

Data Quality Policy

Applies to	All Achieving for Children Employees, agency staff, volunteers and contractors
Date created	January 2016
Most recent review	September 2020
Signed off by	Information Governance Board
Reviewing arrangements	The policy will be reviewed every two years to judge its effectiveness or updated sooner in accordance with changes in legislation.
Next review date	August 2022
Equality analysis completed	Not required
Relating policies and procedure (including tri-x chapter)	Information Governance Policies and Procedures
Version	3.0
Version History	<p>January 2016 - approved by Director of Standards and Improvement</p> <p>May 2018 - updated to comply with GDPR. Approved by Director of Standards and Improvement</p> <p>September 2020 - updated to take account of service changes. Approved by the Information Governance Board</p>

1. Introduction

Achieving for Children recognises the importance that reliable information has on its ability to deliver and manage services to the public and improve performance. Good quality, accurate and timely data is essential in the provision of reliable performance and financial information to support decision making at all levels.

Although Achieving for Children accepts that levels of data quality tolerance vary according to different perceptions or varying needs of users, it is committed to pursuing high standards of data quality in all circumstances. Every care will be taken to ensure that the data and information used to support decision making is accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete in line with the corporate data quality policy.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out Achieving for Children's overarching approach to managing and improving data quality to support decision making.

Service specific policies and procedures will flow from this corporate policy, where relevant and necessary, thereby ensuring that all standards outlined in this policy are maintained across Achieving for Children. By achieving high standards of data quality, Achieving for Children and its commissioning Councils will:

- have assurance in the information supplied so that there will be confidence in the decision making processes,
- provide and publish data which is reliable, timely and robust,
- be able to respond effectively to service provision and issues affecting children, young people and their families in the boroughs of Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead.

3. Scope

The policy covers all Achieving for Children data across all services and systems relating to service users, the delivery of services, financial management, performance management, corporate governance and communication. It should be noted that the policy is not restricted to performance indicators.

4. Implementing the Policy

4.1 Achieving for Children aims to maintain and present information and data using the guidelines outlined in table 1 below:

Table 1: Data Quality Guidelines

Accurate	Data must be accurate with clear procedural guidance for collecting, using and amending data. Information and data should be sufficiently accurate to enable decision making to be based on it.
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Valid	Data needs to be presented in line with relevant requirements, rules and definition to ensure clarity, consistency and comparability, in particular performance and open data. Collection and presentation methods should be consistent and well explained.
Reliable	Data collection processes must be clearly defined and followed to ensure on-going stability and consistency over time. In particular trend data must reflect real change rather than variations in data collection methods or approaches.
Timely	Data should be collected as quickly as possible after the event or activity, and must be available quickly enough to support information, business needs and management decisions.
Relevant	Data must be relevant to the purpose for which it is used, and must be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect changing needs, including changed service or legislative requirements.
Complete	Data must be verified on a regular basis to ensure that there are no gaps and that systems do not contain redundant or duplicate records. Verification approaches include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● data cleansing to remove duplicate records or complete missing information ● signing off processes to verify that data has been checked ● regular query reports to check system integrity ● Regular checks and sampling to quality assure data accuracy.

- 4.2 The need to enforce high information data quality standards should be weighed sensibly against the cost and resources required to deliver it but it is accepted that time and effort is required to improve long standing information and data quality weaknesses.
- 4.3 Achieving for Children will ensure that data is stored in a secure environment with appropriate security and system backups for all business critical systems. The access and use of data should be appropriate to the data user and comply with relevant legislation such as the Data Protection Act. Systems will be regularly tested to ensure processes are secure. Adequate business continuity plans will be developed and maintained.

- 4.5 Information sharing is crucial to partnership working. It is essential that we have confidence in shared data or data supplied by third parties. Achieving for Children will ensure that a formal framework for data sharing with partners is put in place. This includes identifying and complying with all relevant, legal, compliance and confidentiality standards. A validation process will be established for all data provided by partners or third parties.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Achieving for Children is committed to ensuring that it has the right people within the right skills and knowledge to deliver services. This section provides a summary of the roles and responsibilities in relation to using, managing and improving the quality of Achieving for Children data.

Roles	Responsibility
Intelligence and Improvement Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● regularly reviewing and reporting on compliance with data quality policy and procedures and liaising with appropriate officers to rectify non compliance. ● establishing and seeking agreement of a corporate set of indicators ● maintaining and promoting a manual of definitions , providing support and advice to services ● developing the performance management element of the Quality Assurance Framework to incorporate data quality ● promoting the importance of data quality throughout Achieving for Children and with partners.
Business Systems and ICT Team/RBWM PARIS Team/Other systems administrators Data Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the administration of the data systems and coordination of definitions with data providers to ensure systems are in place to collect and report data; ● ensuring that all data collection processes are documented and that there is an appropriate responsible officer in place who understands the process and can maintain day to day aspects of data collection; ● will ensure audit checks are conducted and systems to validate data quality are established and report back to those who provide data ● informing the Intelligence Team of changes to data and or supporting definitions as they arise.
Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO)	<p>The SIRO ensures that an overall culture exists that values and protects information within Achieving for Children.</p> <p>Ensures that all risks relating to data quality are understood and managed through the organisation’s risk management approaches</p>

Information Governance Lead and Data Protection Officer	The Information Governance Lead and Data Protection Officer ensures that Achieving for Children has adopted good information governance policies and procedures and complies with data protection laws.
Information Asset Owners	Information Asset Owners are responsible for the information in their service systems to ensure ownership, access, usage and transfer to ensure business is transacted with an acceptable level of risk.
Line Managers	<p>Line managers must ensure their staff comply with all Achieving for Children Information Governance policies and refer breaches to the relevant Associate Director OPA1 and Business Services and senior manager in OPA2. All managers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensure that clearly documented systems and processes are in place for the collection, recording and analysis of data. ● ensure arrangements are in place to quality assure data and carry out audits on a regular basis. ● ensure staff have the necessary skills and knowledge required to capture, process and deliver high quality data ● never knowingly use inaccurate or incomplete data for reporting purposes, and highlight any known risks or issues to the Information Asset Owner.
All staff	<p>All staff must ensure compliance with relevant process documentation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read, understand and follow this policy and associated procedures that relate to the capture, use and management of Achieving for Children data. ● Handle Achieving for Children data in a way which is responsible and make every effort to ensure its accuracy, validity, reliability, timeliness, relevance and verifiability ● Communicate any risks or concerns to line managers concerning the capture or use of data