

Guidance for Schools & Colleges: Transfer of Child Protection Records

1. Introduction

1.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2015) states that it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that, *'Where children leave the school or college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.'*¹

1.2 Evidence from a recent Local Authority audit of school safeguarding practice, indicates that some schools feel less confident about how to transfer child protection records when a child leaves. In response to the finding, this guidance has been devised in order to support schools and colleges to fulfil their responsibilities in this area. 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 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.

2. Retention of child protection records

2.1 When children transfer from your establishment and records of child protection/welfare concerns have been made, these should be copied and the originals sent to the receiving school as soon as possible. Schools may wish to keep a copy of the file themselves; this will provide the school of evidence of what the school knew and the actions they took to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. 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.

2.2 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. Paper records should be shredded and electronic records deleted. This recommendation is in line with the Information and **Records Management Society Guidance**.

3. Procedures for Transfer

3.1 When a pupil transfers from one school to another, their child protection file should be forwarded to the new school without delay, and in any case

¹ Annex B of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE, (2015)

within five school days². **This transfer should be arranged separately from the main school file.** Such information sharing should occur between Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and/or Head Teachers. Records of this nature should never be transferred by unsecure means including the use of the parent/carer as a courier.

3.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

3.3 Whenever 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 1) 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.

3.4 Where feasible, records can be delivered by hand from one Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

3.5 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

3.6 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.

3.7 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 2 above. Where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan and the receiving school's identity is not known, the DSL should also contact the child's allocated social worker without delay.

² This recommendation is in line with the findings of a national Serious Case Review.

3.8 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 sent to the Lead Teacher - Services to Home Educators, Children's Services, Professional Development Centre, 144 Woodside Road, Norwich, NR7 9QL using the secure processes outlined above. Services to Home Educators will store and transfer child protection files as detailed in this guidance.

3.9 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 Strategy Team at cs.rpaqueries@norfolk.gov.uk or by contacting Mark Horton, Tracking Co-Ordinator directly on 01603 638464 for support. 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.

3.11 If at any stage child protection files are requested by another agency for the purposes of conducting a criminal investigation or Serious Case 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.

Appendix 1: FILE TRANSFER RECORD AND RECEIPT

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

NAME OF CHILD:	
DOB:	
NAME OF SCHOOL SENDING CP FILE:	
ADDRESS OF SENDING SCHOOL:	
METHOD OF DELIVERY:	BY HAND SECURE POST ELECTRONICALLY
DATE FILE SENT:	
NAME OF DSL TRANSFERRING FILE:	
NAME OF PERSON TRANFERRING TO:	
SIGNATURE:	

PART 2: To be completed by receiving school or college

NAME OF SCHOOL RECEIVING FILE:	
ADDRESS:	
DATE RECEIVED:	
NAME OF PERSON RECEIVING FILE:	
DATE CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT SENT:	
SIGNATURE:	

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.