



# Data Protection Policy

Reviewed June 2017

To reviewed by February 2019

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## **Introduction**

William Reynolds Primary School and Nursery collects and uses personal information about staff, pupils, parents and other individuals who come into contact with the school. This information is gathered in order to enable it to provide education and other associated functions. In addition, there may be a legal requirement to collect and use information to ensure that the school complies with its statutory obligations.

Schools have a duty, as Data Controllers, with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) detailing the information held and its use. These details are then available on the ICO's website. Schools also have duty to issue a Fair Processing Notice to all parents/carers; this summarises the information held on pupils, why it is held and the other parties to whom it may be passed on.

## **Purpose**

This policy is intended to ensure that personal information is dealt with correctly and securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and other related legislation. It will apply to information regardless of the way it is collected, used, recorded, stored and destroyed, and irrespective of whether it is held in paper files or electronically. All staff involved with the collection, processing and disclosure of personal data will be aware of their duties and responsibilities by adhering to these guidelines.

## **What is Personal Information?**

Personal information or data is defined as data which relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data, or other information held.

## **What is a subject access request?**

A subject access request (SAR) is simply a written request made by or on behalf of an individual for the information which he or she is entitled to ask for under section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). The request does not have to be in any particular form. Nor does it have to include the words 'subject access' or make any reference to the DPA. Indeed, a request may be a valid SAR even if it refers to other legislation, such as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

## **Data Protection Principles**

The Data Protection Act 1998 establishes eight enforceable principles that must be adhered to at all times:

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully;
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes;
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive;
4. Personal data shall be accurate and where necessary, kept up to date;
5. Personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes;
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Data Protection Act 1998;
7. Personal data shall be kept secure i.e. protected by an appropriate degree of security;
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of data protection.

## **General Statement**

The school is committed to maintaining the above principles at all times.

Therefore the school will:

- Inform individuals why the information is being collected when it is collected
- Inform individuals when their information is shared, and why and with whom it was shared
- Check the quality and the accuracy of the information it holds
- Ensure that information is not retained for longer than is necessary
- Ensure that when obsolete information is destroyed that it is done so appropriately and securely
- Ensure that clear and robust safeguards are in place to protect personal information from loss, theft and unauthorised disclosure, irrespective of the format in which it is recorded
- Share information with others only when it is legally appropriate to do so
- Set out procedures to ensure compliance with the duty to respond to requests for access to personal information, known as Subject Access Requests
- Ensure our staff are aware of and understand our policies and procedures

### **Processing, storing, archiving and deleting personal data: guidance**

Personal data and school records about pupils are confidential to the child. The information can be shared appropriately within the professional working of the school to enable the school to make the best educational provision for the child. The law permits such information to be shared with other educational establishments when pupils change schools.

School records for a child should be kept for 7 years after the child leaves the school, or until the child reaches 25 years of age (whichever is greater) and examination records the same.

Data on staff is sensitive information and confidential to the individual, and is shared, where appropriate, at the discretion of the Head Teacher and with the knowledge, and if possible the agreement of the staff member concerned.

Employment records form part of a staff member's permanent record. Because there are specific legislative issues connected with these (salary and pension details etc.) these records should be retained as set out by the LA.

Interview records, CV's and application forms for unsuccessful applicants are kept for 6 months.

All formal complaints made to the Head Teacher or School Governors will be kept for at least seven years in confidential files, with any documents on the outcome of such complaints. Individuals concerned in such complaints may have access to such files subject to data protection and to legal professional privilege in the event of a court case.

### **Complaints**

Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints policy. Complaints relating to information handling may be referred to the Information Commissioner (the statutory regulator).

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every 2 years. The policy review will be undertaken by the Headteacher, or nominated representative.

## **Contacts**

If you have any enquires in relation to this policy, please contact the Headteacher who will also act as the contact point for any subject access requests.

