

20 March 2025

FOI Ref 17840

Request - You asked us the following:

1. The number of crimes reports where a child under the age of 18 was in possession of a weapon on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for the following calendar years: 2014, 2019, 2023, 2024

Within this - please provide:

Breakdown of type of weapons used (please list examples if you cannot provide a full breakdown)

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

2. The number of crime reports where a child under the age of 18 has committed the following offences on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for each offence for the following calendar years: 2014, 2019, 2023, 2024

a) Common Assault & Battery

b) ABH (s47)

b) GBH (s20)

c) Wounding with or without a weapon (s18)

Within this - please provide

Breakdown of the number of victims who was a pupil

Breakdown of the number of victims who was a member of staff

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

3. The number of crime reports where a child under the age of 18 was threatening someone with a weapon on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for the following calendar years: 2014, 2019, 2023, 2024

Within this - please provide:

Breakdown of type of weapons used (please list examples if you cannot provide a full breakdown)

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, then please answer QUESTION 1 + 2 only.

We received your request on 14/02/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Staffordshire Police's response to your enquiry is as follows:

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

The following exemption has 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'.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 1,290 occurrences which were classed as one of the following offences/home office codes and where the suspect was under 18 or where the age was not recorded:

005/01 - 5D - Wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm
008/01 - 8N - Malicious Wounding:- wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm
008/06 - 8N - Assault occasioning actual bodily harm
008/06 - 8S - Assault on a constable occasioning actual bodily harm
105/01 - 105A - Common assault and battery

In order to identify the type of weapon and whether the victim was a pupil or teacher, would involve a manual review of each offence. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 4 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 86 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by some considerable margin.

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, we may be able to provide the number of crimes recorded for the calendar years 2014, 2019, 2023 and 2024 which were classified as one of the following home office codes and offences and where the suspects age was under 18, along with a breakdown of the suspect age/gender and where the location is recorded as a school.

- 008/27 Having an article with a blade or point on school/further education premises
- 008/28 Possession of other offensive weapon on school/further education premises
- 008/62 Threaten with a blade or sharply pointed article on school/further education premises
- 008/63 Threaten with an offensive weapon on school/further education premises
- 005/01 Wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm
- 008/01 Malicious wounding - wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm

- 008/06 Assault occasioning actual bodily harm
- 105/01 Common assault and battery

Please be advised, in relation to data from 2014, some of this information may have been deleted from Staffordshire Police records due to our retention and Management of Police Information guidelines.

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Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the Staffordshire Police website although personal details are not included.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

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

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.



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4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

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

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit