

Official Statistics Release

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Introduction

This official statistics release reports on the number of children's social care providers and places and provision of residential accommodation for children in boarding schools and further education colleges for which Ofsted had regulatory or inspection responsibility for, covering the period between 31 December 2011 and 31 March 2012.¹ Children's social care providers include children's homes, secure children's homes, residential special schools, residential family centres, boarding schools, further education colleges, secure training centres, adoption support services, voluntary adoption agencies, local authority adoption agencies and independent and local authority fostering services.

These statistics are based on a snapshot as at 31 March 2012. Ofsted will publish these data at regular intervals and the next release will be in autumn 2012.

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¹ The boarding schools data relate only to boarding schools which have their welfare inspections carried out by Ofsted. These include maintained boarding schools; independent boarding schools that are not members of an association; and a small number of independent schools that are members of an association, other than the Independent Schools Association.

Key findings – movement in providers and places

National number of providers and places at 31 March 2012

- There were a total of 3,166 children's social care providers and providers of residential accommodation for children in boarding schools and further education colleges in England.
- The former North West Government Office Region (GOR) had the largest number of providers at 639 and the South East had the next largest with 492. The North East had the smallest number of providers at 169. The number of providers in individual local authorities varied from one in City of London and two in Isles of Scilly and Thurrock to 130 in Kent.

Children's Homes at 31 March 2012²

- 66% of all providers in England were children's homes (2,074 homes).
- There were more children's homes in the North than in the other regions, with 807 homes in total. This compares with 659 in the Midlands regions and 608 in the Southern regions. The North West GOR had the largest number of children's homes with 514 while the North East GOR had the smallest with 107.
- The local authority with the largest number of children's homes located in its area was Lancashire with 101 homes. Kent and then Staffordshire had the next largest number of homes, with 77 and 74 homes respectively.
- Six local authorities did not have any children's homes, either run by them or run by private or voluntary organisations, located in their area. Four of the six authorities were in London.
- Another 25 local authorities did not run any of the children's homes located in their area.
- There were 11,765 registered places in children's homes in England.
- There was little change in the overall number of children's home places. The largest overall change was in the number of places in children's homes located in Essex, where there was a decrease of 27 places.

Other social care providers as at 31 March 2012

- The number of residential family centre places has increased by 7 places since 30 June 2011.
- The number of Independent fostering services has also increased by 7 places 30 June 2011.
- Please see Table 3 for a breakdown of all provision types at a national level.

² The figures for children's homes exclude secure children's homes. These homes are recorded separately.

Methodology

1. The data in this publication are taken from Ofsted's Regulatory Support Application (RSA) database, which holds information about all registered social care providers, and the Inspection Tracking System (ITS) which hold information about secure training centres. Data relate to the position as at the end of each month, up to 31 March 2012.
2. Information about the number of places is collected at different intervals for different providers which will affect the changes seen in the number of places when looking at quarterly data.
3. An updated list of schools inspected by the Independent School Inspectorate was used to calculate the boarding school figures (please see the 'Boarding Schools' note in the glossary for more details). Because of this the numbers of boarding schools and hence the total number of providers for 31 December 2011 differ slightly from the numbers in the previous publication.
4. For more information on how Ofsted regulates and inspects children's social care, please go to the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Care-and-local-services/Children-s-social-care

Additional information

All the tables and charts shown in this release, along with additional analysis by month and at regional and local authority level, are available in Excel format on the Ofsted website in the same location as this document. Underlying data are also available in Excel and comma separated values (.csv) formats.

Please see data tables listed below:

Table 1: Children's social care providers and places (national or Government Office Region or local authority)

[Please see Table 1 in the Excel workbook in the same zip file as this document]

Table 2: Children's social care providers and places (national and Government Office Region and local authority)

[Please see Table 2 in the Excel workbook in the same zip file as this document]

Table 3: National number of children's social care providers at the end of each quarter, by provision type

[See Table 3 below]

Map 1: Number of children's homes, by former Government Office Region, at the end of the current quarter

[See Map 1 below]

Map 2: Number of children's homes places, by former Government Office Region, at the end of the current quarter

[See Map 2 below]

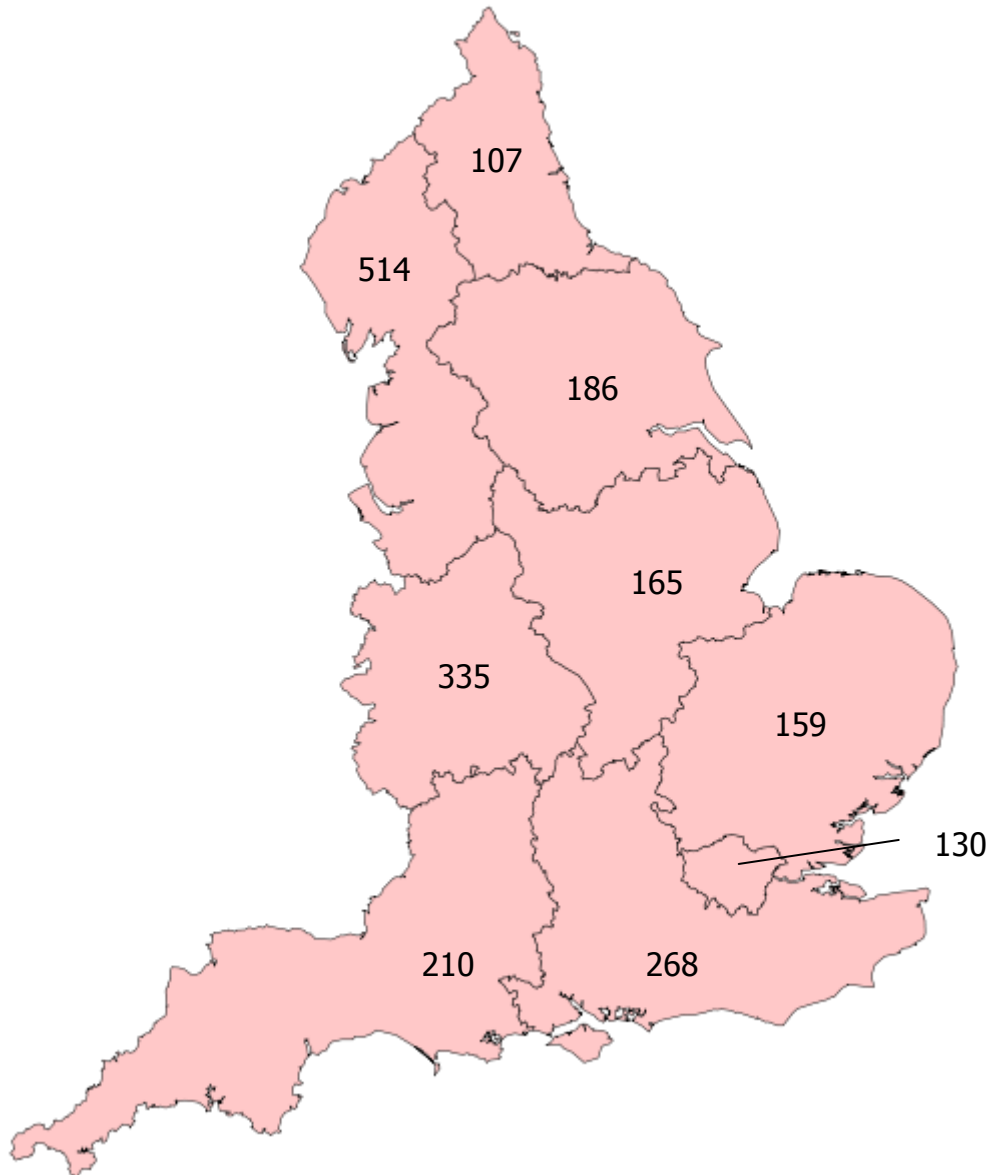
Table 3: National number of children’s social care providers and places at the end of each quarter, by provision type³

Date	Data type	Children's Home	Secure Children's Home	Residential Special School	Residential Family Centre	Boarding School	Further Education College with Residential Accommodation	Secure Training Centre	Adoption Support Agency	Voluntary Adoption Agency Branch	Local Authority Adoption Agency	Independent Fostering Service	Local Authority Fostering Service	All
30 June 2011	Providers	2,076	16	205	58	533	43	4	44	48	149	288	150	3,614
30 September 2011	Providers	2,074	16	202	61	89	43	4	43	48	150	288	149	3,167
31 December 2011	Providers	2,063	16	197	64	85	44	4	43	48	150	292	149	3,155
31 March 2012	Providers	2,074	16	194	65	86	44	4	40	48	150	295	150	3,166
30 June 2011	Places	11,862	300	5,147	392	71,985	4,226							
30 September 2011	Places	11,844	281	5,355	417	10,156	4,290							
31 December 2011	Places	11,780	281	6,395	425	9,602	4,177							
31 March 2012	Places	11,765	281	6,328	429	9,724	4,177							

³ There has been a decrease in the overall number of children’s social care providers and boarding schools between 30 June and 30 September 2011. This is because since 1 September 2011, all independent boarding schools that are members of the Independent Schools Association have the inspection of their welfare carried out by the Independent Schools Inspectorate rather than by Ofsted: they are, therefore, no longer included in the data.

Map 1

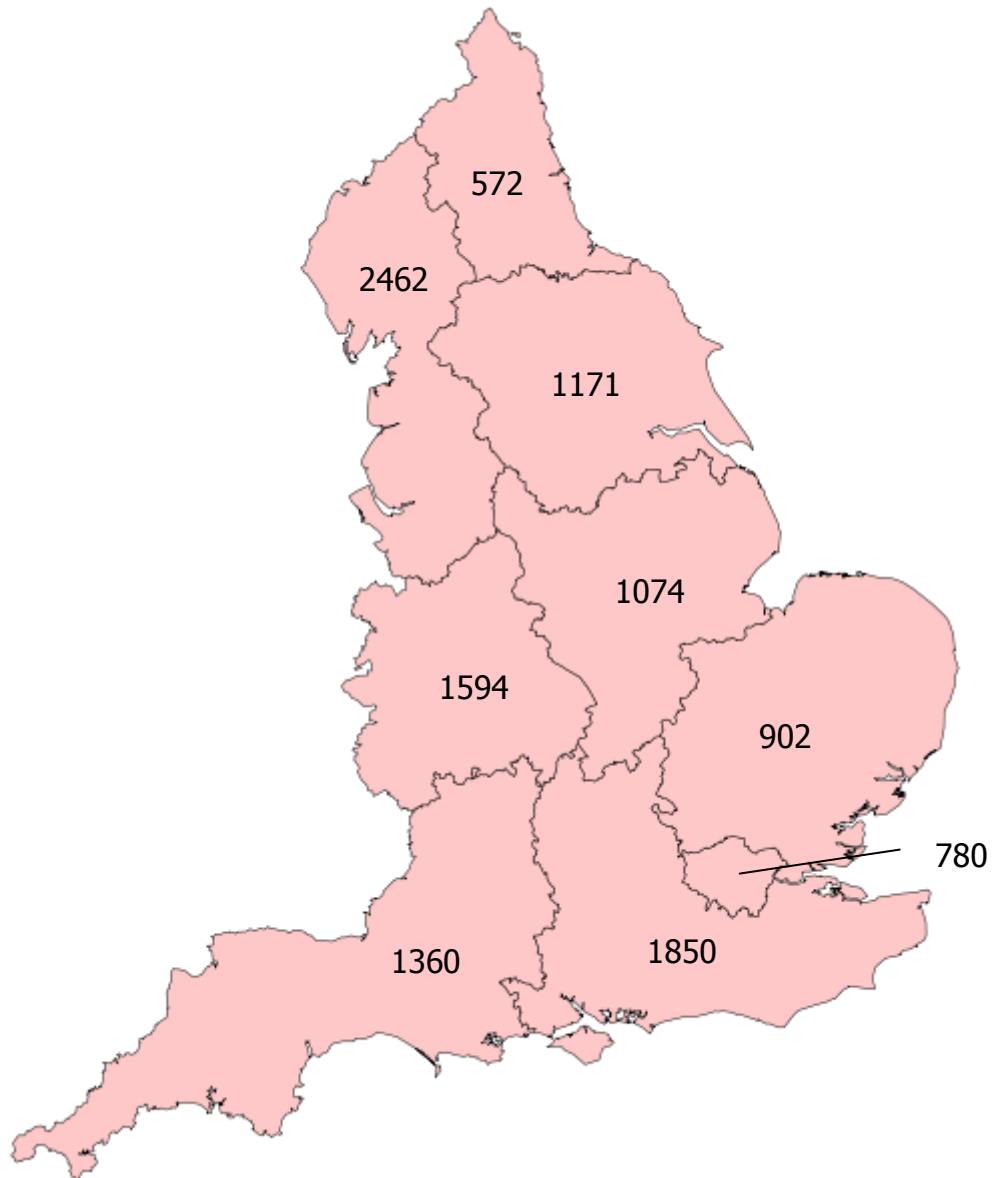
Number of children's homes, by former Government Office Region, at the end of the current quarter⁴



⁴ Not including secure children's homes.

Map 2

Number of children's homes places, by former Government Office Region, at the end of the current quarter⁵



⁵ Not including secure children's homes.

Glossary

Adoption agencies

The focus of all adoption agencies is on placing children successfully into adoptive families who the agency recruits, assesses, prepares and supports, so they will meet the children's needs and enable them to develop and achieve throughout their lives. The services maintained by local authorities are described in section 3(1) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Local authorities place children with adoptive families recruited and approved by themselves, by other local authorities or by voluntary adoption agencies who must register with Ofsted. Adoption agencies may also provide birth records, counselling and intermediary services to adoptees and birth relatives. There are three branches of voluntary adoption agencies in Wales which are inspected by Ofsted because their head offices are in England. These are not included in this publication.

