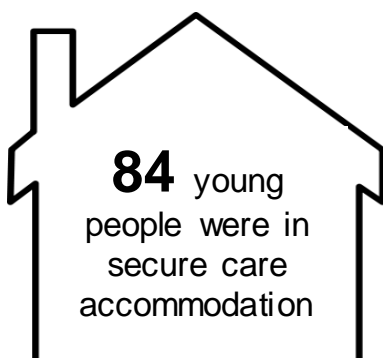
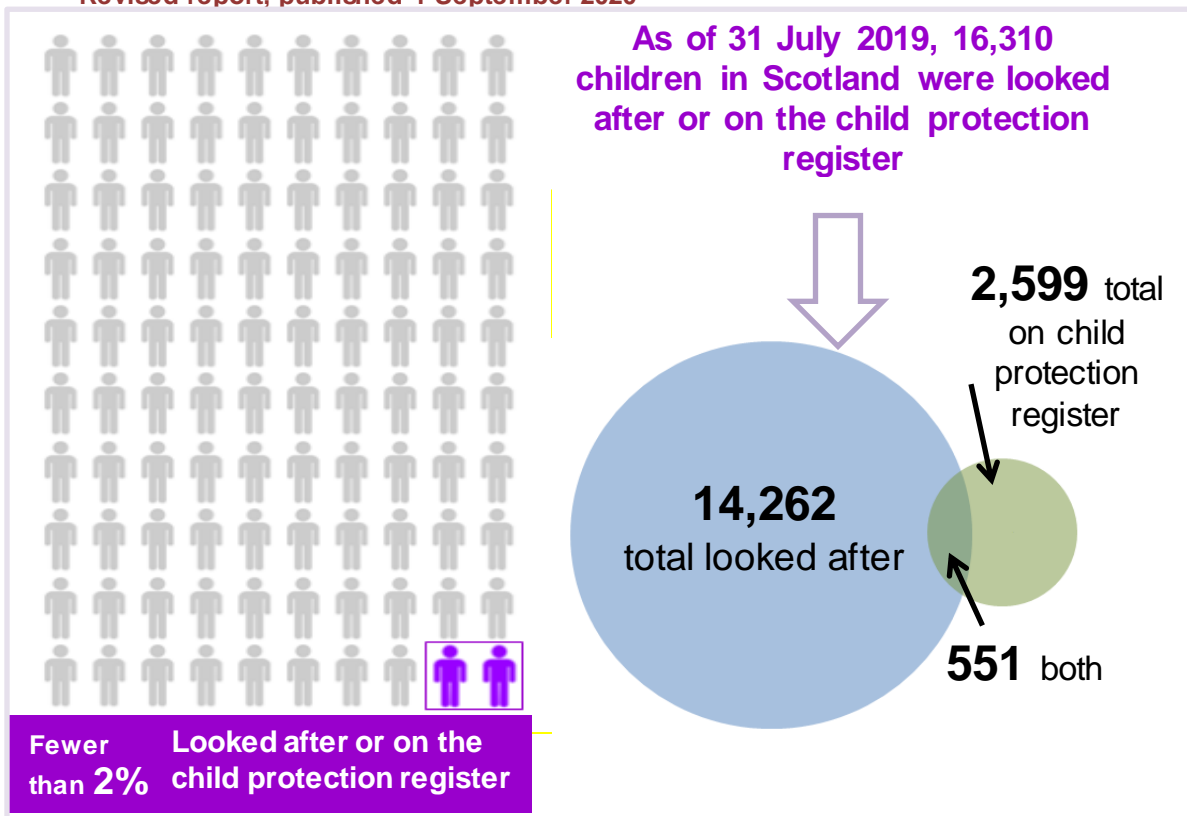


CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2018-19

Revised report, published 1 September 2020



Comparisons with 2017-18:

- 2%** decrease in the number of children looked after
- 3%** increase in the number of children on child protection register
- 1** fewer young person, on average, during the year in secure care accommodation

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Introduction

What do these statistics include?

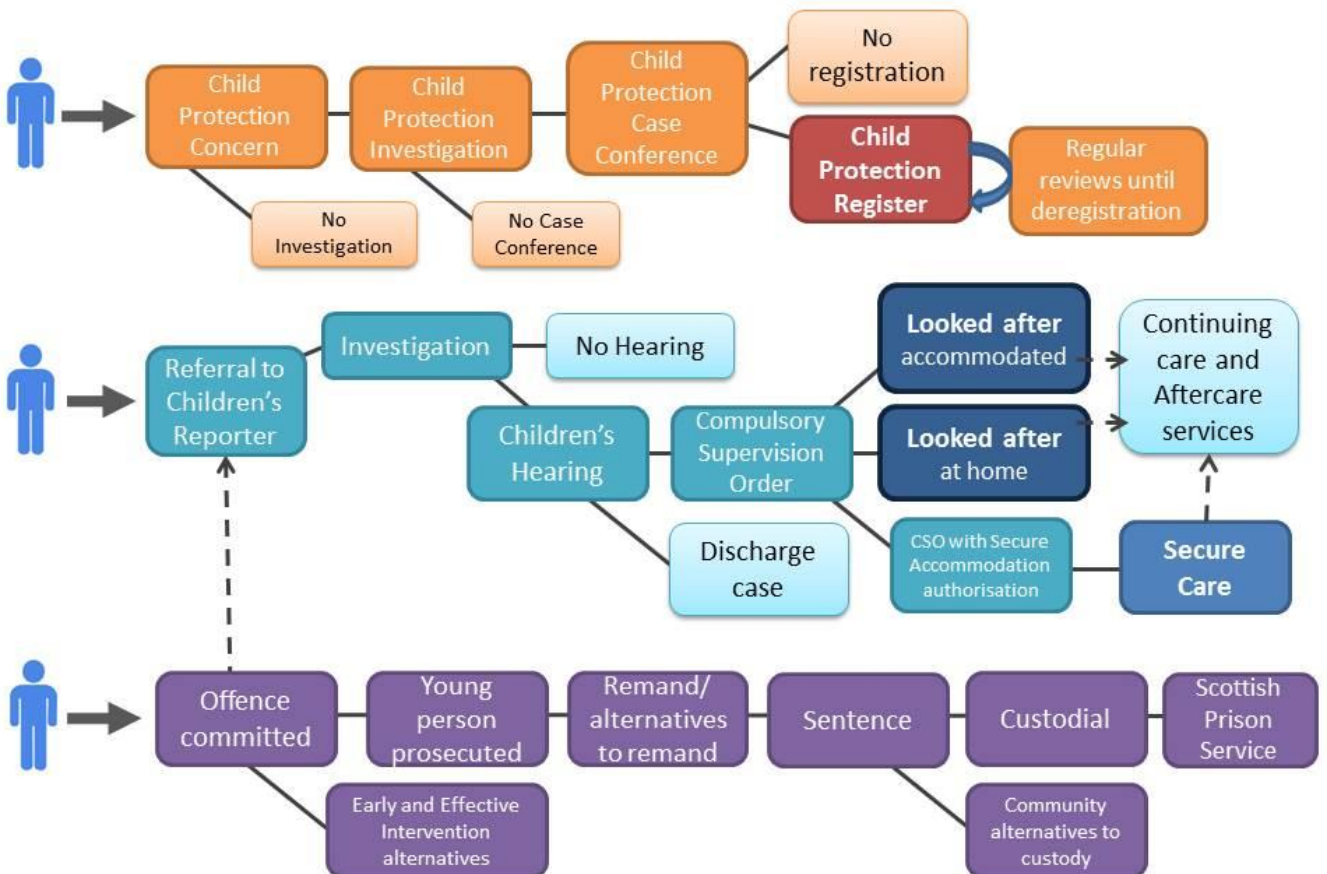
We present information collected from local authorities and secure units on children and young people, who were formally looked after; under child protection measures; or in secure care at some point between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019.

How do children come to be counted in these figures?

There are a number of ways that a child may become:

- Voluntary looked after
- Referred to the Children’s reporter and entered on the child protection register
- Via the criminal justice system taken into secure care

The diagram below gives a high-level illustration of the main routes by which children would be included. See background note 1.1 for more information.



Revisions

Each year, data for Children Looked After, Child Protection and Eligibility for Aftercare are collected for the period 1 August to 31 July from all local authorities in Scotland.

Data for Glasgow City were not provided for the period 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 in time for the original release of this report, on 31 March 2020. In that original publication, data for Glasgow in 2017-18 were estimated based on 2016-17 records.

In this revised report, data for Glasgow City in 2017-18 have now been included in time series analysis. Glasgow City's Looked After Children data for 2018-19 have also been revised following quality assurance steps which were possible by comparing the 2017-18 data provided with data for 2018-19.

Additionally, it is normal practice that, during the child protection data collection process, local authorities revise their data for the previous year. This report reflects those updates provided by all local authorities for 2017-18.

Although this report primarily focusses on results for 2018-19, revised tables for 2017-18 are included in the supporting Excel tables.

The overall impacts of these revisions are summarised below.

Children looked after

The number of Looked After Children in Scotland was previously reported as being 14,738 in the 2017-18 and 14,015 in 2018-19 – a 5% decrease. These figures have been revised to 14,554 and 14,262 respectively – a 2% decrease.

Child protection

The total number of children on the child protection register was previously reported to be 2,668 in 2017-18 and 2,599 in 2018-19 – a 3% decrease. The 2017-18 figure has been revised to 2,530 – meaning there was a 3% increase in the number of children on the child protection register between 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Children Looked After



The total number of children looked after has fallen for the seventh consecutive year.



The number of children starting to become looked after **decreased**, compared with 2018.



The number of children ceasing to be looked after **decreased**, compared with 2018.

This section presents data on looked after children from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019. This is referred to as 2019 for ease of reporting, with 2017-18 referred to as 2018, and so on. Local authorities have a responsibility to provide support to certain children and young people, known as 'looked after children'. A child may become looked after for a number of reasons; including neglect, abuse, complex disabilities requiring specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system.

At 31 July 2019, there were 14,262 looked after children – a decrease of 292 (2%) from 2018. This is the seventh consecutive year the numbers have decreased following a peak of 16,248 in 2012. The number of children ceasing to be looked after each year has been consistently more than the numbers becoming looked after over this period, as is shown in the attached publication tables 1.3 and 1.4.

Placement type

There are several types of care setting in which looked after children or young people could be looked after, including at home (where a child is subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order and continues to live in their usual place of residence), foster care, residential unit or school, a secure unit, with prospective adopters, or in kinship care (where they are placed with friends or relatives).

[Table 1.1](#) and [Chart 1](#) show the proportion of children being looked after at home has decreased over the last decade, with 25% of the total in this group in 2019 compared to 39% in 2009. Increasing proportions of children are being looked after away from home in community settings, in particular with foster carers (34% of the total in 2019 compared with 29% in 2009). Kinship care (29% of 2019 placements) was the second most common setting type for looked after children in 2019. Children looked after in residential care settings remain static at around 10% of the overall total.

Table 1.1: Number and percentage of children looked after at 31 July, in each type of accommodation⁽¹⁾

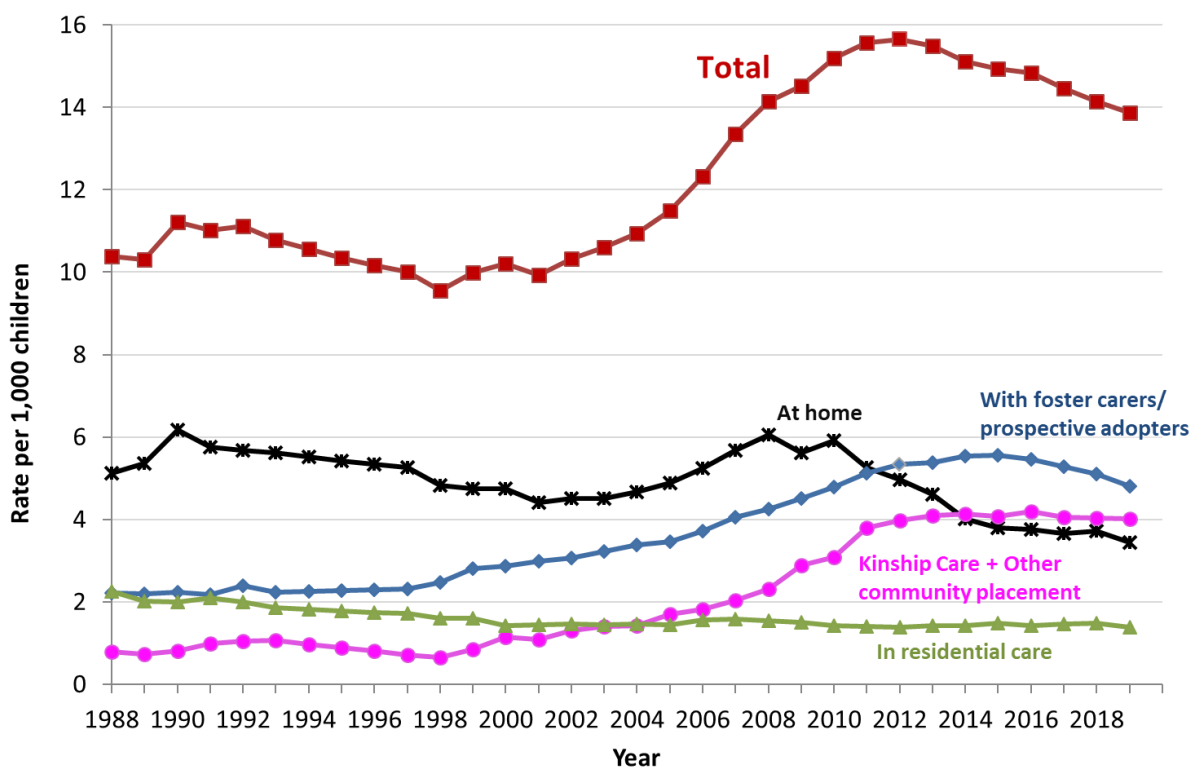
	2009	2018	2019
In the community	13,707	13,042	12,814
At home with parents	5,924	3,789	3,569
With Kinship Carers: friends/relatives	2,993	4,073	4,175
With Foster Carers provided by LA	3,594	3,453	3,335
With Foster Carers purchased by LA	905	1,491	1,463
With prospective adopters	242	186	212
In other community ⁽²⁾	49	50	60
Residential Accommodation	1,580	1,512	1,448
In local authority home	611	599	581
In voluntary home	138	122	127
In residential school	598	383	344
In secure accommodation	102	57	63
Crisis care	18	0	0
In other residential ⁽³⁾	113	351	333
Total looked after children	15,287	14,554	14,262

(1) Information on the number of children looked after by accommodation type is available back to 1988 in chart 1 data of the spreadsheet version of the associated downloadable publication tables

(2) 'In other community' is a category that captures those people in community placements outside those listed, such as supported accommodation.

(3) The bulk of the 'other residential' placements are private/independent residential placements for young people with complex needs.

Chart 1: Children looked after per 1,000 children under 18 by type of accommodation, 1988-2019



Care Plan

When children become looked after, a care plan should be produced. The care plan should include detailed information about the child's care, education and health needs, as well as the responsibilities of the local authority, the parents and the child. A care plan is considered 'current' if it has been produced or reviewed in the past 12 months.

Table 1.2a shows that 94% of the 14,262 children who were looked after at the end of July 2019 had a current care plan, down 3 percentage points from 2018. Of those looked after by kinship carers, 91% had a current care plan. This compares with 95-96% for other placement types for those looked after away from home.

Table 1.2a: Children looked after with and without a current care plan, at 31 July 2019⁽¹⁾

	At home	Away from home	Away from home - breakdown by category				Total
			With Kinship Carers: friends/relatives	With Foster Carers	With prospective adopters/ other community	In Residential Care	
With a current care plan	3,404	10,033	3,804	4,588	259	1,382	13,437
Without a current care plan	165	660	371	210	13	66	825
Total	3,569	10,693	4,175	4,798	272	1,448	14,262
With a current care plan	95%	94%	91%	96%	95%	95%	94%
Without a current care plan	5%	6%	9%	4%	5%	5%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(1) Some children without a current care plan may have one in progress on this date; local recording may differ with regard to when a care plan is recorded as being in place.

Children starting and ceasing to be looked after

The reduction in total numbers being looked after is because more people are leaving care than starting.

As shown in table 1.3, 3,824 episodes of care began between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019. This represents a 4% decrease from the 3,979 episodes of care beginning in 2018.

Table 1.3: Number of children starting to be looked after, by age⁽¹⁾

Age	Number			Percentage		
	2009	2018	2019	2009	2018	2019
Under 1	641	626	565	12%	16%	15%
1-4	1,138	852	891	22%	21%	23%
5-11	1,563	1,275	1,137	30%	32%	30%
12-15	1,800	1,149	1,128	35%	29%	29%
16-17	55	73	102	1%	2%	3%
18-21 ⁽²⁾	4	2	1	0%	0%	0%
Not known	0	2	0	0%	0%	0%
Total	5,201	3,979	3,824	100%	100%	100%

(1) A child may start to be looked after more than once in a year and so may be counted more than once.

[Table 1.3](#) also shows that over the last 10 years children have started episodes of care at younger ages. In 2009, 34% of children starting episodes of care were under five years of age. By 2019 this had risen to 38%, although this is a decline from a peak of 41% in 2014. Fifteen percent of children starting episodes of care were less than one year old, increasing from 12% in 2009.

There were slightly more boys than girls starting episodes of care in 2019 – 52% boys compared with 48% girls, (the Scotland-wide population of under 18s was 51% male in 2019¹). The gender split of those starting episodes of care has remained stable over the last 10 years.

[Table 1.4](#) shows the number of episodes of care which ceased by length of time looked after. There were 4,068 episodes of care which ceased between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019, a decrease of 6% from the previous year.

The length of time for which children ceasing to be looked after had been looked after remained similar between 2018 and 2019. However, when compared with 2009, there are a higher proportion of children who had been looked after for more than five years, and a lower proportion who had been looked after for under six months.

1 - National Records of Scotland, mid-year population estimates, 2019.

Table 1.4: Number of children ceasing to be looked after, by length of time looked after ⁽¹⁾

Length of time looked after	Number			Percentage		
	2009	2018	2019	2009	2018	2019
Under 6 weeks	409	219	259	9	5	6
6 weeks to under 6 months	333	326	321	8	8	8
6 months to under 1 year	767	594	543	17	14	13
1 year to under 3 years	1,718	1,545	1,474	39	36	36
3 years to under 5 years	652	675	643	15	16	16
5 years and over	515	968	828	12	22	20
Not known	-	-	-	0	0	0
Total	4,394	4,327	4,068	100	100	100

(1) A child may cease to be looked after more than once during the year and will be counted once for each episode of care ending.

When a child ceases being looked after, a destination is recorded (Table 1.5). This is the second year that the destinations of Kinship Care Order and Continuing Care were recorded. A Kinship Care Order is a court order that confers all or part of parental responsibilities and rights to a friend or relative of the child and can be a trigger for receipt of kinship care assistance. More information on Continuing Care is available in the [Continuing Care](#) section.

Most children (58% in 2019) go home to their biological parents and 16% go to live in kinship care with friends or relatives or leave care through a Kinship Care Order when they cease to be looked after. The proportion of children leaving care due to being adopted was 7% in 2019, the same level as in 2018. The majority of adoptions (63%) are of children aged under five years old, as shown in Additional Table 1.9. There is a much more even spread of ages of young people leaving care to go home or to live with friends and relatives.

Table 1.5: Number of children ceasing to be looked after by destination⁽¹⁾

Destination after leaving care	Number			Percentage		
	2009	2018	2019	2009	2018	2019
Home with (biological) parents	2,797	2,367	2,365	64%	55%	58%
Kinship carers: Friends/relatives ⁽¹⁾	499	571	563	11%	13%	14%
Kinship Care Order ⁽²⁾	-	113	70	-	3%	2%
Former foster carers ⁽¹⁾	71	116	110	2%	3%	3%
Continuing Care ⁽²⁾	-	84	167	-	2%	4%
Adoption	204	309	265	5%	7%	7%
Supported accommodation / own tenancy	225	235	223	5%	5%	5%
Other ⁽³⁾	279	218	281	6%	5%	7%
Not known	319	314	24	7%	7%	1%
Total	4,394	4,327	4,068	100%	100%	100%

(1) A child may cease to be looked after more than once during the year and will be counted once for each episode of care ending.

(2) New destination categories of 'continuing care' and 'kinship care order' were added in 2018. Children who left care for these destinations in previous years were mostly recorded in the friends/relatives category for 'kinship care order' and the former foster carers category for 'continuing care', which partly explains the decrease in these 2 categories in 2018.

(3) "Other" includes residential care, homeless, in custody and other destination.

Pathway Plans

Local authorities have a duty to provide advice, guidance and assistance for young people who at the point of leaving care have reached 16 years of age. This is referred to as 'aftercare services'. Local authorities are required to carry out a pathway assessment for aftercare services for all currently looked after young people who are over the age of sixteen and every 'compulsorily supported person' (a care leaver who has not yet reached their nineteenth birthday). These young people should be provided with a pathway co-ordinator who assesses their needs and a pathway plan which outlines how the local authority plans to meet the needs of the young person. The pathway assessment should be done within three months of a young person becoming a compulsorily supported person but it is expected that all young people over age 16 will have had their pathway assessment, and will have a completed pathway plan in place as to their future before they cease to be looked after.

Of those young people who had reached 16 years of age at the time they ceased to be looked after during 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019, 71% (down from 73% in 2018) had a pathway plan and 60% had a pathway co-ordinator ([Table 1.6](#)), a decrease from 68% in 2018. Where a young person's final placement type was 'at home' they were less likely to have a pathway plan or a pathway co-ordinator than if the final placement type was 'away from home'. Of children whose last placement was at home, 64% had a pathway plan and 51% a pathway coordinator, compared with 75% and 64% respectively of those whose final placement type was 'away from home'.

Table 1.6: Pathway plans and nominated pathway co-ordinators of young people who were at least 16 years of age on the date they ceased to be looked after during 2018-19^(1,2)

	Number			Percentage			Away from home - breakdown by category			
	Looked after at home	Looked after away from home	Total	Looked after at home	Looked after away from home	Total	With Kinship Carers: friends/relatives	With Foster Carers	With prospective adopters/ other community	In Residential Care
With a pathway plan at discharge	249	692	941	64%	75%	71%	132	252	38	270
Without a pathway plan at discharge	141	236	377	36%	25%	29%	105	57	9	65
With a nominated pathway co-ordinator at discharge	198	592	790	51%	64%	60%	122	202	30	238
Without a nominated pathway co-ordinator at discharge	192	336	528	49%	36%	40%	115	107	17	97
Total	390	928	1,318	100%	100%	100%	237	309	47	335

(1) Figures include all episodes of ceasing to be looked after beyond 16 years of age (i.e. a child may be counted more than once).

(2) It may be the case that some young people who don't have a relevant pathway plan/coordinator may be receiving similar support from adult services instead.

Aftercare services

[Table 1.7](#) shows the number of young people eligible for aftercare services by age and the percentage of these young people in receipt of aftercare on 31 July 2019.

From April 2015, aftercare eligibility has been extended to cover all care leavers up to and including people aged 25 where it previously only covered up to their 21st birthday. As this is an extension of the original policy, the data in this publication are unlikely to be a full report on the additional eligible age group. These data will continue to improve in quality in future publications as extension of support services to this group becomes more completely embedded. Figures have risen from 4,602 in 2016 to 6,650 in 2019 as a result of better reporting of the over-21 age group.

For young people eligible for aftercare, more than half have taken up these services in some way across all age groups, up to age 21. For the 22 and over age group, the majority are not receiving aftercare, which may be expected as many of this group may have moved onto adult services where required.

Table 1.7: Young people eligible for and in receipt of aftercare services by age⁽¹⁾, 2019

Status	16	17	18	19-21	22+	Total
In receipt of aftercare	207	407	647	1,684	923	3,868
Not in receipt of aftercare	159	222	404	791	1,206	2,782
Total eligible for aftercare	366	629	1,051	2,475	2,129	6,650
In receipt of aftercare	57%	65%	62%	68%	43%	58%
Not in receipt of aftercare	43%	35%	38%	32%	57%	42%
Total eligible for aftercare	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(1) Age on 31 July 2019.

Continuing Care

Continuing Care is the continued provision of the accommodation and other assistance that was being provided by the local authority immediately before the young person ceased to be looked after. Only children who cease to be looked after aged 16 years or over and were looked after away from home are eligible for Continuing Care. Continuing Care has been available to eligible care leavers from April 2015, enabling eligible young people aged 16 or older to stay in the same kinship, foster or residential care placements when they ceased to be looked after.

The data in [Table 1.5](#) shows that 167 children who ceased to be looked after between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019 received Continuing Care. The 'higher age' for continuing care eligibility has risen annually as part of a roll out strategy. This data, therefore, only includes those aged between 16 and 20. The data in [Table 1.5](#) only includes those who entered Continuing Care when they left care in 2018-19.

Continuing Care became fully operational in April 2020, allowing all eligible careleavers to remain in their care setting from age 16 until their 21st birthday.

In the eligible for aftercare collection there is additional information on the population in Continuing Care that can be used to supplement the data in [Table 1.5](#). [Table 1.8](#) shows that, in addition to the 167 young people recorded as ceasing to be looked after and staying in Continuing Care, there were an additional 119 eligible for aftercare in Continuing Care. Therefore, in total there were 286 young people recorded as being in Continuing Care in 2018-19.

Table 1.8: Children in Continuing Care^(1,2)

	Recorded as ceasing to be looked after with a destination of Continuing Care	Recorded as being in Continuing Care and eligible for aftercare ⁽²⁾	Total
Number of children	167	119	286

(1) These figures are likely to be underestimates of the number in Continuing Care as some local authorities have been unable to return the category of data in this collection.

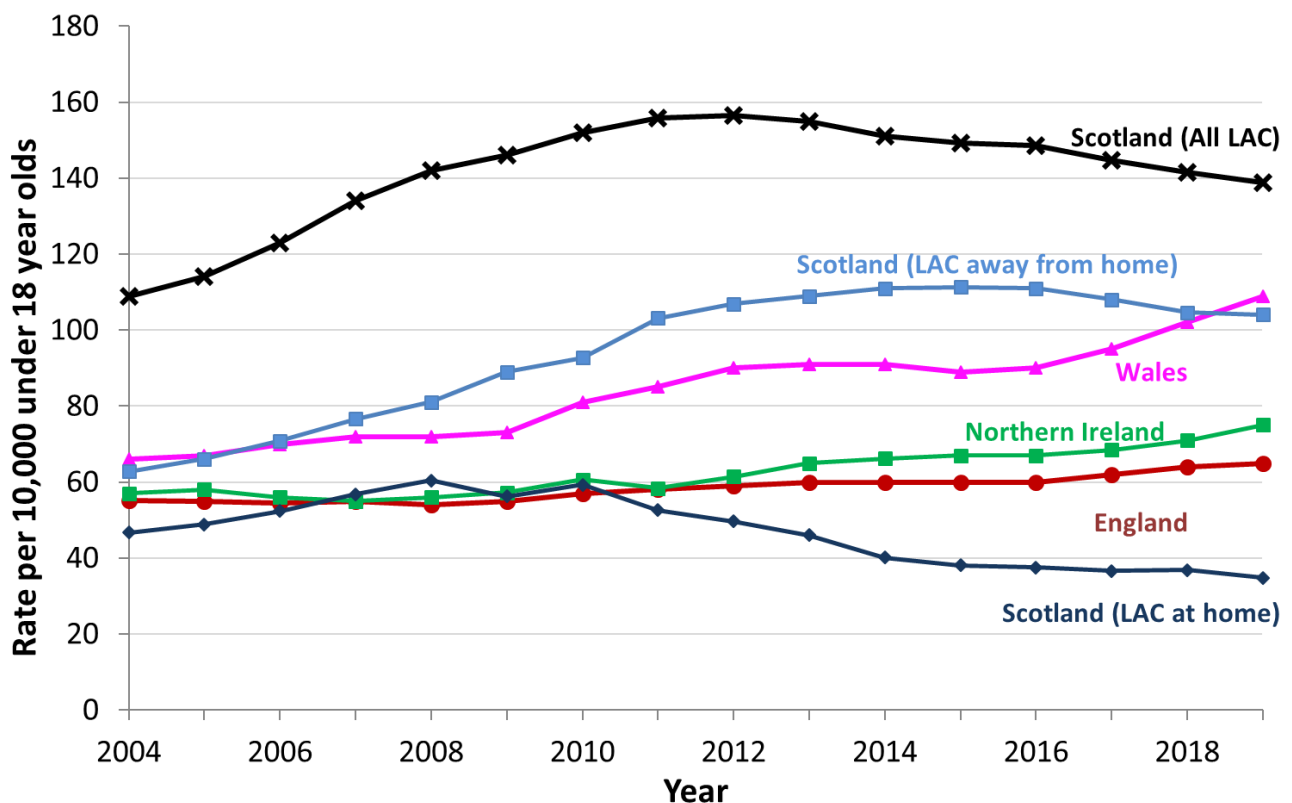
(2) There were 39 additional children recorded as being in Continuing Care and eligible for aftercare, but they were also included in the ceasing to be looked after with a destination of Continuing Care figures. They have been omitted from this column to avoid double counting.

