



West Kirby Grammar School

Freedom of Information Policy

Purpose

This document is a statement of the aims and principles applied by West Kirby Grammar School to ensure that it is able to comply with requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI Act).

Scope

This policy does not form part of the contract of employment for staff, but it is a condition of employment that employees will abide by the rules and policies made by the School from time to time. Any failures to follow the policy can therefore result in disciplinary proceedings.

Principles

West Kirby Grammar School (WKGS) will comply with main the principle behind the FOI Act in that people have a right to know about the activities of public authorities, unless there is a good reason for them not to. This is sometimes described as a presumption in favour of disclosure, meaning that:

- Everybody has a right to access official information. Disclosure of information should be the default – in other words, information should be kept private only when there is a good reason and it is permitted by the Act;
- An applicant (requester) does not need to give you a reason for wanting the information. On the contrary, you must justify refusing them information;
- You must treat all requests for information equally, whether they are journalists, local residents, public authority employees, or foreign researchers, except under some circumstances relating to vexatious requests and personal data;
- Because you should treat all requesters equally, you should only disclose information under the Act if you would disclose it to anyone else who asked. In other words, you should consider any information you release under the Act as if it were being released to the world at large.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to information held by public authorities.

It does this in two ways:

- a) Public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities (Publication Scheme)
- b) Members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

a) Publication Scheme

The Freedom of Information Act was introduced to promote greater openness and accountability across the public sector, and establishes a general right of access to information held by public authorities, including Academies. Along with Human Rights and Data Protection legislation, FOI aims to build a culture of rights and responsibilities for citizens. WKGS, as part of its compliance with the Freedom of Information Act has an agreed publication scheme, setting out:

1. The classes of information which we publish or intend to publish
2. The method by which the information will be published
3. Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment
4. Written requests

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for Academies approved by the Information Commissioner's office.

b) Requests for Information

Request for information under the FOI Act must be in writing for the attention of the Headteacher, via email: office@wkgs.net, in writing to: West Kirby Grammar School, Graham Road, West Kirby, Wirral CH48 5DP or via the internet through What Do They Know.com: <https://www.whatdotheyknow.com>. All requests will be processed in line with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance within 20 working days.

The School will inform the requester in writing whether the information they have requested is held and where it is held or have the information provided to them. There is no explicit right to copies of original documents but when copies are requested and where providing those documents is possible they will be provided, unless the contents fall within the realms of exemption under the FOI Act whereby the exempt information maybe redacted before disclosure to the requester.

Useful Links and Further Information

Processing of requests for information flow chart

https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1167/flowchart_of_request_handling_under_foia.pdf

Full guidance relating to Freedom of Information Regulations from the ICO

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guidance-index/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/>

Administration Use Only:	
Statutory / Non Statutory:	Statutory
Website:	Yes
GB Committee:	H & S
Document Formulated:	March 2018
Review:	Every 2 years
Date Reviewed by Committee:	15 October 2018
Reviewed Document Adopted by FGB	
Next Review Date:	October 2020