



## Freedom of Information Policy

### 1. Rationale:

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. It gives people improved access rights to public organisation documents, aiming to promote openness in government.

### 2. Definitions:

Our 'Publication Scheme', summarised in the first section of the 'Aims and Objectives' below, lays out the information that we proactively make available to parents and the wider community. The detailed 'Publication Scheme' is included as Appendix B.

### 3. Aims and Objectives:

- To facilitate more effective public access to the process for requesting information.
- To communicate the information currently published or which we are intending to publish. As a brief summary, our 'Publication Scheme' includes:
  - The School Prospectus
  - Governors' documents, including 'The Instrument of Government' and the agreed minutes of the Governing Body and its Committees for the current and last full academic year.
  - Policies that relate to students, the curriculum or the school more generally.
- To explain the procedure for requesting information including
  - A timescale for a response.
  - Reasons why the school might not be able to give information.
  - Whether or not a charge might be incurred.
  - How to give feedback or to make a complaint.

### 4. Implementation:

Availability of information: We aim to provide as much information as possible via the school website. If you cannot find the information you require and it is covered by the 'Publication Scheme' we will make this available to you free of charge. Please contact the school informally.

Formal request under the FOIA: If the information you require is not covered by the 'Publication Scheme', please follow the guidance given in the model application template 'Appendix A'.

Timescale for a response: We will respond to your enquiry within 24 hours to acknowledge receipt of your request and to give a timescale for resolution. The statutory response time under the FOIA is 20 working days.



Reasons why information might not be given: There are a number of exemptions under the Act. In particular, we have a duty to protect the personal information of individuals. Under Section 40 of the FOIA we may refuse your request if our response would mean the disclosure of information which could identify individuals.

Charging: No charge will be made for electronic copies of information. Single copies of information covered by our 'Publication Scheme' will also be free of charge. Otherwise, if your request involves photocopying or printing there may be a small charge. The total cost would be advised prior to printing/ postage for agreement.

Feedback/Complaints: We would welcome any comments or suggestions that you may have about this policy and associated procedures. If you wish to comment or to make a complaint this should be addressed to the Principal by letter or by email [head@penketh.warrington.sch.uk](mailto:head@penketh.warrington.sch.uk) in line with the school's complaints procedure.

## **5. Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- Formal requests for information arising from this policy will be addressed/ forwarded to the Vice Principal (Climate for Learning) who will log the request and action taken.
- Details of FOIA requests will be provided to the Principal on a termly basis and to Governors annually.

## **6. Links:**

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the school's Data Protection Policy and 'Fair Processing' procedures.

## **7. Responsibilities:**

Vice Principal (Climate for Learning):

To log and action formal requests for information; to provide a summary termly for the Principal and annually to Governors.

Principal:

To monitor formal requests termly and to respond to complaints.

Governors:

To review the FOI policy and matters arising from it on an annual basis.

**8. Date of Approval by Governors:                      September 2015**

**9. Next Review Date:    September 2018**



## Appendix A: Formal Request for information under FOIA 2000

*This guidance is based on the Warrington Borough Council template.*

Please address requests for information by letter to the Vice Principal (Learning & Standards) or via email to [head@penketh.warrington.sch.uk](mailto:head@penketh.warrington.sch.uk)

To help us to respond to your request please give as much as possible of the following information:

- Title/ First name/ Last name
- Address and post code
- Telephone number(s)
- Email address
- Company name if request is being made on behalf of a company or organisation.
- Information required (please give as much detail as possible).

Our preferred method for responding to requests is by email, which means that we can get information to you quicker and is better for the environment. We may also need to contact you to find out more detail about your request.

However, if you would prefer telephone or postal contact please advise us of your preference. If you require information to be sent in, for example, large print or Braille please let us know.

If you are not satisfied with our response, please contact the Principal in line with our complaints policy. If the Principal is not able to resolve your complaint you may contact the Information Commissioner's Office. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of information Act 2000 and that deals with formal complaints. Their current contact details are:

First Contact Team,  
Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745

Email: [casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)



## Appendix B: Publication Scheme

The list below is not meant to be definitive. Our legal commitment is to the Information Commissioner's model publication scheme upon which this appendix is based. We are encouraged to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

### Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

- **Instrument of Government**

The Instrument of Government is the document which records the name and category of the school and the name and constitution of its governing body.

- **School prospectus**

The statutory contents of the school prospectus, as follows:

- Information about the implementation of the governing body's policy on pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- A description of the policies relating to disabled pupils, including facilities to improve access and the accessibility plan.

Once the prospectus has been published and made available to parents, access to it should be available to anyone.

- **Governing Body**

The names, and contact details of the governors and the basis on which they have been appointed.

- **School session times and term dates**

Details of school session times and dates of school terms and holidays.

- **Location and contact information**

The address, telephone number and website for the school together with the names of key personnel.

### What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

Financial information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

- **Annual budget plan and financial statements**

Details of the Individual Schools Budget distributed by the Local Authority and the school's annual income and expenditure returns.

- **Capital funding**

Details of the capital funding allocated to the school together with information on related building projects and other capital projects.

- **Additional Funding**

Income generation schemes and other sources of funding including any Specialist School funding.



- **Procurement and contracts**

Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services. Details of contracts that have gone through a formal tendering process.

- **Pay policy**

The statement of the school's policy and procedures regarding teachers' pay.

- **Staffing and grading structure**

- **Governors' allowances**

Details of allowances and expenses that can be claimed or incurred.

## **What our priorities are and how we are doing**

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

- **School profile**

*Please note that the Government has removed the requirement to complete the online template.*

- o Government-supplied performance data
- o Summary of latest Ofsted report\*
- o The required narrative sections covering areas such as successes during the year; areas of improvement; efforts to meet the individual needs of every child; pupil's health, safety and support; post-Ofsted action plan; and links with parents and the community

(\* the full Ofsted report is also available.)

- **Performance management information**

Performance management policy and procedures adopted by the governing body.

- **School's future plans**

Any major proposals for the future of the school involving, for example, consultation or a change in school status.

- **Every Child Matters / Child Protection**

The contribution of the school to the five Every Child Matters outcomes. The policies and procedures that are in place to ensure that functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in compliance with any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

## **How we make decisions**

Decision-making processes and records of decisions.

- **Admissions policy / decisions**

The school's admission arrangements and procedures, together with information about the right of appeal. Individual admission decisions would not be expected to be published, but information on application numbers/patterns of successful applicants (including criteria on which applications were successful) should be if this information is held by the school.

- **Minutes of meetings of the Governing body and its sub-committees**



Minutes, agendas and papers considered at such meetings should be published as soon as practicable, with the exception of information that is properly considered to be private to the meeting.

## **Our policies and procedures**

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

- **School policies**

This will include school policies and procedures together with other information related to the school such as charging and remissions policy, health and safety and risk assessment, complaints procedure, staff conduct policy, discipline and grievance policies, pay policy, staffing structure implementation plan. It will also include policies and procedures for handling information requests.

- **Pupil and Curriculum policies**

This will include such policies as home-school agreement, curriculum, sex education, special educational needs, accessibility, race equality, collective worship, careers education (Key Stage 4 pupils) and pupil discipline.

- **Records management and personal data policies**

This will include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies.

- **Equality and diversity**

Guidelines relating to equal opportunities.

- **Policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff**

If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available.

- **Charging regimes and policies**

Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published. They should clearly state what costs are to be recovered, the basis on which they are made, and how they are calculated.

## **Lists and registers**

- **Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments**

Statutory Instruments (for example Regulations), departmental circulars and administrative memoranda sent to the Head Teacher/Governing Body concerning the curriculum.

- **Disclosure logs**

The disclosure log indicates the information provided in response to requests.

- **Asset register**

Information from capital asset registers.

- **Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers**



## **The services we offer**

Information about the services the school provides including leaflets, guidance and newsletters.

This could include:

- **Extra-curricular activities/ Out of school clubs**
- **School publications**
- **Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees**
- **Leaflets, booklets and newsletters**