

**Education & Skills**

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[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)

Customer reference:  
Our reference: REQ07010

01 April 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Educational Psychologists.

You have requested the following information:

- 1. The number of education psychologists employed centrally by the local authority (not locum education psychologists or private education psychologists paid by the LA) in 2019-20, 2018-19 and 2017-18 (academic years) AND the amount of money this cost the local authority for each of those years***

Year	Number <sup>1</sup>	Cost
2017/2018	15	£681,090
2018/2019	12	£804,197
2019/2020	15	£359,922 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>As at 01 September each year.

<sup>2</sup>As at 25 February 2020.

2. **The number of education psychologists paid by the local authority who are not employed centrally (so locum education psychologists and private education psychologists) in 2019-20, 2018-19 and 2017-18 (academic years) AND the amount of money this cost the local authority for each of those years.**

Year	Number <sup>1</sup>	Cost
2017/2018	9	£174,721
2018/2019	15	£52,751
2019/2020	12	£138,235 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Please note some of these contracts are/were quite short. Our associates typically work 1 or 2 days per week.

<sup>2</sup>As at 23 March 2020.

3. **Please state whether your local authority has fully traded services for the non-statutory work done by education psychologists i.e. please state YES or NO that your local authority charges schools for education psychologist work that is not Education Health and Care Plan assessments.**

Yes

**If yes, what year did you fully trade your non-statutory education psychologist services i.e. when did the local authority introduce these charges on schools?**

As Coventry City Council introduced these charges over 10 years ago we do not hold the data you request and are advising you as per Section 1(1) of the Act.

**If your local authority has partially traded its education psychologist services, please state what the LA does and does not charge schools for.**

N/A

4. **Please provide both the total number of all schools in the local authority, and the number of schools in the local authority which bought education psychologist services from the local authority in 2019-20, 2018-19, 2017-18 (academic years).**

As per Section 21 of the FOIA I can confirm that the total number of all schools in Coventry can be found at the link below:

<https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

Please see table below for numbers of schools that purchased Educational Psychologist services from the Local Authority:

Year	Number
2017/2018	96
2018/2019	94
2019/2020	92

Please note the above figures are the number of Local Authority schools that commissioned Educational Psychology hours for each financial year.

**5. How much did the local authority charge schools for education psychologist services in 2019-20, 2018-19, 2017-18.**

With regards to Question 5, the Council confirms that it holds this information but that it is exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides that:

*“Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it)”*

In this case, disclosure of the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the providers for the amounts they charge for Educational Psychology services. As a result, we are satisfied that the exemption applies.

This exemption is subject to the public interest test as detailed below:

**Public interest test**

There is an inherent public interest in ensuring that there is openness and transparency in the spending of public money. Transparency is likely to increase confidence in procurement procedures and purchasing decisions made by the Council. It will also enable the public to understand whether the Council is getting value for money from its purchasing decisions.

Having said this, we believe that disclosure of the Educational Psychology charges could prejudice the Council’s ability to make sound purchasing decisions as providers would not be operating from a level playing field. For example, disclosure of the costs to a competitor could lead to the competitor copying elements of their business model to win work without actually having the internal mechanisms (capacity, staffing skills, etc.) to deliver the product or service at the level and price outlined, when future bids with the Council or other organisations are tendered.

After considering the arguments outlined above, the Council have decided to withhold the information relating to the charges.

**6. Can the local authority identify its key priorities and problems regarding education psychologists, and provide any reasons? (e.g. can't recruit because of lack of trainees, schools won't buy our services because of lack of funding etc)**

Difficulty recruiting due to national shortage of Educational Psychologists.

The supply of information in response to a freedom of information request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

Should you wish to make any further requests for information, you may find what you are looking for is already published on the [Council's web site](#) and in particular its FOI/EIR [Disclosure log](#), [Council's Publication Scheme](#), [Open Data](#) and [Facts about Coventry](#).

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours sincerely

**Project Support & Operational Finance Assistant**