



# Amherst School (Academy) Trust

## Freedom of Information Policy & Publication Scheme

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Freedom of Information Policy &amp; Publication Scheme</b>
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<b>Policy Reference</b>	
<b>Function</b>	For Information and Guidance
<b>Status</b>	Recommended
<b>Audience</b>	Parents, Governors, Headteacher, Teachers, Support Staff, the Department for Education, Public bodies
<b>Ownership / Implementation</b>	The Headteacher and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
<b>Reviewed by</b>	School Business Manager
<b>Review Frequency</b>	3 yearly
<b>Date Approved by Staff and Pupil Welfare Committee</b>	January 2023
<b>Date Approved by Full Governing Body</b>	Responsibility delegated to the Staff and Pupil Welfare Committee
<b>Date for Review</b>	January 2026



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### Background

Amherst School (Academy) Trust is committed to complying with and implementing the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and related legislation. This provides a general entitlement to any person to be able to access information held by school, subject to exemptions and conditions laid down by law.

### Scope

This policy applies to all information held by school regardless of how it was created or received. It applies irrespective of the media on which the information is stored and whether the information is recorded on paper or held electronically. The Act's powers are fully retrospective and thus information is accessible no matter how old it may be. Similarly, information in draft form will also be accessible under the Act.

It should be noted that access to personal information (that is information from which a living individual can be identified) is still governed under the Data Protection Act 1998. Requests for access to such information will be governed in line with the requirements of this legislation.

### Dealing with Requests

Amherst School (Academy) Trust will offer advice and assistance to anybody wishing to make a request for information. We are committed to dealing with requests within statutory guidelines, which means that a response will be made no more than 20 working days from the date of request and more speedily if possible. This will be extended in specific circumstances on legal advice in connection with the public interest. However, Amherst School (Academy) Trust is committed to providing a prompt service and every attempt will be made to provide the information earlier than the expiry of the 20 working day period. Repeated or vexatious requests for information will be refused. School will claim exemptions as appropriate whilst maintaining a commitment to openness, scrutiny and the public interest. Amherst School (Academy) Trust will put in place an appropriate procedure for measuring the public interest when considering a qualified (also known as "non-absolute") exemption which requires such a test.

Any request in writing will be considered a Freedom of Information request including those received by email and fax. There is no need for requests to indicate that they are made under the Act and all requests will be dealt with under this policy. School reserves the right to refuse requests where the cost of locating, retrieving and editing (where necessary) the information would exceed the statutory maximum (currently £450). The School recognises that requests for environmental information may be made over the telephone and that different exemptions apply.



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### **Adopting and Maintaining Publication Schemes**

Amherst School (Academy) Trust has adopted a Publication Scheme (see below) in accordance with Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act and is committed to updating and maintaining it to keep it current and relevant. The Publication Scheme contains many of the documents, policies, plans and guidance which are regularly asked for. Material contained within the publication scheme, and a copy of the scheme itself, will be readily available. Where charges are applied these will be stated in the Scheme. The scheme can be accessed in school on request. School staff will give advice and assistance on how to use the scheme as appropriate.

### **Relationship with the Data Protection Act 2018**

Amherst School (Academy) Trust is under a legal duty to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018. We will carefully consider our responsibilities under this Act before releasing personal information about living individuals, including current and former employees and pupils.

### **Responsibilities**

Amherst School (Academy) Trust has a responsibility to make information available in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Responsibility for compliance with this and related policies will rest with the Governing Body who will delegate those responsibilities to the Head Teacher. Complaints regarding the use of this policy should be directed to the Governing Body.

All school staff have a responsibility to ensure that any request for information they receive is dealt with under the Act and in compliance with this policy. They are also responsible for good information handling practice and for implementing records, management policies and procedures as appropriate to their post.

### **Contact Details**

For advice and assistance please contact the Head Teacher. Further advice and information about the Freedom of Information Act, including full details of exemptions and advice on the public interest test, is available from the Information Commissioner's website at [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

### **Publication Scheme**

Below is Amherst School (Academy) Trust's Publication Scheme on information available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The governing body is responsible for maintenance of this scheme.



