

Purston Infant School

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY & DATA PROTECTION

SECTION 1 – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Introduction

Pupils and their parents already have the right to see all personal records held by the School on themselves. In addition much non-confidential information held by the School has traditionally been made available to the wider school community. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 seeks to clarify the disclosure arrangements for information held by public bodies such as schools. Under the Act members of the public (including school staff and parents) now have the right to request access to information not protected by the Data Protection Act or deemed confidential by the School – see Sections 2 & 3.

Under the Freedom of Information Act all maintained schools must now ensure that they make certain information and the mechanism for gaining access to such, clearly available. Naturally, information may not be released if it does not exist or if to do so would breach someone else's rights to confidentiality, or the information is covered by an exemption in the Act.

The information covered by this policy relates not only to information available in hard paper copies but also to that published on the School's Website. However, there are categories of information which are not available under the Freedom of Information Act such as confidential personal files – see Section 2 (Confidentiality).

This policy conforms to the model approved for schools by the Information Commissioner.

Aims

Through this policy and its implementation the School aims to:

1. clearly describe the classes of information that it already publishes or is intending to publish in the near future;
2. clearly describe the manner in which the information is published/made available.
3. identify when, and the scale of, charges related to the provision of the requested information.

Categories of information published by the School

There are four categories of information which are readily available from Purston Infant School. These are:

1. The School Prospectus;
2. Governing Body Documentation;
3. The School Policies;
4. Other procedures and general information related to the School.

1. The School Prospectus

The prospectus contains general information about Purston Infant School, its curriculum staffing, etc. Copies of the prospectus are provided on request to the parents of pupils applying, or considering applying, to attend the School. The School Prospectus is also available on the School website. The Prospectus contains the following statutory requirements:

- Name, address and telephone number of the School along with the type of School;
- Names of the School Governors, Headteacher and members of staff (including responsibilities);
- The School's Admission Policy;
- The School's mission statement and aims;
- The School's religious affiliation or denomination (if any) as well as an explanation of the parents rights to withdraw their child from religious education and acts of collective worship;
- A statement of the number of pupils on roll and rates of authorised and unauthorised absence;
- The arrangements for parents of prospective pupils to visit the School.

2. Governor's Documentation

Records of the School's financial controls, budget and school fund finances are kept in accordance with current DfE and LA regulations – consideration will be given to providing this information in response to reasonable requests. The following records **MUST** be kept for the current financial year and the previous 6 financial years:

- Copy Orders;
- Paying-in slip stubs/records;
- Delivery notes;
- Copy receipts for all income;
- Copies of paid invoices;
- Bank statements;
- Copy remittance advices;

The instruments of Government

All information regarding the Governing Body is contained within a Governor Induction File located in the Headteacher's office. Information within the file includes:

- Name of the Governing Body.
- Manner in which the Governing Body is constituted.
- Term of office for each category of Governor (i.e. teacher, parent etc) if less than 4 years.
- The current committee make up:-
 - i. Resources;
 - ii. Standards and Curriculum;
 - iii. Performance Management.

Minutes of the Governing Body Sub-Committee Meetings

The agendas and minutes for all Governing Body meetings for the present and previous full school year are available from the Headteacher. N.B. When named individuals are discussed at a meeting, the Chair of Governors will declare that the Governing Body has entered 'confidential mode'. Such minutes are retained in the confidential minutes folder and as such are not available. All other minutes are freely available.

3. School Policies

School policies are available to parents on request.

4. Other School Procedures and general information

The following information relating to the everyday running of the School is also available within school:

**The Curriculum – details of Schemes of Work;
Latest Ofsted Inspection Report (May 2013) including Post Ofsted
recommendations;**

School calendar – term dates and special events;

School bulletins;

Risk Assessments;

Statutory instruments and administrative memoranda.

Any sent by the DfE to the Headteacher or Governing Body related to the Curriculum.

The School Website (www.purstoninfant.ik.org)

The School Website is seen as the first port of call for generic information about the School. Requests for information will often be referred to the website which is freely accessible. Requests for printed information will have a charge associated with them. However you may wish to visit the School's website where you will find:

The School Prospectus

Contact details	Telephone number	e-mail address	postal address
Staff Lists	Detailing any teaching and learning responsibilities		
Ofsted Report	most recent May 2013		
Subject details	Curriculum/Subject overview		
	Examination results for the previous year		
	After School Clubs		
Calendar	Term dates		
Governors	Names and category of all the Governors		
Newsletters	Current		

Making a request for information

If you wish to have paper copies of information provided by the School, you should contact the School by telephone or letter. Contact details are set out below:

Telephone number : **01977 723550**
Contact address **Purston Infant School**
Nunns Lane
Featherstone
WF7 5HF

Any request for materials by post should provide a return address to which the information will be posted.

Paying for information

Members of the public have a statutory right to ask for information under the Freedom of Information Act. No charge is made by the School for information sourced from the School's Website.

For parents of present or prospective pupils (including parents who wish information to help them decide if they wish their child to attend the School), single copies of all relevant and available information are provided free of charge. However, should a request for information involve a large amount of non-standard paperwork or duplication, the School reserves the right to make a charge to cover duplication and administrative costs.

