



## DEBATE PACK

Number CDP-0208, 8 October 2018

# Children's social care in England

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## Summary

On 9 October 2018 there will be a General debate on children's social care in England. This will take place in the main Commons Chamber.

This debate was sponsored by Tim Loughton MP who proposed the debate to the Backbench Business Committee on 10 July 2018.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

# 1. Children's social care

Children's social care services are generally situated within or alongside broader children's services. The Department for Education (DfE) research report [Children's services: spending and delivery](#) (July 2016) provided the following explanation of the types of children's services that local authorities provide:

Local councils describe their children's services by using a four-tier model, which may be represented as a pyramid or continuum of needs.

**Tier 1:** Universal services such as schools, and health visiting.

**Tier 2:** Targeted services for children and families beginning to experience, or at risk of, difficulties; for example school counselling, parenting programmes, and support for teenage parents.

**Tier 3:** Specialist services for children and families with multiple needs such as intensive family support, and services for children with disabilities.

**Tier 4:** Specialist services for children and families with severe and complex needs, including child protection services, and looked after children.<sup>1</sup>

Children's social care services sit within tiers 3 and 4 of this framework:

**Non statutory services:** Tier 1 and tier 2 services for cases with a lower level of need than children in need and looked after children.

**Statutory services:** Tier 3 and tier 4 services for children in need, and looked after children, as established in the Children Act 1989.<sup>2</sup>

Social care services may include:

- services for looked after children<sup>3</sup>, including fostering and residential care
- court liaison and advisory services
- adoption
- child protection
- family support
- services for children with disabilities

Local authorities work with other bodies such as the police, health and education services, and private and voluntary care providers, to meet their statutory duties.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Education, [Children's services: spending and delivery: Research report by Aldaba and the Early Intervention Foundation](#), July 2016, p7

<sup>2</sup> Department for Education, [Children's services: spending and delivery: Research report by Aldaba and the Early Intervention Foundation](#), July 2016, p9

<sup>3</sup> Under the *Children Act 1989*, a child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she is provided with accommodation for a continuous period for more than 24 hours, or is subject to a care order.

The Department for Education is responsible for the legal and policy frameworks within which children's social care services operate. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government provides funding to local authorities for children's services.

## 1.1 The legal context

All decisions should be driven by the well-being of the child. This is one of the core principles of the children's social care system in England.

The way that agencies and organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is set out in Department for Education statutory guidance: [Working together to safeguard children](#) (last updated 1 August 2018).

The document summarises the legislative framework as follows:

Whilst it is parents and carers who have primary care for their children, local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out specific duties: section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the local authority to provide services to children in need in their area, regardless of where they are found; section 47 of the same Act requires local authorities to undertake enquiries if they believe a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services in local authorities are the key points of professional and political accountability, with responsibility for the effective delivery of these functions

These duties placed on the local authority can only be discharged with the full co-operation of other partners, many of whom have individual duties when carrying out their functions under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (see chapter 2). Under section 10 of the same Act, the local authority is under a duty to make arrangements to promote co-operation between itself and organisations and agencies to improve the wellbeing of local children (see chapter 1). This co-operation should exist and be effective at all levels of an organisation, from strategic level through to operational delivery.

The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, strengthens this already important relationship by placing new duties on key agencies in a local area. Specifically the police, clinical commissioning groups and the local authority are under a duty to make arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes<sup>4</sup>

## Children in Need

'Child in Need' is a broad definition spanning a wide range of children and adolescents, in need of varying types of support and intervention. A child is defined as 'in need' under section 17 of the *Children Act 1989*, where:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for them of services by a local authority;
- their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for them of such services; or
- they are disabled.<sup>5</sup>

Children in need make up a small minority of all children. At 31 March 2016, an estimated 3% of all children were in need of help and protection, and around 6% of all children were in need at some point throughout the year.<sup>6</sup>

Children in need of help and protection are assessed and supported through children's social care services and include:

- children on Child in Need Plans
- children on Child Protection Plans
- looked after children
- young carers
- disabled children

The Department for Education figure below provides an overview of statutory thresholds for children in need:<sup>7</sup>

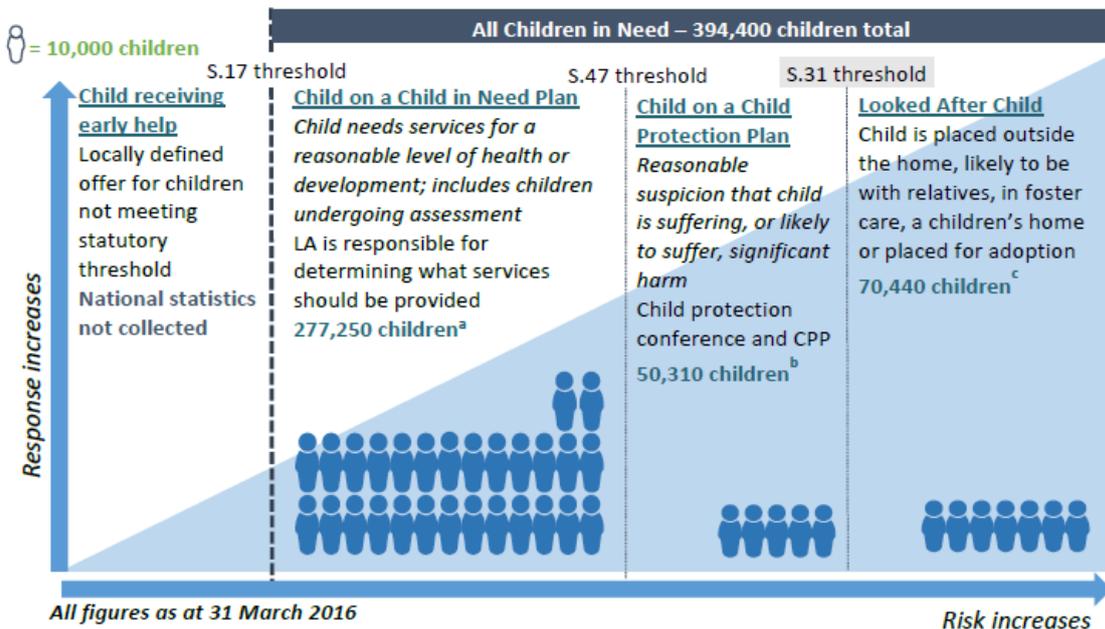
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<sup>4</sup> Department for Education, [Working together to safeguard children](#), last updated 1 August 2018, pp6-7

<sup>5</sup> Section 17(10) of *Children Act 1989*

<sup>6</sup> Department for Education, [Children in need of help and protection - data and analysis](#), 16 March 2018, Section 2.1 p8

<sup>7</sup> Department for Education, [Children in need of help and protection - data and analysis](#), 16 March 2018, Section 2.1 p8

**Figure 1.0 - Overview of statutory thresholds for Children in Need**

The Commons Library briefing paper CBP-7730: [Local authority support for children in need \(England\)](#) (October 2016) provides further information on the assessment process and the services available to children in need and their families in England.

## 1.2 The policy context

In 2010, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned the [Munro Review of child protection](#), which recommended major reform of children's social work when it was published in May 2011. It proposed 15 recommendations designed to create "a better balance between essential rules, principles, and professional expertise" and ensure that children's services could be more "child-centred" and less bureaucratic.<sup>8</sup>

In July 2016, the DfE published [Putting children first](#), setting out its vision for children's social care by 2020.<sup>9</sup> It built on a previous policy paper: [Children's social care reform: a vision for change](#) (January 2016).

The Government's strategy involves reform in the three key areas:

- **people and leadership** – bringing the best into the profession and giving them the right knowledge and skills for the challenging but hugely rewarding work ahead, and developing leaders equipped to nurture practice excellence
- **practice and systems** – creating the right environment for excellent practice and innovation to flourish, learning from the very best practice, and learning from when things go wrong
- **governance and accountability** – making sure that what we are doing is working, and developing innovative new

<sup>8</sup> E Munro, [The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report – a child-centred system](#), Cm 8062, Department for Education, May 2011

<sup>9</sup> Department for Education, [Putting children first: Delivering our vision for excellent children's social care](#), July 2016

organisational models with the potential to radically improve services.<sup>10</sup>

The reform programme includes: developing the social work profession through assessment and accreditation; supporting innovation; establishing a new What Works Centre; and exploring new governance and accountability arrangements. The DfE has published a '[roadmap](#)' for how it intends to transform children's social care services, with a timeframe for delivery of the reforms.<sup>11</sup>

The **national assessment and accreditation system** is intended to introduce a new practice-focused methodology to establish the knowledge and skills that child and family social workers need for statutory child and family social work. The Government's consultation outcome – [Confidence in practice: child and family social work assessment and accreditation system](#) (8 December 2017) – provides further information on the proposed reforms.

The **Children's Social Care Innovation Programme** was launched by the DfE in 2014 to test innovative ways of supporting vulnerable children and young people. The programme objectives are to:

- Improve life chances for children receiving help from the social care system.
- Create stronger incentives and mechanisms for innovation, experimentation and replication of successful new approaches.
- Drive better value for money across children's social care.

The Programme has a budget of £200m for 2014-20. Information about the individual projects, as well as insights gained from the Programme as a whole, are available on the [Innovation Programme Projects and Insights webpage](#).

Alongside the Innovation programme, DfE is working with the best leaders and practitioners in children's social care through the **Partners in Practice programme**. This programme aims to support wider improvement across the children's social care system through understanding and sharing what works in improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

The DfE has commissioned a **What Works Centre for Children's Social Care** to foster a culture of evidence-informed practice. The Centre will be established as an independent organisation by 2020, but will publish early research during its development. The What Works Centre is being set up in close collaboration with the sector:

We are working in close consultation with leaders, practitioners, children, young people, families and researchers across the sector to:

- Identify gaps in the evidence, and create new evidence through trials and evaluations

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<sup>10</sup> Department for Education, [Putting children first: Delivering our vision for excellent children's social care](#), July 2016, p5

<sup>11</sup> [Letter from the Permanent Secretary of the DfE to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee](#), 18 September 2017

- Collate, synthesise and review existing evidence
- Develop, test and publish tools and services that support the greater use of evidence and inform the design of the future Centre
- Champion the application of robust standards of evidence in children's social care research.<sup>12</sup>

The Government has also announced that it will establish a **National Stability Forum for Children's Social Care** to provide leadership across the sector and drive forward the Government's vision for children's social care.<sup>13</sup>

## Fostering

The House of Commons Education Select Committee's [2016-17 inquiry into fostering](#) found that the fostering system was under pressure. The key recommendations of the report included:

- Ensuring all young people in foster care are meaningfully engaged, have full access to advocacy services and where possible are placed with their siblings.
- The establishment of a national college for foster carers, which will work to improve working conditions.
- A national recruitment and awareness campaign to increase capacity in the foster care system.<sup>14</sup>

The DfE commissioned an independent review to inform the Government's knowledge and understanding of foster care in England. The 2018 report, [Foster Care in England](#), by Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers, investigated a range of fostering-related issues and made 36 recommendations about how the outcomes of children in foster care could be improved.

The DfE's response to the Education Select Committee's *Fostering* report and the independent *Foster Care in England* report - [Fostering Better Outcomes](#) (July 2018) - describes the Government's vision for foster care underpinned by five overarching ambitions:

- Children are listened to and involved in decisions about their lives
- Foster parents receive the support and respect they need and deserve to care for children
- There are enough high quality fostering placements, in the right place, at the right time
- LAs [local authorities] commission placements according to the needs of the child

<sup>12</sup> [What Works Centre for Children's Social Care](#) website [Accessed 27 September 2018]

<sup>13</sup> Department for Education, [Fostering Better Outcomes: The Government response to the Education Select Committee into fostering and Foster Care in England](#), CM9662, July 2018, p43

<sup>14</sup> House of Commons Education Committee, [Committee calls for better support for foster carers and children in care](#), 22 December 2017

- Children experience stability regardless of permanence plan<sup>15</sup>

The report responds to a total of 52 recommendations and sets out the Government's proposals to improve the fostering system.

The Commons Library briefing for a Westminster Hall debate on Foster Care on 14 March 2018 - [Foster care in England](#) – provides further information.

### 1.3 Challenges facing children's social care

In recent years a number of reports, from a range of stakeholders, have highlighted ongoing concerns with children's social care services. For example:

- [Care Crisis Review](#) - A sector-led seven month review of the rise in applications for care orders and the number of children in care. The final report - [Care Crisis Review: Options for Change \(June 2018\)](#) - provided an in-depth analysis of the current state of children's social care and set out 20 options for change. These include "immediate steps that could be taken to move away from an undue focus on processes and performance indicators, to one where practitioners are able to stay focused on securing the right outcomes for each child".<sup>16</sup>

This report was [debated in Parliament](#) and the Commons Library produced a corresponding [summary for the debate](#).

- The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Children's [2016-17 Inquiry into children's social care services in England](#) identified key areas for improvement and made recommendations for change. The APPG published a further report - [Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#) – in July 2018.
- The Education Select Committee's [2016-17 inquiry into fostering](#) called on the Government to conduct a review of the whole children's care system: "... We believe that the Government should conduct a fundamental review of the whole care system to address wider issues and ensuring that the care system is fulfilling its purpose".<sup>17</sup>
- A report by Action for Children and National Children's Bureau - [Turning the Tide](#) (November 2017) – analysed the funding pressures on children and young people's services.
- A position paper from the Association of Directors of Children's Services - [A Country That Works For All Children](#) (October 2017) explored the impact of different initiatives and policies on

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<sup>15</sup> Department for Education, [Fostering Better Outcomes: The Government response to the Education Select Committee into fostering and Foster Care in England](#), CM9662, July 2018, p9

<sup>16</sup> Care Crisis Review, [Care Crisis Review: Options for Change](#), June 2018, pp4-5

<sup>17</sup> House of Commons Education Committee, [Fostering: First Report of Session 2017-19](#), HC340, 22 December 2017, p3

children's lives and outcomes, and "calls for a marshalling of resources across the various government departments, a reaffirmation of the value of preventative services and the establishment of a cross-government review to understand better the reasons for, and links between, rising levels of child poverty and demand for children's statutory services".

- The Public Accounts Select Committee's 2016–17 inquiry into [Child protection](#) concluded that:

The Department seemed to us worryingly complacent that nothing can be done to improve [Children's] services more quickly. The Department's newly stated ambition to improve services by 2020 is welcome but the Department lacks a credible plan for how and by when it will make a difference and ensure that local authorities are intervening effectively to make a difference to these children's lives...<sup>18</sup>

The [Government response](#) was published in March 2017.

- The National Audit Office published a critical report - [Children in need of help or protection](#) – in October 2016 which made a number of recommendations to improve children's services. The head of the National Audit Office, Amyas Morse, said:

Six years have passed since the Department recognised that children's services were not good enough. It is extremely disappointing that, after all its efforts, far too many children's services are still not good enough. To achieve its new goal of improving the quality of all services by 2020 the Department will need to inject more energy, pace and determination in delivering on its responsibilities.<sup>19</sup>

The key issues raised by these reports include:

- Increasing demand for children's social care;
- Funding pressures;
- Varying thresholds for social care;
- Poor and inadequate services in some areas;
- Workforce challenges – including recruitment and retention of social workers;
- Poor outcomes for children in need.

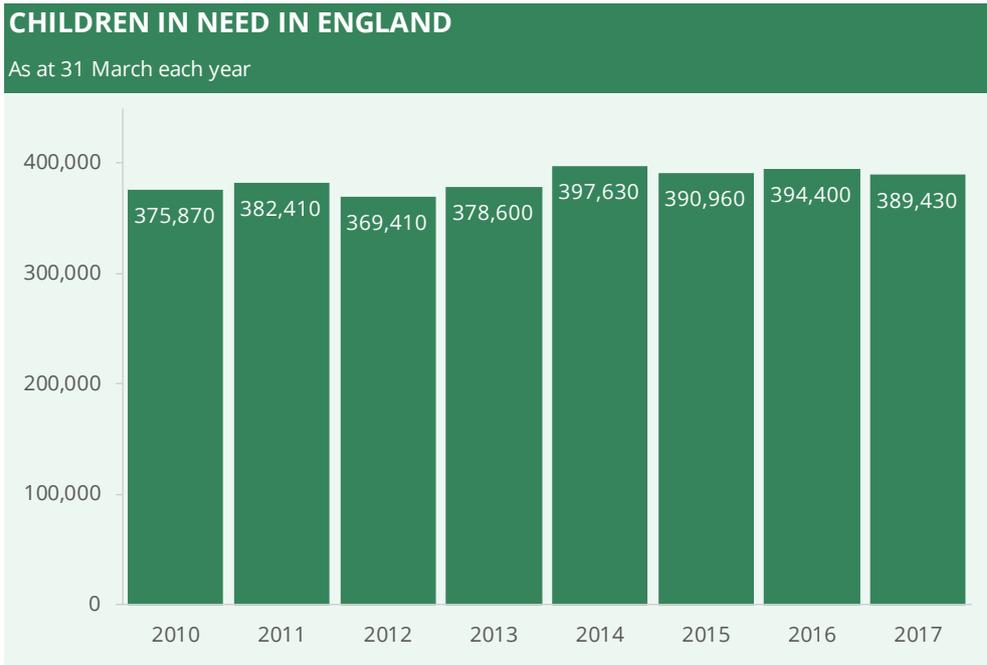
An overview of some of these issues is provided in the following sections of the briefing paper.

## 1.4 Increasing demand for social care

The chart below shows the number of children in need since 2010. The number was at its lowest in 2012 at 369,410 and at its highest in 2014 at 397,630. As at 31 March 2017 there were 389,430 children in need in England.

