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Reporting year 2024

# Children accommodated in secure children's homes

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**Published** 16 May 2024

**Release type** [Accredited official statistics](#)

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This release contains statistics on children accommodated in secure children's homes, including:

- numbers of approved and available places
- availability and occupancy rates

## Releases in this series

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## Methodologies

- children accommodated by sex, age, ethnicity, and length of stay.

[Children accommodated in secure children's homes](#)

The data in this release is used to support monitoring and assessment of capacity within the system. The data is reported for England and Wales and is collected directly from secure children's homes.

Figures relate to a snapshot of the position on 31 March each year, except for 2020 when the reference date was changed to 29 February to reflect the position in secure children's homes before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.

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# Headline facts and figures - 2024

## Number of children accommodated

**156**

Up 12%, from 139 last year

► What is this?

## Percentage of approved places occupied (occupancy rate)

**66%**

Up from 60% last year

► What is this?

## Number of children placed by YCS

**59**

Up 5%, from 56 last year

► What is this?

Figures relate to 31 March 2024, for England and Wales, comparisons are to 31 March 2023 unless otherwise stated.

- The number of places that were approved for use has risen by 7 to 237, up from 230 last year. However, this is still slightly below the approved places in recent years - between 2015 and 2022 the figure remained fairly stable around 250 places.
- Children accommodated in secure children's homes increased by 12% (17 more children) to 156. Between 2010 and 2021 there was an overall gradual decline in children accommodated in secure children's homes, but since 2021 the figure has fluctuated more - generally around 150 each year.
- The occupancy rate increased to 66% - up from 60% last year - but the same as in 2022.
- 59 children were placed by the Youth Custody Service (YCS), up 5% (3 more children) from 56. Between 2010 and 2021 there was a longer-term trend of fewer children being placed in secure children's homes by the YCS, however since 2021 the number has remained fairly stable at around 60 children.

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## Background

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### Secure children's homes

Secure children's homes provide a safe place where very vulnerable children and young people can receive the care, support and education they need. Beds within secure children's homes are either contracted to the Youth Custody Service (YCS), or are available to local authorities (LAs) for welfare or criminal justice placements, so children can be placed within these children's homes either by LAs or the YCS. The YCS place vulnerable children when they are remanded to custody by the courts or are serving a custodial sentence. LAs place children when no other type of placement can keep them safe as they are a significant risk to themselves or others.

There are currently two other types of secure accommodation - [young offender institutions](#) and [secure training centres](#) . Data on children placed in these are not included in this release [but are published by the Ministry of Justice \(MoJ\) \(opens in a new tab\)](#).

#### Places contracted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

From September 2017, the overall responsibility for commissioning of youth custody transferred to the MoJ from the Youth Justice Board. At the same time the YCS took over responsibility for individual placements of children and young people into youth custody and day-to-day management of youth custody. Some places within secure children's homes are contracted out for use to the MoJ and children are placed in them by the YCS.

[Go to top](#)

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## Places approved and available

[Hide](#)

There are currently 14 secure children's homes in England and Wales, with 237 approved places which is an increase of 7 approved places on last year. This increase is largely due to the increase in approved beds at Clare Lodge (where capacity was reduced last year).

The availability of approved places has increased since last year, at 93% up from 88%. The availability rate is above 90% for the first time since 2016 - it was consistently above 90% between 2010 and 2016 but had been below in each year since.

Not all approved places are always available for use, for example homes may temporarily close to make improvements, a bed may be out of use due to damage or refurbishment or if staffing ratios mean a reduced number of places can be filled.

### Chart

Table

► Export options

## Places approved for use and available for use have increased slightly in 2024 in England and Wales

	Number of places approved	Number of places available
<b>2010</b>	311	291
<b>2011</b>	312	291
<b>2012</b>	300	288
<b>2013</b>	296	286
<b>2014</b>	298	283
<b>2015</b>	254	245
<b>2016</b>	254	245
<b>2017</b>	254	227
<b>2018</b>	255	220
<b>2019</b>	259	228
<b>2020</b>	254	227
<b>2021</b>	253	223
<b>2022</b>	249	220
<b>2023</b>	230	203
<b>2024</b>	237	220

[Data symbols](#) 

## Footnotes

1. Figures are at 31 March each year, except for 2020 where figures are at 29 February to reflect the position before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.

Source: SA1

## Explore and edit this data online

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The number of approved places contracted to the MoJ steadily declined from 191 places in 2010 to 106 in 2019. Since then places contracted to the the MoJ have remained at a similar level - there were 105 places this year - the same as in 2023.

