| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0596  Responded to: 21st June 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## How many missing cases have there been every year since 2020 relating to looked-after children? What facilities were these children missing from e.g. young persons' residential unit or foster home.

## Could I also have these figures broken down by age of the missing child as well as police division?

Regarding your request, please see the tables below displaying the data that you require. Please note the caveats after the last table.

Table 1 shows the total missing persons investigations for under 18 looked after children for the period 1st January 2020 - 29th February 2024 (Calendar Year).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of recorded missing person investigations** |
| 2020 | 3563 |
| 2021 | 3898 |
| 2022 | 4100 |
| 2023 | 4316 |
| 2024 | 558 |

Table 2 shows the total recorded (under 18) looked after children missing persons investigations by the facility that they went missing from for the period 1st January 2020 - 29th February 2024 (Calendar Year).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Facility** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** |
| Adult Care Home | 11 | 11 | 21 | 11 | 0 |
| Foster care address | 256 | 261 | 331 | 358 | 42 |
| Home address | 387 | 480 | 654 | 712 | 96 |
| NHS | 17 | 22 | 28 | 19 | 0 |
| Other | 182 | 195 | 142 | 240 | 32 |
| School | 90 | 116 | 142 | 123 | 20 |
| Young Persons Unit | 2620 | 2813 | 2633 | 2852 | 368 |
| Workplace | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 3568 | 3898 | 4100 | 4316 | 558 |

Table 3 shows the total recorded (under 18) looked after children missing persons investigations per Police Scotland division from for the period 1st January 2020 - 29th February 2024 (Calendar Year).

Table 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Division | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| Argyll and West Dunbartonshire | 53 | 36 | 80 | 52 | 7 |
| Ayrshire | 376 | 270 | 269 | 353 | 54 |
| Dumfries and Galloway | 35 | 97 | 144 | 54 | 6 |
| Edinburgh | 245 | 365 | 395 | 600 | 44 |
| Fife | 293 | 490 | 620 | 608 | 50 |
| Forth Valley | 401 | 253 | 255 | 255 | 22 |
| Greater Glasgow | 501 | 490 | 290 | 482 | 75 |
| Highlands and Islands | 184 | 253 | 346 | 242 | 51 |
| Lanarkshire | 651 | 533 | 514 | 590 | 99 |
| Lothians and borders | 358 | 490 | 375 | 362 | 52 |
| North East | 87 | 122 | 134 | 104 | 18 |
| Renfrewshire and Inverclyde | 88 | 160 | 371 | 334 | 39 |
| Tayside | 291 | 339 | 307 | 280 | 41 |
| Total | 3568 | 3898 | 4100 | 4316 | 558 |

Table 4 shows the total recorded (under 18) looked after children missing persons investigations by age for the period 1st January 2020 - 29th February 2024 (Calendar Year).

Table 4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age of missing child | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| 0 years | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 years | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 years | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 6 years | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 7 years | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| 8 years | 3 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 0 |
| 9 years | 9 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| 10 years | 8 | 12 | 7 | 14 | 0 |
| 11 years | 51 | 21 | 27 | 22 | 3 |
| 12 years | 123 | 182 | 199 | 251 | 21 |
| 13 years | 317 | 381 | 496 | 793 | 110 |
| 14 years | 627 | 764 | 896 | 902 | 100 |
| 15 years | 1259 | 1063 | 1216 | 1201 | 211 |
| 16 years | 818 | 1011 | 764 | 833 | 77 |
| 17 years | 343 | 456 | 484 | 285 | 33 |
| Total | 3563 | 3898 | 4100 | 4316 | 558 |

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| All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information. All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as of 26th March 2024. |
| 1. The data was extracted from the Missing Person's Database. |
| 2. The data was extracted using the Date Reported Missing. All Divisions across Police Scotland started using the Missing Persons Database for recording Missing Person Investigations within April 2019. |
| 3. The age of the missing person is based on the 'Date Reported Missing'. This is the age recorded when the nominal was reported missing. |
| 4. Table 1 is a count of missing person investigations, and not unique persons. The same person can appear more than once in the count of missing person investigations. |
| 5. Records with a null Division have been excluded. |
| 6. Please note, records without a valid Date of Birth have been excluded. |
| 7. Nominals under the age of 18 on the date they were reported missing have been selected. |
| 8. Nominals recorded as a 'Looked After Child' have been selected. |
| 9. Please note, each record would need to be read to confirm the circumstances. |

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.