
Children Order Statistical Bulletin 2005

**This statistical bulletin is based on the Children
Order returns for Northern Ireland
2000-2005.**

Main Findings

Child Protection

- During 2004/05 2,000 child protection investigations were completed, 72 (3.7%) more than in 2003/04.
- At 31 March 2005, there were 1,593 children on the child protection register, a rate of 31 children per 10,000-population aged under 18, compared with 24 in England, 33 in Wales and 20 in Scotland.
- Nine percent of children on the child protection register at 31 March 2005 were under 1 year old, with 32.9% under 5 years old.
- At 31 March 2005, almost 60% of children had been on the child protection register for less than 1 year.
- Between 1999/00 and 2004/05, the number of child protection registrations increased by 5.8% (62), from 1067 to 1129 respectively.
- At 31 March 2005, 34.8% (554) of children on the child protection register were assessed to be at risk of Neglect (only), 19.8% (316) at risk of Physical Abuse (only), 15.2% (242) at risk of Emotional Abuse (only), 14.7% (234) at risk of Sexual Abuse (only) and 15.5% (247) at risk of more than one type of abuse.

Looked After Children

- At 31 March 2005, there were 2,531 looked after children in Northern Ireland, a rate of 56 children per 10,000-population aged under 18. Comparative figures in the UK are 55 in England, 106 children in Scotland and 65 children in Wales.
- Just over 63% (1,606) of looked after children were in foster care, with 19.8% (500) placed with family, 12.5% (317) in residential accommodation, and 4.3% (108) in other types of accommodation.
- From 2000 to 2005, the number of looked after children increased by 4.5% (109), from 2,422 to 2531. This compares with increases of 5%, 3% and 19% in England, Scotland and Wales respectively.
- The numbers of children accommodated for respite care increased by 45.2%, from 677 in 1999/00 to 983 in 2004/05.
- Just over 43% of discharges from care in 2004/05 related to children who had been in care for 1 year or longer, with 33% relating to children who had been in care for less than 2 weeks.

Day Care

- At 31 March 2005, there were 245 day nurseries in Northern Ireland, providing 9,197 registered places for children under 5 years old.
- Between 2000 and 2005, the number of day nurseries providing places for children under 5 increased by 52% (84), from 161 to 245 respectively, with a corresponding increase of 64% (3576) in the numbers of registered places available which rose from 5,621 to 9,197.
- At 31 March 2005 3,730 childminders were registered with local HSS Trusts, with 18,065 child-minding places available for children under 12 years of age, and an average of just below 5 children per childminder.
- Of the 18,065 available child-minding places, 56.3% (10,174) were designated for children under 5 years old.
- At 31 March 2005, 584 playgroups provided 13,770 places, an average of 23 places per playgroup.
- At 31 March 2005, there were 259 out of school clubs providing 6,288 places for children aged 4-11 years old, with an average weekly attendance of 4603 per operating week.

Children's Homes

- At 31 March 2005, there were 52 residential homes for children; 42 statutory, 9 voluntary and 1 private children's home.
- The 52 children's residential homes provide accommodation for a maximum of 392 children at any given time.

Secure Accommodation

- There is one secure unit for children in Northern Ireland, providing accommodation to a maximum of 15 children at any one time.
- There were 49 admissions to and 39 discharges from secure accommodation during 2004/05.

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Child Protection

Child Protection Investigations

Child protection investigations are classified using one of the following categories:

- Joint Protocol⁽¹⁾
- Social Workers
- PSNI

Table 1.1: Child protection investigations completed during year ended 31 March (2000–2005)

Investigation category	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Joint protocol	757	30.1	470	19.9	441	19.4	417	19.4	391	20.3	381	19.1
Social workers	1,702	67.8	1,840	78.0	1,786	78.7	1,696	78.9	1,510	78.3	1,592	79.6
Police	52	2.1	50	2.1	43	1.9	36	1.7	27	1.4	27	1.4
Total	2,511	100.0	2,360	100.0	2,270	100.0	2,149	100.0	1,928	100.0	2,000	100.0

Main Points

- During 2004/05, 2000 child protection investigations were completed, 72 (3.7%) more than in 2003/04.
- Compared with 1999/00 the proportion of child protection investigations completed under joint protocol fell from 30.1% (757) to 19.1% (381) in 2004/05.
- Over the same period the proportion of child protection investigations carried out by social workers increased by over 11 percentage points, from 67.8% to 79.6% in 2004/05.

¹ Joint Protocol' investigations are carried out jointly by Social Workers and the PSNI.

The Child Protection Register

Table 1.2: Composition of the child protection register by age and gender at 31 March 2005

Age (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	82	9.8	61	8.1	143	9.0
1-4	213	25.5	167	22.1	380	23.9
5-11	337	40.3	307	40.6	644	40.4
12-15	170	20.3	179	23.6	349	21.9
16 & over	34	4.1	43	5.7	77	4.8
Total	836	100.0	757	100.0	1,593	100.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, there were 1593 children on the child protection register, a rate of 31 children per 10,000-population aged under 18, compared with 24 in England⁽¹⁾, 33 in Wales⁽²⁾ and 20 in Scotland⁽³⁾.
- Of the 1593 children on the register, 836 (52.4%) were boys and 757 (47.6%) were girls.
- Nine percent of children on the register were under 1 year old, with 32.9% under 5 years old.
- Almost 5% of children on the register were aged 16 & over.

¹ Source: Statistics of Education: Referrals, Assessments and Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers: Year Ending 31 March 2004. Department for Education and Skills (England) 2005.

² Source: Local Authority Child Protection Registers for Financial Year 2003-04 or at 31 March 2004. National Assembly for Wales 2004.

³ Source: Children's Social Work Statistics 2003-04. Scottish Executive 2005.

Figure 1.1: Composition of the child protection register by age at 31 March 2005

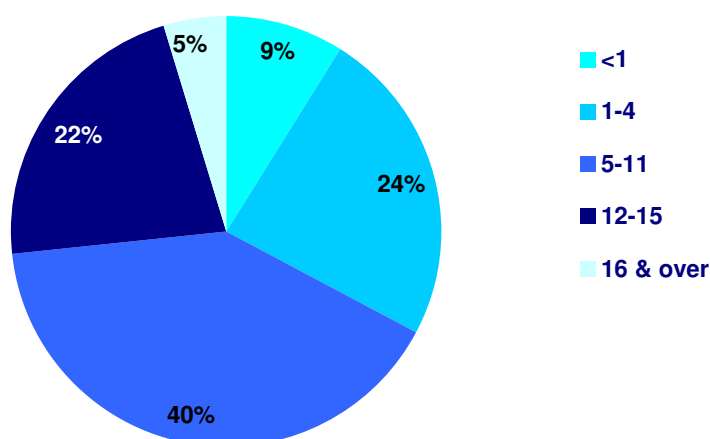


Table 1.3: Composition of the child protection register by age at 31 March (2000–2005)

Age (years)	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	88	5.9	97	6.9	105	6.9	92	5.7	94	6.6	143	9.0
1-4	397	26.8	356	25.2	388	25.3	395	24.6	342	24.1	380	23.9
5-11	614	41.4	574	40.6	630	41.1	682	42.4	600	42.3	644	40.4
12-15	329	22.2	315	22.3	345	22.5	356	22.1	317	22.4	349	21.9
16 & over	55	3.7	72	5.1	63	4.1	83	5.2	64	4.5	77	4.8
Total	1,483	100.0	1,414	100.0	1,531	100.0	1,608	100.0	1,417	100.0	1,593	100.0

Main Points

- Between 2000 and 2005, the number of children on the child protection register increased by 6.7%, from 1483 to 1583 respectively.
- Since 2000, the proportion of children in the <1 age band has increased by 3 percentage points, from 5.9% in 2000 to 9.0% in 2005, with a 52% increase in numbers from 2004 to 2005, from 94 to 143 respectively.
- During the 5 years since 2000, the numbers of children aged 16 & over on the child protection register has increased by 40%, from 55 to 77 at 31 March 2005.

Category of Abuse

The category of abuse under which each child is considered to be at risk is decided at the Child Protection Case Conference. When agreement is reached that the child is at risk and protection is necessary, each child is recorded under the category that best reflects the nature of the risk.

The four main categories used are: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. For more complex cases mixed categories are used e.g. 'neglect and physical abuse' or 'physical and sexual abuse'.

Neglect:

The actual or likely persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical Abuse:

Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Sexual Abuse:

Actual or likely exploitation of children or adolescents. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

Emotional Abuse:

Actual or likely, persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behaviour development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or only form of abuse.

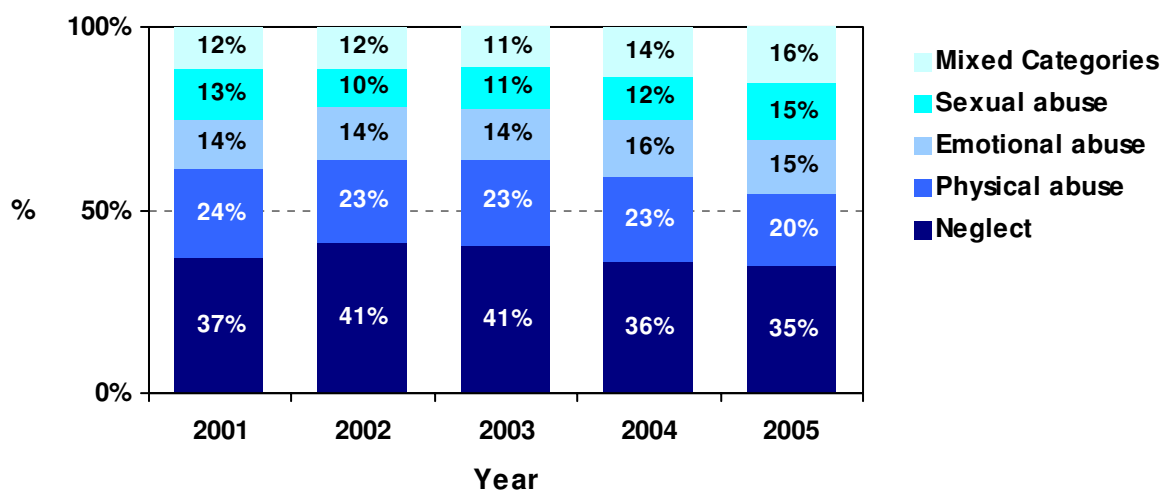
Table 1.4: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March 2005

Category of Abuse	Potential	Suspected	Confirmed	Total
Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - neglect	1	1	2	4
Main category - physical abuse	6	0	0	6
Main category - sexual abuse	3	1	1	5
Neglect and Physical Abuse				
Main category - neglect	16	3	20	39
Main category - physical abuse	92	5	17	114
Neglect and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - neglect	7	2	8	17
Main category - sexual abuse	27	5	0	32
Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse				
Main category - physical abuse	14	1	8	23
Main category - sexual abuse	5	1	1	7
Neglect (only)	279	8	267	554
Physical Abuse (only)	252	4	60	316
Sexual Abuse (only)	184	33	17	234
Emotional Abuse (only)	144	7	91	242
Total	1,030	71	492	1,593
%	64.7	4.5	30.9	100.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, 34.8% (554) of children on the child protection register were assessed to be at risk of Neglect (only), 19.8% (316) at risk of Physical Abuse (only), 15.1% (242) at risk of Emotional Abuse (only), 14.7% (234) at risk of Sexual Abuse (only) and 15.5% (247) at risk of more than one type of abuse.
- Comparative figures for other UK regions are as follows: England⁽¹⁾ - 42% for Neglect (only), 15% for Physical Abuse (only), 9% for Sexual Abuse (only), 20% for Emotional Abuse (only) and 14% for more than one category of abuse; in Wales⁽²⁾ - 43.2% for Neglect (only), 18.0% for Physical Abuse (only), 19.9% for Emotional Abuse (only), 8.5% for Sexual Abuse (only) and 10.4% for more than one category of abuse.
- Almost 65% (1030) of children on the register were assessed as potential cases of abuse, with 30.9% (492) confirmed cases of abuse, and 4.5% (71) cases where abuse was suspected.
- Of the 492 confirmed cases of abuse, almost 54% (267) were 'Neglect only', and 18% related to 'Emotional Abuse'. (Table 1.4 and Figure 1.2)

Figure 1.2: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March (2001-2005)



¹ Source: Statistics of Education: Referrals, Assessments and Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers: Year Ending 31 March 2004. Department for Education and Skills (England) 2005.

² Source: Local Authority Child Protection Registers for Financial Year 2003-04 or at 31 March 2004. National Assembly for Wales 2004.

Table 1.5: Composition of the child protection register by category of abuse at 31 March (2001–2005)

Category of Abuse	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Neglect, Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - neglect	11	0.8	5	0.3	6	0.4	1	0.1	4	0.3
Main category - physical abuse	1	0.1	4	0.3	1	0.1	8	0.6	6	0.4
Main category - sexual abuse	1	0.1	2	0.1	2	0.1	2	0.1	5	0.3
Neglect and Physical Abuse										
Main category - neglect	38	2.7	20	1.3	28	1.7	25	1.8	39	2.4
Main category - physical abuse	49	3.5	84	5.5	91	5.7	97	6.8	114	7.2
Neglect and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - neglect	10	0.7	7	0.5	8	0.5	8	0.6	17	1.1
Main category - sexual abuse	18	1.3	22	1.4	15	0.9	22	1.6	32	2.0
Physical Abuse and Sexual Abuse										
Main category - physical abuse	28	2.0	18	1.2	26	1.6	21	1.5	23	1.4
Main category - sexual abuse	7	0.5	14	0.9	2	0.1	10	0.7	7	0.4
Neglect (only)	526	37.2	625	40.8	651	40.5	509	35.9	554	34.8
Physical Abuse (only)	340	24.0	359	23.4	376	23.4	330	23.3	316	19.8
Sexual Abuse (only)	189	13.4	159	10.4	178	11.1	164	11.6	234	14.7
Emotional Abuse (only)	196	13.9	212	13.8	224	13.9	220	15.5	242	15.2
Total	1,414	100.0	1,531	100.0	1,608	100.0	1,417	100.0	1,593	100.0

Main Points

- Between 2001 and 2005, the proportion of children registered under 'Sexual Abuse (only)' increased from 13.4% (189) to 14.7% (234).
- The proportion of children registered under 'Physical Abuse (only)' decreased from 24% (340) in 2001 to 19.8% (316) in 2005.
- The number of children registered under Physical Abuse, where the main category of abuse was 'Neglect and Physical Abuse', increased from 3.5% (49) in 2001 to 7.2% (114) in 2005.

Length of Time on the Child Protection Register

Table 1.6: Composition of the child protection register by length of time on the register and age at 31 March 2005

Time on register	Age (years)											
	<1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16+		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	56	39.2	38	10.0	96	14.9	68	19.5	7	9.1	265	16.6
3 months < 6 months	40	28.0	73	19.2	122	18.9	53	15.2	11	14.3	299	18.8
6 months < 1 year	47	32.9	104	27.4	135	21.0	62	17.8	15	19.5	363	22.8
1 year < 2 years	n/a	n/a	115	30.3	145	22.5	77	22.1	19	24.7	356	22.3
2 years < 3 years	n/a	n/a	37	9.7	80	12.4	46	13.2	5	6.5	168	10.5
3 years or more	n/a	n/a	13	3.4	66	10.2	43	12.3	20	26.0	142	8.9
Total	143	100.0	380	100.0	644	100.0	349	100.0	77	100.0	1,593	100.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, almost 60% of children had been on the register for less than 1 year.
- Just below 9% (142) of children had been on the register for 3 years or more.
- Almost 42% (666) of children had been on the register for 1 year or more.
- The majority of children (57%) aged 16 & over had been on the register for 1 year or more.

Figure 1.3: Length of time on the child protection register at 31 March 2005

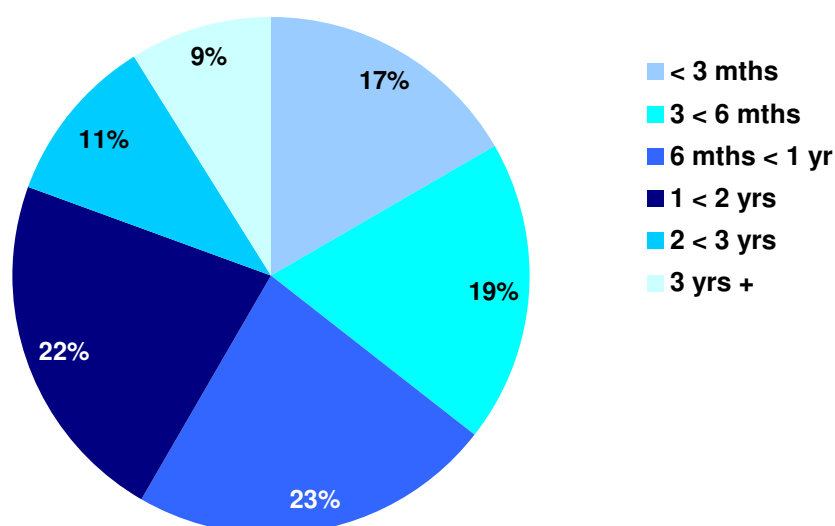


Table 1.7: Composition of the child protection register by length of time on the register at 31 March (2001-2005)

Time on the Register	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 3 months	226	16.0	293	19.1	307	19.1	245	17.3	265	16.6
3 months < 6 months	168	11.9	290	18.9	241	15.0	206	14.5	299	18.8
6 months < 1 year	377	26.7	314	20.5	386	24.0	291	20.5	363	22.8
1 year < 2 years	364	25.7	339	22.1	400	24.9	388	27.4	356	22.3
2 years < 3 years	160	11.3	167	10.9	127	7.9	165	11.6	168	10.5
3 years or more	119	8.4	128	8.4	147	9.1	122	8.6	142	8.9
Total	1,414	100.0	1,531	100.0	1,608	100.0	1,417	100.0	1,593	100.0

Main Points

- Between 2001 and 2005, the numbers of children on the register between 6 months and 2 years decreased by 3%, from 741 to 719 respectively.
- During the same period, the numbers on the register for less than 6 months increased from 27.9% to 35.4% at 31 March 2005.

Child Protection Registrations

Table 1.8: Child protection registrations by gender and age during the year ended 31 March 2005

Age (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	117	20.1	92	16.8	209	18.5
1-4	135	23.2	103	18.9	238	21.1
5-11	211	36.2	200	36.6	411	36.4
12-15	109	18.7	134	24.5	243	21.5
16 & over	11	1.9	17	3.1	28	2.5
Total	583	100.0	546	100.0	1,129	100.0

Main Points

- There were 1129 registrations onto the child protection register in 2004/05.
- Just over half the registrations in 2004/05 were in respect of boys (51.6%), compared with 48.4% for girls.
- Comparisons of registrations by gender indicate that boys registered during 2004/05 tended to be slightly younger than girls, with 43.3% of boys aged 4 or below compared with 35.7% of girls.
- Just below quarter (24%) of registrations were in respect of children aged 12 or older.

Figure 1.4: Child protection registrations by age during year ended 31 March 2005

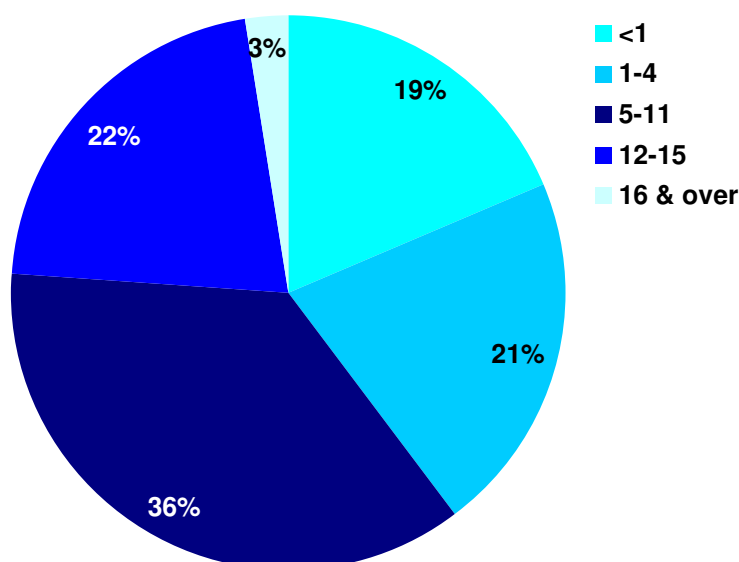


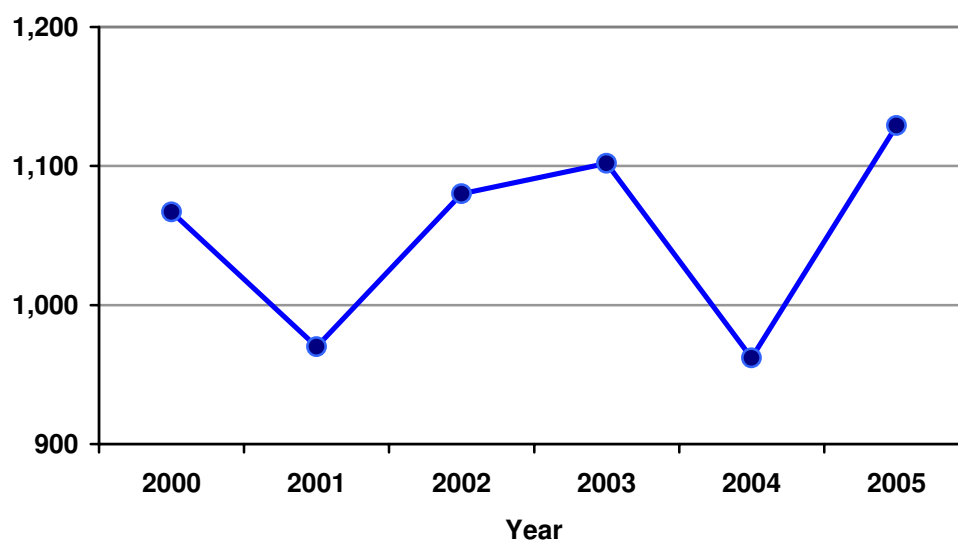
Table 1.9: Child protection registrations by age during year ended 31 March (2000–2005)

Age (years)	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	158	14.8	155	16.0	173	16.0	143	13.0	160	16.6	209	18.5
1-4	272	25.5	233	24.0	259	24.0	279	25.3	237	24.6	238	21.1
5-11	398	37.3	374	38.6	418	38.7	447	40.6	364	37.8	411	36.4
12-15	222	20.8	189	19.5	215	19.9	215	19.5	183	19.0	243	21.5
16 & over	17	1.6	19	2.0	15	1.4	18	1.6	18	1.9	28	2.5
Total	1,067	100.0	970	100.0	1,080	100.0	1,102	100.0	962	100.0	1,129	100.0

Main Points

- Between 1999/00 and 2004/05, the number of child protection registrations increased by 5.8% (62), from 1067 to 1129 respectively.
- Since 1999/00, there has been little variation in the age profile of children registered onto the child protection register.

Figure 1.5: Child protection registrations during year ended 31 March (2000–2005)



Looked After Children

A child becomes looked after if they are provided with accommodation for a continuous period of twenty-four hours or more by a HSS Trust in the exercise of its social services function.

Table 2.1: Composition of looked after children population by age and gender at 31 March 2005

Age (years)	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	31	2.3	30	2.5	61	2.4
1-4	175	13.1	173	14.5	348	13.7
5-11	462	34.6	407	34.1	869	34.3
12-15	454	34.0	364	30.5	818	32.3
16 & over	215	16.1	220	18.4	435	17.2
Total	1,337	100.0	1,194	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- At 31st March 2005, there were 2531 looked after children in Northern Ireland, a rate of 56 children per 10,000-population aged under 18. Comparative figures in the UK are 55 in England⁽¹⁾, 106 in Scotland⁽²⁾ and 65 in Wales⁽³⁾.
- Of the 2531 looked after children at 31 March 2005, 34.3% (869) were aged 5-11, 32.3% (818) were 12-15 years, 17.2% (435) were 16 years & over, and 16.2% (409) were under 5 years old.
- There was little variation in the age profile of boys and girls looked after at 31 March 2005.
- Just over 52% of looked after children at 31 March 2005 were boys, and almost 48% were girls.
- At 31 March 2005, 2.4% of looked after children were less than 1 year old.

¹ Source: Children Looked After in England (including adoptions and care leavers) 2003-04. Department for Education and Skills (England) 2005.

² Source: Children's Social Work Statistics 2003-04. Scottish Executive 2005.

³ Source: Social Services Statistics Wales 2003-04. Local Government Data Unit Wales 2005.

Figure 2.1: Composition of looked after children population by age at 31 March 2005

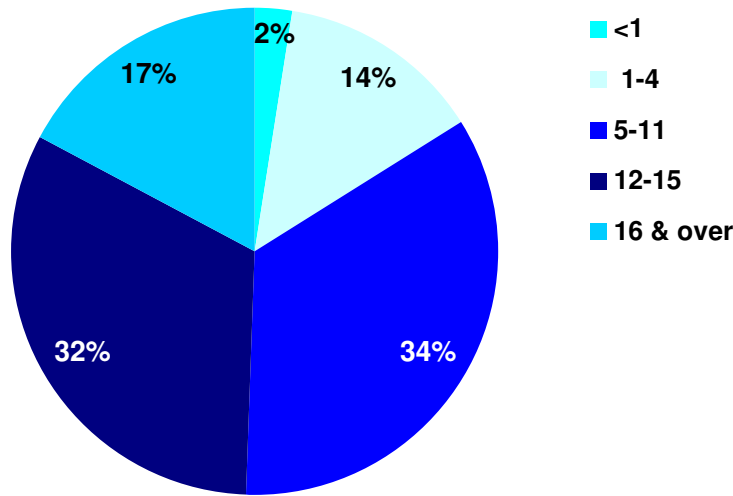


Table 2.2: Composition of looked after children population by age at 31 March (2000–2005)

Age (years)	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<1	55	2.3	51	2.1	69	2.8	60	2.5	75	3.0	61	2.4
1-4	363	15.0	345	14.3	350	14.3	364	14.9	366	14.6	348	13.7
5-11	871	36.0	878	36.4	865	35.3	872	35.7	881	35.1	869	34.3
12-15	727	30.0	710	29.4	740	30.2	738	30.2	775	30.9	818	32.3
16 & over	406	16.8	430	17.8	429	17.5	412	16.8	413	16.5	435	17.2
Total	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0	2,510	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- Since 2000, the number of looked after children increased by 4.5% (109), from 2422 in 2000 to 2531 in 2005. This compares with increases of 5%, 3% and 19% in England⁽¹⁾, Scotland⁽²⁾ and Wales⁽³⁾ respectively.
- Over the five years from 2000 to 2005 there has been little change in the age profile of looked after children.

¹ Source: Children Looked After in England (including adoptions and care leavers) 2003-04. Department for Education and Skills (England) 2005.

² Source: Children's Social Work Statistics 2003-04. Scottish Executive 2005.

³ Source: Social Services Statistics Wales 2003-04. Local Government Data Unit Wales 2005.

Legal Status of Looked After Children

Table 2.3: Composition of looked after children population by gender and legal status at 31 March 2005

Legal Status	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Emergency Protection Order (Articles 63 & 64)	8	0.6	7	0.6	15	0.6
Accommodated under Article 21	443	33.1	351	29.4	794	31.4
Interim Care Order	167	12.5	158	13.2	325	12.8
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	523	39.1	490	41.0	1,013	40.0
Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)	183	13.7	174	14.6	357	14.1
Freed Adoption and Looked After by Board / Trust	5	0.4	6	0.5	11	0.4
Other	8	0.6	8	0.7	16	0.6
Total	1,337	100.0	1,194	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, 40% (1013) of looked after children were subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)', with a further 14% subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)'. Over 30% of children in care were 'Accommodated under Article 21', with less than 1% in care under an 'Emergency Protection Order'.
- A higher proportion of boys (33.1%) than girls (29.4%) were 'Accommodated under Article 21'.
- A slightly higher proportion of girls (41.0%) than boys (39.1%) were subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)'.

Figure 2.2: Legal status of looked after children population at 31 March 2005

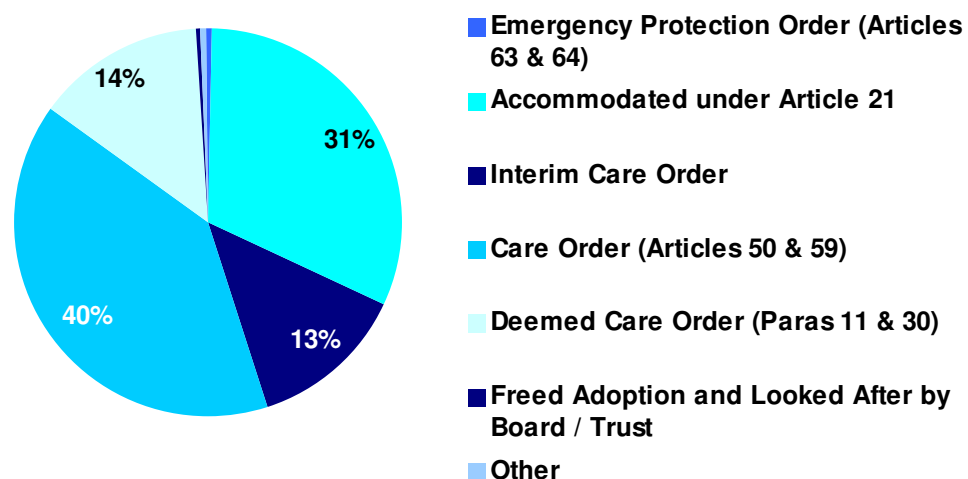


Table 2.4: Legal status of looked after children population at 31 March (2000–2005)

Legal Status	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Emergency Protection Order (Articles 63 & 64)	25	1.0	31	1.3	24	1.0	20	0.8	32	1.3	15	0.6
Accommodated under Article 21	696	28.7	733	30.4	756	30.8	680	27.8	743	29.6	794	31.4
Interim Care Order	179	7.4	187	7.7	262	10.7	327	13.4	329	13.1	325	12.8
Care Order (Articles 50 & 59)	412	17.0	543	22.5	652	26.6	799	32.7	918	36.6	1,013	40.0
Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)	1,078	44.5	895	37.1	720	29.4	569	23.3	441	17.6	357	14.1
Freed for Adoption and Looked After by Board/Trust	10	0.4	6	0.2	20	0.8	40	1.6	23	0.9	11	0.4
Other	22	0.9	19	0.8	19	0.8	11	0.4	24	1.0	16	0.6
Total	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0	2,510	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- Over the 5 years from 2000 to 2005, the proportion of looked after children subject to 'Care Orders (Articles 50 & 59)' increased from 17.0% (412) in 2000 to 40.0% (1013) in 2005.
- In contrast, the proportion of looked after children subject to 'Deemed Care Order (Paras 11 & 30)' decreased from 44.5% to 14.1% (357) over the same period.
- The proportion of looked after children subject to an 'Interim Care Order' almost doubled from 7.4% (179) to 12.8% (325) in 2005.
- Children taken into care under an 'Emergency Protection Order (Articles 63 & 64)' has fallen from 1.0% to 0.6% of the looked after children population.

Placement of Looked After Children

Children taken into care can be placed in:

- Residential care;
- Foster care;
- With family; or
- Other accommodation ⁽¹⁾.

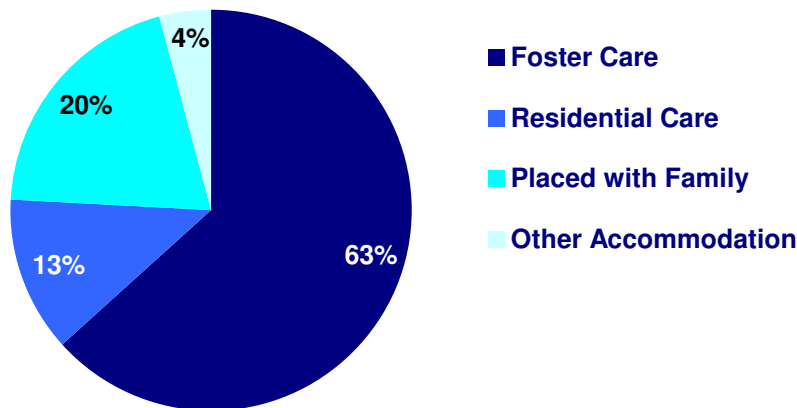
Table 2.5: Placement of looked after children at 31 March (2000 – 2005) ⁽²⁾

Placement Type	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	285	11.8	273	11.3	299	12.2	296	12.1	325	12.9	317	12.5
Foster Care	1,611	66.5	1,528	63.3	1,513	61.7	1,577	64.5	1,529	60.9	1,606	63.4
Placed with Family	472	19.5	532	22.0	534	21.8	494	20.2	561	22.4	500	19.8
Other Accommodation ⁽¹⁾	54	2.2	81	3.4	107	4.4	79	3.2	95	3.8	108	4.3
Total	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0	2,510	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- Just over 63% (1606) of looked after children were in foster care at 31 March 2005, with 19.8% (500) placed with family, 12.5% (317) in residential accommodation, and 4.3% (108) in other types of accommodation.
- Across the UK regions the majority of children in care are placed in foster care. The Northern Ireland proportion of 63% is lower than equivalent figures of 68% in England ⁽³⁾ and 71% in Wales ⁽⁴⁾.

Figure 2.3: Placement of looked after children at 31 March 2005 ⁽²⁾



¹ Other accommodation can include special schools, hospitals, bed sits, independent living etc.

² At least one Trust inappropriately classified some children placed in foster care as placed with family in the LA2 return provided to Community Information Branch. Care needs to be exercised when using these figures.

³ Source: Children Looked After in England (including adoptions and care leavers) 2003-04. Department for Education and Skills (England) 2005.

⁴ Source: Social Services Statistics Wales 2003-04. Local Government Data Unit Wales 2005.

Length of Time in Care

Table 2.6: Length of time in care by age at 31 March 2005

Time in care	Age (years)											
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 2 weeks	5	8.2	2	0.6	4	0.5	7	0.9	1	0.2	19	0.8
2 weeks < 3 mths	17	27.9	28	8.1	43	4.9	50	6.1	12	2.8	150	5.9
3 mths < 6 mths	17	27.9	18	5.2	41	4.7	35	4.3	10	2.3	121	4.8
6 mths < 1 yr	22	36.1	54	15.6	80	9.2	59	7.2	14	3.2	229	9.0
1 yr < 2 yrs	n/a	n/a	131	37.8	138	15.9	86	10.5	46	10.6	401	15.8
2yrs < 3 yrs	n/a	n/a	65	18.7	122	14.0	87	10.6	42	9.6	316	12.5
3yrs or more	n/a	n/a	49	14.1	441	50.7	494	60.4	311	71.3	1,295	51.2
Total	61	100.0	347	100.0	869	100.0	818	100.0	436	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, over half (51.2%) looked after children had been in care for 3 years or more, with almost 80% in care for 1 year or longer.
- Just over 20% of the looked after children had been in care for less than 1 year.
- Older children (16 years & over) were less likely than younger children to spend shorter periods of time (less than 6 months) in care.
- Over one third (36.1%) of looked after children under 1 year old had been in care for less than 3 months.

Figure 2.4: Length of time in care at 31 March 2005

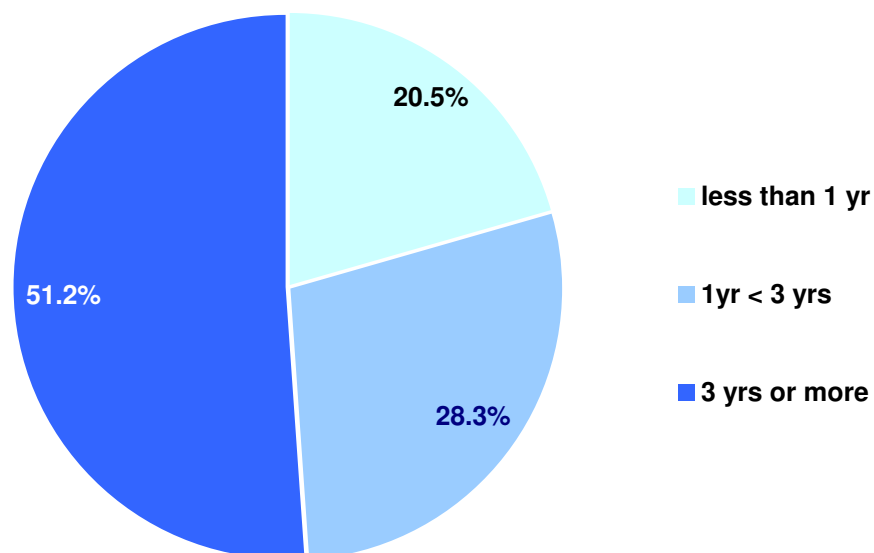


Table 2.7: Length of time in care at 31 March (2000–2005)

Length of time in care	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 2 weeks	31	1.3	37	1.5	33	1.3	30	1.2	21	0.8	19	0.8
2 weeks < 3 mths	120	5.0	104	4.3	121	4.9	118	4.8	120	4.8	150	5.9
3 mths < 6 mths	93	3.8	122	5.1	115	4.7	139	5.7	121	4.8	121	4.8
6 mths < 1 yr	268	11.1	205	8.5	294	12.0	243	9.9	279	11.1	229	9.0
1 yr < 2 yrs	341	14.1	365	15.1	324	13.2	406	16.6	391	15.6	401	15.8
2yrs < 3 yrs	208	8.6	284	11.8	293	11.9	252	10.3	351	14.0	316	12.5
3yrs or more	1,361	56.2	1,297	53.7	1,273	51.9	1,258	51.4	1,227	48.9	1,295	51.2
Total	2,422	100.0	2,414	100.0	2,453	100.0	2,446	100.0	2,510	100.0	2,531	100.0

Main Points

- Between 2000 and 2005, the proportion of children in care for 3 years or more decreased from 56.2% (1361) in 2000 to 51.2% (1295) in 2005.
- During this period, the proportion of placements that lasted less than 6 months remained relatively constant at approximately 10%.
- The proportion of children in care between 1 to 3 years increased from 22.7% in 2000 to 28.3% in 2005.

Respite Care

Respite care relates to a series of short-term, pre-planned or ad-hoc placements when a child moves temporarily from his/her carer (i.e. foster care, residential care or with family etc), to allow the child and the carer to spend some time away from each other. The respite move could involve a change in placement type (i.e. foster care to residential care) or the child may remain in the same placement type (i.e. foster care to foster care). Children may also move from a family placement to other placement types. The use of respite care varies across Trusts. Some Trusts make considerable use of short-term respite care, aimed at maintaining a child in a family placement. Other Trusts use respite care on a more limited basis.

Table 2.8: Respite care by placement type and age during year ended 31 March 2005

Placement Type	Age (years)										Total	
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16+			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	0	0.0	4	3.1	65	14.8	72	24.4	33	36.3	174	17.7
Foster Care	29	100.0	102	78.5	280	63.9	163	55.3	21	23.1	595	60.5
Placed with Family	0	0.0	22	16.9	72	16.4	45	15.3	19	20.9	158	16.1
Other ⁽¹⁾ Accommodation	0	0.0	2	1.5	21	4.8	15	5.1	18	19.8	56	5.7
Total	29	100.0	130	100.0	438	100.0	295	100.0	91	100.0	983	100.0

Main Points

- During 2004/05, 983 children received respite care placements.
- Of the 983 children who received respite care, 60.5% (595) were foster care placements, 17.7% (174) were residential care placements, 16.1% (158) were placed with family, and 5.7% (56) were placed in 'Other Accommodation'.
- Children under 5 years old were more likely than older children to receive a foster care placement.
- Almost 75% (733) of children who received respite care in 2004/05 were aged 5-15 years old, with 9% 16 or older, and almost 3% under 1 year old.

¹ Other accommodation can include special schools, hospitals, bed sits, independent living etc.

Figure 2.5: Children who received respite care services by placement type during year ending 31 March 2005

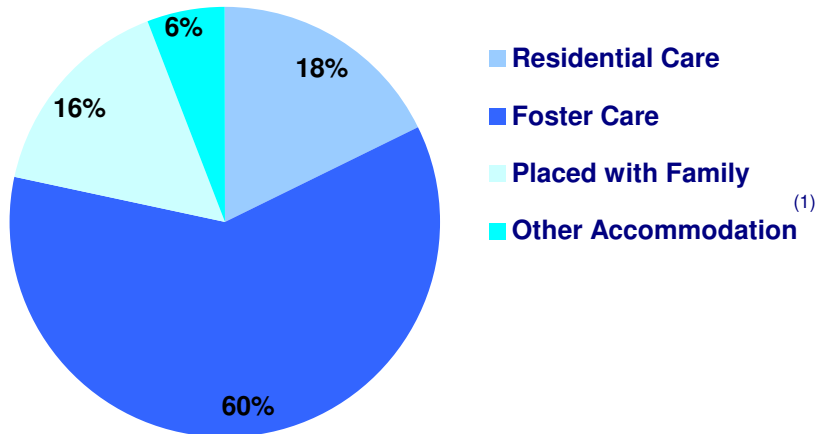


Table 2.9: Children who received respite care services by placement type for years ending 31 March (2000-2005)

Placement Type	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential Care	148	21.9	148	18.4	175	20.6	162	19.1	179	20.9	174	17.7
Foster Care	408	60.3	490	61.0	531	62.4	523	61.6	525	61.2	595	60.5
Placed with Family	113	16.7	153	19.1	130	15.3	130	15.3	113	13.2	158	16.1
Other Accommodation	8	1.2	12	1.5	15	1.8	34	4.0	41	4.8	56	5.7
Total	677	100.0	803	100.0	851	100.0	849	100.0	858	100.0	983	100.0

Main Points

- Since 1999/00, the number of children accommodated for respite care increased by 45.2% (306), from 677 to 983 in 2004/05.
- During this period, the proportion of children accommodated for respite care in residential accommodation decreased from 21.9% in 1999/00 to 17.7% in 2004/05.
- The proportion of children placed in 'Other Accommodation' for respite care increased from 1.2% to 5.7% in 2004/05

¹ Other accommodation can include special schools, hospitals, bed sits, independent living etc.

Discharges from Care

Table 2.10: Discharges from care by length of time in care and age during year ended 31 March 2005¹

Time in care	Age (years)										Total	
	< 1		1-4		5-11		12-15		16 & over			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 2 weeks	14	40.0	36	24.7	73	32.9	151	60.2	24	10.0	298	33.3
2 weeks < 3 mths	7	20.0	10	6.8	28	12.6	28	11.2	10	4.1	83	9.3
3 mths < 6 mths	5	14.3	9	6.2	15	6.8	17	6.8	9	3.7	55	6.1
6 mths < 1 yr	9	25.7	14	9.6	18	8.1	19	7.6	12	5.0	72	8.0
1 yr < 2 yrs	n/a	n/a	36	24.7	29	13.1	14	5.6	18	7.5	97	10.8
2yrs < 3 yrs	n/a	n/a	19	13.0	18	8.1	4	1.6	19	7.9	60	6.7
3yrs or more	n/a	n/a	22	15.1	41	18.5	18	7.2	149	61.8	230	25.7
Total	35	100.0	146	100.0	222	100.0	251	100.0	241	100.0	895	100.0

Main Points

- During 2004/05, there were 895 discharges from care. children who had been in care for less than 2 weeks.
- Just over 43% of discharges from care in 2004/05 related to children who had been in care for 1 year or longer, with 33% relating to children who had been in care for less than 2 weeks.
- Of the 241 discharges from care relating to children aged 16 and over, 62% had been in care for 3 years or more.

¹ As some children were discharged more than once during 2004/05, the information on discharges is not a count of the numbers of children discharged from care during this period

Children's Day Care

Day care facilities for children include childminders, playgroups, day nurseries and out of school clubs. These facilities are available mainly through independent providers. The majority of day care services are provided through the independent sector – either through voluntary organisations, private companies or individuals operating a business, community groups as co-operative enterprise or any of these bodies on a partnership basis. Children may attend day care on a full or part-time basis depending on their needs and those of their parents.

Day Nurseries

Table 3.1: Day nurseries provision for children under 5 at 31 March 2005

Providers	Number of Day Nurseries	Number of Registered Places
Voluntary Agencies	26	803
Private Organisations (including employer)	189	7,642
Other Organisations	30	752
Total	245	9,197

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, there were 245 day nurseries in Northern Ireland, providing 9197 registered places for children under 5 years old.
- Over 8 in 10 (7,642) registered places in day nurseries were provided by the private sector, including employers.

Table 3.2: Day nurseries provision for children under 5 at 31 March (2000–2005)

Service Provider	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places	No. of Day Nurseries	No. of Registered Places
Voluntary Agencies	12	349	13	476	15	528	18	587	21	697	26	803
Private Organisations (including employer)	142	5,048	143	5,440	164	6,138	163	6,633	181	7,084	189	7,642
Other Organisations	7	224	7	258	27	490	16	578	24	643	30	752
Total	161	5,621	163	6,174	206	7,156	197	7,798	226	8,424	245	9,197

Main Points

- Since 2000, the number of day nurseries providing places for children under 5 increased by 52% (84), from 161 in 1999 to 245 in 2005.
- During this period the numbers of registered places increased by 64%, from 5621 to 9197 in 2005.
- Between 2000 and 2005, the relative provision of places by the private sector fell from 90% to 83% respectively, with small proportional increases in provision by voluntary agencies, up from 6% to 9%, and 'Other Organisations', up to 8% from 4%.
- The number of day nurseries provided by private organisations increased steadily from 142 to 189 in 2005, with a corresponding increase of 2594 registered places in day nurseries for children under 5 years old.

Childminders

Childminders can care for both children under 5 years old and children of school age outside normal school hours, or during holidays in domestic premises, usually the childminder's home. Childminders can offer these services all year round for the full adult working day. Parents and childminders usually negotiate the terms and conditions.

Table 3.3: Registered childminders and childminding places available at 31 March 2005

Childminders/Places	No. of Childminders	No. of Childminding Places	Childminding Places for children under 5	
			Number	%
Registered	3,730	18,065	10,174	56.3
Of which:				
Sponsored	211	865	493	57.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, 3730 childminders were registered with local HSS Trusts, providing a total of 18065 childminding places for children under 12 years of age, with an average of just below 5 children per childminder.
- Of the 18065 available childminding places for children under 12, 56.3% (10174) were designated for children less than 5 years old.
- Local HSS Trusts sponsored almost 5% (865) of available childminding places.

Table 3.4: Childminding places available at 31 March (2001–2005)

Places	2001			2002			2003			2004			2005		
	No. of Places	Places for under 5s	% of places for under 5s	No. of Places	Places for under 5s	% of places for under 5s	No. of Places	Places for under 5s	% of places for under 5s	No. of Places	Places for under 5s	% of places for under 5s	No. of Places	Places for under 5s	% of places for under 5s
Registered	20,185	10,544	52.2	20,464	11,484	56.1	21,164	12,015	56.8	19,714	11,009	55.8	18,065	10,174	56.3
Of which:															
Sponsored	690	411	59.6	588	366	62.2	689	405	58.8	719	433	60.2	865	493	57.0

Main Points

- Between 2001 and 2005, the number of child minding places for children under 12 decreased by 10.5% (2121), from 20185 in 2001 to 18064 in 2005.
- This compared with a decrease of 370 (3.5%) in the numbers of childminding places available for children under 5 years old.
- From 2001 to 2005, the proportion of available child minding places for children under 12 sponsored by local HSS Trusts increased from 3.4% (690) to 4.8% (865) respectively, an increase of 25% (175) in the actual number of places sponsored by HSS Trusts.

Playgroups

Playgroups provide session care for children aged between 3 and 5 years of age, though exceptionally some providers may take slightly younger children. Playgroups aim to provide learning experiences to young children through structured play opportunities in groups, and with the involvement of the parents in all aspects of the operation of the group.

Most playgroups are run on a self-help basis by groups of parents with one or two paid staff. Some playgroups may be run by Trusts or voluntary organisations e.g. NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children). Some are called opportunity groups and cater specifically for children with special needs. Playgroup sessions usually last no longer than 4 hours.

Table 3.5: Registered playgroups and places available at 31 March 2005

Playgroup Providers	Number of Playgroups	Number of Places
HSS Trusts	4	94
Voluntary Agencies	18	421
Community / Local Committees	504	11,910
Private Provision	58	1345
Total	584	13,770

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, 584 playgroups provided 13770 places, giving an average of 23 places per playgroup.
- Almost 9 in 10 places available in playgroups were provided through community and/or local committees, with 11.2% (1,590) provided by the private sector, 2.7% (391) through voluntary agencies, and 0.7% (106) provided by local HSS Trusts.

Table 3.6: Registered playgroups and places available at 31 March (2000–2005)

Playgroup Providers	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places	No. of Play groups	Places
HSS Trusts	6	145	6	145	6	145	5	130	4	106	4	94
Voluntary Agencies	40	1,197	47	1,379	35	988	14	363	18	391	18	421
Community / Local Committees	542	13,233	504	12,006	507	12,156	512	12,555	496	12,142	504	11,910
Private Provision	97	2,151	96	2,068	91	1,743	76	1,600	90	1,590	58	1345
Total	685	16,726	653	15,598	639	15,032	607	14,648	608	14,229	584	13,770

Main Points

- Between 2000 and 2005, the number of registered playgroups decreased by almost 15%, from 685 in 2000 to 584 in 2005.
- Provision of playgroups has fallen in each sector, in voluntary agencies from 40 to 18 playgroups, a fall of 55%, with a corresponding drop of 65% in the number of places provided by voluntary agencies.
- The number of playgroups provided privately decreased by 40%, from 97 in 2000 to 58 in 2005, together with a fall of 37.4% in the number of places available for children.
- In the largest sector provider (Community/Local Committees) the number of playgroups has dropped by 38 (7%) from 542 to 504, with a corresponding drop of 8.2% (1091) in the numbers of places available for children.

Out of School Clubs

Out of school clubs provide care for school aged children, usually lasting from the end of the normal school day until collected by the parent/carer. Some clubs also care for children before school begins. Out of school clubs are not open access. They may be run by HSS Trusts, voluntary organisations or community groups/local committees, or privately.

Table 3.7: Out of school clubs for children aged 4-11 at 31 March 2005

Providers	Clubs	Places available	Average attendances per operating week
HSS Trusts	15	353	1,141
District Councils	4	96	89
Voluntary Organisations	107	2,477	2,240
Other Organisations	133	3,362	1,545
Total	259	6,288	5,015

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, there were 259 out of school clubs providing 6288 places for children aged 4-11 years old, with an average weekly attendance of 5015 per operating week.
- Over 9 in 10 (240) out of school clubs were provided by voluntary or other organisations, the remainder by HSS Trusts or District Councils.
- Voluntary out of school clubs had the highest average weekly attendance with 2240 attendances per operating week.

Table 3.8: Out of school clubs for children aged 4-11 at 31 March (2000–2005)

Providers	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Clubs	Places	Clubs	Places	Clubs	Places	Clubs	Places	Clubs	Places	Clubs	Places
HSS Trusts	21	432	8	182	10	204	14	332	13	320	15	353
District Councils	15	484	6	130	7	130	3	72	4	96	4	96
Voluntary Organisations	50	996	82	1,651	86	1,862	90	1,986	116	2,584	107	2,477
Other Organisations	103	2,231	83	1,767	102	2,322	105	2,383	117	2,572	133	3,362
Total	189	4,143	179	3,730	205	4,518	212	4,773	250	5,572	259	6,288

Main Points

- From 2000 to 2005, the numbers of out of school clubs increased by 37%, from 189 to 259 respectively.
- In 2005, there were 51.8% more places in out of school clubs (6288) than in 2000 (4143).
- Out of school club provision by District Councils fell from 15 to 4 clubs in 2005, with a corresponding fall of 388 in the numbers of places available.
- In contrast, the number of clubs provided by the voluntary sector more than doubled from 50 to 107, with the numbers of places increasing by 1481 to 2477 in 2005.

Children's Residential Homes

Children's residential homes provide care and accommodation for children in accordance with Part IX of the Children Order (Northern Ireland) 1995.

At 31 March 2005, there were 52 residential homes for children; 42 statutory, 9 voluntary and 1 private children's home.

Table 4.1: Children's statutory residential homes at 31 March 2005

Board	Statutory Residential Homes	Places	Places per 10,000-pop. aged under 18	Admissions per 10,000-pop. aged under 18 ⁽¹⁾	Discharges per 10,000-pop. aged under 18 ⁽²⁾
Eastern	17	126	7.5	7.1	6.3
Northern	7	60	5.4	5.4	4.3
Southern	7	45	5.0	6.6	5.0
Western	11	73	8.8	3.4	3.6
Northern Ireland	42	304	6.7	5.9	5.0

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, there were 42 children's statutory residential homes in Northern Ireland, providing 304 places, with an average of 7.2 places per home.
- The Eastern Board (17) had more than twice the number of children's homes as the Northern and Southern Boards combined (14).
- The Western Board (8.8) had the highest number of places per 10,000-population aged under 18, and the Southern Board had the lowest (5.0).
- The rate of admissions to children's statutory residential homes per 10,000 population under 18 was highest in the Eastern (7.1), and lowest in the Western Board (3.4)

Figure 4.1: Places in children's statutory residential homes by board at 31 March 2005

