



Department
for Education

Adoption Leadership Board headline measures and business intelligence

Quarter 3 2015 to 2016 update

January 2017

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Summary

Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures

2,080 children waiting at 31 December 2015

This is a 32% decrease from 31 March 2015 when there were 3,060 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family.

32% of children waiting at 31 December 2015 had been waiting 18 months or more, a decrease from 53% as at 31 March 2015.

Child timeliness has improved

The latest quarterly data suggests that the time taken between a child entering care and being placed with a family for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A1) was 17 months during the first three quarters of 2015-16. These improvements have been driven by an increase in the proportion of children placed within a year, from 19% in 2012-13 to 40% in the first three quarters of 2015-16.

The latest quarterly data suggests that the average number of days between placement order and match for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A2) was 8 months during the first three quarters of 2015-16.

Adopter timeliness is declining

The latest quarterly data suggests adopter timeliness is declining. In quarter 2 2013-14, 50% of approvals made by local authorities were made within 6 months of registration, while in quarter 3 2015-16 this had decreased to 26% of registrations, despite signs of improvements since the end of 2014-15.

The timeliness of matches has declined. In quarter 4 2013-14, 80% of matches were made within 6 months of approval, compared to 51% in quarter 3 2015-16.

Other Key Headlines

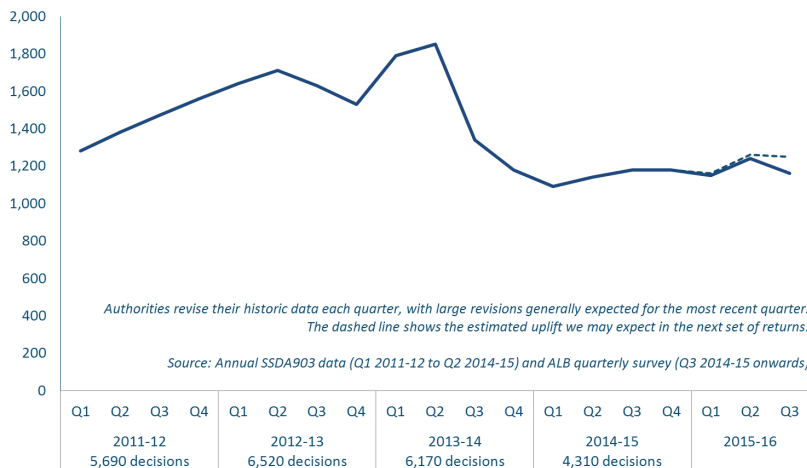
New ADM decisions and placement orders granted have fallen

Quarterly data suggests that the number of new decisions has continued to fall from 1,850 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 1,160 in quarter 3 2015-16, a decrease of 37%.

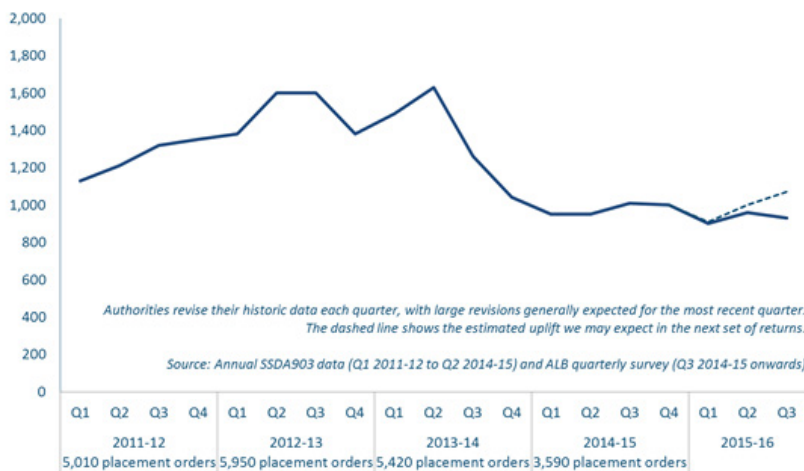
The number of new placement orders have also continued to fall from 1,630 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 930 in quarter 3 2015-16, a decrease of 43%.

