



**W A T E R T O N**  
ACADEMY TRUST®



# Freedom of Information Policy

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

This policy includes the Publication Scheme on information available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Trustees of Waterton Academy Trust are responsible for maintenance of this scheme and each Headteacher and Local Hub Board is responsible for ensuring the information stated is readily available.

### Introduction

One of the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) is that academies should be clear and proactive about the information they hold and how it will be made public.

To do this we must produce a publication scheme, available to the public, setting out:

- The classes of information which we publish or intend to publish
- The manner in which the information will be published
- To review and update on a regular basis the information available under this scheme
- Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.
- To publish any dataset held by the authority that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the authority is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the public authority is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under a specified licence. The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is available in paper form.

Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example personal information.

This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

## Categories of Information Published

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

- Who we are and what we do
- What we spend and how we spend it
- What our priorities are and how we are doing
- How we make decisions
- Our policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- The services we offer

## Right to request information

There is a legal right for any person to make a request to an academy for access to information held by that academy. Academies are under a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. Enquirers do not have to say why they want the information and the request does not have to mention FOIA. The enquirer is entitled to be told whether the academy holds the information (this is known as the duty to confirm or deny) and, if so, to have access to it. Access can include providing extracts of a document or a summary of the information sought, 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 only four reasons for not complying with a valid request for information under FOI:-

- the information is not held
- the cost threshold is reached
- the request is considered vexatious or repeated
- one or more of the exemptions apply

## How to Request Information

All requests for information should:

- Be submitted in writing by either letter, fax or email
- State your name and correspondence address (postal or email).
- Clearly describe the information requested providing enough detail to identify and locate the information.
- Not be covered by any other piece of legislation

***To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence  
"FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST"***

All employees of Waterton Academy Trust are aware of this process.

## **How we will deal with a FOIA request for information**

If the request relates to a single academy or to multiple academies within Waterton Academy Trust the responsibility for co-ordinating the request lies with the Data Protection Officer. The Headteachers of each academy may be involved in the request and be required to provide information to the DPO.

## **Timeline for reply**

We will do our utmost to reply to any request promptly. In any case, we will meet the legally prescribed limit of 20 school days or 60 working days if this is shorter. The response time starts from the time the request is received. Where we need to ask you for more information to enable us to answer, the 20 days start time begins when this further information has been received.

If a qualified exemption applies and we need more time to consider the public interest test, we will reply within the 20 days stating that an exemption applies and include an estimate of the date by which a decision on the public interest test will be made. Where we have notified you that a charge is to be made, the time period stops until payment is received and then continues again once payment has been received.

## **Paying for information**

Information published on the Trust and its academies websites is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet service provider. If you do not have Internet access, you can access the Trust and its academies websites using a local library.

We aim to respond to FOIA requests free of charge. However, if your request means that we do incur significant costs, e.g. a significant amount of photocopying, printing, paying a large postage charge, or a request for a priced item such as some printed publications or DVDs, we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request. Information will be charged at the actual cost of providing it (e.g. 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.

A detailed guide to the information available and how to access it is attached as appendix A. If the information you are looking for is not available via the scheme and is not on the Trust and/or its academies (schools), you can still contact us to ask if we have it.

## **Feedback and Complaints**

We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you want to make any comments about the scheme or if you require further assistance or wish to make a complaint then initially this should be made to the CEO of Waterton Academy Trust. If you are not satisfied with the assistance you receive and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made then this should be made to the Information Commissioner's Office. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and deals with formal complaints. They can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Email: [publications@ic-foi.demon.co.uk](mailto:publications@ic-foi.demon.co.uk)

Website: [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

## Appendix A: Information to be Published

Who we are and what we do	How the information can be obtained
Waterton Academy Trust organisational information, structures, locations and contacts	WAT Website/hard copy
Academy Master Funding Agreement Supplemental Funding Agreements	WAT Website On request from COO
Academy staff and structure	Academy Website
Trust Board – names and contact details of the Trustees and the basis of their appointment	WAT Website
Academy session times, term dates, holidays and key dates	Academy Website
Academy location and contact information	Academy Website
What we spend and how we spend it	
Financial accounts	WAT Website
Annual budget plan and financial statements	On request from CFO
Capital funding – details of capital funding allocated to the academy along with information on related building projects and other capital projects	On request from CFO
Additional funding – income generation schemes	On request from CFO
Financial Management Policy	On request from CFO
Record of contracts that have gone through a formal tendering process	On request from CFO/COO
Staffing and grading structure	On request from COO
Pay policy	On request from COO
Governors/Directors' Allowances – details of allowances and expenses that can be claimed or incurred	On request from CFO
What our priorities are and how we are doing	
Development plan	Academy website/hard copy
Academy Performance data	DfE website school performance tables
Academy Ofsted report	Academy Website and Ofsted Website
How we make decisions	
Agreed minutes of meetings of the ASC	By request to MAT Governance Officer
Agreed minutes of meetings of the Trust Board of Waterton Academy Trust	WAT website/By request to MAT Governance Officer

Agreed minutes of meetings of the Trustees of Waterton Academy Trust	WAT website/By request to MAT Governance Officer
Admissions policy including appeals information	WAT Website
Admissions data	Hard copy
Our policies and procedures	
Anti fraud & bribery policy	WAT Website
Charging and remissions policy	WAT Website
Data protection policy	WAT Website
Freedom of information policy	WAT Website
Home school agreement	By request at each Academy
Health and Safety Policies & Statement	WAT Website/Academy Website
Complaints procedure	WAT Website/hard copy
Equality & diversity policies and procedures SEN policy Accessibility plan Race equality policy Equality information and objectives	Academy Website/hard copy
HR policies and procedures Recruitment policies/procedures (including staff vacancy information) Employee code of conduct policy Disciplinary and grievance policy/procedure Pay policy	By request to Central HR Team (external) WES Portal (internal)
Pupil and curriculum policies Home school agreement Sex education policy Safeguarding and Child protection policy Behaviour and discipline policy EYFS policy	Academy Website
Records management and personal data policies Records retention Data protection policy	By request to COO
Whistleblowing Code of Practice	WAT Website
Lists and Registers	
Asset register	By request to CFO
Disclosure logs	By request to COO
Any information the academy is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	By request to COO
Currently maintained lists and registers only	By request to relevant party (some info may be available for inspection only)
Out of school clubs	By request to Academy
School publications	By request to Academy
Services for which the academy is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	By request to Academy

## Policy Information

Document Detail			
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Version	2		
Effective from:	March 2020		
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Version Control			
Version	Date	Author	Change /Reference
1	January 2017	V Collins	
2	March 2020	V Collins	Changes in Governance Structures. Some changes in references to other policies.