

# Children's Services

## SECTION 3: Looked After Children

A child is looked after by a Trust if he/she 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.

**CH39** *Looked after children at 31 March per 10,000-population aged under 18*

**Table 3.1** : Looked After Children at 31 March per 10,000-population aged under 18

Trust	CH39		
	1999	2000	2001
North & West Belfast	83.7	84.8	82.5
South & East Belfast	59.9	67.2	72.2
Ulster Community & Hosp. Down Lisburn	56.7	60.9	63.4
<b>Eastern</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>66.3</b>
Causeway	53.5	62.5	51.9
Homefirst	47.4	46.0	43.5
<b>Northern</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>45.4</b>
Armagh & Dungannon	30.4	27.8	35.2
Craigavon & Banbridge	35.0	35.6	27.7
Newry & Mourne	29.1	24.0	29.4
<b>Southern</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>30.8</b>
Foyle	59.8	66.7	69.7
Sperrin Lakeland	37.9	38.5	38.7
<b>Western</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>55.1</b>	<b>56.9</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>50.5</b>	<b>52.6</b>	<b>52.4</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>52.3</b>

At 31 March 2001, there were 2,414 children being looked after in Northern Ireland, an increase of 3.9% since 1999 (2,324). Over the last three years, the rate of children per 10,000-population aged under 18 being looked after increased slightly, from 50.5 in 1999 to 52.4 in 2001.

Across Trusts, the rate of looked after children varied considerably, from 82.5 children per 10,000-population aged under 18 in North & West Belfast to 27.7 in Craigavon & Banbridge.

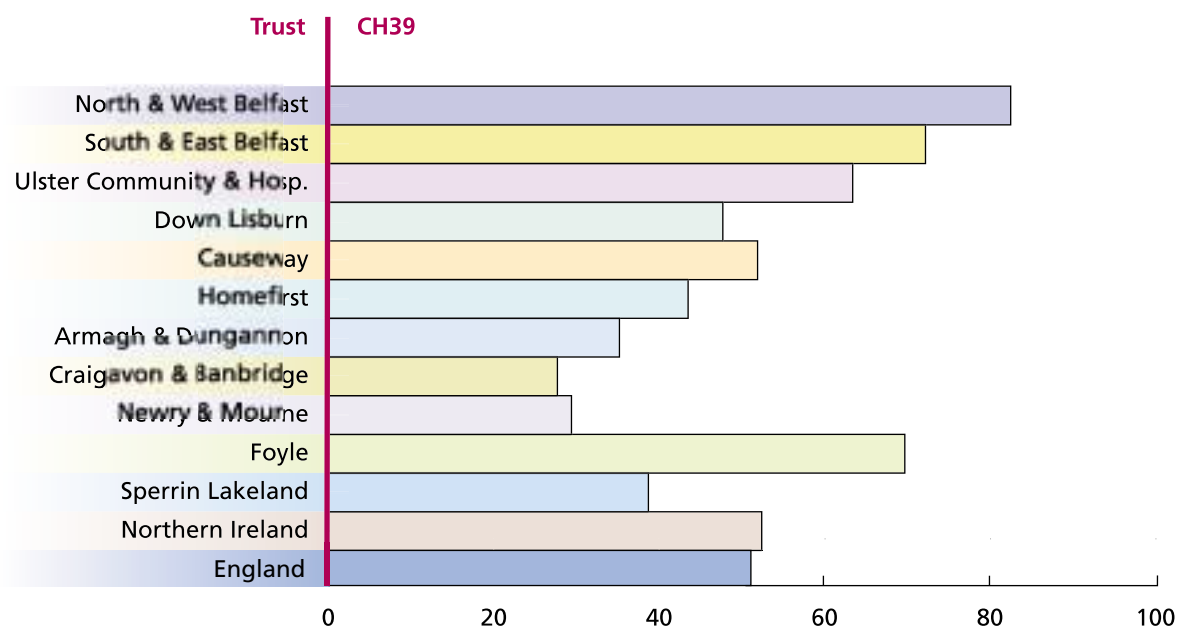
Since 1999, the rate of children being looked after per 10,000-population aged under 18 has increased in seven of the eleven Trusts. The most significant increase was in South & East Belfast, which increased from 59.9 children per 10,000-population aged under 18 in 1999 to 72.2 at 31 March 2001.

Across Boards, the rates of children being looked after per 10,000-population aged under 18 ranged from 66.3 in the Eastern Board to 30.8 in the Southern Board (Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1).

For the purpose of analysis the looked after children population is divided into four age groups (under 5, 5-11, 12-15 and 16 & over) (Tables 3.2 and 3.3).

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Figure 3.1 : Looked After Children per 10,000 population aged under 18 (2001)



## Looked After Children by Age Group

**CH40** Looked after children aged under 5 at 31 March per 10,000-population aged under 5

**CH43** Looked after children aged 16 & over at 31 March per 10,000-population aged 16 & over

Table 3.2 : Looked After Children per 10,000-population by Age Group (aged under 5 and 16 & over) at 31 March (1999-2001)

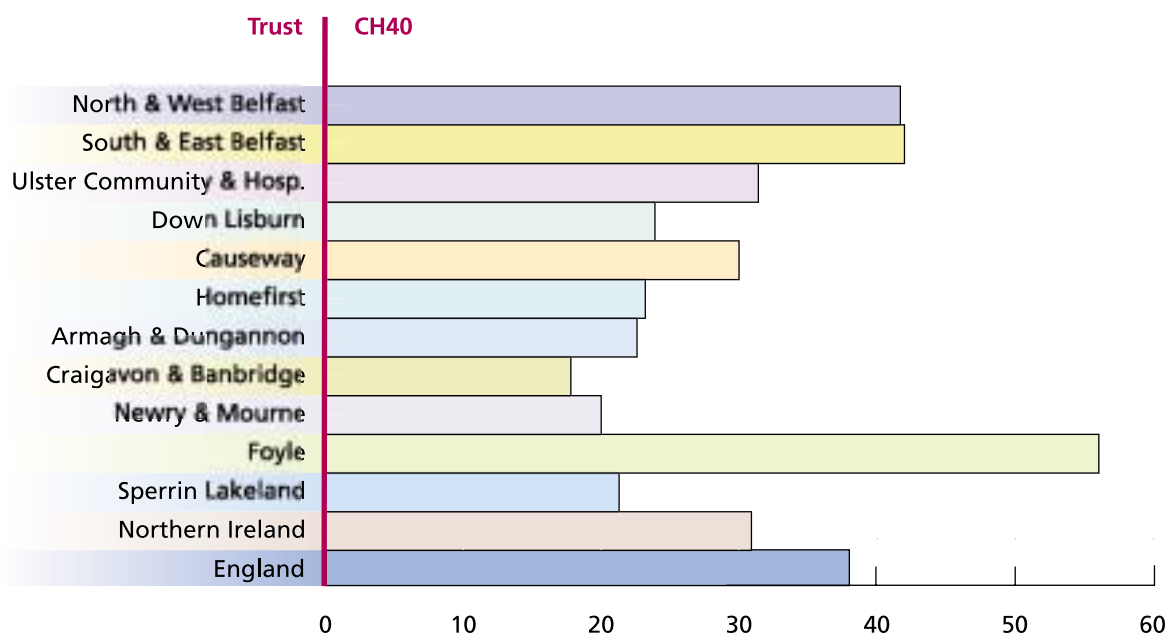
Trust	CH40			CH43		
	1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
North & West Belfast	43.2	41.7	41.7	117.9	140.2	162.4
South & East Belfast	30.1	40.4	42.0	96.3	105.0	129.1
Ulster Community & Hosp.	27.0	33.5	31.4	50.3	67.0	86.1
Down Lisburn	20.1	25.4	23.9	76.6	82.8	93.1
<b>Eastern</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>85.7</b>	<b>99.0</b>	<b>117.8</b>
Causeway	40.0	52.8	30.0	91.5	115.2	101.6
Homefirst	27.8	30.3	23.2	71.7	66.7	57.7
<b>Northern</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>67.7</b>
Armagh & Dungannon	23.8	16.7	22.6	39.5	42.3	59.3
Craigavon & Banbridge	20.0	28.9	17.8	55.2	63.9	34.9
Newry & Mourne	9.3	10.7	20.0	66.9	53.5	46.8
<b>Southern</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>47.1</b>
Foyle	42.1	49.1	56.1	81.7	88.8	94.1
Sperrin Lakeland	22.4	20.2	21.3	49.4	56.8	71.6
<b>Western</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>75.4</b>	<b>84.7</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>84.8</b>
England	37.1	38.8	38.8	74.1	75.3	77.2

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The rate of looked after children aged under 5 in Northern Ireland has increased slightly over the last three years, from 28.7 children per 10,000-population aged under 5 in 1999 to 30.9 in 2001. In England, the rate of children aged under 5 being looked after per 10,000-population aged under 5 is slightly higher (38.8).

Across Trusts, rates varied slightly, from 17.8 children aged under 5 being looked after per 10,000-population aged under 5 in Craigavon & Banbridge to 56.1 in Foyle. The trend over the last three years has shown an increase in the rate of children under 5 being looked after in five Trusts. Foyle has shown the most significant increase, from 42.1 children under 5 per 10,000-population aged under 5 in 1999 to 56.1 in 2001 (Table 3.2 and Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2** : Looked After Children aged under 5 per 10,000 population aged under 5 (2001)



Since 1998/99, the rate of children aged 16 & over being looked after has increased significantly, from 73.5 children aged 16 & over per 10,000-population aged 16 & over in 1999 to 84.8 in 2001.

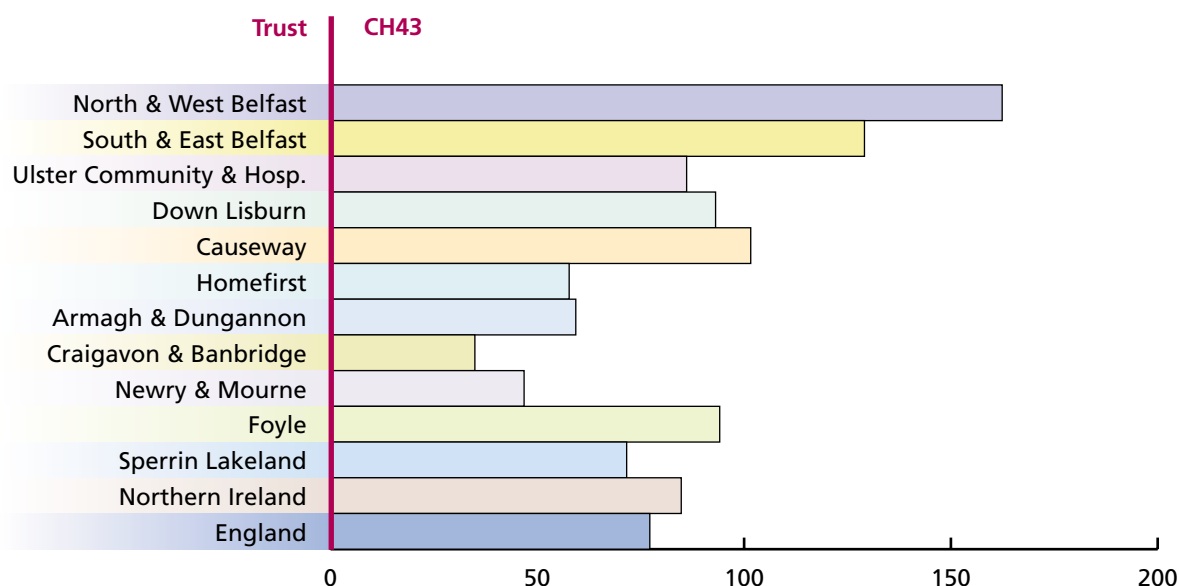
North & West Belfast had the highest rate of children aged 16 & over being looked after per 10,000-population aged 16 & over (162.4), whilst Craigavon & Banbridge had the lowest (34.9).

Across Boards, the Eastern Board with 213 looked after children aged 16 & over, accounts for almost 50% of looked after children in this age group (430).

Over the last three years, three Trusts indicated a decrease in the rate of children aged 16 & over being looked after per 10,000-population aged 16 & over. Ulster Community & Hospitals showed the most significant increase in the rate of children aged 16 & over being looked after, from 50.3 in 1999 to 86.1 in 2001 (Table 3.2 and Figure 3.3).

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**Figure 3.3** ■ Looked After Children aged 16 and over per 10,000 population aged 16 & over (2001)



**.CH41** *Looked after children aged 5-11 at 31 March per 10,000-population aged 5-11*

**CH42** *Looked after children aged 12-15 at 31 March per 10,000-population aged 12-15*

**Table 3.3** ■ Looked After Children per 10,000 population by Age Group (aged 5-11 and aged 12-15) (1999-2001)<sup>(1)</sup>

