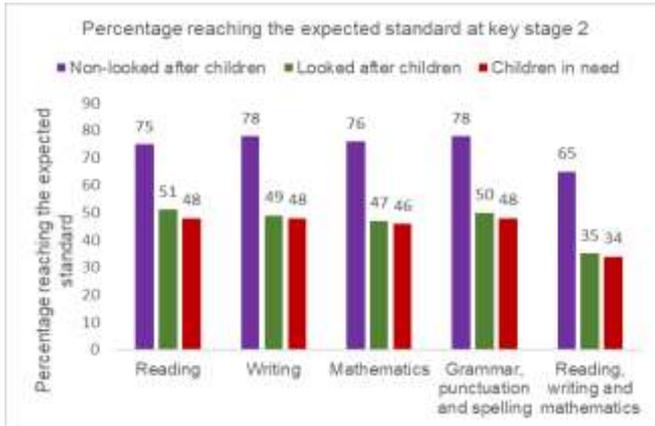




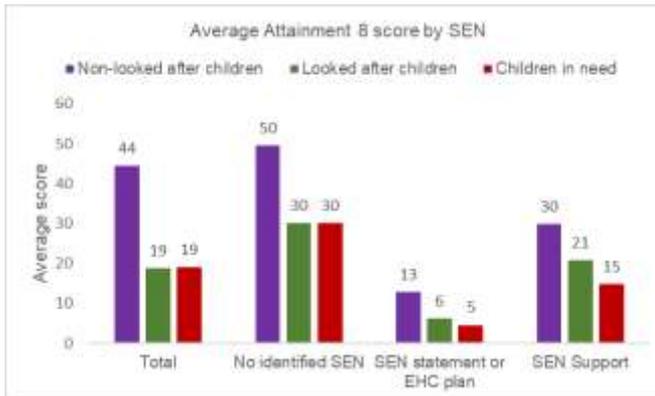
11 April 2019

Looked after children achieve slightly better than children in need at key stage 2 (KS2)



In 2018, looked after children performed slightly better than children in need¹ at KS2. However, attainment for both looked after children and children in need is much lower than for non-looked after children.

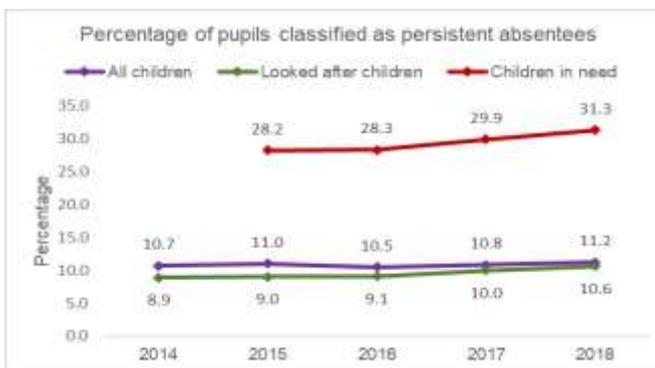
Looked after children attainment at key stage 4 (KS4) varies across special education needs (SEN) groups



In 2018, the average Attainment 8 scores for looked after children and children in need were much less than for non-looked after children.

Looked after children and Children in need reaching the end of KS4 are 3-4 times more likely to have an SEN than all children. This accounts for part of the difference (See section 4 for more detail).

Looked after children are less likely to be classified as persistent absentees



The percentage of looked after children classified as persistent absentees has increased over recent years from 8.9% in 2014 to 10.6% in 2018.

Looked after children are less likely to be classified as persistent absentees than all children and much less likely than children in need².

¹ Figures for children in need exclude looked after children.

² Children in need persistent absentee figures have only been produced on a comparable basis for the last four years.

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About this release

This statistical release provides national and local authority (LA) level information on the outcomes for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March 2018, by local authorities in England. LA level data is published for the local authority that looks after the child. LA level data is provided as underlying data.

All figures are based on data collected annually through the children looked after return (also known as SSDA903) which is completed each spring by all local authorities in England. Further details on which children are included in the data collection can be found in the children looked after return [collection guide](#).

Information on attainment, special educational needs (SEN), absence and exclusions are based on looked after children data that has been matched to attainment, school census, alternative provision census and where applicable pupil referral unit (PRU) census data. Where possible, figures are presented for the last five years to allow comparisons back to 2014 (or 2013 in the case of exclusions).

Following on from the GCSE reforms, key stage 4 outcomes figures for 2018 reflect the changes that have been implemented in the [main key stage 4](#) statistical publication. As last year, there are two tables at national level at key stage 4; both provide additional breakdowns of the Progress 8 measure (school type and length of most recent period of care).

The methodology document for this release has been incorporated into the looked after children statistics guide that was published for the first time in December 2017. The looked after children statistics guide covers both the looked after children main statistical publications as well as this release and is published alongside both publications [here](#). In 2018, data on health, wellbeing and offending outcomes, were published in the [main looked after children](#) statistics release in November. An update to this guide will be published in May 2019.

Information on the attainment outcomes of previously looked after (PLAC) who left care through an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order children looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March 2018 will be published in May 2019

In this publication

The following tables are included in the statistical release:

- CLA_Outcomes_2018_National_Tables (Excel .xlsx)
- Underlying data: CLA_Outcomes_2018_UD (open format .csv and metadata .txt)

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

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at:

CLA.STATS@education.gov.uk

1. Introduction

What is a looked after child?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

- is provided with accommodation for a continuous period for more than 24 hours
- is subject to a care order; or
- is subject to a placement order.

A looked after child ceases to be looked after when he or she turns 18 years old. On reaching his or her 18th birthday, the status of the child changes from being looked after to being a young adult eligible for help and assistance from the local authority. Such help and assistance is usually provided in accordance with the various aftercare provisions of the Children Act.

Definitions for this publication

For this publication, the definition of a 'looked after child' is a child who has been continuously looked after for at least 12 months up to and including 31 March 2018. This definition has been used because 12 months is considered an appropriate length of time to gauge the possible association of being looked after on educational attainment. However, note that a child may not have been in the care of a local authority for the whole of a key stage period. It is also the cohort of children for whom information on outcomes such as health, wellbeing and offending are collected through the SSDA903 return. In previous years these health, wellbeing and offending outcomes figures have been included in this publication but from 2015 they have been published in the main children looked after statistical release '[Children looked after in England including adoption](#)'.

Where reference throughout this publication is made to a 'non-looked after child', we have defined this as a child who has not been looked after continuously for 12 months as at 31 March. This will include both children who have never been looked after and also those who have been looked after but who have not met the 12 months criteria.

For comparison purposes, children in need figures are included in this release. Both looked after children and non-looked after children as defined above are likely to include children in need. Figures are taken from the additional tables to the '[Characteristics of children in need](#)' publication. Data collected in the children in need census is matched to the national pupil database and where a match is made the child is included.

Children in need

When a child is referred to children's social care, an assessment is carried out to identify if the child is in need of services, which local authorities have an obligation to provide under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. These services can include, for example, family support (to help keep together families experiencing difficulties), leaving care support (to help young people who have left local authority care), adoption support or disabled children's services (including social care, education and health provision). Figures for children in need in this publication exclude children in need who are also looked after, but include looked after children who were also the subject of a child protection plan during the year.

Changes to this publication

Changes have been made to the outcomes presented in this publication in the following areas:

- Local authority level data
- Key stage 1
- Key stage 2

- Key stage 4

Details are given in the technical information section at the end of this document and throughout the text.

2. Attainment at key stage 1 (Table 2)

In 2018, 51% of looked after children reached the expected standard in reading, 42% in writing, 49% in maths and 58% in science. This is slightly higher than last year for maths, the same as last year for reading, and slightly lower than last year for science. In 2018, 48% of children in need reached the expected standard in reading, 41% in writing, 49% in maths and 57% in science.

Compared to non-looked after children, attainment for looked after children is much lower. The largest differences are in writing (28 percentage points) and maths (27 percentage points). The attainment for children in need is also much lower than for non-looked after children, with the largest difference being in writing (29 percentage points).

The percentage point difference between the attainment of looked after children and non-looked after children has increased slightly in science in 2018, but has decreased in other subjects.

