



Shakespeare

Primary School

Shakespeare Primary School and Nursery Freedom of Information Policy

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 the 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 governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Requests for access to such information (subject access requests) will be managed under our Data Protection Policy and in line with 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 promptly and, in any event, no later than 20 working days from the date of receipt of the request, in line with section 10 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and more speedily if possible. Where we need additional time to consider the balance of the public interest test in relation to qualified exemptions, we may extend this by up to a further 20 working days, and we will notify the requester of the extension and the reasons. 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 school 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. The school reserves the right to refuse requests where the estimated cost of locating, retrieving and, where necessary, extracting the information would exceed the statutory appropriate limit

(currently £450 for schools) set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

The school recognises that requests for environmental information may be made verbally, including over the telephone, and that such requests are handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which have different exceptions and procedures.

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 1998

The school is under a legal duty to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. We will carefully consider our responsibilities under this legislation before releasing personal information about living individuals, including current and former employees and pupils, and we will handle such requests under our Data Protection and Records Management policies.

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. If a requester remains dissatisfied after the school's internal review, they have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

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 in making or handling a request under this policy, please contact the School Business Manager in the first instance, who will liaise with the Head Teacher and Data Protection Officer where appropriate.

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