

ACES ACADEMIES TRUST

Aspiration Creativity Excellence Success



Policy Statement
on

Freedom of Information

Drawn up by:	Director of Finance & Operations
Date:	January 2025
Revised:	Annually (S&I Committee)
Date adopted by Board:	January 2025

1. Statutory Duties

1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies to the governing bodies of Academies with effect from 1 September 2010.

1.2 Schools are required to

- a) make information available proactively through a Publication Scheme;
- b) from 1 September 2010 to deal with specific requests for information.

2. Publication Scheme

2.1 The Trust has adopted the Model Publication Scheme for secondary schools outlining information that the school publishes proactively.

2.2 The scheme sets out categories of information that the school publishes, the form in which the information is published and whether or not charges apply.

3. The right to request information

3.1 From 1 September 2010 the public have a right to request any information held by a public authority, ie the school, which has not already been made available through the Publication Scheme.

- a) Requests must be made in writing.
- b) The Trust will respond within 20 days, excluding non-school days as defined in section 579(1) of the Education Act 1996. If the 20th day to respond to a request is during a non-school day, the Trust will have up to 60 days to respond (see <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/3364/regulation/3/made>)
- c) The Trust may charge a fee for providing information as follows:
 - I. Costs of reproduction: printing or photocopying;
 - II. Costs of postage;
 - III. Where collating and providing the information exceeds the set limit of £450 (18 hours of work). The fee will only be for charges above the £450 limit. This will only apply where the Trust is able to complete the FOI.
- d) If a fee is payable to complete the FOI, a fees notice will be submitted for payment in advance of completion of the FOI.
- e) The Trust will not be required to release information to which an exemption in the Act legitimately applies.
- f) The Trust will explain to the applicant why the information may not be released and may have to justify the decision to the Information Commissioner.
- g) Applications which relate to the personal data of the applicant or third parties will be considered and responded to as a Subject Access Request under GDPR 2018

3.2 The Freedom of Information Act has 23 exemptions which may be applied: 8 are absolute exemption, 15 are qualified exemptions (they will only not apply if the information requested is in the public interest). The 8 absolute exemptions will be applied without exception. The 15 qualified exemptions will be applied if they are relevant to the FOI application being considered.

The full list of exemptions can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/part/II>

4. Refusal of a Freedom of Information Request

The Trust can refuse an entire request under the following circumstances:

I. It would cost too much or take too much staff time to deal with the request.

II. The request is vexatious.

III. The request repeats a previous request from the same person.

5. The Trust will review this policy in the light of future guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.

Guidance

The Information Commissioner Office:

<http://ico.org.uk>

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/>

PUBLICATION SCHEME

This is the Trust's Publication Scheme on information available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Board of Trustees is responsible for maintenance of this scheme.

1. Introduction: what a publication scheme is and why it has been developed

One of the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in the rest of this document) is that public authorities, including all maintained and academy schools, should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public.

To do this we must produce a publication scheme, setting out:

- *the classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;*
- *the manner in which the information will be published; and*
- *whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.*

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is either available for you on our website to download and print off or available in paper form. Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example personal information. This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

2. Aims and Objectives

Our mission is to inspire excellence and fulfil potential.

We aim for all students to be nurtured as uniquely talented individuals, finding fulfilment through their learning and the development of their intellectual, creative, physical and emotional capabilities.

We aim for our students to develop the moral integrity to become responsible global citizens, so that they may take their place in society with confidence. We are confident that anyone associated with the Hinchingsbrooke learning community, student or adult, will leave the richer for their experience.

Our values

We aim to instil values in our students such as compassion, tolerance and a sense of justice. We are committed to building a learning community based on

- Mutual respect
- Moral integrity
- Freedom of expression
- A sense of ambition for self and others
- Tolerance and
- An appreciation of religious and cultural diversity

Our staff

We are committed to

- Developing the quality of teaching and learning
- Supporting innovation and enterprise
- Promoting the well-being of all staff

Our partnerships

We are committed to

- Building a strong and effective partnership with parents
- Forging links with other educational providers to enrich opportunities for our students and to support others in their educational endeavours
- Working with local businesses to provide work related learning and to develop pathways to employment
- Encouraging our students to make a contribution to the local and wider communities

Our future

We are committed to

- Valuing our heritage whilst remaining forward-looking
- Being at the forefront of educational change
- Making the best use of technology to support learning
- Providing an all-round education of the whole child
- Building our reputation as a centre of excellence

CORE PURPOSE:

Our core purpose is to nurture all of our students as uniquely talented individuals and principled global citizens, maximising their academic outcomes, their personal development and their capacity to be independent autonomous learners.

