

St. Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Records Management Policy

October 2015

The Academy recognises that by efficiently managing its records, it will be able to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Academy. Records provide evidence for protecting the legal rights and interests of the academy, and provide evidence for demonstrating performance and accountability. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Relationships with existing policies

1. Scope of the policy

- This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by staff of the academy in the course of carrying out its functions.
- Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the academy and which are then retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created or received, and then stored in hard copy or electronically.

2. Responsibilities

- The Academy has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this is the Head of the Academy.
- The person responsible for records management in the academy will give guidance about good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely way. They will also monitor compliance with this policy by surveying at least annually to check if records are stored securely and can be accessed appropriately.
- Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the academies records management guidelines.

3. Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Data Protection Policy

- Freedom of Information Policy
- and with other legislation or regulations (including audit, equal opportunities and ethics) affecting the academy.

Managing Student Records

The student record should accompany the student to every school they attend and should contain information that is accurate, objective and easy to access.

A student or their nominated representative have the legal right to see their file at any point during their education and even until the record is destroyed (when the student is 25 years of age or 35 years from the date of closure for students with special educational needs). This is their right of subject access under the Data Protection Act 1998. It is important to remember that all information should be accurately recorded, objective in nature and expressed in a professional manner.

Items which should be included on the student record

- If the student has attended an early years setting , then the record of transfer should be included on the student file.
- Admission form (application form)
- Fair processing notice (if these are issued annually only the most recent need be on the file)
- Parental permission for photographs to be taken (or not)
- Years Record
- Annual Written Report to Parents
- National Curriculum and R.E. agreed Syllabus Record Sheets
- Any information relating to a major incident involving the student (either an accident or other incident)
- Any reports written about the student
- Any information about a statement and support offered in relation to the statement
- Any relevant medical information (should be stored in the file in an envelope clearly marked as such)
- Child protection reports/disclosures (should be stored in the file in an envelope clearly marked as such)
- Any information relating to exclusions (fixed or permanent)
- Any correspondence with parents or outside agencies relating to major issues
- Details of any complaints made by the parents or the student

The following records should be stored separately to the student record as they are subject to shorter retention periods and if they are placed on the file then it will involve a lot of unnecessary weeding of the files before they are transferred on the another education establishment.

- Absence notes
- Parental consent forms for trips/outings (in the event of a major incident all the parental consent forms should be retained with the incident report not in the student file)
- Correspondence with parents about minor issues
- Accident forms (these should be stored separately and retained on the academy premises until their statutory retention period is reached. A copy could be placed on the student file in the event of a major incident)

Transferring the student file to another educational establishment

The student record should not be weeded before transfer to another educational establishment unless any records with a short retention period have been placed in the file. It is important to remember that the information which may seem unnecessary to the person weeding the file may be a vital piece of information required at a later stage.

If files are sent via post, they should be sent by registered post with an accompanying list of the files. Where possible, the educational establishment should sign a copy of the list to say that they have received the files and return that to the sender. Where appropriate, records can be delivered by hand with signed confirmation for tracking and auditing purposes.

Electronic documents that relate to the student file also need to be transferred, or, if duplicated in a master paper file, destroyed.

Responsibilities for the student record once the student leave the Academy

The Academy which the student attend until statutory leaving age (or the educational establishment where the student completed sixth form studies) is responsible for retaining the student record until the student reaches the age of 25 years. This retention is set in line with the Limitation Act 1980 which allows that a claim can be made against an organisation by a minor for up to 7 years from their 18th birthday.

Safe destruction of the student record

The student record should be disposed of in accordance with the safe disposal of records guidelines.

Transfer of a student record outside the EU area

If you are requested to transfer a student file outside the EU area because a student has moved into that area, please contact the Local Education Authority for further advice.

Storage of student records

All student records should be kept securely at all times. Paper records, for example, should be kept in lockable storage areas with restricted access, and the contents should be secure within the file. Equally, electronic records should have appropriate security.

Access arrangements for student records ensure that confidentiality is maintained whilst equally enabling information to be share lawfully and appropriately, and to be accessible for those authorised to see it.