

EDUCATION AND CHILDRENS SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item
No. 7

DATE: 6 SEPTEMBER 2016

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE DATA

Ward(s) All

Portfolio: Councillor Burley – Children and Young People

Summary of report

This report describes and comments on the performance and impact of services to children and their families, in the form of a dataset that is provided quarterly to this Scrutiny Panel together with analysis of the most significant indicators. Officers believe that the data shows a direction of travel that is generally positive. They will continue to use such indicators to inform action that is needed to achieve and sustain improvement and embed the highest quality of practice across the service.

Reason for scrutiny

The Children's Services Scrutiny Panel receives a similar report to this each quarter, as part of its regular monitoring of the quality and performance of the Council's services to children and their families.

Recommendation

That the report be received

Background papers

None other than an appendix containing the latest key performance indicators for Children's Services.

Resource and legal considerations

There will be a resource implication as social work caseloads have to reduce to become comparable with other neighbouring authorities. There are no specific legal considerations.

Citizen impact

There is none specific to this report. However, the services it concerns play a key role in the quality of life of – and outcomes for – the children and young people of Walsall.

Environmental impact

None

Performance management

This report brings together a range of data and findings that are the products of a variety of internal performance management processes and systems.

Equality Implications

This report has no specific equalities implications.

Consultation

This report describes the impact of a range of services, many of which are delivered through partnership arrangements and are subject to consultative processes. However there has been no need for specific consultation about this report.

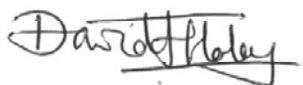
Contact Officers:

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Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Haley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

David Haley – Executive Director: Children’s Services ☎ 652081

✉ David.Haley@walsall.gov.uk

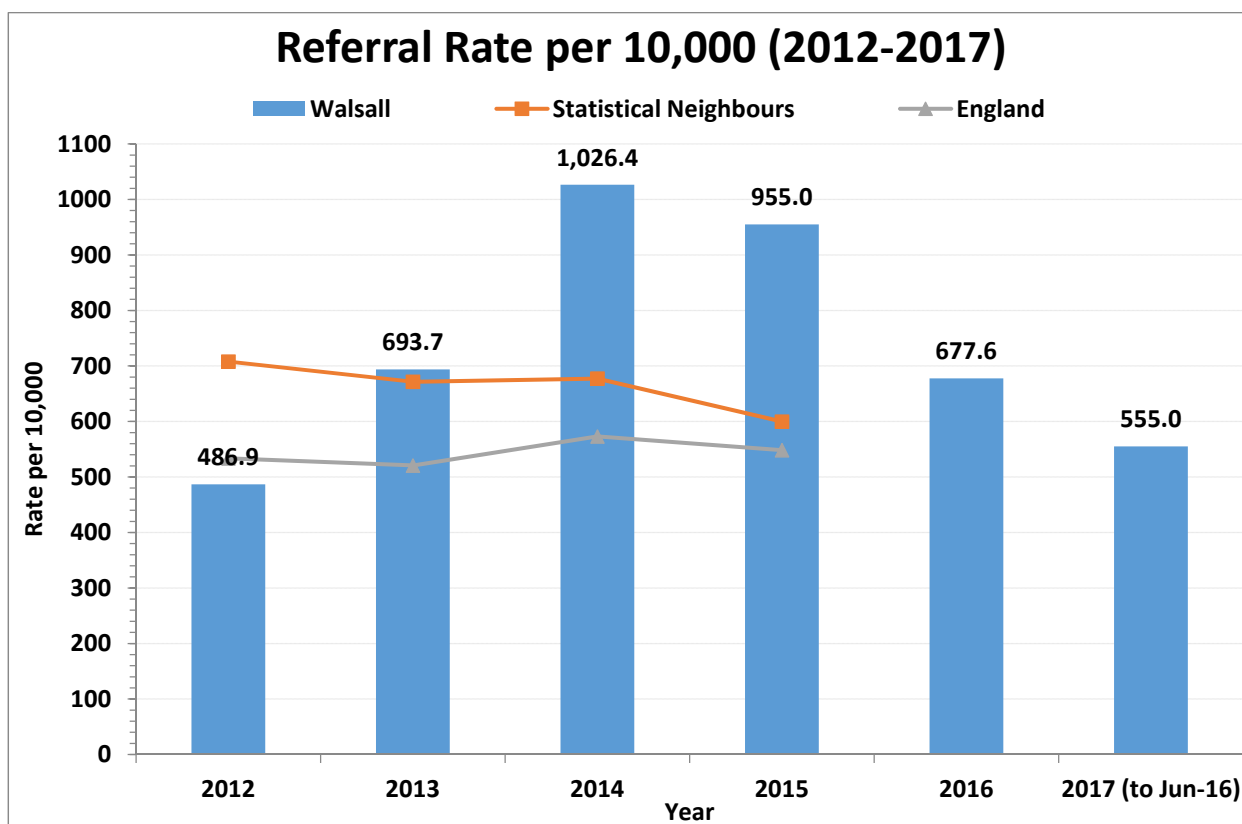
1. Up to date data

The Walsall figures for 2015/16 are provisional until confirmation through statutory return process and publication.

Referrals and Assessments

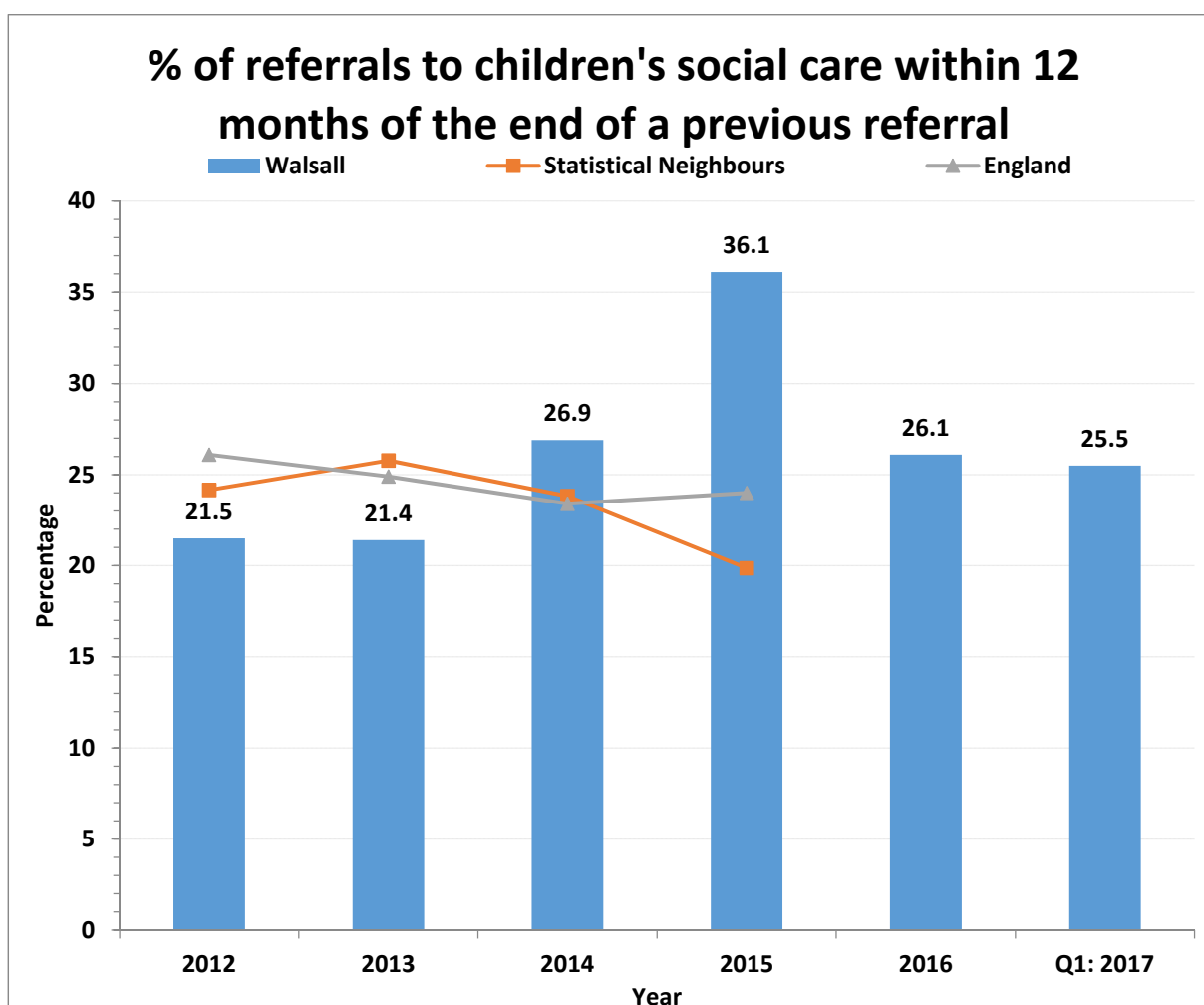
Number and Rate of Referrals (2011-16)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (No.)	3,083	4,414	6,541	6,167	4,376	896
Walsall (rate / 10K)	486.9	693.7	1026.4	955.0	677.6	555.0
SN	707.9	671.6	677.3	599.8		
England	533.5	520.7	573.0	548.3		



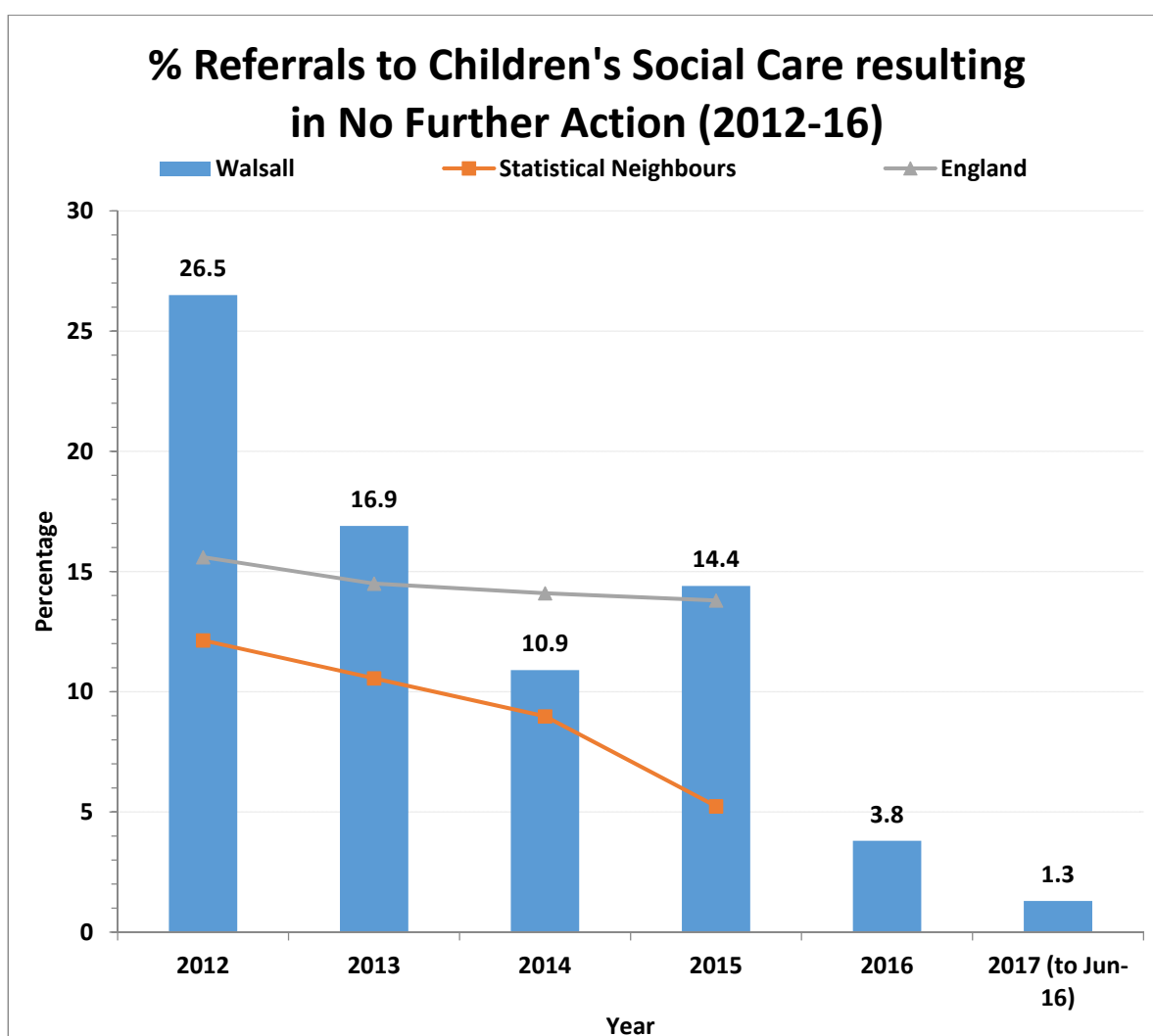
Number and Percent of Referrals within 12 months of a previous referral

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	(Jul 15 to Jun 16):Q1
Walsall (No.)	662	945	1,760	2,225	1,144	1,118
Walsall (%)	21.5	21.4	26.9	36.1	26.1	25.5
SN	24.2	25.8	23.8	19.9		
England	26.1	24.9	23.4	24.0		



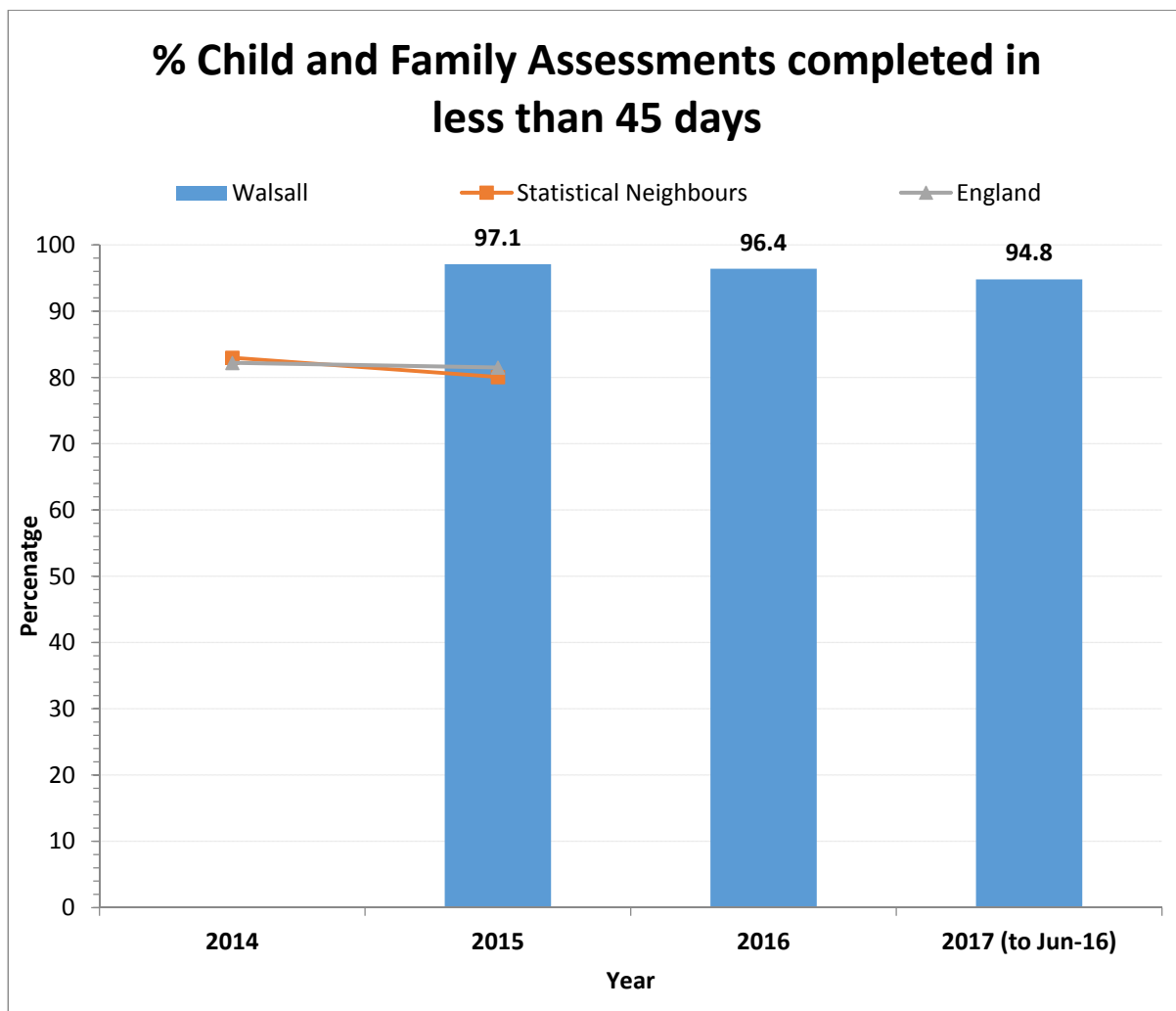
Number and percentage of referrals resulting in No Further Action

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (No.)	818	748	710	891	155	12
Walsall (%)	26.5	16.9	10.9	14.4	3.5	1.3
SN	12.1	10.6	9.0	5.2		
England	15.6	14.5	14.1	13.8		



Number of Child and Family Assessments complete in less than 45 days

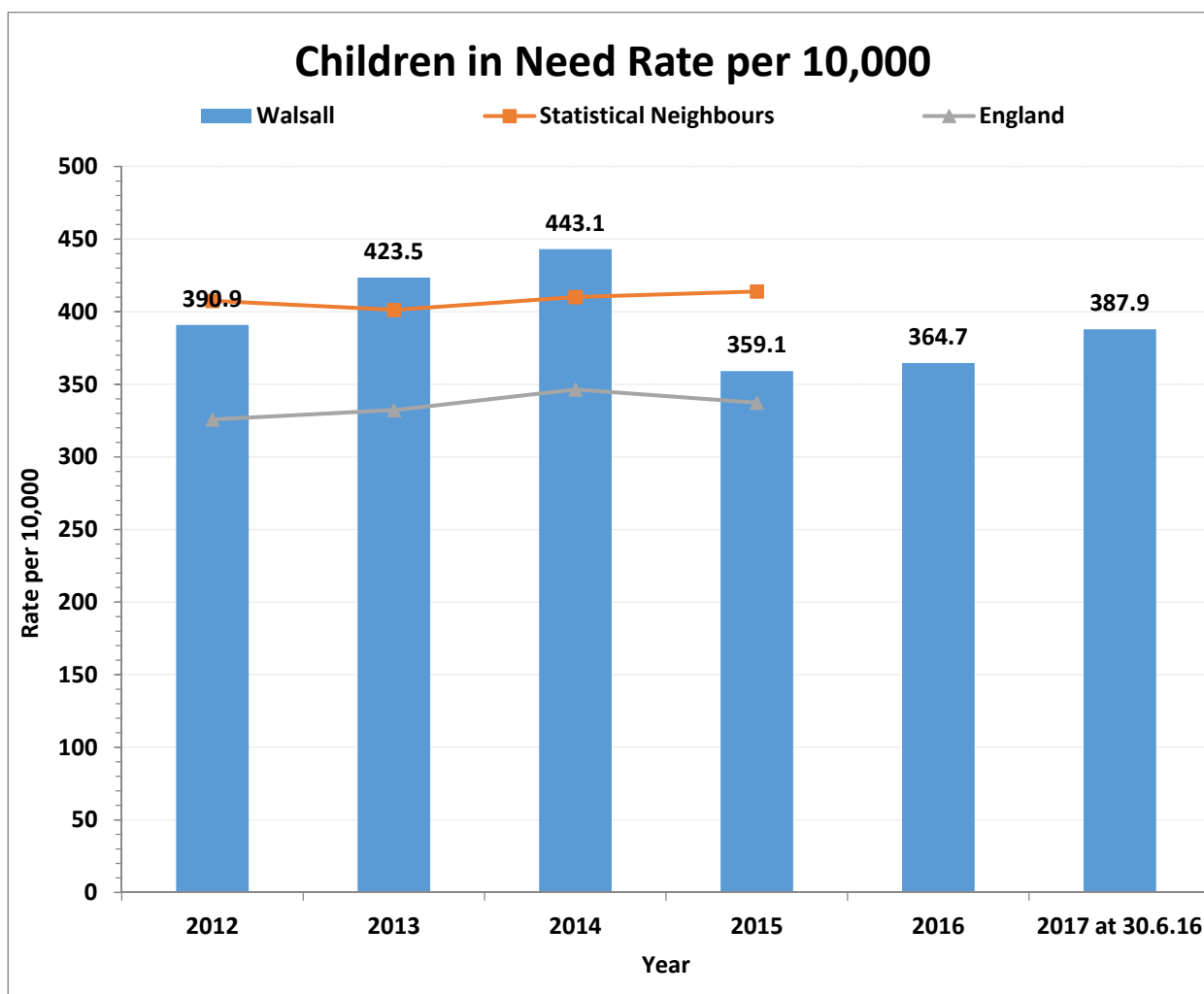
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (No.)				6021	4945	1191
Walsall (%)				97.1	96.4	94.8
SN			83.0	80.1		
England			82.2	81.5		



