

**PROUD** OF OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

# Walsall Children's Services Corporate Parenting Board Quarter 4 - 2023/24



 **IMPROVE**  
outcomes and  
customer experience

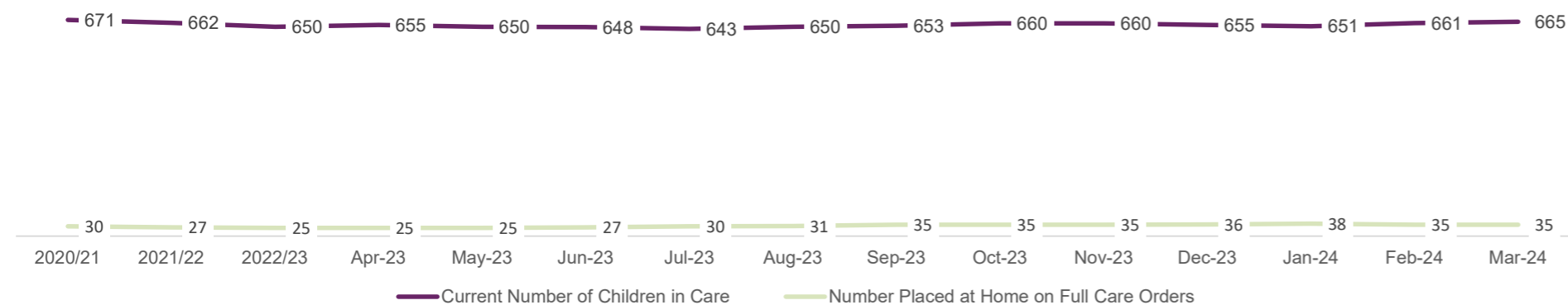
 **IMPROVE**  
employee satisfaction  
and engagement

 **IMPROVE**  
service efficiency  
and performance

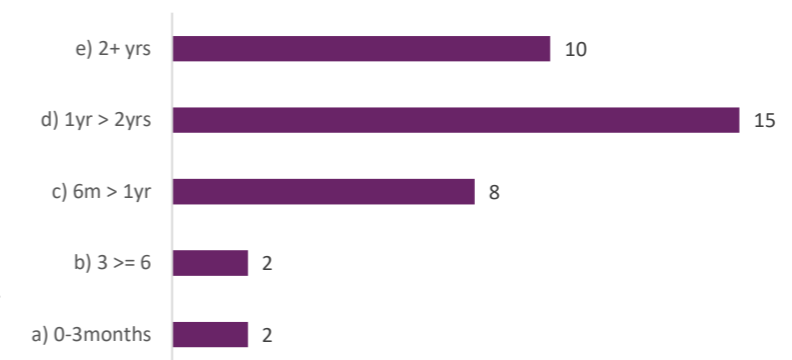
## Current Children in Care (CiC) Profile



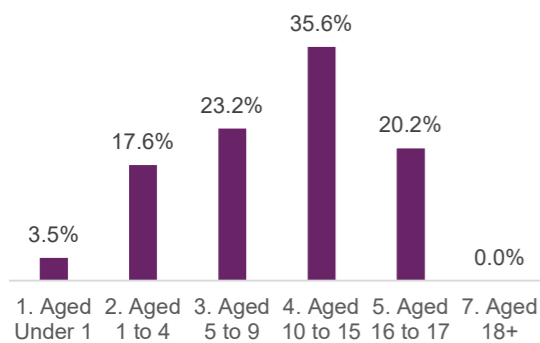
Number of Children in Care in Walsall (12 Month Rolling)



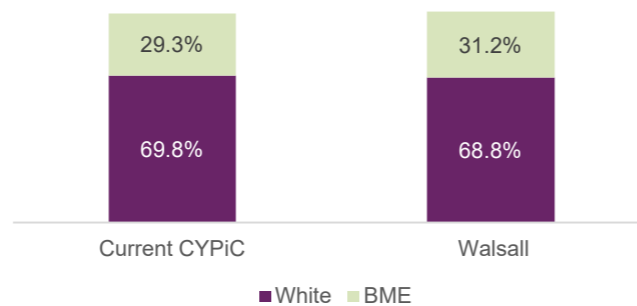
Length of Time placed at home on full care orders



