



Dacorum Education
Support Centre

Data Protection Policy

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

DESC is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and continues to update this annual registration.

Schools, Local Authorities (LAs), the Department for Education (DfE) and other government departments all process information on pupils and in doing so 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. The types of data we hold, why that data is held, and to whom it may be passed on is outlined below.

DESC holds information on pupils in order to support their teaching and learning, to monitor and report on their progress, to provide appropriate pastoral care, and to assess how well the school as a whole is doing. This information includes contact details, national curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information. From time to time schools are required to pass on some of this data to LAs, the DfE and agencies that are prescribed by law.

The **Local Authority** uses information about children for whom it provides services to carry out specific functions for which it is responsible, such as the assessment of any special educational needs the child may have. The DfE also uses the information to derive statistics to inform decisions on (for example) 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 children cannot be identified from them. LAs have a duty under the Children Act 2004 to cooperate with their partners in health and youth justice to improve the well-being of children in their areas. As part of this duty they will be required to maintain the accuracy of the information held on the Information Sharing (IS) Index about children and young people in their area.

Ofsted uses information about the progress and performance of pupils 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 Children Act 2004 provides for the Secretary of State to issue Regulations requiring the "governing body of a schools in England" to disclose information for inclusion on the Information Sharing (IS) Index. The purposes of the index are to:

- Help practitioners working with children quickly identify a child with whom they have contact;
- determine whether that child is getting the universal services (education, primary health care) to which he or she is entitled; and
- enable earlier identification of needs and earlier, more effective action to address these needs by providing a tool to help practitioners identify which other practitioners are involved with a particular child; and
- encourage better communication and closer working between practitioners

The index will hold for each child or young person in England:

- Basic identifying information: name, address, gender, date of birth and a unique identifying number based on the existing Unique Identifying Number/National Insurance Number;
- Basic identifying information about the child's parent or carer;
- Contact details for services involved with the child: as a minimum school and GP Practice but also other services where appropriate; and
- the facility for practitioners to indicate to others that they have information to share, are taking action or have undertaken a common assessment in relation to a child.

The index will NOT record statements of a child's needs, academic performance, attendance or clinical observations about a child.

All practitioners and system support staff (in LAs who will be responsible for maintaining the data) will have to have relevant training and to have undergone rigorous checks and appropriate security clearance procedures. To ensure high standards of accuracy, information on the IS Index will be drawn from a number of sources including the termly School Census from which, from January 2007, pupils' home address will be collected.

The Department for Education will also provide Ofsted with pupil data for use in school inspection. Where relevant, pupil information may also be shared with post 16 learning institutions to minimise the administrative burden on application for a course and to aid the preparation of learning plans.

Pupil information may be matched with other data sources that the Department holds in order to model and monitor pupils' educational progression; and to provide comprehensive information back to LAs and learning institutions to support their day to day business. The DfE 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.

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 the matching will require that individualised data is used in the processing operation, but that data will not be processed in such a way that it supports measures or decisions relating to particular individuals or identifies individuals in any results. This data sharing will be approved and controlled by the Department's Chief Statistician.

The DfE may also disclose individual pupil information to independent researchers into the educational achievements of pupils who have a legitimate need for it for their research, but each case will be determined on its merits and subject to the approval of the Department's Chief Statistician.

Providing information to Connexions services providers and the right to opt out

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

Connexions brings together all the services and support young people need during their teenage years offering differentiated and integrated support to young people through Personal Advisers (PAs). For some young people this may be just for careers advice, for others it may involve more in-depth support to help identify barriers to learning and find solutions brokering access to more specialist support, eg drug abuse, sexual health and homelessness. PAs work in a range of settings including schools, colleges, one-stop shops community centres and on an out-reach basis.

For pupils of 13 years and over, the school is legally required to pass on certain information to Connexions services providers on request. This information includes the name and address of the pupil and parent, and any further information relevant to the Connexions services' role. However parents, or the pupils themselves if aged 16 or over, can ask that no information beyond name and address (for pupil and parent) be passed on to Connexions. If as a parent, or as a pupil aged 16 or over, you do not want Connexions to receive from the school information beyond name and address, then please contact the school within **28 days** of receiving this note. If you do not notify the school that you wish to exercise your right to opt out after the 28 day period has elapsed information will be passed to Connexions providers upon request.

The LA and DfE may supply to Connexions services providers information which they have about children, but will not pass on any information they have received from the school if parents (or the children themselves if aged 16 or over) have notified the school that Connexions should not receive information beyond name and address