



Confidentiality Policy

Respecting the trust families place in us

Assisting Parents with Children Affected by Mental Health
Registered Charity Number 1186256

Version	1.0
Adopted	March 2026
Approved by	The Board of Trustees, signed on its behalf by Lauren Ridley, Chair of Trustees
Policy owner	CEO
Next review	March 2027, or sooner if legislation or guidance changes
Applies to	All trustees, staff, volunteers, placement students and contractors

At a Glance

Our promise: Families share personal and often painful information with APCAM. We will keep it confidential, share it only with consent or where the law or safety requires, and always be honest with people about the limits of confidentiality.

- **Explain the limits at the start:** confidentiality is never absolute.
- **Need to know:** share only what is necessary, with those who need it.
- **Ask first:** seek consent before sharing, unless doing so would put someone at risk.
- **Never promise to keep a secret** about harm.
- **Confidentiality continues** after a family stops using APCAM, and after you leave APCAM.

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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how APCAM protects confidential information about the children, young people and families we support, our staff and volunteers, and the organisation. It applies to everyone working for APCAM, during and after their time with us, and to information in any format, including spoken conversations.

Confidentiality is about trust and respect. Data protection law sets out rules for how personal data is handled; this policy sets out the professional standards we expect. The two policies work together.

2. What is Confidential?

- any information about a service user, including the fact that they use APCAM;
- what is said in counselling, parent support, advocacy and youth sessions;
- information about a family's circumstances, health, SEND, finances, housing or relationships;
- information shared by other agencies, such as schools, the local authority or health services;
- personal information about staff, volunteers and trustees;
- sensitive information about APCAM, such as unpublished financial information or Board discussions.

3. Explaining Confidentiality

At the start of any work with a child, young person or family, staff will explain in clear, age-appropriate language:

- what information we record and why;
- who within APCAM may see it, including supervisors;
- that we will ask before sharing information with anyone outside APCAM, except where we cannot;
- the situations in which we must share information without consent.

This is recorded on the person's file. For counselling clients, it forms part of the therapeutic contract, in line with the Therapeutic Disclosures Policy.

4. Limits of Confidentiality

APCAM will share confidential information without consent, where necessary and proportionate, if:

- a child, young person or adult at risk is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm;
- there is a serious risk to someone's life, including a risk of suicide;
- there is a risk of serious harm to others;
- we are required to by law or a court order, including information about terrorism or serious crime;
- there is a mandatory reporting duty, such as known cases of female genital mutilation in under-18s.

Wherever it is safe and appropriate, we will tell the person before we share, explain why and involve them in the process. The decision and the reasons for it will always be recorded.

Remember: Never promise a child, young person or adult that you will keep a secret about harm. Say that you may need to share it with someone whose job is to keep them safe.

5. Sharing with Consent

Much of APCAM's work, such as advocacy with schools, EHCP reviews, housing support and Early Help, involves sharing information with other professionals. Staff will:

- get consent before sharing, and record what has been agreed and with whom;
- share only the information needed for the purpose;
- check that young people who are competent to decide agree, as well as parents where appropriate;
- respect a person's decision to withdraw consent, unless there is a safeguarding reason to share.

6. Confidentiality Within APCAM

- Information is shared within APCAM on a need-to-know basis only.
- Case discussions in supervision and team meetings are confidential and should use initials where possible.
- Staff must never discuss service users in public places, on public transport, or where they can be overheard, including on phone and video calls.
- Staff must never discuss service users with their own family or friends.
- In a small community, staff must take extra care not to reveal, even by acknowledging someone in the street, that a person uses APCAM. Let the service user greet you first.

7. Stories, Case Studies and Reports

Information about service users used in funding bids, impact reports, newsletters or trustee reports must be anonymised so that the person cannot be identified, including through combinations of details such as a village, a school or an unusual circumstance. Identifiable stories, quotes or images are used only with written consent, in line with the Social Media Policy.

8. Trustees

Trustees receive anonymised information about service users. They do not have access to individual case files unless it is necessary for a specific governance purpose, such as an allegation or serious incident. Board discussions and papers are confidential.

9. Breaches of Confidentiality

Any breach of confidentiality must be reported to the CEO immediately. It will be managed under the Data Protection Policy where personal data is involved. A deliberate or careless breach may

lead to disciplinary action, or the end of a volunteer, placement or contractor arrangement. Confidentiality obligations continue after someone leaves APCAM.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Trustees will monitor how this policy is working through regular reports from the CEO, feedback from staff, volunteers and service users, and learning from any incidents or complaints. This policy will be reviewed annually by the policy owner, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or APCAM's services change.

11. Related Policies and Legal Framework

11.1 Related APCAM policies

- Data Protection Policy 2026
- Therapeutic Disclosures Policy 2026
- Safeguarding Policy 2026 (including WeGame)
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2026
- Social Media Policy 2026
- Professional Boundaries Policy 2026
- Whistleblowing Policy 2026

11.2 Legislation and guidance

- APCAM Constitution (Foundation model CIO constitution, last amended 20 September 2019)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1998, Article 8
- Common law duty of confidentiality
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services
- Terrorism Act 2000
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (FGM mandatory reporting)
- BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions

Approval

Approved by	The Board of Trustees, by resolution in line with clause 13 of the APCAM Constitution
Signed on behalf of the Board	Lauren Ridley, Chair of Trustees
Signature	
Date adopted	March 2026
Next review	March 2027
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