

EDSTART SCHOOLS

Records Management Policy

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

Policy owner	EdStart Specialist Education Ltd
Applies to	EdStart Schools – All Sites
Category	Information governance
Approval and validity	September 2026 to September 2027
Review trigger	Annual review, or earlier following statutory, regulatory or operational change

Status: This 2026 version supersedes all previous versions.

Records Management Policy

Last reviewed September 2026 on:

Next review due September 2026 by:

Records Management Policy For the purposes of this Policy “EdStart” means EdStart Specialist Education Provision.

EdStart recognises that by efficiently managing its records, it will be able to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the institution. Records provide evidence for protecting the legal rights and interests of EdStart and provide evidence for demonstrating performance and accountability. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.

It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Relationships with existing policies

1. Scope of the policy

1.1 This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by EdStart's staff in the course of carrying out its functions.

1.2 Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by EdStart and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

1.3 A small percentage of EdStart's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the institution's archives and for historical research. This should be done in liaison with the County Archives Service.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 EdStart has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Head Teacher Mr Kevin Buchanan.

2.2 The person responsible for records management within EdStart will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely way. They will also monitor compliance with this policy by surveying at least annually to check if records are stored securely and can be accessed appropriately.

2.3 Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the EdStart's records management guidelines.

3. Recording Systems

Information created by EdStart must be managed against the same standards regardless of the media in which it is stored.

3.1 Maintenance of Record keeping System

i. It is important that filing information is properly resourced and is carried out on a regular basis. It is equally important that the files are weeded of extraneous information where appropriate on a regular basis. Removing information from a file once a freedom of information request has been made will be a criminal offence (unless it is part of normal processing).

ii. Applying retention periods is straightforward provided files are closed on a regular basis.

iii. Once a file has been closed, it should be moved out of the current filing system and stored either in an appropriate place until it has reached the end of the retention period.

iv. Information security is very important especially when dealing with personal information or sensitive policy information. There are a number of basic rules:

- All personal information should be kept in lockable filing cabinets which are kept locked when the room is unattended;
- Personal information held on computer systems should be adequately password protected. Information should never be left up on a screen if the computer is unattended;
- Files containing personal or sensitive information should not be left out on desks over night;
- Where possible sensitive personal information should not be sent by e-mail; unless the information is encrypted or in a password protected document;
- If files need to be taken off the premises they should be secured in the boot of a car or in lockable containers;
- Coaches may carry data on their own personal devices or memory sticks in order to access files at different venues. Any data carried in this way must be encrypted using appropriate encryption software.
- All computer information should be backed up regularly and the back-up should be stored off the site.

v. Information contained in email should be filed into the appropriate electronic or manual filing system once it has been dealt with.

4. The Safe Disposal of Information Using the Retention Schedule

4.1 Files should be disposed of in line with the attached retention schedule (see appendix). This is a process which should be undertaken on an annual basis during the month of August.

4.2 Paper records containing personal information should be shredded using a cross-cutting shredder. Other files can be bundled up and put in a skip or disposed of to the waste paper merchant. Loose papers should not be put in skips unless the skip has a lid. CD's/DVD's/Floppy disks should be cut into pieces. Audio/Video tapes and fax rolls should be dismantled and shredded.

4.3 Electronic data should be archived on electronic media and 'deleted' appropriately at the end of the retention period.

5. Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Freedom of Information policy
- Data Protection policy
- and with other legislation or regulations (including audit, equal opportunities and ethics) affecting EdStart

6. Monitoring and Review This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Managing Director and management committee. The Records Management Policy and Retention Schedule will be reviewed and updated annually.