

Pupil and Parent/Carer Privacy Notice

Privacy and data protection

SMS Changing Lives School



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SMS Changing Lives School



Approved by	Hecabe DuFraisie, Head Teacher
Approval date	24 September 2026
Last reviewed	September 2026
Next review	September 2027, or earlier if our processing changes materially
Data controller	SMS Coaching Ltd, trading as SMS Changing Lives School
Data protection contact	tyrone.mcivor@smscoaching.co.uk
Data Protection Officer	Contact via the school data protection contact above

This notice explains how the school uses personal information. It should be read alongside the Photographs and Images Policy for discretionary pupil images.

In simple terms

We use personal information to educate and support pupils, meet SEND and safeguarding needs, communicate with families and professionals, and run the school.

We may receive information from families, local authorities, previous schools, health and therapy services, social care, Virtual Schools and other professionals.

Staff may use approved school-managed AI, including ChatGPT Business, as a working tool for tasks such as referral reviews, IEPs and provision maps. Staff remain responsible for every decision and final record.

We use filtering and monitoring on school networks and school-managed devices to help keep pupils safe online.

Photograph permission is recorded through referral/admission paperwork. From 1 October 2026, new online content will normally avoid images in which pupils are clearly distinguishable or readily recognisable.

Formal pupil records are kept in the school's approved systems. AI chats and uploaded working material are not the official pupil record and are deleted when they are no longer needed for the work.

1. What this notice covers

This notice explains how SMS Changing Lives School uses personal information about current, former and prospective pupils, parents/carers and, where relevant, other family members or professionals whose information appears in pupil records. It also covers information we receive during referral and consultation processes.

It is intended to provide the privacy information required by UK data protection law. The exact information used and lawful basis depend on the purpose of the processing.

2. What personal information we use

- identification and contact details, admissions information and education identifiers;
- parent/carers, parental responsibility and emergency contact information;
- attendance, education arrangements, behaviour, incidents, risk assessments, safeguarding and physical intervention records;
- assessment, progress, curriculum, examinations, accreditation, careers and destination information;
- SEND information, including EHCPs, annual reviews, IEPs, provision maps, interventions and professional reports;
- health, medical, disability, mental health, therapy and medication information where relevant;
- social care, looked-after or previously looked-after child information, Virtual School and PEP information where relevant;
- pupil characteristics used for education, equality or statutory purposes, such as sex, ethnicity and language where applicable;
- photographs, video and other images used for authorised school purposes, and CCTV or identification/safeguarding images where applicable;
- online-safety, filtering and monitoring information from school networks and school-managed devices;
- correspondence, meeting records, complaints and communications; and
- technical and security information created by approved school systems and service providers where necessary.

3. Where the information comes from

We may obtain information directly from pupils, parents/carers and staff, or from other lawful sources including:

- local authorities, commissioning teams and Virtual Schools;
- previous or current schools, colleges and other education providers;

- health, CAMHS, therapy, educational psychology, occupational therapy and speech and language services;
- social care, safeguarding partners, police or youth justice services where relevant;
- examination boards, awarding organisations and post-16 providers; and
- approved contractors and service providers acting for the school.

Where we obtain personal information from another source rather than directly from the person it is about, we provide or make available the required privacy information in accordance with the timescales and exemptions in data protection law.

4. Why we use personal information and the lawful bases we rely on

We identify an appropriate lawful basis for each processing activity. The main bases used by SMS are:

Purpose / situation	Main lawful basis
Education, SEND, safeguarding, attendance, examinations, regulatory or other legal duties	Legal obligation - Article 6(1)(c), where the processing is required by law. Legitimate interests - Article 6(1)(f), where appropriate for an independent school and where the individual's rights do not override the school's interests.
Teaching, pupil progress, pastoral support, communications, school improvement, administration, safety and security where not specifically required by law	Legitimate interests - Article 6(1)(f). The interests may include providing and improving education and support, running the school effectively, protecting pupils and staff, and securing school systems. We consider the impact on children and families before relying on this basis.
A contract with the person concerned, or steps requested by them before entering a contract	Contract - Article 6(1)(b), where this genuinely applies.
A serious emergency involving life or safety	Vital interests - Article 6(1)(d), where necessary.
A genuinely optional activity or use where consent is the appropriate basis	Consent - Article 6(1)(a). Consent can be withdrawn at any time without affecting processing already carried out lawfully.

