

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA) NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Warwickshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016



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DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|----------|-----|----------|-------|
| Document Name: | Children Looked After (CLA) Needs Assessment | | | | |
| Published Date: | Tuesday, 17 May 2016 | Version: | 1.0 | Release: | Final |
| Author: | Emma Adams / Kate Rushall | | | | |
| Owner: | Children & Families SLT | | | | |

This document is only valid on the day it was printed.

The source of the document will be found at this location:

<http://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/api/documents/WCCC-644-253>

REVISION HISTORY

| Revision Date | Previous Revision | Summary of Changes | Change Marking |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| 7-Mar-16 | N/A | Initial draft produced | N/A |
| 15-Apr-16 | 0.4 | Final draft produced | 0.5 |
| 17-May-16 | 0.6 | Changes incorporated | 0.7/1.0 |

APPROVALS

This document requires the following approvals.

N.B. Signed approval should be filed appropriately in the project filing system.

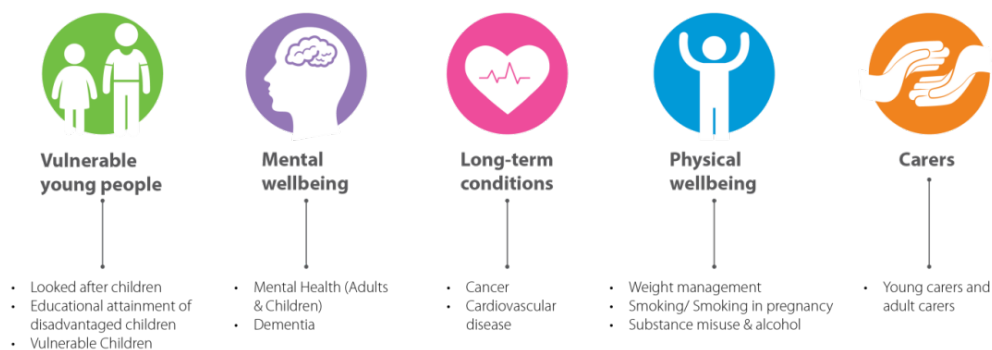
| Name | Signature | Title | Date of Issue | Version |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Children & Families SLT | | Children & Families SLT | 17-May-16 | 1.0 |

DISTRIBUTION

This document has been distributed to:

| Name | Title | Date of Issue | Version |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Beate Wagner | Head of Service - Children's and Families | 15-Mar-16 | 0.7 |
| Beate Wagner | Head of Service - Children's and Families | 17-May-16 | 1.0 |

Children Looked After (CLA) are one of the eleven identified priority areas to form part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) three year programme of work:



KEY MESSAGES

WARWICKSHIRE'S CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

- The number of Children Looked After (CLA) in Warwickshire has risen by 8% over the last four years (to 31 March 2015). The CLA rate in the county is higher than the equivalent national and statistical neighbour averages but lower than the regional rate (see page 15).
- There is significant variation in CLA rates across the county. At district/borough level, Nuneaton & Bedworth has significantly higher rates than Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick (see page 17).
- Despite having the lowest overall rate of CLA in the county, the rate of children looked after in Stratford-on-Avon District has increased by 18% over the past five years, to 31 March 2015 (see page 18).
- BME children are over-represented within Rugby's CLA population compared with the borough's Census 2011 0-17 year population, comprising nearly one third of Rugby's CLA population (see page 20).
- There has been consistent numbers of children coming into care and the data suggests that the rate of entry is higher than the rate of children leaving care, so the numbers of children and young people in care in Warwickshire is rising (see page 25).
- Population projections indicate that if the rate of CLA remains the same, by 2025 Warwickshire will have 50 more children looked after than at March 2015 (see page 29).
- Research from Sheffield University suggests an 'inverse care law' in that more affluent Local Authorities intervene in children's lives more than relatively disadvantaged Local Authorities for the same level of deprivation. When compared with its statistical neighbours, Warwickshire has the third highest CLA rate in 2015, yet is the 8th most deprived out of its 11 statistical neighbours so there may appear to be some truth in this from a Warwickshire perspective (see page 21).

UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN

- Warwickshire consistently has a higher proportion of UASC in its CLA population compared to the national average (see page 34).
- After a four year period of decline, the number of UASC rose from 29 at March 2014 to 45 at March 2015, and continued to rise to 85 UASC at the end of the financial year. This recent rise is attributed to the refugee crisis in Europe (see page 35).
- 15 UASC went missing from care in 2015, compared to 3 in 2014 and 5 in 2013. A strategy is currently being developed to ensure Warwickshire adopts best practice in responding to UASC who might be at risk of trafficking (see page 37).

- Just over half of all missing UASC since 2011 have been Vietnamese (see page 38).

SERVICE PROVISION

- Warwickshire has higher proportions of CLA placed in independent living and residential settings (children's homes, residential schools) than 5 years ago (see page 41).
- The rise in CLA over the last five years has been greater than the rate of growth in local authority fostering services. As a result, a higher proportion of CLA are now placed with agency carers than five years ago (see page 41).
- At March 2015, just under 65% of CLA were placed within Warwickshire and over nine in ten (91%) CLA were placed either in Warwickshire or in a neighbouring local authority (see page 45).
- The proportion of CLA placed in foster care placements out of county increases with age, suggesting that Warwickshire has fewer foster placements than the county requires for older CLA (see page 44).
- A third (33.3%) of children looked after in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015 have been looked after for less than a year (see page 48).
- In 2014/15, the proportion of CLA in a long term stable placement had reached its lowest point in a five year period (since 2010/11) at only 60% (see page 48).

COPRODUCTION AND ENGAGEMENT

- A number of key priorities were identified by children and young people in care in Warwickshire about what would make care better: Having someone there to listen; Being prepared for adult life; Having the right knowledge and skills to manage; Concern about future career opportunities and prospects; Concern about their vulnerability to mental health problems (see page 54).
- Over seven in ten CLA in Warwickshire who were asked to rate their placement experience on a scale of 0 to 10 rated their placement experience as 10, the most positive (see page 55).

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

- Educational attainment for CLA remains lower than for their non-looked after peers even at the earliest stage of assessment (see page 59 onwards).
- Warwickshire's attainment 'gap' between CLA and their peers was larger than the equivalent national 'gap' for reading, writing and maths at KS2 & for English and Maths at KS4 in 2014 (see page 59 onwards).

- Nearly two-thirds of CLA at March 2014 who were matched to school census data had a special educational need; much higher than the proportion of children with a SEN in the school population as a whole (see page 63).
- Warwickshire's fixed term exclusion rate for CLA is four times as high as the equivalent rate for all children (see page 60).

HEALTH OUTCOMES

- CLA have the same core health needs as their non-looked after peers, but their background and experiences are likely to make them more vulnerable to poorer health outcomes (see page 67).
- Over the past five years, the proportion of children receiving a health check in Warwickshire stayed static (80% in 2011 and 2015) and the proportion receiving a dental check has decreased by 7% over the same time period (see page 67).
- 152 children & young people in Warwickshire received a service from Journey's in 2014/15; the majority due to attachment issues (see page 72).
- In 2014/15, 2% of Warwickshire's CLA were identified as having a substance misuse problem compared to 4% of the national CLA population (see page 75).
- At March 2016, there were 68 CLA with a recorded disability, 9% of Warwickshire's CLA population, of whom over a third have a learning disability (see page 76).

CRIME & OFFENDING OUTCOMES

- Children and young people who are, or have been, looked after are over five times more likely than other children to get involved in crime nationally (see page 79).
- Offending rates among CLA in Warwickshire have fallen from 5.2% to 3.0% in the last two years (see page 80).

CARE LEAVERS

- The proportion of CLA continuing to be looked after following their 16th birthday has increased over the last five years, from 45% to 69% (see page 81).
- The overall proportion of WCC care leavers aged 19-21 in EET has fallen recently and is lower than the national average (which is increasing, see page 82).
- Warwickshire has a much higher proportion of care leavers who are not in contact with the Local Authority compared to the national average (34% and 13% respectively). This is higher among UASC. This means that we don't know enough about the type and suitability of the accommodation they are living in (see page 82).
- Young people leaving care don't always have the skills they need for successful independent living (see page 82 onwards).

KEY ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMISSIONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop more local placements as one way to secure better outcomes for CLA. This is explored in further detail in the Placement Sufficiency Strategy.
- Continue seeking to increase the number of Warwickshire approved foster carers, through a comprehensive range of recruitment methods.
- Review the mechanisms for identifying the early signs of placement instability and develop better responses. Work with Independent Fostering Agencies to share best practice in this area.
- Increase the number of foster carers with availability to take placements for teenagers.
- Continue to develop the specialist fostering provision including solo/therapeutic fostering placements and parent and baby placements to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of CLA, some with more complex needs, including access to responsive support services.
- Work with providers to ensure appropriate Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) specialist knowledge is embedded in the operation of residential units.
- Work with providers in the children's residential sector to develop restorative justice as a consistent approach to offending behaviours.
- Ensure that the protocol between the local authority, local police & youth offending service clearly sets out Warwickshire's expectations for dealing with in-home incidents, including when it might be appropriate to involve the police.

SOCIAL CARE PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement the recommendations from the residential care placements review, addressing case management and fostering practice.
- Implement the recommendations from the emerging review of WCC Foster Care Service.
- Implement the recommendations from the review of CLA who had three or more placement moves.
- Continue the work to ensure all recommendations from the Department for Education's published guidance on the care of unaccompanied and trafficked children are implemented in Warwickshire to ensure the best possible protection for UASC who may be at risk of going missing. To consider any specialist placement provision that might be required as a consequence.

GAPS IN OUR KNOWLEDGE AND DATA RECOMMENDATIONS

- Less reliance on case management and more meaningful qualitative and quantitative evidence on children's journeys (focus on outcomes in Mosaic should support this; however, further work to build in themes from the children's journey is required).
- While there has been some attempts to do some detailed case file audits as part of this assessment, this needs to be applied more consistently across all elements of the child's journey to develop understanding further
- Carefirst records were inconsistent and missing in some cases, and recording of placements moves requires improvement. Ensure that a chronology of placement moves and reasons for breakdown or disruption are consistently completed, to support the assessment of needs and identification of alternative placements should the current situation breakdown.
- Ensure that case recording meets expectations, ensuring that key decisions relating to the CLA's journey are consistently recorded. The quality of some recording is poor and improved case planning and evidence around the intervention is required.

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- A shift in focus to educational progress rather than attainment gives a more realistic view of the achievements of CLA. There is currently limited educational progress data routinely reported nationally or locally for CLA.
- CLA should be set accelerated targets for educational progress, with the professional and care-based support needed to achieve those targets clearly identified.
- To complete an in depth review of Warwickshire Virtual School pupils to identify themes from the child's journey through school and what could be improved.
- Ensure that school staff provide appropriate support (partly through the Virtual School), to identify and place pupils in high performing schools and limit placement and school changes, in particular at Key Stage 4.
- Virtual schools should have access to all relevant information and analysis about all children in care educated locally, whatever their 'home' local authority, in order to provide integrated support and challenge for local schools and to assess and improve the performance of the cohort and of individual children.

CARE LEAVERS RECOMMENDATIONS

- The career plans for care leaver's should consistently cover education, employment or training opportunities that will enhance their career prospects.
- The local authority should consider establishing a service specifically targeted around preparation for independent living, assisting with issues such as life skills,

employability, building positive networks and relationships, training, housing, finance, budgeting and money management.

- Systems/processes should be in place to improve Warwickshire's contact with care leavers.
- To ensure that every care leaver is informed about their entitlement to an independent advocate.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

- Continue to consult with children and young people and consider their views (through the Children in Care Council and other avenues) to ensure decisions that are made are influenced by them and that all decisions are fully explained.
- Continue to implement the CLA Improvement Plan up to March 2017 which responding directly to young people's priorities.
- The profile of Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) and how they can support CLA is better promoted and continuity of social workers and IROs is ensured as far as possible.
- To change practices as identified from consultation with Warwickshire CLA that include:
 - Fewer people at Children Looked After review meetings
 - Changing the language used which can sometimes be a barrier
- Implement the Asylum & Care Leavers 2016/17 Improvement Plan, identifying actions from the workshop held with Care Leavers and Asylum Seeking Children.

HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

- To continue to ensure that care leavers are educated on sexual health, family planning and parenting skills aimed at decreasing early pregnancies amongst care leavers and reduce risk of care leavers' children being admitted into care themselves.
- To continue to develop options with CLA and their carers on how their mental health can be promoted and how they can better access support or information when required.
- Consideration should be given to the completion of psychological assessments on some CLA at an earlier stage in their care pathway so that more timely decisions can be made about their future care requirements.

INTRODUCTION

The overarching drivers behind this needs assessment are to:

- Supporting CLA to achieve good outcomes
- Sufficiency of care, support and placements for children looked after and care leavers, supporting them to positive destinations.

The needs assessment seeks to:

- gain a better understanding of Warwickshire's profile of CLA including at a district/borough level
- to improve the understanding and practice in relation to CLA
- to inform service development and the commissioning of services that will secure the best provision for this group to improve their lives and future opportunities.

The needs assessment will inform the Sufficiency Commissioning Strategy, which focuses on having a sufficient range of placement provision for CLA, care leavers and those on the edge of care. The Sufficiency Commissioning Strategy will identify the service gaps for specific age groups and types of need across the CLA population. It will lead to a clear strategic plan for the development of local services, predominantly within the fostering market and aligned support services. The needs assessment will also inform the Children and Families Strategic Business Plan, reiterating and reaffirming actions and outcomes where appropriate. The work will dovetail closely with the early intervention needs assessment and strategy aimed at, preventing and reducing the numbers of children entering care. Finally the needs assessment will complement the current Foster Care Review that is taking place.

The looked after population is not a static group of children and key issues vary over time as different needs emerge. For example, issues such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), changes in court processes, adoption and permanency and changes in the broader environment have an impact on the CLA population. These changes take place within a climate of reducing resources, presenting challenges to working practices in responding to the needs of CLA.

Who is a child looked after?

The term 'children looked after' refers to children who are under the age of 18 who have been provided with care and accommodation by a local authority's Children's Services. Children and young people entering care may have a history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Some may have suffered the death of a parent, or have parents who are unable to look after them properly because of illness or other personal issues. A very small number of young people enter care because of criminal activity and a significant number will have behavioural and relationship difficulties. Children enter the care of the Local Authority by two

main routes; firstly, because their parents have requested care and voluntarily agreed that they are accommodated, or secondly, through a legal route because the child is in danger of being harmed and there are safeguarding concerns.

Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989:

The Local Authority will find suitable accommodation for a child when the parents accept and agree that they cannot provide a suitable home for their child, whatever the reason and regardless of whether the reason for this is temporary or ongoing. Parental responsibility remains with the parent/guardian & any person who has parental responsibility can remove the child from LA accommodation at any time.

Under section 31 of the Children Act 1989:

If a Local Authority believes that a child is in danger of being harmed, the Local Authority will apply for a care order which will be made by a court. The court will take all the circumstances into careful consideration before doing this. When a care order is made, the Local Authority acquires parental responsibility for the child and have the power to determine the extent to which a parent or guardian of the child may meet their parental responsibility for that child. A court order can either be a full court order or an interim court order, where the council can take the child into care on a temporary basis.

A child ceases to be looked after when he or she reaches 18 years old. On reaching their 18th birthday, the status of the child changes from being looked after to being a care leaver who is eligible for help and assistance from the local authority.

Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 aims to:

"delay young people's discharge from care until they are prepared and ready to leave; to improve the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care; to provide better personal support for young people after leaving care; and to provide the financial arrangements for care leavers."

Source: Paragraph 1 Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

Who is an unaccompanied asylum seeking child?

An unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC) is a child under the age of 18 who is outside their country of origin and who seeks asylum in their own right, who is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who by law has responsibility to do so¹. Children who arrive in the UK on their own are supported by the local authority's children's services in the area where they are found. Local authorities have a duty of care to ensure that the welfare of UASC are met and are 'looked after' under section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

¹ Home Office: Processing an asylum application from a child. [Accessed on: 20/1/12/2015]
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/257469/processingasylumapplication1.pdf

Government Policy

There are a wide range of policies and guidance relevant to CLA and of particular note is [The Children and Families Act 2014](#), which received Royal Assent in March 2014.

The Act introduced reforms to tackle delay in the adoption process and for improving the life chances of children looked after. It introduced 'fostering for adoption' placements; gave children in care the option to stay with their foster families until they turn 21²; required every local authority to have a virtual school head to champion the education of children in care; improved the quality of children's residential care; changed the arrangements for contact between looked-after children and their birth families; removed the explicit wording around ethnicity when considering the compatibility of children with foster carers and adoptive parents; and introduced a single education, health and care plan for children with special education needs and disabilities up to the age of 25 (see The Children and Families Act [explanatory notes](#) for more information).

Health & Wellbeing

The aim of the local authority is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children looked after and as a result, there is also relevant statutory guidance related to promoting the health and wellbeing of children looked after. In March 2015, the Department for Education and the Department for Health published '[Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children.](#)' The updated guidance provides detail on the planning, commissioning and delivery of health services for children looked after and aims to ensure children looked after have access to any physical or mental health care they may need.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with other relevant statutory guidance:

- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the Quality Standards](#)
- [Who Pays? Determining responsibility for payments to providers](#)
- [National Tariff Payment System](#)

Key elements from the statutory guidance include:

- The corporate parenting responsibilities of local authorities which includes having a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children they look after, including eligible children and those placed for adoption, regardless of whether they are placed in or out of authority or the type of placement.

² In Warwickshire, young people can stay in their foster placement post 18 under the staying put scheme if they wish to do so. The expectation is the carer will continue to support with independent living.

This includes the promotion of the child's physical, emotional and mental health and acting on any early signs of health issues.

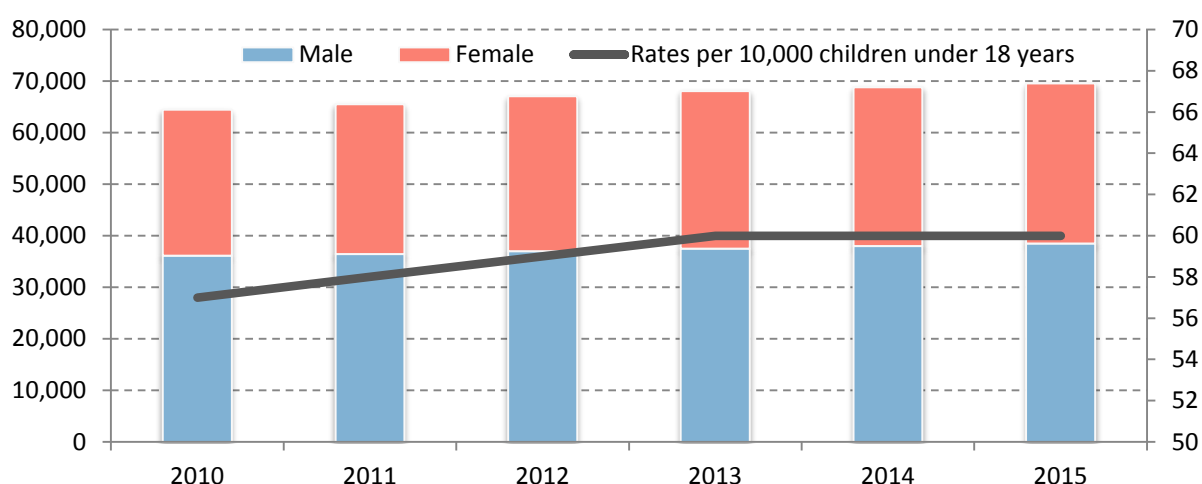
- The local authority that looks after the child must arrange for them to have a health assessment, completed by a registered medical practitioner and an up-to-date individual health plan, forming part of the child's overall care plan.
- Local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), NHS England and Public Health England must cooperate to commission health services for all children in their area.
- The health needs of children looked after should be taken into account in developing the local JSNA and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS).
- Local authorities, CCGs and NHS England should ensure that plans are in place to enable children leaving care to continue to obtain the healthcare they need.
- Children looked after should be able to participate in decisions about their health care. Arrangements should be in place to promote a culture:
 - where children looked after are listened to
 - that takes account of their views according to their age and understanding, in identifying and meeting their physical, emotional and mental health needs
 - that helps others, including carers and schools, to understand the importance of listening to and taking account of the child's wishes and feelings about how to be healthy.

The National Picture - Children Looked After (CLA) in England

There were just under 70,000 CLA in England at 31st March 2015. The numbers have increased steadily over the past seven years and nationally, it is now higher than at any point since 1985. This rise is not just a reflection of a rise in the child population, as the rate of CLA is also increasing, from 57 per 10,000 at 31st March 2010 to 60 per 10,000 at 31st March 2015. The rate of CLA varies significantly between local authorities, from 158 per 10,000 in Blackpool to a low of 20 per 10,000 in Wokingham.

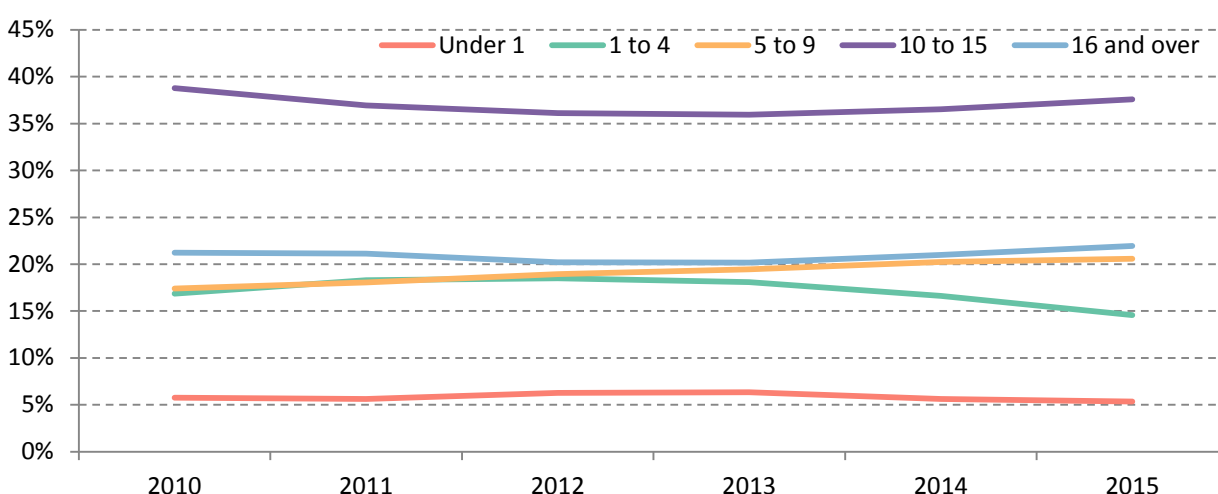
The largest CLA age group nationally is 10-15 year olds, which made up over a third (38%) of CLA at 31st March 2015. There has been a slight increase in the percentage of 5-9 year olds, from 18% in 2010 to 21% in 2014. There has been a fall in the last two years in the number of children aged 1-4 years, reflecting higher numbers of children of this age group ceasing to be looked after (around 8,500 per year) than those starting to be looked after (just under 6,000 each year). For older children aged 10 years and above, there has been a rise in the number starting to be looked after (12,120 in 2013 compared with 13,870 in 2015). There has been a smaller increase in those ceasing to be looked after, resulting in just over 3,000 more children aged 10 years and over being looked after at 31st March compared with 2013.

Figure 1: Number & rate of CLA in England at 31st March by gender, 2010-2015



The ethnic breakdown for CLA has varied little since 2011. The majority of CLA at 31 March 2015 (73%) are from a white British background: similar to the general population of all children. Children of mixed ethnicity continue to be slightly over-represented, and children of Asian ethnicity slightly under-represented in the CLA population.

Figure 2: Age profile of CLA in England at 31st March, 2010-2015

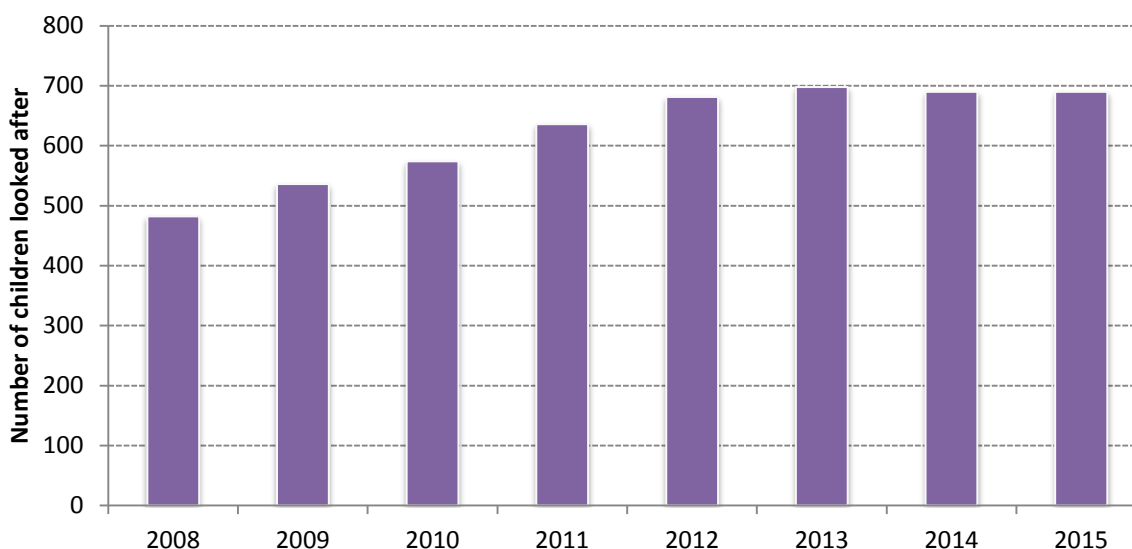


At 31st March 2015, 42,030 (60%) children were looked after under a care order (either an interim or full care order), a 5% increase compared to 2014 and an 8% increase since 2011. A further 19,850 (29%) children were looked after under a voluntary agreement under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 - this number and percentage has increased steadily since 2013. However, there has been a fall in the number of CLA with a placement order (a pre-requisite to a child being placed for adoption from care) at 31 March 2015, from 9,580 (14%) in 2014 to 7,320 (11%) in 2015. Nationally, there has been a rise in the number of younger children from care who have been made subject to special guardianship orders which can explain this decline.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER IN WARWICKSHIRE

There were 690 children looked after in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015, the same number as at 31st March 2014 but an increase of 8% compared to 31 March 2011. In 2013/14, Warwickshire saw its first slight reduction in the number of children looked after at year end compared to the previous years since 2008.

Figure 3: Number of children looked after in Warwickshire at 31st March, 2008-2015



Reflecting the throughput of children looked after by Warwickshire, there were 995 children looked after at any time during 2014/15; a reduction from 1,010 children who experienced a care episode during 2013/14.

Rate of children looked after

The rate of children looked after (per 10,000 children under 18 years) in Warwickshire has increased, from 57 per 10,000 at 31st March 2011 to 61 per 10,000 at 31st March 2015. Warwickshire's rate of children looked after is slightly higher than the England average (61 per 10,000 children compared with 60 per 10,000 children), but lower than that of the West Midlands at 75 per 10,000 children. Warwickshire's rate of children looked after is notably higher than its statistical neighbours (61 per 10,000 children compared with 52 per 10,000 children).

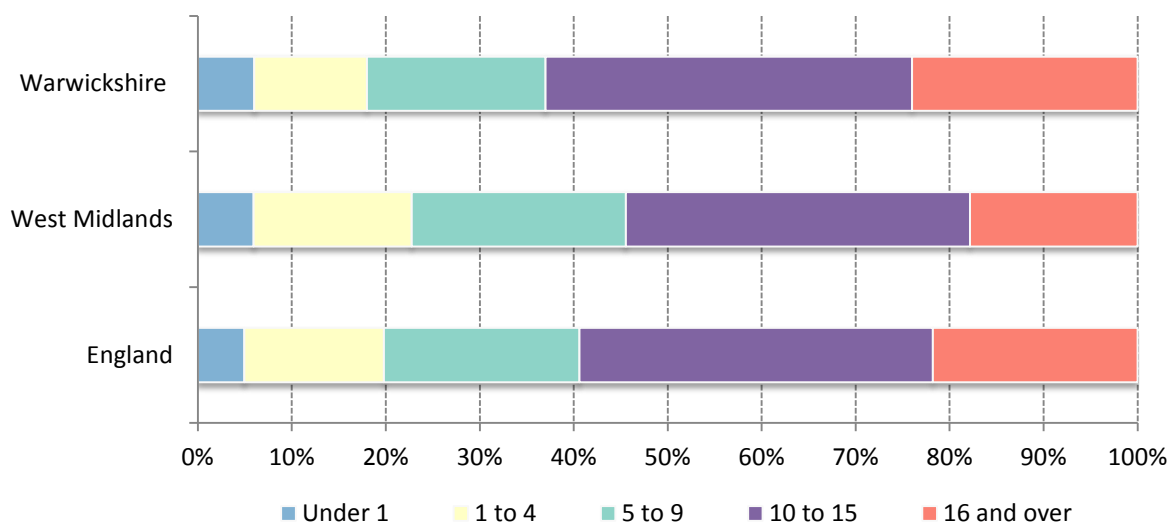
Figure 4: Rate of children looked after at 31st March, 2006-2015



Age of children looked after

The age profile of children looked after in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015 is slightly older than the England average and the West Midlands. The proportion of children looked after aged under 5 years in Warwickshire is 18% compared with 23% in the West Midlands and 20% nationally. Similarly, the proportion of children looked after aged over 16 years is 24% in Warwickshire compared with 18% in the West Midlands and 22% nationally. This is likely to be the effect of Warwickshire’s unaccompanied asylum seeking child population, of whom 74% (34 out of 46 children) were over the age of 16 years at 31st March 2015. However, there is no detailed information available on unaccompanied asylum seeking children at a national or regional level to confirm this.

Figure 5: Percentage of CLA at 31st March 2015 by age group, Warwickshire



Ethnicity of children looked after

At 31st March 2015, 81% of children looked after in Warwickshire were white British, less than the 84% of children looked after as at 31st March 2014. If unaccompanied asylum seeking children are excluded from this cohort, 87% of children looked after as at 31st March 2015 were white British. According to 2011 Census data, 86.3% of children in Warwickshire aged 0-17 years are white British, a similar proportion to Warwickshire's children looked after population (excluding unaccompanied asylum seeking children who are not included in Census data). Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnic groups are over-represented within Warwickshire's CLA population as at 31st March 2015 (2.0% of Warwickshire's CLA population compared with 0.9% of total 0-17 population), as are mixed/multiple ethnic groups (6.2% of Warwickshire's CLA population compared with 4.0% of total 0-17 population).

Figure 6: Ethnicity of Warwickshire's CLA as at 31st March 2015 compared with Census 2011 data (excluding unaccompanied asylum seeking children)

| Ethnic group | Census Data 0-17 population | Warwickshire Children Looked After population |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| White: Total | 89.4% | 90.1% |
| <i>of which:</i> | | |
| <i>White British</i> | 86.3% | 87.4% |
| <i>White Irish/Gypsy or Irish Traveller/Other white</i> | 3.1% | 2.7% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Total | 4.0% | 6.2% |
| Asian/Asian British: Total | 5.3% | 1.4% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Total | 0.9% | 2.0% |
| Other ethnic group: Total | 0.5% | 0.3% |

Children looked after by district/borough

Reporting on children looked after at district/borough level is not straightforward. Children can be placed in a different district/borough to their originating home district and some children and young people are placed out of county. Children looked after in Warwickshire have an allocated social worker in a Children and Families Team located in each of the five district areas, or where the young person is 16+ years the allocated social worker is in the countywide Asylum and Leaving Care Service. Children with severe disabilities are allocated to the county wide Integrated Disability Service.

Of the 690 CLA in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015, 46 were allocated to the Asylum Team (7% of Warwickshire's total looked after population). Figure 7 shows the number and proportion of children looked after allocated to teams covering a specific district/borough in Warwickshire at 31st March 2011 - 2015.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough had the highest rate of children looked after in the county at 31st March 2015, with 95 children looked after per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years. This rate is considerably higher than the rest of Warwickshire's districts/boroughs. It is also one of two districts/boroughs in Warwickshire where the rate has increased since 31st March 2014 (94 children looked after per 10,000 children at 31st March 2014), the other being Rugby Borough, with 52 children looked after per 10,000 children at 31st March 2015. This is an increase from 49 children looked after per 10,000 children at 31st March 2014. Stratford-on-Avon District has the lowest rate of children looked after (33 children looked after per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years, with North Warwickshire borough having the largest decrease in rate from 53 children looked after per 10,000 at 31st March 2014 to 47 children looked after per 10,000 at 31st March 2015.

Figure 7: Number of CLA in Warwickshire by district/borough of allocated team, 2011-2015

| District | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| North Warwickshire | 62 | 67 | 69 | 67 | 58 |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 197 | 206 | 237 | 256 | 256 |
| Rugby | 99 | 108 | 110 | 109 | 119 |
| Stratford | 68 | 75 | 85 | 82 | 76 |
| Warwick | 104 | 137 | 130 | 122 | 116 |
| Integrated Disability Service | 17 | 18 | 22 | 23 | 19 |
| Asylum Seekers | 87 | 69 | 45 | 29 | 46 |
| Youth Justice | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Warwickshire Total | 636 | 681 | 698 | 690 | 690 |

The rate of children looked after has increased in all districts and boroughs in Warwickshire over the last 5 years apart from North Warwickshire Borough, where the rate dropped from 50 children looked after per 10,000 at 31st March 2011 to 47 children looked after per 10,000 at 31st March 2015. The largest increase in the rate of looked after children over the past five years was in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough, which has seen a rise of over 30% (from 73 children looked after per 10,000 at 31st March 2011 to 95 per 10,000 at 31st March 2015). Despite having the lowest overall rate of children looked after in the county, the rate of children looked after in Stratford-on-Avon District has increased by 18% over the past five years, whereas the increase in Warwick District is comparatively small at only 8%.

Figure 8: Rate of CLA in Warwickshire by district/borough of allocated team, 2009-2015

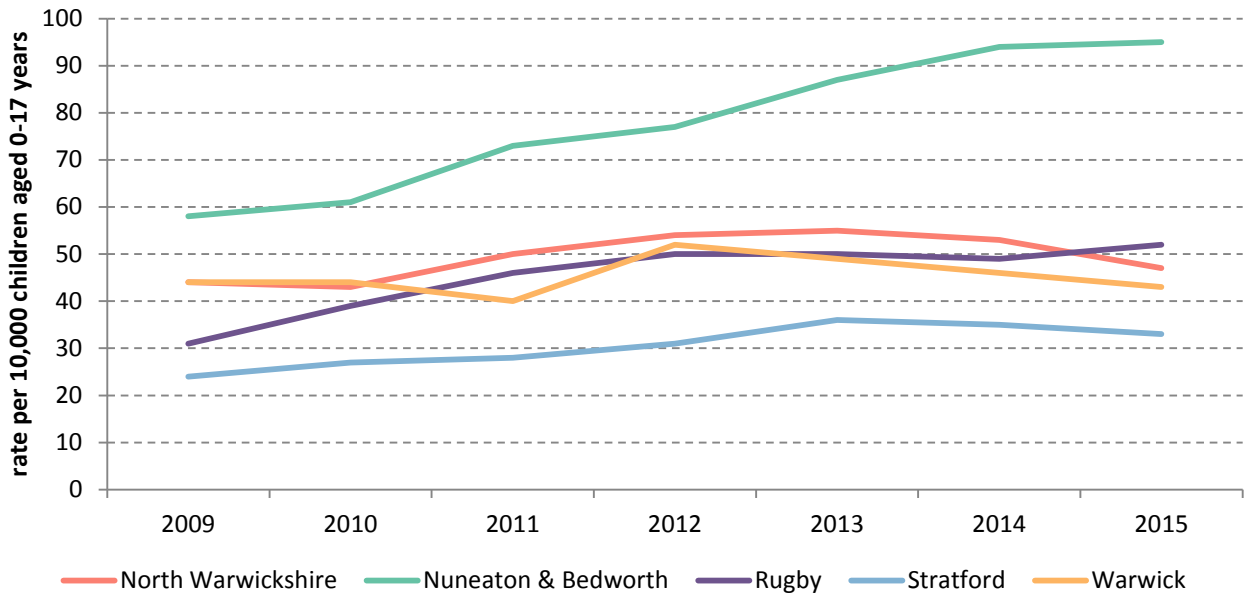
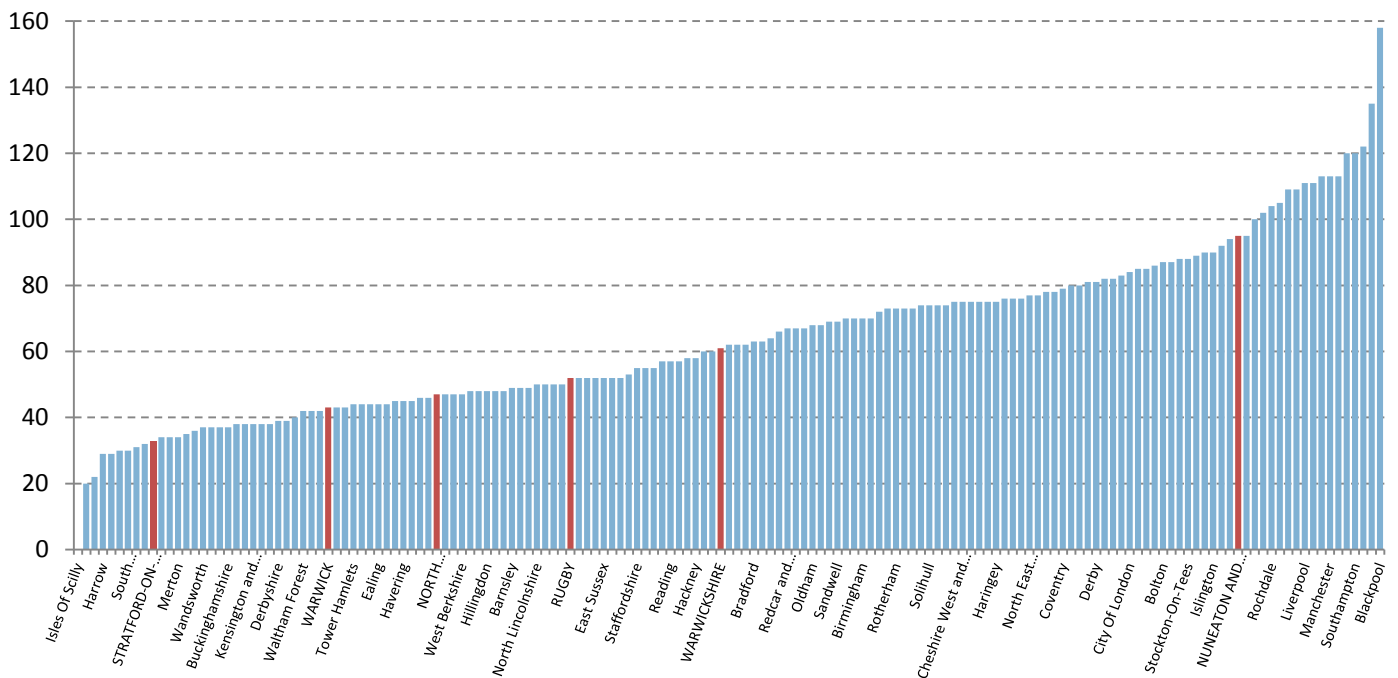


Figure 9 shows the rate of children looked after in Warwickshire compared with all local authorities in England as of 31st March 2015. Warwickshire’s rate is just above the England average, however there are districts/boroughs in the county which are at the national extremes. Nuneaton and Bedworth’s rate of children looked after is within the highest 20% in the country, whereas Stratford-on-Avon’s and Warwick’s rate of children looked after are within the lowest 20% in the country.

Figure 9: Rate of CLA per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years nationally, at 31 March 2015



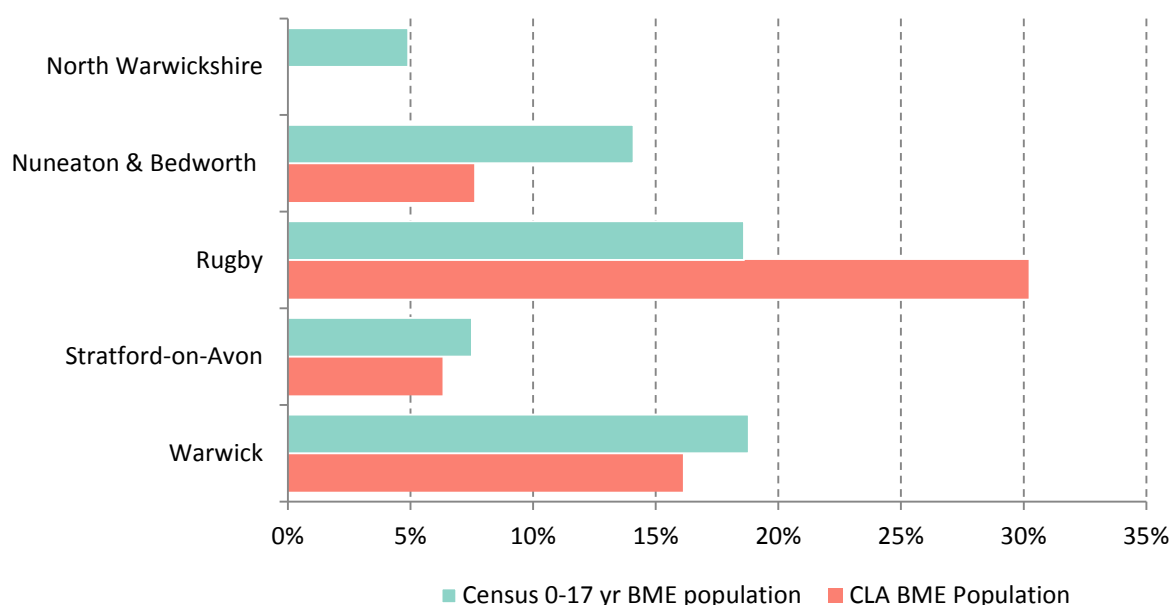
When the children and young people from the Integrated Disability Service are allocated to a district/borough, Nuneaton and Bedworth's rate of children looked after is even higher at 97.6 children looked after per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years. The rate of children looked after also increases for Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick (34.2 and 46.0 per 10,000 respectively).

Figure 10: Rate of children looked after at 31st March 2015 by district/borough including and excluding IDS cases

| District/Borough | Number of CLA | Rate of CLA | Rate of CLA (excluding IDS cases) |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 58 | 47.2 | 47.2 |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 264 | 97.6 | 94.6 |
| Rugby | 119 | 51.9 | 51.9 |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 79 | 34.2 | 32.9 |
| Warwick | 124 | 46.0 | 43.0 |
| Children's Asylum Team | 46 | N/A | N/A |

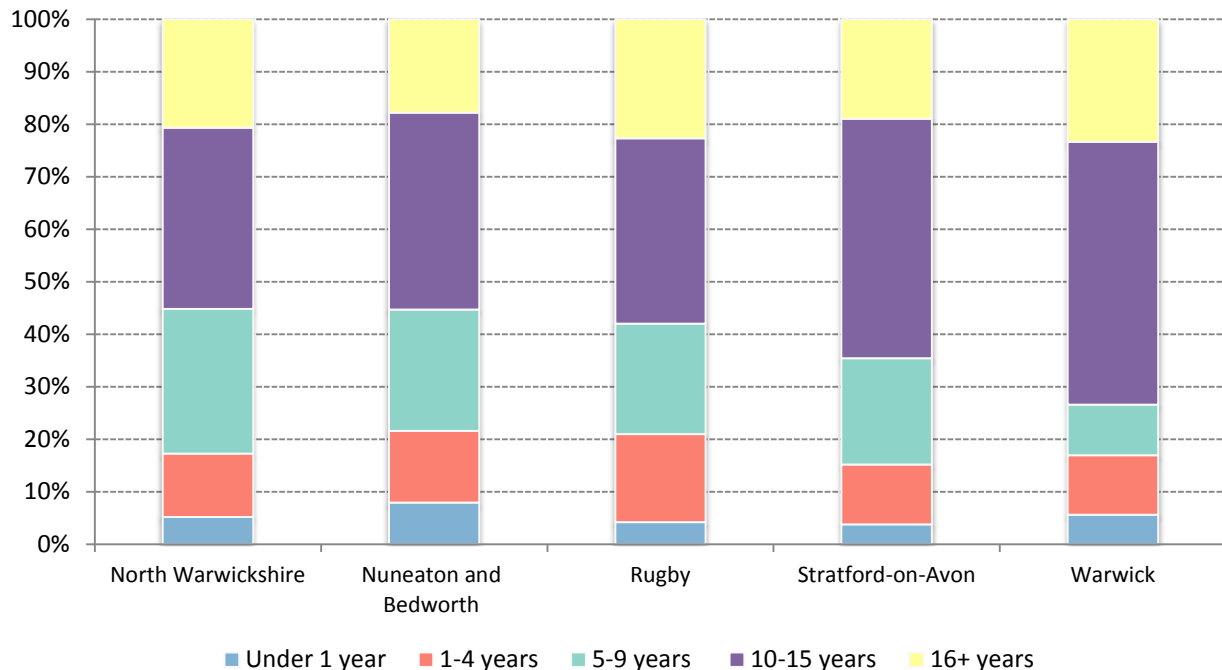
The ethnicity of Warwickshire's children looked after population varies at district/borough level. In North Warwickshire, 100% of children looked after at 31st March 2015 were white British, compared with Rugby, where nearly one third (30.2%) of all children looked after at 31st March 2015 were from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities. Rugby is the only district/borough in Warwickshire where black and ethnic minority children are over-represented within the children looked after population compared with the 2011 Census 0-17 year old population, as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Proportion of BME children looked after at 31st March 2015 compared to Census 2011 0-17 year old population, by district/borough



The age profile of children looked after in Warwickshire varies at district/borough level. In Warwick (excluding UASC), nearly three-quarters (73.4%) of children looked after at 31st March 2015 were over the age of 10 years, of which nearly one-quarter (23.4%) were 16+ years. By comparison, in Nuneaton & Bedworth and Rugby, over one-fifth of children looked after at 31st March 2015 were under the age of 5 years.

Figure 12: Age profile of CLA in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015 by district/borough



Link between Children Looked After and Deprivation

Recent national research³ published in December 2015, suggests that gross inequalities in children’s life chances are being reflected in Children’s Services referral and CLA rates. These inequalities cannot be explained by only paying attention to deprivation factors. Reducing inequalities is a possible policy goal as it is in health policy however it appears that more affluent local authorities intervene in children’s lives more than relatively disadvantaged local authorities for the same level of deprivation⁴.

It is useful to consider this in the context of Warwickshire’s profile in terms of deprivation and CLA statistics. Figure 13 shows the CLA rate per 10,000 for Warwickshire and each of its statistical neighbours at 31 March 2015 compared to the proportion of areas* in the 10% most deprived nationally, according to the income deprivation affecting children index

³ Children’s Social Care Inequalities: A Surprising Research Finding, Professor Paul Bywaters
https://www.careknowledge.com/childrens_social_care_inequalities_a_surprising_research_finding_25769830339.aspx

⁴ Measured using the Index of Multiple Deprivation, a comprehensive measure covering seven different dimensions of deprivation.

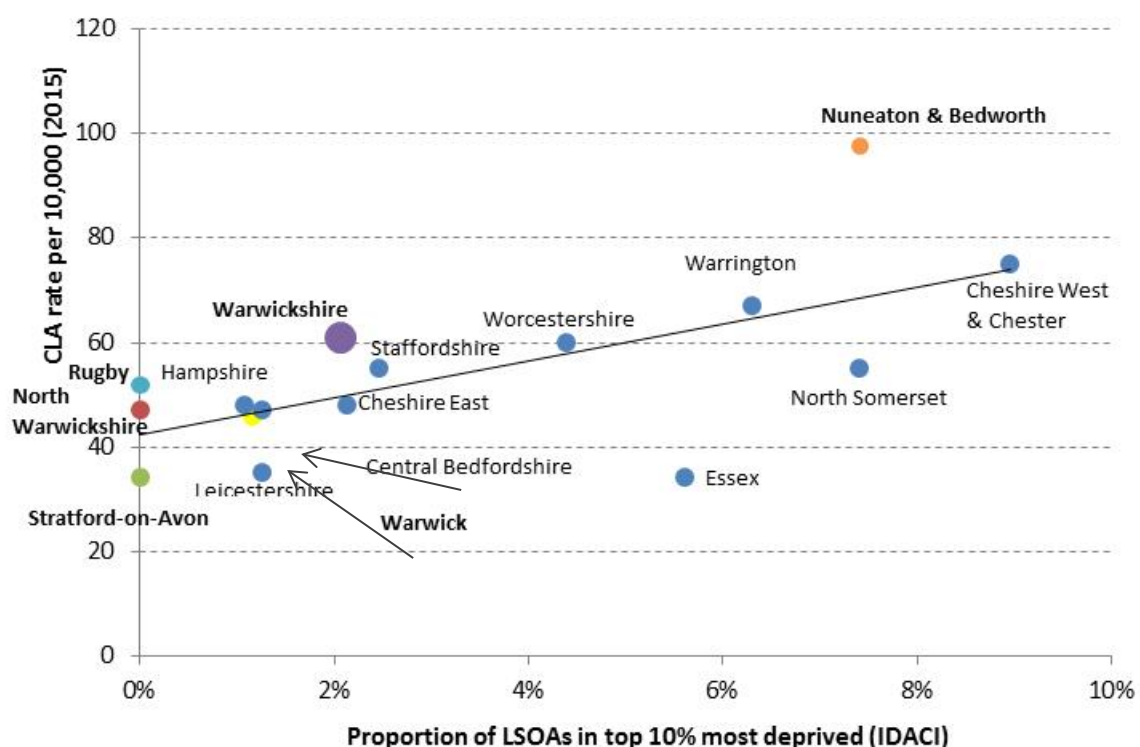
(IDACI) from the 2015 deprivation index. A trend-line has been added which shows the 'line of best fit' given the data for each of the 11 local authorities.

The chart suggests a positive relationship between deprivation and children looked after rates i.e. the higher the level of deprivation, the higher the number of children per 10,000 who are looked after. However, differences still remain and this is particularly relevant for Warwickshire.

For instance, Warwickshire and Cheshire East share similar levels of deprivation (2.1% of areas in top 10% most deprived nationally) but have considerably different children looked after rates (61 children per 10,000 in Warwickshire compared to 48 per 10,000 in Cheshire East).

Conversely, Warwickshire and Worcestershire have similar rates of children looked after (61 and 60 children per 10,000 respectively), however, Worcestershire is relatively more deprived than Warwickshire (4.4% of Worcestershire's areas are in the top 10% most deprived nationally) with over double the proportion of deprived areas than Warwickshire (2.1%).

Figure 13: Children Looked After Rates compared to deprivation affecting children



Warwickshire has the third highest children looked after rate in 2015 out of its statistical neighbours (Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington have higher rates), yet is the 8th most deprived out of the 11 statistical neighbours (see Figure 14). This is in contrast to Essex

which has the lowest rate of children looked after out of its statistical neighbours in 2015, yet is the 4th most deprived area in the cohort.

This suggests that Warwickshire and Essex could be considered the two local authority areas that have the largest differences and are at the two 'extremes' in terms of the differences in the rankings showing the relationship between children looked after rates and income deprivation affecting children.

Recognising that both children looked after rates and deprivation levels at a county level masks considerable variation at district/borough level, Figure 13 breaks this down further and shows Warwickshire's five district/borough rates compared to deprivation affecting children (coloured dots on the scatter plot). This shows that Nuneaton & Bedworth has the highest deprivation levels and CLA rate of Warwickshire's district/boroughs and a higher child looked after rate (97.6 children per 10,000 children) than any of Warwickshire's statistical neighbours.

Figure 14: CLA rates compared to deprivation affecting children

| | CLA rate per 10,000 children (2015) | Rank* (CLA) | % areas in top 10% most deprived (IDACI, 2015) | Rank* (deprivation) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Cheshire West and Chester | 75 | 1 | 9.0% | 1 |
| Warrington | 67 | 2 | 6.3% | 3 |
| Warwickshire | 61 | 3 | 2.1% | 8 |
| Worcestershire | 60 | 4 | 4.4% | 5 |
| Staffordshire | 55 | 5 | 2.5% | 6 |
| North Somerset | 55 | 5 | 7.4% | 2 |
| Hampshire | 48 | 7 | 1.1% | 11 |
| Cheshire East | 48 | 7 | 2.1% | 7 |
| Central Bedfordshire | 47 | 9 | 1.3% | 9 |
| Leicestershire | 35 | 10 | 1.3% | 10 |
| Essex | 34 | 11 | 5.6% | 4 |
| <i>Statistical Neighbours</i> | 52 | | | |
| <i>England</i> | 60 | | | |

**where 1 refers to the highest Children Looked After rate and most deprived area*

North Somerset has similar deprivation levels to Nuneaton & Bedworth, yet North Somerset has a much lower rate of children looked after at 55 children per 10,000 children. Rugby, North Warwickshire and Stratford-on-Avon are all clustered to the left of the graph with no areas in the top 10% most deprived areas nationally on the income deprivation affecting children index yet their CLA rates vary considerably. Warwick District sits with Central Bedfordshire and Hampshire with similar deprivation levels and children looked after rates.

