

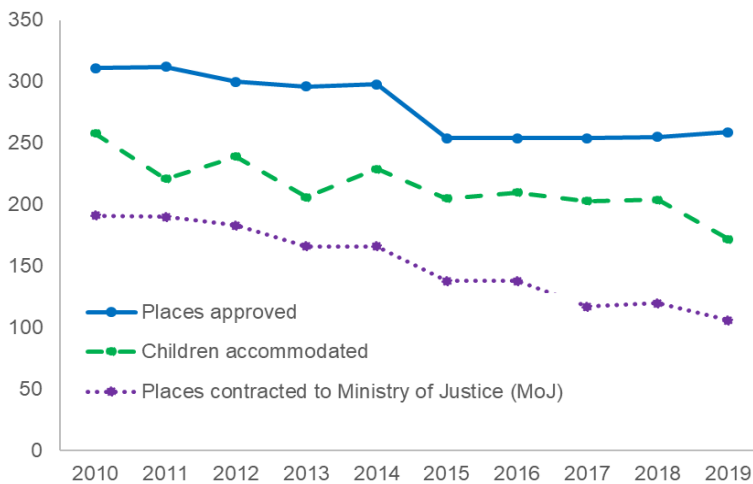


# Children accommodated in secure children's homes at 31 March 2019: England and Wales



06 June 2019

## The number of places approved for use in secure children's homes remain stable, whilst the number of children accommodated falls

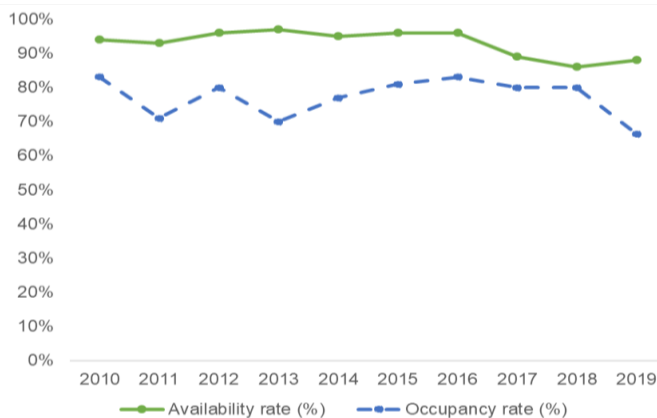


At 31 March 2019, there were 259 places approved for use in secure children's homes in England and Wales, up slightly from 255 in 2018.

The number of children accommodated in secure children's homes was 172 at 31 March 2019, 32 children (16%) less than last year when there were 204.

At 31 March 2019, there were 106 places contracted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), a decrease from 120 last year.

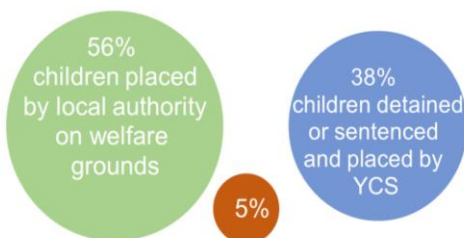
## The availability rate increases slightly, whilst the occupancy rate falls



At 31 March 2019, 88% of approved places in England and Wales were either occupied or available for use. This has increased from 86% in 2018.

At 31 March 2019, 66% of approved places in England and Wales were occupied, this is down from 80% of approved places occupied in both 2017 and 2018.

## The proportion of children detained or sentenced and placed by the Youth Custody Service has decreased



Children placed by local authority in a criminal justice context

The percentage of children detained or sentenced and placed by the Youth Custody Service has decreased to 38%, (down from 48%) and the percentage of children placed by the local authority on welfare grounds has increased to 56% (from 47%).

The proportion of children placed by local authorities in a criminal justice context has remained the same as last year, at 5%.

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## About this release

This statistics publication provides data on secure children's homes (SCHs) in England and Wales. It includes the number of places approved and number of children accommodated as well as characteristics of those children accommodated: gender, age, length of stay and type of placement. This publication gives an annual snapshot of the status of secure children's homes in England and Wales at 31 March. All figures in this publication relate to England and Wales combined, unless otherwise stated.

## In this publication

The following tables are included in this publication:

- Main tables (Excel .xls)

The accompanying data quality, uses and methodology document, provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

## Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at [cla.stats@education.gov.uk](mailto:cla.stats@education.gov.uk).

# 1. Places approved and children accommodated (Table 1)

There are currently 15 secure children’s homes (SCHs) in England and Wales. This figure has remained stable at 15 for the last five years..

The number of approved places in the 15 SCHs has been stable over the last five years, however, there has been a decrease of 52 approved places (17%) since 2010.

The number of children accommodated in SCHs has fallen compared to last year, down 16%. In 2019, 172 children were accommodated and in 2018 the figure was 204. There has been an overall decrease of 86 children accommodated (33%) since 2010.

The number of approved places contracted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has fallen this year by 12%, from 120 in 2018 to 106 in 2019. This is 85 places (45%) fewer than in 2010.

**Table 1: Number of places approved, children accommodated and places contracted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) at 31 March**

England and Wales, 2010 to 2019

	Places approved	All children accommodated	Of which places contracted to MoJ
2019	259	172	106
2018	255	204	120
2017	254	203	117
2016	254	210	138
2015	254	205	138
:	:	:	:
2010	311	258	191

Source: DfE SA1 survey

## Secure children’s homes

Secure children’s homes (SCHs) are children’s homes which provide a locked environment and restrict a child or young person’s liberty. They provide care and accommodation to children and young people who have been detained or sentenced by the criminal courts and those who have been remanded to secure local authority accommodation. They also accommodate and care for children and young people who have been placed there on welfare grounds by local authorities (LAs) and the courts. Secure children’s homes provide children and young people with support tailored to their individual needs; to achieve this they have a high ratio of staff to young people and are generally small facilities. The care of children within the secure estate is governed by the contractual arrangements in place with the different establishment types such as the Ministry of Justice as well as the applicable regulations, in particular, Secure Training Centre Rules 1998; Young Offender Institution Rules 2000; Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015. Secure Children’s Homes (SCH) and Secure Training Centres (STC) will work towards the outcomes for young people which are laid out within their contractual, and other agreements with the Youth Custody Service.

## Youth Custody Service

From September 2017, the overall responsibility for commissioning of youth custody transferred to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) from the Youth Justice Board. At the same time the Youth Custody Service (YCS) took over responsibility for individual placements of Children and Young People into youth custody and day-to-day management of youth custody.

## Young Offender Institution

Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) can accommodate young people aged from 15-21. However, the YCS is only responsible for commissioning YOIs which hold young males aged from 15-18. YOIs tend to be larger than SCHs and STCs with lower ratios of staff to young people. Consequently, young people who are more resilient and older may be placed in a YOI. Also young people who predominantly externalise their risk may be placed within a YOI.

## Secure Training Centre

Secure Training Centres (STCs) are available to place those young people who are a little older and perhaps more independent and more motivated to attend school, or have risk factors which would make a placement in a YOI

inappropriate. There are three purpose built STCs in England offering secure provision to sentenced or remanded young people aged 12-17.

## 2. Availability and Occupancy rates (Table 1)

The availability rate of approved places has fallen for the last two years but has risen this year from 86% in 2018 to 88% in 2019. The occupancy rate has fallen, to 66%, after holding stable at 80% in both 2017 and 2018 which reflects the decrease in the number of placements by the YCS.

### Availability rates

The availability rates are based on the number of places that were in use or available for use at 31 March (excluding any approved places that are out of service, e.g. undergoing development work). The percentages do not indicate the number of vacant places.

