

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY



St Joseph's Primary School

RATIONALE:

Personal information will only be collected and recorded by a school in accordance with both the school's Privacy Policy and the CEC Privacy and Collection Notice.

AIMS:

To collect, handle, use, store and disclose student records under the following definitions:-

"Record" means anything produced or reproduced in material form. Records can include files, notes, recordings, emails, opinions. There are three levels of access in respect of student records.

General Access Records (Students)
Controlled Access Records (Students)
Restricted Access Records (Students)

General Access Records (Students)

These records include objective and verifiable data which is necessary for the ongoing administrative functioning of the school. Examples of information retained in such records may include:

- student identification and enrolment details;
- attendance records;
- general medical records, noting that some medical records constitute "sensitive information" and consequently maintaining their confidentiality is essential
- medical issue notification forms;
- results from standardised aptitude or achievement tests, School Reports and achievement records including NAPLAN results and results from university sponsored tests;
- travel forms; and
- reports of low level disciplinary action, minor playground issues.

This information should be accessible to each student's teacher(s) and also to administrative support staff and others as delegated by the Principal. General staff access should only be where this is necessary for the discharge of the school's duty of care.

A common, clearly visible mark on the cover of the General Access files is to be made to indicate that separate information is held in either Controlled Access Records and/or Restricted Access Records. A red or purple sheet is to be placed inside the Student Record card to indicate whether that separate information is held by the Principal or by the Additional Needs Teacher.

Controlled Access Records (Students)

Access to these records is controlled by the Principal. Learning Support files may include the following types of information and are accessible to the class teacher and other staff via the Additional Needs Teacher, but only with the approval of the Principal:

Individual Education Plans (IEP) and associated learning support documentation
Information from outside experts pertaining to children with additional needs such as specialist assessments (examples include cognitive, speech/language, occupational therapy, psychologist and paediatric reports), diagnostic reports (examples include WIAT2, NEALE Reading Analysis and Reading Recovery Reports), medical records (examples include neurology, dietician, hearing and vision reports).

Restricted Access Records (Students)

Highly confidential, personal and sensitive records are kept safely and securely in the Principal's office. Examples of information contained in such records may include:

sensitive medical records;
family records including DOCS reports, Ombudsman Notifications, Family Court or legal correspondence;
correspondence relating to significant disciplinary action leading to suspension or expulsion;
correspondence relating to serious student misconduct, cheating or harassment
student risk assessment reports;
correspondence relating to actual or alleged student violence; and
correspondence about students considered a risk to self, a risk to others or those who have suffered abuse or neglect.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Record Management

The Principal or nominees as stated under 'definitions' has the responsibility to ensure that records are stored securely;
Student records are protected and reasonable safeguards are in place to secure against unauthorized access, use, modification and disclosure; and
The use of Black and Green sticker dots on Student Record Cards indicate "Restricted" and "Controlled Access" information is kept in other locations. The Restricted files are kept in a locked cupboard in the Principal's Office and in the Controlled Access are kept in the Special Education Room.

Parent Access to and Correction of Records

Parents have a right of access to all information held by the school on their child. File access by parents is available through the Principal or nominee and under their supervision. All notes and records made by school staff during parent interviews are regarded as recoverable and are the property of the school (whether in a file or not as the case may be) and therefore care should be taken when meeting notes are taken. Parents may also have a 'right of request of correction' in certain circumstances. When parents request that a file be "corrected" advice is to be sought from the CEO.

Particular care with student information will be taken in situations where material may be shared as part of a discussion to ensure privacy rights and obligations are respected.

File notes and records may be sought as part of Court action. All notes will be legible and reflect a high professional standard. Notes will be non-judgmental, objective and evidence-based.

In the event that the Principal is unsure of the appropriate action to be taken regarding the management of confidential, personal or sensitive information the CEO Education Consultant or CEO Employment Relations Consultant should be contacted for advice.

Student Record Disposal

Only the Principal can authorize the destruction of school records. Inappropriate destruction may leave a school, its staff or the CEO in a difficult position in the event of either the need to reassess student needs or in the event of litigation.

Each school should maintain a Register of Records Destroyed. Before destruction of records the record's title/description, inclusive of dates, and destruction method will be noted in the Register. The Principal will sign the Register.

School records will be disposed of in an appropriate manner. Destruction will be by shredding or total incineration and by total erasure if the records are electronic.

