



Youth Justice Statistics 2022 to 2023 England and Wales

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

Statistics bulletin

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Youth Justice Statistics, England and Wales, April 2022 to March 2023

The youth justice system in England and Wales works to prevent offending and reoffending by children. It is different to the adult system and is structured to address the needs of children.

This publication looks at data for the youth justice system in England and Wales for the year ending March 2023 (where available). It considers the number of children (those aged 10 to 17) in the system, the offences they committed, the outcomes they received, their demographics and the trends over time.

Main points

Stop and searches of children increased compared to the previous year	↑	Stop and searches of children increased by 13% and accounted for over one in five of the total stop and searches where age was known. Over three quarters of stop and searches of children resulted in no further action.
Arrests of children increased for the second consecutive year	↑	Arrests of children increased by 9% compared with the previous year, though the number remained lower than pre-pandemic levels.
First time entrants to the youth justice system increased for the first time in the last ten years	↑	There were just under 8,400 child first time entrants (FTEs). This was an increase of 1% compared with the previous year, the first increase seen in the last ten years.
Almost two thirds of children remanded to custody received a non-custodial outcome	↑	Of those who did not receive a custodial sentence following a custodial remand 28% were acquitted or had their case dismissed while 72% received a non-custodial sentence.
The average time from offence to completion at court remained high	↓	The average time from offence to completion was 207 days, down from 217 days in the previous year but well above pre-pandemic levels.
Offences resulting in a caution or court sentence increased	↑	The number of offences resulting in a caution or court sentence increased by 1% compared with the previous year, though remained below pre-pandemic levels.
Sentencing of children at court increased for the first time in the last ten years	↑	The number of sentencing occasions involving children increased by 8% compared with the previous year, the first year-on-year increase of the last ten years.
The number of children held in custody has fallen	↓	There was an average of around 440 children in custody at any one time during the year, a fall of 3% against the previous year and the lowest number on record.
The reoffending rate increased for the first time in eight years	↑	The reoffending rate increased by 0.9 percentage points from the previous year, the first increase since the year ending March 2014, though the second lowest rate in the time series.

For technical details see the accompanying [Guide to Youth Justice Statistics](#)

We would welcome any feedback to statistics@yjb.gov.uk

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Things you need to know

This publication draws together a range of statistics about children in the youth justice system from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 (hereafter the year ending March 2023), where available. Following on from the recommendations in the [Overcoming Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics](#) report, this publication guides the user through the flow of children aged 10 to 17 years in the youth justice system in England and Wales.

The contents of the report will be of interest to government policy makers and those monitoring policy, the agencies engaged with the youth justice system at both national and local levels, academics, the voluntary and community sector and others who want to understand more about the system.

The data described in this publication come from various sources including the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), youth justice services (YJSs), the Youth Custody Service (YCS), and youth secure estate providers. The Statistics and Analysis Team at the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) produce this report.

Details of all the administrative databases and bespoke collections used for this report can be found in the [Guide to Youth Justice Statistics](#) which provides users with further information on the data sources, data quality and terminology, in particular the types of outcomes given to children. Where data are taken from other publications, links can be found within the chapters.

This is an annual report, with the focus on the year ending March 2023, however much of the data used in this report are drawn from quarterly publications and there may be more up to date data available. The purpose of this report is to provide an overall summary of the youth justice system, allowing users to find everything in one place. All data referenced are available in the Supplementary Tables that accompany this report. Separate tables covering YJS level information are also available, including in an open and accessible format.

Within this publication the words 'child' or 'children' are used to describe those aged 10 to 17. When the terms 'child or young adult' or 'children and young adults' are used, it means that 18 year olds may be included in the data. For example, in the behaviour management dataset, these statistics include 18 year olds still in the youth secure estate.

When talking about pre-pandemic levels, this refers to the years prior to the year ending March 2021 and is used to highlight where numbers remain much higher or lower than the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Percentage change and percentage point changes are used throughout the publication. Percentage change refers to the difference between two numbers from one year to the next and percentage point change refers to the difference between two percentages, which is used when comparing proportions.

Rounding conventions have been adopted in this publication to aid interpretation and comparisons. Figures greater than 1,000 have been rounded to the nearest 100 and those smaller than 1,000 to the nearest 10. Rates have been reported to one decimal place. Percentages have been calculated from unrounded figures and then rounded to the nearest whole percentage. Unrounded figures have been presented in the Supplementary Tables.

The data in this report are compared with the previous year (the year ending March 2022 in most cases), with the year ending March 2013 as a long-term comparator (ten years). Any other reference period is referred to explicitly.

Statistician's comment

These statistics draw together a range of statistics about children in the youth justice system. The latest figures highlight year-on-year increases at many stages of the system, in some cases for the first time in the last ten years. While most of the increases are likely to demonstrate the continued recovery of the criminal justice system following the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, in some cases we are seeing the figures rising for children while in the adult system they are unchanging or saw smaller increases.

Stop and searches of children increased by 13% compared to the previous year while remaining at the same level for adults and the children accounted for just over one in five stop and searches where age was known, increasing by two percentage points from the previous year. Arrests of children increased by 9%, whereas there was just a 2% increase for adults.

First time entrants to the youth justice system increased for the first time in ten years, though by just 1% and were the second lowest on record, while proven offences were higher and sentences given at court saw an increase for the first time in the last ten years.

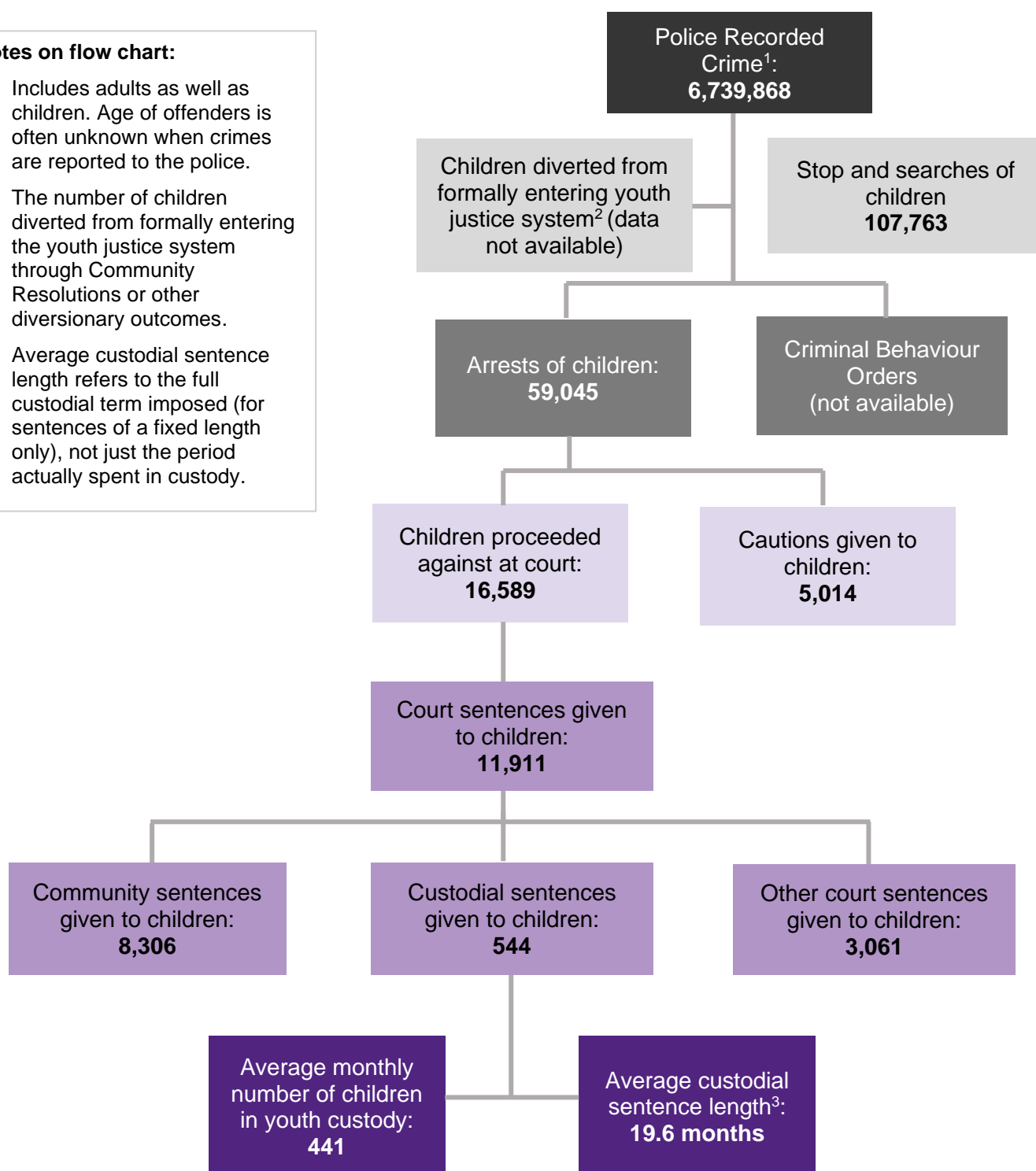
Black children continued to be overrepresented across most stages of the youth justice system, though there were continued reductions in the proportions they accounted for across several areas including stop and search, arrests, youth cautions, first time entrants, sentencing and children in custody.

The reoffending rate for children increased by 0.9 percentage points to 32.2% following seven years of year-on-year reductions, while the number of children in the cohort continued to decrease.

Flows through the youth justice system, year ending March 2023

Notes on flow chart:

1. Includes adults as well as children. Age of offenders is often unknown when crimes are reported to the police.
2. The number of children diverted from formally entering the youth justice system through Community Resolutions or other diversionary outcomes.
3. Average custodial sentence length refers to the full custodial term imposed (for sentences of a fixed length only), not just the period actually spent in custody.



1. Gateway to the youth justice system

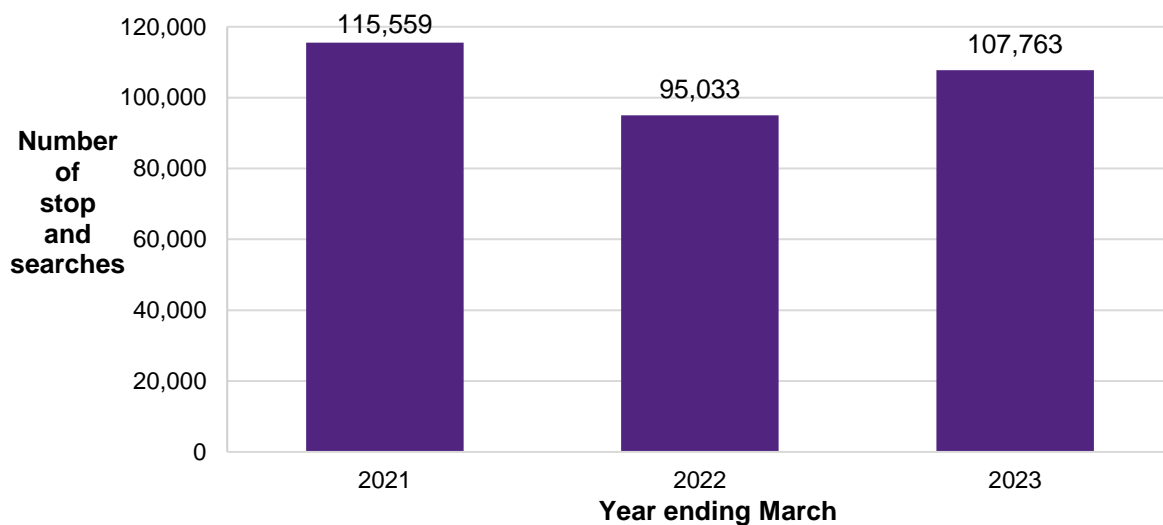
In the year ending March 2023:

- There were around 107,800 stop and searches of children, an increase of 13% on the previous year, while remaining static for those aged 18 and over. Stop and searches involving children accounted for over one in five stop and searches where age was known.
 - Black children were involved in 20% of stop and searches (where ethnicity was known). This was 14 percentage points higher than the proportion of Black 10 to 17 year olds in the 2021 population and the only ethnic group to be over-represented compared with the population.
 - Over three quarters (77%) of stop and searches of children resulted in No Further Action, while 10% resulted in arrest.
 - Arrests of children increased for the second consecutive year, rising by 9% compared to the previous year to around 59,000.
-

This chapter covers data on stop and searches, arrests and youth cautions given to children.

1.1 Stop and searches of children aged 10 to 17

Figure 1.1: Number of stop and searches of children, England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023

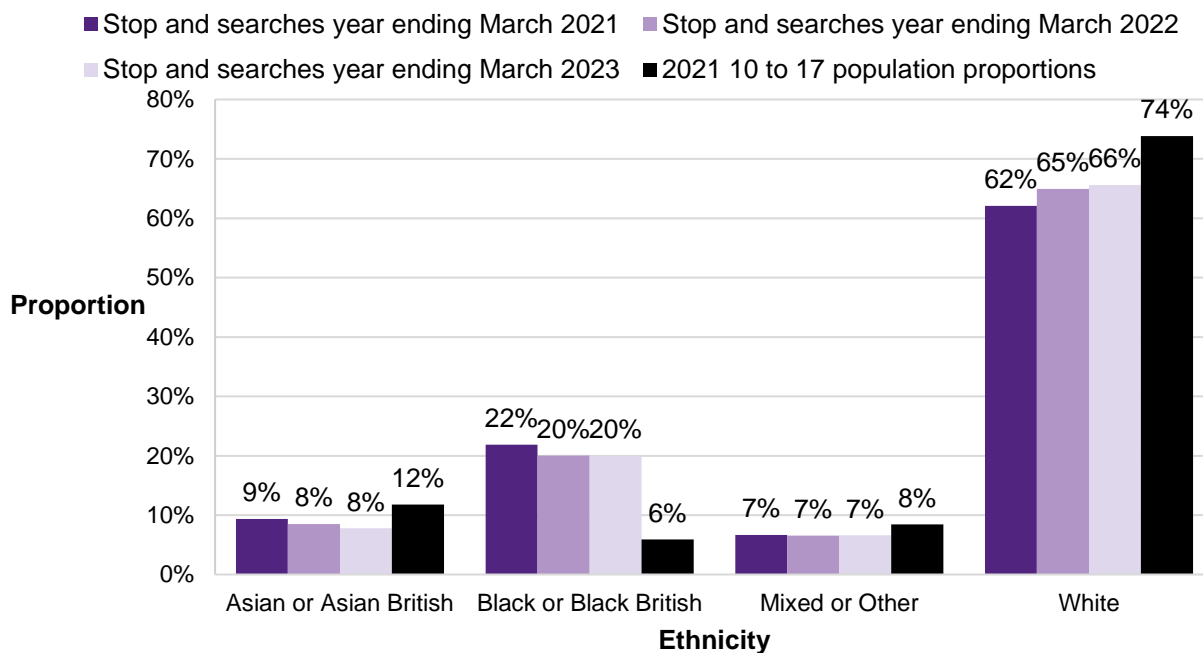


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.1

In the year ending March 2023, there were around 107,800 stop and searches of children. This was an increase of 13% compared with the previous year while stop and searches of people aged 18 and over remained static. The number of stop and searches involving children as a proportion of overall stop and searches where age was known¹ has increased by two percentage points in each of the last two years, rising from 17% in the year ending March 2021 to 19% last year and 21% in the latest year.

¹ Age was not recorded for 7% of stop and searches either because age was unknown (4%) or it was a vehicle search (3%).

Figure 1.2: Proportion of stop and searches of children by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023²



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.1

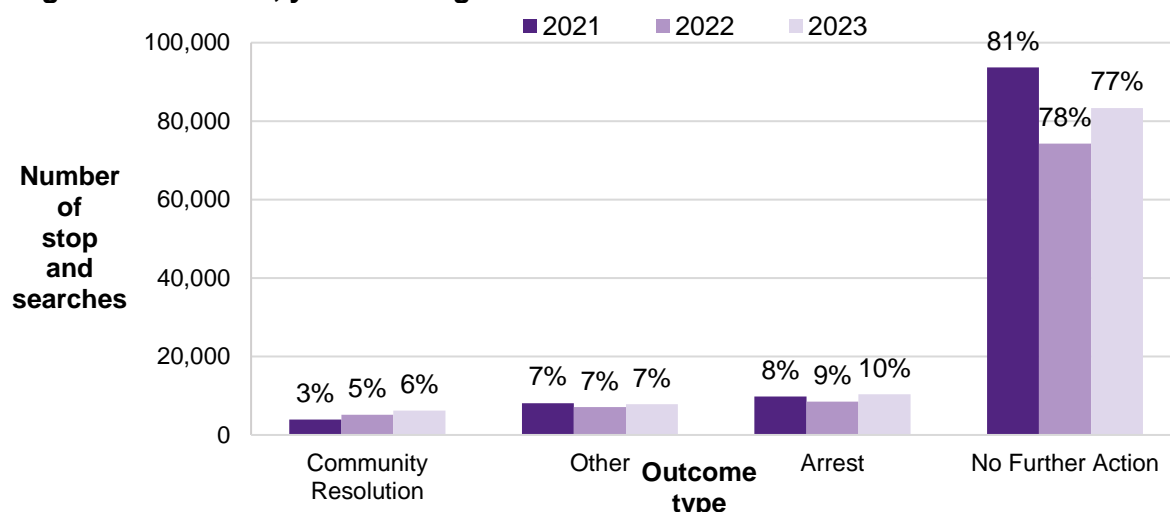
Since the year ending March 2021, the Home Office have collected stop and search data on both the “officer observed” ethnicity and the “self-defined” ethnicity of the person searched, for individual records. This means that if the self-defined ethnicity of the person searched was not stated, officer-observed ethnicity can be used as a replacement, for analytical purposes.

Black children were involved in 20% of stop and searches where ethnicity was known in the year ending March 2023. This was 14 percentage points higher than the proportion of Black 10 to 17 year olds in the 2021 population and Black children were the only ethnic group to be over-represented compared with the population.

There was an increase of one percentage point in the proportion of White children involved in a stop and search compared with the previous year (65% in the year ending March 2022 compared with 66% in the latest year), the only ethnic group to see an increase, though this was eight percentage points lower than the proportion of White 10 to 17 year olds in the 2021 population.

² Where ethnicity was known. Ethnicity was unknown for 2% of stop and searches of children aged 10 to 17 in the year ending March 2023.

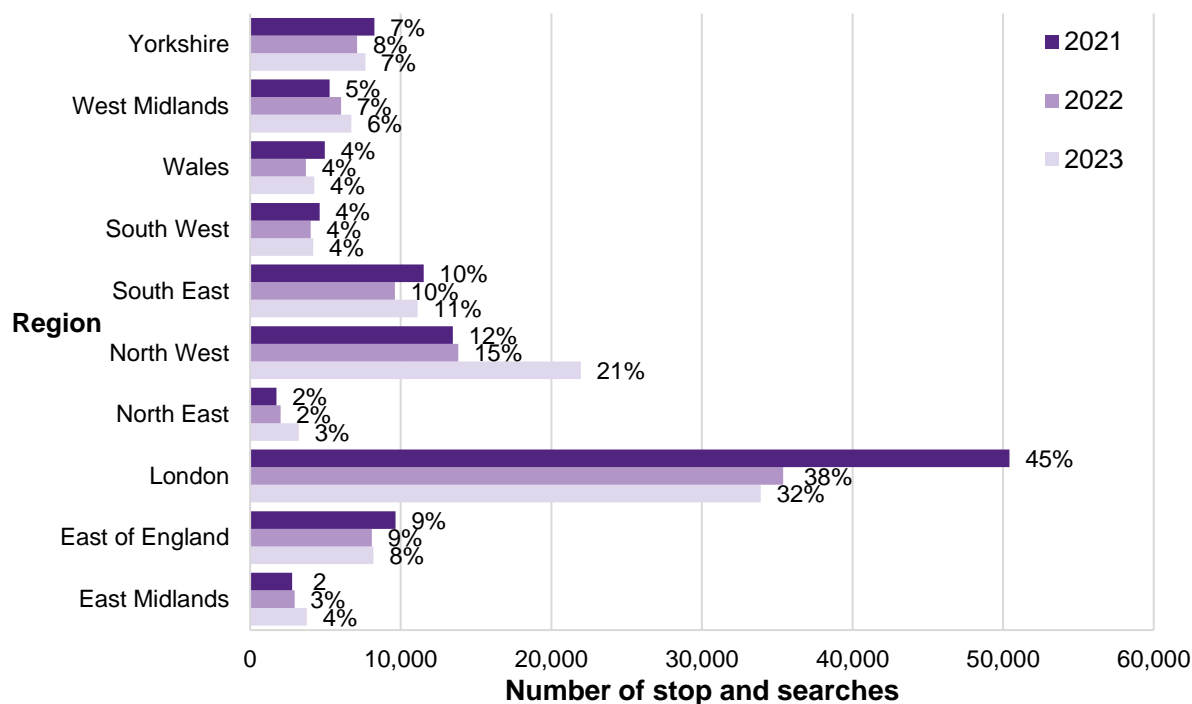
Figure 1.3: Number and proportion of stop and searches of children by outcome type, England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.4

As figure 1.3 shows, the majority (around 83,400 or 77%) of stop and searches of children resulted in No Further Action, while around 10,400 (10%) resulted in arrest, 6,200 (6%) resulted in Community Resolutions with the remaining 7,800 (7%) resulting in other outcomes including Cannabis Warnings, Seizure of Property or Verbal Warnings.

Figure 1.4: Number and proportion of stop and searches of children by region, England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023



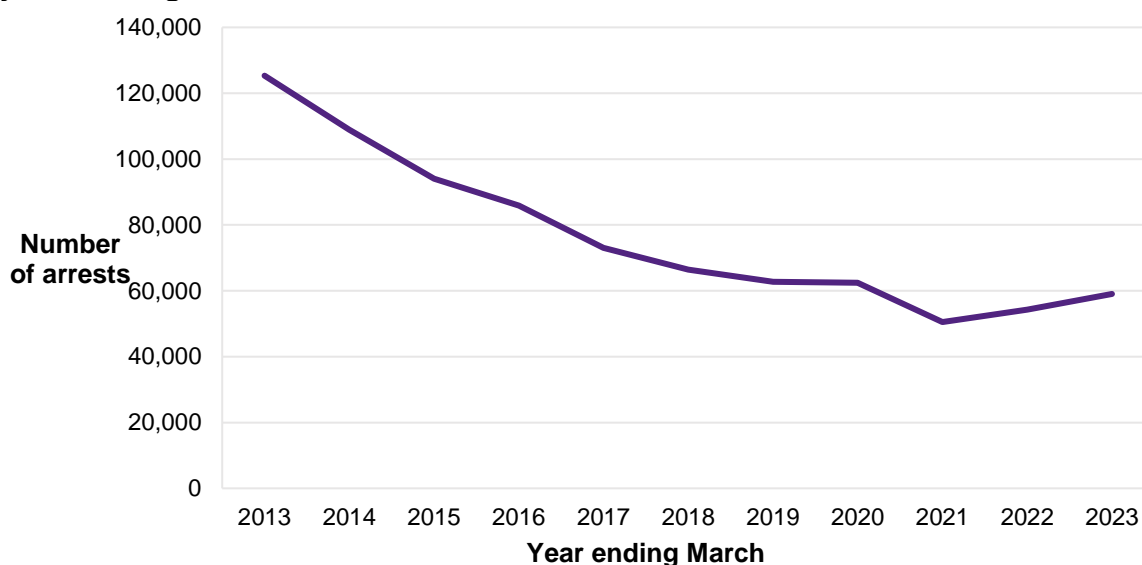
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.5

While London accounted for almost a third (32%) of stop and searches of children in England and Wales, it was the only region to record a year-on-year decrease in the year ending March 2023 with a fall of 4%. The North West accounted for 21% of stop and searches of children and saw the second largest year-on-year increase with a rise of 59% compared with the previous year. While the North East saw the largest year-on-year increase (60%) of stop and searches, they accounted for just 3% of the total, the lowest in the country.

Supplementary Table 1.6 adds some further context to the regional data looking at individual police force areas. Within the North West for example, the number of stop and searches of children in Greater Manchester increased from around 2,500 in the year ending March 2022 to around 7,100 in the latest year – an increase of 190%, while in Cheshire, the number of stop and searches was more than double compared with the previous year, rising from around 1,300 in the year ending March 2022 to around 2,800 in the latest year. In Wales, where there was a 15% year on year increase, stop and searches of children in Dyfed-Powys increased by 235% compared with the previous year (from around 450 in the year ending March 2022 to around 1,500 in the latest year).

1.2 Arrests of children for notifiable offences

Figure 1.5: Number of arrests of children for notifiable offences, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023

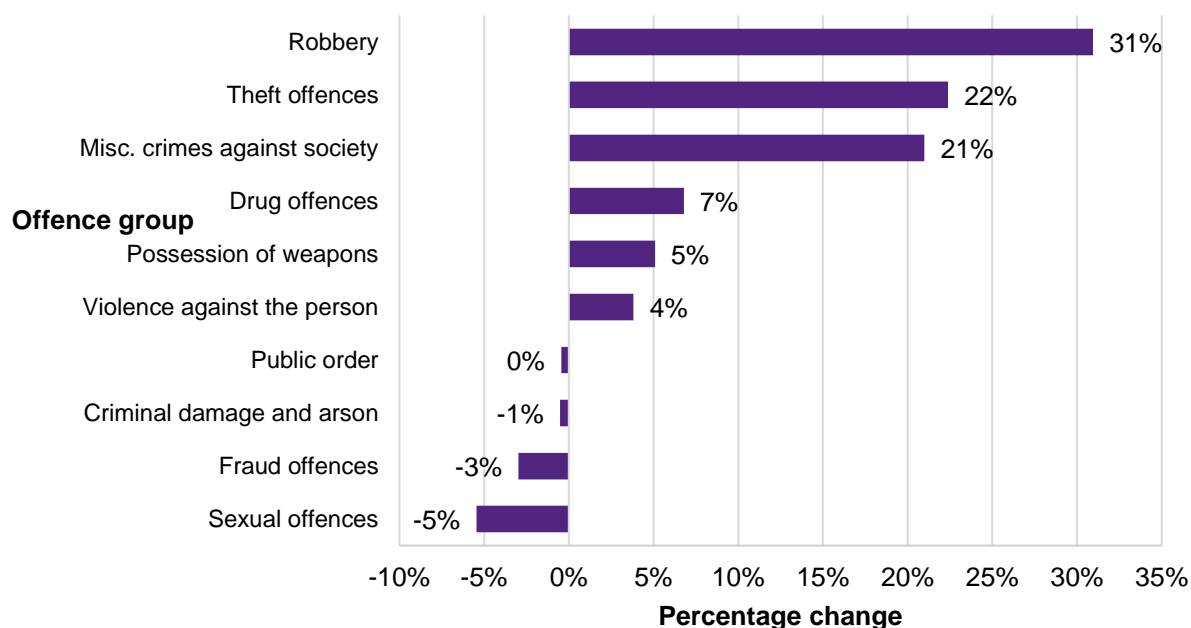


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.7

In the latest year, there were around 59,000 arrests of children for notifiable offences. This was an increase of 9% compared to the year ending March 2022 and was the second consecutive year in which arrests of children increased. There was a decrease of 53% compared to the year ending March 2013.