Special category data includes information such as health, disability, ethnicity, religion and certain other sensitive characteristics. When we use special category data we also identify an appropriate Article 9 condition. Depending on the purpose, this may include substantial public interest (for example safeguarding or support for people with disabilities), health or social care, vital interests, legal claims, or explicit consent where appropriate. Criminal offence information is processed only where UK data protection law permits it.

5. Do you have to provide the information?

Some information is required because we have a legal duty to collect or use it, or because it is necessary to provide education, SEND support, safeguarding, examinations or another service safely and effectively. If required information is not provided, we may be unable to meet a legal duty or provide the relevant service. Where information is genuinely optional, we make that clear when we ask for it.

6. Use of approved Artificial Intelligence (AI)

SMS may use approved school-managed generative AI services, including ChatGPT Business, as a staff working tool. We use AI to support staff; we do not use it to replace professional judgement or to make final decisions about pupils.

Examples of approved staff uses include:

- reviewing referral and consultation information and preparing a referral summary or draft placement analysis;
- supporting EHCP and annual review preparation;
- drafting or reviewing IEPs, provision maps, pupil profiles and related SEND documents;
- summarising education, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding or risk information for staff review;

- preparing draft letters, reports, minutes and other school documents; and
- identifying information, actions or review points for a member of staff to consider.

Where the task genuinely requires it, an approved AI service may process personal information contained in an EHCP, referral pack, professional report or other pupil document. Staff minimise the information used where this can be done without undermining the task. Where full context is necessary, an authorised member of staff may use the full document in the approved school workspace.

The AI provider processes the information to provide and secure the service. It may also process technical information such as account identifiers, IP address, browser/device information and security logs. OpenAI states that content in ChatGPT Business workspaces is not used to train its models by default.

AI chats, uploaded files and draft outputs are working material, not the official pupil record. They are kept only while they are needed to complete the work, check the output, manage related follow-up or maintain continuity in that work. When they are no longer needed, they are deleted in accordance with the school's retention process and the provider's deletion arrangements. Any final record that needs to be retained is saved in the appropriate school system and follows the normal school retention period.

Some approved cloud and AI services may process or store information outside the United Kingdom. Where this happens, SMS uses the safeguards required by UK data protection law. Further information about material providers and transfer safeguards is available from the school data protection contact.

7. Human oversight and automated decisions

SMS does not make decisions about pupils that have legal or similarly significant effects solely by automated means. Staff check AI-generated work and remain responsible for admissions, placement, SEND provision, safeguarding, risk, behaviour, exclusions, interventions, funding and pupil outcomes.

8. Filtering and monitoring of school internet and devices

SMS uses filtering and monitoring on school networks and school-managed devices to help keep pupils safe online, prevent access to illegal or harmful content, identify safeguarding or welfare concerns and protect school systems.

Depending on the system and the event, this may include user or device identifiers, websites or domains accessed or blocked, search terms or prompts, security events and information linked to a safeguarding or security alert. Monitoring data and alerts are accessible only to authorised staff and, where necessary, approved IT support.

Routine monitoring information is kept only for as long as it is needed for safeguarding, security and investigation purposes, using the school's approved system settings and retention arrangements. If an alert becomes part of a formal safeguarding, disciplinary, security or legal record, that record follows the relevant school retention period.

9. Photographs, video and other images

The school uses photographs and other images to record learning, celebrate achievement, evidence participation and communicate aspects of school life. Discretionary photograph and image permission is sought from parents/carers through referral/admission paperwork and recorded by the school. Staff check the recorded permission before using a pupil image for a discretionary purpose, and the wishes of the young person are also respected.

Where the appropriate permission is in place, photographs may be used offline or within controlled school communications for purposes such as pupil reports, learning records and portfolios, evidence of educational or pastoral activities, internal displays, certificates, presentations, newsletters or updates shared directly with parents/carers, and appropriate internal quality assurance or staff training.

Online publication from 1 October 2026

For new content published on the school website, school social media accounts or online promotional material, the school will normally avoid images in which pupils are clearly distinguishable or readily recognisable. Suitable approaches include activity or work photographs rather than faces, images taken from behind, distance shots and careful cropping.

A clearly recognisable pupil image may exceptionally be used online only where there is a clear and specific reason, the recorded permission covers that use, the pupil's wishes have been considered, and safeguarding and data-protection checks identify no reason the pupil should not be publicly identifiable.

The school will not routinely publish a pupil's full name alongside their photograph.

Parents/carers may change or withdraw discretionary photograph permission by contacting the school. The school will stop future discretionary use covered by that permission and, where relevant, remove school-controlled online material when consent is the lawful basis for publication.

Photograph permission never overrides safeguarding. Staff must not publish an identifiable image of a pupil who should not be publicly identified because of a safeguarding concern, legal restriction or other known risk. Images required for essential administration, identification, CCTV or safeguarding may rely on a different lawful basis and are not dependent on discretionary photograph permission.

Further detail is set out in the school's Photographs and Images Policy, effective from 1 October 2026.

10. Who we may share information with

We share personal information only where there is a lawful reason and only to the extent necessary for the purpose. Depending on the circumstances, this may include:

- local authorities, commissioning teams and Virtual Schools;
- previous, current or future education settings, post-16 providers and careers/youth-support services where applicable;
- the Department for Education (DfE) where a statutory or regulatory collection applies;
- Ofsted and other regulators or public authorities where required;
- NHS, CAMHS, school nursing, therapy and other health professionals;
- social care, safeguarding partners, LADO services, police, emergency services or youth justice services where necessary;
- examination boards, awarding organisations and learning-record services;
- transport, alternative provision, vocational, enrichment or therapy providers where necessary;
- legal, insurance and other professional advisers where necessary; and
- approved IT, MIS, filtering/monitoring, cloud and AI service providers acting under appropriate data-protection arrangements.

Information shared with the Department for Education

DfE collects personal information from education settings through statutory and regulatory data collections. Where a collection applies to SMS, we provide the information required for that collection. This may include pupil identifiers, pupil characteristics, SEND, attendance, education and attainment/outcome information. DfE publishes its own privacy information explaining how it uses information received from education settings.

11. How long we keep information

We do not keep personal information for longer than is necessary. Different records have different retention periods. Formal pupil, safeguarding, SEND, attendance, examination, complaints and other school records are retained in accordance with the SMS Records Retention Schedule and any applicable legal, safeguarding, regulatory or limitation requirements. The schedule is available from the school on request.

Where a fixed period is not stated in this notice, the criteria used are the purpose for which the information is needed, any legal or safeguarding requirement, the need to manage claims or regulatory matters, and whether the information has become part of the formal school record. All working material and routine system logs follow the specific criteria explained in sections 6 and 8. Discretionary photographs and images are retained and disposed of in line with the school's records-retention and data-protection arrangements.

12. Your data protection rights

Data protection rights belong to the individual whose personal information is being processed. Pupils can exercise their own rights where they have sufficient understanding. A parent/carers may act on a pupil's behalf where they are authorised to do so or where it is otherwise appropriate. Parents and carers also have rights over information that is about them personally.

Depending on the lawful basis and circumstances, rights may include:

- the right to be informed;
- the right of access;
- the right to have inaccurate information corrected;
- the right to erasure in certain circumstances;
- the right to restrict processing in certain circumstances;
- the right to object in certain circumstances;
- the right to data portability where the legal conditions apply;
- the right to withdraw consent where consent is the lawful basis; and
- rights relating to automated decision-making.

These rights are not absolute. We will explain any lawful restriction that applies to a request.

13. Questions, rights requests and complaints

For questions about this notice, to exercise a data protection right, or to raise a data protection complaint, contact:

Data protection contacts

School data protection contact: tyrone.mcivor@smscoaching.co.uk

Data Protection Officer: contact via the school data protection contact above

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Current contact and complaints information is available at ico.org.uk.

14. Changes to this notice

We review this notice so that it remains accurate. If we make a material change to how we use personal information, we will update the notice and bring the change to the attention of the people affected where data protection law requires us to do so.

Related school document

Photographs and Images Policy - effective 1 October 2026.