Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2014/15

Main Findings 2014/15

Education outcomes for looked after children have <u>improved</u>.

However, there are still <u>large gaps</u> compared to all pupils.

Leaver Attainment

35%
LAC with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5

up from **15%** in 2009/10

comp to **85%** all pupils 2014/15

Leaver Destinations

69%
LAC in positive follow up destinations

up from **40%** in 2009/10

comp to **92%** all pupils 2014/15
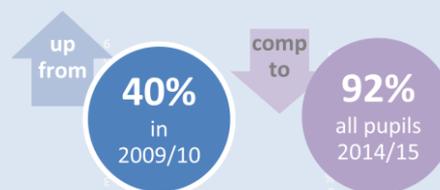
Attendance

92%
LAC attendance

up from **88%** in 2009/10

comp to **94%** all pupils 2014/15

Exclusions

218 per 1,000 LAC pupils

down from **360** in 2009/10

comp to **27** for all pupils 2014/15
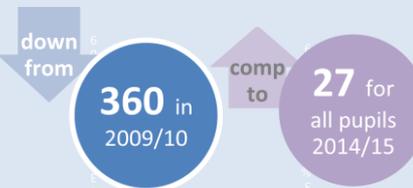
Looked after children with the <u>most positive</u> education outcomes are those:

★ In foster care. Those looked after at home generally had worse outcomes.

★ With fewer placements in the year and looked after for the whole year.

★ Who have been looked after for the whole year, rather than just part of it.

Contents

Introduction

Local authorities have a responsibility to provide support to certain vulnerable young people, known as 'looked after children'. A young person may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, abuse, complex disabilities which require specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system.

This publication links school and social work data to present information on the attainment, post-school destinations of looked after young people who leave school, and the school attendance and exclusion rates of all looked after children.

Who are counted in these figures?

This first two chapters of this publication gives information on the education outcomes of the 427 young people who were looked after from August 2014 to July 2015 and who left school during 2014/15. These looked after children represent less than one per cent of the 52,491 2014/15 school leavers.

The latter figures focus on rates of attendance and exclusions among all looked after children who were at publically-funded schools. The attendance figures are based on the 7,463 looked after school attendees that were successfully linked to the schools data, and similarly, the exclusions data are based on the 654 looked after school attendees who were linked to the schools data and also experienced an exclusion at some point during 2014/15.

Educational attainment

> The attainment of looked after school leavers continues to be worse than for pupils overall
>
> Looked after leavers who were in foster placements, and those with fewer placements had higher attainment

This section presents data on the educational attainment of the 427 young people who were looked after from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015 and who left school during 2014/15. All figures have been updated since previous publications following improvements in linking methodology and better coverage of Scottish Candidate Numbers, so should not be compared to previously published figures. All underlying data are available here:

http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/EducOutcomesLAC

Age of school leavers
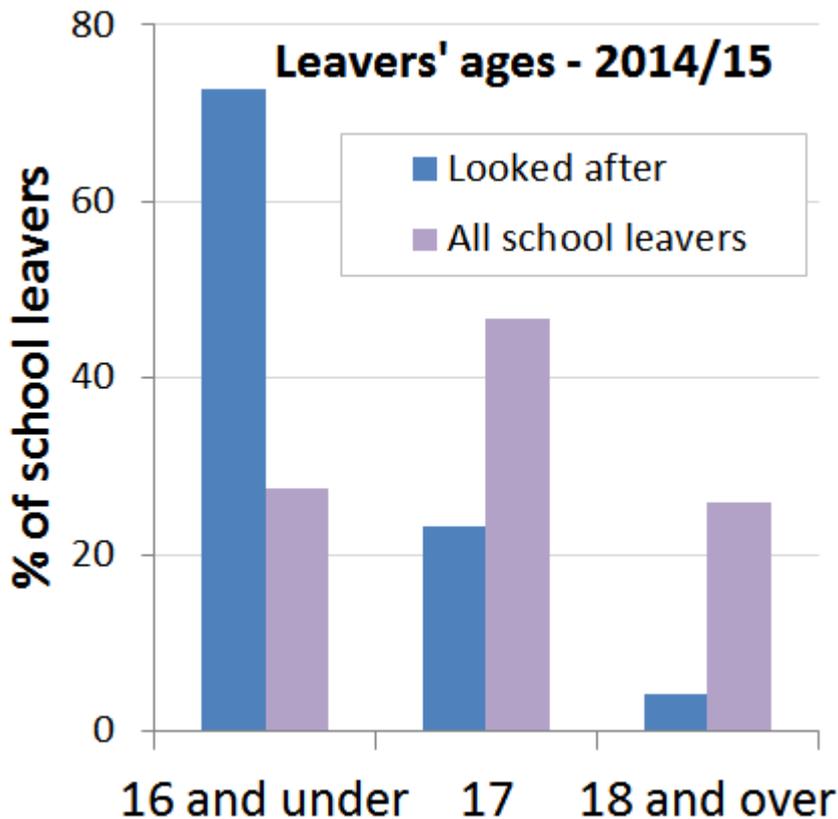
Looked after children tend to have lower levels of educational attainment than non-looked after children. These differences are, in part, linked to the fact that looked

after children tend to leave school at younger ages. In 2014/15 almost three quarters (73 per cent) of looked after school leavers were aged 16 and under (i.e. they left school at the earliest point they could) compared to over one quarter (27 per cent) of school leavers more generally. The proportion of leavers who were aged 16 and under has improved since 2009/10, including among looked after leavers, but discrepancies between looked after leavers and other leavers remain consistent.

Highest level of qualification

Looked after children obtain lower qualification levels on average than all school leavers. In previous years, a system of Tariff Scores has been used to measure attainment. However, since 2013/14, leavers have been classified by identifying the highest Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level at which they achieved one or more passes by the time they leave school. This includes SQA attainment at SCQF levels 3 to 7.

Standard Grades were no longer available in 2013/14 and Intermediate qualifications ceased to exist from August 2015. They have been replaced with the new National qualifications. The current leavers will have taken a range of qualifications, some may have taken the new National qualifications introduced in the 2013/14 academic year, but the majority will have taken the qualifications currently being phased out. Only 2013/14 S4 leavers and 2014/15 S4 and S5 leavers may have experienced Curriculum for Excellence throughout their school education, and this publication therefore does not measure the impact of the new system.