1.3 Arrests of children by offence group

Figure 1.6 Percentage change in arrests of children by offence group, England and Wales, years ending March 2022 to 2023

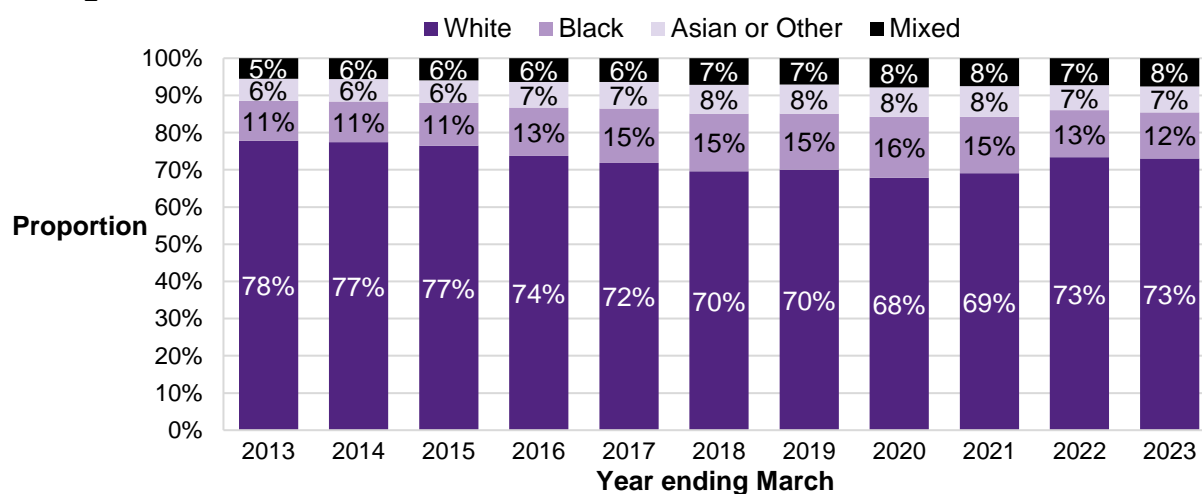


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.10

Figure 1.6 shows the year-on-year percentage change in the number of arrests by offence group. Robbery saw the biggest rise with a 31% increase on the previous year (from around 4,600 to around 6,000). This was followed by smaller rises for arrests for theft offences and miscellaneous crimes against society offences, which increased by 22% and 21% respectively. Arrests for sexual offences and fraud offences saw the biggest decreases, falling by 5% and 3% year on year respectively.

1.4 Arrests of children by ethnicity

Figure 1.7: Proportion of arrests of children by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023³



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Tables 1.7

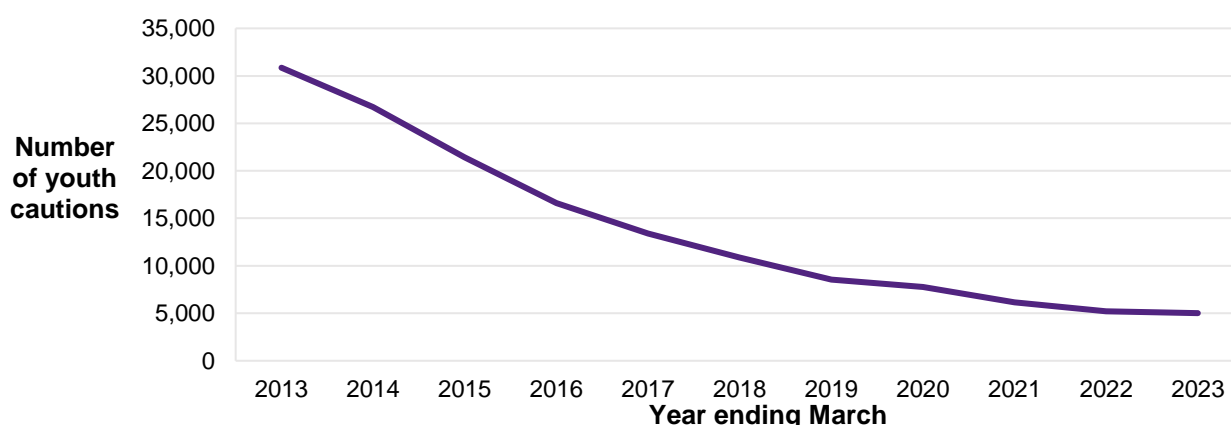
³ Where ethnicity was known. Ethnicity was unknown for 12% (around 7,300) of total arrests in the year ending March 2023.

In the latest year, 73% (around 37,800) of arrests, where ethnicity was known, were of White children. This proportion is the same as the previous year, though a decrease from 78% in the year ending March 2013. Arrests of Black children accounted for 12% (around 6,400) in the latest year, the third consecutive year this proportion has decreased. Arrests of Mixed (around 3,900) and Asian and Other (around 3,600) children made up 8% and 7% respectively of the total in the latest year and have also seen changes in proportions over the last ten years, albeit on a smaller scale.

Compared with the year ending March 2013, the numbers of arrests of children of each ethnicity have all decreased by a large degree, but at different rates. For example, arrests of White children have fallen by 61%, compared to 51% for Black children.

1.5 Youth cautions

Figure 1.8: Number of youth cautions, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023

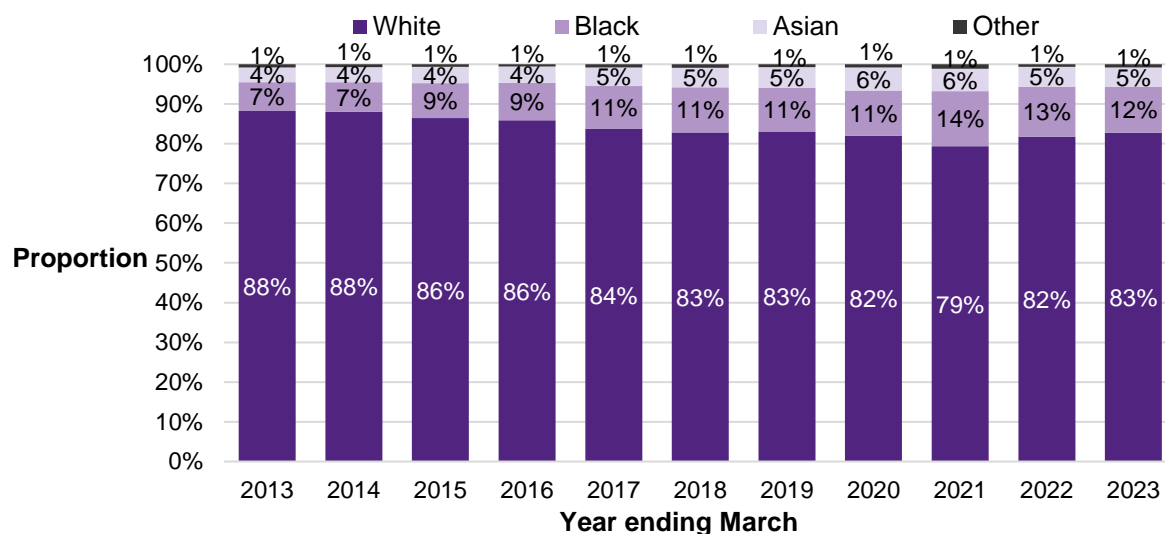


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.14

In the year ending March 2023, around 5,000 youth cautions were given to children. This is a decrease of 4% since the previous year and a decrease of 84% against the year ending March 2013.

Youth cautions increased by 41% for miscellaneous crimes against society and by 29% for theft offences compared with the previous year while there were decreases of 60% for fraud offences, 21% for possession of weapons offences and 18% for drugs offences.

Figure 1.9: Proportion of youth cautions given by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023^{4,5}

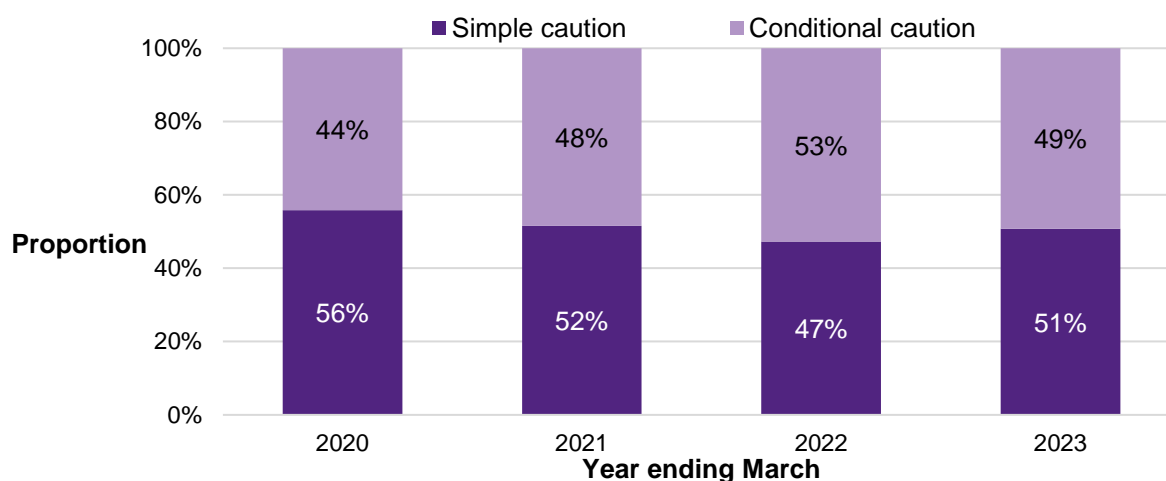


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.16

In the year ending March 2023, for the second consecutive year, the proportion of youth cautions issued has decreased for Black children and increased for White children, while remaining stable for Asian and Other children.

All ethnic groups have seen decreases in the volume of youth cautions issued over the course of the decade. However, there was a smaller decrease for Black children when compared to other ethnic groups, leading to an increase in the proportion of youth cautions Black children made of the total, from 7% to 12% over the last decade.

Figure 1.10: Proportion of youth cautions given by type, England and Wales, years ending March 2020 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 1, Table 1.14

Figure 1.8 shows that simple cautions are higher than conditional cautions in the latest year with an increase of four percentage points compared with the previous year.

⁴ Ethnicity is police officer identified. There is not a Mixed ethnicity group in officer identified ethnicities, so caution should be used if comparing with data using self-identified ethnicities.

⁵ Where ethnicity was known. Ethnicity was unknown for 17% (around 800) of total youth cautions given in the year ending March 2023.

2. First time entrants to the youth justice system

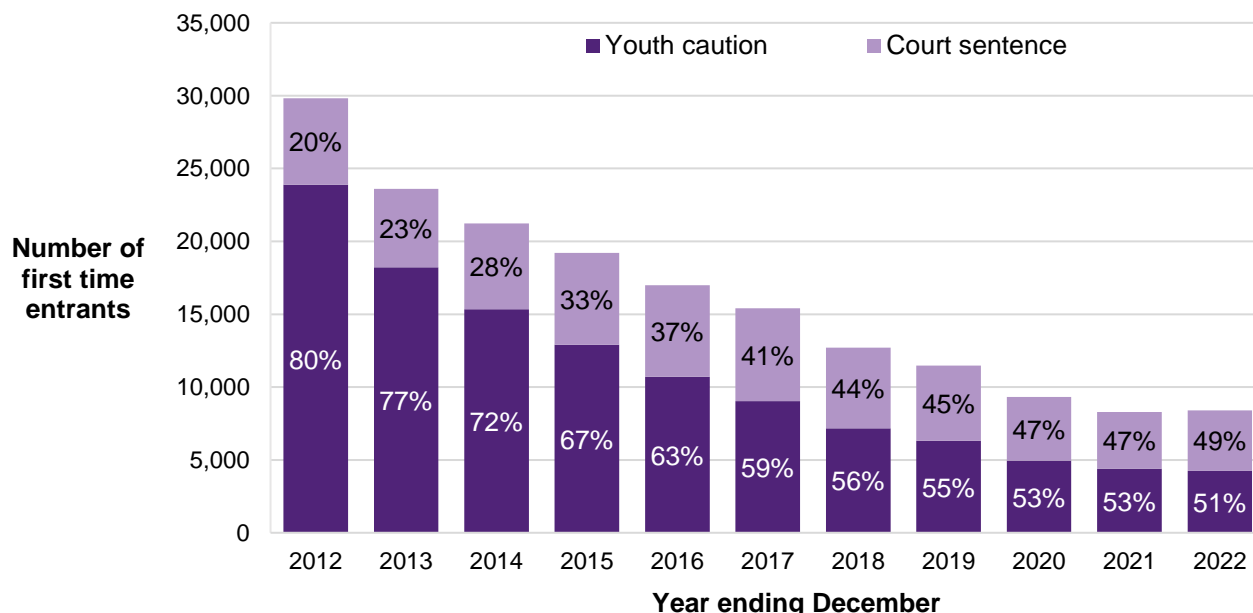
In the year ending December 2022:

- There were just under 8,400 child first time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system. For the first time in the last ten years, the number of child FTEs increased (by 1%) compared with the previous year, though this is still the second lowest number in the time series.
- Compared with the previous year, the number of child FTEs aged 10 to 14 increased by 7% (or 160) to around 2,300, the first year-on-year increase in the last ten years while the number of child FTEs aged 15 to 17 decreased by 1% (or 60) to around 2,100.
- While there was a 2% increase in the number of White child FTEs, the number of child FTEs from each ethnic minority group fell with Black child FTEs seeing the biggest decrease of 8%, followed by Asian child falling by 6% and Other child FTEs falling by 4%.

This chapter covers data on trends, demographics, offence and outcome types of child first time entrants. A first time entrant to the youth justice system is a child aged between 10 and 17 who received their first caution or court sentence and was residing in England and Wales at the time of their first offence. Data for the year ending March 2023 is not available, therefore data for the year ending December 2022 is presented in this chapter.

2.1 Trends in the number and proportion of child first time entrants to the youth justice system

Figure 2.1: Number and proportion of child first time entrants by type of outcome, England and Wales, years ending December 2012 to 2022



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 2, Table 2.5

The number of child FTEs to the youth justice system increased by 1% to just under 8,400 compared with the previous year, the first year-on-year increase of the last ten years. However, this was still the second lowest number of child FTEs in the time series, and 72% lower than the year ending December 2012.

Children accounted for 10% of all FTEs to the criminal justice system in the year ending December 2022, compared to 16% in the year ending December 2012 and up from 9% in the previous year (see Chapter 11 – Comparisons with the adult system for further details).

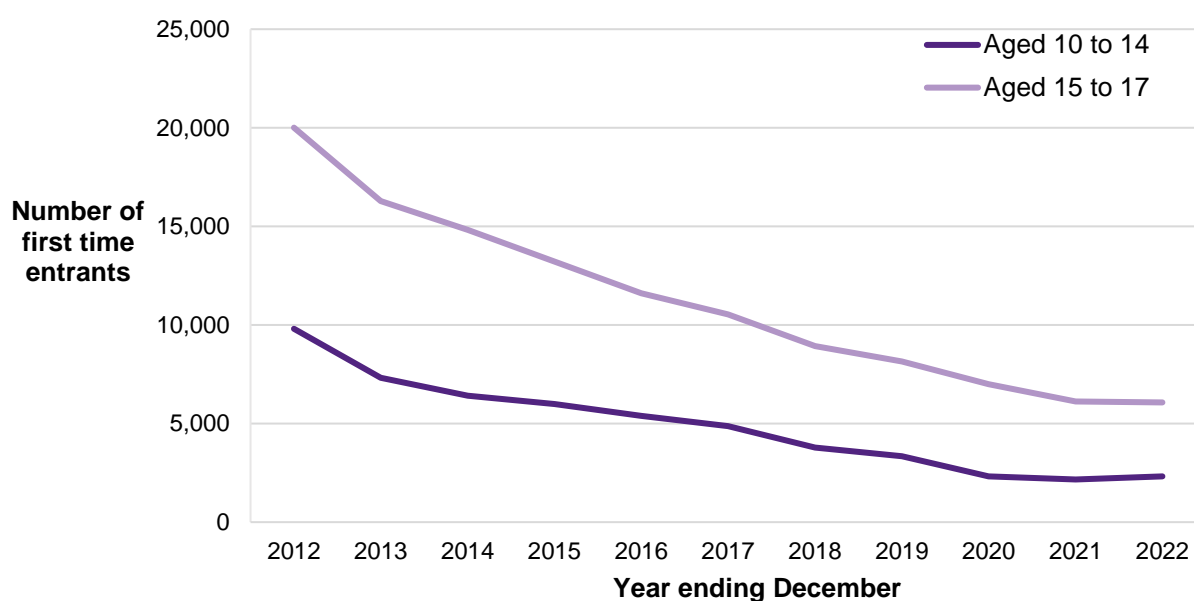
As shown in Figure 2.1, the difference between the number of child FTEs receiving a caution as opposed to a court sentence is much smaller in recent years than compared with ten years ago. While the majority of child FTEs received a caution in each of the last ten years, this proportion has fallen from 80% in the year ending December 2012 (when around 23,900 child FTEs received a caution), to 51% in the year ending December 2022 (when around 4,300 child FTEs received a caution).

The number of child FTEs receiving a court sentence (predominantly community sentences) had been falling year-on-year from the year ending December 2018 to December 2021 but increased by 6% in the year ending December 2022. Since the year ending December 2012, the proportion of child FTEs receiving a court sentence has increased from 20% to 49%.

2.2 Characteristics of child first time entrants

Age group

Figure 2.2: Number of child first time entrants by age group, England and Wales, years ending December 2012 to 2022

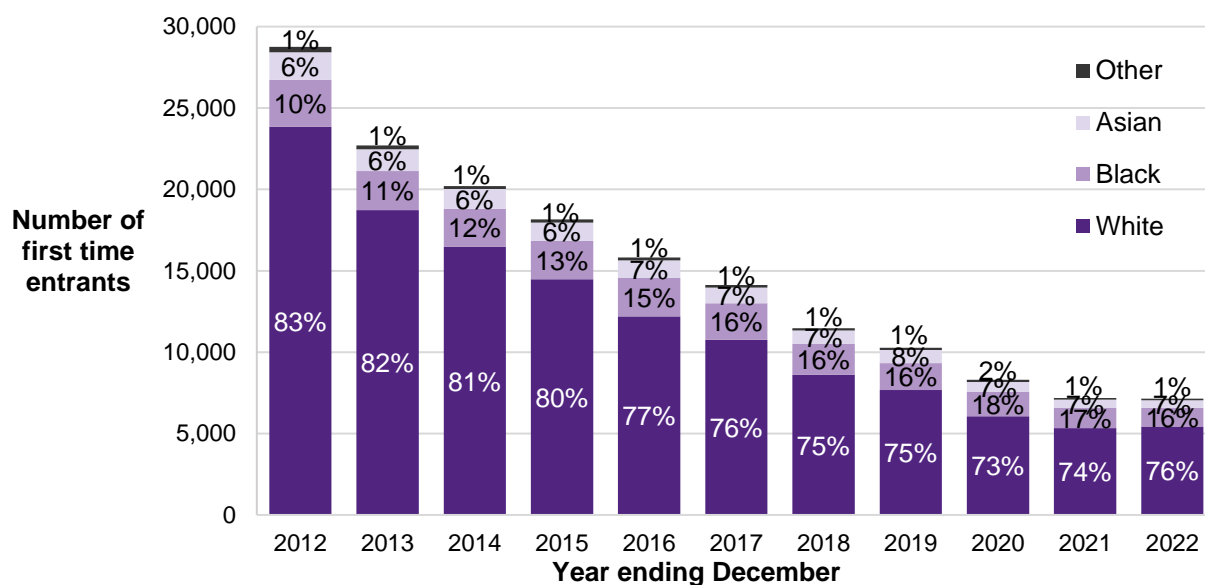


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 2, Tables 2.6

Compared with the previous year, the number of first time entrants aged 10 to 14 increased by 7% (or 160) to around 2,300, the first year-on-year increase in the last ten years while the number of first time entrants aged 15 to 17 decreased by 1% (or 60) to around 2,100, continuing the year-on-year decreases of the last decade, albeit the smallest annual fall in FTEs for this age group.

Ethnicity

Figure 2.3: Number and proportion of child first time entrants by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending December 2012 to 2022⁶



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 2, Table 2.7

As shown in Figure 2.3, there has been a downward trend in the number of child FTEs for each ethnicity over the last ten years. Child FTEs from a White ethnic background have fallen at the fastest rate, by 77% (from around 23,800 to around 5,400) over the last ten years, resulting in the proportion they comprise of all child FTEs reducing from 83% to 76%.

Compared with the previous year, there was a 2% increase (from around 5,300 to around 5,400) in the number of White child FTEs, whilst the number of child FTEs from each ethnic minority group fell, with Black child FTEs seeing the biggest decrease of 8% (from around 1,200 to around 1,100), followed by Asian child FTEs falling by 6%, and FTEs from an Other ethnic background falling by 4%.

Compared to the year ending December 2012 the proportion of Black child FTEs has increased from 10% to 16%, however this proportion has fallen in each of the last two years.

Sex

There have always been more boys than girls who are child FTEs. In the year ending December 2022, boys comprised 84% of the total child FTEs, whilst making up 51% of the general population of 10 to 17 year olds.

The number of child FTEs has fallen for both boys and girls over the last decade, with the larger percentage decrease seen in girls. The number of child FTEs who are girls has fallen by 82% (from around 7,100 to around 1,300) over the last ten years. This compares to a decrease of 69% for child FTEs who are boys over the same period (from around 22,500 to around 6,900).

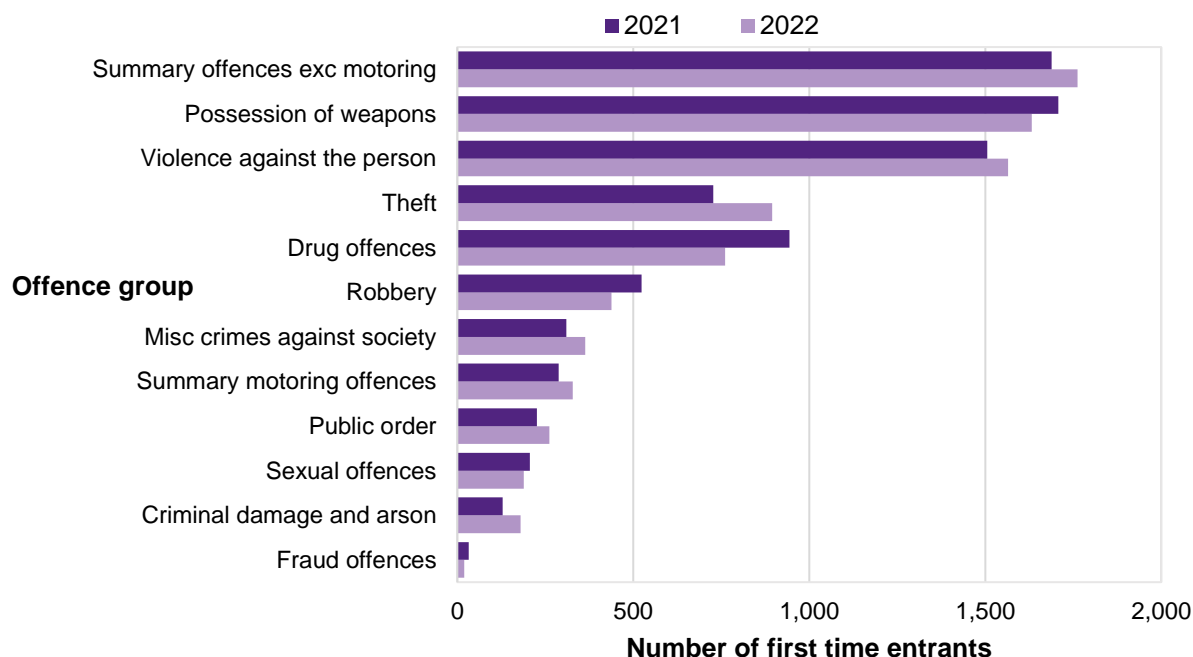
⁶ Where ethnicity was known. In the year ending December 2022, the ethnicity was unknown for 15% of child FTEs.

2.3 Types of offences committed by child first time entrants

In the year ending December 2022, the three most common offences committed by child FTEs were summary offences excluding motoring (21%), possession of weapon offences (19%) and violence against the person offences (19%). Compared with the year ending December 2012, the proportion of theft offences fell from 25% to 11%.

The proportion of child FTEs committing possession of weapon offences increased by 16 percentage points over the last ten years while summary motoring offences increased by three percentage points over the same period and are the only offence groups to see a real term increase in that period.

Figure 2.4: Number of child first time entrants by primary offence group, England and Wales, years ending December 2021 and 2022



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 2, Table 2.2

Supplementary Table 2.3 shows that in the year ending December 2022 there were decreases compared with the previous year for child FTEs committing fraud offences (down 38% though the small number of these offences should be taken into account), drug offences (down 19%), robbery (down 16%), sexual offences (down 8%) and possession of weapons offences (down 4%) while there were increases for child FTEs in all other offence groups with criminal damage and arson (up 40%) and theft (up 23%) seeing the biggest rises compared with the previous year.

3. Children cautioned or sentenced

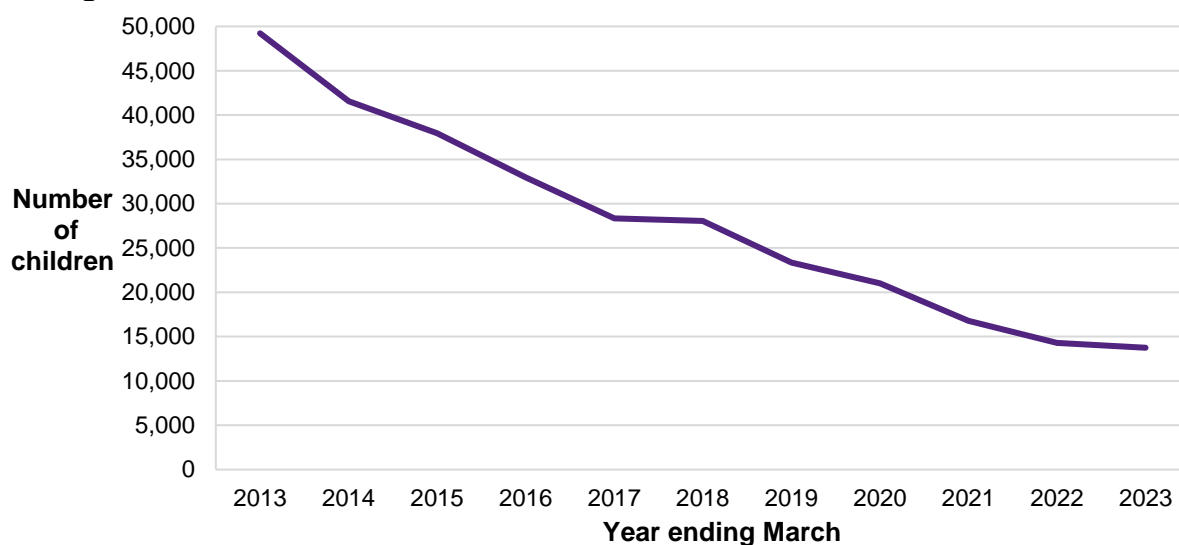
In the year ending March 2023:

- Around 13,700 children received a caution or sentence, a fall of 4% from the previous year and of 72% from ten years ago.
 - The number of children cautioned or sentenced in the 10 to 14 year old age group increased by 6%, whilst the number in the 15 to 17 year old ages groups decreased by 7%.
 - Black children remain over-represented, accounting for 11% of all children cautioned or sentenced compared with 6% of the 10 to 17 population, though the number of Black children cautioned or sentenced decreased by 10% compared with the previous year.
 - The number of children of all other ethnicities also decreased compared with the previous year: 14% for Other children, 8% for Asian children, 4% for both Mixed children and 2% for White children.
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This chapter looks at the trends and demographic characteristics of children who received at least one youth caution or court sentence.

