

## **Information Management Strategy Support Materials for Schools**

### **The Common Transfer System**

When children transfer from one school to another, it is important that the 'new' school has, and is able to act on, information about them.

The Common Transfer System (CTS) provides a system for the secure, electronic transfer of pupil information when pupils move school. Schools (or LEAs in specific circumstances) can create an electronic file known as a CTF (Common Transfer File) of pupil personal and assessment information from the school's management information system (MIS). Files can then be sent to the pupil's next school for direct import to their MIS.

The 'system' comprises two main parts; firstly, the school MIS that holds pupil data and can generate common transfer files for exchange. Secondly, a secure web based transfer site (s2s) where electronic data files can be safely exchanged between schools, LEAs and central administration bodies. Files are interchangeable between schools even if they use MIS software supplied by different companies.

### **What are the statutory requirements in relation to the Common Transfer System?**

The Education (Pupil Information) (Wales) Regulations 2004 as amended in 2007 specify:

- Head teachers must pass on specific pupil information in electronic format when a pupil changes school using a Common Transfer System (CTS) within 15 days after the pupil ceases to be registered there.
- If a pupil leaves a school and after reasonable effort, a head teacher has been unable to ascertain the location of the pupil's destination school or knows the pupil is moving out of the maintained sector, the head teacher must transfer the pupil's CTF to a secure internet website provided for that purpose. In this instance it is the Lost Pupil area of the secure school to school website known as s2s.
- If a head teacher from a pupil's old school receives a request from the head teacher of a pupil's new school for common transfer information or any educational record relating to that pupil, they must provide the information as soon as possible after the date on which the head teacher of the old school first learned of the pupil's registration at the new school and in any event no later than 15 school days of receiving the request.

- If a pupil arrives at a new school without his/her common transfer information or details of his/her old school the head teacher of the new school must contact the LEA which maintains the new school to request a search of the Lost Pupil area of the s2s website.

Information that **must** be provided in electronic format:

### **School details**

- sending school LEA and establishment number
- sending school establishment number
- receiving school's LEA number
- receiving school's establishment number
- pupil school history (if available)

### **Pupil details**

- UPN
- surname
- first name
- date of birth
- gender
- ethnic code
- source of ethnic code
- national identity
- Welsh language ability
- SEN provision
- free school meal eligibility
- in care indicator
- the address where the pupil normally resides
- the surname of at least one contact person and details of their relationship to the pupil
- an indicator where medical information exists that may be relevant to the pupil's new school

**Attendance data – for the current or most recent academic year (include attendance history if available)**

- School year
- number of sessions possible (half days)
- number of sessions attended
- number of authorised absences
- number of unauthorised absences

## Key Stage 1, 2, 3

- Most recent teacher assessment levels

### **The Common Transfer System some Do's and Don'ts**

#### **Children arriving from Scotland, Northern Ireland or abroad**

If a child arrives from Scotland, Northern or the Republic of Ireland or abroad, a new UPN will need to be created for them. If they have previously been educated in a maintained school in England or Wales their old UPN should be reassigned to them. A new UPN should only be created if the school has been unsuccessful, after reasonable efforts, in locating the pupil's original CTF.

**N.B:** Schools in Scotland assign their own version of a UPN which can look similar to those in England and Wales, however, they are not compatible and will not pass validation in Wales.

#### **What to do if a child arrives from a non-maintained school**

If a child arrives from a school in the non-maintained sector a temporary or new UPN may need to be created for them. The new school should seek the common transfer information and educational record from the old school(s) If the pupil has previously been educated in a maintained school in England or Wales their old UPN should be reassigned to them and the temporary UPN removed. A new UPN should only be created if the school has been unsuccessful, after reasonable efforts, in locating the pupil's original CTF.

Maintained schools should make reasonable and collaborative arrangements to obtain a pupil's educational record when they arrive from a non-maintained school.

#### **What to do if a child arrives at a new school without a CTF and their old school is known**

If a pupil arrives at a new school without a CTF but the details of the old school are available, the new school needs to contact the old school and request they send the old pupil's CTF.

### **What to do if a child arrives at a new school but their CTF has been sent to another school**

Should a child arrive at a new school without a CTF and it is established that the CTF has been sent to another school, the sending school, not the receiving school, needs to contact the incorrect school to redirect the CTF. The sending school must then resend the file to the receiving school.

### **What to do if a child arrives at a new school without a CTF and their old school is not known or has no record of them attending**

The head teacher should contact the LEA that maintains the school to request a search of the Lost Pupil area of the s2s website. Where no records can be identified, LEAs will wish to consider whether the lack of data may be a potential indicator of a family in need or at risk.

In view of the potential safeguarding issues that may lie behind such cases, LEAs are strongly encouraged to process similar requests from schools in the independent sector, where those schools have made reasonable, but unsuccessful, enquiries.

Further guidance on the Common Transfer System can be found in chapter 4 of the Welsh Assembly Government circular 18/2006 on *Educational Records, School Reports and the Common transfer System – the keeping, disposal, disclosure and transfer of pupil information*.

### **Children missing education and the Lost Pupil Database**

The 'Lost Pupil Database' is a searchable area of the s2s website containing Common Transfer Files (CTF) of pupils where the destination (or next) school of the pupil is not known to the school the pupil is leaving.

The purpose is;

to enable LEAs to identify pupils whose destination on leaving a school which they maintain is unknown, and to provide a facility whereby a local authority, on being requested by a school which has just enrolled a new pupil, but cannot identify the previous school to request a CTF, can search for a CTF which may have been 'posted' there by the previous school.

The site currently only allows LEAs to undertake searches for a pupil's CTF. If a school requires a search to be undertaken they should contact their authority's named Lost Pupil contact.

### **Pupil's moving out of the maintained sector**

Should a pupil leave school and is confirmed to be educated other than at school, moved to a non maintained school or to a destination incapable of receiving a CTF, the school should remove the pupil's name from the school roll and send the CTF to the Lost Pupil section of the s2s website. The school

needs to create a CTF with just that pupil in it and identifies the destination school as non maintained (using MMM as the LEA number and MMMM as the school establishment number). The CTF will then be stored in the database of pupils who have moved outside the maintained system.

Further guidance on the use of the Lost Pupil Database can be found in chapter 5 of the Welsh Assembly Government circular 18/2006 on *Educational Records, School Reports and the Common transfer System – the keeping, disposal, disclosure and transfer of pupil information*.

### **Lost Pupil and generic file transfers on the S2S website**

S2S is a secure data transfer website available to schools and LEAs in Wales and England. It was designed and is managed by the DCSF (formally DfES) to enable Common Transfer Files to be sent from, and to, any maintained school.

A generic file transfer facility also enables s2s users to exchange files of any safe type securely by following a file name convention. For schools there is a file size limit of **4Mb**. For LEAs the limit is **10Mb**. Files approaching that size can cause performance to degrade significantly. If possible, please split large files into sub-files (for example two or three zip files rather than one very large composite file) and send them, thus benefiting yourself and all users of the system.

Further guidance on s2s and its use can be found at:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/ims/datatransfers/s2s/>