



**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

All schools in Connect Schools Academy Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Staff Responsible:	Head Teachers
Date of Review:	June 2018
Date of Next Review:	June 2020

## VERSION CONTROL

Date	Change
June 2018	Policy changed to Trust format.
	Changes made to incorporate content of Raglan Primary School Policy

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## **1. Introduction:**

One of the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in the rest of this document) is that public authorities, including schools, should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public and promote greater openness and accountability across the public sector. The FOIA establishes a general right to access information.

As a multi-academy Trust we must produce a publication scheme, setting out:

- the classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;
- the manner in which the information will be published; and
- whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.

This Publication Scheme (referred to as the “Scheme” in this document) conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

## **2. Right to request information**

There is a legal right for any person to make a request to an Academy for access to information held by that Academy. Academies are under a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. Enquirers do not have to say why they want the information and the request does not have to mention the FOIA.

The enquirer is entitled to be told whether the Academy holds the information (this is known as the duty to confirm or deny) and, if so, to have access to it. Access can include providing extracts of a document or a summary of the information sought, or access to the original document.

However, the FOIA recognises the need to preserve confidentiality of sensitive information in some circumstances and sets out a number of exemptions. Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example, personal data. The Scheme should be read in conjunction with our Data Protection Policy.

There are four reasons for not complying with a valid request for information under the FOIA:

1. the information is not held;
2. the cost is greater than the threshold of £450;
3. the request is considered vexatious or repeated; and/or
4. one or more of the exemptions apply.

## **3. Responsibilities**

The Governing Body is responsible for the maintenance and review of this Scheme and Policy. The Governing Body delegates to the Headteacher the day-to-day responsibility for FOIA Policy and the provision of advice, guidance, publicity and interpretation of the Policy.

The Headteacher will provide a single point of reference, coordinate FOIA and related policies and procedures, take a view on possibly sensitive areas, ensure all staff are aware of the Policy and consider what information and training staff may need. The Headteacher will ensure that a well-managed records management and information system exists in order to comply with requests. This will include keeping a record of refusals and reasons for refusals, to allow the Governing Body to review the Scheme and the Policy at a frequency of its discretion.

#### **4. How to request information**

We expect most relevant information can be found on the Trust's website:

<http://www.connectschoolsacademytrust.com/>

Some policies are specific to individual schools within the Trust, so can be found on each school's own website. These can however be reached through links on the Trust website:

<http://www.connectschoolsacademytrust.com/trust-policies>

If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the Scheme, please contact the Trust by email, fax or letter. Contact details are set out below.

Email: [info@csat.org.uk](mailto:info@csat.org.uk)

Contact Address: Connect Schools Academy Trust  
Towncourt Lane, BR5 1EH

You do not have to mention FOIA in your correspondence and we expect most information will be provided in a 'business as usual' manner.

If you would like to make a request under the FOIA, please:

- make the request in writing (this includes email or fax);
- state the enquirer's name and correspondence address (email addresses are allowed);
- describe the information requested - there must be enough information to be able to identify and locate the information; and
- clearly mark any correspondence: "PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST"

#### **5. Timeline for reply**

We will do our utmost to reply to any request promptly. In any case, we will meet the legally prescribed limit of 20 working days, excluding non-school days. Where the 20th day to respond to a request is during a non-school day, we will have up to 60 days to respond. The response time starts from the time the valid and fully specified request (as above) is received. Where we need to ask you for more information to enable us to answer, the 20 days start time begins when this further information has been received.

If a qualified exemption applies and we need more time to consider the public interest test, we will reply within the 20 days stating that an exemption applies and include an estimate of the date by which a decision on the public interest test will be made. For further details on the public interest test, exemptions and refusal of requests, see references in section 10.

Where we have notified you that a charge is to be made, the time period stops until payment is received and then continues again once payment has been received.

#### **6. Information**

Please see Appendix A for a guide to the information available under the Scheme

## **7. Paying for information**

Information published on our website is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet service provider. If you don't have Internet access, you can access our website using a local library or using public facilities.

We aim to respond to FOIA requests free of charge. However, if your request means that we have to incur significant costs, e.g. a significant amount of photocopying, printing, paying a large postage charge, or a request for a priced item such as some printed publications or DVDs, we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request. Information will be charged at the actual cost of providing it (e.g. the cost of photocopying, plus time of employee photocopying information, plus postage and any other actual costs incurred as a result of providing the requested information). If we need to charge for providing the information, we will require payment before we can provide the information.

See Appendices for further information.

## **8. Feedback and Complaints**

We welcome any comments or suggestions anybody may have about the Scheme. To make any comments about this Scheme and Policy, or to make a complaint, please write to the address set out in Section 4 for the attention of The Chair of Trustees.

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made then this should be addressed to 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. The complaint should be made in writing to:

The Case Reception Unit, Customer Service Team, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF.

## **9. Review of this Policy**

This Scheme and Policy as well as its application will be reviewed every two years by the Governing Body.

## **10. Further information sources**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/freedom-of-information-guide-for-academies>

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/education/>

## Appendix A

The Connect Schools Academy Trust has adopted the Information Commissioner’s Model Publication Scheme in its entirety and have produced a guide to information which sets out the information we hold, where it can be obtained and whether a fee is payable.

### Guide to Information available from The Connect Schools Academy Trust under the model publication scheme.

Information to be Published	How the Information Can be Obtained?
<b>Class 1 – Who we are and what we do? (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</b>	
Who’s who in the schools	Website
Who’s who on the Governing Body	Website
Instrument of governance	By request
Contact details for the Head Teachers and Governing Body	Website
Staff structure	Website
School sessions and term dates	Website

<b>Class 2 – What we Spend and how we spend it? (Financial information related to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)</b>	
Annual Budget	Hard copy on request
Capital Expenditure	Hard copy on request
Additional Funding	Hard copy on request
Procurement and Projects	Hard copy on request
Pay Policy	Hard copy on request
Governor Allowance policy	Hard copy on request

<b>Class 3 – What are our priorities are and how we are doing? (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)</b>	
School profile	Website
Performance Management Policy	Hard copy on request

<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions? (Decision making process and records of decisions)</b>	
Admissions Policy	Website
Non-confidential minutes of the Governing Body	Hard copy on request

<b>Class 5 – Our Policies and Procedures. (Current written policies for delivering our service and responsibilities) School Policies, Including:</b>	
Charging and Remissions Health and Safety Complaints Procedures Data Protection Accessibility Adverse Weather E-Safety Staff conduct Discipline and grievance FOI Business Continuity	Website or hard copy on request.
Pupil and Curriculum Policies, Including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Bullying</li> <li>• Behaviour</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• SEND</li> <li>• Attendance &amp; Punctuality</li> <li>• Sex Education</li> <li>• Medical Conditions</li> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Uniform</li> <li>• Home school Agreement</li> </ul>	Website
Records Management and Personal Data Policies, Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection</li> <li>• FOI</li> <li>• E-Safety</li> </ul>	Website
Charging & Remissions Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging &amp; Remissions</li> </ul>	Website

<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers. (Currently maintained lists and registers only</b>	
Asset register	Hard copy on request
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers (THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER)	Hard copy on request

<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b>	
Extra-curricular activities	Website
Out of school clubs	website

### Schedule of Charges

The first step is to determine if the threshold (currently £450) would be exceeded. Staff costs will be calculated at £25 per hour. We will take account of the costs of determining if the information is held, locating and retrieving the information, and extracting the information from other documents. We cannot take into account the costs involved in determining whether information is exempt.

If a request would cost less than the appropriate limit, (currently £450) schools can only charge for the cost of informing the applicant whether the information is held, and communicating the information to the applicant (e.g. photocopying, printing and postage costs).

If a request would cost more than the appropriate limit, (£450) the school can turn the request down, answer and charge a fee, or answer and waive the fee applicable to inform the applicant if the information is held.

Type of Charge	Description	Basis of Charge
Disbursement	Photocopying/printing @ 5p per sheet (black & white	Cost
	Photocopying/printing @ 10p per sheet (colour)	Cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal mail standard 2nd class delivery
Statutory Fee		In accordance with legislation and as above