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Largest national providers of private and voluntary social care (March 2022)

Updated 21 July 2022

Applies to England

Contents

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Main findings

- The private sector share of children's homes and fostering services continues to grow.
- The percentage of homes and places owned by the 10 largest private owners of children's homes (CHs) remains at 33%, the same as in 2021.
- The largest company, CareTech Holdings PLC, continued to account for almost 10% of all private children's homes.
- The 21 largest companies owned 929 homes, which is 42% of all private children's homes, and 35% of all children's homes.
- Just 1 in 8 private children's homes (296 or 13%) was a single provider that is not in the ownership chain of a larger company, which is broadly the same percentage as in 2021.
- Among privately owned independent fostering agencies (IFAs), 3 in 5 were single

providers (163, or 61%). The remaining 103 agencies were within the ownership chain of a company that owns 2 or more IFAs.

- Among the 103 privately owned IFAs that were within a company ownership chain, the majority (73 IFAs) were owned by 7 large providers. Large providers are companies that offer more than 1,000 places through the IFAs they own.
- The 7 largest providers accounted for 59% of all private IFA places in England as at 31 March 2022 (20,550 out of 31,125 places), and 52% of all IFA places.
- The largest provider of IFA places, the Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd), provided 6,490 places. This is 18% of all IFA places provided by the private sector, and 17% of all IFA places.
- There are 4 companies that appear on the list of largest providers for children's homes and IFAs. These companies are: CareTech Holdings PLC, the Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd), Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris) and Compass Community Ltd.

Introduction

This release provides information about the ownership of children's homes and IFAs in England, as at 31 March 2022. Children's homes and IFAs run by the private and voluntary sector are the most common types of children's social care settings in England.

Since our report last year on large providers, there have been several substantial publications contributing to the collective knowledge on the subject, particularly by the Competition and Markets Authority and the Independent Care Review.

In 2020–21, £11 billion was spent on children's services. Of this, £5.7 billion, or almost half, was spent on children in care. Almost two thirds (£3.7 billion) of spend on children in care went on residential and fostering care. Of the £1.8 billion spent on all foster care, £0.9 billion was in the private sector. Of the £1.8 billion spent on all residential children's care, £1.3 billion was in the private sector. However, it is worth noting that the published data does not differentiate between children's homes and semi-independent living.

According to the latest available Department for Education data, there were just over 34,000 children in private or voluntary sector provision (of around 80,000 children looked after in total) in England, as at 31 March 2021. Of these children, around 30,000 were in private provision and around 4,500 in voluntary provision; these figures exclude children who live in provisions run by organisations that provide the children's services function of the council, including trusts.

The private sector, then, accommodated around 37% of all children in care. This figure included around 18,000 in IFAs, around 5,000 in children's homes, as well as around 5,300 in semi-independent and independent living. These first 2 groups are the focus of this paper, as semi-independent and independent living are not currently regulated or inspected by Ofsted.

This release describes the picture of private and voluntary ownership across children's homes and IFAs, as at 31 March 2022. This includes information about the largest providers, which are the companies that own the largest number of children's homes, or provide the largest number of fostering places through the IFAs they own. These providers looked after around 25,000 children in private or voluntary children's homes and IFAs, or just under one third of all children in care in England.

We extracted the ownership data for this release from the 'get information about a company' tool on Companies House. The information on Companies House is provided by companies themselves, and neither Companies House nor Ofsted verify its accuracy. The company names used throughout this release are presented as at source.

Private companies own the majority of providers across children's homes and IFAs. For this reason, privately owned provisions are the central focus of this release. Among children's homes, when we exclude the 3 smaller sub-groups – secure homes, residential special schools (RSS) registered as children's homes and short-break-only homes) – the picture as at March 2022 remains similar to recent years. However, viewing the data year-by-year shows a slow and steady increase of private ownership of children's homes. There is a similar pattern among IFAs, with the number of fostering places provided by private companies increasing steadily. This incremental increase is sometimes obvious, such as when one company announces its purchase of another. But often it is not easy to identify, even by triangulating data from Ofsted and from Companies House.

Children's homes

As at 31 March 2022, there were a total of 2,873 children's homes of all types actively operating in England, offering a total of 12,898 places for children. Of these, 2,264 homes (79%) were in the private sector and 467 (16%) were run by local authorities and health authorities. The remaining 142 (5%) were in the voluntary sector.

The number of homes run by the private sector has increased by 8%, from 2,096 homes in 2021 to 2,264 in 2022. This was a smaller increase than from 2020 to 2021 (12%).

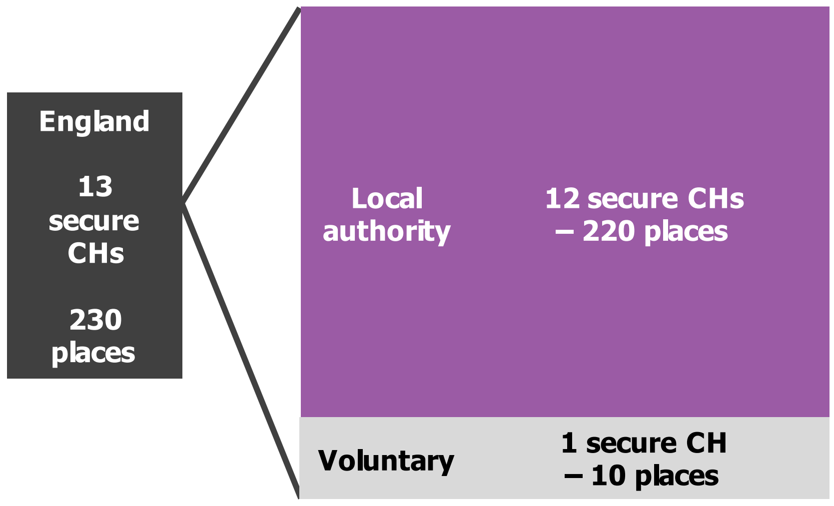
In the same period, the number of homes run by the voluntary sector, and by the local- and health-authority sector, has not really changed. This is in contrast to the previous year, which saw a decline of 12% and an increase of 9% respectively.

This paper focuses on private ownership of children's homes, as at 31 March 2022. It is useful, though, to break down ownership by types of children home provided, as they are not a single group.

Secure children's homes

Secure children's homes were the smallest group, with 13 homes in England, offering a total of 230 places. Most of the secure children's homes are owned by local authorities (12 out of 13), with the remaining home being voluntary.

Figure 1: Number of secure children's homes and places, by sector



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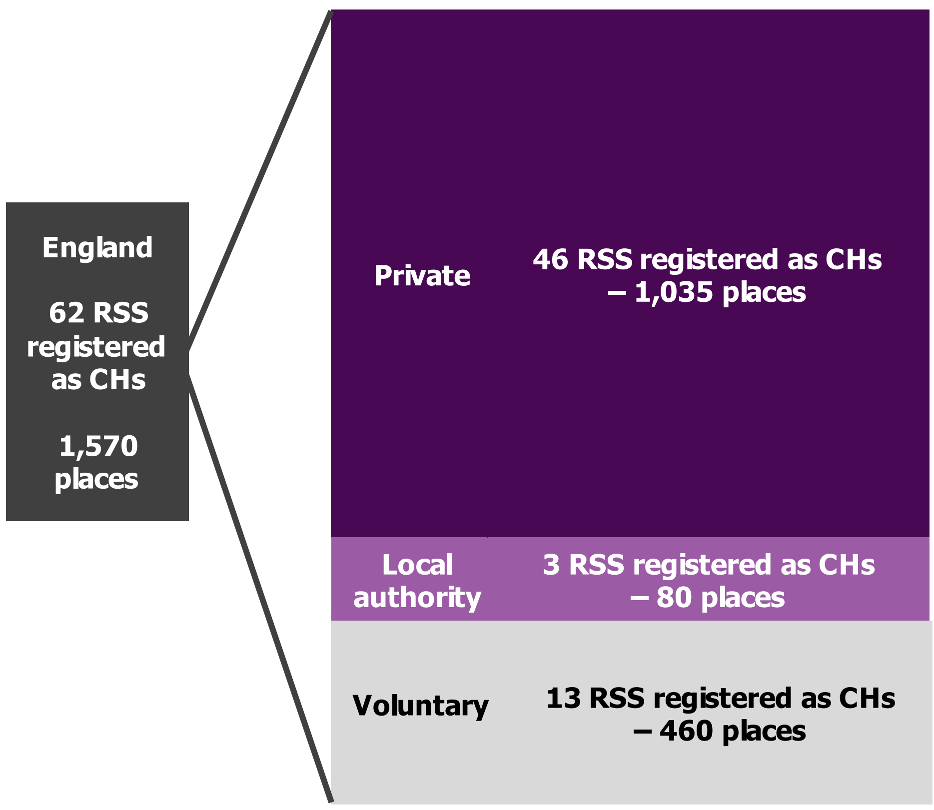
View data in an accessible format.

Residential special schools registered as children's homes

There were 62 RSS registered as children's homes, with a total of 1,570 places. This was a drop of around 12% in providers and places from 2021. Private organisations owned 46 (74%) of the schools with 1,035 (66%) of the places. Voluntary organisations owned 13 homes (21%) with a total of 460 places (29%). Local authorities owned 3 homes (5%), offering a total of 80 places (5%).

Figure 2: Number of RSS registered as children's homes and places, by sector



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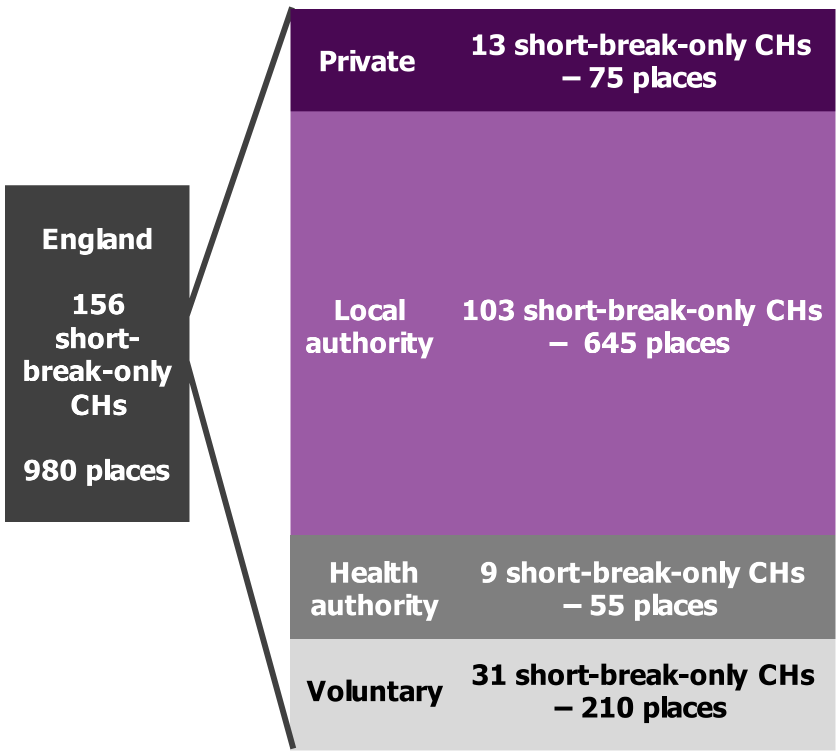
Short-break-only children's homes

These homes offer short periods of care for disabled children who usually live with their parents. There were 156 homes that provided care only for short breaks, offering a total of 980 places. The majority of these (112 homes, 72%) were owned by local authorities, with some owned by health authorities, which offered a total of 700 places (71%). Voluntary organisations ran 31 homes (20%) offering 210 places (21%), with the remaining 13 homes (8%) run by the private sector (75 places, 8%).

