



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

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Data Protection Policy

Policy owner	Governance Director, Cheshire Academies Trust
Next review	Summer 2029
Applies to	All schools within Cheshire Academies Trust

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Statement of intent

In this policy, Cheshire Academies Trust (or 'the Trust'), means the Trust itself and any of its academies and Cheshire LTA (the teaching school).

Cheshire Academies Trust is required to keep and process certain information about its staff members and pupils in accordance with its legal obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

The Trust, may, from time to time, be required to share personal information about its staff or pupils with other organisations mainly the Department for Education (DfE), the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Local Authorities, the Trust's business partners (for example the HR business partner or payroll provider), other Trusts and educational bodies, and potentially social services or health organisations.

This policy is in place to ensure all staff, trustees and governors are aware of their responsibilities and outlines how the Trust complies with the following core principles of the UK GDPR.

Organisational methods for keeping data secure are imperative, and Cheshire Academies Trust believes that it is good practice to keep clear practical policies, backed up by written procedures in all of its establishments.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to the following:
 - The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
 - The Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2016)
 - The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004
 - The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- 1.2. This policy will also have regard to the following guidance:
 - Information Commissioner's Office (2017) 'Overview of the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)'
 - Information Commissioner's Office (2018) 'Guide to Data Protection'
 - Information Commissioner's Office (2018) 'Guide to the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)'
- 1.3. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following other Trust policies:
 - CAT Staff ICT User Policy
 - CAT Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
 - CAT Data Retention Schedule
 - CAT Staff Disciplinary Policy

2. Applicable data

- 2.1. For the purpose of this policy, **personal data** refers to information that relates to an identifiable, living individual, including information such as an online identifier, such as an IP address. The UK GDPR applies to both automated personal data and to manual filing systems, where personal data is accessible according to specific criteria, as well as to chronologically ordered data and pseudonymised data, e.g. key-coded.
- 2.2. **Sensitive personal data** is referred to in the UK GDPR as 'special categories of personal data', which are broadly the same as those in the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. These specifically include the processing of genetic data, biometric data and data concerning health matters.

3. Principles

- 3.1. In accordance with the requirements outlined in the UK GDPR, personal data will be:
 - Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to individuals.
 - Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes; further processing for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes shall not be considered to be incompatible with the initial purposes.
 - Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
 - Accurate and, where necessary, kept up-to-date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay.
 - Kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods, insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes, subject to implementation of the

appropriate technical and organisational measures required by the UK GDPR in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals.

- Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.
- 3.2. The UK GDPR also requires that “the controller shall be responsible for, and able to demonstrate, compliance with the principles”.

4. Accountability

- 4.1. Cheshire Academies Trust will implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to demonstrate that data is processed in line with the principles set out in the UK GDPR.
- 4.2. The Trust will provide comprehensive, clear and transparent privacy notices which clearly outline what data is collected, why it is collected and who it could be shared with
- 4.3. Records of activities relating to higher risk processing will be maintained, such as the processing of special categories data or that in relation to criminal convictions and offences.
- 4.4. Internal records of processing activities will include the following:
- Name and details of the organisation
 - Purpose(s) of the processing
 - Description of the categories of individuals and personal data
 - Retention schedules
 - Categories of recipients of personal data
 - Description of technical and organisational security measures
 - Details of transfers to third parties, including documentation of the transfer mechanism safeguards in place
- 4.5. The Trust will implement measures that meet the principles of data protection by design and data protection by default, such as:
- Data minimisation
 - Pseudonymisation
 - Transparency
 - Allowing individuals to monitor processing
 - Continuously creating and improving security features
- 4.6. Data protection impact assessments will be used, where appropriate.

5. Data Protection Officer (DPO)

- 5.1. The DPO for the Trust will be fulfilled by the person who occupies the role of the Director of Operations for Cheshire Academies Trust. The DPO will be appointed in order to:
- Inform and advise the Trust and its employees about their obligations to comply with the UK GDPR and other data protection laws
 - Monitor the Trust’s compliance with the UK GDPR and other laws, including managing internal data protection activities, advising on data protection impact assessments, conducting internal audits, and providing the required training to staff members.
- 5.2. In order to provide transparency, the Trust has appointed a Lead Trustee for UK GDPR who has professional experience and knowledge of data protection law. The DPO reports directly to the Board of Trustees in respect of data protection matters. Specifically, this Trustee will have responsibility for UK GDPR compliance at Trust level and for Cheshire LTA.
- 5.3. The Trust’s academies will each appoint a Lead Governor for UK GDPR who along with the academy Principal is responsible for ensuring compliance in their academy. The Chair of the Local Governing Body

(LGB) and the Principal will be required to confirm compliance to the DPO on an annual basis and be responsible for reporting any UK GDPR breaches to the DPO within the required timescales.

