

Pickwick Academy Trust



Freedom of Information Policy

Policy Group:	Admin & Data
Policy Ref:	ADD/04
Responsible Reviewing Officer and Job Title:	Emma Oldale Chief Finance and Operating Officer
Date Written:	November 2024
Date Approved by the Board:	November 2024
Date of Next Review:	November 2027

1. Introduction – Statement of Intent

- a. The Freedom of Information Act (2004) came into force on 1st January 2005. The main principle behind freedom of information legislation is that people have a right to know about the activities of public authorities, unless there is a good reason for them not to. This means that:
 - everyone has the right to access official information
 - an applicant does not need to give a reason for wanting the information
 - all requests must be treated equally, unless vexatious or relating to personal data
 - information disclosure should be completed on an equal basis, for example, it should only be disclosed to one person as if it were being released to the whole world.
- b. As an education provider, Pickwick Academy Trust and each of its schools has an obligation to publish a Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, outlining how it will meet its duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and associated regulations. The Trust recognises its duties and will make every effort to meet its obligations under this legislation.
- c. The Trust will make every effort to provide assistance and advice to those requesting information by advising them of their rights, the requirements of a valid request submission and drawing their attention to the Trust FOI publication scheme.

2. Purpose and Scope

- a. This policy outlines the Trust's policy and procedures for:
 - The release and publication of private data and public records
 - Providing applicants with advice and assistance throughout the duration of their requests.
- b. It also clarifies the Trust's position regarding the appropriate limit to the costs incurred by the Trust/school in obtaining any requested information, and on charging fees for its provision.
- c. This policy applies to all recorded information held by the Trust or its schools that relates to the business of the organisation, as detailed in the FOI Publication Scheme.
- d. The policy also covers requests for information relating to the environment and health and safety which are covered by the Environmental Information Regulations. These will be processed in the same way as Freedom of Information requests but can be verbal as well as provided in writing.
- e. Requests for personal data are covered by the Data Protection Act and GDPR. Individuals can request to see what information the trust or a school holds about them by submitting a Subject Access Request.

3. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

- a. The Trust's CEO is responsible for broadcasting the policy and its requirements and through the Trust Executive Team and Headteachers ensuring that provision is made for its promulgation. This will include familiarisation of all staff including those with specific roles associated with data within their responsibilities.
- b. The Data Protection Officer for Pickwick Academy Trust is One West. They can provide support for FOI requests and SARS and can be contacted through:

Email: i-west@bathnes.gov.uk

Telephone: 01225 395959

One West

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Guildhall

High Street

Bath

BA1 5AW

- c. Headteachers and Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that a Freedom of Information Request is complied with within the correct timeframe.
- d. All staff are responsible for reading this policy and ensuring that they are aware of the requirements of them in line with Freedom of Information legislation as requests can be made to any staff member and they must make their Line Manager aware, should a request be received.

4. Publication Scheme

- a. Pickwick Academy Trust has adopted the ICO's Model Publication Scheme for Schools which is available on the Trust website:
[Home - Pickwick Academy Trust](#)
- b. This specifies the information which it will publish on the Trust/school's website, and whether the information will be available free of charge or on payment.
- c. The publication scheme will be reviewed and, where necessary, updated on an annual basis.

5. Accepting Requests for Information

- a. The Trust/school will only accept a request for information which meets all of the following criteria:
 - It is in writing (this includes requests sent to the Trust/school's social media accounts and requests under the EIR that can also be verbal).
 - It states the name of the applicant (not a pseudonym) or the name of the person or organisation that they are acting on behalf of (this can be checked if it is suspected that a false name is being used as the request is vexatious or repeated)

