

London Borough of Barnet
2 Bristol Avenue,
Colindale,
London, NW9 4EW
23 November 2021
Our ref: 7782784

Thank you for your request received on 28 October 2021, for the following information:

Attached is an excel template with 4 requests of information as of 30th September 2021:

- * Request 1: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee for children placed with IFA's by type of placement and age bands. Also, to be provided at a total level.**
- * Request 2: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee by IFA provider by age bands.**
- * Request 3: Breakdown of fees you pay your carers by age band and split between maintenance allowance and fee / skill (if applicable)**
- * Request 4: Breakdown of any additional financial support you provide your carers split by age band**
- * Request 5: A set of general questions**

Please refer to the 'Inputs & Instructions' sheet of the attached file for guidance on how to complete the document. There is an example of how to update this tab and examples on each of the tabs to support. If you do have any questions on how to complete this, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we can provide guidance.

Attached is an excel template with 3 requests of information as of 30th September 2021:

*** Request 1: Information in relation to the LAC population and the number of registered LA children's homes**

Request 2: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee by IFA provider by age bands. Also please provide discounts by IFA.

*** Request 3: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee for children placed by independent residential providers by staffing levels**

Please refer to the 'Inputs & Instructions' sheet of the attached file for

guidance on how to complete the document. There are examples on each of the tabs to support. If you do have any questions on how to complete this, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we can provide guidance.

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

Response

The council holds the information requested and it is attached/ the answers to your questions are below

Attached is an excel template with 4 requests of information as of 30th September 2021:

**** Request 1: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee for children placed with IFA's by type of placement and age bands. Also, to be provided at a total level.***

The supplied Excel sheet has not been completed due to the complexity of information required. Please find below a summary response to the information requested.

As of 30th September, London Borough of Barnet had a total of 94 IFA Placements

The table below shows average costs for IFA placements by age bands

non-UASC	£1,019
<i>IFA Core Fostering - under 12</i>	<i>£890</i>
<i>IFA Core Fostering - over 12</i>	<i>£918</i>
<i>IFA Core Fostering - Solo - Over 12</i>	<i>£1,100</i>
<i>IFA Specialist Fostering - under 12</i>	<i>£1,297</i>
<i>IFA Specialist Fostering - over 12</i>	<i>£1,368</i>
<i>IFA Parent Over 18 & Child</i>	<i>£1,599</i>
<i>IFA Parent Under 18 & Child</i>	<i>£1,308</i>
UASC	£797
<i>IFA Core Fostering - over 12</i>	<i>£797</i>
IFA average	£982

**** Request 2: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee by IFA provider by age bands. Also please provide discounts by IFA.***

This information is not available as rates paid by individual IFA providers are Commercially sensitive. Rates paid to providers on the Commissioning Alliance Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle (DPV) are not available to disclose by individual purchasing Local Authorities. Should you require further information on DPV rates, please redirect this FOI to CommissioningAlliance@ealing.gov.uk

Please see response to question 1 for total number of children placed in IFAs and average fees.

**** Request 3: Breakdown of fees you pay your carers by age band and split between maintenance allowance and fee / skill (if applicable)***

Please see attached Excel sheet, FOI Fostering response under Request 3 tab.

**** Request 4: Breakdown of any additional financial support you provide your carers split by age band***

Please see attached Excel sheet, FOI Fostering response under Request 4 tab.

**** Request 5: A set of general questions***

Please see attached Excel sheet, FOI Fostering response under Request 5 tab.

Please refer to the 'Inputs & Instructions' sheet of the attached file for guidance on how to complete the document. There is an example of how to update this tab and examples on each of the tabs to support. If you do have any questions on how to complete this, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we can provide guidance.

Attached is an excel template with 3 requests of information as of 30th September 2021:

The supplied Excel sheet has not been completed due to the complexity of information required. Please find below a summary response to the information requested.

**** Request 1: Information in relation to the LAC population and the number of registered LA children's homes***

The supplied Excel sheet has not been completed due to the complexity of information required. Please find below a summary response to the information requested.

As at 30th September 2021 we had 325 Children in Care.

London Borough of Barnet currently has 2 Local Authority registered children's homes.

**** Request 2: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee for children placed with independent residential providers by type of placement and staffing levels***

Type of residential provision	Average fees
Care only	£4,969
Care & Therapy	£7,106
Care, Therapy & Education	£4,745
<u>Average residential</u>	<u>£5,240</u>

**** Request 3: Information in relation to number of children and average weekly fee for children placed by independent residential providers by staffing levels***

Whether the children are on a framework or not we would not disclose Average Weekly fees and discounts given the low numbers of children cared for by the individual providers - see refusal notice below.

We do not hold information on staffing levels per home and staffing varies per placement due to additional support required. Please see response to request 2 for average fees.

S43 – Weekly fees paid to independent residential providers

Because of the commercial nature of this process and the subsequent variations in rates of pay, we have concluded that this information is exempt under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) because the disclosure of this information would be prejudicial to the third party's and the London Borough of Barnet's commercial interests. This is a qualified or non-absolute exemption and the public interest test applies.

We recognise the public interest in the disclosure of this information. These factors include the importance of transparency in the decision-making process relating to the spending of public money to ensure that procurement processes are conducted in an open and honest way. It is also important for the public to see taxpayers' money being used effectively and public authorities getting value for money.

However, the disclosure of this information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of these providers who contract their services to us if details of their specific rates are disclosed. These average weekly fees paid for each residential providers.

Disclosure of this information could provide any future employer with the rate at which the contractor provided their services to London Borough of Barnet, and this is likely to have a negative impact on the contractor's future bargaining position, causing them financial disadvantage or loss. We believe that it is important to withhold this information to prevent prejudice to our contractor's future bargaining position. In addition, and as a consequence to the potential prejudice caused to our contractors, there is a strong risk that the Council's bargaining position for the future would be prejudiced because contractors and suppliers may become reluctant to enter into further free and frank negotiations.

Lastly, future suppliers who would be made aware of these actual rates paid would be at a huge advantage in any future tender process and this would undermine the Council's ability to negotiate the purchasing of quality services at commercially competitive rates, effectively preventing us from achieving the value for money that is so important. For these reasons we consider that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

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 Records & Information Management Service, Assurance Group, 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.