

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock



Freedom of Information Policy

Policy Details

Legal Status	Adopted	Version Date	Last Review	Next Review	Responsible
Statutory	3 rd June 2026	March 2026	June 2023	June 2029	Miss McLaughlin

Related Documents

1. Data Protection Policy
2. Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure
3. Records Management Policy & Disposal of Records Schedule

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1. Introduction - Freedom of Information Publication Scheme Statement

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), all public authorities, including schools, must abide by its terms and should be clear about the information they will make public. This requires the formation of a specific publication scheme which conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner and commits Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned, where this information is held by Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock.

2. Aims

The FOIA publication scheme commits Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock:

- To proactively publish, or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information (including environmental information) which is held by the College and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the College and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish, or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within the scheme.
- To produce and publish methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the College makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.

3. Expectations

All written requests for information should be answered within 20 school days of receipt (or 60 days including holiday time whichever is shorter). If this timescale is impractical, it may be that the effort to provide a response will exceed the cost limited provided for in the Act, in which case the request may be refused. This must be explained to the requestor within the time limit. The time limit does not include any time spent waiting for fees to be paid for disbursements (see below) as the response need not be sent until such fees have been received.

The College may make a charge for requests for information under the FOIA. Charges will only cover disbursements (for example, photocopying or postage). The school will not charge students or their parents/carers or staff for requests relating to their records nor for a single paper copy of information routinely published. All requests for release of information under the FOIA not covered under the publication scheme must be in writing, either by letter or email, and must indicate who is making the request, their postal/email address and what information they want.

The school may refuse a request on one of the following grounds:

- It would cost more than £450 to comply (allowing for £25 per hour for work done in compiling the answer plus any disbursement costs).
- The request is vexatious or repeated.
- The information is exempt from disclosure under one of the exemptions in the FOIA.
- The school also holds information which is not individual but which is not routinely published (e.g. budget information). The FOIA makes provision for this to be made available, but any such request should be referred to the College Business Manager (for specific financial requests) in the first instance.

Some information which the College holds may not be made public, such as personal information. Any request for such information should always be referred to the Principal.

All staff should understand that any request for information submitted in writing is a request under the FOIA, regardless as to whether the request mentions the Act. If the information is routinely published, then the member of staff receiving a request (be it verbally or in writing from a member of the public) should either direct the requestor to the College website or arrange for a single copy of the relevant document to be placed at Reception for collection. If the request is beyond this paragraph's scope, involves any complexity or will incur cost (e.g. postage), then it should be referred to the Principal who will respond to the request in writing.

The presumption of the legislation is that information will be disclosed unless the Act provides a specific reason to withhold it. There are more than 20 exemptions which are mainly intended to protect sensitive or confidential information. Only where the College has real concerns about disclosing the information will the College look to see whether an exemption might apply. Even then, where the potential exemption is a qualified exemption, we will consider the public interest test to identify if the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. Therefore, unless it is in the public interest to withhold the information, it has to be released.

Personal information requested by the subject of that information is exempt under the FOIA, as such information is covered by the Data Protection Act. Individuals must, therefore, make a 'Subject Access Request' under the Data Protection Act if they wish to access such information.

Personal information requested by third parties is also exempt under the FOIA where release of that information would breach the Data Protection Act. If a request is made for a document (e.g. Governing Body minutes) which contains personal information the release of which to a third party would breach the Data Protection Act, the document may be issued by blanking out the relevant personal information as set out in the redaction procedure.

4. Classes of Information Published

The publication scheme guides you to information the College currently publishes (or has recently published) or which we will publish in the future. This is categorised into 'classes' of information, organised into six topic areas:

- a. Who we are and what we do - organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.
- b. What we spend and how we spend it - financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.
- c. What our priorities are and how we are doing - performance information, assessments, inspections and reviews.
- d. How we make decisions - policy proposals and decisions, decision-making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.
- e. Our policies and procedures - current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.
- f. Lists and Registers - information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the school.

These classes of information will not generally include:

- Information, the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the FOIA, or is otherwise considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

5. Charges which May Be Made for Information Published under this Scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum. Material which is published and accessed on the College website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by parliament. Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- Photocopying/printing (at 5p per black and white sheet and 10p per colour sheet).
- Postage (Royal Mail cost of 2nd class) and packaging.
- The costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

6. How to Request Information

For information included in the publication scheme:

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where the College is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Paper copies of the information set out in the College's publication scheme can be obtained, where appropriate, on the College website at www.knock.co.uk or requested by telephone, email or letter.

