

# Freedom of Information

Heartlands Community Trust Academy is committed to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which came into force on 1 January 2005 and which comes to include Academies by the Academies Act 2010, with effect from 1 January 2011. The Academies are committed to the principles of accountability and the general right of access to information, subject to legal exemptions. The policy outlines our framework for managing requests.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, any person has a legal right to ask for access to information held by the Academies. They are entitled to be told whether the Academies hold the information, and to receive a copy, subject to certain exemptions.

The information which the Academy routinely makes available to the public includes information available on the School Website. Requests for other information are dealt with in accordance with 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 Academy holds is covered by the Act. The Academy has a Retention Schedule based on the schedule recommended by the Records Management Society of Great Britain, which guides the Academy as to how long it should keep 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 the Act can be addressed to **the Head's PA** employed by the Academy. However, all responses are to be cleared with **the Headteacher** prior to despatch. Staff need to be aware of the process for dealing with requests. Requests must be made in writing, (which can include email), and should include the enquirer's 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 enquiry. There is a time limit of 20 days excluding school holidays for responding to the request.