

***Larne Crisis Accommodation***

**Confidentiality Policy**

Principles

LCA clients and their families are entitled to expect that any information about health, family circumstances, children's development and behaviour shared with, or observed by LCA staff will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Policy's Statement of Intent

LCA respects the right for all information, records and observations to be treated with respect and with due attention to confidentiality and privacy.

However, the legal principle that "the welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Order NI) means that confidentiality comes second to the right of the child to be protected from harm.

Procedures

We will ensure that:-

All registration forms and records of clients will be kept by the manager in a secure place for a maximum of 7 years and then destroyed without compromising confidentiality. The Accident and Incident book should be retained indefinitely.

Parents may have access to the records of their own children but may not have access to information about any other child.

Any confidential information given by clients to the manager or support worker will not be passed onto other adults without permission, except where a person’s safety is at risk and then only to relevant professionals.

Any anxieties/evidence relating to personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group except with the child's key worker and group leader.

Information may be shared with Social Services and/or Department of Education (DE) in accordance with their guidance and regulation. Parental consent is to be obtained beforehand, if appropriate.

All issues pertaining to the employment of staff, whether paid or voluntary, will remain confidential to those persons who are directly involved with personnel decisions. Records should be retained for 7 years.

All staff, volunteers, students, parents/carers, clients and committee members will be made aware of this confidentiality policy.

All the above points are subject to the overall commitment of LCCC, which is to the safety and the wellbeing of those who attend it.

Any breach of confidentiality by any member of staff or committee will lead to disciplinary action.

**For staff, volunteers and others receiving information on clients.**

All information concerning clients is confidential.

Information must not be disclosed to anybody other than in the following circumstances:

* With the client’s and/or referrers consent.
* To other Larne Community Care Centre workers (voluntary or paid), to the extent needed to enable them to carry out their work.
* When disclosure is required by law.

Whenever you are not sure whether information should be disclosed you must consult the Manager.

I confirm that I must maintain the confidentiality of personal information entrusted to me in the course of my work and I undertake to abide by the Regulations.

Reviewed by Diane Topping 18/8/22