

# Freedom of Information Policy

Date	Revised amendment details	By whom
Nov 2016	Adopted by TEFAT Board	Trustees
May 2021	Reviewed and approved	Ops Group
May 2024	Reviewed and approved	Ops Group
May 2027	Proposed review date subject to any earlier identified statutory requirement to update	
Aug 2025	Update to reflect new Head of Legal and Governance, Katie Stobbart.	Katie Stobbart

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## 1. Related policies and documents

- 1.1. [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- 1.2. [Data Protection in Schools DfE April 2024](#)

## Definitions

- Where the word 'Trust' is used in this document it refers to The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust.

## **Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Values**

### **1. Put children first**

- a. We trust and value your professionalism
- b. We share the responsibility for the learning and welfare of all of our children
- c. Our purpose is to improve the lives of children

### **2. Be safe**

- a. Don't assume that someone else will do it
- b. Look after yourself, your colleagues and all children
- c. We are all responsible for each other's safety and well being
- d. Discuss any concerns with an appropriate member of staff

### **3. Be kind & respect all**

- a. People are allowed to be different as are you
- b. Kindness creates the positive environment we all need to flourish
- c. This kindness should extend to ourselves as well as to others

### **4. Be open**

- a. If you can see a better way, suggest it
- b. If someone else suggests a better way to you, consider it
- c. We exist to nurture innovators and support those who take informed risks in the interests of children

### **5. Forgive**

- a. We all make mistakes
- b. Admit them, learn from them and move on

### **6. Make a difference**

- a. Making the world a better place starts with you
- b. Model the behaviour that you would like to see from others

## 1. Policy statement and objectives

- 1.1. As a public authority, The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust (TEFAT) is bound by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 1.2. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in the rest of this document) ensures that public authorities, including all maintained schools and Academies, should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public. This policy outlines TEFAT's procedures and response to any Freedom of Information requests made to the Trust.
- 1.3. This policy aims to:
  - Ensure the utmost level of transparency across all areas of the Trust
  - Ensure compliance with legal duties that are required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
  - Ensure that schools and staff are aware of their responsibilities and the procedures for information requests
- 1.4. The Trust has produced a Freedom of Information Publication Scheme as set out by the Information Commissioner, which can be found in Appendix A. The Publication Scheme includes:
  - 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
- 1.5. The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published or updated in the future. All information in our publication scheme can be made available in hardcopy if required.
- 1.6. The processes under this policy will cover requests that are not covered by any other legislation. Other types of requests, including those containing personal information, must be dealt with under our GDPR policies and procedures. Any requests for environmental information must be managed separately under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

In regard to compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Board of Trustees has delegated:

- Any requests for information from the Trust to the Data Protection Officer (DPO)
- Any requests for information from individual schools to the Principal

### 3. Published Classes of Information

As categorised by the ICO, the classes of information that are made available are organised under the following topics:

- Who we are and what we do
- What we spend and how we spend it
- What our priorities are and how we are doing
- How we make decisions
- Our policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- The services we offer

In some circumstances, the information requested will be exempt under the FOIA from being disclosed. This includes:

- If the information requested contains personal information
- If the information requested includes third party information
- If the information is already accessible in the public domain
- If the information is detrimental to the commercial interests of the Trust
- If the information could create safeguarding concerns
- Information that is in draft form
- Information that is no longer held or readily available, for example archived or difficult to access
- Information that would cost more than £450 to retrieve

### 4. Procedure for requesting information

- 4.1. The Elliot Foundation recognises its responsibility to provide any necessary support required for anyone making an information request. If the information you are looking for is not recorded in the Publication Scheme, please email the Data Protection Officer ([katie.stobbart@elliottfoundation.co.uk](mailto:katie.stobbart@elliottfoundation.co.uk)) or write to the school directly.
- 4.2. If you require a paper version of any of the documents as shown in the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, please directly contact the school. If there are any issues please contact the Data Protection Officer for the Trust.
- 4.3. When making an information request, please adhere to the following:
  - Clearly mark any correspondence with **“FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST”**
  - Clearly describe the piece of information that you are requesting
  - Make the request in writing (email or letter) as verbal requests are not valid under the FOIA

- 4.4. Routine requests for information, for example a parent requesting a copy of a school policy, can be managed outside of the FOIA and does not have to follow this procedure.

## 5. Procedure for responding to a request

- 5.1. If the requested information is exempt from being shared, the Trust will detail why the information is unavailable.
- 5.2. The Trust aims to respond to a request as soon as practically possible. The Trust will aim to respond within 20 school days of the receipt, and will be no longer than 60 calendar days.
- 5.3. The release of information under the FOIA means the shared information is now available within the public domain.

## 6. Feedback and Complaints Procedure

If you would like to share any comments or suggestions regarding our Publication Scheme, require further assistance in regard to a request or wish to make a complaint, please contact the Principal or the DPO in the first instance.

Any complaints in relation to requests made under the FOIA will be managed through the Trust's normal complaint procedure, where the complaint will be escalated appropriately.

If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO ensures compliance under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

They can be contacted in writing at:

**Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF**

Alternatively, you can visit their website for more information:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

## Appendix A: Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

### Who we are and what we do:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
<p>TEFAT details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Who we are' Board, Members, and senior staff</li> <li>• Governance structure, accountability, representation and feedback loops</li> <li>• Contact details for Trust</li> <li>• Annual Report</li> <li>• Structure</li> </ul>	Trust website
Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation	Trust website
<p>Information relating to the Community Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition and membership</li> <li>• Term of Office</li> <li>• Meeting schedule</li> </ul>	Individual School's website
<p>Academy Prospectus/website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School contact details</li> <li>• Principal information</li> <li>• Information on admissions</li> <li>• Statement of school's ethos and values</li> <li>• Affiliations with any religion or religious denomination, religious education and right to withdraw, collective worship and alternative provision</li> <li>• Information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational needs</li> <li>• Number of pupils on roll</li> <li>• Rates of pupils' authorised and unauthorised absences</li> </ul>	Trust website and/or individual schools website



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Curriculum assessment results for appropriate Key Stages, with national summary figures</li> <li>• The arrangements for visits to the school by prospective parents</li> <li>• School term dates</li> </ul>	
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#### What we spend and how we spend it:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
TEFAT Financial Accounts	Trust website
Any other financial information	Hard copy or email on request

#### What our priorities are and how we are doing:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
Published Ofsted reports, school profile and performance data	Individual schools website
Annual Report (update yearly, previous years available)	Trust website and / or individual school website

#### How we make decisions:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
Minutes of Trust Board and committee meetings	Hard copy or email on request
Agendas of meetings of the Trust Board and its sub-committees	Hard copy or email on request
Minutes of Community Council meetings	Hard copy or email on request
Admissions Policy	Trust website and individual school website

## Our policies and procedures:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
TEFAT Central School Policies and Procedures	Trust website
Locally-owned policies and procedures (where applicable)	Individual school websites

## Lists and Registers:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
Membership Register for Trustees	Trust website
Asset Register	Hard copy or email on request

## The services we offer:

Information published	How the information can be obtained
Education and Curriculum offer	Trust website and individual school website
Virtual School	Trust website and individual school website
Extra-curricular and out of school activities	Individual school website
School publications i.e prospectuses and further information	Individual school website

## Appendix B: Breakdown of Charges for FOI Requests

Description	Basis of charge
Photocopying charge depending on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black and white</li> <li>• Colour</li> </ul>	Cost of printing plus administration cost
Postage	Cost of postage - 1st or 2nd class delivery depending on time frame

Charges are discretionary to each school, please contact the school you are requesting information from for more information about charges.