

Data Protection Policy

Purpose and Scope

Next Steps Ed is committed to protecting the privacy and personal data of all individuals associated with the organisation, including students, staff, parents, and partners. This policy ensures compliance with data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and any applicable national laws. It establishes clear guidelines for collecting, processing, storing, and disposing of personal data to safeguard individuals' rights and maintain trust. This policy applies to all personal data handled by the organisation, in both digital and physical formats.

Principles of Data Protection

Next Steps Ed adheres to the following principles when handling personal data:

- 1. Lawfulness, Fairness, and Transparency:** Personal data will be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner.
- 2. Purpose Limitation:** Data will be collected for specific, legitimate purposes and not processed further in ways incompatible with those purposes.
- 3. Data Minimisation:** Only the data necessary for the intended purposes will be collected and processed.
- 4. Accuracy:** Personal data will be accurate and kept up to date.
- 5. Storage Limitation:** Data will be retained only as long as necessary for the stated purposes, and securely deleted when no longer needed.
- 6. Integrity and Confidentiality:** Personal data will be processed securely, protecting it against unauthorised access, loss, or damage.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Data Controller:** Next Steps Ed is responsible for determining the purposes and means of processing personal data.
- Data Protection Officer (DPO):** The DPO oversees compliance with data protection laws, advises on data-related matters, and acts as the point of contact for data subjects.
- Staff and Volunteers:** All individuals handling personal data must adhere to this policy and attend relevant training.

Data Subject Rights

Individuals have the right to:

- Access their personal data and obtain information about how it is processed.
- Request correction or deletion of inaccurate or unnecessary data.
- Restrict or object to data processing under certain circumstances.
- Withdraw consent where processing is based on consent.
- Lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority if they believe their data rights have been violated.

Data Security

Next Steps Ed employs appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect personal data, including:

- Encryption and password protection for digital data.
- Secure storage and restricted access for physical records.
- Regular audits and risk assessments to identify and mitigate vulnerabilities.

Data Breach Management

In the event of a data breach, the organization will:

1. Assess the scope and impact of the breach.
2. Notify affected individuals and relevant authorities within 72 hours if required by law.
3. Implement corrective actions to prevent future breaches.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, technology, or organisational needs. Compliance will be monitored regularly to ensure its effectiveness.

Policy Review Date: 10th December 2025

Policy Approved By: Mica Smith - Director