
The Local Authority Children's Social Care Services Workforce Report, December 2012, England

From the National Minimum Dataset for Social Care (NMDS-SC)

March 2013

“we share
information
about the social
care workforce”



Department
for Education

nm ds-scTM
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data set for social care





Executive Summary

This report contains information about staff employed (directly and indirectly) by children's social services departments in England as at 31st December 2012. This report does not cover staff employed at adult social service departments (this part of the workforce has been reported on separately¹). This report uses data collected in the National Minimum Dataset for Social Care (NMDS-SC). The NMDS-SC is managed by Skills for Care on behalf of the Department of Health and has been collecting information about social care providers and their staff since late 2005.

This is the second year that the NMDS-SC has been the source of this report, previous to that local authority workforce information was collected via the Personal Social Services Staff of Social Services Departments return (SSDS001).

Information in this report is broken down into four job role groups, managers/ supervisors, professionals (e.g. social workers, registered nurses), direct care (e.g. care workers, senior care workers, community support and outreach workers) and other (e.g. ancillary and admin staff), for more information about job role groups and service types included in the NMDS-SC and the services types that make up the bases of this report please see annex A.

Main finding

Based on the NMDS-SC data received from 68 of 152 local authorities (please see annex B), the main findings were;

- Direct-care providing roles accounted for 37% of jobs in local authority children's services; professional roles accounted for 28%.
- 92% of workers in these authorities were directly employed by local authorities and 5% were bank or pool staff (see section on employment status).
- The turnover rate for all workers in these local authority children's services was 11.2% (1 in 9 workers leaving per year).
- The turnover rate for social workers in these children's authorities was 9.2% (1 in 11 workers leaving per year).
- The vacancy rate for all children's workers in these authorities was 7.0%; the vacancy rate for children's services social workers was 6.9%.
- 83% of workers in these authorities were female; the rate was higher for those in direct care providing roles.
- Almost a fifth of staff (19%) in these authorities were aged 55 or over and therefore likely to retire in the next 10 years. This proportion drops to 17% (or 1 in 6) for social workers.
- The median annual salary for a social worker in the children's services in these local authorities was £30,850.
- Around 50% of social workers in the responding London local authorities were from a black or minority ethnic background. This figure drops to 2% in the responding authorities in the North East.

¹ <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/psstaffsept12>



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1. Introduction

The data in this report are derived from the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2012, all information was created or updated during 2012. The report covers staff employed (directly or indirectly) by children's local authority services in England. The report does not cover adult social services departments² or staff employed by the independent sector.

This report contains three sections, the first describing information about local authority children's services, including whole time equivalent job ratios, vacancy rates and turnover rates. The second section contains information about children's local authority staff including descriptions by gender, age, ethnicity, pay rates, sickness and full/ part time employment status. The third section describes social workers and their characteristics.

Some independent sector (private and voluntary) figures have been included for comparative purposes only; these figures are based on Skills for Care's analysis of the information recorded in the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2012. Some adult local authority figures have also been included for comparative purposes; these figures are based on data from 152 local authority's data in the NMDS-SC as at 30th September 2012.

Submission of NMDS-SC data in 2012 was voluntary for children's services. Due to the voluntary nature of the return there was a lower coverage figure than in adult services, it is also not possible to estimate the total size of the children's local authority workforce. This report is based on information held in the NMDS-SC and does not represent the children's social care sector as a whole. While the amount of data received has not allowed the report to estimate the total size of the workforce- the fact that there was data received from almost half of all local authorities and on over 27,000 workers means that there is no reason to suggest that statistics derived from this analysis are not representative of England as a whole.

The data in this report provides valuable insight in areas where previously little information existed. Overall the purpose of this report is to analyse what the NMDS-SC is showing about the local authority children's workforce.

1.1. Response rate

In July 2012 local authority children's services were encouraged by the Department for Education to make a voluntary and partial data return. During 2012 a total of 68 of the 152 (45%) councils provided some data³ and of those 68 there were 59 that provided some information at individual worker level. For more information about response rates by local authority area, including the number of establishments, workers and worker record data received in 2012, please see annex B.

1.2. Social Workers

At December 2012, the NMDS-SC held information on 7,200 social workers and held individual worker data for 6,830 of these (see section 4 on social workers).

² This workforce has been reported on separately- <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/pssstaffsept12>

³ Information about at least one establishment within that local authority area

2. Organisation level information

2.1. Total number of jobs reported in the NMDS-SC

As at 31st December 2012 there were 27,100 jobs in children’s local authority services in England recorded in the NMDS-SC.

Chart 1 below shows the proportion of jobs by job role group. Direct care providing roles accounted for 37% of all children’s services jobs recorded in the NMDS-SC. This group includes care workers, senior care workers, community support and outreach workers, childcare workers or childcare assistants and a range of related jobs involved with providing care and support directly, for more information about individual job roles please see the Analysis of the Local Authority Children’s Social Care Services Workforce excel report.

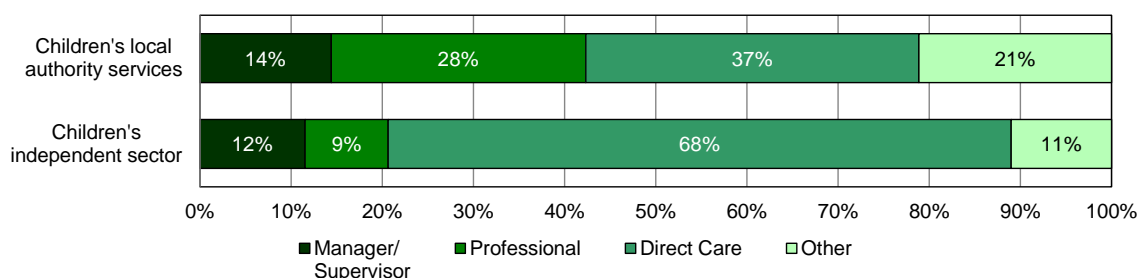
Professional roles accounted for 28% (7,600) of jobs in responding children’s local authority services. This job role group includes registered nurses, social workers⁴, occupational therapists, allied health professionals and qualified teachers (working in a care setting).

Managerial and supervisory roles accounted for 14% (3,900) of jobs. This group includes senior managers, middle managers, first line managers, registered managers, supervisors and managers that are care-related but not directly providing care.

Jobs that fall into the category of ‘other’ accounted for 21% (5,700) of jobs. This category includes ancillary staff, administrative staff and other jobs not directly involved in providing care and support.

In the children’s independent sector (as recorded in the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2012) direct care providing roles accounted for 68% of all jobs and professionals just 9%.

Chart 1. Proportion of children’s local authority and independent sector jobs reported in the NMDS-SC by job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

⁴ Social worker managers may be recorded in the NMDS-SC as a professional or a managerial role depending on individual establishment/ team’s classification.

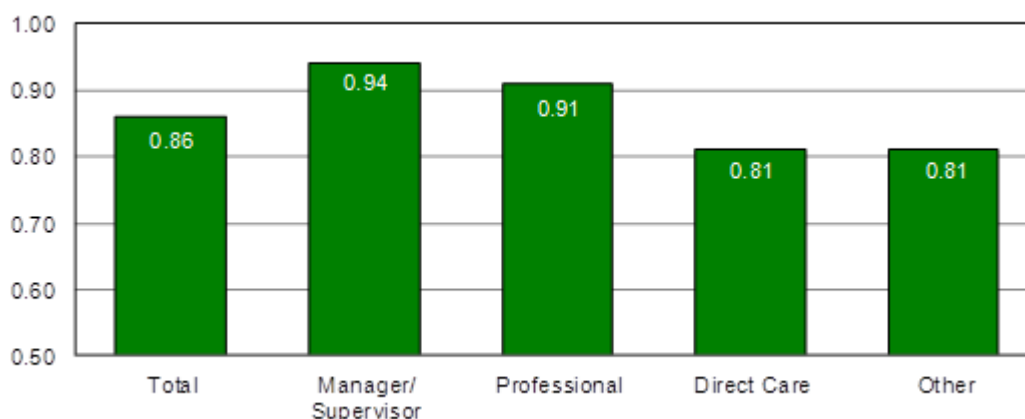
When looking at the breakdown of children's local authority jobs by main service group⁵ the majority (71%) were community care services, residential care accounted for 9% of jobs, day care for 2%, domiciliary care for 1% and the remaining 17% were in other care services (including head office services) (See annex A for a breakdown of services included in each service group).

2.2. Whole time equivalent jobs (WTE jobs)

Whole time equivalents were calculated based on 37 or more contacted hours a week being classed as one whole time equivalent job⁶. Any worker with less than 37 contacted hours was calculated as a proportion of a whole time equivalent worker.

The 27,100 children's local authority staff recorded in the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2012 equated to 23,300 WTE jobs. The ratio of jobs to whole time equivalent jobs was 0.86. Variation exists in the ratio of jobs to WTE jobs between job groups, please see Chart 2. The ratios were highest in managerial (with a ratio of 0.94) and professionals (with a ratio of 0.91) roles where full time working appears to be the most common.

Chart 2. WTE job ratios per job by job group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

For further details about the ratio of WTE jobs please see Table 1. In adult services departments the overall ratio of jobs to WTE jobs was 0.79. For direct care staff it was 0.75, for managers/supervisors it was 0.91, for professionals 0.89 and for 'others' 0.77.

Table 1. Jobs and whole time equivalent jobs by job group and main service group

	Jobs	WTE jobs	Percentage of WTE jobs		Jobs	WTE jobs	Percentage of WTE jobs
Total	27,100	23,306	0.86	Total	27,100	23,306	0.86
Manager/ Supervisor	3,903	3,669	0.94	Residential	2,425	1,964	0.81
Professional	7,571	6,890	0.91	Day	653	398	0.61
Direct Care	9,903	8,021	0.81	Domiciliary	329	293	0.89
Other	5,723	4,636	0.81	Community	19,216	16,718	0.87
				Other	4,477	3,895	0.87

Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

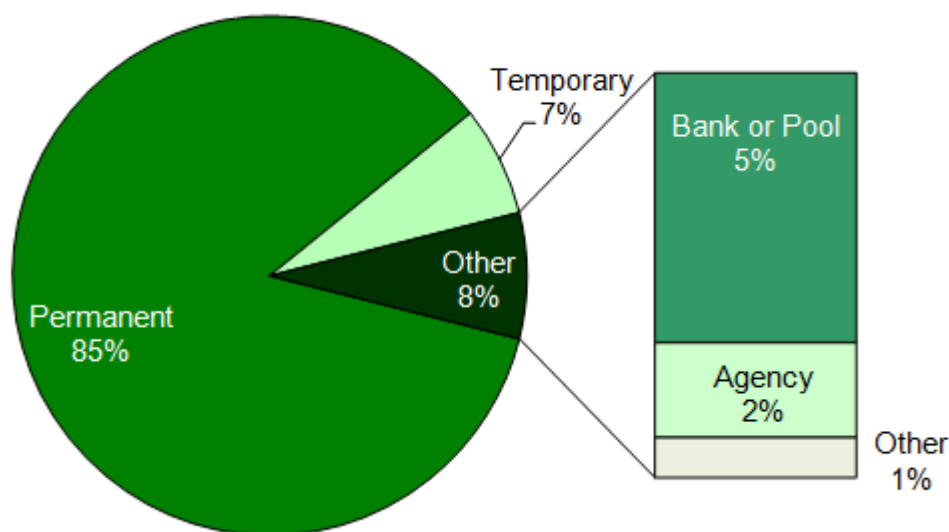
⁵ Please see annex A for definitions

⁶ Where workers had a working arrangement of zero contracted hours (workers with no fixed hours on their contract) whole time equivalent were calculated based on additional hours worked as opposed to contacted hours.

2.3. Employment status

The majority (92%) of the children’s workforce recorded in the NMDS-SC were directly employed by the local authority. The remaining 8% of staff were not directly employed with the largest proportion being bank or pool workers (bank or pool staff are those who are available to the organisation as a whole but are deployed in a casual or short term basis). Staff were generally permanently employed (85%) while 7% were temporarily employed. In the children’s independent sector, 84% of staff were directly employed (76% permanently and 8% temporarily) while 16% were made up of agency staff (10.5%), bank or pool staff (4%) and 1.5% other (Chart 3).

Chart 3. Employment status of children’s local authority workers



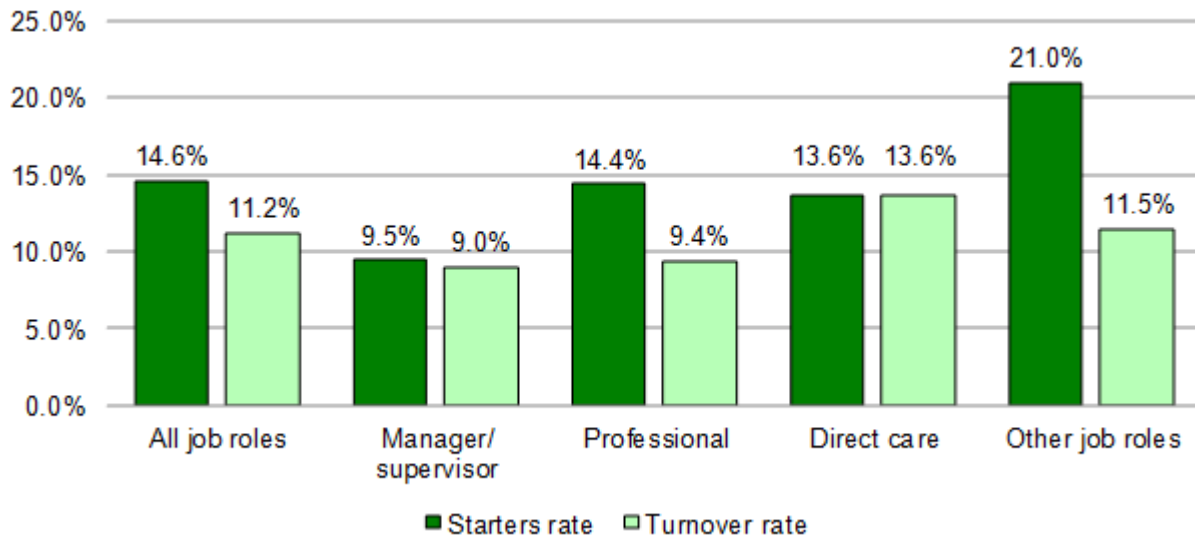
Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

2.4. Turnover, starters and vacancy rates

The NMDS-SC collects information on the number of starters and leavers in the past 12 months and the number of vacancies in an establishment/ team. Turnover is one of the biggest costs to care organisations and a major influencing factor when it comes to the experience of service users. The turnover rate for all workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities was 11.2% (1 in 9 workers leaving per year), while the starters rate was 14.6%. The turnover rate for direct care staff was 13.6% and the starters rate was also 13.6%. For professionals turnover was lower at 9.4% and the starters’ rate was higher at 14.4% (Chart 4).

