



## Information Governance Team

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27 August 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

### Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

**Request ID: FOI731376392**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Alternative Provision (AP).

You have requested the following information:

### SEN Placements

**1. The total number of children and young people currently receiving SEN support, broken down by type of placement (e.g. mainstream schools, special schools, private or independent providers).**

Please see details below as per the January 2025 census:

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Nursery             | 32            |
| Mainstream          | 10,779        |
| Pupil Referral Unit | 37            |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>10,848</b> |

With regards to private and independent schools, we are advising you as per Section 1(1) of the Act that this information is not held. We do not receive school census data from private or independent schools and are not aware of those students with additional needs supported by schools themselves.

## **2. New students placed into SEN provision in the academic year 2024/2025.**

Students who receive additional support directly from schools are not placed in special school provision.

## **3. The number of children and young people who have been placed outside the local authority area.**

School places are allocated based on parental preference and applicable oversubscription criteria. Schools will determine any additional support needed by students on entry to the school. The local authority would not 'place' students outside the authority area based on them receiving SEN support.

## **4. The total cost to the local authority for SEN placements in the academic year 2024/2025, broken down by type of placement and provider.**

Part of the information requested is being withheld as it falls under the exemption(s) in Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relates to Information Intended for Future Publication.

The information can be viewed after the accounts are finalised and accessible using the link below:  
[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/finance/section 251 tables](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/finance/section%20251%20tables)

With regards to data broken down by provider and placement, we hold the information which you have asked for, but we have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £450 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees Regulations 2004). This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours or more, in determining whether the information is held, locating, retrieving and extracting it.

This is not recorded in a reportable format. In order to obtain this we would have to manually check various databases, the time which we estimate will exceed 18 hours. This part of your request has been refused under section 12(2) of the Act.

## **5. Breakdown in the number of SEN placements and associated costs over the last five years.**

See response to Question 4 and use the link provided to access the data. We are unable to provide a breakdown as per the reasons outlined above.

## **Alternative Provision Placements**

### **1. The total number of children and young people currently in Alternative Provision placements, broken down by type (e.g. pupil referral units, independent alternative provision providers).**

As at the January 2025 census there were 73 pupils in pupil referral units.

In regards to placements arranged via Coventry Alternative Provision. We lead a collaboration of schools/academies and training providers within Coventry to ensure high quality Alternative Provision is made available and accessible to students who attend school. All pupils accessing this provision remain on the role of the school.

## **2. New students placed into AP placements in the academic year 2024/2025.**

Coventry Alternative Provision Academy - 51  
Inspired Pathways 152

In regards to placements arranged via Coventry Alternative Provision. Coventry City Council does not directly commission providers for the delivery of Alternative Provision.

The Council maintains an established Coventry Alternative Provision Framework to ensure the availability of high quality, registered provision. All pupils accessing this provision remain on the roll of their respective schools. These placements are commissioned by schools.

## **3. The number of AP placements made outside the local authority area.**

None.

## **4. The total cost to the local authority for AP placements in the academic year 2024/2025, broken down by provider.**

£1,583,814 Inspired Education  
£1,800,081 - Coventry Extended Learning Centre  
£1,107,769 Coventry Alternative Provision Academy

Please note that the above figures are for the financial year.

In regards to placements arranged via Coventry Alternative Provision. We lead a collaboration of schools/academies and training providers within Coventry to ensure high-quality Alternative Provision is made available and accessible to students who attend school. Please note that the net expenditure to Coventry City Council for this is NIL as schools pay for this service.

## **5. Breakdown in the number of AP placements and associated costs over the last five years.**

Please see details below for pupil referral units.  
Placements as per the January census for each year:

|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 2020 | 109 |
| 2021 | 69  |
| 2022 | 68  |
| 2023 | 82  |
| 2024 | 108 |

Associated costs in financial years:

|           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| 2019/2020 | £4,019,491 |
| 2020/2021 | £3,627,283 |
| 2021/2022 | £3,717,871 |
| 2022/2023 | £3,819,212 |
| 2023/2024 | £4,589,954 |

In regards to placements arranged via Coventry Alternative Provision. Coventry City Council does

not commission any providers for the delivery of Alternative Provision.

The Council maintains an established Coventry Alternative Provision Framework to ensure the availability of high quality, registered provision. All pupils accessing this provision remain on the roll of their respective schools. These placements are commissioned and funded by schools, and as such, Coventry City Council does not incur any net expenditure.

Please see details below of online providers:

Number of placements:

2023/2024 16

2024/2025 - 24

With regards to associated spend, it is confirmed that the Council does hold information pursuant to your request. However, it is our view that the information is exempt from disclosure under Section 43(2) – Commercially Sensitive Information. Section 43(2) exempts information from disclosure where disclosure of that information would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

It is the Council's position that the third party providers and its own commercial interests would be prejudiced and/or would be likely to be prejudiced by the disclosure of the requested information.

Once the information is disclosed this means that it will be in the public domain and it could not only be used by the requester but also any other providers in a similar market.

Arguments in favour of disclosure.

- Promote accountability and transparency for the Council's decisions and in its spending of public money.
- Assist the public to understand and challenge our decisions.
- Inform the public of the activities carried out on their behalf, allowing for more user involvement and collaborative decision making.
- Enable the public to better scrutinise the public monies spent

Arguments against disclosure.

- There is a public interest in allowing public authorities to withhold information which if disclosed, would reduce providers' ability to compete in a commercial environment.
- The successful providers operate in a competitive market. If prejudicing the commercial interests of the successful providers in the market would distort competition in that market, this would not be in the public interest.
- Disclosure of information may cause unwarranted reputational damage or loss of confidence in the Council.
- Revealing information such as a pricing mechanism can be detrimental to a provider's commercial interest. If an organisation has knowledge of a provider's business model, it can exploit this for its own commercial interest. This would also have a detrimental impact on the Council on other contracts and procurements by distorting the market, for the reasons stated above.

Having considered the arguments for and against disclosure, the Council has decided that the

public interest in this case is best served by maintaining the exemption under section 43(2) FOIA and by not disclosing the information requested.

The decision to withhold the information requested is therefore upheld on the basis that Section 43(2) in relation to commercially sensitive information has been applied correctly.

**6. Are you working with any online providers of AP tuition/provision e.g. Tute or Academy21**

Yes.

**Waiting Times and Capacity**

**1. The average waiting time for both SEN and AP placements in the last academic year (2024/2025) and how many students are on the waiting list.**

**2. The average waiting time for both SEN and AP placements in the academic year 2023/2024 and how many students are on the waiting list.**

In response to question 1 and 2 above, the Local Authority does not operate a waiting list. At any one time there will be a number of children that will be within the process and timeframe as set out in statutory guidance.

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

**Information Governance**