

PHOENIX COLLEGE



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Introduction

Phoenix College is committed to the Freedom of Information Act and to the principles of accountability and the general right of access to information. This policy outlines our response to the Act and a framework for managing requests.

Background

The school recognises that under the Freedom of Information Act, any person (the enquirer) has a legal right to ask for access to information held by the school. The enquirer is entitled to be told whether the school holds the information, and to receive a copy, subject to certain exemptions.

Requests for information under the legislation should be addressed in the first instance to the Principal.

The school will 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. The school will respond to each request within 20 days excluding school holidays.

Scope

If any element of a request to the school includes personal or environmental information, these will be dealt with under the Data Protection Act (DPA) or Environmental Regulations (EIR). Any other information is a request under the Freedom of Information Act, and must be dealt with accordingly.

Obligations and Duties

The school recognises its duty to

- provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. The school 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 the school holds..

Dealing with Requests

The school will respond to all requests in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Freedom of Information Act.

Exemptions

The school will consider if information requested is subject to exemption under the Freedom of Information Act.
applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Charging

The school will respond to most requests free of charge, and only charge where significant costs are incurred.

Responsibilities

The Governing body has delegated the day-to-day responsibility for compliance with the Freedom of Information Act to the Principal. The Principal has nominated the School Business Manager as the delegated person to deal with all Freedom of Information Act requests.

Complaints

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

FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Review

This policy document and associated Publication Scheme will be reviewed every 2 years.