



Freedom of Information Policy

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REVIEW HISTORY

VERSION NO.	DATE OF CHANGE	CHANGE SUMMARY	PAGE NO.
0.1	12.5.21	Draft	
2.0	5.5.22	'if the information can be released' changed from 'is to be released' as sometimes the information can't be given over - due to exemptions such as commercial sensitivity or safeguarding	5

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Policy Statement

OAK Multi Academy Trust is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) as a public authority, and as such, must comply with any requests for information in accordance with the principles laid out in the Act. This means that the trust must hold and publish a FOI Publication Scheme, to communicate what information we hold is readily available to the public, and where it can be found.

All public authorities must also have processes in place to manage and FOI requests that are made.

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The Model Publication Scheme provided by the ICO for schools and academies has been adopted by Oak Multi Academy Trust. The Model Publication Scheme provides a list of the information routinely published by academies which the ICO expects them to make available unless:

- They do not hold the information
- The information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute
- The information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible, or, it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

It is the Trust's aim to ensure that the publication of information is accessible for individuals. The table in Appendix 1 details the information routinely published. Much of the information listed is routinely published on individual school websites and in their individual prospectuses.

The publication scheme and the material it covers will be readily available in hard copy from the trust or the individual school, depending on the source of the information.

Schedule of charges under Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Type of Charge	Description	Basis of charge
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/Printing @ 10p per sheet	Actual cost 10p
	Photocopying/Printing @ 50p per sheet	Actual cost 50p
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2nd class

Where the cost of postage, printing or photocopying is below £10.00, we will not make a charge. Where it is over £10.00, the first £10.00 will be free of charge, after that we will charge the full estimated cost of postage and copying.

Before we produce the information, we shall inform you of the total cost. You may wish to refine the request to reduce the cost and we would be happy to discuss this with you.

Freedom of Information requests

Any request for any information from the trust or our individual schools will be considered to see if it meets the criteria of FOI. This is irrespective of whether the individual making the request mentions the FOI.

If the request is simple and the information can be released, then the individual who received the request can release the information but must ensure that this is done within the timescale set out below.

A copy of the request and response should then be sent to the Trust Governance Manager, Danielle Benyon-Payne admin@oaktrust.org.

All other requests should be referred in the first instance to Danielle Benyon-Payne admin@oaktrust.org who may co-ordinate the process with other staff.

All requests under FOI are treated as if made by any member of the public. Any information released will be within the public domain and may not be marked restricted or confidential.

Time limits for FOI requests

The trust and/or school must respond as soon as possible, and in any event, within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the request. When calculating the 20 working day deadline, a “working day” is a school day (one in which pupils are in attendance), subject to an absolute maximum of 60 normal working days (not school days) to respond.

Procedure for dealing with a request

All FOI requests should be forwarded on receipt to the specified co-ordinator in each school, the SBM. Initially it will be necessary to determine whether or not the organisation holds the information requested. This might be in hard copy or digital media. There may be occasions where information is held, but the process of extracting the relevant information would take considerable time. In those instances the requester may be given the opportunity to refine the request based on the information given.

Part 1 – Identifying the types of information

As an organisation we hold different types of information:

- Organisational information, prospectus, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance, schemes of delegation, Trust and individual school arrangements.
- Financial information about income and expenditure, financial audit, funding agreements, procurement, tendering and contracts.
- Plans, strategies, aims and objectives, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.
- Decision making processes and records of decisions, internal criteria and procedures
- Policies and procedures –protocols, policies and procedures for delivering services and compliance with our statutory and regulatory obligations.
- Lists and registers required by law and other key information.
- Details of our curriculum and wider educational offering

Part 2 - Considering the nature of the request

FOI requests will be fully complied with unless an exemption applies. Common exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 include:

Section 40 (1) – the request is for the applicants personal data. This must be dealt with under the subject access regime in the GDPR, see the Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices;

Section 40 (2) – compliance with the request would involve releasing third party personal data, and this would be in breach of the GDPR principles as set out in Data Protection Policy

Section 41 – information that has been sent to the Academy Trust (but not the Academy’s own information) which is confidential;

Section 21 – information that is already publicly available, even if payment of a fee is required to access that information;

Section 22 – information that the Academy Trust intends to publish at a future date;

Section 43 – information that would prejudice the commercial interests of the Academy and / or a third party;

Section 38 – information that could prejudice the physical health, mental health or safety of an individual (this may apply particularly to safeguarding information);

Section 31 – information which may prejudice the effective detection and prevention of crime – such as the location of CCTV cameras;

Section 36 – information which, in the opinion of the chair of trustees of the Academy Trust, would prejudice the effective conduct of the Academy. There is a special form for this on the ICO’s website to assist with the obtaining of the chair’s opinion.

