Freedom of Information policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
July 2016	July 2017	Margaret O'Sullivan	

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004

We are aware that under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) we have a legal duty to supply certain information to enquirers and that we must be clear and proactive about the information we make public.

To do this we have in place a publication scheme that sets out:

- The classes of information we publish or intend to publish
- The manner in which the information will be published
- How to request information
- Payment for information

We are committed to the aims of the FOIA and the access provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 by promoting an open transparent policy as we believe the public have a right to access the recorded information held by us.

We understand that recorded information held by us relates to the business of the School and includes information that is:

- created and held by us
- created by us but held by another organisation on our behalf
- held by us but relating to the Governor Body
- held by us but provided by third parties

We believe the FOIA will encourage greater openness and accountability in public authorities, help increase levels of public trust, encourage improvements in our interaction with the public and provide the public with information they require in order to participate in decision making.

We understand that the FOIA allows schools to withhold certain information which are listed under Absolute exemption and qualified exemption.

We are 'under a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information and must respond to the enquiry promptly, and in any event, within 20 working days of receipt (not including school holidays)'.

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We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To provide certain information to enquirers under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- To recognise that we have a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher as 'Data Controller' for the school;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- nominated a link governor to:

  - ☐ visit the school regularly;
  - ☐ work closely with the Headteacher and the co-ordinator;
  - ☐ ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
  - ☐ ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
  - ☐ attend training related to this policy;
  - ☐ report to the Governing Body;
  - ☐ report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

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Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the link governor;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors;
- report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- be aware of all other linked policies;
- handle all requests for information in compliance with the various acts;
- take advice from the Data Controller;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

Categories of Information Published

Current published information is:

School Prospectus

- ☐ The name, address, telephone number, email address and website
- ☐ The type of school
- ☐ The names of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors and contact details
- ☐ The Admissions policy
- ☐ The school's ethos and values
- ☐ SEN policy
- ☐ The number of pupils on roll
- ☐ Attendance figures
- ☐ National Curriculum results for each Key Stage

School Profile

- ☐ Successes this year
- ☐ Improvements to be made
- ☐ Pupil achievements at age 7
- ☐ Pupil achievements at age 11
- ☐ Analysis of results over the past three years

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- ☐ Arrangements to ensure every child gets teaching to meet their individual needs
- ☐ A list of the activities and options available to all pupils
- ☐ Absence rates compared to other schools
- ☐ Pupils views of the school and how we have addressed these views
- ☐ Working with parents and the community
- ☐ Destinations of Y6 leavers

Governors' documents

- ☐ Instrument of Government
- ☐ Minutes of meetings of the governing body and its committees

Pupils & Curriculum Policies

- ☐ Home-School Agreement
- ☐ Curriculum Policy
- ☐ Sex Education Policy
- ☐ Special Education Needs Policy
- ☐ Accessibility Plans
- ☐ Race Equality Policy
- ☐ Collective Worship
- ☐ Child Protection Policy
- ☐ Behaviour and Attitude Policy

School Policies and other Information related to the school

- ☐ The school's Ofsted Inspection Reports
- ☐ School Development Plan
- ☐ Charging and Remissions Policy
- ☐ School Session Times and Term Dates
- ☐ Health and Safety Policy
- ☐ Complaints Procedure
- ☐ Performance Management of Staff
- ☐ Staff, Discipline and Grievance

Dealing with a Request for Information

The Headteacher will deal with written requests for information by:

- deciding if the request comes under one of the following Acts namely:

  - ☐ Data Protection Act
  - ☐ Environmental Information Regulations
  - ☐ Freedom of Information Act

- deciding whether the school holds the information
- providing the information if it has already been made public
- informing the enquirer if the school does not have that information
- deciding if information disclosed might affect the interests of a third party
- deciding if the estimated cost of complying with the request will exceed the appropriate limit

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- ensuring that all personal information is excluded from a requested document
- consider if the request is annoying or repeated
- dealing with a FOI request within 20 working days
- dealing with a Data Protection request within 40 calendar days.

Reasons for not Complying with a Request

We accept the four reasons under the FOIA for not complying with a request for information:

- that the requested information is not held
- the cost threshold is reached
- the request is considered annoying or repeated
- that one or more of the exemptions apply

Complaints

All complaints will be dealt with by the school's complaints procedure.

Information Availability

Documents can be downloaded from the school website or by contacting the school by letter, fax or email.

Payment for Information

Information published on the website is free. A charge has been fixed for Education Records at a maximum of £50.

Reporting Requests

All requests for information will be reported to the governors by the Head.

Feedback and Complaints

We actively encourage the views and suggestions from parents and the general public about how we can improve this publication scheme.

All complaints should be addressed to the Information Commissioner's Office which ensures that all organisations comply with Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Prospectus
- the school website
- the Staff Handbook

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- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- communications with home such as letters and newsletters
- reports such annual report to parents
- information displays around the school

Training

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on this policy on induction
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Board of Governors for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

▪ Data Protection Procedures	▪ School Prospectus	▪ Governors
▪ Curriculum Policies	▪ School Policies	▪ Complaints

Headteacher:		**Date:**	
Chair of Governing Body:		**Date:**	

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