



**SUFFOLK  
CONSTABULARY**  
*Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe*

## **Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 001958-19**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 28 May 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

*“For each of the following years (2015/16 2016/17 2017/18 2018/19) please tell me:*

1. *How many reports of a missing person have been made that relate to*
  - a) *A child or young person who resides in a children’s home*
  - b) *A child or young person staying in ‘unregulated accommodation’ sometimes known as semi-independent accommodation*
  - c) *Any looked after child or young person irrespective of the accommodation.*
  
2. *For each of those same years (2015/16 2016/17 2017/18 2018/19) please tell me:*
  - a) *How many crime reports registered at children’s home*
  - b) *Unregulated accommodation/semi-independent accommodation.*

*For all of those crimes recorded at those locations I would like to see as much of the Athena data as is available without breaching privacy regulations.”*

## **Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 18 June 2019

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

Suffolk Constabulary is unable to confirm what information is held with regards to missing persons from, and offences that have occurred in, unregulated accommodation or, in the case of missing persons, a looked after child generally. Such information is not recorded within the missing persons database (COMPACT) or within the crime system Athena. Consequently, the only way to establish an accurate answer to these questions would be to manual review all offences and missing person entries. Such research would also require this level of detail being noted within the relevant report or offence.

Considering there are hundreds of missing persons entries received in any one year and there are additionally thousands of offences we would need to review, it is anticipated that such a search would take a vast amount of time, well in excess of the 18-hour cost limit.



Additionally, the Constabulary is unable to confirm the number of looked after children who have gone missing in generally terms, as the information is not recorded in this manner.

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.

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.

1. The total number of reports of missing children or young persons from children's homes has previously been supplied and can be found within FOI response 00200-19, which is available within the Constabulary's 2019 Disclosure logs under the category 'Safeguarding and Custody' and within the month of January.

<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/services/freedom-information/disclosure-logs>

2. A search has been completed of the Constabulary's crime system for all offences recorded where 'children's home' is the premise type. Please note that this information is only available from 19 October 2015 onwards, as data prior to this time is held within the legacy crime system which is not recorded in the same way and the information is not accessible



without a manual review of records.

Please note that the information supplied does not provide any context to the offence and consequently, the Constabulary cannot confirm the nature of the offence and the involvement of the care home. In certain cases, the location is recorded as the nearest identifiable landmark for the purpose of crime recording, as opposed to the precise location the offence occurred.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Crimes Recorded at Children's Homes</b>
15/16	95
16/17	245
17/18	248
18/19	234
<b>Total</b>	<b>822</b>

***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.***

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack, FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

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.



**SUFFOLK  
CONSTABULARY**  
*Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe*

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 40 working 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](mailto: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](http://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