



Stratford College Student Record Keeping Policy

Ratified: Mr. Michael Gilbert, School Manager

Date: February 2008

Scope and Purpose

This policy relates to the retention, use and dissemination of information of records relating to students in the school community and in particular supports effective teaching and learning. Student Records are defined as anything held in written or electronic form that refers to a student's education progress.

In the spirit of a caring and supportive community Stratford College aims to ensure that a system of record keeping is established and maintained which supports the teaching and learning process and recognises the value of good communication. Such a policy will also promote a sense of community with teachers, students and parents adopting a partnership approach.

- Section 9 (g) of the Education Act 1998 requires that a school "ensures that parents of a student or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, have access in a prescribed manner to records kept by that school relating to the progress of that student in his/her education"
- Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 requires that a school maintain a register of all students attending the school.
- Section 21 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 requires that a school maintain a daily record of attendance/non-attendance to include the reasons for non-attendance.

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Teachers will be guided in their teaching to ensure that each student will receive an appropriate education. Students and parents will receive regular feedback which will assist the student to monitor his/her progress in terms of achieving appropriate learning targets in addition to meeting behaviour and attendance requirements.

Parents and students will become aware at the earliest possible time of difficulties in relation to a student's behaviour and/or attendance. Communication can commence between school and home in relation to these issues.

Excellent communication based on factual and accurate data will be a feature of the school.

The school will meet statutory requirements under the relevant areas of legislation

Clarity will exist in the school community in relation to a system of record keeping including creation, maintenance, use of, storage and access.

- The school will ensure that the information kept in individual student's records is accurate and secure and conforms to the terms of this policy.
- Parents/guardians and students over the age of 18 will have their requests for review of their records dealt with in accordance with this policy.

Content

Student Records should be maintained in the following areas:

- a) Enrolment Details – application forms, reports from other schools, assessments etc
- b) Pupils academic progress including examination/assessment results
- c) Reports/assessments in the area of special needs
- d) Serious incidents of pupil misbehaviour

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- e) Attendance/non-attendance
- f) References
- g) Accidents/incidents
- h) counselling notes

N.B. It is advisable to inform parents that a particular incident is being recorded.

- a) Manual
- b) Computerised

Access

Designated Personnel

- a) Teachers/authorised members of staff
- b) E.W.O. re attendance as outlined in the Education Welfare Act 2000
- c) Parents, re own child and students over the age of 18 re own record, as per section 9 (g) of the Education Act 1998. Any such request should be made in writing to the Principal who will arrange an appointment for the purpose of reviewing the record. The parent/guardian and student over the age of 18 may see and make notes about the relevant record but must not enter any notes on the record. Upon completion of the review of the record the parent/guardian or student over the age of 18, will acknowledge in writing that they had inspected the record and this acknowledgement becomes part of the record.
- d) Other school at point of transfer of a student between schools
- e) Under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003
- f) Under the discovery process in legal proceedings
- g) Through the Freedom of Information Act 1997 when schools submit documents to government departments

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- and other agencies who come under the remit of FOI.
- h) The School Manager may refuse access to a record in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a report on a student's record which includes details of a particularly sensitive family matter etc.)
- i) In the event of legal proceedings which may limit the right of one or both parents to access to information about their child, the school should be informed in writing immediately.
- j) Outside Requests: those who are not parents/guardians or students over the age of 18 will not have access to records, except in exceptional circumstances such as a request by the Gardai, health board personnel etc. All such requests must be made to the Principal and will only be released on the production of proof of identity and the reason for the request.

Guidelines re Content

Factual, which may include a teacher's professional opinion

b) Brief

c) Up to date

d) Records should be written on the basis that "every thing may be seen by everybody".

Storage

The storage of student records should be secure and confidential. Offices, filing cabinets, secure computer access and archives are provided to ensure this

b) Procedures re access

Staff are responsible for their own record keeping and should follow school, professional ethical and best practise guidelines eg Institute of Guidance Counsellors with regard to keeping records. Access to any records may be given as per this policy.

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c) Archival system

The school archives are kept in the store room attached to the library. There is also an archival section in both the Resource and Guidance offices, relating to these specific areas only. All records are kept in locked filing cabinets and all three rooms are locked when not in use.

Designated Personnel: School Manager/Principal/Deputy Principal/Bursar

- a) State Examination Commissions results and Department of Education and Science Roll Books are kept for an indefinite period. Records relating to serious situations re counselling, SEN and or Discipline are also kept indefinitely.
- b) Job applications are kept for a period of 1 year.
- c) All other records are kept for a period of 6 years
- d) The destruction of records will be carried out by designated personnel only and using a shredder.

Review

Notwithstanding the need to make ongoing adjustments, the policy should be reviewed after two years.

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Appendix 1

Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

Schools should note that DATA is defined as *personal information held relating to an individual/employee in electronic or manual form.*

The duties of a data controller (school authority/employer) come under the Eight Data Protection Principles:

1. Obtain and process the information fairly
2. Keep it only for one or more specified and lawful purposes
3. Process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given to you initially
4. Keep it safe and secure
5. Keep it accurate and up to date
6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
7. Retain it no longer than is necessary
8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to any individual on request.

Commonly schools are obliged to register with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner because they record "sensitive data" about their pupils on computer.

"Sensitive data" refers to personal data relating to: racial origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, physical or mental health, sexual life, criminal convictions. Even if a school doesn't retain such "sensitive data" electronically the submission to the Department of Education/Science or other statutory bodies of information in relation to an individual's health or learning disability would constitute grounds to be registered as a data controller.

Further information may be had by contacting the Data Protection Commissioner, Block 6, Irish Life Centre, Lower

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Abbey Street, Dublin 1. Telephone: 01-8748544. Web: www.dataprotection.ie or by consulting the Data Protection Information Pack which was issued to all schools by the Department of Education and Science in September 2003.

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