

# Outcome Indicators for Children Looked after

## *Twelve months to 30 September 2009 England*

### SUMMARY

The main findings of the SFR are as follows:

1. At 30 September 2009 there were 43,200 children who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months by English local authorities. This is a decrease of 1 per cent from the figure of 43,700 in 30 September 2008.
2. 32,300 of these children were of school age and of these 27 per cent had a statement of Special Educational Needs, 11.9 per cent missed at least 25 days of school, and 0.4 per cent received a permanent exclusion. Since 2008, the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs has fallen by 0.9 percentage points, the percentage of pupils who missed at least 25 days of school fell by 0.4 percentage points and the percentage of looked after children with a permanent exclusion has decreased by 0.1 percentage points.
3. On average 58 per cent of those looked after children in the appropriate age group achieved level 2 at Key Stage 1 and 51 per cent achieved level 4 at Key Stage 2. The comparable percentages for all children were 85 per cent and 82 per cent respectively.
4. 46 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months who were aged 11 in 2009 achieved at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 English. This is the same as in both 2008 and 2007. 46 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months who were aged 11 in 2009 achieved level 4 in maths at Key Stage 2. The corresponding percentage for 2008 was 44 per cent and in 2007 43 per cent.
5. In school year 11, 68 per cent of looked after children obtained at least one GCSE or GNVQ compared with 99 per cent of all school children who achieved any qualification. These figures are an improvement on 2008 when the corresponding figure for looked after children was 66 per cent. 29 per cent of looked after children did not sit an examination of this type in 2009 compared with 31 per cent in 2008 and 32 per cent in 2007.
6. 15 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months obtained at least 5 GCSEs or GNVQs at grades A\*- C compared with 70 per cent of all children who gained 5 or more A\*-C at GCSE or equivalent. This compares to 14 per cent of looked after children and 65 per cent of all children in 2008. When including all equivalents, 19 per cent of looked after children obtained 5 GCSEs or equivalent.
7. Based on voluntary information provided by 127 of the 152 Local Authorities, 10 per cent of children looked after for at least twelve months achieved at least 5 A\*-C GCSEs or any equivalent, including English and mathematics. This compares to 50 per cent of all children.

8. At the end of school year 11, 73 per cent of children looked after for at least twelve months remained in full-time education and 14 per cent were unemployed the September after leaving school. In 2008, 69 per cent remained in full-time education and 16 per cent of looked after children were unemployed.
9. 9 per cent of looked after children aged 10 or over, were cautioned or convicted for an offence during the year, two and a half times the rate for all children of this age. This rate has increased since 2008.
10. 84 per cent of looked after children had immunisations that were up to date, 86 per cent had a dental check, and 85 per cent had an annual health assessment. In 2008 these figures were 82 per cent, 87 per cent and 87 per cent respectively.
11. 5 per cent of looked after children were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year, of which 60 per cent received an intervention for their problem during the year.

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Introduction**

#### **The OC2 statistical collection**

12. In September 1999 the Government established 11 objectives for children's social services in England. One of these is 'to ensure that looked after children gain the maximum life chance benefits from educational opportunities, health care and social care'.
13. In order to collect the data needed to monitor progress towards this objective three new statistical collections were introduced. One of these (OC2) covers a range of outcome indicators for looked after children in England. This publication presents the results of this collection for the twelve months ending 30 September 2009. The figures presented include the National Indicator Set indicators 99, 100 and 101.
14. The information presented in this release is sourced from the OC2 data collection. This is the final year that this collection will take place; from 2010 onwards information on the outcomes of looked after children will be sourced from the children looked after collection (SSDA 903) and the matched administrative data taken from the National Pupil Database and the Children Looked After database (CLA-NPD). A comparison between the attainment figures returned via the OC2 data collection and this new matched data source was published by the Department on 25 November 2009 and can be accessed [here](#).
15. A new publication on the Outcomes of Looked After Children presenting information from these new data sources is due to be released in November/December 2010.

## **Data Quality**

16. This is the ninth time that social services departments have been asked to supply this information. Information about substance misuse of children looked after was collected for the first time for a twelve month period ending 30 September 2006. This year, for the first time, information on achievements by looked after children in GCSEs and ALL equivalents was collected on a voluntary basis. National figures are based on the 127 of the 152 LAs that provided a full return. For all other sections of the return, full sets of data were provided by all 152 LAs.
17. In some authorities the number of looked after children in some of the categories on the OC2 return is relatively small; caution is required when considering these figures as they are more susceptible to chance variation than figures based on larger numbers of children.

