



ARCHIVES & RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Rationale

- Schools create, receive and manage records on matters such as administration, accountability, student management, curriculum, property and facilities, school heritage, finance and personnel. All such records need to be properly managed. Below are notes on some particular record types. It is not an exhaustive list and schools should refer to the relevant retention and disposal authorities for sentences on specific records.
- Schools must create, manage and dispose of public records (electronic and hardcopy) in accordance with standards set by the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) and guidelines issued by the Department.
- Schools need to properly manage records in order to:
 - meet legislative responsibilities
 - ensure records are stored when needed and destroyed when permissible
 - meet administrative responsibilities to staff and students
- Schools that regularly carry out authorised destruction of records are in a better position to manage their records holdings. Records can only be destroyed in accordance with a Retention and Disposal Authority.
- At a minimum, schools should keep up to date with the destruction of temporary records.
- All public records have life-spans that are determined by standards issued under the *Public Records Act 1973*. These range from 'destroy immediately' to 'keep forever'. To find out how long a particular record needs to be kept refer to the relevant Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA).
- Some school records can be destroyed under normal administrative practice (NAP). Such records include working papers, drafts, duplicate copies of records stored elsewhere and ephemeral records such as unsolicited 'junk mail'. Records destroyed under NAP do not need to be recorded in the destruction register.
- A small proportion of school records are permanent. This means they cannot be destroyed and will, eventually, be transferred to the Public Record Office Victoria.
- People are allowed to access their own records directly from schools but are denied access to the records of other people. For example:
 - Secondary schools are often approached by ex-students seeking their school reports (usually to join the armed forces). Schools should provide this information where possible.
 - Primary and secondary schools can be approached by those who wish to have proof of their enrolment for immigration or citizenship reasons. Schools should provide this information where possible.
- In some circumstances 'historical' records such as Pupil Registers can be made available to researchers. Such access is granted at the Principal's discretion but the following should be taken into account:
- It is recommended that Pupil Registers covering the period of the last forty years not be made publicly available.
- Some Pupil Registers are very fragile and should be handled with care.
- Pupil Registers must not leave the school.
- All Government schools in Victoria are public offices under the Public Records Act 1973 and are legally obliged to follow the rules developed by the Public Record Office Victoria. The Public Record Office Victoria issues standards that guide public offices on creation, management and retention/destruction of public records held by the public office. More information on the Act, see: [Public Record Office Victoria](#)
- [Schools General Retention & Disposal Authority \(PROS 01/01\)](#) This RDA covers records specific to schools such as, but not limited to, reports, attendance rolls, enrolment records and School Council records.
- [General Retention & Disposal Authority for Records of Common Administrative Functions \(PROS 07/01\)](#) This RDA covers records common to all public offices such as, but not limited to, financial records and personnel records.
- Particular attention should be paid to the creation and maintenance of records that have heightened importance due to their requirements for business continuity, legal and financial accountability, confidentiality and sensitivity.
- Schools should have a system for managing their electronic and paper records to ensure the authenticity, security, reliability and accessibility of these records. If the school does not have an appropriate electronic document management solution available they are to print and file hardcopy versions of high risk electronic records. Schools that do manage their records are able to easily store, retrieve and dispose of records when needed.

Purpose

- To ensure Footscray North Primary School complies with legislative and business requirements for creation, storage and disposal of records.
- To regulate access to official school documents, to protect privacy and to ensure that documents are not lost or misplaced.

Definition

Public records are any work-related documents in any media made or received by staff or volunteers in Victorian Government schools.

Implementation

- Records that are not in current use (called inactive records) will be stored on school premises but please note the following:
 - The records MUST be safe from unauthorised access.
 - The records must be stored in an environment free from dangers such as water, excessive light, excessive heat, vermin and insects.
 - The records should be properly boxed and labeled and a list should be created so that records can be easily located when needed.
 - All school staff who manage records must become familiar with the two Retention and Disposal Authorities that are used to sentence school records.
- The school will maintain a destruction register that contains the following information:
 - title and unique identifier of record
 - relevant RDA and class
 - date of destruction
 - individual authorising destruction and their position in the school
 - method of destruction
 - individual performing/supervising destruction
- If the school employs an external organisation to destroy the records, the school will request a certificate of destruction. This certificate will be kept with the register.
- Records destruction will be secure and irreversible, safe, and environmentally friendly. Guidelines on records destruction are available from the Public Record Office Victoria at: <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/publIns/1013g3.pdf>
- If the school is approached to support or initiate a school reunion, the school will be guided by A School Reunions Guide which is available to inform schools and members of the public about what can be provided, see: A – [Access](#) to Historical and Public Records – School Reunions

Staff Personal Files

Essential personal documentation about each staff member will be maintained in a personal file. These will be held in a secure environment with restricted access.

On cessation of employment, a staff member's personal file will be retained by the school where they were last employed for 50 years from date of cessation. The file may be reactivated if the staff member is re-employed prior to the appropriate destruction time.

If a previously employed staff member commences employment in a school, the employing school must retrieve the personal file from the school where that staff member last worked.

For a previously employed staff member, if re-employed, a personal file will already exist. This file must be retrieved rather than creating a new personal file.

Permanent school records will stay in the school until such time as transfers to the Public Record Office Victoria can be arranged. Transfers of permanent records to the Public Record Office Victoria are handled by the Department. Schools will be notified when a transfer is scheduled.

Student Reports

Student reports Foundation (Prep) to Year 6 – destroy six years after student departures.

Asbestos-Related Records

ALL asbestos-related records will be kept indefinitely even if an RDA states that the record can be destroyed. For more information on the implications of the Document Destruction Act, the school will refer to: [Advice 18, Crimes \(Document Destruction\) Act 2006: Implications for government recordkeeping](#)

Expulsion Records

All records relating to disciplinary action resulting in expulsion of a student will be destroyed within one year of expulsion of the student or when the student ceases to be of school age, whichever is the later.

Financial Records

Most school financial records such as statements, invoices, receipts, etc. will be kept for seven years.

The annual financial statement that is signed off by an auditor and usually presented to the School Council is the only financial record that is permanent.

- Permission must be obtained from the person responsible for document management for a document to be viewed. A valid reason must be stated as to why the document is to be accessed. If doubt exists, the Principal should be consulted. Please refer also to the attached Confidentiality document.
- If approved, the file may be viewed or copied, as appropriate, and, if borrowed, the original item(s) should be returned intact and promptly to the person from whom they were borrowed.
- If the responsible person is absent, permission must be sought from the Principal.
- Confidentiality, professionalism and the requirements of relevant Privacy Acts must be observed in relation to information accessed.
- Documents must not be removed or viewed without permission.
- Please refer also to the *school's Freedom of Information Policy*, the *Record Keeping Policy & Procedures Policy* and the *Information Privacy Policy*.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update early June 2018).

This policy was ratified by School Council 25/3/2019

Reference:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/archives.aspx