



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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21 March 2017

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: 0212-17**

Thank you for your request dated 27 February 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 during 2016?*
- 2) *How many children benefited from the Continuity of Education Allowance during 2016?*
- 3) *What was the total cost (in pounds sterling) to the department for providing the Continuity of Education Allowance to staff during 2016? Please could you also break this down by staff based in the UK, and staff posted overseas.*
- 4) *In 2016, how much (in pounds sterling) did the department spend on Continuity of Education Allowance for children attending the following schools:  
(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,  
(m) Gordonstoun School*

We have now completed our search and 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 year 2015/2016. We are unable to provide the information specifically for 2016 as our information is held centrally by 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, there are no available schools of an acceptable standard.

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.

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 are required to 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.

The necessary costs of Continuity Education Allowance, number of officers in receipt of CEA and the number of children both in the UK and overseas for financial year 2015/2016 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

The costs of Continuity of Education Allowance for children attending the schools listed in question 4 for financial year 2015/2016 are as follows:

School	Financial Year 2015/16
Charterhouse	£120,248.75
Dulwich College	£153,713.75
Eton College	£79,139.50
Harrow	£0.00
Marlborough College	£177,470.74
Rugby	£145,921.56
Westminster	£43,371.90
Winchester College	£255,784.00
Cheltenham Ladies College	£49,990.00
Roedean	£130,856.00
St Paul's School	£0.00
Fettes College	£27,295.64
Gordonstoun	£100,304.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,284,095.84</b>

Yours sincerely,

International Policy (Education & Freight)  
Human Resources Directorate



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