3.1 Number of children who received a caution or sentence

Figure 3.1: Number of children given a caution or sentence, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 3, Table 3.1

Around 13,700 children received a caution or sentence in the year ending March 2023, 4% fewer than the previous year and 72% lower than ten years ago. This decrease is likely in part due to an increase in the use of diversionary outcomes in recent years.

3.2 Demographic characteristics of children who received a caution or sentence

Figure 3.2: Age group and sex of children receiving a caution or sentence compared to the general 10 to 17 population, England and Wales, year ending March 2023

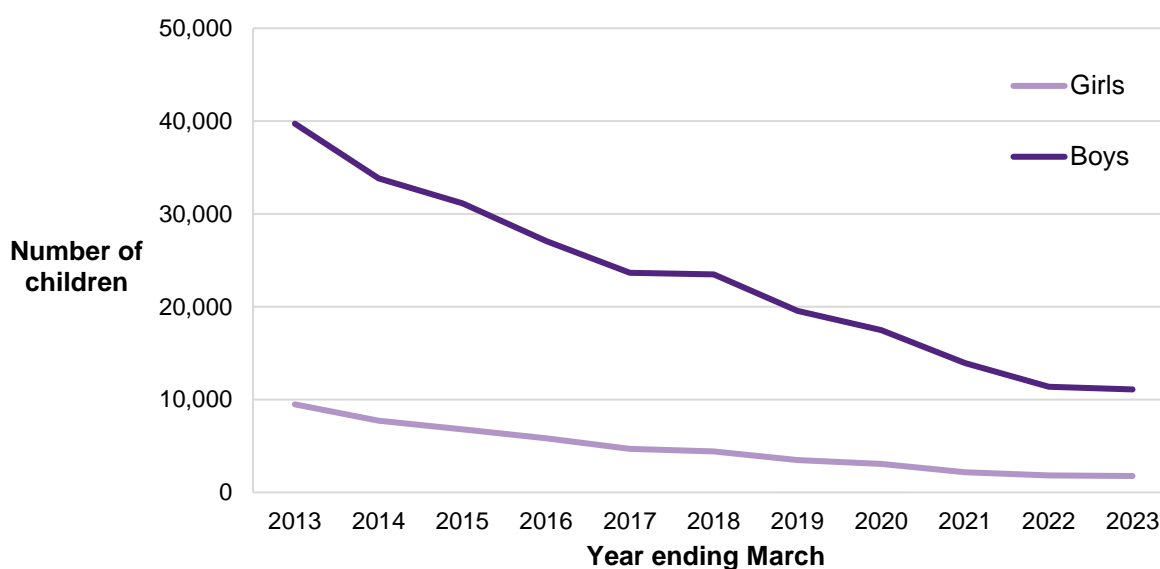
	Age Group		Sex	
	10 to 14	15 to 17	Boys	Girls
Children receiving a caution or sentence	26%	74%	86%	14%
10 to 17 population	64%	36%	51%	49%

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 3, Tables 3.3 and 3.4

Children aged 15 to 17 accounted for 74% of the offending population, while making up 36% of the 10 to 17 population in England and Wales.

Boys accounted for 86% of the offending population compared with 51% of the 10 to 17 population in England and Wales.

Figure 3.3: Number of children receiving a caution or sentence by sex, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023⁷



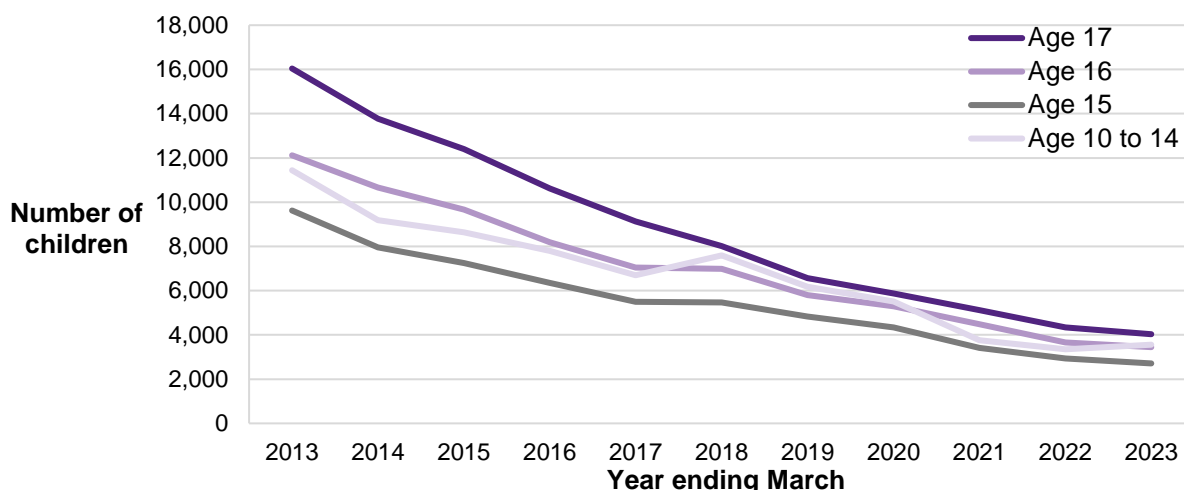
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 3, Table 3.3

In the year ending March 2023, around 1,800 girls and around 11,100 boys received a caution or sentence. This represents a 3% fall for both sexes from the previous year. The number of girls as a proportion of the total number of children who received a caution or sentence was 14%, while the proportion of boys is 86%, which was the same as the previous year.

Compared with the year ending March 2013, the numbers of girls and boys receiving a caution or sentence have fallen by 81% and 72% respectively.

⁷ In the year ending March 2023, children cautioned or sentenced where the sex was unknown accounted for 6% of the total.

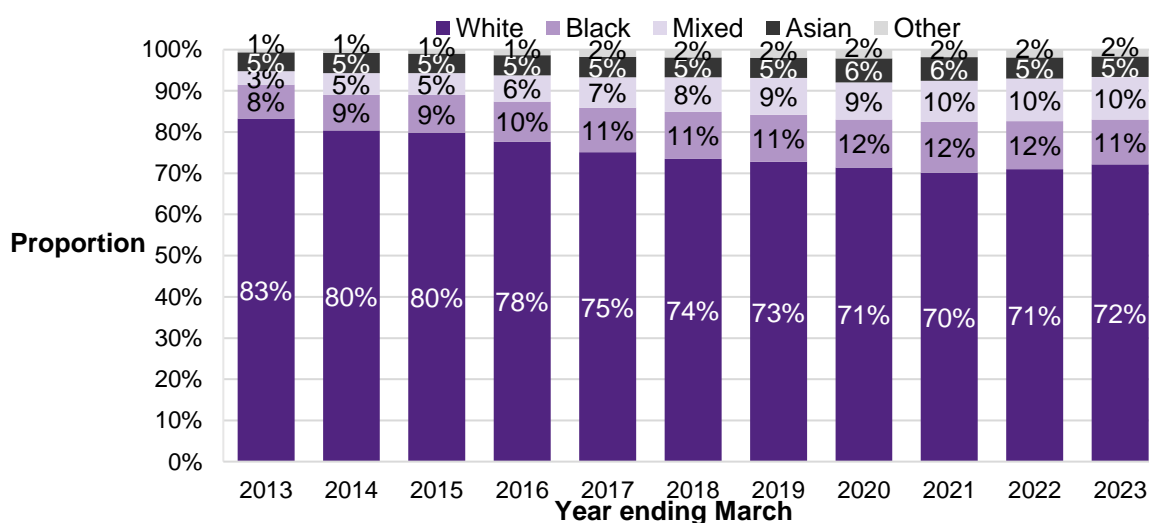
Figure 3.4: Number of children receiving a caution or sentence by age, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 3, Table 3.4

In the year ending March 2023, the number of 10 to 14 year olds cautioned or sentenced increased by 6% compared with the previous year, while there was a 7% decrease for 15 to 17 year olds. The increase in the number of 10 to 14 year olds is also seen in First Time Entrants.

Figure 3.5: Proportion of children receiving a caution or sentence by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023⁸



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 3, Table 3.1

Black children remain over-represented, accounting for 11% of all children cautioned or sentenced compared with 6% of the 10 to 17 population, though the number of Black children cautioned or sentenced decreased by 10% compared with the previous year.

The number of children of all other ethnicities also decreased compared with the previous year: 14% for Other children, 8% for Asian children, 4% for both Mixed children and 2% for White children.

⁸ Where ethnicity was known Ethnicity was not known for 4% of children cautioned or sentenced in the year ending March 2023.

4. Proven offences by children

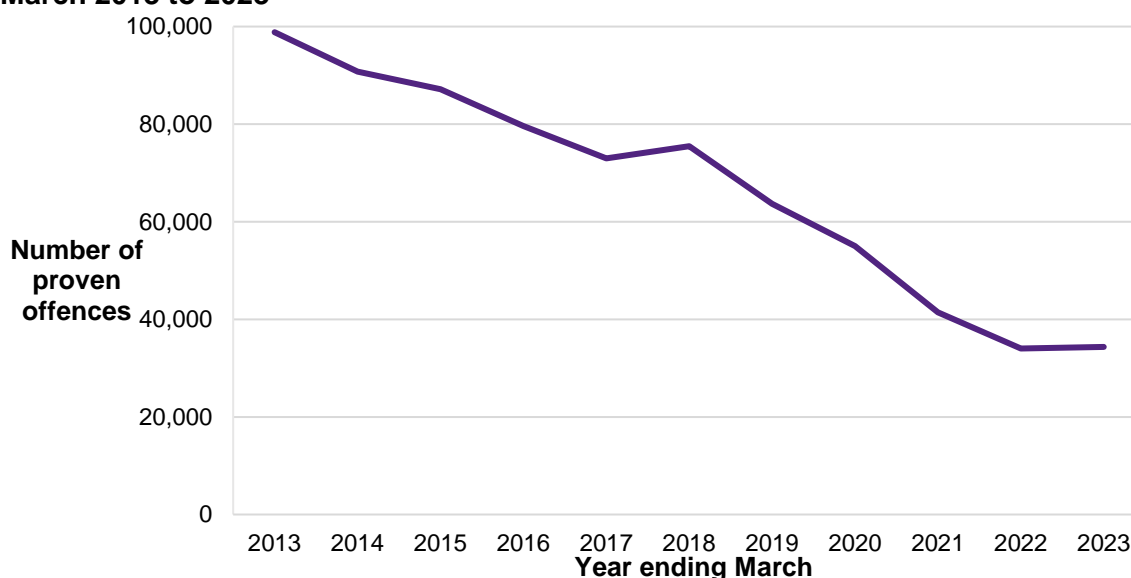
In the year ending March 2023:

- The number of proven offences committed by children saw an increase compared with the previous year, rising by 1% to around 34,300 proven offences.
 - The offence groups with the largest increases compared to the previous year are burglary (rising by 37%) and theft and handling stolen goods (rising by 23%).
 - Decreases were seen in drugs offences (falling by 16%), criminal damage (10%), and robbery (9%).
 - There were just under 3,400 knife or offensive weapon offences resulting in a caution or sentence committed by children. This is a fall of 4% compared with the previous year, though 23% higher than ten years ago.
-

This chapter looks at the trends of proven offences committed by children and proven knife and offensive weapon offences. A proven offence is one which results in a caution or court sentence.

4.1 Trends in proven offences by children

Figure 4.1: Number of proven offences by children, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 4, Table 4.1

The number of proven offences committed by children saw an increase compared with the previous year, rising by 1%. In the year ending March 2023, there were around 34,300 proven offences committed by children which resulted in a caution or sentence at court. While there was an increase in the latest year, the number of proven offences was 65% lower than ten years ago.

Offence volumes

Supplementary Table 4.1 shows that six of the 11 offence groups have seen an increase in the number of offences in the latest year. Burglary and theft and handling stolen goods have the largest increases, rising by 37% and 23% respectively. The largest decreases were seen in drugs offences (falling by 16%), criminal damage (10%), and robbery (9%).

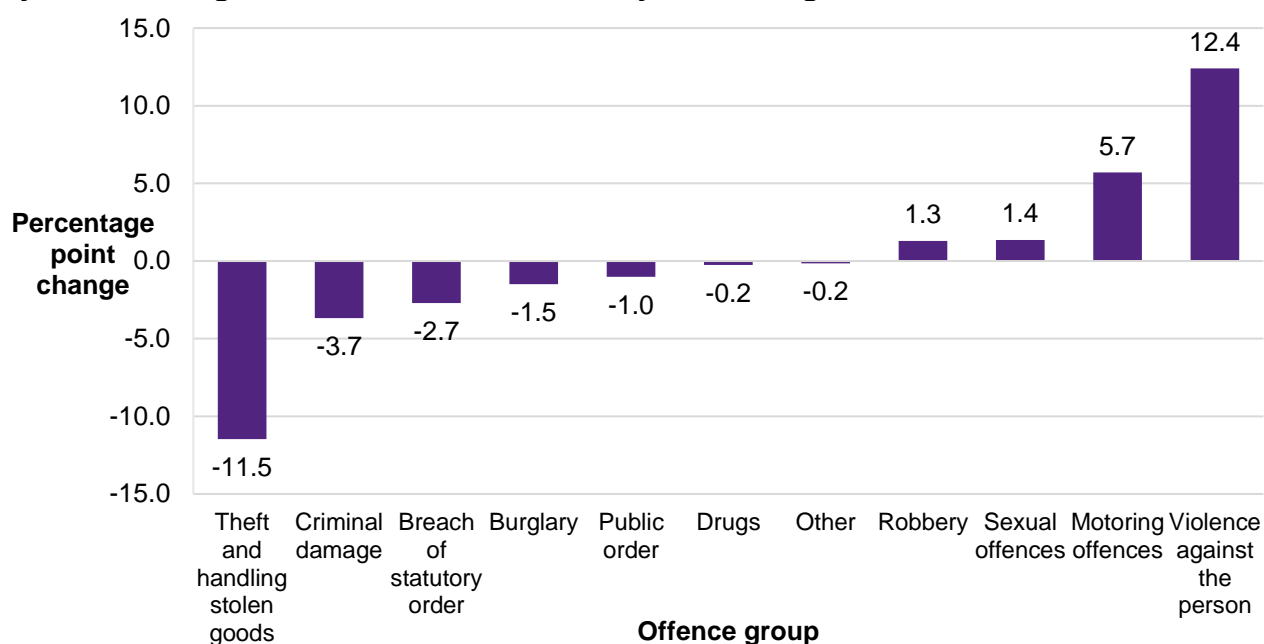
In all offence groups, there were fewer proven offences compared to ten years ago. Theft, criminal damage, and breach of statutory order are the three offence groups to see the largest fall over this time (with theft decreasing by 86%, breach of statutory order by 84%, and criminal damage by 76%).

In the latest year, most proven offences were committed by children who were⁹:

- boys (87%)
- aged 15 to 17 (76%)
- White (73%).

Offence volumes as a proportion of total

Figure 4.2: Percentage point change in the proportion of proven offences committed by children, England and Wales, between the years ending March 2013 and 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 4, Table 4.1

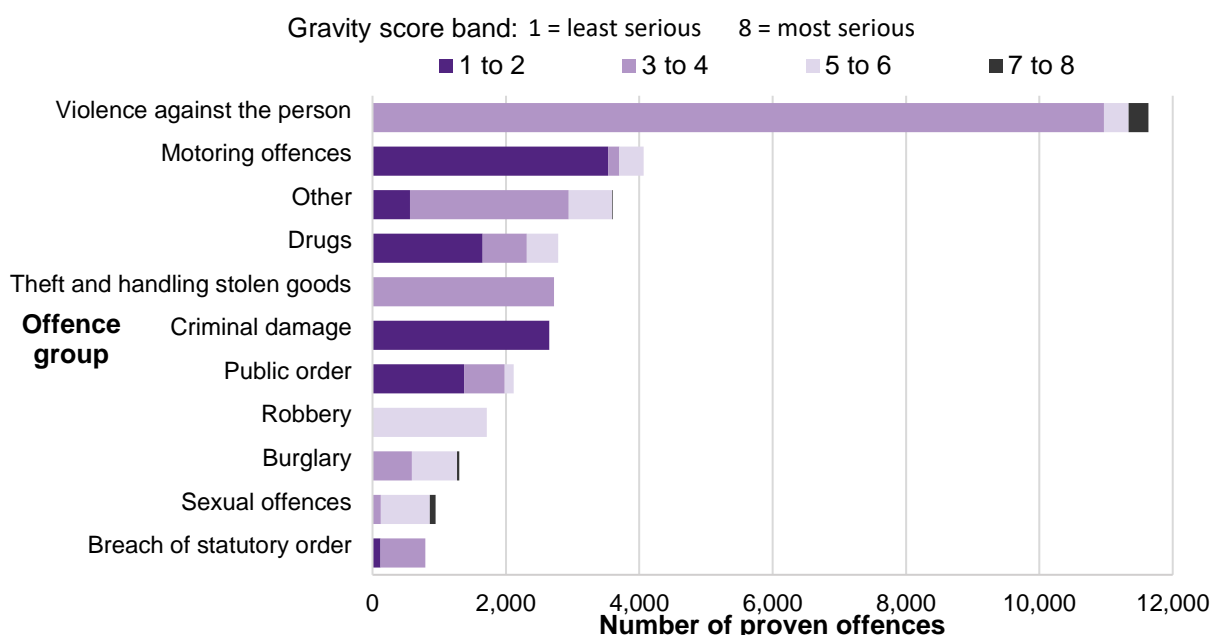
Whilst the number of proven offences committed by children has fallen for all types of offence compared with ten years ago, the proportions of these offence groups has been changing. Violence against the person offences have seen the largest increase in proportion, increasing from 21% in the year ending March 2013 to 34% of proven offences in the latest year.

Theft and handling stolen goods offences have seen the largest proportional decrease in the last ten years, falling from 19% in the year ending March 2013 to 8% in the latest year.

⁹ In the year ending March 2023, the ethnicity of the child was not known for 3% of the proven offences, and the sex of the child was not known for 5% of the proven offences.

4.2 Offence group by gravity score

Figure 4.3: Number of proven offences by children by offence group and gravity score band, England and Wales, year ending March 2023



Supplementary Table: Chapter 4, Table 4.6

An offence's gravity score is scored out of eight, ranging from one (least serious) up to eight (most serious).

Figure 4.3 shows the violence against the person offence group made up the largest share of offences. Only a small proportion of offences (6%) within this group had a higher gravity score of five to eight. For offences within robbery, burglary and sexual offences, the majority had a higher gravity score of five to eight (100%, 54% and 87% respectively).

In the latest year, around 130 proven offences committed by children had the highest gravity score of eight, which accounted for less than 1% of all proven offences. The majority of these offences were sexual offences (63%) and violence against the person (35%) (Supplementary Table 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Proportion of proven offences by gravity score band and demographic characteristics, England and Wales, year ending March 2023

		Gravity score band	
		Less serious: 1 to 4	Most serious: 5 to 8
Age	10 to 14	87%	13%
	15 to 17	83%	17%
Ethnicity	Asian	78%	22%
	Black	75%	25%
	Mixed	83%	17%
	Other	81%	19%
	White	85%	15%
Sex	Girls	94%	6%
	Boys	82%	18%

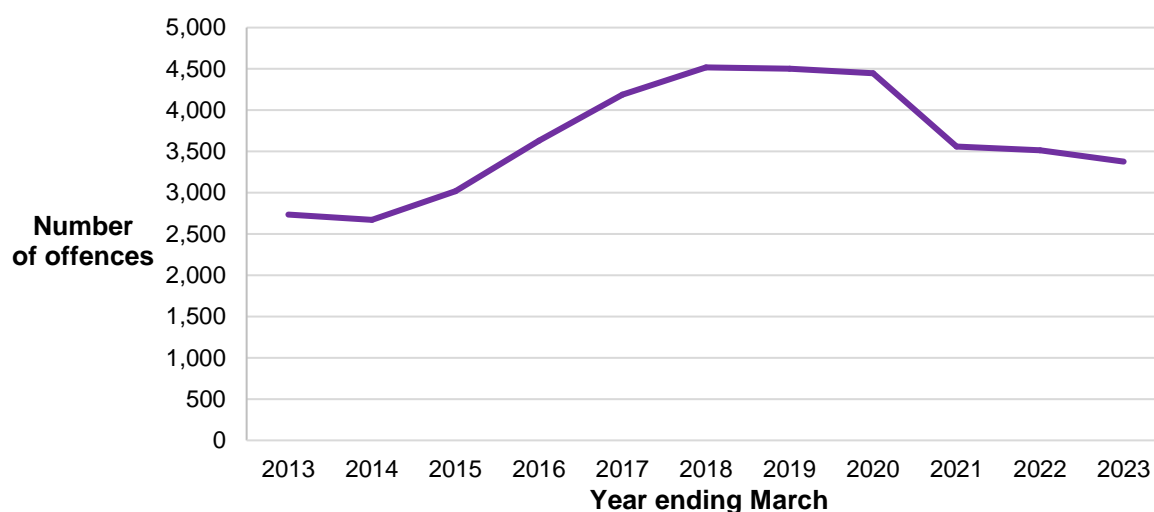
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 4, Table 4.5

Figure 4.4 shows that the proportion of proven offences with a gravity score in the higher band of five to eight, was greater for:

- those aged 15 to 17 (17% compared to 13% of offences committed by 10 to 14 year olds)
- Black children (25%) and Asian children (22%), with the other ethnic groups ranging from 15% to 19%
- boys (18%, compared to 6% for girls).

4.3 Proven knife or offensive weapon offences committed by children

Figure 4.5: Number of knife or offensive weapon offences committed by children, resulting in a caution or sentence, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 4, Table 4.7

This section covers offences for which children received cautions or sentences for possession of an article with a blade or point, possession of an offensive weapon, or threatening with either type of weapon. In the year ending March 2023, there were just under 3,400 knife or offensive weapon offences committed by children resulting in a caution or sentence, which is 4% fewer than the previous year but 23% greater than ten years ago. This is the fifth consecutive year-on-year decrease.

In the latest year, the majority (98%) of knife or offensive weapon offences committed by children were possession offences and the remaining 2% were threatening with a knife or offensive weapon offences. These proportions have remained broadly stable over the years.

In the year ending March 2023, 56% of disposals given to children for a knife or offensive weapon offence were a community sentence. This proportion is broadly stable over the last ten years.

The proportion of children sentenced to immediate custody decreased from 7% to 6% in the last year, which is the lowest proportion seen across the last ten years.

5. Sentencing of children

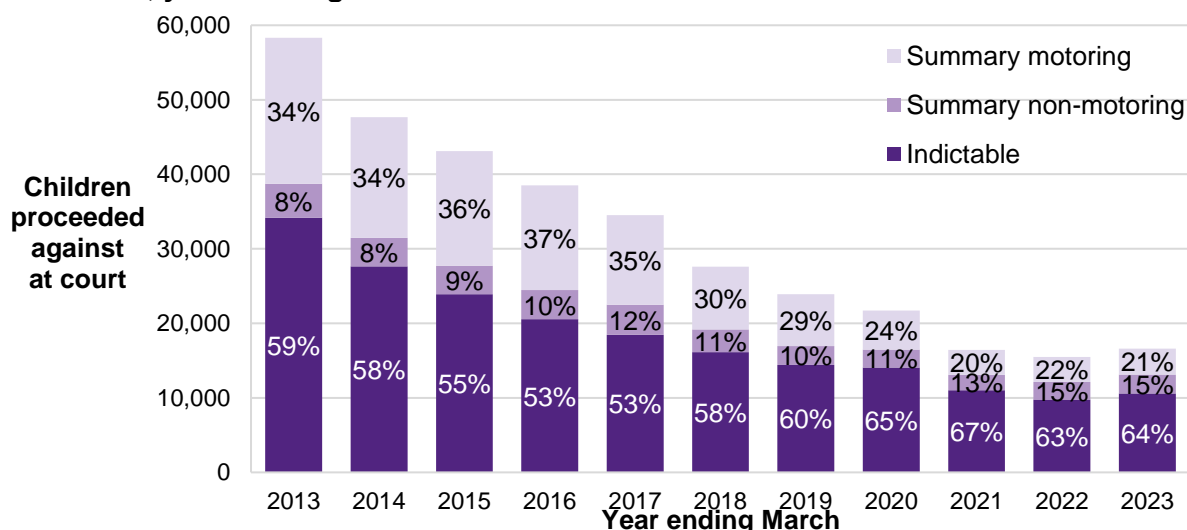
In the year ending March 2023:

- There were just over 11,900 occasions where children were sentenced in all courts in the latest year, which is 8% higher than the previous year. This was the first year-on-year increase in the last ten years.
- In the year ending March 2023, the average time from offence to completion was 207 days, compared with 217 days in the previous year but well above pre-pandemic levels.
- Sentencing occasions involving Black children for indictable offences fell by 13% compared with the previous year, while increasing by 12% for White children.
- The average custodial sentence length has decreased by almost four months compared with the previous year to 19.6 months.

This chapter focuses on trends of children proceeded against at court, time taken from offence to completion at court and sentences received at court by children by type of sentence and court. The Ministry of Justice changed the data source for these statistics which has resulted in changes to historic data published in earlier year's publications. Details of the changes can be found on the [Technical Guidance for Criminal Justice Statistics](#).

