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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin  
an Fowk Siccar**

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# **Children Order Statistical Bulletin 2008**

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**A NATIONAL STATISTICS PUBLICATION**

## Reader Information

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## About Community Information Branch

The purpose of Community Information Branch is to promote effective decision making in children and adult social services by providing quality information and analysis. We collect, analyse, and disseminate a wide range of community information that is used to help monitor the delivery of personal social services policy. Information collected by CIB is used to assess HSC Trust performance, for corporate monitoring, policy evaluation, and to respond to parliamentary / assembly questions. Information is widely disseminated through a number of regular key statistical publications and ad hoc reports details of which are available by clicking on the link below.

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### Our Vision and Values

Community Information Branch aims to:

- Provide up-to-date, quality information on children and adult social services and community health;
- to disseminate findings widely with a view to stimulating debate, promoting effective decision-making and improvement in service provision; and
- be an expert voice on social care information

## Main Findings

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### Child Protection

- At 31 March 2008, there were 2,071 children on the child protection register, an increase of 463 (29%) from the same date in 2003.
- During 2007/08 2,306 child protection investigations were completed, similar to the number completed in 2006/07 (2,320).
- Between 2002/03 and 2007/08, the number of child protection registrations increased by 36% (395), from 1,102 to 1,497 respectively.
- At 31 March 2008, almost one third (32%) of children on the child protection register were assessed to be at risk of Neglect (only), 24% (488) at risk of Physical Abuse (only), 13% (266) at risk of Emotional Abuse (only), 12% (244) at risk of Sexual Abuse (only) and 20% (408) at risk of more than one type of abuse.
- For the year ending 31 March 2008, Northern Ireland <sup>1</sup> had the highest number (48.0) of children on the child protection register per 10,000-population aged under 18, compared with Wales (36.4), England <sup>2</sup> (26.6), and Scotland (23.3).

### Looked After Children <sup>2</sup>

- Between 2007 and 2008, the number of looked after children in Northern Ireland increased by 3% (77), from 2,356 to 2,429.
- In the six years from 2003 to 2008, the number of children in care has fluctuated from a high of 2,531 in 2005 to a low of 2,356 in 2007.
- At 56.3 and 54.1 respectively, in 2008, Northern Ireland <sup>1</sup> and England had similar numbers of looked after children per 10,000-population aged under 18. Equivalent figures were notably higher for Scotland (142.1) and Wales (75.5).
- Almost 8 in 10 (78%) of all respite care placements in 2007/08, were with foster carers.
- Forty-three percent (390) of all care leavers in 2007/08 had been in care for 1 year or longer, compared with 34% (310) that were discharged after less than 2 weeks in care.

### Children's Homes

- At 30 June 2008, there were 55 residential homes for children, providing a total of 388 places. Of these 55 residential homes, 42 were statutory and 13 were independent children's homes providing 311 and 70 places respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that UK comparisons detailed are set against a background in which England, Wales and Scotland operate under a different legislative framework

<sup>2</sup> A number of HSC Trusts may be inappropriately classifying children placed in foster care as being placed with family on the LAC return provided to CIB. It is hoped that this issue will be addressed for 2008/09.

# Contents

<b>Main Findings</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Child Protection Investigations</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Table 1.1: Child protection investigations completed during year ended 31 March (2003–2008) .....	4
<b>The Child Protection Register</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Table 1.2: Composition of the child protection register by age and gender at 31 March 2008.....	5
Figure 1.1: Composition of the child protection register by age at 31 March 2008.....	5
Table 1.3: Composition of the child protection register by age at 31 March (2003–2008).....	6
<b>Category of Abuse</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Table 1.4: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March 2008 .....	7
Figure 1.2: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March (2004-2008).....	8
Table 1.5: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March (2004–2008) .....	9
<b>Length of Time on the Child Protection Register</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Table 1.6: Composition of the child protection register by length of time on the register and age at 31 March 2008.....	10
Figure 1.3: Length of time on the child protection register at 31 March 2008.....	10
Table 1.7: Composition of the child protection register by length of time on the register at 31 March (2004-2008) .....	11
<b>Child Protection Registrations</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Table 1.8: Child protection registrations by gender and age during the year ended 31 March 2008 .....	12
Figure 1.4: Child protection registrations by age during year ended 31 March 2008 .....	12
Table 1.9: Child protection registrations by age during year ended 31 March (2003–2008) .....	13
Figure 1.5: Child protection registrations during year ended 31 March (2003–2008).....	13
<b>Looked After Children</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Looked After Children Population</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Table 2.1: Composition of looked after children population by age and gender at 31 March 2008 .....	14
Table 2.2: Composition of looked after children population by age at 31 March (2003–2008).....	15

<b>Legal Status of Looked After Children .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Table 2.3: Legal Status of looked after children population by gender at 31 March 2008 .....	16
Figure 2.2: Legal status of looked after children population at 31 March 2008 .....	16
<b>Placement of Looked After Children.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Table 2.5: Placement of looked after children at 31 March (2003–2008) .....	18
Figure 2.3: Placement of looked after children at 31 March 2008 .....	18
<b>Length of Time in Care .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Table 2.6: Length of time in care by age at 31 March 2008 .....	19
Figure 2.4: Length of time in care at 31 March 2008.....	19
Table 2.7: Length of time in care at 31 March (2003–2008).....	20
Table 2.8: Respite care by placement type and age during year ended 31 March 2008.....	21
Figure 2.5: Children who received respite care services by placement type during year ending 31 March 2008 .....	22
Table 2.9: Children who received respite care services by placement type for years ending 31 March (2003-2008) .....	22
Table 2.10: Discharges from care by length of time in care and age during year ended 31 March 2008.....	23
<b>Children’s Residential Homes .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Table 3.1: Children’s statutory residential homes at 30 June 2008 .....	24
Table 3.2: Children’s independent residential homes at 30 June 2008 .....	25
<b>Comparative Data .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Child Protection .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Table 4.1: Child protection register – UK comparative data (2007/08) (Rate per 10,000-population aged under 18) .....	26
Figure 4.1: Children on child protection register per 10,000-population aged under 18 .....	27
<b>Looked After Children .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Table 4.2: Looked after children – UK comparative data over 5 years.....	27
Table 4.3: Looked after children by placement – UK comparative data (2007/08).....	28
Figure 4.2: Percentage of looked after children by placement – UK comparative data .....	28

## Child Protection

### Child Protection Investigations

Child protection investigations are classified using one of the following categories:

- Joint Protocol <sup>1</sup>
- Social Workers
- PSNI

**Table 1.1: Child protection investigations completed during year ended 31 March (2003–2008)**

Investigation category	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Joint protocol	417	19	391	20	381	19	293	14	316	14	362	16
Social workers	1,696	79	1,510	78	1,592	80	1,811	85	1,966	85	1,905	83
Police	36	2	27	1	27	1	25	1	38	2	39	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,149</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,928</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,129</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- During 2007/08, 2,306 child protection investigations were completed in Northern Ireland, similar to the number completed in 2006/07 (2,320).
- Between 2002/03 and 2007/08, the proportion of child protection investigations completed under joint protocol decreased by 3 percentage points, whilst the proportion of child protection investigations carried out by social workers increased by 4 percentage points.

<sup>1</sup> Joint protocol investigations are carried out jointly by social workers and the PSNI.

## The Child Protection Register

**Table 1.2: Composition of the child protection register by age and gender at 31 March 2008**

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	87	8	80	8	167	8
1-4	267	25	258	26	525	25
5-11	413	38	338	34	751	36
12-15	248	23	236	24	484	23
16 & over	64	6	80	8	144	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,079</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, there were 2,071 children on the child protection register.
- Of these children on the register, 1,079 (52%) were boys and 992 (48%) were girls.
- Eight percent of children on the register were under 1 year old, with 33% under 5 years old.
- Seven percent of children on the register were aged 16 & over.

**Figure 1.1: Composition of the child protection register by age at 31 March 2008**

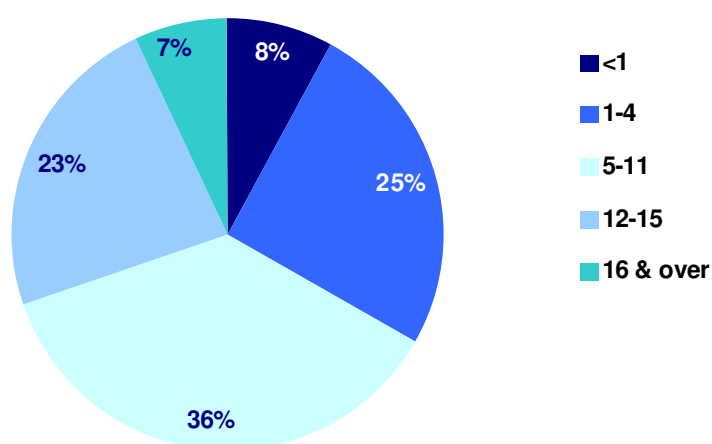


Table 1.3: Composition of the child protection register by age at 31 March (2003–2008)

Age Group (years)	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	92	6	94	7	143	9	145	9	148	8	167	8
1-4	395	25	342	24	380	24	434	26	449	25	525	25
5-11	682	42	600	42	644	40	623	38	656	36	751	36
12-15	356	22	317	22	349	22	344	21	423	23	484	23
16 & over	83	5	64	5	77	5	93	6	129	7	144	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,608</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,593</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,805</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Between 2003 and 2008, the number of children on the child protection register increased by 29%, from 1,608 to 2,071 respectively.
- Since 2003, the proportion of children aged under 1 year old on the register has increased by over 2 percentage points, from 6% in 2003 to 8% in 2008.

## Category of Abuse

The category of abuse under which each child is considered to be at risk is decided at the Child Protection Case Conference. When agreement is reached that the child is at risk and protection is necessary, each child is recorded under the category that best reflects the nature of the risk.

The four main categories used are: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. For more complex cases mixed categories are used e.g. 'neglect and physical abuse' or '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 children or adolescents. 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 behavioural 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: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March 2008 <sup>1</sup>**

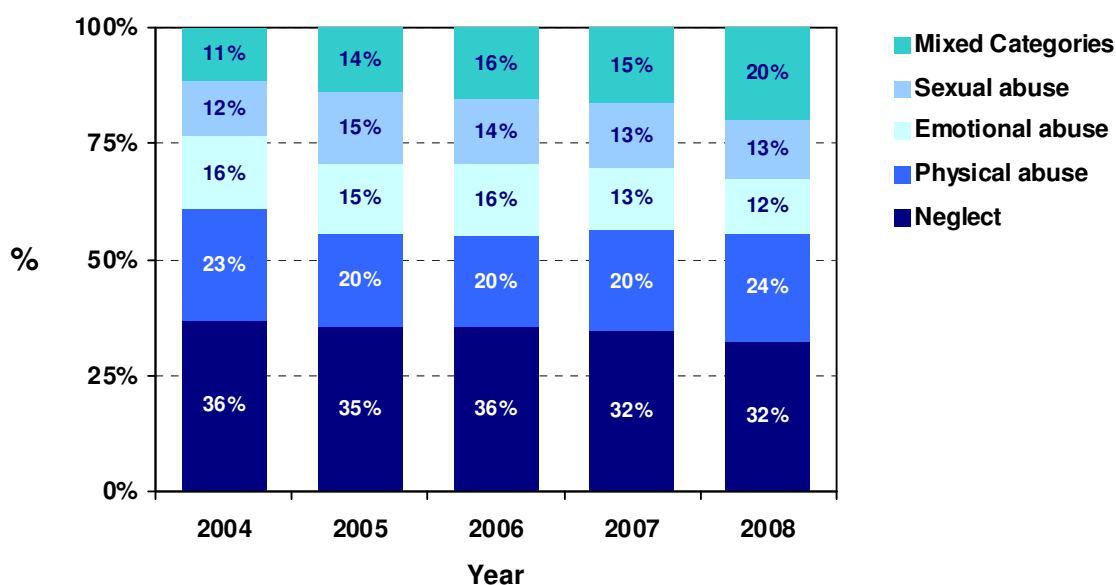
Category of Abuse	Potential	Suspected	Confirmed	Total
<b>Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse</b>	27	0	0	42
<b>Neglect and Physical Abuse</b>				
Main category – neglect	15	0	46	61
Main category - physical abuse	134	9	19	162
<b>Neglect and Sexual Abuse</b>				
Main category - neglect	5	5	13	23
Main category - sexual abuse	40	0	0	57
<b>Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse</b>	36	10	17	63
<b>Neglect (only)</b>	305	26	334	665
<b>Physical Abuse (only)</b>	415	24	49	488
<b>Sexual Abuse (only)</b>	191	20	33	244
<b>Emotional Abuse (only)</b>	158	24	84	266
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,326</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>2,071</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>1</sup> "0" represents a zero or a cell count less than 4 in order to avoid personal disclosure. In addition, where a zeroed cell can be deduced from the totals, the next smallest cells will be zeroed. For this reason some row and column totals may not tally.

## Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, almost one third (32%) of children on the child protection register were assessed to be at risk of Neglect (only), 24% (488) at risk of Physical Abuse (only), 13% (266) at risk of Emotional Abuse (only), 12% (244) at risk of Sexual Abuse (only) and 20% (408) at risk of more than one type of abuse.
- Almost two thirds (1,326) of children on the register were assessed as potential cases of abuse, with 30% (617) confirmed cases of abuse, and 6% (128) of cases where abuse was suspected.

**Figure 1.2: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March (2004-2008)**



**Table 1.5: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March (2004–2008)**

Category of Abuse <sup>1</sup>	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse</b>	11	1	15	1	18	1	40	2	42	2
<b>Neglect and Physical Abuse</b>										
Main category - neglect	25	2	39	2	35	2	69	4	61	3
Main category - physical abuse	97	7	114	7	107	7	176	10	162	8
<b>Neglect and Sexual Abuse</b>										
Main category - neglect	8	1	17	1	14	1	16	1	23	1
Main category - sexual abuse	22	2	32	2	32	2	43	2	57	3
<b>Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse</b>										
Main category - physical abuse	21	1	23	1	31	2	40	2	53	3
Main category - sexual abuse	10	1	7	0	8	0	44	2	10	0
<b>Neglect (only)</b>	509	36	554	35	582	36	569	32	665	32
<b>Physical Abuse (only)</b>	330	23	316	20	323	20	357	20	488	24
<b>Sexual Abuse (only)</b>	164	12	234	15	226	14	225	12	244	12
<b>Emotional Abuse (only)</b>	220	16	242	15	263	16	226	13	266	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,593</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,805</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Between 2004 and 2008, the proportion of children registered under 'Neglect (only)' decreased by four percentage points, from 36% (509) to 32% (665).
- The number of children registered under mixed categories of abuse increased from 194 (14%) in 2004 to 408 (20%) in 2008.

## Length of Time on the Child Protection Register

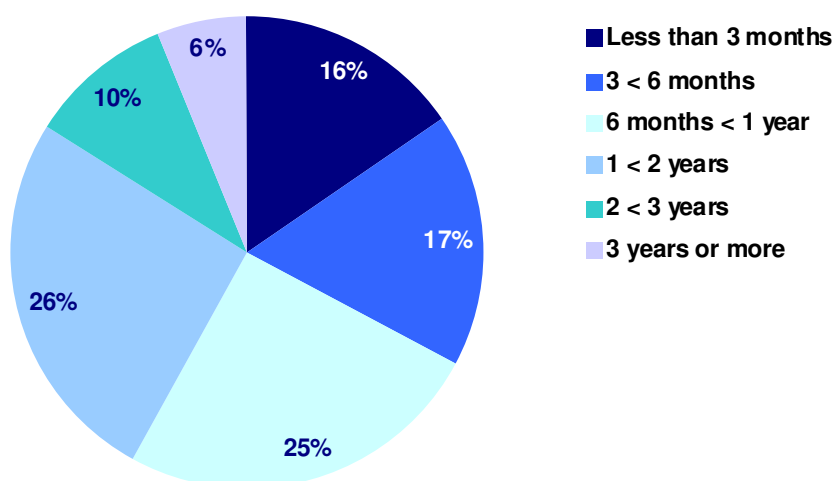
**Table 1.6: Composition of the child protection register by length of time on the register and age at 31 March 2008**

Length of time on register	Age Group (years)											
	<1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16+		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	59	35	84	16	95	13	69	14	15	10	322	16
3 months < 6 months	48	29	94	18	139	19	69	14	10	7	360	17
6 months < 1 year	60	36	118	22	193	26	123	25	27	19	521	25
1 year < 2 years	0	0	169	32	190	25	124	26	53	37	536	26
2 years < 3 years	0	0	51	10	75	10	60	12	22	15	208	10
3 years or more	0	0	9	2	59	8	39	8	17	12	124	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, 58% of children had been on the register for less than 1 year.
- Six percent (124) of children had been on the register for 3 years or more.
- The majority of children aged 16 & over (83%) had been on the register for 6 months or more.

**Figure 1.3: Length of time on the child protection register at 31 March 2008**



**Table 1.7: Composition of the child protection register by length of time on the register at 31 March (2004-2008)**

Length of time on the register	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	245	17	265	17	262	16	352	20	322	16
3 months < 6 months	206	15	299	19	301	18	289	16	360	17
6 months < 1 year	291	21	363	23	386	24	452	25	521	25
1 year < 2 years	388	27	356	22	398	24	431	24	536	26
2 years < 3 years	165	12	168	11	149	9	143	8	208	10
3 years or more	122	9	142	9	143	9	138	8	124	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,593</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,805</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Between 2004 and 2008, the proportion of children on the register for less than 1 year increased by 6 percentage points, from 52% in 2004 to 58% in 2008.
- During this period, the proportion of children on the register for 2 years or more decreased by 4 percentage points from 20% in 2004 to 16% in 2008.