<sup>18</sup> House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, Child protection: Thirty-first Report of Session 2016–17, HC 713, 16 December 2016, p3

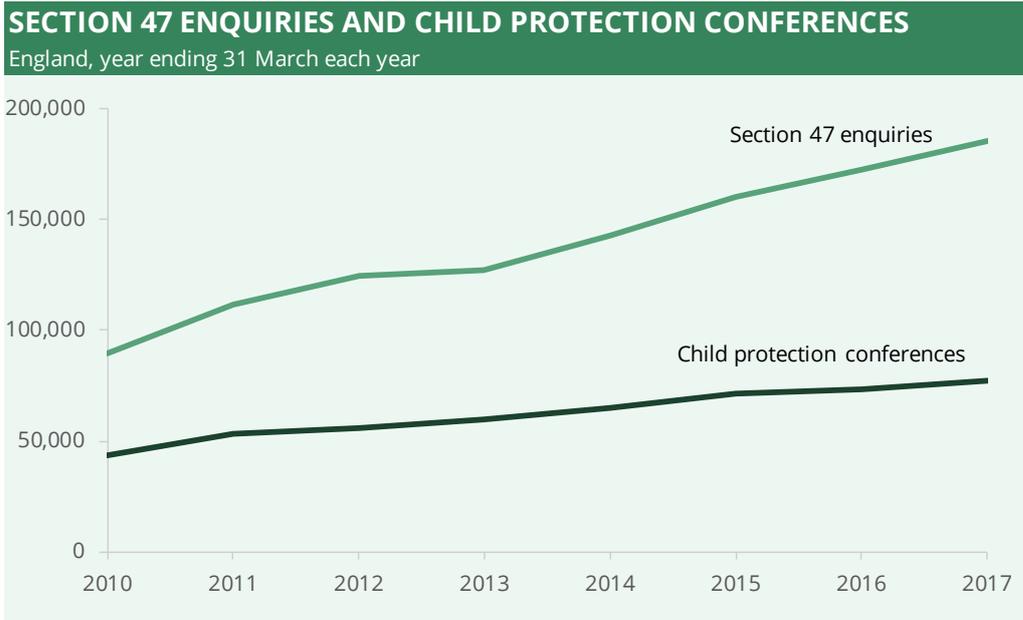
<sup>19</sup> National Audit Office webpage [Children in need of help or protection](#) [Accessed 27 September 2018]



[Source: DFE Children in Need Statistics](#)

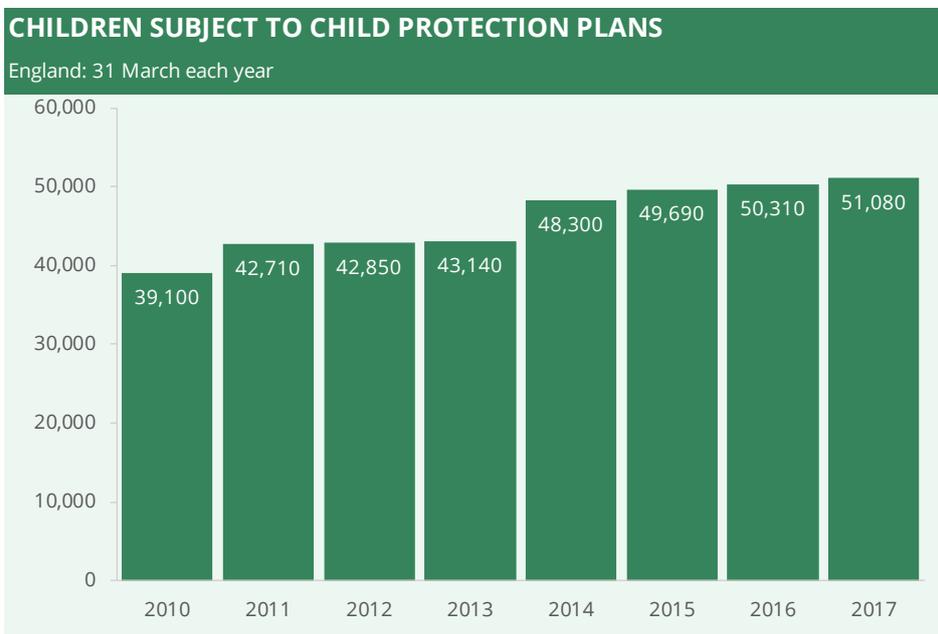
If a local authority identifies there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, it will carry out an assessment under section 47 of the *Children Act 1989* to determine if it needs to take steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. If concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of harm then an initial child protection conference should be convened within 15 working days.

The chart below shows that Section 47 enquiries and child protection conferences have increased year on year since 2010. Between 2010 and 2017 the number of Section 47 enquiries increased by 108% from 89,300 in 2010 to 185,450 in 2017. Over the same period the number of child protection conferences increased by 75% from 43,900 to 76,930.



Source: [DFE Children in Need Statistics](#)

At the initial child protection conference, the decision will be made as to whether the child needs to become the subject of a child protection plan. The number of children who became subject to a child protection plan has also increased year on year since 2010. In the year ending 31 March 2017 a total of 51,080 children in England had a child protection plan in place.



Source: [DFE Children in Need Statistics](#)

The number of children looked after has also increased in recent years. As at 31 March 2017 there were a total of 72,670 looked after children in England, a +13% increase on the 2010 figure of 64,470. The table below shows that the majority of looked after children are in foster placements, followed by secure units and children's homes.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER IN ENGLAND BY PLACEMENT TYPE										
As at 31 March each year										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2010 to 2017	
									Number	%
Foster placements	46,890	48,150	50,030	50,560	50,890	51,590	51,480	53,420	+6,530	+14%
Placed for adoption	2,530	2,710	2,900	3,620	3,940	3,590	3,160	2,520	-10	-0%
Placement with parents	4,210	3,990	3,600	3,310	3,270	3,570	3,890	4,370	+160	+4%
Other placement in the community	2,440	2,560	2,380	2,270	2,250	2,420	3,080	3,090	+650	+27%
Secure units, children's homes	6,250	6,060	6,070	6,500	7,030	7,230	7,710	7,890	+1,640	+26%
Other residential settings	950	940	930	1,020	930	890	880	1,080	+130	+14%
Residential schools	1,000	920	930	590	400	150	140	130	-870	-87%
<b>All children looked after</b>	<b>64,470</b>	<b>65,500</b>	<b>67,070</b>	<b>68,070</b>	<b>68,820</b>	<b>69,500</b>	<b>70,450</b>	<b>72,670</b>	<b>+8,200</b>	<b>+13%</b>

Source: [DFE Looked After Children Statistics](#)

## Why is demand increasing nationally?

A range of factors have been attributed as contributing to the increase in demand for children's social care services including:

- greater awareness and referrals in the wake of high profile cases such as those involving sexual exploitation in Rotherham.
- increasing numbers of children who are vulnerable or at risk from female genital mutilation, gang violence, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, and increasing numbers of unaccompanied children seeking asylum.
- better identification, rather than an actual increase in the number of children at risk.<sup>20</sup>

According to some stakeholders, the current austerity measures, in particular reductions in public sector funding and welfare reform, are key contributory factors.

In a policy paper – [A Country That Works For All Children](#) - published in October 2017, the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) summarised the issues as follows:

Local authorities are ambitious about improving children's life chances but a series of conflicting national policy initiatives - particularly in relation to welfare reform - coupled with dramatic reductions in public sector funding, are increasingly affecting our ability to improve outcomes.

[...]

Whilst councils across the country have safeguarded spending on child protection services to protect the most vulnerable, the unintended consequence of the government's austerity programme has been to drive up demand for these services as more and more families find themselves at the point of crisis. [The](#)

<sup>20</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC), [No Good Options: Report of the Inquiry into Children's Social Care in England](#), 17 March 2017, p9

[Child Poverty Action Group](#) suggests the annual cost of tackling child poverty in the U.K. is £29 billion, this sum dwarfs the estimated £2 billion funding gap in children's services (LGA, 2017).

ADCS members are concerned that our ability to address the growing pressures in the child protection system and wider children's services, including schools, via the provision of early help and support to families is being eroded by austerity. The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 aimed to improve services for children by promoting early help and multi-agency working to bring about positive outcomes for children, young people and their families but these preventative duties have never been sufficiently funded. We are not, nor should we be, a blue light service...<sup>21</sup>

The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) has called for a cross-government review to better understand the reasons for, and links between, rising levels of child poverty and demand for children's statutory services.<sup>22</sup>

The [All Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) for Children 2016-17 Inquiry into children's social care services](#) in England also highlighted the impact of funding pressures on the number of children being taken into care:

Inevitably, the available resource is being spent disproportionately on children most at risk of harm. Unfortunately, the Inquiry heard that across the country, there is insufficient resource for universal services, early help for families, and even statutory support for children classified as "in need". Strikingly, in a survey conducted for the Inquiry, 89 per cent of directors of children's social services reported finding it increasingly challenging to fulfil their statutory duties under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.<sup>23</sup>

And:

The Inquiry heard repeatedly that increasing resource is being directed towards children who have already suffered abuse or neglect, or those at high risk of harm. Correspondingly, fewer resources are allocated for early intervention and prevention, including support for families. The result is a shift towards late intervention, where needs have often escalated significantly before any support is put in place. This often results in more children being taken into care, and ultimately in poorer outcomes for children and families.<sup>24</sup>

## 1.5 Funding

Children's services are funded via the local government finance settlement; the funding is not ring-fenced.

