

Shropshire Council Retention Guidelines for Schools

This retention schedule contains recommended retention periods for the different record series created and maintained by schools during their business. The schedule refers to all information regardless of the media in which it is stored.

Some of the retention periods are governed by statute. Others are guidelines following best practice. Every effort has been made to ensure that these retention periods are compliant with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Managing record series using these retention guidelines will be deemed to be 'normal processing' under the legislation mentioned above. If record series are to be kept for longer or shorter periods than laid out in this document the reasons for this need to be documented.

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1. Acknowledgements

This retention schedule for schools is based on the guidelines issued by the Local Government Group of the Records Management Society of Great Britain and the Shropshire Council Education authority.

2. The purpose of the school retention schedule

The purpose of the retention schedule Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, schools are required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which the school creates during its business.

The retention schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.

Staff are expected to manage their current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different kinds of retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems.

The retention schedule refers to all information, regardless of the media in which they are stored.

3. Benefits of a school retention schedule

There are several benefits which arise from the use of a complete retention schedule:

- Managing records against the retention schedule is deemed to be 'normal processing' under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- Providing staff are managing record series using the retention schedule, they cannot be found guilty of unauthorised tampering with files once a freedom of information request or a data subject access request has been made.
- Staff can be confident about destroying information at the appropriate time.
- Information which is subject to Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation will be available when required.
- The school is not maintaining records and storing information unnecessarily.

4. Maintaining and amending the school retention schedule

Where appropriate this retention schedule will be reviewed by the Records Manager, Shropshire Council and amended to include any new record series created. It will also remove any obsolete record series. The Shropshire Council corporate retention schedule will also be updated.

5. What to do with records once they have reached the end of their administrative life:

5.1 Destruction of records

There records have been identified for destruction they should be disposed of in an appropriate way. All records containing personal information, or sensitive policy information should be destroyed (shred hard copy) before disposal (if possible).

Any other records should be bundled up and disposed of to a waste-paper merchant or disposed of in other appropriate ways. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the school to maintain a list of records which have been destroyed and who authorised their destruction. Staff should record at least:

- File reference (or another unique identifier)
- File title (or brief description)
- Number of files
- The name of the authorising officer. This could be kept in an Excel spreadsheet or other database format.

5.2 Transfer of records to Shropshire Archives

Where records have been identified as being worthy of permanent preservation, arrangements should be made to offer the records to Shropshire Archives. A list of the records sent to the archives should be created to include the information above. The contact details for Shropshire Archives are as follows:

Senior Archivist
Shropshire Archives
Castle Gates
Shrewsbury
SY1 2AQ
Tel: 0345 678 9096
Email: archives@shropshire.gov.uk

5.3 Transfer of information to other media

Where lengthy retention periods have been allocated to records, staff may wish to consider converting paper records to other media such as microform or digital media. The lifespan of the media and the ability to migrate data where necessary should always be considered.

6. Useful Contacts

Name	Job Title	Contact
Dale Pitt	Records Manager	01743 252612
Tom Mullen	Data Protection Officer	01743 252774

7.1 Child Protection: The retention and use of records relating to child protection matters concerning pupils, and child protection allegations against staff requires specific guidance in this schedule.

Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Child protection files	Yes	Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidelines	DOB + 25 yrs Once the child protection file is transferred, there is no need to keep a copy.	Ultimate disposal action: Destroy. Child Protection information should not be copied when children leave the school or college (where the child is still under 18, the information does not need to be sent to a university). Ensure the child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Where a child is removed from roll to be educated at home, the file should be sent to the Local Education Authority.
Incident statements and supporting notes (Behaviour, SEN, bullying, domestic issues, safeguarding and pastoral care and child protection)	Yes	ICO Guidance 2018	DOB + 25 yrs	Restricted access to sensitive incident records and data maintained on a secure remote server managed in the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS). CPOMS enables the school to track referrals to external agencies (NHS / Children's services / Police and communication with parents and carers. Hard copy records have the potential for 3 rd party access and sensitive data can be lost by potential fire and flooding. CPOMS is cloud based and allows a school to upload records to a hosted site to share. Records can be accessed securely from various types of devices and data is secured.

				Original copies do not need to be retained once the records have been uploaded and verified within CPOMS. Records in CPOMS conform to BS10008:2020, allowing for hard copy records to be destroyed. Records of files being transferred to another school that do not have CPOMS in place must be download as a hard copy file for any transfer This should be transferred separately as a hard copy file of all records and data, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Schools do not need to keep original documents once digitised within CPOMS, but where a decision is made locally to retain original documents, they must be retained securely.
Allegations of abuse made against a Teacher or other staff, including where the allegation is unfounded	Yes	Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidelines	Until the person's normal retirement age, or 10 yrs from the date of the allegation if that's longer	Once an unfounded investigation is completed, an employer may keep limited record that an allegation was received and investigated. For example, where the allegation relates to abuse and the person is employed to work with children, or other vulnerable individuals. A summary record may be retained on the confidential personnel file and a copy given to the person concerned.

7.2 Governors				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Minutes				
Principal set (signed)	No		Permanent	RETAIN in school for 6 yrs from date of meeting and then offer to Archives
Inspection copies	No		3 yrs from date of meeting	DESTROY – If these Minutes contain any sensitive information, they should be Destroyed
Agendas	No		Date of meeting	DESTROY
Reports			Date of meeting + 6 yrs	RETAIN in school for 6 yrs from date of meeting and then offer to Archives
Annual parents' meetings	No		Date of meeting + 6 yrs	RETAIN in school for 6 yrs from date of meeting and then offer to Archives
Instruments of government	No		Permanent	RETAIN in school whilst school is open and then offer to Archives
Trusts and endowments	No		Permanent	RETAIN in school whilst operationally required and then offer to Archives
Action plans	No		Date of plan + 3 yrs	DESTROY under normal circumstances, but consider offering to Archives for a sample to be taken if the school has been through a difficult period
Policy documents	No		Expiry of policy	RETAIN in school whilst operationally required. This includes if the expired policy is part of a past decision making process – offer to Archives

7.3 School management				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Logbooks [Books where the Head-teacher or another member of staff keeps of record of what happens in the school, this may include details of events, photographs and other information]	Yes	Activities of individual pupils and staff are subject to data protection	Date of last entry in the book + 6 yrs	RETAIN in the school for 6 yrs from the date of the last entry - Offer to Archives
Minutes [Senior Management Team and other internal administrative bodies]	Yes	Amended in consultation with Safeguarding Children Group	Date of meeting + 5 yrs	RETAIN in school for 5 yrs from meeting and offer to Archives. The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation
Head teacher reports [Made by the Head Teacher or the Management Team]	Yes	Amended in consultation with Safeguarding Children Group	Date of report + 3 yrs	RETAIN in school for 3 yrs from completion of report/meeting and offer to Archives. The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation
School correspondence created by all staff with administrative responsibilities (except child protection records which are dealt with in section 7.1 above).	Yes	Amended in consultation with Safeguarding Children Group	Closure of file + 6 yrs	DESTROY - If these records contain sensitive information, they should be Destroyed

7.3 School management				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Correspondence created by head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of year and other members of staff with administrative responsibilities	No		Date of correspondence + 3 yrs	DESTROY - If these records contain sensitive information, they should be Destroyed
Professional development plans	Yes		Closure + 6 yrs	DESTROY
School development plans	No		Closure + 6 yrs	REVIEW - Offer to Archives
Employer's liability	Yes		Permanent	Offer to Archives
Performance reviews	Yes		Permanent	Offer to Archives

7.4 Pupils				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Admission registers	Yes		Date of last entry in the book (or file) + 6 yrs	RETAIN in the school for 6 yrs from the date of the last entry - Offer to Archives
Attendance registers	Yes		Date of register + 3 yrs	DESTROY - If these records are retained electronically, any back-up copies should also be destroyed at the same time
Pupil record cards	Yes			
<i>Primary</i>	Yes		RETAIN for the time which the pupil remains at the school	Transfer to the secondary school (or other primary school) when the child leaves the school - In the case of exclusion it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service
<i>Secondary</i>	Yes		DOB of the pupil + 25 yrs (not SEN)	DESTROY – In the case of exclusion, it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service
Pupil files	Yes			
<i>Primary</i>			RETAIN for the time which the pupil remains at the school	Transfer to the secondary school (or other primary school) when the child leaves the school - In the case of exclusion, it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service

