



## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 001335  
Date            19 July 2017

### ***Children - Referrals***

#### **Request:**

I am undertaking a study of the incidence of involvement of children in the child protection system. I would like to access some information under the Freedom of Information Act on children referred and investigated by Children's Social Care or its predecessor in your local authority (Wolverhampton).

Can you please supply the following information regarding referrals etc. to children's social care or its predecessor for two cohorts of children? Children born in the year from 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012, before their fifth birthday and separately children born in the year from 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007 also before their fifth birthday:

1. How many children had ever been referred?
2. How many referrals were made on these children?
3. How many children had started an episode as a child in need?
4. How many children had ever been subject of a section 47 enquiry?
5. How many children had ever been subject of a child protection plan (or placed on a child protection register)?
6. For those children placed on a child protection plan/register the category of abuse allocated at the start of the first plan/registration?
7. How many children had ever been looked after?
8. How many looked after children had left care to be adopted?
9. What was the legal status of looked after children born 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012 at 31st March 2017 and for children born 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007 at 31st March 2012?

Questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 are counts of individual children whilst question 2 asks for the number of referrals made on children in this cohort. I am interested in the migration of information systems and would like to know how social workers using the system get a full view of past referrals.

Can you tell me and which information systems you moved from and to? Also how does a social worker using the information system get to see the set of previous referrals etc. for a child.

For questions 4 & 5 include children placed on the register prior to their birth should be included.

In response to your request, please find our response below:

		06-07 Born	11-12 Born
1	How many children had ever been referred	956	1280
2	How many referrals were made on these children	Data not sufficient to fulfill this request	2860
3	How many children had started an episode as a child in need	Data not sufficient to fulfill this request	939
4	How many children had ever been subject of a section 47 enquiry	Data not sufficient to fulfill this request	238
5	How many children had ever been subject of a child protection plan (or placed on a child protection register)	106	156
6	For those children placed on a child protection plan/register the category of abuse allocated at the start of the first plan/registration	See below table	See below table
7	How many children had ever been looked after	74	96
8	How many looked after children had left care to be adopted	16	28
9	What was the legal status of looked after children born 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012 at 31st March 2017 and for children born 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007 at 31st March 2012	See below table	See below table

Q6 for the 06-07 born	
Category of Abuse	Count of Categories
Neglect	46
No Category of Abuse Classification	33
Emotional abuse	19
Sexual abuse	4
Physical abuse	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>106</b>

Q6 for the 11-12 born	
Category of Abuse	Count of Categories
Neglect	99
Emotional abuse	50
Physical abuse	6
Sexual abuse	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>156</b>

Q9 for the 06-07 born	
Legal Status Descr	Count of Status's
Placement order granted	15
Interim Care Order	12
Full Care Order	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>29</b>

Q9 for the 11-12 born	
Legal Status Descr	Count of Status's
Full Care Order	8
Placement order granted	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>14</b>

In regards to questions 2, 3 and 4 (06/07 Born), we can confirm that we cannot supply the information you requested for the reasons set out below. Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires City of Wolverhampton Council, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you, the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states the fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies:

In relation to your particular request, the following exemption applies:

### **Section 12 - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit**

We can confirm that the Council holds information falling within the description specified in your request. However, Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows a public authority to refuse a request if the cost of providing the information to the applicant would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information.

The Regulations provide that the appropriate limit to be applied to requests received by local authorities is £450 (equivalent to 18 hours of work). In estimating the cost of complying with a request for information, an authority can only take into account any reasonable costs incurred in:

- (a) *Determining whether it holds the information,*
- (b) *Locating the information, or a document which may contain the information,*
- (c) *Retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information,*  
*and*
- (d) *Extracting the information from a document containing it.*

*For the purposes of the estimate the costs of performing these activities should be estimated at a rate of £25 per hour.*

The information appertaining to the information requested above is not easily accessible and as such this information is not held as a distinct set able to be

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retrieved or reported on. To get the information would require a full scale look into all individual records. This would be a manual exercise and as such we believe that the aggregated time it would take to collate the information would be in excess of 18 hours (equivalent to a notional cost of £450).

In terms of the systems, we moved from a locally built and maintained mainframe system to OLM CareFirst and the answer to the second part of the question is that old paper files are accessed from the Council's archive.