



Partnership Achievement Community Excellence

Document Retention Policy

Agreed by Directors: May 2018

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Introduction

PACE Academy Trust 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 Trust. Records provide evidence for protecting the legal rights and interests of the Trust, 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
- Recording systems
- Disposal
- Relationships with existing policies

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by staff of the Trust in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Trust 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.

A small percentage of the Trust's records may be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Trust's archives and for historical research. This should be done in liaison with the Local Authority archives.

Responsibilities

The Trust has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Executive Headteacher, who will communicate the policy to Head Teachers and Heads of School.

The Trust School Business Manager is responsible for records management in the Trust and 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 a 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.

Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Trust's records management guidelines.

Recording systems

Information created by the Trust must be managed against the same standards regardless of the media in which it is stored.

- i. It is important that filing information is properly resourced and is carried out on a regular basis. It is equally important that the files are weeded of extraneous information where appropriate on a regular basis. Removing information from a file once a freedom of information request has been made will be a criminal offence (unless it is part of normal processing);
- ii. Applying retention periods is straight forward provided files are closed on a regular basis;
- iii. Once a file has been closed, it should be moved out of the current filing system and stored either in a record room in the school or in another appropriate place until it has reached the end of the retention period;

- iv. Staff and employees should be mindful of these basic rules;
- All personal information should be kept in lockable filing cabinets which are locked when the room is unattended;
 - Personal information held on computer systems should be adequately password protected. Information should never be left on an unattended screen;
 - Files containing personal or sensitive personal information should be sent using a secure system;
 - Data taken off the school site must be stored securely in a lockable file;
 - Staff should not carry data on memory sticks or other removable data carriers unless encrypted;
 - All computer information should be backed up regularly and the backup should be stored off site;
 - Information contained in email should be filed into the appropriate electronic or manual filing system once it has been dealt with.

Disposal

Files should be disposed of in line with Records Management Toolkit of Schools Retentions Guidelines

<https://irms.org.uk/page/SchoolsToolkit>

This should be an annual process. All personal information must be shredded before disposal. Electronic data should be archived on electronic media and deleted appropriately at the end of the retention period.

Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Data Protection policy
- and with other legislation or regulations (including Freedom of Information, audit, equal opportunities and ethics) affecting the Trust.

This policy excludes staff and pupil leaver details on SIM's net Management Information System which are not able to be deleted.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in May 2020 or before should the law or guidance change before this date.