

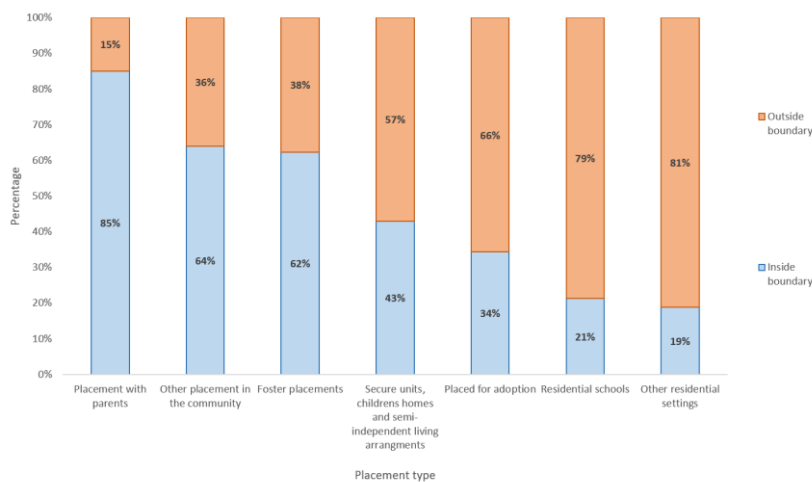


SFR 50/2017, 7 December 2017

60% of foster placements are within the local authority boundaries...

Proportion of placements inside or outside the local authority boundary

England, at 31 March 2017



60% of looked after children at 31 March 2017 were looked after within the local authority boundary and 40% were looked after outside the boundary, similar to previous years. 74% of placements were within 20 miles of home.

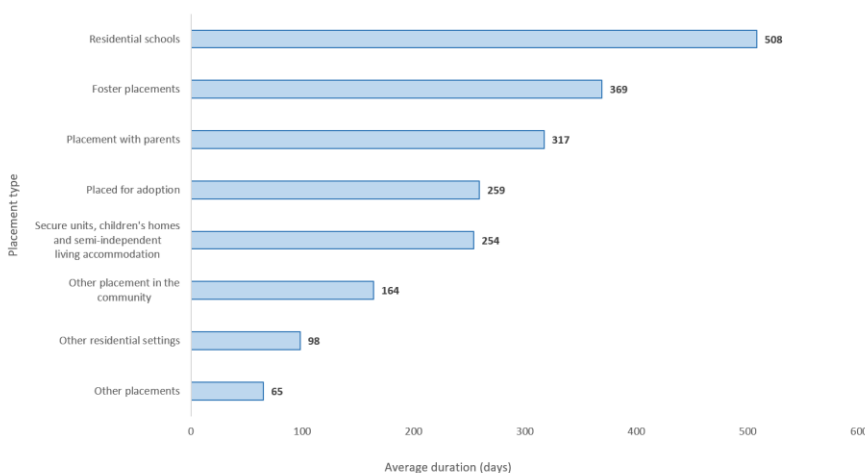
The proportion of placements within the local authority boundary varies greatly by placement type; 62% of foster placements are within the local authority boundary compared to 43% of secure units, children's homes and semi-independent living arrangements and 21% of residential school placements.

Source: SSDA903

The average duration of placements fell slightly...

Average duration of placements, by placement type

England, year ending 31 March 2017



For all placements, the average (mean) duration of placements ceasing in the year was 314 days (approximately 10 and a half months) which was very slightly less than last year.

Average duration varies by placements; residential school placements and foster placements have the longest durations.

Source: SSDA903

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About this release

This statistical first release (SFR) provides further analysis of looked after children in England for the year ending 31 March 2017, based upon the same data source as the main statistical first release published on 28 September 2017.

This release provides further information at national level on:

- children looked after at 31 March by locality of placement and placement provider,
- children starting and ceasing to be looked after by placement type,
- number of placements and number of periods of care for children ceasing to be looked after,
- duration of placements and information on reason for placement change
- legal status and gender of adopters, and
- offending, substance misuse, health and development assessments and behavioural health outcomes indicators

Additional local authority level information is available through the underlying data accompanying this release.

In this publication

The following updates have been made to the SFR:

- Children looked after national tables (SFR50_2017_National_tables.xls) now includes additional tables
- Underlying data (open format .csv and metadata .txt) has been added
- The looked after children statistics guide has been updated to incorporate the items included in the additional tables.

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at: cla.stats@education.gov.uk.

1. Placements of children looked after (Tables A4 & A5, B2, B3, C2, D2-D4)

Almost three quarters of looked after children (at 31 March) were placed within 20 miles of their home address, and 60% are within the local authority boundary, similar to previous years.

Children placed with parents and foster placements are most likely to be close to home (93% and 80% respectively); placements where the child is placed for adoption are least likely to be placed close to home (42%).

Around three quarters of children starting to be looked after in the year ending 31 March 2017 were in a foster placement, but over the last three years this has decreased slightly. Over the same time, the proportion placed with parents has slightly increased.

The average (mean) duration of periods of care has decreased from 863 days in 2013 to 759 days in 2017

The main release reported that the numbers of looked after children in England continue to increase. After small rises of 1% each year between 2014 and 2016, the rise this year has been greater at 3%. At 31 March 2017 there were 72,670 looked after children in England, an increase of 2,220 on 2016, and an increase of 4,600 on 2013.

Distance between home and placement (for children looked after at 31 March)

Most looked after children are placed close to their home address; at 31 March 2017 53,900 children looked after (74%) were placed within 20 miles of their home address 19% were placed over 20 miles away and for the remaining 7% the distance from “home” was not known. The percentages are similar to last year, however the proportion of children for whom the information is not known has increased from 5% in 2015 to 7% in 2017 (for reasons why the distance may not be known see the blue box below).

