



Definition document for the managers of controlled, voluntary and maintained schools and pupil referral units in Northern Ireland

This guidance gives examples of the kinds of information that we would expect schools to provide in order to meet their commitments under the model publication scheme. It will be of most use to schools developing their own guide to information. Nursery and primary schools may alternatively use the model guides to information which will be provided for this sector.

We would expect schools to make the information in this definition document available unless:

- they do not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

The guidance is not meant to give a definitive list. The legal commitment is to the model publication scheme, and authorities should look to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Instrument of Government**

The Instrument of Government is the document which records the name and category of the school and the name and constitution of its governing body.

- **School prospectus**

The statutory contents of the school prospectus, as follows:

- information about the implementation of the governing body's policy on pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- a description of the policies relating to disabled pupils, including facilities to improve access and the accessibility plan.

Once the prospectus has been published and made available to parents, access to it should be available to anyone.

- **Annual Report**

Only maintained nursery schools are required to produce a Governor's Annual Report to Parents.

- **Governing Body**

The names, and contact details of the governors should be available and the basis on which they have been appointed.

- **School session times and term dates**

Details of school session times and dates of school terms and holidays.

- **Location and contact information**

The address, telephone number and website for the school together with the names of key personnel.

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

The minimum we would expect is that financial information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

- **Annual budget plan and financial statements**

Details of the school budget and the school's annual income and expenditure returns.

- **Capital funding**

Details of the capital funding allocated to the school together with information on related building projects and other capital projects.

- **Additional Funding**

Income generation schemes and other sources of funding. (Specialist secondary schools may have additional government funding and arrangements with private sector sponsors.)

- **Procurement and contracts**

Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services. Details of

contracts that have gone through a formal tendering process.

- **Pay policy**

The statement of the school's policy and procedures regarding teachers' pay.

- **Staffing and grading structure**
- **Governors' allowances**

Details of allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed.

What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.

The minimum we would expect in this class is current information.

Below is a list of the type of information that we would expect schools to have readily available for publication. Any other reports or recorded information showing the school's planned or actual performance should normally be included.

- **School profile**

- Government-supplied performance data
- Summary of latest Education and Training Inspectorate report*
- The required narrative sections covering areas such as: successes during the year; areas of improvement; efforts to meet the individual needs of every child; pupil's health, safety and support; post-Education and Training Inspectorate report action plan; and links with parents and the community

(* the full Education and Training Inspectorate report should also be available.)

- **Performance management information**

Performance management policy and procedures adopted by the governing body.

- **Schools future plans**

Any major proposals for the future of the school involving, for example, consultation or a change in school status.

- **Every Child Matters / child protection**

The contribution of the school to the five Every Child Matters outcomes. The policies and procedures that are in place to ensure that functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in compliance with any guidance issued by the Department of Education.

<p>How we make decisions Decision-making processes and records of decisions.</p>
<p>We would expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions policy / decisions <p>The school's admission arrangements and procedures, together with information about the right of appeal. Individual admission decisions would not be expected to be published, but information on application numbers/patterns of successful applicants (including criteria on which applications were successful) should be if this information is held by the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meetings of the Governing body and its sub-committees <p>Minutes, agendas and papers considered at such meetings should be published as soon as practicable, with the exception of information that is properly considered to be private to the meeting.</p>
<p>Our policies and procedures Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.</p>
<p>We would expect information in this class to be current information only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School policies <p>This will include school policies and procedures together with other information related to the school such as charging and remissions policy, health and safety and risk assessment, complaints procedure, staff conduct policy, discipline and grievance policies, pay policy, staffing structure implementation plan. It will also include policies and procedures for handling information requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil and Curriculum policies <p>This will include such policies as home-school agreement, curriculum, sex education, special educational needs, accessibility, race equality, collective worship, careers education (Key Stage 4 pupils) and pupil discipline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records management and personal data policies <p>This will include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and diversity <p>This will also include policies, schemes, statements, procedures and</p>

guidelines relating to equal opportunities. This will include an equality scheme/statement in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- **Policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff**

If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will readily available.

- **Charging regimes and policies**

Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published. They should clearly state what costs are to be recovered, the basis on which they are made, and how they are calculated.

Lists and registers

We expect this to be information contained in currently maintained list and registers only.

- **Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments**

Statutory Instruments (for example Regulations), departmental circulars and administrative memoranda sent to the Head Teacher/Governing Body concerning the curriculum.

- **Disclosure logs**

If a school produces a disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to requests, it should be readily available. Disclosure logs are recommended as good practice.

- **Asset register**

We would expect some information from capital asset registers to be available, if such registers are held.

- **Any information the school is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers**

The services we offer

Information about the services the school provides including leaflets, guidance and newsletters.

Generally this is an extension of part of the first class of information and may also relate to information covered in other classes. Examples of services that could be included here are:

- **Extra-curricular activities**
- **Out of school clubs**

- **School publications**
- **Services for which the school is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees**
- **Leaflets, booklets and newsletters**