

Freedom of Information Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The trust is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) as a public authority, and as such, must comply with any requests for information in accordance with the principles laid out in the Act.
- 1.2 Futura Learning Partnership (the trust) publishes the ICO model Publication Scheme on the trust website in accordance with ICO rules.

2. What is a request under FOI?

- 2.1 Any request for any information from the trust is technically a request under the FOI, whether or not the individual making the request mentions the FOI. However, the ICO has stated that routine requests for information (such as a parent requesting a copy of a policy) can be dealt with outside of the provisions of the Act.
2. All requests should be referred in the first instance to the Chief Operating Officer, who may allocate another individual to deal with the request.
2. When considering a request under FOI, it must be taken into account that a release under FOI is treated as release to the general public, and so once it has been released to an individual, anyone can then access it. The trust cannot restrict access when releasing therefore, by marking the information “confidential” or “restricted”.

3. Time limit for compliance

- 3.1 The trust must respond as soon as possible, and in any event, within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the request. For an academy, a “working day” is one in which pupils are in attendance, subject to an absolute maximum of 60 calendar days to respond.
- 3.3 Where a request for information falls under the provisions of the Publication Scheme, all reasonable efforts will be made to release the information as soon as practically possible.

4. Procedure for dealing with a request

The trust’s detailed procedure for dealing with a request can be found in Appendix A

- 4.1 The first stage in responding is to determine whether or not the trust “holds” the information requested, and whether the information requested is included within the Publication Scheme. Where included in the Publication Scheme, the procedures at Appendix B should be followed. The academy will hold the information if it exists in computer or paper format. Some requests will require the trust to take information from different sources and manipulate it in some way. Where this would take minimal effort, the trust is considered to “hold” that information, but if the required manipulation would take a significant amount of time, the requestor should be

contacted to explain that the information is not held in the manner requested, and offered the opportunity to refine their request

4.2 The second stage is to decide whether the information can be released, or whether one of the exemptions set out in the Act applies to the information. Common exemptions that might apply include:

4.2.1 *Section 40 (1) – the request is for the applicant’s personal data. This must be dealt with under the subject access regime in the Data Protection Act (DPA)*

4.2.2 *Section 40 (2) – compliance with the request would involve releasing third party personal data, and this would be in breach of the DPA*

4.2.3 *Section 41 – information that has been sent to the trust (but not the trust’s own information) which is confidential;*

4.2.4 *Section 21 – information that is already publicly available, even if payment of a fee is required to access that information;*

4.2.5 *Section 22 – information that the trust intends to publish at a future date;*

4.2.6 *Section 43 – information that would prejudice the commercial interests of the trust and/or a third party;*

4.2.7 *Section 38 – information that could prejudice the physical health, mental health or safety of an individual (this may apply particularly to safeguarding information);*

4.2.8 *Section 31 – information which may prejudice the effective detection and prevention of crime;*

4.2.9 *Section 36 – information which, in the opinion of the Chair of Trustees of the trust, would prejudice the effective conduct of the academy. There is a special form for this on the ICO’s website to assist with the obtaining of the chair’s opinion.*

4.3 The sections mentioned in italics are qualified exemptions. This means that even if the exemption applies to the information, you also have to carry out a public interest weighting exercise, balancing the public interest in the information being released, as against the public interest in withholding the information.

5. Responding to a request

5.1 When responding to a request where the trust has withheld some or all of the information, the trust must explain why the information has been withheld, quoting the appropriate section number and explaining how the information requested fits within that exemption. If the public interest test has been applied, this also needs to be explained.

5.2 The letter should end by explaining to the requestor how they can complain. The trust complaints policy is that such complaints should be addressed to the CE.

6. Charges

For items not routinely available the trust will usually make a charge. This will be calculated taking into account direct labour costs based on the time spent in researching and collecting the information. The trust will also charge for photocopies or scanned documents and/or the direct cost of putting the information into other requested formats, plus postage if applicable. Where a charge is to be made, requestors will be advised accordingly, and the information supplied once the corresponding fee has been paid.

Schedule of Charges (Outside the Publication Scheme)

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/printing @ 5p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying/printing @ 10p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail
Statutory Fees		In accordance with the relevant legislation
Staff costs	Full cost of time involved to prepare (search, locate, retrieve, extract) information where this exceeds 18 hours across all related requests within a 60 day period	Flat charge- - £25 per hour

Appendix A

Internal procedure

The person responsible for responding to FOI requests is the Chief Operating Officer. Enquiries can be sent by email to FOI-requests@futuralearning.co.uk. Emails will be automatically forwarded to the Chief Operating Officer and the EA to the Chief Operating Officer. Alternatively, a request can be sent by post to the Chief Operating Officer. Details of the email and postal addresses are published on the trust website. If the Chief Operating Officer is absent and unlikely to be able to respond to the request in the time permitted, the request will be forwarded to the CE to deal with.

The trust FOI response process:

- every request received is logged by the Chief Operating Officer and the Executive Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer, both will also set an Outlook reminder for 2 working days prior to the response deadline, which is currently 20 working days (a working day for a school is one on which pupils attend)
- the Chief Operating Officer will decide if the request is valid, consulting the trust's solicitor if necessary
- the Chief Operating Officer will decide if the request falls within the remit of the Publication Scheme
- where a request is within the remit of the Publication Scheme, the procedures at Appendix B will be followed the Chief Operating Officer will immediately acknowledge the request and notify the requestor if charges apply
- the Chief Operating Officer will formulate the response within the time limit - further advice on the response will be sought from the solicitor if necessary
- the response will usually be sent by PDF or hard copy only and will include details of the trust's appeals process, which is in writing within 10 working days to the CE
- the Chief Operating Officer will copy the response to the Executive Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer and both will file the request and response
- the Executive Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer will notify the Chief Operating Officer should a response not have been sent 2 working days prior to the deadline.

All FOI requests and responses outside of the Publication Scheme will be reported to the Audit & Risk Committee at its final meeting of each academic year.

Appendix B

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Introduction

This document has been produced as a requirement of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and introduces a Model Publication Scheme in response to Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Model Publication Scheme provided by the ICO for schools and academies has been adopted by the trust with effect from May 2017.

The Model Publication Scheme provides a list of the information routinely published by academies which the ICO expects them to make available unless:

- They do not hold the information
- The information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute
- The information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible, or, it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

Guide to the Information Available from the trust under the Publication Scheme

The table below details the information routinely published. Next to each category of information is indicated the manner in which the information described will be available.

Charging information is also included. In certain circumstances the trust may waive the fee at its absolute discretion.

Confirmation of any payment due will be given prior to the information being provided. Payment will generally be requested prior to the provision of the requested information which will be provided to the requestor as soon as practically possible

Written Requests

Information held by the trust that is not listed in the publication scheme can be requested in writing and will be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Please mark all such requests clearly with the words Freedom of Information Request.

Please email requests to FOI-requests@futuralearning.co.uk or send in writing to:

Chief Operating Officer / FOI Requests

Futura Learning Partnership

Chandag Road

Keynsham

BS31 1PH

Appeals can be made in writing to the CE at the same address.

The trust's website address is www.futuralearning.co.uk

Guide to the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme (ICO Model)