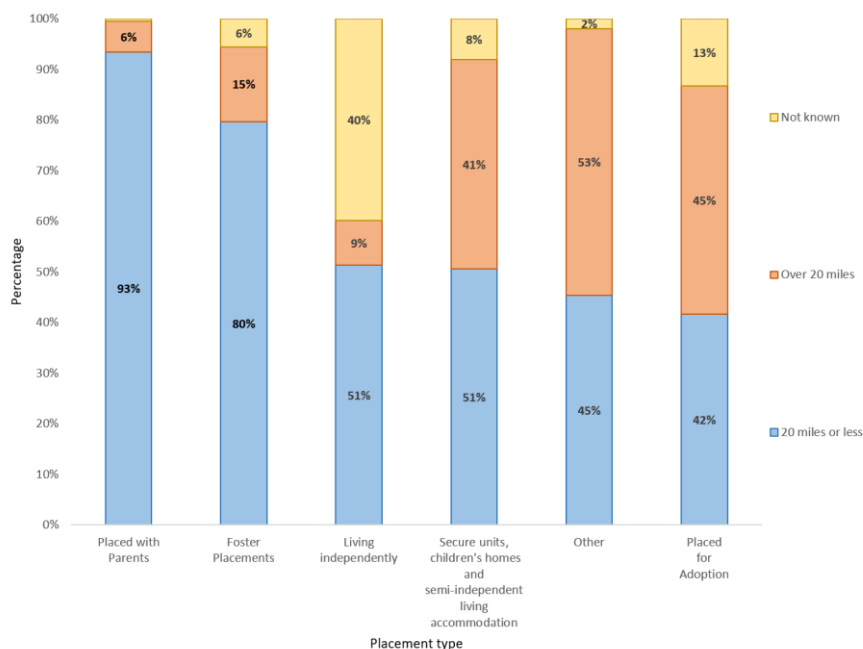
Collection of information on distance between home and placement

A child’s home postcode and placement postcode are collected and are used to calculate the distance between the child’s home and placement and whether the child was placed within the local authority boundary. In some instances, it is not possible to identify how far from home a child is placed as the “home” address is unknown. Examples include where the child’s home is outside of England, the child is from overseas, the child’s parents are homeless or the child is from a traveller family. Also, for reasons of confidentiality the distance and local authority of placement is not recorded for some children, including some children placed for adoption.

This means when we look at distance from home by placement type, in some instances there are large proportions for whom the distance is not known. For example, unaccompanied asylum seeking children account for a large proportion looked after children living independently which explains the large proportion of unknown distance from home for looked after children who were living independently.

The distance from home varies depending upon the type of placement the child is in. The proportion of children who are in a placement within 20 miles or less of home, over 20 miles or whose distance is not known are shown in Figure 1. Placed with parents (93%) and foster placements (80%) are most likely to be close to home; placements where the child is placed for adoption (42%) are least likely to be placed close to home.

Figure 1: Percentage of children looked after by placement type and distance from home: England, at 31 March 2017

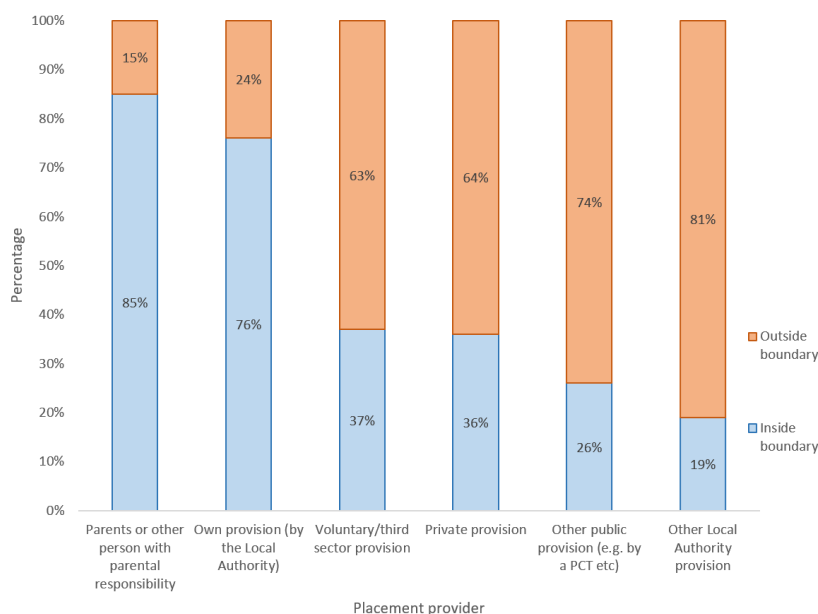


Source: SSDA903

Location of placement providers (for children looked after at 31 March)

60% of looked after children at 31 March 2017 were looked after within the local authority boundary and 40% were looked after outside the boundary, similar to previous years. Figure 2 shows the proportion of children placed with placement providers within the local authority boundary. Children placed with their parents or other person with parental responsibility, or in the local authority's own provision, are more likely to be inside the local authority boundary, and children in voluntary/third sector provision, or private provision, or other public provision, or other local authority provision are less likely to be inside the local authority boundary.

Figure 2: Children looked after by provider type and location: England, at 31 March 2017



Source: SSDA903

Placement provider type (for children looked after at 31 March)

Whether the provision is inside or outside the local authority boundary, most placements for looked after children are provided either by the local authority (54%) or provided privately (33%). The remainder is provided by parents or those with parental responsibility (6%), voluntary provision (5%), other local authorities (1%) or other public provision (1%), for example a primary care trust.

Inside the local authority boundary, 68% is the local authorities own provision and 20% is private provision, whereas outside the local authority boundary we see these figures almost switch, i.e. 54% of the provision is private provision and 33% is the local authorities' own provision.

Placements of children who started to be looked after in the year

The numbers of children who began to be looked after in the year were published in the main release in September. 32,810 children started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2017; an increase of 2% from the previous year's figure of 32,160 and an increase of 13% from 2013. This release now provides breakdowns by placement type.

In the year ending 31 March 2017, 24,190 children starting to be looked after were placed in foster placements, 2,960 were placed in secure units, children's homes and semi-independent living arrangements, 1,920 were placed with parents and 1,820 were placed in other residential settings. The remaining 1,920 children were placed in other community placements, residential schools or were placed for adoption.