- an address for correspondence (residential/ work postal address or email address)
 - It adequately describes the information requested, even if broad or unclear. (the trust recognise that the Act covers information requests not documents and so relevant information may need to be gathered to fulfil the request).
- b. A request will be treated as made in writing if it meets all of the following requirements:
- It is transmitted by electronic means or in paper format – see appendix A for a template FOI request form
 - It is received in legible form
 - It is capable of being used for subsequent reference
- c. Where a request is submitted in a foreign language, the Trust/school is not expected to obtain a translation of the request. For the request to be processed, the Trust/school will ask the applicant to provide their request in English.
- d. The Trust will publish details of its procedures for dealing with requests for information on its website, in its Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, which includes the following:
- A contact address and telephone number
 - An email address
- e. If a person is requesting their own personal data, it should be dealt with as a Subject Access Request.
- f. If environmental, or some elements of health and safety information is requested, this is provided as a Freedom of Information request but covered by the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

6. General Rights of Access to Information held by the Trust/School

- a. Provided that the request meets the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the Trust/school will comply with its duty to:
- Confirm or deny to any person making a request for information to the Trust/school, whether it holds information of the description specified in the request.
 - Provide the documentation if the Trust/school confirms that it holds the requested information.
- b. An initial response letter should be provided to the requestor to acknowledge receipt of the request and if necessary, clarify the information requested and/ or

the charge levied for compliance with the request. See appendix B for a template letter.

- c. The duties outlined in section a must be completed no later than 20 school days, or 60 working days if this is shorter, from receipt of the request, or from the date that clarification in order to fulfil the request is received (See appendix C for a template letter of response).
- d. Where a fee is charged, the timeframe within which the Trust/school has to respond to the request will only begin from the day the fee is received.
- e. The Trust/school will not comply with paragraph 5 a of this policy where:
- f. The Trust/school reasonably requires further information to meet a freedom of information request, has informed the applicant of this requirement, but was not subsequently supplied with that further information.
- g. A request for information is exempt under section 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- h. The cost of providing the information exceeds the appropriate limit.
- i. The request is vexatious.
- j. The request is a repeated request from the same person made within 60 consecutive working days of the initial one.
- k. A fee notice was not honoured.
- l. The requested information is not held by the Trust/school for the purposes of the Trust/school's business.
- m. Where information is, or is thought to be, exempt, the Trust/school will, within 20 school days, give notice to the applicant which:
- n. States that fact.
- o. Specifies the exemption in question.
- p. There are two types of exemption under the FOI which can be used to refuse part or all of a request, including whether or not you hold the information. These are:
 - Absolute – includes requests for information that is reasonably accessible, in court records, include personal data of living third parties where there is no lawful basis identifiable for you to share it, given to you by someone else where disclosure could lead to a breach of confidence
 - Qualified – includes requests for information intended for future publication, relates to criminal investigations, could prejudice law enforcement activities, could endanger anyone's physical or mental health or safety, covered by legal professional privilege, could prejudice commercial interests.
- q. Please read ICO guidance if it is believed that one of these may apply - [Exemptions | ICO](#)

- r. If information falls within scope of a qualified exemption and the Trust/school needs additional time to consider the public interest test ([When and how do we apply the public interest test? | ICO](#)), the Trust/school may extend the deadline. In most cases, the extension will exceed no more than a further 20 school days; however, the actual length of the extension will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- s. Where a public interest test extension is required, the Trust/school will write to the applicant to inform them of this, stating the following information:
 - t. Which exemption(s) the extension relies on and why.
 - u. A revised deadline for when the applicant will receive their response.
 - v. Where a deadline has to be further extended, the Trust/school will write to the applicant again, stating the information outlined above. See appendix D for a template letter.
- w. Requests for information that is not recorded by the Trust/school (e.g., requests for explanations, clarification of policy and comments on the Trust's/school's business) will not be considered as a valid request. In these cases, the applicant will be provided with an explanation of why their request will not be treated under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Trust/school will respond to the applicant through other channels as appropriate.
- x. Where information is not available despite a thorough search (completed in accordance with the ICO checklist – [Conducting searches for information checklist | ICO](#)), the requester must be advised and if the information is held by another public body, they can be advised to redirect their request.
- y. The information provided to the applicant will be in the format that they have requested, where possible – see section 9 below.
- z. Where it is not possible to provide the information in the requested format, the Trust/school will assist the applicant by discussing alternative formats in which it can be provided.
 - aa. The information provided will also be in the language in which it is held, or another language that is legally required.
 - bb. If, under relevant disability and discrimination regulations, the Trust/school is legally obliged to provide the information in other forms and formats, it will do so.
 - cc. In some cases, a request may be dealt with under more than one access regime, e.g., if the request involves both information about the Trust/school and personal information, it will be dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and as a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act 2018.
 - dd. Staff should be aware that it is a criminal offence to alter, deface, block, erase, destroy or conceal any information held by the Trust/school with the intention of preventing disclosure following a request.

