Department for Education

Children looked after and adoption performance tables: year ending March 2014

Methodology and guidance document

December 2014

Contents

Guidance for Performance Tables 2014

Notes for all tables

1.   Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers but where the numerator was five or fewer, or the denominator was 10 or fewer, they have been suppressed and replaced by a cross (x). To protect the confidentiality of data on individual children it has also been necessary to suppress other figures whenever it would be possible to calculate the value of a suppressed number by means of simple arithmetic with data from other publications. Percentages have been derived from unrounded figures.

2.   Symbols used:

   x   Figures not shown in order to protect confidentiality.

   ..   Not applicable, i.e. no children in the cohort.

   -      Percentages less than 0.5% but greater than 0%

3.   All tables include a rank to show the local authorities in order of performance (local areas with the best performance are ranked as number one). If two or more local authorities have the same score then they will receive the same rank.

4.   In the attainment tables, some of the children will have been placed in schools outside the Local Authority responsible for them.

5.   The attainment tables will be updated next year once more recent data has become available.

6.   These tables are based on the data submitted and signed-off by the LA at the time of the data collection, but we have subsequently been notified of some errors in the data submitted by some LAs:

- Plymouth identified that a small number of children with a change of legal status were incorrectly coded as having a change of both legal status and placement. This affects 8 children included in the Placement 1 indicator and 6 in the Placement 2 indicator.
- Salford identified one child who should have been coded as in touch with the local authority and in higher education. The child was incorrectly coded as not in touch with the authority and consequently was excluded from the Leaving Care tables.
- Bexley identified that four children have been incorrectly given a date for an agency decision maker's decision that they should be adopted.This affects the Adoption Scorecard 3 indicator.

Placement Indicators

Placement 1: Percentage of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year ending 31 March.

Definition

All placements of 24 hours or more of children that were looked after on 31 March during the previous year are counted regardless of duration, except for an agreed series of short term placements.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of children looked after at 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 with three or more placements in the previous year and then dividing this total by the sum of the number of children looked after at same three dates.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Any placements that were already open on 1 April at the beginning of the year, and any which were open on 31 March at the end of the year are included. A child being placed for adoption with their existing foster carer is not included as a change of placement for the purposes of these figures.

Note

From 2014-15, each episode of a child being missing or absent from care will be recorded in a separate module in the SSDA 903 collection, and the Department will be able to exclude missing children from the placement analysis accordingly.

Good performance

A **low** percentage represents good performance.

Placement 2: Percentage of looked after children aged under 16 at 31 March who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or who were placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement lasted for at least 2 years

Definition

All children aged under 16 that were looked after on 31 March for a continuous period of at least 2.5 years are considered. Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who were living in the same placement for at least two years or if they have been placed for adoption, their adoptive placement and their previous placement combined last for at least two years (subset A).

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by first calculating the sum of subset A for 2012, 2013 and 2014 and then dividing it by sum of the children aged under 16 that were looked after for at least 2.5 years on 31 of March of each of the following years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Note

From 2014-15, each episode of a child being missing or absent from care will be recorded in a separate module in the SSDA 903 collection, and the Department will be able to exclude missing children from the placement analysis accordingly.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Placement 3: Percentage of looked after children at 31 March placed outside the Local Authority boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live

Definition

All children looked after on 31 March are considered. Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children placed outside their Local Authority (LA) boundary and who were more than 20 miles from where they used to live. Children placed for adoption are excluded from this subset.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of children looked after who were placed outside their local authority boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live at 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of children looked after at 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

Distance is calculated by the SSDA 903 system as the distance, in a straight line, between postcodes.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **low** percentage represents good performance.

Adoption Indicators

Adoption 1: Percentage of looked after children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted

Definition

All children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending on 31 March are considered. Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who ceased to be looked after because they were adopted.

Only the last occasion on which a child ceased to be looked after in the year has been included. Children who ceased to be looked after in more than one year will be counted more than once.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding all the children looked after who ceased to be looked after who were adopted (children with a reason episode ceased E11 or E12) in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of children looked after who ceased to be looked after in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **higher** percentage represents good performance, but percentages should not reach 100%.

