



PROCEDURES FOR THE RETENTION OF SCHOOL RECORDS

Version Created – August 2019



Procedures for the retention of School Records

This document informs Headteachers and school leaders of the requirement for the management of school records, ensuring that legal, fiscal and administrative retention periods are kept, and highlighting records that are worthy of permanent preservation that are likely to contain material of historic interest. Retention periods must be strictly adhered to in order to ensure that information is not destroyed before its appropriate destruction date in accordance with the procedures.

Current and non-current records

- It is important to distinguish between current records, which need to be on hand and kept in the school, and non-current records, which can be stored accessibly, but separately. Records need to be removed from the current records series as soon as they cease to be required for regular reference.
- Current Data Protection legislation states that personal information should not be kept for longer than is necessary.
- Personal data must be kept safe and secure and appropriate technical or organisational measures must be taken to protect against accidental loss or damage.
- A tracking system should be employed so that information that has been closed, archived or destroyed can be tracked easily in the event of a Freedom of Information request for it. Wrexham Archives Service operates a Records Management System to store the Council's non-current records that need to be kept for statutory or administrative reasons (the time stated after current in the 'retention period' column of the Retention Schedule).
- The Records Management staff are based at Wrexham Museum, with the records stored at:

Unit 13, Whitegate Industrial Estate – telephone 01978 266496.

This service is also available for schools. There is a procedure for transferring these records, which has to be adhered to – this can be found in the 'Records Management Procedure Manual' on the schools Intranet site. If schools wish to use this service, then the Records Management staff should be contacted in the first instance.

Archives

Some records will need to be preserved as archives and transferred to the Archives service. Schools will still have access to these records, but they will also be available to the general public for historical research.

Restricted access periods are applied to any qualifying documents.

Schools can either transfer records directly from the school, or if the records are in the Records Management system, they will automatically be transferred over once they are no longer needed for school use (see 'retention in school' column in the Retention Schedule).

Destruction

- Records no longer needed should be thrown away immediately, as keeping them wastes space. Most will need confidential destruction and will have to be shredded.
- If your school holds a significant amount of paperwork that needs to be disposed of, there are a number of local third party companies who will be able to assist you. These companies may be able to destroy the documents without leaving your school site, and all should be able to provide you with a Certificate of Disposal.
- Records in the Records Management system will be destroyed along with the other boxes in the system due for destruction that particular year. However, if records have not been stored in Records Management, it is the responsibility of the school to dispose of them. Records should not be transferred over to Records Management if they are over or close to the destruction date.

Retention Scheduling

- This means deciding on how long you need to keep records and writing it down systematically.
- There follows a Retention Schedule for some of the most common school records. It notes how long the records need to be kept for school use after they become current and the action to be taken.
- Current means current year, *or* while current (depending on the context).
- Transfer to Archives means the historic archives.

For further guidance on records not appearing on this schedule, contact Records Management staff on (01978) 266496, or email archives@wrexham.gov.uk

Retention Record for School Documents

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
HEADTEACHER AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT				
Minutes of Senior Management Team and other internal administrative bodies	Current year + 5 years	Transfer to Archives		
Log books of school activity maintained by the Headteacher	Date of last entry + minimum of 6 years, then review	Offer to archives service – may be of permanent historical value		
Reports created by Headteacher / Management Team	Date of report + 3 years minimum, then review or as required	Secure Disposal		
Correspondence created by Head teachers, Deputy Heads, Heads of Year or other staff with administrative responsibilities	Current year + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
Professional development plans	Should be held in personnel file – if not, then termination + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
School Development plans	Life of plan + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE				
Implementation of Curriculum				
Schemes of work	Current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		It may be appropriate to review these records each year, to consider a further retention period .
Timetable	Current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		
Class record books	Current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		
Mark books	Current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		
Records of homework set	Current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		
Pupil's work	The pupil's work should be returned to the pupil at the end of the academic year. Otherwise, current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		It may be appropriate to retain some samples of pupil's work for your records.
Curriculum returns	Current year + 3 years	Secure Disposal		

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
GOVERNOR MANAGEMENT				
Records relating to the election of parent/staff governors (not appointed by the governors)	Date of election + 6 months	Secure Disposal		
Records relating to the appointment of co-opted governors	As long as decision recorded in minutes, the appointment records can be destroyed once governor finished their term	Secure Disposal		Exception – records need to be retained where there have been allegations concerning children – in this case retain for 25 years.
Records relating to election of chair and vice chair	Once recorded in meeting minutes, election records can be destroyed	Secure Disposal		
Meeting schedule	Current year	Standard Disposal		
Schemes of Delegation	Until superseded or whilst relevant			Schools may wish to retain these documents for their reference. They could be offered to archives if appropriate
Agenda – principal copy	Should be stored with principal set of minutes			Consult archiving team before disposal.
Agendas – additional copies	Date of meeting	Standard Disposal		
Minutes – principal set	7 years from date of meeting	Standard Disposal		Departmental decision
Register of attendance at full governing board meetings	Date of last meeting in book + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Annual Parent Meeting Papers	Date of meeting + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Governor Monitoring visits	Date of visit + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
Records relating to complaints made to and investigated by Governors/Headteacher	Major complaint – current year + 6 years. If negligence involved – current year + 15 years. If Child Protection of Safeguarding involved – current year + 40 years.	Secure Disposal		
Correspondence sent / received by the Governing body or Headteacher	Current year + 5 years			
Action plans administered by Governors	Until superseded	Secure Disposal		

