Confidentiality for Young People Policy

Who does this policy apply to?

- Staff, secondees and volunteers dealing with young people and the confidential information they may provide to The Trust

Delivery Partner note:

Delivery Partners will use their own policies but should check that these at least meet the standards of The Prince’s Trust policies.

The Policy

- Anything that a young person chooses to share with a member of Trust staff or volunteer must be treated with the utmost respect
- Staff and volunteers are not allowed to ‘keep secrets’ and anything shared with a staff member of a serious nature (including something which puts themselves /others at risk) has to be shared with other staff members. Young people should be made aware of this
- Volunteers have a duty to report all issues of a serious nature to their Trust contact
- If a young person requests information that The Trust holds about themselves this should be arranged with the consent of your Line Manager/Trust contact to ensure it is done correctly
- Please see the Data Protection Policy for guidance on how to keep data secure and how to manage requests for data

Changes since previous policy

- Based on the Fairbridge policy
- Content that overlaps with the Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Policy and Data Protection Policy has been removed
- Clarification has been made on sharing data in line with The Trust stance on fair collection

Why we have this policy

This policy ensures confidential information about a young person is handled appropriately and correctly.

Young people may disclose information to Prince’s Trust staff and volunteers as a result of the relationship they have with them and the environment that Prince’s Trust programmes create. This policy is designed to ensure that this disclosure helps the young person wherever possible and that the level of trust is maintained. This policy also covers sharing information about young people.
The Trust has a responsibility to both ensure that it respects the information that is shared by young people and also that it protects young people under its Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Policy. Information regarding the safe storage of young people’s information is in the Data Protection Policy.

**Responsibility**
- Line managers are responsible for addressing any safeguarding issues that may emerge with the relevant safeguarding officer
- Illegal acts/criminality must be reported to your line manager/Trust contact who will then decide whether to contact the police or refer the decision to a more senior member of staff
- Where a member of staff or volunteer breaks this policy without authorisation, the incident will be investigated

**General principles**
- Staff and volunteers should be aware of where they discuss personal or confidential information about a young person (please note all must adhere to Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy)
- All confidential information must be kept securely. See Data Protection Policy.
- Serious or sensitive information given by the young person, or received from a third party, in a confidential setting must be shared with the line manager/Trust contact
- In practice, some Managers may opt to share all information with their team. However, the Manager maintains the right to share information on a “need to know” basis
- Staff should ensure that recorded information about a young person is factual and not based on hearsay, circumstance or opinion. See Data Protection Policy.

**Communicating this policy to young people**
- This Policy should be explained to young people as part of their induction onto a programme, including their right to view any information held about them. Where needed, the Policy should be reiterated to young people
- This includes explaining the ‘Fair Collection Notice’ on the Profile Form which enables us to share information with others and/or send them further information. If they have agreed to sharing information, we do not need to go back to them for further consent.

**How to support a young person disclosing information of a sensitive and serious nature**
- See definition below of ‘sensitive and serious nature’
- Refer to the Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Policy. Staff or volunteers who are working with a young person in a mentoring relationship must receive training on Safeguarding so that they are aware of what steps need to be followed

**What to do about a disclosure**
- Staff and volunteers are not allowed to ‘keep secrets.’ Anything shared with a staff member or volunteer of a serious nature has to be shared with their line manager/Trust contact
In some cases, a disclosure in prison will leave you with no option but to report it immediately to the prison staff and before you leave the prison. In this scenario, you may not be able to contact your line manager in advance and will need to do so as soon as reasonably possible.

See Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Policy for further information.

Definitions:
Information of a serious or sensitive nature that should be disclosed:

- When a young person has serious physical or psychological needs that require immediate medical attention
- When a young person under the age of 16 or a vulnerable adult discloses serious abuse and inaction could leave them immediately in the same abusive situation
- When other young people under the age of 16 are potentially at immediate risk of significant harm (e.g. siblings)
- When there is good reason to believe that someone else may cause significant harm to another young person
- When there is good reason to believe that a young person may cause significant harm to themselves or others

Significant harm:
While there is no absolute definition of ‘significant harm’, the following should be considered:

- The degree or extent of any physical/emotional harm
- The duration and frequency of any physical/emotional harm
- The extent to which the person may be psychologically affected
- The extent of premeditation, degree of threat and coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual factors (see Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Policy for further information)
- The Operations Director/Child Protection Officer should then decide who else within The Prince’s Trust should have this information. This decision will be based on safety factors and consideration of possible development needs

Related policies
- Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Working with Offenders Policy
- Working with Young People with Mental Health Needs Policy
- Medical and Next of Kin Policy
- Consent for Under 18s Policy

References:

Comments related to the maintenance of this policy should be directed to policies@princes-trust.org.uk
All Prince’s Trust policies are reviewed in March and re-issued in April each year.

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