Adoption support agencies

Adoption support agencies are defined by section 8 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and provide services to anyone touched by adoption and are registered with Ofsted. This includes counselling and help for children and adults to gain information about their adoption or to trace birth relatives. Adoption support agencies can be either organisations or individuals, and may be contracted by a local authority to provide support services.

Boarding Schools

Ofsted inspects boarding (welfare) in all maintained boarding schools and in a minority of independent boarding schools. These schools alone are captured in the data. The independent schools in which Ofsted inspects the boarding but not the education, are those that are members of the Bridge Schools Inspectorate or Schools Inspection Service.

Ofsted does not inspect boarding (welfare), or education in independent schools which are members of an association that is affiliated to, or a member of, the Independent Schools Council.

Children's homes

A children's home is defined in section 1 of the Care Standards Act 2000, and is an establishment that provides care and accommodation wholly or mainly for children. Children's homes vary in size and nature. They fulfil a range of purposes designed to meet the different needs of those children and young people who are assessed as needing a residential care placement. Some homes, for example, provide short breaks which are needed to help support children and their family.

Fostering services

Local authority fostering services are defined by section 4 of the Care Standards Act 2000. Local authority fostering services and independent fostering agencies recruit, prepare, assess, train and support foster carers. Independent fostering agencies (IFAs) are private companies or charities, which are registered with Ofsted and provide placements to children and young people with foster carers approved by them. IFAs work closely with Local Authorities to deliver these placements.

Places

The term 'places' used in this report refers to the number of places for which the social care provider has capacity. This number usually will not, therefore, be the same as the actual number of children who are receiving services from the provider. Ofsted holds data relating to places for: children's homes; secure children's homes; residential special schools; residential family centres; boarding schools; and further education colleges. For some of these providers Ofsted does not hold data relating to places. Where this is the case, the number of places has been estimated. For all other provision types, and aggregated provision types, places data are not available.

Providers

Children's social care providers are those institutions or organisations or agencies that provide services to the relevant children and young people. The providers commented on within this report include children's homes, secure children's homes, residential special schools, residential family centres, boarding schools, residential further education colleges, secure training centres, adoption support agencies, voluntary adoption agencies, local authority adoption agencies, private fostering arrangements, independent fostering agencies and local authority fostering agencies.

Residential accommodation in further education colleges

The welfare provision of further education colleges that provide, or arrange, residential accommodation for one or more students under the age of 18 years.

Residential family centres

Residential family centres are defined in section 4(2) of the Care Standards Act 2000 as establishments at which: a) accommodation is provided for children and their parents; b) the parents' capacity to respond to the children's needs and to safeguard their welfare is monitored and assessed; and c) the parents are given such advice, guidance and counselling is considered necessary.

Residential special schools

Residential special schools are defined in section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. They vary in size and nature. The sector includes large non-maintained special schools which make provision for very specific needs and take children as full boarders from all over the country, to smaller more local providers catering for children with a range of different special needs and disabilities who may be resident at the school only during the week.

Secure children's homes

Secure children's homes, as defined in section 25 Children Act 1989, accommodate children and young people who are remanded or have been sentenced for committing a criminal offence. They also accommodate children and young people who are placed there by a court because their behaviour is deemed to present a significant and immediate threat to their safety or the safety of others, unless they are placed in a secure environment.

Secure training centres

Secure training centres are defined in section 43(1) (d) of the Prison Act 1952. Ofsted inspects both the care and educational provision for children in four secure training centres⁶. They accommodate young people between the ages of 12 and 17 who have been remanded or sentenced by the courts. The centres are under contract to the Youth Justice Board, which monitors their compliance with requirements. Ofsted does not regulate secure training centres but has an agreement with the Youth Justice Board to inspect care twice a year and education once a year. The last inspection cycle of secure training centres (STC) was completed on 31 March 2012. The Youth Justice Board have commissioned an annual joint inspection of each STC by Ofsted, HMI Prisons and the Care Quality Commission, beginning September 2012 and completing by 31 March 2013. The draft inspection framework is currently out to public consultation, closing 26 June 2012.

⁶ The last inspection cycle of secure training centres (STC) was completed on 31 March 2012. The Youth Justice Board have commissioned an annual joint inspection of each STC by Ofsted, HMI Prisons and the Care Quality Commission, beginning September 2012 and completing by 31 March 2013. The draft inspection framework is currently out to public consultation, closing 26 June 2012.

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