

Reach Support Services

Data Protection & Confidentiality Policy

1. Purpose

REACH Support Services Ltd is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality, and rights of all individuals we work with. This policy outlines how we handle, store, and share personal and sensitive information in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and associates working on behalf of REACH Support Services Ltd, and covers all personal data processed in connection with the delivery of services to children, young people, schools, families, and professional partners.

3. Data We Collect

We may collect and store the following types of data: names; contact details; date of birth; school/educational information; well-being and support needs; session notes; assessments; referral forms; consent documents; emergency contacts; medical or safeguarding information (where appropriate).

4. Lawful Basis for Processing

We process personal data under the following lawful bases: consent: we obtain written consent from clients/guardians before collecting or sharing data. Legal obligation: we may process data where required by safeguarding or child protection law. Vital interests: to protect someone's life in emergencies. Public task or legitimate interest: when working in collaboration with schools or local authorities to provide support services.

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5. Confidentiality

Information shared in sessions is treated as confidential unless there is a safeguarding concern or legal obligation to disclose. All staff are trained in handling sensitive information appropriately. We will never share personal information without consent, except in circumstances where a child or another individual is at risk of harm.

6. Data Storage and Security

Paper records are stored securely in locked filing cabinets. Digital records are stored on encrypted, password-protected systems. Access is restricted to authorised personnel only. We retain data only for as long as necessary (typically 7 years), unless legal obligations require otherwise.

7. Sharing Information

We may share personal information with: schools; designated safeguarding leads (DSLs); SENCOs; parents or guardians (when appropriate); external professionals (e.g., social workers, counsellors). With consent Statutory bodies (e.g., police, safeguarding boards) - without consent only when required.

8. Rights of the Individual

Under UK GDPR, individuals have the right to: access their personal data; request correction or deletion; object to or restrict processing; withdraw consent at any time; lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

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9. Breaches and Complaints

All data breaches will be reported promptly and managed in accordance with our Data Breach Procedure. Any concerns about data handling or confidentiality should be raised with the Directors of REACH Support Services Ltd.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to legislative or organisational changes.

Last reviewed: May 2025

Next review due: May 2026

Approved by: Jamie Tugby

Signature: