



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2016-00356

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Crimes Committed by Children Under 10

Request and Answer:

Question

Please can you tell me how many children under the age of 10 and below the age of criminal responsibility have been found responsible for crimes in the police force area for the past two years? Please can you also provide an age breakdown and give detail of the nature of the crime for which they are believed to have committed yet cannot be prosecuted?

Answer

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Please find included below a table detailing the number of reports of alleged risk behaviour in relation to children under 10 years old for the years 2014 and 2015 broken down by the nature of the alleged risk behaviour and the age of the child.

Age	Risk Behaviour	Year	
		2014	2015
4	Common Assault	0	1
	Motoring	1	1
	Sexual Offences	1	0
5	Burglary	1	0
	Common assault	0	2
	Motoring	0	1
	Sexual Offences	1	2
	Theft	1	0
6	AOABH	1	0
	Common Assault	3	0
	Criminal Damage	0	2
	Possession of Drugs	0	1
	Sexual offences	1	1
	Theft	2	1
7	Aggravated Assault	0	1
	Common Assault	1	5
	Criminal Damage	2	5
	Hoax Calls	0	1
	Motoring	1	1

	Offensive Weapon	1	0
	Sexual Offences	1	1
	Theft	2	1
8	Assault on Police	1	0
	Common Assault	8	9
	Criminal Damage	5	2
	Disorderly Behaviour	1	0
	Hoax Calls	1	0
	Motoring	0	2
	Sexual Offences	4	1
	Theft	5	4
9	Aggravated Assault	1	0
	Arson	2	0
	Burglary	1	2
	Common Assault	13	12
	Criminal Damage	6	7
	Hoax Calls	2	1
	Offensive Weapon	1	0
	Sexual Offences	1	1
	Theft	6	8
	Threats to kill	0	1

Please Note: Children under 10 years of age are under the age of criminal responsibility and so in legal terms cannot commit a crime. In all those instances where a child under 10 years has been detected for behaviour that would otherwise be described as criminal, specially-trained Police Youth Diversion Officers will provide a welfare response. Support / intervention programmes will be considered, as well as the notification of statutory partners such as social Services if appropriate, with the agreement and consent of a parent / guardian. Cases will be monitored over a period of time to ensure no further repetition of such behaviour and no further risk is identified to the child or others. These figures relate to alleged incidents only and are not final validated statistics. This data is extracted from a live system and may be subject to change. Human error must be taken into consideration when examining data of this nature. There are a number of labelling options as well as age related factors that can be misinterpreted, which can create the potential for incorrect data. In addition, please note that sexual offences can include all levels of indecency, including urinating in public & inappropriate touching.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psnipolice.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.