Illustration 3: Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels

Level 3	Access 3 National 3 Standard Grade (Foundation)	Level 6	Higher at A-C
Level 4	Intermediate 1 at A-C National 4 Standard Grade (General)	Level 7	Advanced Higher at A-C
Level 5	Intermediate 1 at A-C National 5 at A-C Standard Grade (Credit)		

Table 1.1: Percentage of all looked after school leavers by their highest level of attainment 2014/15

|	Looked after leavers	All school leavers
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	86	98
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	73	96
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better	35	85
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	8	60
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7	1	19
No qualifications at SCQF level 3 or better	14	2

Older data available at http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/EducOutcomesLAC

As can be seen in Table 1.1, while the level of qualifications of looked after school leavers shows the least difference to that of all school leavers at the lowest level of qualification (86 per cent of looked after school leavers have at least one SCQF level 3 qualification or better, compared to 98 per cent of all school leavers), the difference increases proportionally at higher levels.

Almost all school leavers (96 per cent) have at least one qualification at level 4 or better (see Illustration 3 for list of qualifications). This compares to almost three quarters (73 per cent) of looked after leavers with the same level of qualifications. At the higher levels of qualification, three in five of all leavers (60 per cent) have a at least one qualification at level 6 or better while fewer than one in ten looked after leavers (8 per cent) had qualifications at this level.

However, while looked after school leavers achieve less highly than school leavers more generally, educational attainment among looked after leavers has improved over the last five years, narrowing the gap. Chart 2 shows the highest level of qualification held by looked after leavers and all leavers over time (excluding level 7 for clarity, as numbers are very low among looked after leavers). The proportion of looked after leavers with no qualifications has fallen from 23 per cent in 2009/10 to 14 per cent in 2014/15. Over the same period the proportion of looked after leavers with one or more qualification at level 5 or better jumped from 15 per cent to 35 per cent.

Chart 2: Highest level of attainment of looked after leavers and all school leavers, 2009/10 to 2014/15

Looked after leavers

Highest SCQF level

☐ No qualifications
▨ 1+ at Level 3
■ 1+ at Level 4
☐ 1+ at Level 5
▨ 1+ at Level 6

All school leavers

Highest SCQF level

☐ No qualifications
▨ 1+ at Level 3
■ 1+ at Level 4
☐ 1+ at Level 5
▨ 1+ at Level 6
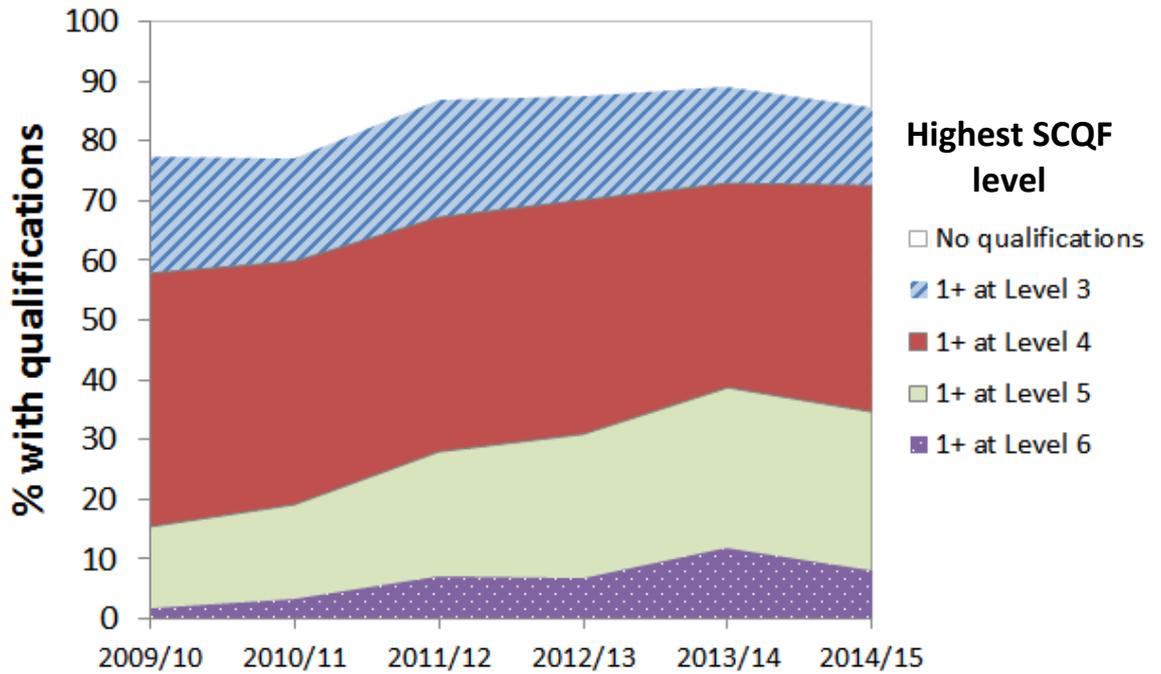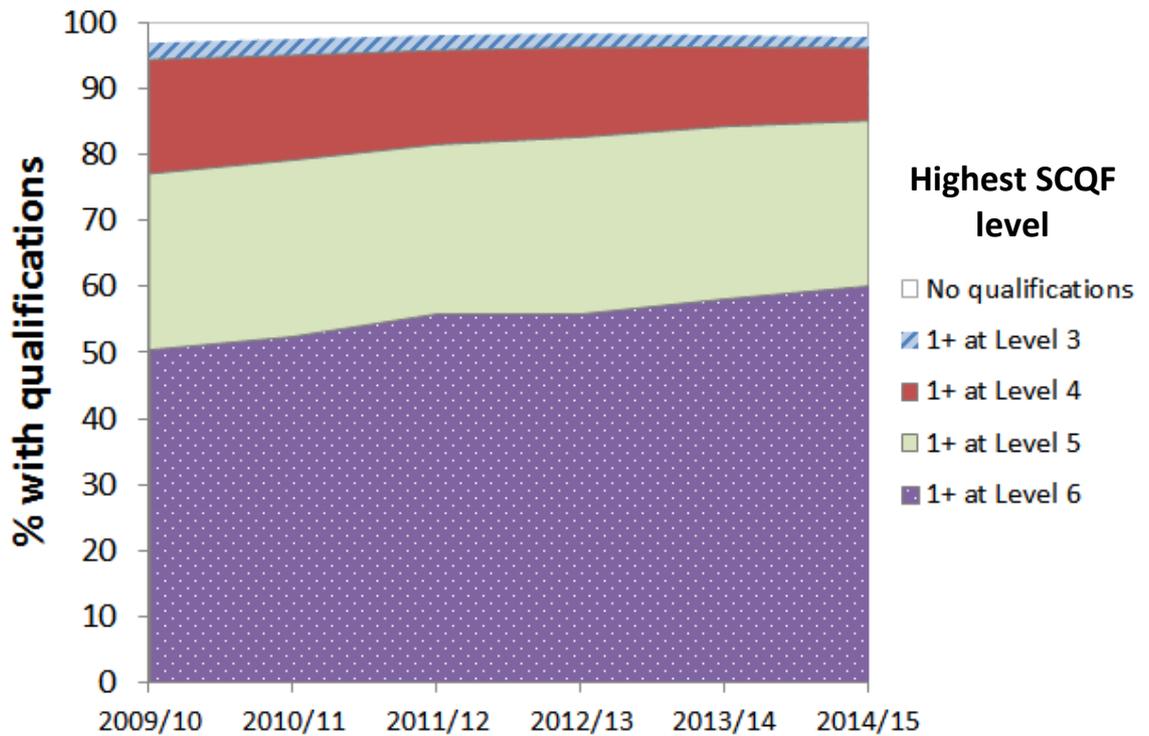
Highest level of qualification by type of accommodation

When a young person is looked after there are various types of residence in which they could be placed. Placements can be at home (where a child is subject to a Supervision Requirement and continues to live in their usual place of residence), foster care, a kinship care placement (where they are placed with friends or relatives) or a residential placement. Table 1.2 presents the attainment of looked after leavers with only one placement in 2014/15 by the type of that placement.

Table 1.2: Percentage reaching highest level of attainment of looked after school leavers with one placement for the year, by the accommodation type of that placement 2014/15[1]

	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better
In the community			
At home with parents	63	36	6
With friends/relatives	86	81	41
With foster carers provided by LA	*	96	66
With foster carers purchased by LA	*	90	61
In other community[2]	-	-	-
Residential accommodation			
In local authority home	*	64	15
In voluntary home	*	86	*
In other residential[3]	*	62	*
All looked after	**86**	**75**	**40**

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.
(2) Includes with prospective adopters.
(3) Includes in residential school, secure care accommodation or crisis care.

Educational attainment varies across the types of accommodation in which looked after children are placed. Overall, more than eight in ten looked after school leavers achieved at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or better. Children in foster care provided and purchased by the LA perform well (66 and 61 per cent respectively achieving at level 5 or better). School leavers looked after at home had the lowest overall levels of attainment, with six per cent achieving at least one qualification at level 5 or better, compared to 40 per cent for looked after leavers as a whole. It is

unclear whether the relative success of those in foster care is because these settings encourage better outcomes, or because the circumstances of the people placed within them are more positive – the reason is potentially a combination of these things.

Highest level of qualification by number of placements

Looked after school leavers who experience more placements in the year tend to have lower levels of qualifications. Table 1.3 shows that three quarters (75 per cent) of looked after leavers who had just one placement all year achieved one or more qualification at level 4 or better compared to more than six in ten (62 per cent) of looked after leavers who had 4 or more placements during the year.

This trend is more noticeable at higher levels of qualification. 40 per cent of leavers with one placement reached level 5 or better, whereas less than a quarter of those with more placements achieved so highly.

It should be noted that the numbers of young people with larger numbers of placements is small and care should be taken when interpreting these figures.

Table 1.3: Proportion of looked after school leavers achieving qualifications by number of looked after placements they had in 2014/15[1]

	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better
1 placement	86	75	40
2 placements	88	65	24
3 placements	73	64	*
4 or more placements	*	62	0
All looked after	**86**	**73**	**35**

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

Cross-UK comparisons

The improvements seen in the proportion of looked after children in Scotland achieving qualifications since 2009/10 mirrors the general trend across the UK. Because of differences in the education systems between Scotland and the rest of the UK (and in the ages at which looked after children's qualifications are measured) it is not possible to directly compare qualification levels of looked after children. See background note 5.3 for further information.

Post-school destinations

Looked after school leavers are less likely to go in to positive destinations, particularly Higher Education

There is a bigger decline in those in positive destinations at follow-up for looked after children, except those in foster care

This section presents data on the destinations of the 427 young people who were looked after from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015 and who left school during 2014/15. Information on young people's 'destinations' (such as employment or further education) is collected three and nine months after they leave school. All figures have been updated since previous publications due to improvements in coverage and updates to methodology, so should not be compared to previously published figures. For more information on school leaver destination categories, see background note 4.8. The data underlying the illustrations are available here: http://www.gov.scot/stats/bulletins/01226

Initial and follow-up destinations

Chart 3: Looked after children in postive destinations nine months after leaving school, 2009/10 to 2014/15
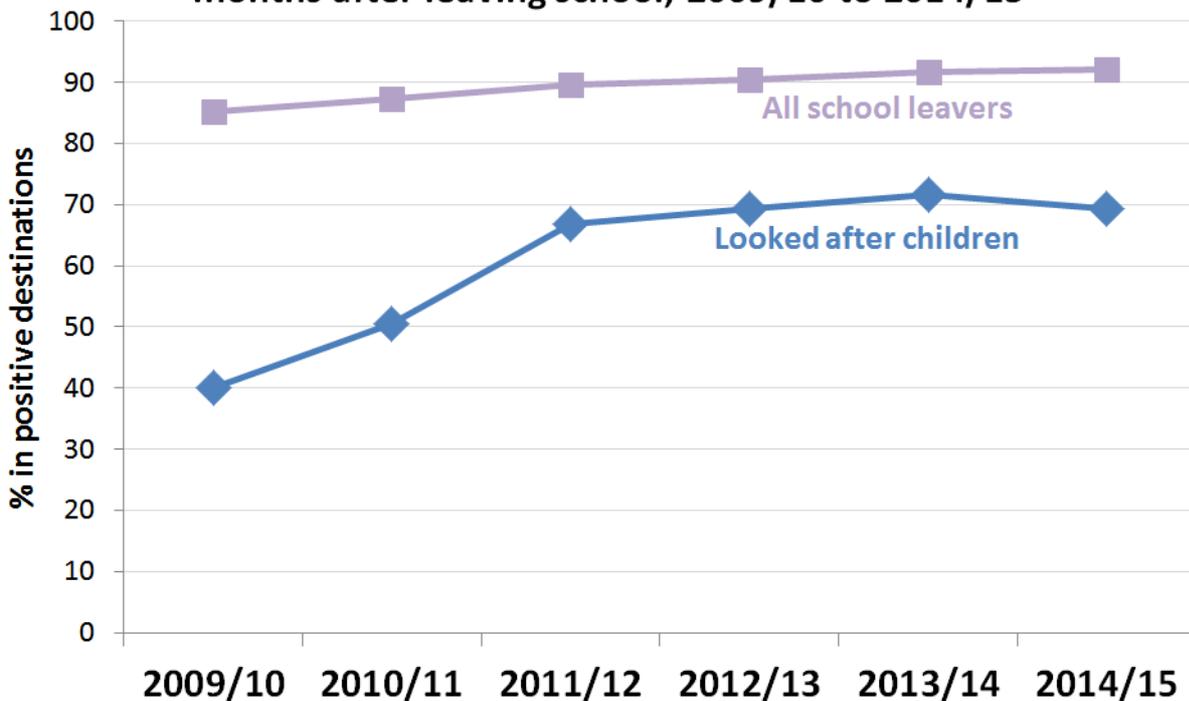
A young person is said to be in a positive destination if they are in education, employment, training, voluntary work or an Activity Agreement[1]. A lower proportion of looked after children enter positive destinations than all school leavers, but this gap has narrowed since 2009/10, although progress appears to have stalled in recent years. The lower proportion of looked after children going into positive destinations is likely to be related to looked after young people leaving school at younger ages.