- 5.4. Each academy will also appoint a member of staff as the 'UK GDPR Lead' (usually the Business Manager). This member of staff has operational responsibility for completing the annual academy UK GDPR review and reporting to governor on UK GDPR on a termly basis.
- 5.5. The DPO will not be penalised for performing their task.
- 5.6. Sufficient resources will be provided to the DPO to enable them to meet their UK GDPR obligations.

6. Responsible Officer (RO)

- 6.1. The RO for UK GDPR will be the person who occupies the role of Lead Trustee or Governor for UK GDPR.
- 6.2. On an annual basis they will undertake an internal review of UK GDPR compliance at their individual academy and report their findings to the Local Governing Body and the DPO, via completion of the annual academy UK GDPR review form.

7. Lawful processing

- 7.1. The legal basis for processing data will be identified and documented prior to data being processed.
- 7.2. Under the UK GDPR, data will be lawfully processed under the following conditions:
 - The consent of the data subject has been obtained.
 - Processing is necessary for:
 - Compliance with a legal obligation.
 - The performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.
 - For the performance of a contract with the data subject or to take steps to enter into a contract.
 - Protecting the vital interests of a data subject or another person.
 - For the purposes of legitimate interests pursued by the controller or a third party, except where such interests are overridden by the interests, rights or freedoms of the data subject.
- 7.3. Sensitive data will only be processed under the following conditions:
 - Explicit consent of the data subject, unless reliance on consent is prohibited by EU or Member State law.
 - Processing carried out by a not-for-profit body with a political, philosophical, religious or trade union aim provided the processing relates only to members or former members (or those who have regular contact with it in connection with those purposes) and provided there is no disclosure to a third party without consent.
 - Processing relates to personal data manifestly made public by the data subject.
 - Processing is necessary for:
 - Carrying out obligations under employment, social security or social protection law, or a collective agreement.
 - Protecting the vital interests of a data subject or another individual where the data subject is physically or legally incapable of giving consent.
 - The establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims or where courts are acting in their judicial capacity.
 - Reasons of substantial public interest on the basis of Union or Member State law which is proportionate to the aim pursued and which contains appropriate safeguards.
 - The purposes of preventative or occupational medicine, for assessing the working capacity of the employee, medical diagnosis, the provision of health or social care or treatment or management of health or social care systems and services on the basis of Union or Member State law or a contract with a health professional.

- Reasons of public interest in the area of public health, such as protecting against serious cross-border threats to health or ensuring high standards of healthcare and of medicinal products or medical devices.
- Archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1).

8. Consent

- 8.1. Consent must be a positive indication. It cannot be inferred from silence, inactivity or pre-ticked boxes.
- 8.2. Consent will only be accepted where it is freely given, specific, informed and an unambiguous indication of the individual's wishes.
- 8.3. Where consent is given, a record will be kept documenting how and when consent was given.
- 8.4. The Trust ensures that consent mechanisms meet the standards of the UK GDPR. Where the standard of consent cannot be met, an alternative legal basis for processing the data must be found, or the processing must cease.
- 8.5. Consent accepted under the DPA will be reviewed to ensure it meets the standards of the UK GDPR; however, acceptable consent obtained under the DPA will not be reobtained.
- 8.6. Consent can be withdrawn by the individual at any time.
- 8.7. The consent of parents will be sought prior to the processing of a child's data, except where the processing is related to preventative or counselling services offered directly to a child.

