Nottinghamshire Health & Wellbeing Board

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Children in Care and Care Leavers

Available online:
https://www.nottinghamshireinsight.org.uk/research-areas/jsna/children-and-young-people/children-in-care-and-care-leavers-2024/

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Nottinghamshire Health & Wellbeing Board

Who are our children in care?

What is their experience in care?

What are the health and wellbeing needs of children in care and care leavers in Nottinghamshire?

What can the health and care system (and wider partners) do to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes?

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1. How many children from Nottinghamshire are in care currently? (Monday 20th January 2025)

a) 682
b) 824
c) 928



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2. How many care leavers (aged 17 – 21 years old) were there in Nottinghamshire last year?

a) 598
b) 670
c) 865



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3. What % of children in care from Nottinghamshire were placed in Nottinghamshire last year?

a) 53%
b) 72%
c) 89%



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4. What % of children who left care from Nottinghamshire in the last year returned to live with birth parents?

a) 9%
b) 20%
c) 45%



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5. What % of care leavers aged 19 – 21 in Nottinghamshire are in education, employment or training?

a) 51%
b) 75%
c) 82%



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Correct answers:

1. C (928)
2. B (670)
3. A (53%)
4. B (20%)
5. A (51%)



Health Inequalities

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Mental ill health: Nationally 45% of children in care have a diagnosable mental health problem and are four times more likely to have a mental health disorder or to attempt suicide than their peers. (1)

Special Educational Needs (SEN): Children in care and leaving care are significantly more likely to have special educational needs than their peers, with children requiring special educational support more likely to have worse employment prospects than their peers. (2)

Employment and Education Attainment: 38% of care leavers aged 19-21 years old are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) in 2022 - 2023, compared to 13% of all 19 to 21-year-olds. (3)

Exploitation: Children and young people living in care, and especially those placed in foster homes or residential settings, are at greater risk of being targeted for criminal exploitation and this risk is heightened for young people with insecure immigration status. (4)

