

# Freedom of Information Policy & Publication Scheme

North Halifax Grammar School



<b>Approved by:</b>	Full Governance Board
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	Spring Term 2025
<b>Next review due by:</b>	Spring Term 2028
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Academy Finance Director

# Contents

Freedom of Information Policy.....	3
Background.....	3
Requests for information .....	3
Charging fees and cost limits .....	4
Providing advice and assistance .....	5
Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.....	7
Introduction .....	7
Classes of Information.....	7
The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available ....	8
Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme.....	8
Written Requests.....	9
Contact Details.....	9
Monitoring, evaluation, and review .....	9
Annex 1: Guide to information available from the school under the Model Publication Scheme.....	10
Annex 2: Schedule of Charges.....	13

# Freedom of Information Policy

## Background

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 (2021) 'Definition document for the governing bodies of maintained and other state-funded
- academies 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 school policies:

- Data Protection Retention and Confidentiality Policy

## Requests for information

We will only accept a request for information if it meets the following criteria:

- It is in writing (this includes requests sent to our social media accounts)
- It states the name of the applicant
- It adequately describes the information requested

The school will publish details of its procedures for dealing with requests for information on the website, which includes the following:

- A contact address and email address
- A telephone number
- A named individual to assist applicants with their requests

Any requests will be completed no later than 20 school days, or 60 working days if this is shorter, from receipt of the request.

We will not comply where:

- We reasonably requires further information to meet a freedom of information request, has informed the applicant of this requirement, but was not subsequently supplied with that further information.
- The information 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.
- A request for information is exempt under section 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- The cost of providing the information exceeds the appropriate limit.
- The request is vexatious.
- The request is a repeated request from the same person made within 60 consecutive working days of the initial one.
- A fee notice was not honoured.

- The requested information is not held by the school for the purposes of the school's business.

Where information is, or is thought to be, exempt, we will, within 20 school days, give notice to the applicant which:

- States that fact
- Specifies the exemption in question

If information falls within scope of a qualified exemption and the school needs additional time to consider the public interest test, the school may extend the deadline. In most cases, the extension will exceed no more than a further 20 school days; however, the actual length of the extension will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Where a public interest test extension is required, the school will write to the applicant to inform them of this, stating the following information:

- Which exemption(s) the extension relies on and why
- A revised deadline for when the applicant will receive their response
- Where a deadline has to be further extended, we will write to the applicant again.
- Requests for information that is not recorded by the school (e.g. requests for explanations, clarification of policy and comments on the school's business) will not be considered valid requests. In these cases, the applicant will be provided with an explanation of why their request will not be treated under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the school will respond to the applicant through other channels as appropriate.

The information provided to the applicant will be in the format that they have requested, where possible. Where it is not possible to provide the information in the requested format, we will assist the applicant by discussing alternative formats in which it can be provided.

The information provided will also be in the language in which it is held, or another language that is legally required.

If, under relevant disability and discrimination regulations, we are legally obliged to provide the information in other forms and formats, we will do so.

In some cases, a request may be dealt with under more than one access regime, e.g. if the request involves both information about the school and personal information, it will be dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Staff are made aware that it is a criminal offence to alter, deface, block, erase, destroy or conceal any information held with the intention of preventing disclosure following a request.

### **Charging fees and cost limits**

We will not comply with any freedom of information request that exceeds the statutorily imposed appropriate limit of £450.

When determining whether the cost of complying with a freedom of information request is within the appropriate limit, we will take account only of the costs we reasonably expect to incur in relation to:

- Determining whether it holds the information.
- Locating the information, or a document which may contain the information.
- Retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information.
- Extracting the information from a document containing it.

- Costs related to the time spent by any person undertaking any of the activities are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour.

We are not required to search for information in scope of a request until it is within the cost limit.

If responding to one part of a request would exceed the cost limit, we do not have to respond to any other parts of the request.

Where multiple requests for information are made within 60 consecutive working days of each other, either by a single person or by different persons who appear to be acting in concert, the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the total costs of complying with all of them.

We may, within 20 school days, give an applicant who has requested information from the school, a written notice stating that a fee is to be charged for the school's compliance.

Charges may be made for disbursements, such as the following:

- Production expenses, e.g. printing and photocopying
- Transmission costs, e.g. postage
- Complying with the applicant's preferences about the format in which they would like to receive the information, e.g. scanning to a CD

Fees charged will not exceed the total cost to the school of:

- Informing the person making the request whether we hold the information.
- Communicating the information to the person making the request.

Where a fee is to be charged, we will not comply unless the requested fee is paid within a period of three months, beginning with the day on which the fees notice is given to the applicant.

## **Providing advice and assistance**

We will provide assistance for each individual on a case-by-case basis; examples of how we will provide assistance include the following:

- Informing an applicant of their rights under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Assisting an individual in the focus of their request, e.g. by advising of the types of information available within the requested category
- Advising an applicant if information is available elsewhere and how to access this information
- Keeping an applicant informed on the progress of their request

Where we wish to ask a different public authority to deal with a request by transferring it to them, this will only be done with the agreement of the applicant.

In order to provide assistance as outlined above, we will engage in the following good practice procedures:

- Make early contact with an individual and keep them informed of the process of their request.
- Accurately record and document all correspondence concerning the clarification and handling of any request.
- Give consideration to the most appropriate means of contacting the applicant, taking into account their individual circumstances.

- Discuss with the applicant whether they would prefer to receive the information in an alternative format, in cases where it is not possible to provide the information requested in the manner originally specified.
- Remain prepared to assist an applicant who has had their request denied due to an exemption.

We will give particular consideration to what level of assistance is required for an applicant who has difficulty submitting a written request. In circumstances where an applicant has difficulty submitting a written request, the school will:

- Make a note of the application over the telephone and then send the note to the applicant to confirm and return – the statutory time limit for a reply would begin here.
- Direct the individual to a different agency that may be able to assist with framing their request.

Where an applicant's request has been refused either because the information is accessible by other means, or the information is intended for future publication or research, we will, as a matter of good practice, will provide advice and assistance.

We will advise the applicant how and where information can be obtained, if it is accessible by other means.

Where there is an intention to publish the information in the future, we will advise the applicant of when this publication is expected.

If the request is not clear, we will ask for more detail from the applicant in order to identify and locate the relevant information, before providing further advice and assistance.

If we believe the applicant has not provided their real name, we will inform the applicant that the request will not be responded to until further information is received from the applicant.

If we are able to clearly identify the elements of a request, it will respond following usual procedures and will provide advice and assistance for the remainder of the request.

If any additional clarification is needed for the remainder of a request, the school will ensure there is no delay in asking for further information. Applicants are given two months to provide any requested clarification. If an applicant decides not to follow our advice and assistance and fails to provide clarification, we are under no obligation to contact the applicant again.

If we are under any doubt that the applicant did not receive the advice and assistance, we will re-issue it.

We are not required to provide assistance where an applicant's request is vexatious or repeated, as defined under section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Applicants will also be informed of their right to complain to the ICO if they are still dissatisfied following the outcome of their request.

# Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

## Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies to North Halifax Grammar School. This publication scheme commits the school 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 school.

The school has adapted the Model Publication Scheme that has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

The scheme commits the school:

- To proactively publish, or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information including environmental information, which is held by the academy and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information that is held by the academy and falls within the classifications below.
- 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 North Halifax Grammar School 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.

## 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 function of the academy.

### **The service we offer**

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets 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 school 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 the school, information will be provided on our 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, the school 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 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 the school 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 academy 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 packing
- the costs directly incurred because 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 published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.



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 the provision of the information.

### **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 Freedom of Information Act.

### **Contact Details**

If you require a paper version of any information, or want to ask whether information is available, please contact us by telephone, email, or letter. Contact details are set out below or you can visit the website.