The number of children placed by the YCS in secure homes decreased from 146 in 2011 and 2012 down to 56 in 2023. This year YCS placements have increased slightly to 59.

Figures published by the [His Majesty's Prison Service \(opens in a new tab\)](#) show 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. This is reflected in the secure children's homes data for MoJ contracted places and YCS placements.

Chart

Table

► Export options

Places contracted to the MoJ and children placed by the YCS in England and Wales

	Number of children placed by YCS	Number of places contracted to the MoJ
2010	131	191
2011	146	190
2012	146	183
2013	102	166
2014	111	166
2015	97	138
2016	89	138
2017	93	117
2018	98	120
2019	66	106
2020	80	107
2021	55	107
2022	62	105
2023	56	105
2024	59	105

[Data symbols](#) ?

## Footnotes

- Figures are at 31 March each year, except for 2020 where figures are at 29 February to reflect the position before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.

Source: SA1

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## Children accommodated and occupancy rate

[Hide](#)

Within the 14 secure children’s homes, there were 156 children accommodated, up 12% since 2023. Between 2010 and 2021 there was an overall gradual decline in children accommodated in secure children's homes, but since 2021 the number of children accommodated has fluctuated more - generally around 150 children each year.

The occupancy rate was 66% - up from 60% last year. Note that a lower occupancy rate does not necessarily mean that there are available spaces within secure children's homes - availability of a suitable place may depend upon whether or not the place is contracted to the YCS. In addition, placements are complex and each home will assess the resources required to support the individual needs of the children they accommodate.

### Occupancy rates

These are based on the number of children accommodated in relation to the number of places for which the home has approval to operate with

[Chart](#)

[Table](#)

► [Export options](#)

**Children accommodated in secure homes in England and Wales have increased in 2024**

	Number of children accommodated
2010	258
2011	221
2012	239
2013	206
2014	229
2015	205
2016	210
2017	203
2018	204
2019	172
2020	184
2021	142
2022	165
2023	139
2024	156

[Data symbols](#) 

### Footnotes

1. Figures are at 31 March each year, except for 2020 where figures are at 29 February to reflect the position before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.

Source: SA1

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## ► Export options

**In 2024, both the occupancy and availability rates have increased in secure children's homes in England and Wales**

	Percentage of approved places available (availability rate)	Percentage of approved places occupied (occupancy rate)
<b>2010</b>	94%	83%
<b>2011</b>	93%	71%
<b>2012</b>	96%	80%
<b>2013</b>	97%	70%
<b>2014</b>	95%	77%
<b>2015</b>	96%	81%
<b>2016</b>	96%	83%
<b>2017</b>	89%	80%
<b>2018</b>	86%	80%
<b>2019</b>	88%	66%
<b>2020</b>	89%	72%
<b>2021</b>	88%	56%
<b>2022</b>	88%	66%
<b>2023</b>	88%	60%
<b>2024</b>	93%	66%

[Data symbols](#) ?

## Footnotes

1. Figures are at 31 March each year, except for 2020 where figures are at 29 February to reflect the position before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.
2. Percentages in charts and tables are rounded to the nearest whole number. Where percentages apply to a group of categories they may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Children and young people placed within secure children's homes may be placed as:

- **Children detained or sentenced and placed by the YCS** include children detained for, or convicted of, a serious offence under the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 or the Criminal Justice Act 2003; or subject to a Supervision Order with a residence requirement or a Detention and Training Order under the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000.
- **Children placed by the local authority in a criminal justice context** include children remanded by a court under section 102 (Remand to youth detention accommodation) of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012; or accommodated pursuant to section 38 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.
- **Children placed by the local authority on welfare grounds** include children who are placed into the homes by their local authority under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 for the protection of themselves and/or others.

In 2024, 46% of children in secure children's homes were placed on welfare grounds, 38% were detained or sentenced and placed by the YCS and 16% were placed by the LA in a criminal justice context.

Children placed in secure homes on a welfare basis fell slightly to 72 (down by 2 children), continuing a longer term trend, decreasing steadily from a peak of 105 children in 2016.