In 2014/15 expenditure on 'services to young people' was reclassified to Children and Families Social Care services expenditure. As a result

<sup>21</sup> Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), [A Country That Works For All Children](#), 11 October 2017, p1

<sup>22</sup> Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), [A Country That Works For All Children](#), 11 October 2017

<sup>23</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC), [No Good Options: Report of the Inquiry into Children's Social Care in England](#), 17 March 2017, p2

<sup>24</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC), [No Good Options: Report of the Inquiry into Children's Social Care in England](#), 17 March 2017, p3

expenditure on children and families social care cannot be tracked back to 2010/11 on a consistent basis. The table below shows two separate time series, but both suggest that expenditure on children's social care has been protected, during a period in which Government funding for local authorities has fallen in real terms.<sup>25</sup>

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY EXPENDITURE ON CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE</b>			
England £ billions			
	Cash	Real Terms (2017/18 Prices)	Real terms Annual % change
2010/11	6.65	7.43	
2011/12	6.42	7.08	-4.7%
2012/13	6.61	7.15	+0.9%
2013/14	6.92	7.34	+2.7%
2014/15	8.09	8.48	
2015/16	8.30	8.63	+1.8%
2016/17	8.48	8.62	-0.1%
2017/18	8.84	8.84	+2.6%

Sources:

[MHLG: Local authority revenue expenditure and financing data](#)

[HMT: GDP Deflator June 2018](#)

Research by Aldaba and the Early Intervention Foundation for the DfE analysed the spend per head on children's services between 2010-11 and 2015-16, and identified wide variation in spend per head between local authorities for both children in need and looked after children.<sup>26</sup> Variations in spend per head may be a result of a number of factors, for example: sudden changes in the number of children supported through the services; efficiencies, and the number of the most expensive types of placements, such as residential care. The National Audit Office reported in 2016 that "Neither the DfE nor authorities understand why spending varies".<sup>27</sup>

As children's social care services are primarily statutory responsibilities, funding pressures in this area tends to lead to use of reserves or spending reductions in other service areas, rather than a reduction in service.<sup>28</sup>

There is a concern that funding for non-statutory children's services, in particular for early and preventative interventions such as Sure Start and young people's services, has been significantly reduced in many areas. For example, the Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, raised concerns about the impacts of cuts to preventative services in a 2018 report on public spending on children:

<sup>25</sup> National Audit Office, *Financial sustainability of local authorities 2018*, 8 March 2018

<sup>26</sup> DfE, *Children's services spending update November 2017*, November 2017, para 31

<sup>27</sup> National Audit Office, *Children in need of help or protection*, 12 October 2016, Summary

<sup>28</sup> National Audit Office, *Financial sustainability of local authorities 2018*, 8 March 2018, para. 2.30

The work shows, therefore, that spend on children has in fact been overall broadly resilient over the last 20 years, even taking into account the effects of the 2008 recession. Within that overall figure, however, are some worrying trends. Mainstream and acute services such as age 4-16 education and provision for children in care have been protected at the expense of targeted preventative services, removing vital safety nets for some very vulnerable children. The 60% cut in Sure Start and youth services will see an increasing number of vulnerable children fall through the gaps.

England now spends nearly half of its entire children's services budget on 73,000 children in the care system – leaving the other half for the remaining 11.7 million kids.

Children do not arrive in extreme need overnight and many could be prevented from getting to that point if we helped them sooner in a more effective way. We are, in effect, attempting to manage and contain crisis in children's lives after allowing it to escalate.

The economic and social costs are unsustainable. The cost to the state will ultimately be greater, but it is the lifetime cost to these children which we should be most troubled by. They only have one childhood, one chance to grow up. Already we see the costs of helping children later in life, or of allowing greater numbers to become marginalised – in the current pressures on family courts, special schools and the care system; in spiralling numbers of school exclusions and the consequent increase in younger and younger children linked to violent street gangs.<sup>29</sup>

The charity [Action for Children](#) has published two research reports that raise concerns that opportunities to intervene early are being missed, and “Some children are stuck in a revolving door into social care, in a cycle of referral and assessment, but only receiving help at crisis point”.<sup>30</sup>

In a parliamentary debate on the Care Crisis Review on 5 September 2018, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi, outlined Government action on early intervention and rejected calls to ring-fence funding for preventative services:

My hon. Friend the Member for Telford has an interest in early intervention. I assure her that, across Government, we are addressing the root causes of children's needs early - be it by supporting children with alcohol-dependent parents or in families affected by domestic abuse, preventing young people from being drawn into serious violence, or investing in early years and children's and young people's mental health. Our “Working Together to Safeguard Children” statutory guidance is clear that local areas should have a comprehensive range of effective evidence-based services in place to address assessed needs early. The Government have also committed £920 million to the troubled families programme, which aims to achieve significant and sustained improvement for up to 400,000 families with multiple high-cost problems by 2020.

On the point that my hon. Friend on funding for preventive support services, it is for local authorities to determine how to

<sup>29</sup> Children's Commissioner for England, [Public Spending on Children in England: 2000 to 2020](#), Institute for Fiscal Studies - Elaine Kelly, Tom Lee, Luke Sibietta and Tom Waters, June 2018, pp2-3

<sup>30</sup> Action for Children, [Revolving Door Part 1](#) (2017) and [Revolving Door Part 2](#) (2018)

spend their non-ring-fenced income on the services they provide, including services for preventive support measures.<sup>31</sup>

The APPG for Children's 2018 report - [Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#) – reported evidence that thresholds for accessing children's care were rising:

The APPGC received compelling evidence suggesting that thresholds for accessing children's social care are rising. A survey of social workers carried out by the Inquiry found that 70 per cent felt thresholds had risen for qualifying as a 'child in need' under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (s.17) and half said the same in relation to making a child subject to a child protection plan. This means that it is getting harder for children and families to access help when they need it. This trend is more evident in relation to early help and services for 'children in need'. Nevertheless, the Inquiry received evidence suggesting that thresholds are also very high, and potentially rising, for access to more acute statutory services.<sup>32</sup>

Commentators are also concerned that the current levels of funding are not sustainable. The Local Government Association's (LGA) [Budget Submission Autumn 2017](#) asserted that "**Children's social care in particular is becoming the biggest area of financial challenge for social care authorities**".<sup>33</sup> The LGA reported that 75% of councils overspent their children's services budgets by more than £0.5 million each in 2015/16, and estimated that children's services will face a £2 billion funding gap by 2019/20:

Children's social care is being pushed to breaking point, with 75 per cent of councils having no choice but to overspend on their children's services budgets by more than half a million pounds each in 2015/16. Our latest analysis shows that collectively in that year, councils surpassed their children's social care budgets by £605 million in order to protect children at immediate risk of harm.

Councils have faced an unprecedented surge in demand for children's social care support over recent years that is showing little sign of abating. More than 170,000 children were subject to child protection enquiries in 2015/16, compared to 71,800 in 2005/0614 – a 140 per cent increase in just 10 years. Meanwhile, social work as a career is increasingly seen as unattractive. Seventy four per cent of councils have recruitment and retention difficulties and 43 per cent are using agency staff. This creates further cost pressures.

Taking into account these pressures, children's services are rapidly becoming unsustainable, with a £2 billion funding gap expected to open by 2020. Unless urgent action is taken to reduce the number of families relying on the children's social care system for support, this gap will continue to grow.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> [HC Deb 5 September 2018 c154W](#)

<sup>32</sup> The APPG for Children, [Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#), July 2018, p5

<sup>33</sup> Local Government Association, [LGA Budget Submission Autumn 2017](#), November 2017, p4

<sup>34</sup> Local Government Association, [LGA Budget Submission Autumn 2017](#), November 2017, p8

More recently, [the LGA has estimated](#) that the funding gap will amount to “£3 billion by 2025”, and that within the last year “there was a £816 million overspend in council’s children’s social care budgets”.<sup>35</sup>

## 1.6 Effectiveness of social care services

Formal assessment of local authority delivery of children’s social care is the responsibility of the independent inspectorate, Ofsted. Information about [How Ofsted inspects children's social care](#) is available on the Ofsted website.

Ofsted inspections of local authority’s children’s services focus on:

- the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements to help and protect children
- the experiences and progress of children looked after
- the arrangements for achieving permanence for children who are looked after including adoption performance
- the experiences and progress of care leavers
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspections are carried out under the single inspection framework (SIF). The SIF has an overall effectiveness judgement. There are three key judgements: help and protection, children looked after, and leadership and management. The SIF also has two sub judgements: adoption and care leavers.

146 of the 152 local authorities have now received at least one SIF inspection. The [Ofsted Annual Report 2016/17: education, children’s services and skills](#) presents the following inspection outcomes:

**Figure 14: Overall effectiveness of local authorities at their most recent SIF inspection, 31 August 2017**



1. Based on inspections carried out by 31 August 2017 where the report was published by 30 September 2017.  
Source: Ofsted

The report concludes that “Nationally, the overall effectiveness of local authorities continues to improve”, with 34% of local authorities judged as either outstanding or good compared to 26% at the time of the last social care annual report.<sup>36</sup>

46% of local authorities were judged to require improvement to be good overall and 20% were judged to be inadequate overall. However,

<sup>35</sup> Local Government Association, [Briefing for Westminster Hall Debate on findings of the Care Crisis Review](#), 5 September 2018

<sup>36</sup> Ofsted, [Ofsted Annual Report 2016/17: education, children’s services and skills](#), 13 December 2017, para. 146

Ofsted point out that the overall judgement hides variations in practice areas:

Very few LAs are inadequate in all areas of practice. Of the 29 LAs judged inadequate overall, 17 (59%) of them had at least one key area of practice where children were receiving a service that was not yet good, but it was not failing children. Only two LAs were inadequate across all areas, including adoption and care leavers.<sup>37</sup>

Other key findings from the [Ofsted Annual Report 2016/17](#) include:

- We found that there was some relationship between the level of deprivation in an LA area and its SIF inspection overall effectiveness judgement. The less deprived LAs were more likely to be judged good and less likely to be judged requires improvement to be good. Perhaps most importantly, there was no strong relationship between deprivation and those judged inadequate. [Para. 160]
- Our initial research suggests no clear relationship between spend per head and SIF inspection overall effectiveness judgement. [Para. 161]
- Social care providers in England have continued to improve over the years. More providers are now judged good or outstanding than previously (84%). All but two of the individual provider types have also improved since the 2015 Annual Report. Only secure children's homes and secure training centres have not improved over time.<sup>38</sup> Currently, no secure training centres are judged good or outstanding. [Para. 184]

Ofsted will use a new framework for the [inspection of local authority children's services \(ILACS\)](#) from 2018, which is intended to support the earlier identification of risk and success.<sup>39</sup>

In a parliamentary debate on [Children's Services](#) on 12 December 2017 the Minister for Children and Families outlined Government action to improve the standard of children's social care:

We have strengthened our approach to intervention in cases where councils are failing to provide adequate services for children in need of help and protection, looked-after children or care leavers. That programme of intervention is yielding real results. Some 36 local authorities have been lifted out of failure since 2010 and we are seeing a positive impact from the independent children's social care trusts that we have set up in Doncaster and Slough. We also have great examples of local authorities, such as Leicester City and West Berkshire, that have turned their services around at an impressive pace, underlining what can be achieved with a relentless focus on improvement along with the right help and support. I am of course pleased with such results, but I am not complacent—we will continue to

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<sup>37</sup> Ofsted, [Ofsted Annual Report 2016/17: education, children's services and skills](#), 13 December 2017, para. 147

<sup>38</sup> **Secure children's homes** accommodate both children and young people who are remanded or have been sentenced for committing a criminal offence. They also accommodate those whose behaviour is deemed to present a significant and immediate threat to their safety or the safety of others. **Secure training centres** accommodate young people between the ages of 12 and 17 who have been remanded or sentenced by the courts.

<sup>39</sup> For further information see: ['A new inspection system'](#), *Ofsted blog*, 9 November 2017

act swiftly in cases of failure and to act decisively to ensure improvement is happening everywhere in the system.

We have identified £20 million to be invested in improvement support to help create a system of sector-led improvement, founded on systematic and effective self-assessment and peer challenge. We have enjoyed real success in working with sector partners on that. Together, we are testing a system of regional improvement alliances that will, in time, spread to the whole country and enable a robust system of support and challenge between local authorities, supported by key partners such as Ofsted and my Department.

We are expanding our partners in practice programme. Our PiPs, as they are familiarly referred to, are excellent local authorities whose children's services are secure and whose leadership is strong. For a few years now, the partners have been pioneering excellent practice and working systematically to spread it across the system. They are a model of good practice, not seen from a distance but working hand-in-hand alongside teams in other authorities that want to learn and improve their own practice...<sup>40</sup>

## 1.7 Variations in service provision

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Children's 2017 inquiry into children's social care drew attention to the issue of variations in service provision and outcomes for children:

Alongside evidence of the funding challenge facing local authorities, the Inquiry heard evidence of substantial variations in local policies and in outcomes for children. Perhaps most strikingly, the proportion of children in local authority care ranges from just 22 per 10,000 to 164 per 10,000. Moreover, this and similar variations are only partially explained by differences in deprivation.<sup>41</sup>

The APPG's follow-up report - [Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#) (July 2018) - found evidence that children with similar needs, and those facing similar risks, were receiving different levels of intervention and support depending on where they live:

The level of need a child has to reach in order to access support was found to vary across the country. Inconsistency appears to be particularly stark in relation to the provision of early help and wider preventative services.

More than 80 per cent of Directors of Children's Services, surveyed as part of the Inquiry, said that there were variations in thresholds for accessing early help. Almost three quarters reported variable thresholds for 'children in need' support, and almost two thirds said there was variation in thresholds for making a child subject to a child protection plan.

Analysis of Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) 'threshold documents' found some significant disparities in how local areas were addressing need, particularly in response to children who are self harming, families with housing problems and even children experiencing physical abuse. These findings suggest that children with similar needs, and those facing similar risks, are receiving

<sup>40</sup> [HC Deb 12 December 2017 c116WH](#)

<sup>41</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC), [No Good Options: Report of the Inquiry into Children's Social Care in England](#), 17 March 2017, p2

different levels of intervention and support depending on where they live.<sup>42</sup>

The APPG recommended urged the Department for Education to urgently respond to the “emerging evidence about variation in thresholds and their application across children’s social care departments, and the implications for children and families”.<sup>43</sup>

The National Audit Office 2016 study – [Children in need of help or protection](#) – found that in the year ending 31 March 2015 there were very wide variations between local authorities in the rates of referrals accepted, re-referrals, children in need and repeat child protection plans.<sup>44</sup>

## 1.8 Outcomes for children in need

It is widely acknowledged both that the majority of looked after children experience more positive outcomes than they would have if there were not taken into care and that children in care often experience better outcomes than those in the wider group of “children in need”. However, children in care and those leaving care face a variety of lower outcomes compared to their peers:<sup>45</sup>

Figure 1: Challenges facing looked-after children



Source: Department of Education, *Children Looked After in England, 2017; Outcomes for children looked after, 2017*; Bazalgette.L et. Al, 2015

Understanding the routes to and causes of these outcomes is challenging. In particular, it is an area of contention as to whether these outcomes are a necessary result of the circumstances that children in the care system have experienced, or whether the care system could and should do more to alleviate and mitigate these impacts. A recent report by the Social Market Foundation – [Looked-after Children: The Silent Crisis](#) (August 2018) provides further analysis of this issue and recommends a range of actions to ensure improvement.

In March 2018 the Government launched a [Review of support for children in need](#) and called for evidence to help understand what makes a difference to the educational outcomes of children in need, and what works in practice to improve those outcomes.

<sup>42</sup> The APPG for Children, [Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#), July 2018, p4

<sup>43</sup> The APPG for Children, [Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#), July 2018, p4

<sup>44</sup> National Audit Office, [Children in need of help or protection](#), 12 October 2016, Summary

<sup>45</sup> Social Market Foundation, [Looked-after Children: The Silent Crisis](#) by Matthew Oakley, Guy Miscampbell, Raphael Gregorian, August 2018

The DfE has released [new data and analysis on children in need](#) including:

- the characteristics of children in need
- the overlaps with other areas of disadvantage such as special educational needs
- their experiences through children's social care and school
- their outcomes from the early years, through education and into adulthood

And concludes that "The data shows that while children in need overall have poorer educational outcomes than other children, there is variation in the progress that children make across local areas. Despite children in need being less likely to achieve than their peers overall, some children are able to succeed despite the challenges they face".<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> DfE, [Review of Children in Need](#), 16 March 2018

## 2. Press and news articles

### General

[Baby P death 10 years on: the case's lasting impact on child protection](#), Children and Young People Now, 26 July 2017

[Dear ministers, here is how you fix children's social work](#), Community Care, 15 June 2017

[What the looked-after children statistics don't tell us](#), Community Care, 3 October 2017

[Ministers 'in the dark' over scale of child vulnerability](#), BBC News, 4 July 2017

[Britain's child social care system is quietly being dismantled](#), *Guardian*, 6 April 2017

### Social care funding and demand for services

[Councils plan £900m of cuts including children's services and early years](#), Children and Young People Now, 20 September 2018

[Revealed: cash crisis pushing child services to tipping point](#), *Observer*, 1 September 2018

[Spare us another Tory 'big society' solution to the social care crisis](#), *Guardian*, 9 August 2018

[Vulnerable children facing 'catastrophe' over crisis-hit councils](#), BBC News, 4 August 2018

[Children's services spending to increase by £542m](#), Children and Young People Now, 29 June 2018

[Care for our children is in crisis. We must give their families more help](#), *Guardian*, 21 June 2018

[Spending on children and young people's services cut by nearly £1bn in six years, figures reveal](#), *Guardian*, 3 April 2018

['Unstable' funding for children's social care hitting services](#), Community Care, 7 December 2017

[Ninety children taken into care each day, figures show](#), BBC News, 12 October 2017

### Thresholds for assistance and early intervention

[Children in crisis as social care struggles](#), *Times*, 11 July 2018

[A problem-solving court protects our most vulnerable children. It must be supported](#), *Times*, 28 June 2018

[Why are more social work assessments leading to no further action?](#) Community Care, 26 April 2018

[1,000 Sure Start children's centres may have shut since 2010](#), *Guardian*, 5 April 2018

[Benefit cuts main cause of surge in demand for children's services, warn council leaders](#), *Independent*, 31 October 2017

[Five essential steps to support the next generation of children in care](#), *Guardian*, 12 October 2017

[Up to 140,000 children left at risk of neglect and abuse as cash-strapped councils struggle to cope, figures show](#), *Independent*, 14 August 2017

[Social workers 'face pressure' to use section 20 arrangements, report finds](#), *Community Care*, 13 July 2017

[Children's policy 'tipped too far' towards removing children at point of crisis, says BASW](#), *Community Care*, 15 May 2017

## Regional variations

[Why does Northern Ireland have fewer children in care?](#) *Guardian*, 19 September 2018

[Country matters: inequalities in children's social care](#), *Community Care*, 11 September 2018

[Children in north of England 70% more likely to face care process, study shows](#), *Guardian*, 3 July 2017

## Quality of care

[Newly qualified social workers should be respected, not undermined](#), *Guardian*, 16 July 2018

[Neglected older children going 'unseen' as authorities fail to recognise abuse and trauma, finds report](#), *Independent*, 6 July 2018

[Thousands of children in care are moved around like 'pinballs'](#), *Times*, 1 June 2018

['I had no choice but to be split from my sister'](#), *BBC News*, 18 April 2018

['Challenging but fair': the new inspection regime for children's services](#), *Guardian*, 29 March 2018

[Manageable caseloads and supported social workers: how to move on from 'inadequate'](#), *Community Care*, 23 March 2017

[Councils struggling to find secure placements for children at risk](#), *Community Care*, 10 April 2017

## Alternative providers and strategies

[Barnardo's bid to save children's services](#), *Times*, 23 September 2018

[Cash-strapped councils turn to algorithms to spot children at risk](#), *Times*, 17 September 2018

[Council progresses with plans to move children's services into company](#), *Community Care*, 13 September 2017

[Can new partnership keep vulnerable children out of care?](#) *Guardian*, 2 February 2018

[Outsourcing children's services is not a quick fix](#), *Guardian*, 7 October 2016

## Local authorities

[Protect children from cuts, broke Northamptonshire county council is urged](#), *Times*, 3 August 2018

[The Guardian view on councils in crisis: paying the price for dogma](#), *Guardian*, 2 August 2018

[Sunderland children's services to get extra £6.5m](#), BBC News, 20 June 2018

[Tory council at risk of bankruptcy calls for funding system fix](#), *Guardian*, 18 May 2018

[Sandwell children's services remain 'inadequate'](#), BBC News, 29 January 2018

['Inadequate' children's services to be taken over by neighbouring council](#), Community Care, 31 October 2017

[Worcestershire child deaths prompt serious case reviews](#), BBC News, 12 October 2017

[The Tory council that failed its children](#), *Guardian*, 4 October 2017

[Worcestershire children's services to be taken over](#), BBC News, 19 September 2017

[Rapid shake-up for child protection at failing council](#), *Times*, 14 September 2017

[Kirklees Council's children's services 'need help'](#), BBC News, 14 September 2017

## 3. Sector comment

### General

The [Association of Directors of Children's Services](#) frequently publishes press releases, blogs, consultation submissions and reports on children's social care. For instance, you can read their contributions on the subject of [care](#), [adoption](#), [fostering](#), [residential care](#), and [family justice](#).