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
Policy documents created by Governors	Until superseded			The school should consider retaining policies relating to Child Protection, Safeguarding and other pupil-related issues.
FINANCIAL RECORDS				
Annual accounts	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Loans / grants managed by the school	Date of last payment + 12 years	Secure Disposal		
All records relating to the creation and management of school budgets	Life of budget + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
Invoices / Receipts / Order books / Delivery notices	Current financial year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Records relating to collection or banking of money	Current financial year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Records relating to identification and collecting of debt	Final payment + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
School fund – Cheque books; paying in books; Ledger; Invoices; Receipts; Bank Statements; Journey Books	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Free School Meals register	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
School Meal Registers	Current year + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
School Meal summary sheets	Current year + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
Records of management of contracts under seal	Last contract payment + 12 years	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provision section	
Records of management of contracts under signature	Last contract payment + 6 years	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provision section	
RECRUITMENT				
Records leading up to the appointment of a Headteacher	Add to personnel file, retain until end of appointment + 25 years. Unsuccessful applicants – date of successful applicants + 6 months	Secure Disposal		
Records for unsuccessful candidates (staff or governors)	Date of appointment of successful candidate + 6 months	Secure Disposal		

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
Pre-employment vetting information (e.g. DBS checks) (successful candidates)	For the duration of employment + 25 years	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provision section	
Pre-employment vetting information – evidence of right to work in the UK	Where possible, should be retained in personnel file		See Statutory Provision section	
ADMISSIONS				
Records relating to the creation / implementation of School Admissions policy	Life of policy + 3 years	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provision section	
Admissions – if successful	Date of admission + 1 year	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provision section	
Admissions – if appeal is unsuccessful	Resolution of case + 1 year	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provision section	
Register of Admissions	Every entry must be preserved for 3 years from the date the entry was made	School may wish to keep the register permanently as an archive record, or to transfer to the Local authority's archiving service	See Statutory Provision section	
Admissions – Secondary school	Current year + 1 year	Secure Disposal		
Successful admissions	Add information to pupil file	Secure Disposal		
Unsuccessful admissions	Until appeals process completed	Secure Disposal		
OPERATIONAL ADMINISTRATION				
General file series which do not fit under any other category	Current year + 5 years, then review	Secure Disposal		
Records relating to creation and publication of school brochure and prospectus	Current academic year + 3 years	Standard Disposal		School could retain a copy for their archives
Records relating to the creation and distribution of circulars to staff/parents/pupils	Current academic year + 1 year	Standard Disposal		
School Privacy Notice	Until superseded + 6 years			
Consents relating to school activities as part of Data Protection compliance	Can be destroyed when pupil leaves school			
Newsletters	Current academic year + 1 year	Standard Disposal		School may decide to retain a copy

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
Visitor management systems (including electronic systems) – visitor books and signing-in sheets	Last entry in book + 6 years	Standard Disposal		New industry-standard extended period, in case of claims by parents/pupils about various actions.
STAFF MANAGEMENT				
Staff Personnel File	Termination of Employment + 6 years unless part of an IICSA inquiry, in which case would need to be retained until investigation complete	Retain / archive staff file until further notice.	See Statutory provisions section	
Annual appraisal / assessment records	Current Year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Sickness absence monitoring	Where sickness pay is not paid – current year + 3. where sickness pay is paid – current year + 6 years (as a financial record)			Categorised as sensitive data – a legal obligation under statutory sickness pay to maintain records for sickness monitoring
Staff training – where leads to professional development	Length of time required by professional body	Secure Disposal		
Staff training – first aid, health and safety	Retained in personnel file	Secure Disposal		
Staff training relating to children – e.g. safeguarding, other child-related training	Date of training + 40 years (ongoing IICSA inquiry)	Secure Disposal		Reflects that the IICSA inquiry may wish to see training records as part of an investigation.
DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS				
Reference to a disciplinary incident should be retained in a staff member's personnel file, because of the potential for a further future misconduct incident. An overall record of a disciplinary matter must be kept. Employers should not confuse the expiry of a warning with a requirement to destroy all reference to its existence in the staff file.	Oral warning: Date of warning + 6 months Written warning level 1: Warning Date + 6 months; Written warning level 2: Warning date + 12 months; Final warning: Date of warning + 18 months	Secure Disposal		
HEALTH AND SAFETY				
Health and Safety Policy Statements	Life of policy + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
Risk Assessments	Life of risk assessment + 3 years, provided that a copy of the assessment is stored with the accident report if an accident occurs	Secure Disposal		

