

Islamiyah Girls High School



Child Protection Record Policy

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Guidance for Schools & Colleges: Child Protection Record Keeping and the Transfer of Child Protection Records

1. Introduction

1.1. Clear and comprehensive child protection records are crucial to support children’s safety, welfare and educational outcomes. Records themselves do not keep children safe, but research, serious case reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews repeatedly show the significant impact on safeguarding poor record keeping can have¹. The purpose of this guidance is to support schools and colleges to fulfil their responsibilities in this area, providing a framework for reviewing record-keeping practices.

1.2. This guidance should be followed by all educational establishments in Norfolk that provide education to children and young people up to the age of 18 years. These establishments include schools maintained by the Local Authority, Free Schools, academies, special schools, independent schools and sixth form and further education colleges.

1.3 [Keeping Children Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2022) states;

“Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.”²

In addition, Annex C Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022, clarifies that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date, stored securely and are transferred appropriately. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure child protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C.³

2. Quality Assurance and Evaluating Child Protection Records

2.1. In order to support reflective safeguarding practice and ensure statutory requirements are met, DSLs should consider quality assurance checks of safeguarding records. Regular audit of records will enable identification of strengths and areas of development in record keeping, development of improvement actions which can be reviewed over time for progress. A [safeguarding record keeping quality assurance audit tool](#), Appendix 1, is available to support audit of safeguarding record keeping.

2.2. It is recommended that DSLs evaluate the system for safeguarding recording using the following reflective questions:

- Do the records tell the ‘story’ of the child and the actions taken to address the concerns?

¹ Paragraph 70, Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (2022)

² Paragraph 68, Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (2022)

³ Paragraph 101, Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (2022)

- Are records up to date and complete?
- Do they contain evidence of all relevant actions including telephone calls, e-mails, and minutes/notes of meetings?
- Do they demonstrate effective identification and management of risk of harm?
- Do they demonstrate sound decision making, appropriate responses and referrals in a timely way?
- Do they show tenacity in following up concerns and referrals?
- Is there evidence of effective partnership working including attendance at and contribution to child protection, child in need and family support process activities?
- Is there clarity regarding information sharing?
- Are the wishes and feelings of the child actively sought and clearly recorded in the record?
- Are patterns of cumulative risk identified and actions taken to address this?
- Is any professional challenge recorded appropriately including the outcome of this?

It is important to remember that members of the governing board do not have a right or remit to see details of specific children or cases, however, DSLs should consider producing overview reports of audit findings for governing bodies and proprietors to enable governance oversight of their statutory duties in relation to record keeping.⁴ The document [Guidance on writing a safeguarding report to the Governing Board](#) includes a section on child protection record keeping and multi-agency working.

3. Transfer of child protection records

3.1. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022) states that it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that:

*“Where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and **within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term** to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO’s) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.”*

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child’s safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently

⁴ Paragraph 101, Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (2022)

receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives."⁵

3.2. The responsibility for the transfer of records lies with the original setting, as the receiving setting may not otherwise know that child protection concerns exist. It is important that all child protection records are transferred at each stage of a child's education up until the age of 18 years and includes a child's transfer into post-16 education.

4. Retention of child protection records

4.1. When children transfer from your establishment and records of child protection/welfare concerns have been made, the originals must be sent to the receiving school as per 3.1 above. In some circumstances, it may be proportionate for a setting to retain a copy of the file after the child has left; this will provide evidence of what the setting knew and the actions they took to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. Circumstances may include an ongoing criminal investigation or court case, a safeguarding practice review, domestic homicide review or a complaint about the setting that relates to safeguarding. If a school or college decides to retain a copy of any child protection records they have transferred, these should be stored securely and destroyed once the retention period has expired as detailed below.

4.2. It is recommended that child protection records are retained until a child's 25th birthday (6 years after the subject's last contact with the Authority). Records should then be securely disposed of and a record of disposal kept.

4.3. Paper records should be shredded, and electronic records deleted. This recommendation is in line with the [DfE Data Protection Toolkit](#).

5. Procedures for Transfer

5.1. When a pupil transfers from one school to another, their child protection file should be forwarded to the new school without delay, and always within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. **This transfer should be arranged separately from the main school file.** Such information sharing should occur between DSLs and/or Head Teachers. Records of this nature should never be transferred by unsecure means including the use of the parent or carer as a courier

1.1. ⁵Whenever a file is transferred, schools should retain evidence of the transfer of the record and request confirmation of receipt of the file. Schools may wish to use the template 'Record of Child Protection File Transfer' (Appendix 2) as a basis for collating this evidence. The transferring school should maintain a log of files transferred alongside evidence of confirmation of receipt of the file; this evidence should be stored securely along with other child protection information.

5.2. The DSL from the transferring school should make telephone contact with their counterpart in the receiving school to discuss the case and agree a means of transfer of the records as soon as is practicable.

5.3. Where feasible, records can be delivered by hand from one DSL to another as part of the transition process. Files should only be transferred electronically if a secure electronic system is used. Evidence of the transfer of records should be retained even where records are delivered by hand.

5.4. If child protection files are sent by post, it should be by secure, recorded delivery to a named individual. The receiving school should receive a telephone call in advance to notify them that a child protection file(s) is being sent. The envelope should be marked as 'Strictly Confidential' and for the attention of the named DSL only. A record of transfer form should be included with the file and the receiving school should be asked to sign the form return that to the sending school confirming that they have received the file.

5.5. When a pupil transfers to a Further Education or 6th Form College, the school must follow the procedures as described above and transfer the child protection file to the college as part of the transition process. If a school does not have a confirmed destination for a pupil post-16, they should contact the Participation and Transition Team via cs.rpaqueries@norfolk.gov.uk or on 0344 800 8022. Colleges are advised to contact the previous school if they have concerns about a young person and are not in receipt of a child protection file.

6. Dual Registration

6.1. Where children are dual registered (e.g., on roll at a mainstream school, but receiving education in another establishment, such as a Short Stay School or a Specialist Resource Base), details of any existing child protection records should be shared with the new establishment prior to the agreed start date to enable them to support the child appropriately.

7. Permanent Exclusion

7.1. When a child is permanently excluded, it is important that the establishment providing all or a substantial amount of a child's education following the exclusion has any child protection records relating to the child as soon as possible. The excluding school should make arrangements for child protection information to be transferred to the education provider as soon as possible – **this should not be delayed until after the exclusion hearing or appeal**. If an exclusion is not upheld, the education provider will need to make arrangements to transfer the information back to the home school.

8. Children Missing Education

8.1. Whenever a child leaves a setting outside of normal transition times, settings should follow Norfolk County Council [Children Missing Education Procedures](#). When a child leaves and the new school is not known, child protection files should be retained by the setting and transferred to the new setting, once known, or destroyed once the retention period has expired as detailed in Section 4 above. Where a child is subject to a multi-agency planning process and the receiving school's identity is not known, the DSL should also contact the child's allocated social worker or Family Practitioner without delay.

9. Home Education

9.1. Where a parent elects to remove their child from a school roll to home educate, any safeguarding concerns should be detailed on the Services to Home Educators (SHE) Notification Form in line with [LA guidance](#). If the child has a child protection file, a copy of this should be along with the Services to Home Education referral form via [Any Comms Plus](#) to the Services to Home Educators Team. Schools without access to Any Comms Plus should securely email: ehe@norfolk.gov.uk. Should you have any further questions, please contact Services to Home Educators on 01603 307733.

9.2. Services to Home Educators will store and transfer child protection files as detailed in this guidance. **The school should retain the original copy of the file** and destroy this once the retention period has expired as detailed in Section 4 above.

10. Requests for information from another agency

10.1. If at any stage child protection files are requested by another agency for the purposes of conducting a criminal investigation or Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the school or college **must make and retain copy of the file** before providing this information. The setting should also retain evidence of who the information was passed to and for what purpose.

Transferring School: Please ensure that the child protection file is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving school using a secure method of delivery with Part 1 of this form completed.

Receiving School: Please complete Part 2 and return this form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead listed in Part 1 above. You are advised to keep a copy for your own reference

Approved by:

Mrs. Yaasmin Mubarak
Headteacher
Date: September, 2023

Mubarak Patel
Chair of Governing Body
September, 2023

Appendix 1

[Safeguarding Record Audit Tool](#)

Audit Date:		Audit completed by:	
Name of child:		DSL(s) for the case:	

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
1. Contents			
A chronology			
Front sheet			
Copies of referrals			
Invitations to child protection conferences/rapid network meetings and core group meetings			
Copies of reports to conference			
Minutes/notes of multi-agency meetings including strategy discussions			

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
Records of all relevant telephone conversations, meetings and e-mail correspondence			
Copies of the most up to date plan for the child e.g., a CP, CiN, FSP or Early Help Plan			
Are records stored securely?			
2. Format			
Is the child clearly identified within the records?			
Name, designation and signature of the person completing the record populated?			
Are other professionals clearly identified including name and job title?			
Is the date (including the year) and time of any incidents or when a concern was observed recorded?			

