

13 August 2024

FOI Ref 16827

Request - You asked us the following:

The number of reported knife or bladed article possessions in schools in each of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. eg, 2019 - 5, 2020 - 24, and so on...

The number of reported threats involving a knife or bladed article in schools in each of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The number of reported attacks involving a knife or bladed article in schools in each of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

We received your request on 30/04/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

Staffordshire Police discloses/withholds the following information.

- 1. The number of reported knife or bladed article possessions in schools in each of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. eg, 2019 - 5, 2020 - 24, and so on...
- 2. The number of reported threats involving a knife or bladed article in schools in each of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.
- 3. The number of reported attacks involving a knife or bladed article in schools in each of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can easily retrieve information from our systems to answer question 3 of your request. Whilst we were able to retrieve a search and locate offences at school, there were over 400 occurrences that had no location recorded, necessitating a manual trawl to verify whether the reported location was a school. Similarly, in order to answer question 3, an attack may be classified as GBH, which would require a trawl through thousands of such offences identify where these involved a knife or bladed article and whether the location was a school. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by some considerable margin.

A manual review of each occurrence would therefore be required in order to identify, extract and correlate the information requested.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit.
Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the prescribed limit'.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

In order to assist in refining your request, should you retract question 3, the number of offences recorded as one of the following could be provided:

- 'Having an article with a blade or point on school/further education premises'
- 'Possession of another offensive weapon on school/further education premises'
- 'Threaten with a blade or sharply pointed article on school/further education premises'
- 'Threaten with an offensive weapon on school/further education premises'

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response.

If you would like us to carry out a review of our response, please let us know within two months of the date of receipt of this email, review requests should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit



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A safe and confident Staffordshire