7. Provision of Information

- a. Information provided will be that available at the time of the request with no changes, unless these would have been completed as part of a routine update. Information relating to a request should not then be deleted, even if the deletion was scheduled.
- b. Documents should be double checked to ensure that they are correct and do not include sensitive details or unnoticed personal data. This may be particularly important when releasing an electronic document as they often contain hidden information.
- c. If a staff member is concerned, they must ensure that another member of staff checks the documents are correct and have been stripped of any metadata or source data before they are sent.

8. The appropriate limit

- a. The Trust/school will not comply with any freedom of information request that exceeds the statutorily imposed appropriate limit of £450.
- b. When determining whether the cost of complying with a freedom of information request is within the appropriate limit, the cost will be estimated and the Trust/school will take account only of the costs we reasonably expect to incur in relation to:
 - Determining whether it holds the information.
 - Locating the information, or a document which may contain the information.
 - Retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information.
 - Extracting the information from a document containing it.
 - Costs related to the time spent by any person undertaking any of the activities outlined in section 6 of this policy on behalf of the Trust/ school, are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour.
- c. The Trust/school is not required to search for information in scope of a request until it is within the cost limit. If responding to one part of a request would exceed the cost limit, the Trust/school does not have to respond to any other parts of the request.
- d. If refusing the request, the Trust/ school must send a written refusal notice - see Appendix D.
- e. The requester can refine their request appropriately and if received, this should be treated as a new request and a new timeline will begin.
- f. Where multiple requests for information are made to the Trust/school within 60 consecutive working days of each other, either by a single person or by different persons who appear to be acting in concert, the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the total costs to the Trust/school of complying with all of them.

9. Charging Fees

- a. The Trust/school may, as soon as possible within 20 school days, give an applicant who has requested information from the Trust/school, a written notice stating that a fee is to be charged for the school's compliance.
- b. Charges may only be made for disbursements, such as the following:
 - Production expenses, e.g., printing and photocopying
 - Transmission costs, e.g., postage
 - Complying with the applicant's preferences about the format in which they would like to receive the information, e.g., scanning to a CD
- c. Fees charged will not exceed the total cost to the school of:
 - Informing the person making the request whether we hold the information.
 - Communicating the information to the person making the request.
- d. Where a fee is to be charged, the Trust/school will not comply with section 6 of this policy unless the requested fee is paid within a period of three months, beginning with the day on which the fees notice is given to the applicant.
- e. Where a fee is paid by cheque, the Trust/school has the right to wait until the cheque is cleared before commencing work.
- f. Once a fee is received, the Trust/school will inform the applicant of the revised response deadline, i.e., up to 20 school days (or 60 working days).
- g. When calculating the 20th school day in which to respond to a freedom of information request, the period beginning the day on which the fee notice is given to the applicant and ending with the day on which the fee is received will be disregarded.
- h. Where the Trust/school has underestimated the cost to be charged to an applicant, a second fees notice will not be issued; instead, the Trust/school will bear the additional costs.
- i. The Trust/school will not take into account any costs which are attributable to the time spent by persons undertaking any of the activities mentioned in section 7 above.

10. Means of Communication

- a. Where, on making a request for information, the applicant expresses a preference for communication by any one of the following means, the Trust/school will, as far as is practicable, give effect to that preference:
 - The provision to the applicant of a copy of the information in permanent form or in another form acceptable to the applicant.

