



Record Retention Policy

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Record Retention Policy

1. Purpose of the policy

Data protection law applies when schools, as data controllers, are processing personal data.

The ICO is the UK's independent body set up to uphold information rights. They enforce and regulate freedom of information and data protection laws and promote good practice.

As part of the ICO's data quality principles it is a requirement that data is kept no longer than is necessary and therefore that Aspire schools have an appropriate retention policy in place and adhere to it.

The retention policy lays down the length of time which records needs to be retained and the action which should be taken when records are of no further administrative use.

2. Responsibilities

Each Aspire school has a responsibility to maintain its records and record keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for this policy.

Individual staff must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the school's records management guidelines.

Members of staff are expected to manage their current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different kinds of retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems.

3. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by staff at the school in the course of carrying out its functions.

Records are defined as all documents which facilitate the business carried out by the school and which thereafter are retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities.

The retention schedule refers to all information, regardless of the media in which they are stored.

This policy is to be read and considered in conjunction with the Aspire Data Protection Policy and other policies, legislation or regulations affecting the school.

Where AI or digital tools are used to generate, store, or process records, staff must ensure compliance with the Trust's AI Policy.

Where this policy says that the disposal method is to 'shred' this means using a cross shredder or using a company who guarantee secure shredding of documentation.

This policy is an abbreviated and customised version of the 'Information and Records Management Society Retention Guidelines for School'

Where records have been identified for destruction, they should be disposed of in an appropriate way.

All records containing personal information, or sensitive policy information should be shredded before disposal using a cross cut shredder. The school may also use an external provider of confidential waste disposal services. Any records containing personal data cannot be put into the dustbin or a skip.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the school to maintain a list of records which have been destroyed and who authorised their destruction. Schools must maintain an auditable record of destruction activities, including date, method, and authorising person.

4. Transfer of records to archives

Where records have been identified as being worthy of permanent preservation, arrangements should be made to transfer the records to archives.

5. Transfer of information to other media

Where lengthy retention periods have been allocated to records, members of staff may wish to consider converting paper records to other media such as digital media. The lifespan of the media and the ability to migrate data where necessary should always be considered. Permission from the data protection officer must be obtained before converting records to digital media.

6. Retention guidelines

The following retention guidelines have been determined by Aspire.

Some of the retention periods are governed by statute, others by following best practise recommendations.

Every effort has been made to ensure that these retention periods are compliant with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of information Act 2000 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Managing records using these retention guidelines will be deemed to be 'normal processing' under the legislation mentioned above.

If record series are to be kept for longer or shorter periods than laid out in this document than the reasons for this need to be documented.

7. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Trust Board will review this policy at least every three years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Trust and its academies.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links with other Aspire policies *available on the Trust website at <https://www.aspire-mat.co.uk/mat-policies/>*

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Finance Policy & Procedure Manual
- Health & Safety Policy
- AI and Emerging Tech Policy

Appendix 1: Company/Trust records

Basic file description	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
Company Articles of Association, Rules / bylaws	Companies Act 2006 Charities Act 2011	Permanent	-
Academy Funding Agreement and any supplemental agreements	Charities Act 2011	Permanent	
Trustee minutes of meetings and written resolutions	Companies Act 2006 Charities Act 2011	10 years	Secure disposal
Member minutes of meetings and written resolutions	Companies Act 2006 Charities Act 2011	10 years	Secure disposal
Documents of clear historical / archival significance	Data Protection regulation	Permanent if relevant data protection regulation provisions are met	Secure disposal
Contracts e.g. with suppliers or grant makers	Limitation Act 1980	Length of contract term plus 6 years	Secure disposal
Contracts executed as deeds	Limitation Act 1980	Length of contract term plus 12 years	Secure disposal
Intellectual Property (IP) records and legal files regarding provision of service	Limitation Act 1980	Life of service provision or IP plus 6 years	Secure disposal

See Appendix 2 for other records for the Trust that are the same as those managed in Aspire's academies.

