



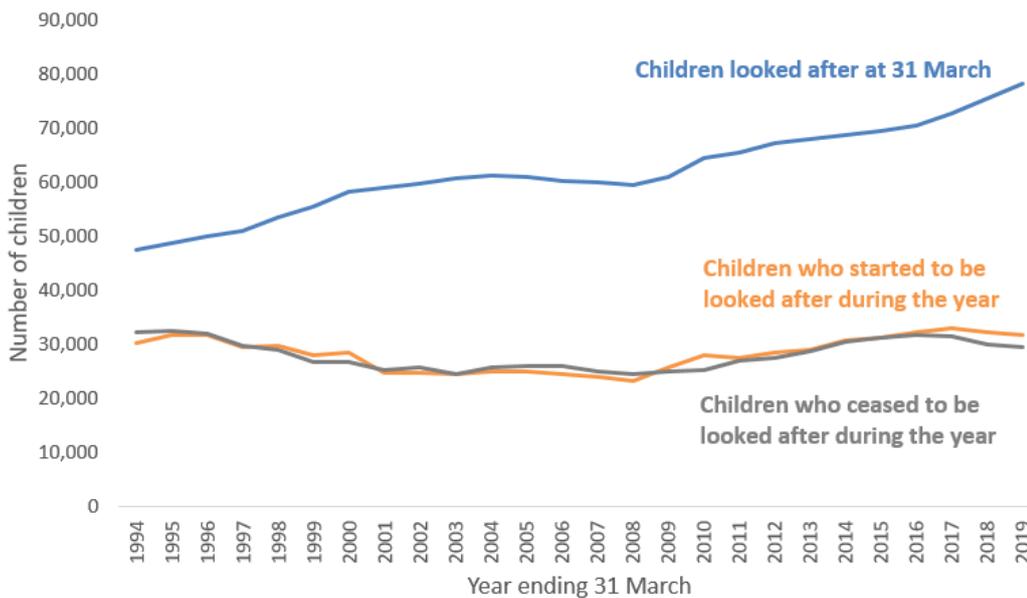
Children looked after in England (including adoption), year ending 31 March 2019



5 December 2019

The number of children looked after continue to rise...

Number of children starting and ceasing to be looked after in the year, and the number looked after at 31 March



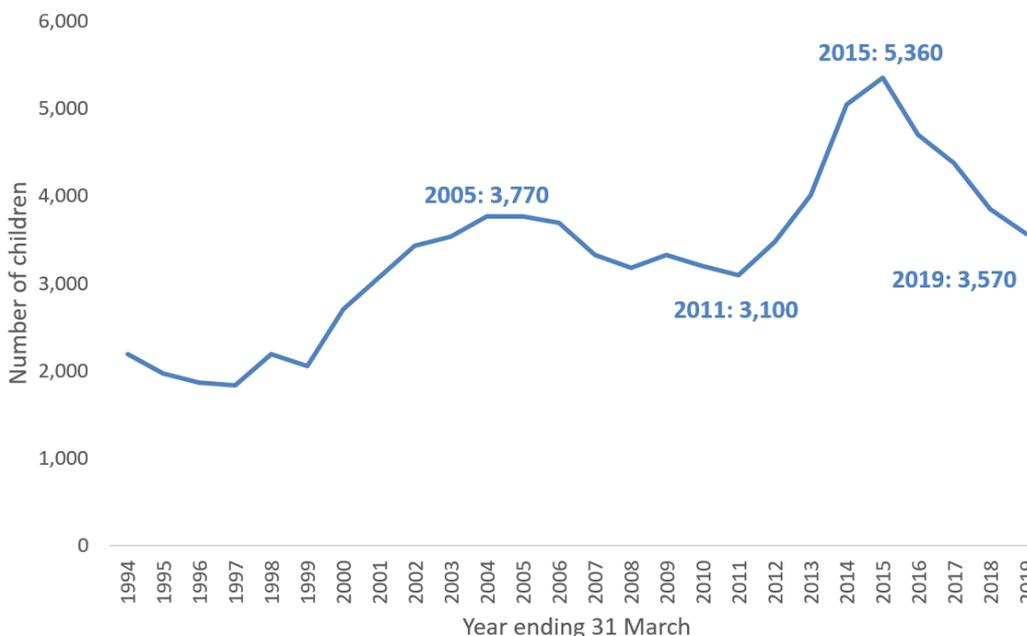
The number of children looked after in England is up 4% to 78,150 at 31 March 2019.

The number of children starting to be looked after during the year is down 2% to 31,680.

The number of children ceasing to be looked after during the year is down 2% to 29,460.

Adoptions from care continue to fall...

Looked after children who were adopted during the year



Children ceasing to be looked after during the year due to adoption fell by 7% to 3,570 - this continues the drop seen last year and is down from a peak of 5,360 in 2015.

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About this release

This statistics publication provides information about looked after children (CLA) in England, including information on:

- characteristics
- placement type
- legal status
- children starting and ceasing to be looked after
- children who go missing or are away from their placement without authorisation
- health and behavioural outcomes
- care leavers (aged 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 years)
- children who were placed for adoption, who were adopted and the average time between stages of the adoption process

In this publication

The following tables are included in this publication:

- Children looked after tables (Excel .xls) – national and local authority figures
- Underlying data (open format .csv and metadata .txt) which includes local authority level figures

The accompanying CLA statistics guide provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data and tables.