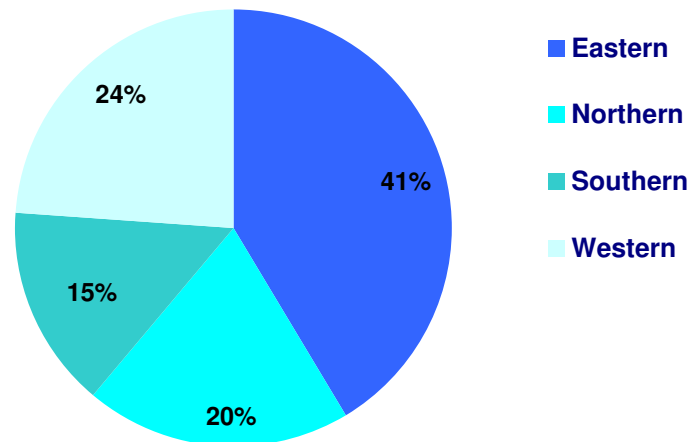


Table 4.2: Children's voluntary residential homes at 31 March 2005

Board	Homes	Places	Places per 10,000-pop. aged under 18	Admissions per 10,000-pop. aged under 18 ⁽¹⁾	Discharges per 10,000-pop. aged under 18 ⁽²⁾
Eastern	4	54	3.2	1.7	1.6
Northern	3	19	1.7	1.8	2.2
Southern	2	9	1.0	0.0	0.0
Western	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Northern Ireland	9	82	1.8	1.1	1.1

Main Points

- At 31 March 2005, there were 9 voluntary children's homes providing 82 places, with an average of 1.9 places per 10,000-population aged under 18.
- There were no voluntary children's homes in the Western Board.
- Of the 82 places in voluntary children's homes, 54 (66%) were provided by 4 homes in the Eastern Board.

Secure Accommodation

Secure accommodation is provided for the purpose of 'restricting liberty'. In 2004/05, there was one secure unit in Northern Ireland, providing accommodation for up to a maximum of 15 young people at any one time.

The secure accommodation unit for children is located within the Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust, and admissions into this unit are available on a regional basis.

Table 5.1: Admissions into secure accommodation by age and gender (2004/05)

Gender	Age at time of admission						All admissions	
	12-13		14-15		16+			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boys	10	35.7	16	57.1	2	7.1	28	57.1
Girls	7	33.3	11	52.4	3	14.3	21	42.9
Total	17	34.7	27	55.1	5	10.2	49	100.0

Main Points

- During 2004/05, there were 49 admissions into secure accommodation.
- Of the 49 admissions in 2004/05, 28 (57%) were male and 21 were female (43%).
- All of the children admitted into secure accommodation during 2004/05 were 12 years of age or older.
- Just over 55% of the admissions into care during 2004/05 related to children aged between 14-15 years old, with 10% aged 16 years or older.

Figure 5.1: Admissions into secure accommodation by age and gender (2004/05)

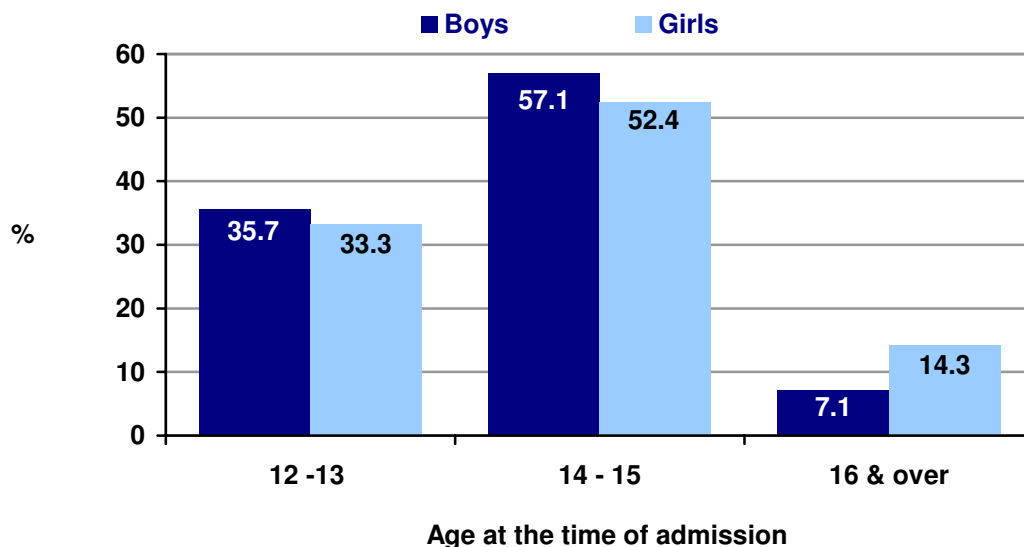


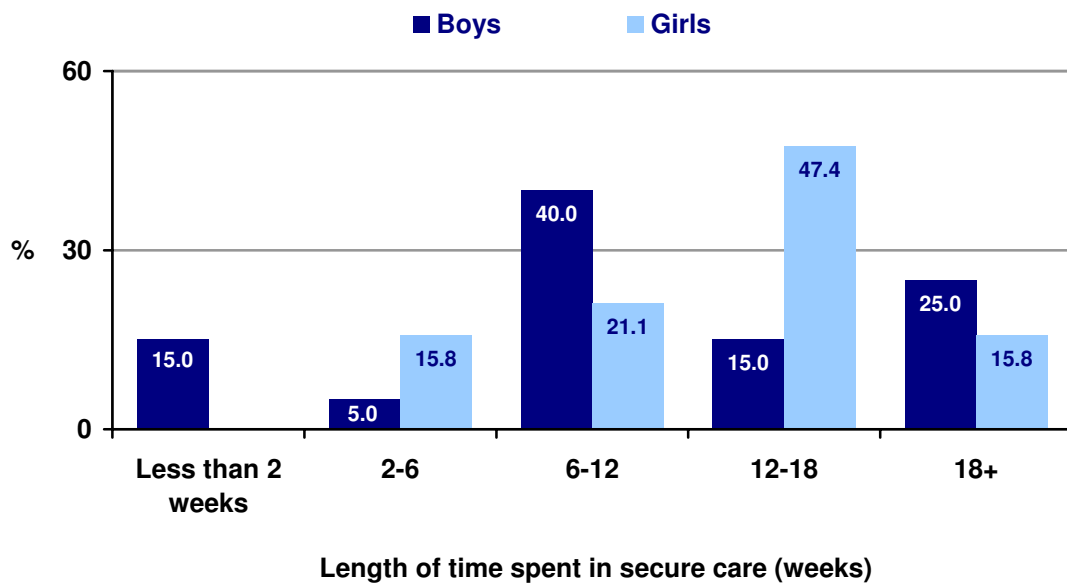
Table 5.2: Discharges from secure accommodation by gender and duration in care (2004/05 ⁽¹⁾)

Gender	Weeks										All Discharges	
	Less than 2		2-6		6-12		12-18		18+		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Boys	3	15.0	1	5.0	8	40.0	3	15.0	5	25.0	20	51.3
Girls	0	0.0	3	15.8	4	21.1	9	47.4	3	15.8	19	48.7
Total	3	7.7	4	10.3	12	30.8	12	30.8	8	20.5	39	100.0

Main Points

- During 2004/05, there were 39 discharges from secure accommodation, of which 20 (51%) were male and 19 (49%) were female.
- Of the 39 discharges, 8 (20%) related to children who had been in secure accommodation for 18 weeks or longer, compared with 3 discharges where children had been in secure accommodation for less than 2 weeks.

Table 5.2: Discharges from secure accommodation by gender and duration (2004/05) ⁽¹⁾



¹ Excludes children admitted in 2004/05 who were still in care at 31st March 2005.

Further Information

Detailed children order tables as at 31 March for both 2004 and 2005 are available to download at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats&research/childrens_order.asp .

For **further details** about the statistics contained in this bulletin, please contact:

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