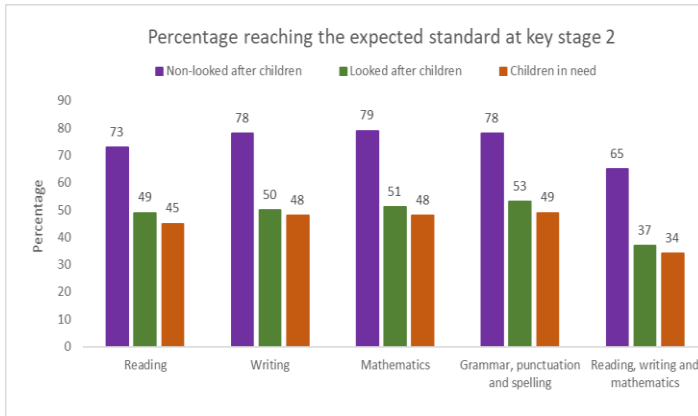




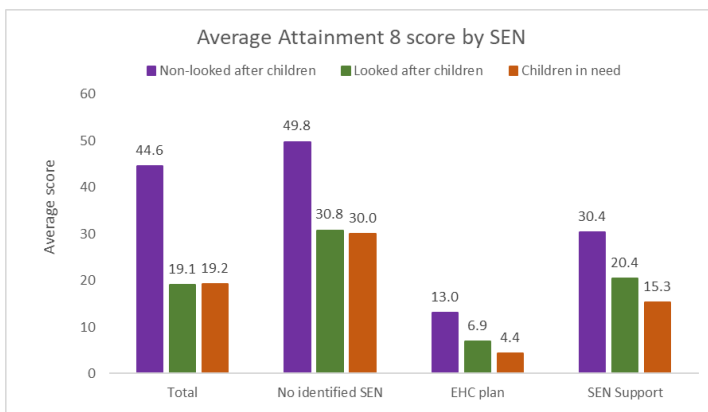
26 March 2020

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



In 2019, 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 across all subjects.

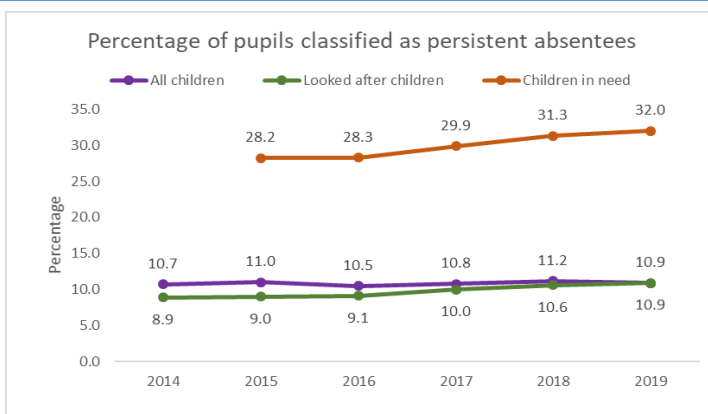
Looked after children attainment at key stage 4 (KS4) varies across special education needs (SEN) groups



In 2019, 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 5 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 10.9% in 2019.

Looked after children are around as likely to be persistent absentees as the overall pupil population, but are 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 five 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 2019, 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 only.

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 and alternative provision census. Where possible, figures are presented for previous years to allow comparisons.

For the first time this year, data has been included at national level on the destinations of looked after children after key stage 4. This is 2017/18 destinations for the 2016/17 cohort.

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 2019, data on health, wellbeing and offending outcomes, were published in the [main looked after children](#) statistics release in December. An update to this guide will be published in May 2020.

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 2019 will be published in May 2020.

In this publication

The following tables are included in the statistical release:

- CLA outcomes 2019: National tables (Excel .xlsx)
- CLA outcomes 2019: Underlying data (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 (to be updated in May 2020).

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. 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

Details on changes are given in the technical information section at the end of this document.

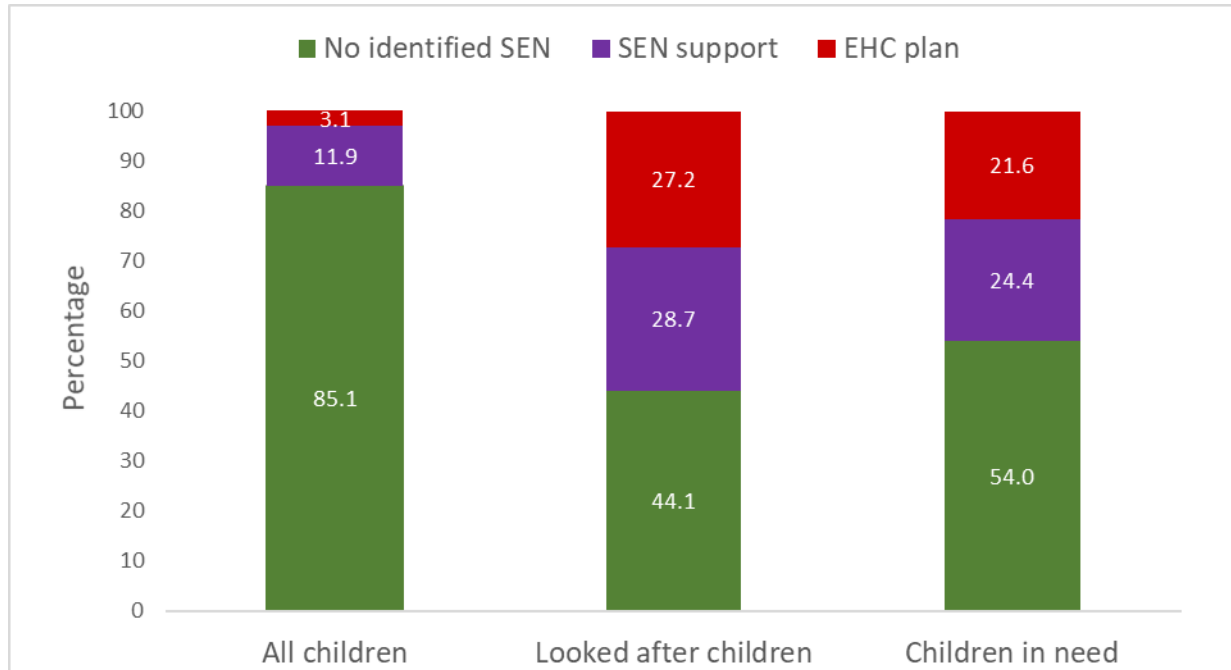
Note that the Department for Education plans to produce a new publication this year containing educational outcomes for other social care groups, such as pupils on a child protection plan at 31 March, and the outcomes of pupils who were in need or looked after at any time over the previous six years.

2. Special educational needs (Table 2a, 2b & SEN UD)

Looked after children are almost four times more likely to have a special educational need (SEN) than all children, and are almost nine times more likely to have an education, health and care (EHC) plan than all children. It is important to consider this difference across the cohorts when viewing the outcomes data in this publication.

