



**BIRMINGHAM  
CHILDREN'S TRUST**

# **Birmingham Children's Trust ("the Trust") Data Quality Policy**

If you have any enquiries about this Policy, contact the Practice Hub.

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## 1. OVERVIEW AND PUBLICATION PARTICULARS

### Document History

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## Overview

Authority <sup>1</sup>	Birmingham Children's Trust – Head of Performance & Quality Assurance.
Owner <sup>2</sup>	Birmingham Children's Trust – Asst. Director, Practice Improvement & Development.
Scope <sup>3</sup>	All employees working within all business areas and using all processes of Birmingham Children's Trust. Data includes all data related to children's services, such as case management, health records, educational data, and service delivery metrics. Processes covers managing data from its creation to its disposal, including data collection, storage, usage, processing, extraction, access, redaction, sharing, deletion, and archiving.
Review period <sup>4</sup>	This document will be reviewed at least every three years or more often if justified by a change in circumstances.
Related Birmingham Children's documents	This document interfaces with the Trust's ICT Policy and Systems. It draws on British Policies, Legislation etc. that are related to this Policy here, describing how they relate. These would include preceding and following procedures/processes, any relevant Trust Policies, Codes of Practice, Guidelines or legislative documents

<sup>1</sup> AUTHORITY: The person or organisation who is responsible for enforcing this Policy

<sup>2</sup> OWNER: The organisational position of the person who has rights to authorise changes to, or disposal of, this Policy

<sup>3</sup> SCOPE: The organisations or persons to whom the Policy applies

<sup>4</sup> REVIEW PERIOD: How frequently the Policy should be reviewed

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy sets out the Trust's approach to data quality and the roles and responsibilities of staff, managers and partners in ensuring data quality standards are met. The policy is aligned with the relevant legislation, guidance and best practice, including:

- a. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- b. The Children Act 1989, and 2004.
- c. The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- d. Children and Families Act 2014
- e. The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- f. The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance
- g. The Local Government Transparency Code 2015
- h. The Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015
- i. The Caldicott Principles and the National Data Guardian's Data Security

## 3. DEFINITIONS

Data refers to the collection and analysis of information about children and families who were previously open to, have ever had contact with or are currently open to and in receipt of a service from the Trust.

Data includes all data related to children's services, such as case management records, health records, educational data, and service delivery metrics. The data collected by the Trust helps Trust employees to understand the needs of children, ensuring their safety, and improving the services provided to them

Data Processing covers managing data from its creation to its disposal, including data collection, storage, usage, processing, extraction, access, redaction, sharing, deletion, and archiving.

Data quality (DQ) refers to the accuracy, reliability, and usefulness of data for decision-making. It involves establishing clear and consistent definitions and standards for data collection, usage, and sharing, aligned with national and local requirements and guidance.

Data validation is the process of ensuring that data input meets predefined criteria and standards before it's processed, acting as a crucial checkpoint for accuracy.

Data quality framework aims to maintain a record of processing activity, documenting definitions, sources, formats, rules, and validations for key data items and indicators used by the Trust and its partners.

## **4. POLICY PARTICULARS**

Birmingham Children's Trust (the Trust) is committed to providing high-quality services to children, young people and families in Birmingham. The Trust recognises the importance of data quality as a key enabler for effective decision making, performance management, service improvement, safeguarding and partnership working. The Trust, through this data quality policy (DQ policy) aims to ensure that the data it collects, uses and shares is accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant, complete and secure.

The DQ policy is supported by a data quality framework (DQ Framework), which outlines the processes, procedures and tools for data collection, validation, analysis, reporting and improvement. The policy and the framework are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changing needs and requirements.

Data of sufficient quality is necessary for the successful delivery of the Trust's services including the protection of children and meeting the Trusts statutory requirements.

## **5. POLICY CONTENT**

### **I. Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Establish a clear and consistent understanding of data quality across the Trust and its partners
- b. Define the data quality principles and standards that the Trust adheres to
- c. Assign the roles and responsibilities for data quality management and improvement
- d. Provide guidance and support for staff and managers on data quality issues and good practice
- e. Promote a culture of data quality awareness and improvement within the Trust and its partners
- f. Ensure compliance with the relevant legal, regulatory, and ethical frameworks for data quality

## II. Scope:

This policy applies to all data and information that the Trust collects, uses, shares and stores, whether in electronic or paper format. This includes data and information relating to:

- a. Children, young people and families who receive or are eligible for services from the Trust
- b. Staff, volunteers and contractors who work for or with the Trust
- c. Performance, finance, governance, risk and audit of the Trust
- d. Partners and stakeholders who work with the Trust to deliver services or support its functions

This policy applies to all staff, managers, board members and partners who are involved in any aspect of data and information management within the Trust or on its behalf. This includes data and information creation, collection, input, processing, analysis, reporting, sharing, storage, retention, archiving, redaction, and disposal.

## III. Data Quality Principles and Standards

The Trust adheres to the following data quality principles and standards, which are based on the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's definition of data quality:

- a. **Accuracy:** Data should be sufficiently accurate for its intended purposes and captured once only, as close to the point of activity as possible. Sometimes, accuracy must be weighed against timeliness, cost and effort of collection. Where compromises are made on accuracy, limitations must be clear to users.
- b. **Validity:** Data should be recorded and used in compliance with relevant requirements for each service with rules and definitions, ensuring consistency across the Trust and with similar organisations. In the absence of actual data, consideration must be given to how well the available data is able to satisfy the intended purpose.
- c. **Reliability:** Data should reflect stable and consistent collection methods across the Trust and its partners, whether using manual or computer-based systems, or a combination. Data should be comparable and compatible over time and across different sources.
- d. **Timeliness:** Data should be available routinely and promptly enough, and as soon as is reasonable after the event or activity, for it to be of value to decision making and service delivery. Data should be reported and published in line with internal and external deadlines and expectations.

