

WIGSTON ACADEMIES TRUST

MANAGEMENT POLICY

NUMBER TWENTY FIVE

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Policy

Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring that schools comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA).

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1. Introduction

Wigston Academies Trust is committed to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and to the principles of accountability and the general right of access to information, subject to legal exemptions. This policy outlines our response to the Act and a framework for managing requests.

2. Background

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoI) came fully into force on January 1 2005. Under the Act, any person has a legal right to ask for access to information held by the school. They are entitled to be told whether the school holds the information, and to receive a copy, subject to certain exemptions.

The information which the school routinely makes available to the public is included in the Publication Scheme. Requests for other information should be dealt with in accordance with the

statutory guidance. While the Act assumes openness, it recognises that certain information is sensitive. There are exemptions to protect this information.

The Act is fully retrospective, so that any past records which the school holds are covered by the Act. The DfE has issued a Retention Schedule (see school retention schedule) produced by the Records Management Society of Great Britain, to guide schools on how long they should keep school records. It is an offence to wilfully conceal, damage or destroy information in order to avoid responding to an enquiry, so it is important that no records that are the subject of an enquiry are amended or destroyed.

Requests under FoI can be addressed to anyone in the school; so all staff need to be aware of the process for dealing with requests. Requests must be made in writing, (including email), and should include the enquirers name and correspondence address, and state what information they require. They do not have to mention the Act, nor do they have to say why they want the information. There is a duty to respond to all requests, telling the enquirer whether or not the information is held, and supplying any information that is held, except where exemptions apply. There is no need to collect data in specific response to an FoI enquiry. There is a time limit of 20 days excluding school holidays for responding to the request.

3. Scope

The FoI Act joins the Data Protection Act and the Environmental Information Regulations as legislation under which anyone is entitled to request information from the school.

Requests for personal data are still covered by the Data Protection Act. (DPA). Individuals can request to see what information the school holds about them. This is known as a Subject Access Request, and must be dealt with accordingly.

Requests for information about anything relating to the environment – such as air, water, land, the natural world or the built environment and any factor or measure affecting these – are covered by the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). They also cover issues relating to Health and Safety. For example queries about chemicals used in the school or on school land, phone masts, car parks etc. would all be covered by the EIR. Requests under EIR are dealt with in the same way as those under FoIA, but unlike FoIA requests, they do not need to be written and can be verbal.

If any element of a request to the school includes personal or environmental information, these elements must be dealt with under DPA or EIR. Any other information is a request under FoIA, and must be dealt with accordingly.

4. Obligations and Duties

Wigston Academies Trust recognises its duty to

- provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. *We will respond to straightforward verbal requests for information, and will help enquirers to put more complex verbal requests into writing so that they can be handled under the Act.*
- tell enquirers whether or not we hold the information they are requesting (the duty to confirm or deny), and provide access to the information we hold in accordance with the procedures laid down in Appendix 1.

5. Publication Scheme

Wigston Academies Trust has adopted the Model Publication Scheme for Schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

The Publication Scheme and the materials it covers will be readily available from the school office.

6. Dealing with Requests

We will respond to all requests in accordance with the procedures laid down in Appendix 1.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures.

7. Exemptions and Registers

Certain information is subject to either absolute or qualified exemptions. The exemptions are listed in Appendix 2.

When we wish to apply a qualified exemption to a request, we will invoke the public interest test procedures to determine if public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

We will maintain a register of requests where we have refused to supply information, and the reasons for the refusal. The register will be retained for 5 years.

8. Public Interest Test

Unless it is in the public interest to withhold information, it has to be released. We will apply the Public Interest Test before any qualified exemptions are applied.

For information on applying the Public Interest Test see Appendix 3.

9. Charging

We reserve the right to refuse to supply information where the cost of doing so exceeds the statutory maximum, currently £450

10. Responsibilities

The Governing Body will delegate day to day responsibility for compliance to the Headteacher.

11. Complaints

Any comments or complaints will be dealt with through the school's normal complaints procedure.

We will aim to determine all complaints within 14 days of receipt. We will publish information on our success rate in meeting this target. The school will maintain records of all complaints and their outcome.

If on investigation 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's office. They can be contacted at:

FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow,

Cheshire SK9 5AF

Model Publication Scheme

This model publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. It may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

The publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- The scheme proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, the information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.

Classes of Information

Who are we and what we do

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

What our priorities are and how are we doing

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

How we make decisions

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

Lists and Registers

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

The services we offer

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges which may be made for Information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for the information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written requests

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

A M Green
June 2015

Appendix 1

Procedure for Dealing with Requests

Note: This Appendix is adapted from the DfES Guide for Maintained Schools on Full Implementation from January 2005, with the exception of paras 17 – 21 which have been changed to reflect amended guidance.

1. To handle a request for information the governing body or delegated person will need to ask themselves a series of questions. These are set out below and shown on pages 12 - 13 as process maps.

Is it a FOI request for information?

2. A request for information may be covered by one, or all, of three information rights:
 - Data Protection enquiries (or subject access requests) are ones where the enquirer asks to see what personal information the school holds about the enquirer. If the enquiry is a Data Protection request, follow your existing school DPA guidance.
 - Environmental Information Regulations enquiries are ones which relate to air, water, land, natural sites, built environment, flora and fauna, and health, and any decisions and activities affecting any of these. These could therefore include enquiries about recycling, phone masts, school playing fields, car parking etc. If the enquiry is about environmental information, follow the guidance on the IC's website [here](#) or the DEFRA website [here](#).
 - FOI enquiries are concerned with all other information and the reasoning behind decisions and policies. The request does not have to mention the FOI Act. All requests for information that are not data protection or environmental information requests are covered by the FOI Act.

Is this a valid FOI request for information?

3. An FOI request should:
 - be **in writing**, including 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 information¹; and
 - not be covered by one of the other pieces of legislation.
4. Verbal enquiries are not covered by the FOI Act. Such enquiries can be dealt with where the enquiry is relatively straightforward and can be dealt with satisfactorily. However, for more complex enquiries, and to avoid disputes over what was asked for, you should ask the enquirer to put the request in writing or email, when the request will become subject to FOI.

Does the school hold the information?

5. "Holding" information means information relating to the business of the school:
 - the school has **created**, or

¹ In cases where the enquiry is ambiguous assist the enquirer to describe more clearly the information requested. Where possible, establish direct contact. The aim is to clarify the nature of the information requested and not to determine the aims or motivation of the enquirer. If you notify the enquirer that you need further information to enable you to answer, you do not have to deal with the request until the further information is received. The response time limit starts from the date this is received.

