



# DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Summary guidelines of records retention periods for schools

### Please Note:

Due to the ongoing Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) neither pupil nor staff records should be destroyed until further notice. The guidance below gives a retention period (in the 'Retention Action' column), but where records should **not be** destroyed, this has been noted in the 'Disposal Action' column. For further information/clarification please contact the council's Corporate Records Manager by emailing [records.management@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:records.management@derbyshire.gov.uk) or telephoning 01629 539203.



Version History				
Version	Date	Detail	Author	Responsible Officer
1.00	2012	First version	David Jenkins	David Jenkins
2.00	2014	Second version – revised to reflect changes to national guidance	David Jenkins	David Jenkins
3.00	2016	Update re. non disposal of pupil and staff files	David Jenkins	David Jenkins
4.00	2017	Updated to include: information on child protection records to be transferred to DCC; records of administration of medicines	David Jenkins	David Jenkins
5.00	2018	Updated to include temporary restrictions on destruction as ordered by IICSA	Mark Smith / Gareth Mainprize	Martin Stone / Chris Newton
5.01/2	2019	SCH 7.7/8: Updated wording on medicines SCH 6.2: Mentions entitlement to work. SCH 6.3 changed from 6 to 12 months in line with HR 6.01. SCH 6.4 expanded according to suggestions from Audit Services.	Mark Smith	Martin Stone / Chris Newton
5.03	20/09/2019	Introduction reworded: discusses use of pupil management systems, and retention by academies of records created by predecessor schools. SCH 4.12: Reworded to allow confirmation time SCH 7.1: PEEPs added as example SCH 12.2: School census added as example	Mark Smith / Jon Farmer	

### About these guidelines

These guidelines have been produced by Derbyshire County Council to help you manage your school's records. The retention periods given are based on legislation and common practice. If you can't find the information you need here, try the Information and Records Management Society's Schools Toolkit (<https://irms.site-ym.com/general/custom.asp?page=SchoolsToolkit>).

If your local authority school becomes an academy, it continues to be classed as a public body under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, meaning you are obliged to manage records appropriately using clearly established retention periods. Since May 2019, Commercial Transfer Agreements with newly formed academies have required them to follow the retention rules laid out in these guidelines when managing records of the predecessor school. We recommend all academies take this approach, even if transfer was before that date.

The guidelines below give a description of each record type, followed by the action you need to take (e.g. retain for 3 years), based on a "trigger" event (e.g. date record created). The disposal action will either be to destroy the records or transfer them elsewhere. This could be to another school, to Derbyshire County Council or as archives to Derbyshire Record Office.

You may see references to paper records which are no longer created in your school (e.g. log books). If so, you can ignore these retention periods except when reviewing any backlog of paper records. Many records separately listed on the following pages are in practice maintained as part of an integrated pupil record in an electronic management system. Where the stated retention period is under 7 years, this is generally not because of an overriding legal obligation to destroy the record at a particular point, but for administrative convenience or alignment with common practice. If there is no reasonably practical way to disaggregate the pupil record (e.g. destroying attendance data after 3 years but destroying exam results after 5 years), it is acceptable to destroy all such data after 6 years plus the current academic year. The Limitations Act 1980 provides a reasonable justification for this practice, as the school may need to rely on any component part of a record in defending itself from civil claims. Where the retention period is 7 years or more, this should be applied in your electronic system just as it would be with paper records.

**Glossary of Terms:**

**Business decision:** if there is no law or regulation to say how long a record should be kept, we may base this decision on the administrative needs of the organisation

**Closure:** when a record ceases to be 'current' – this can be the when a set of minutes are formally agreed, or when a Help Desk incident is formally closed. Many retention periods are triggered after the 'closure' of a record

**Common practice:** if there is no law or regulation to say how long a record should be kept, we may base this decision on what similar organisations do

**Disposal:** the processes associated with the end of a records lifecycle, they will typically include destruction of the records or transfer of the records to Derbyshire Record Office for permanent preservation

**Functional Description:** the description of the function that the record serves (i.e. the functional description of a set of minutes is 'the process of preparing business...')

**Permanent:** Retain the record permanently and offer to Derbyshire Record Office. Use the enquiry form at: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/record-office/depositors/school-archives/school-archives.aspx>

**Record:** the recorded evidence about an activity

**Retention Action:** the action regarding the retention of a record, triggered by a particular event (e.g. closure of a record)

**Additional Information:**

For queries on retention periods please contact the Corporate Records Manager on [records.management@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:records.management@derbyshire.gov.uk) or 01629 539203.