## **Rounding and suppression of very small numbers to preserve confidentiality**

18. We have again applied rounding and suppression conventions to all data in this publication, in order to conceal very small numbers. This is to prevent the possibility of individual children being identified in the statistical tables. The conventions used are now applied to all personal social services statistics publications, and closely follow the established guidelines to protect the identity of all looked after children.
19. A result of applying this procedure is that some columns of data at individual Local Authority level, which largely consist of very small numbers, contain many dashes (-) to replace actual numbers in the range 1-5. For further details about rounding and suppression see the Technical Notes at the end of this document.

## **Coverage of OC2**

20. The OC2 collection covers all children and young people in England who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 30 September. These figures exclude looked after children under an agreed series of short term placements (sometimes called 'Family Link Placements', 'Short Breaks' or 'respite care') during that period. These figures include asylum seeking children.
21. From the overall group of children who had been looked after for at least twelve months at 30 September, smaller subsets are defined by the scope of some of the data items. These subsets are listed in Table 1.1 in the Technical Notes section.
22. Where a child has 'slipped' a year or more (e.g. is taking key stage tests or GCSEs later than expected from their date of birth) their results are not included.

## **Duration in Care**

23. The 2009 OC2 collection shows that 43,200 children had been continuously looked after for at least twelve months at 30 September 2009, a decrease of 1 per cent from 30 September 2008 when 43,700 children had been continuously looked after for at least twelve months.
24. The figure of 43,700 from the OC2 returns closely approximates an estimate for children at 31 March 2009 who had been looked after for twelve months or more which can be derived from the SSDA 903 return.

## **Comparability of figures from OC2 with figures for all children**

25. Several tables include comparative figures for all children in England alongside data collected from OC2. The figures for 'all children' are collected on various slightly different bases, which are explained below.

## **Comparability of educational results (Tables A, B, C1, C2, 1,2,3,4,5)**

26. The figures for educational information including SEN and exclusions in Table A and educational attainment in Tables B, C1, C2, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are collated according to the Local Authority (LA) to which each school belongs. Many looked after children in foster or residential placements are placed out-of-authority and this is particularly the case in the Greater London area, where typically more than 60 per cent of all foster placements are placed out-of-authority and may well attend a school belonging to a different LA to the authority which is looking after them. Caution must therefore be used when comparing educational data collected on the OC2, with that for all children.
27. Figures for looked after children at local authority level include maintained schools, including mainstream and maintained special schools, City Technology Colleges (CTCs) and Academies. Figures for "all children" at national level include all schools, including independent schools whereas local authority figures include maintained schools, including mainstream and special schools, CTCs and academies.
28. Comparability between educational attainment data for looked after children and all children at local level have to be viewed with these caveats in mind.
29. The national SEN figures are based on the January school census. All other figures are based on a school year running from 1 September to the following 31 August.

## Comparability of education, employment and training status (Tables D and 6)

30. The comparative figures in Tables D and 6 were provided by the Connexions Service and are based on a survey of all year 11 pupils in maintained schools in England in the school year which ended in August 2009. They exclude data from a small number of independent schools.

## Comparability of offending data (Table 7)

31. The figures for all children cited in Table 7 are for Police Force areas, which do not necessarily follow the same boundaries as individual authorities, and in many instances include the areas of a number of authorities. These figures must therefore be treated with caution. At present the 'all children' data collected on this basis are the only figures available to provide a comparison with looked after Children.

**Figure 1.1: Comparability between reference periods of OC2 data for 30 September 2009 and the data for all children obtained from other sources**

