

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 000479
Date 03 October 2016

Agency Social Workers and Foster Carers

Request:

I am requesting the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. As of each of the following months, the total number of qualified children's social workers (FTE and headcount) working for the council (including agency workers, excluding unfilled vacancies):
 - March/April 2010 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2011 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2012 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2013 – [155 headcount](#)
 - March/April 2014 – [112 headcount](#)
 - March/April 2015 – [183.5 fte](#)
 - March/April 2016 – [181.3 fte](#)
2. As of each of the following months, the total number of qualified children's social workers (FTE and headcount) working for the council who were agency social workers:
 - March/April 2010 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2011 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2012 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2013 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2014 - [unknown](#)
 - March/April 2015 – [54 fte](#)
 - March/April 2016 – [30 fte](#)
3. For each of the following financial years, the total expenditure by the council on agency children's social workers:
 - 2009/10 = [£1.1m](#)
 - 2010/11 = [£1.8m](#)
 - 2011/12 = [£1.7m](#)
 - 2012/13 = [£1.1m](#)
 - 2013/14 = [£2.1m](#)
 - 2014/15 = [£3.7m](#)
 - 2015/16 = [£2.9m](#)
4. During each of the following financial years, the number of Looked After Children the council had placed with in-house foster carers:

- . 2010/11 339
- . 2011/12 326
- . 2012/13 306
- . 2013/14 301
- . 2014/15 322
- . 2015/16 286

5. During each of the following financial years, the number of Looked After Children the council had placed with agency foster carers:

- . 2010/11 192
- . 2011/12 315
- . 2012/13 371
- . 2013/14 502
- . 2014/15 484
- . 2015/16 384

6. How many Looked After Children were placed with the same in-house foster carer for the whole of 2015/16, and what was the combined cost to the council of these placements?

87 were placed with the same carer for all of 2015/16.

Allowances paid to foster carers comprise of different elements as detailed in Question 8. It is not possible to identify the total payments in relation to the specific children identified in this question since some elements of the payments relate to the level of the carer and the total number of children in their care and not to the individual child.

It is however possible to quantify the cost of the fostering allowance element which was £829,416 for 2015/16 for the 87 children identified.

7. How many Looked After Children were placed with the same agency foster carer for the whole of 2015/16, and what was the combined cost to the council of these placements?

215 were placed with the same carer for all of 2015/16. The total cost of the foster care element of these placements was £8,352,123.

For questions 6 and 7, "placed" means children whose placement lasted for the whole of the year, rather than new placements occurring midway through the year.

8. What was the council's standard rate/framework for in-house foster carer fees in 2015/16?

From 01/04/2015, we paid in-house foster carer weekly fees as follows:-

Recruitment and Retention Payments

Years as a Carer	Weekly Payment
0-1	£170.57
2	£181.23
3	£191.89
4	£202.55

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

5	£213.21
6	£223.88
7	£234.53
8	£245.19
9 and more	£255.85

PLUS Fostering Allowance

Age of Child	Weekly
0-4	£142.86
5-10	£162.73
11-15	£202.58
16 and 17	£246.44

From 04/01/2016, we pay in-house foster carers weekly as follows:-

Carer Level	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	Exemption
1	£85.00	£102.00	£119.00	£204.00
2	£255.00	£306.00	£357.00	£614.00
3	£331.50	£397.70	£463.40	£663.00
4	£600.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

9. Please list the foster carer agencies the council sourced foster carers from in 2015/16, and (if available) the fees rate they charged to the council?

ABACUS FOSTERING

ABC FOSTERING SERVICES LTD

ACORN HOUSE FOSTERING SERVICES LTD

ADOLESCENT AND CHILDREN'S TRUST

BANYA FAMILY PLACEMENT AGENCY

BY THE BRIDGE

CAMBIAN CHILDCARE LTD - BIRMINGHAM

CAMBIAN CHILDCARE LTD - BREDBURY

CAMBIAN CHILDCARE LTD- PINNACLE HOUSE

CAPSTONE FOSTER CARE - MIDLANDS OFFICE

CHANNELS AND CHOICES THERAPEUTIC

CHILD CARE BUREAU LTD

CHILDREN ALWAYS FIRST FOSTERCARE

CHILDREN'S FAMILY TRUST

CLIFFORD HOUSE FOSTERING LTD

COMPASS SERVICES FOR CHILDREN LTD

CORE ASSETS FOSTERING LTD- DERBY

CORE ASSETS FOSTERING LTD- DUDLEY

CORE ASSETS FOSTERING LTD- WORCESTER

COVE CARE

FAMILIES @ FAMILY CARE LTD

FAMILIES@FAMILY CARE ASSOCIATES LTD

FAMILIES@FAMILYCARE (MIDLANDS)

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

FAMILY FOSTERCARE LIMITED
FAMILY OPTIONS
FAMILYPLACEMENTS.COM
FIVE RIVERS CHILD CARE LTD
FOSTER CARE COOPERATIVE
FOSTERING OPTIONS LIMITED
FOSTERING PEOPLE
FOSTERING SOLUTIONS - LANCASHIRE
FOSTERING SOLUTIONS - STAFFORD
FOSTERPLUS LTD
FREEDOM FOSTERING AGENCY
FUSION FOSTERING
FUTURE FAMILIES
IDEAL FOSTERING
IKON FOSTERING
NEW CHAPTERS FOSTERCARE
NEW LIFE FOSTERING AGENCY
NEXUS FOSTERING
ORANGE GROVE - SHREWSBURY
ORANGE GROVE HOUSE
PARALLEL PARENTS
PATHWAY CARE (MIDLANDS) LTD
PATHWAY CARE MIDLANDS - BROMSGROVE
PHOENIX FOSTERING
PLUS ONE FOSTERING
PRIORY FOSTERING SERVICES
PROGRESS CARE SOLUTIONS
PROSPECTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LTD
QUALITY FOSTERING
RED KITE FOSTERING
REGIONAL FOSTER PLACEMENT
SHINE FOSTERING LTD
ST CHRISTOPHERS FELLOWSHIP
SUNBEAM FOSTERING AGENCY
SWIIS FOSTER CARE LTD
TACT- EAST MIDLANDS OFFICE
THE NATIONAL FOSTERING AGENCY LTD
WALSALL COUNCIL- CHILDREN'S SERVICES

(The list above is a list of all the IFAs used in 15-16)

The least expensive weekly placement with an independent foster agency was £537 and the most expensive weekly placement with an independent foster agency was £1850.