



CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2017/18

Main Findings 2017/18

Education outcomes for looked after children have improved over the last 5 years.

However, there are still large gaps compared with all pupils.

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels

Leaver Attainment

39%

Children looked after with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5

up from

31%
in
2012/13

compare with

86%
all pupils
2017/18

Leaver Destinations

76%

Children looked after in positive follow up destinations

up from

69%
in
2012/13

compare with

93%
all pupils
2017/18

A lower proportion of looked after children achieve the Curriculum for Excellence level relevant to their stage than all pupils.

Looked after children with the most positive education outcomes are those:

- ★ In foster care or with friends or relatives rather than in other care settings.
- ★ Who have been looked after for the whole year, rather than just part of it.

Contents

Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2017/18	1
Contents	2
Introduction	3
Who are counted in these figures?	3
Coverage	4
Educational attainment	5
Age of school leavers	5
Highest level of qualification	7
Highest level of qualification by type of accommodation	11
Highest level of qualification by number of placements.....	12
Post-school destinations	15
Initial destinations	15
Follow-up destinations	16
Initial and follow-up destinations by type of accommodation	18
Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (Experimental Statistics). 20	
Stage	21
Type of accommodation	22
Number of placements	23
Background notes	25
1. Sources and coverage	25
2. Methodology	28
3. Impact of the use of 2016/17 data for Glasgow City	29
4. Definitions and notation	30
5. Data Quality	33
6. Enquiries.....	34
Annex A	35
List of tables.....	35

Introduction

Local authorities have a responsibility to provide support to a group of 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 school leaver attainment and the post-school destinations of looked after young people who left school in 2017/18. This year school attendance and exclusion rates are not included as they are only included every other year, and will next be collected in 2018/19 and reported in 2020.

This publication also includes experimental statistics on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels for looked after children and young people, on which data was published for the wider school population in December 2018.

Who are counted in these figures?

This publication reports on the education outcomes of school-age children who were looked after by all local authorities in Scotland, except Glasgow City, at any point between August 2017 to July 2018 and had a recorded Scottish Candidate Number available. The figures also include children looked after in Glasgow City at any point between August 2016 and July 2017 and had a recorded Scottish Candidate Number. Further information on this approach to reporting is available in the [Coverage section](#). For ease of reporting, the period referred to in the rest of the document will be August 2017 to July 2018 for all looked after children, including those from Glasgow City.

The first two chapters of this publication give information on the education outcomes and post-school destinations of the estimated 999 young people who were looked after at any point between August 2017 to July 2018 and who were in the 2017/18 school leaver cohort. These looked after children represent two per cent of the 49,748 2017/18 school leavers. The final two chapters focus on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels across four year groups of 3,745 young people who were looked after at some point during 2017/18.

The figures presented here are a subset of the population of looked after children in Scotland. This is because the data on looked after children needs to be linked to schools data from publically-funded schools. Not all looked after children can be successfully linked to the schools data for a variety of reasons. For successful

linking to occur, the Scottish Candidate Number of the child is needed to obtain data on their education outcomes. A Scottish Candidate Number is usually assigned to a child when they begin school. Therefore looked after children of pre-school age are excluded from the analysis presented in this publication. Some school-age looked after children also have missing Scottish Candidate Numbers in the data provided to Scottish Government by local authorities. Therefore, these children are also excluded from the figures. More information on this is available in the background notes.

Coverage

Data for Children Looked After was collected for the period 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 from all local authorities in Scotland, except from Glasgow City. To estimate national figures for 2017/18, the 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City have been used along with the 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. This is in line with the approach taken in the [Children's Social Work Statistics 2017/18](#) publication, which was released on 26 March 2019.

The 2016/17 education outcomes data has also been used for the children looked after in 2016/17 in Glasgow City. Further information on the impact of using 2016/17 data for Glasgow City is available in the [Background Notes](#).

Scottish Government officials are currently working with Glasgow City to secure the Children Looked After return for 2017/18. If the return is provided to Scottish Government, then this publication will be updated to include the data from Glasgow City.

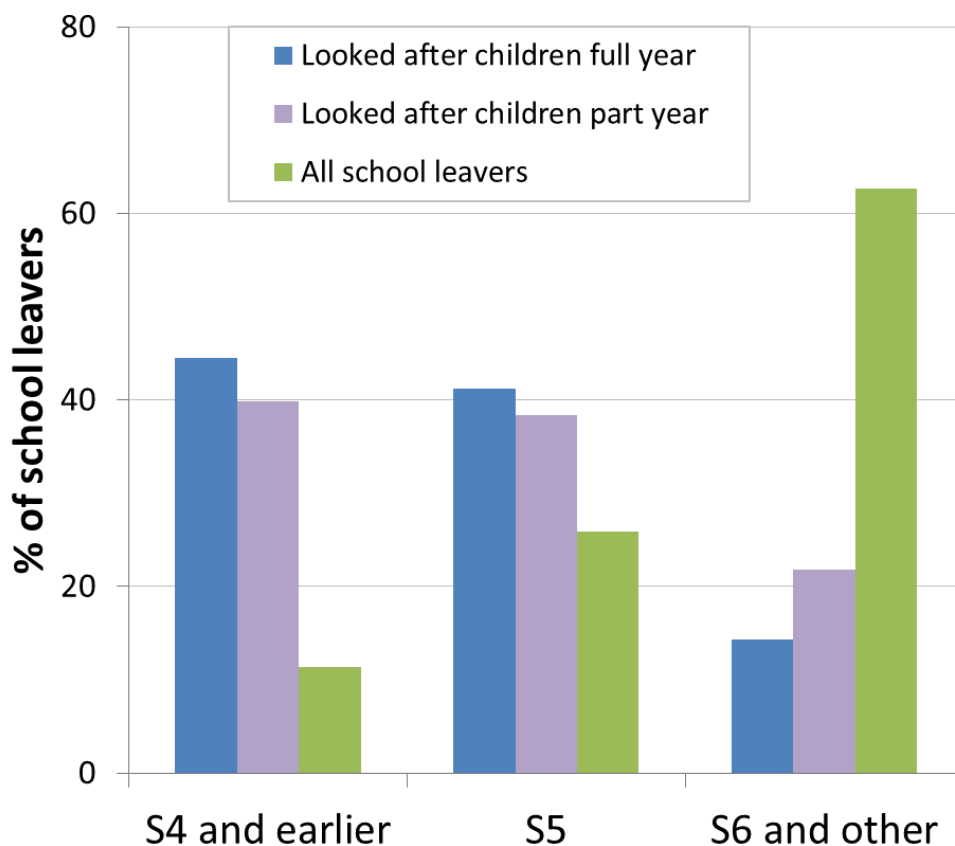
Educational attainment

- ↑ The attainment of school leavers looked after for the full year at SCQF level 5 or better has fluctuated, while those looked after for part of the year have shown an improvement in attainment over the last five years
- Looked after leavers who were in foster care or with friends or relatives had higher attainment than looked after leavers in other placement types

This section presents data on the educational attainment of the estimated 999 young people who were looked after during the period 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 and who left school during 2017/18. Links to the underlying data are available in the background notes.

