



Department
for Education

**Experimental
Statistical Release**

The Local Authority Children's Social Care Services Workforce report, December 2011, England

From the National Minimum Dataset for Social Care (NMDS-SC)

31st May 2012

we gather
information about the
social care sector



Department
for Education



nmuds-scTM
national minimum
data set for social care



Executive Summary

This report contains information about staff employed (directly and indirectly) by children's social services departments in England as at 31st December 2011. This report does not cover staff employed by adult social services departments (this part of the workforce has been reported on separately¹). This report uses data collected in the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC). The NMDS-SC is managed by Skills for Care on behalf of the Department of Health and has been collecting information about social care providers and their staff since early 2006.

The previous data source for local authority workforce information was the Personal Social Services Staff of Social Services Departments return (SSDS001). The data in this report are not directly comparable because the SSDS001 covered both adults and children's services whereas this report focuses solely on children's.

Where applicable, independent sector figures have been included for comparative purposes only. These figures are based on Skills for Care's analysis of the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2011. For information about the service types included in the NMDS-SC and the service types that make up the bases of this report please see annex A.

Main findings

Based on the NMDS-SC data received from 71 local authorities, the main findings were:

- Direct-care providing roles accounted for 40% of jobs in local authority children's services; professional roles accounted for 26%.
- 92% of workers are directly employed with the local authorities, the remaining 8% are generally bank or pool staff (see section on employment status).
- The turnover rate for all workers in local authority children's services was 11% (1 in 9 workers leaving per year).
- The turnover rate for social workers in children's services was 9.1% (1 in 11 workers leaving per year).
- The vacancy rate for all children's local authority workers was 7.4%; the vacancy rate for children's services social workers was 6.1%.
- 82% of workers are female, the rate is higher for those in direct care providing roles.
- Almost a fifth of staff (19%) were aged 55 or over and therefore likely to retire in the next 10 years. This proportion drops to 16% (or 1 in 6) for social workers.
- The median annual salary for a social worker in the children's local authority sector was £31,200.
- Around 50% of social workers in London are from a black or minority ethnic background. This figure drops to 2% in the North East.
- Differences between the children's local authority workforce, the children's independent sector workforce and the adult local authority workforce are provided where applicable.

While the amount of data received has not allowed the report to estimate the total size of the workforce – the fact that there was data received from almost half of all local authorities and on over 25,000 workers means that that is no reason to suggest that statistics derived from the analysis are not representative of England as a whole.

¹ www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/pssstaffsept11

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Introduction

The data in this report are derived from the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2011, all information has been created or updated during 2011. The report covers staff employed (directly or indirectly) by children's local authority services in England. The report does not cover adult social services departments² or staff employed by the independent sector.

This report contains three sections, the first describing information about local authority children's services, including whole time equivalent job ratios, vacancy rates and turnover rates. The second section contains information about children's local authority staff including descriptions by gender, age, ethnicity, pay, sickness and full time/ part time status. The third section describes social workers and their characteristics.

Some independent sector (private and voluntary) figures have been included for comparative purposes only; these figures are based on Skills for Care analysis of the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2011. Some adult local authority figures have also been included for comparative purposes; these figures are based on NMDS-SC as at 30th September 2011.

Submission of NMDS-SC data in 2011 was voluntary for children's services. Due to the voluntary nature of the return contributing to lower coverage figures than in adult services, it has not been possible this year to estimate the total size of the children's local authority workforce. This report is based on information held in the NMDS-SC and does not represent the children's social care sector as a whole. While the amount of data received has not allowed the report to estimate the total size of the workforce – the fact that there was data received from almost half of all local authorities and on over 25,000 workers means that that is no reason to suggest that statistics derived from the analysis are not representative of England as a whole.

While the response rate is not high enough to estimate the size of the children's workforce – the data received still provides valuable insight in areas where previously little information existed. Overall the purpose of this report is to analyse what the NMDS-SC is showing about the local authority children's workforce.

Response rate

In July 2011, local authority children's services were encouraged by the Department for Education to make a voluntary and partial NMDS-SC return. During 2011, a total of 71 of the 152 (47%) councils provided some data³ and of those 71 there were 58 (82%) that provided some information at individual worker level.

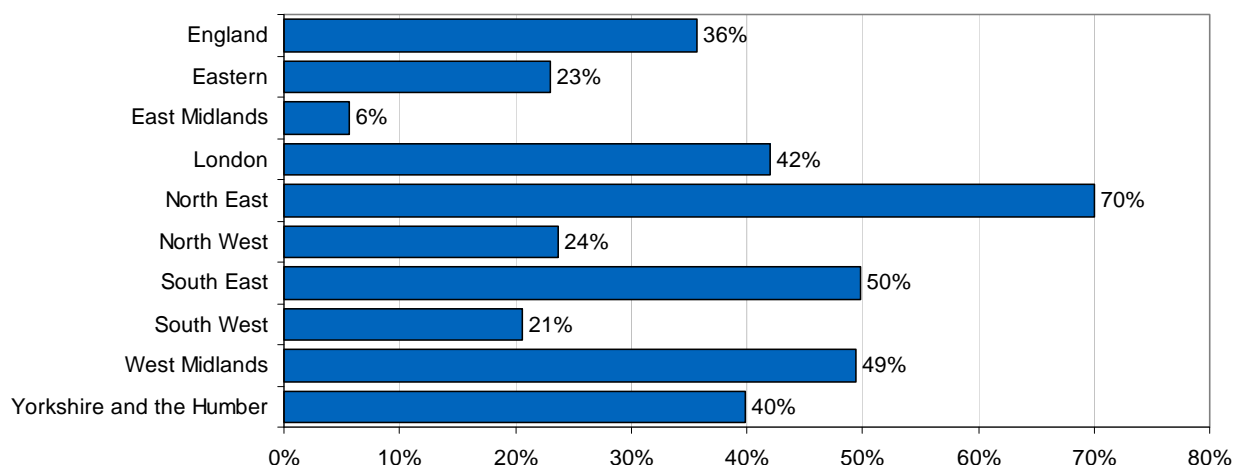
At September 2010, 71,445 jobs were recorded in the SSDS001 as working in children's services (see Annex C for which SSDS001 job codes are included in this definition). There were

² This workforce has been reported on separately – www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/pssstaffsept11

³ Information about at least one establishment within that local authority area

25,000 jobs recorded in the NMDS-SC, approximately 35.7% of the SSDS001 total. It should be noted that there was significant regional variation in terms of the percentage of workers recorded in the NMDS-SC in 2011 compared with the number of jobs recorded in SSDS001 2010. The North East had the highest percentage (70%), followed by South East (50%) and West Midlands (49%), while the East Midlands had the lowest at 6% (chart 1). For detailed coverage information see Annex B, for information about the children’s workforce total in SSDS001 2010 see Annex C.