The Children's Society has published many relevant reports which can be found on their [publications website](#). Major publications include:

- [Crumbling Futures: Why vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds need more support as they move into adulthood](#), March 2018
- [Good Childhood Report 2017](#)

[Vulnerable children and social care in England: a review of the evidence](#), Education Policy Institute, April 2018

[Perceptions of Care](#), Become, June 2017

### Care homes

[ICHA "State of the Market" survey](#), Independent Children Homes Association, 4 February 2018

### Family support/ special guardians/kinship carers

[Firm foundations: complaints about council support and advice for special guardians](#), Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, May 2018

Family Rights Group's 2018 survey of over 500 kinship carers - Features in a [press release from the Family Rights Group](#) (see date 08.04.2018) and also a [Guardian article](#) from the same date

Caroline Lynch and Professor Janet Boddy, [Cooperation or coercion? Children coming into the care system under voluntary arrangements](#), Family Rights Group, 2017

[Kinship Care: State of the Nation 2017](#), Grandparents Plus, 2017. Previous publications by Grandparents Plus can be seen on their [website](#).

Cathy Ashley and David Roth, [What happens to siblings in the care system?](#) Family Rights Group, 2015

### Spending on services

[England's largest councils set to outline another raft of savings this winter, with £1bn in new reductions needed to balance budgets](#), County Council Network, 20 September 2018

[Children in need – defining the problem](#), National Children's Bureau, 6 June 2018

[Making Sense - Understanding the drivers of variation in spend on children's services](#), LGA and Newton, 2018

[Councillors warn that rising demand and a lack of resources are leaving children's needs unmet](#), National Children's Bureau, 30 October 2017

[Children's social care at breaking point, council leaders warn](#), LGA, 9 August 2017

[Close the children's services funding gap](#), a campaign by the LGA, Barnardo's, Action for Children, The Children's Society, and the National Children's Bureau

## Early intervention, crisis care and adoption

[Revolving door part 2: Are we failing children at risk of abuse and neglect?](#) Action for Children, 2018

[BASW unveils the Adoption Enquiry report and key findings](#), British Association of Social Workers, January 2018

[Children must fall deeper into crisis before getting help, suggests survey of social workers](#), National Children's Bureau, 11 September 2017

[Revolving door part 1: Are vulnerable children being overlooked?](#) Action for Children, 2017

## Quality of care

Matthew Oakley, Guy Miscampbell, Raphael Gregorian, [Looked-after Children: The Silent Crisis](#), Social Market Foundation, August 2018

- The SMF have also brought together data from Ofsted to show how local authorities across the country are performing. Some of this data is presented in an [interactive dashboard](#).

[Changes in quality of health and social care services for disabled children and their families](#), Disabled Children's Partnership, June 2018

The Howard League has published a number of reports on [ending the criminalisation of children in residential care](#).

[In Care, Out of Trouble](#), Prison Reform Trust, 2016

- The results of a review "established to examine the reasons for, and how best to tackle, the over representation of children in care, or with experience of care, in the criminal justice system in England and Wales". [Impact reports](#) have subsequently published to show how its recommendations have been taken forward.

## 4. Further reading

### Library publications

[Supporting children in need into adulthood](#), Commons Library debate pack, 5 September 2018

[Findings of the Care Crisis Review](#), Commons Library debate pack, 4 September 2018

[The Troubled Families programme](#), Commons Library briefing paper, 18 July 2018

[Social Work Regulation \(England\)](#), Commons Library briefing paper, 22 June 2018

[Foster care](#), Commons Library debate pack, 13 March 2018

[Vulnerable Children: Work of the Children's Commissioner](#), Lords Library, 8 December 2017

[Local authority support for children in need \(England\)](#), Commons Library briefing paper, 10 October 2016

[Early Intervention](#), Commons Library briefing paper, 26 June 2017

### Parliamentary publications

[Storing Up Trouble: a postcode lottery of children's social care](#), APPG for Children/NCB, July 2018

[No Good Options: Report of the Inquiry into Children's Social Care in England](#), APPG for Children/NCB, March 2017

[Social Work Reform inquiry](#), Education Select Committee (2016-17)

[Fostering](#), Education Select Committee (2016-17)

[Mental health and wellbeing of looked after children inquiry](#), Education Select Committee (2015-16)

### Government publications

Gov.uk: [Parenting, childcare and children's services – Research and statistics](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#), DfE, updated August 2018

[Children's services omnibus](#), DfE, 17 May 2018

[Corporate parenting, the local offer and personal adviser support](#), Department for Education (DfE), last updated 26 February 2018

[Children's Social Care Innovation Programme: final evaluation report](#), DfE, November 2017

[Children's services in England: repeat referrals](#), DfE, 20 July 2017

[Special guardianship guidance](#), DfE, updated 26 January 2017

[Children's residential care in England](#), DfE, 2016

## **Independent public organisations**

[Vulnerability report](#), Children's Commissioner, July 2018

Elaine Kelly, Tom Lee, Luke Sibieta and Tom Waters, [Public Spending on Children in England: 2000 to 2020](#), Children's Commissioner and the IFS, June 2018

[Stability index](#), Children's Commissioner, June 2018

[Who Cares? Children's Commissioner report on public expectations for the care of vulnerable children](#), Children's Commissioner and Ipsos Mori, May 2018

- A question was posed in the Lords regarding this report. In response, Baroness Walmsley [deposited a paper](#) in the Libraries of both Houses, outlining the Government's position on its findings.

[Growing up neglected: a multi-agency response to older children](#), Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, 6 July 2018

- This report is "part of the programme of [joint targeted area inspections](#) which examine how well agencies are working together in local areas to help and protect children." The authors find that neglect can often go 'unseen.'

[The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2016/17](#), HC 618, Ofsted, 13 December 2017

## **Academic research**

Coventry University is running the [Child Welfare Inequalities Project](#). You can find its research output on their website.

Paul Bywaters et al., [Child welfare inequalities in the four nations of the UK](#), Journal of Social Work, 2018

## 5. Parliamentary material

### Written Statements

[Publication of guidance](#), HCWS828 04 Jul 2018

- A written statement by Nadhim Zahawi about the publication of new statutory safeguarding guidance: the revised [Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance](#) and the new [Local Safeguarding – Transitional Arrangements](#) statutory guidance.

[Safeguarding and Child Protection](#), HCWS508, 05 March 2018

- A written statement by Victoria Atkins about a consultation on suggested reforms that would have introduced new duties on some organisations to report and act on cases where child neglect is suspected. As outlined in the [Government response](#), this was eventually rejected.

[Social Work England](#) HCWS728, 04 Jun 2018

- A statement about the [government response](#) to the public consultation on the regulatory framework for Social Work England, a specialist regulator for social workers in England. Nadhim Zahawi notes that there was general support for the proposals.

### Debates

[Children in Need: Adulthood](#), Westminster Hall debate, HC deb 6 September 2018, volume 646, cc182-204WH

[Care Crisis Review](#), Westminster Hall debate, 05 Sep 2018, volume 646, cc141-158WH

[Family Hubs](#), Westminster Hall debate, HC deb 24 Jul 2018, volume 645, cc274-292WH

[Social Workers](#), House of Lords debate, 16 May 2018, volume 791, cc746-760

[Foster Care](#), Westminster Hall debate, HC deb 14 Mar 2018, volume 637, cc327-350WH

[Social Workers](#), Westminster Hall debate, 13 Mar 2018, volume 637, cc309-326WH

[Vulnerable Children](#), HL deb 14 Dec 2017, volume 787, cc1674-1708

[Children's Services](#), Westminster Hall debate, HC deb 12 December 2017, volume 633, cc.112-8 WH

### Parliamentary Questions (PQs)

#### Fostering

[Foster Care](#), PQ158701, 04 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Dodds, Nigel | **Party:** Democratic Unionist Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of people under the age of 18 are in foster care.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Department for Education

At 31 March 2017, there were 72,670 looked after children in England of whom 53,420 children were in foster placements.

The number of children in foster placements can also be expressed as a rate per 10,000 children under 18 years of age using the mid-year population estimates provided by the Office for National Statistics. Figures at 31 March 2017 show there were 45 children per 10,000 of the population aged under 18 who were in foster placements in England.

The Department for Education only holds the information for England. The devolved administrations hold the information for the other constituent countries.

