

Single Central Record (SCR) Guidance for Schools in Haringey

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Background

It has been a requirement since 2007 that all schools must maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks. This was set out in some detail in the original publication “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007)” and more recently updated in the DfE’s July 2015 statutory guidance for schools and colleges titled *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE 2015),

It is essential that schools have read and applied this statutory guidance.

Introduction

This Guidance Note should be read in conjunction with the attached excel Template and in the context of *Keeping children safe in education – July 2015*.

It is intended for:

- Head teachers
- Governing bodies
- Staff in schools delegated with responsibility for maintaining a school’s ‘Single Central Record’

The aim is to advise on the requirements and best practice around maintaining a Single Central Record (SCR) of those employed or engaged in the school, for the purposes of safeguarding children.

This guidance focuses on both what **should** and **must** be recorded on the SCR but is not intended to be comprehensive advice on Safer Recruitment practices or other related safeguarding regulations.

Responsibilities, Advice and Auditing

Each school will determine who is responsible for maintaining the Single Central Record but it is suggested that the Headteacher takes the overall responsibility, delegating the actual process of updating the record to a member of the school’s support team.

Headteachers and Chairs of Governors are responsible for ensuring that they have robust processes in place to carry out and record recruitment checks for staff, volunteers and anyone who has regular access to children within the school.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors are responsible for the correct vetting of staff. It is wise to ensure that the SCR is monitored and checked regularly and we strongly recommend that the SCR is signed off by the termly by the Head. The Chair of Governors (or other nominated governor) should understand the requirements of the SCR and be confident that the Head is fulfilling their duty.

Format of the Single Central Record

There is no defined format for the Single Central Record.

It is a matter for each school to determine whether the Single Central Record is held manually or in electronic form but it must be kept in a single location.

Most schools will hold the Single Central Record in electronic form as an Excel document. If this method is used then the records should all be on one Excel workbook although they may be held across different worksheets within that workbook (for example separate sheets may be set up for different categories of workers such as Employees, Volunteers, Agency/Supply, etc)

Who should appear on the Single Central Record?

Paragraph 73 of “Keeping Children Safe in Education” states: “The single central record must cover the following people:

- all staff (including supply staff) who work at the school: in colleges, this means those providing education to children
- all others who work in regular contact with children in the school or college, including volunteers; and - Paragraph 66 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (April 2014)
- for independent schools, including academies and free schools, all members of the proprietor body.

Based on this definition it is for the school to determine who to include or not to include on the SCR.

The very short term cover staff totalling a few days would not normally be put on the SCR but you still need to ensure the Agency has carried out all the checks and hold the evidence on file. As a general rule, anyone who has regular (3 or more times in a 30 days period) and unsupervised contact with children must be on the SCR. Thus a record of the above checks must be kept for the following groups of individuals:

- a) **All staff** who are employed directly by your school.
- b) **All support staff** who are employed for a reasonable period of time, whether employed directly by the school or through an Agency
- c) **Volunteers:** whose work involves regular contact with children and always include those who are engaged in “Regulated Activity”.
- d) **The Chair and all members of the Local Governing Body;** Schools must check for all their governors, regardless of their contact with children: photographic identification, evidence of address, undertake a Children’s Barred List check and ask them to sign a declaration confirming their suitability to fulfil the role. Evidence of these checks must be retained
- e) **Individuals providing additional teaching or instruction** to pupils but who are not staff members e.g. sports coaches, Music Teachers, artists, and peripatetic staff.
- f) **Students on work related learning** (placements of 15 days or more);
- g) **Students on regular community work** e.g. running a football club.
- h) **Agency and Supply Staff:** whilst schools do not need to carry out the SCR checks themselves on agency staff, since agencies are required to carry out the same checks as schools do for their staff, a School must obtain written confirmation from the agency that the appropriate checks have been

carried out and are satisfactory. Agency/supply workers do not need to be recorded individually on the SCR. Instead the agency itself should be recorded and the SCR completed to show that they complete all the required vetting checks on their employees. A School does not need to see evidence of the checks, except where a DBS check discloses information. The physical evidence required to support this entry on the SCR must include written confirmation from the agency that the appropriate checks have been carried out and are satisfactory for the individuals concerned and up-to-date copies of the agency's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policies, which should be obtained before any of their people attend the School and then on an annual basis to ensure the appropriate vetting checks are adhered to. In addition, schools must undertake an identity check on agency staff to confirm that the individual arriving at the School is the individual that the agency intends to refer to them. Where supply staff are employed directly by the School the same checking and recording procedure in place for regular employees will need to be followed.

