

## **Statistics of Education:**

### **Children Adopted from Care in England: 2002–2003**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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## CHILDREN ADOPTED FROM CARE IN ENGLAND: 2002–03

### Introduction

1. This bulletin presents data for the year ending 31 March 2003 on children looked after by English local authorities who were adopted during the year. This is the third year that data were collected via the AD1 statistical return, providing a detailed picture of the adoption process. For earlier years some basic information on adoptions was available via other statistical collections. All figures are for England only and exclude children accommodated under agreed series of short-term placements.

### Main Findings

- 3,500 looked after children were adopted in England in the year ending 31 March 2003, 3% (110) more than in the previous year and 29% (810) more than in 1999–2000.
- The number of looked after children adopted in 2002–03 was 7% of the number of children who had been looked after for 6 months or more at 31 March.
- 59% (2,100) of these children were aged between 1 to 4, whilst 29% (1,000) were aged between 5 to 9.
- 68% (2,400) of children had been looked after for less than 3 years prior to being adopted.
- The average time taken for looked after children to complete the adoption process was 2 years 9 months in 2002–03.
- 81% (2,900) of looked after children adopted during the year 2002–03 were placed for adoption within 12 months of the best interest decision.
- 15% (540) of children were adopted by their former foster carer.

## STATISTICAL COMMENTARY

### Life chances for children

2 The Government's target for adoption, included in the Priorities and Planning Framework 2003–2006, is to maintain current levels of adoption placement stability (as measured by the proportion of placements for adoption ending with the making of an adoption order) so that the quality is not compromised whilst increasing the use of adoption, as follows:

*By 2004–05 increase by 40% the number of looked after children who are adopted, and aim to exceed this by achieving, if possible, a 50% increase by 2006, up from 2,700 in 1999/00. All councils will bring their practice*

*up to the current level of the best performers (bands 4 and 5 of the PSS PAF indicator C23) (See paragraph 3)*

*By 2004–05 increase to 95% the proportion of looked after children placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision that adoption is in the child's best interests, up from 81% in 2000–01, and maintain this level (95%) up to 2006, by locally applying the timescales in the National Adoption Standards, taking account of the individual child's needs (See paragraph 18)*

The Performance Assessment Framework indicator for adoptions of looked after children, PAF C23, is defined as follows:

*The number of looked after children adopted during the year as a percentage of the number of children looked after at 31 March who had been looked after for 6 months or more on that day. (See paragraph 5)*

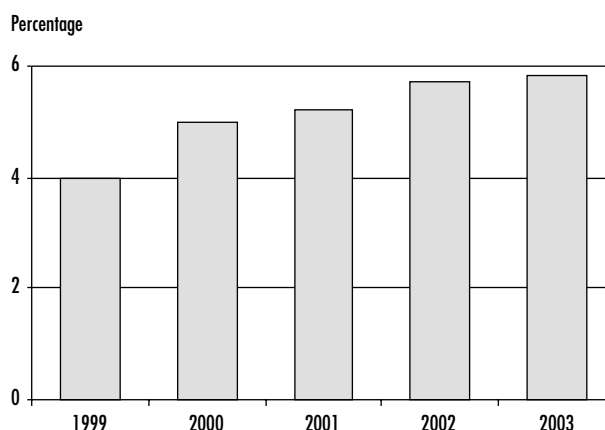
### Children adopted during the year to 31 March 2003

#### Total figures – Table 1

3 The total number of looked after children who were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003 was 3,500, an increase of 3% on the previous year, and a 29% increase on the 1999–2000 figure.

4 The percentage of looked after children who were adopted in 2002–03 is much the same as the previous year, although it had risen each year between 1999 and 2001. This is illustrated by Figure A. 6% of looked after children were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003 compared to 4% in 1998–99.

**FIGURE A:**  
Percentage<sup>1</sup> of looked after children adopted, years ending 31 March 1999 to 2003



<sup>1</sup> Percentage of total looked after at 31 March

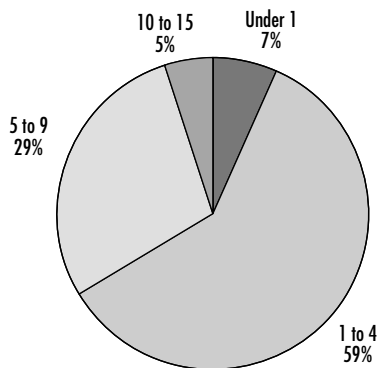
5 Provisional figures for PAF indicator C23, based on data from the CLA100 return, show that the number of looked after children adopted in 2002–03 was 7% of the number of children who had been looked after for 6 months or more at 31 March. This is similar to the figure in 2001–02. Revised figures for this indicator will be calculated using SSDA903 data and will be published in Spring 2004.