- e. **Relevance:** Data should be relevant to the purposes for which it is used. It should be defined, collected and analysed with its intended use and audience in mind. Data should be reviewed periodically to reflect changing needs and priorities.
- f. **Completeness:** Data requirements and collection processes should be clearly specified based on the needs of the Trust and its partners. Missing, incomplete or invalid records should be avoided or minimised, and where they occur, they should be monitored, reported and addressed.
- g. **Security:** Data should be stored securely and confidentially where appropriate, in line with the Trust's information security policies and procedures. Data should be accessed and used only by authorised staff and partners who have a legitimate need and purpose. Data should be protected from unauthorised or unlawful access, use, disclosure, alteration, loss or damage.

#### **IV. Data Quality Framework**

The Trust has developed a data quality framework, which outlines the processes, procedures and tools for data collection, validation, analysis, reporting and improvement.

#### **V. Review and Monitoring**

This policy and the data quality framework will be reviewed and updated at least every three years, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, guidance, best practice or organisational requirements. The review and update process will involve consultation with staff, managers, Trust Improvement board members and partners, and will take into account feedback, learning and good practice from data quality audits, reviews and improvement actions.

The Trust will monitor and report on its data quality performance and improvement on a regular basis, using the data quality performance measures and mechanisms outlined in the data quality framework. The data quality performance and improvement reports will be presented to the Trust Leadership Team, the Executive Directors, the Service Information Asset owners, the Data Protection Officer, the Caldicott Guardian, the Data Quality Manager, the Data Providers and the Data Users, as well as to relevant external authorities and stakeholders, as required.

The Trust will also seek external assurance and feedback from independent sources on its data quality, performance and



improvement, such as external auditors, regulators, inspectors, commissioners and partners, as appropriate.

## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trust has established clear roles and responsibilities for data quality management and improvement, as outlined below:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<b>The Trust Leadership Team (TLT)</b>	The TLT has overall responsibility for the quality of data and information within the Trust and for ensuring compliance with this policy and the relevant legal and regulatory frameworks. The Trust Leadership Team sets the strategic direction and priorities for data quality and monitors the Trust's performance and improvement against data quality standards and targets.
<b>The Chief Executive (CEX)</b>	The CEX has overall accountability for the strategic management of data quality and for ensuring that data quality is embedded in the Trust's culture, values and processes. The Chief Executive delegates the day-to-day management of data quality responsibility to the Trust Improvement Board comprising Directors, Assistant Directors, and Data Quality Manager.
<b>The Trust Improvement Board (TIB)</b>	The TIB has responsibility for ensuring that data quality is maintained and improved across the service areas and for ensuring that data quality issues are identified, reported and resolved. It also has responsibility for ensuring that staff and managers are aware of and comply with this policy and the data quality framework.
<b>The Data Protection Officer (DPO)</b>	The DPO has responsibility for advising on the Trust's compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, and for providing advice and guidance on data quality matters. The Data Protection Officer also has responsibility for liaising with the Information Commissioner's Office and other relevant authorities on data quality issues and breaches.

<b>The Caldicott Guardian</b>	The Caldicott Guardian has responsibility for ensuring that personal information about children, young people and families who use the Trust's services is used legally, ethically and appropriately, and that confidentiality is maintained. The Caldicott Guardian also has responsibility for approving and reviewing data sharing agreements and protocols with partners and stakeholders.
<b>The Data Quality Manager (DQM)</b>	The Data Quality Manager - DQM (Head of Performance and Quality Assurance) has responsibility for developing, implementing and reviewing the data quality framework, and for providing support and training to staff and managers on data quality issues and good practice. The Data Quality Manager also has responsibility for coordinating and reporting on data quality audits, reviews and improvement actions.
<b>The Service Information Asset Owners</b>	The Service Information Asset Owners (relevant Directors/ Assistant Directors/ Heads of Services) have responsibility for ensuring that data quality is managed and improved within their respective teams and functions, and for ensuring that data quality principles and standards are met. They also have responsibility for ensuring that data collection, validation, analysis and reporting processes are documented and followed, and that data quality issues are escalated and resolved.
<b>The Data Providers</b>	The Data Providers are the staff and partners who create, collect, input, process or update data and information within the Trust or on its behalf. They have responsibility for ensuring that the data they provide is accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant, complete and secure, and that they comply with this policy and the data quality framework.
<b>The Data Users</b>	The Data Users are the staff and partners who access, analyse, use or share data and information within the Trust or on its behalf. They have responsibility for ensuring that the data they use is fit for purpose, and that they comply with this policy and the data quality framework.

## **7. EXCEPTIONS**

None.

## **8. ENFORCEMENT**

Any individual member of staff who contravenes this Policy may be investigated under the Trust's disciplinary procedure and, where appropriate, legal action may be taken.

Other individuals within the scope of this Policy may be investigated and, where appropriate, legal action may be taken against them, or withdrawal of privileges.

Third parties or partner organisations who contravene this Policy may jeopardise their relationship with Birmingham Children's Trust and may also face legal action.