



Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 091555
Date 14 September 2015

Looked After Children

Request:

Please provide details of what statistical information (for example in relation to volume and /or duration), whether by Key Performance Indicator, or otherwise, your Local Authority keeps on:-

(a) Looked after children

Following careful consideration, the information you requested above falls under the exemption(s) in section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("The Act"), which relates to 'information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.

Information about Looked after Children is submitted to the DfE via the CLA (903) child level data return. Publication of various statistical reports from this return, as well as the underlying data at local authority level for the past 5 years can be found here (please note that 2014/15 information will be published in various stages over the next three months):

The above exemption applies as the information is published and publicly-available to view by accessing <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-looked-after-children>

(b) Specifically children looked after under s.20 CA 1989

Please see our response to question (a) above. The information is contained in the statistical releases linked to above.

(c) Initial and core assessment numbers and outcomes

Following careful consideration, the information you requested above falls under the exemption(s) in section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("The Act"), which relates to 'information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.

The Local Authority has been undertaking Single Assessments since September 2013. Information about referrals, assessments and outcomes is submitted to the DfE via the Children in Need (CiN) Census. Publication of various statistical reports from this return can be found here (Again 14-15 data will be released in various stages over the coming months):

The above exemption applies as the information is published and publicly-available to view by accessing <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-children-in-need>

(d) Children subject to Child Protection Plans

Please see our response to question (c) above. The information is contained in the statistical releases linked to above.

(e) Children subject to Children in Need Plans

Please see our response to question (c) above. The information is contained in the statistical releases linked to above.

(f) Children subject to pre-proceedings

Following careful consideration, the Council regrets to inform you that it has decided not to disclose this information.

Information you have requested has been withheld from disclosure. The exemption engaged is Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI).

Section 12 of the FOI exempts Public Authorities from providing information where the estimated cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. Any estimate must be undertaken in accordance with the limits set in fees regulations made under Section 12 (5) of the FOI.

These Fees Regulations (SI 2004/3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations) allow for a refusal where the cost of compliance, for local authorities such as the Council, would exceed £450. As a guide, staff time to identify and extract this information is charged at a rate of £25 per hour.

In summary it would take over a month to provide the information you are requesting. as we would have to manually trawl through approximately 1,500 case files for the last 3 years:

(a) determining whether it holds the information,

(b) locating the information, or a document which may contain the information,

(c) retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information, and

(d) extracting the information from a document containing it".

(g) Children subject to Care Proceedings

Please see our response to question (a) above. The information is contained in the statistical releases linked to above.

(h) Adoption (approval of adopters, matching, timescales, numbers of adopters approved, numbers of children placed etc)

Following careful consideration, the information you requested above falls under the exemption(s) in section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("The Act"), which

relates to information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.

Some adoption data is available in the Looked after Children statistics linked to above.

The above exemption applies as further adoption data can be found in the Adoption Scorecards: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-scorecards> and further data relating to adoptions can be found via the Adoption Leadership Board: <http://www.adcs.org.uk/resources/adoption.html>

Please provide copies of such statistical information for the last three full statistical years and year to date.

Please provide copies of any statistical returns in relation to adoption that you have provided to the DfE or other government department in the last three years, and copies of any substantive responses by the DfE or other government department to those statistical returns (in particular whether the DfE or other government department have set targets for your performance, provided financial benefit for performance or imposed financial penalties for performance).

We are not able to provide copies of the statistical returns as the returns are generally submitted as Child Level Data, however, all data relating to returns is published in its aggregated format by DfE as linked to above. We have had challenge from the DfE in relation to our adoption performance and for the last two years due to being 'double red' rated on the adoption scorecards (for 2012/13 this was a visit, for 2013/14 the challenge was undertaken via teleconference). In preparation for these challenges we have prepared reports – these reports are attached. *On both occasions the DfE have been satisfied with our responses and no specific targets or financial benefits or penalties have been set.*