

# **Safeguarding record keeping guidance for education settings**

The Education Safeguarding Service

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# 1. Introduction to record keeping

***“No single professional can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.”*** (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 p.5)

## 1.1 Why do we need to keep records?

Accurate and up to date recording of child protection or welfare concerns is essential for a number of reasons:

- It can help educational settings identify child protection or welfare concerns at an early stage
- It can help settings identify patterns of concerns
- It can enable settings to record seemingly minor issues to build a more complete picture of what life may be like for their learners
- It helps settings to monitor and manage safeguarding practices, including decision making, actions taken and agreed joint strategies with other agencies
- It can provide evidence to support professional challenge, both within educational settings and when working with external agencies
- It can support settings to demonstrate action taken to reduce impact of harm to a child
- It helps to evidence robust and effective safeguarding practice in inspections and audits.

The importance of good, clear child protection record keeping is identified as essential practice within statutory guidance for educational settings. Keeping children safe in education 2018 highlights that *‘all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy’* (p.11).

Keeping children safe in education 2018 identifies that Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) should refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals to ensure they *‘are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals’* (p.90). The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2017 identifies the need for early years providers to maintain records (p16).

As part of their ‘Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills’ handbook (2016) Ofsted will be looking for evidence that;

- *Written records are made in an appropriate and timely way and are held securely where adults working with children or learners are concerned about their safety or welfare* (4.5)
- *records are shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent* (4.5)
- *records of any referrals ‘are retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child or learner from further harm’* (4.7)

Well-kept records will assist and support DSLs in meeting their key responsibilities to respond appropriately to welfare concerns and to keep their communities safer. Effective record keeping will also support monitoring, risk-assessment and planning for learners, and will enable informed and timely referrals to be made when necessary.

## **1.2 What happens if educational settings don't keep effective records?**

Failing to keep accurate child protection records indicates non-compliance with statutory requirements for educational settings. However, most importantly, poor record keeping can place learners and the wider community at risk of significant harm.

Research and serious case reviews repeatedly identify common features of inadequate practice, including poor recording keeping. Other common issues include failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect; failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, not sharing information, sharing information too slowly, and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be acting. These issues can be reduced through effective record keeping.

## **1.3 Who needs to understand record keeping?**

Promoting the welfare of and safeguarding children is a whole setting task; all members of staff have an essential role to play in helping to identify possible indicators of abuse or neglect at an early stage (Keeping children safe in education 2018 and Working together to safeguard children 2018).

For some learners a “one off” welfare or child protection incident may occur and there will be no doubt that this must be immediately recorded and reported. Most often however, it is the accumulation of several small incidents, events or observations that provide evidence of harm being caused. It is vital that any concerns staff have for a learner’s welfare, however small, are formally recorded and passed to the DSL.

Keeping children safe in education 2018 identifies that if staff are in doubt about the settings recording requirements, they should discuss this with the DSL or a deputy (p.11). All DSLs should therefore be clear on the settings recording approaches and should ensure that all members of staff receive appropriate and regular information, training and support.

## **1.4 What do staff need to know about record keeping?**

A formal record of welfare concerns, which could include child protection issues, must always be completed by staff, irrespective of their role in the setting. Best practice would be for educational settings to use a consistent welfare concern form. Record keeping templates can be found on Kelsi.

DSLs may find it helpful to adopt a whole staff approach to introducing the settings record keeping system to staff. Ideally this should be in the context of child protection training and as part of induction; where this is not possible, formal meetings should be implemented. This approach will provide an opportunity to remind staff of their safeguarding responsibilities and the expectations on them to report and record concerns. Staff meetings can also be a useful forum for clarifying what is viewed as a “welfare concern”.

Some staff groups may have methods for recording information about learners e.g. class-based notebooks or diaries. The use of these systems to record welfare related information or issues should be avoided as it runs the risk of essential information being lost; members of staff should be aware that **all** welfare concerns must be recorded and kept centrally by DSL.

If staff have doubts as to whether an incident or information constitutes a concern, or should be formally recorded, they should consult with the DSL. Safeguarding information is shared on a need to know basis, so it may be the DSL already has concerns regarding the learner, and the information could provide vital evidence.

