

Freedom of information policy

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
- Race Disparity Audit - Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website (Cabinet Office)

We are aware that the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) has entirely replaced the previous Data Protection Act (DPA) making changes to many existing data protection rules and regulations that schools, academies and other educational establishments adhered to under the DPA. The principal aim of the GDPR is to strengthen and unify the safety and security of all data held within an organisation.

We are aware that under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) we have a legal duty to supply certain information to enquirers and that we must be clear and proactive about the information we make public.

This policy explains how we do this and includes details regarding;

- The classes of information we publish or intend to publish
- The manner in which the information will be published
- How to request information
- Payment for information

We are committed to the aims of the FOIA and the access provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 by promoting an open transparent policy as we believe the public have a right to access the recorded information held by us.

We understand that recorded information held by us relates to the business of the School and includes information that is:

- created and held by us
- created by us but held by another organisation on our behalf
- held by us but relating to the Governor Body
- held by us but provided by third parties

We believe the FOIA will encourage greater openness and accountability in public authorities, help increase levels of public trust, encourage improvements in our interaction with the public and provide the public with information they require in order to participate in decision making.

We understand that the FOIA allows schools to withhold certain information which are listed under absolute exemption and qualified exemption.

We are 'under a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information and must respond to the enquiry promptly, and in any event, within 20 working days of receipt (not including school holidays)'.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that are connected with this policy.

Aims

- To provide certain information to enquirers under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- To recognise that we have a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher as 'Data Controller' for the school;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- ensure that this school has fully implemented the FOIA
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- provide guidance, support and training where necessary;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- handle all requests for information in compliance with the various acts;
- take advice from the Data Controller;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

Information made public

School Information

- The name, address, telephone number, email address and website
- The type of school
- The names of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors and contact details
- The Admissions policy
- The school's ethos and values
- SEND policy
- The number of pupils on roll
- Attendance figures
- Examination results
- Improvements to be made
- Analysis of results over the past three years
- Latest full Ofsted inspection report
- School policies

Governors' documents

- Governors Annual Report
- Instrument of Government
- Minutes of meetings of the governing body and its committees

Dealing with a Request for Information

The Headteacher will deal with written requests for information by:

- deciding if the request comes under one of the following Acts namely:
 - Data Protection Act
 - Environmental Information Regulations
 - Freedom of Information Act
- deciding whether the school holds the information
- providing the information if it has already been made public
- informing the enquirer if the school does not have that information
- deciding if information disclosed might affect the interests of a third party

- deciding if the estimated cost of complying with the request will exceed the appropriate limit (this will be set with reference to the “Information Commissioner’s Office”) https://ico.org.uk/media/1168/fees_cost_of_compliance_appropriate_limit.pdf
- ensuring that all personal information is excluded from a requested document
- consider if the request is annoying or repeated
- deal with a FOI request within 20 working days
- deal with a Data Protection request within 40 calendar days.

Reasons for not Complying with a Request

We accept the four reasons under the FOIA for not complying with a request for information:

- that the requested information is not held
- the cost threshold is reached
- the request is considered annoying or repeated
- that one or more of the exemptions apply

Complaints

All complaints will be dealt with by the school’s complaints procedure.

Information Availability

Documents can be downloaded from the school website or by contacting the school by letter or email.

Payment for Information

Information published on the website is free. A charge may be made for other information not available on the website.

Reporting Requests

All requests for information will be reported to the governors by the Headteacher.

Feedback and Complaints

We actively encourage the views and suggestions from parents and the general public about how we can improve this publication scheme. All complaints should be addressed to the Information Commissioner’s Office which ensures that all organisations comply with Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the school website

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed every three years or when the need arises by the Headteacher and the governing body.

Date approved by governors	March 2022
Date for review	March 2025