
**Children Order Statistical Bulletin
2003**

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**This bulletin presents statistical information
based on the Children Order returns for
Northern Ireland up to 31st March 2003.**

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Main Findings

Child Protection

- There were 1,608 children on the child protection register at 31st March 2003, a rate of 35.6 children per 10,000-population aged under 18. The equivalent figure for England was 24 children per 10,000 of the population aged under 18.
- Almost three quarters (1,169) of children on the child protection register at 31st March 2003 were aged under 12.
- Just over 40% of children on the child protection register had been on the register for 1 year or more.
- Since 2000/01, the number of registrations onto the child protection register increased by 13.6%, from 970 in 2000/01 to 1,102 in 2002/03.

Looked After Children

- Since 1998, the number of looked after children has increased by 3.9% (92), from 2,354 in 1998 to 2,446 in 2003.
- Of the 2,446 looked after children at 31st March 2003, over 64% (1,577) were placed in foster care, 20% (494) with family, 12% (296) in residential accommodation and 3% (79) in 'other' types of accommodation such as a hospital or special school.
- A total of 849 children were accommodated for respite care during 2002/03, an increase of 45.1% since 1997/98.

- Between 1998 and 2003, the proportion of children in care for 3 years or more decreased from 62.2% (1,464) in 1998 to 51.4% (1,258) in 2003.

- In 2002/03, 1,068 children were discharged from care, over 4 in 10 (440) after less than 2 weeks in care.

Day Care

- From 1998 to 2003, the number of registered day care places for children under 5 increased by 84.4%, from 4,229 to 7,798 respectively.
- At 31st March 2003, there were 4,224 registered childminders providing 21,164 places for children aged under 12, over 50% (12,015) of which were designated for under 5's.

- A total of 607 playgroups provided 14,648 places at 31st March 2003.

- At 31st March 2003, there were 212 out of school clubs providing 4,773 places for children aged 4-11, with an average weekly attendance of 4,135.

Children's Homes

- At 31st March 2003, there were 43 children's homes, providing a total of 363 places.
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Child Protection Investigations

Child protection investigations are classified using 3 categories: those conducted under Joint Protocol⁽¹⁾, by Social Workers and by Police.

Table 1.1: Child Protection Investigations Completed during the years 1997/98 – 2002/03

Investigation Categories	1997/98		1998/99		1999/00		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Joint Protocol	1,059	32.4	926	31.0	757	30.1	470	19.9	441	19.4	417	19.4
Social Workers	2,136	65.4	1,989	66.7	1,702	67.8	1,840	78.0	1,786	78.7	1,696	78.9
Police	69	2.1	69	2.3	52	2.1	50	2.1	43	1.9	36	1.7
Total	3,264	100.0	2,984	100.0	2,511	100.0	2,360	100.0	2,270	100.0	2,149	100.0

Main Points

✍ In 2002/03, 2,149 child protection investigations were completed, 34.2% less than the number completed in 1997/98 (3,264).

✍ Between 1997/98 and 2002/03, the percentage of child protection investigations completed under joint protocol fell from 32.4% (1,059) of all investigations in 1997/98 to 19.4% (417) in 2002/03.

✍ Over the same period, the percentage of investigations carried out by social workers increased by just over 13 percentage points, from 65.4% in 1997/98 to 78.9% in 2002/03.

¹ Investigations conducted under 'Joint Protocol' are investigations which are carried out jointly by Social Workers and the Police.

Children on the Child Protection Register

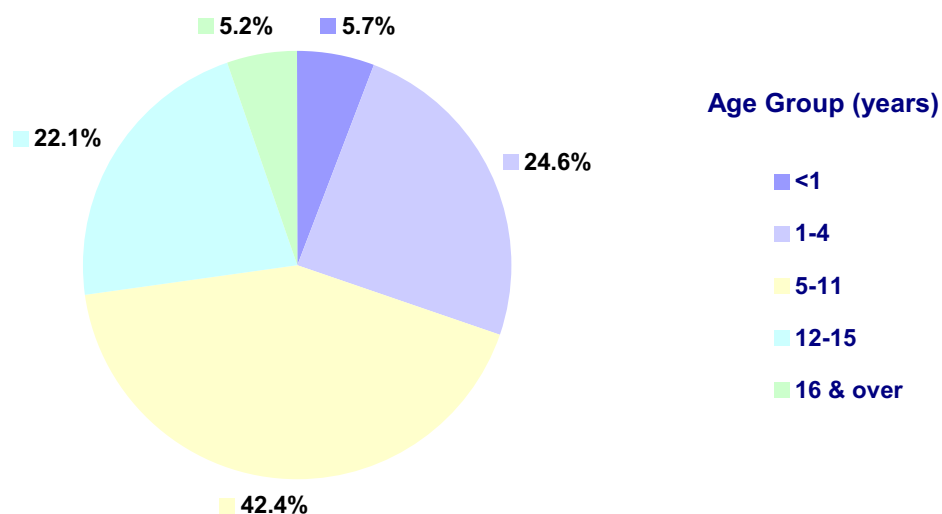
Table 1.2: Children on the Child Protection Register by Age Group and Gender at 31st March 2003

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	50	6.1	42	5.3	92	5.7
1-4	205	25.1	190	24.0	395	24.6
5-11	356	43.6	326	41.2	682	42.4
12-15	180	22.1	176	22.2	356	22.1
16 & over	25	3.1	58	7.3	83	5.2
Total	816	100.0	792	100.0	1,608	100.0

Main Points

- ✍ There were 1,608 children on the child protection register at 31st March 2003, a rate of 35.6 children per 10,000-population aged under 18, compared with 24.0 per 10,000 in England (24)⁽¹⁾.
- ✍ Of the 1,608 children on the register at 31st March 2003, 816 (50.7%) were boys and 792 (49.3%) were girls.
- ✍ Over 2 in 5 (682) children on the register were aged between 5-11 years, with 24.6% aged 1-4, 22.1% aged 12-15, 5.7% under 1 year old and 5.2% aged 16 & over.
- ✍ Over twice as many girls (58) than boys (25) aged 16 & over were on the register at 31st March 2003.
- ✍ Just below 6% of children on the register were under 1 year old, with 30.3% under 5 years old.

Figure 1.1: Children on the Child Protection Register by Age Group at 31st March 2003



¹ Source: Children and Young People on Child Protection Register During Year Ending 31st March 2003 England. Statistics Division. November 2003.

Table 1.3: Children on the Child Protection Register by Age Group at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Age Group (years)	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	98	7.1	98	6.7	88	5.9	97	6.9	105	6.9	92	5.7
1-4	392	28.3	406	27.8	397	26.8	356	25.2	388	25.3	395	24.6
5-11	589	42.5	617	42.2	614	41.4	574	40.6	630	41.1	682	42.4
12-15	266	19.2	302	20.6	329	22.2	315	22.3	345	22.5	356	22.1
16 & over	41	3.0	40	2.7	55	3.7	72	5.1	63	4.1	83	5.2
Total	1,386	100.0	1,463	100.0	1,483	100.0	1,414	100.0	1,531	100.0	1,608	100.0

Main Points

Between 1998 and 2003, the number of children on the child protection register increased by 16.0%, from 1,386 in 1998 to 1,608 in 2003.

Almost three quarters (1,169) of children on the register at 31st March 2003 were aged under 12.

Since 1998, the proportion of children on the register aged 1-4 decreased by almost 4 percentage points, from 28.3% in 1998 to 24.6% in 2003.

Since 1998, the number of children aged 16 & over on the register has doubled, from 41 in 1998 to 83 in 2003.

Category of Abuse

The category of abuse under which each child is registered is decided at the Child Protection Case Conference. When agreement is reached that protection is necessary, the child is recorded under the abuse category that most accurately reflects their situation.

The four main categories of abuse used are; neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse, as well as a number of mixed categories for more complex cases, e.g. 'neglect and physical abuse' and 'physical and sexual abuse'.