## Child Protection Registrations

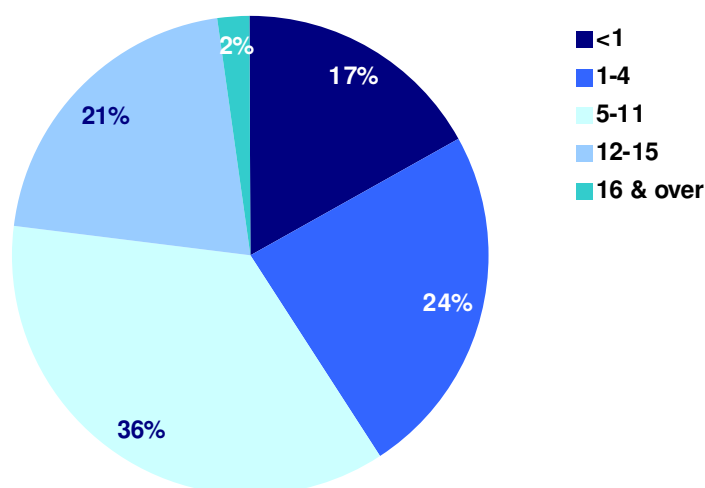
**Table 1.8: Child protection registrations by gender and age during the year ended 31 March 2008**

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	135	18	118	16	253	17
1-4	185	24	174	24	359	24
5-11	275	36	265	36	540	36
12-15	150	20	160	22	310	21
16 & over	13	2	22	3	35	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- There were 1,497 registrations on to the child protection register in 2007/08, demonstrating similar proportions of boys and girls.
- Comparisons of registrations by gender indicate that girls registered during 2007/08 tended to be slightly older than boys, with 25% of girls aged 12 & over compared with 22% of boys.
- Over two fifths (41%) of registrations were in respect of children under 5 years old.

**Figure 1.4: Child protection registrations by age during year ended 31 March 2008**



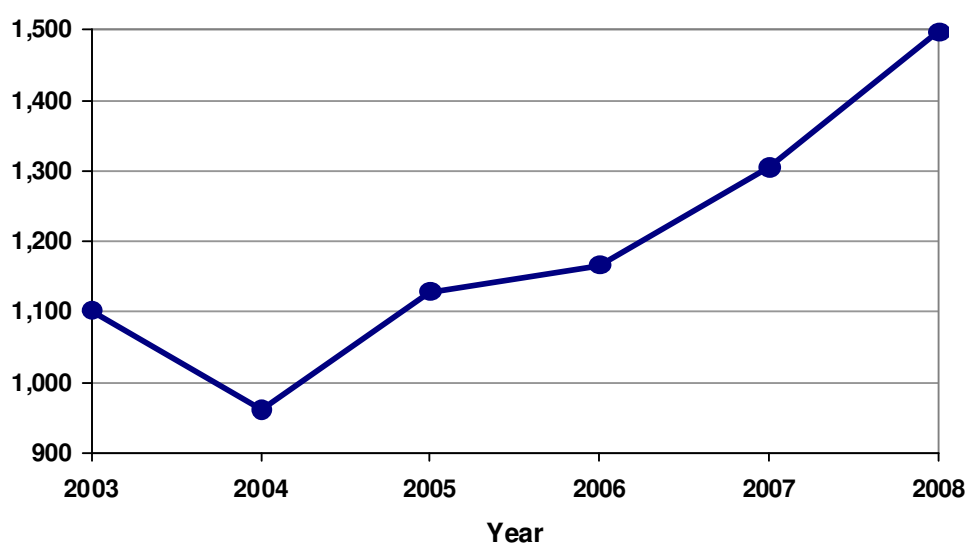
**Table 1.9: Child protection registrations by age during year ended 31 March (2003–2008)**

Age Group (years)	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	143	13	160	17	209	19	209	18	231	18	253	17
1-4	279	25	237	25	238	21	287	25	278	21	359	24
5-11	447	41	364	38	411	36	399	34	446	34	540	36
12-15	215	20	183	19	243	22	237	20	290	22	310	21
16 & over	18	2	18	2	28	2	34	3	60	5	35	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,102</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,129</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,305</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Between 2002/03 and 2007/08, the number of child protection registrations increased by 36% (395), from 1,102 to 1,497 respectively.
- In 2007/08, almost twice as many children aged 16 and over were registered on the child protection register as in 2002/03; which represents an increase of 0.7 percentage points.

**Figure 1.5: Child protection registrations during year ended 31 March (2003–2008)**



## Looked After Children

A child becomes looked after if they are provided with accommodation for a continuous period of twenty-four hours or more by a HSS Trust in the exercise of its social services function.

### Looked After Children Population

**Table 2.1: Composition of looked after children population by age and gender at 31 March 2008**

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	24	2	25	2	49	2
1-4	182	14	182	16	364	15
5-11	419	33	363	31	782	32
12-15	380	30	353	30	733	30
16 & over	260	21	245	21	505	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, there were 2,433 looked after children in Northern Ireland.
- Of those looked after at 31 March 2008, 52% were boys and 48% were girls.
- Of the 2,433 looked after children, 32% (782) were aged 5-11, 30% (733) were 12-15 years, 21% (505) were 16 years & over, and 17% (413) were under 5 years old at 31 March 2008.
- At 31 March 2008, 2% of looked after children were less than 1 year old.

Figure 2.1: Composition of looked after children population by age at 31 March 2008

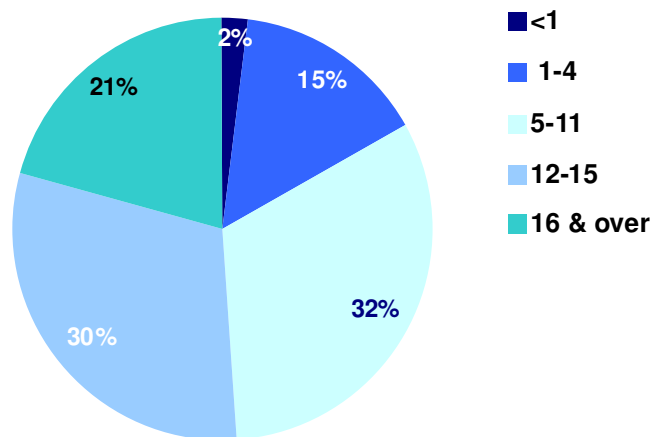


Table 2.2: Composition of looked after children population by age at 31 March (2003–2008)

Age Group (years)	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	60	2	75	3	61	2	60	2	64	3	49	2
1-4	364	15	366	15	348	14	334	14	298	13	364	15
5-11	872	36	881	35	869	34	830	34	765	32	782	32
12-15	738	30	775	31	818	32	763	31	765	32	733	30
16 & over	412	17	413	16	435	17	449	18	464	20	505	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,510</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,531</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,436</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,356</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- There was a 3% increase in the total number of children looked after in the last year, from 2,356 in 2007 to 2,433 in 2008.
- Over the five years from 2003 to 2008, the proportion of children looked after aged between 5 and 11 decreased by four percentage points, from 36% (872) in 2003 to 32% (782) in 2008.

## Legal Status of Looked After Children

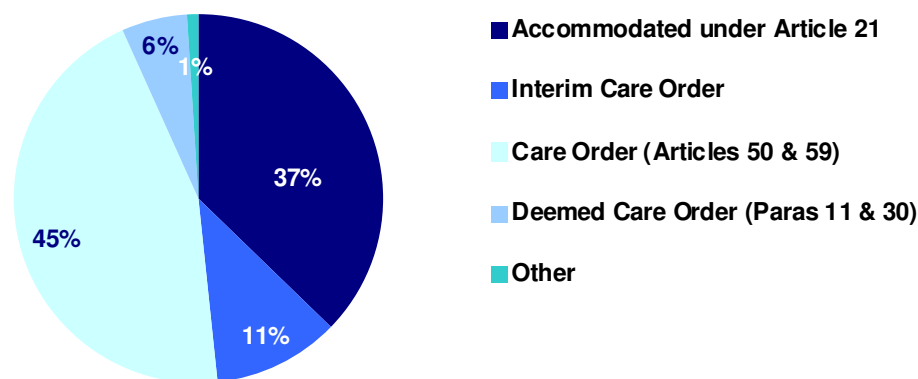
Table 2.3: Legal Status of looked after children population by gender at 31 March 2008 <sup>1</sup>

Legal Status	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accommodated under Article 21	480	38	422	36	902	37
Interim Care Order	141	11	135	12	276	11
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	572	45	520	45	1,092	45
Deemed Care Order (Para's 11 & 30)	66	5	80	7	146	6
Other	6	0	11	1	17	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, 45% (1,092) of looked after children were subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)', 37% (902) were subject to 'Accommodated under Article 21', 11% (276) were subject to 'Interim Care Orders' and 6% (146) were subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Para's 11 & 30)'.
- Similar proportions of boys and girls were recorded under each legal status category at 31 March 2008.

Figure 2.2: Legal status of looked after children population at 31 March 2008



<sup>1</sup> To avoid personal disclosure the 'Other' category includes children taken into care under Emergency Protection Orders (Articles 63 & 64).

Table 2.4: Legal status of looked after children population at 31 March (2003–2008) <sup>1</sup>

Legal Status	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accommodated under Article 21	680	28	743	30	794	31	760	31	800	34	902	37
Interim Care Order	327	13	329	13	325	13	302	12	218	9	276	11
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	799	33	918	37	1,013	40	1,066	44	1,093	46	1,092	45
Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)	569	23	441	18	357	14	278	11	216	9	146	6
Freed for Adoption and Looked After by Board/Trust	40	2	23	1	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	31	1	56	2	31	1	30	1	29	1	17	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,510</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,531</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,436</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,356</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Over the five years from 2003 to 2008, the proportion of looked after children subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)' increased by over 12 percentage points from 799 (33%) in 2003 to 1,092 (45%) in 2008.
- In contrast, over the same period, the proportion of looked after children subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)' decreased by 17 percentage points from 23% (569) to 6% (146).
- Since 2003, the proportion of looked after children 'Accommodated under Article 21' increased by over 9 percentage points from 28% (680) in 2003 to 37% (902) in 2008.

<sup>1</sup> To avoid personal disclosure the 'Other' category includes children taken into care under Emergency Protection Orders (Articles 63 & 64).

## Placement of Looked After Children

Children taken into care can be placed in:

- Residential care;
- Foster care;
- With family; or
- Other accommodation <sup>1</sup>.

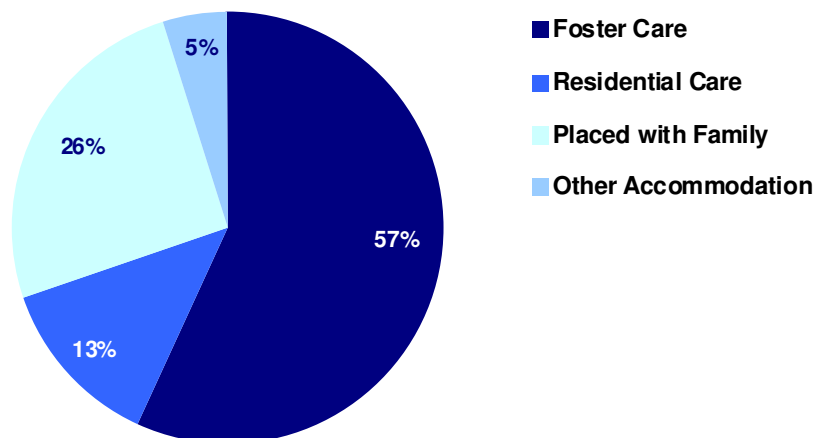
**Table 2.5: Placement of looked after children at 31 March (2003–2008) <sup>2</sup>**

Placement Type	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	296	12	325	13	317	13	321	13	283	12	319	13
Foster Care	1,577	64	1,529	61	1,606	63	1,522	62	1,389	59	1,376	57
Placed with Family	494	20	561	22	500	20	486	20	566	24	622	26
Other Accommodation <sup>1</sup>	79	3	95	4	108	4	107	4	118	5	116	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,510</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,531</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,436</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,356</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, the majority (57%) of looked after children were in foster care with 26% (622) placed with family, 13% (319) in residential accommodation, and 5% (116) in other types of accommodation.
- Over the five years from 2003 to 2008, the percentage of children in foster care decreased by 7 percentage points whilst the proportion of children placed with family increased by 6 percentage points from 20% in 2003 to 26% in 2008.
- During the same period, the proportions of children in residential care and in other accommodation increased by 1 and 2 percentage points respectively.

**Figure 2.3: Placement of looked after children at 31 March 2008**



<sup>1</sup> Other accommodation includes: independent living, supported accommodation, secure accommodation, hospital, hostels, aftercare facilities, Simon community, respite care facilities, bed & breakfast accommodation, bed-sits, dependent living etc.

<sup>2</sup> A number of HSC Trusts may be inappropriately classifying children placed in foster care as being placed with family on the LAC return provided to CIB. It is hoped that this issue will be addressed for 2008/09.

