



CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2018/19

Main Findings 2018/19

Education outcomes for looked after children have improved over the last 6 years.

However, there are still large gaps compared with all pupils

Leaver Attainment

35%

Looked after school leavers with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5

up from

23%
in
2012/13

compared with

85%
all pupils
2018/19

Leaver Destinations

71%

Looked after school leavers in positive follow up destinations

up from

63%
in
2012/13

compared with

93%
all pupils
2018/19

School attendance

87% for pupils looked after within the last year

down from

89%
in
2012/13

compared with

93%
all pupils
2018/19

School exclusions

152 per 1,000 looked after pupils

down from

280
in
2012/13

compared with

22 all pupils
2018/19

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Introduction

Local authorities have a responsibility to provide support to a group of vulnerable young people, known as 'looked after children'. A young person may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, abuse, complex disabilities which require specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system.

This publication links school and social work data to present information on school leaver attainment, the post-school destinations, school attendance and exclusion rates and Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels of looked after young people who left school in 2018/19.

Full results are available from the accompanying tables here: www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-80004-015-1

Who are counted in these figures?

This publication reports on the education outcomes of school-age children who were looked after by all local authorities in Scotland at any point between August 2018 to July 2019 and had a recorded Scottish Candidate Number available.


The first two chapters of this publication give information on the education outcomes and post-school destinations of the estimated 1,031 young people who were looked after at any point between August 2018 to July 2019 and who were in the 2018/19 school leaver cohort. These looked after young people represent two per cent of the 49,748 2018/19 school leavers. The final two chapters focus on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels across four year groups of 3,288 young people who were looked after at some point during 2018/19.


The figures presented here are a subset of the population of looked after children in Scotland. This is because the data on looked after children needs to be linked to schools data from publicly-funded schools. Not all looked after children can be successfully linked to the schools data for a variety of reasons. For successful linking to occur, the Scottish Candidate Number of the child is needed to obtain data on their education outcomes. A Scottish Candidate Number is usually assigned to a child when they begin school. Therefore looked after children of pre-school age are excluded from the analysis presented in this publication. Some school-age looked after children also have missing Scottish Candidate Numbers in the data provided to Scottish Government by local authorities. Therefore, these children are also excluded from the figures. More information on this is available in the background notes.

This year, the way in which the data is reported has changed; instead of reporting separately on children looked after for the full year and those looked after for part of the year, results are presented for all children looked after within the last year as one category. The main reason for this is that the splitting of looked after children into full and part year categories was becoming less of a meaningful distinction, especially for school leavers. Being looked after for part of the year may not be a good indicator of the level of stability that a young person experiences; for example, young people who cease to be looked after may remain in the same place as they did while they were looked after, and not therefore as likely to experience the same level of instability as a young person starting to be looked after, who would also be included in the looked after for part of the year category.

Data is still available in the accompanying tables for overall attainment, post-school destinations and attendance and exclusion by those looked after for the full year and part year for purposes of continuity.

Educational attainment

 Attainment for school leavers who were looked after within the last year has improved over the last six years.

 Looked after leavers who were in foster care or with friends or relatives had higher attainment than other placement types

This section presents data on the educational attainment of the estimated 1,031 young people who were looked after during the period 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019 who left school during 2018/19.

Age of school leavers

Chart 1a: Stage of all school leavers and those who were looked after, 2018/19

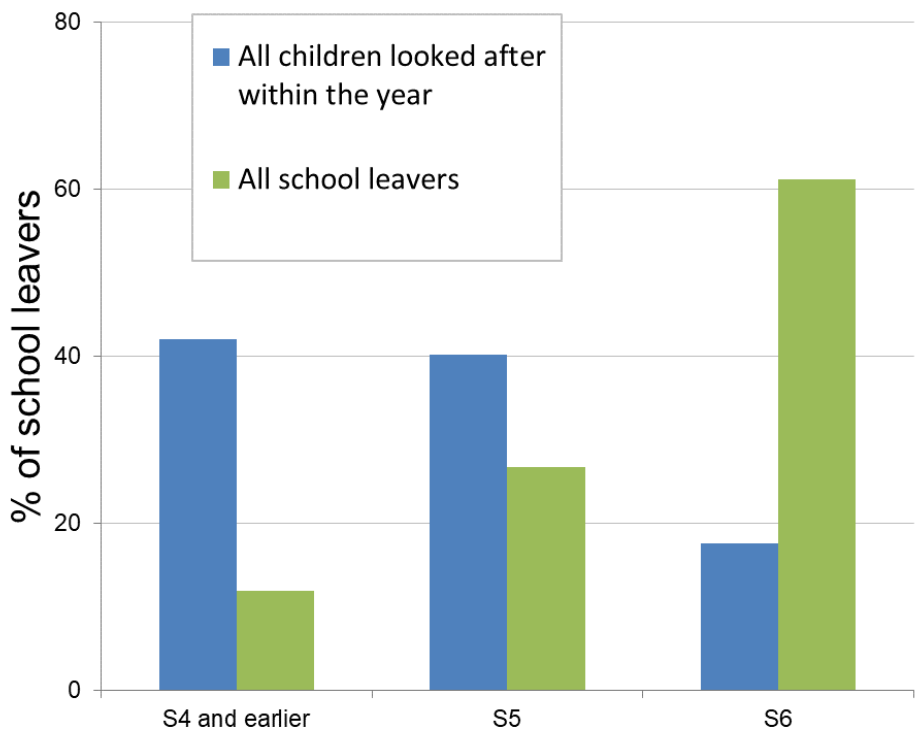
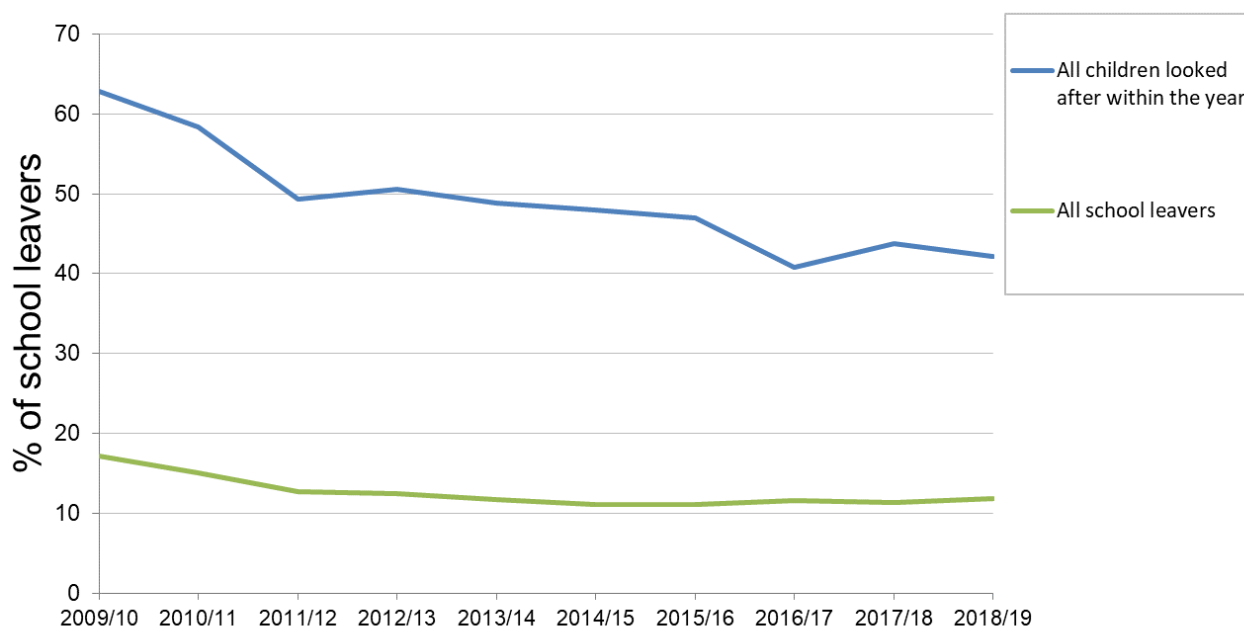


Chart 1b: Percentage of pupils leaving school in S4 or earlier for all school leavers and those who were looked after, 2009/10 to 2018/19

