

Publishing information



Publication duty

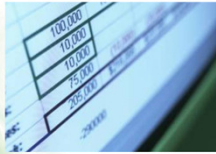


Your school must:

- have and maintain an approved publication scheme
- publish information and help the public to find it


1. Part of the Act and an important duty


A note about the EIRs



"Active dissemination"
of environmental
information

1. The EIRs don't require a "publication scheme", but they do require "active dissemination" or environmental information. In fact, they're more prescriptive than FOISA about it, focusing on information that's held electronically, including registers (not school), databases and lists.
2. The good news is you don't need to worry about the EIRs unduly as by adopting a publication scheme, you'll have met your responsibilities under all FOI law (FOISA and the EIRs).

Consider the public interest 



- What the school does
- Why it does it that way
- How well it does it (what it achieves)
- What it costs

1. The publication duty is all about you making information available in the public interest.
2. You're not asked to have a crystal ball – you can't foresee everything every member of the public would like to know.
3. The aim is to think about being open and transparent about what you do. For example, if there's a law requiring you to publish something, you can be sure there's a public interest in that information. In other cases, you'll have to think a bit harder, For example, maybe you collect data for a business purpose, but it doesn't have any wider application – you'll have to think about whether there is a public interest in it.
4. So you need to think about the types of information in which there is a general public interest. FOI law gives you these examples..., but they're not intended to be exhaustive.
5. We thoroughly recommend you also think about information that people are going to request.



1. You're doing a lot of this already, so don't be intimidated! Instead, see it as an opportunity to think strategically about the information you publish and what your stakeholders (children, parents, support workers, regulators) want to know – it's an investment in good relationships as well as meeting a statutory duty.
2. We thoroughly recommend you think not just about the "public interest" but in what the public are likely to be interested in – and will ask you for. A challenge for you to take home as homework – how many of your websites have the school term time and holiday dates? It's one of the most visited pages on City of Edinburgh Council's website
3. It also helps to think about publication as part of any new plans – if your school intends to start any new activities, we suggest you include in the planning process what information you'll provide about them and when.

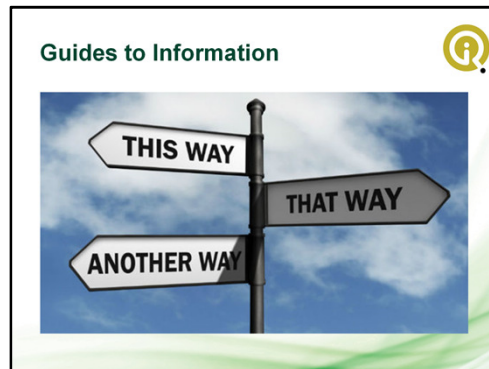
The Model Publication Scheme



Classes of information and accessibility principles.
Free to adopt.

1. Agree you'll adopt it
2. Identify the information you hold under each class
3. Prepare the information for publication (meeting the principles)
4. Produce and publish a **Guide to Information**
5. Notify the SIC by **1 September 2016**

1. We make it easier by producing a Model Publication Scheme. (copy in your packs).
2. This sets out the classes of information and important information accessibility principles.
3. You could produce your own publication scheme and then send it to us to approve. But we really don't recommend it – we used to do it that way and it was a tortuous experience for both sides. It's much more straightforward to adopt the MPS
4. All Scottish public authorities have adopted the MPS and 97% recommend it to new bodies.
5. The steps are...[as above]



1. The MPS requires you to publish a Guide to the Information you publish.
2. It must point people to what information is available and how they can get it.
3. The form and format of the Guide is your choice – choose the best way to make your information available to the people who'll want to access it. Almost all authorities make theirs available online and then offer a service to print information out for people who can't access the internet or need special formats.
4. You can produce your own school's Guide from scratch or you can decide as a group to develop a template Guide. You would still all have to fill in the information and where it is available, but a template will make it much easier than having to produce individual Guides.
5. [Group exercise to identify what is held and published under classes of information]



1. I'll gather up all your sheets and type them up
2. Do you like the idea of a template Guide? If so, do we have any volunteers to co-ordinate it?
3. If not, I'll circulate the sheets to you and you can create your own Guides