



Department
for Education

Reference: 2019-0023243
Date: 28 August 2019

Dear Edward Williams,

Internal Review reference: 2019-0026642

In reference to your recent Freedom of Information request to the Regional Schools Commissioners Office, Department for Education, I write to inform you of the outcome of the internal review process following your complaint of 19 July 2019. You requested:

“an internal review of Department for Education's handling of my FOI request - The No Outsiders programme at Parkfield Community School in Birmingham”.

The department has now concluded the internal review process and has carried out a thorough review of the case, chaired by a senior official who was not involved with the original request. The department has decided to uphold the original decision not to disclose the information concerned, for the same reasons set out in the letter of 19 July 2019.

I consider that the original exemption was correctly applied and in line with Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) guidelines and have decided to uphold the original decision not to comply with your request under Section 12 of the Act.

I would also like to clarify a point, as raised in your complaint.

In your email of 19 July 2019, you stated:

You have failed to explain where the data is held and why it exceeds the costs threshold.

It may be helpful to clarify that as your request was directed at the department, this means that it was considered to apply to information held by the department as a whole. As such, the request applied to information held by many policy areas and officers.

The department has been providing support and assistance with mediation to Parkfield Community School around the recent issues with the No Outsiders programme since the beginning of the year. This work has been carried out by officers within the department across a wide range of policy teams and areas, as we have attempted to reach the best possible resolution to the situation.

The search for information in scope of your request returned more than 3000

unique results, which would each have to be reviewed individually for the information specific to your request, and relevant information extracted.

The cost threshold applicable to central Government is £600 and represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days locating, retrieving and extracting the information. The amount of data within scope of the request, combined with the manner in which it is stored, means that locating and retrieving this information will exceed the cost threshold.

I understand that the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands has offered further contact such as a telephone call, in order to discuss your request further. I would like to encourage you to accept this offer, as it may allow the department to assist you further and discuss in more detail the information you are requesting. This may help the department to comply with your request, but I cannot guarantee that this will result in the release of information.

If you are unhappy with this decision, you have the right to appeal directly to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Case Reception Unit
Customer Service Team
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Further information about the Information Commissioner's complaints procedure can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website:
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/complaints/>

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Meyrick

Chief Executive
Teacher Regulation Agency
Department for Education
Cheylesmore House, Coventry