

7 October 2025

FOI Ref 21884

Request - You asked us the following:

Primary request: record-level dataset

Please provide record-level (row-by-row) data for all CSE-related crimes in your force area for each calendar year 2010–2024 inclusive (and 2025 year-to-date if available).

A) Scope / definition

Confirm the operational definition of “Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)” and whether you use a CSE flag/marker.

If no CSE flag exists, please state which Home Office offence codes or crime classifications you use to identify CSE offences (e.g., grooming, arranging/facilitating child sexual offences, sexual communication with a child, controlling child prostitution/indecentcy, etc.).

B) Requested dataset fields (record-level, anonymised)

For each relevant record, please include:

Year of offence/record

Crime classification/offence code

Outcome code (Home Office outcome type, with description if available)

Arrest made (Y/N)

Suspect sex (M/F/Other/Unknown)

Suspect ethnicity (classification used by force)

Suspect nationality (if recorded; if not, state “not recorded”)

Suspect religion (if recorded; if not, state “not recorded”)

CPS referral (Y/N)

CPS charging decision (if recorded by police)

C) Format

Please supply data in machine-readable CSV with a data dictionary (field definitions, code lists, outcome descriptions).



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Remove any direct personal identifiers (names, DOB, addresses, case numbers).

Fallback request: aggregated data

If providing the above record-level dataset would:

exceed the s.12 cost limit,

or be refused under s.40 (personal information) or s.31 (law enforcement),

then please instead provide annual aggregated totals for 2010–2024 (and 2025 YTD):

Number of recorded crimes meeting your CSE definition.

Outcomes for those crimes by Home Office outcome type.

Number of arrests of suspects, broken down by:

Sex (M/F/Other/Unknown)

Ethnicity (force's classification)

Nationality (if recorded)

Religion (if recorded)

Number of CPS referrals for charging decisions.

CPS charging decisions recorded by police (Charge/Alternative charge/No further action/Out of court/etc.).

Assistance

If full coverage from 2010 is not available, please provide data from the earliest year held.

If any field is not held, please confirm explicitly (s.1(1)(a)).

If partial data is possible, please release what you hold and advise under s.16 how to refine further.

I confirm I am requesting only non-identifiable information for research purposes.

We received your request on 24/09/2025 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:

We are unable to provide the data for the primary request as this would exceed the time and cost threshold as stipulated by the Freedom of Information Act. However, we are also unable to provide the data for the fallback request. This is because there is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. Between 01/01/2020 and 31/08/2025 alone, there are in excess of 2,500 occurrences which may be relevant to this request. In order to determine whether an arrest took place and to determine the CPS charging decision (if held), the record for each offence would require manual review. 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 -10 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to between 208 and 416 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.

In addition, arrest data prior to 20/05/2020 is not readily available. This is because on this date 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. It would entail searching thousands of records to establish if it fitted the criteria of the request.

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.

If your request was amended, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide the number of recorded crimes with a Child Sexual Exploitation flag added, broken down by outcome between 01/01/2020 and 24/09/2025. Staffordshire Police would also be able to confirm the operational definition of "Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)" and whether we use a CSE flag/marker. Please note that further exemptions may apply.

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.



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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:

Information Access Team
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 Information Access Team 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 a Supervisor who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Information Access Team 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 Supervisor 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 Supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant 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 link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team