### Occupancy rates

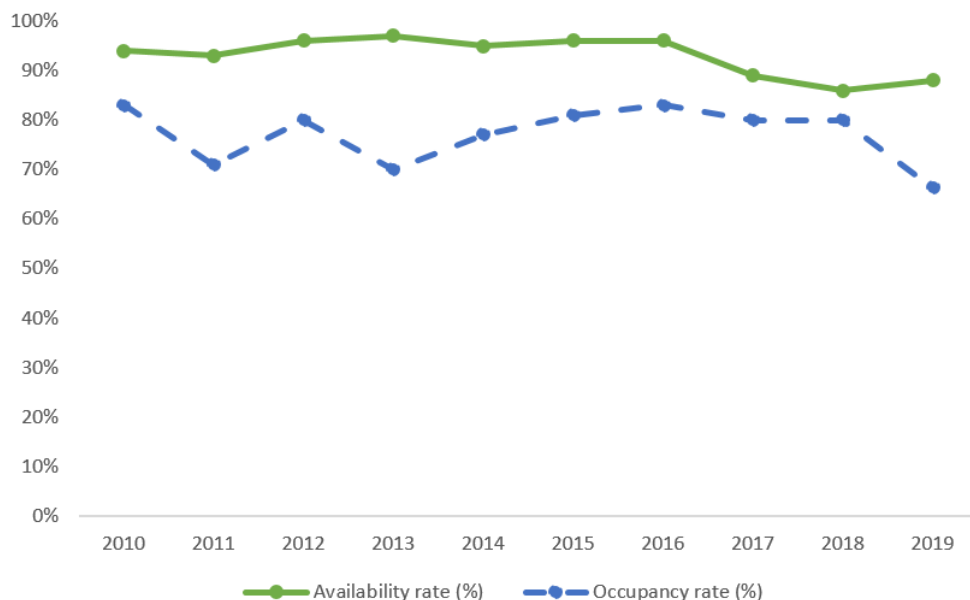
The occupancy rates are based on the number of children accommodated at 31 March in relation to the number of places approved by the Secretary of State, and are displayed to the nearest whole number.

Between the years of 2010 and 2016, the availability rate remained consistently above 90%, but has since fallen below 90%. However, two homes were undergoing building renovations resulting in few or no rooms available in 2018 and there was a similar situation with some of the homes in 2017. One home is being renovated in 2019 resulting in none of their rooms being available for use.

In 2019, 66% of approved places were occupied, down from 80% in 2018. Since 2010, the occupancy rate has previously fluctuated between 70% (2013) and 83% (2010 and 2016).

**Figure A: Availability and occupancy rates over time**

England and Wales, 2010 to 2019



Source: DfE SA1 survey

### 3. Type of placement (Tables 1 & 2)

Of the children accommodated at 31 March 2019 in England and Wales, 38% of children accommodated were placed by the Youth Custody Service (YCS), down from 48% in 2018 and 51% in 2010. 56% were placed by the local authority on welfare grounds (compared with 47% in 2018 and 37% in 2010). 5% of children accommodated were placed by the designated local authority in a criminal justice context (the same as in 2018).

#### Welfare placement

Children can be placed into the homes by their local authority (LA), under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 for the protection of themselves and/or others.

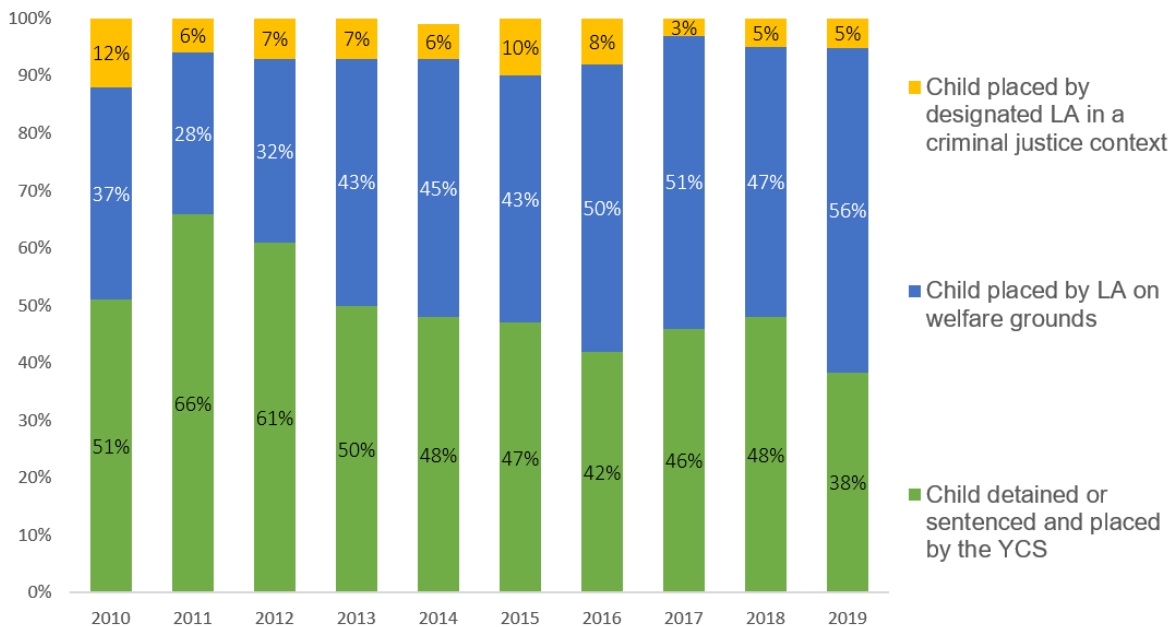
#### Youth Custody Service

From September 2017, the overall responsibility for commissioning of youth custody transferred to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) from the Youth Justice Board. At the same time the Youth Custody Service (YCS) took over responsibility for individual placements of Children and Young People into youth custody and day-to-day management of youth custody.

This change in the proportions of children accommodated by type of placement has been influenced by the decrease in the number of children detained or sentenced and placed by the YCS. These figures have decreased by 33% compared to last year, from 98 to 66 children, whereas the numbers of children placed by the local authority on welfare grounds, or placed by the LA in a criminal justice context were largely unchanged.

Figures published by the Ministry of Justice<sup>1</sup> show that the overall population of the youth secure estate has declined in the last decade, influenced by a move by courts towards sentencing children being a last resort.

**Figure B: Type of placement percentages for children accommodated in secure children’s homes at 31 March England and Wales, 2010 to 2019**



Source: DfE SA1 survey

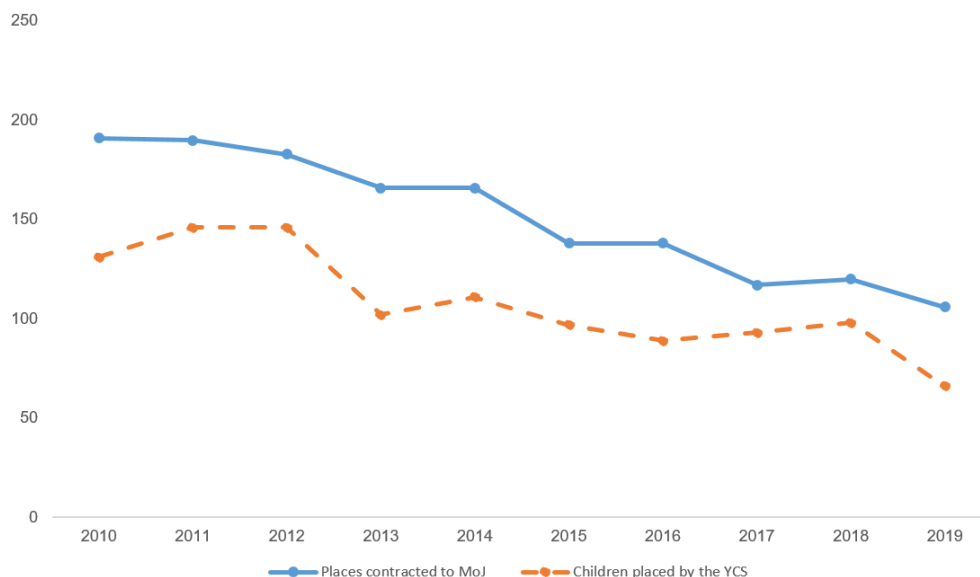
Note: Due to rounding, the sum of the category percentages may not always total 100%.

<sup>1</sup> [Youth Custody data](#)

Between 2010 and 2019, both the number of places contracted to the MoJ and the number of children placed by the YCS has fallen overall.

**Figure C: Places contracted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and children placed by the Youth Custody Service (YCS)**

England and Wales, 2010 to 2019



Source: DfE SA1 survey

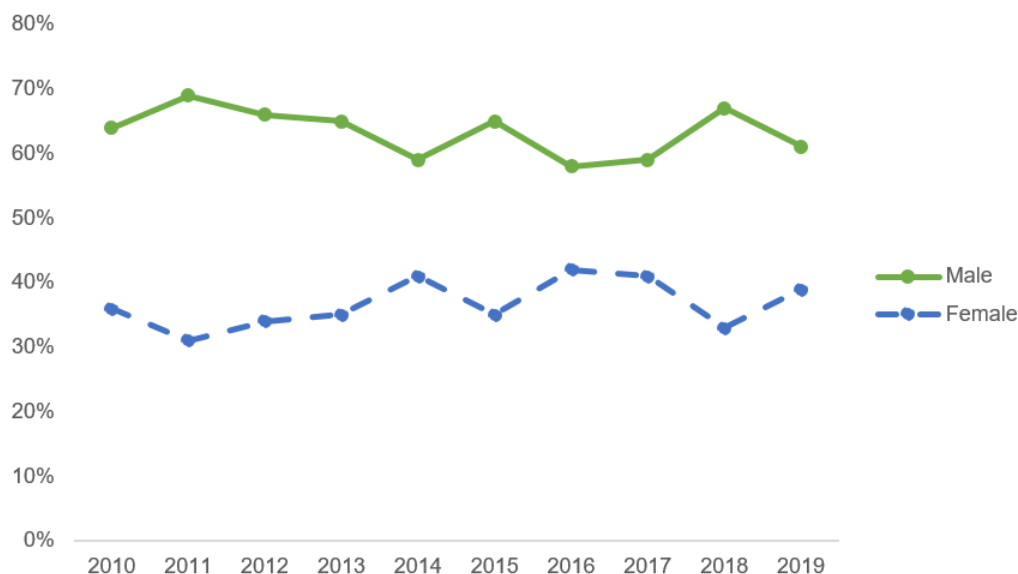
#### 4. Gender and age (Tables 1 & 2)

Of the 172 children accommodated in England and Wales at 31 March 2019, 61% (105) were male and 39% (67) were female. There has been a decrease in the proportion of children accommodated who were male, from 67% in 2018 to 61% in 2019. This is explained by a 23% decrease in the numbers of males accommodated, compared to last year, whereas the numbers of children accommodated who were female has remained the same as last year.

Information showing the gender split by type of placement is not collected but it is likely this decrease in the number of males relates to the decrease in children placed by the YCS.