3. Categories of information published

The publication scheme guides you to information which we currently publish (or have recently published) or which we will publish in the future. This is split into categories of information known as 'classes'. These are contained in section 6 of this scheme. The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised as follows:

<i>School Prospectus</i>	information published in the school prospectus.
<i>Trust Documents</i>	information published in Board and local governing body documents.
<i>Pupils & Curriculum</i>	information about policies that relate to pupils and the school
<i>Trust Policies/ and other information related to the Trust</i>	information about policies that relate to the Trust in general

4. How to request information

If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the scheme, please contact ACES Academies Trust, Hinchingsbrooke School, Brampton Road, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3BN

Email: communications@acesmat.uk
Tel: 01480 375700

To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence **“PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST” (in CAPITALS please)**. If the information you are looking for is not available via the scheme and is not on our website, you can still contact the school to ask if we have it.

5. Paying for information

Information published on our website is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet service provider. If you do not have Internet access, you can access our website using a local library or an Internet café.

Single copies of information covered by this publication are provided free unless stated otherwise in section 6. If your request means that we have to do a lot of photocopying or printing, or pay a large postage charge, or is for a priced item such as some printed publications or videos we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request. Where there is a charge this will be indicated by a £ sign in the description box.

6. Classes of Information Currently Published

Class	Trust/School	Description
School Prospectus	School	In accordance with the Education (School Information) (England) Regulations 2009, the statutory contents of the school prospectus are as follows, (other items may be included in the prospectus at the school’s discretion): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the report containing special needs information referred to in section 317(5) of EA 1996

Trust/Local Governing Body information – this section sets out information published in Trust and local governing body documents.

Class	Trust/School	Description
Instrument of Governance	Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name of the school The category of the school The name of the Trust/ local governing body The manner in which the Trust/local governing body is constituted The term of office of each category of director/governor if less than 4 years The name of any body entitled to appoint any category of trustee/governor Details of any trust If the school has a religious character, a description of the ethos The date the instrument takes effect

Minutes ¹ of meeting of the Board and its	Trust & School	Agreed minutes of meetings of the Board and its committees/local governing body <i>(current and last full academic school year)</i>
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¹ Some information might be confidential or otherwise exempt from the publication by law – we cannot therefore publish this

committees /local governing body		
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Pupils & Curriculum Policies - This section gives access to information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum.

Class	Trust/School	Description
Home-school agreement	School	Statement of the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities, the parental responsibilities and the school's expectations of its pupils for example homework arrangements
Curriculum Policy	School	Statement on following the policy for the secular curriculum subjects and religious education and schemes of work and syllabuses currently used by the school
Relationships & Sex Education Policy	School	Statement of policy with regard to sex and relationship education
Special Educational Needs Policy	School	Information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational needs
Accessibility Policy	School?	Plan for increasing participation of disabled pupils in the school's curriculum, improving the accessibility of the physical environment and improving delivery of information to disabled pupils.
Equality	Trust	Statement of policy for promoting equality
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	School	Statement of policy for safeguarding and promoting welfare of pupils at the school
Behaviour & Attendance	School	Statement of general principles on behaviour and discipline and of measures taken by the headteacher to prevent bullying.

Trust/School Policies and other information related to the school - This section gives access to information about policies that relate to the school in general.

Class	Trust/School	Description
Published reports of Ofsted referring expressly to the school	School	Published report of the last inspection of the school and the summary of the report.

Class	School/Trust	Description
Charging and Remissions Policy	School	A statement of the school's policy with respect to charges and remissions for any optional extra or board and lodging for which charges are permitted, for example school publications, music tuition, trips
School session times and term dates	School	Details of school session and dates of school terms and holidays

Health and Safety Policy	Trust	Statement of general policy with respect to health and safety at work of employees (and others) and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out the policy
Complaints procedure	Trust	Statement of procedures for dealing with complaints
Staff Conduct, Discipline and Grievance	Trust	Statement of procedure for regulating conduct and discipline of trust staff and procedures by which staff may seek redress for grievance
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Trust	Any statutory instruments, departmental circulars and administrative memoranda sent by the Department of Education and Skills to the CEO, Headteacher or Trustees relating to the curriculum

School Policies are available on individual school websites

7. Charges

In line with The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004

The appropriate limit for costs incurred will be £450; maximum of 18 hours at £25/hour, plus disbursements.

We will charge as follows:

- the first 18 hours of collating information is free;
- we will charge 10 pence per sheet for anything copied plus postage;
- we will charge £25 per hour if someone wants to come in and look at records, in a supervised environment;
- the Trust will not proceed with any Freedom of Information request beyond 18 hours as defined by the appropriate limit.

8. Feedback and Complaints

We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you want to make any comments about this publication scheme or if you require further assistance or wish to make a complaint then initially this should be addressed to the Headteacher.

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made then this should be addressed to the Information Commissioner's Office. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and that deals with formal complaints.

They can be contacted at: Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF; or

Enquiry/Information Line: 0303 123 1113 email: casework@ico.org.uk Website: <http://ico.org.uk/>