



## 4.0 Record Retention and Deletion Policy

Firfield Primary School

Version 2.1

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<b>Job Role</b>	School Business Manager
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<b>Version produced Spring 2023</b>	<p>Introductory information at 4.2 about IICSA removed as the Inquiry closed in Oct 2022.</p> <p>New section inserted at 4.8 relating to child sexual abuse and 4.9 regarding staff records.</p> <p>Recommendations from the Inquiry have been incorporated into the tables throughout in section 4.11 (subsections 1 , 6, 7, 8, 18, 10 and 24)- please see <b>green</b> text.</p> <p>Some further minor amends and additions throughout retention table- please see <b>green</b> text.</p>

This document will be reviewed annually and sooner when significant changes are made to the law

Guidance from the Department for Education about school policies can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-policies-for-schools-and-academy-trusts/statutory-policies-for-schools-and-academy-trusts>

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## 4.1 Introduction

This record retention and deletion policy contains recommended retention periods for the different record series created and maintained by Firfield Primary School. The schedule refers to all information whether it is held in hard copy or electronic format including cloud and web based or on third party platforms.

Some of the retention periods are governed by statute. Others are guidelines, following best practice, employed by schools throughout the United Kingdom. Every effort has been made to ensure that these retention periods are compliant with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), Article 8, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and the Code of Practice on Records Management (under Section 46 of the FOI).

Managing records series using these retention guidelines will be deemed to be 'normal processing' under the terms of the legislation noted above. If those record series are to be kept for longer or shorter periods than the time scales held in this document, the reasons for any deviation must be recorded.

## 4.2 Purpose

This policy, for managing records at Firfield Primary School has been drawn up in conformity with legislation, regulations affecting schools and best practice as promoted by the Information and Records Management Society of Great Britain.

This policy sets out guidelines for recording, managing, storing and the disposal of data, whether they are held on paper or electronically (including online), in order to assist staff, and the school, to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) including as adopted by the United Kingdom as a result of its exit from the European Union ("UK GDPR"), Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It should be read and used in conjunction with all of our related policies.

It is expected that;

- All information held by schools needs to be justifiable, by reference, to its purpose.
- Schools must be transparent and accountable as to what data they hold.
- Schools must understand and explain the reasons why they hold data.
- Schools must be able to respond to Subject Access Requests.
- Schools must be able to amend, delete or transfer data promptly upon any justified request.
- Schools must be able to audit how personal data was collected and when and why.
- Schools must hold sensitive data securely, accessed only by those with reason to view it and possess a policy as to why it is needed.
- Schools must have retention policies that reflect the importance of records relating to child sexual abuse to victims and survivors, and that they may take decades to seek access to such records.

## 4.3 Disposal of Data

Article 5(e) of the GDPR states that personal data should be 'kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes... in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of the data subject ('storage limitation')'.

Not all data needs to be destroyed. The school should determine whether records are to be selected for permanent preservation, or for destruction or to be transferred into a different format.

When information is no longer required, it should 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, 'regular' waste disposal and ribbon shredders are not secure.

Paper records should be cross-shredded, incinerated, or pulped.

CDs/DVDs/discs should be cut into pieces. Hard copy images, AV recordings and hard disks should be dismantled and destroyed. Where third party disposal companies are employed, a certificate of destruction must be obtained. Staff working for external provider should have been trained in the handling and destruction of confidential data.

If the school receives a request for records that have not yet been destroyed, even if they should have been destroyed, that record must still be made available to the requestor.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the school to maintain a list of all records that have been destroyed and who authorised their destruction. This record should be retained for 15 years. The appropriate members of staff (Data Lead) should record:

- File reference and/or unique identifier
- File title or brief description of contents
- Number of files
- Name of the authorising officer

An example is contained in Annex A.

## 4.4 Transfer of Records to Archives

A school archive is different from official school records. A school archive preserves data where there is a legitimate interest in holding that information e.g. to commemorate a significant event in the life of the school. It can take on many characteristics and serve many purposes--but it neither compliments nor replaces the official record-keeping systems.

Where records have been identified as being worthy of permanent preservation, due to their historical or social value, they may be retained on site or offered to the Local Authority Record Office (see local guidance [Find an archive | The National Archives](#)).

Where the school decides to maintain an onsite archive, the school should consult with their Data Protection Officer to implement the following steps:

- Establish what information needs to be archived
- Select someone to serve as the archivist. This may be an additional function within an established role, to work alongside both the Data Protection Officer and Data Lead officer (where applicable).
- Select a physical location to house the collection, and determine what equipment and supplies are needed to accomplish the project for the first year and on a continuing basis e.g. safe storage, shelving
- Remember that archives can include electronic data e.g. schools may have digital photographs which are no longer displayed on their website or social media pages. Consider not only holding and cataloguing this data in a secure driver, but making potential requestors aware of its presence, through a dedicated website.

- Come to an agreement with the Local Authority Record Office, in order for the collected materials could be turned over if the school archives should be discontinued.

## 4.5 Transfer of Records to other Media

Where lengthy retention periods have been allocated to records, schools should consider converting paper records to other media (e.g. digital or virtual, 'cloud' based). The lifespan of the media, and the ability to migrate data, should be documented in a Digital Continuity Policy. A scanning risk assessment is recommended to ensure the procedure is adequate. Further information about digital continuity can be found on the [National Archives website](#) who also provide guidance on assessing and managing [digital continuity risks](#) and a [digital continuity checklist](#). Schools that believe that they need to retain digital records over a long period on devices, software systems or in formats that may become inaccessible due to developments in technology should seek further advice from the Data Protection Officer and their IT support staff.