**Figure D: Percentage of male and female children accommodated in secure children’s homes**

England and Wales, 2010 to 2019



Source: DfE SA1 survey

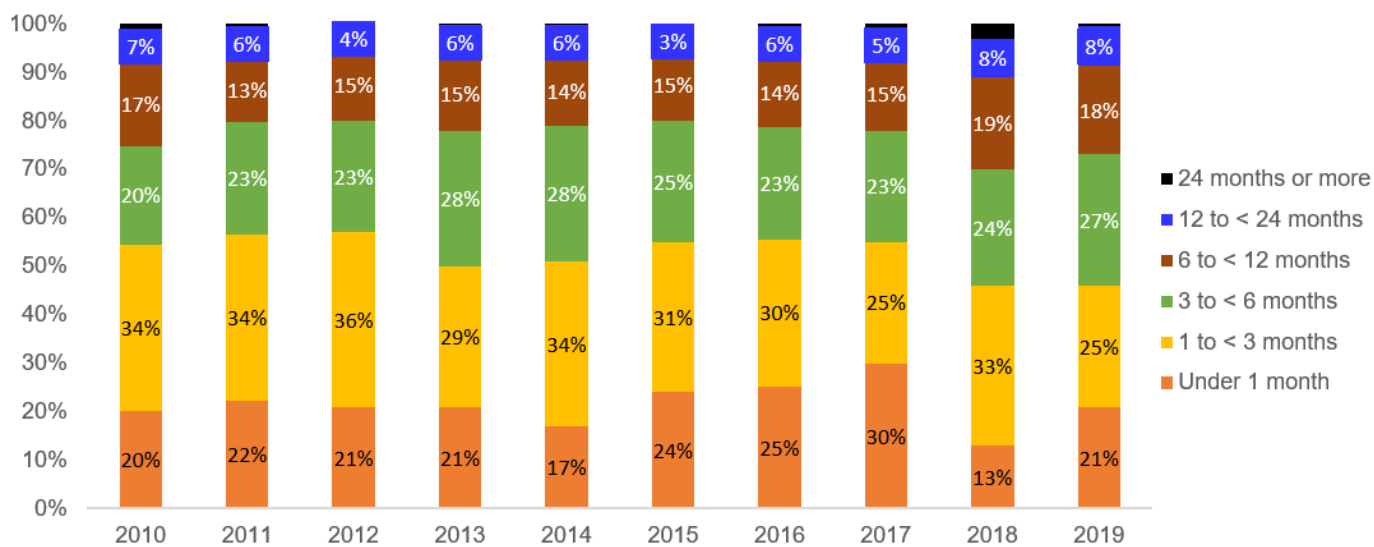
In 2019, much of the decrease in the number of children accommodated is seen in the group of children aged 16, which has almost halved from 57 children accommodated in 2018 to 31 in 2019. In all other age categories, the number of children accommodated are similar to last year.

## 5. Length of stay (Tables 1 & 2)

Of the 172 children accommodated in England and Wales at 31 March 2019, 46% had been accommodated for less than 3 months, the same as in 2018. 2018 was the first time in the period since 2010 that more than half of the children accommodated were accommodated for 3 months or more.

Last year there was an increase in the proportion of children accommodated for longer periods. 11% of children were accommodated for a year or more. However, this year the proportion has reduced to 9% which is more in line with the figures previously in the years 2010 to 2017.

**Figure E: Length of stay of children accommodated**  
England and Wales, 2010 to 2019



Source: DfE SA1 survey

Note: Due to rounding, the sum of the category percentages may not always total 100%.

## 6. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the [department's statistics website](#):

- 1 Places approved and children accommodated in secure children's homes at 31 March by gender, age, length of stay and type of placement (numbers and percentages), England and Wales, 2010 to 2019
- 2 Places approved and children accommodated in secure children's homes at 31 March by type of placement (numbers and percentages), England, 2010 to 2019
- 3 Places approved and available, and children accommodated at 31 March by individual secure children's homes (numbers and percentages), 2010 to 2019

When reviewing the tables, please note that the National Statistics Code of Practice requires that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that all published or disseminated statistics produced by the DfE protect confidentiality. For confidentiality purposes, numbers from 1 to 5 inclusive and percentages based on a numerator between 1 and 5 inclusive and a denominator between 1 and 10 inclusive have been replaced in the published tables by the symbol 'c'. To ensure the suppressed number cannot be identified by simple arithmetic secondary suppression may be required. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero (0). "." means not applicable. Further information on the tables can be found in the accompanying methodology document.

## 7. Further information is available

- **The MoJ** publishes [youth custody data](#) monthly on children and young people within secure children's homes (SCHs), secure training centres (STCs) and young offender institutions (YOIs).
- **Ofsted** publishes official statistics annually on [Children's social care in England](#).

## 8. National Statistics

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.

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.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

## 9. Technical information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this publication. This 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.



## 10. Get in touch

### Media enquiries

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Department  
for Education



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Reference: Children accommodated in secure children's homes at 31 March 2019



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