Top Tips for Handling Subject Access Requests (SARs) in Schools

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Understand What a SAR is

A Subject Access Request (SAR) allows individuals to request access to their personal data. This applies to staff, parents, and even students.

Recognise a Request

SARs don't need to be in a specific format - it could be made verbally, in writing or even through social media, and the request does not have to identify itself as a "subject access request".

Acknowledge and Log the Request
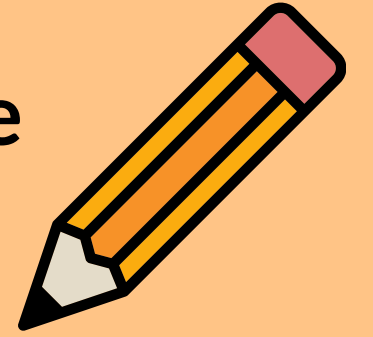
Always acknowledge the request promptly and log the date to track the deadline. You have **one month** to respond.

Verify Identity (if needed)

If you're unsure about the requester's identity, ask for proof before sharing sensitive data.

Review the Data Carefully

Check that the information is relevant and excludes third-party data or sensitive information.

Know When You Can Refuse

You can refuse or charge a fee *only* if a request is excessive or repetitive. Ensure reasons for refusal are documented.

Communicate Clearly

Provide the information in a clear, accessible format. Be ready to explain any complex data.

When in doubt, consult your Data Protection Officer (DPO) for guidance!