

## Is there a typology we can apply to children who are in contact with children's social care?

### Evidence Summary

*The Evidence Summaries have not been conducted or written as rapid reviews, systematic reviews or comprehensive literature reviews. Instead they were designed and written as brief notes intended to give the Independent Review of Children's Social Care a quick overview of some of the evidence on a particular topic or question. They are only being published for transparency and given their limited scope, are not intended as a resource for wider purpose.*

### Introduction

This is an evidence summary for the Care Review Team by What Works for Children's Social Care (WWCSC). It summarises some of the different typologies that could be considered for children who are in contact with Children's Social Care (CSC), and the evidence base for them.

To understand and recommend a set of typologies as below, we drew from a number of different data sets and reports, as well as conversations with colleagues, some of whom have practised as social workers.

### What do we mean by Typology?

Merriam-Webster defines Typology as follows "study of or analysis or classification based on types or categories".<sup>1</sup> To ignore or dismiss the current 'typologies' which are predominantly used when discussing children who are in contact with CSC; Children In Need (CIN), Children on a Child Protection Plan (CPP), and Children Looked After (CLA) would perhaps be unhelpful at this stage. The majority of the existing literature and evidence base focuses on the differences in experiences and outcomes for these children, and at times these gaps are stark.

Having said that, there is progress to be made in perhaps identifying smaller sub-groups, typologies or clusters of children and young people (CYP) who are, or have been, in contact with CSC, in order to ensure that our efforts, time, money and resources are being directed towards the places they are needed. As such, we have identified groups of CYP by demographic, risk factors, and finally other external factors to take into consideration.

### How many?

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<sup>1</sup> "Typology." Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/typology>. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.



The equivalent of one in ten children needed a social worker in 2018, either currently or at some time in the preceding six years.<sup>2</sup> In the year ending 31st March 2020, there were 80,080 Children Looked After, giving a rate of 67 per 10,000 children under 18 which is up from 65 the previous year.<sup>3</sup> For the same time frame there were 389,260 Children in Need and 51,510 Child Protection Plans; these figures are down on the previous year, to 323.7 per 10,000 children, down from 334.2 the previous year for Children in Need and 323.7 per 10,000 children, down from 334.2 for Child Protection Plans.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that these figures are drawn from the CiN Census - consequently they reflect the number of young people with a given status at a given moment in time. Because child protection plans and child in need plans are typically short term, and many young people return to their parents having been in care for less than a year, the number of young people in these groupings over the course of a year is substantially larger.

## Who are they, and why does this matter?

Where possible using data published annually by the DfE the following section sets out some of the demographics of CIN, CPP and CLA. It also highlights the existing evidence on these 'typologies' and their outcomes as a result of their contact with CSC.

### Demographics

#### Race

For children in care the year to 31st March 2020<sup>5</sup>, percentage of children in need<sup>6</sup> and percentage of all children from the 2011 census<sup>7</sup>

Ethnicity	Percentage of Children in Care	Percentage of Children in Need	Percentage of all children(aged 0-17)
Total White	74%	71.7%	80.4%
Total White and Asian, Black African or Black	10%	8.8%	4.4%

<sup>2</sup> Department for Education. (2019). *Help, protection, education: concluding the Children in Need review*.

[online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/809236/190614\\_CHILDREN\\_IN\\_NEED\\_PUBLICATION\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809236/190614_CHILDREN_IN_NEED_PUBLICATION_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*.

[online] Available at:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

<sup>4</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Characteristics of children in need, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available

at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need/2020> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

<sup>5</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*.

[online] Available at:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

<sup>6</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Characteristics of children in need, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available

at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need/2020> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

<sup>7</sup> England and Wales (2018). *Age groups*. [online] Service.gov.uk. Available at:

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/age-groups/latest#age-profile-by-ethnicity> [Accessed 22 Apr. 2021].



Caribbean (Mixed)			
Total Asian or Asian British	4%	7.4%	9.4%
Total Black or Black British	7%	8.6%	4.7%
Total Other ethnic groups	4%	3.4%	1.1%
Total Refused or information not yet available	1%	N/A	N/A

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percentage of Children in Foster Care<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>Percentage of Children in Children's Home<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Percentage of Children in Secure Children's Home<sup>10</sup></b>
Total White	76%	81%	67.2%
Total White and Asian, Black African or Black Caribbean	9%	8%	15.2%
Total Asian or Asian British	4%	3%	4.0%
Total Black or Black British	7%	6%	11.8%
Total Other ethnic groups	3%	1%	N/A
Total Refused or information not yet available	1%	N/A	N/A

<sup>8</sup> DfE. (2018). Looked after children in foster care: analysis. [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/679270/Analysis\\_-\\_looked\\_after\\_children\\_in\\_foster\\_care.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/679270/Analysis_-_looked_after_children_in_foster_care.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Ofsted. (2015). *Children Looked After Statistics*.

