

Outcome Indicators for Children Looked after

Twelve months to 30 September 2007 ***England***

SUMMARY

The main findings are as follows:

1. At 30 September 2007 there were 44,200 children who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months by English local authorities. This is the same number as at 30 September 2006.
2. 33,600 of these children were of school age and of these 28% had SEN statements, 13% missed at least 25 days of school, and 1% received a permanent exclusion. These percentages were similar to last year.
3. On average 56% of those children looked after in the appropriate age group achieved level 2 at Key Stage 1, 49% level 4 at Key Stage 2 and 30% level 5 at Key Stage 3. The comparable percentages for all children were 85%, 82% and 74% respectively.
4. The 46% of children looked after continuously for at least 12 months aged 11 in 2007 achieved at least level 4 at KS2 English. This figure compares to 43% in 2006 and 42% in 2005. 43% of children looked after continuously for at least 12 months who were in year 11 in 2007 achieved level 4 in maths at Key Stage 2. The corresponding percentage for 2006 was 41% and in 2005 38%.
5. In school year 11, 64% of these children looked after obtained at least one GCSE or GNVQ compared with 99% of all school children. These figures are an improvement on 2006 and 2005 when the corresponding figures for children looked after were 63% and 60% respectively. 32% of children looked after did not sit an examination of this type in 2007 compared with 34% in 2006 and 36% in 2005.
6. 13% obtained at least 5 GCSE's (or equivalent) at grades A*- C compared with 62% of all children. This compares to 12% and 59% in 2006.
7. At the end of school year 11, 66% remained in full-time education compared to 80% of all school-leavers. 17% were unemployed the September after leaving school compared to 5% of all school-leavers. In 2006, 64% remained in full-time education compared to 78% for all school-leavers and 20% of children looked after were unemployed compared to 5% of all school-leavers.
8. 9.5% of these children looked after aged 10 or over, were cautioned or convicted for an offence during the year, almost two and a half times the rate for all children of this age. This rate has stayed similar over the past 3 years.

9. 80% of these children looked after had immunisations that were up to date, 86% had a dental check, and 84% had an annual health assessment. In 2006 these figures were 80%, 85% and 83% respectively.
10. 5% of these children looked after were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year, of which 62% received an intervention for their problem during the year.

COMMENTARY

1. Introduction

The OC2 statistical collection

- 1.1 In September 1999 the Government established 11 objectives for children's social services in England. One of these is 'to ensure that children looked after gain the maximum life chance benefits from educational opportunities, health care and social care'.
- 1.2 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 children looked after in England. This publication presents the results of this collection for the twelve months ending 30 September 2007. The figures presented include the Personal Social Services Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators C18, C19 and C24.

Data Quality

- 1.3 This is the seventh time that social services departments have been asked to supply this information. Information about substance misuse of children looked after have only been collected since 2006.
- 1.4 In some authorities the number of children looked after 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

- 1.5 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 children looked after.
- 1.6 A result of applying this procedure is that columns of data at individual authorities level which largely consist of very small numbers, contain many dashes (-) to replace actual numbers in the range 1-5.

Coverage of OC2

- 1.7 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 children looked after 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.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 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

- 1.10 The 2007 OC2 collection shows that 44,200 children had been continuously looked after for at least twelve months at 30 September 2007, the same number as at 30 September 2006. This represented approximately 74% of all children who were looked after on 30 September.
- 1.11 The figure of 44,200 from the OC2 returns closely approximates an estimate for children at 31 March 2007 who had been looked after for twelve months or more which can be derived from the SSDA 903 return.

2. Comparability of figures from OC2 with figures for all children

- 2.1 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, C, 1,2,3,4,5)

- 2.2 The figures for educational attainment in Tables A, B, C, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are collated according to the Local Authority (LA) to which each school belongs. Many children looked after in foster or residential placements are placed out-of-council and this is particularly the case in the Greater London area, where typically more than 60% of all foster placements are placed out-of-council and may well attend a school belonging to a different LA to the council which is looking after them. Caution must therefore be used when comparing educational data collected on OC2, with that for all children.
- 2.3 Figures for children looked after at local authority level include all children regardless of where the schooling takes place. Figures for “all children” include maintained schools, City Technology Colleges, Academies, all independent schools including independent special schools and non maintained special schools, all hospitals and pupil referral units.
- 2.4 Comparability between educational attainment data for children looked after and all children at local level have to be viewed with these caveats in mind.

2.5 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)

2.6 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 2007. They exclude data from a small number of independent schools.

Comparability of offending data (Table 7)

2.7 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 children looked after.

Figure 2.2: Comparability between reference periods of OC2 data for 30 September 2007 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 2007, and who had a statement of SEN on that date	All children in the school population at January 2007 with a statement of SEN. Data published in DCSF SFR ‘Special Educational Needs in England: January 2007’.
Table A: Numbers of permanent exclusions from schools	All children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2007, 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 2007. 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 2005/06’.

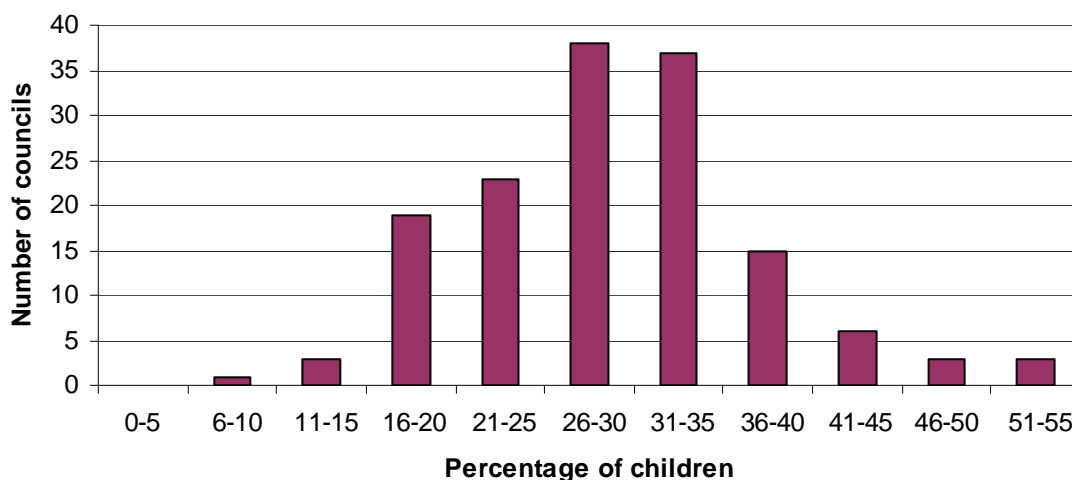
Tables B, 2, 3, 4 Key Stage results	Of all children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2007, those who were eligible to sit relevant Key Stage tasks and tests according to their date of birth.	All children in the LA maintained school population eligible to sit relevant Key Stage tasks and tests according to their date of birth. Refers to the school year ending August 2007. Data published in DCSF SFRs 'National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 1 in England, 2007', 'National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England, 2007 (Revised)', and 'National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 3 in England, 2007 (Revised)'.
Tables C, 5: GCSE performance	Of all children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2007, 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 GNVQ. Refers to the school year ending August 2007.
Tables D, 6 : Activity following year 11	Of all children looked after continuously for twelve months or more on 30 September 2007, 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 2007. (Connexions/Careers Service Annual Activity Survey, carried out in October 2007).

3. Educational Attainment

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

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 33,600 of the children looked after continuously for at least twelve months were of school age at 30 September 2007. It is estimated that of these, 9,300 (28%) during the 2006-07 school year held statements of special educational needs. This percentage is the same as that for the twelve months ending 30 September 2006 (28%).
- 3.3 Compared to national figures for all children in England, children looked after are almost ten times more likely to hold a statement of special educational needs. Just under 3% of all school children in England held a statement of SEN at January 2007.
- 3.4 The comparator figures in Table A for all children in England represent the position at January 2005 to January 2007.
- 3.5 Figure 3.1 shows the variation between authorities in the percentage of their children looked after for twelve months who had statements of SEN on 30 September. As can be seen, in nearly two-thirds of authorities the incidence of children looked after with special educational needs lies between 21% and 35% inclusive.

Figure 3.1: Councils ranked according to percentage of children looked after for at least twelve months at 30 September 2007 who held a statement of SEN



Exclusions from school (Tables A and 1)

- 3.6 Children looked after also appear more likely to receive a permanent exclusion from school. Out of the 33,600 children looked after of school age, there were 220 permanent exclusions during the 2006-07 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.
- 3.7 The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of children who had been looked after for at least twelve months and who were eligible for schooling is 0.7%. This percentage is very similar to last year (0.8%).
- 3.8 This compares with 0.1% of all children in England in the 2007 school year. The comparator figures of exclusions are for all children.
- 3.9 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)

- 3.10 For the 2006-07 school year, 13% of children looked after continuously throughout the year missed 25 days or more of school for any reason. This represents Performance Assessment Framework indicator C24. There is no comparator data available for all children.

**Target on attainment
(Tables B, C and 2, 3, 4 and 5)**

3.11 There are three indicators relating to children looked after underpinning the 2007 Public Service Agreement (PSA) target to narrow the gap in educational achievements of all children and young people. These are:

- *Increase the proportion of children looked after at Key Stage 2 achieving level 4 in English to 60% by 2011;*
- *Increase the proportion of children looked after at Key Stage 2 achieving level 4 in mathematics to 55% by 2011;*
- *Increase the proportion of children looked after achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs or equivalent at Key Stage 4 to 20% by 2011.*

3.12 The target relates to children who were looked after on 30 September and had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months. Data presented later in this section show that for the twelve months ending 30 September 2007:

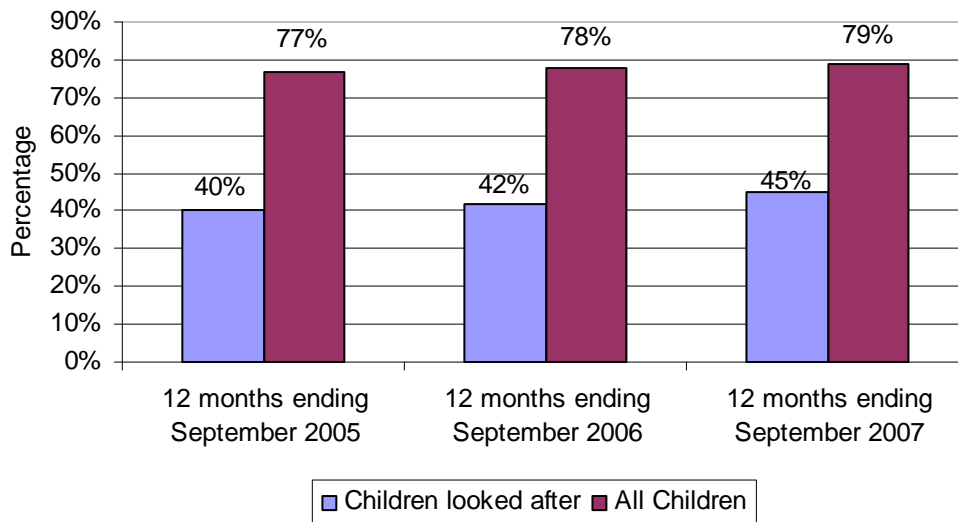
- 46% of children looked after continuously for at least 12 months aged 11 in 2007 achieved at least level 4 at KS2 English. This figure compares to 43% in 2006 and 42% in 2005.
- 43% of children looked after continuously for at least 12 months who were in year 11 in 2007 achieved level 4 in maths at Key Stage 2. The corresponding percentage for 2006 was 41% and in 2005 38%.
- 13% of children continuously looked after for at least 12 months in year 11 attained 5 GCSE or equivalent passes at grades A*-C (see paragraph 3.19). This figure compares to 12% in 2006 and in 2005 was 11%.

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

3.13 The performance of those children looked after continuously for a year at the end of the three Key Stages is shown in Table B. Overall on average, 56% reached target level 2 at Key Stage 1, 49% reached level 4 at Key Stage 2 and 30% reached level 5 at Key Stage 3. (The comparable figures for school year ending August 2006 were 58%, 47%, and 30% respectively.) It can be seen that the lower academic performance of children looked after with age mirrors that of the national school population. The equivalent national figures for key stages 1, 2 and 3 for the school year ending August 2007 being 85%, 82% and 74% respectively. However the dip in performance for children looked after is steeper.