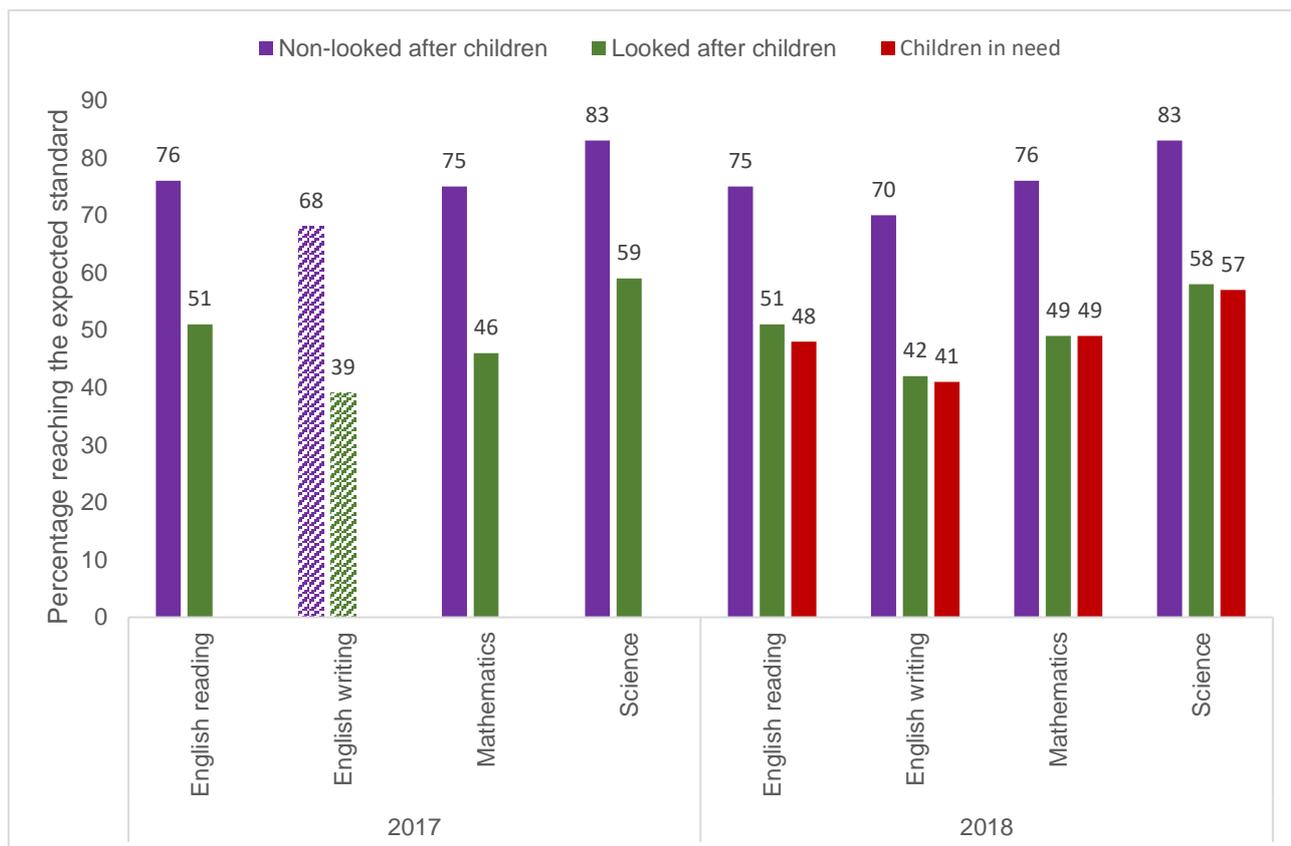
Key stage 1 assessments

Teacher assessment (TA) judgments in reading, writing, maths and science are reported for each pupil at the end of key stage 1 (typically aged 7). Teacher assessments are based on a broad range of evidence from across the curriculum and knowledge of how a pupil has performed over time and in a variety of contexts. Pupils are required to take tests in English and maths at the end of key stage 1, however schools are not required to submit test outcomes to the Department for Education.

New key stage 1 assessments were introduced in 2016 to assess the new, more challenging national curriculum and the expected standard was raised. As a result, figures from 2016 onwards are not comparable to earlier years.

Changes were made within the 2017/18 writing TA frameworks mean that judgements in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017.

Figure 1: Percentage of looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need reaching the expected standard at key stage 1, 2017 and 2018, England³.

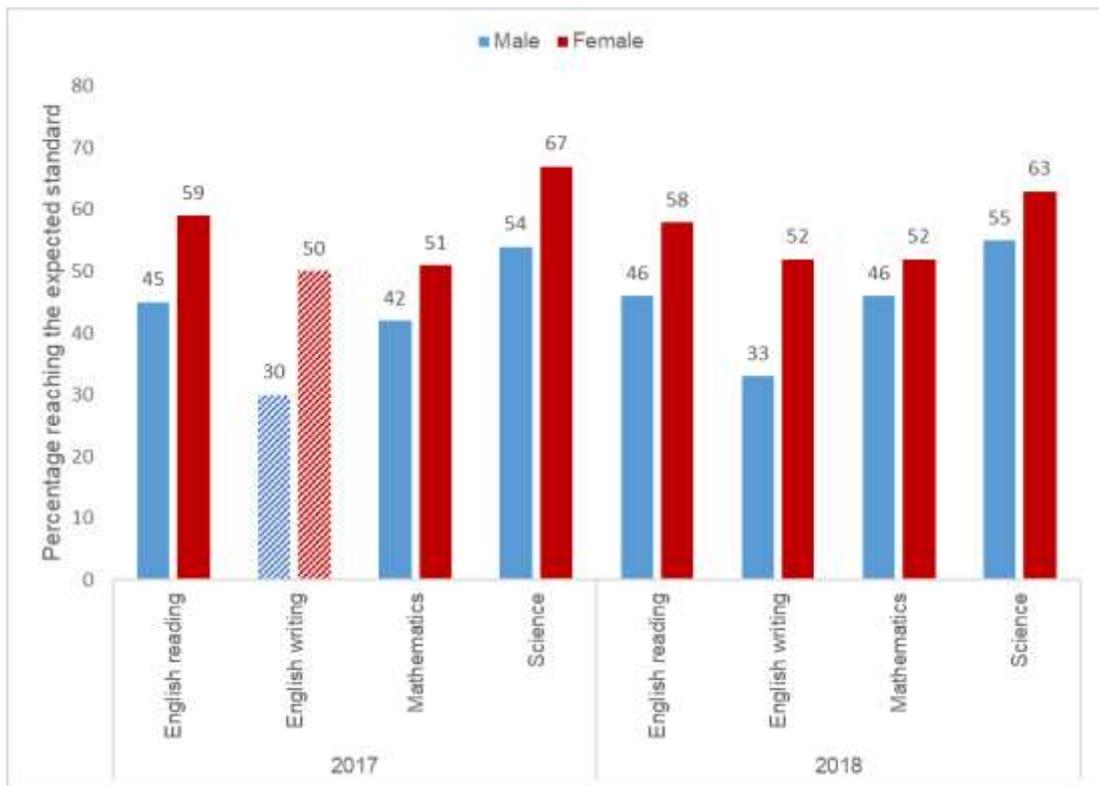


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

Within the looked after group of children, girls continue to outperform boys in all subjects. The largest differences are in reading and writing, where in 2018 looked after girls outperformed looked after boys by 12 and 18 percentage points respectively. This is broadly similar to patterns in the gender attainment difference for non-looked after children. However, there has been a decrease in the percentage point difference between looked after girls and looked after boys in all subjects, with the largest decrease being in science – a difference of 9 percentage points, down from 13 in 2017.

³ Changes were made within the 2017/18 writing teacher assessment frameworks, which means that judgements in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017. The results for writing in 2017 have been shaded in this figure, to show that they are not comparable with results for 2018.

Figure 2: Percentage of looked after children reaching the expected standard at key stage 1, by gender, 2017 and 2018, England⁴.

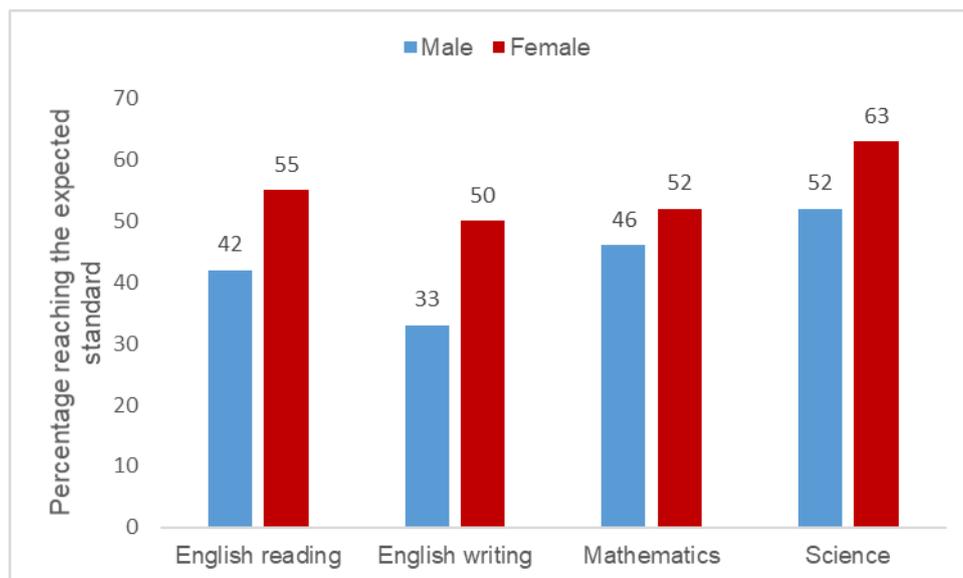


Source: CLA-NPD

Similarly, for children in need, girls outperform boys in all subjects. The largest difference is in reading and writing, where in 2018 girls in need outperformed boys in need by 13 and 17 percentage points respectively. This is similar to patterns in the gender attainment difference for non-looked after children and looked after children.

⁴ Changes were made within the 2017/18 writing teacher assessment frameworks, which means that judgements in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017. The results for writing in 2017 have been shaded in this figure, to show that they are not comparable with results for 2018.

Figure 3: Percentage of children in need reaching the expected standard at key stage 1, by gender, 2018, England.



Source: CIN-NPD

3. Attainment and progress at key stage 2 (Table 3a, 3b & KS2 UD)

In 2018, 35% of looked after children reached the expected standard in the headline measure reading, writing and maths. This is lower than the percentage reaching the expected standard in individual subjects which ranges from 47% in maths to 51% in reading.

Compared to non-looked after children, attainment for looked after children is much lower. However, attainment of looked after children is slightly higher than children in need.

From 2017 to 2018, the percentage achieving the expected standard across all subjects has increased for all three groups; looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, with the exception of grammar, punctuation and spelling, where 50% of looked after children reached the expected standard in both years.

Overall, looked after children progress less well than non-looked after children at key stage 2. However, when SEN is considered, looked after children progress more than non-looked after children for those with no identified SEN and those with SEN support.