Appendix 2: Academy records

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
1. Child protection					
1.1	Child protection files	Yes	Education Act 2002, s175, related guidance "Safeguarding Children in Education", September 2004	Date of birth + 25 years	Secure disposal
1.2	Allegation of child protection nature against a member of staff, including where the allegation is unfounded	Yes	Employment Practices Code: Supplementary Guidance 2.13.1 (Records of Disciplinary and Grievance). Education Act 2002 Guidance "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff" November 2005	Until the person's normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation whichever is the longer then review. Allegations that are found to be malicious should be removed from personnel files. If found, they are to be kept on the file and a copy provided to the person concerned.	Secure disposal
2. Governors (Local Governing Bodies) and Trustees (Trust Board)					
2.1	Minutes - Principal set (signed)	No		Permanent	Must be available in school for 6 years from the meeting. Can then be archived/stored elsewhere.
	Minutes - Inspection copies	No		Date of meeting + 3 years	Secure disposal
2.2	Agendas	No		Date of meeting	Secure disposal
2.3	Reports	No		Date of report + 6 years	Retain in school for 6 years from report date. Can consider archiving/storing anything important.
2.4	Annual parents' meeting papers	No		Date of meeting + 6 years	Retain in school for 6 years from meeting date. Can consider archiving/storing anything important.
2.5	Instruments of Government	No		Permanent	Retain in school whilst school open. Can then be archived/stored elsewhere.

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
2.7	Action plans	No		Date of action plan + 3 years	Secure disposal
2.8	Policy documents	No		Expiry of policy	Retain in school whilst policy operational (this includes if the expired policy is part of a past decision making process).
2.9	Complaints files	Yes		Date of resolution of complaint + 6 years	Review for further retention in the case of contentious disputes. Secure disposal.
2.10	Annual reports required by DfE	No	Education (Governors' Annual Reports) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002.SI2002 No1171	Date of report + 10 years	Secure disposal
3. School management					
3.1	Log books	Yes		Date of last entry in book + 6 years	Secure disposal
3.2	Minutes of the senior management team and other internal administrative bodies	Yes		Date of meeting + 5 years	Retain in school for 5 years from meeting date. Can consider archiving/storing anything important.
3.3	Reports made by the head teacher or management team	Yes		Date of report + 3 years	Retain in school for 3 years from report date. Can consider archiving/storing anything important.
3.4	Records created by head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of year and other members of staff with administrative responsibilities	Yes		Closure of file + 6 years	Secure disposal
3.5	Correspondence created by head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of year and other members of	No/Yes		Date of correspondence + 3 years	Secure disposal

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
	staff with administrative responsibilities				
3.6	Professional development plans	Yes		Closure + 6 years	Secure disposal
3.7	School development plans	No		Closure + 6 years	Review for further retention. Secure disposal.
3.8	Admissions - if the admission is successful	Yes		Admission + 1 year	Secure disposal
3.9	Admissions - if the appeal is unsuccessful	Yes		Resolution of case + 1 year	Secure disposal
3.10	Proof of address supplied by parents as part of the admissions process	Yes		As the corresponding admission record	Secure disposal
3.11	Supplementary information form including additional information such as religion, medical conditions supplied as part of the admissions process	Yes		As the corresponding admission record	Secure disposal
4. Pupils					
4.1	Admission registers	Yes		Entry + 7 years	Retain in school for 7 years from entry. Can consider archiving these records if have the facility.
4.2	Attendance registers	Yes		Date of register + 3 years	Secure disposal
4.3	Pupil files retained in schools - Primary	Yes		Retain for time which the pupil remains at the primary school	Transfer to the secondary school (or other primary school) when the child leaves the school.

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
4.4	Pupil files - Primary	Yes		Retain for time which the pupil remains at the primary school	Transfer to the secondary school (or other primary school) when the child leaves the school.
4.5	Special Educational Needs files, reviews and individual education plans	Yes		Date of birth + 25 years	Secure disposal
4.6	Correspondence relating to authorised absence and issues	Yes		Date of absence + 2 years	Secure disposal
4.7a	Examination results - Public	No		Year of examination + 6 years	Secure disposal
4.7b	Examination results - Internal	Yes		Current year + 5 years	Secure disposal
4.8	Any other records created in the course of contact with pupils	Yes/No		Current year + 3 years	Review at the end of 3 years and retain with pupil file if necessary. Secure disposal
4.9	Statement maintained under the Education Act 1996 Section 324	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 1	Date of birth + 30 years	Secure disposal unless legal action is pending
4.10	Proposed statement or amended statement	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 1	Date of birth + 30 years	Secure disposal unless legal action is pending
4.11	Advice and information to parents regarding educational needs	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 2	Closure + 12 years	Secure disposal unless legal action is pending
4.12	Accessibility strategy	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 14	Closure + 12 years	Secure disposal unless legal action is pending
4.13	Parental permission slips for school trips, where there has been no major incident	Yes		Conclusion of the trip	Secure disposal unless legal action is pending

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
4.14	Parental permission slips for school trips, where there has been a major incident	Yes	Limitation Act 1980	Date of birth of pupil involved in the incident + 25 years	Secure disposal. Permission slips for all pupils on trip need to be retained for period to show that the rules had been followed for all pupils.
4.15	Records created by schools to obtain approval to run an educational visit outside the classroom,	No	3 part supplement of the Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) (1998)	Date of visit + 14 years	Secure disposal
4.16	Walking bus registers	Yes		Date of register + 3 years	This takes into account that if an incident requiring an accident report, the register will be submitted with the accident report and kept for the retention time for accident reporting. Secure disposal
5. Child curriculum					
5.1	School development plan	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
5.2	Curriculum returns	No		Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal
5.3	Schemes of work	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at end of each year and allocate a new retention period. Secure disposal.
5.4	Timetable	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at end of each year and allocate a new retention period. Secure disposal.
5.5	Class record books	Yes/No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at end of each year and allocate a new retention period. Secure disposal.

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
5.6	Mark books	Yes/No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at end of each year and allocate a new retention period. Secure disposal.
5.7	Record of homework set	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at end of each year and allocate a new retention period. Secure disposal.
5.8	Pupils' work	Yes		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at end of each year and allocate a new retention period. Secure disposal.
5.9	Examination results	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
5.10	SATs records, examination papers and results	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
5.11	PAN reports	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
5.12	Value added and contextual data	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
5.13	Self evaluation forms	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
6. Personnel records					
6.1	Timesheets, sick pay	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
6.2	Staff personnel files	Yes		Termination + 25 years	Secure disposal
6.3	Interview notes and recruitment records	Yes	KCSIE - Safer Recruitment requirements	Date of interview notes + 6 months if unsuccessful. If successful place in personnel file.	Secure disposal
6.4	Pre-employment vetting information (including DBS checks)	Yes	DBS guidelines	Date of check + 6 months	Secure disposal

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
6.5	Disciplinary proceedings	Yes	Where the warning relates to child protection issues see 1.2	See below	Secure disposal
6.5a	Oral warning	Yes		Date of warning + 12 months	Secure disposal
6.5b	Written warning - level one	Yes		Date of warning + 12 months	Secure disposal
6.5c	Written warning - level two	Yes		Date of warning + 12 months	Secure disposal
6.5d	Final warning	Yes		Date of warning + 18 months	Secure disposal
6.5e	Case not found	Yes		If child protection see 1.2, otherwise destroy immediately	Secure disposal
6.6	Records relating to accident/injury at work	Yes		Date of incident + 12 years	In case of serious accidents a further retention period will need to be applied. Secure disposal
6.7	Annual appraisal and assessment records	Yes		Current year + 5 years	Secure disposal
6.8	Salary cards	Yes		Last date of employment + 85 years	Secure disposal
6.9	Maternity pay records	Yes	Statutory Maternity Pay (General) Regulations 1986 (SI1986/1960), revised 1999 (SI 1999/567)	Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal
6.10	Records held under Retirement Benefits Schemes (Information Powers) Regulations 1995	Yes	Retirement Benefits Schemes (Information Powers) Regulations 1995	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
6.11	Proofs of identity collected as part of the process for checking "portable" enhanced DBS disclosure	Yes	KCSIE	Where possible these should be checked and a note/copy of what was checked placed on personnel file. If felt necessary to keep any	Secure disposal of notes/copies and return of originals.

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
				documentation this should also be placed in personnel file.	
6.12	Volunteer records	Yes		6 months after the volunteer stops volunteering.	Secure disposal
7. Health and safety					
7.1	Accessibility plans	Yes	Disability Discrimination Act 1995	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
7.2	Accident reporting	Yes	Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979 Regulation 25. Social Security Administration Act 1992 Section 8. Limitation Act 1980		Secure disposal
7.2a	Adults	Yes		Date of incident + 7 years	Secure disposal
7.2b	Children	Yes		Date of birth of child + 7 years	Secure disposal
7.3	COSHH	No	Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	Current year + 40 years	Where appropriate an additional retention period may be allocated. Secure disposal
7.4	Incident reports	Yes		Current year + 20 years	Secure disposal
7.5	Policy statements	No		Date of expiry + 1 year	Secure disposal
7.6	Risk assessments	Yes/No		Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal
7.7	Process of monitoring areas where employees and persons are likely to have come in contact with asbestos	Yes/No		Last action + 40 years	Secure disposal
7.8	Process of monitoring areas where employees and persons are likely to have	Yes/No		Last action + 50 years	Secure disposal

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
	come in contact with radiation				
7.9	Fire precautions log book	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
7.10	Inspection records	No	HSE	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
8. Administration					
8.1	Employer's liability certificate	No		Closure of school + 40 years	Secure disposal
8.2	Inventories of equipment and furniture	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
8.3	General file series	No		Current year + 5 years	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal
8.4	School brochure or prospectus	No		Current year + 3 years	Disposal
8.5	Circulars (staff, parents, pupils)	No		Current year + 1 year	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal
8.6	Newsletters, ephemera	No		Current year + 1 year	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal
8.7	Visitors book	Yes		Current year + 2 year	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal
8.8	PTA	Yes/No		Current year + 6 years	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal
9. Finance					
9.1	Annual accounts	No	Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.2	Loans and grants	Yes/No	Financial Regulations	Date of last payment on loan + 12 years	Secure disposal
9.3	Contracts	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
9.3a	Under seal	No		Contract completion date + 12 years	Secure disposal
9.3b	Under signature	No		Contract completion date + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.3c	Monitoring records	No		Current year + 2 years	Secure disposal
9.4	Copy orders	No		Current year + 2 years	Secure disposal
9.5	Budget reports, budget monitoring etc.	No		Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal
9.6	Invoice, receipts and other records covered by the Financial Regulations	No	Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.7	Annual budget and background papers	Yes/ No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.8	Order books and requisitions	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.9	Delivery documentation	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.10	Debtors' records	Yes/No	Limitations Act	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.19	Free school meals registers	Yes		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
9.20	Petty cash books	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
10. Property					
10.1	Title deeds	No		Permanent	These should follow the property
10.2	Plans	No		Permanent	Retain in school whilst operational. Can then be archived/stored elsewhere.
10.3	Maintenance and contractors	No	Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
10.4	Leases	No		Expiry of lease + 6 years	Secure disposal
10.5	Lettings	Yes		Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
10.6	Burglary, theft and vandalism report forms	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
10.7	Maintenance log books	No		Last entry + 10 years	Secure disposal
10.8	Contractors' reports	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
11. Local authorities					
11.1	Secondary transfer sheets (primary)	Yes		Current year + 2 years	Secure disposal
11.2	Attendance returns	Yes		Current year + 1 year	Secure disposal
11.3	Circulars from LEA	Yes		Whilst required operationally	Review to see if further retention period required. Disposal
12. Department of Education					
12.1	HMI reports	No		These do not need to be kept any longer	Secure disposal
12.2	OFSTED reports and papers	No		Replace former report with new inspection report	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal
12.3	Returns	No		Current year + 6 years	Secure disposal
12.4	Circulars from DfE	No		Whilst required operationally	Review to see if further retention period required. Disposal
14. School meals					
14.1	Dinner register	Yes		Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal
14.2	School meals summary sheets	Yes/No		Current year + 3 years	Secure disposal
15. Family Liaison Officers and Home School Liaison Assistants					
15.1	Day books	Yes		Current year + 2 years	Review to see if further retention period required. Secure disposal

	Basic file description	Data Protection issue	Statutory provisions	Retention period	Action at end of administrative life of record
15.2	Reports for outside agencies - where the report has been included on the case file created by the outside agency	Yes		Whilst the child is attending the school	Secure disposal
15.3	Referral forms	Yes		While the referral is current	Secure disposal
15.4	Contact data sheets	Yes		Current year then review	If contact is no longer active secure disposal
15.5	Contact database entries	Yes		Current year then review	If contact is no longer active secure delete
15.6	Group registers	Yes		Current year + 2 years	Secure disposal

Appendix 3: Links to external resources

- Companies Act 2006
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/46/contents>
- Charities Act 2011
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/25/contents>
- Limitation Act 1980
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/58/contents>
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents>
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50/contents>
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents>
- Data Protection Act 2018
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents>
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>
- General Data Protection Act 2018.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29>
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
<https://gdpr-info.eu/>
- Information and Records Management Society Retention Guidelines for School
<https://irms.org.uk/general/custom.asp?page=SchoolsToolkit>
- Record keeping and retention information for academies and academy trusts (DfE, Feb 2022)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/record-keeping-and-retention-information-for-academies/record-keeping-and-retention-information-for-academies-and-academy-trusts>