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Compiled by: Lucie Edwards	
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Date ratified by Governors:

Signed:

Mary Hare Schools Records management policy

Background

1. Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires schools to follow a Code of Practice on managing their records. Under section 7 of the Code of Practice on the Management of Records, it states that:
'Authorities should have in place a records management policy, either as a separate policy or as part of a wider information or knowledge management policy.'

Statement

2. The School recognises that by efficiently managing its records, it will be able to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the institution. Records provide evidence for protecting the legal rights and interests of the school, and provide evidence for demonstrating performance and accountability. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:
 - Scope
 - Responsibilities
 - Relationships with existing policies

Scope

3. This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by staff of the school in the course of varying out its functions.
4. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the school and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

Responsibilities

5. The school has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the School Principal.
6. The person responsible for records management in the school will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in timely way. They will also monitor compliance with this policy by surveying at least annually to check if records are stored securely and can be accessed appropriately.

7. The school office staff have primary responsibility for the collection, storage and retention of records.
8. Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with school's records management guidelines.

Relationship with existing policies:

9. The following are policy to read alongside records management;
 - Data Protection
 - Physical intervention, de-escalation and physical contact
 - Money and valuables
 - Damage repairs and maintenance
 - Health and safety
 - Risk Assessment
 - Child protection and safeguarding
 - First aid
 - Complaints and representations
 - Absence without authority

Objective

10. The objective of this policy is;
 - To clarify expectations of staff in relation to recording pastoral information.
 - To provide guidance and support to staff in relation to the recording, sharing, storage and retention of confidential information.
 - To ensure continuity in meeting the pastoral needs of pupils when staff are unavailable or leave.
 - To ensure managers have the means to monitor the effectiveness of interventions designed to meet pupils' pastoral needs.
 - To provide a source of information for enquiries and investigations into complaints and to offer staff support in such circumstances.

Purpose of Recording

11. The purpose of recording is;
 - To comply with legal requirements and government expectations.
 - To provide a documented account of the school's involvement with pupils and their families in relation to pastoral matters.
 - To provide a source of information to help in planning strategies to meet pupils' pastoral needs.
 - To demonstrate accountability of staff in decision-making and to ensure that their actions are open to scrutiny.
 - To ensure continuity in meeting the needs of pupils when staff are unavailable or have left.
 - To provide evidence for investigations and enquiries and to protect both staff and pupils where allegations or questions of conduct are raised.
 - To demonstrate compliance with policy and procedural requirements.

12. The overall purpose of maintaining records is to ensure that the school has sufficient information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and attend to their pastoral needs.

Procedures for recording information

13. Records need to be concise (but contain enough information for their purpose), relevant, legible and written in easy to understand language.
14. Staff should write their records with their audience in mind. They should use simple language and avoid the use of professional jargon. It is also good practice to avoid abbreviations or initials. If it is necessary to use these forms they should be explained in full the first time they are used.
15. Where possible, staff should attempt to confine the record to factual events. However, where opinions or judgements are made those should be clearly identified as such e.g. if a pupil was seen who appeared to be under the influence of alcohol it would be inappropriate to record that she was drunk (fact). It would be more appropriate to record that she appeared intoxicated - evidenced by slurred speech, unsteady gait and smell of alcohol (professional judgement).
16. All records must conform to anti-oppressive/anti-discriminatory practice and must not contain any negative stereotypical, derogatory, insulting or subjective descriptions of children/young people or their parents/carers.
17. The purpose of keeping records is to ensure that the school has sufficient information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and attend to their pastoral needs. Staff also need to be aware that there is the potential for all the information they record to move into the public domain either:
 - through a request by a parent/carer or child/young person to access their records or ...
 - through a requirement to disclose information to Police/Social Services in the course of a criminal or child protection investigation or ...
 - on the direction of a Court

Data protection

18. When receiving information staff must adhere to the Data Protection principles. Personal data must be:
 - **processed fairly and lawfully** i.e. the data subject should be told that information is being collected and why; what will happen to it and with whom it will be shared and under what circumstances.
 - **processed only for specific purposes** i.e. information is not collected for its own sake, rather to maintain a record of pastoral issues in relation to a

child/young person with the purpose of safeguarding and promoting his/her welfare.

- **adequate, relevant and not excessive** i.e. only collect and keep information you require. Staff must be able to justify why information was obtained and retained if asked.
- **accurate and up-to-date** i.e. there is an expectation that staff will check the accuracy of information and keep it up to date. Any inaccuracies should be corrected. There should be no private or secret records on any child or young person.
- **not kept for longer than necessary** i.e. there is an expectation that records will be regularly reviewed and information no longer relevant or necessary will be removed. However, all information relating to a child's welfare or safety will always be deemed necessary and should be retained.
- **processed in line with the rights of the data subject** i.e. children/young people and their parents have a right to access information held on them.
- **protected by appropriate security** i.e. records should be kept safely and securely to ensure that no confidential information is inadvertently disclosed. There is an expectation that information will be exchanged on a 'need to know' basis and staff will monitor their conversations to ensure they are not overheard.

Sharing information and access to records

19. All recorded information remains confidential and is only shared with individuals with a right to access or need to know in order to safeguard and promote a pupil's welfare. Parents or pupils wishing to see their files may do so, with confidential or third-party information excepted. More information about the access to records can be found in the schools Data Protection policy.

Storage and retention

20. It is Mary Hare policy to retain all individual pupil records for 30 years after the date of birth of that pupil. Where records are kept in a book form, they are kept for 30 years from the date of birth of the youngest pupil within the last school year of records made. The care team transfer pupil care files of leavers to the school office at the end of the academic year. The individual pupil care file and school file are consolidated at the time of leaving, after receiving the results of their final exams. These inactive files are then securely stored.

Safe destruction of records

21. All records containing personal information should be disposed of by shredding when the retention date expires. A log should be kept of the document and date of disposal. This is organised by the school office.

Safe transfer of records between schools

22. The school transfers pupil records to other schools electronically using a secure common transfer file via SIMS. Paper records are sent by special delivery to the new school.

Managing pupil records

23. The pupil record should be seen as the core record charting an individual pupil's progress through the education system. The pupil record should accompany the pupil to every school they attend and should contain information that is accurate, objective and easy to access. These guidelines are based on the assumption that the pupil record is a principal record and that all information relating to the pupil will be found in the file (although it may spread across more than one file; including Care Files).
24. It is strongly recommended that schools use a consistent file cover for the pupil record. This assists the school and care to ensure consistency of practice when receiving records from a number of different primary schools. If, for example, primary schools have many different file covers for their files, the secondary school that the pupil files were transferred to would then be holding different levels of information for pupils which had come from different primary schools.
25. By using pre-printed file covers all the necessary information is collated and the record looks tidy and reflects the fact that it is the principal record containing all the information about an individual child. The use of standard document wallets should be avoided as it is very difficult to ensure that all the information required by the school is recorded consistently.

Opening a file

26. The pupil record starts its life when a file is opened for each new pupil as they begin school. This is the file which will follow the pupil for the rest of his/her school career. If pre-printed file covers are not being used then the following information should appear on the front of the paper file:
 - Surname
 - Forename
 - DOB
 - Special Educational Needs Yes/No [Additional to deafness]
27. The file cover should also contain a note of the date when the file was opened and the date when the file is closed if it is felt to be appropriate.

28. Inside the front cover the following information should be easily accessible:

- The name of the pupil's doctor
- Emergency contact details
- Gender
- Preferred name
- Position in family
- Ethnic origin [although this is "sensitive" data under the Data Protection Act 1998, the Department for Education require statistics about ethnicity]
- Language of home (if other than English)
- Religion [although this is "sensitive" data under the Data Protection Act 1998, the school has good reasons for collecting the information]
- Any allergies or other medical conditions that it is important to be aware of although this is "sensitive" data under the Data Protection Act 1998, the school has good reasons for collecting the information]
- Names of parents and/or guardians with home address and telephone number (and any additional relevant carers and their relationship to the child)
- Name of the school, admission number and the date of admission and the date of leaving.
- Any other agency involvement e.g. speech and language therapist, paediatrician
- It is essential that these files, which contain personal information, are managed against the information security guidelines.

29. Items which should be included on the pupil record

- Admission form (application form)
- Fair processing notice [if these are issued annually only the most recent need be on the file]
- Parental permission for photographs to be taken (or not)
- Years Record
- Annual Written Report to Parents
- National Curriculum and R.E. Agreed Syllabus Record Sheets
- Any reports written about the child
- Any information about an EHC plan and support offered in relation to the EHC plan
- Any relevant medical information.
- Child protection reports/disclosures (should be stored in the file in an envelope clearly marked as such, upon achieving)
- Any information relating to exclusions (fixed or permanent)
- Any correspondence with parents or outside agencies relating to major issues
- Details of any complaints made by the parents or the pupil

30. The following records should be stored separately to the pupil record as they are subject to shorter retention periods and if they are placed on the file then it

will involve a lot of unnecessary weeding of the files before they are transferred on to another school.

- Absence notes.
- Parental consent forms for trips/outings.
- Correspondence with parents about minor issues.
- Accident forms (these are to be stored separately in the Medical Department and retained on the school premises until their statutory retention period is reached. A copy could be placed on the pupil file in the event of a major incident)

31. Each pupil care plan file must contain the following information:

- Name, gender, date of birth and home address.
- Religious persuasion (if any), described racial origin, cultural and linguistic background.
- Contact arrangements – name, address and telephone numbers, including emergency contact. Also stating any restrictions on contact or communication with parents or others.
- Any special dietary, health or dental needs.
- Welfare plan and one2one documents.
- Risk assessments (individual risk assessments for behaviour or welfare)
- Records of non-prescription medication given.
- Dates and details of unauthorised absences from school.
- Date and circumstances of any sanctions given or measure of control, reasonable force or discipline used on the child.
- Any details or reports of significant incidents or accidents.
- An up-to-date record of pupil development.

32. A separate file is kept in surgery containing details of the pupil's registered GP, details of accidents, injuries or serious illness, immunisations, allergies and prescribed medication given, including medication controlled by the pupil themselves.

Procedures for Welfare plans and pupil One2Ones

33. Welfare plans are provided to assess individual pupil needs, in care, in accordance with the pupils EHC plan and to plan how these might be met. Individual pupil care is provided in accordance with this plan and its progress is monitored and updated.

34. Pupils were invited to devise a name and logo for their individual care planning meetings and chose the name 'One2One.'

35. The Welfare plans are reviewed through the One2Ones each term by the pupil's key worker, unless another person is requested by the pupil. It is the responsibility of the key worker to ensure that the plan is being complied with on a day-to-day basis. In the sixth form, pupils are given One2One questionnaires to complete which enables any additional information, support or strategies to be given to individual pupils.

36. One2Ones should take into account the following:

- Targets and actions form EHC plans
- Health needs and promotion
- Communication methods
- Cultural and religious needs
- Social and leisure needs
- Contact arrangements for family, friends and others.
- Managing disabilities and individual special needs
- Medication administration (where necessary)
- Provision of intimate care, such as guidance with hygiene, bathing or hair washing
- Any other additional needs
- An understanding of school rules and routines

37. One2Ones should be written clearly and concisely and should document areas where progress has been made and identify any future aims or actions.

38. Pupils should have the opportunity to read their completed Welfare plan and One2Ones and sign it to say that they have read and understood the content and any aims or action it identifies. The key worker should also sign and date it.

Incident records

39. The following record books are kept securely in the Heads of Care office and managed by the Vice Principal:

- Major incident book
- Absence without authority book
- Physical intervention book
- Complaints book
- Compliments book
- Child protection allegations or concerns and referrals to Children's Services / Ofsted

40. Records that fall under these headings are checked by the Care Standards Officer before being included in the books, to ensure all relevant information is present. These records are monitored half-termly by the Care Standards Officer and Vice Principal, along with the Independent Visitor (a Governor or their appointed representative), during their Standard 20 visits. Copies of these records are kept in individual pupil care plan files, with the exception of Child Protection records.

41. Each house keeps its own records of all sanctions given. These are evaluated termly by Team Leaders and Heads of Care. They are also monitored by the Care Standards Officer and the Independent Visitor.

Accident and injury records

42. Staff are required to complete an accident form for any pupil involved in an accident, receiving a significant injury or when they are taken to hospital for either of these reasons. At the secondary school, the school nurse will issue an accident form and it must be completed and returned to the surgery as soon as possible. At the Primary School, the accident forms are kept in the main school office and it is the responsibility of the person dealing with the accident or injury to complete the form.
 43. Staff involved in an accident or receiving an injury whilst at work, must complete an accident form. These are held in the bursary at the Secondary School and in the main school office at the Primary School.
 44. Any visitors involved in an accident or receiving an injury whilst on School premises, must also complete an accident form.
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