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Department for Education

Reporting year 2025


Stability measures for children

looked after in England

Statistics on the stability of Children Looked After (CLA) in their placement, at school and in their professional support, for CLA on 31 March each year.

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Official statistics in development 

[Department for Education](#)

Published

30 April 2026

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30 April 2026

[1 update](#)

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 **DfE are proposing to publish school stability biennially rather than annually. We welcome feedback from users on this proposal by 31 August 2026 to cla.statistics@education.gov.uk**

Headline facts and figures

High placement instability

10%

Down from 11% last year

► High placement instability



High school instability

8%

Unchanged from last year

► High school instability



High social worker instability

24%

Down from 27% last year

► High social worker instability



High combined instability

1%

Unchanged from last year

► High combined instability



1 in 10 children looked after (10%) in 2025 experienced high placement instability (3 or more placements during the year) - broadly stable with previous years. Children looked after who were initially detained for child protection reasons had the highest proportion experiencing high placement instability (26%).

The proportion of children looked after experiencing high school instability (at least one mid-year school move during the year) in 2025 was 8% - unchanged from 2022 and broadly stable over the past five years (7% in 2021). Children looked after with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan were less likely to experience high school instability

in 2025 (5%) - compared with those who had some SEN support or with no identified SEN – both 9%.



The proportion of children looked after experiencing high social worker instability (3 or more social workers during the year) in 2025 was 24%. Children looked after aged under 1 year experienced the highest social worker instability (31%). The proportion of children looked after experiencing high social worker instability decreases as age increases - 22% of children looked after aged 16 or over experienced high social worker instability.

1 in 100 children looked after (1%) experienced high instability in all three stability measures (placement, school and social worker) in 2025. There is little variation between different characteristics groups.

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About these statistics

This is the second release in this series which brings together information on the stability of children looked after (CLA) in England, including stability in their placements, at school and in their social worker support into one place.

Data is taken from the annual [SSDA903 data collection](#)  which is collected from local authorities in England, and from the termly [school census data collection](#) . Each year local authorities can revise previous years' CLA data. The latest statistics relate to CLA on 31 March 2025 and comparisons are made to CLA on 31 March 2024 unless otherwise stated.

Placement stability and school stability data are five-year time series covering 2021 to 2025. Social worker stability data is only available for 2024 and 2025 as the data was collected by DfE for the first time in 2024.

This release is published as **official statistics in development**, which means that these statistics are undergoing evaluation for quality and user need. As the social worker data collection is new, we expect the quality of the data returns to improve over time as the collection becomes established. We welcome feedback on these statistics from users by

31 August 2026 via the details in the “contact us” section below.

Proposed changes to this publication

The Department for Education regularly reviews its statistical publications to ensure the statistics meet user needs.

We plan to improve the timeliness of stability statistics going forward, by publishing both placement stability and social worker stability data in November/December each year in this release. This will bring forward the publication of social worker stability data by 4 months compared to the current publication schedule. To enable this, we are proposing to publish data on school stability biennially instead of annually. Information would be published in the Spring following the relevant Autumn [Children looked after in England including adoptions](#) publication and include data for both the latest year and the previous year. All stability data will be combined in one place in the [Stability measures for children looked after in England](#) series. Following these plans, the next publication of placement stability and social worker stability statistics would be in November/December 2026, and the next publication of school stability would be in Spring 2028, including data for both the latest year and the previous year. We welcome feedback on this proposal from users by 31 August 2026 to cla.statistics@education.gov.uk.

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Placement stability

The number of placements experienced by children looked after (CLA) in a one-year period has remained broadly stable over the past 5 years, with a slight increase in stability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Chart](#)

[Table](#)

► [Export options](#)

CLA on 31 March by number of placements during the year, 2021 to 2025

	CLA on 31 March				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
With 1 placement during the year	70%	69%	69%	68%	69%
With 2 placements during the year	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%
With 3 placements during the year	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%
With 4 placements during the year	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
With 5 placements during the year	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
With 6 placements during the year	k	k	k	k	k
With 7 or more placements during the year	k	k	1%	1%	k

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Footnotes

1. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures in some tables may be suppressed, denoted by a 'c', percentages <0.5% are denoted by a 'k'. Historical data may differ from older publications which is mainly due to amendments made by local authorities after the previous publication. However, users looking for a longer time series may wish to check for the equivalent table in earlier releases of this publication. Figures exclude children looked after under a series of short-term placements.

Source: SSDA903

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

Explore data

High placement instability

High placement instability is defined as a looked after child experiencing 3 or more placements during the year ending 31 March.

1 in 10 CLA (10%) experienced high placement instability (3 or more placements) - broadly stable from 11% in 2024 and 9% in 2021 (figures based on unrounded numbers).

A lower proportion of CLA experience high placement instability when focusing on those who have been in care for 12 months or more (9%) compared to those who have been in care for less than 12 months (14%).

Characteristics of CLA with high placement instability

► Export options

CLA on 31 March with high placement instability by characteristics (percentage of CLA in each category with high instability), 2021 to 2025

		With 3 or more placements during the year				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Sex	Male	9%	9%	10%	10%	10%
	Female	10%	11%	12%	12%	11%
Age group	Under 1 year	12%	11%	12%	12%	12%

Age group	Under 1 year	13%	11%	12%	12%	12%
	1 to 4 years	8%	10%	11%	11%	10%
	5 to 9 years	6%	7%	8%	8%	8%
	10 to 15 years	8%	10%	11%	11%	10%
	16 years and over	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%
	Ethnicity	Total White	9%	10%	11%	11%
Total Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups		10%	11%	12%	12%	11%
Total Asian or Asian British		7%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Total Black, African, Caribbean or Black British		9%	10%	10%	11%	11%
Total other ethnic group		8%	8%	7%	8%	9%
Total refused or information not yet available		10%	8%	8%	6%	9%
Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children		Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	7%	6%	5%	6%
	Children excluding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	9%	10%	11%	11%	11%

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Source: SSDA903

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

[Explore data](#)

Legal status and placement type for CLA with high placement instability

CLA who were initially detained for child protection reasons had the highest proportion experiencing high placement instability (26%). This was followed by CLA who were detained under youth justice legal statuses (19%). CLA whose first legal status in the year was a placement order (placed for adoption) were the least likely to experience high placement instability (6%). Proportions are similar to those seen last year.

► [Export options](#)

**CLA on 31 March with high placement instability
(percentage of CLA in each category with high**

instability), by first legal status during the year, 2021 to 2025

		With 3 or more placements during the year				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
First legal status during the year	Care orders	8%	9%	10%	10%	9%
	Placement order granted	4%	6%	6%	6%	6%
	Voluntary agreements under S20 CA 1989	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%
	Detained for child protection	20%	23%	23%	26%	26%
	Youth justice legal statuses	17%	15%	16%	18%	19%

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2. First placement and legal status during the year, excluding a small number of children for whom placement on 31 March of the relevant year and corresponding legal status has been used instead. See methodology document for further

information.

[Show 1 more footnote](#)

Source: SSDA903

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CLA whose first placement in the year was 'Other residential settings' (including care homes or custody) experienced the highest placement instability (24%) - unchanged from last year. This was followed by those with a first placement of 'Other placements'.

Placements which don't fall into the main placement categories are grouped within 'Other placements'. These tend to be placements by the courts (s38(6)) with a relative or non-assessed person, placements with other unregistered carers or unregulated placements (for example whilst awaiting availability of an alternative placement, if it's in the child's best interests or the child's choice).

High placement instability was experienced by 9% of CLA whose first placement in the year was a foster placement - unchanged from last year.

► Export options

CLA on 31 March with high placement instability (percentage of CLA in each category with high instability), by first placement during the year, 2021 to 2025

		With 3 or more placements during the year				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
First placement during the year	Foster placements	7%	9%	9%	9%	9%
	Placed for adoption	c	4%	3%	4%	5%
	Placed with parents or other person with parental responsibility	10%	11%	11%	13%	13%
	Secure homes and children's homes	15%	17%	16%	14%	14%
	Independent and semi-independent living arrangements/ supported accommodation	16%	11%	10%	10%	8%
	Other residential settings	26%	24%	24%	24%	24%
	Residential schools	c	c	c	c	c
	Other placements	19%	17%	22%	21%	23%

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Footnotes

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previous publication. However, users looking for a longer time series may wish to check for the equivalent table in earlier releases of this publication. Figures exclude children looked after under a series of short-term placements.

