



Statistical First Release

Outcomes for Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England as at 31 March 2014

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Attainment continues to improve for looked after children at key stages 1 and 2

At key stage 1, 71 per cent of looked after children achieved level 2 or above in reading in 2014 (compared with 69 per cent in 2013), 61 per cent achieved level 2 or above in writing (the same as in 2013), and 72 per cent achieved level 2 or above in mathematics (71 per cent in 2013). At key stage 2, the percentage of looked after children achieving the expected level in reading, writing (TA) and mathematics combined has risen to 48 per cent, an increase of 3 percentage points since 2013. At key stage 4, 12.0 per cent of looked after children achieved 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C including English and mathematics. However, due to reforms to the educational and assessment systems for key stage 4 during 2013/14 it is not possible to make comparisons with earlier years.

Attainment gaps are broadly similar or have closed slightly...

At key stage 1, gaps between looked after and non-looked after children remain broadly similar to those seen since 2010. At key stage 2 the gap in attainment on the headline measure has closed slightly since its introduction in 2012. Direct comparisons for the attainment gap at key stage 4 are not possible because of system reforms. The attainment gap in 2014 for the percentage achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalents at A*-C including English and mathematics is 40 percentage points.

A National Statistics publication

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

Two-thirds of looked after children have a SEN....

...and these children achieve at lower levels than other looked after children without a SEN across key stages 2 and 4, but attainment has improved on last year at key stage 2 (direct comparisons are not possible at key stage 4).

Permanent and fixed term exclusions for looked after children continue to fall...

Following previous trends, the rates of permanent and fixed rate exclusions for looked after children continued to fall in 2012/13, to their lowest levels. However, these remain above the rates seen for all children.

Just half of looked after children have emotional and behavioural health that is considered normal...

...but this has changed very little over recent years. However, there have been increases in the percentages of looked after children who have up-to-date health checks, and rates of substance misuse and offending rates are falling.

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What does this statistical release cover?

This Statistical First Release (SFR) provides national and local authority (LA) level information on the outcomes for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March 2014. The report includes information on educational attainment, special educational needs (SEN), health and wellbeing, offending, substance misuse and exclusions from school. In most cases, figures are presented for the last 5 years to enable comparisons back to 2010.

All figures are based on data collected annually through the Children Looked After return (also known as SSDA903) which is completed each spring by all local authorities in England. This is a longitudinal data collection. Further details on which children are included in the data collection can be found in the children looked after return [2013-14 collection guide](#). Information on attainment, SEN and exclusions are based on children looked after data that has been matched to attainment and school census data.

What is a looked after child?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

- is provided with accommodation for a continuous period for more than 24 hours
- is subject to a care order; or
- is subject to a placement order

A looked after child ceases to be looked after when he or she turns 18 years old. On reaching his or her 18th birthday, the status of the child changes from being looked after to being a young adult eligible for help and assistance from the local authority. Such help and assistance is usually provided in accordance with the various aftercare provisions of the Children Act.

For this publication, the definition of a 'looked after child' is a child who has been continuously looked after for at least 12 months up to and including 31 March 2014. This definition has been used because 12 months is considered an appropriate length of time to gauge the possible association of being looked after on educational attainment. It is also the cohort of children for whom information on outcomes such as health, wellbeing and offending are collected through the SSDA903. Where reference throughout this publication is made to a 'non-looked after child', this is defined as a child who has not been looked after continuously for 12 months as at 31 March. This will include children who have never been looked after and also those who have been looked after but who have not met the 12 months criteria.

The Department for Education publishes annual statistics on looked after children in England. These statistics are taken from the SSDA903 return that local authorities submit for the children they are responsible for. The latest publication was published in September 2014 and reports on looked after children for the year ending 31 March 2014. This publication can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption--2>.

Why monitor outcomes for looked after children and what is being done to improve outcomes?

This statistical release is the main source of information on outcomes for looked after children in England. It is used to inform policy decisions which aim to improve the outcomes for this vulnerable group of children, as well as other government departments, external agencies and social and educational researchers. Without this information it would be very difficult for ministers, Parliament, central and local government, pressure groups and the public to monitor government policies. It is also used by local authorities to understand the educational and other outcomes for children for whom they are responsible.

Closing the gap between the attainment of looked after children and all young people remains a high priority of the department. To support this priority the government has put the virtual school head role on a statutory footing to signal how important it is for everyone to champion the education of looked after children, wherever they are placed. The virtual school head will ensure the educational attainment of the children they look after is tracked and monitored as if the children attended a single school.

In April 2014 additional funding via the pupil premium was introduced for looked after children. Local authorities are allocated funding of £1,900 based on the number of eligible looked after children from the first day of care rather than, as previously, six months.

Attainment, special educational needs and exclusions for looked after children

1. Attainment of looked after children in key stage 1 continues to improve (Table 1; 1,750 looked after children)

Percentage achieving the expected level continues to increase

Since 2010, there has been sustained improvements in attainment at key stage 1 across all subjects, most notably in reading where attainment for looked after children has increased from 64 per cent achieving the expected level, to 71 per cent in 2014. Reading had the largest improvement between 2013 and 2014, of 2 percentage points (see Chart 1).

Attainment gap has closed slightly for reading and mathematics but, remained stable for writing compared with 2010

The attainment gap between looked after and non-looked after children is largest for writing at 25 percentage points, and this has risen by 1 percentage point since 2013. The reading attainment gap closed by 1 percentage point between 2013 and 2014, while the mathematics attainment gap was unchanged from 2013 (see Chart 2).

Chart 1: Improvements for looked after children at key stage 1

Percentage of looked after children achieving level 2 or above at key stage 1, 2010-2014

