

West Pelton Primary School



Record keeping and retention policy

Approved by: Chair of
Governing Body

Date: 7/3/19

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by: 7/3/21

Purpose of this Policy

The school needs to create and maintain accurate records in order for it to function. The policy for managing records at West Pelton Primary School has been drawn up in conformity with legislation, regulations affecting schools and best practice as publicised by the Records Management Society of Great Britain.

This policy sets out guidelines for recording, managing, storing and disposing of data, whether they are held on paper or electronically in order to assist staff, and the School, to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FIA). It should be read and used in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Members of staff are expected to manage their current record keeping systems using the Record Keeping and Retention Policy and to take account of the different kinds of retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems.

Benefits of the Record Retention Policy

There are a number of benefits which arise from the use of a complete Retention Policy:

- Managing records against the Retention Policy is deemed to be “normal processing” under the Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Provided members of staff are managing record series using the Retention Policy they cannot be found guilty of unauthorised tampering with files once a freedom of information request or a data subject access request has been made.
- Members of staff can be confident about destroying information at the appropriate time
- Information which is subject to Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation will be available when required.
- The school is not maintaining and storing information unnecessarily. It is important that all staff bear in mind, when creating documents and records of any sort (and particularly email), that at some point in the future those documents and records could be disclosed - whether as a result of litigation or investigation, or because of a subject access request under the DPA. The watchwords of record-keeping are therefore accuracy, clarity, professionalism and objectivity.

Current Pupils

Pupil Records

A file is kept on each pupil in the admin office. The file holds the home / school agreement, data collection form and other relevant information about that pupil (including the medical questionnaire that the parents completed when their child joined the school, and records of all treatment and immunisations that a pupil receives during his or her time at the school, including records of all accidents and injuries to pupils). The medical record contains any significant known drug reactions, major allergies and notable medical conditions. This information is available to staff likely to administer medication or treatment. The Catering Manager (Taylor Shaw) holds details of pupils with food allergies. It will also include information from previous schools.

The information held on the school's information management system (SIMS) covers: the pupil's name, address, class, emergency contact details, academic performance, school reports and daily attendance. Confidentiality of personal information is protected in accordance with the schools Data Protection Policy

Pupils with Special Educational, Welfare or Medical Needs

The names of pupils with special educational, welfare or medical needs are recorded and any special provision to be made for individual pupils are made available to those staff with a need to know that information.

Medical Records

Any confidential medical report is kept securely in the child's SEN file in the admin office.

All students who have a more serious level of medical need (e.g. diabetes, anaphylaxis) have an individual Health Care Plan (HCP) which is put together by the parents/guardian with the GP's/consultant's instructions for care within school should the event arise. The HCPs are then checked by the SENCO and placed in the pupil's individual file. Teachers who have contact with these students can view pupils information with serious health issues. These students have a medical alert flag along with other pupils with less serious health matters.

The SENCO will disclose the names of current pupils with medical conditions, or social information of a sensitive nature that may be of relevance to staff in their dealings with pupils, for example, when arranging trips and visits.

Access by Staff

Staff can access pupil medical records by requesting permission from either the Head teacher or School admin officer. The record requested would then be shared with the staff member, where appropriate, in the school office.

Data Protection Policy

Data about pupils and their parents will be collected periodically and stored and processed in order to allow for the efficient operation of the school.

Parents are invited to agree to the school using photographs of their child and information relating to his or her achievements for promotional purposes, which may be published, either in paper format or social media, for eg. on Facebook, Twitter or on the school web site.

Access by Parents and Pupils

The schools Data Protection Policy describes its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act, including parents' rights and the rights to have access to their personal data. It also covers the circumstances under which data would be disclosed to a third party.

Fair Processing Notice

West Pelton Primary school will comply with a Fair Processing Notice legally issued by a public body or other authority that is a data controller and is subject to the same legal constraints regarding the manner in which it handles data.

Staff Induction

All new teaching and office staff will be given training on accessing and managing school records (including the database), as part of their induction into the school's local procedures for marking work, report-writing and written and electronic communications with pupils and parents.

Retention of Records Security

As a guiding principle, the DPA requires that personal data is only retained for as long as necessary - that is, necessary for the specific lawful purpose (or purposes) it was acquired. Any information which is held is to be kept in accordance with the schools Online Safety Policy.

Retention Periods

One consideration in whether it is necessary or desirable to keep records is possible future litigation. Ideally, therefore, records would not be disposed of until the limitation period for bringing a claim has passed. For most contracts that will mean 6 years from any breach but the date to start counting from is the last day of the period under contract.

In some cases the prompt may be the end of a calendar year, so for the purpose of this policy a contingency has generally been built in (e.g. 7 years where the statutory limitation is 6 years). **For this reason, we keep all records of past pupils until a pupil is 25 years old.** At that point, we securely destroy all disciplinary, medical and financial records.

Limitation periods may be dis-applied altogether by courts in the case of certain crimes or associated breaches of care (e.g. historic abuse), whether a charge is brought by the police or a school is sued under a private claim. It is not always possible to try a case where the evidence is inadequate, including due to a lack of corporate memory (e.g. records and witnesses): but generally the courts and police will expect to see a record, and inferences may be drawn otherwise.

In many cases these records will comprise personal or sensitive personal data (e.g. health or criminal allegations): in which case, even justifiable reasons to keep records for many years will need to be weighed against personal rights. Historical high-profile cases in the field of child protection probably make a cautious approach to record retention advisable and, from a DPA perspective, easier for the School to justify retention for long periods. But the longer data is retained, and the more sensitive material is kept on file, the greater – and potentially more serious – the risk of security breach.

The table at the end of this policy provides guidance on retention periods for different records held by school.

Unless there is a specific statutory obligation to hold or destroy records, the retention periods are not prescriptive limits. Retention periods may be shorter or longer than the suggested document retention period, according to context. If in doubt, advice should be sought through the schools Data Protection Officer.

Disposal of Documents

When information is no longer required, it can be disposed of. For confidential, sensitive or personal information to be considered securely disposed of, it must be in a condition where it cannot either be read or reconstructed. Skips and 'regular' waste disposal are not considered to be secure.

Paper records should be shredded using a cross-cutting shredder; CDs / DVDs / diskettes should be cut into pieces. Hard-copy images, Audio Visual recordings and hard disks should be dismantled and destroyed. Where third party disposal experts are used they should ideally be supervised but, in any event, under adequate contractual obligations to the school to process and dispose of the information securely. Whenever records are destroyed, staff should record at least:

- File reference (or other unique identifier)
- File title (or brief description)
- No of files
- The name of the authorising officer
- Date of destruction

This can be kept in an Excel spreadsheet or other database format.

West Pelton Primary School – Table of Data/Document Retention Periods

1. Child Protection					
The retention and use of records relating to child protection matters concerning pupils, and child protection allegations against staff requires specific guidance in this schedule.					
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record		
Safeguarding Policies and procedures	No	Permanent	ARCHIVE	Transfer to archive for retention when new policy implemented.	
Child Protection files	Yes	DOB + 25 years but review sensitive case files every 5-6 years thereafter	SHRED	<p>Child Protection information must be copied and sent under separate cover to new school whilst the child is still under 18 (i.e. the information does not need to be sent to a university, for example). Where a child is removed from roll to be educated at home, the file should be copied to the Local Education Authority.</p> <p>Limitation periods can be dis-applied in criminal and civil abuse cases; to be weighed against rights under the DPA and our insurers' requirements.</p>	
Allegation of a child protection nature against a member of staff, including where the allegation is unfounded	Yes	Until the person's normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation if that's longer	SHRED	<p>ICO Employment Practices Code: Supplementary Guidance 2.13.1 (Discipline, grievance and dismissal)</p> <p>"Records of allegations about workers who have been investigated and found to be without substance should not normally be retained once an investigation has been completed. There are some exceptions to this where for its own protection the employer has to keep a limited record that an allegation was received and investigated, for example, where the allegation relates to abuse and the worker is employed to work with children or other vulnerable individuals".</p> <p>Summary record to be retained on confidential personnel file, and a copy given to the person concerned.</p>	

1. Child Protection (continued)

The retention and use of records relating to child protection matters concerning pupils, and child protection allegations against staff requires specific guidance in this schedule.

Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
DBS Disclosure Certificates	Yes	No longer than 6 months from decision on recruitment unless DBS specifically consulted	SHRED	Keep a record in the Single Central Register of the fact that checks were undertaken, with relevant reference details (Disclosure number, date, who checked it).

2. Governors & School Committee Meetings

Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
School Committee Minutes				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Version 	No	Permanent	ARCHIVE	Transfer to archive for permanent retention after 6 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection Copies 	No	Date of Meeting + 3 years	SHRED	Minutes may contain personal information so default method of destruction is to shred.
Agendas	No	Permanent	ARCHIVE	Transfer to archive for permanent retention after 6 years
Reports (including annual report)	No	Permanent	ARCHIVE	Transfer to archive for permanent retention after 6 years
AGM Parents' meeting papers	No	Date of meeting + 6 years	DESTROY	Destroy after retention period
Articles of Government	No	Permanent – Maintained by HTO	Retain in school whilst school is open	Transfer to Archives when the school has closed
Trusts and Endowments	No	Permanent – Maintained by HTO	Retain in school whilst operationally required	Transfer to Archives
Action Plans	No	Date of action plan + 6 years	DESTROY	Although these could be destroyed after 3 years, linked to school finances (especially if the school has been through a difficult period) which have to be retained for a minimum of 6 years after the end of the financial year.
Policy documents	No	Expiry of policy + 6 years	DESTROY	Retained for inspection purposes and if policy is linked to past decision-making process. Version control important.

Complaints files	Yes	Date of resolution of complaint + 6 years	DESTROY	Review for further retention before destruction in the case of contentious disputes. Destroy routine complaints. Complaints alleging possible harm to a pupil by a member of staff are covered in 1 above.
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3. SLT / Management				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Minutes of the Senior Leadership Team and other internal administrative bodies	Yes	Date of meeting +5 years	SHRED	May contain personal information.
Records created by Head, Deputy Head and other members of staff with administrative responsibilities (except child protection records which are dealt with in section 1 above).	Yes	Closure of file +6 years	SHRED	May contain personal information.
Correspondence created by Head, Deputy Head and other members of staff with administrative responsibilities	No	Date of correspondence +3 years	SHRED	May contain personal information.
Staff Professional Development Plans	Yes	Closure + 6 years	SHRED	May contain personal information.
School Strategic Development Plans	No	Closure + 6 years	DESTROY	Review before destruction for relevance to any current actions/decisions.

4. Pupils				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Admission Registers (including application forms, assessments and records of decisions)	Yes	Date of pupil leaving school + 7 years	SHRED	
Attendance registers	Yes	Date of register + 7 years	SHRED	If these records are retained electronically any back up copies should be destroyed at the same time
Pupil files	Yes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary 		Retain for the time which the pupil remains at the Primary school	Transfer to the senior school (or other primary/transferring school) when the child leaves the school.	
Special Educational Needs files, reviews and Individual Education Plans	Yes	DOB of the pupil + 25 years	SHRED	In the case of exclusion it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service
Letters authorising absence	No	Date of absence + 2 years	DESTROY	

4. Pupils (continued)				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Pupil Medical Records	Yes	DOB of the pupil + 25 years	SHRED	
Any other records created in the course of contact with pupils	Yes/No	Current year + 3 years	REVIEW/ SHED	Review at the end of 3 years and either allocate a further retention period or destroy.
Statement maintained under The Education Act 1996 - Section 324	Yes	DOB + 30 years	SHRED	Unless legal action is pending, in which case retain.
Proposed statement or amended statement	Yes	DOB + 30 years	SHRED	Unless legal action is pending, in which case retain.
Advice and information to parents regarding educational needs	Yes	Closure + 12 years	SHRED	Unless legal action is pending, in which case retain.
Accessibility Strategy	Yes	Closure + 12 years	SHRED	Unless legal action is pending, in which case retain.
Children SEN Files	Yes	DOB + 35 years	SHRED	Unless legal action is pending, in which case retain.

5. Curriculum				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Curriculum development	No	Current year + 7 years	DESTROY	
Curriculum returns	No	Current year + 3 years	DESTROY	
School syllabus	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY	Review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or destroy.
Schemes of work	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY	Review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or destroy.
Class record books	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY	Review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or destroy.
Mark Books	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY	Review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or destroy.
Pupils' work	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY	Review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or destroy.
SATS records	Yes	Current year + 7 years	SHRED	
Trip Records	Yes	Date of Trip + 2 years	SHRED	Also, see Health and safety with regard to risk assessments. Records should be retained for longer if an incident occurs.