<sup>10</sup> WWCS. (2020). UNLOCKING THE FACTS: YOUNG PEOPLE REFERRED TO SECURE CHILDREN'S HOMES. [online] Available at: [https://whatworks-csc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WWCS\\_Unlocking\\_the\\_Facts\\_SCH\\_technical\\_report\\_Dec2020.pdf](https://whatworks-csc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WWCS_Unlocking_the_Facts_SCH_technical_report_Dec2020.pdf)



Berridge et al. (2020) found that similar to the educational trends for children not in contact with CSC, the pattern of attainment for children with a social worker shows higher attainment for children of most other ethnicities than those who were White British or Irish.

## Gender

Of Children in Need on 31 March 2020, 54% were male and 44% female (with 2% unborn or of unknown gender). In comparison with the general population, ONS 2019 mid-year estimates show that 51% of children are male and 49% female.<sup>11</sup>

For children in care the breakdown by gender is similar to that of CIN, with 56% male and 44% female.<sup>12</sup>

- With regards to attainment at key stage 4, according to Berridge et al. (2020) gender appears to play largely the same role for children in need or looked after as it does more generally, girls tend to perform better than boys.

## Age

Children in Need

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Unborn	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Under 1 year	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.7
1 to 4 years	19.6	18.7	18	17.5	16.9	16.2
5 to 9 years	25	24.9	24.7	24.1	23.3	22.3
10 to 15 years	30.1	30.6	31.2	31.6	31.9	31.9
16 years and over	18.2	18.9	19.2	19.9	21.2	23.2

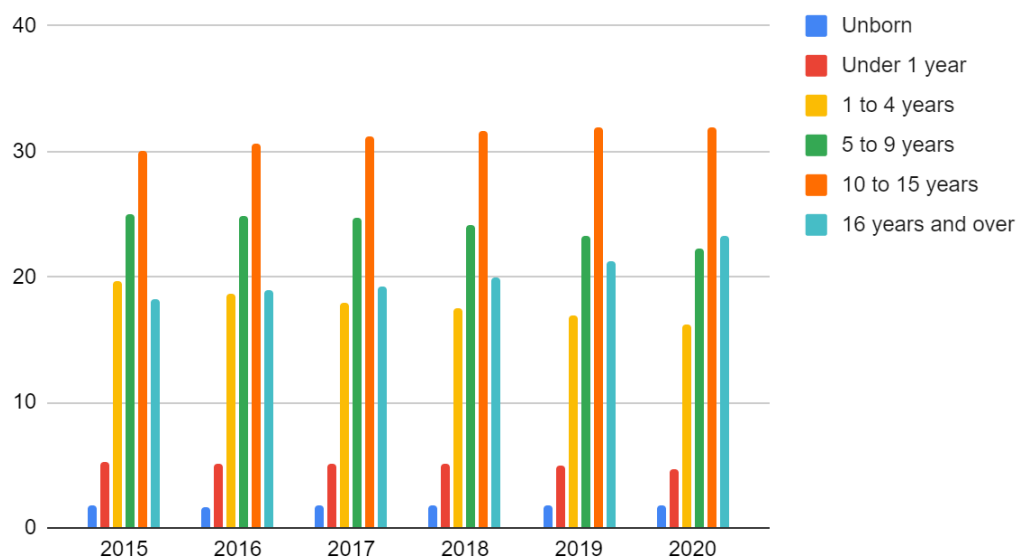
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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].



## Age of Children in Need, 2015-2020



From the above graphic, the average age of Children in Need has gone up, with the two oldest age brackets seeing long term increase. Of note, the proportion of children in need aged 16 or over has increased from 18.2% to 23.2% in the last six years.<sup>13</sup>

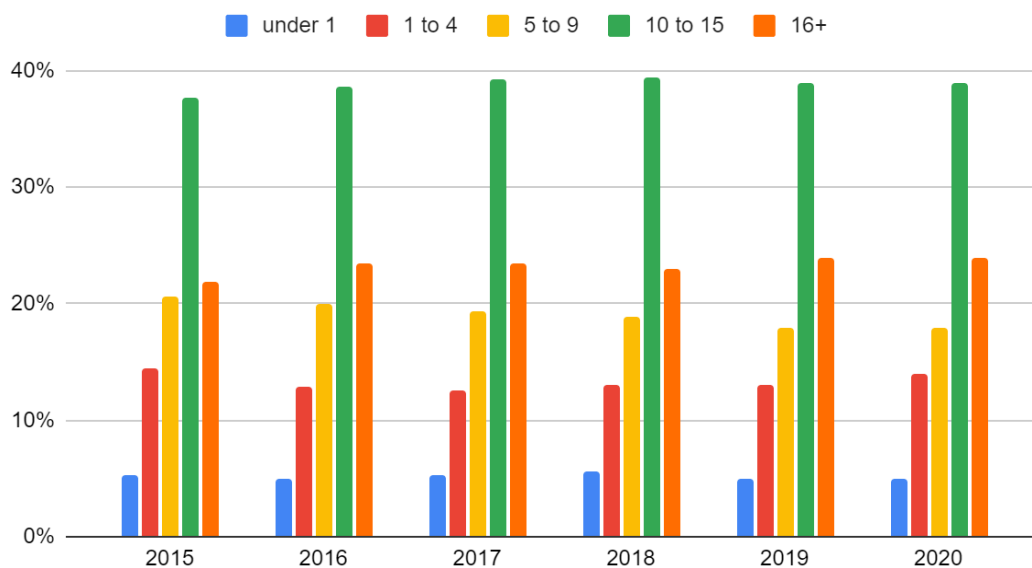
### Children Looked After

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>under 1</b>	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%
<b>1 to 4</b>	14%	13%	13%	13%	13%	14%
<b>5 to 9</b>	21%	20%	19%	19%	18%	18%
<b>10 to 15</b>	38%	39%	39%	39%	39%	39%
<b>16+</b>	22%	23%	23%	23%	24%	24%

<sup>13</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Characteristics of children in need, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need/2020> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].



## Age of Children Looked After 2015-2020



For children looked after, similar to children in need, the largest age bracket is 10-15 at 39%, with those aged over 16 accounting for 24% of the total number of children looked after.<sup>14</sup>

The growing numbers of older children in care or classed as in need is of note due to the suggested relationship between age and outcome, for example:

### *Educational Outcomes*

Entering into care for the first time during secondary school was a significant predictor of poorer educational attainment at KS4. Overall, children whose social care interventions were ongoing in Year 11 had lower KS4 scores ( ) than those whose interventions had concluded by Year 11, scoring approximately 2.5 grades lower over the average of their eight best GCSEs.<sup>15</sup>

### *Placement Type*

Mirroring the pattern for upwards trend in age of CIN and CLA, the majority of children in secure children's homes were aged 15/16 at 56%, ages 13/14 were 32% of the population with those aged 17 making up 9% of those in secure children's homes. Findings from The Children's Commissioner, reported that young people over the age of 13 were six times more likely to be placed in a children's home or secure unit than those under 13 (The Children's Commissioner, 2019, p.4).

## Child Death

<sup>14</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

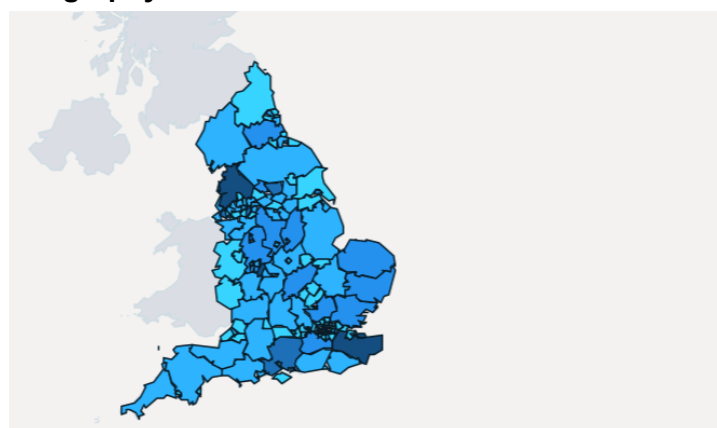
<sup>15</sup> Berridge, D., Luke, N., Sebba, J., Strand, S., Cartwright, M., Staples, E., Mcgrath-Lone, L., Ward, J. and O'higgins, A. (2020). *Children In Need And Children In Care: Educational Attainment And Progress*. [online] . Available at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/policybristol/briefings-and-reports-pdfs/Final%20Report%20Nuffield.pdf> [Accessed 6 Apr. 2021].



	Age of child at the time of death					
	0 days-27 days	28 days-364 days	1 year-4 years	5 years-9 years	10 years-14 years	15 years-17 years
<b>Number of which had:</b>						
<b>Modifiable factors identified</b>	328	247	74	43	72	98
<b>No modifiable factors identified</b>	778	344	247	168	157	159
<b>Total</b>	1,106	591	321	211	229	257

Deaths occurring in the neonatal period (0–27 days) represented the largest proportion of deaths reviewed (n=1106, 41%) and a further 591 (22%) deaths were within the 28–364 days age group. Together, deaths where the child was aged under 1 represented 63% of child deaths reviewed during 2019–20. The largest proportion of cases with modifiable factors identified was the 28–364 days age group (42%), where the lowest proportion was in the 5–9 years age group (20%).<sup>16</sup>

## Geography



**Key to Number of children looked after (Children looked after at 31 March each year, 2020)**

- 24 to 438
- 439 to 853
- 854 to 1,267
- 1,268 to 1,682
- 1,683 to 2,096

(rates per 10,000 children)<sup>17</sup>

The geographical spread of children looked after in rates per 10,000 children saw, Blackpool (North West England) having the highest at 223 and Wokingham (South East England) having the lowest at 24.<sup>18</sup>

The rate of children in need at 31 March 2020 varied between regions, with the North East (462.9) having the highest rate and the East of England (236.1) the lowest.<sup>19</sup>

## Reason for entry

<sup>16</sup> Child Death Review Data: Year ending 31 March 2020. (2020). [online] . Available at: <https://www.ncmd.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Main-Text-FINAL-WEB.pdf>.

