

## How schools handle your child's personal information

### A guide to how we process information about your child

This is the full version of how schools process your child's personal information.

**Schools** hold information on their pupils and from time to time, by law, they have to share some of the information with various government organisations. **Schools** will also share information with other organisations where there is a need to protect a child or someone else from harm.

The Data Protection Act 1998 calls **schools, local authorities** and other organisations that process children's information 'data controllers'. This means, among other things that the information held about children must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law.

We have set out below:

- what type of information is held about your child;
- why this information is held;
- some of the organisations that may see it; and
- what some of the organisations do with the information.

**Schools** process information on their pupils for the following reasons.

- To support their teaching and learning
- To monitor and report on their pupil's progress
- To make sure children get the help and support that they need at school
- To assess how well the school is doing in general

Schools hold the following information.

- Basic information such as your child's date of birth and details about you (such as your name and address)
- Characteristics such as your child's ethnic origin
- Information about your child's attendance in school
- Information about your child if they are excluded from school
- Information about child protection (if this applies)
- Information about antisocial incidents like bullying and racism
- Your child's national curriculum assessment results
- Your child's special educational needs (if any) and any relevant medical information

The Children Act 2004 says that all **government-run schools** in England can put information about their pupils on **ContactPoint**.

**ContactPoint** is an online directory of children living in England and the people who work with them. Only people who have permission can see the directory, if they need it as part of their work. This will include people who work in education, health, social care, youth offending and some voluntary organisations.

**ContactPoint** will hold the following information about your child.

- Basic identifying information – their name, address, sex, date of birth and a reference number.
- Basic identifying information about you.
- Contact details for services working with your child (at least their school and GP practice, but also other services, where appropriate).
- If your child has been assessed by other services.

**ContactPoint** will not keep a record of your child's needs, progress at school, attendance or medical information.

**ContactPoint:**

- helps people who work with your child to quickly identify them;
- decide whether your child is getting the services they are entitled to (for example, education and health care); and
- encourages people working with your child to communicate and work together better.

For more information, please visit the website:

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/contactpoint/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/contactpoint/).

Your **local authority** uses information about your child to carry out the following tasks for which it is responsible.

- Assessing any special educational needs your child may have.
- Producing statistics for other government organisations and to help them make decisions about how schools are funded, for example. Your child cannot be identified from these statistics.
- Assessing how schools are performing and to set targets for them.

Under the Children Act 2004, your local authority has a duty to work with their partners in health and youth justice to improve children's wellbeing in their areas. As part of this duty they will have to make sure the information held on **ContactPoint** about children and young people in their area is accurate.

If you have any questions about the information we hold, visit our website at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk). Or, e-mail [dataprotection@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

The **Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)** uses information about children to:

- carry out research and produce statistics to influence and improve education policy;
- monitor how the education service is performing in general;
- give **local authorities** and schools feedback on information about their schoolchildren for a range of purposes including checking information is correct, measuring how schools are performing and to get information which is missing because it was not passed on by a child's former school;
- provide the **Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)** with information about children to use in their school inspections;
- share children's information with learning institutions for over 16s to reduce the work for these institutions when pupils apply for courses, and to help these institutions prepare learning plans.

The **Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)** may also use the information they hold about children to match it with other information they hold to:

- develop and monitor children's progress in education; and
- provide the local authority and schools with full information to support their day-to-day business.

Matching information involves processing individual children's information, but it will not be processed in a way which identifies individual children or supports measures or influences decisions relating to particular children.

Please visit [www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk) for more information on the **DCSF**, or write to:

Data Protection Officer  
DCSF Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9NA.

The **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)** uses children's information to put together the national curriculum assessments portfolio throughout Key Stages 1 to 3. This includes both compulsory assessments and those that are optional. The **QCA** also use the information to work out how effective the national curriculum is and its associated assessment arrangements, and to make sure that these are continually improved.

The **QCA** pass the results of these assessments on to the **DCSF** so they can produce statistics on trends and patterns in the levels of what children achieve.

You can find information about the **QCA** on their website at [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk).

Or, you can contact:

Data Protection Officer  
QCA  
83 Piccadilly  
London  
W1J 8QA.

The **Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)** uses information about pupil's progress and performance to:

- help inspectors measure schools' work; and
- help schools measure their own performance, and as part of **Ofsted's** assessment, measure how effective their education initiatives and policies are.

**Ofsted** includes the **Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI)** which reports, both to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and to the public, on the quality of education and training adult learners and young people in England receive. The **ALI** is responsible for inspecting all publicly funded work-based training for people over 16 and learning for people aged 19 and over.

**ALI** inspectors are also responsible for inspecting learning in prisons and all adult and community education, carrying out area inspections of provision for 16- to 19-year-olds to support **Ofsted**, and learning online through learndirect provided by the University for Industry.

Visit Ofsted's website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) for more information. Or, contact:  
Data Protection Officer  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE.

The **Learning and Skills Council (LSC)** uses information about pupils to produce statistics, to measure and develop education policy and monitor the education service in general.