- the school has **received from another** body or person, or
- **held by another** body **on the school's behalf**.

6. Information means both hard copy and digital information, including email.
7. If the school does not hold the information, you do not have to create or acquire it just to answer the enquiry, although a reasonable search should be made before denying that you have got information the school might be expected to hold.

Has the information requested already been made public?

8. If the information requested is already in the public domain, for instance through your Publication Scheme or on your website, direct the enquirer to the information and explain how to access it.

Is the request vexatious or manifestly unreasonable or repeated?

9. The Act states that there is no obligation to comply with vexatious requests. This is taken to mean a request which is designed to cause inconvenience, harassment or expense rather than to obtain information, and would require a substantial diversion of resources or would otherwise undermine the work of the school². This however does not provide an excuse for bad records management.

Can the school transfer a request to another body?

10. If the information is held by another public authority, such as your local authority, first check with them they hold it, then transfer the request to them. You must notify the enquirer that you do not hold the information and to whom you have transferred the request. You should answer any parts of the enquiry in respect of information your school does hold.

Could a third party's interests be affected by disclosure?

11. Consultation of third parties may be required if their interests could be affected by release of the information requested, and any such consultation may influence the decision. You do not need to consult where you are not going to disclose the information because you will be applying an exemption.
12. Consultation will be necessary where:
 - disclosure of information may affect the legal rights of a third party, such as the right to have certain information treated in confidence or rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights;
 - the views of the third party may assist you to determine if information is exempt from disclosure, or
 - the views of the third party may assist you to determine the public interest.

Does an exemption apply?

² It is not intended to include otherwise valid requests in which the applicant may make complaints or vent frustrations. In addition, you do not have to comply with repeated identical or substantially similar requests from the same applicant unless a "reasonable" interval has elapsed between requests.

13. The presumption of the legislation is that you will disclose information unless the Act provides a specific reason to withhold it. There are more than 20 exemptions. They are set out in Appendix 2 and are mainly intended to protect sensitive or confidential information.
14. Only where you have real concerns about disclosing the information should you look to see whether an exemption might apply. Even then, where the potential exemption is a qualified exemption, you need to consider the public interest test to identify if the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. Therefore, unless it is in the public interest to withhold the information, it has to be released. Appendix 3 contains guidance on conducting a public interest test.

What if the request is for personal information?

15. Personal information requested by the subject of that information is exempt under the FOI Act as such information is covered by the Data Protection Act. Individuals must, therefore, continue to make a 'subject access request' under the Data Protection Act if they wish to access such information.

What if the details contain personal information?

16. Personal information requested by third parties is also exempt under the FOI Act where release of that information would breach the Data Protection Act. If a request is made for a document (e.g. Governing Body minutes) which contains personal information whose release to a third party would breach the Data Protection Act, the document may be issued by blanking out the relevant personal information as set out in the redaction procedure. The procedure for redaction is here³.

How much can we charge?

17. The Act allows governing bodies to charge for providing information. For further information, see Appendix 4
18. The first step is to determine if the threshold (currently £450) would be exceeded. Staff costs should be calculated at £25 per hour. You can take account of the costs of determining if the information is held, locating and retrieving the information, and extracting the information from other documents. You cannot take into account the costs involved in determining whether information is exempt.
19. If a request would cost less than the appropriate limit, (currently £450) the school 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).

³ The procedure for redaction is:

i) mask the passages which are not to be disclosed and photocopy; (ii) annotate in the margin against each blank passage, the exemption and section of the Act under which this passage is exempt; iv) explain in the covering letter that the relevant exemptions are marked in the attachments and in the case of non-absolute exemptions, how the public interest test has been considered.

On no account must you use the computer to rewrite the document or email and simply delete the exempted passages so that the resulting document appears as though they did not exist. The one circumstance where this would be permissible would be where the only redacted parts are personal information such as people's names and the covering letter explains this.

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. If it decides to charge a fee, and does not have other powers to do so, it can charge on the basis of the costs outlined in Appendix 4.

20. Schools will however wish to consider whether calculating the cost of the fee outweighs the cost of providing the information. In practice we recommend that schools respond to straightforward enquiries free of charge and charge where the costs are significant.
21. If you are going to charge you must send the enquirer a fees notice and do not have to comply with the request until the fee has been paid. Appendix 4 gives more information on charging.

Is there a time limit for replying to the enquirer?

22. Compliance with a request must be prompt and certainly within the legally prescribed limit of 20 working days, excluding school holidays.⁴ Failure to comply could result in a complaint to the Information Commissioner. The response time starts from the time the request is received. Where you have asked the enquirer for more information to enable you to answer, the 20 days start time begins when this further information has been received.
23. If a qualified exemption applies and you need more time to consider the public interest test, you should reply within the 20 days stating that an exemption applies but include an estimate of the date by which a decision on the public interest test will be made. This should be within a “reasonable” time – in practice, it is recommended by the Department that normally this should be within 10 working days.
24. Where you have notified the enquirer that a charge is to be made, the time period stops until payment is received and then continues again once payment has been received.

What action is required to refuse a request?

25. If the information is not to be provided, the person dealing with the request must immediately contact the person in the school with delegated responsibility for FOI to ensure that the case has been properly considered and the reasons for refusal are sound. If it is decided to refuse a request, you need to send a refusals notice, which must contain
 - i) the fact that the responsible person cannot provide the information asked for;
 - ii) which exemption(s) you are claiming apply;
 - iii) why the exemption(s) apply to this enquiry (if it is not self-evident);
 - iv) reasons for refusal if based on cost of compliance (see Appendix 4)
 - v) in the case of non-absolute exemptions, how you have applied the public interest test, specifying the public interest factors taken into account before reaching the decision (see Appendix 3)
 - vi) reasons for refusal on vexatious or repeated grounds
 - vii) the internal complaints procedure.
26. For monitoring purposes and in case of an appeal against a decision not to release the information or an investigation by the Information Commissioner, the responsible person must keep a record of all enquiries where all or part of the requested information is withheld

⁴ An order to this effect is to be made under section 10(4) of the Act and should take effect from 1 January 2005

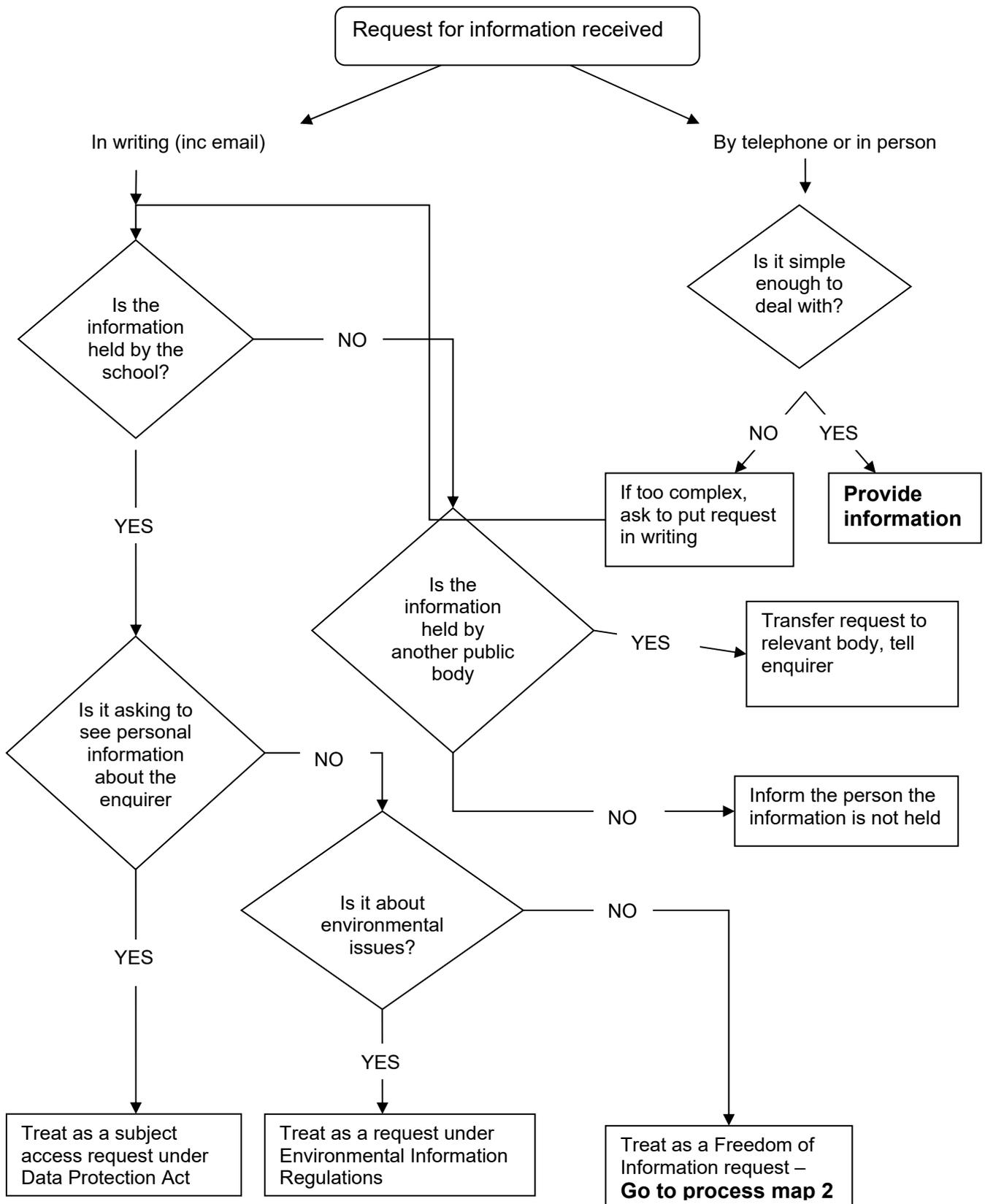
and exemptions are claimed. The record must include the reasons for the decision to withhold the information. Records should be retained for 5 years. There are no requirements to keep records where you have supplied the information requested.

What do I do if someone complains?

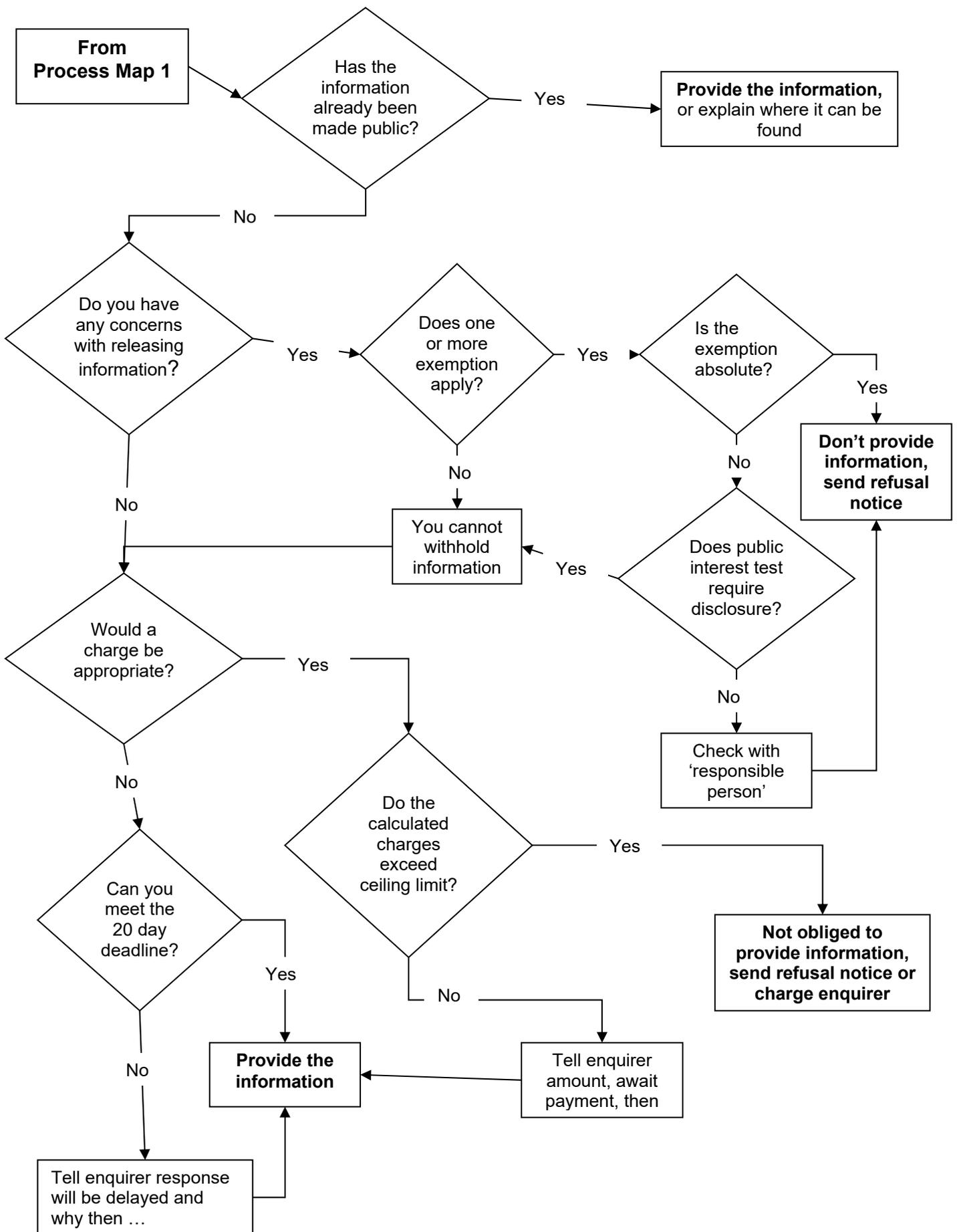
27. Any written (including email) expression of dissatisfaction - even if it does not specifically seek a review – should be handled through the school’s existing complaints procedure which should be fair and impartial. The procedure should be clear and non bureaucratic. Wherever practicable the review should be handled by someone not involved in the original decision. The Governing Body should set and publish a target time for determining complaints and information on the success rate in meeting the target. The school should maintain records of all complaints and their outcome.