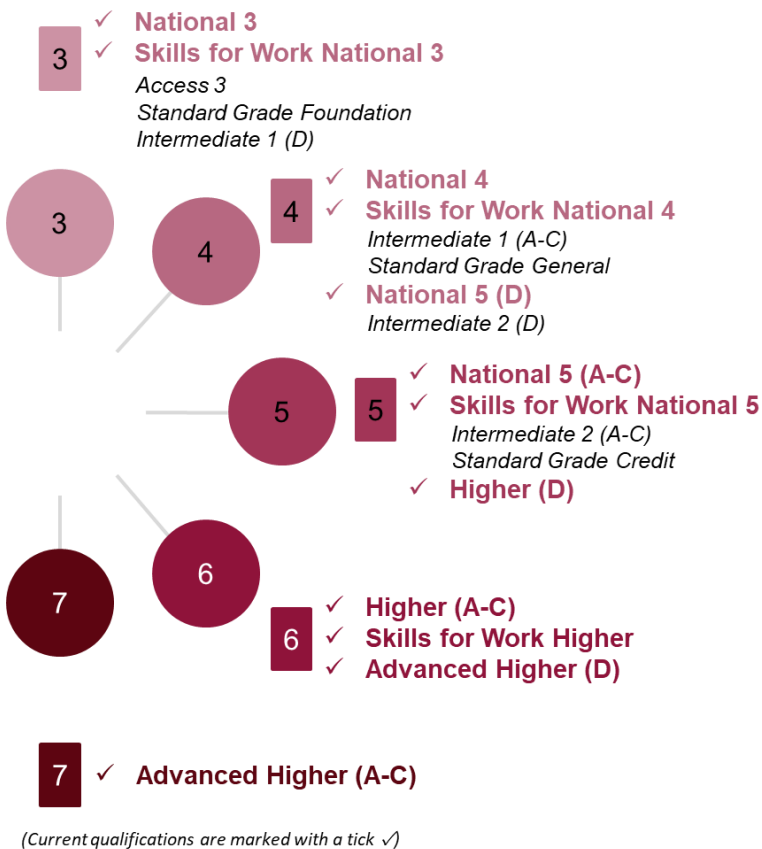


Looked after children tend to leave school at earlier stages, as shown in Chart 1a. In 2018/19 42% of school leavers who were looked after within the year left school in S4 or earlier, compared with 12% of school leavers more generally. The proportion of looked after leavers who left school in S4 or earlier has decreased since 2012/13, however the proportion remains higher than for all school leavers (Chart 1b).

Highest level of qualification

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is used as the basis for reporting attainment. The SCQF is Scotland’s national qualifications framework. The SCQF has 12 levels, which, in ascending order (SCQF Level 1-12), indicate the level of difficulty of a particular qualification. With reference to a set of ‘level descriptors’, the SCQF allows for broad comparisons to be made between qualifications (Illustration 2). It also allows learners, employers and the public in general, to understand the range of skills and learning that should be achieved at each level.

Illustration 2: Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels



Highers (SCQF Level 6) are generally taken in S5/S6 and Advanced Highers (SCQF 7) are generally taken in S6. Highers, sometimes along with Advanced Highers, are the Scottish qualifications required for entry into Higher Education.

In this publication, grade A to C (or ungraded pass) is considered a pass. If a pupil attains a D at a certain level, this is counted as attainment at the level below.

School leavers from 2018/19 are the fourth cohort to have experienced the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) throughout the senior phase of their school education. School leavers from 2013/14 and 2014/15 will have taken a range of qualifications from the current set to older qualifications that have now been phased out.

Table 1.1: Percentage of all school leavers and those who were looked after, by highest level of attainment achieved, 2018/19

	School leavers looked after within the last year	All school leavers
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	83	98
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	70	96
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better	35	85
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	11	61
1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7	2	19
No passes at SCQF 3 or better	17	2

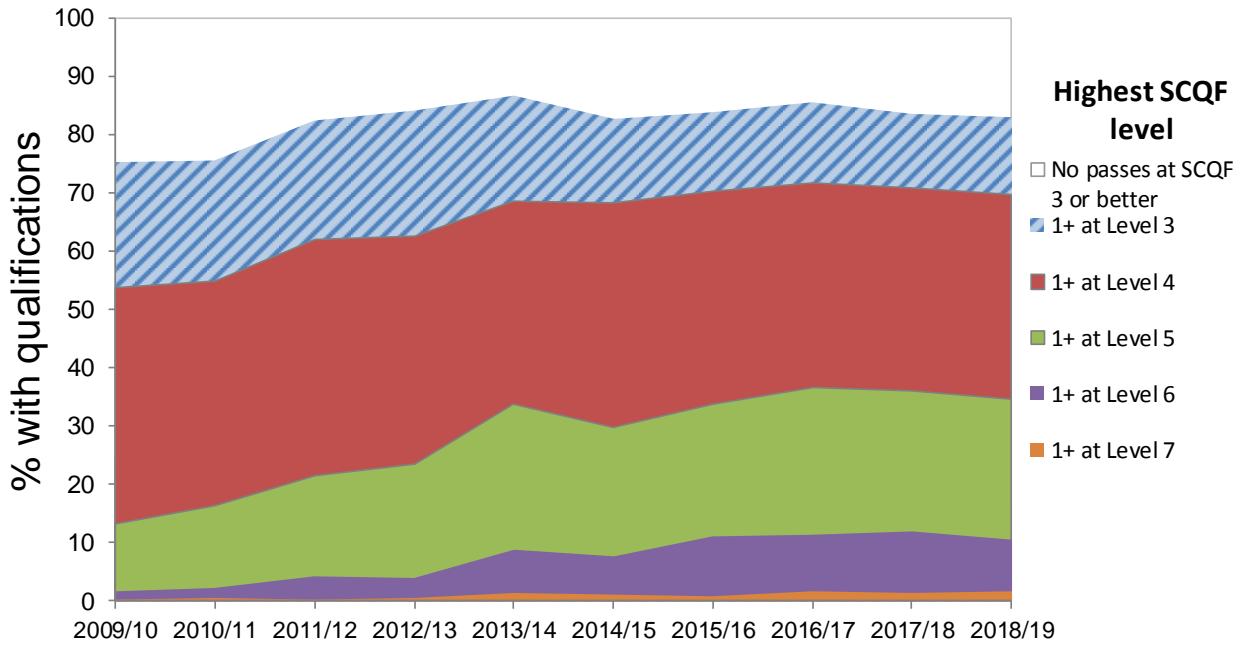
Almost all school leavers (96%) have at least one qualification at level 4 or better. This compares with 70% of young people looked after within the last year leaving school with the same level of qualifications. At the higher levels of qualification, 61% of all leavers have at least one qualification at level 6 or better, compared with 11% of looked after school leavers.

Chart 2a shows the percentage of school leavers who were looked after within the year who left school with one or more qualifications at each SCQF level and Chart 2b shows the same for all school leavers. The percentage of looked after school leavers achieving all SCQF qualification levels is consistently lower than all school leavers; however, educational attainment among looked after leavers has improved notably over the last ten years, narrowing the gap to all school leavers. However, most of the improvement in attainment for looked after school leavers occurred from around 2011/12 to 2013/14 and the levels of attainment achieved have been broadly stable since then.

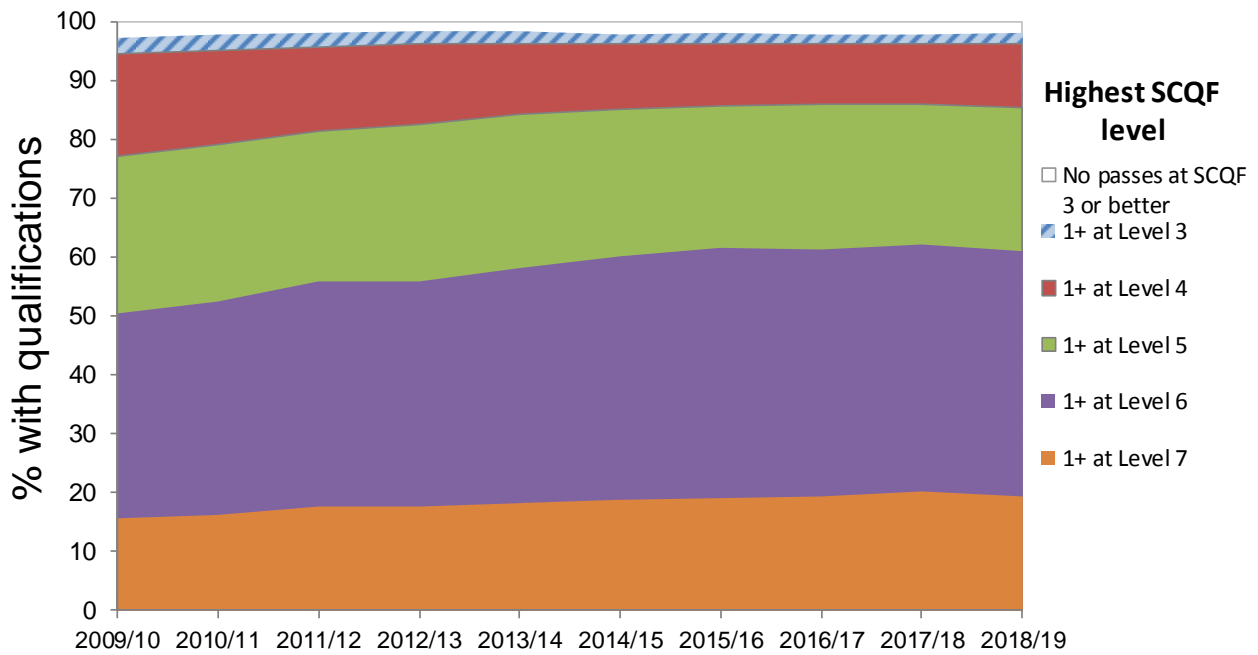
The proportion of leavers looked after within the year with no qualifications at SCQF 3 or higher decreased from 25% in 2009/10 to 17% in 2011/12, and has fluctuated around that level since (17% in 2018/19). Attainment at higher levels, however, has increased since 2012/13: from 62% to 70% at SCQF level 4 or better, from 23% to 35% at SCQF level 5 or better, from 4% to 11% at SCQF level 6 or better and a small increase from 1% to 2% at SCQF level 7 or better.

Chart 2: Percentage of all school leavers and those who were looked after, by highest level of attainment achieved, 2009/10 to 2018/19⁽¹⁾

(a) School leavers looked after within the year



(b) All school leavers



(1) All figures have been revised in 2018/19 to ensure that all years were calculated using the same method.

Type of accommodation

When a young person is looked after, there are various types of care setting where they can be placed. Placements can be at home (where a child is subject to a Supervision Requirement and continues to live in their usual place of residence), foster care, kinship care (where they are living with friends or relatives) or residential care. Table 1.2 presents the attainment level of leavers looked after within the last year by the type of placement.

Educational attainment varies across the types of accommodation in which looked after children are living. School leavers in foster care provided and purchased by the local authority performed better than those in other care settings, with 66% and 70% achieving at least one qualification at SCQF level 5 or better respectively, compared with 35% of all looked after school leavers.

School leavers who were looked after within the last year in 'other residential settings', which includes residential schools, secure care accommodation and crisis care, had the lowest overall levels of attainment, with 59% achieving at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or better, compared with 83% for all looked after school leavers. School leavers who were looked after at home with parents also had low levels of attainment compared with most other placement types.

Table 1.2: Percentage of school leavers looked after within the year, by highest level of attainment achieved and placement type, 2018/19⁽¹⁾

	Looked after leavers					
	% No passes at SCQF 3 or better	% with 1 or more qualification at SCQF				
		Level 3 or better	Level 4 or better	Level 5 or better	Level 6 or better	Level 7 or better
In the community (children with one placement)						
At home with parents	27	73	48	13	*	0
With friends or relatives	10	90	82	46	15	0
With foster carers provided by LA	5	95	94	66	27	6
With foster carers purchased by LA	7	93	90	70	29	*
In other community ⁽²⁾	*	*	*	*	*	*
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)						
In local authority home	22	78	70	27	9	*
In voluntary home	17	83	67	*	*	*
In other residential ⁽³⁾	41	59	34	*	0	0
More than one placement	13	87	75	31	4	*
All looked after within the last year	17	83	70	35	11	2

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

(2) Includes supported accommodation and with prospective adopters.

(3) Includes in residential school, secure care accommodation and crisis care..

Number of placements in the last year

Young people who are looked after may be looked after in different residences over time. Moving to a new residence or a new carer is recorded as a change in placement. Table 1.3 shows that a slightly higher percentage of leavers looked after within the year with two placements achieved at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or better (88%) than those with one or three or more placements (both 82%). However, a higher proportion of those with one placement achieved qualifications at higher attainment levels (SCQF level 5 or better).

Table 1.3: Percentage of school leavers looked after within the year, by highest level of attainment achieved and number of placements they had in the year, 2018/19⁽¹⁾

Number of placements	No passes at SCQF level 3 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better	1 or more qualification at SCQF level 7 or better
1	18	82	69	35	12	2
2	12	88	79	31	6	*
3 or more	18	82	64	30	0	0
All looked after within the last year	17	83	70	35	11	2

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

Post-school destinations

- Looked after school leavers are less likely to go to positive destinations than school leavers in general, especially higher education
- ↑ The percentage of looked after leavers in positive initial and follow-up destinations has increased over the last six years

This section presents data on the destinations of the estimated 1,031 young people who were looked after during the period 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019 and who left school during 2018/19. Information is collected on the destination of school leavers in the September after they leave school (initial destination) and again the following March (follow-up destination). School leavers who are engaged in higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment or are undertaking personal skills development¹ are classified as having a 'positive destination'. Other destinations include school leavers who are unemployed and individuals where their destination is not known. For more information on school leaver destination categories, see background note 4.8.

Initial destinations

A lower proportion of looked after children enter positive destinations than all school leavers, but this gap has narrowed since 2012/13. The lower proportion of looked after children going into positive destinations is likely to be related to looked after young people tending to leave school at an earlier stage to all pupils. 81% of young people looked after within the last year went on to a positive destination after leaving school, compared with 95% of all school leavers in 2018/19 (Table 2.1). The gap of 14 percentage points between all school leavers those who were looked after in 2018/19 has narrowed from a gap of 21 percentage points in 2012/13, when 71% of looked after school leavers were in a positive initial destination, compared with 92% of all school leavers.

48% of school leavers who were looked after within the last year were in either Higher or Further Education 3 months after leaving school. In comparison, more than two thirds (68%) of all school leavers were in Further or Higher Education (Table 2.1). The lower proportion of looked after young people entering Higher

¹ In previous publications, young people participating in Personal Skills Development (PSD)

were individually mapped to destination categories. PSD is now included as a separate category and also counts as a "positive destination". More information is in Background notes section 4.8.

Education can be partly explained by leaving school at an earlier stage and consequent lower levels of qualifications.

Table 2.1: Percentage of all school leavers and those who were looked after by initial destination (3 months after leaving school), 2018/19

	School leavers looked after within the last year	All school leavers
Higher Education	5	40
Further Education	43	27
Training	16	3
Employment	14	23
Voluntary Work	1	1
Personal Skills Development ⁽²⁾	3	0
Unemployed Seeking	11	3
Unemployed Not Seeking	6	1
Unknown	1	0
% in a positive destination⁽¹⁾	81	95

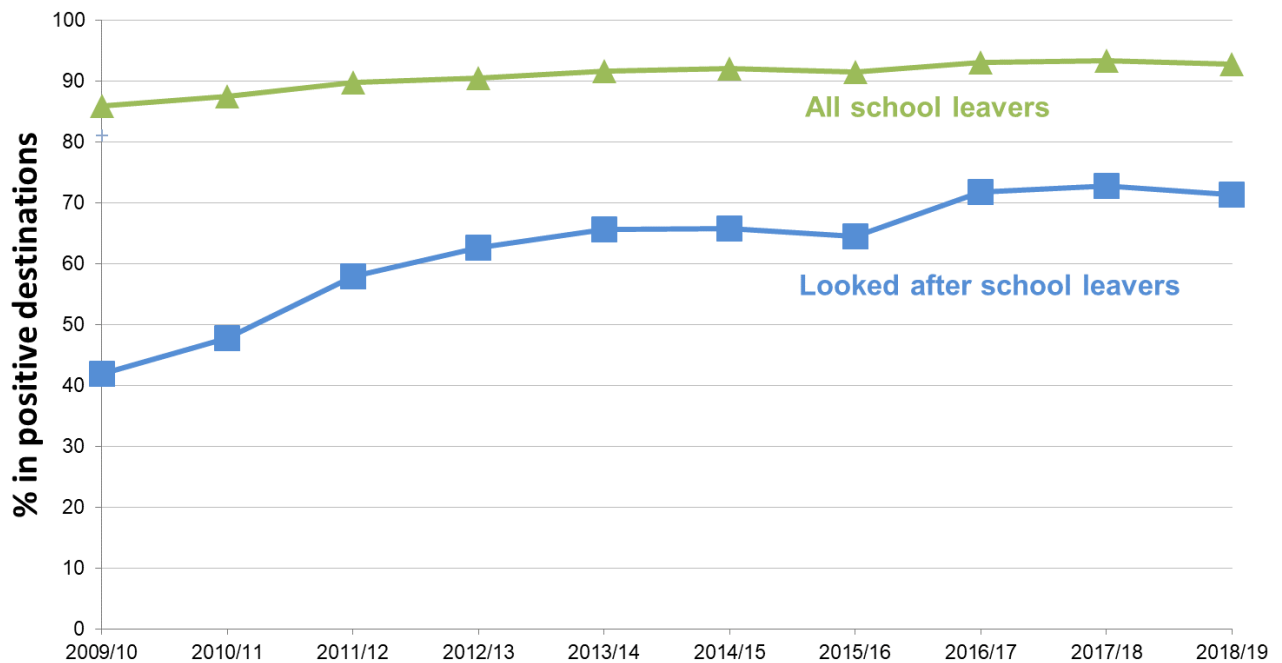
(1) Positive destinations includes higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment and personal skills development.