- The provision to the applicant of a reasonable opportunity to inspect a record containing the information.
 - The provision to the applicant of a digest, or summary of the information, in permanent form or in another form acceptable to the applicant.
- b. Where a preference is not stated by the applicant, the Trust/school will communicate by any means which are reasonable under the circumstances. For example, where an applicant uses Twitter to make a request, the Trust/school may respond via an alternative medium as Twitter restricts the length of a response.

11. Providing Advice and Assistance

- a. The Trust/school will meet its duty to provide advice and assistance, as far as is reasonable, to any person who proposes to make, or has made, requests for information to the Trust/school.
- b. The Trust/school may offer advice and assistance in the following circumstances:
- If an individual requests to know what types of information the Trust/school holds and the format in which it is available, as well as information on the fees regulations and charging procedures
 - If a request has been made, but the Trust/school is unable to regard it as a valid request due to insufficient information, leading to an inability to identify and locate the information
- c. If a request has been refused, e.g., due to an excessive cost, it may be necessary for the Trust/school to assist the individual who has submitted the request. The Trust/school will provide assistance for each individual on a case-by-case basis; examples of how the Trust/school will provide assistance include the following:
- Informing an applicant of their rights under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - Assisting an individual in the focus of their request, e.g., by advising of the types of information available within the requested category
 - Advising an applicant if information is available elsewhere and how to access this information
 - Keeping an applicant informed on the progress of their request
- d. Where the Trust/school wishes to ask a different public authority to deal with a request by transferring it to them, this will only be done with the agreement of the applicant.
- e. In order to provide assistance as outlined above, the Trust/school will engage in the following good practice procedures:
- Make early contact with an individual and keep them informed of the process of their request.
 - Accurately record and document all correspondence concerning the clarification and handling of any request.
 - Give consideration to the most appropriate means of contacting the applicant, taking into account their individual circumstances.

- Discuss with the applicant whether they would prefer to receive the information in an alternative format, in cases where it is not possible to provide the information requested in the manner originally specified.
 - Remain prepared to assist an applicant who has had their request denied due to an exemption.
- f. The Trust/school will give particular consideration to what level of assistance is required for an applicant who has difficulty submitting a written request.
- g. In circumstances where an applicant has difficulty submitting a written request, the Trust/school will:
- Make a note of the application over the telephone and then send the note to the applicant to confirm and return – the statutory time limit for a reply would begin here.
 - Direct the individual to a different agency that may be able to assist with framing their request.

NB. This list is not exhaustive, and the school may decide to take additional assistance measures that are appropriate to the case.

- h. Where an applicant's request has been refused either because the information is accessible by other means, or the information is intended for future publication or research, the Trust/school, as a matter of good practice, will provide advice and assistance.
- i. The Trust/school will advise the applicant how and where information can be obtained if it is accessible by other means.
- j. Where there is an intention to publish the information in the future, the Trust/school will advise the applicant of when this publication is expected.
- k. If the request is not clear, the Trust/school will ask for more detail from the applicant in order to identify and locate the relevant information, before providing further advice and assistance.
- l. If the Trust/school believes the applicant has not provided their real name, the Trust/school will inform the applicant that the request will not be responded to until further information is received from the applicant.
- m. If the Trust/school is able to clearly identify the elements of a request, it will respond following usual procedures and will provide advice and assistance for the remainder of the request.
- n. If any additional clarification is needed for the remainder of a request, the Trust/school will ensure there is no delay in asking for further information.
- o. Applicants are given two months to provide any requested clarification. If an applicant decides not to follow the Trust/school's advice and assistance and fails

to provide clarification, the Trust/school is under no obligation to contact the applicant again.