Children in Need

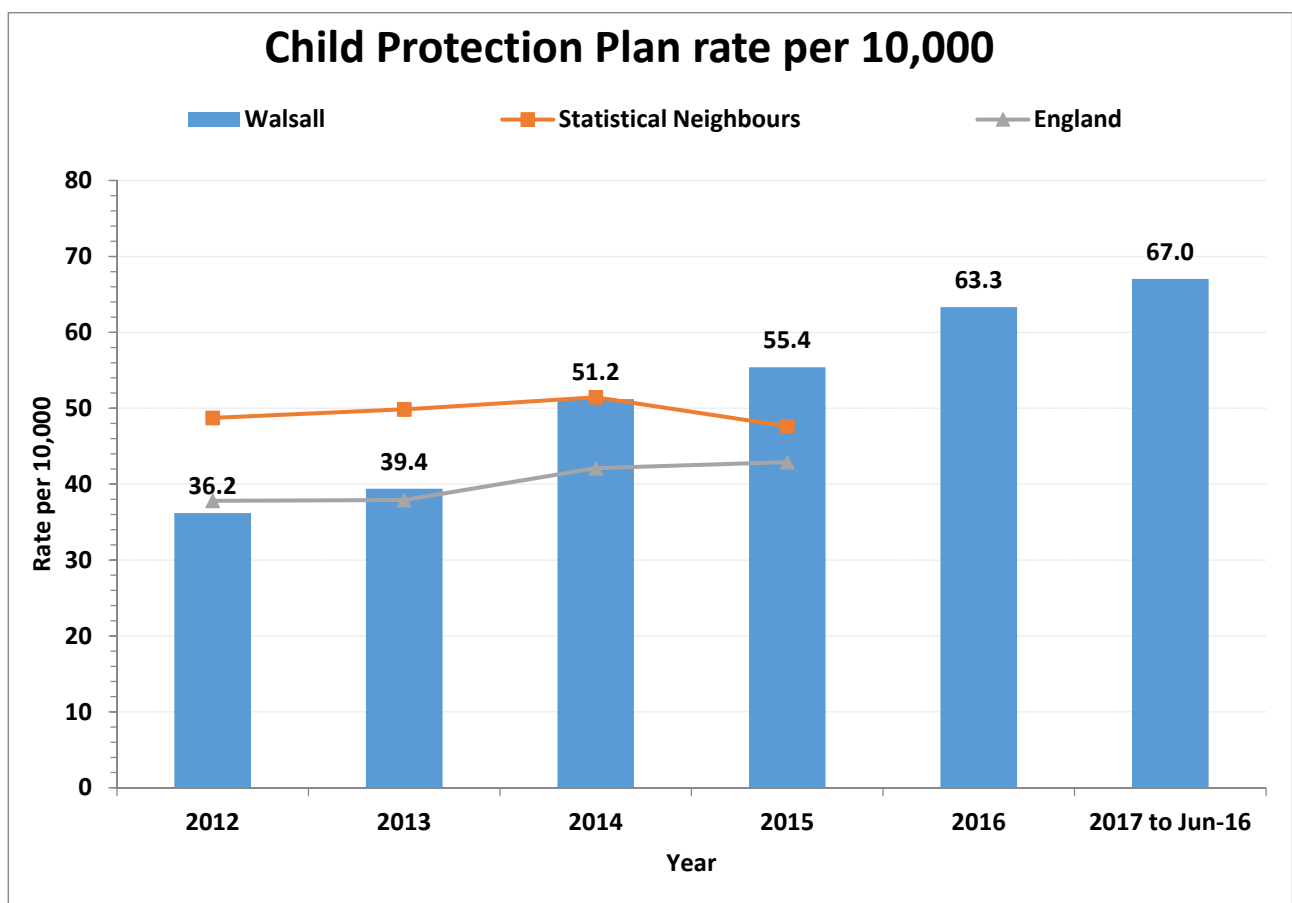
Number and Rate of CIN as at 31st March

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 Q1
Walsall (No.)	2,475	2,695	2,824	2,319	2,355	2,505
Walsall (rate per 10K)	390.9	423.5	443.1	359.1	364.7	387.9
SN	407.4	401.2	410.1	413.9		
England	325.7	332.2	346.4	337.3		



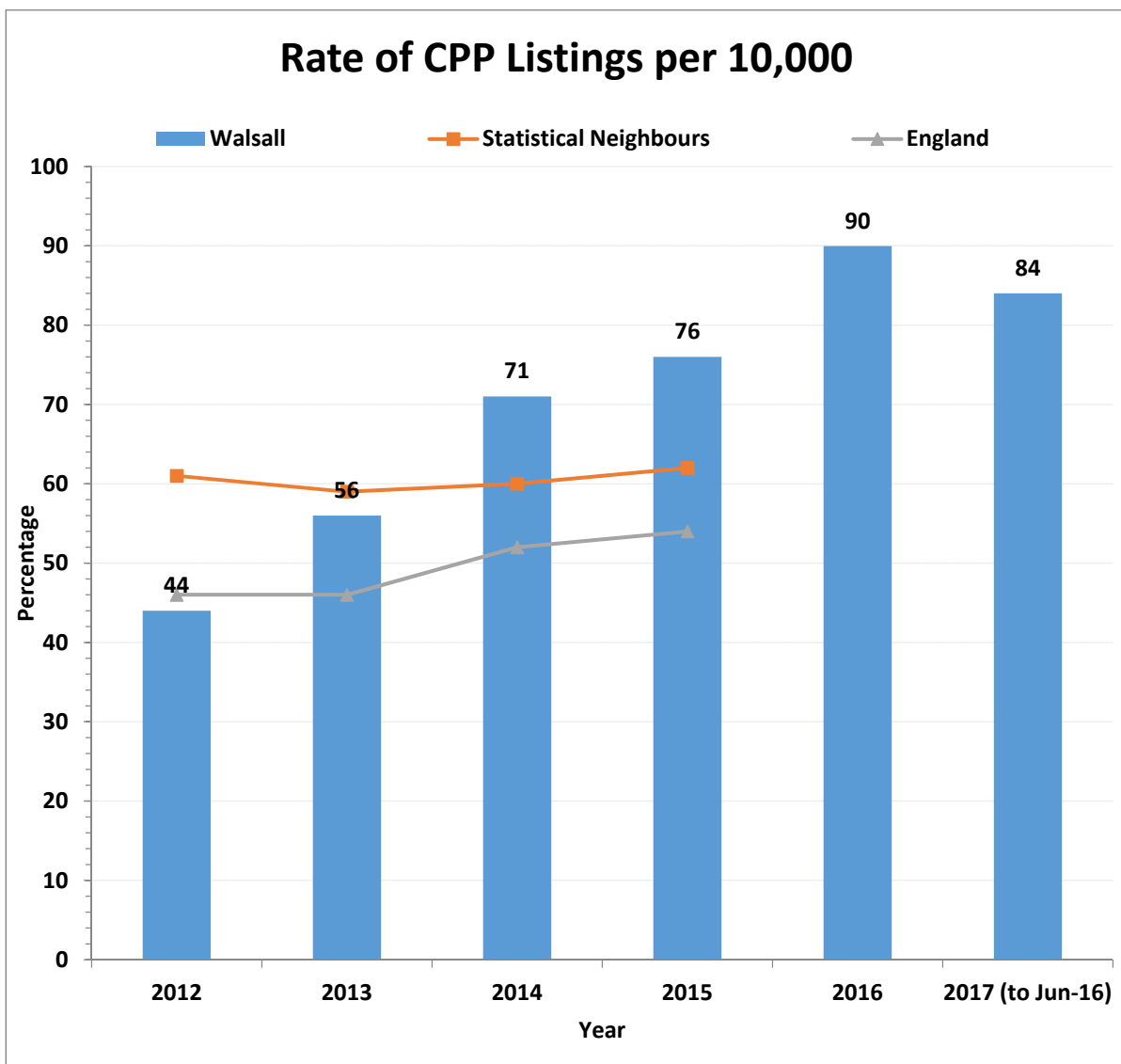
Number and rate subject to a Child Protection Plan on 31st March

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (no.)	229	251	326	358	409	432
Walsall (rate per 10K)	36.2	39.4	51.2	55.4	63.3	67.0
SN	48.7	49.9	51.5	47.6		
England	37.8	37.9	42.1	42.9		



