

Record Retention Policy



This policy has been adapted/adopted from the West Berkshire Record Retention Policy for school.

Headteacher	Sign & Date:	
Chair of Governing Board	Sign & Date:	

Review schedule (this policy will be reviewed annually)

Date	Description of any changes	Date approved by Governing Board

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1. Key Contacts

Key Contacts within the Local Authority

	Name	Address	Telephone contact	Email
SIA IT & Strategic Education Business	Thomas Ng	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	01635 503430	Thomas.Ng@westberks.gov.uk
Data Protection officer	James Gore	Council Offices Market St Newbury RG14 5LD	01635 519591	James.gore@westberks.gov.uk
Principal Education Welfare and Safeguarding Officer	Linda Curtis	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	01635 519788	Linda.curtis@westberks.gov.uk
Education Safeguarding Officer	Joan Ball	Council Offices Turnham's Green Park Pincents Lane Tilehurst Reading Berkshire RG31 4UH	01189 167770	joan.ball@westberks.gov.uk

2. Introduction

This policy has been adapted with permission from the model Policy of Derbyshire County Council.

These guidelines have been produced by West Berkshire Council to assist schools in the management of their records.

The guidelines outline the recommended retention periods for schools based on legislation and common practice.

It is the responsibility of schools to retain their records for the appropriate retention period, or to transfer their historical records.

The retention guidelines produced in this document are some of the key retention periods which need to be considered. For a comprehensive list of retention periods schools should consult the Schools Toolkit produced by the Information and Records

Management Society <https://irms.org.uk/page/SchoolsToolkit>

Explanatory Notes

The retention guidelines will outline a description of records, followed by the action to be taken (e.g. retain for 3 years). This will be based on an event/action which will trigger that retention action (e.g. date record created). The disposal action will either be the destruction of the records, or their transfer to another destination.

These guidelines may include references to records which are no longer routinely created as part of school business (e.g. log books). These have been included to assist schools who have a large backlog of historical records which require reviewing.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 LEA schools (including schools which are granted academy status) are regarded as public bodies and are subject to the Act. This requires that schools manage their records appropriately against agreed retention periods.

3. Glossary of Terms:

Business decision: if there is no law or regulation to say how long a record should be kept, we may base this decision on the administrative needs of the organisation.

Closure: when a record ceases to be 'current' – this can be when a set of minutes are formally agreed or when a Help Desk incident is formally closed. Many retention periods are triggered after the 'closure' of a record.

Common practice: if there is no law or regulation to say how long a record should be kept, we may base this decision on what similar organisations do.

Record: the recorded evidence about an activity.

Retention Action: the action regarding the retention of a record, triggered by a particular event (e.g. closure of a record).

4. Record Retention Guidance

Child Protection
 When children move between schools, school A should retain a copy of records until safe receipt is acknowledged by the receiving school. It is important that any copies are securely destroyed following confirmation of transfer.

Children in Care
 Children in care may have a number of changes in school. When they move between schools, it is imperative that their school file is securely sent to the receiving school in a timely manner. School A should always retain a copy of records until safe receipt is acknowledged by the receiving school. It is important that any copies are securely destroyed following confirmation of transfer.

Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Child Protection files (Primary Schools)	Retain for the duration of the	Date Pupil changes	Keeping Children Safe in Education

	pupils attendance at the school	school	(Department for Education)
Child Protection files (Child Missing from Education, Traveller, Roma, Gypsy, and therefore removed from the roll).	Retain for 25 years (as above) SECURE DISPOSAL (these records must be shredded)	Date removed from roll	“Safeguarding Children in Education” 2004 Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)
Child Protection files (child is removed from the roll and is elective home educated)	Retain for 25 years (as above) SECURE DISPOSAL (these records must be shredded)	Date removed from roll	“Safeguarding Children in Education” 2004 Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)
Allegations of a child protection nature made against a member of staff (including unfounded allegations)	Retain until the normal retirement age for the member of staff or for 10 years (whichever is longer)	Date of meeting SECURE DISPOSAL (these records must be shredded)	Employment practice code: Supplementary Guidance (information Commissioners Office)
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention

Governors

Principal set of signed minutes	Retain at school for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of meeting	Common practice
Inspection copies of minutes	Retain for 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of meeting	Common practice
Agendas	No retention required	Conclusion of meeting	Common practice
Reports	Retain at school for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of report	Common Practice

Annual parents meeting papers	Retain at school for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of meeting	Common Practice
Instrument of government	Retain at school for the duration of its operation	Closure of school	Common Practice
Trusts and Endowments	Retain at school for the duration of its operation	End of operational use	Common Practice
Action plans	Retain for 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Expiration of action plans	Common Practice
Policy documents	Retain while policy is used operationally	Expiration of policy	Common Practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Records relating to complaints made to and investigated by the governing body or head teacher	Current year + 6 years. If negligence involved then: current year + 15 years If child protection or safeguarding issues are involved then: current year + 40 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Resolution of complaint	Common Practice
Annual reports required by central government	Retain at school for 10 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Education (Governors' annual Report) (Amendment regulations 2002)
School Management			
Log Books	Retain at school for 6 years	Date of last entry in log book	Common Practice

	SECURE DISPOSAL		
Minutes of Senior Management Team	Date of the meeting+ 3 years then review annually, or as required if not destroyed SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of meeting	Common Practice
Reports made by the Headteacher or the Management Team	Retain at school for 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of report	Common Practice
School Development Plans	Life of plan + 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Expiry of plan	Common Practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Successful school admissions applications	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of admission	School Admission Code Dec 2014
Unsuccessful school admission applications (where no appeal is made)	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	Start of school term	School Admission Code Dec 2014
Unsuccessful school admission applications (where an appeal is made)	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	Resolution of case	School Admissions Code Dec 2014
Proofs of address supplied by parents as part of the admissions process	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of admission	School Admissions Code Dec 2014
Pupil Records			
Register of Admissions <i>Schools may consider keeping the Admission Register permanently as</i>	Retain for 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Last entry in register.	School Admissions Code Dec 2014

<i>an archive record</i>			
Attendance register	Retain for 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Last entry in register	School attendance: Departmental advice October 2014
Pupil files (primary school)	Retain for duration of pupil's attendance at school	Date pupil changes school	Common practice
Special educational needs records relating to individual support provided by the schools (Primary)	Retain for duration of attendance at school	Transfer to secondary school	Common practice
Special educational needs records relating to individual support provided by the schools (Secondary)	Retain for 35 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Pupil's date of birth	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Letter authorising absence	Retain for 2 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of absence	Education Act 1996 s.7
Public examination results	Retain for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of examination	Common practice
Internal school examination results	Retain for 5 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of examination	Common practice
SEND files, reviews and EHCPs including advice and information issued by the school to parents regarding educational needs for individual pupils	Retain for 31 years. EHCP is valid until age 25 + 6 years retention period SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of birth	Special educational needs and disability act 2001
Accessibility Strategy	Retain for 12 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Expiry of strategy	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
Parental permission	No retention	Conclusion	Common practice

slips for school trips where there has not been a major incident	required SECURE DISPOSAL	of trip	
Parental permission slip for school trips Where there has been a major incident	Retain for 25 years from the date of birth of the pupil involved in the incident. SECURE DISPOSAL	Pupil's date of birth	The Limitations Act 1980
Records created by school to obtain approval to run an Educational Visit outside the classroom where there has not been a major incident	Retain for 14 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of visit	The Health and Safety at work Act 1974
Records created by school to obtain approval to run an Educational Visit outside the classroom where there has been a major incident	Retain for 21 years from the date of birth of the pupil involved in the incident SECURE DISPOSAL	Pupil's date of birth	The Limitations Act 1980
Walking Bus register	Retain for three years SECURE DISPOSAL	Last entry in register	Common practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention

Curriculum

Curriculum development	Retain for 6 years	End of calendar year that the record was created in	Common Practice
Curriculum returns	Retain for 3 years	End of calendar year that the record was created in	Common Practice
School syllabus	Retain for 1 year	Expiration of syllabus	Common Practice
Schemes of work	Retain for 1	End of the	Common practice

	year	Calendar year that the record was created in	
Timetable development	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the Calendar year that the record was created in	Common practice
Record of marks awarded	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the Calendar year that the record was created in	Common Practice
Records of homework set	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the Calendar year that the record was created in	Common Practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention

Personnel

Staff personnel files	Retain for 7 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of employment	Limitations Act 1980 (section 2)
Recruitment record for successful candidates including interview notes and copy evidence of entitlement to work in the UK	Retain and add to personnel file	Date successful candidate is in post	Common Practice
Interview notes for unsuccessful candidates	6months SECURE DISPOSAL	Date successful candidate is in post	Common practice
Pre-employment vetting of successful candidates for the purpose of preventing unsuitable people from working with children (e.g DBS checks).	Retain for 6 months SECURE DISPOSAL	Date information was checked	DBS guidelines
Pre-employment vetting of successful candidates,	Add copies of evidence to the personnel		Common practice

for the purposes of ensuring school staff are adequately qualified	file		
Pre-employment vetting of successful candidates, for the purposes of ensuring school staff are legally entitled to work in the UK	Add copies of evidence to the personnel file		Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
Written warning (level 1)	Retain for 6 months SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of warning	Common practice
Written warning (level 2)	Retain for 12 months SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of warning	Common practice
Final warning	Retain for 18 months SECURE DISPOSAL	Date of warning	Common practice
Warnings subsequently found to be based on an unfounded case (excluding child protection related warnings)	No retention required SECURE DISPOSAL	Date case to be found unfounded	Common Practice
Staff appraisal records	Retain for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Common practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention

Health and Safety

Accessibility Plans	Retain for 6 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Disability and Equality Act 2010
Accident/incident reporting (adults)	Retain for 3 years after the last entry in the Accident Book	3 years after the last entry in the Accident Book	Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR

	SECURE DISPOSAL		
Accident/incident reporting (children)	Retain for 3 years after the last entry in the Accident Book SECURE DISPOSAL	3 years after the last entry in the Accident Book	Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR
Records of monitoring areas where employees/pupils are likely to come into contact with asbestos	Retain for 40 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Last action on file	The control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations.
Records of monitoring areas where employee/pupils are likely to come into contact with radiation	Retain for 50 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Last action on file	The Ionising Radiations regulations 1985
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Fire log books	Retain for 3 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of calendar year	Common practice
Records of the administration of non-prescription medicines and remedies including painkillers, or very commonly prescribed drugs such as antibiotics or asthma inhalers	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	End of calendar year	Common practice
Records of the administration of any other medication, including: peg feeding; injections; treatments for serious conditions such as diabetes, ADHD or depression; records of reported incidents, or problems arising from administering medication	Retain for 21 years and 6 months from pupil's date of birth SECURE DISPOSAL	Pupil's date of birth	Common Practice

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Employer's Liability Certificate	Retain for 40 years (May be kept electronically) SECURE DISPOSAL	Closure of School. To be passed to LA if school closes	Common practice
Inventories of equipment/furniture	Retain for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of calendar year	Common practice
Circulars to parents/staff/pupils	Retain for 1 year STANDARD DISPOSAL	End of calendar year	Common practice
Newsletters produced by the school	Retain for 1 year STANDARD DISPOSAL	End of calendar year	Common practice
Visitor books	Retain for 6 years (in case of claims by parents or pupils about various actions) SECURE DISPOSAL	Last entry in visitor book	Common practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Finance			
Annual accounts	Retain at school for 6 years STANDARD DISPOSAL		Common practice
Invoices, receipts, and other financial records covered by financial regulations	Retain at school for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL		Standard financial regulations
Annual budget and supporting papers	Retain at school for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL		Common practice
Ordinary contracts	Retain at school for 6 years		The Limitations Act 1980

	SECURE DISPOSAL		
Contracts under seal	Retain at school for 12 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of contract	The Limitations Act 1980
Property			
Building plans	Retain whilst operational	End of operational use	Common practice
Burglary, theft and vandalism report forms	Retain for 6 years SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Common practice
Contractors' reports	These should be retained whilst the Building belongs to the school and should be passed on to any new owners if the building is leased or sold.		Common practice
Record description	Retention period	Trigger	Basis for retention
Local Authority			
Secondary transfer sheets	Retain for 2 years SECURE DISPOSAL	Year of transfer	Common practice
Attendance returns	Retain for 1 year SECURE DISPOSAL	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Common practice
Central Government			
Ofsted reports and papers	Retain whilst current SECURE DISPOSAL	Date new report issued	Common practice
Returns to central	Retain for 6	End of the	Common practice

government	years SECURE DISPOSAL	calendar year that the record was created in	
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Transferring of School Records Between Educational Provision

When a pupil ceases to be registered at a maintained school in England, the school is legally required to send a common transfer file (CTF) and educational record to the pupil's new school if it is in the UK. In addition, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) should make sure the pupil's child protection file and/or notes of concern are transferred to the new school or college.

Information relating to child protection should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. This means that these files should be stored separately, such as in separate envelopes, but can still be transferred at the same time providing they are clearly identified and addressed to the relevant person.

Parents can't prevent child protection records relating to their child being transferred to a new school.

Prior to transferring records contact should be made between schools/college to confirm the pupil is accepted and the date they will be on roll. A named contact should be identified so that, in particular, child protection records are sent from DSL to DSL.

Transferring records electronically

Providing records are suitably encrypted it is preferable to transfer electronic records.

- If the CTF is transferred through the DfE's school-to-school (S2S) system. The system is encrypted to help ensure that pupils' personal data is transferred securely.
- Child Protection databases such as CPOMS and MyConcern allow secure electronic transfer of files between schools who both use the same systems.

Transferring paper records

The school sending the records need to ensure an audit trail is kept evidencing the transfer of documents which may include:

- How the records have been transferred
- What measures were taken to protect pupils' personal data during transfer.
- Who delivered the files, on what date and at what time

- Who received the files (including a signature)

In cases where records are sent by post a receipt of delivery from the receiving school/courier company should be obtained.

When children move between schools, school A should retain a copy of records until safe receipt is acknowledged by the receiving school. It is important that any copies are securely destroyed following confirmation of transfer.

Policy Adopted by FGB May 2022