

Freedom of Information Act Policy

Ormiston Academies Trust takes its responsibilities with regard to the management of the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 very seriously. This document covers:

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1. Scope of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 are adhered to and in particular that:

- A significant amount of routinely published information about the Ormiston Academies Trust is made available to the public as a matter of course.
- Other information is readily available on request and such a request is dealt with in a timely manner; and
- In cases where information is covered by an exemption, consideration is given as to whether or not the information should be released.

2. Responsibilities

The Ormiston Academies Trust recognises its corporate responsibility under the Act to provide a general right of access to information held. The body with overall responsibility for this policy is the Ormiston Executive Team.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for drawing up guidance on freedom of information and promoting compliance with this policy in such a way as to ensure the easy, appropriate and timely retrieval of information.

3. Specific requests for information

Information not already made available is accessible through a specific request for information. In this regard the Freedom of Information Act establishes two related rights:

- The right to be told whether information exists, and
- The right to receive the information (subject to exemptions)

These rights can be exercised by anyone – natural or legal persons, worldwide. These specific requests for information not listed in the publication scheme will be dealt with by the Chief Operating Officer who will refer all enquiries to the Ormiston Executive Team.

Any request must be made in a permanent form (for example in writing or by email) and a charge may be made for dealing with any request. Requestors will not be entitled to information to which any of the exemptions in the Act applies. However, only those specific pieces of information to which the exemption applies will be withheld, and information covered by an exemption will be subject to review by the Chief Operating Officer.

The Ormiston Academies Trust will respond to any request within 20 working days although further reasonable details can be requested in order to identify and locate the information. If a fee is required, the period of 20 working days is extended by up to 3 months until the fee is paid.

4. Charges

Ormiston Academies Trust reserves the right to charge an appropriate fee for dealing with a specific request for information not listed in the publication scheme in accordance with the Act.

5. Complaints

The Chief Operating Officer will co-ordinate any complaints received in respect of this policy.

The complaint should be addressed to the Chief Operating Officer in the first instance. The complaint will be acknowledged immediately and every reasonable effort will be made to offer a more comprehensive reply within 21 days.

If the applicant is not satisfied with the reply then they should inform the Chief Operating Officer within 21 days.

If applicants are dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint they may seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for review by the Information Commissioner should be made in writing to:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625-545-700
Fax: 01625-545-510

6. Exemptions under the Act

There are 23 exemptions under the Act, some exemptions where the public interest test applies, and others which are absolute exemptions.

Ormiston Academies Trust may decide that some information it holds could be regarded as exempt information under the Act. Where a request is made for information which includes exemptions Ormiston Academies Trust will consider the prejudice test and the public interest test, and may in some circumstances withhold the requested information.

7. Contacts

Paul Nye
Chief Operating Officer
144 Newhall Street
Birmingham
B3 1RY
Tel: +44 (0)121 236 5100
E-mail: foi@oatoc.co.uk