



Sharing Student Information with Third Parties

Overview

At times, BCE schools may receive requests to share personal information about a student with third parties (such as doctors, psychologists, or allied health professionals). This can include assessments, questionnaires, checklists, observations, statements of student functioning, academic results etc. Sharing of student information has a range of implications in terms of privacy, data security, informed consent, and records management. With informed parent/legal guardian consent, BCE schools are encouraged to consult and collaborate with third parties to share information to support student learning and wellbeing.

Partnership

Schools should always work in partnership with parents/legal guardians to ensure transparency when sharing student information and consulting with third parties. The [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#) require parents and students to be involved in decisions that directly affect them.

Requests for student information may be made directly to the school from a third party or from a parent/legal guardian requesting school support to access third party services e.g information to support a medical or allied health referral.

Requests might be made for the school to:

- consult with third parties (in person, by phone, online or via email),
- provide written information to third parties e.g paediatrician letter, and/or
- complete forms and assessments provided by third parties.

All requests for schools to share student information with third parties for must include a clear expectation about:

- what information will be shared,
- the most appropriate method of sharing, documenting and returning the information eg. Verbal, written, email, mail, via parent/legal guardian,
- be accompanied by parent/legal guardian consent

The school can request a summary of assessment results, and/or a copy of the ensuing report be provided by the provider or parent/legal guardian to support the student's participation and engagement in school. Guidance Counsellors are school-based subject matter experts in student mental health and wellbeing and should be involved in all interactions with external mental health specialists (e.g., psychologists, paediatricians, psychiatrists, etc).



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Parent/legal guardian consent

[Informed consent](#) must be obtained from the parent/legal guardian of a student before any information can be shared with third parties. This includes sharing personal student information to and recording personal student information from third parties whether spoken or in writing. Informed consent means consent that is:

- **Voluntary** – the person giving the consent knows that they do not have to give consent and that there will be no adverse consequences if they do not give consent.
- **Informed** – the consenting individual knows for what purpose, how, to whom and under what conditions information will be recorded, used or disclosed before agreeing.
- **Specific** – consent must be specific and identify the activities, information and parties that it will cover.
- **Time-limited** – for a particular purpose for a specified period. Parents/legal guardians can revoke consent at any time.

for BCE staff

Requests (from a parent or third party) for the school to share personal student information with or complete an assessment for a third party are actioned as follows:

1. Inform the Principal/delegate that a request to share student information or to complete an assessment has been made. The Principal/delegate clarifies the purpose of the request and discerns who is best placed to respond.
2. Ensure the parent/legal guardian has provided [written informed consent](#) for school staff to share the requested information/consult with the third party. If not using the BCE consent form, ensure written communication addresses all elements of informed consent covered on the BCE form.
3. Inform the parents/legal guardians the third party is required to supply a hard copy of any forms for completion (no online forms can be completed).
4. Clarify (with parent and/or third party) timeframe for completion (up to two weeks for written response) and how the information is most appropriately shared with/returned to the third party eg. phone call, meeting, email, mail, via parent/legal guardian.

Note: **restricted psychometric assessments must be provided directly to the third party and not to the parent unless otherwise advised by the third party to ensure the information is correctly interpreted for its intended purpose.** The parent/legal guardian can ask the requesting professional to share relevant information with them (the Guidance Counsellor can determine which questionnaires/record forms to which this would apply).



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5. Provide documented meeting/conversation notes or written information to the Support Teacher Inclusive Education or Guidance Counsellor to retain a copy and discern appropriate storage:
 - a. psychometric/restricted questionnaires/record forms must only be stored in the Guidance Counsellor section of the Engage Student Support System
 - b. all other documentation must be stored in [Personalised Supports](#) or [Conversations](#) (i.e if student does not have a Personalised Support area) and can be shared with parents by the school as appropriate to the purpose and context. Sensitive information about a student or their family should be [permitted to 'specialist' role holders](#)
6. Keep a copy of the parent/legal guardian consent on the Engage Student Support System in either Personalised Supports or Conversations (i.e if student does not have a PS area).
7. Provide a copy of documentation to the third party and/or parent/legal guardian as agreed in (4) and inform Principal and parent/legal guardian.

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