**Length of Time in Care**

**Table 2.6: Length of time in care by age at 31 March 2008**

Length of time in care	Age Group (years)											
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	15	31	19	5	38	5	37	5	12	2	121	5
3 months < 6 months	17	35	43	12	58	7	38	5	13	3	169	7
6 months < 1 year	17	35	70	19	90	12	47	6	36	7	260	11
1 year < 2 years	0	0	115	32	108	14	73	10	58	12	354	15
2 years < 3 years	0	0	63	17	71	9	59	8	40	8	233	10
3 years or more	0	0	54	15	413	53	484	66	345	68	1,296	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

**Main Points**

- At 31 March 2008, over half (53%) of looked after children had been in care for 3 years or more, with 77% in care for 1 year or longer.
- Almost 1 in 4 (23%) looked after children had been in care for less than 1 year.
- Older children (16 years & over) were less likely than younger children to have spent shorter periods of time (less than 6 months) in care.
- Over two thirds (69%) of looked after children under 1 year old had been in care for more than 3 months.

**Figure 2.4: Length of time in care at 31 March 2008**

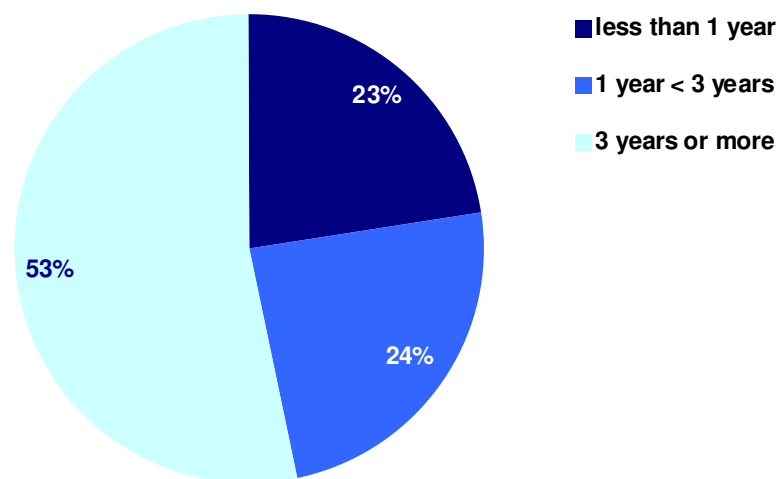


Table 2.7: Length of time in care at 31 March (2003–2008)

Length of time in care	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	148	5	141	5	169	6	126	4	133	4	121	4
3 months < 6 months	139	6	121	5	121	5	107	4	126	5	169	7
6 months < 1 year	243	10	279	11	229	9	193	8	211	9	260	11
1 year < 2 years	406	17	391	16	401	16	402	17	292	12	354	15
2 years < 3 years	252	10	351	14	316	12	315	13	303	13	233	10
3 years or more	1,258	51	1,227	49	1,295	51	1,293	53	1,291	55	1,296	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,510</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,531</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,436</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,356</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Between 2003 and 2008, the proportion of children in care for 3 years or more increased by 2 percentage points, from 51% in 2003 to 53% in 2008.
- During this period, the number of children looked after for between 6 months and 1 year increased by 7% from 243 (10%) in 2003 to 260 (11%) in 2008.

## Respite Care

Respite care relates to 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), to allow the child and the carer to spend some time away from each other. The respite 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 2.8: Respite care by placement type and age during year ended 31 March 2008 <sup>1</sup>**

Placement Type	Age Group (years)											
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16+		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	0	0	0	0	33	11	48	17	0	0	95	11
Foster Care	31	86	123	97	248	82	187	68	59	63	648	78
Placed with Family	5	14	0	0	16	5	26	9	0	0	59	7
Other Accommodation <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	0	6	2	14	5	12	13	32	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>100</b>

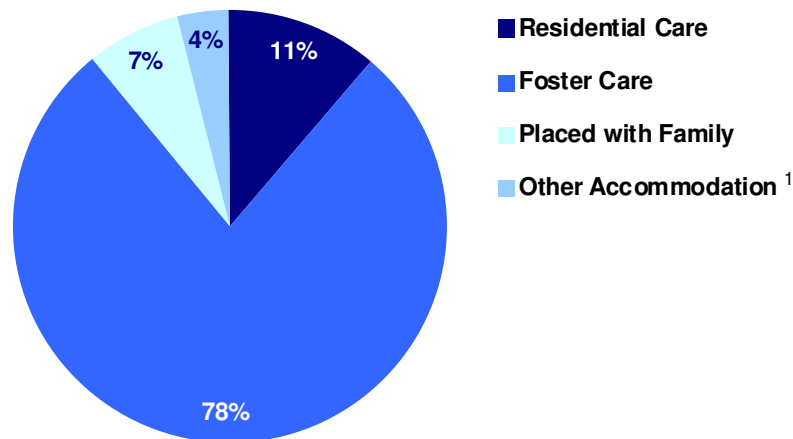
### Main Points

- Of the 834 children who received respite care in 2007/08, 78% (648) were foster care placements, 11% (95) were residential care placements, 7% (59) were placed with family, and 4% (32) were placed in 'Other Accommodation'<sup>1</sup>.
- Children under 5 years old were more likely than older children to receive a foster care placement.
- Almost 70% (578) of children who received respite care in 2007/08 were aged 5-15 years, with 20% under 5 years old and 11% aged 16 or older.

<sup>1</sup> "0" represents either a zero or a cell count less than 4 in order to avoid personal disclosure. In addition, where a zeroed cell can be deduced from the totals, the next smallest cells will also be zeroed. For this reason some row or column totals may not tally.

<sup>2</sup> Other accommodation includes: independent living, supported accommodation, secure accommodation, hospital, hostels, aftercare facilities, Simon community, respite care facilities, bed & breakfast accommodation, bed-sits, dependent living etc.

**Figure 2.5: Children who received respite care services by placement type during year ending 31 March 2008**



**Table 2.9: Children who received respite care services by placement type for years ending 31 March (2003-2008)**

Placement Type	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	162	19	179	21	174	18	75	10	70	10	95	11
Foster Care	523	62	525	61	595	61	613	78	576	81	648	78
Placed with Family	130	15	113	13	158	16	55	7	43	6	59	7
Other Accommodation <sup>1</sup>	34	4	41	5	56	6	42	5	25	4	32	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Main Points

- Since 2002/03, the proportion of children accommodated for respite care in foster placements has increased by 16 percentage points, from 62% to 78% in 2007/08.
- During this period, the proportion of children accommodated for respite care in residential accommodation decreased by almost 8 percentage points, and similarly, children placed with family decreased just over 8 percentage points.

<sup>1</sup> Other accommodation includes: independent living, supported accommodation, secure accommodation, hospital, hostels, aftercare facilities, Simon community, respite care facilities, bed & breakfast accommodation, bed-sits, dependent living etc.

## Discharges from Care

**Table 2.10: Discharges from care by length of time in care and age during year ended 31 March 2008<sup>1</sup>**

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	10	38	130	62	70	36	50	34	50	15	310	34
2 weeks < 3 months	7	27	16	8	21	11	32	22	11	3	87	10
3 months < 6 months	4	15	9	4	18	9	13	9	9	3	53	6
6 months < 1 year	5	19	11	5	16	8	18	12	19	6	69	8
1 year < 2 years	0	0	21	10	19	10	18	12	23	7	81	9
2 years or more	0	0	23	11	53	27	16	11	217	66	309	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- During 2007/08, there were 909 discharges from care.
- Forty-three percent of discharges from care in 2007/08 related to children who had been in care for 1 year or longer, with 34% relating to children who had been in care for less than 2 weeks.
- Two thirds (66%) of the children aged 16 and over discharged from care had been in care for 2 years or more.

<sup>1</sup> A number of categories have been suppressed to avoid personal disclosure.

## Children's Residential Homes

Children's residential homes provide care and accommodation for children in accordance with Part IX of the Children Order (Northern Ireland) 1995.

At 30 June 2008, there were 55 residential homes for children: 42 statutory and 13 independent children's homes.

**Table 3.1: Children's statutory residential homes at 30 June 2008 <sup>1</sup>**

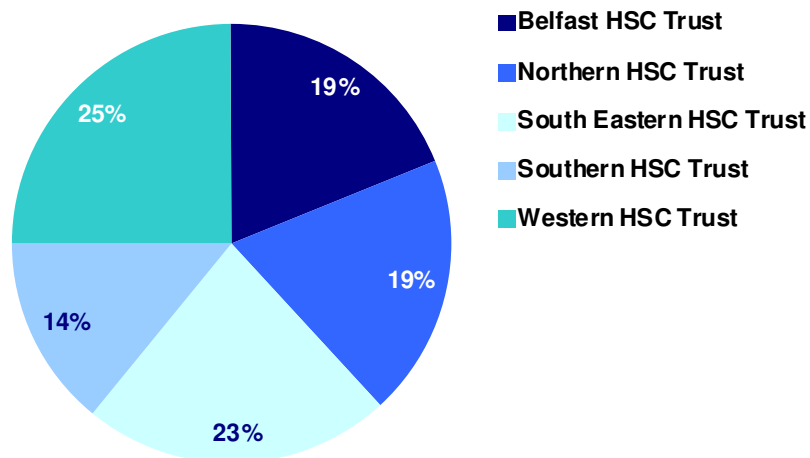
HSC Trust	Statutory Homes	Statutory Places	Places per 10,000-pop. aged under 18
Belfast HSC Trust	8	58	7.6
Northern HSC Trust	7	60	5.5
South Eastern HSC Trust	8	70	8.7
Southern HSC Trust	7	45	5.0
Western HSC Trust	12	78	10.1
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>7.2</b>

### Main Points

- At 30 June 2008, there were 42 children's statutory residential homes in Northern Ireland providing 311 places, equivalent to 7.2 places per per 10,000-population aged under 18.
- Across HSC Trusts, the Western HSC Trust had the highest number of statutory children's homes in Northern Ireland (12), providing a total of 78 places.
- Similarly, the Western HSC Trust (10.1) had the highest number of places in statutory children's homes per 10,000-population aged under 18, whilst the Southern HSC Trust (5.0) had the lowest.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Health & Personal Social Services Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA).

**Figure 3.1: Places in children's statutory residential homes by HSC Trust at 30 June 2008**



**Table 3.2: Children's independent residential homes at 30 June 2008 <sup>1</sup>**

HSC Trust	Independent Homes	Independent Places	Places per 10,000-pop. aged under 18
Belfast HSC Trust	5	34	4.5
Northern HSC Trust	3	17	1.6
South Eastern HSC Trust	2	8	1.0
Southern HSC Trust	3	11	1.2
Western HSC Trust	0	0	0
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1.6</b>

#### Main Points

- At 30 June 2008, there were 13 independent children's homes in Northern Ireland providing 70 places, equivalent to 1.6 places per 10,000-population aged under 18.
- There were no independent children's homes in the Western HSC Trust.
- Of the 70 places in independent children's homes, almost half (34) were provided by 5 homes in the Belfast HSC Trust.

## UK Data

It should be noted that UK comparisons detailed in this section are set against a background in which England, Wales and Scotland operate under a different legislative framework. For example in Scotland, children who are in need of care and protection may have supervision placed on them. Most of these children are allowed to remain at home under the supervision of a social worker; although, some may be placed in foster care or residential care whilst under supervision. As a result of a high rate of children being looked after at home in Scotland, very low proportions are cared for in foster homes (29%), compared with Northern Ireland (59%), England (75%) and Wales (75%).

### Child Protection

**Table 4.1: Child protection register – UK data (2007/08) (Rate per 10,000-population aged under 18) <sup>1</sup>**

	Northern Ireland	England <sup>2</sup>	Scotland	Wales
Child Protection Register at 31 March	48.0	26.6	23.3	36.4
Registrations	34.7	30.9	26.9	46.5
De-registrations	28.5	29.7	30.5	46.5
Re-registrations	5.6	4.2	4.3	n/a