Legal Status of Children Looked After

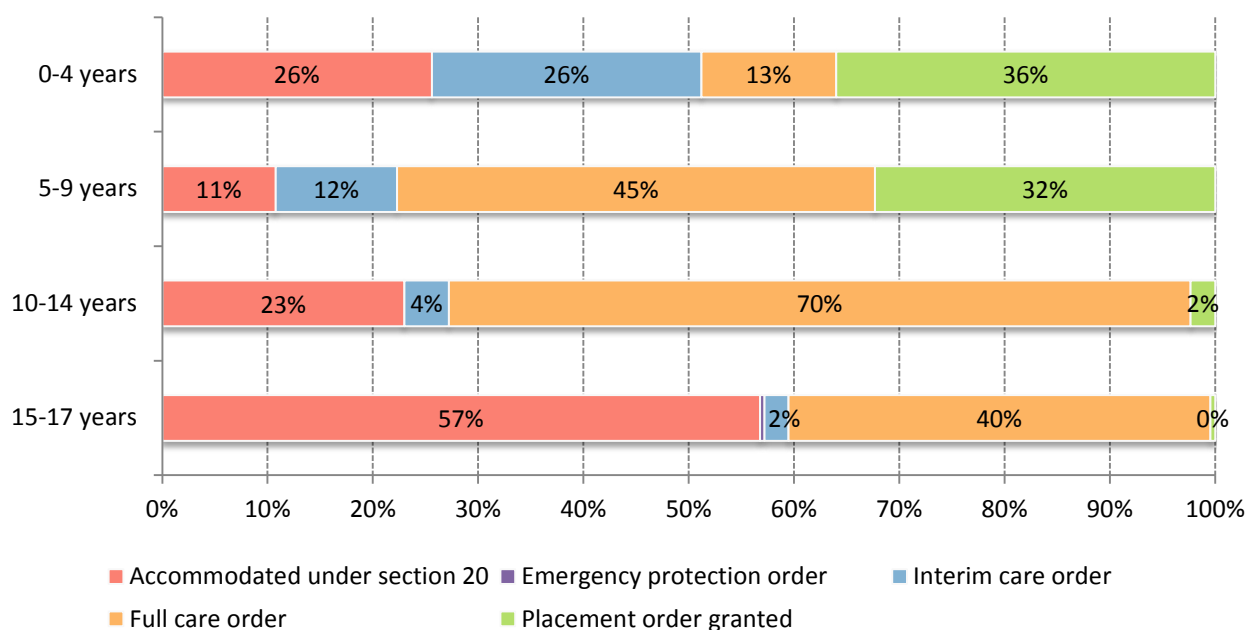
The majority (46%) of children looked after at 31st March 2015 were subject to a care order, followed by just under a third (32%) who were accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (where parental responsibility remains with the parents or legal guardian).

Figure 15: Children looked after in Warwickshire as at 31st march 2015 by legal status

| Legal Status | Number of children | % |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Interim care order | 61 | 8.8% |
| Full care order | 314 | 45.5% |
| Placement order granted | 93 | 13.5% |
| Emergency protection order | 1 | 0.1% |
| Accommodated under section 20 | 221 | 32.0% |
| Total | 690 | 100.0% |

Children are more likely to be accommodated under section 20 at an older age (57% of children aged 15-17 years) and more likely to be subject to a placement order or an interim care order at a younger age (36% of children aged 0-4 years subject to placement orders and 26% subject to interim care orders). 70% of all children looked after aged 10-14 years were subject to care orders.

Figure 16: CLA in Warwickshire as at 31st March 2015 by legal status and age



Children missing from care

Children in care are three times more likely to run away than children who are not in care. Any child who goes missing is vulnerable to sexual exploitation, but children missing from care are even more so. Their past experiences may mean that they have not had good experiences of adult relationships, or may have experienced abuse or neglect, and as a consequence are more susceptible to grooming.

Missing is defined as a child looked after who is not at their placement or place where they are expected to be (e.g. school) and their whereabouts are not known⁵.

In 2014/15, 26 children looked after in Warwickshire had a missing incident during the year, equating to 3% of the total looked-after population. This is lower than the national average of 6% of children who had a missing incident during the year. Of these 26 children, 11 children had more than one missing incident during the year, ranging from two to nine recorded missing incidents.

Children entering care

A total of 315 children started to be looked after in 2014/15, a 2% decrease from 2013/14 (320 children). This compares to an increase over the same time period of 2% nationally and 5.6% across the West Midlands. The number of children starting to be looked after during the year has remained relatively stable within Warwickshire over the past four years, despite a 12% increase from 31st March 2011 to 31st March 2012. Overall, there has been an average 9% increase in children who started to be looked after during each year since 2011 compared to an increase of 13% nationally and 22% across the West Midlands. When looking at the past four years, the number of children starting to be looked after in Warwickshire has decreased by -3.0% compared to a national increase of 9% and an increase of 15% across the West Midlands.

Figure 17: Children started to be looked after by financial year, 2011-2015

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | % change from 2011-2015 | % change from 2012-2015 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| England | 27,510 | 28,390 | 28,970 | 30,540 | 31,070 | 13% | 9% |
| West Midlands | 3,060 | 3,240 | 3,540 | 3,610 | 3,740 | 22% | 15% |
| Warwickshire | 290 | 325 | 310 | 320 | 315 | 9% | -3% |

The proportion of children starting to be looked after during 2014/15 in each age bracket is roughly the same in Warwickshire as in England and the West Midlands. However,

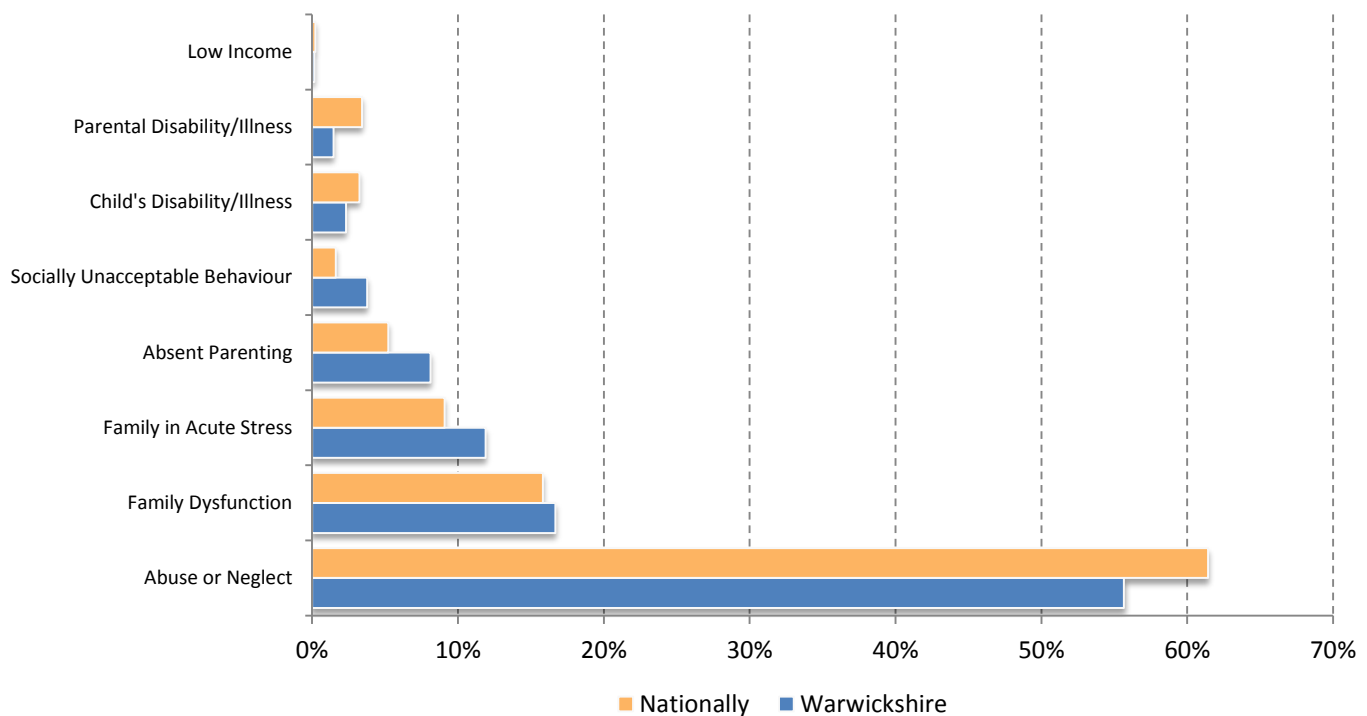
⁵ Department for Education (2014) Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from care https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3.pdf

Warwickshire has the lowest proportion of 5-9 year old children starting to be looked after (16%) and the highest proportion of children aged 16+ years (17%). This is due to Warwickshire's proportion of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, which is higher than that of the national and regional CLA population. If UASC are removed from the analysis of children starting to be looked after in Warwickshire in 2014/15, 11% of children were aged over 16 years.

The age profile of the children who started to be looked after during 2014/15 is notably different to the current CLA population as at 31st March 2015. This is a countrywide trend, with a much higher proportion of younger children starting to be looked after during the year than the total looked after population. Most children who enter care at a young age leave care by returning to their parents or through adoption or special guardianship arrangements usually with extended family members. The proportion of children under 1 year old who started to be looked after during 2014/15 was four times higher than the proportion of Warwickshire's total CLA population under 1 year old at 31st March 2015.

The reason children are enter care in Warwickshire is largely similar to the national picture. The majority (56%) of children in Warwickshire were looked after due to abuse or neglect (compared to 61% nationally). A slightly higher percentage of children enter care in Warwickshire due to the family being in acute stress, family dysfunction, absent parenting and socially unacceptable behaviour. This is higher than the national picture, where Warwickshire also has fewer children in care due to child's or parent's disabilities.

Figure 18: CLA in Warwickshire by category of need, compared to England, 2015



At district/borough level (excluding UASC), the reason that children enter care varies considerably. The majority of children in all districts/boroughs as at 31st March 2015 were looked after due to abuse or neglect, however this majority ranges from under half of all children (46%) in Warwick to 85% of all children in North Warwickshire.

After abuse and neglect, the second highest proportion of children in three of the five districts/boroughs (apart from North Warwickshire & Warwick) were looked after due to family dysfunction. This equated to nearly a quarter (24%) of all children in Rugby compared to only 1.7% of children in North Warwickshire. The second highest proportion of children in North Warwickshire and Warwick were looked after due to family in acute stress. Nationally, this accounts for 9.1% of children looked after, however in Warwick this accounts for over a quarter of all children looked after (27%) as at 31st March 2015.

If the categories of need 'family in acute stress' and 'family dysfunction' are combined, these categories accounted for one quarter (25%) of all children looked after nationally as at 31st March 2015. In Warwickshire, these categories accounted for only 10% of CLA in North Warwickshire and a high of 48% in Warwick; almost double the proportion compared to the national average. Rugby has the highest proportion of CLA due to parental illness or disability (5%) whereas no children were looked after due to this reason in North Warwickshire or Warwick. Stratford-on-Avon had the highest proportion of children looked after due to the child's disability (6.3%) and due to socially unacceptable behaviour (6.3%).

Figure 19: Children looked after in Warwickshire (excluding UASC) as at 31st March 2015, by Category of Need

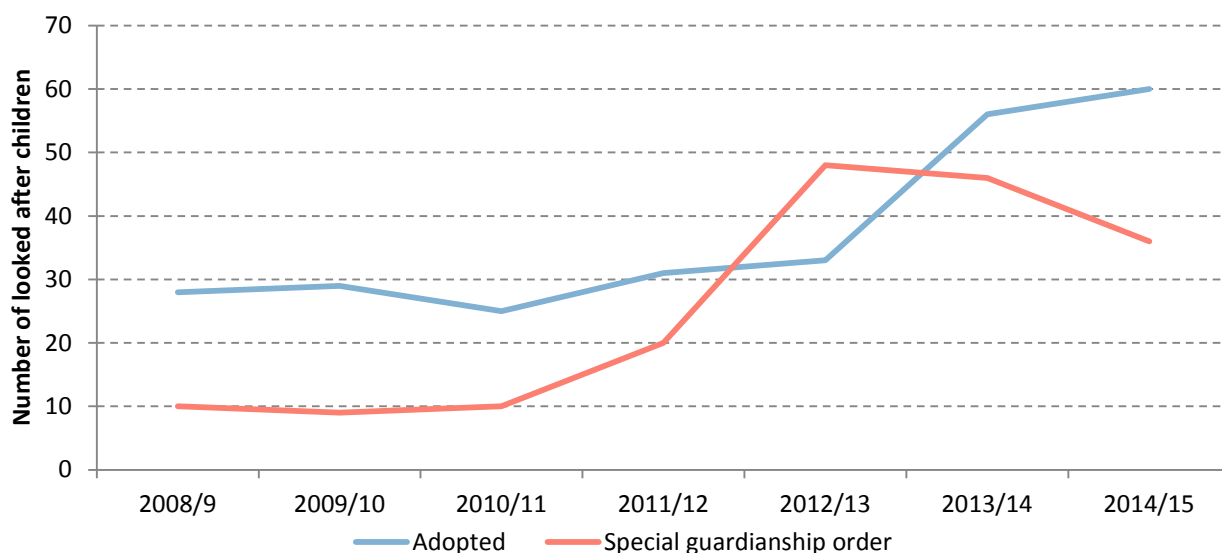
| Category of Need | North Warwickshire | Nuneaton & Bedworth | Rugby | Stratford-on-Avon | Warwick |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------|-------------------|---------|
| Abuse or neglect | 84.5% | 65.2% | 54.6% | 51.9% | 46.0% |
| Child's disability | 3.4% | 2.3% | 0.8% | 6.3% | 1.6% |
| Parental illness or disability | 0.0% | 1.1% | 5.0% | 1.3% | 0.0% |
| Family in acute stress | 8.6% | 7.2% | 9.2% | 17.7% | 26.6% |
| Family dysfunction | 1.7% | 17.8% | 24.4% | 15.2% | 21.0% |
| Socially unacceptable behaviour | 0.0% | 5.3% | 4.2% | 6.3% | 1.6% |
| Low income | 1.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Absent parenting | 0.0% | 1.1% | 1.7% | 1.3% | 3.2% |

Children Ceasing to be in care

A total of 331 children ceased to be looked after in Warwickshire in 2014/15 compared with 334 in 2013/14, a slight decrease from the previous year. The most common reason for children ceasing to be looked after in Warwickshire is that they returned home to live with their parents or relatives (35%).

The percentage of children ceasing care to be made subject of a special guardianship order (SGO)⁶ has increased from less than 4% in 2009/10 to 14% in 2013/14, but has subsequently decreased in 2014/15 to 11%. The percentage of children ceasing to be looked after because they were adopted has increased from 28 children adopted in 2008/09 to 60 children during 2014/15, an increase of 82% from 2012/13 and an increase of 114% since 2008/09.

Figure 20: Number of Adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders in Warwickshire, 2009/10 – 2014/15

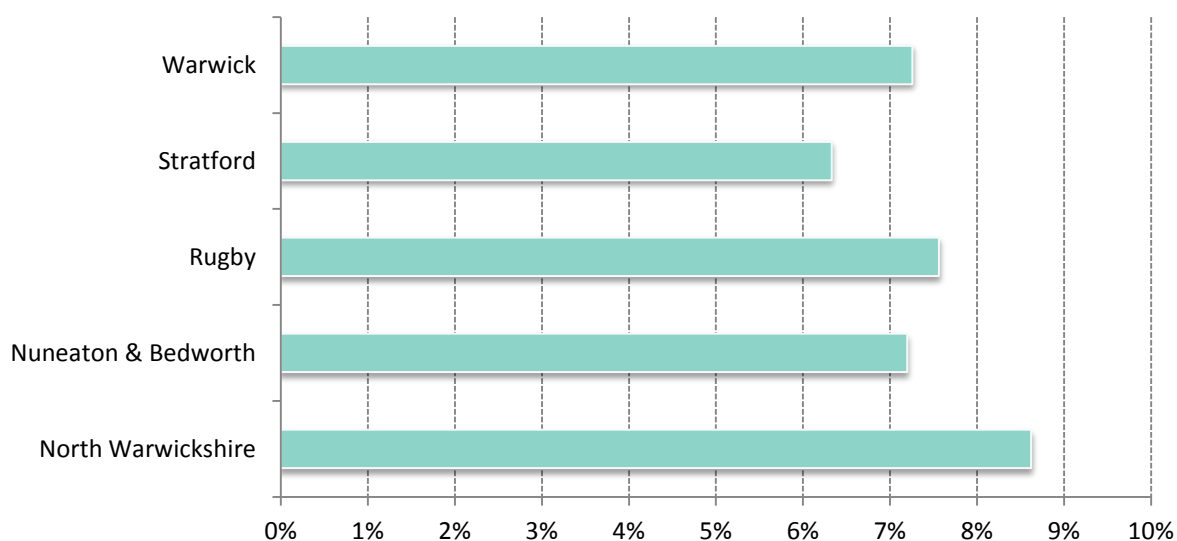


Out of 690 children looked after at 31st March 2015, 47 were placed for adoption, equating to 7.3% of placements excluding UASC or 6.8% of placements including UASC. This is higher than the national average of 4.8% of placements including UASC and higher than the West Midlands average of 5.0%.

Just over half (51%) of children placed for adoption at 31st March 2015 were in the north of the county (North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth), equating to 8.6% of placements in North Warwickshire and 7.2% of placements in Nuneaton and Bedworth (excluding UASC). Stratford-on-Avon had the lowest proportion of children placed for adoption at 6.3%.

⁶ A special guardianship order is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's 'special guardian'. It is a private law order made under the Children Act 1989 and is intended for those children who cannot live with their birth parents and who would benefit from a legally secure placement.

Figure 21: Proportion of CLA placed for adoption (excluding UASC) by district/borough at 31st March 2015



Locally produced data shows that the proportion of children placed for adoption has increased considerably in the north of the county since March 2015, but fallen elsewhere.- The table below shows the proportion of children placed for adoption as a snapshot by month. This data excludes UASC as well as IDS and Leaving Care teams.

The proportion of children placed for adoption in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth has increased by over 8 percentage points from March 2015 to November 2015 to 18.9% and 17.0% respectively. In Warwick, the proportion of children placed for adoption fell by 3.4 percentage points over the same time period and in Rugby, the proportion of children placed for adoption fell by 1.9 percentage points.

Figure 22: Proportion of children looked after placed for adoption as a snapshot by month by district/borough, excluding UASC, IDS and Leaving Care teams

| District | Mar-15 | ~ | Jun-15 | Jul-15 | Aug-15 | Sep-15 | Oct-15 | Nov-15 | ppt change from Mar-15 to Nov-15 |
|---------------------|--------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 10.6% | | 15.4% | 11.5% | 13.2% | 16.7% | 17.0% | 18.9% | 8.3ppt |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 8.8% | | 11.8% | 14.8% | 17.5% | 16.4% | 17.4% | 17.0% | 8.2ppt |
| Rugby | 10.0% | | 9.7% | 10.8% | 12.4% | 8.6% | 8.6% | 8.1% | -1.9ppt |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 7.9% | | 6.3% | 7.5% | 7.6% | 10.9% | 9.2% | 7.9% | 0.0ppt |
| Warwick | 9.9% | | 7.9% | 7.2% | 7.5% | 6.7% | 7.3% | 6.5% | -3.4ppt |

Projecting future numbers of children looked after

There is no level of certainty with regards to projecting the future number of children looked after in Warwickshire. The decision to take a child into care will be based on a wide ranging assessment of individual circumstances and wider environmental factors and circumstances.

There is no ideal number of CLA, therefore the best marker for this is compare Warwickshire’s children looked after rate with that of the statistical neighbours.

The latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2014 population estimates suggest that there were just over 112,000 children aged 0-17 years in Warwickshire. ONS population projections estimate that the 0-17 year population will grow by 6% (just over 7,200 children) by 2024. However, this growth is not equal across the county. The largest growth is expected in Rugby (9.7%) followed by Nuneaton & Bedworth (8.6%). By contrast, growth in Stratford-on-Avon is expected to be the smallest at only 1.1%.

Figure 23: Projections of 0-17 year olds in Warwickshire by district/borough, 2014-2024

| Area | 2014 | 2024 | Difference | % change |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Warwickshire | 112,262 | 119,467 | 7,205 | 6.4% |
| North Warwickshire | 12,290 | 12,597 | 307 | 2.5% |
| Nuneaton and Bedworth | 27,048 | 29,385 | 2,337 | 8.6% |
| Rugby | 22,895 | 25,115 | 2,220 | 9.7% |
| Stratford on Avon | 23,071 | 23,316 | 245 | 1.1% |
| Warwick | 26,958 | 29,053 | 2,095 | 7.8% |

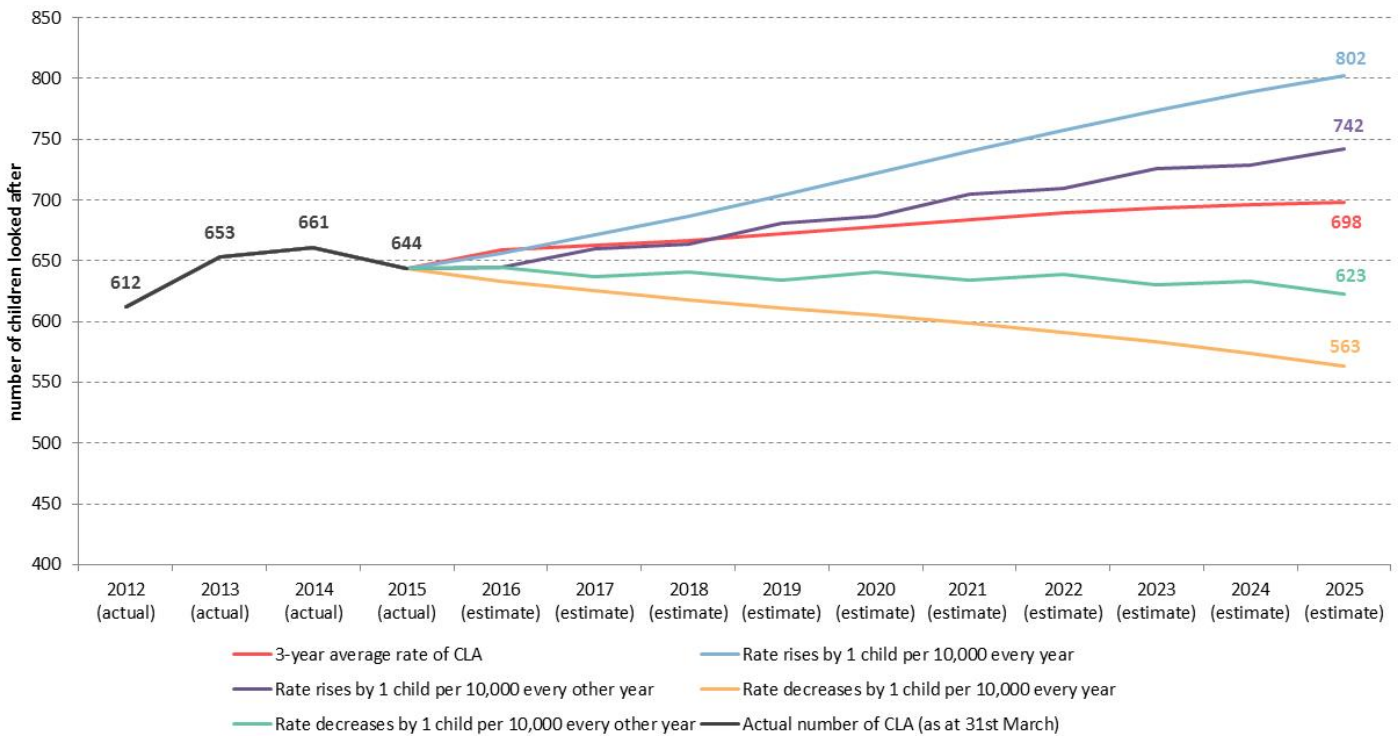
The average rate of children looked after in Warwickshire (excluding UASC) over the past three years is 58 per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years. If this rate is applied to population projections for Warwickshire, the number of children looked after (excluding UASC) is predicted to rise to approximately 700 children (excluding UASC) by 2025 due to population growth unless an effective strategy is put into place to reverse this trend and address the disparities between the districts and boroughs.

The following chart shows the predicted number of CLA in Warwickshire (excluding UASC) if the rate of CLA were to differ from the three-year average rate of 58 per 10,000 children. The chart shows how many CLA there would be in Warwickshire if the rate were to:

- Increase by 1 child per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years every year from 2015 as at 31st March
- Increase by 1 child per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years every other year from 2015 as at 31st March
- Decrease by 1 child per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years every year from 2015 as at 31st March
- Decrease by 1 child per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years every other year from 2015 as at 31st March

The numbers have been calculated using ONS yearly population projections for 0-17 year olds in Warwickshire.

Figure 24: Predicted number of children looked after in Warwickshire (excluding UASC), by differing rates per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years up to 2025



All the above figures exclude unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The number of children in this cohort are unaffected by demographic change (due to originating from other countries) and a rate for these children cannot be calculated without a denominator.

Over the past seven years the number of UASC has ranged from a low of 29 as at 31st March 2014 to a high of 87 as at 31st March 2011. The average number of UASC over this seven year period is 57 children. If the lowest number, average number and highest number of UASC seen over the past seven years as at 31st March in Warwickshire is added to the predicted number of children looked after (excluding UASC), the total predicted number of children looked after in Warwickshire (including UASC) as at 31st March 2025 may be as follows.

Figure 25: Predicted total number of CLA (including UASC) at 31st Mar 2025

| Rate of CLA in Warwickshire | 2025 predicted number of CLA in Warwickshire | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Lowest number of UASC (27 UASC) | Average number of UASC (57 UASC) | Highest number of UASC (87 UASC) |
| 3-year average rate of CLA (2013-15) | 727 | 755 | 785 |
| Rate rises by 1 child per 10,000 every year (from 2015) | 831 | 859 | 889 |
| Rate rises by 1 child per 10,000 every other year (from 2015) | 771 | 799 | 829 |
| Rate decreases by 1 child per 10,000 every year (from 2015) | 592 | 620 | 650 |
| Rate decreases by 1 child per 10,000 every other year (from 2015) | 652 | 680 | 710 |

At district/borough level, if the current (as at 31st March 2015) rate of CLA in each district/borough is applied to local level population projections, the number of children looked after (excluding UASC) at 2025 is shown in Figure 26 below.

Figure 26: Predicted number of CLA by district/borough up to 2025 at the rate as at 31st March 2015

| District/borough | 2015 (actual) | 2020 (estimate) | 2025 (estimate) | Change from 2015-2025 |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 58 | 58 | 60 | 2 |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 264 | 278 | 288 | 24 |
| Rugby | 119 | 126 | 131 | 12 |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 79 | 79 | 80 | 1 |
| Warwick | 124 | 130 | 134 | 10 |

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) are some of the most vulnerable children in the country. They can be alone, in an unfamiliar country and are likely to be surrounded by people who are unable to speak their first language. They are at risk of trafficking and exploitation, ranging from unpaid domestic service, bonded labour and benefit fraud through to trafficking for the sex industry and other criminal activities.

The local authority providing for their care has a duty to protect and support UASC. Arising from their lived experiences, UASC often have complex needs and require support to address these as soon as the child becomes looked after by the local authority. An assessment of need for an unaccompanied child needs to be carried out quickly, as the opportunity to intervene in their lives may be very narrow. A higher percentage of UASC go missing from care, often within the first 48 hours.

Due to recent, extensive media coverage on the number of asylum seekers arriving in Europe from conflict zones such as Afghanistan and increasingly from Syria, and the massing in Calais to try and gain entrance to the UK, unaccompanied children have become a focus of public attention.

A Freedom of Information (FOI) request by Community Care revealed that numbers of UASC being looked after by local authorities nationwide (excluding Kent), have increased by an average of 55% from October-September 2013 and the same period in 2014-15⁷. However, a relatively small number of councils are looking after a disproportionate share of UASC. The same Freedom of Information request found that nearly one third (32%) of councils responding to the request said that they did not have any UASC in their care.

An amendment to the Immigration Bill⁸ tabled in November 2015 sets out arrangements for transfer of responsibility of UASC between local authorities. Warwickshire has received four young people under this scheme.

The National Picture - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

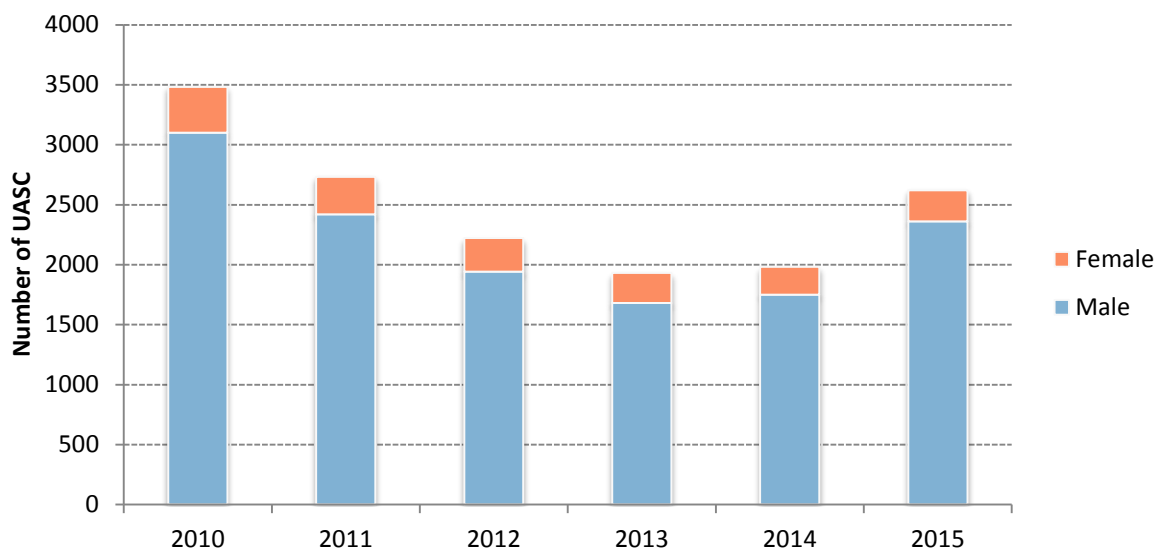
The number of looked after UASC known to local authorities in England fell steadily from 3,480 in 2010 to 1,930 in 2013. However, the number began to rise again in 2014 and was back up to approximately the same number of children seen in 2011 by 2015 (2,740 in 2011, 2,630 in 2015). This number is increasing due to the large number of asylum seekers entering Europe from conflict zones in the Middle East.

⁷ <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2016/01/13/huge-rise-child-refugee-population-leaves-many-councils-struggling-cope/>

⁸ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2015-2016/0074/amend/psc0742711a.pdf>

On average, approximately 88% of UASC are male with very little fluctuation each year (min 87.0% in 2013, max 89.7% in 2015).

Figure 27: Number of looked after Unaccompanied asylum seeking children, England, 2010-2015



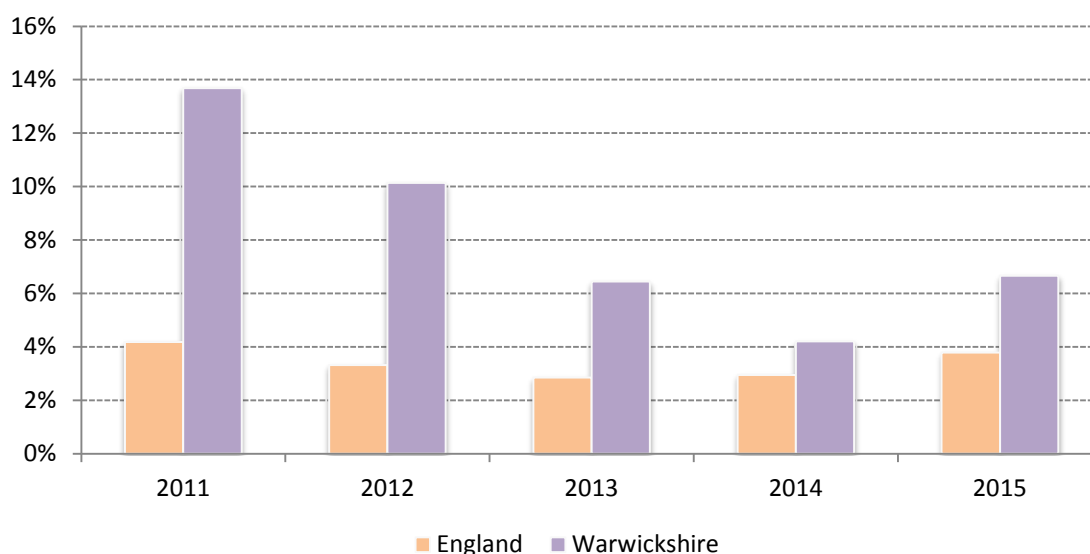
Asylum applications from Afghani UASC made up over half (52%) of all applications in 2009 but by 2014, had dropped to 9.2%. Conversely, asylum applications from Albanian UASC rose from less than 2% of total applications in 2009 to over one third (37%) in 2013, despite dropping again slightly in 2014 to 33%. The same pattern can be seen for Eritrean UASC, who made up under 8% of all applications in 2009 but almost one quarter (24%) of applications in 2014. Applications from Vietnamese UASC have stayed relatively consistent over the past five years, equating to, on average, around 6% of total applications per year.

In 2014, there were 310 age disputed asylum claims recorded in England by the Home Office. This represents 16% of all applications from UASC in 2014. However, the number of age disputed claims has fallen significantly since 2009 suggesting that either fewer adults are coming to the UK claiming to be children, or that staff at screening units at ports and asylum centres are more lenient in their approach to accepting age.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Warwickshire

Warwickshire consistently has a higher proportion of UASC in its child looked after population compared to the national average due, in part, to the M6 and M40 motorways which run through the county. This 'gap' has decreased from 2011 to 2014 but has increased again in 2015. The chart below shows the proportion of UASC in Warwickshire compared with England as at the 31st March each year.

Figure 28: Proportion of Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Warwickshire and England as at 31st March, 2011-2015



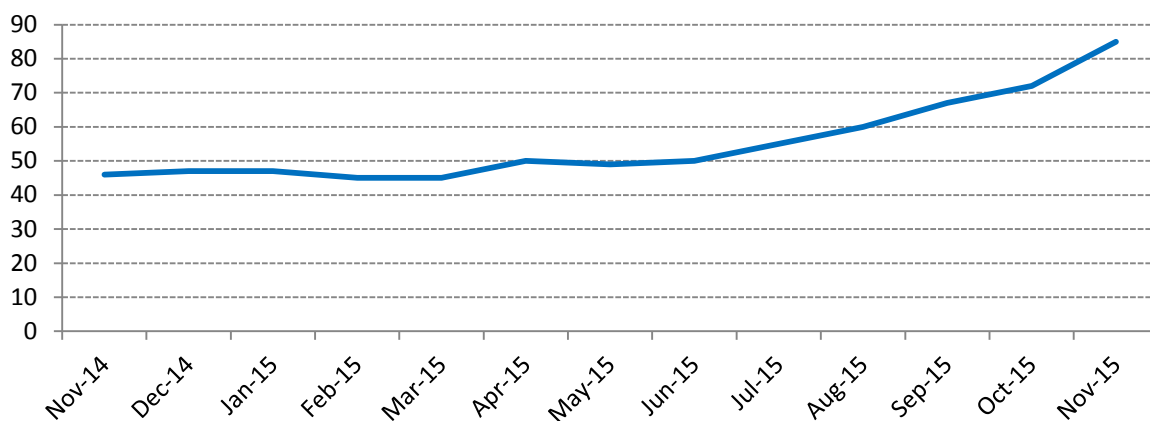
After a four year period of decline, the number of UASC in Warwickshire has risen from 29 children at 31st March 2014 to 45 children at 31st March 2015.

Figure 29: Unaccompanied asylum seeking children, Warwickshire, 2009-2015

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Unaccompanied asylum seeking children | 60 | 66 | 87 | 69 | 45 | 29 | 45 |
| % change to previous year | ~ | 10.0% | 31.8% | -20.7% | -34.8% | -35.6% | 55.2% |

Locally produced data shows that this number has continued to rise, currently standing at 85 UASC as at 31st December 2015. This recent rise in UASC in Warwickshire is attributed to the refugee crisis in Europe, caused largely by the displacement of people from war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Eritrea and Syria.

Figure 30: Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Warwickshire, Nov 14 – Nov 15



The total number of UASC to be accommodated by Warwickshire Local Authority at any point in 2014/15 was 74, a 7% decrease in the total number in 2013/14. 77% were between the ages of 16 and 18. Five were subsequently age assessed as adults after being accommodated as looked after. Only two out of 74 UASC were female, therefore 97% of UASC in 2014/15 were male.

Warwickshire has seen a drop in the number of asylum applications from children originating from Afghanistan, following the national trend. However, the majority (41%) of unaccompanied asylum seeker children accommodated by Warwickshire in 2014 were Afghani, followed by Eritreans (23%) and then Albanians and Iranians (7% each). The number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children from Eritrea and Albania has increased from 2011/12 to 2014/15, whereas the number of children from Afghanistan and Iran has fallen over the same period.

Figure 31: Nationality of unaccompanied asylum seeking children accommodated by Warwickshire at any point, by financial year

| Nationality | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Afghani | 72 | 51 | 36 | 30 |
| Albanian | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| Algerian | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Eritrean | 10 | 6 | 18 | 17 |
| Ethiopian | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Iranian | 15 | 16 | 5 | 5 |
| Iraqi | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Kuwaiti | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Moroccan | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Nigerian | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Palestinian | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Sudanese | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Syrian | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Vietnamese | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Total | 105 | 87 | 77 | 74 |

Depending on their age and circumstances, UASC in Warwickshire are either placed in foster care or with their peers in a shared house (semi-independent living). As at 31st December 2015, over half (51%) of UASC were accommodated in semi-independent living and just under half were in foster care.

Figure 32: Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Warwickshire as at 31st December 2015 by placement type

| Placement Type | Number | Proportion |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| P2 Independent Living (B&B, Bedsit etc.) | 43 | 50.6% |
| R1 Residential Care Home | 1 | 1.2% |
| U4 Placement with other foster carer - long term | 20 | 23.5% |
| U6 Placement other FC - not approved adopt/LTerm | 21 | 24.7% |
| Total | 85 | 100% |

The decision to place a child with a foster carer is usually dependent upon the age the child is/claiming to be. UASC aged over 16 years tend to be placed in semi-independent living whereas younger children tend to be placed with foster carers.

The table below shows the number of UASC accommodated by the district/borough of the placement address. This may be the address of a foster home or of a shared house. As at 31st December 2015 nearly three quarters (72%) of UASC in the care of Warwickshire were placed out of county, with 48 out of 85 children (56%) are placed in Coventry in shared living accommodation. Out of 24 children placed within Warwickshire, 15 (63%) were placed in Warwick District.

Figure 33: Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the care of Warwickshire local authority as at 31st December 2015 by district/borough of placement address

| Placement District | Number | Proportion |
|-----------------------|--------|------------|
| Coventry | 48 | 56% |
| Warwick | 15 | 18% |
| Nuneaton and Bedworth | 5 | 6% |
| Birmingham | 5 | 6% |
| Other West Midlands | 5 | 6% |
| Rugby | 3 | 4% |
| Other | 3 | 4% |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 1 | 1% |
| North Warwickshire | 0 | 0% |

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children missing from care

It is not uncommon for UASC to go missing from care and to never be found/ returned to care. The Department of Education's statutory guidance on the care of unaccompanied and

trafficked children⁹ makes recommendations as to the steps which may be necessary to protect unaccompanied children who may be at risk of going missing. These are:

- temporarily removing mobile phones to prevent traffickers making contact with children and putting in place other methods for the child to stay in touch with friends or family if required;
- encouraging children to memorise a phone number so that, if they do go missing from care but then find they are at risk, they can contact the local authority or carer;
- allowing access to the internet only in group settings;
- providing 24 hour supervision whenever a child leaves their care setting for the first 4 - 12 weeks in care;
- ensuring the child's room does not allow for easy exit, for example, is on an upper floor;
- providing appropriate training to previously trafficked children so that they can talk to trafficked children newly taken into care about the risks they face.

A strategy is being developed to ensure that Warwickshire adopts best practice in responding to the circumstances of unaccompanied children who might be at risk of trafficking. However, the unprecedented number of UASC that Warwickshire is currently experiencing makes putting these steps in more difficult, especially when there is a shortage of suitable placements.

The number of UASC who have gone missing from care and their nationalities are shown in Figure 34 below. Just over half of all missing asylum seeking children since 2011 have been Vietnamese.

Figure 34: Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Warwickshire who have gone missing from care by financial year and nationality

| Nationality | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | Total |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Afghani | 4 | 1 | | 1 | 3 | 9 |
| Albanian | | | 2 | | | 2 |
| Egyptian | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Iranian | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Nigerian | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Pakistani | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Palestinian | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Syrian | | | 1 | | 1 | 2 |
| Vietnamese | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 19 |
| Total | 9 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 15 | 37 |

⁹ Department of Education (2014). Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children. Accessed from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/330787/Care_of_unaccompanied_and_trafficked_children.pdf

In 2010, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre produced its annual Strategic Threat Assessment (STA) on the current picture of child trafficking in the UK. The largest identified trend in this report was the trafficking of Vietnamese children into the UK. The report identified 58 children potentially trafficked from Vietnam to the UK over the 12 month period of the study. 37 of these children were exploited in cannabis farms, with a number being exploited in brothels, nail bars and for street crime purposes.

As at 31st December 2015, there were no Vietnamese unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Warwickshire's care. This means that all the Vietnamese children who were looked after in 2015 (9 children) have gone missing and their whereabouts unknown.

The average length of time in placement before going missing for UASC who went missing from Warwickshire's care in 2015 was two days. This emphasises the need for Warwickshire to have clear strategy in accordance with the DfE's recommendations in order to protect UASC who may be at risk of going missing, especially for the first 48 hours in placement.

SERVICE PROVISION

Where possible, CLA should be supported to stay at home or be returned home to their families as soon as conditions allow. Where this is not possible, children should be able to grow up in a family environment which promotes their physical and emotional development and wellbeing. Research has shown that better outcomes for CLA are achieved where that placement offers stability, acceptance and inclusion¹⁰. A long term of permanent placement offers a CLA emotional permanence (attachment); physical permanence (stability) and legal permanence (the carer has parental responsibility for the child).

In order to deal with the effect of their early life experiences children may enter care with established challenging behaviours. These behaviour patterns will have helped children survive in difficult situations and which can affect how they respond to their care placement.

CLA are not a homogenous group and their characteristics (such as age, ethnicity) vary. Therefore, a choice of placement is essential in order to meet the wider ranging and differing needs of their looked after population.

The majority (75%) of CLA in England are based with foster carers. As well as recruiting new foster carers, it is also important to retain and support existing carers and ensure a package of support is built into the placement. This is particularly important for carers of children and young people who have complex needs. A significant minority of children are cared for in residential placements. It is important that children are placed in environments that meet their needs and that the staff provide a positive, supportive and caring environment.

Children looked after by placement type

The table below shows the number and proportion of CLA in Warwickshire by placement type as at 31st March 2009 and as at 31st March 2015 and the percentage point difference between the two dates.

¹⁰ Department for Education (2013) Improving Permanence for Looked After Children
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/264952/final_improving_permanence_data_pack_2013_sept.pdf

Figure 35: Number and proportion of children looked after in Warwickshire by placement type as at 31st March 2009 and 2015

| Placement Type | 2009 | | 2015 | | percentage point (ppt) change 2009-2015 |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| WCC Family and Friends (Kinship) Care | 55 | 10% | 59 | 9% | -1ppt |
| WCC Foster Care | 317 | 59% | 336 | 49% | -10ppt |
| IFA Foster Care | 71 | 13% | 131 | 19% | 6ppt |
| Independent Living | 6 | 1% | 43 | 6% | 5ppt |
| Family Centre or Parent & Baby Unit | 1 | 0% | 3 | 0% | ~ |
| Placed for Adoption | 19 | 4% | 47 | 7% | 3ppt |
| Placed with Parents | 47 | 9% | 32 | 5% | -4ppt |
| Y.O.I or Prison or Police Custody | 1 | 0% | 1 | 0% | ~ |
| Residential Home/School | 17 | 3% | 32 | 5% | 2ppt |
| Secure Unit | 2 | 0% | 2 | 0% | ~ |
| Other Placement | 0 | 0% | 4 | 1% | 1ppt |
| WARWICKSHIRE TOTAL | 536 | 100% | 690 | 100% | ~ |

Foster care placements

Over three-quarters of children looked after in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015 were placed with foster carers. However, the number and proportion of children in foster placements has fallen in Warwickshire from 83% of all CLA at 31st March 2009 to a low of 76% of all CLA at 31st March 2015. Nationally, the proportion of CLA in foster placements has risen over the same time period, from 72% in 2009 to 75% in 2015 (slightly lower than Warwickshire).

The fall in the proportion of CLA in foster care placements in Warwickshire is most pronounced among children placed with local authority approved carers (excluding Warwickshire approved family and friends foster carers), a 10 percentage point drop from 31st March 2009 to 31st March 2015, from 59% of all Warwickshire placements, to 49% of all Warwickshire placements. Conversely, the proportion of children placed with an independent fostering agency (IFA) placement has increased over the same time period, from 13% at March 2009 to 19% at March 2015.

At district/borough level (excluding UASC), as at 31st March 2015, North Warwickshire had the highest proportion of CLA in foster care placements (85% of all placements in the borough). Stratford-on-Avon had the lowest proportion of CLA in foster care placements (71% of all placements in the district). The remaining CLA who were not in foster care placements would be placed with parents or other placement types such as residential care or independent living.

North Warwickshire had the highest proportion of CLA placed with WCC foster carers, at 64% of all placements, however, the borough also had the second highest proportion of CLA placed with independent agency foster carers (21%) and no children fostered by friends and

family. Stratford-on-Avon had the lowest proportion of children placed with independent agency foster carers (13%) and the lowest proportion of children placed with WCC foster carers (44%), however it had the highest proportion of children fostered by friends and family at 14%.

Figure 36: Number and proportion of CLA in foster care placements, by foster placement type & district/ borough, as at 31st March 2015

| District/Borough | Agency Foster Care | WCC Foster Care | Foster with Friend/Family | Total Foster Placements |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 12 (21%) | 37 (64%) | 0 (0%) | 49 (84%) |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 64 (24%) | 128 (48%) | 19 (7%) | 211 (80%) |
| Rugby | 19 (16%) | 54 (45%) | 14 (12%) | 87 (73%) |
| Stratford | 10 (13%) | 35 (44%) | 11 (14%) | 56 (71%) |
| Warwick | 20 (16%) | 63 (51%) | 15 (12%) | 98 (79%) |
| Warwickshire | 125 (19%) | 317 (49%) | 59 (9%) | 501 (78%) |

Other placements

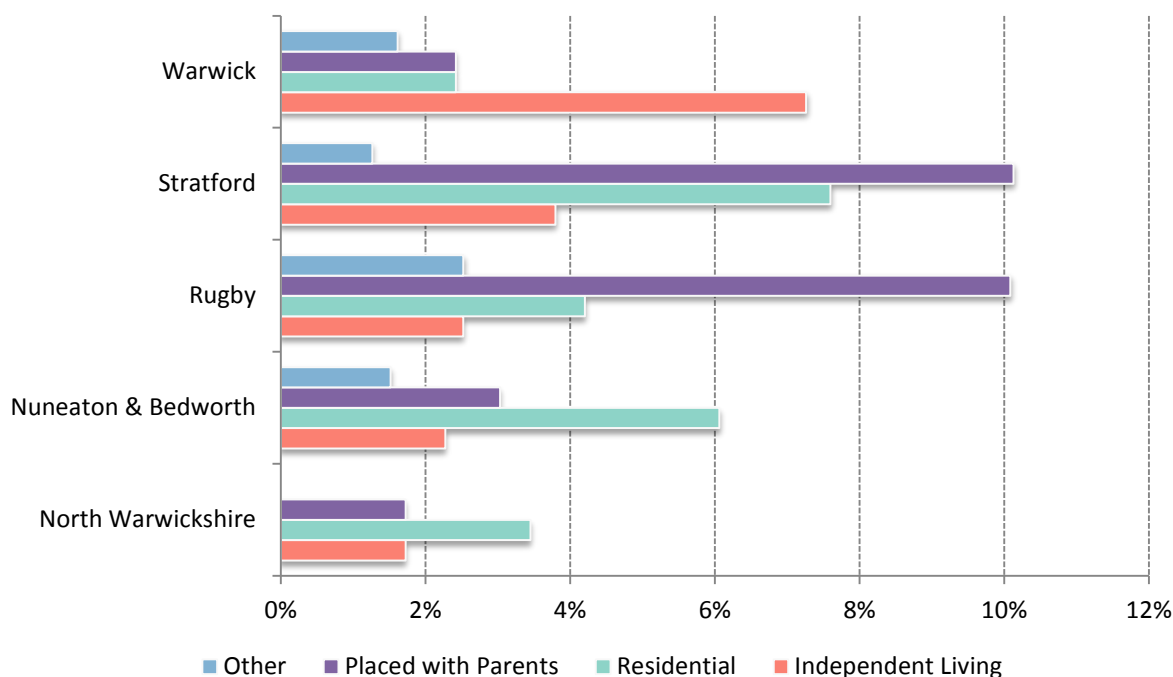
The proportion of CLA placed in independent living has increased over time from 1.1% of all placements as at 31st March 2009 to 6.2% of all placements as at March 2015. This reflects the increasing proportion of older UASC who are placed in semi-independent shared housing with support. The use of residential placements has also increased over the same period, from 3.2% of all placements as at 31st March 2009 to a high of 4.6% of all placements at 31st March 2015.

Figure 37: Number and proportion of children looked after in Warwickshire by placement type as at 31st March 2009 and 2015

| Placement Type | 2009 | | 2015 | | percentage point (ppt) change 2009-2015 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Foster placement with friend or family | 55 | 10% | 59 | 9% | -1ppt |
| Foster placement with LA carer | 317 | 59% | 336 | 49% | -10ppt |
| Foster placement with IFA carer | 71 | 13% | 131 | 19% | 6ppt |
| Independent Living Placement | 6 | 1% | 43 | 6% | 5ppt |
| Parent & Baby Unit | 1 | 0% | 3 | 0% | ~ |
| Placed for adoption | 19 | 4% | 47 | 7% | 3ppt |
| Placed with own parents – children subject to care orders | 47 | 9% | 32 | 5% | -4ppt |
| Prison/Police Custody | 1 | 0% | 1 | 0% | ~ |
| Residential Care/School | 17 | 3% | 32 | 5% | 2ppt |
| Secure Unit | 2 | 0% | 2 | 0% | ~ |
| Other Placement | 0 | 0% | 4 | 1% | 1ppt |
| WARWICKSHIRE TOTAL | 536 | 100% | 690 | 100% | ~ |

At district/borough level (excluding UASC), as at 31st March 2015, Stratford-on-Avon had the highest proportion of children looked after placed in residential care at 7.6% of all placements, compared with Warwick which only had 2.4% of children looked after placed in residential care. Warwick had the highest proportion of CLA placed in independent living (7.3%) compared with North Warwickshire (1.7%) and a Warwickshire average (excluding UASC) of 3.4% of all placements.

Figure 38: Proportion of CLA by placement type, excluding foster care, by district/borough at 31st March 2015



In and out of county placements

Statutory guidance states that CLA should be placed close to their originating home, with access to local services and close to their friends and family, when it is safe to do so¹¹. As at 31st March 2015, 64% of Warwickshire’s children looked after were placed within the Warwickshire boundary, with the remaining 36% placed outside the local authority boundary. This is a similar proportion to the national average and to the West Midlands average (both rounded to the nearest ten). It should be noted however that Warwickshire have a number of approved foster carers who live just outside of the county boundary in Redditch, Coventry and Tamworth.

¹¹ Sufficiency: securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children (statutory guidance), Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2010; www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-sufficient-accommodation-for-looked-after-children

Figure 39: CLA placed inside and outside the LA boundary, as at 31st March 2015

| Area | Inside LA boundary | Outside LA boundary |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| England | 60% | 40% |
| West Midlands | 59% | 41% |
| Warwickshire | 64% | 36% |

The proportion of CLA placed within the Warwickshire boundary changes depending on the placement type, as shown in the table below. Children looked after placed in specialist fostering and residential placements are more likely to be further away because of their specialism.

Figure 40: CLA in Warwickshire by placement type & placement location, as at 31st March 2015

| Placement Type | Warwickshire | | Out of County | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----|---------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % |
| IFA Foster Care | 38 | 29% | 93 | 71% |
| Family Centre or Parent and Baby Unit | 0 | 0% | 3 | 100% |
| Independent Living | 18 | 42% | 25 | 58% |
| Other Placement | 2 | 50% | 2 | 50% |
| Placed for Adoption | 44 | 94% | 3 | 6% |
| Placed with Parents | 25 | 78% | 7 | 22% |
| Residential care | 4 | 13% | 28 | 88% |
| Secure Unit | 0 | 0% | 2 | 100% |
| WCC Foster Care | 265 | 79% | 71 | 21% |
| WCC Family and Friends (Kinship) Care | 48 | 81% | 11 | 19% |
| Y.O.I. or Prison or Police Custody | 0 | 0% | 1 | 100% |

The proportion of CLA placed within the Warwickshire boundary also changes depending on the age of CLA. Some placements, such as independent living arrangements and residential care, are only suitable for older children, however others, especially foster care placements (which make up over three-quarters of all placements as at 31st March 2015) are suitable for children looked after of all ages.

The table below shows the number and proportion of CLA in a foster care placement as at 31st March 2015 placed within Warwickshire and out of county by type of foster care placement and age. The proportion of children placed in foster care placements which are out of county increases with age (21% of all foster care placements for CLA aged 0-4 years compared with 41% of all foster placements for CLA aged 16+ years). This suggests that Warwickshire has fewer foster placements than the county requires for older CLA.