All staff should be mindful that records may be shared with others at some stage, for example when making a referral to statutory agencies, compiling a report for a Child Protection Case Conference, and in some cases, may be used as evidence in court proceedings. It is important that staff always use clear and precise language (including recording any specific words used by a child) and they record facts, not opinion; any interpretation or inference drawn from what was observed, said or alleged should be clearly recorded as such.

DSLs should ensure that all staff are clear about how they as the DSL will respond to reported concerns; this could include providing appropriate feedback to the member of staff who completed the form. Staff should be empowered to seek clarification on the action taken by the DSL, including why concerns have not been reported to the statutory agencies. Feedback on concerns raised should be an expectation; staff should not be passive in acquiring this and should seek a response if this is not forthcoming. It should be made clear to all staff that if concerns remain following a welfare concern, a consultation could be sought with their Area Safeguarding Advisor. Additionally, all staff should be made aware of the settings whistleblowing procedure if they are unhappy with the action taken by the DSL.

## 2. Effective Record Keeping

### 2.1 What is a welfare concern?

Staff need to maintain an attitude of “*it could happen here*” where safeguarding is concerned (Keeping children safe in education 2018). All staff need to be alert and ‘professionally curious’; questioning behaviours and checking this out with the DSL as necessary to enable information shared to be evaluated.

A welfare concern could include a child protection issue, however may also include concerns that may arise through:

- Behaviour
- Attitudinal changes
- Physical injury or injuries
- A disclosure or allegation
- Physical presentation
- Attendance
- Information from or observation of behaviour of a parent/carer

- Information from a third party e.g. sibling, friend, transport, neighbour, a member of the extended family etc.
- Information shared by another professional

## 2.2 What should staff record on a welfare concern form?

The welfare concern form should ensure that essential information is recorded. This should include:

- Who is making the report
  - Capture the full name and role of the person the report was made by
- When the report was made
  - Record the date, location and time of the incident/event/observation
- What the concern is
  - The incident/event/observation should be described clearly and concisely
  - Where appropriate, record the names of those involved, including any witnesses
  - Record where the incident/event/observation took place and how the information came to light
  - Any questions staff have asked (Note: Staff should use open questions e.g. TED - Tell, Explain and Describe)
  - Physical marks and/or injuries should be recorded with sufficient detail using a body map.
    - An example of a body map can be found at [www.proceduresonline.com/kentandmedway/pdfs/body\\_maps.pdf](http://www.proceduresonline.com/kentandmedway/pdfs/body_maps.pdf)
    - Staff should not examine the learner; only record what they can see.
    - Photographs should **NOT** be taken by staff. Taking photos of injuries can be traumatic and distressing for learners and staff. If photos of injuries are required for evidence purposes, this should be done by the Police.
- Why the member of staff is concerned.

All information recorded should be:

- legible and written using straightforward language
- Using a child's own words (verbatim) as much as possible
- Factually accurate, i.e. not opinion (any interpretation or assumptions should be clearly recorded as such).
- Signed and dated in full (time, day, month and year) by the person making the report

Welfare concern forms should be easily accessible to all staff and depending on the size and type of setting, be available in a range of different places, for example, classrooms, the staff room, the main office, Headteacher/Managers/DSL's offices.

When a welfare concern form is passed to the DSL it should be checked to determine it is sufficiently detailed and has been signed and dated by the staff member who has reported the concern. If a body map has been completed or there are any other documents referred to in the record, the DSL should ensure they are attached and, where appropriate, are also dated and signed.

## 2.3 What should DSLs record on a welfare concern form?

The level of detail recorded will depend on the nature and seriousness of the concern highlighted, however, the following information should be recorded by DSLs on the welfare concern form:

- The full name of the DSL who received the concern form
- The date (time, day, month and year) the form was received
- If different to the above, the name of the DSL who acted and the date action was taken
- Action taken by DSLs to investigate the concern; examples could include;
  - Recommendation for staff to monitor specific aspects of the learners' presentation, behaviour, attendance etc. and for how long
  - Discussions and telephone calls, including professional consultations
  - The decision to (or not to) refer concern to a statutory agency
- Any rationale for decision making

## 3 The Safeguarding File

### 3.1 When should I start a safeguarding file?

Once a welfare concern has been passed to the DSL and a record has been made of the action taken and/or decision making, these documents will require storage in a separate child protection/safeguarding filing system. This is regardless of whether formal child protection procedures have been initiated. For some children, this single record will be the only concern held for them over their time in the setting. For others, further information will be brought to you from a variety of sources over time.