Adoption 2: Percentage of looked after children who ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order

Definition

All children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending on 31 March are considered. Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order.

Only the last occasion on which a child ceased to be looked after in the year has been included. Children who ceased to be looked after in more than one year will be counted more than once.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding all the children looked after who ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order (children with a reason episode ceased E43 or E44) in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of children looked after who ceased to be looked after in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **higher** percentage represents good performance, but percentages should not reach 100%.

Adoption Scorecards Indicators

Adoption Scorecard 1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted

Definition

For all the children that have been adopted during the year ending 31 March, the average length of time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, i.e. being placed for adoption codes A3 to A6.

Children who were not placed for adoption prior to the adoption order are excluded.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by averaging the time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (i.e. being placed for adoption, placement codes A3 to A6), for all children that were adopted between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2014.

The indicator is presented rounded to the nearest number of days.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **low** number of days represents good performance.

Adoption Scorecard 2: Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family

Definition

For all the children that have been adopted during the year ending 31 March, the average length of time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child (i.e. a placement order being granted) and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family.

Children who were not placed for adoption prior to the adoption order are excluded. Children with no Placement Order or Freeing Order are also excluded (legal status codes E1 and D1, respectively).

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by averaging the time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child, i.e. granting a placement order or a freeing order (legal status codes E1 and D1, respectively) and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family, for all children that were adopted between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2014.

The indicator is presented rounded to the nearest number of days.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Notes

A time of zero is assigned to children who were matched before court authority was received.

Good performance

A **low** number of days represents good performance.

Adoption Scorecard 3: Percentage of children who wait less than 18 months[1] between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family

Definition

All the children that have been adopted during the year ending 31 March and those in the adoption system (i.e. with an agency decision maker's decision that they should be adopted) at 31 March are considered.

Of these children, we are also interested in the subset of children that waited less than 18 months[1] between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family.

Children adopted who were not placed for adoption first are excluded.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by determining the number of children, who either:

- were adopted between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2014 and waited less than 18 months[1] between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (excludes children adopted who were not placed for adoption first); or
- were in the adoption system at 31 March 2014 and had waited less than 18 months from becoming looked after to be placed (if placed for adoption); or
- were in the adoption system at 31 March 2014 and had been looked after less than 18 months (if still waiting to be placed).

This is divided by the sum of children adopted between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2014 and all children in the adoption system at 31 March 2014.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

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[1] This threshold was 20 months for the indicator covering the period between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2013, and before that it was 21 months for the periods between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2012 and 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2011.

Attainment Indicators

Attainment 1: Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months who achieved at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics

Definition

All the children looked after continuously for 12 months who were eligible for Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics during the year ending 31 March are considered.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who achieved at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics based on test results.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2011, 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2013.

The indicator will be updated for the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 after the publication of the statistical first release for outcomes for children looked after in December 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding all the children looked after continuously for 12 months and who achieved at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of children looked after continuously for 12 months in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2013.

Attainment data for 2013 are provisional, data for 2012 and earlier are based on the final attainment data.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Further Information

For further information about the matching process and the matching rates between the looked after children data and the National Pupil Database please see the "Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities" statistical first release.

Attainment 2: Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months who achieved 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including English and mathematics

Definition

All the children looked after continuously for 12 months who were eligible for Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics during the year ending 31 March are considered.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who achieved 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including English and mathematics.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2011, 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2013.

The indicator will be updated for the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 after the publication of the statistical first release for outcomes for children looked after in December 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding all the children looked after continuously for 12 months and who achieved 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including English and mathematics in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of children looked after continuously for 12 months in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2013.

Attainment data for 2013 are provisional, data for 2012 and earlier are based on the final attainment data.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Further Information

For further information about the matching process and the matching rates between the looked after children data and the National Pupil Database please see the "Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities" statistical first release.

Attainment 3: Percentage of sessions missed due to overall absences for children who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 31 March

Definition

All possible sessions (over five half terms) for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March are considered.

Of these, we are also interested in the number of sessions missed due to overall absences (both authorised and unauthorised) for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2011, 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2013. The indicator will be updated for the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 after the publication of the statistical first release for attainment for children looked after in December 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of sessions (over five half terms) missed due to overall absences for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of sessions (over five half terms) for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March are considered in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014. For 2009 to 2012 absence data was only collected for five half terms. In 2013 absence data started to be collected for the sixth half term. In order to make year on year comparisons and produce a three year average the indicator and values in the table are based on data for the first five half terms of the year.

