

EP COLLIER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Freedom of Information Policy

1. Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) was introduced to promote greater openness and accountability across the public sector and requires all maintained schools and Academies to be clear and proactive about the information they will make public.

EP Collier has adopted the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Model Publication Scheme. We also publish a Guide to Information based on the template available from the ICO which sets out:

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

2. How to Request Information

If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the Model Publication Scheme the request must be made in writing by email or letter giving clear details of the information requested. The request must be submitted to the school office:

EP Collier Primary School, Ross Road, Reading RG1 8DZ (0118 937 5470)
admin@epcollier.reading.sch.uk

To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence "MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST".

If the information you are looking for is not evident via the scheme or on our website, then a Freedom of Information (FOI) request is needed. This must be in writing and must contain the requestor's name, contact details and either postal address or email address for the response to be sent. Verbal requests cannot be made.

We will respond to all FOI requests within 20 working days from receipt (excluding school holidays) following the process set out in process maps 1 and 2 below.

3. Scope

The FOI Acts 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). Requests for information about anything relating to the environment are covered by the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). They also cover issues relating to Health and Safety. Requests under EIR are dealt with in the same way as those under FOI, but unlike FOI 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.

4. Withholding Information

The FOI Act contains 23 exemptions whereby information can be withheld. There are two categories: absolute and non-absolute. We will only withhold information if it falls within the scope of one or more of these exemptions. Complete files or documents will not be withheld just because part of the information is covered by an exemption.

An exemption will only be applied where we have reason to believe that prejudice might occur to the interest protected by the exemption. In addition, wherever a “public interest” exemption is being considered, we will only withhold that information which it can demonstrate that the public interest will be best served by withholding. When considering withholding information under a non-absolute exemption we will take into account whether the release of the information would:

- Promote further understanding of current issues of public debate
- Promote the accountability of decisions taken by us and the spending and allocation of public money
- Bring to light matters of public safety
- Allow the public to understand and challenge decisions made by us
- Be otherwise in the public interest

Where information is withheld under an exemption in most cases the reason behind the decision will be made clear to the applicant, citing the exemption under which the information is being withheld.

5. Paying for Information

We reserve the right to refuse to supply information where the cost of doing so exceeds the statutory maximum, currently £450. Details relating to charging can be found in our Guide to Information.

6. Complaints

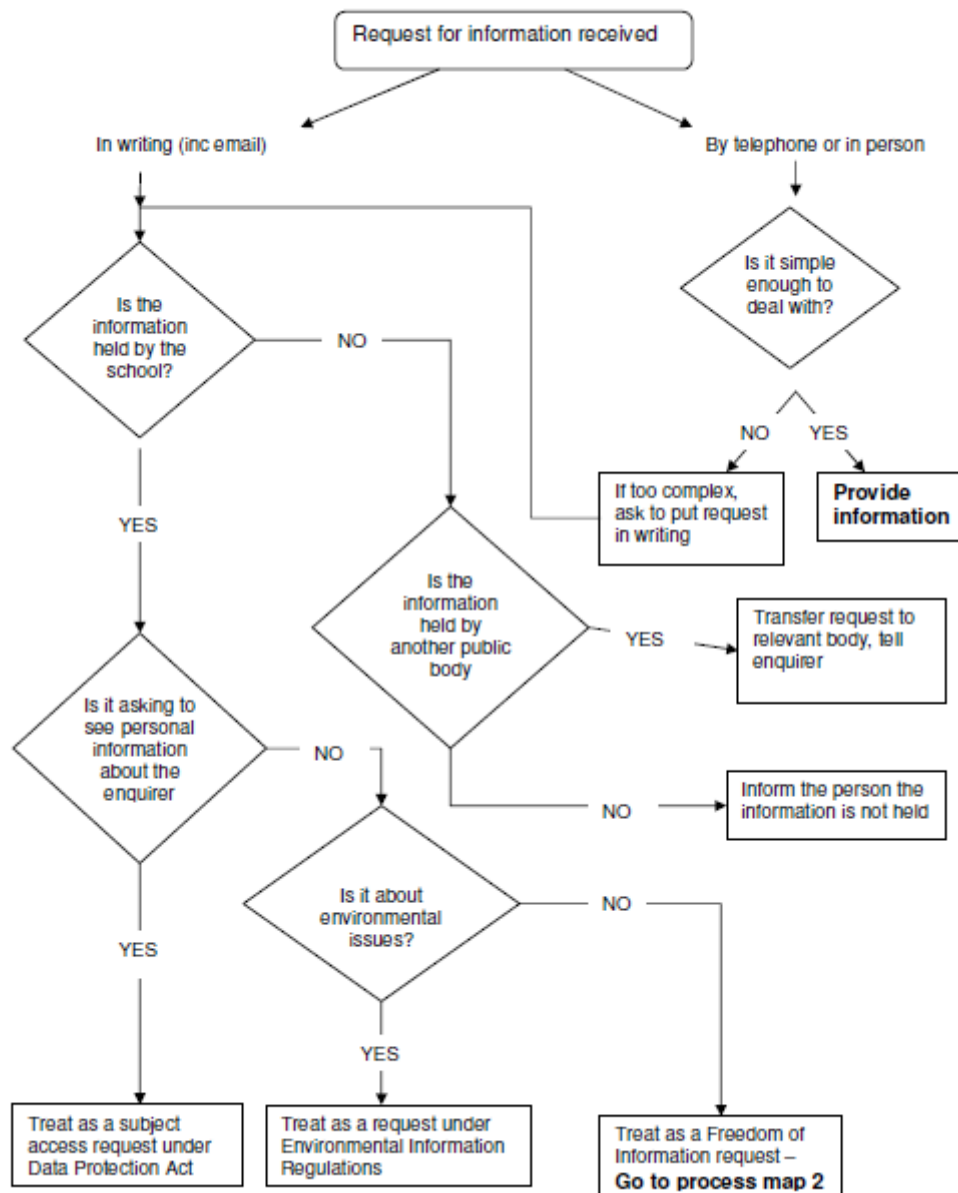
If you want to make any comments about this publication scheme or if you require further assistance or wish to make a complaint regarding information you have received or been refused then initially this should be addressed to the Head teacher.

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:

The Case Reception Unit
Customer Service Team
Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Enquiry/Information Line: 01625 545 700
Website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Process Map 1 for Dealing with Requests



Process Map 2 for Dealing with Requests