Feedback

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

1. Children looked after by local authorities (Tables A1-A5, C1, C2, D1-D4)

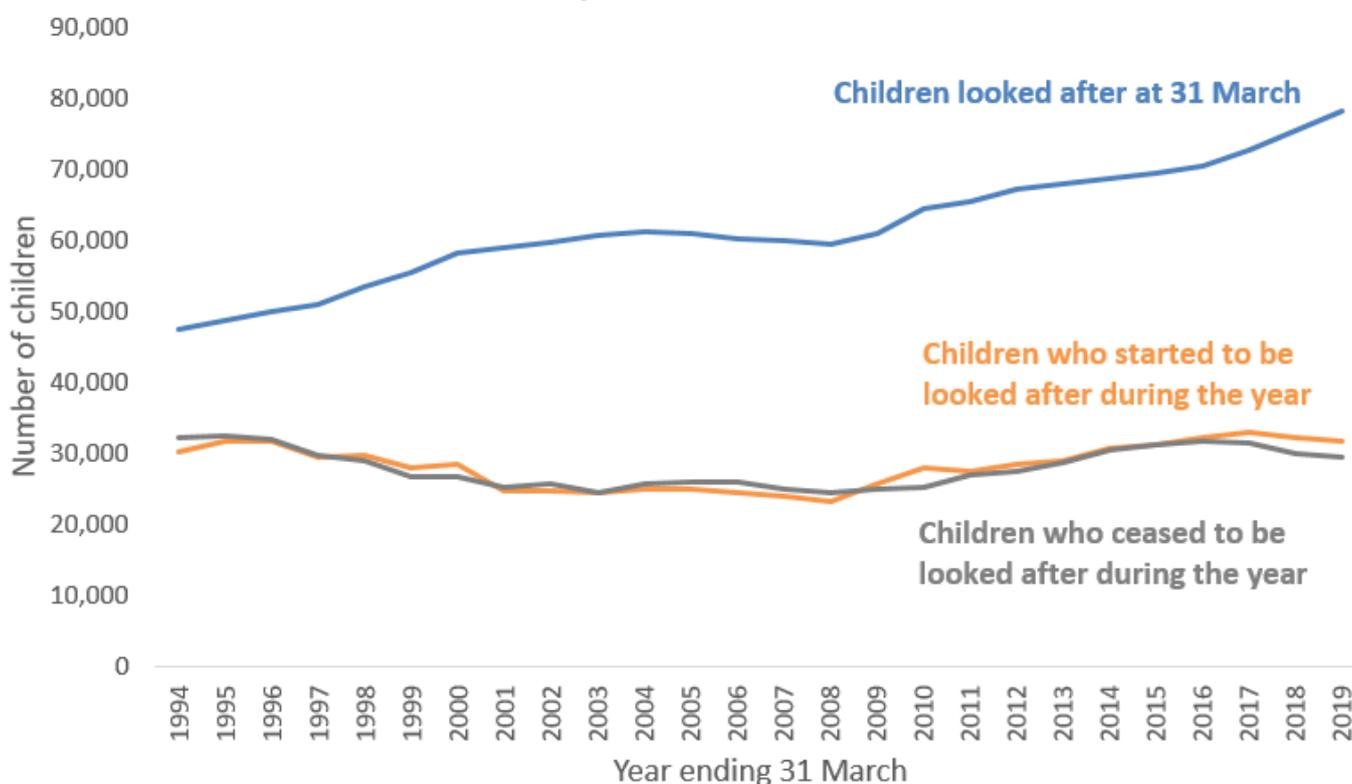
Figures relate to the year ending 31 March 2019 unless otherwise stated.

At 31 March, the number of children looked after (CLA) by local authorities in England increased by 4% since 2018 to 78,150 - continuing increases seen in recent years. This is equivalent to a rate of 65 children per 10,000 - up from 64 per 10,000 in 2018 and 60 per 10,000 in 2015.

The number of children starting to be looked after has fallen this year by 2% to 31,680.

The number ceasing to be looked after has fallen this year by 2% to 29,460 after a period of gradual increases and a high of 31,860 in 2016.

Chart 1: Number of children starting and ceasing to be looked after in the year and numbers at 31 March
England, 1994 to 2019



Source: SSSA903

Under the Children Act 1989, a **child is looked after** by a local authority if he or she falls into one of the following:

- is provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours [Children Act 1989, Section 20 and 21],
- is subject to a care order [Children Act 1989, Part IV], or
- is subject to a placement order.

Characteristics of children looked after at 31 March

Just over half are male (56%) - 44% are female; similar to 2018.

The largest age group (39%) are aged 10-15 years; 24% are aged 16 years and over; 18% are aged 5-9 years, 13% are aged 1-4 years and 5% are aged under 1 year. Over the last 5 years the average age of CLA has been steadily increasing.

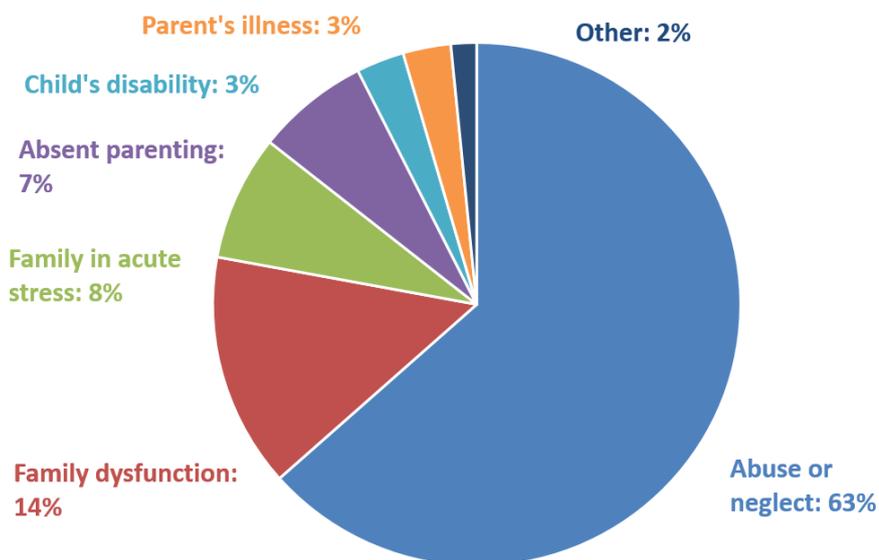
The majority are of white ethnicity (74%). 10% were of mixed ethnicity and 8% were of Black or Black British ethnicity. Since 2015, the proportion of CLA of white ethnicity has decreased steadily from 77%. It is likely this slight change is due to the broadly non-white make up of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), a group which has recently grown in number.

Reason for being looked after

When a child is assessed by children's services their primary need¹ is recorded. There are a range of reasons why a child is looked after including being looked after:

- as a result of or because they were at risk of abuse or neglect - 49,570 children - the most common reason identified
- primarily due to living in a family where the parenting capacity is chronically inadequate (family dysfunction) - 11,310
- due to living in a family that is going through a temporary crisis that diminishes the parental capacity to adequately meet some of the children's needs (family being in acute stress) - 6,050
- due to there being no parents available to provide for the child - 5,410
- due to the child's or parent's disability or illness - 4,580
- due to low income or socially unacceptable behaviour – 1,230.

Chart 2: Proportions of CLA by primary need
England, 31 March 2019



Source: SSSA903

¹ Further detail of the primary need codes can be found in [appendix A](#) of the children in need census collection guide.

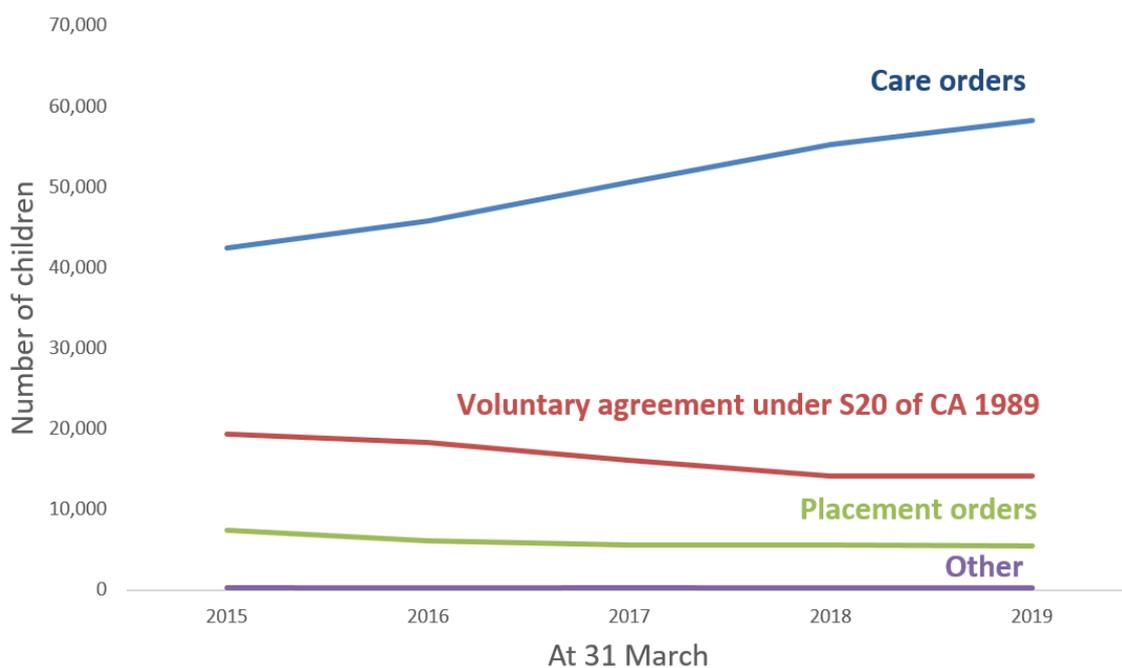
Legal status of children looked after

There are different ways for children to be looked after with different legal statuses although most children are looked after under a care order. At 31 March 2019 children were looked after:

- under a **care order** – a court order placing a child in the care or supervision of a local authority – 75%
- under a **voluntary agreement** – this allows a local authority to provide accommodation for a child where there's parental consent, or when no-one with parental responsibility is in place – 18%
- under a **placement order** – a court order allowing a local authority to place a child for adoption – 7%
- detained for **child protection** or under **youth justice** legal statuses - less than 0.5%.

The number of children looked after under a care order has been rising in recent years, and the number looked after under a voluntary agreement under S20 of the Children Act 1989 has been falling.

Chart 3: Legal status of CLA:
England, 31 March 2015 to 2019



Source: SSDA903

Placements of children looked after

Most CLA are placed in foster placements (72%); 13% of CLA being placed in a foster placement with a relative or friend and 58% being placed with a foster carer who is not a relative or friend.

The remaining CLA are placed:

- in secure units, children's homes or semi-independent living accommodation (for example, hostels or flats where staff are employed to provide support and advice) - 12%
- placed with parents - 7%
- living independently or in residential employment - 4%
- placed for adoption – 3%

There has been a continued slight increase in children placed in 'secure units, children's homes and hostels', and children placed with parents, and a corresponding slight decrease in children in foster placements and placed for adoption.

Placement stability is also important - most CLA (68%) had one placement in the year but 10% had three or more.

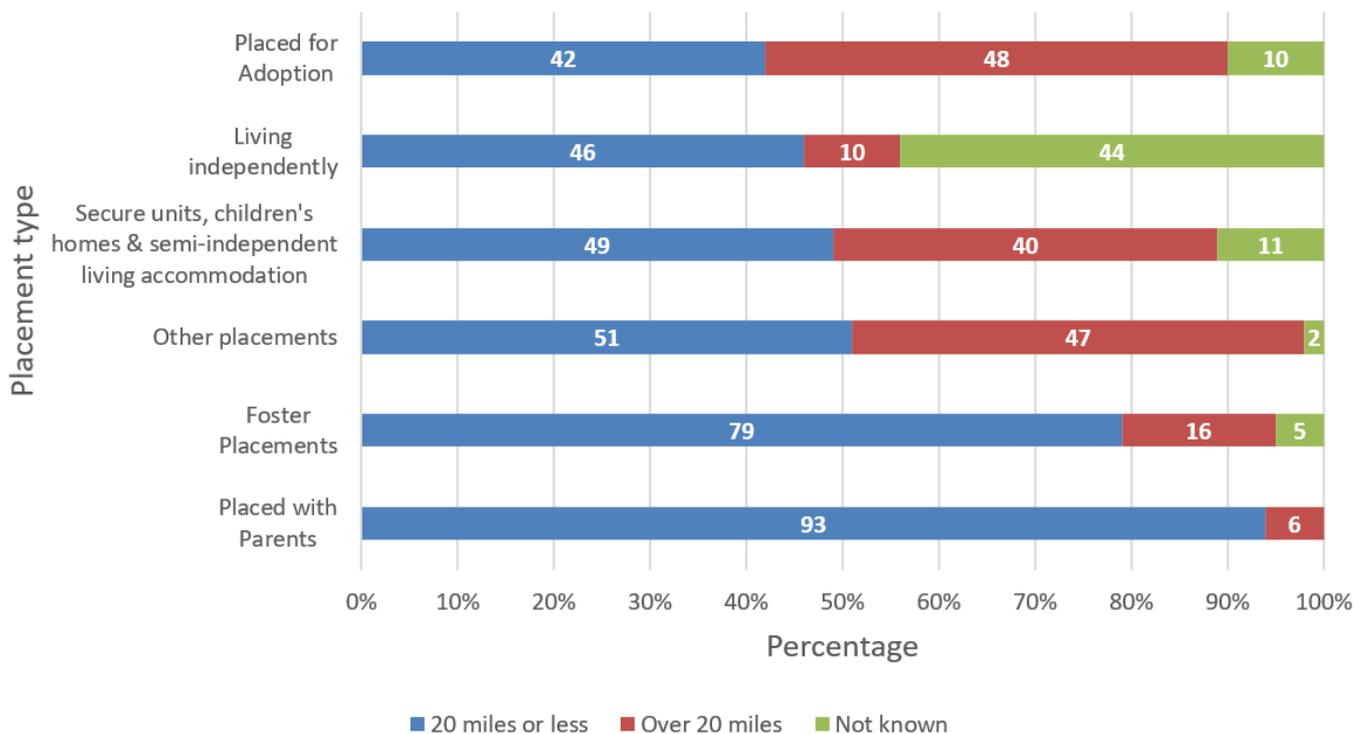
Locality of placements

Local authorities have a general duty to provide accommodation that is within the local area and allows the child to live near their home.

Placements inside the council boundary accounted for 58% of all CLA placements, placements outside the council boundary – 41%. Information is not known for 1% of placements – usually this is to protect the whereabouts of the child.

The majority of CLA (73%) were placed within 20 miles of home but 20% were not. Information for the remaining 7% was not known or not recorded². As expected, location of placement varies by placement type; children placed for adoption are more likely to be placed over 20 miles from home and children placed with parents or in a foster placement are most likely to be placed 20 miles or less from home.

Chart 4: Placement of CLA:
England, 31 March 2019



Source: SSDA903

² This could be for example because the child is an asylum-seeking child and so no home postcode can be reported. However also for reasons of confidentiality, distance and LA of placement are not recorded for some children including some placed for adoption.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)

UASC are children aged under 18, who have applied for asylum in their own right and are separated from both parents and/or any other responsible adult. Local authorities have a legal duty to provide accommodation for these children.

The number of UASC increased by 11% to 5,070 and they represent around 6% of all children looked after in England.

Most UASC are male (90%), 85% are aged 16 and over, and 87% have a primary need of absent parenting.

UASC are not distributed evenly around the country. Local authorities with points of entry to the country, for example Kent and Croydon, have much larger numbers of UASC than other local authorities. However there is a scheme³ in place to help redistribute UASC across the country.

Children starting to be looked after

The number of children starting to be looked after has fallen this year by 2% since 2018 - 31,680 children started to be looked after.

Changes in the characteristics of children starting to be looked after are consistent with the increase in UASC this year – the proportions who are male, aged 16 and over, with a need due to absent parenting have all increased.

Half of children starting to be looked after did so under a voluntary agreement under S20 of the Children Act 1989; care orders accounted for a further 35%. These proportions are both the same as last year which suggests the recent increase in care orders and corresponding decrease in voluntary agreements may be stabilising.

Fewer children starting to be looked after are in a foster placement, 68% down from 78% in 2015. 10% were placed in 'secure units, children's homes and semi-independent living accommodation', 7% were placed with parents and 7% placed in other placements in the community.

³ The [National Transfer Scheme](#) came into force on 1 July 2016. This is a voluntary agreement made between local authorities to ensure a fairer distribution of UASC across the UK, so any LA does not face unmanageable responsibilities accommodating and looking after unaccompanied children simply by virtue of being the point of arrival in the UK.

2. CLA who were missing or away from placement without authorisation (Table G1)

A child is **missing from care** if they're not at their placement or the place they're expected to be (for example, school) and their whereabouts is not known.

