

# **Freedom of Information Subject Access Request Policy**



<b>Last reviewed</b>	<b>Spring 2026</b>
<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Catherine Phillips, Head Teacher</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Chair of Governors</b>
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## **1. Introduction**

St Leonard's Primary School is committed to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and to the principles of accountability and the general right of access to information, subject to legal exemptions. This policy outlines our response to the Act and a framework for managing requests.

## **2. Background**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol) came fully into force on January 1 2005. Under the Act, any person has a legal right to ask for access to information held by the school. They are entitled to be told whether the school holds the information, and to receive a copy, subject to certain exemptions.

The information which the school routinely makes available to the public is included in the Publication Scheme. Requests for other information should be dealt with in accordance with the statutory guidance. While the Act assumes openness, it recognises that certain information is sensitive. There are exemptions to protect this information.

The Act is fully retrospective, so that any past records which the school holds are covered by the Act. The DfES has issued a Retention Schedule produced by the Records Management Society of Great Britain, to guide schools on how long they should keep school records. It is an offence to wilfully conceal, damage or destroy information in order to avoid responding to an enquiry, so it is important that no records that are the subject of an enquiry are amended or destroyed.

Requests under Fol can be addressed to anyone in the school; so all staff need to be aware of the process for dealing with requests. Requests must be made in writing, (including email), and should include the enquirers name and correspondence address, and state what information they require. They do not have to mention the Act, nor do they have to say why they want the information. There is a duty to respond to all requests, telling the enquirer whether or not the information is held, and supplying any information that is held, except where exemptions apply. There is no need to collect data in specific response to an Fol enquiry. There is a time limit of 20 working days excluding bank holidays, weekends and school holidays for responding to the request.

For further information and guidance, see the DfES "Freedom of Information Act 2000 – A Guide for Maintained Schools on Full Implementation from January 2005." This can be found on [Teachernet](#), under Freedom of Information in the A-Z of School Leadership.

## **3. Scope**

The Fol Act 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). Individuals can request to see what information the school holds about them. This is known as a Subject Access Request, and must be dealt with accordingly.

Requests for information about anything relating to the environment – such as air, water, land, the natural world or the built environment and any factor or measure affecting these – are covered by the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). They also cover issues relating to Health and Safety. For example queries about chemicals used in the school or on school land, phone masts, car parks etc. would all be covered by the EIR.

Requests under EIR are dealt with in the same way as those under FoIA, but unlike FoIA 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. Any other information is a request under FoIA, and must be dealt with accordingly.

#### **4. Obligations and Duties**

The school recognises its duty to

- provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. We will respond to straightforward verbal requests for information, and will help enquirers to put more complex verbal requests into writing so that they can be handled under the Act.
- tell enquirers whether or not we hold the information they are requesting (the duty to confirm or deny), and provide access to the information we hold in accordance with the procedures laid down in Appendix 1.

#### **5. Publication Scheme**

St Leonard's Primary School has adopted the Model Publication Scheme for Schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

The Publication Scheme and the materials it covers will be readily available from the school office.

#### **6. Dealing with Requests**

We will respond to all requests in accordance with the procedures laid down in Appendix 1 (Subject Access Request).

We will ensure that all staff and governors are aware of the procedures.

#### **7. Exemptions**

Certain information is subject to either absolute or qualified exemptions. The exemptions are listed in the general notes in Appendix 1.

When we wish to apply a qualified exemption to a request, we will invoke the public interest test procedures to determine if public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

We will maintain a register of requests where we have refused to supply information, and the reasons for the refusal. The register will be retained for 5 years.

#### **8. Public Interest Test**

Unless it is in the public interest to withhold information, it has to be released. We will apply the Public Interest Test before any qualified exemptions are applied.

#### **9. Charging**

We reserve the right to refuse to supply information where the cost of doing so exceeds the statutory maximum, currently £450. We will contact the enquirer and see if they wish to reduce the request, thus reducing the time and costs to below the minimum.

The school will respond to most requests free of charge and only charge when significant costs are incurred. We will calculate the costs, taking account of staff time, as well as direct costs.

## **10. Responsibilities**

Governing bodies are advised to delegate the day-to-day responsibility for compliance with the FoIA to the Head Teacher

The Bursar will coordinate enquiries and be a point of reference for advice and training.

## **11. Complaints**

Any comments or complaints will be dealt with through the school's normal complaints procedure.

We will aim to determine all complaints within 14 days of receipt. We will publish information on our success rate in meeting this target. The school will maintain records of all complaints and their outcome.

If on investigation the school's original decision is upheld, then the school has a duty to inform the complainant of their right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's office.

Appeals should be made in writing to the Information Commissioner's office. They can be contacted at:

FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

## Appendix 1

**This form is for any person who wishes to apply for access to personal data held by St Leonard's Primary School Office. Please read the Subject Access Request Guidance Notes below before completing this form.  
A separate form should be completed for each individual.**

NOTE: This is not a mandatory form – Subject Access requests made in other formats will also be accepted but this form is designed to speed up the process.

### Subject Access Request Guidance

**Please read before filling in the Subject Access Request Form**

#### Which sections should I complete?

**Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5** should be completed for all applications.

**Sections 6, 7 and 8 (Representative Details and Authority to Release Information to a Representative)** should only be completed if the application is being made by a representative (i.e. someone other than the data subject themselves).

**Section 3 (Proof of the applicant's identity)** - If you do not have any of the forms of identity listed, we may in exceptional circumstances accept alternatives for consideration.

*This form is designed to assist the process of making a subject access and, as a consequence, may speed the process up; but it is not mandatory, all subject access requests made in other formats will also be processed.*

#### What information will help with the processing of my subject access request?

*In order to process a Subject Access Request, we require proof of the requestors:*

- Full Name
- Address
- Contact Telephone Number
- Identification- A request should be accompanied by 2 forms of identification. (Copies are acceptable) and may include a utility bill to confirm address and a passport or birth certificate to confirm name.

*Other acceptable forms of identification include.*

- Full valid Current passport
- Driving License (with or without photograph)
- Local Bus Pass
- Birth/Adoption/Marriage Certificate
- Identity Card issued by a recognised local employer
- NHS Medical Card
- Council or social landlord rent book
- Allowance/Benefit/Pension Book
- Letter from a responsible person (e.g. Solicitor, Doctor, Minister of religion, Teacher etc.) which says they know the applicant and confirms the applicants name and address
- Recent Council Tax Bill

## **What information does St Leonard's Primary School hold?**

*St Leonard's Primary School holds information relevant to the conduct of its functions which will include, but not be restricted to, personal information about pupil's education record, applications you have made and any other action undertaken. However, some data may have been reviewed and destroyed where appropriate in accordance with our information retention policies.*

*St Leonard's Primary School is also the 'data controller' for certain information held by other bodies which are contracted by St Leonard's Primary School in connection with the conduct of specific passport activities. This is likely to be the case if you have been interviewed or if an application has failed or been withdrawn. There are exceptions to this – for example, St Leonard's Primary School is not the data controller for medical records held by such contractors and has no remit to disclose such.*

## **How long will it take to get my data?**

*Once we are satisfied that you meet the criteria for disclosure of data under the Data Protection Act, and have provided sufficient information, there is a time limit of 20 working days (excluding bank holidays, weekends and school holidays) from the date that we accept your application to respond to the request.*

*Records may be held in several different locations in paper and electronic formats. If you only require specific information and you clearly state what that is – for example a specific document or IT-only data – then you are likely to get a quicker disclosure.*

*The form includes a section for giving details if you need a disclosure by a certain date. No guarantee can be given that a disclosure will be completed by that date but we will endeavour to comply with reasonable requests for expedited action.*

