



# **Freedom of Information Act Request Procedures**

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**Newbury Academy Trust**

September 2017

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 "Academy", "Academy Trust" all refer to Newbury Academy Trust, Love Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2DU. School refers to one of the three schools within the Newbury Academy Trust, Trinity School, Love Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2DU; Fir Tree School, Fir Tree Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2RA; Speenhamland School, Pelican Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 1NU.
- 1.2 The term Governor refers to both Full Governing Body Trustees and Local Governing Body Governors.

## 2. Aims

- 2.1 One of the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is that public authorities should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public. This means that public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities. As part of this, the Academy has produced a publication guide (Appendix 1), setting out:

- The classes of information which we publish;
- The manner in which the information will be published;
- Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example some personal information (see exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act).

- 2.2 This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

## 3. Categories of Information Published

- 3.1 The publication scheme guides you to information which we currently publish (or have recently published) or which we will publish in the future. This is split into categories of information known as 'classes'.
- 3.2 The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised into six broad topic areas:
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 about 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

Decision-making processes and records of decisions

5. Our Policies and Procedures

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

6. The services we offer

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

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

- 4.1 If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the scheme, please contact the Academy Trust by telephone, email, fax or letter. Alternatively, most documents are freely available for you to view, save, or print a copy from our websites as outlined in the publication scheme.
- 4.2 Contact details are set out in the publication scheme. To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence "PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST". If the information you are looking for is not available via the publication scheme, you can still contact the Academy Trust to ask if we have it. The Trust will respond to your request within 20 school days or 60 working days, whichever occurs first.
- 4.3 Personal information about others is usually exempt from disclosure under the Data Protection Act 1998.

#### **5. Paying for Information**

- 5.1 Information published on our website is free.
- 5.2 Charges for paper copies and postage are detailed in the 'Freedom of Information - Guide to information available from the Academy Trust under the model publication guide. (Appendix 1).

#### **6. Responding to Requests for Information**

- 6.1 The Executive Headteacher, or the Academy Trust Business Manager if assigned to do so, will review the request and respond accordingly. The Academy Trust will respond as follows:

- To confirm that the information requested is held and to disclose the information;
  - To inform the requestor that the information is not held and therefore cannot therefore be disclosed; confirm that the Academy Trust is unable to confirm or deny whether the information is held; or
  - confirm that information is held but explain that it is exempt from disclosure.
- 6.2 The relevant person will respond to the requestor within 20 school days or 60 working days of the request being made, whichever is the shorter period.
- 6.3 The response to the request in some circumstances may take longer than the timescales set out at 5.2 above, including in circumstances where additional clarification is requested from the requestor, or if extra time is required to consider the public interest.
- 6.4 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that requests should not be allowed to cause a drain on the Academy Trust's time, energy and finances to the extent that they negatively affect normal public functions. The Executive Headteacher can reserve the right to refuse a request if it is likely to be in excess of 18 hours to find, retrieve and extract the information requested. Under these circumstances an opportunity for the request to be refined will be provided.
- 6.5 Wilfully concealing, damaging or destroying information in order to avoid answering an enquiry is an offence.
- 6.6 The Academy Trust will only refuse a request if it is lawfully allowed to do so, for example if it is subject to an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 6.7 If the Academy Trust refuses to confirm or deny whether information is held, or refuses to provide information, then it will send the requester a refusal notice.

## **7. Internal Review Process**

- 7.1 If the requestor is unhappy with the outcome, he or she can request an internal review of the Academy Trust's decision. Any such Internal Review will be considered by the Trust's Appeals Committee.
- 7.2 The Trust's Appeals Committee will meet in a timely manner such that it can respond to the requestor within 20 school days of the request being made.
- 7.3 If the requestor wishes to appeal the refusal request they must address their appeal in writing to the Clerk to Governors c/o Trinity School, Love Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2DU.

- 7.4 If the requestor is still not satisfied with the outcome they can commence the complaints process to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The complaint should be submitted within three months of the outcome of the internal review to:

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

<b>Authorised by</b>	Resolution of the Board of Trustees
<b>Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
<b>Effective Date of the Policy</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
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