A stand-alone individual file for a child must be started when:

- Concerns for the child and consequently records of these and actions in the setting are increasing.
- The child has been referred to a partner agency for support.
- You have been made aware of the involvement of a partner agency with the child/family and are contributing to multi agency assessments.

Information about child protection concerns and referrals should be kept in a separate child protection file for each child, rather than in one 'concern log'. The child protection file should be started as soon as you become aware of any concerns. It is recommended that DSLs ensure that several blank files are made available in preparation, so that record keeping can be appropriate from the beginning.

### 3.2 What should be included in a safeguarding file?

Keeping children safe in education 2018 (Paragraph 36; page 11) identifies that 'All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing'. Therefore, records included within a child's safeguarding file may include the following:



- All setting welfare concern forms.
- Any notes initially recorded in the form of notebooks or diaries.
- Records of discussions, telephone calls and meetings (with colleagues, other agencies or services, parents and children/young people).
- Records of the settings decision making, as well as action taken and appropriate justifications.
- Professional consultations.
- Letters sent and received.
- Print outs of emails or other electronic communications sent and received.
- Referral forms (both for external and education-based services).
- Minutes of meetings (copies for each child as appropriate).
- Formal plans linked to the child (e.g. Child Protection Plan).

In cases where information is held in this variety of formats it may be helpful to use a ring binder file and organise this on a 'modular' basis for ease of reference i.e. sections titled:

- Setting records
- Letters
- Multi-agency records
- Health

### **3.3 What is a front/cover sheet?**

When an individual file is started, it is helpful to use a front/cover sheet to enable key information to be easily accessed. This should not be on the front of the file, but the first page within a file.

An example of a front/cover sheet can be found in 'Templates for Record Keeping Guidance 2018'.

### **3.4 What is a chronology?**

A chronology is most helpfully stored at the front of a child's safeguarding file behind the front/cover sheet, where it can be quickly accessed and viewed and should be kept up to date. An example of a chronology template can be found in the 'Templates for Record Keeping Guidance 2018'.

The importance of understanding concerns for a child in the context of history, time-lines and other known information cannot be underestimated. Chronologies are central to this process and it is strongly recommended that these are completed on an ongoing basis. In addition to aiding assessment, a chronology will serve as an important record of settings actions and when attached to a referral, can provide an overview, evidence and justification for a referral being made.

A chronology should list specific and significant incidents, events and actions taken in relation to the child and where appropriate their family, with a brief explanation, or cross-reference to the relevant record within the file; do not clutter up a chronology by copying and pasting reams of information or entering other documents into it.



A chronology entry should be concise, factual and clear representation of the event/incident. If there no action was taken following a concern being received, clearly explain why not.

An example of a chronology entry could be:

Date of Incident	Summary of incident/actions taken	Entry completed by:	Request for support made?
05.01.18	Jonny returned to school after the winter break with a broken arm. His mother reports this occurred during a trip to the local trampoline park. Call to Jonny's mum to discuss any special requirements.	Miss Avery 06.01.18	No
15.05.18	Jonny arrived at school distressed and told Mrs Barnett (TA) that this morning, his mother had been shouting at him because he couldn't get his trousers on the right way round.  Concern form completed and passed to Miss Avery who spoke with Jonny's mother. (see file for documents)	Miss Avery 15.05.18	No

### 3.5 How are siblings managed on safeguarding files?

Where concerns relate to more than one child from the same family, a separate file for each child should be created. Settings should not have 'sibling' or 'family' files; this can cause issues when siblings transition to a new setting but also can contravene data protection requirements.

Common records e.g. child protection conference minutes should be duplicated for each file where appropriate containing information relevant to the named child within the file.

### 3.6 How to education settings cross reference with other general files?

It's good practice to keep child protection files separate from a child's general records. It is therefore useful to have a system which indicates on a child's general record that they have a separate child protection record. Suggestions for this may include coloured stickers or labels.