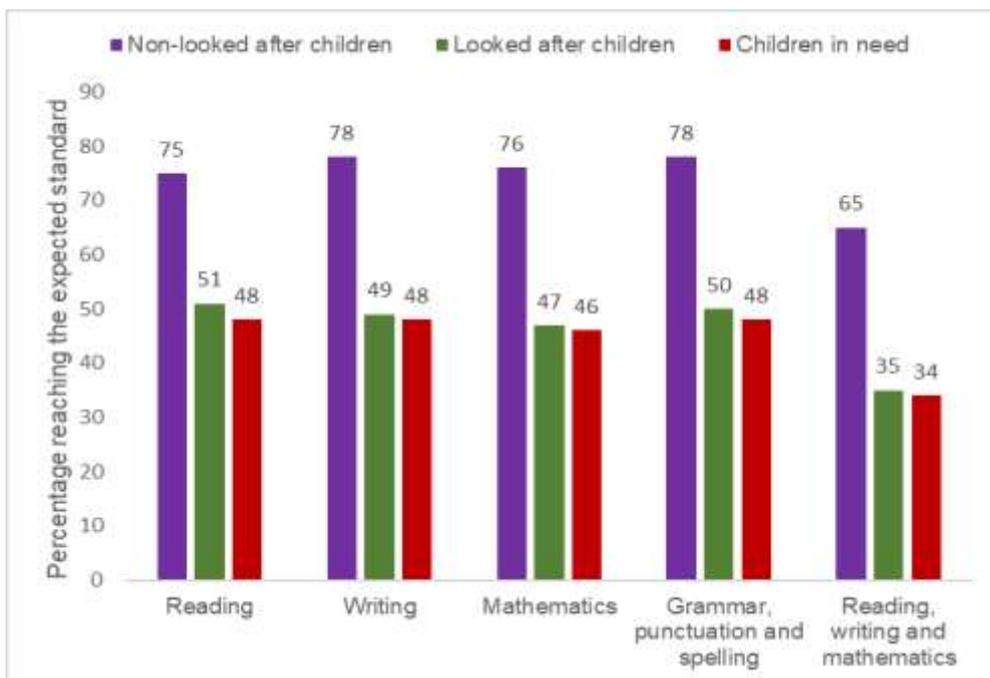
Attainment at key stage 2

Key stage 2 assessments

At the end of key stage 2, pupils are assessed by national curriculum tests in reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils also receive a teacher assessment (TA) outcome in reading, writing, maths and science based on the standards in the [framework](#) for teacher assessment. The combined measures use the reading and maths test results and the outcome of the writing teacher assessment.

New key stage 2 assessments were introduced in 2016 to assess the new, more challenging national curriculum and the expected standard was raised. As a result, figures from 2016 onwards are not comparable to earlier years. Changes made within the 2017/18 writing TA frameworks mean that judgements in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017. Figures for writing and for reading, writing and maths combined in 2018 are not comparable to previous years due to changes in the writing teacher assessment frameworks.

Figure 4: Percentage of children reaching the expected standard at key stage 2 across all subjects, for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, 2018, England.



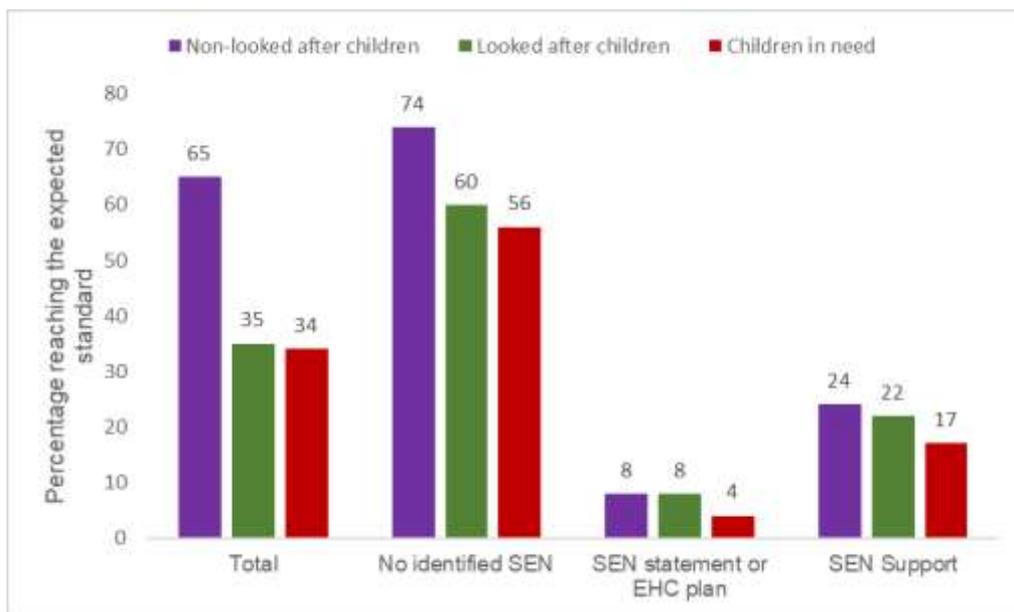
Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

As highlighted above, in 2018, 35% of looked after children reached the expected standard in the headline measure reading, writing and maths, which is much lower than the 65% for non-looked after children.

However, the figures show that 58% of looked after children at the end of key stage 2 have a special educational need (SEN) identified, compared to 49%⁵ of children in need and 17% of non-looked after children and attainment rates for children with a SEN are much lower. As shown below, the higher prevalence of SEN amongst looked after children and children in need can partly, but not fully, explain the gap in attainment compared to non-looked after children at key stage 2.

⁵ Children in need data uses school census for SEN provision. Looked after children and non-looked after children data uses school census and alternative provision census for SEN provision.

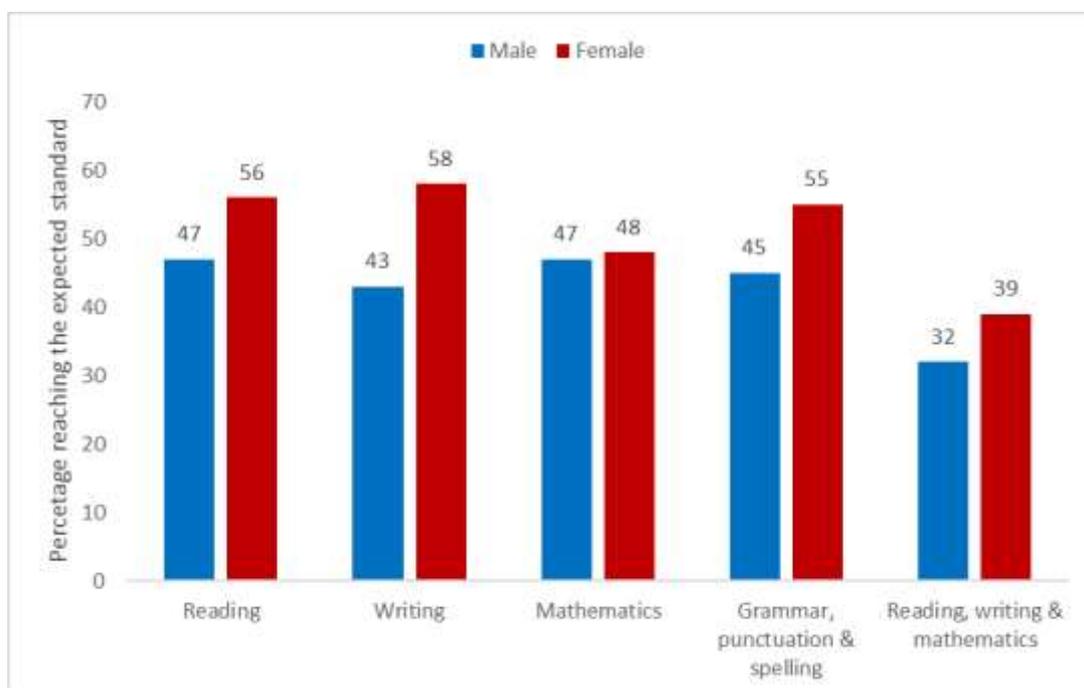
Figure 5: Percentage of children achieving the expected standard in the headline measure reading, writing and maths at key stage 2, for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, by SEN, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

Within the looked after children group, girls outperform boys in all subjects. Generally, the gender attainment difference for looked after children is similar to previous years and similar to patterns seen for non-looked after children. Children in need attainment by gender follows a similar pattern to other comparison pupil groups.

Figure 6: Percentage of looked after children reaching the expected standard or above at key stage 2, by gender, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD

Progress at key stage 2

Key stage 2 progress measures

These progress measures aim to capture the progress that pupils make from the end of key stage 1 (typically age 7) to the end of primary school (typically age 11). They are a type of value-added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the results of other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment. Progress scores are calculated for each of reading, writing and maths.

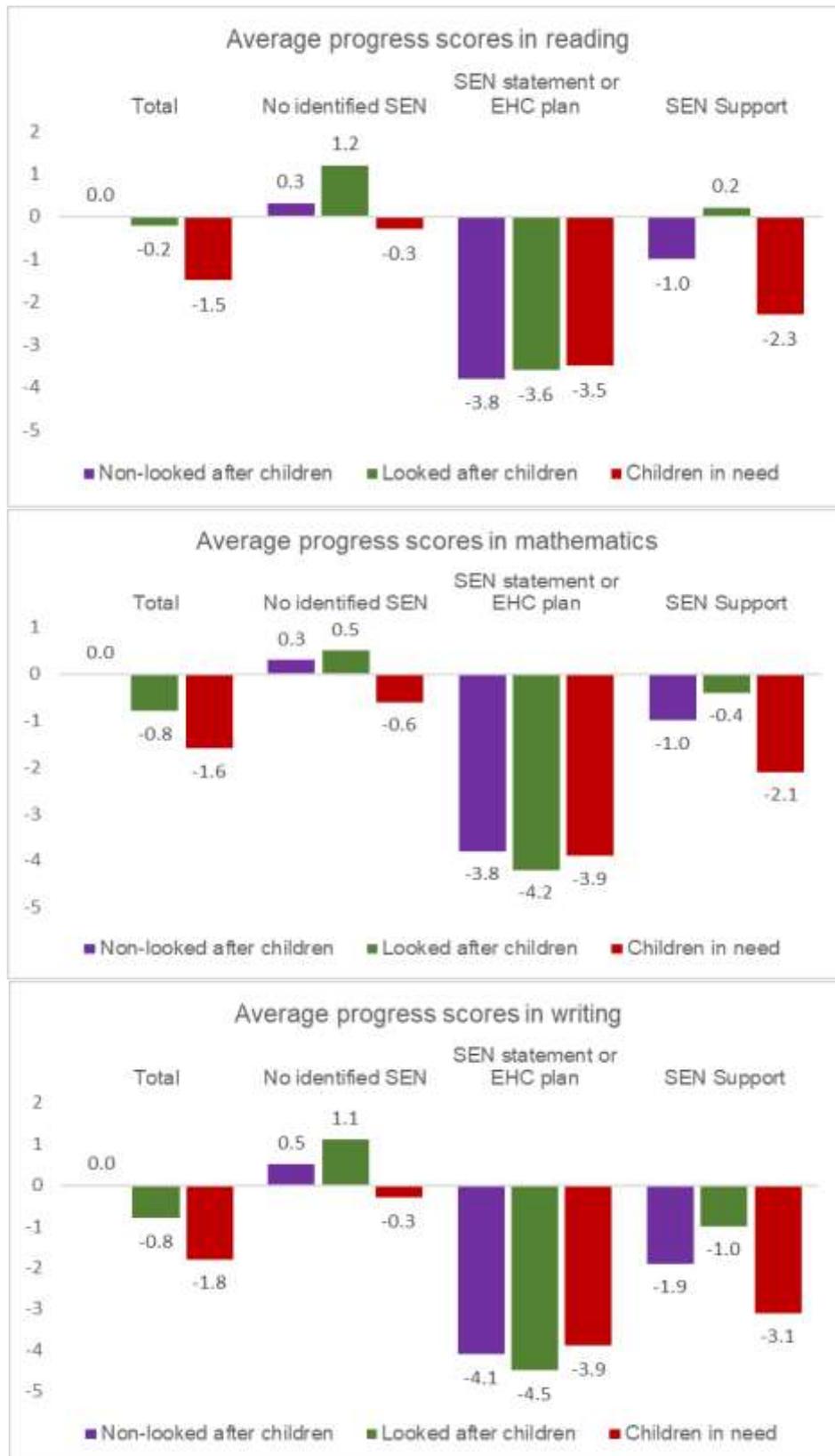
The [progress methodology](#) was further refined in 2017 to allow greater number of prior attainment groups and better comparisons between pupils working below the standard of the tests. Pupils in special schools were included in the calculation of prior attainment groups for the progress measures in 2017. In addition, pupils who were entered for the test but were not awarded a scaled score were also included in progress calculations (whereas they were excluded in 2016).

The progress methodology was further refined in 2018 to reduce the disproportionate impact of extreme pupil-level progress scores by limiting how negative a pupil's progress score can be when calculating averages.

For all children included in the progress measure calculations (state-funded schools and non-maintained special schools):

- Looked after children progress less well than non-looked after children, with the largest differences being in writing and maths, where looked after children have an average progress score of -0.8 compared to non-looked after children who make average progress (progress score of 0.0).
- Children in need progress notably less well than both looked after children and non-looked after children across all subjects in the overall total, with the largest difference being in writing, where children in need have an average progress score of -1.8 compared to non-looked after children who make average progress (progress score of 0.0).
- The picture is different when special educational needs (SEN) are taken into account:
 - i) No identified SEN – looked after children progress better than non-looked after children in reading, writing and maths, whereas children in need progress less well than non-looked after children in all three subjects.
 - ii) SEN support – looked after children progress better than non-looked after children in reading, writing and maths, whereas again, children in need progress less well than non-looked after children in all three subjects.
 - iii) SEN statement or education, health and care (EHC) plan – non-looked after children progress better than looked after children in writing and maths, but looked after children progress better in reading. Children in need progress better than non-looked after children in reading and writing, but less well in maths.

Figure 7: Progress in reading, writing and maths at key stage 2, for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, state-funded schools and non-maintained special schools, by SEN, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

4. Attainment and progress at key stage 4 (Table 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e & KS4 UD)

In 2018, the average Attainment 8 score for looked after children was 18.8 compared to 44.4 for non-looked after children and 19.0 for children in need.

Although looked after children have a similar average Attainment 8 score as children in need, they perform slightly less well than children in need in the other headline measures; achieving a pass in English and maths, entering EBacc and achieving EBacc.

The average Ebacc average point score for looked after children is 1.47 compared to 3.84 for non-looked after children and 1.52 for children in need.

In 2018, the percentage of looked after children achieving a pass in English and maths at grade 4 or above remained steady at 17.5%, compared to 17.4% in 2017. Conversely, there was a decrease in the percentage of children in need achieving a pass in English and maths from 19.1% to 18.7%.

Looked after children progress less well than non-looked after children but slightly better than children in need.

Key stage 4

In 2017, pupils sat reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and maths for the first time, graded on a 9 to 1 scale. New GCSEs in other subjects are being phased in, first being taught from September 2016 to 2018. To ensure all pupils benefit from the reformed qualifications, only the new GCSEs will be included in secondary school performance measures as they are introduced for each subject (for example, only reformed GCSEs in English and maths are included in 2017 measures). When comparing 2017 headline measures to the equivalent revised data from 2016, it is important to note the changes in methodology underpinning the 2017 data. When comparing the 2018 revised headline and additional measures to the equivalent revised data from 2017, it is important to note any changes to methodology or data changes underpinning the 2018 measures as a result of the introduction of further reformed GCSEs graded on the 9-1 scale which have a higher maximum score than unreformed GCSEs.

Of the reformed GCSE subjects introduced in 2018, only science had a significant change in the structure of the qualifications available; combined science was introduced replacing core and additional. Combined science is a double award GCSE and is graded from 9-9 to 1-1. For more detail on the combined science GCSE in relation to its inclusion in performance measures, please see the secondary accountability guidance.

Attainment 8

Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), maths (double weighted), three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the [DfE approved list](#).

In 2018, Attainment 8 had a maximum point score of 90, compared to a maximum of 87 in 2017, as a result of the phased introduction of reformed GCSEs. This difference should be taken into account when considering any change in Attainment 8 score between 2017 and 2018.

Progress 8

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment'), calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school. Progress 8 is a relative measure, therefore the national average Progress 8 score for mainstream schools is very close to zero. When including pupils at special schools the national average is not zero as Progress 8 scores for special schools are calculated using Attainment 8 estimates based on pupils in mainstream schools. More information on Attainment 8 and Progress 8 can be found [here](#).

Progress 8 is part of the new secondary accountability system being implemented from 2016. Progress 8 is a relative measure, which means that the overall national score remains the same between years. In 2017, a new methodology was implemented which changed the basis for calculating key stage 2 prior attainment. Previously, attainment had been

calculated using an average for English (reading and writing) and maths scores. This was revised to be just reading and maths. This resulted in a larger proportion of pupils with higher key stage 2 prior attainment scores. The Progress 8 measure should not be compared year on year. More information on the calculation of this measure is available in the [Progress 8 guidance](#).

Attainment in English and maths (grades 5 or above)

From 2017, this measure looks at the percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in both English and maths. Pupils can achieve the English component of this with a grade 5 or above in English language or literature. There is no requirement to sit both exams.

Attainment in English and maths (grades 4 or above)

From 2017, this measure looks at the percentage of pupils achieving grade 4 or above in both English and maths. Pupils can achieve the English component of this with a grade 4 or above in English language or literature. There is no requirement to sit both exams.

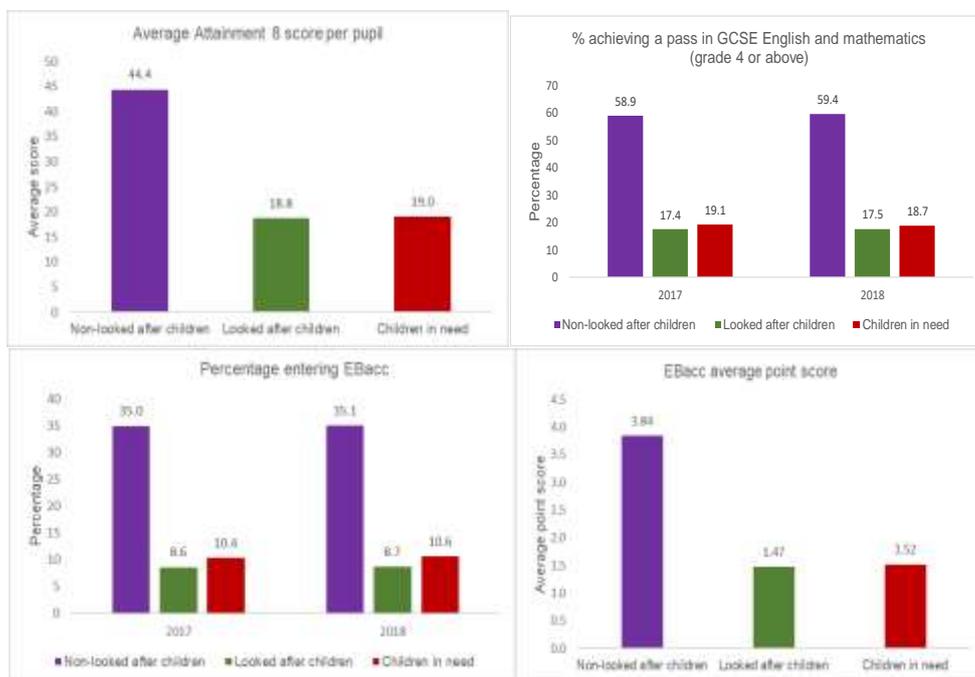
The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry and average point score (APS)

The EBacc was first introduced into the performance tables in 2009/10. It allows people to see how many pupils reach the attainment threshold in core academic subjects at key stage 4. The EBacc is made up of English, maths, science, a language, and history or geography. To count in the EBacc, qualifications must be on the [English Baccalaureate list of qualifications](#).