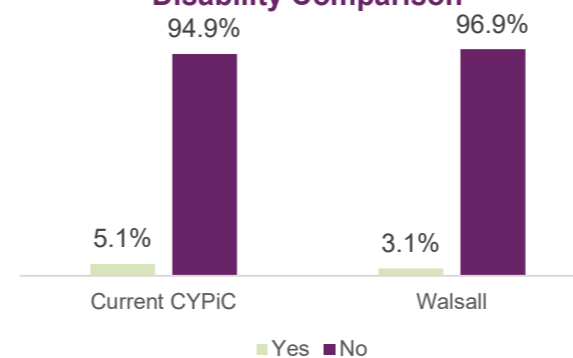
% of current CiC by age



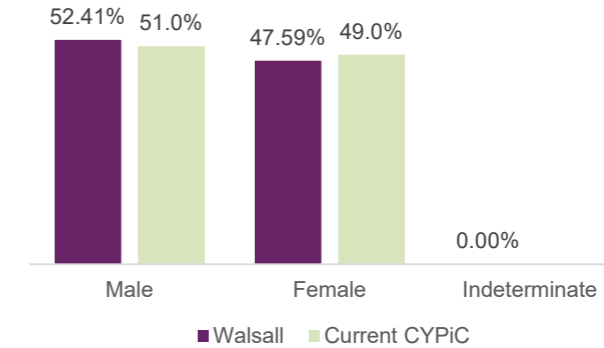
Ethnicity Comparison



Disability Comparison



Gender Comparison



## Commentary

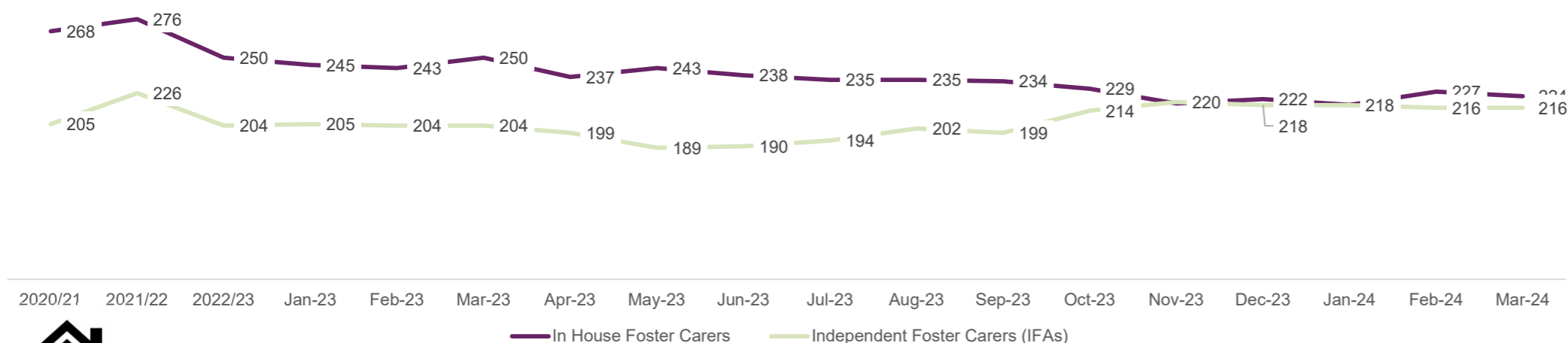
Demographic data has been taken from the 2020 mid-year population estimates. The proportion of children from ethnic backgrounds other than white is increasing, largely within the Asian and Other groups. This is more generally driven by the increasing number of children seeking asylum. A higher percentage of Children in Care have a disability (5.2%), compared to the overall 0-17 population (3.1%), increasing from 5.0% in Quarter 3. A slightly lower percentage of Children in Care are male (51.0%) compared to the overall 0-17 population of Walsall (53.0%). The number of boys entering care has increased by 16.9%, whereas the number of girls entering care has reduced by 31.9%. The increase in children in remand and seeking asylum contributes to this. Boys are more likely to move into residential care either as a first placement or as a placement move.

Overall the number of children who are entering care is falling. In 2022-23 just 163 children entered care (23.5 per 10,000) compared with 180 children entered care in 2021-22(26.0 per 10,000 population) This is a reduction of 9.4% on 2021-22 and 31.2% on the number that entered care in 2019-20.

The current rate of 96 per 10,000 remains below that of our statistical neighbours but is still higher than the 2022/23 England and West Midlands averages. We currently have 35 children placed at home on full care order, this is a slight decrease from 36 at the end of Quarter 3, although the figure rose to 38 at the end of January. 25 of the 35 have been placed at home for over a year. Work is continuing with the courts to revoke care orders for children who are placed at home where appropriate.

## CiC Placement Analysis

Breakdown of Foster Placements (12 Month Rolling)



The number of CiC placed with in house foster carers and IFA's has increased but remains fairly stable.



**% CiC placed 20 mile+ from home, outside of LA boundary**  
**118**  
**18.3%**

2022/23 Walsall = 18.0%  
2021/22 Walsall = 13.0%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 16.0%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 16.1%  
2022/23 England = 17.0%

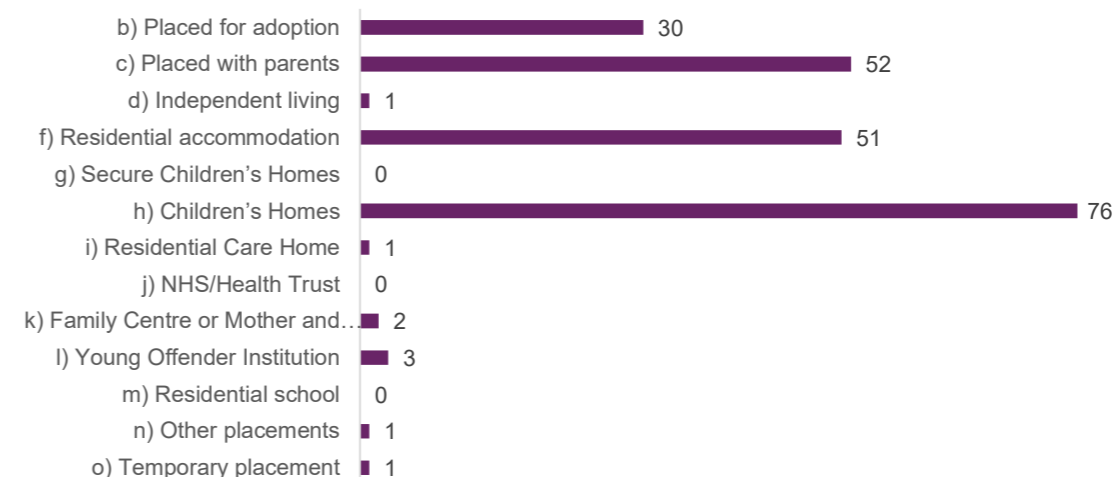
**% CiC 3 or more placements in a year**  
**57**  
**8.6%**

2022/23 Walsall = 9.0%  
2021/22 Walsall = 7.0%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 10.0%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 9.7%  
2022/23 England = 10.0%

**% of CiC in same placement for over 2.5 years**  
**172**  
**60.6%**

2022/23 Walsall = 67.0%  
2021/22 Walsall = 68.0%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 69.0%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 68.2%  
2022/23 England = 69.0%

Current CiC by Placement Type (non-fostered)



## Commentary

We are seeing a fluctuating picture of children who enter a residential children's home as a first placement. The proportion of children who entered a residential children's home as a first placement was relatively low, prior to 2021-22, with the number of children ranging from between seven and nine. In 2021-22 this increased to 14 (7.8%) but in 2022-23 the number fell back to six (3.6%).

18.3% of Walsall's CiC are placed 20 plus miles from their home address this is a slight increase on the 2022-23 out-turn of 18%, but lower than the previous quarter (18.6%). 8.6% of the CiC population have had 3 or more placements within a year. This is lower than the 2022-23 out-turn of 9%. The percentage of CiC in the same placement for over 2 years if CiC for over 2.5 years (60.6%) is lower than regional and statistical neighbour averages for 2022/23.

An increase in children remanded to custody in 2022-23 with 14 children entering care compared to 3 in 2021-22. Whilst this increase can be attributed to a significant incident the Youth Justice Partnership are undertaking needs assessment of all children involved in serious violence to influence wider partnership strategy. At 31st March 2024, there were 3 children in care placed in Young Offender Institutions. This has decreased from 5 at the end of Quarter 3.

