

Children Order Statistical Trends for Northern Ireland 2003/04 to 2008/09

This bulletin presents Children Order Statistical Trends for Northern Ireland, covering the period from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2009. Trend activity data are detailed in relation to Child Protection and Looked After Children. The information is based on annual Children Order statistical returns provided by Health and Social Care Trusts to the DHSSPS. The companion publication to this bulletin, the Children Order Statistical Tables for Northern Ireland (2008/09), was published on 16 April 2010.

Summary Key Findings

Child Protection

1. Between 2004 and 2009, the number of children on the Child Protection Register in Northern Ireland increased by 76%, from 1,417 to 2,488 respectively (**Table 1.3**)
2. From 2003/04 to 2008/09, the number of Child Protection Investigations increased by 48% (928), from 1,928 to 2,856 respectively (**Table 1.1**)
3. Child Protection Registrations increased by 90% (867) from 962 in 2003/04 to 1,829 in 2008/09 (**Table 1.9**)
4. De-Registrations from the Register rose 22% (250) to 1,404 in 2008/09 from 1,154 in 2003/04 (**Table 1.10**)

Children Looked After

1. At 31 March 2009, there were 2,463 looked after children in Northern Ireland, an increase of 1% from 2008, and a fall of 2% since 2004 (**Table 2.2**)
2. In recent years, the proportion of Looked After Children in care for three years or more fell from 53% in 2006 to 50% in 2009 (**Table 2.7**)
3. The age profile of Looked After Children from 2004 to 2009, indicates an increase in the proportion aged 16 or over, which rose by four percentage points from 16% to 20% respectively (**Table 2.2**)
4. The number of children placed in foster care increased by 17%, from 1,376 in 2007/08 to 1,607 in 2008/09. This compared with a 25% drop in children placed with family during the same period (**Table 2.5**)

Theme

Children Order Statistical Trends for Northern Ireland 2003/04 to 2008/09

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Reader Information

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About CIB

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 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.

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib-3/statistics_and_research-cib-pub/children_statistics.htm

Our Vision and Values

Community Information Branch aims to:

- provide up-to-date, quality information on children and adult social services and community health;
- 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.

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Technical Notes

Data Collection

The information presented in this bulletin derives from Children Order statistical returns provided by each of the five Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland to Community Information Branch in the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety.

Children Order returns are aggregated statistical counts relating to Child Protection, Children in Need, Looked After Children and Day Care provision for children. Figures presented in the present bulletin relate to Child Protection and Looked After Children for the period 2003/04 to 2008/09, and breakdowns are available, for example, by age, gender.

The information on Children's Homes for June 2009, was provided by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for Northern Ireland, who are responsible for the registration and inspection of these types of facility.

The 'Children Order Statistical Trends for Northern Ireland' together with its companion publication the 'Children Order Statistical Tables for Northern Ireland' presents a comprehensive series of data on the Children Order in Northern Ireland.

Data Quality

To ensure Children Order returns are accurate, HSC Trusts have six weeks to update SOS CARE with relevant information. When returns are received by Community Information Branch, checks are carried out to verify that information is consistent both within and across returns. Trend analyses are used to monitor annual variations and emerging trends. Queries arising from validation checks are presented to HSC Trusts for clarification and if required returns may be amended and/or re-submitted.

For 2008/09, figures for Looked After Children placed in foster care may exclude a small number of children mistakenly coded as 'placed with family' or 'Other'. Planned changes to SOS CARE will facilitate the future accurate recording of placement types for looked after children.

A detailed quality report for children's community statistics is available on our website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/quality_report_for_childrens_statistics-3.pdf

Statement of Administrative Sources

Children Order returns are derived from SOS CARE, which is the main administrative system used to support HSC Trusts in delivering social care services to children. A detailed 'Statement of Administrative Sources' is available on our website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/cib_statement_of_administrative_sources.pdf

Disclosure Conventions

To prevent disclosure of the identity of individual children it has been necessary to suppress figures whenever it would be possible to calculate the value of a cell with a low count by means of simple arithmetic. Our policy statement on disclosure and confidentiality is available on our website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/cib_confidentiality_statement.pdf

Data Changes

The information presented in this bulletin historically has excluded Children in Need statistics, but we hope to introduce trend analysis for this set of data in the next release of this bulletin, which is due for publication in November 2010.

Revisions Policy

These data are revised by exception. If this occurs the circumstances of the revision are reported on our website and the dates figures are revised are noted both on the website and within the publication. The full revisions policy for these and other community statistics is published on our website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/cib_revisions_policy.pdf

Main Uses of Data

Data from these publications meet the information needs of a wide range of internal and external users. Within DHSSPS figures from Children Order publications are used by policy officials to monitor the volume of activity, Inter Agency working and reasons for referrals, and to compare the changing characteristics of Looked After Children and children on the Child Protection Register over time.

Related Publications

Details of statistics on similar themes to those detailed within this bulletin and published by other countries in the United Kingdom are outlined below.

England

Children Looked After in England (including adoption and care leavers) year ending 31 March 2009

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000878/index.shtml>

Referrals, assessment and children and young people who are the subject of a child protection plan, England - Year ending 31 March 2009

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000873/index.shtml>

Children Assessed To Be In Need By Children's Social Care Services, England, 6 Months Ending 31 March 2009

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000892/index.shtml>

Wales

Adoptions, Outcomes and Placements for Children Looked After by
Local Authorities: Year Ending 31 March 2009 - Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2009/hdw200908262/?lang=en>

Referrals, Assessments and Social Services for Children, 2008-09

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2009/hdw200909232/?lang=en>

Scotland

Child Safety and Wellbeing - Children Looked After - Scotland

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

Child Safety and Wellbeing - Child Protection – Scotland

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

A National Statistics Publication

National Statistics are produced to a high professional standard set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. As we want to engage with users of our statistics, we invite you to feedback your comments on this publication to:

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Key Findings

Child Protection

- Between 2004 and 2009, the number of children on the Child Protection Register increased by 76%, from 1,417 to 2,488 respectively
- At 31 March 2009, there were 2,488 children on the Child Protection Register in Northern Ireland, an increase of 20% (417) from 2008 (2,071)
- From 2008 to 2009, the numbers of children on the Register in age bands 5-11 and 12-15 rose by 27% (200) and 23% (112) respectively. Within these bands, the numbers of girls rose by 35% and 32%, compared with increases of 20% and 15% for boys
- The age profile of children on the Register has remained relatively constant, with a two percentage point increase in the numbers of children in age band 12-15, increasing from 22% in 2004 to 24% in 2009
- In the five year period from 2005 to 2009, there has been little change in the profile of children by duration on the Register
- 76% (315) of the increase in numbers on the Register between 2008 and 2009, was related to Physical Abuse and/or Neglect
- Since 2005, the proportion of children on the Register due to a combination of Sexual/Emotional/Physical Abuse and Neglect increased by ten percentage points, from 14% in 2005 to 24% in 2009
- Between 2005 and 2009, the proportion of children Registered under 'Neglect (only)' decreased by seven percentage points, from 35% (554) to 28% (706). In the same period, children registered due to Physical Abuse increased by five percentage points, from 20% in 2005 to 25% in 2009
- Between 2005 and 2009, the proportion of children on the Register for 3 years or more, fell from 9% to 7% respectively
- Between 2003/04 and 2008/09, the number of Child Protection Investigations increased by 48% (928), from 1,928 to 2,856 respectively
- Investigations increased by 24% (550) from 2,306 in 2007/08 to 2,856 in 2008/09, with Joint Protocol Investigations up 58% in the same period, from 362 to 572 respectively
- Between 2004 and 2009, Child Protection Registrations increased by 90% (867) from 962 to 1,829 respectively
- More recently, Registrations increased by 22% (332), from 1,497 in 2008 to 1,829 in 2009
- Between 2004 and 2009, Child Protection De-Registrations rose 22% (250) from 1,154 to 1,404 respectively

Looked After Children

- At 31 March 2009, there were 2,463 Looked After Children in Northern Ireland, an increase of 1% (30) from 2008, and a fall of 2% (47) since 2004
- The age profile of Looked After Children from 2004 to 2009, indicates an increase in the proportion of Looked After Children aged 16 or over, which rose by four percentage points from 16% to 20% respectively
- Over the five years from 2004 to 2009, the proportion of Looked After Children subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)' increased by almost 10 percentage points from 918 (37%) in 2004 to 1,133 (46%) in 2009
- For the same period, the proportion of Looked After Children subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)' fell by 14 percentage points from 18% (441) to 4% (104)
- Since 2004, the proportion of Looked After Children 'Accommodated under Article 21' has increased by 6 percentage points from 30% (743) in 2004 to 36% (880) in 2009
- At 31 March 2009, 65% of Looked After Children were in Foster Care (1,607) with 19% (467) placed with Family, 13% (308) in Residential Accommodation, and 3% (81) in Other Accommodation
- The numbers of children placed in Foster Care increased by 17% (231) from 1,376 in 2007/08 to 1,607 in 2008/09. This compared with a drop of 25% (155) in children 'placed with Family' during the same period
- The numbers of Looked After Children has increased annually from 2,356 in 2007 to 2,463 in 2009, a rise of almost 5%(107) for this two year period
- In recent years, the proportion of Looked After Children in care for three years or more fell from 53% in 2006 to 50% in 2009
- Between 2004 and 2009 there has been little change in the profile of Looked After Children in terms of duration in care, with similar proportions in care for three years or more, less than one year, and between one and three years in care
- Of the 689 children who received Respite Care in 2008/09, 77% (532) were Foster Care Placements, 16% (108) were Residential Care placements, 6% (42) were Family placements and 1% (7) were in 'Other Accommodation'
- Almost three quarters (73%) of children who received Respite Care in 2008/09, were aged 5-15 years, with 18% (123) aged under 5, and 10% (66) aged 16 or older
- Since 2004, the proportion of children accommodated for Respite in Foster Care placements has increased by 16 percentage points, from 61% to 77% in 2009.
- During this period, the proportion of children accommodated for Respite in Residential Accommodation fell 5 percentage points, and by 7 percentage points for children placed with Family

Child Protection

Child Protection Investigations

Child Protection Investigations are classified using one of the following categories:

- Joint Protocol¹
- Social Workers
- PSNI

Table 1.1: Child Protection Investigations completed during year ended 31 March (2004–2009)

Investigation category	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%	%	No.	%	No.	%
Joint Protocol	391	20	381	19	293	14	316	14	362	16	572	20
Social workers	1,510	78	1,592	80	1,811	85	1,966	85	1,905	83	2,231	78
Police	27	1	27	1	25	1	38	2	39	2	53	2
Total	1,928	100	2,000	100	2,129	100	2,320	100	2,306	100	2,856	100

Main Points

- Of the 2,856 Child Protection Investigations in 2008/09, 20% were Joint Protocol
- Child Protection Investigations increased by 24% (550) from 2,306 in 2007/08 to 2,856 in 2008/09, with Joint Protocol Investigations up by 58% in the same period, from 362 to 572 respectively
- Between 2003/04 and 2008/09, the number of Child Protection Investigations has increased by 48% (928), from 1,928 to 2,856 respectively

¹ 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 2009

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	88	7	88	7	176	7
1-4	291	24	299	24	590	24
5-11	496	40	455	36	951	38
12-15	285	23	311	25	596	24
16 & over	79	6	96	8	175	7
Total	1,239	100	1,249	100	2,488	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, there were 2,488 children on Child Protection Registers in Northern Ireland, an increase of 20% (417) from 2008 (2,071)
- Of the 2,488 children on Child Protection Registers, 50% were boys and 50% were girls
- 7% were under 1 year old, and 7% were aged 16 or older
- Almost two-fifths (38%) of children on the Child Protection Register were aged 5-11

Figure 1.1: Composition of the Child Protection Register by age at 31 March 2009

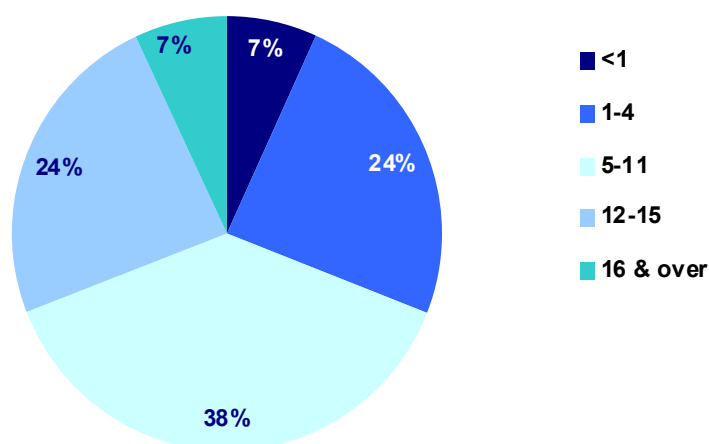


Table 1.3: Composition of the Child Protection Register by age at 31 March (2004–2009)

Age Group (years)	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	94	7	143	9	145	9	148	8	167	8	176	7
1-4	342	24	380	24	434	26	449	25	525	25	590	24
5-11	600	42	644	40	623	38	656	36	751	36	951	38
12-15	317	22	349	22	344	21	423	23	484	23	596	24
16 & over	64	5	77	5	93	6	129	7	144	7	175	7
Total	1,417	100	1,593	100	1,639	100	1,805	100	2,071	100	2,488	100

Main Points

- From 2008 to 2009, the numbers of children on the Child Protection Register in age bands 5-11 and 12-15 increased by 27% (200) and 23% (112) respectively
- Within these age bands, the numbers of girls increased by 35% and 32% respectively, compared with increases of 20% and 15% for boys
- Between 2004 and 2009, the number of children on the Child Protection Register has increased by 76%, from 1,417 to 2,488 respectively.
- The age profile of children on the register has remained relatively constant, with a two percentage point increase in the numbers of children in age band 12-15 increasing from 22% in 2004 to 24% in 2009

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 2009¹

Category of Abuse	Potential	Suspected	Confirmed	Total
Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse	0	0	34	72
Neglect and Physical Abuse				
Main category – neglect	0	0	76	123
Main category - physical abuse	190	17	37	244
Neglect and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - neglect	0	0	25	35
Main category - sexual abuse	36	8	10	54
Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse	48	7	19	74
Neglect (only)	365	31	310	706
Physical Abuse (only)	499	42	77	618
Sexual Abuse (only)	189	24	29	242
Emotional Abuse (only)	207	19	94	320
Total	1,621	156	711	2,488
%	65	6	29	100

¹ - cell counts have been suppressed to avoid personal disclosure

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, 28% (706) of children on the Child Protection register were assessed to be at risk of Neglect (only), 25% (618) at risk of Physical Abuse (only), 13% (320) at risk of Emotional Abuse (only), 10% (242) at risk of Sexual Abuse (only) and 24% (602) at risk of more than one type of abuse
- Almost two thirds (1,621) of children on the register were assessed as potential cases of abuse, with 29% (711) confirmed cases of abuse, and 6% (156) of cases where abuse was suspected
- Since 2005, the proportion of children on the register due to a combination of sexual/emotional/physical abuse and neglect has increased by ten percentage points from 14% in 2005 to 24% in 2009

Figure 1.2: Composition of the Child Protection Register by category of abuse at 31 March (2005-2009)

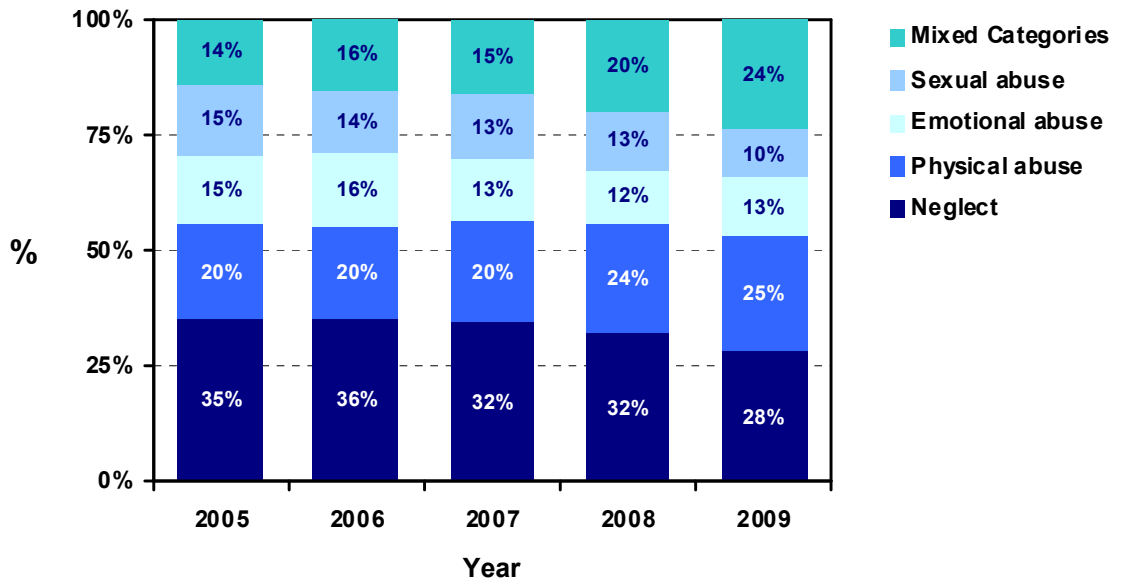


Table 1.5: Composition of the Child Protection Register by category of abuse at 31 March (2005–2009)

Category of Abuse ¹	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse	15	1	18	1	40	2	42	2	72	3
Neglect and Physical Abuse										
Main category - neglect	39	2	35	2	69	4	61	3	123	5
Main category - physical abuse	114	7	107	7	176	10	162	8	244	10
Neglect and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - neglect	17	1	14	1	16	1	23	1	35	1
Main category - sexual abuse	32	2	32	2	43	2	57	3	54	2
Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - physical abuse	23	1	31	2	40	2	53	3	61	2
Main category - sexual abuse	7	0	8	0	44	2	10	0	13	1
Neglect (only)	554	35	582	36	569	32	665	32	706	28
Physical Abuse (only)	316	20	323	20	357	20	488	24	618	25
Sexual Abuse (only)	234	15	226	14	225	12	244	12	242	10
Emotional Abuse (only)	242	15	263	16	226	13	266	13	320	13
Total	1,593	100	1,639	100	1,805	100	2,071	100	2,488	100

