



*'Spurring each other on with love'*

# Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Policy

## 2026-2027 ANNUAL

POLICY HISTORY (starting with the new cycle started in 2011)

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Governor adoption Date	Signed by the Chair	Next Review Date
1	Model scheme used from Information Commissioner's Office	March 26 <sup>th</sup> 2015		Summer Term 2016
2	Model Devon policy used	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2020		Summer Term 2021
3	Model Policy used -no changes	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Agreed at virtual resources committee	Summer Term 2022
4	Model Policy used -no changes	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2022		Summer Term 2023
5	Model Policy used - DCC	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2023		Summer Term 2024
6	Model Policy used - DCC	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2024		Summer Term 2025
7	Model Policy used - DCC (no changes made)	12 <sup>th</sup> June 2025		Summer Term 2026
8	Model Devon policy used. Policy Date: 15 April 2026	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2026		Summer Term 2027

## 1. Introduction

This policy sets out how the *school* complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). The school is committed to openness, transparency, and accountability, and recognises the public's right to access recorded information held by the *school*.

This policy applies to all employees, *governors*, contractors, and volunteers who create, manage, or hold information on behalf of the school.

## 2. Legal Framework

The school is subject to:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR (for personal data)
- Education Acts and other relevant statutory guidance

FOIA provides a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities.

EIR provides a right of access to environmental information, which includes information on land, buildings, energy, waste, emissions, and environmental policies.

## 3. Scope of Requests

### 3.1 Freedom of Information (FOI)

FOI covers all recorded information held by the school in any format, including:

- Emails
- Paper files
- Digital documents
- Meeting minutes
- Policies and reports

### 3.2 Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)

EIR applies to environmental information held by the *school* such as:

- Energy use
- Waste management
- Building plans
- Health & Safety
- Accident records
- Environmental impact assessments
- Policies relating to or in any way affecting the environment

The full definition of environmental information is outlined within [Regulation\(2\)\(1\) of the EIR](#).

EIR requests have slightly different rules to requests made under the FOIA, including a presumption in favour of disclosure.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for compliance with the Acts, whilst the FOI/EIR Lead Officer will coordinate responses and maintain the *school's* publication scheme. The Lead officer will also ensure that statutory deadlines are met wherever possible.

All *school* staff have a responsibility to recognise and promptly forward any FOI / EIR request received on to the Lead Officer and to manage records responsibly and securely.

## 5. Making a Request

Any individual, whether or not they live in the UK, is entitled to make a request under both the FOIA and EIR. Requests can be made by:

- Email
- Letter
- Via social networking sites such as 'X' or 'Facebook'
- Online form (if provided)

FOI requests must:

- Be in writing
- Include the requester's name and contact address
- Clearly outline the information requested

EIR requests can be made verbally or in writing.

The *school* will assist applicants to clarify or refine their request where necessary.

## 6. Responding to Requests

### 6.1 Timescales

FOI: 20 school days

EIR: 20 working days (which can be extended to 40 days for complex cases)

### 6.2 Fees

There is no provision for charging applicants a fee for making requests under the FOIA. However, the *school* is permitted to charge applicants for disbursements such as postage or photocopying (at a rate of no more than 10p per sheet).

If an information request falls under the EIR, the school may charge a reasonable fee for making the information available. Any charges will be made in accordance with [Regulation 8](#) of the EIR.

For FOI requests, if the costs of locating, retrieving and extracting the requested data exceed the statutory limit of £450 (equivalent to 18 hours), the school may refuse the request or offer the requester the option to refine it in accordance with [Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)

There is no statutory equivalent under EIR, but if an EIR request is received which is considered particularly voluminous, these requests may be refused under the Manifestly Unreasonable exception outlined within [Regulation 12\(4\)\(b\)](#) of the Regulations.

### 6.3 Exemptions and Exceptions

The school may withhold information where an FOI exemption applies in accordance with [Part II Sections 21 to 44 of the FOIA](#) and where an EIR exception applies in accordance with [Part 3, Regulations 12 and 13 of the EIR](#) :

Where information is withheld, the *school* will:

- Explain the reason
- Cite the relevant exemption/exception and apply the Public Interest Test where applicable
- Inform the requester of their right to review and appeal

## 6.4 Vexatious or Repeated Requests

On rare occasions, the *school* may receive a *vexatious or repeated request*. The school does not have to disclose information in response to a vexatious or repeated request and can refuse such requests under [Section 14\(1\) of the FOIA](#) or [Regulation 12\(4\)\(b\) of the EIR](#). In such cases, the school will consider the [Information Commissioner's Office guidance on vexatious requests](#) and any appropriate case law.

If a request is deemed vexatious, the school will notify the applicant of this by issuing a refusal notice and a clear explanation of the reasons why.

## 7. Publication Scheme

The *school* adopts the [ICO Model Publication Scheme](#) and maintains a Guide to Information that sets out what information is routinely published, including:

- Policies and procedures
- Financial information
- Governing body / Trustee information
- Curriculum and performance data

The Publication Scheme is available on the school's website or on request.

## 8. Records Management

The school understands that effective record-keeping supports efficient FOIA/EIR compliance and will:

- Maintain accurate, up-to-date records
- Store information securely
- Retain and dispose of records in line with the School's Records Retention Schedule [download.asp](#) and statutory guidance

## 9. Internal Review and Complaints

If a requester is dissatisfied with the school's response, they may request an internal review within 40 working days.

The review will be conducted by a senior member of staff not involved in the original decision.

If the requester remains dissatisfied, they may contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

## 10. Monitoring and Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- Guidance from the ICO is updated
- Operational issues arise

## 11. Policy History

Policy Version	Summary of Change	Amended by	Implementation Date
V1.0	Policy Created	DPO	15 April 2026