



Devon, Torbay & Plymouth Schools

By email

21/05/2019

Dear Schools,

Information sharing to support the provision of important school health services

I understand that you have a number of concerns regarding the sharing of the personal information of the children attending your school with the providers of school health services commissioned by your local authority.

After having spoken with the Public Health England data protection officer, I am writing to assure you that the sharing of this information is entirely lawful under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

As part of their statutory duty to improve public health, local authorities are responsible for carrying out height and weight measurements, undertaking dental surveys, providing vaccinations, and providing vision and hearing screening to all children attending primary schools in their area. These services are vitally important to improving children's health and supporting their educational development and attainment.

The role of PHE is to support local authorities in providing these services in a lawful manner and to a consistent standard. To that end, PHE has issued national guidance on the administration of school health services. This includes advice that the sharing of children's personal data from school rolls with health service providers is entirely lawful under the GDPR and DPA 2018.

The detail of this advice is contained in the attached letter. This has been reviewed by the Information Commissioner's Office, which has confirmed that the advice it contains is correct. A copy of the ICO decision letter is also attached.

I recognise that the GDPR has resulted in a number of changes to data protection legislation, and that these changes have created some uncertainty about the lawful basis for sharing personal information.

However, please be assured that your school will not be breaching data protection law by sharing the personal information of the children in your care with health service providers. These services are vital to helping improve the individual and collective health of children,

so it is very important that misunderstandings about the GDPR do not prevent children from receiving these very important services.

I hope this letter and the accompanying attachments provide you with reassurance, but I would be very happy to arrange to speak with you if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Antje Hirschmiller - GDPR Lead for Virgin Care Devon
Beccy Lyons & Lorraine Ricketts – Devon Immunisation Team Leaders