6. Staff Records				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Contracts of employment	Yes	End of contract + 7 years	SHRED	
Timesheets, sick pay	Yes	Current year + 6 years	SHRED	
Staff Personal files	Yes	Termination + 7 years	SHRED	Including leave and training records.
Interview notes and recruitment records	Yes	Date of interview + 3 years	SHRED	But see separate note on retention of DBS certificates. Notes on unsuccessful candidates can be destroyed after 6 months.
Pre-employment vetting information (including unsuccessful DBS checks)	Yes	Date of check + 6 months	SHRED	To be done by the designated member of staff. This information should be placed on the personnel file if the applicant is successful and managed according to this policy.
Pension or other benefit schedule	Yes	Permanent maintained by HTO	- ARCHIVE	At HTO.
Disciplinary proceedings for all matters except those relating to child protection issues (see 1 above):	Yes			
• Informal warning		Date of warning + 6 months	SHRED	If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file.
• written warning – level one or two		Date of warning + 12 months	SHRED	If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file.
• final warning		Date of warning + 18 months	SHRED	If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file.
• case not found (except child protection allegations – see section 1)		Immediately at the conclusion of the case	SHRED	
Records relating to accident/injury at work	Yes	Date of incident + 5 years	SHRED	Review at the end of this period. In the case of serious accidents a further retention period will need to be applied.

6. Staff Records (continued)

Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Annual appraisal/ assessment records	No	Duration of employment + 7 Years	SHRED	
Salary cards / overtime records etc	Yes	Last date of employment + 6 Years	SHRED	The information should be transferred to the Harpur Trust payroll dept at the appropriate time who will maintain the master record
Maternity pay records	Yes	Current year +7 years	SHRED	
Employees' health records	Yes	End of employment + 7 years	SHRED	
Records held under Retirement Benefits Schemes (Information Powers) Regulations 1995	Yes	Last payment + 6 years	SHRED	

7. Health and Safety				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Accessibility Plans	No	Current year + 6 years	DESTROY	
Accident Reporting	Yes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults – Accident Book 	Yes	Last entry in the accident book + 4 years	SHRED	Latent injuries can take years to manifest and the limitation period for claims reflects this: so keep a note of all procedures as they were, and keep a record that they were followed. Review each case before destruction, especially if a claim is live.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children 	Yes	DOB + 25 years	SHRED	A child may make a claim for negligence for 7 years from their 18th birthday. To ensure that all records are kept until the pupil reaches the age of 25 this retention period has been applied.
COSHH	No	Current year + 10 years	DESTROY	Review and where appropriate an additional retention period may be allocated.
Policy Statements	No	Date of expiry + 3 years	DESTROY	Version control is important.
Risk Assessments	No	7 years from Completion of project incident, event or activity	DESTROY	Retain if risk assessment relates to a visit during which an incident occurred and a claim is ongoing. Review if an incident occurred but there was no claim. Risk assessments for trips can be destroyed 3 years after the trip if no incidents occurred.
Process of monitoring of areas where employees and persons are likely to have come in contact with asbestos		Last action + 40 years	DESTROY	Records maintained by Estates and Facilities Manager
Process of monitoring of areas where employees and persons are likely to have come in contact with radiation		Last action + 50 years	DESTROY	Records maintained by Estates and Facilities Manager / Deputy Bursar
Fire Precautions log books		Current year + 6 years	DESTROY	

8. Administrative				
Basic file description	Data Protection Issues	Retention Period	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record	
Employer's Liability certificate	No	Permanent	ARCHIVE	Retain for 40 years after school has closed.
Inventories of equipment and furniture	No	Disposal of last item +6 years or date superseded + 6 years	DESTROY	
School brochure/prospectus	No	Current year + 3 years	ARCHIVE	Transfer to Archives
Circulars (staff/parents/pupils)	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY/ ARCHIVE	Review for any items which may be usefully archived.
Newsletters etc	No	Current year + 1 year	DESTROY/ ARCHIVE	Review for any items which may be usefully archived.
Visitors' book		Current year + 2 years	DESTROY/ ARCHIVE	Review for any items which may be usefully archived.