As announced in July 2017, from 2018 the headline Ebacc attainment measure is the Ebacc average point score (Ebacc APS). This replaces the previous threshold Ebacc attainment measure. Ebacc APS measures pupils' point scores across the five pillars of the EBacc. This ensures the attainment of all pupils is recognised, not just those at particular grade boundaries, encouraging schools to enter pupils of all abilities, and support them to achieve their full potential.

Attainment at key stage 4

Figure 8: Average Attainment 8 score, percentage achieving a pass in English and maths, and percentage entering and achieving EBacc, for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, 2017 and 2018, England.

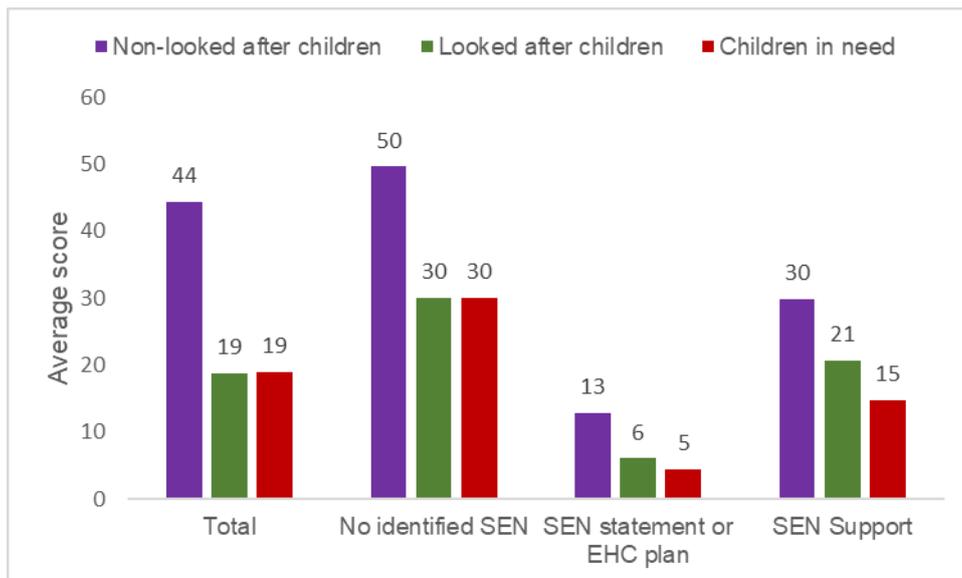


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

As shown above, the average Attainment 8 score for looked after children is 18.8 compared to 44.4 for non-looked after children and 19.0 for children in need. However, 52% of looked after children and 49%⁶ of children in need at the end of key stage 4 have a special educational need (SEN) identified, compared to only 14% of non-looked after children.

Attainment rates for children with a SEN are much lower than those without a SEN. The attainment difference between looked after children and non-looked after children for this measure is therefore reduced when the effects of the proportion of children with SEN in each group are removed, by looking at those with no identified SEN, those with SEN statements or EHC plans and those with SEN support separately. There is a similar pattern for children in need when compared to non-looked after children.

Figure 9: Average Attainment 8 score for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, by SEN, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

⁶ Children in need data uses school census for SEN provision. Looked after children and non-looked after children data uses school census and alternative provision census for SEN provision.

Progress at key stage 4

For all children included in the progress measure calculations (state-funded schools, non-maintained special schools and alternative provision), looked after children progress less well than non-looking after children, but slightly better than children in need.

Figure 10: Average Progress 8 score for looked after children and non-looking after children, by SEN, 2018, England.

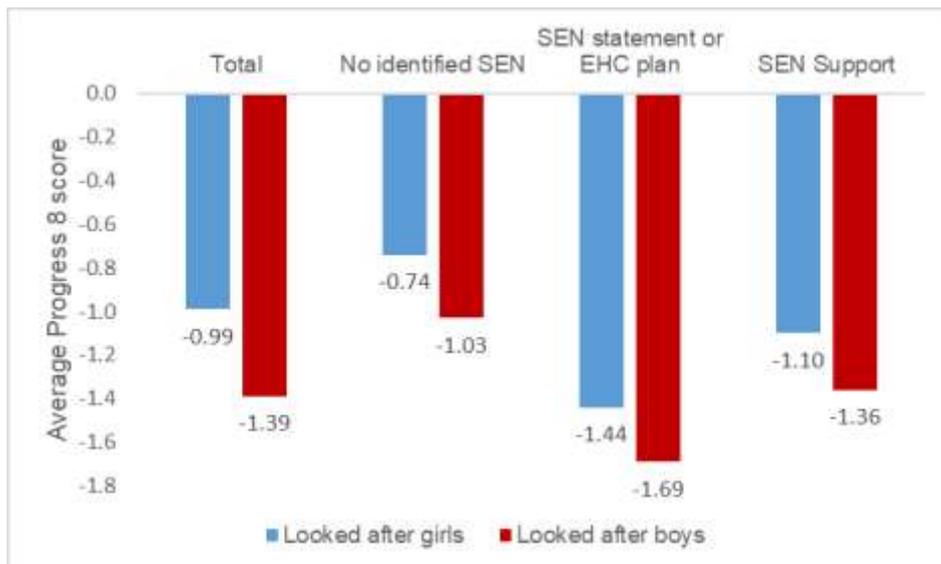


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

In contrast to key stage 2, even when we consider the effects of the proportion of children with SEN in each group, by looking at those with no identified SEN, those with SEN statements or EHC plans and those with SEN support separately, looked after children and children in need progress less well than non-looking after children in all groups, though the differences are less marked.

Looked after boys progress less well than looked after girls in all groups, a similar pattern is seen for non-looking after children.

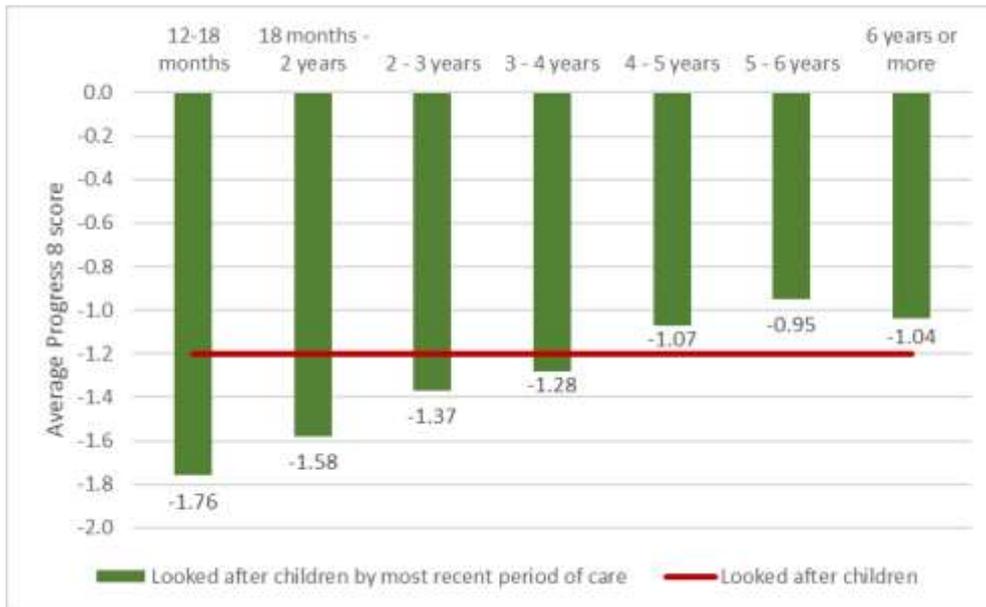
Figure 11: Average Progress 8 score for looked after boys and looked after girls, by SEN, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD

Looked after children in long term care have higher progress scores than pupils whose most recent period of care is much shorter.

Figure 12: Average Progress 8 score for looked after children, by length of most recent period of care, 2018, England.



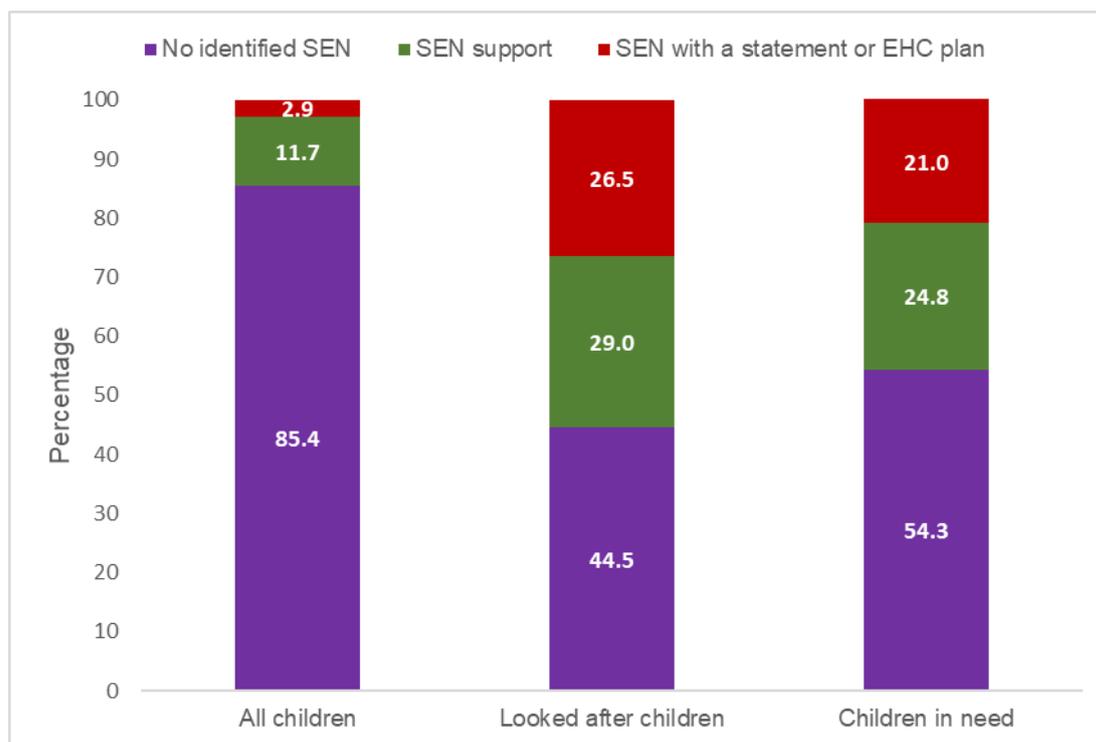
Source: CLA-NPD

5. Special educational needs (Table 5a, 5b & SEN UD)

Looked after children are almost four times more likely to have a special educational need (SEN) than all children, and are just over nine times more likely to have a statement of special educational need or education, health and care (EHC) plan than all children.