Main Points

- 76% (315) of the increase in numbers on the register between 2008 and 2009, were related to Physical Abuse and/or Neglect
- In the same period, children registered due to Physical Abuse has increased by five percentage points, from 20% in 2005 to 25% in 2009
- Between 2005 and 2009, the proportion of children registered under 'Neglect (only)' decreased by seven percentage points, from 35% (554) to 28% (706)

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 2009

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	55	31	103	17	184	19	124	21	24	14	490	20
3 months < 6 months	53	30	95	16	154	16	89	15	19	11	410	16
6 months < 1 year	68	39	142	24	216	23	134	22	39	22	599	24
1 year < 2 years	0	0	180	31	221	23	136	23	48	27	585	24
2 years < 3 years	0	0	55	9	99	10	64	11	22	13	240	10
3 years or more	0	0	15	3	76	8	49	8	24	14	164	7
Total	176	100	590	100	950	100	596	100	176	100	2488	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, 60% of children had been registered for less than one year, with 7% registered for three years or longer
- Of the 164 children on the register for three years or longer, 46% (76) were aged 5-11 and 30% (49) were aged 12-15
- Two-fifths (42%) of children aged 5-11 had been on the register for one year or longer

Figure 1.3: Length of time on the Child Protection Register at 31 March 2009

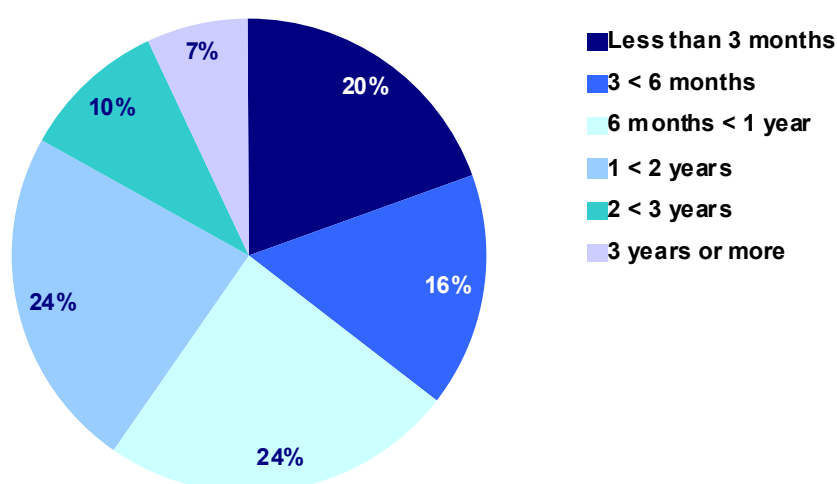


Table 1.7: Composition of the Child Protection Register by length of time on the register at 31 March (2005-2009)

Length of time on the register	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	265	17	262	16	352	20	322	16	490	19
3 months < 6 months	299	19	301	18	289	16	360	17	410	16
6 months < 1 year	363	23	386	24	452	25	521	25	599	24
1 year < 2 years	356	22	398	24	431	24	536	26	585	24
2 years < 3 years	168	11	149	9	143	8	208	10	240	10
3 years or more	142	9	143	9	138	8	124	6	164	7
Total	1,593	100	1,639	100	1,805	100	2,071	100	2,488	100

Main Points

- Between 2005 and 2009, the proportion of children on the register for 3 years or more, fell from 9% to 7% respectively
- In the five year period from 2005 to 2009, there has been little change in the profile of children by duration on the register

Child Protection Registrations

Table 1.8: Child Protection Registrations by gender and age during the year ended 31 March 2009

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	144	16	132	14	276	15
1-4	193	22	219	23	412	23
5-11	347	39	308	33	655	36
12-15	174	20	236	25	410	22
16 & over	32	3	44	5	76	4
Total	890	100	939	100	1,829	100

Main Points

- There were 1,829 registrations onto the Child Protection Register in 2008/09, with more girls (51%) than boys (49%) registered during this period
- Comparison by gender indicates that girls registered during 2008/09 tended to be slightly older than boys, with 30% of girls aged 12 or over, compared with 23% of boys
- Just under two fifths (38%) of registrations were in respect of children under 5 years old

Figure 1.4: Child Protection Registrations by age during year ended 31 March 2009

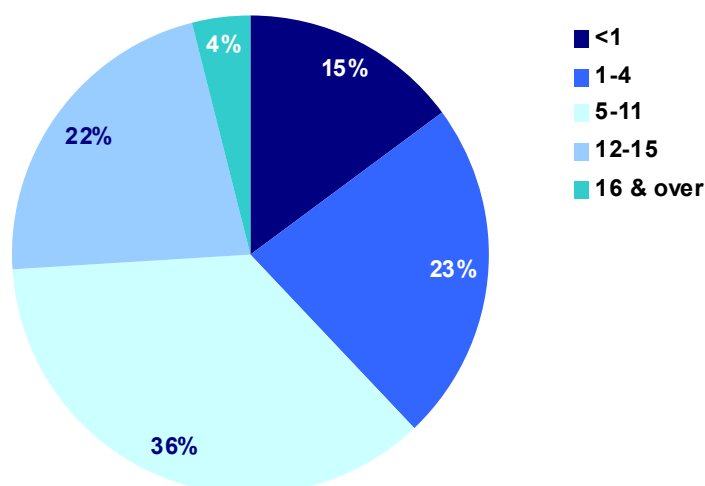


Table 1.9: Child Protection Registrations by age during year ended 31 March (2004–2009)

Age Group (years)	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	160	17	209	19	209	18	231	18	253	17	276	15
1-4	237	25	238	21	287	25	278	21	359	24	412	23
5-11	364	38	411	36	399	34	446	34	540	36	655	36
12-15	183	19	243	22	237	20	290	22	310	21	410	22
16 & over	18	2	28	2	34	3	60	5	35	2	76	4
Total	962	100	1,129	100	1,166	100	1,305	100	1,497	100	1,829	100

Main Points

- The number of registrations onto the Child Protection register increased by 22% (332), from 1,497 in 2008 to 1,829 in 2009
- Between 2004 and 2009, the number of registrations increased by 90% (867) from 962 to 1,829 respectively
- There has been little change in the age profile of Child Protection registrations between 2004 and 2009
- The proportions of registrations for children aged 12-15, and 16 or over, rose by 3 and 2 percentage points to 22% and 4%, respectively
- The relative proportions of registrations relating to children aged under 1, fell by 2 percentage points from 17% in 2004 to 15% in 2009

