

Our Ref: NG/RM/26014
Date: 10th February 2026

Nicola Griffiths
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Lawton House
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ST4 8HH

Reception: 0300 123 1535

Dear

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing in response to your e-mail of the 12th January 2026. Your request has been processed using the Trust's procedures for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Requested information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I am requesting data regarding the waiting times for autism assessments for children. Please provide the following information for each year from 2015 – 2025 (I understand the 2025 data might not be ready yet!)

1. The number of referrals received for autism assessments for children (breaking down into age groups of 0-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years+).
2. The average waiting time from referral to assessment. Breaking down each stage of process from referral, initial consultation, diagnostic assessment and final report.
3. The number of referrals that met NHS waiting time target (13 weeks).

Please see Appendix 1 attached.

Please note the wait time from referral to assessment has been based on the number of days from referral to the first attended direct contact that the patient had with the Autism Assessment service. We are currently unable to provide an accurate breakdown of initial consultation, diagnostic assessment and final report from the information that is captured within our EPR system.

Statistical question regarding the present day:

4. What is the longest recorded waiting time for an assessment in the past year? **1370 days**
The above figure represents the longest wait time for a person still waiting for their assessment to commence.
5. The number of children currently on the waiting list. **2592**

6. How much funding has been allocated to children's autism assessments in each of the past 10 years?

The Trust does not hold historical funding in the level of detail requested as children's autism assessment activity is funded through the Trust's baseline commissioned block contract rather than discrete activity-based allocations.

Where additional investment has been made through outsourced provision, disclosure would be likely to prejudice the Trust's commercial interests by undermining our ability to negotiate value-for-money contracts with external providers. This information is therefore exempt under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The public interest in protecting the Trust's commercial position outweighs the public interest in disclosure

7. What is the current staffing level for autism assessment teams? **There are 24.42 WTE staff however this is to provide an All-age assessment service and are unable to break this down to WTE specifically to children as we work as one team.**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review of the management of your request. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust, Trust Headquarters, Lawton House, Bellringer Road, Trentham, ST4 8HH. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely



Nicola Griffiths
Deputy Director of Governance