

Statistics of Education: Care Leavers, 2002–2003, England



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CARE LEAVERS, 2002–2003, ENGLAND

Introduction

1 This bulletin presents provisional statistics on the educational qualifications of young people who ceased to be looked after in England, aged 16 or over, during the year ending 31 March 2003, and on the activity & accommodation of former looked after children whose 19th birthday fell during the year.

2 The bulletin presents a summary of the data from two statistical returns, the OC1 – “Educational Qualifications of Care Leavers” and the OC3 – “Care Leavers on their 19th Birthday” for the year ending 31 March 2003. The OC1 return was introduced from 1 April 1999 and this is the fourth year of collection. The OC3 was introduced from 1 April 2001, so this is the second year of collection.

3 Both of these returns were introduced following the publication of the Government’s objectives for children’s social services in September 1999¹. One of these is “to ensure that children looked after gain the maximum life chance benefits from educational opportunities, health care and social care”.

Main Findings

- 44% (or 2,800) of the 6,400 young people leaving care in 2002–03 had at least one GCSE or GNVQ on leaving care, up from 41% last year. This compares to 96% of all Year 11 children.
- 6% (or 370) left care with at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–C.
- 43 local authorities reported that 50% or more of their care leavers had gained at least one GCSE or GNVQ.
- There were 700 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children who left care in 2002–03, and 30% of them had at least one GCSE or GNVQ qualification.
- Councils remained in touch with 81% of former looked after children. 49% (or 2,400) were known to be in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday (21% in education and 28% in training or employment). This compares to 46% in 2001–02.
- 17% of councils reported that the level of employment, training or education amongst young people who were formerly looked after reached the Government’s target of being at least 75% of the level amongst all young people of the same age in their area. 13% of councils reached this target level last year.
- More than a third (37%) of care leavers were known to be living independently on their 19th birthday.

- 50% of former Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children who had left care were in education on their 19th birthday, compared with 21% of all care leavers.

STATISTICAL COMMENTARY

Educational Achievements

4 Educational attainment is felt to be an important Indicator of children’s life chances. Research has shown that, on average, looked after children do less well in school than other children. For this reason the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) includes an indicator (A2) that uses OC1 data and is defined as follows:

The percentage of young people leaving care with at least 1 GCSE at grades A–G, or a GNVQ. (See paragraph 14)*

Coverage of Care Leavers

5 The OC1 collection covers all young people leaving care in England at the age of 16 or over, during the year ending 31 March, apart from those looked after solely under an agreed series of short term placements. It includes some young people who were looked after for a short period, many of whom may have had no previous care history.

6 The OC1 return includes the educational achievements on leaving care of all care leavers aged 16 and over, regardless of when they sat their exams. This means that some of the children will have left care aged 16 but before they were due to take their exams. The OC1 also captures some children whose latest period of care started after the time they would normally sit examinations.

7 A few local councils were unable to supply complete information on the educational achievements of a small number of the care leavers (see Technical Notes).

Duration of care and age on leaving – Table 1

8 During the year ending 31 March 2003, 6,400 young people left the care of local councils in England aged 16 or over. Table 1 shows that 3,600 of these were boys and 2,900 were girls. 3,100 were aged 16–17 when they left, and 3,300 left care aged 18 or over (most of these left on their 18th birthday).

9 The duration of the latest period of care of children aged 16 and over who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2003 varies markedly by age. Table (i) shows that whilst 54% of care leavers aged 16 were looked after for periods of less than 1 year, the comparable figure for those aged 18 years and over was only 5%.

1 The Government’s Objectives for Children’s Social Services, September 1999; Dept of Health

Table (i) Percentages of children ceasing to be looked after during year ending 31 March 2003 by duration of last period of care.

	16 yr	17 yr	18 yr	18yr & over
Less than 6 Months	37	14	3	-
6 months to under 1 yr	17	7	2	-
1 yr to under 2 yrs	22	19	6	-
2 yrs to under 4 yrs	15	29	27	32
4 yrs to under 6 yrs	4	11	15	24
6 yrs to under 8 yrs	2	6	12	12
8 yrs and over	3	13	34	20

10 Table 1 shows that the longer children are in care, the better their educational achievements. It also shows that girls performed consistently better than boys. Of those boys who had been looked after for under 2 years, 25% gained at least one GCSE or GNVQ, compared to 45% of those who had been looked after for 2 or more years. The equivalent figures for girls were 37% and 58% respectively.

Date of sitting exams – Table 2

11 Most school children normally sit their exams during the June of their Year 11 at school. We can define the number of children eligible for Year 11 by their age on 31 August just before the start of the school year. Thus if a child was 15 years old on 31 August 2002 (with a date of birth between 1/9/86 and 31/8/87 inclusive) the child will have normally been eligible for Year 11 in the 2002/2003 school year. This means that some care leavers will have sat their exams as much as two years (or more) prior to leaving care, whilst others may have left care within weeks of taking exams.

12 Table (ii) shows that of all care leavers during the year ending 31 March 2003, 45% would, under normal circumstances, have sat their exams in the summer of 2001, whilst a further 24% would have sat in 2000. However, it can also be seen that 5% of care leavers in 2002–03 are not actually due to sit their exams until June 2003 (i.e. during the data year ending March 2004).

13 The projection of the school year in which care leavers should have sat their exams is based solely on the dates of birth. It cannot take into account the fact that some young people for various reasons may sit

Table (ii) Number of children ceasing to be looked after during year ending 31 March 2003 by date of birth.

Date of birth	Date due to sit exams	Number	Percentage
Aug 83 or earlier	June 99 or earlier	-	-
Sept 83–Aug 84	June 00	1,500	24
Sept 84–Aug 85	June 01	2,900	45
Sept 85–Aug 86	June 02	1,700	26
Sept 86–Aug 87	June 03	300	5

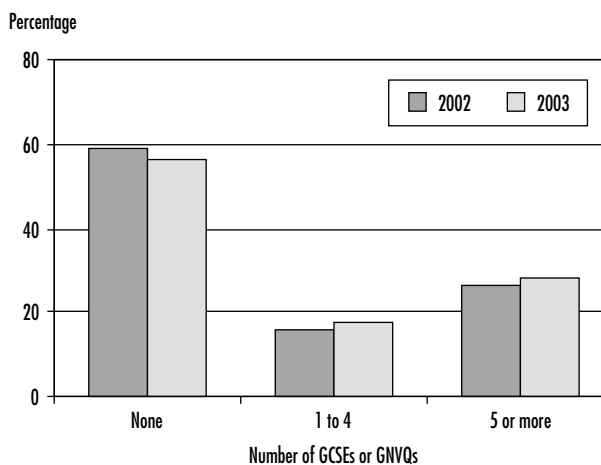
exams later than most of their age group, or indeed that some more able children may sit some exams early.

Qualifications achieved

14 Table 2 shows that 2,800 young people left care having gained at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ², representing 44% of care leavers (PAF indicator A2). 28% of care leavers had at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–G on leaving care, and 6% had at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–C. See chart 1.

CHART 1:

Percentage of care leavers with given number of GCSEs at grades A*–G or GNVQs, years ending 31 March 2002 and 2003



Comparison of boys and girls at each level of qualification – Tables 3A and 3B

15 Table 3A shows that girls performed better than boys at each level of qualification. 50% of girls had at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ on leaving care, compared to 38% of boys. At the higher grades, 8% of girls had at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–C, compared to 4% of boys.

16 If the estimated 320 children who left care before having the opportunity to sit their exams are excluded, then the proportion of care leavers who achieved at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ rises to 47% (41% of boys and 54% of girls). This is shown in Table 3B.

Comparison over the four years – Table 4

17 Table (iii) shows that the proportion of care leavers with at least one GCSE or GNVQ on leaving care has increased steadily over the four years since the OC1 was introduced, from 31% in 1999–00 to 44% in 2002–03.

Table (iii) Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after during the years ending 31 March 2000 to 2003, by qualifications gained

	Year ending 31 March			
	2000	2001	2002	2003
At least 1 GCSE/GNVQ	31	37	41	44
5 GCSE A*–C	4	5	5	6
No qualifications	66	59	55	54

The proportion with five or more GCSEs at grades A*–C has also increased, though more gradually.

18 In 2002–03, 56% of care leavers aged 16 or over had no GCSEs or GNVQs, and 54% had no qualifications at all. This compares to 69% and 66% in 1999–2000. Table 4 shows in more detail the numbers and percentages of care leavers with each level of qualification for the years ending 2000 to 2003.

Educational achievements of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children – Table 5

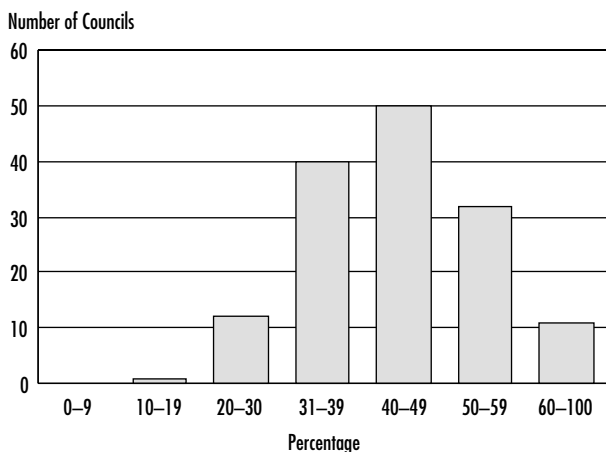
19 This is the first year that data on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) were collected on the OC1 return. Local councils were asked to record whether each child was a UASC when they left care, including former UASCs who had been granted Refugee status or Exceptional Leave to Remain. Table 5 shows that 700 of the care leavers covered by the OC1 were UASCs. 30% of them achieved at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ, compared to 44% of all care leavers. UASCs were more likely to have GNVQs than other care leavers, with 8% having at least one, compared to 4% of all care leavers.

Comparison between Local Councils

20 For the year ending 31 March 2003, 43 local councils reported that 50% or more of care leavers achieved at least one GCSE or GNVQ (PAF indicator A2), compared with 35 councils for the previous year. In 2003, three local councils had fewer than five care leavers, and these councils have been excluded from chart 2.

CHART 2:

Percentage of children leaving care with at least 1 GCSE at grade A* to G or GNVQ, year ending 31 March 2003



Comparison of the educational achievements of care leavers with all children

21 The results for care leavers can be compared with the figures for all Year 11 children in state and independent schools in England in the 2001/2002 school

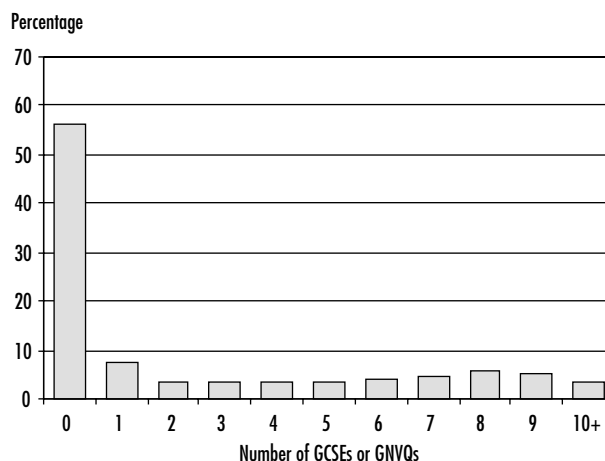
year³. 95% of these children obtained at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ (94% of boys and 96% of girls). This compares to 44% of care leavers (38% of boys and 50% of girls). 89% of Year 11 children gained at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–G³, compared to 28% of care leavers.

22 These comparisons should, however, be made with caution: firstly, the looked after population includes some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in our society; and secondly young people covered by the OC1 collection may be 16, 17 or 18 years old, whereas the data for all children covers only those aged 15 at the start of the 2001/2002 academic year.

23 Although two quite different cohorts of children are being compared, analyses on the number of passes at GCSE or GNVQ level achieved by each child does reveal striking differences. As can be seen in chart 3, more than half of care leavers (56%) failed to obtain any GCSE or GNVQ qualifications.

CHART 3:

Percentage of care leavers with given number of GCSEs at grades A*–G or GNVQs, year ending 31 March 2003



24 Chart 4 illustrates the equivalent distribution for all Year 11 children in the 2001/2002 school year, and reveals a peak at 10 passes.

25 In the 2001/2002 school year, 52% of all Year 11 children attained 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*–C³. Only 6% of care leavers gained this level of qualification.

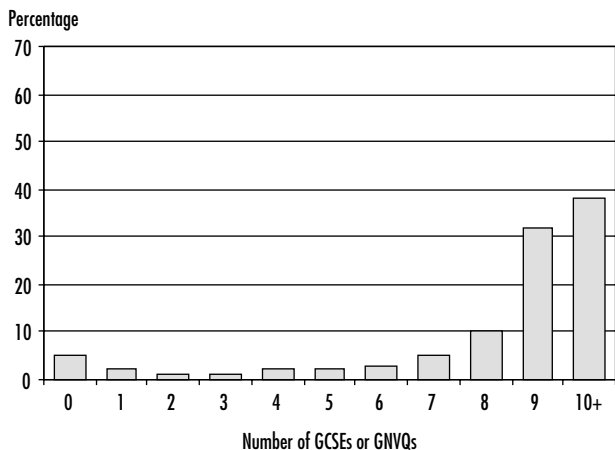
Young people leaving care with no GCSEs or GNVQs – Table 6

26 Table 6 gives more information about these care leavers. 180 were recorded as having obtained qualifications other than GCSEs and GNVQs. For those with no qualifications, councils were able to record one of three reasons. 10% were due to take examinations later in the school year after leaving care. 6% had taken at least one examination but obtained no qualifications.

³ The figures for all children are not strictly comparable as they include GCSE equivalents. The figures are from the DfES publication: 'National Curriculum Assessments for KS3 (revised) GCSE/GNVQ Examination Results (provisional) and associated Value Added measures for young people in England, 2001/02'.

CHART 4:

Percentage of all children with given number of GCSEs at grades A*-G or GNVQs in the 2001/2002 school year.



A further 16% were said to have a health condition or disability that prevented them from taking examinations. For the remaining 71% no reason was given.

Care leavers on 19th Birthday

27 The OC3 collection, for which this is the first year of collection, covers all young people who

- a) were looked after on 1 April 2000, and
- b) whose date of birth fell between 1 April 1983 and 31 March 1984.

The information collected relates to their accommodation and activity on their 19th birthday, which as a direct consequence of the above definition will fall within the year ending 31 March 2003.

28 It will be noted that the above definition does not take into account the length of time a young person was in care; and also specifically excludes any children who were not being looked after on the key date of 1 April 2000. In these respects, the cohort of children captured by the OC3 will differ from the definition of eligible children under the Care Leavers Act.

29 Research shows that care leavers experience high levels of unemployment and are at risk of social exclusion. Based on that research, the Government has set a public Service Agreement target to improve the life chances of children. The part of the target that relates to the OC3 collection is as follows:

Improve the level of education, training and employment outcomes for care leavers aged 19, so that levels for this group are at least 75% of those achieved by all young people in the same area⁴ by 2004 (See paragraph 36)

There is a related indicator (A4) as part of the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF):

The percentage of young people who were looked after on 1 April in their 17th year who were engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19. (See paragraph 33).

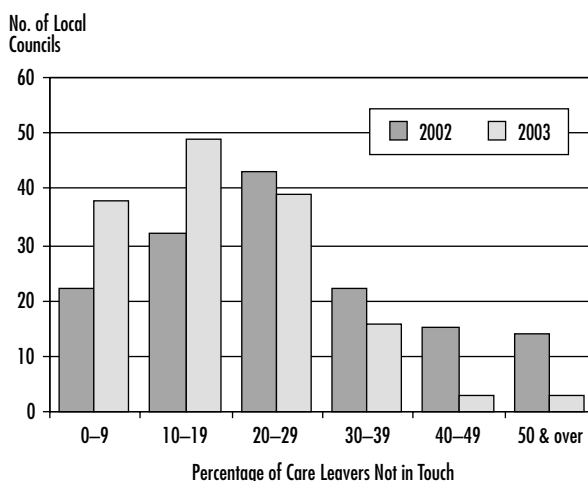
Contact with Care Leavers

30 At the time of publication, details on 4,900 children had been received. Of these, councils were in touch with 4,000 young people (or 81%) on, or near their 19th birthday; compared with 75% in 2001-02. Councils, proportionally maintained better links with girls (83% in touch, compared with 77% in 2001-02) than with boys (79% in touch, compared with 73% in 2001-02).

31 There were wide differences at local council level, with 12 local councils reporting to be in touch with all their former looked after children and a further 26 councils in touch with over 90%. Conversely, 15 councils were not in touch with one third or more of their former clients. Chart 5 shows that councils were generally in touch with a higher proportion of care leavers than last year.

CHART 5:

Percentage of care leavers at age 19 who are not in touch with council, year ending 31 March 2003



32 Table (iv) shows that a higher proportion of children previously looked after by shire counties were not in touch with their local council, compared with those looked after by other types of authority. The proportion of care leavers in education or employment varies across

Table (iv) Percentages of care leavers at age 19, by activity, year ending 31 March 2003

	Not in touch	In Education, employment	Not in Education, employment
Met districts	17	43	39
Shire counties	24	49	27
Unitary Authorities	16	51	34
Inner London	17	51	32
Outer London	18	55	28

⁴ Data for all 19 year old in the local population is derived from the Labour Force Survey

the types of authority, being highest among those looked after in Outer London and lowest in Metropolitan districts.

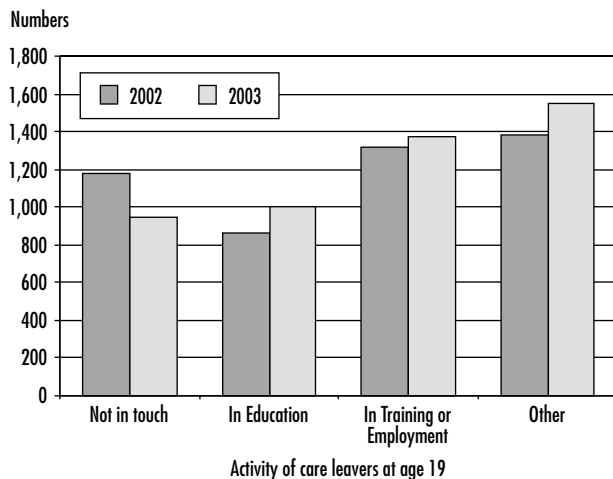
Activity on 19th birthday – Tables 7 and 8

33 Local councils were asked to codify the activity of all those young persons with whom they were in touch on their 19th birthday, into five separate categories (See Appendix C for list of codes). Table 7 shows that 49% (or 2,400 young persons) were in education, training or employment (PAF indicator A4) and 32% were not. The remaining 19% were those who were not in touch with the LA.

34 It can be seen from Table 7 that of those in education, training or employment, girls were more likely to be in education than boys, and boys were more likely to be in training or employment.

35 Table 8 shows that the 49% of care leavers in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday in 2002–03 compares to 46% in 2001–02. However, out of those who were in touch with the council, the proportion in education, training or employment was 61% in 2002–03, the same as in the previous year. The numbers of young people engaged in each type of activity can be seen in chart 6.

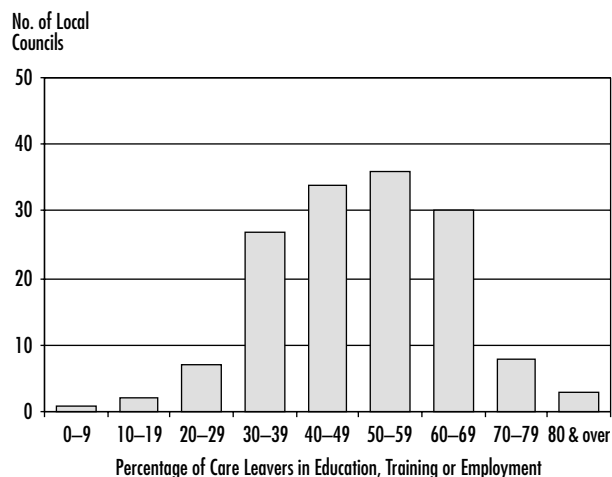
CHART 6:
Number of care leavers at age 19, by activity, years ending 31 March 2002 and 2003



36 At local council level, the proportion of young people in education, training or employment ranged from 0% to 91% (see chart 7 for the distribution). The Government's target, as set out in paragraph 29 above, is for the level of care leavers in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday to be at least 75% of the local rate in their area, by 2004. In 2002–03, 17% of councils have already reached this target level. This has risen from 13% of councils in 2001–02.

37 The target in 2001–02 was for the level of care leavers in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday to be at least 60% of the local level, rather

CHART 7:
Percentage of care leavers at age 19 in education, training or employment, year ending 31 March 2003



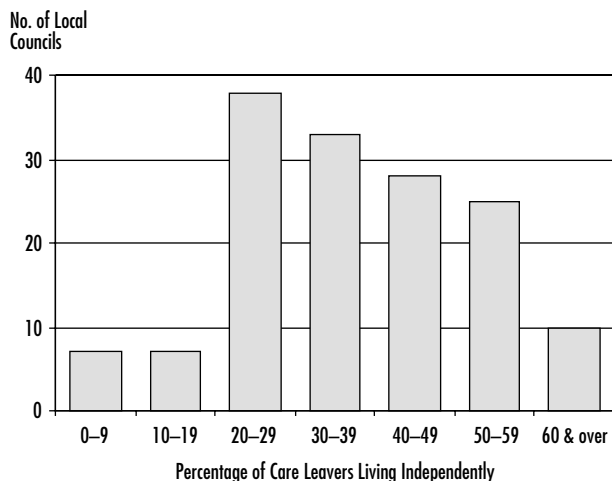
than 75%. In 2002–03, 42% of councils reached this level, compared to a revised figure of 37% in 2001–02.

Accommodation on 19th birthday – Tables 9 and 10

38 The accommodation of young people on their 19th birthday is classified into eleven separate groups (see Appendix C for list of codes and their definitions). Table 9 shows that the largest category of placement was Living Independently, which accounted for 37% of all the young people (including those not in touch with the local council). The figure was 31% for males and 45% for females. The second most common type of accommodation was Supported Accommodation, which accounted for 15% of the young people. 120 young people were in custody, the vast majority of whom were male.

39 The percentage of young people living independently varied widely at local council level (see chart 8). 14 councils reported less than 20% of their former clients were living independently, whilst ten councils reported over 60% living in this category of accommodation.

CHART 8:
Percentage of care leavers at age 19 who are living independently, year ending 31 March 2003



40 Table 10 shows that the proportion of care leavers in each type of accommodation on their 19th birthday was similar in 2002–03 to the previous year. The percentages shown in this table are different from those in Table 9 because they only include the young people who were in touch with their local council. The proportions in supported accommodation and living with parents and relatives have increased slightly since 2001–02, while the proportions in community homes and lodgings have decreased slightly.

