



**Publication Scheme of Information
Available Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Purposes of the policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and, where appropriate, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 are adhered to within Harrold Lower School.
- 1.2 We will ensure that:
- a significant amount of routinely published information about the school is made available to the public as a matter of course. This is known as a Publication Scheme.
 - requests for other information are dealt with within the statutory timescales of the appropriate legislation and, in cases where an exemption or exception is engaged, appropriate consideration is given as to whether or not the information should be released.

Publication Scheme

- 2.1 Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 required that schools adopt and maintain an Information-Commissioner-approved Publication Scheme and to proactively publish information in accordance with that scheme.
- 2.2 This is a document which specifies:
- the classes of information which we already 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 receipt of payment
- 2.3 The Information Commissioner has produced both a model publication scheme and guidance for schools which makes provision for, but is not limited to, the classes of information listed below.

Who We Are and What We Do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

What We Spend and How We Spend It

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

What Our Priorities Are and How We Are Doing *Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.*

How We Make Decisions *Decision making processes and records of decisions.*

Our Policies and Procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.

Lists and Registers

Currently maintained lists and registers only.

The Services We Offer

Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses.

- 2.4 There is therefore an expectation on Harrold Lower School to make the above information available unless:
- we do not hold it
 - it is to be withheld under a Freedom of Information exemption or Environmental Information Regulations exception; 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.
- 2.5 Our Publication Scheme can be found on the school website and hard copies of listed documents can be obtained from the School as directed.
- 2.6 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the maintenance of this scheme which will be reviewed bi-annually and following new guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office. The updated Publication Scheme will be published on the website as soon as it is approved.
- 2.7 We will not charge for information listed on the Publication Scheme, except where specifically indicated
- 2.8 In exceptional circumstances, some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this is the case, contact details will be provided and an appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale
- 2.9 Information will be provided in the language in which it is held. Where we are legally required to translate any information, we will do so.
- 2.10 Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation, and any other legislation, to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Requests for Information Not Covered by Our Publication Scheme

- 3.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 came into force for all public bodies on 1 January 2005 and their purpose is to promote both transparency and access to recorded information.
- 3.2 Anyone can make a request for recorded information.
- 3.3 Whilst a request can be in the form of a question, rather than a request for specific documents, the school does not have to answer the question if this would mean creating new information or giving an opinion or judgment that is not already recorded.
- 3.4 We will acknowledge receipt of requests, however we may need to seek clarification to establish or in some cases help refine the request before it is deemed valid. The timescales for response commence after receipt of a valid request.

- 3.5 Upon receipt of a valid request the information sought will be communicated to the applicant within statutory timescales, subject to paragraphs 3.6 – 3.9 inclusive. All schools are required to respond within 20 working days excluding school holidays.
- 3.6 There will be occasions where we will not supply the requested information (e.g. the school may neither hold nor be the owner of the requested information; or we may consider that an appropriate exemption or exception applies). Applicants will be informed if this is the case.
- 3.7 If any information is to be withheld, both the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 require a school, in their final response, to confirm or deny whether the information sought is held (unless the act of doing so is itself exempt) and to provide details of the exemption / exception applied.
- 3.8 The application of some exemptions / exceptions allows for an extension in the response timescale. Applicants will be informed if this is the case.
- 3.9 Charges may be applied to the communication costs of some requests (e.g. reprographics, postage and packaging, copying) and if this is the case the applicant will be informed in advance. On these occasions the information will be released upon receipt of any fees.
- 3.10 As part of the final response, we will include details of how an applicant can complain if they remain unhappy. The school can be contacted within 2 months from the date of our response to request a review.
- 3.11 Upon receipt of a request for review, both the original request and our initial response will be independently reviewed by the Chair of Governors or a nominated Governor. They uphold or do not uphold the original response in full or in part.
- 3.12 The reviewed response will be communicated to the applicant within 25 school days from the receipt date of that request.
- 3.13 Should an applicant remain dissatisfied following our reviewed response, they may contact the Information Commissioner directly at:
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 700
Email: casework@ico.org.uk
Website: www.ico.gov.uk
- 3.14 The Information Commissioner is the independent regulatory authority for both the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The school will abide by the decisions of the Information Commissioners Office, unless it considers itself to have grounds for an appeal to the Information Tribunal.
- 3.15 Requests for personal data and some third party information are covered solely by the Data Protection Act 1998. Further details are available in our Data Protection Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the school's compliance with both Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations. However, day-to-day responsibility may be delegated to the school's strategy and Business Manager.
- 4.2 The Qualified Person for determining whether disclosure would be likely to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs, should the Section 36 Exemption be engaged, is the Chair of Governors.

- 4.3 A nominated member of the Governing body with no prior involvement will be responsible for reviewing any complaints about the schools application of the relevant legislation should they be received.

Handling and Tracking of Requests

- 5.1 Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act should be in writing, state the enquirer's name and correspondence address and describe the information requested. Whilst all members of staff will assist any applicant where possible, we have a designated email address to assist with prompt processing.

email: office@harroldlowerschool.co.uk

Please make the subject *Freedom of Information Request*

Requests in writing should be addressed to:

School Bursar

Harrold Lower School, The Green, Harrold, Bedfordshire, MK43 7DB

Tel: 01234 720312

To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence "**Freedom of Information Request**"

- 5.2 All requests for information will be logged by the School Bursar and tracked thereafter. This will assist us in ensuring that timescales are met and assist identification of repeat, similar or vexatious requests.
- 5.3 We will annually review multiple or similar requests for information on subjects not already included in our Publication Scheme and consider their inclusion in it.
- 5.4 If the information you're looking for isn't available via the scheme and isn't on our website, you can still contact the school to ask if we have it.

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 If your request means that we have to do a significant amount of photocopying, printing, pay a large postage charge, or is for a priced item such as some printed publications or videos we will let you know any cost before fulfilling your request. Information will be charged at the actual cost of providing it (i.e. the cost of photocopying, plus time of employee photocopying information, plus postage and any other actual costs incurred as a result of providing the requested information). If we need to charge for providing the information, we will require payment before we can provide the information.

Further Information

For further information about the Freedom of Information act and your rights, please refer to the Information Commissioner's website: <http://www.ico.gov.uk>