

Document Disposal Policy

Ratified/Reviewed by...	Date	Date to be reviewed
Approved by the Finance, Audit, Risk and H&S Committee	May 2026	May 2027

Character Education Trust

Document Disposal Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedure for the retention and disposal of documents at Aylesford School and Wrotham School. It ensures compliance with legal, regulatory, and operational requirements, while protecting sensitive information and ensuring records are kept for an appropriate period.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff at Wrotham School and Aylesford School who handle or manage documents, including both paper and electronic records.

Document Retention and Disposal Timeline

Document Type	Retention Period	Action at End	Further Information / Legislation
Primary school pupil records	Until pupil leaves the school	Transfer to next school	Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
Secondary school pupil records	Until pupil's 25th birthday	Dispose securely or transfer	Limitation Act 1980; Education (Pupil Information) Regulations 2005
SEND records (EHC plans)	6 years from end of EHC plan	Dispose securely or transfer	SEND Code of Practice; Limitation Act 1980
Child protection files	Until child's 25th birthday	Dispose securely; transfer	KCSIE §§122–123; IICSA recommendation
Child sexual abuse files	Until child's 75th birthday	Dispose securely	IICSA recommendation
Allegations against staff (including unfounded)	Until staff's retirement age or 10 yrs post-allegation	Dispose securely	KCSIE; Working Together guidance

Document Type	Retention Period	Action at End	Further Information / Legislation
Contracts (finance)	6 years from last payment	Dispose securely	Limitation Act 1980
Debtors' records (finance)	6 years from end of financial year	Dispose securely	Limitation Act 1980
VAT records	6 years from finance year end	Dispose securely	VAT Notice 700/21
Admissions (governance)	6 years from admission date	Dispose securely	School Attendance (Pupil Reg.) Regulations 2024
Attendance registers	6 years from date of entry	Dispose securely	School Attendance (Pupil Reg.) Regulations 2024
Annual governors' report	10 years	Dispose securely	Education (Govs' Annual Reports) Regs 2002
Curricular records	At least 1 year	Dispose securely	Education (School Records) Regs 1989; Education (Pupil Information) Regs 2005
Directors' disqualification records	15 years from disqualification date	Dispose securely	Directors Disqualification Regs 2004
Educational visit records	10 years from visit date	Dispose securely	Health & Safety guidance; Limitation Act 1980
School vehicle records	6 years from disposal of vehicle	Dispose securely	Limitation Act 1980
Accessibility plans	Life of plan + 6 years	Dispose securely	Limitation Act 1980
Accident records	3 years from accident date	Dispose securely	Social Security Regulations 1979

Document Type	Retention Period	Action at End	Further Information / Legislation
Hazardous substances exposure logs (e.g. asbestos)	5 years	Dispose securely	COSHH Regulations 2002
Health surveillance records	40 years	Dispose securely	COSHH Regulations 2002
Other staff health records	While employed in school	Dispose securely	COSHH Regulations 2002
Fire assessments	Life of assessment + 6 years	Dispose securely	Fire Service Order 2005; Limitation Act 1980
Maintenance records (property)	6 years from finance year end	Dispose securely	VAT Notice 700/21
Title deeds	12 years from deed end	Dispose securely	Limitation Act 1980
DBS copy certificates (staff)	6 months from recruitment date	Dispose securely	KCSIE
Maternity pay records	3 years after end of relevant tax year	Dispose securely	Statutory Maternity Pay Regs 1986
Pay records (payroll)	3 years from end of relevant tax year	Dispose securely	PAYE and payroll regulations
Personnel files (staff employment)	6 years from termination of employment	Dispose securely	Limitation Act 1980
Retirement benefit accounts	At least 6 years from account signing	Dispose securely	Retirement Benefits Schemes Regs 1995

Disposal Procedures

1. Paper Records:

- Documents should be securely shredded to ensure confidential information is not disclosed.

2. Electronic Records:

- Electronic files should be permanently deleted from all storage systems, including backups.

3. Compliance:

- Staff responsible for document retention must ensure records are disposed of at the end of their retention period.
- A log should be kept of all destroyed documents, including the type of document, destruction method, and date of destruction.

4. Special Considerations:

- If there is ongoing legal action or investigation, documents must be retained until advised otherwise by legal authorities.

Child protection:

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as required by changes in legislation or school needs.

References:

https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/3324/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines_june_2023.pdf