

Mr Jamie Halliday

Our Ref: ASM/IR/67437

By email only:

request-1399708-3bc6d4d7@whatdotheyknow.com

Email: Informationrights@gateshead.gov.uk

Date: 14 April 2026

Dear Mr Halliday

Internal Review of Information Request

An internal review of the response to your information request has been completed as you expressed dissatisfaction with the response provided.

On 8 February 2026, you requested information held by Gateshead Council relating to retention and disposal arrangements for education records.

A response was disclosed to you on 13 March 2026. On 17 March 2026 you requested an internal review in relation to incomplete disclosure.

In response to question 1, the Council disclosed its Common Corporate Retention Periods document. This document refers to Appendix 1 which was not provided. You have asked for this to be disclosed along with a service-specific ROPA entries or equivalent retention schedule entries for the categories listed in question 1 of your original request.

You state question 2 related to records held by the local authority, not maintained schools. You would like confirmation whether any documented retention policy, schedule or guidance existed for Council-held education records during 2010-2014 and who conducted the search for this information, and what sources or systems were checked. You have asked for confirmation in writing if the Council is unable to locate any documentation.

With regard to the Council's response that it has no role in ensuring maintained schools comply with records management, you state question 4 concerned the Council's recorded guidance and oversight role more broadly. You have asked for confirmation whether the Council holds recorded guidance, circulars or communications issued to maintained schools on these matters. You have asked for explicit confirmation if no documentation exists.

Review

In carrying out this review I have considered the requirements of the Act; the response provided to you and discussed the information held by the Council with the relevant service. Below is the Council's response addressing the questions you presented.

Appendix 1 of the Common Corporate Retention Periods document was not disclosed

Please find attached Appendix 1 of the Common Corporate Retention document.

Retention schedule entries for the categories listed in Question 1 of my original request

The retention period is until a child's 25th birthday (or 31st birthday if SEN) for the following categories:

- maintained school pupil file / educational record
- records held by the local authority relating to an individual pupil's education
- exclusion records (fixed-term and permanent), including panel or decision paperwork
- EOTAS / home tuition / alternative provision records, including placement decisions and commissioning referrals

SEND records held by the local authority (assessments, notes, decisions, panel minutes, plans) are retained until the child's 31st birthday.

Education finance and commissioning records relating to alternative provision or tuition (purchase orders, invoices, provider contracts, budget monitoring) are retained for 7 years.

Please confirm whether any documented retention policy, schedule, or guidance existed for council-held education records during 2010–2014.

Searches have been undertaken by speaking with Council staff employed in the relevant teams during this period as well as intranet searches.

No documented retention policies, schedules or guidance for council-held education records during 2010-2014 have been located.

Confirmation whether the Council holds recorded guidance, circulars or communications issued to maintained schools on SARs, educational records requests, and retention expectations.

Gateshead Council does not hold guidance, circulars or communications to maintained schools on SARs, educational records requests, and retention expectations. This is because these issues fall under the remit of the school's Data Protection Officer.

The Council's decision

I found the Council did not fully comply with the requirement under section 1(1) of the Act to provide the information being requested. I have also found the Council failed to comply with its requirements under section 10(1) of the Act as it did not provide a response to you promptly, and not later than the twentieth working day. Please accept my apologies for the Council's shortcomings regarding these matters.

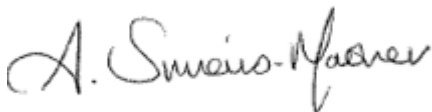
I have reminded services of their responsibilities under the Act to supply all requested information unless a valid exemption applies and to respond within the statutory deadlines for compliance.

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you may apply under Section 50 to the Information Commissioner at the address given below for a decision whether the request for information made by you to the Council has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF. [FOI and EIR complaints | ICO](#)

The Information Commissioner shall consider the matter fully and make a fresh decision.

Yours sincerely,



Angela Simmons-Mather
Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer.