



**BOHUNT EDUCATION TRUST
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bohunt Education Trust (BET or the 'Trust') is a multi-academy trust based in the south of England, a Department for Education approved academy sponsor, to support local schools. The Trust's schools include Bohunt School Liphook, Bohunt Worthing, Bohunt Wokingham, Priory School in Southsea and The Petersfield School.

The Trust actively seeks and is legally required to share information about itself and its activities, subject to the constraints of Data Protection legislation and certain sensitive matters explicitly addressed by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In this Policy, all references to "we" and "our" in this Policy refer to the Trust, unless distinguished in the text.

- 1.2 The Trust believes that the freedom of information is a 'fundamental value'.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 The main legislation covering freedom of information is the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act"). Under the Act, each Institution is classed as a "public authority" and has a legal obligation to provide information through an approved publication scheme and in response to valid requests made by individuals to the Institution under the Act.

- 2.2 Information that is held by the Trust in a recorded (paper or electronic) format can be requested under the Act and, subject to any relevant exemptions, will need to be disclosed. **Disclosures under the Act are disclosures into the public domain.** This includes recorded information, printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs and sound or video recordings.

- 2.3 The Act does not give people access to their own personal data (information about themselves). Access to personal data is covered under the Data Protection Act 1998 ("the DPA").

3. Related Policies and Documents

- 3.1 Accessing Information under the Freedom of Information Act guidance;
- 3.2 Safeguarding Policy;
- 3.3 Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy;

3.4 Data Protection Policy;

3.6 Other policies and documents may be identified from time to time as circumstances change and may be added to this list.

4. Rationale

4.1 The Trust is a separate public authority covered by the Act and has produced this policy to ensure employees and agents of the Trust comply with their respective obligations under the Act.

5. Core Principles

5.1 The Trust will publish the information set out in the Model Publication Scheme for Academies and will ensure that documents containing the information are available on request.

5.2 The Trust will give access to information not covered by the Model Publication Scheme, except for any exempt information, following a valid request and the payment, where appropriate, of the fee within 20 school days or 60 working days, whichever is shorter.

5.3 There will be occasions where the Trust does not hold the information requested or when it can refuse to give access to the requested information. If a refusal is made the Trust will give reasons for the refusal and list any applicable exemptions (providing reasons for the public interest test being better served by non-disclosure (than by disclosure) where necessary).

5.4 The Trust will publish details of an appeals procedure against refusal to give access.

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

6.1 Publication of information listed in the Publication Scheme will be the responsibility of the manager named in the publication scheme.

6.2 The Publication Scheme and the materials it covers will be readily available from the Trust and published on the Trust website.

6.3 In addition to the information listed in the Publication Scheme, the Trust will share any other information that it holds, as quickly as possible and without charge, unless it is properly exempt under the Act, for example where it:

- Is not held by the Trust;

- is information reasonably accessible through another route (i.e. already within the public domain);
- is information in respect of an investigation that relates to criminal proceedings, either current or potential;
- relates to the prevention or detection of crime;
- relates to Court records, including information relating to legal proceedings;
- is personal information;
- is information provided in confidence;
- is planned to be publically disclosed in the future;
- is likely to endanger health and safety;
- is covered by legal privilege;
- would prejudice commercial interests or
- is vexatious or repeated.

6.4 This is not an exhaustive list and should a request be received it should be forwarded immediately to the Trust Business Manager. The statutory timescale starts to run as soon as it is received by a school (no matter who within the school received it).

6.5 Access to information held by the Trust under the Act will be overseen by *[insert BET name]*.

6.6 The *[insert name]* will:

- publish on the Trust website and in printed form the Model Publication Scheme;
- provide assistance to persons wishing to access information but who are unclear about the process;
- acknowledge access requests within 5 working days of receipt;
- where further details of the information requested are needed before the access request can be dealt with, send a letter or email requesting that information within 5 working days of receipt of the access request;
- where a fee is to be paid, send a letter or email setting out details of the fee to be paid within 5 working days of the receipt of the access request or, where applicable, further details of the information request are received;
- make the information accessible in the form which the applicant requests within 20 school days of receipt of the original request (or 60 working days, whichever is shorter) or within 20 school days of the receipt of clarification about the request if it was required (or 60 working days whichever is shorter);
- in some instances an extension to the timescale may be required either due to the length of time that is required to consider the public interest arguments under the Act in respect of possible disclosure of the requested information. The Trust is to notify the person requesting the information of the

extension which should be completed as promptly as possible and in any event within an additional twenty working days;

- where the information is exempt or the access request is vexatious or repeated, the Trust Business Manager will send a refusal notice to the applicant setting out the reason for refusal with, where necessary, the category of exemption claimed, any public interest test considerations and drawing attention to the appeals procedure;
- where the information is exempt, the Trust Business Manager will decide whether to confirm/deny or not in the refusal notice the existence of the information following the guidance in the Act;
- where the refusal is on the grounds that the information is available elsewhere, the Trust Business Manager will, in the refusal notice, guide the applicant on where to access the information;
- the Trust Business Manager will direct appeals to the Executive Director Schools within two days of receipt, and
- the Executive Director Schools will complete the appeals process.