5.1 Children proceeded against

Figure 5.1: Number and proportion of children proceeded against at court, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023

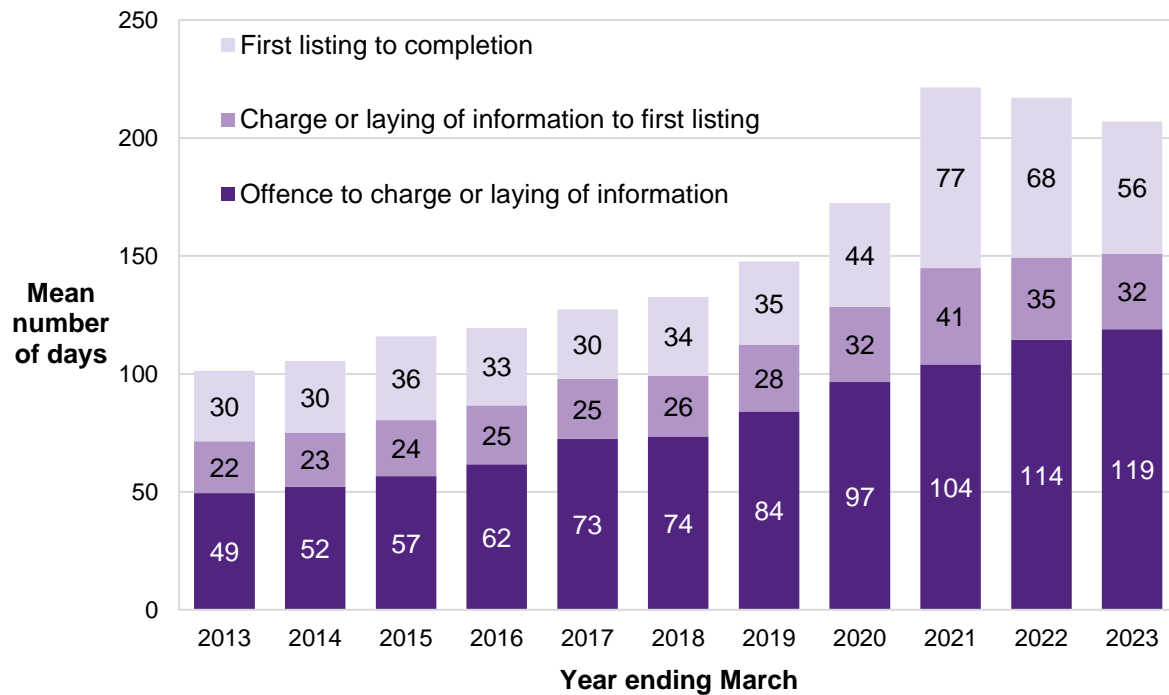


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Table 5.1

There were around 16,600 children proceeded against at court in the year ending March 2023. This was an increase of 7% compared with the previous year and the first year-on-year increase in the last ten years and a fall of 72% compared to ten years ago. Almost two thirds (64%) of these proceedings were for indictable offences, 21% were for summary non-motoring offences and the remaining 15% were for summary motoring offences (Supplementary Table 5.1).

5.2 Average time from offence to completion at court

Figure 5.2: Average time in days from offence to completion at court, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Table 5.2

Figure 5.2 shows the average (mean) number of days taken from the day of the offence or alleged offence to the day the case was concluded at court with the child being found guilty or acquitted.

In the year ending March 2023, the average time from offence to completion was 207 days, compared with 217 days in the previous year and 101 days in the year ending March 2013.

While the average time for offence to completion saw a decrease for the second consecutive year, it was 104% higher than in the year ending March 2013. This is also reflected across the adult system, as evidenced in the [Criminal Court Statistics](#).

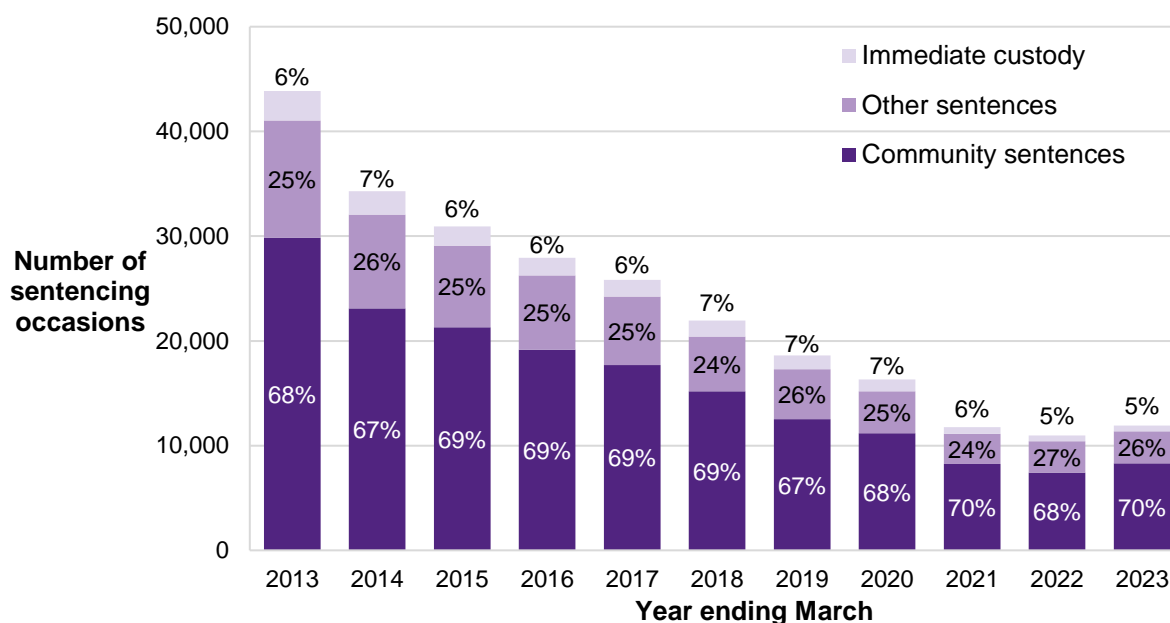
Figure 5.2 shows that compared with the previous year, the average days for:

- offence to charge or laying of information increased by five days (4%) to 119 days
- charge or laying of information to first listing decreased by three days (9%) to 32 days
- first listing to completion decreased by eight days (18%) to 56 days.

The average time from first listing to completion was between 30 days and 41 days in the years ending March 2013 to 2020 and rose to 76 days in the year ending March 2021 before falling over the last two years to 56 days in the year ending March 2023, which is still well above pre-pandemic levels.

5.3 Sentencing of children in all courts

Figure 5.3: Number and proportion of sentencing occasions of children in all courts by sentence type, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Table 5.4

There were just over 11,900 occasions where children were sentenced in all courts in the year ending March 2023, which is 8% higher than the previous year, the first year-on-year increase of the last ten years, though remaining below pre-pandemic levels. The number of sentencing occasions was 73% lower than ten years ago.

The number of custodial sentences has decreased in each of the last ten years. There were around 540 custodial sentences given in the year ending March 2023, compared with around 570 in the previous year (a decrease of 4%) and compared with around 2,800 ten years ago (a decrease of 81%).

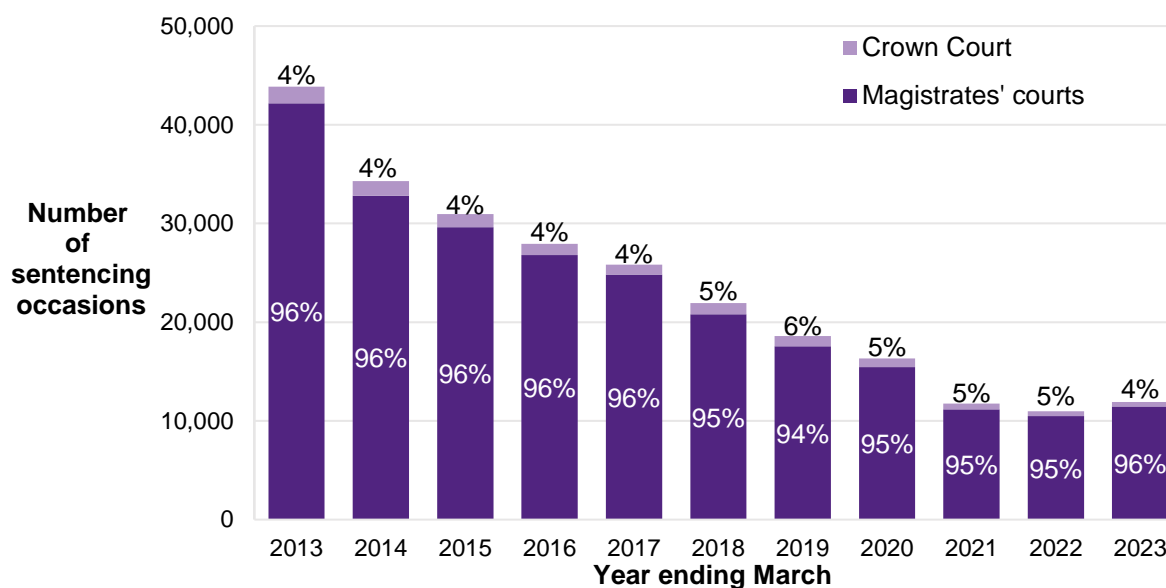
As Figure 5.3 shows, the proportion of custodial sentences has remained broadly stable, varying between 5% and 7% of total sentences over the last ten years.

Supplementary Table 5.4 shows that in the year ending March 2023, of the 11,900 sentencing occasions of children for all types of offences in all courts there were:

- around 540 sentences to immediate custody (5% of all sentences)
- around 8,300 community sentences (an increase of 12% compared with the previous year and accounting for 70% of all sentences)
- just under 3,100 other types of sentences (an increase of 3% compared with the previous year and accounting for 26% of all sentences). These include absolute and conditional discharges, fines and other less common disposals.

5.4 Sentencing of children by court type

Figure 5.4: Number and proportion of sentencing occasions of children by court type, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023¹⁰



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Table 5.4

Depending on the seriousness of the offence, cases will either be heard in a magistrates' court from start to finish or will be referred from a magistrates' court to the Crown Court. The Crown Court only hears cases involving more serious offences, so a much smaller number of children are sentenced in this type of court compared with magistrates' courts.

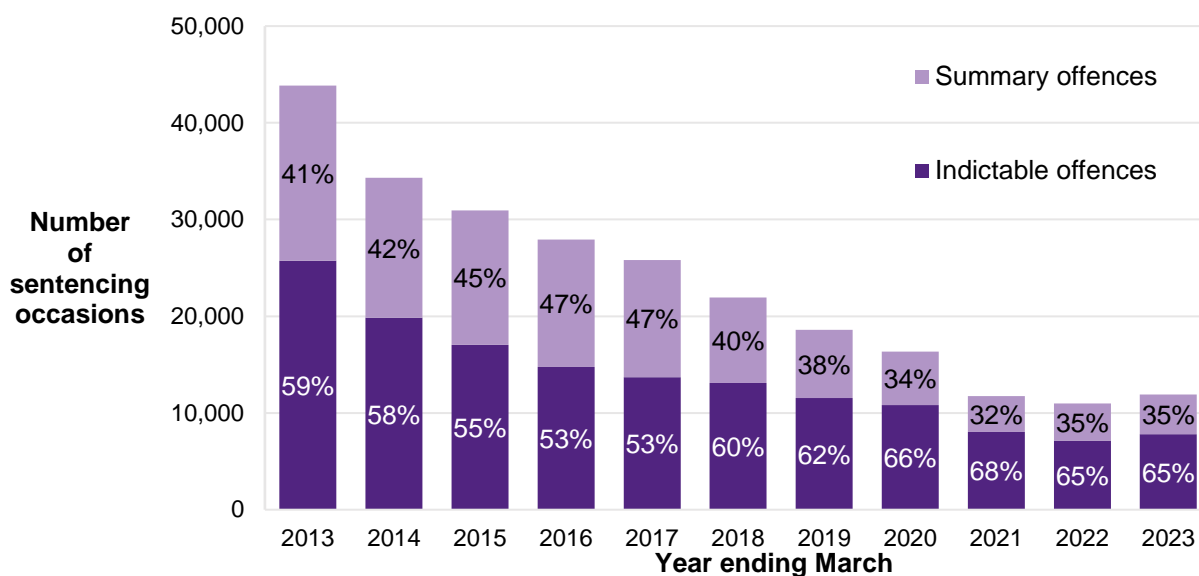
In the latest year, just 4% (around 460) of all sentencing occasions of children were at the Crown Court. While this proportion has remained broadly stable over the last ten years, varying between 4% and 6%, it's the lowest it's been since the year ending March 2017 (Figure 5.4).

The fact that the Crown Court tries the most serious cases is reflected in the types of sentences given. In the year ending March 2023, custodial sentences were given in around half (just under 230) of the just over 460 sentencing occasions of children at the Crown Court. This compares to just 3% (around 320) of the 11,400 sentencing occasions at magistrates' courts.

¹⁰ Youth Courts are categorised as magistrates' courts in the data. This will impact the figures for indictable only defendants at the magistrates' court which will include a high volume of children.

5.5 Sentencing of children at all courts by type of offence

Figure 5.5: Number and proportion of sentencing occasions of children in all courts by type of offence, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Tables 5.5a and 5.5b

Of the 11,900 occasions in which children were sentenced in the year ending March 2023, 65% were for indictable¹¹ offences and 35% were for summary offences. The proportions of sentencing occasions of children for indictable offences was the same as the previous year but 6 percentage points higher than the year ending March 2013.

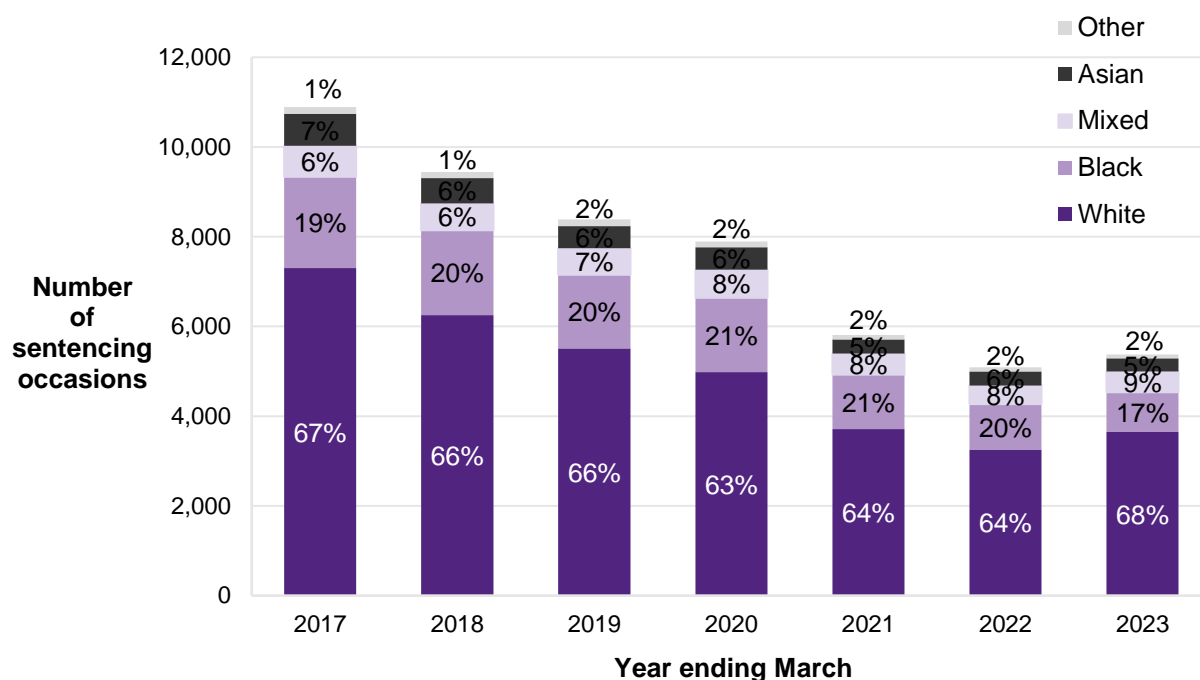
Of the almost 7,800 occasions on which children were sentenced for indictable offences in the latest year, 81% involved a community sentence, whereas of the 4,300 occasions in which children were sentenced for summary offences, 48% involved a community sentence.

In the year ending March 2023, 7% of the occasions in which children were sentenced for indictable offences involved a sentence to immediate custody, compared with 1% for summary offences (Supplementary Tables 5.4a and 5.4b).

¹¹ Indictable offences include triable either way offences.

5.6 Sentencing of children for indictable offences by ethnicity¹²

Figure 5.6: Number and proportion of sentencing occasions of children for indictable offences by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending March 2017 to 2023¹³



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Table 5.6c

In the year ending March 2023, the number of occasions on which children were sentenced at court for indictable offences varied by ethnicity. In the latest year there were:

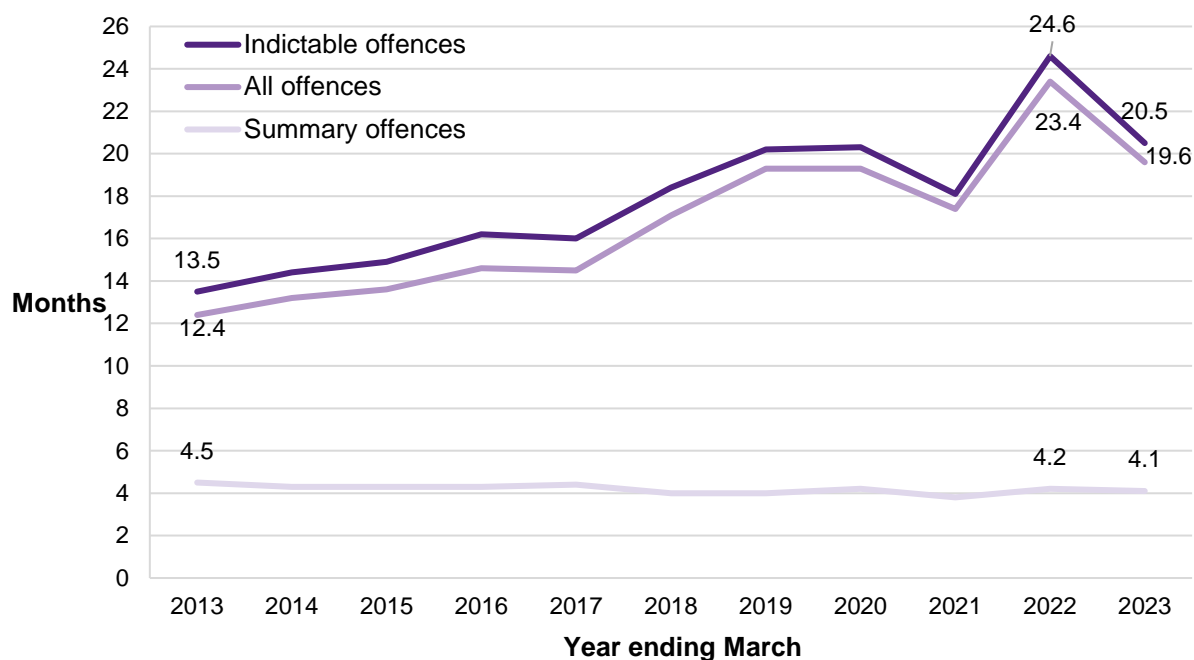
- around 3,600 sentencing occasions for White children, a 12% increase compared with the previous year
- just under 890 sentencing occasions for Black children a 13% decrease compared with the previous year and the third consecutive year in a row where there was a decrease
- around 460 sentencing occasions for Mixed children, a 12% increase compared with the previous year
- around 290 sentencing occasions for Asian children, an 8% decrease compared with the previous year
- around 90 sentencing occasions for Other children, a 9% decrease compared with the previous year.

¹² Data on summary level offences are not included as many defendants are not required to be present when sentenced so data on ethnicity is limited.

¹³ Where ethnicity was known. In the year ending March 2023, ethnicity was unknown for 31% of sentencing occasions for indictable offences at all courts.

5.7 Average custodial sentence length¹⁴

Figure 5.7: Average custodial sentence length in months by type of offence, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 5, Tables 5.4, 5.4a and 5.4b

For children sentenced to custody, the average custodial sentence length varied based on the type of offence the child was sentenced for. In the latest year, the average custodial sentence length was:

- 19.6 months for all offences
- 20.5 months for indictable offences
- 4.1 months for summary offences.

The average custodial sentence length for all offences has decreased by almost four months compared with the previous year to 19.6 months, following a sharp increase from the years ending March 2021 to 2022.

The average custodial sentence length for indictable offences decreased by over four months compared to the previous year.

For summary offences, the average custodial sentence length has remained broadly stable between 4.0 and 4.5 months for all years, except the year ending March 2021, where it decreased slightly to 3.8 months.

¹⁴ Excludes life and indeterminate sentences.

6. Use of remand for children

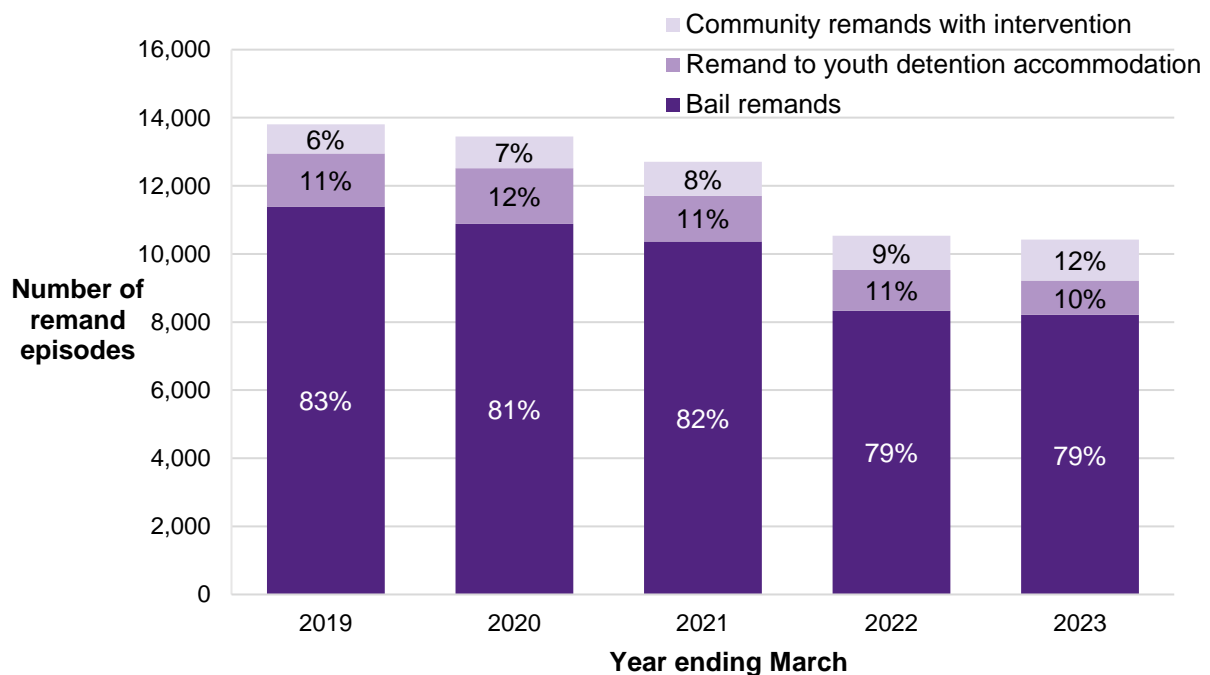
In the year ending March 2023:

- Almost two thirds (63%) of children remanded to youth detention accommodation did not subsequently receive a custodial sentence.
- Children remanded in youth custody accounted for 44% of the average youth custody population in the latest year, a slight decrease from 45% in the previous year. This is the second highest proportion seen in the last ten years with last year being the highest.
- There were around 10,400 remand episodes of which the majority (79%) were bail remands, with youth detention accommodation remands accounting for 10%, and 12% being community remands with intervention.

This chapter presents data on trends of use of remand for children aged 10 to 17, characteristics of the custodial remand population and the outcomes for children following custodial remand.

6.1 Types of remand given to children

Figure 6.1: Number and proportion of remands given to children by type, England and Wales, years ending March 2019 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 6, Table 6.2

Figure 6.1 shows the number of remand decisions made for outcomes occurring in each year. Where a child was given more than one remand decision during the court process, only the most restrictive is shown. Where a child was given multiple outcomes on the same day, only the most restrictive is counted.

There were around 10,400 remands given to children in the year ending March 2023, of which:

- the majority (79%) were bail remands
- 12% were community remands with intervention
- 10% were remands to youth detention accommodation.

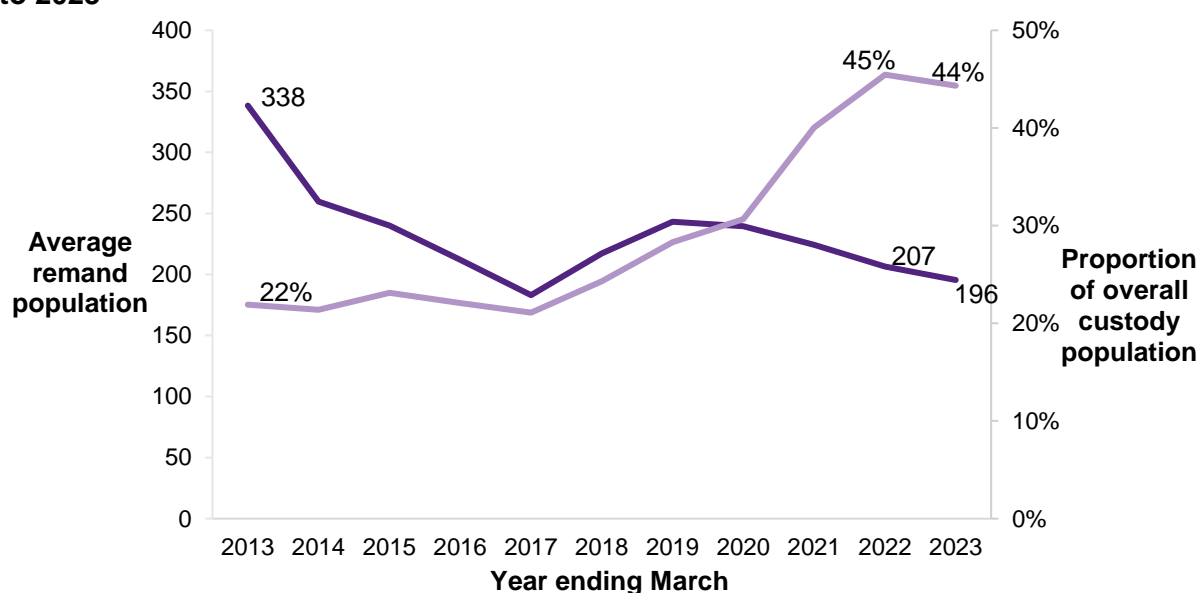
There was a slight decrease of 1% in the number of remand episodes compared to the previous year.

For remands given in the year ending March 2023, the breakdown of demographics (Supplementary Table 6.1) shows:

- most episodes (89%) involved boys
- the majority (84%) involved children aged 15 to 17
- most episodes were given to White children (63%), while Black children and Mixed children were the next highest (17% and 13% respectively)¹⁵.

6.2 Average monthly population of children on remand in youth custody

Figure 6.2: Average monthly population and proportion of children on remand in youth custody, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 6, Table 6.3

There was an average monthly population of around 200 children remanded in youth custody at any one time in the year ending March 2023, which was 5% lower than the previous year and 42% lower than ten years ago.

