

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXX
By email

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

Date 17th February 2025

Our Ref FOI 2025-205

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 14th February 2025, concerning under 18s committing offences on education premises.

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.

Following receipt of your request, research was conducted by the Business Intelligence department at Wiltshire Police. Your request for information has now been considered and I am **not** obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

1. The number of crimes reports where a child under the age of 18 was in possession of a weapon on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for the following calendar years: **2014, 2019, 2023, 2024**

Within this - please provide:

Breakdown of type of weapons used (please list examples if you cannot provide a full breakdown)

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

2. The number of crime reports where a child under the age of 18 has committed the following offences on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for each offence for the following calendar years: **2014, 2019, 2023, 2024**

a) Common Assault & Battery

b) ABH (s47)

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b) GBH (s20)

c) Wounding with or without a weapon (s18)

Within this - please provide

Breakdown of the number of victims who was a pupil

Breakdown of the number of victims who was a member of staff

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

3. The number of crime reports where a child under the age of 18 was threatening someone with a weapon on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for the following calendar years: **2014, 2019, 2023, 2024**

Within this - please provide:

Breakdown of type of weapons used (please list examples if you cannot provide a full breakdown)

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

Our response:

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at s1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at s1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

Whilst I can confirm Wiltshire Police do hold the requested information, section 12(1) of the FOIA states:-

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.

The information you are requesting - namely in relation to question 2 - is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Whilst we do have an education 'flag' on our system that we can search on, this is not a mandatory flag and is not consistently used. To provide a response based solely using this flag would be placing inaccurate information into the public domain. There may be instances where crimes occurred at a school or further education premises, but the flag was not used and therefore searching using the flag would omit these occurrences. Additionally, the flag would record incidents that occurred with the given postcode area which the school or further education premises is in, meaning incidents that occurred near to the school or further education premises would also be included alongside those that occurred on the premises itself.

To accurately establish the number of common assault / battery, s47 ABH, s20 GBH and s18 GBH that took place within a school or further education premises would require manually interrogating each of these crime types recorded on our system for the years 2014, 2019, 2023 and

2024. This would entail manually interrogating thousands of records, far exceeding the time obligations on the authority to comply.

There are offence descriptions specifically relating to blades / pointed articles / offensive weapons on school / further education premises. For the response to questions 1 and 3, please see below.

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. Therefore the whole of the request should fall under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please note:

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.

Forces may use different recording systems, therefore it may be possible some Forces can provide this information where others cannot.

Ordinarily under our Section 16 obligation to provide advice and assistance we would advise you of a way to refine your request to a more manageable level. Due to the difficulties in obtaining the requested information, as outlined above, I cannot think of a way in which this could be achieved.

Although excess cost removes the Forces' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. What I can provide you with is documented below:

1. The number of crimes reports where a child under the age of 18 was in possession of a weapon on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for the following calendar years: **2014, 2019, 2023, 2024**

Within this - please provide:

Please note: The below data has been provided for the following offence descriptions - *Having an article with a blade or point on school premises ; Possess an article with a blade or point on school/further education premises ; Possess offensive weapon on school premises ; Possess offensive weapon on school/further education premises.*

Breakdown of type of weapons used (please list examples if you cannot provide a full breakdown)

Weapon Used	Reported Year				Grand Total
	2014	2019	2023	2024	
Acid/corrosive	-	1	-	-	1
Armoured gloves	-	1	-	-	1
Blade from pencil sharpener	-	-	-	1	1
Combat knife	-	-	-	1	1

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Hammer	-	1	-	-	1
Knife	-	-	-	3	3
Knife/blade (used/threatened)	1	-	-	-	1
Knife/bladed(possession)	3	13	12	4	32
Lock knife	1	-	-	-	1
Machete	-	-	-	1	1
Metal bar	-	-	-	1	1
NULL	-	-	-	1	1
Sharp instrument	-	1	-	-	1
Grand Total	5	17	12	12	46

Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Please note: A child who is under the age of 10 is below the age of criminal responsibility.

Reported Age	Reported Year				Grand Total
	2014	2019	2023	2024	
10-12	1	4	3	6	14
13-14	3	8	6	4	21
15-16	1	5	3	1	10
17-18	-	-	-	1	1
Grand Total	5	17	12	12	46

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

Gender	Reported Year				Grand Total
	2014	2019	2023	2024	
Female	1	1	5	4	11
Male	4	16	7	8	35
Grand Total	5	17	12	12	46

3. The number of crime reports where a child under the age of 18 was threatening someone with a weapon on school/further education premises?

Please provide data for the following calendar years: **2014, 2019, 2023, 2024**

Within this - please provide:

Please note: The below data has been provided for the following offence description - *Threaten a person with a blade/sharply pointed article on school premises.*

Breakdown of type of weapons used (please list examples if you cannot provide a full breakdown)

Weapon Used	Reported Year		Grand Total
	2014	2019	
Fist/boot/physical	1	-	1
Knife/blade (used/threatened)	1	1	2
Knife/bladed(possession)	1	1	2
Grand Total	3	2	5

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Breakdown of the ages of the children (e.g. Under 4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16, 16-18)

Please note: A child who is under the age of 10 is below the age of criminal responsibility.

Reported Age	Reported Year		Grand Total
	2014	2019	
10-12	-	2	2
13-14	3	-	3
Grand Total	3	2	5

Breakdown of gender (male and female)

Gender	Reported Year		Grand Total
	2014	2019	
Female	-	1	1
Male	3	1	4
Grand Total	3	2	5

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires 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.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss the withheld information.

Yours sincerely,

Force 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



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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 Fol 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

Please note that the ICO's offices will be closed for the foreseeable future and are therefore unable to receive correspondence via post.

If you should wish to contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

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