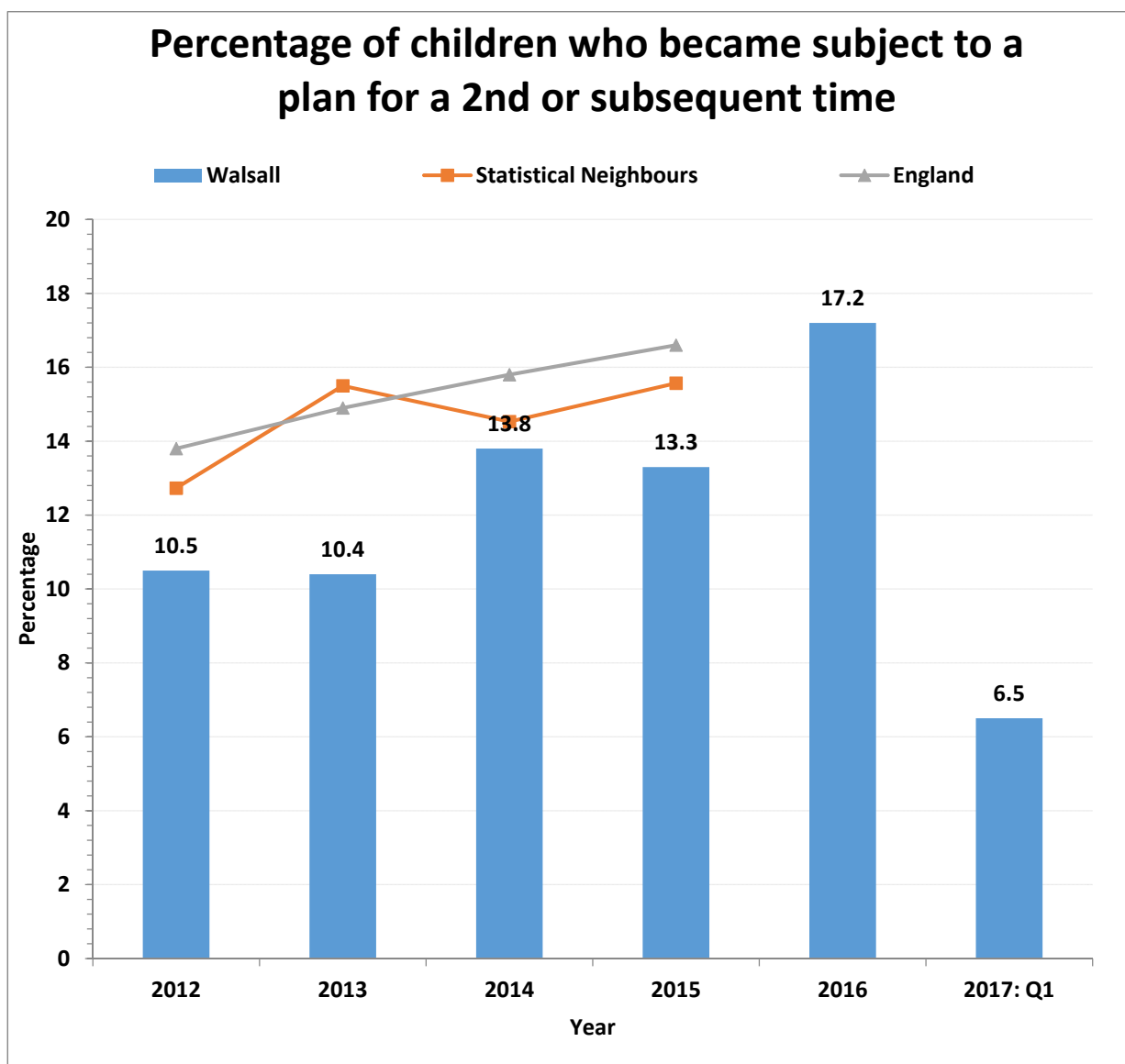
Number and rate who became subject to a CP Plan

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (no.)	277	355	455	489	581	136
Walsall (rate per 10K)	44	56	71	76	90	84
SN	61	59	60	62		
England	46	46	52	54		



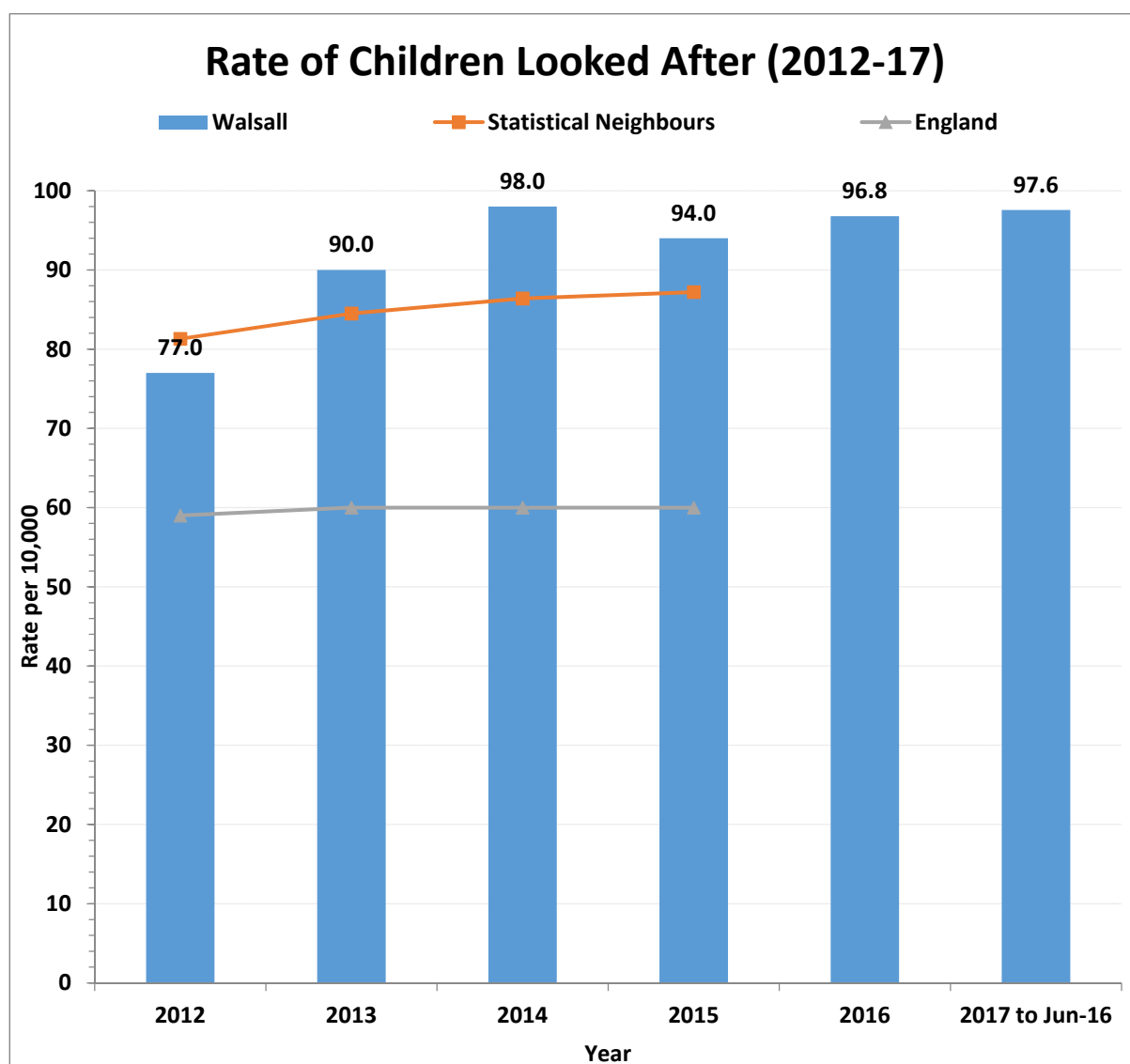
Number and Percentage of children who became subject to a CP plan for a second and subsequent time

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (No.)	29	37	63	65	100	9
Walsall (%)	10.5	10.4	13.8	13.3	17.2	6.5
SN	12.7	15.5	14.5	15.6		
England	13.8	14.9	15.8	16.6		