Retention of Records

Schools are responsible for the creation, management, storage and disposal of records relating to all aspects of student management. All records remain the property and responsibility of the school.

The student file retention schedule in the table below is to be regarded as a minimum standard.

Item/Description		Retention Period
Admission Records		
Application and enrolment forms	GA	Retain with individual student files Minimum – retain for 7 years after student has left school or age 25 years, whichever is the greater
Interview Notes	GA	Retain with individual student files Minimum – retain for 7 years after student has left school or age 25 years, whichever is the greater
Admission Register		Permanent
Attendance Records		
Class Rolls/Attendance Registers		Retain for 7 years after last date in Roll (CEO requirement)
Correspondence relating to absenteeism	GA	Retain for 2 years after action completed
Assessment Records		
Certificates and statements of assessment not collected by students	GA	Destroy 2 years after assessment

Exam books and student answer sheets	GA	Destroy 2 years after assessment
Exam papers (unused samples)	GA	Retain 1 copy for 7 years or when reference ceases
External exam results	GA	Retain for 7 years after student has left school or age 25 years, whichever is the greater
Informal exams and test papers, answers and results	GA	Destroy when reference ceases
Individual student results Including copies of certificates and statements of assessment	GA	Retain with individual student files. Minimum - retain for 7 years after student has left school or age 25 years, whichever is the greater
Master records of results of student cohorts	GA	<i>Permanent</i>
Master records of Standardised Achievement Tests	GA	<i>Permanent</i>
SAT – individual student results	GA	Minimum - retain for 7 years after student has left school or age 25 years, whichever is the greater
Work samples and other data used in assessment (including student diaries, reports and journals)	GA	Return to student or destroy 2 years after assessment
<i>Student Discipline</i>		
Individual cases requiring significant disciplinary action, such as expulsion	RA	Retain a minimum of 20 years after action completed and then destroy
Individual case files relating to other incidences of student misconduct, cheating and harassment	GA	Minimum - retain for 7 years after student has left school or age 25 years, whichever is the greater

File Movement And Transfer

When a student moves from one school to another the content of the existing records pertaining to that student should be reviewed to determine the appropriate information to be copied if a request is received from the new school for information.

Student records should only be transferred consistent with the terms of the school's Collection Notice or with specific parental consent, or as required by law for example DOCS sharing of information, or the Education Act, risk assessment requests.

In general if no request is received from a parent or another School Principal (through the parent) no information is copied and released.

All requests for information release should be made in writing to the Principal. The Principal can seek advice from CSO personnel.

The current school's complete student record should be kept intact and procedures should be made to securely store the file according to the file retention schedule in this Policy.

General Access Records

Where transition is from a Catholic primary school to a Catholic secondary college all the above advice applies. Secondary colleges and primary schools within the Diocese are required to have agreed communication and transition procedures in place to ensure the orderly transfer of students from one school to another.

Secondary schools are to seek student performance and other information (for example NAPLAN and PER) from parent sources first during the enrolment interview process. Additional information can be released by the Primary Principal on receipt of a request for records from the student's parents and/or guardian.

The original General Access File remains in the school which first enrolled the student.

Controlled Access Records

In the case of students with identified Additional Learning Needs (Learning Support files) file management is to be treated in the following way:-

Catholic School to Catholic School (within the Diocese)

Given that those student records will be held on the Web Apps system all information is available to the Principal of the new Diocesan school. Additional information is to be treated according to advice in the Table above. The original and complete file remains intact in the school and secured as per this Policy.

Catholic School to Catholic School (Lismore to another NSW Diocese)

As long as written parent authorisation is obtained, file contents pertaining to learning support matters can be copied for transfer to the new Catholic school on request from the new Principal. The original and complete file remains intact in the school and secured as per this policy.

Catholic School to any other school (or any Catholic school outside NSW)

As long as written parent authorisation is obtained, file contents pertaining to IEP matters can be copied for transfer to the new school on request from the new Principal. The original and complete file remains intact in the school and secured as per this policy.

Restricted Access Records

In the case of more highly sensitive Restricted Access files such as defined in this Policy, confidential or sensitive information about students shall only be disclosed with the consent of the parents and/or guardians. The exception is generally when:

A serious risk of harm arises, such that protective action is necessary, for example a risk to self, a risk to others, abuse or neglect, it is required by law as in the case of student violence.

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