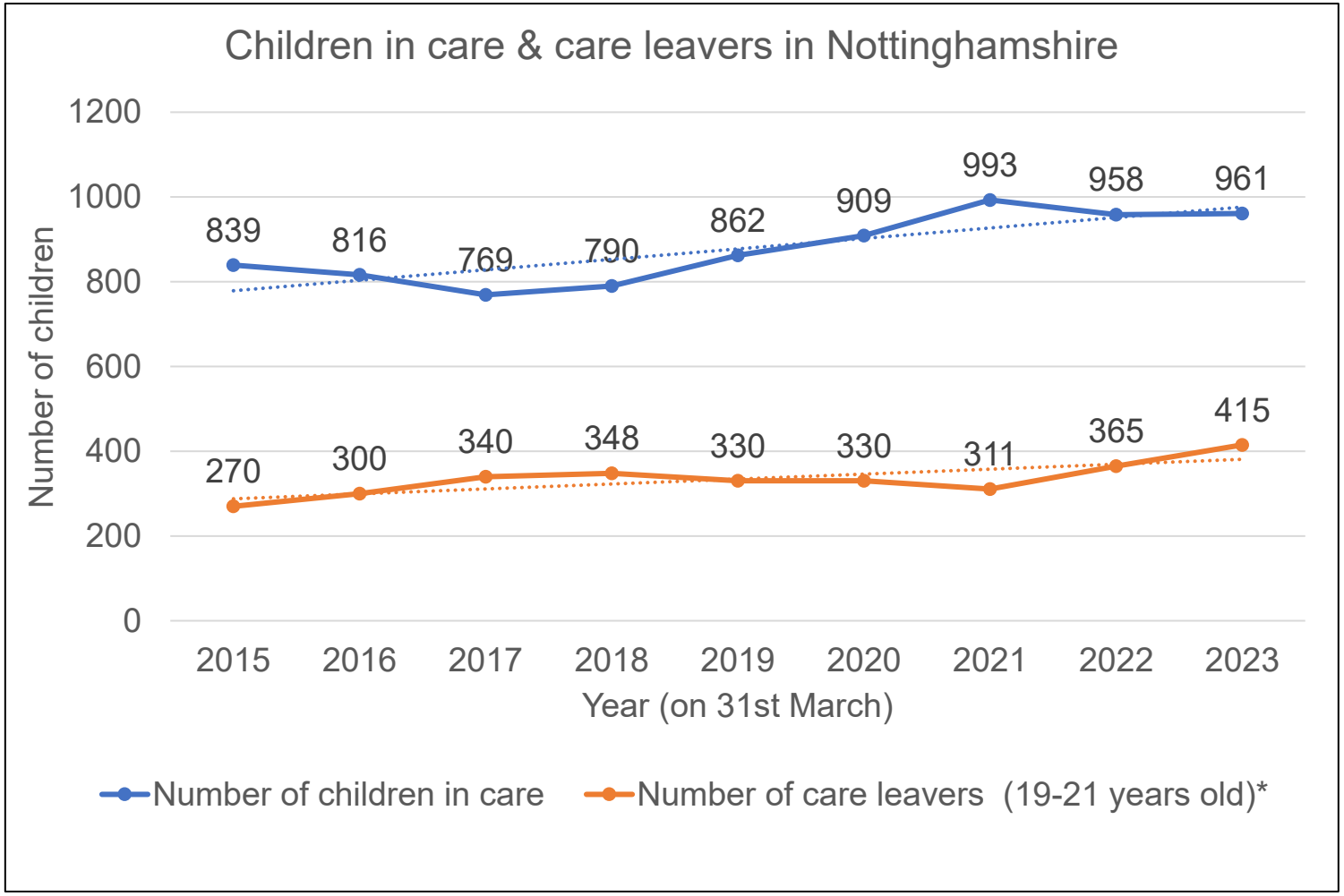
Health Inequalities

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Homelessness: The number of 18–20-year-old care leaver households in England experiencing homelessness has increased by 33% since 2018-19 to 3,710 in 2022-2023, which is at a higher proportion than the 11% increase in the number of households facing homelessness in the general population over the same period.(5) Older research approximated that 25% of the adult homeless population are care leavers.(6)

Criminal Justice: Children in care are more at risk of interacting with the criminal justice system in early adulthood than their peers. 52% of children in care were convicted of a criminal offence by the academic year they turned the age of 24, compared to 13% of children who had not experienced care.(7) Older research approximated that almost 25% of the adult prison population have previously been in care.(8)

Premature mortality: According to research adults who spent time as children in care are 70% more likely to die prematurely than those who did not. (9) This risk of a higher mortality rate can last for over 40 years after leaving care and has been found to be mainly attributable to self-harm, accidents, and mental health. (10)



Source: National Government, Department for Education, Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

