

Data Protection and Record-keeping Policy

Introduction:

This policy was formulated by Staff and Board of Management of Howth Road Mixed N.S. 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.

Rationale:

- 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;
 - Education Act **1998**, Section 9g requiring a school to provide access to records to students over 18/parents
 - Education Welfare Act **2000** – requiring a school to report school attendance and transfer of pupils.

Relationship to School Ethos:

Howth Road Mixed National School promotes openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils as a means towards providing the caring environment through which a child can develop and grow to his full potential.

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 past pupils who are over 18
- 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, contact details and parents' names. These are kept in the school office in a locked filing cabinet while a pupil is enrolled and in the strong room where a pupil is no longer enrolled.

2. Student Records:

Student records are held by each class teacher and a master copy is held in the pupil file in the office.

Student records may contain:

- Personal details of the student
- Medical sensitive data
- School report cards
- Psychological/Clinical/Occupational Therapy/Speech and Language Assessments
- 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 permission/refusal to access LS/RT services in the school,
- Portfolios of student work e.g. Art
- Details of behavioural incidents or accidents.

3. Staff Data

This data relates to personal and professional details of the Staff such as name, address, date of birth, contact details, payroll number, attendance records, qualifications, school records, sick leave, CPD, curriculum vitae, school returns, classes taught, seniority and supervision payments.

These details are stored in a staff file in the locked filing cabinet in the school office.

4. Administrative Data:

- Attendance Reports, Roll Book, Registers
- Accident Report Book
- Administration of Medicines Indemnity Form
- Policies
- HSE files
- Board of Management files
- Accounts
- CCTV footage

All footage is used for security purposes only and is only accessed at the request of the Board of Management. Footage is managed by authorised staff only.

Requests for access to footage must be related to a Board of Management member and only in regard to a security concern.

Footage is not to be used for any other purpose.

Access to Records:

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

- Parents/guardians
- Past pupils over 18
- Health Service Executive
- Designated school personnel
- Department of Education & Skills
- First and second-level schools (where relevant).
- An Garda Síochána

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 can make such a request either by phone, email or in writing. The right to erasure or rectification is available to change any mistakes or inaccuracies by proper authorisation through the same procedures.

The Annual School Report format and its communication to parents are in compliance with those set down by the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment). A standardised school report form is used which is issued in June.

Storage:

All records are stored in the school for a minimum of 7 years until the past pupil reaches the age of 21+4 years for due process of appeals. These records are stored in the strong room in a locked filing cabinet.

A pupil profile and selection of records are held by each teacher in his/her individual classroom and passed on to the next teacher as the child moves to the next class.

Teachers should store records in lockable areas when not in use.

All completed school roll books are stored in a similar location in addition to samples of children's work and pupil profiles. These are transferred to the strong room during school holidays.

Access to these stored files is restricted to authorised personnel only.

Computerised records, systems are password protected. Records are backed up an external hard drive system- one held on site and another held by a member of the Board of Management.

Success Criteria:

- Compliance with Data Protection Act and Statute 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 Data:

This new policy is effective from 26th January 2015.

All records held from before that date will continue to be maintained in the school.

Review/Ratification/Communication:

This policy was ratified on 26th January 2015.

The policy will be available on the school website and through the office.

It will be reviewed every 4 years subject to legislative changes and amended if necessary.

References:

- Solas (CPSMA) May-June 2001
- Education Act 1998
- Education Welfare Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 2003
- Freedom of Information Act