



REQUEST 17487

RESPONSE

1. Please confirm whether your local authority has issued/ commenced a Section 47 enquiry or investigation in respect of a child and/or their family/carer in relation to overseas access to puberty blockers/gender affirming care at any point in the last 5 years.
2. If yes, please list the number of Section 47 orders by date.

I am aware that there may be anonymity concerns. In cases where too few Section 47 orders have been issued, for example <5, please state a minimum figure and please simply confirm whether investigations were issued in the period pre May 2024, or post May 2024:

3. Please provide the reason for instigating or engaging the section 47 order in as much detail as you can.

We do not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) relieves a public authority from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the estimated time required to locate, review and extract the information exceeds a certain threshold set out in Regulations.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3244) set out the rules in relation to the cost limit (otherwise called the “appropriate limit”). These Regulations are published by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) and are viewable on their web site from this link:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf

The Regulations set out the cost limit for Government departments and for other public authorities. For local government, Regulation 3 states that the cost limit is £450 and Regulation 4(4) states that the prescribed hourly rate is £25. Regulation 4(4) further provides that where the local authority estimates the time taken to gather the information would exceed this limit (which based on the prescribed hourly rate, equates to 18 officer hours), it may refuse the request under section 12 of FoIA.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case. There were 9567 S47's during this period and using a minimum of 5 minutes per case (could take longer each case) would take over 797 hours.