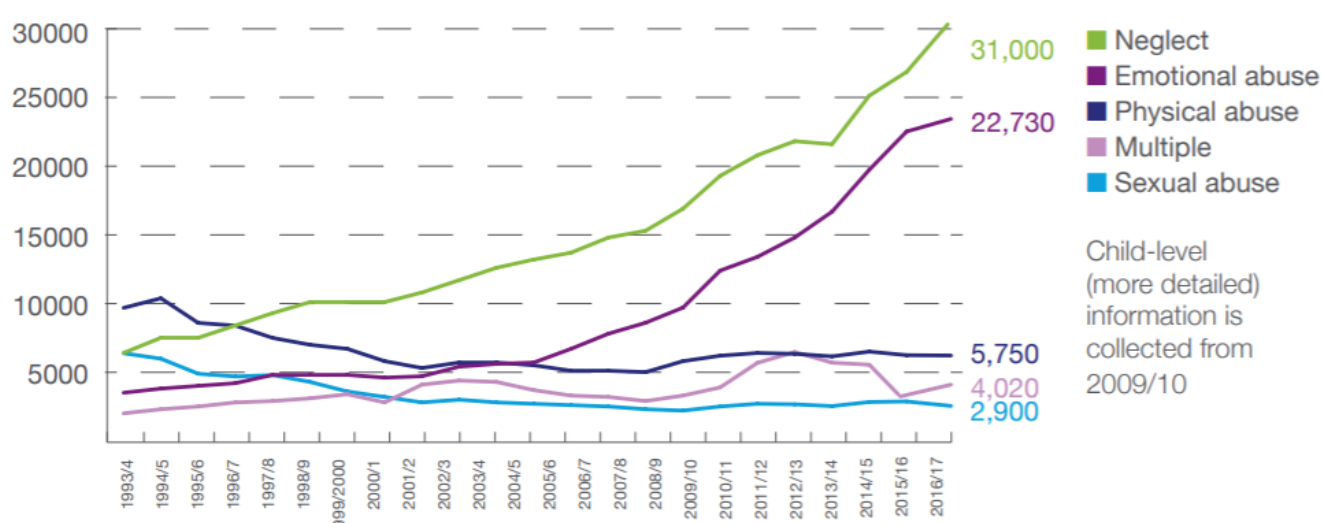
<sup>17</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Characteristics of children in need, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need/2020> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021]

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



Abuse or neglect was the most prevalent reason children entered care, at 65%.<sup>20</sup> For children in need, Domestic violence is the most common factor identified at assessment followed by parent mental health.<sup>21</sup> The Family Justice Observatory's report into care proceedings within the first year of a baby's life found that, in Wales, over half (53%) of mothers with infants in care proceedings reported an existing mental health condition at their initial antenatal assessment, whilst 77% had a mental health related GP or hospital contact or admission recorded in their health records prior to the child's birth.<sup>22</sup> 47% of infants coming into care in the period 2012/13 to 2016/17, had mothers who had already appeared in court for care proceedings concerning an older sibling.<sup>23</sup> The effects on children of witnessing experiencing abuse, neglect or domestic violence or living with a parent who suffers with poor mental health, can be far-ranging. Where they are taken into care, or subject to social care intervention, this may not mitigate the effects of their traumatic experiences, for example on mental health or school readiness.



24

The above shows the number of CPP in England by category of abuse from 1993/4 to 2016/17. It shows a dramatic decrease in the number of registrations for sexual abuse in England since 1994: the numbers fell by two-thirds, from 6,400 in 1993/94 to 2,200 in 2008/9. It also shows a significant rise in the number of those on a CPP due to neglect or emotional abuse.

## Risk Factors

<sup>20</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

<sup>21</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Characteristics of children in need, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need/2020> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021]

<sup>22</sup> Griffiths, L.J. et al. (2020). *Born into care: One thousand mothers in care proceedings in Wales*. London: Nuffield Family Justice Observatory.

<sup>23</sup> Broadhurst, K., Alrouh, B., Mason, C., Ward, H., Holmes, L., Ryan, M., & Bowyer, S. (2018). *Born into Care: newborn babies subject to care proceedings in England*. The Nuffield Family Justice Observatory: Nuffield Foundation, London.

<sup>24</sup> Kelly, L. and Karsna, K. (2017). *Measuring the scale and changing nature of child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation Scoping report Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/documents/scale-and-nature-scoping-report-2018/>.





Beyond demographics there are other factors that arguably influence the lives of children with a social worker in ways which could be worthy of consideration when trying to determine patterns of need. Some of these factors and their related outcomes are briefly summarised below.

### **CCE incl. County Lines and CSE**

The Children's Society highlighted the following factors as increasing the risk of CCE, growing up in poverty, having learning difficulties, being excluded from school or being a looked after child. The government guidance on Criminal Exploitation states a risk factor for vulnerability to exploitation as the following "having prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse; lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)".<sup>25</sup> A review by The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel found that boys from black and minority ethnic backgrounds appear to be more vulnerable to harm from criminal exploitation.<sup>26</sup> The Children's Commissioner found referrals to children's services where gangs are identified as a factor at assessment rose 26% between 2015/16 and 2016/17 (from 5,200 to 6,570).<sup>27</sup> The increased risk young people in contact with children's social care face of criminal and/or sexual exploitation, appears to be an identifiable pattern worth further thought.

### **Disabilities**

Children who are disabled make up 12% of the total CIN.<sup>28</sup> Various studies have identified the high prevalence of SEND, particularly behavioural, social or emotional difficulties for children in care especially, as well as children in need. For example, Jay and Gilbert (2021) found a very high proportion of children who were in care or need during school years had SEN provision at some point (83% and 65%, respectively).<sup>29</sup> The largest category of SEND for Children in Need and Children in Care is Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH) (38% of Children in care at KS4 who have an SEN Statement / Education, Health and Care Plan, which can pose particular behavioural challenges for schools.

The data suggests a higher level of educational disadvantage for children in care who have a disability. For example, the lower GCSE results achieved the children had a higher average levels of emotional and behavioural difficulties (1 point lower for every 4 extra points on the difficulties measure). In comparison to those who received no CSC intervention at all, children with a disability(s) disabled children scored 37 fewer points at KS4 if they had received a longer-term intervention and 31 points fewer if their intervention was shorter.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Home Office (2018). *Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable adults: County Lines Guidance*. [online] . Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/863323/HOC\\_countyLinesGuidance\\_-\\_Sept2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863323/HOC_countyLinesGuidance_-_Sept2018.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. (2020). *It was hard to escape: Safeguarding children at risk from criminal exploitation*. [online] . Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/870035/Safeguarding\\_children\\_at\\_risk\\_from\\_criminal\\_exploitation\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/870035/Safeguarding_children_at_risk_from_criminal_exploitation_review.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> The Children's Commissioner. (2019). *Keeping kids safe*. [online] . Available at:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CCO-Gangs.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Department for Education. (2019). Characteristics of children in need: 2018 to 2019. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/843046/Characteristics\\_of\\_children\\_in\\_need\\_2018\\_to\\_2019\\_main\\_text.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843046/Characteristics_of_children_in_need_2018_to_2019_main_text.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Jay MA, Gilbert R. 2021. Special educational needs, social care and health. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*. 106:83-85.

<sup>30</sup> Berridge, D., Luke, N., Sebba, J., Strand, S., Cartwright, M., Staples, E., Mcgrath-Lone, L., Ward, J. and O'higgins, A. (2020). *Children In Need And Children In Care: Educational Attainment And Progress*. [online] . Available at:



## Mental Health

It is possible to assume that all children and young people who come into contact with children's social care will have some element of poor mental health, a complex, traumatic or difficult home life would seem to contribute to that. As well as known links between parental mental health and child mental health.<sup>31</sup> Poor mental health of CYP in care is not a new phenomenon, see Meltzer (2003) or Ford et al. (2007) for example. In 2020, 38% of Children Looked After had SDQ scores which were a cause for concern, while 13% had 'borderline' scores. When comparing children who are not looked after, one in 10 suffer with a diagnosable mental health disorder compared to nearly half of looked after children.<sup>32</sup> There are two elements to consider in the context of typologies, poor mental health in childhood and adolescence leads to poorer outcomes later in life, for children in care who are already at a disadvantage, how does the intersectionality of care experience and poor mental health play out later in life.

## Youth Justice

Children who have been/are in care are over-represented in the Justice system. For example, 23% of adult prisoners have been in care, and 40% of prisoners under 21.<sup>33</sup> In England in 2020, three per cent of Children Looked After had a conviction or youth caution.<sup>34</sup> Evidently there are factors which intersect for these young people which means they end up in the justice system, it may therefore be worth considering that young people in contact with both CSC and the Youth Justice System are in want of additional thought. Given that they are already vulnerable and disadvantaged, diverting them away from the justice system would seem a reasonable goal to have.

## UASC

For the year 2020 the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) was 5,000, down 3% on the peak of 5,140 UASC last year. UASC are a distinct group of CLA and currently represent around 6% of all CLA. 90% of UASC are male, and 86% are aged 16 or more. Absent parenting was the main category of need for these young people - 87%. UASC are not distributed evenly across the country - they tend to be concentrated in local authorities that are points of entry to the country, for example Kent or Croydon.<sup>35</sup> As mentioned, UASC are a distinct group of children

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<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/policybristol/briefings-and-reports-pdfs/Final%20Report%20Nuffield.pdf> [Accessed 6 Apr. 2021].

<sup>31</sup> Karimzadeh, M., Rostami, M., Teymouri, R., Moazzen, Z. and Tahmasebi, S. (2017). The association between parental mental health and behavioral disorders in pre-school children. *Electronic Physician*, [online] 9(6), pp.4497–4502. Available at:

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5557127/#:~:text=Studies%20show%20that%20primary%20school,psychologically%20healthy%20parents%20\(2\).](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5557127/#:~:text=Studies%20show%20that%20primary%20school,psychologically%20healthy%20parents%20(2).) [Accessed 22 Apr. 2021].

<sup>32</sup> Mental health and well-being of looked-after children Fourth Report of Session 2015-16 HC 481. (2016.). [online] . Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmeduc/481/481.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> The Who Cares? Trust, 'The statistics'.

<sup>34</sup> Nuffield Foundation. (2021). *Nuffield Family Justice Observatory: Children in the family justice system infographic*. [online] Available at: <https://www.nuffieldfjo.org.uk/resource/children-in-the-family-justice-system> [Accessed 22 Apr. 2021].

<sup>35</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].



looked after and as such have a different set of factors to consider, hence the suggestion to recognise USAC as a separate 'typology' of children in contact with CSC.

## **Other factors to consider**

Another way we identified potential typologies was through existing research, of particular use was a report by Berridge et al. (2020). The report looks at educational attainment and progress of all young people at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2017 and their history of intervention by Children's Services. The authors drew up typologies for over 70,000 young people who had at least one intervention, by combining information about:

- Intervention type: children subject to a Children in Need Plan (CINP); a Child Protection Plan (CPP); Children in Care (CIC); (and children receiving no interventions)
- Pattern of intervention: single intervention or multiple interventions (split into increasing, decreasing or peaking with respect to severity)
- Duration of intervention: a continuous period under or over 6 months for CINP or CPP, and under or over 12 months for CIC
- Whether in receipt of an intervention at Key Stage 4

This yielded 34 different groups. The research then examined attainment at Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 for each group and found notable differences. For example, young people with multiple interventions and those still receiving interventions at KS4 performed significantly worse at KS4 exams than young people with single interventions. From this report, we have identified a number of factorial typologies which could be of use, these have been supplemented by work from other reports and academic literature.

### **Length of intervention**

In Berridge et al. (2020) children and young people who received higher-level (e.g. children in care) or longer interventions had lower attainment at all key stages and made less progress than those who received shorter and lower levels of intervention (e.g. children in need).

### **Multiple interventions**

CYP who experienced multiple periods of intervention had poor educational outcomes. Whether an intervention was still ongoing in Year 11, was also a contributing factor to educational attainment. Excluding 'disabled groups', those children and young people who had experienced multiple interventions from CSC during their lives, and an intervention was still ongoing during Year 11 were the lowest achieving group at KS4. This group also made the least progress (had the lowest Progress 8 scores) in comparison to the other groups.

Berridge et al. highlight that it is common to have so-called "multiple periods of intervention". They found that those who had experienced fewer than four periods of intervention, were more likely to succeed educationally at age 16 than those children who experienced four or more periods of social care intervention. The trend continues later in life, after the age of 18, with children who had a social worker in the year they took their GCSEs, only six per cent were in higher education, compared with



28% of those not in need.<sup>36</sup> By age 21, half had still not achieved Level 2 qualifications (which include GCSEs), compared to 11% of those not in need.<sup>37</sup>

## Stability

Stability, or indeed instability has been identified in the literature as a detrimental factor for children and young people with a social worker. Just over 1 in 10 children in care (8,000 children) experienced multiple placement moves in 2018/19. This rate has remained largely unchanged since 2016.<sup>38</sup> There are of course geographical variations in placement stability across the country, Hampshire for example has the highest average rate of CIC with two or more placement moves at 16.4%, whereas Rutland has the lowest with 3.7%.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps inevitably, those who had spent longer time in care had experienced a higher number of placement changes, as much as three times more than those CYP who experienced shorter stays in care. Having a higher number of placement changes was predictive of lower KS4 scores.