Table 2.1: Positive initial destinations (3 months after leaving school) among looked after leavers and all school leavers, 2009/10 to 2014/15[1]

	2009/10	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Looked after school leavers				
Higher Education	1	4	6	4
Further Education	30	37	43	36
Other positive destination	26	36	30	37
% in a positive destination	**57**	**78**	**78**	**77**
All school leavers				
Higher Education	36	37	39	39
Further Education	27	28	26	28
Other positive destination	24	27	27	27
% in a positive destination	**87**	**92**	**92**	**93**

(1) Due to improvements outlined in background note 3.2, historical data has been updated.

More than three-quarters (77 per cent) of children looked after for a full year who left school during or at the end of 2014/15 were in a positive destination three months after leaving school, compared with nine in ten (93 per cent) of all 2014/15 school leavers (Table 2.1). Among looked after young people, 40 per cent were either in Higher or Further Education. The lower proportion of looked after young people entering higher education can largely be explained by leaving school earlier and consequent lower levels of qualifications.

The positive destination is more likely to be sustained after nine months for all school leavers rather than for looked after leavers. By the time of the follow-up in

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[1] An Activity Agreement is an agreement between the young person and a trusted professional that the leaver will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them become ready for formal learning or employment.

March, almost seven in ten (69 per cent) looked after children who were looked after for the year from August 2014 to July 2015 and left school in that period were in a positive destination, compared with 92 per cent of all 2014/15 school leavers. The rate of positive destinations among looked after children at the time of the follow-up has improved greatly over the period of measurement, from 40 per cent in 2009/10 to 69 per cent in 2014/15. This increase is predominantly due to an increase in looked after school leavers entering employment (from 7 per cent in 2009/10 to 19 per cent in 2014/15). There is a lower proportion of looked after school leavers in positive follow-up destinations compared to their initial destinations (77 per cent in positive destinations initially down to 69 per cent at follow up). This reduction is also present for all school leavers, but to a lesser extent (93 per cent in positive destinations initially down to 92 per cent at follow up).

There is a consistently large fall drop-off in the proportion of looked after young people sustaining a place in further education. It is not clear why this occurs, but it may highlight a need for extra support for this group to continue their education.

Table 2.2: Positive follow-up destinations (nine months after leaving school) among looked after leavers and all school leavers, 2009/10 to 2014/15[1]

	2009/10	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Looked after school leavers				
Higher Education	*	4	5	4
Further Education	22	31	36	26
Other positive destination	*	34	31	39
% in a positive destination	40	69	72	69
All school leavers				
Higher Education	34	37	38	37
Further Education	24	24	24	23
Other positive destination	27	29	29	32
% in a positive destination	85	90	92	92

(1) Due to improvements outlined in background note 3.2, historical data has been updated.

Table 2.3 shows the percentage of looked after school leavers in positive destinations three and nine months after leaving school. There is a decrease in

proportions in positive destinations in all groups except for those children in foster care, where the proportion actually increases. The largest decreases are seen in those young people looked after at home or with friends/relatives.

Table 2.3: Percentage of positive initial and follow-up destinations among looked after school leavers with one placement, 2014/15[1],[2]

Single Type of Accommodation	In a positive destination after three months	In a positive destination after nine months
In the community		
At home with parents	67	48
With friends/relatives	83	67
With foster carers provided by LA	86	87
With foster carers purchased by LA	90	94
In other community[1]	-	-
Residential Accommodation		
In local authority home	82	74
In voluntary home	71	71
In other residential[2]	69	62
More than one placement	65	58
Total looked after children	**77**	**69**

(1) Includes 'with prospective adopters'.
(2) Includes 'in residential school, 'in secure care accommodation' and 'crisis care'.

Cross-UK comparisons

The improvements seen in the proportion of looked after children in Scotland moving into positive destinations after leaving school since 2009/10 mirrors the general trend across the UK overall. Because of differences in the education systems and leaving between Scotland and the rest of the UK (and in the ages at which young people leave school) it is not possible to directly compare post school destinations of looked after children. See background note 5.3 for further information.

School Attendance

👤	Attendance of looked after pupils has been gradually improving and the gap with all pupils narrowing
★	Attendance is lowest for those looked after at home and with a greater number of placements

This section presents data on the school attendance of looked after young people who were at publically-funded schools, comparing overall attendees with the 7,463 looked after children who were linked to the schools data. Attendance data is now only collected every two years, so the information for 2011/12 and 2013/14 is not available.

