



My Ref: FOI5999
Enquiries to: Information Requests
E-Mail: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

Dear Requester,

Re: Request for Information – Freedom of Information Act 2000

I wish to confirm that the council has completed its search for the information which you requested.

The information requested and our findings are as follows: -

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to your authority's children's placements, placement sufficiency, use of unregistered provision, and workforce supply into any in-house residential children's homes operated by the authority.

This request concerns policy, resourcing, performance, decision-making and procurement within children's social care and does not seek personal data.

This information is sought in the public interest to ensure transparency and accountability in the delivery of statutory duties to looked-after children, children in need of care and support, and care leavers — and to inform market engagement by commissioning, placement and workforce providers seeking to address identified sufficiency and staffing gaps.

Where data is held against a financial year, please provide figures for the most recent three complete financial years (2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25) and the current year to date. Where monthly snapshots are held, please provide the most recent 12-month period.

1. Placement Numbers by Category

1.1 For each of the following placement types, please provide the number of children/young people placed as at the most recent available snapshot date, and confirm the snapshot date used:

- **Ofsted-registered children's homes (under 18s)**
- **Ofsted-registered supported accommodation (16–17-year-olds, post-April 2023 regulation)**
- **Unregistered provision — children under 18 placed in settings that are not Ofsted-registered (including any placement not registered with Ofsted as a children's home or as regulated supported accommodation at the time of placement, and including emergency/short-notice placements)**
- **Unregulated supported accommodation — care leavers aged 18+ not subject to Ofsted registration**
- **Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements**
- **In-house foster placements**

- **Residential schools / 52-week placements**
- **Secure children's homes / secure welfare**
- **Out-of-area placements (placed 20+ miles from home address, or outside the LA boundary — please state which definition applies)**

Breakdown of placement types as at 13th May 2026

Type	Total Number	Out of LA boundary
Ofsted-registered children's homes (under 18s)	57	46
Ofsted-registered supported accommodation (16–17-year-olds, post-April 2023 regulation)	29	14
Unregistered provision — children under 18 placed in settings that are not Ofsted-registered (including any placement not registered with Ofsted as a children's home or as regulated supported accommodation at the time of placement, and including emergency/short-notice placements)	X	X
Unregulated supported accommodation — care leavers aged 18+ not subject to Ofsted registration	0	0
In-house foster placements	149	35
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements	90	47
Residential schools / 52-week placements	X	0
Secure children's homes / secure welfare	X	X

X – Answer suppressed to protect confidentiality

1.2 Please provide the equivalent figures for each of the following years, where held:

- **2022/23**
- **2023/24**
- **2024/25**
- **2025/26 (year to date)**

As of the 31st of March, for each year:

Type	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Ofsted-registered children's homes (under 18s)	37	37	51	59
Ofsted-registered supported accommodation (16–17-year-olds, post-April 2023 regulation)	26	35	22	32

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PO Box 634, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 9GG

Unregistered provision — children under 18 placed in settings that are not Ofsted-registered (including any placement not registered with Ofsted as a children's home or as regulated supported accommodation at the time of placement, and including emergency/short-notice placements)	X	X	X	X
Unregulated supported accommodation — care leavers aged 18+ not subject to Ofsted registration	Data not held in a reportable format.			
In-house foster placements	154	146	140	144
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements	80	75	67	85
Residential schools / 52-week placements	X	X	X	X
Secure children's homes / secure welfare	X	X	X	X

X – Answer repressed to protect confidentiality

2. Unregistered Placements – Detail

For children under 18 placed in unregistered provision at any point during the last 12 months, please provide:

2.1 The total number of such placements made.

25

2.2 The average duration of those placements (in days).

57.16

2.3 The longest single placement duration (in days).

349 days as of 13/5/26

2.4 The number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) or High Court inherent jurisdiction authorisations associated with such placements.

X – Answer suppressed to protect confidentiality

2.5 The average weekly cost paid to unregistered providers, and the highest single weekly cost.

Average weekly cost paid to unregistered providers - £10,009

Highest single weekly cost paid to unregistered providers - £12,848

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2.6 The number of Ofsted and/or DfE notifications made by the authority regarding use of unregistered provision.

Data not held in a reportable format

3. Sufficiency and Placement Searches

Over the most recent 12-month period for which data is held:

3.1 The total number of placement referrals or searches issued to external providers.

400 Approx

3.2 The number of searches that resulted in no suitable Ofsted-registered offer being identified — including where no regulated provider accepted the placement on the authority's required terms (for example, due to complexity, cost or location).

Data not held in a reportable format

3.3 The number of placement offers declined by providers after an initial expression of interest, where recorded.

Data not held in a reportable format

3.4 The average time (in days) taken to secure a placement following initial referral or search, where data is held.

Data not held in a reportable format

3.5 The number of placements that ended prematurely due to provider notice (provider-initiated termination).

Data not held in a reportable format

3.6 The number of emergency (same-day or next-day) placement requests, and the proportion that were matched to a regulated setting.

Data not held in a reportable format

3.7 Whether the authority is currently meeting the placement targets set out in its most recent Sufficiency Strategy. If not, please state the scale of the shortfall by placement type.

Data not held in a reportable format

3.8 Any internal or external reports or summaries the authority has produced in the last 12 months regarding placement sufficiency challenges. Titles or links will suffice where full disclosure is not possible.

Data not held in a reportable format

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Where exact figures for any of the above are not held, please provide any available estimates, ranges or narrative explanation of current practice.

4. Commissioning Arrangements

4.1 Which frameworks, Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS) or consortium arrangements does the authority use for children's residential placements, supported accommodation (16+), and IFA placements? Please name each.

White Rose Framework

4.2 Does the authority spot-purchase outside of these frameworks? If yes, in approximately what proportion of placements?

- Residential – 65%
- Fostering – 20%
- Supported Accommodation – 100%

4.3 What is the process for a new Ofsted-registered provider to be added to the authority's approved or preferred provider list, or to its referral distribution list?

E-mail childrenscommissioning@barnlsey.gov.uk

4.4 What is the typical timeframe for onboarding a new provider onto the authority's approved or preferred list, from initial enquiry to inclusion?

Not monitored, estimate not possible.

4.5 Please provide contact details (named officer where possible, otherwise relevant team inbox) for the function(s) responsible for:

- (a) children's residential placements commissioning

childrenscommissioning@barnlsey.gov.uk

- (b) supported accommodation commissioning

childrenscommissioning@barnlsey.gov.uk

- (c) IFA commissioning

childrenscommissioning@barnlsey.gov.uk

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4.6 Please provide the generic team inbox(es) used to receive placement referral responses and expressions of interest from providers.

childrensplacements@barnsley.gov.uk

5. Fee Benchmarking

For the most recent financial year, please provide:

5.1 Highest, lowest and mean weekly fee paid for an Ofsted-registered residential children's home placement.

5.2 Highest, lowest and mean weekly fee paid for Ofsted-registered 16+ supported accommodation.

5.3 Highest, lowest and mean weekly fee paid for solo or bespoke placements, where used.

Type	Highest	Lowest	Mean
weekly fee paid for an Ofsted-registered residential children's home placement	£17,465.14	£3,405.15	£7,822
weekly fee paid for Ofsted-registered 16+ supported accommodation	£13,207	£420.30	£1,820
weekly fee paid for solo or bespoke placements, where used	Don't report to this level		

6. In-House Residential Provision & Workforce Supply

6.1 Does the authority operate any in-house Ofsted-registered children's homes? If yes, please state the number of homes and total registered bed capacity as at the most recent available date.

- Yes, 1 home, 3 bed capacity.

6.2 Total annual spend on temporary / agency staff deployed into the authority's in-house children's homes in the most recent complete financial year.

- Nil

6.3 Names of the staffing agencies or employment businesses currently used to supply temporary workers into the authority's in-house children's homes, including any framework or neutral-vendor arrangements in place.

- N/A

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6.4 Please provide contact details (named officer where possible, otherwise relevant team inbox) for the function(s) responsible for engaging agency/temporary staff into the authority's in-house children's homes.

Tess Weigh - tessaweigh@barnsley.gov.uk

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact Information Requests Via email.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the way the Directorate has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. Please clearly mark your correspondence 'Complaint' and address it to:

Barnsley MBC
Information Requests Team
PO Box 634
Barnsley
S70 9GG
email: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

Customer Services Team
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Email: <http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>

Kind regards,

Information Requests Team, Barnsley MBC

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