- p. If the Trust/school is under any doubt that the applicant did not receive the advice and assistance, the Trust/school will re-issue it.
- q. The Trust/school is not required to provide assistance where an applicant's request is vexatious or repeated, as defined under section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- r. Where the Trust/school has already sent a refusal request in relation to a previous vexatious request, the Trust/school is not obliged to send another notice for future vexatious requests.
- s. An ongoing evidence log is kept, recording relevant correspondence or behaviour that has been taken into account when a request has been classed as vexatious.
- t. The Trust/school is not required to provide information where the cost of complying with a request exceeds the limit outlined in the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In such cases, the Trust/school will firstly provide the applicant with advice and assistance to help them reframe or refocus their request with a view of bringing it within the cost limit. Then the school will consider whether any information can be provided free of charge if the applicant refuses to pay the fee.
- u. If a request is refined, it will be treated as a new request.
- v. A record will be kept by the CFOO or the Headteacher of all the advice and assistance provided in respect of a particular Freedom of Information request at Trust or school level.
- w. A record will be held at Trust level of any advice and assistance provided to a school in response to a particular Freedom of Information request.

12. Consultation with Third Parties

- a. The Trust/school may need to consult third parties about information held in scope of a request to consider whether it would be suitable to disclose the information. Situations where third parties may need to be consulted include the following:
 - When requests relate to persons or bodies who are not the applicant and/or the Trust/school
 - When the disclosure of information is likely to affect the interests of persons or bodies who are not the applicant or the Trust/school
- b. The Trust/school will consider if a third party needs to be directly consulted about a request, particularly, if there are contractual obligations that require consultation before information is disclosed.

- c. Third parties will also be consulted where the Trust/school is proposing to disclose information relating to them or information that is likely to affect their business or private interests.
- d. The views of third parties will be given appropriate weighting when deciding how to respond to a request. For example, if the third party created or provided the information, they may have a better understanding of its sensitivity.
- e. It is ultimately the Trust/school's decision as to whether information in scope of a request will be released following any relevant consultation.
- f. Where the Trust/school decides to release information following consultation with a third party, the third party will be informed in advance that the information is going to be disclosed.
- g. Where the Trust/school intends to release information that relates to a large number of third parties, the Trust/school will consider whether it would be more appropriate to contact a representative organisation who can express views on behalf of the third parties, rather than contacting each party individually. If no representative organisation exists, the Trust/school may also consider only notifying or consulting a sample of the third parties relating to the disclosure.
- h. Decisions made in line with paragraph 11 g will be made on a case-by-case basis.

13. Internal Reviews

- a. When responding to requests for information, the details of the Trust/school's internal review process will be set out, including information about how applicants can request an internal review. Applicants will also be informed of their right to complain to the ICO if they are still dissatisfied following the outcome of the Trust/school's internal review.
- b. Requests for an internal review should be made in writing to the Trust/school.
- c. For a request for an internal review to be accepted, it must be made within 40 school days from the date the school issued an initial response to the request.
- d. Upon receipt of an application, the Trust/school will acknowledge an application and inform the applicant of the intended response date. Responses will usually be delivered within 20 school days of receipt of the application.
- e. If an internal review is complex, requires consultation with third parties or the relevant information is of high volume, the Trust/school may need to extend the usual response timeframe. In these cases, the Trust/school will inform the applicant and provide an alternative response date. In most cases, the extension will exceed no more than a further 20 school days; however, the actual length of the extension will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

- f. Where clarification is needed from an applicant regarding the review, the normal response period will not begin until clarification is received.
- g. Wherever possible, the review will be undertaken by a different member of staff than the person who took the original decision.
- h. During a review, the Trust/school will evaluate the handling of the request; particular attention will be paid to concerns raised by the applicant.
- i. The applicant will be informed of the outcome of the review and a record will be kept of such reviews and the final decision that is made.
- j. If the outcome of the review is to disclose information that was previously withheld, the information will be provided to the applicant at the same time they are informed of the response to the review, where possible. If this is not possible, the applicant will be informed of when the information will be provided.
- k. Within the response to a review, the applicant will be informed again of their right to complain to the ICO.