41 In addition to recording the accommodation of the young person, councils were asked to make a subjective assessment as to its suitability. Of those young people who were in touch with their local council only 280 (or 7%) were in accommodation that was adjudged to be unsuitable by the council. Most of these young people were in ‘other’ accommodation, in custody, living with parents or relatives or living independently.

Activity of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers – Table 11

42 Data concerning Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) were collected on the OC3 return for the first time this year. Local authorities were required to record whether each young person was a UASC at the time of leaving care. For the purposes of this return, former UASCs who had been granted Exceptional Leave to Remain or had refugee status were included.

43 Table 11 shows that UASCs made up 7% of the care leavers captured by the OC3. 50% of UASCs were in education (10% in higher education), compared with 21% of all care leavers generally (6% in higher education). Only 15% of UASCs were in training or employment, compared with 28% of all care leavers.

Comparison between activity and accommodation on 19th birthday – Table 12

44 Table 12 shows that there was little or no correlation between activity and accommodation – with the largest number of children in four out of the five activity categories living independently.

45 It is also seen from Table 12 that 6% of young people were not in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday because of disability, and 26% for some other reason.

Comparison between activity and accommodation on 19th birthday and qualifications on leaving care (linking OC1 and OC3 data) – Table 13

46 Table 13 analyses the cohort of children captured by the OC3 by the number of qualifications the young person had obtained at the time of leaving care recorded on the OC1. (The analysis does not take into account any further qualifications that might have been gained after leaving care, as these are not collected centrally – see also Technical Notes). As would be expected, between two and three times as many young people who left care with at least one GCSE or GNVQ were in education, training or employment, compared to those who were engaged in some other activity. The table also shows that 61% of the young people who are no longer in touch with their local councils had no qualifications when they left care. This is the same proportion as in 2001–02.

47 Chart 9 shows the relationship between qualifications on leaving care and activity at age 19.

CHART 9:
Percentage of care leavers at age 19, by activity and qualifications, year ending 31 March 2003

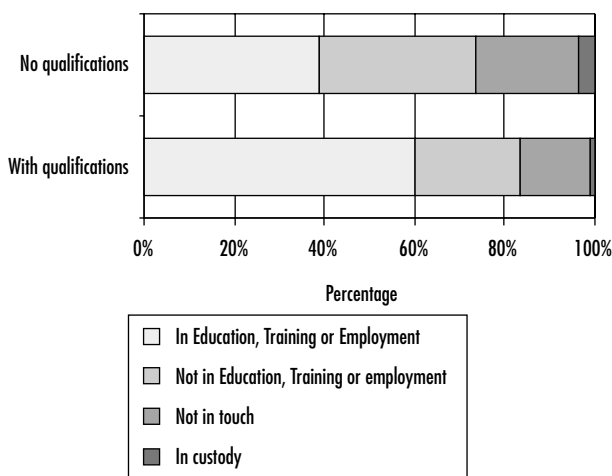


TABLE 1

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2003, by age, gender, duration of the latest period of care and qualifications achieved.

England		numbers and percentages								
Duration of latest period of care	Boys					Girls				
	All Boys	Age on leaving care				All Girls	Age on leaving care			
		16	17	18th	Older than 18th		16	17	18th	Older than 18th
				birthday	birthday				birthday	birthday
Number of care leavers										
All durations	3,600	1,100	680	1,800	40	2,900	850	530	1,500	30
less than 6 months	560	400	110	40	-	410	310	60	50	0
6 months to under 1 year	260	170	50	50	-	230	170	30	30	-
1 year to under 2 years	440	220	120	100	-	410	200	110	100	0
2 years to under 4 years	840	170	170	490	10	690	120	180	380	10
4 years to under 6 years	400	50	80	260	10	320	30	50	240	10
6 years to under 8 years	290	20	50	220	10	220	10	30	170	-
8 years and over	760	40	90	610	10	590	20	70	500	-
Number of care leavers with at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ										
All durations	1,350	280	290	770	10	1,450	310	310	820	10
less than 6 months	100	60	30	10	0	120	80	20	20	0
6 months to under 1 year	70	40	10	10	-	80	50	20	20	0
1 year to under 2 years	150	60	60	30	-	190	100	60	40	0
2 years to under 4 years	340	70	80	180	-	380	50	120	210	10
4 years to under 6 years	170	20	40	110	-	180	20	40	130	-
6 years to under 8 years	140	10	20	110	-	120	-	10	100	0
8 years and over	380	20	50	320	-	380	-	50	310	0
Percentage of care leavers in each duration with at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ										
All durations	38	26	42	43	29	50	37	58	56	40
less than 6 months	17	16	25	14	0	29	27	33	33	0
6 months to under 1 year	26	24	27	28	-	34	28	55	48	0
1 year to under 2 years	33	27	47	30	-	46	48	51	37	0
2 years to under 4 years	40	43	46	37	-	55	43	63	55	50
4 years to under 6 years	44	37	50	44	-	58	62	70	55	-
6 years to under 8 years	49	68	41	50	-	56	-	43	59	0
8 years and over	51	38	53	52	-	64	-	74	63	0

TABLE 2

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2003, by the time the child would normally sit exams and the level of qualifications achieved

	numbers and percentages					
	All Years	Time child would normally sit exams ¹				
		Jun 99 or earlier	Jun 00	Jun 01	Jun 02	Jun 03
Number of care leavers	6,400	-	1,500	2,900	1,700	320
Number with:						
at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ	2,800	-	750	1,410	630	10
at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–G	1,800	0	510	910	360	-
at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–C	370	0	110	210	60	-
Percentage with:						
at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ	44	-	48	48	38	-
at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–G	28	-	33	31	22	-
at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*–C	6	-	7	7	-	-