Chart 4: Percentage attendance of all pupils and looked after young people, 2009/10 to 2014/15
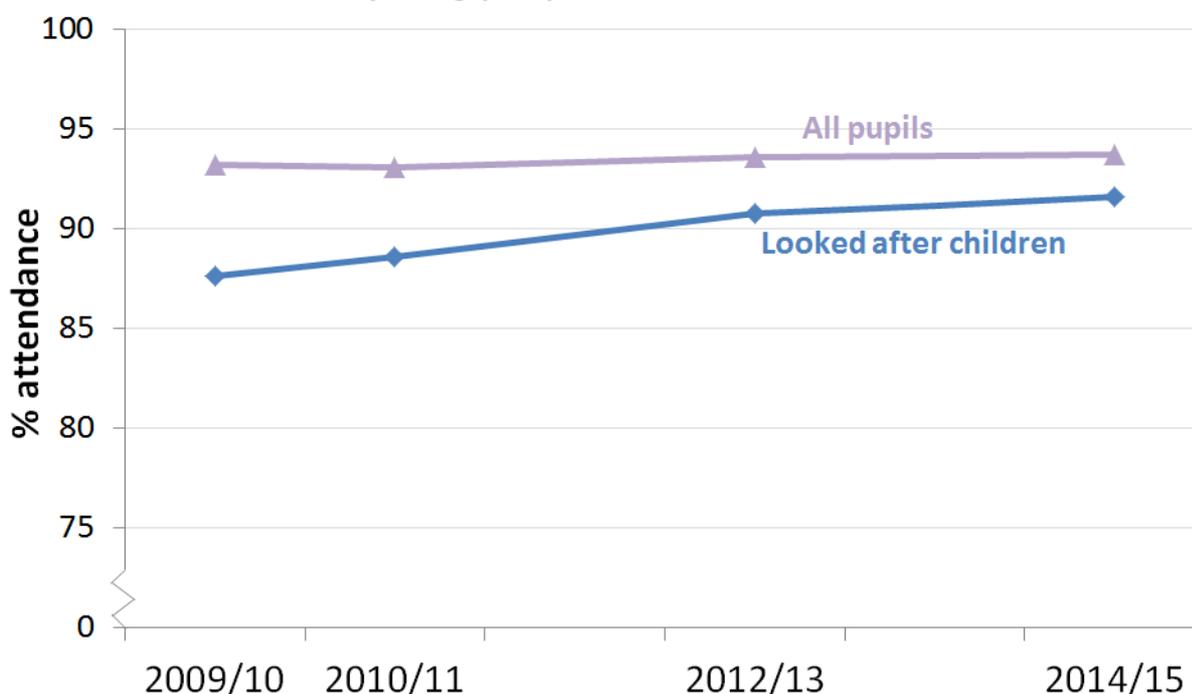
The school attendance of all pupils is recorded individually. Overall attendance is over 90 per cent for all pupils, although this is higher in primary schools than it is for secondary and special schools. Looked after young people consistently have lower school attendance than average, although the figure continues to improve for those looked after for the full year.

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Stage

Table 3.1: Percentage attendance of all pupils and looked after young people by stage, 2009/10 to 2014/15[1],[2]

	2009/10	2010/11	2012/13	2014/15
Stage				**Looked after pupils**
Primary	93.4	93.6	94.6	95.2
Secondary	80.5	82.8	86.7	88.1
Special	84.6	83.0	85.4	87.6
Scotland	**87.7**	**88.6**	**90.8**	**91.6**
Stage				**All pupils**
Primary	94.9	94.8	94.9	95.1
Secondary	91.2	91.1	91.9	91.8
Special	90.6	90.0	90.5	90.7
Scotland	**93.2**	**93.1**	**93.6**	**93.7**

(1) Due to improvements outlined in background note 3.2, historical data has been updated.
(2) From 2010/11, data only collected biennially.

The attendance rate of looked after children is increasing steadily, and in 2014/15 is close to four percentage points higher than it was in 2009/10, and it is increasing in all stages for looked after children. Most of this increase is driven by the improvement in the attendance of looked after children in secondary school, which is almost eight percentage points higher. The overall rate is continuing to converge with the rate for all pupils, and the gap has reduced from six to two percentage points.

Accommodation type and gender

The highest rates of attendance are seen in children in residential schools, as may be expected, but numbers at these schools are small, and therefore the figures are likely to be variable. Of the larger categories of accommodation, both foster care types record attendance of greater than 96 per cent – a higher rate than for children overall (94 per cent). The lowest rates are found amongst children looked after at

home, and of those in a residential setting, those in local authority homes have the worst attendance.

For children looked after there is little gender difference in rates of attendance. Bigger differences are seen for those young people in residential accommodation, but numbers in these settings are relatively small, and differences should therefore be treated with caution.

Table 3.2: Percentage attendance for looked after children by accommodation type and gender, 2014/15

Accommodation type	Girls	Boys	Total
In the community			
At home with parents	82.1	81.4	81.7
With friends/relatives	93.0	93.0	93.0
With foster carers provided by LA	96.5	96.6	96.5
With foster carers purchased by LA	96.9	96.7	96.8
In other community[1]	*	97.2	97.2
Residential Accommodation			
In local authority home	83.2	87.0	85.2
In voluntary home	85.8	90.1	88.9
In residential school	*	98.9	99.0
In other residential[2]	93.7	92.6	93.1
Unknown/Multiple placements	89.1	90.5	89.8
Total looked after children	*91.5*	*91.7*	*91.6*

(1) Includes 'with prospective adopters'.
(2) Includes 'in secure care accommodation', and 'crisis care'.

Number of looked after placements

The overall number of placements experienced by looked after children generally supports the view that children who experience more placements have lower attendance rates. Attendance rates are highest (92 per cent) among pupils who have been looked after for all of 2014/15 in one placement, although there is an exception where children with five or more placements have better attendance than

those children who had three or four placements in the year. This may be a function of the relatively small numbers in this group.

Table 3.3: Percentage attendance for looked after children, by number of placements and gender, 2014/15

Number of Placements	Girls	Boys	Total
1	92.0	91.9	92.0
2	90.2	91.3	90.8
3	86.6	88.6	87.6
4	86.6	87.8	87.1
5 or more	87.9	89.8	88.5
Total looked after full year	*91.5*	*91.7*	*91.6*

School exclusions of looked after children

⬇ Exclusion rates for looked after pupils continue to fall

🧍 Looked after children are much more likely to be excluded from school than the average pupil

In comparison with the general school population, this section presents data on the numbers and rates of exclusions of the 654 looked after children at publically-funded schools who were successfully linked to schools data, and who experienced an exclusion. Exclusions data is now only collected every two years, so the information for 2011/12 and 2013/14 is not available.

Table 4.1 shows the total number and rate of exclusions. As children can be excluded more than once per year they will be counted more than once in these figures. The rate of exclusions among looked after children is much higher than in the general school population (218 cases per 1,000 looked after pupils, compared to 27 per 1,000 in the general school population), and is falling at a similar rate. However, the absolute fall in the rates of exclusions for looked after children is much greater, but they are coming from a much worse position.

Table 4.1: Exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils by all pupils, looked after children and stage, 2009/10 to 2014/15

Stage	2009/10	2010/11	2012/13	2014/15
				Looked after full year
Primary	122	95	83	79
Secondary	632	584	476	322
Special	591	455	576	569
Scotland	**360**	**321**	**279**	**218**
				All pupils
Primary	12	11	10	9
Secondary	82	72	58	50
Special	174	148	148	126
Scotland	**45**	**40**	**33**	**27**

As seen in chart 5, looked after children are showing a continuing decline in the rate of exclusions, the declines are comparable in proportion to those in the overall population, although they look much more impressive as they started from a much worse position.

