



Freedom of Information

Created by: Headteacher	Date: January 2017
Approved by the Governing Body:	Date: 19/1/17

Chair of Governors:	Date: 19/1/17
Headteacher:	Date: 19/1/17

SECTION 1 – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Introduction

Pupils and their parents already have the right to see all personal records held by the School on themselves. In addition much non-confidential information held by the School has traditionally been made available to the wider school community. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 seeks to clarify the disclosure arrangements for information held by public bodies such as schools. Under the Act members of the public (including school staff and parents) now have the right to request access to information not protected by the Data Protection Act or deemed confidential by the School – see Sections 2 & 3.

Under the Freedom of Information Act all maintained schools must now ensure that they make certain information and the mechanism for gaining access to such, clearly available. Naturally, information may not be released if it does not exist or if to do so would breach someone else's rights to confidentiality, or the information is covered by an exemption in the Act.

The information covered by this policy relates not only to information available in hard paper copies but also to that published on the School's Website. However, there are categories of information which are not available under the Freedom of Information Act such as confidential personal files – see Section 2 (Confidentiality).

This policy conforms to the model approved for schools by the Information Commissioner.

Aims

Through this policy and its implementation the School aims to:

1. clearly describe the classes of information that it already publishes or is intending to publish in the near future.
2. clearly describe the manner in which the information is published/made available.
3. identify when, and the scale of, charges related to the provision of the requested information.

Categories of information published the School

There are four categories of information which are readily available from the School:

1. The School Prospectus.
2. Governing Body Documentation.
3. The School Policies (many are statutory).
4. Other procedures and general information related to the School.

1. The School Prospectus

The prospectus contains general information about the School, its curriculum and staffing, etc. Copies of the prospectus are automatically provided to the parents of all pupils applying to attend the School and copies are provided for any parents who wish to consider their child attending the School. The School Prospectus is also available on the School website. The Prospectus contains the following statutory requirements:

- Name, address and telephone number of the School along with the type of School
 - Names of the School Governors, Headteacher and all members of staff (including responsibilities).
 - The School's Admission Policy.
 - The School's mission statement and aims.
 - The School's religious affiliation or denomination (if any) as well as an explanation of the parents rights to withdraw their child from religious education and acts of collective worship, and a description of the alternative provisions that are made.
 - The School's Special Educational Needs Policy.
 - A statement of the number of pupils on roll and rates of authorised and unauthorised absence.
 - The arrangements for parents of prospective pupils to visit the School.
-

- The number of places for pupils of normal age of entry in the preceding school year and the number of written applications/preferences expressed for those places.
- An overview of each subject within the School Curriculum.

2. Governor's Documentation

This category contains specific information related to the Governing Body, names of governors, minutes of meetings and financial information regarding the School's budget, etc. It also contains all published materials relating to the Governing Body and its role in the day to day running of the School. The Governors' Report is automatically provided to the parents of all pupils within the School.

The following information is published as a statutory content of the Annual Governors Report to parents, items marked with * are statutory others are those the School wishes to incorporate.

- Names of the members of the Governing Body including the addresses of the Chair of Governors and the Clerk to the Governors.
- A statement of progress made in implementing the School's action plan following an inspection.
- The School's budget including gifts made to the School and governors expenses.
- The School's Staff and Pupils Security Policy.
- Information regarding the implementation of the School's Special Educational Policy and any changes made during the last year.
- The number of pupils on roll and rates of authorised and unauthorised absence.

In addition records of the School's financial controls, budget and private fund finances are kept in accordance with current DfES and LEA regulations – consideration will be given to providing this information in response to reasonable requests. The following records **MUST** be kept for the current financial year and the previous 6 financial years:

- ☐ Copy Orders;
- ☐ Paying-in slip stubs/records;
- ☐ Signed delivery notes;
- ☐ Copy receipts for all income;
- ☐ Certified paid invoices Bank statements;
- ☐ Copy remittance advices Bank reconciliation statements;
- ☐ SIMS - LRM detailed accounts;
- ☐ Copy VAT returns;
- ☐ Copy C.I.T.D.S returns.

The instruments of Government

This section contains the following information:

- Name and category of the School.
- Name of the Governing Body.
- Manner in which the Governing Body is constituted.
- Term of office for each category of Governor (i.e. teacher, parent etc) if less than 4 years.
- Terms of reference for Governing Body committees. (See separate policy.)
These include the areas of responsibility for each committee and the extent of any delegated powers - must be agreed by the full Governing Body and recorded in writing. The current committee make up should be recorded and its relationship to the full Governing Body identified. Typical committees are:
 - i. School Improvement;
 - ii. Finance/Pay/Personnel;
 - iii. Health & Safety/Site & Buildings;
 - iv. Community Links;
 - v. First Committee;
 - vi. Appeals Committee.
- Name of any body entitled to appoint Governors, i.e. Local Education Authority.
- Details of any trusts.
- Religious character of the School (if appropriate), and a statement of the School's ethos.
- Dates from which the instruments of government take effect.

