

Cardinal Newman Catholic High School

Freedom of information Policy

Explanatory Notes

Governing Bodies are responsible for ensuring that schools comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). Some aspects, such as charging are at the discretion of the Governing Body.

Introduction

Cardinal Newman Catholic High School is committed to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and to the principles of accountability and the general right of access to information, subject to legal exemptions. This policy outlines our response to the Act and a framework for managing requests.

Background

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol) came fully into force on January 1 2005. Under the Act, any person has a legal right to ask for access to information held by the school. They are entitled to be told whether the school holds the information, and to receive a copy, subject to certain exemptions.

The information which the school routinely makes available to the public is included in the Publication Scheme. Requests for other information should be dealt with in accordance with the statutory guidance. While the Act assumes openness, it recognises that certain information is sensitive. There are exemptions to protect this information.

The Act is fully retrospective, so that any past records which the school holds are covered by the Act. The DfE has issued a Retention Schedule produced by the Records Management Society of Great Britain, to guide schools on how long they should keep school records. It is an offence to wilfully conceal damage or destroy information in order to avoid responding to an enquiry, so it is important that no records that are the subject of an enquiry are amended or destroyed.

Requests under Fol can be addressed to anyone in the school; so all staff need to be aware of the process for dealing with requests. Requests must be made in writing, (including email), and should include the enquirers name and correspondence address, and state what information they require. They do not have to mention the Act, nor do they have to say why they want the information. There is a duty to respond to all requests, telling the enquirer whether or not the information is held, and supplying any information that is held, except where exemptions apply. There is no need to collect data in specific response to a Fol enquiry. There is a time limit of 20 days excluding school holidays for responding to the request.

For further information and guidance, see the DfES "Freedom of Information Act 2000 – A Guide for Maintained Schools on Full Implementation from January 2005."

Scope

The FoI Act joins the Data Protection Act and the Environmental Information Regulations as legislation under which anyone is entitled to request information from the school.

Requests for personal data are still covered by the Data Protection Act. (DPA). Individuals can request to see what information the school holds about them. This is known as a Subject Access Request, and must be dealt with accordingly.

Requests for information about anything relating to the environment – such as air, water, land, the natural world or the built environment and any factor or measure affecting these – are covered by the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). They also cover issues relating to Health and Safety. For example queries about chemicals used in the school or on school land, phone masts, car parks etc. would all be covered by the EIR. Requests under EIR are dealt with in the same way as those under FoIA, but unlike FoIA requests, they do not need to be written and can be verbal.

If any element of a request to the school includes personal or environmental information, these elements must be dealt with under DPA or EIR. Any other information is a request under FoIA, and must be dealt with accordingly.

Obligations and Duties

Our school recognises its duty to

- Provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. *We will respond to straightforward verbal requests for information, and will help enquirers to put more complex verbal requests into writing so that they can be handled under the Act.*
- Tell enquirers whether or not we hold the information they are requesting (the duty to confirm or deny), and provide access to the information we hold in accordance with the procedures laid down in Appendix 1.

Cardinal Newman Catholic High School has adopted the Model Publication Scheme for Schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

The Publication Scheme and the materials it covers will be readily available from our *School office. It will also be published on our website.*

Dealing with Requests

We will respond to all requests in accordance with the procedures laid down in Appendix 1.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures as this Policy will be available on line.

Exemptions

Certain information is subject to either absolute or qualified exemptions. The exemptions are listed in Appendix 2.

When we wish to apply a qualified exemption to a request, we will invoke the public interest test procedures to determine if public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

We will maintain a register of requests where we have refused to supply information, and the reasons for the refusal. The register will be retained for 5 years.

8. Public Interest Test

Unless it is in the public interest to withhold information, it has to be released. We will apply the Public Interest Test before any qualified exemptions are applied.

For information on applying the Public Interest Test see Appendix 3.

9. Charging

We reserve the right to refuse to supply information where the cost of doing so exceeds the statutory maximum, currently £450

This is Cardinal Newman Catholic High School's Publication Scheme

Our full title and address for sending requests for any documents is: Cardinal Newman Catholic High School, Bridgewater Ave, Latchford, Warrington WA4 1RX

The person responsible for maintenance of this scheme is: Mrs Warburton, Headteacher

1. Introduction: what a publication scheme is and why it has been developed

One of the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in the rest of this document) is that public authorities, including all maintained schools, should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public.

To do this we must produce a publication scheme, setting out:

- *The classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;*
- *The manner in which the information will be published; and*
- *Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.*

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is either available for you on our website to download and print off or 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.

2. Categories of information published

The publication scheme guides you to information which we currently publish (or have recently published) or which we will publish in the future - this is split into categories of information known as 'classes'. These are contained in section 5 of this scheme. The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised into four broad topic areas:

- ***School Prospectus*** - information published in the school prospectus.
- ***Governors' Documents*** - information published in the Governors' Annual Report and in other governing body documents.
- ***Pupils & Curriculum*** - information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum.
- ***School Policies*** - information about policies that relate to the school in general.

3. How to request information

You can request a copy of the information you want from the contact detailed below.

If the information you're looking for isn't available via the scheme and isn't on our website, you can still ask if we have it. You can contact the school by telephone, email or letter.

Email: enquiries@cardinal-newman.co.uk

Tel: 01925 635556

Contact Address: **Cardinal Newman Catholic High School, Bridgewater Ave, Latchford, Warrington WA4 1RX**

To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence "**PUBLICATIONS SCHEME REQUEST**" (in **bold CAPITALS**).

4. Paying for information

Single copies of information covered by this publication are provided free unless stated otherwise. If your request means that we have to do a lot of photocopying or printing, or pay a large postage charge, or is for a priced item such as some printed publications or videos we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request.

Information published on our website is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet service provider. If you don't have Internet access, you can access our website using a local library or an Internet café.

Classes of Information Currently Published

School Prospectus - this section sets out information published in the school prospectus.

Class	Description
School Prospectus	<p>Although there is no longer a statutory obligation to provide a School Prospectus, Cardinal Newman Catholic High School currently provides a Prospectus on the School website and also in hard copy form. Our Prospectus includes the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the name, address and telephone number of the school, and the type of school. • the names of the Headteacher and chair of governors. • a statement of the school's ethos and values. • information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational need

Governors' Annual Report and other information relating to the governing body - this section sets out information published in the Governors Annual Report and in other Governing Body documents.

Class	Description
Governors' Annual Report	<p>The statutory contents of the governors' annual report to parents are as follows, (other items may be included at the school's discretion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of the governing body membership, including name and address of chair and clerk. • a statement on progress in implementing the action plan drawn up following an inspection. • a financial statement, including gifts made to the school and amounts paid to governors for expenses. • information about school security. • information about the implementation of the governing body's policy on pupils

	<p>with special educational needs (SEN) and any changes to the policy during the last year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a description of the arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities; details of steps to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than other pupils; and details of existing facilities to assist access to the school by pupils with disabilities. • the accessibility plan covering future policies for increasing access by those with disabilities to the school (<i>from April 2004</i>). • how teachers' professional development impacts on teaching and learning. • number of pupils on roll and rates of pupils' authorised and unauthorised absence. • the school's targets for Key Stage 3 assessments • National Curriculum assessment results for appropriate Key Stages, with national summary figures. • the school's targets for public examinations at Key Stage 4 . • GCSE results in the school, locally and national. • GCE A/AS and vocational qualification results in the school and nationally • the number of pupils studying for and percentage achieving other vocational qualifications • the destinations of school leavers
Instrument of Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name of the school. • The category of the school. • The name of the governing body. • The manner in which the governing body is constituted. • The name of any person entitled to appoint any category of governor. • Details of any trust. • If the school has a religious character, a description of the ethos of the school. • The date the instrument takes effect.
Minutes ^[1] of meeting of the Governing Body and its committees	Minutes from governors board and committee meetings

Pupils & Curriculum Policies - this section gives access to information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum.

Class	Description
Home - school agreement	Written statement of the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities, the parental responsibilities and the school's expectations of its pupils for example homework arrangements.
Curriculum Policy	Statement on following the policy for national curriculum subjects, including any syllabus followed by pupils at the school.
Sex Education Policy	Written statement of policy with regard to sex education.

Collective Worship	Statement of arrangements for the required daily act of collective worship.
Careers Education [Secondary]	Statement of the programmes of careers education provided for Key Stage 4.
Pupil Discipline	Written statement of general principles on behaviour and discipline including any anti bullying policy as appropriate.

School Policies - This section gives access to information about policies that relate to the school in general.

Class	Description
Reports of School Inspections under Sections 10 and 23 of the School Inspections Act 1996	Report of an inspection of the school and the summary of the report.
Post Inspection action plan	A plan setting out the actions required following an inspection.
Charging and remissions policies	A statement of the school's policy with respect to charges and remissions for any optional extra or board and lodging of which charges are permitted, for example music tuition, trips.
School session times	Details of school session and dates of school terms and holidays.
Special Education Needs	Information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational needs.
Accessibility Plans	Written plan of improvements to access for pupils with disabilities (<i>from April 2004</i>).
Health and Safety Policy	Written statement of general policy with respect to health and safety at work of employees (and others) and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out the policy.
Child Protection Policy	Statement of general principles on Child Protection arrangements (<i>from March 2004</i>).
Complaints procedure	Statement of procedures for dealing with complaints.
Staff Appraisal	Statement of procedures adopted by the governing body relating to staff appraisal.
Staff Conduct, Discipline and Grievance	Statement of procedure for regulating conduct and discipline of school staff and procedures by which staff may seek redress for grievance.

6. Feedback and Complaints

We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you want to make any comments about this publication scheme or if you require further assistance or need to make a complaint then initially this should be addressed to Mrs Warburton Headteacher.

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 the Information Commissioner's Office. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and that deals with formal complaints. They can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Or

Enquiry/Information Line: 01625 545 745
E-mail: publications@ic-foi.demon.co.uk

[\[1\]](#) Some information might be confidential or otherwise exempt from the publication by law - we cannot therefore publish this

Reviewed October 2013