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Data Protection/Record Retention Policy

Introduction:

The purpose of the policy is to identify the Records required to be retained by the school and to ensure confidentiality and manageable procedures in relation to access to such records by parents and stake holders.

Rationale:

- A policy on data protection and record keeping is necessary to ensure that the school has proper procedures in place in relation to accountability and transparency
- It is good practice to record pupil progress so as to identify learning needs
- A policy must be put in place to ensure a school complies with legislation such as;
 - Education Act, Section 9g requiring a school to provide access to records to students over 18/parents
 - Education Welfare Act – requiring a school to report school attendance and transfer of pupils

Relationship to School Ethos:

Scoil Mhuire promotes openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils as a means towards providing the caring environment through which a child can develop and grow to full potential.

Aims/Objectives:

- To ensure the school complies with legislative requirements
- To clarify the types of records maintained and the procedures relating to making them available to the relevant bodies
- To put in place a proper recording and reporting framework on the educational progress of pupils
- To establish clear guidelines on making these records available to parents and pupils over 18
- To stipulate the length of time records and reports will be retained

Guidelines:

The Principal assumes the function of data controller and supervises the application of the Data Protection Act within the school. The data under the control of the Principal comes under the following headings.

Personal Data:

This data relates to personal details of the students such as name, address, date of birth, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, religious belief, medical details, dietary information, PPSN. It does not include parents and guardians details. These are kept in the Administration Office.

Student Records:

Student records are held by each class teacher and a master copy is held in the administration office. Student records contain:-

- Personal details of the student
- School report cards
- Psychological Assessments (if any)
- Standardised Test Results
- Attendance Records
- Screening Test such as MIST. and NRIT
- Data Protection
- Teacher – designed tests. Each class teacher designs his/her own test template
- Diagnostic Tests Reports
- Individual Education Plans
- Learning Support/Resource Data such as records of refusals to allow children access to LS/RT services in the school
- Portfolios of student work e.g. Art
- Staff Data – name, address, date of birth, contact details, payroll number, pension details, attendance records, qualifications, school records, etc.

Administrative Data:

- Attendance Reports, Roll Book, Registers
- Accident Report Book
- Administration of Medicines Indemnity Form

Access to Records:

The following will have access where relevant and appropriate to the data listed above;

- Parents/Guardians
- Past Pupils over 18
- Health Service Executive
- Designated School Personnel
- Department of Education and Science
- First and Second level schools (where relevant)

A parental authorisation form must be completed by parents in the event of data being transferred to outside agencies such as health professionals etc. Outside agencies requesting access to records must do so in writing giving seven days notice. Parents/Guardians can make such a request either by phone or in writing.

The Annual School Report format and its communication to parents are outlined clearly in our schools Pupil Profiling/Reporting on Pupils Policy. A standardised school report form is used which is issued by post in the last week in June.

Storage:

Records are kept for a minimum of 7 years. Standardised tests booklets are shredded after one year but the raw score, stens and percentiles are kept on record until past pupils reach adulthood.

A pupil profile is held by each teacher in his/her individual classroom and passed on to the next teacher as the child moves to the next class.

As children pass to second level their personal records are stored in the school attic for a period of time (7 yrs minimum). All completed school roll books are stored in a similar location in addition to samples of children's work and pupil profiles. Access to these stored files is restricted to authorised personnel only. For computerised records, systems are password protected.

Success Criteria:

- Compliance with Data Protection Act and Statue of Limitations Act
- Easy access to records
- Framework in place for ease of compilation and reporting
- Manageable storage of records

Roles and Responsibilities:

The school staff, under the direction of the Principal will implement and monitor this policy. Individual teachers will design, administer and record all in-class testing. The Principal will ensure records are maintained and stored, particularly the records of students transferring to another school.

Implementation Data:

This new policy is effective from _____. All records held from before that date will continue to be maintained in the school attic.

Review/Ratification/Communication:

This policy was ratified and communicated in _____..

References:

Solas (CPSMA) May-June 2001
Education Act 1998
Education Welfare Act 2000
Date Protection Act 2003
Freedom of Information Act