For queries about transferring records to Children's Services contact the Information Governance Team on [cs.dpandfoi@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:cs.dpandfoi@derbyshire.gov.uk) or 01629 536470.

Additional retention schedules (inc Finance, Human Resources, Management and Administration, Property, Procurement) and Derbyshire County Council's Records Disposal Policy and Procedures can be found at [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/retentionschedules](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/retentionschedules).

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
<b>CHILD PROTECTION</b>						
SCH 1.1	Child protection files (primary school)	Retain for the duration of the pupil's attendance at the school	Date pupil changes school	Transfer to Secondary School	Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)	Where a child is removed from the roll to be educated at home/missing from education see below
SCH 1.2	Child protection files (secondary school)	Retain for 25 years	Pupil's date of birth	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page) Consider transfer to off-site storage on child reaching school leaving age	"Safeguarding Children in Education" 2004 Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)	Where a child is removed from the roll to be educated at home/missing from education see below
SCH 1.3	Child protection files (Child missing from education, Traveller, Roma, or Gypsy and therefore removed from roll)	N/A	Date removed from roll	Transfer to Derbyshire County Council for retention in accordance with Children's Services retention schedule	"Safeguarding Children in Education" 2004 Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)	Scan all documents into one folder, use the naming convention as per guidance sent out (CME) and send via the <a href="#">Perspective Lite Secure Portal</a> which can also be accessed via <a href="#">Derbyshire SchoolsNet</a> .

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
SCH 1.4	Child protection files (child is removed from the roll and is Elective Home Educated)	N/A	Date removed from roll	Transfer to Derbyshire County Council for retention in accordance with Children's Services retention schedule	"Safeguarding Children in Education" 2004 Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)	Scan all your documents into one folder, use the naming convention as per guidance sent out (EHE) and send via the <a href="#">Perspective Lite Secure Portal</a> which can also be accessed via <a href="#">Derbyshire SchoolsNet</a> .
SCH 1.5	Allegations of a child protection nature made against a member of staff (including unfounded allegations)	Retain until the normal retirement age for the member of staff or for 10 years (whichever is the longer)	Employee's retirement age	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Employment Practices Code: Supplementary Guidance (Information Commissioner's Office)	
<b>GOVERNORS</b>						
SCH 2.1	Principal set of signed minutes	Retain at school for 6 years	Date of meeting	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 2.2	Inspection copies of minutes	Retain for 3 years	Date of Meeting	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 2.3	Agendas	No retention required	Conclusion of meeting	Destroy	Common practice	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
SCH 2.4	Reports	Retain at school for 6 years	Date of report	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 2.5	Annual parents meeting papers	Retain at school for 6 years	Date of meeting	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 2.6	Instrument of Government	Retain at school for the duration of its operation	Closure of school	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 2.7	Trusts and Endowments	Retain at school whilst operationally required	End of operational use	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 2.8	Action Plans	Retain for 3 years	Expiration of action plan	Destroy	Common practice	May be appropriate to offer to Record Office
SCH 2.9	Policy documents	Retain while policy is used operationally	Expiration of policy	Transfer to archives when policy is no longer operational	Common practice	
SCH 2.10	Complaints files	Retain for 6 years	Resolution of complaint	Review and destroy if complaints are non-contentious	Common practice	
SCH 2.11	Annual reports required by central government	Retain at school for 10 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Education (Governors' Annual Reports) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
<b>SCHOOL MANAGEMENT</b>						
SCH 3.1	Log books	Retain at school for 6 years	Date of last entry in log book	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	Legislation no longer requires the completion of a school log book
SCH 3.2	Minutes of management team	Retain at school for 5 years	Date of meeting	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 3.3	Reports made by management team	Retain at school for 3 years	Date of report	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 3.4	Development plans	Retain for 6 years	Expiry of plan	Review with a view to destroy	Common practice	May be appropriate offer to Derbyshire Record Office
SCH 3.5	Successful school admissions applications	Retain for 1 year	Date of admission	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 3.6	Unsuccessful school admission applications (where no appeal is made)	Retain for 1 year	Start of school term	Destroy	School Admissions Appeals Code 2012	
SCH 3.7	Unsuccessful school admission applications (where an appeal is made)	Retain for 1 year	Resolution of case	Destroy	School Admissions Appeals Code 2012	
SCH 3.8	Proofs of address supplied by parents as	Retain for 1 year	Date of admission	Destroy	Common practice	



Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
	part of the admissions process					
<b>PUPIL RECORDS</b>						
SCH 4.1	Admission registers	Retain for 6 years	Last entry in register	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	Admission registers are not commonly created in paper format (see note on p3)
SCH 4.2	Attendance registers	Retain for 3 years	Last entry in register	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 4.3	Pupil files (primary school)	Retain for duration of the pupil's attendance at school	Date pupil changes school	Transfer to Secondary School	Common practice	In the case of school exclusions it may be appropriate to transfer to Behaviour Service
SCH 4.4	Pupil files (secondary school school)	Retain for 25 years	Pupil's date of birth	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	The Limitations Act 1980	
SCH 4.5	Special educational needs records relating to individual support provided by the schools (primary)	Retain for duration of attendance at school	Date pupil changes school	Transfer to Secondary School	Common practice	
SCH 4.6	Special educational needs records relating to individual support provided by the schools (secondary)	Retain for 35 years	Pupil's date of birth	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001	This period is recommended by Derbyshire County Council.

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
SCH 4.7	Letters authorising absence	Retain for 2 years	Date of absence	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 4.8	Public examination results	Retain for 6 years	Date of examination	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 4.9	Internal school examination result	Retain for 5 years	Date of examination	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 4.10	Advice and information issued by the school to parents regarding educational needs for individual pupils	Retain for 12 years	Date advice issued	Destroy	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001	
SCH 4.11	Accessibility Strategy	Retain for 12 years	Expiry of strategy	Destroy	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001	May be appropriate to offer to Derbyshire Record Office
SCH 4.12	Parental permission slips for school trips where there has not been a major incident	N/A	Confirmation that there has been no major incident	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 4.13	Parental permission slips for school trips <b>where there has been a major incident</b>	Retain for 25 years from the date of birth of the pupil/s involved in the incident	Pupil's date of birth	Destroy	The Limitations Act 1980	
SCH 4.14	Records created by schools to obtain approval to run an Educational Visit	Retain for 14 years	Date of visit	Destroy	The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974	Records created might include risk assessments

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
	outside the classroom where there has not been a major incident					
SCH 4.15	Records created by schools to obtain approval to run an Educational Visit outside the classroom <b>where there has been a major incident</b>	Retain for 21 years from the date of birth of the pupil/s involved in the incident	Pupil's date of birth	Destroy	The Limitations Act 1980	Records created might include risk assessments
SCH 4.16	Walking bus register	Retain for 3 years	Last entry in register	Destroy	Common practice	In the event of an incident it is assumed that an accident report will be made and retained for the appropriate retention period (see Health and Safety, below)
<b>CURRICULUM</b>						
SCH 5.1	Curriculum development	Retain for 6 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
SCH 5.2	Curriculum returns	Retain for 3 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 5.3	School syllabus	Retain for 1 year	Expiration of syllabus	Destroy	Common practice	May be appropriate to offer to Derbyshire Record Office
SCH 5.4	Schemes of work	Retain for 1 year	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Review with a view to destroy	Common practice	
SCH 5.5	Timetable development	Retain for 1 year	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Review with a view to destroy	Common practice	
SCH 5.6	Records of marks awarded	Retain for 1 year	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 5.7	Records of homework set	Retain for 1 year	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
<b>PERSONNEL</b>						
SCH 6.1	Staff personnel files	Retain for 7 years	End of employment	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Common practice	
SCH 6.2	Recruitment record for successful candidates, including interview notes and copy evidence of entitlement to work in the UK	Retain and add to personnel file.			Common practice, Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006	
SCH 6.3	Interview notes for unsuccessful candidates	Retain for 12 months	Date successful candidate is in post	Destroy	Business requirement	
SCH 6.4.1	Pre-employment vetting of successful candidates, for the purposes of preventing unsuitable people from working with children (e.g. DBS checks)	Retain for 6 months	Date information checked	Destroy	DBS guidelines	
SCH 6.4.2	Pre-employment vetting of successful candidates, for the purposes of ensuring	Add copies of evidence to personnel file (SCH 6.1)			Common practice	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
	school staff are adequately qualified					
SCH 6.4.3	Pre-employment vetting of successful candidates, for the purposes of ensuring school staff are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom	Add copies of evidence to personnel file (SCH 6.1)			Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006	
SCH 6.5	Written warnings (level 1)	Retain for 6 months	Date of warning	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Common practice	
SCH 6.6	Written warning (level 2)	Retain for 12 months	Date of warning	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Common practice	
SCH 6.7	Final warning	Retain for 18 months	Date of warning	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Common practice	
SCH 6.8	Warnings subsequently found to be based on an unfounded case (excluding child protection related warnings)	No retention required	Date case found to be unfounded	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Common practice	For child protection related warnings see Child Protection section above.
SCH 6.9	Staff appraisal records	Retain for 5 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	<b>Do not</b> destroy (refer to note on front page)	Common practice	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>						
SCH 7.1	Accessibility Plans, including Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs)	Retain for 6 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Disability and Equality Act 2010	
SCH 7.2	Accident/incident reporting (adults)	Retain for 7 years	Date of incident	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 7.3	Accident/incident reporting (children)	Retain for 25 years	Child's date of birth	Destroy	The Limitations Act 1980	
SCH 7.4	Records of monitoring areas where employees/pupils are likely to come into contact with asbestos	Retain for 40 years	Last action on file	Destroy	The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002	
SCH 7.5	Records of monitoring areas where employees/pupils are likely to come into contact with radiation	Retain for 50 years	Last action on file	Destroy	The Ionising Radiations Regulations 1985	
SCH 7.6	Fire log books	Retain for 7 years	End of calendar year	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 7.7	Records of the administration of non-prescription medicines and remedies including painkillers,	Retain for 1 year	End of calendar year	Destroy	Business decision	Events significantly outside individual treatment plan should be treated

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
	or very commonly prescribed drugs such as antibiotics or asthma inhalers					as non-routine (see below)
SCH 7.8	Records of the administration of any other medication, including: peg feeding; injections; treatments for serious conditions such as diabetes, ADHD or depression; records of reported incidents, or problems arising from administering medication.	Retain for 21 years and 6 months from pupil's date of birth	Pupil's date of birth	Destroy	Business decision	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>						
SCH 8.1	Employer's Liability Certificate	Retain for 40 years	Closure of school		Common practice	Transfer to DCC on closure of school
SCH 8.2	Inventories of equipment/furniture	Retain for 6 years	End of calendar year	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 8.3	Circulars to parents/staff/pupils	Retain for 1 year	End of calendar year	Destroy	Common practice	



Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
SCH 8.4	Newsletters produced by the school	Retain for 1 year	End of calendar year	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 8.5	Visitor books	Retain for 2 years	End of calendar year	Destroy	Common practice	
<b>FINANCE</b>						
SCH 9.1	Annual accounts	Retain at school for 6 years	End of calendar year	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	
SCH 9.2	Invoices, receipts, and other financial records covered by financial regulations	Retain for 6 years	End of calendar year	Destroy	Standard financial regulations	
SCH 9.3	Annual budget and supporting papers	Retain for 6 years	End of calendar year	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 9.4	Ordinary contracts	Retain for 6 years	End of contract	Destroy	The Limitations Act 1980	
SCH 9.5	Contracts under seal	Retain for 12 years	End of contract	Destroy	The Limitations Act 1980	
<b>PROPERTY</b>						
SCH 10.1	Building plans	Retain whilst operational	End of operational use	Offer to Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	

Ref. No.	Functional Description	Retention Period	Trigger	Disposal action	Basis for retention	Comments
SCH 10.2	Burglary, theft and vandalism report forms	Retain for 6 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 10.3	Contractors' reports	Retain for 6 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	
<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>						
SCH 11.1	Secondary transfer sheets	Retain for 2 years	Year of transfer	Destroy	Common practice	
SCH 11.2	Attendance returns	Retain for 1 year	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	
<b>CENTRAL GOVERNMENT</b>						
SCH 12.1	Ofsted reports and papers	Retain whilst current	Date new report issued	Transfer Derbyshire Record Office	Common practice	Replace old report with new report
SCH 12.2	Returns to central government	Retain for 6 years	End of the calendar year that the record was created in	Destroy	Common practice	E.g. school census

