

As the enrolment counts on POD will become the basis for grant payments and teacher allocations, it is imperative that a record exists on POD for each pupil enrolled in the school. The following arrangements will apply in relation to the population of POD for the academic year 2016/2017 onwards:

1) In relation to all new enrolments to primary schools from 2016/2017 onwards, schools must ensure that parents/guardians are fully informed of the requirement on schools to transfer data onwards to POD and parents/guardians should be made fully aware that they are giving their child's details for this purpose, in addition to providing it for the purpose of local school administration. Schools should be cognisant of this when enrolling new pupils to their school in the future.

2) The Department is satisfied that there is a clear legal basis for the onward transfer of data from schools to POD. The Department understands that, despite this, a very small minority of parents/guardians may express concerns about data that they are providing to the school being transferred onwards to POD. The Fair Processing Notice contains information on the purpose, legal basis for data collection and retention policy of the data, and schools are requested to alert parents/guardians to the fact that this information is now available on the Department's website.

The Department is satisfied that the information in the Fair Processing Notice will provide clarity and reassurance to any parents who may have concerns. However, in the very small minority of cases where, despite all efforts by schools and the clarifications provided by the Department, the parent/guardian of a pupil still very strongly objects to the onward provision of data to POD, the Department recognises that a practical arrangement must be made in order to ensure that schools are not adversely affected and that a record can be made for all pupils on POD. Therefore, for these cases the following arrangements will apply:

a. Parents/guardians who continue to object to the onward provision of data to POD need to put their objections in writing to the school in order for their wishes to be carried out.

Note

that verbal objections will not be sufficient in this regard, as schools will be required by the Department to maintain written records of objections, and parents who do not put their objections in writing should be informed by the school that their record will be nonetheless transferred to POD within a four-week timeframe.

Parents/guardians who object should be given every opportunity to provide their objections in writing to the school.

b. Schools that are in receipt of a letter from a parent/guardian outlining their objections to the onward provision of data to POD can create a partial record for that pupil on POD, using the guidelines available on request from the POD Helpdesk. This will ensure that a record is created for the pupil which will be counted for grant allocation purposes. In these cases, schools will be required to have a corresponding letter from that pupil's parent/guardian objecting to the transfer of certain data available on file in the school. These records must be available for future inspection on request by the Department's Inspectorate.