Furthermore, to maintain the pattern of intervention at an older age being more complex, those 16 or older are much more likely to experience multiple placement changes. Higher numbers of placement changes are also more common for those CIC placed in residential care which appears to fit in with the narrative around older children in care and instability, and indeed other risk factors as already mentioned. Specifically for CIC, those CYP who had experienced a higher number of placement changes got lower GCSE scores, 1 point lower for every 2 placement changes. Children who have needed a social worker move schools more than other children. School instability eg. greater numbers of absences or exclusions, and changing schools was also a cause for concern with regards to attainment, as well as other risk factors such as CCE<sup>40</sup>. Indeed school instability in year 10 or 11 was a predictor of lower attainment at KS4.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Department for Education. Help, protection, education: concluding the Children in Need review. (2019). [online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/809236/190614\\_CHILDREN\\_IN\\_NEED\\_PUBLICATION\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809236/190614_CHILDREN_IN_NEED_PUBLICATION_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> The Children's Commissioner. *Stability index 2020*. (2020). [online] . Available at: <https://cco-web.azureedge.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/cco-stability-index-2020.pdf> [Accessed 20 Apr. 2021].

<sup>39</sup> The Children's Commissioner. (2020). *Stability index 2020*. [online] . Available at: <https://cco-web.azureedge.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/cco-stability-index-2020.pdf>.

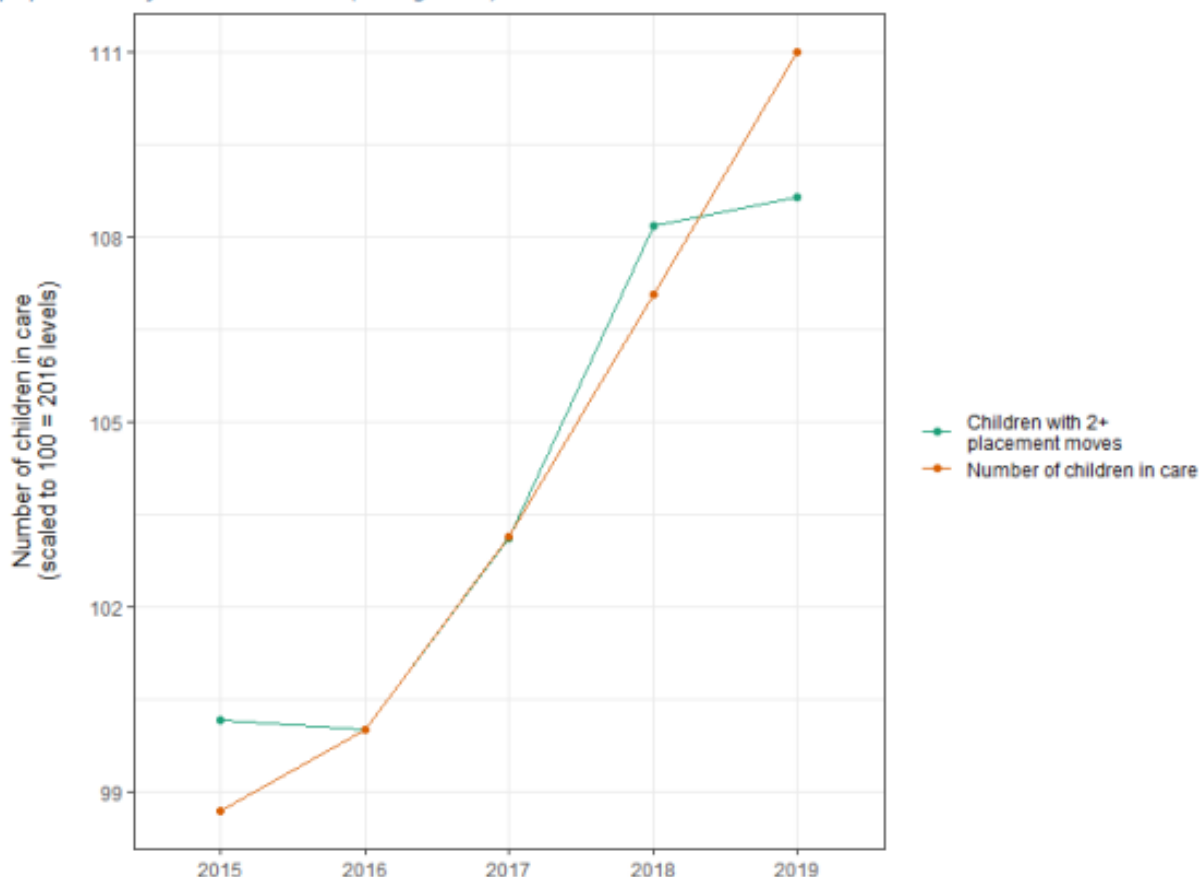
<sup>40</sup> Help, protection, education: concluding the Children in Need review. (2019). [online] . Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/809236/190614\\_CHILDREN\\_IN\\_NEED\\_PUBLICATION\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809236/190614_CHILDREN_IN_NEED_PUBLICATION_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>41</sup> Berridge, D., Luke, N., Sebba, J., Strand, S., Cartwright, M., Staples, E., Mcgrath-Lone, L., Ward, J. and O'higgins, A. (2020). *Children In Need And Children In Care: Educational Attainment And Progress*. [online] . Available at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/policybristol/briefings-and-reports-pdfs/Final%20Report%20Nuffield.pdf> [Accessed 6 Apr. 2021].