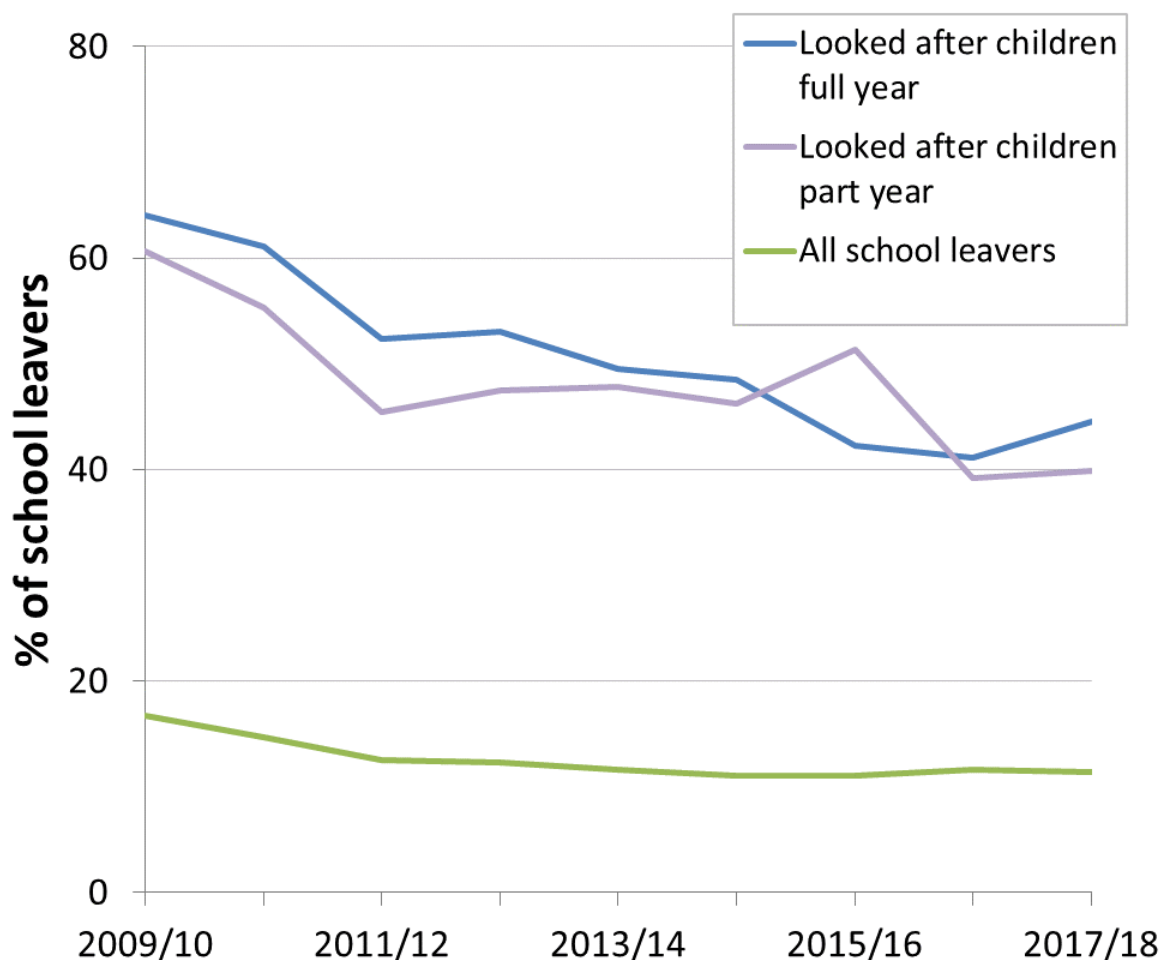
Age of school leavers

Chart 1a: Stage of all school leavers and those who were looked after, 2017/18⁽¹⁾



(1) Looked after children data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

Chart 1b: Percentage of pupils leaving school in S4 or earlier for all school leavers and those who were looked after, 2009/10 to 2017/18⁽¹⁾



(1) Looked after children data for 2017/18 is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

Looked after children tend to leave school at earlier stages, shown in Chart 1a. In 2017/18 44% of children looked after for the full year and 40% of those looked after for part of the year left school in S4 or earlier, compared with 11% of school leavers more generally. The proportion of looked after leavers who left school in S4 or earlier has decreased since 2012/13, however the proportion remains higher than for all school leavers (Chart 1b).

A higher proportion of young people who were looked after for part of the year left school in S6 (22%) than those looked after for the full year (14%). Many young people cease to be looked after once they turn 18 and therefore are only looked after for part of the year. The proportion of children ceasing to be looked after once they turn 18 has increased in 2017/18. This partially explains the higher proportion

of children looked after for part of the year leaving school in S6, as all 18 year olds still in school will be in S6.

Highest level of qualification

Looked after children obtain lower qualification levels on average than all school leavers, which is at least partly explained by the lower school leaving age. 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 Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) attainment at SCQF levels 3 to 7.

Illustration 2 shows the equivalent qualifications over time since Standard Grades ceased to exist in 2013/14 and Intermediate qualifications ceased to exist from August 2015 and both were replaced with the new National Qualifications. The majority of current leavers will have exclusively taken the new qualifications, but some may have taken the old qualifications. It is not the purpose of this publication to measure the impact of the new system on outcomes for looked after young people.

Illustration 2: Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels

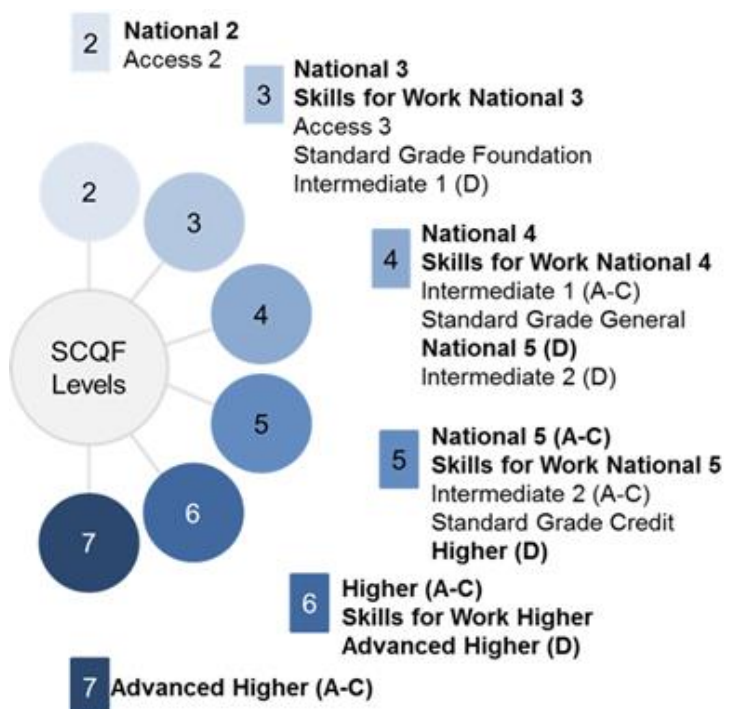


Table 1.1: Percentage of looked after and all school leavers by their highest level of attainment 2017/18⁽¹⁾

	Looked after leavers – full year	Looked after leavers – part year	All school leavers
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	86	82	98
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	76	67	96
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better	39	36	86
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	12	11	62
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7	1	1	20
No passes at SCQF 3 or better	14	18	2

(1) Looked after children data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

The qualification levels achieved by young people who were looked after for the full year are higher than for young people looked after for part of the year at most attainment levels, as shown in Table 1.1. However, while looked after school leavers don't achieve qualification levels as high as school leavers more generally, educational attainment among looked after leavers has improved notably over the last nine years, narrowing the gap to all school leavers, as seen in chart 2a and 2b. However, most of the improvement in attainment for looked after school leavers occurred from around 2011/12 to 2013/14 and the levels of attainment achieved have been broadly stable since then.

Almost all school leavers (96%) have at least one qualification at level 4 or better. This compares with an estimated three quarters (76%) of leavers looked after for the full year and two thirds (67%) looked after for part of the year with the same level of qualifications. At the higher levels of qualification, 62% of all leavers have at least one qualification at level 6 or better, while an estimated 12% of leavers who were looked after for the full year and 11% who were looked after for part of the year had qualifications at this level.

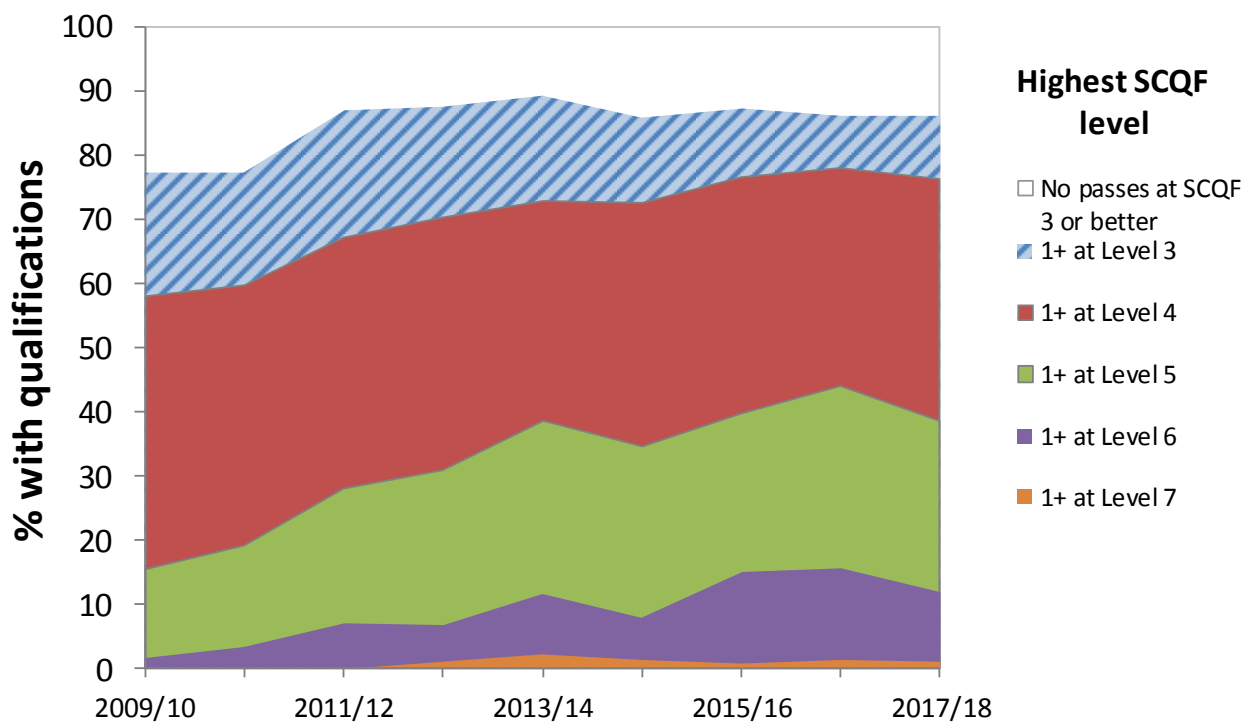
Charts 2a, 2b and 2c show the total qualifications held by looked after leavers and all leavers over time. The proportion of leavers looked after for the full year with no qualifications at SCQF 3 or higher has increased slightly from 12% in 2012/13 to an estimated 14% in 2017/18 (Chart 2a). For leavers looked after for part of the year,

the proportion with no qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher has fallen slightly from 19% to an estimated 18% over the same period (Chart 2b).

Leavers looked after the full year have consistently higher levels of attainment than those looked after for part of the year. However, at the higher levels of attainment (SCQF 6 or better) the difference is very small, with 12% of leavers looked after for the full year and 11% of leavers looked after for part of the year achieving this level or better.

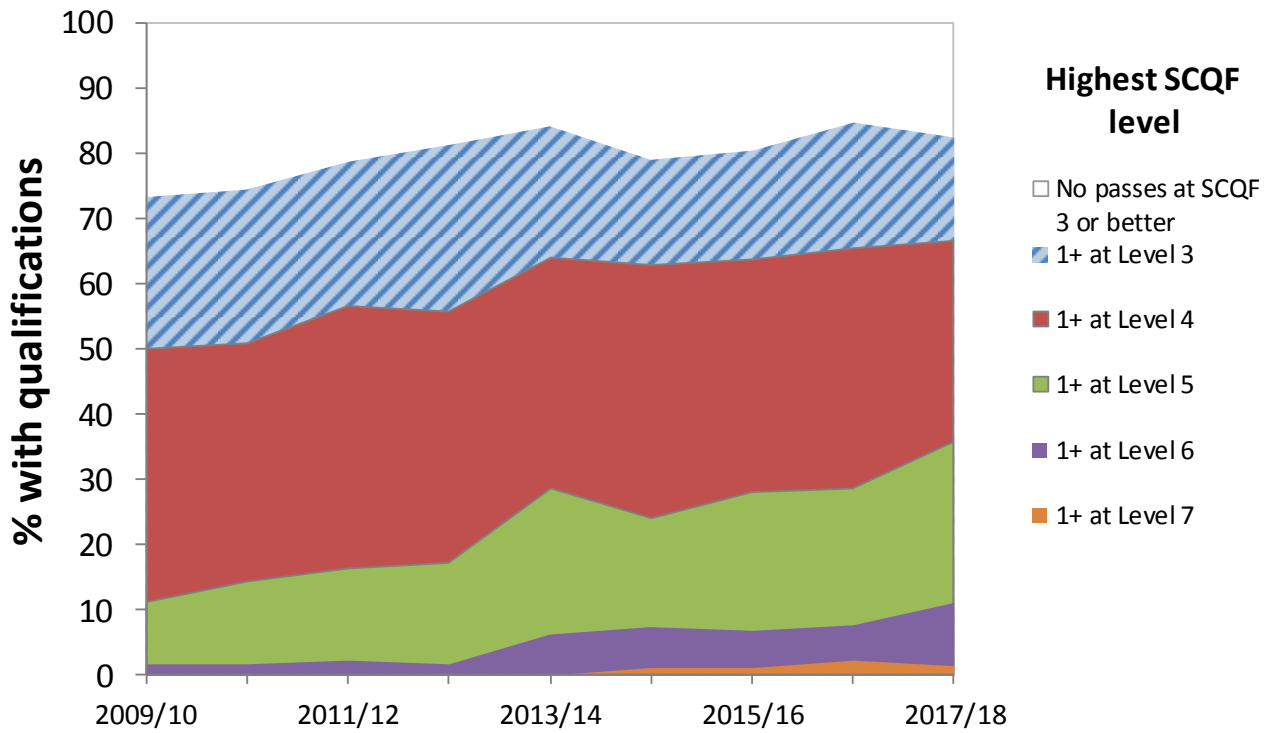
Chart 2: Highest level of attainment of looked after leavers (full year and part year) and all school leavers, 2009/10 to 2017/18⁽¹⁾

