



Sen Talk CIC Confidentiality Policy

1. About Sen Talk CIC

Sen Talk is a Community Interest Company, registered in November 2017. Sen Talk aims to provide better outcomes for children with special educational needs and is dedicated to improving the emotional and social development of autistic children and children with ADHD.

The organisation sets out to challenge the discrimination of children with disabilities and provide opportunities for growth and development through all its projects and efforts.

2. Sen Talk's Confidentiality Policy

Sen Talk's Board of Trustees (Directors) and the Chief Executive Officer recognise their overall responsibility for ensuring that Sen Talk complies with its legal obligations.

This policy applies to all Sen Talk staff and volunteers and any other third party that has access to confidential information that may be regarding staff, volunteers or service users. The data covered by the confidentiality policy includes information about:

- Sen Talk, for example, its plans or finances.
- Other organisations.
- Individuals, for example, users, volunteers and staff whether recorded electronically or in paper form.

All staff, volunteers and others who work at Sen Talk must respect the need for confidentiality of information held about anyone who comes into contact with the organisation. This is expected to continue even when contact has ceased with this person, and when the volunteer or staff member no longer works for Sen Talk.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Sen Talks' Data Protection Policy and GDPR (May 2018). The policy is endorsed by Sen Talk's Trustees and will be reviewed annually to make sure it remains relevant and appropriate to the needs of Sen Talk, its staff, volunteers, users and visitors.

This Confidentiality policy is freely accessible to all. A copy of this policy is available electronically via the website www.sentalk.org/policies and a hardcopy is accessible in the main office within the policies and procedure folder.

Confidentiality policy amended and approved on 24th March 2020

3. Information about individuals

Sen Talk is committed to ensuring confidential services to all individuals. The confidentiality is between the individual and the organisation, not the members of staff delivering a particular service. This means that members of staff will share information, where appropriate, with other team members.

Confidential information will not be sought from a client unless expressly in the interests of that client, i.e. to enable a better service delivery.

Information will only be passed to another agency or to other individuals outside of the charity with the consent of the client, where possible this will be with written consent. If a member of staff or volunteer intends to get information from another agency to help the client or to refer them to another agency, then this must be explained to the client and their permission given.

No personal information about staff, volunteers or users will be given to any third party including a member of their family, without the consent of the client. Information will only be divulged on a “need to know” basis. Information will be treated in confidence and will not be divulged to anyone outside the organisation except where extenuating circumstances exist (see below). However, in order that we can provide the best possible help to our users it may be necessary to share information with a manager or colleagues within Sen Talk.

All users are entitled to privacy and will be made aware that they can specifically request to be seen in private. In no circumstances should details of a client be discussed by anyone outside of the organisation or in an open plan area in such a manner that it is possible to identify the client. Staff and volunteers should take due care and attention when speaking to users and using the telephone, fax, email or other online communication modes. No client should be able to hear a conversation or personal details of another service user.

4. Use of client information for publicity, reporting or training purposes

Sen Talk does need to be able to give information where appropriate about the impact of its services.

If one of our services has an outcome which would provide useful material for publicity, reporting or training purposes, then wherever possible the permission of the client will be sought before the story is told to anyone else. If permission cannot be obtained, then any details that would enable identification of the client to be made will be changed and anonymised.

5. Limits to client confidentiality

In certain circumstances Sen Talk reserves the right to break confidentiality should this be deemed necessary. These circumstances include:

- If a member of staff believes that a client could cause danger to themselves or to others.
- If a member of staff suspects abuse or has knowledge of abuse.
- If the client gives information which indicates that a crime has been committed.
- If disclosure is required by law, for example, by the police.
- If a person is felt to lack the mental capacity to make a decision. In such cases staff or volunteers will discuss with a manager and they will only act in the client's best interest.
- If the client gives information which indicates a possible terrorist threat.

The decision on whether to break confidentiality will be decided on a case by case basis and always in conjunction with a Project Manager and/or the Sen Talk Director.

6. Access to data

This Policy operates on a "need to know" basis and apart from staff and volunteers in the office of Sen Talk, no-one will have access to client or organisational information unless it is relevant to the service or their work. All users have the right to request access to all information stored about them and have a right to see a copy of this confidentiality policy on request. If any party concerned has a sensory or physical impairment, efforts should be made to ensure that all aspects of this policy and exchanges between parties are understood.

Significant breaches of this policy will be handled under Sen Talks' disciplinary procedures.

7. Evaluation and Monitoring

All staff and volunteers will be given a copy of this policy when they join Sen Talk, as part of their induction pack, and will sign the confidentiality statement that they will abide by this policy. Sen Talk will ensure that all staff and volunteers are trained in the application of this policy.

Appendix 1: Sen Talk's confidentiality statement for staff and volunteers

When working for Sen Talk, you will often need to have access to confidential information which may include, for example:

- Personal information about individuals who are supporters (e.g. funders, in-kind supporters) or otherwise involved in the activities organised by Sen Talk.
- Information about the internal business of Sen Talk.
- Personal information about colleagues working for Sen Talk.

Sen Talk is committed to keeping this information confidential, in order to protect people and the organisation itself. 'Confidential' means that all access to information must be on a need to know and properly authorised basis. You must use only the information you have been authorised to use, and for purposes that have been authorised. You should also be aware that under the Data Protection Act 1998, unauthorised access to data about individuals is a criminal offence.

You must assume that information is confidential unless you know that it is intended by Sen Talk to be made public.

You must also be particularly careful not to disclose confidential information to unauthorised people or cause a breach of security. In particular you must:

- Not compromise or seek to evade security measures (including computer passwords).
- Not gossip about confidential information, either with colleagues or people outside Sen Talk.
- Not disclose information unless you are sure that you know who you are disclosing it to, and that they are authorised to have it.

If you are in doubt about whether to disclose information or not, do not guess. Withhold the information while you check with an appropriate person (your Line Manager and/or the Data Protection Officer, Aaron Barbour) whether the disclosure is appropriate.

Your confidentiality obligations continue to apply indefinitely after you have stopped working for Katherine Low Settlement.

I have read and understand the above statement. I accept my responsibilities regarding confidentiality.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____