



Information Commissioner's Office
Promoting public access to official information
and protecting your personal information

For immediate release

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Young people can access information about them held by schools

The Information Commissioner's Office has published new guidance today explaining the rights that young people have to access information held about them by their school.

It aims to help primary and secondary state schools understand their obligations when dealing with information requests from students and their parents under the Data Protection Act. It explains what information should be provided and when information should not be disclosed.

The guidance also notes that students as young as 12 should generally be able to access their own educational record and other personal information held about them. Where a young person cannot understand the nature of the request, someone with parental responsibility can ask for the information on the child's behalf.

Phil Jones, Assistant Commissioner, said: 'The Data Protection Act gives us all important rights to access information held about us. Schools should treat students' requests for their own personal information properly and requests for a student's educational record must be processed within 15 days. As a general rule, students aged 12 and over should be considered mature enough to make a request for their own personal information, but as young people mature at different ages schools must treat each request on a case by case basis.'

Information requests should be made in writing and in most cases a fee can be levied. The guidance note also includes a list of information that should not be disclosed.

There are separate guidance notes for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and these form part of a series published by the Information Commissioner's to explain the technical provisions of the Act to organisations. To download a copy please go to [Technical guidance note](#)

ENDS

If you need more information, please contact the Information Commissioner's press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at: www.ico.gov.uk

Notes to Editors:

1. The Information Commissioner promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003.
2. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk
3. Separate guidance is available for England, Wales and Northern Ireland
4. Anyone who processes personal information must comply with eight principles, which make sure that personal information is:
 - a. Fairly and lawfully processed
 - b. Processed for limited purposes
 - c. Adequate, relevant and not excessive
 - d. Accurate and up to date
 - e. Not kept for longer than is necessary
 - f. Processed in line with your rights
 - g. Secure
 - h. Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection
5. The website also carries copies of other good practice and technical guidance notes in this series. These include:
 - a. Subject access and third party information
 - b. CCTV
 - c. Subject access and employment references
 - d. Pension trustees
 - e. Professionals' opinions
 - f. Buying and selling databases
 - g. Outsourcing
 - h. Exam guidance
 - i. Privacy Enhancing Technologies

