

Freedom of Information (FOI) Policy & FOI Publication Scheme

Alcester Grammar School



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Alcester Grammar School is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) as a public authority, and as such, must comply with any requests for information in accordance with the principles laid out in the Act.

2. Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

- 2.1. Alcester Grammar School publication scheme is contained within this policy (see Appendix 1). Most of the information listed below is published routinely on the Academy website and in the school prospectus. Stakeholders are invited to review the publication scheme before submitting a FOI request.
- 2.2. This publication scheme has the following aims:
- 2.3. To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the Academy and falls within the classification below.
- 2.4. To specify the information that is held by the Academy and falls within the classifications below.
- 2.5. To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- 2.6. To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can easily be identified and accessed by members of the public.
- 2.7. To review and update regularly the information the Academy makes available under this scheme.
- 2.8. To produce a schedule of fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- 2.9. To make this publication scheme available to the public.
- 2.10. To publish any dataset held by the Academy that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the Academy 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 the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, if they apply, and otherwise under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act section 19. The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The term 'relevant copyright work' is defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

2.11. The publication scheme and the material it covers will be readily available in hard copy from the Academy. It is also available on the Academy website.

2.12. This scheme conforms to the model scheme for Academies as approved by the Information Commissioner's Office - a link to which can be found [here](#).

2.13. Method by which information under the Publication Scheme is made available

The Academy will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of the Academy, information will be provided on our website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on our website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by this method, the Academy will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances, some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided and an appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where the Academy is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

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.

2.14. **Schedule of charges under Freedom of Information Publication Scheme**

Type of charge	Description	Basis of charge
Disbursement cost	B&W photocopying/ printing @ 10p per sheet	Actual cost

	Colour photocopying/ printing @ 50p per sheet	Actual cost
	Postage	Royal Mail 2nd class postage cost

Where the cost of postage, printing or photocopying is below £10.00, we will not make a charge.

Where it is over £10.00, the first £10.00 will be free of charge, after that we will charge the full estimated cost of postage and copying.

Before we produce the information, we shall inform you of the total cost. You may wish to refine the request in order to reduce the cost and we would be happy to discuss this with you.

3. What is a request under FOI?

- 3.1. Any request for any information from Alcester Grammar School is technically a request under the FOI, whether or not the individual making the request mentions the FOI. However, the ICO has stated that routine requests for information (such as a parent requesting a copy of a policy) can be dealt with outside of the provisions of the Act.
- 3.2. In all non-routine cases, if the request is simple and the information is to be released, then the individual who received the request can release the information, but must ensure that this is done within the timescale set out below. A copy of the request and response should then be sent to the Principal.
- 3.3. All other requests should be referred in the first instance to the Principal via office@alcestergs.com, who may allocate another individual to deal with the request.
- 3.4. When considering a request under FOI, you must bear in mind that release under FOI is treated as release to the general public, and so once it has been released to an individual, anyone can then access it, and you cannot restrict access when releasing by marking the information “confidential” or “restricted”.

4. Time limit for compliance with FOI requests

- 4.1. Alcester Grammar School must respond as soon as possible, and in any event, within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the request. For Alcester Grammar School when calculating the 20 working day deadline, a “working day” is a school day (one in which

pupils are in attendance), subject to an absolute maximum of 60 normal working days (not school days) to respond.

5. Procedure for dealing with a request

- 5.1. When a request is received that cannot be dealt with by simply providing the information, it should be referred in the first instance to the Principal, who may reallocate to an individual with responsibility for the type of information requested.
- 5.2. The first stage in responding is to determine whether or not Alcester Grammar School “holds” the information requested. The Academy will hold the information if it exists in computer or paper format. Some requests will require the Academy to take information from different sources and manipulate it in some way. Where this would take minimal effort, the Academy is considered to “hold” that information, but if the required manipulation would take a significant amount of time, the requestor should be contacted to explain that the information is not held in the manner requested, and offered the opportunity to refine their request. For example, if a request required the Academy to add up totals in a spreadsheet and release the total figures, this would be information “held” by Alcester Grammar School. If Alcester Grammar School would have to go through a number of spreadsheets and identify individual figures and provide a total, this is likely not to be information “held” by the Academy, depending on the time involved in extracting the information.

The classes of information that are available include:

- Class 1 - Who we are and what we do
- Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it
- Class 3 - What our priorities are & how we are doing it
- Class 4 - How we make decisions
- Class 5 - Our policies and procedures
- Class 6 - Lists and Registers
- Class 7 - The services we offer

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

- 5.3. The second stage is to decide whether the information can be released, or whether one of the exemptions set out in the Act applies to the information.

Common exemptions include:

- Section 40 (1) – the request is for the applicants personal data. This must be dealt with under the subject access regime as per the Data Protection Policy;
- *Section 40 (2) – compliance with the request would involve releasing third party personal data, and this would be in breach of the GDPR principles as set out in Data Protection Policy;*
- Section 41 – information that has been sent to the Academy Trust (but not the Academy’s own information) which is confidential;
- Section 21 – information that is already publicly available, even if payment of a fee is required to access that information;
- Section 22 – *information that the Academy Trust intends to publish at a future date;*
- *Section 43 – information that would prejudice the commercial interests of the Academy and / or a third party;*
- *Section 38 – information that could prejudice the physical health, mental health or safety of an individual (this may apply particularly to safeguarding information);*
- *Section 31 – information which may prejudice the effective detection and prevention of crime*
- *Section 36 – information which, in the opinion of the chair of trustees of the Academy Trust, would prejudice the effective conduct of the Academy. There is a special form for this on the ICO’s website to assist with the obtaining of the chair’s opinion.*

- 5.4. The sections mentioned in italics are qualified exemptions. This means that even if the exemption applies to the information, you also have to carry out a public interest weighting exercise, balancing the public interest in the information being released, as against the public interest in withholding the information.

6. Responding to a request

- 6.1. When responding to a request where Alcester Grammar School has withheld some or all of the information, Alcester Grammar School must explain why the information has been withheld, quoting the appropriate section number and explaining how the information requested fits within that exemption. If the public interest test has been applied, this also needs to be explained.
- 6.2. The letter should end by explaining to the requestor how they can complain – either by reference to an internal review by the Principal, or by writing to the ICO.

7. Contact

- 7.1. If anyone has any questions, suggestions or complaints in relation to this policy or the publication scheme appendix then this should be initially sent to The Principal, Alcester Grammar School, Birmingham Road, Alcester B49 5ED
- 7.2. If you require a paper version of any information set out under the FOI Publication Scheme, contact Alcester Grammar School using the details on the school website www.alcestergs.com . To help us process requests quickly, any correspondence should be clearly marked 'FOI Publication Scheme Request'.
- 7.3. If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made then this should be addressed to: Information Commissioner's Office, they can be contacted at: ICO, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF Telephone: 0303 123 1113 Website: www.ico.org.uk

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 Who are we and what do we do Organisational information, structures, locations & contacts. Current Information Only.	Hard copy & / or School Website	
School Location & Contact details	School Website	No charge
Principal's contact details	School Website	No charge
Who's who in the school Key personnel	School Website	No charge
Governing Body Names, terms of office & the basis of their appointment	School Website	No charge
Articles of Association & Funding Agreement	School Website	No charge
School Prospectus	School Website	No charge
School Session Times & Term Dates	School Website	No charge
Class 2 What we spend and how we spend it Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit. Current and previous financial year, as a minimum.	Hard copy & / or School Website	
Annual Statutory Accounts	School Website / Companies House	No charge
Details of capital funding received - see Statutory accounts for prior years> Current year (provided on request)	Website/ Request	No charge
Procurement & contracts procedure, including formal tendering process.	On request	Schedule of charges
Pay Policy	Hard copy	Schedule of charges

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Staff Pay - details of Senior Staff salaries, in bands of £10k, within Statutory accounts.	School Website / Companies House	No charge
Governors' allowances that can be incurred or claimed, and a record of total payments made to individual governors.	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Details of any premiums we receive such as pupil premium	School website	No charge
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews. Current information as a minimum.	Hard copy & / or School Website	
School profile ○ DfE School Performance data ○ The latest Ofsted Report	School Website	No charge
Performance management policy & procedures adopted by the governing body.	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
The school's future plans	School Website	No charge
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	School Website	No charge
Class 4 – How we make decisions Decision making processes and records of decisions Current and previous three years as a minimum		
Admissions Policy & decisions (not individual admission decisions)	School Website	No charge
Agendas and minutes of meetings of the governing body and its committees, unless an exemption applies to the information or parts of it.	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities. Current information only.		
Alcester Grammar School Policies including: ○ Data Protection Policy ○ Charges & Remissions Policy ○ Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy ○ Home School Agreement ○ SEN Policy ○ Behaviour Policy	School Website	No charge