## 4.6 Transfer of Records to other Settings & 'Last Known School'

When a child leaves the school, all pupil records, including safeguarding/child protection records should be transferred in a secure manner, to the child's new school. If the records contain sensitive information (e.g. Child Protection records), proof of receipt must be obtained and logged by the school's Data Lead. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#) (KCSiE) states that "where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file." All copies of data held by the school that the child has departed should then be deleted or retained in line with the retention schedule below, including all paper records and data stored electronically. Generally, a record should be kept for tracking and auditing purposes only.

Schools may wish to retain some minimal 'skeleton' data about pupils' admission, departure and next destination (where known) in order to respond to any requests for information about these pupils and for the school's historical archive. If schools intend to create and maintain these records, this should be noted on the retention policy. In some instances, schools may have a legitimate interest in retaining a copy of more detailed pupil records for a longer time period. If the school does retain pupil records, then they should be prepared to justify this retention and will need to consider if a Data Protection Impact Assessment should be completed for any extended retention of records once a pupil has left the school. See section 17.5 below.

Responsibility for maintaining the pupil record passes to the 'last known school'.

The school is the final or last known school if:

- secondary phase and the pupil left at 16 years old or for post-16 or independent education, or;
- at any point the pupil left for elective home education, they are missing from education, or have left the UK, or have died.

Schools should note that tertiary colleges are not included in the definition above. This means that for pupils that leave your setting for a tertiary college, the college may not want the pupil file to be forwarded to them. If this applies to your school, you should discuss with the college what pupil records they wish to receive. They must receive the child protection file, as per the requirements of KCSiE above.

The Pupil Record should be retained as a whole for 25 years from the date of birth of the pupil, after which time, if no longer required, it can be deleted or destroyed.

SEN and other support service records can be retained for a longer period of 31 years to enable defence in a “failure to provide a sufficient education” case.

If a school wishes to retain data for analysis or statistical purposes, it should be done in an anonymised fashion.

## 4.7 Records relating to Child Sexual Abuse

Records relating to child sexual abuse should be retained for 75 years, in line with the recommendations arising from the outcome of the [Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse \(IICSA\)](#). The Inquiry stated that these records should be retained for such a long period in recognition of the importance of these records to victims, but that they should be regularly reviewed during that extended retention period. Where records are held digitally, schools will particularly need to consider digital continuity if they hold records for staff or governors where there are relevant records or are the ‘last known school’ responsible for this long retention period for any relevant pupil records.

Where there is evidence, or allegations of child sexual abuse, then it will almost certainly be appropriate to retain the entire pupil, staff or other record as a whole, not just the parts of the record that pertain to the abuse. Staff whose duties include reviewing or digitising records should be trained to understand the importance of any evidence or allegations of child sexual abuse that they may happen to uncover, whether that was what they were looking for and the importance of them bringing these to the attention of school leadership and/or preserving these records.

The Inquiry report also recommends that the UK government directs the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) to introduce a Code of Practice on retention of and access to records known to relate to child sexual abuse. This Policy will be updated in line with any Code of Practice from the ICO. The report states that such a code should set out that institutions should have:

- retention policies that reflect the importance of such records to victims and survivors, and that they may take decades to seek to access such records;
- clear and accessible procedures for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse to access such records;
- policies, procedures and training for staff responding to requests to ensure that they recognise the long-term impact of child sexual abuse and engage with the applicant with empathy.

## 4.8 Retention of Records relating to Staff

As stated above regarding the long-term retention of minimal pupil records, schools may wish to retain very basic ‘skeleton’ records about staff that have worked in the school beyond the normal retention of the whole personnel/HR file. This information may include the staff name, role, contract start and end dates. This may be useful for schools who may need to respond to requests for information from/regarding staff, in the event of it being needed for litigation or other legal purpose and as part of their historical archive. If schools intend to create and maintain these records, this should be noted on the retention policy (at section 7.11 below)

## 4.9 Responsibility and Monitoring

The Head Teacher holds primary and day to day responsibility, for implementing this policy. The Data Protection Officer, in conjunction with the school, is responsible for monitoring its use and effectiveness and resolving any queries with regards the interpretation of the policy.

All permissions to access data are granted by the Head Teacher and recorded in the member of staff’s personnel file.

All teaching and office staff are given training and guidance on accessing and managing school records, to ensure compliance with the time scales laid out under the retention schedule. All members of staff, with access to records, are expected to;

- Manage their current record keeping systems using the Retention Policy.
- Only dispose of records in accordance with the requirements outlined in this policy, if authorised to do so.
- Ensure that any proposed divergence from the records retention schedule and disposal policies is authorised and documented by the Head Teacher.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and is not intended to have a contractual effect. However, it does reflect the school's current practice, the requirements of current legislation and best practice and guidance. It may be amended by the school but any changes will be notified to employees within one month of the date on which the change is intended to take effect. The school may also vary any parts of the procedure, including time limits, as appropriate.

## 4.10 Outline Retention Schedule

Derbyshire County Council's GDPR for Schools service uses an adapted version of the IRMS pro forma retention schedule (Please see following). This offers a comprehensive and thorough review of all possible data that may be held by a school – the outline schedule, however, provides an initial overview of how the data retention policy can be applied to the records held by a school.

The full and most up to date Derbyshire County Council retention schedule can be accessed via: <https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/keeping-children-safe-in-education/safeguarding-policies-guidance-and-protocols/school-guidelines-on-records-retention-periods.docx>

