



Data Protection/Record Retention Policy

Introduction:

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff, parents and Board of Management of St. John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS. The purpose of the policy is to identify the records required to be retained by the school and to ensure confidentiality and manageable procedures in relation to access to such records by parents and stake holders.

School Ethos:

This school promotes openness and cooperation between staff, parents and pupils as a means towards providing the caring environment through which children can develop and grow to their full potential

Rationale for the Policy:

- A policy on data protection and record keeping is necessary to ensure that the school has proper procedures in place in relation to accountability and transparency
- It is good practice to record pupil progress so as to identify learning needs
- A policy must be put in place to ensure a school complies with legislation such as;
 - (i) Education Act, Section 9 g requiring a school to provide access to records to students over 18 years and parents/guardians
 - (ii) Education Welfare Act – requiring a school to report attendance and transfer of pupils

Aims/Objectives:

- To ensure the school complies with legislative requirements
- To clarify the types of records maintained and the procedures relating to making them available to the relevant bodies
- To put in place a proper recording and reporting framework on the educational progress of pupils
- To establish clear guidelines on making these records available to parents and pupils who are over 18 years
- To stipulate the length of time records and reports will be retained

Guidelines:

The Principal assumes the function of Data Controller and supervises the application of the Data Protection Act within the school. The data under the control of the Principal comes under the following headings.

1. Personal Data:

This data relates to personal details of the students such as name, address, date of birth, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, religious belief, medical details, dietary information, PPSN, parents/guardians contact details. These records are kept a locked filing cabinet in the administration office.

2. Student Records:

Student records are held by each class teacher and a master copy is held in the principal's office. Student records may contain:-

- Personal details of the student
- Medical sensitive data
- School report cards
- Psychological Assessments (if any)
- Standardised Test Results
- Attendance Records
- Screening Test such as MIST and NRIT
- Data Protection
- Teacher – designed tests. Each class teacher designs his/her own test template
- Diagnostic Tests Reports
- Individual Education Plans
- Learning Support/Resource Data such as records of permissions/refusals to allow children access to LS/RT services in the school
- Portfolios of student work e.g. Art
- Details of behavioral incidents or accidents

These records are kept in a locked filing cabinet, by the principal.

3. Staff Data:

This data relates to the personal and professional details of all staff such as name, address, date of birth, contact details, payroll number, pension details, attendance records, qualifications, school records, sick leave, CPD, curriculum vitae, school returns, classes taught, seniority, Statutory declarations/ Garda vetting records, medical certificates.

These records are kept locked in a filing cabinet, by the principal.

4. Administrative Data:

- Attendance Reports, Roll Book, Registers
- Accident Report Book
- Administration of Medicines Indemnity Form
- Policies
- HSE files
- BOM files
- Accounts

These records are kept in a locked filing cabinet, by the principal.

Access to Records:

The following will have access where relevant and appropriate to the data listed above;

- Parents/Guardians
- Past Pupils over 18 years of age
- Health Service Executive
- Designated School Personnel
- Department of Education and Skills
- First and Second Level schools, where relevant, and with written permission from parents or guardians)

A parental authorisation form must be completed by parents in the event of data being transferred to outside agencies such as health professionals etc. Outside agencies requesting access to records must do so, in writing, giving seven days notice. Parents/Guardians must, also, make such a request in writing. In certain circumstances email requests will be sufficient.

The right to erasure or rectification is available to change any mistakes or inaccuracies by proper authorization through the same procedures.

The Annual School Report format and its communication to parents are outlined clearly in our schools Pupil Profiling/Reporting on Pupils Policy. A standardised school report form is used which is issued by post in the last week in June.

Storage:

Records are kept for a minimum of 7 years. Standardised Test booklets are shredded after one year but the raw score, stens and percentiles are kept on record until past pupils reach 21years of age. These records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the school's storeroom.

A pupil profile and a selection of records are stored by each teacher in his/her individual classroom and passed on to the next teacher as the child moves to the next class. These assessment files are stored in locked filing cabinets in each class room.

As children pass to second level their personal records are stored in the school for a period of time (7 yrs minimum). All completed school roll books are stored and locked in the Principal's office along with pupil profiles. Access to these stored files is restricted to authorised personnel only. For computerised records, all Student Data Management Systems will be password protected.

All computer held records are backed up at least once a month and the Back up DVD is stored securely by the principal.

Criteria for measuring success of Policy:
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- Compliance with Data Protection Act and Statue of Limitations Act
- Easy access to records
- Framework in place for ease of compilation and reporting
- Manageable storage of records

Roles and Responsibilities:

The school staff, under the direction of the Principal will implement and monitor this policy. Individual teachers will design, administer and record all in-class testing. The Principal will ensure records are maintained and stored, particularly the records of students transferring to another school.

Implementation Date and subsequent reviews:

Implementation date: February 2012

1st Review November 2012

The policy was communicated to the whole school community via email notification and the school's website.