



## Data Protection and Record Keeping Policy

### Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by all staff on our school planning day on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008 with the help of the SDP Facilitator, Aodhán de Búrca. It was reviewed in 2017 and ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management on May 24<sup>th</sup> 2017.

### Rationale

It has become necessary to devise a policy on record keeping for the following reasons:

- *Teaching is informed by pupil learning needs and the recording of where a pupil is in relation to his/her learning is a cornerstone of good teaching.*
- *Education Act Section 9(g) provides that parents (or students of 18 years or upwards) are entitled to have access in the prescribed manner to records kept by the school relating to the progress of the student in his/her education.*
- *Attendance at school has a bearing on a pupil's attainment levels.*
- *Education (Welfare) Act requires principals*
  - *To communicate to a school, to which a student is transferring, any problems relating to school attendance which the pupil concerned had and any other appropriate matters relating to the pupil's educational progress.*
  - *To keep a record of the pupil's attendance and the reasons for failure to attend.*
  - *To inform the Educational Welfare Officer in writing, where a pupil is suspended for a period in excess of 6 days/or where a pupil is absent in excess of 20 school days in a school year/or where in the opinion of the principal the student is not attending regularly.*
- *The school's existing procedures need to be clarified to ensure that the school complies with the spirit as well as the letter of the law e.g. accountability and transparency.*

### Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Gaelscoil Riada seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents, and pupils.

Gaelscoil Riada, by introducing this policy hopes to achieve the following objectives:

- *To record the educational progress that a pupil is making thereby enabling parents and teachers to support the child's learning.*
- *To report to parents in a meaningful way on the educational progress of their children.*



- *To establish clear, practical procedures that will enable parents/guardians (or past pupils who have reached the age of 18) to access records relating to educational progress.*
- *To ensure that this access is available within the capacity of the school to administer it.*
- *To establish a clear understanding, shared by management, staff and parents, as to the type of records that are maintained and how such records should be made available.*
- *To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements while awaiting the issue of guidelines as to the 'prescribed manner' referred to in Section 9 (g) of the Education Act.*
- *To ensure that, in so far as possible, the school complies with legislative requirements/principles of good practice while awaiting the issue of guidelines*

### **Content of policy**

**Annual Reports:** Report cards are used in the school to report on the child's work on an annual basis. Copies of the report are sent home to parents and the booklets are kept in the school. A copy of the annual report is kept for ten years after the child leaves the school or when the child is 22 years old. If parents are separated, two separate copies will be given to both parents if requested.

**Standardised Tests:** Standardised tests are administered in this school in the third term of each year. At present we are using the Drumcondra English and the Sigma T Maths test. Drumcondras are administered in first class in May. Teachers fill in the class teacher result sheet for each class. This is kept in school records and is used to make priorities in literacy /numeracy development. Scores are often transferred to graph format to make reading more accessible for staff. The child's individual test booklet is kept for one year from the date of the test. Parents are contacted if teachers are worried about results.

**Teacher-designed Tests:** The results of the tests designed by teachers will be kept for the year and they can be used for teacher planning, parent-teacher meeting and annual reports. Results of tests will inform teacher planning, parent teacher meetings and report cards. The results of these tests are kept by the class teacher.

**Screening Tests:** The MIST is administered to senior infants in the second term of the year. The test booklet is kept 10 years after the child has left the school/until the child is 22 years old. The test is administered to ascertain pupil's level of progress. We will get parent's permission before tests are administered.

**Diagnostic Tests:** Record of Diagnostic Tests will be recorded in the child's file. The results will be kept in the school 10 years after the child has left the school/until the child is 22 years old. The Nealle Analysis Tests(NALA) are administered in Gaelscoil Riada. Teachers will be looking for written permission before tests are administered.

**Samples of Pupil's Work:** Teachers keep class-based samples of children's work and art activities. The pupil's work will inform teacher planning, parent teacher meetings and report cards. The samples will be kept for the schoolyear only.



