



Freedom of Information Policy

Approved by:	Kirsty Burridge
Last reviewed:	August 2025
Next Review by:	September 2027
Review Cycle:	Biennial

1. Policy Statement

Blue Sky Independent School is committed to transparency and accountability. The school recognises the legal right of the public to access recorded information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

This policy sets out the school's approach to handling FOI requests, ensuring requests are processed efficiently, fairly, and within statutory timescales.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All recorded information held by the school in any form (paper, electronic, email, audio/video, or other media).
- Requests made by any member of the public, including parents, community members, and journalists.

Excluded from this policy:

- Personal data requests under the Data Protection Act 2018 (handled under the school's Data Protection Policy).
- Requests for information intended for commercial gain may be considered separately.

3. Legal Framework

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- ICO guidance on FOI

4. Principles

- FOI requests will be dealt with openly, impartially, and within the statutory 20 working days (or 60 calendar days if environmental information).
- The school will provide advice and assistance to requesters where needed.
- Where information cannot be released, the school will provide a valid reason and reference to the relevant exemption under FOIA.
- All staff have a responsibility to identify and manage records appropriately to facilitate compliance with FOIA.

5. Making a Request

- Requests must be made in writing (letter, email, or online form) and include:
 - Name and contact details of the requester
 - A clear description of the information requested
- Requests should be sent to:
Freedom of Information Officer / Headteacher
Email: [school email]
Address: [school address]
- The school may contact the requester to clarify or refine the request if necessary.

6. Responding to Requests

- The school will acknowledge requests promptly and aim to respond within 20 working days (statutory requirement).
- Information will be provided in the format requested, if reasonably practicable (e.g., electronic, paper).
- If the request is refused or exempt, the response will include:
 - The exemption applied
 - Reasons for withholding information
 - Details of the internal review and appeal process

7. Exemptions

The school may refuse a request if the information is:

- Exempt under FOIA (e.g., personal data, commercially sensitive information, security matters)
- Vexatious or repeated requests
- Already reasonably accessible elsewhere

A full list of exemptions can be found in the FOIA 2000 and ICO guidance.

8. Charges

- The school may charge for supplying information if:
 - It incurs significant costs in time, resources, or copying
 - The request is for commercial purposes
- Charges will be reasonable, and the requester will be informed in advance.

9. Record-Keeping

- All FOI requests and responses will be logged by the FOI Officer.
- Records will include:
 - Requester's details
 - Date of request and response
 - Information released or withheld
 - Reason for any refusal
- Records will be retained in line with the school's retention schedule.

10. Review and Complaints

- Requesters dissatisfied with the school's response may request an internal review.
- Internal reviews will be carried out by a senior member of staff not involved in the original decision.
- If still dissatisfied, requesters may appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

11. Monitoring and Review

- The Headteacher and Proprietor will review this policy every two years to ensure legal compliance and effectiveness.
- Staff will receive training on FOI responsibilities and exemptions.