

# St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre

## Freedom of Information Policy



2023

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The FOIA was introduced on 30 November 2000 but came fully into force on 1 January 2005. The act gave new rights of access for the public to public bodies recorded information.
- 1.2 The FOIA requires public bodies to action two specific legal obligations.
  - To adopt and maintain a publication scheme setting out details of information that the school will routinely make available and how the information can be obtained;
  - To comply with requests for information.

## **2. What a publication scheme is and why it has been developed?**

- 2.1 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 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.*
- 2.2 The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is available in paper form.
  - 2.3 Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example personal information.
  - 2.4 This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

## **3. Aims and Objectives**

- 3.1 The school aims to :
  - Enable every child to fulfil their learning potential, with education that meets the needs of each child,
  - Help every child develop the skills, knowledge and personal qualities needed for life and work,

and this publication scheme is a means of showing how we are pursuing these aims.

#### **4. Categories of Information Published**

4.1 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.

4.2 The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised into five broad topic areas:

- School Prospectus - information published in the school prospectus.
- School Profile - online
- Governors' Documents - information published in governing body documents.
- Pupils and Curriculum - information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum
- School Policies and other information related to the school - information about policies that relate to the school in general.

#### **5. How to request information detailed in the scheme**

5.1 If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the scheme, please contact the school by telephone, email or letter. Contact details are set out below :

Email : [Jayne.oconnell@taw.org.uk](mailto:Jayne.oconnell@taw.org.uk)

Telephone : 01952 386260

Contact Address : St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre, Church Road, Donnington Wood, Telford TF2 7PZ

To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence "PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST" (in CAPITALS please).

5.2 If the information you're looking for isn't available via the scheme you can still contact the school to ask if we have it (see FOI request section of this policy).

#### **6. Paying for Information**

- 6.1 Information published on our website is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet service provider. IF you don't have Internet access, you can access our website using a local library or an Internet café.
- 6.2 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.

#### **7. Classes of Information Currently Published**

**School Prospectus** - this section sets out information published in the school prospectus.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>School Prospectus</b>	<p>The statutory contents of the school prospectus are as follows, (other items may be included in the prospectus at the school's discretion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name, address and telephone number of the school, and the type of school</li> <li>• The names of the head teacher and chair of governors</li> <li>• Information on the school policy on admissions</li> <li>• A statement of the school's ethos and values</li> <li>• Details of any affiliations with a particular religion or religious denomination, the religious education provided, parents' right to withdraw their child from religious education and collective worship and the alternative provision for those pupils</li> <li>• Information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational needs</li> <li>• Number of pupils on roll and rates of pupils' authorised and unauthorised absences</li> <li>• National Curriculum assessment results for appropriate Key Stages, with national summary figures</li> <li>• The arrangements for visits to the school by prospective parents</li> </ul>

**Governors' Annual Report and other information relating to the governing body** - this section sets out information published in the Governors' Annual Report and in other governing body documents.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Governors' Annual Report</b>	<p>The statutory contents of the governors' annual report to parents are as follows, (other items may be included in the annual report at the school's discretion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of the governing body membership, including name and address of chair and clerk</li> <li>• A statement on progress in implementing the action plan drawn up following an inspection</li> <li>• A financial statement, including gifts made to the school and amounts paid to governors for expenses</li> <li>• A description of the school's arrangements for security of pupils, staff and the premises</li> <li>• Information about the implementation of the governing body's policy on pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and any changes to the policy during the last year</li> <li>• A description of the arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities; details of steps to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than other pupils; details of existing facilities to assist access to the school by pupils with</li> </ul>	

	<p>disabilities; the accessibility plan covering future policies for increasing access by those with disabilities to the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A statement of policy on whole staff development identifying how teachers' professional development impacts on teaching and learning</li> <li>• Number of pupils on roll and rates of pupils' authorised and unauthorised absence</li> <li>• National Curriculum assessment results for appropriate Key Stages, with national summary figures</li> <li>• A statement of the extent to which proposals in the post-inspection action plan have been carried into effect</li> </ul>
<b>Instrument of Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name of the school</li> <li>• The category of the school</li> <li>• The name of the governing body</li> <li>• The manner in which the governing body is constituted</li> <li>• The term of office of each category of governor if less than 4 years</li> <li>• The name of anybody entitled to appoint any category of governor</li> <li>• Details of any trust</li> <li>• If the school has a religious character, a description of the ethos</li> <li>• The date the instrument takes effect</li> </ul>
<b>Minutes of meeting of the governing body and its committees</b>	Agreed minutes of meetings of the governing body and its committees - some information might be confidential or otherwise exempt from the publication by law - we cannot therefore publish this

**Pupils & Curriculum Policies** - This section gives access to information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum

<b>Class</b>	<b>Description</b>
Home - school agreement	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	Statement on following the policy for the secular curriculum subjects and religious education and schemes of work and syllabuses currently used by the school
Sex Education Policy	Statement of policy with regard to sex and relationship education
Special Educational Needs Policy	Information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational needs
Accessibility Plans	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.

Race Equality Policy	Statement of policy for promoting race equality
Collective Worship	Statement of arrangements for the required daily act of collective worship
Safeguarding Policy	Statement of policy for safeguarding and promoting welfare of pupils at the school
Behaviour and Discipline Policy	Statement of policy on behaviour and discipline and of measures taken by the Headteacher to encourage good learning behaviour in school
Anti-Bullying Policy	Statement of policy on behaviour and discipline and of measures taken by the Headteacher to prevent bullying

**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	Description
Published reports of Ofsted referring expressly to the school	Published report of the last inspection of the school and, where appropriate, inspection reports of religious education in those schools designated as having a religious character.
Post-Ofsted inspection action plan	A plan setting out the actions required following the last Ofsted inspection and where appropriate an action plan following inspection of religious education where the school is designated as having a religious character
Charging and Remissions Policies	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	Details of school session and dates of school terms and holidays
Health and Safety Policy and risk assessment	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	Statement of procedures for dealing with complaints
Performance Management of Staff	Statement of procedures adopted by the governing body relating to the performance management of staff and the annual report of the Headteacher on the effectiveness of appraisal procedures
Staff Conduct, Discipline and Grievance	Statement of procedure for regulating conduct and discipline of school staff and procedures by which staff may seek redress for grievance
Pay Policy	Statement of the school's policy regarding teachers' pay including procedures for determining teachers' grievances in relation to their pay
Staffing Structure Implementation Plan	The school's plan for the implementation of any changes to its staffing structure following statutory review
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Any statutory instruments, departmental circulars and administrative memoranda sent by the Department of Education and Skills to the Headteacher or governing body relating to the curriculum

Admissions Policy	Statement of the school's policy on admissions
Annex A - Other documents	Annex A provides a list of other documents that are held by the school and are available on request

## **8. Making/Processing a Request under FOIA**

- 8.1 The school is aware of its obligations in relation to the FOIA and intends to fulfil its legal obligations.
- 8.2 Requests for information have to be in writing (letter, email, social media posting) and must include the name of the person requesting information, an address for correspondence and a description of the information sought. Requests should be sent to :

**Headteacher, St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre, Church Road, Donnington Wood, Telford, TF2 7PS**

**Alternatively requests can be e-mailed to : [Jayne.oconnell@taw.org.uk](mailto:Jayne.oconnell@taw.org.uk)**

- 8.3 Once we receive your request we may seek more details from you to establish what information you are requesting.
- 8.4 If we do not hold the information you have requested we will confirm this to you and, wherever possible, provide contact details for other public sector bodies that may hold the information you have requested in our response letter.
- 8.5 If we do hold the information you have requested then we have to assess this to see if any of the exemptions detailed in the FOIA apply, eg if by releasing the information requested we would cause a serious health and safety issue we would apply exemption (section) 38 and not provide you with the information. Exemptions can either be 'Absolute' or 'Qualified'. If an exemption is qualified then we will apply the Public Interest Test to decide if the application of the exemption should be overruled due to public interest.
- 8.6 A requester will receive a response to their request within 20 works days of the day we receive it (if it is received after 3.30pm then it will be 20 works days from the next working day ), regardless of whether we do or do not hold the information. In exceptional circumstances we may not be able to meet the 20 working day deadline, if this is the case we will contact you to let you know when we hope to send the information requested to you.
- 8.7 We will not provide assistance to applicants whose requests are seen to be vexatious or repeated as defined in section 14 of the FOIA. In deciding if a request is either a vexatious or repeated request we will consider guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.

- 8.8 Right of Appeal – In the response the requester receives they will be given details on how to appeal if they are not satisfied with the information we have/have not supplied. The appeal will be processed by a person independent to the original response process.
- 8.9 Fees/Charges – We are allowed to recover the costs of printing, copying and postage and packing. If we require a fee to be paid then a fees notice will be sent to the requester. If the fees notice has been sent and the requester is not prepared to pay the fee, we may :
- Consider whether any information that may be of interest is available free of charge, or;
  - Consider providing an indication of what, if any, information could be provided without a fee being payable, or;
  - Consider advising the requester that by refining the request, information may be able to be supplied for a lower fee or at no charge
- 8.10 The school will provide advice and assistance to people making requests for information. Advice and guidance may be sought from the Headteacher using the previously stated contact details.

## **9. Feedback and Complaints**

- 9.1 We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you want to make any comments about the publication scheme or if you require further assistance or wish to make a complaint then initially this should be addressed to the Headteacher.
- 9.2 If you have 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 : 01625 545 700**

**Email : [publications@ic-foi.demon.co.uk](mailto:publications@ic-foi.demon.co.uk)**

**Website : [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)**



## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - CHECKLIST FOR ACTION ON RECEIPT OF A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

- Decide whether the request is a request under DPA, EIR or FOI
- Decide whether the school holds the information or whether the request should be transferred to another body if the information is held by them
- Provide the information if it has already been made public
- Inform the enquirer if the information is not held
- Consider whether a third party's interests might be affected by disclosure and if so consult them
- Consider whether any exemptions apply and whether they are absolute or qualified
- Carry out a public interest test to decide if applying the qualified exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information
- Decide whether the estimated cost of complying with the request will exceed the appropriate limit (still to be agreed but expected to be around £500)
- If a request is made for a document that contains exempt personal information ensure that the personal information is removed by applying the redaction procedure
- Consider whether the request is vexatious or repeated

### **Remember**

Schools are under a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information.

The enquirer is entitled to be told whether the school holds the information (the duty to confirm or deny) except where certain exemptions apply

A well managed records and management information system is essential to help schools to meet requests

Requests should be dealt with within 20 days excluding school holidays

Wilfully concealing, damaging or destroying information in order to avoid answering an enquiry is an offence. A valid FOI request should be in writing, stating the enquirer's name and correspondence address and describe the information requested.

Expressions of dissatisfaction should be handled through the school's existing complaints procedure.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and Governors. The Data Protection Policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

**Compiled by Jayne Overal**

**Date 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

**Reviewed : February 2023**