(2) There has been a change to the way in which Personal Skills Development activity is categorised in these statistics. For more information see the background notes section 3.7.

Follow-up destinations

From 2009/10 to 2013/14, the percentage of looked after school leavers in positive follow-up destinations increased rapidly from 42% to 66%, then stabilised for three years, before increasing to 72% in 2016/17; over the last three years, the percentage of leavers looked after within the year in follow-up destinations has remained broadly stable. Over the same time period, the proportion of all school leavers has remained higher but increased more gradually, from 86% in 2009/10 to 92% in 2013/14 and 93% in each of the last three years. (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Percentage of all school leavers and those who were looked after in positive follow-up destinations, 2009/10 to 2018/19⁽¹⁾



(1) All figures have been revised in 2018/19, due to the inclusion of personal skills development as a destination and to ensure that all years were calculated using the same method.

The positive initial destination is more likely to be sustained after nine months for all school leavers rather than for looked after leavers. In 2018/19, 71% of school leavers looked after within the last year were in a positive follow-up destination, down from 81% in a positive initial destination. The reduction is also present for all school leavers, but to a lesser extent (93% in a positive follow-up destination, down from 95% in positive initial destinations).

Table 2.2: Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination (9 months after leaving school), for all school leavers and those who were looked after children, 2018/19⁽¹⁾

	School leavers looked after within the last year	All school leavers
Higher Education	5	38
Further Education	37	23
Training	10	2
Employment	16	28
Voluntary Work	1	0
Personal Skills Development ⁽²⁾	2	0
Unemployed Seeking	13	3
Unemployed Not Seeking	11	2
Unknown	4	1
% in a positive destination⁽¹⁾	71	93

(1) Positive destinations includes higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment and personal skills development.

(2) There has been a change to the way in which Personal Skills Development activity is categorised in these statistics. For more information see the publication background notes section 3.7.

Initial and follow-up destinations by type of accommodation

Table 2.3 shows the percentage of school leavers looked after within the last year in positive initial and follow-up destinations by placement type. Those in foster care placements had the highest proportion in positive initial and follow-up destinations, while young people who were looked after at home or had more than one placement had the lowest proportion in positive destinations.

The largest decreases between the proportion in positive initial and follow-up destinations were seen in those young people in a local authority home, decreasing from 86% in a positive initial destination to 68% at follow-up, and young people with

more than one placement, decreasing from 80% in a positive initial destination to 64% at follow-up.

Table 2.3: Positive initial and follow-up destinations among school leavers looked after within the year, by placement type, 2018/19⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

	Initial survey		Follow-up survey	
	Number	% in a positive destination	Number	% in a positive destination
In the community (children with one placement)				
At home with parents	320	69	319	62
With friends or relatives	188	84	187	73
With foster carers provided by LA	143	97	141	87
With foster carers purchased by LA	73	97	73	90
In other community ⁽³⁾	*	*	*	*
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)				
In local authority home	91	86	91	68
In voluntary home	*	*	*	*
In other residential ⁽⁴⁾	32	84	32	81
More than one placement	165	80	163	64
All looked after within the last year	1,031	81	1,025	71

(1) Some children who were included in the initial destination survey could not be contacted at the time of the follow up destination survey. This is why the total number of children in each survey differs.

(2) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

(3) Includes supported accommodation and with prospective adopters.

(4) Includes in residential school, secure care accommodation and crisis care.

School Attendance

- ↓ The attendance rate has fallen for looked after pupils over the last six years
- The attendance rate for pupils looked after in a foster care placement is higher than the attendance rate for all pupils

This section presents data on the school attendance of looked after young people who were at publicly-funded schools. It compares attendance for all pupils in publicly-funded schools with 11,238 pupils who were looked after within the last year. Attendance data is collected every two years, so the information for 2011/12, 2013/14, 2015/16 and 2017/18 is not available.

Chart 4: Percentage attendance of all pupils and those who were looked after, 2009/10 to 2018/19

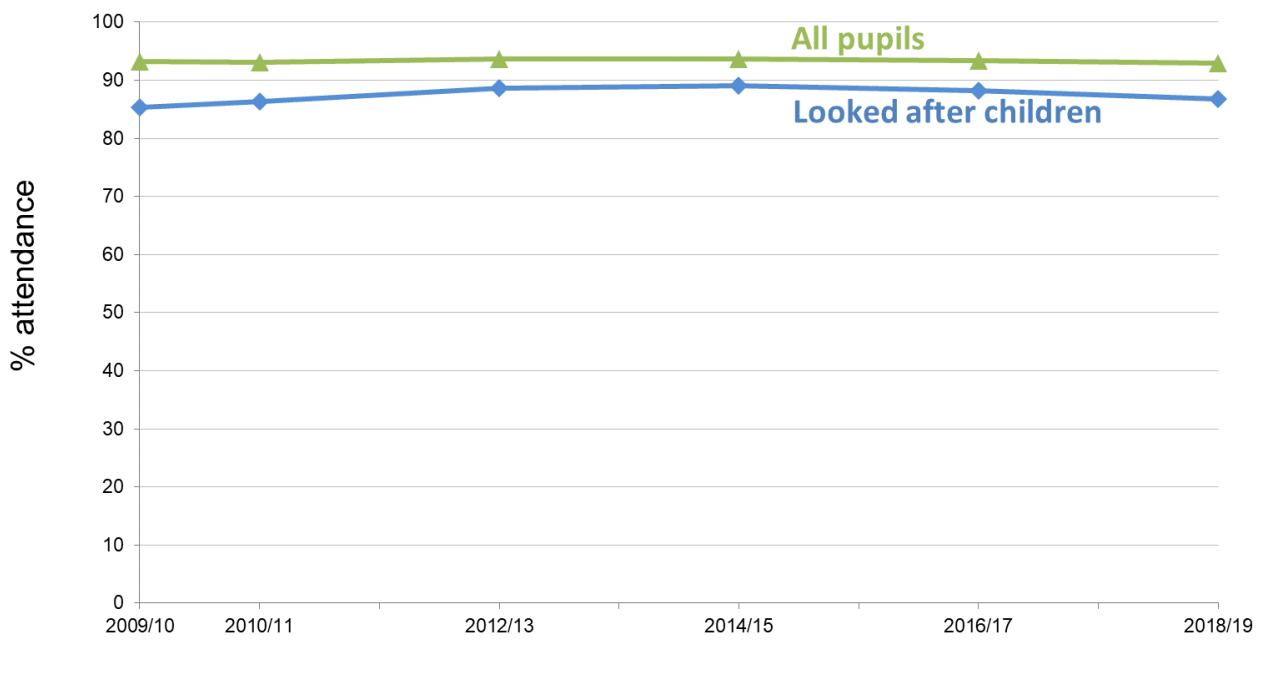


Chart 4 shows that the rate of attendance for pupils looked after within the year is consistently below the rate for all pupils. The gap in attendance rate between these groups has increased over the last six years from 4.9 percentage points in 2012/13 (93.6% for all pupils and 88.7% for looked after pupils) to 6.2 percentage points in 2018/19 (93.0% for all pupils and 86.8% for looked after pupils).

Sector

Table 3.1: Percentage attendance of all pupils and those who were looked after, by stage, sector and gender, 2018/19

Stage/ Sector	Pupils looked after within the last year	All Pupils
Primary	92.4	94.5
Secondary	81.1	90.7
Special	85.1	90.1
Scotland	86.8	93.0

Looked after children have a lower attendance rate than all pupils in all school sectors (Table 3.1). However, the differences are relatively small in primary school, with the attendance rate for pupils looked after within the year and all pupils being 92.4% and 94.5% respectively in 2018/19.

For special schools, the attendance rate for pupils looked after within the year was 85.1%, while the rate for all pupils was 90.1%.

In secondary school, the differences in attendance rate between looked after children and all pupils are greater than in the primary and special sectors. Pupils looked after within the year had an attendance rate of 81.1%, compared with a rate of 90.7% for all pupils.

Accommodation type and gender

Table 3.2 shows the attendance rates for pupils looked after within the year by the type of accommodation and gender. The highest attendance rates are for young people in 'other community' placements (including those in supported and those with prospective adopters) in a foster care placement, both provided by and purchased by local authorities. The attendance rates of 95.6%, 95.4% and 95.3% respectively for these pupils were higher than the rate for all pupils (93.0%). Pupils looked after at home (76.4%) and those in local authority homes (83.5%) had the lowest attendance rates.

Overall, girls who were looked after within the year had a slightly higher attendance rate than boys looked after within the year, with an attendance rate of 87.0% for girls compared with 86.6% for boys. For pupils looked after in all residential accommodation placement types, however, boys had a higher rate of attendance than girls.

Table 3.2: Percentage attendance for looked after pupils, by accommodation type and gender, 2018/19

Accommodation type	Girls	Boys	Total
In the community (children with one placement)			
At home with parents	76.9	76.1	76.4
With friends or relatives	90.4	90.8	90.6
With foster carers provided by LA	95.3	95.4	95.4
With foster carers purchased by LA	95.2	95.5	95.3
In other community ⁽¹⁾	94.9	96.4	95.6
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)			
In local authority home	80.8	85.5	83.5
In voluntary home	83.6	85.2	84.7
In other residential ⁽²⁾	83.7	85.8	85.1
More than one placement	86.8	86.5	86.7
All looked after within the last year	87.0	86.6	86.8

(1) Includes supported accommodation and with prospective adopters.

(2) Includes in residential school, in secure care accommodation, and crisis care.

Number of placements

Pupils looked after within the year who experienced one or two placements had higher rates of attendance than pupils with three or more placements (Table 3.3). This pattern was similar for both girls and boys. Attendance rates were highest among pupils with two placements (87.6%) and one placement (86.8%) and lowest for those with three placements (83.8%) and four placements (84.2%). It should be noted that the majority of pupils looked after within the last year had only one placement.

Table 3.3: Percentage attendance for looked after pupils, by number of placements within the year and gender, 2018/19

Number of placements	Girls	Boys	Total
1	87.1	86.6	86.8
2	87.8	87.4	87.6
3	84.6	83.1	83.8
4	82.3	86.2	84.2
5 or more	83.9	87.4	85.6
All looked after within the last year	87.0	86.6	86.8

School exclusions



Exclusion rates for pupils looked after within the year have fallen over the last six years



The exclusion rate for looked after pupils was around seven times as high as for all pupils in 2018/19

In comparison with the general school population, this section presents data on the numbers and rates of exclusions of the 837 pupils who were looked after within the year at publicly-funded schools who were successfully linked to schools data, and who experienced an exclusion. Exclusions data is collected every two years.

Table 4.1 shows the number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils. As children can be excluded more than once per year a single child may be counted more than once in these figures. The rate of exclusions among pupils looked after within the year was 152 per 1,000 pupils in 2018/19. This is around seven times as high as the rate of 22 per 1,000 pupils for all pupils.

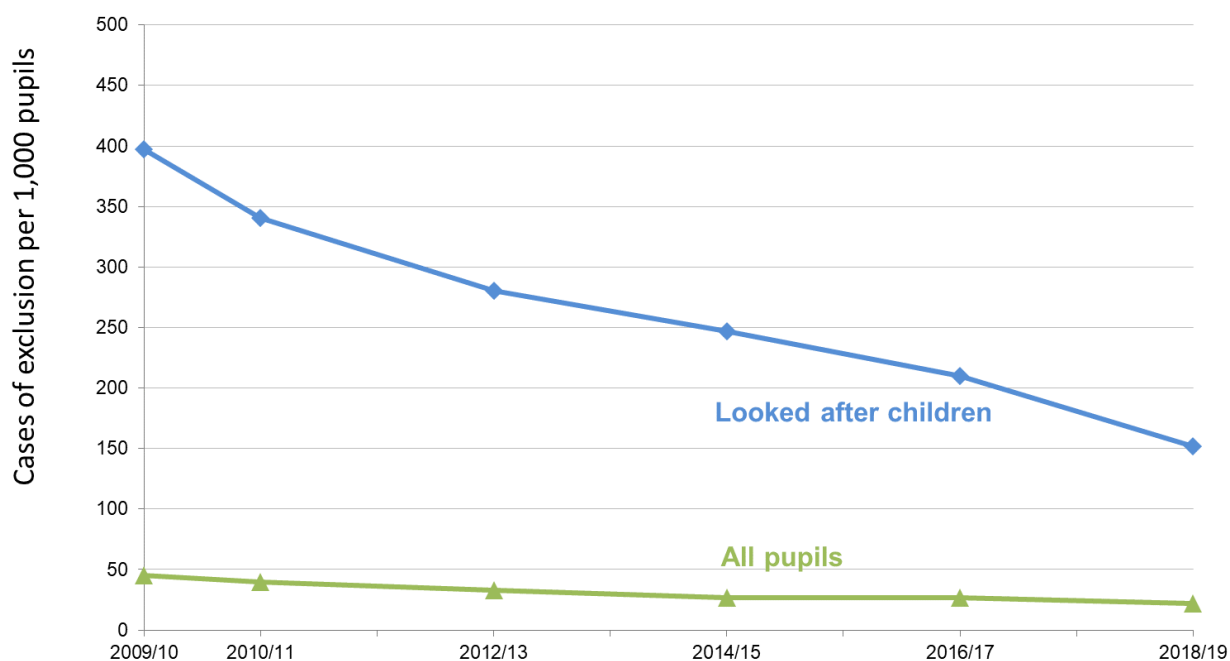
The exclusion rate was lowest for pupils looked after within the year in primary school in 2018/19, at 56 per 1,000, compared with 230 per 1,000 pupils for those in secondary school and 309 per 1,000 for those attending a special school.

Table 4.1: Number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils by all pupils, looked after children and sector, 2012/13 to 2018/19

Sector	2012/13	2014/15	2016/17	2018/19
All looked after within the year				
Primary	83	83	84	56
Secondary	467	383	317	230
Special	565	553	355	309
Scotland	280	247	210	152
All pupils				
Primary	10	9	11	8
Secondary	58	50	48	40
Special	148	126	94	62
Scotland	33	27	27	22

The rate of exclusion cases for looked after pupils has fallen substantially, from 397 per 1,000 pupils in 2009/10 to 280 per 1,000 pupils in 2012/13 and 152 per 1,000 pupils in 2018/19 (Chart 5). The decrease has been seen across all sectors (Table 4.1). The gap between all pupils and those who were looked after has also narrowed over this period, although the exclusion case rate for pupils looked after within the year remains much higher than for all pupils.

Chart 5: Number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils for all pupils and those who were looked after, 2009/10 - 2018/19



Where Table 4.1 presents data on the number of exclusions, including potential multiple counts of the same child, Table 4.2 presents data on the number of individual children excluded; the number of pupils excluded per 1,000 pupils shown in Table 4.2 are therefore lower than the number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils shown in Table 4.1.

In 2018/19, the rate of pupils excluded was 74 per 1,000 pupils for children looked after within the year. This is around five times as high as the rate of 16 per 1,000 pupils for all pupils. Because pupils looked after within the year are five times as likely to be excluded compared with all pupils, but the exclusion case rate is seven times as high, pupils looked after within the year who are excluded are more likely to be excluded multiple times than all pupils who are excluded.