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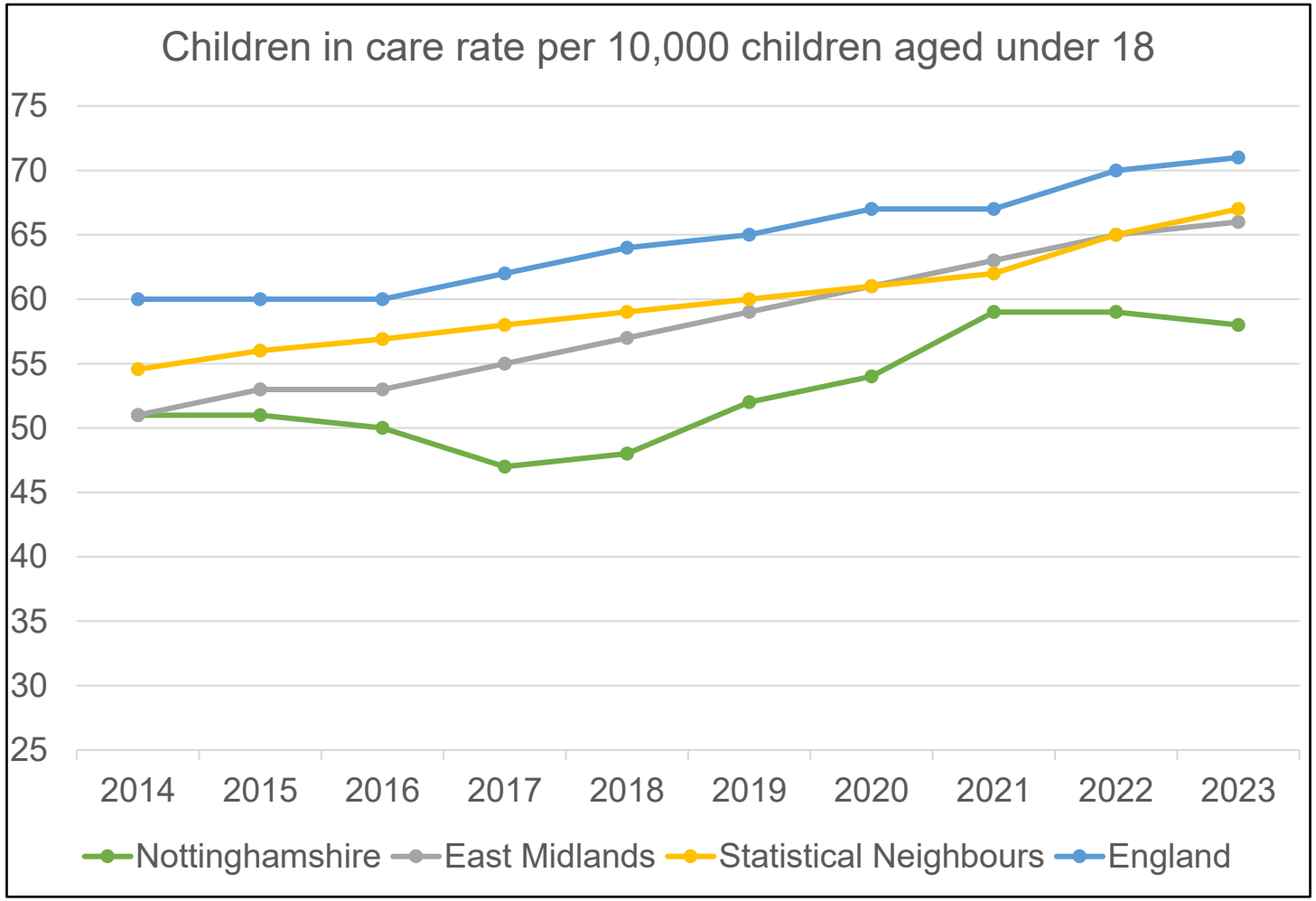
961 children in care in 2022 - 2023:
▲ *18% increase since 2016*

415 care leavers in 2022 - 2023:
▲ *38% increase since 2016*

71 unaccompanied children in 2022 - 2023:
▲ *87% increase since 2016*

2015 – 2025
= 11% increase in number of children in care

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*** Proportion of the population in care has levelled out locally since 2021***

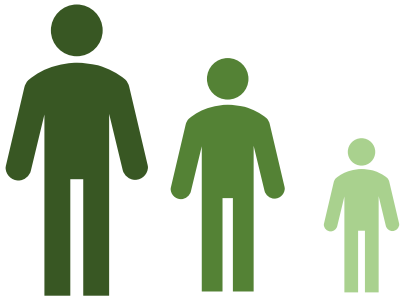
Source: National Government, Department for Education, Local Authority Interactive Tool

Our Children in Care

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AGE WHEN ENTERING CARE

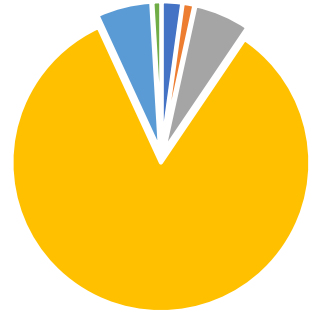
20% under 1 years old
11% 1 – 4 years old
10% 5- 9 years old
29% aged 10 – 15 years old
31% aged 16 – 17 years old



AGE OF CHILDREN IN CARE

5% under 1 years old
12% 1 – 4 years old
13% 5- 9 years old
38% aged 10 – 15 years old
32% aged 16 – 17 years old

82% White
(80% White British)



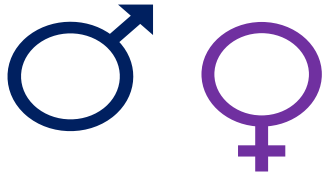
Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people (UASC)