## Statutory Visits and Reviews



### % Visits undertaken to timescale (12 month rolling)

Where a statutory visit has been undertaken to timescale in accordance with the child's plan.

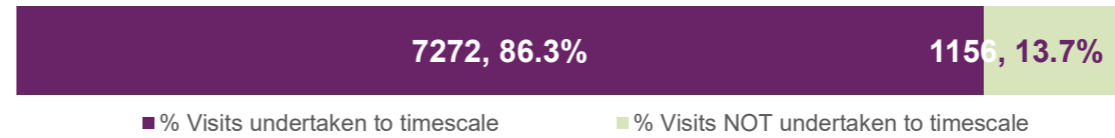
Time Since Last Visit Undertaken	Number	%
a) 0 - 6 weeks	588	88.4%
b) 6 - 12 weeks	70	10.5%
c) 12 - 18 weeks	7	1.1%
d) 18+ weeks	0	0.0%
No Visit Recorded - new in last month	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Reviews carried out within timescale (12 month Rolling)

Where reviews for children looked after are carried out within timescale

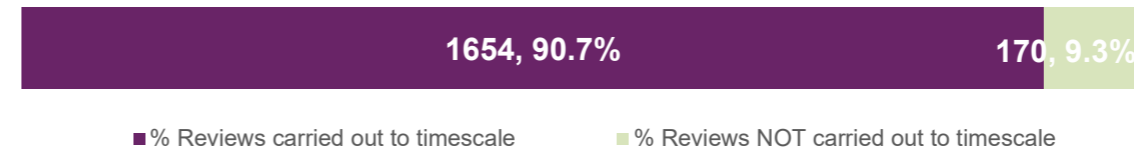
Time Since Latest Review	Number	%
a) 0 > 3 months	424	63.8%
b) 3 > 6 months	223	33.5%
c) 6 > 9 months	6	0.9%
d) 9 > 12 months	0	0.0%
e) 1 year or more	0	0.0%
No review	0	0.0%
No Review - new in last month	12	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



2022/23 Year Out-turn = 87%  
2021/22 Year Out-turn = 89%  
2020/21 Year Out-turn = 92%



### % of children in care by time since last visit



2022/23 Year Out-turn 95%  
2021/22 Year Out-turn = 91%  
2020/21 Year Out-turn = 95%



### % Time Since Latest Review



## Commentary

The proportion of CiC where a statutory visit has been undertaken to timescale in accordance with the child's plan is 86.3%, with 88.4% seen within 6 weeks of the previous visit or coming in care. There were 0 CiC with no visits recorded as 31st March 24.

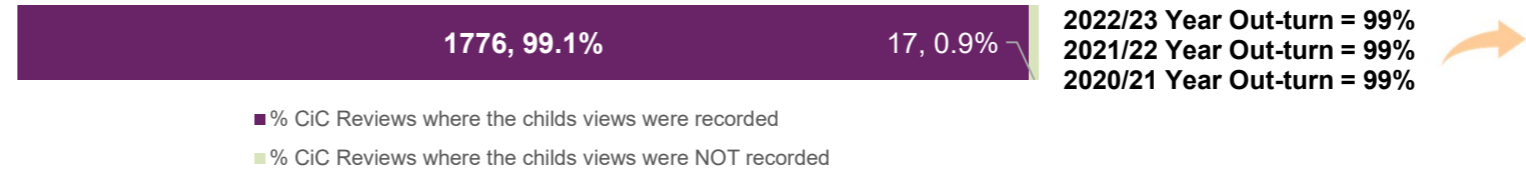
90.7% of reviews have been undertaken within timescales. 63.8% of current Children in Care have had a review within the last 6 months. 1.8% (12) children currently have no review because they were new into care during the last month, however, this review will have been completed on time and will be in the process of being recorded (IROs have 20 working days from the date of review to write their reports).

Views of the child



**% CiC Reviews where the child's views were recorded (12 month rolling period)**

The proportion of CiC reviews where the child's views were recorded (this is where the review took place and a "PN" code has been selected)

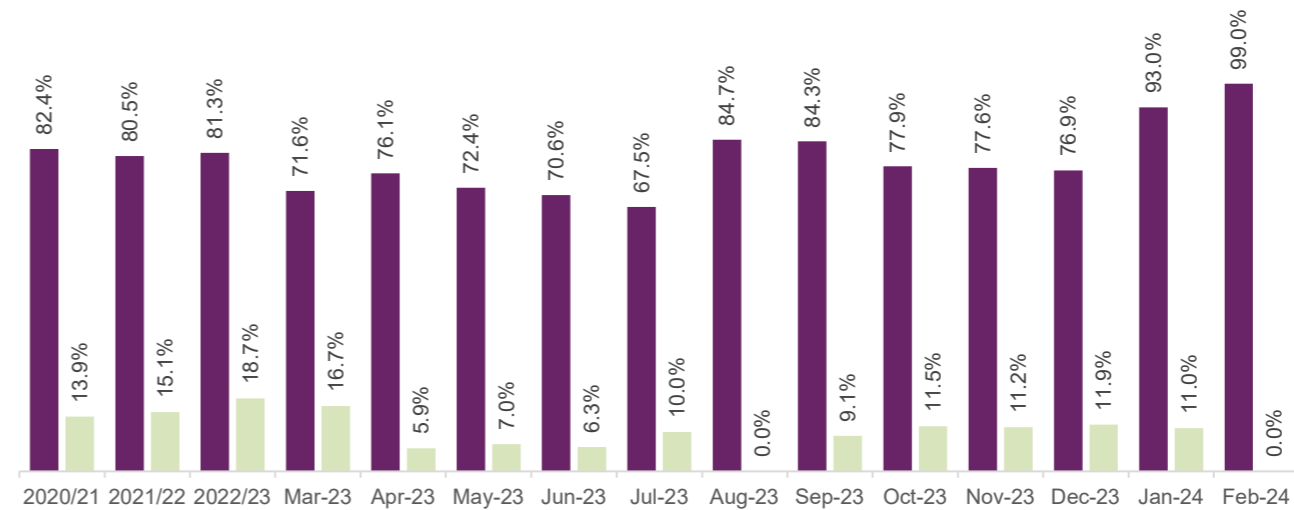


**% CiC Reviews where the child attended their review (12 month rolling period)**

The proportion of CiC reviews where the child's physically attends their review.



**% Same social worker since last review**    **% of SW Changes due to moving service**



Type of Participation at Review (12 month rolling period)	Number	%
PN0 - child under 4 at time of review	374	N/A
PN1 - child attends and speaks for themselves	846	60.9%
PN2 - child attends and an advocate speaks for them	52	3.7%
PN3 - child attends and conveys their views non-verbally	10	0.7%
PN4 - child attends; does not speak for themselves / convey their views	19	1.4%
PN5 - child does not attend but asks advocate to speak for them	100	7.2%
PN6 - child does not attend but conveys their feelings to the conference	202	14.5%
PN7 - child does not attend nor conveys their view to the conference	21	1.5%
PN8 - where IRO visits/talks to the child to obtain their views for the meeti	128	9.2%
<b>Total Reviews</b>	<b>1764</b>	
<b>No Participation Code Reported</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

**Commentary**

The child's views were recorded at 99.1% of CiC reviews. This is similar to the out-turns for the previous three years, this remains very positive performance.

64.2% of children attended their review in the previous 12 months. This is a decrease compared with the previous two years.

The percentage of children who have kept the same social worker since the last review has remained high over the last six months, following a decrease between September and October.

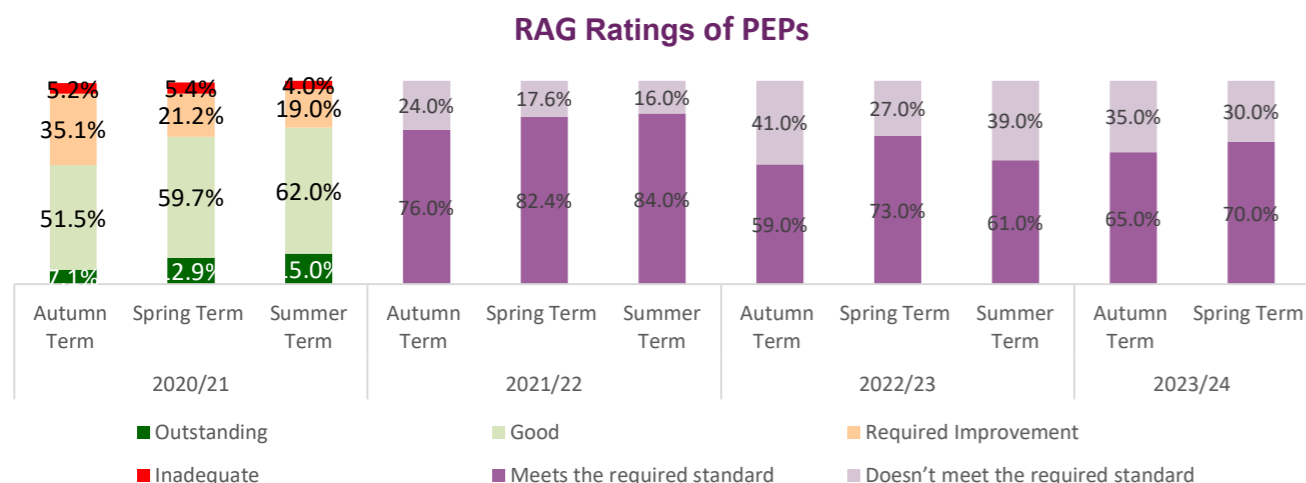
The percentage of social worker changes due to moving services has fluctuated throughout the year. In January, this figure decreased to from 11.9 to 11.0%. There were no social worker changes in February 24. This data is no longer collected on the 'All About You' form. Therefore, the latest data is from February 2024.

## Education

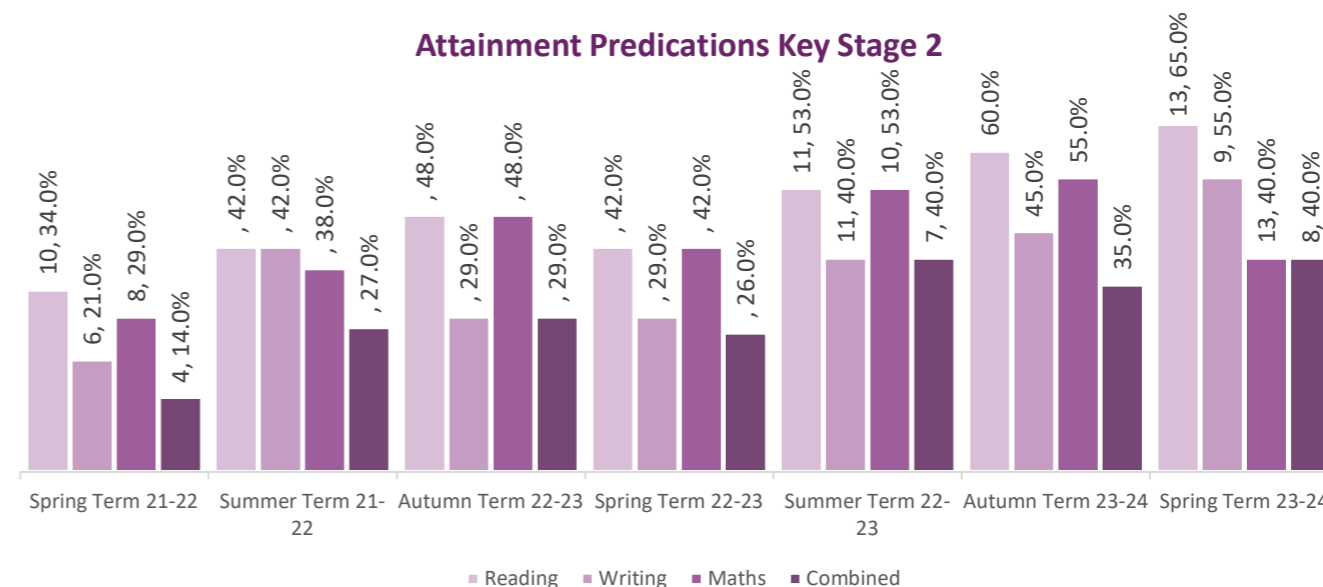


### RAG Ratings of PEPs

The quality assurance process changed in 2021/22 from being rated inadequate, requires improvement, good and outstanding, to meets the required and standard and doesn't meet required standard this enables us to distinguish between very good and very poor PEPs'.

