

OFFICIAL



Heddlu Police

DYFED-POWYS

FOI Reference: 695/2020

Request:

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information.

- 1) How many sexual offenses were recorded by your police department at schools, in the last three academic years?
- 2) For these alleged offenses, please could you let me know the ages of victims, in the last three academic years?
- 3) How many of the suspects of these alleged offenses were under 18, in the last three academic years?

Response 1:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, the details of which are as follows:

- For the last 3 academic years (17/18, 18/19 & 19/20) there have been a total of 174 sexual offences recorded at schools

Response 2:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, however some of that information has been exempted by virtue of Section 30(1)(a) – Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities (please see the end of the document for an explanation of the applied exemption).

Victim Age	Total
3	2
4	6
5	13
6	4
7	13
8	10
9	9
10	14
11	6
12	11
13	22

14	27
15	18
16	8
17	2
18	1
26	1
35	1
39	1
63	1
S30(1)(a) applies (ongoing investigations)	4
Grand Total	174

Response 3:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, however some of that information has been exempted by virtue of Section 30(1)(a) – Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities (please see the end of the document for an explanation of the applied exemption).

Suspect Age	Total
Under 18	118
Over 18	42
Not recorded	10
S30(1)(a) applies (ongoing investigations)	4
Grand Total	174

Explanation of the applied Exemption:

Section 30(1)(a) Investigations and Proceedings conducted by Public Authorities

The Section 30(1)(a) exemption is a class-based qualified exemption. This means that the legislators when writing the legislation considered that the release of such information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 would cause harm to the public authority or individual concerned. There is therefore no requirement to carry out a HARM Test in respect of such information. However there is a requirement to carry out a Public Interest Test in order to establish whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption may be outweighed by a wider public benefit in disclosure.

Section 30(1)(a) Investigations and Proceedings conducted by Public Authorities:

- (1) Information held by a public authority is exempt information if it has at any time been held by the authority for the purposes of -*
- (a) Any investigation which the public authority has a duty to conduct with a view to it being ascertained (i) whether a person should be charged with an offence, or (ii) whether a person charged with an offence is guilty of it*

Public Interest Test

Considerations favouring disclosure:

Disclosure of the information would improve the public's knowledge and awareness in relation to crimes within the Dyfed-Powys Police area and would provide satisfaction to the public that these cases are investigated thoroughly and offenders are being dealt with accordingly.

Considerations favouring non-disclosure:

This exemption covers information held at any time for the purpose of an investigation, whether the case is ongoing, closed or abandoned. To release details of ongoing investigations, as in this case, could undermine and prejudice those investigations. This would impact on the forces' future law enforcement capabilities by hindering the prevention or detection of crime.

Balancing Test

After considering the advantages and disadvantages in disclosure, it falls upon Dyfed-Powys Police to conduct a balance test on the issues. The strongest argument for disclosure, which is public awareness, needs to be weighed against the strongest arguments for non-disclosure, which in this case is that the release would undermine and prejudice ongoing investigations, which would impact on the forces' future law enforcement capabilities by hindering the prevention or detection of crime.

Therefore, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

It should be noted that owing to the systems adopted by Dyfed-Powys Police in relation to the recording of such matters the information provided may or may not be accurate.

Police Forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the data. It should be noted that for these reasons this Force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

(This is a response under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and disclosed on 23/11/20)