



Information Governance Team

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)
Request ID: FOI496368730**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Care experienced 16-17 year olds housed in unregulated accommodation.

You have requested the following information:

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021

It's been 18 months since new rules came into place that guaranteed children aged under-16 would be housed in regulated accommodation where they receive day to day care.

Regulated accommodation, according to the Act, includes:

- a care home
- a hospital as defined in section 275(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006
- a residential family centre as defined in section 4(2) of the Care Standards Act
- a school within the meaning of section 4 of the Education Act 1996(4) providing accommodation that is not registered as a children's home
- an establishment that provides care and accommodation for children as a holiday scheme for disabled children as defined in regulation 2(1) of the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013

Under the new rules, children aged 16-18 are no longer guaranteed to be housed in accommodation where they receive day-to-day care and can instead be housed in independent or semi-independent accommodation where they instead receive “support”. This is also known as unregulated accommodation.

Please could you provide the following information. Please note there are four parts to my request.

1. How many (i) care experienced children in your local authority aged 16-17 (inclusive) are currently housed in unregulated accommodation and (ii) how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children aged 16-17 (inclusive) are currently housed in unregulated accommodation.

Unregulated accommodation is sometimes known as “independent accommodation” or “semi-independent accommodation”.

By care experienced children I mean children who are known to the council and who have been living in foster care or residential accommodation or another form of regulated accommodation as outlined above.

By unregulated accommodation I mean accommodation for care experienced children aged 16 and over, where they can receive support but not care. Please use this article from Become Charity for more information on what defines unregulated accommodation.

It does not include foster homes, residential care, hospital settings, residential school settings.

Clarification:

(i) those that were in a fostering / regulated setting immediately before entering an un-regulated setting;

1. (i) Number of care experienced children in regulated accommodation prior to moving to unregulated at 28 Feb 2023: 17 (as per the definition above)

1 (ii) Number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in unregulated accommodation as at 28 Feb 2023: 57 (Note: of these, 2 were care experienced).

2. How many care experienced children in your local authority aged 16-17 have gone missing between 18 February 2021 and 1 March 2023?

Clarification:

(i) Care experienced children who were in fostering / regulated or un-regulated accommodation at the point they went missing aged 16-17

The number of care experienced looked after children that have gone missing between 18 February 2021 and 1 March 2023 is 77.

Please note that a child may have several missing episodes and in all but a very small number of cases, the children are subsequently found. The statistic presented relates to the number of distinct children and not the total number of missing episodes.

3. How many unaccompanied asylum seeking children in your local authority aged 16-17 have gone missing between 18 February 2021 and 1 March 2023?

Clarification:

(i) Care experienced children who were in fostering / regulated or un-regulated

accommodation at the point they went missing aged 16-17

The number of care experienced unaccompanied asylum seeking that have gone missing between 18 February 2021 and 1 March 2023 is 6.

Please note that a child may have several missing episodes and in all but a very small number of cases, the children are subsequently found. The statistic presented relates to the number of distinct children and not the total number of missing episodes.

4. Please can you provide information on what mechanisms are in place to ensure that children housed in independent or semi-independent accommodation are properly cared for. Information could be but is not limited to guidance for housing providers or landlords, guidance for social workers, guidance for children and young people.

A supported accommodation framework is in place with providers, who sign up to the requirements stipulated within the contract.

The Commissioning Team ensure that our young people are properly cared for and supported according to their level of need. The commissioning team, Quality Assure providers in a number of ways to ensure quality is maintained:

- Commissioning checks are completed for all providers prior to placement
- Quality Assurance visits to Head Office
- Quality Assurance to supported accommodation properties
- Regular contract meetings with our main providers
- Attendance at regional meetings to share and gather intelligence
- Obtaining young people's views on the service/accommodation provider

All children have an allocated social worker /PA and access to advocacy should they request it. Children aged 16/17 who are in care/ looked after have a pathway plan, independent reviewing Officer and remain supported through regular pathway reviews, meetings with professionals and have an assigned link worker from the supported accommodation provider, who supports them to build upon their independence skills.

Further information can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/10

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/childrens-social-care/care-leavers>

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/29100/through_care_local_offer.pdf

https://coventrychildcare.proceduresonline.com/p_leaving_care.html

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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