



TFT Retention Policy 2026

Created by: Operations & Procurement Business Partner and Trust GDPR Coordinator

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Date of Next Review: March 2027 or earlier in response to statutory changes

Retention Policy

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Retention Policy

1. ABOUT THIS POLICY

Our Trust, and schools within the Trust, recognise that by efficiently managing our records, we will be able to comply with our legal and regulatory obligations, and to contribute to the effective overall management of our schools. Maintaining good records helps us to provide the evidence needed to protect the legal rights and interests of our schools, and for us to demonstrate our performance and accountability.

This policy provides the framework through which we will effectively manage our records.

It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Safe destruction of records
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Relationships with existing policies

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by permanent and temporary staff of the schools in the course of carrying out its functions. Also, by any agents, contractors, consultants or third parties acting on behalf of the schools.

Records are defined as all documents which facilitate the business carried out by the school and which are thereafter retained to provide evidence of transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electrical format e.g. paper documents, scanned documents, e-mails, audio and video recordings, text messages, notes of telephone and spreadsheets, Word Documents, presentations, etc.

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000), Data Use and Access ACT 2025 (DUAA 2025). It is based on the IRMS Toolkit For Schools, the Department of Education – Data Protection Toolkit for Schools, Department of Education – Annual Review of School Records and Safe Destruction Checklist, and guidance published by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on the GDPR.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Governing Body

The governing body of the Academy Trust has a statutory responsibility to maintain the school's records and record keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory framework of the schools.

4.2 The Data Protection Lead / responsible person

Each School's Data Protection Lead will provide guidance on good records management practices within each school and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely way.

The Data Protection Lead will monitor compliance with this policy by ensuring that the 'Annual Review of School Records Checklist' is completed at least annually. The Data Protection Lead will also maintain a Data Destruction Log.

4.3 All Staff

It is the responsibility for all members of staff to ensure that our schools do not keep personal information for longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes for which it was collected.

Our schools will manage and document its records disposal process in line with the guidance provided by the IRMS Toolkit for Schools.

It is the responsibility of all members of the schools to ensure that they:

- Manage school records consistently in accordance with school's policies and procedures;
- Properly document their actions and decisions;
- Hold personal information securely;
- Only share personal information appropriately and do not disclose it to an unauthorised third party;
- Dispose of records securely in accordance with the guidance set out in the Information and Records Management Society's (IRMS) toolkit for schools/school's Records Retention Schedule.
- Notify the School's Data Protection Lead of any data disposal. The School's Data Protection Lead will record this on their Data Destruction Log.

Staff who do not comply with this policy may face disciplinary action.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

5. SAFE DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

All records containing personal information, or sensitive policy information will be made either unreadable or un-reconstructable.

- Paper records should be shredded using a cross-cutting shredder
- CDs / DVDs / Floppy Disks should be cut into pieces
- Audio / Video Tapes and Fax Rolls should be dismantled and shredded
- Hard Disks and Digital Media Devices should be dismantled and sanded

Any other records will be bundled up and disposed of to a wastepaper merchant or disposed of in other appropriate ways.

Do not put records containing personal information with the regular waste or a skip.

Where an external provider is used, where possible, all records will be shredded on-site in the presence of an employee. The organisation must also be able to prove that the records have been destroyed by the company who should provide a Certificate of Destruction. Staff working for the external provider will be trained in the handling of confidential documents.

The shredding will be planned with specific dates and all records will be identified as to the date of destruction.

PLEASE NOTE: if the records are recorded as 'to be destroyed' but have not yet been destroyed and a request for the records has been received they **MUST** still be provided.

6. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires us to maintain a list of records which have been destroyed and who authorised their destruction

When destroying either a substantial amount of information or information which is of a particularly sensitive or important nature, members of staff should record at least:

- The information that has been destroyed
- The volume of the information that has been destroyed
- Who provided authorisation to destroy the information
- The date the information was destroyed

By following this guidance and completing the Annual Checklist, we will ensure that our schools are compliant with the Data Protection rules and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING POLICIES

This policy is linked to our:

- Data Protection Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Annual Checklist and Retention Schedule Document