Chart 5: Exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils by all pupils, looked after children, 2009/10 to 2014/15
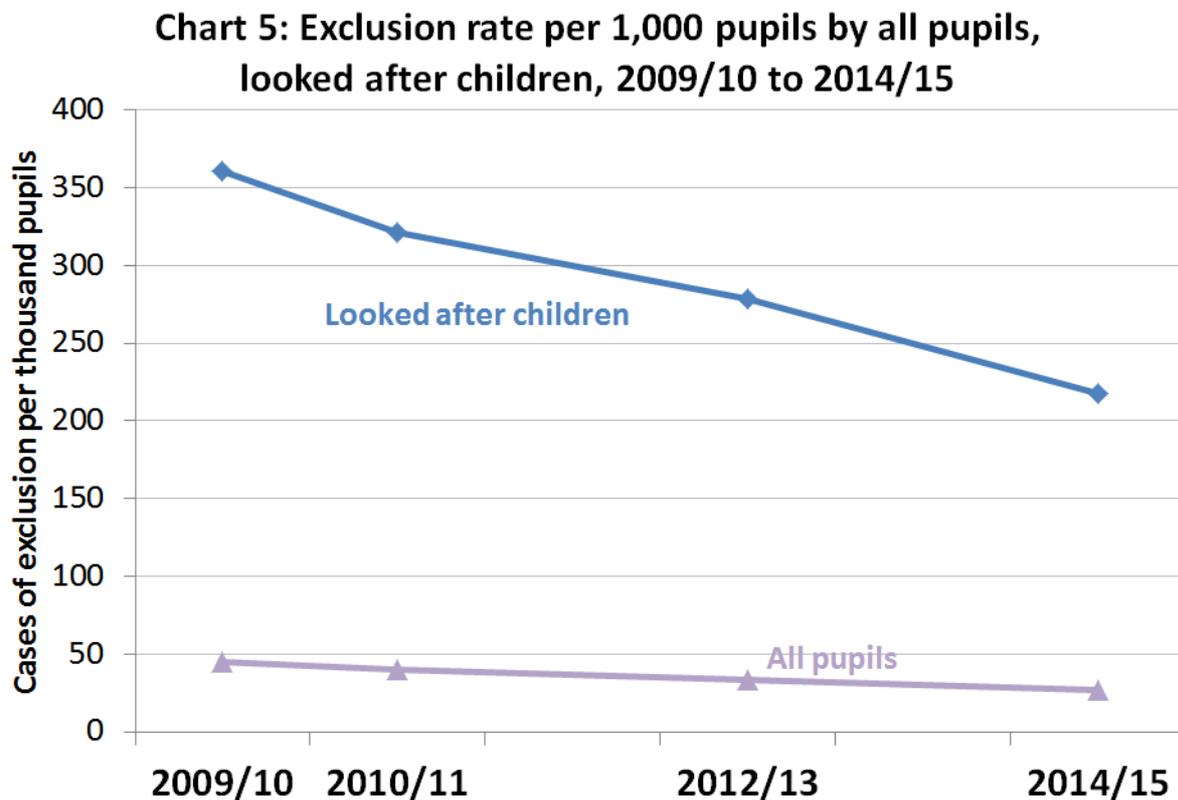
Where Table 4.1 presents data on the total number of exclusions, including potential multiple counts of the same child, Table 4.2 presents data on the total number of children excluded, resulting in lower figures. In both groups, the rate of exclusions is four to five times greater in secondary schools compared to primary schools.

Table 4.2: Number of different pupils excluded and exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils by all pupils, looked after children and sector, 2014/15

Stage	Number of pupils excluded	Rate per 1,000 pupils
		Looked after children
Primary	119	36
Secondary	452	150
Special	91	228
		All Pupils
Primary	1,890	5
Secondary	8,176	29
Special	380	56

Accommodation type

Table 4.3: Cases of exclusions for looked after children, by accommodation type, 2014/15[1],[2]

Single Type of Accommodation	Total exclusions for looked after children	Exclusions per 1,000 pupils who were looked after
In the community		
At home with parents	299	261
With friends/relatives	236	141
With foster carers provided by LA	169	109
With foster carers purchased by LA	104	135
In other community[1]	2	125
Residential Accommodation		
In local authority home	131	891
In voluntary home	34	810
In residential school	0	-
In other residential[2]	15	246
Unknown/Multiple placements	463	370
Total looked after children	**1,453**	**218**

(1) Includes 'with prospective adopters'.
(2) Includes 'in secure care accommodation' and 'crisis care'.

As with attendance, there is a similar disparity between types of accommodation in the rates of exclusions. Those children in residential accommodation tend to have higher rates of exclusions than looked after in the community. Children looked after at home have a noticeably higher exclusion rate than others looked after in the community (Table 4.3).

There is a tendency for looked after children with a greater number of placements to have a higher rate of exclusions. Clearly the number of placements experienced has a strong influence on the rate of exclusions.

Table 4.4: Cases of exclusions for looked after children, by number of placements, 2014/15

| Number of placements	Total exclusions	Exclusions per 1,000 pupils who were looked after
1	990	182
2	259	301
3	148	536
4	29	403
5 or more	27	628
Scotland	**1,453**	**218**

Outcomes for young people looked after for part of the year

	Children looked after for part of the year have poorer outcomes for all education aspects – attainment, leaver destinations, attendance and exclusions – compared to those looked after for the full year

Up to this point this publication has focused on the 427 school leavers who were looked after for the entire year (although they may have been accommodated in more than one place). Focusing on this group allows us to look at the impact of being looked after on young people's education outcomes.

This section looks at the outcomes for the 412 school leavers who were looked after for part of the year – those who stopped or started being looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015.

■ Looked after for full year

■ Looked after for part of year
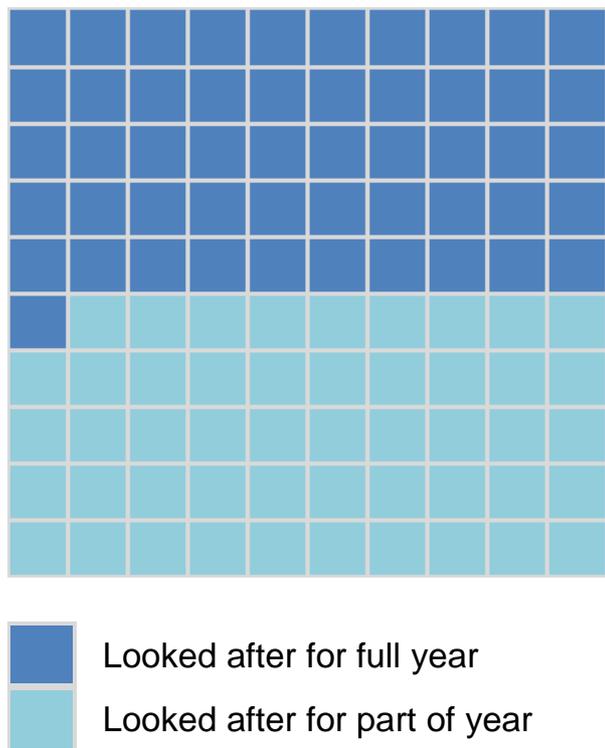
While data on young people looked after for part of the year do not directly tell us about the impact of being looked after on education outcomes they do give insight into the impact of the upheaval of moving in to or out of care.