Children remanded in youth custody accounted for 44% of the average youth custody population in the latest year, a slight decrease from 45% in the previous year. This is the second highest proportion seen in the last ten years with last year being the highest. The

¹⁵ Where ethnicity was known. In the year ending March 2023, the ethnicity of children was unknown for 4% of remand episodes.

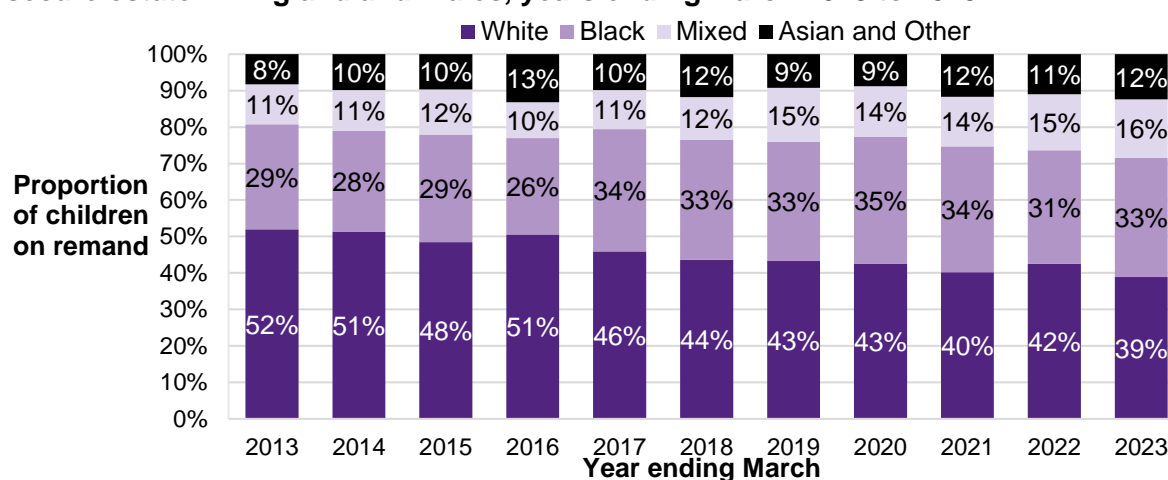
median number of nights in custody on remand reduced from 68 nights in the year ending March 2022 to 47 nights in the year ending March 2023.

Supplementary Tables 6.3 and 6.4 show that for children remanded in youth custody, the majority were:

- in a Young Offender Institution (74%)
- boys (98%), a proportion which has remained broadly stable over the last ten years
- from an ethnic minority group (61%), an increase from 58% in the previous year
- aged 17 (54%), a decrease from 60% in the previous year.

See Chapter 7 for information on the length of time children spent in youth custody on remand.

Figure 6.3: Proportion of children in youth custody on remand by ethnicity, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023¹⁶



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 6, Table 6.3

Supplementary Table 6.3 shows that in the latest year, the average number of children in custody on remand remained the same as the previous year for Black and Mixed children, increased slightly for Asian and Other children and fell by 13% for White children.

This is represented in Figure 6.3, which shows that the proportion that ethnic minority groups comprised increased from 58% to 61% in the last year. This was 13 percentage points higher than ten years ago.

Figure 6.3 also shows that:

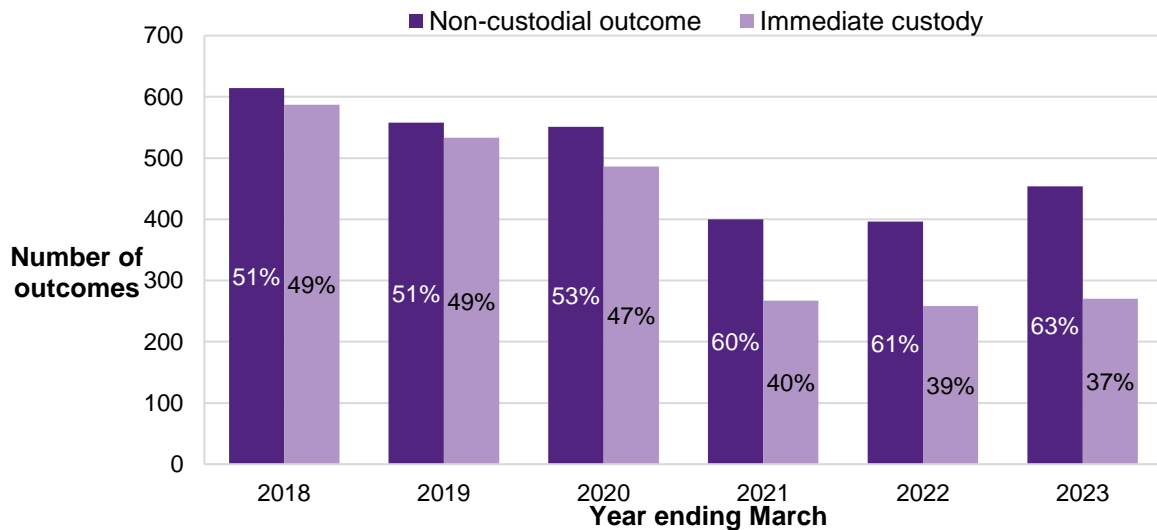
- the proportion of Black children on remand in youth custody increased by two percentage points from the previous year to 33% having decreased in the previous two years
- over the last ten years the proportion of White children remanded in youth custody has seen a general downward trend, falling from 52% to 39%
- Mixed children accounted for 16% of those remanded in youth custody in the latest year, which is a slight increase on the previous year and five percentage points higher than ten years ago (11%)

¹⁶ Where ethnicity was known. In the year ending March 2023, the ethnicity was unknown for 3% of the monthly average remand population.

- the proportion of Asian or Other children increased slightly to 12% from 11% in the previous year. This proportion has fluctuated between 8% and 13% over the last ten years.

6.3 Outcomes for children following remand to youth detention accommodation¹⁷

Figure 6.4: Number and proportion of outcomes following remand to youth detention accommodation by type, England and Wales, years ending March 2018 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 6, Table 6.6

In the year ending March 2023, the number of outcomes for children remanded to youth detention accommodation was 11% higher than the previous year. Almost two thirds (63%) of outcomes for children remanded to youth detention accommodation at some point during court proceedings did not subsequently result in a custodial sentence. This was two percentage points higher than the previous year and 12 percentage points higher than the year ending March 2018.

Of the 450 outcomes which did not result in a custodial sentence, 72% resulted in a non-custodial sentence and 28% resulted in acquittal, dismissal or were not proceeded against.

The proportion of children remanded to youth detention accommodation at some point during court proceedings who did not subsequently result in a custodial sentence varies by court type. For those who received an outcome at a magistrates' court, 79% did not subsequently receive a custodial sentence compared with 43% for those who received an outcome at the Crown Court.

This proportion varies by ethnicity (Supplementary Table 6.7). The proportion of outcomes for those remanded to youth detention accommodation, who did not go on to get a custodial sentence, varies from 58% for Black children and White children, 70% for Mixed children and 75% for Asian children.

¹⁷ The Ministry of Justice changed the data source for these statistics which has resulted in changes to historic data published in earlier year's publications. Details of the changes can be found on the [Technical Guidance for Criminal Justice Statistics](#)

7. Children in youth custody

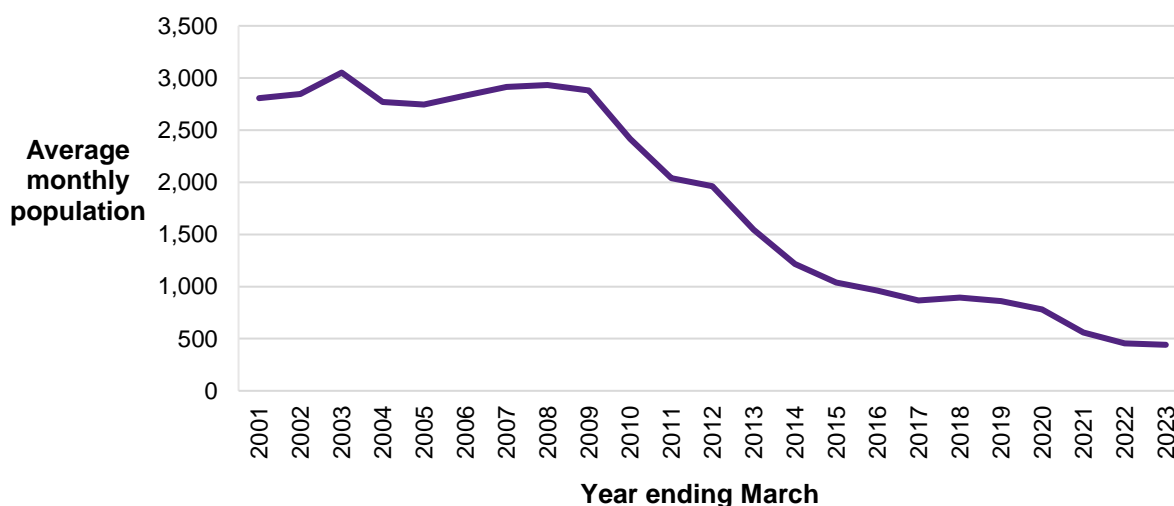
In the year ending March 2023:

- There was an average of around 440 children in custody at any one time during the year, a fall of 3% against the previous year and the lowest number on record.
 - The proportion of children held in custody on remand remained high at 44% (down from 45% compared to the previous year), the second largest proportion since the time series began.
 - Black children remain overrepresented in custody, accounting for 26% of the youth custody population compared with 6% of the 10 to 17 population. The number of Black children in custody decreased by 9% compared to the year ending March 2022, the largest decrease of any ethnicity.
 - The number of custodial episodes ending fell by 10% compared with the previous year, which continues the downward trend seen in recent years.
 - The median number of nights spent on remand in the latest year was 21 nights fewer than the previous year. The proportion of remands that lasted three months or more decreased from 43% to 31% compared to the previous year.
-

This chapter presents data on trends of children aged 10 to 17 in youth custody in England and Wales by demographic characteristics, offence types, legal basis for detention, distance from home and data on length of time in custody. There are some 18 and 19 year olds in the youth secure estate. Data on the youth secure estate which includes 18 and 19 year olds can be found in the monthly [youth custody data](#) produced by the Youth Custody Service.

7.1 Average monthly youth custody population

Figure 7.1: Average monthly youth custody population (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2001 to 2023

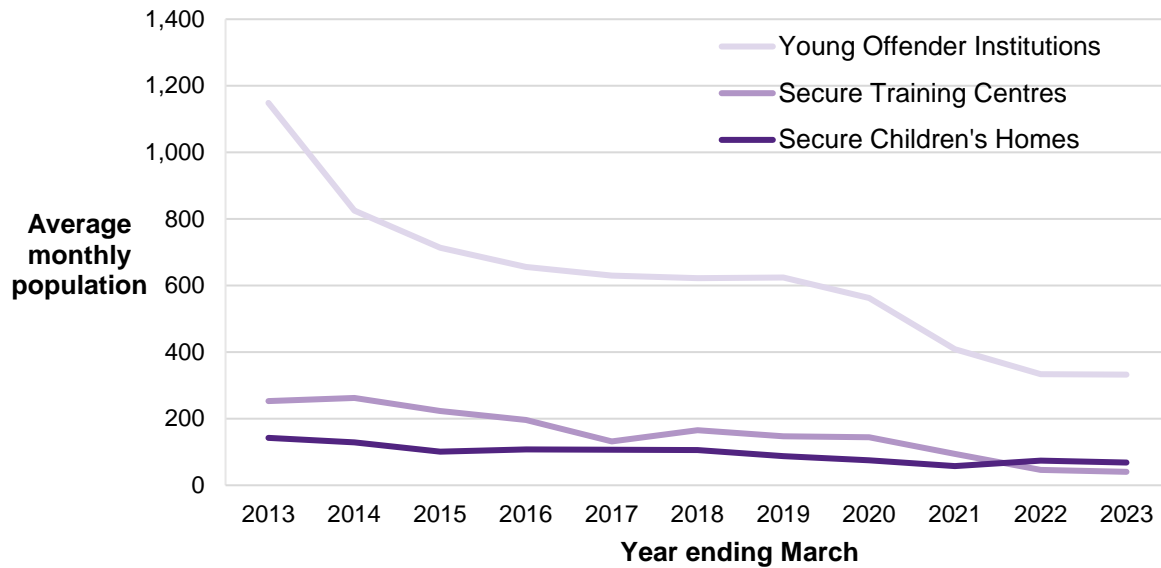


Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.3

In the year ending March 2023, there was an average of around 440 children in custody at any one time which was the lowest number on record. The average youth custody population has fallen in each of the last five years and in the year ending March 2023, it decreased by 3% (13 children) compared to the previous year and by 71% (around 1,100 children) compared to the year ending March 2013.

7.2 Average monthly youth custody population by sector

Figure 7.2: Average monthly youth custody population by sector (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.4

As in previous years, in the year ending March 2023 the majority of children in custody were held in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) (75%). The largest long-term fall in the average monthly youth custody population has been seen in the number of children in YOIs, falling 71% over the last ten years, but remained in line with the previous year.

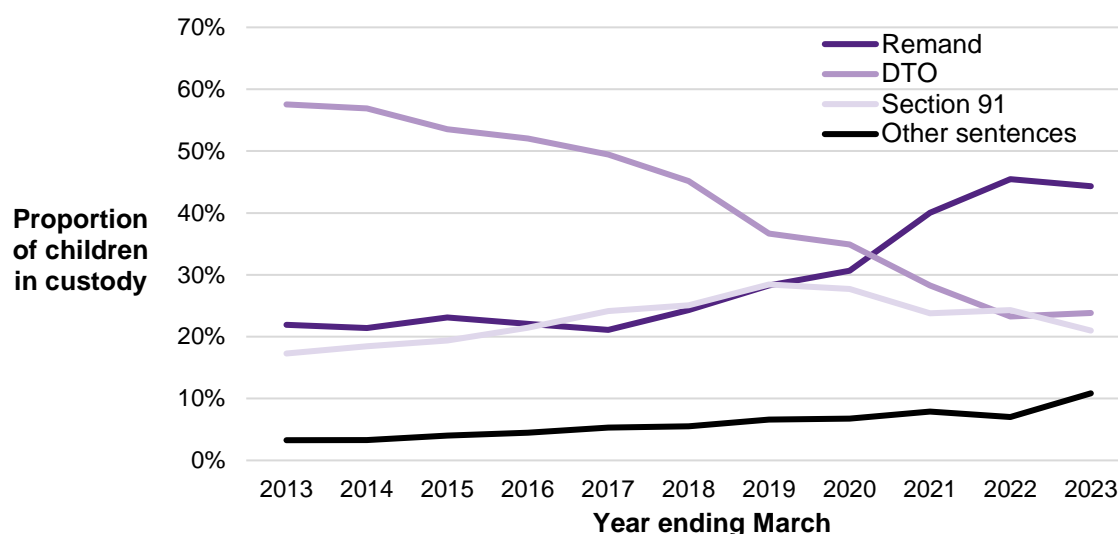
In the latest year, children held in Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) accounted for 16% of the average youth secure estate population, which along with the previous year was the highest proportion in the time series. The average monthly population of SCHs decreased by 52% over the last ten years, with a 7% decrease compared with the previous year.

Of all children in custody, 9% were held in Secure Training Centres (STCs) in the latest year, a decrease from 13% in the previous year and the lowest in the time series. The average monthly population of STCs decreased by 84% over the last ten years, with a 13% decrease compared with the previous year.

7.3 Legal basis for detention of children in custody

Information on the legal basis for detention relates to the most serious legal basis for which a child is placed in custody.

Figure 7.3: Proportion of children in custody by legal basis for detention (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.5

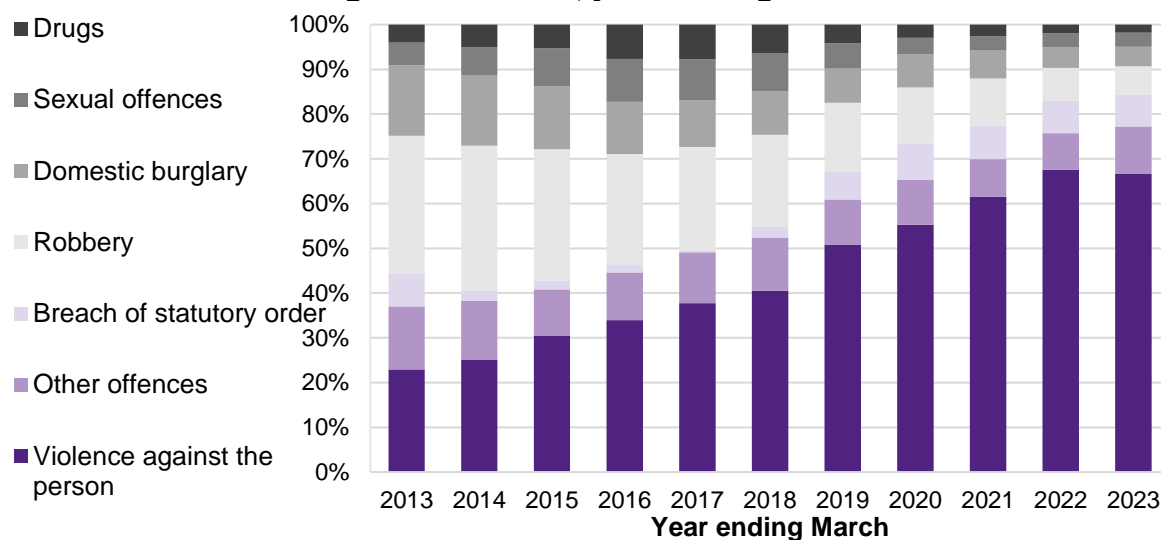
Figure 7.3 and supplementary Table 7.5 show that while the number of children in custody has decreased for all legal basis types over the last ten years, the proportions of these legal basis types have been changing:

- The proportion of children held in custody on remand remained high at 44% of the children's population, double what it was ten years ago but slightly down from the previous year when it was 45%. This was the second largest proportion since the time series began.
- Children serving a Detention and Training Order (DTO) accounted for 24% of the children's population in the latest year, down from 58% ten years ago and slightly up from the previous year when it was 23%.
- The proportion of those serving a Section 250 (formerly Section 91) sentence accounted for 21% of the children's population. It had steadily increased from 17% in the year ending March 2013 to 28% in the year ending March 2019 before falling to 24% in the years ending March 2021 March 2022 and further decreasing in the latest year.
- The proportion of children on Other sentences (which include other long-term sentences) continues to make up the smallest share, at 11% in the latest year, though this was an increase of four percentage points compared with the previous year.

7.4 Offences resulting in children going into custody

There was a decrease in the number of children in custody across most offence groups compared to the previous year, with the biggest decreases seen in robbery and drugs. Robbery saw a decrease of 16%, and drugs saw a decrease of 12%.

Figure 7.4: Proportion of children in custody by offence group (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.6

Figure 7.4 shows that the proportion of children in youth custody for violence against the person offences had increased in nine of the last ten years but reduced by one percentage point in the latest year and accounted for over two thirds (67%) of the youth custody population in the latest year. In the same time period, the proportion of children in custody for robbery has fallen by 25 percentage points, from 31% to 6%.

7.5 Demographics of children in custody

Figure 7.5: Demographics of the average youth custody population (10 to 17 year olds) compared to the general 10 to 17 population, England and Wales, year ending March 2023

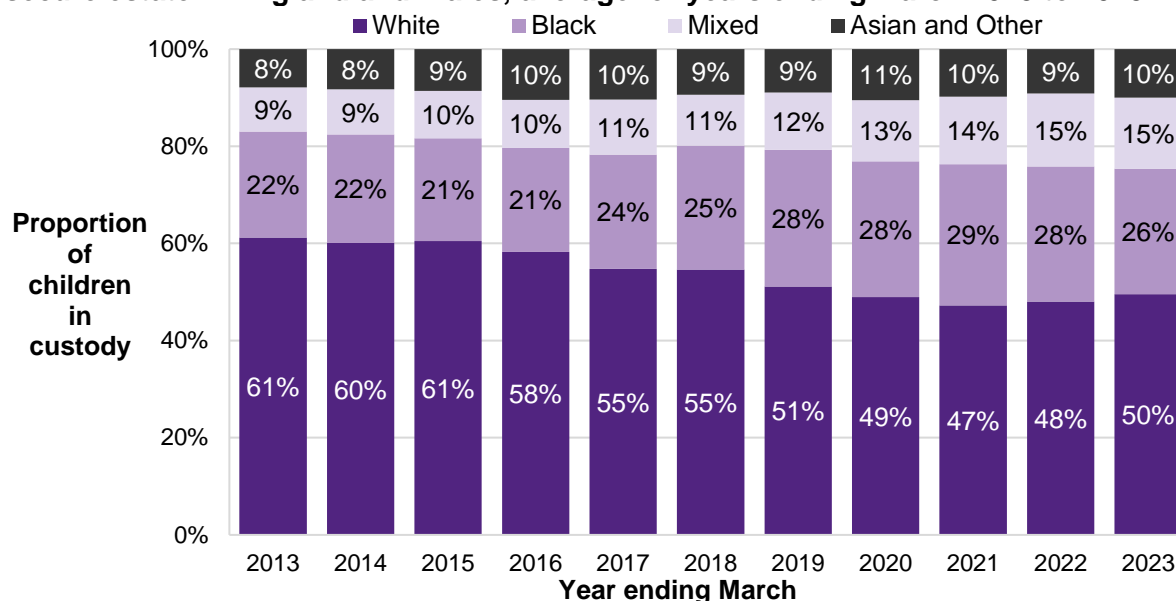
	Age group		Sex	
	10 to 14	15 to 17	Boys	Girls
Youth custody population	3%	97%	97%	3%
10 to 17 population	64%	36%	51%	49%

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.8

In the latest year, most children in the youth secure estate were boys (97%), which is the same as the previous year although a slight increase (from 95%) compared to ten years ago (year ending March 2013).

Those aged 17 have made up over half of the youth custody population in each of the last ten years and accounted for 57% in the latest year (Supplementary Table 7.8).

Figure 7.6: Proportion of children in custody by ethnicity (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, average for years ending March 2013 to 2023¹⁸



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.9

While all ethnic groups have seen a decrease in the average custody population over the last ten years as the whole population has decreased, they have been falling at different rates which has led to a change in the proportion each ethnic group comprises.

Figure 7.6 shows that over the last ten years:

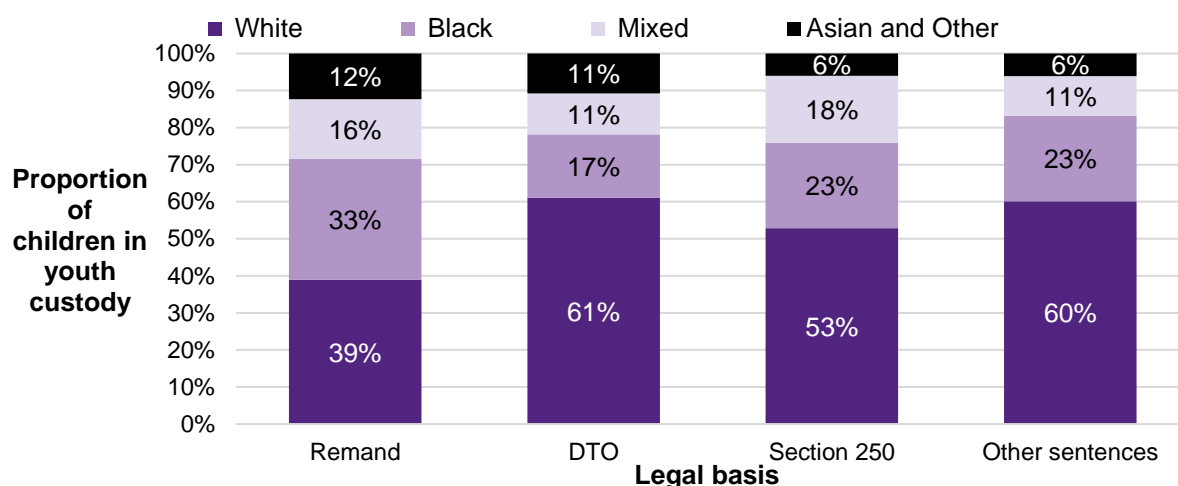
- the proportion of White children in youth custody has been falling, from 61% to 50%, though saw an increase of two percentage points in the latest year
- the proportion of Mixed children has increased the most, from 9% to 15% over the last ten years
- the proportion of Black children is four percentage points higher than ten years ago (from 22% to 26%), though there have been decreases in each of the last two years
- the proportion of Asian or Other children has increased from 8% to 10% over the last ten years.

Supplementary Table 7.9 shows that in the year ending March 2020, White children made up less than half of the youth custody population (49%) for the first time since the data series began, as they continued to do in the two following years (47% in the year ending March 2021 and 48% in the year ending March 2022), while accounting for 50% in the latest year.

In the year ending March 2023, the average number of Black children in custody decreased by 9% compared to the previous year, while the average number of White children increased by 1%.

¹⁸ Where ethnicity is known. The ethnicity was unknown for 1% of the youth custody population in the year ending March 2023.

Figure 7.7: Proportion of children in custody by ethnicity and legal basis for detention (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, average for the year ending March 2023¹⁹



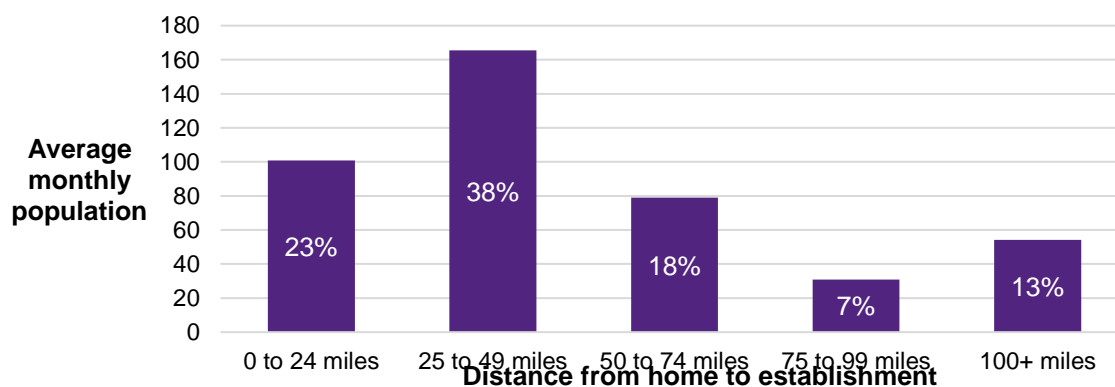
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.11

Supplementary Table 7.11 shows that the proportions each ethnicity make up by legal basis has been changing over the last ten years:

- the proportion of Mixed children on Section 250 sentences has seen the greatest increase in the last ten years, from 10% to 18%
- the proportion of Mixed children on remand has increased from 11% to 16%
- the proportion of White children on remand has decreased from 52% to 39%
- the proportion of White children on DTOs has decreased from 68% to 61%
- the proportion of Asian and Other children serving Section 250 sentences has halved from 12% to 6%.

