



Aim:

To make sure that the parents/carers who contact MK PPS are confident that they can access information, advice and support from staff and volunteers, safe in the knowledge that information about them is respected, protected, and not shared with others without their permission.

Processes and Procedures:

Usually parents/carers will make contact with PPS themselves. In exceptional circumstances, a third party (school or social worker etc) may contact the service on behalf of a parent/carer when permission has been given. When the first call is made to the parent/carer, PPS check that help and support is actually wanted.

Information held by PPS is confidential and is held on a secure database which is password protected and only accessible by PPS staff. Data is only entered once parents have been informed about the confidentiality policy and have given permission for information to be kept. Paper files are held in a locked filing cabinet to which only PPS staff have access.

Parents/carers have the right to remain anonymous.

Parent/carers are asked to sign a 'consent form' giving PPS written permission to contact a variety of third parties (SEN Team, School, Educational Psychologist etc). These can be changed or deleted by the parent/carer as required. Contact with these professionals will only be made following further verbal permission, if it is needed to move the case on, or to access information from others in order to provide appropriate support.

The PPS is based in a private office in the GHEC, where parents/carers can come and talk in private, without being observed, overheard or interrupted.

Staff diaries are anonymised, so that others can see where appointments are booked, but not who with. This information is only available to PPS staff via the database.

Once a case has been inactive for 6 months it is archived. This means that all paper documents, where someone else has the original (parent/carer, SEN Team, school), are shredded in the office. Documents produced by PPS, or sent directly to us, or which have a special significance, are scanned and saved electronically before being shredded. These are saved onto a CD and are kept in a locked cupboard. Electronic records are disposed of when they have been inactive for 6 years.

Where issues need to be brought to the attention of the Local Authority, this is done in a way to protect the parent/carer's anonymity, unless they give permission to be identified. Statistical reports produced from the database are all anonymous and are used to help the PPS monitor its service and identify issues and trends.

If a message is left for a parent/carer, it will say who the message is for, who has made the call, and the PPS telephone number. Details of the child/case are not left on the message.

All information held by PPS will be handled in a way that conforms to the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Exceptions:

The only exception to keeping information confidential is if there is a concern regarding child protection. Staff and volunteers have a duty to report their concerns about a child's safety. Milton Keynes Parent Partnership follows the Milton Keynes Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines www.mkscb.org