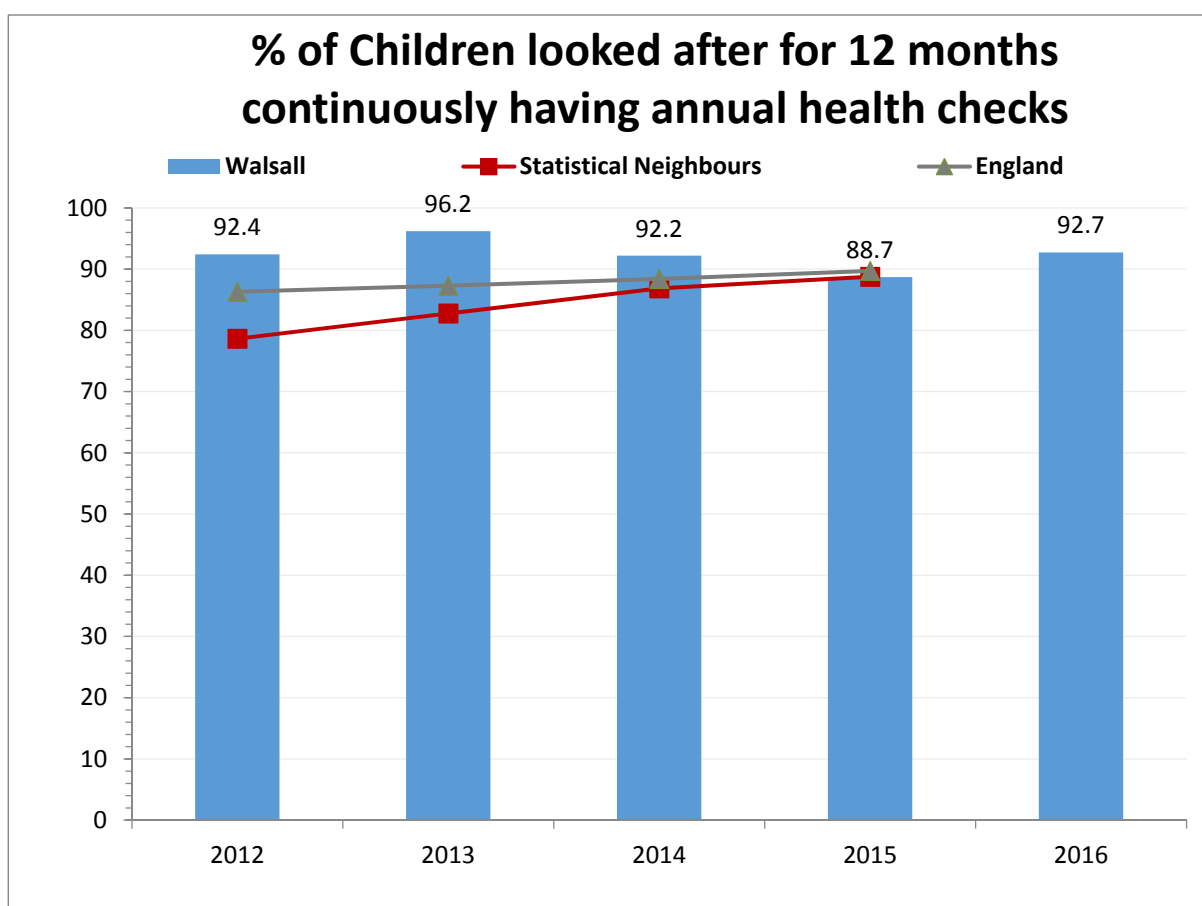
Children Looked After

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (No.)	490	575	625	605	625	630
Walsall (rate per 10K)	77.0	90.0	98.0	94.0	96.8	97.6
SN	81.3	84.5	86.4	87.2		
England	59.0	60.0	60.0	60.0		



% LAC Annual health check

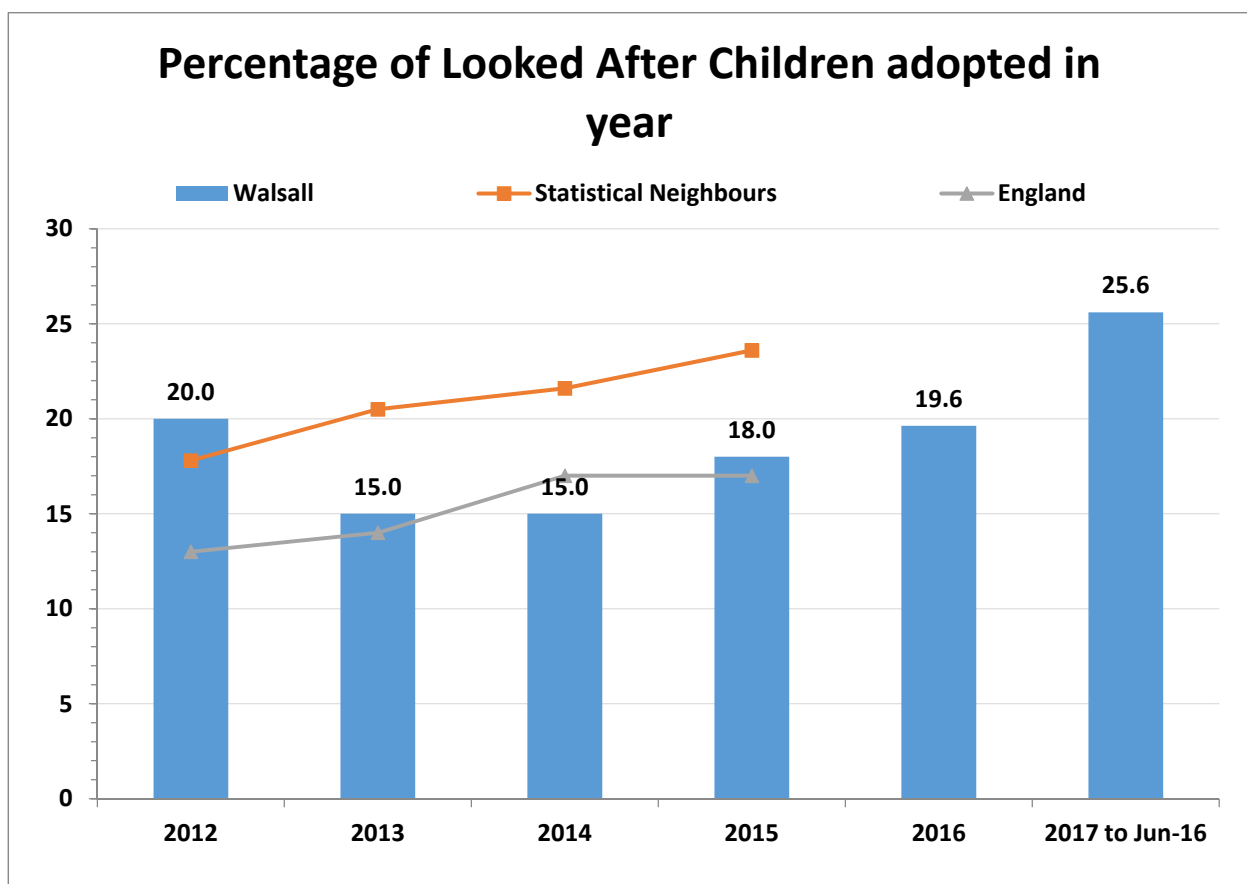
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Walsall (No.)	370	365	380	416	458
Walsall (%)	92.4	96.2	92.2	88.7	92.7
SN	83.5	85.8	82.0	87.7	
England	78.6	82.8	86.9	88.8	
	86.3	87.3	88.4	89.7	



Adoption

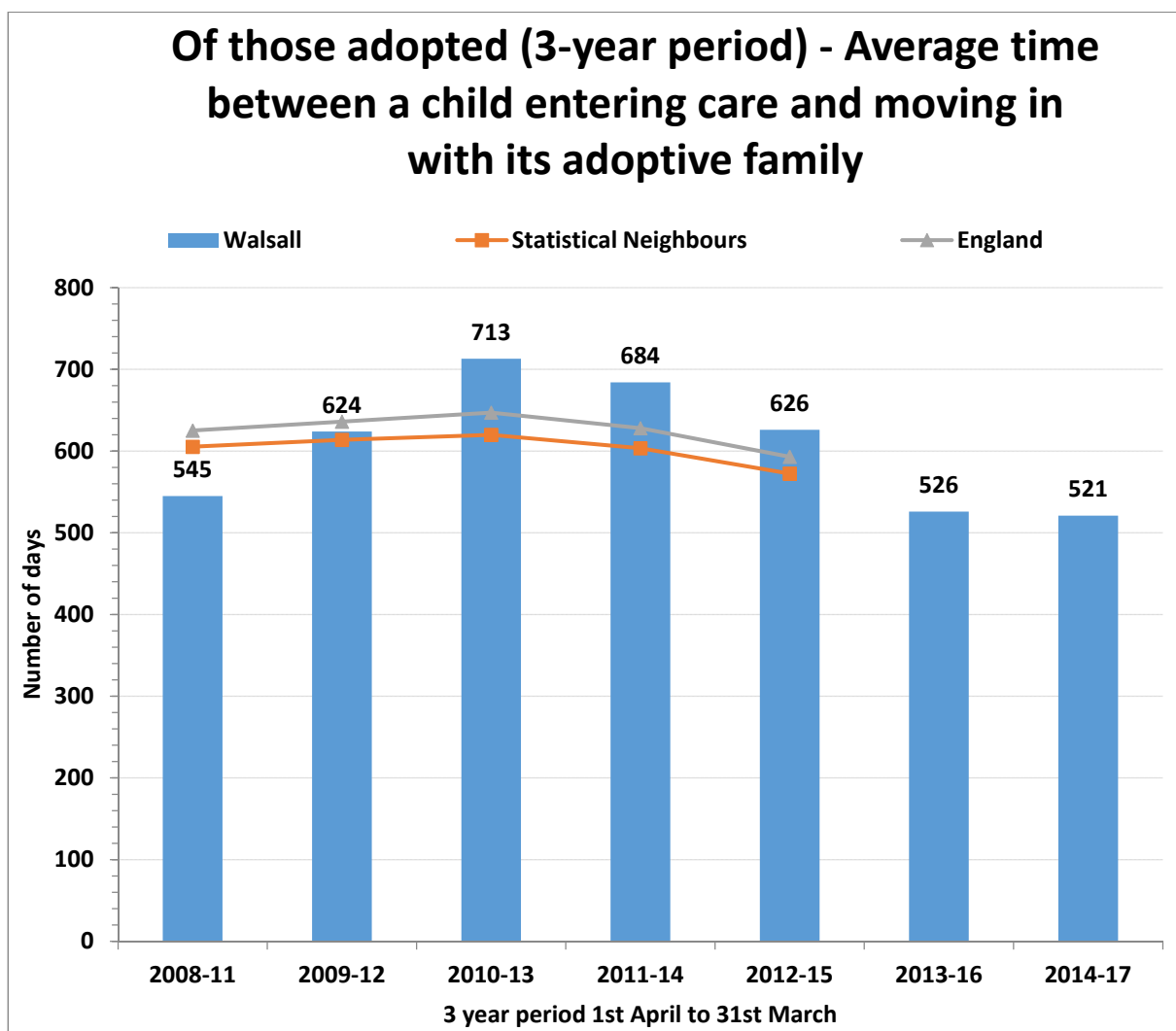
% of Children ceasing care in the year - adopted

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 to 30.6.16
Walsall (no.)	35	25	26	38	32	10
Walsall (%)	20.0	15.0	15.0	18.0	19.6	25.6
SN	17.8	20.5	21.6	23.6		
England	13.0	14.0	17.0	17.0		



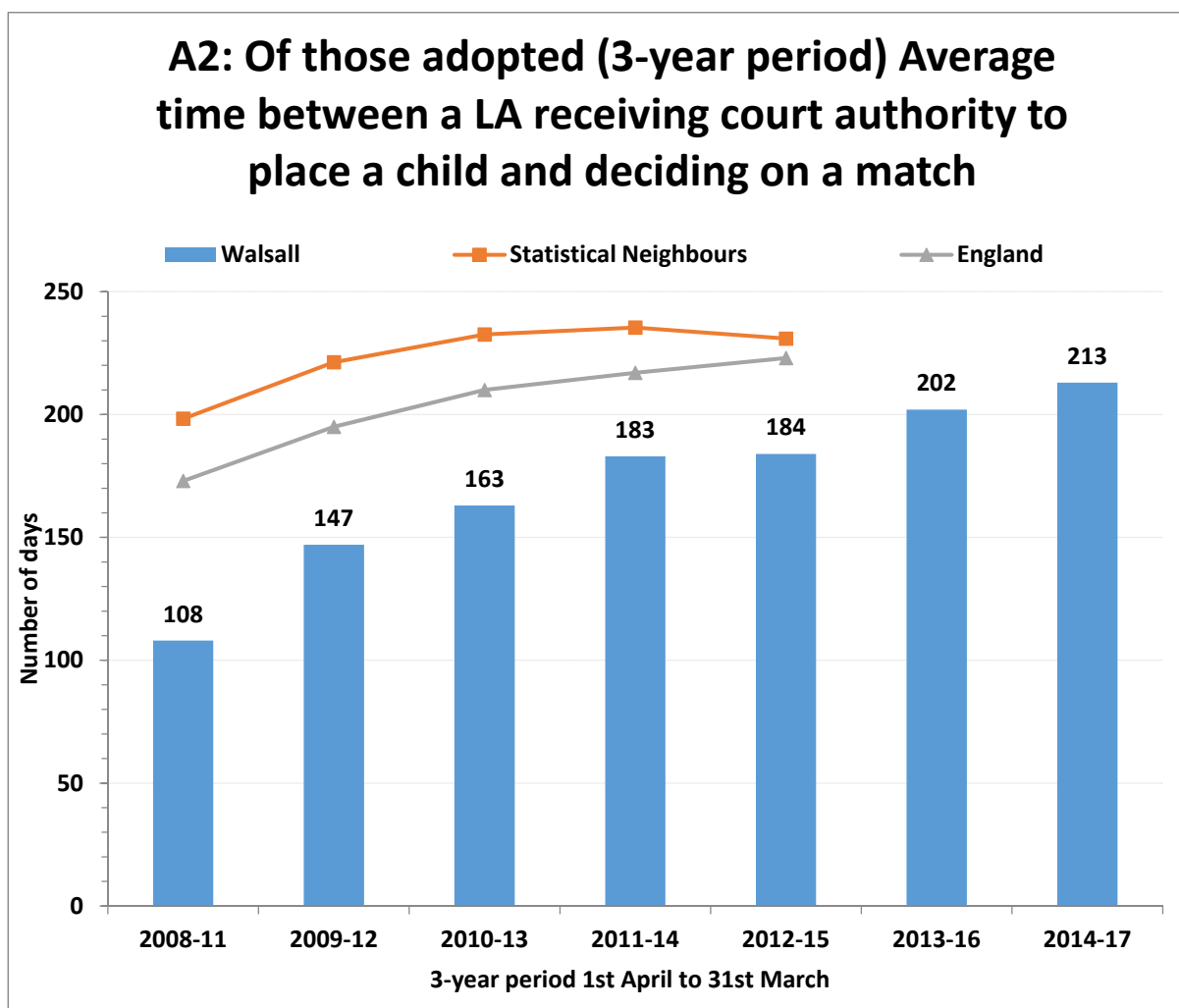
A1: Of those adopted (3-year period) - Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family

	2008-11	2009-12	2010-13	2011-14	2012-15	2013-16	2014-17 to 30.6.16
Walsall (no. Adopted)	85	95	90	85	90	96	80
Walsall (days)	545	624	713	684	626	526	521
SN	605	614	620	603	572		
England	625	636	647	628	593		



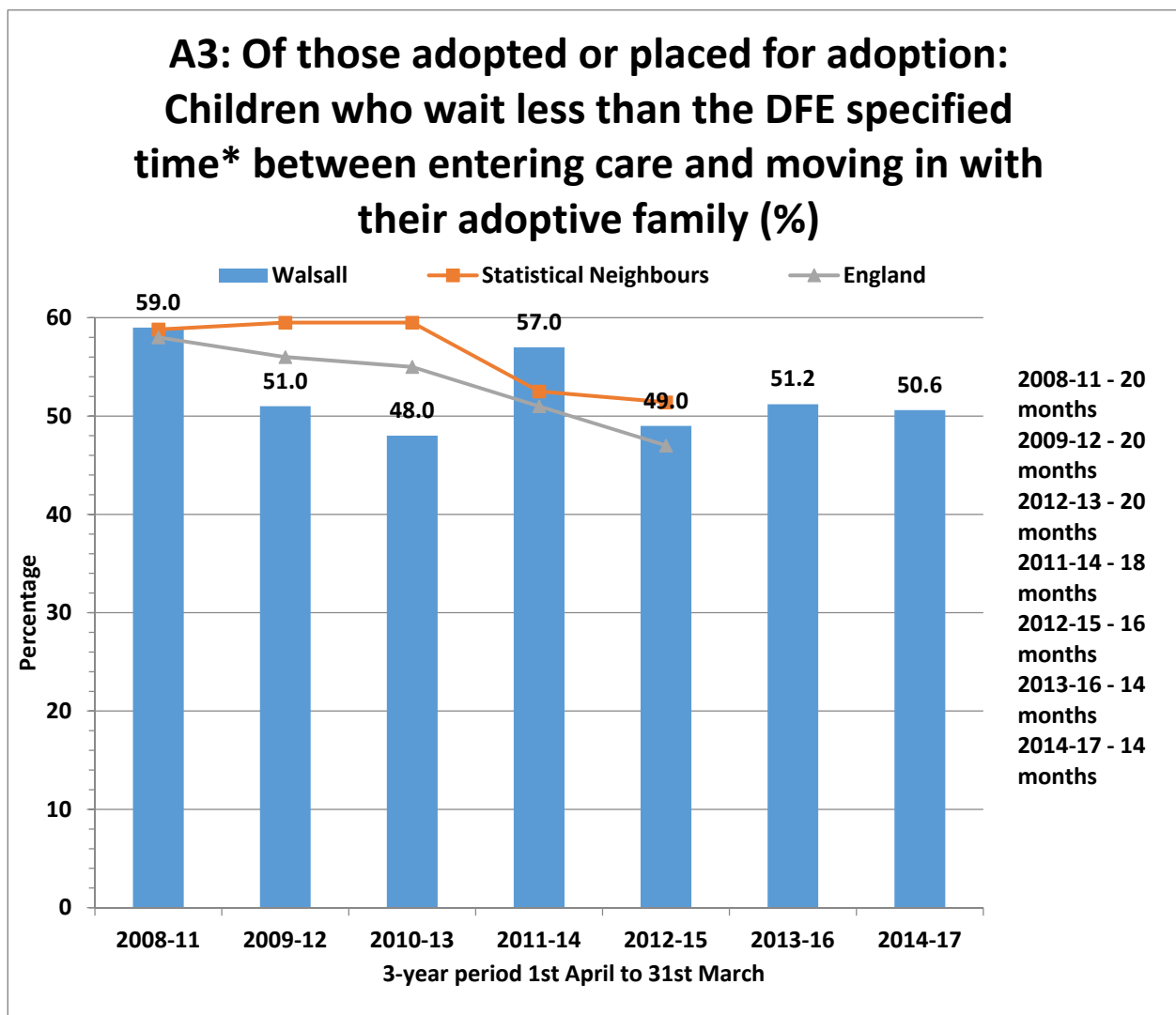
A2: Of those adopted (3-year period) Average time between a LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match

	2008-11	2009-12	2010-13	2011-14	2012-15	2013-16	2014-17 to 30.6.16
Walsall (No. Adopted)	85	95	90	85	90	96	80
Walsall	108	147	163	183	184	202	213
SN	198	221	233	235	231		
England	173	195	210	217	223		