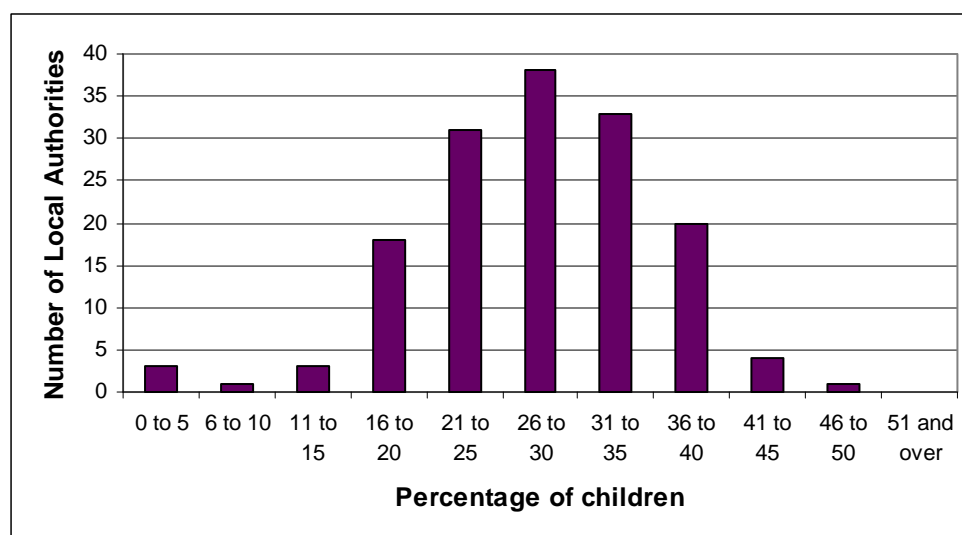
Relevant tables and data item	OC2 data item and time period	'All children' data definition, time period, and source
Table A: Children with a statement of SEN	All children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2009, and who had a statement of SEN on that date	All children in the school population at January 2009 with a statement of SEN. Data published in DCSF SFR 'Special Educational Needs in England: January 2009'.
Table A: Numbers of permanent exclusions from schools	All children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2009, and who became permanently excluded from school at any time during the twelve month period. Where a child was permanently excluded twice during the period, both exclusions are counted.	All children in the school population who became permanently excluded during the school year ending August 2008. Where a child was permanently excluded twice during the period, both exclusions are counted. Data published in DCSF SFR 'Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions from Schools and Exclusion Appeals in England 2007/08'. This is the latest year for which data is available.
Tables B,2, and 3: Key Stage results	Of all children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2009, those who were eligible to sit relevant Key Stage tasks and tests according to their date of birth.	All children in the LA maintained school population eligible to sit relevant Key Stage tasks and tests according to their date of birth. Refers to the school year ending August 2009. Data published in DCSF SFRs "National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 1 in England, 2009" and "National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England, 2009 (Revised)".
Tables C1, C2, 4 and 5: GCSE performance	Of all children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2009, those who belonged in Year 11 according to their date of birth.	All children at the end of Key Stage 4 in the school population who were eligible to sit relevant GCSE or equivalent. Refers to the school year ending August 2009.
Tables D, 6: Activity following year 11	Of all children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2009, those who belonged in Year 11 according to their date of birth.	All pupils in the LA maintained school population in England who were in year 11 which ended in August 2009. (Connexions/Careers Service Annual Activity Survey, carried out in October 2009).

## Educational Information

### Children who have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) (Tables A and 1)

32. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Further definitional and background information is provided in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* which was published in November 2001.
33. 32,300 of the children looked after continuously for at least twelve months were of school age at 30 September 2009. It is estimated that of these, 8,700 (27 per cent) during the 2008/09 school year held statements of special educational needs.
34. Compared to national figures for all children in England, looked after children are almost 10 times more likely to hold a statement of special educational needs. Just under 3 per cent of all school children in England held a statement of SEN as at January 2009.
35. The comparator figures in Table A for all children in England represent the position at January 2007 to January 2009.
36. Figure 2.1 shows the variation between authorities in the percentage of their children looked after continuously for at least twelve months who had statements of SEN on 30 September. As can be seen, in just over two-thirds of authorities the incidence of looked after children with special educational needs lies between 21 per cent and 35 per cent inclusive.

**Figure 2.1: Local authorities ranked according to percentage of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 30 September 2009 who held a statement of SEN**



## **Exclusions from school (Tables A and 1)**

37. Looked after children also appear more likely to receive a permanent exclusion from school. Out of the 32,300 looked after children of school age, there were 130 permanent exclusions during the 2008/09 school year. Fixed-term exclusions are not included. Although this is a count of exclusions rather than children excluded, it is uncommon for the same child to receive more than one permanent exclusion during the school year.
38. The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of children who had been looked after for at least twelve months and who were eligible for schooling is 0.4 per cent. This percentage is very similar to last year.
39. This compares with 0.1 per cent of all children in England in the 2007/08 school year. The comparator figures of exclusions are for all children.
40. Small numbers have been suppressed in Table 1. For further details see the section on 'Rounding and Suppression' at the end of the Technical Notes.

## **Children who missed at least 25 days of school for any reason (Tables A and 1)**

41. For the 2008/09 school year, 12 per cent of children looked after continuously throughout the year missed 25 days or more of school for any reason. This was formerly known as indicator C24 within Ofsted's Performance Assessment Framework . There is no comparable data available for all children; although the Department collects information on absence from school this is only for pupils of age 5 to 15. Information is not available for pupils from all age groups.

