Data Protection and Pupil Records Policy

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated by the staff during February 2008 and revised in November 2011.

Rationale

It is necessary to devise a policy on record keeping at this time because

- Teaching is informed by pupil learning needs and the recording of where a pupil is in relation to his/her learning is a cornerstone of good teaching.
- Education Act Section 9 (g) provides that parents (or students of 18 years or upwards) are entitled to have access in the prescribed manner to records kept by the school relating to the progress of the student in his/her education.
- Attendance at school has a bearing on a pupil's attainment levels.
- Education (Welfare) Act requires principals
    1. To communicate to a school, to which a student is transferring, any problems relating to school attendance which the pupil concerned had and any other appropriate matters relating to the pupil's educational progress.
    2. To keep a record of the pupil's attendance and the reasons for failure to attend.
    3. To inform the Educational Welfare Officer in writing, where a pupil is suspended for a period in excess of 6 days/ or where a pupil is absent in excess of 20 school days in a school year/ or where in the opinion of the principal the student is not attending regularly.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Derrycreha N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between, staff, parents and pupils.

Aims

Our school hopes to achieve the following by introducing this policy.

- To record the educational progress that a pupil is making thereby enabling parents and teachers to support the child's learning.
- To report to parents in a meaningful way on the educational progress of their children.
- To establish clear, practical procedures that will enable parents/guardians (or past pupils who have reached the age of 18) to access records relating to educational process.
- To ensure that this access is available within the capacity of the school to administer it.
- To establish a clear understanding, shared by management, staff and parents, as to the type of records that are maintained and how such records should be made available.
- To ensure that the school complies with the legislative requirements while awaiting the issue of guidelines as to the 'prescribed manner' referred to in Section 9 (g) of the Education Act.

Content of Policy

There is a file for each pupil which is kept in the filing cabinet while the pupil is attending the school. When a pupil leaves or transfers, the file is stored with others of the same date in the attic. These files are kept until the past pupil is 21 and will be shredded at that stage.

The following records are kept in the pupil files:

- Annual Report
- Standardised Tests
- Diagnostic Tests
- Individual Education Plans
- Record of Attendance – on report card
- Psychological Assessments
- Referrals for Learning Support
- Enrolment Forms

Due to storage problems the following records are not in the pupil files but are kept in a locked press.

- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- A copy containing written reports of serious incidents/serious injuries.
- Minutes of Board of Management meetings are also kept under lock and key in the filing cabinet.

All records are stored in written form.

Content

Annual Report

Issued in June – by hand. Copies to separated parents as required/requested. Different format for Infants and First/Sixth. Format based on templates issued by NCCA.

Standardised Tests

Micra and Sigma tests are administered to all classes in May/June each year. The STEN score (with explanation) will be communicated to parents in annual report and discussed at p/t meeting in October or before that if necessary. An NCCA information leaflet is given out to parents at the start of the year.

Teacher Designed Tests

Teachers devise their own tests from time to time. Results are filed/reported when appropriate/relevant.

Screening Tests

The MIST is administered by L.S.T. in April/May annually. The class teacher and L.S.T. discuss the results and take appropriate action. MIST tests are stored in a secured place.

Diagnostic Tests

Diagnostic assessment is undertaken when necessary by the L.S.T. who has the experience in this area. Among the tests administered are The Neale Analysis literacy test and a spelling test. The class teacher consults with parents and

keeps them informed at all stages. The Principal contacts N.E.P.S where necessary.

Individual Education Plans which are drawn up by L.S.T./ Resources Teachers alongside the class teacher are included in pupil files.

Access to Records

The following have access to records – school personnel, parents/guardians, past pupils over 18 years, H.S.E. (where relevant) and second level schools where necessary. Permission will be sought from parents before allowing access to reports by third parties, e.g. other schools, H.S.E.

Procedure

Parents and past pupils known to principal may make a verbal request for access to file. In all other cases a written request is demanded and proof of identity also. Files will be provided between one/two weeks after request.

Responsibility for updating pupil files

While the Principal has over-all responsibility for pupil files – each class teacher is responsible for placing copy of annual report and STEN scores in file at the end of the school year.

Records regarding employees

Contracts, references, C.V.'s and job applications are also stored securely in the filing cabinet. Access to these is limited to the principal, chairperson of B.O.M. and D.E.S. personnel. These records are shredded when an employee leaves Derrycreha N.S.

Roles and Responsibility

The principal has overall responsibility for this policy.

This policy will be reviewed and amended when legislation and guidelines and best practice demand.