Figure 1.5: Child Protection Registrations during year ended 31 March (2004–2009)

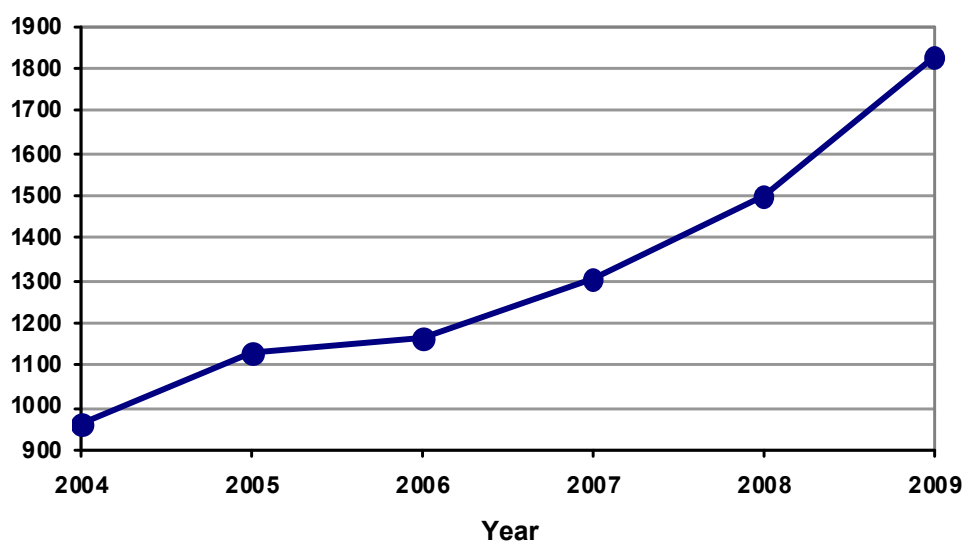


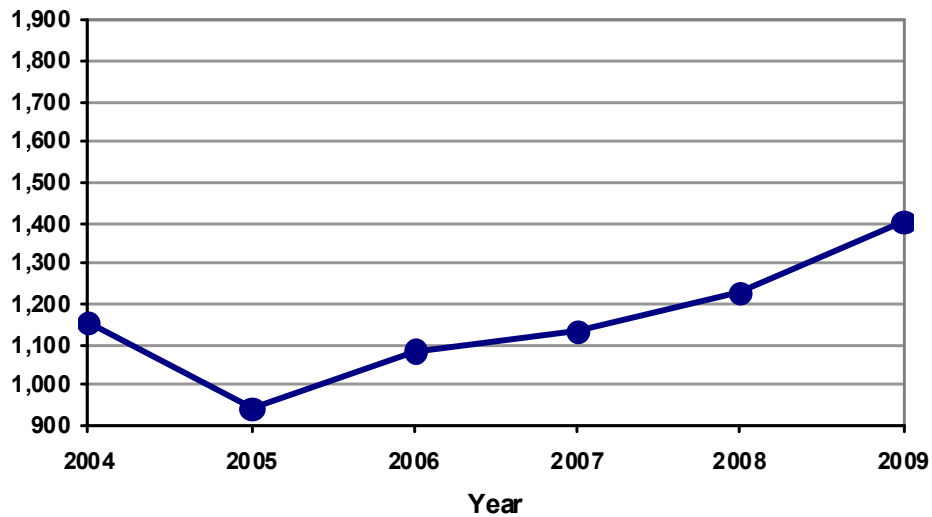
Table 1.10: Child Protection De-registrations during year ended 31 March (2004 – 2009)

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	1,154	940	1,085	1,133	1,230	1,404

Main Points

- The number of De-registrations from the Child Protection Register increased by 14% (174), from 1,230 in 2008 to 1,404 in 2009
- Between 2004 and 2009 the number of De-registrations increased by 22% (250) from 1,154 to 1,404 respectively

Figure 1.6: Child Protection De-registrations during year ended 31 March (2004 – 2009)



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 Health and Social Care 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 2009

Age Group (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	44	3	28	2	72	3
1-4	198	15	179	15	377	15
5-11	406	32	347	30	753	31
12-15	390	30	370	32	760	31
16 or over	257	20	244	21	501	20
Total	1,295	100	1,168	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, there were 2,463 Looked After Children in Northern Ireland
- Of the 2,463 Looked After Children, 3% (72) were aged under one year old, and 20% (501) were aged 16 or over
- Over half (53%) of all Looked After Children were boys, and 47% were girls

Figure 2.1: Composition of Looked After Children population by age at 31 March 2009

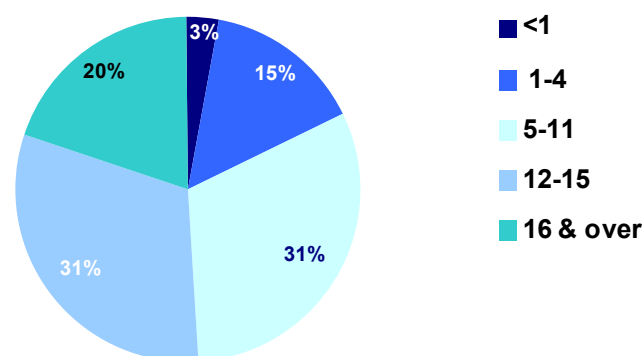


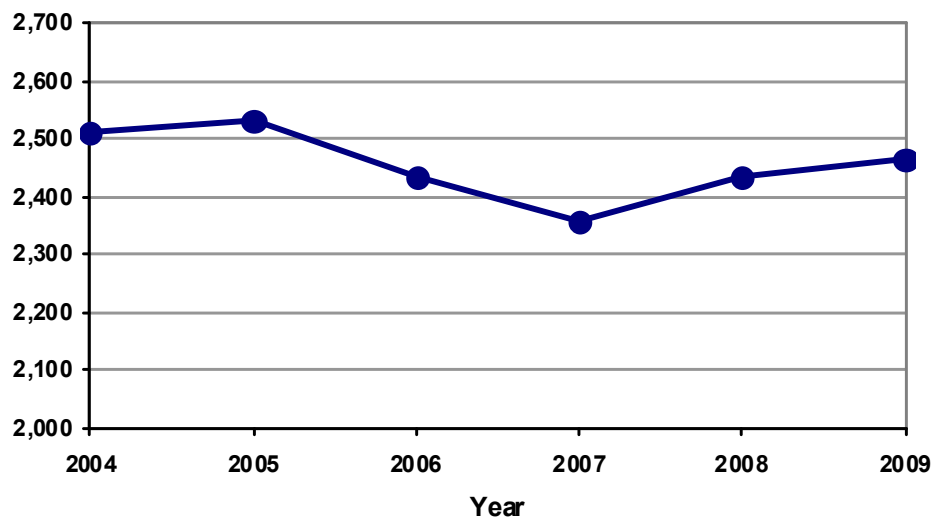
Table 2.2: Composition of Looked After Children population by age at 31 March (2004–2009)

Age Group (years)	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	75	3	61	2	60	2	64	3	49	2	72	3
1-4	366	15	348	14	334	14	298	13	364	15	377	15
5-11	881	35	869	34	830	34	765	32	782	32	753	31
12-15	775	31	818	32	763	31	765	32	733	30	760	31
16 or over	413	16	435	17	449	18	464	20	505	21	501	20
Total	2,510	100	2,531	100	2,436	100	2,356	100	2,433	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, there were 2,463 Looked After Children in Northern Ireland, an increase of 1% (30) from 2008, and a fall of 2% (47) since 2004
- The age profile of Looked After Children from 2004 to 2009, indicates an increase in the proportion of Looked After Children aged 16 or over, which rose by four percentage points from 16% to 20% respectively
- The proportion of children in age band 5-11 fell from 35% in 2004 to 31% in 2009

Figure 2.2: Total Number of Looked After Children at 31 March (2004 – 2009)



Legal Status of Looked After Children

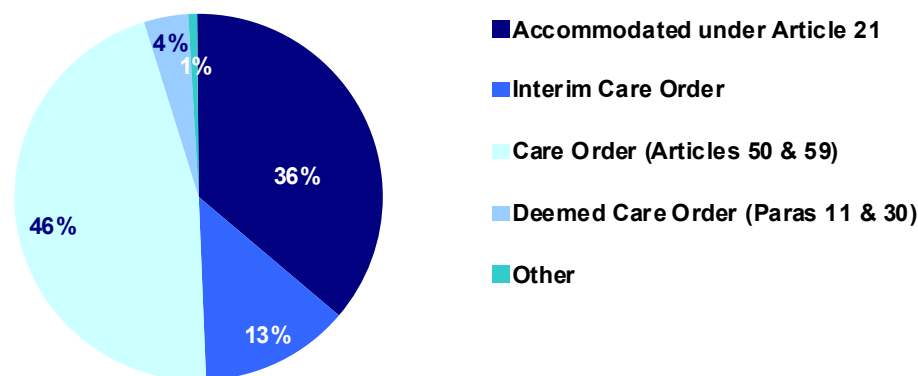
Table 2.3: Legal Status of Looked After Children population by gender at 31 March 2009¹

Legal Status	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accommodated under Article 21	468	36	412	35	880	36
Interim Care Order	175	14	154	13	329	13
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	601	46	532	46	1,133	46
Deemed Care Order (Para's 11 & 30)	44	3	60	5	104	4
Other	7	1	10	1	17	1
Total	1,295	100	1,168	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, 46% (1,133) of Looked After Children were subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)', 36% (880) were subject to 'Accommodated under Article 21', 13% (329) were subject to 'Interim Care Orders' and 4% (104) were subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Para's 11 & 30)'
- The profile of Looked After Children by legal status was similar for boys and girls, with almost equal proportions recorded under each legal status category at 31 March 2009

Figure 2.3: Legal status of Looked After Children population at 31 March 2009



¹ 'Other' 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 (2004–2009)¹

Legal Status	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accommodated under Article 21	743	30	794	31	760	31	800	34	902	37	880	36
Interim Care Order	329	13	325	13	302	12	218	9	276	11	329	13
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	918	37	1,013	40	1,066	44	1,093	46	1,092	45	1,133	46
Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)	441	18	357	14	278	11	216	9	146	6	104	4
Freed for Adoption and Looked After by Board/Trust	23	1	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	56	2	31	1	30	1	29	1	17	1	17	1
Total	2,510	100	2,531	100	2,436	100	2,356	100	2,433	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- Over the five years from 2004 to 2009, the proportion of Looked After Children subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)' increased by almost 10 percentage points from 918 (37%) in 2004 to 1,133 (46%) in 2009
- In contrast, for the same period, the proportion of Looked After Children subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)' fell by 14 percentage points from 18% (441) to 4% (104)
- Since 2004, the proportion of Looked After Children 'Accommodated under Article 21' has increased by 6 percentage points from 30% (743) in 2004 to 36% (880) in 2009

¹ 'Other' 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 in
- Other accommodation¹.

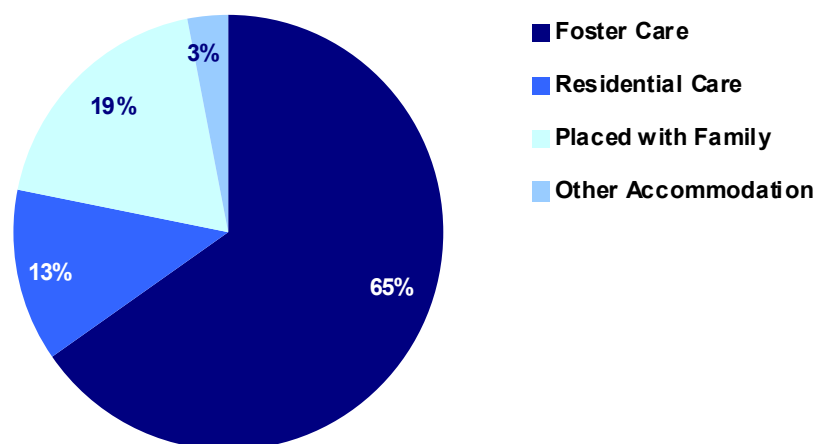
Table 2.5: Placement of Looked After Children at 31 March (2004–2009)²

Placement Type	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	325	13	317	13	321	13	283	12	319	13	308	13
Foster Care	1,529	61	1,606	63	1,522	62	1,389	59	1,376	57	1,607	65
Placed with Family	561	22	500	20	486	20	566	24	622	26	467	19
Other Accommodation ¹	95	4	108	4	107	4	118	5	116	5	81	3
Total	2,510	100	2,531	100	2,436	100	2,356	100	2,433	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, 65% of Looked After Children were in foster care (1,607) with 19% (467) placed with family, 13% (308) in residential accommodation, and 3% (81) in Other accommodation
- The numbers of children placed in foster care increased by 17% (231) from 1,376 in 2007/08 to 1,607 in 2008/09. This compared with a drop of 25% (155) in children ‘placed with family’ during the same period
- The numbers of Looked After Children has increased annually from 2,356 in 2007 to 2,463 in 2009, a rise of just under 5% (107) for this period
- Over the five year period, from 2004 to 2009, the number of Looked After Children has dropped by 2% (47)

Figure 2.4: Placement of Looked After Children at 31 March 2009



¹ ‘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.

² Some HSC Trusts may have inappropriately classified children placed in foster care as being placed with family on the LA return provided to CIB.

Length of Time in Care

Table 2.6: Length of time in care by age at 31 March 2009

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	30	42	36	10	52	7	42	6	12	2	172	7
3 months < 6 months	21	29	40	11	49	6	38	5	20	4	168	7
6 months < 1 year	21	29	48	13	82	11	52	7	29	6	232	9
1 year < 2 years	0	0	113	30	116	15	107	14	50	10	386	16
2 years < 3 years	0	0	74	20	91	12	57	7	50	10	272	11
3 years or more	0	0	64	17	364	48	465	61	340	68	1233	50
Total	72	100	375	100	754	100	761	100	501	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- At 31 March 2009, 50% (1,233) of Looked After Children had been in care for three years or more, with 77% (1,891) in care for one 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
- Just below 30% (21) of Looked After Children under 1 year old had been in care between six months and one year

Figure 2.5: Length of time in care at 31 March 2009

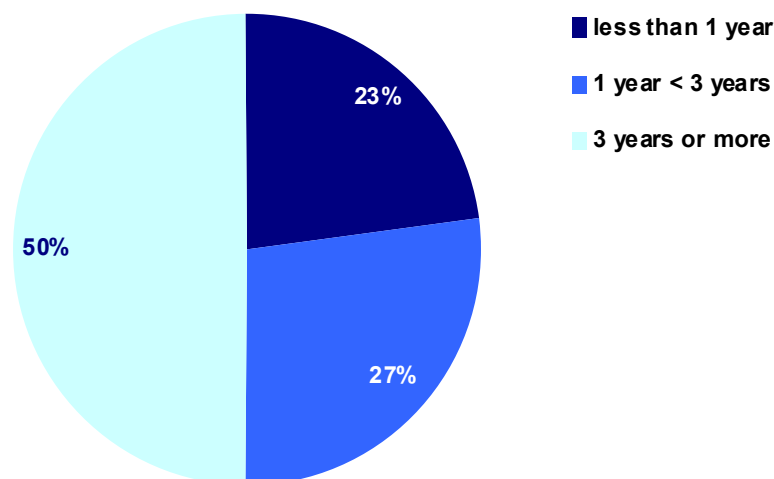


Table 2.7: Length of time in care at 31 March (2004–2009)

Length of time in care	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	141	5	169	6	126	4	133	4	121	4	172	7
3 months < 6 months	121	5	121	5	107	4	126	5	169	7	168	7
6 months < 1 year	279	11	229	9	193	8	211	9	260	11	232	9
1 year < 2 years	391	16	401	16	402	17	292	12	354	15	386	16
2 years < 3 years	351	14	316	12	315	13	303	13	233	10	272	11
3 years or more	1,227	49	1,295	51	1,293	53	1,291	55	1,296	53	1,233	50
Total	2,510	100	2,531	100	2,436	100	2,356	100	2,433	100	2,463	100

Main Points

- In recent years, the proportion of Looked After Children in care for three years or more fell from 53% in 2006 to 50% in 2009
- Between 2004 and 2009 there has been little change in the profile of Looked After Children in terms of duration in care, with similar proportions in care for three years or more, less than one year, and between one and three years in care

Respite Care

Respite care generally refers 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 2009 ¹

Placement Type	Age Group (years)										Total	
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16+			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	0	0	0	0	42	15	45	20	19	29	108	16
Foster Care	0	0	89	95	214	78	164	72	38	58	532	77
Placed with Family	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	14	42	6
Other Accommodation ²	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1
Total	29	100	94	100	273	100	227	100	66	100	689	100

Main Points

- Of the 689 children who received respite in 2008/09, 77% (532) were accommodated in foster care placements, 16% (108) were residential care placements, 6% (42) were family placements and 1% (7) were in 'Other Accommodation'¹.
- Children under 5 years old were more likely than older children to receive a placement in foster care for respite
- Almost 73% (500) of children who received respite care in 2008/09 were aged 5-15 years, with 18% (123) aged under 5, and 10% (66) aged 16 or older

¹ 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 2.6: Children who received respite care services by placement type during year ending 31 March 2009

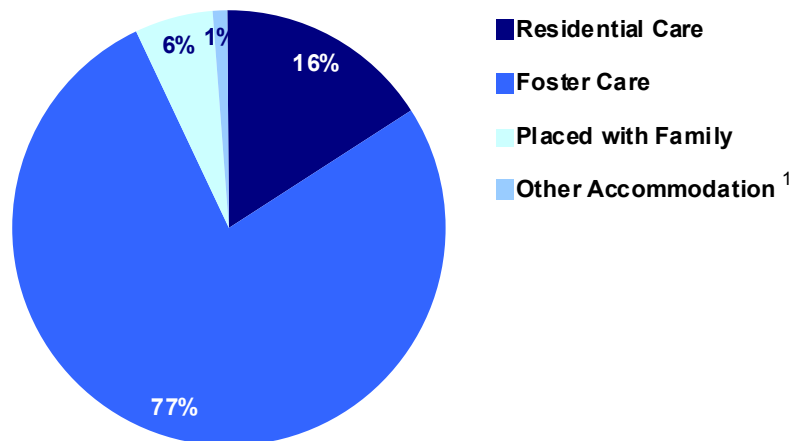


Table 2.9: Children who received respite care services by placement type for years ending 31 March (2004-2009)