The turnover rate in the children’s independent sector was 14.2% for all job roles and 15.9% for direct care staff. In the adult statutory sector it was 11.5% for all job roles and 12.2% for direct care- the two sectors are therefore reasonably similar in this respect.

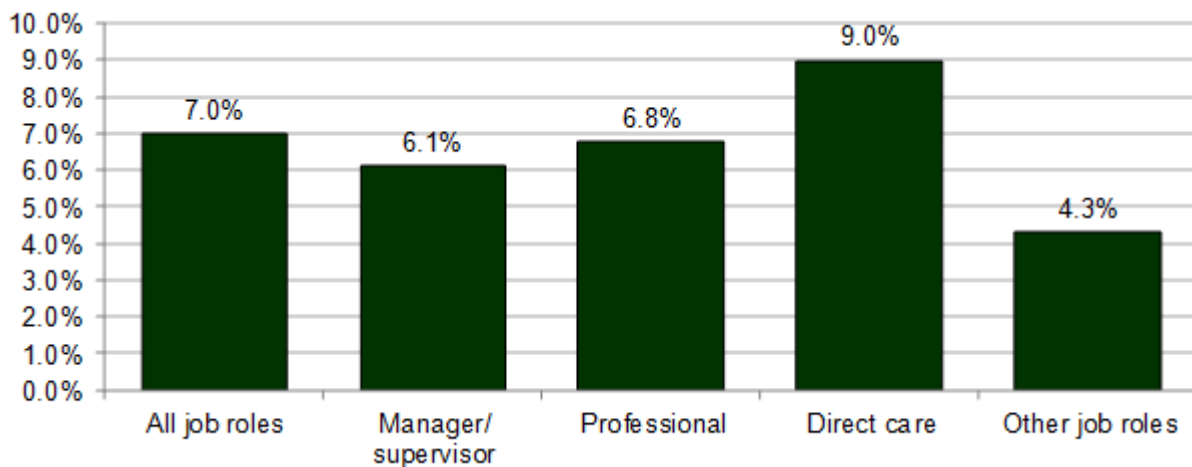
Chart 4. Turnover and starters rate for children’s local authority workers, by job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

The vacancy rate for workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities was 7.0%. The vacancy rates were lower for managerial job roles (6.1%) and higher for direct care job roles (9.0%) (Chart 5).

Chart 5. Vacancy rates for children’s local authority workers, by job group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

The vacancy rate for all workers was marginally lower in adult’s social services departments (6.7%). Vacancy rate for professionals (5.1%), manager/ supervisors (6.6%) and direct care staff (7.3%) was lower than the vacancy rate for ‘other’ staff employed (7.9%).

3. Individual worker characteristics

This section contains information about workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities in 2012 and is derived from individual worker level data collected by the NMDS-SC. Of the 27,000 workers reported in the NMDS-SC 89% (24,000) provided an individual worker record, for further information about coverage please see annex B.

The topic areas covered are gender, age, ethnicity, pay, sickness and employment status. The NMDS-SC collects other data items including qualifications, training, experience and nationality but these are not included in this report as they were not identified by the Department for Education as part of the voluntary return from local authorities⁷. For information about social workers please see section 4.

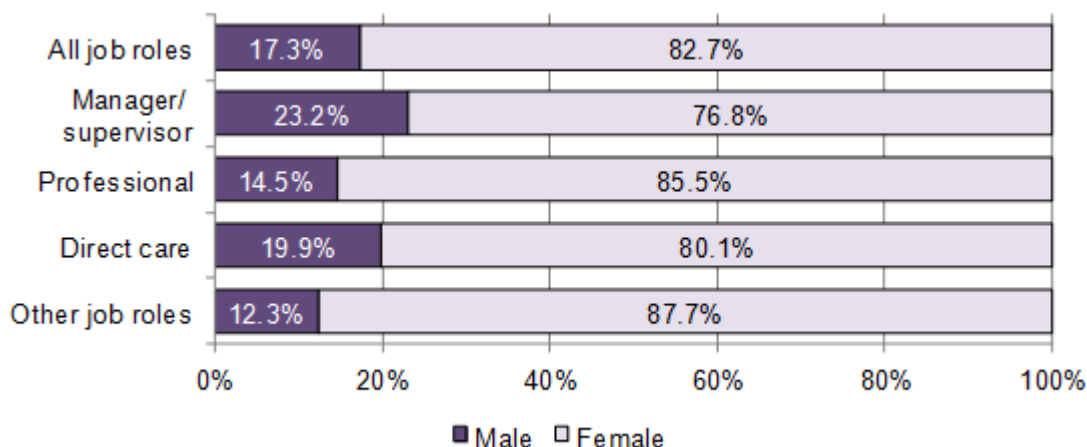
3.1. Demographics

3.1.1. Gender

Analysis of the gender distribution of workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities shows that the majority of staff were female (83%). The proportion of gender splits is almost the same in the adults local authority sector (82% females, 18% males). Gender distribution in the children’s independent sector is also very similar (85% females, 15% males).

Gender distributions display some differences across job groups (Chart 6). The proportion of females is higher in the ‘other’ job roles group (88%) and in professionals (85%) and lower in the job role group managers/ supervisors (77%).

Chart 6. Gender distribution of staff by job group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

⁷ All data submitted by individual local authorities are made available to them via the NMDS-SC website in a series of tailored reports, see the local authority area profiles- sub sector analysis, www.nmDS-sc-online.org.uk

3.1.2. Age group

The average age of a worker in a children’s services department in the responding local authorities was 43 years old (Table 2). This was similar across all job role groups, with direct care staff and professionals having the youngest average age at 42 and managers and supervisors having the oldest average age at 48 years old.

The overall average age of a worker in the children’s independent sector is 40 years old. Direct care staff had the youngest average (38 years old), followed by managers and supervisors (43 years old), professionals (43 years old) and other staff with the highest average age (46 years old).

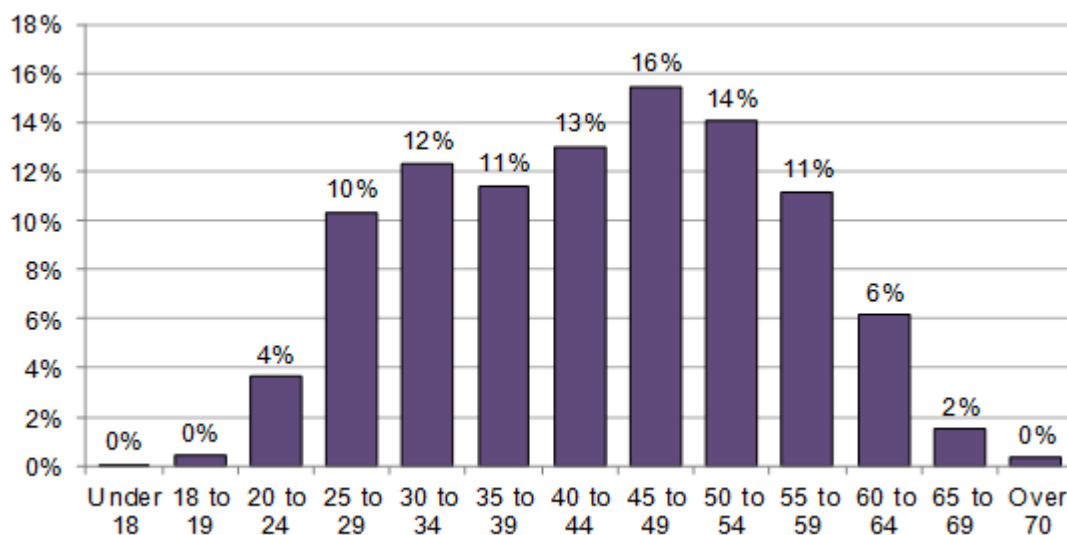
Table 2. Average age of children’s local authority staff by job role group

	All job roles	Manager/ supervisor	Professional	Direct care	Other
Mean age	43	48	42	42	45
Base	23,890	3,374	7,033	8,748	4,735

Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

Just over half of staff (54%) were aged between 40 and 59 years old. Almost a fifth of staff (19%) were aged 55 or over and therefore likely to retire in the next 10 years. At the extremes of the age scale there were very few staff (4%) aged under 24 years old while 8% were aged 60 years or over (Chart 7).

Chart 7. Age distribution of staff



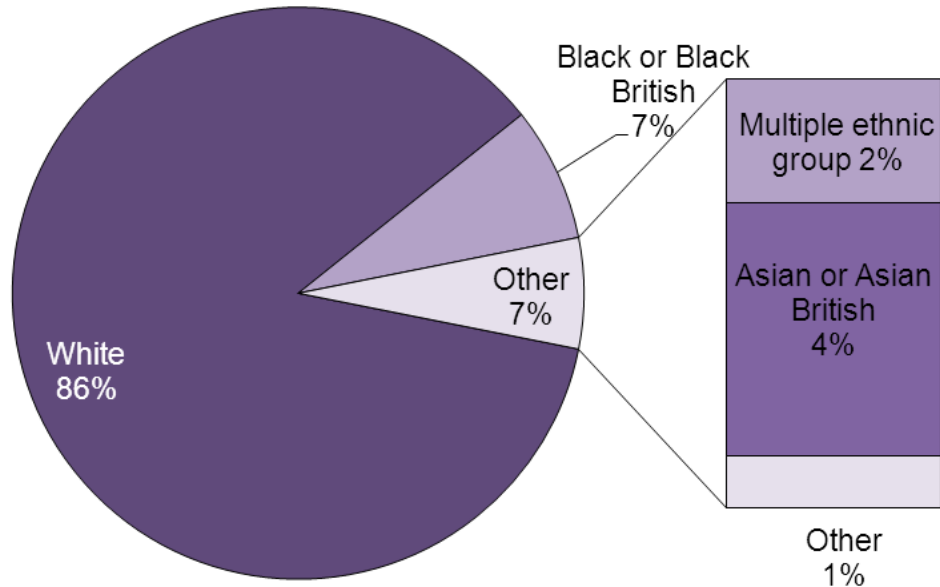
Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

3.1.3. Ethnicity group

The majority (86%) of workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities in 2012 were White, with just 14% from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups (8% Black, 4% Asian, 2% Mixed ethnic groups and 1% other).

The picture was the same as the independent sector (86% White, 14% BME) and in the adult’s social services (88% White, 12% BME).

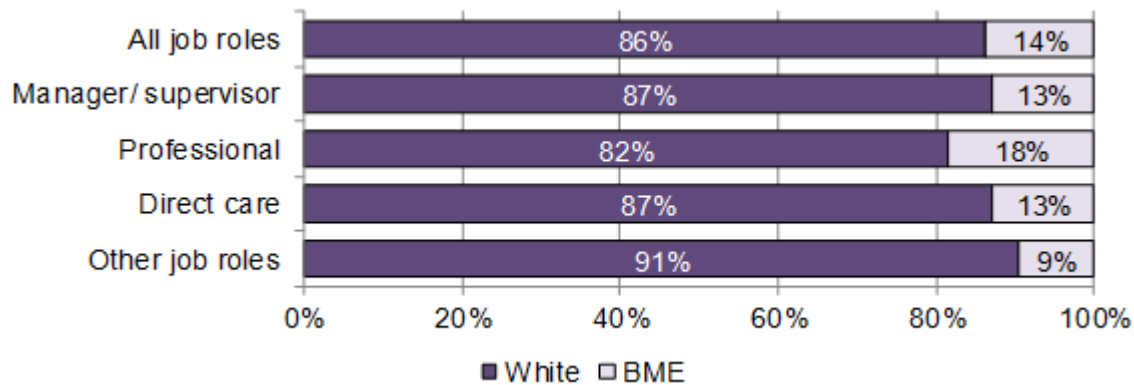
Chart 8. Ethnicity of staff



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

The ethnicity distribution differed by job role. The percentage of White workers was higher for managers/ supervisors and direct care staff (87%) and for other job roles (91%) and lower for professionals (82%) (Chart 9).

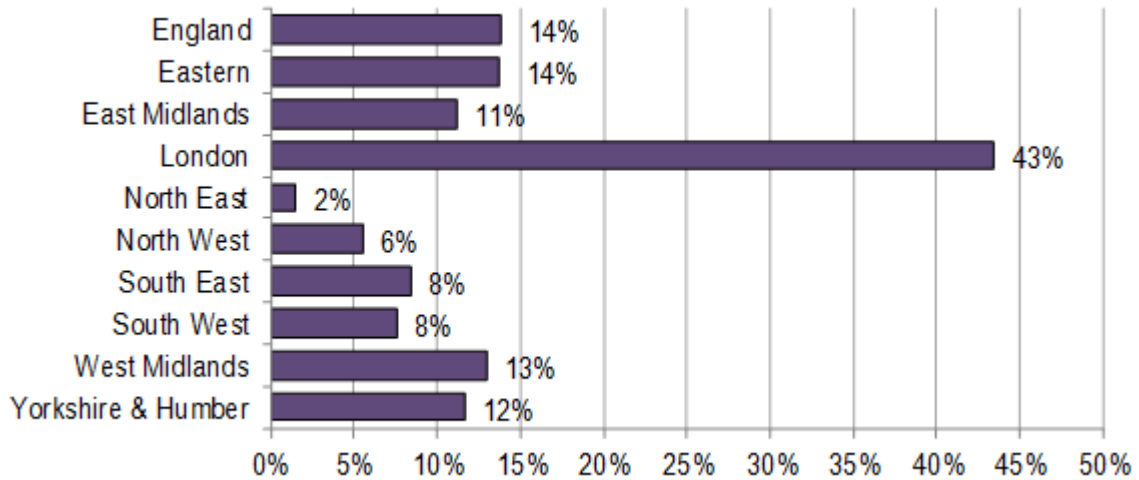
Chart 9. Ethnicity of staff by job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

As one would expect, there are significant regional differences in the ethnicity distribution. London had by far the highest proportion of BME workers (43% of all workers). The North East and North West had the lowest proportion of BME workers with 2% and 6% respectively.

Chart 10. Percentage of BME workers by region



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

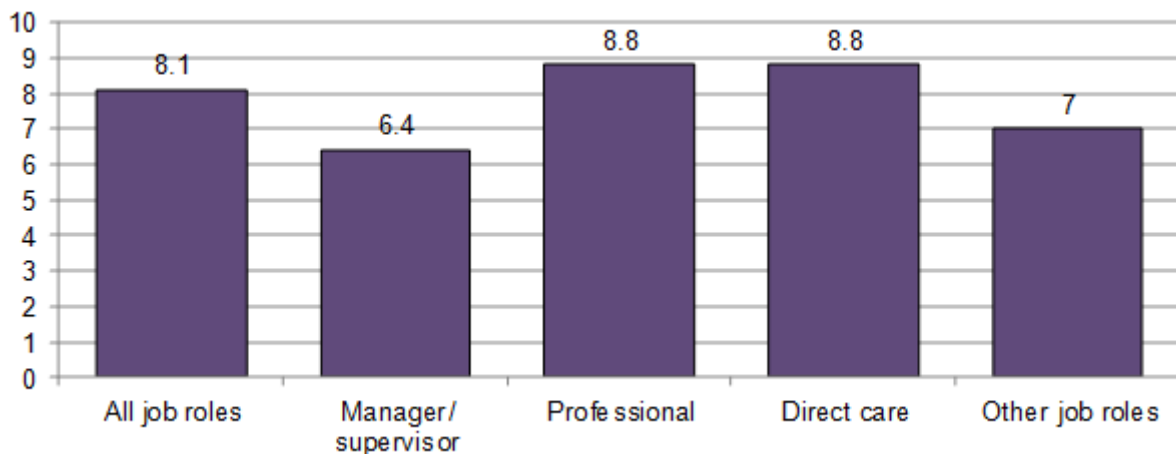
3.2. Employment status

3.2.1. Sickness

The average number of sick days in the previous 12 months for workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities was 8.1 days. The average number of sick days for managers/ supervisors was lower at 6.4, this figure rose for professionals and direct care staff at 8.8 days in the past 12 months. Some of these differences in sickness levels may be explained by differences in working patterns (see Chart 11) as sick days are not always recorded in the same way for those without regular working hours.

The average number of sick days in the independent sector was lower with 4.9 days being the average.

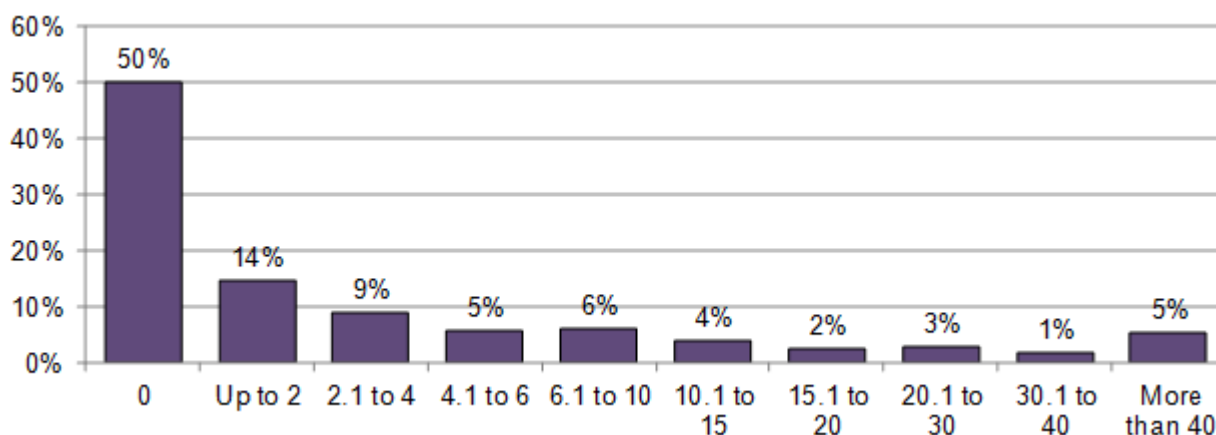
Chart 11. Average number of sick days in the past 12 months of staff by job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

Although the average number of sick days was 8.1, half of staff had zero sick days and 79% had 6 or fewer days.

Chart 12. Number of sick days in the past 12 months of all staff



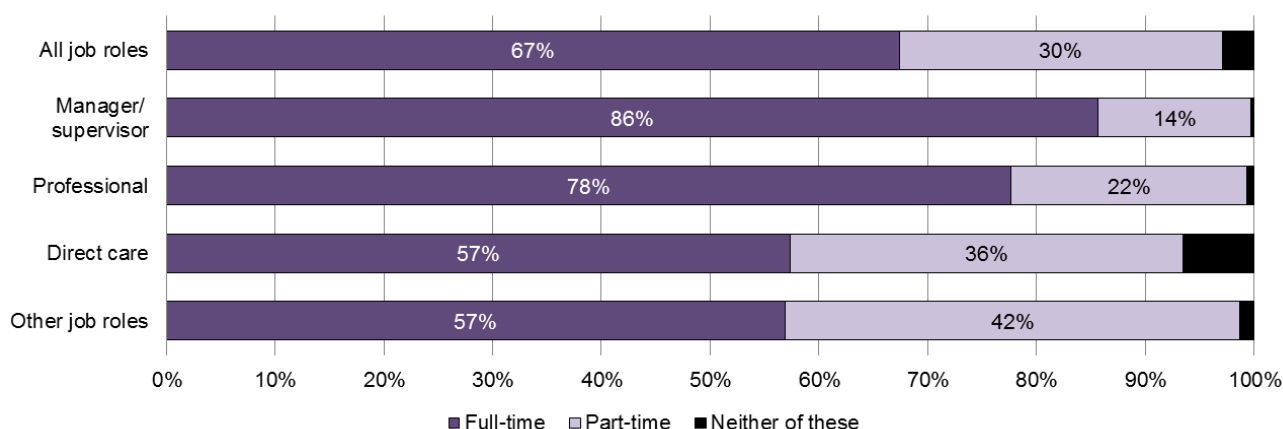
Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

3.2.2. Full time/ part time status

Two thirds of staff (67%) in children’s services in the responding local authorities worked full time, almost a third (30%) worked part time and the remaining 3% worked neither full nor part time, this category mostly comprised of bank or pool workers and other types of workers that do not have regular shift patterns such as zero contracted hours (represented in black in the chart below).

As expected managers/ supervisors and professional workers had a higher proportion of full time hours (86% and 78% respectively). For more information about working arrangements/ contract type and employment status by full time / part time employees please see the Analysis of the Local Authority Children’s Social Care Services Workforce excel report.

Chart 13. Full time/ part time status of staff by main job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2013

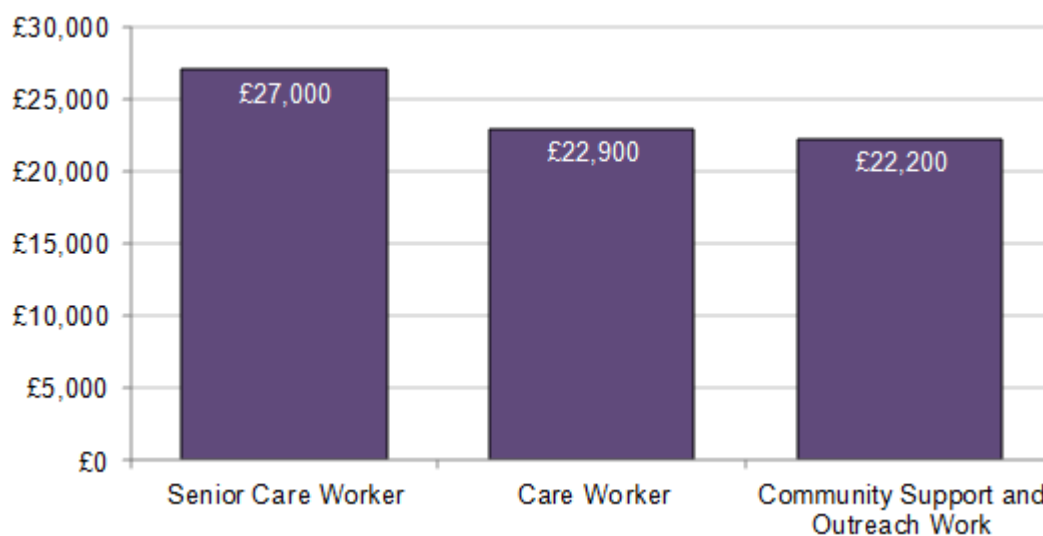
The picture was similar in the children’s independent sector, with 65% full time, 20% part time and 15% neither full nor part time workers. There was more part time working in the adult sector where full time staff made up 43% of the workforce and part time accounted for 52%.

3.2.3. Pay rates

The data in this section shows whole time equivalent (WTE) median annual salaries for workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities. Annual salary data were converted to WTE salaries under the assumption that the average full time contracted hours was 37. Data recorded in the NMDS-SC at hourly rate were converted into annual salaries.

When looking at the median WTE annual salaries for three of the direct care providing job roles- community support and outreach workers were the lowest paid with a median of £22,000 per annum, care workers were paid slightly more at £22,900 and senior care workers higher at £27,000.

Chart 14. Median WTE annual salaries of selected direct care providing job roles

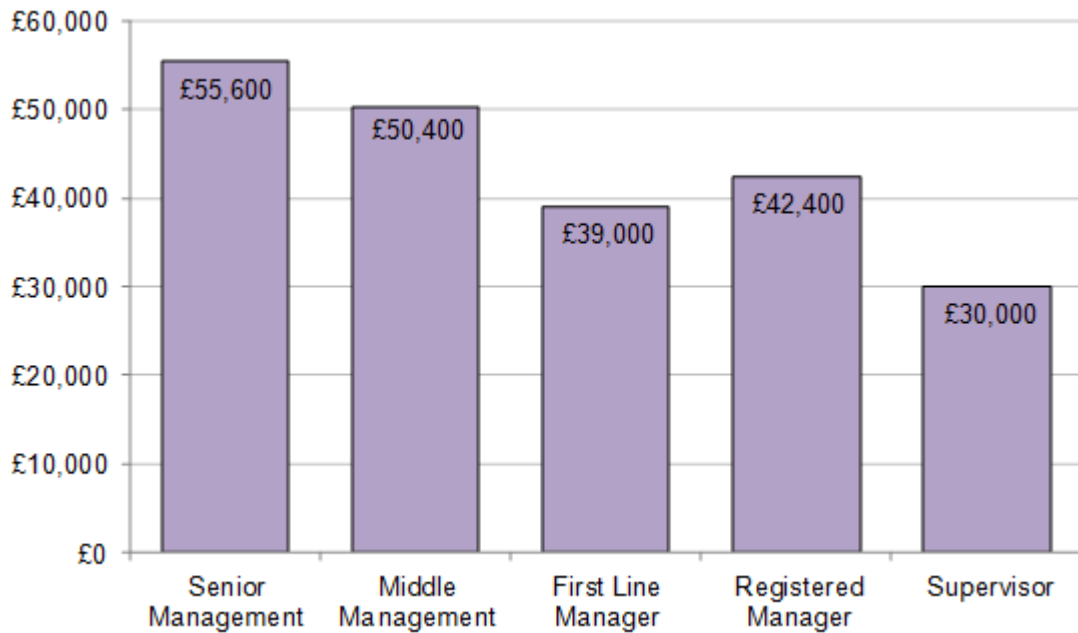


Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

Results of local authority and independent sector full time equivalent pay analysis may not be directly comparable due to differences in roles and responsibilities, however children’s independent sector analysis has been provided for context. Local authority rates were considerably higher than in the children’s independent sector, where care workers were paid a median annual salary of £16,000. They were also higher than in the adult’s local authority sector where care workers received a median annual salary of £16,800.

WTE annual salaries for five of the managerial job roles are provided below. Senior management roles were the highest paid with a median of £55,600. Pay rates for middle managers were the next highest with a median of £50,400 followed by registered managers (£42,400), first line managers (£39,000) and supervisors (£30,000).

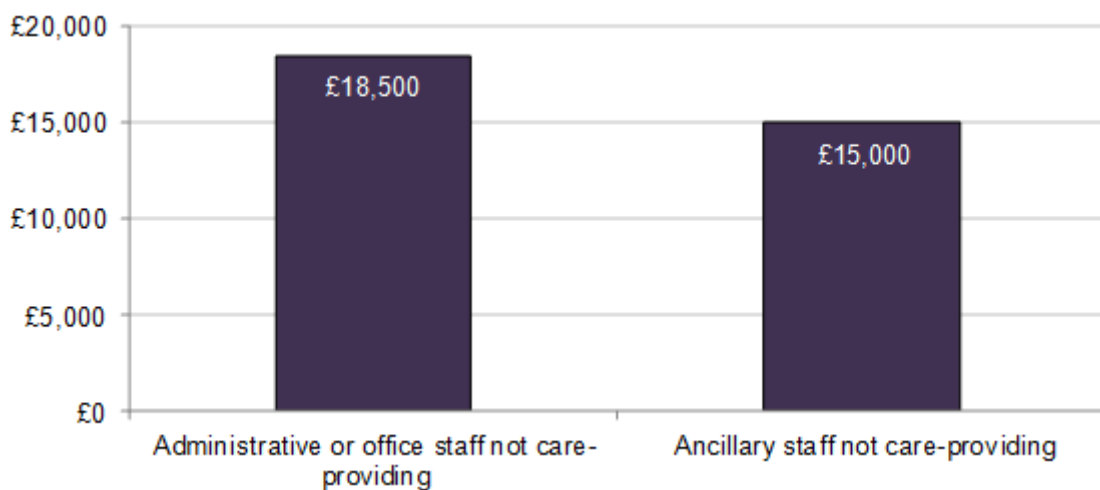
Chart 15. Median WTE annual salaries of selected management job roles



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

Administrative and office staff were paid a median annual salary of £18,500 and ancillary staff were paid a median of £15,000. This was very similar to the adult’s local authority sector (administrative £19,100 and ancillary £14,800) and also to the children’s independent sector (administrative £17,200 and ancillary £14,700).

Chart 16. Median WTE annual salaries of selected ‘other non-care providing roles’



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

4. Social workers

This chapter provides a more detailed analysis of social workers in children's services in the responding local authorities. The data is based on the 7,200 social workers recorded in the NMDS-SC from 59 local authorities only.

4.1. Total number and WTE jobs and headcounts

This section compares the number of social worker jobs and whole time equivalent jobs⁸. During 2012 a total of 7,200 social workers were recorded in the NMDS-SC in the children's local authority sector these equated to 6,560 WTE jobs. The ratio of social worker roles to whole time equivalent jobs was 0.91.

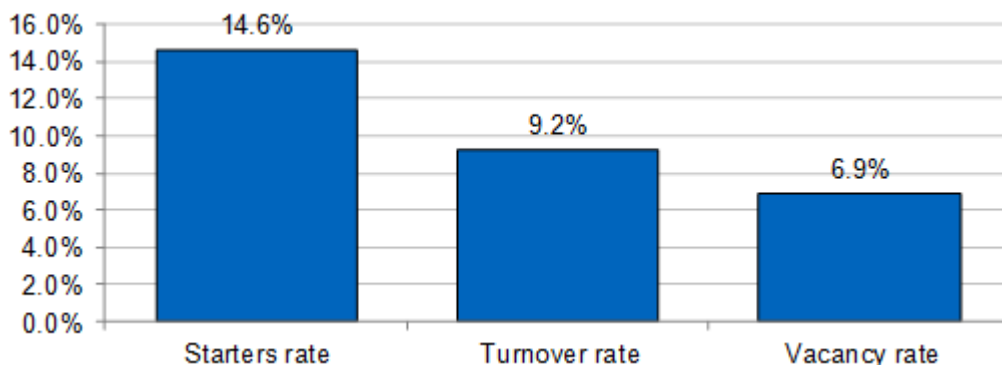
In the adults local authority sector there was also an average of 0.91 jobs per social worker. The majority of social workers are employed in children's community care settings (87%), with 11% in other services.

4.2. Turnover, starters and vacancy rates

The turnover rate of social workers as recorded in the NMDS-SC was 9.2%, which is less than the overall turnover of the children's local authority workforce (11.2%) and the same as managers and supervisors (9.0%).

The starters rate for social workers was 14.6%, this was the same as the starters rate overall (14.6%) and higher than the starters rate of managers/ supervisors (9.5%). The vacancy rate of social workers was 6.9%, this vacancy rate was slightly higher than managers/ supervisors (6.1%) however lower than the vacancy rate overall (7.0%) (Chart 17).

Chart 17. Starters, vacancy and turnover rate of social workers (children's services)



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012 (Based on 6,331 social workers from 59 local authorities)

In responding children's local authorities in 2012 the majority of social workers (94%) were permanently employed, 3% were temporarily employed and 3% were agency staff.

⁸ For details on whole time equivalent calculations please see 1.2

4.3. Demographics

4.3.1. Gender

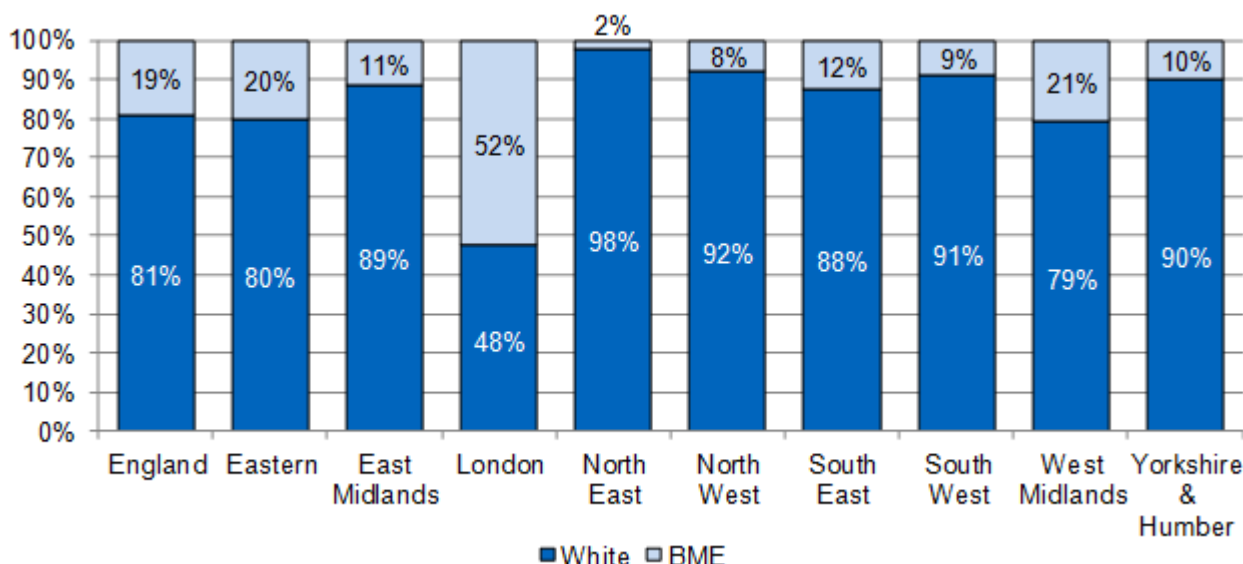
The majority of social workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities were female (85%), with 15% male (based on 6,832 social workers). This was similar to the proportion of females (83%) and males (11%) in the children’s independent sector and the adult’s local authority sector (81% females, 18% males).

4.3.2. Ethnicity

The majority of social workers in children’s services in the responding local authorities were White (81%) with 19% being Black or Minority Ethnic (11% Black/ Black British, 4% Asian/Asian British, 2% Mixed and 1% other) (based on 6,049 social workers).

As with the ethnic distribution for the total children’s local authority sector (see section 2.1.3) there were large variations by region. London had the largest proportion of BME social workers (52%), with the smallest proportion being in the North East (2%).

Chart 18. Ethnicity distribution of social workers by region

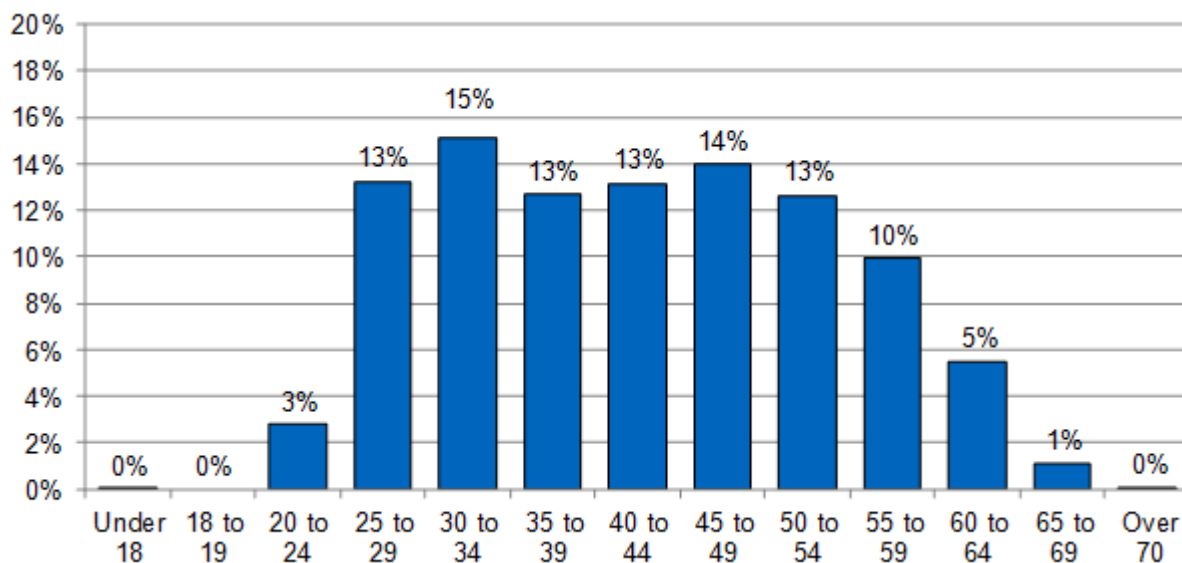


Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

4.3.3. Age

The average age of a social worker in children’s services in the responding local authorities is 42 years old, which is younger than the adult’s local authority sector where a social worker has an average age of 47. Just over half (55%) of children’s local authority social workers were aged between 30 and 49 years old, 23% were aged between 50 and 59 years old. Just 16% of social workers are aged under 30 while 7% are over 60 years old (based on 6,043 social workers).