Neglect:-

The actual or likely persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical Abuse:-

Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Sexual Abuse:-

Actual or likely exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

Emotional Abuse:-

Actual or likely persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behaviour development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or only form of abuse.

Table 1.4: Number of Children on the Child Protection Register at 31st March 2003 by Category of Abuse

Category of Abuse	Potential	Suspected	Confirmed	TOTAL
Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - neglect	0	1	5	6
Main category - physical abuse	1	0	0	1
Main category - sexual abuse	1	0	1	2
Neglect and Physical Abuse				
Main category - neglect	7	0	21	28
Main category - physical abuse	66	8	17	91
Neglect and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - neglect	0	4	4	8
Main category - sexual abuse	6	2	7	15
Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - physical abuse	14	2	10	26
Main category - sexual abuse	1	1	0	2
Neglect (only)	258	17	376	651
Physical abuse (only)	288	16	72	376
Sexual abuse (only)	135	16	27	178
Emotional abuse (only)	125	12	87	224
Total	902	79	627	1,608
Percentage (%)	56.1	4.9	39.0	100.0

Main Points

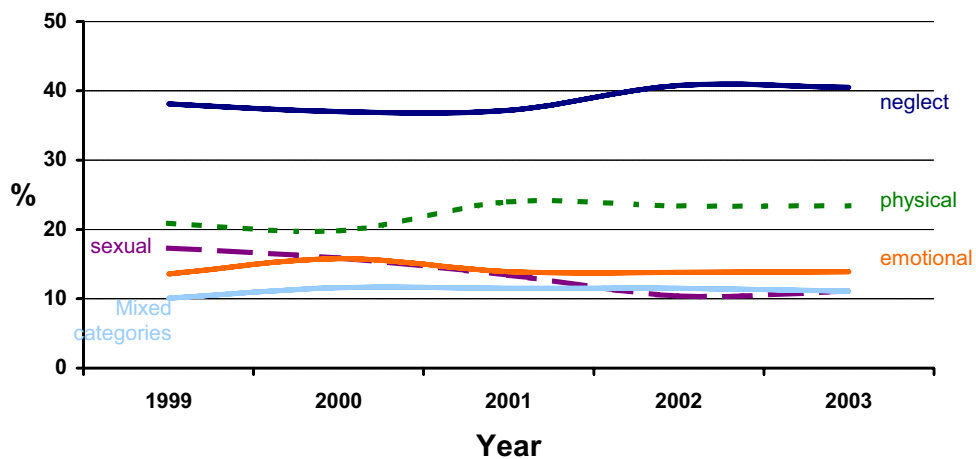
At 31st March 2003, 40.5% (651) of children were on the register for reasons of 'Neglect only', 23.4% (376) for 'Physical abuse', 13.9% (224) for 'Emotional abuse', 11.1% (178) for 'Sexual abuse' and 11.1% (179) for more than one category of abuse.

Of the 627 confirmed cases of abuse, 60.0% (376) were categorised as 'Neglect only'.

(Table 1.4 and Figure 1.2)

Over half (902) of children on the register were assessed as potential cases of abuse, whilst 39.0% (627) were cases of confirmed abuse and 4.9% (79) were cases of suspected abuse.

Figure 1.2: Percentage of Children on the Child Protection Register at 31st March (1999 - 2003) by Category of Abuse ⁽¹⁾



¹ Data is not available for 1998.

Table 1.5: Number of Children on the Child Protection Register by Category of Abuse at 31st March (1999 – 2003) ⁽¹⁾

Category of Abuse	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - neglect	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	0.8	5	0.3	6	0.4
Main category - physical abuse	10	0.7	3	0.2	1	0.1	4	0.3	1	0.1
Main category - sexual abuse	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1	2	0.1	2	0.1
Neglect and Physical Abuse										
Main category - neglect	23	1.6	51	3.4	38	2.7	20	1.3	28	1.7
Main category - physical abuse	52	3.6	64	4.3	49	3.5	84	5.5	91	5.7
Neglect and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - neglect	7	0.5	8	0.5	10	0.7	7	0.5	8	0.5
Main category - sexual abuse	28	1.9	21	1.4	18	1.3	22	1.4	15	0.9
Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - physical abuse	26	1.8	22	1.5	28	2.0	18	1.2	26	1.6
Main category - sexual abuse	2	0.1	3	0.2	7	0.5	14	0.9	2	0.1
Neglect (only)	557	38.1	548	37.0	526	37.2	625	40.8	651	40.5
Physical abuse (only)	306	20.9	293	19.8	340	24.0	359	23.4	376	23.4
Sexual abuse (only)	253	17.3	236	15.9	189	13.4	159	10.4	178	11.1
Emotional abuse (only)	199	13.6	234	15.8	196	13.9	212	13.8	224	13.9
Total	1,463	100.0	1,483	100.0	1,414	100.0	1,531	100.0	1,608	100.0

Main Points

✍ Between 1999 and 2003, the proportion of children registered under 'Sexual abuse only' decreased from 17.3% (253) to 11.1% (178).

✍ The proportion of children registered under 'Physical abuse only' increased from 20.9% (306) in 1999 to 23.4% (376) in 2003.

✍ The number of children registered under physical abuse, where the main category of abuse was 'Neglect and Physical Abuse', increased from 3.6% (52) in 1999 to 5.7% (91) in 2003.

¹ Data is not available for 1998.

Length of Time on the Child Protection Register

Table 1.6: Children on the Child Protection Register by Length of Time on the Register and Age Group at 31st March 2003

Time on the Register	Age Groups (years)											
	<1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16+		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	33	35.9	79	20.0	119	17.4	66	18.5	10	12.0	307	19.1
3 months < 6 months	30	32.6	55	13.9	107	15.7	43	12.1	6	7.2	241	15.0
6 months < 1 year	29	31.5	98	24.8	167	24.5	79	22.2	13	15.7	386	24.0
1 year < 2 years	n/a	n/a	119	30.1	171	25.1	88	24.7	22	26.5	400	24.9
2 years < 3 years	n/a	n/a	30	7.6	49	7.2	34	9.6	14	16.9	127	7.9
3 years or more	n/a	n/a	14	3.5	69	10.1	46	12.9	18	21.7	147	9.1
Total	92	100.0	395	100.0	682	100.0	356	100.0	83	100.0	1,608	100.0

Main Points

At 31st March 2003, almost 6 in 10 (58.1%) children had been on the register for less than 1 year.

Over 4 in 10 (674) children had been on the register for 1 year or more.

Just below 10% (133) of children aged 5 years & over had been on the register for 3 years or more.

Compared with the younger age groups, a higher proportion of children aged 16 & over (65.1%) had been on the register for 1 year or more.

Figure 1.3: Length of Time on the Child Protection Register at 31st March 2003

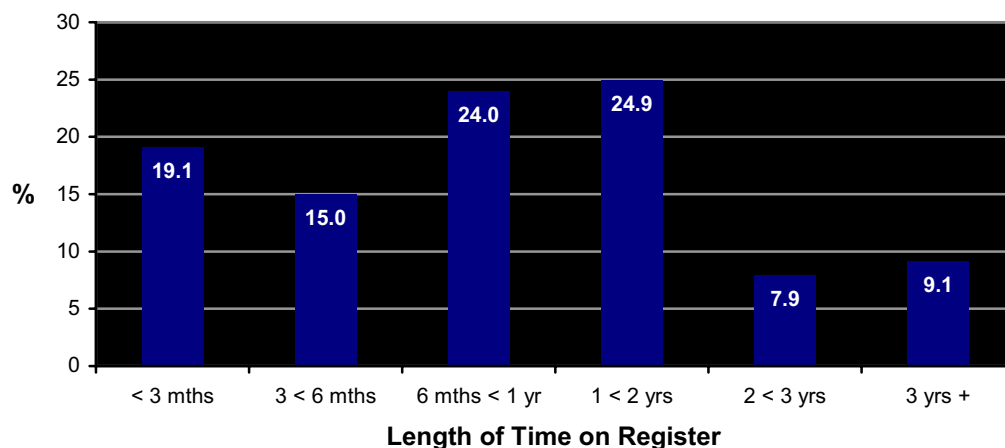


Table 1.7: Children on the Child Protection Register by Length of Time on the Register at 31st March (1999 – 2003) ⁽¹⁾

Time on the Register	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	280	19.1	239	16.1	226	16.0	293	19.1	307	19.1
3 months < 6 months	246	16.8	243	16.4	168	11.9	290	18.9	241	15.0
6 months < 1 year	324	22.1	324	21.8	377	26.7	314	20.5	386	24.0
1 year < 2 years	343	23.4	415	28.0	364	25.7	339	22.1	400	24.9
2 years < 3 years	135	9.2	143	9.6	160	11.3	167	10.9	127	7.9
3 years or more	135	9.2	119	8.0	119	8.4	128	8.4	147	9.1
Total	1,463	100.0	1,483	100.0	1,414	100.0	1,531	100.0	1,608	100.0

Main Points

Between 1999 and 2003, the number of children who had been on the register for between 6 months and 2 years increased from 667 in 1999 to 786 in 2003.

