

Subject Access Requests: Parent/Carer Guide



What Is the Right of Access?

You have the right to know if an organisation (in this case a school) holds any personal data on you or your child. You can also ask them for copies of your personal information, verbally or in writing. This is called the right of access and is commonly known as making a subject access request or an SAR.

This guide explains how to make a subject access request. You can make a subject access request to find out:

- what personal information we hold about your child (or you)
- how we are using it
- who we are sharing it with
- where we got your data from.

What is a SAR?

A SAR, or a Subject Access Request, is a formal request to view or receive copies of the information which an organisation (in our case a school) holds on a living person. For schools, this can be information on pupils or staff members. The request is handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR requirements.

What Can a SAR Request Include?

When requesting a SAR, it is important that you are clear which exact records you want to see or receive copies of. These can include things such as:

- school reports
- school work
- external reports (such as therapy reports or other services)
- communications eg. Letters or emails
- performance data
- internal monitoring information

If you are not clear about what documents you are requesting then this may slow down our ability to provide you with the information you want.

What should my request say?

You should include:

- A clear label for your request – e.g. Use ‘Subject Access Request’ as your email subject line.
- The date of your request.
- Your name
- Your current contact details
- A comprehensive list of what personal data you want to access with any relevant details, relevant dates or search criteria that will help us identify what data you want.
- How you would like to receive the information – e.g. Via email or hard copies.

Don't include:

- Other information with your request, such as details about a wider complaint or query.
- Threatening or offensive language.

Can I make a Subject Access Request Verbally?

Yes, you can make a Subject Access Request verbally, but we recommend you put it in writing, if possible, to give both parties a record of the request.

If you are making a verbal SAR, try to:

- Use straightforward, polite language.
- Focus the conversation on your subject access request.
- Discuss the reason for your request, if this is appropriate, work with us to identify the type of information you need.

How long does a SAR take?

The law states we have **one calendar month** from the day your request is received in which to respond to the request. However, if the request is significant then we can lawfully extend this for up to an additional two months.

Why can it not be done any quicker?

The law says that we have to consider a wide range of factors when considering a SAR request. Primarily, we have to ensure that we do not breach the privacy rights of anyone else whose details may be included in any documents we have. It is therefore important that we take the time to (a) identify all the documents we have (b) review them with regards to other people's privacy rights and (c) that no harm - physical or mental - may come to anyone by releasing the documents.

We aim to get the documents to you as soon as we can, but this does take time and usually takes the full 30 days. Contacting the school or the Data Protection Officer frequently will not speed things up.