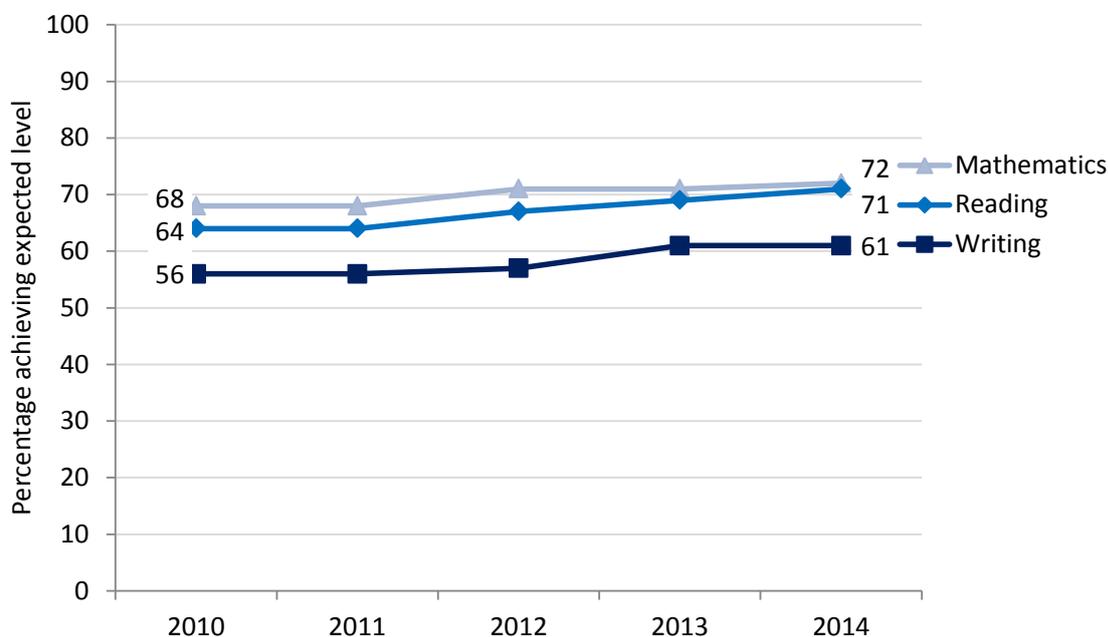
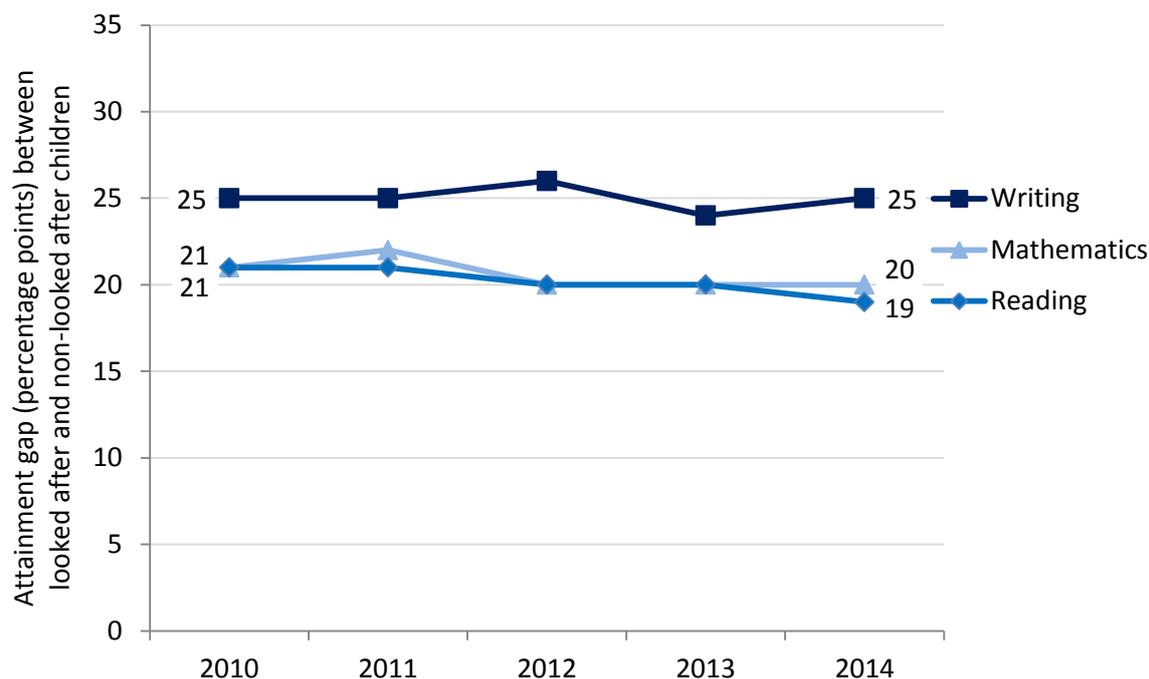


Chart 2: Gap narrowed for reading, but increased slightly in year for writing

Attainment gaps between the percentages of looked after and non-looked after children achieving the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics, 2010-2014



2. Attainment of looked after children in key stage 2 continues to improve, with attainment gaps decreasing (Table 2; 2,450 looked after children)

Percentage achieving the expected level across all subjects increases

The percentage of looked after children achieving the expected level in reading, writing (TA) and mathematics combined – the key indicator of pupil attainment at key stage 2 – has risen to 48 per cent, an increase of 3 percentage points since 2013, and of 6 percentage points since 2012. Rises have been seen across all individual subjects, continuing year-on-year trends (see Chart 3).

The attainment gap in the combined measure has remained constant, although it has fallen in each of the individual subjects¹

48 per cent of looked after children achieved the expected level in reading, writing (TA) and mathematics combined in 2014 compared with 79 per cent of non-looked after children, an attainment gap of 31 percentage points. This remained unchanged from 2013 but is lower than when the measure was introduced in 2012 (see Chart 4).

Where comparisons are available, attainment gaps have narrowed across all individual subjects between 2010 and 2014.

¹ Gaps can narrow in all individual subjects, but not in the overall measure, where additional children achieve say 2 of the 3 measures, where previously they may have only achieved in 1 of the 3 measures.

Percentage making expected progress in mathematics, reading and writing increases

The percentage of looked after children making expected progress (a minimum of two levels of progress between key stage 1 and key stage 2) in each subject continued to increase between 2013 and 2014. At least 75 per cent of looked after children made the expected progress between key stage 1 and 2 in each individual subject.

Girls outperform boys across all subjects except mathematics

Looked after girls outperform looked after boys in all subjects except mathematics, where results are matched. This has generally been the case in previous years and is similar to trends in the gender attainment gap seen for non-looked after children.

Chart 3: Improvements in all subjects for looked after children at key stage 2
Percentage of looked after children achieving level 4 or above at key stage 2, 2010-2014

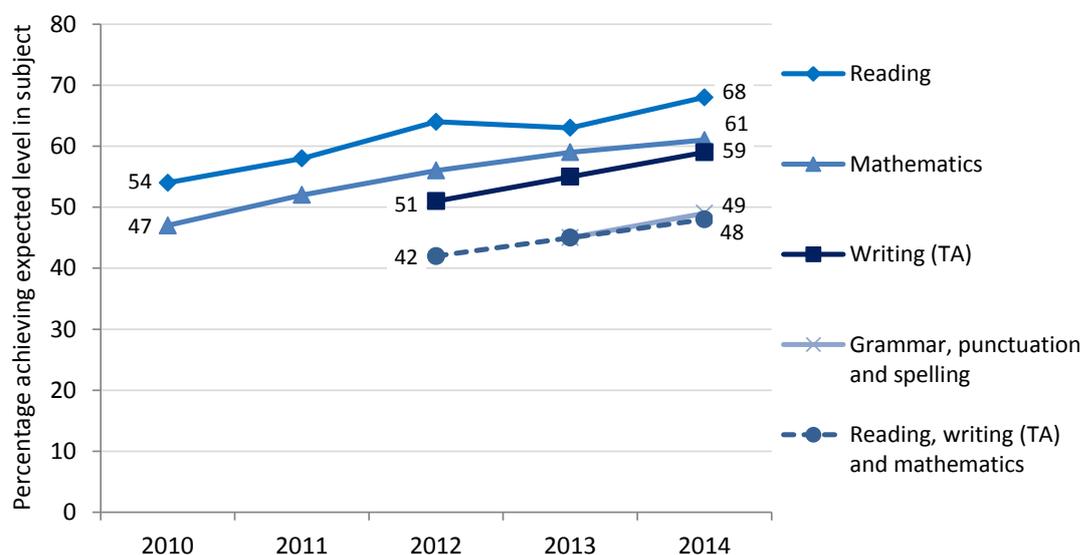
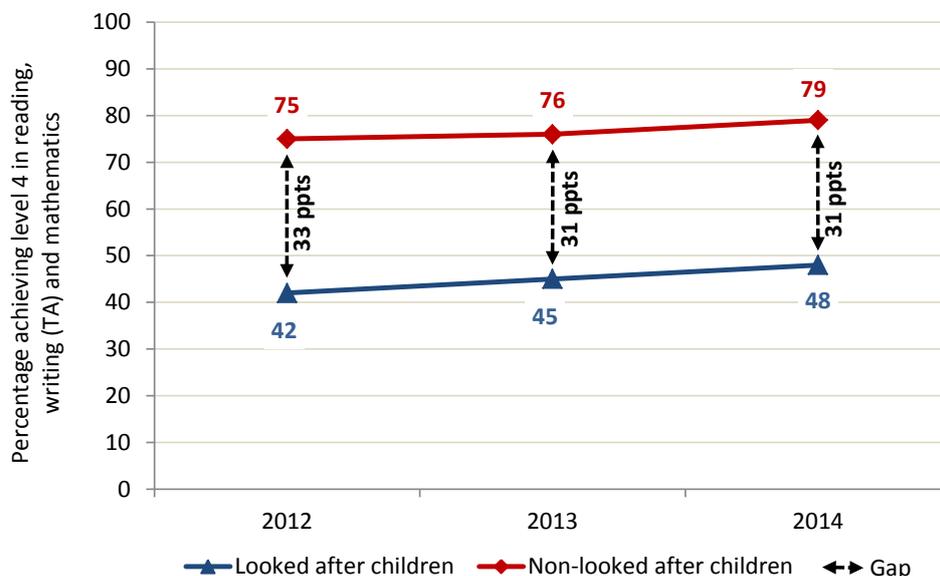


Chart 4: Attainment for both sets of children has improved since 2012, and the gap has narrowed
Attainment and attainment gaps between the percentages of looked after and non-looked after children achieving the expected level in reading, writing (TA) and mathematics, 2012-2014



3. Attainment of looked after children at key stage 4 (Table 3; 4,800 looked after children)

Two major reforms have been implemented which effect the calculation of key stage 4 (KS4) performance measures data:

1. Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education recommendations which;

- restrict the qualifications counted
- prevent any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE
- cap the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil

2. An early entry policy to only count a pupil's first attempt at a qualification.

The above reforms have had a significant impact on the 2013/14 GCSE and equivalent results data. To aid users in understanding this impact additional data has been calculated; this additional '2013 methodology' data removes the rules regarding the Wolf Review recommendations and early entry policy from the calculation of performance measures. It is intended to provide a point of comparison, using a proxy set of results based on 2012/13 rules. However, there are limitations to this data. It cannot reverse the behaviour of some schools that happened in response to the policy changes nor can it mitigate for any cohort effect (differences in the abilities of pupils between years).

Furthermore, a number of other changes took place in 2013/2014 which has impacted on results:

- Discounting against qualification type
- The move to linear GCSE formats
- Removal of the Speaking and Listening component from English examinations

As a result of these changes, 2013/14 data cannot be directly compared with earlier years.

For a full breakdown of the reforms, and their estimated impact, users should refer to [SFR 41/2014](#)

12.0 per cent of looked after children achieved 5 or more A*-C GCSEs or equivalent, including English and mathematics...	The percentage of looked after children achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent including English and mathematics (the headline measure) was 12.0 per cent in 2014. It is not possible to directly compare with earlier years due to the changes outlined above (see Chart 5).
...however, 68 per cent of looked after children eligible to sit GCSEs had a special educational need and attainment for those with a special educational need is lower	68 per cent of looked after children eligible to sit GCSEs have a special educational need. The percentage of looked after children with a special educational need achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent including English and mathematics was 8.0 per cent in 2014, compared to 28.1 per cent for those without a special educational need. Additional analysis will be undertaken to compare attainment of looked after children with a special educational need, with non-looked after children with a special educational need.

Attainment gap of 40.1 percentage points between looked after and non-looked after children

In 2014 there is a difference of 40.1 percentage points between the rates of looked after and non-looked after children achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs and equivalents including English and mathematics (see Chart 6).

Low numbers of looked after children made expected progress in mathematics and English

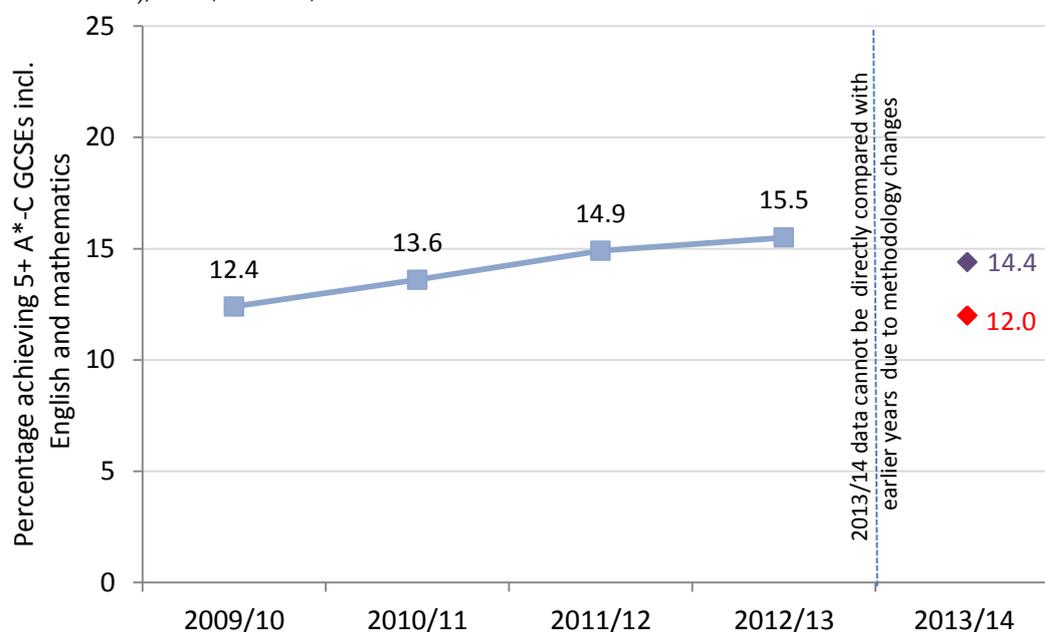
In 2014, just over 1 in 3 looked after children made expected progress in English, compared with just over 2 in 3 non looked after children. Just over 1 in 4 looked after children made expected progress in mathematics compared with just less than two-thirds non-looked after children. It is not possible to directly compare with earlier years due to the changes outlined above

Girls achieve more highly than boys across all years; the gap currently stands at 7 percentage points for the headline measure

Looked after girls consistently achieve higher than looked after boys at key stage 4. Since 2010 there has been an increase in the attainment gap between looked after girls and looked after boys in those achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent, including English and mathematics. In 2014 the attainment gap between the genders was 7.3 percentage points.

Chart 5: 12.0 per cent of looked after children achieved the expected level at key stage 4 in 2014

Percentage of looked after children achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent (including English and mathematics), 2009/10-2013/14



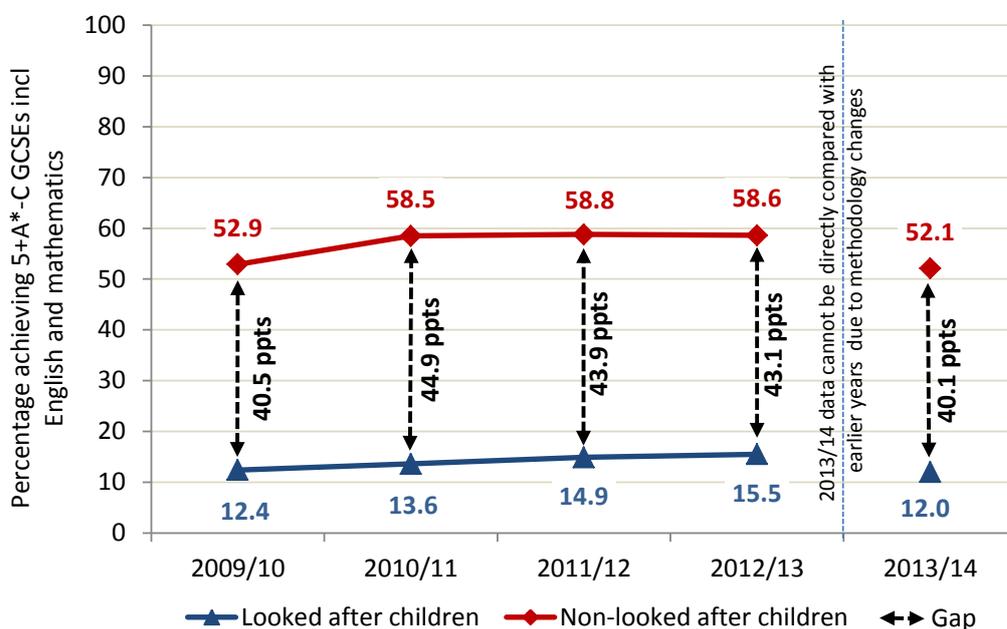
Colour coding:

2013/14 (with 2013 'methodology' applied)

2013/14 (with 'new 2014 methodology' applied)

Chart 6: The attainment gap stands at 40.1 percentage points between looked after and non-looked after children on the headline key stage 4 measure

Attainment and attainment gaps between the percentages of looked after and non-looked after children achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent (including English and mathematics), 2009/10-2013/14



4. Looked after children have higher levels of Special Educational Needs (SEN) (Tables 9 & LA8; 21,890 children with a SEN)

Two-thirds of looked after children have a SEN

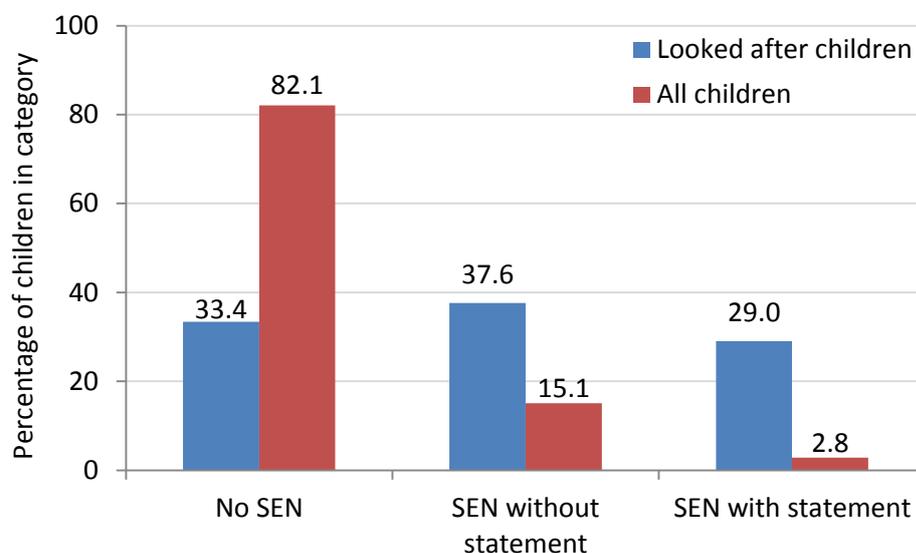
66.6 per cent of looked after children for whom data were available had a special educational need (SEN), which consists of 29.0 per cent with a statement of SEN and 37.6 per cent without a statement. These figures are much higher than the total population with SEN (looked after and non-looked after children). In 2014, 17.9 per cent of all children had a SEN which consisted of 2.8 per cent with a statement and 15.1 per cent without a statement (see Chart 7).

The most common SEN was 'behavioural, emotional and social difficulties'

In 2014 the most common type of SEN for looked after children was 'behavioural, emotional and social difficulties', which accounted for 49.0 per cent of looked after children at School Action Plus as their primary special need and 38.9 per cent of pupils with a statement of SEN. The second most common was Moderate Learning Difficulty, which accounted for 20.6 per cent of children at School Action Plus and 17.1 per cent of children with a statement. These types of SEN were both the most commonly reported in each of the previous three years, although there has been a decrease in the percentages with these two types of need since 2011. Speech, language and communication needs has become a more common primary SEN type amongst looked after children with SEN over time; this accounts for 10.6 per cent of looked after children at School Action Plus and 7.9 per cent of pupils with a statement of SEN.

Chart 7: Two-thirds of looked after children have a Special Educational Need, much higher than the school population as a whole

Percentage of children with a Special Educational Need, split by whether it is stated, 2014



5. Attainment of looked after children with SEN is lower than other looked after children, but is increasing at key stage 2 (Tables 10-11)

In 2014, there were 2,440 looked after children who were eligible to sit key stage 2 tests and had SEN information available. Of these, 1,600 (66 per cent) had a SEN. There were 3,940 looked after children who were eligible to sit key stage 4 tests and had SEN information available. Of these, 2,660 (68 per cent) had a SEN.

Looked after children with a SEN achieve less than those without at both key stage 2 and 4

The percentage of looked after children with a SEN achieving level 4 at key stage 2 (32 per cent) is much lower than the rates for looked after children without a SEN (80 per cent). Similarly, the percentage of looked after children with a SEN achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent (including English and mathematics) (8 per cent) is much lower than the rates for looked after children without a SEN (28 per cent) (see Chart 9). This follows the same trends seen nationally for all children with SEN at both key stages.

But key stage 2 attainment improving for looked after children with a SEN

There has been an improvement in the percentage of looked after children with a SEN attaining all key stage 2 measures. In particular, 32 per cent of looked after children with a SEN achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics combined, an increase from 26 per cent in 2012, when the measure was first introduced. Pupils on school action plus saw the largest time-series increase, of 8 percentage points since 2012 (see Chart 8).

Chart 8: Key stage 2 attainment has increased for all looked after children with a SEN
 Percentage of looked after children achieving level 4 or above in all of reading, writing and mathematics, split by SEN provision, 2012-2014

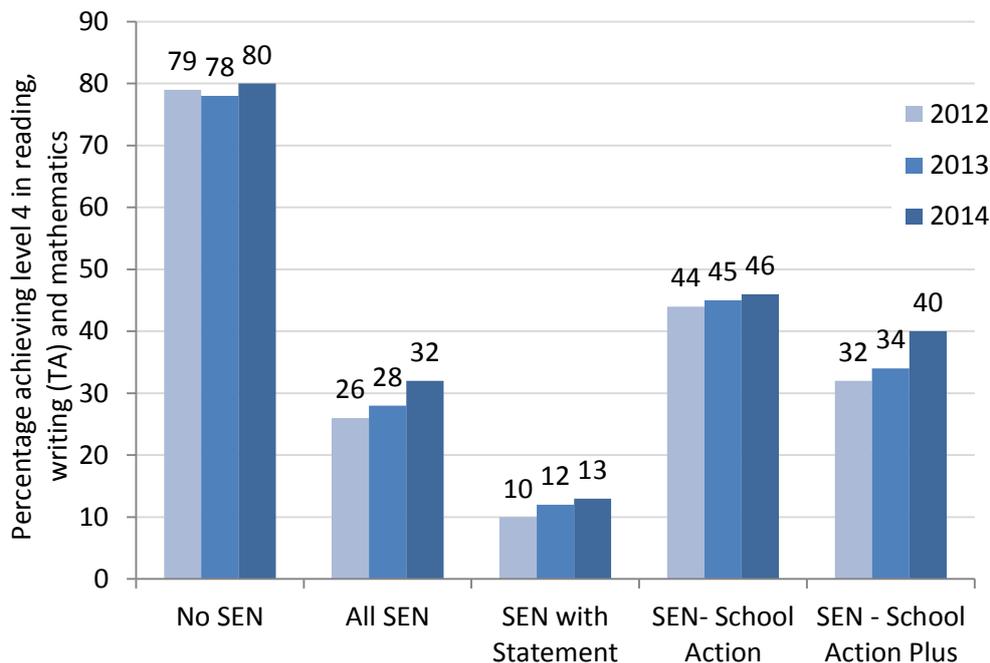
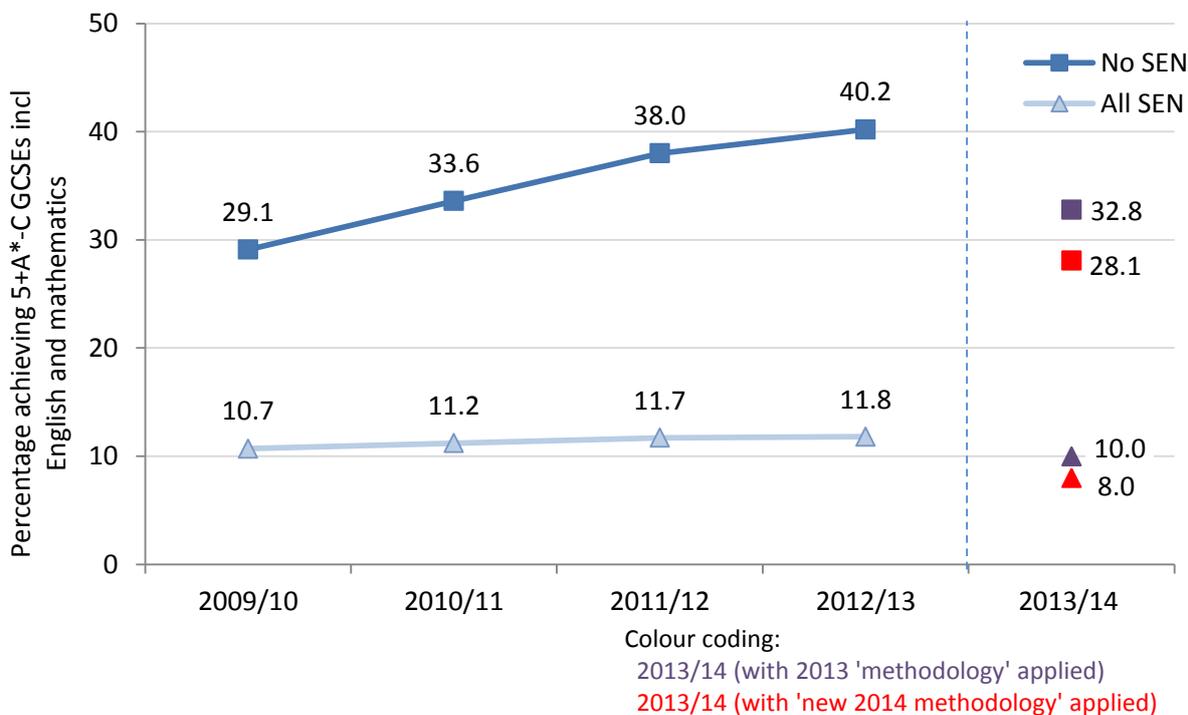


Chart 9: Key stage 4 attainment for looked after children is lower for those with a SEN than those without

Percentage of looked after children achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent (including English and mathematics), split by whether the child has a SEN, 2009/10-2013/14



6. Exclusions for looked after children are falling² (Table LA9)

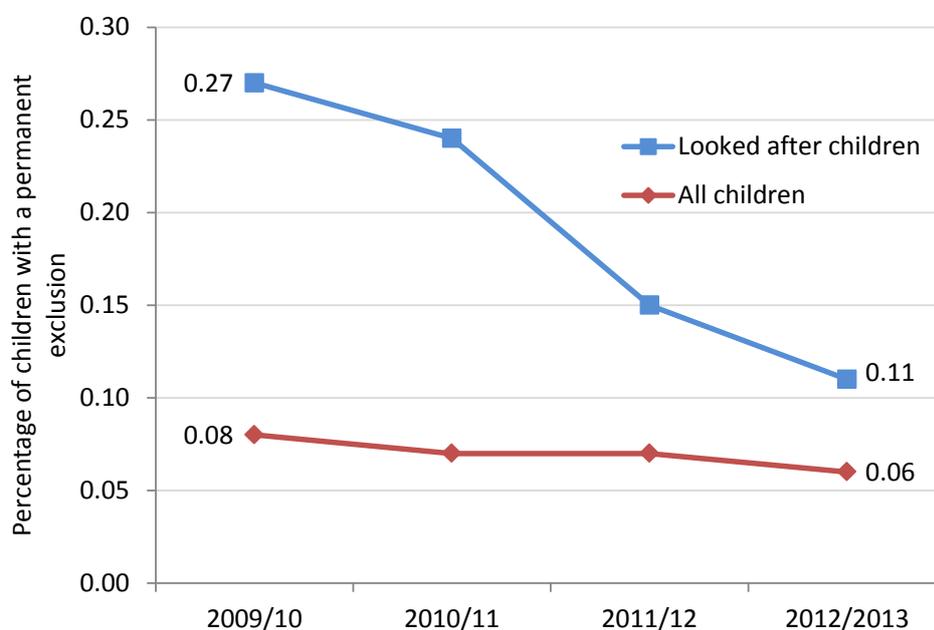
The latest exclusions data available is from the academic year 2012/13. This is matched to looked after children data from the corresponding year – year ending 31 March 2013. *Please note that this is an earlier year than the other latest information on looked after children in this statistical release.* In 2013, 28,820 looked after children aged 5 to 15 were matched to the school census.

Permanent exclusion rate nearly two times as high as for all children, but is decreasing at a higher rate	0.11 per cent of looked after children were permanently excluded from school in 2012/13. This is nearly two times higher than the rate for all children at 0.06 per cent. However, this has reduced greatly over the past four years when permanent exclusions amongst looked after children were 0.27 per cent, over three times higher than for the whole population (see Chart 10).
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Fixed term exclusion rate over five times as high as for all children, and is falling at a similar rate over time	9.78 per cent of looked after children had at least one fixed term exclusion from school in 2012/13. This is over five times as high as the rate for all children at 1.92 per cent. Again, this has reduced over the past four years - fixed term exclusions amongst looked after children were 12.62 per cent in 2010 – this follows the national trend seen for the whole population (see Chart 11).
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Chart 10: Permanent exclusion rate nearly twice as high for looked after children but falling at a faster rate

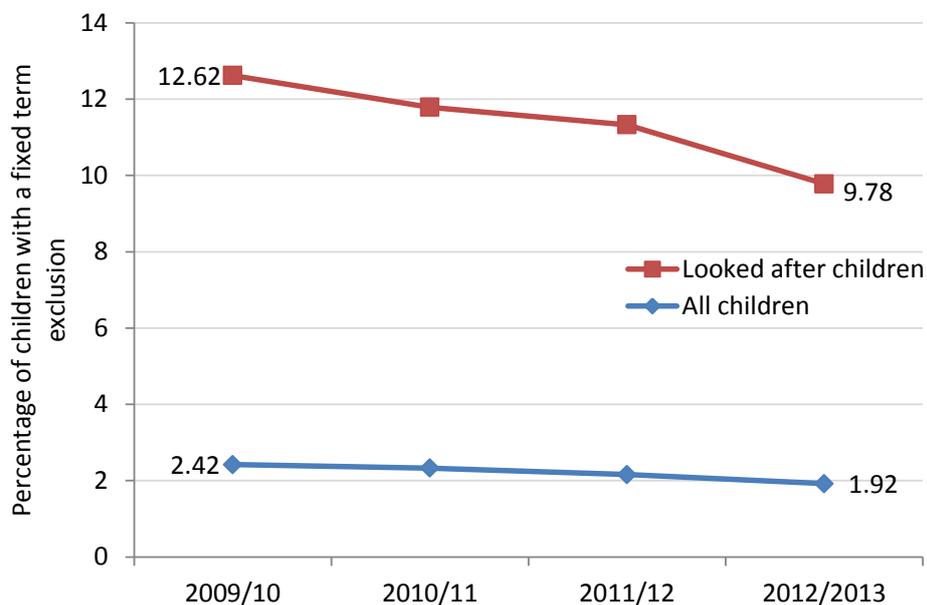
Percentage of looked after children with a permanent exclusion compared to all children, 2009/10 to 2012/13



² Absence rates for looked after children will be published as an additional table in March 2015.