Good performance

A **low** percentage represents good performance.

Further Information

For further information about the matching process and the matching rates between the looked after children data and the National Pupil Database please see the "Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities" statistical first release.

Attainment 4: Percentage of school-age children looked after continuously for 12 months who were attending a school that was assessed as being below the floor targets at Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 4

Definition

All the school-age children looked after continuously for 12 months in the year ending 31 March are considered.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who were attending a school that was assessed as being below the floor targets at Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 4.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2011, 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2013.

The indicator will be updated for the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 after the publication of the statistical first release for outcomes for children looked after in December 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the all school-age children who were attending a school that was assessed as being below the floor targets at Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 4 in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014. This total is then divided by the combined total of school-age children looked after continuously for 12 months in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 to obtain the indicator.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **low** percentage represents good performance.

Further Information

For further information about the matching process and the matching rates between the looked after children data and the National Pupil Database please see the "Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities" statistical first release.

Leaving Care Indicators

Leaving Care 1: Percentage of children leaving care over the age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday

Definition

All the children who ceased to be looked after in the year ending 31 March and who were aged 16 and over when they ceased to be looked after are considered. The small number of children whose period of being looked after ended because they died aged 16 or 17 are excluded.

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of children who were aged 18 or over when they ceased to be looked after.

Only the last occasion on which a child ceased to be looked after in the year has been counted.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of children who were aged 18 or over when they ceased to be looked after in each of the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 and then dividing by the total number of children who were aged 16 or over when they ceased to be looked after in the years ending 31 March 2012, 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014.

The small number of children whose period of being looked after ended because they died aged 16 or 17 are excluded.

The indicator is a three year average based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Leaving Care 2: Percentage of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in education, employment or training

Definition

All the former relevant young people[2] whose 19th, 20th or 21st birthday falls between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 who were previously looked after for at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, including some time after their 16th birthday, are considered

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of former relevant young people who were in education, employment or training (EET).

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2014.

Due to a change in the data collection, it is not possible to present a longer time series.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of former relevant young people in EET in the year ending 31 March 2014 and dividing by the total number of former relevant young people in the same period of time.

The indicator is based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Further information

Guidance on care leavers information can be found in section 2.9 of the SSDA 903 guidance notes.

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[2] The definition of a former relevant young person can be found in section 2.9.3 of the SSDA 903 guidance notes.

Leaving Care 3: Percentage of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in suitable accommodation

Definition

All the former relevant young people[3] whose 19th, 20th or 21st birthday falls between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 who were previously looked after for at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, including some time after their 16th birthday, are considered

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of former relevant young people who were in suitable accommodation.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2014.

Due to a change in the data collection, it is not possible to present a longer time series.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of former relevant young people in suitable accommodation in the year ending 31 March 2014 and dividing by the total number of former relevant young people in the same period of time.

The indicator is based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Further information

Guidance on care leavers information can be found in section 2.9 of the SSDA 903 guidance notes.

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[3] The definition of a former relevant young person can be found in section 2.9.3 of the SSDA 903 guidance notes.

Leaving Care 4: Percentage of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in higher education

Definition

All the former relevant young people[4] whose 19th, 20th or 21st birthday falls between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 who were previously looked after for at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, including some time after their 16th birthday, are considered

Of these children, we are interested in the subset of former relevant young people who were in higher education.

Period covered

The most recent indicator refers to the year ending 31 March 2014.

Due to a change in the data collection, it is not possible to present a longer time series.

Calculation

The indicator is calculated by adding the number of former relevant young people in higher education in the year ending 31 March 2014 and dividing by the total number of former relevant young people in the same period of time.

The indicator is based on a snapshot of the data taken in summer 2014.

Good performance

A **high** percentage represents good performance.

Further information

Guidance on care leavers information can be found in section 2.9 of the SSDA 903 guidance notes.

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[4] The definition of a former relevant young person can be found in section 2.9.3 of the SSDA 903 guidance notes.

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