Chart 1. Percentage of workers in NMDS-SC in 2011 compared with SSDS001 in 2010



Source. SSDS001 2010 and NMDS-SC 2011

Social Workers

At December 2011, the NMDS-SC held information on 6,400 social workers and held individual worker data for 5,200. See section 3 on social workers.

In the SSDS001 2010 there were 26,930 roles recorded in children’s services that may have been being carried out by qualified social workers (see annex C for definitions of Social Workers using SSDS001 job codes). Of the 26,930 roles, 13,190 were classified as ‘field social workers’. Other roles potentially being carried out by social workers included team managers, assistant team managers, care managers and senior social workers.

The definition of the Social Worker role in the NMDS-SC states that the role requires a professional social work qualification in order for a person to fulfil the role.

1. Organisation level information

1.1. Total number of jobs reported in the NMDS-SC

As at 31st December 2011 there were 25,500 jobs in children’s local authority services in England recorded in the NMDS-SC. This represents around one third of the total workforce as at the end of September 2010 according to SSDS001.

Direct care providing job roles accounted for 40% (10,300) of all children’s services jobs in the NMDS-SC this group includes care workers, senior care workers, community support and outreach workers, childcare workers or childcare assistants and a range of related jobs involved with providing care and support directly.

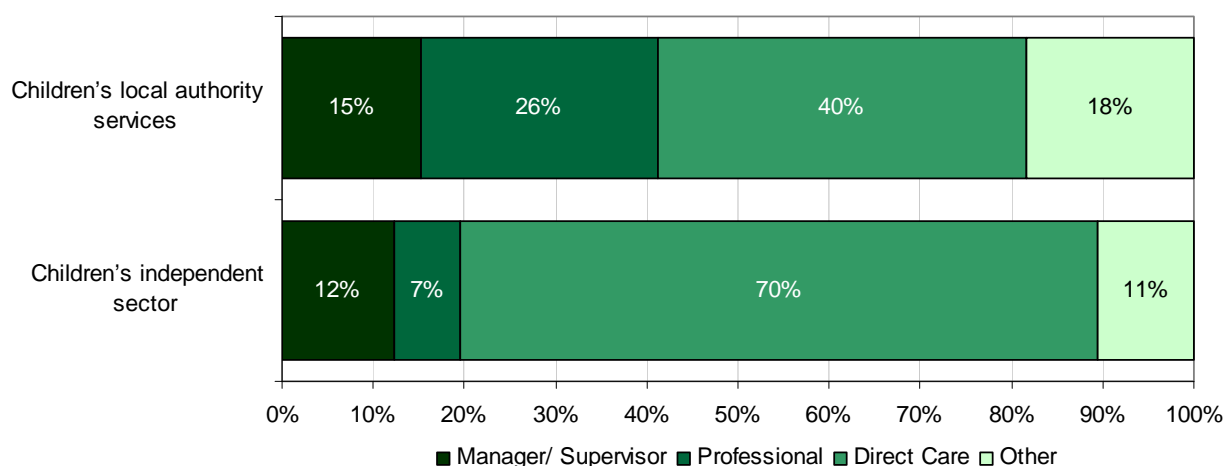
Professional roles accounted for 26% (6,700) of jobs. This job role group includes registered nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, allied health professionals and qualified teachers (working in care settings).

Jobs that fall into the ‘other’ category accounted for 18% (4,700) of jobs. This category includes ancillary staff, administrative staff and other jobs not directly involved in providing care or support.

Managerial and supervisory roles accounted for 15% (3,900) of jobs. This group includes senior managers, middle managers, first line managers, registered managers, supervisors and managers that are care-related but not directly providing care.

In the children’s independent sector direct care providing roles accounted for 70% of all jobs and professionals just 7% (NMDS-SC December 2011).

Chart 2. Percentage of children’s local authority jobs as reported in the NMDS-SC by service.



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

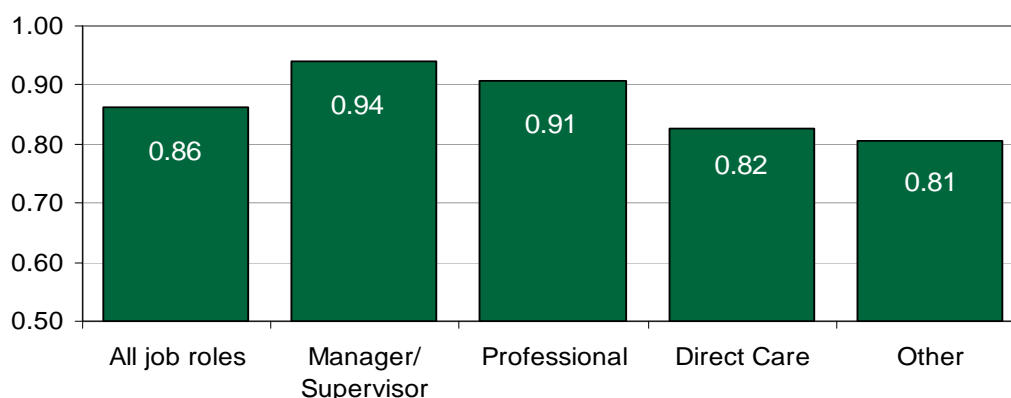
When looking at the breakdown of children’s local authority jobs by main service group just over two thirds of jobs (67%) were in community care. Residential care accounted for 8% of jobs, day care for 1%, domiciliary care for 2% and 22% were in other care settings (including head office services) (See annex A for a breakdown of services included in each service group).

1.2. Whole time equivalent jobs (WTE jobs)

Whole time equivalents were calculated based on 37 or more contracted hours a week being classed as 1 whole time equivalent job⁴. Any worker with less than 37 contracted hours was calculated as a proportion of a whole time equivalent worker.

The 25,500 children’s local authority staff recorded in the NMDS-SC as at 31st December 2011 equated to 22,000 WTE jobs. The ratio of jobs to whole time equivalent jobs was 0.89. Variation exists in the ratio of jobs to WTE jobs between different job role groups. The ratios were highest in managerial (with an average of 0.94) and professional (with an average of 0.91) roles where full time working appears to be the norm.

Chart 3. WTE jobs per job by job group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

For further details about the ratio of jobs to WTE jobs please see table 1. In adult social services departments the overall ratio of jobs to WTE jobs was 0.79. For direct care staff it was 0.75, for managers/ supervisors 0.91, for professionals 0.89 and for ‘others’ 0.76.

⁴Where workers had a working arrangement of zero contracted hours (worker with no fixed hours on their contract) whole time equivalent were calculated based on additional hours worked as apposed to contracted hours.

