

Intelligence Briefing

Education Outcomes for Children in Care

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Education Research and Statistics at the GLA contributes to the Authority's evidence base. This *Briefing* is not a statement of GLA policy.

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Key points

1. In 2000 Victoria Climbié died aged eight, murdered in circumstances which drew the attention of the national media. It was also the case that Victoria Climbié was of compulsory school age, and was known to social workers in the three London boroughs where she had lived. She had not been brought to the attention of the local education authorities concerned, and was unknown to local schools. There was a gap between the social work record and the local education record.

2. That gap in the record was not necessarily an aberration confined to three London boroughs, and may well have reflected the wider working culture of social workers at the time. The year after Victoria Climbié died a collection of papers edited by Sonia Jackson entitled *Nobody Ever Told Us School Mattered. Raising the educational attainments of children in care* was published by the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering. The title was a clear signpost to its contents, and Jackson noted in the first paper in the collection that '*The conclusion is inescapable: (social work) researchers and practitioners do not see education as a particularly interesting or important aspect of care for separated children.*' (page 16). The book concluded that this blind spot as far as education was concerned extended to decisions about the placement of children in :

- children's homes
- foster care
- and in adoption

all resulting in disrupted or neglected education or both. The same points were made again in 2004 in *Taking Care of Education. An evaluation of the education of looked after children* (pages 4 to 10). Disrupted and/or neglected education will, in part, explain the tendency for Children in Care to have remarkably low levels of educational attainment compared with other children, and for that gap to increase as children age over the course of the school years.

3. The disrupted provision of school places for some children, interlaced with periods of no provision at all, is an education outcome in its own right, not least because local authorities have a duty to ensure that a sufficient number of school places is available for locally-resident children. Taking that point and those in the first two Key Points together, the question is whether or not the 'gap' between the social worker record and the educationalists' record has now been closed.

4. In 2008 10,600 young people were Looked After in London, with only 4,700 recorded as being on roll in maintained (state) schools. The school record was equivalent to 44 per cent of the London Looked After total, and was the lowest proportion in any English region. In the same year, slightly less than 60,000 young people were Looked After by local authorities in England. Of these only 31,000 were recorded as being on roll in English maintained schools.

5. That pattern applied in every English region. Some of these children 'missing' from education would have been below school age, and it is possible that the record for more recent years has improved. An analysis of more recent data might usefully test for that possibility.

6. Some Looked After Children with a school place still miss the standard educational assessments which are used to guide provision for other children. These young people would have been identified as having special educational needs, and/or be on roll in special schools or Pupil Referral Units. In both cases key stage assessments are commonly 'disapplied', that is they are not carried out. Research carried out for the British Columbia Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth, and published in 2007, pointed to a similar situation in Canada, noting that

A growing portion of the children in care population is not being assessed through the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment); there are increasingly no benchmarks to determine how well these children are doing within the school system at early ages.

Work is also needed to identify the extent of non-assessment in England from the early years onwards, and to establish whether this points to the need for new approaches to assessing and reporting Looked After Children's educational attainment and progress. That said, devising baseline measures of educational need and progress for Children in Care would not necessarily be simple, but they are clearly needed if adequate provision is to be made.

7. Preliminary cross-sectional evidence presented in the *Briefing* also points to a need for longitudinal analysis, to 'track' young people over time, to establish a clearer view of the extent to which pupils move home and change of school over time, and to assess the impact that has on educational attainment.

8. Evidence based on analysis of the 2008 National Pupil Dataset confirms that Looked After Children were more likely than other pupils to face hurdles in accessing education. Thirty five per cent of Looked After pupils, and 17 per cent of other pupils, living in London had been admitted to their current school during the course of the school year rather than at the beginning. Both figures were higher than the comparable figures for any other English region.

9. In 2008, in every English region including London Looked After pupils travelled further than other pupils to school, regardless of whether they attended schools in their home district or in another district. Pupils in London had the shortest distances to travel, perhaps because of the comparatively small size of London boroughs and the larger number of schools per square mile in the capital because of its high population density.

10. In the same year and in all English regions, a smaller proportion of Looked After pupils than other pupils were on roll in schools, such as voluntary aided church schools, that were their own admissions authorities.

11. In all English regions, Looked After pupils were more likely than other pupils to be on roll in a school maintained by a local (education) authority other than the one where they lived. On balance, it is likely that Looked After pupils are more likely than other pupils to face disrupted education, to encounter barriers to education themselves, and for their carers, teachers and social workers to face barriers to communication others do not encounter or encounter to a lesser extent.

12. A high proportion of Children in Care have a record of special educational needs and/are on roll in special schools. In all English regions in 2008 some two out of every three Looked After pupils had a record of support for special educational needs, approximately three times the rate found amongst other pupils.

13. Over the period 2002 to 2011, Looked After Children were approximately 10 times more likely than pupils as a whole to have a statement of special educational needs. In 2008 Looked After pupils in all English regions were 10 times more likely than other pupils to be on roll in a special school. The proportion of Looked After pupils on roll in special schools was lowest in London.

14. In 2008, Looked After pupils were more than twice as likely as other pupils to have a SEN record of behaviour, emotional and social difficulty. In the same year Looked After pupils were also more likely than other pupils to have a SEN record of moderate or severe learning difficulty.

15. Between 2002 and 2010 only a small proportion, generally less than 1 per cent, of Looked After Children were permanently excluded from school. However, the proportion was always higher than for children generally, and higher in London than in England as a whole.

16. Over the period 2002 to 2011 Looked After Children were more likely than young people as a whole to be convicted of a crime or subject to a final warning/reprimand in London and England as a whole.

17. At age 19 young people who had been Looked After at age 16 in London face an increasing prospect of unemployment compared young people of that age as a whole.

18. Looked After Children are some four times less likely than children as a whole to reach nationally expected levels of attainment in the early years of primary school at key stage 1, and the available evidence points to that gap widening as Looked After Children age and pass through the compulsory school years.

19. In terms of the 'raw score' outcomes outlined above, from access to school places to education attainment, Children in Care are markedly disadvantaged, with consequences in terms of interaction with the law, further education and employment prospects.

20. Other children also experience moves of home and changes of school (child mobility) in a context of social disadvantage which has implications for attainment, while others will have special educational needs, be absent from school with damaging effects on educational progress, or be permanently excluded. Children in Care are however distinctive precisely because they are in Care, and child abuse or neglect is the most common reason why children are in Care. In March 2009 more than 5,000 young London, and 37,000 young people in England as a whole, were in Care on that basis.

21. The Briefing shows that Children in Care are not the only young people to experience abuse or neglect but, as the Briefing makes clear, they have a range of

disadvantages which may themselves be the outcome of arrangements for social care and education in England, and which have an adverse effect on their attainment.

22. There is a clear need to establish a baseline of *national and regional* information against which the experience of Children in Care can be mapped *over time* and compared with the experiences of other groups of young people in respect of

- length, continuity, and type of school placement
- change and stability of home address
- continuity and change in type of SEN and level of support and
- school attendance and exclusion.

23. On the basis of international evidence the Briefing points to the possibility that Children in Care are missing out on the standard pupil educational assessments which teachers use to identify pupil need and areas of strength. This may be because so many Children in Care are placed in special schools and elsewhere where national curriculum assessments do not apply.

- There is a pressing need for national and regional baseline measures of the continuity and completeness of the education assessment record amongst Children in Care, compared with the continuity and completeness of other groups of children's assessment record.
- Where foundation profile and national curriculum assessments have not been applied, alternative assessment arrangements need to be used or devised and applied by educators to provide a guide to pupil needs and strengths which can be shared with other teachers and inform provision.
- Where pupils evidently disappear from the school record, whether through exclusion or because of transfers to alternative education, there is a need for the Department for Education to establish baseline measures of the curriculum offered to those pupils, children's contact time with educators, and of educational outcomes.

At least in principle, progress will all of the recommendations in points 22 and 23, apart from the last one, could be achieved through analyses of longitudinal information from the National Pupil Dataset (NPD). Pupils in alternative provision do not have records in the NPD.

1. Introduction

On the measures shown in this *Briefing* Looked After Children are disproportionately multiply disadvantaged, and the *Briefing* is aimed at three, related, groups with an interest in that situation.

- It is aimed at those who already have a knowledge of education in England, and who want a summary of available core data on the experience and outcomes of Looked After Children as these bear on education.
- It is also aimed at those who already have a knowledge of social care in England, and who want a summary of the core available data on Looked After Children's educational experience and attainment.
- Finally, the *Briefing* points to gaps in our understanding of the situation of Looked After children in London and in England as a whole, and to questions that could be answered through further research. To that extent the *Briefing* is aimed at researchers and those agencies which fund or otherwise support research.

The *Briefing* draws on publicly available information published for a number of years, mainly up to 2010 or 2011, by what is now the Department for Education, to provide a view of trends over time and with a commentary to alert the reader to some of the pitfalls the data present. The *Briefing* also draws on other, mainly quantitative, evidence from abroad, where this sheds light on the situation in England. Finally, the *Briefing* includes cross-sectional analyses of national extracts of pupil records from the 2008 (English) National Pupil Dataset to provide new information that would not otherwise be available. The *Briefing* makes a number of recommendations for further analysis of longitudinal versions of the National Pupil Dataset.

Where possible, data are presented as graphs and statistical tables are included mainly where the equivalent in graphical form would be unhelpfully hard to read. The graphs are based on summary data in a separate *Descriptive Statistics* spreadsheet file. That file also contains additional information not shown in the *Briefing*, and is available at The *Descriptive Statistics* file includes references to the source DfE publications and to other data which, in many cases, are simply too numerous to list in the main text. Each worksheet in *Descriptive Statistics* has a number, which is shown in the main text, for example 'Ref DS1' (the 1st worksheet in the *Descriptive Statistics* file). References in the main text and elsewhere to analyses of pupil level data from the

2008 National Pupil Dataset are given as '2008 NPD' and the NPD (see the comment below on the *Technical Note*). Other references are indicated in the main text in the ordinary way.

The *Briefing* is also accompanied by a separate *Technical Note*, which gives a range of further information on points raised in the main text, on the statistical analysis used to summarize educational attainment and on the NPD, and on issues such as NPD data confidentiality and the role of the Department for Education (not the GLA) in regulating access to the data.

2. Children in Care - the context

2.1 Victoria Climbié

Most will take it as read that education is an integral part of growing up, that it plays a key role in shaping children's well being. Education will be taken for granted as a part of cultural normality. In February 2000 Victoria Climbié died in horrific circumstances. Being eight years old she was of compulsory school age, had never attended school in England, and was unknown to the local education authorities in the three London boroughs where she had lived. The Laming Report summary of social worker contact with Victoria Climbié and her aunt mentions one instance when her education was raised (but then not pursued).² Unsurprisingly, the Laming Report into the child's death recommended that social workers making an assessment of a child should ensure that the local education department was aware of that child.³

The death of Victoria Climbié might be ascribed to shortcomings in a limited number of local authorities, which were not found elsewhere. However, Sonia Jackson's 2001 book *Nobody Ever Told Us School Mattered. Raising the educational attainment of children in care* brought together a collection of *existing* and new research which pointed to a more widespread issue concerning the professional cultures of social workers *and* educationalists (and those carrying out research in each field) with social workers failing to take account in their decisions of the importance of education for the future of Looked After Children, and with mainstream educationalists not providing a lead in developing effective programmes for Looked After Children. More than a decade after the death of Victoria Climbié, the question remains whether social workers have now developed effective links with educationalists, and whether educationalists are ensuring that effective educational provision is available for Looked After Children in schools or in alternative provision.

There are two major sources of data on Looked After Children that might, at first glance, be analysed to answer the first of those two questions. The first is the annual Social Service Department Activity survey (SSDA 903) of individual local authorities in England. This includes a headcount of Looked After Children by Age and gender at 31st March. The second source is the National Pupil Dataset (NPD), which contains individual records for each of the 7.5 million pupils on roll in England's maintained (state) primary, secondary and special schools, including a record of whether a child on roll in a school is Looked After. Table 1 is based on a comparison of headcounts of Looked After Children from these two sources. As recently as 2008, more Looked After

Children are reported in the social work survey than appeared in the pupil record, and that gap is referred to here as the NPD ‘undercount’. This ‘undercount’ is substantial, amounting to nearly 23,000 individuals in 2008. Of these, more than 4,000 were, like Victoria Climbié, of compulsory school age. No precise number is available for those Looked After Children aged 1 to 4, and 16 plus, who were outside the compulsory school age range, but might have been on roll in a school and were not.

Table 1. NPD ‘undercount’ of Looked After Children, 2008 ^{Ref DS1d}

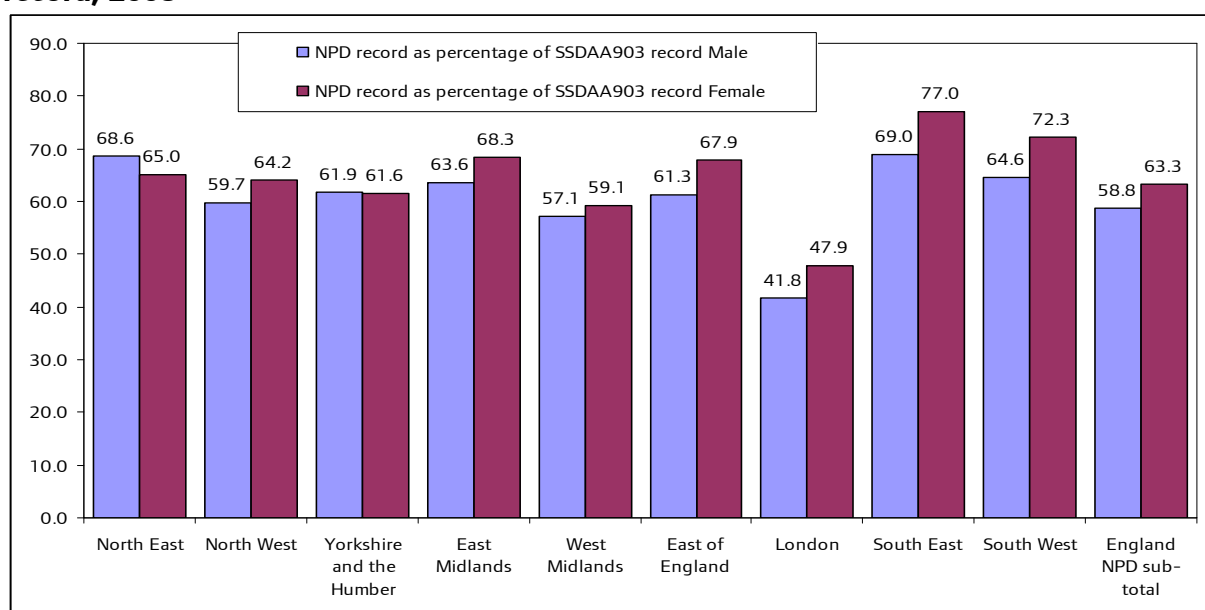
	Children looked after at 31 March 2008	Ages as at 31st March 2008			
		1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	16 and over
North East	1,076	460	17	112	277
North West	3,942	1,530	152	713	1,047
Yorkshire and the Humber	2,503	997	150	308	708
East Midlands	1,289	515	-43	144	473
West Midlands	3,122	1,003	170	694	905
East of England	2,033	703	-19	407	682
London	5,935	1,064	291	1,801	2,339
South East	2,046	898	-205	41	972
South West	1,444	556	-70	255	493
England sub-total	23,340	7,666	433	4,425	7,916
All 2008 NPD	22,790	7,650	314	4,085	7,841

Source: derived from a comparison of DCSF SFR 23 2008 and records in the 2008 National Pupil Dataset. Negative numbers indicate a higher headcount in the NPD than is reported from the SSDA 903 survey. The NPD total includes Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish pupils attending English schools.

Figure 1 shows the NPD record of Looked After Children as a percentage of the figures from the 2008 SSDA 903, grouped by English region. The NPD ‘shortfall’ varies in different regions, and there is a particularly marked shortfall in London. It is also generally the case that the shortfall is greater for boys than for girls. The London school record amounts to only four in every 10 young males in London who are Looked After.

The separate *Technical Note* which accompanies the *Briefing* explores the discrepancy further, partly by focussing on young people in the compulsory age range (age 5 to 15 at the start of the school year) and partly by reviewing information on the number of young people receiving alternative forms of education and whose records would not have appeared in the 2008 NPD.

Figure 1. NPD record of Looked After pupils as a percentage of the SSDA 903 record, 2008 Ref D51e



The overall conclusions are

i the discrepancies between the NPD and the SSDA 903 survey are not random.

They are more pronounced

- for boys than girls,
- for young people of secondary school age than for children of primary school age,
- and are more pronounced for London than the other English regions.

ii The publicly available national figures for young people in alternative education do not distinguish between those in care and those not in care, and this makes it impossible to say with any certainty whether that form of provision explains the NPD 'undercount'. There is in any event a dearth of publicly available national information on alternative education, which means that it is not possible here to assess types of provision and patterns of outcomes for any particular group, including Looked After Children. Part of that limited information is shown in worksheets 1f and 1g in the Descriptive Statistics file which accompanies this *Briefing*.

iii Since a key point in the report on Victoria Climbié's death was that social workers in successive authorities had *not* alerted their local education authorities to her existence, there would be value in the (now) Department for Education triangulating information from the NPD with information on Looked After Children in alternative provision and data held in local authority Looked After Children databases and in reporting whether there are gaps in the record.

iv Given the tendency for children in alternative provision to have remarkably low levels of educational attainment in key stage assessments and public examinations, the suggested review could also usefully provide further details of the educational attainment of, *and educational provision for*, Looked After Children in alternative provision, including the curriculum offered, how much contact time young people have with those providing education, how progress is monitored and verified and, for those who go off the school roll, information on each of these areas *from the point when they leave school provision*.