The proportions of children starting to be looked after by placement have remained fairly constant over recent years. However, we may be starting to see a slight reduction in the proportion of children starting to be looked after in a foster placement, which has reduced from 77% of placements for children starting to be looked after in 2013 down to 74% in 2017. Over the same time, we can see in table 1 that the proportion placed with parents has increased from 4% in 2013 to 6% in 2017.

Table 1: Children starting to be looked after by placement type:
England, year ending 31 March 2017

	2013 Number	2017 Number	2013 Percentage	2017 Percentage	Percentage point change since 2013
All children starting to be looked after	28,980	32,810	100%	100%	n/a
Foster placements	22,230	24,190	77%	74%	-3
Secure units, home and semi-independent living arrangements	2,700	2,960	9%	9%	0
Placement with parents	1,140	1,920	4%	6%	+2
Other residential settings	1,500	1,820	5%	6%	+1
Other placements in the community	1,100	1,610	4%	5%	+1
Other placements	210	280	1%	1%	0
Residential schools	110	30	-	-	0
Placed for adoption	x	x	x	x	x

Source: SSSA903

Three quarters of children who started to be looked after were placed in foster placements – 49% were foster placements within the local authority boundary and 24% were foster placements outside the local authority boundary. The proportion inside the local authority boundary is similar to last year, but has decreased from 54% in 2013.

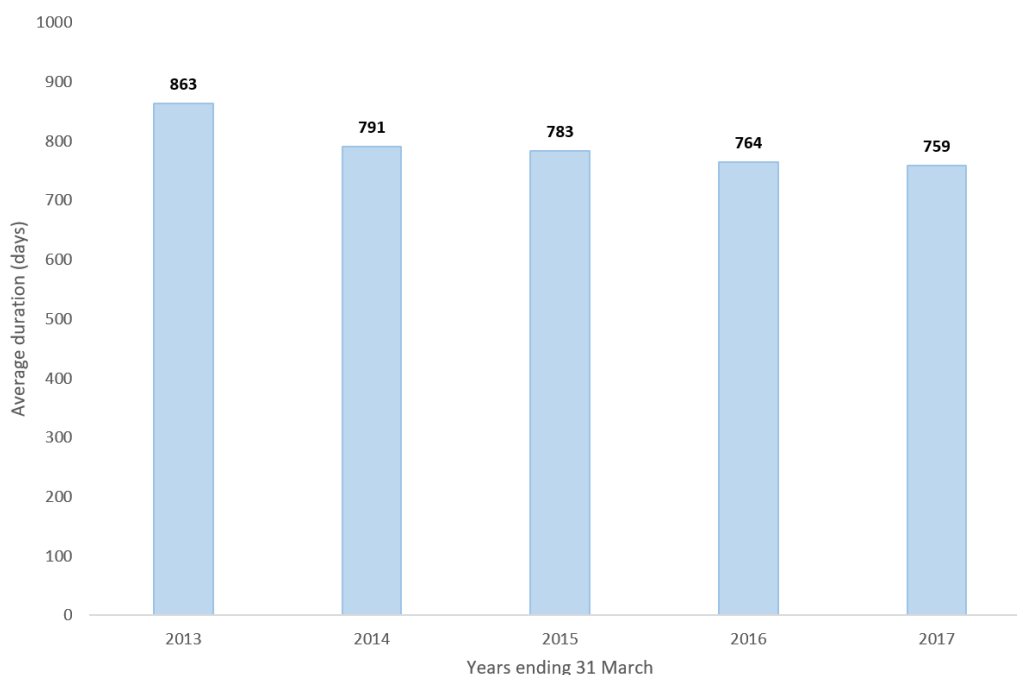
The proportion of children starting to be looked after who were in foster placements inside the local authority boundary and were placed with relatives or friends increased steadily from 9% in 2013 to 13% in 2017. Over the same period, the proportion of children who started to be looked after who were placed in foster placements inside the local authority boundary with other foster carers decreased, from 45% in 2013 to 37% in 2017.

Duration of placements for children who ceased to be looked after in the year

The numbers of children who ceased to be looked after were published in the main release in September. 31,250 children ceased to be looked after in 2017; a decrease of 2% from the 2016 figure of 31,830 but an increase of 9% from 2013.

The average (mean) duration of the final period of care, in days, for children who ceased to be looked after continued to decrease again slightly in 2017, following the pattern seen in recent years. In the year ending 31 March 2017, average duration for the latest period of care was 759 days, down very slightly from 764 in 2016 and down from 863 in 2013. This reflects the increase in the proportion of shorter placements, for example in 2013 32% of placements lasted less than 6 months but in 2017 this had increased to 36%.

Figure 3: Children who ceased to be looked after by average duration of latest period of care
England, years ending 31 March 2013 to 2017



Source: SSDA903

Most children ceasing to be looked after had experienced only one period of care (85%), 11% had two and 4% had three or more periods of care, similar to last year, and 36% of all children who ceased to be looked after had three or more placements.

Duration of any placement ceasing in the year

79,620 placements ceased during the year ending 31 March 2017. Just under a quarter of placements (24%) lasted for under one month, and 22% lasted over a year, similar to last year.

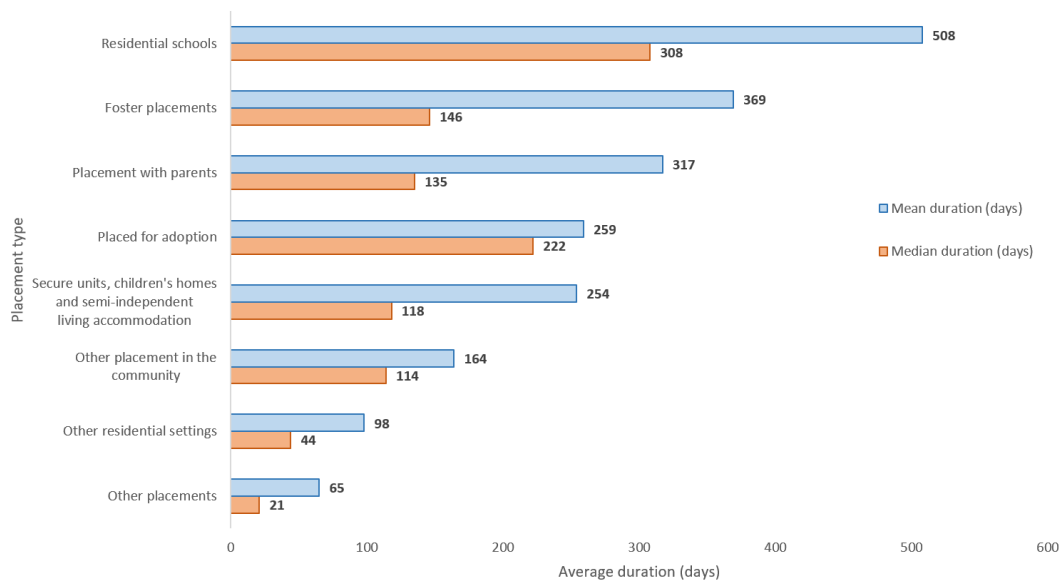
For all placements, the average (mean¹) duration of placements which ceased in 2017, was 314 days (approximately 10 and a half months) and the median² duration was 140 days (just under 5 months), both very slightly less than last year³. The average duration of placements ceasing in the year vary greatly depending upon the type of placement; placements in residential schools last the longest – an average of 508 days in 2017.

¹ The mean value is the sum of all placement durations, divided by the number of placements.

² The median value is the middle value in an ordered group of numbers, i.e. if we order all placement durations then the median is the value at the mid-point.

³ Both the median and mean average duration are provided. The median may be a better descriptor of the typical value as it is not affected so much by some very large or very small values. For almost all placement types (excluding placed for adoption) there are far more shorter placements than longer placements. For each placement type there are instances of longer term placements, for example a long term foster placement, which influence the mean value.

Figure 4: Average duration (in days) of placements ceasing, by placement type: England, year ending 31 March 2017



Source: SSSA903

Reason for placement change for children who moved placements in the year

Information on the reasons why children move placements was collected for the first time in 2016 and is published as experimental statistics. This new data should be interpreted cautiously.

In the year ending 31 March 2017, looked after children changed placements 49,540 times. 11% of the placements that changed were due to a change in the status of the placement only, for example, the carer moves home rather than the placement ending. A third of placements were recorded to have ended because of a change to or the implementation of the care plan. This is where the change of placement is a planned part of the child's care plan and it would be a move to a placement that meets the child's assessed needs on a temporary or permanent basis, for example a move from a short-term fostering placement to a long-term fostering placement. 12% of placements ended because the carer requested the placement end due to the child's behaviour. 26% of placements were recorded as having ceased due to 'Other reasons' which is a decrease on the 34% reported as 'Other reasons' in 2016 and is likely to reflect an improvement in recording rather than placements ending due to a reason not listed⁴.

⁴ Further investigation with local authorities suggests that custody moves are being reported within 'Other reasons' so we are introducing a new category in 2019 to allow these to be identified separately.

2. Looked after children placed for adoption who were adopted, and their adopters (Table E3 & E4)

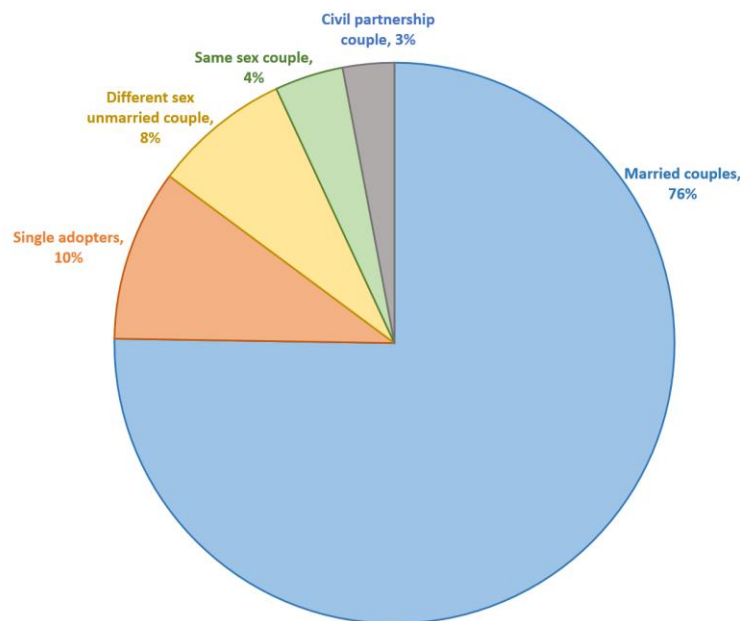
The number of children for whom the local authority has made the decision they should be placed for adoption has fallen again this year to 11,750, down 7% on last year and down 29% from a peak in 2014.

Most looked after children who were adopted were adopted by two people (90%) which has been stable over the last five years; 79% were adopted by a married or civil partnership couple.

The main release showed that the number of looked after children who were adopted in 2017 decreased, continuing a decline we saw last year. In the year ending 31 March 2017, 4,350 children looked after were adopted, down from 4,710 in 2016 and down from a peak of 5,360 in 2015. This fall was expected as the number of looked after children with a placement order has been decreasing, as has the number of looked after children who were placed for adoption. The average duration of the final period of care fell from 2 years 6 months in 2013 to 2 years in 2017.

Most looked after children who were adopted were adopted by two people, 90% in the year ending 31 March 2017. Over the last five years this proportion has been stable, fluctuating around 90%. 79% were adopted by a married or civil partnership couple, 11% were adopted by an unmarried couple (either same or different sex) and 10% were adopted by a single adopter.

Figure 5: Children looked after adopted, by legal status of adopters
England, year ending 31 March 2017



Source: SSDA903

Children looked after for whom the local authority has made the decision to adopt

The number of children for whom the local authority has made the decision they should be placed for adoption has fallen again this year to 11,750, down 7% on the 12,700 reported last year and down 29% from a peak of 16,540 in 2014. Of these, 7,020 (60%) had the decision made in a previous year, but the child was still looked after at 31 March 2017 and the decision to adopt was still in place.

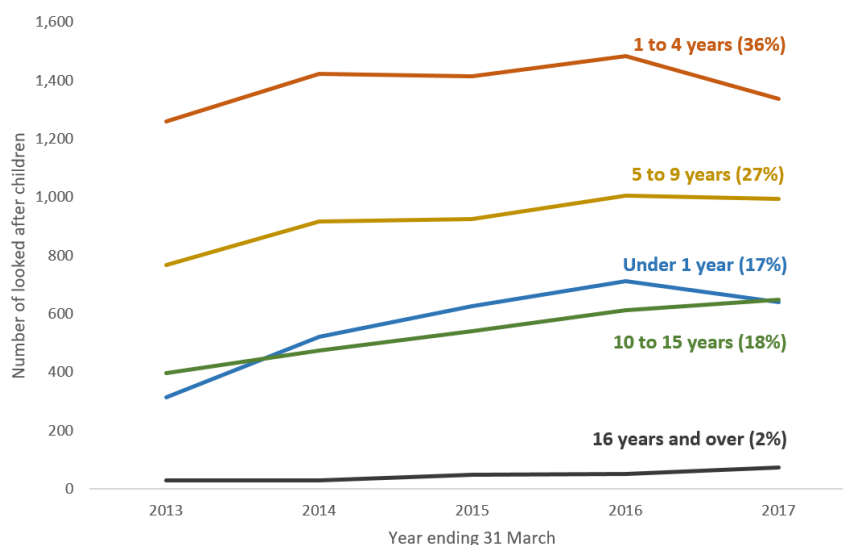
Of the 11,750 children with an adoption decision, 4,400 (37%) were adopted during the year or left care without the decision being reversed, 2,500 (21%) were placed for adoption, 260 (2%) left care after a reversal of their decision, 490 (4%) were still looked after with their decision reversed, and the remaining 4,100 (35%) were still waiting to be placed for adoption at 31 March 2017. 2,580 (22%) were waiting with a placement order, up slightly from 2,450 last year.

3. Looked after children who were the subject of a special guardianship order (Table E5)

This data has been included for the first time this year to provide characteristics information on children who were the subject of a special guardianship order. The main release showed that there was a slight decrease in the number of looked after children with a special guardianship order, from a peak of 3,860 in 2016 to 3,690 in 2017. 53% of these children had a special guardianship order made to former foster carers and 47% had a special guardianship order made to carers other than former foster carers.

The average age of looked after children who were the subject of a special guardianship order was 5 years and 8 months in 2017, up from 5 years and 3 months in 2016 – a level at which it has been since 2013. The overall decrease in the number of looked after children with a special guardianship order (of 4% compared to 2016) was largely driven by falls of 10% in each of the 1 to 4 year old age group and the under 1 years age group.

Figure 6: Looked after children who were the subject of a special guardianship order, by age at order
England, years ending 31 March 2013 to 2017

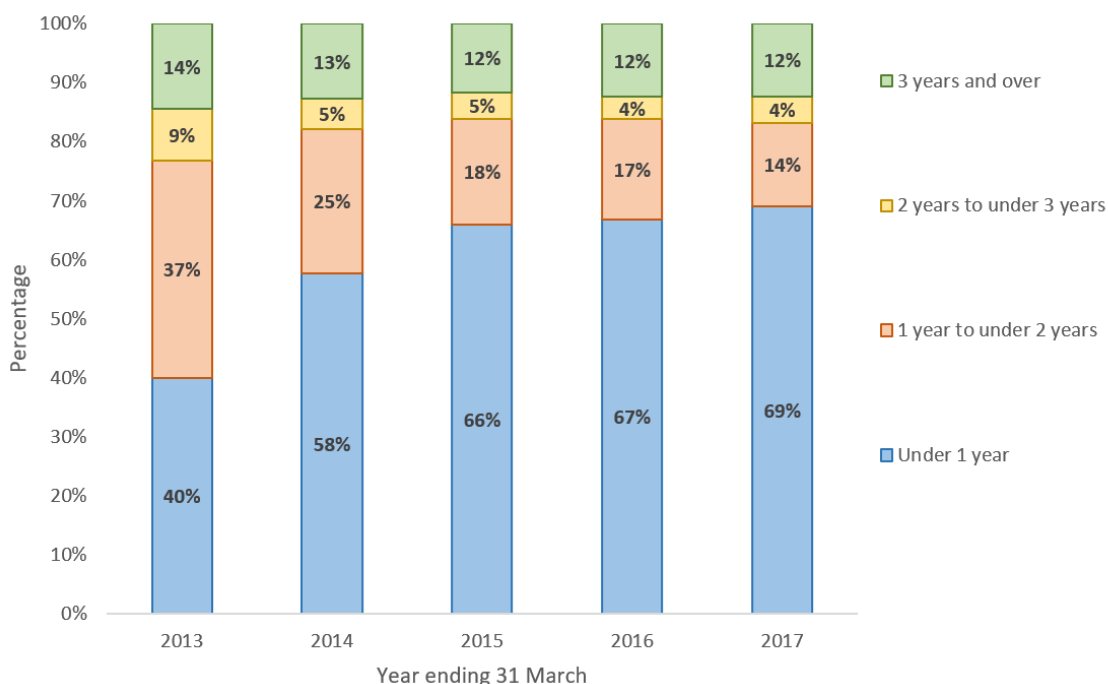


Source: SSDA903

The average duration of the final period of care for looked after children who were the subject of a special guardianship order has been falling. In the year ending 31 March 2017 the average duration of the final period of care was 1 year and 5 months, the same as in 2016 but down 5 months on 2013. This decrease has been caused by a reduction of the number of final periods of care lasting 1 year to 2 years (down steadily from 37% in 2013 to 14% in 2017) and an increase in the number of final periods of care lasting under 1 year (up steadily from 40% in 2013 to 69% in 2017).

Figure 7: Looked after children who were the subject of a special guardianship order, proportion by duration of final period of care

England, years ending 31 March 2013 to 2017



Source: SSDA903

4. Outcome indicators for looked after children (Tables I1-I5b)

Information on outcome indicators are for children looked after at 31 March for at least 12 months.

4% of children looked after aged between 10 and 17 years had been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year. This is similar to previous years.

4% of children looked after were identified as having a substance misuse problem; the same as in both 2016 and 2015; 49% received an intervention (similar to previous years).

Slightly fewer children had their immunisations (84% down from 87%) and dental checks (83% down from 84%) reported as up to date than in previous years.

The proportion of children looked after who have emotional and behavioural health that is considered normal (based on their strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) score) has remained stable at 49%.

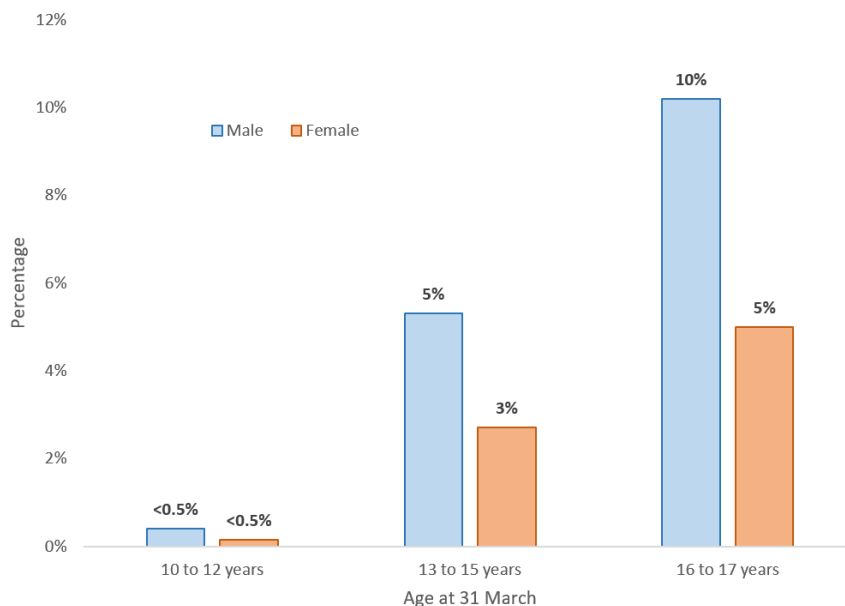
Offending rates for children looked after (Tables I1)

The proportion of looked after children who were convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand has remained stable. In the year ending 31 March 2017, 4% of children aged 10 years or over (1,580 children) who were looked after for at least 12 months were convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year, similar to 2016 and 2015 (both 5%). Looked after children (who have been looked after for at least 12 months) are five times more likely to offend than all children; the latest available figures for all children are for the year ending 31 March 2016 which continues to show 1% offended, the same as the previous year (and compared to 5% of children looked after for at least 12 months for year ending 31 March 2016)⁵.

⁵ Source: Ministry of Justice – [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2016](#)

Males were twice as likely to offend as females and older children were more likely to offend than younger children. This is similar to previous years.

Figure 8: Looked after children who were convicted or the subject of a reprimand or warning, by age and gender
 England, at 31 March 2017



Source: SSDA903

Substance Misuse (Tables I2)

Substance misuse is defined as 'intoxication by (or regular excessive consumption or and/or dependence on) psychoactive substances, leading to social, psychological, physical or legal problems'. It includes problematic use of both legal and illegal drugs (including alcohol when used in combination with other substances). 'Substance' refers to both drugs and alcohol but not tobacco.

If a child has more than one type of substance misuse problem then they are reported as receiving an intervention if they received an intervention for any of them.

The percentage of children looked after who were identified as having a substance misuse problem has remained the same since 2015. Of the 49,750 children looked after for at least 12 months in the year ending 31 March 2017, 4% were identified as having a substance misuse problem. Almost half of these (49%) received an intervention for their substance misuse problem, compared to 50% last year, and 48% in 2014. Comparable rates for all children are not available.

Substance misuse is slightly more common in males and is more common in older looked after children. 5% of males were identified with a substance misuse problems compared to 4% of females. 11% of 16 to 17 year olds were identified with a substance misuse problem in the year ending 31 March 2017, compared to 5% of 13 to 15 year olds.

Health and development outcomes (Tables I3 and I4)

Immunisations up to date reports whether the child has had all the immunisations that a child of their age should have received. It includes immunisations which should have been given before the child became looked after. Where children have not received their immunisations because of parental refusal, for health reasons, or because the young person refuses, they should be counted as not being up-to-date. Children for whom the local authority are not sure if vaccinations are up to date, for example an asylum seeking child whose early vaccination history is not known, or whose country of origin vaccination requirements are not known, should also be counted as not being up-to date.

All children covered in this cohort can be expected to have their **teeth checked by a dentist**, even very young children. Children who have declined to have their teeth checked are recorded as not having received a dental check.

Health assessments must be carried out by a doctor or other suitably qualified professional twice a year for those under 5 years of age. Both these assessments must be carried out in order for the annual assessment requirement to be satisfied for under 5s. The assessment should be carried out once in every period of six months before the child's fifth birthday. This means that one assessment should be carried out in the first six months and one in the second six months. For those aged 5 or over, a single annual assessment fulfils the requirement. Children who decline to have a health assessment are reported as not having received an annual assessment.

Most looked after children are up to date with their health care. Of the 49,750 children looked after continuously for 12 months at 31 March 2017:

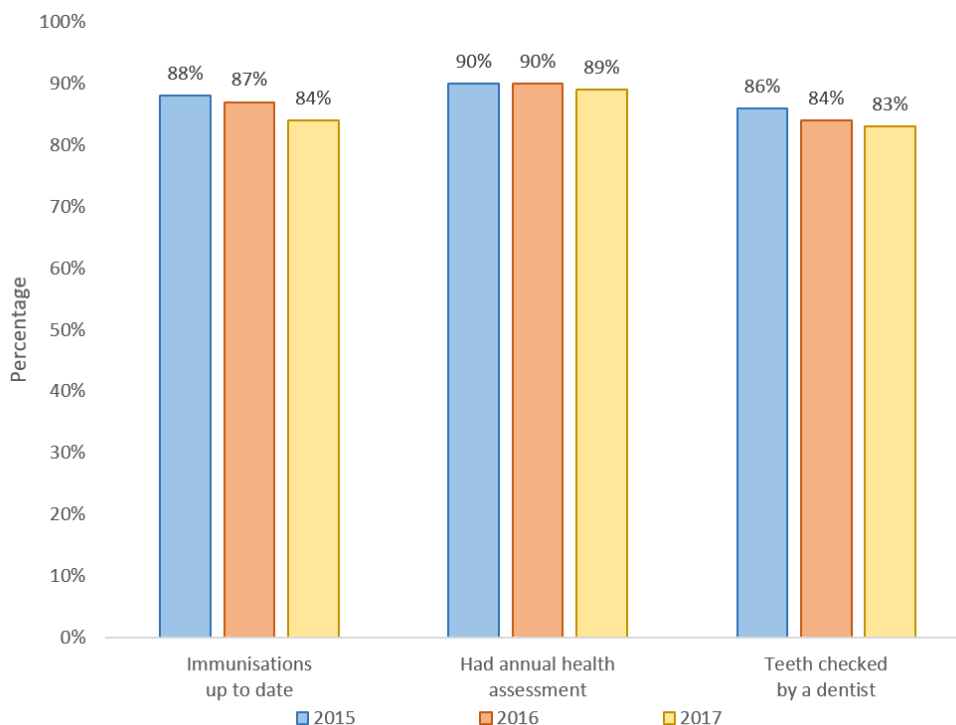
- 84% were reported as being up to date with their immunisations, compared to 87% in 2016 and 88% in 2015,
- 89% had their annual health check, compared to 90% in 2016 and 2015,
- 83% had their teeth checked by a dentist, compared to 84% in 2016 and 86% in 2015.

Older children were less likely to be up to date, with 75% of those aged 16 years and over being up to date with immunisations, a slight fall from 78% in 2016 and 79% in 2015. 83% had their annual health check and 75% had their teeth checked – similar to previous years.

The apparent decrease in immunisations up to date could be due to the increased numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children. If the local authority is not sure if immunisations are up to date, for example an asylum seeking child whose history is not known, or whose country of origin vaccination requirements are not known then they should be reported as not up to date.

Of the 4,730 children looked after aged 4 years and under, 3,900 had development assessments up to date which is 82%. This is a very slight fall of 1 percentage point from 83% in 2016 but is down from 90% in 2015.

Figure 9: Looked after children at 31 March who were looked after for at least 12 months by health and development outcomes
England, at 31 March 2015 to 2017



Source: SSSA903

Emotional and behavioural health (SDQ scores) (Tables I5a & I5b)

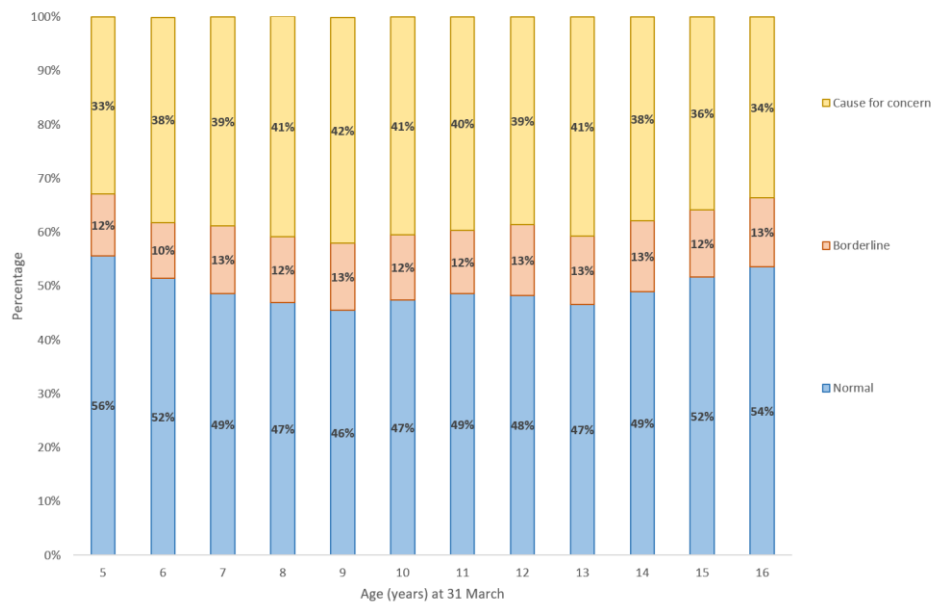
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores

This data item covers the emotional and behavioural health of children looked after, as recorded by a main carer in the strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ), a short behavioural screening questionnaire. The SDQ has five sections that cover details of emotional difficulties; conduct problems; hyperactivity or inattention; friendships and peer groups; and also positive behaviour, plus an “impact supplement” to assist in the prediction of emotional health problems. The questionnaire must be completed by the child’s main carer. For most looked after children and young people this will be either a foster carer or their residential care worker where the child is in residential accommodation. However, it is possible for the questionnaire to be completed by a parent or other family member if they are looking after the child.

All local authorities are required to make sure that a SDQ is completed for each of their looked after children aged between 4 and 16 years inclusive. It provides valuable information as part of a child’s annual health assessment - its primary purpose is to give social workers and health professionals information about a child’s wellbeing. A score of 0 to 13 is considered normal, 14 to 16 is borderline, and 17 to 40 is a cause for concern.