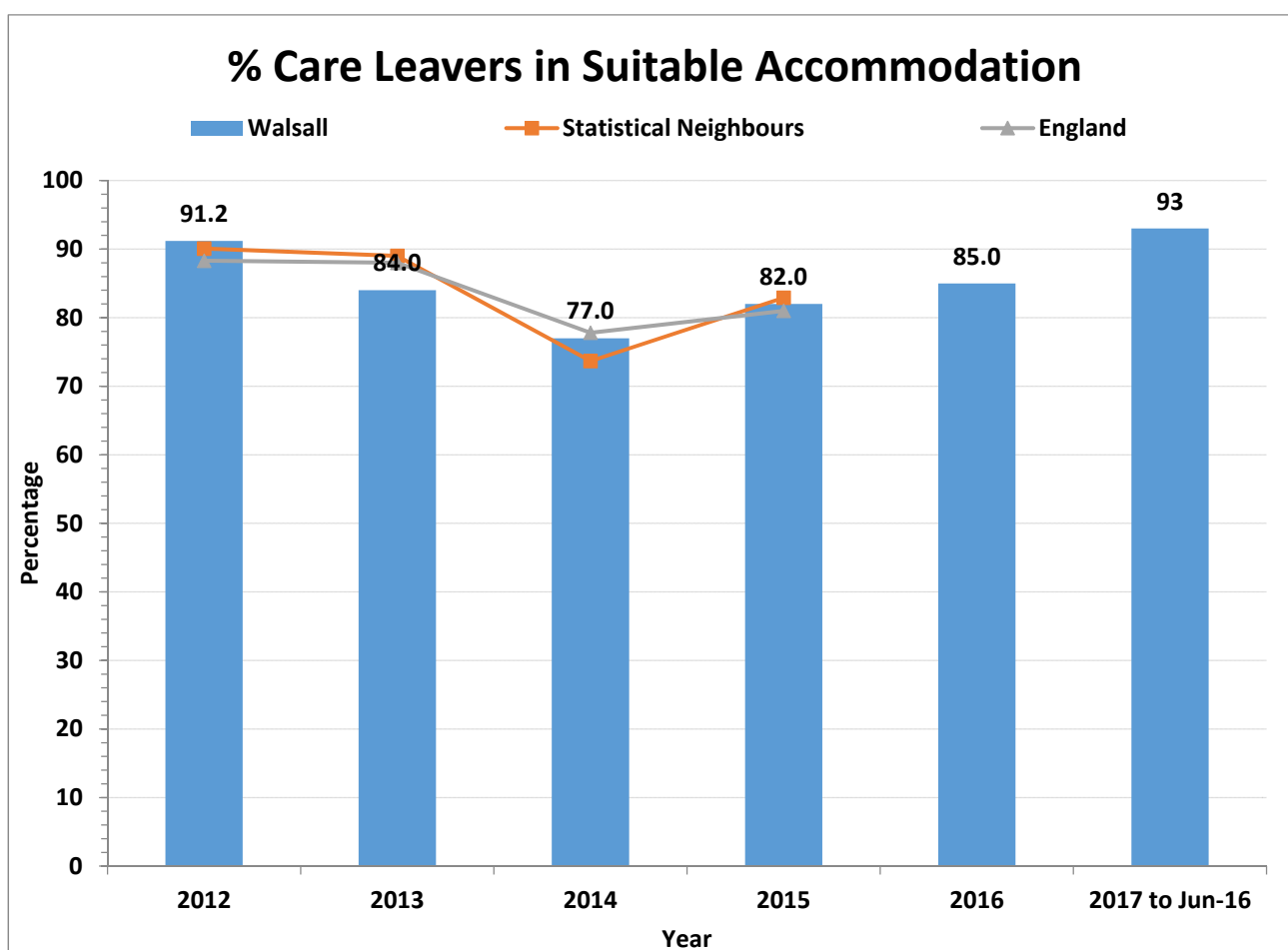
A3: Of those adopted or placed for adoption (3-year period): Children who wait less than the DFE specified time* between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (%)

	2008-11	2009-12	2010-13	2011-14	2012-15	2013-16	2014-17 to 30.6.16
Walsall (%)	59.0	51.0	48.0	57.0	49.0	51.2	50.6
SN	58.8	59.5	59.5	52.5	51.4		
England	58.0	56.0	55.0	51.0	47.0		



Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17: Q1
Walsall (No. Care Leavers)	35	45	135	130	110	107
Walsall (No. Suitable Accommodation))	32	38	104	107	93	99
Walsall	91.2	84.0	77.0	82.0	85	93
SN	90.1	89.0	73.7	82.9		
England	88.3	88.0	77.8	81.0		

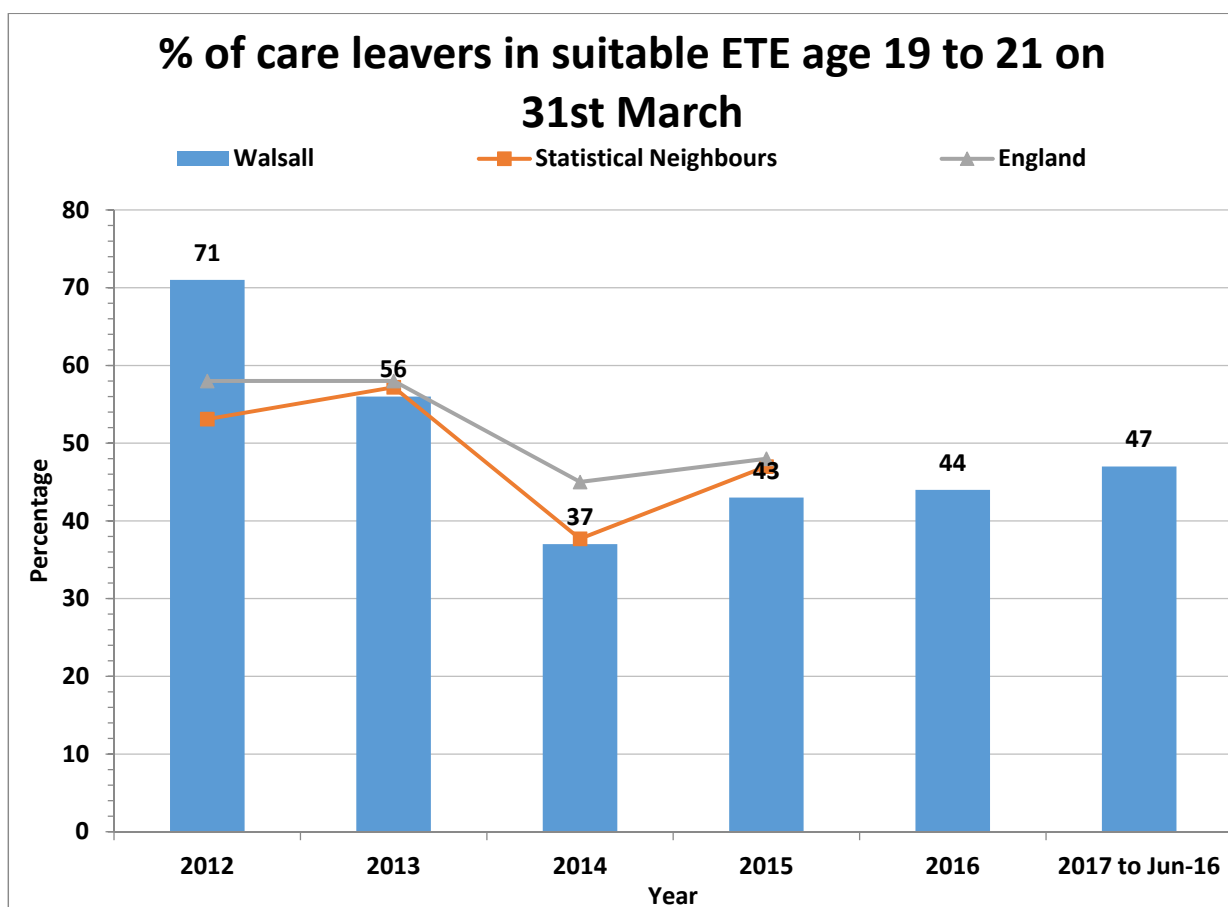


Care Leavers in Suitable Education, Employment or Training

	2011-12 [^]	2012-13 [^]	2013-14 [*]	2014-15 [*]	2015-16 [*]	2016-17
Walsall (no. care leavers)	35	45	135	130	110	107
Walsall (No. Suitable ETE)	25	25	50	56	48	50
Walsall (%)	71	56	37	43	44	47
SN (%)	53	57	38	47		
England (%)	58	58	45	48		

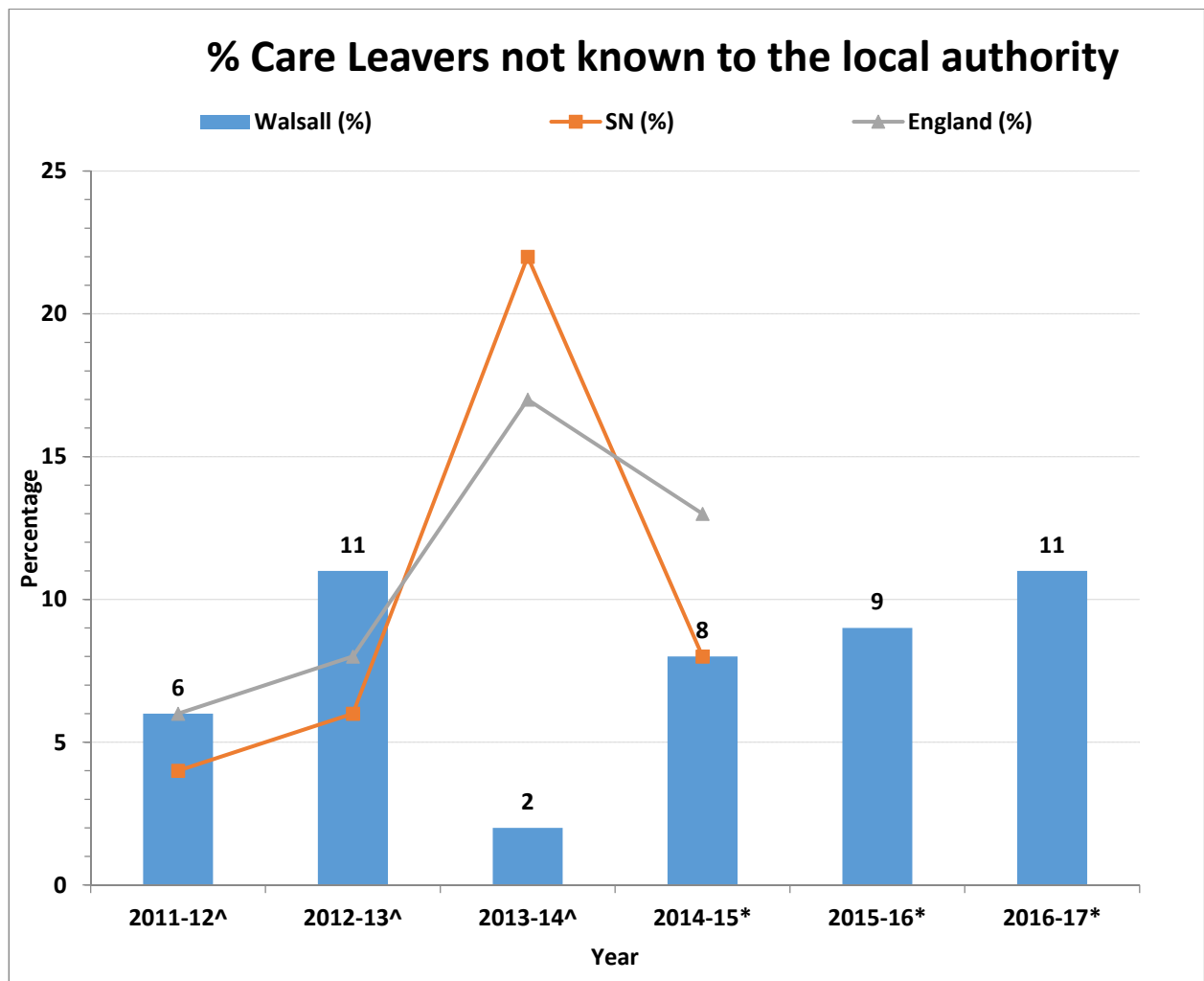
* - All children now aged 19, 20 and 21 who were looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday including some time after their 16th birthday