## 4. Strategic Record Keeping Decisions

### 4.1 How do we keep/store records and who has access?

It is the responsibility of the DSL to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals. Child protection records must be kept separate from all other records relating to that child.

Child protection records should be stored in a locked cabinet preferably within the DSL's office with access only to those with direct child protection responsibility for children. It is essential to ensure that the settings leadership team know the arrangements for access to records in the absence of the DSLs. This should form part of the settings child protection policy in respect of how welfare concerns for children will be managed if the DSL is not available.

For Early Years providers, the EYFS 2017 sec 3.69 states that, records must be easily accessible and available. With prior agreement from Ofsted or the childminder agency with which they are registered, these may be kept securely off the premises. Confidential information and records about staff and children must be held securely and only accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

## **4.2 How should we keep records as part of a team of DSL's?**

In settings where there is a lead DSL supported by deputy DSLs there should be a clear system for ensuring that welfare concerns are managed appropriately to prevent duplication and avoid complacency. Examples of this could include the lead DSL being the main point of contact; staff should only speak with a deputy DSL if the lead is not available. For larger settings they may consider asking sites, year groups/departments to report to a deputy DSL with regular and formally recorded meetings taking place between the lead and any deputies.

The lead DSL will need to ensure they maintain a clear oversight of all safeguarding concerns. Lead DSLs may find it helpful to formally meet on a regular basis with any deputy DSLs and/or other pastoral staff to ensure information sharing takes place.

Within 'Keeping children safe in education' 2018 guidance, it is suggested that the DSL should keep all cases (including early help) under constant review and consider escalation processes if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

DSLs should keep a list of children within the setting who are:

- Known to early help
- Child in Need
- Children who are subject to a Child Protection plan
- Children in Care

Such a list can be used to ensure that all relevant members of staff are clear about which agencies are involved with which children. This will also enable staff to cross reference any other concerns as they arise, such as behavioural issues. This list can also be anonymised as evidence to demonstrate that DSLs have a clear understanding and oversight of children with multi-agency plans within the setting.

## **4.3 Can we use electronic record keeping systems?**

Many settings are now opting to use electronic record keeping systems to log and manage child protection and welfare concerns. Educational settings should use the recording system approach that work best for them, whilst still maintaining appropriate child protection records in line the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

Electronic systems have both benefits and downsides; the physical layout of the site, storage availability, technology access, budgets and the local context will all influence the usefulness of electronic approaches, however the decision to opt for electronic approaches is down to individual settings.

**Some points DSLs and leaders may wish to consider are:**

Is the system GDPR and Data Protection compliant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does the setting know this; what checks have been made?</li> <li>▪ Who has access to the data held on the system? (note access to this data should be the same as for physical copies)</li> </ul>
How does this system work for staff who do not have access to setting IT systems, such as volunteers or midday supervisors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will physical copies of the welfare concern form still need to be available?</li> <li>▪ If so, will these be transferred or kept?</li> </ul>
How do files transfer when children move to a different setting, such as at transition stages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not all settings use electronic systems and not all electronic systems 'speak to each other' so files may need to be printed out.</li> </ul>
How will files be accessed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How are files accessed for meetings offsite, e.g. case conferences etc.?</li> <li>▪ How are files accessed or audited if they are required by someone external to the setting, such as part of a safeguarding review or investigation?</li> </ul>
How much will the system cost the setting, both short and long term and is that proportionate and justifiable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will additional IT devices or systems be required to ensure all staff have access?</li> </ul>
What training is required?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What training will be provided to DSLs to enable them to administrate the system?</li> <li>▪ How will the DSL ensure that all staff receive appropriate guidance and training regarding expected usage of the system?</li> </ul>
Has the setting updated and amended their child protection policies to reflect the change of practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How will changes to the policies be communicated with stakeholders?</li> </ul>

It is recommended that setting leaders document the decision making regarding using electronic record keeping systems so that it can be evidenced, if necessary.

## 4.4 How do we communicate with other staff members about record keeping?

Many educational settings employ a range of staff who hold specific pastoral care responsibilities; this could include pupil welfare managers, Family Liaison Officers and Parental Support Advisers. Due to their roles, pastoral staff may have their own systems for recording ongoing work with children and their families; however, DSLs should be aware of these systems and establish clear processes for sharing information accordingly. In all cases where child protection concerns, or events arise, pastoral staff must complete the “welfare concern” form and pass information formally to the DSL.

If pastoral staff keep their own records regarding activity undertaken to support children or their families where a child protection file exists, these records must be cross referenced and oversight by the DSL should be evidenced. If records or information kept by pastoral staff is shared informally with the DSL, for example as part of staff meetings or informal conversations etc., this should also be formally recorded.

Settings will often commission other professionals to deliver additional support to their learners. External agencies will have their own systems for recording safeguarding information, however it is important that your system of recording is used by all staff on site, including commissioned staff. This may require information to be transferred by the external staff member onto your systems; whilst this may feel like duplication it is essential that any account of concern is recorded using your systems.

## 5. Information sharing and data protection

### 5.1 What are my responsibilities under data protection?

Neither the parent nor the child has an automatic right of access to child protection records. However, it is best practice to share information written by staff unless there is a valid reason to withhold it. For example, child protection records may be exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 in cases where disclosure may cause serious physical or emotional harm to the child or any other person. However, the exemption only applies to the information that may cause harm and is not a blanket exemption for the whole file.

The right of access, commonly referred to as subject access, gives individuals the right to obtain a copy of their personal data as well as other supplementary information. Under this right and individual is entitled only to their own personal information and not to information relating to other people (unless they are acting on behalf of that person). All third-party information should be removed, or consent sought for its disclosure from source.

If a Subject Access Request (SAR) is made, you must act on the request without undue delay, and, at the latest within one month of receipt. Further information about Subject Access Requests can be found on Kelsi at [www.kelsi.org.uk/school-management/data-and-reporting/access-to-information/the-data-protection-act-1998](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/school-management/data-and-reporting/access-to-information/the-data-protection-act-1998)

Cases of alleged abuse that result in court proceedings may require the setting to disclose their records, either through the police or social services. Records (suitably anonymised) may also be requested for use in disciplinary proceedings.

In all court cases, a requesting solicitor or other third party should be advised that a Witness Summons or Subpoena should be obtained. In these situations, the advice of your Area Safeguarding Advisor and/or legal department should be sought.

## 5.2 What information can be shared?

Whilst, among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure, this is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

All information held by the setting should be shared with Specialist Children's Services, police and health professionals as appropriate, where there is a concern that a child is at risk of significant harm. Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 authorises all agencies to share information in these circumstances.

For further generic information on information sharing, you can access and download 'Information sharing – advice for safeguarding practitioners' 2018 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)

## 5.3 Can I speak to DSL's of different settings?

On occasions where safeguarding concerns exist for a child in the context of a family situation and siblings attend other schools or settings, it may be appropriate for the DSL to consult on a confidential basis with the DSL from another school/setting to share and jointly consider concerns.

If in any doubt about the appropriateness of this process, advice can be sought from your Area Education Safeguarding Advisor.

# 6. Transfer of Records

## 6.1 How do I prepare a file ready for transfer?

The learner's record should not be weeded before transfer unless any of the items mentioned below have been placed on the file.

- Absence notes
- Parental consent forms for trips/outings (in the event of a major incident all the parental consent forms should be retained with the incident report not in the pupil record)
- Correspondence with parents about minor issues

- Accident forms (these should be stored separately and retained on the school premises until their statutory retention period is reached. A copy could be placed on the pupil file in the event of a major incident).

It is important to remember that the information which may seem unnecessary to the person weeding the file may be a vital piece of information required at a later stage. Consider whether an entry on the learner's chronology would be appropriate.

For example, if 5 absence notes were received over a relatively short period of time, you may want to combine this in a chronology entry such as:

Date of Incident	Summary of Incident / Actions taken	Entry completed by:	Request for support made?
15.05.18	There have been 5 absence notes (not consecutive days) presented by Miss Ray between 22.04.18 and 10.05.18. Miss Avery has discussed this with Miss Ray who has cited illness as the reason. Miss Avery has emphasised the need for regular and consistent attendance.	Miss Avery 15.05.18	No

Primary Schools do not need to keep copies of any records, except if there is an ongoing legal action. In these cases, the school should keep that information until the case is closed and then send the information to the new school.

If a pupil is not moving to a secondary school the primary school should send the files onto KCC to store.

