



# The Leys Primary & Nursery School

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## Freedom of Information Policy

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## 1. Our Commitment

The Leys Primary and Nursery School is committed to openness and transparency. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI), anyone has the right to request information that we hold. This policy explains how we handle these requests and what information we make publicly available.

We follow guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which can be found at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

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## 2. What is Freedom of Information?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives anyone the right to:

- Ask whether we hold specific information
- Receive a copy of that information (subject to certain exemptions)

### Key points:

- Requests must be made in writing (including email)
- Requesters must provide their name and correspondence address
- They don't need to mention the FOI Act or explain why they want the information
- We have 20 working days (excluding school holidays) to respond
- The Act covers all records we hold, past and present (subject to our retention schedule)

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## 3. Types of Information Requests

We handle three different types of requests:

### Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

General requests for information about the school, its policies, spending, decisions, etc.

### Subject Access Requests (SARs)

Requests from individuals for their own personal data. These are handled under GDPR, not FOI. Individuals should complete our SAR form and submit it to our Data Protection Officer:

Patrick Aikman – [patrick@schoolposervice.com](mailto:patrick@schoolposervice.com)

### Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Requests

Requests about anything relating to the environment, including:

- Air, water, land quality
- The natural world or built environment
- Health and safety issues (e.g., chemicals used on school land, phone masts, car parks)

**Note:** EIR requests can be made verbally, unlike FOI requests.

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## 4. Information We Publish Routinely

We have adopted the Model Publication Scheme approved by the Information Commissioner. This means we proactively publish information in the following categories:

### Class 1: Who We Are and What We Do

Available on our **website**:



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- Staff structure and key contacts
- Governing body members and how they were appointed
- Instrument of Government
- Contact details for the Headteacher and governing body
- School prospectus and annual report
- Term dates and session times
- School address and contact details

## **Class 2: What We Spend and How We Spend It**

Available on request from the **School Business Manager**

- Annual budget and financial statements
- Capital funding information
- Financial audit reports
- Procurement and contracts
- Pay policy
- Staff allowances, expenses, and grading structure
- Governors' allowances and payments

## **Class 3: What Our Priorities Are and How We Are Doing**

Available on our **website**:

- Latest Ofsted report (summary and full report)
- Post-inspection action plan
- Performance data
- School profile

## **Class 4: How We Make Decisions**

**Admissions policy** - available on our website

**Governing body meeting agendas and minutes** - available on request from the School Business Manager (excluding confidential items)

## **Class 5: Our Policies and Procedures**

Available on our **website**:

- Data protection and information security policies
- Records retention and destruction policies
- Safeguarding and child protection policies
- Charging and remissions policy

## **Class 6: Lists and Registers**

Available on **request from the School Business Manager**

## **Class 7: Services We Offer**

Available on our **website**:

- Extra-curricular activities
- Out of school clubs
- School newsletters



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## 5. How to Request Information

### If the information is in our Publication Scheme:

- Check our website first
- For items marked "available on request," contact the school by phone or email

### If the information is not in our Publication Scheme:

#### Make your request in writing:

- By email to: [admin@leys.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@leys.herts.sch.uk)
- By post to: The Leys Primary and Nursery School, Ripon Rd, Stevenage, SG1 4QZ
- Clearly mark it "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST"

#### Include:

- Your name
- Your correspondence address
- A clear description of the information you want

#### We will:

- Acknowledge your request
- Confirm whether we hold the information
- Provide the information within 20 working days (excluding school holidays), unless an exemption applies
- Explain our reasons if we cannot provide the information

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## 6. When We May Not Provide Information

### Cost Limit

We may refuse requests where the cost of gathering and providing the information exceeds £450. This is calculated based on staff time at £25 per hour.

### Exemptions

Some information is exempt from disclosure. Exemptions fall into two categories:

**Absolute exemptions** - we do not have to disclose the information (e.g., personal data of third parties, information provided in confidence)

**Qualified exemptions** - we apply a public interest test to decide whether to disclose (e.g., information that could prejudice law enforcement, commercially sensitive information)

When we apply a qualified exemption, we assess whether the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

We maintain a register of refused requests and the reasons for refusal, which we keep for 5 years.

For detailed guidance on exemptions, see the ICO website.

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## 7. Charges

Most information is provided free of charge. However, we may charge for:

Item	Charge	Basis
Black and white photocopying/printing	10p per sheet	Actual cost
Colour photocopying/printing	20p per sheet	Actual cost
Postage	Varies	Royal Mail 2nd class standard rate

We will inform you of any charges before providing the information. You can then decide whether to proceed with your request.

## 8. Our Responsibilities

We will:

- Provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information
- Respond to straightforward verbal requests for information
- Help people put complex requests into writing
- Tell you whether we hold the information you're requesting
- Provide access to information in accordance with ICO guidance
- Respond within 20 working days (excluding school holidays)

## 9. Staff Responsibilities

**All staff** should be aware that FOI requests can be addressed to anyone in the school.

### If you receive a request for information:

1. **Recognise it** - Any written request (including email) asking for information about the school
2. **Forward it immediately** to the Headteacher, marking it "FOI REQUEST"
3. **Do not delete or destroy** any records relating to the request
4. **Do not respond yourself** unless authorised to do so

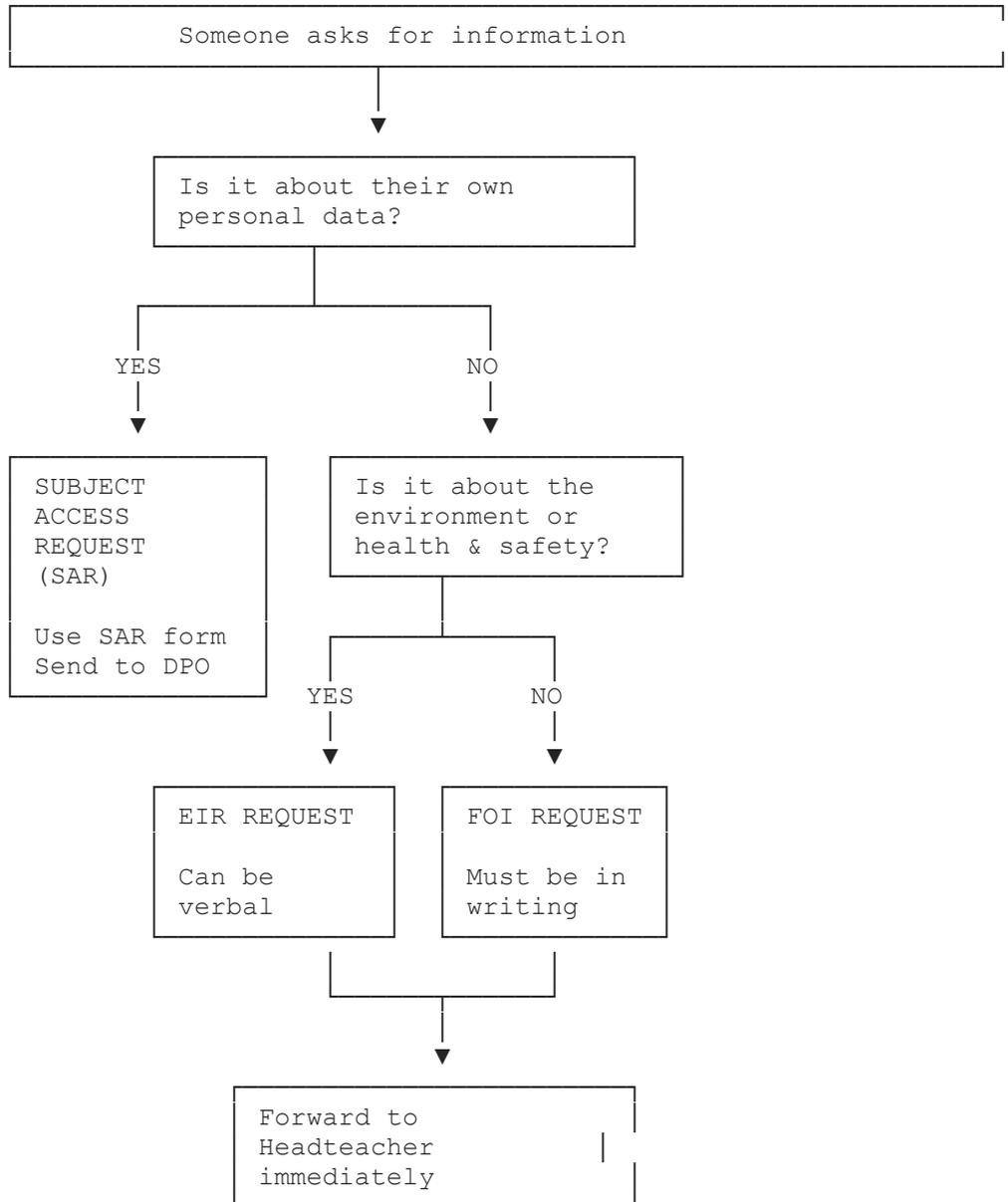
**Important:** It is an offence to wilfully conceal, damage, or destroy information to avoid responding to an enquiry.



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## 10. Quick Reference: Types of Requests



## 11. Complaints

If you're unhappy with our response to your FOI request, you can complain using our normal complaints procedure.

### We will:

- Aim to resolve complaints within 10 working days
- Maintain records of all complaints and outcomes
- Publish our success rate in meeting this target



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**If we uphold our original decision**, you have the right to appeal to the Information

Commissioner's Office:

**FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution**

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

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

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## 12. Policy Review

The Governing Body will review this policy annually