AGE: 94% UASC 16-17 years old

SEX: 93% Male

ENTRY: 66% national transfer scheme, 31% spontaneous arrivals, 3% Adult Asylum hotels

NATIONALITY: 49% Afghanistan, 12% Iran, 11% Sudan



57% Male
43% Female

22% of children in care from Mansfield (1)
22% of children in care from Ashfield (2)
15% of children in care from Bassetlaw (3)
11% of children in care from Newark & Sherwood (4)
9% of children in care from Broxtowe (6)
7% of children in care from Gedling (5)
4% of children in care from Rushcliffe (7)
() relates to Lower Tier Local Authority deprivation rankings



Journey in Care

**All figures relate to 2022 - 2023*

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41% of children entered care due to abuse or neglect
18% of children entered care due to absent parenting
15% of children entered care due to family dysfunction

58% in foster care
18% Secure units, children's homes, and semi-independent living accommodation
11% of children in care experience 3 or more placement moves
66% children spent at least 2 years in the same placement

14% of children in care had a missing incident

10% (11) of first-time entrants to Youth Justice were children in care

0 children in care on remand

17 children in care subject to child sexual exploitation meeting



45% of children in care from Nottinghamshire are placed out of area

483 children placed outside of Nottinghamshire as at March 2023;

- **27% in Nottingham City**
- 21% in Derbyshire
- 13% in Lincolnshire
- 6% in Leicestershire

31% other reason
18% return home
13% special guardianship order
12% turned 18 years old
8% were adopted

Health & Wellbeing

Brief interventions delivered-	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Smoking	4%	5%	6%	7%
Alcohol use	4%	4%	5%	6%
Substance use	3%	4%	4%	5%
Nutrition	26%	26%	23%	22%
Weight management	3%	3%	2%	3%
Sexual health	12%	11%	12%	13%
Emotional Health & Wellbeing	22%	23%	23%	22%
Oral Health	25%	24%	24%	22%

Most common interventions delivered;

- Oral Health
- Nutrition
- Emotional Health & Wellbeing



6% of children in care in Nottinghamshire identified as having a substance use problem (and 33% of these children received treatment).
This is higher compared to 2.7% of all children in care in England.





97% of children having had their annual health checks in 2022 – 2023
This is better than children in statistical neighbouring local authorities (88%), East Midlands (88%) and the average for England (89%).





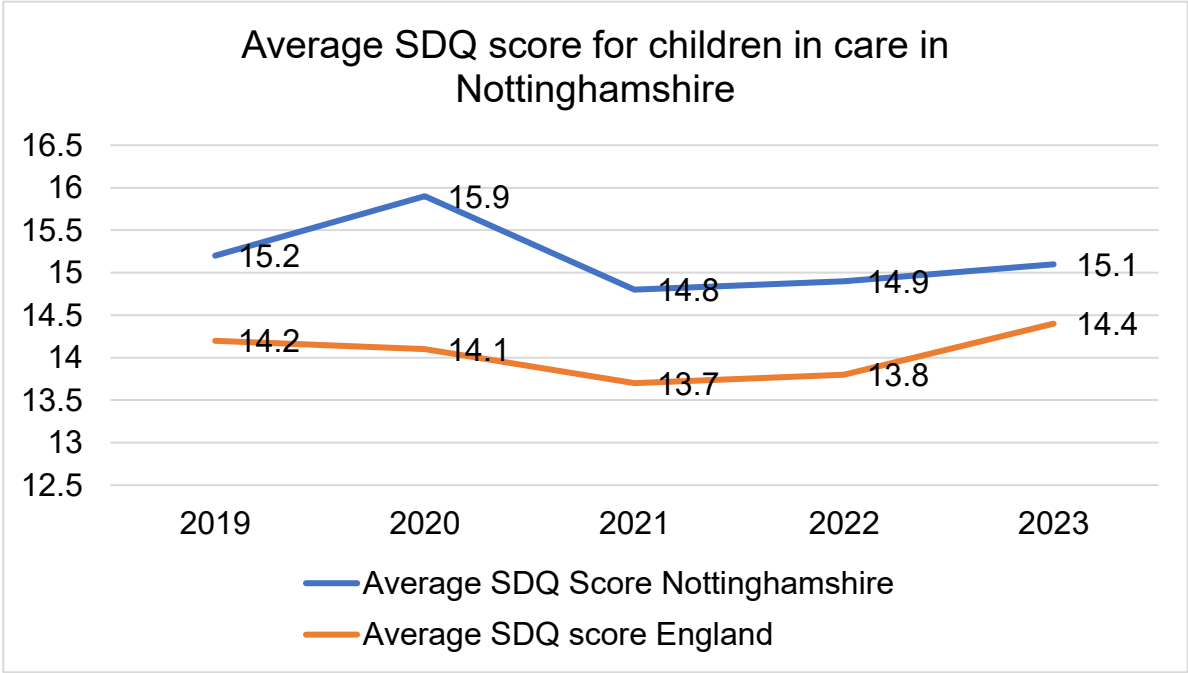
98% of children in care in Nottinghamshire had up to date immunisations in 2022 - 2023
This is better than those in Nottinghamshire's statistical neighbours (80%), East Midlands (75%) and the average for England (82%).