28. When the original request has been reviewed and the outcome is that the information should be disclosed this should be done as soon as practicable. When the outcome is that procedures within the school have not been properly followed, the school should review procedures to prevent any recurrence. When the outcome upholds the school’s original decision or action, the applicant should be informed of their right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. The appeal should be made in writing to:
FOI Compliance Team (complaints)
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF

Process Map 1 for Dealing with Requests



Process Map 2 for Dealing with Requests



Appendix 2 Exemptions

Note: This Appendix is taken from the DfES Guide for Maintained Schools on Full Implementation from January 2005.

1. Although decisions on disclosure should be made on a presumption of openness, the FOI Act recognises the need to preserve confidentiality and protect sensitive material in some circumstances.
2. You cannot withhold information in response to a valid request UNLESS one of the following applies:-
 - an exemption to disclosure, or
 - the information sought is not held, or
 - the request is considered vexatious or repeated or
 - the cost of compliance exceeds the threshold (see Appendix 4)

The duty to confirm or deny

3. A person applying for information has the right to be told if the information requested is held by the school, and if that is the case to have the information sent (subject to any of the exemptions). This obligation is known as the school's "duty to confirm or deny" that it holds the information. However, the school does not have to confirm or deny if:-
 - the exemption is an absolute exemption (see paragraph 6), or
 - in the case of qualified exemptions (see paragraph 8), confirming or denying would itself disclose exempted information

Exemptions

4. A series of exemptions are set out in the Act which allow the withholding of information in relation to an enquiry. Some are very specialised in their application (such as national security) and would not usually be relevant to schools. There are more than 20 exemptions but schools are likely to use only a few of them.
5. There are two general categories of exemptions:-

Absolute: where there is no requirement to confirm or deny that the information is held, disclose the information or consider the public interest; and

Qualified: where, even if an exemption applies, there is a duty to consider the public interest in disclosing information

What are the Absolute Exemptions?

6. There are 8 absolute exemptions listed in the Act. Even where an absolute exemption applies:-

- it does not mean that you can't disclose in all cases; it means that disclosure is not required by the Act. A decision could be taken to ignore the exemption and release the information taking into account all the facts of the case
- there is still a legal obligation to provide reasonable advice and assistance to the enquirer

7. The absolute exemptions in the Act are set out below. **Those which might be relevant to schools are marked with an *:**

7.1 **Information accessible to the enquirer by other means*** (Section 21)

If information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by another route than the Act, it is exempt information. This is the case even if the enquirer would have to pay for the information under that alternative route. This exemption includes cases where you are required to give information under other legislation, or where the information is available via the Publication Scheme.

7.2 **Information dealing with security matters** (Section 23) (see also qualified exemption under Section 24 on national security)

This applies to information directly or indirectly supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters such as GCHQ, MI5, MI6, Special Forces and the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

7.3 **Court records** (Section 32) – (see also the qualified exemption under Section 30 concerning investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities)

This applies to information related to proceedings in a court or tribunal or served on a public authority for the purposes of proceedings.

7.4 **Parliamentary Privilege** (Section 34)

This exempts information if it is required for the purpose of avoiding an infringement of the Parliamentary privilege. Parliamentary privilege is an immunity whereby MPs cannot be prosecuted for sedition or sued for libel or slander over anything said during proceedings in the House.

7.5 **Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs** (Section 36) - see also the qualified exemption part of Section 36

This relates to the maintenance of the collective responsibility of Ministers.

7.6 **Personal information*** (Section 40) - see also the qualified exemption part of Section 40.

Where enquirers ask to see information about themselves, this is exempt under the Act because it is covered by the Data Protection Act. Consult your existing school Data Protection guidance.

7.7 **Information provided in confidence*** (Section 41)

This relates to information obtained from a person if its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that, or another, person.

7.8 **Prohibitions on disclosure*** (Section 44)

Information is exempt where its disclosure is prohibited under any other legislation by order of a court or where it would constitute a contempt of court or where it is incompatible with any EC obligation.

What are the Qualified Exemptions?

8. With qualified exemptions, even if it is decided that an exemption applies, there is a duty to consider the public interest in confirming or denying that the information exists and in disclosing information. Guidance on carrying out the public interest test is at Annex C. The qualified exemptions in the Act are set out below. **Those which might be relevant to schools are marked with an *:**
- 8.1 **Information intended for future publication*** (Section 22)
If at the time the request was made, information is held with a view to publication, then it is exempt from disclosure if it is reasonable that it should not be disclosed until the intended date of publication. This could apply for instance to statistics published at set intervals, for example annually or where information is incomplete and it would be inappropriate to publish prematurely⁵. Remember, you still have a legal duty to provide reasonable advice and assistance.
- 8.2 **National security** (Section 24) (see also absolute exemption 23)
Information is exempt for the purposes of safeguarding national security.
- 8.3 **Defence** (Section 26)
Information is exempt if its disclosure would prejudice the defence of the UK.
- 8.4 **International relations** (Section 27)
Information is exempt if its disclosure would or would be likely to, prejudice relations between the UK and any other state, international organisation.
- 8.5 **Relations within UK** (Section 28)
Information is exempt if its disclosure would or would be likely to, prejudice relations between any administration in the UK ie the Government, Scottish Administration, Northern Ireland Assembly, or National Assembly of Wales.
- 8.6 **The economy** (Section 29)
Information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the economic or financial interests of the UK
- 8.7 **Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities*** (Section 30)
Information is exempt if it has at any time been held by the school for the purposes of criminal investigations or proceedings, such as determining whether a person should be charged with an offence or whether a charged person is guilty, or investigations which may lead to a decision to institute criminal proceedings. The duty to confirm or deny does not apply to such information.
- 8.8 **Law enforcement*** (Section 31)
Information which is not exempt under Section 30 Investigations and Proceedings, may be