¹ Based on date of birth

TABLE 3A

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2003 aged 16 or over, by sex and level of qualifications achieved

England												numbers and percentages
	Number of care leavers aged 16 or over	number with					percentage with					
		at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ at grade A*–G	at least 1 GCSE at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C	at least 1 GNVQ	at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ at grade A*–G	at least 1 GCSE at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C	at least 1 GNVQ	
All children	6,400	2,800	2,700	1,800	370	240	44	42	28	6	4	
Boys	3,600	1,400	1,300	780	130	120	38	37	22	4	3	
Girls	2,900	1,400	1,400	1,000	240	120	50	49	35	8	4	

TABLE 3B

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2003 aged 16 or over, with an opportunity of sitting exams before leaving, by sex and level of qualifications achieved

England												numbers and percentages
	Number of care leavers aged 16 or over with opportunity of sitting exams ¹	number with					percentage with					
		at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ at grade A*–G	at least 1 GCSE at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C	at least 1 GNVQ	at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ at grade A*–G	at least 1 GCSE at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C	at least 1 GNVQ	
All children	5,700	2,700	2,600	1,700	360	230	47	45	30	6	4	
Boys	3,200	1,300	1,300	760	130	110	41	39	24	4	4	
Girls	2,500	1,400	1,300	1,000	230	120	54	53	38	9	5	

¹ Children whose date of birth is later than 31 August 1986, and children whose date of birth is between 1 September 1985 and 31 August 1986 and who left care on or before 30 June 2002, have been excluded from this table

TABLE 4

Children who ceased to be looked after during the years ending 31 March 2000 to 2003 aged 16 or over, by level of qualifications achieved

England	numbers and percentages							
	numbers				percentages			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
All Children	6,400	6,600	6,400	6,400	100	100	100	100
Children with at least:								
1 GCSE at grades A*–G or 1 GNVQ	2,000	2,400	2,600	2,800	31	37	41	44
1 GCSE at grades A*–G	1,900	2,400	2,500	2,700	29	36	40	42
5 GCSEs at grades A*–G	1,200	1,600	1,700	1,800	19	24	27	28
5 GCSEs at grades A*–C	260	300	340	370	4	5	5	6
1 GNVQ	220	220	210	240	3	3	3	4
Children with:								
No GCSEs or GNVQs	4,400	4,200	3,800	3,600	69	63	59	56
No Qualifications.	4,200	3,900	3,500	3,400	66	59	55	54

TABLE 5Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children¹ (UASC) who ceased to be looked after during the year ending March 2003 aged 16 or over, by sex and level of qualifications achieved

England	Number of care leavers aged 16 or over	numbers and percentages									
		number with					percentage with				
		at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ at grade A*–G	at least 1 GCSE at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C	at least 1 GNVQ	at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ at grade A*–G	at least 1 GCSE at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–G	at least 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C	at least 1 GNVQ
All UASC	700	200	200	100	30	60	30	26	14	4	8
Boys	570	150	130	60	20	40	27	24	11	3	7
Girls	180	70	60	40	10	20	39	35	23	8	11

¹ Includes former UASCs who have been granted Refugee status or Exceptional Leave to Remain

TABLE 6

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2003 aged 16 or over, without GCSE or GNVQ qualifications

England		numbers and percentages					
	Number of care leavers with no GCSEs or GNVQs	Other qualifications ¹	No qualifications	Reason for no qualifications ²			
				due to sit exams after leaving care	sat exams but no qualifications obtained	health condition or disability	none of these reasons
All children	3,600	180	3,400	340	190	530	2,400
Boys	2,200	120	2,100	180	110	300	1,500
Girls	1,400	60	1,400	160	70	230	900
Percentage of those with no qualifications:							
All children	.	.	100	10	6	16	71
Boys	.	.	100	9	5	14	71
Girls	.	.	100	11	5	16	64

1 Qualifications include A levels and those listed in DFES Circular 0796/2001

2 For full definition of these categories see Appendix C

TABLE 7

Activity on 19th birthday of care leavers who were looked after on 1 April 2000 aged 16 and over, by gender and activity

England		numbers and percentages				
	All Young people	In Education, training or employment	Council in touch with young person			Not in Touch
			Of which		Not in Education, training or employment	
			In Education	In Training or employment		
Numbers						
All young people	4,900	2,400	1,000	1,400	1,600	940
Males	2,700	1,300	510	830	780	580
Females	2,200	1,000	490	540	770	370
Percentages						
All young people	100	49	21	28	32	19
Males	100	50	19	31	29	21
Females	100	48	23	25	35	17

TABLE 8

Numbers and percentages of care leavers at age 19 who were looked after on 1 April 1999 and 1 April 2000 aged 16 and over, by activity

England	numbers and percentages			
	Numbers of young people		Percentages of young people	
	2002 ¹	2003 ²	2002 ¹	2003 ²
All young people	4,700	4,900	100	100
In Education, training or employment	2,200	2,400	46	49
Not in Education, training or employment	1,400	1,600	29	32
Not in touch	1,200	940	25	19

1 Looked after on 1 April 1999

2 Looked after on 1 April 2000

TABLE 9

Accommodation on 19th birthday of care leavers who were looked after on 1 April 2000 aged 16 and over, by gender and accommodation

England	numbers and percentages								
	All young people	Council in touch with young person							Not in Touch
		With Parents or Relatives	Community Home	Supported Accommodation ¹	Lodgings	Independent Living	Other ²	In Custody	
Numbers									
All young people	4,900	530	200	710	270	1,800	300	120	940
Males	2,700	340	130	380	160	830	180	100	580
Females	2,200	190	70	330	110	970	120	20	370
Percentages									
All young people	100	11	4	15	6	37	6	2	19
Males	100	12	5	14	6	31	7	4	21
Females	100	9	3	15	5	45	5	1	17

