



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

**WRITTEN QUESTION
FOR ANSWER BY THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
ON 8 MARCH 2021**

Laura Anne Jones (South Wales East):

Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the number of children in care in Wales for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020? (WQ82184)

Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the average age of children in care, as well as the average length of care placement in Wales for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020? (WQ82185)

Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the number of child safety reports received by local authorities in Wales in 2019 and 2020, as well as the number of interventions carried out, including court proceedings? (WQ82186)

Julie Morgan: Our latest statistical release providing information on children looked after by local authorities up to March 2020, was published on 24 February 2021. The link to the release can be found at: <https://gov.wales/children-looked-after-local-authorities-april-2019-march-2020>.

The number of children looked after as at 31 March 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 is provided below.

Children looked after at 31 March, 2017-2020 (a)

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Children looked after at 31 March	5,960	6,405	6,835	7,170

Source: Looked After Children Census

(a) Excluding children looked after exclusively under short breaks
Data has been rounded to the nearest 5

The age of children who are looked after is recorded in age bands. Below is a table setting out the number of children looked after in each age band as at 31 March 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Children looked after at 31 March by age, 2017-2020 (a)

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Aged under 1 year	365	360	385	340
Aged 1-4 years	1,070	1,180	1,290	1,330
Aged 5-9 years	1,380	1,480	1,600	1,710
Aged 10-15 years	2,170	2,380	2,545	2,650
Aged 16-17 years	980	1,000	1,015	1,130
Aged 18 and over	*	*	*	5
All ages	5,960	6,405	6,835	7,170

Source: Looked After Children Census

(a) Excluding children looked after exclusively under short breaks

Data has been rounded to the nearest 5

* data item is disclosive

The placements of children who are looked after are recorded for each reporting year. Below is a table setting out the number of placements during the year for children looked after as at 31 March 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. Also included is the average number of days that children looked after at 31 March had been in continuous care during the year.

Children looked after at the 31 March by the number of placements during the year, and the average length of continuous time spent in care during the year, 2017-2020 (a)

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Number of children looked after at 31 March	5,960	6,405	6,835	7,170
With 1 placement during year	4,250	4,600	4,965	5,210
With 2 placements during year	1,105	1,160	1,225	1,320
With 3 or more placements during year	600	650	650	645
The average length of time that a child looked after at the 31 March, had been in continuous care during the year (days) (b)	238.7	247.1	250.3	261.5

Source: Looked After Children Census

(a) Excluding children looked after exclusively under short breaks

(b) For each year, the maximum number of days a child can spend in continuous care is 364 days. The average length of time (in days) has been calculated by dividing the numerator by the denominator:

Numerator: Summing up the number of days each child had been in continuous care for those looked after at the 31 March

Denominator: The number of children looked after at the 31 March.

Data has been rounded to the nearest 5

We do not currently collect data on the number of child safety reports, nor are we able to provide data on the number of interventions. Moving forward, Welsh Government will be collecting data on the number of Strategy Meetings that take place concerning safeguarding contacts. This is a better metric than contacts, which relate to safeguarding alone

However, we do collect information about the number of children placed on the Child Protection Register. The rate of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) per 10,000 population aged under 18 has been decreasing in recent weeks following a peak at the start of December 2020 and as of 22 February was 49 per 10,000 population aged under 18. The CPR rate as at 31 March 2019 was 45 per 10,000 population aged under 18; this compares with 47 per 10,000 population aged under 18 the previous year.