⁵ Note the following:-

- the intended publication does not have to be by the school, it can be by another person or body on behalf of the school
- the date of publication does not have to be known, it could be at some future date (although it is recommended that some idea of a likely date is given)
- the duty to confirm or deny does not apply if to do so would involve the disclosure of any of the relevant information

exempt under this exemption in the event that disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the following among others:-

- the prevention or detection of crime
- the apprehension or prosecution of offenders
- the administration of justice
- the exercise of functions such as ascertaining if a person has broken the law, is responsible for improper conduct, whether circumstances justify regulatory action, ascertaining a person's fitness or competence in relation to their profession, ascertaining the cause of an accident or protecting or recovering charities or its properties
- any civil proceedings brought by or on behalf of the school which arise out of an investigation carried out for any of the purposes mentioned above.

The duty to confirm or deny does not arise where prejudice would result to any of these matters.

8.9 Audit Functions (Section 33)

Information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the exercise of an authority's functions in relation to the audit of the accounts of other public authorities. It does not apply to internal audit reports.

8.10 Formulation of government policy (Section 35)

Information held is exempt information if it relates to the formulation or development of government policy, ministerial communications, advice by Law Officers (eg Attorney General) and the operation of any Ministerial private office

8.11 Prejudice to the conduct of public affairs (Section 36) (excluding matters covered by the absolute exemption part of Section 36)

Information likely to prejudice the maintenance of the convention of the collective responsibility of Ministers or likely to inhibit the free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views

8.12 Communications with the Queen* (Section 37)

Information is exempt if it relates to communications with the Queen, the Royal Family or Royal Household or if it relates to the award of honours. The duty to confirm or deny does not arise where this exemption applies.

8.13 Health and Safety* (Section 38)

Information is exempt if its disclosure would or would be likely to endanger the safety or physical or mental health of any individual. The duty to confirm or deny does not arise where prejudice would result.

8.14 Environmental information* (Section 39)

Information is exempt under FOI where it is covered by the Environmental Information Regulations. Environmental information can cover information relating to: air, water, land, natural sites, built environment, flora and fauna, and health. It also covers all information relating to decisions or activities affecting any of these.

8.15 Personal information* (Section 40) – see also the absolute exemption part of Section 40

Where an individual seeks information about themselves Data Protection Act powers apply. Where the information concerns a third party, it is exempt if its disclosure would contravene the Data Protection Act, or the data protection principles; or if the person to whom the

information relates would not have a right of access to it because it falls under one of the exemptions to the Data Protection Act. The duty to confirm or deny does not arise in relation to this information if doing so would be incompatible with any of the above.

8.16 Legal professional privilege* (Section 42)

Legal professional privilege covers any advice given by legal advisers, solicitors and barristers. Generally such information will be privileged. A school wishing to disclose the information will need to seek consent from the provider of the advice. This exemption covers all such information where a claim to legal professional privilege can be maintained in legal proceedings. The duty to confirm or deny does not arise where to do so would involve the disclosure of such information.

8.17 Commercial interests* (Section 43)

Information is exempt if it constitutes a trade secret or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person or body (including the school). The duty to confirm or deny does not arise where prejudice would result to commercial interests but not where the information constitutes a trade secret.

Protective Markings and Applying Exemptions

9. When considering if an exemption to disclosure should apply, bear in mind that the presence of a protective marking (Restricted, Confidential or Secret, with or without descriptors such as Staff, Management, Commercial etc) does not constitute an exemption and is not in itself sufficient grounds on which to prevent disclosure. Each case must be considered on its merits.

Timing

10. Where information has previously been withheld, it must not be assumed that any subsequent requests for the same information will also be refused. Sensitivity of information decreases with age and the impact of any disclosure will be different depending on when the request is received. Therefore, for each request, it will be necessary to consider the harm that could result at the time of the request and, while taking into account any previous exemption applications, each case should be considered separately.

Next steps

11. In all cases, before writing to the enquirer, the person given responsibility for FOI by the school governing body will need to ensure that the case has been properly considered, and that the reasons for refusal, or public interest test refusal, are sound.

Appendix 3

Applying the Public Interest Test

Note: This Appendix is taken from the DfES Guide for Maintained Schools on Full Implementation from January 2005.

Background

1. Having established that a qualified exemption(s) definitely applies to a particular case, you must then carry out a public interest test to identify if the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. Therefore, unless it is in the public interest to withhold the information, it has to be released. Although precedent and a developed case law will play a part, individual circumstances will vary and each case will need to be considered on its own merits.

Carrying out the test

2. It is worth noting that what is in the public interest is not necessarily the same as that which may be of interest to the public. It may be irrelevant that a matter may be the subject of public curiosity. In most cases it will be relatively straightforward to decide where the balance of the public interest in disclosure lies. However, there will inevitably be cases where the decision is a difficult one. Applying such a test depends to a high degree on objective judgement and a basic knowledge of the subject matter and its wider impact in the school and possibly wider. Factors that might be taken into account when weighing the public interest include:-

For Disclosure	Against Disclosure
Is disclosure likely to increase access to information held by the school?	Is disclosure likely to distort public reporting or be misleading because it is incomplete?
Is disclosure likely to give the reasons for a decision or allow individuals to understand decisions affecting their lives or assist them in challenging those decisions?	Is premature disclosure likely to prejudice fair scrutiny, or release sensitive issues still on the internal agenda or evolving?
Is disclosure likely to improve the accountability and transparency of the school in the use of public funds and help to show that it obtains value for money?	Is disclosure likely to cause unnecessary public alarm or confusion?
Is disclosure likely to contribute to public debate and assist the understanding of existing or proposed policy?	Is disclosure likely to seriously jeopardise the school's legal or contractual position?
Is disclosure likely to increase public participation in decision-making?	Is disclosure likely to infringe other legislation e.g. Data Protection Act?
Is disclosure likely to increase public participation in political processes in general?	Is disclosure likely to create a controversial precedent on the release of information or impair your ability to obtain information in the future?
Is disclosure likely to bring to light information affecting public safety?	Is disclosure likely to adversely affect the school's proper functioning and discourage openness in expressing opinions?
Is disclosure likely to reduce further enquiries on the topic?	If a large amount of information on the topic has already been made available, would further disclosure shed any more light or serve any useful purpose?