14. Contracts and Outsourced Services

- a. The Trust/school will make clear what information is held by third party contractors on behalf of the Trust/school.
- b. Where a contractor holds information relating to a contract held with the Trust/school on behalf of the Trust/school, this information is considered in the same way as information held by a public authority and so is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- c. When entering into a contract, the Trust/school and contractor will agree what information the Trust/school will consider to be held by the contractor on behalf of the Trust/school, this will be indicated in the contract.
- d. Appropriate arrangements will be put in place for the Trust/school to gain access to information held by the contractor on the Trust/school's behalf, in the event that a freedom of information request is made. These arrangements will be set out in a contract, and will cover areas including the following:
 - How and when the contractor should be approached for information and who the points of contact are
 - How quickly information should be provided to the Trust/school
 - How any disagreement about disclosure between the Trust/school and contractor will be addressed
 - How requests for internal reviews and appeals to the ICO will be managed
 - The contractor's responsibility for maintaining record keeping systems in relation to the information they hold on behalf of the Trust/school

- The circumstances under which the Trust/school must consult with the contractor about disclosure and the process for doing so
 - The types of information which should not be disclosed and the reasons for this confidentiality, where appropriate
- e. In some situations, the Trust/school may offer or accept confidentiality arrangements that are not set out within a contract with a third party. The Trust/school and the third party will both be aware of the legal limits placed on the enforceability of expectations of confidentiality and the public interest in transparency.
- f. Such expectations outlined in paragraph 14 e will only be created where it is appropriate to do so.
- g. Contractors must comply with requests from the Trust/school for access to information they hold on behalf of the Trust/school.
- h. Requests for information held by a contractor on behalf of the Trust/school will be responded to by the Trust/school. If a contractor receives a request, this will be passed onto the Trust/school for consideration.

15. Equal Opportunities

An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed in order to ensure it complies with equality obligations outlined in discrimination legislation. The policy positively reflects the aims and ambitions of Pickwick Academy Trust.

16. Legal Framework

- a. This policy has due regard to the following legislation:
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
 - The Data Protection Act 2018
 - The Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004
- b. This policy also has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
- Cabinet Office (2018) 'Freedom of Information Code of Practice'
 - ICO (2013) 'Definition document for the governing bodies of maintained and other state-funded schools in England'
 - ICO (2015) 'Model publication scheme'
 - ICO (2016) 'Duty to provide advice and assistance (section 16)'
 - ICO (2015) 'Time limits for compliance under the Freedom of Information Act (section 10)'

17. Associated Policies

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with other Pickwick Academy Trust policies in the same group of policies including but not limited to:

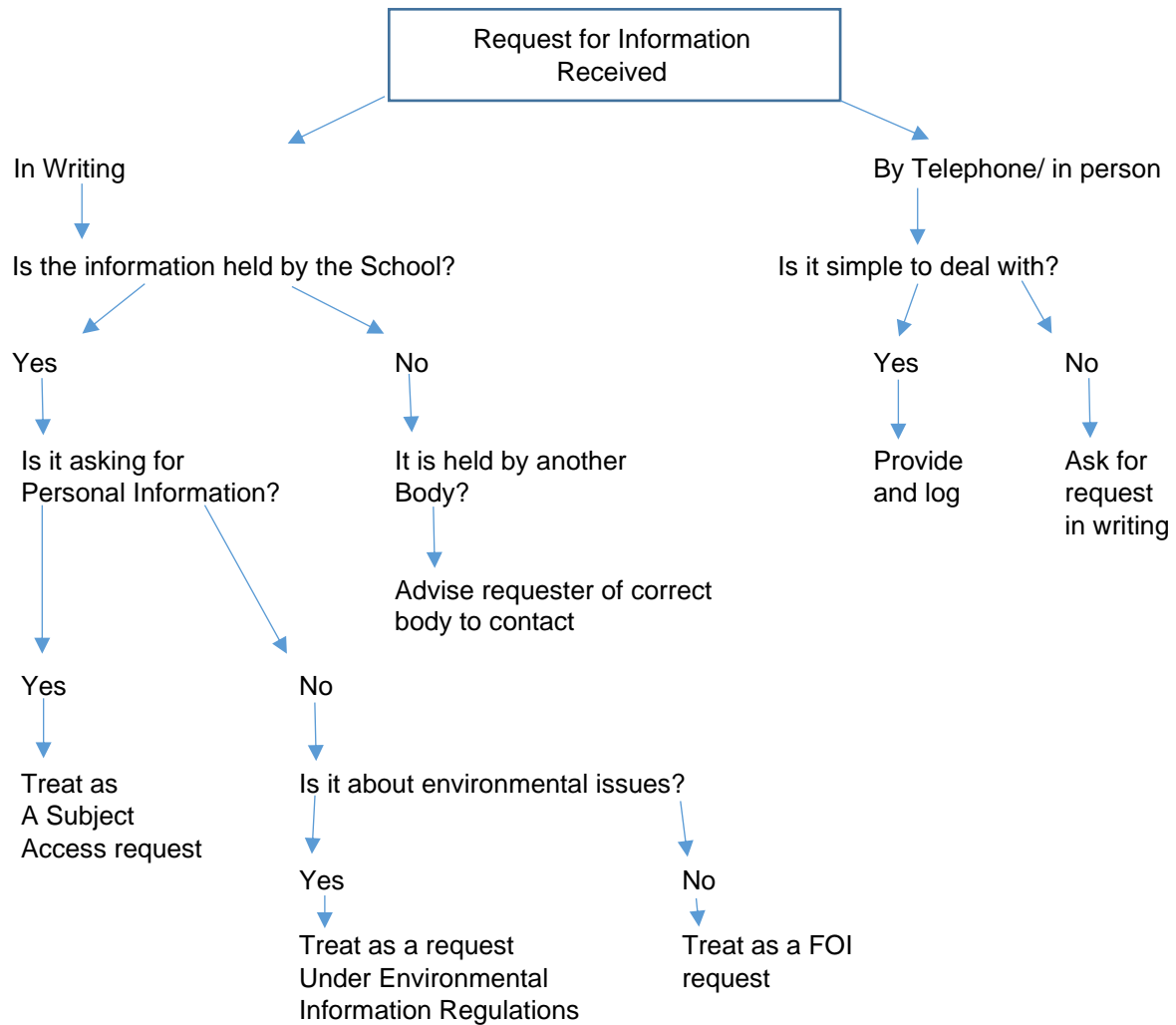
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Retention Policy

18. Monitoring and Review

- a. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or in light of any changes to relevant legislation.

1. Appendices

A. Process for Dealing with Requests



B. Pickwick Academy Trust Freedom of Information Request Form



Please fill in the form below to make your request. Feel free to delete the parts highlighted in yellow, which provide more instructions to help you.

Please send the completed form to admin@pickwickacademytrust.co.uk or the admin email address of the relevant school.

Name of requester	Please specify your real name or the name of the person or organisation you're requesting the information on behalf of.
Contact details	This can be any postal or email address you can receive correspondence to, including personal and work addresses.
Information you want to access	Please be as specific as possible. We may return to you for further clarification if we're not clear what you're looking for.
How you want to receive the information	<p>The means of communication here can be 1 or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A copy of the information (e.g., hard copy, electronic document)• An opportunity to come in and inspect the information• A digest or summary of the information

C. Pickwick Academy Trust Initial FOI request response letter template.



Dear [requester's name],

Thank you for the request you made on [date of request], seeking the following information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000:

[Copy and paste the information requested in the initial request.]

If you don't need to clarify anything with the requester, deal with the request under different legislation or charge them a fee, insert this:

This is to confirm that we have received your request. You should receive a response from us by [insert date that's 20 school days away from when they submitted the request, or 60 working days if that's sooner].

If you need to clarify anything with the requester, insert this:

We would like to clarify the following point(s) to make sure we give you the information you are looking for:

[Insert clarification questions here].

