

Freedom of Information Policy

Birchwood Community Academy Trust

Policy owner (Name):	Alan O'Reilly
Policy owner (Job Title):	School Business Manager
Governing body oversight:	Policy Review Committee
Date of approval:	
Date of next review:	

Policy Statement

1. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) provides public access to information held by public authorities. Birchwood Community Academy Trust (BCAT) is a public authority as defined by the act. This policy and publication scheme commits BCAT to make information available to the public as part of the organisation's activities.
2. BCAT is obliged to publish certain information about their activities and members of the public are entitled to request information from public BCAT.
3. BCAT is committed to being open and transparent. Our publication scheme can be found on our website at **www.birchwoodhigh.org** and paper copies are available on request from the office at the address below. We aim to publish as much information as possible on our websites but if there is any other information that you require please email **contactus@birchwoodhigh.org** or write to:

**Freedom of Information Officer
Birchwood Community Academy Trust
Brock Road, Birchwood,
Warrington
Cheshire
Wa3 7PT**

4. Please include your name, address and telephone number and your preferred method of response with your request. In order for us to consider your request it would be helpful if you could state why you are requesting the information.
5. Your request will be acknowledged upon receipt and you will be advised when you may expect the information from us. Please see our charging policy below for information requested. We will write to you if a charge is likely to be payable to ascertain if you would like to continue with your request. All requests will be responded to within the 20 working day statutory time limit. For clarity, the academy interprets working days as days within the school term.

6. There may be times when requested information cannot be supplied due to Data Protection Act exemptions etc. We will write to you if this applies to your request. You have the right to appeal the decision in writing in the first instance and your request will be reconsidered by a panel of the trusts' trustees. You may also contact the Information Commissioner's Office if you think our decision is unreasonable www.ico.org.uk or write to:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Scope and purpose

7. BCAT recognises its duty to:
 - provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information. We will help enquirers to put more complex requests into writing.
 - inform 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.
 - ensure that all classified personal data, including electronic and paper copies, are held securely and transferred securely and only to authorised individuals or agencies.

Procedures for handling requests

8. The information which the academy routinely makes available to the public is included in the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Requests for other information should be dealt with in accordance with these procedures.
9. BCAT prefers that requests for information are made using the correspondence methods outlined in paragraph 3 above. However, all FOIA requests will be dealt with in accordance with the same procedure.
10. All FOIA requests should be passed to the FOIA officer.
11. The FOIA officer will consider requests in accordance with the provisions of the FOIA to determine an appropriate response. The FOIA officer will use the ICO Flowchart shown in appendix two as a guide to handling requests.

The publication scheme

12. The publication scheme shown in appendix one commits BCAT to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The purpose of the scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public.
13. The scheme commits BCAT:

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

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

Methods of publication

15. Where it is within the capability of BCAT, 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 via the website, we will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

16. 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.

17. Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where there is a legal requirement to translate any information, we will do so.

18. 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

19. Charges made by the school for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

20. Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

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

21. Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised and justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public. The schedules of charges is shown in appendix three.

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

Appendix One: Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained
Who we are and what we do (organisational information, structures, locations and contacts – current information only)	
Who's who in the academy Who's who on the BCAT Senior Leadership Team	www.birchwoodhigh.org www.birchwoodhigh.org
Who's who on the academy's governing body and the basis of their appointment	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Funding Agreement and Articles of Association	www.birchwoodhigh.org
Contact details for the Principal and contact details for the trustees	www.birchwoodhigh.org
Academy prospectus (if any)	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Trust Annual Report within Audited Accounts	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Academy staffing structure	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Academy lesson times and term dates	www.birchwoodhigh.org
What our priorities are and how we are doing (strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews – current information as a minimum)	
Academy profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data • The latest Ofsted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summary ○ Full report • Post-inspection action plan 	www.birchwoodhigh.org http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk / Hard copy on request Hard copy available on request

Birchwood Community Academy Trust

Staff performance management policy and procedures adopted by the academy board	Hard copy on request
The Academy's future plans; for example, proposals for and any consultation on the future of the academy, such as a change in status (if any)	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Safeguarding and Child Protection	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
How we make decisions (decision making processes and records of decisions – current and previous three years as a minimum)	
Admissions policy/decisions criteria (not individual admission decisions) – where applicable	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Agendas and minutes of meetings of the academy board (NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings)	Hard copy of approved minutes are available on request
Our policies and procedures (current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)	
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) 	Hard copy available on request
Charging regimes and policies (Charging and Remissions policy)	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Lists and registers – currently maintained lists and registers only	
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	N/A
Disclosure logs	N/A
Asset register	Hard copy on request

Birchwood Community Academy Trust

Any information the academy is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers (this does not include the attendance register)	Specific information is available on request if the information is held by the academy.
The services we offer (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses – current information only)	
Extra-curricular activities	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Out of academy hours clubs	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request
Services for which the academy is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Hard copy on request
Academy publications, leaflets, books and newsletters	www.birchwoodhigh.org / Hard copy on request

Appendix Two: Schedule of Charges

Charges

The charges below can be made by Birchwood Community Academy Trust (BCAT) for copies of documents and other information under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Regulations 2004. The charges will be reviewed as part of the normal policy review cycle.

- **Website** – access to the website is free of charge unless otherwise specified
- **Email and attachments** – free of charge unless otherwise specified
- **Website printouts** – printouts from the school website or external websites are **not** provided
- **Administration fees** - charges can, in accordance with the relevant legislation, legally be made for administration where a request will take a significant amount of staff time. Such charges are calculated at £25 per hour with a maximum limit of £450. We are within our statutory rights to refuse to comply with a request where the cost to provide it will exceed 18 hours. Guidance will be given to the requester on how they could refine their request to make it less onerous. Alternately we may comply with the request for an extra charge which will be advised to you prior to starting the work. The fee will be payable in full before supplying the information.
- **Photocopying and postage charges** for responses made by post of all information:
 - A4 pages at 10p per page (single sided) black and white, 15p per page colour (single sided)
 - A3 pages at 20p per page (single sided) black and white, 25p per page colour (single sided)
 - Photocopies: information accessed in the school office can be viewed free of charge, photocopies can be made according to the scale charges above.
 - Postage for standard letters (first and second class) will not be made. For larger collections of material, postage will be charged for any item or items in excess of a cost of £2.