During this period, there has been a slight drop from 18.4% to 17.0%, in the proportion of children that were on the register for 2 years or more.

¹ Data is not available for 1998.

Registrations on the Child Protection Register

Table 1.8: Registrations on the Child Protection Register by Gender and Age Group during year ended 31st March 2003

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	70	12.6	73	13.3	143	13.0
1-4	145	26.2	134	24.5	279	25.3
5-11	247	44.6	200	36.5	447	40.6
12-15	87	15.7	128	23.4	215	19.5
16 & over	5	0.9	13	2.4	18	1.6
Total	554	100.0	548	100.0	1,102	100.0

Main Points

✍ In 2002/03, there were 1,102 registrations onto the child protection register.

✍ A higher proportion of girls (25.8%) than boys (16.6%) aged 12 & over were registered in 2002/03.

✍ Of the boys registered during 2002/03, 44.6% were aged 5-11 years, compared with an equivalent of 36.5% of girls.

Figure 1.4: Registrations on the Child Protection Register by Age Group during year ended 31st March 2003

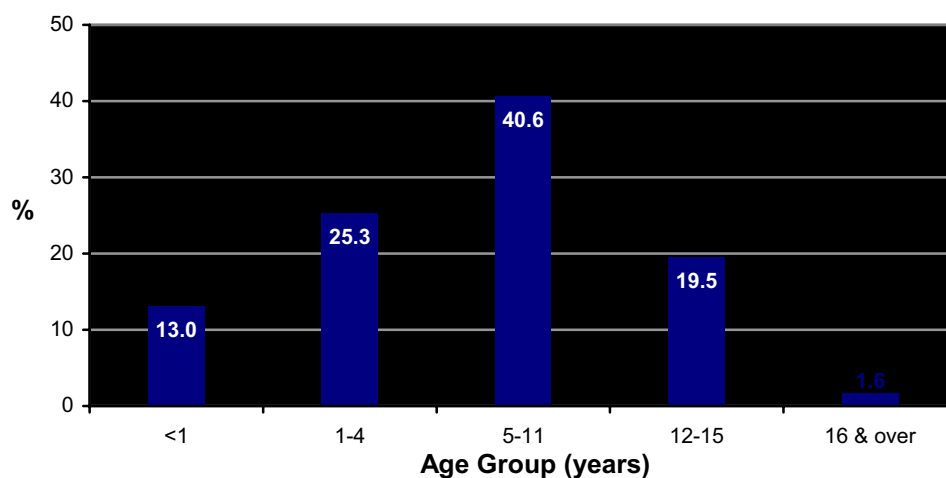


Table 1.9: Registrations on the Child Protection Register by Age Group (1998/99 – 2002/03) ⁽¹⁾

Age Group (years)	1998/99		1999/00		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	156	14.3	158	14.8	155	16.0	173	16.0	143	13.0
1-4	273	25.0	272	25.5	233	24.0	259	24.0	279	25.3
5-11	434	39.7	398	37.3	374	38.6	418	38.7	447	40.6
12-15	212	19.4	222	20.8	189	19.5	215	19.9	215	19.5
16 & over	18	1.6	17	1.6	19	2.0	15	1.4	18	1.6
Total	1,093	100.0	1,067	100.0	970	100.0	1,080	100.0	1,102	100.0

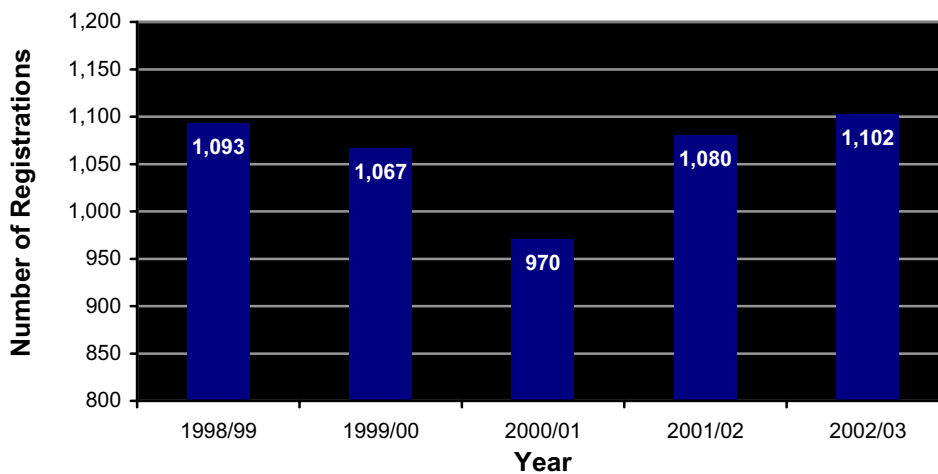
Main Points

Between 1998/99 and 2002/03, the number of registrations onto the child protection register increased slightly, from 1,093 in 1998/99 to 1,102 in 2002/03.

Since 1998/99, there has been little variation in the age profile of children going onto the register.

However, since 2000/01, the number of registrations increased by 13.6%, from 970 in 2000/01 to 1,102 in 2002/03.

Figure 1.5: Registrations on the Child Protection Register during year ended 31st March (1998/99 – 2002/03)



¹ Data is not available for 1997/98.

A child is looked after by a Trust if s/he is in its care or has been provided with accommodation for a continuous period of more than twenty-four hours by the Trust in the exercise of its social service function.

Table 2.1: Looked After Children by Age Group and Gender at 31st March 2003

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	26	2.0	34	2.9	60	2.5
1-4	191	15.0	173	14.7	364	14.9
5-11	457	36.0	415	35.3	872	35.7
12-15	394	31.0	344	29.3	738	30.2
16 & over	202	15.9	210	17.9	412	16.8
Total	1,270	100.0	1,176	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

- ✍ At 31st March 2003, there were 2,446 looked after children in Northern Ireland.
- ✍ There was little variation in the age profile between boys and girls looked after at 31st March 2003.
- ✍ Over one third (872) of looked after children were aged 5-11 years, 30.2% (738) aged 12-15 years, 16.8% (412) aged 16 years & over and 17.4% (424) under 5 years old.
- ✍ At 31st March 2003, almost 52% of looked after children were boys and just over 48% were girls.
- ✍ Almost 3% of looked after children were less than 1 year old.

Figure 2.1: Looked After Children by Age Group at 31st March 2003

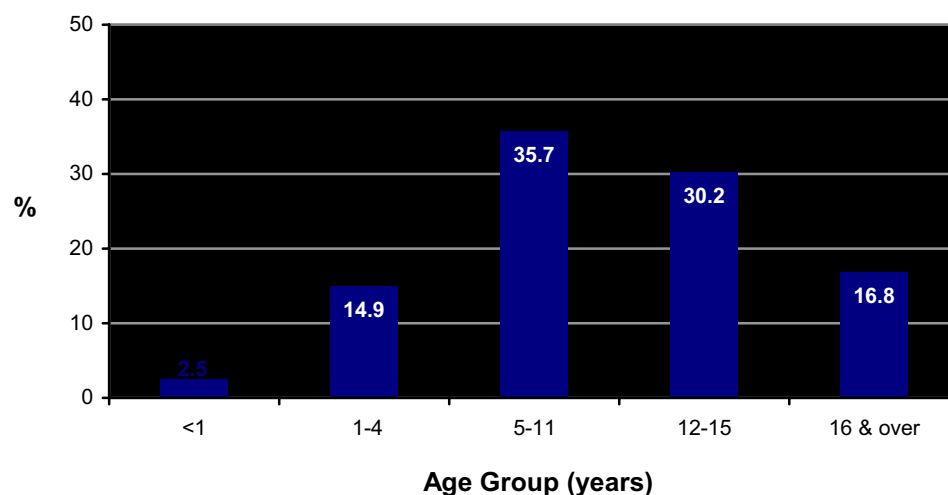


Table 2.2: Looked After Children by Age Group at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Age Group (years)	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	43	1.8	45	1.9	55	2.3	51	2.1	69	2.8	60	2.5
1-4	330	14.0	323	13.9	363	15.0	345	14.3	350	14.3	364	14.9
5-11	867	36.8	852	36.7	871	36.0	878	36.4	865	35.3	872	35.7
12-15	713	30.3	731	31.5	727	30.0	710	29.4	740	30.2	738	30.2
16 & over	401	17.0	373	16.0	406	16.8	430	17.8	429	17.5	412	16.8
Total	2,354	100.0	2,324	100.0	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

✍ Since 1998, the number of looked after children increased by 3.9% (92), from 2,354 in 1998 to 2,446 in 2003.

✍ Over the six years from 1998, the age profile of looked after children has remained relatively unchanged.

Legal Status of Looked After Children

Table 2.3: Children Looked After by Legal Status and Gender at 31st March 2003

Legal Status	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Emergency Protection Order (Articles 63 & 64)	11	0.9	9	0.8	20	0.8
Accommodated under Article 21	364	28.7	316	26.9	680	27.8
Interim Care Order	169	13.3	158	13.4	327	13.4
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	403	31.7	396	33.7	799	32.7
Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)	298	23.5	271	23.0	569	23.3
Freed Adoption and looked after by Board/Trust	21	1.7	19	1.6	40	1.6
Other	4	0.3	7	0.6	11	0.4
Total	1,270	100.0	1,176	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

- ✍ At 31st March 2003, almost one third (799) of looked after children were the subject of Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59).
- ✍ A higher proportion of girls (33.7%) than boys (31.7%) were the subject of Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59).
- ✍ No children were the subject of child assessment orders.
- ✍ A higher proportion of boys (28.7%) than girls (26.9%) were Accommodated under Article 21.

Figure 2.2: Legal Status of Looked After Children at 31st March 2003

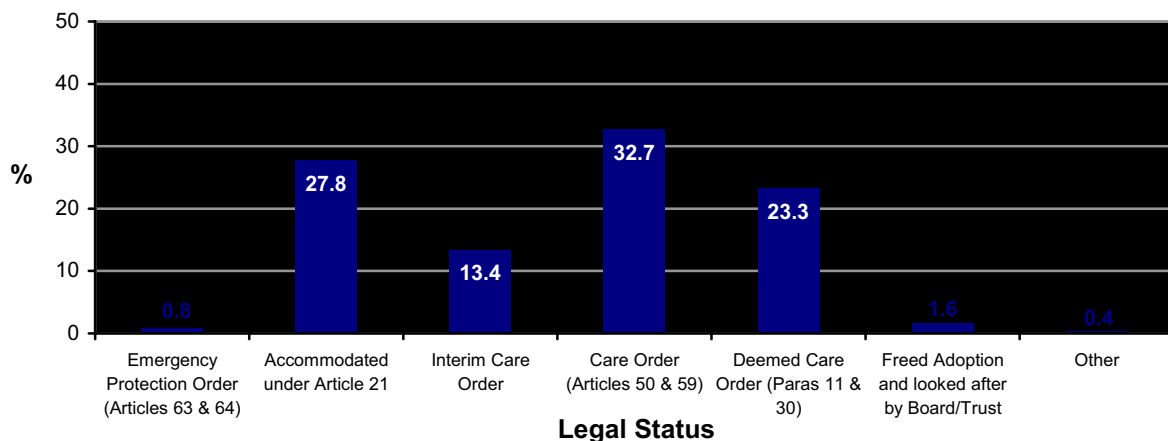


Table 2.4: Children Looked After by Legal Status at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Legal Status	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Emergency Protection Order (Articles 63 & 64)	11	0.5	28	1.2	25	1.0	31	1.3	24	1.0	20	0.8
Accommodated under Article 21	511	21.7	613	26.4	696	28.7	733	30.4	756	30.8	680	27.8
Interim Care Order	56	2.4	114	4.9	179	7.4	187	7.7	262	10.7	327	13.4
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	198	8.4	268	11.5	412	17.0	543	22.5	652	26.6	799	32.7
Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)	1,551	65.9	1,270	54.6	1,078	44.5	895	37.1	720	29.4	569	23.3
Freed Adoption and looked after by Board/Trust	6	0.3	8	0.3	10	0.4	6	0.2	20	0.8	40	1.6
Other	21	0.9	23	1.0	22	0.9	19	0.8	19	0.8	11	0.4
Total	2,354	100.0	2,324	100.0	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

- ✍ The legal status under which children are looked after has undergone significant changes between 1998 and 2003.
- ✍ Over the six years from 1998 to 2003, the proportion of looked after children who were the subject of Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59) increased from 8.4% (198) in 1998 to 32.7% (799) in 2003. The most significant increase (147) occurring between 2002 (652) and 2003 (799).
- ✍ The proportion of looked after children subject to a Deemed Care Order decreased from 65.9% (1,551) in 1998 to 23.3% (569) in 2003.
- ✍ Between 1998 and 2003, the proportion of looked after children who were Accommodated under Article 21 increased from 21.7% (511) in 1998 to 27.8% (680) in 2003.
- ✍ Over the same period, the number of children who were the subject of Interim Care Orders increased substantially, from 2.4% (56) in 1998 to 13.4% (327) in 2003.

Placement

Children looked after can be placed:

- ✍ In Residential care;
- ✍ In Foster care;
- ✍ With family; or
- ✍ Other ⁽¹⁾ accommodation.

Table 2.5: Placement of Looked After Children by Gender at 31st March 2003

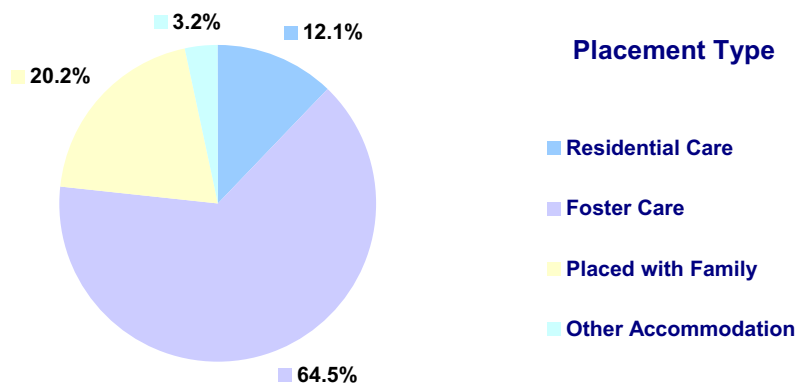
Placement Type	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	163	12.8	133	11.3	296	12.1
Foster Care	794	62.5	783	66.6	1,577	64.5
Placed with Family	268	21.1	226	19.2	494	20.2
Other Accommodation	45	3.5	34	2.9	79	3.2
Total	1,270	100.0	1,176	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

✍ Over 64% (1,577) of looked after children were placed in foster care, 20.2% (494) were placed with family, 12.1% (296) in residential accommodation and 3.2% (79) in other accommodation.

✍ There was little difference in the proportions of boys and girls in each type of placement, although a higher proportion of girls (66.6%) than boys (62.5%) were placed in foster care.