Cross-UK looked after comparisons

The definition of “looked after children” varies across the countries within the UK, which makes cross-UK comparisons difficult. To improve comparability, the Scotland figure at 31 March has been used, rather than the published 31 July figure, as the other nations publish on this date.

Chart 2 gives Scottish figures including a breakdown for children looked after at home and away from home for comparability with the other nations. Scotland has a much higher number of children looked after at home than the rest of the UK, a placement which in Scotland requires a supervision order from the Children’s Panel. Overall, Scotland had the highest rate of looked after children in 2019 at an 139 children per 10,000 under 18 population. The rate for only children looked after away from home in Scotland is no longer the highest in the UK at 104 per 10,000 under 18 population. This is slightly lower than the rate of looked after children in Wales (109 per 10,000). The rates in Northern Ireland (75 per 10,000) and England (65 per 10,000) are much lower.

Chart 2: Cross-UK comparison of rate of looked after children per 10,000 children, 2004-2019






Links to the cross-UK data underlying the chart can be found in Background Note 1.7. There is more information on the comparability of looked after children data across the UK at the bottom of the following link:

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

The data used to produce the charts and tables on looked after children in the publication are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication. There are also **additional tables** available in the supporting files.

www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-social-work

Child Protection

-  **Number of children** on the child protection register increased slightly in 2019, but is lower than the peak in 2014
-  Around half of children were **on the child protection register for less than 6 months**
-  Most common causes for concern were **emotional, and domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, and neglect** .

This section presents data on children on the child protection register from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019. This will be referred to as 2019 for ease of reporting (with 2017-18 referred to as 2018 and so on). Child protection means protecting a child from abuse or neglect. This can either be in cases where abuse or neglect has taken place, or in cases where a likelihood of significant harm or neglect has been identified. The risk of harm or neglect is considered at a Child Protection Case Conference. Where a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, their name will be added to the child protection register (a child protection registration).

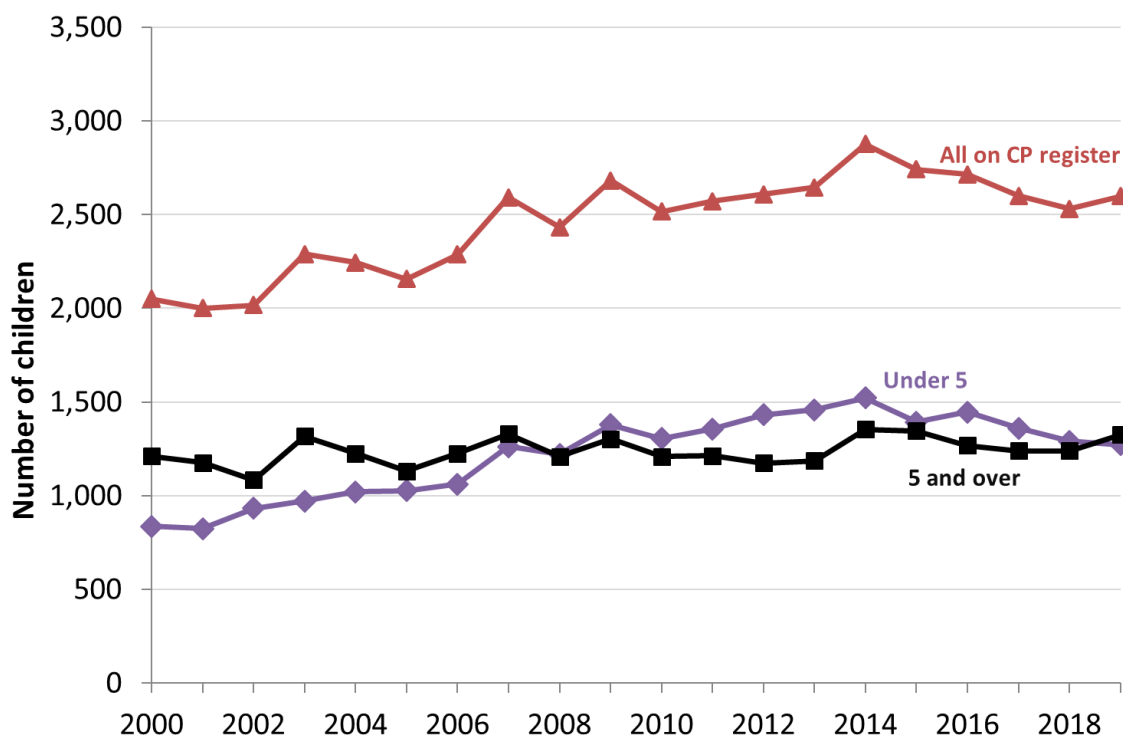
This was the seventh year that child protection data has been collected entirely at individual level. As the series has lengthened, more in-depth validation of the data has been possible, which gives a high level of confidence in its accuracy.

Children on the child protection register

The number of children on the child protection register increased from 2,530 in 2018 to 2,599 in 2019 (a 3% increase). [Chart 3](#) shows that the number of children on the child protection register fluctuated regularly, and there was a general upward trend until 2014. However, the number on the register has reduced in four out of the last 5 years.

As is usual, the number of children on the register in 2019 will be revised in next year's publication, as updated information is received from local authorities. This report includes revised figures in 2018 for all local authorities.

Chart 3: Number of children on the child protection register at 31 July, by age, 2000-2019⁽¹⁾



In 2019, half of children on the child protection register were aged under five and half were over 5. Since 2008, there have been more children aged under five than over five on the child protection register, with the gap narrowing so that in 2019 when there were 1,273 children aged under 5 and 1,326 aged 5 and over on the child protection register.

There is no strong gender pattern among children on the child protection register – 51% were boys, 46% were girls, and the remaining 4% were unborn (Table 2.1). Because of a change in how unborn children were recorded by local authorities in 2010, figures for unborn children are only comparable from 2011 onwards.

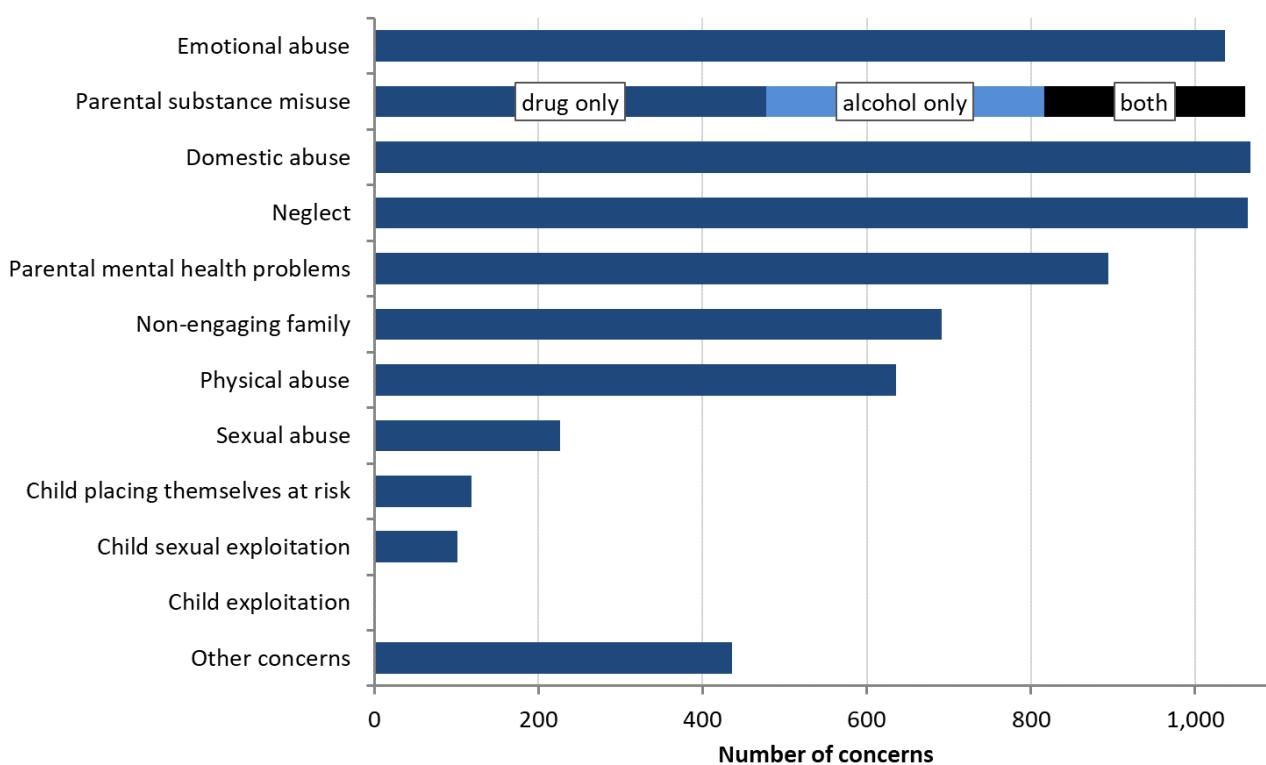
Table 2.1: Number of children on the child protection register by gender⁽¹⁾

	Number			Percentage		
	2009	2018	2019	2009	2018	2019
Boys	1,357	1,231	1,316	51	49	51
Girls	1,287	1,195	1,185	48	47	46
Unborns	38	104	98	1	4	4
All children	2,682	2,530	2,599	100	100	100

(1) Unborn children include both unborn children with a known gender and those with an unknown gender. Those with a known gender are not included in the boys or girls categories in this table.

At child protection case conferences, multiple concerns can be recorded (rather than just the main category of concern). This means that the total number of concerns is larger than the total number of registrations. For the 2,599 children on the child protection register at 31 July 2019, there were 7,332 concerns at the case conferences at which they were registered – an average of 2.8 concerns per conference. [Chart 4](#) shows the most common concerns identified were domestic (1,068) and emotional (1,037) abuse, neglect (1,064), and parental substance misuse (1,061). The parental substance misuse category is further broken down by the type of substance misused. Alcohol misuse only was identified as a concern in 339 conferences, drug misuse only in 477 conferences and both in 245 conferences. Data is shown in full in additional table Additional Table 4.3.