3. Note also that:
- potential or actual embarrassment to, or loss of confidence in, the school, staff or Directors is NOT a valid factor
 - the fact that the information is technical, complex to understand and may be misunderstood may not of itself be a reason to withhold information
 - the potential harm of releasing information will reduce over time and should be considered at the time the request is made rather than by reference to when the relevant decision was originally taken
 - the balance of the public interest in disclosure cannot always be decided on the basis of whether the disclosure of particular information would cause harm, but on certain higher order considerations such as the need to preserve confidentiality of internal discussions
 - a decision not to release information may be perverse i.e. would a decision to withhold information because it is not in the public interest to release it, itself result in harm to public safety, the environment or a third party?
4. You will need to record the answers to these questions and the reasons for those answers. Deciding on the public interest is not simply a matter of adding up the number of relevant factors on each side. You need to decide how important each factor is in the circumstances and go on to make an overall assessment.

For Disclosure

5. Where the balance of the public interest lies in disclosure, the enquiry should be dealt with and the information required should be made available. Where the factors are equally-balanced, the decision should usually favour disclosure (but see 3rd bullet point above).

Against Disclosure

6. After carrying out the public interest test if it is decided that the exemption should still apply, proceed to reply to the request.

There will be occasions when it has been decided that a qualified exemption applies but consideration of the public interest test may take longer. In such a case, you must contact the enquirer within 20 working days stating that a particular exemption applies, but including an estimate of the date by which a decision on the public interest test will be made. This should be within a “reasonable” time – in practice, it is recommended this decision is made and communicated within the 20 days but where not possible it is suggested that no more than 10 working days beyond the 20 days should be allowed.

Appendix 4 Standard Letters

4.1 To inform the enquirer the school does not hold the requested information.

{School Address}

{Applicant Address}

{Date}

Dear **{Name}**

Thank you for your request for information received on

We have conducted a thorough search of our records and unfortunately we are unable to locate the information you requested. This may be because the school has never held this information is older than the statutory requirements for retention and has been legally destroyed in accordance with our retention schedules.

If you have any comments relating to how your request has been handled by our school, please contact **{Name and address of contact or complaints procedure}**.

Yours sincerely

{Name}

{Title}

4.2 To inform the enquirer you are transferring the request to another public body.

{School Address}

{Applicant Address}

{Date}

Dear **{Name}**

Thank you for your request for information, received on . To the best of our knowledge the requested information is not held within the school.

However, we believe that **{Name and address of organisation}** may hold the information you require. We will therefore need to transfer the request to them.

If you have an objection to this transfer you should let us know as soon as possible by writing to **{Address}** or telephoning and asking for **{Name of Officer dealing with the request}**.

If you have any comments relating to how your request has been handled by our school, please contact **{Name and address of contact for complaints procedure}**.

Yours sincerely

{Name}

{Title}

4.3 To seek clarification of a request.

{School Address}

{Applicant Address}

{Date}

Dear {Name}

Thank you for your request for information, received on . From the information described, we have been unable to identify the information you require.

Could you please give us more information relating to **{Include specific information you require, try to ensure that terms that may be unfamiliar to the requestor are explained}**.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires that we deal with requests such as this within 20 working days. We are not required to include any time whilst waiting for clarification of a request. We will endeavour to proceed with your request as soon as you supply the information required. If we have not received a reply within three months we will treat this request as cancelled.

If you have any comments relating to how your request has been handled by our school, please contact **{Name and address of contact for complaints procedure}**.

Yours sincerely

{Name}

{Title}

4.4 To inform the enquirer that the information they want is already publicly available.

{School Address}

{Applicant Address}

{Date}

Dear **{Name}**

Thank you for your request for information, received on .

The information which you requested is already available to the public via our school publication scheme, which is available from the school office or on our website **{website address}**.

If you have any comments relating to how your request has been handled by our school, please contact **{Name and address of contact for complaints procedure}**.

Yours sincerely

{Name}

{Title}

4.5 To inform an enquirer of any charges to be made for complying with their request.

{School Address}

{Applicant Address}

{Date}

Dear **{Name}**

Thank you for your request for information, received on . It is estimated that the time to find this information will be hours. The cost of this search will exceed the statutory ceiling of £450 for free searching time allowed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

To proceed with your request we will require a fee of £ **{supply details of local address and payment details}**. We will continue with the search on receipt of payment, however if we have not received a reply within three months we will cancel the request.

If you have any comments relating to how your request has been handled by our school, please contact **{Name and address of contact for complaints procedure}**.

Yours sincerely

{Name}
{Title}

Appendix 5

Retention and Disposal Schedule

This retention schedule sets out the minimum amount of time a school needs to keep certain records. Where there isn't an entry in the 'statutory provisions' column the retention period has been calculated from current custom and practice in discussion with Local Authorities. This schedule is an adaptation of the Records Management Society's retention guidelines published in February 2006. This schedule has been updated with current practice and some sections have been added to reflect the variety of records kept in Leicestershire.

Contents of the retention and disposal schedule

- Section 1 – Child Protection
- Section 2 – Directors
- Section 3 – Management
- Section 4 – Pupils
- Section 5 – Curriculum
- Section 6 – Human Resources
- Section 7 – Health and Safety
- Section 8 – Administrative
- Section 9 – Financial
- Section 10 – Property
- Section 11 – Local Authority
- Section 12 – DfE
- Section 13 – Connexions
- Section 14 – School Meals
- Section 15 – Arts in Education

1. The purpose of the retention schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, schools are required to maintain a retention schedule. The schedule should list the types of documents the school holds, how long they should be kept for and how they should be destroyed. Members of staff are encouraged to manage their current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different kinds of retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems. The retention schedule refers to all information, regardless of the media in which it is stored.

2. Benefits of a retention schedule

There are a number of benefits which arise from the use of a complete retention schedule:

- a. Managing records against the retention schedule is deemed to be "normal processing" under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- b. Members of staff can be confident about destroying information at the appropriate time.
- c. Information which is subject to Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation will be available when required.
- d. The school is not maintaining and storing information unnecessarily.

3. Maintaining and amending the retention schedule

Where appropriate the retention schedule should be reviewed and amended to include any new record series created and remove any obsolete record series.

4. What to do with records once they have reached the end of the administrative life

a. Destruction of records/registers

Where records have been identified for destruction they should be disposed of in an appropriate way. All records containing personal information, or sensitive policy information should be shredded before disposal (if possible).

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the school to maintain a list of records which have been destroyed and who authorised their destruction. Members of staff should record at least:

- File reference (or other unique identifier);
- File title (or brief description);
- No of files
- The name of the authorising officer

This could be kept in an Excel spreadsheet or other database format.

b. Transfer of records to the Archives

Where records have been identified as being worthy of permanent preservation, arrangements should be made to transfer the records to the Archives. A list of the records sent to the archives should be created to include the information above.

