

Freedom of Information Policy

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1. Introduction

The Bright Futures Federation and each school within it are “public authorities” for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). The FOIA provides public access to information held by public authorities. The EIR provides public access to environmental information as defined in the Regulations. FOIA and EIR promote openness and transparency.

For the purposes of this policy, “the Federation” refers to the Bright Futures Federation and its constituent schools (St Giles CE Primary School, St Peter’s CE Primary School, and any future schools within the Federation). References to “the school” should be interpreted accordingly unless a school-specific responsibility is explicitly stated.

Information is provided in two ways:

1. It is mandatory to publish certain information (publication scheme); and
2. Any person is entitled to request information which subject to the application of any exemptions must be provided free of charge.

The Act does not give people access to their own personal data. Subject Access Requests are dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

2. Aim

This Policy will ensure:

- the school complies with its duties under the FOIA and EIR and handles requests under the correct regime;
- the school has a process in place which will result in proactive publication of what information is available;
- any person knows they can make a request and who to contact;
- all appropriate staff will be able to recognise and respond appropriately to a valid request for information; and
- that there is awareness amongst staff, contractors or others having contact with the School that the duties under FOIA and EIR may impact on the ability to guarantee confidentiality of information.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- all recorded information held by any school within the Federation or by a third-party provider operating on the Federation’s behalf.

Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The Federation Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with FOIA and EIR across all constituent schools.

The Executive Headteacher holds strategic oversight, while Heads of School retain day-to-day responsibility for FOI/EIR compliance at their respective sites. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) acts as the central point of contact for FOI/EIR enquiries.

All staff will be trained on recognising a request for information. A designated member of staff is responsible for handling requests for information. Requests should be made to: office@stgilesprimary.co.uk or office@st-peters.school.

Where a request covers information held by more than one school within the Federation, the DPO will coordinate the response to ensure statutory timescales are met and information is issued consistently.

Each school retains responsibility for providing its information promptly to support the coordinated response.

5. Publication Scheme

All schools within the Federation adopt and maintain the Model Publication Scheme as approved by the Information Commissioner, ensuring consistent publication across the Federation.

Where appropriate, publication will be coordinated centrally to ensure consistency, avoid duplication, and maintain compliance.

6. Request Handling

The School will ensure that:

- advice and assistance is provided to the requestor if required;
- responses will be provided promptly and within the statutory time limit of 20 School days. A 'School' day will be any day on which there is a session and the pupils are in attendance. In the alternative the school will respond within 60 working days if that is shorter;
- information will only be withheld in accordance with the exemptions specified by legislation. The reasons for applying the exemption will be provided to the requester;
- care will be taken to ensure that personal data is not unlawfully disclosed in response to a request for information made under FOIA/EIR;
- information provided to the School from third-parties may be the subject of a request for information. In considering whether exemptions apply, the school will seek to consult with the third party but the legal responsibility for deciding whether or not the information should be released rests with the school;
- any requests for internal reviews will be handled in accordance with the Bright Futures Federation Complaint Policy, ensuring a consistent approach across all schools. These will be responded to within 20 school days as recommended by the Information Commissioner; and
- if the school's original decision is upheld, then the school has a duty to inform the complainant of their right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Appeals should be made in writing to the Information Commissioner and addressed to:

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.