Chart 4: Concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the child protection register, 2019



Child protection registrations and deregistrations

The number of registrations to the child protection register increased by 1% between 2018 and 2019. The proportion of children registered who had never been registered before fell to 80% in 2019, down from 82% in 2018 ([Table 2.2](#)). The remaining 20% of registrations on the child protection register were for children who had been registered previously. The largest group of these children are those that had been previously registered 2 years ago or more, with this group making up 11% of all registrations in 2019.

Table 2.2: Number of registrations following an initial, pre-birth or transfer-in case conference by length of time since previous deregistration

Time since last deregistration	Number			Percentage		
	2009	2018	2019	2009	2018	2019
Never been registered before	3,103	3,495	3,425	86%	82%	80%
Registered before but time unknown	0	1	0	0%	0%	0%
Less than 6 months	68	84	99	2%	2%	2%
6 months - < 1 year	78	107	104	2%	3%	2%
1 year - < 18 months	94	62	107	3%	1%	2%
18 months - < 2 years	54	54	96	1%	1%	2%
2 years or more	231	424	456	6%	10%	11%
Not known if been registered before	0	19	6	0%	0%	0%
Proportion of registrations to children who had been registered before ⁽¹⁾	14%	17%	20%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	3,628	4,246	4,293	100%	100%	100%

(1) This is calculated as a proportion of registrations excluding cases where it is not known if a child had been registered before.

[Table 2.3](#) shows the numbers of deregistrations from the child protection register. There were 4,224 deregistrations from the child protection register in the year to 31 July 2019, a 2% decrease from the 4,316 recorded in 2018. The most common reason for deregistration in 2019 was an improved home situation, recorded in 53% of cases.

Table 2.3: Length of time registered and reason for deregistration from the child protection register⁽¹⁾

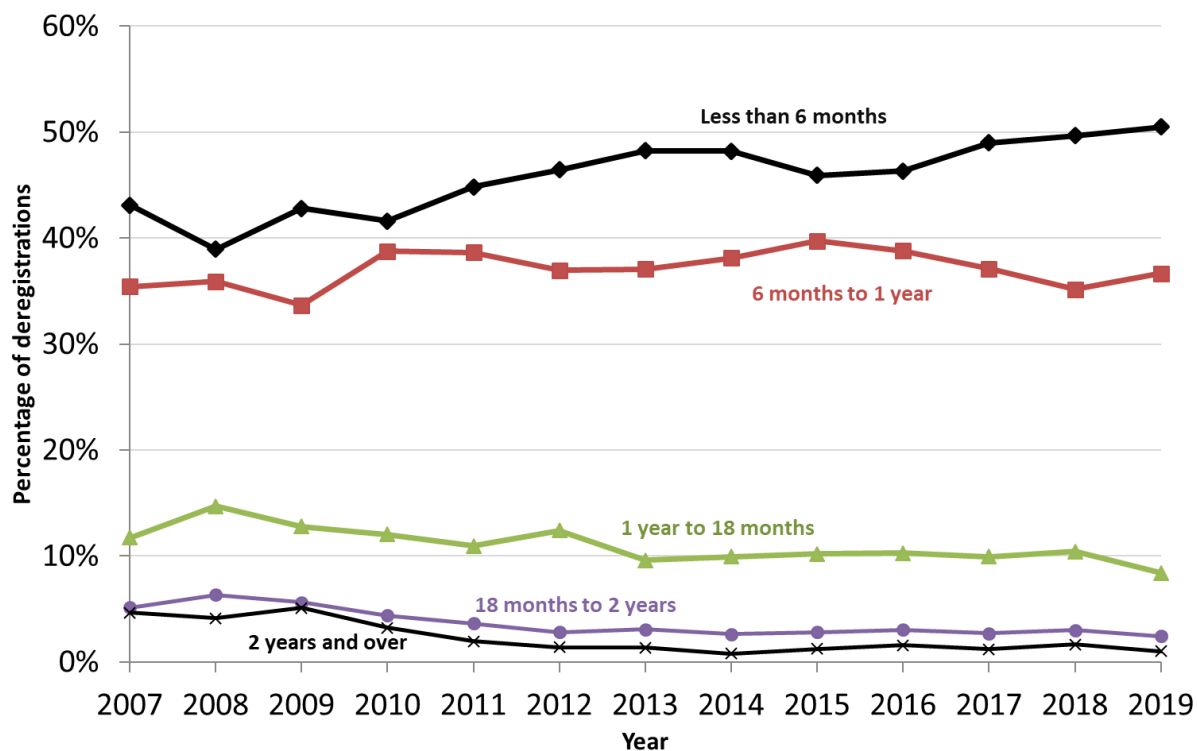
Time since last deregistration	Number			Percentage		
	2009	2018	2019	2009	2018	2019
Length of time registered						
Less than 6 months	1,498	2,143	2,132	43%	50%	50%
6 months to under 1 year	1,178	1,518	1,548	34%	35%	37%
1 year to under 18 months	447	450	355	13%	10%	8%
18 months to under 2 years	197	130	103	6%	3%	2%
2 years or more	179	72	43	5%	2%	1%
No date of registration information	0	3	43	0%	0%	1%
Reason for de-registration						
Child taken into care & risk reduced	536	508	497	15%	12%	12%
Child with other carers	295	320	307	8%	7%	7%
Child died	6	10	6	0%	0%	0%
Removal of perpetrator	82	108	144	2%	3%	3%
Improved home situation	1,195	2,428	2,223	34%	56%	53%
Child automatically de-registered because of age	16	8	12	0%	0%	0%
Child moved away - no continued risk	33	31	37	1%	1%	1%
Other reason	1,336	903	998	38%	21%	24%
Reason not known	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Total	3,499	4,316	4,224	100%	100%	100%

(1) Includes where a child transferred to another local authority and where reason has not been recorded.

[Chart 5](#) shows that, since 2015, the percentage of deregistrations of children who spent less than six months on the child protection register increased each year to

the current figure of 50% of deregistrations. There has been a corresponding decrease over this period in the proportion of deregistrations for children who spent 6 months or more on the child protection register.

Chart 5: Percentage of deregistrations by length of time on Child Protection Register. 2007-2019



Child Protection Register Geographical Comparisons

Within Scotland

Table 2.4 shows the number and rate of children under 16 who were on the child protection register in Scotland in 2019 by local authority. The rate varied from 0.8 per 1,000 children in the East Renfrewshire to 4.7 per 1,000 children in East Ayrshire.

There is a lot of variability from year to year in the numbers of children on the child protection register at a local authority level due to the small numbers of children involved in each local authority. In many cases, there are no obvious reasons for changes, although, in some areas, sibling groups entering and leaving the system has led to fluctuating numbers.

Table 2.4: Number of children on the child protection register and rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15 by local authority

Local authority	2009		2018		2019	
	Number on Register	Rate ^(1,2)	Number on Register	Rate ^(1,2)	Number on Register	Rate ^(1,2)
Aberdeen City	182	5.6	68	2.0	119	3.4
Aberdeenshire	81	1.7	77	1.6	103	2.1
Angus	82	4.0	64	3.3	45	2.4
Argyll and Bute	32	2.1	31	2.4	28	2.2
City of Edinburgh	287	4.1	189	2.4	122	1.5
Clackmannanshire	58	6.0	37	4.1	25	2.8
Dumfries and Galloway	79	3.1	93	4.0	25	1.1
Dundee City	95	4.0	75	3.1	91	3.8
East Ayrshire	75	3.4	107	5.1	98	4.7
East Dunbartonshire	27	1.4	57	3.0	55	2.8
East Lothian	84	4.5	29	1.5	55	2.8
East Renfrewshire	29	1.6	9	0.5	15	0.8
Falkirk	93	3.3	88	3.1	125	4.4
Fife	191	3.0	170	2.6	209	3.2
Glasgow City	299	3.1	308	3.1	414	4.1
Highland	69	1.7	81	2.1	91	2.3
Inverclyde	42	2.9	31	2.5	48	3.8
Midlothian	90	5.8	45	2.6	49	2.7
Moray	66	3.9	62	3.8	47	2.9
Na h-Eileanan Siar	23	4.9	*	*	*	*
North Ayrshire	56	2.2	154	6.8	104	4.6
North Lanarkshire	74	1.1	95	1.5	162	2.6
Orkney Islands	4	1.1	5	1.4	*	*
Perth and Kinross	43	1.7	75	3.1	78	3.2
Renfrewshire	126	4.0	103	3.4	83	2.7
Scottish Borders	47	2.3	50	2.6	46	2.4
Shetland Islands	11	2.5	8	1.9	12	2.9
South Ayrshire	31	1.6	44	2.5	37	2.1
South Lanarkshire	117	2.1	180	3.3	116	2.1
Stirling	50	3.1	55	3.5	42	2.7
West Dunbartonshire	31	1.9	54	3.4	44	2.8
West Lothian	108	3.1	82	2.3	104	2.9
Scotland	2,682	2.9	2,530	2.8	2,599	2.8

(1) Per 1,000 population aged 0-15. Source: National Records of Scotland, 2007-2019 mid-year population estimates

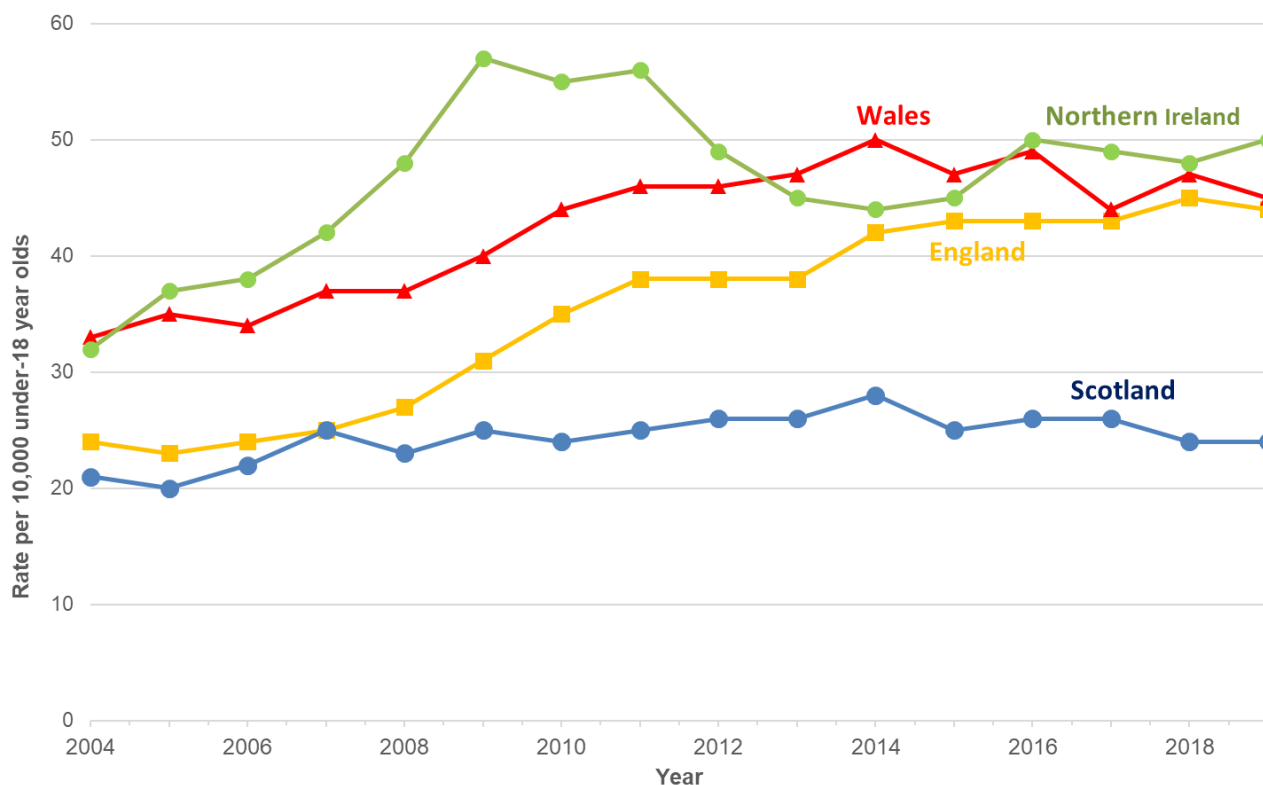
(2) The rate shown in this table includes unborn children who are on the register

Cross-UK child protection comparisons

Child protection systems across the United Kingdom vary but are generally comparable. Scotland's collection year runs from 1 August to 31 July, so end-year figures are typically reported at 31 July in this publication, while the collection year in England, Wales and Northern Ireland runs from 1 April to 31 March (so end-year figures are at 31 March). However, in Chart 6 we report the Scotland figures at the 31st March to allow comparison with the other countries.

The proportion of children on the child protection register has been broadly stable in Scotland over the last decade and this proportion is notably lower compared with the rest of the UK. Scotland did not experience the large increases in children on the register in 2007-2011 as seen in the rest of the UK.

Chart 6: Cross-UK comparison of rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 under 18s, 2004-2019



There is more information on the comparability of child protection data across the UK at the bottom of the following link:

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

The data used to produce the charts and tables on child protection in the publication are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication. There are also **additional tables** available in the supporting files.

www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-social-work

Secure Care Accommodation

- **Average number of residents** reduced by 1 to 79 since 2018
- **The number of young people admitted** to secure care increased by 3% to 217 since 2018.

This section presents 2018-19 data on secure care accommodation. Following the conventions in the rest of this publication 2018-19 is referred to as 2019. Secure care is used for a small number of young people who present high risk to themselves or others and a placement to secure can only be authorised following a decision through the Children’s Hearing System or a Court.

Bed complement

There were 84 secure places available in five secure units in Scotland excluding emergency beds on 31 July 2019 (Table 3.1). Furthermore, there were an additional 7 beds available across these units for emergency and short-term use – these would normally only be used if required and on a short-term basis.

Table 3.1: Secure care unit bed complement at 31 July 2019⁽¹⁾

Unit	Number of secure care beds
Edinburgh Secure Services	6
Good Shepherd	18
Kibble	18
Rossie School	18
St. Mary's Kenmure	24
ALL UNITS	84

(1) Excluding emergency or short-term beds

Capacity and usage

Table 3.2 shows there were an average of 79 residents in secure care accommodation between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019, a slight decrease from an average of 80 in the previous year. There was an 18% increase in the average number of residents from within Scotland and a decrease of 26% in the average number of residents from outside Scotland, most of whom were from England.

The number of nights emergency beds were used was 398 in 2019. This is an increase of 40% from 284 in the previous year. The number of residents using emergency beds has also increased from 41 in 2018 to 55 in 2019.

Table 3.2: Secure care accommodation capacity⁽¹⁾ and usage, 2014-2019

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ^(3,4)	2019	% change 2018-19
Places at year end	90	90	90	84	84	84	0%
Admissions during the year	232	249	256	248	210	217	3%
Discharges during the year	226	245	253	257	213	210	-1%
Average number of residents during the year	74	82	85	76	80	79	-1%
Residents from within Scotland	67	76	72	56	45	53	18%
Residents from outside Scotland	7	6	13	19	35	26	-26%
Minimum number of residents during the year	60	71	77	67	73	71	-3%
Maximum number of residents during the year ⁽¹⁾	84	89	90	87	86	88	2%
Number of nights emergency bed used during the year ⁽²⁾	5	146	50	90	284	398	40%
Number of residents emergency bed used for during the year ⁽²⁾	3	13	11	25	41	55	34%

(1) Capacity: Young people can be admitted and discharged more than once during the year.

(2) Four units reported having an emergency bed: Rossie Secure Accommodation Services; Good Shepherd Centre; Kibble Education and Care Centre; and St. Mary's Kenmure. St Mary's Kenmure also have 3 short-term beds. (see background notes for definition of an emergency or short-term bed).

(3) 2018 figures for emergency bed usage have been estimated for St. Mary's Kenmure.

(4) 2018 figures for all items in this table, except places at year end, have been corrected in this publication due to the discovery of an error affecting residents admitted to emergency beds.

On 31 July 2019, 29% of young people in secure care accommodation were female (Table 3.3); 65% were aged 16 or over; and 90% were aged 15 or older.

On 31 July 2019, 32% of young people in secure care accommodation had at least one disability, defined as “a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

Table 3.3: Young people in secure care at 31st July 2019 by gender, age at admission, disability and length of stay^(1,2)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ⁽³⁾	2019	% of 2019 total
Gender of residents⁽⁴⁾							
Males	52	59	65	46	39	60	71%
Females	29	26	23	34	43	24	29%
Age of Residents							
13 years old or under	5	7	9	14	12	*	*
14 years	12	18	18	18	18	*	*
15 years	31	28	27	26	25	21	25%
16 years or over	33	32	34	22	27	55	65%
Residents with disability							
Yes	-	-	34	27	39	27	32%
No/unknown	-	-	54	53	43	57	68%
Length of stay of residents at year end							
Less than 1 month	13	17	20	26	10	21	25%
1 month to under 2 months	14	16	14	13	14	16	19%
2 months to under 3 months	14	13	14	12	13	9	11%
3 months to under 6 months	23	26	24	25	27	22	26%
6 months to under 1 year	9	*	10	*	14	11	13%
1 year or more	8	*	6	*	0	5	6%
Total	81	85	88	80	82	84	100%

(1) As at 31 July of each year.

(2) Cells containing * represent numbers that are suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

(3) 2018 figures for all items in this table have been corrected in this publication due to the discovery of an error affecting residents admitted to emergency beds.

(4) Trans, intersex and non-binary individuals are grouped with males for the purposes of maintaining confidentiality.

Cross-UK secure care accommodation comparisons

Table 3.4 shows secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved, and children accommodated across the United Kingdom. This shows that there is no clear trend in the number of children accommodated in England and Wales, as the numbers have fluctuated.

As noted earlier in this Secure Care Accommodation section, the Scotland total includes a number of children that are from the rest of the UK. The England and Wales totals may also include some children from other parts of the UK, but these numbers aren't published separately.

Table 3.4: Number of secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved and children accommodated at year end across the United Kingdom^(1,2,3), 2014-2019

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ⁽⁵⁾	2019
England	Number of secure children's homes	16	14	14	14	14	14
	Places approved	276	232	232	232	233	237
	Children accommodated	211	194	192	184	189	162
Wales	Number of secure children's homes	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Places approved	22	22	22	22	22	22
	Children accommodated	18	11	18	19	15	10
Scotland ⁽⁴⁾	Number of secure care units	5	5	5	5	5	5
	Places approved	90	90	90	84	84	84
	Children accommodated	80	85	84	81	82	84

(1) Sources: England and Wales - Statistics on secure children's homes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-secure-children-s-homes>; Scotland - Secure care accommodation census; Northern Ireland, official/national statistics are not produced on secure care accommodation. The legal routes into secure care can vary between the four UK countries.

(2) As noted elsewhere, the Scotland total includes a number of children from the rest of the UK, so trends in each country based on the children's origin may be different.

(3) The figures from outside Scotland include children placed on welfare grounds only.

(4) To allow for comparison with England and Wales, Scotland's data for all years is 'at 31 March' within this table only.

(5) 2018 figure for children accommodated in Scotland been corrected in this publication due to the discovery of an error affecting residents admitted to emergency beds.