Chart 11: Year on year decrease for looked after children with a fixed term exclusion following the national trend for all children

Percentage of looked after children with a fixed term exclusion compared to all children, 2009/10 to 2012/13



Outcomes data from the looked after children return³

7. Just half of looked after children have emotional and behavioural health that is considered normal⁴ (Tables 8a-8b)

Just half of looked after children have 'normal' emotional and behavioural health; this has changed very little over the last three years

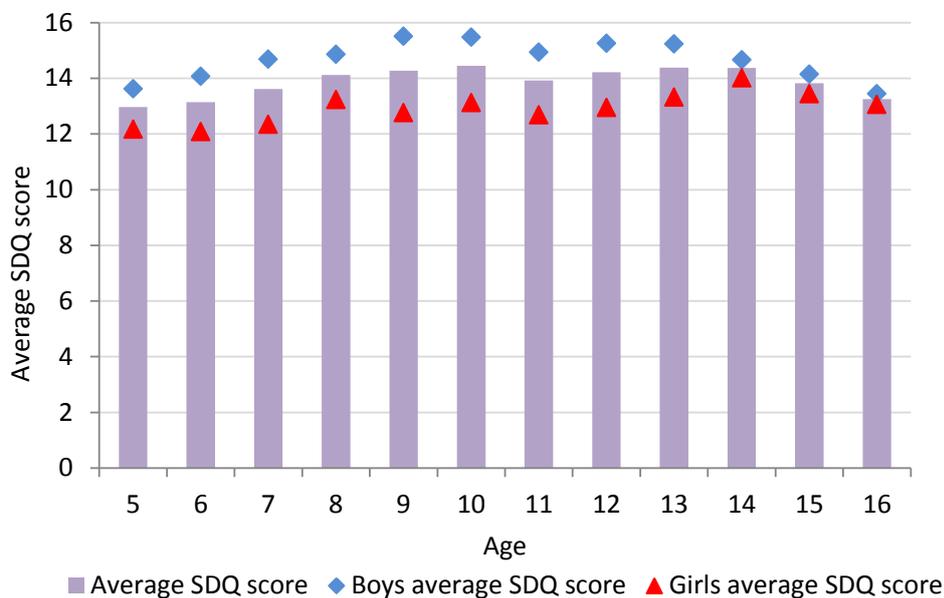
In 2014, the percentage of looked after children with emotional and behavioural health that is considered normal is 50.4 percent, borderline is 12.8 percent and cause for concern is 36.7 percent. There has been very little change in the emotional and behavioural health of looked after children over the last three years based on their SDQ scores.

More boys than girls have emotional health that is cause for concern

A higher score on the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire indicates more emotional difficulties, with a score of 0 to 13 being considered normal, a score of 14 to 16 considered borderline cause for concern, and 17 or more a cause for concern. In 2014, a higher proportion of boys (40.1%) than girls (32.6%) scored 17 or above on their SDQ, indicating cause for concern with their emotional health. Looked after boys score higher than looked after girls at all ages (see Chart 12).

Chart 12: At all ages, looked after boys score more highly than girls on their SDQ scores

Average (mean) score for looked after children on the SDQ, by gender and age, 2014



³ The information in this section covers outcomes such as offending, health and substance misuse which is collected directly from local authorities via the looked after children (SSDA903) return for the cohort of children who have been looked after continuously for 12 months at 31 March.

⁴ The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) should be completed for every child looked after for at least 12 months and aged 5 to 16 as at the end of March. In 2014, there were 34,770 children in this cohort, however just 68 per cent of these returned an SDQ score.

8. Most looked after children are up to date with their health care

(Tables 6-7)

The majority of looked after children are up to date with health care

The majority of looked after children are up to date with immunisations (87.1 percent), and their annual health check (88.4 percent), as well as having their teeth checked by a dentist (84.4 percent). All of these figures are higher than in 2013 and 2012, most notably for immunisations which have increased by 4.0 percentage points since 2012. Comparable data for non-looked after children is not available.

Older children are less likely to be up to date

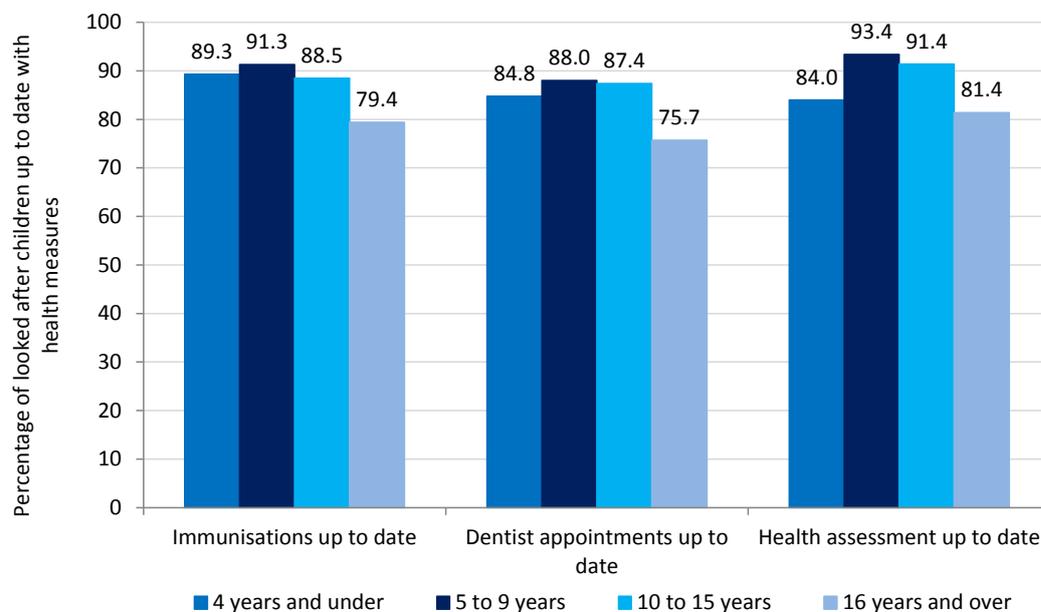
Looked after children aged 16 and above are less likely to be up to date with health measures, scoring lowest on all three health checks. However, these rates have improved across all ages and all health measures since 2013 (except for annual health assessments for the '4 years and under' category which fell by 0.5 per cent) (see Chart 13).

Most under-fives are up to date with development assessments

In 2014, there were 8,760 children looked after who were aged 5 or under. Of these, 86.8 per cent were up to date with their development assessments (health surveillance/ promotion checks), compared with 84.6 per cent in 2013 and 81.7 per cent in 2012.

Chart 13: The majority of looked after children are up to date with their health checks, although children aged 16 years and over are less likely to be