2. First placement and legal status during the year, excluding a small number of children for whom placement on 31 March of the relevant year and corresponding legal status has been used instead. See methodology document for further information.

Source: SSDA903

Explore and edit this data online

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Long-term placement stability

The number of placements experienced by CLA over a two-year period has been broadly stable over the past 5 years - in 2025, 23% of CLA experienced high placement instability (3 or more placements during the previous 2 years), unchanged from 2024 but up from 21% in 2021 (figures based on unrounded numbers).

[Chart](#)

[Table](#)

► [Export options](#)

CLA on 31 March by number of placements in the previous 2 years, 2021 to 2025

CLA 2 years on 31 March

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
--	------	------	------	------	------

With 1 placement during the previous 2 years	54%	55%	54%	54%	54%
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

With 2 placements during the previous 2 years	24%	24%	24%	23%	23%
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

With 3 placements during the previous 2 years	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

With 4 placements during the previous 2 years	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
--	----	----	----	----	----

With 5 placements during the previous 2 years	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
--	----	----	----	----	----

With 6 placements during the previous 2 years	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
--	----	----	----	----	----

With 7 or more placements during the previous 2 years	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
--	----	----	----	----	----

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2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who also spent at least one

day in care in the previous year ending 31 March.

Source: SSDA903

Explore and edit this data online

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Of those CLA aged under 16 on 31 March who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years, 69% had lived in the same placement for at least 2 years.

Further information on placement stability can be found in the 'P' highlight tables accompanying this release.

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School stability

We are proposing to publish school stability biennially rather than annually. We welcome feedback from users on this proposal by 31 August 2026 to cla.statistics@education.gov.uk.

The proportion of CLA experiencing at least one school move in a one-year period (between 1 April and 31 March) has been stable since 2021 at 11% each year (figures based on unrounded numbers).

High school instability

High school instability is defined as a looked after child experiencing at least one mid-year school move during the year ending 31 March - a move at any point in the year excluding the period 1 August to 30 September.

The proportion of CLA experiencing high instability in 2025 was 8% - unchanged from 2022 and broadly stable since 2021 (7%).

► Export options

CLA on 31 March by number of school moves during the year, 2021 to 2025

		CLA on 31 March				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Any moves	With no moves during the year	89%	89%	89%	89%	89%
	With one move during the year	11%	10%	11%	11%	11%
	With two moves during the year	k	1%	1%	1%	k
	With three or more moves during the year	c	k	c	k	k
Mid-year moves	With no mid-year moves during the year	93%	92%	92%	92%	92%
	With one mid-year move during the year	6%	7%	8%	8%	8%
	With two mid-year moves during the year	k	k	k	k	k
	With three or more mid-year moves during the year	c	c	c	c	c

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Footnotes

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previous publication. However, users looking for a longer time series may wish to check for the equivalent table in earlier releases of this publication. Figures exclude children looked after under a series of short-term placements.

2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who are of school age and have been matched to the school census. See methodology document for further information.

[Show 4 more footnotes](#)

Source: SSDA903 and school census

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Explore data

Characteristics of CLA with high school instability

Looking at sex and the major ethnic groups, there is little change over time or across different characteristics.

CLA aged 4 to 9 years experience the highest school instability each year, 12% in 2025, compared to 8% of CLA aged 10 to 15 years.

