



Freedom of Information Policy

Brierley CE (VC) Primary School

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: Autumn 2023
Last reviewed on:	September 2023	
Next review due by:	September 2024	

Our Vision

Though we are many, we are one body. Together, we learn and grow.

God is at the heart of all we do, shining His light to guide us on our journey. Together, we face change and transformation with courage.

In love, we nurture all to be resilient, hopeful and aspirational; to become the very best version of ourselves, knowing that we are loved.

Each member of our school community is honoured and celebrated for their unique character and qualities: difference is met with dignity and compassion. Though we are many, we are one body.

Our community at Brierley stretches beyond the school, where we share God's message of love through our actions, our thoughts and our words as we continue on life's path.

Background

Our school is committed to complying with and implementing the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and related legislation. This provides a general entitlement to any person to be able to access information held by school, subject to exemptions and conditions laid down by law.

Scope

This policy applies to all information held by school regardless of how it was created or received. It applies irrespective of the media on which the information is stored and whether the information is recorded on paper or held electronically. The Act's powers are fully retrospective and thus information is accessible no matter how old it may be. Similarly, information in draft form will also be accessible under the Act.

It should be noted that access to personal information (that is information from which a living individual can be identified) is still governed under the Data Protection Act 1998. Requests for access to such information will be governed in line with the requirements of this legislation.

Dealing with Requests

School will offer advice and assistance to anybody wishing to make a request for information. We are committed to dealing with requests within statutory guidelines, which means that a response will be made no more than 20 working days from the date of request and more speedily if possible. This will be extended in specific circumstances on legal advice in connection with the public interest test. However, school is committed to providing a prompt service and every attempt will be made to provide the information earlier than the expiry of the 20 working day period. Repeated or vexatious requests for information will be refused. School will claim exemptions as appropriate whilst maintaining a commitment to openness, scrutiny and the public interest. School will put in place an appropriate procedure for measuring the public interest when considering a qualified (also known as "non-absolute") exemption which requires such a test.

Any request in writing will be considered a Freedom of Information request including those received by email and fax. There is no need for requests to indicate that they are made under the Act and all requests will be dealt with under this policy. School reserves the right to refuse requests where the cost of locating, retrieving and editing (where necessary) the information would exceed the statutory maximum (currently £450).

School recognises that requests for environmental information may be made over the telephone and that different exemptions apply.

Adopting and Maintaining Publication Schemes

School has adopted a Publication Scheme in accordance with Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act and is committed to updating and maintaining it to keep it current and relevant. The Publication Scheme contains many of the documents, policies, plans and guidance which are regularly asked for. Material contained within the publication scheme, and a copy of the scheme itself, will be readily available. Where charges are applied these will be stated in the Scheme. The scheme can be accessed in school on request. School staff will give advice and assistance on how to use the scheme as appropriate.

Relationship with the Data Protection Act 2018

School is under a legal duty to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018. We will carefully consider our responsibilities under this Act before releasing personal information about living individuals, including current and former employees and pupils.

Responsibilities

School has a responsibility to make information available in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Responsibility for compliance with this and related policies will rest with the Governing Body who will delegate those responsibilities to the Head Teacher. Complaints regarding the use of this policy should be directed to the Governing Body.

All school staff have a responsibility to ensure that any request for information they receive is dealt with under the Act and in compliance with this policy. They are also responsible for good information handling practice and for implementing records management policies and procedures as appropriate to their post.

Contact Details

For advice and assistance please contact Mrs S Benson at Brierley CE Primary School

Further advice and information about the Freedom of Information Act, including full details of exemptions and advice on the public interest test, is available from the Information Commissioner's website at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

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