Figure 41: Children looked after in Warwickshire in foster care by foster care placement type & placement location, by age, as at 31st March 2015

| Age of CLA | IFA Foster Care | | WCC Foster Care | | WCC Family & Friends | | Total | |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Warks | Out of County | Warks | Out of County | Warks | Out of County | Warks | Out of County |
| 0-4 | 7 (58%) | 5 (42%) | 48 (81%) | 11 (19%) | 9 (90%) | 1 (10%) | 64 (79%) | 17 (21%) |
| 5-10 | 8 (28%) | 21 (72%) | 73 (80%) | 18 (20%) | 11 (79%) | 3 (21%) | 92 (67%) | 42 (33%) |
| 11-15 | 13 (21%) | 48 (79%) | 91 (75%) | 31 (25%) | 20 (91%) | 2 (8%) | 124 (60%) | 81 (40%) |
| 16 + | 10 (34%) | 19 (36%) | 20 (91%) | 2 (8%) | 8 (62%) | 5 (38%) | 38 (59%) | 26 (41%) |
| Total | 38 (29%) | 93 (71%) | 265 (79%) | 71 (21%) | 48 (81%) | 11 (19%) | 351 (67%) | 175 (33%) |

The map below shows the distribution of placements by placement postcode for Warwickshire's children looked after population as at 31st March 2015. Just under 65% of children are placed within Warwickshire, however if CLA who are placed in a neighbouring local authority to Warwickshire are included, this proportion rises to 91%.

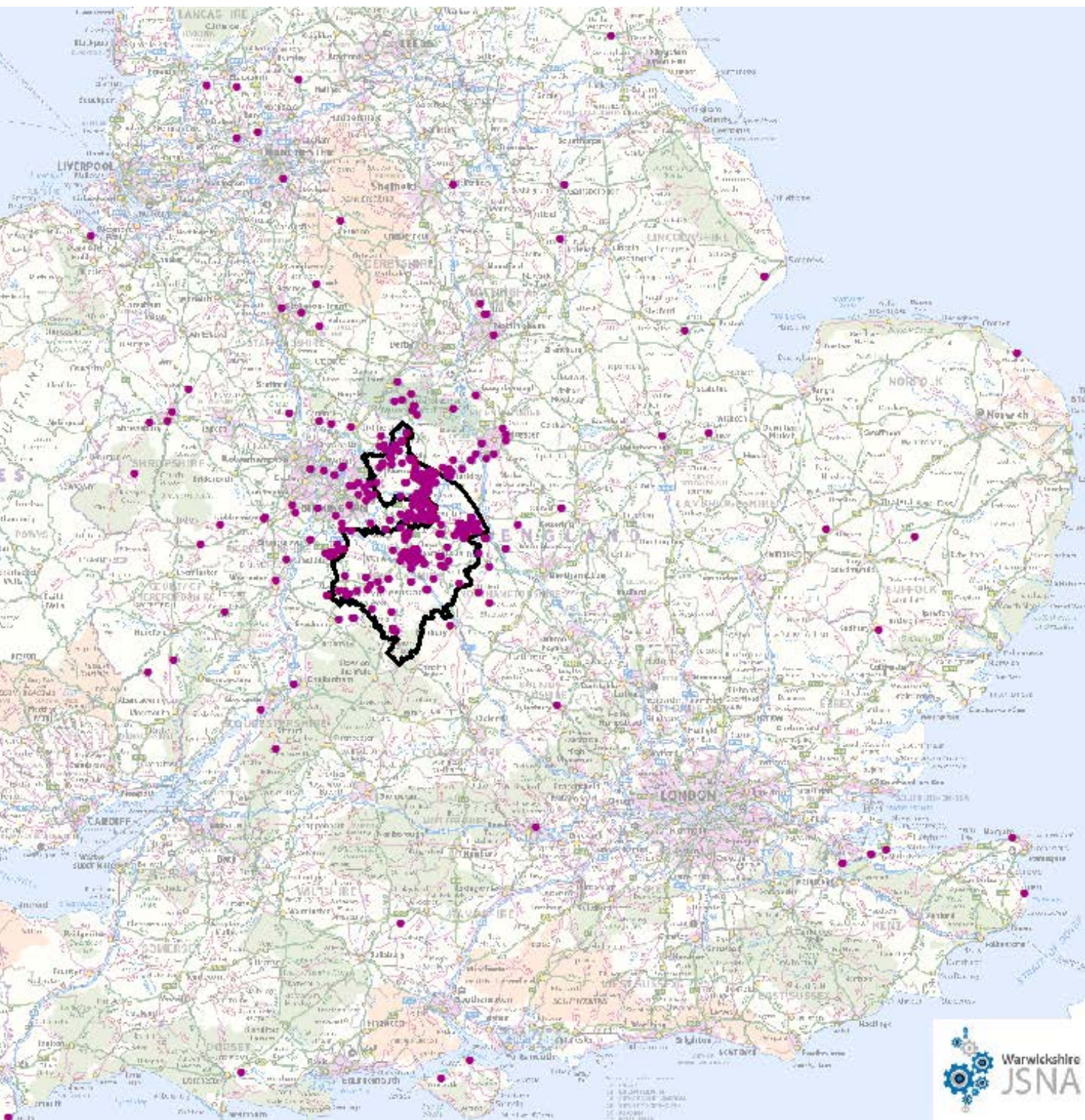
The distribution of foster care placements within Warwickshire is shown on the second map. These clusters tend to be higher in the urban areas of the county, reflecting the larger populations in these wards.

Seven out of the top ten wards with the highest numbers of foster care placements at 31st March 2015 are in Nuneaton & Bedworth (Poplar, Galley Common, St. Nicolas, Bede, Abbey, Weddington and Bar Pool wards). Of the remaining three wards, two are in Warwick (Sydenham and Brunswick wards) and one in Rugby (Wolston & the Lawfords ward). All of the above wards have more than ten foster care placements at 31st March 2015.

Placement postcode for Warwickshire Children Looked After at 31st March 2015

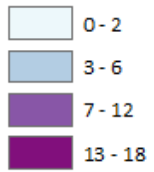
Numbers of Children Looked After by
Placement Local Authority, 2015
(excluding Warwickshire)

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Coventry | 62 |
| Birmingham | 15 |
| Redditch | 15 |
| Daventry | 11 |
| Hinckley and Bosworth | 10 |
| North West Leicestershire | 9 |
| Blaby | 8 |
| Solihull | 8 |
| Tamworth | 8 |
| Shropshire | 7 |
| Wychavon | 7 |
| Bromsgrove | 5 |

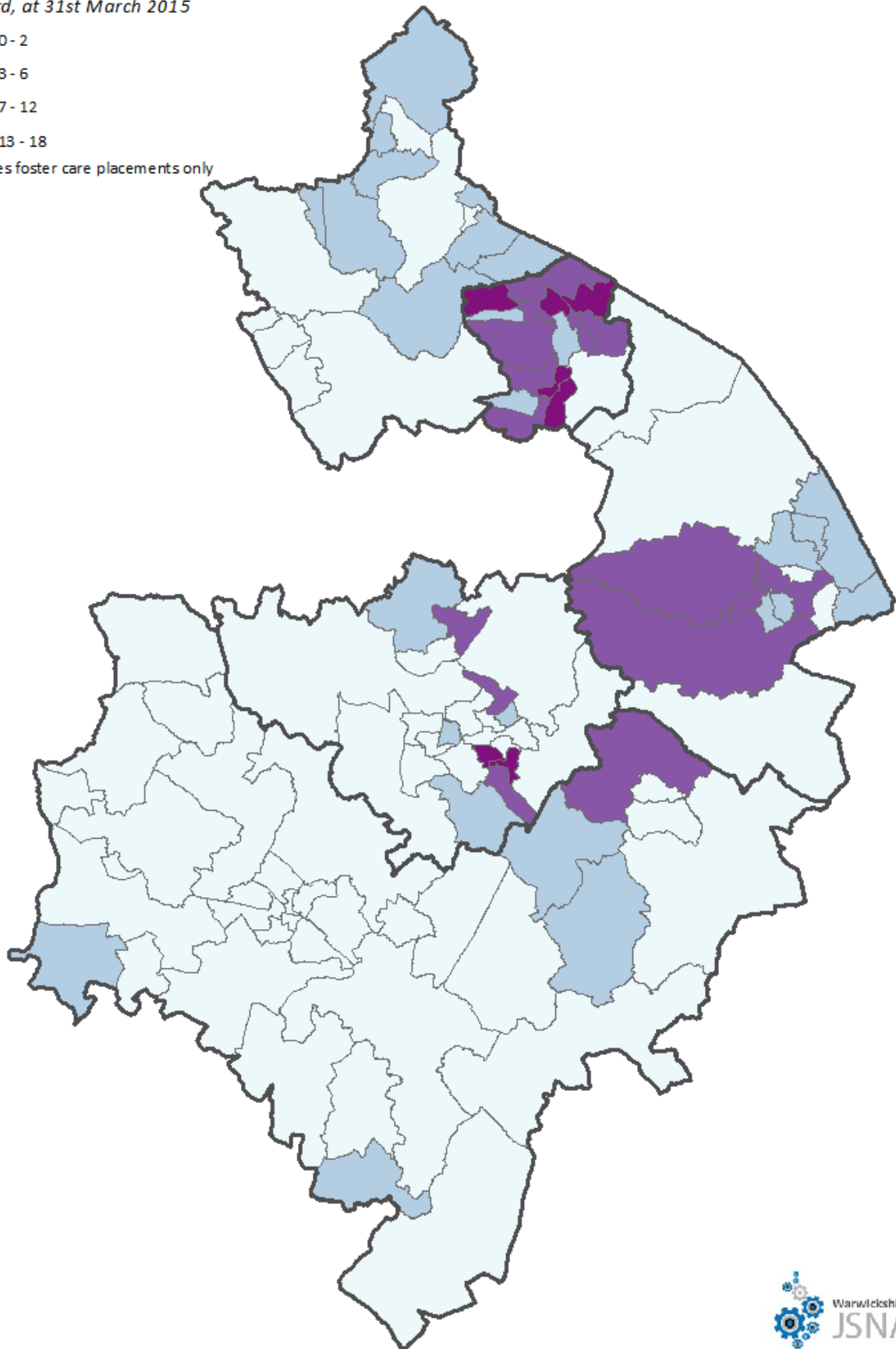


Children Looked After by Placement postcode*

By Ward, at 31st March 2015



* Includes foster care placements only

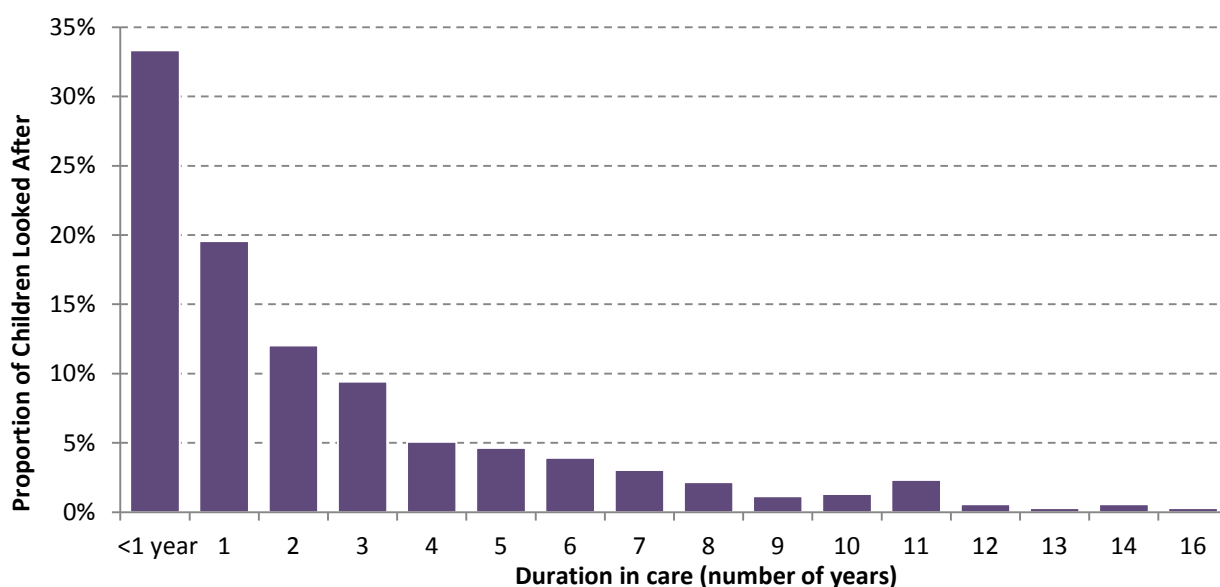


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Duration in Care

A third (33.3%) of CLA in Warwickshire at 31st March 2015 have been looked after for less than a year. This equates to 230 children across the county. This tapers sharply as the number of years increase, from one in five (20%) children being looked after for one year, compared to 5.7% or 39 children who have been looked after for ten years or more.

Figure 42: Duration in care for Warwickshire's Children Looked After, at 31st March 2015



Over three quarters (76%) of UASC are looked after for less than a year. Across the districts/boroughs, the proportion of children in care for less than a year varies from 14% of children in North Warwickshire to 35% in Rugby. Of the districts/boroughs in Warwickshire, three (North Warwickshire, Rugby and Stratford-on-Avon) have the highest proportion of CLA in the two to five year band. However, the largest group in Nuneaton and Bedworth and Warwick are those children in care for less than a year.

Long term stability

The proportion of CLA considered to be in a long term stable placement¹² has fallen over recent years. In 2014/15, the proportion has reached its lowest point in the five year period (2010/11 – 2014/15) with only three in five (60%) CLA under 16 years old considered to have a long term stable placement. However, these indicators refer to stability afforded through adoption, they do not account for the number of CLA who achieved stability through special guardianship which accounts for a further 11%.

¹² A long term stable placement is a CLA aged under 16 years old who has been looked after continuously for at least two and a half years, who has been living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or are placed for adoption.

Figure 43: Long term stability, 2010/11-2014/15

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Warwickshire | 71.0% | 69.0% | 63.8% | 62.0% | 60.3% |
| Statistical Neighbours | 66.3% | 64.0% | 63.4% | 63.8% | TBC |
| England | 68.0% | 68.0% | 67.0% | 67.0% | TBC |

There were 126 children as at 31st March 2015 who were considered to be in a long term stable placement. Over four in five (81%) of these children were aged between 10-15 years old. At district/borough level, the largest volumes and proportion of long term placements are in Nuneaton and Bedworth (46 children or 37% of Warwickshire's total). This might be expected as the borough has the highest rates of CLA in Warwickshire.

Short term stability

The percentage of children with three or more placement moves in a given year is an important measure of stability. Warwickshire has consistently remained above 12% on this measure with a further deterioration in the latest year to 15.5%. This will be particularly relevant when comparing Warwickshire's performance to its statistical neighbours in 2015 as the proportions of CLA with three or more placement moves were similar at 31st March 2014 (12.2% and 12% respectively). This will not be known until the benchmarking data is released.

Figure 44: Percentage of children with three of more placements, 2010/11-2014/15

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Warwickshire | 11.8% | 12.8% | 12.5% | 12.2% | 15.5% |
| Statistical Neighbours | 11.5% | 11.5% | 11.1% | 12.0% | TBC |
| England | 11.0% | 11.0% | 11.0% | 11.0% | TBC |

As at 31st March 2015, 107 children had three or more placements during the year. Seven in ten (71%) of these children were aged ten years old or over and 35% were aged 16 years or over. Higher numbers are seen in the two older age groups across all of the districts/boroughs in Warwickshire.

Figure 45: District/Borough & age breakdown of three plus placement moves, 31 March 15

| | Under 1 | 1-4 years | 5-9 years | 10-15 years | 16+ years | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| North Warwickshire | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 6 | 4 | 7 | 12 | 12 | 41 |
| Rugby | 3 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 4 | 22 |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 9 |
| Warwick | 1 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 4 | 16 |
| Asylum Seeking Children | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 13 | 15 |
| Warwickshire | 12 | 8 | 11 | 38 | 38 | 107 |

Of the children that were aged 16 and over, asylum seeking children account for over a third (34%) of those with three or more placement moves in the year. Nuneaton & Bedworth has the highest numbers of children who have had three or more placement moves in the county, accounting for 38% of the county's numbers.

Figure 46 shows all children who had three or more placement by placement type at 31st March 2015. During 2014/15, three in ten (30%) were placed with a WCC foster carer and a similar proportion with an independent agency foster carer (28%). This was followed by 14% or 15 children in independent living placements, supporting the view that lack of placement stability is more of an issue for older CLA.

Figure 46: Placement Type as at 31 March 2015 of children who experienced three or more placement moves during 2014/15

| Placement Type at 31 March 2015 | Numbers | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| WCC Foster Care | 32 | 29.9% |
| IFA Care | 30 | 28.0% |
| Independent living | 15 | 14.0% |
| Placed for Adoption | 9 | 8.4% |
| Residential care | 8 | 7.5% |
| WCC family and friends (Kinship) care | 7 | 6.5% |
| Placed with Parents | 4 | 3.7% |
| Other Placement | 1 | 0.9% |
| Secure Unit | 1 | 0.9% |
| Warwickshire Total | 107 | 100% |

Under the remit of the JSNA, three case file audits have been completed to provide more detail to the assessment and to reflect the local authority's concern about deterioration in performance in key areas and in response to the increasing use of residential care. These have been the:

- Review of the increased use of residential care placements
- Review of children with three or more placement moves
- A further case file audit of recently looked after children to review whether there was the opportunity to divert or prevent a child entering care. This will feed into the Prevention JSNA Needs Assessment (preventing/reducing the numbers of children coming in care).

The key messages from the case file audits can be found in Appendix 1.

National Children in Care and Care Leavers survey

The State of the Nation Report is the 2015 version of the ‘Care Monitor’ survey of children in care and care leavers originally run annually by the Children’s Rights Director. The Children’s Commissioner publishes regular State of the Nation reports into aspects of children’s lives. The first of five annual reports,¹³ published in August 2015, focuses on the experiences of children in care and care leavers and provides valuable intelligence to support this needs assessment. The Children’s Commissioner argues the following should be included in any improvement plan for CLA:

1. It is essential that children’s views are sought and influence all decisions that are made about them and that all decisions are fully explained to them.
2. Support for all care leavers is extended up to 25 years of age.
3. Every child in care should have at least one continuing and consistent relationship with someone who is there for them through their time in care and into adulthood.
4. Services should enable children to keep their social worker for longer through their time in care.
5. Every child in care should have access to high quality therapeutic care to enable them to recover from past harm & build resilience & emotional wellbeing.

In total, just under 3,000 surveys were collected nationally. The report highlights that for many, the system does a good job, providing greater safety and security than that which could be provided by birth parents.

A number of key areas came out of the national survey when children were asked, ‘**What makes care good?**’

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Being listened to | Having good and supportive relationships with caring adults |
| Making progress personally with your life | Having contact with birth family |
| Being ordinary | Normal |
| Feeling a member of the family | Stability |

“People respecting my judgment”

“Having a voice and being able to make my own decisions...”

¹³ State of the Nation, Report 1, Children in Care and Care Leavers survey 2015, http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Care%20monitor%20v12_1.pdf

However, some children do not find the stability they need in the care system and many can be very vulnerable because of their life experiences.

‘What would make care better?’

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Being listened to | Supported for as long as you need |
| Being understood, believed in and encouraged | Having continuing relationships with carers and professionals and consistency |
| Stability and a sense of belonging | Making sense of the past, being able to understand what had happened and getting help |

“To give more of a chance of a better life no matter what situation a child is in. Be more supportive and never give up on them. That is the whole point of the care system.”

The stigma of being in care was a strong theme emerging from respondents nationally. Day-to-day life was affected by the ‘bureaucracy’ of being in care. There was a strong message from those in foster care, who might perhaps have had greater hopes of



-  **53% of children**
Felt scared coming into care
-  **41% of children**
Felt sad coming into care
-  **14% of children**
Felt happy coming into care
-  **22% of children**
Felt safe coming into care
-  **13% of children**
Felt relaxed coming into care

being in a ‘normal’ environment. Children wanted a social worker they could rely on to be honest with them and who would help them to understand what might happen next. There was a strong sense that children wanted to be kept informed. In addition to needing to understand what might happen in the future, some children reported needing help to understand their current situation and to make sense of the trauma they had experienced.

Coming into Care

Nationally, children were asked ‘**When you first came into care how did you feel?**’ Those children who came into care (became ‘looked after’) as a result of a voluntary agreement were less likely to report they were too young to understand and more likely

to report that they understood why they came into care. Over half the children who said what they felt on entering care said they were scared (53.6%) and 41.9% felt sad.

“I felt scared and sad, I wanted to be taken away from my mum as she was hurting me and my brother but was scared what was going to happen.”

Living in the right place

The overwhelming majority (81%) thought they were living in the right place and felt that being part of a family was an important reason for thinking they were in the right place. This was not just the case for children in foster care. However, 10% of children and young people nationally said that where they lived was not right for them and the main reasons stated were that they:

- Did not feel they were listened to;
- Not helped;
- Lack freedom;
- Lack trust;
- Do not get on with carers;
- Feel they do not belong;
- Are not living with their birth family;
- Lack of contact with birth family;
- Are located too far away from family, friends, school or college;
- Or live in an isolating environment.

Feeling safe

Care leavers were the group most likely to cite this as important in terms of feeling safe. This group is the least likely to feel as if they have someone watching out for them: this was a recurrent theme for all other groups in making them feel safe.

Of the children answering ‘Yes’ to **‘Do those who look after you know when you are worried, or feel unsafe?’** by far the majority were children living in foster care. Nationally, fewer children living in residential homes or care leavers answered, perhaps suggesting that children living in foster care can feel more confident that they are ‘known’ by their carers.

Leaving Care

Nationally, nearly one in five (18%) respondents to this survey were care leavers. Just over half 54% of care leavers stated that they left care at the right time. Just under a third, 30% of young people, said they had not left care at the right time for them and a further 16% reported being unsure. The reasons were mainly feeling settled in their

placement and being forced to leave it before they were ready.

Like children in care, those getting ready to leave care expressed what worked best in terms of being listened to, taken seriously and having an influence over their futures. But many also wrote of the importance of professionals, foster carers and support workers in their lives. More young people expressed appreciation of the opportunity to remain in foster care or semi-independent accommodation as they reached adulthood than did those who indicated their welcome of a new found freedom having left care. There was pride in making progress but a value was placed on having supportive adults around you.



Warwickshire Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council¹⁴ in Warwickshire are the voice for children and young people in the care of Warwickshire County Council. The Council is made up of children and young people aged between 11 and 20 years old and includes those placed with foster carers or in supported lodgings, with experience of life in care.

The Children in Care Council carry out a number of roles including:

- Improving services for looked after children and young people in Warwickshire up to the age of 24.
- Listen to looked after children and young people so that their voice can be heard by adults that run Children’s and Families services.
- Improve gaps in services because the Council want looked after children and young people to have a better quality life.
- Want the experience of coming into the care of Warwickshire County Council to be a positive one for looked after children and young people.
- Working as a team and co-operating with each other to get good results for looked after children and young people.

Key Messages from Warwickshire Children in Care Council

The Warwickshire Children in Care Council planned, prepared and organised a consultation event that took place at the Virtual School Award Ceremony in November 2015. The data collected as part of this consultation can be compared against national trends from the 2015 State of the Nation Report, referred to earlier in the chapter, giving an indication on how

¹⁴ For more information on the Children in Care Council and Warwickshire’s Participation Strategy with children and young people, please visit: <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/cicc>

children in Warwickshire feel in comparison to the national sample of CLA.¹⁵

The experiences of CLA with foster carers in Warwickshire was positive overall, with phrases such as 'talks to me', 'always helps,' and 'respects me.' Where children were less positive about their foster carers, feedback included that they were 'not listening' and 'getting angry'. Similarly, the survey was positive about experiences with social workers overall. A number of key areas emerged when Warwickshire children were asked about their social workers:

Experience of Social Workers

| Positive | Negative |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 'Understands me' | 'Being ignored' and 'Not listened to' |
| 'Lets me learn new things' | 'Asking difficult decisions' |

The data suggests that in Warwickshire, children and young people are more likely to ask their foster carer or social worker for help than compared to the national survey, where children and young people are likely to go to friends or a teacher in the first instance. Fewer Warwickshire children and young people felt they knew how an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) could help them (33%) compared to their peers nationally (63%).

In the 2015 Warwickshire consultation, most respondents said they knew what a care plan is, however, half of respondents say they did not know what their care plan says and two thirds of respondents say that they do not know or do not agree with what their care plan says.

Experience of placement

Children and young people in Warwickshire were asked to rate their placement experience on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is a negative experience and 10 is a positive experience. Over seven in ten (73%) children and young people rated their placement experience as 10 in Warwickshire. Five children and young people scored their experience of care as five or less.

The top three things that children & young people felt they should have more of a say about in Warwickshire are similar to those themes nationally, including where they live, contact with family and the future. School choice was also a theme added by Warwickshire CLA.

More CLA in Warwickshire felt they were doing well at school. All Warwickshire children that took part in the activities felt that they were doing 'just about ok,' good or 'very good' at school. However, half of respondents in the Warwickshire consultation felt that their school was too far and half of respondents said their school had changed.

¹⁵ Although it is worth noting that the sample size for the Warwickshire survey is relatively small, responses ranged from five to 28 respondents and in some cases, the methodology may not have been replicated in the same way as the national survey.

All children asked in Warwickshire felt 'safe' or 'sometimes safe' where they lived; up slightly from the 2014 survey (96%). However, conversely, a higher proportion of young people worry about their safety in Warwickshire when compared to the national picture. Half of children asked 'sometimes worry' about their safety. The equivalent national care monitor survey (from the previous years' survey) shows that just under a third (32%) of children and young people worry about their safety.

As part of this Warwickshire consultation, the following were identified as the top five dangers to children and young people compared to national themes:

| Warwickshire | | National | |
|--------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. | Drugs | 1. | Drugs |
| 2. | Alcohol | 2. | Bullying |
| 3. | Strangers | 3. | Alcohol |
| 4. | Knives | 4. | Strangers |
| 5. | Bullying | 5. | Knives |

Care Leavers workshop

A workshop was held in October 2015 with 21 young people working alongside 16 staff from the Asylum Seeker and Care Leaving team. The group discussed a number of issues in providing good quality services to care leavers. The information collected has led to the development of an action plan to improve services to care leavers with required changes and actions up to March 2017.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Children who are looked after by the local authority are more likely to have poor experiences of education and very low educational achievement at school¹⁶. The proportion of CLA who reach the average levels of attainment expected at all ages remains significantly lower than for non-looked after children and few progress on to higher education. This greatly increases the chances of children looked after becoming NEET.