7.4 Pupils				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
<i>Secondary</i>	Yes		DOB of the pupil + 25 yrs	DESTROY – In the case of exclusion, it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service
Deceased pupil files (Primary and Secondary)	Yes		7 yrs after the Pupil has died	Destroy. (Death occurs outside of education environment)
Special Educational Needs files, reviews & Individual plans	Yes		DOB of the pupil +35 yrs	DESTROY – In the case of exclusion, it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service
Letters authorising absence	No		Date of absence + 2 yrs	DESTROY
Absence books	No		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Examination results	Yes			
<i>Public</i>	No		Yr of examinations + 6 yrs	DESTROY – Any certificates left unclaimed should be returned to the examination board.
<i>Internal examination results</i>	Yes		Current yr +5 yrs	DESTROY – If records are retained on the pupil file, or National Records of Achievement, they need only be

				kept for as long as operationally necessary.
7.4 Pupils				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Pupil correspondence	Yes		Current yr + 3 yrs	REVIEW – Consider allocating a further retention period or DESTROY
Statement maintained under Education Act 1996 - Section 324	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 - Section 1	DOB + 30 yrs	DESTROY – Unless legal action is pending
Proposed statement or amended statement	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 - Section 1	DOB + 30 yrs	DESTROY – Unless legal action is pending
Advice and information to parents regarding educational needs	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 - Section 2	Closure + 12 yrs	DESTROY – Unless legal action is pending
Accessibility strategy	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 – Section 14	Closure + 12 yrs	DESTROY – Unless legal action is pending
Children SEN files	Yes		Closure + 35 yrs	DESTROY – Unless legal action is pending

7.5 Curriculum				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Curriculum development	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Curriculum returns	No		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
School syllabus	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period
Schemes of work	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period
Timetable	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period
Class books	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period
Mark books	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period
Records of homework set	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period
Pupil's work	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY - It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period

7.5 Curriculum				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
SATS results	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	These records should be Destroyed
PANDA reports	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	These records should be Destroyed

7.6 School personnel				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Timesheets, sick pay	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Staff personal files	Yes		Termination + 15 yrs	DESTROY
Interview notes and recruitment records	Yes		Date of interview + 1 yr	DESTROY
Pre-employment vetting information – including unsuccessful CRB checks	No	CRB guidelines	Date of check + 1 yr	DESTROY – This information should be placed on the personnel file if the applicant is successful
Disciplinary files (not child protection – see 7.1)	Yes			
<i>Oral warning</i>	Yes		Date of warning + 6 months	DESTROY – If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from file
<i>Written warning – Level one</i>	Yes		Date of warning + 6 months	DESTROY – If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from file
<i>Written warning – Level two</i>	Yes		Date of warning + 1 yr	DESTROY – If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from file
<i>Final warning</i>	Yes		Date of Warning + 2 yrs	DESTROY – If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from file
<i>Case not found</i>	Yes		DESTROY	Immediately at the conclusion of the case. except Child Protection allegations (see 7.1)
Annual appraisal and assessment records	No		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY

7.6 School personnel				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Timesheets, sick pay	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Salary cards	Yes		Last date of employment + 6 yrs	DESTROY – The information should be transferred to the superannuation department at the appropriate time who will maintain the master record
Maternity pay records	Yes	Statutory maternity pay	Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Records held under retirement benefits schemes	Yes	Information Powers Regulations 1995	Last payment + 6 yrs	DESTROY

7.7 School health and safety				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Accessibility plans	No	DDA	Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Accident reporting	Yes			
<i>Adults – Accident book</i>	Yes		Last entry in book + 6 yrs	DESTROY
<i>Adults – Internal reports</i>	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
<i>Children</i>	Yes		DOB + 25 yrs	DESTROY – A child may make a claim for negligence 7 yrs from their 18 th birthday. All records are kept until the pupil reaches the age of 25 yrs.
Records relating to serious injury at work	Yes		Date of incident + 12 yrs	REVIEW
COSHH	Yes		Current yr +10 yrs	REVIEW
Incident reports	Yes		DOB + 25 yrs	DESTROY
Risk assessments	Yes		Date assessment superseded+ 3 yrs	DESTROY
Asbestos monitoring	Yes		Last action + 40 yrs	DESTROY – The process where employees and persons are likely to have encounter asbestos
Radiation monitoring	Yes		Last action + 50 yrs	DESTROY – The process where employees and persons are likely to have contact with radiation

7.8 School administration				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Employer's liability certificate	Yes		Permanent whilst the school is open	Retain for 40 yrs after the school has closed
School brochure/prospectus	Yes		Current yr + 3 yrs	Offer to Archives - The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent reservation
Circulars (staff/parents/pupils)	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY
Newsletters	No		Current yr + 1 yr	REVIEW to see whether any further retention is required - Offer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent reservation]
Visitor's book	No		Current yr + 2 yrs	REVIEW to see whether any further retention is required - Offer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent reservation]
PTA/old pupils' associations	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	Offer to Archives - The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent reservation
Cooks' daybook	No		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Dinner register	No		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Leaflets and publications	No		When superseded	DESTROY