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained
<p>Class 1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This will be current information only</p>	
Who's who in the trust	Trust website
Who's who on the Board of Trustees and the basis of their appointment	Trust website
Articles of Association	Trust website
Contact details, including address, telephone number, email and website address, together with the names and positions of staff, and how they may be contacted	Trust website Individual school websites
School prospectus	Individual school websites
Annual Report	Trust website
Scheme of Delegation	Trust website
Gender Pay Gap reporting	Trust website
School session times and term dates	Individual school websites
<p>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Information available for current financial year, and two previous financial years)</p> <p>The trust annual report and accounts</p> <p>Finance Policy</p> <p>Staff Expenses Policy</p> <p>Governors' and Trustees' Expenses Policy</p> <p>Other financial information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Agreement • Annual Budget Plan and Financial Statements • Annual audited accounts 	<p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Hard copy or email Trust website</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure over £5,000 (published annually) • Capital Funding and Expenditure • Audit Reports • Procurement and Contracts Procedures • Staff Allowances and Expenses • Staff Pay by Band and Grading Structures • Trustees' and Governors' Allowances • Trade Union Facility Time Reporting • Pupil Premium Reports • Other Premium Reports (eg Recovery, Coronavirus, PE) 	<p>Hard copy or email</p> <p>Individual School websites</p>
<p>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</p> <p>(Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews-current information only)</p> <p>The trust annual report</p> <p>OFSTED reports</p> <p>School exam and assessment results</p> <p>Performance tables</p> <p>Vision, values and aims</p> <p>Performance Management (Appraisal) Policies</p>	<p>Trust website</p> <p>Individual school websites</p> <p>Trust and individual schools' websites</p> <p>Trust website</p>
<p>Schools' future plans</p> <p>Other major proposals/plans</p> <p>Data Protection Impact Assessments</p>	<p>Trust website/ Individual school websites</p> <p>Hard copy or email</p>
<p>Class 4 – How we make decisions (current year and previous 3 years)</p> <p>Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>Agendas, papers and approved minutes of Trust Board meetings and its committees, including Academy Governance Committees (excluding items deemed confidential)</p>	<p>Trust website</p> <p>Hard copy or email</p>
<p>Admissions policy/decisions (numbers admitted, application numbers, criteria on which admitted not individual admission decisions)</p> <p>Trustees' and Members' Business interests</p> <p>Trustees' Meeting Attendance</p> <p>Governors' Business Interests and Meeting Attendance</p>	<p>Individual school websites/hard copy or email</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Individual School websites</p>

Class 5 – Our policies and procedures	
<p>Trust policies (current only) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging and remissions policy • Health and Safety • Complaints procedure • Whistleblowing policy • HR policies, including Staff Recruitment Policies • Teachers’ Pay Policy • Current vacancies 	<p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Hard copy or email</p>
<p>School policies and documents including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-school agreement • Curriculum • Relationships and ex education • Special educational needs • SEND Information Report • Collective worship • Careers education policy and programme information (schools with secondary pupils only) • Pupil behaviour • Anti-bullying • Remote Education Provision 	<p>Individual school websites</p> <p>Trust website</p> <p>Individual school websites</p>
<p>Records management, access to information and personal data policies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Breach Policy • Records Management policies • Data Protection (including information sharing policies) • Privacy Notices • Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme • CCTV location information 	<p>Trust website</p> <p>Hard copy/email</p>
<p>Equality and Diversity, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and Diversity Policy • Equalities statement and objectives 	<p>Trust website</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Plans 	Individual school websites
<p>Child Protection and Safeguarding, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy • Online Safety Policy • Drugs Policy • Positive Handling 	Individual School websites Trust website
<p>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</p> <p>Currently maintained lists and registers only</p>	Some information may only be available by inspection
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Hard copy/email
Disclosure logs	Hard copy/email
Asset register	Hard copy/email
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers (THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER)	Hard copy/email
<p>Class 7 – The services we offer</p> <p>(Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)</p> <p>Current information only</p>	Some information may only be available by inspection
Extra-curricular activities	Individual school websites/Hard copy/Email
Out of school clubs	Individual school websites
School publications	Individual school websites
Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Trust website
Leaflets booklets and newsletters	Hard copy/Email/ Individual school websites

Schedule of Charges (Publication Scheme)

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/printing @ 5p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying/printing @ 10p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail
Statutory Fees		In accordance with the relevant legislation
Commercial Publications	Where the trust/school has collected/collated information for commercial purposes or the information has been made available under the trust's trading services	Charge as already defined for commercial/trading purposes