1 Supported hostels, trainer flats, supported lodgings, foyers

2 Includes bed & breakfast and emergency accommodation

TABLE 10

Numbers and percentages of care leavers in touch with local councils at age 19 who were looked after on 1 April 1999 or 2000 aged 16 and over, by accommodation

England		numbers and percentages			
Accommodation	Numbers of young people in touch		Percentages of young people in touch		
	2002 ¹	2003 ²	2002 ¹	2003 ²	
All young people	3,600	3,900	100	100	
With Parents or Relatives	470	530	13	14	
Community Home	200	200	6	5	
Supported Accommodation ³	580	710	16	18	
Lodgings	310	270	9	7	
Independent Living	1,600	1,800	46	46	
Other ⁴	270	300	8	8	
In Custody	110	120	3	3	

1 Looked after on 1 April 1999

2 Looked after on 1 April 2000

3 Supported hostels, trainer flats, supported lodgings, foyers

4 Includes bed & breakfast and emergency accommodation

TABLE 11

Activity on 19th birthday of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children¹ (UASC) who were looked after on 1 April 2000 and left care aged 16 and over

England		Council in touch with young person					Not in Touch
All young asylum seekers		In Higher Education (above A level)	In Education other than higher education	In Training or Employment	Not in Education or Employment owing to illness/disability	Not in Education or Employment for other reasons	
		All UASC	360	40	140	50	
Percentages	100	10	40	15	-	14	21

1 Includes former UASCs who have been granted Refugee status or Exceptional Leave to Remain

TABLE 12

Comparison between activity and accommodation on 19th birthday of care leavers who were looked after on 1 April 2000 aged 16 and over

	England							numbers and percentages
	All young people	Council in touch with young person					Not in Touch	
		In Higher Education (above A level)	In Education other than higher education	In Training or Employment	Not in Education or Employment owing to illness/disability	Not in Education or Employment for other reasons		
All young people	4,900	280	730	1,400	280	1,300	940	
Percentages	100	6	15	28	6	26	19	
Not in touch	940	940	
With Parents or Relatives	530	20	60	230	50	170	.	
Lodgings	270	30	80	120	10	30	.	
Independent Living	1,800	150	280	660	70	640	.	
Supported Accommodation ¹	710	60	200	240	40	170	.	
Other ²	620	20	110	130	110	250	.	

1 Supported hostels, trainer flats, supported lodgings, foyers

2 Includes community homes, bed & breakfast, emergency accommodation and in custody

TABLE 13

Care Leavers who were looked after on 1 April 2000 aged 16 and over, by activity and accommodation on 19th birthday and qualifications on leaving care

	England				numbers
	All young people	With qualifications ¹	No qualifications	No record ²	
All young people	4,900	2,100	2,600	180	
Not in touch	940	330	580	40	
In custody	120	20	100	-	
In Education, Training or Employment					
All accommodation	2,400	1,300	990	90	
With parents or relatives	310	150	140	10	
Community Home	110	10	90	10	
Lodgings	230	150	70	10	
Independent living	1,100	640	420	30	
Supported accommodation ³	500	280	200	20	
Other ⁴	130	60	60	10	
Not in Education, Training or employment					
All accommodation	1,400	500	900	50	
With parents or relatives	220	70	150	10	
Community Home	90	10	80	-	
Lodgings	40	20	20	-	
Independent living	710	270	420	30	
Supported accommodation ³	210	90	120	10	
Other ⁴	170	50	120	10	

1 At least 1 GCSE or GNVQ

2 No OC1 record on file

3 Supported hostels, trainer flats, supported lodgings or foyers

4 Includes bed & breakfast and emergency accommodation

TECHNICAL NOTES

The OC1 Collection

(i) The OC1 collection covers young people leaving care in England aged 16 or over between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2003 inclusive, regardless of how long they had been looked after. Some will have attended schools outside their home authority area. Local councils are required to report on qualifications gained from examinations taken during or before the latest period of care. Any qualifications gained from examinations taken after the end of the latest period of care are excluded.

(ii) The OC1 was first introduced for the year ending 31 March 2000. The data presented in this bulletin is for the fourth year of collection.

The OC3 Collection

(iii) The OC3 collection covers all young people who

- a) were looked after on 1 April 2000, and
- b) whose date of birth fell between 1 April 1983 and 31 March 1984.

The information collected relates to their accommodation and activity on their 19th birthday, which as a direct consequence of the above definition will fall within the year ending 31 March 2003.

(iv) The OC3 was introduced for the first time for the year ending 31 March 2002. The data presented in this bulletin is for the second year of collection.

Form and Data items

(v) The OC1 and the OC3 forms are reproduced at Appendices A & B respectively. The codes and field definitions for the Accommodation and Activity data items of the OC3 are given at Appendix C.

Missing data

(vi) Data for both returns was received from all 150 local councils in England. Some data from earlier years is incomplete however, particularly for the OC1 collection for the year ending 31 March 2000, when several councils reported difficulties in supplying the information.

Validation

(vii) The OC1 and OC3 data were subjected to a number of validation checks including, where possible, comparison with other collections (notably the SSDA903). Local councils were informed of any validation failures. Many returned corrected data, although at the time of preparing this bulletin, inconsistencies remain in the figures for a number of authorities.

(viii) The OC3 collection effectively covers all children who were being looked after on 1 April 2000 aged 16. It follows that each of these children will subsequently leave care aged 16 or over, and is therefore also covered by the OC1 collection. At the time of publication, there were 180 OC3 records on file for which no OC1 had been received. Based on an analysis of all statistical returns for children services, the estimated numbers of OC1 and OC3 returns missing for the data year 2003 are 40 and 30 respectively.

