All One In A Million Free School Policies have been devised to ensure that:

- OIAM core values are at the heart of all we do: compassion, honesty, integrity and excellence
- Students from all backgrounds and all abilities are welcome
- Each student has the opportunity to flourish and achieve their potential
- We value the individuality of each student within the context of membership of our community
- We are committed to raising educational attainment and improving our students’ life chances
- We provide an environment in which all students will be self-aware, self-disciplined and confident
- All students will understand how to make a positive contribution to our extended community
- We support academic, creative and personal achievement through our focus on Sport, the Arts and Enterprise
Freedom of Information Policy

General

One In A Million Free School (OIAMFS) has a legal duty under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations to supply certain information to enquirers.

The OIAMFS’s policy is that:

- An enquirer must be informed whether OIAMFS holds that information or not, and if it does it must supply the information
- The information must be supplied within 20 days of the request. This may be extended up to 60 days if this is request just prior to or during the school holidays
- The information can include personal or non-personal information, but no information relating to named individuals will be released
- Other information that the Principal considers to be of a sensitive nature may also be withheld. In so deciding the Principal will consider whether it should be released in the public interest if in withholding the information is greater than the public interest in releasing it
- The Principal will oversee the process for providing information. In so doing account will be taken of any codes of practice, and any guidance from the Information Commissioner and other appropriate organisations

Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility to the governing body for ensuring that the policy is implemented and that the management process is maintained.

Where the Principal has appointed another officer to be responsible for the management of information that person will ensure the effective implementation and administration of this policy.

Information to be provided or Publication Scheme

OIAMFS intends to be clear and proactive about the information it will make public.

To this end our publication scheme, sets out:

- The classes of information which we publish or intend to publish
- The manner in which the information will be published
- Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment

The governors have decided that:

- All published information by OIAMFS will be made available
- All unpublished information (including any advice or memoranda) will be made available on request, except where:
  - The names of individual people can be identified in the documents
  - The Principal considers that the document(s) contain sensitive material in the
meaning of the Act and as explained in the Code of Practice
  o Where the OIAMFS intends to publish it in due course

The Process
On receipt of a request in writing for information the Principal will:

  • Decide whether the request is a request under Data Protection Act, Environmental Information Regulations or Freedom Of Information Act
  • Decide whether OIAMFS holds the information or whether the request should be transferred to another body if the information is held by them
  • Provide the information if it has already been made public
  • Inform the enquirer if the information is not held
  • Consider whether a third party’s interests might be affected by disclosure and if so consult them
  • Consider whether any exemptions apply and whether they are absolute or qualified
  • Carry out a public interest test to decide if applying the qualified exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information;
  • Decide whether the estimated cost of complying with the request will exceed the appropriate limit (i.e. £450 in total with a maximum of £50 per individual educational record)
  • If a request is made for a document that contains exempt personal information ensure that the personal information is removed by applying the redaction procedure
  • Consider whether the request is vexatious or repeated

OIAMFS recognises its duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information.

Reasons for not complying with a request
OIAMFS accepts that according to the legislation there are only four reasons for not complying with a valid request for information under FOI:

  • The information is not held
  • The cost of providing the information will exceed the threshold of £450
  • The request is considered vexatious or repeated
  • One or more of the exemptions apply

OIAMFS also recognises that the exemptions provided by the FOIA are:

  • Information accessible by other means
  • Personal information
A request for personal information is covered by the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. Individuals may continue to make a “subject access request” under the DPA – these are where the enquirer asks to see what personal information the school holds about themselves.

Environmental information, where information is covered by the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

Complaints
Expressions of dissatisfaction will be handled through the school’s existing complaints procedure (see Complaints Policy).

Advertising the service
OIAMFS will advertise its policy on freedom of information in the Staff Handbook.

Charging
It is possible to levy a charge in accordance with FOIA regulations. If a charge is to be made, written notice will be given to the person making the request prior to collating and supplying the information. The charge has been fixed for Education Records at a maximum of £50. A maximum hourly rate of £25 per hour will be charged in addition to any costs of photocopying and postage. To reduce costs and hence charges requestors will be offered the opportunity where possible to receive the information electronically.

Training
Staff involved in the storage and management of the service will receive appropriate training.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review
The Principal will monitor the policy in liaison with the Business Manager. The Governing Body will review and amend this policy and procedure at least every two years or as required by:

- Changes in legislation
- Changes in guidelines from advisory bodies
- The effectiveness of the policy