Further advice and information is available from the Information Commissioner's Office, [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) or telephone 01625 5457453

## **Rights of access to information**

There are two distinct rights of access to information held by schools about pupils.

1. Under the Data Protection Act 1998 any individual has the right to make a request to access the personal information held about themselves.
2. The right of those entitled to have access to curricular and educational records as defined within the Education Pupil Information (Wales) Regulations 2004.

These procedures relate to subject access requests made under the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Responding to an SAR request**

Requests for information must be made in writing; which includes email, and be addressed to the Head teacher. If the initial request does not clearly identify the information required, then further enquiries will be made.

The identity of the requestor must be established before the disclosure of any information, and checks should also be carried out regarding proof of relationship to the child. Evidence of identity can be established by requesting production of:

- passport
- driving licence
- utility bills with the current address
- Birth / Marriage certificate
- P45/P60
- Credit Card or Mortgage statement

Any individual has the right of access to information held about them. However with children, this is dependent upon their capacity to understand (normally age 12 or above) and the nature of the request. The Head teacher should discuss the request with the child and take their views into account when making a decision. A child with competency to

understand can refuse to consent to the request for their records. Where the child is not deemed to be competent an individual with parental responsibility or guardian shall make the decision on behalf of the child. When considering borderline cases, you should take into account, among other things:

- the nature of the personal data;
- any court orders relating to parental access or responsibility that may apply;
- any duty of confidence owed to the child or young person;
- any consequences of allowing those with parental responsibility access to the child's or young person's information. This is particularly important if there have been allegations of abuse or ill treatment;
- any detriment to the child or young person if individuals with parental responsibility cannot access this information;
- any views the child or young person has on whether their parents should have access to information about them.

The school may make a charge for the provision of information, dependent upon the following:

- Should the information requested contain the educational record then the amount charged will be dependent upon the number of pages provided.
- Should the information requested be personal information that does not include any information contained within educational records schools can charge up to £10 to provide it.
- If the information requested is only the educational record viewing will be free, but a charge not exceeding the cost of copying the information can be made by the Headteacher.

The response time for subject access requests, once officially received, is 40 days (**not working or school days but calendar days, irrespective of school holiday periods**). However the 40 days will not commence until after receipt of fees or clarification of information sought

The Data Protection Act 1998 allows exemptions as to the provision of some information; **therefore all information will be reviewed prior to disclosure.**

Third party information is that which has been provided by another, such as the Police, Local Authority, Health Care professional or another school. Before disclosing third party information consent should normally be obtained. There is still a need to adhere to the 40 day statutory timescale.

Any information which may cause serious harm to the physical or mental health or emotional condition of the pupil or another should not be disclosed, nor should information that would reveal that the child is at risk of abuse, or information relating to court proceedings.

If there are concerns over the disclosure of information then additional advice should be sought.

Where redaction (information blacked out/removed) has taken place then a full copy of the information provided should be retained in order to establish, if a complaint is made, what was redacted and why.

Information disclosed should be clear, thus any codes or technical terms will need to be clarified and explained. If information contained within the disclosure is difficult to read or illegible, then it should be retyped.

Information can be provided at the school with a member of staff on hand to help and explain matters if requested, or provided at face to face handover. The views of the applicant should be taken into account when considering the method of delivery. If postal systems have to be used then registered/recorded mail must be used.

### **Complaints**

Complaints about the above procedures should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body who will decide whether it is appropriate for the complaint to be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaint procedure. Complaints which are not appropriate to be dealt with through the school's complaint procedure can be dealt with by the Information Commissioner. Contact details of both will be provided with the disclosure information.

If on investigation the school's original decision is upheld, then the school has a duty to inform the complainant of their right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's office.

Appeals should be made in writing to the Information Commissioner's office. They can be contacted at:

FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire

SK9 5AF

**Contacts**

If you have any queries or concerns regarding these policies / procedures then please contact the Headteacher. Further advice and information can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office, [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)