



Information Governance Team

Postal Address:
Coventry City Council
PO Box 15
Council House
Coventry
CV1 5RR

www.coventry.gov.uk

E-mail: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

Phone: 024 7697 5408

06 January 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI381845763

Thank you for your request for information relating to Fostering and Residential services (replaces FOI374414978).

You have requested the following information:

FOSTERING

1. Please provide the number of children and average weekly fee for children placed with IFA's by type of placement and age bands and also at a total level

2. Please provide the number of children and average weekly fee by age bands for children placed with each IFA provider. Also please provide discounts by IFA provider

For Questions 1 and 2, it is confirmed that the Council does hold information pursuant to your request. However, it is our view that the information is exempt from disclosure under the following:

Section 43(2) – Commercially Sensitive Information

Section 40(2) – Personal Information

Section 43(2) exempts information from disclosure where disclosure of that information would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

It is the Council's position that the third-party providers and its own commercial interests would be

prejudiced and/or would be likely to be prejudiced by the granular disclosure of the requested information particularly where we have used a provider with a single home, for a single placement.

Once the information is disclosed this means that it will be in the public domain and it could not only be used by the requester but also any other providers in a similar market.

Arguments in favour of disclosure.

- Promote accountability and transparency for the Council's decisions and in its spending of public money.
- Assist the public to understand and challenge our decisions.
- Inform the public of the activities carried out on their behalf, allowing for more user involvement and collaborative decision making.
- Enable the public to better scrutinise the public monies spent

Arguments against disclosure.

- There is a public interest in allowing public authorities to withhold information which if disclosed, would reduce providers' ability to compete in a commercial environment.
- The successful providers operate in a competitive market. If prejudicing the commercial interests of the successful providers in the market would distort competition in that market, this would not be in the public interest.
- Disclosure of information may cause unwarranted reputational damage or loss of confidence in the Council.
- Revealing information such as individual utilisation rate can be detrimental to a provider's commercial interest as this could be used to identify financial income. If an organisation has knowledge of a provider's business model, it can exploit this for its own commercial interest. This would also have a detrimental impact on the Council on other contracts and procurements by distorting the market, for the reasons stated above.

Having considered the arguments for and against disclosure, the Council has decided that the public interest in this case is best served by maintaining the exemption under section 43(2) FOIA and by not disclosing the information requested.

The decision to withhold the information requested is therefore upheld on the basis that Section 43(2) in relation to commercially sensitive information has been applied correctly

Additionally, by providing this information this may be used to identify individuals placed with the residential providers due to the low numbers involved.

Therefore, this information is exempt under section 40 (2) of the FOIA. This exemption covers the personal data of third parties (anyone other than the requester) where complying with the request would breach any of the principles in the Data Protection Act.

This has been done as the Council considers that this information meets the definition for personal data set out in Section 3(2) and 3(3) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) as:

(2) personal data means any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual (subject to subsection (14)(c))”

(3) "Identifiable living individual" means a living individual who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to –

- (a) an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data or an online identifier, or
- (b) one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual."

Section 40(2) of the FOIA states that personal data relating to third parties (i.e. a party other than the person requesting the information) is exempt information if it is the personal data of a third party (i.e. not yourself) and one of the conditions in section 40(3A-B) or 40(4A) is satisfied.

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption not subject to the Public Interest Test.

3. Please provide a breakdown of the fees you pay your carers by age band and split between maintenance allowance and fee / skill (if applicable)

Mainstream Allowance

Band	Allowance
Staying put	£238.72
0-4	£153.32
5-10	£174.73
11-15	£217.34
16+	£264.39

Fee/skills fee

This is based on the skill level of the carer- and is not aged based. Current year fee

Skills level 1: £58.17

Skills level 2: £151.32

Skills level 3: £232.74

Specialist Skills dual fee: £308.14

Specialist Skills solo fee: £383.98

4. Please provide a breakdown of any other financial support you provide to your carers by age band

Clothing

Band	Allowance
0-4	£153.32
5-10	£174.73
11-15	£217.34
16+	£264.39

Holiday

Band	Allowance
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0-4	£306.64
5-10	£349.46
11-15	£434.68
16+	£528.78

Festival/Christmas

Band	Allowance
0-4	£153.32
5-10	£174.73
11-15	£217.34
16+	£264.39

Birthday

Band	Allowance
0-4	£153.32
5-10	£174.73
11-15	£217.34
16+	£264.39

5. General questions

a. When did your foster carers last receive an increase to their fostering allowances?

April 2021.

b. Is there a regular process for reviewing your foster carers fees? If so what is this and how often?

Fostering fees and allowances are reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

c. What is the mileage your carers are expected to do within their contract?

45 miles pw before they can claim additional mileage.

d. What is the average number of LAC cases your social workers are expected to hold at any one time?

The average case load is 14 to 16.

RESIDENTIAL CARE

6. Please provide information on LAC population and number of registered children's homes in your Local Authority

Following careful consideration, the information you requested falls under the exemption(s) in Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relates to 'information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.'

The exemption applies as the information is published and publicly available to view by accessing the Department of Education website, please use the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-looked-after-children>

This exemption is not subject to the public interest test.

7. Please provide the number of children and average weekly fee for children placed with independent residential providers by type of placement and staffing levels and also at a total level

8. Please provide the number of children and average weekly fee by staffing levels for children placed with each independent residential provider. Also please provide discounts by independent residential provider

For Questions 7 and 8, please refer to Question 1.

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR 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.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

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

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 icocasework@ico.org.uk.

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

Yours faithfully

Information Governance