



Department  
for Education

# **Adoption Leadership Board headline measures and business intelligence**

**2013 to 2014 and quarter 1 2014 to 2015  
update**

**November 2014**

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## Summary

### Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures

**4,680 children waiting** There were 4,680 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family as at 31 March 2014. This compares to 5,480 children as at 31 March 2013, a decrease of 15%. Quarterly data suggests that there was a further 17% decrease to 3,890 as at 30 June 2014.

**Child timeliness has improved** Quarterly data suggests that the average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adopted family in 2013-14 was 586 days. This is an improvement from 658 days in 2012-13, but is still 39 days above the 2011-14 scorecard threshold. A revised estimate using annual data will be published in the Adoption Scorecards later in the year.

**“Adopter gap” is closing** Our most recent estimate for the “adopter gap” suggests we need to approve 140 more adopter families as at 30 June 2014.

**Adopter timeliness has improved** The proportion of applications approved within 6 months in quarter 1 2014-15 was 31%. This compares to 27% of decisions being made within 6 months of applications in 2012-13. However, quarterly data suggests there has been a decrease since quarter 2 of 2013-14 when around a half of approvals were being made within 6 months of application.

### Other Key Headlines

**New ADM decisions have fallen** The number of Adoption Decision Maker (ADM) decisions fell by 10% from 6,480 to 5,840, between 2012-13 and 2013-14. This is in line with the falls since quarter 2 2013-14 suggested by quarterly data. Quarterly data suggests that the number of new decisions has continued to fall from 1,830 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 960 in quarter 1 2014-15, a decrease of 47%.

**New placement orders granted have fallen** From 5,920 to 5,020, between 2012-13 and 2013-14. This is in line with the falls since quarter 2 2013-14 suggested by quarterly data. Quarterly data suggests new placement orders have continued to fall from 1,550 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 760 in quarter 1 2014-14, a decrease of 51%.

**5,050 children were adopted from care during 2013-14**

This is up 26% from 2012-13 and 63% from 2010-11. This is the highest number of adoptions since the current data collection began in 1992. Quarterly data suggests that there were 1,230 children adopted from care in quarter 1 2014-15. This is a decrease of 7% from 1,330 in quarter 4 2013-14.

The chart below shows the number of adoption orders, residence orders and Special Guardianship Orders over time.

**Adopter approvals have decreased**

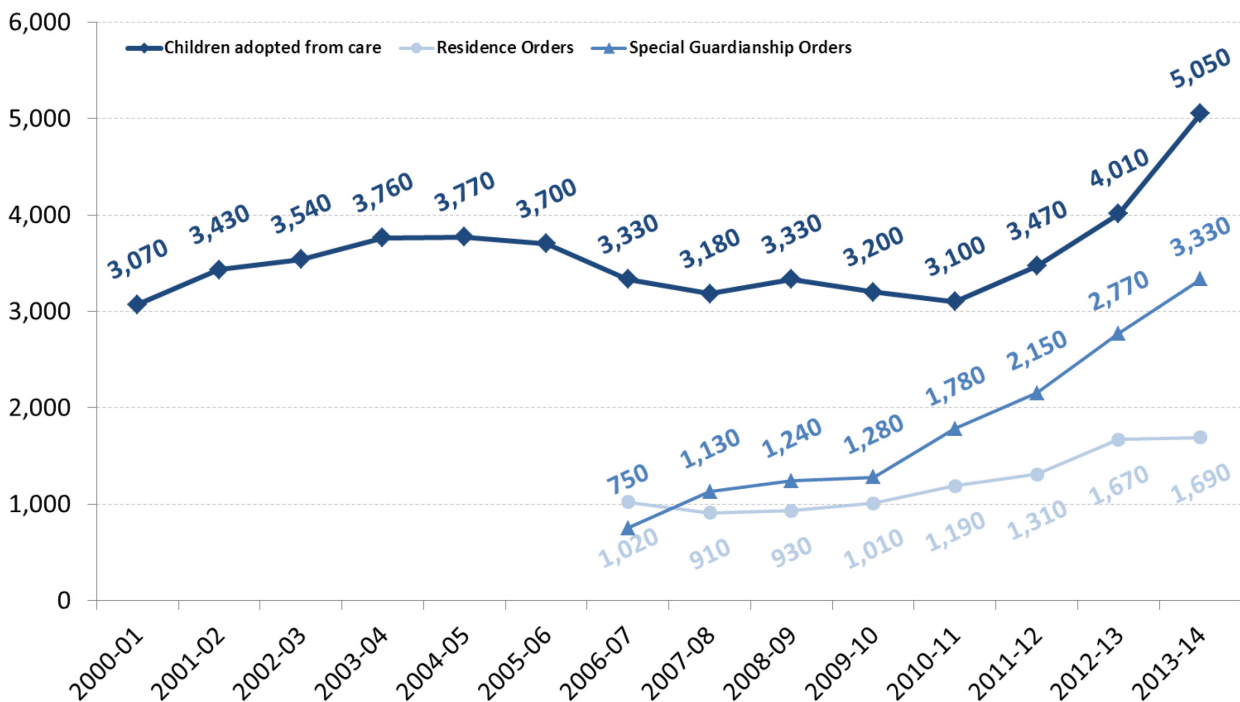
The number of adopter families approved for adoption has decreased by 14% from 1,380 in quarter 4 2013-14 to 1,200 in quarter 1 2014-15.

**Stage 1 takes 11 weeks**

For adopters approved through the new 2 stage process, the average time taken to complete stage 1 was 76 days (11 weeks) whilst stage 2 took 116 days (17 weeks).

**Stage 2 takes 17 weeks**

**Number of children adopted from care, residence orders and special guardianship orders**



## Data Sources

**New data** This document has been updated with new SSDA903 data providing information on children in 2013-14 and new data from the ALB quarterly survey providing information on children and adopters in the first quarter of 2014-15 (April to June).

**SSDA903 data** Local authorities provide data on their looked after children using the SSDA903 collection. Data are collected from all local authorities. The information is collected at child level and includes information about the child's characteristics and their dates for each stage of the care process, including adoption. The data goes through thorough quality assurance and local authorities are able to update their historic data annually. We therefore view this as the most robust source of information on adoption. It is used to produce the Looked After Children statistical first release (SFR) and the Adoption Scorecards. The most recent data covers the year ending 31 March 2014. The SFR can be found [here](#).

**ALB quarterly survey** From quarter 4 2013-14, responsibility for quarterly surveys transferred (from the DfE for local authorities and the CVAA for voluntary adoption agencies) to the ALB. The ALB collection form includes new variables, the biggest change being that adopter data is requested at adopter level (previous collections asked for this aggregated to agency level). This was also the first time voluntary adoption agencies were asked for the same adopter information as local authorities.

All local authorities and all voluntary adoption agencies provided a return in quarter 1 2014-15. The response rate for the adoptions information was 100% whilst the response rate for the adopters information was 95% (144 local authorities), an improvement on quarter 4 (76%). Estimates for 2013-14 are based on data provided by local authorities who returned in all four quarters of the year. Therefore the analysis includes returns from 53% of local authorities which have been aggregated up to the regional level. The 2013-14 figures have been revised since the last pack due to further data being received from local authorities and revised historical information being provided in the quarter 1 returns. Figures relating to quarter 1 2014-15 are based on all data provided for that quarter.

**Ofsted data** Ofsted publish annual data on the recruitment of adopters and the children placed with them. Data is collected on both local authority recruitment and voluntary adoption agency recruitment. We include information on adopter timeliness taken from this collection in this pack. Data relating to 2013-14 will be published in November.



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