60% of children in care in Nottinghamshire had a dental check in 2022-2023
This is below average compared to 76% of our statistical neighbours, 78% average for East Midlands and 76% for England.

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a behavioural screening questionnaire that can provide an indication of the emotional health of children in care in Nottinghamshire.
A score of 0 to 13 is considered normal, 14 to 16 is borderline, and 17 to 40 is a cause for concern



In 2023, **42% of children in care had a score which was cause for concern**, 12% with scores that were borderline and 46% that were normal.

These score have remained relatively stable since 2019.
77% completion rate for Nottinghamshire CiC aged 4-16 yrs. (2023)

Source: National Government, Department for Education, 'Statistics: Looked After Children' Local Authority Annual returns (2019 – 2023)

CAMHS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN TEAM

Since 2020 new referrals received to CLA CAMHS team increased year on year.

The majority of referrals are for attachment difficulties and 53% were for children aged between 15 and 19 years.

Data on waiting times fluctuates, however it does suggest an overall increasing trend in average waiting times.

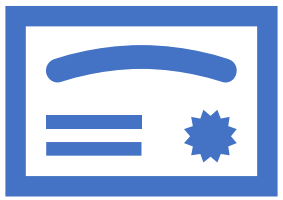
52% met expected reading standard
35% met expected writing standard
35% met expected maths standard
(Key Stage 2)

86% average attendance for Nottinghamshire children in care of statutory school age in the academic year 2022-2023

Since 2020 **increase in the proportion of half days recorded as absences** for children in care in Nottinghamshire
This is similar to England







Between 2018/2019 and 2021/2022 between 9.6% and 13.6% of children in care in Nottinghamshire achieved a grade 5 or above in their Mathematics and English GCSEs.
This is low compared to 49.8% of all children in England achieved a grade 5 and above

Between 250 and 300 children school aged children in care are identified as having special education needs (SEN).
This is similar proportion to the England average for children in care.

After 18 years, the proportion of Nottinghamshire care leavers in EET is around 50%
This is similar to the national average for care leavers

Recommendations

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Data & Reporting

- ✓ Care experience and protected characteristics
- ✓ Key Performance Indicators
- ✓ Data on dental health
- ✓ Evaluate need for sensory processing treatment

Strategic Planning & Governance

- ✓ Delivery Plan
- ✓ Advocating for children in care in wider children and families' partnerships
- ✓ Reciprocal treatment of children in care in area and out of area
- ✓ Coproduction
- ✓ UASC Steering Group

Health and Wellbeing

- ✓ Understand and standardise therapy in residential settings
- ✓ Evaluate mental health support for care leavers
- ✓ Investigate how to improve access to adult mental health services
- ✓ Review arrangements for dental service to improve access
- ✓ Review services for health assessments for children in care
- ✓ Trauma informed training
- ✓ Promote identification and support for substance use
- ✓ Prioritise children in care and their special education needs

Any Questions?

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*All data and sources referenced are included within the full joint strategic needs chapter available online at: https://www.nottinghamshireinsight.org.uk/research-areas/jsna/children-and-young-people/children-in-care-and-care-leavers-2024/