i) **Building contractors:** who have regular contact with children. The same process for agency and supply staff should be followed.

j) **Caretaking/catering/security/coach-driving contractors:** the same process for agency and supply staff should be followed.

In relation to contractors, for example cleaners, catering staff, building contractors and coach companies, schools and academies should ensure that they have written confirmation from the contractor that any of their staff that come into contact with children have satisfactorily undergone the checks the School is required to carry out for its own employees, the content of which must be satisfactory. (Regular contract staff such as contract cleaners or caterers)

You do not normally need to include on your SCR visitors to the school, work experience students or occasional volunteers or one off contractors who maybe on short term cover duty.

The SCR should reflect your current workforce. When a person leaves employment it is recommended you should remove the record from the SCR by either deleting or archiving the record or storing these on a leavers page. It is good practice to keep this information for 6 months.

Who does not need to be on the SCR?

a) **Visitors:** who will only have ad hoc or irregular contact with children e.g. those who have business with the Head/other staff members.

b) **Contractors carrying out emergency repairs** e.g. plumbers.

c) **Building contractors:** who do not have regular contact with children. Due to health and safety reasons, children should be kept away from areas where work is being carried out. Thus the majority of building contractors will not have access to children and will not need to be on the SCR.

d) **Volunteers/parents:** attending one-off schools trips/events which are non-residential.

e) **Secondary pupils undertaking voluntary work or work experience** (in these cases the school placing the student should ensure they are suitable for the placement).

f) **Individuals on site before or after school hours.**

However, it is good practice for those groups listed above to:

- a) Sign in and out of the School;
- b) Undergo an identification check on their first visit to the School; and
- c) Never be left unsupervised when children are on the premises.

What information should be recorded on the SCR?

The statutory guidance states:

“The information that must be recorded is whether or not the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- an identity check;
- a barred list check;
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate;
- a prohibition from teaching check;
- further checks on people living or working outside the UK;
- a check of professional qualifications; and
- a check to establish the person’s right to work in the UK

Under each of these headings the guidance suggests you should record:

- what has been seen
- when it was seen, and
- by whom it was seen

These represent the minimum requirements.

However, the SCR should be more than simply a compliance document. It should be an integral part of the school’s recruitment and selection policy forming a useful and practical purpose in recording and referencing the pre employment checks within a single comprehensive document.

For this reason the template/model spreadsheet that has been developed as part of this guidance paper has been designed to comply with the statutory regulations and also best practice in order that it can be used as a practical tool to support schools in delivering the principles of Safer Recruitment. Never leave an empty field. If not applicable insert n/a in the cell.

Teacher status checks

The Department for Education provides a free service for schools, local authorities and supply agencies in England to check the record of any teacher they are considering employing. This secure service is called ‘Employer Access Online’(all schools should register)

Since the 1st September 2013, it has been a statutory requirement that a Prohibition Order check must be made for any teacher the school employs. This is different to a barred list check (obtained via the DBS). The prohibition check can be made via the Employer Access service.

Through the Employer Access service, schools can check:

- teacher’s personal details
- initial teacher training qualifications
- qualified teacher status

- induction status
- supplementary qualifications
- details of any active sanctions
- a suspension or conditional order imposed by the General Teaching Council for England (prior to abolition) that is still current
- prohibition from teaching

Prohibition Order

- It is a statutory requirement of the SCR that prohibition order checks are recorded for all newly appointment teachers commencing from April 2014.
- The Pre-employment Checks will include the date the completed prohibition order check was evidenced and who evidenced it.
- Proof that the prohibition order check has been carried out should be kept.
- Where a prohibition order check reveals information, the first step should be to contact the schools Human resources provider immediately for advice.

Ofsted: Inspection of the Single Central Register

Ofsted Inspectors will check the school's single central record early in the inspection with the expectation that it will be complete and meet statutory requirements.

Ofsted has established a definition for 'administrative errors' in relation to the single central record (see below). No allowance will be made, for example, for breaches to the requirements for the DBS disclosures

However, if there is a **minor** administrative error such as the absence of a date on the record, and this can be easily rectified **before** the final team meeting, schools will be given the chance to resolve the issue.

Ofsted allows schools three types of 'administrative errors' as long as they are corrected before the end of the inspection.

"Administrative errors may be defined as follows:

- failure to record one or two dates;
- individual entries that are illegible; or
- one or two omissions where it is clear that the information is already held by the school but the school has failed to transfer over the information in full to the single central record."

Governors need to know that the single central record is being maintained as a live document – it is one of the statutory documents specified by the DfE. Ofsted inspectors will expect that is current. The School Inspection Handbook says: "*Inspectors should also request that the following information is made available at the start of the inspection:the single central record, which summarises the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils*"

The 2014 [Ofsted 'Inspecting Safeguarding' Briefing](#) states that:

If a school or college has concerns about an existing staff member's suitability to work with children, it should carry out all relevant checks as if the person were a new member of staff. Similarly, if a person working at the school or college moves from a post that was not regulated activity into work which is regulated activity, the relevant checks for the regulated activity must be carried out. Apart from these circumstances, the school or college is not required to request a DBS check or barred list check. The only requirement for those appointed before March 2002 is that they must have been List 99 checked. DBS checks became mandatory for the entire maintained schools' workforce from 12 May 2006 (September 2003 for independent schools, including academies).

Haringey process

Every month a report is sent to all schools, outlining which pre-employment checks are completed or ongoing. This helps the school build on their single central record.

Pilot inspections

Pilot inspections have recommended that a column be added to the SCR to show that staff have signed the 'Keeping Pupils Safe in Education' document. Schools could also require staff to sign Haringey's 'Keeping children and young people safe from radicalisation and extremism' guidance.

FAQs

Who should manage the Single Central Record?

In many schools, the SCR is managed by a member of the school's business team, typically the senior manager. There is no statutory guidance on this, but ultimately the headteacher and chair of governors are responsible for the correct vetting of staff. It is wise therefore to ensure that the SCR is monitored and checked regularly, perhaps termly, and signed off by the head. The Chair of Governors (or other nominated governor) should understand the requirements of the SCR and be confident that the Head is fulfilling their duty. Given the importance of the SCR, more than one person should know how to access and update the information.

Who can enter the information on the single central record?

This information can be entered by whoever at the school/college identifies as responsible for doing so. In order to verify that they have checked the employee's or volunteer's details, each entry must show the name of the person making the check, the position held and the date when the check was completed.

Whose name should appear as the person who carried out the check?

The name of the individual who was given the responsibility for submitting the application for a DBS disclosure certificate – including making the necessary document checks and, in most cases, dealing with the certificate when it was returned.

How detailed should the record of qualifications be? Do we now have to record the actual qualification held – Certificate in Education and so on? If so, do we have to go back and enter this information for all existing staff members?

It is sufficient for the single central record to record that the teacher holds Qualified Teacher Status and the teacher reference number against staff names where appropriate, with the name and position of the person who checked this.

How do schools carry out such checks?

Schools will need to have access to [Employer Access Online](#), which is a free service for schools, local authorities and teacher supply agencies in England. They can check the record of any teacher that they employ or are considering employing. To use the system you need a Department for Education secure access user account and password which will then provide a link to the teacher services portal.

What physical evidence do teachers need to provide to prove they that they are qualified to teach – for example, do they need to produce their original certificates or diplomas?

This is a matter for the employer to determine

Note:

External companies like **supply agencies** should provide you with something in writing to indicate all relevant checks have been carried out (check this includes right to work and overseas checks and (prohibition checks for teachers). Settings still need to ID check as they would any other member of staff.

Drivers of vehicles only for children now falls under a regulated activity and the setting/school must ensure that drivers are DBS checked and that all other relevant checks have been carried out and ID checks when the bus arrives so they know that the driver is DBS checked.