Placement Type	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	179	21	174	18	75	10	70	10	95	11	108	16
Foster Care	525	61	595	61	613	78	576	81	648	78	532	77
Placed with Family	113	13	158	16	55	7	43	6	59	7	42	6
Other Accommodation ¹	41	5	56	6	42	5	25	4	32	4	7	1
Total	858	100	983	100	785	100	714	100	834	100	689	100

Main Points

- Since 2004, the proportion of children accommodated for respite in foster care placements has increased by 16 percentage points, from 61% to 77% in 2009.
- During this period, the proportion of children accommodated for respite care in residential accommodation fell 5 percentage points, and by 7 percentage points for children placed with family

¹ 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 2009¹

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	18	58	113	50	107	51	62	41	32	11	332	36
2 weeks < 3 months	5	16	19	8	12	6	23	15	13	4	72	8
3 months < 6 months	-	13	-	6	17	8	18	12	16	5	68	7
6 months < 1 year	-	13	-	9	23	11	22	14	15	5	84	9
1 year < 2 years	0	0	35	15	19	9	10	7	40	13	104	11
2 years or more	0	0	26	12	33	16	18	12	184	61	261	28
Total	31	100	226	100	211	100	153	100	300	100	921	100

Main Points

- During 2008/09, there were 921 discharges from care. who had been in care for less than 2 weeks.
- 39% (365) of discharges related to children in care for 1 year or more, with 36% (332) relating to children
- Over 60% (184) of the children aged 16 and over discharged from care during 2008/09 had been in care for 2 years or more

¹ 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 (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

At 30 June 2009, there were 54 residential homes for children: 42 statutory and 14 independent children's homes.

Table 3.1: Children's statutory residential homes at 30 June 2009 ¹

HSC Trust	Statutory Homes	Statutory Places	Places per 10,000-pop. aged under 18
Belfast HSC Trust	8	58	7.7
Northern HSC Trust	7	60	5.5
South Eastern HSC Trust	9	72	8.9
Southern HSC Trust	7	45	5.0
Western HSC Trust	11	77	10.0
Northern Ireland	42	312	7.2

Main Points

- At 30 June 2009, there were 42 children's statutory residential homes in Northern Ireland providing 312 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 (11), providing a total of 77 places.
- Similarly, the Western HSC Trust (10.0) 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.

¹ 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 2009

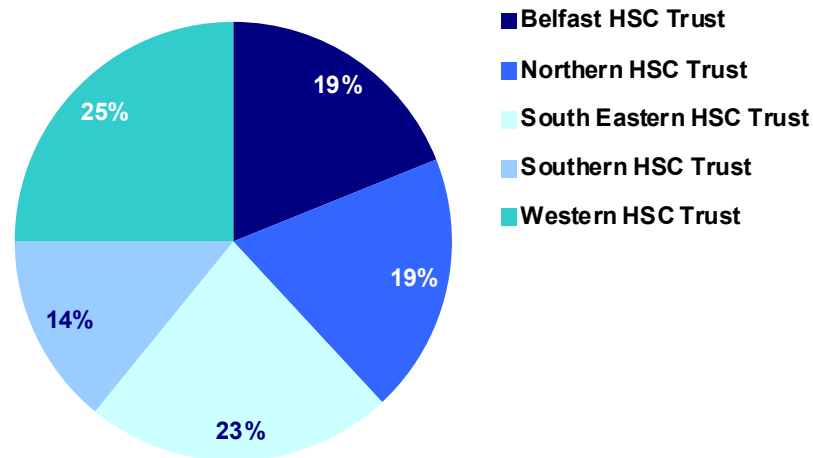


Table 3.2: Children's independent residential homes at 30 June 2009 ¹

HSC Trust	Independent Homes	Independent Places	Places per 10,000-pop. aged under 18
Belfast HSC Trust	5	34	4.5
Northern HSC Trust	5	23	2.1
South Eastern HSC Trust	1	6	0.7
Southern HSC Trust	3	11	1.2
Western HSC Trust	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	14	74	1.7

Main Points

- At 30 June 2009, there were 14 independent children's homes in Northern Ireland providing 74 places, equivalent to 1.7 places per 10,000-population aged under 18
- There were no independent children's homes in the Western HSC Trust
- Of the 74 places in independent children's homes, almost half (34) were provided by 5 homes in the Belfast HSC Trust

Readership Survey

1 What do you use the Children Order Statistical Trends for? (Please tick all that apply)

Briefing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy Formulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do Not Use	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 Were the Children Order Statistical Trends of any value to you?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'No', please indicate why

.....

3 Please indicate how useful you found each section of the Children Order Statistical Trends: (Please tick one of the following)

	Very Useful	Useful	Little Use	No Use	Do Not Use
Children on Child Protection Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children Looked After	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Homes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 What did you find most useful?

.....

.....

.....

5 What did you find least useful?

.....

.....

6 Would you like to see other subject areas covered in the Children Order Statistical Trends?

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....

.....

7 How would you judge the level of detail contained in the Children Order Statistical Trends?

Too Much	<input type="checkbox"/>
About Right	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not Enough	<input type="checkbox"/>

8 Would you like to see any improvements in the Children Order Statistical Trends?

No
Yes (please specify)

.....
.....

9 How satisfied are you with the information provided?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Dissatisfied
Very Dissatisfied

If 'Dissatisfied' or 'Very Dissatisfied', please indicate why
.....

10 Any further comments on this bulletin?

.....
.....
.....
.....

11 To help us analyse the responses to this survey, please indicate:

a. Where you work:

DHSSPS
HSC Board
HSC Trust
Voluntary Organisation
Other Department
Research / Academic
Other (please specify)

.....

b. Your specific area(s) of interest:

e.g. finance, service planning, elderly, family & childcare, learning disability etc

.....
.....
.....

All completed readership surveys should be returned to: Community Information Branch, DHSSPS, Annexe 2, Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast, BT4 3SQ

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

Additional Information

Further information on Children Order Statistical Trends for Northern Ireland 2003/04 to 2008/09 is available from:

Office Information Manager

Community Information Branch

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Annexe 2

Castle Buildings

Stormont

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