
Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice

1. Introduction

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Bishop Auckland College Group complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS certificate information.

The Group also complies fully with its obligations under the UK General Data Protection Act Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, along with all other relevant legislation relating to the processing of personal data. Certificate information is processed fairly, lawfully and securely, and only for specified purposes.

The Group has a written policy on the secure handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS certificate information, which is made available on the staff portal.

2. Storage & Access

Where paper copies are held, DBS certificate information is stored securely in a lockable, non-portable, storage container. Access is strictly controlled and limited to individuals who are authorised and required to see it as part of their duties. The Group uses an e-safeguarding service which stores and manages information in line with the DBS Code of Practice. The system is password protected and is also only accessed by relevant individuals.

3. Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is shared only with individuals who are authorised to receive it and who have a legitimate need to know as part of their duties.

A record is maintained of all individuals to whom certificate information has been disclosed. It is a criminal offence to disclose such information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Information relating to DBS certificates is handled in line with statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), issued by the Department for Education.

All staff involved in the handling of DBS information receive appropriate training to ensure compliance with the DBS Code of Practice and data protection legislation.

4. Usage

DBS certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and in accordance with the Group's legal and safeguarding obligations. Information is not used for any purpose other than assessing suitability for the role in question.

5. Retention

DBS certificate information is not retained for any longer than is necessary. Once a recruitment or other relevant decision has been made, certificate information is retained for a maximum period of six months. This allows for the resolution of any disputes, complaints or audits.

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In exceptional circumstances where it is considered necessary to retain certificate information for longer than six months, the Group will:

- consult with the DBS (where appropriate)
- fully consider the data protection and human rights of the individual
- document the justification for extended retention

During the retention period, all information will continue to be stored securely with strictly controlled access.

6. Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e., by shredding, pulping or burning in the case of paper records, or by secure deletion where records are held electronically. The Group ensures that the third-party service provider used for electronic storage also complies with secure destruction requirements. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

In accordance with the DBS Code of Practice, the Group does not retain any photocopy, image or other representation of the DBS certificate or its contents.

However, the Group will retain a record of:

- the name of the individual
- the fact that a DBS check was carried out
- the type of certificate requested
- the position for which the certificate was requested
- the unique reference number of the certificate
- the date of issue of the certificate
- the outcome of the check
- the recruitment decision taken

For further information please contact:

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