The charts below show the number of ADM decisions and placement orders over time. The estimated figures on the charts are based on the uplift seen in previous quarters when local authorities revise their figures the following quarter. When we apply this uplift our estimates suggest that the number of new decisions may have plateaued and new placement orders granted may have seen their second consecutive rise.

Number of new ADM decisions in each quarter since 2011-12



Number of new placement orders granted in each quarter since 2011-12



Children adopted from care has decreased

Quarterly data suggests that the number of children adopted from care has fallen between quarter 2 and 3 2015-16 from 1,010 to 960.

Adoptive family approvals and registrations have decreased

There have been 2,700 registrations to become an adoptive family in the first three quarters of 2015-16. This equates to an annualised figure of 3,600 which if it manifests, would represent a fall of 37% compared to 2014-15 (decreases of 41% for LAs and 20% for VAAs).

There have been 2,910 adoptive families approved for adoption in the three quarters of 2015-16. This equates to an annualised figure of 3,880 which if it manifests, would represent a fall of 26% compared to 2014-15 (decreases of 29% for LAs and 13% for VAAs).

Our most recent estimate for the “adopter gap” suggests that the gap has closed, and we now have more adoptive families than children waiting. However, there are still 1,820 children with a placement order not yet matched and the relevance of this measure assumes that matching is working effectively.

Reversal of decision

Of the children reported to have had their decision reversed during the first three quarters of 2015-16, 29% were due to the court not making a placement order, a further increase on 2014-15. However, this year, the proportional increase has been driven by a fall in the number of prospective adopters not being found.

Regional adoptive family timeliness

The average number of days between registration and approval in the first three quarters of 2015-16 was 252 days, this compares to 237 days in 2014-15. The average number of days between approval and match in the first three quarters of 2015-16 was 201 days, this compares to 153 days in 2014-15.

All approvals and matches in Q1 to Q3 2015-16			
	Average number of days between registration and approval for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days between approval and match for <u>new matches</u>	Average number of days between registration and match for <u>new matches</u>
North East	234	228	443
North West	232	182	397
Y & the Humber	240	181	419
East Midlands	215	178	387
West Midlands	240	183	427
East of England	248	200	429
London	267	238	496
South East	279	189	458
South West	279	245	512
LAs in ENGLAND	249	198	437
VAs in ENGLAND	264	220	469
ENGLAND	252	201	442

2 Stage Process in Q1 to Q3 2015-16			
Average number of days between enquiry and the start of Stage 1 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days for Stage 1 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days between the end of Stage 1 and the start of Stage 2 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days for Stage 2 for <u>new approvals</u>
58	84	24	124
120	88	20	132
103	93	31	134
119	76	30	132
68	82	23	142
114	85	45	132
84	96	39	148
73	114	37	147
109	110	27	143
95	93	31	138
117	116	22	134
99	97	29	137

Data Sources

New data This document has been updated with new data from the ALB quarterly survey providing information on children and adopters in the third quarter of 2015-16 (October to December 2015).

SSDA903 data Local authorities provide data on their looked after children using the SSDA903 collection. Data are collected from all local authorities. The information is collected at child level and includes information about the child's characteristics and their dates for each stage of the care process, including adoption. The data goes through thorough quality assurance and local authorities are able to update their historic data annually. We therefore view this as the most robust source of information on adoption. It is used to produce the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#) (SFR) and the [Adoption Scorecards](#). The most recent data covers the year ending 31 March 2016.

ALB quarterly survey In quarter 3 2015-16 the response rate for the child level section of the return was 99%, and the response rate for the adopter level section of the return was 98%. Therefore national and regional figures on adoptions and adopters include estimates made for non-responses. Estimates are made by scaling to the regional level based on the number of adoptions in each LA during 2014-15 (from the SSDA903 data). Three Voluntary Adoption Agencies did not provide a return in quarter 3 2015-16.

Ofsted data Ofsted have previously published annual data on the recruitment of adopters and the children placed with them. From quarter 4 2014-15 the Ofsted data collection became part of the quarterly survey.



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