7.9 School finance				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Annual accounts	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current yr + 6 yrs	Offer to Archives
Loans and grants	Yes	Financial Regulations	Date of last payment on loan + 12 yrs	REVIEW to see whether any further retention is required - Offer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent reservation]
Contracts				
<i>Under seal</i>	Yes		Contract completion date + 12 yrs	REVIEW to see whether any further retention is required - Offer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent reservation]
<i>Under signature</i>	Yes		Contract completion date + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Budget monitoring reports	Yes		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Invoices and receipts covered by financial regulations	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Order books and requisitions	No		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Delivery notes	No		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY
Debtors' records	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
School fund records covered by financial regulations	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY

7.9 School finance				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Applications for free school meals, travel, uniforms	Yes		Whilst child is at school	DESTROY
Student grant applications	Yes		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Free school meals registers	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Petty cash books	No	Financial Regulations	Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY

7.10 School property				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Title deeds	Yes		Permanent	These should follow the property – Offer to Archives
Plans	Yes		Permanent	Retain until superseded and offer to Archives
Maintenance and contracts	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Leases	Yes		Expiry of lease + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Lettings	Yes		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Burglary, theft and vandalism reports	No		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Maintenance logbooks	Yes		Last entry + 10 yrs	DESTROY
Contractors' reports	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Inventory	No		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY

7.11 LA				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Secondary transfer sheets (Primary)	Yes		Current yr + 2 yrs	DESTROY
Attendance returns	Yes		Current yr + 1 yr	DESTROY
Circulars from LA	No		Whilst operationally required	REVIEW to see whether a further retention period is required – Offer to Archives
Admissions data	Yes		Current yr + 5 yrs	DESTROY/DELETE
Student enrolment	Yes		Current yr = 2 yrs	DESTROY

7.12 DCSF				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
HMI reports	No		These do not need to be kept any longer	If any are retained - Offer to Archives
OFSTED reports and papers	Yes		Replace former report with any new inspection report	REVIEW to see whether a further retention period is required – offer to Archives
Returns	No		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Circulars from DCSF	No		Whilst operationally required	REVIEW to see whether a further retention period is required – offer to Archives

7.13 Partnership working				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Service level agreements	Yes		Until superseded	DESTROY
Work experience agreement	Yes		DOB of child + 18 yrs	DESTROY

7.14 School meals				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Dinner register	No		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
School meals summary sheet	No		Current yr + 3 yrs	DESTROY
Free school meals register	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Free school meals vouchers	Yes		Current yr + 5 yrs	DESTROY
School meals vouchers	No		Current yr + 5 yrs	DESTROY

7.154 Schools and colleges				
Basic file description	Data Protection issues	Statutory Provisions	Retention period [operational]	Action at the end of the administrative life of the record
Tutor folders	Yes		Termination + 6 yrs	DESTROY
Potential tutors	Yes		Current yr + 2 yrs	DESTROY
Ex tutor folders	Yes		Termination + 15 yrs	DESTROY
Student enquiry files	Yes		Current yr + 2 yrs	DESTROY
Student support files and finance	Yes		Current yr + 6 yrs	DESTROY

8. European funded records

Where any record relates to a project that is funded by a European Union (EU) programme, it is essential that all the records are retained together.

All EU funded records (including finance) can only be disposed of **after** the EU funded programme has been nationally signed off. Therefore, records associated with an EU funded programme have a different life cycle to other similar records listed within the Retention Schedule.

9. Finding the School retention schedule

The School retention guidance can be found on the Shropshire Learning Gateway:

[Retention Policy – Shropshire Learning Gateway \(shropshirelg.net\)](https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/learning-gateway/retention-policy)

The Schools Retention Schedule is also available in the Education and skills worksheet of the Corporate Retention Schedule at:

- Shropshire Council website:
<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/privacy/your-privacy/>
- Shropshire Council intranet:
[What is the corporate retention schedule? - SC Intranet \(shropshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/intranet/what-is-the-corporate-retention-schedule)

10. Retention schedule Update

This school retention schedule was updated by:

Records Manager
Shropshire Council

Date: 20 December 2021