

# Accessing pupils' information

Pupils attending any type of school have a right of access under the Data Protection Act 1998 to their own information. This is known as the right of subject access. When a child cannot act for themselves or the child gives permission, parents will be able to access this information on their behalf.

If the child attends a maintained school, parents have an independent right of access to their child's educational record, under separate education regulations.

## As a parent, what sort of information can I access?

If your child attends a maintained school, you have a right to access your child's educational record. This covers information that comes from a teacher or other employee of a local authority or school, the pupil or you as a parent, and is processed by or for the school's governing body or teacher, except for information the teacher has solely for their own use. So it will cover information such as the records of the pupil's academic achievements as well as correspondence from teachers, local education authority employees and educational psychologists engaged by the school's governing body. It may also include information from the child and from you, as a parent. Information provided by the parent of another child would not form part of a child's educational record.

## What if my child attends an academy or a free school in England, or an independent school?

There is no equivalent legal right to access your child's educational record. It will be up to the school to decide whether to grant such access, and it is likely to depend on the contractual relationship between the parent and the school.

## As a parent, how can I access my child's educational record?

This will depend on the location of the school. In England and Northern Ireland you should make the request in writing to the Board of Governors. In Scotland you should make your request in writing to the local education authority for local authority schools, the proprietor for independent schools or the manager for grant aided schools. For schools in Wales you should make your request in writing to the head teacher.

## How long should this take?

A request for an educational record must receive a response within 15 school days.

## How much will it cost?

The school can charge what it costs to supply a copy of the information. It is free for a parent to view the educational record. See also 'As a pupil, how much will it cost?' below.

## As a parent, when can I request other information about my child?

You will be able to access all the information about your child if your child is unable to act on their own behalf or gives their permission. As a general guide, a child of 12 or older is expected to be mature enough to make this kind of request.

## As a parent, are there circumstances where I could be denied access to my child's educational record?

There are certain circumstances where the school can withhold an educational record; for example, where the information might cause serious harm to the physical or mental health of the pupil or another individual.

The request for access would also be denied if it would mean releasing examination marks before they are officially announced. For further information please read our page on [exam results](#).

## As a pupil, what rights do I have to access my information?

You (or someone acting on your behalf) have the right to a copy of your own information. This is known as the right of subject access. However, schools may withhold information in certain circumstances, such as where serious harm may be caused to your physical or mental health or another individual, or where the request is for an exam script or for exam marks before they are officially announced.

## As a pupil, how should I request information and how long will it take?

You should make your request in writing to the school. In Northern Ireland and Scotland the school should respond within 40 calendar days after it has received the fee and any other information it needs to find the information and, if necessary, identify that it's really you making the request. This is also the case for England and Wales if the request is only for information outside the educational record. However, if any of the information requested is in the educational record, then the school should respond in 15 school days.

## As a pupil, how much will it cost?

For your educational record, it depends on the number of pages provided. For example, 1 to 19 pages will cost £1.20; 20 pages will cost £2, and so on, up to a maximum of 500+ pages which will cost £50. If the request is for other information excluding the educational record then the maximum charge is £10.

## What if the information you want involves information about another person?

Information about another person may not always be available to you. Unless the other person gives their permission, or it is reasonable in the circumstances to provide the information without permission, the school will be entitled to withhold this information.