



Disclosure Team
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Carolyne Willow
carolyne.willow@article39.org.uk

data.access@justice.gov.uk

27th July 2020

Dear Ms Willow,

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – 200707002

Thank you for your request dated 7TH July, in which you asked for the following information from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ):

“1 - A copy of any children’s rights impact assessment produced for The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

2 - A copy of any equality impact assessment produced for The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

3 - Information produced and circulated to children detained in secure training centres which explains the changes arising from The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

4 - Information produced and circulated to parents of detained children, or local authorities when the child is looked after, which explains the changes arising from The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

5 - Any correspondence between the Ministry of Justice and G4S Care and Justice Services and MTC in respect of The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

6 - Any correspondence between the Ministry of Justice and Ofsted, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons and the Care Quality Commission in respect of The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

7 - Any correspondence between the Ministry of Justice and the Youth Justice Board in respect of The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.

8 - Any correspondence between the Ministry of Justice and the Children’s Commissioner for England in respect of The Secure Training Centre (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020.”

Your request has been handled under the FOIA.

The MoJ does not hold the specific information you have requested in questions 1-8.

Outside the scope of the FOIA, I can advise that, the Statutory Instrument (SI) that came into force on 2 July makes amendments to a small number of existing Secure Training Centre (STC) Rules, to allow sites to operate in a way that reduces the risk of transmission of the virus, to help save lives and keep children and young people safe in secure settings. These changes are consistent in approach with SI 'The Prison and Young Offender Institution (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020' and existing Public Health England advice on infection control, which made these amendments necessary.

The modifications of the existing STC rules provide flexibility to allow for the safe operation of services for children in STCs, where this is necessary to control infection risk to children and staff during the Covid-19 pandemic. At all times STCs are required to deliver the highest possible regime whilst still complying with health guidelines.

During the pandemic, we have communicated with staff and children in the youth custody estate, parents and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) to ensure they are regularly updated about the pandemic, including the reasons why measures have had to be taken, and most recently to advise that work is progressing on Covid-19 recovery. The YCS have also provided regular briefings to Ofsted outlining current delivery challenges and the approach being taken to manage infection control.

STCs as institutions have remained relatively Covid-19 -free during this period. While this has been a challenging time for all, the vast majority of young people in STCs have shown great patience and maturity and an understanding of why measures have been necessary to protect themselves, their peers, their families and those staff working with them.

As the recovery phase gathers pace, the daily schedule in STCs will continue to be built up to as close to normal expectations as possible. Recovery in STCs will be managed as per the principles of the published 'Covid-19: National Framework for Prison Regimes and Services' which is an over-arching recovery model in use by HMPPS. The roadmap within that Framework sets out how minimum expectations for developing a Covid-safe regime are captured in a suite of thematic Exceptional Delivery Models (EDMs). The STCs will receive a set of these EDMs that are either developed specifically for the context of young people in custody or adapted to reflect the needs of children. The STCs will develop plans in response to each EDM, for example there is one about how to safely operate social visits and site level plans are being developed in line with the expectations of that EDM. Each plan developed in response to an EDM will have a corresponding Equalities Assessment, considered at a local level to assess impacts on protected characteristics. It is currently envisaged that face-to-face education will increase in volume during July. STCs have been working throughout lockdown to deliver as much face-to-face work as it has been deemed safe to do but the recovery phase and easing of lockdown will allow opportunities to increase this. Face to face social visits will commence at these sites by mid-July – albeit with necessary measures taken to ensure safety and subject to close monitoring, so that necessary actions can be taken to protect the health and wellbeing of all those on site should the wider health position require it, in line with the allowances made in this SI.

The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. The duty is to only provide the recorded information held.

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to request an internal review by responding in writing to one of the addresses below within two months of the date of this response.

data.access@justice.gov.uk

Disclosure Team, Ministry of Justice,

You do have the right to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. However, please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning their investigation.

Yours sincerely

L. Picton
HMPPS Briefing & Correspondence Team