Figure 2.3: Placement of Looked After Children at 31st March 2003



¹ Other accommodation refers to: special schools, hospitals, bedsits, independent living etc.

Table 2.6: Placement of Looked After Children at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Placement Type	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	264	11.2	260	11.2	285	11.8	273	11.3	299	12.2	296	12.1
Foster Care	1,515	64.4	1,506	64.8	1,611	66.5	1,528	63.3	1,513	61.7	1,577	64.5
Placed with Family	506	21.5	488	21.0	472	19.5	532	22.0	534	21.8	494	20.2
Other ⁽¹⁾ Accommodation	69	2.9	70	3.0	54	2.2	81	3.4	107	4.4	79	3.2
Total	2,354	100.0	2,324	100.0	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

Over the six years from 1998, the placement of looked after children has remained relatively unchanged.

¹ Other accommodation refers to: special schools, hospitals, bedsits, independent living etc.

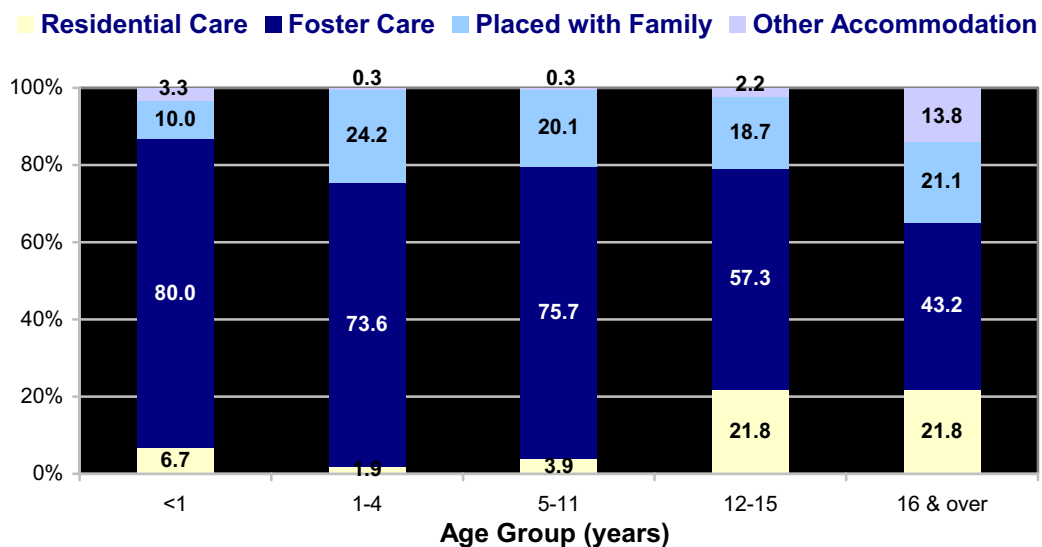
Table 2.7: Placement of Looked After Children by Age Group at 31st March 2003

Placement Type	Age Group (years)										Total	
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	4	6.7	7	1.9	34	3.9	161	21.8	90	21.8	296	12.1
Foster Care	48	80.0	268	73.6	660	75.7	423	57.3	178	43.2	1,577	64.5
Placed with Family	6	10.0	88	24.2	175	20.1	138	18.7	87	21.1	494	20.2
Other ⁽¹⁾ Accommodation	2	3.3	1	0.3	3	0.3	16	2.2	57	13.8	79	3.2
Total	60	100.0	364	100.0	872	100.0	738	100.0	412	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

- ✍ Of the 2,446 looked after children, the highest proportion (35.7%) were 5-11 years old, 30.2% were 12-15 years old, 16.8% were aged 16 & over, 14.9% were 1 to 4 years old and 2.5% were less than 1 year old.
- ✍ Of the 296 children placed in residential care, 15.2% (45) were less than 12 years old.
- ✍ Children under 1 year old tended to be placed in foster care (80.0%) or with family (10.0%).
- ✍ Of children aged 16 years & over, 43.2% (178) were placed in foster care, 21.8% (90) in residential care, 21.1% (87) with family and 13.8% (57) in other accommodation.

Figure 2.4: Placement of Looked After Children by Age Group at 31st March 2003



¹ Other accommodation refers to: special schools, hospitals, bedsits, independent living etc.

Length of Time Looked After

Table 2.8: Length of Time Looked After by Age Group at 31st March 2003

Length of Time in Care	Age Group (years)											
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 2 weeks	4	6.7	6	1.6	9	1.0	9	1.2	2	0.5	30	1.2
2 weeks < 3 mths	16	26.7	23	6.3	32	3.7	43	5.8	4	1.0	118	4.8
3 mths < 6 mths	12	20.0	34	9.3	46	5.3	37	5.0	10	2.4	139	5.7
6 mths < 1 yr	28	46.7	65	17.9	75	8.6	58	7.9	17	4.1	243	9.9
1 yr < 2 yrs	n/a	n/a	123	33.8	156	17.9	85	11.5	42	10.2	406	16.6
2yrs < 3 yrs	n/a	n/a	62	17.0	112	12.8	46	6.2	32	7.8	252	10.3
3yrs or more	n/a	n/a	51	14.0	442	50.7	460	62.3	305	74.0	1,258	51.4
Total	60	100.0	364	100.0	872	100.0	738	100.0	412	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

At 31st March 2003, almost 6 in 10 (59.7%) looked after children aged 5 & over had been in care for 3 years or more.

Older children (16 years & over) were less likely than younger children to spend shorter periods of time (less than 6 months) in care.

Almost three quarters (305) of looked after children aged 16 & over had been in care for over 3 years, compared with 62.3% (460) of children aged 12-15 years.

One third (20) of looked after children under 1 year old had been in care for less than 3 months.

Figure 2.5: Length of Time Looked After at 31st March 2003

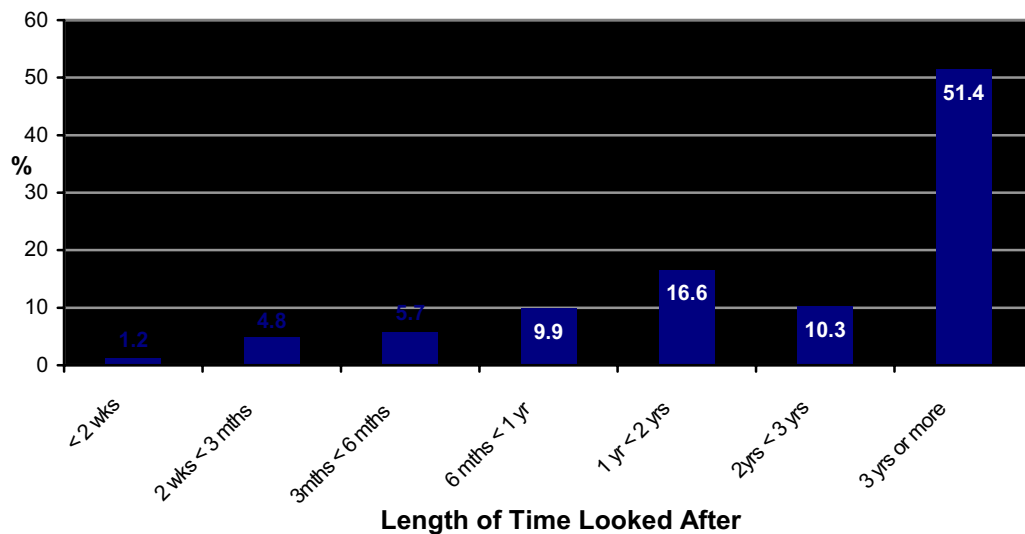


Table 2.9: Length of Time Looked After at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Length of Time in Care	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 2 weeks	18	0.8	26	1.1	31	1.3	37	1.5	33	1.3	30	1.2
2 weeks < 3 mths	115	4.9	121	5.2	120	5.0	104	4.3	121	4.9	118	4.8
3 mths < 6 mths	88	3.7	96	4.1	93	3.8	122	5.1	115	4.7	139	5.7
6 mths < 1 yr	138	5.9	207	8.9	268	11.1	205	8.5	294	12.0	243	9.9
1 yr < 2 yrs	270	11.5	240	10.3	341	14.1	365	15.1	324	13.2	406	16.6
2yrs < 3 yrs	261	11.1	202	8.7	208	8.6	284	11.8	293	11.9	252	10.3
3yrs or more	1,464	62.2	1,432	61.6	1,361	56.2	1,297	53.7	1,273	51.9	1,258	51.4
Total	2,354	100.0	2,324	100.0	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0

Main Points

Between 1998 and 2003, the proportion of children in care for 3 years or more decreased from 62.2% (1,464) in 1998 to 51.4% (1,258) in 2003.