Table 1. Jobs and whole time equivalent jobs by job group and main service setting

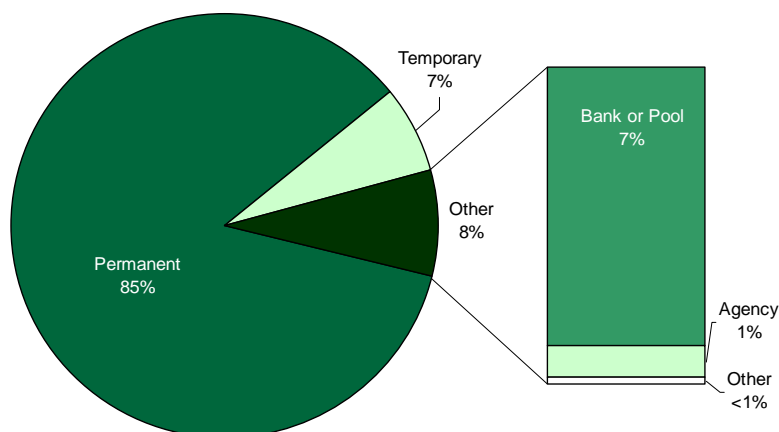
	Jobs	WTE jobs	Percentage of WTE jobs		Jobs	WTE jobs	Percentage of WTE jobs
All services	25,514	22,025	0.86	All services	25,514	22,025	0.86
Manager/Supervisor	3,875	3,642	0.94	Residential	2,073	1,740	0.84
Professional	6,657	6,044	0.91	Day	269	192	0.71
Direct Care	10,281	8,481	0.82	Domiciliary	635	480	0.76
Other	4,701	3,789	0.81	Community	17,050	14,895	0.87
				Other	5,487	4,649	0.85

Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

1.3. Employment status

The majority (92%) of the children’s workforce recorded in the NMDS-SC were directly employed by the local authority. The remaining 8% of staff were not directly employed with the majority being bank or pool workers (bank or pool staff are those who are available to the organisation as a whole but are deployed on a casual or short term basis). Staff were generally permanently employed (85%) while 7% were temporarily employed. In the children’s independent sector 83% of staff were directly employed (76% permanently and 7% temporarily) the remaining 17% were made up of agency staff (8%), bank or pool staff (5%) and 3% other (Chart 4).

Chart 4. Employment status of children’s local authority workers



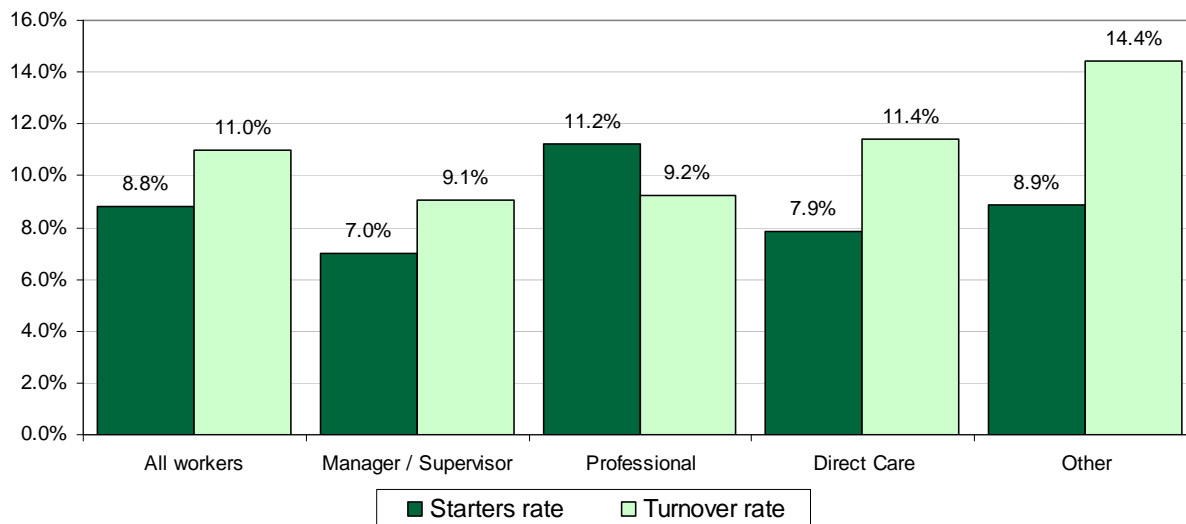
Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

1.4. Turnover, starters and vacancy rates

The NMDS-SC collects information on the number of starters and leavers in the past 12 months and the number of vacancies in an establishment / team. The turnover rate for all workers in local authority children’s services was 11.0% (1 in 9 workers leaving per year), while the starters rate was 8.8%. The turnover rate for direct care staff was 11.4%, and the starters’ rate was 8.3%. For professionals both turnover (9.2%) and starters rate (6.2%) was lower than in direct care (Chart 5).

The turnover rate in the children’s independent sector was 14.6% for all job roles and 16.4% for direct care staff. In the adult statutory sector it was 11.9% for all job roles and 12.4% for direct care staff – the two sectors are therefore reasonably similar in this respect.

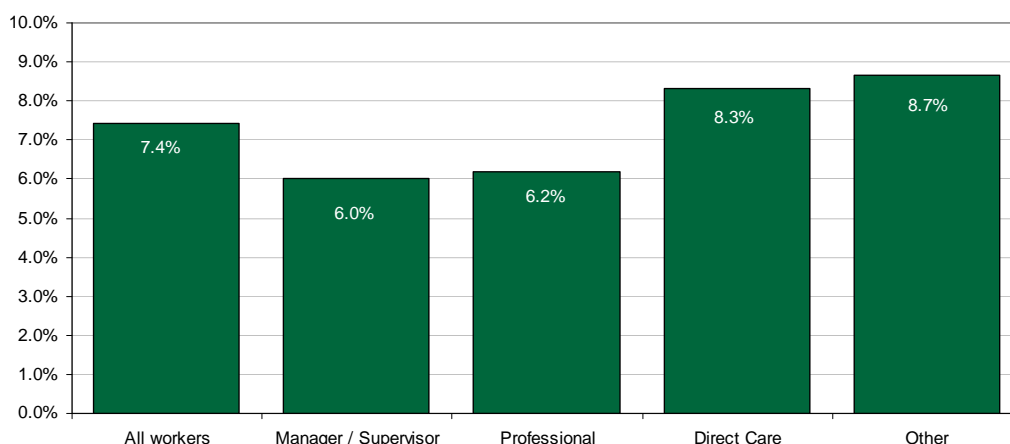
Chart 5. Turnover and starters rate for children’s local authority workers, by job role



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

The vacancy rate for all children’s local authority workers as recorded in the NMDS-SC was 7.4%. Vacancy rates were lower for managerial job roles (6%) and higher for direct care jobs (8.3%) (Chart 6).

Chart 6. Vacancy rates for children’s local authority workers, by job group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

The vacancy rate for all workers was marginally higher in adult social services departments (7.8%). Vacancy rate for professionals (7.1%), managers/ supervisors (7.4%) and direct care staff (7.7%) was lower than the vacancy rate for ‘other’ staff employed (9.0%).

2. Individual worker characteristics

This section contains information about children’s local authority staff in 2011 and is derived from individual worker level data collected by the NMDS-SC. For information about coverage please see annex B.