Once we are clear on what information you are requesting, you should receive a response from us within 20 school days, or 60 working days if that is shorter.

If you need to deal with the request under different legislation, insert this:

The information you have requested does not fall under the terms of the Act. Instead, we will treat your request under [insert relevant legislation, e.g., the UK GDPR].

This means you should receive a response from us by [insert deadline as set out in relevant legislation].

If you need to charge a fee for responding to the request, insert this:

In order for us to fulfil this request, you will need to pay us [insert amount] within 3 months of the date this notice was issued. [If you want, add details about what costs this payment would cover]. The response time will begin following payment of the required amount.

If you are not willing or able to pay this fee, please do get in touch and we can discuss ways of refining your request that could bring this cost down.

If you do pay the fee, you should receive a response from us within [insert amount of compliance time left since receiving the request] once we have received the payment.

[Insert details of how this fee should be paid, such as bank account details.]

Kind regards,

[Your name]

D. Pickwick Academy Trust Response Letter to FOI request



Dear [requester's name],

Thank you for the request you made on [date of request], seeking the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

[Copy and paste the information requested in the initial request and any follow-up clarifications.]

If you don't have the information requested, insert this:

We can confirm that this information is not held by us.

[If you're aware of another public authority that may hold the information instead, tell them to re-apply to this authority and supply them with the relevant contact details.]

If you have the information requested, insert this:

We can confirm we hold the information you have requested.

If the information is already published as part of your publication scheme, insert this:

This information is already available for you to access, as set out in our publication scheme which can be found here: [insert link to your publication scheme here, and your accompanying guide to information if you have one].

If you're supplying a copy of the information and/or a summary or digest of it, insert this:

Please find attached a [copy/summary] of the information requested. [If you want to add in any explanation or background context for the information, do so here.]

If you're providing an opportunity to allow the requester to come into school to see the information, insert this:

We can now show the information to you if you come into the school. Please let us know when would be a suitable time for you to come in by [insert details for how to arrange a time – e.g., phone/email].

If you have internal appeals process in place, insert this:

If you are not satisfied that we have complied with the Act in responding to your request, you can request an internal review. Please get in touch by [phone/email – or other], explaining what you would like us to review.

Freedom of Information Policy November 2024

If you're not satisfied with the outcomes of the internal review, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner:

- Report a concern online at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>
- Call 0303 123 1113
- Or write to: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Kind regards,

[Your name]

Dear [requester's name],

E. Pickwick Academy Trust Refusal Response Letter to FOI request



Thank you for the request you made on [date of request], seeking the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

[Copy and paste the information requested in the initial request.]

If you're refusing on the grounds of a vexatious or repeated request, insert this:

We will not be supplying the information as we believe your request to be [vexatious/repeated]. This is allowable under section 14 of the Act.

We will not send a written refusal in response to any further [vexatious/repeated] requests.

If you're refusing on the grounds that it exceeds your cost limit, insert this:

We will not be supplying the information as the 'cost of compliance' for completing this request on our end would exceed £450, the appropriate cost limit set in legislation. This is allowable under section 12 of the Act.

[Add details about how you calculated this cost and which parts of the request took the cost over the line – for example because it would require an extensive search in a number of locations.]

Please do get in touch and we can discuss ways of refining your request that could bring this cost down.

If you're refusing on the grounds of exemptions set out in the Act, insert this:

We will not be supplying the information under the exemption set out in [insert section] of the Act, which applies to information concerning [insert details].

If you're refusing to confirm or deny whether you have the information for whatever reason, add this below whichever of the above sections used:

Due to this exemption, we're also not able to confirm or deny that we hold this information.

If you have internal appeals process in place, insert this:

If you are not satisfied that we have complied with the Act in responding to your request, you can request an internal review. Please get in touch, explaining what you would like us to review.

Freedom of Information Policy November 2024

If you are not satisfied with the outcomes of the internal review, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner:

- Report a concern online at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>
- Call 0303 123 1113
- Or write to: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Kind regards,

[Your name]