Figure 3: Number of short-break-only children's homes and places, by sector



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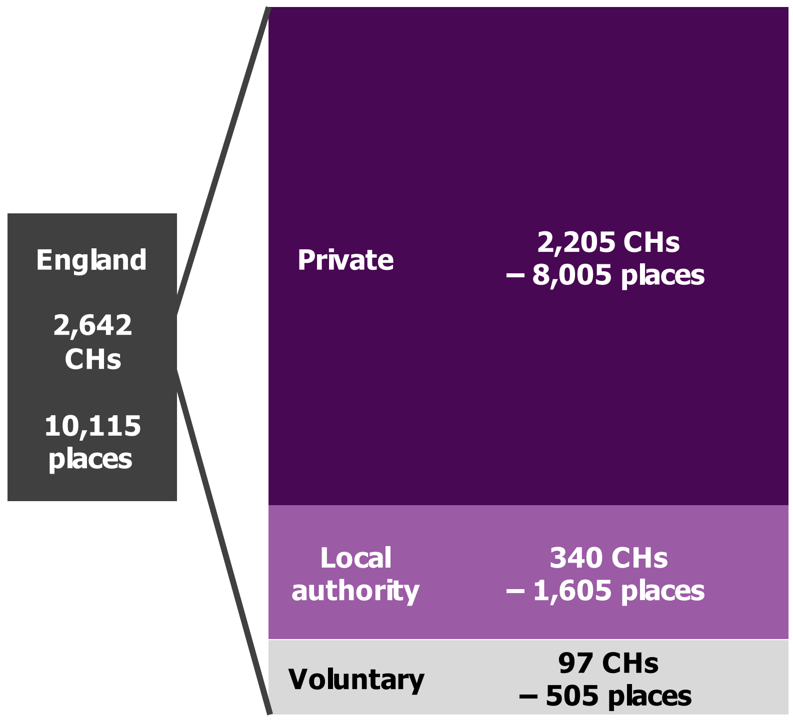
View data in an accessible format.

Children's homes

The remaining 2,642 children's homes were the largest group of homes (92% of all types of home). These offered the largest number of residential places (10,115 places, 78% of all places). Within this group, different homes specialise in meeting different needs. Some are more generic (for example, working with children with a range of complex needs). Some can be specialised (for example, working with those who have experienced child sexual exploitation). Children's homes typically provide group care, but can vary in size from 1 to 20 beds.

More than 4 in 5 of these homes were owned by private companies (2,205 homes, 83%), which accounts for 8,005 places (79%). Of the remaining children's homes, 340 (13%) were owned by the local authority (1,605 places, 16%), and 97 (4%) were owned by voluntary organisations (505 places, 5%).

Figure 4: Number of children's homes and places, by sector



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View data in an accessible format.

For the rest of this release, analysis will include only the 2,642 children's homes. This excludes short-break-only homes, RSS registered as children's homes and secure children's homes. This maximises comparability between sectors. Figure 5 shows the sector breakdown of these children's homes compared with last year.

There was a rise in the number of private sector homes, from 2,031 in 2021 to 2,205 homes. At 9%, this was broadly in line with the rise in numbers of all children's homes; as a result, the proportion of homes owned by the private sector stayed fairly static from 2021 to 2022. The voluntary sector increased very slightly from 91 to 97 homes and the local authority sector saw no change from 340 homes.

Figure 5: Comparison of the sector breakdown of children's homes as at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2022

View data in an accessible format.

Ownership of private children’s homes

There is a wide range of ownership among children’s homes. Some homes are single providers (existing as a single entity, not owned by a larger company). Others are nested within a larger company’s ownership chain. Some of these companies own only a few homes, but some own a considerably larger number.

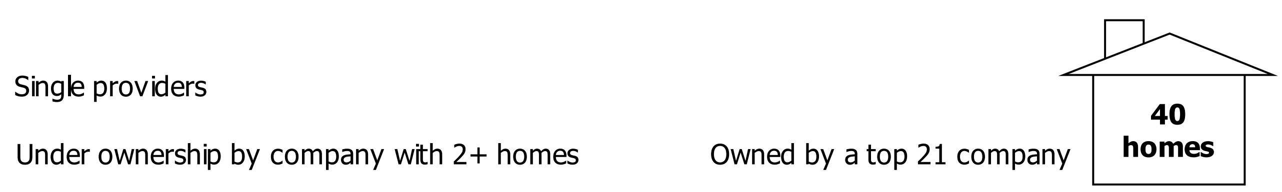
As at 31 March 2022, a total of 295 private companies owned multiple homes. The majority of these (229 companies, 79%) owned between 2 and 5 homes each. The company with the most, CareTech Holdings PLC, owned 205. Because there is such variation in the number of homes that companies own, we have analysed the largest providers separately. We looked at how homes owned by these companies differ from all children’s homes nationally.

We have data, extracted from Companies House, on the ownership of 2,195 of the 2,205 private children’s homes. The remainder are owned by individuals not companies, and have been excluded from the following analysis.

Of these 2,195 privately owned children’s homes, as at 31 March 2022:

- 301 (13%) were single providers
- 1,894 (86%) were owned as part of another top company with at least 2 homes
- 992 (45%) were owned by companies that each owned 10 or more separate children’s homes, and of these 992 homes, 929 were owned by just 21 top companies

Figure 6: Number of private children’s homes in England as at 31 March 2022, by ownership type



View data in an accessible format.

Overall, the top 10 companies accounted for 33% of all private children’s homes, in line with previous years. CareTech Holdings PLC – the largest – alone accounted for 9% of all private children’s homes.

Table 1: The 10 largest providers of private children’s homes as at 31 March 2022, compared with 31 March 2021

Position	Position	Top company	Number	Net	Places	Net

	change		of children’s homes	change in number of homes		cha in plac
1	Position unchanged	CareTech Holdings PLC	205	+9	678	+8
2	Increase from last year’s position	Aspris Holdco Limited (Priory Group/Partnerships in Care)	108	+104	394	+33
3	Decrease from last year’s position	Keys Group Ltd (G Square Healthcare Private Equity LLP)	105	-1	372	+82
4	Decrease from last year’s position	The Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd)	60	-7	272	-38
5	Position unchanged	Horizon Care and Education Ltd	50	+2	175	+15
6	Increase from last year’s position	Hexagon Care Services Ltd (HCS Group Ltd)	48	+3	181	-19
7	Increase from last year’s position	Esland Group Holdings Ltd	43	+10	118	+8
8	Position unchanged	The Partnership of Care Today (Care Today Children’s Services)	33	-1	121	-9
9	Increase from last year’s position	Homes2Inspire Ltd (The Shaw Trust Ltd)	32	+4	202	+92
10	Increase from last year’s position	Wordsworth Midco 1 Ltd (Witherslack)	32	0	117	+7

The largest providers have generally continued to grow in terms of the number of homes owned and places provided. In one case in particular (Aspris Holdco Limited, previously known as The Priory Group), there has been a large increase, of 179%, due in part to its purchase of Sandcastle Care Ltd (previously the sixth largest provider).

Where companies did see a fall in the number of homes or places, these were generally small.

The company Homes2Inspire Ltd (The Shaw Trust Ltd) joined the list of the 10 largest providers this year, adding 4 new homes since 31 March 2021. Although it was 11th in 2021, in 2020 it was 10th, so 2022 represents a return to the 10 largest providers list.

No companies dropped from top 10 largest, due to Sandcastle Care Ltd being bought out by Aspris Holdco Limited.

The next companies, ranked 11 to 21 in terms of the number of children's homes they own, are detailed in table 2.

Table 2: Next 11 largest providers of private children's homes as at 31 March 2022, compared with 31 March 2021

Position	Position change	Top company	Number of children's homes	Net change in number of homes	Places	Net change in places
11	Increase from last year's position	Compass Community Ltd	28	+2	142	+2
12	Increase from last year's position	Ardenton Capital Ltd	27	+1	76	+6
13	Increase from last year's position	Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris)	25	+11	100	+50
14	Position unchanged	Meadows Care Holdco Ltd	20	-1	64	-6
15	Position unchanged	Reflexion Care Group Ltd	19	0	51	+1
16	Position unchanged	Time Out Property Ltd	18	0	33	+3
17	Position unchanged	Ashridge Capital (Phoenix) Ltd Partnership	17	0	42	-8
18	Position unchanged	Care 4 Children Holdco Ltd	16	0	65	-5
19	Position unchanged	Blue Mountain Homes Ltd	15	0	51	+1

20	Position unchanged	Ethelbert Specialist Homes Ltd	14	0	57	-3
21	New to the list of largest providers	Foundation Investment Partners Management LLP	14	Not previously in data as top company	44	Not previousl in data as top company

Foundation Investment Partners Management LLP has also been included in this and subsequent tables, as it was a new entry into the top 21 largest providers of children's homes this year. However, this does not represent an increase in the number of homes or places owned by this company, only a shift in membership in the top 21 due to Sandcastle Care Ltd being bought out.

Nutrius UK Topco Ltd is the one notable change in this group. It moved from 21st to 13th position, after only entering the top 21 companies last year. The company increased its number of homes and places through the acquisition of 2 previously separate companies that owned 10 homes between them. A similar acquisition pattern led to its entry into the top 21 largest companies in 2021.

The 11th to 21st largest companies owned 213 homes, which was only 8 more than CareTech Holdings PLC owned alone.

Overall, the 21 largest companies owned 929 homes (42% of all private children's homes) in both 2022 and 2021.

Inspection outcomes for privately owned children's homes

As at 31 March 2022, the inspection profile for the 2,007 private children's homes with judgements, were as follows:

- 211 (11%) were graded outstanding
- 1,327 (66%) were graded good
- 415 (21%) were graded requires improvement to be good
- 54 (3%) were graded inadequate

The number of inspected settings has increased by around a quarter from 2021, due to the restart of full inspections after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

Nationwide, 77% of the 2,007 children's homes inspected were graded outstanding or good, the same as for privately owned homes. A full discussion of children's homes inspection outcomes is available in our Children's Social Care in England 2022 national statistics. Of the top 21 companies, 15 had higher or equal proportions of these grades at their homes.

This release includes inspection activity up to 31 March 2022 only. However, inspections have occurred since this date. As a result, some settings' inspection grades may have improved or declined since 31 March 2022.

Ownership of voluntary children's homes

As at 31 March 2022, there were 97 voluntary owned children's homes; that is, homes owned by charities or not-for-profit organisations. The breakdown of these was very similar to 2021:

- 20 (21%) were single providers
- 77 (80%) were owned as part of another top company with at least 2 homes
- 52 (54%) were owned by companies with 5 or more separate children's homes

Compared with the private sector, there were fewer large companies in terms of number of homes. Only one top company, The Together Trust, had more than 10 homes under its ownership.

Table 3: The 5 largest providers of voluntary children's homes as at 31 March 2022

Position	Top company	Number of children's homes	Places
1	The Together Trust	11	47
2	Break	8	32
3	Birtenshaw	8	25
4	The Caldecott Foundation Ltd	7	42
5	St Christopher's Fellowship	7	41

Inspection outcomes

The latest full graded inspection outcomes for the 91 voluntary children's homes with judgements were as follows:

- 17 (19%) were graded outstanding
- 54 (59%) were graded good
- 17 (19%) were graded requires improvement to be good
- 3 (3%) were graded inadequate

This release includes inspection activity up to 31 March 2022 only. However, inspections have occurred since this date. As a result, some settings' inspection grades may have improved or declined since 31 March 2022.

Independent fostering agencies

Most children in care (71%) are in foster care. This can be provided by either local authority fostering agencies or IFAs. According to our most recent statistics, over a third of all fostered children (around 20,100) are fostered through IFAs.

As at 31 March 2022, there were 316 IFAs operating in England (excluding the 10 IFAs owned by trusts that operate on behalf of local authorities). The 316 IFAs offered a total of 39,250 fostering places for children as at 31 March 2022. This was a net increase of 9 IFAs (3%) from the previous year, when there were 307 IFAs. This net increase was the result of 14 new registrations and 5 deregistrations.

Data on the number of places provided by each IFA comes from Ofsted's annual fostering data collection. As the 2022 collection is ongoing, data included here reflects the 2021 returns. This means we do not know the number of places offered by the 14 agencies that registered during 2021 to 2022. Additionally, due to the impact of COVID-19, a small number of agencies (20) which opened prior to 2021 did not submit data in the 2020 or 2021 collections. An estimate of places cannot be made for these 34 settings, which is likely to have impacted on the overall number of reported places.

For an additional 6 agencies, we were able to estimate the number of places by taking an average of the data submitted by agencies for the previous 3 years. In this release, we included the estimated number of places for these 6 IFAs.

Private or voluntary organisations can own IFAs, but the majority are privately owned (268 IFAs, 85%). As at 31 March 2022, the 268 private IFAs offered a total of 35,290 fostering places (90% of all IFA places). Voluntary organisations accounted for the remaining 48 IFAs (15%), and offered 3,955 places (10% of all IFA places).

Figure 7: Proportion of IFAs and IFA places provided by the private sector

View data in an accessible format.

The private sector has grown from 2021 to 2022, with a net increase of 9 IFAs. This resulted from 14 new registrations and 5 deregistrations. These new private IFAs accounted for all the IFAs registered in 2021 to 2022, as there were no new registrations within the voluntary sector.

In the voluntary sector, there was no change in the number of IFAs. As a result, the private sector has increased its share in IFA ownership very slightly, by 1 percentage point, from 84% in 2021 to 85% in 2022.

Ownership of private IFAs

Although many IFAs are single providers not owned by a larger company, a number are nested within a larger company's ownership chain. Some of these companies own only a few IFAs, but some own a considerably larger number.

As at 31 March 2022, there were a total of 16 private companies that owned at least 2 IFAs. The majority of these (10 companies) owned 5 or fewer IFAs each, while the company with the most, Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris), owned 24. Because there is such variation in the number of IFAs that companies owned, and the number of fostering places they provided, we have analysed the largest providers separately.

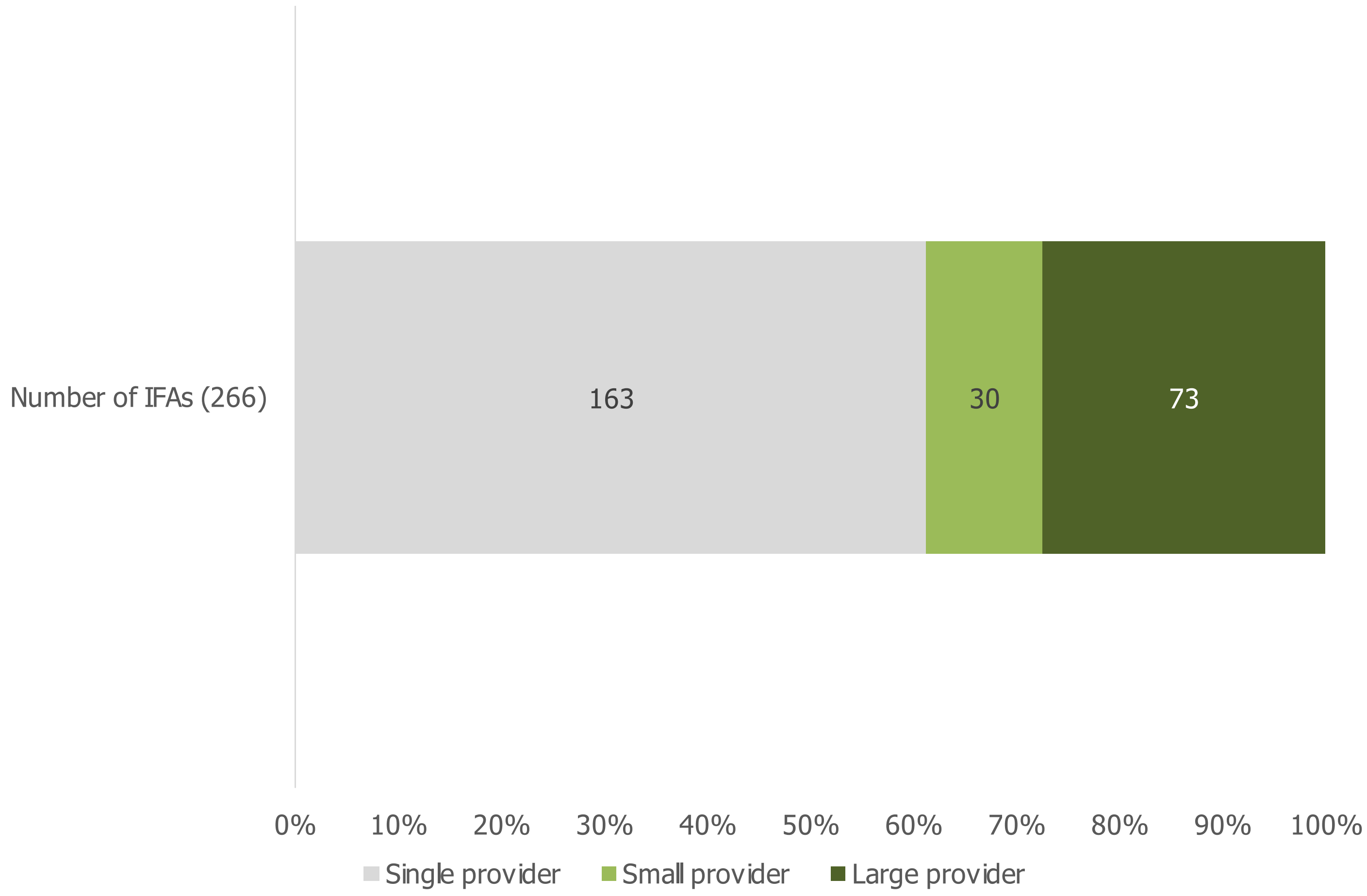
As a result, throughout the following section of the release, we have described IFAs as having 3 different types of ownership:

1. Single provider: those IFAs that exist as a single entity, and are not owned by a larger company.
2. Small provider: those IFAs that are within the ownership chain of a small company. For this release, we defined a small company as one that owns multiple IFAs, but offers fewer than 1,000 fostering places through all of the IFAs it owns.
3. Large provider: those IFAs that are within the ownership chain of a large company. For this release, we defined a large company as one that owns multiple IFAs, and offers more than 1,000 fostering places through all of the IFAs it owns. This is consistent with the definition used in previous releases on this topic.

When determining the size of companies, we chose to use the number of IFA places offered by each company, rather than the number of IFAs that it owns. This best captures the reach of a company, in terms of how many children it could offer care to. We calculated the total number of places a company offers as the sum of all places offered by all IFAs within its ownership chain. For example, if a company has 4 IFAs in its ownership chain, and each of these offered 25 places, the total places offered by the company is 100.

