

Model Letter

Dear Parent

Fair Processing and the Data Protection Act 1998

Schools hold and process a variety of information on their pupils which is necessary to support their learning. From time to time, schools are required by law to pass on some of this information to other educational and healthcare organisations. This is in order to run the education and healthcare services.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, the information held about pupils must only be used for specific purposes. Under the Act, the school is required to write to parents/pupils to tell them about the types of data held, why it is held and to whom it may be passed. This is referred to as a 'Fair Processing Notice' and one has been included for you with this letter.

Where a pupil is younger than 12 years old, the Fair Processing Notice is provided to the parent (or the person with parental responsibility). The parent is encouraged to share it with the pupil if the pupil is able to understand it.

Where a pupil is aged 12 or more, the Fair Processing Notice is provided to both the pupil and the parent.

When a pupil reaches the age of 16, the Fair Processing Notice is reissued. For pupils of 13 years and over, the school is legally required to pass on certain pupil information to Connexions - the Government's support service for all young people aged 13 to 19 in England. However, parents, or the pupils themselves once they are aged 16 or over, can ask that no information beyond the name and address (which is compulsory for pupil and parent) be passed on. By reissuing the notice to pupils at the age of 16, it draws pupils' attention to the fact that the right to opt out from passing such information on, transfers from the parent to the pupil.

From January 2009, schools are legally required to supply basic information to ContactPoint. ContactPoint is an online directory which will help people who work with children to quickly find out who else is working with the same child, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support. The basic information which needs to be supplied only includes the name and address of the child, contact details for their parents or carers (with parental responsibility) and the contact details of the school. Parents are invited to check and update the information held about themselves by getting in touch with the school.

If you have any queries regarding Fair Processing and the Data Protection Act 1998, please do not hesitate to contact (school to provide details of the member of staff to contact) at the school.