The Social Exclusion Unit's report "[A Better Education for Children in Care](#)"¹⁷ identified five key reasons why children looked after underachieve in education:

- their lives are characterised by instability;
- they spend too much time out of school;
- they do not have sufficient help with their education if they fall behind;
- primary carers are not expected or equipped to provide sufficient support and encouragement for learning and development;
- they have unmet emotional, mental & physical needs that impact on their education

Closing the gap between the attainment of CLA and their peers remains a high priority for central and local government. The Association of Directors of Childrens Services (ADACS) Joint Policy Paper, "[The Educational Achievement of Children in Care](#)"¹⁸ published in December 2015 describes the relationship between being in care and poor educational outcomes and explains this, in part, by the trauma of pre-care experiences such as poverty, maltreatment and neglect. The research findings suggest that care generally provides a protective factor, with early admission to care being associated with consistently better educational outcomes. Care also benefits those admitted into the care system later, but it does not fully reverse the damage that has already been done.

Another issue highlighted in the paper is the fluidity of the care population. While the cohort of children in care is large nationally, it is relatively small and heterogeneous locally. Simplistic headline year-on-year metrics are not statistically valid when assessing performance at local authority or school level, making year-on-year comparison difficult.

Too often there is an underlying assumption that simply being in care leads to poor outcomes. This assumption is strongly refuted by the research evidence. This incorrect assumption leads to educational targets being set too low, and not being sufficiently

¹⁶ Department for Children, Families and Schools. (2010) *Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children. Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities.*

¹⁷ <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/3623826/A-better-education-for-children-in-care.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://adcs.org.uk/assets/documentation/ADCS-NCER-VSHN-Educational-Achievement-of-Children-in-Care-Final.pdf>

challenging. Far too many CLA do not make 'expected progress' from the point they are taken into care.

However, while CLA typically achieve substantially less well than their peers on all educational measures, there is a strong association between the length of time in care and positive educational outcomes at age 16¹⁹. When the educational outcomes for CLA are compared with their peers with similar backgrounds, the achievement gap is very much smaller. Being in care is associated with improved educational outcomes when compared to children in need – those on the edge of care.

There is a wealth of national and local data on the educational attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils²⁰ and their non-disadvantaged peers. This also features within the eleven JSNA priority themes, however, it is worth considering the educational outcomes of the CLA population in isolation to support this needs assessment.

Warwickshire picture

There are two local sources of data to consider when reporting on the educational outcomes of children looked after. These are:

- The **Department for Education data published in the Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)** which allows Warwickshire to compare itself with other local authorities in England²¹.
- All children and young people in the care of Warwickshire County Council belong to the **Warwickshire Virtual School**. This includes children that attend schools or colleges outside of Warwickshire²².

The important distinction between the two datasets is the first considers all those children looked after who attend a Warwickshire school and have a valid Unique Pupil Number (UPN) recorded in the annual looked after children return (SSDA903). This could therefore include CLA who do not live in Warwickshire, but attend a Warwickshire school. However, all children and young people in the care of Warwickshire belong to the Warwickshire Virtual School as well as their mainstream school, wherever they are placed in the country. Children and young

¹⁹ <http://adcs.org.uk/assets/documentation/ADCS-NCER-VSHN-Educational-Achievement-of-Children-in-Care-Final.pdf>

²⁰ Department for Education defines disadvantaged pupils as CLA (continuously for six months during the year and aged between five and fifteen) and pupils who were eligible for free school meals during the last six years.

²¹ *This dataset provides data on the outcomes for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months and data up to 31 March 2014 on: Educational attainment, special educational needs (SEN), exclusions from school, health including emotional and behavioural health and offending and substance misuse.*

²² The Virtual School seeks to work with education providers to close the attainment gap between looked after children and their peers. To achieve this, a team of experienced teachers work as Education Advisers under the leadership of the Virtual School head. Each adviser takes responsibility for a group of schools to: Monitor Personal Education Plans (PEPs) to ensure individual needs are identified and addressed, work with designated teachers, as lead professionals, to enable them to provide the best help and support and protect the entitlement to a good education for all children and young people in care

people in the care of other authorities who are living and attending schools in Warwickshire are also part of the Virtual School.

Unless otherwise stated, all Virtual School data is included in the dedicated Virtual School section at the end of this chapter and any other Warwickshire data refers to published Warwickshire data for those pupils attending a Warwickshire school.

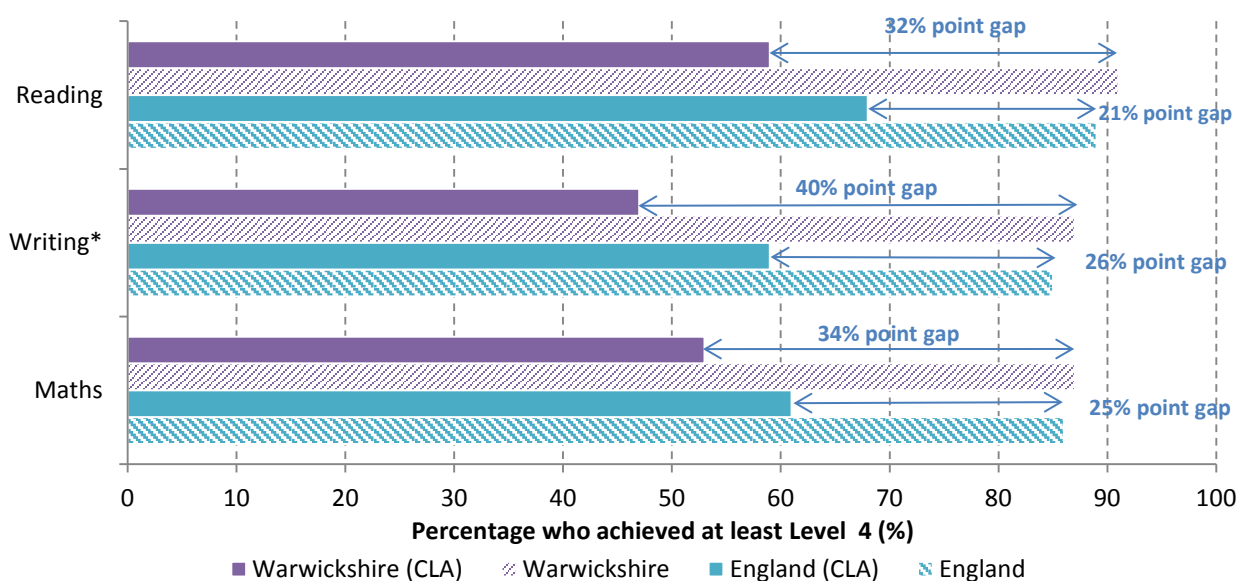
Key Stage 2

The key indicator of pupil attainment at key stage 2 is the percentage of CLA achieving the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics combined. In contrast to the national picture, Warwickshire has seen falls in attainment levels across all individual subject areas from 2013 to 2014. Due to the relatively small numbers of CLA in each year at a county level, there is considerable variation in the percentage figures when comparing across Warwickshire year-on-year and as a result, there is much more fluctuation at a local level than the reported figures at a national level.

Warwickshire's 'gap' when comparing CLA to their peers in 2014 is larger than the equivalent national 'gap' for reading, writing and maths at key stage 2²³.

Figure 47: Key Stage 2 attainment gap, Warwickshire & England, 2014

*Writing is undertaken as a teacher assessment rather than a formal test



Key Stage 4

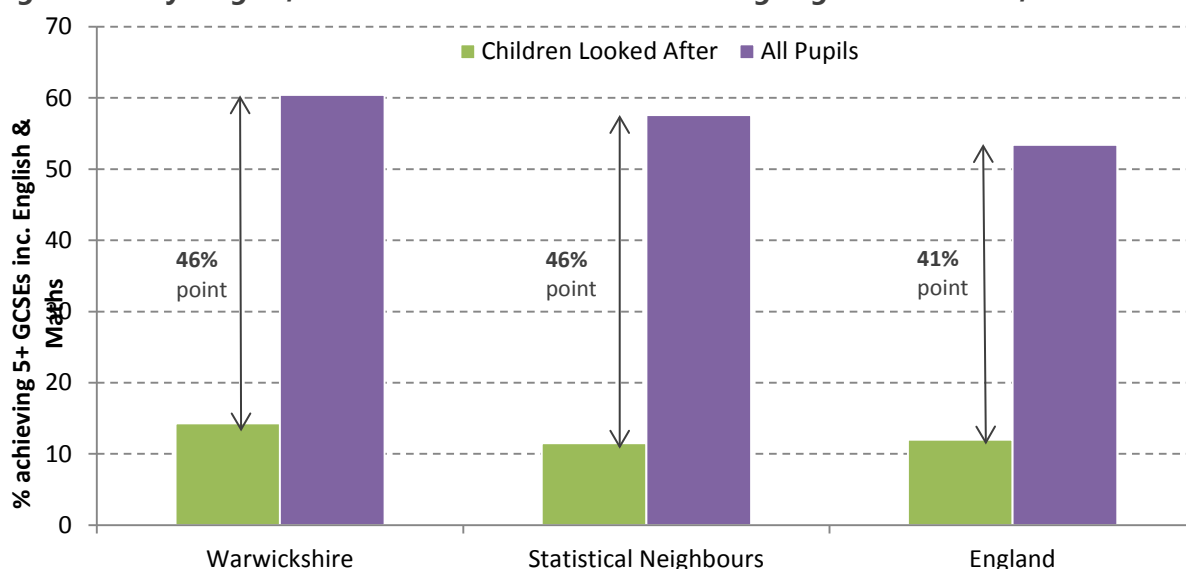
The percentage of children looked after achieving five or more GCSEs A*-C or equivalent including English and Maths (the headline measure) in Warwickshire was 14.3% in 2014. It is

²³ Warwickshire total figure is likely to double count the number of children looked after; however, the numbers are small and therefore should not make any material difference to the proportions (15 pupils were looked after out of an approximate cohort of 5,400 pupils in Year 6 on the school roll in May 2014 representing 0.3% of the total).

not possible to directly compare with earlier years due to the changes outlined in the national picture section. However, we can consider Warwickshire’s position in comparison to its statistical neighbours and the national average in 2014. There were 50 pupils who were looked after²⁴ and eligible to take their GCSEs in 2014. Warwickshire’s proportion of children looked after achieving five or more GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths is higher (14.3%) than the equivalent statistical neighbours (11.5%) and national (12%) benchmarks.

Despite this high proportion, it is set against a higher than average proportion of all pupils in Warwickshire achieving five or more GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths, creating a similar or larger attainment ‘gap’ (46% point gap) when comparing the gap with statistical neighbours (46% point gap) and the national average (41% point gap).

Figure 48: Key Stage 4, Five or more A*- C GCSE's including English and Maths, 2014



Exclusions

The latest exclusions data available is from the academic year 2012/13. This is matched to children looked after data from the corresponding year – year ending 31 March 2013. This is an earlier year than the other reported information in this chapter. In 2013, 275 children looked after aged 5 to 15 were matched to the school census in Warwickshire. The proportion of CLA who were permanently excluded from school has stayed at 0% in the county for the last three years.

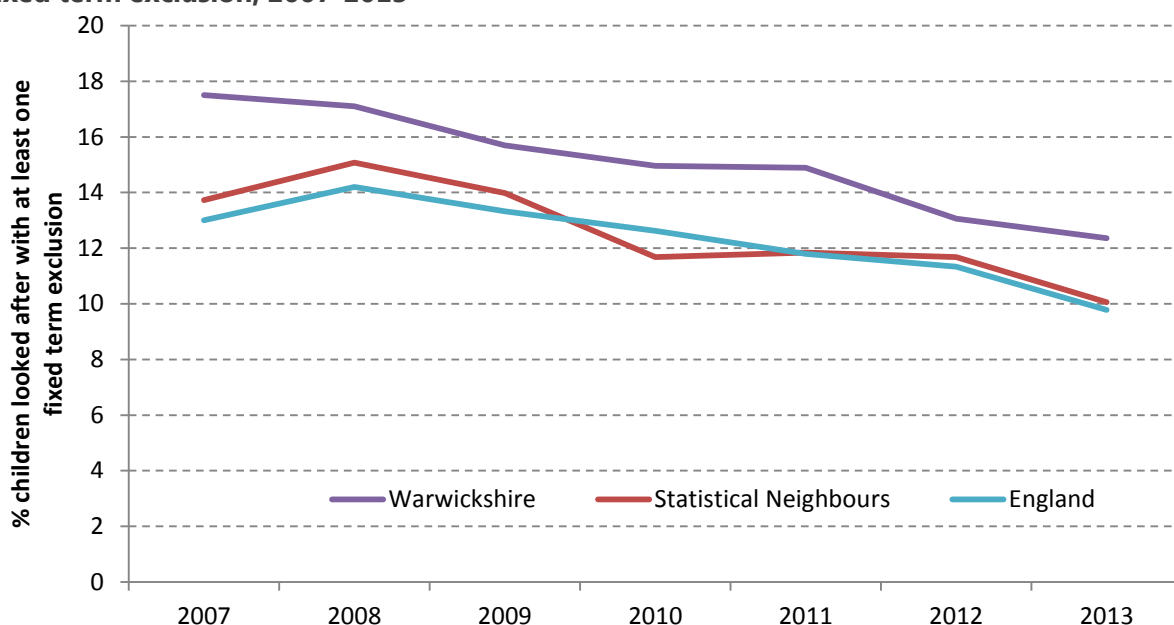
A fixed period exclusion refers to a pupil who is excluded from school but remains on the register of that school because they are expected to return when the exclusion period is

²⁴ This is the number of CLA at the end of key stage 4 in all educational settings. If a child is recorded as at the end of key stage 4 (in year group 11) more than once, then the same child may appear in the local authority results in more than one year. This affects around 3% of looked after children each year.

completed. The fixed term exclusion rate in Warwickshire has shown a consistent decline between 2007 and 2013, falling over five percentage points from 17.5% looked after children with at least one fixed term exclusion in 2007 to 12.4% in 2013. This decline mirrors the trends across the county's statistical neighbours and the national trend yet despite this, Warwickshire's rate remains higher than the national rate, 12.4% in the county in 2013 compared to 9.8% nationally, although this gap is narrowing over time.

Figure 49 considers the fixed term exclusion rate between 2007 to 2013 for CLA for at least twelve months compared with the overall Warwickshire and national exclusion rates²⁵. It shows a decline over time in the proportion of CLA pupils attending a Warwickshire school with a fixed term exclusion, following a similar trend to the county's statistical neighbours and the national picture, albeit at a higher rate in the first instance.

Figure 49: Percentage of CLA continuously for at least twelve months with at least one fixed term exclusion, 2007-2013

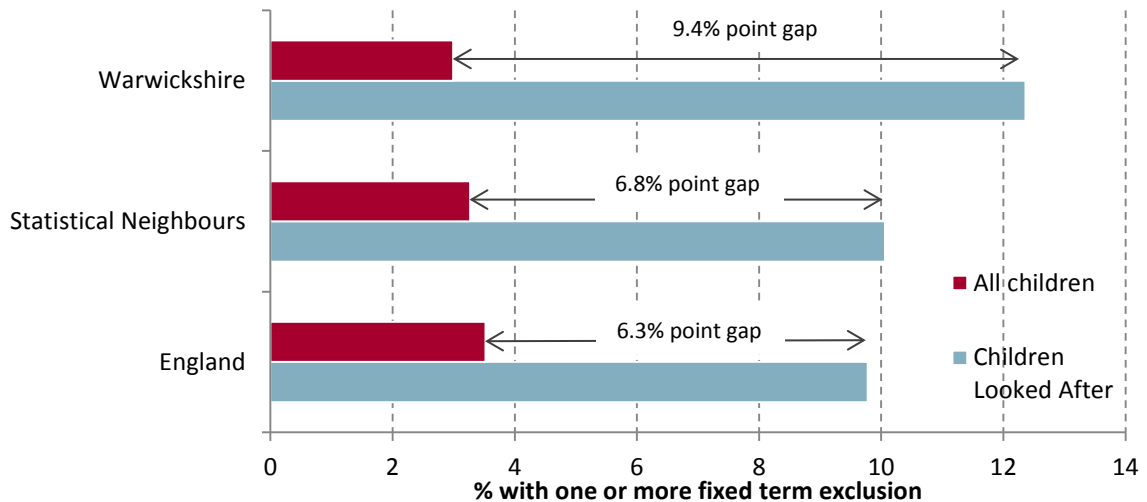


It's useful to ascertain if children looked after fixed term exclusion rates are significantly different from the equivalent all children rates in Warwickshire. Perhaps unsurprisingly, a higher proportion of CLA have at least one fixed term exclusion when compared with all pupils in Warwickshire (see Figure 50). Warwickshire's fixed term exclusion rate for children looked after is *four* times as high as the equivalent rate for all children in 2013, 12.4% compared to 3.0%, representing a 9.4% point gap. This is considerably higher than the statistical neighbour rate (10.1%) and the national average (9.8%) and as a result, means that Warwickshire's 'gap' is larger when compared with the national benchmark. This 'gap' is

²⁵ Warwickshire and national 'all children rates' will include the CLA cohort, however, it's a useful comparator to benchmark against.

accentuated as Warwickshire's fixed term exclusion rate for all pupils was 3% in 2013, lower than the national and neighbour rates (3.5% and 3.3% respectively).

Figure 50: Proportion of pupils with at least one fixed term exclusions for Children Looked After and all pupils, 2013

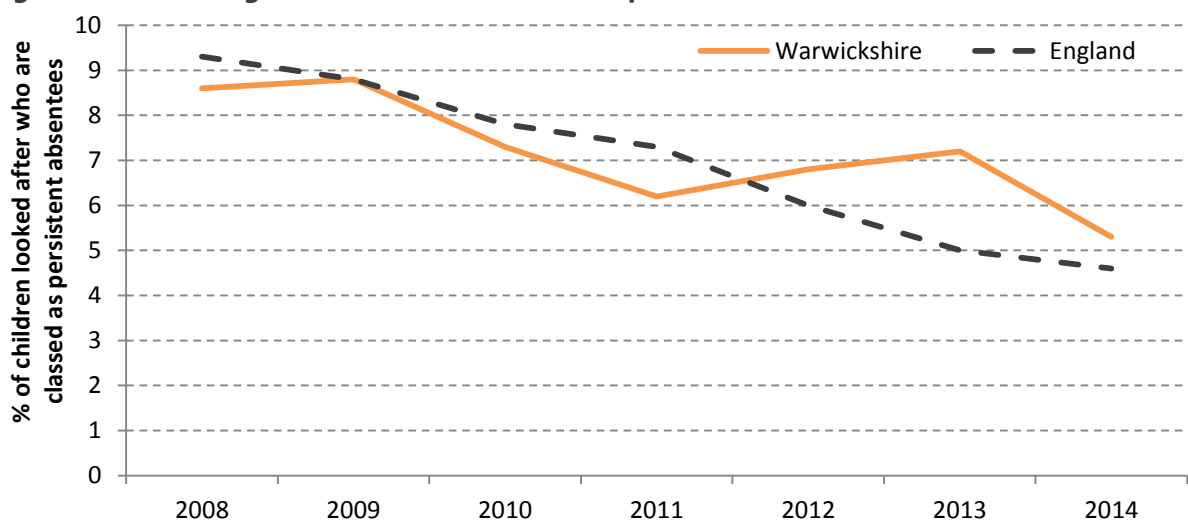


School Absence

Absence data is taken from the School Census which collects information for children in state-funded primary and secondary schools and maintained and non-maintained special schools. Absence data for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months is now available for 2014.

Persistent absentees are defined as having 46 or more sessions of absence (authorised and unauthorised) during the year, equating to approximately a 15% overall absence rate. Warwickshire's rate of persistent absence for children looked is shown over time below.

Figure 51: Percentage of CLA who are classed as persistent absentees, 2008-2014

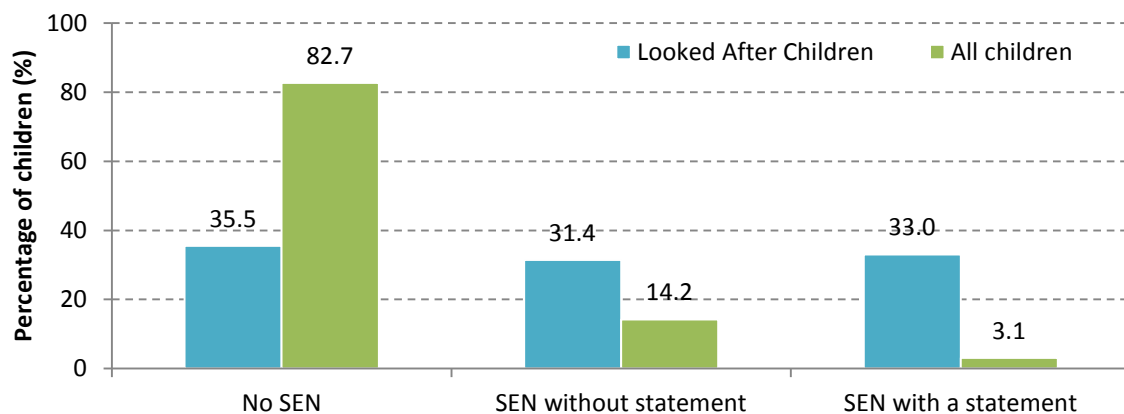


In 2012, absence data was only collected for five half terms. In 2013, absence data started to be collected for the sixth half term however, to allow a comparison over time, Figure 51 presents the five term figure for 2013 and 2014. Just over 5% of children looked after were classed as persistent absentees in Warwickshire in 2014, above the national rate of 4.6%. Warwickshire's rate has been consistently above the England equivalent since 2012, with a spike of 7.2% in 2013.

Special Educational Need (SEN)

Nationally, CLA have higher levels of special educational needs (SEN) than their non-looked after peers. In 2013/14, two thirds of CLA had a SEN and these children achieve at lower levels than other CLA without a SEN across key stages 2 and 4, however, attainment has improved on last year at key stage 2. In 2014, there were 320 CLA in Warwickshire at 31 March who had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months and matched to census data. Nearly two thirds (65%) of these children had a special educational need (SEN), made up of a third (33%) with a statement of SEN and 31.4% without a statement.

Figure 52: Percentage of children in Warwickshire with a Special Educational Need (SEN), split by whether it is stated, 2014



These figures are much higher than the total population with SEN (i.e. the school population as a whole). In 2014, nationally 17.9% of all children had a SEN which consisted of 2.8% with a statement and 15.1% without a statement. The corresponding figure for Warwickshire in 2014 is similar at 17.3%, with a slightly higher proportion than the national equivalent with a statement (3.1%) and slightly lower proportion without a statement (14.2%) in Warwickshire.

Warwickshire Virtual School

The Virtual School has been reorganised to focus more on providing support and challenge to schools, colleges and settings so that they provide the best education for children and young people between the ages of 3 and 18. The Virtual School's three improvement priorities for 2015/16 are to:

- Improve the quality of interventions by improving Personal Education Plans (PEPS)
- Upskill school staff through the professional development of designated teachers
- Protect the entitlement to a good education

Pupil Premium

The Virtual School has provided more guidance on the use of pupil premium after PEP monitoring exercise has shown that it could be used more effectively with a renewed focus on educational outcomes.²⁶

As at May 2015, the Warwickshire Virtual School had 444 pupils from reception to Year 11 with nearly three in five in secondary education. Over 80% of pupils in Year 6 (end of primary phase education) and Year 11 (end of secondary school education) had a Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place at May 2015 which was written in the previous six months. Of those pupils who did not have a PEP in place at May 2015, the majority (17 out of the 20 pupils) with no PEP in place were in Year 11. There are various reasons why PEPs may not have been in place, including that some children are out of county and therefore harder to monitor.

School Readiness and Good Levels of Development (GLD)

School readiness is a measure of how prepared a child is to succeed in school cognitively, socially and emotionally and this is represented in the good level of development (GLD) measure. Children are defined as having reached a GLD at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage if they achieved the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social & emotional development, physical development, communication and language) and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

Early Years pupil results are not published for CLA as a specific cohort however, the Business and Commissioning Intelligence (BCI) team have joined Warwickshire's CLA of reception age at July 2013, June 2014 and June 2015 from CareFirst (i.e. when these children would have taken their EYFSP assessments) to Early Years Foundation stage assessment criteria via the Department for Education's Key to Success website. This data includes all Warwickshire CLA that were matched to their EYFSP results regardless of the school they attended (whether it be a Warwickshire school or not). As at June 2015, there were 22 eligible looked after pupils in Warwickshire. Due to the size of this cohort, it is not possible to show this data in any meaningful way as the small size means there are considerable fluctuations in the percentage figures year-on-year. However, the high level message from the data is that, even at the earliest stage of statutory national curriculum assessments, children who are looked after already appear to be behind their peers. For example, a third of CLA in 2015 and were eligible to take their EYSFP assessment achieved a good level of development in Warwickshire, this compares to over two thirds (67%) of pupils when all Warwickshire pupils

²⁶ *The new ePEP system will help provide timely and more detailed data on how this funding is used and whether it has helped children and young people to make better progress.*

are considered. Although there are less than ten CLA achieving a good level of development in 2015, this appears to show that CLA in Warwickshire are half as likely to achieve a good level of development as their peers from this relatively small cohort.

Virtual School Exam Results

Key Stage 2 - Year 6

Figure 53 shows the attainment of CLA in their final year at primary school and was similar to that of CLA nationally. Though there has been an improvement since 2014, there is still a significant gap between our Year 6 children and their peers. Of the 27 children in the statistical cohort, 13 achieved at least level 4 in reading, writing and maths with a further six achieving level 4 in two of the three areas – classed as ‘near misses’.

Figure 53: Outcomes for Virtual School pupils in Year 6 in Warwickshire

| | Warwickshire LAC 2013 | Warwickshire LAC 2014 | Warwickshire LAC 2015 | Warwickshire (all pupils) 2015 | National LAC 2014 |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Level 4+ Reading | 71% | 55% | 67% | 89% | 68% |
| Level 4+ Writing | 79% | 40% | 59% | 87% | 59% |
| Level 4+ Spelling, punctuation & grammar | 54% | 40% | 52% | 80% | 45% |
| Level 4+ Maths | 71% | 45% | 56% | 86% | 61% |
| Level 4+ Reading/ Writing & Maths | 67% | n/a | 48% | 79% | 48% |

Key Stage 4 - Year 11

Warwickshire’s Virtual School uses a new electronic monitoring system (ePEP) to support and monitor the current group of Year 11s and help more of them to achieve this standard. Data in Figure 54 shows that from the cohort of 40 children looked after in Year 11 at the end of the last academic year (2014/15), seven (18%) achieved five GCSEs including English and Maths. Six pupils in the most recent year’s data were ‘near misses’ in that they achieved one or more GCSEs at grade C, demonstrating that they had the potential to gain good grades. The trend over time is improving for those children who are looked after by the Virtual School and Figure 55 shows ‘the gap’ between this cohort and all children in Warwickshire has narrowed from 2011 to 2015 from a 48% point gap in 2011 to a 43% point gap in 2015.

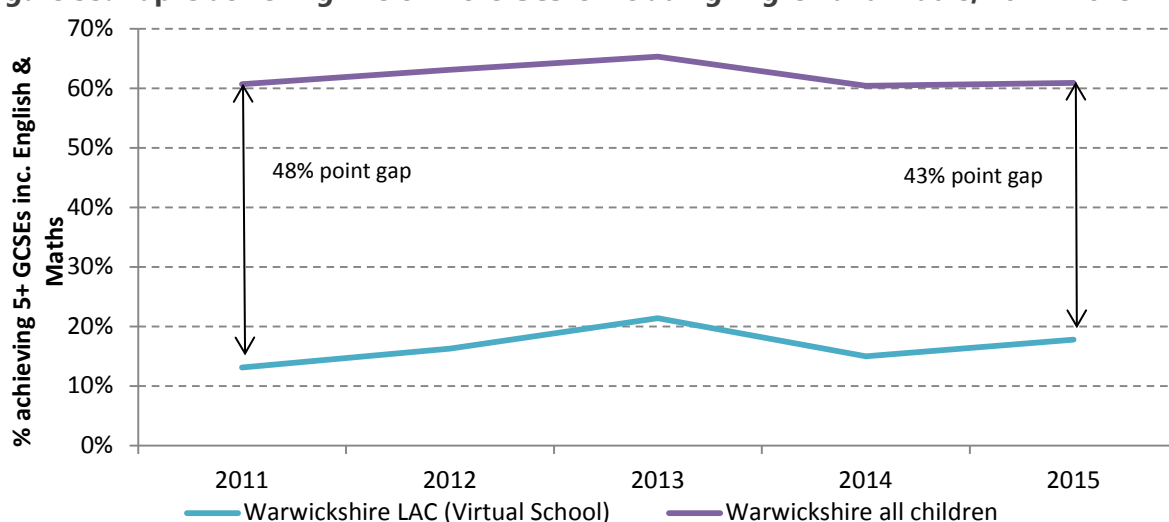
A group of young people which includes those with SEN statements (13 in the Y11 cohort), children with significant mental health needs (1) and those unable to cope with mainstream school because of behaviour (5) were unlikely to achieve good GCSEs. The main priority with this group, along with those with low academic achievement is to ensure they move on smoothly to the next phase of education. The majority of young people in year 11 (88%)

have been supported into positive destinations with five pupils in the current cohort of 40 currently not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Figure 54: Outcomes for year 11 in the statistical cohort (2014/15 provisional)

| Statistical group | SEN Statements | 5 A*-C GCSEs inc Eng & Maths | 5 GCSEs A*-C | 5 GCSEs A*-G | 1 GCSE A*-C | 1 GCSE A*-G | Any qual | Total |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------|-------|
| Total 2014 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 17 | 16 | 31 | 37 | 40 |
| % 2014 | 23% | 15% | 17% | 41% | 39% | 76% | 93% | |
| Total 2015 | 13 | 7 | 8 | 17 | 15 | 29 | 36 | 40 |
| % 2015 | 33% | 18% | 20% | 43% | 38% | 73% | 90% | |

Figure 55: Pupils achieving five or more GCSEs including English and Maths, 2011 -2015



Exclusions and pupils not being educated

The Virtual School intervenes when young people are at risk of exclusion and offers support to schools to find other solutions including education in different settings such as colleges and with training providers. Consequently, the number of permanent exclusions has reduced to one in the latest reporting period, from five in 2013/14. As in 2014, a small number of children in transition between foster placements who are temporarily not being educated.

Attendance

In Warwickshire, a new system, Looked After Call, has been commissioned to provide the Virtual School with a daily record of school attendance which also notifies social workers when children are absent. There can then be a response from an appropriate professional to any situation where a CLA may be missing school unnecessarily and the Virtual School can keep an accurate track of the cohort. Early indications suggest that attendance is good with a small number with attendance rates of less than 90% (threshold figure for persistent absence). Currently 2% of school age CLA by the Virtual School are persistently absent.

HEALTH OUTCOMES

Statutory Guidance on 'Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children' (2015)²⁷ details the extent and nature of health problems among children in the care system. Children and young people who are looked after have the same core health needs as other young people, but their backgrounds and experiences are likely to make them particularly vulnerable to poorer health outcomes.

Health Assessments

It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure health assessments are carried out and that every child has a health plan. Health organisations have a duty to comply with requests by the local authority and also to ensure that health plans are effective.

Data for health assessments is collected by the Department for Education annually for all children looked after for a year or more on the 31st March. These figures do not reflect the actual workload as all children taken into care require an initial health assessment within 28 days of entering care, and there are children entering and leaving care throughout the year.

Over the past five financial years, the proportion of children receiving a health check in Warwickshire has stayed the same (80% as at 31st March 2011 and 80% as at 31st March 2015). However, the proportions have improved nationally and for Warwickshire's statistical neighbours over the same time period.

Figure 56: Proportion of CLA as at 31st March who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months & who have had an annual health assessment, 2010/11-2014/15

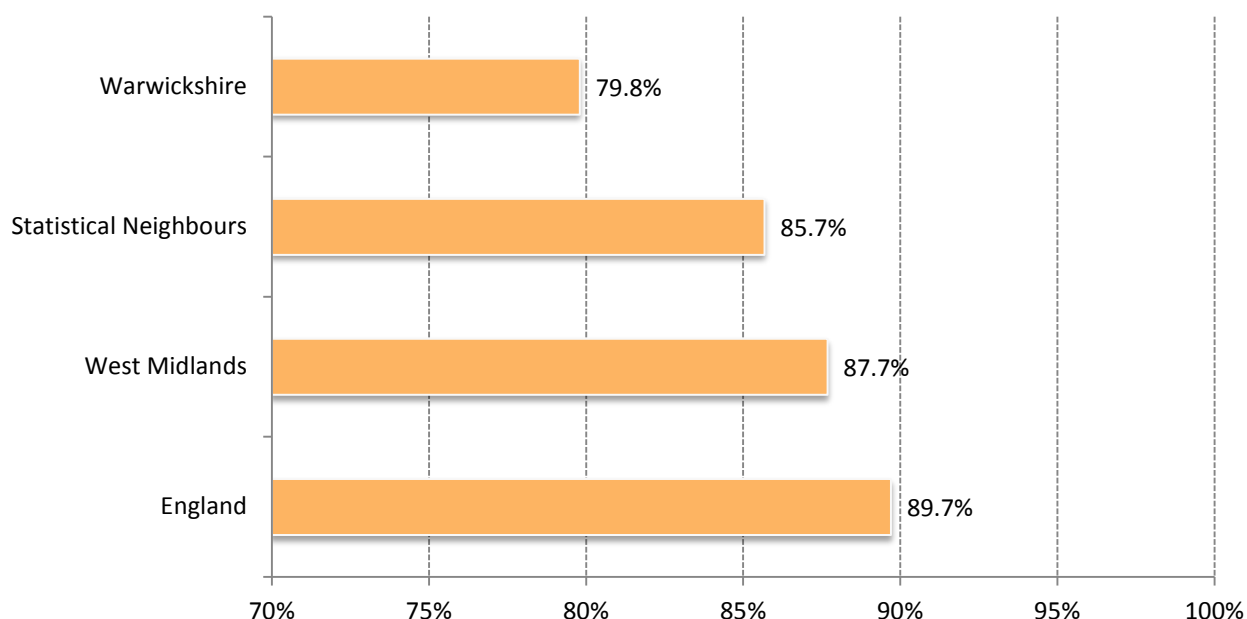
| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| England | 84.3 | 86.2 | 87.3 | 88.4 | 89.7 |
| Statistical neighbours | 76.2 | 83.3 | 84.2 | 80.8 | 85.7 |
| Warwickshire | 80.2 | 76.3 | 76.8 | 80.0 | 79.8 |
| Difference between Warks & Eng avg | -4.1 ppt | -9.9 ppt | -10.5 ppt | -8.4 ppt | -9.9 ppt |

As at 31st March 2015, the proportion of children who received an annual health check in Warwickshire was 10 percentage points lower than the national average, and six percentage points lower than Warwickshire's statistical neighbours. However, it is important to remember that children who are looked after have the right to refuse a health assessment, and this will disproportionately affect Warwickshire which has a slightly older age profile of CLA, since older children are more likely to refuse assessments.

²⁷ Department for Education and Department of Health (2015) Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413368/Promoting_the_health_and_well-being_of_looked-after_children.pdf

Figure 57: Proportion (%) of CLA as at 31st March 2015 who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months & who have had an annual health assessment



At district/borough level (excluding IDS, Asylum & leaving care), in 2014/15, North Warwickshire had the highest proportion of CLA receiving health checks, at 97.4%. Nuneaton and Bedworth had the lowest proportion of children receiving an annual health check at 82.0%.

Figure 58: Proportion of CLA as at 31st March who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months & who have had an annual health assessment in Warwickshire by district/borough/allocated team

| District/borough of allocated team | Proportion of CLA who have received an annual health check (%) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 97.4 |
| Nuneaton and Bedworth | 82.0 |
| Rugby | 86.5 |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 90.9 |
| Warwick | 87.5 |
| Countywide Asylum Team | 72.7 |
| Leaving care | 56.6 |
| Integrated Disability Service | 82.4 |

Warwickshire are using creative means to try to engage with their CLA and be more flexible with their work patterns to encourage their children and young people to attend their health checks. This includes:

- Texting reminders for initial health assessments or where young people request this.
- Letters to carers / young people for health assessment clinic appointments include a request for the carer to provide an up to date mobile telephone number so the looked after children team can text appointment reminders.
- Offering flexible appointment times - Looked after children's nurses see children either at home or in another setting of choice after school or college to promote health assessment take up.
- Telephoning carers/young people to book appointments to ensure they can be attended rather than just sending out appointment letters.
- Offering telephone contact for nurse-led review health assessments where a young person does not want a face to face appointment.
- Offering a health discussion with a looked after children's nurse for children and young people who decline their initial health assessment. The IHA is offered after this if the child / young person agrees.
- A Decline Pathway is in place so that a Health Plan is provided for children/ young people who social workers refer for a health assessment but who then decline their health assessment. This keeps the focus on health for the child and the expectation is that this is discussed at the child's statutory review meetings.
- A Health Passport is provided for care leavers after their leaving care health assessment better enabling them to access services going forward.

Timeliness of Health Assessments

It is expected that an initial health assessment is completed within 28 days of a child entering care. In Warwickshire, as at 12th October 2015, 90 children had been in care for over 28 days but had received no initial health assessment; a further 30 children had been in care for less than 28 days and had no initial health assessment recorded.

Of the 90 children who had been in care for over 28 days but had not received an initial health assessment, 16 children (18%) were UASC.

Figure 59: Warwickshire CLA in care for over 28 days who had not received an initial health assessment by district/borough of allocated team, as at 12th October 2015

| District/borough of allocated team | CLA with no Health Assessment Recorded (as at October 2015) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 0 |
| Nuneaton and Bedworth | 17 |
| Rugby | 10 |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 12 |
| Warwick | 15 |
| Countywide Asylum Team | 16 |
| Leaving care | 10 |
| Integrated Disability Service | 9 |
| Youth Justice | 1 |
| Total | 90 |

One third (66.6%) of the children were male. If UASC are excluded, a similar proportion (62.2%) were male. Including UASC, just under one half of all children were aged 15 and over. If UASC are excluded, 39% of children were aged 15 and over.

| | Including UASC | Excluding UASC | UASC Only |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Male | 60 | 46 | 14 |
| Female | 30 | 28 | 2 |
| 0-4 years | 8 | 8 | 0 |
| 5-9 years | 8 | 8 | 0 |
| 10-14 years | 32 | 29 | 3 |
| 15-17 years | 42 | 29 | 13 |
| Total | 90 | 74 | 16 |

However, proactive, joint working between health and social care colleagues in Warwickshire aims to improve Warwickshire's position in terms of both the timeliness of initial health assessments and also the number of completed health assessments. This work includes:

- Meetings between the Looked after Children's health service and Service Managers in social care to look at why there are difficulties and how these can be resolved.
- Warwickshire's IDS manager is now a member of the Health Services for Looked After Children (HELAC) meetings to prevent children under Warwickshire's IDS team from missing/delaying their initial health assessments.

Warwickshire’s leaving care service manager is a key member of HELAC meetings to continually try to improve the number of care leavers accepting health assessments.

- Requests for initial health assessment consent at children’s panels by the designated CLA nurse
- Use of the Start and Cease dates information by the Looked after Children’s team to request initial health assessment paperwork where requests have not been received from social care.

Dental Checks

The World Health Organization says oral health is integral to overall health and essential for wellbeing. As corporate parents, it is the local authority’s responsibility to make sure that CLA have regular dental checks so that if children develop tooth decay, appropriate treatment can be instigated promptly.

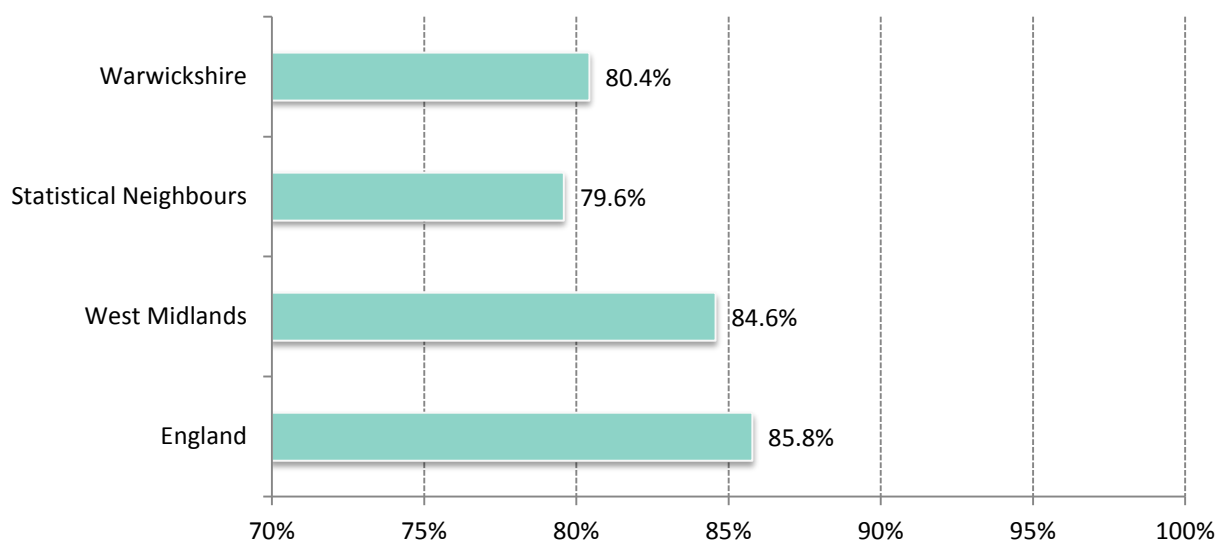
Data for dental checks is collected by the Department for Education annually for all CLA for a year or more on the 31st March. Over the past five financial years, the proportion of children who have had their teeth checked by a dentist in Warwickshire has decreased (87% as at 31st March 2011 and 80% as at 31st March 2015). However, the proportions have increased nationally and for Warwickshire’s statistical neighbours over the same time period.

Figure 60: Proportion (%) of children looked after as at 31st March who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months & who have had their teeth checked by a dentist, 2010/11-2014/15

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| England | 82.4 | 82.4 | 82.0 | 84.4 | 85.8 |
| Statistical neighbours | UNK | UNK | 75.0 | 74.9 | 79.6 |
| Warwickshire | 86.9 | 85.0 | 86.6 | 82.0 | 80.2 |
| Difference Between Warks & Eng avg | 4.5 ppt | 2.6 ppt | 4.6 ppt | -2.4 ppt | -5.6 ppt |

As at 31st March 2015, the proportion of children who had their teeth checked by a dentist in Warwickshire was 80.2%; over five percentage points lower than the England average (85.8%) but similar to Warwickshire’s statistical neighbours.

Figure 61: Proportion of children looked after as at 31st March 2015 who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months & who have had their teeth checked by a dentist



Mental Health

Recent NICE guidance suggests that 60% of children looked after have emotional and mental health problems²⁸. Therefore, children looked after and their carers need access to the full range of child and adolescent mental health services, from promotion, advice and services in primary care/community setting to highly specialist provision.

Journeys is a service which aims to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of looked after and adopted children and young people living in Coventry and Warwickshire.

With regards to Warwickshire, in 2014/15, Journeys received 177 referrals of which 100% were acknowledged within 48 hours. 120 mental health assessments were undertaken, all within 10 working days. 152 new children and young people received a service in 2014/15 and 258 children received at least one appointment.

Most children were receiving direct interventions with Journeys in 2014/15 due to attachment issues. Other areas of concern included behavioural issues, anger and self-esteem.

²⁸ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph28/evidence/looked-after-children-ep22-the-mental-health-of-looked-after-children-under-5-years-joe-sempik2>

Figure 62: Children & young people receiving interventions from Journeys by areas of presenting concern, 2014/15

| Main area of initial concern | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Total |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|----|----|------------|
| Anger | 16 | 25 | 34 | 56 | 131 |
| Anxiety/Phobias | 14 | 14 | 19 | 32 | 79 |
| Attachment | 101 | 115 | 29 | 66 | 311 |
| Behaviour | 47 | 39 | 25 | 39 | 150 |
| Bereavement | 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 20 |
| Bullying | - | - | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| Depression | 10 | 14 | 6 | 7 | 37 |
| Family conflict | 3 | 4 | 11 | 20 | 38 |
| Loss | 14 | 17 | 8 | 19 | 58 |
| Self esteem | 47 | 60 | 18 | 13 | 138 |
| Other | - | - | 10 | 35 | 45 |

There was a relatively even gender split of children directly receiving treatment at the end of quarter 4, with 55 males and 52 females (51% vs 49%). 43% were aged between 5 and 10 years of age, 39% were between 11 and 15 years of age, with the remainder aged 0-4 years (7%) and 16-18 years (11%).

Data on the mental health of looked after children is collected through a strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) and a single summary figure for each child (the total difficulties score), ranging from 0 to 40 is calculated. A higher score indicates greater difficulties (a score of under 14 is considered normal, 14-16 is moderate/borderline cause for concern and 17 or over is a cause for concern (severe/abnormal)). Best practice in Warwickshire is that the SDQ is completed on all CLA during their health assessments.

Feedback received from Journeys from January-March 2015 (Quarter 4) shows that out of all the young people who completed pre and post SDQ questionnaires, 93% showed improvement. Overall, the mean SDQ pre intervention score was within the severe/abnormal clinical range at 19.07. By the end of intervention or at point of review, the mean score reduced to 12.12, which is within the normal clinical range. This is a mean improvement of 6.95, following the intervention for young people using Journeys, which amounts to an average percentage improvement of 34%.

Figure 63: Pre and post intervention SDQ scores for young people using Journeys in quarter 4, 2014/15

| | SDQ Score | Emotional symptoms | Conduct problems | Hyperactivity/inattention | Peer relationship problems | Prosocial behaviour |
|------|-----------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| PRE | 19.07 | 5.49 | 4.00 | 6.41 | 3.17 | 6.76 |
| POST | 12.12 | 2.98 | 2.34 | 4.76 | 2.00 | 8.22 |

Teenage Pregnancy

Teenagers who become parents are already known to experience greater educational, health and economic difficulties than young people who are not parents. Young people who have been looked after are two and a half times more likely to become pregnant as teenagers than the general population, and their children are then more than twice as likely to go into care themselves²⁹. It is estimated that one in four young women leaving care are either pregnant or already mothers, and almost half of female care leavers become mothers between the ages of 18 and 24. Young men in care are also more likely to become young fathers.

Vulnerable young people need additional support to enable them not to repeat their own experience of parenting and the cycle of poor attachment once they do decide to have a baby. It is therefore critically important that children in care and care leavers are helped to gain the self-esteem and skills needed to develop loving, respectful and safe relationships.

In 2014, Warwickshire County Council held two focus groups with professionals as to the reasons why children looked after have earlier pregnancies than their peers. Some of the reasons they gave are summarised below:

| Positive | Negative |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to be loved • Prove themselves • Achievement • Want to belong • Makes them adults • To attract attention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure of forward planning (this does not apply to looked after children only) • Failure to say 'no' • Lack of knowledge of contraception (Unprotected sex without awareness of the consequences) • At risk of sexual exploitation • Low self esteem |

Professionals in Warwickshire involved in these focus groups believed that the biggest reason for children looked after becoming parents early was because of their desire '*to be loved and love someone*'. Professionals in Warwickshire reported that many children looked

²⁹ Preventing teenage pregnancy in looked after children (August 2004)
<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing09/>

after 'want to be pregnant from the age of 14-15'. 'They may see pregnancy as a vehicle for them to do better', to succeed in something. 'girls in care want to be the better mother' (particularly if their own mother is the reason they are in care) and 'boys want to parent successfully'. Some boys see it as a sign of masculinity to be able to father a child.

Delaying parenthood in looked after children is reliant upon:

- Building the self-esteem of children in care from an early age
- Encourage children who are looked after to have aspirations in life
- Relationship and sex education
- Raise awareness and hold training sessions for foster carers
- Work on health promotion activities
- Parenting support and help if children who are looked after do become pregnant

Substance Misuse

Drug and alcohol misuse pose a significant risk to a young person's physical and psychological health and development. National and local evidence suggests that the majority of young people who misuse substances are likely to be using alcohol or cannabis although current policy models are being challenged by the growth of the 'legal highs' market.

While large numbers of children experiment with drugs and subsequently stop without any ill effects, certain groups are particularly vulnerable to suffering significant harm through substance misuse. Especially vulnerable are children looked after (particularly if they are excluded from school). Some of these children come from homes where families have misused drugs and alcohol and it is known that children of parents or carers who misuse drugs or alcohol are more likely to develop misuse/ and or mental health problems themselves.

In Warwickshire in 2014/15, 2% of CLA who had been looked after for at least 12 months were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year compared to 4% of the national CLA population.

Disability

Disabled children constitute a significant group in the looked after system. There is evidence that they are more likely to be looked after, remain in care for longer and have a higher risk of being placed inappropriately in comparison to non-disabled children³⁰. However, most disabled children who are in foster care are not looked after because of their disability,

³⁰ IRISS Insights (2011) Permanence & Stability for disabled looked after children
http://www.iriss.org.uk/sites/default/files/iriss_insight11.pdf

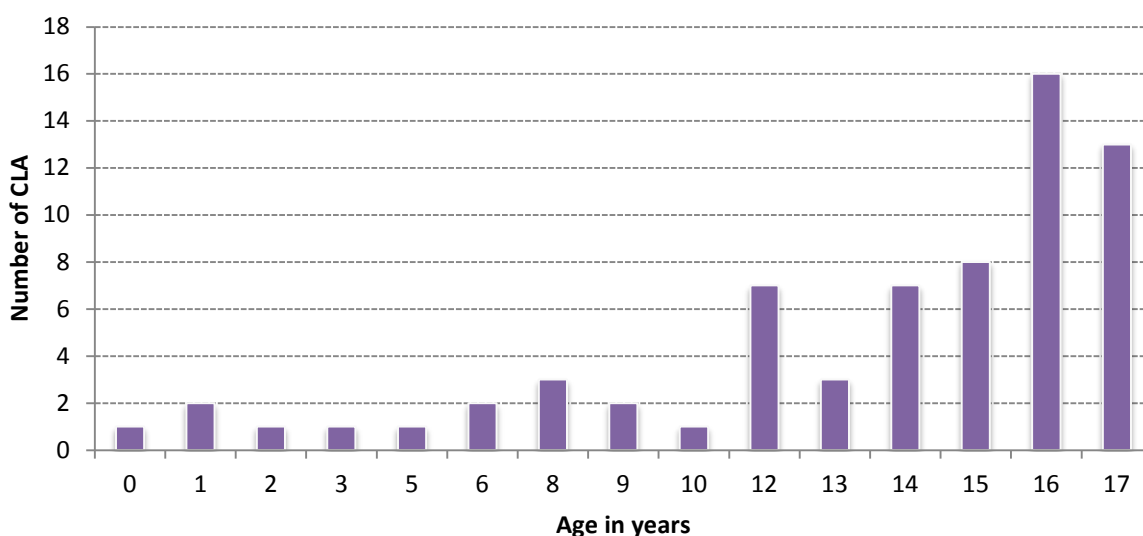
although this may be a contributing factor, but for the same reasons as other looked after children, namely reasons associated with abuse and neglect³¹.

It is not easy to report on the number of disabled children looked after nationally or locally. One of the reasons being the uncertainty over definitions and measurements of 'disability'. In order to try to ascertain the number of children with a disability in Warwickshire, the following criteria have been applied:

- Any child who is allocated/assigned to an Integrated Disability Service team
- Any child who has a Child In Need Category of Disability
- Any child who has a Secondary Child Disability Category
- Any combination of the three above

As at 10th March 2016, there were 68 CLA in Warwickshire with a recorded disability, equating to 9% of all CLA in Warwickshire. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of children with a disability were male with the remainder female (38%). The number of CLA with a disability increases with age. Over half (54%) of all CLA with a disability in Warwickshire are aged 15 years or above.

Figure 64: Children looked after with a disability in Warwickshire by age, as at 10th March 2016



The majority of children with a disability were allocated to an Integrated Disability Service Team (27 out of 68 children, equating to 40% of all children with a disability). Leaving Care has the second highest proportion of CLA with a recorded disability (15 out of 94 children, equating to 16% of all children currently allocated to Leaving Care). At district/borough level,

³¹ Sinclair I, Baker C, Wilson K and Gibbs I (2005) Foster Children: Where they go and how they get on, London: Jessica Kingsley

North Warwickshire has the highest proportion of disabled children looked after (16% of all CLA in the borough).

Figure 65: Children looked after with a disability in Warwickshire by Allocated Team, as at 10th March 2016

| District/Borough of Allocated Team | Number of Disabled CLA | Total CLA | Proportion who are recorded as disabled |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------|
| North Warwickshire | 7 | 60 | 11.7% |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 6 | 227 | 2.6% |
| Rugby | 6 | 99 | 6.1% |
| Stratford-on-Avon | 2 | 64 | 3.1% |
| Warwick | 3 | 105 | 2.9% |
| Children's Asylum Team | 2 | 82 | 2.4% |
| Leaving Care Team | 15 | 94 | 16.0% |
| Integrated Disability Service North | 10 | 10 | 100.0% |
| Integrated Disability Service South | 17 | 17 | 100.0% |
| Warwickshire Total | 68 | 758 | 9.0% |

The majority (40%) of children with a disability in Warwickshire were looked after due to 'Abuse or Neglect', followed by 'Disability' (31%).

Figure 66: Children looked after with a disability in Warwickshire by Category of Need, as at 10th March 2016

| Category of Need | Number of CLA with a disability | Proportion of CLA with a disability |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| N1-Abuse or Neglect | 27 | 39.7% |
| N2-Disability | 21 | 30.9% |
| N4-Family in Acute Stress | 10 | 14.7% |
| N5-Family Dysfunction | 5 | 7.4% |
| N6-Socially Unacceptable Behaviour | 3 | 4.4% |
| N8-Absent Parenting | 2 | 2.9% |
| Total | 68 | 100.0% |

Over one third (35%) of CLA with a recorded disability in Warwickshire have a learning disability. Children can have more than one disability recorded. Just under a quarter (22%) of children with a disability have autism and/or a communication disorder.