Please contact the Information Systems Manager, Leicestershire County Council on 0116 3055783.

c. Transfer of information to other media

Where lengthy retention periods have been allocated to records, members of staff may wish to consider converting paper records to other media such as microfilm or digital media. The lifespan of the media and the ability to migrate data where necessary should always be considered.

Retention Schedule

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
1. Child Protection				
Child Protection files	Yes	Education Act 2002, s175, related guidance "Safeguarding children in Education", September 2004, Children's Act 2004	DOB + 25 years	SHRED Child Protection information must be copied and sent under separate cover to new school/college whilst the child is still under 18 (i.e. the information does not need to be sent to a university for example). Where a child is removed from roll to be educated at home, the file should be copied to the Local Authority.
Allegation of a child protection nature against a member of staff, including where the allegation is unfounded	Yes	Employment Practices Code: Supplementary Guidance 2.13.1 (Records of Disciplinary and Grievance) Education Act 2002 guidance "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff" November 2005	Until the person's normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation if that's longer	SHRED Employment Practices Code: Supplementary Guidance 2.13.1 Records of Disciplinary and Grievance "Records of allegations about workers who have been investigated and found to be without substance should not normally be retained once the investigation has been completed. There are some exceptions to this where for its own protection the employer has to keep a limited record that an allegation was received and investigated, for example, where the allegation relates to abuse and the worker is employed to work with children or other vulnerable individuals". Summary record to be retained on confidential personnel file, and a copy given to the person concerned

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
2. Directors				
Minutes • <i>Principal set (signed)</i>	No		Permanent	Retain in school for 6 years from date of meeting. Transfer to Archives
• <i>Inspection copies</i>	No		Date of meeting + 3 years	DESTROY [If these minutes contain any sensitive personal information they should be shredded]
Agendas	No		Date of meeting	DESTROY
Reports	No		Date of report + 6 years	Retain in school for 6 years from date of meeting. Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
Annual Parents' meeting papers	No		Date of meeting + 6 years	Retain in school for 6 years from date of meeting. Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
Trusts and Endowments	No		Permanent	Retain in school whilst operationally required. Transfer to Archives
Action Plans	No		Date of Action Plan + 3 years	DESTROY It may be appropriate to offer to the Archives for a sample to be taken if the school has been through a difficult period
Policy documents	No		Expiry of policy	Retain in school whilst policy is operational (this includes if the expired policy is part of a past decision making process) Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample fro permanent preservation

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
Complaints files	Yes		Date of resolution of complaint + 6 years	Retain in school for the first 6 years. Review for further retention in the case of contentious disputes. Destroy routine complaints. Complaints alleging possible harm to a young person by a member of staff are covered in section 1 above
Annual Reports required by the DfE	No	Education (Directors' Annual Reports) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002.SI 2002 No 1171	Date of report + 10 years	Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample of permanent preservation]
Proposals for school to become, or be established as Specialist Status schools	No		Current year + 3 years	Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
3. Management				
Log Books [Books where the Headteacher or another member of staff keeps a record of what happens in the school, this may include details of events, photographs and other information]	Yes		Date of last entry in the book + 6 years	Retain in the school for 6 years from the date of the last entry Transfer to the Archives From January 1 st 2005 subject access is permitted into unstructured filing systems and log books and other records created within the school containing details about the activities of individual pupils and members of staff will become subject to the Data Protection Act 1998
Minutes of the Senior Management Team and other internal administrative bodies	Yes		Date of meeting + 5 years	Retain in the school for 5 years from meeting. Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
Reports made by the head teacher or the management team	Yes		Date of report of + 3 years	Retain in school for 3 years from the meeting. Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
Records created by Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers, Heads of Year and other members of staff with administrative responsibilities (except child protection records which are dealt with in Section 1 above)	Yes		Closure of file + 6 years	DESTROY If these records contain sensitive information they should be shredded
Correspondence created by Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers, Heads of Year and other members of staff with administrative responsibilities	No		Date of correspondence + 3 years	DESTROY If these records contain sensitive information they should be shredded
Professional development plans	Yes		Closure + 6 years	SHRED
School development plans	No		Closure + 6 years	Review Offer to the Archives
4. Pupils				
Admission Registers	Yes		Date of last entry in the book (or file) + 6 years	Retain in the school for 6 years from the date of the last entry. Transfer to the Archives
Attendance Registers	Yes		Date of register + 3 years	DESTROY [If these records are retained electronically any back up copies should be destroyed at the same time]

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
Pupil record cards • <i>Primary</i> • <i>Secondary</i>	Yes		Retain for the time which the pupil remains at the primary school DOB of the pupil + 25 years	Transfer to the secondary school (or other primary school) when the child leaves the school In the case of exclusion it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service SHRED
Pupil files • <i>Primary</i> • <i>Secondary</i>	Yes		Retain for the time which the pupil remains at the primary school DOB of the pupil + 25 years	Transfer to the secondary school (or other primary school) when the child leaves school In the case of exclusion it may be appropriate to transfer the record to the Behaviour Service SHRED
Special Educational Needs case files, reviews and Individual Education Plans	Yes		35 years from closure (the Local Authority should have a copy so compare the file to ensure duplicates are not being retained)	SHRED
Letters authorizing absence	No		Date of absence + 2 years	SHRED
Absence books	Yes		Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Examination results • <i>Public</i>	No		Year of examinations + 6 years	DESTROY Any certificates left unclaimed should be returned to the appropriate Examinations Board

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
• <i>Internal examination results</i>	Yes		Current year + 5 years If these records are retained on the pupil file or in their National Record of Achievement they need only be kept for as long as operationally necessary	DESTROY
Any other records created in the course of contact with pupils	Yes/No		Current year + 3 years	Review at the end of 3 years and either allocate a further retention period or DESTROY
Statement maintained under The Education Act 1996 – Section 324	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 1	DOB + 30 years	DESTROY unless legal action is pending
Proposed statement or amended statement	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 1	DOB + 30 years	DESTROY unless legal action is pending
Advice and information to parents regarding educational needs	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 2	Closure + 12 years	DESTROY unless legal action is pending
Accessibility Strategy	Yes	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Section 14	Closure + 12 years	DESTROY unless legal action is pending
Children SEN Files	Yes		Closure + 35 years	DESTROY unless legal action is pending
5. Curriculum				
Curriculum development	No		Current year + 6 years	DESTROY
Curriculum returns	No		Current year + 3 years	DESTROY

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
School syllabus	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Schemes of work	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Timetable	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Class record books	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Mark Books	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Record of homework set	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Pupils' work	No		Current year + 1 year	It may be appropriate to review these records at the end of each year and allocate a new retention period or DESTROY
Examination results	Yes		Current year + 6 years	DESTROY [These records should be shredded]
Value added records	Yes		Current year + 6 years	DESTROY [These records should be shredded]

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
6. Human Resources				
Timesheets, sick pay	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Staff Personal files	Yes		Termination + 7 years	SHRED
Interview notes and recruitment records	Yes		Date of interview + 6 years	SHRED
Pre-employment vetting information (including unsuccessful CRB checks)	No	CRB guidelines	Date of check + 6 months	SHRED [by the designates member of staff] This information should be placed on the personnel file if the applicant is successful and managed according to the guidelines
Disciplinary proceedings for all matters except those relating to child protection issues (see section 1 above): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Oral warning</i> • <i>Written warning – level one</i> • <i>Written warning – level two</i> • <i>Final warning</i> 	Yes		<p>Date of warning + 6 months</p> <p>Date of warning + 6 months</p> <p>Date of warning + 12 months</p> <p>Date of warning + 18 months</p>	<p>SHRED If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file</p> <p>SHRED If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file</p> <p>SHRED If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file</p> <p>SHRED If this is placed on a personal file, it must be weeded from the file</p>

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
• <i>case not found</i> (except child protection allegations see section 1 above)				DESTROY immediately at the conclusion of the case
Records relating to accident/injury at work	Yes		Date of incident + 12 years	Review at the end of this period. In the case of serious accidents a further retention period will need to be applied
Annual appraisal/assessment records	No		Current year + 5 years	SHRED
Salary cards	Yes		Last date of employment + 6 years	The information should be transferred to the superannuation department at the appropriate time who will maintain the master record SHRED
Maternity pay records	Yes	Statutory Maternity Pay (General) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/1960), revised 1999 (SI 1999/567)	Current year + 3 years	SHRED
Records held under Retirement Benefits Schemes (Information Powers) Regulations 1995	Yes		Last payment + 6 years	SHRED
7. Health and Safety				
Accessibility Plans		Disability Discrimination Act	Current year + 6 years	DESTROY
Accident Reporting • <i>Adults – Accident Book</i>	Yes	Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979 Regulation 25	Last entry in the accident book + 3 years	SHRED

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adults – Internal Reports</i> • <i>Children</i> 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>Social Security Administration Act 1992 Section 8</p> <p>Limitation Act 1980</p>	<p>Current year + 3 years</p> <p>DOB + 25 years</p>	<p>SHRED</p> <p>SHRED A child may make a claim for negligence for 7 years from their 18th birthday. To ensure that all records are kept until the pupil reaches the age of 25 this retention period has been applied</p>
COSHH			Current year + 10 years	Review [where appropriate an additional retention period may be allocated]
Incident reports	Yes		Current year + 20 years	SHRED
Policy Statements			Date of expiry + 1 year	DESTROY
Risk Assessments			Date of assessment superseded + 3 years	DESTROY
Process of monitoring of areas where employees and persons are likely to have come in contact with asbestos			Last action + 40 years	DESTROY
Process of monitoring of areas where employees and persons are likely to have come in contact with radiation			Last action + 50 years	DESTROY
Fire Precautions log books			Current year + 6 years	DESTROY

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
8. Administrative				
Employers' Liability certificate			Permanent whilst the school is open	Retain for 40 years after school has closed
Inventories of equipment and furniture			Disposal of last item + 6 years or date superseded + 6 years	DESTROY
General file series			Current year + 5 years	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
School brochure/prospectus			Current year + 3 years	Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
Circulars (staff/parents/pupils)			Current year + 1 year	DESTROY
Newsletters, ephemera			Current year + 1 year	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
Visitors' book			Current year + 2 year	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
PTA/Old Pupils' Association			Current year + 6 years	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
9. Financial				
Annual Accounts		Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	Offer to Archives
Loans and grants		Financial Regulations	Date of last payment on loan + 12 years	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
Contracts			Contract completion date +12 years	SHRED
• under seal				
• under signature			Contract completion date + 6 years	SHRED
• monitoring records			Current year + 2 years	SHRED
Copy orders			Current year + 2 years	SHRED
Budget reports, budget monitoring etc.			Current year + 3 years	SHRED
Invoice, receipts and other records covered by the Financial Regulations		Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Annual Budget and background papers			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Order books and requisitions			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Delivery Documentation			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Debtors' Records		Limitation Act 1980	Current year + 6 years	SHRED

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
School Fund – Cheque books			Current year + 3 years	SHRED
School Fund – Paying in books			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
School Fund – Ledger			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
School Fund - Invoices			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
School Fund – Receipts			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
School Fund – Bank statements			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
School Fund – School Journey books			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Applications for free school meals, travel, uniforms, etc.			Whilst child at school	SHRED
Student grant applications			Current year + 3 years	SHRED
Free school meals registers	Yes	Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Petty cash books		Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	SHRED
10. Property				
Title Deeds			Permanent. These should follow the property	Offer to Archives
Plans			Permanent	Offer to Archives Retain until superseded then offer to archives before destruction
Leases			Expiry of lease + 6 years	DESTROY

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
Maintenance and contractors		Financial Regulations	Current year + 6 years	DESTROY
Lettings			Current year + 3 years	DESTROY
Burglary, theft and vandalism report forms			Current year + 6 years	SHRED
Maintenance log books			Last entry + 10 years	DESTROY
Contractors' Reports			Current year + 6 years	DESTROY
11. Local Authority				
Secondary transfer sheets (Primary)	Yes		Current year + 2 years	SHRED
Attendance returns	Yes		Current year + 1 year	DESTROY
Circulars from LA			Whilst operationally required	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
12. DfE				
HMI reports				These do not need to be kept any longer Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
OFSTED reports and papers			Replace former report with any new inspection report	Review to see whether a further retention period is required Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]

Function Description	Data Protection issues	Statutory provisions	Retention period operational	Action at end of administrative life of the record
Census returns (SIMS does not retain an electronic copy)			Current year + 6 years	DESTROY
Circulars from DfE			Whilst operationally required Review to see whether a further retention period is required	Transfer to Archives [The appropriate archivist will then take a sample for permanent preservation]
13. Connexions				
Service level agreements			Until superseded	SHRED
Work Experience agreement			DOB of child + 18 years	SHRED
14. School Meals				
Dinner Register			Current year + 3 years	SHRED
School Meals Summary Sheets			Current year + 3 years	SHRED
15. Arts in Education				
Pupil Reports			6 years from event	SHRED
Pupil registration forms			6 years from registration	SHRED