2.2 Children in Care and Children in Need

While not overlooking Lord Laming's criticisms of social work practice and management or successive reports to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) on the extent of child abuse – abuse of which local authorities may not always be aware⁴ – we might assume that a child being taken into care is a rare event, best approached as a personal issue for the child and needing support from professional, child psychologists. On March 31st 2010 11,000 young people were Looked After in London and 64,400 in England as a whole.⁵ Those numbers are not small.

They are also not the whole of the matter. Local authorities also maintain a record of Children in Need (some of whom will be Looked After), and some comparisons can be made between figures for all Children in Need and figures for all Children in Care. Figures for 2010 group Children in Need by type of need,⁶ and these can be compared with 2009 figures for Looked After Children grouped in much the same way.⁷ This gives a broader indication of the extent and nature of need (further information on each type of need is given in the separate *Technical Note*) and also indicates possible similarities and differences in approaches to Looked After Children and to Children in Need. (In 2009 figures were available for type of need for all children in Care in 2009, but in 2010 and 2011 the published regional figures were only for the much smaller number of children newly taken into Care. Figure 2 cannot, at least for the present, be updated.)

Figure 2. Number of Children in Need and Number of Looked After Children in London at 31st March 2011 ^{Ref DS2}

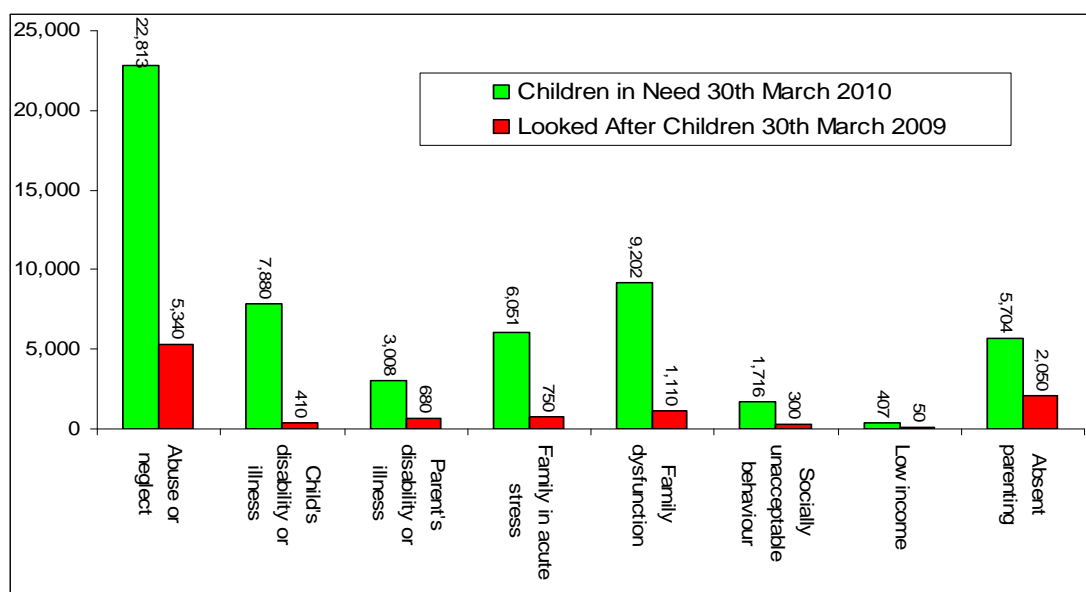
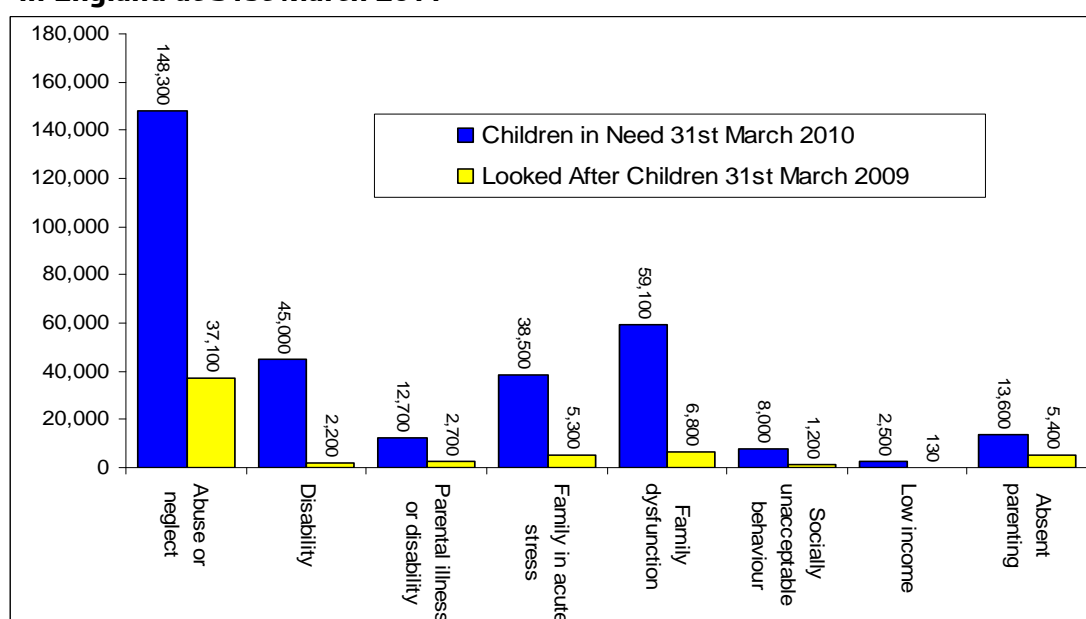


Figure 3. Number of Children in Need and Number of Looked After Children in England at 31st March 2011 ^{Ref DS2}



Figures for Children in Need were missing for four London boroughs but despite this there were far more children recorded as being in Need than in Care in each of the categories shown. The same point applies to Figure 3, which gives the equivalent picture for England. Looked After Children may well have experienced extreme levels of the different types of stress shown in the graphs, but they are by no means unique in the type of stress experienced.

Figure 4 shows Looked After Children by type of need as a percentage of the Looked After total, and Figure 5 provides equivalent figures for Children in Need. While the categories differ slightly, Figures 4 and 5 are intended to highlight any differences between the types of need recorded for Looked After Children and Children in Need. Differences exist and are in some instances considerable.

Figure 4. Children Looked After by reason as a percentage of all children in Care, at 31st March 2009 ^{Ref DS3}

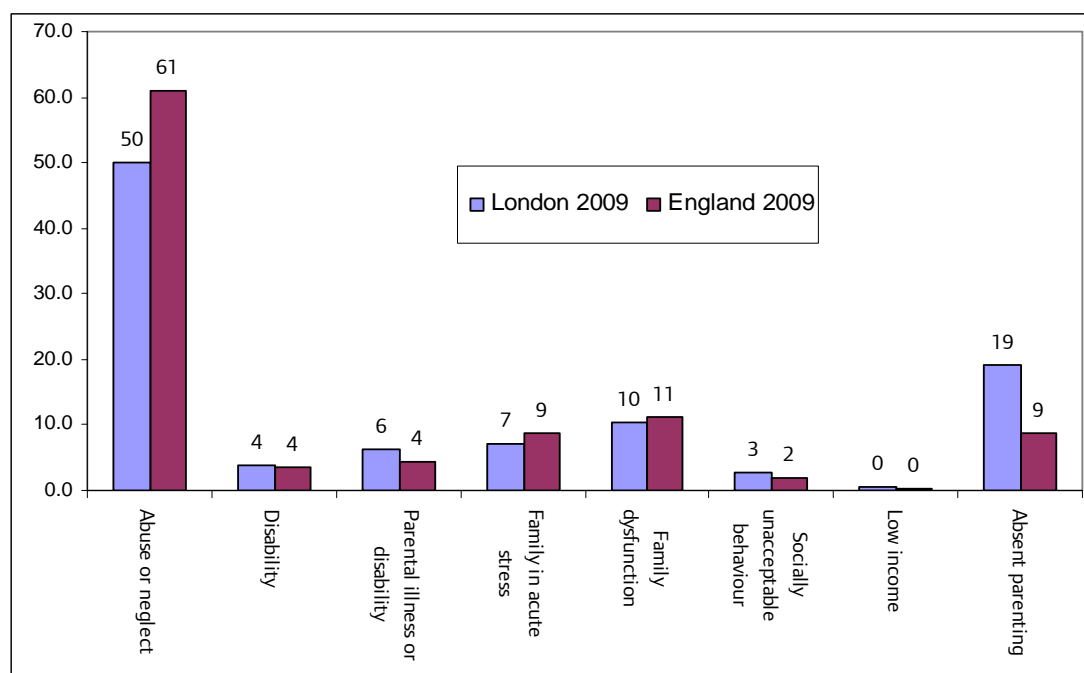
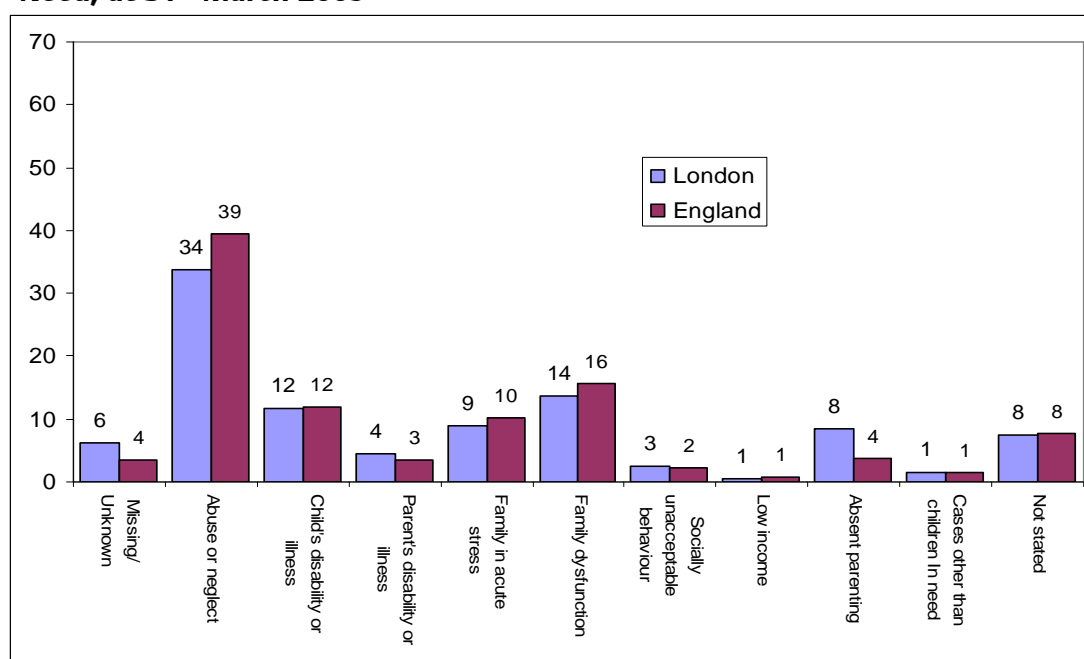


Figure 5. Children in Need by area of Need as a percentage of all Children in Need, at 31st March 2009 ^{Ref DS4}



The 'Abuse or Neglect' and 'Absent parenting' categories are proportionally much more pronounced amongst Looked After Children than Children in Need, and 'Parent's disability or illness' and 'Family dysfunction' are more pronounced amongst Children in Need than amongst Looked After Children. On balance, while the 'Abuse or Neglect' reason is the most common for both groups of young people, the figures are consistent with child protection being a more prominent issue when children are taken into care, and family support being more prominent in the case of Children in Need.

Proportionally speaking, young people in London are *less* likely than young people nationally to have 'abuse or neglect' recorded as the reason for a child being taken into care or as the area of need for Children in Need. Also 'absent parenting' features more prominently as an issue in London than in England as the reason why a child was taken into Care or as the type of need. This *may*⁸ reflect the higher incidence of unaccompanied children from abroad seeking asylum arriving in London, shown in Figure 6. Those numbers declined consistently in London from 2006 to 2011, and accounted for less than half of the number of children shown in Figure 2 who were taken into care because of absent parenting in 2011.

Figure 6. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children looked after at 31 March, 2006 to 2011 Ref D55

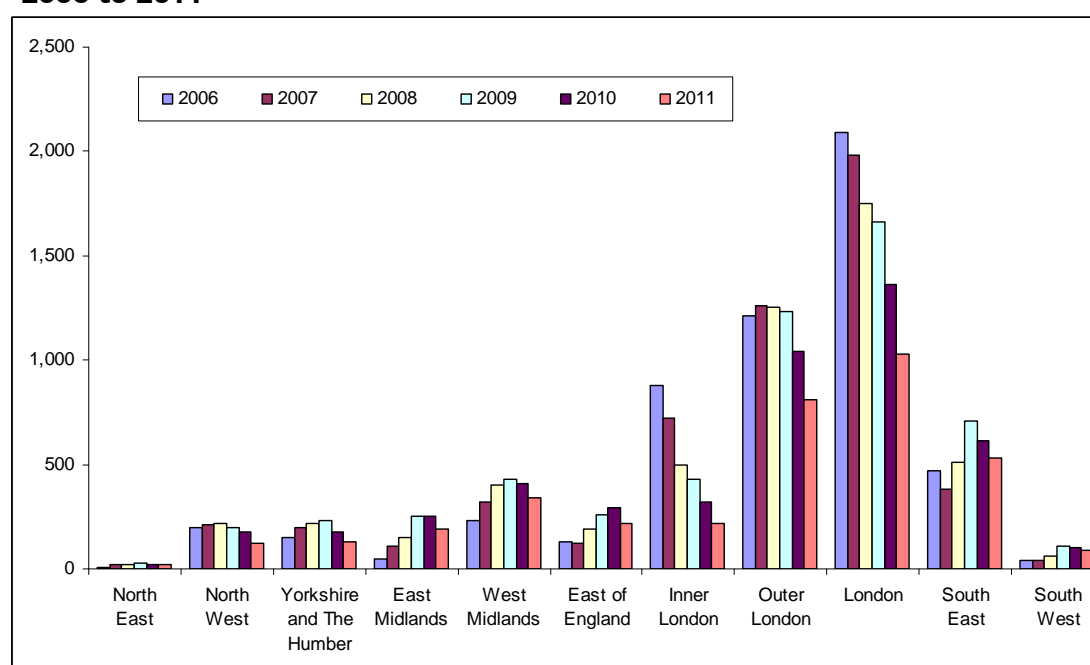
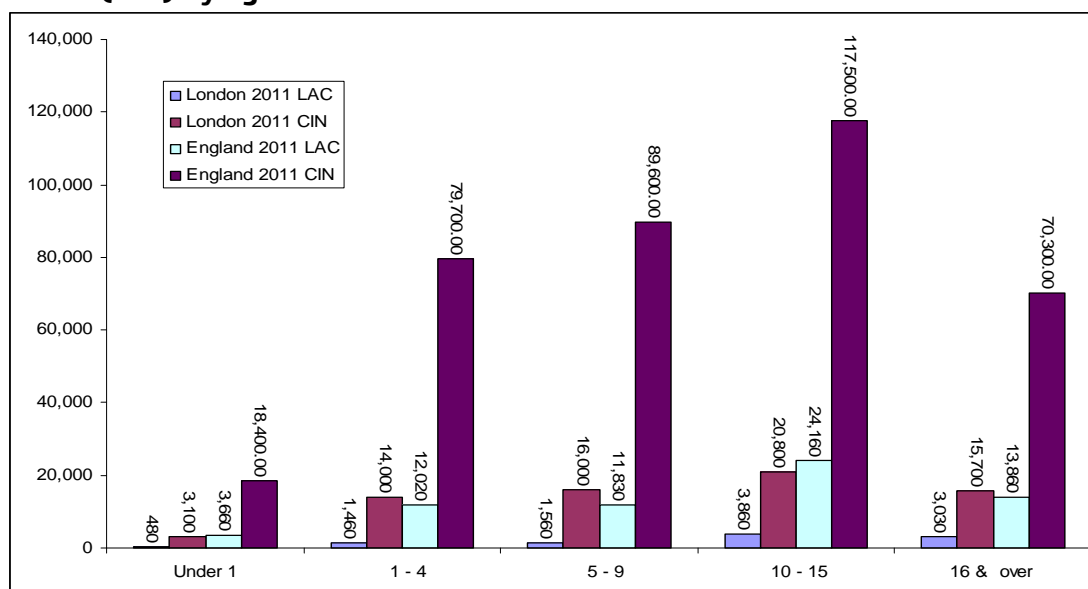


Figure 7 shows Children in Need and Looked After Children in age bands as these were on 31st March 2011, and the majority in both groups is in the age range 10 to 15. The

next largest group of Looked After Children is aged 16 and over, while the next largest group of Children in Need is in the primary school age range.

Figure 7. Number of Looked After Children (LAC) and number of Children in Need (CIN) by age 2011 ^{ref DS6}



In both cases, the smallest group is under one, which is the narrowest of the age ranges and is likely to have the fewest young people because of that. National data on the educational attainment of Children in Need is neither published nor available from the National Pupil Database, and the Tables shown later in this *Briefing* which summarize the attainment and post-school experiences of Looked After Children cannot include comparable details for Children in Need. However, the key point remains that the experience of Looked After Children is part of a wider pattern of need: their experience is not wholly set apart from the experience of all other children.

2.3 International comparisons

The international dimension is approached here in three ways. The first approach involves drawing on information which allows for a comparison between a number of aspects of Looked After status in Britain and elsewhere to provide a sense of perspective on the situation here. Is the British situation typical, atypical, or similar in some respects but not others? This section focuses on two sets of internationally comparative research studies with those questions in mind.

The second approach draws on evidence of situations outside the UK on a specific issue for which there is no exactly directly comparable British evidence but which is nonetheless potentially illuminating for work that might be done here. Two research

reports prepared by the British Columbia Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth on Children in Care, special needs, educational attainment and youth offending falls into that second category and is referred to again Section 7.3.

The third approach uses work from outside the UK to indicate further research that could be carried out in England using existing data, and the method that might be applied. The concluding section of the *Briefing* draws on the two British Columbia studies in that way to suggest what new work might be done with the existing (English) National Pupil Dataset data and with additional data.

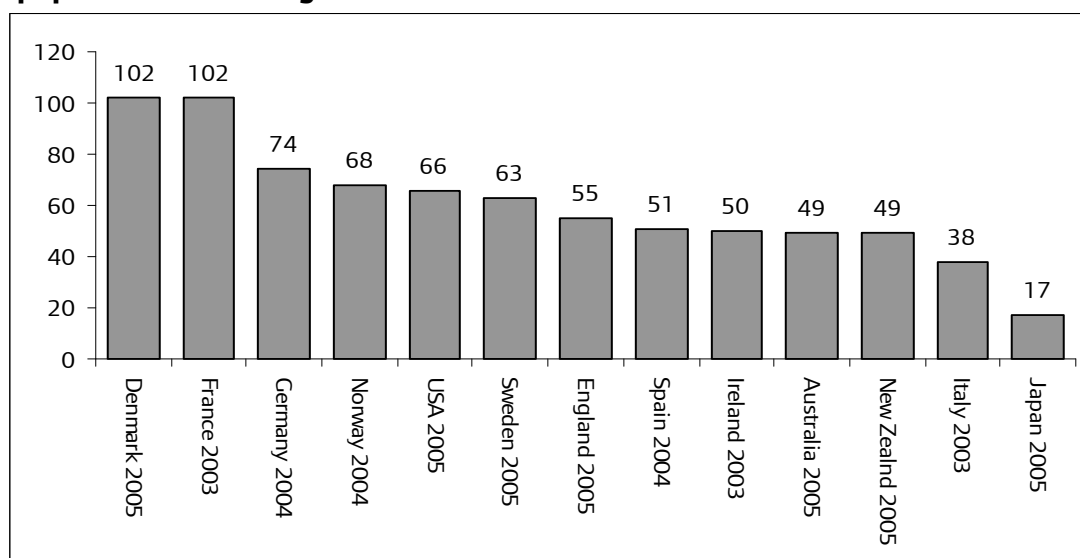
June Thoburn's work from 2007 and 2009 provide the first of two examples of comparative work which helps set the British situation in wider context. The 2009 review of evidence on the reunification of Looked After Children contains the following statement, which might appear to imply that the Nordic countries on the one hand, and countries such as Britain and the USA on the other, take different approaches to the social care of children in need.

Out-of-home care is an essential part of the child welfare services in all countries. The characteristics of the service (and the frequency with which it is used) vary according to social and political context. In some countries (including Germany and most mainland European and Nordic countries) it is viewed more positively as part of a service to help parents and children under stress or otherwise vulnerable to adversity than in other (mainly Anglo-phone) countries, where it is more often viewed as a service of last resort.⁹

That statement can be taken at face value as far as approaches to Looked After Children and child protection are concerned but it does not follow that, taken as a whole, approaches to *children in need* necessarily reflect that dichotomy. The previous section of the *Briefing* points to the possibility that there is a greater emphasis on family support in approaches to Children in Need in England, and any greater emphasis on child protection issues amongst children who have been taken into care would need to be seen in that context. That said, while there is a shortage of comparable data, which limits international comparisons,¹⁰ where these can be made some show that the position in England is not at the extreme end of the range while others point to differences in the approach to social care in social democratic and in liberal democratic polities - with England placed in the second group. Figure 8, for example, shows the proportion of children and young people in care. England is in the middle of the range

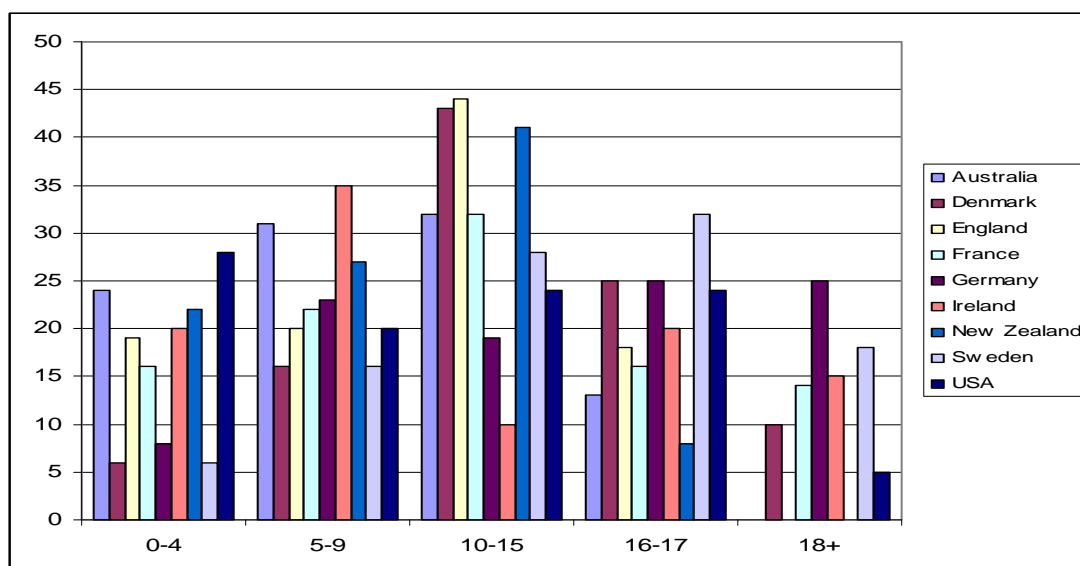
for the countries shown with Sweden as its neighbour, when we might have expected to find them at opposite ends of the range.

Figure 8. Number of young people under the age of 18 in care at one point in time in different years from 2003 to 2005 for every 10,000 in the population of that age in 13 countries ^{Ref DS7}



Source: June Thoburn *Globalisation and Child Welfare: Some Lessons from a Cross-national Study of Children in Out-of-home Care Social Work Monographs*, University of East Anglia, 2007, page 14.

Figure 9. Age range of children and young people in care on a specified date, 2002 ^{Ref DS7}



Source: June Thoburn 2007, page 20

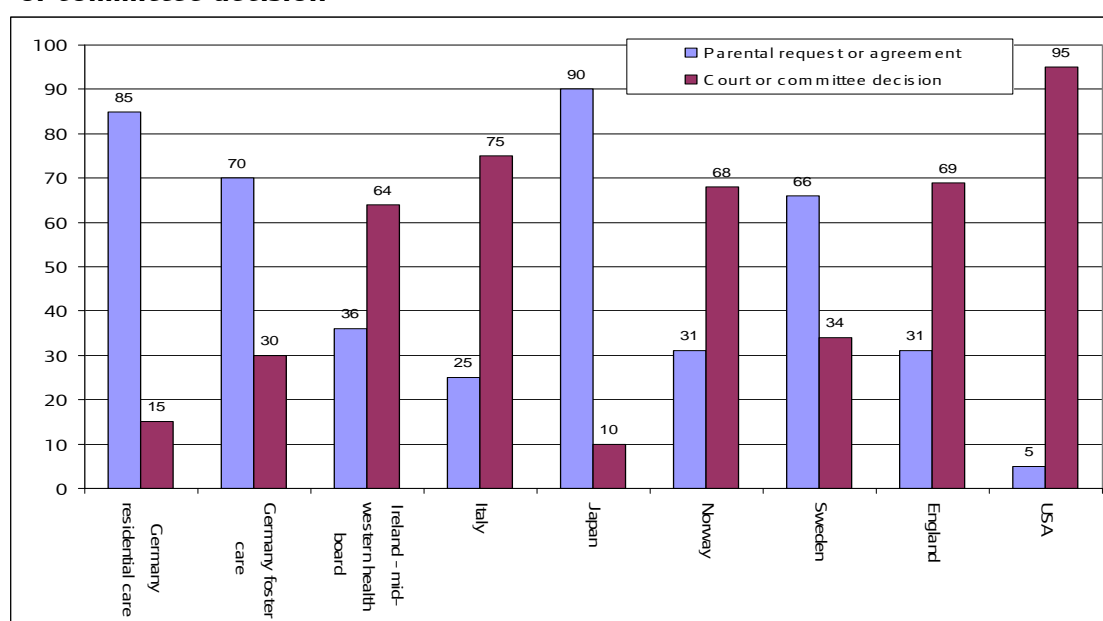
Note: the age ranges shown in the graph are indicative rather than exact. The actual ages ranges, where these differ from those shown are:

Australia 10 to 14 and 15 to 17; France 0 to 5, 6 to 10 and 11 to 15; Germany 0 to 5, 6 to 11, 12 to 14, and 15 to 17; Ireland 0 to 5, 6 to 12, 13 to 14, 15 to 16 and 17 to 18; New Zealand 10 to 15 and 16 plus; Sweden 0 to 3, 4 to 9, 10 to 14 and 15 to 17

Figure 9 shows the age range of those in care in 2002, approximately matching the English pre-school years, the primary school phase, the compulsory secondary school age range and the post-compulsory education age range respectively. Young people in the English compulsory secondary age range (11 to 15) form the single main group of looked after children in England, Denmark, New Zealand, Australia and France. In Germany the main groups are, in English terms, of post-compulsory education age. There is also a marked difference between a small group of countries, including Denmark, Germany and Sweden, where pre-school children form a limited proportion of Looked After children and Australia, England, France, Ireland and the USA on the other where the proportion is much larger. France aside, there is evidence here of a difference in social care in different countries.

Figure 10 shows the extent to which the decision to take a child into care involves parental agreement that a child should be taken into care, and there are substantial differences between Germany, Sweden and Japan on the one hand and Italy, Norway, England, the USA and that part of Ireland covered by the mid-western health board on the other. The first group of countries appear to place much greater emphasis on parents requesting or agreeing to a child being taken into care while the second group, including England, place that responsibility in the hand of the courts or a state committee. That two socially similar countries such as Norway and Sweden

Figure 10. Percentage of children taken into care as a result of parental request or agreement and percentage taken into care as a result of a court or committee decision ^{Ref D57}



Source: derived from June Thoburn 2007, page 27

should have almost exactly opposite positions on this measure suggests either that the difference follows from policy differences over and above a simple distinction between the Nordic countries and English-speaking countries such as the UK and the United States or, possibly, that the differences reflect the way in which data have been collected.

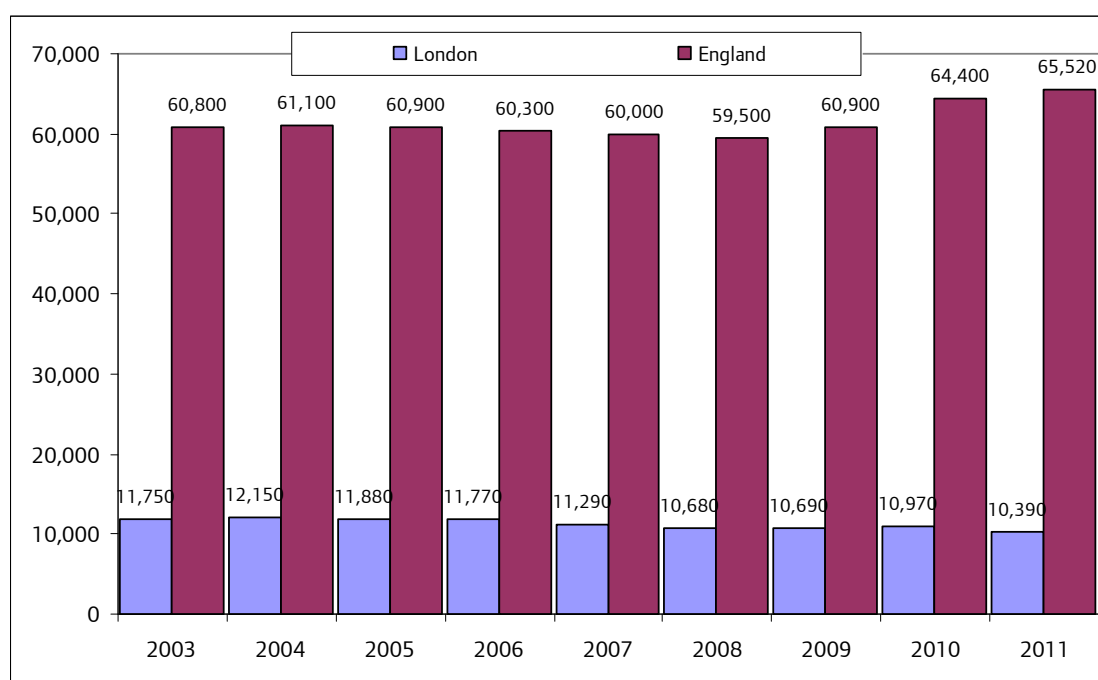
Work from the *Young People from a public care background: pathways to education in Europe* (YiPPEE) project, led by researchers at the Thomas Coram Research Unit, provides the second body of work with comparative international information. The project focussed on pathways to higher education, but also provided an overview of attainment at earlier stages. The project's analysis of national statistics¹¹ included Denmark, Sweden and England, and found higher levels of attainment amongst Looked After Children at the end of compulsory schooling (formally at age 16 in all three countries) in Denmark and Sweden than in England, though the authors also point to a gap between the attainment of Looked After and other pupils in all three countries.¹² Additionally, the study points to delays in attainment while accepting that this may be benign, as in the case of a young person travelling during a gap year before going to university, as well as possibly reflecting disrupted education during the in Care period.

This points to a further area for future research. Patterns of educational provision will reflect the intended and the unintended consequences of policy (See the 2011 Wolf Report for an example of that approach applied to vocational education).¹³ Actual patterns of provision in the compulsory and post-compulsory school years could be monitored nationally using individual pupil records in the National Pupil Dataset and in further education datasets. Other possible work refers to the relationship between finding foster placements and maintaining continuity of schooling. This is discussed further in the next section, but the international evidence is that there is a negative association between the number of placements and level of educational attainment which could be investigated further.

3. English Data - the number and age of Looked After Children

The number of Looked After Children in England increased by approximately 5,000 between 2003 and 2011, but fell by approximately 1,400 in London over the same period. The number of Looked After Children in London as a percentage of the English total also fell by two to three percentage points over the same period.

Figure 11. Number of children Looked After at 31st March, 2003 to 2011 (ref DS9)



The picture changes when the number of children in Care in London and elsewhere are shown as a proportion of young people generally. Table 2 provides that information and, viewed that way, a comparatively high proportion of young people in the capital is Looked After. This is particularly so in inner London, which has the highest proportion of Looked After Children for seven of the eight years shown. Nonetheless, Table 2 does show that the proportion of young people in Care has tended to fall over the period 2004 to 2011.

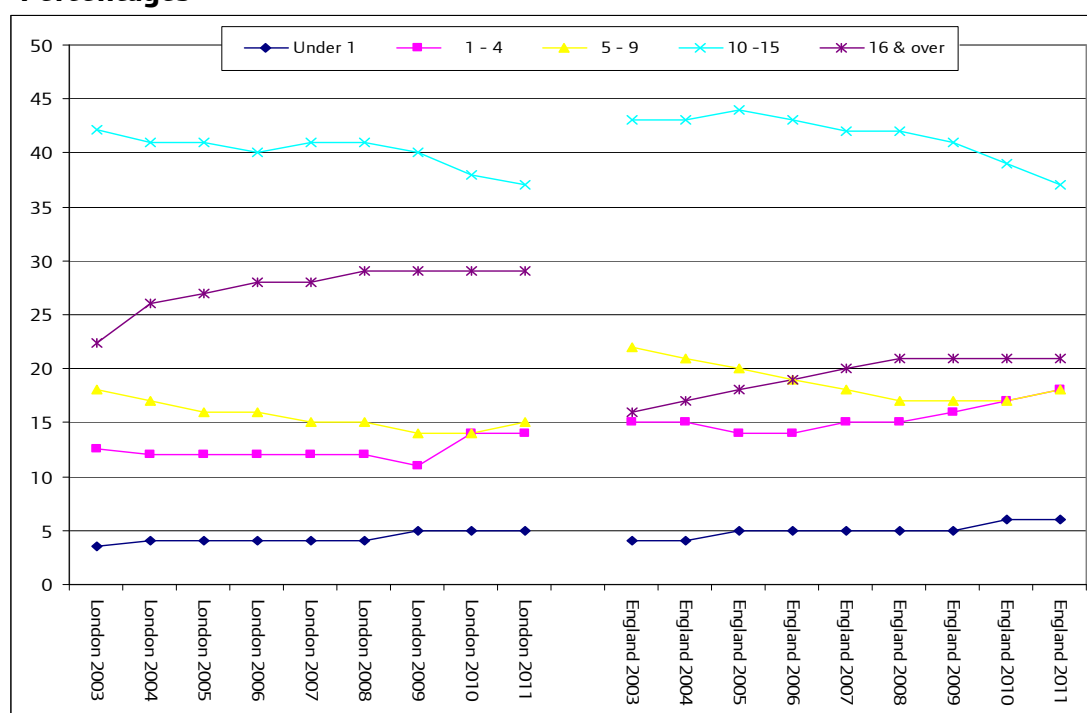
Figure 12 shows the number of Looked After Children by age group as a percentage of all Looked After Children. The situation is consistent with Thoburn's data shown in Figure 9. Children aged 10 to 15 are the single largest group of Looked After Children in both London and England, though numbers as a proportion of the Looked After total generally fell between 2003 and 2011. The percentages shown in Figure 12 are percentages of the Looked After total.

Table 2. Number of Looked After Children and rate per 10,000 in the population aged less than 18, 31st March 2005 to 2011 ^{ref DS9}

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of Looked After Children at 31st March								
North East	3,320	3,280	3,150	3,260	3,250	3,250	3,640	3,820
North West	10,070	10,230	10,270	10,410	10,290	10,590	11,170	11,350
Yorkshire and The Humber	6,630	6,530	6,370	6,540	6,530	6,720	7,060	7,300
East Midlands	3,930	3,770	3,700	3,680	3,730	3,910	4,200	4,430
West Midlands	6,910	6,980	7,130	7,310	7,370	7,630	8,010	8,180
East of England	5,750	5,810	5,800	5,650	5,630	5,740	6,210	6,400
Inner London	6,200	5,970	5,750	5,360	4,920	4,760	4,910	4,600
Outer London	5,940	5,910	6,020	5,890	5,770	5,920	6,050	5,780
London	12,140	11,880	11,770	11,260	10,690	10,680	10,960	10,390
South East	7,530	7,600	7,500	7,310	7,360	7,660	8,150	8,480
South West	4,900	4,860	4,650	4,560	4,520	4,710	5,000	5,160
England	61,200	60,900	60,300	59,970	59,360	60,890	64,410	65,520
Rate per 10,000 young people aged under 18 in the population								
North East	60	60	58	61	61	61	69	73
North West	65	67	67	69	69	71	75	77
Yorkshire and The Humber	59	58	57	59	59	61	64	66
East Midlands	42	40	40	39	40	42	45	48
West Midlands	56	57	59	61	61	64	67	68
East of England	47	48	47	46	46	47	50	52
Inner London	103	99	95	91	83	80	81	75
Outer London	59	58	59	57	56	56	57	54
London	75	73	72	70	66	65	66	61
South East	42	42	42	41	41	42	45	46
South West	46	46	44	43	43	45	47	49
England	55	55	55	55	54	55	58	59

Note: Local authority amendments to data mean that regional totals shown in DfE time series data can vary slightly depending on when they were published.

Figure 12. Looked after children by age, London and England 2003 to 2011 – Percentages ^{Ref DS8}



By contrast, the proportion of Looked After Children aged young people aged 16 and over increased up to 2008 and then 'plateaued' in London and in England as a whole. Consistent with the international data, children of pre-school age made up the smallest proportion of the Looked After total.

4. The placement of Looked After Children

Foster care was the major, and proportionally increasing, type of placement for Looked After Children in each of the years shown in Table 3, and accounted for more than two thirds of all placements. 'Other placement in the community' perhaps with relatives, and placement in 'other residential settings' were the only two other types of placement which increased proportionally between 2007 and 2010. All other forms of placement fell.

Foster care placements have potential implications for education in terms of where they are, how frequently they change and whether fostering is itself seen as involving responsibilities for young people's education. The questions here are whether change in fostering and other placements, and more specifically the number of changes in placement, can lead to difficulties in finding a school place for the child.¹⁴

One American review¹⁵ referred to research in New York which concluded that almost 65 per cent of young people in foster care had transferred between schools within rather than at the beginning of the school year. The same review also referred to a Chicago study where more than two thirds of foster placements changed school after their first

Table 3. Placement of Looked After Children, London and England, 2007 to 2011, percentages^{Ref DS10}

	London					England				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Foster placements	70.4	71.1	72.2	72.2	73.1	70.5	71.1	72.6	73.3	74.1
Placed for adoption	3.4	3.6	3.0	2.6	2.6	4.2	4.4	4.1	3.6	3.7
Placement with parents	4.2	3.5	3.2	3.1	2.9	8.5	7.6	6.7	6.5	6.1
Other placement in the community	4.2	4.6	5.0	5.7	6.1	2.7	2.9	3.1	3.6	3.8
Secure units, children's homes and hostels	13.4	12.9	12.1	11.8	11.0	10.8	10.9	10.2	9.6	9.0
Other residential settings	1.4	1.5	1.9	2.3	1.8	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.6
Residential schools	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.9	2.0	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.5
Missing - Absent for more than 24 hours from agreed placement	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Other placement	0.1			0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.1	99.9	100.0	100.0

placement. One of the reports from the British Colombian project referred to in section 2.3 of this *Briefing* also notes the high number of schools attended by children in care, and also provides a comparison with the number attended by the school population generally (on average seven and four respectively).¹⁶ Work by Cameron, Hollingworth and Jackson, also referred to in Section 2, reports Swedish evidence on the number of

placements for all individuals placed in care. The majority had two or more placements and, depending on the sample analysed, approximately 20 per cent had four or more placements, and the greater the number of placements the lower the level of educational attainment.¹⁷ There is no equivalent national information published for the UK, but data in the National Pupil Database is used here to provide a (very) preliminary view of home and school location, which might be developed further in the future.

5. Stability and proximity of school placements and access to schools which are their own admissions authorities

The placement of Looked After Children in England with different foster carers has been researched in a variety of different ways, both in England and elsewhere. Perhaps surprisingly, education researchers have not matched this with work on stability and change in school placements or in terms of access to some types of schools rather than others. This section provides (very) preliminary information on each of those areas under four headings

- 5.1 rates of inward pupil mobility amongst Looked After and other pupils in England
- 5.2 distance travelled from home to school, and whether this differs for Looked After and other Children
- 5.3 the incidence of Looked After and other pupils attending a school in an LEA area other than the one in which they live
- 5.4 whether Looked After Children are less likely than other pupils to be admitted to schools which are their own admissions authorities

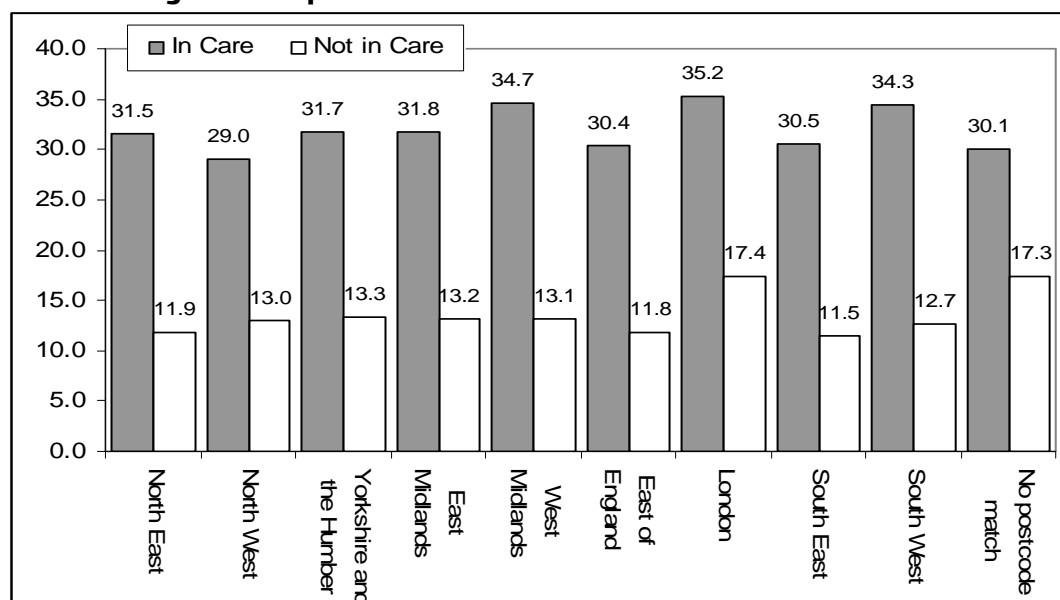
5.1 Inward pupil mobility

The term 'pupil mobility' refers to pupils changing schools at non-standard times. Figure 13 shows rates of 'inward' pupil mobility, which refers to pupils who were admitted during the course of the school year rather than at the beginning of the year. (This is explained further in the accompanying *Technical Note*). The rate of inward mobility amongst Looked After Children is generally double that of other pupils, and this may reflect disrupted education which in turn is likely to have knock on effects for attainment.

London Challenge, established in 2003, was charged with raising educational attainment in London. One of its documents took teachers' views and research into account to report the 10 key educational challenges faced in London schools, including high levels of pupil mobility. London Challenge did, however, acknowledge that it had proved difficult at that time, '*to isolate the effect of pupil mobility on attainment because it occurs alongside other factors*' (such as poverty).¹⁸ Table 11 in the *Descriptive Statistics* file which accompanies the *Briefing* cross-references inward pupil mobility with the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). While there is a relationship between higher levels of poverty and higher levels of mobility generally, that

relationship does not hold true for Looked After Children. It may be that the impact of high rates of pupil mobility amongst Looked After Children is different from the impact on pupils generally, and this might be investigated further.

Figure 13. Pupils aged five and over on roll in January 2008. Percentage of Looked After and other children admitted to their current school other than in August or September^{Ref D511}



Source: 2008 NPD

5.2 Home-school distance

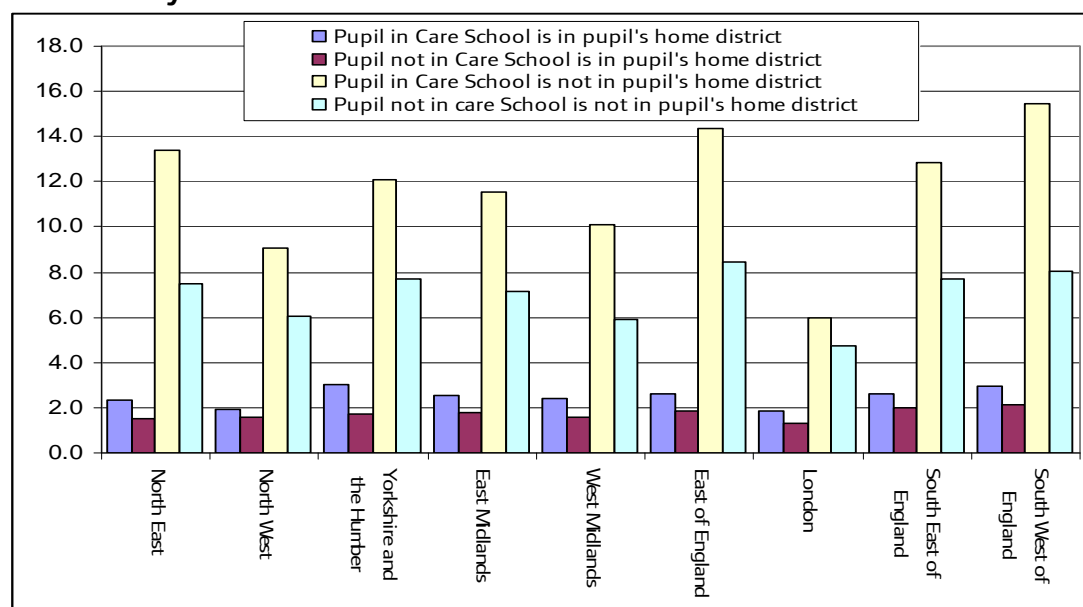
The greater the distance between Looked After pupil placement and the school attended, the greater the risk to communications between, for example, foster carers and teachers and also to pupil participation in after-school activities in rural areas.

Figure 14 shows the average straight-line distance between pupil home and school, based on grid references for home and school postcode. Figures are shown separately for Looked After and other pupils, and depending on whether the pupil attends a school in his or her own district or in another district. What these terms mean, and why districts have a particular significance for those taking a 'London point of view', and why the graph does not include pupils attending special schools is explained in the *Technical Note* that accompanies this *Briefing*.

However, the key observation is that Looked After pupils typically travel further to school than other pupils. This is so in all English regions, and particularly so for Looked After pupils attending school outside their home district. This may reflect changes in foster placements at earlier points in time, or greater difficulties amongst Looked After

Children in accessing local schools. Given the trend exists in all English regions, the issue warrants further investigation.

Figure 14. Straight-line home-school distance in kilometres. 2008 pupils by care status and whether the school is in the pupil's home district. Mainstream schools only Ref DS12



Source: 2008 NPD

See the separate *Technical Note* for an explanation of what a district is and how home-school distance has been calculated.

5.3 Pupils attending schools maintained by an L(E)A other than the one in whose area they live in

London boroughs and unitary authorities have statutory responsibilities for education, and until recently were known as local education authorities (LEAs). Counties were also LEAs and their districts did not have statutory responsibilities for education. Face-to-face communication between local authority social work staff from the area where the child lives, and local authority education staff in the authority where the child attends school will not be eased if a child lives in one local (education) authority area, but attends a school maintained by another.

Table 4 shows whether the school where the child is on roll is maintained by the L(E)A in whose area the child lives. Academies are not maintained by a local authority, but are included and have been attributed to, for example, the London borough in which they are located. Within each region, Looked After pupils are more likely than other pupils to be on roll in schools outside the L(E)A area in which they live. While this does not automatically mean that communications between teachers and social workers

employed in different L(E)A areas will be problematic, it is an added issue that children educated in their 'home' L(E)A area do not face. Looked After Children are, once more, facing a hurdle that other children tend to meet less often.

Table 4. 2008 pupil care status, home region and whether the mainstream school attended is maintained by the pupil's home L(E)A or by another L(E)A

2008 pupil home English region	Pupil in Care			Pupil not in Care		
	Attends school maintained by home L(E)A	Attends school maintained by another L(E)A	Total	Attends school maintained by home L(E)A	Attends school maintained by another L(E)A	Total
Number						
North East	1,528	164	1,692	334,052	11,078	345,130
North West	4,954	435	5,389	918,888	47,158	966,046
Yorkshire and the Humber	3,173	158	3,331	675,135	24,944	700,079
East Midlands	1,707	164	1,871	531,051	26,873	557,924
West Midlands	3,054	335	3,389	702,357	46,801	749,158
East of England	2,547	143	2,690	648,790	23,465	672,255
London	3,114	840	3,954	802,353	144,478	946,831
South East of England	3,465	260	3,725	867,916	46,129	914,045
South West of England	2,232	128	2,360	586,065	27,530	613,595
Total	25,774	2,632	28,406	6,066,607	400,304	6,466,911
Percentage						
North East	90.3	9.7	100.0	96.8	3.2	100.0
North West	91.9	8.1	100.0	95.1	4.9	100.0
Yorkshire and the Humber	95.3	4.7	100.0	96.4	3.6	100.0
East Midlands	91.2	8.8	100.0	95.2	4.8	100.0
West Midlands	90.1	9.9	100.0	93.8	6.2	100.0
East of England	94.7	5.3	100.0	96.5	3.5	100.0
London	78.8	21.2	100.0	84.7	15.3	100.0
South East of England	93.0	7.0	100.0	95.0	5.0	100.0
South West of England	94.6	5.4	100.0	95.5	4.5	100.0
Total	90.7	9.3	100.0	93.8	6.2	100.0

Source: 2008 NPD

Note: The Tables excludes pupils living in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland and pupils who home postcode could not be matched to a home area. For the sake of consistency, pupils attending special schools are also not included in the Table. See DS13 for an equivalent Table which includes numbers of pupils attending special schools.

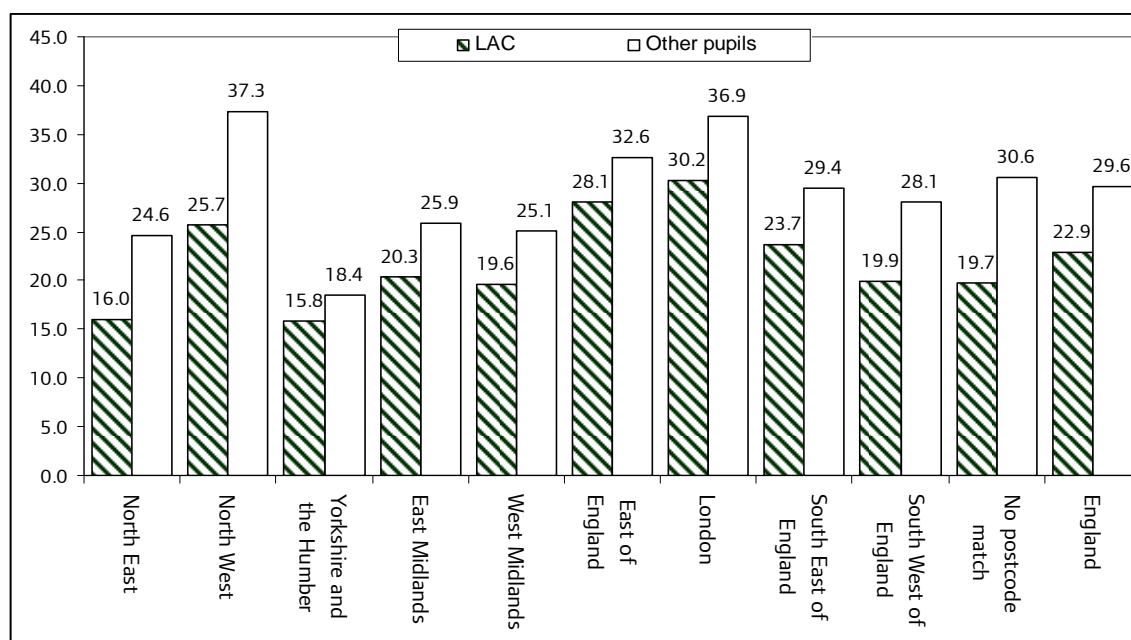
The percentage of pupils educated 'out-borough' in London appears particularly high. London boroughs are small compared to shire county L(E)As, and London has a comparatively good transport system. It is simply easier for a higher proportion of pupils in London than in the shire counties to attend a school outside the home L(E)A area. *The Technical Note* which accompanies this *Briefing* provides additional information.

5.4 Admissions to schools that are their own admissions authorities

The school admissions system in England means that local authorities are the admissions authorities for some schools and that the other schools are their own admissions authorities. Local authorities are the admissions authorities for community schools, voluntary controlled schools and LA maintained nursery and special schools. Voluntary aided (mainly church) schools, foundation schools and Academies are their own admissions authorities. Earlier analysis of the intake to the two types of school in London concluded that disadvantaged pupils in every London borough were under-represented and schools which were their own admissions authorities and over-represented in schools for which the local authority was the admissions authority.¹⁹ Academies were not included in that analysis since, at that time, they were still for the main part located in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Figure 15 confirms that in all English regions Looked After Children are less likely than other pupils to have access to schools that are their own admissions authorities, and that this is so in all regions and at times by a large margin.

Figure 15. The proportion of Looked After Children and the percentage of other children on roll in schools that were their own admissions authorities ^{Ref DS14}



Source: 2008 NPD

Note: Numbers of pupils on roll in local authority nursery schools and special schools are not included in the graph. A very high proportion of pupils on roll in special schools attend schools (for which local authorities manage admissions). Given the high proportion of Looked After Children with SEN, the inclusion of special schools may blur factors associated with schooling and social selection and factors associated with school provision and SEN.

The cumulative evidence clearly points to a need for analyses of *longitudinal* data from the NPD to establish how far Looked After Children are more or less likely to move home and change school than other pupils, and whether that leads is associated with educational disadvantage. The NPD does not contain 'everything' needed to complete that exercise - it does not include a record of what type of care placement a Looked After Child has, but it does mean that research using existing data can go beyond what has been done to date.

6. Children and young people moving out of Care

This section reviews the destinations of young people when Care ceases and, as Table 5 shows, the single major destination for Looked After Children in London and in England as a whole moving out of care in the recent past was the young person's own family or other relatives. The next largest category in Table 5 is the unspecific 'Care ceased for any other reason'. The available data mean that this category cannot be disaggregated.

Movement into independent living, with or without formalised support, is the third largest category and would be made up of older young people, with the next largest category being adoption. Figures for those adopted distinguish between those where there was no parental opposition and those where consent was dispensed with, parents did not oppose. The adoption route involves a small and slightly declining proportion of Looked After Children (with a higher proportion in England as a whole than in London).

Table 5. Reason children ceased to be looked after during the year ending on 31st March (percentage of all destinations) 2007 to 2011^{ref DS15}

	London					England				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Adopted - application unopposed	5.0	5.7	6.0	4.0	4.4	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.8	6.3
Adopted - consent dispensed with	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.3	2.5	6.5	6.2	6.1	6.0	5.1
Died	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Care taken by another LA	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Returned home to live with parents or relatives	39.9	39.2	39.7	43.9	44.4	40.5	39.4	38.1	39.0	38.6
Residence order granted	2.8	2.3	1.9	2.4	2.1	4.0	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.4
Special guardianship order made to former foster carers	1.8	2.8	3.2	2.8	2.8	2.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.2
Special guardianship order made to carers other than former foster carers	1.2	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.6	1.0	1.5	1.7	1.7	2.3
Moved into independent living (with supportive accommodation)	11.2	10.4	8.9	9.4	9.2	9.7	10.0	8.9	9.2	9.0
Moved into independent living (with no formalised support)	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.5	2.3	3.8	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0
Transferred to residential care funded by adult social services	2.3	1.9	2.3	1.3	1.1	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.8
Sentenced to custody	1.2	1.7	2.1	1.8	2.1	1.0	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.5
Care ceased for any other reason	25.8	25.9	25.5	24.8	25.5	21.1	20.7	23.1	21.9	22.2
All children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Two British studies of the reunification of Looked After Children with their families conclude, albeit on the basis of small samples, that reunification is only successful in a

minority of cases and with continuing social worker support. In one study, reunification was most successful with young children aged 6, with approximately two thirds of reunited children overall being taken back into care or placed elsewhere.²⁰ Additionally, children who remained in care tended to show better 'well-being' than those who were reunited with families.²¹ The measure of well-being used was intended to cover education outcomes such as attainment though it is not clear how far that was taken into account.

Thoburn's 2009 review takes an international view of the reunification of children who are still of an age to be dependent on good parenting, and notes that the success and extent of reunification in different countries will reflect the different norms underpinning approaches to taking children into care in the first case. Where care is provided as short-term respite for families in short-term difficulty, then it is reasonable to suppose that there will be an expectation that reunification will take place, and it is also possible that an above average rate of reunification will occur where temporary care has been arranged at parents' request.²² Thoburn's review notes that rates of reunification vary by the age at which young people were taken into care, and length of time in care, neither of which are shown in Table 6. Rates of return tend to be higher amongst short-term placements, particularly in the USA, and in the longer run, with up to 87 per cent returning to the birth family in England within five years.²³ Early returners were more likely to have been placed in temporary placements.

Where the issue is one of child abuse and/or problematic adult behaviour, reunification is itself more problematic, and permanent care is more likely to be arranged through adoptions.²⁴ Unsurprisingly, children who were taken into care because of abuse were less likely to be returned home if the abuser was still there, as were young people who had been returned home and then been taken into care again.

Thoburn's 2009 review cites work by Tausig which concluded that older returners with behavioural and emotional problems experienced more difficulties at school, and were more likely to take drugs and be involved in risky behaviour. Additionally, children were less likely to return home where parents are addicted to drugs, have chronic mental health problems or multiple and long-standing problems.²⁶

There are variations in the likelihood that re-uniting Looked After Children with their families will work – certainly there would appear to be no single solution or approach

that is effective for every child in every circumstance. For some, a further issue may arise if they leave Care at the end of compulsory schooling and, at least in principle, can enter the job market to lead an independent life. Information on this is presented in section 9.

7. Looked After Children's special educational needs, permanent exclusions from school and contact with the law

This section covers three topics, which at first glance seem appear to be free-standing and deserving of their own separate sections. Evidence from British Columbia suggests that the topics may well be inter-related, and the approach taken here reflects that.

7.1 Looked After Children and special educational needs (SEN)

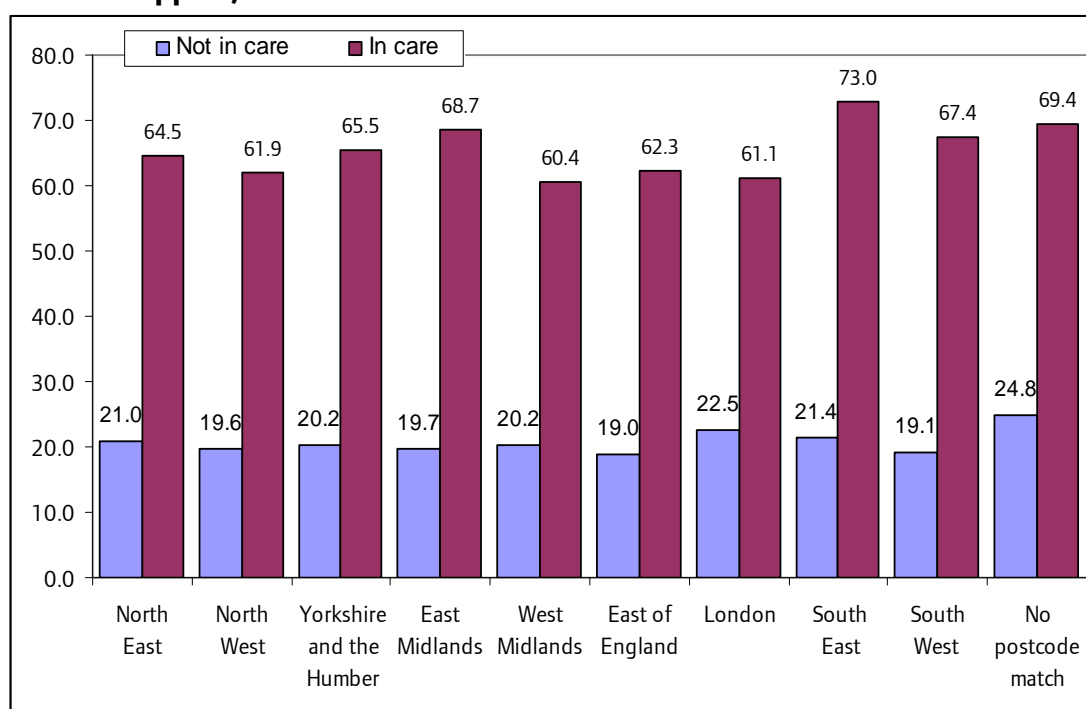
Pupils who have a need for educational support over and above that typically required by pupils in mainstream schools, that is schools other than special schools, may have a special educational need. Some, including pupils whose mother tongue is not English, and who need support to acquire English, are not included in that category. Additionally, some special needs have their root in a physical disability, but only those disabilities which require additional support for the pupil to learn are classified as special educational needs, and some types of disability do not impair learning and are not included in the SEN list of categories. Further some categories of SEN are not necessarily based on a physical disability. SEN and disability are not synonymous.

Support for pupils with SEN takes three forms. Support provided wholly from the resources of the school attended is called 'School Action'. 'School Action plus' involves support mainly provided through the resources of the school attended but with additionally support provided from elsewhere. The third form of support involves a statement drawn up by an education psychologist, which specifies what support should be made available to a child. In cases where a child requires specialist support not available locally, he or she may be directed to a school elsewhere where that provision is available.

Figure 16 shows the percentage of Looked After and other pupils who received support for special educational needs in 2008. In most English regions one in five pupils on roll in maintained schools receive support for special educational needs. The proportion of Looked After pupils receiving support for SEN is closer to two out of three pupils. In London, the proportion is comparatively low, but it was still the case that more than six in every ten Looked After Children received SEN support.

A record of type of SEN is also available in the NPD, though this does not apply to pupils receiving School Action support alone. Table 6 shows the number of Looked After and other pupils with each main type of SEN (there is a further record of

Figure 16. Percentage of Looked After and other pupils receiving any form of SEN support, 2008. Ref DS16



Source: 2008 NPD

subsidiary SEN type not shown here.) Table 6 also shows those numbers as a percentage of all pupils with a record of type of SEN. Almost half of Looked After pupils who have a record of SEN type have a record of Behaviour, emotional and social difficulty. This is twice the rate for other pupils with a record of SEN type in 2008.

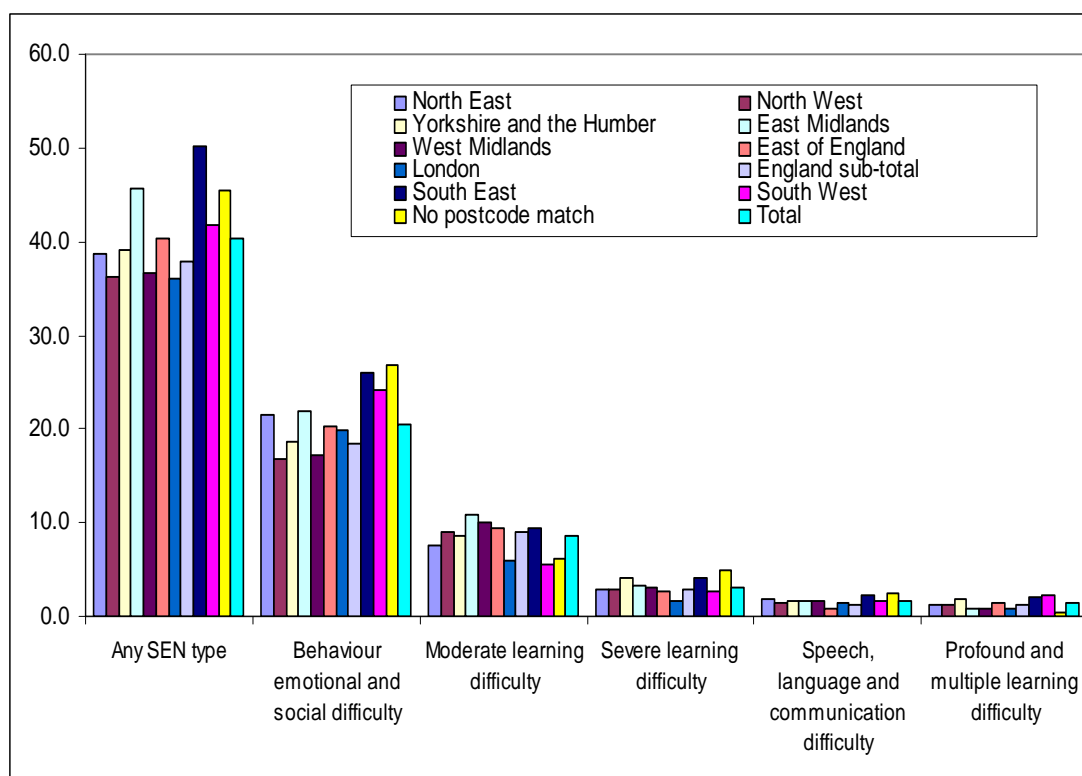
Table 6. All 2008 pupils attending English maintained with a record of SEN School Action plus or a SEN statement, by Care status and main type of special educational need. Ref DS16

Main SEN type	Pupil not in Care	Pupil in Care	Total
Number			
Specific learning difficulty	76,514	875	77,389
Moderate learning difficulty	168,781	3,951	172,732
Severe learning difficulty	28,339	1,266	29,605
Profound and multiple learning difficulty	8,631	552	9,183
Behaviour, emotional and social difficulty	143,675	8,210	151,885
Speech, language and communication difficulty	96,475	1,045	97,520
Hearing impairment	14,243	124	14,367
Visual impairment	8,052	96	8,148
Multi-sensory impairment	937	15	952
Physical disability	25,517	349	25,866
Autistic spectrum disorder	47,213	659	47,872
Other difficulty/disability	26,494	830	27,324
Total	644,871	17,972	662,843
Percentages			
Specific learning difficulty	11.9	4.9	11.7
Moderate learning difficulty	26.2	22.0	26.1
Severe learning difficulty	4.4	7.0	4.5
Profound and multiple learning difficulty	1.3	3.1	1.4
Behaviour, emotional and social difficulty	22.3	45.7	22.9
Speech, language and communication difficulty	15.0	5.8	14.7
Hearing impairment	2.2	0.7	2.2
Visual impairment	1.2	0.5	1.2
Multi-sensory impairment	0.1	0.1	0.1
Physical disability	4.0	1.9	3.9
Autistic spectrum disorder	7.3	3.7	7.2
Other difficulty/disability	4.1	4.6	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 2008 NPD

Figure 17 compares the percentage of Looked After pupils and other pupils who had a record of different types of SEN 2008. (That is, the denominator is all Looked After pupils and all other pupils respectively, rather than just those who had a record of School Action plus support or a statement of SEN.) Overall there is a 40 percentage point difference between the proportion of Looked After pupils and the proportion of other pupils with a record of SEN-type.

Figure 17. Percentage point difference in the incidence of four types of SEN. Looked After pupils and other pupils, by home region, 2008 Ref DS17



Source: 2008 NPD

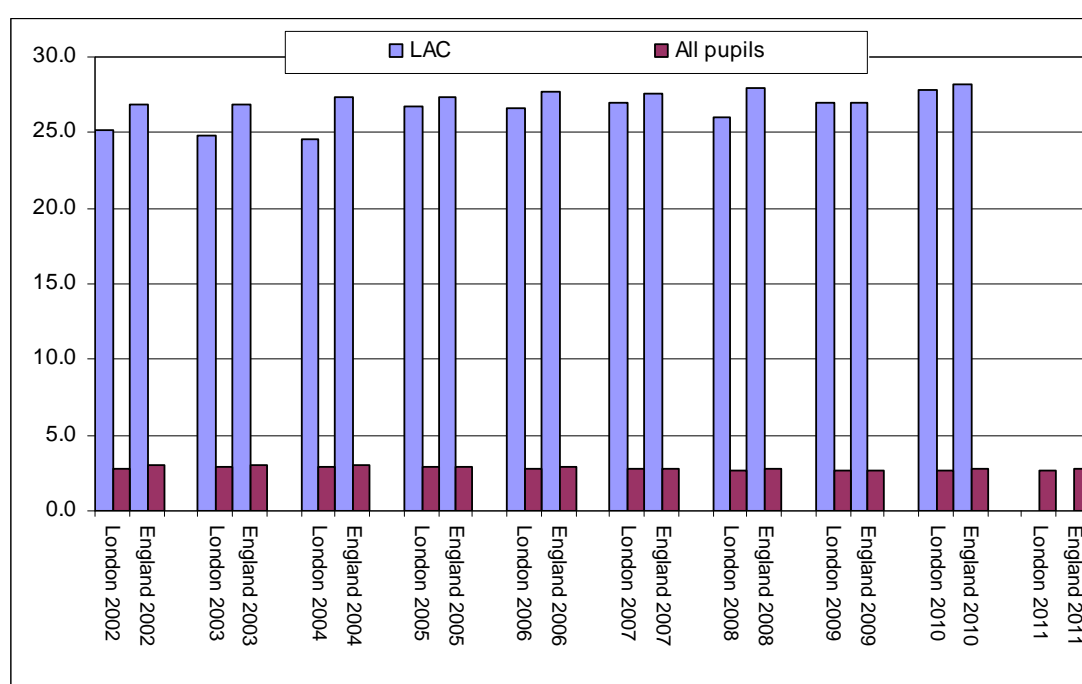
This may be a consequence of the family experiences that led to them having been taken into care or it may have been a cause or a consequence of the 'in care' cycle itself. Again it is not possible to discern that cause from existing data but the gap is particularly large between Looked After Children and other children living in the South East of England, the East Midlands, the South West and amongst pupils whose home area could not be identified, and is likely to have an impact on other education outcomes. Additionally, it should be a matter of concern that in 2008 pupil 'home' area cannot be identified in the NPD record for an above average proportion of Looked After pupils with a record of SEN. The 2008 NPD record of Looked After Children's home postcode is reviewed further in the separate *Technical Note* which accompanies this *Briefing*.

Unsurprisingly, Looked After pupils are, again, on the view shown in Figure 17, disproportionately likely to have a record of Behaviour, emotional and social need. The next largest 'gap' between Looked After and other pupils is for those with a record of moderate learning difficulty. It is likely that there will, again, be consequences for

education outcomes generally, including key stage assessments and public examination results.

Figure 18 is based on the SSDA 903 survey rather than the NPD, and shows the proportion of Looked After children and all children who had a statement of SEN in the period 2002 to 2010. The percentages are based on separate headcounts for each year. One in four Looked After Children had a statement of SEN, though the exact proportion varies from one year to the next and the proportion is generally lower in London than in England as a whole. By comparison, approximately three young people out of every hundred had a statement of SEN. The gap between the Looked After young people and young people generally did not narrow over the nine years shown.

Figure 18. Percentage of Looked After Children and all children with a statement of special educational needs, 2002 to 2010 London and England
Ref DS18

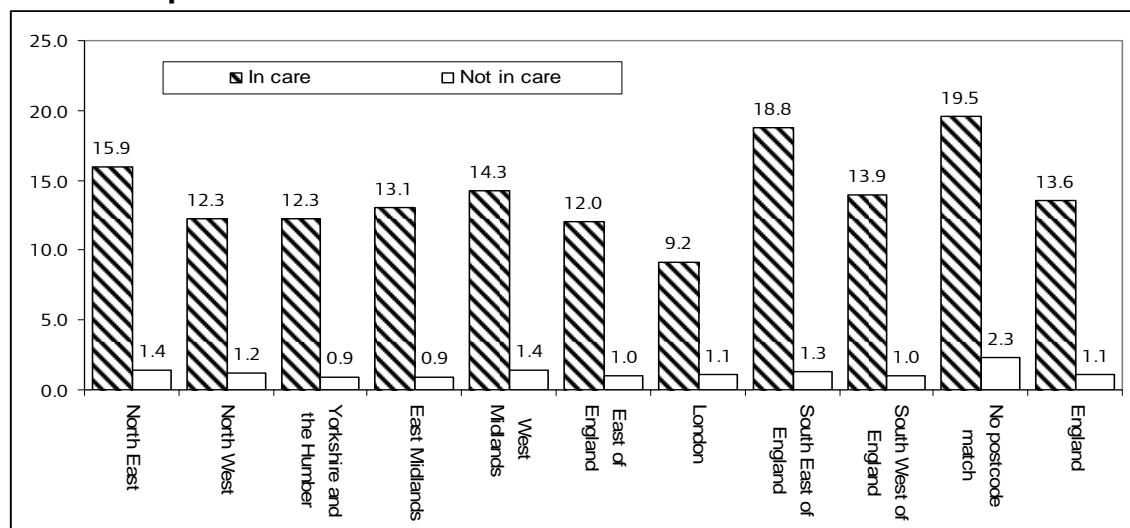


Note: DfE is scheduled to publish further information on SEN statements for 2011 on 28th March

A much higher proportion of Looked After pupils than other pupils were on roll in special schools rather than mainstream schools in 2008. This is consistent with the higher proportion of Looked After Children who have a statement of SEN, though the data do not explain how it is that the higher incidence of statements of SEN, and of SEN generally, amongst Looked After Children comes into being. Special schools do not include Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), which fell outside the scope of the NPD in 2008.

PRUs are included in later NPD data collection exercises, and the situation in them is now open to review in the future.

Figure 19. Percentage of Looked After pupils and percentage of other pupils on roll in special schools in 2008.^{RefDS19}



Source: 2008 NPD

Advice provided in 2009 by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in *Guidance on Looked After Children with Special Educational Needs placed out-of-authority* makes it plain that it is the responsibility of the local authority where the child is ordinarily resident to carry out an SEN assessment where a statement of SEN may be required.²⁷ Unsurprisingly, the advice focuses on Looked After Children on roll in maintained schools. Other guidance issued by DCSF in 2009 states that

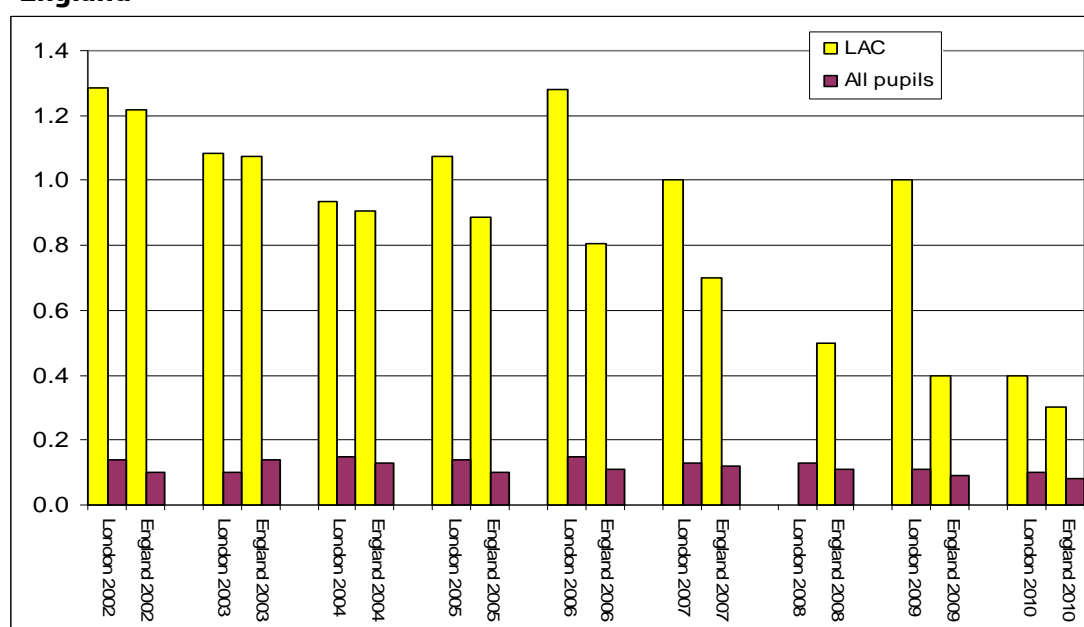
*Many looked after young people have suffered from a disrupted school experience – they may have attended a number of schools or been absent from school for extended periods of time.*²⁸

A 2003 report commissioned by the then Department for Education and Skills and the Local Government Association on a sample of 377 pupils at key stage 4 noted that a third had three or more educational placements during their secondary school years (possibly including placements in alternative education).²⁹ Given that tendency towards disrupted education, and the comparatively greater tendency for Looked After Children to live in one L(E)A area and attend school in another, there would be value in reviewing the continuity of SEN provision, including provision under an SEN statement, for Looked After pupils and other pupils.

7.2 Permanent exclusions and pupil absence

Figure 20 is based on DfE summaries of SSDA 093 survey data, and shows the percentage of Looked After and all (as opposed to other) pupils with one or more permanent exclusions from school. The scale shown on the left of the graph indicates that comparatively few pupils in London and England are permanently excluded from school. However, allowing for that, the exclusion rate for Looked After Children is higher than for pupils generally, and the exclusion rate for Looked After Children in London is higher than for England as a whole.

Figure 20. Looked After Children and all children with one or more permanent exclusions as a percentage of the school roll, 2002 to 2010, London and England Ref D520



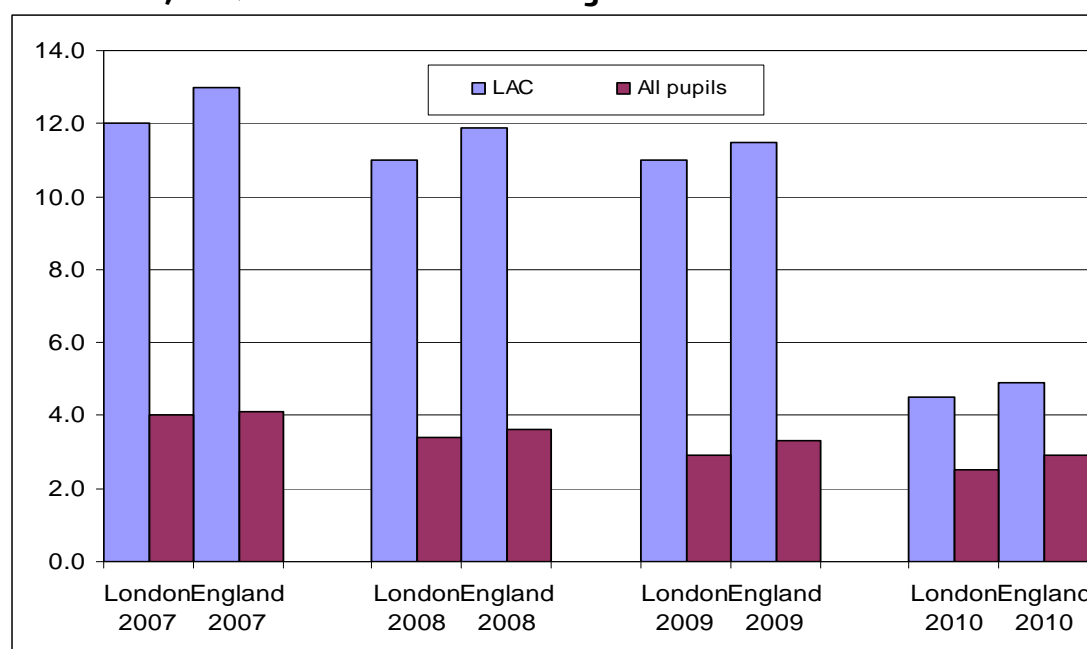
Pupil absence from school can mean education missed which is not then caught up on. There are potentially issues, such as bullying, which might explain why some pupils avoid school and, again potentially, a risk to child safety when young people are away from school.

In the period covered by Figure 21, a pupil was classed as a persistent absentee if he or she missed one in five school registrations sessions. For the majority of the period shown, Looked After Children were more than twice as likely as pupils generally to be persistent absentees, though that gap and proportion of children who were persistent absentees fell markedly in 2010. From July 2011 the 20 per cent of registrations missed

threshold for classifying pupils as persistent absentees fell to 15 per cent, which means that Figure 21 cannot be updated as it stands.

Figures 20 and 21 show that Looked After Children are proportionally more likely than other pupils to be out of school because of truancy education and out of education because of exclusion. Exclusions may contribute to the high rate of inward pupil mobility amongst Looked After Children referred to in section 5. The data to explore this further are now included in the NPD, and the scope for analysing that data is discussed further in the *Technical Note* that accompanies this *Briefing*.

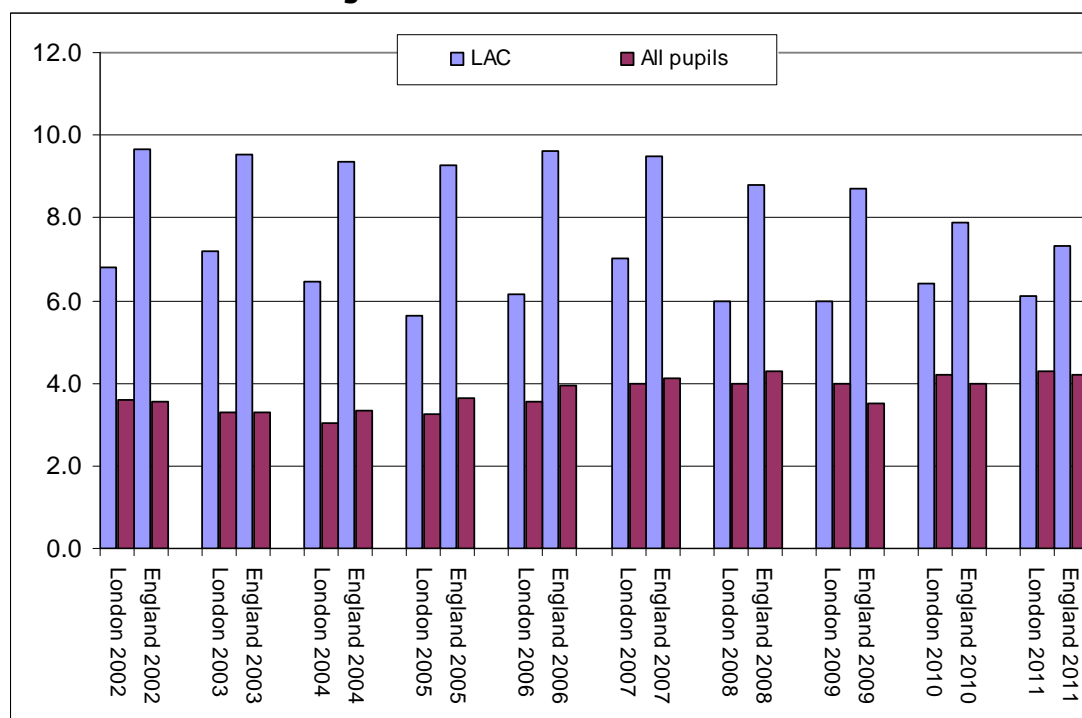
Figure 21. Persistent absentees as a percentage of Looked After Children and all children, 2007 to 2010 London and England ^{Ref DS20}



7.3 Looked After Children and youth disorder

Figure 22 provides a view of youth crime or disorder over a ten year period for London and England as a whole. Two points are clear. Looked After Children were approximately twice as likely as 10 to 17 year olds as a whole to have been convicted or subjected to a final warning, and Looked After Children in London were consistently less likely to be in that situation than Looked After Children in England as a whole.

Figure 22. Percentage of Looked After Children and all children aged 10 to 17 convicted or subject to a final warning/reprimand during the year, 2002 to 2011 London and England ^{Ref DS21}



Note: after 2009 what is now the Department of Education ceased to publish figures for convictions or final reprimands for all 10 to 17 year olds. The figures for 2010 and 2011 for 'All pupils' shown in the graph are estimates based on past trends.

However, while a great deal has been written about educational attainment, or rather the lack of it, and involvement in youth crime, comparatively little systematic evidence is available that might explain any association between Looked After youth, education and youth crime. The 2009 joint report of the Representative for Children and Youth and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, British Columbia, Canada, is an exception to this.³⁰

The review is based on data for 50,000 children born in 1986, who had attended schools in British Columbia in 1997-98 and who were aged 11 in December 1997. It is not immediately clear from the report for how many years this cohort was tracked, but evidence is provided on 21 year olds, who would have reached that age by 2007. In tracking individuals in this way, the study provides *longitudinal* data. It also linked records of children in care with information for the same individual from the criminal and youth justice systems the education system and with information on income assistance.³¹

Thirty six percent of Children in Care had contact with the Youth Justice system between the ages of 12 and 17 and only 6 per cent of Children in Care who encountered the Youth Justice system had successfully completed secondary education. The proportion of Looked After Children successfully completing secondary education was smaller than the proportion encountering the Youth Justice system. A smaller proportion (31 per cent) of Children in Care successfully completed secondary education.³² Some 88 per cent of Looked After Children who had contact with the Youth Justice system had a record of special needs relating to behaviour and/or serious mental illness.³³ Children who had been taken into care at age 1 to 5 and between ages 13 to 16 were particularly likely to encounter the youth justice system between ages of 12 to 21.³⁴

There would be privacy issues in England if researchers wished to follow practice in British Columbia by merging pupil records with individual youth offender records using information such as each young person's name, date of birth and gender. It remains to be seen whether that issue will arise and whether it can be resolved. More information is given in the *Technical Note*.

8. Educational attainment

Key points in this *Briefing* and in the second of the British Columbia Reports are that a gap between the education attainment of Looked After Children and other children is evident at an early age and that it widens as children pass through the education system.³⁵ One response would be to intervene at an early age *and* to have a record of progress for all pupils that can be used to assess whether pedagogies and policies are actually working - or not,

However, the authors of the 2007 British Columbia reports on Looked After Children state bluntly that

*A growing portion of the children in care population is not being assessed through the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment); there are increasingly no benchmarks to determine how well these children are doing within the school system at early ages.*³⁶

This has implications for education in England where the debate about educational teacher assessments and tests, and public examinations has tended to polarise between those who are in favour of public reporting for purposes of public accountability and those who argue that, if assessments (not 'tests') are to take place at all, they should be for purely diagnostic work within classrooms and without attendant 'league tables'. The second point of view has made some headway, and the publication of Key Stage 1 and key stage 3 tests outcomes no longer occurs nationally (and possibly not at all), and the same applies to Key Stage 2 science test results. It is also accepted that outcomes for some pupils should not be reported for school accountability purposes in performance tables. Pupils who have only recently arrived in England and are not fluent in English do not have their public examination results reported. Likewise pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) are unlikely to be included in reports on key stage teacher assessments and tests.

What might be described as something of a retreat from pupil assessment is evident from the Tables in this section, and this has come at a price in the way the British Columbia study describes. In practice, a variety of methods for assessing pupil attainment and educational need already exist, including a variety of cognitive ability tests. While it is unlikely that a single assessment package can be used for all pupils, including pupils from overseas who are not fluent in English, this *Briefing* began by

citing a criticism of social workers' past 'failure' to factor the importance of education into their work. By the same token educationalists can quite reasonably be expected to bear in mind the position of Looked After Children, and to devise or use existing assessments which provide meaningful information (other than the label 'assessments disapplied') which would otherwise not exist. In research a 'next step' might be an analysis of the completeness and outcomes of Looked After Children and Britain's equivalent of British Columbia's readiness for school assessments, the Foundation Profile.

In the absence of that type of assessment and analysis, this section is concerned with the attainment of Looked After Children relative to all children at key stages 1 to 4. Key stage assessment, and in some instances tests, are completed in the summer which young people for the main part begin at age 6, 10, 13, and 15 respectively. The next section provides, albeit limited, information on education after the compulsory school years, which a child in England begins when he or she first reaches the age of five at the start of the school year, and which finishes at the end of the school year which a young person begins aged 15. This section focuses on whether different 'cohorts' of pupils reach nationally expected levels of attainment, that is whether they do or do not reach or pass national attainment 'benchmarks'.

Unfortunately, reporting practice changed in 2010, to include only those Looked After Children deemed eligible for assessment, that is, those for whom key stage assessments were deemed appropriate. This means that a view of the situation of Looked After Children as a whole is no longer available. The figures included in this Section are for the period 2002 to 2009.

Odds ratios are particularly appropriate for the analysis of different cohorts and the separate *Technical Note* explains their calculation, and what their place is in describing a changing world. Mapping the progress of the same individual pupils in schools over time is also possible using *longitudinal* data from the National Pupil Dataset (NPD), though that is beyond the scope of this *Briefing*.

For present purposes, the closer the odds ratio is to 1 the closer the chances are that the same proportion of Looked After Children as pupils generally will reach national attainment benchmarks. Conversely, the larger the odds ratio, the greater the gap between the proportion of Looked After Children and children generally reaching those

benchmarks. (Odds ratios also conveniently summarize what would be much larger Tables if 'percentage achieving nationally expected levels in ...' were shown separately for Looked After Children and for all pupils.) Percentage figures are shown in the *Descriptive Statistic* file available separately with the *Briefing*.

The first three Tables show the odds ratios for English, Mathematics and Science at Key Stages 1 to 3 from 2002 to 2009 (where assessment data are available). The odds of Looked After Children relative to all children of reaching nationally expected levels of attainment are worse at key stage 3, part way through secondary schooling, than they are for Looked After Children in earlier assessments at Key Stage 1 and 2 in primary schools. However, the odds of Looked After Children reaching national benchmarks compared to all children are at times better at the end of primary schooling at Key Stage 2 than they are at Key Stage 1 part way through primary school. That being so, we should resist the temptation to conclude that Looked After Children fall further behind other children as they pass through the English school system, though there are issues to explore about experience in secondary schools.

The fourth Table provides information based on the proportions of young people reaching national benchmarks in public examinations. The odds ratio for achieving at least one Grade A*-G in GCSE is the greatest shown in any of the four Tables, is greater in London than in England and has increased in London and nationally over recent years. Put another way, the gap between the proportions of Looked After children and all children reaching this basic KS4 benchmark is the largest shown, is larger in London than in England as a whole, and it is widening. School improvement has been a major focus of education policy and practice for more than 20 years, and those statistics will be of concern to those involved in either.

Perhaps counter-intuitively, the odds ratio is smaller for the harder to reach benchmark of 5 or more higher grade passes at GCSE or equivalent. This highlights the point that odds ratios are relative. Virtually all pupils achieved at least one GCSE grade at A*-G and approximately half of Looked After Children in 2002 did not. That gap is large. In the same year less than half of all pupils reached the more demanding '5 A*-C'

Table 7. The odds of Looked After Children relative to all children of reaching nationally expected levels of attainment in English Assessments at Key Stages 1 to 3, 2002 to 2009 London and England ^{Ref D523}

	Ks1 Reading	KS1 Writing	KS2 English	KS3 English
London 2002	4.2	3.5	5.0	7.1
London 2003	4.6	3.5	4.3	6.4
London 2004	NA	NA	4.9	7.3
London 2005	4.1	3.9	4.3	7.8
London 2006	3.2	2.8	4.8	6.5
London 2007	4.0	3.7	3.9	6.6
London 2008	2.9	3.0	4.4	5.8
London 2009	3.0	2.8	4.6	NA
England 2002	6.1	5.6	5.7	6.9
England 2003	5.1	4.8	5.1	7.7
England 2004			5.0	8.4
England 2005	4.2	4.2	5.2	7.8
England 2006	3.9	4.0	5.0	6.6
England 2007	4.3	3.9	4.7	6.9
England 2008	4.0	4.0	5.1	6.6
England 2009	3.8	3.9	4.7	NA

Table 8. The odds of Looked After Children relative to all children of reaching nationally expected levels of attainment in mathematics at Key Stages 1 to 3, 2002 to 2009 London and England ^{Ref D523}

	KS1 Mathematics	KS2 Mathematics	KS3 Mathematics
London 2002	5.2	5.5	6.7
London 2003	4.0	4.3	6.9
London 2004	NA	4.4	7.4
London 2005	5.1	4.4	6.6
London 2006	3.9	4.3	5.5
London 2007	4.0	3.4	6.6
London 2008	4.2	4.8	6.1
London 2009	3.1	4.7	NA
England 2002	6.5	5.2	7.5
England 2003	5.8	5.1	8.1
England 2004		4.8	7.8
England 2005	5.6	5.0	7.2
England 2006	4.9	4.6	7.0
England 2007	5.2	4.4	7.1
England 2008	5.5	4.8	6.8
England 2009	4.4	4.4	NA

Table 9. The odds of Looked After Children relative to all children of reaching nationally expected levels of attainment in science at Key Stages 2 and 3, 2002 to 2009 London and England ^{Ref DS23}

	KS1 science	KS2 science	KS3 science
London 2002	NA	5.3	6.6
London 2003	NA	4.4	6.3
London 2004	NA	5.1	6.4
London 2005	NA	4.7	5.7
London 2006	NA	4.5	5.8
London 2007	NA	3.8	5.7
London 2008	NA	4.7	5.7
London 2009	NA	4.5	NA
England 2002	NA	5.7	7.0
England 2003	NA	6.0	7.0
England 2004	NA	5.5	7.4
England 2005	NA	5.4	6.7
England 2006	NA	5.0	6.2
England 2007	NA	5.1	6.6
England 2008	NA	4.9	6.3
England 2009	NA	4.5	NA

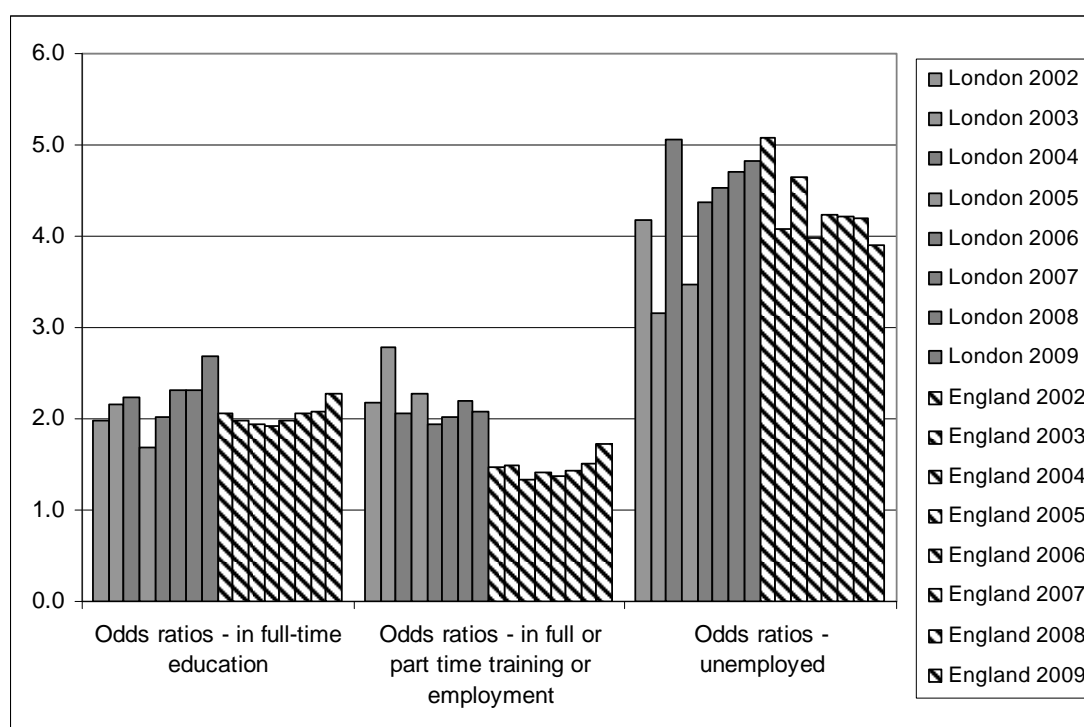
Table 10. The odds of Looked After Children relative to all children of reaching three national benchmarks in public examination ^{Ref DS23}

	Achieving at least 1 GCSE or equivalent at grade A*-G	Achieving at least 5 GCSEs or equivalent at grade A*-G	Achieving at least 5 GCSEs or equivalent at grade A*-C
London 2002	20.4	17.7	11.1
London 2003	20.2	16.3	9.6
London 2004	24.6	15.3	10.4
London 2005	20.3	13.2	8.4
London 2006	22.7	16.1	8.5
London 2007	32.7	16.3	8.8
London 2008	36.1	19.4	9.8
London 2009	42.2	22.1	11.3
England 2002	16.4	15.0	12.0
England 2003	16.9	14.5	11.0
England 2004	18.3	12.2	11.2
England 2005	17.7	11.8	10.6
England 2006	25.9	13.5	10.9
England 2007	51.2	14.6	11.3
England 2008	36.9	14.2	11.7
England 2009	41.9	15.1	13.4

9. Destinations of Looked After young people after the end of compulsory schooling.

The previous section showed the chances of Looked After Children *relative* to all children of reaching national education attainment benchmarks at key stages 1 to 4. The graph below also provides information based on a comparison of the situation of school leavers who had been in care with all school leavers. Information on all school leavers was provided by the Connexions Service which itself provides advice for 13 to 19 year olds on education and employment.

Figure 23. Odds ratios of Looked After Children in the year immediately after the end of compulsory schooling of being in full-time education, in full or part-time training or employment, or of being unemployed, 2002 to 2009
Ref D528



However, since there is no annually updated national 'citizen activity database', comparing the situation of those who had been Looked After with that of people of a similar age becomes progressively more difficult at the regional level as school days recede into the past. The next Table provides information on the situation of 19 year olds who had been Looked After at age 16, and shows the proportion of the cohort local authorities had lost contact with.

Amongst those with whom contact had been maintained, the percentage who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) tended to increase over the period 2007

to 2011. Typically, between one in three and one in four of those who had been looked after at age 16 were 'NEET' at 19, with the NEET rate being lower in London than in England as a whole.

Table 11. Young people aged 19 at 31st March who were Looked After on 1st April at age 16, by activity at age 19, 2007 to 2011 Ref D529

	London				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
All in Higher Education (%)	9.1	10.0	11.8	10.8	9.0
All in non-HE education (%)	35.2	37.5	34.2	35.7	38.9
All in training (%)	21.8	21.3	19.3	14.6	18.1
NEET - illness/ disability (%)	2.4	3.1	2.5	3.8	3.5
NEET - other reasons (%)	24.2	21.3	23.6	25.5	23.6
NEET any reason	26.7	24.4	26.1	29.3	27.1
Local authority not in touch (%)	7.9	6.9	8.1	8.9	7.6
All young people aged 19 years old who were looked after on 1 April when aged 16 years old	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All young people aged 19 years old who were looked after on 1 April when aged 16 years old (Number)	1,650	1,600	1,610	1,570	1,440
	England				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
All in Higher Education (%)	6.0	6.9	6.9	7.3	6.2
All in non-HE education (%)	25.5	27.2	26.1	29.7	30.2
All in training (%)	30.7	31.2	30.2	24.4	24.8
NEET - illness/ disability (%)	5.0	4.7	4.9	4.7	0.2
NEET - other reasons (%)	24.1	24.1	26.2	27.4	1.6
NEET any reason	29.1	28.8	31.1	32.1	32.8
Local authority not in touch (%)	7.8	6.6	5.6	5.6	5.9
All young people aged 19 years old who were looked after on 1 April when aged 16 years old	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	6.9
All young people aged 19 years old who were looked after on 1 April when aged 16 years old (Number)	5,800	5,800	6,100	6,200	6,290

Note: figures are rounded

The proportion in higher education was higher in London than in England as a whole, the small in both cases with lower figures for 2011 than for 2010. Those who were in education other than higher education tended to rise between 2007 and 2011, albeit unevenly, and again the proportion in London was higher than in England as a whole.

By contrast the proportion in training fell over the period and, perhaps given the numbers in education, the proportion in training in London was lower than in England as a whole. Quite apart from the impact of education in itself, the difference between the 'in training' figures for London and those for England *may* reflect the more limited youth labour market in London than elsewhere.

Table 12 provides a record of the accommodation in which those had been Looked After at age 16 lived in at age 19.

Table 12. Accommodation - all young people aged 19 who were looked after on 1 April 2004 then aged 16 years (rounded) ^{ref D530}

All children now aged 19 years who were looked after on 1 April 2004 then aged 16 years								
	London				England			
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010
Community home	17.6	15.0	16.8	19.7	9.3	9.5	9.0	10.0
Semi-independent transitional accommodation	4.7	5.6	6.2	8.3	7.8	9.0	9.3	10.3
Supported lodgings	2.9	2.5	1.9	1.9	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.5
Ordinary lodgings	0.6	1.3	-	0.6	1.0	1.6	1.3	1.3
Foyers	47.6	48.1	46.6	40.8	43.1	41.4	42.6	41.9
Independent living	-	-	-	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5
Emergency accommodation	1.2	1.3	1.9	1.3	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.6
In custody	2.9	-	2.5	3.2	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.6
Bed and breakfast	3.5	6.3	5.6	4.5	4.7	5.9	6.1	5.6
Other accommodation	7.6	6.9	8.1	8.9	7.8	6.6	5.6	5.6
All children now aged 19 years who were Looked After on 1 April when aged 16 years	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children now aged 19 years who were Looked After on 1 April when aged 16 years (Number)	1,700	1,600	1,610	1,570	5,800	5,800	6,100	6,200

Conclusions

Children are taken into care because their circumstances suggest that is necessary, with abuse and/or neglect in the home being the most common trigger. That is not the end of the matter. Education outcomes for Britain's Looked After Children broadly reflect those in other countries, and attainment in key stage assessments and public examinations is part of that picture, but only part of it. The fact that Victoria Climbié was never on roll in any English school is an education outcome which could only have an impact on attainment. In the same way disrupted education, and the extra distance travelled by Looked After Children to school are outcomes and will have a bearing on attainment.

Nonetheless, raw score attainment in Key Stage assessments and so on, counts in its own right. Attainment gaps exist between Looked After and other children at an early age, and they tend to widen as children pass through the education system. A high proportion of Looked After Children have special educational needs, which will themselves be a barrier to education progress. There is preliminary circumstantial evidence from the NPD and elsewhere that Looked After Children are more likely than other pupils to have a disrupted and/or delayed experience of schooling and that schooling, when it does take place, is accompanied by a high level of absenteeism. The risks of Looked After Children being caught up in the Criminal Justice system and of unemployment are greater than for young people generally.

Remarkably little information is published on arrangements for alternative education and, while the English NPD is an extremely important dataset, it has that gap in it and this will be particularly significant if Looked After Children are disproportionately represented in alternative education. There is scope for DfE to triangulate the pupil record with the SSDA 903 record and records of alternative education. There is also scope for educationalists to devise assessments that can inform work on the educational progress of those Looked After Children who fall outside the scope of National Curriculum assessments, and for that information to be linked to young people's NPD records. Additionally, there is scope for at least thinking about linking youth offending records to NPD records to analyse youth offending and attainment, though it should be recognised that there will be reservations about that and access to data should not be taken for granted.

There is however scope *now* to analyse mobility and educational attainment using longitudinal NPD data, including data on Looked After status, special educational needs and changes of school and of home address. Again, a note of caution is needed. The majority of the evidence *available to the DfE* is that the statistical effect of pupil mobility largely disappears when other pupil characteristics such as free school meal entitlement (for which schools already receive additional funding) are taken into account. At the same time, to the best of my knowledge, no teachers working in schools where there are high levels of pupil mobility argue that this does *not* have an impact on attainment and on the additional resources the schools involved need. It may well be that, despite what appear to be contradictory conclusions, both views are in a sense 'right'.

There is scope for research on all pupils into the impact on educational attainment of individual pupil's history of moving home and changing school, using longitudinal NPD data (and possibly identifying gaps in formal schooling in the process). There is also a good deal in the *Briefing* which points in that direction as far as future research on Looked After Children in particular is concerned.

