



Supporting Parents
Supporting Children

■ Record all the steps you take to meet the needs of GDPR

- In case anyone ever questions what you have done to make sure the Parents' Association is GDPR compliant, make sure you keep track of everything the committee does.

■ Look at your Data Protection Policy

- If you don't have one you should develop one.
- This is not as scary as it sounds – please see the sample Data Protection Policy template (available on the NPC website www.npc.ie).

IMPORTANT:

- All consent to record someone's details and to contact them must be recorded in writing whether electronically or on a hard copy form.
- All consent must be dated.
- Don't assume parents will be happy with having their details kept on file or to be contacted by the PA committee. Always check!
- Never share information without prior written permission to do so.

Disclaimer: We hope you find this guide useful but please be aware that this information is not to be construed as legal advice. If you are in doubt as to your legal obligations or require advice on any of the areas covered, we urge you to seek independent legal advice.

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General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

A Guide for Parents' Associations

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GDPR is an EU regulation which changes data protection law in Europe, it strengthens the rights for everyone, giving people more rights over their own information.

As of the 25th of May 2018, GDPR replaces the existing data protection legislation.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS?

Even small organisations like Parents' Associations (PAs) must make sure that they are GDPR compliant. Parents' Associations often ask parents for their contact details so that they can communicate with them. GDPR will mean your PA Committee will have to look at how you collect, use and protect people's information, or Personal Data.

WHAT IS PERSONAL DATA?

This is any information that identifies somebody, including their contact details.

For example it includes their:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address
- Date of birth

WHAT SHOULD OUR PARENTS' ASSOCIATION DO TO ENSURE WE COMPLY WITH GDPR?

■ Look at personal data you already have on file

- Should the PA committee have this information?
- If you don't use it, you shouldn't keep it. Personal information should only be kept for as long as it is necessary to keep it e.g. while the parent is on the Parents' Association Committee or for the school year.
- If the parents are no longer involved in the Parents' Association or the school, you should delete/destroy their personal data.
- You cannot keep personal details 'just in case' you might need them.

■ Contact those whose details you already have on file

- You need to ask parents if they are happy to give their permission (**consent**) to the Parents' Association Committee to keep their contact details on file.
- Parents must be given the option to say 'No', that they no longer want their details held on file i.e. be allowed to **withdraw** this information.
- Tell them why you want their permission to keep their information on file e.g. to communicate with them, to tell them about Parents' Association events (see the sample consent request form available on the NPC website www.npc.ie).
- Get the parents' permission to contact them in different ways. You must ask them separately for each method of contact (see the sample consent request form).
- Stress with the parents that you will never share their information without asking for their permission to do so and be careful not to do this. Once shared information cannot be unshared! Don't share email addresses when sending emails and don't share details on social media.
- Tell the parents how long you will keep their details on file e.g. for the school year.
- Keep a record of how you get their permission (**consent**) to contact them and keep their details on file e.g. by email or a hard copy form.
- This record should have a **date** when they give the PA committee permission to keep their details on file.

■ Before you collect any new personal data

- A good rule is 'If you don't need it, don't collect it'.
- If you have decided you need to collect new personal data, all the processes you use to contact those whose details you already have on file apply (listed above).

■ Make sure the data is secure

- Who on the PA committee will have peoples contact details? It is a good idea if perhaps only the PA secretary has this information.
- Where will this information be stored? GDPR doesn't only refer to electronic files, it also applies to hard copy files/forms etc. these should be locked away securely.
- If this information is kept on a computer it should be password protected. It should really be encrypted if on a laptop, in case the laptop is lost or stolen.
- We recommend you use a dedicated Parents' Association email account to keep all email contact with parents in one place.

■ Put a plan in place for what to do when someone leaves the Parents' Association Committee

- Update passwords when people leave the PA committee.
- Remove people who have left the committee from any social media platform private groups.