Table 4.2: Number of pupils excluded and exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils for all pupils and those who were looked after by sector, 2018/19

Stage	Number of pupils excluded	Rate of pupils excluded per 1,000 pupils
All looked after within the last year		
Primary	165	31
Secondary	616	113
Special	56	106
Scotland	837	74
All Pupils		
Primary	1,941	5
Secondary	7,050	25
Special	200	30
Scotland	10,736	16

Accommodation type and number of placements

As with attendance rate, there is a similar disparity in rates of exclusion according to the type of accommodation in which pupils looked after within the year are placed. Children in residential accommodation and at home with parents tend to have higher rates of exclusions than those looked after in foster care and with friends or relatives (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Cases of exclusions per 1,000 pupils for pupils looked after within the year, by accommodation type, 2018/19 ⁽¹⁾

Accommodation type	Total exclusions for looked after pupils	Exclusions case rate per 1,000 pupils who were looked after
In the community (children with one placement)		
At home with parents	696	214
With friends or relatives	235	82
With foster carers provided by LA	134	74
With foster carers purchased by LA	38	43
In other community ⁽²⁾	*	*
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)		
In local authority home	148	425
In voluntary home	*	*
In other residential ⁽³⁾	52	243
More than one placement	384	219
All looked after within the last year	1,710	152

(1) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

(2) Includes supported accommodation and with prospective adopters.

(3) Includes in residential school, in secure care accommodation, and crisis care.

Pupils who were looked after within the year with a greater number of placements tended to have a higher rate of exclusion (Table 4.4). There were 140 cases of exclusion per 1,000 pupils for pupils with only one placement, increasing to 341 cases of exclusion per 1,000 pupils for pupils with four placements. Those with five or more placements had a lower rate of exclusion at 264 per 1,000 pupils, although there were only 14 cases of exclusion in this relatively small group of pupils.

Table 4.4: Cases of exclusions per 1,000 pupils looked after within the year, by number of placements within the year, 2018/19

Number of placements	Total exclusions for looked after pupils	Exclusions case rate per 1,000 pupils who were looked after
All looked after within the last year		
1	1,326	140
2	232	181
3	107	322
4	31	341
5 or more	14	264
Scotland	1,710	152

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels

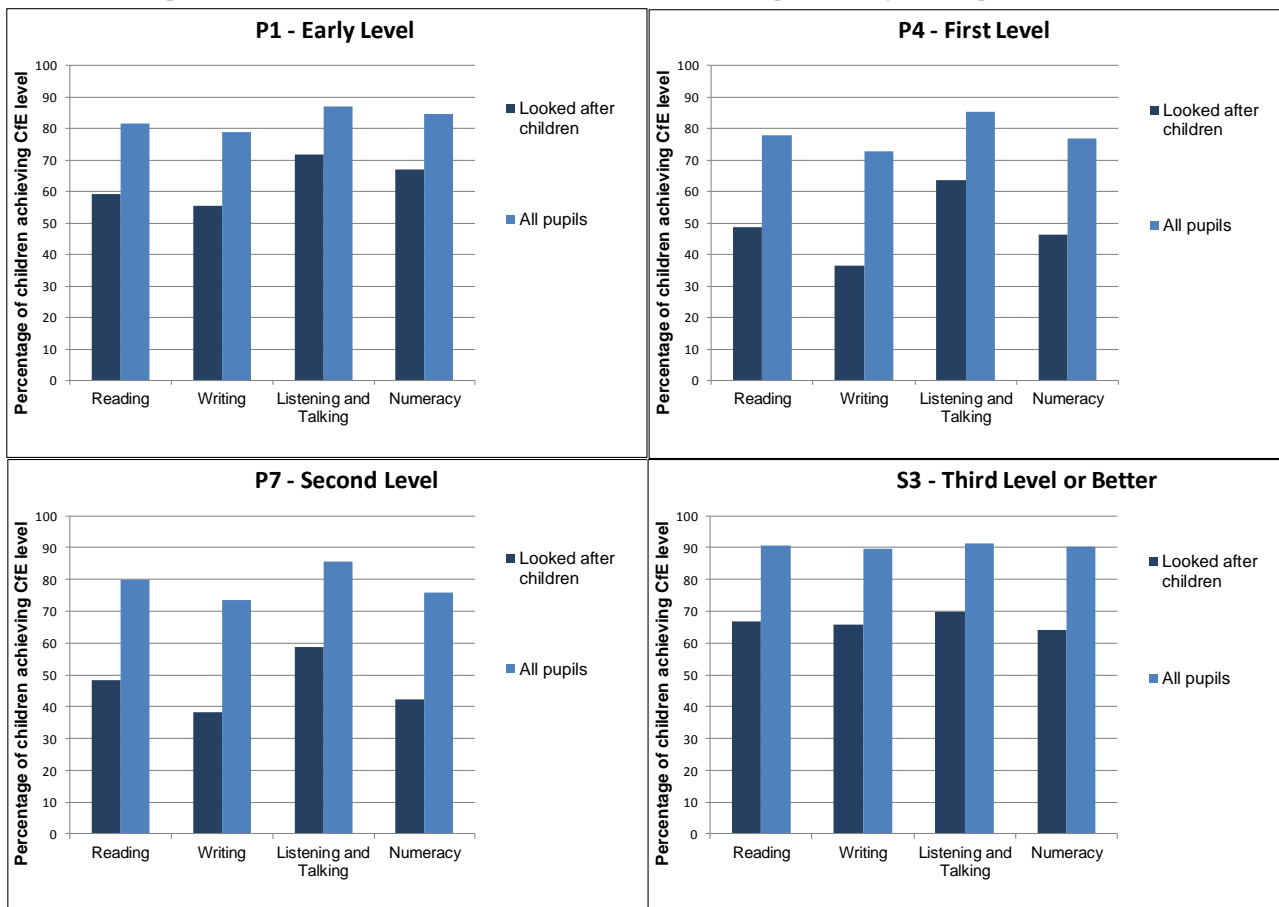
- A lower proportion of looked after children achieve the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level relevant to their stage compared with all children across all organisers
- Achievement of CfE levels is lowest for those looked after at home and those looked after in residential accommodation

This section presents data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels for aspects of literacy (reading, writing, and listening and talking) and numeracy of the estimated 3,288 young people who were looked after at some point between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019, and who were in Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 or Secondary 3 during the 2018/19 school year.

The data shows the CfE level achieved for each pupil within selected stages (P1, P4, P7 and S3 in mainstream schools and all pupils based in standalone special schools/units) in the following curriculum organisers: reading, writing, listening and talking, and numeracy, and relates to the CfE level achieved as at June 2019.

Stage

Chart 6: Percentage of all pupils and those who were looked after achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾, by stage, 2018/19



(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

Across all stages and organisers, a lower proportion of children who were looked after within the year achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage compared with all pupils (Chart 6).

The proportion of children looked after within the year achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage is highest for listening and talking at all stages, and lowest for writing across all primary stages. This is also the case for all pupils, although with a higher proportion achieving the level relevant to their stage.

The gap between all pupils and those who were looked after within the year is lowest amongst P1 pupils (Early Level), with gap across the four organisers ranging from 15 to 24 percentage points. The gap was higher for P4 (First Level), where the gap ranges from 22 to 36 percentage points, and P7 pupils (Second Level), where the gap ranges from 27 to 35 percentage points. The gap between all pupils and those who were looked after within the year is then reduced at S3 (Third Level or better), varying from 22 to 26 percentage points across the four organisers.

Type of accommodation

Achievement of CfE levels varies across the types of accommodation in which looked after children are placed. Generally, a higher proportion of pupils looked after within the year who lived with friends/relatives achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage across most organisers than in other placement types. (Table 5.1). A lower proportion of pupils placed in voluntary homes, in other residential accommodation, at home with parents and those with more than one placement achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage compared with all pupils looked after within the last year.

Table 5.1: Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after within the last year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾, by accommodation type, 2018/19⁽²⁾

Accommodation type	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
In the community (children with one placement)				
At home with parents	51	45	60	50
With friends or relatives	62	55	74	62
With foster carers provided by LA	64	56	70	58
With foster carers purchased by LA	61	50	68	58
In other community ⁽³⁾	*	*	*	*
Residential Accommodation (children with one placement)				
In local authority home	53	52	63	51
In voluntary home	38	42	54	42
In other residential ⁽⁴⁾	38	38	46	44
More than one placement	51	47	60	50
All looked after within the last year	57	51	66	55

(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

(2) Cells containing * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

(3) Includes supported accommodation and with prospective adopters.

(4) Includes in residential school, in secure care accommodation, and crisis care.

Number of placements

A higher proportion of pupils looked after within the year who only had one placement achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage than those with 2 and 3 or more placements (Table 5.2). This pattern was consistent across all four organisers.

Table 5.2: Percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 children who were looked after within the last year achieving the CfE level relevant to their stage⁽¹⁾, by number of placements 2018/19

Number of placements	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
1	58	51	67	56
2	49	47	60	50
3 or more	57	47	61	51
All looked after within the last year	57	51	66	55

(1) See background notes for information regarding the CfE levels relevant to a pupil's stage.

Background notes

1. Sources and coverage

1.1 This document summarises the education outcomes of Scotland's looked after children. It links information from:

- the Looked After Children statistics 2018/19
- Pupil Census records, 2019
- School Leaver Initial and Follow-up Destination data, October 2019 and March 2020
- Attainment data throughout school education
- School attendance and absence statistics, 2018/19
- School exclusion statistics, 2018/19
- Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels, 2018/19

Attainment and initial destinations figures for all children in Scotland are available here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-attainment-initial-leaver-destinations-no-2-2020-edition/>

Follow-up destinations figures for all children are available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-follow-up-leaver-destinations-no-2-2020-edition/>

Attendance and absence data for all children in Scotland are available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/school-attendance-and-absence-statistics/>

Exclusion data for all children in Scotland are available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/school-exclusion-statistics/>

Achievement of CfE Levels for all children in Scotland are available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/achievement-curriculum-excellence-cfe-levels-2018-19/>

1.2 The looked after children data held by the Children and Families team is linked to the educational outcomes data using a child's Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). However, a SCN is not supplied for every looked after child. For example, if a child is under five they are unlikely to have a SCN. Children also might not have a SCN if they have been educated at home, in an independent school, outside Scotland or have already left school. It may also not be possible for a SCN to be provided for a child if they have left school.

We estimate that the Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCNs) provided by local authorities represented 89% of the possible matched records for school-age

children. By imputing data from previous years from some local authorities we estimate that 90% of looked after school-age children had matchable SCNs. There was variation between local authorities in the percentage of SCNs provided, ranging from 61% to 100%.

Table 6.1: Percentage of children aged 5 to 15 with Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) present, by local authority, 2018/19⁽¹⁾

Local Authority	SCN provided in 2018/19	Total SCNs after processing
Aberdeen City	97.8	97.8
Aberdeenshire	97.0	97.0
Angus	91.9	91.9
Argyll and Bute	96.3	96.3
City of Edinburgh	90.0	90.0
Clackmannanshire	96.9	96.9
Dumfries and Galloway	95.6	95.6
Dundee City	74.6	90.3
East Ayrshire	87.1	87.1
East Dunbartonshire	96.7	96.7
East Lothian	97.9	97.9
East Renfrewshire	92.2	93.3
Falkirk	95.0	95.0
Fife	97.2	97.2
Glasgow City	60.9	61.0
Highland	96.3	96.3
Inverclyde	95.1	95.1
Midlothian	99.1	99.1
Moray	95.7	95.7
Na h-Eileanan Siar	97.1	97.1
North Ayrshire	94.6	94.8
North Lanarkshire	97.0	97.0
Orkney Islands	100.0	100.0
Perth and Kinross	99.2	99.2
Renfrewshire	99.8	99.8
Scottish Borders	98.7	98.7
Shetland Islands	100.0	100.0
South Ayrshire	96.8	96.8
South Lanarkshire	95.4	95.4
Stirling	88.7	88.7
West Dunbartonshire	98.4	98.4
West Lothian	99.2	99.2
Scotland	89.3	89.8

1.3 The **looked after children** statistics were collected by Children and Families statistics team in the Scottish Government from local authorities. Demographic information on all children looked after (including the most recent data covering

children who were looked after between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019) is available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-social-work/>

The survey forms, data specifications and guidance notes for the data presented in this publication (and previous years' publications) can be seen at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-exchange-of-data-looked-after-children/>

1.4 The **qualifications** data were provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). The grade boundaries and publication schedules of this information is available here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/63002.html>.

1.5 The **leaver destinations** data were collected by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on each young person identified as being a school leaver in September 2019 (initial destination, approximately three months after leaving school) and March 2020 (follow-up destination, approximately nine months after leaving school). The time of year that a young person leaves school can affect their destinations in these surveys, as a young person leaving school in May who starts a course in the following January could be counted as being in another destination in the initial survey, but a positive destination in the follow-up survey.

1.6 **Leaver destinations** Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 2: 2020 Edition: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-attainment-initial-leaver-destinations-no-2-2020-edition/>

and Follow-up leaver destinations no. 2: summary statistics – 2020:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-follow-up-leaver-destinations-no-2-2020-edition/>

1.7 **Achievement of CfE Levels** data were gathered by the Scottish Government, and relates to achievement in the Broad General Education (BGE) based on teacher professional judgements regarding pupil's achievement in literacy and numeracy against CfE levels. A very small proportion of children have long term significant and complex additional support needs that mean that it is unlikely that they will progress through the CfE levels during their time in education. These children are recorded as 'child following individual milestones' and are included in the data. However, children for whom the teacher has been unable to make a professional judgement are not included.

1.8 Further information with regards the **Achievement of CfE Levels** data collection can be found here:

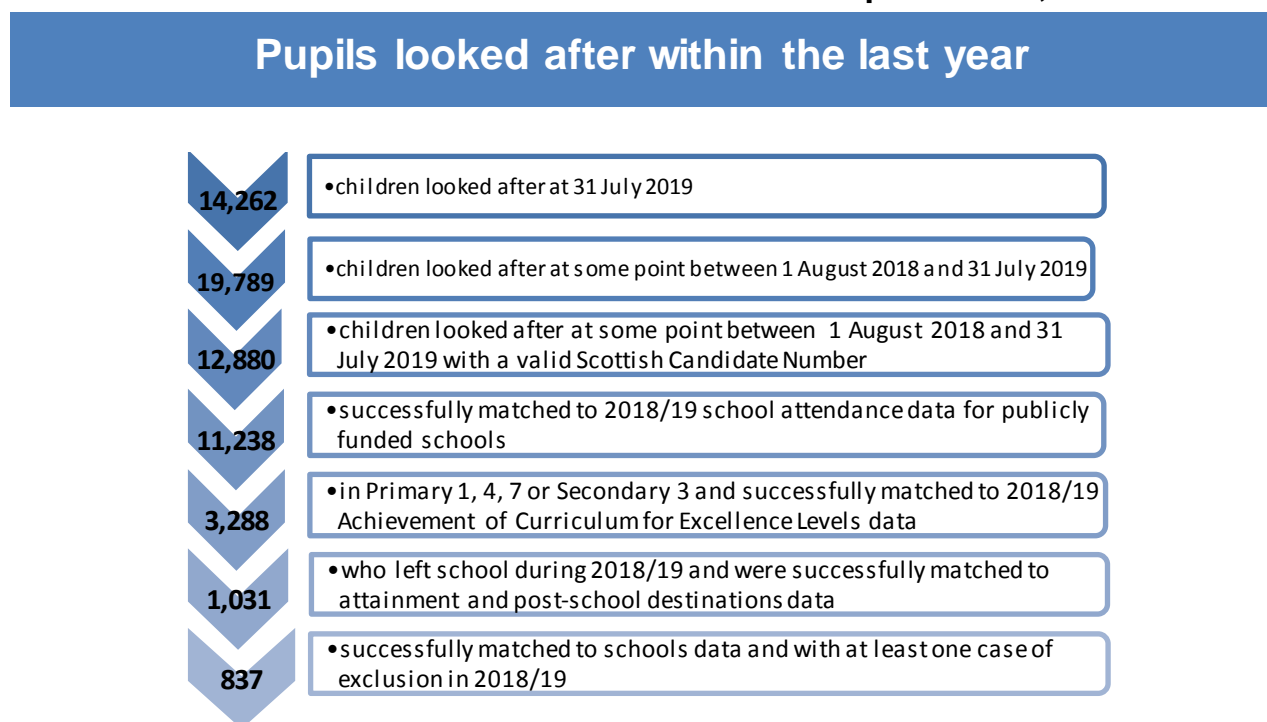
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/achievement-curriculum-excellence-cfe-levels-2018-19/>

2. Methodology

Matching looked after children data to school outcomes

2.1 As reported in Children’s Social Work Statistics 2018-19², there were 14,262 children looked after on 31 July 2019. The population used in this publication was established through the following process:

Illustration 3: Looked after children included in this publication, 2018/19



2.3 The looked after children data provided to Scottish Government annually includes the Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) for each child, where available. This is used to link information on looked after children to various information from schools held by Scottish Government. This includes data on attendance and absence, which is collected biennially, attainment and post-school destinations data and Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels data which are collected annually. Data are based only on pupils where there was a match on SCN and the age of the child in the looked after children dataset was appropriate for the stage associated with the SCN in the matched dataset. For example, if there was a record in the looked after children dataset for a ten year-old that matched a record in schools data for a pupil in S4, this record would be excluded from the analysis.