**6** Table 1 shows that in 2002–03 more boys were adopted than girls. This differs from 2001–02 when an equal number of boys and girls were adopted. The gender balance in the numbers adopted has fluctuated over the past 5 years.

**7** The average age of a child at adoption in 2002–03 was 4 years 3 months. This was slightly younger than in the previous year, when the average age was 4 years 5 months. The average age has fluctuated around this level for the past 5 years.

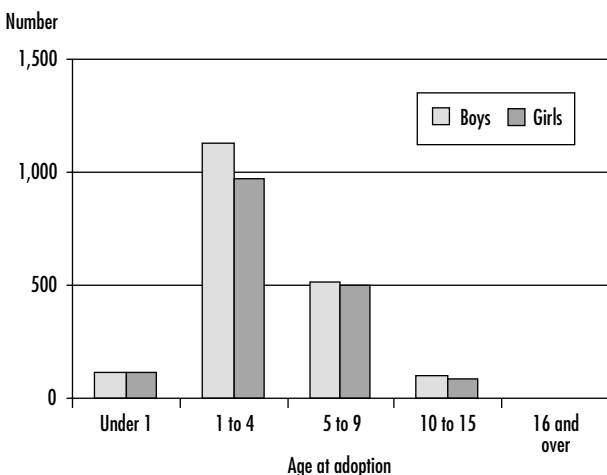
**8** The majority of children adopted in 2002–03 were aged between 1 and 4 at adoption (2,100 or 59% of the total). This is an increase in the number of children in this age group since the previous year (2,000 in 2001–02), although as a percentage of the total it has gone down slightly (60% in 2001–02). The number of children adopted aged under 1 was 240 in 2002–03, up from 190 in 2001–02. The number of children in the older age groups was about the same as the previous year, with a slight decrease in the number of 10–15 year olds being adopted. Figure B illustrates the age breakdown of looked after children adopted in 2002–03.

**FIGURE B:**  
Children adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003, by age



**9** Figure C shows that in most age groups the number of boys and girls adopted was very similar. However among children aged 1 to 4 there were more boys adopted than girls.

**FIGURE C:**  
Children adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003, by age and sex



### Length of final period of care

**10** For children who were adopted during 2002–03, Table 1 shows that the average duration of their final period of care was 2 years 9 months, a decrease of one month on last year's figure. The average duration has fluctuated at about this level for the past five years. In 2002–03 the percentage of children whose final period of care lasted under 2 years was 41%, compared to 38% in 2001–02.

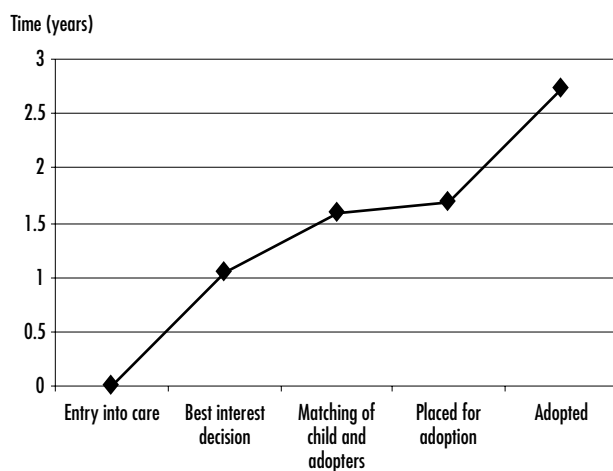
### Length of final period of care by age – Table 2

**11** Table 2 shows the length of the final period of care for children adopted in 2002–03 by the age at which they started to be looked after. This shows that the younger a child at the start of their final period of care, the shorter the length of time they are looked after before an adoption order is granted. 70% of children who entered care aged 4 and under were adopted in under 3 years, compared to only 39% of those aged 5 and over.

### Length of stages of the adoption process – Tables 3 and 4

**12** There are four stages of the adoption process as shown in Table 3. The shortest stage of the adoption process was between 'matching of child and adopters' and 'being placed for adoption'; this took on average 1 month in 2002–03, about the same as the previous year. The longest stages of the process were firstly between 'entry into care' and 'best interest decision' and secondly between 'placed for adoption' and 'being adopted', which both took on average 1 year (see Figure D).

**FIGURE D:**  
Average length of time between stages of the adoption process, for adoptions during the year ending 31 March 2003



**13** Table 3 shows that for children adopted in 2002–03 the average age at the start of the last period of care was 1 year 7 months, the same as in the previous year.

**14** Table 4 shows the average time between the different stages of the adoption process by age at the start of the period of care. It illustrates that children aged under 1 spent less time at most stages of the process than other age groups.

**15** The length of time between entry into care and the best interest decision was longer for children who entered care when they were older. On average it took 9 months for children under 1 and 1 year 4 months for children aged 1–4. This increased gradually, to nearly two years for children aged 7 or over at the start of the period of care.

**16** The time between the best interest decision and the matching of the child and adopter was 7 months on average. This stage tended to take longest for those who were aged 4 or 5 at the start of the period of care. Children aged 7 and over spent less time at this second stage than all other age groups except the under 1s.

### Length of time between best interest decision and adoption – Tables 5 and 6

**17** Table 5 shows that the average length of time between the best interest decision and adoption was 1 year 8 months in 2002–03, compared to 1 year 9 months in 2001–02. For all ages the average time of this process was the same or less than the previous year.

**18** Table 6 shows that 81% of looked after children who were adopted in the year ending 31 March 2003 were placed for adoption within 12 months of the best interest decision. This is a slight increase on the figures for the last two years, which were both 80%.

### Foster Carer Adoptions – Table 7

**19** The number of looked after children who were adopted by their former foster carers in 2002–03 was 540, or 15% of the total (see Figure E).

**FIGURE E:**  
Number of children adopted by their former foster carers during the years ending 31 March 2001 to 2003

	2001	2002	2003
Number	430	550	540
<i>As a percentage of all children adopted</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>15</i>
Boys	230	240	280
Girls	210	300	260

**20** The gender balance was similar for foster carer adoptions and other adoptions, with more boys being adopted than girls in both categories. 52% of children adopted by their former foster carer were boys, compared to 53% of those not adopted by a former foster carer.

**21** Children who were adopted by their former foster carers tended to be older, with an average age at adoption of 6 years 8 months, compared with 3 years 10 months for children not adopted by their foster carers.

**22** Children who were adopted by their former foster carers were looked after for longer before being adopted than other children. 62% of children adopted by their former foster carers were looked after for 3 years or more prior to being adopted, compared to 27% for other children.

### Children placed for adoption

**23** Before looked after children can be adopted they must be placed for adoption with their prospective adopters. This must be for a period of at least 13 weeks (except for children adopted by their former foster carers), although in practice it is usually much longer. Information about looked after children who are placed for adoption is collected by the Department on the SSDA903 statistical return. In the year ending 31 March 2002, 7% of adoptive placements did not end in adoption. This figure has remained at a similar level since 1999–2000. The figure for 2003 is not available yet, as the SSDA903 database has not been finalised.

**24** Snapshot figures for 31 March 2003 show that at that date the number of children placed for adoption was 3,400. This is a decrease of 5% on the figure at 31 March 2002 (3,600). The number of children placed for adoption at 31 March each year gives an indication of the future number of adoptions.

### Adoptions not from care

**25** In the year ending 31 March 2003, adoptions of looked after children made up about 70% of all adoptions in England. The total number of adoptions during the year was 5,000. Although the number of adoptions of looked after children has increased over the last five years, the number of other adoptions, eg by step-parents or relatives, has decreased from 2,200 in 1998–99 to 1,500 in 2002–03.

**26** Figures for all adoptions that take place in England and Wales can be found in the ONS publication ‘Marriage, divorce and adoption statistics’. For more information on this publication, please call 01329 813376.

### Other UK data

**27** Enquiries about adoptions in other UK countries should be made to

Wales: Robin Jones  
02920 823 625

Scotland: Ester Roughsedge  
0131 244 3745

Northern Ireland: Eugene Mooney  
02890 520 726

**TABLE 1:**  
Looked after children adopted during the years ending 31 March 1999 to 2003

numbers and percentages

	Numbers <sup>1,2</sup>					Percentages				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>All children</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>3,100</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Percentage of looked after children adopted from care<sup>3</sup></i>	4	5	5	6	6					
<b>Sex</b>										
Boys	1,100	1,400	1,600	1,700	1,900	49	50	52	50	53
Girls	1,100	1,400	1,500	1,700	1,700	51	50	48	50	47
<b>Age at adoption</b>										
Under 1	200	200	200	190	240	9	7	7	5	7
1 to 4	1,300	1,600	1,900	2,000	2,100	57	58	60	60	59
5 to 9	590	790	850	1,000	1,000	26	29	28	29	29
10 to 15	150	140	140	190	180	7	5	5	5	5
16 and over	10	10	20	10	10	0	0	1	0	0
Average age (yrs:months)	4:4	4:4	4:3	4:5	4:3					
<b>Duration of final period of care<sup>4</sup></b>										
Under 1 year	240	240	260	230	270	11	9	8	7	8
1 year to under 2 years	580	710	950	1,100	1,200	26	26	31	31	33
2 years to under 3 years	610	810	860	970	970	27	30	28	28	27
3 years to under 5 years	580	750	750	870	810	26	27	24	25	23
5 years and over	200	230	250	310	320	9	8	8	9	9
Average duration (yrs:months)	2:10	2:9	2:9	2:10	2:9					

1 Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding

2 Data for 2001, 2002 and 2003 are taken from the AD1 return. Data for earlier years are based on the SSDA903 sample

3 Percentage of total looked after at 31 March

4 Period of care refers to a continuous period of being looked after, which may include more than one placement or legal status

**TABLE 2:**  
Looked after children adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003:  
Age of children at start of last period of care and the length of time until adoption

		numbers <sup>1</sup>								
		Time between start of care period and granting of adoption order								
		All children	Under 1 year	1 year to under 2 years	2 years to under 3 years	3 years to under 4 years	4 years to under 5 years	5 years to under 6 years	6 years to under 7 years	7 years & over
<b>All children</b>		<b>3,500</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Percentages<sup>1</sup></i>		<i>100</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>
Age at start of last period of care <sup>2</sup>										
	Under 1	2,000	260	890	470	180	80	30	30	30
	1	470	-	120	160	100	40	20	-	20
	2	370	-	70	110	90	40	30	20	-
	3	270	0	40	90	60	40	10	10	10
	4	200	0	20	70	70	20	10	10	10
	5	110	0	20	30	30	20	10	10	10
	6	70	0	10	20	20	10	10	-	-
	7 & over	80	0	10	20	20	10	10	-	-

1 Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding

2 Period of care refers to a continuous period of being looked after, which may include more than one placement or legal status

**TABLE 3:**  
Looked after children adopted during the years ending 31 March 2001 to 2003:  
Average time between the different stages of the adoption process, and average age

		years:months					
Stages of the adoption process		Average time between entry into care and different stages of adoption process (y:m)			Average age of child (y:m)		
		2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
	Entry into care	0:0	0:0	0:0	1:6	1:7	1:7
	Best interest decision	1:0	1:1	1:0	2:6	2:8	2:7
	Matching of child and adopters	1:6	1:7	1:7	3:0	3:2	3:2
	Placed for adoption	1:7	1:9	1:8	3:2	3:4	3:3
	Adopted	2:9	2:10	2:9	4:3	4:5	4:3

**TABLE 4:**

Looked after children adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003:

Average time between the different stages of the adoption process by age at start of period of care

years:months					
Age at start of period of care	Average time between entry into care and date of best interest decision	Average time between date of best interest decision and matching of child and adopters	Average time between date of matching and date placed for adoption	Average time between date placed for adoption and the date child adopted	Total: Average time between entry into care and adoption
Under 1	0:9	0:5	0:1	0:11	2:2
1	1:3	0:8	0:1	1:1	3:2
2	1:4	0:9	0:1	1:3	3:5
3	1:4	0:9	0:2	1:3	3:6
4	1:4	0:10	0:2	1:4	3:6
5	1:8	0:10	0:2	1:3	3:11
6	1:8	0:9	0:2	1:0	3:6
7 & over	1:11	0:7	0:1	1:3	3:10
All ages	1:0	0:7	0:1	1:0	2:9

**TABLE 5:**  
Average duration of time between best interest decision and adoption during the years ending 31 March 2001 to 2003, by age

Age at best interest decision	years:months		
	Average duration of adoption process, from time of best interest decision (y:m)		
	2001	2002	2003
<b>All children</b>	<b>1:9</b>	<b>1:9</b>	<b>1:8</b>
Under 1	1:4	1:3	1:3
1	1:8	1:8	1:7
2	1:11	2:1	2:0
3	2:0	2:2	2:0
4	2:1	2:5	2:3
5	2:2	2:5	2:3
6 & over	2:6	2:1	2:1

**TABLE 6:**  
Time taken between best interest decision and being placed for adoption during the years ending 31 March 2001 to 2003

	numbers		
	2001	2002	2003
<b>All children<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3,100</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>3,500</b>
Placed within twelve months of best interest decision	2,500	2,700	2,900
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>81</i>
Placed over twelve months of best interest decision	600	700	680
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>19</i>

<sup>1</sup> Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding

**TABLE 7:**  
Looked after children adopted during the year ending 31 March 2003: Foster carer adoptions

	numbers and percentages			
	numbers <sup>1</sup>		percentages	
	Not adopted by foster carer	Adopted by foster carer	Not adopted by foster carer	Adopted by foster carer
<b>All children</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Boys	1,600	280	53	52
Girls	1,400	260	47	48
<b>Age at adoption</b>				
Under 1	220	10	7	2
1 to 4	1,900	200	63	38
5 to 9	800	210	27	40
10 to 15	-	100	-	18
16 & over	-	10	-	2
Average age (yrs:months)	3:10	6:8		
<b>Duration of final period of care<sup>2</sup></b>				
Under 1 year	250	10	8	3
1 year to under 2 years	1,100	90	36	17
2 years to under 3 years	870	100	29	18
3 years to under 5 years	640	170	21	31
5 years and over	160	170	5	31
Average duration (yrs: months)	2:5	4:3		

1 Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding

2 Period of care refers to a continuous period of being looked after, which may include more than one placement or legal status

## TECHNICAL NOTES

### The AD1 return

Figures for the years ending 31 March 2001 to 2003 are derived from the AD1 statistical return, which was submitted to the Department by local councils in England with social services responsibilities. Data for previous years have been extracted from the SSSA903 database.

The AD1 return collects child level figures for children looked after by local councils who were adopted within the collection period. It was first introduced for the year ending 31 March 2001. The aim of this return is to provide more detailed data relating to adoptions from care, and providing more up-to-date summary figures for our customers than is possible from the detailed SSSA903 return.

The AD1 return will work in conjunction with the SSSA903 return. Following this initial publication, a more in-depth analysis will be provided as part of the SSSA903 publication where possible.

### Definitions used

A copy of the AD1 form and associated guidance notes can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B at the back of this bulletin.

### Missing data

Data were received from all 150 local authorities. Four authorities (Rutland UA, Isles of Scilly, City of London and Sutton) had no looked after children adopted during the year.

### Validation checks

The data were subjected to a number of validation checks, including comparisons with other collections (CLA 100 & SSSA903) where possible. Local authorities were informed of the validation failures and many returned corrected data. Data published in the main SSSA903 publication will incorporate any further data revisions.

### Rounding and suppression

In order to ensure confidentiality of all looked after children rounding and suppression conventions have been used in this bulletin.

All numbers 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 published tables by a hyphen. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero.

### Figures on the Internet

The Department for Education and Skills website contains a copy of this Bulletin. It can be found at:

[www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000425/index.shtml](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000425/index.shtml)

### Symbols used in tables

- Figures between 1 and 5 inclusive

Department of Health

Form AD1  
2002/2003

Adoptions of looked after children

This collection covers children who ceased to be looked after following the granting of an adoption order. Complete one of these forms for every looked after child by your local council who was adopted between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2003 inclusive.

Submit completed forms by 31 May 2003

	Item
Local Authority Code:	1
Young Person's ID Number:	2
Sex (1 = male, 2 = female):	3
Date of birth:	4
Date started to be looked after in latest period of care:	5
Date of approval of adopters:	6
Date of LA's decision that adoption is in the child's best interest:	7
Date of matching child and adopters:	8
Date of placement for adoption:	9
Date of adoption:	10
Was child adopted by his/her former foster carer(s)? (1 = yes, 0 = no):	11
UASC <sup>1</sup> at date of adoption (1 = yes, 0 = no):	12

<sup>1</sup> UASC: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker, Refugee or granted Exceptional Leave to Remain

Department of Health

# Guidance Notes for the completion of statistical return AD1

## Adoptions of looked after children

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### 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003

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For help and information: contact DoH on [clastats@doh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:clastats@doh.gsi.gov.uk)

Send completed forms or disk (with a batch control sheet) to the appropriate contact point for your local council:

LA Codes 100 to 410	Contact: Farida Ebrahim	Tel: 020 7972 5574
LA Codes 411 to 721	Contact: Don Sault	Tel: 020 7972 5578
LA Codes 722 to 914	Contact: Gideon Ovadia	Tel: 020 7972 5579

Postal address for correspondence and submissions

Department of Health (SD3A)  
Room 452C Skipton House  
80 London Rd  
London SE1 6LH

Or email to: [clastats@doh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:clastats@doh.gsi.gov.uk)

An electronic version of the form, in the form of an MS Excel workbook, has been placed on the internet at [www.doh.gov.uk/stats/forms.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/stats/forms.htm). Local councils are encouraged to use this format, as the data can then be loaded directly into the Department's database.

### Purpose of return

The aim of the AD1 return is to collect detailed information about every child who was adopted from care during the year ending 31 March 2003. This data relate to both the child and its adoptive parent(s).

### Summary of changes for 2002/03

- Identification of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). An additional new field (item 12) has been included for identifying those young people who were UASC at the date of adoption (see page 4 for details).

### Deadline

The final deadline for submitting the completed return will be **31 May 2003**. If you submit after this date, you may be too late to be included in the published figures.

## **General background Notes**

### **Children covered by this return**

1. This return applies to all young people looked after by your authority at some point during the year ending 31 March 2003, who ceased to be looked after (during this period) on the granting of an adoption order. All of these children will have been placed with their adoptive parents before adoption. They should be treated as looked after throughout this period of being 'placed for adoption', and should be recorded as ceasing to be looked after on the day the adoption order was granted.
2. This return applies both to the one third of looked after children covered by the SSDA 903 sample, and the two thirds not included in the sample.

### **Cross-validation against SSDA 903 sample records**

3. Where a child's day of birth is divisible by three, it will fall in the SSDA 903 sample group and a SSDA 903 record should also be submitted for the 2002/2003 year.
4. The following checks will be made by DH after both AD1 and SSDA 903s have been submitted:
  - That an SSDA 903 record has also been submitted for all children for whom a form AD1 has been submitted and whose day of birth puts them in the sample group.
  - That a form AD1 has also been submitted for all sample children where reason episode ceased E1 ('adopted') has been recorded on an SSDA 903 return.
5. For all children where there is both an AD1 and an SSDA 903 return:
  - That items 1,2,3,4 on AD1 match the same items on the header of SSDA 903.
  - That item 5 on AD1 matches the same date calculated from SSDA 903 episode data.
  - That item 9 matches the date of the start of the 'placement for adoption' recorded on SSDA 903.
  - That item 10 matches the date the child left care and with the reason episode ceased being recorded as 'adopted' (code E1) on SSDA 903.

### **PAF indicator C23**

6. Information provided in this return, together with information from table 1.1 of the CLA100, will be used by the Department to calculate indicator C23 of the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) for your council. This is:
  - The number of children adopted from care during the year, as a percentage of all children who were looked after at 31 March 2003 for over 6 months.

**Note:**

Any AD1 record that fails any of the above mentioned validation tests, will be excluded from this calculation.

## Completing this return

7. Boxes must not contain letters, nor symbols such as hyphens or asterisks. Complete all boxes, do not leave any uncompleted.

### Notes on Individual numbered items on AD1 form

#### Item 1: LA Code

1. Use the standard 3-digit code number allocated by DH for PSS statistical returns.

#### Item 2: Child ID number

2. A unique local ID number should be provided for each young person. This must be the SSDA 903 ID number (if the young person falls within the SSDA 903 sample group), and should be entered in exactly the same format.

#### Item 3: Sex

3. Enter 1 for male, 2 for female.

#### Items 4–10: Dates

4. If completing the form as a spreadsheet, divide with forward slashes, e.g. 25/04/1994.

#### Item 5: Date started to be looked after in latest period of care

5. If child has been looked after more than once, with a break in between, only the start-date of the latest period of care should be entered. Exclude any period during which the child was looked after under an agreed series of short breaks (Reg 13 of the Arrangement for Placement of Children (General) Regulations, 1991).

#### **Note**

This date should **not** be confused with the date the child first started to be looked after; neither should it be confused with the start date of the last *episode* of care.

#### Items 6, 7 & 8: Dates

6. There may be a number of steps involved in the making of these decisions. Enter in each case the date of the final decision by the local authority, rather than the date of the recommendation by the adoption panel. Please note the following sequencing rules (for further information, please see the document “AD1 Frequently Asked Questions”):
  - The date at item 5 must be before the date at item 7
  - The date at item 6 may be before, after or the same as the date at item 7
  - The dates at item 6 and 7 must be before or the same as the date at item 8
  - The date at item 8 must be before or the same as the date at item 9

### **Item 9: Placement for adoption**

7. All of these children will have been placed with their adoptive parents before adoption for at least 13 weeks; they should be treated as looked after throughout this 'placement for adoption'. The date of the placement should be taken as the date the child moved to start living with the prospective adopters on a permanent basis, except where the child was adopted by his/her former foster carers. There are two ways in which this can happen:
- Foster carers may adopt with the agreement of the local authority. In this case the date of placement for adoption may be regarded as being the same as the date of a decision by the LA to match the child and the prospective adopters (item 8).
  - Alternatively foster carers may adopt after making an application for adoption themselves without the support of the local authority. In this case the date of placement for adoption may be taken as the date the adoption application was lodged with the court. In addition, under these circumstances the adopters may not have been approved by the LA or matched with the child, or the LA may not have decided that adoption is in the child's best interest. In these cases the date that the adoption application was lodged with the court should be used to complete these data items. This approach may also be necessary in cases where individuals other than foster carers successfully apply to adopt a looked after child.

### **Item 10: Date of adoption**

8. This is the date the court grants an adoption order. A child ceases to be looked after on that date.

### **Item 11: Child adopted by former carer**

9. Enter 1 for yes or 0 for no.

### **Item 12: UASC Indicator**

10. This item relates to whether the child was an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker at the time of adoption. This should include former UASCs, who have been granted either Refugee Status or Exceptional Leave to Remain. Enter 1 for yes or 0 for no.

## **Methods of submitting this return**

### **Electronic submission**

1. This is the preferred format, and the AD1 form is available as an Excel workbook on the 'Statistics and Surveys' part of the DH website at **[www.doh.gov.uk/stats/forms.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/stats/forms.htm)**. This workbook is designed to be fully interactive and user-friendly, and the first sheet of the file gives full notes on "How to use". If you are unable to download it from the internet, it can be sent to you on request by post on disk, or by email. The workbook also contains a copy of the AD1 form and a batch control sheet that are in a readily printable format.

2. You can check at any time to see whether a child has been entered on the workbook more than once by pressing Control + c. You are, in any event, advised to perform this check, before forwarding the submission to the Department.
3. Your completed spreadsheet should be saved (see under "How to Use" for file naming protocol) and emailed to the Department at the address given on the Cover Sheet. Alternatively it may be sent on disk by post.

### **As paper forms**

4. A 'paper version', suitable for completion by hand, is supplied within the Excel workbook, and can be printed off and photocopied, if necessary. Forms submitted in this way should be returned in a single bundle with a completed Cover Sheet securely attached.
5. When completing the Cover Sheet manually please ensure that the total number of forms enclosed has been entered correctly.

#### **Note**

With effect from 2003/2004, all child based returns must be made in the appropriate electronic format. 2002/2003 is the last year for which a paper AD1 return will be accepted.

### **Comments**

We would welcome comments on this guidance, particularly where it is felt that it could be improved, and we will be willing to update the guidance to take on board your views. Any revisions to this guidance will be placed on the usual web site; please ensure that you have the latest version to hand when completing the AD1 submission. Comments should be e-mailed to the address at the start of this document.

### **Version control**

This is version 1.0 of AD1 guidance for the 2002/03 year.

### **AD1 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Further details on completion and coverage of this return can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions document on the internet at [www.doh.gov.uk/stats/forms.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/stats/forms.htm).

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