## General Notes

1. We will acknowledge your application in writing.
2. There is no fee for a Subject Access Request, however this may change depending on the complexity of each case.  
We accept cheques or postal orders made out to St Leonard's Primary School.
3. When we process information requests for children aged 13 or over and spouses, we require their signature of authority before disclosing data. A separate application form should be completed for each individual and additional fee submitted. Sections, 4 and 5 should be completed by a parent/guardian for a child under 13.
4. The documents that you receive may have data redacted (blacked-out) or contain rough notes that may lack clarity. This is because we aim to supply copies of the original records whenever possible. However, as school records also include third party information that we cannot release to you under the Data Protection Act, e.g. another person's data, this is removed.
5. We will not disclose information by fax or telephone. Disclosure by post is usually made by first class post to the address you provide in section 2 or, if appropriate, to your representative named in section 6.

## Checklist

- Have you completed all relevant sections of the form?
- If you are a representative, has your client signed the authority in Section 8 or provided a separate signed note of authority?
- If you are submitting the form yourself, have you signed the form at Section 5?
- If you are signing as a parent or guardian of a child under 13, have you provided a photocopy of their full birth certificate, photocopies of any court orders and proof of your parental responsibility?
- Have you enclosed two pieces of identification from the lists in Section 3 (one from each of A and B)?
- Have you signed the declaration in Section 5?
- Have you provided as much information as possible to enable us to find the data you require?

**Please send your completed form, proof of identity  
to:**

Miss C Phillips  
Data Protection Lead  
St Leonard's Primary  
School  
Stafford  
Staffordshire  
ST16 3TW

**Section 1 – Applicant Details**

Title (please tick one):	Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Title (please state):
Forename(s):	
Family Name:	
Previous Family Name:	
Other name(s) known by:	
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy):	...../...../..... Male <input type="checkbox"/> or Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Nationality:	
Place of Birth:	
School Reference Number:	School Reference: .....
Please give details of any other known reference numbers issued by the school	Other references: ..... State context: .....

**Section 2 – Applicant Details**

Current Address:	
Postcode	
Daytime Telephone No:	
Email Address:	
Previous Address:	
Postcode:	



**Section 5 – Declaration**

*The information which I have supplied in this application is correct, and I am the person to whom it relates or a representative acting on his/her behalf. I understand that St Leonard's Primary School may need to obtain further information from me/my representative in order to comply with this request.*

Signature of Applicant:	Date:
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### Section 6 – Representative Details

*(If completed St Leonard's Primary School will reply to the address you provide in this section)*

Name of Representative:	
Company Name:	
Address & Postcode:	<div style="border-bottom: 1px dotted black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px dotted black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px dotted black;"></div>
Daytime Telephone No:	
Email Address:	

### Section 7 – Proof of the Representative's identity

*Please provide copies of two pieces of identification, one from list A and one from list B below and indicate which ones you are supplying.*

**Please DO NOT send an original passport, driving licence or identity card**

**List A (photocopy of one from below)**

**List B (plus one original from below)**

Passport/Travel Document	<input type="checkbox"/>	A letter sent to you by the Passport Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photo driving licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Utility bill showing current home address	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign National Identity Card	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bank statement or Building Society Book	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

### Section 8 – Authority to release information to a Representative

*A representative needs to obtain authority from the applicant before personal data can be released. The representative should obtain the applicant's signature below, or provide a separate note of authority.*

*This must be an original signature, not a photocopy (tip: using blue ink often helps verification).*

*If the applicant is signing as the guardian of a child under 13, proof of legal guardianship must also be provided.*

I hereby give my authority for the representative named in Section 3 of this form to make a Subject Access Request on my behalf under the Data Protection Act.

Signature of Applicant:	Date:
Signature of Representative:	Date:

### Section 9 – Timescale

*If you have specific reasons for requiring data by a specific date please give details below:*

(a) Date required:
(b) Reason (please state and supply supporting evidence):