Chart 19. Age distribution of social workers



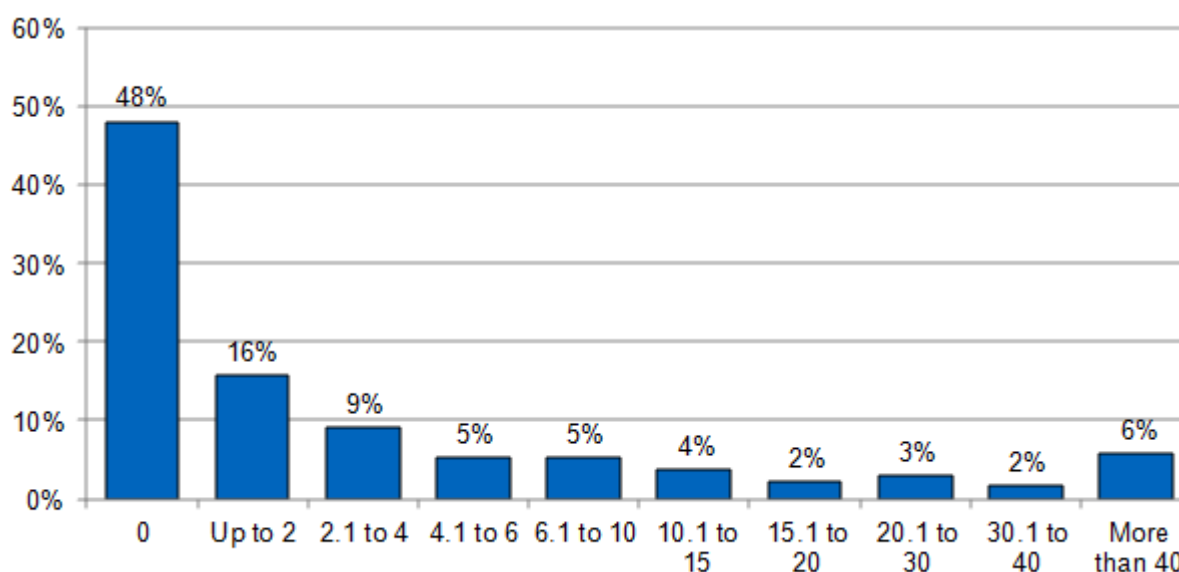
Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

4.4. Employment status and sickness

The majority of social workers were full time (78%), 21% were part-time and 1% were neither full nor part time (this category was mostly comprised of bank or pool workers and other types of workers that do not have a regular shift pattern such as zero hours contract). The proportion of full time social workers was lower in the adults local authority sector (72%).

The average number of sick days in the previous 12 months for social workers was 8.9 days with 73% having 4 or less sick days per annum.

Chart 20. Sick days distribution of social workers



Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

4.5. Pay section

The data in this section shows whole time equivalent (WTE) median salaries for social workers working in children’s services in the responding local authorities. To add context, WTE median salaries for social workers working in adult’s local authorities have been provided.

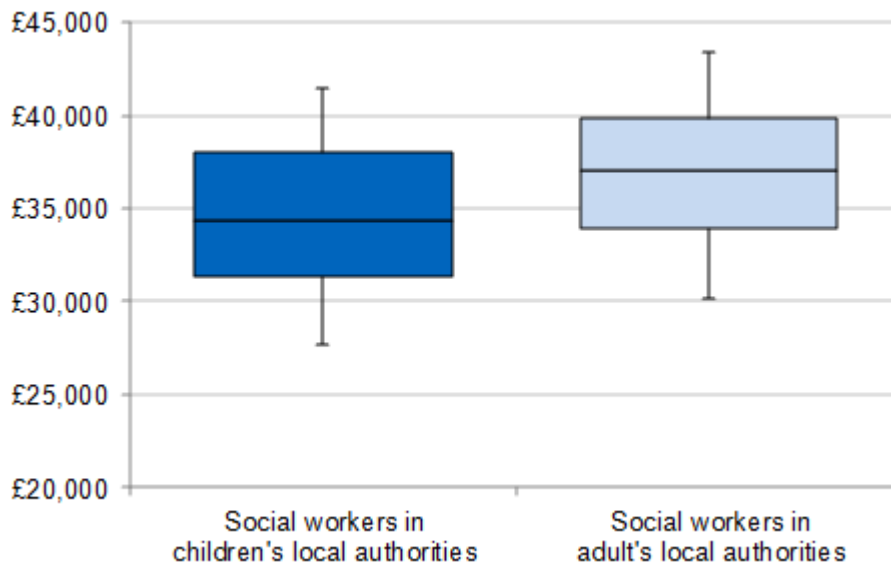
The median annual salary for a social worker in the children’s local authority sector was £30,850; this was similar to the median salary for a social worker in the adult local authority sector (£31,800)

Table 3. WTE annual salaries of social workers in children’s and adults local authorities

	Social workers in children’s local authorities	Social workers in adult’s local authorities
Percentile 95	£42,000	£43,400
Percentile 75	£34,550	£34,600
Median	£30,850	£31,800
Percentile 25	£27,850	£28,600
Percentile 05	£24,350	£23,300

Source. NMDS-SC December 2012

Chart 21. Boxplots showing WTE annual salaries for social workers



Source. Children’s data as at December 2012, Adult’s data as at September 2012

Annex A. How the children's sector is represented in the NMDS-SC

The NMDS-SC collects data from both the adults and the children's social care sector. An establishment and its workforce are defined as part of the children's sector if they have the following establishment types **and** services;

Establishment type

- Statutory local authority (children's services)
- Statutory local authority (generic or other services)
- Statutory local authority owned

Services

Children's residential

- Family centre (residential)
- Children's homes
- Secure units
- Residential special schools
- Specialist college services – SPC
- Boarding Schools
- Other children's residential care service

Children's day Care

- Full day care, e.g. day nursery
- Sessional day care e.g. play group/preschool
- Out of school club
- Holiday club

- Crèche
- Childminder
- Other children's day care service

Children's domiciliary

- Domiciliary Care Services - DCC

Children's Community Care

- Fostering or adoption service or agency
- Family centre
- Family support
- Mental health
- Child protection
- Social work and care management
- Information and advice services
- Other children's community care service

If the establishment type is recorded as 'Statutory local authority (children's services)' then 'Head office services' and 'Any other services' are also included as part of the children's sector and included in this report.

Job role groups

Manager/ Supervisor

- Senior Management
- Middle Management
- First Line Manager
- Registered Manager
- Supervisor
- Managers and Staff in Care-Related but not Care-Providing Roles

Professional

- Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- Registered Nurse
- Allied Health Professional
- Teacher

Direct Care

- Senior Care Worker
- Care Worker
- Community Support and Outreach Worker
- Employment Support
- Advice Guidance and Advocacy
- Educational Support
- Youth Offending Support
- Counsellor
- Nursery Nurse
- Childcare Worker or Childcare Assistant
- Educational Assistant
- Technician
- Other Care-Providing Job Roles

Other

- Administrative or Office Staff Not Care-Providing
- Ancillary Staff not Care-Providing
- Other non-Care-Providing Job Roles

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