Trust	CH41			CH42		
	1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
North & West Belfast	75.9	82.0	72.6	141.5	125.9	122.6
South & East Belfast	58.6	59.9	64.8	86.3	100.1	100.1
Ulster Community & Hosp.	66.7	65.3	62.5	76.3	81.3	89.9
Down Lisburn	39.8	42.9	42.4	76.3	78.3	68.2
<b>Eastern</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>62.1</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>96.3</b>	<b>94.6</b>
Causeway	51.3	55.3	52.3	54.2	59.7	52.4
Homefirst	42.4	44.5	46.8	68.4	57.9	55.8
<b>Northern</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>65.2</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>55.0</b>
Armagh & Dungannon	25.1	22.6	30.7	43.2	43.2	46.1
Craigavon & Banbridge	26.2	23.9	23.9	61.3	52.3	44.8
Newry & Mourne	24.4	14.4	20.8	43.7	43.7	48.7
<b>Southern</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>46.5</b>
Foyle	55.8	59.2	62.6	78.7	92.1	87.6
Sperrin Lakeland	33.3	34.0	28.5	58.8	58.8	61.3
<b>Western</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>48.4</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>76.7</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>73.9</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>71.8</b>

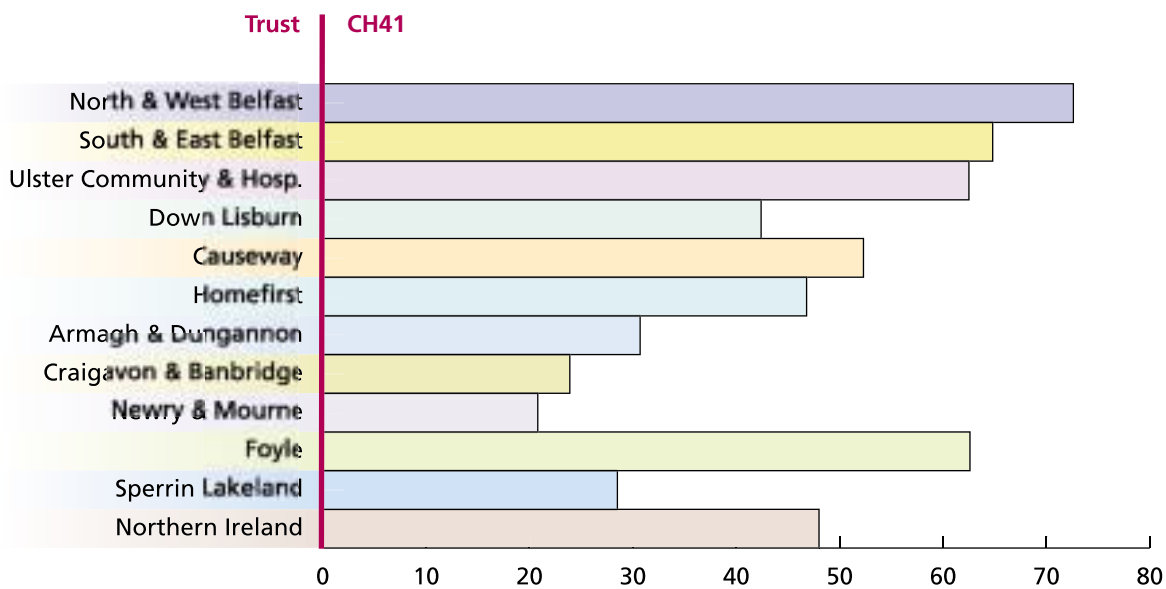
(1) England still use the age groups 5-9 and 10-15

## Children's Services

At March 2001, 48 children per 10,000-population aged 5-11 were being looked after by the Trusts, compared with 46.6 children in 1999. Across Trusts, this ranged from 72.6 children per 10,000-population aged 5-11 in North & West Belfast to 20.8 in Newry & Mourne.

Almost half (404) of all looked after children aged 5-11 were in the Eastern Board, a rate of 60 children per 10,000-population aged 5-11. This compared with 25.3 children per 10,000-population aged 5-11 in the Southern Board (Table 3.3 and Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4 : Looked After Children aged 5-11 per 10,000 population aged 5-11 (2001)**



Between 1999 and 2001, the rate of children aged 12-15 being looked after has decreased slightly, from 73.9 children per 10,000-population aged 12-15 in 1999 to 71.8 in 2001. The rates varied significantly across Trusts. In North & West Belfast, 122.6 children per 10,000-population aged 12-15 were being looked after, compared with 44.8 in Craigavon & Banbridge.

Over the last 3 years, six Trusts have shown an increase in the rates of children aged 12-15 being looked after (Table 3.3 and Figure 3.5).