

Your information, your rights

Confidentiality, information sharing and
access to your Early Help service records



About this leaflet

Camden's Early Help services aim to work with parents to help them achieve the best for their children. To do this, we have to find out some information about families so that we can provide the best services and support.

If you have a family worker, they will record information about you and your family in an electronic case file. The information is treated as confidential and the file is kept safe and in a secure location.

In order for us to work with you and support you to make things better for your children, we may at times have to share information with other professionals working with your family, and this leaflet explains the rules we follow. Your information may also be used for the purposes of anonymised research.

This leaflet tells you:

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- why we keep information
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- what kind of information we keep
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- how we use the information
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- how, why and with whom we share information
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- how we keep the information safe and how long we keep it for
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- your rights on the information we keep.
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Our duties

The Data Protection Act 1998 allows Early Help services to hold information about children and families that the service works with. However, the law says we must:

- only hold information that we need to help and support families
- only use the information for that reason
- make sure the information we hold is accurate
- keep the information only for as long as it is needed
- make sure we only use the information lawfully and do not breach your rights as the owner of this information
- keep the information secure at all times.

What information we hold

Early Help services hold a wide range of information on families including:

- personal details of family members
- a record of the referral giving details of what help you are seeking and why
- assessments carried out by family workers and other agencies to identify what help you need
- details of support plans and reviews of this plan by the team around the family
- details of the family worker's contacts with family members and the team around the family
- records of meetings and visits with the family and the team around the family
- information from other professionals about the family.

Sharing information with other professionals

Early Help services will only share information with other professionals if we have your consent. The reason we would like you to consent to us sharing information with other professionals working with your family is to provide a better service to you. More and more professionals are working in groups and sharing information allows the right help to be provided to families early. We have found that if support and services are provided to families early this leads to more positive outcomes and prevents problems reaching crisis.

The only time we will share information without your consent is when we have reason to believe that your child may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm and we need to refer your family to our social work service - or when it is felt that you may cause harm to others, or to assist a police investigation.

Professionals we would like to share information with are:

- GPs and health professionals
- Schools
- Police
- Early Help services
- Multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)
- Complex families team
- Children's centres
- Children's social care services
- Probation
- Housing
- Youth offending service
- Mental health services
- Drug and alcohol services
- Voluntary organisations
- Other local authorities
- Employment advisers.

We will only share relevant information needed to provide you and your family with a high standard of service and only with people who need to know. With your consent we will share the following documents:

- any assessments we receive with regard to your family
- any assessments carried out with regard to your family
- records of the review of any plan made in respect of your child
- records of any meetings held with you and the team around the family
- any referrals we make to other agencies for services on your behalf.

Your lead professional will consult you on what information will be shared, with whom and why so that you can make an informed decision about consenting.

Sharing information for research purposes

Camden Council is committed to providing services that build resilience in all families and communities across the borough and to help us do this we may share your information for the purposes of anonymised research.

To help us to understand the value of the services we are providing to Camden families we are carrying out research with the help of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Information shared for these purposes will be anonymised and handled securely and in accordance with the law. This will not affect the benefits, services or support that you receive.

More information can be found in our privacy statement on the Council's website: camden.gov.uk or by emailing: **informationandrecordsmanagement@camden.gov.uk**

Keeping your information safe

We understand how important it is for you to have complete trust in us to keep your information safe and maintain confidentiality. Because we value your trust, we will always:

- make sure that all the information you give us is kept safe on computer records that can only be seen by staff who work with you and your family
- only share information with your consent unless we think your child is at risk of harm or when it is felt that you may cause harm to others or to assist a police investigation
- keep your records for no longer than five years from the date your case is closed
- information shared for research purposes will be anonymised then destroyed on completion of the study.

Accessing your records

The law says you have the right to see your case record - known as 'access to records' - and to ask Early Help services to consider making changes if you think that the information written in the record is wrong.

Your lead professional will always share information with you on a regular basis about what goes on your record so that you are kept informed about what actions have been taken and support provided and why.

Your lead professional should always provide you with copies of key documents such as assessments, minutes of meetings and reports they have written and you can always ask them for copies of documents and a letter confirming that you have given verbal consent to this information where appropriate.

If your case is closed to Early Help services, you will need to contact the information and records management team and make a request to see your records. They can be contacted at:

Information and records management, floor 5, 5PS
Freepost RSLT-RJBR-TXAA
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
London
WC1H 9JE

Email: informationandrecordsmanagement@camden.gov.uk

You can also write to the **Information Commissioner** at:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Phone: 01625 545 745

Fax: 01625 524 510

Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Consent to information sharing

Name of family:

Children's details:

Name	Gender	Date of birth

Address:

Name of person giving consent:

Relationship to child/ren:

Parental consent: Yes No

Please tick the relevant box only if you do NOT want your information to be shared with any of following agencies, and leave the boxes blank if you are happy to share information with the organisations listed below:

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Education (including early years) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Police | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's social care services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family service | <input type="checkbox"/> Probation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth offending service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health services | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug and alcohol services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other local authorities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment advisers | |

The following information has been explained to me:

- what information will be shared
- why the information will be shared
- with whom the information will be shared
- the consequences of sharing or not sharing information
- how information will be kept secure
- I can ask to see case records under the Data Protection Act 1998
- I have the right to withdraw consent at any time.

I give consent for Early Help services to approach other agencies for information about my family

- Yes No

I give consent for Early Help services to share information with other agencies

- Yes No

Signature of person
giving consent:

Name:

Date: //

Once signed, this form should be scanned and uploaded to the client's record.