9. The right to be informed

- 9.1. The privacy notice supplied to individuals in regards to the processing of their personal data will be written in clear, plain language which is concise, transparent, easily accessible and free of charge.
- 9.2. We do not offer services directly to children without having gained parental consent.
- 9.3. In relation to data obtained both directly from the data subject and not obtained directly from the data subject, the following information will be supplied within the privacy notice:
 - The identity and contact details of the controller, and where applicable, the controller's representative and the DPO.
 - The purpose of, and the legal basis for, processing the data.
 - The legitimate interests of the controller or third party.
 - Any recipient or categories of recipients of the personal data.
 - Details of transfers to third parties and the safeguards in place.
 - The retention period used to determine the retention period.
 - The existence of the data subject's rights, including the right to:
 - Withdraw consent at any time.
 - Lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority.
 - The existence of automated decision making, including profiling, how decisions are made, the significance of the process and the consequences.
- 9.4. Where data is obtained directly from the data subject, information regarding whether the provision of personal data is part of a statutory or contractual requirement and the details of the categories of personal data, as well as any possible consequences of failing to provide the personal data, will be provided.
- 9.5. Where data is not obtained directly from the data subject, information regarding the source the personal data originates from and whether it came from publicly accessible sources, will be provided.
- 9.6. For data obtained directly from the data subject, this information will be supplied at the time the data is obtained.
- 9.7. In relation to data that is not obtained directly from the data subject, this information will be supplied:

- Within one month of having obtained the data.
- If disclosure to another recipient is envisaged, at the latest, before the data is disclosed.
- If the data is used to communicate with the individual, at the latest, when the first communication takes place.

10. The right of access

- 10.1. Individuals have the right to obtain confirmation that their data is being processed.
- 10.2. Individuals have the right to submit a subject access request (SAR) to gain access to their personal data
- 10.3. The Trust will verify the identity of the person making the request before any information is supplied.
- 10.4. A copy of the information will be supplied to the individual free of charge; however, the Trust may impose a 'reasonable fee' to comply with requests for further copies of the same information.
- 10.5. Subject Access Requests may be made to the Trust verbally or in writing and where possible should include a secure email address for the information to be provided to.
- 10.6. Where a request is manifestly unfounded, excessive or repetitive, a reasonable fee will be charged.
- 10.7. All fees will be based on the administrative cost of providing the information.
- 10.8. All requests will be responded to without delay and at the latest, within thirty days of receipt.
- 10.9. Where a request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, the Trust holds the right to refuse to respond to the request. The individual will be informed of this decision and the reasoning behind it, as well as their right to complain to the supervisory authority and to a judicial remedy, within one month of the refusal.
- 10.10. In the event that a large quantity of information is being processed about an individual, the Trust will ask the individual to specify the information the request is in relation to.
- 10.11. The Trust reserves the right to extend its response by a further 2 months if the request is complex or multiple requests are made from the same person or family

11. The right to rectification

- 11.1. Individuals are entitled to have any inaccurate or incomplete personal data rectified.
- 11.2. Where the personal data in question has been disclosed to third parties, the Trust will inform them of the rectification where possible.
- 11.3. Where appropriate, the Trust will inform the individual about the third parties that the data has been disclosed to.
- 11.4. Requests for rectification will be responded to within one month; this will be extended by two months where the request for rectification is complex.
- 11.5. Where no action is being taken in response to a request for rectification, the Trust will explain the reason for this to the individual, and will inform them of their right to complain to the supervisory authority and to a judicial remedy.

12. The right to erasure

- 12.1. Individuals hold the right to request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing.
- 12.2. Individuals have the right to erasure in the following circumstances:
 - Where the personal data is no longer necessary in relation to the purpose for which it was originally collected/processed
 - When the individual withdraws their consent

- When the individual objects to the processing and there is no overriding legitimate interest for continuing the processing
 - The personal data was unlawfully processed
 - The personal data is required to be erased in order to comply with a legal obligation
 - The personal data is processed in relation to the offer of information society services to a child
- 12.3. The Trust has the right to refuse a request for erasure where the personal data is being processed for the following reasons:
- To exercise the right of freedom of expression and information
 - To comply with a legal obligation for the performance of a public interest task or exercise of official authority
 - For public health purposes in the public interest
 - For archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific research, historical research or statistical purposes
 - The exercise or defence of legal claims
- 12.4. Where personal data has been disclosed to third parties, they will be informed about the erasure of the personal data, unless it is impossible or involves disproportionate effort to do so.
- 12.5. Where personal data has been made public within an online environment, the Trust will inform other organisations who process the personal data to erase links to and copies of the personal data in question.

13. The right to restrict processing

- 13.1. Individuals have the right to block or suppress the Trust's processing of personal data.
- 13.2. In the event that processing is restricted, the Trust will store the personal data, but not further process it, guaranteeing that just enough information about the individual has been retained to ensure that the restriction is respected in future.
- 13.3. The Trust will restrict the processing of personal data in the following circumstances:
- Where an individual contests the accuracy of the personal data, processing will be restricted until the Trust has verified the accuracy of the data
 - Where an individual has objected to the processing and the Trust is considering whether their legitimate grounds override those of the individual
 - Where processing is unlawful and the individual opposes erasure and requests restriction instead
 - Where the Trust no longer needs the personal data but the individual requires the data to establish, exercise or defend a legal claim
- 13.4. If the personal data in question has been disclosed to third parties, the Trust will inform them about the restriction on the processing of the personal data, unless it is impossible or involves disproportionate effort to do so.
- 13.5. The Trust will inform individuals when a restriction on processing has been lifted.

14. The right to data portability

- 14.1. Individuals have the right to obtain and reuse their personal data for their own purposes across different services.
- 14.2. Personal data can be easily moved, copied or transferred from one IT environment to another in a safe and secure manner, without hindrance to usability.
- 14.3. The right to data portability only applies in the following cases:
- To personal data that an individual has provided to a controller
 - Where the processing is based on the individual's consent or for the performance of a contract
 - When processing is carried out by automated means
- 14.4. Personal data will be provided in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable form.

- 14.5. The Trust will provide the information free of charge.
- 14.6. Where feasible, data will be transmitted directly to another organisation at the request of the individual.
- 14.7. Cheshire Academies Trust is not required to adopt or maintain processing systems which are technically compatible with other organisations.
- 14.8. In the event that the personal data concerns more than one individual, the Trust will consider whether providing the information would prejudice the rights of any other individual.
- 14.9. The Trust will respond to any requests for portability within one month.
- 14.10. Where the request is complex, or a number of requests have been received, the timeframe can be extended by two months, ensuring that the individual is informed of the extension and the reasoning behind it within one month of the receipt of the request
- 14.11. Where no action is being taken in response to a request, the Trust will, without delay and at the latest within one month, explain to the individual the reason for this and will inform them of their right to complain to the supervisory authority and to a judicial remedy.

15. The right to object

- 15.1. The Trust will inform individuals of their right to object at the first point of communication, and this information will be outlined in the privacy notice and explicitly brought to the attention of the data subject, ensuring that it is presented clearly and separately from any other information.
- 15.2. Individuals have the right to object to the following:
 - Processing based on legitimate interests or the performance of a task in the public interest
 - Direct marketing
 - Processing for purposes of scientific or historical research and statistics.
- 15.3. Where personal data is processed for the performance of a legal task or legitimate interests:
 - An individual's grounds for objecting must relate to his or her particular situation.
 - The Trust will stop processing the individual's personal data unless the processing is for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims, or, where the Trust can demonstrate compelling legitimate grounds for the processing, which override the interests, rights and freedoms of the individual.
- 15.4. Where personal data is processed for direct marketing purposes:
 - The Trust will stop processing personal data for direct marketing purposes as soon as an objection is received.
 - The Trust cannot refuse an individual's objection regarding data that is being processed for direct marketing purposes.
- 15.5. Where personal data is processed for research purposes:
 - The individual must have grounds relating to their particular situation in order to exercise their right to object.
 - Where the processing of personal data is necessary for the performance of a public interest task, the Trust is not required to comply with an objection to the processing of the data.

16. Privacy by design and privacy impact assessments

- 16.1. The Trust will act in accordance with the UK GDPR by adopting a privacy by design approach and implementing technical and organisational measures which demonstrate how the Trust has considered and integrated data protection into processing activities.
- 16.2. Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) will be used to identify the most effective method of complying with the Trust's data protection obligations and meeting individuals' expectations of privacy.

- 16.3. DPIAs will allow the Trust to identify and resolve problems at an early stage, thus reducing associated costs and preventing damage from being caused to Cheshire Academies Trust's reputation, which might otherwise occur.
- 16.4. A DPIA will be used when using new technologies or when the processing is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
- 16.5. A DPIA will be used for more than one project, where necessary.
- 16.6. High risk processing includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Systematic and extensive processing activities, such as profiling
 - Large scale processing of special categories of data or personal data which is in relation to criminal convictions or offences
- 16.7. The Trust will ensure that all DPIAs include the following information:
 - A description of the processing operations and the purposes
 - An assessment of the necessity and proportionality of the processing in relation to the purpose
 - An outline of the risks to individuals
 - The measures implemented in order to address risk
- 16.8. Where a DPIA indicates high risk data processing, the Trust will consult the ICO to seek its opinion as to whether the processing operation complies with the UK GDPR.