Percentage of looked after children up to date with health measures by age, 2014

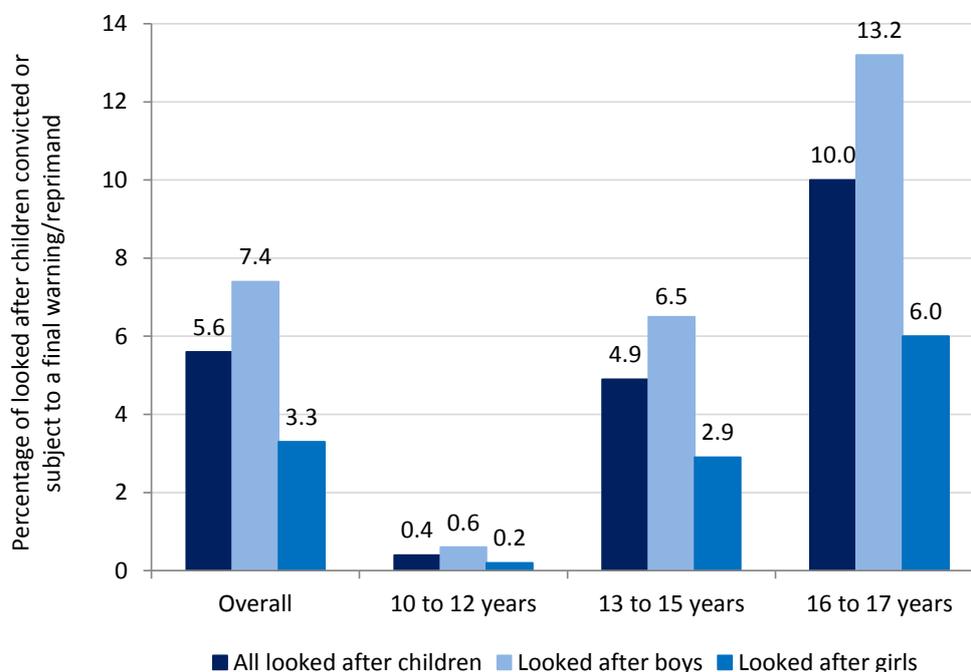


9. Offending⁵ rates are falling, although still higher than for all children (Table 4)

Looked after children less likely to be convicted or subject to final warning or reprimand than in previous years	Of the 30,660 children looked after aged between 10 and 17 years, 1,710 (5.6 per cent) had been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year, compared with 6.1 per cent in 2013 and 6.9 per cent in 2012. Comparable figures for all children are not yet available for 2014, however 1.2 per cent of all children were convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand in 2013, a decrease from 1.5 per cent in 2012.
Offending was higher amongst older children	The age group most likely to have been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year was 16 to 17 year olds (10.0 per cent) compared with 4.9 per cent of 13 to 15 year olds and 0.4 per cent of 10 to 12 year olds (see Chart 14).
Offending more frequent amongst boys	Boys are more likely to have been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year, 7.4 per cent, compared with 3.3 per cent of girls.

Chart 14: Offending higher in older looked after children and boys

Percentage of looked after children convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year by gender, 2014



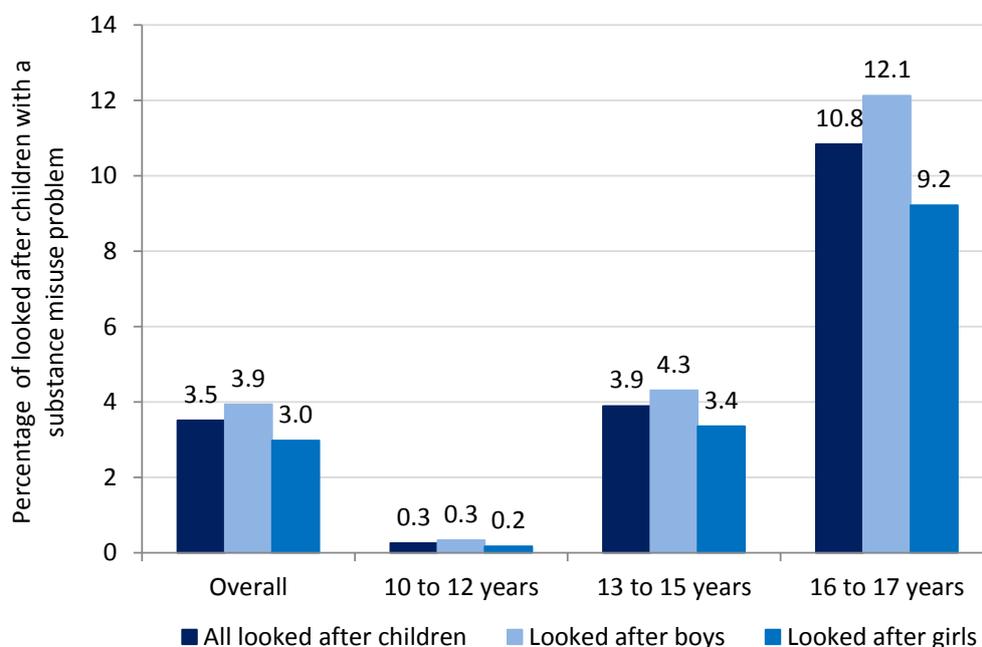
⁵ Offending data is collected for all children looked after continuously for at least 12 months aged 10 or above.

10. Boys more likely to have a substance misuse problem, rates are falling (Table 5)

Rate of substance misuse is the same as in 2013, but lower than in 2012 ⁶	Of the total 47,670 children looked after continuously for 12 months at 31 March 2014, 1,680 children (3.5 per cent) were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year, the same level as in 2013 and lower than the 4.1 per cent in 2012. Comparable rates for all children are not available.
Substance misuse is more common among older looked after children	1,200 children identified as having a substance misuse problem were aged 16 or 17. This represents 10.8 per cent of all looked after children in this age group. Boys in this age group were more likely to have a substance misuse problem than girls (see Chart 15)
Intervention rate has fallen from 2013	Of the looked after children identified as having a substance misuse problem in 2014, 56.3 per cent (940 children) received an intervention for the problem with a further 34.2 per cent (570 children) refusing the intervention which was offered. This compares to 2013, when 57.5 per cent received an intervention, and a further 34.4 per cent refused the intervention offered.

Chart 15: Looked after boys more likely to have a substance misuse problem than girls

Percentage of looked after children identified as having a substance misuse problem by age and gender, 2013



⁶ Information on substance misuse was collected for all children looked after for at least 12 months on March 31 2014.

List of tables

The following tables are available in excel format on the [department's statistics website](#).

Attainment of looked after children

Table 1: Key Stage 1 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by gender, 2010-2014

Table 2: Key Stage 2 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by gender, 2010-2014

Table 3: Key Stage 4 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by gender, 2010-2014

Table LA1: Eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at Key Stage 1, 2014

Table LA2: Eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at Key Stage 2, 2010-2014

Table LA3: Eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at Key Stage 4, 2010-2014

Outcomes from the looked after children return

Table 4: Offending by children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by age and gender, 2012-2014

Table 5: Substance misuse by children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by age and gender, 2012-2014

Table 6: Health care of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months by age and gender, 2012-2014

Table 7: Development assessments of children aged 5 or under who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months by gender, 2012-2014

Table 8a: Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children - Average score for children looked after at 31 March for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was received, 2012-2014

Table 8b: Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was received, 2012-2014

Table LA4: Offending by children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, 2014

Table LA5: Substance misuse by children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, 2014

Table LA6: Health care and development assessments of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, 2014

Table LA7: Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children - Average score for children looked after continuously for at least 12 months for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was completed, 2014

Looked after children with a Special Educational Need (SEN)

Table 9: Children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months by type of Special Educational Need (SEN), 2014

Table 10: Key Stage 2 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months by provision of Special Educational Need (SEN), 2010-2014

Table 11: Key Stage 4 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months by provision of Special Educational Need (SEN), 2010-2014

Table LA8: Children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months by Special Educational Need (SEN), 2014

Exclusions of looked after children

Table LA9: Exclusions from school of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, 2010-2013

Technical Notes

Data sources

1. The 2013-14 figures for looked after children are the latest in a regular series. Data are collected on the SSDA903 return, which provides the Department for Education with data on looked after children in England. This is a longitudinal collection and, therefore, previous years' figures may change where a local authority has updated records.

SSDA903

2. Information collected on SSDA903 includes details about the child (for example gender, date of birth, unique pupil number) and details about the child's episodes of care (for example, category of need, legal status under which the child is looked after and type of placement). It also collects various outcome indicators (OC2) for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March. The information collected includes data on offending, health promotion checks, immunisations, dental checks, health assessments and substance misuse.
3. The SSDA903 collects data on a financial year basis (so from the 1 April to the 31 March). A child who is identified as 'continuously looked after for at least 12 months' is a child who has been looked after for the entire financial year.

