

12 May 2025

FOI Ref 21325

Request - You asked us the following:

1a) How many times have you responded to a malicious threat or intruder at a school where they have had to do a full lockdown in the years (from January-January): 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.
b) Can you give a breakdown to the nature of the incident in reference to question 1a

2a) How many people aged 0 to 16-years-old have been found in possession of a knife or bladed articles in school and have been arrested for the following years (from January-January): 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.
b) Can you give a break down by age and sex in reference to question 2a

3a) How many people aged 0 to 16-years-old have been charged for possession of a knife or bladed article at a school for the following years (from January-January): 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.
b) Can you give a break down by age and sex in reference to question 3a

4a) How many violent assaults have you attended in schools for the following years (from January-January): 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.
b) Can you give a break down by age and sex in reference to question 4a
Please provide the information in an electronic format or Excel spreadsheet.

We received your request on 09/05/2025 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:

This is because on 20th May 2020 Staffordshire Police implemented a new case management system. This system brought data from a number of legacy systems into one to provide a single nominal record, including the custody system. The old custody system has now been decommissioned and as a result there is no search facility to be able to retrieve the requested data to answer Q2 of this request. This would entail searching thousands of records to establish if it fitted the criteria of the request. To achieve this task would exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold stipulated by the FOI Act. Furthermore, there is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer questions 1 and 4 of this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 138,060 incidents recorded as

'suspicious' and for Q4 there is 63,690 incidents which has been recorded as 'violence' which would require manual review to determine if they conformed with your request. 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 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 16,812 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. Data can be provided from the 20th May 2020 whereby the offence has been recorded as 'Having an article with a blade or point on school/further education premises' and/or 'Possession of other offensive weapon on school/further education premises', where the suspect is between the ages 0-16 and where there has been an arrest or charge, broken down by year.

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.



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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.

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