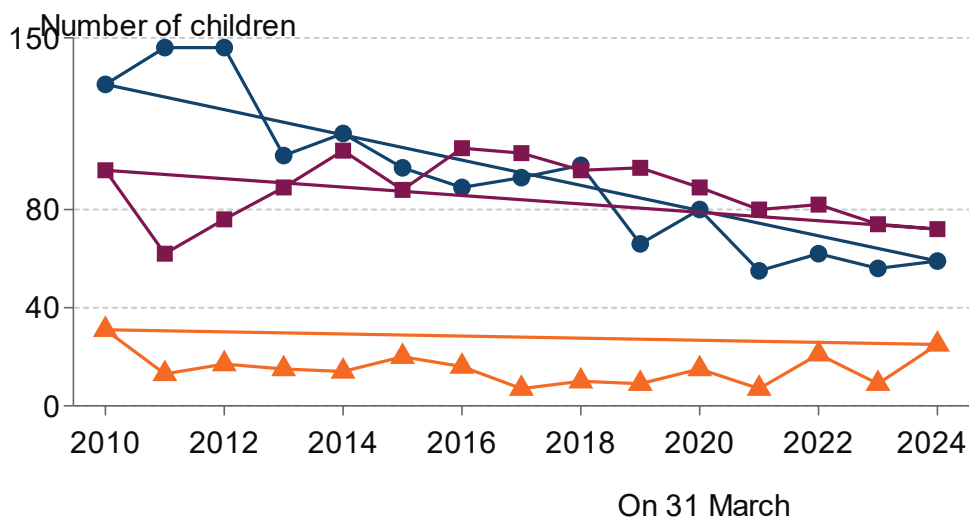
Children detained or sentenced and placed by the YCS increased slightly to 59 (up by 3 children). Placements by the YCS have been broadly similar since 2021 - down from a peak of 146 in 2012.

Children placed by the LA in a criminal justice context increased to 25 (up by 14 children).

Chart   Table

## ► Export options

### Children placed in secure children's homes by placement type, 2010 to 2024



- Children detained or sentenced and placed by the YCS
- Children placed by the LA on welfare grounds
- ▲ Children placed by the LA in a criminal justice context

## Footnotes

1. Figures are at 31 March each year, except for 2020 where figures are at 29 February to reflect the position before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.
2. Percentages in charts and tables are rounded to the nearest whole number. Where percentages apply to a group of categories they may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Source: SA1

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## Sex, age, and ethnicity

Note that due to the relatively small size of the cohort, users should be cautious interpreting year on year changes.

Sex

There are more males than females accommodated in secure children’s homes. The proportion of children who were accommodated who were male was 72% - the same as last year. Males are over-represented in the secure children's homes population (compared to 51% in the overall child population - as shown in the latest ONS mid-year population estimates).

Age

Children aged 15 years or over make up 74% of the children accommodated. The numbers in each age group are small and do fluctuate over time - children accommodated by age in 2024:

- 9 were aged 13 years (6%)
- 26 were aged 14 years old (17%)
- 41 were aged 15 years old (26%)
- 40 were aged 16 years old (26%)
- 32 were aged 17 years old (21%)
- the remaining 5% were either aged under 13, or 18 years and over.

Ethnicity

Information on the ethnicity of children accommodated in secure homes was reported for the first time in 2021. The numbers and proportions of children accommodated by ethnicity are in the table.

► Export options

**Children accommodated in secure children's homes, by ethnicity, in England and Wales, 2020 to 2024**

		Number of children accommodated					Percentage of children accommodated				
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Ethnicity of child	Total	x	142	165	139	156	x	100%	100%	100%	100%
	White	x	103	107	99	98	x	73%	65%	71%	63%
	Mixed	x	c	30	18	13	x	c	18%	13%	8%
	Black or Black British	x	13	9	13	24	x	9%	5%	9%	15%
	Asian or Asian British	x	11	10	7	9	x	8%	6%	5%	6%
	Other Ethnic groups	x	c	c	c	c	x	c	c	c	c
	Unknown	x	0	c	c	c	x	0%	c	c	c

[Data symbols ?](#)

## Footnotes

- Figures are at 31 March each year, except for 2020 where figures are at 29 February to reflect the position before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the national lockdown.
- 'c' denotes figures suppressed to preserve confidentiality.

[Show 2 more footnotes](#)

Source: SA1

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## Length of stay

[Hide](#)

The length of stay of children accommodated is given in the table.

[Go to top](#)

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## Methodology

Find out how and why we collect, process and publish these statistics.

[Children accommodated in secure children's homes](#)

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- managed impartially and objectively in the public interest
- meet identified user needs
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You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the [OSR website](#).

## Contact us

If you have a specific enquiry about Children accommodated in secure children's homes statistics and data:



## Children looked after statistics team

Email: [cla.stats@education.gov.uk](mailto:cla.stats@education.gov.uk)

Contact name: Justin Ushie

## Press office

If you have a media enquiry:

Telephone: 020 7783 8300

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