



Force Disclosure Unit
Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: 4th July 2024

Ref: FOI 2024/634

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 3rd July 2024 concerning violence and possession of weapons offences in 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:

Apologies please see the amended version to include possession of weapons offences as well as Violent crimes...

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I would like to request the following information. Please note the information sought is in relation to present day crimes and not historical.

Violent and possession of weapons offences in Schools 2024/2023

1, How many alleged violent offences, and those of possession of weapons (including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in 2024/2023?

2, How many alleged violent offences and those of possession of weapons (including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in which the victim was aged 18 and under 2024/2023?

3, How many of those alleged violent offences and those of possession of weapons (Including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in which the perpetrator was aged 18 and under 2024/2023?

Violent Offences and possession of weapons offences in Schools 2023/2022

4, How many alleged violent offences and possession of weapons offences (including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in 2023/2022?

5, How many alleged violent offences and possession of weapons offences (including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in which the victim was aged 18 and under 2023/2022?

6, How many of those alleged violent offences and possession of weapons offences (Including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in which the perpetrator was aged 18 and under 2023/2022?

Violent Offences and possession of weapons offences in Schools 2022/2021

7, How many alleged violent offences and possession of weapons offences (including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in 2022/2021?

8, How many alleged violent offences and possession of weapons offences (including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in which the victim was aged 18 and under 2022/2021?

9, How many of those alleged violent offences and possession of weapons offences (Including breakdown) have been recorded as crimes, on school premises in which the perpetrator was aged 18 and under 2022/2021?

NB

Possession of Weapons contains the following classifications:

- 10A Possession of Firearms with Intent
- 10B Possession of Firearms Offences
- 10C Possession of Other Weapons
- 10D Possession of Article with Blade or Point
- 81 Other Firearms, Knives and Offensive Weapon Offences

Our response:

As per our previous response to you (reference FOI 2024/630) – the information that you are requesting for the majority of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. This is because in order to locate the number of violent and possession of weapons offences that have been reported as taking place on a school premises, we would need to physically trawl through every report made for the time frame requested in order to retrieve this information accurately. As previously mentioned to you, although we have a school “flag” on our systems that we can search on to extract reports made relating to schools, the use of this flag is not mandatory and therefore, relies upon the individual inputting the data to apply this flag appropriately – which as the flag is not a mandatory field to complete, the use of this flag is subject to human error.

There are likely to be occasions whereby a violent incident has occurred on a school premises, however, the school flag has not been ticked when the crime occurrence was created and therefore, a search on this flag will likely leave out a number of relevant occurrences. Another issue with searching on this flag is that it is based on the postcode of the school, so there would likely be other reports this flag would bring up that would've also taken place within the given postcode area that the school is situated within that might not be relevant to your request. For example, a search is likely to bring up

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incidences where a violent assault has happened near a school in addition to those actually on the school premises itself, which would compromise the integrity of the results even further.

Additionally, it may be the case where a student for example, was found with a blade at school and then sent home where they were subsequently dealt with by officers. In this instance, the home address of the individual would likely be associated with the occurrence and not the school itself, and the school may only be mentioned within the summary and/or the main body of the crime report – of which would need to be manually looked at in order to accurately obtain the information you require.

Therefore, under the circumstances 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.

Please note, that if one part of the request engages a Section 12 response, the whole request will engage a Section 12 response. The reason being is due to the fact that locating, retrieving and extracting any further information would only add to the already exceeded time obligations.

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.

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,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker

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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

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.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.

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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
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk