

Policies & Procedures

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Date policy approved	Spring 2018
Approving body	Abbey MAT Board of Directors
Next review date	Spring 2021
Previous review date	

Abbey Multi Academy Trust

Freedom of Information Policy & Publication Scheme

Introduction

Abbey Multi Academy Trust has adopted the model publication scheme prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner.

This publication scheme commits Abbey Multi Academy Trust to make information available to the public as part of our normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information outlined in section 2 below and Appendix 1 shows where this information is held by Abbey Multi Academy Trust and its academies.

The scheme commits Abbey Multi Academy Trust:

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

The following classes of information are laid down by the Information Commissioner in the model publication scheme.

- **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, contracts and financial audit.
- **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 Abbey Multi Academy Trust's functions.
- **The services we offer**
Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information provided **do not 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 guide to information available under the publication scheme, included at **Appendix 1** below, indicates what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Wherever possible, information will be provided on either Abbey Multi Academy Trust or individual academy websites. 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, a request should be submitted to the Trust's Governance and Compliance Officer who undertakes the role of Data Protection Officer for the Trust and can be contacted at dpo@abbeytrust.org .

In exceptional circumstances, some information may be available only by viewing in person. In this case, requests must be made via the Data Protection Officer (dpo@abbeytrust.org). 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 Abbey Multi Academy Trust 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 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. Any charges made by Abbey Multi Academy Trust 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 actual disbursements incurred such as:

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

Current charging rates can be found in **Appendix 2**.

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 the Trust, justified and are in accordance with a 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 provision of the information.

Written requests

Information held by Abbey Multi Academy Trust that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing. The provision of this information will be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. All requests made under the Freedom of Information Act should be directed to the Data Protection Officer (dpo@abbeytrust.org).

Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Trust must normally respond to requests within 20 school days, or 60 working days if this is shorter, counting the first working day after the request is received as the first day. However, the Trust will aim to respond to requests more promptly where possible.

Complaints

Any complaints about the operation of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Abbey Multi Academy Trust Complaints Policy. This can be found on the Abbey Multi Academy Trust website and on the websites of the Trust's individual academies.

Complaints relating to Abbey Multi Academy Trust's response to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act may be referred to the Information Commissioner who can be contacted at Wycliffe House, Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF or at www.ico.gov.uk .

Monitoring arrangements and relationship with existing policies

The DPO is responsible for monitoring this policy.

This policy and publication scheme is linked with the following policies and documents:

- Abbey MAT Data Protection Policy
- Abbey MAT Records Management Policy
- Abbey MAT Retention Schedule
- Abbey MAT Privacy Notices
- Abbey MAT Data Protection Handbook (guidance issued to staff)

Review frequency: 3 years

Policy owner: Governance & Compliance Officer (DPO)

Appendix 1: Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Guide to information available from Abbey Multi Academy Trust and its academies under the publication scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Who we are and what we do <i>(current information only)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles of association and scheme of delegation 	Abbey MAT website Email/ hard copy on request	Nil See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Agreement 	Abbey MAT website Email/ hard copy on request	Nil See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who's who in the Trust/ Academy 	Abbey MAT website <i>(for Trust)</i> Academy website <i>(for individual academies)</i>	Nil Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who's who on the Trust Board/ Academy Governing Body and the basis of their appointment 	Abbey MAT website (for Trust) Academy website (for individual academies)	Nil Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact details for the Trustees, Local Governing Bodies, and Principal/ Head of School, via the Trust/ Academy 	Abbey MAT website (for Trust) Academy website (for individual academies)	Nil Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School session times, term dates and holidays 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location and contact information, including email address 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School prospectus and curriculum 	Academy website	Nil
What we spend and how we spend it <i>(current and previous financial years as a minimum)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbey Multi Academy Trust financial statements 	Abbey MAT website Email/ hard copy on request	Nil See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital funding 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial audit reports 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of expenditure on items over £2000, published at least annually 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement and contracts the Trust or an academy has entered into, or information relating to/ a link to information held by an organisation which has done so on its behalf 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay policy 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing, pay and grading structure. As a minimum the pay information should include salaries for senior staff (Senior Leadership Team or equivalent as above) in bands of £10,000; for more junior posts, by salary range. 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Charge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed, with totals paid to individual senior staff members (Senior Leadership Team or equivalent, whose basic actual salary is at least £60,000 per annum) by reference to categories. 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees and Governors Expenses – details of allowances and expenses that can be claimed or incurred and a record of total payments made to individual trustees and governors 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
What our priorities are and how we are doing <i>(current information)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance data supplied to the English Government or a direct link to the data 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Academy's latest Ofsted report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary Full report 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance management policy and procedures 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance data or a direct link to it 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The future plans of the Trust and its academies (e.g. proposals for and any consultation on the future of an academy) 	Trust and individual academy websites	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding and child protection – policies and procedures on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children 	Trust and individual academy websites	Nil
How we make decisions <i>(current and previous three years)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions policy, arrangements and decisions (not individual admission decisions) 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agendas and minutes of meetings of the Trust, its LGBs and committees (NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meetings) 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
Our policies and procedures <i>(current information only)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies, procedures, and documents that the Trust or its academies are required to have by statute or by its funding 	Trust and individual academy websites (as required) Email/ hard copy on request	Nil See schedule of charges

