

Date: 31st March 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/016603/M

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/016603/M

I write in connection with your request for information dated 20/03/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information.

For the period 1 January 2021 to 28 February 2026, please provide:

Q1 - The total number of rape and sexual assault crimes recorded that include the tag 'online', 'virtual reality', 'VR' or 'virtual'.

Q2 - The total number of rape and sexual assault crimes recorded including the tag 'metaverse', 'meta', 'Roblox', or 'Fortnite'.

Q3 - The gender and age of any victims - if unable to be specific then under 10, under 13, under 16, under 18, or 18+ is acceptable.

Q4 - Whether these crimes resulted in any investigation (and if this is ongoing), arrests, charges, prosecutions, and convictions.

If fulfilling this request exceeds the cost limit, please advise on how I may refine it to fall within the limits.

Please provide this information in an electronic format (Excel or CSV preferred).

Many thanks,

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information. I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP.

Caveats:

In July 2019, GMP implemented one of the largest IT infrastructure changes in UK policing. The systems are in continual development and the data provided for this request is what the systems currently hold.

1. The crime grand totals are all the crimes recorded for the period 01/01/2021-28/02/2026.
2. An online crime flag was used, along with key word searches using "virtual reality", "VR", "virtual" for part 1 and "metaverse", "meta", "Roblox" and "Fortnite" for part 2 within the crime Description and MO Description options.
3. The data is based on when the crime was recorded and not when the crime was committed.
4. Where possible duplicates have been removed.
5. The data provided for this request is subject to change as crimes are progressed and/ or updated.

Question 1 – Total 165

Question 2 – Total 21

Question 3

Sexual Assault and Rape Offences (Online, Virtual Reality, VR and Virtual)

Gender	Total
Female	151
Male	14
Unknown	0

Age	Total
Under 10	5
Age 10 – 15	62
Age 16 – 18	25
Age 19 +	73

Sexual Assault and Rape Offences (Metaverse, Meta, Roblox and Fortnite)

Due to low numbers returned, the gender and age breakdown has been exempted from disclosure under Section 40(2) Personal Information – this information constitutes personal data of an identifiable living individual, and to disclose this information would breach the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data is defined by Section 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and means data that relates to an individual who can be identified directly or indirectly from that data.

Question 4

Sexual Assault and Rape Offences (Online, Virtual Reality, VR and Virtual)

Outcome	Total
Charged/Positive Outcome	31
Insufficient Evidence	37
No Suspect Identified	36
Victim Not Supporting	38

Other Outcome	23
---------------	----

Sexual Assault and Rape Offences (Metaverse, Meta, Roblox and Fortnite)

Outcome	Total
Charged/Positive Outcome	3
Insufficient Evidence	5
No Suspect Identified	7
Victim Not Supporting	5
Other Outcome	1

Please note, GMP do not hold prosecution and conviction data. For this information you would need to contact the relevant courts.