Educational attainment of young people looked after for part of the year

The qualification levels of young people who were looked after for the full year is higher than for young people looked after for part of the year. More than a third of (35 per cent) full year looked after leavers had one or more qualification at level 5 or better compared to less than a quarter (24 per cent) of part year looked after leavers. The qualification levels of young people who were looked after for part of the year is most similar to that of young people who were looked after for the whole

year and experienced two or three placements in that time. While it is unclear how upheaval in previous years impacts on outcomes these data suggest that upheaval in the year that young people take exams has a relationship to their outcomes.

Table 5.1: Percentage of all school leavers looked after for part of the year achieving different levels of attainment, 2014/15

	Looked after part year	Looked after full year
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	79	86
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	63	73
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better	24	35
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	7	8
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7	1	1
No qualifications at SCQF level 3 or better	21	14

Post-school destinations of young people looked after for part of the year

Young people looked after for part of the year are less likely than those looked after for the full year to enter a positive destination nine months after leaving school. Where three-quarters of young (69 per cent) people looked after for the full year went on to a positive destination after leaving school, six in ten (61 per cent) of those looked after for part of the year did.

Table 5.2: Percentage of school leavers who were looked after for part of the year and for all of the year by follow up destination (nine months after leaving school), 2014/15

	2009/10	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Looked after part year				
Higher Education	1	1	3	3
Further Education	16	18	23	20
Other positive destination	19	36	33	39
% in a positive destination	**36**	**55**	**59**	**61**
Looked after full year				
Higher Education	*	4	5	4
Further Education	22	31	36	26
Other positive destination	18	34	31	39
% in a positive destination	**40**	**69**	**72**	**69**

School attendance of young people looked after for part of the year

Young people looked after for part of the year have clearly poorer school attendance than those looked after for the full year. The attendance rate among children looked after for part of the year has improved by three percentage points since 2009/10 to 84 per cent, but still lags approximately 10 per cent behind the rate for all school children, whereas the rate for children looked after for the full year is only two per cent behind.

Table 5.3: Percentage attendance of young people looked after for part of the year by stage, 2009/10-2014/15[1]

	2009/10	2010/11	2012/13	2014/15
Stage				**Looked after part year**
Primary	91	91	92	91
Secondary	72	72	77	76
Special	76	76	77	80
% attendance	**81**	**82**	**85**	**84**
Stage				**Looked after full year**
Primary	93	94	95	95
Secondary	80	83	87	88
Special	85	83	85	88
% attendance	**88**	**89**	**91**	**92**

(1) From 2010/11, data only collected biennially.

Exclusions of young people looked after for part of the year

Young people looked after for part of the year have rates of exclusions that are much higher than children looked after for the full year, and the rate of improvement seen in the overall and full year figures appears to have stalled in the part year group.

Table 5.4: Cases of Exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils by children looked after for part of the year and stage, 2009/10-2014/15[1]

	2009/10	2010/11	2012/13	2014/15
Stage				**Looked after part year**
Primary	144	130	85	93
Secondary	740	594	491	521
Special	1,019	488	555	628
Rate of exclusions	**490**	**370**	**296**	**315**
				Looked after full year
Primary	122	95	83	79
Secondary	632	584	476	322
Special	591	455	576	569
Rate of exclusions	**360**	**321**	**279**	**218**

(1) From 2010/11, data only collected biennially.

Background notes

1. Sources and coverage

1.1   This document summarises the education outcomes of Scotland's looked after children. It links information from:
- the Children Looked After statistics 2014/15
- Pupil Census records 2014
- School Leaver Initial and Follow-up Destination data, October 2015 and March 2016
- Attainment data throughout school education
- Attendance data 2014/15
- Exclusion data 2014/15

Education outcome figures for all children in Scotland are available here: http://www.gov.scot/stats/bulletins/01225

1.2   The **looked after children** statistics were collected by Children and Families statistics team in the Scottish Government from local authorities. Demographic information on all children looked after (including the most recent data covering children who were looked after between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015) is available here:
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork

The survey forms, data specifications and guidance notes for the data presented in this publication (and previous years' publications) can be seen at:
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/SurveyChildrenLookedAfter

1.3   The **qualifications** data were collected by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). The grade boundaries and publication schedules of this information is available here: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/63002.html.

1.4   The **leaver destinations** data were collected by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on each young person identified as being a school leaver in September 2015 (initial destination, approximately three months after leaving school) and March 2016 (follow-up destination, approximately nine months after leaving school). The time of year that a young person leaves school can affect their destinations in these surveys, as a young person leaving school in May who starts a course in the following January could be counted as being in an other destination in the initial survey, but a positive destination in the follow-up survey.

1.5   **Leaver destinations** data were published in Summary Statistics for Attainment, Leaver Destinations and Healthy Living in Scotland 2016: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Pub-SS-ALM

2. Methodology

Matching looked after children data to school outcomes

2.1   As reported in Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15[2], there were 15,404 children looked after on 31 July 2015. The population used in this publication was established through the following process:

Illustration 4: Children included in this publication, looked after for the full year and part of the year 2014/15

Full year		Part year	
15,404	•children looked after at 31 July 2015	15,404	•children looked after at 31 July 2015
19,978	•children looked after at some point between August 2014 and July 2015	19,978	•children looked after at some point between August 2014 and July 2015
9,735	•children over 4 years old looked after continually from August 2014 to July 2015	5,350	•children over 4 years old looked after for part of August 2014 to July 2015
427	•and who left school during academic year 2014/15	412	•and who left school during academic year 2014/15

2.2   As Illustration 4 shows, there are many more looked after children than those matched in this publication. Children are assigned a Scottish Candidate Number when they start primary school. If a child is under five – as the majority of looked after children are – they are unlikely to have a Scottish Candidate Number. Children also might not have a Scottish Candidate Number if they have been educated at home, in an independent school, outside Scotland or have already left school.

