

Reference: FOI-1748

Request:

I write to request access to the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

1. Anonymised demographics of all staff currently employed in the following teams within children's services – special educational needs, inclusion, education improvement, virtual school and educational psychology (not exhaustive if LA has a different set up within its education teams) – please provide ages, gender and length of service of the employees
2. Retention rates for all staff with management / leadership responsibility in the above teams. How long have the post holders been in their posts and how many times has the post been recruited to in the last 5 years.
3. Any existing data or anonymised reports from exit reviews conducted with any staff leaving the teams mentioned above. If it not possible to provide anonymised copies, please provide a list of the reasons of all employees from exit interviews for the last 2 years.
4. Information relating to professional development programmes offered to employees within children's services.
5. Data / Results of any leadership questionnaires you have asked employees within children's services to complete within the last 2 years including workforce satisfaction surveys.
6. Details and / copies of any current staff retention policies / initiatives

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Response:

1. Age

0-25: 1

25-34: 12

35-44: 19

45-54: 49

55-64: 35

65+: 2

Gender

Male: 25

Female: 93

Length of Service

Less than 1 year: 11

1-4 years: 36

5-9 years: 19

10-14 years: 19

15-19 years: 12

20-24 years: 10

25-29 years: 2

30-34 years: 5

35-39 years: 3

40+ years: 1



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2. Within the last 5 years, the Health, Education and Safeguarding Service has been reorganised. Establishment reports are run on a monthly basis so every report since April 2019 (circa 60 reports) would need to be checked and compared to enable mapping to be completed.

Therefore, this part of the request is refused under section 12 (1) Freedom of Information Act 2000, since the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

In assessing the cost of complying, the costs attributable to officer time involved in complying have been considered. Such costs are limited to £450.00 under the Regulations, which equates to eighteen hours of officer time.

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including refinement of dates relevant to the information required.

3. There have been 879 leavers in the last 2 years and each leaver from children services would need to be identified along with their manager at the time of leaving to contact them to retrieve any exit information taken.

Therefore, this part of the request is refused under section 12 (1) Freedom of Information Act 2000, since the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

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- All practitioners in Childrens Services are expected to complete the programme below within the first 12 months of their employment.

Children’s Social Care Mandatory Training – for all practitioners	
Within 3 months	
Live training (webinar/face to face)	Duration
Introduction to Signs of Safety	3 days
NTSCP Child Protection (or refresher)	3 hours
NTSCP Child Exploitation & Introduction to MSET	1.5 hour
Lone Working & Personal Safety	1.5 hour
Liquid Logic (LCS) appropriate to role	
E-learning	
Domestic Abuse Awareness	
Coercive Control	
Multi-agency forums (Children’s Social Care)	
NTSCP County Lines	
Sexual Exploitation	
Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP)	
SEND Introduction	
Understanding Autism Tier 1	
Mental Health Awareness – Children and Young People	

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Parental conflict and its impact on children (Module 1)	
Introduction to Young Carers	
Young Carers Training Module 2	
Oliver McGowan Training	
Within 6 months	
Live training (webinar/face to face)	Duration
Domestic Abuse Awareness (Level 1)	6 hours
Child to Parent Violence and Abuse	3 hours
Basic Drugs Awareness and Intervention	2 hours
Caring about Adversity, Resilience and Empowerment (Basic Introduction to Trauma Informed Practice)	2.5 hours
Life Story Work (E-learning or live dependent on role)	2 days
Within year 1	
Live training (webinar/face to face)	Duration
Solihull Approach - 2 Day Foundation	2 days
Domestic Abuse: Ask and Action (Level 2)	6 hours
Care for Me (Young People/Participation Team)	1 hour
E-learning	
The Mental Capacity Act and Young People	E-learning
Repeatable training	Frequency
Signs of Safety Practice & Bitesize Sessions	As required
Safeguarding – any NTSCP course	Yearly

Each team within Children's Services has additional role specific training courses in addition to the above, for example Residential Childcare Officers complete CALM, medication and first aid training as required by Ofsted.

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The Authority has a huge range of apprenticeships available from Level 2 (equivalent to GCSEs) to Level 7 (equivalent to Masters) covering most areas and occupations within the Authority. Some directly relevant to Children's Services include Early Years Practitioner, Early Years Educator and Youth Justice Practitioner.

All Managers within the Authority have access to the Building Brilliant Managers Programme (BBM). This is an evolving programme that aims to embed the organisational values in the approach and practice of our managers. This supports the development of both existing and future managers.

In addition to the above we are about to embark on a programme of Dare to Lead Workshops for our managers across Children's Services.

5. In September 2022 North Tyneside Council conducted a Team Survey of all employees. The return rate in the Children's directorate was 32%.

THE SUCCESSES

Colleagues within the Children's directorate believe that they make a difference

- Nine in ten feel they make a difference in their job role (91% vs, 83% overall).
- 82% believe that their job makes good use of their skills and abilities (77% overall).
- 86% believe they have a purpose in the council (80% overall).

Support

- Three quarters of colleagues feel valued which is higher than the council overall (67%) and a significant increase compared to 2018 (74% vs, 58% 2018).
- 91% of colleagues know where to go for support (85% overall).

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- 82% of colleagues feel that they are treated with dignity and respect in the council, which is significantly higher than the council average (76%).

Colleagues in the Children's directorate are generally very positive about their line manager 85% believe that overall they do a good job which is significantly higher than the council average (79%)

- Specific aspects where colleagues are significantly more positive compared to the rest of the council include:
 - agreement that they feel motivated and inspired by their line manager to be more effective in their job (75% vs. 69% overall).
 - Belief that they are encouraged and supported to put forward ideas and suggestions for improving the way they do things (79% vs. 73% overall).
 - Agreement that their line manager seeks to build their confidence and self belief (72% vs. 66% overall).

Generally, employees in the Children's directorate are more positive than other parts of the council about SLT, and where there is comparator data, colleagues' perceptions have improved significantly since 2018.

There is a better flow of communication within the Children's directorate compared to other parts of the council.

- Generally, 86% of colleagues feel the council keeps them fully or fairly well informed (86% compared 81% overall).
- 87% know who to go to to put forward suggestions for improvement (compared to 77% overall) and
- 66% believe they have the opportunity to contribute their views before changes are made (compared to 58% overall).
- Cross partnership working is more evident in this part of the council compared to other directorates (66% vs. 55% overall)

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THE CHALLENGES

Colleagues in the Children's directorate feel under resourced

- 21% disagree that they are able to strike the right balance between their work and home life, which is significantly higher than for the council overall (15%).
- That said, there is a significant improvement in the proportion of colleagues in this directorate who state that they are given realistic deadlines to work to (70% vs. 61% in 2018).

Colleagues are split in opinion as to whether they believe their pay is a fair reward for their duties and responsibilities (49% agree vs. 35% who disagree)

Fewer colleagues this year are in agreement that their IPR discussion with their line manager helps them to focus on improving their performance (58% agree vs. 74% in 2018)

6. The Authority is developing a right people, right place, right skills and right time strategy that supports recruitment and retention. This links into the wider people strategy and ensures the right processes and policies are in place to allow colleagues to feel a sense of belonging.

A copy of the Authority's recruitment policy, which covers recruitment practice, is attached.