In 2019, 55.9% of looked after children had a special educational need, compared to 46.0% of children in need and 14.9% of all children.

Figure 1: Special educational needs of looked after children, children in need and all children, 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

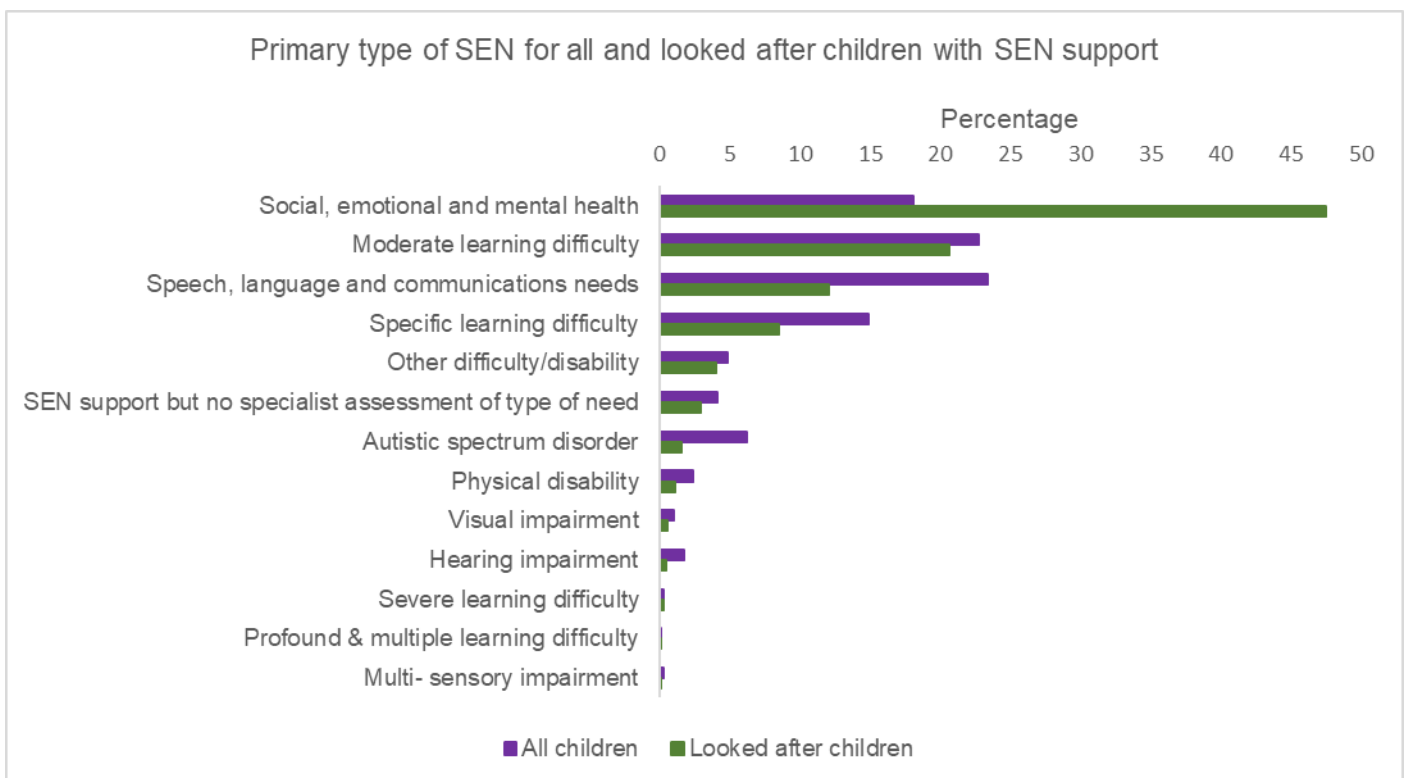
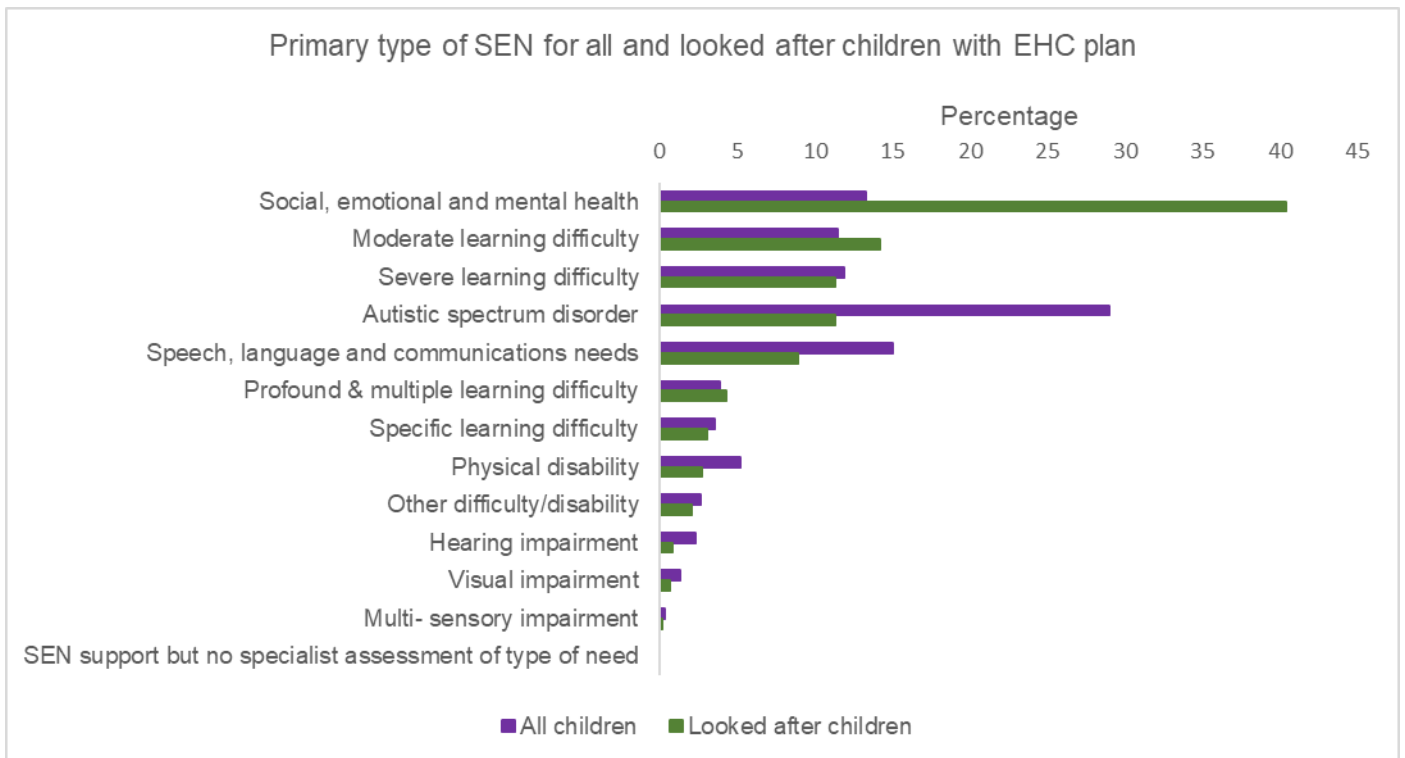
Information on primary type of special educational need is collected for those with EHC plans and those with SEN support³. For both groups, social, emotional and mental health is the most common primary type of special educational need for looked after children, covering 40.4% of those with EHC plans and 47.5% of those with SEN support. This contrasts with the child population as a whole⁴ where this is the primary need of only 13.3% of those with EHC plans and 18.1% of those with SEN support.

