

Reading Parent Partnership Service



Confidentiality Policy

Reading Parent Partnership Service runs a self-referral service for parents, offering information and support about all aspects of a child's special educational needs. The handling of information that parents provide complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and is not shared with anyone outside of the PPS unless they have given permission for it to be shared or there are Child Protection issues.

Very occasionally PPS staff may agree to contact parents/carers, who have been referred to the service by, and who have given permission for their contact details to be passed to PPS.

Information held by the Parent Partnership Service is confidential and held on a secure password protected database, only accessed by PPS staff. Any paper files are held in a locked filing cabinet, to which only Parent Partnership staff have access. There are occasions when the database has to be maintained, and Kimpton Consultants who undertake this work state: *Kimpton Consultants undertake to protect any data that comes into its remit and not to pass it on or use it for any purpose other than supporting the appropriate parent partnership service.*

PPS staff shall obtain consent from the parents before consulting the local authority's (LA) case file or any other papers relating to the child or young person with special educational needs, or discussing a child or young person with LA or school staff.

At times it may be helpful to pass on information from PPS files, e.g. if we are involved in disagreement resolution work or negotiating on behalf of a parent. However, this will only be done with parental permission.

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If we receive a request for information from LA Officers for legal reasons, e.g. judicial review, the request will go to the head of service, or if absent, to their line manager, who will consider the request and, with the parents' permission, direct that, where necessary, the relevant information be extracted from the file, and sent to the relevant officer, with a copy to the parents.

In the event of case notes being requested by parents under the Freedom of Information Act, the PPS Coordinator will send the requested notes directly to parents.

Once a case has been closed the file will be retained for one year and then archived in the database or, in the case of a paper file, shredded.

The only exception to confidentiality is in regard to information received which leads staff or volunteers to believe that a child may be at risk. In that circumstance the Service has a legal obligation to pass on concerns in line with local safeguarding procedures.