2.4 There are many more children looked after within the last year than those matched in this publication. Children are assigned a Scottish Candidate Number

² Children’s Social Work Statistics 2018-19, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-scotland-2018-2019/>

when they start primary school. If a child is under five they are unlikely to have a Scottish Candidate Number. Children also might not have a Scottish Candidate Number if they have been educated at home, in an independent school, outside Scotland or have already left school. Of looked after children aged 5 to 15 years old, 90% had a valid Scottish Candidate Number present (Table 6.1).

3. Definitions and notation

Children Looked After

3.1 Local Authorities have a responsibility to provide support to certain vulnerable young people, known as looked after children. A young person may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, mental, physical or emotional abuse, parental substance misuse or poor parenting skills, complex disabilities which require specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system. The definition of a 'looked after child' is set out in section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 ("the 1995 Act"), as amended by the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act") and Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act").

3.2 Supervision Requirement – A children's hearing is a lay tribunal which considers and makes decisions on the welfare of the child or young person before them, taking into account all the circumstances including any offending behaviour. The hearing has to decide on the measures of supervision which are in the best interests of the child or young person. If the hearing concludes compulsory measures of supervision are necessary, it will make a Supervision Requirement which will determine the type of placement for the child. In most cases the child will continue to live at home but will be under the supervision of a social worker. In some cases the hearing will decide that the child should live away from home with relatives or other carers.

3.3 Types of placement

Community placements

- At home with parent(s): at home with parent(s) or 'relevant person(s)' as defined in Section 93(2)(b) of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995
- With friends/relatives: placed with friends or relatives who are not approved foster carers. Also referred to as 'kinship care'.
- With foster carers provided by the local authority
- With foster carers purchased by the local authority
- With prospective adopters
- Other community: such as supported accommodation, hospital (e.g. at birth)

Residential placements

- Local authority home: in local authority children's home/hostel, local authority home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, local authority home/hostel for physically disabled children
- Voluntary home: in voluntary children's home/hostel, in voluntary home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, in voluntary home/hostel for physically disabled children
- Residential school: in local authority residential school (home/hostel), in voluntary residential school (home/hostel), in private school, in independent school
- Secure accommodation
- Crisis care: for example: in women's refuge, in local authority hostel for offenders, in voluntary hostel for offenders, in local authority hostel for drug/alcohol abusers, in voluntary hostel for drug/alcohol abusers
- Other residential: a known residential setting but does not fit with one of the above

3.4 There is information on the process by which children come to be looked after and legislation governing this on the Scottish Government website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/lac>

School information

3.5 Scottish Candidate Number – A unique number created by the Scottish Qualifications Authority and assigned to each child by their school when they enter the Scottish School Education System (usually in Primary 1).

School leaver destinations

3.6 School leaver – A young person of school leaving age who left a publicly funded secondary school during or at the end of the school year. Age of school leavers was calculated as at 30 June 2018. Young people of school leaving age who left a publicly funded special school are not counted in this publication.

3.7 Post-school destinations – Destinations data collected by Skills Development Scotland using a combination of administrative data sharing by partners, contact centre follow up and the traditional follow up by operational staff. More information is available from the latest publication: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-attainment-initial-leaver-destinations-no-2-2020-edition/>

The broad categories for leaver destinations are:

- Higher Education – includes leavers following HND (Higher National Diploma) or HNC (Higher National Certificate) courses, degree courses, courses for the education and training of teachers and higher level courses for professional qualifications. It includes programmes at a level higher than the standard of the National Qualifications, i.e. above SCQF Level 7. Leavers with a deferred, unconditional place in higher education have also been included in this category..
- Further Education – includes leavers undertaking full-time education which is not higher education and who are no longer on a school roll. This may include National Qualifications.
- Training – includes leavers who are on a training course and in receipt of an allowance or grant, such as the Employability Fund national training programme. It also includes leavers who are on local authority or third sector funded training programmes that are in receipt of a training allowance or those participating in Community Jobs Scotland. From 2018/19 this category includes school leavers receiving support that would previously have been recorded as ‘Activity Agreements’. This means that the proportion of 2018/19 school leavers with a destination category of Training cannot be directly compared to the proportion recorded for previous years. Further information can be found in the Activity Agreements definition below.
- Employment – employed and in receipt of payment from their employers.
- Voluntary Work - includes those undertaking voluntary work/volunteering which will involve a young person giving of their time and energy through a third party with or without financial allowance.
- Activity Agreement – Activity Agreements were ‘agreements between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment’. From 2018/19, Activity Agreements are no longer recorded as a post-school destination. Instead, school leavers receiving this support who left during or at the end of the 2018/19 academic year are recorded in the Training category.
- Personal Skills Development - The way in which school leavers undertaking Personal Skills Development activity are counted in these statistics has changed. In previous publications, young people participating in Personal Skills Development (PSD) were individually mapped to destination categories; this mapping was carried out by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Scottish Government analysts based on details of the PSD activity recorded on the SDS Customer Support System (CSS). Depending on the evidence, a leaver could be mapped to a positive destination or an unemployed seeking or unemployed not seeking destination. This meant that

school leavers from special units within mainstream schools, specifically those with severe and complex needs, participating in PSD were not always being classified as in a “positive destination”. In light of user feedback, we undertook to consider the categorisation of school leavers in PSD. Historic data back to 2009/10 have been revised to allow comparison over time on a consistent basis.

- Unemployed seeking – includes those known by Skills Development Scotland or their partners to be seeking employment or training. This includes those receiving support from SDS, Department of Working and Pensions and other partners. It is based on regular contact between the supporting organisation and the individual. This does not refer to the definition of ‘unemployed’ used by the Department of Work and Pensions to calculate published unemployment rates.
- Unemployed not seeking – includes all those individuals who are not yet ready or are unavailable to enter the labour market for a range of reasons. The reasons may involve ill health/sickness, prison, pregnancy, caring for children or other dependents or taking time out.
- Unknown – destination is not known either to Skills Development Scotland or to the school attended.

3.8 Positive destinations – includes higher education, further education, training, employment, voluntary work, Personal Skills Development and (between 2010/11 and 2017/18) Activity Agreements.

3.9 Curriculum for Excellence is designed to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for children and young people aged from 3 to 18. The curriculum includes the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated.

CfE Level	Stage
Early	The final two years of early learning and childcare before a child goes to school and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier or later for some. The Fourth Level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4. The Fourth Level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the Fourth Level outcomes.
Senior Phase	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

Further information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found here:

<https://www.education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-%28building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5%29/What%20is%20Curriculum%20for%20Excellence>

Curriculum for Excellence defines five levels of learning. The first four levels are described in the Experiences and Outcomes, with progression to qualifications described under a fifth level, the [senior phase](#).

While children and young people should feel that the transition from one stage of learning to another is smooth, they should still be able to look forward to the excitement of starting nursery, primary school and secondary school, and finally to moving on to [positive and sustained destinations](#).

4. Data Quality

4.1 This is an Official Statistics Publication. Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. These statistics undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. The results contained in this publication are deemed fit for purpose, but may be revised in future years where updates are made to the data. This publication has not yet been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority.

4.2 There is more information on the data quality of the administrative sources underlying this publication here:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/sourcesandsuitability/StatementAdminSources>

Cross-UK comparisons

4.3 Differences in the education systems of Scotland and the rest of the UK make cross-UK comparisons invalid. The most similar figures from across the UK are published here:

England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-looked-after-children#outcomes-for-looked-after-children>

Wales - <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/Social-Services/Childrens-Services/Children-Looked-After/Educational-Qualifications-of-Care-Leavers>

Northern Ireland - <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/dhssps-statistics-and-research/childrens-services-statistics>

4.4 Information on the differences between each administration's looked after children statistics is available on the Scottish Government children's statistics web site at:

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

5. Enquiries

The information in this publication is available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-social-work/>

Email any requests for **further analysis** to children.statistics@gov.scot.

If you would like to receive notification of forthcoming statistical publications, please register your interest on the Scottish Government ScotStat website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/scotstat.

Children and Families Statistics

1 September 2020

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are free from political interference.

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

- are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot
- are available via background tables
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail statistics.enquiries@gov.scot.

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