2.3   For looked after young people in 2014/15 a total of 839 full and part year records matched with the school leavers cohort provided by Skills Development Scotland.

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[2] Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15, http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/03/5133

2.4   We estimate that the Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCNs) provided by local authorities on the Looked After Children data return 2014/15 represented 75 per cent of the possible matched records. By imputing data from previous years from some local authorities we estimate that 79 per cent of looked after school leavers had matchable SCNs.

3. Revisions and changes

3.1   *Full year/part year revision* - In 2012/13 children looked after for the full year with 2 or more placements were counted as 'part year'. After consultation we counted these children as 'full year' for this publication and revised the 2012/13 data accordingly – this distinction was retained this year. There were 427 school leavers who were looked after for the entire year and 412 young people who were looked after for part of the year between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015. Where possible we have included part year data in the excel version of the tables http://www.gov.scot/stats/bulletins/01226.

3.2 *Historical data* – All previously published data has been updated following changes to data availability and methodology, and some improved coverage of Scottish Candidate Numbers from the children looked after data collection. Data for 2009/10-2013/14 cohorts have been updated and supersede previously published figures for these years.

3.3 *Change to school leaving dates* – Previously published figures for 2013/14 have been revised in line with the new cohort year definition. The leaver year is now aligned with the timing of the annual pupil census – i.e. third Wednesday in September to third Tuesday in September (was previously 1st August to 31st July).

4. Definitions and notation

Children Looked After

4.1   Local Authorities have a responsibility to provide support to certain vulnerable young people, known as looked after children. A young person may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, mental, physical or emotional abuse, parental substance misuse or poor parenting skills, complex disabilities which require specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system. The definition of a looked after child is in section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland)

Act 1995, as amended by Schedule 2, para 9(4) of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.

4.2 *Supervision Requirement* – A children's hearing is a lay tribunal which considers and makes decisions on the welfare of the child or young person before them, taking into account all the circumstances including any offending behaviour. The hearing has to decide on the measures of supervision which are in the best interests of the child or young person. If the hearing concludes compulsory measures of supervision are necessary, it will make a Supervision Requirement which will determine the type of placement for the child. In most cases the child will continue to live at home but will be under the supervision of a social worker. In some cases the hearing will decide that the child should live away from home with relatives or other carers.

4.3 *Types of placement*
Community placements
- At home with parent(s): at home with parent(s) or 'relevant person(s)' as defined in Section 93(2)(b) of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995
- With friends/relatives: placed with friends or relatives who are not approved foster carers. Also referred to as 'kinship care'.
- With foster carers provided by the local authority
- With foster carers purchased by the local authority
- With prospective adopters
- Other community: such as supported accommodation, hospital (e.g. at birth)

Residential placements
- Local authority home: in local authority children's home/hostel, local authority home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, local authority home/hostel for physically disabled children
- Voluntary home: in voluntary children's home/hostel, in voluntary home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, in voluntary home/hostel for physically disabled children
- Residential school: in local authority residential school (home/hostel), in voluntary residential school (home/hostel), in private school, in independent school
- Secure accommodation
- Crisis care: for example: in women's refuge, in local authority hostel for offenders, in voluntary hostel for offenders, in local authority hostel for drug/alcohol abusers, in voluntary hostel for drug/alcohol abusers
- Other residential: a known residential setting but does not fit with one of the above

4.5   There is information on the process by which children come to be looked after and legislation governing this on the Scottish Government website: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/lac

School information

4.6   *Scottish Candidate Number* – A unique number created by the Scottish Qualifications Authority and assigned to each child by their school when then enter the Scottish School Education System (usually in Primary 1).

School leaver destinations

4.7   *School leaver* – A young person of school leaving age who left a publicly funded secondary school during or at the end of the school year – see note 3.3 on changes to school leaving dates. Age of school leavers was calculated as at 30 June 2015. Young people of school leaving age who left a publicly funded special school are not counted in this publication.

4.8   *Post-school destinations* – Destinations data collected by SDS using a combination of administrative data sharing by partners, contact centre follow up and the traditional follow up by operational staff. Full definitions are available from SDS: https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/40707/national-school-leaver-initial-destination-report-2014-15-dec-20152.pdf. The broad categories for leaver destinations are:

- *Higher Education* – entered University to study at degree level, or an FE/HE college to study at HNC/HND level.
- *Further Education* – studying at a non-advanced level and are not on a school roll.
- *Training* – on a training course and in receipt of an allowance.
- *Employment* – employed and in receipt of payment from their employers.
- *Voluntary Work*
- *Unemployed and seeking employment or training* – registered with Skills Development Scotland and are known by them to be seeking employment or training.
- *Unemployed and not seeking employment or training* – due to (for example) sickness, prison, pregnancy, caring for children or other dependents or taking time out.
- *Activity Agreement* – an agreement between the young person and a trusted professional that the leaver will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them become ready for formal learning or employment.

- *Unknown* – destination is not known either to Skills Development Scotland or to the school attended.

4.9 *Positive destinations* – includes higher education, further education, training, voluntary work ,employment and activity agreements.

5. Data Quality

5.1 This is an Official Statistics Publication. Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. These statistics undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. The results contained in this publication are deemed fit for purpose, but may be revised in future years where updates are made to the data This publication has not yet been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority.

5.2 There is more information on the data quality of the administrative sources underlying this publication here:
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/sourcesandsuitability/StatementAdminSources

Cross-UK comparisons

5.3 Differences in the education systems of Scotland and the rest of the UK make cross-UK comparisons invalid. The most similar figures from across the UK are published here:

England - https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/outcomes-for-children-looked-after-by-local-authorities

Wales - https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/Social-Services/Childrens-Services/Children-Looked-After/Educational-Qualifications-of-Care-Leavers

Northern Ireland - https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/dhssps-statistics-and-research/childrens-services-statistics

5.4 Work has been undertaken between the Scottish Government and administrations from England, Wales and Northern Ireland to document clearly the differences between each administration's **looked after children** statistics and to scope out the feasibility and need for a comparable dataset. Further developments

from this work have been published on the Scottish Government children's statistics web site at:

http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/socialservicestats

6. Enquiries

Please send any **media enquiries** to Linsey Stewart on 0131 244 3070.

The information in this publication plus **additional tables** are available at:
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/EducOutcomesLAC

Email any requests for **further analysis** to children.statistics@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

If you would like to receive notification of forthcoming statistical publications, please register your interest on the Scottish Government ScotStat website at:
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat.

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Annex A

List of additional tables

The data underlying the illustrations, expanded versions of the tables and additional data tables are available here: http://www.gov.scot/stats/bulletins/01226

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Background notes

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

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