If their whereabouts is known but the carer has concerns or the incident has been notified to the local authority or the police, then the child is **away from placement without authorisation**.

These figures are published as additional tables of official statistics alongside this National Statistics release due to concerns about the quality of the data. An increasing number of local authorities do not use the away without authorisation category as their figures align with local police reporting.

Additional context provided by local authorities suggests figures for missing are over-reported by around 3% in 2017, 8% in 2018 and 10% in 2019 so the true number of children with a missing incident is likely to have increased much more modestly than the published numbers suggest.

Figures should not be compared across local authorities or between years.

Missing incidents were reported for 11% of CLA (11,830 children) in 2019. There were 73,470 missing incidents - an average (mean⁴) of 6.2 missing incidents per child who went missing. The average (median⁵) number of days per missing incident was 1 day.

The largest proportion of missing incidents were from 'secure units, children's homes and semi-independent living arrangements' (50%), however this is likely because more older children are placed in these settings and older children are more likely to go missing. 27% of missing incidents were from foster placements and 19% from CLA who were living independently.

Away without authorisation incidents were reported for 3% of CLA (3,650 children).

3. Health and behavioural outcomes for looked after children (Tables I1-I5b)

Figures relate to the 54,590 CLA at 31 March 2019 who had been looked after for at least 12 months in the year unless otherwise stated.

Offending rates

Information on offending rates is collected for children aged 10 years or over who were CLA for at least 12 months at 31 March – 38,110 children in 2019. Of these, the proportion convicted or subject to youth cautions or youth conditional cautions during the year was 3%, down from 5% in 2017.

Substance Misuse

Substance misuse is defined as 'intoxication by (or regular excessive consumption or and/or dependence on) psychoactive substances, leading to social, psychological, physical or legal problems. It includes problematic use of both legal and illegal drugs (including alcohol when used in combination with other substances).

'Substance' refers to both drugs and alcohol but not tobacco.

CLA identified as having a substance misuse problem – 4%, the same as in 2018 and 2017.

Substance misuse is slightly more common in males – 4%, compared to 3% of females.

An intervention was received for 46% of children who were identified as having a substance misuse problem.

⁴ The arithmetic mean, i.e. the sum of the values divided by the number of values.

⁵ The median, or middle value when all values are ordered from lowest to highest.

Health and development outcomes

Immunisations up to date reports whether the child has had all the immunisations that a child of their age should have received. It includes immunisations which should have been given before the child became looked after.

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

Health assessments must be carried out by a doctor or other suitably qualified professional twice a year for those under 5 years of age. Both these assessments must be carried out in order for the annual assessment requirement to be satisfied for under 5s. For those aged 5 or over, a single annual assessment fulfils the requirement. Children who decline to have a health assessment are reported as not having received an annual assessment.

For more information see the [children looked after data collection guide](#).

Most CLA are up to date with their health care with:

- reported as being up to date with their immunisations – 87%, up slightly from 85% in 2018
- reported as having had their annual health assessment – 90%, up slightly from 88% in 2018
- reported as having had their teeth checked by a dentist – 85%, up slightly from 84% in 2018
- Under 5s (6,150 children) reported as having development assessments up to date – 88%, up from 85% in 2018.

Older children were less likely to be up to date with immunisations – particularly older males – but this could be influenced by the relatively large number of UASC in this category for whom immunisation history may not be known.

Emotional and behavioural health (SDQ scores)

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores This describes the emotional and behavioural health of CLA, as recorded by a main carer in the strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ). The SDQ is a short behavioural screening questionnaire. Its primary purpose is to give social workers and health professionals information about a child's wellbeing. A score of 0 to 13 is considered normal, 14 to 16 is borderline, and 17 to 40 is a cause for concern. For further information see the [children looked after data collection guide](#).

For children aged 5 to 16 years looked after at 31 March 2019 for at least 12 months (41,140 children), 78% had a reported SDQ score with an average score of 14.2 – the same as 2018. Of these:

- 49% had 'normal' emotional and behavioural health (same as 2018)
- 13% had 'borderline' scores (12% in 2018)
- 39% had scores which were a cause for concern (same as 2018).

Across almost all ages, boys are more likely to have scores which were a cause for concern.

4. Children ceasing to be looked after (inc adoption) (Tables D1-D4, E1-E5)

Figures relate to the year ending 31 March 2019 unless otherwise stated.

29,460 children ceased being looked after, a decrease of 2% on 2018.

Reasons for ceasing to be looked after

Reasons for ceasing to be looked after include:

- returning home to live with parents – 30%
- moving into independent living (with or without support) – 16%
- special guardianship orders (a private law order where an individual is appointed as the child's special guardian) – 13%
- being adopted – 12%

