



Privacy Notice 2026

Early Steps SEND Consultancy

Laura Hanson

Early Years SENCO

Introduction

Early Steps SEND Consultancy is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality and security of personal data. All personal information is processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, Working Together to Safeguard Children, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and other relevant legislation and professional guidance.

This privacy notice explains how personal data is collected, used, stored, shared and protected when services are provided by Early Steps SEND Consultancy. The notice applies to parents and carers, children and young people, early years settings, schools, local authorities, professionals, and any individual who makes contact with the consultancy.

Early Steps SEND Consultancy only collects information that is necessary to provide safe, lawful and effective SEND consultancy services.

Data Controller

The Data Controller responsible for the processing of personal data is:

Laura Hanson

Early Years SENCO

Early Steps SEND Consultancy

Tyne and Wear, North East England

Email: laura.senco@earlstepssend.co.uk

Telephone: 07581 208721

The Data Controller is responsible for ensuring that personal data is processed lawfully, fairly and transparently and that appropriate security measures are in place to protect all information held.

Personal Data Collected

In order to provide SEND consultancy services, Early Steps SEND Consultancy may collect and store personal information relating to children, parents, carers, professionals and settings. This may include contact details, identifying information, developmental information, SEND needs, education records, EHCP documentation, observation notes, reports, correspondence, invoices and contracts.

Where necessary to provide professional advice or fulfil safeguarding duties, information relating to health needs, behaviour, safeguarding concerns or other sensitive matters may also be processed. Such information is treated as confidential and is only collected where it is relevant to the service being provided.

Information may be provided directly by parents, carers, settings, schools, local authorities or other professionals, or may be recorded during consultations, meetings, observations or written work completed as part of the consultancy service.

Purpose of Processing

Personal data is processed for the purpose of delivering SEND consultancy services safely and professionally. This includes providing advice, completing observations, preparing reports, supporting EHCP applications or reviews, delivering training, maintaining professional records, responding to enquiries, arranging bookings, issuing invoices and meeting legal or safeguarding responsibilities.

Information will only be used for legitimate professional purposes connected to the work of Early Steps SEND Consultancy and will not be used for unrelated activities without consent, unless required by law.

Lawful Basis

Personal data is processed in accordance with UK GDPR using one or more lawful bases. In most cases, information is processed because it is necessary for the performance of a contract, to comply with a legal obligation, or for legitimate professional interests in providing consultancy services. In some situations, consent may be relied upon, particularly where information is provided voluntarily. Where there is a risk of harm to a child or individual, information may also be processed under the lawful basis of vital interests.

Where special category data is processed, such as health information or details relating to special educational needs, this is done in accordance with the additional conditions permitted under data protection law, including safeguarding, education provision, and professional duties.

Sharing Information

Information will only be shared where it is necessary, lawful and proportionate to do so. In the course of providing SEND consultancy services, it may be necessary to share information with parents or carers, early years settings, schools, local authorities, health professionals, educational psychologists, SEND professionals or safeguarding agencies.

Information may also be shared without consent where there is a legal duty to do so, where safeguarding concerns arise, or where disclosure is required to protect a child or other person from harm. Early Steps SEND Consultancy will always aim to share the minimum information required and will do so in a secure and professional manner.

Personal data is never sold, used for marketing, or shared for commercial purposes.

Storage and Security

Early Steps SEND Consultancy takes appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that personal data is stored securely. Electronic records are kept on password-

protected devices and secure cloud systems with appropriate security settings in place. Paper records, where used, are stored securely and access is restricted.

Security measures include the use of anti-virus software, firewalls, secure passwords, multi-factor authentication where available, and restricted access to files. Only the Data Controller has access to personal data unless information needs to be shared for professional reasons.

Reasonable steps are taken at all times to prevent unauthorised access, loss, misuse or disclosure of personal information.

Retention

Personal data will only be kept for as long as necessary to provide services and to meet legal, insurance and professional requirements. Consultancy records, reports and related documentation are normally retained for up to seven years. Financial records are retained in line with HMRC requirements. Safeguarding information may be kept for longer where required by law or guidance.

Once the retention period has passed, information will be securely deleted, destroyed or anonymised.

Rights

Under data protection law, individuals have the right to access the personal information held about them, to request correction of inaccurate information, to request deletion where appropriate, to restrict or object to processing, and to request a copy of their data in a portable format where this applies.

Requests relating to personal data must be made in writing to the Data Controller. Identification may be required before information is released.

Subject Access Requests

Requests to laura.senco@earlystepssend.co.uk. Response within one calendar month.

Complaints

If you are unhappy with how personal data is handled, you should contact:

Laura Hanson

Early Steps SEND Consultancy

laura.senco@earlystepssend.co.uk

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

www.ico.org.uk

Website

Information provided through the website, email, telephone, WhatsApp or other contact methods will only be used to respond to enquiries, arrange services and maintain professional records. Information is stored securely and is not shared for advertising purposes.

If a website is used, it may collect basic technical information such as cookies or analytics data in accordance with data protection law.

Review of this Privacy Notice

This privacy notice will be reviewed annually and updated where necessary to ensure compliance with current legislation and professional guidance.