[^] - All children now aged 19 years old who were looked after on 1 April (3-years prior) then aged 16 years old



% Care Leavers Local Authority does not have information

	2011-12 [^]	2012-13 [^]	2013-14 [^]	2014-15 [*]	2015-16 [*]	2016-17
Walsall (No. Care Leavers)	35	45	135	130	110	107
Walsall (no. not in touch)	2	5	3	10	9	11
Walsall (%)	6	11	2	8	9	10
SN (%)	4	6	22	8		
England (%)	6	8	17	13		



2. Understanding Our Performance

a) Rate of referrals has reduced

In the years 2011-12 and 2012 –13, there were significant issues with how referrals to children's services were dealt with and this was picked up in the 2012 Ofsted inspection which resulted in an inadequate rating. In 2013-14 there was a re-design of the 'front door' and considerable work was undertaken with partners to rebuild confidence, which saw a steep rise in the number of referrals. The Early Help offer was not robust at this time which meant that the service was working with families whose needs could have been met at the early help stage. During 2014-15 and 2015-16, considerable work has been undertaken both at the early help level and also children's services, with the development of the MASH and the start of locality working. In 2015-16, the WSCB delivered extensive threshold training, initially weekly and now monthly. This focused on helping partners understand how to respond when they had concerns about a child and when a referral to Children's Social Care was appropriate. The impact of this work, alongside the introduction of a new children's recording system is, resulting in improved accuracy of recording, and a reduction in the referral rate in line with our statistical neighbours. As both MASH and locality working continue to embed there is increased confidence that children and their families are receiving the right help and support and the referral rate will stabilise.

b) Number & percentage of re-referrals has decreased

The rate of re-referrals to children's services had significantly increased over the year 2014-15, the England average sits at approximately 20-25% and at the out turn Walsall's rate was 36%. In the first 2 quarters of 2015-16 there continued to be an increase, however the subsequent quarters saw a steady decrease to a position of 26% at the end of 2016. The new electronic recording system was implemented in Nov 2015 and this has resulted in improved accuracy of recording and reporting. In short the improved performance in respect of re-referrals is has been due to the impact of:

- MASH & Early Help Hub
- Robust and effective Early Help offer
- Impact of threshold training
- Improved recording and reporting

A re-referral audit was conducted In May 16 and overall the audit demonstrated the subsequent referral was due a different presenting concern and that the 2nd referral was primarily over 6months from the initial referral. The audit did not find any referrals to be inappropriate and that the threshold was correct and consistently applied. Approximately 40% of all referrals into the MASH are related to domestic abuse and this further impacts on the referral rate and will continue to be a significant factor in the re-referral rate. However with the addition of an IDVA into the MASH it is expected that this should improve the identification and speedy direction of effect support much earlier on.

c) Children & Family Assessments

Prior to the implementation of the single assessment in 2015, considerable planning was undertaken with managers and social workers to ensure that there were clear expectations and guidance in place prior to implementation. The benefit of the pre-planning is evident in the high rate of completed assessments within timescale and also the reducing re-referral rate, as the assessment timescale is now proportionate to the presenting referral need.

d) Numbers of CP plans and the use of the category of Emotional Abuse

In Walsall the main category of abuse recorded for children subject of child protection plans is emotional abuse at 58% of plans where in other authorities the main category is neglect. This is partly due to the prevalence of domestic violence. Also in Walsall where Domestic violence and neglect are both present the practice has been to record against the category of emotional abuse. This practice is beginning to be challenged and the use of the GCP tool is being rolled out across the service to bring a better balance and ensure that neglect is being assertively addressed both as part of child protection plans and as part of CIN plans.

e) Average time between entering care and moving in with an adoptive family and the average time between receiving court authority and deciding to match to a family.

The performance on A1 has been steadily improving over a three year average. The figures highlighted above relate to A1 data 2011-14 where as our 2012-15 data is considerably improved. In 2011-14 the discharge through adoption involved a number of complex children where care proceedings were protracted and we persevered to a successful adoption outcome. The timescale for these children impacted adversely on the overall average. But these plans were the right plans for these children. In many of these cases the A2 indicator was low because family finding commence well before the end of proceedings. Walsall has a commitment to considering adoption for as wide a range of children as possible, this can often mean protracted family finding or legal matters to overcome.

f) Missing Children

Walsall Council currently commissions Walsall Street Teams to provide comprehensive and specialist support, advice and guidance to young people at risk of, or have been, sexually exploited, and/or have runaway, which increases the risk of those young people being harmed, or engaging in risky behaviours, in the future. In terms of the background of missing children.

Priorities for Continued Improvement

Awareness raising and skills workshops for social workers in developing missing interventions are planned for the autumn term. Work is currently underway with Commissioners to strengthen the requirement of providers out of borough to share all return interviews with allocated social workers. Work is also ongoing to explore the possibility of the Walsall's current provider undertaking these on behalf of Walsall where children are placed in adjoining boroughs on a Black Country footprint. We continue to

work on a regional basis to challenge the West Midlands force policy in relation to their use of the 'absent' category for some children.

g) Child Sexual Exploitation

The LSCB and Walsall Council LGA commissioned the LGA to undertake a Child Sexual Exploitation Diagnostic and this took place in Walsall between 18-20 July. The review considered the following key lines of enquiry:

- Strategic Leadership and Governance
- Quality Assurance & Performance Management
- Front line safeguarding practice
- Partnership response and community engagement
- Document Review
- Assessment of Compliance with the requirements of statutory guidance on CSE (DCSF 2009)

Headline feedback has identified a range of strengths and a range of areas for further consideration and development. The full report will be available later in September and work is underway to develop an action plan based on the headline feedback received so far.

Further training is currently being commissioned from LoudMouth Theatre Company for social workers and the new CSE co-ordinator is working with youth service colleagues to scope how best to develop and sustain a young person's reference group.

h) Prevent Activity

Following the successful conclusion of WRAP training for all schools in Walsall, training to all social care staff is now almost complete. WRAP training for early year's settings and providers will commence in the autumn term.

Channel Panel continues to meet monthly and the pro-active relationship between MASH, the Counter Terrorism Unit and the Prevent Co-ordinator continues to be seen positively by the Counter Terrorism Unit as a seamless service which has resulted in appropriate intervention to safeguard children.

Priorities for Continued Improvement

Channel Panel has recently begun discussions to consider the possibility of developing 'Channel Lite' as a range of interventions for children and young people whose presentation is concerning but who do not meet the Counter Terrorism Unit's remit for Cannel. Work is currently in hand to scope the demand and consider resources required if this work identifies this as an area for further development.

j) Female Genital Mutilation

Work has been completed across the social care workforce to ensure that the statutory duty to report female genital mutilation is understood.

The majority of current communities in Walsall do not practice female genital mutilation; however both health colleagues and schools are aware of their statutory requirements

both to report and to share their concerns with the MASH. As a result a small number of referrals are made across the year; in 2015/16 this was 1 child.

k) Unregistered Schools

This issue has been raised with Elected Members, across all Council Directorates and with partners to raise awareness of the possibility of the existence of unregistered schools in Walsall. There is a single point of contact which is the Head of Safeguarding. Although some potential unregistered schools have been raised, when these have been checked out they have proved to be registered faith schools.

A further letter will be sent to all known alternative providers and study centres in Walsall to coincide with the return after the summer break to remain them of the requirements to register if the education they provide meets or exceeds the scope of regulations under section 94 of the 2008 Act.

3. Achievements

- Two new group managers appointed at Safeguarding Family Support service (SFS)
- Additional two teams have been set up in SFS to begin to reduce the supervisory ratios to 1:6
- Steady progress in reducing case loads in line with the caseload promise. 21 children per experienced social worker in SFS, higher in LAC but in process of recruiting
- Two practice development co-ordinators have been appointed to support the ASYEs
- 18 good ASYEs recruited and are in the process of starting – mostly in SFS
- Permanency co-ordinator appointed so Fostering and Adoption service fully staffed
- Positive feedback from the restorative practice training
- Direct work resources being rolled out to all social workers
- Changed statement of purpose of one of our children's homes to enable us to bring 4 children back into the borough.
- Good engagement with Regional Adoption Agency developments
- Increasing footprint of IRO – good use of dispute resolution process
- Launch of new re-commissioned Domestic violence services
- Launching the two evidence based programmes with support from the NSPCC Anticipating Frontline cohorts of trainee social workers for 2017
- Two excellent summer events for LAC 'Mad hatter's tea party' and the 'excellent night out' supported by FCA.
- Review of 1000 early help cases to give assurance re thresholds and locality working

4. Challenges and ongoing development

- Recruitment and retention to ensure stability and reduce dependency on agency workers.
- Too many costly agency workers.
- Recent campaigns have not attracted any experienced social workers
- The quality of basic practice and recording is still too variable.
- Caseloads are still too high and need to reduce to come in line with other neighbouring authorities. 15 for experienced social workers and 12 for NQSWs
- The number of children subject to child protection plans needs to reduce.
- The number of Looked After Children needs to reduce
- Continued discharge / variation of care orders to reduce numbers of children at home on care orders and to increase SGOs for close family carers where placements are stable and secure
- The number of children placed out of Borough in costly residential placements needs to reduce
- More children need to be placed with Walsall Foster Carers rather than with Independent Foster Carers.
- Increase and retain more internal Foster Carers
- Strengthen first line management and improve the quality of supervision
- Improve the interface with newly developing locality arrangements

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