



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

REQUEST NUMBER: FOI Request 000499-17

REQUEST DETAILS:

1. *“KNIVES/GUNS*

Please detail the number of times knives (please include all types of known knives or descriptions for knives e.g. machetes and blades) or guns have been

a) seized on school premises for each month of the past five years including 2016

b) used in an knife crime or gun crime incident (e.g. stabbing or shooting) on school premises for each month of the past five years including 2016

c) Please also provide the age of the youngest child found to be in possession of a knife or gun

2. *DRUGS*

Please detail the number of times illegal drugs and illegal highs (e.g. knives, guns, machetes) have been seized on school premises for each month of the past five years including 2016. For each incident please give the month and year, a description of the drug or legal high (e.g. heroin or 'spice') and the age of child thought to be in possession.”

RESPONSE:

Suffolk Constabulary has considered your request for information and our response is below.

This response is correct as of 13 January 2017

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

In order to establish the number of weapons seized from schools would require a manual search of the Constabulary's Electronic Property System



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(EPS). We have previously run a report for the 2013 calendar year for all property entered under the category of 'manmade / weaponry'. From this, we would have to look at all those entries and cross refer them with the incident data to establish the location of the seizure i.e. whether it were a school or otherwise.

The Constabulary consider it would take approximately 40 hours to retrieve this information, based on a 4 minute search per relevant entry, per year.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged 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 Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the 'appropriate limit' for the Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting *all* information your request is too broad to be complied with within the £450 limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

Although excess cost removes the Force's 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.

A search has been completed of the crime system for all offences recorded of 'Having an article with a blade/point on school premises' and 'Possess offensive weapon on school, premises' where a weapon has been recorded within the property field of the crime report.

The table provided in the attached spreadsheet provides the information for knife/gun seizures and drug seizures, in separate tabs.

The information provided confirms all relevant offences recorded including the weapon / drug type, by year and month and includes ages for the drug related offences.

The youngest person found in possession of a weapon was 13.

Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the crime data. It should be noted that for these reasons this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any



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other response you may receive.

Please be aware that the information provided/researched from the 19 October 2015 has been extracted from the Athena crime system. The information provided is subject to change as processes are amended to ensure accurate and precise crime recording.