

➔ KEY POINTS

INFORMATION SHARING GUIDANCE

Share to Safeguard

Creating a Culture of Confident Information Sharing for Children and Young People.

The **guidance** released on 10 September 2026 by the DfE presents an opportunity to shift the conversation about Information Sharing away from whether information can be shared and towards how practitioners share information confidently, lawfully and promptly to safeguard children.

The guidance is aimed at frontline practitioners, managers, senior leaders and safeguarding partners across local authorities, health, police, education and wider safeguarding services. It is accompanied by strategic and operational data sharing agreement templates to support implementation.

No single agency will ever hold the complete picture. Children are safest when information from multiple agencies is brought together to understand risk, vulnerability and need.

Its not just paperwork!

- ➔ Information sharing is not paperwork.
- ➔ It is not bureaucracy
- ➔ It is not an administrative task that sits alongside safeguarding practice.

Information sharing is safeguarding practice.

The difference between a child receiving help and a child remaining hidden from services is often whether professionals have shared what they know, when they know it, with the people who need to know.

Safeguarding reviews repeatedly show that children are harmed not because nobody was concerned, but because no one agency held the complete picture.

Effective information sharing enables professionals to connect those concerns, understand cumulative risk and act decisively. It is therefore one of the most significant protective actions that practitioners and organisations can take on behalf of children and young people.

CULTURE CHANGING

Key to success is creating a culture where practitioners are more concerned about a child being left unsafe through a lack of information sharing than they are about being criticised for sharing safeguarding information appropriately and in good faith.

Children are better protected when professionals share relevant information confidently, proactively and without unnecessary delay.

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) frequently find concerns about data protection, organisational boundaries and professional accountability have sometimes resulted in information being withheld, delayed or shared inconsistently.

The new guidance seeks to address this by creating a clearer expectation that safeguarding partners and practitioners should share information where it is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the question should not be 'Can I share?' but 'What information needs to be shared, with whom, and how quickly?'

➔ SPIRIT OF THE CHANGES

The guidance is not primarily about creating additional bureaucracy. It is about creating a safeguarding culture where:

- Information sharing is viewed as a safeguarding responsibility
- Practitioners feel confident exercising professional judgement
- Agencies work collectively rather than operating in organisational silos
- The needs and safety of children take precedence over organisational risk aversion
- Uncertainty becomes a reason to seek advice and collaborate, not a reason to avoid sharing information

SHARING INFORMATION
SAFELY & EFFECTIVELY