3.14 Considering Maths and English only, on average, 45% reached level 4 at Key Stage 2 compared with 42% in August 2006 and 40% in August 2005. Figure 3.2 illustrates these figures more clearly and compares them against the equivalent figures for all children. Combining these figures in 2006-07 shows the proportion of children looked after for at least 12 months aged 11 and achieving at least level 4 at KS2 English and Maths to be 57% of the proportion for all children. This compares to 54% in 2005-06 and 52% in 2004-05.

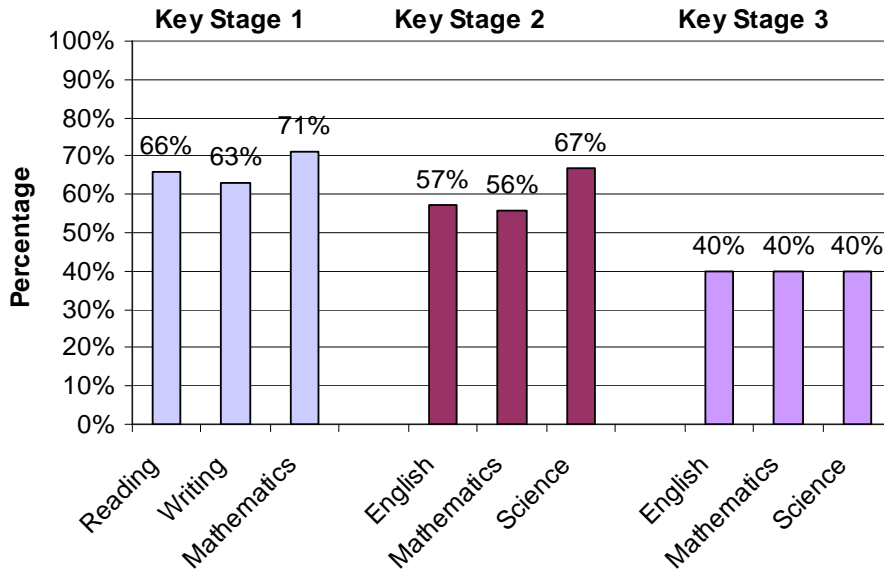
Figure 3.2: Percentage of children looked after for at least 12 months at 30 September 2005-2007 reaching level 4 in Maths and English, compared with all children



3.15 Figure 3.3 shows the percentage of children looked after attaining the target level at each Key Stage test, as a proportion of the percentage of all children attaining the target level for the 2006-07 school year.

3.16 The data show that the performance of children looked after achieving the target level for Key Stage 1 is between 63% and 71% of that of all children. For Key Stage 2, the performance of children looked after drops to between 56% and 67% of that of all children, and at Key Stage 3, the attainment of children looked after is only around 40% of that of the total school population at Key Stage 3.

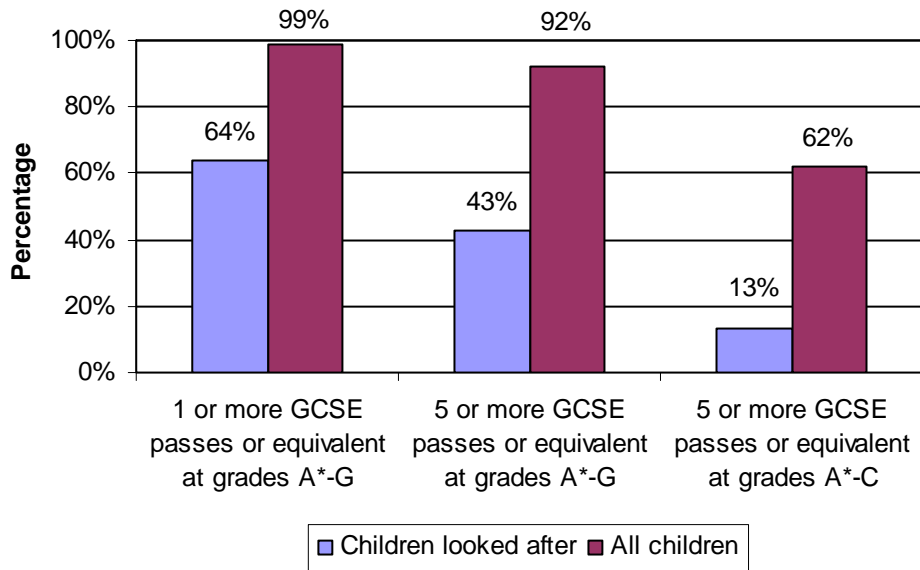
Figure 3.3 The proportion of children looked after attaining the target level of each of the Key Stage tasks and tests, shown as a percentage of the proportion of all children attaining the target level. Twelve months to 30 September 2007



**Year 11: GCSEs and GNVQs
(Tables C and 5)**

- 3.17 Of the children looked after continuously throughout Year 11 (Tables C and 5), 32% did not sit a GCSE or equivalent exam, compared with 34% in 2006 and 36% in 2005. 64% obtained at least one GCSE at grade A*- G or a GNVQ. This compares to 63% and 60% for the school years ending 30 August 2006 and 2005. The equivalent figure for all children in England in year 11 who obtained at least one grade A* - G or a GNVQ during the school year ending August 2007 is 99%.
- 3.18 43% of children looked after during the year achieved 5 or more GCSE or equivalent passes at grades A*- G, compared to 92% of all children.
- 3.19 Only 13% of children looked after attained 5 GCSE or equivalent passes at grades A*-C, compared with 62% of all children. This figure for children looked after shows a slight increase compared to previous years (12% in 2006 and 11% in 2005). The OC2 excludes the results of young people who left care after completing year 11 but before 30 September 2007.
- 3.20 Figure 3.4 compares GCSE or equivalent attainments of children looked after in year 11 to the attainments of all children.

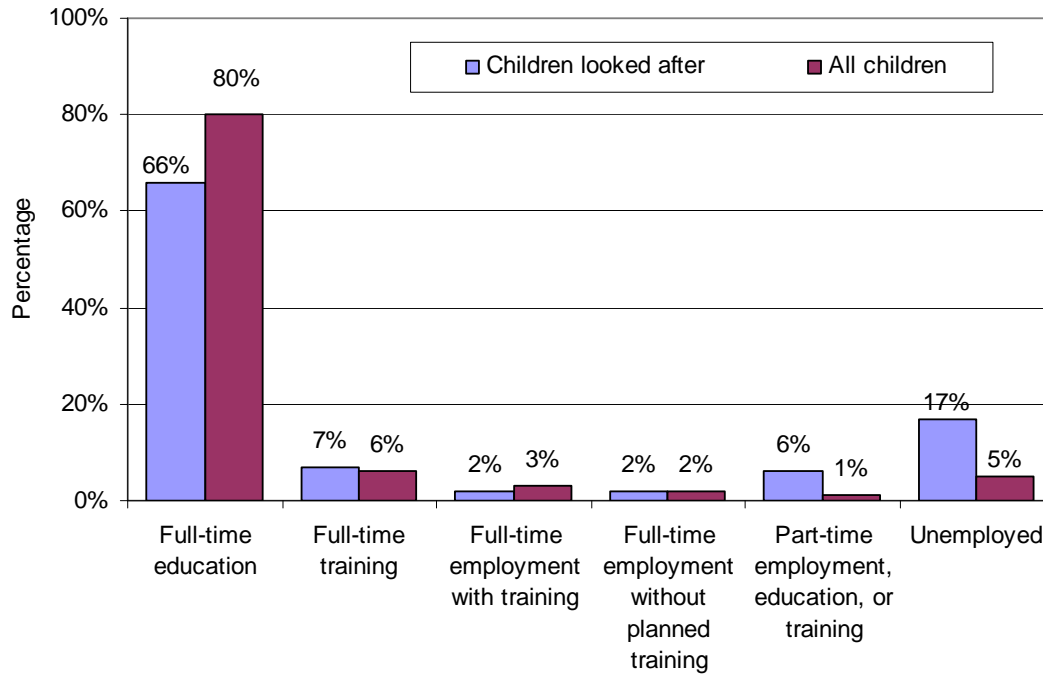
Figure 3.4 Percentage of children looked after for at least twelve months at 30 September 2007 obtaining GCSE or equivalent passes, compared with all children



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

- 3.21 The OC2 return collects information on the position of those children looked after who finished compulsory schooling during the 2006-07 school year on completing year 11. The reader should bear 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.
- 3.22 At 30 September 2007, 66% of these young people were in or about to start full-time education. 7% were in full-time training, 4% in full-time employment and 6% in part-time employment, education, or training. 17% of these young people were unemployed at 30 September; for 1% this was due to ill-health or disability. These percentages are similar to those which were reported for the position at 30 September 2006 (64% were in full-time education, 7% in full-time training, 4% in full-time employment, 6% in part-time employment, education or training and 20% were unemployed).
- 3.23 Figure 3.5 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 2007’. This survey was carried out in October 2007, covering all young people who were in year 11 during the 2006-07 school year.
- 3.24 The comparison shows that, at a national level, fewer children looked after remained in full-time education than in the comparator population, whereas more children looked after were unemployed, or in part-time education, employment or training.

Figure 3.5: The position of children looked after at 30 September 2007 following the completion of year 11, compared with all children of same age.



Cautions and Convictions

Cautions and convictions (Tables E and 7)

- 4.1 As can be seen from Table E and figure 4.1, children looked after of the age of criminal responsibility are almost two and a half times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence than others. 9.5% of children looked after for a year or more who were aged 10 or over had been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year.
- 4.2 This compares with a figure of 4.1% for all children. The ratio of these two percentages represents PAF indicator C18. This figure (2.3%) is lower than that for the twelve months ending 30 September 2006 (2.5%).
- 4.3 Table 7 shows these figures at local council 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 4.1: Children aged 10 or over convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the years ending 30 September 2003 to 2007

England	percentages				
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Children looked after	9.5	9.3	9.3	9.6	9.5
All children ¹	3.3	3.3	3.7	3.9	4.1
PAF Indicator C18 ²	2.9	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.3

¹ Data for all children are from the Home Office and are for calendar years 31 December 2002 to 2006, expressed as a percentage of all children aged 10-17.

² For definitions of PAF C18, see table E and table 7.

5. Health Outcomes

Health Assessments (Table F and Tables 8 & 9)

- 5.1 Of the 44,200 children who had been looked after continuously for twelve months, 37,300 (84%) had their annual health assessment and 38,000 (86%) had their teeth checked by a dentist during that period.
- 5.2 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 for a year all babies will have teeth and so they should be checked.
- 5.3 Just over three quarters (80%) of children looked after continually throughout the year 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.
- 5.4 The combination of the percentages for dental checks and health assessments make up PAF C19. 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 2007 is 85%. This compares with a figure of 84% last year.
- 5.5 In addition, 6,100 (88%) of children under age 5 who had been looked after for at least a year had their development assessments up to date. This compares to 5,700 (86%) in 2006.

6. Substance Misuse (Table G and Table 10)

- 6.1 5% of these children looked after were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year, of which 62% received an intervention for their problem during the year.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Coverage of OC2

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 2007

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 a twelve months.
<i>Items 2 – 8 are subsets of item 1:</i>		
2	Total eligible for schooling	Children whose date of birth in range 1/9/90 to 31/8/02
3	Key stage 1	Children eligible for school year 2, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/99 to 31/8/00.
4	Key stage 2	Children eligible for school year 6, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/95 to 31/8/96.
5	Key stage 3	Children eligible for school year 9, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/92 to 31/8/93.
6	GCSEs and GNVQs	Children eligible for school year 11, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/90 to 31/8/91.
7	Offending	Children aged 10 or over at 30 September, i.e. whose date of birth is 30/9/97 or earlier.
8	Development Assessments	Children aged 5 years or younger at 30 September, i.e. whose date of birth is 01/10/01 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 2007	Children eligible for school year 11, i.e. whose date of birth in range 1/9/90 to 31/8/91. (This is the same as Item 6).

Twelve month data period

The data collected cover young people looked after at 30 September 2007 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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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 Tables	Numbers at local authority level, as shown in Tables
0	0	0
1	-	-
2	-	-
3	-	-
4	-	-
5	-	-
6	10	5
7	10	5
8	10	10
9	10	10
10	10	10
11	10	10
12	10	10
13	10	15
14	10	15
15	20	15
16	20	15

Actual Number	Numbers at England level, as shown in Tables	Numbers at local authority level, as shown in Tables
17	20	15
18	20	20
19	20	20
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
1,956	2,000	1,955
1,957	2,000	1,955
1,958	2,000	1,960

Further enquiries

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