The **LSC** use these statistics (including those based on information provided by the **QCA**) in a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them.

Sometimes, the **LSC** may share information about children with other government departments or agencies but this will only be to produce statistics or carry out research.

The **LSC** or its partners may also want to contact learners from time to time about relevant courses or learning opportunities.

You can get more information from the LSC's website at [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk). Or, you can contact:

Data Protection Officer  
Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry  
Warwickshire  
CV1 2WT.

The **LSC** also manage the **Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP)** Programme on behalf of the **MIAP** membership. **MIAP** is about making how information on learning and what people achieve is collected, handled and shared across the education sector more efficient.

You can find more information about **MIAP** membership on their website at [www.miap.gov.uk](http://www.miap.gov.uk)

**LSC** is responsible for developing and running the **Learner Registration Scheme (LRS)**, and for creating a record of achievement for each learner

If your child is 14 or over and registering to study for GCSEs or A-levels, their **school** will pass on certain details about them to the **LRS** to create a reference number and maintain certain details about your child. They will also give the **MIAP** Service information about what your child has achieved to create and maintain a learner record for your child.

The Learner Registration Service will let organisations that have legal permission see the information held about your child using the reference number. You can see the details about these organisations at [www.miap.gov.uk](http://www.miap.gov.uk) You can choose not to allow these organisations to see your child's information. You can find details of how to do this at [www.miap.gov.uk](http://www.miap.gov.uk).

If you want more information on **MIAP** visit their website at [www.miap.gov.uk](http://www.miap.gov.uk). Or, contact:

Data Protection Officer  
Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry  
Warwickshire  
CV1 2WT.

**Connexions** is the Government's career support service for all young people aged 13 to 19, in England. It also provides support for young people up to the age of 25, who have learning difficulties or disabilities (or both).

**Connexions** personal advisers offer different types of support and bring together all the services and support young people need during their teenage years.

Some young people may only need careers advice. But, for others it may involve more support to help identify barriers to learning and find solutions for them to get more specialist support, for example, for drug abuse, sexual health and homelessness. Personal advisers work in a range of settings including schools, colleges, one-stop shops, community centres, homes and other places where young people might be.

If your child is 13 or over, by law their school must pass on certain information to **Connexions** when they are asked. This information includes your and your child's name and address and any further information relevant to the **Connexions** services.

You **local authority** and **DCSF** may give **Connexions** information they have about your child, but they will not pass on any information they have received from your child's school if you or your child (if your child is 16 or over) have told the school not to give them any information other than your or your child's name and address.

**Primary care trusts (PCTs)** use children's information to carry out research and produce statistics to monitor, measure and develop local health services. Primary care trusts use their statistics in such a way that will not identify your child.

The **PCT** may be given information on your child's height and weight and may have to keep details of your child's names to do this following a weighing and measuring exercise set by the **Department of Health**.

You can find more information on the following websites.

- [www.thpct.nhs.uk](http://www.thpct.nhs.uk)
- [www.nhs.uk/England/AuthoritiesTrusts/Pct/Default.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/England/AuthoritiesTrusts/Pct/Default.aspx)

The **Department of Health** uses information about children's height and weight in different year groups to carry out research and produce statistics to inform, influence and improve health policies and to monitor how the health service is performing as a whole. This information will not identify any child.

The **Department of Health** will base their discussions with Strategic Health Authorities on how they manage themselves by using statistical information about pupils who go to schools in the area of the **primary care trust**.

The **Department of Health** will also provide statistical information about the **primary care trust** to the Healthcare Commission to assess how the health services are performing in general.

For more information, visit the **Department of Health's** website at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk).

Or, contact:

Data Protection Officer  
Skipton House  
80 London Road  
London  
SE1 6LH.

### **Data protection**

By law, all organisations that hold personal information about anybody have to make sure that the information they hold is secure. They also have to make sure that only people who have permission to see this information can see it if they need to carry out their work.

We take great care to make sure that the personal information we keep about children, both on paper and on computer, is safe.

All staff that use children's information must have relevant checks and training for the type of information they handle.

### **Your rights**

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, schoolchildren have certain rights. These include a general right to see personal information held about them by any organisation.

They would have to ask in writing to see their personal information. This request is known as a 'Subject Access Request' (SAR).

We generally consider children aged 12 and over as mature enough to understand their rights and to make a Subject Access Request themselves if they want to.

If your child is younger than 12, you will normally have to ask on their behalf to see the information held about them.

To carry out their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998, your child's school may, before they respond to your or your child's request, ask you for proof of your or your child's identity and other information to find the personal information you or your child have asked for.

You also have the right to see, or have a copy of, your child's educational record at their school. If you want to see your child's educational record you should write to their school.

Under the Learning and Skills Act, you or your child (if they are 16 or over) can also ask that your child's school does not pass on any information other than your or your child's name and address to **Connexions**. If you do not want **Connexions** to receive any other information about you or your child, please contact your child's school.