Looked after children with EHC plans 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.

³ 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'.

⁴ Figures for all children are available in table 8 of the National Statistics: [Special Educational Needs in England, 2019](#)

Figure 2: Looked after children and all children by primary type of special educational need, 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD

3. Attainment at key stage 1 (Table 3 & KS1 UD)

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.

Changes to the 2018/19 reading, maths and science TA frameworks mean that judgements in 2019 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

In 2019, 52% of looked after children reached the expected standard in reading, 43% in writing, 49% in maths and 60% in science. Compared to non-looked after children, attainment for looked after children is much lower. The largest differences are in writing and maths (26 percentage points).

In 2019, 48% of children in need reached the expected standard in reading, 40% in writing, 48% in maths and 56% in science. The attainment of children in need is slightly lower than looked after children.

From 2018 to 2019, the percentage of looked after children reaching the expected standard in writing increased slightly (by 1 percentage point) and for non-looked after children and children in need, the percentage of those reaching the expected standard in writing decreased by a similar amount.

Looked after girls outperform looked after boys in all subjects. The largest differences are in writing (17 percentage points) and reading (7 percentage points) followed by science and mathematics. This subject pattern is broadly similar to the gender attainment difference for non-looked after children and for children in need.

The gender attainment gap for looked-after children has decreased for all subjects from 2018 to 2019, with the largest decrease being in reading, maths and science (5 percentage points). This is different to the gender attainment gap for non-looked after children and children in need, where for 2018 and 2019 they are very similar.

4. Attainment and progress at key stage 2 (Table 4a, 4b & KS2 UD)

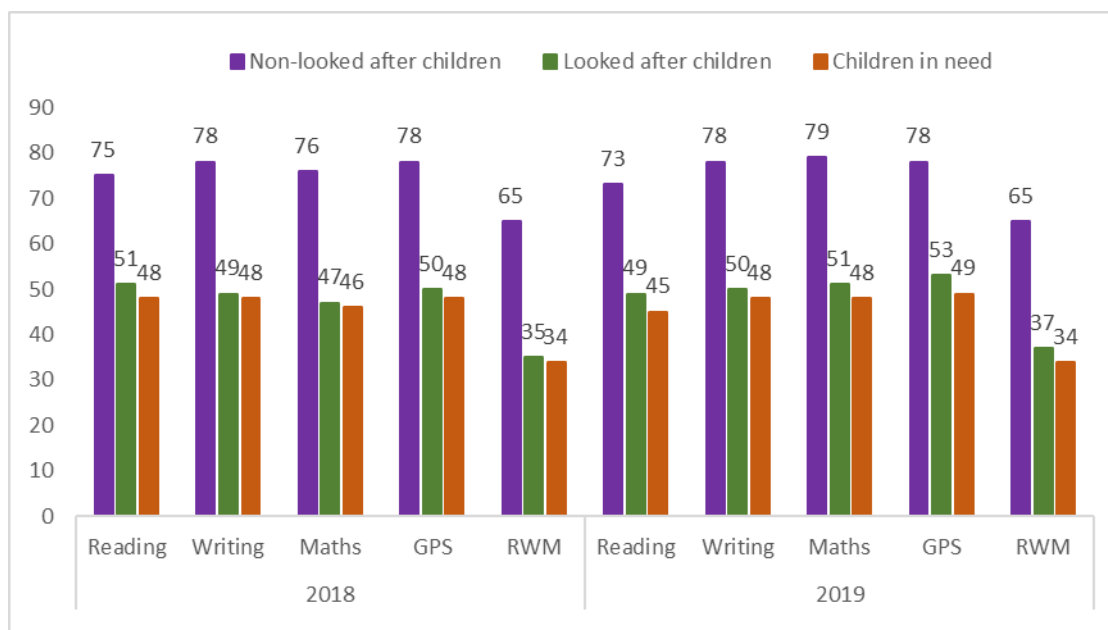
Attainment at key stage 2

Key stage 2 assessments

Pupils take national curriculum assessment in year 6, at the end of KS2, when most pupils will reach age 11 by the end of the school year. Pupils take tests (commonly referred to as SATs) in reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) and receive a teacher assessment (TA) in writing. The combined reading, writing and maths measure uses the results of the reading and maths tests and the outcome of the writing teacher assessment.

In 2019, 37% 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 49% in reading to 53% in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Figure 3: 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 to 2019, England.



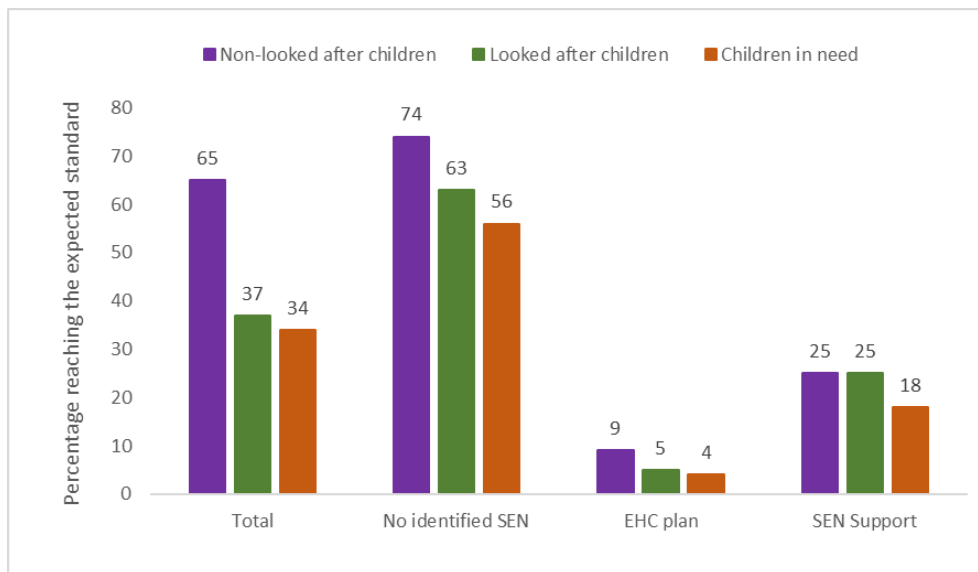
Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

As shown above, in 2019, 37% 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, 58% of looked after children at the end of key stage 2 have a special educational need (SEN) identified, as do 49%⁵ of children in need. In comparison, only 19% of non-looked after children have a SEN. The higher prevalence of SEN amongst looked after children and children in need, shown in the chart below, may in part explain the gap in attainment compared to non-looked after children.