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
Accident report records – if over 18 at time of accident	Retain accident report for 3 years from the date of the incident	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provisions section	Accident book must be kept secure, with restricted access (Data Protection requirement). Guidance confirmed by LA Health & Safety section.
Accident report records – if under 18 at time of accident	Retain accident report until the pupil's 21 st birthday	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provisions section	Accident book must be kept secure, with restricted access (Data Protection requirement). Guidance confirmed by LA Health & Safety section.
Fire Precaution Log Books	Current year + 3 years	Secure Disposal		
Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate	Closure of school + 40 years	Pass to local authority if school closes		
MAINTENANCE				
School maintenance records – carried out by contractors	Retain whilst building belongs to the school			
School maintenance records – carried out by employees, including maintenance log books	Retain whilst building belongs to the school			
Inventories of furniture and equipment	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Burglary/theft/vandalism reports	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
PUPIL'S EDUCATIONAL RECORD				
Primary	Retain whilst the child remains at the primary school	The file should follow the pupil when he/she leaves the primary school.		
Secondary	Date of birth of pupil + 25 years	NB: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse: restrictions in place for destruction of Children's Social Care records - current intention is to review in 2023.		
Special Educational Needs (SEN) files – including reviews and education, health and care plans, advice given to parents.	Date of birth of the pupil + 31 years	NB: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse: restrictions in place for destruction of Children's Social Care records - current intention is to review in 2023.	See Statutory Provisions section	Retention period adds an additional 6 years in line with the Limitation Act.
Exam results – public	Should be added to the pupil file			
Child Protection Information held in pupil file	If placed in pupil file, should be in sealed envelope and retained for same length of time as the pupil file	NB: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse: restrictions in place for destruction of Children's Social Care records	See Statutory Provisions section	

Record Series	Retention Period (in years)	Required action by School	Relevant legislation	Additional notes
Child Protection Information held in separate file	35 years from case closure	NB: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse: restrictions in place for destruction of Children's Social Care records		Departmental decision
Exam results – school copy	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
SATS results	Added to pupil's educational file			School may wish to keep a composite of the whole year's SATS results for current year + 6 years, to allow for comparisons to be made.
ATTENDANCE				
Attendance registers	Paper copies – preserve entry for 3 years from the date the entry was made	Secure Disposal	See Statutory Provisions section	May wish to consider referring attendance records to the local authority archiving team
Correspondence relating to absence (authorised or unauthorised)	Current academic year + 2 years		See Statutory Provisions section	
SCHOOL TRIPS				
Parental permission for school trips – where there has been a major incident	DOB of pupil involved + 25 years	Secure Disposal		Permissions for all pupils on trip need to be retained to show rules had been followed for all pupils
Parental permission for school trips – where there has been no major incident	School may wish to assess whether the forms are likely to be required – could dispose of consent forms at end of trip, or the academic school year.	Secure Disposal		
PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS				
Records relating to the creation and management of PTAs and /or Old Pupils Associations	Current year + 6 years then review	Secure Disposal		
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS				
Estyn Inspection Reports and papers	Replace former report with any new inspection report	Secure Disposal		
Returns made to central government	Current year + 6 years	Secure Disposal		
Circulars/information from central government	Retain for operational use	Secure Disposal		

Relevant Statutory Provisions

<u>Record Series</u>	<u>Legislation</u>
Records of management of contracts under seal	Limitation Act 1980
Records of management of contracts under signature	Limitation Act 1980
Pre-employment vetting information (e.g. DBS checks) (successful candidates)	Keeping learners safe (158/2015) Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (Welsh Government circular no: 009/2014)
Pre-employment vetting information – evidence of right to work in the UK	An Employer's Guide to Right to Work checks (Home Office, May 2015). Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006.
Records relating to the creation / implementation of School Admissions policy	School Admissions Code 2013 - Statutory Code document no: 005/2013 Date of issue: July 2013
Admissions – if successful	School Admissions Code 2013 - Statutory Code document no: 005/2013 Date of issue: July 2013
Admissions – if appeal is unsuccessful	School Admissions Code 2013 - Statutory Code document no: 005/2013 Date of issue: July 2013
Register of Admissions	School Admissions Code 2013 - Statutory Code document no: 005/2013 Date of issue: July 2013
Special Educational Needs (SEN) files – including reviews and education, health and care plans, advice given to parents	Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018; also Limitation Act 1980
Child Protection Information held in pupil file	Keeping learners safe (Guidance document no: 158/2015) Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (Welsh Government circular no: 009/2014) Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008. Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
Child Protection Information	Keeping learners safe (Guidance document no: 158/2015) Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (Welsh Government circular no: 009/2014) Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008. Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014
Accident Records – if pupil under age of 18	The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
Accident Records – if pupil over age of 18	The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
Staff Personnel File	Limitation Act 1980 section 2
Attendance Registers	The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010; All Wales Attendance Framework
Correspondence relating to absence (authorised or unauthorised)	Education Act 1996 Section 7