

25 August 2021
Our ref: 7535580

Thank you for your request received on 2 August 2021, for the following information:

If you can not supply all statistics please supply the ones you can within the given time framework allowed. LAC means looked after child by child social services.

- 1. How many children have become LAC in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 2. How many LAC children are diagnosed with mental health issues in any category in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 3. How many LAC children have tried or succeeded in committing suicide in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 4. How many parents of LAC, meaning the parents they lived with before becoming LAC have been since diagnosed with mental health issues in any category in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 5. How many parents of LAC, using the above definition have committed suicide each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 6. How many complaints have been filed against child social services in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 7. How many LAC have run away or disappeared in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**
- 8. How many LAC have died from any cause in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.**

If you do not hold the statistics on any of these questions please let me know which questions you can not readily respond to when you respond to the statistics of the ones readily available on your system.

We have processed this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

I can confirm that London Borough of Barnet holds the information you requested. However, we are withholding some of that information since we consider that the following exemptions apply to it.

1. How many children have become LAC in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

As per our statutory requirements, The Department for Education publishes statistics on children under local authority care at national and local authority level. This data includes statistics regarding the number of Looked After Children in the year, broken down by Local Authority:

Refusal Notice - S21 - Material already published

Under section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you by other means.

The information relevant to your request is published online at the following link:

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

2. How many LAC children are diagnosed with mental health issues in any category in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

We are unable to provide this information within the statutory 18-hour limit because we do not hold this data in a reportable format. To obtain this information we need to read each Looked after Child's file to ascertain if any of the children were diagnosed with mental health issues.

Over the 10 years almost 1700 children have come into care. It would take at least 10 minutes to review each case to find out if any of the Looked after Children were diagnosed with mental health issues.

1700 cases x 10 minutes = 17000 minutes (283 Hours).

We must therefore refuse your request, please see Refusal notice (Section 12) below.

Refusal Notice

Section 12 of FOIA states that the council does not have to comply with a request for information if the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit of £450 calculated at £25 per hour with a limit of 18 hours. The appropriate limit relates strictly to the process of determining whether the information is held; locating, retrieving and extracting the information, or a document containing it.

3. How many LAC children have tried or succeeded in committing suicide in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

0 LAC children succeeded in committing suicide.

For attempted suicides see refusal notice below

We are unable to provide this information within the statutory 18-hour limit because we do hold this data in a reportable format. To obtain this information we need to read each Looked after Child's file to ascertain if any of the children have attempted to commit suicide.

Over the 10 years almost 1700 children have come into care. It would take at least 10 minutes to review each case to find out if any of the Looked after Children had attempted suicide.

1700 cases x 10 minutes = 17000 minutes (283 Hours).

We must therefore refuse your request, please see Refusal notice (Section 12) below.

Refusal Notice

Section 12 of FOIA states that the council does not have to comply with a request for information if the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit of £450 calculated at £25 per hour with a limit of 18 hours. The appropriate limit relates strictly to the process of determining whether the information is held; locating, retrieving and extracting the information, or a document containing it.

4. How many parents of LAC, meaning the parents they lived with before becoming LAC have been since diagnosed with mental health issues in any category in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

We do not hold this information in a reportable manner, please see response to Q2

5. How many parents of LAC, using the above definition have committed suicide each calendar year for the past 10 years.

We do not hold this information in a reportable manner, please see response to Q3

6. How many complaints have been filed against child social services in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

Year	Complaints filed against Children's Service
2010/11	69
2011/12	88
2012/13	124
2013/14	132
2014/15	117

2015/16	123
2016/17	111
2017/18	121
2018/19	104
2019/20	93

7. How many LAC have run away or disappeared in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

Year	Children Missing/Away
2010/11	34
2011/12	32
2012/13	39
2013/14	48
2014/15	53
2015/16	83
2016/17	105
2017/18	107
2018/19	96
2019/20	116

The recording of LAC who have run away or disappeared in the earlier years may not be as accurate as recording practices has improved significantly over the last 5 years and the parameters of recording missing has changed over the years.

8. How many LAC have died from any cause in your area each calendar year for the past 10 years.

We are unable to provide the data as the numbers are less than 5. Please see the Refusal Notice (Personal data -exemption) below.

Refusal Notice S 40 (2) identifying individuals through statistical tables (fewer than 5)

The information you require is attached, but some information has been redacted. This is because in some instances, owing to the low numbers of individuals involved (fewer than 5) disclosing this data may make it possible for individuals to be identified. This information is therefore exempt by virtue of section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), as disclosure of this information to the public generally, in the Council's view, would not be consistent with data protection principles in Article 5 of the General Data Protection Regulations. This is an absolute exemption and the public interest test does not apply.

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Information Management Team (FOI) London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.