6.8 The Trust Business Manager will present a termly report to the Executive Director Schools and an annual report to the Trust Board detailing access requests received. For each individual request, the report will give:

- The date of the request;
- The subject(s) of the request;
- Whether the request was made by an individual or a legal person, such as a company or corporation;
- The Trust response to the request;
- Where the response to the request was to give access:
 - the time taken to satisfy the request, and
 - the marginal cost of providing access and any fee charged.
- Where the response to the request was to refuse access:
 - the reason for the refusal including the category of the exemption cited where applicable, and
 - the response of the applicant to the refusal.
- Where an appeal against a refusal has been made and the outcome of the appeal.
- The report will not give names or other personal details of the applicants, however it will where refusal to give access has been made on the grounds of 'repeated requests' which will then include a note showing which requests were made by the same person.

6.9 This Policy will be reviewed every three years and updated, as applicable, to ensure that it remains appropriate in the light of any relevant changes to the law, organisational policies or contractual obligations.

7. PUBLICATION SCHEME

Procedure

The publication scheme states the information which BET schools currently publish (or have recently published) or which will be published in the future. This is split into categories of information known as “classes”. The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised into four broad topic areas:

School Prospectus – information published in the school prospectus

Governors’ Documents – information published in the minutes of Governors meetings and in other governing body documents.

Students and Curriculum – information about policies that relate to students and the school curriculum

School Policies and other information related to the school – information about policies that relate to the school in general.

How to request information

If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the scheme, the request must be made in writing by email or letter, giving clear details of the information requested. Contact details are set out below or you can visit our website at *[insert BET school website]*.

Email: *[insert BET school email address]*

Tel: *[insert BET school email contact number]*

Contact Address: *[insert BET school address]*

To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence “PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST” (in CAPITALS please)

If the information you are looking for isn’t available via the scheme and isn’t on our website you can still contact the school to ask if we have it.

Paying for information

Information published on our website is free, although you may incur costs from your Internet service provider. If you don’t have Internet access, you can access our website using a local library or an Internet Café.

Single copies of information covered by this publication are free unless stated otherwise in section 6. If your request means that we have to do a lot of photocopying or printing or pay a large postage charge or is for a priced item, such as some printed publication or videos, we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request. Where there is a charge this will be indicated by a £ sign in the description box.

Classes of Information Currently Published

School Prospectus – this section sets out information published in the school prospectus.

- The name, address and telephone number of the school and the type of school
- The names of the Principal and Chair of Governors
- Information on the school policy on admissions
- A statement of the school's ethos and values
- Details of any affiliations with a particular religion or religious denomination, the religious education provided, parents' rights to withdraw their child from religious education and collective worship and the alternative provision for those students
- Information about the school's policy on providing for students with special educational needs
- Number of students on roll and rates of students' authorised and unauthorised absences
- National Curriculum assessment results for appropriate Key Stages, with national summary figures
- KS4 results in the school, locally and nationally
- A summary of GCSE/A/AS level results in the school and nationally
- The number of students studying for and percentage achieving other vocational qualifications
- The destinations of school leavers'
- The arrangements for visits to the school by prospective parents
- The number of places for students of normal age of entry in the preceding school year and the number of written applications/preferences expressed for those places.

Governors Documents – this section sets out the information published in the School Profile and other Governing Body documents.

School Profile – the statutory contents of the School Profile are as follows (other items may be included at the school's discretion)

- What have been our successes this year?
- What are we trying to improve?
- How have our results changed over time?
- How are we making sure that every child received teaching to meet their individual needs?
- How do we make sure our students are healthy, safe and well-supported?

- What have we done in response to our Ofsted report?
- How are we working with parents and our community?

The Instruments of Government

- The name of the school
- The category of the school
- The name of the Governing Body
- The manner in which the Governing Body is constituted
- The term of office of each category of Governor (if less than 4 years)
- The name of anybody entitled to appoint any category of Governor
- Details of BET
- If the school has a religious character, a description of the ethos
- The date the instrument takes effect

Agreed minutes of meetings of the Governing Body and its Committees (current and last full academic school year).