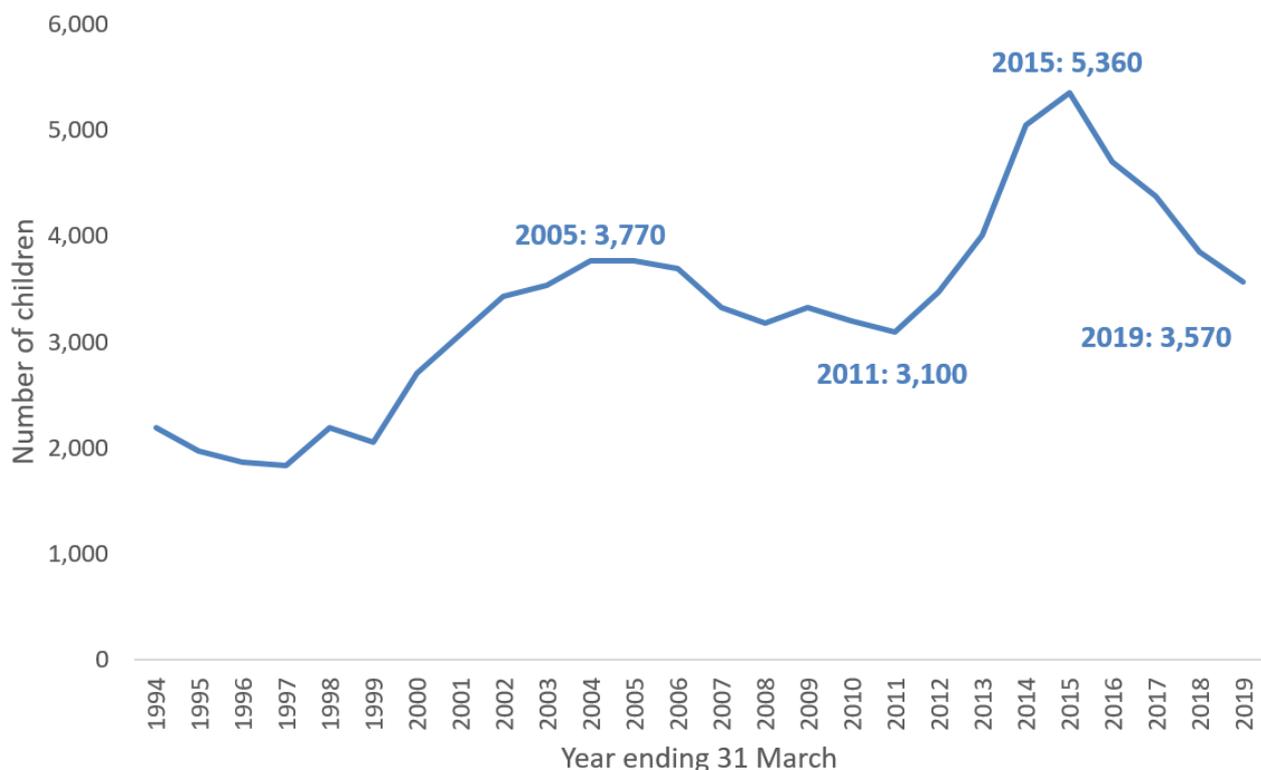
The proportion of children ceasing who were male, and who ceased on their 18th birthday have both been increasing, likely to be influenced by UASC reaching 18 years of age and leaving the care system. 32% of children ceasing to be looked after left on their 18th birthday, up from 23% in 2015.

The average duration of a period of care for children who ceased to be looked after was 808 days (just under 2 years and 3 months). This had been decreasing slightly, in 2017 it was down 25 days on 2015. However, since 2017 the average duration has since increased by 50 days, so children are being looked after for longer.

Children looked after who were adopted

The number of CLA who were adopted has fallen by 7% since 2018 to 3,570. Adoptions have been falling, down from 5,360 in 2015.

Chart 5: CLA who were adopted:
England, 1994 to 2019



Source: SSSA903

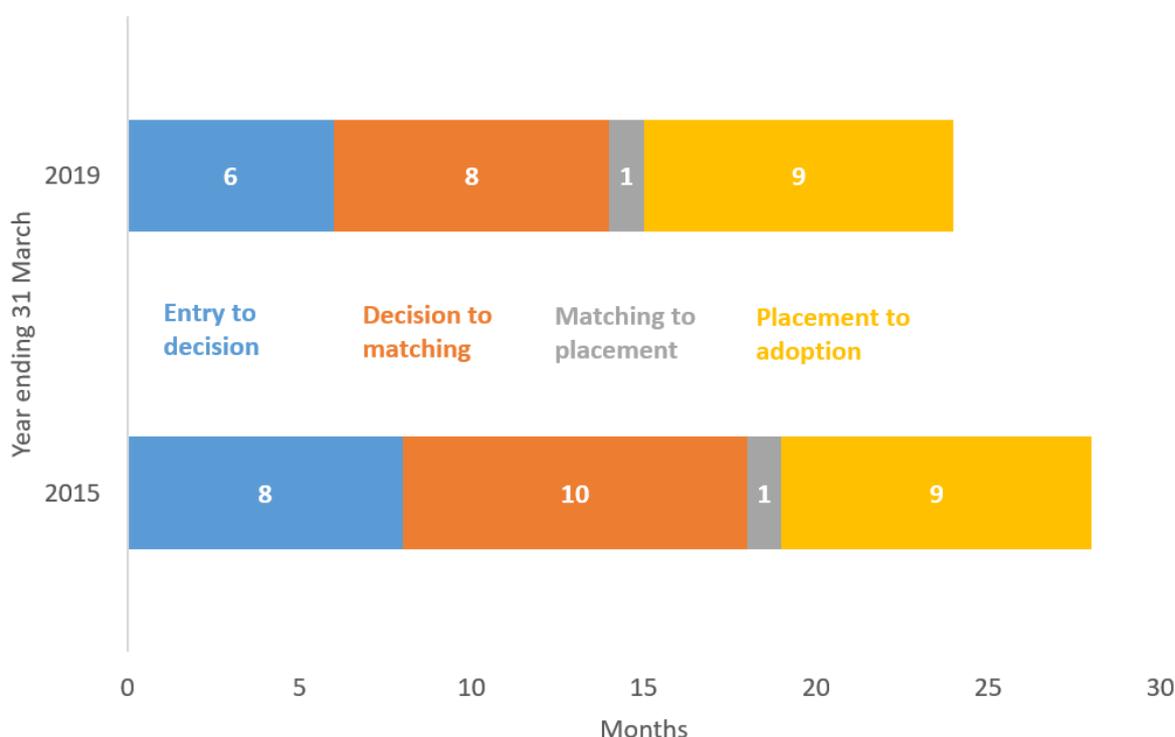
The average time between entry into care and adoption is 1 year and 11 months, the same as 2018 and down from 2 years and 3 months in 2015 and 2016. The reduction has been at two stages as:

- the time to decision to place a child for adoption following entry to care is down from 8 months in 2015 to 6 months in 2019
- the time between the decision to place for adoption and matching of child and adopters is down from 10 months in 2015 to 8 months in 2019.

The average time from entry to care and adoption varies by the age of the child at the start of the period of care with older children tending to wait slightly longer. The average (mean) age on starting the final period of care is 1 year and 2 months; the average (mean) age at adoption is 3 years and 1 month.

The duration of the final period of care for children adopted was less than 2 years for 66% of children, compared to 52% in 2015.

Chart 6: CLA who were adopted, duration of stages of adoption (in months)
England, 2015 and 2019



Source: SSDA903

Children looked after who left care through a special guardianship order

Figures relate to the year ending 31 March 2019 unless otherwise stated.

Children ceasing to be looked after through a special guardianship order (SGO)⁶ increased by 11% to 3,830. Most SGOs were to relatives or friends – 90% - the remainder were largely to former foster carers – 9%.

The average (mean) age at SGO decreased to 5 years and 7 months, down from 5 years and 10 months in 2018, (but similar to 2017).

⁶ See [special guardianship statutory guidance](#) for more information.

5. Former care leavers (Tables F1-F4)

Figures relate to the year ending 31 March 2019 unless otherwise stated.

Data collected on care leavers

Local authorities provide information about children who were previously looked after, who turned 17 to 21 in the year. These were CLA for at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, including some time after their 16th birthday.

'In touch'

Local authorities are expected to stay in touch⁷ with care leavers and provide statutory support to help the care leaver transition to living independently. Local authorities were in touch with 75% of 17-year olds, 93% of 18-year olds and 89% of 19 to 21-year old care leavers.

'Activity' of care leavers⁸

For 17-year olds, 34% were known to be in education, 15% in training or employment and 27% were not in employment, education or training (NEET). Information was known for 76% of 17-year olds.

For 18-year olds, 46% were known to be in education, 18% in training or employment and 30% were NEET. Information was known for 94% of 19-21-year olds.

For 19 to 21-year olds, 6% were known to be in higher education, 21% were in other education, 25% were in training or employment and 39% were NEET (compared to around 12%⁹ of all young people aged 19 to 21 years). Information was known for 91% of 19-21-year olds.

Accommodation of care leavers

Information on accommodation of care leavers is broadly similar to last year. The detail is in tables F1 to F4 however:

17-year-old care leavers were accommodated:

- with parents – 43%,
- in custody – 10%
- in semi-independent transitional accommodation – 7%

18-year-old care leavers were accommodated:

- in semi-independent transitional accommodation – 27%,
- with former foster carers – 20%,
- living independently – 13%
- with parents or relatives – 12%.

19 to 21-year-old care leavers were accommodated:

- living independently – 35%
- in semi-independent transitional accommodation – 14%
- with parents or relatives – 11%
- with former foster carers – 8%

⁷ To be counted as 'in touch', there should be contact between the local authority and the young person around 3 months before and one month after the young person's birthday.

⁸ In a small number of cases, whilst the local authority may not be in touch with the care leaver, they may still be certain of their activity, for example being posted abroad in the armed services, in which case the information can be reported.

⁹ Taken from [NEET statistics annual brief 2018](#).

Information on whether care leaver accommodation is suitable can be used to monitor whether they are receiving the support they need to make a successful transition to adulthood. However, there are no hard and fast rules on whether accommodation is deemed 'suitable'; the decision will depend on the circumstances of the individual case.

**Table 1: Percentage of care leavers living in suitable accommodation, by age group
Year ending 31 March 2019**

Age	In suitable ¹⁰ accommodation	In unsuitable ¹¹ accommodation	Not known ¹²
17-year olds	64%	13% ¹³	23%
18-year olds	89%	5%	6%
19-21-year olds	85%	6%	9%

“Staying Put”

19- and 20-year olds who ceased to be looked after on their 18th birthday, and who were still living with their former foster carers ('Staying Put') stayed at 26%, the same as in 2018. Children who ceased to be looked after in a foster placement aged 18, who remained with their foster carers 3 months after their 18th birthday – 57%, up from 55% in 2018 and 51% in 2017.

¹⁰ Accommodation is to be regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable provision for young people.

¹¹ Accommodation that clearly exposes the person to risk of harm or social exclusion by reason of its location or other factors is 'unsuitable'.

¹² Either because the local authority is not in touch, or the young person has refused contact or no longer requires services.

¹³ 10% were in custody which is always deemed unsuitable.

6. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available on the [department's statistics website](#):

National tables

- A1 Children looked after at 31 March by gender, age at 31 March, category of need, ethnic origin, legal status and motherhood status, 2015 to 2019
- A2 Children looked after at 31 March by placement, 2015 to 2019
- A3 Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children looked after at 31 March, by gender, age at 31 March, category of need and ethnic origin, 2015 to 2019
- A4 Children looked after at 31 March 2019 by distance between home and placement and locality of placement
- A5 Children looked after at 31 March 2019 by placement, placement location and placement provider
- B1 Children looked after at any time during the year ending 31 March and those looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March by gender, age at 31 March, placement and ethnic origin, 2015 to 2019
- B2 Number of new placements for children looked after during the year by locality of placement and distance between home and placement, 2019
- B3 Duration of placements ceasing in the year ending 31 March 2019
- B4 Reason for placement change for children who moved placement in the year ending 31 March 2019
- C1 Children who started to be looked after during the years ending 31 March by gender, age on starting, category of need, ethnic origin, legal status and previous permanence arrangement, 2015 to 2019
- C2 Children who started to be looked after during the years ending 31 March by placement, 2015 to 2019
- D1 Children who ceased to be looked after during the years ending 31 March by gender, age on ceasing, reason episode ceased, legal status, category of need and ethnic origin, 2015 to 2019
- D2 Children who ceased to be looked after during the years ending 31 March by placement on ceasing, 2015 to 2019
- D3 Children who ceased to be looked after during the years ending 31 March by duration of latest period of care and average duration of latest period of care in days, 2015 to 2019
- D4 Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2019 by number of periods of care in care history, number of placements in period of care and age on ceasing
- E1 Children looked after who were adopted during the year ending 31 March by gender, age at adoption, ethnic origin, category of need, final legal status, duration of final period of care and age on starting final period of care, 2015 to 2019
- E2 Children looked after who were adopted during the year ending 31 March by average time between the different stages of the adoption process and age at start of period of care, 2015 to 2019
- E3 Children looked after who were adopted during the years ending 31 March by number of adopters, legal status of adopters and by gender of adopters, 2015 to 2019
- E4 Children for whom the local authority has made the decision that the child should be placed for adoption, those placed and waiting for adoption and children where the decision to place for adoption has been reversed, 2015 to 2019
- E5 Children looked after who were the subject of a special guardianship order during the years ending 31 March by gender, age on ceasing to be looked after, ethnic origin, category of need, final legal status, duration of final period of care and age on starting final period of care, 2015 to 2019
- F1 Care leavers now aged 19, 20 and 21 years old by gender, contact with the local authority and activity and former UASC status, 2017 to 2019
- F2 Care leavers now aged 19, 20 and 21 years old by accommodation, 2017 to 2019
- F3 Care leavers aged 17 and 18 years old by gender, contact with the local authority and activity and former UASC status, 2017 to 2019
- F4 Care leavers aged 17 and 18 years old by accommodation, 2017 to 2019
- H1 Children looked after at 31 March and children who started, ceased and were adopted during the years ending 31 March 1994 to 2019

- I1 Offending by children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by age and gender, 2017 to 2019
- I2 Substance misuse by children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by age and gender, 2017 to 2019
- I3 Health care of children who have been continuously looked after for at least twelve months, by age and gender, 2017 to 2019
- I4 Development assessments for children aged 4 or under who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by age and gender, 2017 to 2019
- I5a Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children - average score for children looked after at 31 March for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) score was received, 2019
- I5b Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children for whom a strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) was received, by gender, 2017 to 2019

Local authority and regional tables

- LAA1 Children looked after at 31 March 2015 to 2019
- LAA4 Children looked after at 31 March, who were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) during the year, 2015 to 2019
- LAB1 Children looked after at any time during the year ending 31 March and those looked after exclusively under a series of short-term placements, 2015 to 2019
- LAC1 Children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2015 to 2019
- LAD1 Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2015 to 2019
- LAE1 Children who ceased to be looked after due to adoption during the year ending 31 March 2015 to 2019
- LAF2a Care leavers now aged 19, 20 and 21 by activity, 2019
- LAF2b Care leavers aged 17 and 18 by activity, 2019
- LAF4a Care leavers now aged 19, 20 and 21 by suitability of accommodation, 2019
- LAF4b Care leavers aged 17 and 18 by suitability of accommodation, 2019

Additional tables: Official statistics on children who were missing or away from placement without authorisation

- G1 Children looked after who were missing or away from placement without authorisation, 2015 to 2019
- LAG1 Children looked after who were missing or away from placement without authorisation, LA level, 2019

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

- **Rounding Conventions**

The National Statistics Code of Practice requires that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that all published or disseminated statistics produced by the DfE protect confidentiality. National figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. For confidentiality purposes, small numbers have been replaced in the published tables by a 'c'. To ensure the suppressed number cannot be identified by simple arithmetic secondary suppression may be required. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero (0). The following convention has been used:

“.” means not applicable

“..” means not available

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

- **UK Comparability of Looked-After Children’s Statistics**

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

- **Population Estimates**

Population estimates are used to calculate rates per 10,000 children under the age of 18 published in Table A1 and LAA1. These are calculated using the appropriate mid-year population estimates (June 2019) supplied by the [Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS).

7. Further information is available

- **Outcomes for looked after children in England:** Information on [outcomes for looked after children](#) is available for children looked after at 31 March 2018. Outcomes include educational attainment, special educational needs (SEN), absence and exclusions from school.
- **Children in need and child protection statistics for England:** Information on [referrals, assessments and children who were the subject of a child protection plan](#) (taken from the Children in Need census) is available for 2019.
- **Information on care proceedings in England:** The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) publish information on care proceedings applications made by local authorities where CAFCASS has been appointed by the court to represent the interests of children.
- **Adoption and special guardianship leadership board (ASGLB):** [Quarterly reports](#) were published by DfE up to 31 March 2017, and following this they have been published on the [Coram-i](#) website.
- **Local authority expenditure:** Information on local authority [planned expenditure](#) on schools, education, children and young people's services is available for the financial year 2017-18. This data is returned to DfE by local authorities via the Section 251 Budget Return.
- **Ofsted:** [Ofsted](#) publish inspection outcomes for local authority children's services and children's social care providers in England as well as data on the placements of children looked after and fostering in England.
- **Devolved administrations:** [Scotland](#), and [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#) publish their own information on children social care on their websites.

8. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics in [February 2015](#), in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

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

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed. Information on improvements made to these statistics to continue their compliance with the Code of Practice are provided in the looked after children statistics guide.

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

9. Technical information

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

10. Get in touch

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Department
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