



*The request relates to section 7 of the Care Planning, Placement and Review 2010 Regulations (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/959/regulation/7/made>) which states: (1) Before C is first placed by them or, if that is not reasonably practicable, before the first review of a case, the responsible authority must make arrangements for a registered medical practitioner to (a) carry out an assessment of state of health, and (b) provide a written report of the assessment, addressing the physical, emotional and mental health.*

- 1. What number of young people entered the care of a local authority in England between 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019?*
- 2. What number of the young people that entered the care of a local authority in England between 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, had their emotional health assessed on entry to the care of a local authority?*
- 3. What number of the young people that entered the care of a local authority in England between 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, had their emotional health assessed by a registered medical practitioner?*
- 4. What number of written emotional health assessments have been completed for the young people who entered the care of a local authority in England between 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 by a registered medical practitioner (aligned to the legislation highlighted above)?*
- 5. How does the Department for Education know if each local authority in England has delivered the legislation outlined above (section 7 of the Care Planning, Placement and Review 2010 Regulations)?*
- 6. What does the Department for Education ask from each local authority in England to evidence that they are delivering the requirements of the legislation outlined above (section 7 of the Care Planning, Placement and Review 2010 Regulations)?* I have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Figures from the looked after children data collection (SSDA903) show that some 31,680 children started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2020. Information on the age of starting and the category of need of these children is published in Table C1 in the statistical release “Children looked after in England 2019, including adoption” at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2018-to-2019>. When a child enters care, the child is assessed by children’s services and their primary need is recorded. However, the SSDA903 collection does not specifically collect data on the emotional health of the child on entry to care as assessed by a registered medical practitioner.

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), a short behavioural screening questionnaire, for children aged 5 to 16 who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months does provide some information on the emotional and behavioural health of CLA population whilst in care. As at 31 March 2019 some 49 per cent of respondents were deemed to have ‘normal’ emotional and behavioural health, 13 per cent had borderline scores and 39% had scores which were a cause for concern. Local authorities are required to ensure that the SDQ questionnaire is completed by the looked-after child’s main carer annually.

The Department for Education does not request evidence from local authorities that they are delivering the requirements of Section 7 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2010 Regulations. However, local authority children’s services are inspected by Ofsted under the framework for the inspections of local authority children’s services (ILACS). The ILACS framework looks at whether the physical and mental health needs of children in care and care leavers are identified and met and this will inform the judgement that the local authority receives.