In 2018, 55.5% of looked after children had a special educational need, compared to 45.7% of children in need and 14.6% of all children.

Figure 13: Special educational needs of looked after children, children in need and all children, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

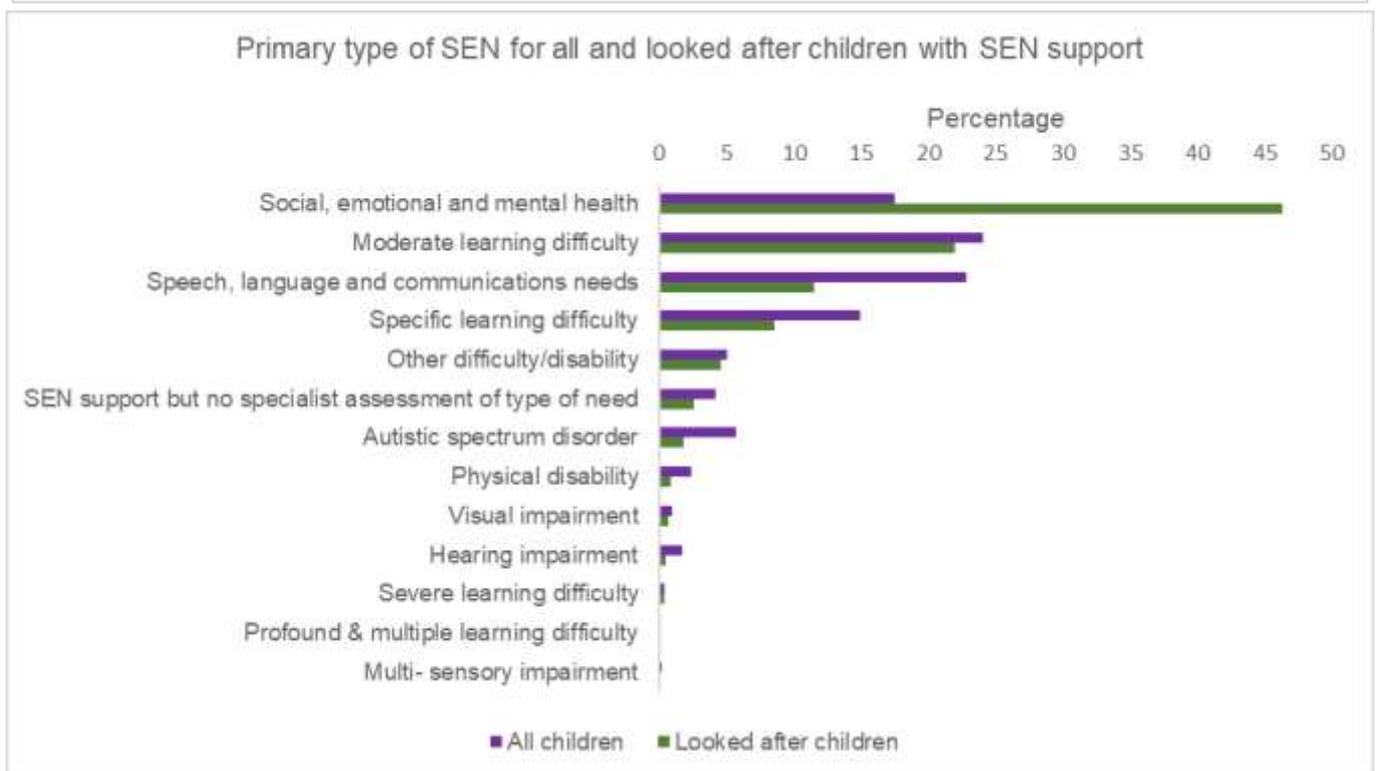
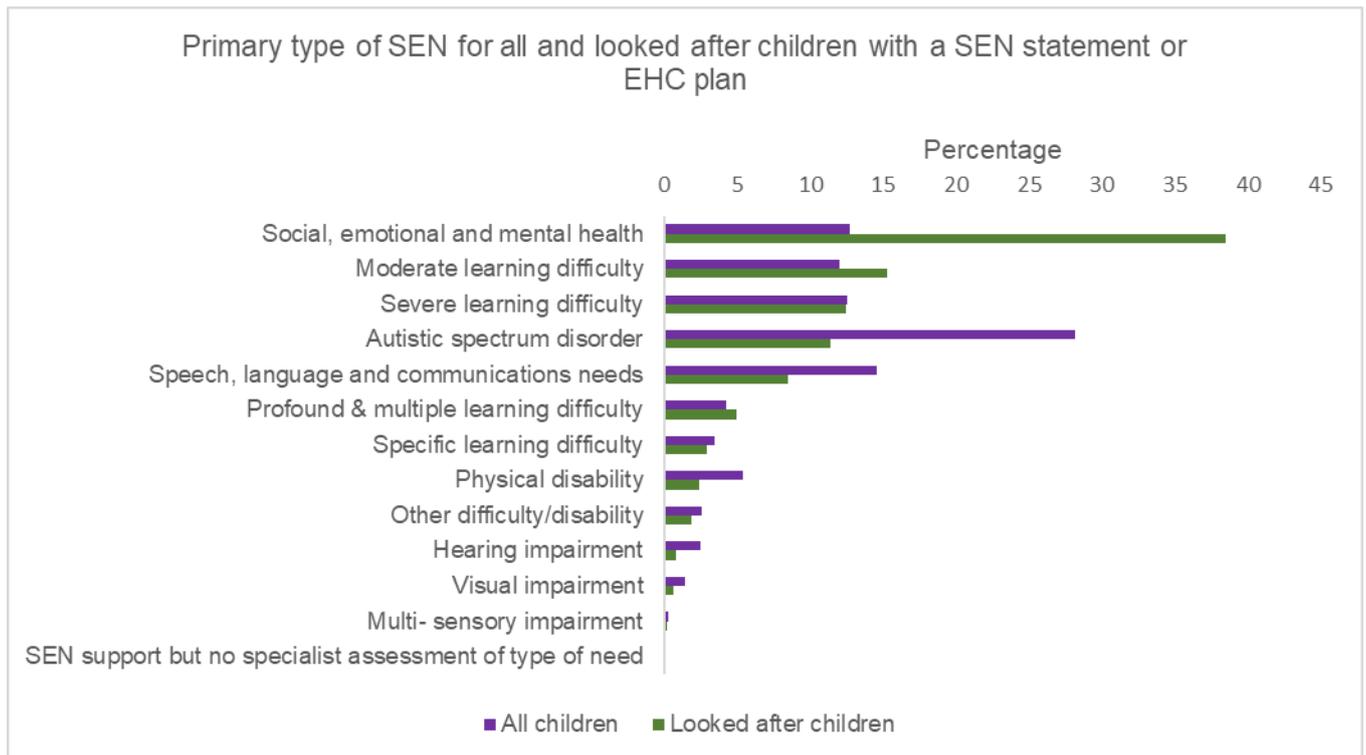
Information on primary type of special educational need is collected for those with a statement or EHC plan and those with SEN support⁷. For both groups, social, emotional and mental health is the most common primary type of special educational need for looked after children, covering 38.5% of those with a statement or EHC plan and 46.3% of those with SEN support. This contrasts with the child population as a whole⁸ where this is the primary need of only 12.8% of those with a statement or EHC plan and 17.5% of those with SEN support.

Looked after children with a statement or EHC plan are much less likely to have hearing impairment, visual impairment, autistic spectrum disorder, physical disability, or speech, language and communication needs as their primary type of special educational need than all children.

⁷ The special educational needs and disability (SEND) provisions in the Children and Families Act 2014 were introduced on 1 September 2014. From then, any children or young people who are newly referred to a local authority for assessment are considered under the new Education Health and Care (EHC) plan assessment process. The legal test of when a child or young person requires an EHC plan remains the same as that for a statement under the Education Act 1996. In addition, the previous 'school action' and 'school action plus' categories were replaced by a new category 'SEN support'.