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 4: Percentage of children achieving the expected standard in the headline reading, writing and maths measure at key stage 2, for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, by SEN, 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

Progress at key stage 2

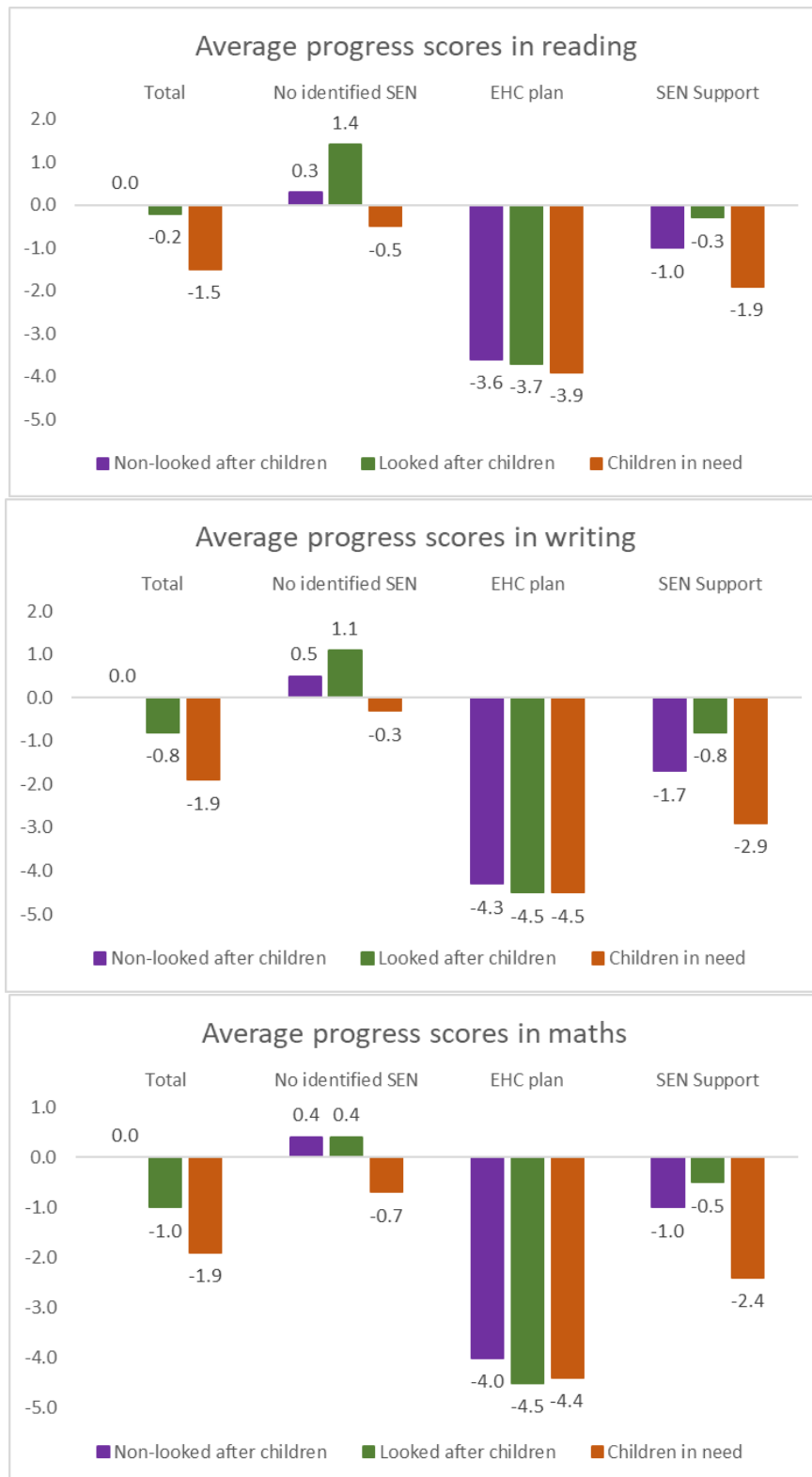
Key stage 2 progress measures

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.

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 difference being in writing and maths, where looked after children have an average progress score of -0.8 and -1.0 respectively, 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, with the largest differences being in writing and maths, where children in need have an average progress score of -1.9 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. Looked after children either with no identified SEN or who receive SEN support typically progress as well or better than non-looked after children or children in need across all subjects. The higher prevalence of SEN amongst looked after children and children in need, may in part explain the differences in progress overall compared to non-looked after children.

Figure 5: 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, 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

5. Attainment and progress at key stage 4 (Table 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e & KS4 UD)

Key stage 4

The headline accountability measures for secondary schools include: Progress 8, EBacc entry, destinations of pupils after key stage 4, attainment in English and mathematics, Attainment 8 and EBacc APS. For more information, see the [secondary accountability guidance](#).

Progress 8

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 (KS2) to the end of KS4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score (see below) – with the national average Attainment 8 score of all pupils 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.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry

The EBacc shows how many pupils are entering GCSEs (or AS level qualifications) in core academic subjects at KS4. The EBacc consists 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](#).

Attainment in English and maths (grades 5 or above)

This measure looks at the percentage of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in both English and mathematics.

Attainment 8

Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications. This includes: English (double weighted if both GCSEs in 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](#).

Due to the introduction of reformed GCSEs and the 9-1 grading scale, this measure will not be comparable between years until all reformed GCSEs are introduced into performance tables in 2020.

EBacc average point score (EBacc APS)

The EBacc average point score was introduced into secondary school performance tables in 2018. It measures pupils' point scores across the five pillars of the EBacc – with a zero for any missing pillars. 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.

In 2019, the average Attainment 8 score for looked after children was 19.1 compared to 44.6 for non-looked after children and 19.2 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.