The topic areas covered are gender, age, ethnicity, pay, sickness and employment status. The NMDS-SC collects other data items including qualifications, training, experience and nationality but these are not included in this report as they were not identified by the Department for Education as part of the voluntary return from local authorities⁵. For information about social workers please see section 3.

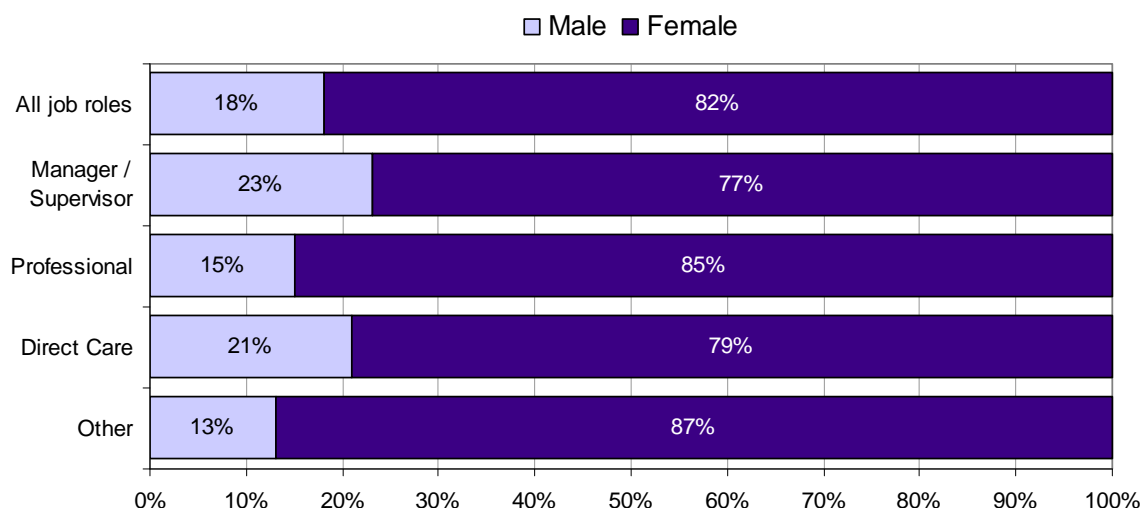
2.1. Demographics

2.1.1. Gender

Analysis of the gender distribution of workers in children’s local authority services shows that the majority of staff were female (82%). The proportion of males to females is the same in the adult local authority sector. Gender distribution in the children’s independent sector is a little different where 70% of workers were female and 30% were male.

Gender distributions display some differences across job role groups (Chart 7). The proportion of females is highest in the ‘other’ job roles group (87%), and in professionals (85%) and lowest in the job role group managers/ supervisors (77%).

Chart 7. Gender distribution of staff by job group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

⁵ All data submitted by individual local authorities is made available to them via the NMDS-SC website in a series of tailored reports, see the local authority area profiles- sub sector analysis, www.nmuds-sc-online.org.uk

2.1.2. Age group

The average age of children's local authority staff was 43 years old (Table 2). This was similar across all job role groups, with direct care staff and professionals having the youngest average age at 42 and managers and supervisors having the oldest average age at 47 years old.

The overall average age of a worker in the children's independent sector is 39 years old, direct care staff had the youngest average (38 years old), followed by managers and supervisors (42 years old), professionals (42 years old) and other staff with the highest average age (45 years old).

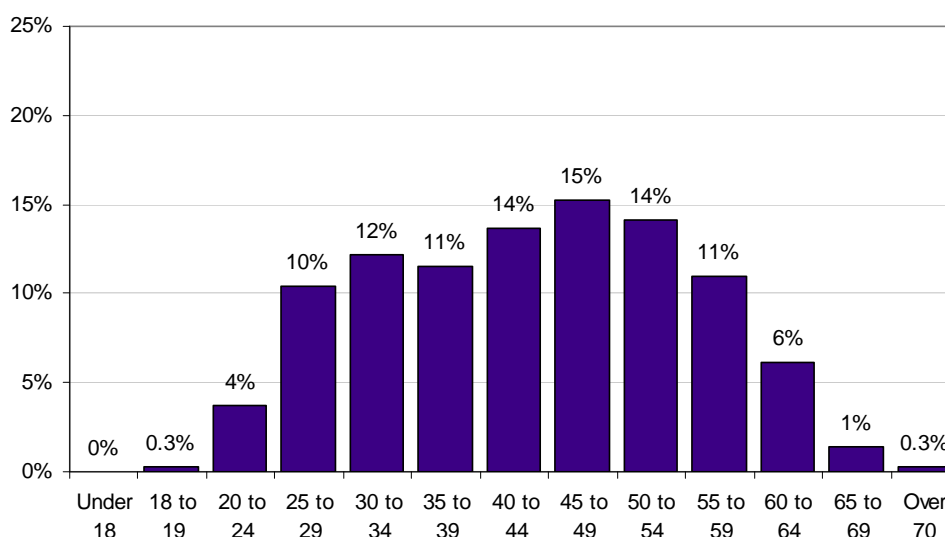
Table 2. Average age of children's local authority staff by job role group, 2011

	Total	Manager/ Supervisor	Professional	Direct Care	Other
Average Age	43	47	42	42	44
Base	20,400	2,900	5,500	8,000	4,000

Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

Just over half of staff (54%) were aged between 40 and 59 years old. Almost a fifth of staff (19%) were aged 55 or over and therefore likely to retire in the next 10 years. At the extremes of the age scale there were very few staff (4%) aged under 24 years old while 7% were aged 60 years or over (Chart 8).

Chart 8. Age distribution of staff



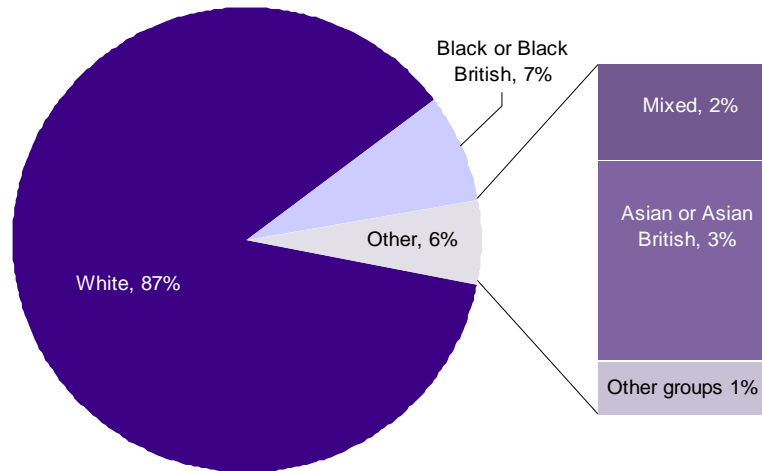
Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

2.1.3. Ethnic group

The majority (87%) of workers in the children's local authority sector in 2011 were White with just 13% from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups (7% Black or Black British, 3% Asian or Asian British, 2% Mixed and 1% other groups).