17. Use and Protection of Biometric Information

- 17.1 The Trust does not collect, process or store biometric information.

18. Data breaches

- 18.1. The term 'personal data breach' refers to a breach of security which has led to the destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data.
- 18.2. The DPO will ensure that all staff members are made aware of, and understand, what constitutes as a data breach as part of their continuous development training for the Trust and Cheshire LTA. This is the responsibility of the Principal (who will be advised by the DPO) in Trust academies. The Lead governor for Trust academies should satisfy themselves that this takes place on a regular basis.
- 18.3. Where a breach is likely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals this will be reported to the DPO immediately.
- 18.4. All notifiable breaches will be reported by the DPO, to the relevant supervisory authority within 72 hours of the Trust becoming aware of it.
- 18.5. The risk of the breach having a detrimental effect on the individual, and the need to notify the relevant supervisory authority, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 18.6. In the event that a breach is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of an individual, the Trust will notify those concerned directly.
- 18.7. A 'high risk' breach means that the threshold for notifying the individual is higher than that for notifying the relevant supervisory authority.
- 18.8. In the event that a breach is sufficiently serious, the public will be notified without undue delay.
- 18.9. Effective and robust breach detection, investigation and internal reporting procedures are in place at the Trust, which facilitate decision-making in relation to whether the relevant supervisory authority or the public need to be notified.
- 18.10. Within a breach notification, the following information will be outlined:
 - The nature of the personal data breach, including the categories and approximate number of individuals and records concerned
 - The name and contact details of the DPO
 - An explanation of the likely consequences of the personal data breach

- A description of the proposed measures to be taken to deal with the personal data breach
 - Where appropriate, a description of the measures taken to mitigate any possible adverse effects
- 18.11. Failure to report a breach when required to do so will result in a fine, as well as a fine for the breach itself.
- 18.12. The process which will be followed by the Trust and its academies in the event of a data breach is set out in appendix 1 of this policy.

19. Data security

- 19.1. Confidential paper records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, drawer or safe, with restricted access.
- 19.2. Confidential paper records will not be left unattended or in clear view anywhere with general access.
- 19.3. Digital data is coded or password-protected, both on a local hard drive and on a network drive that is regularly backed up off-site.
- 19.4. Portable data is kept in a locked filing cabinet, drawer or safe when not in use.
- 19.5. Memory sticks will not be used to hold personal data
- 19.6. All electronic devices are password-protected to protect the information on the device in case of theft.
- 19.7. Staff, trustees and governors will only use Trust provided secure platforms and email addresses for the sharing of data.
- 19.8. All necessary members of staff are provided with their own secure login and password and are required to keep this secure
- 19.9. Emails containing sensitive or confidential information are sent via secure email only
- 19.10. We do not send circular emails to parents. Secure school messaging systems are used instead.
- 19.11. Where personal information that could be considered private or confidential is taken off the premises, either in electronic or paper format, staff will take extra care to follow the same procedures for security, e.g. keeping devices under lock and key. The person taking the information from the Trust premises accepts full responsibility for the security of the data.
- 19.12. Before sharing data, all staff members, Trustees and Governors have a duty under this policy to ensure:
- They are allowed to share it.
 - That adequate security is in place to protect it.
 - Who will receive the data has been outlined in a privacy notice
- 19.13 Under no circumstances are visitors allowed access to confidential or personal information. Visitors to areas of the Trust containing sensitive information are supervised at all times.
- 19.14 The physical security of the Trust's buildings and storage systems, and access to them, is reviewed on a **termly** basis. If an increased risk in vandalism/burglary/theft is identified, extra measures to secure data storage will be put in place.
- 19.15 The Trust takes its duties under the UK GDPR seriously and any unauthorised disclosure may result in disciplinary action.
- 19.16 The Trust's designated **Data Protection Officer** is responsible for continuity and recovery measures to ensure the security of protected data.

20. Publication of information

- 20.1. Cheshire Academies Trust publishes a publication scheme on its website outlining classes of information that will be made routinely available, including:
- Policies and procedures
 - Annual reports
 - Financial information
- 20.2. Classes of information specified in the publication scheme are made available quickly and easily on request.

