

Freedom of Information Policy

September 2025

Plymouth Grove Primary School

This model policy and procedure has been produced by One Education's HR and People service. The HR and People team provides management and HR support and advice to schools and academies purchasing their services under an agreed Service Agreement. For further information please contact the HR and People team via the Helpline: 0161 276 0153 or Email: hrpeople@oneeducation.co.uk Website: www.oneeducation.co.uk

This policy is recommended for adoption by all maintained schools including community, voluntary controlled, community special, maintained nursery, foundation, foundation special and voluntary aided schools. It is also recommended for adoption by academies and free schools (modified as appropriate and taking into account the particular circumstances of the relevant academy or free school). Some school or academy specific provisions are included. This policy should therefore be adapted as necessary and inappropriate provisions deleted. The HR and People team can assist in adapting this policy to fully reflect a school's status including their academy or multi academy trust (MAT) status.

References in this policy to schools include a reference to academies and free schools unless otherwise stated. References in this policy to the Headteacher include a reference to an academy or free school Principal and references to the governing body include references to governing boards and/or trust boards as applicable.

Document Control	
Title	Free of Information Policy
Date	September 2025
Supersedes	March 2021
Amendments	None, remains compliant
Review	Every 3 years
Author	HR and People, One Education Ltd
Date consultation completed	14/10/2025
Date adopted by Governing Body	14/10/2025

Equality Statement: - Under the public sector equality duty (PSED), all schools/academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. This means schools/academies must take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented.

The One Education HR and People team regularly reviews all policies and procedures which are recommended to schools/academies to ensure compliance with education and employment legislation including the Equality Act 2010. Consultation with schools/academies is an important part of this review process. Headteachers, Principals and Governing Bodies are asked to contact the HR and People team via the Helpline if they believe there are any negative equality impacts in their school/academy in relation to the application of this policy/procedure.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. PUBLICATION SCHEME	4
3. MAKING A REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT	5
4. REFUSING A REQUEST	5
5. CHARGES	6
6. PURPOSE OF INFORMATION PROVIDED	6
7. COMPLAINTS	6

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Plymouth Grove Primary School recognises the need to hold information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”) and make it available to the public in accordance with provisions of the Act, subject to any legal exemptions.
- 1.2 Any reference in Act to “public authorities” applies to schools.

2. PUBLICATION SCHEME

- 2.1 The Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOI) requires all Public Authorities (including schools) to produce a register of the types of information it will routinely make available to the public.
- 2.2 Plymouth Grove Primary School has adopted the model publication scheme approved by the Information Commissioner.
- 2.3 Plymouth Grove Primary School publication scheme sets out the seven classes of information identified in the model publication scheme:
 - 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
- 2.4 Information will be provided on the School’s website wherever possible. However, some information may only be available in hard copy. If it is not possible to access the information via the website, the School will make appropriate arrangements for the information to be made available upon request to the Headteacher at Plymouth Grove Primary School
- 2.5 The purpose of the publication scheme is to make the greatest amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the requestor. Any charges made by the school will be kept to a minimum. Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.
- 2.6 Charges may be made to cover the School’s costs such as: photocopying, postage and packaging and/or any costs directly incurred by the School as result of providing the information. If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the charge will be given before the information is provided and payment may be required prior to provision of the information.

3. MAKING A REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

- 3.1 Any requests for Information held by the school that is not published under the School's publication scheme should be made in writing to the school via letter or email.
- 3.2 The request will then be acknowledged in writing and if necessary, clarification will be sought on what is being asked for.
- 3.3 The School will comply with the Freedom of Information request promptly within 20 working days from the date of the request. The information Commissioner's office interprets this to mean that 'Day 1' is the first working day after the request is received.
- 3.4 The school will respond in one of the following ways:
- By providing the information requested;
 - Confirming that it does not hold the information requested;
 - Confirming that the information requested is already publicly available and where it can be obtained from; or
 - Explaining whether any/all of the information is exempt from disclosure.
- 3.5 If more time is needed to consider the public interest test in applying an exemption, the School may claim a reasonable extension of up to an additional 20 working days. The requester will be informed within the initial 20-working-day period if this applies.
- 3.6 Section 10 also permits variations to the 20-working-day timescale in limited circumstances, which will be explained to the requester if applicable.

4. REFUSING A REQUEST

- 4.1 The School will try to make as much information available as possible. However, sometimes there may be a valid legal reason for withholding information. Examples of when the school may withhold information include:
- School intends to publish the information in the future;
 - The law states the information must not be released.
 - Disclosure would:
 - Breach confidentiality;
 - Breach the Data Protection Legislation;
 - Breach the public interest.
- 4.2 Reasons will be provided if School decides to withhold information.
- 4.3 If only part of the requested information is exempt, the School will comply with its Section 1(1) duties to disclose any information that is not exempt. This will be done promptly and within the 20-working day time limit.

4.4 School will provide a refusal notice that will:

- State that the School is refusing the request;
- Specify the exemption(s) being relied on;
- Provide reasons why the exemption(s) apply;
- Where applicable, explain the outcome of the public interest test;
- Inform the requester of their right to request an internal review, and their right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if unsatisfied.

5. CHARGES

- 5.1 Most information requested will be provided free of charge, although School may charge a fee for the photocopying/printing/postage of larger documents and where it is not available in the Publications Scheme.
- 5.2 School will not charge for time spent dealing with a request but there is no obligation to provide information if it would involve more than 18 hours work. In such cases, school will make contact with the requestor and discuss options.
- 5.3 If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the charge will be given before the information is provided and payment may be required prior to provision of the information.

6. PURPOSE OF INFORMATION PROVIDED

- 6.1 Information provided by the School under the Freedom of Information Act may be used by the requester for their own purposes.
- 6.2 However, some of the information disclosed may be subject to copyright, either held by the School or a third party. Where this is the case, the use of such material may be restricted.

7. COMPLAINTS

- 7.1 Any complaint about how School has handled a request under the Act should be referred to the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, Telephone 01625 545700, Website www.ico.org.uk