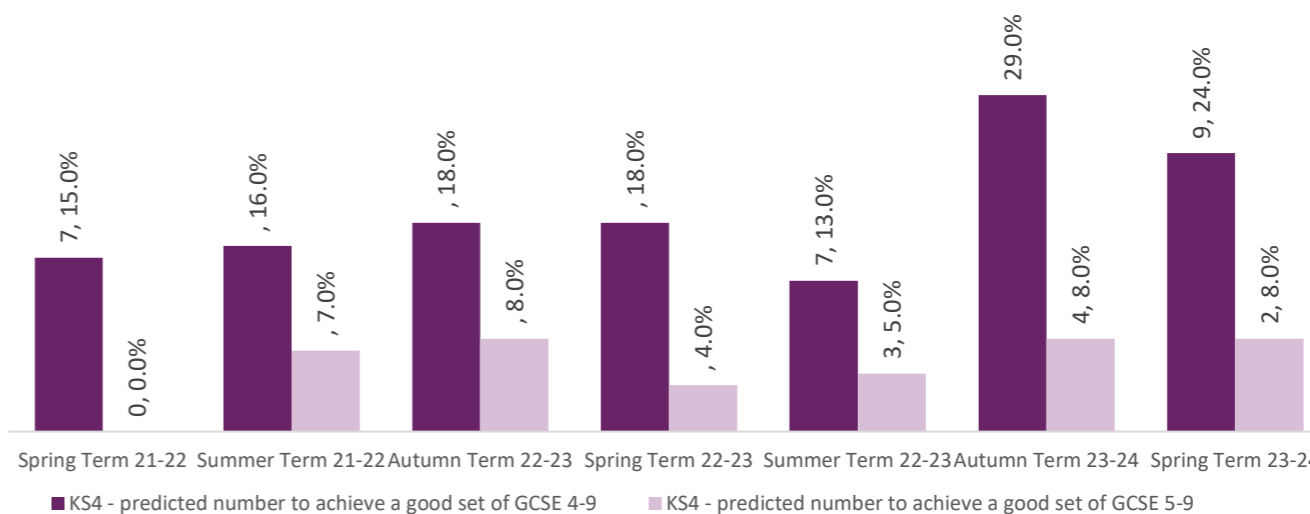
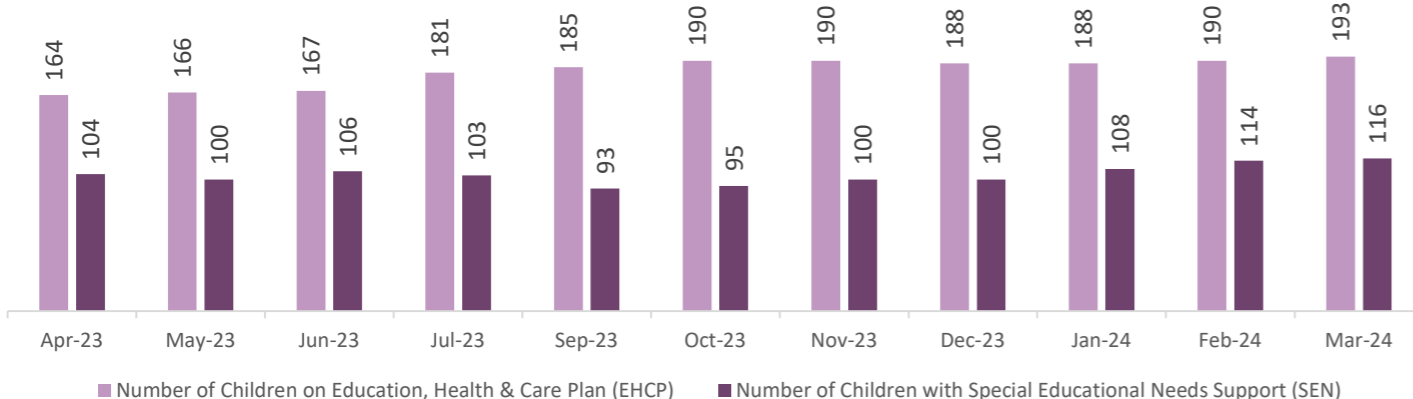


### Attainment Predictions Key Stage 2



### Key Stage 4 KS4 - predicted number to achieve a good set of GCSE 4-9 & 5-9

### EHCP and SEN Support



## Commentary

**Please Note** - The quality assurance process for the rating of completed PEPs changed from a "RAG" system to "Meets the required standard" and "Doesn't meet the required standard" from 2021/22.

KS2 -The percentage of children predicted to achieve the expected level of attainment for KS2 combined in reading, writing and maths as at spring 2023-24 is 40%, which is an increase compared to autumn 2022-23 (35%), and also represents an increase compared to the spring term during 2022/23 (26%)

KS4 -The percentage of children predicted to achieve a good set of GCSE (4-9) reported in spring 2023-24 was 24% which is a decrease compared to autumn 2023-24 (29%). However, this is higher than the figure for spring 2022/23 (18%). The percentage of children predicted to achieve a good set of GCSE (5-9) reported in spring 2023/24 was 8%, which is the same as the previous term.

The number of children with an EHCP has increased throughout the reporting period from 164 in April 2023 and is at curenly at 193 as at 31st March 2024.

The number of children with SEN support has remained fairly stable during the reporting period. However, the figure has increased to the highest level during this period with 116 children as at 31st March 2024.

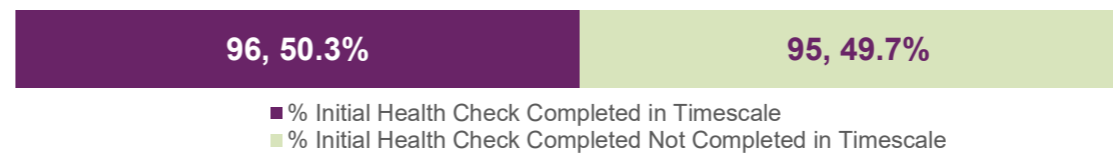


## Health and Well-being



### % Initial Health Check Completed in Timescale

Assessments in timescale of CiC admission for those in care for 28 days or more (12 month rolling figure)

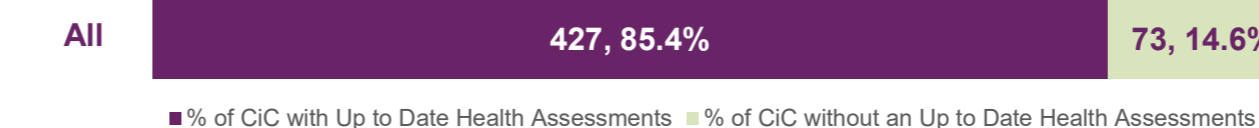


2022/23 Year Out-turn = 66%  
2021/22 Year Out-turn = 78%  
2020/21 Year Out-turn = 75%



### % of CiC with Up to Date Health Assessments

Where the child is over 5 and has been in care for over a year

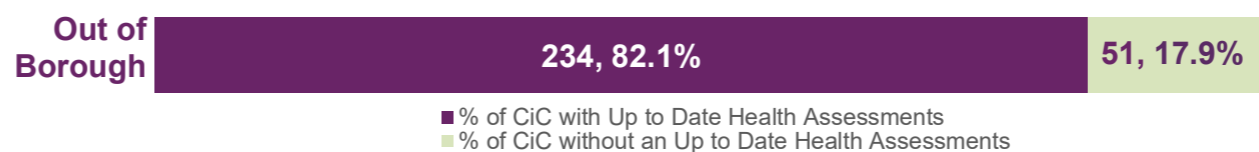


2022/23 Walsall = 86%  
2021/22 Walsall = 91%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 83%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 91%  
2022/23 England = 89%



### % of CiC with an up to date dental check

Where the child is over 5 and has been in care for over a year



2022/23 Walsall = 88%  
2021/22 Walsall = 88%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 70%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 79%  
2022/23 England = 76%



## Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire should be completed for every child looked after for at least 12 months and aged 5 to 16 years-old.

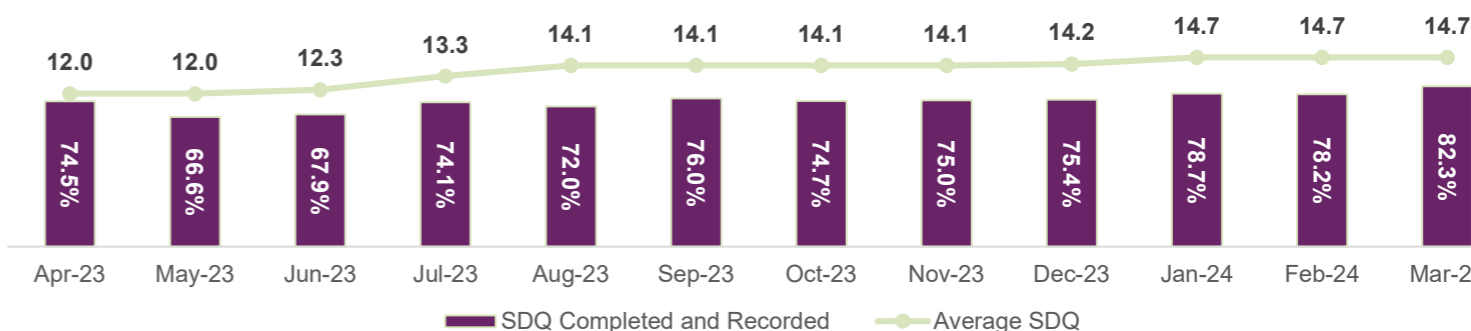
Average SDQ Score  
**14.7**

### Breakdown

Score	Considered	Number
Score 0 - 13	Normal	186
Score 14 - 16	Borderline	56
Score 17 - 40	Cause for Concern	153

Score	% of those eligible for SDQ	% against all Children Looked
Score 0 - 13	47%	28.0%
Score 14 - 16	14%	8.4%
Score 17 - 40	39%	23.0%

Number of children looked after for at least 12 months aged 5 to 16 with an SDQ score (Rolling 12 months)



## Commentary

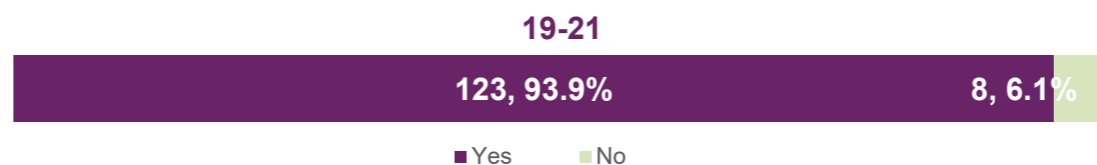
More children, coming into our care, have complex support needs, with high levels of need associated with exploitation, mental health difficulties, and have required Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. Performance shows an increase in the number of children in care have up to date health checks with 85.4%, compared to 82.1% at the end of quarter 3. There has also been an increase in the percentage of children whose initial health checks are done on time - 50.3% currently compared to 46.8% at the end of Q3. Social Care and Health colleagues continue to work closely together to ensure that processes for notifying health when a child enters care are robust and the finalisation of health assessments is timely. The Dental checks indicator is an indicator that increases month on month, so you should see significant impact quarter upon quarter. At the end of Q4, the figure is 86.6%. The figure for Q4 2022/23 was 88%, so there is little change in this figure since last year. The proportion of SDQ's completed and recorded was 82.3% in March 2024, increasing from 75.4% at the end of the previous quarter. The average SDQ score is currently 14.7. This has increased slightly from 14.2 at the end of Quarter 3. 153 children currently have an SDQ score that suggests there may be a cause for concern in their emotional and mental well-being based on the answers they gave to the questionnaire. This has increased from 128 last quarter.

## Care Leavers



### Care Leavers in touch

Care Leavers where the local authority is in touch aged 19-21

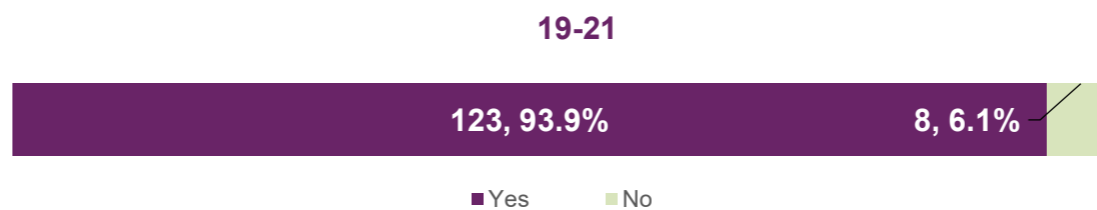


2022/23 Year Out-turn = 99%  
2021/22 Year Out-turn = 95%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 96%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 96%  
2022/23 England = 96%



### Care Leavers in suitable accommodation

Care Leavers whose accommodation is classed as suitable for ages 19-21 (excluding 'gone abroad', 'deported' and 'residence not known')

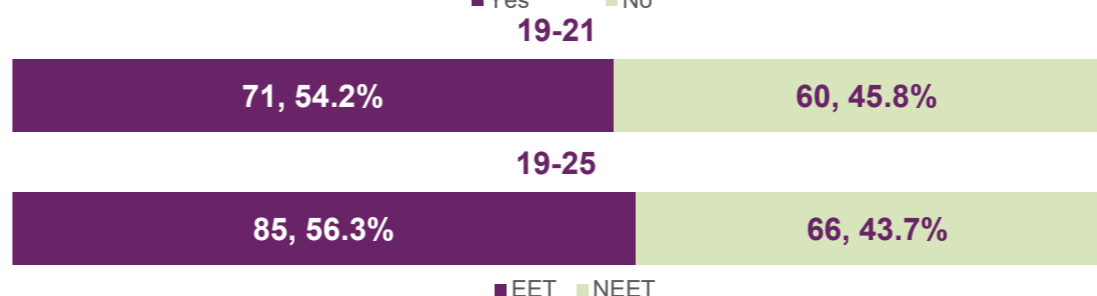


2022/23 Year Out-turn = 96%  
2021/22 Year Out-turn = 91%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 88%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 90%  
2022/23 England = 88%



### Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training

Education, Employment and Training of Care Leavers aged 19-21

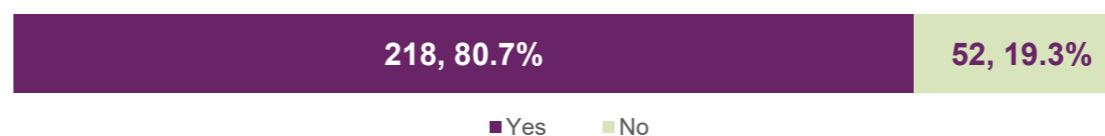


2022/23 Year Out-turn = 54%  
2021/21 Year Out-turn = 54%  
2022/23 West Midlands = 55%  
2022/23 Stat Neighbours = 52%  
2022/23 England = 55%



### Care Leavers available to work - All Ages

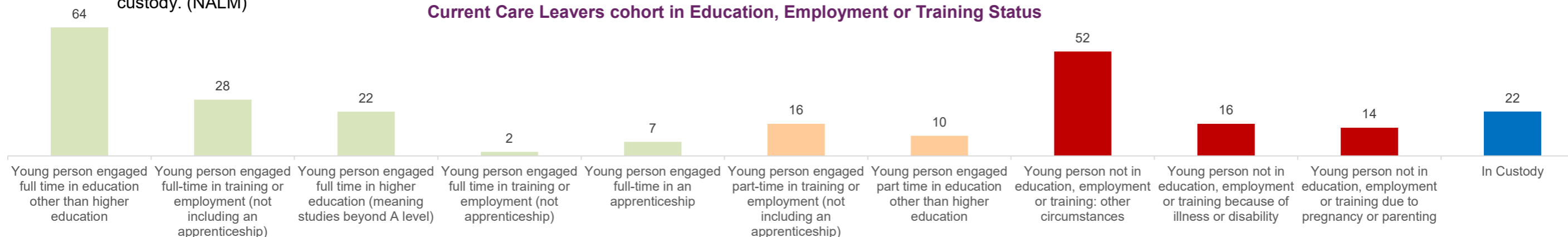
Care Leavers who are available to work this excludes all those that are not available for the labour market due to illness/disability, pregnancy or young mothers or being in custody. (NALM)



2022/23 Year Out-turn = 83%  
2021/22 Year Out-turn = 87%  
2020/21 Year Out-turn = 86%



### Current Care Leavers cohort in Education, Employment or Training Status



## Commentary

The percentage of 19-21 year old care leavers in education, employment or training at the end of quarter 4 of 2023-24 was 54.2%. This has increased slightly compared to 2022-23 out turn of 54%. The 19-25 cohort has decreased slightly, with 56.3% care leavers in Education, Employment or Training, compared to 56.9% at the end of Quarter 3.

80.7% of care leavers are available to work - excluding those not available for the labour market (NALM) due to illness, disability, pregnancy or being a young mother or because they are in custody. This has decreased from the 2022-23 out-turn (83%). 22 of Walsall's care leavers are currently in custody, increasing from 17 last quarter. The number of care leavers in suitable accommodation remains high with 93.9%, increasing from 91.9% at the end of Quarter 3. It should be noted that this is lower than the out-turn at the end of March 2023 (96%).

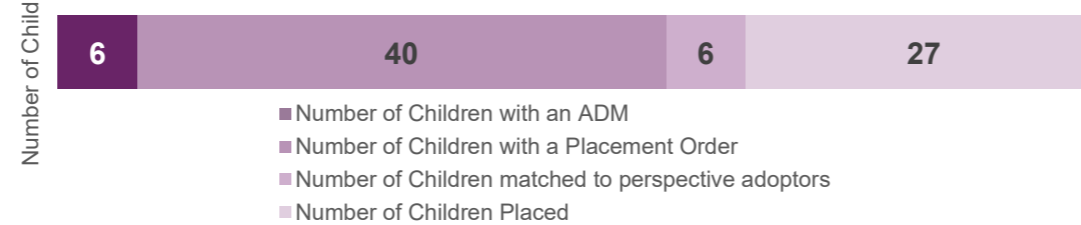


## Adoption and Permanency

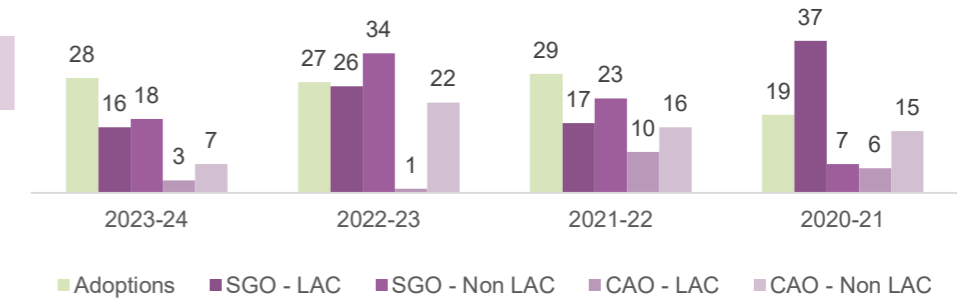


### Adoption Pipeline

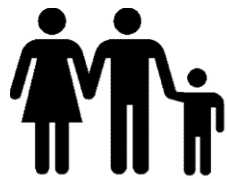
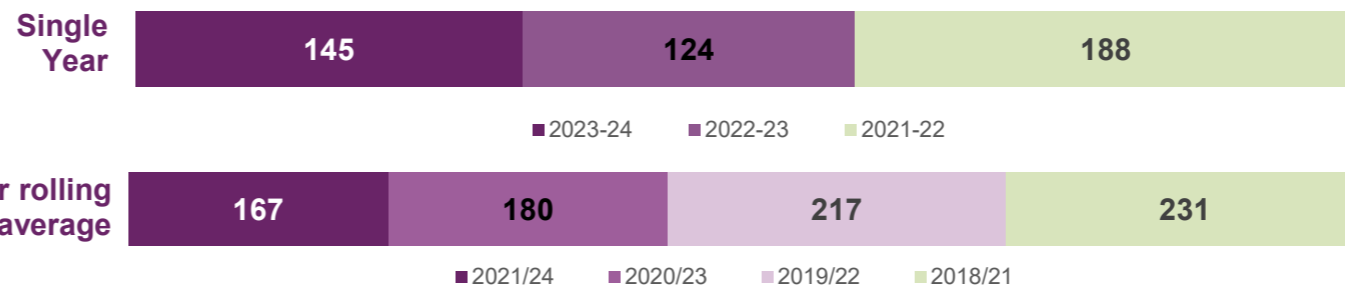
Adoption Pipeline (Based on the ALB Return)



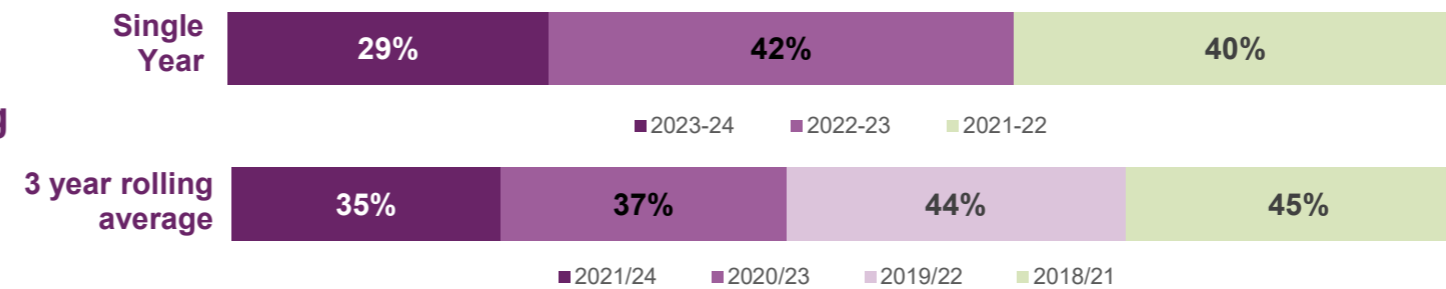
Number of adoptions



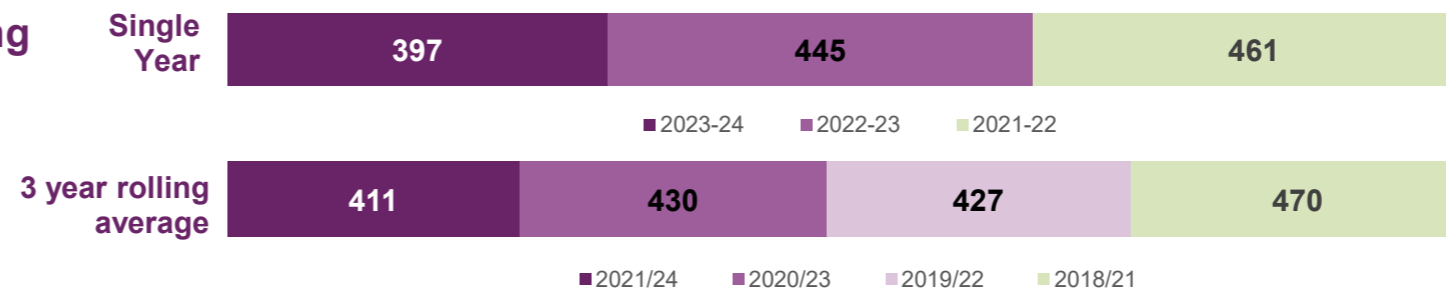
### A2 - Average time between receiving court authority to place and finding a match



### A3 - % Children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family



### A10 - Average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (stopped at point of fostering for foster carers adoptions)



## Commentary

There were 27 adoptions during 2022/23 this based on the latest ALB data. In 2023/24 28 children were adopted.

During 2023/24, children were waiting a longer time than in 2022/23 between receiving court authority to place and finding a match - this was 145 days compared to 124 days in 2022/23. 29% of Children wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family, decreasing from 42% in 2022/23.

For many children and young people in care, SGOs are a positive way to provide a loving and caring home and enable children to leave care, supporting closer links to their birth families, siblings and wider family and friend networks and, where this is right for the child or young person, we will provide the support needed to enable an SGO to be put in place. In 2022/23 60 children ceased to be looked after due to special guardianship orders this is a significant increase on the 40 in 2021-22. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 34 Children have ceased to be looked after due to special guardianship orders (16 - LAC and 18 - Non LAC) and 10 due to child arrangement orders (3 - LAC and 7 - Non LAC).