



Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy



Freedom of Information Policy

Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy

At Streetsbrook, we strive to provide an equal chance for all to become responsible citizens who lead happy and fulfilled lives, and are equipped with the skills and abilities to shape the world they live in.

‘Learning for Life’

Our values are:

Desire to Learn

To enjoy the lifelong process and challenge of learning; alone and with others.

Love and Respect

To have respect for ourselves, others and the environment, recognising and celebrating individual lifestyles, cultures and faiths.

Happiness

Developing successful relationships where individuals can build and follow their dreams.

Confidence

Having the self-belief to embrace and follow your own choices.

Being a Good Citizen

Making a positive contribution to communities on a local and global scale.

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This policy has been adopted from the Local Authority.

Purpose

Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy is committed to openness and transparency in its dealings with all persons and organisations and fully embraces the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'). This policy sets out how all staff and governors at the Academy will make every effort to meet its obligations under the Act and will regularly review internal procedures to ensure that it is doing so.

Read this policy in conjunction with the Data Protection Policy, Access to Information Policy, Records Management Policy, Freedom of Information request procedures, Publication Scheme and guidance documents.

About Freedom of Information Act

The Act gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities and came into force in January 2005. It gives the public the opportunity to find out what the Academy does and how we do it, enables the public to question our decisions more closely and ensures that the services we provide are efficiently and properly delivered.

The Act places the following requirements on the Academy:

- Information which is routinely published by the Academy is made available in accordance with the Academy's Publication Scheme
- Information not covered by the Publication Scheme is made available to enquirers on request, within 20 working days, unless an exemption or limit applies
- Exemptions under the Act are applied appropriately, and in accordance with the legislation
- A fair and efficient internal appeal system is administered
- A properly structured approach to managing records is in place to ensure that essential records of the Academy's activities are maintained in appropriate detail

The Act applies to all recorded information created and held by the Academy and its staff, regardless of format, storage medium and age.

The Act does not give people access to their own personal information (about themselves). If a member of the public wants to see information that the Academy holds about them they should make a Subject Access Request under Data Protection law.

Requests for Information

The Academy will provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. We will respond directly to straightforward verbal requests for information, and will help enquirers to put more complex requests into writing so that they can be handled under the Act.

A response to a request will be sent within the statutory guidelines 20 working days from the date of request, however, the Academy is committed to providing a prompt service and every attempt will be made to provide the information earlier than the expiry of the 20 working day period.

There is no need for requests to indicate that they are made under the Act. All staff are made aware of the procedure to follow for when a request is received.

Refusals and Exemptions

It may be appropriate for the Academy to provide information in redacted (edited) form, in line with any exemptions that need to be applied under the legislation.

The Academy recognises that requests for environmental information, under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, may be made over the telephone as well as in writing, and that different exemptions apply.

The Academy may be unable to provide all or some of the information requested for any of the following reasons, and will inform the requestor if:

- The information is not held
- An exemption to the disclosure is being applied
- It would cost the Academy more than £450 to provide the information
- The request is considered a vexatious request.

There are 23 exemptions whereby information can be withheld, in particular those concerning:

- The Academy's duties under Data Protection law to keep confidential personal and sensitive information about individuals
- Other legal and contractual obligations
- Material detrimental to the safe and efficient operation of the Academy
- Information which is commercially sensitive

Fees & Charges

The Academy will respond to most requests free of charge, and only charge where significant costs are incurred for photocopying, printing, faxing, postage and any work required putting information into a requested format unless requested on grounds of disability. If a charge is to be made, the Academy will give written notice to the applicant before supplying the information requested.

The Academy reserve the right to refuse to supply information where the cost of doing so exceeds the statutory maximum. If the Academy agree to still provide the information, staff time may also be charged at the Office Manager's hourly rate.

Responsibilities

The Academy and Governing Body have a legal responsibility to comply with the Act and are accountable to the Information Commissioner's Office. The staff member with overall responsibility for this policy is the Headteacher.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of compliance with the Act. This includes the development of procedures and guidance, their promotion to staff through training and outreach, and the maintenance and periodic review of the Publication Scheme.

All Academy staff have a responsibility to ensure that any request for information they receive is dealt with under the Act, in compliance with this policy and to provide the Headteacher with all the necessary advice and assistance when requested to do so. All staff are also responsible for good information handling practice and for implementing records management policies and procedures as appropriate to their post.

All staff understand that concealing, amending or destroying information which has been subject to a Freedom of Information request is prohibited under the Act.

Complaints

Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's complaints policy. Please contact the Headteacher, Mrs L Minter if you wish to make a complaint at office@streetsbrook.solihull.sch.uk or write to:

Streetsbrook infant & Early Years Academy
Ralph Road
Shirley
B90 3LB

Complaints relating to the Academy's compliance with the FOIA may be referred to the Information Commissioner's Office (the statutory regulator).

Contacts

If you have any enquires in relation to this policy, please contact the Office Manager Mrs N McInnes. Please send requests for information under the Act to Mrs N McInnes, Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy, and address above.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect best practice or amendments made to the Act, if not before a review in the Spring Term 2024.

This policy was ratified by Governors at the Finance Committee meeting on 23 March 2023.

Signed:  Chair

Signed:  Headteacher