Rounding and Confidentiality

(ix) To ensure that no individual child can be identified from statistical tables, the Department has introduced a protocol for the rounding and suppression of very small numbers. All figures in this Bulletin which exceed 1,000 have been rounded to the nearest hundred, and all other figures greater than 5 have been rounded to the nearest ten. All figures between 1 and 5 inclusive have been suppressed, as have any percentages where either the numerator is less than 5, or the denominator is less than 10.

(x) It has on occasion been necessary to suppress other data whenever it would be possible to calculate missing data by means of simple arithmetic. The rule applied in these circumstances has been to suppress the next smallest data item. As a result of all these changes, detailed figures may not sum to the totals presented.

Data Revisions

(xi) Because of the incomplete nature of the data and the outstanding validation failures the figures presented here should be treated with some caution. They may be updated to incorporate additional data, revisions and further analysis.

(xii) Further information and analysis of OC1 and OC3 data at local council level (including any further revisions) will be published at a later date.

Figures on the Internet

(xiii) The Department for Education and Skills web site contains a copy of this Bulletin. It can be found at:

www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000423/index.shtml

Symbols used in tables

- Data suppressed for reasons of confidentiality. Normally this will refer to numbers between 1 and 5 inclusive, or percentages where either the numerator is less than 5 or the denominator is less than 10.
- .
- .

Educational Qualifications of Care Leavers

Complete one of these forms for each young person aged 16 or over who ceased to be looked after by your authority at any time between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2003 inclusive. Submit completed forms by 31 May 2003

	Item
Local Authority Code :	1
Young Person's ID Number:	2
Sex (1 = male, 2 = female):	3
Date of birth:	4
Date of start of latest period of care:	5
Date ceased to be looked after:	6
Reason care ceased:	7
<hr/>	
Young person's qualifications on ceasing to be looked after:	
Number of GCSEs at grade A* to G:	8
Number of GCSEs at grade A* to C:	9
Number of GNVQs:	10
Number of other educational or vocational qualifications:	11
Reason for having no qualifications on ceasing: (select code from list in guidance notes)	12
<hr/>	
UASC ¹ as at date child ceased to be looked after (item 6) (1 = yes, 0 = no):	13

1 UASC: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker, Refugee or granted Exceptional Leave to Remain

Care Leavers on their 19th Birthday

Complete one of these forms for each young person who at 1/4/2000 was in their 17th year and looked after by your authority, and who has since left care.

Submit completed forms with a cover sheet by 31 May 2003

	Local Authority Code :	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	Item 1
Young Person's ID Number:		<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	2
	Sex (1 = male, 2 = female):	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	3
	Date of birth:	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	4
	Date of start of latest period of care:	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	5
	Date ceased to be looked after:	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	6
	Were you in touch with the young person on his/her 19th birthday?	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	7
<p>If your answer to item 7 was 'yes' (i.e Codes 1 or 3) complete the following using the most appropriate codes from the 2003 guidance notes version 1.0 (Nov 2002) or later. If your answer was 'no' (i.e Codes 2, 4 -6) enter a zero for items 8 and 9, and move on to item 10.</p>			
	Activity at 19th birthday:	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	8
	Accommodation at 19th birthday:	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	9
	UASC ¹ as at 1 Apr 2000 (1 = yes, 0 = no):	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	10

1 UASC: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker, Refugee or granted Exceptional Leave to Remain

Appendix C

OC1 Return year ending 31 March 2003

Item 12: Reason for having no qualifications on ceasing

0 Not applicable – i.e. at least one of items 8, 9, 10 or 11 are greater than zero.

1 Young person was due to sit exams later in the school year, after having ceased to be looked after.

2 Young person sat at least one exam, but obtained no qualifications.

3 Health condition or disability prevented young person sitting exams.

4 Young person did not sit exams, or was not due to sit exams later in the school year, and was not prevented from doing so by a health condition or disability.

OC3 Return year ending 31 March 2003

Item 8 Main Activity: Codes and definitions

G1 Young person engaged in **higher education** (i.e. studies beyond A level)

– ‘Higher education’ means all studies at a higher academic level than A level. This includes degrees, diplomas in higher education, teaching and nursing qualifications, HNDs, ONDs, and BTEC. For the purpose of OC3 this includes either full-time or part-time study.

G2 Young person in **education other than higher education**

– This means all other education not covered by G1.

G3 Young person in training or employment

– ‘Training’ includes government-supported training, including Youth Training, New Deal, Training for Work, and National Traineeships.
‘Employment’ includes paid employment, self-employment, and voluntary unpaid work.

G4 Young person not in education, employment or training, because of own illness or disability

– Refers to young people where none of G1, G2 or G3 applies, specifically because the young person’s

own illness or disability has prevented them from participating in any of these activities.

G5 Young person not in education, employment or training: other circumstances

– Refers to young people not covered by the other categories. This includes people who are not able to participate in any of these activities because of pregnancy, or because they are parents or carers.
Appendix C

Item 9 Type of Accommodation: Codes and definitions

B With parents or relatives (See note below about ‘staying with friends or relatives’).

C Community home or other form of residential care such as an NHS establishment

D Semi-independent, transitional accommodation (e.g. supported hostel, trainer flats); self-contained accommodation with specialist personal assistance support (e.g. for young people with disabilities, pregnant young women and single parents); and self-contained accommodation with floating support.

E Supported lodgings (where supervisory staff or advice workers are available to provide formal advice or support).

K Ordinary lodgings, without formal support. In general this will include young people lodging with former foster carers.

T Foyers and similar supported accommodation which combines the accommodation with opportunities for education, training or employment.

U Independent living, e.g. independent tenancy of flat, house or bedsit, including local council or housing association tenancy, or accommodation provided by a college or university. Includes flatsharing. (See note below about ‘staying with friends or relatives’).

V Emergency accommodation (e.g. night shelter, direct access, emergency hostel)

W Bed and breakfast

X In custody

Y Other accommodation