

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

XXXXXX – by email

Date: 16th January 2023

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2024 / 070

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 15th January 2024 concerning Complaints by Parents about Schools.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

I would like to know the number of complaints sent by parents to the police force about primary and secondary schools in 2023 and 2019

I would like a breakdown of the phase (primary, secondary) and the complaint type.

Our response:

The information that you are is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

Whilst our crime recording systems are fairly sophisticated and we have a number of designated fields in which we record certain specifics about a crime or incident which can then – theoretically – be used to run searches on, we do not have specific fields in which we record the following :-

- a) The location of the crime or incident being a school specifically
- b) They type of school or educational establishment involved
- c) Whether the reporting person is a parent of a pupil per-se



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Wiltshire Police record crimes in accordance with Home Office Crime Recording guidelines. There is not currently a specific crime category for crimes or incidents occurring in schools or complaints specifically about a school as you are asking. A crime occurring within school premises could fall into almost any crime category from Violence Against the Person, through Theft Offences, Sexual Offences and so on.

The only way of ascertaining the information you require would be to review virtually all the crimes reported to Wiltshire Police in turn for the time periods you require and note whether they met your criteria or not.

Given that Wiltshire Police record something around c40,000 individual crimes in any given calendar year, I am absolutely confident that to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek would by far exceed the time obligations upon this authority to comply, and in so doing would exceed the fees limits. This is set at £450 calculated at a flat rate of £25 per hour for those work activities comprising of confirming the information is held, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this can be achieved in this particular case.

Please Note

If a parent rings Wiltshire Police to report a crime or incident at a school where their child is involved (say an assault or theft of their belongings for instance), then the complaint is against the individual person making the assault NOT against the school itself.

A Police Force would not ordinarily become involved in complaints about a school per-se (eg the lack of heating, a dangerous playground and so on) unless a specific crime had been committed or if there was a Public Order issue. Complaints **about schools** would ordinarily be reported to the Local Council as they govern public schools, or – in the case of private schools – to the governors of those establishments.

Under our Section 16 obligation to be as helpful to an applicant as possible, we would recommend you submit a similar FOI Request to both Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council for the information you require.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Wiltshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemption applicable to the information requested is:

Section 12: Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

- (1) Section 1(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 appropriate limit.

In accordance with section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and been considered in the light of your request within the time constraints applicable under the legislation.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Penny
Disclosure Decision Maker

Wiltshire Police offers a re-examination of your case under its review procedure.



Force Disclosure Unit

Wiltshire Police HQ, London Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Telephone 101 ext 62005

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Wiltshire 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 to the:

Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk.

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 Force Disclosure Unit within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original FoI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing to include confirmation of the reasons for the review. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker, who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Force 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 twenty 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
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk