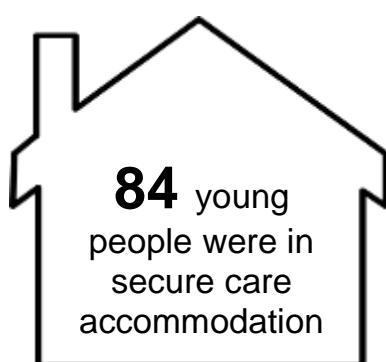
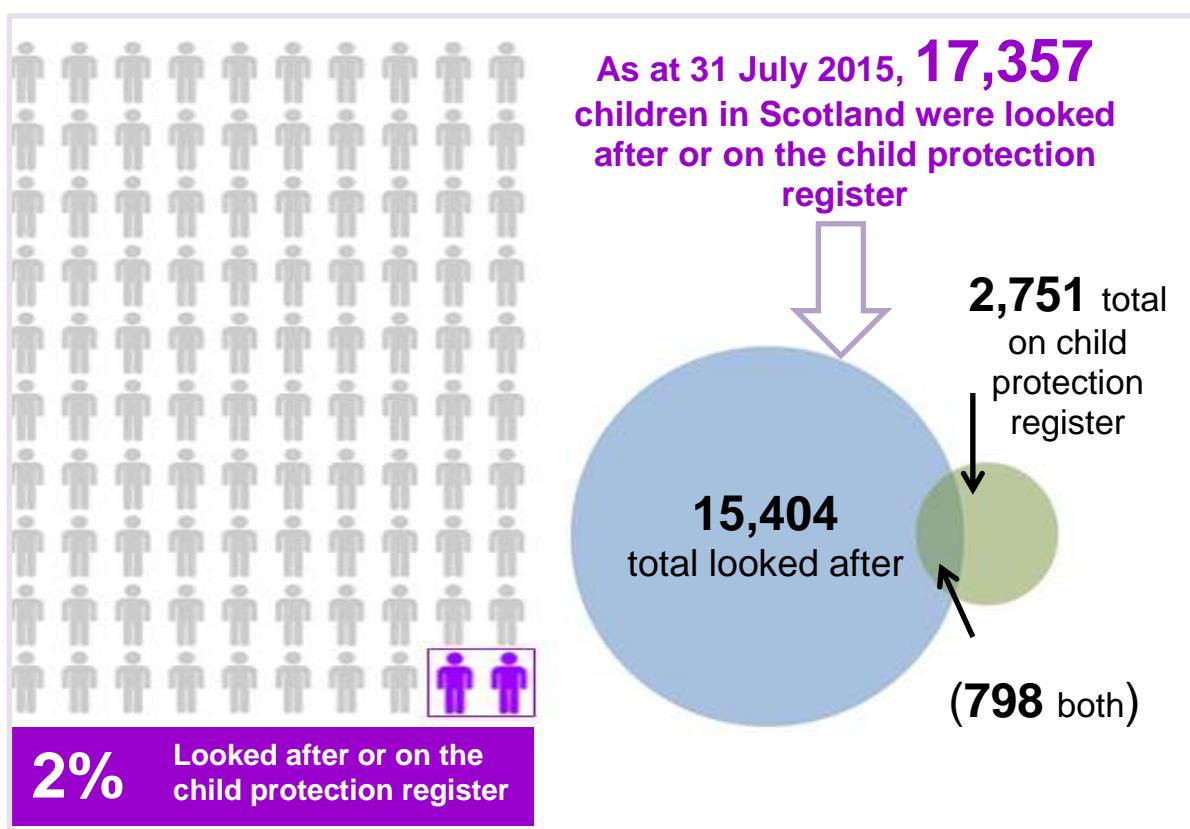


CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2014-15



Comparisons with 2013-14:

1% decrease in number of children looked after

4% decrease in number of children on child protection register

8 more residents, on average, during the year in secure care accommodation

Contents

Introduction.....	3
What do these statistics include?	3
How do children come to be counted in these figures?.....	3
Children Looked After.....	4
Placement type	4
Children starting and ceasing to be looked after	7
Aftercare services	12
Cross-UK looked after comparisons.....	13
Child Protection.....	15
Children on the child protection register	15
Child protection registrations and deregistrations	19
Within Scotland.....	23
Cross-UK child protection comparisons	23
Secure Care Accommodation	25
Bed complement.....	25
Capacity and usage.....	26
Cross-UK secure care accommodation comparisons	29
What are the trends in other children's social work data?	30
Are these figures accurate?.....	31
Background notes	32
1. Context and related publications	32
2. Data sources and coverage.....	34
3. Definitions and notation	36
4. Data Quality and revisions.....	42
5. Enquiries.....	44
Annex A	45
Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15.....	45
Publication tables.....	45
Annex B	47
Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15.....	47
Additional tables	47

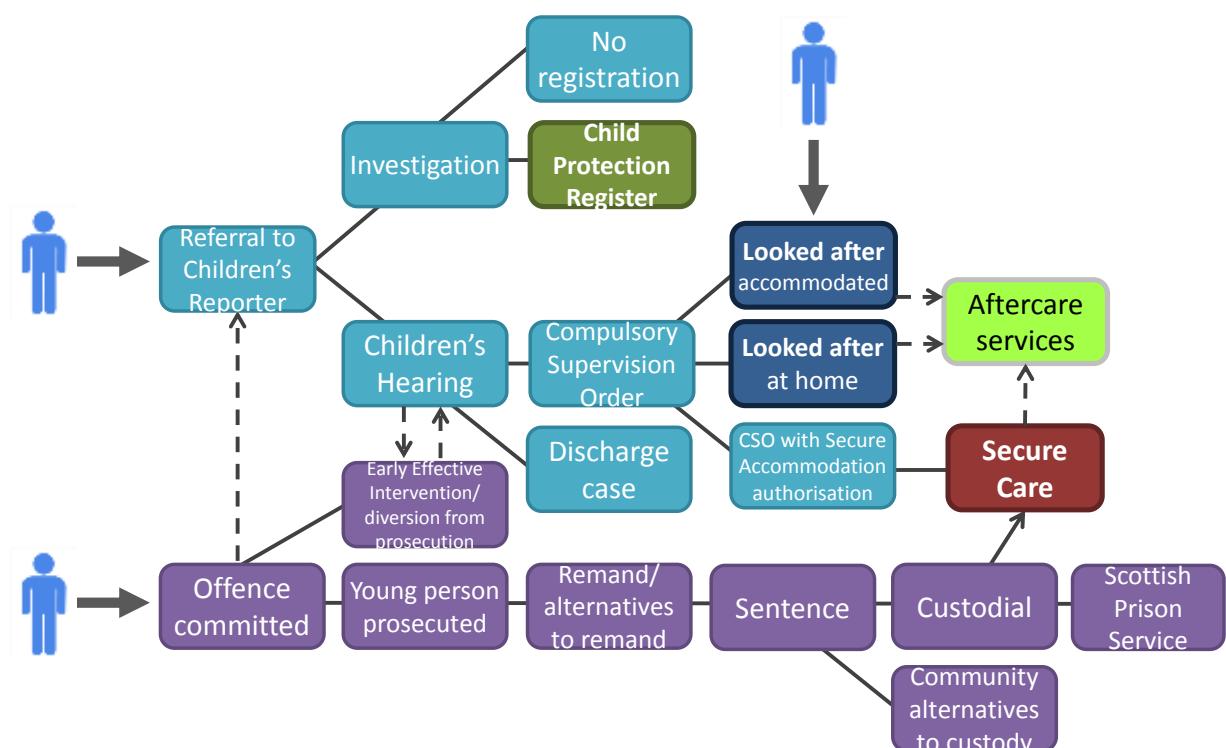
Introduction

What do these statistics include?

We present here information collected from local authorities and secure units on children and young people who were formally looked after, under child protection measures, or in secure care at some point between August 2014 and July 2015.

How do children come to be counted in these figures?

There are a number of ways that a child may come to be looked after, on the child protection register or in secure care. Children may be referred to the Children's Reporter, become voluntarily looked after or come via the criminal justice system. The diagram below gives a high-level illustration of the main routes by which children would be included. See background note 1.1 for more information.



Children Looked After



The total number of looked after children has fallen for the third year in a row



The use of permanence orders is increasing year on year



Episodes of care continue to lengthen – the number of episodes longer than five years have doubled since 2008

This section presents data on children looked after during the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015. This will be referred to as 2015 for ease of reporting (with 2013-14 referred to as 2014 and so on). Local authorities have a responsibility to provide support to certain vulnerable young people, known as ‘looked after children’. A young person may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, abuse, complex disabilities which require specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system.

At 31 July 2015, there were 15,404 looked after children – a decrease of 196 (or one per cent) from 2014. This is the third consecutive year the numbers have decreased following a peak of 16,248 in 2012; the numbers leaving care each year have been consistently more than number starting.

Placement type

There are several types of placement that looked after children or young people could be placed in, including at home (where a child is subject to a Supervision Requirement and continues to live in their normal place of residence), foster care, residential unit or school, a secure unit or a kinship placement (where they are placed with friends or relatives).

Table 1.1 and Chart 1 show there is a continued decreasing trend in children being looked after at home with this group accounting for only 25 per cent of the total in 2015 compared to 32 per cent in 2012. Increasing numbers of children are being looked after away from home

in community settings, in particular with foster carers (36 per cent of the total). 2014 was the fourth year running that there were more children looked after by foster carers/prospective adopters than looked after at home: there are now 39 per cent more in these categories. The number of children in kinship care now also exceeds those looked after at home. Numbers of children looked after in residential care settings have been fairly static over recent years, although this year there was a six per cent increase, driven mainly by an increase in the ‘other residential’ category.

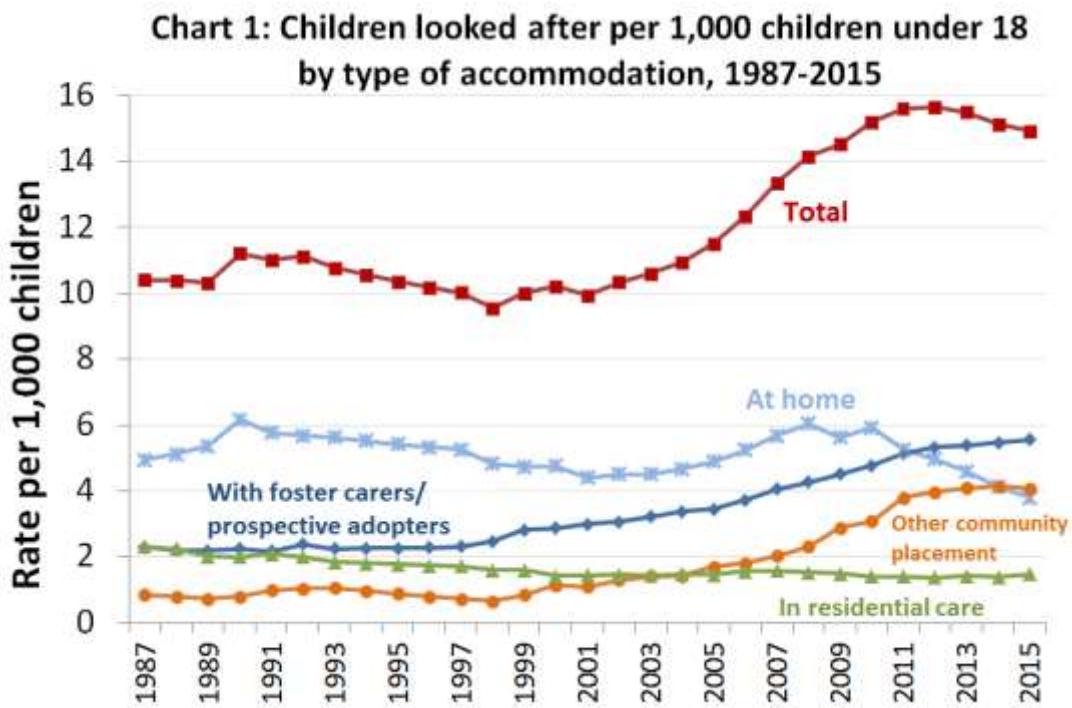
Table 1.1: Number of children looked after by type of accommodation, 2012-2015⁽¹⁾

Type of accommodation	2012	2013	2014	2015
In the community	14,815	14,566	14,133	13,875
At home with parents	5,153	4,762	4,142	3,927
With friends/relatives	4,076	4,183	4,217	4,158
With foster carers provided by LA	3,946	3,906	4,002	3,891
With foster carers purchased by LA	1,333	1,427	1,520	1,587
With prospective adopters	262	243	201	264
In other community	45	45	51	48
Residential Accommodation	1,433	1,466	1,467	1,529
In local authority home	564	575	579	564
In voluntary home	90	112	117	133
In residential school	451	439	392	402
In secure accommodation	95	65	82	79
Crisis care	14	12	15	18
In other residential ⁽²⁾	219	263	282	333
Total	16,248	16,032	15,600	15,404

(1) Information on the number of children looked after by accommodation type is available back to 1971 in Table 1.1a of the excel version of the publication tables:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork>

(2) The bulk of the ‘other residential’ placements are private/independent residential placements for young people with complex needs.



When children become looked after, a care plan should be produced. The care plan should include detailed information about the child's care, education and health needs, as well as the responsibilities of the local authority, the parents and the child. A care plan is considered 'current' if it has been produced or reviewed in the past 12 months.

Table 1.2: Children looked after with and without a current care plan, at 31 July 2015⁽¹⁾

	Looked after at home	Looked after away from home	Total
Number			
With a current care plan	3,686	10,967	14,653
Without a current care plan	241	510	751
Percentage			
With a current care plan	93.9	95.6	95.1
Without a current care plan	6.1	4.4	4.9

(1) Some children without a current care plan may have one in progress on this date; local recording may differ with regard to when a care plan is recorded as being in place.

Table 1.2 shows that 95 per cent of the 15,404 children who were looked after at the end of July 2015 had a current care plan, a four per cent

decrease on 2014. There was little difference between children looked after at home and away from home – 93.9 per cent of those at home and 95.6 per cent of those away from home had a current care plan.

Children starting and ceasing to be looked after

The reduction in total numbers being looked after is simply because more people are leaving care than starting. A child will be counted more than once in each set of figures if they have started being looked after and/or ceased being looked after more than once during the reporting year.

There were 4,198 children who started to be looked after during 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015 – the lowest figure since 2005. Table 1.3 shows a two per cent decrease from 2014 (4,295) and a 14 per cent decrease from 2010 (4,859).

Table 1.3: Number of children starting to be looked after by age 2005, 2010, 2014-2015^{(1),(2)}

Age	2005	2010	2014	2015	% 2005	% 2010	% 2014	% 2015
Under 1	400	650	700	668	9	13	16	16
1-4	857	1,146	1,042	933	20	24	24	22
5-11	1,255	1,463	1,303	1,305	29	30	30	31
12-15	1,644	1,555	1,198	1,232	38	32	28	29
16-17	175	45	52	58	4	1	1	1
18-21 ⁽³⁾	-	0	0	2	0	0	-	0
Unknown	2	0	0	0	0	0	-	-
Total	4,333	4,859	4,295	4,198	100	100	100	100

(1) Table excludes planned series of short term placements. The number of looked after children aged 18+ was not asked for prior to 2006. A child may start to be looked after more than once in a year and so may be counted more than once.

Full data by gender and age group for 2003-2015 is available in Table 1.3 of the excel version of the publication tables.

(2) Due to rounding, the percentage totals may not equal the sum of their parts.

(3) The 18-21 category in this table may include a small number of looked after young people who were over 21 years.

Children looked after

Over the last 10 years children have started to be looked after at younger ages. In 2005, 29 per cent of children starting to be looked after were aged under five. By 2015 this had risen to 38 per cent, although this is a three percentage point decrease from last year. The figures have been broadly steady since 2011. A large proportion of this group are the under-one year olds, and the numbers in this youngest group have almost doubled since 2005, but are also mostly static since 2011. There was a corresponding decrease in the proportion of children aged 12+ being looked after (those aged 5-11 remained flat).

There were slightly more boys starting to be looked after in 2015 – 53 per cent compared to 47 per cent of girls; generally there is a fairly balanced gender split with children starting to be looked after.

Table 1.4: Number of children ceasing to be looked after, by length of time looked after, 2005, 2010, 2014-2015^{(1),(2)}

Length of time looked after	2005	2010	2014	2015	% 2005	% 2010	% 2014	% 2015
Under 6 weeks	578	342	367	293	16	8	8	7
6 weeks to under 6 months	390	349	398	371	11	8	8	8
6 months to under 1 year	617	764	646	578	17	17	14	13
1 year to under 3 years	1,308	1,811	1,739	1,619	37	40	37	37
3 years to under 5 years	395	672	800	739	11	15	17	17
5 years and over	278	566	746	767	8	13	16	18
Total	3,566	4,504	4,696	4,367	100	100	100	100

(1) Excludes children who are on a planned series of short term placements. If a child ceases to be looked after more than once during the year they will be counted more than once.

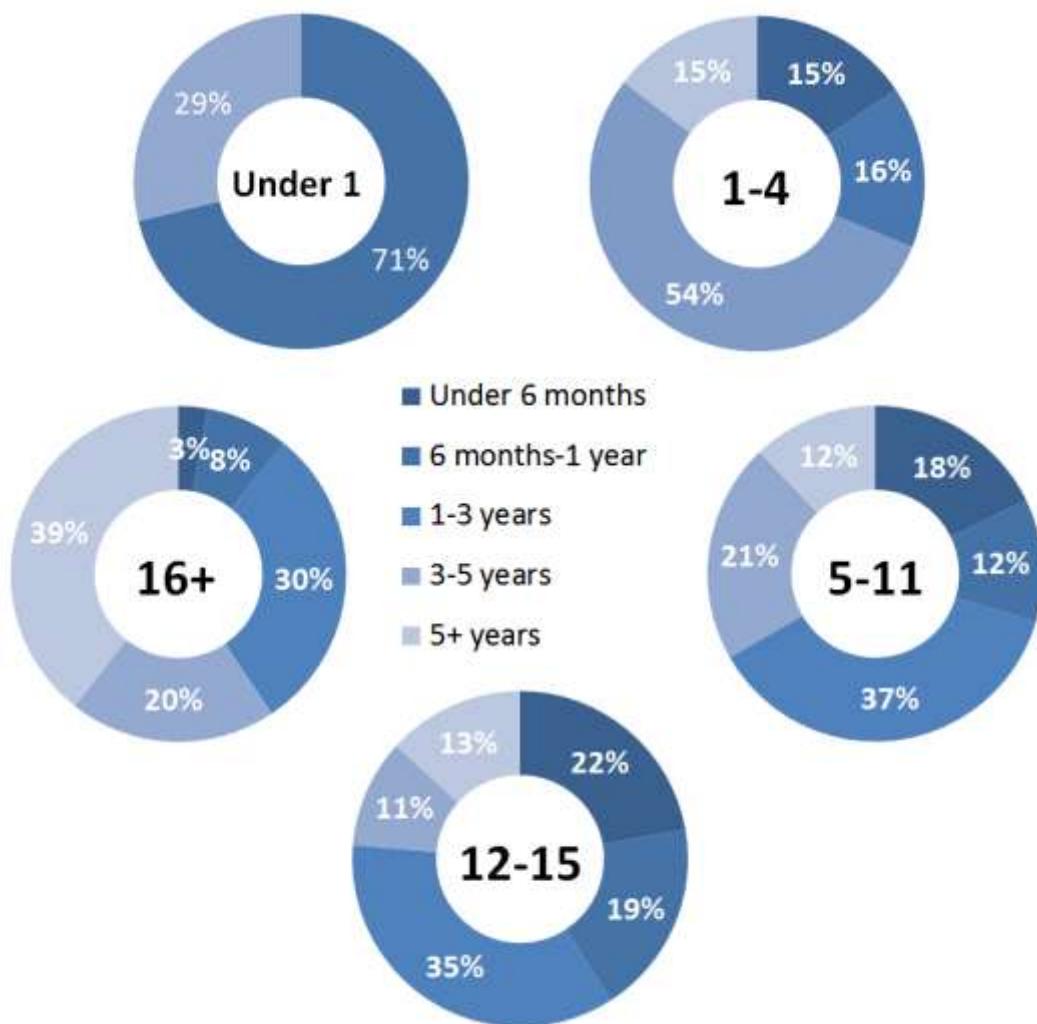
(2) Some totals do not exactly equal the sum of their component parts due to the effects of rounding.

Table 1.4 shows the number of children who ceased being looked after between 2005 and 2015. There were 4,367 children who ceased being looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015, a decrease of seven per cent from the 2014 figure (4,696) and the smallest amount of care leavers since 2007. However, this still represents an overall increase of 22 per cent since 2005, the year in which figures reached a low point of 3,566.

The length of time children had been looked after at the point they stopped being looked after remained similar between 2014 and 2015, but longer-term, there are many more children being looked after for more than three years, and many fewer in care for only a period of weeks. This implies that children are more likely to remain looked after until a permanent placement is found.

The length of time spent in care is also related to the age of the child. Clearly, there's a correlation with age, as a child cannot be in care for longer than they've been alive, but there are various different patterns that can be seen in each age group. One notable point is that there's a marked increase in the number of placements of less than a year in the 12-15 age group. This may be related to the changes in family and personal dynamics as children reach puberty.

Chart 2: Length of time children had been looked after when ceasing to be looked after, by age, 2015



Just as children are starting to be looked after at a younger age, children are also ceasing to be looked after at younger ages. The number of children ceasing to be looked after who were under the age of 12 increased by 53 per cent between 2005 and 2015, although it should be noted that 2005 had the fewest care leavers on record. Fuller information can be found in the published Excel tables which accompany this release – see Annex B for details.

Table 1.5: Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after by destination, 2011-2015⁽¹⁾

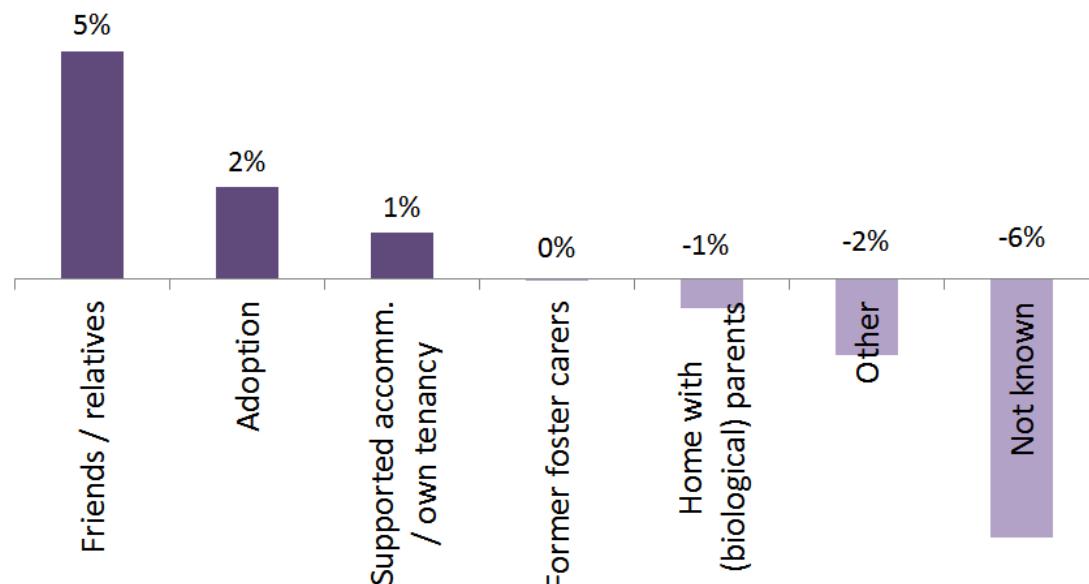
Destination after leaving care	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Home with (biological) parents	62.0	60.0	68.2	67.5	65.7	61.4
Friends/relatives	11.8	13.1	12.1	13.8	14.4	17.0
Former foster carers	1.9	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.7	1.8
Adoption	4.8	5.7	5.7	6.3	7.2	6.9
Supported accommodation/own tenancy	5.7	6.2	5.5	5.7	6.1	6.8
Other ⁽²⁾	6.7	4.9	5.8	4.5	3.9	5.0
Not known	7.0	9.0	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(1) Table excludes planned series of short term placements. A child may cease to be looked after more than once during the year and will be counted once for each episode of care ending. Some totals do not exactly equal the sum of their component parts due to the effects of rounding.

(2) "Other" includes residential care, homeless, in custody and other destination.

Upon leaving care, children are allocated to a destination category (Table 1.5). More than half of children (61.4 per cent in 2014-15) go home to their biological parents and 17.0 per cent go to live with friends or relatives. The percentage leaving care to go home has fallen consistently over at least the last three years. Due to the large number of unknowns before 2012, trends are not as clear for that period. The increase in data quality, as shown by the shrinkage of the 'Not known' category, is illustrated in Chart 3.

Chart 3: Percentage difference by destination between 2010 and 2015



Local authorities are required to carry out a pathway assessment for aftercare services on young people who are over school leaving age but are still looked after within three months of the young person becoming compulsorily supported. These young people should be provided with a pathway co-ordinator who assesses their needs and a pathway plan which outlines how the local authority plans to meet the needs of the young person.

Of those young people who had reached their minimum school leaving age at the time they ceased to be looked after during 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015, 74 per cent had a pathway plan and 79 per cent had a pathway co-ordinator. Where a young person's final placement type was 'at home' they were less likely to have a pathway plan or a pathway co-ordinator than if the final placement type was 'away from home'. Table 1.6 shows that, of children whose last placement was at home, 63 per cent had a pathway plan and 66 per cent a pathway coordinator, compared with 81 and 85 per cent (respectively) of those whose final placement type was 'away from home'.

Table 1.6: Pathway plans and nominated pathway co-ordinators of young people who were beyond minimum school-leaving age on the date they ceased to be looked after during 2014-15^{(1),(2)}

	% Looked after at home	% Looked after away from home	Total %
With a pathway plan	63	81	74
Without a pathway plan	37	19	26
With a nominated pathway co-ordinator	66	85	79
Without a nominated pathway co-ordinator	34	15	21
Total	100	100	100

(1) Figures include all episodes of ceasing to be looked after beyond minimum school leaving age (i.e. a child may be counted more than once).

(2) It may be the case that some young people who don't have a relevant pathway plan/coordinator may be receiving similar support from adult services instead.

Aftercare services

Local authorities have a duty to provide advice, guidance and assistance for young people who – at the point they leave care – have reached minimum school leaving age, referred to as ‘aftercare services’. Table 1.7 shows the proportion of young people eligible for aftercare services on 31 July 2015 by age and their economic activity. ‘Economic activity’ refers to whether a young person was in education, employment or training.

There were 3,599 young people reported to be eligible for aftercare services on 31 July 2015, of whom only 31 per cent were known to not be receiving aftercare, broadly similar to 2014. Forty-seven per cent of those receiving aftercare for whom current activity is known were in education, training or employment. This is a one per cent increase on 2014, although direct comparisons should be treated with caution as numbers are susceptible to fluctuation.

For young people eligible for aftercare, more than half have taken up these services in some way. More of the eldest group (19+) are not in education, training or employment, and more of this group are receiving aftercare.

Being in education, training or employment is correlated with age – there are progressively more in this category as they get older.

Table 1.7: Percentage of young people eligible for aftercare services by age and economic activity, at 31 July 2015⁽¹⁾

Economic activity	15-16	17	18	19+	All
In education, training or employment	32	22	27	30	28
Not in education, training or employment	22	29	29	36	31
Not known	12	11	9	12	11
Not receiving aftercare	34	38	35	23	31
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Of those in education, training or employment					
In higher education	19	14	11	17	15
In education other than HE	43	34	37	28	33
In training or employment	39	52	52	55	52
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Not in education, training or employment					
- due to short term illness	*	*	*	2	1
- due to long term illness or disability	0	*	*	8	6
- due to looking after family	*	*	9	9	8
- due to other circumstances	96	88	84	82	84
Total	100	100	100	100	100

(1) Cells containing * represent numbers that are suppressed to maintain confidentiality. Due to rounding, the totals for percentages may not equal the sum of their parts.

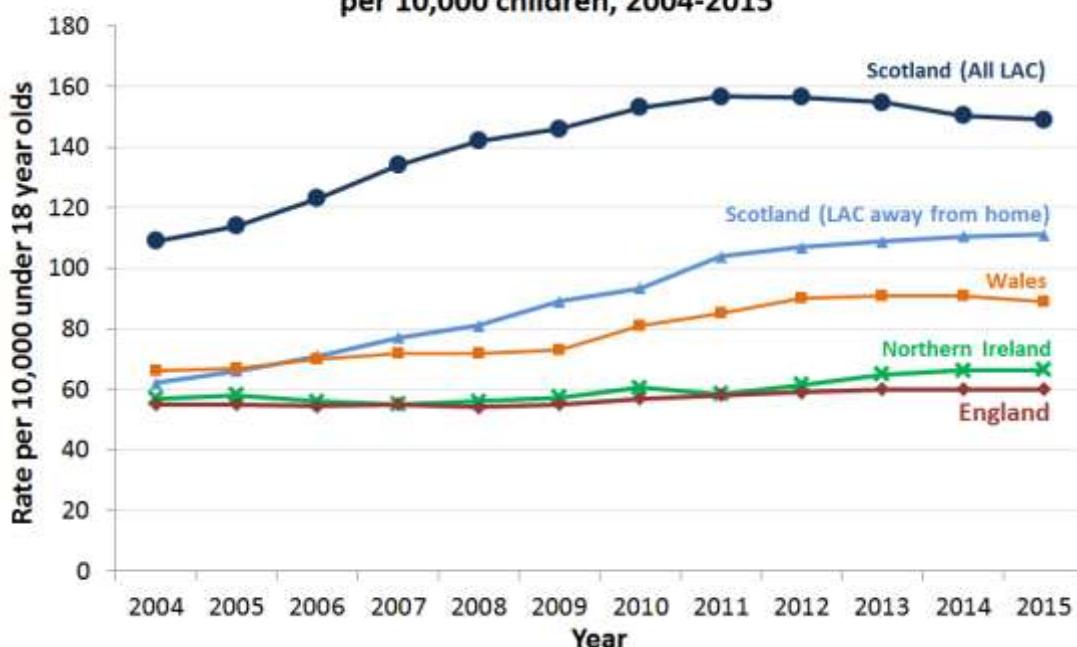
Cross-UK looked after comparisons

The definition of “looked after children” varies across the countries within the UK. In Scotland children looked after at home are included in the definition and in the statistics whereas, they are usually excluded in the England and Wales statistics. As a result, it is not meaningful to simply compare rates in Scotland with the rest of the UK – we are considering excluding s.25 and s.20 orders to mitigate this. To improve

comparability, the Scotland figure at 31 March has been used below, rather than the published 31 July figure.

Chart 4 gives Scottish figures both including and excluding children looked after at home. This shows that, even when children looked after at home are excluded, in the last three years, the rate is still increasing more quickly than in the rest of the UK. Northern Ireland is increasing at a slightly slower rate. England is steady, and Wales has fallen slightly after years of increase. This sharp increase in numbers in Scotland over the past 10 years coincides with a focus on intervening earlier in the lives of vulnerable children and may explain the higher rate in Scotland. This is reflected in the data which shows looked after children tend to be younger in Scotland than the rest of the UK – 12 per cent of looked after children in Scotland are aged 16 or over, compared to 22 per cent in England, 18 per cent in Northern Ireland and 17 per cent in Wales.

Chart 4: Cross-UK comparison of rate of looked after children per 10,000 children, 2004-2015



Links to the cross-UK data underlying Chart 4 can be found in Background Note 1.7. There is more information on the comparability of looked after children data across the UK:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/socialservicestats>

There are **additional tables** on looked after children available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork>

Child Protection



4 per cent decrease from the previous year in **total number** on the child protection register



More children on the child protection register for **longer than a year**



More children leaving the register due to 'Improved home situation'

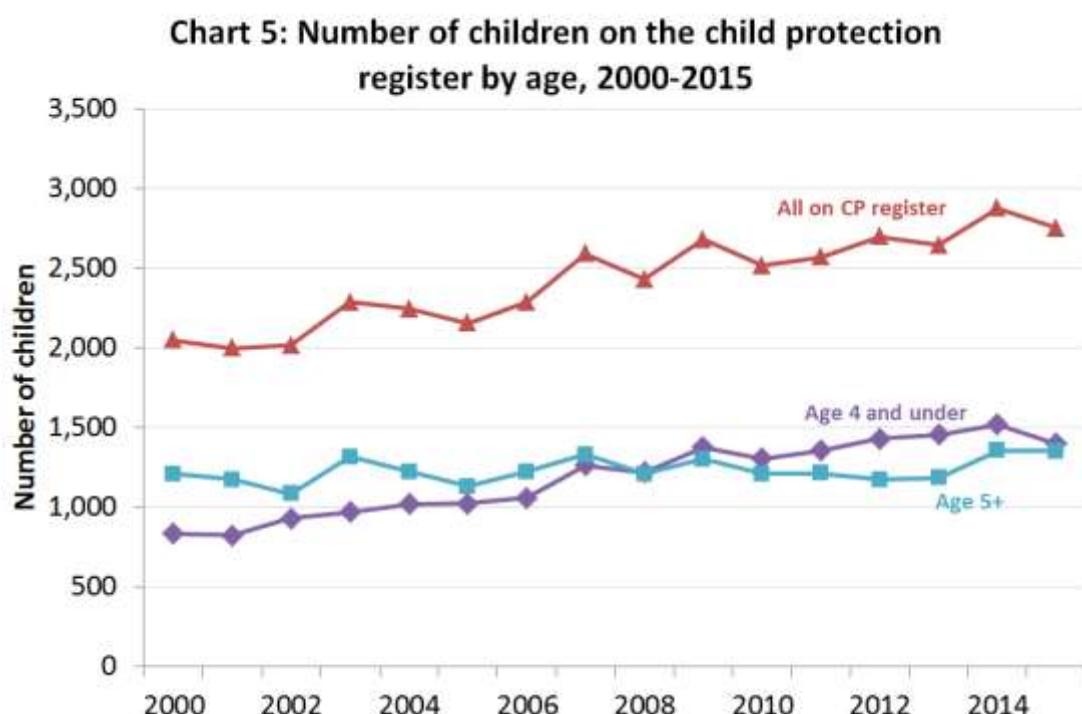
This section presents data on children on the child protection register from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015. This will be referred to as 2015 for ease of reporting (with 2013-14 referred to as 2014 etc.). Child protection means protecting a child from abuse or neglect. This can either be in cases where abuse or neglect has taken place, or in cases where a likelihood of significant harm or neglect has been identified. The risk of harm or neglect will be considered at a Child Protection Case Conference. Where a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, their name will be added to the child protection register (a child protection registration).

2014-15 was only the third year that child protection data has been collected entirely at individual level. With three years of individual data now available, it has been possible to further verify the robustness of previously-collected data, which gives a high level of confidence in its accuracy. In future years, additional breakdowns and analysis will be available as the series lengthens. Some of the 2013-14 figures have been revised as part of the 2014-15 validation process.

Children on the child protection register

As Chart 5 shows, the number of children on the child protection register has fluctuated regularly, but there is a general upwards trend. The total has increased by 34 per cent between 2000 and 2015 (from 2,050 to 2,751). Following updated information from local authorities, the 2014 data has been revised down slightly from the initial published

figure from 2,882 to 2,877. The number of children registered in 2015 is higher than every year in the time series apart from 2014; it has fallen 4 per cent since last year. It should be noted that relatively large year-on-year changes are experienced in a number of local authorities (see Table 2.2 for local authority level breakdowns).



In 2015, 51 per cent of children on the child protection register were aged under five. Since 2008 there have been more children aged under 5 than over five on the child protection register. However, in 2015, there was a seven per cent fall in the number of those aged 5 and under, and this has driven the overall fall in the number of children on the register.

There is no strong gender pattern among children on the child protection register – 50 per cent were boys, 45 per cent were girls and the remaining five per cent were unborn children. Because of a change in how unborn children were recorded by local authorities in 2010, figures for unborn children are only comparable from 2011 onwards.

Table 2.1: Number of children on the child protection register by gender, 2012-2015⁽¹⁾

	2012	2013	2014 ⁽²⁾	2015	Rate per 1,000 under 16s 2015 ⁽³⁾
Boys	1,335	1,299	1,400	1,378	2.7
Girls	1,268	1,220	1,354	1,242	3.2
Unborns	93	125	123	131	-
Unknowns	2	1	0	0	-
All children	2,698	2,645	2,877	2,751	3.0

(1) Full data by gender and age group for 2000-2015 is available in Table 2.1 of the excel version of the publication tables.

(2) Revised since original publication. See background note 4.10 for more information.

(3) Source: National Records of Scotland, 2014 mid-year population estimates.

From Table 2.2 it can be seen that, in Scotland in 2015, 3.0 children in every 1,000 children under 16 were on the child protection register. At local authority level the rate varied from 0.2 per 1,000 children in Eilean Siar to 6.3 per 1,000 children in Clackmannanshire.

As is often the case, there is a lot of variability in the numbers of children on the child protection register at a local authority level. In many cases, there are no obvious reasons for changes, although in some areas, a large number of sibling groups entering the system has led to increasing numbers.

The large fall from 67 last year to 26 children reported in East Lothian is credited to the ‘Signs of Safety’¹ approach to case conferences, which aims to build a ‘safety network’ around the parents and child.

¹ http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/1366/child_protection_and_vetting/805/child_protection/3

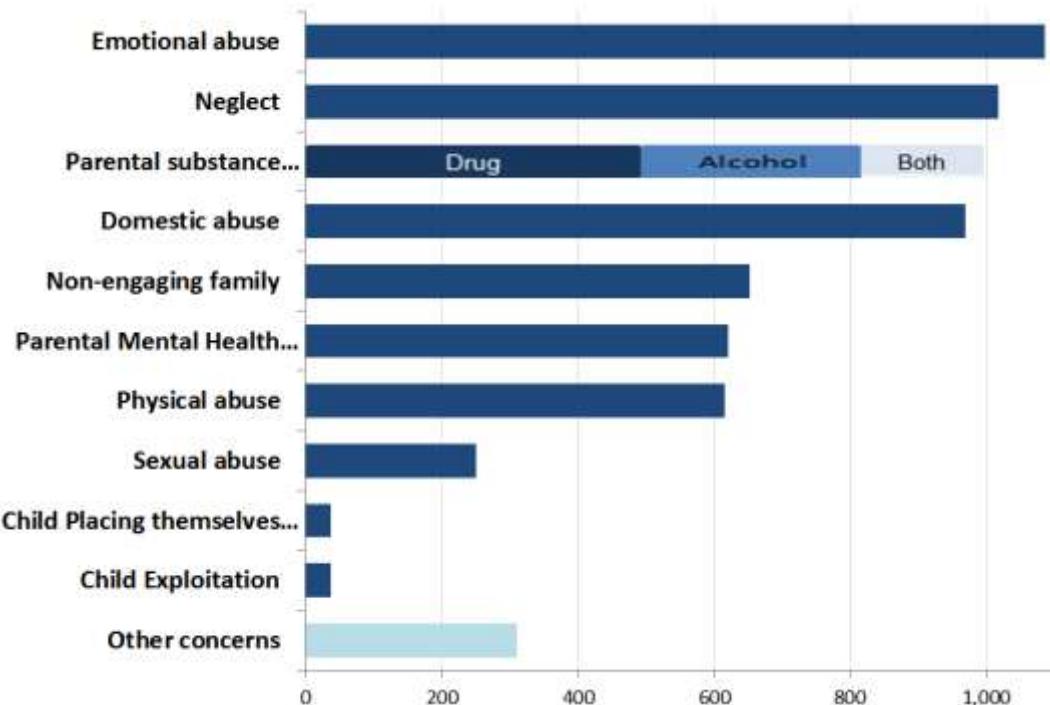
Table 2.2: Number of children on the child protection register and rate⁽¹⁾ per 1,000 population aged 0-15 by local authority, 2005 and 2015⁽²⁾

	2005		2015	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Aberdeen City	147	4.5	98	2.9
Aberdeenshire	108	2.3	90	1.8
Angus	53	2.6	88	4.5
Argyll & Bute	39	2.4	33	2.4
Clackmannanshire	12	1.3	57	6.3
Dumfries & Galloway	62	2.3	91	3.8
Dundee City	83	3.4	71	3.0
East Ayrshire	41	1.8	66	3.1
East Dunbartonshire	8	0.4	51	2.8
East Lothian	27	1.5	26	1.4
East Renfrewshire	15	0.8	33	1.8
Edinburgh, City of	234	3.3	256	3.4
Eilean Siar	13	2.7	1	0.2
Falkirk	68	2.4	75	2.7
Fife	118	1.8	182	2.8
Glasgow City	264	2.6	505	5.2
Highland	118	2.9	79	2.0
Inverclyde	34	2.2	42	3.2
Midlothian	71	4.5	29	1.8
Moray	70	4.1	45	2.7
North Ayrshire	27	1.0	90	3.9
North Lanarkshire	92	1.4	99	1.6
Orkney Isles	4	1.1	6	1.7
Perth & Kinross	37	1.5	82	3.3
Renfrewshire	69	2.2	85	2.8
Scottish Borders	37	1.8	28	1.5
Shetland	8	1.7	12	2.8
South Ayrshire	28	1.5	61	3.4
South Lanarkshire	115	2.0	187	3.4
Stirling	29	1.8	44	2.8
West Dunbartonshire	23	1.3	16	1.0
West Lothian	103	3.0	123	3.5
Scotland	2,157	2.3	2,751	3.0

(1) Source: National Records of Scotland, 2005, 2015 mid-year population estimates.

(2) Information for all years from 2007 is included in the publication tables.

Chart 6: Concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the child protection register, 2015



Since 2012, multiple concerns can be recorded at each case conference (rather than just the main category of abuse). This means that the total number of concerns is larger than the total number of registrations and that figures on concerns identified from 2012 onwards are not comparable to previous data on category of abuse/risk. For the 2,751 children on the child protection register at 31 July 2015 there were 6,769 concerns at the case conferences at which they were registered – an average of 2.5 concerns per conference. Chart 6 shows the most common concerns identified were emotional abuse (39 per cent), neglect (37 per cent) and parental substance misuse (36 per cent).

Child protection registrations and deregistrations

The number of registrations to and deregistrations from the child protection register have both increased over the last five years, although registrations has dropped this year. Table 2.3 shows that 15 per cent of children who were placed on the child protection register during 2014-15 had been on a child protection register before. This

figure has fluctuated slightly over the past five years, but has consistently been around 16 per cent.

Table 2.3: Number of registrations following an initial, pre-birth or transfer-in case conference by length of time since previous deregistration, 2013-2015⁽¹⁾

	2013	2014	2015	% 2015
Never been registered before	3,574	3,819	3,690	84%
Registered before but time unknown	1	1	2	-
Less than 6 months	114	111	112	3%
6 months - < 1 year	88	108	91	2%
1 year - < 18 months	73	94	95	2%
18 months - < 2 years	54	98	67	2%
2 years or more	318	361	325	7%
Not known if been registered before	29	30	11	0%
Proportion of registrations to children who had been registered before ⁽²⁾	15%	17%	16%	
Total	4,251	4,622	4,393	100%

(1) Information back to 2007 is included in the excel version of the publication tables.

(2) Excludes cases where it is not known if a child had been registered before.

**Chart 7: Percentage of deregistrations by length of time
on the child protection register, 2007-2015**

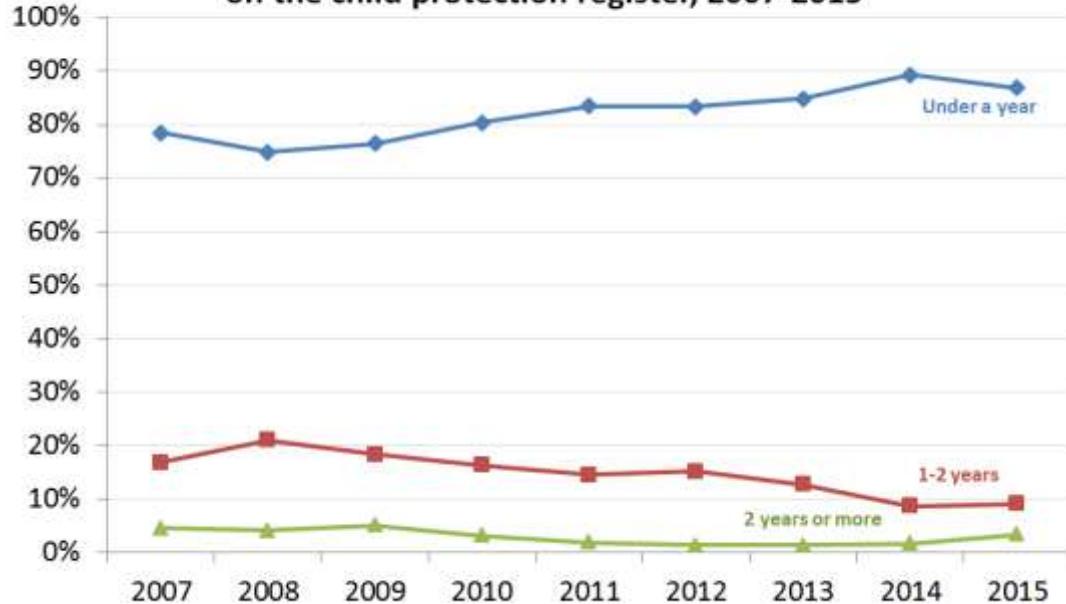


Chart 7 shows that, while there is an increase in number of children registered, the length of time for which children are registered had decreased for a period of seven years. However, in 2015, there was a jump of 22 per cent in the number of placements of longer than a year, although this still only accounts for 13 per cent of the overall number.

Table 2.4: Number of deregistrations from the child protection register by length of time on register and reason for deregistration, 2013-2015⁽¹⁾

	2013	2014	2015	% 2015
Length of time registered				
Less than 6 months	2,012	2,492	2,474	55%
6 months to under 1 year	1,576	1,431	1,456	32%
1 year to under 18 months	409	248	283	6%
18 months to under 2 years	132	134	130	3%
2 years or more	58	77	156	3%
No date of registration	41	12	23	1%
Reason for deregistration				
Child taken into care & risk reduced	617	670	610	13%
Child with other carers	322	334	259	6%
Child died	8	5	6	0%
Removal of perpetrator	123	106	167	4%
Improved home situation	2,136	2,187	2,491	55%
Child automatically de-registered due to age	7	15	8	0%
Child moved away - no continued risk	21	48	47	1%
Other reason	993	1,028	934	21%
Reason not known	1	1	-	-
Total	4,228	4,394	4,522	100%

(1) Information for all years back to 2007 is included in the excel version of the publication tables.

Table 2.4 shows the ongoing increase in deregistrations. There were 4,537 deregistrations from the child protection in the year to 31 July 2015, a four per cent increase on 2014 and a 42 per cent increase on 2008. The most common reason for deregistration in 2014-15 (in 55 per cent of cases) was an improved home situation.

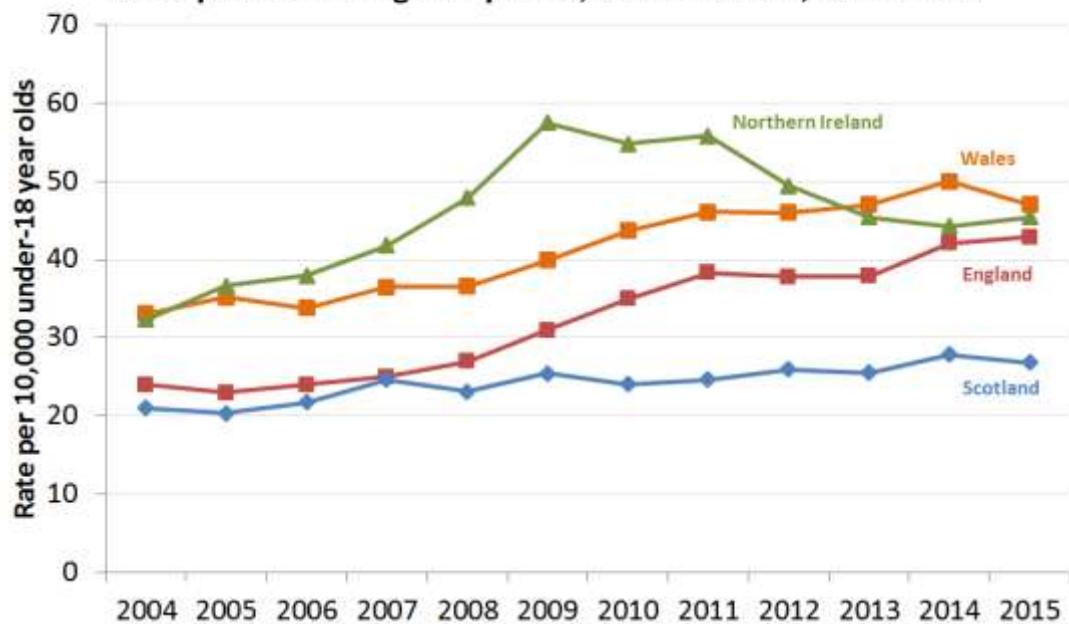
Within Scotland

Across Scotland, 17.6 per thousand under 18s are looked after or on the child protection register, but there is variation across local authorities. The rate is highest in Glasgow (with 35.8 children per 1,000 under 18s) and lowest in East Renfrewshire, (with 8.6 per children per 1,000 under 18s). In general rates are higher in the West of Scotland and urban areas.

Cross-UK child protection comparisons

Child protection systems across the United Kingdom vary but are generally comparable. Scotland's collection year runs from 1 August to 31 July, so end-year figures are reported at 31 July, while the collection year in England, Wales and Northern Ireland runs from 1 April to 31 March (so end-year figures are at 31 March). The time series of individual-level data is now long enough in Scotland to allow a figure to be reported at 31 March for this comparison.

Chart 8: Cross-UK comparison of rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 under 18s, 2004-2015



While Scotland has seen an increasing trend in the rate of registrations to the child protection register over the last decade, it is not as steep as the increase in England and Wales over the same period and remains at the lowest rates across the UK. Northern Ireland has been the outlier in terms of its trends over recent years, but now it appears that the other

three parts of the UK are converging, with Scotland remaining noticeably low.

There are links to the cross-UK data underlying Chart 8 in Background Note 1.8 and more information on the comparability of child protection data across the UK here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/socialservicestats>

Additional tables on child protection are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork>

Secure Care Accommodation



Average number of residents has increased this year, reversing recent declines



Emergency bed usage is at highest recorded level

This section presents 2014-15 data on secure care accommodation. Secure care normally refers to accommodation for vulnerable young people who are likely to abscond and they are at risk of harm to themselves or others. They are usually placed in secure care on welfare grounds by the Children's Hearing System. Children can also be placed on offence grounds by the Hearings System or the Criminal Justice System.

As secure care accommodation is in place for a very specific group of individuals, numbers will be much smaller than for those who are looked after or on the child protection register. There is no apparent connection between trends – while increases have been seen for children on the child protection register over recent years, decreases have been experienced by those who are looked after or in secure care accommodation. It can be seen this year that trends in child protection and secure have both reversed.

Bed complement

There were 90 secure places available in five secure units excluding emergency beds on 31 July 2015 (Table 3.1). It should be noted that two units operated at reduced capacity for part of the year. There were an additional 6 beds available across these units for emergency and respite use – these would normally only be used if required and on a very short-term basis. The average cost per week of a secure bed during 2014-15 was £5,495.

Table 3.1: Secure care unit bed complement at 31 July 2015⁽¹⁾

Unit	Bed Complement
Edinburgh Secure Services	12
Good Shepherd	18
Kibble	18
Rossie School	18
St. Mary's Kenmure	24
ALL UNITS	90

(1) St Mary's' capacity was reduced to 21 beds from June 2014 – April 2015 and Rossie's capacity was reduced to 14 from April 2014 – April 2015.

There was an average of 82 residents in secure care accommodation throughout 2014-15, an increase of 11 per cent from 74 residents in the previous year and reversing the recent downward trend (Table 3.2). The number of young people in secure care accommodation throughout the year ranged from 71 to 89.

Capacity and usage

Table 3.2: Secure care accommodation capacity⁽¹⁾ and usage, 2012-2015

	2013	2014	2015	% change 2014-15
Secure Accommodation				
Places at year end	90	90	90	0%
Admissions during the year	215	232	248	7%
Discharges during the year	228	226	245	8%
Average number of residents during the year	77	74	82	11%
Minimum number of residents during the year	66	60	71	18%
Maximum number of residents during the year	90	84	89	6%
Number of nights emergency bed used during the year	48	5	146	2,820%
Number of residents emergency bed used for during the year	15	3	13	333%

(1) Young people can be admitted and discharged more than once during the year.

Secure care accommodation

Table 3.3 shows that the number of young people in secure care accommodation on 31 July 2015 was 84. Following a three year decrease from 2009-10, this has increased in the last two years, most recently by four per cent.

Sixty-nine per cent of young people in secure care accommodation on 31 July 2015 were male and just under 40 per cent were aged 16 years and over. Young people in secure care accommodation tend to be older than those looked after and on the child protection registers. The data shows the majority (70 per cent) of young people in secure care accommodation are 15 years or older. This is a very different pattern from what is seen in the child protection and looked after children data where the majority of children are under five and 11 respectively.

Ninety-three per cent of young people in secure care accommodation on 31 July 2015 had at least one additional support need and by far the most common category of additional support need was “other social, emotional and behavioural difficulties” (89 per cent). This is much higher than the proportions reported for children who are looked after or on the child protection register.

Table 3.3: Young people in secure care accommodation by gender, age, additional support needs and length of stay, 2013-2015⁽¹⁾

	2013	2014	2015	% of 2015 total
Gender of residents				
Males	47	52	58	69%
Females	27	29	26	31%
Age of Residents				
13 years old or under	10	5	7	8%
14 years	9	12	18	21%
15 years	16	31	27	32%
16 years or over	39	33	32	38%
Residents with additional support needs⁽²⁾				
Any known additional support needs	73	76	78	93%
Additional support needs, where known				
Medically diagnosed social, emotional & behavioural difficulties	42	32	27	32%
Other social, emotional & behavioural difficulties	68	64	75	89%
Specific learning difficulties	11	5	1	1%
Mental health problems	26	31	28	33%
Language and communication disorder	6	10	8	10%
Visual impairment	13	13	14	17%
Other	31	32	28	33%
Length of stay of residents at year end				
Less than 1 month	18	13	16	19%
1 month to under 2 months	8	14	16	19%
2 months to under 3 months	12	14	13	15%
3 months to under 6 months	18	23	26	31%
6 months to under 1 year	10	9	9	11%
1 year or more	8	8	4	5%
Total	74	81	84	100%

(1) As at 31 July of each year. From 2011, centres have opened and closed and total capacity has changed. Please refer to footnote 1 in Table 3.2 for more information on this.

(2) Due to small numbers, some additional support needs categories have been included in the 'Other' category. These include 'autistic spectrum disorder', 'hearing impairment', 'learning disability' and 'other chronic illness/disability'. Note that a young person can have multiple additional support needs.

Cells containing * represent numbers that are suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

Cross-UK secure care accommodation comparisons

Table 3.4: Number of secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved and children accommodated at year end across the United Kingdom⁽¹⁾, 2013-15

		2013	2014	2015
England	Number of secure children's homes	16	16	14
	Places approved	274	276	232
	Children accommodated	187	211	194
Wales	Number of secure children's homes	1	1	1
	Places approved	22	22	22
	Children accommodated	19	18	11
Scotland⁽²⁾	Number of secure care units	5	5	5
	Places approved	90	90	90
	Children accommodated	74	80	85

(1) Sources: England and Wales - Children accommodated in secure children's homes statistics; Scotland - Secure care accommodation census; Northern Ireland, official/national statistics are not produced on secure care accommodation. The legal routes into secure care can vary between the four UK countries.

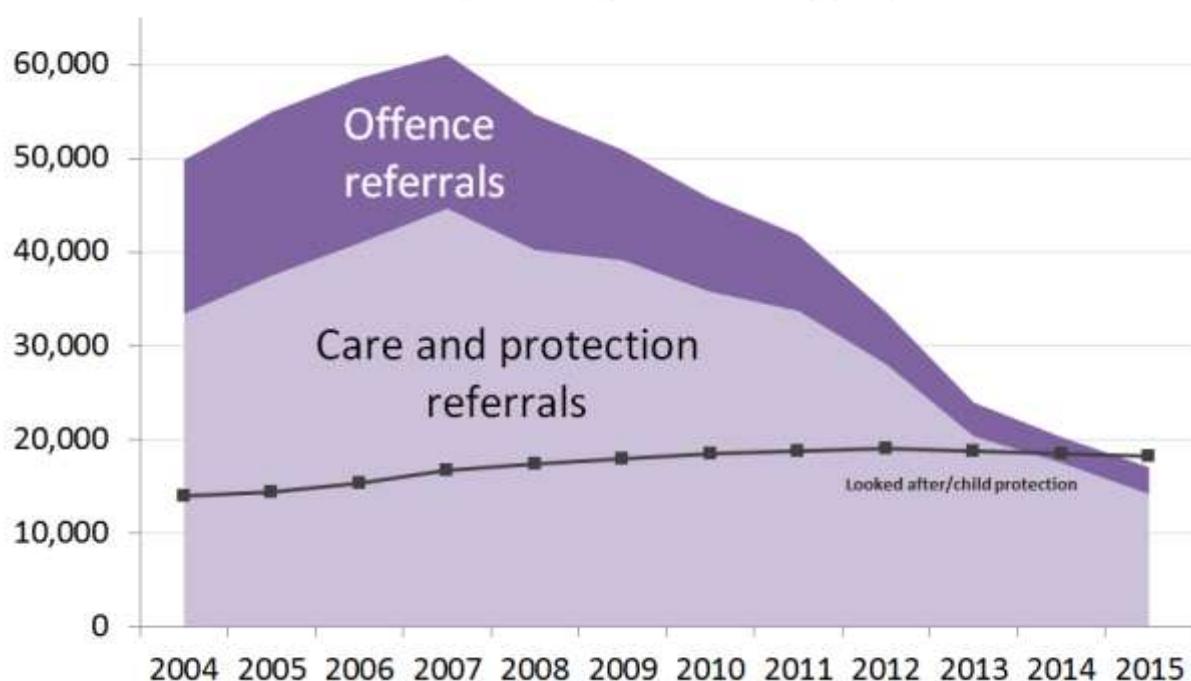
(2) To allow for comparison with England and Wales, Scotland's data for all years is 'at 31 March' within this table only.

Table 3.4 secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved and children accommodated across the United Kingdom. This shows a downward trend in places approved and children accommodated in Wales and England since 2014 – this is the opposite to the trend in Scotland.

What are the trends in other children's social work data?

Between 2004 to 2015 – a period in which the number of children who are looked after or on the child protection register has *increased* by 30 per cent – the number of children and young people referred to the Reporter *decreased* by close to 66 per cent². The decrease is the result of falls in both the number of offence and non-offence referrals. Offence referrals now only account for 17 per cent all referrals, down from 33 per cent in 2003/04. As with the looked after and child protection statistics, younger children make up an increasing proportion of referrals.

Chart 9: Children Referred to the Children's Reporter and numbers looked after/on child protection register, 2004-2015



The fall in referrals to the Reporter is likely due to pre-referral screening across many areas of the country leading to a reduction in referrals received by the Reporter where compulsory measures are not deemed

² SCRA Official Statistics

http://www.scra.gov.uk/cms_resources/SCRA%20Statistical%20Analysis%202014-15.pdf

necessary and a proportionate increase in referrals where they are deemed necessary.

The historic increase in the number of children who are looked after or on the child protection register at a time when referrals are falling means that the smaller number of referrals being received by the Reporter are potentially of a more complex nature and are more likely to end up being looked after or on the child protection register than in previous years. The continuing decline in numbers of children who are both looked after and on the child protection register seen since 2012 could be linked to the fall in referrals now starting to feed through to the later stages of the social work system.

Are these figures accurate?

The data are high quality and validated both by local authorities and Scottish Government. There may be minor amendments to the 2014-15 data in future years as records are updated, but this is unlikely to affect the overall trends. There is more information on data quality in the background notes.

Background notes

1. Context and related publications

1.1 This publication includes data on children and young people who were looked after, on the child protection register or in secure care accommodation between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015. Children most commonly become looked after or placed on the child protection register following a referral to the Children's Reporter. The majority of referrals to the Children's Reporter are on care and protection grounds, although a small proportion are on offence grounds. Young people are placed in secure care either as an outcome of the criminal justice system or through a referral to the Children's Reporter. Figures on referrals to the Children's Reporter are published by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA):

http://www.scra.gov.uk/cms_resources/Online%20annual%20dashboard%202014-15.swf

1.2 This publication collates demographic data on children who were looked after during 2014-15. In June 2016 Education Outcomes for Looked After Children statistics 2014-15 will be published on a subset of these children – focussing mainly on those looked after continuously for a year from August 2014 to July 2015. However, there is value in looking at the wider population too, and this data will also be available in some form. The education outcomes publication will be available here:
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/EducOutcomesLAC>

1.3 The annual Civil Law Statistics published by the Scottish Government includes a table which gives the number of petitions for adoption made through the courts. These figures include looked after children who are adopted from care as well as children who are outwith the care system. The Civil Law Statistics in Scotland 2013-14 are available here:
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/civil-judicial-statistics/>

Cross-UK comparability

1.4 It is possible to draw comparisons between the looked after children, child protection and secure care accommodation statistics of the four UK countries. However it should be borne in mind that there are differences in legislation, the children's social work systems and the definitions of categories that will affect these figures.

1.5 Work has been undertaken between the Scottish Government and administrations from England, Wales and Northern Ireland to document clearly the differences between each administration's **looked after children** statistics and to scope out the feasibility and need for a comparable dataset. Further developments from this work have been published on the Scottish Government children's statistics web site at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/socialservicestats>

1.6 Work was commissioned by the Department for Education to document clearly the differences between each administration's **child protection** statistics. Further developments from this work have been published on the Scottish Government Children's Statistics web site at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/socialservicestats>

Equivalent data across the UK

1.7 **Looked after** statistics:

England	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2014-to-2015
Wales	https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/Social-Services/Childrens-Services/Children-Looked-After
Northern Ireland	https://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/news/publication-%E2%80%99children%E2%80%99s-social-care-statistics-northern-ireland-201415%E2%80%99

1.8 **Child protection** statistics:

England	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2014-to-2015
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Wales	http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/local-authority-child-protection-registers/?lang=en
Northern Ireland	http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/statistics/socialcare/child-protection-register.htm

1.9 Official/national statistics are not produced on **secure accommodation** in Northern Ireland. However, there is one secure unit which when at full capacity can house sixteen 11 to 18 year olds. The latest national statistics on children accommodated in secure children's homes in England and Wales were released on 4 June 2015 and can be found at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-secure-children-s-homes>

2. Data sources and coverage

2.1 The **looked after children** data in this publication were collected at an individual level from local authorities. Data were collected on all children/young people who were looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015, on every episode of being looked after which occurred at some point in the reporting period, every placement that took place during these episodes and every legal reason for which a child was looked after. Statistics were also collected at an individual-level for eligible for aftercare. We have now ceased the collection of information regarding planned series of short-term placements. Therefore, since 2013-14, this information has not been collected. Please refer to the previous '[Children's Social Work Statistics](#)' publications for statistics on planned series of short-term placements.

2.2 All **child protection** information in this publication were collected at an individual level from local authorities for the second consecutive year. Information is submitted for each investigation and case conference held as well as demographic information for each child. In 2011-12 individual-level information was collected on the children on the child protection register at 31 July 2012 only and prior to this data was collected in full or in part as aggregate summarised data.

2.3 The child protection statistics survey covered the period 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015. If a member of the public or professional report

concern about a child, a referral will be made to an agency such as the local authority social work team. If they decide that the child is at risk of significant harm, an investigation will be undertaken. In 2010-11 and previous years, aggregate information was collected on the referrals that were initiated during the period (so numbers starting). From 2011-12 information has been collected on child protection investigations which ended during the collection period. Information on child protection referrals has not been collected since 2010-11.

2.4 The **secure care** statistics in this publication were collected from five secure care units which were open at 1 August 2014.

2.5 The secure care accommodation census covered 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015. The data collected at the unit level covers the number of places and average cost per week per bed. Individual-level information was collected on the characteristics of the young person, medical care, admissions and discharges in secure care accommodation. Information on dedicated close support is no longer collected. Please refer to Background Notes 2.6 and 2.7 for further information.

2.6 During 2014, the questions/sections that were asked in the secure care and close support accommodation census were reviewed. This was to reduce the burden for the data providers, given that some data was either available from other sources or there was no identifiable need. The following information has subsequently been dropped:

Unit level:-

- Number of close support places (see Background Note 2.7).
- Emergency bed usage (as this information could be calculated from the individual level section).
- Staffing (as this information is available from the Scottish Social Services Council). See Background Note 2.8 for further information.

Individual level:-

- Close support (see Background Note 2.7).

2.7 Information on close support was collected from 2010 to 2013. Close support previously included in this publication were those that

were in the same building as the secure unit i.e. that were related directly to the secure unit. The reason for only including close support in the same physical location as the secure unit was because capital and overhead costs were thought to be inherently linked. However, for 2012-13, data was revised to remove Edinburgh's information, as they did not meet the criteria for inclusion. This meant that for the remaining two units that had a dedicated close support unit (Good Shepherd and Rossie) there were limitations to what information could be published on close support due to small numbers. These two units confirmed that they were also able to separate out secure care and close support costs. Therefore, from 2013-14, this information has not been collected. Please refer to the previous '[Children's Social Work Statistics](#)' publications for statistics on close support information.

2.8 The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) can provide information on staffing and vacancies of secure accommodation services, where a secure unit has provided that information to the Care Inspectorate, although this is not necessarily published. Please note that vacancy information would be at an aggregate level, not at post level. This means staff type would not be available, nor would it be possible to tell if the post was full time or part time. The data is an annual snapshot of the workforce on 31 December each year and includes a range of variables in addition to vacancy information. If you require further information on staffing and vacancies on the other data held for secure accommodation services, please contact James Arnold (james.arnold@sssc.uk.com) at the SSSC. Alternatively, you can visit the SSSC's workforce data site at: <http://data.sssc.uk.com>.

3. Definitions and notation

3.1 The survey forms, data specifications and guidance notes for the statistics presented in this publication (and previous years publications) are all available online. The data specifications include the standard validation checks undertaken to quality assure these data.

	Online documentation
Looked after	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/SurveyChildrenLookedAfter

Child protection	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/SurveyChildProtection
Secure care accommodation	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/SurveySecureAccommodation

Children Looked After

3.2 *Looked after child* – The definition of a looked after child is in section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, as amended by Schedule 2, para 9(4) of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007. Information on this definition is available here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/03/10110037/2>

3.3 *Supervision Requirement/Compulsory Supervision Order* – A children's hearing is a lay tribunal which considers and makes decisions on the welfare of the child or young person before them, taking into account the circumstances including any offending behaviour. The hearing decides on the measures of supervision which are in the best interests of the child or young person. If the hearing concludes compulsory measures of supervision are needed, it will make a Supervision Requirement or a Compulsory Supervision Order which will determine the type of placement for the child. In most cases the child will continue to live at home but will be under the supervision of a social worker. In some cases the hearing will decide that the child should live away from home with relatives or other carers.

3.5 *Permanence order* – This is an order that the sheriff court can make for the protection and supervision of children. By default, parents have a right for their child to live with them and control where the child lives. A Permanence order, which can only be applied for by the local authority, transfers this right to the local authority. Other parental rights and responsibilities can be shared between the local authority, birth parents and carers of the child (e.g. foster or kinship carers).

3.6 *Types of placement*

- At home with parent(s): at home with parent(s) or ‘relevant person(s)’ as defined in Section 200 of the Children’s Hearings Act 2011

- With friends/relatives: placed with friends or relatives who are not approved foster carers. Also referred to as 'kinship care'.
- With foster carers provided by the local authority
- With foster carers purchased by the local authority
- With prospective adopters
- Other community: such as supported accommodation, hospital (e.g. at birth)
- Local authority home: in local authority children's home/hostel, local authority home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, local authority home/hostel for physically disabled children
- Voluntary home: in voluntary children's home/hostel which may be specifically for children with learning disabilities or for physically disabled children
- Residential school: in local authority or voluntary residential school (home/hostel), private school or independent school
- Secure accommodation
- Crisis care: in women's refuge, local authority/voluntary hostel for offenders or for drug/alcohol abusers
- Other residential: a known residential setting but does not fit with one of the above

3.7 There is information on the process by which children come to be looked after and legislation governing this on the Scottish Government website: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/lac>

Child Protection

3.8 *Child Protection Case Conference (CPCC)* – a meeting where the risk of harm or neglect of a child is addressed. There are four types of CPCC:

Type	Who it is for	Potential outcome
Initial	a child not currently on the child protection register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child is registered or - Child is not registered
Pre-birth	an unborn child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child is registered or - Child is not registered
Review	a child already on the child protection register or where there are significant changes in the child or family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child remains on register or - Child is de-registered

	situation	
Transfer	a child already on the child protection register moving between local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child is de-registered or - Child remains on register

3.9 *Registrations* - The children who were the subject of a child protection case conference and were subsequently added to the child protection register between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015.

3.10 *Deregistrations* - Children who were subject to a transfer or review conference and subsequently removed from the child protection register between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015.

3.11 The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, published in 2010 and refreshed in 2014, is available here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/05/3052>

Secure care accommodation

3.12 *Secure accommodation legal framework* – The children's hearings system has responsibility for dealing with most children and young people under 16 who commit offences or who are in need of care and protection. In some cases children's hearings have responsibility for young people under 18 where the young person is under the supervision of the hearing when he or she reaches 16 and the supervision requirement is extended.

3.13 For children who commit very grave crimes (the circumstances are set out in the relevant Lord Advocate's guidelines), the option remains for them to be jointly reported to the children's reporter and the procurator fiscal and together, they will decide whether prosecution through the court is appropriate. The court may then sentence, or return the young person to the hearing to be dealt with.

3.14 A young person who appears in court accused of an offence, where bail is not considered appropriate, can be remanded to the care of the local authority responsible for them under section 51 of the Criminal Procedures (Scotland) Act 1995. Local authorities are then responsible for placing that young person in secure care.

3.15 A young person convicted of an offence in court can be sentenced to detention in secure accommodation under section 205 or 208 of the Criminal Procedures (Scotland) Act 1995. In these cases, it is the responsibility of Scottish Ministers to place the sentenced young person in suitable accommodation.

3.16 Before a child or young person can be placed in secure accommodation through the children's hearings system, the children's panel must consider that the young person meets the legal criteria set out in The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. The conditions are -

- (a) that the child has previously absconded and is likely to abscond again and, if the child were to abscond, it is likely that the child's physical, mental, or moral welfare would be at risk;
- (b) the child is likely to engage in self harming conduct;
- (c) the child is likely to cause injury to another person.

3.17 Average number – The average number of young people in secure care accommodation over the year is calculated using the dates of admission and discharge for every child. Ages on admission, discharge during 2014-15 and age at 31 July 2015 are the actual ages for all young people.

3.18 *Ethnicity and Religion* – Data was collected on ethnicity and religion of young people in secure care and close support accommodation, but we are unable to publish this due to small numbers and data confidentiality issues.

3.19 *Additional support needs* – Additional support needs categories were based on ISD Health and Social Care Data Dictionary codes when the survey form was finalised in December 2007. Information was collected on types of additional support needs for young people in close support, but we are unable to publish a detailed breakdown of additional support needs due to small numbers and data confidentiality issues.

3.20 *Emergency beds* – these can be used at short notice, for example, when a young person is admitted during the night as it is less disruptive for the other young people. The young person is usually admitted to the main facility the following day. Three units operated such a place.

3.21 *Mothballed* – The term mothballed was used when recommendation 6 from the Securing our Future Initiative report recommended the targeted closure of 12 beds to bring the capacity of each of the independent secure units down to 18 beds. Beds were mothballed for the first year with on-going review meaning provision was reduced although a group of key core staff were retained to provide emergency cover if there was ever a short term need to increase capacity.

Additional support needs

3.22 The information that was previously labelled as 'disability' does not meet the definition of disability outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and is more accurately described as additional support needs. For this reason the equivalent data that was labelled as 'disability' prior to 2011-12 will, from 2011-12 until 2014-15, be presented as 'additional support needs'. The statistics themselves have not changed in any way – the content of the data and categories remain the same, so are still comparable over time. From 2015-16, a new disability question will be introduced for our child protection, children looked after and secure care accommodation data collections.

Further information is available at:-

- Children looked after – [data specifications and guidance notes](#)
- Child protection – [data specification and guidance notes](#)
- Secure care accommodation – [data specification and guidance notes](#)

Notation and rounding

3.23 The following notation is used in this publication

- zero
- * In cases where information is presented on a small number of children and is potentially disclosive, indicates that data have been suppressed.

3.24 The sum of the breakdowns in the tables may not sum to the total displayed due to rounding.

4. Data Quality and revisions

- 4.1 The data for all three parts of this publication – looked after children, child protection and secure care – come from administrative data held by local authorities and secure units. As this information is used to monitor and manage these sectors it should be robust and accurate.
- 4.2 Automated validation checks are undertaken at the point the data is submitted. These validations are outlined in the relevant data specifications (see Background note 3.1 for links).
- 4.3 The Children and Families statistics team undertake a range of validation checks on administrative data as part of the quality assurance process of preparing this national statistics publication. These procedures include; trend analysis, comparing against other available sources, and checking outliers with data providers. The data providers are then asked to confirm their data – for looked after children and child protection data this confirmation comes from local authorities, for secure care accommodation this confirmation comes from secure units. In cases where concerns about data quality outweigh the value of have an estimated figure publically available, we would not publish particular information (e.g. legal reason data from the looked after children collection).
- 4.4 There is more information on the data quality of the administrative sources underlying this publication here:
- <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/sourcesandsuitability/StatementAdminSources>

Looked after – comparability over time

- 4.5 Looked after children statistics for years prior to 2008-09 used data supplied by local authorities aggregated at a local authority level. Since 2008-09, local authorities are reporting significant improvements in the quality of their data reporting as a result of the new individualised

collection methodology. This should be borne in mind when performing cross-year comparisons.

4.6 Data collected on children in a current planned series of short-term placements was not collected from 2013/14 onwards – in consultation with local authorities and data users, it was seen to be little-used, and could therefore be dropped from the collection. Historical figures are still available from previous years' publications.

4.7 This publication presents revised 2013-14 for looked after children, although the changes were minimal (0.3%).

Looked after – data quality of specific variables

4.8 From 2011-12, local authorities were requested to supply information on all legal reasons for a child being looked after (i.e. a child may have more than one legal reason at any time). While the quality of this information is improving it is still not being consistently recorded across local authorities. Only information on the legal reasons in place at the 31st July has been published (Table 1.5 in the additional tables).

4.9 The only looked after field for which data is collected but not published is religion. This is due to data quality concerns as each year around two-thirds of children are recorded with religion as 'unknown'.

Child protection

4.10 For the first time in 2012-13 the child protection data was collected entirely at individual-level. As there was much more detail and complexity to the 2012-13 data than in previous years there was much more scope for small errors. However, during the 2014-15 collection process, it was possible for local authorities to revise their 2013-14 data. This, coupled with the possibility of comparing data across two different years, had helped improve on the quality of individual data and the confidence in the accuracy of this.

4.11 Prior to 2011-12, some local authorities did not place 'unborn' children on the child protection register until the child was actually born. The revised National Guidance now states that 'unborn' children should

be placed on the child protection register if this is required and not wait until the child is born.

4.12 This publication presents revised 2013-14 for child protection which has resulted in a 0.2 per cent change in the national figure.

Secure care accommodation

4.13 As the number of young people using secure care is very small, relative changes over time will show greater percentage changes than for data relating to children looked after child protection.

4.14 Information was collected in 2011-12 to help monitor outcomes for the National Contract for Secure Care on whether a full medical assessment was received, an individualised Care/sentenced/remand plan completed, an individualised learning plan based on educational assessment completed and a transition/pathway plan in place. As the contract for secure care continues to develop, this information has become less relevant to the annual collection. To reduce burden on units, we have not collected the information listed above or on information on secure authorisations turned down from 2012-13.

5. Enquiries

Please send any **media enquiries** to:

- Children Looked After/Child Protection: Donna Rafferty, 0131 244 2672
- Secure Care Accommodation: Leanna MacLarty, 0131 244 3803

These data and **additional tables** on looked after children, child protection and secure care and close support accommodation are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork>

Email any requests for **further analysis** to
childrens.statistics@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Children and Families Statistics

22 March 2016

Annex A

Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15

Publication tables

Excel versions of these tables are available here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork>

Introduction

Illustration 1 Infographic showing all children in Scotland and relative number being looked after and on the child protection register at 31 July 2015

Looked after children

- Chart 1 Children looked after per 1,000 children under 18 by type of accommodation 1987-2015
- Table 1.1 Number of children looked after at 31 July 2009-2015, by type of accommodation
- Table 1.1a Number of children looked after by type of accommodation, 1971-2015
- Table 1.2 Children looked after at 31 July 2015 with and without a current care plan
- Table 1.3 Number and percentage of children starting to be looked after 2003-2015, by age and gender
- Chart 2 Length of time children had been looked after when ceasing to be looked after, by age, 2015
- Table 1.4 Number and percentage of children ceasing to be looked after, by length of time looked after and age, 2003-2015
- Table 1.5 Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after by destination, 2002-2015
- Chart 3 Percentage difference by destination between 2008 and 2014
- Table 1.6 Pathway plans and nominated pathway co-ordinators of young people who ceased to be looked after during 2014-2015 who were beyond minimum school-leaving age on the date they ceased to be looked after
- Table 1.7 Young people eligible for aftercare services on 31 July 2015, by age and economic activity

Chart 6 Cross-UK comparison of rate of looked after children per 10,000 children, 2004-2015

Child protection

- Chart 5 Children on the child protection register, by age, 2000-2015
- Table 2.1 Number of children on the child protection register by gender, 2000-2015
- Table 2.1a Number of children on the child protection register by gender and age, 2000-2015
- Table 2.2 Number and rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15 of children on the child protection register: 2007-2015, by local authority
- Table 2.3 Concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the child protection register 2007-2015
- Chart 6 Concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the child protection register, 2015
- Table 2.4 Number of deregistrations from the child protection register, 2007-2015, by length of time on register and reason for deregistration
- Chart 7 Deregistrations by length of time registered, 2007-2014
- Chart 8 Cross-UK comparison of rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 under 18s, 2004-2014

Secure care accommodation

- Table 3.1 Secure care unit bed complement at 31 July 2015
- Table 3.2 Secure care accommodation capacity and usage, 2013-2015
- Table 3.3 Young people in secure care accommodation 2013-2015 by gender, age, additional support needs and length of stay

Other

- Chart 9 Children Referred to the Children's Reporter and numbers looked after/on child protection register, 2004-2015

Annex B

Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15

Additional tables

Excel versions of these tables will be made available here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork>

1. Looked after children 2014-15

Characteristics of looked after children at 31 July 2015

- Table 1.1 by age group and gender
- Table 1.2 by ethnic group
- Table 1.3 by additional support needs status
- Table 1.4 by type of accommodation
- Table 1.5 by Legal Reason for Being Looked after

Children **starting** to be looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015

- Table 1.6 by age group and gender
- Table 1.7 by ethnic origin
- Table 1.8 by additional support needs status

Children **ceasing** to be looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015

- Table 1.9 by age group and gender
- Table 1.10 by destination on discharge and age
- Table 1.11 by ethnic origin
- Table 1.12 by additional support needs status
- Table 1.13 by age group and length of time looked after

Young people **ceasing** to be looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015 who were **beyond minimum school leaving age** on date they ceased to be looked after

- Table 1.14 by age group and destination on discharge
- Table 1.15 by final accommodation type and destination on discharge

Young people eligible for **aftercare** services on 31 July 2015

- Table 1.16 by age and type of accommodation
- Table 1.17 by gender and economic activity
- Table 1.18 by ethnic group and economic activity

- Table 1.19 by additional support needs status and economic activity
- Table 1.20 episodes of homelessness since becoming eligible for aftercare services
- Table 1.21 and in receipt of aftercare services, with a pathway plan and pathway coordinator

2. Looked after data over time

- Table 2.1 Number of children looked after 2002-2015 by age and gender
- Table 2.2 Number of children looked after 2002-2015 by type of accommodation
- Table 2.3 Number of children looked after 2003-2015 by ethnic origin
- Table 2.4 Number of children looked after 2002-2015 by additional support needs status
- Table 2.5 Number of children looked after by number of placements during the past year, 2012-2015
- Table 2.6 Number of children ceasing to be looked after, by destination and age, 2002-2015
- Table 2.7 Number of children looked after in a planned series of short-term placements, by gender and age 2002-2015
- Table 2.8 Cross UK comparison of the number of looked after children and rate per 10,000 children under 18, 2004-2015

3. Looked after data by local authority

Local authority breakdowns of

- Table 3.1 Children starting and ceasing to be looked after, 2014-15
- Table 3.2 Characteristics of children looked after, 31 July 2015
- Table 3.3 Children looked after by type of accommodation, 31 July 2015
- Table 3.4 Percentage of care leavers beyond minimum school leaving age with a pathway plan and a pathway co-ordinator, 2014-15
- Table 3.5 Young people eligible for aftercare services, percentage receiving aftercare and percentage in employment, education or training, 31 July 2015

4. Child protection additional tables

- Table 4.1 Number of initial, pre-birth or transfer in child protection case conferences: 2007 to 2015 - by child's primary known/suspected abuser

- Table 4.2 Number of children on the child protection register, 2007-2015 - by ethnic group, additional support need status and religion
- Table 4.3 Concerns identified at case conference of children who were on the child protection register, 2012-15
- Table 4.4 Movement on and off the child protection register, 2014-2015 by local authority
- Table 4.5 Concerns identified at case conference by local authority
- Table 4.6 Main abuser recorded at case conference by local authority
- Table 4.7 Number of children on the child protection register across UK, 2004-2015
- Table 4.8 Rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 children across UK, 2004-2015

5. Secure care accommodation additional tables

- Chart 5.2 Secure care accommodation places, admissions and discharges, 2000-2015
- Chart 5.3 Length of stay on discharge as a percentage of young people discharged during the year, 2000-2015
- Table 5.1 Secure care accommodation capacity and usage, 2007-2015
- Table 5.2 Young people in secure care accommodation, 2007-2015 by gender, age, additional support needs and length of stay
- Table 5.3 Young people admitted to or discharged from secure care accommodation, 2007-2015, by age and length of stay
- Table 5.4 Number and rate of young people admitted to secure care accommodation by local authority, 2013-2015
- Table 5.5 Young people admitted to secure care accommodation: placement prior to admission and reason for admission by gender, 2014-15

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

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact children.statistics@gov.scot for further information.

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