



Department  
for Education

# **Key stage 2 attainment for children recorded as adopted from care**

**July 2014**

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## Introduction

For the first time in January 2014, the department collected data from schools on children adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005 as well as those who left care under a special guardianship order or residence order. This document provides some initial analysis on the numbers of children reported and the key stage 2 attainment of these children.

**The information was collected via the January 2014 School Census. However, information was only returned if those with parental responsibility (adoptive parents, special guardians and carers of former looked after children on residence orders) decided to self-declare their child's status to schools. Comparisons with other adoptions data<sup>1</sup>, suggests that less than 60% of all adopted children aged 4-15 years were recorded, so the numbers in this report are an undercount of the true numbers of children adopted from care.**

Throughout this report, where reference has been made to children who have been 'adopted from care', this means children who have been declared on the 2014 school census as adopted, have a special guardianship order (SGO) or who have a residence order (RO).

'Non-adopted' children refers to all those who have not been declared on the 2014 school census as adopted, had a special guardianship order (SGO) or a residence order (RO), which is the default value.

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<sup>1</sup> Data collected from Local Authorities through the annual children looked after data collection (SSDA903) includes information on the numbers of children adopted from care each year. Information is published at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption>.

## Key points

**Over 24,000 pupils recorded as adopted from care.**

24,160 pupils were recorded as adopted from care, with 70.8% actually adopted from care, 19.8% subject to a special guardianship order and 9.5% subject to a residence order.

**More primary pupils recorded as adopted from care than secondary pupils.**

78.8% of all adopted from care pupils are in primary year groups. This is due to only collecting data on adopted from care and special guardianship orders (SGO) since 30 December 2005 and residence orders (RO) since 14 October 1991. 1,050 children in year 7 in 2014 who were recorded as adopted were matched to key stage 2 attainment data available for 2013.

**Children adopted from care have lower achievement than non-adopted children but have higher achievement than looked after children**

In 2013, for key stage 2, non-adopted children have higher achievement than children who are adopted, have SGO and RO. The attainment gaps ranged from 16 to 26 percentage points difference, depending on subject. Children who have been adopted from care achieve better than the key stage 2 looked after children cohort.

## Notes

1. Data presented in this report shows comparisons in key stage 2 attainment rates between children who have been adopted from care (as declared by parents on the School Census), non-adopted children and looked after children. For the purpose of the analysis in this report, and consistent with published data on [outcomes for looked after children](#), a looked after child is considered to be a child who has been looked after continuously for at least 12 months to the 31 March.
2. Pupil numbers are taken from the School Census. They include maintained and direct grant nursery schools, state-funded primary, secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools and pupil referral units (including alternative provision academies and free schools). For further information please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014> .
3. For key stage 2 attainment, a time series of data for the last 5 years has been given. Please note that the adopted from care indicator was only collected for the first time on the 2014 school census and this indicator has been matched to earlier years of attainment data. It is therefore possible that a child may not have been 'adopted from care' at the time of taking the assessments.
4. It is also important to note that with the earlier years of attainment data, there is likely to be a higher proportion of children who have been adopted later on in childhood. This is because of the school census rules for declaring an adopted child, which state that only children adopted on/after 30 December 2005 should be declared as adopted. This means, for example, that children who have been declared as adopted and who sat key stage 2 assessments (assessments taken usually by age 11) in 2009 must have been aged at least 7 years old at the time of adoption.
5. All pupil numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10 and all percentages are shown to 1 decimal place for pupil number figures, and the nearest whole number for attainment figures. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and totals due to rounding.

# Main Findings

## Numbers of pupils recorded as adopted from care

Table 1 below shows the number of pupils declared as adopted from care, split into adopted from care, subject to a special guardianship order and subject to a residence order. The number not adopted from care is given for comparison.

**Table 1 – Number of pupils recorded as adopted from care<sup>1</sup>**

	Number of pupils	Percentage of pupils	Percentage of total Adopted from Care
Not adopted from care	7,727,020	99.7	
All adopted from care	24,160	0.3	
<i>Adopted from care</i>	17,090		70.8
<i>Subject to a Special Guardianship order</i>	4,780		19.8
<i>Subject to a Residence order</i>	2,280		9.5
Total pupils	7,751,170		

Source: School Census, January 2014

1. Pupil numbers are taken from the School Census. They include maintained and direct grant nursery schools, state-funded primary, secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools and pupil referral units (including alternative provision academies and free schools). For further information please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014>.

0.3% of all pupils have been recorded as adopted from care, subject to a special guardianship order, or subject to a residence order, with adopted from care constituting 70.8% of these. However, it's likely that this is an undercount of the true number of adopted pupils as comparisons with other data sources suggest that less than 60% of all adopted children aged 4-15 were recorded.

## National Curriculum Year Group

Table 2 below shows the number of pupils declared as adopted from care in each year group, adopted from care pupils as a percentage of each year group, and adopted from care pupils in each year group as a percentage of all adopted from care pupils (all year groups).

**Table 2 – number of pupils adopted from care, by year group<sup>1,2</sup>**

National curriculum year group	Number of adopted from care pupils in each year group	Adopted from care pupils as a percentage of all pupils in each year group	Percentage of adopted from care pupils in each year group
Nursery 1	110	0.2	0.5
Nursery 2	620	0.2	2.6
Reception	2,880	0.5	11.9
Year group 1	3,020	0.5	12.5
Year group 2	2,970	0.5	12.3
Year group 3	2,900	0.5	12.0
Year group 4	2,780	0.5	11.5
Year group 5	2,420	0.4	10.0
Year group 6	2,080	0.4	8.6
Year group 7	1,070	0.2	4.4
Year group 8	980	0.2	4.1
Year group 9	820	0.2	3.4
Year group 10	750	0.1	3.1
Year group 11	620	0.1	2.6
Year group 12	60	0.0	0.3
Year group 13	40	0.0	0.2
Year group 14	10	0.1	0.0
Not followed	20	1.4	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,160</b>		<b>100</b>

Source: School Census, January 2014

1. Pupil numbers are taken from the School Census. They include maintained and direct grant nursery schools, state-funded primary, secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools and pupil referral units (including alternative provision academies and free schools). For further information please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014>.
2. Data for pupils aged 4 and above in year groups Reception to 11 and pupils aged 4 to 15 not following the national curriculum is being used for pupil premium allocations in 2014-15. Therefore, figures in year groups outside of this cohort may be less than expected. In particular, it is worth noting that nursery year groups shown in this analysis do not contain all pupils in those year groups as some are recorded on the early years census

This table shows that approximately 1 in 200 pupils in year groups R to 5 are declared as adopted from care, which reduces to just over 1 in 1000 for year groups 10 and 11. Almost 80% (78.8%) of all those identified as adopted from care are in years R to 6.

These figures show the effect of the restriction to only collect adoptions from care and special guardianship orders on or after 30 December 2005 and residence orders on or after 14 October 1991. The percentage of all adopted pupils reduces sharply for those in year groups 7 and above.

## Attainment of adopted children at key stage 2

Table 3 below shows the numbers of children in the school census who have been matched to 2013 key stage 2 data and, therefore, have been included in the following analysis (numbers in the same cohorts for other years are broadly similar, although do get smaller with earlier years). **Please note the relatively small numbers of some of the groups.**

**Table 3**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Number of children matched to key stage 2 data</b>
All adopted from care	1,050
<i>Adopted</i>	760
<i>SGO</i>	170
<i>RO</i>	130
Non- adopted	519,660
Looked after children	2,290

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10

Source: School Census, January 2014, SSDA903 2013, key stage 2 attainment data 2013

The following table (table 4) shows a time series for the main key stage 2 measures over the last five years, comparing children who were adopted from care (including SGO and RO), non-adopted children and looked after children.

**Table 4****Percentage of children achieving level 4 and above at key stage 2**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>*Adopted from care (incl. SGO and RO)<sup>1</sup></b>					
Number of children	600	570	800	970	1,050
Percentage achieving level 4 in:					
Maths	52	48	54	59	60
Reading	65	59	64	69	70
Writing TA	-	-	-	56	60
Reading, writing TA and maths	-	-	-	46	49
GPS <sup>4</sup>	-	-	-	-	51
<b>Non-adopted<sup>2</sup></b>					
Number of children	539,510	396,080	526,540	520,330	519,660
Percentage achieving level 4 in:					
Maths	79	79	80	84	85
Reading	86	83	84	86	86
Writing TA	-	-	-	81	83
Reading, writing TA and maths	-	-	-	74	75
GPS <sup>4</sup>	-	-	-	-	73
<b>Looked after children<sup>3</sup></b>					
Number of children	2,280	1,730	2,110	2,300	2,290
Percentage achieving level 4 in:					
Maths	47	47	52	56	59
Reading	59	54	59	64	63
Writing TA	-	-	-	51	55
Reading, writing TA and maths	-	-	-	42	45
GPS <sup>4</sup>	-	-	-	-	45

1. All adopted children include those who have been declared on the 2014 School Census as either as 'adopted', 'special guardianship order' or 'residence order'.

2. Non-adopted children are those children who have not been declared as 'Adopted', 'SGO' or 'RO' in the 2014 School Census. Children for whom this information is not available, have not been included in this cohort.

3. Looked after children are those children who were looked after continuously for at least 12 months

4. GPS is the grammar, punctuation and spelling test introduced in 2013.

\*PLEASE NOTE: The adopted from care indicator is only available for the 2014 school census. This 2014 indicator has been matched to attainment data for earlier years. It is possible, especially for earlier years, that the child may not have been adopted from care at the time of taking key stage 2 assessments. Also due to the school census rules with declaring an adopted child (children adopted on/after 30 December 2005), earlier years of attainment data are likely to contain a higher proportion of children who have been adopted later in childhood.

- not available

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10

Across all five years, non-adopted children achieve better at all subjects than 'adopted from care' children. Children who have been 'adopted from care' achieve better than looked after children. These findings may be associated with the proportions of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) as looked-after children have higher rates of SEN than other children (see [outcomes for looked after children](#) for further information).



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