[Foster Care](#), HL8298, 18 Jun 2018

**Asked by:** Lord Ouseley | **Party:** Crossbench

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated shortfall of foster carers in England at present in relation to children being placed in institutional care; and how any shortfall is being addressed.

**Answering member:** Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

Whilst the number of looked after children has increased steadily over the last nine years, the proportions of children placed in foster care (74%) and in residential care (11%) remain similar to previous years. We cannot ascertain, however, whether there is a shortfall of carers in certain parts of England. Data on children looked after in England can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2016-to-2017>.

The department is carefully considering how to support local authorities and fostering agencies to improve the recruitment and retention of foster parents as it develops the government's response to 'Foster Care in England' (attached) the independent review into the fostering system, and the report from the Education Select Committee's inquiry into fostering (attached).

The department is working with Boarding Schools Partnerships to encourage more local authorities to consider boarding for children in or at risk of going into care, where it might be the right support for them. There are few more vulnerable groups of children in England and the department is focused on enabling them to succeed in life.

## Government-backed programmes

[Social Services: Children](#), PQ 169385, 11 Sep 2018

**Asked by:** Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding the Government plans to provide local authorities not involved in waves one or two of the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme to enable them to adopt successful practice from that programme over the next five years.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Department for Education

There is a comprehensive programme in place to share the learning from the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme and to enable local authorities, including those not directly involved in the programme, to adopt and adapt the most successful innovations. This includes funding for successful projects from the first rounds of the programme to scale and spread into new areas and funding for some of the best local authorities (the Partners in Practice) to support other improving local authorities to adopt and adapt successful projects.

In addition, there is an ongoing programme of local, regional and national events, workshops and seminars, attended to date by over 1200 people. There is a growing package of toolkits, case studies and learning guides available through the Innovation Programme website to help authorities understand and mobilise innovations.

The learning and evidence from the Innovation programme is also informing the new What Works Centre for Children's Social Care, which will build a library of high quality evidence in children's social care and ensure that it is widely used.

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 165602, 23 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the long-term value of innovation projects in respect of local authority children's services departments.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

The Department for Education is evaluating the impact and long-term value of the £200 million Innovation Programme.

In February this year, we published the evidence we have to date announcing the seven key features of practice and seven outcomes that emerged as the strongest features from the evaluation of Round One. Our assessment to date shows that these seven features of practice and outcomes are those which, when implemented effectively, can support and drive real change for children's social care. They can be viewed at the following link: <http://innovationcsc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/3.-Seven-features-of-practice-and-seven-outcomes.pdf>.

We are continuing to test the impact of these seven features of practice and outcomes with projects in Rounds Two and Three through a robust independent evaluation. We are also supporting other children's services departments to scale and spread the learning we have to date. For example; Hertfordshire's successful 'Family Safeguarding' project is extending their model to Luton, Peterborough, Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire in Round Two.

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 165601, 23 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what financial support Partners in Practice has provided to each local authority to assist the setting up of Trust models or Community Interest Companies with regard to local authority children's services departments.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

The Partners in Practice programme includes one Community Interest Company, Achieving for Children (AfC) and one independent trust, Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST). No funding has been provided from the Partners in Practice programme to assist these local authorities with the setting up of these arrangements, however, Doncaster did receive some support and funding from the department.

DCST was established in 2014 with £2.9 million funding from the department. DCST became a Partner in Practice in March 2018 and were awarded up to £1,054,872 to develop a new model of support for children and young people experiencing neglect, particularly adolescents.

AfC was established in 2014 to provide services for the London Boroughs of Richmond and Kingston. AfC was set up independently from the department and the department did not contribute to its set up. They have been a Partner in Practice since 2016 and were awarded up to £7,826,346 to develop further their service delivery model and support other local authorities.

### **Funding, demand and alternative models**

[Social Services: Children](#), PQ HL9563, 25 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Lord Ouseley | **Party:** Crossbench

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they plan to put in place to prevent vulnerable children being taken into local authority care for their own safety due to underfunded local safeguarding services.

**Answering member:** Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

The government wants every child to be in the stable, loving home that is right for them. One of the key principles of the legislation which underpins England's child protection system is that children are best looked after within their families. However, as a last resort, local authorities may apply to the independent courts for a decision about removing a child from his or her family – for the child's safety. In making these decisions, the courts must be satisfied that the threshold for significant harm has been met and that taking the child from his or her family's care will be in the child's best interests.

The government set out its vision for delivering excellent children's social care in 'Putting Children First'. This outlines our reform programme which seeks to: improve the quality of social work practice; create systems and environments where great social work can flourish; promote learning and multi-agency working where all involved in supporting children and families can work together; and support children who both enter and leave the care system.

The 2015 Spending Review made available more than £200 billion until 2020 for councils to deliver the local services their communities want to see, including children's services. In February, Parliament confirmed the 2018-19 settlement for local government, which has provided a £1.3 billion increase in resources to local government over the next two years, from £44.3 billion in 2017-18 to £45.6 billion in 2019-20. In addition, the current business rates retention scheme is yielding strong results. Local authorities estimate that in 2018-19 they will keep around £2.4 billion in business rates growth. This is on top of the core settlement funding. Funding for children's services is an un-

ring fenced part of the wider local government finance settlement. Local authorities have used this flexibility to increase spending on the most vulnerable children by around a £1 billion since 2010.

[Social Services: Children](#), PQ 166434, 25 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Blunt, Crispin | **Party:** Conservative Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the gap between demand and provision of social care services for disabled children and their families; what steps he is taking to address any such gap; and if he will make a statement.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

Working Together to Safeguard Children

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>) sets out how local authorities should provide effective, evidence-based services to protect and promote the welfare of children, including disabled children. The guidance was updated on July 4 2018 and states that it is better to provide services addressing needs early, rather than reacting later. The statutory duty to provide short breaks, introduced in 2011, falls on local authorities. In the transition up to 2015, £880 million was provided to local authorities; funding for short breaks is now an un-ring-fenced part of the wider local government finance settlement.

[...]The government is conducting a review of the relative needs and resources of local authorities that will develop a robust, up-to-date approach to distributing funding across all local authorities in England at local government finance settlements, including for children's services. To inform the review, the Department for Education and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government have jointly-commissioned a data research and collection project on cost and demand pressures for children's services, to understand local authorities' relative funding needs. We are working towards implementation in 2020-21, while keeping this date under review as our work progresses.

[Care Crisis Review](#), Oral questions, HC deb 25 Jun 2018, volume 643, c589

**Asked by:** Bill Esterson | **Party:** Labour Party

Now that the Government have admitted that cuts to the national health service were a political choice, not an economic necessity, will they admit the same when it comes to local government, especially children's social care? Will the Minister read the report from the directors of children's services, take the action that is needed to end the crisis in children's social care, and make the priority looking after our most vulnerable children, not tax cuts for the very wealthy?

**Answered by:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Education

There is some great work taking place in children's social care across the country. Money, of course, is a consideration, but good leadership, and strong and confident teams are making a huge difference. Across government, as has been mentioned, we are spending £1.4 billion on the troubled families programme.

[Local Authorities: Children's Services](#), Oral questions, HC deb 18 Jun 2018, volume 643, cc14-5

**Asked by:** Ms Marie Rimmer (St Helens South and Whiston) (Lab)  
**| Party:** Labour Party

What assessment he has made of the effect on the long-term financial viability of local authorities of the use of their reserves to fund children's services.

**Answered by:** The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Rishi Sunak) |  
**Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Housing, Communities and Local Government

Settlement funding has increased in recognition of pressures, including demand for children's services. In addition, many local authorities have built up substantial reserves over recent years. It is absolutely right that they use those where necessary to protect high quality services for taxpayers.

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 141026, 14 May 2018

**Asked by:** Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much has been spent from the public purse under section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 by public bodies in 2017-2018.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

Local authorities are not required to provide specific data regarding spend on children provided with support under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. However, the Department for Education collects data on local authority spend on a range of services for children and young people.

The data table below shows local authority gross spend that may be on children in need but may also provide services to children not assessed as needing support under section 17. The data is for 2016-17. Data on local authority spend on children and young people services in 2017-18 will be published in autumn 2018.

	<b>2016-17 (£000's)</b>
Child Protection and Safeguarding	£2,334,268
Children's Centres and Other Spend on Children Under 5	£774,349
Family Support	£1,087,140
Other Children and Families Services	£87,175
Services for Young People	£447,532

Source: Section 251 Outturn

[Children's Services: Funding](#), Oral Questions, HC deb 17 Apr 2018, volume 639, c169

**Asked by:** Tracy Brabin | **Party:** Labour Party · Cooperative Party

With the number of young people subject to child protection inquiries rising by 140% in the past decade, it is deeply troubling that by 2020 there will be a £2 billion funding gap in children's services. The Minister knows as well as I do that local authorities are crying out for more support, so what urgent funding can she now make available to protect these vulnerable children?

**Answered by:** Elizabeth Truss | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Treasury

First, we have actually increased the spending for the most vulnerable by £1 billion since 2010. That is funding for the most vulnerable through local authorities. I would point out to the hon. Lady that the important thing is the outcomes we are achieving. The fact that child development outcomes have improved since 2013 and that more children are getting that good level of development shows that we are investing our money in the right areas.

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 118823, 20 Dec 2017

**Asked by:** Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many contracts with private sector companies to provide children's social care services in England were in operation on the latest date for which figures are available.

**Answering member:** Mr Robert Goodwill | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

The department does not hold information on the value of private sector contracts for children's social care. Local authority expenditure data on private provision on children's social care are published annually in the statistical first releases available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-local-authority-school-finance-data>.

