



Our ref: 71937083  
18 March 2025



Account reference:request-1238518-472b852e@whatdotheyknow.com

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000**



Thank you for the Freedom of Information Request you have made for the following information:

**Please release the following information relating to looked after children in the care of your authority for the periods:**

- 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022
- 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023
- 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024
- 1 January 2025 to 31 January 2025

**1. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority during each of these years.**

**1a. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority who have gone missing or absent during each of these years.**

**1b. Please tell how many of them in total are still missing?**

**1c. Please tell me the total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same kid on more than one occasion) of looked after children in the care of your authority going missing in each of the above listed years.**

**1c. If possible, please provide a breakdown of how long they were missing for and the types of accommodation they went missing from.**

**2. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that have identified as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) or a separated child in each of the above listed years.**

**3. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent in each of the above listed years.**

**4. Please tell me total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same kid on more than one occasion) of looked after children in the care of your authority identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent in each of the above listed years.**

**5. Please tell me total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that are still missing or absent (including those who subsequently turned 18 without being found) that were identified or suspected as an UASC or separated child.**

**If possible, for all of the above please provide a breakdown of these numbers by year, nationality of the child, their age and the type of accommodation they went missing from.**

**If identification is a concern due to small numbers involved, please give the total figures and specify whether the child is British / an EU national / non EU national.**

**For questions three and four, please add the length of time the child was missing during each incident.**

**If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, please provide advice and assistance, under the Section 16 obligations of the Act, as to how I can refine my request.**

**If you can identify any ways that my request could be refined I would be grateful for any further advice and assistance.**

**If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me and I will be very happy to clarify what I am asking for and discuss the request.**

**Please provide this information in a machine readable format such as .xlsx or .csv where appropriate.**

**I can confirm that the information you have requested is held by the Trust and the information you have requested can be found in the attached Excel spreadsheet as per your request.**

**Please quote the reference number **71937083** in any future communications.**

**If you are dissatisfied with our response to your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days from the date this authority issued its initial response. Please outline which part of the response you are not happy with setting out your reasons. This request should be addressed to:**

**Birmingham Children's Trust**  
PO Box 17342  
Birmingham  
B2 2DW

**Web:** [www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](http://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

Corporate Information Governance Team  
PO Box 16366  
Birmingham  
B2 2YY

Email: [infogovernance@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:infogovernance@birmingham.gov.uk)

If you are still dissatisfied with the Trust's response after the internal review you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office

Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

I will now close your request as of this date.

Yours sincerely,



**Disclosure Officer**

**Re Use of Public Sector Information**

Where Birmingham Children's Trust is the copyright holder of any information that may be released, re-use for personal, educational or non-commercial purposes is permitted without further reference to the Birmingham Children's Trust. Where the re-use is for other purposes, such as commercial re-use, the applicant should notify the Birmingham Children's Trust in writing to seek approval or agree terms for re-use.

	Calendar Year			
	2022	2023	2024	Jan-25
1. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority during each of these years.	2861	2979	3098	2370
1a. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority who have gone missing or absent during each of these years.	321	360	337	65
1b. Please tell how many many of them in total are still missing?	≤5	6	≤5	≤5
1c. Please tell me the total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same kid on more than one occasion) of looked after children in the care of your authority going missing in each of the above listed years.	5623	6761	7774	196
1c. If possible, please provide a breakdown of how long they were missing for and the types of accommodation they went missing from.	<p>The information you have requested is not held in a readily accessible format. I can confirm that the Trust has kept a manual record (i.e. outside of case management systems).</p> <p>From undertaking a sampling exercise in respect to similar Fol requests in the past, we estimate that it takes approximately 10 minutes to locate the file and locate specific information contained in the file, dependent on the size and complexity of the file.</p> <p>The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) requires us to comply with a request, unless it would be too expensive to do so. Under s.12 (Cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit) of the Act, the cost limit for the Trust is £450 i.e. 18 hours at the rate of £25 per person per hour.</p> <p>The cost limit allows us to consider when estimating the cost of complying with a request, time spent determining whether we hold the information requested; identifying, locating and retrieving it and extracting the information from the relevant documents.</p> <p>In order for us to answer this question, there are 5623 records to review and we estimate that each one would take 10 minutes to review which would take 937 hours. We are therefore unable to process your request as to do so would exceed the cost limit as set out in s.12 of the Act.</p> <p>In cases where the time involved in dealing with requests for information would exceed 18 hours, the Trust normally offers individuals the option to pay for the additional work over and above 18 hours, at a subsidised rate of £25 per hour. However, where the resources involved in dealing with a request would have detrimental impact on the Trust's ability to provide its core services, the Trust is entitled not provide this option, and accordingly, refuse the request outright.</p> <p>In this case due to the amount of work and resources required to comply with this element of your request, the Trust is of the view that the resources involved in responding to your request, even if you were to pay the subsidised statutory rate of £25.00 per hour, would interfere significantly with the Trust's ability to provide its core services, as such, the Trust considers that it is appropriate to refuse the request outright on the basis of Section 12 of the Act.</p>			
2. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that have identified as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) or a separated child in each of the above listed years.	237	331	362	204
3. Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent in each of the above listed years.	15	27	24	≤5
4. Please tell me total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same kid on more than one occasion) of looked after children in the care of your authority identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent in each of the above listed years.	31	82	147	14
5. Please tell me total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that are still missing or absent (including those who subsequently turned 18 without being found) that were identified or suspected as an UASC or separated child.	≤5	6	≤5	≤5
	<p>Some information has been withheld. This information is exempt under Section 40(2) (Personal information) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). Where the number is 5 or less, the Trust has replaced the figure with 'equal to or less than 5' ("≤5"). The numbers have been withheld to prevent individuals being identified; this is in line with the Information Commissioners guidance of anonymization, which mitigates the risk of individuals being identified. The Trust considers that individuals could potentially be identified from the very low numbers and that such identification would constitute a breach of one of the principles set out under the Data Protection Act 2018. This is on the basis that it could be combined with other reasonably available information to identify individuals. As this is personal data, disclosure under Freedom of Information is conditional upon satisfying the First Data Protection Principle, that processing be fair, lawful and transparent. We recognise that there is a public interest in transparency and accountability in public decision making. We have balanced this against the privacy rights of the individual data subjects.</p> <p>On balance, we consider the detriment to privacy through disclosure outweighs the interest that would be served. Accordingly, disclosure would be in contravention of the First Data Protection Principle. It is therefore appropriate for us to withhold this information under section 40(2) (Personal information) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) by virtue of section 40(3A)(a). We are therefore exempting this part of the request under section 40(2) of the Act by virtue of section 40(3A)(a) of the same Act.</p>			