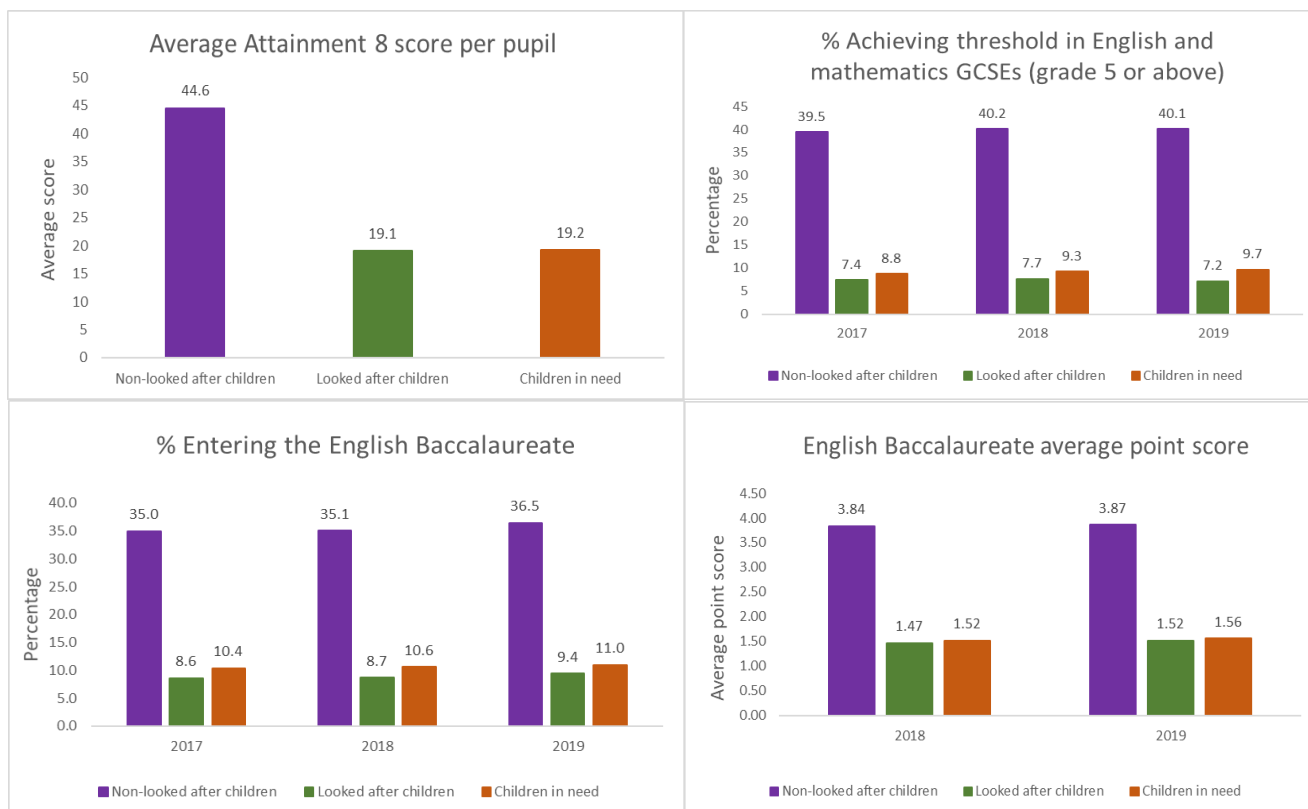
The EBacc average point score has increased slightly for all three groups; looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need in 2019 since 2018. The EBacc average point score for looked after children is 1.52 compared to 3.87 for non-looked after children and 1.56 for children in need.

In 2019, the percentage of looked after children achieving the threshold in English and maths at grade 5 or above decreased from 7.7% in 2018 to 7.2% in 2019. Conversely, there was an increase in the percentage of children in need achieving from 9.3% to 9.7%.

Looked after children progress less well at KS4 than non-looked after children but slightly better than children in need.

Attainment at key stage 4

Figure 6: 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 to 2019, England.



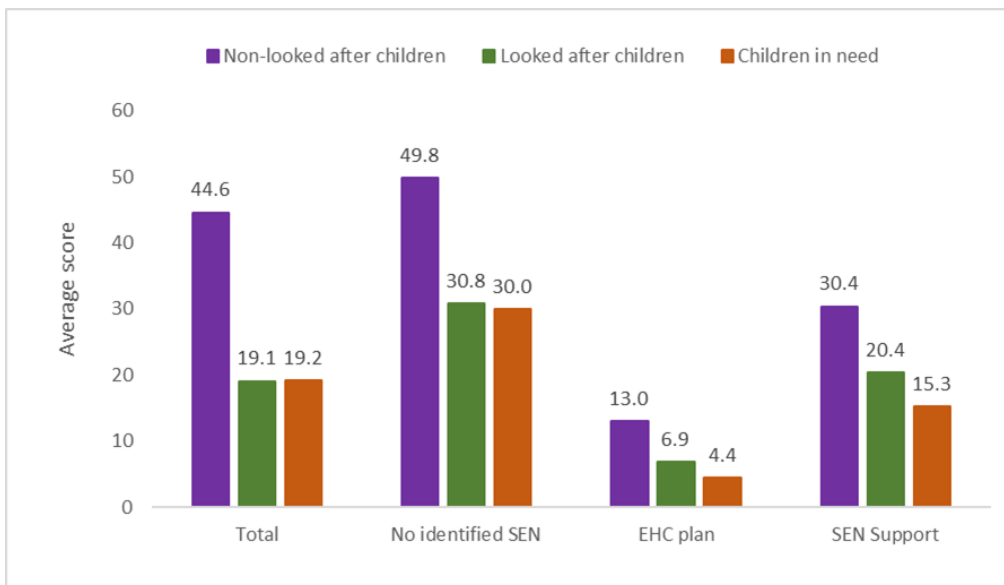
Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

As shown above, the average Attainment 8 score for looked after children and children in need is much less than for non-looked after children.

However, 53% of looked after children at the end of key stage 4 have a special educational need (SEN) identified, as do 48%⁶ of children in need. In comparison, only 14% of non-looked after children have a SEN. The higher prevalence of SEN amongst looked after children and children in need, shown in the chart below, in part explains the gap in attainment compared to non-looked after children.

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.

Figure 7: Average Attainment 8 score for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, by SEN, 2019, England.

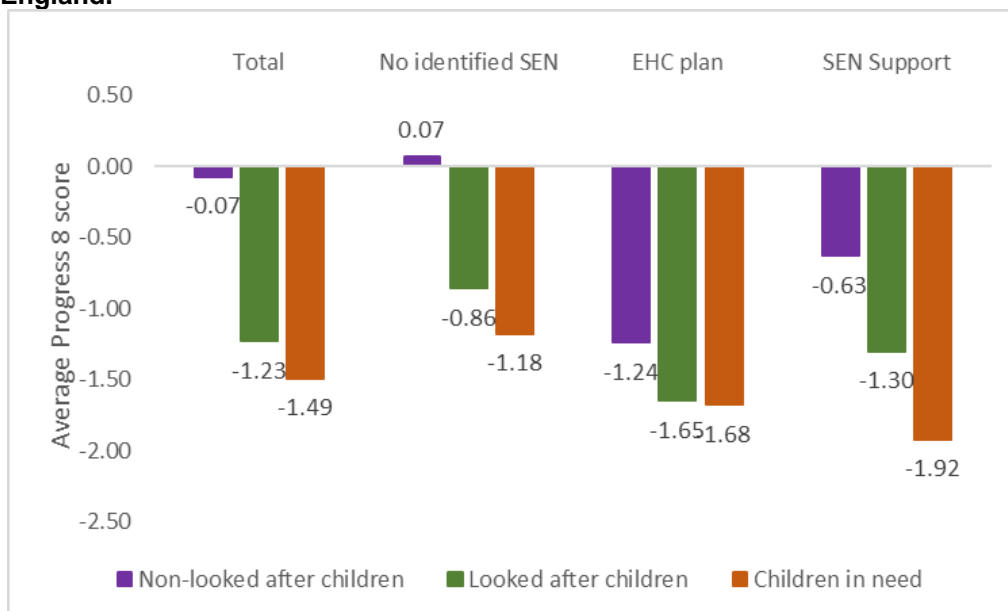


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

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-looked after children, but slightly better than children in need.

Figure 8: Average Progress 8 score for looked after children, non-looked after children and children in need, by SEN, 2019, England.

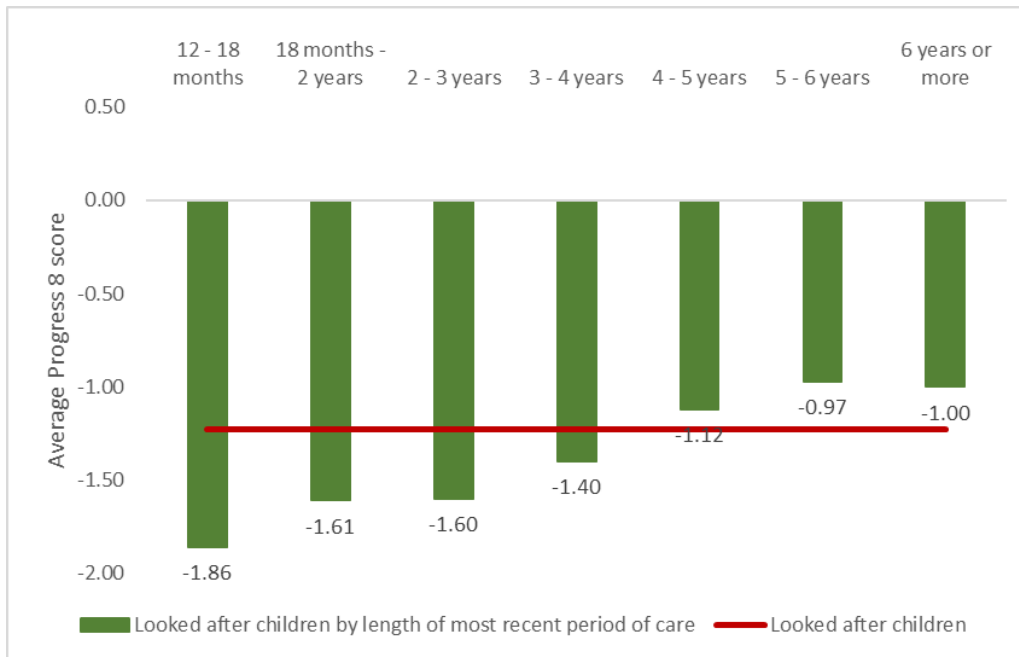


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

In contrast to key stage 2, even when we consider the effects of SEN in each group, looked after children and children in need progress less well than non-looked after children in all groups, though the differences are less marked.

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

Figure 9: Average Progress 8 score for looked after children, by length of most recent period of care, 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD

6. Destinations (Table 6 & Destinations UD)

Destination measures

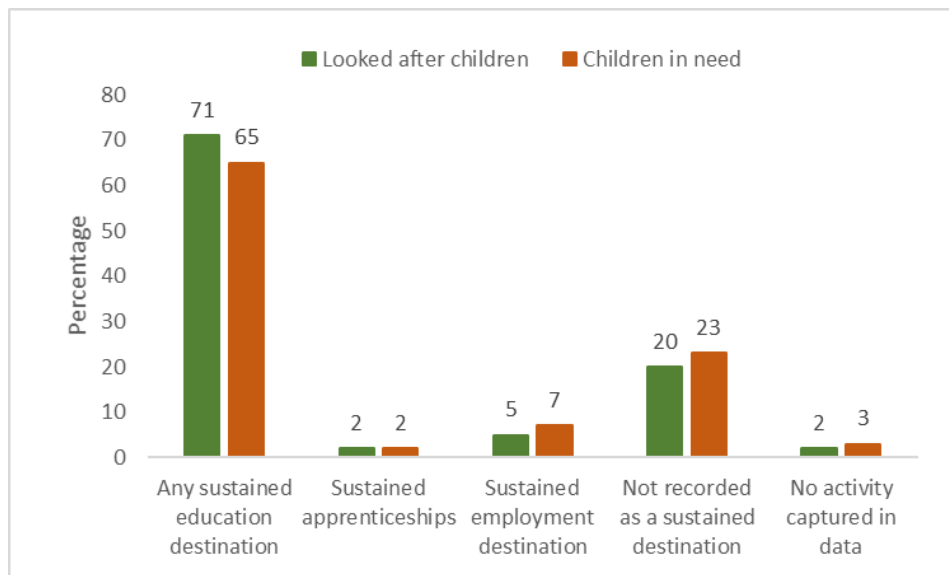
Destination measures show the percentage of pupils or students going to or remaining in an education and/or employment destination in the academic year after completing their key stage 4 (finishing year 11, usually aged 16) or 16-18 (finishing year 13, usually aged 18) studies. The most recent data reports on students who completed the key stage in the 2016/17 academic year and identifies their education and/or employment destinations the following year.

Note that the percentages for looked after children and children in need are much less than the all children figures published in the [Destinations of KS4 and 16 to 18 \(KS5\) students: 2018](#) statistical release. However, it should be noted that the figures in this publication include additional institutions, so they are not directly comparable. For example, other institutions for looked after children include; independent schools, independent special schools and secure units.

This is the first year that we have published destination measures for looked after children and children in need. In 2017/18, 78% of looked after children who completed key stage 4 in 2016/17 were in sustained education or employment, compared to 74% of children in need.

Focusing on those in sustained education, this accounted for 71% of looked after children, compared to 65% of children in need.

Figure 10: Destinations after key stage 4 for looked after children and children in need, 2018, England.