(a) Leavers looked after for the full year



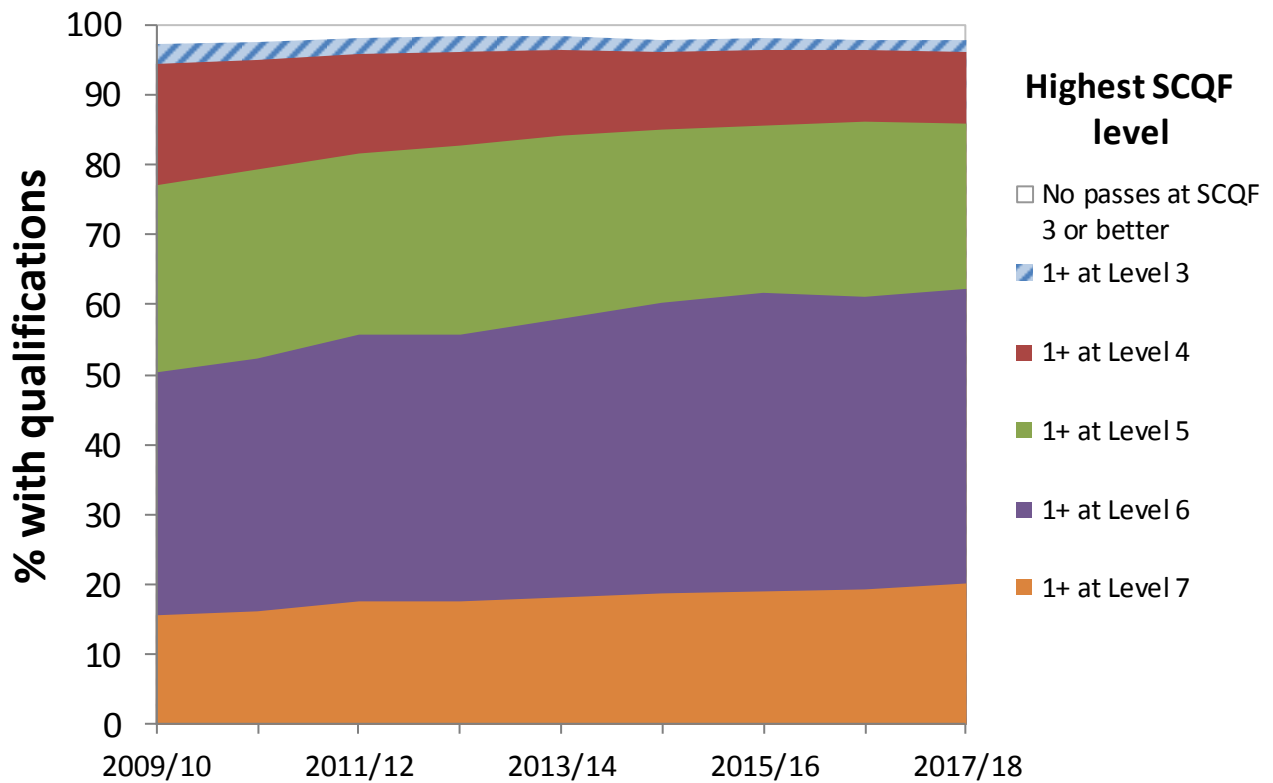
(1) Looked after children data for 2017/18 is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

(b) Leavers looked after for the part of the year



(1) Looked after children data for 2017/18 is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

(c) All school leavers



Highest level of qualification by type of accommodation

When a young person is looked after, there are various types of care setting. 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, kinship care (where they are living with friends or relatives) or residential care. Table 1.2 presents the attainment level of leavers looked after for the full year by the type of placement.

Educational attainment varies across the types of accommodation in which looked after children are living. School leavers in foster care provided and purchased by the local authority performed better than those in other care settings, with 68% and 61% achieving at level 5 or better respectively, compared with 39% of all leavers looked after for the full year.

School leavers looked after for the full year in other residential settings, including residential schools, secure care accommodation and crisis care, had the lowest overall levels of attainment, with 65% achieving at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or better, compared with 86% for all leavers looked after for the full year. School leavers who were looked after at home with parents also had low levels of attainment compared with most other placement types.

Table 1.2: Highest level of attainment of school leavers looked after for the full year, by placement type, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽⁴⁾

	Looked after leavers					
	% No passes at SCQF 3 or better	Level 3 or better	Level 4 or better	Level 5 or better	Level 6 or better	Level 7 or better
In the community (children with one placement)						
At home with parents	27	73	49	14	*	*
With friends or relatives	13	87	77	38	13	0
With foster carers provided by LA	2	98	96	68	25	5
With foster carers purchased by LA	6	94	92	61	22	0
In other community ⁽²⁾	*	*	*	*	*	0
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)						
In local authority home	16	84	69	31	*	0
In voluntary home	20	80	80	*	*	0
In other residential ⁽³⁾	35	65	58	*	*	0
More than one placement	11	89	81	32	*	0
All looked after full year	14	86	76	39	12	1

(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.

(4) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

For school leavers looked after for part of the year, similar results are found. Those looked after in residential accommodation, with more than one placement and at home with parents tend to achieve lower levels of attainment than those looked after with friends and relatives and with foster carers. (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3: Highest level of attainment of school leavers looked after for part of the full year, by placement type, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽⁴⁾

	Looked after leavers					
	% No passes at SCQF 3 or better	% with 1 or more qualification at SCQF Level 3 or better	Level 4 or better	Level 5 or better	Level 6 or better	Level 7 or better
In the community (children with one placement)						
At home with parents	25	75	52	17	*	0
With friends or relatives	8	92	80	51	13	*
With foster carers provided by LA	5	95	90	72	28	8
With foster carers purchased by LA	3	97	97	72	34	*
In other community ⁽²⁾	-	-	-	-	-	-
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)						
In local authority home	25	75	69	31	*	0
In voluntary home	*	*	*	*	0	0
In other residential ⁽³⁾	14	86	71	*	*	0
More than one placement						
All looked after part year	18	82	67	36	11	1

(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.

(4) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

Highest level of qualification by number of placements

Young people who are looked after may be looked after in different residences over time. Moving to a new residence or a new carer is recorded as a change in placement. Table 1.4 shows that an estimated 75% of leavers looked after for the full year who had just one placement all year achieved one or more qualification at level 4 or better compared with 86% of looked after leavers who had 3 or more placements during the year.

Table 1.4: Highest qualification achieved by school leavers (looked after for the full year) by number of placements they had in the year, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

	No passes at SCQF 3 or better	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 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7 or better
1 placement	15	85	75	40	14	1
2 placements	13	87	79	30	*	0
3 or more placements	7	93	86	36	*	0
All looked after full year	14	86	76	39	12	1

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

(2) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

For school leavers looked after for part of the year, 83% of those with one placement achieved one or more qualifications at SCQF level 3 or better (Table 1.5). This compares with 87% of leavers with two placements and 60% of those with three or more placements. It should be noted that the number of children looked after for part of the year with three placements was very small.

In previous years, leavers with one placement tended to achieve a higher level of qualification than those with multiple placements. However, this is not reflected in this years' figures for both those looked after for the full year and part of the year, as there is no clear pattern in the number of placements and the highest level of qualification achieved.

Table 1.5: Highest qualification achieved by school leavers (looked after for part of the year) by number of placements they had in the year, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

	No passes at SCQF 3 or better	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 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7 or better
1 placement	17	83	68	37	11	2
2 placements	13	87	67	33	10	0
3 or more placements	40	60	*	*	0	0
All looked after part year	17	83	67	36	11	1

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

(2) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

Post-school destinations

- Looked after school leavers are less likely to go in to positive destinations than school leavers in general, especially higher education
- ↑ The percentage of looked after leavers in positive initial destinations has increased since last year

This section presents data on the destinations of the estimated 999 young people who were looked after during the period 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 and who left school during 2017/18. Information is collected on the destination of school leavers in the September after they leave school (initial destination) and again the following March (follow-up destination). School leavers who are engaged in higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment or an Activity Agreement¹ are classified as having a 'positive destination'. Other destinations include school leavers who are unemployed and individuals where their destination is not known. For more information on school leaver destination categories, see background note 4.8.