We have extracted data from Companies House on the ownership of all of the 268 privately owned IFAs. Of the 268 IFAs, 163 (61%) were single providers, 30 (11%) were owned by 9 small providers, and 73 (27%) were owned by 7 larger providers. Two were owned by individuals, and have been excluded from this dataset.

Figure 8: Number of private IFAs as at 31 March 2022, by ownership type

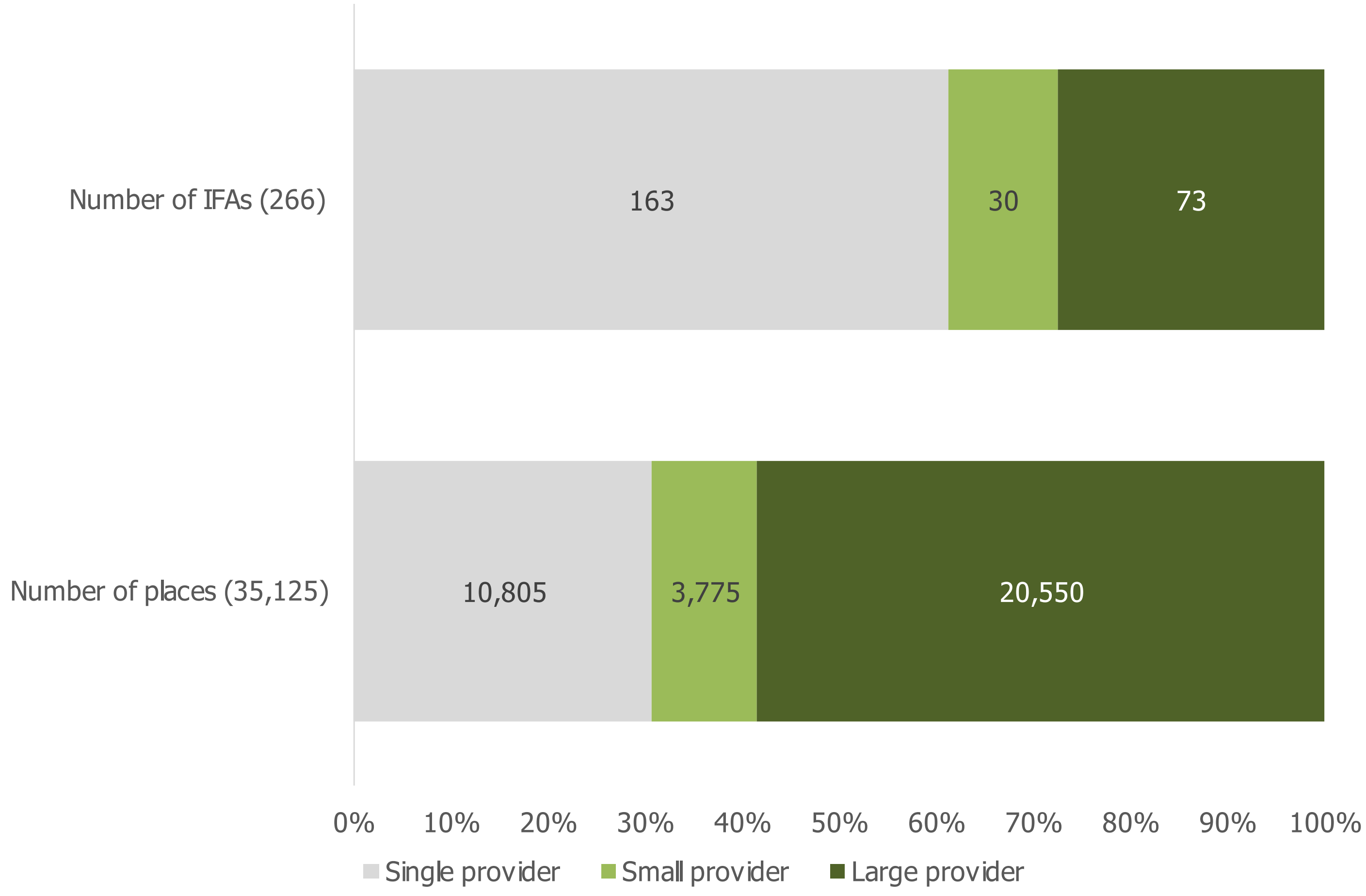


Number of IFAs excludes 2 agencies for whom there was no data available on Companies House.
View data in an accessible format.

The largest number of private IFAs were single providers (163 agencies, 61%). However, these IFAs accounted for only around a third (31%) of the 35,125 places provided by all private IFAs.

The majority of private fostering places (59%) were provided by the 73 IFAs owned by large providers (27% of all private IFAs). Although this is still high, it represents a small (2 percentage point) fall from 61% of all places in privately owned IFAs in 2021. This is because the average number of places owned by the largest IFAs dropped to 280, from 310 in 2021. For small (125 places) and single (65 places) providers, the average number of places has not changed from 2021.

Figure 9: Number of private IFAs and private IFA places as at 31 March 2022, by ownership type



Number of IFAs excludes 2 agencies for whom there was no data available on Companies House.

May not sum due to rounding.

View [data in an accessible format](.).

In the private sector, small providers accounted for the smallest number of IFAs (30, 11%) and places (3,775, 11%). The total combined number of places offered by all small providers was smaller than that of each of the 2 largest providers. These were: the Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd), 6,490 places; and Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris), 5,600 places.

The largest private providers of IFA places

There were 7 private companies that offered over 1,000 fostering places, and are therefore included in our list of largest providers. These 7 providers accounted for 59% of all private IFA places in England as at 31 March 2022 (20,550 out of 35,125 places).

The list of largest providers in 2022 is the same as that in 2021.

