



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 002857-18

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 7 August 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

“How many children under the age of 11 have committed crimes in Suffolk over the last five years? Could I please have a breakdown of the type of crimes committed, the age of the offenders and the area they are from”

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 10 August 2018

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

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.

Children under the age of 10 years old are not considered to have reached an age where they can be held responsible for their crimes. Because they are under the age of ‘criminal responsibility’, they cannot be charged with any criminal offence.

As a consequence of this, Suffolk Constabulary does not routinely collate nominal data for suspects under the age of 10. A victim-based crime would be recorded, even if the suspect were under the age of criminal responsibility and this would simply remain undetected. An ‘under age suspect’ may be mentioned within the free text of the crime but generally their details will not be translated into a formal identifiable record.

Without reading through the freetext of all offences recorded, to establish whether an under 10 played a part on any recorded offence, It is impossible to tell how many under 10’s have broken the law.

Considering there were 48,897 offences recorded during 2014/15 and 50,728 offences recorded during the 2015/16 financial years, it would take well in excess of 18 hours to extract relevant data to answer this request.

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.

The introduction of a new crime recording system (Athena) during October 2015, provided a means to filter in Athena by outcome, which includes ‘Type 11 – Prosecution Prevented – Named Suspect Identified but is below the age of criminal responsibility’.

The information provided below relates to all offences where a suspect in the crime has an outcome of Type 11. This data will not account for any occasion where the child is recorded as an involved party, as opposed to a suspect, of where the outcome has been recorded as any other outcome.

Suspect Age	HO Classification	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	Assault without Injury		1		
3	Assault without Injury				1
4	Other criminal damage to a vehicle (Under Â£5,000)			1	
	Other criminal damage, other (Under Â£5,000)			1	
	Assault without Injury				1
	Causing or inciting a child in sexual activity				1
5	Take or to make or to distribute indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs, of children			1	
	Theft from a motor vehicle		1		



	Assault without Injury			6
	Rape		1	1
	Assault by penetration			1
	Attempted - Assault with Injury		1	
	Sexual assault	1		
6	ASB - Personal	1		
	Other criminal damage, other (Under Â£5,000)	1		
	Racially or religiously aggravated intentional harassment, alarm or distress		1	
	Theft from shops and stalls			1
	Theft if not classified elsewhere		1	
	Assault without Injury	3	1	4
	Assault with Injury	1	2	1
	Rape	1		
	Attempted - Assault by penetration		1	
	Attempted - Sexual assault		1	
	Sexual activity		1	1
	Sexual assault	1	3	
7	Affray	1	1	
	Harassment		2	1
	Other criminal damage to a vehicle (Under Â£5,000)	1		
	Take or to make or to distribute indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs, of children			1
	Theft in a dwelling other than from automatic machine or meter		1	
	Assault without Injury	1	6	2
	Causing or inciting a child in sexual activity	1		1
	Assault with Injury	4	2	2
	Assault by penetration		1	
	Sexual assault	1	3	1
8	Affray		1	
	Causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress	1		
	Harassment, alarm or distress (S5 POA)	1		
	Other criminal damage to a dwelling (Under Â£5,000)		4	1
	Other criminal damage to a vehicle (Under Â£5,000)	1	3	1
	Other criminal damage, other (Under Â£5,000)		1	
	Racially or religiously aggravated assault or assault occasioning actual bodily harm		1	
	Racially or religiously aggravated common assault or beating			1



	Robbery (of Personal Property)			1	
	Take or to make or to distribute indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs, of children		1		1
	Theft from a motor vehicle		1		
	Theft from shops and stalls		1		
	Theft in a dwelling other than from automatic machine or meter			1	
	Threaten with a blade or sharply pointed article on school premises		1		
	Assault without Injury		9	11	6
	Assault with Injury		6	2	2
	Assault by penetration				1
	Sexual assault		2		
9	Affray		1		
	ASB - Nuisance			1	
	ASB - Personal		1		
	Exposure				1
	Harassment, alarm or distress (S5 POA)		1		
	Other criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling (Â£5,000 and over)		1		
	Other criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling (Under Â£5,000)		1		
	Other criminal damage to a dwelling (Under Â£5,000)		1	5	1
	Other criminal damage to a vehicle (Under Â£5,000)			1	1
	Racially or religiously aggravated intentional harassment, alarm or distress			1	1
	Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety		2	1	1
	Theft from a motor vehicle	1			
	Theft if not classified elsewhere		1	1	
	Theft in a dwelling other than from automatic machine or meter			1	
	Assault without Injury	3	8	17	4
	Rape		1		
	Assault with Injury		7	5	5
	Rape				1
	Inciting a child family member to engage in sexual activity				1
	Sexual assault				1
10	Causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress		1		
	Theft from shops and stalls		1		
	Assault by penetration				1
	Sexual activity		1		
	Sexual assault		4		



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Not Recorded	Affray			1	
	ASB - Personal			1	
	Causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress		1		
	Harassment		1		
	Harassment, alarm or distress (S5 POA)				1
	Having an article with a blade or point in a public place			1	
	Other criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling (Under Â£5,000)		1	1	
	Other criminal damage to a dwelling (Under Â£5,000)		1		
	Other criminal damage, other (Under Â£5,000)		1	2	
	Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety			1	1
	Take or to make or to distribute indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs, of children		1	1	
	Theft from the person of another		1		
	Assault without Injury	1	2	1	
	Rape	1			
	Assault with Injury		1	3	1
	Attempted rape		1		
	Attempted - Sexual activity			1	
	Sexual activity		1		1
	Sexual assault		2	1	1
Grand Total		7	98	97	60

Children under the age of 10 years old are not considered to have reached an age where they can be held responsible for their crimes. Because they are under the age of 'criminal responsibility', they cannot be charged with any criminal offence.

Children aged 10-14 can be convicted of a criminal offence if it can be proved that they were aware that what they were doing was seriously wrong.

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 other response you may receive.

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site;
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>



Suffolk Constabulary is not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.



Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 20 days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker
Information Management Department
Suffolk Constabulary
Police Headquarters
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP5 3QS
OR
Email: information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk*

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700