Adoption Scorecards: year ending March 2019

Methodology and guidance document

August 2020

Contents

Guidance for Adoption Scorecards 2019

Notes for all tables

1.   The indicators included in the Adoption Scorecards were set out in the guidance [From Adoption Scorecards to RAA Scorecards](#).

2.   Figures on Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs) are included for RAAs that went live up to and including December 2018. Please note the start dates for these RAAs which are provided below the underlying data table.

3.   All calculations have been derived from unrounded figures.

4.   All figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

5.   Timeliness figures have been included for 3 year and 1 year averages for local authorities, and 1 year averages for RAAs. The average number of days are presented rounded to the nearest day. For counts of 10 or fewer the timeliness figures are suppressed and replaced by a 'c'.

6.   To ensure suppressed numbers cannot be identified by simple arithmetic secondary suppression may be required.

Notes for figures derived from the SSDA903 dataset

7.   Throughout this guidance, reference is made to codes used in the SSDA903 data collection (the data source for the majority of the indicators). Further information on the SSDA903 data collection and the codes can be found in its [guidance](#).

8.   For confidentiality purposes, numbers from one to five inclusive have been replaced by a 'c'. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero (0).

9.   Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers but where the numerator was 5 or fewer or the denominator was 10 or fewer, they have been suppressed and replaced by a 'c'.

10.   Symbols used:

    c   Figures not shown in order to protect confidentiality.

    N/A   Not applicable, i.e. no children in the cohort.

    -        Percentages less than 0.5% but greater than 0%.

Notes for figures derived from the ASGLB dataset

11.   The Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) data collection is used for figures relating to adopters. Further information on the ASGLB data collection can be found in its [guidance](#).

12.   Numbers in the adopter sections of the scorecard are rounded to the nearest 5 for local authorities and 10 for RAAs. For confidentiality purposes, numbers from one to five inclusive have been replaced by a cross (x). Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero (0).

13.   Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers but where the numerator was 5 or fewer or the denominator was 10 or fewer, they have been suppressed and replaced by a cross (x).

14.   Adopter figures relate to RAAs, consortiums or Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs) where appropriate. A note on this will appear below the underlying data table where relevant.

15.   Symbols used:

    x   Figures not shown in order to protect confidentiality.

    N/A   Not applicable, i.e. no children in the cohort.

    ..   Data not provided.

    -       Percentages less than 0.5% but greater than 0%.

The numbering of the indicators is the same as in the previous years. New indicators this year have been given a new number. The order they are presented in this guidance notes reflects their display order in the scorecard.

Timeliness Indicators

A10. Average time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family adjusted for foster carer adoptions, for children who have been adopted

Definition

For all the children that have been adopted during the three-year period ending 31 March, the average length of time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family, i.e. being placed for adoption (placement codes A3 to A6).

The indicator is adjusted for foster carer adoptions, in that if a child was adopted by their foster carer, the time considered is stopped at the date the child moved in with the foster family.

Period covered

Three year and one year averages have been included for local authorities, and one year averages for RAAs.

The most recent 3 year indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

A mean average is calculated of the time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (i.e. being placed for adoption, placement codes A4 and A6) or if adopted by a foster carer (placement codes A3 and A5), until they had moved in with the foster carer, for all children that were adopted between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2019.

Children who were not placed for adoption prior to the adoption order are excluded. Where a child changed placement but not carer(s) (reason for new episode codes T and U), the placement start date for when the child moved in with the carer is used.

The indicator is presented rounded to the nearest number of days.

Note

The methodology for the A10 indicator has been updated, and as such the figures may not match previous publications.

Good performance

A **low** number of days represents good performance.

A2. Average time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family, for children who have been adopted

Definition

For all the children that have been adopted during the three-year period ending 31 March, the average length of time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child (i.e. a placement order being granted) and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family.

Period covered

Three year and one year averages have been included for local authorities, and one year averages for RAAs.

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

A mean average is calculated of the time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child, i.e. granting a placement order or a freeing order (legal status codes E1 and D1, respectively) and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family, for all children that were adopted between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2019.

Children who were not placed for adoption prior to the adoption order are excluded. Children with no placement order or freeing order are also excluded (legal status codes E1 and D1, respectively).

The indicator is presented rounded to the nearest number of days.