Table 4: The largest providers of private IFA places as at 31 March 2022, compared with 31 March 2021

Position	Position change	Top company	Number of IFA places, 2022	Change in number of IFA places since 2021
1	Position unchanged	The Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd)	6,490	+220

2	Position unchanged	Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris)	5,600	-95
3	Position unchanged	Compass Community Ltd	2,515	-1,735
4	Position unchanged	Alderbury Holdings Ltd	2,000	+360
5	Position unchanged	Capstone EOT Trustee Ltd	1,450	+20
6	Position unchanged	CareTech Holdings PLC	1,275	-25
7	Position unchanged	Five Rivers Ireland Ltd	1,215	+145

During 2021 to 2022, none of the large providers registered any new agencies. Of the 14 newly registered IFAs, 13 were opened by single providers who are not part of a wider chain, and 1 by a small provider.

Of the 7 large providers, 3 offered a smaller number of places in 2022 than in 2021. Compass Community Ltd’s fall in the number of places is partially accounted for by the closure of 1 agency with 720 places. It opened 2 new agencies in the same period, for which we do not yet know the number of places; this is likely to balance the loss, at least partially.

None of the other large providers closed any settings during 2021 to 2022.

Due to Compass Community Ltd closing one agency, and none of the large providers opening new agencies, the total number of places accounted for by the largest providers decreased by around 1,100 compared to last year.

Small private providers of IFA places

In addition to the 7 large providers, there were 9 smaller private companies that owned 2 or more IFAs each. These small providers accounted for 30 IFAs (11% of all privately owned IFAs) and 3,775 places (11% of all private IFA places). The number of IFAs owned by these companies ranged from 2 to 6, and the total number of places provided through their IFAs ranged from 150 to 890.

Table 5: Small providers of private IFA places as at 31 March 2022

Position	Position change	Top company	Number of IFA places, 2022	Change in number of IFA places since 2021
8	Position unchanged	Swiis International Ltd	890	+30
9	Position unchanged	Sunbeam Fostering Agency Ltd	750	+20
10	Position unchanged	Fusion Fostering Ltd	490	+10

11	Position unchanged	UK Fostering Ltd	435	-5
12	Position unchanged	The Hazel Project Ltd	295	+5
13	Increase from last year's position	Positive Aspirations Ltd	290	+30
14	Decrease from last year's position	Regional Foster Families Ltd	240	-50
15	Position unchanged	Futures for Children Ltd	235	-5
16	Position unchanged	Young People at Heart Ltd	150	-30

Across all the small providers, the changes in numbers of places, whether increases or decreases, were fairly small. Only 1 small company (Fusion Fostering Ltd) opened a new agency in 2021 to 2022, and 1 (Regional Foster Families Ltd) closed a single agency.

The 7 remaining small providers all owned the same number of IFAs as in the previous year.

Inspection profile of the largest private providers of IFAs as at 31 March 2022

According to regulations, Ofsted has a duty to inspect IFAs at least once within a 3-year inspection window. Agencies judged inadequate or requiring improvement to be good are usually re-inspected within a shorter time frame.

The largest private providers of IFAs continue to have a better grade profile than among all private IFAs nationally. All of the IFAs owned by large providers that had received an inspection grade as at 31 March 2022 were good or outstanding, compared with 94% of all private IFAs nationally. The same was true for IFAs owned by small private providers, all of which were good or outstanding.

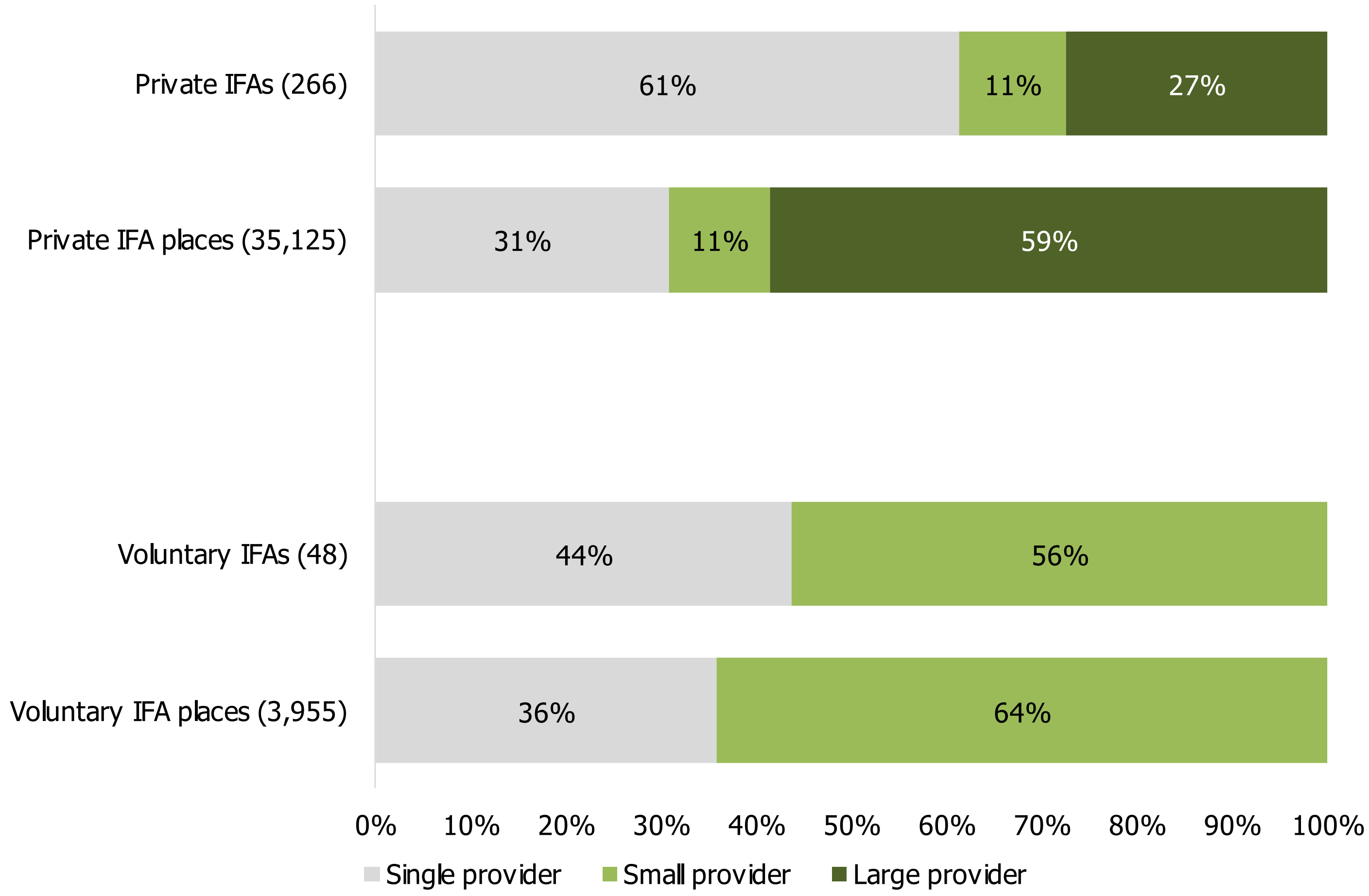
This release includes inspection activity up to 31 March 2022 only. However, inspections have occurred since this date. As a result, some settings' inspection grades may have improved or declined since 31 March 2022.