Figure 3: Trend in children in care at 31st March with 2+ placement moves during the year (green line) compared to population of children in care (orange line)



42

## Placement Type

Recent DfE statistics indicate that 72% of children in care were placed with Foster Carers, 57% of these in unrelated foster care (not with relative or friend); 13% of the remaining cohort were placed in secure units, children's homes or semi-independent living accommodation.<sup>43</sup>

In their study Farmer and Moyers (2008) found that prior to their formalised kinship placement, 42% had been with grandparents, aunts and uncles or other relatives, 55% had been living with parents and just 3% of those children now in kinship care had been in unrelated foster care prior this placement.<sup>44</sup> This suggests that for many children in these circumstances being cared for by a relative

<sup>42</sup> The Children's Commissioner. (2020). *Stability index 2020*. [online] . Available at: <https://cco-web.azureedge.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/cco-stability-index-2020.pdf>.

<sup>43</sup> Department for Education. (2020). *Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2020*. [online] Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2021].

<sup>44</sup> Farmer, E. and Moyers, S., 2008. *Kinship care. Fostering effective family and friends placements*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.



or friend is not all that unusual. However the literature suggests that there are more similarities than differences in terms of the outcomes for children in foster care versus kinship care.

A systematic review of kinship care showed a positive effect on placement stability and this was based on high strength evidence<sup>45</sup>. Children in kinship care were more likely than children in foster care to achieve permanence through a court order, less likely to be adopted and less likely to have social and emotional problems.<sup>45</sup> Children who were placed with unrelated foster carers who on average had spent significantly more time in care.<sup>46</sup> Children in residential care experience poorer outcomes than those in foster care. For example, they achieve lower grades at GCSE by comparison, scoring over six grades lower.<sup>47</sup>

Sir Martin Narey's independent review of children's residential care noted that in 2013, about 62% of children had clinically significant mental health difficulties; and, 74% were reported to have been violent or aggressive in the past six months.<sup>48</sup> He reported that 53% of children living in children's homes have a statement of special educational needs or an Educational, Health and Care plan, and a further 28% have identified special educational needs without statements or EHC plans. This compares to 20% and 34% for all children in care respectively.<sup>49</sup> The observable differences in need and outcome for CYP in different placement types suggests that greater attention could be paid to how placement type can affect a young person.

### **Analytical strategies for identifying different typologies**

Given the heterogeneity of the population of children with a social worker, and the desire to identify common themes or groupings there could be benefit in conducting analyses which identify patterns of risk, need or behaviour that have not previously been identified. For example, Hagman et al. used cluster analysis to identify the 'risk profiles' of children entering residential care.<sup>50</sup> They found that 3 distinct profiles could be identified: Group 1 - Demographic Risk, more likely to be prescribed psychotropic medication and to have had experienced another out-of-home placement prior to entering residential care; Group 2 - Academic Risk, these children scored lowest on measures of reading, maths, and general academic knowledge; Group 3 - Behavioural Risk, presented the highest levels of behaviour, with attention problems in the borderline range and rule-breaking and aggression in the clinical range.

## **Conclusion & Recommendations**

There are many different ways to consider the 'typologies' of children in contact with children's social care. There seems to be merit in continuing to use the CLA, CIN, CPP given the data that is available on the differences in outcomes. However, factors such as race, age and length or number of

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<sup>45</sup> Winokur, M. A., Holtan, A., & Batchelder, K. E. (2018). Systematic review of kinship care effects on safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 28(1), 19-3

<sup>46</sup> Farmer, E. 2009. How do placements in kinship care compare with those in non-kin foster care: placement patterns, progress and outcomes? *Child and Family Social Work*, 14 pp. 331-342.

<sup>47</sup> Sebba, J., Berridge, D., Luke, N., Fletcher, J., Bell, K., Strand, S., Thomas, S., Sinclair, I. and O'Higgins, A. 2019. *The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data*. [online] . Available at: <http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/301411.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup> Narey, M. 2016. Residential Care in England: Report of Sir Martin Narey's independent review of children's residential care.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Hagaman, J.L., Trout, A.L., Chmelka, M.B. et al. (2010). Risk Profiles of Children Entering Residential Care: A Cluster Analysis. *J Child Fam Stud*. 19: 525–535.. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-009-9325-3>





interventions may also be valid or useful lenses to look through, as well as understanding how these factors intersect.

### **Intersectionality**

When we consider the different 'typologies' of children who are in contact with children's social care, it is important to recognise that regardless of which 'typology' or group is chosen, children are each individual, and certainly have differing needs which overlap with each other.

### **Further Research**

Conducting more research on the profiles of entrants to care, as well as more in depth and robust research on outcomes for the groups mentioned above. There is a lack of available data in this area, particularly around the intersectionality of different groups of young people.