Key stage 1, 2 and 4 attainment data

4. Attainment data has been taken from the National Pupil Database (NPD). The data contained within the NPD is collected directly from awarding bodies. Key stage 2 and key stage 4 data for 2014 is provisional, prior to being checked by schools. Once final data becomes available, the differences will be assessed and data will be amended in spring 2015 if differences are deemed significant.
5. School type filters are not applied to key stage data for looked after children analysis. Looked after children attend a range of different setting types and therefore if valid attainment data is reported in the NPD from any setting type, it will be reported in these tables.
6. In 2013, a new test on English grammar, punctuation and spelling was introduced for all pupils following a pilot in 2012. It was also decided that there would no longer be an overall English level from the reading test and writing teacher assessment as in 2012, but instead results on reading and writing would be published separately. As a result of this, the measures of 'English' and 'English and mathematics' are no longer reported and instead the focus has switched to reading test, mathematics test and writing teacher assessment.
7. Progress measures for key stage 2 and key stage 4 were introduced in 2011. National figures are included for the percentage of children at key stage 2 making 2 levels of progress in mathematics, reading and writing, and for key stage 4, the percentage of children achieving the expected level of progress. Definitions of these can be found in the latest statistical releases for key stage 2 and key stage 4. Please note, as with the

other attainment measures for key stage 2 and key stage 4, this is based on provisional data.

8. Two major reforms have been implemented which affect the calculation of key stage 4 (KS4) performance measures data and mean that 2013/14 results are not directly comparable to previous years. Full details of the reforms and their impact can be found at ['Provisional GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2013 to 2014'](#). Further information on key stage 2 measures can be found at ['National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England, 2014 \(Provisional\)'](#).

School Census data

9. Exclusions data, and data on special educational needs (SEN) are taken from spring school census data, also held within the NPD. The spring census is a snapshot of the situation in schools as at the third Thursday in January. Pupil level information has been returned via the school census for nursery, primary, secondary and special schools since 2006. The alternative provision (AP) census was introduced in January 2008 and the pupil referral (PRU) census was introduced in 2010 (from 2014 PRUs have returned data as part of the school census data collection). Both the AP and the PRU censuses also return a snapshot of the situation as at the third Thursday in January.
10. Arrangements for identifying and providing for children with SEN are set out in Part IV of the 1996 Act (and, prior to this, the 1981 and 1993 Education Acts). New rights and duties were introduced by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). A Code of Practice, issued in 1994, supported the rights and duties in the 1996 Act. A new SEN Code of Practice was introduced in January 2002. All LAs, maintained schools and early years settings in receipt of government funding must have regard to it. The Code of Practice specified three stages of provision: School/Early Years Action, School/Early Years Action Plus and Statements of SEN.
11. Information on exclusions is collected two terms in arrears. This publication includes information for children looked after matched to latest exclusions data for 2012/13. Data for 2013/14 will be available in summer 2015.
12. Absence from schools data is taken from the School Census which collects information for children in state-funded primary and secondary schools and maintained and non-maintained special schools. Absence data is collected in arrears and therefore the latest information is for the academic year 2012/13. This was published in April 2014 and can be found in the following link: [Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities in England, as at 31 March 2013](#)
Absence data for 2013/14 will be available in spring 2015.

UPN return rates and data matching

13. The matching of NPD data to looked after children data (SSDA903) is reliant on the quality and return of the unique pupil number (UPN) by local authorities within the children looked after data return. It is the responsibility of local authorities to ensure that the UPN and other child identifiers provided on the SSDA903 are accurate, as

incorrect data could lead to a mismatch of data with the NPD.

14. For the SSDA903 collection for years ending 31 March 2013 and 2014, a valid UPN was to be returned for all pupils aged 4 or over at the start of the school year (e.g. at 31 August 2013 for the 2014 collection). This was a change from previous years when UPNs were expected only for children aged 6 and over. There are several reasons why a child may have no UPN. These are:
 - Child looked after is not of school age and has not yet been assigned a UPN
 - Child looked after has never attended a maintained school in England (e.g. some Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children).
 - Child looked after is educated outside England.
 - Child is newly looked after (from one week before end of collection period) and the UPN was not yet known at the time of the SSDA903 annual statistical return.
 - Sources collating UPNs reflect discrepancies for the child's name and/or surname and/or date of birth therefore preventing reliable matching (e.g. duplicated UPN)
15. For data collected through the SSAD903 in year ending 31 March 2014, 99.0% of children aged 4 to 15 had a UPN submitted (see methodology document for further information).
16. The denominators for the educational attainment, SEN and exclusions tables are the total number of looked after children who were matched to the NPD (using the UPN). In order to measure quality of this data and the percentage of children for whom UPN's were returned, an indicator has been given on the relevant LA tables showing the percentage of children with a UPN returned. Generally the UPN return rate is high but there are some local authorities for whom they are lower.
17. Using primarily the UPN, data from the SSDA903 are matched to NPD attainment data and census data. If a child is not on the roll of a school on the date of the census they will not appear in the census and hence their details are not returned to the department. For those children in the CLA data who do not match to the census, it is possible that they do not appear on the roll of a school at the key date in January.

Impact indicators and attainment gaps

18. The impact indicator for key stage 2 is the attainment gap between looked after children and non-looked after children achieving level 4 in all of reading, writing and mathematics. The impact indicator for key stage 4 is the attainment gap between looked after children and non-looked after children achieving grade A* to C in GCSE English and mathematics. The definition of a looked after children for these impact indicators is a child looked after for 6 months continuously. Latest data can be found [here](#).

Rounding conventions

19. The National Statistics Code of Practice requires that reasonable steps should be taken

to ensure that all published or disseminated statistics produced by the Department for Education protect confidentiality. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10, apart from the numbers of children relating to each local authority which have been rounded to the nearest 5. For confidentiality purposes, numbers from one to five inclusive have been replaced in the published tables by a cross (x). In the local authority tables, where there are zero (0) children for a measure, these too have been replaced by a cross (x). In the national tables, where a number is displayed as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero (0). The following convention has been used:

‘.’ means not applicable

‘-’ means negligible – used to represent a percentage below 0.5%

20. Where the numerator was five or less, or the denominator was 10 or less, percentages have been suppressed and replaced by a cross (x). Note that percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Want more?

Children looked after in England, including adoption	Information about looked-after children in England for the year ending 31 March 2014 was published on 30 September 2014. It includes the number of looked after children, the reasons why children are looked after, their legal status and type of placement, and the number of children who started to be, or ceased to be, looked after during the year ending 31 March 2014. It also covers the number of looked after children who were placed for adoption, the number of looked after children adopted and the average time between different stages of the adoption process.
Children in need and child protection statistics for England	Information on referrals, assessments and children who were the subject of a child protection plan (taken from the Children in Need census) was published in October 2014.
Information on care proceedings in England	The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) publish information on care proceedings applications made by local authorities where CAFCASS has been appointed by the court to represent the interests of children.
Local authority adoption statistics	Children in care and adoption performance indicators for 2014 show how local authorities and looked after children’s services compare with others in England.
Local authority expenditure	Information on local authority planned expenditure on schools, education, children and young people’s services is available for the financial year 2013-14. This data is returned to DfE by local authorities via the Section 251 Budget Return.
Ofsted statistics	Ofsted publish inspection outcomes for local authority children’s services and children’s social care providers in England as well as data on the placements of children looked after.

A National Statistics publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that The Code of Practice shall continue to be observed. This publication has been designated as National Statistics following assessment by the United Kingdom Statistics Authority.

Looked after children data user group:

This is a group which aims to seek feedback on whether these statistics are meeting users' requirements and to consult on any future changes to this data collection and the timing and format of our outputs. If you would like to participate in this group then please register your interest via [email](#).

Got a query? Like to give feedback?

If from the media Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT. 020 7925 6789

If non-media Jennifer Brown, Department for Education, 1st Floor Area G, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington, DL3 9BG. 01325 735684
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