

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXX
By email

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

Date 18th August 2026

Our Ref FOI 2026-747

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 9th August 2026, concerning crimes committed under the age of criminal responsibility.

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:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, please can you provide me the following information for the following years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.

- 1) How many crimes have been recorded by your force which are suspected to have been committed by children aged under 10 (below the age of criminal responsibility)
- 2) A breakdown of the crimes suspected to have been committed by children aged under 10 (below the age of criminal responsibility)
- 3) A breakdown of ages and genders of suspects aged under 10 (below the age of criminal responsibility) associated with committing crimes

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:-

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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 is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Whilst have a relevant detection status ('named suspect below age of criminal responsibility') on our systems, a child below the age of criminal responsibility would not be linked as a suspect. The person age category that would be used is 'child under 10', however, this would not solely apply to the suspect and would apply to any other child involved within the matter (i.e. witness, present etc). To establish whether the 'child under 10' was the suspect would require manually interrogating each occurrence log and/or accompanying documents. Once the suspect has been identified as 'child under 10', then it would be a case of noting the relevant occurrence, age and gender of the suspect.

For the requested period (2015 to 2025), there were a total of 1759 occurrences with the detection status 'named suspect below age of criminal responsibility'. Note, duplicate occurrences from the original data pulled have been removed, as this only means there was more than one 'child under 10' linked to the occurrence. Our Business Intelligence department estimate it would take a **minimum** of 5 minutes to interrogate each record. This means it would take more than 146 hours to complete this task. Even if the request was refined to 2025 only, which would be 190 occurrences, this would still take a minimum of around 16 hours; meaning someone from Business Intelligence would need to focus solely on your request for around 2 full working days, removing them from their daily role, which would be an unreasonable ask.

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.

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

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,

FDU Decision Maker