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20th February 2019

Our Ref: FOI2019/00564

Dear Requestor

**REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 Ref No: FOI2019/00564**

I write in connection with your request for information received on 23rd January. I note you seek access to the following information:

**Please provide data on the number of times children aged 17 years old and younger were kept overnight in police custody under any circumstances. My definition of overnight is: between midnight and 8am, where an individual has been held in custody for 4 or more hours during this time.**

**Q1. How many children aged 17 years and under have spent one or more nights in police custody in 2016?**

**Q2. Please break the figures in Q1 down by age (e.g. 17 years old – 105 children; 16 years old – 110 children; 15 years old – 74 children etc.)**

**Q3. Please break the figures in Q1 down by gender (e.g. Male – 402 children; Female – 161 children).**

**Q4. Please break the figures in Q1 down by ethnicity (e.g. White British – 162 children; White European – 27 children; Black or Black British-African – children; Black or Black British-Caribbean – 12 children; Chinese – 21 children etc.)**

**Q5. In relation to Q1 please provide details of the longest period one child aged 17 years old or younger was held in police custody.**

**CLARIFICATION - I sent a previous request (on the 23rd of January) asking for data from the year 2016. That was a mistake on my part, and I apologise. I would instead like figures from the year 2018.**

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (The Act) to handle all requests in a manner that is blind to the identity of the requestor. Any information released in response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore, in the public domain without caveat.

**RESPONSE** - Following enquiries within the Force please see our response in the tables below: -

Please note – The definition we have been using for “overnight” is where detainees arrive at 23:00hrs and leaves after 04:00 hrs.

Recorded Overnight Stays - Police Custody - Children Under 18 1st Jan 2018 - 22nd May 2018					
Gender/Age	2018	Grand Total	Ethnicity	2018	Grand Total
<b>Female</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	Asian	11	11
16	2	2	Black	18	18
<b>Male</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	Chinese, Japanese or SE		
12	1	1	Asian	4	4
14	5	5	North European - White	28	28
			South European - White	1	1

15	9	9	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>
16	15	15			
17	30	30			
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>			

Recorded Overnight Stays - Police Custody Children Under 18 23rd May 2018 - 31st Dec 2018					
Gender/Age	2018	Grand Total	Ethnicity	2018	Grand Total
<b>Female</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	White British	14	14
14	1	1	White Irish	2	2
15	5	5	White And Black Caribbean	6	6
16	2	2	African	5	5
17	1	1	Any Other Asian Background	6	6
<b>Male</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>84</b>	Any Other Black Background	3	3
13	4	4	Any Other Ethnic Group	3	3
14	2	2	Any Other Mixed Background	2	2
15	16	16	Any Other White Background	2	2
16	27	27	Bangladeshi	3	3
17	35	35	Caribbean	5	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>	Indian	1	1
			Pakistani	3	3
			(blank)	36	36
			Not stated	2	2
			<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>

Recorded Overnight Stays Police Custody - Children Under 18 1st Jan 2018 - 31st Dec 2018		
Gender/Age/Longest Period/ Hours	2018	Grand Total
<b>Male</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
15	1	1
63 hours	1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Bedfordshire Police made a significant investment in a new ICT system, Athena, in May of this year which, when fully implemented, will help keep Bedfordshire safe, bring more offenders to justice and improve outcomes for victims. Updating our ICT was absolutely necessary to ensure Bedfordshire Police remains as effective and efficient as possible. The public should be reassured crime continues to be reported and investigated as normal but whilst colleagues become more comfortable and familiar with how Athena works Bedfordshire Police has some concerns around data quality for which reason some of the data provided concerning events recorded after 23 May, may include some inaccuracies. We apologise for the situation and are working to resolve it as soon as possible.

The numerical data presented in this response is an un-audited snapshot of un-published data sourced from "live" systems and is subject to the interpretation of the original request by the individual extracting the data.

Should you have any further enquiries concerning this matter please do not hesitate to contact me quoting the above reference number.

Yours sincerely

Gary Maxey  
Information Rights

Bedfordshire Police provides you the right to request an independent review of this response under its review procedure. If you require such a review you must notify us within two months from the date of this letter. After lodging a complaint with Bedfordshire Police if you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make an application to the Information Commissioner. For information on how to make a complaint please visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/> or contact them on 0303 123 1113.