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### **1. Introduction: What a publication scheme is and why it has been developed?**

One of the aims of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in the rest of this document) is that public authorities, including all maintained schools, should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public. To do this we must produce a publication scheme, setting out:

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

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is on our website to download and print off or is available in paper form. Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example personal information. This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

### **2. Categories of information published**

The publication scheme guides you to information which we currently publish (or have recently published) or which we will publish in the future. This is split into categories of information known as 'classes'. These are contained in section 7 of this scheme. The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised into four broad topic areas:

- New Parent Information Pack – information for new parents
- Information relating to the school and governing body – information published on the school website and in other governing body documents.
- Pupils & Curriculum – information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum.
- School Policies and other information related to the school – information about policies that relate to the school in general.

### **3. How to request information**

If you require a paper version of any of the documents within the scheme, please contact the school by telephone, email, fax or letter.

Contact details are set out below:

Amherst School (Academy) Trust  
Witches Lane  
Riverhead  
Sevenoaks  
Kent TN13 2AX

Phone: 01732 452577

Fax: 01732 464007

Email: [office@amherst.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@amherst.kent.sch.uk)



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To help us process your request quickly, please clearly mark any correspondence "PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST" (in CAPITALS please). If the information you're looking for isn't available via the scheme, you can still contact the school to ask if we have it.

### **4. 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.

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 publications or videos we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request. Where there is a charge this will be indicated on the Guide to Information Available table.

### **5. Information Currently Published**

**New Parent Information Pack** – This section sets out information contained in the New Parent Information Pack

New Parent Information Pack	The New Parent Information Pack outlines the aims and values of Amherst while the inserts contain information particular to the current academic year, such as term dates, uniform, school academic performance and staff list.
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**Information related to the School and other information relating to the governing body** – this section sets out information published and in other governing body documents.

Articles of Association	The name of the School as a Company The Object of the Company The manner in which the governing body is constituted The term of office for governors The process of the appointment of governors
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**Pupil and Curriculum Policies** – this section gives access to information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum. Paper copies are provided on request.

Home – school agreement	Statement of the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities, the parental responsibilities and the school's expectations of its pupils 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 & Relationships Policy	Statement of policy with regard to sex and relationship education
Special Education Needs Policy	Information about the school's policy on providing for pupils with special educational needs
Single Equality Scheme	Statement of policy for promoting equality
Collective Worship	Statement of arrangements for the required daily act of collective worship
Accessibility Plans	Plan for increasing participation of disabled pupils in the school's curriculum, improving the accessibility of the physical environment and improving delivery of information to disabled pupils.
Child Protection Policy	Statement of policy for safeguarding and promoting welfare of pupils at the school (Whole School Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy).
Behaviour & Discipline Policy	Statement of general principles on behaviour and discipline and of measures taken by the head teacher to prevent bullying



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**School Policies and other information related to the school** – this section gives access to information about policies that relate to the school in general.

Ofsted report	Published report of the last inspection of the school.
Admissions Policy	Statement of the school's policy on admissions.
Health and Safety policy and Risk Assessment	Policy in respect to health and safety of staff and pupils.
Complaints Procedure	Statement of procedures for dealing with complaints.
Financial statements	The details of sources of funding and income provided to the school, together with the detail of income and expenditure and the Report of the Trustees.
Pupil Premium	A report on the use of Pupil Premium funding in the last academic year.
Charging and Remissions policy	The school's policy with respect to charges and remissions for any curricular activities for which charges are permitted e.g. school trips, school events.
Discipline and Conduct Policy and Procedure	Statement of procedure for regulating conduct and capability of school staff and procedures by which staff may seek redress for grievance.
Staff Appraisal	Statement of procedures relating the annual performance management of both teaching and non-teaching staff.
Pay and Reward Policy	The school's policy regarding teachers' and support staff pay and procedures for grievances in relation to pay.