Minutes of the Governing Body Sub-Committee Meetings

The agendas and minutes for all Governing Body meetings for the present and previous full school year are available. N.B. When named individuals are discussed a meeting of the Chairperson will declare that the Governing Body has entered 'confidential mode'. Such minutes are retained in the confidential minutes folder and as such are not available. All other minutes are freely available.

3. School Policies

This category contains information about the policies and procedures by which the School works towards achieving its mission statement and aims. The policies also offer a reference point against which we can evaluate and review their implementation. N.B. Policies shown in bold are statutory and are readily available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Additional Policies

This lists other school Policies which are available on request.

Staff - Induction Of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT)

Staff - Appraisal

Staff - Initial Teacher Training (ITT & QTS)

Staff - Staff Absence

Staff - Bad Weather Arrangements

Staff - Whole School Pay Policy

Staff - Recruitment

Health & Safety

Assessment

Home learning

Pupil Attendance

Freedom Of Information and Confidentiality

Accessibility - Disability Act

Admissions

Improvement Planning

The Home-School Agreement

Inclusion

Teaching And Learning

Citizenship/PSHE

Literacy

Numeracy

E - Safety

Displays

Collective Worship

General Equal Opportunities Issues

Gender Issues/Anti-Sexist

Multicultural Issues/Anti-Racist

Child Protection

Sex Education

Drugs Education

Behaviour Policy

Special Educational Needs

Citizenship/PSHE

Cross-Curricular Themes – SMSC Development

General Aspects Of Budget Management

Financial Management - Aims

Monitoring & Evaluating Financial Management

Procuring Services/Supplies From Outside Agencies

Ordering & Purchasing

Banking Arrangements
 Income & Voluntary Funds
 The School Fund
Charging and Remissions Policy
 Lettings Of School Premises/Facilities
 Petty Cash & The Imprest Account
 Responsibilities For Financial Administration
 Whole School Pay Policy

First Aid Provision & Sick Pupils
 Dealing With Asthma
 School Records

4. Other School Procedures and general information

This category contains policies related to the day-to day running of the School plus Ofsted reports and the School's action plan, etc.

The Curriculum – details of Schemes of Work
School's previous Ofsted inspection report
School calendar – term dates and special events
Complaints procedure
Staff Conduct and Grievance Procedure
Statutory instruments and administrative memoranda

Any sent by the DfE to the Headteacher or Governing Body related to the Curriculum.

The School Website

The School Website is seen as the first port of call for generic information about the School. Requests for information will often be referred to the website which is freely accessible. Requests for printed information will have a charge associated with them. However you may wish to visit the School's website where you will find:

The School's mission statement and aims.

Contact details Telephone number

Address

School's email address

Staff Lists Detailing any managerial or teaching and learning responsibilities.

Copy of the School's last Ofsted Report and associated action plan.

Subject details Curriculum/Subject overview
 Examination results for the previous year
 Syllabi
 Educational games
 Links
 Calendar Term dates
 Parent's Evenings and report dates
 Timing of the School day

SATs -

Dates and timetables

Governors Names and category of all the Governors
 Copy of the Governors Annual Report to Parents

Newsletters Current and backdated copies

School's prospectus

Making a request for information

If you wish to have paper copies of information provided by the School, you should contact the School by telephone, email, fax, or letter clearly indicating on any correspondence "PUBLICATION REQUEST SCHEME". Contact details are set out below:

Email address **admin@weston.herts.sch.uk**
Telephone number **01462790317**
Fax number **01462 790890**
Contact address **Maiden Street, Weston, Herts, SG4 7AG.**

Please ensure that if you request materials by post you provide a return address to which the information should be posted.

Paying for information

Members of the public have a statutory right to ask for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Naturally, no charge is made by the School for information sourced from the School's Website – which is very comprehensive.

For parents of present or prospective pupils (including parents who wish information to help them decide if they wish their child to attend the School), single copies of all relevant and available information are provided free of charge. However, should a request for information involve a large amount of non-standard paperwork or duplication, the School reserves the right to charge 10p per sheet to cover duplication and administrative costs.

When a member of the general public or a member of a professional body requests the information, then the standard charge will be made to cover duplication, postage and administrative costs.

In all cases where a cost is to be levied the purchaser will be informed of the cost and requested to pay the correct amount in advance, (by cash paid or cheque) before the work is undertaken.

Feedback and Complaints

If you wish to discuss the contents or procedures covered by this policy then please contact the Headteacher.

