**Freedom of Information Act Request**

Reference: ECC19031411 09 25
Response: 08 October 2025

**Request 1.**

1. The total number of children who have been signed up to (unaccredited and accredited) online schools over the past two years (broken down by year).
2. The total amount of funding allocated for attendance at (unaccredited and accredited) online schools over the past two years (also broken down by year).
3. The total amount of actual spending on (unaccredited and accredited) online schools over the past two years (also broken down by year).
4. Confirmation of which policy and guidance is used to determine the suitability of the commissioning and awarding of (unaccredited and accredited) online school contracts.

**Request 2.**

1. The total number of children who are signed up to receiving alternative provision over the past five years (broken down by year).
2. The total amount of funding allocated to alternative provisions over the past five years (broken down by year).
3. The total amount of actual spending on alternative provisions over the past five years (broken down by year).
4. Confirmation of which policy and guidance is used to determine the suitability of the commissioning and awarding of alternative provisions.

**Request 3.**

1. Provide the job and person profile for all roles within the SEND and Education teams, including whether each role is paid using the performance related pay model.
2. Provide the performance related pay policy for the SEND and Education teams.

**Request 4.**

Please provide details of all training undertaken by staff working in the SEND and Education departments at Essex County Council between 2022-2025 Specifically, I request:

1. A list of all mandatory training courses required for staff in SEND and Education roles (including caseworkers, team managers, and senior officers).
2. A list of any additional training commissioned by the Council for SEND/Education staff in the same period, including the provider, course title, and cost.
3. Copies of training materials, presentations, or handouts provided to staff, where available.
4. Confirmation of whether staff are required to complete training that references parental behaviour (e.g., managing “difficult” parents, fabricated or induced illness, parental over involvement).
5. The budget allocated to training for SEND/Education staff in each of the last three financial years

**Request 5. Received 19/09**

1. How much money has Essex County Council spent on commissioning provisions that they know cannot meet my son's needs. (e.g. TUTE, NEECA, Hatfield Wick, Transport, KTM Care)
2. What contracts do they currently have on providers for my son?
3. Is Stanway Fiveways currently in receipt of a pupil premium or receiving any additional funding connected to my son?
4. What legal fees has Essex County Council incurred in relation to my son's education (or lack of) and EHCP process?
5. How many people in Essex County Council have worked on my son's case and what % of their working time have they spent on him?

**Request 6, received 01/10/25**

1. A breakdown of the qualification level of SEND Caseworkers
2. What percentage of those with degrees have degrees in SEND
3. What level of mandatory training do SEND caseworkers receive on SEND
4. What are the titles of the SEND training courses
5. What are the titles of other pieces of training that Caseworkers receive, internal and external

I can confirm that Essex County Council does hold this information, however from our preliminary assessment, we estimate that compliance with your request would exceed the appropriate costs limit under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is currently £450. This limit is calculated 18 hours of work at a cost of £25 per hour.

The information you have requested is not available because your request is too large for us to process with the 18 hours specified in the Act. You have requested information for online schools, alternative provision, job and person profiles of SEND and Education, training for all staff in SEND and Education and money spent on commissioning provisions for your son.

The following is a breakdown of the time estimated to fulfil the 6 requests:

Request 1 – This would take 1.5 hours to complete

Question 4 – this has already been provided to you.

Request 2 – This would take 1.5 hours to complete.

Question 8 – this has already been provided to you.

Request 3 – There are 189 positions in SEND and Education, if we estimated 15 minutes to find and produce a copy of every role profile this alone would take 47 hours to complete which exceeds the cost limit laid out in the Act. We have attached the list of job roles, could you limit your request to 5 job and person profiles please.



Request 4 – It is not feasible to provide comprehensive information on mandatory training courses for staff in SEND and Education roles. These areas are highly diverse and require specialist knowledge tailored to each role. Training is often commissioned directly by individual teams based on specific needs. Additionally, retrieving, reviewing, and redacting materials to ensure compliance with copyright regulations would demand substantial time and resources.

Request 5 –

Question 16 – We cannot respond to the question as it is worded because we do not deem them unsuitable.

Question 17 – None, there are no active contracts in place.

Question 18 – N/A

Question 19 – We do not hold this information as we do not record costs on a case-by-case basis.

Question 20 – We do not hold this information.

Request 6 –

Question 21 - As the information requested in item 6 is not held centrally, fulfilling this request would require contacting multiple individual teams and colleagues, awaiting their responses, following up as necessary, and collating the data. We estimate that this process would take approximately 60 hours to complete.

Question 22 - see above response.

Question 23 - this is covered in question 11 with the same response as detailed in 'request 4'.

Question 24 - this is covered in question 11 and 12 with the same response as detailed in 'request 4'.

Question 25 - this is covered in question 11 and 12, with the same response as 'request 4'.

This letter acts as a Refusal Notice in respect of your request.

Under section 16 of the Act, our duty to assist those requesting information we advise that you should consider reframing your request to bring it under the cost limit. For example, you might like to consider

* + reducing the volume of information requested – *please consider submitting one request at a time.*
	+ reducing the timeframe of your request - *you have a range of timeframes; it would be easier if you requested information for 1 year as an example.*
	+ focusing on one topic or service area – *you could ask for just one area, for example, just alternative provisions or SEND and Education job profiles or mandatory and additional training.*

Please note that if you were to submit a series of smaller requests, we may still refuse to provide the requested data. Regulatory guidance states ‘The Act recognises that freedom of information requests are not the only demand on the resources of a public authority. They should not be allowed to cause a drain on your time, energy, and finances to the extent that they negatively affect your normal public functions.

Regulatory advice states that when calculating the costs of complying, we can aggregate (total) the costs of all related requests we receive within 60 working days from the same person or from people who seem to be working together.’ This is why request 5 and 6 have been appended to your other requests.

If you would like to submit a reframed request which falls below the cost limit, or if you would like advice and assistance, then please do not hesitate to contact us and we will provide further support.

Please be aware that the Act only provides access to recorded data held by a public authority and there is no requirement for us to create new information in order to respond to a request for information.

Please also be aware that the Information Commissioner has provided advice to those requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which states:

*Gaining access to public information is your right and public bodies must respect that.*

*However, requests do cost public bodies time and money to respond to. This is public money and we need to make sure it’s spent responsibly.*

*It is important that you don’t submit frivolous or trivial requests.*

*You should not make requests for the same information more than once, unless the information has changed a lot.*

*You should not make requests as a way of ‘punishing’ a public body if you think they have done something wrong. If you do any of the above, the public body could consider your request vexatious and refuse to action it.*

[How to access information from a public authority | ICO](https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/)

**Your Right to Know**

Democracy and Transparency

Essex County Council

Telephone: 033301 38989

Email: YourRight.ToKnow@essex.gov.uk | [www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)