



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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12 January 2016

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: 1148-16**

Thank you for your request dated 15 December 2016 under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). You asked that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) should provide the following:

- 1. How many staff in the department were in receipt of the continuity of education allowance over the past four years? Please could you break this down by financial year, up to and including December 2016. For each member of staff, please could you state how many children are in receipt of the continuity of education allowance and the cost for each member of staff. Please could you also provide a total figure (broken down year by year) for the number of staff and children in receipt of the allowance.*
- 2. What was the cost, in pounds sterling, to the department in respect of staff based in the UK, and posted overseas? Please could you break this down by staff based in the UK, and staff posted overseas and by financial year. Please could you break this down for each member of staff, by financial year, up to an including December 2016.*
- 3. How much, in pounds sterling, has the department spent on continuity of education allowance for children attending (a) Charterhouse School, (b) Dulwich College, (c) Eton College, (d) Harrow School, (e) Marlborough College, (f) Rugby School, (g) Westminster School, (h) Winchester College, (i) Cheltenham Ladies College, (j) Roedean School, (k) St Paul's School, (l) Fettes College and (m) Gordonstoun School over the past three years? Please could you break this down by financial year, for the past four years up to and including December 2016.*

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

Please see below the information the FCO can release to you for the completed financial years. We are unable to provide the information for the current, incomplete, financial year as it is not held centrally until the end of the financial year.

It is a condition of their employment that members of the diplomatic service must be prepared to serve anywhere in the world at any time during their career, sometimes at very short notice. Those with children have a legal obligation as parents to ensure that their children receive a full-time education from the age of five years. Most parents prefer to take their children with them abroad, but in some of the 168 countries and territories where the

FCO has UK based staff, we do not permit staff to take their children either for health or security reasons.

In others, local schools of an acceptable standard are not available. It is longstanding practice that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) helps staff meet their potentially conflicting obligations by providing financial support for their children's education in the UK where staff choose, or are obliged to do so given local conditions in the country to which they are posted, particularly at secondary level. This support encompasses a fixed period before and after the posting and the period of posting itself.

The FCO refunds standard term fees up to a ceiling which is reviewed annually. Where staff opt to send their children to more expensive schools, such as all those schools you have listed, staff meet the difference in cost. The maximum amount the FCO will pay is determined by an independent survey conducted by ECA International, which is used by public and private sector employers whose staff work across the world. Various factors, including availability of places (sometimes at short notice) and proximity of other family members, influence which schools staff choose for their children.

The necessary costs of Continuity Education Allowance, number of officers in receipt of CEA and the number of children for last four financial years, up to 31 March 2016 are as follows :-

Financial Year	Home			Overseas		
	Officers	Children	Cost	Officers	Children	Cost
2015/16	174	295	£6,003,630	174	277	£6,405,432
2014/15	181	309	£6,315,446	189	284	£6,627,688
2013/14	198	316	£6,718,545	180	288	£6,444,278
2012/13	225	341	£8,684,922	217	359	£6,241,139

You requested a breakdown by individual staff member. We are not able to disclose this as the information is personal data of the individuals concerned and in such circumstances, section 40(2) and (3)(a) of the FOIA applies. Even if this were not the case, to anonymise the data would exceed the cost limit for FOI requests.

The following are the costs by the FCO to attend the following schools:-

School	Financial Year 2012/13	Financial Year 2013/14	Financial Year 2014/15	Financial Year 2015/16	Totals
<b>Charterhouse</b>	£23,550.00	£0.00	£59,929.25	£120,248.75	£203,728.00
<b>Dulwich College</b>	£109,687.67	£152,717.00	£201,724.70	£153,713.75	£617,843.12
<b>Eton College</b>	£106,542.60	£112,442.15	£75,983.00	£79,139.50	£374,107.25
<b>Harrow</b>	£8,577.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£8,577.00
<b>Marlborough College</b>	£415,106.22	£257,258.88	£193,022.28	£177,470.74	£1,042,858.12
<b>Rugby</b>	£80,197.00	£138,784.17	£150,876.56	£145,921.56	£515,779.29
<b>Westminster</b>	£0.00	£18,670.00	£28,429.00	£43,371.90	£90,470.90
<b>Winchester College</b>	£201,478.85	£239,254.50	£236,717.00	£255,784.00	£933,234.35

<b>Cheltenham Ladies College</b>	£26,447.00	£27,555.00	£41,861.00	£49,990.00	£145,853.00
<b>Roedean</b>	£84,229.40	£91,140.50	£97,562.50	£130,856.00	£403,788.40
<b>St Paul's School</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Fettes College</b>	£142,253.50	£124,248.15	£42,701.65	£27,295.64	£336,498.94
<b>Gordonstoun</b>	£37,190.00	£47,611.00	£49,200.00	£100,304.00	£234,305.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	£1,235,259.24	£1,209,681.35	£1,178,006.94	£1,284,095.84	£4,907,043.37

Yours sincerely,

Human Resources Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.