The picture was the same in the independent sector (87% white, 13% BME) and in the adult's social services (89% White, 11% BME).

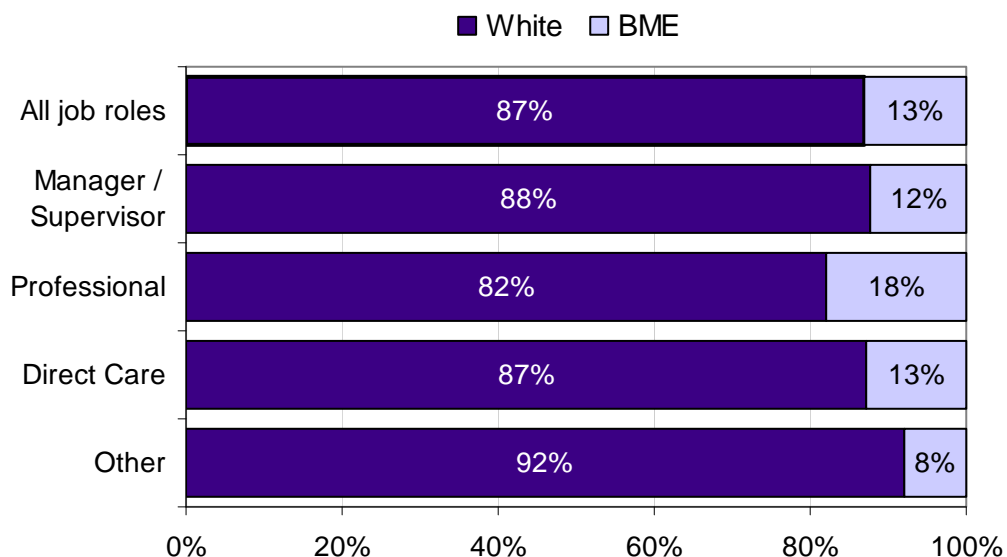
Chart 9. Ethnicity of staff



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

The ethnicity distribution differed by job role. The percentage of White workers was higher for managers and supervisors (88%) and for other job roles (92%) and lower for professionals (82%) (Chart 10).

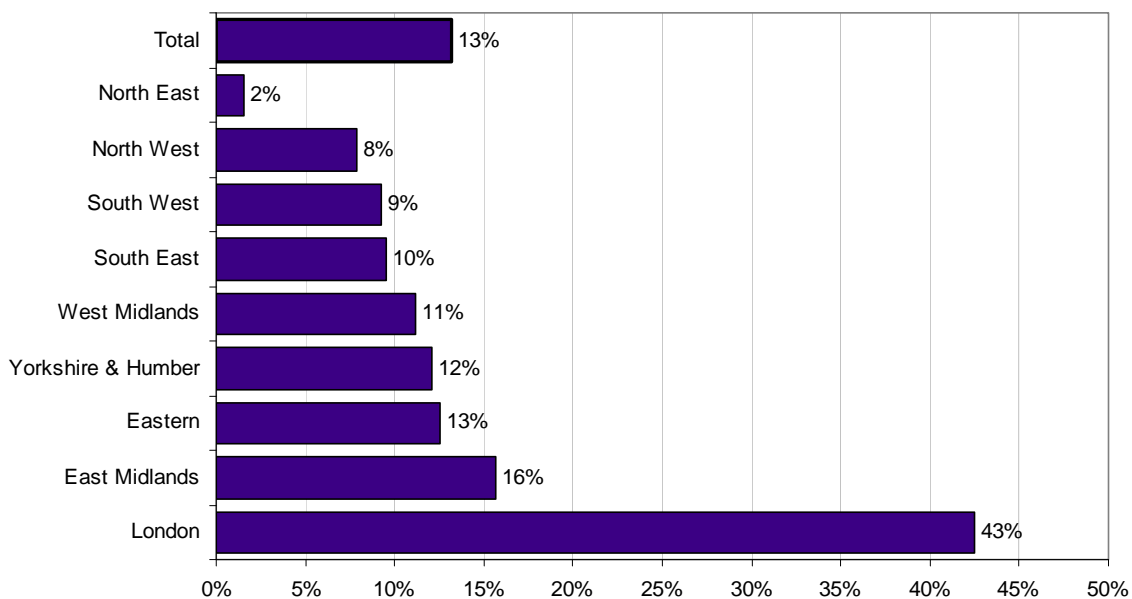
Chart 10. Ethnicity of staff by job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

As one would expect, there are significant regional differences in the ethnicity distribution. London had by far the highest proportion of BME workers (43% of all workers in London). The North East and North West has the lowest proportions of BME workers with 2% and 8% respectively.

Chart 11. Percentage of BME by region



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

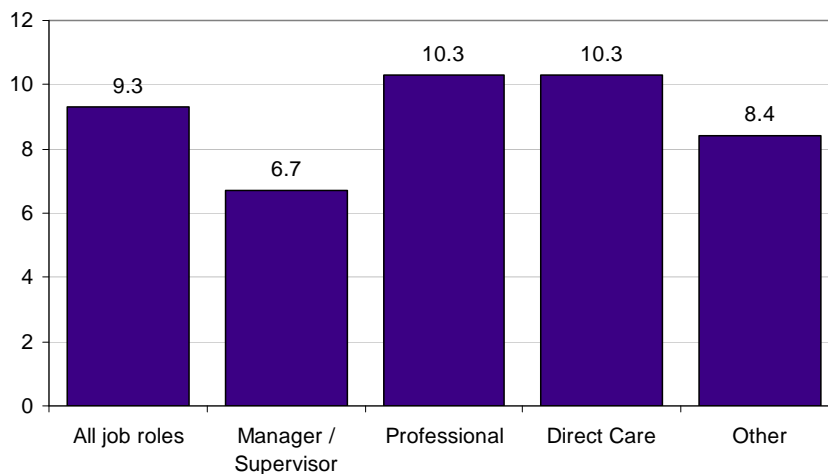
2.2. Employment details

2.2.1. Sickness

The average number of sickness days in the previous 12 months for workers in local authority children’s services in 2011 was 9.3 days. The average number of days sick for managers/ supervisors was lower at 6.7, this figure rose for professionals and direct care staff at 10.3 days in the past 12 months.

The average number of sickness days in the independent sector was lower with 5.4 days being the average. Some of these differences in sickness levels may be explained by differences in working patterns (see 2.2.2) as sickness days are not always recorded in the same way for those without regular working hours.

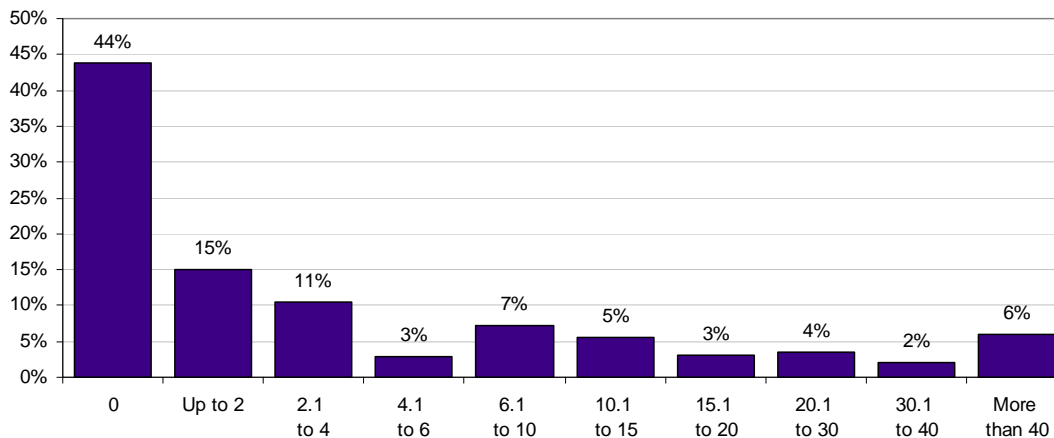
Chart 12. Average number of sick days in the past 12 months of staff by job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

Although the average number of days sickness was 9.3 days, almost half (44%) of staff had zero days sickness and 69% had 6 or fewer days.

Chart 13. Number of sick days in the past 12 months of staff



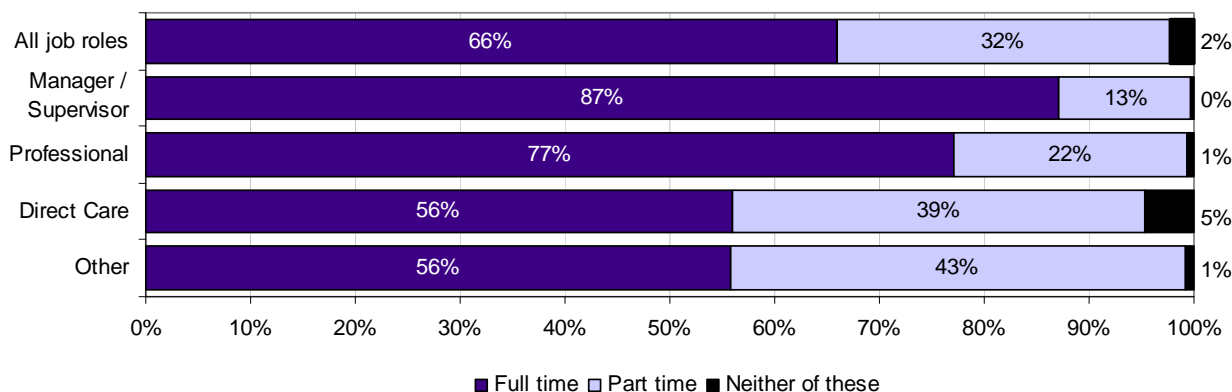
Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

2.2.2. Full time/ part time status

Two thirds of staff (66%) worked full time, almost a third (32%) worked part time and the remaining 2% worked neither full nor part time, this category mostly comprised of bank or pool workers and other types of workers that do not have regular shift patterns such as zero contracted hours (represented in black in the chart below).

As expected managers/ supervisors and professional workers had a higher proportion of full time hours (87% and 77% respectively).

Chart 14. Full time / part time status of staff by main job role group



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

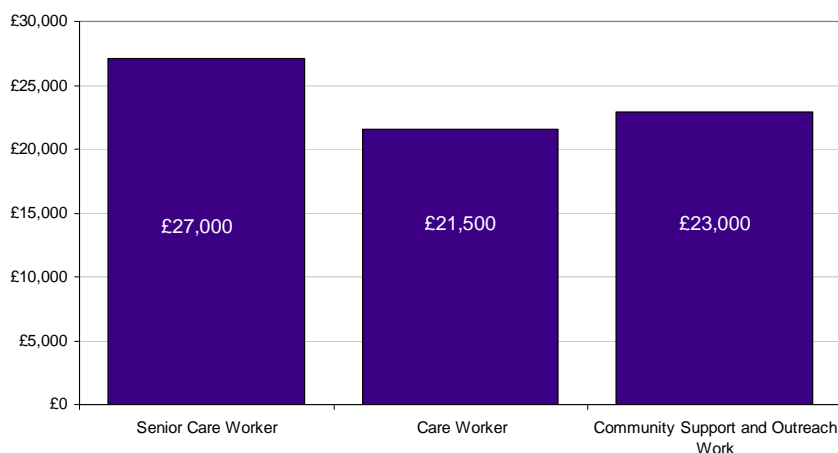
The picture was similar in the children’s independent sector, with 63% full time, 21% part time and 16% neither full nor part time workers. There was more part time working in the adult sector where full time staff made up 43% of the workforce and part time accounted for 52%.

2.2.3. Pay rates

The data in this section shows whole time equivalent (WTE) median annual salaries for children’s local authority sector staff in 2011. Annual salary data were converted to WTE salaries under the assumption that the average full time contracted hours was 37. Hourly rate data were also converted into annual salaries.

When looking at the median WTE annual salaries for three of the direct care providing job roles - care workers were the lowest paid with a median of £21,500 per annum, compared to senior care workers (£27,000) and community support and outreach workers (£23,000).

Chart 15. Median FTE annual salaries of selected direct care providing job roles



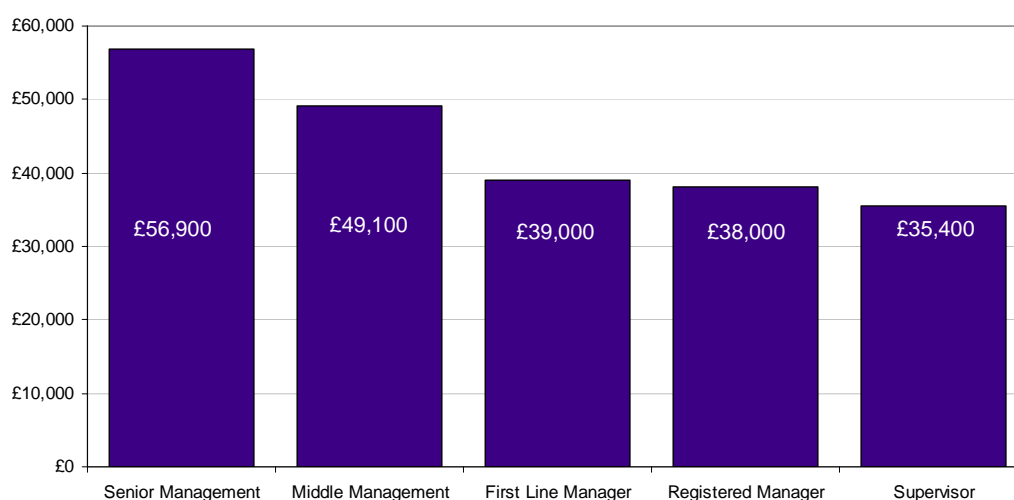
Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

Results of the local authority and independent sector full time equivalent pay analysis may not be directly comparable due to differences in roles and responsibilities, however independent
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sector analysis has been provided for context. Local authority rates were considerably higher than in the children’s independent sector where care workers were paid a median of £15,800, they were also higher than the adult local authority sector where care workers received a median of £16,800.

