



## **Freedom of Information Policy (Including Freedom of Information Scheme)**

Initiated by:	SLT
Approved by:	Governors/SLT
Date Approved:	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
Operational Date:	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
Date of Review:	Summer 2027
Distribution:	SLT/TLR's/All relevant staff

Signed: Bob Harris                      Chair of Governors

Signed:                       Executive Headteacher

**Please note - where this document states the term "parent" it refers to any such person(s) or body that has legal responsibility.**

## **1. Introduction**

Ysgol Cambrian is committed to openness, transparency and accountability. The school complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), which provides a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities.

The school adopts the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Model Publication Scheme and operates clear procedures to ensure all requests are handled consistently, lawfully and within statutory timescales.

## **2. Purpose**

This policy ensures the school:

- Complies fully with the FOI Act
- Promotes transparency and public accountability
- Provides access to information in a timely manner
- Protects sensitive and confidential information
- Supports staff in managing requests effectively

## **3. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All recorded information held by the school
- All staff, governors and volunteers
- All formats (paper, digital, audio, video, emails)

This policy does **not apply to**:

- Personal data (covered by Data Protection legislation)
- Environmental information (covered by Environmental Information Regulations)

## **4. Definition of an FOI Request**

A Freedom of Information request is any written request for recorded information, whether or not it explicitly refers to the Freedom of Information Act.

Requests may be received via:

- Letter
- Email
- Social media
- Any written correspondence

Requests must include:

- A name
- Contact details
- A clear description of the information requested

Requests are applicant-blind, meaning the identity and motive of the applicant must not influence decisions.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Executive Headteacher**

- Overall responsibility for FOI compliance
- Oversees complex or sensitive requests
- Approves final responses where required

### **Head of School**

- Manages day-to-day FOI processes
- Ensures requests are tracked and responded to
- Supports staff in identifying and locating information

### **Governing Body**

- Approves and reviews this policy
- Monitors compliance and risk

### **All Staff**

- Identify FOI requests promptly
- Maintain accurate records

- Provide information when requested internally
- Comply with legal and confidentiality requirements

## 6. Publication Scheme

The school adopts the ICO Model Publication Scheme, which sets out the information routinely made available. The school will:

- Publish information on the website
- Keep information up to date
- Provide copies upon request (charges may apply)

See Appendix 1 for full details.

## 7. Handling FOI Requests: Process

The school follows a structured process:

1. **Receipt and Identification**  
All written requests must be treated as potential FOI requests
2. **Logging and Acknowledgement**  
Requests are logged and tracked
3. **Allocation**  
Requests are assigned to appropriate staff
4. **Information Retrieval**  
Relevant information is identified and gathered
5. **Assessment**  
Consider:
  - Whether the information is held
  - Whether exemptions apply
  - Whether clarification is needed
6. **Consultation**  
Third parties may be consulted where necessary
7. **Review and Authorisation**  
Responses are reviewed and approved by senior leadership
8. **Response Issued**  
Response sent within statutory timescale

## 8. Timeframes

- The school will respond promptly and within 20 working days
- The deadline begins on the first working day after receipt

Time may be extended where:

- Clarification is required
- A public interest test is needed

Applicants will be informed if delays occur.

## 9. Duty to Advise and Assist

The school has a duty to support applicants by:

- Clarifying unclear requests
- Explaining available information
- Helping refine complex or large requests

If clarification is required, the response timeframe pauses until it is received.

## 10. Information We Provide

The right of access includes:

- Confirmation of whether information is held
- Communication of that information unless exemptions apply

The school is not required to create new information.

## 11. Exemptions

Certain information may be withheld where an exemption applies.

Examples include:

- Personal data
- Safeguarding or health and safety concerns
- Commercially sensitive information
- Legal privilege
- Information intended for future publication

Exemptions may be:

- Absolute
- Subject to a public interest test

Where possible, information will be provided in part through redaction.

Applicants will be informed of:

- The exemption applied
- The reason for withholding information

## **12. Charges**

Most information is provided free of charge.

Charges may apply for:

- Printing
- Photocopying
- Postage

Where a request is estimated to exceed 18 hours of staff time (the statutory cost limit), the school may refuse the request.

In such cases, the school will advise the applicant on how the request may be refined.

## **13. Vexatious or Repeated Requests**

The school may refuse:

- Repeated requests submitted within a short timeframe
- Vexatious requests that place an unreasonable burden on the school

Each request will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## **14. Third-Party Information**

Where information involves third parties:

- The school may consult those parties before disclosure
- Their views will be considered but are not binding

## **15. Mixed Requests**

Some requests may fall under more than one legal framework:

- Freedom of Information
- Data Protection legislation
- Environmental Information Regulations

The school will determine the appropriate process and respond accordingly.

## **16. Record Management and Legal Compliance**

All recorded information held by the school is subject to FOI.

It is a criminal offence to:

- Delete
- Alter
- Destroy information

after a request has been received.

## **17. Internal Monitoring and Escalation**

The school will:

- Track all FOI requests
- Monitor deadlines
- Escalate risks of delay to senior leadership

## **18. Transfer of Requests**

If information is not held by the school:

- The applicant will be informed
- Advice will be provided on where to direct the request

## **19. Complaints and Internal Review**

If dissatisfied, applicants may request an internal review.

If still dissatisfied, they may contact:

**Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**

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

## **20. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

## **Appendix 1: Ysgol Cambrian Publication Scheme**

### **1. Introduction**

This Publication Scheme sets out the information Ysgol Cambrian makes routinely available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The school adopts the **ICO Model Publication Scheme**, which covers seven classes of information.

### **2. Classes of Information We Publish**

#### **Class 1: Who We Are and What We Do**

- School contact details
- Staff structure
- Governing Body membership
- School day and term dates
- Mission, values and ethos
- Curriculum information
- ALN provision and specialist support

#### **Class 2: What We Spend and How We Spend It**

- Annual budget information
- Financial statements
- Capital funding
- Procurement procedures
- Staff pay bands
- Governor expenses
- PDG / ALN funding information

#### **Class 3: What Our Priorities Are**

- School Improvement Plan
- Estyn reports
- Self-evaluation summary
- Strategic Equality Plan
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Wellbeing and safeguarding priorities

#### **Class 4: How We Make Decisions**

- Admissions arrangements
- Governing Body minutes (non-confidential)
- Behaviour and exclusion procedures
- Consultation processes

#### **Class 5: Our Policies and Procedures**

Including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- ALN
- Curriculum
- Health and Safety
- Equality
- Complaints
- Data Protection
- Charging and Remissions
- Attendance
- Healthy Schools
- Careers and Work-Related Learning

## **Class 6: Lists and Registers**

- Asset register
- Data Protection registration
- Register of governor business interests

(Not including personal data.)

## **Class 7: Services We Offer**

- After-school clubs
- Enrichment activities
- Therapeutic and health services
- Community links
- Careers and work-related learning
- Transition support

## **3. Accessing Information**

Information is available:

- On the school website
- By email request
- In printed form (charges may apply)

## **4. Charges**

Most information is free.

Charges may apply for:

- Printing
- Photocopying
- Postage
- Requests requiring significant staff time

## **5. Review**

This Publication Scheme is reviewed **annually**.

## **Appendix 2 – FOI Staff Quick Guide (1 Page)**

### **Recognising an FOI Request**

Treat as FOI if it:

- Is in writing (email, letter, social media)
- Requests recorded information
- Includes a name and contact details

⚠ It does **not need to mention FOI**

### **What Staff Must Do Immediately**

1. Forward request to Head of School
2. Do not delay – the deadline has already started
3. Do not respond directly unless instructed

### **FOI Process Overview**

1. Request logged
2. Information gathered
3. Checked for exemptions
4. Approved by SLT
5. Response issued within 20 working days

### **Key Rules**

- Do not delete or change records after a request
- Always provide information unless there is a valid reason not to
- Ask for help if unsure

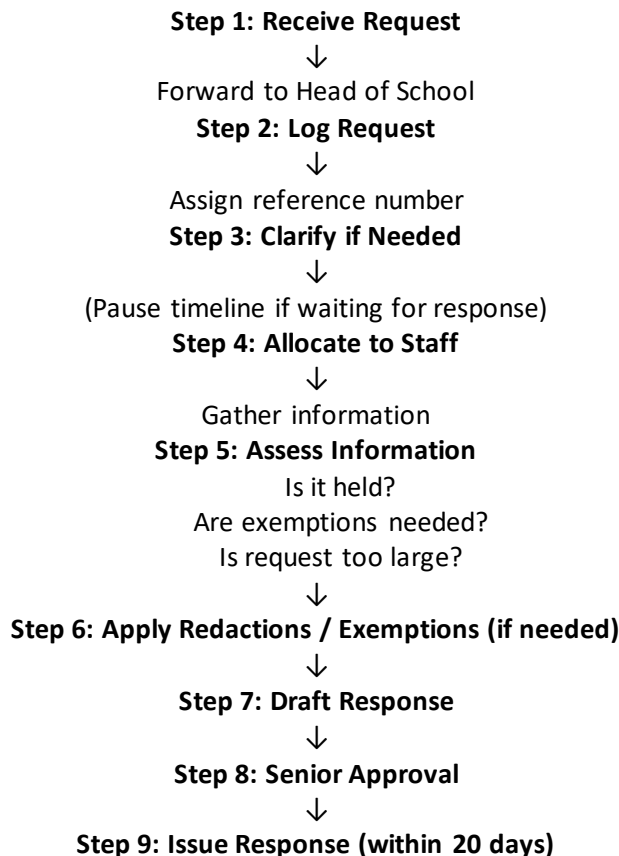
**Timeframe**

- Legal deadline: **20 working days**
- Internal expectation: respond well before deadline

**Support**

If unsure, contact: **Head of School / FOI Lead**

**Appendix 3 – FOI Request Handling Flowchart**



**Appendix 4 – FOI Request Log Template**

FOI Ref No.	Date Received	Requester Name	Request Summary	Department Responsible	Deadline Date (20 Working Days)	Date Acknowledged	Date Sent to Staff	Date Response Drafted	Date Approved	Date Response Issued	Outcome (Full / Partial / Refused)	Exemptions Applied	Notes / Actions

**Appendix 5 – Standard FOI Response Templates**

**Standard Response (Information Provided)**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your request for information received on [date].

The school confirms that the information requested is held and is provided below:

[Insert information]

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right to request an internal review. Details are provided below.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

### **B. Partial Disclosure (With Redactions)**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your request received on [date].

The school holds the requested information. However, some information has been withheld as it falls under the following exemption(s):

[Insert exemption]

Where possible, the remaining information is provided below.

[Insert redacted information]

You may request an internal review if you are dissatisfied with this response.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

### **C. Refusal (Exemption Applied)**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your request received on [date].

The school confirms that the information is held; however, it is being withheld under the following exemption(s):

[Insert exemption and explanation]

This decision has been made after careful consideration.

You have the right to request an internal review.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

**D. Refusal (Cost Limit Exceeded)**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your request received on [date].

The school estimates that the cost of complying with your request exceeds the statutory time limit. For this reason, we are unable to process your request in its current form.

We would be happy to assist you in refining your request to bring it within the allowable limit.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

**E. Information Not Held**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your request received on [date].

The school does not hold the information requested.

You may wish to contact [relevant organisation] who may be able to assist.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]