However, you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner if you are dissatisfied with the service we provide or have a complaint which has not been resolved to your satisfaction. The Information Commissioner's address is:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK95AF

Phone	Enquiry/Information Line	01625 545 700
email	publications@ic-foi-demon.co.uk.	
website	www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk	

SECTION 2 – CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Freedom of Information Act, members of the public (including school staff and parents) now have the right to request access to information not deemed confidential by the School or protected by the Data Protection Act. Section 2 illustrates the nature of records deemed confidential by the School or to be protected by the Data Protection Act 1998.

Discipline sub committees

Minutes of the Governing Body Pupil Discipline sub committee and Governing Body Staff Discipline sub committee are confidential and are therefore not available.

Communications with parents

To help fulfil their important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents are requested and encouraged to communicate via the Office staff or to a particular teacher, any concerns or difficulties, interests or aspirations, that are either specific to, or that are seriously affecting their child's education. The office staff record and deal with this information in a confidential and professional manner.

General Information & Educational Records - Pupils

Confidential copies of reports, pupil profiles, SATs results, the Record of Achievement and the portfolio of work are kept as general information. Such curricular records comprise the major part of a pupil's educational record. Contents of educational records must be disclosed to parents upon request within a specified time and to another school, which is considering a pupil for admission or which has just admitted that pupil. No charge will be made for the provision of such information.

Medical/Confidential Information - Pupils

Confidential medical information and reports (e.g. Social Services and Psychological Reports) are kept separately from general information. The records show:

- ☐ personal details, doctor's name/address/phone number, hospital reference, if applicable;
- ☐ treatment needed regularly (e.g. asthma preventer);
- ☐ relief treatment (e.g. asthma reliever) if required.

The Headteacher (or those with delegated authority) can decide not to disclose/transfer/copy/amend a pupil's record – see Appeals procedure.

There are two special considerations related to Child Protection:

- The Education (Schools Records) Regulations 1989 exempt any information relating to actual, alleged or suspected child abuse from the requirements of disclosure to those with 'Parental Responsibility' (Children Act 1989).
- When a child dies the LEA may carry out a Section 8 Review under the Children Act 1989. This is a multi-agency investigation and a report on behalf of the Education Department is usually compiled by the Principle Education Officer – Child Protection. All school records must be kept in these circumstances - only copies can be given to parents.

This section may also contain other details related to Child Protection but additionally Drugs, HIV, and Mentoring.

Admission Documents & Personal Information - Pupils

The School keeps confidential admission records as specified by the LEA, the Governing Body and DfES.

Staff Records

The School maintains detailed confidential personnel records relating to individual employee's job descriptions, qualifications, experience, length of service, salary levels.

References written for current staff are kept securely by the Headteacher but separate to the other personnel records. Completed application forms and associated references for advertised positions within the School are kept securely in the School Office until an appointment has been made, at which point all copies of application forms and associated references are destroyed when an appointment has proved successful.

SECTION 3 – DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

The School is now heavily reliant on computers to process and record much of the aforementioned data. Accordingly the Governing Body and the Headteacher are registered under the Data Protection Act. The School complies with the Act's 'Data Protection Principles' and reflects its spirit of openness and good practice. The Data Protection Act is an attempt to protect people's privacy by laying down strict rules about how such data should be used. The following information should prove useful in understanding our interpretation of the Act:

What Is Meant By The Term Personal Data?

Within the Data Protection Act, the term personal data is defined as follows:

- i. Data that relates to living people who can be identified.
- ii. Data that expresses an opinion about a person.
- ii. Data that is classified as sensitive personal data. That is data that includes information about a person's:
 - religion,
 - ethnic origins,
 - sexual life,
 - political opinions,
 - health (including mental health).

The Main Principles Of The Data Protection Act 1998

These can be summarized as follows:

- i. Anyone who stores and uses data about any person must declare the fact to the Data Protection Registrar.
- ii. The data may only be obtained in a fair and lawful way.
- iii. The data may only be used for lawful purposes.
- iv. The data may not be passed to anyone who is not entitled to it.
- v. The data must be accurate and not out of date.
- vi. The data must not be kept for longer than is necessary to fulfil the purpose for which it was obtained.
- vii. Precautions must be taken to protect the data from loss, damage and unauthorised access.
- viii. The data must not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area.
- ix. The data can only be processed within the rights of data subjects. (This is explained more clearly below).

What Is Meant By The Term 'The Rights Of Data Subjects'?

This term refers to the rights of individuals under the Act. These rights are summarized as follows:

- i. The person whom the data concerns can request that a copy be provided to them.
- ii. If necessary, the person can demand that inaccurate information is corrected or deleted.
- iii. Individuals have the right to prevent automatic decisions, based on personal data, from being made by computer systems.
- iv. An individual can prevent personal data from being processed if it is likely to cause them distress.
- v. Personal data cannot be used for marketing without the permission of the person to whom it refers.
- vi. Complaints may be made to the Data Protection Commissioner if a person feels that their rights have been contravened.
- vii. A person has the right to compensation for damage or distress caused by breaches of the Act.