Further information can be found in the Information Management Toolkit for Schools: [www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0012/60213/InformationManagementToolkitforSchoolsv4-2.docx](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/word_doc/0012/60213/InformationManagementToolkitforSchoolsv4-2.docx)

## 6.2 How do education settings transfer safeguarding files?

When learners transfer from one education setting to another and records of child protection/welfare concerns have been kept, they must be sent to the receiving setting's DSL.

DSLs must ensure that child protection files are transferred to new school / setting / college as soon as possible as part of transition. This is essential; as part of the transition process is to enable receiving settings to make appropriate safeguarding, risk management and resource decisions.

It is the responsibility of the transferring setting to ensure that records are sent to the receiving setting. However, DSL's in receiving settings should always seek to proactively ensure that positive communications are in place with any feeder settings at transition to check that child protection files have been sent.



The transfer of safeguarding records should be secure and arranged separately from the main child file, in line with DfE guidance, and must be transferred under confidential cover. For example, the transferring DSL arranges to meet the receiving DSL and the records are physically exchanged between them. If a school sent information relating to a pupil who was not attending the new school in September, then this potentially could be a data protection breach.

A receipt should be requested by the transferring setting and presented by the receiving setting. Where the physical transfer of files is not possible or appropriate, the best possible secure delivery of these files should take place, with a receipt being provided by the receiving setting.

It is possible that there may be exceptional circumstances where during the summer break something happens to prevent the learner joining the new setting. This is rare and should be dealt with on a case per case basis. Similarly, consideration must be given to whether it is appropriate to transfer a safeguarding file overseas.

### **6.2.1 Child(ren) subject to a Child Protection plan**

If a child is subject to a child protection plan or there are other ongoing concerns at the time of transfer, then it is strongly recommended that the transferring DSL arrange to meet with the receiving DSL in person to ensure there is effective transition and handover of information.

Child protection files should always be kept by the current education setting which the child attends. Transferring settings do not need to keep copies of child protection files, but if there is reason to they do they must be kept in accordance with data retention (see section 7). In cases where there may be ongoing involvement from transferring settings, for example if any siblings still attend your setting, DSLs may wish to take copies of chronologies etc.

If a child who is subject of a child protection plan leaves your setting and you are unaware of the name of the child's new education placement, you should contact the child's key worker from Early Help or Children's Social Care to discuss how records should be transferred.

### **6.2.2 Children Missing Education**

Where records of child protection/welfare concerns have been kept, and details of the receiving establishment are not known, settings should follow the Missing Children Procedure in conjunction with the ELS Inclusion Service. Schools should also use the 'Lost Pupil Database' section of the 'School to School' secure data transfer service, which can be used to track missing children and trace previous schools.

### **6.2.3 Elective Home Education**

In line with Pupil Registration Regulations, if a parent has formally requested to home educate their child/children, schools need to complete an Off--Rolling Notification via the Digital Front Door. Pupils can only be removed from the roll when the school has received written confirmation from the parent of their intention to home educate, or until authorisation has been given by the SEN team if appropriate.



For further enquiries, contact Elective Home Education Team on 03000 41 69 69 or email [educationathome@kent.gov.uk](mailto:educationathome@kent.gov.uk).

## 7. Retention of Records

### 7.1 How long are records kept for?

Guidance from the Records Management Society is when a child with a child protection record reaches statutory school leaving age, the last school/setting attended should keep the child protection file until the child's 25th birthday. Following this, the file should be shredded; a record should be kept of this having been done including the date, and why.

Kent County Council have further guidelines to help education settings manage their retention of records. Information can be found on the Kelsi website: [www.kelsi.org.uk/school-management/data-and-reporting/access-to-information/records-management](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/school-management/data-and-reporting/access-to-information/records-management)

### 7.2 What should I do if I am not sure whether I need to retain a file?

There may be other exceptional circumstances that arise relating to the transfer and retention of records. If you are unsure how to respond, please seek advice from your Area Education Safeguarding Advisor.

<u>West Kent:</u>	Tel: 03000 412284
<u>East Kent:</u>	Tel: 03000 418503
<u>North Kent:</u>	Tel: 03000 412445
<u>South Kent:</u>	Tel: 03000 415648