WTE annual salaries for five of the managerial job roles are provided below. Senior management roles were the highest paid with a median of £56,900. Pay rates for middle managers were the next highest with a median of £49,100 followed by first line managers (£39,000), registered managers (£38,000) and supervisors (£35,400).

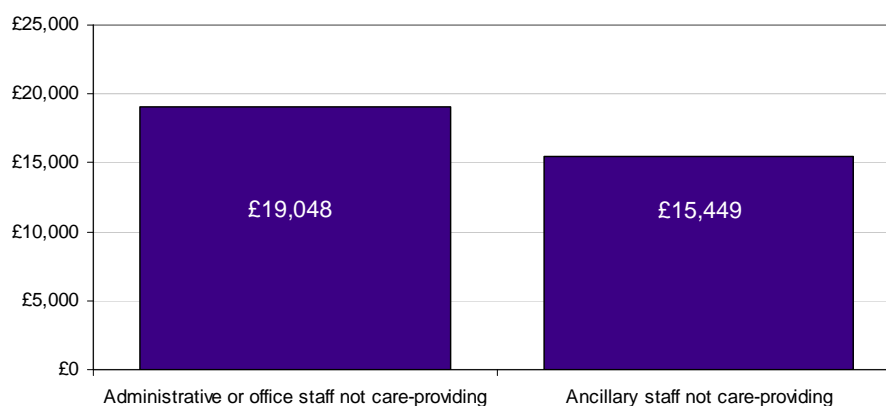
Chart 16. Median WTE annual salaries of selected management job roles



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

Administrative and office staff were paid a median of £19,000 and ancillary staff were paid a median of £15,500. This was very similar to the adult’s local authority sector (administrative £19,100 and ancillary £14,700) and also to the children’s independent sector (administrative £17,900 and ancillary £14,500).

Chart 17. Median FTE annual salaried of selected ‘other non-care providing roles’



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

3. Social workers

This chapter provides a more detailed analysis of social workers working in the children's local authority sector. The data is based on the 6,400 social workers recorded in the NMDS-SC only.

3.1. Total numbers and WTE jobs and headcounts

This section compares the number of social worker jobs and whole time equivalent jobs⁶. During 2011 a total of 6,400 social workers were recorded in the NMDS-SC in the children's local authority sector these equated to 5,800 WTE jobs. The ratio of social worker roles to whole time equivalent jobs was 0.92.

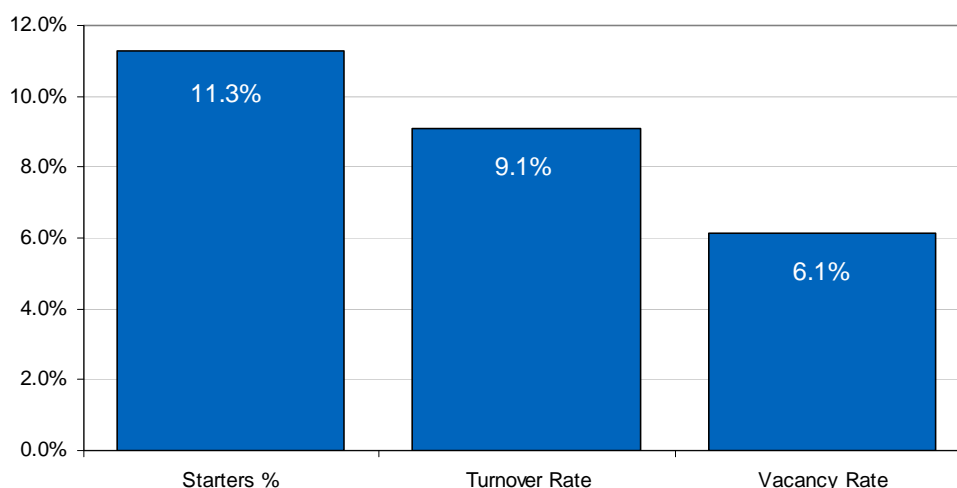
In the adults local authority sector there was an average of 0.91 jobs per social worker. The majority of social workers are employed in children's community care settings (83%), with 15% in other services.

3.2. Turnover, starters and vacancy rates

The turnover rate of social workers as recorded in the NMDS-SC was 9.1%, which is less than the overall turnover of the children's local authority workforce (11%) and the same as managers and supervisors (9.1%).

The starters rate for social workers was 11.3%, this was higher than the starters rate overall (8.8%) and the starters rate of managers/ supervisors (7%). The vacancy rate of social workers was 6.1%, this vacancy rate was slightly higher than managers/ supervisors (6%) however lower than the vacancy rate overall (7.4%) (Chart 18).

Chart 18. Starters, vacancy and turnover rate of social workers (children's services)



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

⁶ For details on whole time equivalent calculations please see 1.2

The majority of social workers (93%) were permanently employed, 3% were temporarily employed, 2% were agency staff, 1% students and 1% bank/ pool staff.

3.3. Demographics

3.3.1. Gender

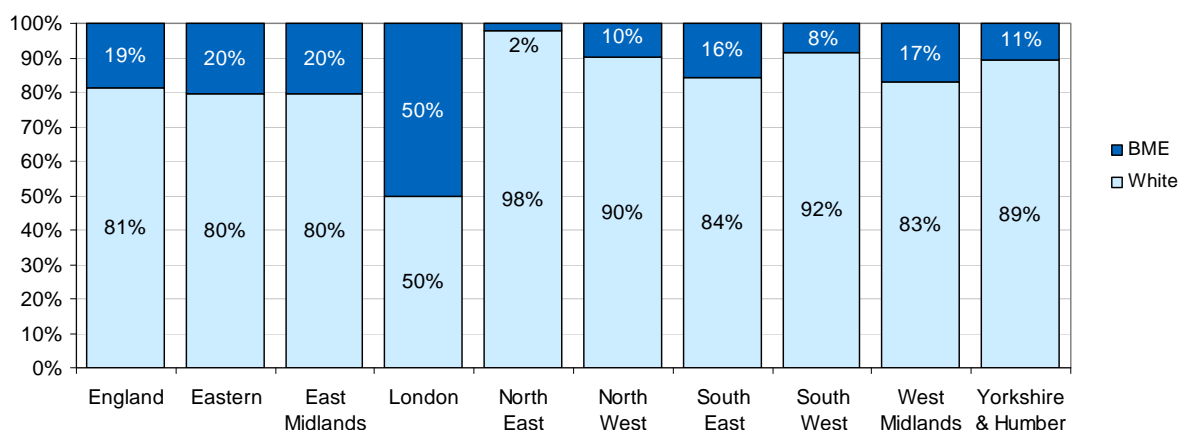
The majority of social workers in the local authority children’s sector were female (85%), with 15% male. This was similar to the proportion of females (82%) and males (18%) in both the children’s independent sector and the adults local authority sector.

3.3.2. Ethnicity

The majority of social workers are White (81%) with 19% being Black or Minority Ethnic (11% Black/ Black British, 4% Asian/Asian British, 2% Mixed and 1% other).

As with the ethnic distribution for the total children’s local authority sector (see section 2.1.3) there were large variations by region. London had the largest proportion of BME social workers (50%), with the smallest proportion being in the North East (2%).

Chart 19. Ethnicity distribution of social workers by region

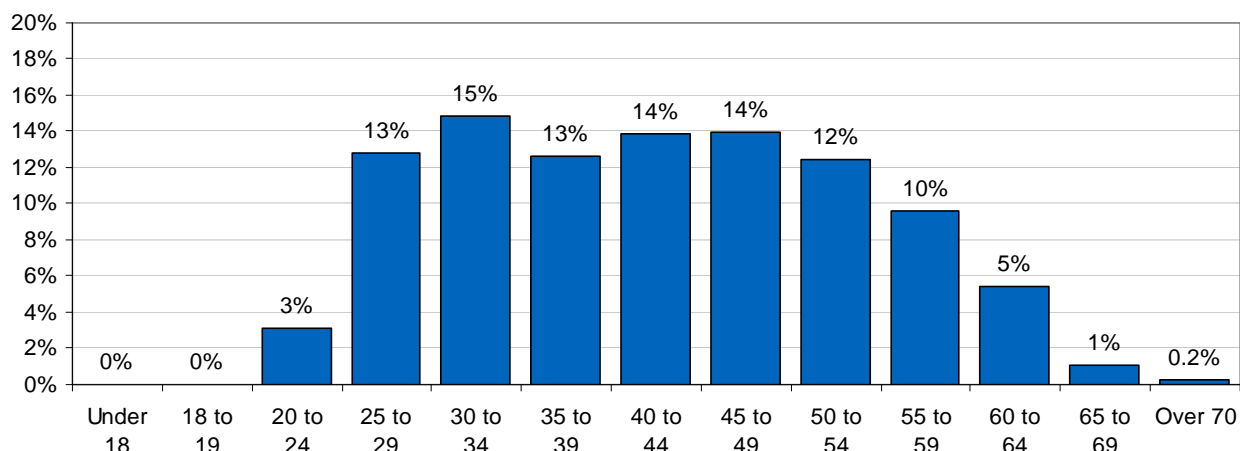


Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

3.3.3. Age

The average age of a social worker is 42 years old, which is younger than the adult’s local authority sector where a social worker has an average age of 47. Just over half (55%) of children’s local authority social workers were aged between 30 and 49 years old, 22% were aged between 50 and 59 years old. Just 16% of social workers are aged under 30 while 7% are over 60 years old.

Chart 20. Age distribution of social workers



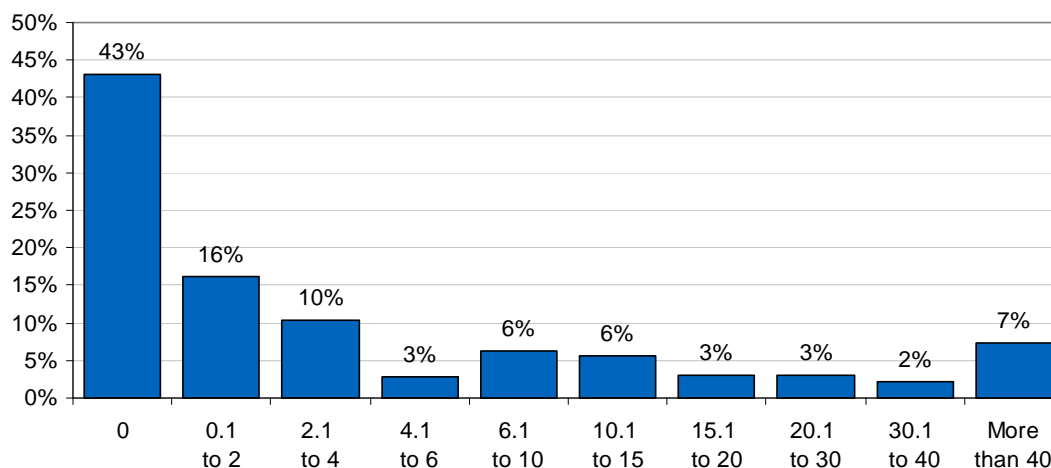
Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

3.4. Employment status and sickness

The majority of social workers were full time (79%), 20% were part-time and 1% were neither full nor part time (this category was mostly comprised of bank or pool workers and other types of workers that do not have a regular shift pattern such as zero hours contract). The proportion of full time social workers was lower in the adults local authority sector (72%).

The average number of sickness days in the previous 12 months for social workers was 10.4 days with 70% having 4 or less days sickness per annum.

Chart 21. Sickness days distribution of social workers



Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

3.4.1. Pay

The data in this section shows whole time equivalent (WTE) median salaries for social workers working in children’s local authorities. To add context, WTE median salaries for social workers working in adults local authorities have been provided.

The median annual salary for a social worker in the children’s local authority sector was £31,200; this was similar to the median salary for a social worker in the adult local authority sector (£30,900) (Table 3).

Table 3. WTE annual salaries of social workers in children’s and adults local authorities

	Social workers in children’s local authorities	Social workers in adult’s local authorities
Percentile 95	£43,500	£40,200
Percentile 75	£35,400	£33,800
Median	£31,200	£30,900
Percentile 25	£27,800	£28,600
Percentile 05	£24,300	£22,200

Source. NMDS-SC December 2011

Annex A. How the children's sector is represented in the NMDS-SC

The NMDS-SC collects data from both the adults and the children's social care sector. An establishment and its workforce are defined as part of the children's sector if they have the following establishment types **and** services;

Establishment type

- Statutory local authority (children's services)
- Statutory local authority (generic or other services)
- Statutory local authority owned

Services

Children's residential

- Family centre (residential)
- Children's homes
- Secure units
- Residential special schools
- Specialist college services – SPC
- Boarding Schools
- Other children's residential care service (describe)

Children's day Care

- Full day care, e.g. day nursery
- Sessional day care e.g. play group/preschool
- Out of school club
- Holiday club
- Crèche
- Childminder
- Other children's day care service (describe)

Children's domiciliary

- Domiciliary Care Services - DCC

Children's Community Care

- Fostering or adoption service or agency
- Family centre
- Family support
- Mental health
- Child protection
- Social work and care management
- Information and advice services
- Other children's community care service (describe)

If the establishment type is recorded as 'Statutory local authority (children's services)' then 'Head office services' and 'Any other services' are also included as part of the children's sector and included in this report.

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