Initial destinations

A lower proportion of looked after children enter positive destinations than all school leavers, but this gap has narrowed since 2012/13. The lower proportion of looked after children going into positive destinations is likely to be related to looked after young people tending to leave school at an earlier stage to all pupils. 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 after leaving school (Table 2.1). While an estimated 83% of young people looked after for the full year went on to a positive destination after leaving school, three quarters (74%) of those looked after for part of the year did. This compares with 94% of all 2017/18 school leavers (Table 2.1).

Among young people looked after for the full year, 49% were either in Higher or Further Education 3 months after leaving school. For those looked after for part of the year, this figure was 36%. In comparison, more than two thirds (68%) of all school leavers were in Further or Higher Education (Table 2.1). The lower proportion of looked after young people entering Higher Education can largely be

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.

explained by leaving school at an earlier stage and consequent lower levels of qualifications.

Table 2.1: Percentage of school leavers by initial destination (3 months after leaving school), for all school leavers and those who were looked after children, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽⁴⁾

	Looked after leavers – full year	Looked after leavers – part year	All school leavers
Higher Education	4	5	41
Further Education	45	31	27
Training	9	9	2
Employment	15	16	23
Voluntary Work	2	2	1
Activity Agreement	9	10	1
Unemployed Seeking	11	17	4
Unemployed Not Seeking	5	9	1
Unknown	1	1	0
% in a positive destination^(2,3)	83	74	94

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality. All figures were revised in 2014/15, so these figures should not be compared with previously-published figures.

(2) Due to the effects of rounding some totals will not equal the sum of their parts.

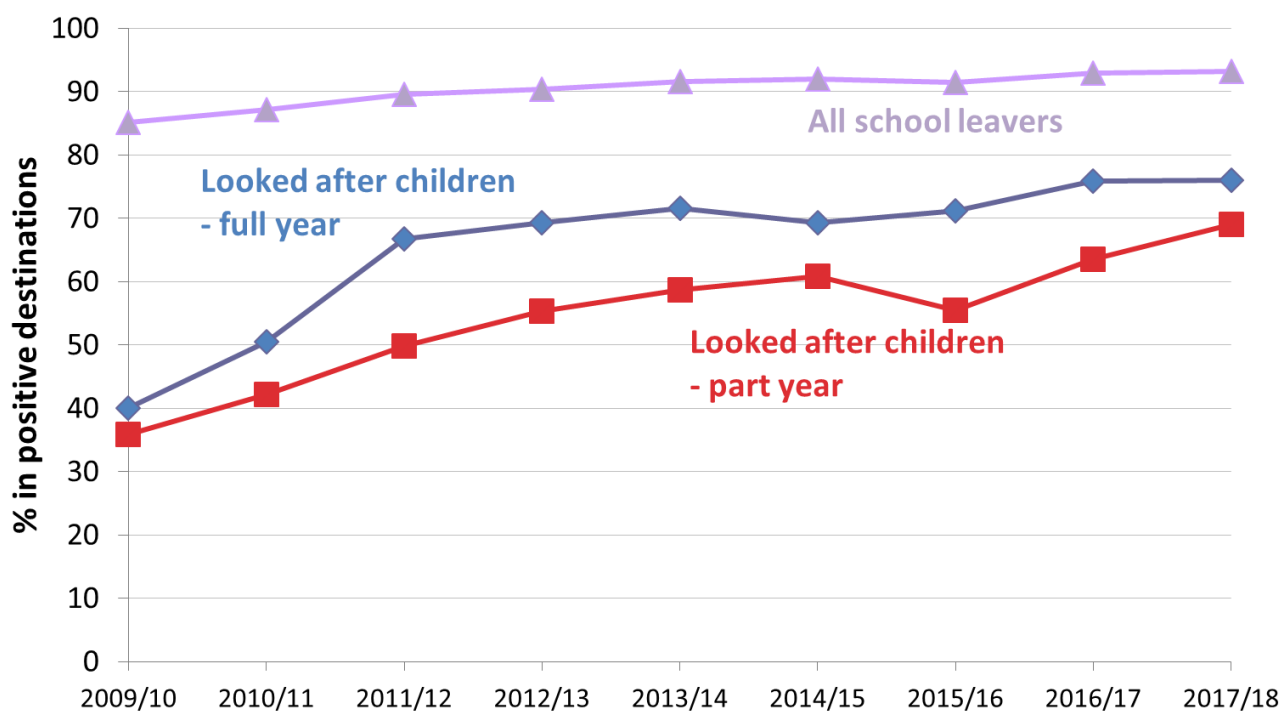
(3) Positive destinations includes higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment and activity agreements.

(4) Looked after children data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

Follow-up destinations

The rate of positive destinations among looked after school leavers at the time of the follow-up (9 months after leaving school) has improved over the past five years. For children looked after for the full year, this has increased from 69% in 2012/13 to 76% in 2017/18. For children looked after for part of the year, the percentage in positive destinations has increased from 55% to 69% over the same period (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Looked after children in positive follow up destinations, 2009/10 to 2017/18⁽¹⁾



(1) Looked after children data for 2017/18 is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

The positive destination is more likely to be sustained after nine months for all school leavers rather than for looked after leavers. Around three quarters (76%) of school leavers looked after for the full year were in a positive follow up destination, down from 83% in a positive initial destination. For school leavers looked after for part of the year these figures were 69% and 74% respectively. The reduction is also present for all school leavers, but to a lesser extent (93% in a positive follow up destination, down from 94% in positive initial destinations).

Table 2.2: Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination (9 months after leaving school), for all school leavers and those who were looked after children, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽⁴⁾

	Looked after leavers – full year	Looked after leavers – part year	All school leavers
Higher Education	4	4	39
Further Education	38	26	23
Training	10	7	2
Employment	18	22	28
Voluntary Work	1	1	1
Activity Agreement	5	9	1
Unemployed Seeking	14	17	4
Unemployed Not Seeking	7	12	2
Unknown	3	3	1
% in a positive destination^(2,3)	76	69	93

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality. All figures were revised in 2014/15, so these figures should not be compared with previously-published figures.

(2) Due to the effects of rounding some totals will not equal the sum of their parts.

(3) Positive destinations includes higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment and activity agreements.

(4) Looked after children data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected.

Initial and follow-up destinations by type of accommodation

Table 2.3 shows the percentage of looked after school leavers in positive initial and follow-up destinations by placement type. For school leavers looked after for the full year, those in foster care placements had the highest proportion in positive initial and follow-up destinations. Young people in residential accommodation and those looked after at home had the lowest proportion in positive destinations.

For young people looked after for part of the year, those in a voluntary home, with friends and relatives and with foster carers had the highest proportion in a positive initial destination. There was a higher proportion of young people in a community

placement other than at home with parents in a positive follow-up destination than those looked after in residential accommodation or with more than one placement.

For those looked after for the full year, the largest decreases at follow-up are seen in those young people in other residential accommodation and those looked after at home with parents. For those looked after for part of the year the largest decrease is seen in school leavers who were with foster carers purchased by the local authority and those in a voluntary home.