### 6. Feedback and Complaints

We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you want to make any comments about this publication scheme or if you require further assistance or wish to make a complaint, then initially this should be addressed to Mr A Reid.

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made, then this should be addressed to the Information Commissioner's Office. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and that deals with formal complaints. They can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
or Enquiry/Information Line: 01625 545 745  
E Mail: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)  
Website : [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)



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### 7. Amherst School Information Dataset

#### Contact information:

School Website: [www.amherst.kent.sch.uk](http://www.amherst.kent.sch.uk)

School Office Tel: 01732 452577

Postal address: Amherst School  
Witches Lane  
Sevenoaks  
Kent TN13 2AX

Headteacher: Mr A B Reid

<b>Class 1 - Who we are and what we do?</b> (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.)	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Who's who in the school	Website / Hard copy information pack	
Who's who on the governing body and the basis of their appointment	Website	
Governor Register of Business Interests	Website	
Articles of Association	Hard Copy in School Office	
Contact details for the Head Teacher and for the governing body	Website contact link	
Parent Information	Website/Hard copy information pack	
Staffing Structure	Website	
School session times and term dates	Website/Newsletter	

<b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it?</b> (Financial information relating to projected and annual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit).	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Financial statements	Website	
Annual Budget Plan	Hard copy	
Pupil Premium	Website	
Sport grant	Website	
Pay and reward policy	Hard copy	
Governors' allowances	Website	





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<b>Class 3 – What our priorities are now and how we are doing?</b> (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.)	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Latest Ofsted report	Website	
Performance data supplied to the Government	Website	
Performance management policy and procedures	Website	
Safeguarding and Child Protection	Website	

<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> (Decision making processes and records of decisions.)	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Admissions policy/decisions (not individual admission decisions.)	Website	
Agenda of meetings of the governing body and its committees	Hard copy	
Minutes of meetings (as above)	Hard copy	

<b>Class 5 – Our Policies and Procedures</b> (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Finance & Personnel policies including:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charges &amp; Remission</li> <li>• Complaints Procedure (for parents)</li> <li>• Behaviour</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Freedom of Information</li> <li>• Governors Allowances</li> <li>• Discipline and conduct policy</li> <li>• Staff appraisal &amp; Capability</li> <li>• Pay &amp; Reward</li> <li>• Safer Recruitment</li> <li>• Staff Leave &amp; Absence</li> <li>• Managing allegations in schools (KCC guidance)</li> <li>• Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	Website or hard copy	



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<p>Curriculum policies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Child Protection/Safeguarding</li> <li>• Curriculum Statement inc Homework</li> <li>• Single Equality Scheme</li> <li>• Online safety</li> <li>• Home/School Agreement</li> <li>• Pupil Premium Statement</li> <li>• Behaviour</li> <li>• SEND and Inclusion</li> </ul>	<p>Website or hard copy</p>	
<p>Premises policies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility policy and Plan</li> <li>• Emergency Procedure and Management Plan</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety including Risk Assessments</li> <li>• Lettings</li> </ul>	<p>Website or hard copy</p>	
<p>Records management and personal data policies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data protection (including information sharing policy)</li> </ul>	<p>Website or hard copy</p>	
<p>Charging regimes and policies This includes details of any statutory charging regimes. Charging policies include charges made for information routine published. It clearly states what costs are to be recovered, the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated.</p>	<p>Website. Also see end of this document.</p>	

<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Asset register	Hard copy	



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<b>Class 7– The services we offer</b> (information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters)	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Extracurricular activities	Website/Hard copy	
Out of school clubs	Web site/Hard copy	
School publications	Web site	

### Disclosure Schedule of Charges

<b>Type of charge</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Basis of charge</b>
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/printing – black and white @2p per sheet	Actual cost
	Photocopying/printing - colour @ 5p per sheet	Actual cost
	Postage	Standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class cost
Statutory fee		In accordance with legislation