



## Freedom of Information Policy

This policy has been produced to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The policy is applicable to all employees within the **Plumpton College Group**. For the avoidance of doubt the policy is non contractual.

Any reference to Plumpton College is relevant to the Plumpton College Group, meaning any employee employed by its subsidiaries, its holding company or any subsidiary of its holding company.

SMT Assigned Owner	Principal
Document Author	Principal
Approved by	Corporation
Date of Approval	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
Date of minor amendments approved by SMT	
Frequency of review	3 years
Date of next review	November 2023

The SMT is delegated to approve minor changes to the policy in response to legal changes and best practice.

# Plumpton College Freedom of Information Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy has been produced to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The policy incorporates the guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- 1.2. This policy applies to all members of staff, contractors and suppliers working for, or on behalf of, the College.
- 1.3. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 was designed to establish a culture of openness and transparency in public administration. It gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities.
- 1.4. A 'public authority' is defined in the Act, and includes but is not restricted to, central and local government, non-departmental public bodies, the police, the health service and schools, colleges and universities.

## 2. The Model Publication Scheme

- 2.1. Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act places a duty on every public authority to:
  - Adopt and publish a scheme listing all the information it makes available to the public.
  - A publication scheme is a document which describes the information a public authority publishes, or intends to publish. In this context, 'publish' means to make information available, routinely. These descriptions are called 'classes of information'. The scheme is not a list of the actual publications, because this will change as new material is published or existing material revised. It is, however, the public authority's commitment to make available the information described.
- 2.2. The scheme sets out information to be made available by the College in accordance with ICO guidelines, in the following categories:

- *Who we are and what we do*
  - Organisational information – structures, locations, contacts
- *What we spend and how we spend it*
  - Published accounts
- *What our priorities are and how we are doing*
  - Strategic plan, inspections and reviews
- *How we make decisions*
  - Decision-making processes, records of decisions
- *Our policies and procedures*
  - Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivery of College services and responsibilities
- *Lists and registers*
  - Information legally required to be held in publicly available registers and logs
- *The services we offer*
  - Prospectuses, leaflets, advice and guidance

### 3. Making a request for information

3.1. Requests for information not included in the publication scheme can be assessed on receipt of a specific written request.

3.2. For a request to be considered valid under the Freedom of Information Act it must:

- Be in writing;
- Include a name and address for correspondence (email address is sufficient);
- Clearly set out the information required.
- Requests should be addressed to The Clerk to the Corporation.

General information on the Freedom of Information Act and the Model Publication Scheme can be obtained from:

- The Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House

Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

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

#### 4. Responding to a request

4.1. The College will respond to a request promptly, and by the 20<sup>th</sup> working day following receipt of the request. If the College is unable to respond within this time frame, it will contact the person requesting the information with explanation and request an extension.

4.2. The response will confirm whether the College holds the information, which if it does it will release. Some information may be exempt from disclosure as set out below.

#### 5. Charges

5.1 The College has the right to charge applications for supplying the requested information but is under no obligation to provide the information if the cost of doing so would be in excess of what is deemed to be an 'appropriate limit'.

#### 6. Exemptions

6.1. In those cases that the College considers a request to be subject to an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act, consideration will be given as to whether the information can be disclosed. This would take into account public interest, the rights of data subjects, legal and contractual obligations and issues of information access and security.

6.2. A full list of the examples can be found on the ICO website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

#### 7. Questions, comments and complaints

7.1. If you are not able to obtain what you require, or if you have any questions, comments or complaints about this scheme, please contact:

- The Clerk to the Corporation  
Plumpton College  
Ditchling Road

Plumpton  
East Sussex  
BN7 3AE  
[laura.holt@plumpton.ac.uk](mailto:laura.holt@plumpton.ac.uk)

## 8. Complaints

8.1.If the individual requesting the data is unhappy with the way their request has been handled, or the outcome, please contact please contact:

- The Principal  
Plumpton College  
Ditchling Road  
Plumpton  
East Sussex  
BN7 3AE  
[complaints@plumpton.co.uk](mailto:complaints@plumpton.co.uk)

8.2.If you feel we have not been able to satisfactorily resolve your appeal, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner, the independent body which oversees the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

More information about the Freedom of Information Act is available from:

- The Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF
- 0303 123 1113
- <https://ico.org.uk/>