**IEP's / IPLP:** Plans are put in place for children who have been assessed, when the results of their tests show that they have special learning priorities. The plan is put together by the learning support/resource teacher after consultation with the class teacher and parents. The plan is kept in the school file for 10 years after the child has left the school/until the child is 22 years old.

**Records of attendance / absence:** Each class teacher keeps a roll book which records absences and attendance at school. The roll is generally completed at 9.50 each day and is kept following the guidelines given from the DES. Parents are reminded at the beginning of each term of the importance of attendance and of the need to send dated notes to the school, under the Education Welfare Act. These notes are kept by individual teachers in the back of the roll book. The notes help the staff to fill in returns to the EWB. A copy of the returns is kept in the school files. The principal also keeps a Leabhar Tinrimh which records daily, monthly and yearly totals of attendance for the whole school. All enrolled children are recorded in the school registers.

**Psychological Assessments:** Psychological records are kept on file. Access to these records is restricted and used only in the interest of the children. These reports are kept for 10 years after the child has left the school/until the child is 22 years old.

**Referrals for Learning Support/ Visiting Teacher Service/ Resource Teacher for Travellers:** If a child is being selected for learning support or other supplementary teaching a letter of permission will be forwarded to parents. This letter must be signed by parents and returned to the school before supplementary teaching can take place. The record will be kept in school/learning support files for 10 years after the child has left the school/until the child is 22 years old.

**Enrolment Form:** Enrolment forms are given out to prospective parents at enrolment. Parents are asked to fill in this form and return the form to the school with a copy of the birth certificate.

**Code of Behaviour, signed by parents:** A Code of Behaviour is available in the school and is available to all parents. All parents sign the Code of Behavior. If they refuse to signed, it will be dated and put in the child's file. Acceptance of the code signed by parents will be kept for one year after the child completes school. Also, a record of

**Record of any serious injury/accident:** An incident book/form is kept in the school. This will be completed by the teacher on duty when the incident occurred. A letter is sent home regarding any incident that a teacher is worried about and it is signed and returned. This letter is stored in the Principal's office.

**Permission to leave school at lunchtime:** Children are not permitted to leave school at lunchtime. This decision will be reviewed in the future.

**Indemnity form for administration of medicine:** Refer to the Health and Safety Policy. Safety form/letter to be sent home to each parent explaining our system. This will then be signed.

**Guidelines for administration of records including records related to employees**



- School personnel, parents/guardians, past pupils who have reached 18 years of age, Welfare Officers, Second Level Schools, and HSE will have access to records as per Section 28 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000.
- Written authorisation from parents of students will be required before allowing access for all appropriate persons to the pupil's records. For specific occasions for example, the involvement of health professionals, specific parental authorisation is required where access to student records are required.
- Any request should be made in writing to the principal. Arrangements will be agreed to review the records at a mutually acceptable time and date.
- Parents will have an opportunity to respond to reports at parent-teacher meetings
- The teachers, principal and secretary will have responsibility for ensuring that records are compiled and updated each year.
- Records will be kept in a safe and secure place. Access to information in the records will be strictly controlled and made available only to those rightfully entitled to it.
- Records will be retained after pupils transfer into adulthood according to the time limits set out in the statute of Limitations 1957-2000
- Where reports are generated by external agencies (e.g. NEPS) permission will be sought from parents before allowing access to the reports by third parties e.g. another school
- In relation to employees the following records will be kept, contracts, references, CV's, job application, attendance, disciplinary.

#### **Success Criteria**

- Systematic compilation of uniform records by staff
- Systematic reporting to parents on education progress in place
- Parent/pupils can access records without undue disruption of teaching time
- Storage of records is manageable

**Roles and Responsibility** The staff will be responsible for the policy.

#### **Date of Implementation**

These procedures are in place since September 2008

**Review** The policy procedures were amended in the 2017/2018 school year when the POD online data system was implemented fully. The school are now using DATAbiz solutions for official record keeping. The principal attended data protection in-service training in March 2017.

#### **Ratification & Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 24/05/17