

ITASS Data Security Guidance

Records Management

“Records” in this context means **any evidence that the school keeps about its activities or any information required for it to carry out its activities.**

Records could be held **on paper, electronically, in photographs or any other multimedia.**

Under section 6 of the Lord Chancellor’s Code of Practice on the Management of Records under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

A school should have in place an overall policy statement, endorsed by top management and made readily available to staff at all levels of the organisation, on how it manages its records, including electronic records.

Records management includes:

- Identifying the reasons why particular records are needed
- Capturing data and creating records
- Storing records appropriately, depending on the level of sensitive or confidential data they contain
- Disposing of records in an appropriate way when they are no longer required, i.e. having a retention schedule

Some records will contain personal or confidential data. This affects **how they are stored, which staff in the school have access to them, and how they should be disposed of** when their retention period ends (e.g. shredding).

The retention of some records is governed by legal requirements, and of others by Local Authority policies (such as Audit). Some retention times are quite long, for example pupil files should be kept until the 25th birthday of a pupil.

Do you know how long you should keep the following types of school record?

- Letters authorising pupil absence
- Reviews and IEPs of SEN pupils
- Public examination results
- Parental permission slips for school trips (this is a trick question – there are two answers!)
- Staff personal files
- Accident reports (again, two answers – one for children and one for adults)
- Annual accounts
- Order books and requisitions
- Lettings
- Governors’ minutes
- Headteacher’s correspondence
- Complaints files
- Visitors’ book

This list gives you some idea of the range of school records that should be managed.

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Complete guides to the retention schedules for school records can be found as follows.

Organisation	Web link	Notes
London Borough of Newham – Information Governance team	http://intranet/information%20governance/Documents/RecordsManagement/RetentionGuidelines/LA%20Retention%20Schedule%20V2%20%20(July%202007).pdf	This Retention Schedule document covers the whole Council. Pages 65 to 91 cover Education and Learning. Some of this content is for LA use but a number of sections apply to school records.
Records Management Society – Toolkit for Schools (May 2008)	http://www.rms-gb.org.uk/resources/848	The document “Retention Guidelines” gives details of which records are covered by legal requirements and how to dispose of them at the end of the retention period.