

To Parents: the Data Protection Act

Fair processing notice

In order to run the education system properly, various public bodies process information on pupils. In doing so they have to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means, among other things, that the data held about pupils must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law. We are writing to tell you about the types of data held, why that data is held, and to whom it may be passed on. It's your right to know.

Who holds the information

What they do with it

<p>The school holds information on pupils in order to ...</p>	<p>support their teaching and learning, monitor and report on their progress, provide appropriate pastoral care, assess how well the school as a whole is doing. What sort of information is held? Contact details, National Curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs, relevant medical information.</p>
<p>Local Authorities (LAs) hold information on pupils in order to ...</p>	<p>carry out specific jobs it has to do, such as the assessment of any special educational needs a pupil may have. It also uses the information to give statistics so as to make decisions on things like the funding of schools, and to assess the performance of schools and set targets for them. The statistics are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. The Children Act 2004 requires Local Authorities to cooperate with health and youth justice to improve the well-being of children in their areas.</p>
<p>The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) holds information on pupils in order to ...</p>	<p>do research, help decide on education policy and to monitor the performance of the education service as a whole. The DfES will feed back to the Local Authority and schools information about their pupils for a variety of purposes such as to check data and where information is missing because it was not passed on by a former school. The DfES will also provide Ofsted with data for use in school inspection. Where relevant, pupil information may also be shared with post-16 learning centres to reduce bureaucracy and to help in preparing learning plans.</p> <p>Pupil information may be matched with other data sources to model and monitor pupils' progress and to provide information back to Local Authorities and learning institutions to support their day to day business. The DfES may also use contact details from these sources to obtain samples for statistical surveys: these surveys may be carried out by research agencies working under contract to the Department and participation in such surveys is usually voluntary. The Department may also match data from these sources to data obtained from statistical surveys.</p> <p>Pupil data may also be shared with other Government Departments and Agencies (including the Office for National Statistics) for statistical or research purposes only. In all these cases when individualised data is used in the processing operation that data will not be processed in such a way that it affects particular individuals or identifies individuals in any results. This data sharing will be approved and controlled by the Department's Chief Statistician.</p> <p>The DfES may also disclose individual pupil information to independent researchers into the educational achievements who have a legitimate need for it for their research, but each case will be determined on its merits and needs approval from the DfES Chief Statistician.</p>

the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) holds information on pupils in order to ...	administer the National Curriculum tests and assessments for Key Stages 1 to 3. The results are passed on to DfES so it can compile statistics on trends and patterns in levels of achievement. The QCA uses the information to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Curriculum and the associated assessment arrangements, and to ensure that these are continually improved.
Ofsted holds information on pupils in order to ...	help inspectors evaluate the work of schools, to assist schools in their self-evaluation, and as part of Ofsted's assessment of the effectiveness of education initiatives and policy. Inspection reports do not identify individual pupils.
The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) holds information on pupils in order to ...	compile statistics, to evaluate and develop education policy and to monitor the performance of the education service as a whole. The statistics (including those based on information from QCA) are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. Sometimes information may be shared with other Government departments or agencies strictly for statistical or research purposes only. The LSC or its partners may wish to contact learners from time to time about courses, or learning opportunities relevant to them.
The Department of Health uses	aggregate information about pupils' height and weight for research and statistical purposes, to inform, influence and improve health policy and to monitor the performance of the health service as a whole.
Primary Care Trusts use information about pupils for ...	research and statistical purposes, to monitor the performance of local health services and to evaluate and develop them. The statistics are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. Reception and Year 6 pupils have been weighed and measured in some schools, and information on the height and weight of individual pupils may be provided to the child and its parents; this will require the PCTs to maintain details of pupils' names for this purpose.

If you want to get hold of the information

Pupils, as data subjects, have certain rights under the Data Protection Act, including a general right of access to personal data held on them, with parents exercising this right on their behalf if they are too young to do so themselves. If you wish to access the personal data held about your child, then please contact the relevant organisation in writing:

- your child's school;
- the Local Authority's Data Protection Officer at Cornwall County Council, County Hall, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 3AY;
- the QCA's Data Protection Officer at QCA, 83 Piccadilly, LONDON, W1J 8QA;
- Ofsted's Data Protection Officer at Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE;
- LSC's Data Protection Officer at Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, Warwickshire CV1 2WT;
- the DfES's Data Protection Officer at DfES, Caxton House, Tothill Street, LONDON, SW1H 9NA.
- the Department of Health's Data Protection Officer at Skipton House 80 London Road London SE1 6LH;
- your local Primary Care Trust.

In order to fulfil their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act the organisation may, before responding to this request, seek proof of identity and any further information required to locate the information requested. Separately from the Data Protection Act, regulations provide a pupil's parent (regardless of the age of the pupil) with the right to view, or to have a copy of, their child's educational record at the school. If parents wish to exercise this right you should write to the school.