## **Targets on attainment (Tables B, C1, C2 and 3, 4 and 5)**

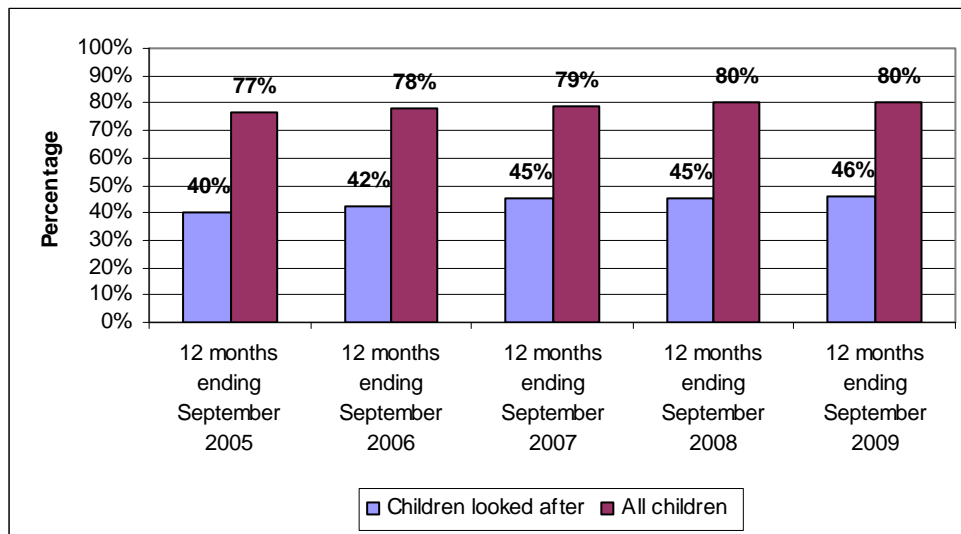
42. The current Public Service Agreement (PSA) Delivery Agreement 11 aims to narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from lower income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. There are two indicators underpinning this target, Indicator 4 relates to the proportion of children achieving level 4 at Key Stage 4.
  - *This aims to increase the proportion of children in care at Key Stage 2 achieving level 4 in English to 60 per cent by 2011 and to increase the proportion of children in care at Key Stage 2 achieving level 4 in mathematics to 55 per cent by 2011*Indicator 5 relates to the proportion of looked after children achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs.
  - *This aims to increase the proportion of children in care achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs or equivalent at Key Stage 4 to 20 per cent by 2011.*
43. The target relates to children who were looked after on 30 September and had been continuously looked after for at least twelve months.

44. 46 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months aged 11 in 2009 achieved at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 English. This is the same as in both 2008 and 2007.
45. 46 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months who were aged 11 in 2009 achieved level 4 in mathematics at Key Stage 2. The corresponding percentage for 2008 was 44 per cent and in 2007 43 per cent.
46. 15 per cent of children continuously looked after for at least twelve months in year 11 attained 5 GCSE or GNVQ equivalent passes at grades A\*-C (see paragraph 54). This figure compares to 14 per cent in 2008 and to 13 per cent in 2007. The newly collected figures in table C2 and table 5 show that 19 per cent of children continuously looked after achieved at least 5 GCSE or ANY equivalent passes at grades A\*-C. This is based on data returned by 127 local authorities.
47. In addition there are three National Indicators (NIs) derived from the OC2 data. NI 99 relates to the proportion of looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2, NI 100 relates to the proportion of looked after children reaching level 4 in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and NI101 relates to the proportion of looked after children achieving 5 or more GCSEs or any equivalents at grades A\*-C, including English and mathematics.

### **Key Stage and GCSE results (Tables B&C, and Tables 2, 3, 4 & 5)**

48. The performance of those children looked after continuously for a year at the end of the two Key Stages is shown in Table B. Overall on average, 58 per cent reached target level 2 at Key Stage 1 and 51 per cent reached level 4 at Key Stage 2. (The comparable figures for school year ending August 2008 were 56 per cent and 50 per cent respectively.) It can be seen that the pattern of academic performance of looked after children mirrors that of the national school population, the equivalent national figures for key stages 1 and 2 for the school year ending August 2009 being 85 per cent and 82 per cent respectively. However the dip in performance at the higher Key Stages is steeper for looked after children.
49. Considering Mathematics and English only, on average, 46 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months reached level 4 at Key Stage 2, compared to 45 per cent in both 2008 and in 2007. Figure 2.2 illustrates these figures more clearly and compares them against the equivalent figures for all children. Combining these figures in 2008/09 shows the proportion of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months aged 11 and achieving at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 English and mathematics to be 58 per cent of the proportion for all children. This is an increase from 57 per cent in both 2007-08 and 2006-07.