Information within these exemptions must be considered and weighed up about the general principle that information should be disclosed wherever applicable.

Part 3 - Responding to a request

When responding to a request where it is necessary to withhold some or all of the information, we will explain why the information has been withheld, quoting the appropriate section number and explaining how the information requested fits within that exemption. If the public interest test has been applied, this will be set out.

In these circumstances the requester can seek a review form with the trust school, and correspondence should be addressed in the first instance to the School Business Manager.

If anyone has any concerns, questions or complaints in relation to this policy or the publication scheme contained within it they should contact Danielle Benyon-Payne, Trust Governance Manager, admin@oaktrust.org

If you require a paper version of any information set out under the FOI Publication Scheme, or want to ask whether information is available, contact the trust using the details set out below.

Contact

As outlined above, please contact Danielle Benyon-Payne, Trust Governance Manager, admin@oaktrust.org for any FOI requests.

You can also visit our website <https://www.oaktrust.org>.

To help us process requests quickly, any correspondence should be clearly marked 'FOI Request'. 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: Information Commissioners Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5A, telephone: 0303 123 1113, website: www.ico.org.uk

Appendix 1: Freedom of Information Publication Scheme (ICO Model)

Classes of Information Currently Published

1. Who Are We and What Do We Do Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

Information Published	Available
Who's who in the Trust?	Trust website (Executive Leadership Team) OAK Academies Trust - Executive Team (oaktrust.org)
Trust members and trustees	Trust website (members and trustees) OAK Academies Trust - Membership and Trustees (oaktrust.org)
Local Governing Board Members	Individual school websites
Governance structure, Statement of Intent and Articles of Association and Supplemental Funding Agreements	Trust website OAK Academies Trust - Annual Reports and Accounts (oaktrust.org)
Senior staff structure	Individual school websites Trust website: OAK Academies Trust - MAT Structure (oaktrust.org)
Contact details of the Head of School or Principal or Executive Headteacher	Individual school websites
School prospectus	Individual school websites
School session times and term dates	Individual school websites
Contact details of the trust	OAK Academies Trust - Contact Us (oaktrust.org)

2. What We Spend and How We Spend It

Current and previous year financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit

Information Published	Available
Trust Annual Report within Audited Accounts	Trust website OAK Academies Trust - Annual Reports and Accounts (oaktrust.org)
Pay policy	Hard copy available on request
Procurement and Contracts	Hard copy available on request
Staff grading and structure	Hard copy available on request

3. Our Priorities

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews

Information Published	Available
School Profile Government supplied performance data Latest Ofsted report	Individual school websites
Vision, values and aims	Individual school websites

	Trust website: OAK Academies Trust - Vision and Values (oaktrust.org)
Performance Management procedures	Hard copy available on request
Trust's future plans	Trust website: OAK Academies Trust - Strategic Development (oaktrust.org)
Safeguarding policies and procedures	Individual school websites

4. Decision Making

Processes and records for last 3 years

Information Published	Available
Admissions policy and decisions (not individual decisions)	Individual school websites
Minutes and agendas of meetings of the Trust (excluding information properly regarded as private to the meetings)	Hard copy - Available on request
Local governing body meeting minutes	Individual school websites

5. Policies and Procedures

Information Published	Available
School Policies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Behaviour • Careers • SEN • Exclusion • Curriculum 	Individual school websites Hard copies available on request
Records Management and Data Protection Policies including Privacy Notices and Freedom of Information Policy and Procedure	Currently hard copy: will be Trust website when ratified.
Trust policies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying • Charging and remissions • Complaints • Data Protection • Employee grievance and code of conduct • Equality and Diversity • Harassment • Parental use of social network and media 	Trust website Hard copies available on request

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and Selection Policy (to be ratified) • Relationships, Sex and Health Education • Volunteer Policy • Whistleblowing 	
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6. Lists and Registers

Information Published	Available
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Hard copies available on request
Disclosure logs (information that has been released in response to an FOI or SAR access request for documents)	N/A
Asset registers	Hard copies available on request

7. Services

Services we offer including leaflets, guidance and newsletters

Information Published	Available
Extra-curricular activities	Individual school websites
After school clubs	Individual school websites
School leaflets, publications and newsletters	Individual school websites
Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Individual school websites