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
Is the date (including the year) and time the record was made clear?			
Do records distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay?			
Do records describe the concern, meeting or conversation in sufficient detail, i.e., no further clarification necessary?			
Are records free of jargon?			
Are records written in a professional manner without stereotyping or discrimination?			
Where applicable, do records include a completed body map to show any visible injuries?			
Are hand-written notes signed and dated to include year, position of author and person the information is being passed to?			

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
3. The Child's Voice and their Network			
Do the records indicate that parents and guardians have been made aware of concerns and their consent is sought in accordance with local procedures unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to a child? Where consent has not been obtained, is the rationale clearly recorded?			
Are the child's views and own words used? (Swear words, insults, or intimate vocabulary should be written down verbatim.)			
Do the records evidence how the child's wishes and feelings have informed practice and the actions taken?			
4. Analysis & Oversight			

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
Is there evidence of management oversight in the file? This could include actions arising from supervision or DSL meetings.			
Do the records enable DSLs to build a picture of cumulative risk over time? e.g., 'low-level' concerns are routinely recorded and captured and lead to appropriate intervention.			
<p>Is there evidence that staff understand when to make referrals when there are issues in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● child-on-child abuse ● sexual violence or harassment ● criminal or sexual exploitation ● radicalisation and/or extremism 			

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
or that they have sought additional advice and support?			
Do the records evidence that staff have identified and reported concerns to the DSLs in a timely way?			
Do the records evidence appropriate and timely responses have been initiated by the DSL(s) in response to concerns?			
Do the records indicate that information has been shared appropriately?			
Do the records evidence that any agreed actions following a referral or meeting have been taken promptly to protect the child or learner from further harm?			
Is there clear evidence of the setting's contribution to the multi-			

Does the file/child's electronic record include the following?	Yes/No?	Commentary (include areas for development as well as good practice):	Actions identified:
agency plan and how staff are working in partnership with external agencies with the aim of improving the child's situation?			
Is any professional challenge recorded with the outcome/resolution evident?			

Overall RAG rating (see key below):		Rationale:	
Action required	Timescale	Name & Position of person responsible	Date action completed & evidence of impact

Grading	Definition
Outstanding	File evidences all criteria are met securely and consistently. In addition to meeting the requirements of a 'good' judgement, there is evidence that practice exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained improvement to the lives of children, young people and families.
Good	The records indicate that the children who is, or is likely to be, at risk of harm or who are the subject of concern are identified and protected. Help is provided early in the emergence of a problem and is well co-ordinated and recorded. Records of action and decisions are clear and up to date. Children and young people are listened to and heard. Staff build effective relationships with children and their families in order to assess the likelihood of, and capacity for, change. Risk is well understood, managed and regularly reviewed. Children and young people experience timely and effective help and protection through risk-based assessment, authoritative practice, planning and review that secures change.
Requires improvement	Not meeting all good grades, but there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. All case file requirements are met. However, the case file is not yet at a good standard and does not provide sufficient assurance that we are delivering good protection, help and care for children, young people and families. In a small number of instances, information is missing or incomplete.
Inadequate	The file does not demonstrate a suitable level of assurance that recording adheres to the required standards and appropriate interventions have been put in place for children and their families. There are, or appear to be, widespread failures or serious failures that leave children harmed or at risk of harm. Response to referrals is not timely or effective, insufficient involvement of family and children and poor managerial oversight. Case file is not able to evidence compliance with statutory requirements.

Appendix 2: File Transfer Record and Receipt

Part 1: To be completed by sending/transferring school or college

Information Required	To be completed
Name of child:	
DoB:	
Name of school sending CP file:	
Address of school sending file	
Method of delivery (by hand, secure post or electronically)	
Date file sent:	
Name of DSL transferring file	
Name of person file transferred to:	
Signature:	

PART 2: To be completed by receiving school or college

Information Required	To be completed
Name of school receiving CP file	
Address	
Date received	
Name of person receiving file	
Date confirmation of receipt sent	
Signature	