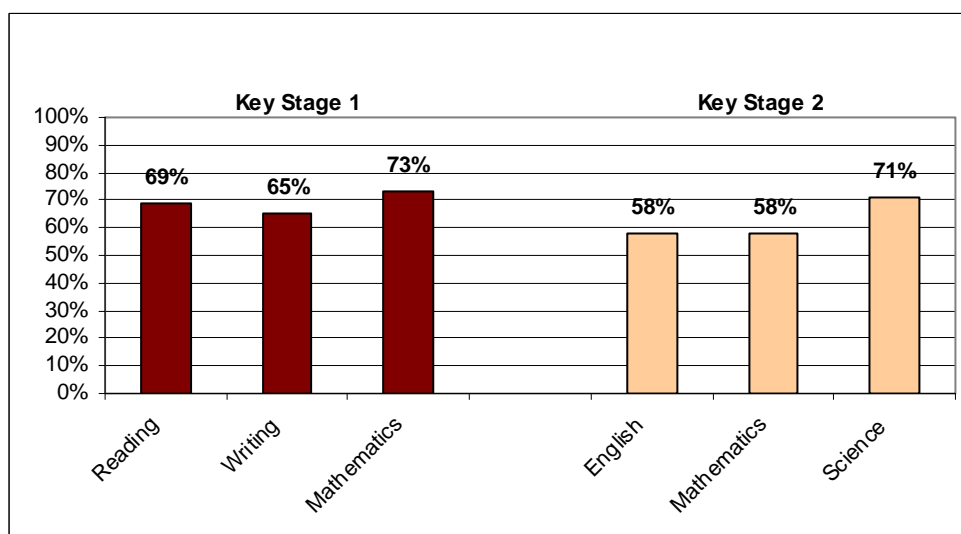
**Figure 2.2: Percentage of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 30 September 2009 reaching level 4 in both mathematics and English, compared with all children:**



50. Figure 2.3 shows the percentage of looked after children attaining the target level at each Key Stage test, as a proportion of the percentage of all children attaining the target level for the 2008/09 school year.

51. The data show that the performance of looked after children achieving the target level for Key Stage 1 is between 65 per cent and 73 per cent of that of all children and for Key Stage 2, the performance of looked after children drops to between 58 per cent and 71 per cent that of all children.

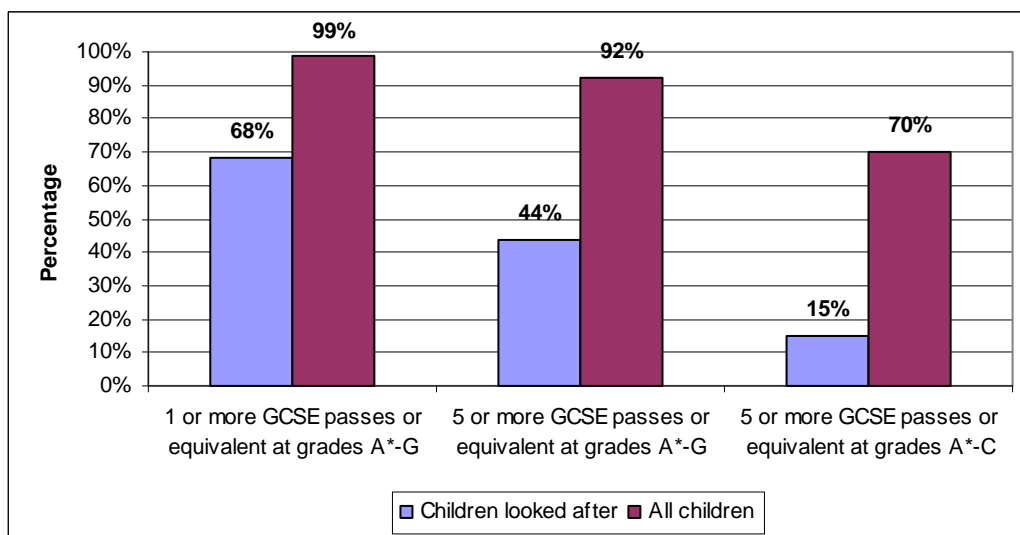
**Figure 2.3: The proportion of looked after children attaining the target level of each of the Key Stage tasks and tests, shown as a percentage of the proportion of all children attaining the target level. Twelve months to 30 September 2009**



## Year 11: GCSEs and GNVQs (Tables C1 and 4)

52. Of the children looked after continuously throughout Year 11 (Tables C1 and 4), 29 per cent did not sit a GCSE exam, compared with 31 per cent in 2008 and 32 per cent in 2007. 68 per cent obtained at least one GCSE at grade A\* - G or a GNVQ. This compares to 66 per cent and 64 per cent for the school years ending 30 August 2008 and 2007. The equivalent figure for all children in England in year 11 who obtained at least one grade A\* - G or any equivalent qualification during the school year ending August 2009 is 99 per cent.
53. 44 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months achieved 5 or more passes at grades A\* - G, compared to 92 per cent of all children.
54. Only 15 per cent of looked after children attained 5 GCSEs at grades A\*-C, compared with 70 per cent of all children. This figure for looked after children shows a slight increase compared to previous years (14 per cent in 2008 and 13 per cent in 2007). The OC2 excludes the results of young people who left care after completing year 11 but before 30 September 2009.
55. Figure 2.4 compares GCSE attainments of looked after children in year 11 to the attainment of all children.

**Figure 2.4: Percentage of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 30 September 2009 obtaining GCSE or GNVQ equivalent passes, compared with all children**

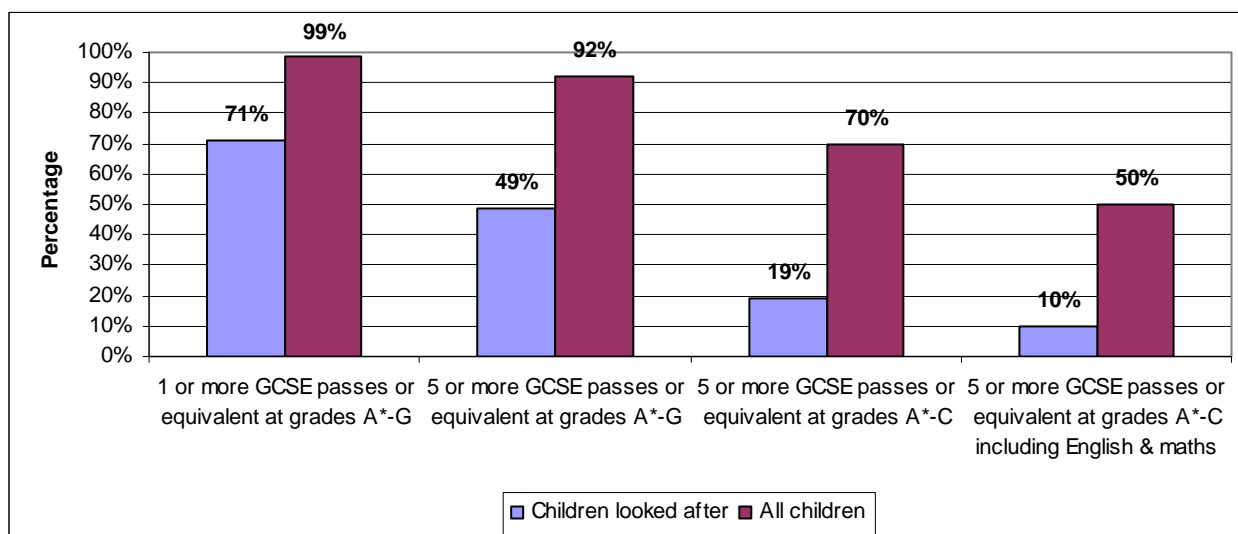


## Year 11: GCSEs and ALL equivalents (Tables C2 and 5)

56. This section only relates to LAs who submitted a full return for this voluntary section of the OC2 collection. Of the 152 LAs, 127 returned all data on GCSEs and equivalents.

- 57. Of the children looked after continuously throughout Year 11 in LAs with a full return (Tables C2 and 5), 16 per cent did not sit a GCSE exam. 71 per cent obtained at least one GCSE or any equivalent at grade A\* - G. The equivalent figure for all children in England in year 11 who obtained at least one grade A\* - G during the school year ending August 2009 is 99 per cent.
- 58. 49 per cent of looked after children achieved 5 or more passes at grades A\* - G, compared to 92 per cent of all children.
- 59. Only 19 per cent of looked after children attained 5 GCSEs at grades A\*-C, compared with 70 per cent of all children. The OC2 excludes the results of young people who left care after completing year 11 but before 30 September 2009.
- 60. 10 per cent of looked after children attained 5 GCSEs or any equivalents at grades A\*-C, including English and mathematics compared with 50 per cent of all children.
- 61. Figure 2.5 compares GCSE attainment, including any equivalent qualifications of looked after children in year 11 to the attainment of all children.

**Figure 2.5: Percentage of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 30 September 2009 obtaining GCSE or any equivalent passes, compared with all children**

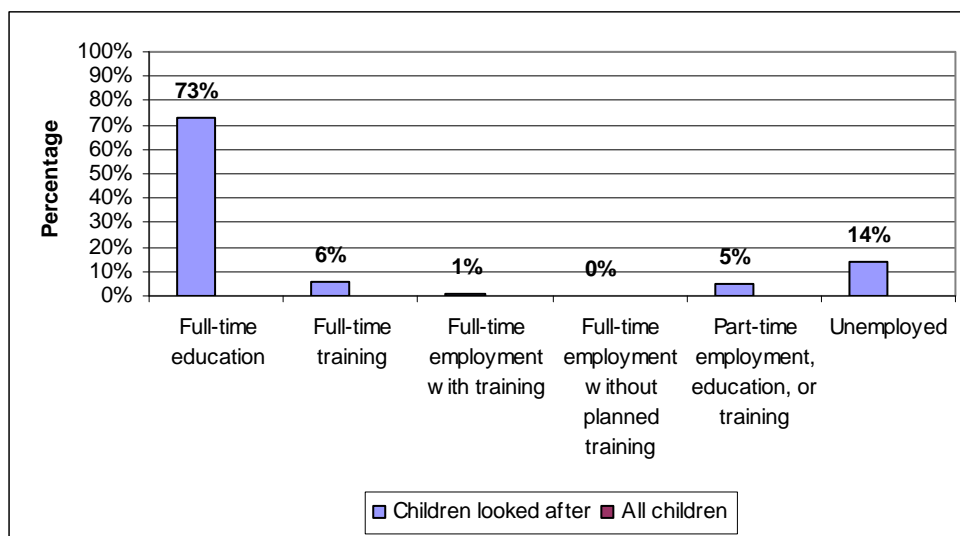


### Education and employment at age 16 (Tables D and 6)

- 62. The OC2 return collects information on the position of those looked after children who finished compulsory schooling during the 2008/09 school year on completing year 11. It should be borne in mind that these data do not represent outcomes for care leavers, as all of these young people were still looked after on 30 September.

63. At 30 September 2009, 73 per cent of these young people were in or about to start full-time education. 6 per cent were in full-time training, 1 per cent in full-time employment and 5 per cent in part-time employment, education, or training. 14 per cent of these young people were unemployed at 30 September; for 1 per cent this was due to ill-health or disability. These percentages are similar to those which were reported for the position at 30 September 2008 ( 69 per cent were in full-time education, 7 per cent in full-time training, 3 per cent in full-time employment, 5 per cent in part-time employment, education or training and 16 per cent were unemployed).
64. Figure 2.6 and Tables D and 6 compare these outcomes with data for all children who completed year 11. The comparative information for all children is from the 'Connexions/ Careers Service Annual Activity Survey 2009'. This survey was carried out in October 2009, covering all young people who were in year 11 during the 2008-09 school year.
65. The comparison shows that, at a national level, fewer looked after children remained in full-time education than in the comparator population, whereas more looked after children were unemployed, or in part-time education, employment or training.

**Figure 2.6: The position of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months at 30 September 2009 following the completion of year 11, compared with all children of same age.**



### Cautions and Convictions (Tables E and 7)

66. Looked after children of the age of criminal responsibility are two and a half times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence than others; 8.7 per cent of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months or more who were aged 10 or over had been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year.

67. This compares with a figure of 3.5 per cent for all children. The ratio of these two percentages was formerly known as indicator C18 within Ofsted's Performance Assessment Framework. This figure (2.5 per cent) is higher than that for the twelve months ending 30 September 2008 (2 per cent).
68. Table 7 shows these figures at local authority level. As explained above, the comparable figures for all children are for Police force areas, which do not necessarily follow the same boundaries as individual authorities and in many instances cover the areas of several authorities.

**Figure 3.1: Children aged 10 or over convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the years ending 30 September 2004 to 2009**

England	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Children looked after	9.3	9.3	9.6	9.5	8.8	8.7
All children	3.3	3.7	3.9	4.1	4.3	3.5
PAF Indicator C18(2)	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.5

1. Data for all children are from the Home Office and are for calendar years 31 December 2003 to 2008, expressed as a percentage of all children aged 10-17.
2. For definitions of PAF C18, see table E and table 7.

## Health Outcomes

### Health Assessments (Table F and Tables 8 & 9)

69. Of the 43,200 children who had been looked after continuously for twelve months, 36,800 (85 per cent) had their annual health assessment and 37,300 (86 per cent) had their teeth checked by a dentist during that period.
70. It must be borne in mind when considering these figures that children have a right to refuse a health assessment or dental check. As the OC2 return is for children looked after continuously for at least twelve months all babies will have teeth and so they should be checked.
71. Around 36,100 (84 per cent) of children looked after continuously for at least twelve months were up-to-date for their routine immunisations. This figure should also be interpreted with some caution. Children may enter care with their immunisations behind schedule, or unknown as in the case of unaccompanied asylum seekers, and it is not always possible for a local authority to 'catch up' with immunisations.
72. The combination of the percentages for dental checks and health assessments make up the former PAF C19 indicator. Immunisations used to be included in this calculation but have now been taken out. Previous years PAF C19 has been recalculated without immunisations for England only so a comparison can be made. The PAF C19 figure for the twelve months ending September 2009 is 86 per cent. This compares with a figure of 87 per cent last year.

73. In addition, 6,100 (88 per cent) of children under age 5 who had been looked after for at least a year had their development assessments up to date. This is the same as in 2008.