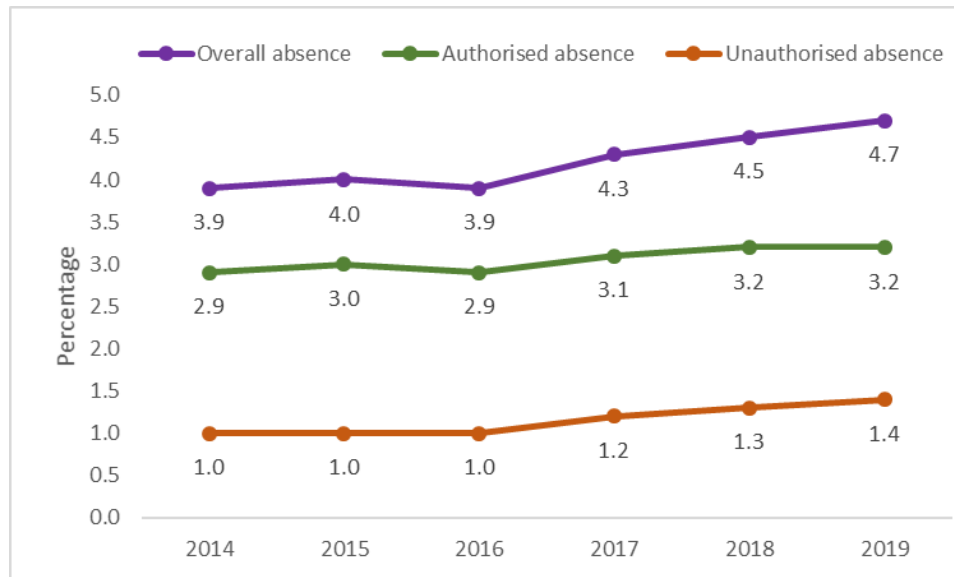
Source: CLA-NPD-LEO, CIN-NPD-LEO

7. Absence (Table 7 & Absence UD)

Absence rates for looked after children have continued to increase this year – overall absence increased slightly from 4.5% of sessions missed in 2018 to 4.7% in 2019. Absence rates for children in need have also continued to increase, from 11.0% of sessions missed in 2018 to 11.4% in 2019.

The percentage of looked after children classified as persistent absentees has increased slightly over recent years, from 8.9% in 2014 to 10.9% in 2019. In 2019, 32.0% of children in need were classified as persistent absentees.⁷

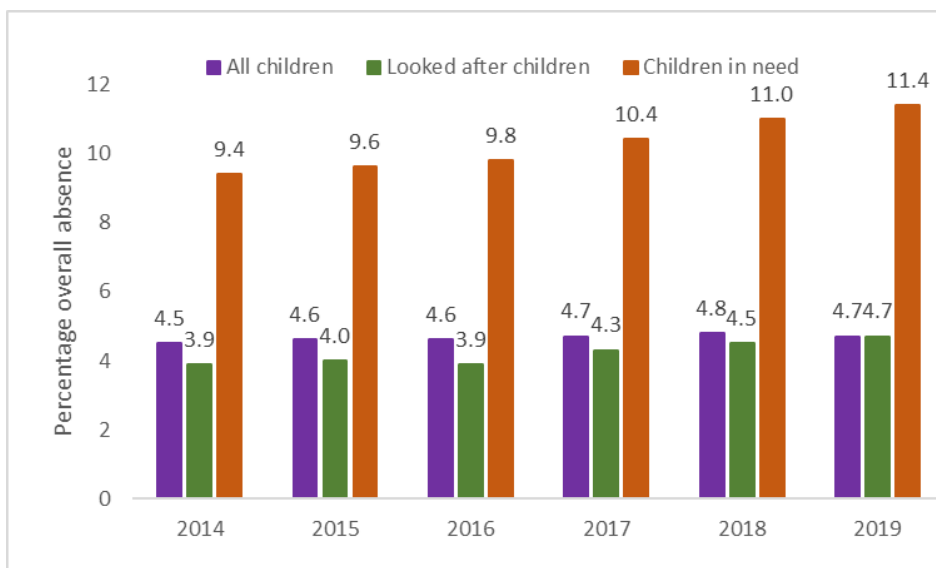
Figure 11: Overall, authorised and unauthorised absence rates (%) for looked after children, 2014 to 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD

In 2019, overall absence rates for looked after children (4.7%) are similar to all children (4.7%) and much lower than for children in need (11.4%).

Figure 12: Overall absence rates (%) for looked after children, all children and children in need, 2014 to 2018, England.



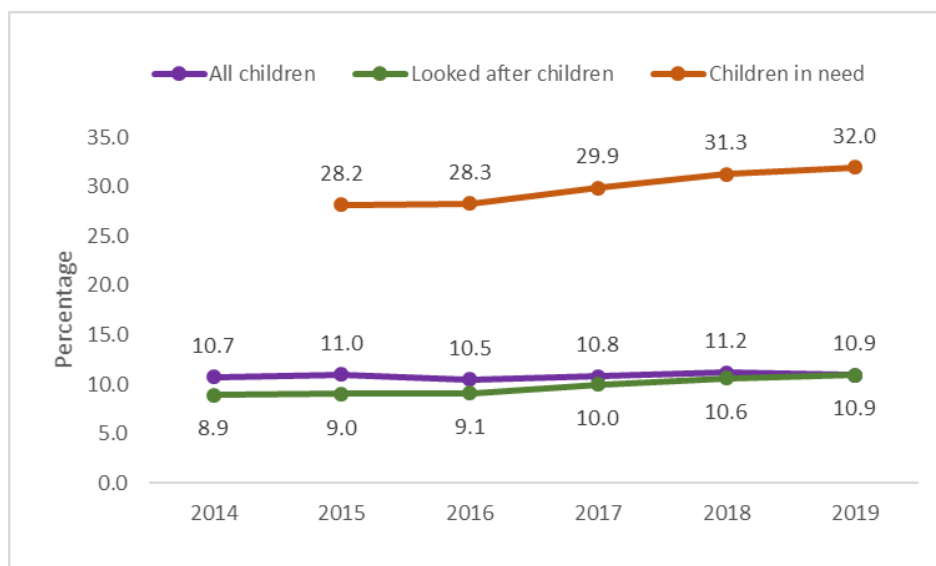
Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

Persistent absentees

Pupil enrolments missing 10 or more percent of their own possible sessions (due to authorised or unauthorised absence) are classified as persistent absentees. See Chapter 3 of the [guide to absence statistics](#) for more information.

In 2019, looked after children (10.9%) and all children (10.9%) were much less likely to be classified as persistent absentees than children in need⁷ (32.0%).

Figure 13: Percentage of looked after children, all children and children in need classified as persistent absentees, 2014 to 2019, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

⁷ Children in need persistent absentee figures have only been produced on a comparable basis for the last five years.

8. Permanent and fixed period exclusions (Table 8 & Exclusion UD)

Exclusions data

Exclusions data are collected two terms in arrears, so the latest exclusions data available is from the academic year 2017/18. This is matched to the looked after children from year ending 31 March 2018, which is a year earlier than the other information in this statistical release. In 2018, 31,720 looked after children aged 5 to 15 were matched to the school census.

The rate of permanent exclusions for looked after children has fallen and is now less than the rate for all children and continues to be much less than the rate for children in need.