Contact details are as follows:

The Principal
Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock
120 Gilnahirk Road
Belfast
BT5 7DL

Tel: 028 9040 1184
Email: info@knock.co.uk

For information not included in the publication scheme:

Information held by the College that is not published under this scheme can be requested, and the College will consider providing the information requested in accordance with the provisions of the FOIA.

The Board of Governors has delegated to the Principal the day-to-day responsibility for the College's Freedom of Information Policy and the provision of advice, guidance, publicity and interpretation of that policy.

Accordingly, any request for information not set out in the publication scheme should be made in writing to the Principal using the contact details above.

To enable the College to process your request quickly and efficiently, any correspondence should be clearly marked 'Freedom of Information Request'.

7. Complaints

Complaints relating to this Policy should be addressed under our Complaints Procedure which is available on the College website at www.knock.co.uk.

Where an individual remains dissatisfied following the completion of the Complaints Procedure, he/she can refer the complaint to the Information Commissioner. Further advice and information can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk.

Signed: Mr Leo O'Reilly
(Chairperson of Board of Governors)

Date: 3rd June 2026

Signed: Miss Deborah McLaughlin
(Principal)

Date: 3rd June 2026

A Guide to Information Available from the College under its Publication Scheme

Please note that much of the listed information is currently available on the College website at www.knock.co.uk

Information to be published		How the information can be obtained?	Charge
A Who we are and what we do? (current information only)			
A.1	College Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Aims and Ethos	Website, Prospectus and by request	Nil
A.2	Board of Governors: names, term and contact details	Website, Annual Report and by request	Nil
A.3	College term dates, holidays and parent-teacher meetings	Website, Student Planner and by request	Nil
A.4	College Prospectus	Website	Nil
A.5	Examination results	Website, Information Booklet and Annual Report	Nil
A.6	College staff and structure: names of key personnel	Website, Prospectus and by request	Nil
A.7	Extra-curricular activities	Website and by request	Nil
A.8	Newsletters and bulletins	Website, email and by request	Nil
Information to be published		How the information can be obtained?	Charge
B What we have and how we spend it? (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts, and financial audit)			
B.1	Annual income and expenditure	Annual Report and by request	Nil
B.2	Annual budget plan	By request	Nil
B.3	Capital funding	By request	See FOI Policy
B.4	Additional funding: income generation and other sources	By request	See FOI Policy
B.5	Procurements and contracts: procedures use for the acquisition of goods and services through formal tendering process	By request	See FOI Policy
B.6	Staffing and grading structure	By request	See FOI Policy
B.7	Salary Policy	By request	See FOI Policy

Information to be published		How the information can be obtained?	Charge
C <i>What are our priorities and how are we doing?</i> <i>Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews. Current information published.</i>			
C.1	College profile	Prospectus and website	Nil
C.2	School Development Plan	Website	Nil
C.3	Child Protection and Safeguarding	Website	Nil
C.4	DE supplied performance data	By request	Nil
C.5	ETI Inspections	Website and DE website	Nil
Information to be published		How the information can be obtained?	Charge
D <i>How we make decisions? Decision-making processes and records of decisions?</i> <i>(Current and previous three years)</i>			
D.1	Admissions Policy: arrangements, procedures and right of appeal. Information of application numbers and number of successful applicants by grade.	Website, prospectus and by request	Nil
D.2	Board of Governors' meeting agendas, papers and minutes - information that is properly considered to be private should be excluded.	By request	See FOI Policy
D.3	Senior Leadership Team meeting agendas, papers and minutes - information that is properly considered to be private should be excluded.	By request	See FOI Policy
Information to be published		How the information can be obtained?	Charge
E <i>Our Policies and Procedures</i> <i>College policies</i>			
E.1	Acceptable Use of Digital Technology - Students	Website	Nil
E.2	Acceptable Use of Digital Technology - Staff	Website	Nil
E.3	Administration of Medication	Website	Nil
E.4	Admissions	Website	Nil
E.5	Addressing Bullying	Website	Nil
E.6	Anti-Fraud	By request	Nil
E.7	Appropriate Policy for Special Categories of Personal Data and Criminal Offence Data	By request	Nil

E	Our Policies and Procedures <i>(Continued)</i> <i>College policies</i>		
E.8	Arrangements for Withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship	By request	Nil
E.9	Assessment, Reporting and Recording	By request	Nil
E.10	Attendance (Students)	Website	Nil
E.11	Bereavement	By request	Nil
E.12	Bullying and Harassment	By request	Nil
E.13	Career Break	By request	Nil
E.14	Charging and Remissions	Website	Nil
E.15	Charity	Website	Nil
E.16	Child Protection/Safeguarding	Website	Nil
E.17	Codes of Conduct <i>(for students)</i>	By request	Nil
E.18	Communications	By request	Nil
E.19	Complaints Procedure	Website	Nil
E.20	CCTV	By request	Nil
E.21	Conflict of Interest	By request	Nil
E.22	Cover	By request	Nil
E.23	Critical Incident	By request	Nil
E.24	Curriculum	Website	Nil
E.25	Data Protection	Website	Nil
E.26	Dignity at Work and Code of Practice for Non-Teaching Staff	By request	Nil
E.27	Disciplinary Procedure for Non-Teaching Staff	By request	Nil
E.28	Disciplinary Procedure for Teaching Staff including Principals and VPs	By request	Nil
E.29	Disclosure Information Security	By request	Nil
E.30	Drugs	Website	Nil
E.31	Educational Visits	Website	Nil
E.32	Equal Opportunities	By request	Nil
E.33	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	Website	Nil
E.34	eSafety and Digital Technology	Website	Nil
E.35	Examination Contingency Plan	By request	Nil
E.36	Examinations and Controlled Assessment/CW/NEA	Website	Nil
E.37	Financial and Administrative Procedures	By request	Nil
E.38	Freedom of Information	Website	Nil

E	Our Policies and Procedures <i>(Continued)</i> <i>College policies</i>		
E.39	Gifted and Talented	Website	Nil
E.40	Grievance Procedure	By request	Nil
E.41	Health and Safety	By request	Nil
E.42	Homework	Website	Nil
E.43	Honour Tie	Website	Nil
E.44	Intimate Care	Website	Nil
E.45	Job Share	By request	Nil
E.46	Learning and Teaching	By request	Nil
E.47	Literacy	By request	Nil
E.48	Lockdown	Not available	N/A
E.49	Malpractice	By request	Nil
E.50	Maternity and Paternity Leave	By request	Nil
E.51	Menopause Workplace	By request	Nil
E.52	Numeracy	By request	Nil
E.53	Parent/Teacher Meetings	Website	Nil
E.54	Pastoral Care	Website	Nil
E.55	Positive Behaviour (inc. College Rules)	Website	Nil
E.56	PRSD	By request	Nil
E.57	Privacy Notice for Staff	By request	Nil
E.58	Privacy Notice for Students and Parents	Website	Nil
E.59	Records Management Policy & Disposal of Records Schedule	By request	Nil
E.60	Recruitment	By request	Nil
E.61	Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy	By request	Nil
E.62	Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)	Website	Nil
E.63	Remote Learning	By request	Nil
E.64	Risk Management	By request	Nil
E.65	Salary	By request	Nil
E.66	Special Educational Needs	Website	Nil
E.67	Staff Professional Learning	By request	Nil
E.68	Staff Secondment	By request	Nil
E.69	Study Leave	Website	Nil

E Our Policies and Procedures <i>(Continued)</i> <i>College policies</i>			
E.70	Subject Access Request Procedure	By request	Nil
E.71	Suspension and Expulsion	By request	Nil
E.72	Teacher Attendance	By request	Nil
E.73	Teacher Induction	By request	Nil
E.74	Teaching Staff Working for Examination Boards	By request	Nil
E.75	TNC Documents	By request	Nil
E.76	Unpaid Leave of Absence	By request	Nil
E.77	Uniform	Website	Nil
E.78	Unreasonable Behaviour	By request	Nil
E.79	Whistleblowing	By request	Nil
E.80	Working with Visual Display Units	By request	Nil
F Lists and Registers <i>(Any information the College is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers)</i>			
F.1	Asset register	By request	See FOI Policy
F.2	DE circulars and statutory instruments	Website and by request	See FOI Policy
F.3	Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers. (This does not include Attendance Registers)	By request. Some information may only be available by inspection.	See FOI Policy