### Substance Misuse (Table G and Table 10)

74. 5 per cent of looked after children were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year, of which 60 per cent received an intervention for their problem during the year. This is a decrease compared to 63 per cent in 2008.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

### Coverage of OC2

75. The Table below specifies the subset of children captured by each of the OC2's data items.

**Table 1.1: Coverage of each OC2 Data Item, period ending 30 September 2009**

Data item on OC2	Definition	Which children were included?
1	Scope of OC2	All children who were looked after on 30 September and on that date had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months.
<i>Items 2 – 8 are subsets of item 1:</i>		
2	Total eligible for schooling	Children whose date of birth in range 1/9/92 to 31/8/04
3	Key stage 1	Children eligible for school year 2, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/01 to 31/8/02.
4	Key stage 2	Children eligible for school year 6, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/97 to 31/8/98.
5	GCSEs and GNVQs	Children eligible for school year 11, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/92 to 31/8/93.
6	GCSEs and all equivalents	Children eligible for school year 11, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/92 to 31/8/93.
7	Offending	Children aged 10 or over at 30 September, i.e. whose date of birth is 30/9/99 or earlier.
8	Development Assessments	Children aged 5 years or younger at 30 September, i.e. whose date of birth is 01/10/03 or greater.
9	Immunisations	All children covered by OC2 return, i.e. all children who were looked after on 30 September and had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months. (This is the same as item 1).
10	Dental checks	
11	Health Assessments	
12	Employment/school status at 30 Sept 2009	Children eligible for school year 11, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/92 to 31/8/93. (This is the same as Item 6).

Key Stage 3 attainment information is no longer collected and is therefore not reported on in this publication.

## Twelve month data period

76. The data collected cover young people looked after at 30 September 2009 in England who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months, defined as the period from 1 October to the following 30 September inclusive. This departs from the Department's other collections of children's personal social services data, which use a 'year' based on the period ending 31 March. The data period used for the OC2 was designed to accommodate the school year.

## Boundaries of authorities

77. As explained in section 2 of this Commentary, some young people covered by the OC2 will have attended schools outside the boundaries of their home local authority social services department. Hence caution must be used when comparing educational data collected on OC2, with that for all children collected.

## Rounding and Suppression of very small Numbers

78. To ensure that no individual can be identified from statistical Tables, similar conventions from last year have again been used in this publication for the rounding and suppression of very small numbers.

## National Tables A - G

79. For this reason, all **numbers** which appear in the national summary Tables (Tables A to G) have been rounded to the nearest 100 if they exceed 1,000, and to the nearest 10 otherwise. Numbers from 1 to 5 inclusive have been suppressed, being replaced in the Table by a hyphen. Where any number is shown as zero (0) the original figure submitted was also zero.
80. All **percentages** at national level have been rounded to 1 decimal place. Wherever the numerator is 5 or less or the denominator is 10 or less of the underlying numbers from which a percentage has been calculated, the percentage has been suppressed and replaced by a hyphen. Where any percentage is shown as zero (0) either both the original figures from which it has been calculated were zero or the numerator was zero and the denominator is over 10.

## Local Tables 1 - 10

81. At local authority level (Tables 1 - 10) the England total **numbers** at the head of each Table have been rounded either to the nearest 10 or 100, following the rule outlined above.
82. All other numbers at local authority level have been rounded to the nearest five, and numbers from 1 to 5 inclusive have been suppressed, being replaced in the published Tables by a hyphen. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was also zero.
83. In local authority tables the England total **percentages** at the head of each Table have been rounded to 1 decimal place, following the rule outlined above.
84. Ratios and PAF indicators have been expressed to one decimal place. Where percentage figures from other sources have been quoted, they have been left in the form in which they were originally published.
85. In tables which include time series, this rounding convention has been applied to data for previous years for the sake of consistency.

## Suppression of other numbers

86. It has also been necessary to suppress other figures whenever it would be possible to calculate the value of a suppressed number by means of simple arithmetic. The rule applied in these circumstances has been to suppress the next smallest data item.

## Symbols used

87. The following symbols have been used in the Tables:

- 0 zero
- Small number suppressed to preserve confidentiality. Normally this will be a number between 1 and 5 inclusive, or a percentage where either the numerator is between 1 and 5 or the denominator is between 1 and 10 inclusive.
- .. Not available
- . Not applicable

**Table 1.2: Examples of the rounding conventions used in this publication:**

Actual number	Numbers at England level, as shown in the Tables	Numbers at Local Authority level, as shown in the tables
0	0	0
1	-	-
4	-	-
5	-	-
6	10	5
7	10	5
8	10	10
9	10	10
10	10	10
12	10	10
13	10	15
15	20	15
16	20	15
20	20	20
120	120	120
124	120	125
125	130	125
126	130	125
994	990	995
995	1,000	995
999	1,000	1,000
1,949	1,900	1,950
1,950	2,000	1,950
1,955	2,000	1,955
1,958	2,000	1,960

### Further enquiries

88. Further enquiries concerning the statistics contained in this report should be addressed to:

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 Department for Children, Schools and Families  
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 Mowden Hall  
 Staindrop Road  
 Darlington DL3 9BG  
[cla.stats@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cla.stats@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk)

### Looked after children data user group:

This is a new group which aims to seek feedback on whether these statistics are meeting users' requirements and to consult on any future changes to this data collection and the timing and format of our outputs. If you would like to participate in this group then please register your interest by email at [mailbox.cla.stats@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mailbox.cla.stats@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk).