

***St Patrick's Academy***  
**DATA PROTECTION POLICY**

***Rationale***

In line with the requirements of Data Protection Act (2000), the Board of Governors of St Patrick's Academy endeavours to ensure that all personal data are treated in a manner that is fair and lawful. In particular, while promoting a culture of openness and accountability, the school recognises the need to protect the interests of those for whom it holds personal information, whether or not this information is of a sensitive nature.

***Purpose***

- To ensure that the school responds in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) to any requests for information,
- To clarify for staff, pupils, parents and the public, the nature of information which can be disclosed;
- To clarify for staff, pupils, parents and the public, the different implications of the DPA and the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA).

***Guidelines***

- This policy should be used in conjunction with the school's Freedom of Information Policy (FoI) and its Policy for Use of the Internet;
- The FoI Policy lists the types of anonymous school documents that can be made public. On the other hand, the DPA protects the privacy of individuals by safeguarding the information that the school holds on them;
- All personal data, relating to Governors, staff, pupils, parents and relevant outside agencies, whether held on computer or in paper files, will be covered by the terms of the DPA;
- All personal data, whether relating to Governors, staff, pupils, parents and relevant outside agencies, will be stored in a secure and safe manner;
- Electronic data will be protected by standard password and firewall systems operated by the school;
- Computer workstations in administrative areas will be positioned so that they are not visible to casual observers waiting either in the office or at the reception hatch;
- Manual data will be stored where it is not accessible to anyone who does not have a legitimate reason to view or process that data, with particular attention being paid to the need for the security of sensitive personal data;
- Particular attention will also be paid to any data relating to staff or pupils being taken outside the school building;
- The school will issue regular reminders to staff, to ensure that all personal data is held securely;
- Personal data will only be disclosed to organisations or individuals for whom consent has been given to receive the data, or organisations that have a legal right to receive the data without consent being given;
- When requests to disclose personal data are received, it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the caller is entitled to receive the data. If the person is not known personally, proof of identity should be requested.
- A record will be kept of any personal data disclosed by the school;
- Personal data, including photographs, will not be used in school newsletters, magazines, on the school website or in other media, without the consent of the data subject and/or his/her parent;
- Routine consent issues will be incorporated into the school's pupil data gathering sheets, to avoid the need for frequent, similar requests for consent being made by the school.
- Personal data will only be disclosed to the officers in the PSNI if they are able to show that they have a specific, legitimate need to have access to personal data.
- If the school receives a written request from a data subject to see any or all personal data that the school holds about him/her, this should be treated as a Subject Access Request – see Appendix III
- Appendix I lists the types of information which are covered under the DPA;
- Appendix II indicates the disposal schedule for the different types of information which are covered under the DPA.