- 20.3. Cheshire Academies Trust will not publish any personal information, including photos, on its website without the permission of the affected individual.
- 20.4. When uploading information to the Trust website, staff are considerate of any metadata or deletions which could be accessed in documents and images on the site.

21. CCTV

- 21.1. CAT Academies with CCTV are required to set out how they will comply with UK GDPR, in respect of recorded images, in a site specific local CCTV policy.

22. Data retention

- 22.1. Data will not be kept for longer than is necessary in line with the Trusts Retention Policy.
- 22.2. Unrequired data will be deleted as soon as practicable.
- 22.3. Paper documents will be securely destroyed and electronic memories scrubbed clean or destroyed, once the data should no longer be retained.

23. DBS data

- 23.1. All data provided by the DBS will be handled in line with data protection legislation; this includes electronic communication.
- 23.2. Data provided by the DBS will never be duplicated.
- 23.3. Any third parties who access DBS information will be made aware of the data protection legislation, as well as their responsibilities as a data handler.

24. Complaints relating to data protection

- 24.1. The Trust is committed to handling any concern about the way personal data is collected, recorded, stored, used, shared, disclosed or disposed of fairly, promptly, proportionately and in confidence.
- 24.2. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is the lead point of contact for data protection complaints and operates independently of the academy leadership about whom a complaint may be made.
- 24.3. A data protection complaint may be made in writing (by email or letter) or verbally, with reasonable adjustments made for those who need them. It may be raised by parents, carers and prospective parents; current and former pupils; current, former and prospective employees, volunteers, governors and trustees; and contractors, suppliers, visitors and members of the wider community.
- 24.4. The full procedure, including the stages of complaint, indicative timescales, how complaints are investigated and contact details, is set out in Appendix 2 – Data Protection Complaints Procedure. This procedure supplements the Trust Complaints Policy and should be read alongside the Trust's Subject Access Request Procedure and Personal Data Breach Procedure.
- 24.5. Individuals have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at any time, and to seek a judicial remedy through the courts in respect of their data protection rights, as set out in Appendix 2.

25. Policy review

- 25.1. This policy will be reviewed every three **years** by the **Data Protection Officer** and the **Lead Trustee for UK GDPR** or sooner if required by changes to law, regulations or experience

Appendix 1

Procedure in the event of a data breach

In the event of a data breach the following procedure should be adhered to:

1. On becoming aware of a data breach the employee should contact their academy Principal and the Trust's Data Protection Officer without delay informing them of the nature and details of the breach.
2. Within three hours or as soon as practically possible the Principal and Data Protection Officer will meet with the named academy lead for UK GDPR and the lead governor (or Trustee if a Trust data breach occurs). Ideally this meeting should take place in person at the affected academy but if this is not possible the meeting can be facilitated via Skype, conference call or whatever means necessary.
3. If any of the people occupying the roles listed are unavailable an appropriate person can be asked to deputise (e.g. Chair of governors in place of the GDPR Governor or Vice Principal in place of the Principal). The remaining group should continue with the meeting, with or without deputies as deemed necessary and appropriate to the scale of the breach.
4. The purpose of the meeting is to gain a view of the severity of the breach and to agree how it will be investigated, by whom and in what timescale.
5. At the end of this meeting the DPO will contact the ICO to inform them of the breach and the steps that will be taken to investigate and address the matter:
 - ***It is a requirement that the ICO is contacted within 72 hours of a data breach regardless of periods of time when academies and the Trust maybe closed.***
6. The staff appointed during the meeting to investigate the breach should then, without delay, perform all necessary enquiries to establish how the breach has occurred, what data has been shared, who does the data belong to, who has it been shared with, what are the risks associated with the breach, who needs to be informed that their data has been shared, what can be done to mitigate the risks associated with the breach and what needs to be put in place to ensure a breach of this nature does not happen again.
7. The DPO should update the ICO on the progress/outcome of the investigations at the earliest possible convenience
8. If it is determined that the breach will result in an employee disciplinary matter this will be taken forward by the Principal in relation to academy employees or DPO in relation to Trust employees, in line with existing disciplinary and HR policies.

The DPO will work with the Principal to ensure any preventative measures outlined as a result of the investigation are implemented as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Appendix 2

Data Protection Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out how the Trust handles complaints relating to the processing of personal data. It supplements the Trust Complaints Policy by providing a route specifically tailored to concerns falling under UK data protection law, and supports the CAT Data Protection Policy by describing the practical steps individuals can take where they believe their information rights have not been respected.

It is designed to ensure that data protection concerns are identified early, dealt with proportionately, and that lessons are learned and reflected in the Trust's wider data protection arrangements.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all academies and central operations within the Trust. It may be used by:

- parents, carers and prospective parents;
- current and former pupils;
- current, former and prospective employees, volunteers, governors and trustees;
- contractors, suppliers, visitors and members of the wider community.

It covers personal data processed by the Trust, its academies, and any data processor acting on its behalf. It does not replace the Subject Access Request Procedure or the Personal Data Breach Procedure, but works alongside them.

3. Legal and regulatory framework

This procedure should be read in conjunction with:

- the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- the Data Protection Act 2018;
- the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) 2003 (as amended);
- guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO);
- the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance on data protection in schools;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition) where complaints touch on safeguarding information.

4. What counts as a data protection complaint

A data protection complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the way the Trust (or a data processor acting on its behalf) has collected, recorded, stored, used, shared, disclosed or disposed of personal data. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a belief that personal data has been used unfairly, unlawfully or without a valid lawful basis;
- concerns about the accuracy of records held by the Trust;
- concerns about disclosure of personal data to a third party, including other parents, agencies or contractors;
- dissatisfaction with how a Subject Access Request, or another data subject rights request, has been handled (including timeliness, redactions, or refusal);
- concerns about the use of photographs, video, CCTV, biometric data or online learning platforms;
- concerns about marketing or fundraising communications;
- the way a personal data breach affecting the individual has been managed or communicated;
- concerns about cookies, tracking or use of the Trust's websites and apps.

Where a concern is general in nature and does not involve personal data, it will be redirected through the main Trust Complaints Policy.

5. Relationship with other procedures

Some matters should be raised through a dedicated route rather than this procedure:

If the concern relates to...	Use this route
Wanting a copy of personal data held about you or your child	Submit a Subject Access Request under the Trust Subject Access Request Procedure. A complaint can be raised under this procedure if you are unhappy with how the SAR has been handled. Please note: a Subject Access Request has its own legal time limit, which is different from the complaint timescales in this procedure. By law (Article 12 UK GDPR), the Trust must normally respond to a SAR within one calendar month. The Trust can take up to two extra months if the request is especially complex or there are several requests, but only if it tells the requester about the delay, and why, within the first month. So if a complaint is about a SAR taking too long, it should be judged against this one-month legal deadline, not the complaint timescales in Section 7.
Reporting a suspected data breach (e.g. a misdirected email, lost device)	Report immediately under the Personal Data Breach Procedure. A complaint about how the breach was managed can be raised under this procedure once the immediate response is underway.
Safeguarding concerns about a child	Contact the academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay, in line with the Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE. Data protection law does not prevent safeguarding action.
General dissatisfaction not involving personal data	Use the Trust Complaints Policy.
HR or employment grievance	Use the relevant HR grievance procedure. Data protection elements may be referred to the Data Protection Officer.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Data Protection Officer (DPO)

The Trust DPO is the lead point of contact for data protection complaints. The DPO operates independently of the academy leadership being complained about, and reports directly to the Board of Trustees in respect of data protection matters.

6.2 Academy-level Data Protection Lead

Each academy has a nominated Data Protection Lead (typically a member of the senior leadership team or academy business manager) who handles day-to-day data protection matters and supports the DPO.

6.3 Principal and CEO

The Principal is responsible for ensuring data protection complaints raised at academy level are escalated promptly to the DPO. The CEO retains overall executive responsibility for data protection compliance across the Trust.

6.4 Board of Trustees

The Board, supported by the relevant committee, retains strategic oversight of data protection arrangements, including patterns and themes arising from complaints.

7. How to make a data protection complaint

Complaints can be made in writing (email or letter), or verbally, with reasonable adjustments made for those who need them. Wherever possible, please include:

- your name and contact details;
- the name of the academy or service concerned (where applicable);

- a clear description of what has happened, when, and who was involved;
- the outcome you are seeking.

You do not need to use formal legal language or refer to specific articles of the UK GDPR. The Trust will treat any clear expression of concern about the use of personal data as a complaint under this procedure.

Stage 1 – Local resolution

In the first instance, we encourage you to raise your concern with the academy or service involved – for example with the class teacher, the academy office, the Data Protection Lead or the Principal. Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally at this stage.