Table 2.3: Positive initial and follow-up destinations among looked after school leavers, by placement type, 2017/18⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽⁵⁾

Type of accommodation	Looked after for the full year		Looked after for part of the year	
	In a positive destination after three months	In a positive destination after nine months	In a positive destination after three months	In a positive destination after nine months
In the community (children with one placement)				
At home with parents	67	59	70	64
With friends or relatives	86	82	84	74
With foster carers provided by LA	96	89	84	89
With foster carers purchased by LA	92	92	81	69
In other community ⁽³⁾	*	*	-	-
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)				
In local authority home	69	63	59	65
In voluntary home	*	*	86	43
In other residential ⁽⁴⁾	76	55	75	67
More than one placement	78	71	59	59
Scotland	83	76	74	69

(1) Some children who were included in the initial destination survey could not be contacted at the time of the follow up destination survey. This is why the total number of children in each survey differs.

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

(3) Includes with prospective adopters.

(4) Includes in residential school, in secure care accommodation, and crisis care.

(5) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (Experimental Statistics)

- A lower proportion of looked after children achieve the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level relevant to their stage compared with all children
- Achievement of CfE levels is highest for those looked after in foster care and with friends or relatives
- Achievement of CfE levels is higher for children looked after for the full year than children looked after for part of the year.

This section presents data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels for aspects of literacy (reading, writing, and listening and talking) and numeracy of the estimated 3,745 children and young people who were looked after at any point between 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018, and who were in Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 or Secondary 3 during the 2017/18 school year.

The achievement of CfE levels statistics are currently labelled “Experimental Statistics” as they are in the process of being developed and have been published to involve users and stakeholders in their development, and to build in quality and understanding at an early stage (see background notes for further information about these statistics). Achievement of CfE levels statistics for 2017/18 continue to be under development and are not directly comparable to the achievement of CfE levels statistics for 2016/17 published last year. For these reasons time series data are not available.

Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCNs) provided by local authorities in the Looked After Children data return in 2017/18 were used to match pupils to their CfE data, along with month and year of birth and gender. There is variation in the provision of SCNs for looked after children across local authorities, particularly for children at the earlier stages of school, ranging from 71% to 100% (see Table 6.1 in background notes and the Excel tables published alongside this publication).

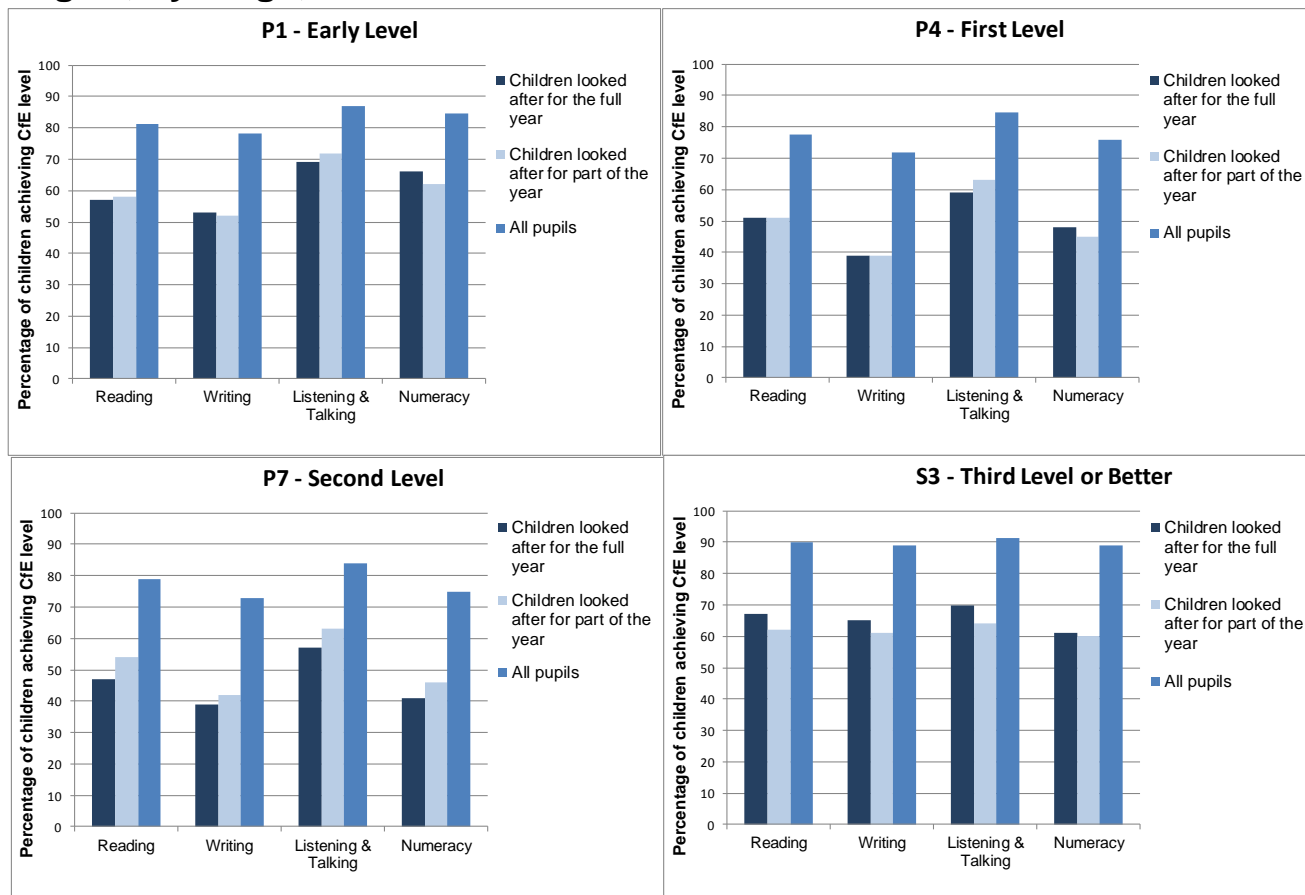
The average percentage of SCNs provided has increased from 90.9% to 94.3% for the local authorities that provided data for 2016/17 and 2017/18. This means that a higher proportion of the population of looked after children are represented in the figures when compared with previous years. This means that the figures presented in this chapter, should be a more accurate representation of the achievement of CfE levels by the whole population of looked after children (including those who could not be identified due to their SCN not being provided).

The data shows the CfE level achieved for each pupil within selected stages (P1, P4, P7 and S3 in mainstream schools and all pupils based in standalone special

schools/units) in the following curriculum organisers: reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy, and relates to the CfE level achieved as at June 2018.

Stage

Chart 4: Percentage of children achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾, by stage, 2017/18⁽²⁾



(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

(2) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities. All school leavers data is not affected,

Across all stages, a lower proportion of children who are looked after (for the full school year or for part of the year) achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage compared with all pupils (Chart 6). Generally, a slightly lower proportion of children who are looked after for part of the school year achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage compared with children who were looked after for the entire school year.

The proportion of children looked after for the full year achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage is generally highest for listening and talking, and lowest for writing across all primary stages, similar to the national picture. Similarly, the proportion of children looked after for the full year achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage falls throughout the primary stages, but increases when looking at the percentage of S3 pupils achieving CfE 3rd level or better. The gap between full-year and part-year looked after children's CfE achievement rates is present at S3. However, at primary stages, a higher proportion of children looked after for part of

the year achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage than those looked after for the full year for most organisers.

Type of accommodation

Achievement of CfE levels varies across the types of accommodation in which looked after children are placed. Generally, a higher proportion of children looked after for the full year who lived with friends/relatives achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage, especially compared with children who were looked after at home (Table 5.1).

For children looked after for part of the year, generally the pattern is similar except that children with foster carers purchased by the local authority also had high rates of children achieving the relevant CfE levels (Table 5.2).

Table 3.1: Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after for the full year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾, by accommodation type, 2017/18⁽²⁾⁽⁵⁾

Accommodation type	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
In the community (children with one placement)				
At home with parents	44	38	54	43
With friends or relatives	62	56	72	57
With foster carers provided by LA	59	54	67	57
With foster carers purchased by LA	56	50	62	53
In other community ⁽³⁾	*	*	*	*
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)				
In local authority home	59	58	61	56
In voluntary home	*	*	*	*
In other residential ⁽⁴⁾	57	52	57	65
More than one placement	58	51	62	53
All looked after full year	56	51	64	53

(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

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

(3) Includes with prospective adopters.

(4) Includes in voluntary home, residential school, secure care accommodation or crisis care.

(5) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

Table 3.2: Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after for part of the year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾, by accommodation type, 2017/18⁽²⁾⁽⁵⁾

Accommodation type	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
In the community (children with one placement)				
At home with parents	52	46	61	50
With friends or relatives	64	55	73	61
With foster carers provided by LA	54	48	71	53
With foster carers purchased by LA	71	68	71	64
In other community ⁽³⁾	63	*	75	63
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)				
In local authority home	56	61	61	72
In voluntary home	*	*	*	*
In other residential ⁽⁴⁾	*	*	*	*
More than one placement	64	57	70	59
All looked after part year	57	50	66	54

(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

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

(3) Includes with prospective adopters.

(4) Includes in voluntary home, residential school, secure care accommodation or crisis care.

(5) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

Number of placements

The majority of children only experienced one placement during the school year 2017/18, with relatively few experiencing 3 or more placements. Taking this into account, tables 5.3 (children looked after for the full year) and 5.4 (children looked after for part of the year) broadly show a decrease in the percentage of children achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage when they had three or more placements during the school year. However, due to the small numbers of children experiencing more than one placement, care should be taken when interpreting these figures.

For children looked after for the full year, those with one and two placements had very similar proportions of children achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage. For children looked after for part of the year, a higher proportion of those with two placements achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage than the other placement number groups.

Table 3.3: Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after for the full year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾ by number of placements 2017/18⁽²⁾

Number of placements	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
1	56	50	65	53
2	59	50	62	54
3 or more	56	54	62	53
All looked after full year	56	51	64	53

(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

(2) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

Table 3.4: Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after for part of the year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾ by number of placements 2017/18⁽²⁾

Number of placements	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
1	56	49	65	54
2	66	62	73	65
3 or more	56	44	61	41
All looked after part year	57	50	66	54

(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

(2) Data is estimated by using 2016/17 figures for Glasgow City and 2017/18 figures for all other local authorities.

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 Looked After Children statistics 2017/18
- Pupil Census records 2018
- School Leaver Initial and Follow-up Destination data, October 2018 and March 2019
- Attainment data throughout school education
- Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels, 2017/18

Education outcome and initial destinations figures for all children in Scotland are available here: <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Publications/Pub-SS-ALL>

Leaver destinations figures for all children are available here:

<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Publications/Pub-SS-FL>

Achievement of CfE Levels for all children in Scotland are available here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/ACEL>

1.2 The looked after children data held by the Children and Families team is linked the educational outcomes data using a child's Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). However, a SCN is not supplied for every looked after child. For example, if a child is under five they are unlikely to have a SCN. Children also might not have a SCN if they have been educated at home, in an independent school, outside Scotland or have already left school. It may also not be possible for a SCN to be provided for a child if they have left school.

We estimate that the Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCNs) provided by the 31 local authorities who supplied a Looked After Children data return 2017/18 represented 94% of the possible matched records for school-age children. By imputing data from previous years from some local authorities we estimate that 95% of looked after school-age children had matchable SCNs. There was variation between local authorities in the percentage of SCNs provided, ranging from 71% to 100% after imputing data from previous years.

Table 4.1: Percentage of children aged 5 to 15 with Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) present, by local authority, 2017/18⁽¹⁾

Local Authority	SCN provided in 2017/18	Total SCNs after processing
Aberdeen City	97.4	97.4
Aberdeenshire	97.9	97.9
Angus	91.7	91.7
Argyll & Bute	95.6	95.6
City of Edinburgh	89.9	89.9
Clackmannanshire	97.7	97.7
Dumfries & Galloway	95.3	95.3
Dundee City	91.6	91.6
East Ayrshire	87.5	87.5
East Dunbartonshire	92.2	92.2
East Lothian	97.1	97.1
East Renfrewshire	92.6	92.6
Falkirk	94.7	94.7
Fife	97.8	97.8
Glasgow City ⁽¹⁾	-	-
Highland	96.8	97.1
Inverclyde	95.9	95.9
Midlothian	96.6	96.6
Moray	85.2	86.3
Na h-Eileanan Siar	97.5	97.5
North Ayrshire	93.0	93.3
North Lanarkshire	87.6	87.8
Orkney Islands	71.4	71.4
Perth & Kinross	98.1	98.1
Renfrewshire	97.6	97.6
Scottish Borders	96.5	96.5
Shetland Islands	100.0	100.0
South Ayrshire	98.3	98.3
South Lanarkshire	97.8	97.8
Stirling	94.1	94.1
West Dunbartonshire	97.9	97.9
West Lothian	97.5	97.5

(1) Data for Glasgow City was not provided in 2017/18.

1.3 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 2017 and 31 July 2018) is available here:

<https://www2.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.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/SurveyChildrenLookedAfter>

1.4 The **qualifications** data were provided 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>.

1.5 The **leaver destinations** data were collected by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on each young person identified as being a school leaver in September 2018 (initial destination, approximately three months after leaving school) and March 2019 (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 another destination in the initial survey, but a positive destination in the follow-up survey.

1.6 **Leaver destinations** data were published in School leavers initial destinations and attainment, 2017/18:
<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Publications/Pub-SS-AIL>

1.7 **Achievement of CfE Levels** data were gathered by the Scottish Government, and relates to achievement in the Broad General Education (BGE) based on teacher professional judgements regarding pupil's achievement in literacy and numeracy against CfE levels. A very small proportion of children have long term significant and complex additional support needs that mean that it is unlikely that they will progress through the CfE levels during their time in education. These children are recorded as 'child following individual milestones' and are included in the data. However, children for whom the teacher has been unable to make a professional judgement are not included.

1.8 The **Achievement of CfE Levels** data are currently "Experimental Statistics". Experimental statistics are Official Statistics that are undergoing development. They are defined in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics as: 'new Official Statistics undergoing evaluation that are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development as a means to build in quality at an early stage'.

1.9 The reason for the **Achievement of CfE Levels** statistics being classed as experimental statistics is because they are based on a new and developing data source. As such time is required:

- a. To receive informed feedback from users and potential users of the statistics;
- b. For users to become familiar with the new statistics and methodology.

