



Date: 04/02/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/013927/S

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/013927/S

I write in connection with your request for information dated 07/01/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am carrying out research for a PhD and would like to supplement my qualitative data with information held by local police forces in England and Wales.

As such, I would like to be provided with the following information if it is available:

1. *The number of children (17 and under) who were flagged as victims of Child Criminal Exploitation in relation to county lines drug dealing and separately, the number of these children who were recorded as being in care (looked-after child). If possible, with age, gender and ethnicity provided for each sets.*
2. *The number of children (17 and under) who were charged with drug supply offences related to county lines drug dealing and separately, the number of these children who were recorded as being in care (looked-after child). If possible, with age, gender and ethnicity provided for both sets.*
3. *Number of missing incidents of children (17 and under) who were missing from care with the following information provided:*
 - *Age*
 - *Gender*
 - *Ethnicity*
 - *Location reported missing from (local or out of force area)*
 - *Whether the child had been assigned a child criminal exploitation/county lines flag.*
 - *If possible, the type of care setting child was missing from.*

Could I please have the above information for the following dates: between 1st January 2022 to 1st January 2025.

All of the requested information is important to me. However, if the information sought here is too much for a single request, could numbers 1 and 2 please be the priority. If this is still too much, I would prefer the information over a shorter time period than not at all.

Result of Searches

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) does not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. To provide the data requested in questions 1 and 2 would involve a manual search of the records of all children with Child Criminal Exploitation marker to see if the record relates to County Lines. Following this, a second manual review would then be needed to determine if it is recorded whether the child in question was in care.

A preliminary search of our records shows that there are over 250 such records. At a very conservative estimate of 5 minutes to locate, retrieve and review each file twice, it would take approximately 41 hours to ascertain the data required.

Therefore, to comply with the whole of your request the process would take over 18 hours' work which exceeds the appropriate limit of £450.00, the amount to which we are legally required to respond.

As per section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the cost of providing you with the information is therefore above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the 'appropriate level' as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.

GMP is obligated, pursuant to section 16(1) of the Act to provide you with advice and assistance on refining your request to bring compliance within the fees limit. In order for the force to keep this within the fees limit, the information that you are requesting will need to be reduced to a greatly reduced time period. The resulting response cannot be guaranteed at this point as it will be dependent upon the number of records that fall within the scope of any new request, as they would still have to be manually assessed.

Should you wish to refine and resubmit your request in line with the advice above please respond to freedomofinformation@gmp.police.uk