Freedom of Information Policy

Developed by:	School Business Manager
Approved by:	Headteacher
Approved:	November 2026
Review Date:	November 2027

Belper School and Sixth Form Centre is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) as a public authority, and as such, must comply with any requests for information in accordance with the principles laid out in the Act.

This means that the trust must hold and publish a FOI Publication Scheme, to communicate what information we hold is readily available to the public, and where it can be found.

All public authorities must also have processes in place to manage and FOI requests that are made.

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The school Publication Scheme has been developed from the Information Commissioner's Office template documents. It is the school's aim to ensure that the publication of information is accessible for individuals. Much of the information listed is routinely published on individual school websites and in their individual prospectuses.

The Publication Scheme and the material it covers will be readily available in hard copy from the school, depending on the source of the information.

Schedule of charges under Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

Type of Charge	**Description**	**Basis of charge**
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/Printing @ 10p per sheet	Actual cost 10p
	Photocopying/Printing @ 50p per sheet	Actual cost 50p
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard second class
See our Charging Policy for more details		

Where the cost of postage, printing or photocopying is below £10.00, we will not make a charge.

Where it is over £10.00, the first £10.00 will be free of charge, after that we will charge the full estimated cost of postage and copying.

Before we produce the information, we shall inform you of the total cost. You may wish to refine the request in order to reduce the cost and we would be happy to discuss this with you.

Freedom of Information requests

Any request for any information from the school will be considered to see if it meets the criteria of FOI. This is irrespective of whether or not the individual making the request mentions the FOI.

If the request is simple and the information is to be released, then the individual who received the request can release the information but must ensure that this is done within the timescale set out below.

A copy of the request and response should then be sent to the School Business Manager.

All other requests should be referred in the first instance to the School Business Manager who may co-ordinate the process with other staff.

All requests under FOI are treated as if made by any member of the general public. Any information released will be within the public domain and may not be marked restricted or confidential.

Time limits for FOI requests

The school must respond as soon as possible, and in any event, within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the request. When calculating the 20-working day deadline, a "working day" is a school day (one in which pupils are in attendance), subject to an absolute maximum of 60 normal working days (not school days) to respond.

Part 1 – Identifying the types of information

As an organisation we hold different types of information.

Organisational information, prospectus, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance, schemes of delegation, school arrangements.

Financial information about income and expenditure, financial audit, funding agreements, procurement, tendering and contracts.

Plans, strategies, aims and objectives, performance indicators, audits, inspections, and reviews.

Decision making processes and records of decisions, internal criteria, and procedures

Policies and procedures –protocols, policies, and procedures for delivering services and compliance with our statutory and regulatory obligations.

Lists and registers required by law and other key information.

Details of our curriculum and wider educational offering

Part 2 - Considering the nature of the request

FOI requests will be fully complied with unless an exemption applies.

Common exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 include:

Section 40 (1) – the request is for the applicant's personal data. This must be dealt with under the subject access regime in the UK GDPR, see the Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices.

Section 40 (2) – compliance with the request would involve releasing third party personal data, and this would be in breach of the UK GDPR principles as set out in Data Protection Policy.

Section 41 – information that has been sent to the school (but not the school's own information) which is confidential.

Section 21 – information that is already publicly available, even if payment of a fee is required to access that information.

Section 22 – information that the school intends to publish at a future date.

Section 43 – information that would prejudice the commercial interests of the school and / or a third party.

Section 38 – information that could prejudice the physical health, mental health or safety of an individual (this may apply particularly to safeguarding information).

Section 31 – information which may prejudice the effective detection and prevention of crime – such as the location of CCTV cameras.

Section 36 – information which, in the opinion of the chair of trustees of the school, would prejudice the effective conduct of the school. There is a special form for this on the ICO's website to assist with the obtaining of the chair's opinion.

Information within these exemptions must be considered and weighed up about the general principal that information should be disclosed wherever applicable.

Part 3 – Responding to a request

When responding to a request where it is necessary to withhold some or all of the information, we will explain why the information has been withheld, quoting the appropriate section number and explaining how the information requested fits within that exemption. If the public interest test has been applied, this will be set out.

In these circumstances the requester can seek a review form with the school, and correspondence should be addressed in the first instance to the School Business Manager.

If anyone has any concerns, questions or complaints in relation to this policy or the publication scheme contained within it they should contact the School Business Manager

If you require a paper version of any information set out under the FOI Publication Scheme, or want to ask whether information is available, contact the trust using the details set out below.

Contact

As outlined above, please contact the School Business Manager for any FOI requests.

You can also visit our website www.belperschool.co.uk. To help us process requests quickly, any correspondence should be clearly marked 'FOI Request'.

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:

Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5A

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk