



School Personal Data Handling Policy

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Responsibility for review: Premises

Related policies: Health and Safety

Introduction

Schools should do everything within their power to ensure the safety and security of any material of a personal or sensitive nature (Becta – Good Practice in information handling in schools – keeping data secure, safe and legal – updated in April 2009 - www.becta.org.uk/schools/datasecurity).

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to take care when handling, using or transferring personal data that it can not be accessed by anyone who does not:

- have permission to access that data
- need to have access to that data.

Any loss of personal data can have serious effects for individuals and / or institutions concerned, can bring the school into disrepute and may well result in disciplinary action and / or criminal prosecution. All transfer of data is subject to risk of loss or contamination.

Anyone who has access to personal data must know, understand and adhere to this policy, which brings together the legal requirements contained in relevant data legislation and relevant regulations and guidance from the Local Authority.

The Data Protection Act (1998) lays down a set of rules for processing of personal data (both structured manual records and digital records). It provides individuals (data subjects) with rights of access and security and requires users of data (data processors) to be open about how it is used and to follow “good information handling principles”.

Policy Statements

The school will hold the minimum personal information necessary to enable it to perform its function and information will be erased once the need to hold it has passed.

Every effort will be made to ensure that information is accurate, up to date and that inaccuracies are corrected without unnecessary delay.

All personal data will be fairly obtained in accordance with the “Fair Processing Notice” and lawfully processed in accordance with the “Conditions for Processing”.

Personal Data



The school and individuals will have access to a wide range of personal information and data. The data may be held in digital format or on paper records. Personal data is defined as any combination of data items that identifies an individual and provides specific information about them, their families or circumstances. This will include:

- Personal information about members of the school community – including *pupils*, members of staff and parents and carers eg names, addresses, contact details, legal guardianship / contact details, health records, disciplinary records
- Curricular / academic data eg class lists, pupil progress records, reports, references
- Professional records eg employment history, taxation and national insurance records, appraisal records and references
- Any other information that might be disclosed by parents / carers or by other agencies working with families or staff members

Responsibilities

The school's Data Protection Officer is (*Denise Barkham*). She will keep up to date with current legislation and guidance and will:

- determine and take responsibility for the school's information risk policy and risk assessment
- appoint the Information Asset Owners (IAOs)

The school will identify Information Asset Owners (IAOs) for the various types of data being held (eg pupil / student information / staff information / assessment data etc).

The IAOs will manage and address risks to the information and will understand :

- what information is held and for what purpose
- how information has been amended or added to over time
- who has access to protected data and why

Everyone in the school has the responsibility of handling protected or sensitive data in a safe and secure manner.

Governors are required to comply fully with this policy in the event that they have access to personal data, when engaged in their role as a Governor.

Registration

The school is registered as a Data Controller on the Data Protection Register held by the Information Commissioner.

Information to Parents / Carers – the “Fair Processing Notice”

Under the “Fair Processing” requirements in the Data Protection Act, the school will inform parents / carers of all pupils / students of the data they hold on the pupils / students, the purposes for which the data is held and the third parties (eg LA, DCSF, QCA, Connexions etc) to whom it may be passed. This fair processing notice will be passed to parents / carers through newsletters and website access, reports or a specific letter / communication). Parents / carers of young people who are new to the school will be provided with the fair processing notice through an induction pack.

Training & awareness

All staff will receive data handling awareness / data protection training and will be made aware of their responsibilities, as described in this policy through:

- Induction training for new staff
- Staff meetings / briefings / Inset
- Day to day support and guidance from Information Asset Owners



Risk Assessments

Information risk assessments will be carried out by Information Asset Owners to establish the security measures already in place and whether they are the most appropriate and cost effective.

The risk assessment will involve:

- Recognising the risks that are present
- Judging the level of the risks (both the likelihood and consequences)
- Prioritising the risks

Becta recommends the use of the following table in judging the level of risk:

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Frequent
PROTECT (Impact Level 1)	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
PROTECT (Impact Level 2)	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
RESTRICTED (Impact Level 3)	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High

Risk assessments are an ongoing process and should result in the completion of an Information Risk Actions Form (example below):

Risk ID	Information Asset affected	Information Asset Owner	Protective Marking (Impact Level)	Likelihood	Overall risk level (low, medium, high)	Action(s) to minimise risk

Impact Levels and protective marking

Following recent incidents involving loss of data, the Government has published *HMG Security Policy Framework* [<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/spf>], which recommends that the Government Protective Marking Scheme is used to indicate the sensitivity of data.

The scheme is made up of five markings, which in descending order of sensitivity are: TOP SECRET, SECRET, CONFIDENTIAL, RESTRICTED and PROTECT. The Protective Marking Scheme is mapped to Impact Levels as follows:

Government Protective Marking Scheme label	Impact Level (IL)
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED	0
PROTECT	1 or 2
RESTRICTED	3
CONFIDENTIAL	4



HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL	5
TOP SECRET	6

Most learner or staff personal data that is used within educational institutions will come under the PROTECT classification. However some, eg the home address of a child (or vulnerable adult) at risk will be marked as RESTRICT.

The school will ensure that all school staff, contractors working for it, and delivery partners, comply with restrictions applying to the access to, handling and storage of data classified as Protect, Restricted or higher. Unmarked material is considered 'unclassified'. The term 'UNCLASSIFIED' or 'NON' or 'NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED' may be used to indicate positively that a protective marking is not needed.

All documents (manual or digital) that contain protected or restricted data will be labelled clearly with the Impact Level shown in the header and the Release and Destruction classification in the footer.

Users must be aware that when data is aggregated the subsequent impact level may be higher than the individual impact levels of the original data. Combining more and more individual data elements together in a report or data view increases the impact of a breach. A breach that puts a learner at serious risk of harm will have a higher impact than a risk that puts a learner at low risk of harm. Breaches that may lose any party lots of money have a higher impact than losses of a few pounds. Long-term significant damage to anyone's reputation has a higher impact than damage that might cause short-term embarrassment.

Release and destruction markings should be shown in the footer eg. "Securely delete or shred this information when you have finished using it".

Secure Storage of and access to data

The school will ensure that ICT systems are set up so that the existence of protected files is hidden from unauthorised users and that users will be assigned a clearance that will determine which files are accessible to them. Access to protected data will be controlled according to the role of the user. Members of staff will not, as a matter of course, be granted access to the whole management information system.

All users will be given secure user names and strong passwords which must be changed annually. User names and passwords must never be shared.

Personal data may only be accessed on machines that are securely password protected. Any device that can be used to access data must be locked if left (even for very short periods) and set to auto lock if not used for five minutes.

All storage media must be stored in an appropriately secure and safe environment that avoids physical risk, loss or electronic degradation.

Personal data can only be stored on school equipment (this includes computers and portable storage media). Private equipment (ie owned by the users) must not be used for the storage of personal data.

When personal data is stored on any portable computer system, USB stick or any other removable media:

- the data must be encrypted and password protected and
- the device must be password protected



- the device must offer approved virus and malware checking software
- the data must be securely deleted from the device, in line with school policy (below) once it has been transferred or its use is complete

The school has clear policy and procedures for the automatic backing up, accessing and restoring all data held on school systems, including off-site backups.

All paper based Protected and Restricted (or higher) material must be held in lockable storage.

The school recognises that under Section 7 of the Data Protection Act, data subjects have a number of rights in connection with their personal data, the main one being the right of access. Procedures are in place to deal with Subject Access Requests ie. a written request to see all or a part of the personal data held by the data controller in connection with the data subject. Data subjects have the right to know: if the data controller holds personal data about them; a description of that data; the purpose for which the data is processed; the sources of that data; to whom the data may be disclosed; and a copy of all the personal data that is held about them. Under certain circumstances the data subject can also exercise rights in connection with the rectification; blocking; erasure and destruction of data.

Secure transfer of data and access out of school

The school recognises that personal data may be accessed by users out of school, or transferred to the LA or other agencies. In these circumstances:

- Users may not remove or copy sensitive or personal data from the school or authorised premises without permission and unless the media is encrypted and password protected and is transported securely for storage in a secure location.
- Users must take particular care that computers or removable devices which contain personal data must not be accessed by other users (eg family members) when out of school.
- When sensitive or personal data is required by an authorised user from outside the organisation's premises (for example, by a member of staff to work from their home), they should preferably have secure remote access to the management information system or learning platform
- If secure remote access is not possible, users must only remove or copy personal or sensitive data from the organisation or authorised premises if the storage media, portable or mobile device is encrypted and is transported securely for storage in a secure location
- Users must protect all portable and mobile devices, including media, used to store and transmit personal information using approved encryption software.
- Particular care should be taken if data is taken or transferred to another country, particularly outside Europe, and advice should be taken from the local authority in this event.

Disposal of data

The school will comply with the requirements for the safe destruction of personal data when it is no longer required.

The disposal of protected data, in either paper or electronic form, must be conducted in a way that makes reconstruction highly unlikely. Electronic files must be securely overwritten, in accordance with government guidance, and other media must be shredded, incinerated or otherwise disintegrated for data.



Use of technologies and Protective Marking
 The following (from Becta) provides a useful guide:

	The information	The technology	Notes on Protect Markings (Impact Level)
School life and events	School terms, holidays, training days, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, events, displays of pupils work, lunchtime menus, extended services, parent consultation events	Common practice is to use publically accessible technology such as school websites or portal, emailed newsletters, subscription text services	Most of this information will fall into the NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED (Impact Level 0) category.
Learning and achievement	Individual learner's academic, social and behavioural achievements, progress with learning, learning behaviour, how parents can support their child's learning, assessments, attainment, attendance, individual and personalised curriculum and educational needs.	Typically schools will make information available by parents logging on to a system that provides them with appropriately secure access, such as a Learning Platform or portal, or by communication to a personal device or email account belonging to the parent.	Most of this information will fall into the PROTECT (Impact Level 2) category. There may be learners whose personal data requires a RESTRICTED marking (Impact Level 3) or higher. For example, the home address of a child at risk. In this case, the school may decide not to make this learners record available in this way.
Messages and alerts	Attendance, behavioural, achievement, sickness, school closure, transport arrangements, and other information that it may be important to inform or contact a parent about as soon as possible. This may be particularly important when it is necessary to contact a parent concerning information that may be considered too sensitive to make	Email and text messaging are commonly used by schools to contact and keep parents informed. Where parents are frequently accessing information online then systems e.g. Learning Platforms or portals, might be used to alert parents to issues via "dashboards" of information, or be used to provide further detail and context.	Most of this information will fall into the PROTECT (Impact Level 1) category. However, since it is not practical to encrypt email or text messages to parents, schools should not send detailed personally identifiable information. General, anonymous alerts about schools closures or transport arrangements would fall into the NOT PROTECTIVELY



	available using other online means.		MARKED (Impact Level 0) category.
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End of policy.