Private provision is defined as expenditure on services provided/managed by private sector entities such as profit-making companies.

The department does not hold information on the number of contracts with private sector companies to provide children's social care services.

In 2014 the government made regulations that prevent local authorities contracting out child protection functions to organisations carried on for profit.

[Social Services: Children](#), PQ HL3672, 12 Dec 2017

**Asked by:** Lord Porter of Spalding | **Party:** Conservative Party

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any assessment has been made of the effectiveness of the operating models of social care trusts in relation to improving local children's services.

**Answering member:** Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

A small proportion of local councils have arrangements whereby some or the entirety of their service is run at arms' length from

the council, through a children's services trust, including some that are in intervention. In two of these councils, Doncaster and Slough, the department established an independent trust after children's social care services were found to be systemically and persistently inadequate.

An evaluation of Doncaster Children's Services Trust shows it was viewed favourably by its staff and has had a positive affect on culture and practice: the investment in staff, quality assurance and the way that the Trust communicates its work has led to a shift in culture. This has led to improved staff morale, workforce stability and some practice improvements. For example, the use of agency workers and staff turnover has reduced; and staff reported spending more time with children and families. However, it is too early to determine whether these changes will result in sustained improvements for children and families. An evaluation of Slough Children's Services Trust is in progress.

Other alternative operating models are being tested by councils who are not in intervention. For example, 'Achieving for Children' (AfC) is a social enterprise company, set up and jointly owned by two councils, Richmond-upon-Thames and Kingston-upon-Thames. It has recently been funded by the Department for Education to expand to three more councils, the first of which is Windsor and Maidenhead, who joined in August 2017. A Department for Education review, published in 2016, into the establishment of AfC suggested that the main benefits of its creation were: better service quality; better staff engagement; higher levels of innovation; better recruitment and retention; and savings from the combining of services across the two local councils and the development of alternative revenue streams.

The department is keen to broaden the developing evidence base on the potential of alternative delivery models to bring better outcomes for local councils. We are funding four projects to explore this through its 'Innovation Programme', and will be evaluating their efficacy.

### **Early intervention and thresholds for care**

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ163787, 23 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Lucas, Caroline | **Party:** Green Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how his Department incentivises local authorities' children's services to provide early help services that can prevent problems reaching crisis point.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party  
**Department:** Department for Education

The department sets out the expectations for how local authorities should provide effective, evidence-based services to protect and promote the welfare of children in the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, which was updated on 4 July 2018 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>. Working Together to Safeguard Children states that it is better to provide services addressing needs early, rather than reacting later.

[...] In addition, the department has contributed £550,000 this year alone to the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF), one of the government's What Works Centres established in 2013. This funding will support the identification and dissemination of evidence based best practice in early help. More information

about the EIF can be found on its website, at <http://www.eif.org.uk/>.

[Social Services: Children](#), PQ 137120, 01 May 2018

**Asked by:** Siddiq, Tulip | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect on outcomes for vulnerable children of the variation in the level of access to children's services throughout England.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

Local areas are best placed to assess the needs and priorities in their area, and thresholds for access to children's services are set locally, allowing for the specific needs of local children and families. As part of inspection of children's services, Ofsted assesses whether local thresholds are set appropriately for children and factors this assessment into judgements on the quality of local services. The department has not made its own assessment of the impact of thresholds for children in need, or for vulnerable children more generally.

### Improving services

[Social Services: Children](#), PQ 144403, 23 May 2018

**Asked by:** Hardy, Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the recommendations made in the report *Crumbling Futures*, published by Children's Society in March 2018.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

We are interested in the recommendations of the Children's Society *Crumbling Futures* report and welcome the focus on this area. The government is committed to preparing vulnerable children for adult life and we recognise the importance of the transition into adulthood.

We are pleased that the report welcomes the recent publications under the government's Children in Need Review. The review is a priority for the government and a significant opportunity to review the support we offer vulnerable children to help them reach their potential. As part of the review we have published new data on the educational and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) outcomes for children in need.

Alongside the new data we have launched a call for evidence to look at the support offered to children in need and asked the Education Endowment Fund and the Early Intervention Foundation to look at the evidence for what works to support these children and improve their outcomes. This will help us assess the adequacy of the support children in need are given and to decide what steps should be taken to improve that support. We will consider any evidence we receive about transition support as part of the review.

It is important that children in need receive the right support throughout childhood to ensure they are ready for adult life. Therefore, we are continuing to implement our reform programme as set out in 'Putting Children First' with the aim that

all children, no matter where they live, should have access to the same high quality care and support to meet their needs. This includes stronger initial training and clarity about the knowledge and skills social workers need in their jobs and creating an environment where innovation can flourish and frontline practice is driven by evidence. We are also taking decisive action to improve services in inadequate local authorities through our interventions programme and by implementing a new improvement strategy for local authorities at risk of delivering inadequate children's social care services.

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 122883, 19 Jan 2018

**Asked by:** Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what policies his Department has developed as a result of inspection findings under the Single Inspection Framework for local authority children's services.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

In 2016, the Department for Education (DfE) set out its plans for Children's Social Care reform in the policy paper 'Putting Children First', which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/putting-children-first-our-vision-for-childrens-social-care>. This paper set out the challenges faced by the children's social care system, including those around training, management, and lack of innovation.

Our reforms were influenced by the evidence on what works to improve children's social care services including findings from the tougher more practice-focused Ofsted inspection framework that we introduced in 2013. We have developed this further and introduced the new Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework this month to drive further improvement in children's services.

Since 2010, spending on the most vulnerable children has increased by over half a billion in real terms and 37 authorities have been lifted out of intervention and have not returned.

We are making further progress in delivering our ambitious reform programme through:

- setting up the 'What Works Centre' for Children's Social Care, which will give us robust evidence on how to improve the lives of vulnerable children;
- placing a new duty on local authorities, police and health services to work together to safeguard and promote children's welfare;
- working with some of the best local authorities in the country to model and disseminate excellent practice through the system, with £20 million going to Councils to get ahead of failure;
- launching the 'alpha' phase of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) of children and family social workers; and
- the extension of the Partners in Practice programme to help improve sector performance.

In response to the recent Public Accounts Committee and National Audit Office report, the department published the 'CSC public roadmap' for how it intends to transform services. This can be found here: <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/public-accounts/Correspondence/2017-19/Correspondence-dfe-Child-Protection-180917.pdf> and sets out a timeframe for delivery of the reforms.

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 113552, 24 Nov 2017

**Asked by:** Gwynne, Andrew | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much her Department has allocated for the training of (a) youth workers and (b) social service practitioners, in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

**Answering member:** Mr Robert Goodwill | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

Local councils are responsible for allocating funding to youth services in line with local need and this includes workforce development. The government, in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, has invested £40 million through the Youth Investment Fund to expand and build the sustainability of local voluntary, community and social enterprise delivered youth services. Many grant recipients will spend part of their grant on workforce development. The Department for Education funds several central training programmes for child and family social workers including, for example, the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment for newly qualified social workers. Separately, many of the projects funded through the Department's Children's Social Care Innovation Programme and Partners in Practice (PiP) programme include training and professional development of social workers. Expenditure in each of the last five years and budget for the current financial year is shown in the table below.

Policy Area	Expenditure					Budget
	(£m)	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Social Work Reform	14.9	15.0	18.3	30.2	34.9	
Innovation Programme & PiPs	0.0	29.7	73.0	51.5	43.7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>44.7</b>	<b>91.3</b>	<b>81.7</b>	<b>78.6</b>	

## Data and statistics

[Children: Social Services](#), PQ 164480, 24 Jul 2018

**Asked by:** Foxcroft, Vicky | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children were referred to children's social services on more than one occasion in the same reporting year in each of the last five years in (a) Lewisham Deptford constituency, (b) Lewisham borough and (c) England.

**Answering member:** Nadhim Zahawi | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

The Department for Education does not hold the information in the requested format.

Figures on children in need are published at a local authority level, not a constituency level. Therefore, the figures for Lewisham Deptford constituency are not available.

The number of children referred to social services on one or more occasions within the same reporting year is not a figure that is routinely produced. Similarly, the number of children referred to social services at least once within consecutive reporting years is also not routinely produced.

The department publishes figures on the number of referrals which were within 12 months of a previous referral. This is a measure of the number of re-referrals rather than the number of children re-referred. Last year, the number of children to which these referrals applied was published for the first time. However, this information is not available for earlier years. These figures have been provided below.

**Table 1: Number of referrals to children's social services that were within 12 months of a previous referral from 2012-13 to 2016-17, and number of children who had a referral within 12 months of a previous referral in 2016-17**

Re-Referrals	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
England	147,700	154,000	152,400	138,700	141,560
Lewisham	414	262	377	387	334
<b>Children Re-referred</b>					
England	..	..	..	..	117,710
Lewisham	..	..	..	..	319

The total number of referrals to children's social services within one reporting year is also reported in table C1 of main tables in the 'children in need and child protection' statistical collection on GOV.UK. It can be accessed at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-children-in-need>.

These figures do not include the number of children who are referred in consecutive years however, as this measure is not routinely produced.

[Letter dated 25/05/2018 from Matthew Coffee, Chief Operating Officer to Emma Lewell-Buck MP regarding notification and data held on the death of children in children's homes from 2008-09 to 2017-18](#), deposited paper DEP2018-0514

- Related to PQs:
  - [Children: Care Homes, PQ 141809, 11 May 2018](#)
  - [Children: Care Homes, PQ 141808, 11 May 2018](#)
  - [Children: Care Homes, PQ 141807, 11 May 2018](#)



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