- Concerns will be acknowledged within 10 academy days.
- A response will normally be provided within 20 academy days of acknowledgement.
- If you remain dissatisfied, you can move to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal complaint to the Data Protection Officer

If your concern is not resolved locally, or you prefer to go directly to the DPO, you can make a formal data protection complaint.

- Contact the DPO using the details in Section 11.
- The DPO will acknowledge your complaint within 10 working days.
- The DPO will carry out a proportionate investigation and issue a written response, normally within 20 working days. Where the matter is complex, the DPO will let you know in writing and provide a revised timescale, which should not normally exceed a further 20 working days. If this extra time is needed, the DPO will write to the complainant at least once to let them know how things are progressing before the new deadline.
- The response will explain the findings, any action taken, and your right to escalate.

Stage 3 – Review by the CEO or nominated trustee

If you are not satisfied with the DPO's response, you may request a review.

- Submit your request in writing to the CEO within 20 working days of the Stage 2 response, explaining why you are dissatisfied.
- The CEO (or a nominated trustee where the matter concerns the CEO or central executive team) will review the handling of the complaint and the conclusions reached.
- A written response will normally be issued within 20 working days. This response concludes the Trust's internal procedure.

8. Right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office

You have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at any stage, although the ICO generally expects organisations to be given an opportunity to respond first. The ICO is the UK's independent supervisory authority for data protection.

Contact details for the ICO:

- Website: ico.org.uk
- Helpline: 0303 123 1113
- Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

You also have the right to seek a judicial remedy through the courts in respect of your data protection rights.

9. How complaints are investigated

The DPO will investigate complaints proportionately, fairly and confidentially. In practice this means:

- gathering relevant information from staff, systems and, where appropriate, processors;
- considering the lawful basis, necessity and proportionality of the processing;
- considering whether data subject rights have been properly facilitated;
- considering whether retention, security and information sharing decisions were appropriate;
- considering whether any personal data breach has occurred and, if so, whether reporting thresholds are met.

The DPO may consult with the Trust’s legal advisers, HR, IT, or other specialists as required. Where the complaint touches on safeguarding, the DPO will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the welfare of any child is the paramount consideration.

10. Possible outcomes

Outcomes will depend on the circumstances but may include:

- an explanation and, where appropriate, an apology;
- correction of inaccurate records;
- erasure, restriction or anonymisation of records, where this is lawful and appropriate;
- changes to procedures, systems or training;
- disciplinary action under separate HR procedures (handled confidentially);
- reporting of a personal data breach to the ICO or affected individuals, where required;
- a finding that the complaint is not upheld, with reasons.

11. Contact details

Contact	Details
School-level Data Protection Lead	Contact the school office in the first instance.
Trust Data Protection Officer	Name: Luci Jones Email: lucijones@cheshireacademiestrust.co.uk
Information Commissioner’s Office	Website: ico.org.uk Helpline: 0303 123 1113

12. Records, confidentiality and monitoring

All data protection complaints, the actions taken in response, and the outcomes will be logged centrally by the DPO. Records are retained in line with the Trust’s Data Retention Schedule.

Complaints will be handled in confidence and on a need-to-know basis. The information provided by complainants is itself personal data and will be processed in accordance with the CAT Data Protection Policy. The DPO will report a summary of complaint themes and learning points to the Board of Trustees (or relevant committee) at least annually, and more frequently where there are significant or systemic issues.

13. Unreasonable, repeated or vexatious complaints

The Trust is committed to dealing with every complaint fairly. In rare cases, where a complaint is repeatedly raised after it has been fully considered, or is pursued in a manner that is unreasonable or abusive, the Trust may restrict further engagement on that matter in line with the Trust Complaints Policy. Restrictions of this kind will not affect the complainant’s right to apply to the ICO. This is separate from a specific right the law gives the Trust under Article 12(5) UK GDPR. If someone makes a data protection rights request (such as a subject access request) that is clearly unjustified or excessive – for example, repeating a request the Trust has already dealt with – the Trust can either charge a reasonable fee to cover its costs or decline to act on it. This can only be done in limited circumstances, and it is up to the Trust to show that a request meets this test. The Trust will look at each request on its own merits.

14. Review of this procedure

This procedure will be reviewed annually by the DPO, or sooner where statutory guidance, ICO regulatory action, or significant case learning indicates that changes are required. Any material changes will be approved by the Board of Trustees, or the committee with delegated responsibility for data protection.