Figure 67: CLA with a disability in Warwickshire by Disability, as at 10th March 2016

| Disability | Number of CLA | Proportion of CLA with a disability |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Autism | 15 | 22.1% |
| Behaviour | 11 | 16.2% |
| Communication | 15 | 22.1% |
| Hand function | 3 | 4.4% |
| Hearing | 1 | 1.5% |
| Incontinence | 4 | 5.9% |
| Learning | 24 | 35.3% |
| Mobility | 8 | 11.8% |
| Personal Care | 5 | 7.4% |
| Vision | 2 | 2.9% |

Most children with experience of care do not get into trouble with the law. However, children and young people who are, or have been, looked after are over five times more likely than other children to get involved in the criminal justice system³². Despite fewer than 1% of all children nationally being in care, a 2013 survey of all 15-18 year olds in young offender institutions found that a third of boys and 61% of girls said they had spent time in care.

“What I’ve heard from different police officers when I’ve been arrested, it’s like, ‘you’re a kid in care, you’re never going to get out of this way of life. You’re in care, kids in care are always on drugs, kids in care always make themselves unsafe, kids in care always self-harm’. So they sort of put a title on kids in care like they’re something bad.”

16 year old girl with a conviction

Research on children in the youth justice system generally, and those in custody in particular, has demonstrated the links between offending and vulnerability. A census of every child imprisoned over a 6 month period in 2008 highlighted this³³:

- 76% had an absent father;
- 47% had run away or absconded;
- 39% had been subject to a child protection plan and/or experienced abuse or neglect;
- 27% had been or were looked after;
- and 13% had experienced the death of a parent or sibling.

For children in care, these indices of disadvantage are likely to be heightened, as three quarters of looked after children are in care as a result of abuse, neglect or family dysfunction³⁴.

Care planning guidance and regulations³⁵ that came into force in April 2011 explicitly address offending by CLA, beginning with the expectation that support measures will be in place to prevent offending through to outlining responsibilities for CLA in custody. Local authorities are required to adopt a proactive position, establishing protocols with youth offending agencies and making sure that each child’s care and placement plan addresses this aspect of their needs rather than responding to offending if and when it occurs.

³² <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/caresteppingstonetocustody.pdf>

³³ Prison Reform Trust (2010) Punishing Disadvantage – a profile of children in custody PRT: London

³⁴ Department for Education (2011) Children looked after by local authorities in England – year ending 31/03/11

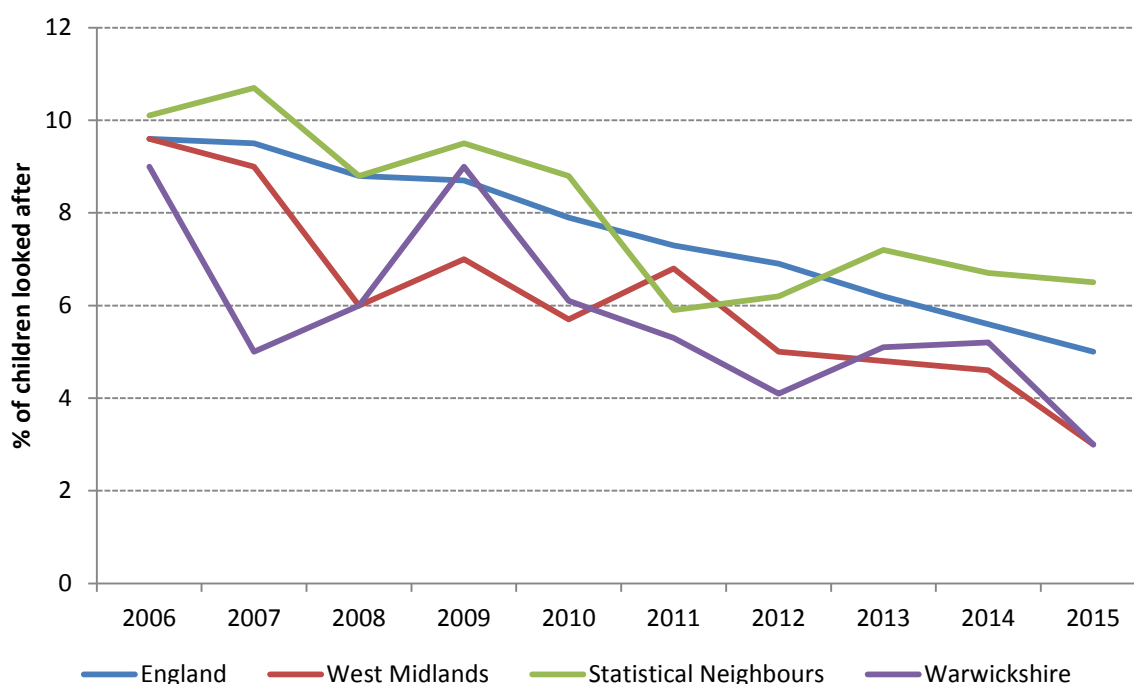
³⁵ Department for Children, Schools and Families (2010) The Children Act 1989 Regulations and Guidance.

Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review. Chapter 8.

Offending data is collected by the Department of Education for children aged 10 years or over who have been continuously looked after for at least 12 months as at 31st March excluding children in respite care.

Offending rates in Warwickshire fell in 2014/15 to 3.0% of all children looked after, after three years of small increases to 5.2% in 2014/15. This is consistent with the national trend. Warwickshire's offending rates are lower than the England average (5.0% in 2014/15) and Warwickshire's statistical neighbours (6.5%) and are on par with the West Midlands average (3.0%)

Figure 68: % of CLA with a conviction or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year, 2005/6 - 2014/15



Good practice example:

Nottingham: In an attempt to tackle the high number of police call-outs to residential children's homes, and the number of looked after children ending up with criminal records, Nottingham has a dedicated 'children in care' police officer who, working closely with children's services, has introduced a restorative approach to dealing with conflict. Having successfully used restorative justice in schools, the officer has close links with residential homes in the city, and is the first port of call for home staff when incidents occur. Using restorative practice to bring everyone involved in incidents, both children and carers, together to discuss what has happened and how it can be put right, outcomes include fewer looked after children entering the youth justice system.

CARE LEAVERS OUTCOMES

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 states that a care leaver is someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday. Over 10,000 young people aged 16 or over leave local authority care each year. Care leavers will often be living independently at age 18, whereas national data shows that 50% of all 22 year olds remain living in their family home. Those leaving care may struggle to cope with the transition to adulthood and may experience social exclusion, unemployment, early pregnancy, health problems, end up in custody or homeless.

From 2008, the government has required local authorities to support care leavers up to the age of 25 if they remained in, or planned to return to, education and training. Subsequently, the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced 'staying put' arrangements which allow children in care to stay with their foster families until the age of 21 years, providing both parties are happy to do so.

There are no official statistics on some aspects of care leavers' lives, such as whether they have timely access to health services, whether they feel they left care at the right time, or the extent to which they have poor social outcomes such as unemployment, homelessness, mental illness or criminal activity.

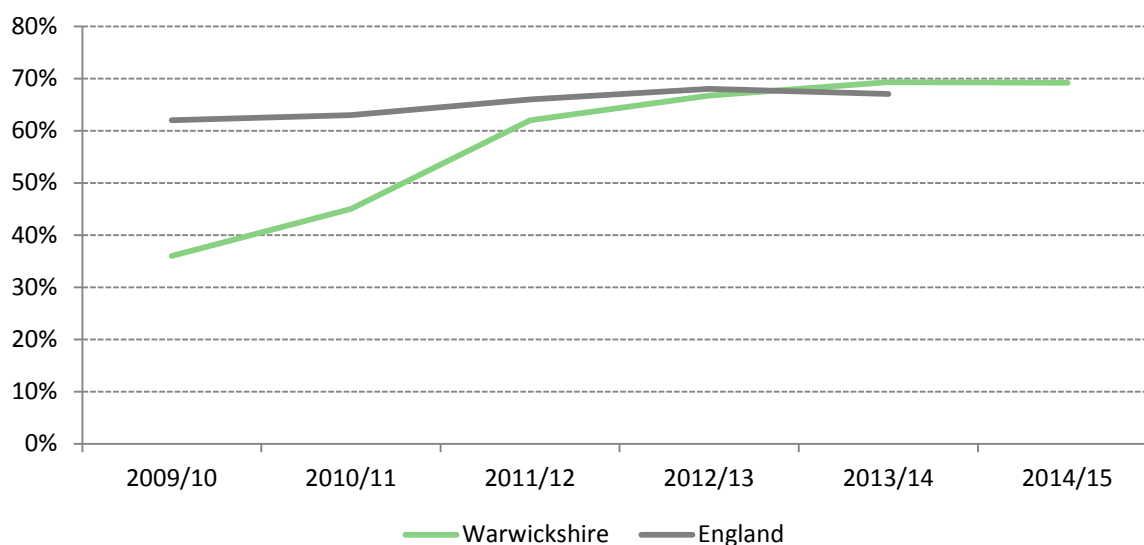
Leaving Care Team

Warwickshire's leaving care team, supports and works with all young people looked after in Warwickshire where they are looked after on or after their 16th birthday and remain in contact until that child is at least 21 years of age. The service aims to ensure that young people are supported as they make the transition into independence.

A looked after young person will be assigned a social worker from the leaving care service prior to their 16th birthday (or 3 months after entering care if older than 16 years) who will, in partnership with the young person, work on their pathway plan. Evidence shows that the longer a care leaver remains in foster care the more positive their longer term outcomes. In 2014/15, 69.2% of children leaving care aged over the age of 16 in Warwickshire remained looked after until their 18th birthday. This percentage has risen considerably over the past 5 years, from 45.0% in 2010/11.

2013/14 was the first year that Warwickshire's proportion of children remaining in care until their 18th birthday has been higher than the England average (69.3% compared with 67.0%) and has remained relatively unchanged in 2014/15 at 69.2%. National data for 2014/15 has not yet been published so comparisons to the England average or Warwickshire's statistical neighbours cannot be made.

Figure 69: Proportion of children leaving care aged over the age of 16 in Warwickshire who remained looked after until their 18th birthday, 2009/10 to 2014/15



Participation in education, employment and training

Children who decide to leave local authority care, or turn 18 and are transitioned out of care, are shown to be less likely to be in education, employment or training (EET) compared with children who were not in care of the same age. Nationally in 2014/15, 39% of care leavers aged 19-21 years were not in education, employment or training compared with 15% of the total 19-24 year old population (based on July-September 2015 DWP data).

The public cost of care leavers not moving into adulthood successfully is likely to be high, although there are no comprehensive datasets to quantify this. However, national research by York University³⁶ estimates that the lifetime cost of the current cohort of 19 year old care leavers being NEET could be around £237 million nationally, which equates to over £3.25 million in Warwickshire.

In Warwickshire, during 2014/15, there were 313 care leavers aged 19-21 years (including UASC), of whom 121 were EET (39% compared with 48% nationally). However, Warwickshire has a much higher proportion of care leavers who are no longer in contact with the local authority than nationally (34% in Warwickshire compared with 13% nationally). There is no obligation for care leavers to keep in touch with the local authority after they turn 18. This is further exacerbated by Warwickshire's high number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children who, for a number of reasons, do not keep in contact with the local authority. If care leavers who are not in contact with the local authority are excluded from the analysis, 59% of care leavers were EET, slightly higher than the national average of 55%. This highlights the

³⁶ University of York (2010) Estimating the life-time cost of NEET [Accessed on: 05/01/2016] https://www.york.ac.uk/media/spsw/documents/research-and-publications/NEET_Final_Report_July_2010_York.pdf

importance of encouraging Warwickshire’s young care leavers to maintain relationships with the services available to them.

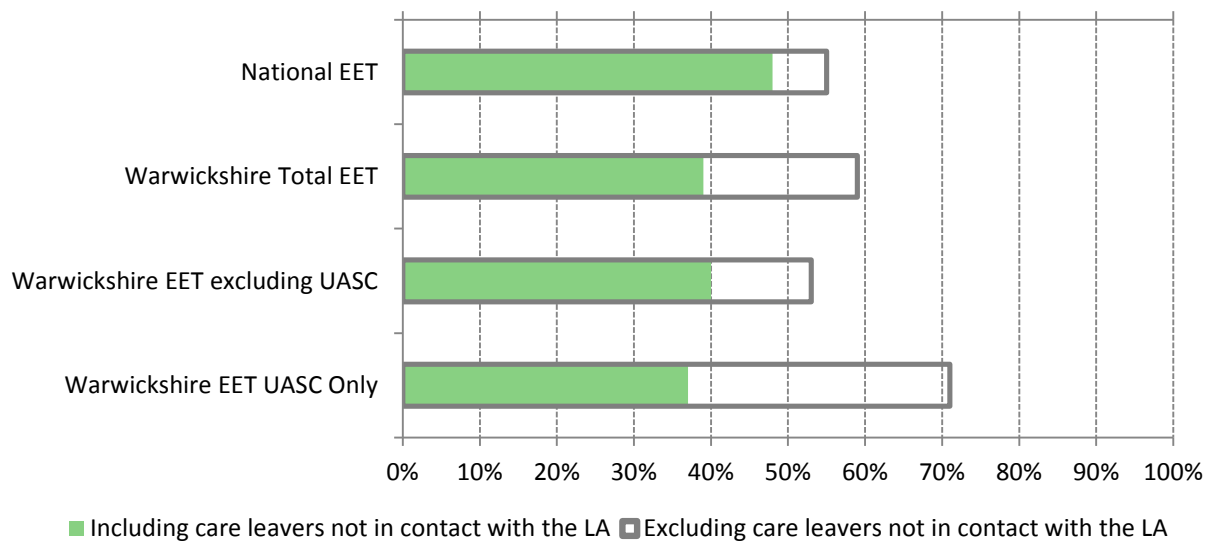
Figure 70: The percentage of Warwickshire care leavers aged 19-21 who were in Education, Employment or Training

| Area | aged 19 | aged 20 | aged 21 | % age groups combined |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Warwickshire 2013/14 | 54% | 38% | 28% | 41% |
| Warwickshire 2014/15 | 45% | 40% | 31% | 39% |
| England 2013/14 | 52% | 45% | 39% | 45% |
| England 2014/15 | 53% | 48% | 42% | 48% |

122 care leavers in Warwickshire during 2014/15 were unaccompanied asylum seeking children (39% of all care leavers aged 19-21 years), of whom 37% were in education, employment or training. However almost half (48%) of all UASC care leavers were no longer in contact with the local authority. If UASC care leavers who are not in contact with the local authority are excluded from the analysis, 71% of UASC care leavers were EET, higher than the Warwickshire overall EET figure and higher than the national average. Unfortunately figures for UASC are not published by the DfE so no comparisons to the national UASC population can be made. However, the data suggests that UASC are less likely to stay in contact with the local authority, but when they do, they are more likely to be EET.

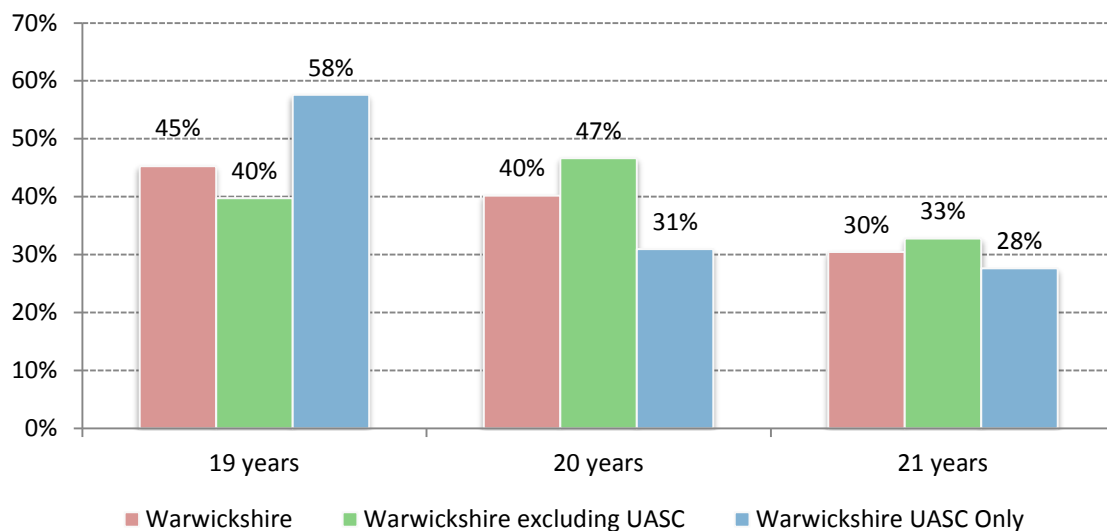
If unaccompanied asylum seeking children are excluded from Warwickshire’s care leaver population, 40% of care leavers aged 19-21 years in 2014/15 were in education, employment or training. If care leavers who are not in contact with the local authority are excluded from the analysis, 53% of care leavers were EET, lower than the Warwickshire overall figure and lower than the national average.

Figure 71: Proportion of Warwickshire Care Leavers aged 19-21 years in Employment, Education or Training, including and excluding those who are no longer in touch with the local authority, 2014/15



The likelihood of care leavers being in education, employment or training reduces the older they are. In Warwickshire during 2014/15, 45% of care leavers aged 19 years were EET compared with 31% of 21 year olds.

Figure 72: Proportion of Warwickshire Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training, 2014/15, by single age



Out of all care leavers in Warwickshire in 2014/15 who were in education, employment or training, nearly one third (32.2%) were in full time training or employment. The majority (40%) of 19 year old EET care leavers were in full time education other than higher education.

Older EET care leavers were much more likely to be in full or part time training or employment (38% and 28% of all 21 year old EET care leavers respectively).

Figure 73: Warwickshire Care Leavers who are EET by activity, by age, 2014/15

| Education, employment or training | 19 years | 20 years | 21 years | Total |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Full time in education other than higher education | 39.6% | 26.8% | 15.6% | 28.9% |
| Full time in higher education (i.e. studies beyond A level) | 6.3% | 7.3% | 12.5% | 8.3% |
| Full time in training or employment | 31.3% | 29.3% | 37.5% | 32.2% |
| Part time in education other than higher education | 6.3% | 4.9% | 6.3% | 5.8% |
| Part time in training or employment | 16.7% | 31.7% | 28.1% | 24.8% |

When looking at Warwickshire’s care leavers EET population, almost half (49%) of UASC were engaged in full time education other than higher education compared with only 17% of care leavers excluding UASC. No UASC care leavers were engaged in full time training or employment compared to over half (51%) of care leavers excluding UASC.

Figure 74: Warwickshire Care Leavers who are EET, 2014/15

| Education, employment or training | Warwickshire | Warwickshire (excluding UASC) | Warwickshire UASC Only |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Young person engaged full time in education other than higher education | 28.9% | 17.1% | 48.9% |
| Young person engaged full time in higher education (i.e. studies beyond A level) | 8.3% | 7.9% | 8.9% |
| Young person engaged full time in training or employment | 32.2% | 51.3% | 0.0% |
| Young person engaged part time in education other than higher education | 5.8% | 3.9% | 8.9% |
| Young person engaged part time in training or employment | 24.8% | 19.7% | 33.3% |

Accommodation

All eligible children in care over the age of 16 years must be provided with a pathway plan that includes their desired accommodation options when the child is due to leave care. The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 stipulates that local authorities should:

- Avoid moving and disrupting young people who are settled
- Assess young people’s needs and prepare them to move
- Offer a choice of accommodation (where practicable)
- Provide a support package to go with the accommodation
- Have a contingency plan in case accommodation arrangements break down

Local authorities may be able to accommodate care leavers in dedicated properties such as training flats, supported lodgings (in family homes) or supported accommodation such as foyers, self-contained flats and shared houses, or fully independent accommodation options.

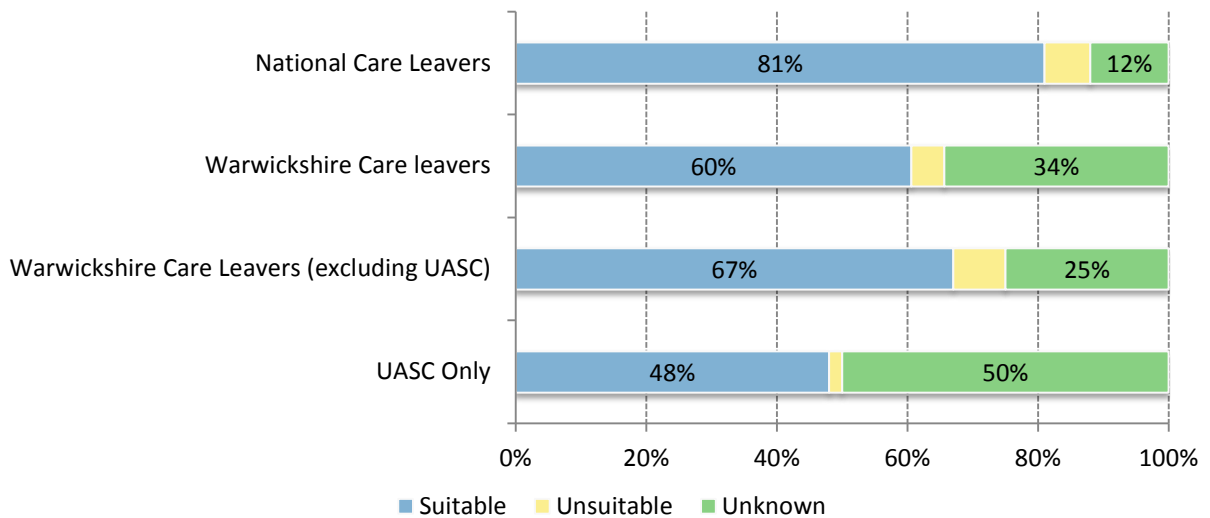
Local authorities may also be able to offer flexible tenancies and support services in social housing, but with the continuing shortage in local authority accommodation, it is more likely a young person will rent from the private rented sector once they turn 18. At this age they will also be able to claim housing benefit, but will be exempt from the shared accommodation rate until the age of 22.

The DfE collects information from local authorities on where care leavers are living on or around their 19th, 20th and 21st birthdays and whether this accommodation is deemed 'suitable'. The DfE guidance³⁷ states that the decision as to whether accommodation is deemed suitable will depend on the circumstances of the individual case and that social workers will have to use their judgement. However, the guidance does state that suitable accommodation for care leavers should provide "safe, secure and affordable provision for young people" and that accommodation that "clearly exposes the person to risk of harm or social exclusion by reason of location or other factors should be coded as unsuitable".

In Warwickshire in 2014/15, 60% of care leavers aged 19-21 years in 2014/15 were deemed to be in suitable accommodation, compared to 81% of care leavers nationally. 5% were deemed to be in unsuitable accommodation, compared to 7% nationally. No information was held by WCC with regards to suitability of accommodation on over a third (34%) of care leavers. If UASC are excluded from the analysis, 67% of care leavers were deemed to be in suitable accommodation, 8% were deemed to be in unsuitable accommodation and no information on suitability was available for 25%. The proportion of care leavers living in unknown accommodation is much higher than the national average, even when UASC are excluded from the analysis. It is unclear whether this is a recording issue or whether these care leavers are choosing not to retain contact with the local authority.

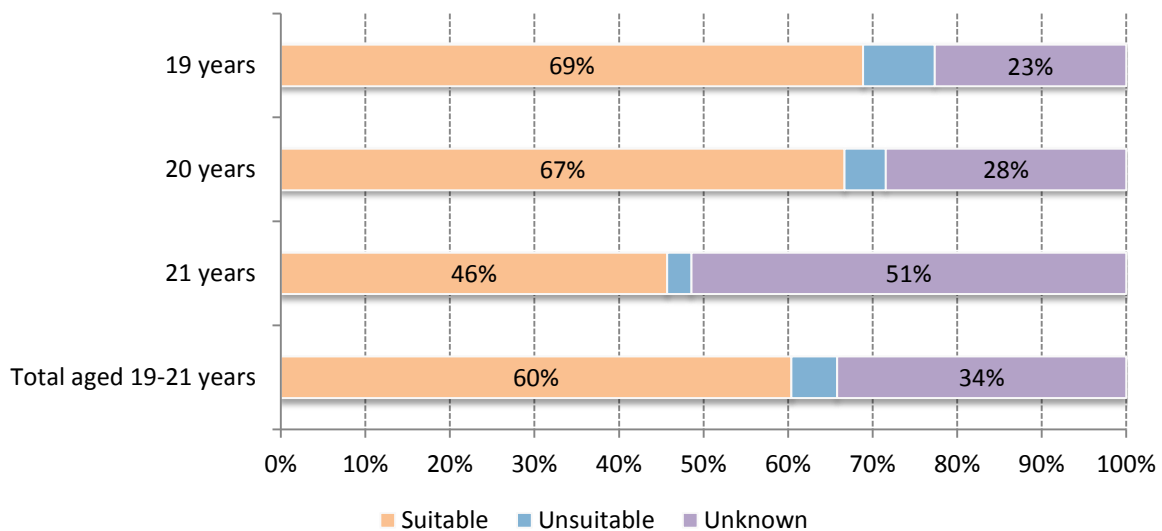
³⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/479658/SSDA903_GuidanceNotes_2015_2016_v1.2.pdf

Figure 75: Warwickshire care leavers aged 19-21 years by suitability of accommodation, 2014/15



The proportion of care leavers in unknown accommodation increases with age. In Warwickshire in 2014/15, 22% of 19 year olds were in unknown accommodation compared with 51% of 21 year olds.

Figure 76: Warwickshire Care Leavers by suitability of accommodation and age, 2014/15



The most common type of accommodation for care leavers in 2014/15 in Warwickshire was independent living (35%), of which 97% of care leavers were suitably placed.

Figure 77: Warwickshire Care Leavers by type of accommodation, 2014/15

| Accommodation Type | Number of Care Leavers | Proportion in suitable accommodation |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| With parents or relatives | 23 | 96% |
| Community home | 5 | 100% |
| Semi-independent, transitional accommodation | 9 | 100% |
| Supported lodgings | 9 | 100% |
| Foyers | 8 | 100% |
| Independent living | 115 | 97% |
| Emergency accommodation | <5 | 100% |
| Bed and breakfast | <5 | 100% |
| In custody | 9 | 0% |
| Other | 14 | 79% |
| With former foster carers | 11 | 100% |
| Unknown | 107 | n/a |

To ensure that care leavers have the best possible life opportunities, well-targeted support is required to address their complex needs or there is a risk of more costly consequences both for the young people and for society. While there is a clear legal framework and an inspection regime in place, the system is not working effectively to deliver good outcomes for all care leavers and a strategy may be needed to ensure that the statutory guidance is fully implemented.