When a member of the general public or a member of a professional body requests the information, then the standard charge will be made to cover duplication, postage and administrative costs.

In all cases where a cost is to be levied the purchaser will be informed of the cost and requested to pay the correct amount in advance, (by cash or cheque) before the work is undertaken.

SECTION 2 – CONFIDENTIALITY (see separate policy for further information)

Under the Freedom of Information Act, members of the public (including school staff and parents) now have the right to request access to information not deemed confidential by the School or protected by the Data Protection Act. Section 2 illustrates the nature of records deemed confidential by the School or to be protected by the Data Protection Act 1998.

Pupil Discipline

Minutes of Governing Body meetings relating to Pupil Discipline and Personnel are confidential and are therefore not available.

Communications with parents

To help fulfil their important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents are requested and encouraged to communicate via the Office staff or to a particular teacher, any concerns or difficulties, interests or aspirations, that are either specific to, or that are seriously affecting their child's education. The office staff record and deal with this information in a confidential and professional manner.

General Information & Educational Records - Pupils

Confidential copies of reports, pupil profiles, SATs results and the portfolio of work are kept as general information. Such curricular records comprise the major part of a pupil's educational record. These records are transferred with the pupil to his/her new school. Contents of educational records must be disclosed to parents upon request within a specified time and to another school which is considering a pupil for admission or which has just admitted that pupil. No charge will be made for the provision of such information.

Medical/Confidential Information - Pupils

Confidential medical information and reports (e.g. Social Services and Psychological Reports) are also kept. The records show:

- personal details, doctor's name/address/phone number, hospital reference, if applicable;
- treatment needed regularly (e.g. asthma preventer);
- relief treatment (e.g. asthma reliever) if required.

The Headteacher (or those with delegated authority) can decide not to disclose/transfer/copy/amend a pupil's record – see Appeals procedure.

There are two special considerations related to Child Protection:

- The Education (Schools Records) Regulations 1989 exempt any information relating to actual, alleged or suspected child abuse from the requirements of disclosure to those with 'Parental Responsibility' (Children Act 1989).
- When a child dies the LA may carry out a Section 8 Review under the Children Act 1989. This is a multi-agency investigation and a report on behalf of the LA is usually compiled by the appropriate Safeguarding Officer. All school records must be kept in these circumstances - only copies can be given to parents.

This section may also contain other details related to Child Protection/Safeguarding but additionally Drugs, HIV, and Mentoring.

Admission Documents & Personal Information - Pupils

The School keeps confidential admission records as specified by the LA, the Governing Body and DfE.

Staff Records

The School maintains detailed confidential personnel records relating to individual employees' job descriptions, qualifications, experience, length of service, salary levels. References written for current staff are kept securely by the Headteacher but separate to the other personnel records. Completed application forms and associated references for advertised positions within the School are kept securely in the School Office until an appointment has been made, at which point all copies of application forms and associated references are destroyed when an appointment has proved successful.

SECTION 3 – DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998 (see separate policy for further information)

The School is now heavily reliant on computers to process and record much of the aforementioned data. Accordingly the School is registered under the Data Protection Act. The School complies with the Act's 'Data Protection Principles' and reflects its spirit of openness and good practice. The Data Protection Act is an attempt to protect people's

privacy by laying down strict rules about how such data should be used. The following information should prove useful in understanding our interpretation of the Act:

What Is Meant By The Term Personal Data?

Within the Data Protection Act, the term personal data is defined as follows:

- i. Data that relates to living people who can be identified.
- ii. Data that expresses an opinion about a person.
- ii. Data that is classified as sensitive personal data. That is data that includes information about a person's:
 - religion,
 - ethnic origins,
 - sexual life,
 - political opinions,
 - health (including mental health).

The Main Principles Of The Data Protection Act 1998

These can be summarized as follows:

- i. Anyone who stores and uses data about any person must declare the fact to the Data Protection Registrar.
- ii. The data may only be obtained in a fair and lawful way.
- iii. The data may only be used for lawful purposes.
- iv. The data may not be passed to anyone who is not entitled to it.
- v. The data must be accurate and not out of date.
- vi. The data must not be kept for longer than is necessary to fulfil the purpose for which it was obtained.
- vii. Precautions must be taken to protect the data from loss, damage and unauthorised access.
- viii. The data must not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area.
- ix. The data can only be processed within the rights of data subjects. (This is explained more clearly below).

What Is Meant By The Term 'The Rights Of Data Subjects'?

This term refers to the rights of individuals under the Act. These rights are summarized as follows:

- i. The person whom the data concerns can request that a copy be provided to them.
- ii. If necessary, the person can demand that inaccurate information is corrected or deleted.
- iii. Individuals have the right to prevent automatic decisions, based on personal data, from being made by computer systems.
- iv. An individual can prevent personal data from being processed if it is likely to cause them distress.
- v. Personal data cannot be used for marketing without the permission of the person to whom it refers.
- vi. Complaints may be made to the Data Protection Commissioner if a person feels that their rights have been contravened.
- vii. A person has the right to compensation for damage or distress caused by breaches of the Act.

Reviewed February 2011

Reviewed January 2014
Derrick Taylor, Chair of Governors