7.6 Youth custody population by distance from home to establishment and youth custody population by region of home youth justice service (YJS)

Figure 7.8: Number and proportion of children in custody by distance from home in miles (10 to 17 year olds), youth secure estate in England and Wales, year ending March 2023²⁰



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.7

¹⁹ Proportions are calculated where ethnicity is known. The ethnicity was unknown for 1% of the youth custody population in the year ending March 2023.

²⁰ Proportions are based on where distance was known. In the year ending March 2023, the distance from home was unknown for 2% of children in the youth secure estate.

For children in the youth secure estate, the distance between their home address and the secure establishment they are placed in can vary (see Figure 7.8). It is not always possible to place children in an establishment close to their home as placement decisions are determined by a number of factors, including the risks and needs of the individual child and available capacity at establishments.

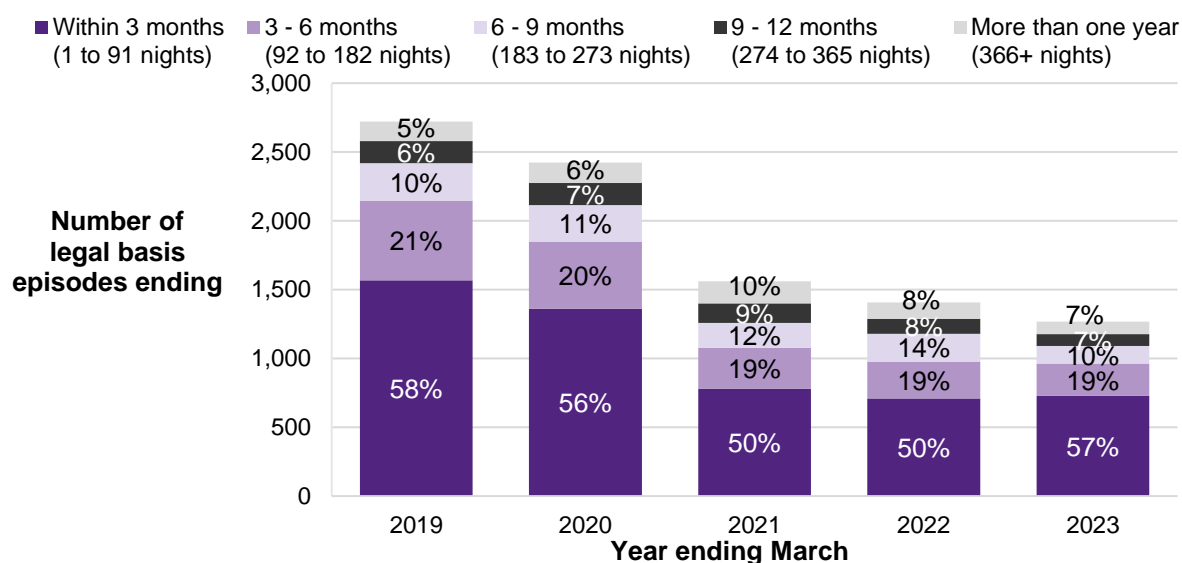
As Figure 7.8 shows, while 62% of children in custody were in an establishment less than 50 miles from their home address, 13% were placed in an establishment 100 miles or more from their home. These proportions are broadly unchanged compared with the previous year.

Supplementary Table 7.13 shows that in the year ending March 2023 children who were under the supervision of a London YJS made up the largest share of children in youth custody accounting for 23% though this was the smallest proportion of the last ten years. The next largest region was the North West, accounting for 18% of children in youth custody, the highest it has been for the last ten years.

Children who were under the supervision of a Welsh YJS accounted for the smallest proportion at 2% followed by those under the supervision of a YJS in the North East region and South West region which both accounted for 4%.

7.7 Legal basis episodes ending by nights spent in the youth secure estate

Figure 7.9: Number and proportion of legal basis episodes ending by nights spent in the youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2019 to 2023



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Median number of nights	88	90	91	91	84

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.19

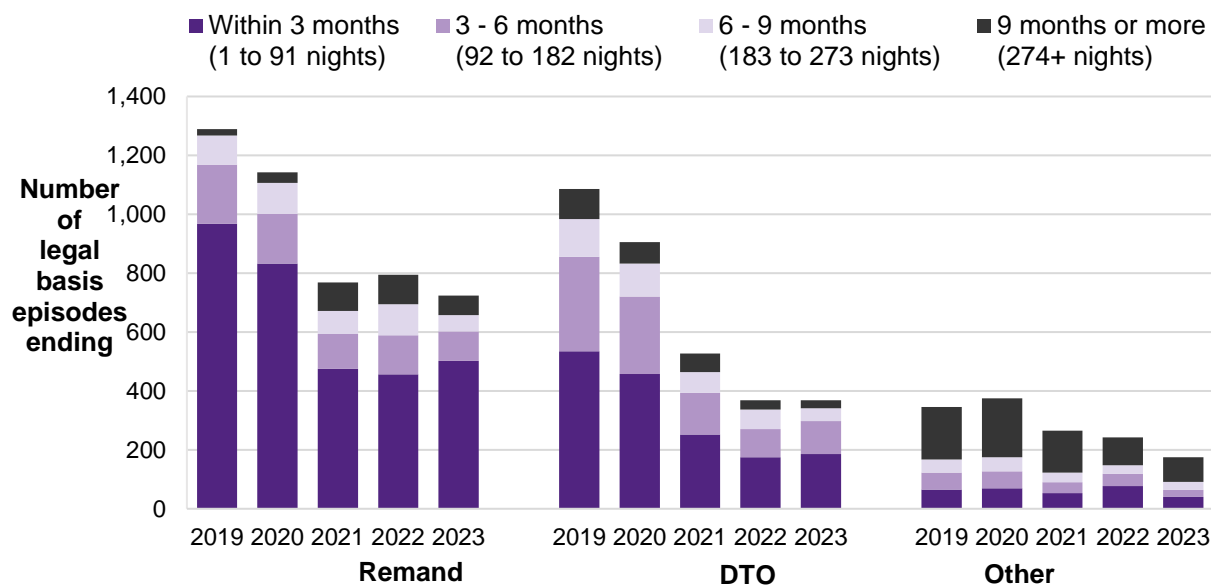
In the year ending March 2023, just under 1,300 legal basis episodes in the youth secure estate ended. This was a decrease of 10% compared to the previous year. Of the 730 legal basis episodes that ended within three months in the latest year, around 140 (20%) ended within seven nights.

In the latest year, around 7% (around 90) of legal basis episodes lasted more than one year which is a decrease compared to the previous year (8%).

The median number of nights spent in youth custody per legal basis episode was 84 nights in the year ending March 2023. This was a decrease of seven nights compared with the previous year, and a decrease of four nights compared with the year ending March 2019.

7.8 Legal basis episodes ending by nights spent in the youth secure estate and legal basis for detention

Figure 7.10: Number of legal basis episodes ending by nights spent in youth custody and legal basis for detention, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2019 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.21

Remand episodes

The number of remand episodes decreased by 9% from the previous year to around 720 whilst children are also spending less time on remand than in previous years. The median number of nights spent on remand in the latest year was 21 nights less than the previous year but eight nights longer (21%) than the year ending March 2019.

Detention and Training Order

For those held on a DTO only, half of the episodes ended within three months, which is a slight increase on the previous year (47%). In the latest year, 19% of DTO episodes ended after six months, compared with 27% in the previous year and 21% in the year ending March 2019.

Other sentences

In the latest year, around 180 legal basis episodes that ended were recorded as Other, which includes long term sentences including Section 250. Almost two thirds of these episodes (63%) lasted six months or longer, which is an increase when compared to the previous year (51%).

The median number of nights spent on this type of legal basis was 258 in the latest year, an increase from 193 nights in the previous year.

7.9 Legal basis episodes ending by nights spent in the youth secure estate and ethnicity

In the latest year, the number of legal basis episodes ending for White children was around 690, which was unchanged from the previous year, compared with around 570 episodes ending for children from ethnic minorities, which was a 20% decrease from the previous year.

Figure 7.11: Proportion of legal basis episodes ending by nights spent and ethnic group, youth secure estate in England and Wales, year ending March 2023

	Number of nights				
	1 – 91	92 – 182	183 – 273	274 – 365	366+
Ethnic minorities	54%	19%	11%	8%	6%
White	60%	18%	9%	6%	6%

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 7, Table 7.20

As shown in Figure 7.11, over two thirds of custodial episodes ended within six months for both White children (73%) and children from ethnic minorities (78%).

7.10 Deaths in youth custody

In the year ending March 2023, no children died in custody in the youth secure estate.

Between the years ending March 2013 and 2023, there were three deaths in youth custody (see the formal [Prisons and Probation Ombudsmen Reports](#)).

8. Behaviour management in the youth secure estate

In the year ending March 2023:

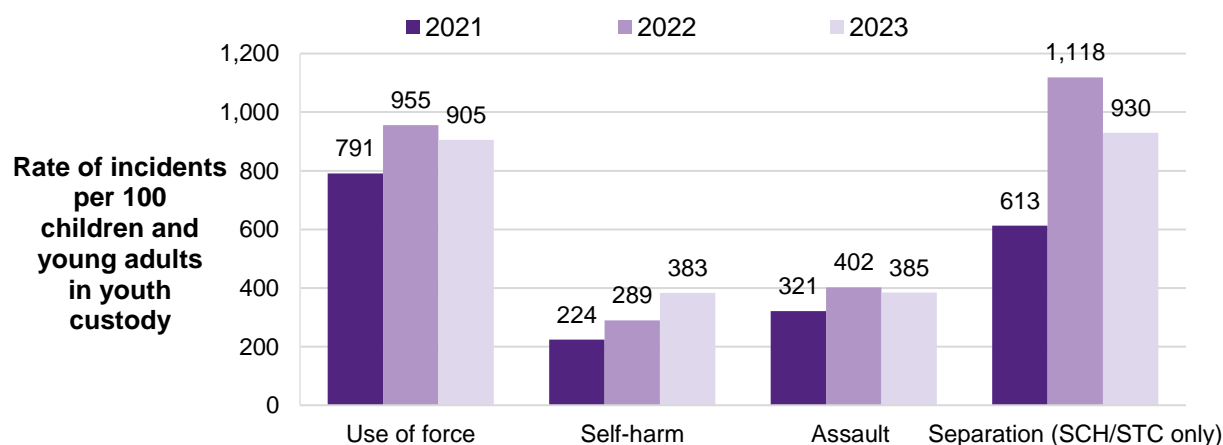
- The number and rate of incidents per 100 children and young adults in the youth secure estate increased from the previous year for self-harm but decreased for incidents of use of force, assault and separation.
- There was an average of around 900 use of force incidents per 100 children and young adults across the youth secure estate; this is a decrease of 5% on the previous year but 14% higher than the year ending March 2021.
- The rate of incidents of self-harm in the youth secure estate increased by 32% in the last year to around 380 incidents per 100 children in the year.
- The rate of incidents of separation in Secure Children’s Homes (SCH) and Oakhill Secure Training Centre (STC) decreased by 17% in the last year to 930 incidents per 100 children and young adults in the year.
- The rate of incidents of assault in the youth secure estate decreased by 4% in the last year to around 380 incidents per 100 children and young adults in the year.

This chapter presents data on trends of behaviour management incidents by type and demographic characteristics as well as incidents of use of force in the youth secure estate. It includes 18-year-olds still in the youth estate, so the term ‘children and young adults’ is used throughout, but only includes those held in the youth secure estate.

Where they are presented, the rates for girls and those aged 10 to 14 should be used with caution as these two groups each make up a very small part of the total population – two percent and three percent respectively – so rates are subject to large fluctuations.

8.1 Trends in the rate of behaviour management incidents

Figure 8.1: Rate of behaviour management incidents per 100 children and young adults, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023²¹



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.3

²¹ Data on separations in Young Offender Institutions is only available from April 2022 and has not been included in this chart.

8.2 Use of force in the youth secure estate

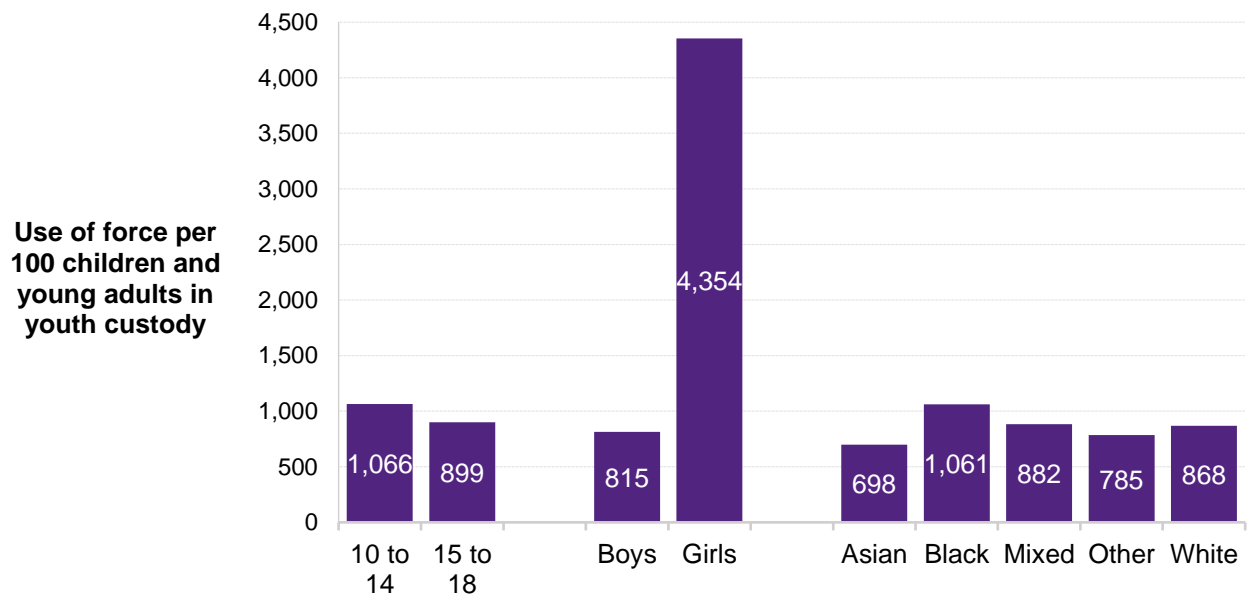
In the year ending March 2023 there were around 4,600 use of force incidents, down 8% compared with the previous year.

When the fall in the custodial population is taken into account, the average rate of use of force incidents per 100 children and young adults in the youth secure estate has also decreased. In the latest year, the rate of use of force incidents per 100 children and young adults in the youth secure estate was just over 900, a decrease of 5% from around 950 in the previous year.

As this is a relatively new dataset, a five year time series is not yet available.

Demographic characteristics of children and young adults involved in use of force incidents

Figure 8.2: Rate of use of force incidents per 100 children and young adults in custody by demographic characteristics, youth secure estate in England and Wales, year ending March 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.5

Figure 8.2 shows that in the year ending March 2023 the rate of use of force incidents per 100 children and young adults in custody was higher for:

- those aged 10 to 14 at around 1,100 per 100 children compared to just under 900 for children and young adults aged 15 to 18)
- girls, at around 4,400 compared to around 820 for boys
- Black children and young adults at around 1,100 compared to just under 870 for White children and young adults.

Use of force incidents involving injuries requiring medical treatment

Figure 8.3: Number of injuries requiring medical treatment to children and young adults resulting from a use of force incident by severity of injury, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023

Severity of injury requiring medical treatment	2021	2022	2023
Minor injury requiring medical treatment on site	35	43	46
Serious injury requiring hospital treatment	7	4	7
Total injuries requiring medical treatment	42	47	53
Proportion of use of force that resulted in an injury requiring medical treatment	1%	1%	1%

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.6

In the year ending March 2023, the number of use of force incidents resulting in medical treatment increased to 53 from 47 in the previous year. 1% of all incidents resulted in injuries requiring medical treatment. This proportion is unchanged from the previous two years (Supplementary Table 8.6). Of all injuries, most (46) were minor requiring medical treatment on site; seven were serious injuries requiring hospital treatment.

8.3 Self-harm in the youth secure estate

The number of self-harm incidents has increased by 27% in the latest year, to around 1,900 incidents. This is the second highest number in the time series, only being lower than the peak in the year ending March 2020.

The rate of self-harm incidents per 100 children and young adults in custody has increased to around 380. This is an increase of 32% compared to around 290 incidents per 100 children and young adults in the previous year and is more than double the rate of five years ago (around 180).

The rate of self-harm incidents per child and young adult involved has also increased compared to the previous year (9 in the year ending March 2023 compared to 6 in the previous year).

Looking at the demographic characteristics of the children and young adults involved in self-harm incidents, in the year ending March 2023 the rate of self-harm per 100 children and young adults in youth custody was higher for:

- girls at 9,200 compared to 160 for boys
- those aged 10 to 14 at 530 compared to 380 for 15 to 18 year olds
- White children and young adults at 700 compared to 65 for children and young adults from Ethnic Minority groups.

The very high rate for girls is driven by the fact that although the population of girls in the youth secure estate averaged just below 13 (compared to 490 for boys), the majority of incidents of self-harm involved girls; nearly 1,200 compared to around 770 for boys.

Figure 8.4: Number of injuries requiring medical treatment to children and young adults by severity of injury as a result of self-harm, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2019 to 2023

Severity of self-harm injury requiring medical treatment	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Minor injury requiring medical treatment on site	621	558	308	374	338
Serious injury requiring hospital treatment	39	69	81	48	38
Total injuries requiring medical treatment	660	627	389	422	376
Proportion of self-harm incidents that resulted in an injury requiring medical treatment	36%	25%	27%	28%	20%

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.11

In the year ending March 2023, a fifth (20%) of self-harm incidents resulted in injuries which required medical treatment (Supplementary Table 8.11). This is a decrease compared with the previous year and is the lowest proportion in the last five years.

As shown in Figure 8.4, in the year ending March 2023 there were around 380 incidents of self-harm that resulted in an injury requiring medical treatment, of which:

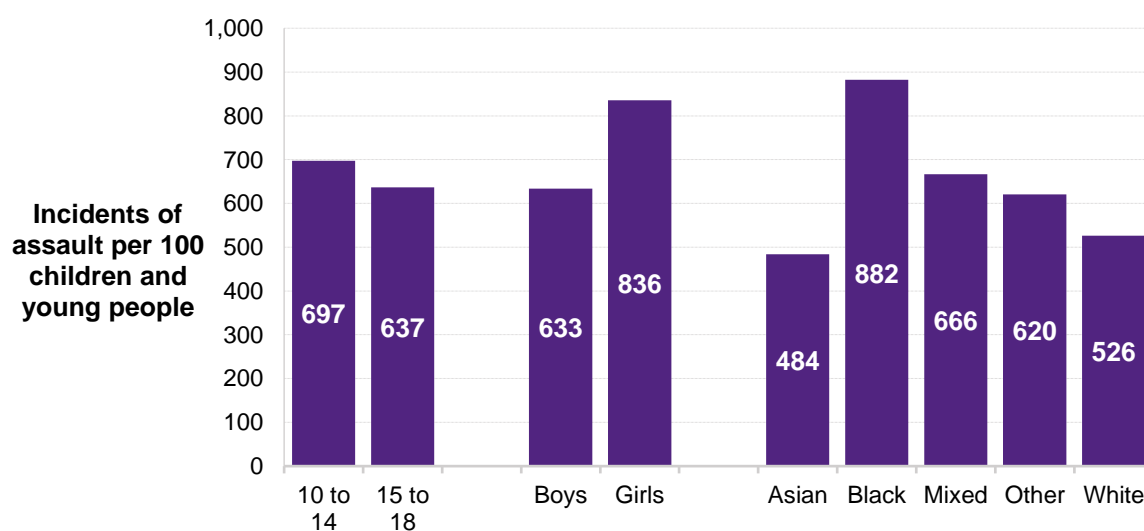
- 90% (338 incidents) were minor injuries requiring medical treatment on site
- 10% (38 incidents) requiring hospital treatment, the highest number in the last five years.

The number of injuries requiring medical treatment to children and young adults following a self-harm incident decreased by 11% in the last year, after a previous rise. The decrease was driven by a fall of over 50% in Oakhill STC. SCHs and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) both also saw decreases but by much less: 14% and 2% respectively (Supplementary Table 8.11).

8.4 Assault incidents in the youth secure estate

In the year ending March 2023 there were over 1,900 assault incidents, with just over 3,200 assailants or fighters. In the latest year, each child or young adult involved as an assailant or fighter were involved in 4 incidents over the year. The number of assailant or fighter involvements per 100 children and young adults in custody was around 640.

Figure 8.5: Number of assailant or fighter involvements per 100 children and young adults in custody, youth secure estate in England and Wales, year ending March 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.14

Figure 8.5 shows that for demographic characteristics of the children and young adults involved as assailants or fighters in the year ending March 2023, the average monthly rates per 100 children and young adults was higher for:

- those aged 10 to 14 at around 700, compared to 640 for those aged 15 to 18 years old
- girls at around 840, compared to 630 for boys
- Black children and young adults at just over 880, compared to around 530 for White children and young adults.

Supplementary Table 8.15 shows that in the year ending March 2023, just over half of all assault incidents involved child on child assaults (53%) with most of the rest being child on staff assaults (44%), although this differed by sector. Most assault incidents in YOIs (59%) involved child on child assaults, whereas the majority of assault incidents in both SCHs and Oakhill STC were child on staff assaults.

Figure 8.6: The severity of injuries to children and young adults resulting from assault incidents, youth secure estate in England and Wales, years ending March 2020 to 2023

Severity of assault injury	2020	2021	2022	2023
Minor injury	570	273	300	268
Serious injury	71	44	40	67
Total assault incidents resulting in injury	641	317	340	335
Proportion of assault incidents that resulted in an injury to a child or young adult	17%	15%	16%	17%

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.16

In the year ending March 2023, 17% of assault incidents resulted in an injury to a child or young adults. Most of these (268) were minor injuries, with 67 serious injuries.

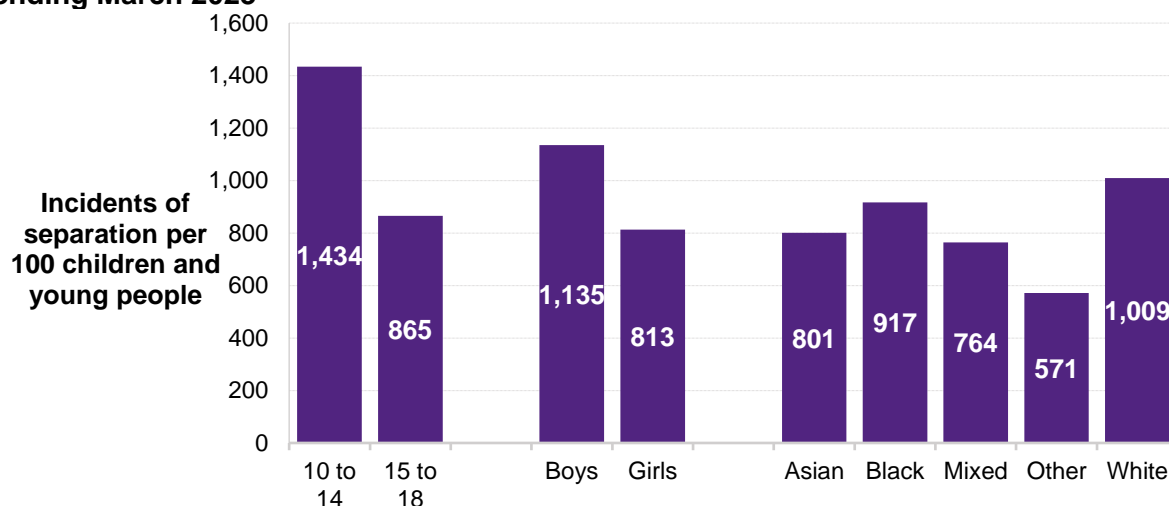
8.5 Separation in the youth secure estate

Before the latest year, data have only been published for SCHs and STCs. Starting from the year ending March 2023, separation data for public YOIs is now also being published but the metrics to measure separation in SCHs / Oakhill STC and in public YOIs are different so the two data sets should not be compared. Also, the metric used to measure separations in SCHs and STCs was changed in April 2019 so figures for the years ending March 2020 onwards should not be compared to earlier years. No data on separations from earlier years is included.

Supplementary Table 8.17 shows there were around 1,000 separation incidents in SCHs and Oakhill STC in the year ending March 2023. This is a 25% decrease compared with the previous year (year ending March 2022) but is 7% higher than the year ending March 2021.

The rate of separation incidents per 100 children and young adults had been rising in earlier years (Supplementary Table 8.19) but fell in the year ending March 2023 (Figure 8.8). In the latest year, the rate was 930 per 100 children and young adults. This is a decrease compared to the previous year (around 1,100).

Figure 8.7: Rate of separation incidents per 100 children and young adults in custody by demographic characteristics, SCHs and Oakhill STC only, England and Wales, year ending March 2023



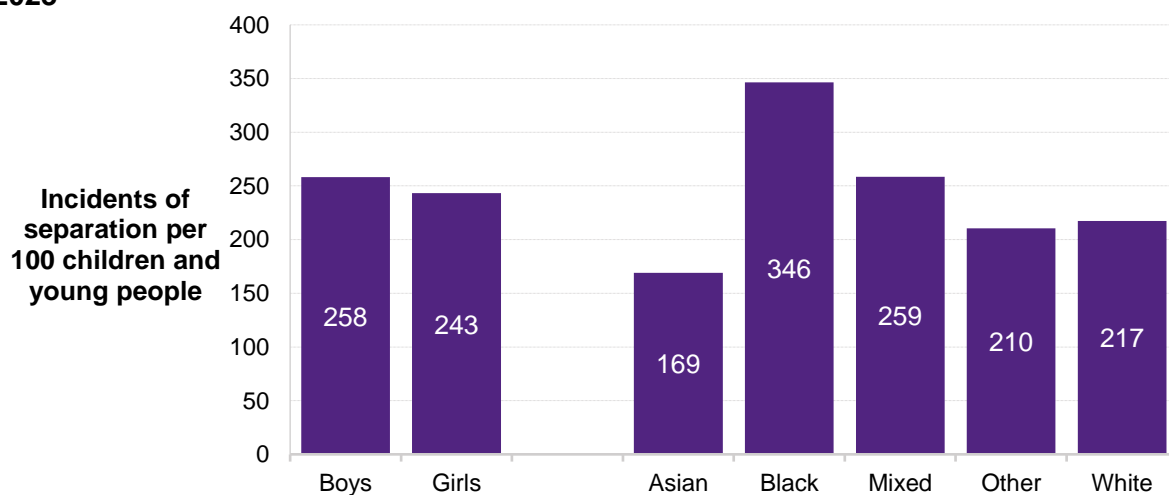
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.18

Figure 8.7 shows that in the year ending March 2023 the rate of separation of children and young adults (SCHs and Oakhill STC only) was higher for:

- those aged 10 to 14 at over 1,400 compared to around 870 for those aged 15 to 18
- White children and young adults at around 1,000, compared to between 570 and 920 for children and young adults from Ethnic Minority groups
- boys at over 1,100, compared to around 810 for girls.