Ownership of voluntary IFAs

Of the 48 voluntary IFAs that were active as at 31 March 2022, around two fifths (21) were single providers. The remaining 27 were within the ownership chains of 6 companies. This is a different pattern of ownership to that seen in the private sector, where around four fifths of IFAs were single providers.

All 6 of the voluntary companies that owned multiple IFAs offered fewer than 1,000 fostering places in total, so are considered small providers. The 27 voluntary IFAs that were owned by small providers accounted for around two thirds of all fostering places provided by voluntary IFAs (2,540, 64%).

Figure 10: Proportion of IFAs and IFA places provided by voluntary and private IFAs, by ownership type



Number of IFAs excludes 2 agencies for whom there was no data available on Companies House.

Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

View data in an accessible format.

The number of IFAs owned by each small voluntary provider ranged from 2 to 7. The total number of places provided by these providers ranged from 130 to 915. The biggest voluntary company, The Adolescent and Children's Trust, owned the most IFAs (7), and provided the most places (915). This number accounts for 36% of voluntary places offered by small providers (915 out of 2,540), and 23% of all voluntary places (915 out of 3,955). It is also almost double the number offered by the next biggest voluntary provider (Barnardo's, 485 places).

Inspection profile of voluntary IFAs owned by small providers and single providers, as at 31 March 2022

Similar to privately owned IFAs, the inspection profile of voluntary agencies has changed very little since 31 March 2021. IFAs owned by small voluntary providers also continue to perform better than all voluntary IFAs nationally, with all judged good or outstanding, compared with 90% of voluntary agencies owned by single providers.

Companies among the largest providers of children's homes and IFA places

There were 4 companies that appeared on the list of largest providers for children's homes and IFAs. These were: CareTech Holdings PLC; Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd); Compass Community Ltd; and Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris).

- CareTech was the largest provider of children's homes (205 homes, offering 680 places), and the sixth largest provider of IFA places (4 IFAs, offering 1,275

places).
- The Outcomes First Group (SSCP Spring Topco Ltd) was the fourth largest provider of children's homes (60 homes, offering 270 places), and the largest provider of IFA places (20 IFAs, offering 6,490 places).
- Compass Community Ltd was number 11 on the list of largest providers of children's homes (28 homes, offering 140 places), and the third largest provider of IFA places (7 IFAs, offering 2,515 places).
- Nutrius UK Topco Ltd (Polaris) was number 13 on the list of largest providers of children's homes (25 homes, offering 100 places), and the second largest provider of IFA places (24 IFAs, offering 5,600 places).

These 4 companies accounted for: 14% of private children's homes; 15% of private children's home places; 21% of private IFAs; and 45% of private IFA places.

Contacts

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Annex: data tables for figures

This section contains the underlying data in an accessible table format for all figures.

Data for Figure 1: Number of secure children's homes and places, by sector

Sector	Number of secure children's homes	Number of places
England	13	230
Local authority	12	220
Voluntary	1	10

See Figure 1

Data for Figure 2: Number of RSS registered as children's homes and places, by sector

Sector	Number of RSS registered as children's homes	Number of places
England	62	1,570
Private	46	1,035
Local authority	3	80

Voluntary	13	460

See Figure 2

Data for Figure 3: Number of short-break-only children's homes and places, by sector

Number of homes	Number of short-break-only children's homes	Number of places
England	156	980
Private	13	75
Local authority	103	645
Health authority	9	55
Voluntary	31	210 places

See Figure 3

Data for Figure 4: Number of children's homes and places, by sector

Sector	Number of children's homes	Number of places
England	2,642	10,115
Private	2,205	8,005
Local authority	340	1,605
Voluntary	97	505 places

See Figure 4

Data for Figure 5: Comparison of the sector breakdown of children's homes as at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2022

As at date	Number of private children's homes	Number of voluntary children's homes	Number of local authority children's homes
As at 31 March 2022	2,205	97	340
As at 31 March 2021	2,031	91	340

See Figure 5

Data for Figure 6: Number of private children's homes in England as at 31 March 2022, by ownership type

Single	Under ownership by company with	Owned by a top 21

providers	2+ homes	company
301	1,894	929

See Figure 6

Data for Figure 7: Proportion of IFAs and IFA places provided by the private sector

Data item	Private sector	Voluntary sector
Percentage of IFAs	85%	15%
Percentage of IFA places	90%	10%

See Figure 7

Data for Figure 8: Number of private IFAs as at 31 March 2022, by ownership type

Number of IFAs owned by single provider	Number of IFAs owned by small provider	Number of IFAs owned by large provider
163	30	73

See Figure 8

Data for Figure 9: Number of private IFAs and private IFA places as at 31 March 2022, by ownership type

Data item	Total number	Single provider	Small provider	Large provider
Number of IFAs	266	163	30	73
Number of places	35,125	10,805	3,775	20,550

See Figure 9

Data for Figure 10: Proportion of IFAs and IFA places provided by voluntary and private IFAs, by ownership type

Data item	Total number	Single provider	Small provider	Large provider
Private IFAs	266	61%	11%	27%
Private IFA places	35,125	31%	11%	59%
Voluntary IFAs	48	44%	56%	–
Voluntary IFA places	3,955	36%	64%	–

See Figure 10

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