Important information for parents of all pupils attending Herefordshire Secondary Schools

To meet requirements imposed by the Data Protection Act 1998, Schools and Local Education Authorities have been instructed to issue a Fair Processing Notice to all parents. The purpose of this notice is to inform parents and pupils of their rights regarding information that is held about pupils, why it is held, and the third parties to whom it may be passed.

On behalf of schools, the Local Education Authority is required by the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to pass information about pupils to Connexions (for further information on Connexions please see heading 'Providing Information to Connexions' below). This Fair Processing Notice covers the provision of information to Connexions and the rights of parents or pupils to 'opt out' and restrict information passed on to name and address only.

Fair Processing Notice - Data Protection Act

Schools, Local Education Authorities and the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) (the government department which deals with education) all hold information on pupils in order to run the education system, and in doing so have to follow the Data Protection Act 1998. This means, among other things, that the data held about pupils must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law. We are therefore writing to tell you about the types of data held, why that data is held, and to whom it may be passed on.

The **school** holds information on pupils in order to support their teaching and learning, to monitor and report on their progress, to provide appropriate pastoral care, and to assess how well the school as a whole is doing. This information includes contact details, National Curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

From time to time schools are required to pass on some of this data to the Local Education Authority (LEA), to another school to which the pupil is transferring, to the DCSF, and to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) which is responsible for the National Curriculum and associated assessment arrangements.

The **Local Education Authority** uses information about pupils to carry out specific functions for which it is responsible, such as the assessment of any special educational needs the pupil may have. It also uses the information to derive statistics to inform decisions on (for example) the funding of schools, and to assess the performance of schools and set targets for them. The statistics are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them.

The **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority** uses information about pupils to administer the National Curriculum tests and assessments for Key Stages 1 to 3. The results of these are passed on to the DCSF in order for it to compile statistics on trends and patterns in levels of achievement. The QCA uses the information to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Curriculum and the associated assessment arrangements, and to ensure that these are continually improved.

The **Department for Education and Skills** uses information about pupils for statistical purposes, to evaluate and develop education policy and to monitor the performance of the education service as a whole. The statistics (including those based on information provided by the QCA) are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. The DCSF will feed back to LEAs and schools information about their pupils where they are lacking this information because it was not passed on by a former school. On occasion information may be shared with other Government departments or agencies strictly for statistical or research purposes only.

Pupils, as data subjects, have certain rights under the Data Protection Act, including a general

right of access to personal data held on them, with parents exercising this right on their behalf if they are too young to do so themselves. If your child wishes to access their personal data, or you wish to do so on their behalf, then please contact the relevant organisation in writing: -

- the school;

- the LEA's Data Protection Officer at The Education and Conference Centre, PO Box 185, Blackfriars Street, Hereford, HR4 9ZR;

- the QCA's Data Protection Officer at QCA, 83 Piccadilly, LONDON, W1J 8QA;

- the DCSF's Data Protection Officer at DfES, Caxton House, Tothill Street, LONDON, SW1H 9NA.

Please note that all rights under the Data Protection Act to do with information about your child rest with them as soon as they are old enough to understand these rights. This will vary from one child to another and you will wish to consider the position for your child, but, as a broad guide, it is reckoned that most children will have a sufficient understanding by the age of 12. We would therefore encourage you to share this note with your child if they are aged 12 or over.

Separately from the Data Protection Act, DfES regulations provide a pupil's parent (regardless of the age of the pupil) with the right to view, or to have a copy of, their child's educational record at the school. If you wish to exercise this right you should write to the school.

Providing information to Connexions

The Connexions Service supports young people, helping them to achieve their potential and to realise benefits from education and employment. Connexions is the new name for the Careers Advice Service, providing an advice and guidance service in England for all 13 – 19 year olds. It's purpose is to enable young people to make an effective transition from school to work and adult life. Connexions aims to encourage more young people to remain in learning so that an increasing number have the qualifications they need for further education and work. It works by bringing together all of the services and support that young people need, whether provided by public, private or voluntary bodies. Connexions is available to all young people, but will also tailor its support to the particular needs of individual students. An advisor works within each school to provide information, advice and support in a classroom environment initially, and a leaflet will be issued to each pupil for them to share with parents at the appropriate time.

For pupils approaching or above age 13 the school is required to pass on information to the Connexions Service via the LEA. This information includes the name and address of the pupil and parent, and any further information relevant to the Connexions Service's role, which is to support young people, helping them to achieve their potential and to realise benefits from education and employment. However parents, or the pupil themselves if aged 16 or over, can ask that no information beyond name and address (for pupil and parent) be passed on to Connexions. If as a parent, or as a pupil aged 16 or over, you do not want Connexions to receive information beyond name and address, then please contact the school in writing as soon as possible.

It is very important that the Connexions Service receive the information about their clients which they need to do their job effectively – subject only to the opt out provision described in the Notice. This information may include the pupils gender, date of birth, ethnicity, special educational needs, school attended and Key Stage or examination results. It is this information that you may request to be withheld from Connexions, as the LEA and the DCSF are obliged to provide name and address details.

Since, for pupils aged 16 or over, the right to ask for information beyond name and address not to be passed to Connexions rests with the pupil rather than the parent, it is particularly important that you share this note with your child if they are of this age.

The LEA and DCSF may provide Connexions with information which they have about your child, but will not pass on any information they have received from us if you (or your child if aged 16 or over) have notified the school that Connexions should not receive information beyond name and address.