During this period, the number of short-term placements (less than 6 months) increased slightly, from 9.4% (221) in 1998 to 11.7% (287) in 2003; although, a higher proportion (16.6%) of children spent between 1 and 2 years in care in 2003, compared with 11.5% in 1998.

Respite Care

Respite care relates to either a series of short-term, pre-planned or ad-hoc placements when a child moves temporarily from his/her carer (i.e. foster care, residential care or with family etc), in order to allow the child and the carer to spend some time away from each other. The move could involve a change in placement type (i.e. foster care to residential care) or the child may remain in

the same placement type (i.e. foster care to foster care). Children may also move from a family placement to other placement types. The use of respite care varies across Trusts. Some Trusts make considerable use of short-term respite care, aimed at maintaining a child in a family placement. Other Trusts use respite care on a more limited basis.

Table 2.10: Respite Care by Placement Type and Age Group during 2002/03

Placement Type	Age Group (years)											
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	0	0.0	3	2.1	63	17.6	63	25.7	33	44.0	162	19.1
Foster Care	25	92.6	123	84.8	224	62.7	132	53.9	19	25.3	523	61.6
Placed with Family	2	7.4	18	12.4	60	16.8	36	14.7	14	18.7	130	15.3
Other ⁽¹⁾ Accommodation	0	0.0	1	0.7	10	2.8	14	5.7	9	12.0	34	4.0
Total	27	100.0	145	100.0	357	100.0	245	100.0	75	100.0	849	100.0

Main Points

✍ A total of 849 children were accommodated for respite care during 2002/03.

✍ In 2002/03, 61.6% (523) of children accommodated for respite care were placed in foster care, 19.1% (162) in residential care, 15.3% (130) with family, and 4.0% (34) in other accommodation.

✍ Children under 5 years old accommodated for respite care were more likely than older children to be placed in foster care.

✍ Proportionately, almost twice as many children aged 12 & over (59.3%) were accommodated for respite care in residential accommodation than children aged under 12 (40.7%).

¹ Other accommodation refers to: special schools, hospitals, bedsits, independent living etc.

Figure 2.6: Children Accommodated for Respite Care during 2002/03 by Age Group

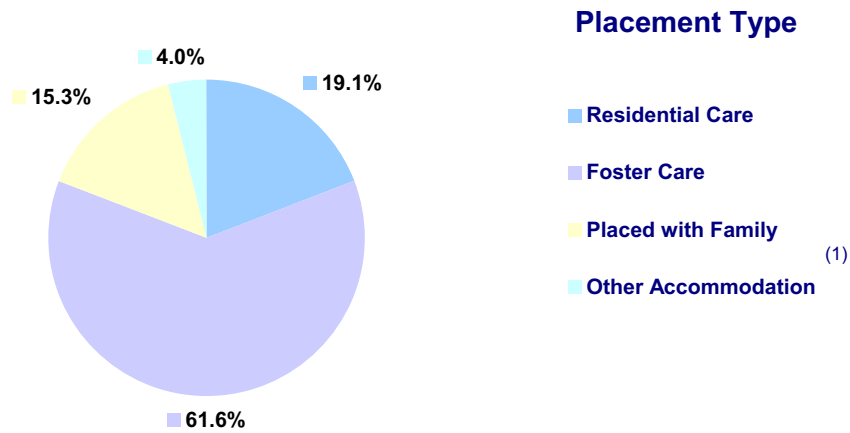


Table 2.11: Children Accommodated for Respite Care by Placement Type (1997/98 - 2002/03)

Placement Type	1997/98		1998/99		1999/00		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	176	30.1	137	23.5	148	21.9	148	18.4	175	20.6	162	19.1
Foster Care	351	60.0	344	59.0	408	60.3	490	61.0	531	62.4	523	61.6
Placed with Family	44	7.5	102	17.5	113	16.7	153	19.1	130	15.3	130	15.3
Other Accommodation	14	2.4	0	0.0	8	1.2	12	1.5	15	1.8	34	4.0
Total	585	100.0	583	100.0	677	100.0	803	100.0	851	100.0	849	100.0

Main Points

Since 1997/98, the number of children accommodated for respite care has increased by 45.1%, from 585 in 1997/98 to 849 in 2002/03.

The number of children placed with family for respite care has increased from 44 in 1997/98 to 130 in 2002/03, an increase of almost 200%.

During this period, the proportion of children accommodated for respite care in residential accommodation decreased from 30.1% (176) in 1997/98 to 19.1% (162) in 2003.

¹ Other accommodation refers to: special schools, hospitals, bedsits, independent living etc.

Discharges from Care

Table 2.12: Discharges from Care by Length of Time in Care and Age Group during year ended 31st March 2003

Length of Time in Care	Age Group (years)											
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 2 weeks	30	56.6	98	46.9	167	50.9	132	52.0	13	5.8	440	41.2
2 weeks < 3 mths	5	9.4	25	12.0	25	7.6	30	11.8	6	2.7	91	8.5
3 mths < 6 mths	5	9.4	16	7.7	22	6.7	21	8.3	7	3.1	71	6.6
6 mths < 1 yr	13	24.5	19	9.1	21	6.4	17	6.7	17	7.6	87	8.1
1 yr < 2 yrs	n/a	n/a	25	12.0	25	7.6	16	6.3	15	6.7	81	7.6
2yrs < 3 yrs	n/a	n/a	12	5.7	7	2.1	8	3.1	18	8.0	45	4.2
3yrs or more	n/a	n/a	14	6.7	61	18.6	30	11.8	148	66.1	253	23.7
Total	53	100.0	209	100.0	328	100.0	254	100.0	224	100.0	1,068	100.0

Main Points

✍ Of the 1,068 children discharged from care in 2002/03, over 40% (440) were discharged after less than 2 weeks in care.

✍ During 2002/03, almost half (128) of children under 5 years discharged from care had been looked after for less than 2 weeks.

✍ Almost two thirds (148) of children aged 16 & over discharged from care in 2002/03, had been looked after for 3 years or more.

Day Care

Day care facilities for children include registered childminders, playgroups, day nurseries and out of school clubs. These facilities are available mainly through independent providers.

The majority of day care services are provided through the independent sector – either through voluntary organisations,

private companies or individuals as a business, community groups as co-operative enterprise or any of these bodies on a partnership basis.

Children may attend on a full or part-time basis depending on their needs and those of their parents.

Day Nursery Care

Table 3.1: Day Nursery Care Provision for Under 5's at 31st March 2003

Day Nursery Provider	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places
Voluntary Agencies	18	587
Private Organisations (including employer)	163	6,633
Other Organisations	16	578
Total	197	7,798

Main Points

At 31st March 2003, there were 197 day nurseries providing 7,798 registered places.

Over 8 in 10 (6,633) registered places were provided by private organisations including employers.

Table 3.2: Nursery Provision for Under 5's at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Nursery Service Provider	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places
Voluntary Agencies	12	292	14	380	12	349	13	476	15	528	18	587
Private Organisations (including employer)	117	3,797	121	4,413	142	5,048	143	5,440	164	6,138	163	6,633
Other Organisations	4	140	1	35	7	224	7	258	27	490	16	578
Total	133	4,229	136	4,828	161	5,621	163	6,174	206	7,156	197	7,798

Main Points

Between 1998 and 2003, the number of registered places in day nurseries has increased by over 80%, from 4,229 in 1998 to 7,798 in 2003. This was largely due to a 75% increase in the number of places provided by the private sector, from 3,797 to 6,633 respectively.

Since 1998, the number of day nurseries has increased by 48.1%, from 133 in 1998 to 197 in 2003.

In 1998, the provision of nurseries was similar to that in 2003, e.g. in 1998, 89.8% of registered places were provided by the private sector, compared with 85.1% in 2003.

The number of day nurseries provided by private organisations increased by 39.3% over the six years, from 117 in 1998 to 163 in 2003, resulting in an additional 2,836 registered places.

Childminders

Childminders look after children under 5 years old and school children outside school hours and during holidays in domestic premises, usually the

childminders own home. They offer this service all year round for the full adult working day. Parents and childminders negotiate the terms and conditions.

Table 3.3: Registered Childminders and Places Designated for Under 5's at 31st March 2003

Childminders / Places	Number of Childminders	Number of Places	No. of Places Designated for under 5's	% of Places Designated for under 5's
Registered	4,224	21,164	12,015	56.8
Of which:				
Sponsored	191	689	405	58.8

Main Points

At 31st March 2003, there were 4,224 registered childminders providing 21,164 places for children aged under 12, over 50% (12,015) of which were designated for under 5's.

Almost 1 in 20 (191) registered childminders were sponsored by the local HSS Trust.

Table 3.4: Registered Childminders and Places Designated for Under 5's at 31st March (1999 – 2003) ⁽¹⁾

Childminders / Places	1999			2000			2001			2002			2003		
	No. of Places	Places for under 5's	% of places for under 5's	No. of Places	Places for under 5's	% of places for under 5's	No. of Places	Places for under 5's	% of places for under 5's	No. of Places	Places for under 5's	% of places for under 5's	No. of Places	Places for under 5's	% of places for under 5's
Registered	18,807	9,850	52.4	19,151	10,547	55.1	20,185	10,544	52.2	20,464	11,484	56.1	21,164	12,015	56.8
Of which:															
Sponsored	523	329	62.9	511	336	65.8	690	411	59.6	588	366	62.2	689	405	58.8

Main Points

Since 1999, the number of places provided by registered childminders increased by 12.5%, from 18,807 in 1999 to 21,164 in 2003.

At 31st March 2003, 56.8% of places provided by registered childminders were designated for children under 5 years, compared with 52.4% in 1999.

Over the five years up to 2003, the number of places provided by sponsored childminders increased by 31.7%, from 523 in 1999 to 689 in 2003.

¹ Data is not available for 1998.

Playgroups

Playgroups provide session care for children aged between 3 and 5, though exceptionally some may take slightly younger children. They aim to provide learning experiences through structured play opportunities in groups, and with the involvement of the parents in all aspects of the operation of the group.

Most playgroups are run on a self-help basis by groups of parents with one or two paid staff. Some playgroups may be run by Trusts or voluntary organisations e.g. NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children). Some are called opportunity groups and cater specifically for children with special needs. Playgroup sessions last no longer than 4 hours.

Table 3.5: Registered Playgroups and Places available at 31st March 2003

Playgroup Providers	No. of Playgroups	No. of Places
HSS Trusts	5	130
Voluntary Agencies	14	363
Community / Local committees	512	12,555
Private provision	76	1,600
Total	607	14,648

Main Points

/// A total of 607 playgroups provided 14,648 places at 31st March 2003.

/// Just over 8 in 10 (12,555) places available in playgroups were provided through community and/or local committees, with 10.9% (1,600) provided privately, 2.5% (363) through voluntary agencies and 0.9% (130) by HSS Trusts.

Table 3.6: Registered Playgroups and Places available at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Playgroup Providers	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places
HSS Trusts	6	153	6	145	6	145	6	145	6	145	5	130
Voluntary Agencies	70	1,846	50	1,469	40	1,197	47	1,379	35	988	14	363
Community / Local committees	471	11,469	505	12,221	542	13,233	504	12,006	507	12,156	512	12,555
Private provision	114	2,424	117	2,615	97	2,151	96	2,068	91	1,743	76	1,600
Total	661	15,892	678	16,450	685	16,726	653	15,598	639	15,032	607	14,648

Main Points

Between 1998 and 2003, the number of registered playgroups has decreased by 8.2%, from 661 in 1998 to 607 in 2003.

Since 1998, the number of places in voluntary playgroups decreased by 80.3%, from 1,846 in 1998 to 363 in 2003.

During this period, the number of voluntary playgroups decreased by 80.0%, from 70 in 1998 to 14 in 2003.

The number of playgroups provided by community/local committee's increased by 8.7% (41), from 471 in 1998 to 512 in 2003, with a corresponding increase of 9.5% (1,086) in the number of places.

Out of School Clubs

Out of school clubs care for school age children in the absence of the parents or the carers from the end of the school day until the parent/carer can collect the child. Some may also care for children before school starts. They are not open access. They may be run by the Trust, Voluntary

organisations or Community groups/Local Committees or Privately. Children will be escorted to the club by a responsible person and not allowed to leave until collected by the parent or person who has parental responsibility or who is looking after the child.

Table 3.7: Out of School Clubs for Children aged 4-11 at 31st March 2003

Out of School Club Provider	No. of Out of School Clubs	No. of Places	Average no. of Attendances per Operating Week
HSS Trusts	14	332	1,196
District Councils	3	72	70
Voluntary Organisations	90	1,986	2,097
Other Organisations	105	2,383	772
Total	212	4,773	4,135

Main Points

At 31st March 2003, there were 212 out of school clubs providing 4,773 places for children aged 4-11, with an average weekly attendance of 4,135.

Just over 9 in 10 (195) out of school clubs were provided by voluntary or other organisations, the remaining 1 in 10 by HSS Trusts or District Councils.

Voluntary out of school clubs had the highest average weekly attendance (2,097).

Table 3.8: Out of School Clubs for Children aged 4-11 at 31st March (1998 – 2003)

Out of School Club Provider	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	No. of Out of School Clubs	Places	No. of Out of School Clubs	Places	No. of Out of School Clubs	Places	No. of Out of School Clubs	Places	No. of Out of School Clubs	Places	No. of Out of School Clubs	Places
HSS Trusts	8	132	20	396	21	432	8	182	10	204	14	332
District Councils	0	0	14	230	15	484	6	130	7	130	3	72
Voluntary Organisations	83	947	35	661	50	996	82	1,651	86	1,862	90	1,986
Other Organisations	24	380	96	1,217	103	2,231	83	1,767	102	2,322	105	2,383
Total	115	1,459	165	2,504	189	4,143	179	3,730	205	4,518	212	4,773

Main Points

From 1998 to 2003, the number of out of school clubs increased by 84.3%, from 115 in 1998 to 212 in 2003 respectively.

In 2003, there were over three times as many places (4,773) in out of school clubs than in 1998 (1,459).

In 2003, there were 3 out of school clubs provided by district councils, compared with none in 1998.

The number of places in out of school clubs provided by 'Voluntary Organisations' in 2003 (1,986) was twice the number in 1998 (947).

A Children's home is one which provides care and accommodation for children as defined under Part IX of the Children Order (Northern Ireland) 1995.

At 31st March 2003, there were 43 children's homes in Northern Ireland, providing a total of 363 places.

Almost 75% (271) of places available were in statutory children's homes, with most of the remainder in voluntary homes. At 31st March 2003, there was one (1) private children's home in Northern Ireland, located in the Western Board.

Table 4.1: Statutory Children's Homes during year ended 31st March 2003

Board	Homes	Places	Places per 10,000-pop. Aged under 18	Admissions per 10,000-pop. Aged under 18	Discharges per 10,000-pop. Aged under 18
Eastern	15	116	6.9	13.7	12.2
Northern	6	56	5.0	4.6	3.0
Southern	5	33	3.7	6.7	4.5
Western	8	66	8.0	15.8	16.6
Northern Ireland	34	271	6.0	10.5	9.2

Main Points

At 31st March 2003, there were 34 statutory children's homes providing 271 places, a rate of 6.0 places per 10,000-population aged under 18, an average of 8 places per home.