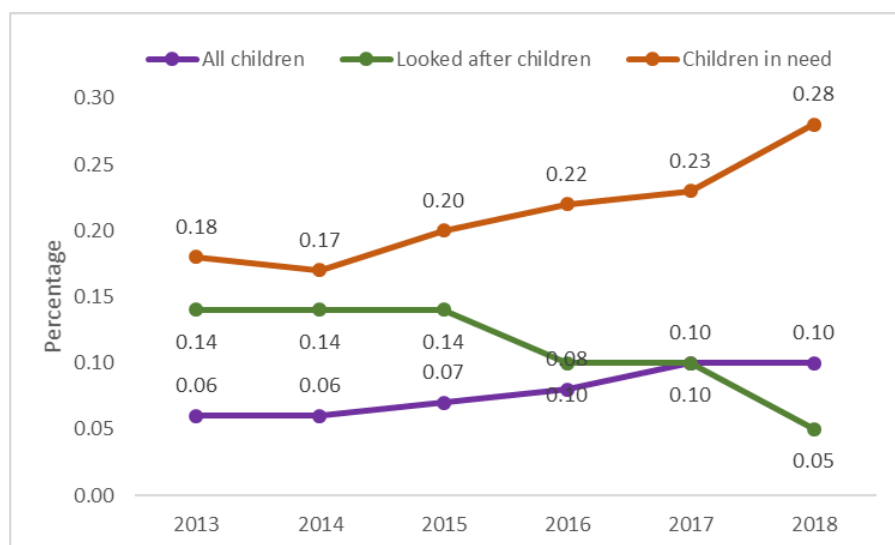
Looked after children are more than five times more likely to have a fixed period exclusion than all children, and nearly one and a half times more likely than children in need.

This fall in exclusion rates for looked after children (both permanent and fixed term) may be the result of revised guidance on exclusions in 2017 but it is also influenced by variations at a local level⁸.

In 2018, 0.05% of looked after children were permanently excluded from school, which is lower than the rate for all children (0.10%) and much lower than the rate for children in need (0.28%). The rate of looked after children permanently excluded dropped in 2018 and is the lowest it has been in the six year period from 2013 to 2018.

In contrast, the rate of all children permanently excluded remained stable whereas it increased for children in need.

Figure 14: Permanent exclusion rates (%) for looked after children, all children and children in need, 2013 to 2019, England.

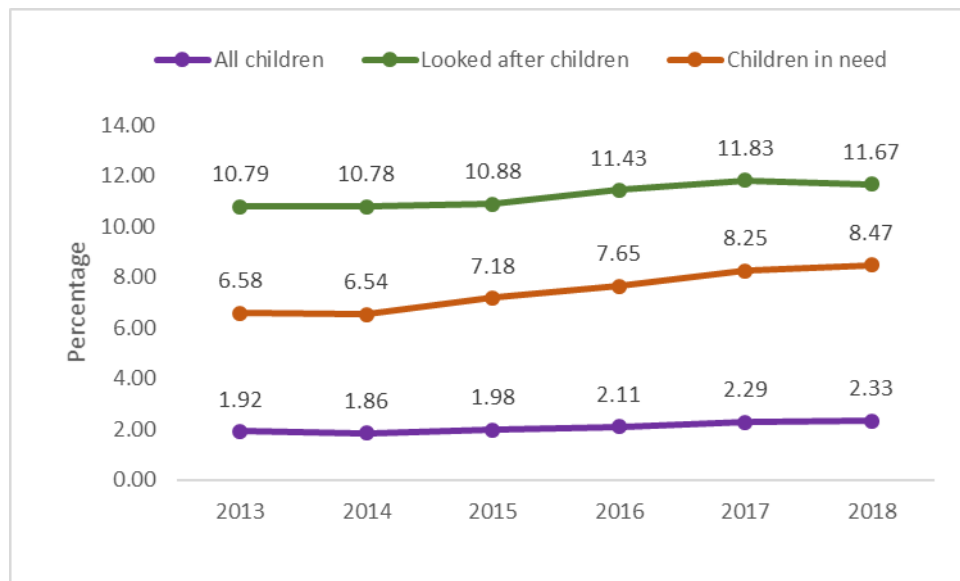


Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

In 2018, 11.67% of looked after children had at least one fixed period exclusion, a decrease from 11.83% in 2017. There has been an increase for all children (2.29% to 2.33%) and children in need (8.25% to 8.47%). For all children and children in need, a trend of increasing fixed period exclusion rates continues since 2014.

⁸ [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)

Figure 15: Percentages of looked after children, all children and children in need who had at least one fixed period exclusion, 2013 to 2018, England.



Source: CLA-NPD, CIN-NPD

9. 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, 2019
- 2a 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), 2019
- 2b Children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, by primary type of special educational need (SEN), 2019
- 3 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, 2018 to 2019
- 4a 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 2019
- 4b 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, 2019
- 5a 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, 2017 to 2019
- 5b 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, 2017 to 2019
- 5c 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, 2019
- 5d 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, 2019
- 5e 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, 2019
- 6 Destinations after completing key stage 4, of children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, and school age children in need at 31 March, by school type, 2018
- 7 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 2019
- 8 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 2018

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.

10. Further information is available

Children looked after in England, including adoption

Information about [looked-after children in England for the year ending 31 March 2019](#) was published on 5 December 2019. 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 2019. 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 2019 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 2018-19. 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 2017-18 on the Scottish Government website . |
| Wales | Statistics on looked after children in Wales are available for 2018-19 on the Welsh government website , however, this does not include statistics on outcomes of looked after children. There is some relevant information available in the children receiving care and support census (CRCS Census) but please note that those children included in the children receiving care and support census are only those children whose case had been open for 3 months or more at the census date of 31 March, i.e. the care and support plan was in place on or before 1 January 2019 and remained at 31 March 2019 so the figures differ to the looked after children census release. |
| Northern Ireland | Statistics on the outcomes of children looked after in Northern Ireland are available for 2017-18 and are published on the Department of Health website . |

11. 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.

12. 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 is due to be updated in May 2020 and will include information on changes to this release highlighted below.

- Data refreshes

In previous releases we have refreshed earlier years data within each time series for looked after children. This year we have assessed whether this annual refresh is still necessary and concluded that, given there is minimal change (if any) on the figures for earlier years from one release to the next and balancing that with the resource required to do the refreshes that we would no longer update previous years data.

- Underlying data

The way that we publish statistics at the DfE is changing. In the future, we will be publishing data on an interactive platform. As part of the transition to this new way of working, we have produced the 2019 underlying data in a new format. This format is beneficial to users as it is more readily machine readable. Also, for the first time we've included all national and local authority level data as underlying data which should also benefit users.

- Key stage 1

Changes to the reading, maths and science teacher assessment (TA) frameworks in 2019 means that attainment is not comparable to previous years. So only writing TA can be compared to 2018 (and this changed in 2018, so can't be compared prior to 2018). As a results we have only published 2018 and 2019 data.

- Destinations

For the first time this year, data has been included at national level on the destinations of looked after children after key stage 4. This is 2017/18 destinations for the 2016/17 cohort.

13. Get in touch

Media enquiries

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Other enquiries/feedback

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Department
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