



# **GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 Policy and Publication Scheme**

Review cycle: annually

Date last reviewed: May 2023

## 1. Introduction

Gearies Primary School is committed to transparency and improving accountability and fully supports the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (The Act) came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. The Act provides public access to information held by public authorities and requires them to publish certain information about their activities. It does this in two ways:

- a) Public Authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities; and
- b) Members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

The Freedom of Information Act may work alongside other laws. These include:

- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community Regulations 2009
- Access to Health Records Act 1990
- Local Government Acts
- Education (Pupil Information) Regulations

The Act covers recorded information that is held, which may include printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs and sound or video recordings. It does not include personal data (information regarding the individual making the request or another person) as this is covered by the Data Protection Act 2018.

Anyone can request information by writing to the School (letter or email or online form) and it will be provided to them in a suitable format (subject to any exemptions that may be applied). There is no formal application procedure.

Where the information is a dataset, it should be provided in a format which is suitable for re-use (i.e. CSV file).

## 2. Our Policy

Gearies Primary School will comply with the Act in the following way:

1. The school will maintain a publication scheme, detailing the information that is routinely made available to the public, using the model provided by the Information Commissioner's office. The publication scheme is available on the School's website at [www.geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.geariesprimaryschool.co.uk).
2. The School will ensure that systems and procedures are in place to meet all the duties set out in the Act.
3. The Act covers all written requests for information received by the School including emails. However, where a request is deemed to be an "ordinary" request, (usually where the information is readily available, e.g. the provision of a list of subjects taught by the school), this information will be provided and not logged as a Freedom of Information request.
4. Where a request asks for additional information, and is more complex in nature, this will be treated as a formal Freedom of Information request and will be logged and handled under Freedom of Information procedures.
5. Detailed guidance on Freedom of Information is published by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and is used as the basis of the School's policy and procedures. A copy of the latest version of the [Guide to Freedom of Information](#) can be found on the Information Commissioner's website. The School will handle all

requests for information in line with the latest guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's office.

6. This means that we will:-

- Acknowledge receipt of your request promptly.
- Identify, collect and provide the information you have requested as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after receipt of your request. If we do not hold the information, we will tell you.
- Tell you if the request will incur a fee
- Inform you of the reasons for refusing a request within 20 working days.
- Where we cannot provide a complete response, we will provide you with the information that we have – partial response.
- Where the request is very broad we will contact you to ask for a more specific request
- Keep you informed if there is a delay.
- Undertake a review of your request if you are dissatisfied with the response or the way your request was handled.

7. All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities under the Act and training will be provided where needed.

### 3. Copyright

The Act does not affect copyright and intellectual property rights that give owners the right to protect their original work against commercial exploitation by others. When giving access to information under the Act, conditions and restrictions cannot be placed on that access. However, a copyright notice can be included with the information disclosed, and a claim can be made in the courts if the requester or someone else uses the information in breach of copyright.

The ICO encourages public authorities to use the [open government licence provided by the National Archives](#). The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) has developed this licence as a tool to enable Information Providers in the public sector to license the use and re-use of their Information under a common open licence. The Controller invites public sector bodies owning their own copyright and database rights to permit the use of their Information under this licence.

### 4. Who can make a request?

Anyone can make a request for information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) – they do not have to be UK citizens, or resident in the UK. Freedom of Information requests (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests can also be made by organisations (i.e. newspapers, charities, campaign group or company). Employees of a public authority can also make a request.

When a request is received, it is the School's responsibility to identify that a request has been made and handle it accordingly, under the correct legislation (see point 1 above).

## 5. What can be requested?

The Act covers any recorded information that is held by a public authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and by UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland. It is not limited to "official documents". Recorded information includes:

- drafts;
- printed documents;
- computer files;
- letters;
- emails;
- photographs;
- sound, telephone or video recordings

The Act does not cover information that is in someone's head, only that which is already available in a recorded form. Therefore, the School is not required to create new information or question staff who may know the answer.

Public authorities include government departments, local authorities, the NHS, state schools and police forces.

The Act covers information that is held on behalf of a public authority even if it is not kept on the authorities' premises, for example, when public services are subcontracted to an external organisation.

The Act does not give people access to their own personal data (information about themselves). If a member of the public wants to see information that a public authority holds about them, it will be handled as a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

## 6. How can a request be made?

Requests for Information under the Freedom of Information Act must:

- Be made in writing (letter, email or via on line form)
- Include the requester's real name.
- Include an address for correspondence (it need not be residential or work address – it can be any address that can be used to contact them, and can be either postal or email).
- Describe the information requested.

If an applicant is unable to write their request, the school is required to offer help and assistance; this may mean a staff member recording their verbal request in a written form on their behalf.

Requests for "environmental information" can also be made verbally.

When considering the requests received from the public, the School is required to act in favour of disclosure, unless there is a good reason not to. All requests for information must be treated equally, except under some circumstances relating to vexatious requests and personal data. The applicant does not have to give a reason for wanting the information, and all applicants should be treated equally, whether they are journalists, residents, MPs, public authority staff or foreign researchers. As a result, the Act is sometimes described as being "applicant and purpose blind".

All information that is released should be considered as if it were being released to the world at large.

The School has **20 working days** to complete this process and is also required to provide advice and assistance to any applicant who seeks to make a request or who has made a request.

A request for information may only be refused where a specified exemption applies. Even where certain exemptions apply information may still be released if it is in the public interest to do so.

If an applicant is unhappy with a refusal, the way their request was handled or the information that was provided to them, they can ask for an internal review to be undertaken.

If they are still not happy following the outcome of the internal review, they then have the right to take the matter up with the Information Commissioner directly, and if that complaint is upheld there will be a Decision Notice issued against the School. The notice will also be published on the ICO website.

## 7. Active publication of information

All public authorities are required to have a publication scheme detailing the information that is routinely made available to the public, and the Information Commissioner's Office has provided a model which must be used.

The guidance is not definitive – public authorities are expected to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

## 8. Handling Freedom of Information / Environmental Information Requests

The School has up to **20 working days** to respond to a Freedom of Information Request, and the Information Commissioner's Office expects that a minimum of **85%** of requests should be answered within this timeframe.

If an applicant asks for an internal review because they are unhappy with the outcome of their request, this must be undertaken by a senior officer in the School who was not previously involved with the request.

Copies of information collected for responses to Freedom of Information requests should be kept for three complete calendar years and then disposed of in accordance with the document retention schedule. Unless there is a legal/statutory reason for keeping them as hard copies, they should be kept as electronic files.

## 9. Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the school for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

The following table describes how the charges have been arrived at:-

Type of charge	Description	How charge is calculated
Disbursement costs	Photocopying/printing at 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
Postage	Royal mail 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Post	Actual cost
Staff time	Research fees for retrieving archived material.	£25 per hour

The statutory regulations state that requests for information below a ceiling of £450 of staff time must be provided free of charge. If the fee for staff time exceeds £450 then the school can refuse to supply the information, or decide to supply it but recover the full costs of doing so (including the first £450).

We do not charge for information available and accessed from our website. Paper copies of some documents are supplied free of charge when only one copy is required. Where there is a charge this will be indicated in the Cost column.

If photocopying charges would be less than £2, the charges may be waived. Where a charge is to be made, the amount due will be notified via a Fees Notice and payment will be required before the information is provided. If payment is not received within three months then it will be assumed that the information is no longer required.

## 10. Written requests

Information held by the school that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the FOIA 2000.

## 11. School contact details

Email: [admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk)

Tel: **020 8550 1803**

Web site: [www.geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.geariesprimaryschool.co.uk)

Address: **Waremead Road, Gants Hill, Ilford, Essex IG2 6TF**

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

## 12. 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 wish to make a complaint then initially this should be addressed to Mr. R. Drew, Head Teacher.

If you are not satisfied with the response that you receive, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office for further help. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and that deals with formal complaints.

Their contact details are as follows:-

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF or

Enquiry/Information Line: Tel: 0303 123 1113.

Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)



**GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
"Success starts here!"  
Head Teacher: Mr R Drew OBE

**Waremead Road Gants Hill Ilford Essex IG2 6TF**

**Tel:** 020 8550 1803

**Email:** [admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk)  
**Website:** [www.geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.geariesprimaryschool.co.uk)  
**Blogspot:** [www.geariesprimaryschool.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.geariesprimaryschool.blogspot.co.uk)



Dear

Fee Notice pursuant to the Freedom of Information (Fees Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004

It will cost the School approximately £INSERT SUM to provide the information you have requested. Payment should be received in the school office within three months or by DATE at the latest or it will be assumed that the information is no longer required.

Please make cheques payable to Redbridge Gearies Primary School Account. We will process your request once the cheque has cleared.

The 20 working day timescale for providing the information you request is suspended until we receive payment from you.

Yours sincerely

<b>GUIDE TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME</b>		
<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained (for paper copies, please contact the school office).</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 1 – Who we are and what we do</b> Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts (current information only).		
Who's who in the school	Website / Paper copy	Free
Who's who on the Board of Governors and the basis of their appointment	Website / Paper copy	Free
Instrument of Government	Paper copy	Free
Named contact and contact details for the Head teacher and for the Board of Governors (via the school office)	Website	Free
School prospectus	Website	Free
Staffing Structure	Website Paper copy	Free 10p per sheet
School session times and term dates	Website / Paper copy	Free
School address and contact details including email address	Website / paper copy	Free

<b>GUIDE TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME</b>		
<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained (for paper copies, please contact the school office).</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it.</b> Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit (current and previous financial years)		
Annual budget plan and financial statements	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Capital funding	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Additional funding	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Procurement and contracts the school has entered into or information relating to/a link to information held by an organisation which has done so on its behalf (for example, a local authority or diocese.)	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Pay policy	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Staff allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed, with totals paid to individual senior staff members (Senior Leadership Team or equivalent, whose basic actual salary is at least £60,000 per annum) by reference to categories.	Paper copy	Free
Staffing, pay and grading structure. As a minimum this pay information should include salaries for senior staff (senior leadership team or equivalent as above) in bands of £10,000; for more junior posts, by salary range.	Website / Paper copy	10p per sheet
Financial audit reports	Paper copy	Free
Details of expenditure items over £2000 – published at least annually but at a more frequent quarterly or six-monthly interval where practical.	Paper copy	10p per sheet

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<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained (for paper copies, please contact the school office).</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</b> Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.(current information):-		
School profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government supplied performance data</li> <li>• The latest Ofsted report (Summary and full report)</li> <li>• Post Ofsted action plan</li> </ul>	Website Paper copy	Free 10p per sheet
Performance management policy and procedures adopted by the Board of Governors	Paper copy	Free
Performance data or a direct link to it	Website	Free
Schools future plans for example, proposals for and any consultation on the future of the school, such as a change in status	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Safeguarding and child protection	Website	Free

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<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained (for paper copies, please contact the school office).</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> Decision-making processes and records of decisions (current and previous three years):-		
Admissions policy/decisions (not individual admission decisions)	Website / Paper copy	Free
Agendas and minutes of meetings of the Board of Governors and its committees (NB: this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings),	Paper copy	10p per sheet

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<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained (for paper copies, please contact the school office).</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b> Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities (current information only):-		
<b>School Policies, including</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging and remissions</li> <li>• Information request handling</li> <li>• Staffing structure</li> </ul>	Website / Paper copy	Free
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and diversity (including equal opportunities)</li> <li>• Complaints procedure</li> </ul>	Website Paper copy	Free 10p per sheet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Discipline and grievance</li> <li>• Succession planning</li> </ul>	Paper copy	10p per sheet

<p><b>Pupil and curriculum policies, including:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home-school agreement</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Sex and relationships education</li> <li>• Special educational needs</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Race equality</li> <li>• Collective worship</li> <li>• Behaviour policy</li> </ul>	Website / Paper copy	Free
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility plan</li> </ul>	Paper copy	Free
<p><b>Records management and personal data policies, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information security policies</li> <li>• Records retention destruction and archive policies</li> <li>• Data protection (including information sharing policies)</li> </ul>	Website Paper copy	Free 10p per sheet
<p><b>Charging regimes and policies</b></p> <p>Charging policy for information routinely published.</p>	Website Paper copy	Free

<b>GUIDE TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME</b>		
<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b> Currently maintained lists and registers only (this does not include the attendance register)		
Curriculum circulars and Statutory instruments	Website Paper copy	Free 10p per sheet
Disclosure logs	Paper copy	10p per sheet
Asset Register	Inspection (please contact the school office)	Free
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	Inspection (please contact the school office)	Free

<b>GUIDE TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME</b>		
<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b> Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses (current information only)		
Extra-curricular activities	Paper copy	Free
Out-of-school clubs	Paper copy	Free
Newsletters	Website / Paper copy	Free
Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees.	Paper copy	10p per sheet
School publications, leaflets, books and newsletters	Website Paper copy Inspection	Free 10p per sheet Free

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