Supplementary Table 8.18 shows there were around 1,000 separation incidents in YOIs in the year ending March 2023. As this is the first year this data has been collected, no trend is available yet.

Figure 8.8: Rate of separation incidents per 100 children and young adults in custody by demographic characteristics, YOIs only, England and Wales, year ending March 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 8, Table 8.18

Figure 8.8 shows that in the year ending March 2023 the rate of separation of children and young adults (YOIs only) was higher for:

- Black children and young adults at around 350, compared to around 220 for White children and young adults and between 170 and 260 for those from other Ethnic Minority groups
- boys at around 260, compared to around 240 for girls.

9. Proven reoffending by children

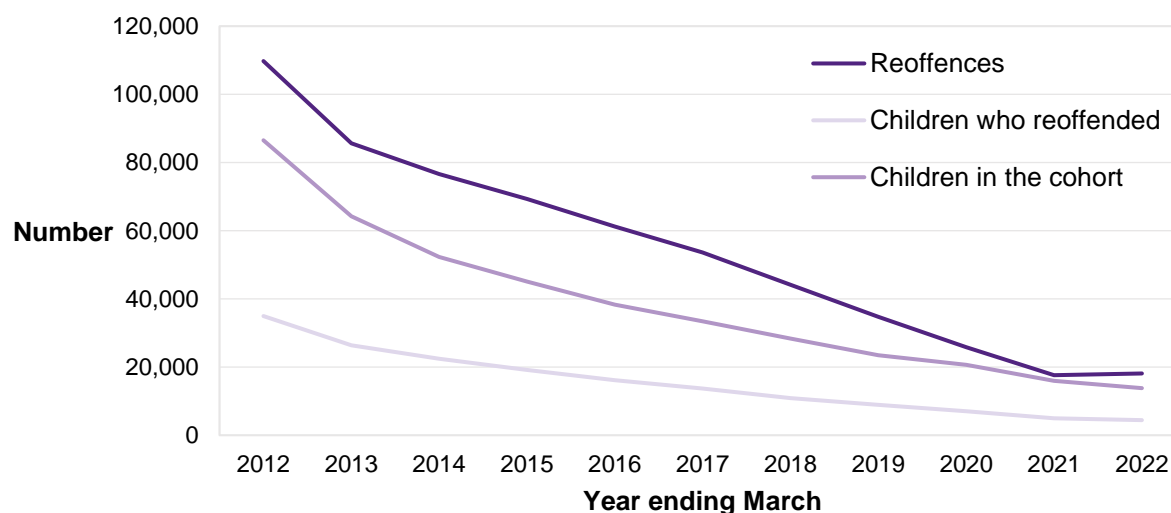
For the year ending March 2022 aggregated cohort²²:

- The proven reoffending rate increased to 32.2%, a 0.9 percentage point increase on the previous year. This was the first increase since the year ending March 2014, though the second lowest rate in the time series after last year.
- The long-term falls in the number of children in the cohort and children who reoffended have continued while the number of reoffences increased for the first time in the last ten years. The number of children in the annually aggregated cohort has fallen by 13% compared to the previous year, the number of children who reoffended has fallen by 11% while the number of reoffences committed increased by 3%.
- Children who reoffended committed around 18,100 reoffences giving an average of 4.07 reoffences per reoffender (frequency rate), the highest this rate has been in the last ten years. This is a 15% increase compared with the previous year (3.54) and 30% higher than ten years ago (3.14).

This chapter covers data on trends in proven reoffending by sentence type and demographics as well as trends in numbers of children in the cohort, children who reoffended and the number of proven reoffences committed by children.

9.1 Children in the cohort, children who reoffend and reoffences

Figure 9.1: Number of children in the cohort, children who reoffended and reoffences, England and Wales, for children entering the cohort in the years ending March 2012 to March 2022



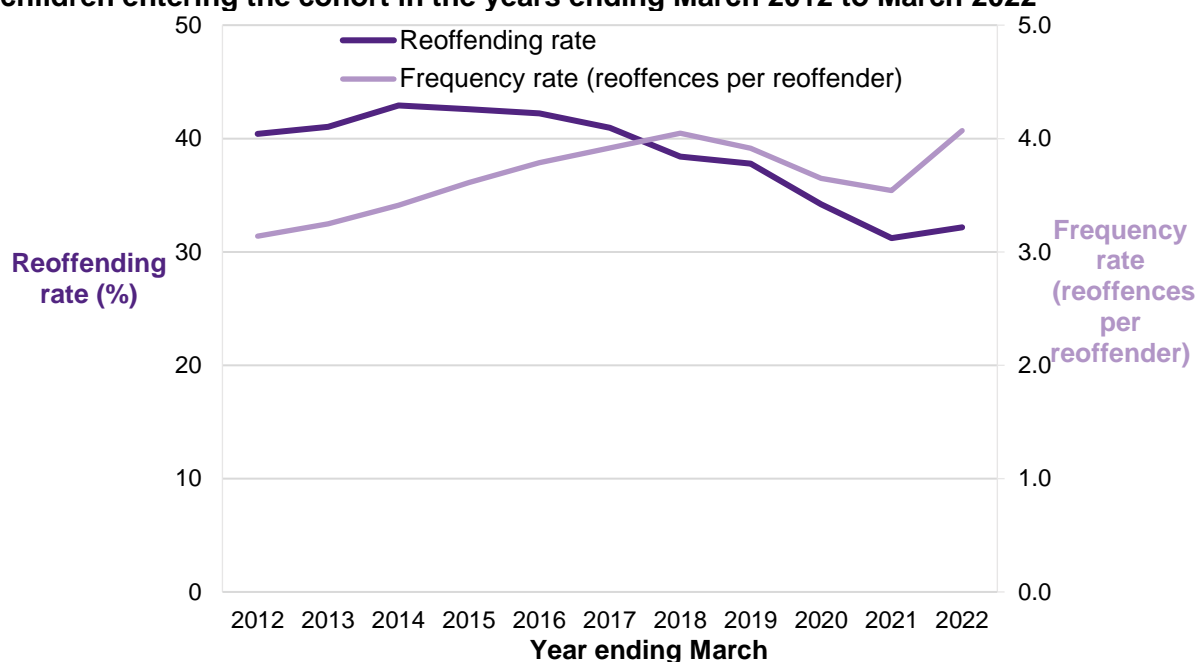
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 9, Table 9.1a

As shown in Figure 9.1, the long-term falls in the number of children in the cohort and children who reoffended have continued while the number of reoffences increased for the first time in the last ten years. The number of children in the annually aggregated cohort fell by 13% compared to the previous year, the number of children who reoffended fell by 11% and the number of reoffences committed increased by 3%.

²² Proven reoffending by children entering the cohort between April 2021 and March 2022. The focus in this chapter is on the annual data based on the aggregate of the four quarterly offender cohorts.

9.2 Reoffending rate and frequency rate

Figure 9.2: Reoffending rate and frequency rate for children, England and Wales, for children entering the cohort in the years ending March 2012 to March 2022



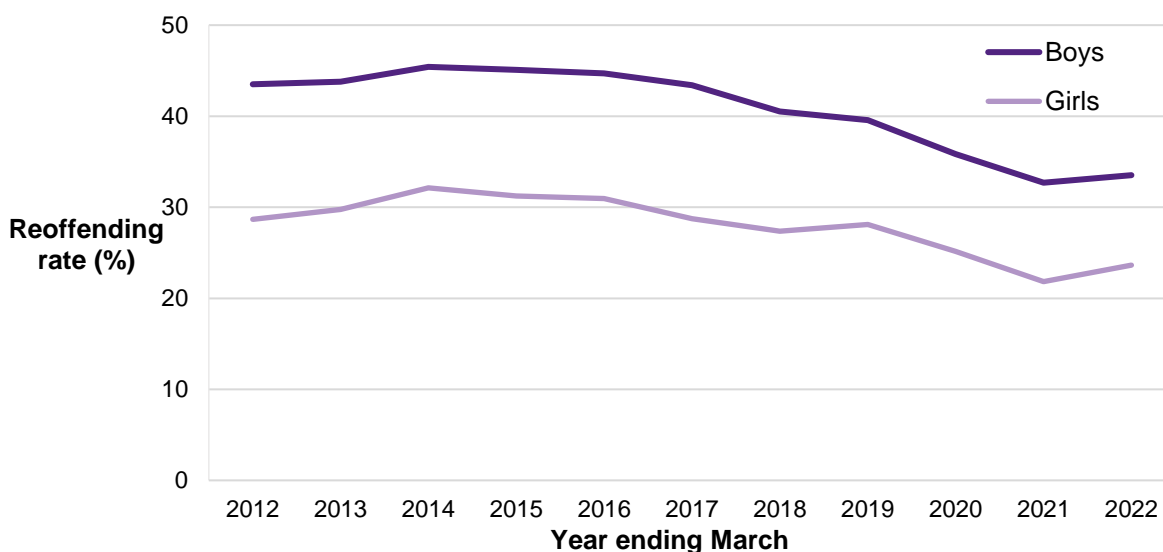
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 9, Table 9.1a

For the year ending March 2022 cohort, the proven reoffending rate increased to 32.2%. This was the first increase since the year ending March 2014, though it is still the second lowest rate in the time series after last year.

In the latest year, children who reoffended committed an average of 4.07 reoffences each (frequency rate), the highest this rate has been in the last ten years, and the first time in the last five years the frequency rate has increased.

9.3 Reoffending by demographic characteristics of children

Figure 9.3: Reoffending rate for children by sex, England and Wales, for children entering the cohort in the years ending March 2012 to March 2022



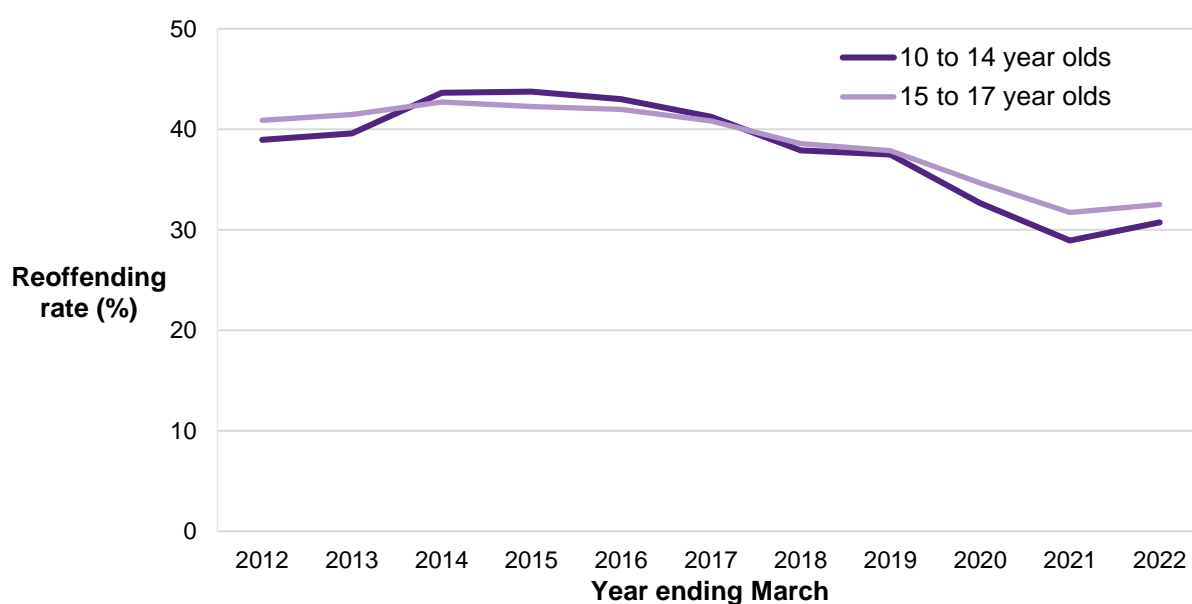
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 9, Table 9.2a

Boys have always made up the majority of the cohort, and the proportion they comprise has been increasing over the last ten years, from 79% to 86% in the year ending March 2021 and remaining at that level in the latest year (Supplementary Table 9.2), the joint highest it has been in the time series.

As shown in Figure 9.3, the reoffending rate for boys has been higher than for girls in each of the last ten years, though they follow similar trends. In the latest year, the reoffending rate for boys was 33.5%, compared to 23.6% for girls. The most recent year saw increases for both sexes with boys increasing by 0.8 percentage points compared with a 1.8 percentage point increase for girls.

Supplementary Table 9.2a shows that the average number of reoffences per reoffender (frequency rate) rose by 16% (the largest increase in the last ten years) for boys in the last year and by 9% with girls having a higher frequency rate than boys for the third consecutive year.

Figure 9.4: Reoffending rate by age group, England and Wales, for children entering the cohort in the years ending March 2012 to March 2022



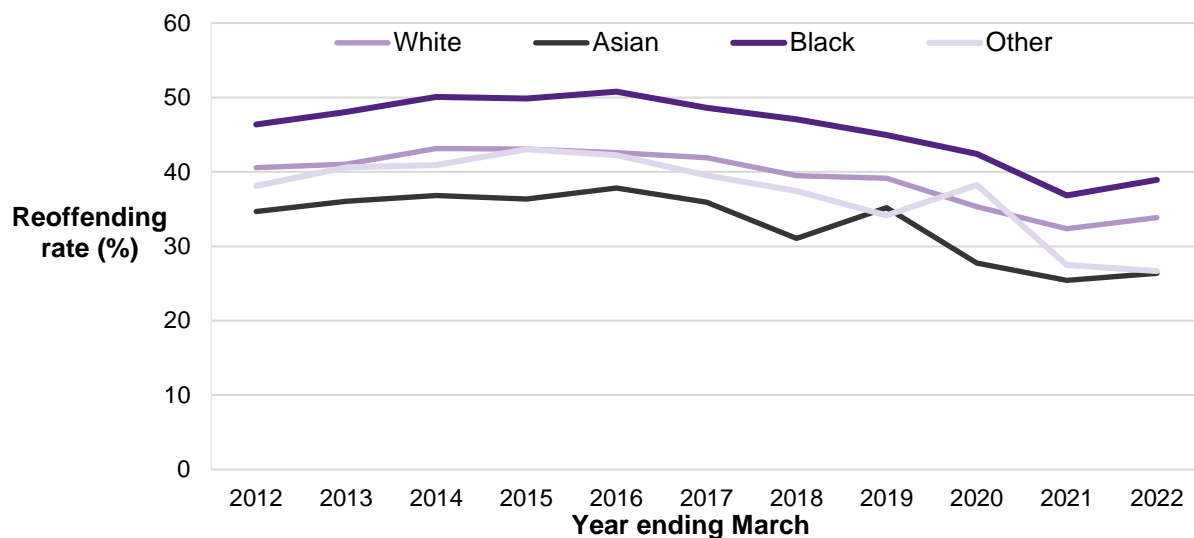
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 9, Table 9.3a

Most children who entered the aggregated cohort were aged 15 to 17, with the proportion decreasing slightly from 82% in the year ending March 2021 to 80% in the year ending March 2022 (Supplementary Table 9.3a).

In the latest year, 10 to 14 year olds had a reoffending rate of 30.7%, a rise of 1.8 percentage points from the previous year, compared with 32.5% for 15 to 17 year olds, a rise of 0.8 percentage points from the previous year.

Supplementary Table 9.3a shows that the frequency rates for 10 to 14 year olds and 15 to 17 year olds was quite similar in the latest year (an average of 4.06 and 4.07 reoffences per reoffender respectively).

Figure 9.5: Reoffending rate for children by ethnicity, England and Wales, for children entering the cohort in the years ending March 2012 to March 2022²³



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 9, Table 9.4a

As shown in Figure 9.5, there have been increases in reoffending rates compared to the previous year for White, Asian and Black children while falling for Other children, though the number of children in the cohort reduced for each ethnicity.

The biggest year-on-year increase of the reoffending rate was for Black children, rising by 2.1 percentage points in the latest year, though this rate was the second lowest it's been for the last ten years with the previous year being the lowest. The number of Black children in the reoffending cohort reduced by 20% compared with the previous year, the second biggest reduction by ethnicity after Other children which fell by 26% with a much smaller cohort.

White children had the second largest year-on-year increase in reoffending rate, rising by 1.5 percentage points to 33.9% in the year ending March 2022, which again, was the second lowest rate for the last ten years. The number of White children in the cohort saw the smallest year-on-year reduction compared with the previous year, falling by 13%.

In the latest year, the reoffending rate for children from an Asian background was 26.4%, the lowest of all ethnicities, and with a rise of 0.9 percentage points since the previous year, the smallest year-on-year increase of all ethnicities.

9.4 Reoffending by criminal history

As might be expected, the rate of reoffending increases with the number of previous offences committed. For the year ending March 2022 aggregated cohort, those with no previous offences had a reoffending rate of 17.6%, compared to 66.6% for those who had committed 11 or more previous offences (Supplementary Table 9.6a).

Those who had committed no previous offences made up 50% of all children in the aggregated cohort, the highest proportion in the time series and up three percentage points from the previous year but committed only 19% of all proven reoffences. Those with 11 or more previous offences made up only 9% of all children in the aggregated cohort but committed 30% of all proven reoffences.

²³ This figure is based on children for whom ethnicity is known. In the aggregated cohort for the year ending March 2022, ethnicity was unknown for 9% of children who entered the cohort.

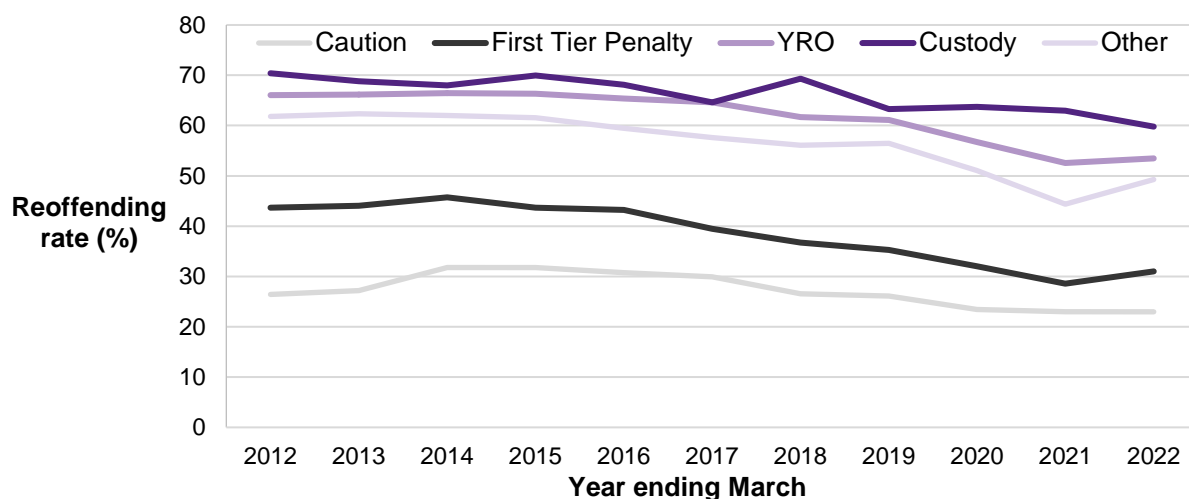
9.5 Reoffending by index offence

The offence that leads to an offender being included in the offender cohort is called the index offence. Supplementary Table 9.5a shows that for the year ending March 2022 cohort:

- Children who committed a summary non-motoring offence as their index offence made up the largest proportion of all index offences committed by children, accounting for 21% of the cohort.
- Violence against the person offences made up the second largest index offence group, at 17%.
- Their associated reoffending rates were 34.6% and 28.6%, respectively.
- Children with an index offence of criminal damage and arson had a reoffending rate of 44.0%, increasing by 7.9 percentage points from the previous year, the highest increase of all index offences.
- Children who committed public order offences saw the biggest decrease from the previous year falling by 9.5 percentage points to 26.8%.

9.6 Reoffending by index disposal

Figure 9.6: Reoffending rate for children by index disposal, England and Wales, for those entering the cohort in the years ending March 2012 to March 2022



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 9, Table 9.7a

The index disposal is the caution or type of sentence the child received for their index offence.

As shown in Figure 9.6, in the year ending March 2022 aggregated cohort, children who received a caution had the lowest reoffending rate (23.0%) of all index disposal types and this remained the same as the previous year.

The reoffending rate remains highest for those released from custody, consistent with the pattern for the last ten years. For children released from custody in the year ending March 2021, 59.8% reoffended, a decrease of 3.1 percentage points from the previous year, the third consecutive year it has decreased.

The greatest year-on-year increase in the reoffending rate was seen in First Tier penalties, which increased by 2.4 percentage points to 31.0%.

Proven reoffending rates by index disposal should not be compared to assess the effectiveness of sentences, as there is no control for known differences in offender characteristics, the offence committed, and the type of sentence given.

10. Criminal histories of children

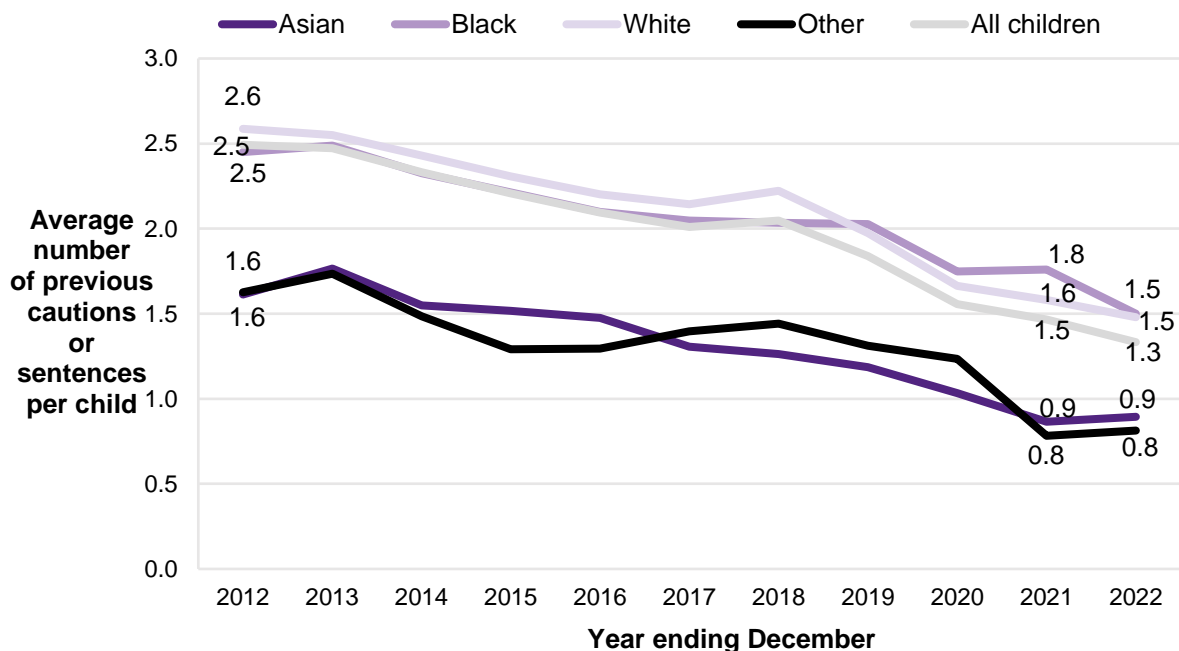
In the year ending December 2022:

- Children cautioned or sentenced had an average of 1.3 previous cautions or sentences, the lowest in the time series. This was a decrease from 1.5 in the previous year and from 2.5 ten years ago.
- For the third consecutive year, more children didn't have a prior criminal history, with 56% of those cautioned or sentenced being first time entrants.
- Of the children cautioned or sentenced who had a criminal history of 15 or more previous cautions or sentences, 37% were sentenced to immediate custody compared to just 1% for those with no previous criminal history.

This chapter presents on trends of criminal histories for children with a caution or conviction. Data for the year ending March 2023 is not available, therefore data for the year ending December 2022 is presented in this chapter.

10.1 Criminal histories of children

Figure 10.1: Average number of previous cautions or sentences of children cautioned or sentenced for any offence by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending December 2012 to December 2022



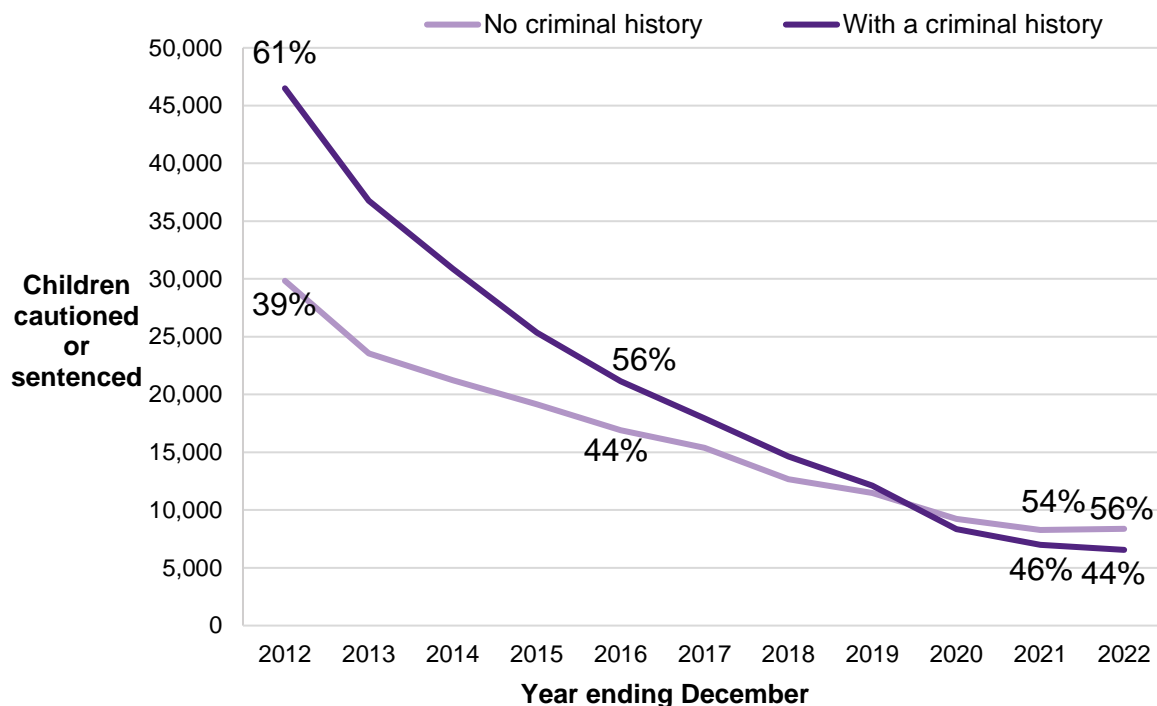
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 10, Table 10.2

Children cautioned or sentenced had an average of 1.3 previous cautions or sentences, the lowest in the time series. This was a decrease from 1.5 in the previous year and from 2.5 ten years ago.

Figure 10.1 shows that the average number of previous cautions or sentences for children cautioned or sentenced varied by ethnicity. In the year ending December 2022, children across all ethnicities had the same or a lower average number of previous cautions or sentences compared with the previous year.

The biggest decrease was for Black children where the average number of previous cautions or sentences fell from 1.8 in the year ending December 2021 to 1.5 in the year ending December 2022. There was a decrease from 1.6 previous cautions or sentences to 1.5 previous cautions or sentences for White children while the average number of previous cautions or sentences remained stable for Asian and Other children at 0.9 and 0.8 respectively.

Figure 10.2: Number and proportion of children cautioned or sentenced with no criminal history compared with those with a criminal history, England and Wales, years ending December 2012 to 2022



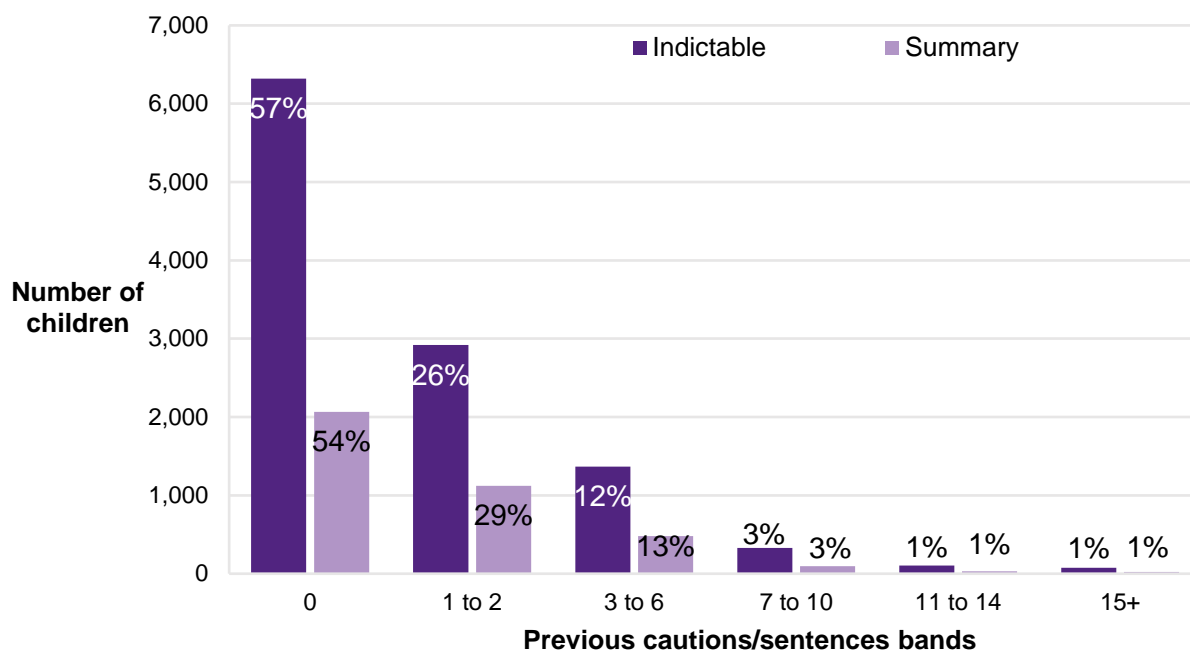
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 10, Table 10.3

For the third consecutive year, more children didn't have a prior criminal history, with 56% of those cautioned or sentenced being first time entrants.

The number of children cautioned or sentenced with a criminal history was around 6,600 in the year ending December 2022. This has decreased by 6% since the previous year when the figure was around 7,000.

10.2 Criminal histories of children – indictable and summary offences

Figure 10.3: Number and proportion of children cautioned or sentenced for summary and indictable offences by number of previous cautions and sentences, England and Wales, year ending December 2022



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 10, Table 10.4

Supplementary Table 10.4 shows that while the number of summary offences were much lower than indictable offences in the year ending December 2022, (around 3,800 summary offences compared to around 11,100 indictable offences), the offending histories are quite similar despite indictable offences being more serious. 46% of children cautioned or sentenced for summary offences had a previous caution or sentence compared to 43% for indictable offences.

Figure 10.4: Proportion of children cautioned or sentenced with no criminal history compared to those with 15+ previous cautions or sentences by type of disposal, England and Wales, year ending December 2022

Disposal type	No criminal history	15+ cautions/sentences
Caution	51%	1%
Absolute discharge	0%	1%
Conditional discharge	3%	15%
Fine	2%	3%
Community sentence	41%	29%
Immediate custody	1%	37%
Other	2%	13%
Number of cautions and sentences	8,387	99

Supplementary Tables: Chapter 10, Table 10.4

For children cautioned or sentenced with a criminal history of 15 or more previous cautions or sentences, the largest proportion were sentenced to immediate custody (37%). For those with no previous cautions or sentences, the majority received a caution (51%).

11. Comparisons with the adult system

In the year ending December 2022:

- There were around 87,900 first time entrants (FTEs) to the criminal justice system, of which around 8,400 (10%) were children and around 79,500 were adults (90%). There was a year-on-year increase of 1% for child FTEs while there was no change for adult FTEs.

In the year ending March 2023:

- There were around 510,000 stop and searches where age was known and children accounted for 21% of these compared with 19% in the previous year. The number of stop and searches of children increased by 13% compared with the previous year against a 0.4% decrease for those aged 18 and over.
- The number of arrests of children increased by 9% compared with the previous year while arrests of adults increased by 2%.
- The number of sentencing occasions increased by 8% for children against the previous year compared with a 3% increase for adults, though children accounted for just 1% of all sentencing occasions.

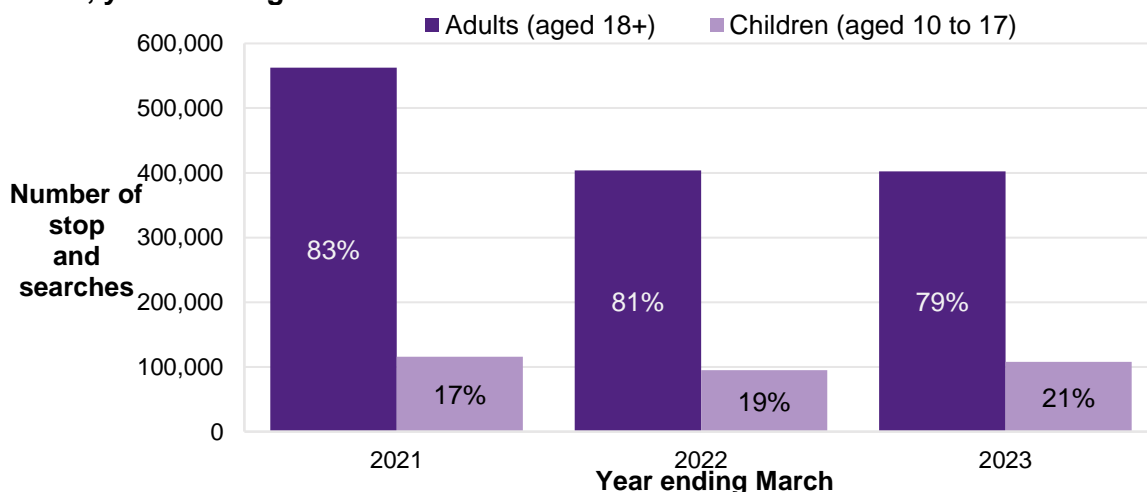
For the year ending March 2022 reoffending cohort:

- Children had a higher reoffending rate (32.2%) than adults (24.9%), as has been the case for the last ten years. The reoffending rates for children and adults (aged 18 and over) both increased by 0.9 percentage points.

This chapter looks at the comparisons at different stages of the criminal justice system between children aged 10 to 17 and adults aged 18 and over.

11.1 Stop and searches

Figure 11.1: Number and proportion of stop and searches by age group, England and Wales, years ending March 2021 to 2023²⁴



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.1

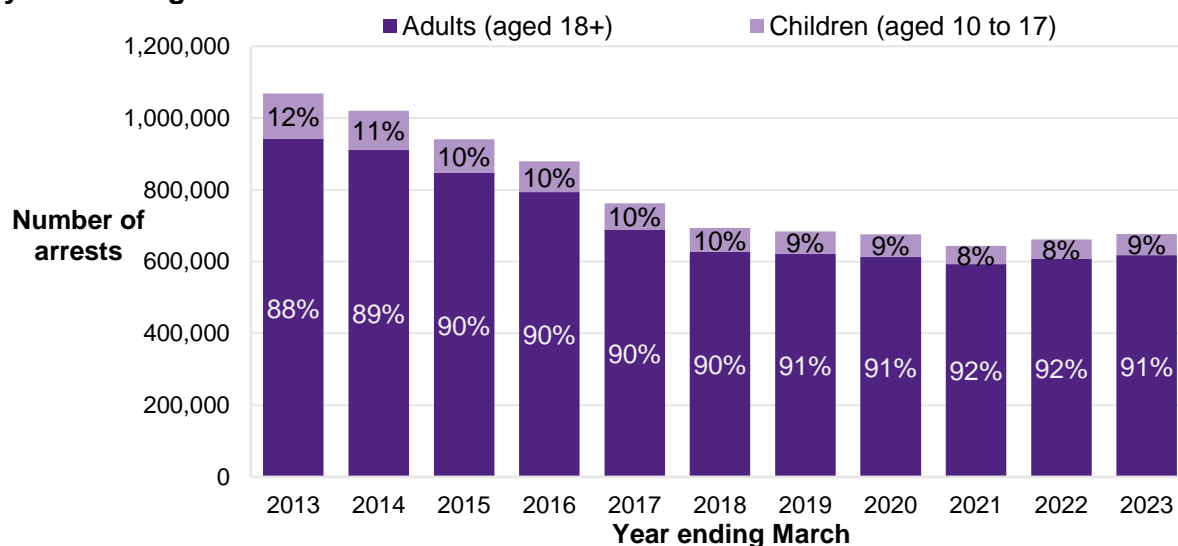
²⁴ Age was not recorded for 7% of stop and searches either because age was unknown (4%) or it was a vehicle search (3%).

In the year ending March 2023, there were around 510,000 stop and searches where age was known and children accounted for 21%. This was an increase of 2% compared with the previous year which was driven by stop and searches of children which increased 13% compared with the previous year. Stop and searches of people aged 18 and over decreased slightly by 0.4% compared with the previous year.

Over three quarters (77%) of stop and searches involving children resulted in no further action compared with over two thirds (68%) for people aged 18 and over.

11.2 Arrests

Figure 11.2: Number and proportion of arrests by age group, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.3

There were around 677,300 arrests where age was known in the year ending March 2023 which is a 2% increase compared to the previous year, but 37% fewer compared to almost 1.1 million arrests ten years ago (year ending March 2013).

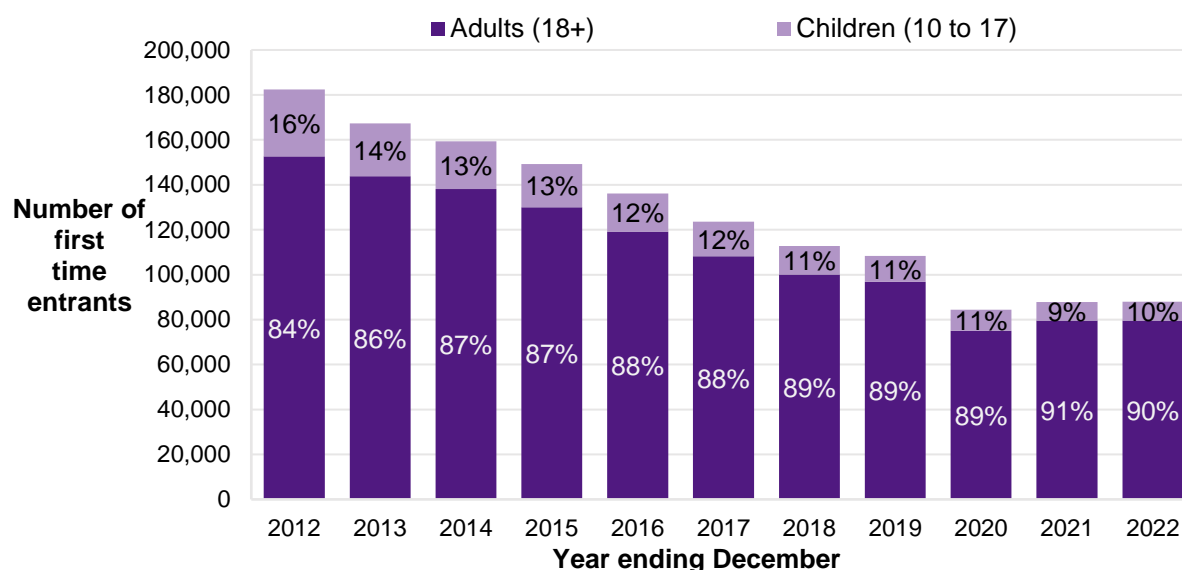
The number of arrests of children increased by 9% compared with the previous year while arrests of adults increased by 2%.

This is the second year in succession to see an overall increase in the number of arrests, putting a stop to a previous long term trend of numbers reducing year on year.

Arrests of children comprised 9% of total arrests where age was known in the latest year, which is consistent with the last five years but less than the 12% seen ten years ago. Arrests of adults form 91% of the total, an increase from 88% seen ten years ago.

11.3 First time entrants to the criminal justice system by age group

Figure 11.3: Number and proportion of first time entrants to the criminal justice system by age group, England and Wales, years ending December 2012 to 2022



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.4

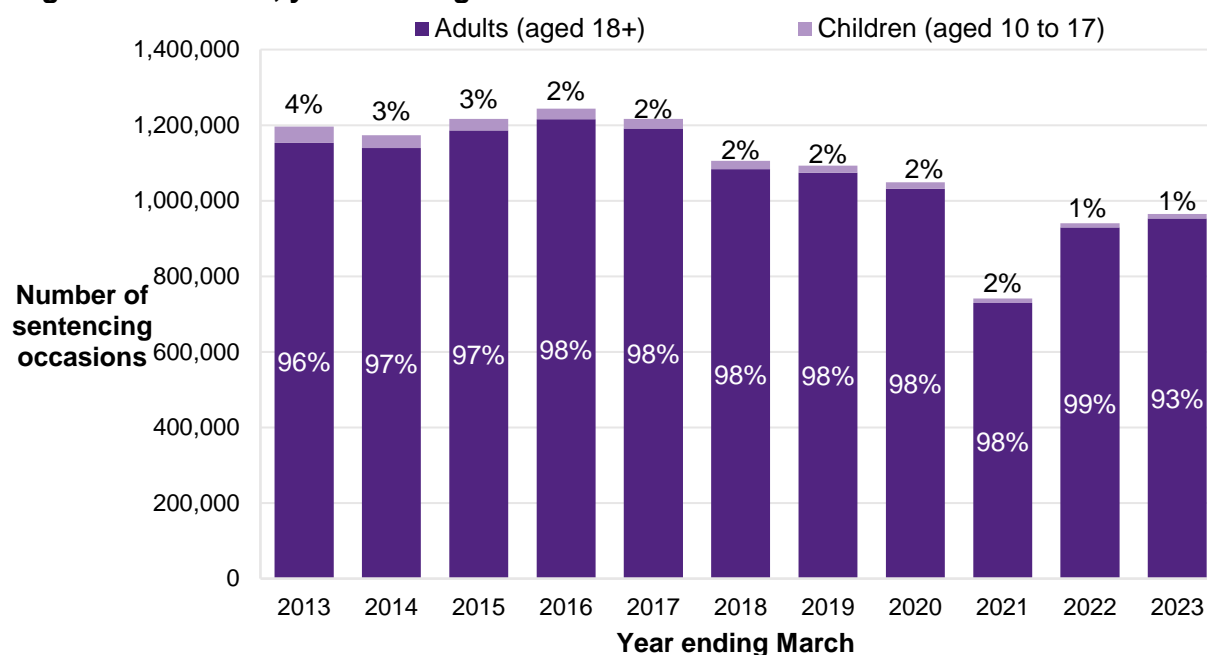
In the year ending December 2022, there were around 87,900 first time entrants (FTEs) to the criminal justice system, a similar figure to that seen in the previous year. The number of child FTEs increased by 1% and the number of adult FTEs effectively saw no change.

In the latest year, 10% of the overall number of FTEs were children (aged 10 to 17), a similar proportion to that seen over the last five years but reduced from 16% ten years ago.

In the year ending December 2022 the number of child FTEs is 72% lower than in the year ending December 2012, and the number of adult FTEs is 48% lower.

11.4 People sentenced at court by age group

Figure 11.4: Number and proportion of sentencing occasions of people by age group, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023²⁵



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.6

In the year ending March 2023, there were around 965,000 court sentencing occasions where age was known. Of these, around 11,900 (1%) were for children.

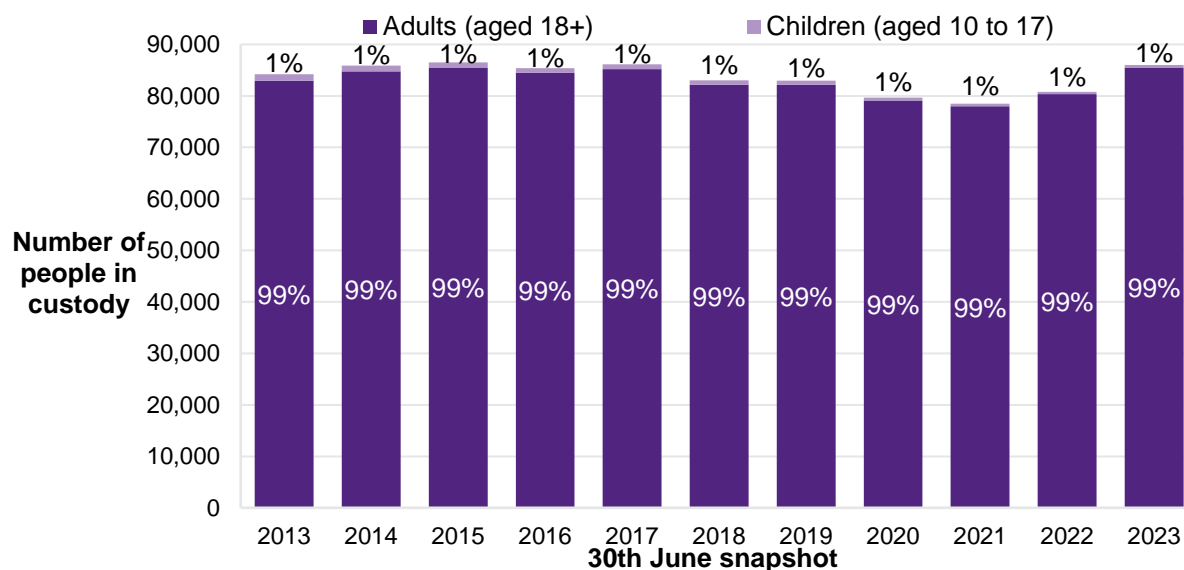
The number of sentencing occasions increased by 3% in the latest year but remain lower than in the period before the pandemic. Sentencing occasions increased for children by 8% compared with the previous year, having seen decreases in each of the previous nine years, while there was a 3% increase for adults compared with the previous year.

For indictable offences, there was an increase of 9% compared with the previous year for children but a reduction of 1% for adults, while for summary offences, there was a 7% increase for children compared with the previous year and a 3% increase for adults.

²⁵ Only sentencing occasions where age group was known are included. In the year ending March 2023, age group was unknown in 8% of sentencing occasions.

11.5 Custody population by age group

Figure 11.5: Number and proportion of people in custody by age group, England and Wales, 30th June 2013 to 2023



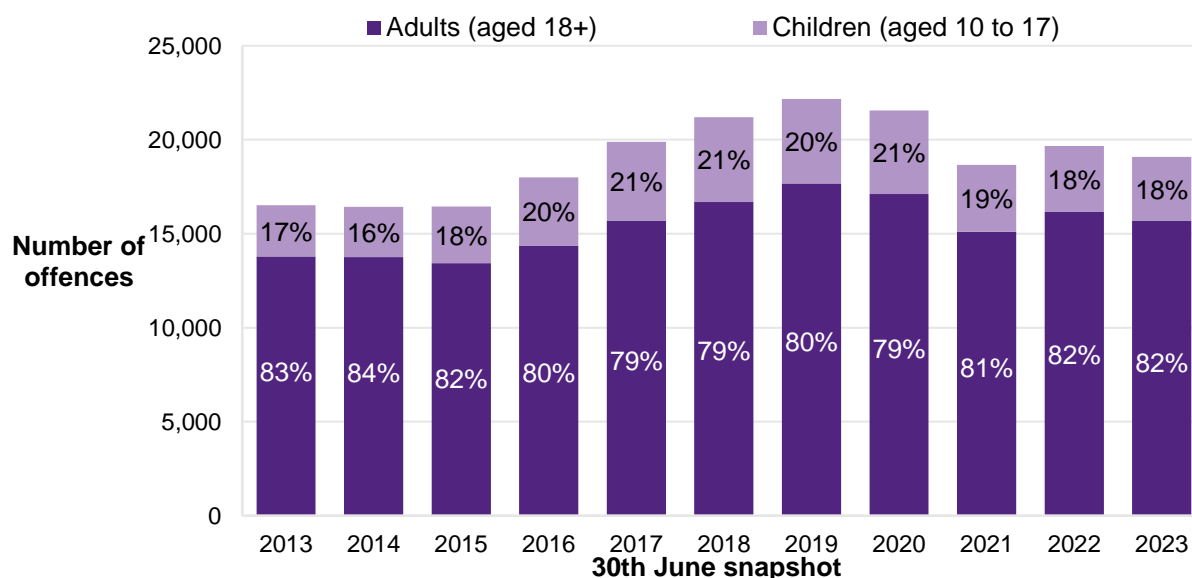
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.8

On the 30th June 2023 there were around 86,000 people in custody. Children accounted for 0.5% (around 460) of the custodial population while adults (aged 18+) accounted for 99.5% (around 85,500). These proportions have remained relatively stable over the last ten years.

The custodial population for adults increased by 6% from the previous year compared with a 3% increase for children. For adults (aged 18+), the custody population is the highest it's been since 2017.

11.6 Knife and offensive weapon offences resulting in a caution or sentence by age group

Figure 11.6: Number and proportion of knife or offensive weapon offences resulting in a caution or sentence, by age group, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2023



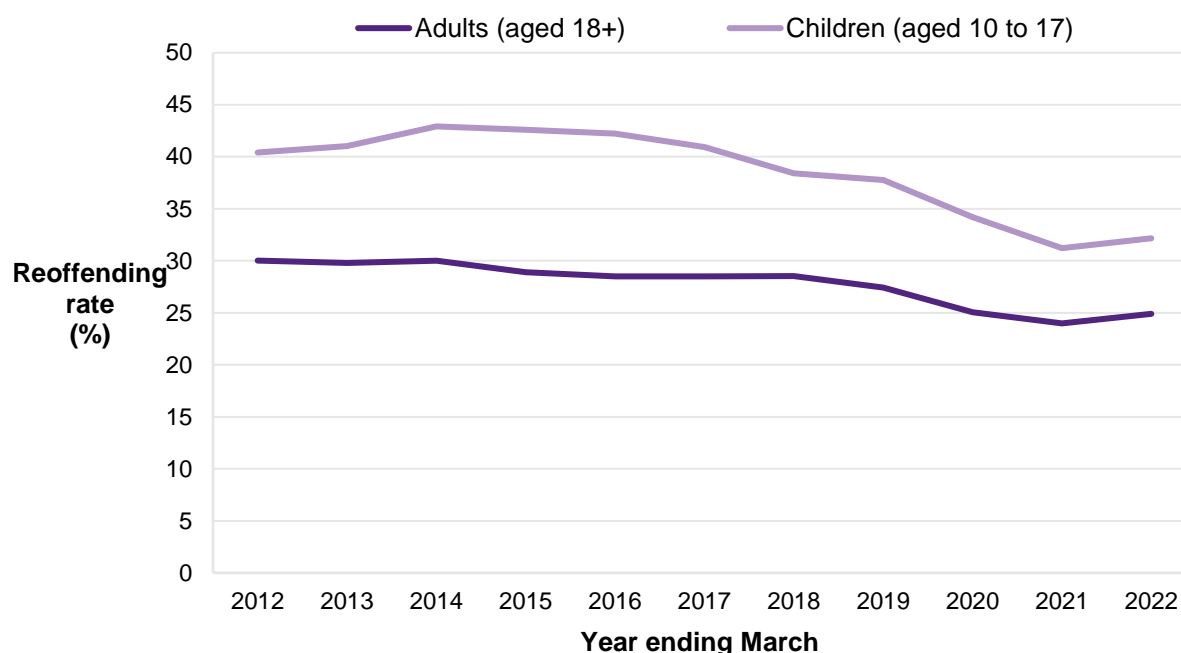
Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.12

In the latest year, children were involved in around 3,400 proven knife or offensive weapon offences, a fall of 4% from the previous year. Adults were involved in around 15,700 of these type of offences, a decrease of 3% from the previous year.

In the latest year, children committed 18% of proven knife or offensive weapons offences, the same proportion as the previous year.

11.7 Reoffending

Figure 11.7: Annual reoffending rates by age group, England and Wales, years ending March 2012 to 2022



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.7

For the aggregated cohort in the year ending March 2022, children had a higher reoffending rate (32.2%) than adults (24.9%), as has been the case for the last ten years. The reoffending rates for children and adults (aged 18 and over) both increased by 0.9 percentage points.

In the year ending March 2022, the number of children in the cohort decreased by 13% from the previous year while the number of adults in the cohort increased by 10%, while in the same period, the number of child reoffenders decreased by 11% compared with a 14% increase for adults.

Children had a higher number of reoffences per reoffender (frequency rate) (4.07) than adults (3.69) in the year ending March 2022 for the first time since the year ending March 2018 and the difference in frequency rates between children and adults was the highest it has been in the last ten years.

Further information

Most of the figures in this report have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to change over time. Steps are taken to improve the completeness and accuracy of this information each year.

Other figures have been taken from official published statistics, which may be National Statistics. Further details on the sources of information are given in the [Guide to Youth Justice Statistics](#).

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- a [Guide to Youth Justice Statistics](#) providing further information on the data included in this publication and how these data are collected and processed. This includes a glossary of the terms used in this bulletin
- a set of additional annexes
- an Infographic
- a set of Supplementary Tables, covering each section of this bulletin
- a set of open explorable data
- a set of maps showing local level data.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status are '[accredited official statistics](#)' that meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

These accredited statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) in January 2014. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled 'accredited official statistics'.

It is the Youth Justice Board's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards. If concerns arise about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, these will be discussed promptly with OSR.

Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Youth Justice Board's Communications Team:

Email: comms@yjb.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

Rhian Manley

Head of Statistics and Analysis

Youth Justice Board

Email: rhian.manley@yjb.gov.uk

Email: statistics@yjb.gov.uk

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from:

www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk

Next update: 30 January 2025

URL: www.gov.uk/government/collections/youth-justice-statistics

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