



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Introduction

The freedom of Information Act came into force fully on 1st January 2005/ The Act gives any person the right to ask a school for access to information which it holds. The aim of this policy is to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public sector or bodies.

The Act enables people to access information which does not fall either under the Data Protection Act or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

This scheme has been based on the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) model publication scheme (version 1.2) which commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information that is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of fees charges for access to information that is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.

Classes of Information

1. Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts

2. What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit

3. What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews

4. How we make decisions

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, Consultations

5. Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities

6. Lists and Registers

Information held in registered required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority

7. services we offer

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered

Classes of information not generally included are:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure
- Information in draft form
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

As an authority, Future Schools Trust has to clearly indicate to the public what information is covered by its scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information has to be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website, or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, it is required to indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be made available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, please contact the author of this document on the details above. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where it is legally required we are required to have the information translated. Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats must be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament. Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

A summary of costs can be found at the end of this policy.

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public. Charges made by the Trust for printing published material are listed at the end of the document and have been kept to a minimum in line with legislation.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, where they apply, or with regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act, or with other statutory powers of the public authority.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written Requests

Information held by an academy that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing from the Headteacher of the individual school, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Making a Freedom of Information Access Request (FOIA)

Freedom of Information Access Requests should be made in writing either by letter or by email to the details at the beginning of this policy with a name and contact postal or email address giving a clear indication of what information is sought.

An acknowledgement email will be sent within two working days confirming whether or not the information can be disclosed and whether or not a fee will be charged. In some cases, a FOIA may be refused for the following reasons:

- It would cost too much or take too much staff time to deal with the request
- The information is not held
- The request is vexatious
- The request repeats a previous request from the same person

Freedom of Information Policy

A twenty working day response time will operate either from the day the FOIA was received if no fees are incurred, or from the date of which payment is received if a fee is due. Please note that the twenty working day response time does not include school closure periods.

Should the information requested already be available or held by another body, the school may refuse your request but will direct the enquirer to the appropriate source. The Headteacher will have the day to day responsibility for deciding whether a request is in line with the Freedom of Information Act and will delegate the collation of information appropriately.

Where information requested contains personal details of a third party, these will be removed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 before a reply is sent.

Exemptions

Future Schools Trust will consistently encourage the release of recorded information to the public. Sometimes it is not appropriate or practicable for recorded information to be disclosed and there are 23 exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act which may apply preventing information from being disclosed.

Complaints

If you are not satisfied with the response that you receive with regards to a FOIA request, a complaint should be made in writing to the governing body. The governing body will respond within ten working days to your complaint. If you are still not satisfied with the response, or the complaint remains unresolved, there is a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner via the Information Commissioners Office.

Future Schools Trust Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Schools within Future Schools Trust comply with the Department for Education Freedom of Information Act model publication scheme for schools by following the table below, which identifies the information which meets the requirements of the Information Commissioner.

Below is a guide to information available from each school within Future Schools Trust:

Class 1 – Who we are and what we do		
Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Multi Academy Trust Funding Agreement/Supplementary Funding Agreements	Trust website https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/documents	N/A
Trust Articles of Association	Trust website https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/documents	N/A
School prospectus and outline curriculum	School websites	N/A
Local Governing Body – names and contact details of the governors and the basis of their appointment	School websites	N/A
Trust Members and Directors – names and contact details	Trust website https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/governance	N/A
School session times and term dates	School websites	N/A
Trust contact details	Trust website https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/contact-us	N/A
School location and contact information – including names of key personnel	School websites	N/A

Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it		
Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit		
<i>Current and previous two financial years as a minimum (current and previous year for primary schools)</i>		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Trust financial statements	Trust website https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/documents	N/A
Trust budget forecast	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes
Summary of individual school budget plan and financial statement	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Details of items of expenditure over £5000 (£2000 for primary schools) – published at least annually but at a more frequent quarterly or six-monthly interval where practical	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Capital funding – details of capital funding allocated to or by the school along with information on related building projects and other capital projects	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Financial audit reports	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Procurement and contracts – Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services:	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Details of contracts that have gone through formal tendering processes	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Pay policy - a statement of the academy's policy on procedures regarding teacher's pay	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes
Staff allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed, with totals paid to individual senior staff members	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes
Staffing, pay and grading structure	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes
Governors' allowances that can be incurred or claimed, and a record of total payments made to individual governors	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews <i>Current information as minimum</i>		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
School profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data supplied to the English Government, or a direct link to the data • The latest Ofsted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary - Full report 	School websites	N/A
Performance management policy and procedures	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes
The school's future plans; for example, proposals for and any consultation on the future of the school, such as a change in status	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Safeguarding and child protection	School websites	N/A

Class 4 – How we make decisions Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, Consultations <i>Current and previous three years as a minimum</i>		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Admissions policy/decisions (not individual admission decisions) – including arrangements, procedures and right of appeal	School websites	N/A
Information on application numbers and number of successful applicants by each oversubscription category (if held by the school or include link to local authority)	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Agendas and minutes of meetings of the local governing body and (if held) its committees. (NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings).	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes
Agendas and minutes of meetings of the Trust Board and (if held) its committees. (NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings).	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes

Class 5 – Our policies and procedures		
Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities <i>Current information only</i>		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Records management and personal data policies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information security policies • Records retention, destruction and archive policies • Data protection (including information sharing policies) 	Trust website (Data Protection Policy) https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/documents	N/A
School policies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging and remissions policy • Health and Safety • Complaints procedure • Equality and diversity policy • Child Protection policy • Sex and Relationship Education Policy • Complaints Procedure • Special Educational Needs • Accessibility Plan • Behaviour Policy • Child Protection Policy 	School websites	N/A
Trust Policies including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary and Grievance Policy • Capability Policy • Staff Code of Conduct • Pay Policy • Recruitment Policy • Redundancy and Redeployment Policy 	Hard copy on request from Trust	Yes

Class 6 – Lists and Registers		
Information held in registered required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority <i>Current maintained lists and registers only (this does not include the attendance register)</i>		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Freedom of Information Disclosure logs	Inspection only by appointment with the Headteacher/hard copy on request	Yes
Asset register	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	Hard copy on request from school	Yes

Class 7 – Services we offer		
Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases.		
<i>Current information only</i>		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Extra-curricular activities	School websites	N/A
Out of school clubs	School websites	N/A
Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Hard copy on request from school	Yes
School publications, leaflets, books and newsletters	School website/Hard copy on request from school	Yes

Schedule of Charges

Type of Charge	Description	Basis of Charge
Disbursement Cost	Photocopying/printing at five pence per sheet (black and white)	Actual cost five pence
	Photocopying/printing at ten pence per sheet (colour)	Actual cost ten pence
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard second class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with relevant legislation

Contact Details

Trust Contact Details	School Contact Details
Future Schools Trust New Line Learning Academy Boughton Lane Maidstone Kent ME15 9QL	See school websites