

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Your request for information has now been considered and the Council's response to your questions is shown below.

You asked:

1. Please provide a copy of your policy regarding the trialling of SEN Direct Payments and personal budgets.

We do not yet have a policy however, a draft is in development. This letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

2. Please confirm whether all parents/carers issued with a new or amended statement since January 2012 have been informed about their right to apply for a Direct Payment for SEN provision under the Special Educational Needs (Direct Payments) (Pilot Scheme) Order 2012. How has this information been provided? Please provide a copy of any standard leaflet or letter issued together with confirmation of the date of issue.

In the new assessment and Education Healthcare Plan process within the Pathfinder programme, all families engage with an impartial Facilitator/Key Worker, provided from a local Leicester Voluntary Community Service group. They are guided through all elements of the new process, including a description of 'notional' Personal Budgets or increased personalisation in the decision making process about their son/daughter.

3. Please confirm the number of parents/carers who are receiving SEN Direct Payments and what those Direct Payments relate to.

None

4. Please confirm whether any of these SEN Direct Payments could be provided outside the Pathfinder project, e.g. payments under Part 6 of a statement for transport.

Not applicable

5. Please provide a copy of your policy for considering requests for direct payments for SEN provision. If you do not have a policy, please confirm whether there are any limits placed on direct payments applications, e.g. they will not be provided if the LA has a block contract or there is a financial limit. Please confirm whether these criteria are communicated to parents and provide a copy of that document.

Our work in the Pathfinder is on-going and we do not currently have a policy for Direct Payments for SEN provision, and no 'limits' have consequently been

addressed. This letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

6. Please confirm your arrangements for reviewing appeals against a refusal of a request for SEN Direct Payments. Please provide a copy of any policy and any leaflet/letter issued to parents explaining this.

This will be developed in due course. This letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

7. Please confirm what information is provided to parents/carers about the trialling of personal budgets. Please provide a copy of any leaflet or letter issued.

This is in development with the policy. This letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

8. Please confirm how many parents/carers are receiving a personal budget within the auspices of the Pathfinder project

None

9. Please confirm how parents/carers in receipt of SEN Direct Payments/ personal budgets obtained the information to make an application. For example, were they:

- (a) sent the information with a new or amended statement**
- (b) recruited as part of a specific pilot**
- (c) neither (a) or (b), the family approached the LA having heard about SEN Direct Payments/personal budgets from other sources**

Please see the response to question 2

10. Please provide a copy of your local offer.

Our Local Offer is available as a web offer at present, with a short hard copy booklet (attached).

The Leicester Local Offer website is: www.localofferleicester.org.uk

The legislation allows you to use the information supplied for your own personal use. Please be aware that any commercial or other use, for example publication, sale, or redistribution may be a breach of copyright under the

Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 as amended unless you obtain the copyright holder's prior permission.

Not all the information that is supplied which is covered by copyright will be the Council's copyright, for example it may be the copyright of a government department or another Council. You should seek either the Council's consent or their consent as appropriate. The Council is willing to advise you of any such potential issues on request. In order to make a request to re-use the information please contact the Information Governance Manager using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

Information Governance Manager
Information and Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG
e-mail: info-requests@leicester.gov.uk

Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please be aware that the Information Commissioner does not normally consider appeals or complaints until the internal appeals and complaints processes of the public authority which is answering the request have been exhausted. You are therefore advised to complain or appeal to the Information Governance Manager before contacting the Commissioner.