



Ministry of Defence

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Our Reference: FOI2015/06143

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

5 August 2015

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) dated 9 July in which you requested the following information:

I request that the Ministry of Defence sends me copies of all correspondence between the Navy and individuals at Arduthie Primary School, Balblair Primary School, Cannich Primary School, Clober Primary School, Gartcorner Primary School, Langbank Primary School in 2010/11 – with personal details of individuals redacted.

I request that the Ministry of Defence sends me copies of all correspondence between the Army and Individuals at Boghall Primary School, St Bartholomews Primary School, Carleton Primary School, Our Lady's Primary School, St Dominics Primary School, Colinton Primary School, Blackfriars Primary in 2011/12/13 – with the personal details of individuals redacted.

I request that the Ministry of Defence sends me copies of Army, Navy or RAF correspondence from the period 2010-15 with staff from any other primary schools in Scotland than those named above - with the personal details of individuals redacted.

To ask if there have been unofficial visits to primary schools by the RAF and what is their policy on visits to Primary Schools

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

I must inform you that the information in your FOI request is not centrally located and would require indentifying, locating and manually searching a large number of records and files at a number of sites. It has been estimated that to provide the information you request will exceed the FOI cost limit. This limit is specified in FOI regulations and for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending three and a half working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. If any one part of an FOI request exceeds the cost limit, then the whole request must be rejected.

Under Section 16 of the FOI act I can suggest that you may wish to refine your request to a single visit, location or year. However, this may still result in a request being cost exempt.

With regard to unofficial visits to and correspondence with primary schools, the Royal Air Force (RAF) have advised that this information is not regularly recorded as the majority of visits and correspondence with schools is done on an *ad hoc* basis. Therefore, the Department would need to ask all serving (and ex serving) RAF personnel who were stationed at a base in Scotland during the period 2010 to 2015 whether they corresponded with any primary schools. Currently there are 2000 personnel at RAF Lossiemouth and a further 800 personnel at other units. Generally a tour lasts between two to five years. Therefore, on average the Department could potentially need to contact over 5600 personnel (2800 personnel multiplied by two tours of three years) for RAF Lossiemouth alone.

Additionally, RAF Kinloss ceased to be an RAF Station on 26 July 2012 and RAF personnel at Leuchars Army base have reduced to 30–40 staff in 2015. Therefore, any information which was held by RAF Kinloss and RAF Leuchars is likely to have been archived or moved to other RAF Stations throughout the UK and will not be easily locatable.

Finally, the term “all correspondence” in your request would include contact between the three Services and a number of primary schools in Scotland with service children on their rolls. This correspondence that would be in relation to providing advice about school places, exclusions and securing MOD funding for pupils and would be refused under Section 40 of the FOI Act (Personal information).

I hope that this information will be helpful to you.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,


Defence People Secretariat