

INFORMATION FOR ALL PARENTS ON THE DATA PROTECTION ACT AND SHARING OF INFORMATION REGARDING SCHOOL PUPILS

Schools, local authorities and the Department for Education (DfE - the government department which deals with education) all hold information on pupils in order to run the education system, and in doing so have to follow the Data Protection Act 1998. This means, among other things, that the data held about pupils, must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law. We are therefore writing to tell you about the types of data held, why that data is held, and to whom it may be passed on.

The school holds information on pupils in order to support their teaching and learning, to monitor and report on their progress, to provide appropriate pastoral care, and to assess how well the school as whole is doing. This information includes contact details, National Curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

From time to time we are required to pass on some of this data to the Local Authority (LA), to another school to which the pupil is transferring, to the Department for Education (DfE), and to Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which is responsible for the National Curriculum and associated assessment arrangements.

The Local Authority uses information about pupils to carry out specific functions for which it is responsible, such as the assessment of any special educational needs the pupil may have. It also uses the information to derive statistics to inform decisions on, for example, the funding of schools and to assess the performance of schools. The statistics are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them.

The **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority** uses information about pupils to administer the National Curriculum tests and assessments for Key Stages 1 to 3. The results of these are passed on to DfE in order for it to compile statistics on trends and patterns in levels of achievement. The QCA uses the information to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Curriculum and the associated assessment arrangements, and to ensure that these are continually improved.

The **Department for Education** uses information about pupils for statistical purposes, to evaluate and develop education policy and to monitor the performance of the education service as a whole. The statistics (including those based on information provided by the QCA) are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. The DfE will feed back to LAs and schools information about their pupils where they are lacking this information because it was not passed on by a former school. On occasion, information may be shared with other Government departments or agencies strictly for statistical or research purposes only.

Pupils, as data subjects, have certain rights under the Data Protection Act, including a general right of access to personal data held on them, with parents exercising this right on their behalf if they are too young to do so themselves. If you wish to access the personal data held about your child, then please contact the relevant organisation in writing:

- the school via the school office
- the LA's Data Protection Officer at SCC, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DJ.
- the QCA's Data Protection Officer at QCA, 83 Piccadilly, LONDON, W1J 8QA.
- the DfE's Data Protection Officer at DfE, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA.