



Minerva
Learning Trust

Trust Freedom of Information Policy

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Changes in this edition

Included a full unedited copy of the 'ICO model publication scheme'

1. Purpose

As an education provider, Minerva Learning Trust has an obligation to publish a freedom of information statement outlining how we will meet our duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and associated regulations. The development and effective implementation of this policy fulfils that requirement.

More specifically, this policy outlines:

- How the Trust will respond to requests from individuals for access to information held about them.
- Our policy and procedures for the release and publication of private data and public records.
- Our policy and procedures for providing applicants with advice and assistance throughout the duration of their requests.
- It also clarifies our position regarding the acceptable limit to the costs incurred in response to any request for information and the charging fees for providing such information.
- References to 'working days' means days where the Trust is operationally open (i.e. school days during term time only).
- In writing means in the form of a letter or electronically through the Trust website contact us page or, email to enquiries@minervalearningtrust.co.uk

2. Aims and Intent

Minerva Learning Trust is committed to openness and transparency in the provision of information to all persons or organisations who request it. We will provide information promptly, subject to the following conditions, which are based on our duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Copies of reference documents, such as policy statements and procedural guidance will be provided free of charge or as published in the Model Publication Scheme from the ICO, which the trust has adopted:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1153/model-publication-scheme.pdf>

The Trust will normally confirm within five working days whether it holds the information you request and, where it is held, will provide it within 20 school days.

To be valid your request must be in writing to ensure that we have a clear statement of what is requested. You must also include your real name and a correspondence address.

In some circumstances information may be withheld under one of the exemptions applicable under the legislation.

If you do not accept the reasons for the Trust declining to disclose the information in your request you should write to the Chair of the Trust in the first instance. If you are not happy with the response, you may wish to contact the Information Commissioner at www.ico.org.uk

Whilst we will provide most information free of charge, we may charge a fee for photocopying/printing/faxing/postage of longer documents where the required information is not listed in our Publication Scheme as being available either free of charge or at a stated charge. If you ask for information in an expensive alternative format, we may charge for this, subject to legislation, such as the Disabilities Discrimination Act. (See '**Charges**' below).

If we intend to charge for providing information, we will tell you in advance what the charge will be (through a fee notice) and will provide the information when we receive payment. The time allowed for us to provide the information (20 working days) does not include the period between the issuing of the fee notice and the receipt of the payment.

The Trust may not be able to provide the information you request for any of the following reasons:

- Where the information requested relates to an opinion and not matters of fact
- The information contains personal data and cannot be disclosed under GDPR
- We do not hold the information
- We are applying an exemption to the disclosure
- It would cost the Trust more than £450.00 to provide the information (this figure is set by Government and is based on the work exceeding 18.5 staff hours to gather the information).

If we are unable to provide the information we will do all we can to advise you as to how you might obtain the information elsewhere or in a different way to keep the cost down.

The Trust will seek advice as necessary to clarify any points or to help resolve any disputes over information requests.

The trust will keep a record of all requests received under the FOIA

3. Links to other documents

This policy has due regard to the following legislation:

- UK GDPR
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004

This policy also has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Cabinet Office (2018) 'Freedom of Information Code of Practice'
- ICO (2013) 'Definition document for the governing bodies of maintained and other state-funded schools in England'
- ICO (2015) 'Model publication scheme'
- ICO (2016) 'Duty to provide advice and assistance (section 16)'
- ICO (2015) 'Time limits for compliance under the Freedom of Information Act (section 10)'

This policy will be viewed in conjunction with the following other Trust policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Retention of Records Policy

4. Charges

The general charge for photocopying, printing, faxing or emailing information as an attachment is 10p per sheet. Postage charges will be at the appropriate rate. For more substantial items, the fee charged depends on whether we estimate that it would cost more or less than £450.00 to provide the information.

In the vast majority of cases the cost will be under £450.00 and we will then charge only for photocopying, printing, faxing and postage. We may also charge for any work required to put the information into the required format, which could involve, for example:

- summarising the information;
- translating the information into a different language.

Please note that we do not have facility to transfer any request for information onto digital media e.g. USB, CD.

We will not normally charge for providing information in an alternative format where this is requested on grounds of disability.

5. Publication Scheme

This publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.
- To publish any dataset held by the authority that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the authority is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the public authority is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, if they apply, and otherwise under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act section 19. The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The term 'relevant copyright work' is defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

Classes of information

- Who we are and what we do. Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.
- What we spend and how we spend it. Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.
- What our priorities are and how we are doing. Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.
- How we make decisions. Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

- Our policies and procedures. Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.
- Lists and registers. Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.
- The services we offer. Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

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 authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament. Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, where they apply, or with regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act, or with other statutory powers of the public authority.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written requests

Information held by a public authority 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 Freedom of Information Act.

How to request information

Information will be delivered electronically where possible to reduce cost but, paper copies can be provided by contacting the Trust using the following contact details.

To enable us to process your request quickly, please mark all correspondence:

“FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST” and address to;
Minerva Learning Trust
Unit P3
Airport Business Park
Sheffield
S9 1XU

6. Guide to Information

This is not an exhaustive list but, outlines the types of information available and where to find it. If the information you require is not listed, you should make contact with the Trust at the address given above.

Information	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do		
Who's who in the Trust/School	Website (Trust) Hard or electronic copy (Schools)	Free or 10p per page
Who's who on the governing body / board of governors and the basis of their appointment	Website	Free
Articles of Association	Trust website statutory information	Free
Contact details for the Head teacher and for the governing body, via the school (named contacts where possible).	Website	Free
School prospectus (if any)	Website	Free
Staffing structure	Electronic copy	Free
School session times and term dates	Electronic copy or hard copy (Schools)	Free or 10p per page
Address of school and contact details, including email address.	Website	
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it		
Finance Policy and financial scheme of delegation	Electronic copy or hard copy (Schools)	Free or 10p per page
Current and prior year Annual Accounts and financial statements	Website	Free
Pupil Premium	Website (School)	Free

Information	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Audit reports (Trust)	Electronic copy or hard copy (Schools)	Free or 10p per page
Procurement and contracts	Electronic copy or hard copy (Schools)	Free or 10p per page
Pay policy	Electronic	Free
Remuneration of key personnel	Annual Accounts – website	Free
Governors’ allowances that can be incurred or claimed, and a record of total payments made to individual governors.	Annual Accounts – website	Free
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing	Website, electronic or hard copy	Free
School profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data • The latest Ofsted report • Post-inspection action plan 	Website and hard/electronic on request	Free download or 10p per page if printed
Performance management policy and procedures adopted by the Trust/Governing body.	Hard or electronic copy	Free download or 10p per page if printed
Performance data or a direct link to it	Website	Free
The Trust’s future plans; for example, proposals for and any consultation on the future growth of the Trust	Website (strategic plan)	Free
Safeguarding and child protection	Website	Free

Information	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 4 – How we make decisions		
(Decision making processes and records of decisions)		
Admissions policy	Website	Free
Agendas and minutes of meetings of the Trust Board/Governing Body and its committees. (excludes information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings).	Electronic	Free
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures		
Statutory policies	Website	Free
All other non-statutory policies	Electronic	Free
Records management and personal data policies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information security policies • Records retention, destruction and archive policies • Data protection (including information sharing policies) 	Electronic	Free
Charging and Remissions policy	Website	Free
Class 6 – Lists and Registers		
Currently maintained lists and registers only (excludes attendance registers).		
Admissions register	Available by inspection only	Free
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments		
Disclosure logs	Electronic	Free
Asset register	Electronic	Free
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	Electronic	Free
Class 7 – The services we offer		

Information	How the information can be obtained	Cost
(Information about the current services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)		
Extra-curricular activities	Website, electronic or hard copy	Free download or 10p per page if printed
Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Charging and remissions policy – website	Free
School publications, leaflets, books and newsletters (note: newsletters and other relevant communications are free to parent/carer)	Website, electronic or hard copy	Free download or 10p per page if printed

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/printing @ 10p per sheet (mono)	Cost per contract copy plus cost of paper plus preparation cost
	Photocopying/printing @ 10p per sheet (colour)	Cost per contract copy plus cost of paper plus preparation cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Maximum Fee	£450	In accordance with ICO and based on 18.5 hours of work

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis, or in light with any changes to relevant legislation.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

The Trust carries out Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that policies, procedures, and practices cater for individuals who share protected characteristics in relation to the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of these assessments is to ensure that policies, procedures, and practices within the organisation are fair to all. If unfairness is highlighted, the assessment will also seek to show how this can be changed and, where it can't be changed, how it can be improved.