Website: <https://www.nhgs.co.uk>  
Tel: 01422 244 625  
Email: [mail@nhgs.co.uk](mailto:mail@nhgs.co.uk)  
Address: Moorbottom Road, Illingworth, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX2 9SU

To help us process requests quickly, any correspondence should be clearly marked "PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST".

### **Monitoring, evaluation, and review**

The board will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

# Annex 1: Guide to information available from the school under the Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
<b>Class 1: Who we are and what we do</b> Our organisational information, structures, locations, and contacts		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Fee charged
Who's who in the school	Website	Free
Who's who on the governing board, and the basis of their appointment	Website	Free
Instruments of Government	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Contact details for the headteacher	Website	Free
Contact details for the governing board	Website	Free
The school prospectus	Website	Free
The school's staffing structure	Website	Free
School session times and term dates	Website	Free
The school's address	Website	Free
The school's contact details	Website	Free
The school's email address	Website	Free
<b>Class 2: What we spend and how we spend it</b> Our financial information concerning the school's projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit – including the current and previous financial year		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Fee charged
Annual budget plan and financial statements	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Capital funding	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Financial audit reports	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Details of expenditure items over £5000 including costs, supplier and transaction information.	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Procurement and contracts the school has entered into, or information relating to information held by an organisation which has entered into procurement or contracts on the school's behalf, for example, the LA	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
The pay policy	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Staff allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed, with totals paid to individual senior staff members by reference to categories	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
The staffing, pay and grading structure	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Trustees' allowances that can be incurred or claimed, and a record of total payments made to individual Trustees	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
<b>Class 3: What our priorities are and how we are doing</b> Strategies and plans, performance indicators, auditors, audits, inspections, and reviews		

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Fee Charged
School profile	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Government supplied performance data The latest Ofsted report – Summary and Full Report	Website	Free
Performance Management policy and procedures adopted by the Governing Body	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
School Development Plan	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Safeguarding policies and procedures	Website	Free
<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> Decision making processes and records of decisions – current and previous three years as a minimum		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Fee Charged
Admissions Policy/decisions (not individual admission decisions)	Website	Free
Agendas of meetings of the Governing Body and (if held) its sub-committees	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Minutes of meeting (as above) – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
<b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b> Current written protocols, policies, and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities - Current information only		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Fee Charged
School policies including:  Charging and remissions policy Health and Safety Staff conduct policy Discipline and grievance policies Equality and diversity (including equal opportunities) policies	  Website Website Website Website Website Website	  Free of charge Free of charge Free of charge Free of charge Free of charge Free of charge
Pupil and curriculum policies, including:  Curriculum Relationships and Health Education Special education needs Accessibility Race equality Behaviour Policy	  Website Website  Website Website Website Website	  Free of charge Free of charge  Free of charge Free of charge Free of charge Free of charge
Records management and personal data policies, including:		

Information security policies	Website	Free of charge
Records retention	Website	Free of charge
Data protection policies	Website	Free of charge
Charging regimes and policies	Website	Free of charge
This should include details of any statutory charging regimes. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published. They should clearly state what costs are to be recovered, the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated.		

**Class 6 – Lists and registers**  
Currently maintained lists and registers only

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Fee Charged
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Disclosure logs	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Asset register	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER	Hard copy	Schedule of charges

**Class 7 – The service we offer**

Information about the service we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses - Current information only

Extra-curricular activities	Website	Free of charge
Out of school clubs	Website	Free of charge
School publications	Website	Free of charge
Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Website	Free of charge
Leaflets books and newsletters	Website	Free of charge

## Annex 2: Schedule of Charges

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide

Type of charge	Description	Basis of charge
Disbursement costs	Photocopying/printing @ 10p per A4 sheet (black and white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying/printing @ 30p per sheet A4 (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with relevant legislation