

FOI 3140

6th June 2025

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Please release the following information relating to looked after children in the care of your authority for the periods:

- 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022
- 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023
- 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024
- 1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025

Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your trust during each of these years.

1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

Response:

733

1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

Response:

819

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Response:

866

1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025

Response:

731

Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your trust who have gone missing or absent during each of these years

Response:

Timeframe	No of missing patient (absconded/left without informing staff)

1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022	<5
1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023	<5
1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024	<5
1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025	<5

The Trust has a legal duty to protect patient confidentiality, in line with this duty the figure <5 has been provided where figures are very low. This is because of the potential risk of identification of an individual. In reaching this decision the Trust has taken into account the small geographical area which the Trust serves and the fact that all information disclosed in response to an FOI is disclosed to the 'world at large' and is published on the Trust website.

S 40 (2) (third party information) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has been applied to exempt the redacted information from disclosure. The Trust does not consider the disclosure of the redacted information to be fair to the individuals concerned as there is the potential risk of identification of an individual(s) which they would not expect, and which would therefore breach the fairness element of the first principle of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Please tell how many of them in total are still missing?

Response:

Timeframe	No. of missing patient (absconded/left without informing staff)	No. who remain missing.
1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022	<5	<5
1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023	<5	0
1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024	<5	<5
1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025	<5	0

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Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your trust that have identified as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) or a separated child in each of the above specified time periods (1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022; 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023; 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024; 1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025)

1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

Response:

16

1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

Response:

34

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Response:

45

1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025

Response:

34

Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your trust identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent in each of the above listed years.

1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

Response:

<5

1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

Response:

0

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Response:

<5

1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025

Response:

<5

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If possible, please tell me the age and nationality of each of these children.

Response:

Albanian and Somalian, all under 18 years.

Please tell me the total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same kid on more than one occasion) of looked after children in the care of your authority identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent in each of the above listed years.

1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

Response:

<5

1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

Response:

0

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Response:

<5

1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025

Response:

<5

The Trust has a legal duty to protect patient confidentiality, in line with this duty the figure <5 has been provided where figures are very low. This is because of the potential risk of identification of an individual. In reaching this decision the Trust has taken into account the small geographical area which the Trust serves and the fact that all information disclosed in response to an FOI is disclosed to the 'world at large' and is published on the Trust website.

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Please tell me the total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that are still missing or absent (including those who subsequently



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turned 18 without being found) that were identified or suspected as an UASC or separated child.

Response:

<5

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If possible, please tell me the age and nationality of each of these children.

Response:

Albanian, under 18 years.

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net