**Data Protection and Record Keeping Policy**

**Introduction**

This guidance applies to the retention of all records at Rochdale Connections Trust. Some of the guidance below relates to records that contain ‘personal data’. Personal data is defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as:

*Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (data subject). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person (GDPR article 4).*

Under the new data protection laws Rochdale Connections Trust is wholly responsible for ensuring compliance with GDPR which came into force on 25 May 2018. GDPR introduces several legal obligations in relation to records containing personal data. This includes obligations such as advising data subjects of the information you hold on them, the purpose for which you hold or process such information, how long you hold it for (the retention period), the legal basis for which you process the personal data and what the data subject’s rights are in relation to the data.

Overall, personal data should be kept for no longer than necessary. As such Rochdale Connections Trust need to be aware of how long each type of record needs to be retained in law, where it might be judicious to retain records for a longer period, and how to destroy records that are no longer needed. Rochdale Connections Trust recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the organisation.

**Objectives and targets**

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by Rochdale Connections Trust staff and volunteers in the course of carrying out its functions. This policy also applies to all accounting records required for retention by the Charity Commission under the Charities Act 2011 and under the Companies Act 2006, as well as those records required by HMRC and others to be retained. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Charity and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

**Records**

Rochdale Connections Trust keeps records containing personal data under a wide variety of headings, including:

* Service-user’s
* Board Members
* Staff
* Volunteers
* Personnel records of staff
* Local Authority (LA)
* Students on work experience placements
* Programmes of work
* Health and safety
* Administration
* Finance
* Property
* CCTV

Rochdale Connections Trust has a corporate responsibility to maintain these records and record keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Operations Manager who will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely fashion. The storage and retention of digital information will also be handled by the Operations Manager, who will ensure that all records are held securely, backed-up on suitable systems, archived when necessary and checked regularly for ease of retrieval when required.

Individual staff must ensure that records for which they are responsible, particularly any that are kept on devices, are accurate, kept securely, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Charity’s records management guidelines. Loss and destruction of records that contain personal data can carry significant penalties from the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO). Personal data must not be placed at risk and appropriate safeguards are in place. There may be further consequences for individuals who fail to comply with safe record keeping guidelines and policies.

**Updating client (service-users) records**

Staff must only record information on the records of service-user’s that they are responsible for. Organisational policy dictates that all records should be updated in a timely manner and in accordance with the specific requirements for their programme or funder.

For those staff working on our **Domestic Violence and Abuse** programmes, information relating to **contact with service-users; contact with other professionals; case specific supervision; multi-agency working** and **reviews of risk and need** must be clearly recorded in the appropriate location (client file; Lamplight) within one working day.

**Archives**

Funders often require records to be archived for a set period of time to allow for future auditing. Archived records stored by Rochdale Connections Trust are:

* treated as being as confidential as current records
* not necessarily as accessible as current records, but will still be retrievable
* stored physically and may also be kept electronically
* stored in their original format

**Disposal of records**

When the period of retention has expired, and there is no other reason to keep them, the records may be disposed of safely and securely. Particular regard must be paid when disposing of records containing personal data. The records will be completely destroyed by shredding paper, cutting up CDs and similar items and dismantling and destroying hard drives. Non-sensitive papers will be bundled and disposed of to a waste paper recycling merchant. A list is kept of records which have been destroyed.

**REVIEW SCHEDULE:**

The Record Keeping Policy is formally reviewed on an annual basis.

**Date of last review:** 23/3/22

**Reviewed by:** Bev Place

**Job Role:** Business Development Manager (Senior Management Team Representative)

**Date of next Review:** 23/3/23