CLA in special schools are less likely to experience high school instability, 2% in 2025, compared to 10% of CLA in state-funded primary schools and 7% in state-funded secondary schools.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are less likely to have a mid-year school move, 3% in 2025 - than CLA who were not unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

[Chart](#)

[Table](#)

► [Export options](#)

CLA on 31 March with high school instability by characteristics (percentage of CLA in each category with high instability), 2021 to 2025

		Mid-year moves				
		With one or more mid-year moves during the year				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Sex	Male	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%
	Female	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%
Age group	4 to 9 years	10%	11%	12%	12%	12%
	10 to 15 years	5%	7%	8%	8%	8%
	16 years and over	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Ethnicity	Total White	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%
	Total Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	7%	8%	8%	8%	9%
	Total Asian or Asian British	5%	6%	7%	7%	7%
	Total Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
	Total other ethnic group	8%	8%	8%	7%	7%
	Total refused or information not yet available	c	c	c	c	11%

School Phase	State-funded primary	8%	10%	11%	10%	10%
	State-funded secondary	6%	6%	7%	7%	7%
	State-funded alternative provision school	11%	9%	7%	9%	8%
	Special school	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	5%	3%	5%	4%	3%
	Children excluding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%

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2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who are of school age and have been matched to the school census. See methodology document for further information.

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Source: SSDA903 and school census

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Legal status and placement type for CLA with high school instability

CLA with a first legal status of 'placement order granted' (a court order allowing a local authority to place a child for adoption) during the year were more likely to experience a mid-year school move in 2025 (21%), up from 20% in 2024 and 16% in 2021.

CLA placed for adoption (a looked after child who goes to live with their prospective adopters) for their first placement during the year were more likely to experience at least one mid-year school move during the year in 2025 (28%) - up from 22% in 2024 and up from 15% in 2021. However these percentages are liable to change year on year due to the size of the underlying numbers of children. This higher level of instability is perhaps not surprising as looked after children who are adopted are more likely to be placed outside the local authority boundary than other looked after children.

► Export options

CLA on 31 March with high school instability (percentage of CLA in each category with high instability) by first legal status and placement during the year, 2021 to 2025

CLA on 31 March

With one or more mid-year moves during the year

		Increase during the year				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
First legal status during the year	Care orders	6%	7%	8%	8%	8%
	Placement order granted	16%	19%	19%	20%	21%
	Voluntary agreements under S20 CA 1989	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%
	Detained for child protection	10%	11%	11%	10%	13%
	Youth justice legal statuses	c	c	c	c	c
First placement during the year	Foster placements	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%
	Placed for adoption	15%	18%	9%	22%	28%
	Placed with parents or other person with parental responsibility	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%
	Secure homes and children's homes	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%
	Independent and semi-independent living arrangements/ supported accommodation	7%	c	1%	1%	c
	Other residential settings	9%	9%	7%	8%	9%
	Residential schools	c	c	c	c	0%
	Other placements	5%	7%	10%	9%	9%

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2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who are of school age and have been matched to the school census. See methodology document for further information.

[Show 5 more footnotes](#)

Source: SSDA903 and school census

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CLA with high school instability by Special Educational Need (SEN)

CLA with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan were less likely to have a mid-year school move in 2025 (5%) - compared with those who had some SEN support or with no identified SEN - both 9%, likely to be because a particular school can be requested in the child's EHC plan.

► Export options

**CLA on 31 March with high school instability
(percentage of CLA in each category with high
instability) by SEN, 2021 to 2025**

		CLA on 31 March				
		With one or more mid-year moves during the year				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
SEN provision	No identified SEN	7%	8%	9%	8%	9%
	SEN support	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%
	Education, Health and Care Plan	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%
	Unknown	6%	10%	9%	10%	12%

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2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who are of school age and have been matched to the school census. See methodology document for further information.

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Source: SSDA903 and school census

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Explore data

Long-term school stability

The proportion of CLA experiencing a school move over a two-year period (between 1 April of the previous year ending 31 March and 31 March of the relevant year) has been broadly stable over the past 5 years – in 2025, 20% of CLA had at least one school move during the previous 2 years, unchanged from 2024 and decreasing slightly from 21% in 2021 (figures based on unrounded numbers).

The proportion of CLA experiencing high instability over a two-year period (at least one mid-year school move - a move at any point in the year excluding the periods 1 August to 30 September in each year) has also been broadly stable over the past 5 years – in 2025, 15% of CLA had at least one mid-year school move during the previous 2 years, unchanged from 2024 and a slight increase from 14% in 2021.

► Export options

CLA on 31 March by number of school moves in the previous 2 years, 2021 to 2025

CLA 2 years on 31 March

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
--	------	------	------	------	------

Any moves	With no moves during the previous 2 years	79%	80%	80%	80%	80%
	With one move during the previous 2 years	19%	18%	18%	18%	18%
	With two moves during the previous 2 years	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
	With three or more moves during the previous 2 years	k	k	k	k	k
Mid-year moves	With no mid-year moves during the previous 2 years	86%	87%	86%	85%	85%
	With one mid-year move during the previous 2 years	12%	12%	13%	13%	13%
	With two mid-year moves during the previous 2 years	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	With three or more mid-year moves during the previous 2 years	k	k	k	k	k

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previous publication. However, users looking for a longer time series may wish to check for the equivalent table in earlier releases of this publication. Figures exclude children looked after under a series of short-term placements.

2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who also spent at least one day in care in the previous year ending 31 March, who are of school age and have been matched to the school census. See methodology document for further information.

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Source: SSDA903 and school census

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Use our table tool to explore this data.

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Further information on school stability can be found in the 'S' highlight tables accompanying this release.

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Social worker stability

Note: This is the second year of the social worker data collection. We expect the quality of the data returns to improve over time as the collection becomes established. Please use caution, especially at local authority level, when making comparisons across years until the social worker data collection is more established and a longer time series is available.

High social worker instability

High social worker instability is defined as a looked after child experiencing 3 or more social workers during the year ending 31 March.

The proportion of CLA experiencing high social worker instability in 2025 was 24%, compared to 27% in 2024 (figures based on unrounded numbers).

A lower proportion of CLA experience high social worker instability when focusing on those who have been in care for 12 months or more (21%) compared to those who have been in care for less than 12 months (33%).

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during the year, 2024 to 2025

	CLA on 31 March	
	2024	2025
With 1 social worker during the year	38%	40%
With 2 social workers during the year	35%	35%
With 3 social workers during the year	18%	17%
With 4 social workers during the year	6%	6%
With 5 social workers during the year	2%	2%
With 6 or more social workers during the year	1%	1%

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2. Figures for 2024 exclude Barnet who did not complete a social worker data return, and a small number of other children from other LAs who were missing from the data collection, or missing social worker episodes for the correct period.

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Characteristics of CLA with high social worker instability

Looking at sex and the major ethnic groups, there is little variation between these characteristics groups.

CLA aged under 1 year experienced the highest social worker instability in 2025 (31%). The proportion of CLA experiencing high social worker instability decreases as age increases with 22% of CLA aged 16 or over experienced high social worker instability.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are less likely to experience high social worker instability (15%) than CLA who were not unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (25%).

[Chart](#)

[Table](#)

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**CLA on 31 March with high social worker instability
by characteristics (percentage of CLA in each
category with high instability), 2024 to 2025**

		With 3 or more social workers during the year	
		2024	2025
Sex	Male	26%	23%
	Female	27%	25%
Age group	Under 1 year	34%	31%
	1 to 4 years	32%	29%
	5 to 9 years	29%	26%
	10 to 15 years	25%	23%
	16 years and over	24%	22%
Ethnicity	Total White	27%	25%
	Total Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	26%	25%
	Total Asian or Asian British	25%	23%
	Total Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	26%	22%
	Total other ethnic group	22%	20%
	Total refused or information not yet available	28%	26%

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	19%	15%
	Children excluding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	27%	25%

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2. Figures for 2024 exclude Barnet who did not complete a social worker data return, and a small number of other children from other LAs who were missing from the data collection, or missing social worker episodes for the correct period.

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Legal status and placement type of CLA with high social worker instability

CLA with a first legal status during the year of 'detained for child protection' were more likely to experience 3 or more social workers (38%) in 2025.

CLA whose first placement in the year was 'Other placement' experienced the highest social worker instability (34%) in 2025.

Placements which don't fall into the main placement categories are grouped within 'Other placement'. These tend to be placements by the courts (s38(6)) with a relative or non-assessed person, placements with other unregistered carers or unregulated placements (for example whilst awaiting availability of an alternative placement, if it's in the child's best interests or the child's choice).

This was followed by those with a first placement of 'Other residential settings' (including care homes, schools or custody) (30%).

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**CLA on 31 March with high social worker instability
(percentage of CLA in each category with high
instability) by first legal status and placement
during the year, 2024 to 2025**

		CLA on 31 March	
		2024	2025
First legal status during the year	Care orders	25%	23%
	Placement order granted	20%	16%
	Voluntary agreements under S20 CA 1989	30%	27%
	Detained for child protection	42%	38%
	Youth justice legal statuses	38%	34%
First placement during the year	Foster placements	26%	24%
	Placed for adoption	18%	7%
	Placed with parents or other person with parental responsibility	30%	29%
	Secure homes and children's homes	26%	24%
	Independent and semi-independent living arrangements/ supported accommodation	26%	22%
	Other residential settings	35%	30%
	Residential schools	17%	21%
	Other placements	35%	34%

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2. First placement and legal status during the year, excluding a small number of children for whom placement on 31 March of the relevant year and corresponding legal status has been used instead. See methodology document for further information.

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Reason for social worker change

The most common reason a looked after child was assigned a social worker during the year was a new social worker being assigned following child transfer due to standard process (24%) (a transfer to another service within the local authority, for example from an assessment team to a child protection team). This was followed by a new social worker being assigned because the previous social worker left their role (22%) and managing caseloads (19%).

In this second year of the data collection, the use of 'Other reason' is 17%, a fall from 37% in the first year of the collection. This shows an improvement in the quality of the reason data, with local authorities more able to identify and report on the reason a child has been

assigned a new social worker.

A number of local authorities continue to report issues with providing the reason a looked after child was assigned a social worker. Where local authorities were unable to provide the reason a child was assigned a social worker, these are generally included within the 'Other reason' category. Further details can be found in the methodology document.

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**Reason for social worker changes during the year
for CLA on 31 March, 2024 to 2025**

	2024	2025
New social worker assigned following child transfer due to standard process	18%	24%
Previous social worker left role	17%	22%
Managing caseloads	14%	19%
First contact or re-referral	8%	11%
Absence cover or return from absence	4%	5%
New social worker assigned following organisational restructure	1%	2%
Child requested change from previous social worker	k	k
Parent/carer requested change from previous social worker	k	k
Previous social worker died	k	k
Other reason	37%	17%

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2. Figures for 2024 exclude Barnet who did not complete a social worker data return, and a small number of other children from other LAs who were missing from the data collection, or missing social worker episodes for the correct period.

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Long-term social worker stability

The proportion of CLA experiencing high instability over a two-year period (3 or more social workers during the previous 2 years) was 53% in 2025.

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CLA on 31 March by number of social workers during the previous 2 years, 2024 to 2025

	CLA 2 years on 31 March	
	2024	2025
With 1 social worker during the previous 2 years	x	19%
With 2 social workers during the previous 2 years	x	28%
With 3 social workers during the previous 2 years	x	25%
With 4 social workers during the previous 2 years	x	15%
With 5 social workers during the previous 2 years	x	8%
With 6 or more social workers during the previous 2 years	x	6%

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2. Includes children looked after on 31 March each year who also spent at least one day in care in the previous year ending 31 March.

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Combined measures of stability

The percentage of CLA experiencing high instability in all three measures of stability (placement, school and social worker stability) was 1% in 2025, unchanged from 2024. There is little variation between different characteristics groups. CLA are only included in this measure if they were in all three of the placement, school and social stability cohorts.

The percentage of CLA experiencing high instability in all three measures of stability over a two-year period was 4% in 2025.

Further information on combined stability can be found in the 'C' highlight tables accompanying this release.

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Contact us

If you have a specific enquiry about Stability measures for children looked after in England statistics and data:

Children Looked After data team

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Press office

If you have a media enquiry:

Telephone: 020 7783 8300

Public enquiries

If you have a general enquiry about the Department for Education (DfE) or education:

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