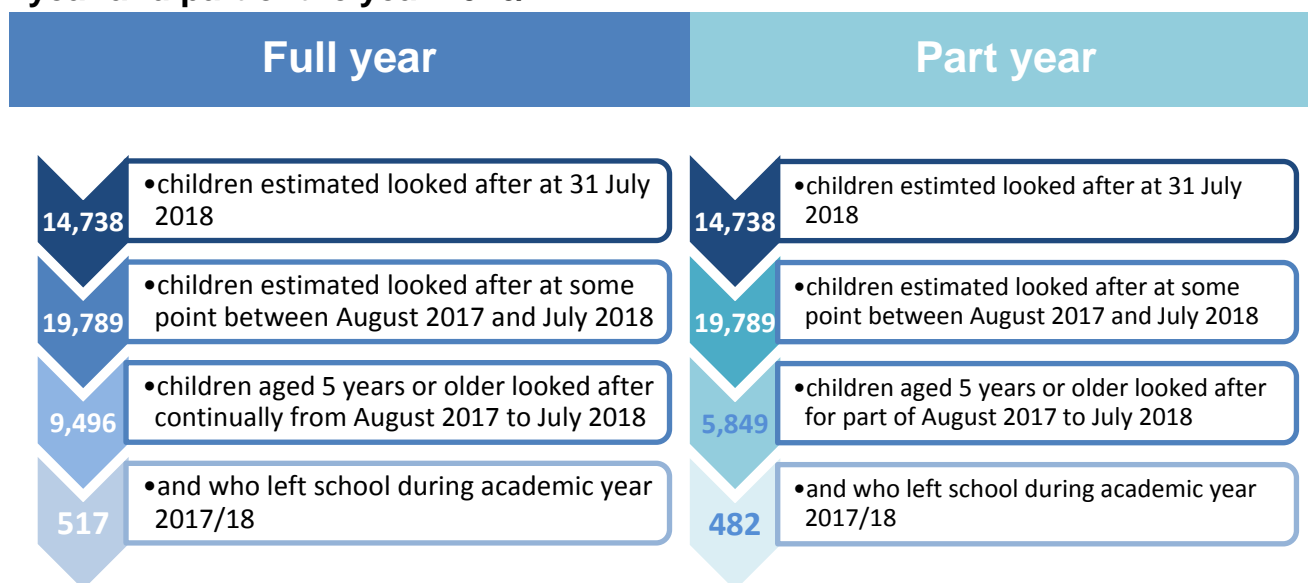
1.10 Further information with regards the **Achievement of CfE Levels** data collection can be found here:
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/ACEL>

2. Methodology

Matching looked after children data to school outcomes

2.1 As reported in Children's Social Work Statistics 2017-18², there were 14,738 children looked after on 31 July 2018. The population used in this publication was established through the following process:

Illustration 3: Children included in this publication, looked after for the full year and part of the year 2016/17



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 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 2017/18 a total of 999 full and part year records matched with the school leavers cohort provided by Skills Development Scotland.

² Children's Social Work Statistics 2017-18, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-2017-2018/>

Matching looked after children data to Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels

2.4 CfE levels for looked after children are based only on pupils where there was a match on SCN, month and year of birth, and gender between the CfE data and looked after children data.

3. Impact of the use of 2016/17 data for Glasgow City

3.1 In order to estimate national level figures for 2017/18, 2016/17 data has been used for Glasgow City along with 2017/18 data for the other 31 local authorities. This affects reporting of the scale of changes that have occurred since last year, since no change from last year has been assumed for Glasgow City. The potential impact of changes to the 2017/18 figures for Glasgow City on the headline national estimates for the level of attainment achieved and post-school destinations for looked after children are evaluated below.

3.2 The estimate of the percentage of school leavers looked after for the full year who achieved one or more qualifications at SCQF level 3 or better was 86% in 2017/18. If the 2016/17 data for Glasgow City had been excluded, the figure for the other 31 local authorities would fall to 85% for 2017/18.

3.3 The estimated percentage of school leavers looked after for the full year who were in a positive destination three months after leaving school was 83% in 2017/18. The figure for nine months after leaving school was 76%. If the 2016/17 data for Glasgow City had been excluded, the percentage for the other 31 local authorities in a positive destination three months after leaving school would remain at 83%. The figure for nine months after leaving school would fall to 75%.

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 set out in section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 ("the 1995 Act"), as amended by the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act") and Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act").

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

4.4 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.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/lac>

School information

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

School leaver destinations

4.6 *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 2018. Young people of school leaving age who left a publicly funded special school are not counted in this publication.

4.7 *Post-school destinations* – Destinations data collected by Skills Development Scotland 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 the latest publication:

<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Pub-SS-ALM>

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.

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

4.9 *Curriculum for Excellence* is designed to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for children and young people aged from 3 to 18. The curriculum includes the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated.

Further information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found here:

<https://www.education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-%28building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5%29/What%20is%20Curriculum%20for%20Excellence>

Curriculum for Excellence defines five levels of learning. The first four levels are described in the Experiences and Outcomes, with progression to qualifications described under a fifth level, the [senior phase](#).

While children and young people should feel that the transition from one stage of learning to another is smooth, they should still be able to look forward to the excitement of starting nursery, primary school and secondary school, and finally to moving on to [positive and sustained destinations](#).

CfE Level	Stage
Early	The final two years of early learning and childcare before a child goes to school and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier or later for some. The Fourth Level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4. The Fourth Level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the Fourth Level outcomes.
Senior Phase	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

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. The chapter on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels is classified as experimental statistics. The achievement of CfE levels statistics are currently labelled “Experimental Statistics” as they are in the process of being developed. They have been published to involve users and stakeholders in their development, and to build in quality and understanding at an early stage

5.2 There is more information on the data quality of the administrative sources underlying this publication here:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/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/collections/statistics-looked-after-children#outcomes-for-looked-after-children>

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.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/socialservicestats>

6. Enquiries

The information in this publication is available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/EducOutcomesLAC>

Email any requests for **further analysis** to children.statistics@gov.scot.

If you would like to receive notification of forthcoming statistical publications, please register your interest on the Scottish Government ScotStat website at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/scotstat.

Children and Families Statistics

18 June 2019

Annex A

List of tables

The data underlying the illustrations, expanded versions of the tables and additional data tables are available here: <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781787818941>

Introduction

Illustration 1 Main findings 2017/18

Educational attainment

Chart 1a Stage of all school leavers and those who were looked after, 2009/10-2017/18

Chart 1b Percentage of pupils leaving school in S4 or earlier for all school leavers and those who were looked after, 2017/18

Illustration 2 Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels

Table 1.1 Percentage of all school leavers and looked after leavers by level of attainment, 2009/10-2017/18

Chart 2 Highest level of attainment of looked after leavers (full year and part year) and all school leavers, 2009/10 to 2017/18

Table 1.2 Highest level of attainment of school leavers looked after for the full year, by placement type, 2017/18

Table 1.3 Highest level of attainment of school leavers looked after for part of the year, by placement type, 2017/

Table 1.4 Highest qualification achieved by school leavers (looked after for the full year) by number of placements they had in the year, 2017/18

Table 1.5 Highest qualification achieved by school leavers (looked after for part of the year) by number of placements they had in the year, 2017/18

Additional data on Educational attainment

Table 1.6 Proportion of school leavers looked after for the full year in each local authority by their highest level of attainment, 2017/18

Post-school destinations

Table 2.1	Percentage of school leavers by initial destination (3 months after leaving school), for all school leavers and those who were looked after children, 2009/10-2017/18
Chart 3	Looked after children in positive follow up destinations, 2009/10 to 2017/18
Table 2.2	Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination (9 months after leaving school), for all school leavers and those who were looked after children, 2009/10-2017/18
Table 2.3	Positive initial and follow-up destinations among looked after school leavers by placement type, 2017/18

Additional data on Post-school destinations

Table 2.4	Positive initial and follow-up destinations school leavers looked after for the full year by local authority, 2017/18
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Achieving CfE Levels

Chart 4	Percentage of children achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage, by stage, 2017/18
Table 3.1	Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after for the entire school year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage, by accommodation type, 2017/18
Table 3.2	Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after for part of the school year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage, by accommodation type, 2017/18
Table 3.3	Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children looked after for the full year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage, by number of placements 2017/18
Table 3.4	Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children looked after for part of the year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage, by number of placements 2017/18

Background notes

Table 4.1	Percentage of children aged 5 to 15 with Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) present, by local authority, 2017/18
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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot

are available via background tables

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.

cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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