⁸ Figures for all children are available in table 8 of the National Statistics: [Special Educational Needs in England, 2018](#)

Figure 14: Looked after children and all children by primary type of special educational need, 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD

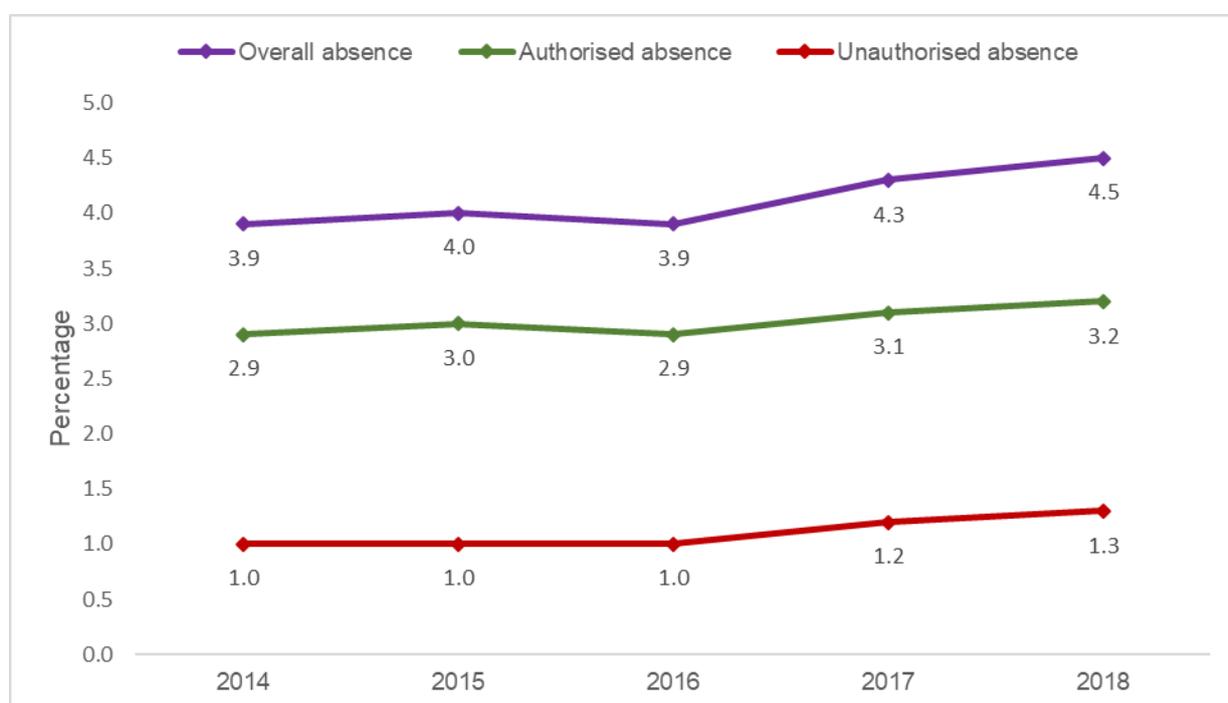
6. Absence (Table 6 & Absence UD)

Absence rates for looked after children have increased from last year – overall absence increased from 4.3% of sessions missed in 2017 to 4.5% in 2018. Absence rates for children in need have increased, from 10.4% of sessions missed in 2017 to 11.0% in 2018.

The percentage of looked after children classified as persistent absentees has increased slightly over recent years, from 8.9% in 2014 to 10.6% in 2018. In 2018, 31.3% of children in need were classified as persistent absentees.¹⁰

Authorised absence for looked after children has remained steady, with 3.2% of sessions missed in 2018 compared to 3.1% in 2017. Unauthorised absence has also remained similar, with 1.3% of sessions missed in 2018 and 1.2% in 2017.

Figure 15: Overall, authorised and unauthorised absence rates (%) for looked after children, 2014 to 2018, England.

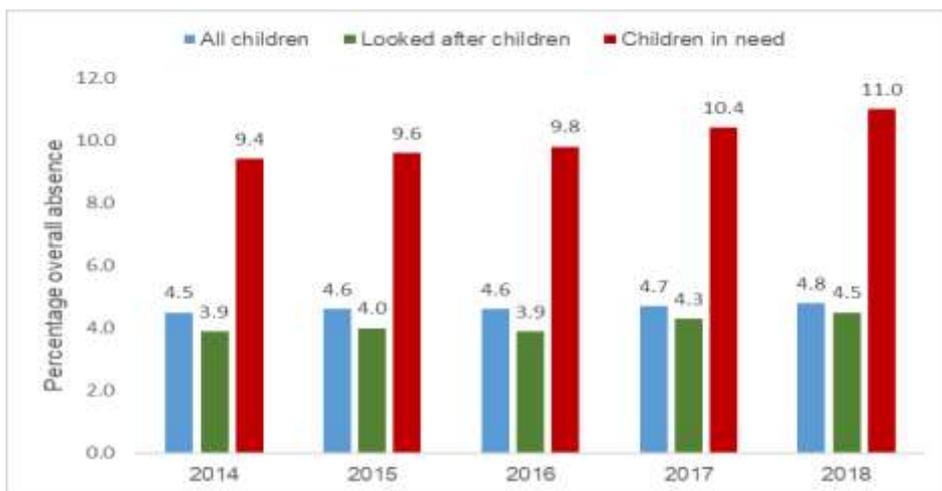


Source: CLA-NPD

In 2018, overall absence rates for looked after children (4.5%) are lower than for all children (4.8%) and much lower than for children in need (11.0%).

Comparing to all children, the difference in overall absence rates is due to looked after children having lower authorised absence rates. In 2018, 3.2% of sessions for looked after children were missed due to authorised absence, compared to 3.5% of sessions for all children and 6.3% for children in need.

Figure 16: Overall absence rates (%) for looked after children, all children and children in need, 2014 to 2018, England.



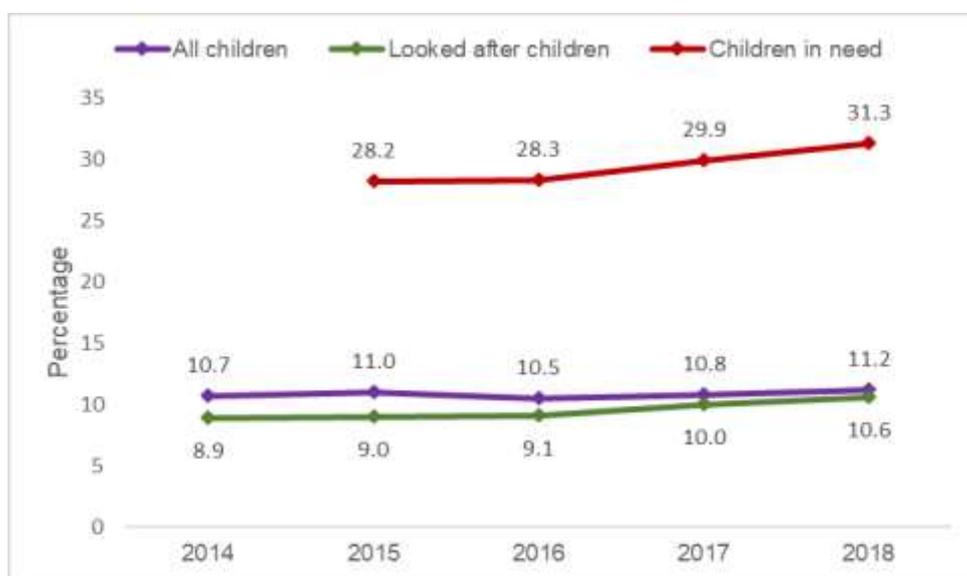
Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

Persistent absentees

The definition of persistent absence changed from the 2015/16 academic year onwards. Pupil enrolments missing 10 or more percent of their own possible sessions (due to authorised or unauthorised absence) are classified as persistent absentees. The information presented for years prior to 2015/16 has been produced using the same methodology in order to allow users to make comparisons on a consistent basis over time. See Chapter 3 of the [guide to absence statistics](#) for more information.

In 2018, looked after children were less likely to be classified as persistent absentees (10.6%) than all children (11.2%) and much less likely than children in need⁹ (31.3%).

Figure 17: Percentage of looked after children, all children and children in need classified as persistent absentees, 2014 to 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

⁹ Children in need persistent absentee figures have only been produced on a comparable basis for the last four years.

7. Permanent and fixed period exclusions (Table 7 & Exclusion UD)

The rate of permanent exclusions for looked after children is the same as the rate for all children, but continues to be much less than the rate for children in need.

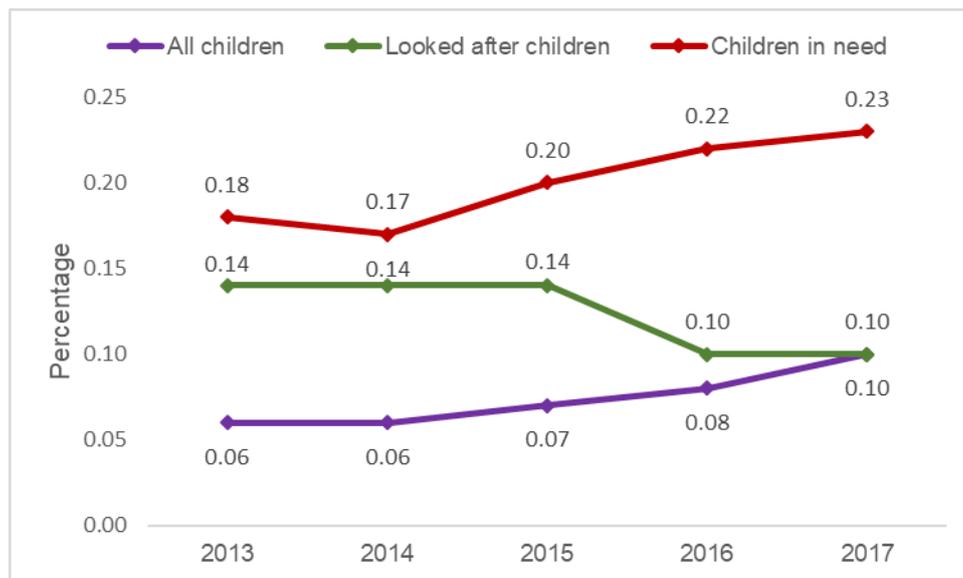
Looked after children are more than five times more likely to have a fixed period exclusion than all children, and nearly one and a half times more likely than children in need. This may be the result of the current policy on exclusions¹⁰

Exclusions data

Exclusions data are collected two terms in arrears, so the latest exclusions data available is from the academic year 2016/17. This is matched to the looked after children from year ending 31 March 2017, which is a year earlier than the other information in this statistical release. In 2017, 30,520 looked after children aged 5 to 15 were matched to the school census.

In 2017, 0.10% of looked after children were permanently excluded from school, which is the same as the rate for all children but lower than the rate for children in need (0.23%). The percentage of looked after children permanently excluded has remained stable at 0.10%, the same as 2016; this is the lowest it has been in the five year period 2013 to 2017. In contrast, the percentage of all children and children in need permanently excluded has risen in each year since 2014.

Figure 18: Permanent exclusion rates (%) for looked after children, all children and children in need, 2013 to 2017, England.

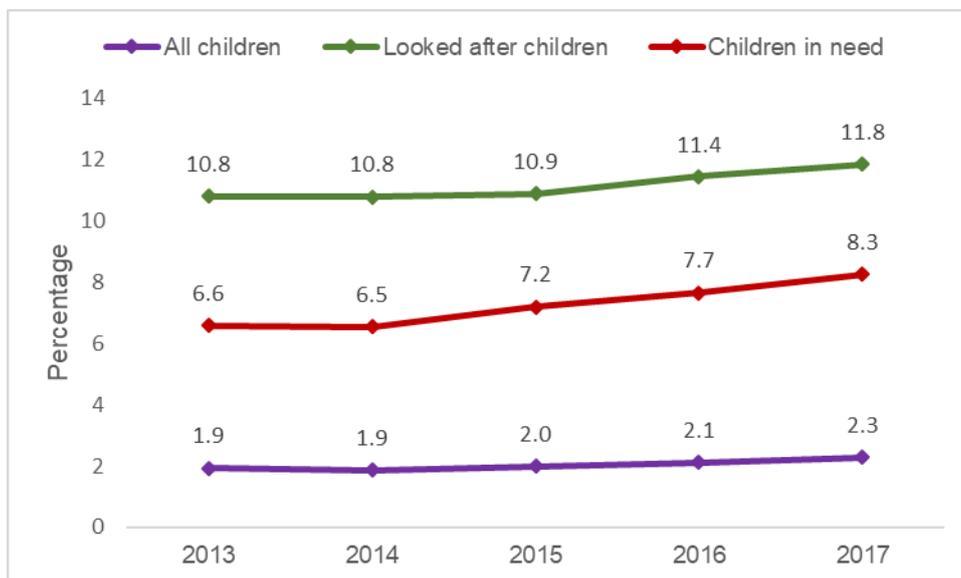


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

¹⁰ [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children](#)

In 2017, 11.8% of looked after children had at least one fixed period exclusion, an increase from 11.4% in 2016. There has also been an increase for all children (2.1% to 2.3%) and children in need (7.7% to 8.3%). This continues a trend of increasing fixed period exclusion rates since 2014.

Figure 19: Percentages of looked after children, all children and children in need who had at least one fixed period exclusion, 2013 to 2017, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

8. Accompanying tables

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

National Tables

- 1 Children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months and children in need, by special educational needs (SEN), eligibility for free school meals (FSM), attainment, progress and absence, 2018
- 2 Key stage 1 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by gender, 2016 to 2018
- 3a Key stage 2 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by special educational needs (SEN) and gender, 2016 to 2018
- 3b Key stage 2 average progress scores of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by special educational needs (SEN) and gender, 2018
- 4a Key stage 4 eligibility and performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by special educational needs (SEN) and gender, 2014 to 2018
- 4b Key stage 4 average Attainment 8 scores of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by special educational needs (SEN) and gender, 2016 to 2018
- 4c Key stage 4 average Progress 8 scores of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by special educational needs (SEN) and gender, 2018
- 4d Key stage 4 average Progress 8 scores of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, non-looked after children and school age children in need at 31 March, by school type and gender, 2018
- 4e Key stage 4 average Progress 8 scores of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by length of most recent period of care, 2018
- 5a Children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, school age children in need at 31 March and all children with special educational needs (SEN), 2018
- 5b Children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by primary type of special educational need (SEN), 2018
- 6 Absence by type of school for children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, school age children in need at 31 March and all children, 2014 to 2018
- 7 Exclusions by type of school for children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, school age children in need at 31 March and all children, 2013 to 2017

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 Department for Education protect confidentiality.

National and regional figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. For confidentiality purposes, numbers from one to five inclusive have been replaced in the published tables by the letter c (c). To ensure the suppressed number cannot be identified by simple arithmetic secondary suppression may be required. In this case the next smallest number is also suppressed.

Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers for key stage 1 and key stage 2 and rounded to one decimal place for key stage 4. Exclusions have been rounded to two decimal places. Averages have been rounded to one decimal place at key stage 2 and at key stage 4 for attainment and to two decimal places at key stage 4 for progress. This is in line with the department's rounding protocols for the main attainment releases. Where the numerator in a percentage was five or less or the denominator was 1 to 10, the percentage has been suppressed and replaced by the letter c (c). Not all percentages will sum to 100 due to these rounding conventions. Averages that are based on 1 to 5 have been suppressed and replaced by the letter c (c).

In addition, the following convention has been used:

‘.’ means not applicable

‘..’ means not available

‘-’ means negligible – used to represent a percentage that would appear as 0 when rounded but is not zero

UK comparability of looked after children's statistics

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

9. Further information is available

Children looked after in England, including adoption

Information about [looked-after children in England for the year ending 31 March 2018](#) was published on 15 November 2018. It includes the number of looked after children, the reasons why children are looked after, their legal status and type of placement, and the number of children who started to be, or ceased to be, looked after during the year ending 31 March 2018. It also covers the number of looked after children who were placed for adoption, the number of looked after children adopted and the average time between different stages of the adoption process.

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 2018 on the children in need statistics website .
Information on care proceedings in England	The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) publish information on care proceedings applications made by local authorities where CAFCASS has been appointed by the court to represent the interests of children.
Local authority children in care and adoption statistics	Children in care and adoption performance tables and adoption scorecards show how local authorities and looked after children's services compare with others in England (2012 to 2014). From 2015, children in care and adoption performance is included in the local authority interactive tool (LAIT) .
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 statistics	Ofsted publish inspection outcomes for local authority children's services and children's social care providers in England as well as data on the placements of children looked after.
Scotland	Statistics on the outcomes of children looked after in Scotland are available for 2016-17 on the Scottish Government website .
Wales	The Welsh government website is currently changing, but statistics on the outcomes of children looked after in Wales will be available on the new website in due course.
Northern Ireland	Statistics on the outcomes of children looked after in Northern Ireland are available for 2016-17 and are published on the Department of Health website .

10. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics in February 2015 [OSR Statistics on Looked After Children](#) 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 this accompanying document [Looked-after children statistics in England: guide - GOV.UK](#)

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

11. Technical information

A looked after children statistics guide accompanies this release. It 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. It also includes information on changes to this release highlighted below.

- Local authority level data

In this release, local authority data is published as underlying data instead of formatted tables, for the most recent year. The data has been reformatted since 2017 to aid analysis and is in line with the principles of 'tidy data'.

- Key stage 1

In 2016, children were assessed under the new national curriculum, where the expected standard has been raised. These changes mean that the key stage 1 expected standard set in 2016 and maintained in 2017 and 2018 is higher and therefore not comparable with the expected standard used in previous year's statistics. It would therefore be incorrect and misleading to make direct comparisons showing changes over time. Improvements since 2016 should be viewed with caution as we expect results to increase as pupils and teachers get used to the new curriculum and assessments. This broad pattern has been seen in the first few years after the introduction of new assessments in the past in England and in other countries, as Ofqual have pointed out¹¹.

Changes made within the 2017/18 writing teacher assessment frameworks mean that judgements made in writing in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017.

- Key stage 2

In 2016, children were assessed under the new national curriculum, where the expected standard has been raised. These changes mean that the key stage 1 expected standard set in 2016 and maintained in 2017 and 2018 is higher and therefore not comparable with the expected standard used in previous year's statistics. It would therefore be incorrect and misleading to make direct comparisons showing changes over time.

Changes made within the 2017/18 writing teacher assessment frameworks mean that judgements made in writing in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017. In addition, attainment in reading, writing and maths is not directly comparable to previous years because of changes to writing teacher assessment frameworks. Improvements since 2016 should be viewed with caution as we expect results to increase as pupils and teachers get used to the new curriculum and assessments. This broad pattern has been seen in the first few years after the introduction of new assessments in the past in England and in other countries, as Ofqual have pointed out¹².

In 2017, the progress methodology was further refined to allow a greater number of prior attainment groups and better comparisons between pupils working below the standard of the tests. Local authority key stage 2 attainment data has been updated to align with the main key stage 2 statistics publication. The national level data remains the same as in previous years and excludes pupils with missing or lost test results and pupils where results are suppressed pending the outcome of a maladministration investigation. The local authority level data excludes pupils with lost results but

¹¹ [Investigation into the sawtooth effect in GCSEs, AS and A levels, 2016](#)

¹² [Investigation into the sawtooth effect in GCSEs, AS and A levels, 2016](#)

includes those with missing results or pending maladministration. It also excludes children that have recently arrived from overseas. As a result, national level England figures don't match national figures from local authority data.

- Key stage 4

Following on from the GCSE reforms, key stage 4 outcomes figures for 2018 reflect the changes that have been implemented in the main key stage 4 statistics publication.

Local authority key stage 4 attainment data has been updated to align with the main key stage 4 statistics publication. The local authority attainment data has children recently arrived from overseas removed. As a result, national level England figures don't match national figures from local authority data.

12. Get in touch

Media enquiries

Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Tel: 020 7783 8300

Other enquiries/feedback

For queries relating to looked-after children statistics: email CLA.STATS@education.gov.uk

For queries relating to children in need statistics: email CIN.STATS@education.gov.uk



Department
for Education



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About this publication:

Email: CLA.STATS@education.gov.uk



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