The Western Board (8.0) had the highest rate of places per 10,000-population aged under 18, whilst the Southern Board had the lowest (3.7).

Statutory children's homes in the Western Board had the highest rate of admissions and discharges per 10,000-population aged under 18 (15.8 and 16.6 respectively), whilst homes in the Northern Board had the lowest (4.6 and 3.0 respectively).

Over 2 in 5 (15) statutory children's homes were in the Eastern Board.

Figure 4.1: Places in Statutory Children's Homes by Board at 31st March 2003

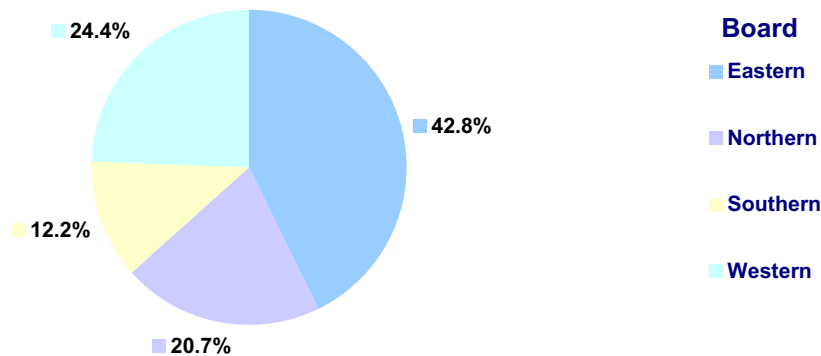


Table 4.2: Voluntary Children's Homes during year ended 31st March 2003

Board	Homes	Places	Places per 10,000-pop. Aged under 18	Admissions per 10,000-pop. Aged under 18	Discharges per 10,000-pop. Aged under 18
Eastern	4	65	3.9	2.3	2.0
Northern	2	10	0.9	3.2	2.9
Southern	2	9	1.0	0.0	0.0
Western	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Northern Ireland	8	84	1.9	1.6	1.4

Main Points

- ✍ At 31st March 2003, there were 8 voluntary children's homes providing 84 places, a rate of 1.9 places per 10,000-population aged under 18.
- ✍ Half (4) of all voluntary children's homes were in the Eastern Board, providing 65 places.
- ✍ There were no voluntary children's homes in the Western Board.
- ✍ The Northern Board had the highest rate of admissions and discharges per 10,000-population aged under 18 (3.2 and 2.9 respectively).

Secure Accommodation

Secure accommodation refers to accommodation provided for the purpose of 'restricting liberty'. In 2002/03, there were 2 secure units in Northern Ireland, providing accommodation for 15 young people at any one time. The secure units are located within Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust; although, admissions are drawn on a regional basis.

In 2002/03, 51 young people were admitted to secure accommodation, of which 26 were male and 25 were female. During this period, there were 58 admissions, with some young people being admitted more than once.

The young people admitted to the secure unit in 2002/03, were aged between 12-17 years old; although, the majority were aged 14 & 15 years old.

Table 5.1: Admissions to Secure Accommodation in 2002/03 by Age at Time of Admission

Gender	Age at Time of Admission to Secure Accommodation									
	Under 12		12 – 13		14 – 15		16 & over		Total Admissions	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boys	0	0.0	13	46.4	14	50.0	1	3.6	28	48.3
Girls	1	3.3	4	13.3	23	76.7	2	6.7	30	51.7
Total	1	1.7	17	29.3	37	63.8	3	5.2	58	100.0

Main Points

Over three fifths (63.8%) of young people admitted to secure accommodation in 2002/03 were aged 14-15 years old, 29.3% were aged 12 – 13 years old, 5.2% were aged 16 & over and 1.7% were aged under 12.

A higher proportion of boys (46.4%) than girls (13.3%) aged 12 – 13 were admitted to secure accommodation during the year.

Figure 5.1: Admissions to Secure Accommodation in 2002/03 by Age at Time of Admission

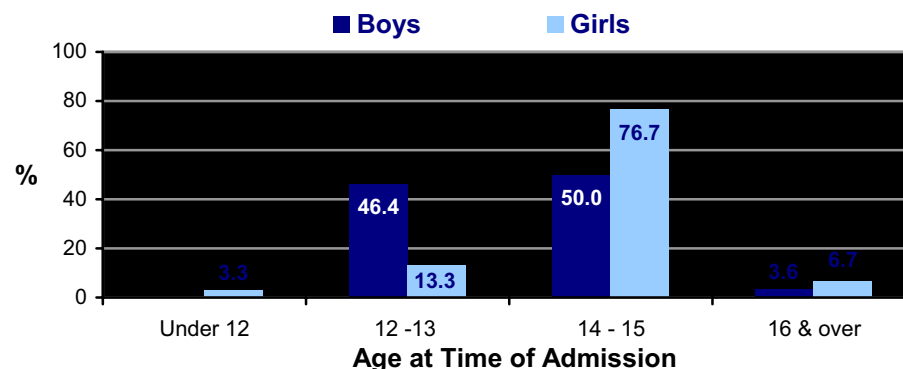


Table 5.2: Discharges from Secure Accommodation ⁽¹⁾ by Length of Time and Gender

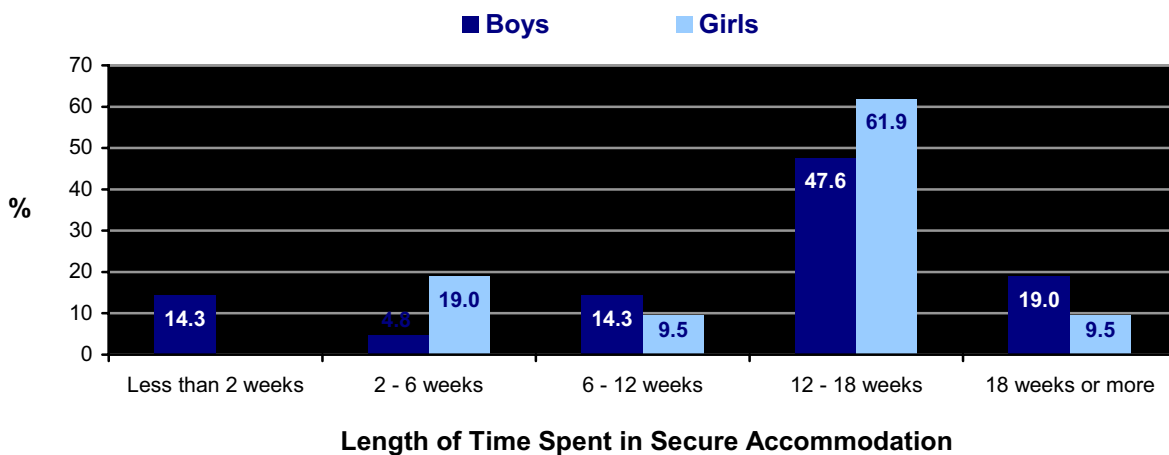
Gender	Less than 2 weeks		2 – 6 weeks		6 – 12 weeks		12 – 18 weeks		18 weeks or more		All Young People Discharged	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boys	3	14.3	1	4.8	3	14.3	10	47.6	4	19.0	21	50.0
Girls	0	0.0	4	19.0	2	9.5	13	61.9	2	9.5	21	50.0
Total	3	7.1	5	11.9	5	11.9	23	54.8	6	14.3	42	100.0

Main Points

Of the 42 young people discharged from secure accommodation in 2002/03, 50% were male and 50% were female.

The majority of boys (67%) and girls (71%) discharged in 2002/03 spent less than 12 weeks in the secure unit before being discharged.

Table 5.2: Discharges from Secure Accommodation ⁽¹⁾ by Length of Time and Gender



¹ Does not include children who were admitted in 2002/03 and who had not been discharged at 31st March 2003.

Further Information

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