Note

A time of zero is assigned to children who were matched before court authority was received.

Good performance

A **low** number of days represents good performance.

A20. Average time (in days) between a child entering care and a local authority receiving court authority to place a child, for children who have been adopted

Definition

For all the children that have been adopted during the three-year period ending 31 March, the average length of time (in days) between a child entering care and a local authority receiving court authority to place a child (i.e. a placement order being granted).

Period covered

Three year and one year averages have been included for local authorities, and one year averages for RAAs.

The most recent 3 year indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

A mean average is calculated of the time (in days) between a child entering care and a local authority receiving court authority to place a child, i.e. granting a placement order or a freeing order (legal status codes E1 and D1, respectively), for all children that were adopted between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2019.

Children who were not placed for adoption prior to the adoption order are excluded. Children with no placement order or freeing order are also excluded (legal status codes E1 and D1, respectively).

The indicator is presented rounded to the nearest number of days.

Good performance

A **low** number of days represents good performance.

Local Authority Indicators

A15. Number of new ADM decisions

Definition

The number of new agency decision maker decisions made during the year ending 31 March that a child should be adopted.

Period covered

The most recent figures refer to the years ending 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

If a child receives more than one ADM decision during the year (following a reversal of the previous decision), they are counted only once. If a child receives a decision in more than one year are counted once in each year.

Note

This indicator has been included to provide contextual information to help agencies understanding how decision making has changed within their own area and across others.

A16. Number of new placement orders granted

Definition

The number of new placement orders granted by the courts during the year ending 31 March.

Period covered

The most recent figures refer to the years ending 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

A child is counted when their legal status changes to placement order granted (legal status code E1).

Note

See note under A15.

A5. Children for whom permanence decisions has changed away from adoption

Definition

The number of children who have had their agency decision maker decision that they should be adopted reversed. A proportion of all children who had been on an adoption plan during the period is also provided.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

To calculate the percentage, the number of children who had their decision reversed during that same period is divided by the number of children with an adoption decision at any point between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2019 (including those whose decision occurred before this period).

The reversal is determined by whether a "Date of decision that the child should no longer be placed for adoption" or "Reason why the child should no longer be placed for adoption" has been provided.

If a child receives more than one reversal during the three year period, they are counted only once.

A17. Number of children in a Fostering for Adoption / Concurrent Planning foster placement

Definition

The number of children in a Fostering for Adoption (FfA) or concurrent planning foster placement at 31 March.

A Fostering for Adoption (FfA) placement relates to when a looked after child is placed in a foster placement with carers who are foster carers who are also approved prospective adopters and adoption is likely to be the outcome. The local authority are considering adoption for the child or are satisfied that the child ought to be placed for adoption but do not have a placement order or parental consent to place the child for adoption, but are seeking to obtain the order or consent.

Concurrent planning is where the local authority is trying to rehabilitate the child with the birth parents, but at the same time, the local authority is planning for adoption, in the event that rehabilitation fails.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by summing all children in care on a Fostering for Adoption (FfA) or concurrent planning foster placement at 31 March (placement type codes U2 or U5).

Matching Indicators

A14. Number of children waiting to be placed for adoption with a placement order

Definition

The number of children with an adoption plan and a placement order in the year ending 31 March who had not been placed for adoption at 31 March.

When adoption is the preferred option for permanence this is referred to as the adoption plan. An adoption plan is made by an agency decision maker.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The time spent waiting with a placement order is calculated by taking the difference (in days) between the placement order date (legal status codes E1 and D1) and 31 March 2019. The groups are calculated as follows:

- 0 to 3 months: Between 0 and 91 days
- 3 to 6 months: Between 92 and 182 days
- 6 to 12 months; Between 183 and 365 days
- 12 to 18 months: Between 366 and 547 days
- More than 18 months: Greater than 547 days

A11. Number of approved adoptive families waiting to be matched

Definition

The number of approved adoptive families as at 31 March.

Calculation

The indicator counts the number of adoptive families returned as having a Stage 2 complete date (if through the 2-stage process) or approval date (if through the old process) that have not yet been matched with children.

The time spent waiting from approval is calculated by taking the difference (in days) between the approval date and 31 March 2019. The groups are calculated as follows:

- 0 to 3 months: Between 0 and 91 days

- 3 to 6 months: Between 92 and 182 days
- 6 to 12 months; Between 183 and 365 days
- 12 to 18 months: Between 366 and 547 days
- More than 18 months: Greater than 547 days

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to 31 March 2019.

Note

For local authorities that work in partnership outside of a RAA, these figures have been assigned to the local authority as per the footnotes. Where a local authority is part of a RAA they have been assigned N/A in the local authority data for this indicator, please refer to the RAA tab of the underlying data and dashboard.

A12. Percentage of adoptive families matched to a child who waited at least 3 months from approval to being matched

Definition

All the adoptive families matched to a child during the year ending 31 March 2019 are considered.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of adoptive families that waited more than 3 months (91 days) between approval and being matched to a child.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by determining the number of adoptive families matched to a child during the year ending 31 March 2019 that waited more than 3 months between approval and being matched and then dividing by the number of adoptive families that were matched to a child during the year ending 31 March 2019.

Note

These figures are included for RAAs only in the scorecards, due to the complexity of RAAs going live during the year and therefore making local authority figures relating to the financial year not comparable. For local authority figures, please refer to the ASGLB local level data files.

Good performance

A **low** percentage represents good performance.

Recruitment Indicators

A13. Number of applications to become an adoptive family still to be assessed (not yet approved or rejected)

Definition

The number of applications to become an adoptive family still to be assessed (not yet approved or rejected) as at 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The indicator counts the number of adoptive families returned as having a Stage 1 start date (if through the 2-stage process) or application submitted date (if through the old process) but no further dates are provided. Adoptive families who were fast tracked to Stage 2 are also included.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to 31 March 2019.

Note

For local authorities that work in partnership outside of a RAA, these figures have been assigned to the local authority as per the footnotes. Where a local authority is part of a RAA they have been assigned N/A in the local authority data for this indicator, please refer to the RAA tab of the underlying data and dashboard.

A21. Number of adopter approvals

Definition

The number of approvals of adoptive families during the year.

Calculation

The indicator counts the number of adoptive families returned as having a Stage 2 complete date (if through the 2-stage process) or approval date (if through the old process) during the year.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2019.

Note

These figures are included for RAAs only in the scorecards, due to the complexity of RAAs going live during the year and therefore making local authority figures relating to

the financial year not comparable. For local authority figures, please refer to the [ASGLB local level data files](#).

A22. Number of applications commencing Stage 1

Definition

The number of registrations of adoptive families during the year.

Calculation

The indicator counts the number of adoptive families returned as having a Stage 1 start date during the year.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2019.

Note

These figures are included for RAAs only in the scorecards, due to the complexity of RAAs going live during the year and therefore making local authority figures relating to the financial year not comparable. For local authority figures, please refer to the [ASGLB local level data files](#).

Related Information

Adoptions from care

Definition

The number of children adopted from care during the year ending 31 March.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by summing all children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted (children with a reason episode ceased code E11 or E12) in the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds

Definition

The number of children adopted from care during the year ending 31 March, for those classified as being from a Black, Asian, Mixed or Other ethnic background.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by summing all the children from an ethnic minority group who ceased to be looked after who were adopted (children with a reason episode ceased E11 or E12) in the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Children from minority ethnic backgrounds are those classified as being from a Black (ethnic origin codes BCRB, BAFR or BOTH), Asian (AIND, APKN, ABAN or AOTH), Mixed (MWBC, MWBA, MWAS or MOTH), Chinese (CHNE) or Other ethnic background (OOTH).

Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Adoptions of children aged five or over

Definition

The number of children adopted from care during the year ending 31 March, for those aged 5 or over when adopted.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by summing all the children who ceased to be looked after aged five or older who were adopted (children with a reason episode ceased E11 or E12) in the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Children who started to be looked after under the age of five

Definition

The number of children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March, who were aged under 5 when they started to be looked after.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by summing all the children who started to be looked after who were under the age of 5 when they started to be looked after in the years ending 31 March 2017, 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Only the first occasion on which a child started to be looked after in the year is counted. Children who started to be looked after in more than one year will be counted more than once.

Power BI Dashboard

A dashboard for the scorecards has been introduced which replaces the version that was previously in the Excel data file. This contains the following tabs:

Page 2, Local authority (LA): Local authority level figures for all of the indicators from the 'Local authority data' tab of the underlying data.

Page 3, Statistical Neigbours: For each local authority, the timeliness figures for their 10 statistical neighbours are included along with the statistical neighbours average.

Page 4, Regional adoption agency (RAA): Regional adoption agency level figures for all of the indicators from the 'Regional Adoption Agency data' tab of the underlying data.

Page 5, RAA-LA comparison: The individual local authority timeliness figures and related information for each RAA.

The dashboard is interactive, when you select a local authority in the drop down filter or an indicator in the charts the figures on the tab will update. **Note that it will only update the figures on that tab, you need to make the selection on each tab separately.**

Navigating the dashboard

The online dashboard view may look slightly different to the screenshots below.

Select the local authority of interest using the filter on each tab as follows:
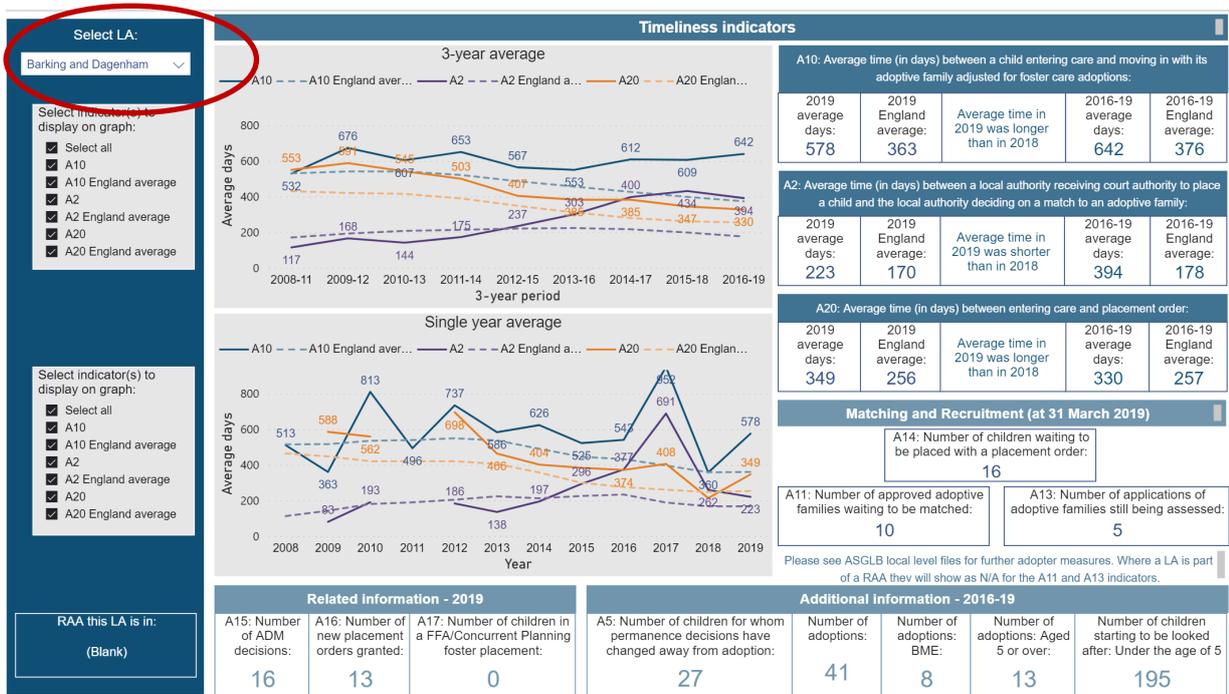
Select the RAA of interest using the filter on each tab as follows:
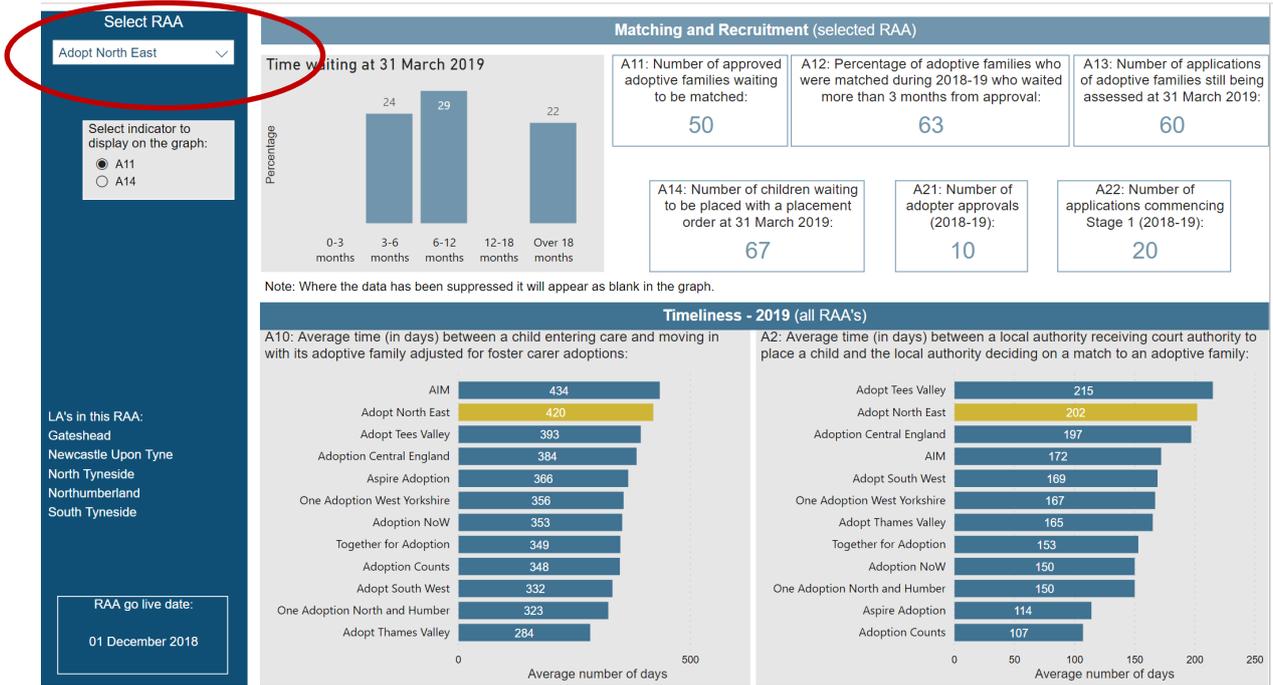
You can select an indicator to display on some of the charts. We recommend selecting one indicator at a time to avoid over-crowding the chart. Select the indicator of interest using the filter on each tab as follows:
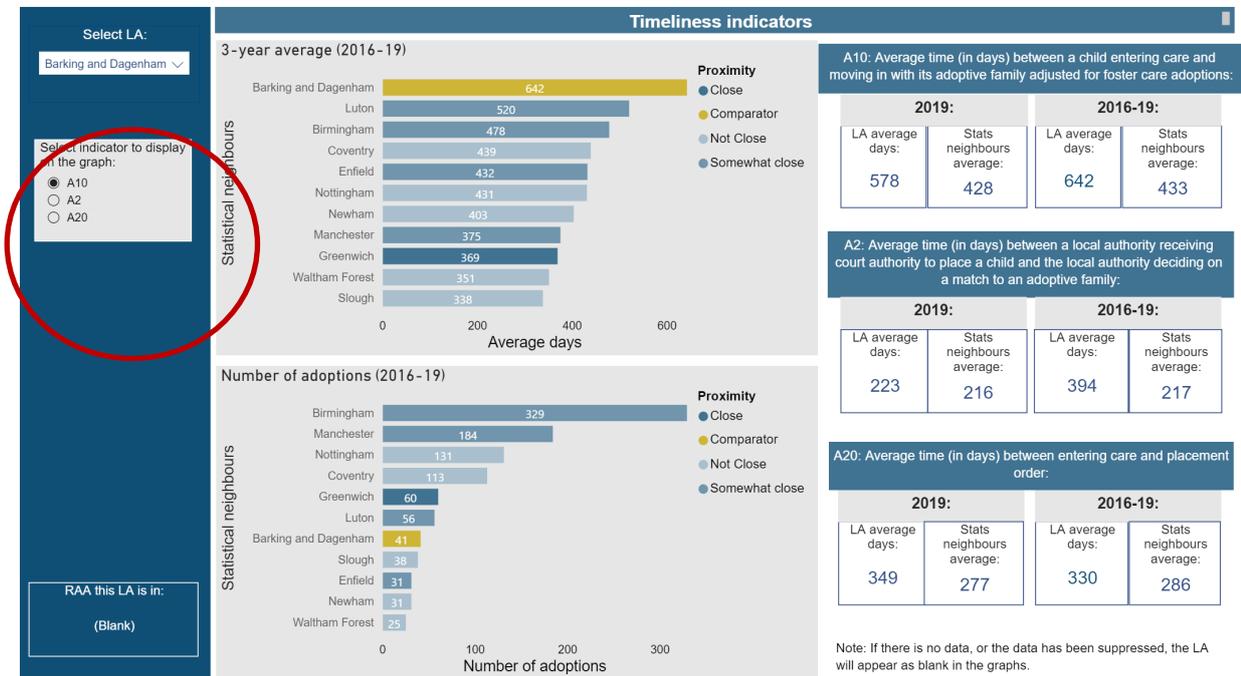
Hover over a chart to display further information:
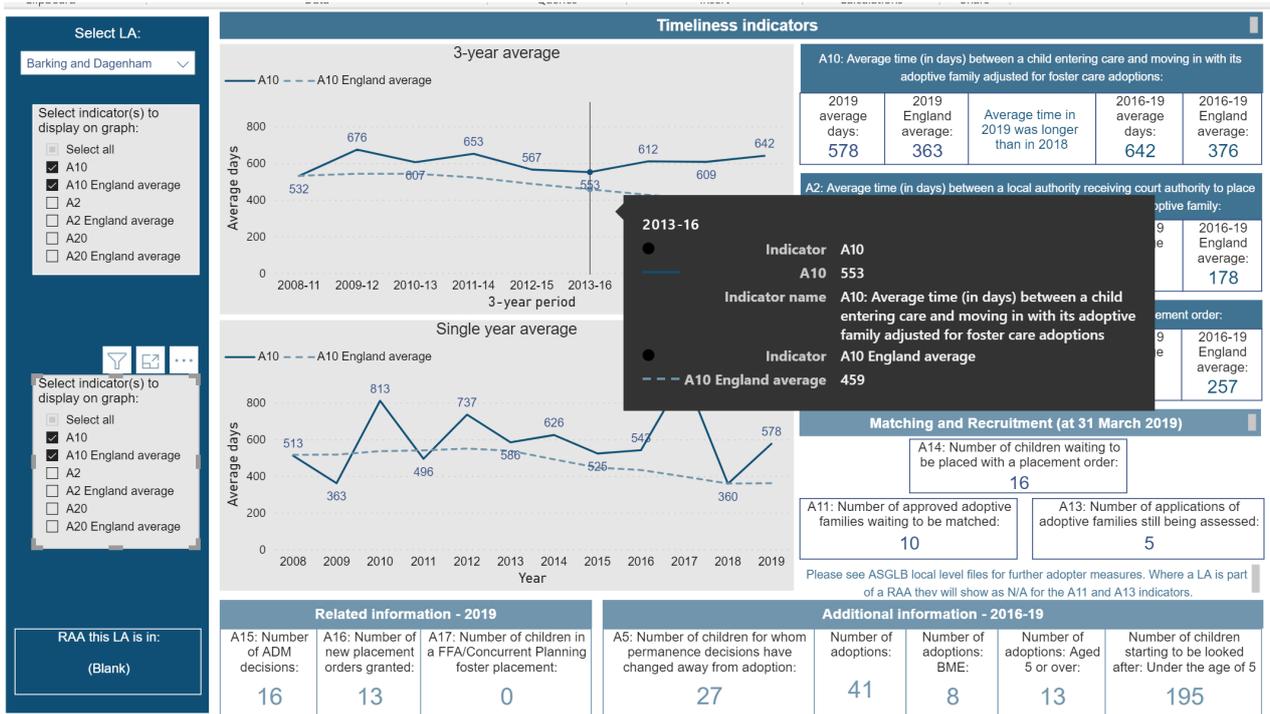
To display the data in a chart as a table, right click on the chart of interest and click 'Show as a table'.

If you have any feedback on the dashboard, please send it to ProgrammeOffice.CSAR@education.gov.uk.

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