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27 March 2009

Mike Buckley

request-9668-df277d8e@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Buckley,

Freedom of Information (FOI) Act – Internal Review

I am responding to your email of 24 March, in which you made a complaint about Ofsted's handling of your request for information, made on that same day. The internal review process is a requirement of the FOI Act and I am responsible for responding to requests of this nature.

Your request

You sent an email to Ofsted to make the following request for information:

"On the 6th March Zenna Atkins Chair Ofsted was named as a speaker at a Common Purpose event.

<http://www.commonpurpose.org.uk/resource...>

Please supply a copy of the e mails between Zenna Atkins and Common Purpose relating to the above event."

Ofsted's response to your request

Ofsted initially responded to your request on 24 March. That response refused to acknowledge your enquiry as a request for information, highlighting that such a request: "must include an address for correspondence". A further email from Ofsted stated that "I do apologise for requesting more information, however, this is needed so that your question can be answered."

Your complaint

In your email of the same day you asked for Ofsted examine the handling of your request to date.

The internal review

I have found that Ofsted's handling of your request to date to have been at fault. Your request, sent by email, should have been treated as satisfying the requirement for "an address for correspondence", as set out at section 8(1)(b) of the FOI Act. The Information Commissioner's guidance clearly sets out this interpretation of what constitutes such an address¹.

I sincerely apologise for this mistake and I can state that the team concerned have reassured me that this error will not be repeated. I can also confirm that the processing of your request has been passed to the relevant team in Ofsted and that you will shortly receive a fully considered response on this matter. This review does not effect your rights should you wish to make a complaint to Ofsted about that future response.

If you are dissatisfied with the conduct of this internal review you have a right to approach the Information Commissioner for a decision as to whether we have dealt with your request for information in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. If you wish to make such an application you should write to:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Duffy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

PETER DUFFY
Deputy Director of Corporate Services