

Statistics and Research – Privacy Notice

Statistical Analysis Team (SAT) and Research and Evaluation Team (RET) carry out statistics and research on behalf of the Department of Education. The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) requires organisations that process personal data to meet certain legal obligations. Within the meaning of this legislation, Department of Education (DE) is the organisational Data Controller for SAT and RET. Given below are the contact details for the DE Data Protection Officer.

Data Controller

Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road, Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Alan Macdonald

Data Protection Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road, Rathgill
Bangor
BT197PR

telephone: (028) 901279788

email: dataprotectionofficer@education-ni.gov.uk

This Privacy Notice explains how DE SAT and RET will use your personal information and protect your privacy. This Privacy Notice does not provide exhaustive detail. This document therefore relates to how DE SAT and RET will manage personal data collected and processed for statistics and research purposes.

Why we process personal information

DE SAT and RET collect and processes personal information for statistics and research purposes, in order to meet the legal obligations and public functions of the Department of Education.

Unless stated otherwise, DE SAT and RET's processing of personal data is carried out in accordance with:

- Section 8 of the DPA; and
- Article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR in that "processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller."

In addition, DE SAT and RET may also process special personal data in accordance with:

- Article 9(2)(j) in that processing is necessary for archiving in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes based on UK law" and
- DPA Schedule 1, Part 1, paragraph 4 (research).

Our obligations and functions include:

- The statutory provisions providing the duties of the Department are contained in the **Education Reform (NI) Order 1989. Article 3** places a duty on the Department to promote the education of the people of Northern Ireland and secure the effective execution by the Education Authority (EA) and other bodies of the Department's policy in relation to the provision of the education service.
- The Department has duties under **Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998** to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
 - between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - between men and women generally;

- between persons with disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to the above obligation, in carrying out its functions the Department is required have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group; and,

- The processing of data by the Department is provided for under statutory provisions listed in the **Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 Article 37** provides that the EA and schools shall make such reports and returns and give such information to the Department as the Department may reasonably require for the purposes of its functions under any statutory provision.

What type of personal data do we process?

To carry out our statistics and research duties, DE SAT and RET collect and processes the following personal data:

- Name
- Contact details i.e. address including postcode
- Date of birth

DE SAT and RET also processes the following special category data:

- ethnic origin
- sex
- religious belief
- health data i.e. special educational needs
- newcomer status.
- looked after children's (LCA) status.

How we obtain personal data?

In order to carry out the statutory functions of the Department, DE SAT and RET may obtain personal information directly from schools and voluntary and private pre-school centres. In some circumstances DE SAT and RET will provide you with a Privacy Notice, to explain in more detail how we may use your personal information.

Who do we share information with?

DE SAT and RET treat all the data we hold with respect, keeping it secure and confidential. Your personal data will solely be used for statistics or research purposes. Personal data collected or held by DE SAT and RET for statistics or research purposes will **not** be disclosed for other purposes.

Only DE SAT and RET officials or organisations under/in contract with DE SAT or RET and involved in the production of statistics or research will be able to access and use your personal data. In any scenario, DE will satisfy itself that it has a lawful basis on which to share the information and document its decision-making.

DE SAT and RET may share your personal/special category data with the following organisations:

- The Department of Health to monitor LAC policy.
- The Electoral Office of Northern Ireland for ensuring young people have the opportunity to vote by giving them the opportunity to be on the electoral register.
- The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Research Support Unit (RSU) and the Trusted Third Party (TTP). This project links together a number of datasets held by DE to develop an 'Education Outcomes Linkage' dataset for research purposes. This also includes a Longitudinal Education Outcome' (LEO) database.

- The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to support the widening of access and participation within Higher Education. Transfers made will be in full compliance with all aspects of the UK GDPR.
- NISRA's Tech Lab to enable them to develop processes that streamline the production of statistical products.
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA) to enhance the monitoring of qualification outcomes and also the analysis of Key Stage Assessment data.
- NISRA to support the production of NI population estimates, migration estimates and future development and production of NI census-like statistics.
- EA to validate pupil information.

DE is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and may receive related requests for information. Personal data will not be disclosed if it would contravene the UK GDPR.

How long we keep your personal data?

DE SAT and RET will retain personal data in line with DE's Retention and Disposal Schedule. DE SAT and RET will only hold personal data where there is a clear need for this data to be used in future statistics or research and will only retain personal data in line with DE's Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Profiling/automated Decision making

We will not use your personal data to make any automated decisions or for any profiling.

Do you transfer my personal data to other countries?

Your data will remain in the UK.

Parents/Guardians

If you write to us about your child, we may ask you to confirm your identity, as their parent/guardian before we can action your correspondence. Further, we may ask you to provide evidence that they have given you their consent to write to us on their behalf, because under data protection law, their personal data belongs to them and we may need confirmation of their agreement before we action your request. In addition, we may need to share your correspondence with specific education bodies such as the EA, in order to help DE answer it.

What are your rights?

As a data subject (someone whose personal data are held by us as data controller) you have rights under data protection law. If your data are being held for statistical purposes only, we may be exempt from complying.

These web links will take you to the ICO website where you will find more information about your Rights under UKGDPR:

- You have the right to obtain confirmation that your personal data is being [processed, and access to your personal data](#)
- You are entitled to have personal data [rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete](#)
- You have a right to have personal data erased and to prevent processing, [in specific circumstances](#)
- You have the right to 'block' or suppress processing of personal data, [in specific circumstances](#)

- You have the right to data portability, [in specific circumstances](#)
- You have the right to object to the processing, [in specific circumstances](#)
- You have rights in relation to [automated decision making and profiling](#)

If you wish to exercise any of these rights in relation to data we hold, please contact our Data Protection Officer at Dataprotectionofficer@education-ni.gov.uk.

What can I do if I am not happy with the way my personal data is handled?

You can raise a complaint about how DE SAT or RET have handled your data by contacting DE's Data Protection Officer.

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint or you believe DE SAT or RET are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you can write to the Information Commissioner:

casework@ico.org.uk, or
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
CHESHIRE
SK9 5AF

This privacy notice was last updated on 26 February 2026.