



Records Management Policy

OakTree College ('the College') is an independent co-educational specialist senior secondary school providing education opportunities for young people of migrant backgrounds who are at risk of disengaging from education.

OakTree College ('the College') seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment where all students can safely participate in the educational experiences offered by the College.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the College staff understand and meet the legislative requirements for creating, managing, storing and disposing of the College records.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the College staff when creating, managing, and disposing of the College's administration and student records. All such records need to be properly managed.

3. Legal Obligations

In Victoria, the creation, management and disposal of public records is governed by the [Public Records Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#) standards issued by the Public Record Office Victoria. The Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001 govern the collection, disclosure and storage of records containing personal information.

Ministerial Order 1359- Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises – standard 2 require schools to have a record management policy for records relevant to child safety and wellbeing.

4. Definitions

Records	School-related records in any format or media made or received by staff or volunteers. Such records are required to be kept for a specific period of time for legislative or other requirements before they can be destroyed.
Normal administrative practice	Working papers, drafts, duplicate copies of records stored elsewhere, CCTV footage, short-term facilitative records (such as phone messages), and unimportant records such as unsolicited 'junk mail' which may be destroyed without approval once administrative use has ended.

5. Implementation

The College is committed to maintaining the accuracy and integrity of student records. The College must have systems and processes in place for managing electronic and hardcopy records to ensure the authenticity, security, reliability and accessibility of these records.

All records must be stored in safe and secure locations to ensure their integrity and accessibility, and prevent unauthorised access.

The College needs to properly manage records in order to:

- promotes good decision-making;
- meets legal responsibilities and requirements;
- encourages consistent service provision; and
- protects student records from accidental or malicious damage, or alteration

In doing so, the College will manage records in a manner that enables staff to easily store (in a secure cabinet), retrieve and dispose of records when needed. Staff, students, parents, carers, guardian can access their own personal records on request, but will be denied access to the records of other people unless such disclosure is lawful. For example, the College may be approached to assist to demonstrate proof of their enrolment for immigration or citizenship reasons. The College will provide such information where possible.

In order to meet its student record keeping obligations the College will:

- monitor student participation, completion rates and student outcomes which will be reported to the community in the College's Annual Report;
- manage student records and results on SIMON (College student management system);
- manage student records and results on the VASS;
- manage the privacy requirements of student data;
- manage the confidentiality of student data by retaining records in a secure environment with appropriate access controls;
- manage the disposal of student records according to State and Commonwealth government requirements;
- comply with the requirements of student identifiers such as USIs and VSNs;
- retain all records relating to child safety, health and wellbeing as legally required;
- use version control to manage documentation and ensure that the most up to date version is in use;
- provide students with timely, current and accurate records of their learning and assessment;
- provide students with the opportunity to update their personal information as needed;
- ensure that student assessments are authenticated;
- prevent or minimise plagiarism, cheating, collusion and academic misconduct to preserve the integrity and authenticity of student records;

- perform routine checks to ensure the accuracy, completeness and authenticity of student records; and
- perform regular backup of electronic student records.

5.1 Records creation

The College will create full and accurate records, either hardcopy (paper) or electronic, of the College functions and activities, including records relating to:

- governance
- operations
- the handling of incidents (including child safety), complaints and investigations
- student management including attendance, academic progress, medication etc.

5.2 Records management and retention

All College records must be retained for a certain period of time in line with the Public Record Office Victoria Guidelines. The periods may range from 12 months or more, for example expulsion records will be destroyed within one year of expulsion, while academic or financial records will be kept for seven years. Records can only be destroyed once that period has expired with the written approval of the College's Executive Principal.

5.3 Records destruction

The College must not dispose of:

- any records that are reasonably likely to be required in a legal proceeding,
- any record that may be required for a current Freedom of Information request,
- records that are of historic value,
- records relevant to child safety and wellbeing (including incidents or allegations of incidents, investigation of child sexual abuse incidents or staff induction training about child safety standards).

The College will dispose of records that have reached the required retention period, with the exception of the above. The Executive Principal must approve the disposal in writing to provide evidence of the disposal activity.

In some circumstances, some records created through normal administrative practice may be destroyed without the Executive Principal approval and the retention period once administrative use has ended (but such documents are recommended to be kept for at least 12 months). These records include:

- working papers
- drafts
- duplicate copies of records stored elsewhere
- short-term facilitative records (such as phone messages)
- unsolicited 'junk mail'
- CCTV footage (as long as there are no records relevant to child safety and wellbeing concerns or allegation).

The College will ensure electronic and hardcopy records are disposed of or destroyed in a way that ensures the records are unreadable and irretrievable (e.g. the use of secure disposal bins for hardcopy records).

Staff should consider the following before a record is destroyed:

- Is there any further administrative need to retain the record?
- Are others still using the record?
- Has the record been held for the required period of retention?
- Does the record relate to a child safety and wellbeing matter?
- Does the type of record require approval of the Executive Principal to destroy?
- If you believe it is just a duplicate copy, locate the original record prior to destroying the copy.

5. Governance

The College Board is responsible for the governance of this policy and must ensure that adequate risk management processes and internal controls are in place to prevent any breaches.

The Executive Principal will have operational oversight on the application and implementation of this policy. The Executive Principal will ensure that staff and volunteers understand information sharing as well as record management and keeping obligations. Annual training will be provided to staff and volunteers.

6. Complaints

Complaints can be lodged in line with the College Complaints policy in relation to how the College meets the legislative requirements for creating, managing, storing and disposing of college records. More information about the complaints process can be found in the Complaints Policy on our website.

7. Storing and Securing Information

The College takes reasonable steps to protect information from misuse and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification and disclosure. All third-party contractors must comply with this policy to mitigate against any information handling risk. Reporting

To ensure appropriate oversight, the College Board will receive operational and compliance reports, including any issues or breaches, from the Executive Principal at its regular meetings or as appropriate.

8. Communication

The College will communicate this policy via the College website to the school community and will be referenced in the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook.

9. Contact

If you have any concerns, contact the College Executive Principal.

10. Related Policies

- Duty of Care Policy

- Child Safety Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan

11. Approval and Review

Document Owner:	Executive Principal
Approved by:	College Board
Approval date:	15 June 2024
Review date:	June 2025 (and every 12 months thereafter)