There is more information on the comparability of child protection data across the UK at the bottom of the following link:

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

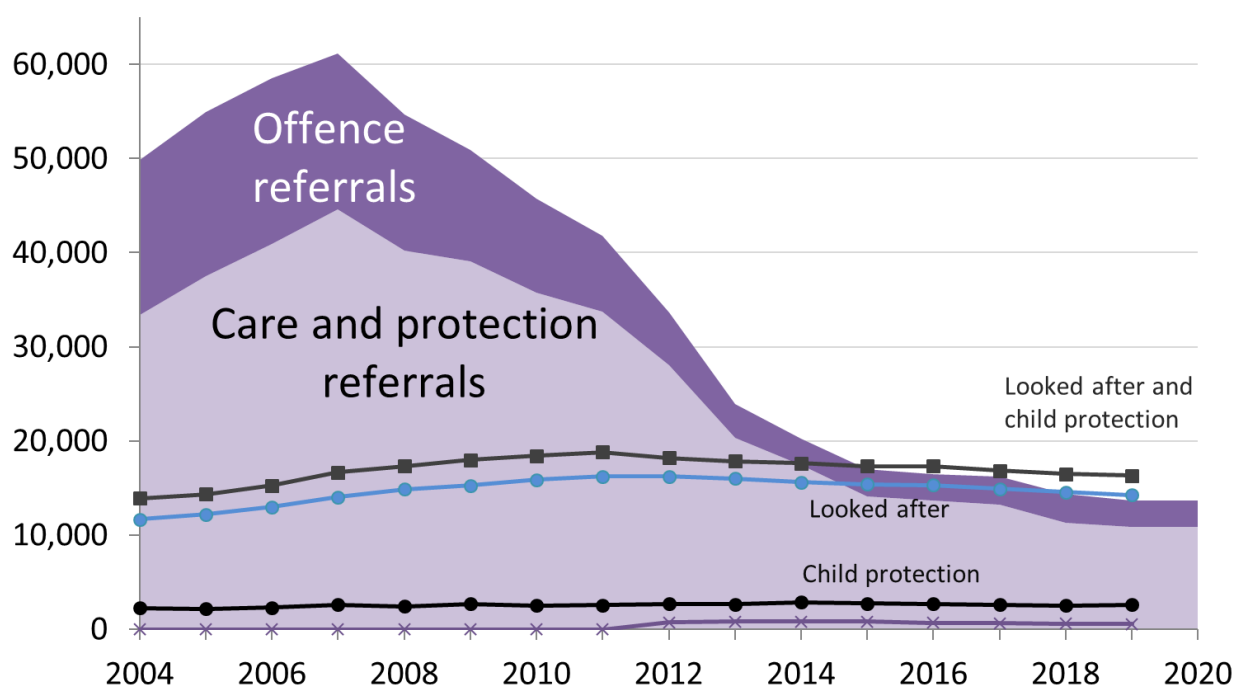
The data used to produce the charts and tables on secure care in the publication are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication. There are also **additional tables** available in the supporting files.

www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-social-work

What are the trends in other children's social work data?

Between 2009 and 2019 the number of children and young people referred to the Children's Reporter decreased by 73%² (Chart 7), while the number of children looked after or on the child protection register has remained broadly stable over this period. The decrease is the result of falls in both the number of offence and non-offence referrals. Offence referrals now account for 21% of all referrals.

Chart 7: Children Referred to the Children's Reporter and numbers looked after/on child protection register, 2004-2019



The fall in referrals to the Reporter is likely to be due to pre-referral screening across many areas of the country. This has led to a reduction in referrals received by the Reporter where compulsory measures are not deemed necessary; and a proportionate increase in referrals where deemed necessary.

1 - SCRA Official Statistics http://www.scra.gov.uk/resources_articles_category/official-statistics/

Background notes

1. Context and related publications

1.1. This publication includes data on children and young people who were looked after, on the child protection register or in secure care accommodation between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019. Children most commonly become looked after or placed on the child protection register following a referral to the Children's Reporter. The majority of referrals to the Children's Reporter are on care and protection grounds, although a small proportion are on offence grounds. Young people are placed in secure care either as an outcome of the criminal justice system or through a referral to the Children's Reporter. Figures on referrals to the Children's Reporter are published by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA):

http://www.scra.gov.uk/resources_articles_category/official-statistics/

Figures on referrals of young people from the criminal justice system to the social work system are published the bottom of the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubSocialWork>

1.2. This publication collates data on children who were looked after during 2018-19. Education Outcomes for Looked After Children statistics are produced on a subset of these children – those whose Scottish Candidate Numbers have been supplied to Scottish Government – and was released on the same day as this report. The education outcomes publication is available here:

www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-social-work

1.3. The annual Civil Law Statistics published by the Scottish Government includes a table which gives the number of petitions for adoption made through the courts. These figures include looked after children who are adopted from care as well as children who are out with the care system. The Civil Law Statistics in Scotland are available the bottom of the following link:

<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/civil-judicial-statistics/>

Cross-UK comparability

1.4. It is possible to draw comparisons between the looked after children, child protection and secure care accommodation statistics of the four UK countries. However it should be borne in mind that there are differences in legislation, the children's social work systems and the definitions of categories that will affect these figures.

1.5. 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 the bottom of the following link:

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

1.6. Work was commissioned by the Department for Education to document clearly the differences between each administration's **child protection** statistics. Further developments from this work have been published on the Scottish Government Children's Statistics web site the bottom of the following link:

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

Equivalent data across the UK

1.7. Looked after children statistics:

England	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2018-to-2019
Wales	https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/Social-Services/Childrens-Services/Children-Looked-After
Northern Ireland	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childrens-social-care-statistics-for-northern-ireland-201819

1.8. Child protection statistics:

England	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-children-in-need
Wales	https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/Social-Services/Childrens-Services/children-receiving-care-and-support
Northern Ireland	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childrens-social-care-statistics-for-northern-ireland-201819

1.9. Official/national statistics are not produced on secure accommodation in Northern Ireland. However, there is one secure unit which when at full capacity can house sixteen 11 to 18 year olds. The latest national statistics on children accommodated in secure children's homes in England and Wales were released on 1 June 2019 and can be found at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-secure-children-s-homes>

2. Data sources and coverage

2.1. The **looked after children** data in this publication were collected at an individual level from local authorities. Data were collected on all children/young people who were looked after between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019, on every episode of being looked after which occurred at some point in the reporting period, every placement that took place during these episodes, and every legal reason for which a child was looked after. Statistics were also collected at an individual-level for those eligible for aftercare.

2.2. All **child protection** information in this publication were collected at an individual level from local authorities. Information is submitted for each investigation and case conference held as well as demographic information for each child. Detailed individual data has been collected since 2012-13. Prior to this, data was collected as aggregate summarised data.

2.3. The child protection statistics survey covered the period 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019. If a member of the public or professional report concern about a child, a referral will be made to an agency such as the local authority social work team. If they decide that the child is at risk of significant harm, an investigation will be undertaken. In 2010-11 and previous years, aggregate information was collected on the referrals that were initiated during the period (so numbers starting). From 2011-12 information has been collected on child protection investigations which ended during the collection period. Information on child protection referrals has not been collected since 2010-11.

2.4. The **secure care** statistics in this publication were collected from five secure care units which were open from 1 August 2018 till 31 July 2019.

2.5. The secure care accommodation census covered 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019. The data collected at the unit level covers the number of places. Individual-

level information was collected on the characteristics of the young person, medical care, admissions and discharges in secure care accommodation.

2.6. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) can provide information on staffing and vacancies of secure accommodation services, where a secure unit has provided that information to the Care Inspectorate, although this is not necessarily published. The data is an annual snapshot of the workforce on 31 December each year. If you require further information on staffing and vacancies on the other data held for secure accommodation services, you can visit the SSSC’s workforce data site at: <http://data.sssc.uk.com> or contact dataenquiries@sssc.uk.com.

3. Definitions and notation

3.1. The survey forms, data specifications and guidance notes for the statistics presented in this publication are available on the Scottish Government website. The data specifications include the standard validation checks undertaken to quality assure these data.

	Online documentation can be found at the bottom of the following links.
Looked after	https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-exchange-of-data-looked-after-children/
Child protection	https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-exchange-of-data-child-protection/
Secure care accommodation	https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-exchange-of-data-secure-accommodation/

Children Looked After

3.2. Under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 , 'looked after children' are defined as those in the care of their local authority – sometimes referred to as a 'corporate parent'. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/looked-after-children/>

3.3. *Supervision Requirement/Compulsory Supervision Order* – 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 the circumstances including any offending behaviour. The hearing decides 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 needed, it will make a Supervision Requirement or a Compulsory Supervision Order 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.

3.4. *Permanence order* – This is an order that the sheriff court can make for the protection of children. By default, parents have a right for their child to live with them and control where the child lives. A Permanence order, which can only be applied for by the local authority, transfers this right of residence to the local authority. In making a permanence order the court can, as it considers appropriate, to promote and safeguard the child's health, development and welfare, also make ancillary orders which:

- give other parental rights and responsibilities to the local authority or other person(s),
- and /or remove those parental rights and responsibilities from the child(s) parents.

A permanence order may also specify arrangements for contact between the child and any other person the court considers appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

3.5. *Types of placement*

- At home with parent(s): at home with parent(s) or 'relevant person(s)' as defined in Section 200 of the Children's Hearings Act 2011
- 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)
- 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 which may be specifically for children with learning disabilities or for physically disabled children
- Residential school: in local authority or voluntary residential school (home/hostel), private school or independent school
- Secure accommodation
- Crisis care: in women’s refuge, local authority/voluntary hostel for offenders or for drug/alcohol abusers
- Other residential: a known residential setting but does not fit with one of the above

3.6. 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>

Child Protection

3.7. *Child Protection Case Conference (CPCC)* – a meeting where the risk of harm or neglect of a child is addressed. There are four types of CPCC:

Type	Who is it for	Potential outcome
Initial	a child not currently on the child protection register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Child is registered or – Child is not registered
Pre-birth	an unborn child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Child is registered or – Child is not registered
Review	a child already on the child protection register either receiving a regular case review, or where there are significant recent changes in the child or family situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Child remains on register or – Child is de-registered
Transfer	a child already on the child protection register moving between local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Child is de-registered or – Child remains on register

3.8. *Registrations* - The children who were the subject of a child protection case conference and were subsequently added to the child protection register between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019.

3.9. *Deregistrations* - Children who were subject to a transfer or review conference and subsequently removed from the child protection register between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019.

3.10. The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, published in 2010 and refreshed in 2014, is available here: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/05/3052>. This guidance is currently under review.

Secure care accommodation

3.11. *Secure accommodation legal framework* – The children’s hearings system has responsibility for dealing with most children and young people under 16 who commit offences or who are in need of care and protection. In some cases children’s hearings have responsibility for young people under 18 where the young person is under the supervision of the hearing when he or she reaches 16 and the supervision requirement is extended.

3.12. For children who commit very grave crimes (the circumstances are set out in the relevant Lord Advocate’s guidelines), the option remains for them to be jointly reported to the children’s reporter and the procurator fiscal and together, they will decide whether prosecution through the court is appropriate. The court may then sentence, or return the young person to the hearing to be dealt with.

3.13. A young person who appears in court accused of an offence, where bail is not considered appropriate, can be remanded to the care of the local authority responsible for them under section 51 of the Criminal Procedures (Scotland) Act 1995. Local authorities are then responsible for placing that young person in secure care.

3.14. A young person convicted of an offence in court can be sentenced to detention in secure accommodation under section 205 or 208 of the Criminal Procedures (Scotland) Act 1995. In these cases, it is the responsibility of Scottish Ministers to place the sentenced young person in suitable accommodation.

3.15. Before a child or young person can be placed in secure accommodation through the children’s hearings system, the children’s panel must consider that the

young person meets the legal criteria set out in The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. The conditions are -

- (a) that the child has previously absconded and is likely to abscond again and, if the child were to abscond, it is likely that the child's physical, mental, or moral welfare would be at risk;
- (b) the child is likely to engage in self harming conduct;
- (c) the child is likely to cause injury to another person.

3.16. Average number – The average number of young people in secure care accommodation over the year is calculated using the dates of admission and discharge for every child. Ages on admission, discharge during 2018-19 and age at 31 July 2019 are the actual ages for all young people.

3.17. *Ethnicity and Religion* – Data was collected on ethnicity and religion of young people in secure care and close support accommodation, but we are unable to publish this due to small numbers and data confidentiality issues.

3.18. *Emergency/short-term beds* – these can be used at short notice, for example, when a young person is admitted during the night as it is less disruptive for the other young people. The young person is usually admitted to the main facility the following day. Four units reported having an emergency bed: Rossie Secure Accommodation Services; Good Shepherd Centre; Kibble Education and Care Centre; and St. Mary's Kenmure. St Mary's Kenmure also has 3 short-term beds for ease these beds are referred to as emergency in the report.

Disability and additional support needs

3.19. Prior to 2011, data was presented as 'Disability', and, because the categories in use did not match with definitions in the Equalities Act, from 2011-12 until 2014-15, data was presented as 'additional support needs'. The statistics themselves did not change in any way – the content of the data and categories remained the same, so were still comparable over time. From 2016-17 onwards, a new disability question has been introduced for the child protection, children looked after and secure care accommodation data collections, and this reduced the question to a simple yes/no, but with a more stringent qualification - "does the young person have a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities?". This is not comparable to data prior to 2016. Work is underway to find a unified set of disability criteria to provide more detail and to meet user needs.

Further information is available in the online documentation listed in [section 3.1](#).

Notation and rounding

3.20. The following notation is used in this publication

- Data not available
- * In cases where information is presented on a small number of children, indicates that data have been suppressed to prevent disclosure of personal information.

3.21. The sum of the breakdowns in the tables may not sum to the total displayed due to rounding.

4. Data Quality and revisions

4.1. The data for all three parts of this publication – looked after children, child protection and secure care – come from administrative data held by local authorities and secure units. As this information is used to monitor and manage these sectors it should be robust and accurate.

4.2. Automated validation checks are undertaken at the point the data are submitted. These validations are outlined in the relevant data specifications (see Background note 3.1 for links).

4.3. The Children and Families statistics team undertake a range of validation checks on administrative data as part of the quality assurance process of preparing this national statistics publication. These procedures include; trend analysis, comparing against other available sources, and checking outliers with data providers. The data providers are then asked to confirm their data – for looked after children and child protection data this confirmation comes from local authorities, for secure care accommodation this confirmation comes from secure units. In cases where concerns about data quality outweigh the value of having an estimated figure publically available, we would not publish that particular information (e.g. legal reason data from the looked after children collection).

4.4. Where data need to be revised due to the resubmission of data for a particular year, or to correct errors, the timing will be announced on our website and by email to those who have registered an interest in our statistics. The impact of revisions will be clearly explained in our published reports.

Looked after – comparability over time

4.5. Looked after children statistics for years prior to 2008-09 used data supplied by local authorities aggregated at a local authority level. Since 2008-09, there have been significant improvements in the quality of data reporting as a result the collection of data about individuals. This should be borne in mind when comparing years.

4.6. Data collected on children in a planned series of short-term placements ceased after 2012/13. This was done in consultation with local authorities and data users. Historical figures are still available from previous years' publications.

Looked after – data quality of specific variables

4.7. The data on looked after children is collected from local authority social work management information systems. There can be a delay between an event affecting the child and the data being updated on local authority management information systems. Therefore, the figures published may be the subject of future revision. However, Scottish Government and partner Local Authorities have been improving data flows and the need for revision is less likely.

4.8. From 2011-12, local authorities were requested to supply information on all legal reasons for a child being looked after (i.e. a child may have more than one legal reason at any time). The quality of this information has consequently improved.

4.9. The only looked after field for which data is collected but not published is religion. This is due to data quality concerns as each year around two-thirds of children are recorded with religion as 'unknown'.

Child protection

4.10. Since 2012-13 the child protection data has been collected at an individual level. It has been normal practice that, during the collection process, local authorities revise their data for the previous year. This report reflects those updates provided by local authorities for 2017-18.

4.11. Prior to 2011-12, some local authorities did not place 'unborn' children on the child protection register until the child was actually born. The revised National Guidance now states that 'unborn' children should be placed on the child protection register if this is required and not wait until the child is born.

Secure care accommodation

4.12. As the number of young people using secure care is very small, relative changes over time will show greater percentage changes than for data relating to children looked after or child protection.

Annex A

Children's Social Work Statistics 2018-19 Publication Tables

Full Excel versions of these tables with additional detail are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication.

Introduction

- Illust. 1 Infographic showing all children in Scotland and relative number being looked after and on the child protection register at 31 July 2019

Looked after children

- Table 1.1 Number of children looked after at 31 July 2009-2019, by type of accommodation
- Chart 1 Children looked after per 1,000 children under 18 by type of accommodation 1987-2019
- Table 1.2 Children looked after at 31 July 2019 with and without a current care plan
- Table 1.3 Number and percentage of children starting to be looked after 2003-2019, by age and gender
- Table 1.4 Number and percentage of children ceasing to be looked after, by length of time looked after and age, 2003-2019
- Table 1.5 Number and Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after by destination, 2002-2019
- Table 1.6 Pathway plans and nominated pathway co-ordinators of young people who were 16 years old or over on the date they ceased to be looked after during 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019
- Table 1.7 Young people eligible for aftercare services on 31 July 2019, by age and economic activity
- Table 1.8 Children in Continuing Care
- Chart 2 Cross-UK comparison of rate of looked after children per 10,000 children, 2004-2019

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- Table 2.2 Number of registrations following an initial, pre-birth or transfer-in case conference by length of time since previous de-registration, 2007-2019
- Table 2.3 Number of deregistrations from the child protection register, 2007-2019, by length of time on register and reason for deregistration
- Chart 4 Concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the child protection register, 2019
- Table 2.4 Number of children on the child protection register and rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15 by local authority, 2007-2019
- Chart 5 Percentage of deregistrations by length of time registered, 2007-2019
- Chart 6 Cross-UK comparison of rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 under 18s, 2004-2019

Secure care accommodation

- Table 3.1 Secure care unit bed complement at 31 July 2019
- Table 3.2 Secure care accommodation capacity and usage, 2014-2019
- Table 3.3 Young people in secure care accommodation 2014-2019 by gender, age, disability and length of stay
- Table 3.4 Number of secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved and children accommodated at year end across the United Kingdom, 2014-2019

Other

- Chart 7 Children Referred to the Children's Reporter and numbers looked after/on child protection register, 2004-2019

Annex B

Children's Social Work Statistics 2018-19 Additional tables

Full Excel versions of these tables are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication.

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- Table 1.5 by age group and gender
- Table 1.6 by ethnic group
- Table 1.7 by disability status

Children **ceasing** to be looked after between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019

- Table 1.8 by age group and gender
- Table 1.9 by destination on discharge and age
- Table 1.10 by ethnic group
- Table 1.11 by disability status
- Table 1.12 by age group and length of time looked after

Young people **ceasing** to be looked after between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019 who had reached **16 years of age** on date they ceased to be looked after

- Table 1.13 by age group and destination on discharge
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- Table 1.20 and in receipt of aftercare services, with a pathway plan and pathway coordinator

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- Table 2.5a Number of children looked after by Legal Reason group 2012-2019
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- Table 3.5 Young people eligible for aftercare services, percentage receiving aftercare and percentage in employment, education or training, 31 July 2019
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- Table 4.2 Number of children on the child protection register, 2007-2019 - by ethnic group, disability and religion
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5. Secure care accommodation additional tables

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- Table 5.3 Number of human papillomavirus (HPV) immunisations received by females discharged from secure care accommodation during 2018-19
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- Table 5.5 Young people admitted to secure care accommodation: placement prior to admission and legal reason for admission by gender, 2018-19
- Table 5.6 Young people admitted to secure care accommodation by legal reason for admission and gender, 2018-19

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

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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 an alternative route
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact childrens.statistics@gov.scot for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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ISBN 978-1-80004-025-0 (web only)

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