



## **Longer version: How Swansea council and your school handles your information**

### **Who are we?**

We are Swansea Council (Civic Centre, Swansea, SA1 3SN, [www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk)) and your school.

### **Why do we need information about you?**

Sometimes we will need to know some things about you, like your name, your birthday and what school you go to. This is known as data or your personal information.

We need to know this because it helps us and other organisations to work together to help you have the best possible start in life, and to help you with things that may be happening around you.

### **Are we allowed to keep information about you?**

Yes, by law. These laws are the rules we must follow while we are working with you. The rules are strict and anyone who breaks the rules can be punished.

The most important rule is that nobody can see your personal information unless the law allows them to (your class teacher, for example).

These are some of the things the rules allow the Council to do:

- Swansea Council and schools work together to get the best education and the most appropriate support for you in school.
- We help children who are having problems at home.
- We arrange for a new home for some children who can't stay at home.
- We protect children from people or things that could hurt them.

The rules also tell us who we can (and cannot) share your information with.

## **What information do we keep about you?**

We only keep information about you and your family that we need. For example, to help you at school and at home and to help your family.

We write what we know about you on computer and on paper. Only certain people are allowed to see things that have been written about you.

## **Who sees what information?**

For nearly all children and young people, no one person will know everything about you. For example, your teacher will see your homework but the school nurse will not.

Sometimes, if things have been difficult for you we might need to ask extra people to help you. This might be because it has been difficult at school or there are problems at home.

We share your information to help us decide how they could help you or your family. We will only do this if we think the problem is serious enough. There are different rules about how we can share your data with other people in order to help you. The rules are strict and we have to follow them.

These are the kinds of people some information about you might be shared with:

- Doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff
- Staff in your school with responsibility for your welfare, such as a teacher or a school welfare officer
- If you are very young, staff in your day care or nursery
- A social worker or a youth worker

All these people are extremely careful about who sees your information. We will often ask you or your parents if we need to share what we've written unless it means you won't be safe if we don't share it. If someone tries to look at what is written about you without permission, they can get into serious trouble.

Sometimes, we might also need to share information with people who work for the Welsh Government who need to understand the work we do, or to help people with their research. If we do this, we will only share certain things. We will not include your name or your address.

When you move from one school to another, we will send some information about you to your new school, so they know who you are and are able to continue to support your learning. We also have to send some information about you to other

organisations when the law says we have to. If you have worked with Social Services, they may need to share records with another Council if you move to their area.

## **How long do we keep your information?**

The new rules explain that we are only allowed to keep information for as long as we need to keep it. Sometimes this means keeping different types of information for different lengths of time.

If children and families have had a little extra help or advice from the Council, then we would usually only keep information for 10 years. If things had been more serious, we might keep information for 35 years. If you were placed in care (such as Foster care) your records are kept for 75 years, or 100 years if you were also adopted.

## **What rights do you have about how we use your information?**

- **Your right to know how information about you is being used**

We have to tell you why we keep information about you, how long for and who else might see it.

- **Your right to see your information**

You can see some information about you but may not be able to see everything because of the various rules that we have to follow.

- **Your right to fix mistakes in your information**

If we have made a mistake when we collected information about you, you can ask us to put it right.

We will also make sure that we explain the mistake to anyone else who has seen the wrong information.

- **Your right to have your information destroyed**

Most of the information that we keep about you cannot be destroyed until the correct amount of time has passed. However, you can ask us if we will destroy any of your information. We will decide whether to do it and we will let you know what we decide.

You may have this right when you deal with other organisations.

- **Your right to ask us to stop using your information**

You can tell us if you are not happy with the way we are using your information. You will need to explain to us why you don't want your information to be used by us. We will have to consider your wishes and let you know what we decide.

## **Other rights**

We won't share your information for commercial use. We never use computers to make decisions about you. Decisions are always made by people, such as social workers or your teachers.

## **What if you want to complain, know more, or you are worried about this?**

If you are ever unhappy about what we have written about you or you are unhappy about what we are doing with your information or you want to complain about how we handle your information you can write to us or email us.

You can also talk to your parents, teacher, foster carer or social worker.

We will look at why you are unhappy and let you know what we decide.

We have a data protection officer. Their job is to help us all to keep working within the rules. Their email is [data.protection@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@swansea.gov.uk).

If Swansea Council or your school cannot resolve your complaint you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office Wales at 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HH.