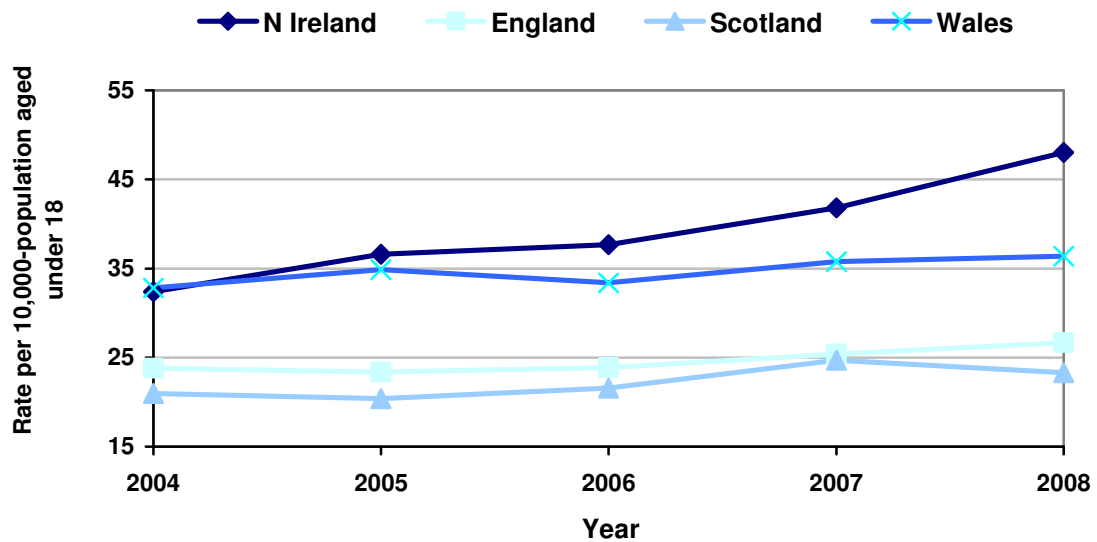
#### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, Northern Ireland had the highest number (48.0) of children on the child protection register per 10,000-population aged under 18, compared with Wales (36.4), England <sup>2</sup> (26.6), and 23.3 for Scotland.
- Wales had the highest number of registrations and de-registrations per 10,000-population aged under 18, both having a rate of 46.5.

<sup>1</sup> Figures shown are rates per 10,000-population aged under 18 and are based on the 2007 mid year population estimates for children aged under 18, available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

<sup>2</sup> English figures refer to children who are the subject of a child protection plan.

Figure 4.1: Children on child protection register per 10,000-population aged under 18 - UK data (2004 – 2008)



## Looked After Children

Table 4.2: Looked after children – UK data over 5 years <sup>1</sup>

Year	Northern Ireland		England		Scotland		Wales	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
2008	2,433	56.3	59,500	54.1	14,886	142.1	4,807	75.5
2004	2,510	57.4	61,100	52.1	11,675	109.5	4,315	66.3
% change per 10,000-population		-1%		-2%		+33%		+9%

### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, Northern Ireland and England had similar numbers of looked after children per 10,000-population aged under 18 (56.3 and 54.1 respectively). The rate for Scotland was 142.1 and for Wales 75.5.
- Since 2004, the number of children looked after per 10,000-population aged under 18 has remained relatively stable in Northern Ireland and England. However, the corresponding figures have increased in both Scotland and Wales, by 33% and 9% respectively.

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that UK comparisons detailed are set against a background in which England, Wales and Scotland operate under a different legislative framework.

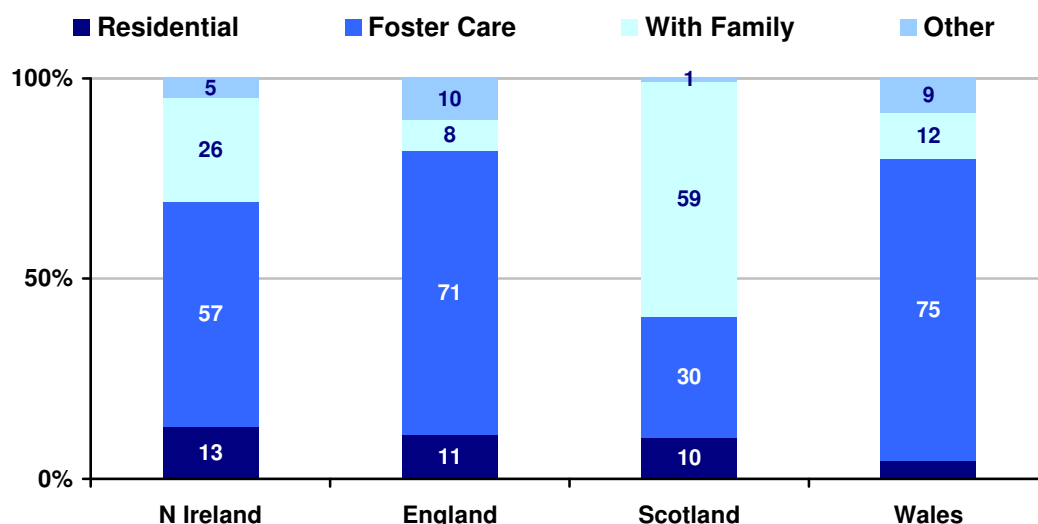
Table 4.3: Looked after children by placement – UK data (2007/08) <sup>1,2</sup>

Category	Northern Ireland		England		Scotland		Wales	
	Rate	%	Rate	%	Rate	%	Rate	%
Residential	7.4	13	5.9	11	14.6	10	3.3	5
Foster Care	31.9	57	40.8	75	42.8	30	54.7	75
With Family	14.4	26	4.1	8	83.6	59	8.4	12
Other	2.7	5	1.8	3	1.1	1	6.3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>56.3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>142.1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>72.7</b>	<b>100</b>

### Main Points

- At 31 March 2008, the majority of placements in Wales (75%), England (75%) and Northern Ireland (57%) were in foster care. Less than one in three placements in Scotland (30%) were foster care placements.
- Over half of all placements in Scotland were with family (59%) compared with just over a quarter of those in Northern Ireland and just 12% in Wales and 8% of placements in England.
- Residential accommodation accounted for 13% of placements in Northern Ireland, in England 11%, Scotland 10% and 5% of placements in Wales.

Figure 4.2: Percentage of looked after children by placement – UK comparative data (2007/08)



<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that UK comparisons detailed are set against a background in which England, Wales and Scotland operate under a different legislative framework.

<sup>2</sup> England, Scotland, and Wales exclude children looked after on short term placements.

## Further Information


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Detailed children order tables as at 31 March 2008 are available to download at:

[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/stats-cib/stats-cib\\_pubs/stats-cib-children\\_order\\_bulletin.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib/stats-cib_pubs/stats-cib-children_order_bulletin.htm) .

For **further details** about the statistics contained in this bulletin, please contact:

Community Information Branch  
Room 11  
Annexe 2  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SQ

 028 9052 2804  
Fax: 028 9052 3288

Email: [cib@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:cib@dhsspsni.gov.uk)