

Freedom of Information Ten Top Tips

1. **Be positive.** Greater transparency is good for the public and the school's image.
2. **Be active.** Publish as much information as possible. Pro-active publication saves time, effort, resources and money. .
3. **Anticipate requests** – don't wait to be asked.
4. **Why not?** The Act presumes disclosure. We should meet people's requests unless there is a good reason within the Act not to. We do not have to withhold information if an exemption applies.
5. **Get talking.** Establish a dialogue with the requester. This can help resolve requests quickly.
6. **Don't fear precedent.** All decisions should be made on their own merits and on a case by case basis at the time of the request.
7. **Give clear reasons.** If turning down a request, write a clear refusal letter. Properly drafted and fully explained refusals can help avoid reviews and complaints.
8. **Give more if it helps.** Supply additional information where it is useful, such as an explanation of the information supplied.
9. **Meet it or beat it.** You **must** meet the 20 day deadline – beat it if possible.
10. **Help yourself.** Don't panic.