Students and Curriculum Policies – This section gives access to information about policies that relate to students and the school curriculum.

| Class | Description |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Home-School Agreement | Statement of the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities, the parental responsibilities and the schools' expectations of its students; for example, homework arrangements. |
| Curriculum Policy | Statement on following the policy for the secular curriculum subjects and religious education and schemes of work and syllabuses currently used by the school. |
| Sex Education Policy | Statement of policy with regard to sex and relationship education. |
| Special Educational Needs Policy | Information about the school's policy on providing for students with special educational needs. |
| Accessibility Plans | Plan for increasing participation of disabled students in the school's curriculum, improving the accessibility of the physical environment and improving delivery of information to disabled students. |
| Single Equality Policy | Statement of policy for promoting equal opportunities for all regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation. |
| Collective Worship | Statement of arrangements for the required daily act of collective worship. |

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| Careers Education Policy | Statement of the programme of careers education provided for Key Stage 4. |
| Safeguarding Policy | Statement of policy for safeguarding and promoting welfare of students at the school. |
| Discipline | Statement of general principles on behaviour and discipline and of measures taken by the Principal to prevent bullying. |

School Policies and other information related to the school – this section gives access to information about policies that relate to the school in general and can be provided free of charge.

| Class | Description |
|---|---|
| Published reports of Ofsted referring expressly to the school | Published report of the last inspection of the school and the summary of the report and, where appropriate, inspection reports of religious education in those schools designated as having a religious character. |
| Post-Ofsted inspection action plan | A plan setting out the actions required following the last Ofsted inspection and, where appropriate, an action plan following inspection of religious education where the school is designated as having a religious character. |
| Charging and Remissions Policies | A statement of the school's policy with respect to charges and remissions for any optional extra or board and lodging for which charges are permitted, for example, school publications, music tuition, trips. |
| School session times and term dates | Details of school sessions and dates of school terms and holidays |
| Health and Safety Policy and risk assessments | Statement of general policy with respect to Health and Safety at work of employees (and others) and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out the policy. |
| Complaints Procedure | Statement of procedures for dealing with complaints |
| Performance Management of Staff | Statement of procedures adopted by the Governing Body relating to the performance management of staff and the annual report of the Principal on the effectiveness of the appraisal system. |
| Staff Conduct, Discipline and Grievance | Statement of procedure for regulating conduct and discipline of school staff and procedures by which staff may seek redress for grievance. |
| Curriculum | Any statutory instruments, departmental circulars and administrative memoranda sent by |

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| circulars and statutory instruments | the Department of Education and Skills to the Principal or Governing Body, relating to the curriculum |
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Requests for any other information held by the school may incur a charge. Written notice of the fee will be provided to the enquirer before any information is supplied.

Freedom of Information - Appeals Procedure

Introduction

- The Act places a duty on public authorities to put a process in place to ensure that applicants are able to appeal to the public authority for an internal review if they are not content with the public authority's decision on the release of information. This provides a first review stage for the applicants.

Appeal Process

Principles

- If **the Trust** refuses to supply the information requested, or the applicant is dissatisfied with its response or feels that a fee has been applied unfairly they may ask for an internal review of that decision. The following principles will apply when considering an appeal request:
- The review will be undertaken by an individual who was not involved in the original request for information.
- If the applicant has not received a response to a request for information within 20 school days or 60 working days (whichever is shorter) it may be regarded that **the Trust** has refused the request; the individual therefore has a right of appeal.
- All reviews will make an assessment of the information released against the information requested and make a full review of the information associated with the original application.
- The reviewer will discuss the decisions made with the staff members concerned with the original request in order to gain a full picture of how decisions were made.
- The reviewer may contact the applicant at their own discretion.
- The reviewer may obtain advice from external sources including legal advice.
- Conclusion will be summarised and handed to the Trust Business Manager who will log them centrally for future reference.
- An internal review must be completed before an appeal can be made to the Information Commissioner.

Timescales

- The Trust will aim to deal with complex appeals within 20 working days of the receipt of the appeal.
- If it becomes clear at any stage of the appeal that the above timescales cannot be met the Trust will inform the applicant in writing and give a revised deadline for completion of the review.

Outcomes

An internal review may have three outcomes:

- The original decision is reversed.
- The original decision is amended.
- The original decision is upheld.

Whatever the outcome of the appeal the complainant will be informed in writing with appropriate information about what will be provided should a decision be reversed or amended.

Requesting an Internal Review:

- i. Requests for internal review should be submitted in writing to *[insert appropriate BET contact]*.
- ii. If the applicant is not happy with the outcome of the internal review they have the right to request a review externally to the Trust. Requests for such an external review should be made in writing to:

Neil Strowger, CEO
Bohunt Education Trust
Bohunt School, Longmoor Road
Liphook, Hants GU30 7NY

Review frequency: 2 years

Review date: April 2019

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