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Charge
agreement, including policies and procedures for handling information requests	Trust and individual academy websites (as required) Email/ hard copy on request	Nil See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records management and personal data policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Records management (retention, archiving, and destruction) ○ Data Protection policies 	Trust and individual academy websites (as required) Email/ hard copy on request	Nil See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging regimes and policies 		
Lists and registers		
<i>(current information only)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure logs 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset register 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any information the Trust/ academy is legally required to hold in publicly available registers 	Email/ hard copy on request	See schedule of charges
The services we offer		
<i>(current information only)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of school clubs 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services for which the academy is entitled to recover a fee, together with details of those fees 	Academy website	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets, booklets and newsletters 	Email/ hard copy on request Academy website (selection)	See schedule of charges Nil

Appendix 2: Freedom of Information Schedule of Charges

Guide to charges that may be levied by Abbey Multi Academy Trust and its academies under the publication scheme

Statutory basis

The Freedom of Information Act and the associated Fees Regulations stipulate that we cannot levy a fee for information unless there is a statutory basis for doing so, or the amount of time taken to locate the information exceeds 18 hours. However, we are allowed to charge for disbursements related to the provision of information and any reformatting requested by the applicant provided we ensure that applicants are aware of any charges that may be made.

Disbursement costs

Information published on academy and Trust websites is free to obtain. However, charges may be made for information that is provided in hard copy for the following:

- Photocopying or printing
- Postage and packaging
- Providing DVDs/CDs and other media
- Costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

In such instances, and where there are no statutory provisions, charges will be calculated in accordance with the following schedule of charges:

Type of Charge	Description	Basis of Charge
<i>Disbursement Cost</i>	Photocopying/printing at 2p per A4 sheet (black and white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying/printing at 7p per A4 sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd Class
	Electronic media (DVD, etc)	Actual cost
	Viewing information	£25 per hour

You will be notified of any applicable charges in advance in writing. Please refer to 'If a fee is payable' below for further information.

When the cost of responding to a request will exceed £450

By law, we are not obliged to respond to a written request for information if the cost would be more than £450; equal to 18 hours' work at £25 per hour.

When estimating the cost of complying with a written request for Information, we will consider the staff time involved in:

- finding out whether the information is held
- locating the information

- getting the information

Costs are worked out at an hourly rate of £25 per person, as set by government, and must be reasonable.

Although we will refuse to provide information in these cases, we will offer to discuss whether you would like to modify the request to reduce the cost.

If you do not agree with the Trust's decision that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, you can ask the Information Commissioner to investigate.

If a fee is payable

If there is a fee to pay, you will be notified in writing of the total cost with an explanation of how those costs have been calculated (a 'fees notice'). The 20 day compliance time for responding to a request will be suspended and then will be reactivated when we receive your payment.

When we have issued a fees notice, you have three months to pay. We do not have to answer the request until payment has been received (section 9(2) of the Freedom of Information Act) and will consider the request to have been cancelled if payment has not been received within three months after the fees notice is issued.