Historically, research on education in England has focussed on both education policy and education practice (sometimes simultaneously), in a way that tends to set it apart from other areas of research.³⁷ Key points in discussions with local education authority researchers about the direction of research in London in the 1990's were that (a) the focus would need to be on school improvement and (b) that improving education required a change in the individual's experience of teaching and learning in individual classrooms (which is not the same as saying that there should be an exclusive focus on teaching and learning, as anyone working in a school with a leaking roof, a high level of staff turnover or volatile levels of funding is likely to agree).

Wider research aimed at improving social care which does not at some stage translate into better practice will be the less effective for that, and a practitioner-oriented approach is present in local social worker good practice meetings, academic social work research³⁸ and in national guidance³⁹ which parallels that developed in education in the 1980's and 1990's.

The *Briefing* points to a modest amelioration in the attainment gap between Looked After Children and children generally, but also to a deterioration, particularly in London, in the relative chances of Looked After Children being unemployed after the end of compulsory schooling. The *Briefing* also invites educationalists and social workers to, as it were, look over the hedge into what may be seen as others' fields, and the Notes and References section which follows is partly written with that in mind. However, a lesson from education research is that education is a high stakes game, that outcomes matter, and that what professionals intend to teach is not the measure of what pupils learn. The NPD provides a wide range of insights into those outcomes, and there is clearly scope for social care research (as well as education research) to use the NPD to assess whether changes in social work practice nationally are translating in better educational outcomes for Looked After Children.

Notes and references

The references shown as 1 to 39 below are numbered in the main text in line with conventional practice.

Additionally, a substantial proportion of the tables and graphs in this *Briefing* are based on data published by the Department of Health, and then by the Department for Education and its predecessors. Those tables and graphs have been given a reference in the main text, which is for a specific worksheet in the supplementary *Descriptive Statistics* EXCEL file which accompanies this *Briefing*. For example the reference 'DS1' in the main text refers to the first worksheet in the *Descriptive Statistics* file. Those worksheets contain the tables on which the graphs are based, and include references to the publications and tables from which data are drawn.

A second set of descriptive statistics are based on analyses of individual pupil records held in the 2008 National Pupil Dataset, to which a variety of additional variables have been added. These are referenced in the main text as '2008 NPD'

1. Michael Rutter and Nicola Madge *Cycles of Deprivation. A Review of Research*, Heinemann, 1977. Pages 183, 205, 212 and 317 review the effects of family separation, including possible effects on young children's ability to form emotional ties with others.

2. *The Victoria Climbié Inquiry. Summary and Recommendations*, pages 25 and 26. This is available at the time of writing at

<http://www.sunderlandchildrenstrust.org.uk/content/laming%20report%20summary.pdf>

A full version of the Laming Report is available at the time of writing at

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4008654

A parliamentary review of the Laming Report is available at

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmhealth/570/570.pdf>

The Laming Report made extensive recommendations on improving management in local authorities and, insofar as training is mentioned, suggests that this should be improved for medical staff so that they are better able to recognize the victims of abuse.

However, the evidence given to the Laming inquiry was actually consistent with a different view as far as the social work approach to education was concerned. The year after Victoria Climbié died a collection of papers edited by Sonia Jackson and called *Nobody Ever Told Us School Mattered. Raising the educational attainments of children in care* was published by the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering. The title was a clear signpost to its contents, and Jackson noted in the first paper in the collection that 'The conclusion is inescapable: researchers and practitioners do not see education as a particularly interesting or important aspect of care for separated children.' (page 16). This blind spot as far as education was concerned extended to care in children's homes, and decision-making about foster placements, and adoption, any or all of which could translate into disrupted schooling.

Also see Rachel Harker, David Dobel-Ober, David Berridge and Ruth Sinclair *Taking Care of Education. An evaluation of the education of looked after children* National Children's Bureau 2004. Pages 4 to 10 refer to system failure in care arrangements, including: poor co-operation between local government social services and education departments; a failure to prioritize education when making placements; low level or no emphasis on education amongst those responsible for exercising Care; changes in placements to suit the carer rather than the child; disrupted education consequent on changes in placement and; low expectations of Looked After Children by educators. The authors do not provide evidence of the extent, location and impact of these shortcomings at the time when the work was published but, given *Nobody Ever Told Us School Mattered*, they are not alone in raising these issues.

Also see the following, which recognises that there are issues in social worker approaches to evidence-based work and suggests a technological solution to professional and performance management needs rather than a change in professional culture. T. Skuse, I Macdonald and H Ward. *Outcomes for Looked After Children. The longitudinal study at the third data collection point (30.9.99) Third Interim report to the Department of Health* (undated). Available at the time of writing at

http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/589995/outcomes_main_ccfr.pdf

3. Recommendation 12 page 35 of *The Victoria Climbié Inquiry. Summary and Recommendations* document

4. See Pat Cawson, Corinne Wattam, Sue Brooker and Graham Kelly *Child Maltreatment in the United Kingdom: a Study of the Prevalence of Child Abuse and Neglect* NSPCC 2000. The executive summary is available at the time of writing at
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/publications/downloads/childmaltreatmentintheukexecsummary_wdf48006.pdf

For a later review see Lorraine Radford, Susana Corral, Christine Bradley, Helen Fisher, Claire Bassett, Nick Howat and Stephan Collishaw *Child abuse and neglect in the UK today* NSPCC 2011 and available at the time of writing at
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/child_abuse_neglect_research_PDF_wdf84181.pdf

5. See local authority web table LAA4 associated with *Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England (including adoption and care leavers) – year ending 31 March 2010* Department for Education and Skills Statistical First Release 27 2010 (DfE SFR 27 2010), available at the time of writing at <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000960/index.shtml>

6. See local authority web table 6 associated with *Children in Need in England, including their Characteristics and Further Information on Children who were the Subject of a Child Protection Plan (Children in Need Census – Final) Year Ending 31 March 2010* Department for Education Statistical Release 28 2010 (DfE OSR 28 2010). Figures for London are the sum of figures shown for individual boroughs. Information is missing for Brent, Hackney and Havering. The report and additional local authority tables are available at the time of writing at
<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000970/index.shtml>

7. Web table LAA9 associated with *Children Looked After in England (including adoption and care leavers) year ending 31 March 2009* Department for Children Schools and Families Statistical First Release 25 2009 (DCSF SFR 25 2009) and available at the time of writing at
<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000878/index.shtml>

8. The Home Office has published statistics of unaccompanied children seeking asylum for the UK as a whole, but figures are not published by region. At the time of writing the UK figures are available at

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/immigration-tabs-q2-2011v2/asylum2-q2-11-tabs>

Eurostat also publishes information on refugees in Europe more generally. The website is not immediately easily navigable. However, at the time of writing the URL below links to a web site showing 'Table of Content' in the upper right quarter of the screen. Select the pdf icon, and go to page 35 of the document that appears for a list of the relevant information.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database

Notes of guidance to both sites need to be read with care.

Education research in England can include (at times) large-scale quantitative research in combination with or separately from (at times) small-scale qualitative analysis and/or case studies. Much, but not all, research on Looked After Children is of the small scale or case study type. Sarah Walker's *Something to smile about. Promoting and supporting the educational and recreational needs of refugee children* (Refugee Council 2011) is a case in point and is available

at the time of writing at

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Council/downloads/researchreports/SMILE%20report_3.pdf

Time series data on unaccompanied children seeking asylum are available at regional level for England in web table LAA7 association with DfE SFR 27 2010. London as a whole accounts for the majority of young people in this category in England with outer London accounting for the majority of the London total.

9. June Thoburn June Thoburn *Reunification of children in out-of-home care to birth parents or relatives: A synthesis of the evidence on processes, practices and outcomes* Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2009, page 2, also see page 7. Available at the time of writing at http://www.dji.de/pkh/expertise_dji_thoburn_reunification.pdf

10. The Eurydice at NFER website aims to provide reliable, comparative information on education systems and policies in Europe. The link below provides an overview of the availability of information in Europe on the educational attainment of Looked After Children as perceived by respondents from individual countries. While there are pockets of good practice the overall perception is that information is sparse.

http://www.nfer.ac.uk/shadomx/apps/fms/fmsdownload.cfm?file_uid=A981999A-C29E-AD4D-0CD2-35A932098B86&siteName=nfer

11. Claire Cameron, Katie Hollingworth and Sonia Jackson (eds) *Young People from a Public Care Background: secondary analysis of national statistics on educational participation* Thomas Corum Research Unit, Institute of Education University of London, and available at the time of writing at http://tcru.ioe.ac.uk/yippee/Portals/1/YiPPEE_WP3_COMPARATIVE_FINAL.pdf

The final report from this project, written by Sonia Jackson and Claire Cameron *Final Report of the YiPPEE project WP12 Young people from a public care background: pathways to further and higher education in five European countries* Thomas Corum Research Unit, Institute of Education University of London, and available at the time of writing at

<http://tcru.ioe.ac.uk/yippee/Portals/1/Final%20Report%20of%20the%20YiPPEE%20Project%20-%20WP12%20Mar11.pdf>

12. Cameron, Hollingworth and Jackson, Eds) *Young People from a Public Care Background: secondary analysis of national statistics on educational participation* page 12.

13. Alison Wolf *Review of Vocational Education. The Wolf Report*. Available at the time of writing at

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011>

14. See David Berridge *Placement stability. Providing stability and continuity for looked after children is essential for their personal development and achievement* Quality Protects Research Briefings Research in practice, Making Research Count Department of Health 2000. Available at the time of writing at

http://www.uea.ac.uk/menu/acad_depts/swk/MRC_web/public_html/files/qpb2.pdf

Also see Emily R. Munro and Ainsley Hardy *Placement Stability – a review of the literature* University of Loughborough, undated. Available at the time of writing at

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/ccfr/Publications/placementstabilitylitreview.pdf>

15. *Educational Outcomes for Children and Youth in Foster and Out-of-Home Care* National Working Group on Foster Care and Education, 2006, and available at the time of writing at http://www.fostercaremonth.org/GetInvolved/Toolkit/Support/Documents/Educational_Outcomes_and_Foster_Care.pdf

The first page contains the following

“School Mobility Rates

Children and youth have an average of one to two placement changes per year while in out-of-home care...

A 2001 study of more than 4,500 children and youth in foster care in Washington State found that at both the elementary and secondary levels, twice as many youth in foster care as youth not in care had changed schools during the year...

In a New York study of 70 children and youth in foster care, more than 75% did not remain in their school once placed in foster care, and almost 65% had been transferred in the middle of the school year...

A three-state study of youth aging out of care (the Midwest Study) by Chapin Hall revealed substantial levels of school mobility associated with placement in out-of-home care. Over a third of young adults reported having had five or more school changes..

School mobility rates are highest for those entering care for the first time. According to another Chapin Hall study of almost 16,000 children and youth in the Chicago Public School system, over two-thirds switched schools shortly after their initial placement."

Also see Pamela Choice, Amy D'Andrade, Kira Gunther, Debbie Downes, James Schaldach, Csilla Csiszar and Michael J. Austin *Education for Foster Children: Removing Barriers to Academic Success* Bay Area Social Services Consortium, Center for Social Services Research, School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley, 2001.

16. Katherine Whittred and Perry Kendall *Joint Special Report. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care in British Columbia: Educational Experiences and Outcomes* British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2007, pages 22 and 23. The report includes a comparison of the number of schools attended by young people generally, and by those in care with special needs, those not in care with special needs and those in care who were without special needs. By age 18 those in care with special needs were likely to have attended more schools than those with special needs who were not in care and those in care who had no special educational needs. This suggests that there is a multivariate relationship between SEN, being in Care, and disrupted schooling which might usefully be analyzed further using English data (and which is not captured by the more commonly produced simple bivariate graphs and tables).

17. Claire Cameron, Katie Hollingworth and Sonia Jackson (eds) *Young People from A Public Care Background: secondary analysis of national statistics on educational participation* Thomas Corum Research Unit, Institute of Education University of London, pages 100 and 105 to 106.

18. London Challenge *London's Key Issues* Department for Education and Skills, undated, pages 13 to 15.

For one account of London Challenge see Kate Myers and Anna Paige see *London Challenge: attempting to engage the system in system-wide reform* prepared for 19th International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement Fort Lauderdale, Florida, January, 2006 and available at the time of writing at

http://www.leadershipforlearning.org.uk/hcdimages/docs/myers_paige.pdf

19. David Ewens *Social Selection, Social Sorting and Education – 1 Who goes where? Maintained schools which are, and maintained schools which are not, their own admissions authorities* GLA DMAG Briefing 2006-25

20. Elaine Farmer and Eleanor Lutman *Case Management and Outcomes for Neglected Children Returned to their Parents. A Five Year Follow-up Study* Department for Children, Schools and Families Research Brief RB 214 2010. Available at the time of writing at <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RB214.pdf>

21. Jim Wade, Nina Biehal, Nicola Farrelly and Ian Sinclair *Maltreated Children in the Looked After System: A Comparison of Outcomes for Those who go Home and Those who do not* Department for Education, Research Brief RBX-10-06 2010.

22. June Thoburn *Reunification of children in out-of-home care to birth parents or relatives: A synthesis of the evidence on processes, practices and outcomes* Bundesministerium für Familie,

Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2009. Available at the time of writing at http://www.dji.de/pkh/expertise_dji_thoburn_reunification.pdf

23. Thoburn 2009 op cit pages 14 and 15.

24. Thoburn 2009 Ibid pages 3 and 4.

25. Thoburn 2009 op cit page 17.

26. Thoburn 2009 op cit page 17.

27. *Guidance on Looked After Children with Special Educational Needs placed out-of-authority* Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009 page 2. Available at the time of writing at <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/00060-2010DOM-EN.pdf>

28. *Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools: Guidance for schools* Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009 page 8. Available at the time of writing at

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/01048-2009.pdf>

Also see via the same link see *Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools: Guidance for schools*

29. Felicity Campbell-Fletcher and Tamsin Archer *Achievement at Key Stage 4 of Young People in Public Care* Department for Education and Skills, Research Report RR434 2003, page 2. available at the time of writing at

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR434.doc>

The study was based on a sample of 377 young people with detailed case studies of seven.

30. *Kids, Crime and Care. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes* British Columbia Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the Representative for Children and Youth, 2009

31. *Kids, Crime and Care. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes* ibid page 21

32. *Kids, Crime and Care. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes* op cit pages 29 and 30

33. *Kids, Crime and Care. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes* op cit page 32

34. *Kids, Crime and Care. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes* op cit page 34

35. Katherine Whittred and Perry Kendall *Joint Special Report. Health and Well-Being of Children in Care in British Columbia: Educational Experiences and Outcomes* British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2007, page 82

36. Katherine Whittred and Perry Kendall ibid page 34.

Also see the third of the British Columbia studies *Joint special Report, Health and Well-Being of Children in Care in British Columbia: Report 1 on Health Services Utilization and Mortality* British Columbia Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the Representative for Children and Youth 2006.

37. For one body of research on education which has a bearing on policy and practice (though less so the latter) see
 A.H. Halsey, Jean Floud and C. Arnold Anderson (eds) *Education, Economy and Society* The Free Press of Glencoe 1961.
 Jerome Karabel and A.H. Halsey (eds) *Power and Ideology in Education* Oxford University Press 1977.
 A.H. Halsey, Hugh Lauder, Phillip Brown and Amy Stuart Wells (eds) *Education, Culture, Economy, Society* Oxford University Press 2002.
 Hugh Lauder, Phillip Brown, Jo-Anne Dillabough, A.H. Halsey (eds) Oxford University Press, 2006.
38. For examples of work which has a good practice in social work element see:
 Scottish Government the Educational Attainment of Looked After Child – Local Authority Pilot Projects
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/238207/0065397.pdf>
- Celia Hannon, Claudia Wood and Louise Bazalgette *In Loco Parentis* Demos, 2010. Available at the time of writing at
http://www.demos.co.uk/files/In_Loco_Parentis_-_web.pdf?1277484312
 Mike Stein has written and presented extensively on a 'what works' theme, with a list available at <http://php.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/profiles/msC.php>
 For examples see
 Mark Stein and Jim Wade *Helping Care Leavers: Problems and Strategic Responses*. Report to the DETR 1999. Available at the time of writing at
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4009027
 Mike Stein, data annex by Marian Morris *Increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation* Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (c4EO) 2010. Available at the time of writing at <http://php.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/pubs/1869/>
 Mike Stein *Quality Matters in Children's Services* Jessica Kingsley Publishers 2009.
 Mike Stein *Resilience and young people leaving care* Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2005.
 Available at the time of writing at
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/resilience-and-young-people-leaving-care>
 The cover note to the JRF publication notes that 'It ... draws upon research studies completed in the last twenty years which have captured the experiences, views and reflections of the young people themselves'. Other work touching on touching on 'children's voice' includes
 Alice Pereira Carvalho *The Aspirations of Young People in Care and Their Perspectives on Resilience* Submitted as a Ph.D thesis, University of Exeter 2010. Available at the time of writing at
<https://eric.exeter.ac.uk/repository/bitstream/handle/10036/117401/CarvalhoA.pdf?sequence=1>
39. For examples of national guidance on planning and standards see
 Audit Commission *Area for Investigation 4: Support for educational attainment through the care planning system*. Available at the time of writing at
<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/lactoolkit/Pages/areaforinvestigation4.aspx>
 National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) and Social Care Institute for Excellence SCIE, NICE public health guidance 28. 2010. Available at the time of writing at
<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/13244/51173/51173.pdf>
 Local Government Association (LGA) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDEA) *Show me how I matter. A guide to the education of looked after children* IDEA and LGA 2006.
 Available at the time of writing at
<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/4840650>