



Wessex  
Learning Trust

*We Learn Together!*

# Freedom of Information Policy

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Wessex Learning Trust. Registered in England. Company Number 7348580.

## **1. Background**

In line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in this document) the Wessex Learning Trust and the academies within the Trust are committed to openness and transparency. We are proactive about the information we make public but also recognise the need to protect sensitive information in certain circumstances.

## **2. Right to Request Information**

The Trust is duty bound to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. This policy gives clear guidance to ensure all employees within the Trust are able to comply with a request for information under FOIA. To do this we have produced 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.
- Whether the information is available free of charge or with payment.

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is available on the Trust website (see page 2 for address) or individual academy websites to download and/or print off, or available in paper form. Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example personal information.

The individual making a FOIA request is entitled to be told whether the information is held and if so, to have access to it. Access can include providing extracts of a document or access to the original document. However, the FOIA recognises the need to preserve confidentiality of sensitive information in some circumstances and sets out a number of exemptions.

There are four reasons for not complying with a valid request for information under the FOIA:

- The information is not held.
- The cost threshold is reached.
- The request is considered vexatious or repeated.
- One or more exemptions apply.

## **3. Classes of Information**

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' which can be found at Appendix 1.

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

- **Who we are and what we do.** General information about the Trust and its academies. For example its staff, leadership and governance, information about the curriculum, school terms and events.
- **What we spend and how we spend it.** Financial Information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.
- **What our priorities are and how we are doing.** Strategy and performance information. For example, OFSTED reports, SIAMS reports.
- **How we make decisions.** Admissions policy, minutes of meetings.

- **Our policies and procedures.** Current policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.
- **Lists and registers.** Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers to the function of the trust and its academies.
- **Services we offer.** For example, out of school clubs, extra-curricular activities and newsletters.

Trust Policy documents can be viewed at [www.wessexlearningtrust.co.uk](http://www.wessexlearningtrust.co.uk)

Policies held by individual academies within the Trust may be viewed via individual websites.

#### **4. How to Request Information**

If you require a paper version of a document, please contact the Headteacher of any academy within the Trust by letter or email. Please clearly mark any correspondence '**FOIA PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST**' in bold CAPITALS).

If the information you are looking for is not available via the scheme and is not on our website, you can still request whether we have it. You can contact the Headteacher at any of the academies within the Trust. The request must include the enquirer's name and correspondence address with a clear description of the information requested.

On receipt of a request the designated individual will decide whether:

- The request is valid.
- Decide whether the information is held.
- Whether the information is available on the website.
- Consider whether a third party's interest 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.
- Consider whether the request is vexatious or repeated.

Requests for information will be dealt with within twenty school days. A school day is a day when students are in attendance at the academy.

If a request is made for a document that contains exempt personal information, the academy/Trust will ensure that the personal information is redacted before the information is provided.

Information relating to the release of your own personal information will be considered as a Subject Access Request (SAR) and considered under the Data Protection Policy.

#### **5. Paying for a FOIA**

Information published on our websites is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet Service Provider. If you do not have internet access, you can access our website using a local library.

The Trust and academies in the Trust will charge a fee in accordance with the FOIA fees and regulations. Single copies of information covered by this publication are provided free unless stated otherwise in the appendix. If your request means that we have to do a lot of photocopying or printing, or pay a 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.

## **6. Record of Requests**

Individual academies and the Trust will maintain a record of requests received. Information recorded will include the date of request, the format of the request, the name of the individual making the request and their address and/or email, the information requested, whether the request was responded to or denied and the date the response was made. Records of requests will be reviewed annually by the Board.

## **7. Feedback and Complaints**

We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you wish to make any comments about this publication scheme please contact the Business and Finance Director at the registered company address. If you wish to make a complaint please see the Trust's Complaint policy.

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you receive, 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 organisation ensures compliance with the FOIA and deals with formal complaints. They can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

## **8. Review**

The policy will be reviewed by the Wessex Learning Trust Board in the light of operating experience and or changes in legislation or further issued guidance from the Department for Education.

Approved by the Wessex Learning Trust Board: 18 May 2017  
Review date: As required

## Appendix A

### Freedom of Information Policy – Classes of Information

Information published or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>Who we are and what we do</b>	
Organisational information, structures, location and contacts. (Current information only)	Hard copies WLT website Individual academy websites
Academy Funding Agreement	WLT website Individual academy websites
Supplemental Funding Agreements	WLT website Individual academy websites
School Staff and Structure	Individual academy websites
Board of Directors	WLT website
Local Governing Body	Individual academy websites
Academy term dates and holidays	Individual academy websites
Location and contact information. Address, telephone number and website	Individual academy websites
Contact details for the Headteacher and Local Governing Body	Individual academy websites

Information publishes or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>What we spend and how we spend it</b>	
Company accounts that have been filed with Companies House	Companies House website WLT website Individual academy websites
Annual budget plan and financial statements	Available on request from the Headteacher
Capital Funding Details of capital funding allocated to the academies with related information on building projects/other capital projects	Available on request from the Headteacher
Additional funding Income generating schemes and other sources of funding	Available on request from the Headteacher
Procurement and contracts Details of contracts that have gone through a formal tendering process	Available on request from the Headteacher

Information publishes or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>What our priorities are and how we are doing</b>	
Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits inspections and reviews	WLT website Individual academy websites
School profile Government supplied performance dates Ofsted report SIAMS report	DfE website Individual academy websites
Appraisal Policy	Individual academy websites
Trust's future Plans	Available on request from the Headteacher.
Child Protection Policies and procedures on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	WLT website Individual academy websites

Information publishes or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>How we make decisions</b>	
Admissions policy Arrangement and procedures and right of appeal. Application numbers, oversubscriptions	WLT website Individual academy websites
Board of Directors meeting agendas and minutes Note information may be restricted if classified as confidential	Company Secretary
Local Governing Body meeting agendas and minutes Note information may be restricted if classified as confidential	Clerk to Governors

Information publishes or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>Our Policies and Procedures</b>	
Trust Policies	WLT website
Individual Academy Policies and Procedures	Individual academy websites

Information publishes or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>Lists and Registers</b>	
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Available on request from individual academies
Asset register	Available on request from individual academies
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publically available registers	Available on request from individual academies

Information publishes or to be published	How the information can be obtained
<b>The Services We Offer</b>	
Extra-Curricular Activities	Individual academy websites
Out of school clubs	Individual academy websites
School publications	Individual academy websites
Services for which the academy is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees	Individual academy websites
Leaflets, booklets and newsletters	Individual academy websites