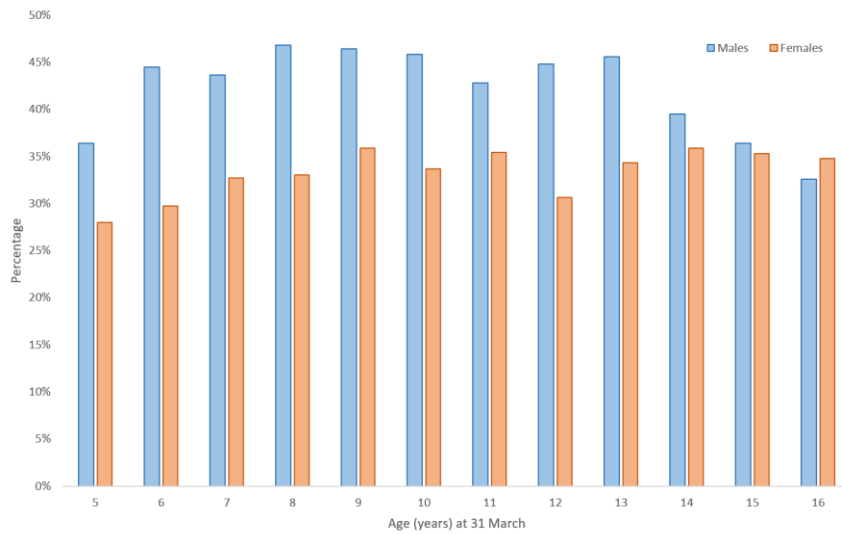
Of the 38,010 children aged 5 to 16 years, who were looked after at 31 March 2017 for at least 12 months, 28,810 (76%) had a SDQ score reported, up from 75% in 2016 and 72% in 2015. Almost half (49%) of children looked after continuously for at least 12 months had ‘normal’ emotional and behavioural health, 12% had ‘borderline’ scores and 38% had scores which were a cause for concern. These figures have remained fairly stable over recent years. The proportion of children with scores that were cause for concern were lowest for children aged 5 and 16 years at 33% and 34%. For almost all ages, males have higher percentage of children who are cause for concern, particularly for children aged under 14 years. For older children the difference between males and females is small and for 16 year olds a higher proportion of girls are a cause for concern.

Figure 10: Percentage of looked after children with SDQ scores that are normal, borderline and cause for concern by age England, at 31 March 2017



Source: SSDA903

Figure 11: Percentage of looked after children whose SDQ score was a cause for concern, by gender England, at 31 March 2017



Source: SSDA903

The average SDQ score was 14.1 in 2017, similar to both 2016 and 2015 when the value was 14.0 and 13.9. For males, the average SDQ score was 14.7 and for females, the average SDQ score was 13.3.

5. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics website ([Statistics: looked-after children](#)). Local authority level figures are available in the publication underlying data.

Children looked after at 31 March

A4 Children looked after at 31 March 2017, by distance between home and placement and locality of placement

A5 Children looked after at 31 March 2017, by placement, placement location and placement provider

Children looked after during the year

B2 Duration of placements ceasing during the year ending 31 March 2017

B3 Reason for placement change for children who moved placements in the year ending 31 March 2017 – Experimental Statistics

Children starting to be looked after

C2 Children who started to be looked after during the years ending 31 March, by gender, age on starting, category of needs, ethnic origin, legal status and previous permanence arrangement

Children who ceased to be looked after

D2 Children who ceased to be looked after during the years ending 31 March by placement on ceasing

D3 Children who ceased to be looked after during the years ending 31 March, by duration of latest period of care and average duration of latest period of care in days

D4 Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2017, by number of periods of care in care history, number of placements in period of care and age on ceasing

Children looked after who were adopted

E3 Children looked after who were adopted during the years ending 31 March by number of adopters, legal status of adopters and gender of adopters

E4 Children for whom the local authority has made the decision that the child should be placed for adoption, those placed and waiting for adoption and children where the decision to be placed for adoption has been reversed, 31 March 2013 to 2017

E5 Looked after children who were the subject of a special guardianship order during the years ending 1 March by gender, age on ceasing to be looked after, ethnic origin, category of need, final legal status, duration of final period of care and age on starting final period of care, years ending 31 March 2013 to 2107

Time Series of key figures

H1 Children looked after at 31 March and children who started, ceased and were adopted during the years ending 31 March, 1994 to 2017

Outcomes for looked after children (OC2)

I1 Offending by children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by age and gender

I2 Substance misuse by children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by age and gender

I3 Health care of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by age and gender

I4 Development assessments for children aged under 5 years who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, by gender

I5a 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

I5b Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was received

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

Rounding Conventions The National Statistics Code of Practice requires that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that all published or disseminated statistics produced by the DfE protect confidentiality. National figures have been rounded to the nearest 10 and local authority figures 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). To ensure the suppressed number cannot be identified by simple arithmetic secondary suppression may be required. In this case the next smallest number and its percentage is also suppressed. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero (0). The following convention has been used:

“.” means not applicable

“..” means not available

“-” means negligible – used to represent a percentage below 0.5%

UK Comparability of Looked-After Children’s Statistics Data is collected and published independently by each of the 4 countries in the UK. Although there are similarities between the data collected by the 4 nations, there are also differences, which may be down to different policies and legislation, and differing historical data collections.

Population Estimates Population estimates are used to calculate rates per 10,000 children under the age of 18 published in Table A1 and LAA1. These are calculated using the appropriate mid-year population estimates supplied by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

6. Further information is available

Outcomes for looked after children in England Information on [outcomes for looked after children](#) is available for children looked after at 31 March 2016. Outcomes include educational attainment, special educational needs (SEN), absence and exclusions from school. Figures for 2017 will be published in March 2018.

Children in need and child protection statistics for England Information on [referrals, assessments and children who were the subject of a child protection plan](#) are available for 2017 (published November 2017).

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 expenditure Information on local authority [planned expenditure](#) on schools, education, children and young people’s services is available for the financial year 2015-16. This data is returned to DfE by local authorities via the Section 251 Budget Return. Data for 2016-17 will be published in December 2017.

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 and fostering in England.
Scotland	Statistics on children’s social work in Scotland are available for 2015-16 on the Scottish Government website .
Wales	Statistics on children looked after in Wales are available for the period up to 31 March 2016 on the Welsh Government website .
Northern Ireland	Statistics on children looked after in Northern Ireland are available for 2015-16 and are published on the Department of Health website .

7. National Statistics

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.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

8. Technical information

A looked after children statistics guide accompanies this SFR. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

9. Get in touch

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