

St Bede's Catholic Infant School

Freedom of Information Act 2000 School Policy

Agreed by Staff **Spring 2023**

Approved by Governors **Spring 2023**

Review Date **Spring 2024**

Signed Chair of Governors S Howard Date 21.3.2023

(Adapted from Model HBC Freedom of Information Act Model School Policy)

1. Introduction

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School is committed to openness and transparency in the provision of information to all persons or organisations who request it.

We will provide information promptly, subject to the conditions based on our duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This policy outlines our response to the Act and provides a framework for managing requests.

2. 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 still governed under the Data Protection Act /General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Requests for access to such information will be governed in line with the requirements of this legislation.

3. Dealing with Requests

St. Bede's Catholic Infant. 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 no more than 20 working days, (excluding school holidays or Inset and training days when pupils are not present), from the date of request and more speedily if possible. Any request in writing will be considered a Freedom of Information request including those received by email and fax. If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the scheme, please contact the school:

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School,
Leigh Avenue,
Widnes,
Cheshire,
WA8 6EL.

Telephone: 0151 424 3112
Fax: 0151 423 3521
e-mail head.stbedesinfant@halton.gov.uk
School Website: www.stbedesinfants.co.uk

We may be unable to provide the information you request for the following reasons:

- We do not hold the information;
- We are applying an exemption to the disclosure; and
- The cost of locating, retrieving and editing (where necessary) the information would exceed the statutory maximum amount (currently £450). This figure is set by Government and is based on the work exceeding 18.5 man hours to gather the information. If we are unable to provide the information we will do all we can to advise you as to how you might obtain the information elsewhere or in a different way to keep the cost down.

The School will seek advice from the Local Authority's Information Governance Manager as necessary to clarify any points or to help resolve any disputes over information requests.

4. Adopting and Maintaining Publication Schemes

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School has adopted a Publication Scheme (see below) 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. The scheme can be accessed in school on request. School staff will give advice and assistance on how to use the scheme as appropriate.

5. Relationship with the Data Protection Act / General Data Protection Regulation 2018

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School is under a legal duty to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act / General Data Protection Regulation 2018. We will carefully consider our responsibilities under this Act before releasing personal information about living individuals, including current and former employees and pupils.

6. Responsibilities

St. Bede's Catholic Infant 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 and the Head Teacher. Complaints regarding the use of this policy should be directed to the Governing Body. 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.

7. Contact Details

If you do not accept our reasons for declining to disclose the information requested you should write to the Chair of Governors at the school in the first instance. If you are not happy with their response, you may wish to contact the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: (01625) 545700 – Helpline is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Fax: (01625) 524510

Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk