



# Children's care monitor 2013/14

Children on the state of social care in England

Reported by the Children's Rights Director for England

March 2014



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## INTRODUCTION

**Roger Morgan, Children's Rights Director for England**



The law sets out my duties as Children's Rights Director for England. With my team, one of my main duties is to ask children and young people for their views about how children and young people are looked after in England. My duties cover children and young people living in children's homes, in family centres, in foster care, or who have been placed for adoption, together with care leavers and children or young people getting any sort of help from council social care services, as well as children and young people living away from home in all types of boarding schools, residential special schools or further education colleges.

As well as asking children for their views and publishing what they tell us, with my team I also give advice on children's rights and welfare to the Government and to Ofsted, the people who inspect social care services and schools. We help individual children by taking up their cases when they are concerned about their rights or welfare. I also have a duty to raise any issues I think are important about the rights and welfare of children or young people living away from home or getting children's social care support.

Children have told us there are some things that are so important to them that we should keep checking them with children. So in 2008 we started publishing a Children's care monitor each year, reporting what children and young people told us about six things which are important to their lives: keeping safe, bullying, having a say in what happens, making complaints and suggestions, education, and how children in care are being looked after. This reports sets out what children and young people told us about how things were for them in 2013.

The 2013 Children's care monitor was carried out through a web survey. We made sure that only those we had invited to take part filled the survey in, by sending passwords to the councils and services we had invited for the children and young people to use. Another 32 children filled in and sent in a Widget symbol version of the survey questionnaire.

On many subjects, what children said in our 2013 sample is close to what children told us in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. That so many findings are so steady over the five years we have been carrying out the Monitor is reassuring – our findings look clear and steady rather than 'all over the place'. Some small differences from one year to the next could well have happened just by chance. However, we have looked back over what children have said over the last five years, and have written in this report about any steady trends that have taken place between 2008 and 2013.

As with all our reports, this one sets out what children themselves have told us, without leaving out things we might disagree with, or adding our own comments. It is purely a report of children's views. We try to write our reports so that they can just as easily be read by children as by professionals and government ministers. This report, like all our reports, is being sent to government ministers and officials, other key people in Parliament, every children's services council in England, and the people in Ofsted who inspect services for children. What children have told us for our past reports led to important changes to decisions about looking after children.

This is the last Monitor report that will be produced by the Office of the Children's Rights Director. From 1 April this year, children's rights work for the children in my remit, along with the job of producing the Children's Care Monitor, will pass to the Children's Commissioner. I am grateful to all the thousands of children who have sent in their views for this and our past Monitor reports, and to all the staff and carers who have helped us in the process over the years. I wish the Commissioner and her team well for monitoring children's views of care in the future.

This report brings together the views of 2,305 children and young people. It is their assessment of how care was doing in 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Morgan', written in a cursive style.

Dr Roger Morgan OBE  
Children's Rights Director for England  
March 2014

## THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO TOOK PART

This report gives the views of 2,305 children and young people who filled in our monitoring survey on line, and 32 more children who filled in our Widget symbol questionnaire. Out of those who completed the main survey, 2,250 told us their age. The youngest was under five, and the oldest was a care leaver aged 24. The middle age out of everyone who took part in the survey was 14. Thirty nine per cent were aged 13 or under, and 61% were aged 14 or over. Twelve per cent of these were aged 18 or over. Out of the 2,286 children who told us whether they were boys or girls, 53% were girls and 47% were boys. There were no big differences<sup>1</sup> in these figures from the 2011 monitor.

The children who took part in the survey were receiving services from 190 different social care services across England which had accepted our invitation to take part in the survey. They included 89 local authorities, 20 independent fostering agencies, 8 independent children's homes, 20 boarding schools, 38 residential special schools and 15 residential further education colleges. The services are listed in the appendix at the end of this report.

Not every child or young person answered every question. For each question, we have given the number who did, and where we give percentages, these are percentages of

all the people who answered that question.

Of the 2,259 children who filled in the main survey and who told us whether they were disabled, 417 (18%) said they were disabled. Out of these 377 told us what sort of disability they had. Out of these 377 children, 83 (22%) said their disability was a learning difficulty, 74 (20%) said they had autism or Asperger's syndrome, 55 (15%) said they had speech, language or communication difficulties, 52 (14%) that they had dyslexia, and 52 (14%) told us they had attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). Other sorts of disability included physical disability, mental health difficulties and epilepsy.

Out of the 2,305 children in the survey, 2,298 answered a question about their ethnic background. Out of these, 79% said they were white, 6% that they were Asian, 6% that they were black and 7% that they were from a mixed background. The other children ticked the answer 'other' for this question.

A total of 2,232 children and young people answered a question about whether they were asylum seekers in this country, and 69 (3%) of those who answered this question told us they were asylum seekers.

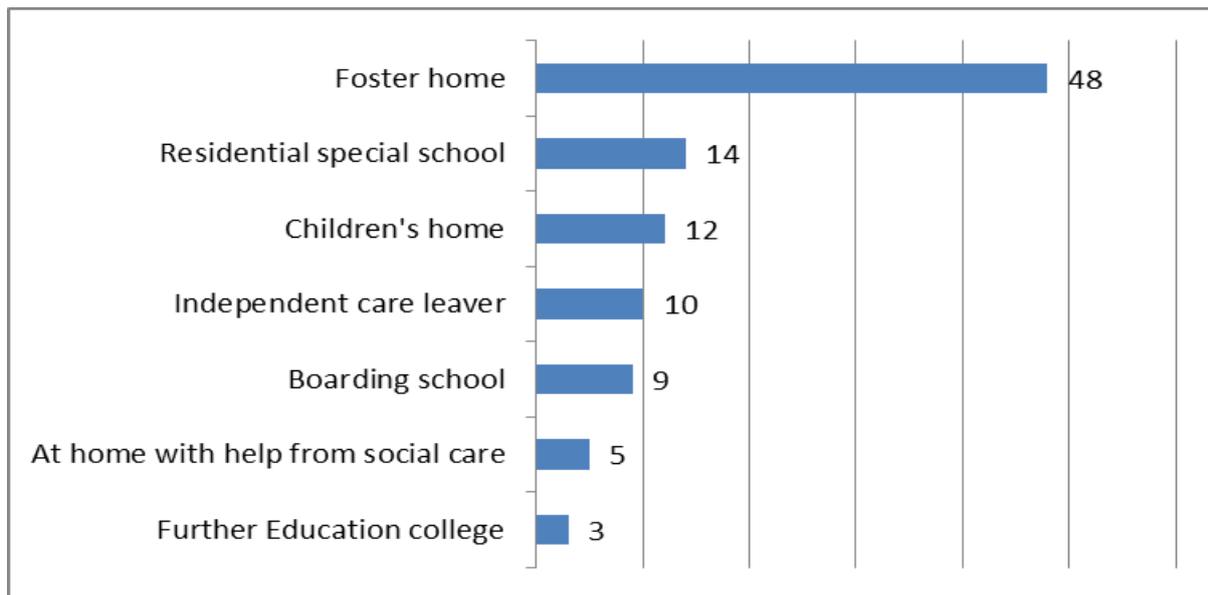
Out of the 32 children and young people who filled in our Widget questionnaire, 20 were boys and 11 girls (one didn't answer that question). The youngest was eight, and the oldest was 19.

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<sup>1</sup> Everywhere in this report, we have counted a 'big difference' as a difference of 10 percentage points or more.

Figure one shows the different settings that the children in our main survey were living in. There were no big differences from the figures for 2011.

**Figure 1: Where the children lived**



Based on answers from 2,305 children.

For this report, we have checked whether different groups of children gave very different answers to the questions. We checked for any big differences in answers between boys and girls, between those aged under 14 and those aged 14 plus, and between those living in different settings. We also checked whether those who said they had a disaid in this 2013 report where there appears to be a definite and steady change over these five years' findings. It is of course important not to assume that very small differences between the

years mean things are actually changing, because different children answered our survey each year and some differences from one survey to the next will have happened purely by chance. But a steady change in one direction may mean that things are changing.

Sometimes the government and local councils might have been trying to change something, but we have found that children themselves aren't seeing that change happening. Not finding a trend over the years can be as important as finding one.

## KEEPING SAFE AND HEALTHY

### WHERE CHILDREN FEEL SAFE AND UNSAFE

We asked children to tell us how safe they felt in different places. Overall, as in past Monitor surveys:

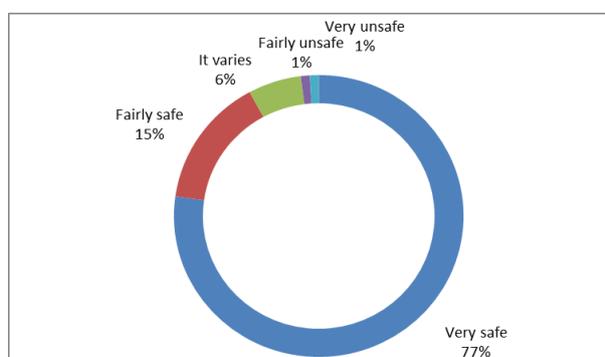
- children felt safest in the building where they live
- next safest at their school or college
- next safest in the countryside
- and least safe in towns or cities.

The children who filled in the Widget questionnaire gave similar views. They felt safest in the building where they lived and at school or college, next safest in the countryside, and least safe in towns or cities.

The findings do not show any big change in how safe children and young people felt in different places over the years we have been doing the Monitor.

Figure two shows how safe the children told us they felt in the buildings where they lived in 2013.

#### Figure 2: How safe children feel in the building where they live



Based on answers from 2,324 children.

As this figure shows, **92% of the children and young people surveyed in 2013 said they felt very safe or fairly safe in the buildings in which they lived.** This was close to the figure of 94% in our last Monitor survey. There were no big differences in answers from boys and girls, or between those aged under 14 and those over 14.

**Children in children's homes felt much less safe in the building where they lived than children generally, with 82% of children in children's homes saying they felt fairly or very safe there.**

**Care leavers also felt much less safe than children and young people generally in the building they were living in, with 81% of care leavers saying they felt safe there.**

**Children in foster care felt safest in the building they lived in, with 98% of foster children saying they felt fairly or very safe there.**

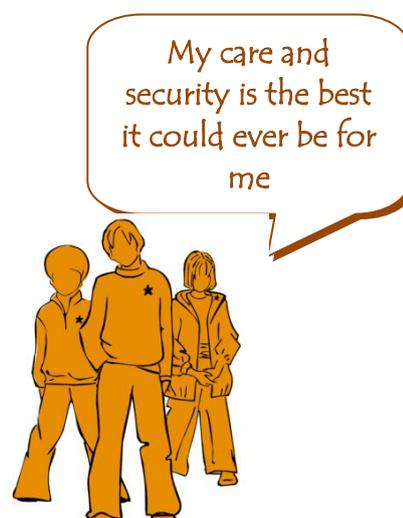
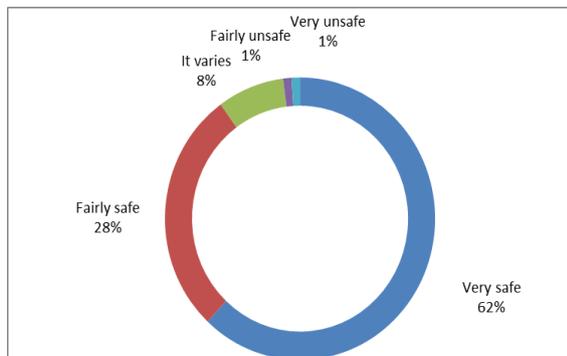


Figure three sets out the findings for how safe the children told us they felt at their school or college in 2013.

**Figure 3: How safe children feel at school or college**



Based on answers from 2,295 children.

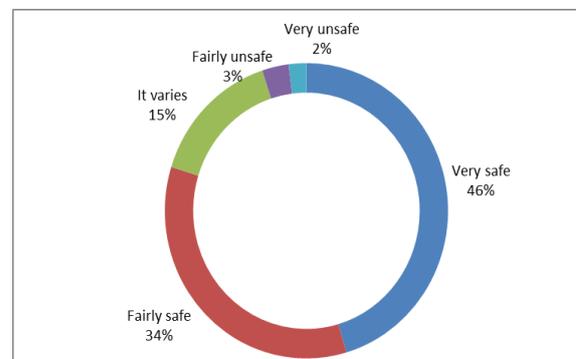
From figure three we can see that in 2013, **90% of the children in our monitoring survey felt either very safe or fairly safe at school or college.** This is exactly the same as in our 2011 survey. There were no big differences on this question between girls and boys, between disabled children and children generally, or between foster children and children in children's homes.

**Those aged 14 and over felt much safer at school or college than those under 14;** 89% of over 14s felt safe or very safe at school or college, compared with 73% of under 14s. We had not found this difference in 2011.

Figure four sets out how safe the children told us they felt when out in the countryside.



**Figure 4: How safe children feel in the countryside**

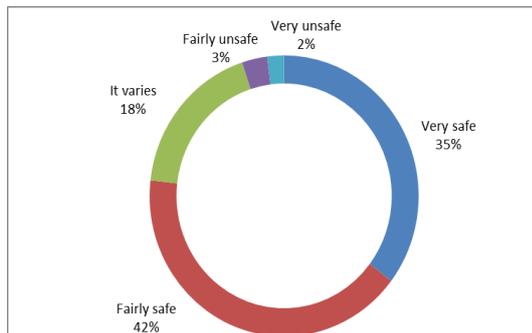


Based on answers from 2,267 children.

In the 2013 survey, **80% felt very safe or fairly safe in the countryside.** This is exactly the same as in 2011, and there were no big differences between boys, girls, older or younger children, or those living in different settings.

Finally, figure five shows the findings for our question about how safe children felt in towns or cities.

**Figure 5: How safe children feel in towns and cities**



Based on answers from 2,315 children.

Towns and cities are the places children told us they feel least safe in, with **only 77% saying they feel very safe or fairly safe in towns and cities in 2013**. This total is close to last year's figure of 73%, and there were no big differences this year between boys and girls, between older and younger children, disabled children and others, or children and young people living in different settings.



## WHAT MAKES CHILDREN FEEL SAFE?

We asked what would make children and young people feel safer in general. We gave people the choice of the most common answers children and young people had given over the last three years, plus space to write in any further answers of their own. **Well over half (59%) of the 2,319 who answered this question in 2013 said there was nothing that would make them feel safer. This is much higher than the 24% who said nothing would make them safer in 2011.**

**There has been a definite increase over the years in the percentage of children and young people saying that nothing would make them feel safer**, from 16% in 2008 to 18% in 2009 and 2010, to 24% in 2011, and up to 59% in 2013.

**The most usual thing that children and young people said made them feel safer was being with adults they trust. Forty percent of the children and young people who answered the question this year gave us this answer.**

**The next most usual answer was having more police or security people about, which this year came from 12% of those answering this question.** This was the next most usual answer in each of the last four Monitor surveys, too.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, or between older or younger children and young people, on what could make them feel safer.

Care leavers were, perhaps not surprisingly, much less likely than younger children and young people to say they would feel safer if they were with adults they trusted.

Children in foster care were much more likely than those in children's homes to say there was nothing that could make them feel safer, and boarders in boarding schools were much less likely than others to say there was nothing that could make them feel safer. Disabled children were much less likely than others to say there was nothing that could make them feel safer.

## DANGERS TO CHILDREN

We asked what children and young people saw as the biggest danger to people their age. Again, we listed the most usual answers from the last three years, and gave everyone the chance to tell us about any other big dangers. Here is the list of the five top dangers children had told us about over the past three years, with the percentages of children who scored each of them as one of the biggest dangers. The percentages are out of the 1,827 who answered the question in 2013.

The top five dangers to children	% of the children giving this answer
Drugs	66%
Bullying	61%
Alcohol	58%
Strangers	53%
Knives	47%

Although there have been slight changes in the order of these dangers over the past five years, **drugs has**

**been top of the list of dangers listed by children each year since we started the Monitor in 2008**, and the danger of knives has been fourth or fifth on the list for the past four years.

**Exactly the same proportion of children (66%) had listed drugs as a top danger in 2011. The proportion of children listing bullying as a top danger had gone up by five percentage points from 56% in 2011 to 61% this year.**

Other dangers hadn't changed so much in frequency since our last survey, when 60% listed alcohol, and 50% listed knives, as top dangers.

In 2013 we found no big differences between boys and girls in what children and young people listed in the top ten dangers. There were no big differences between disabled children and others.

As in past years, here were big differences in what different age groups listed in their top ten dangers.

**The top three dangers listed by over 14s in 2013 were, in order with the most frequently listed first, drugs, alcohol and bullying. The top three dangers listed by those under 14 were bullying, strangers and drugs.**

**Drugs and alcohol were listed in the top ten dangers more often by over 14s than under 14s, while under 14s were more likely to list strangers and bullying.** Seventy seven percent of those over 14 listed drugs (compared with 49% of those aged under 14) and 69% of over 14s listed alcohol (compared with 41% of under 14s). Sixty six percent of under

14s put strangers in their lists, compared with 44% of over 14s, and 71% of under 14s listed bullying, compared with 56% of the over 14s.

**Children in children's homes were more likely than those in foster care to list drugs, alcohol and knives among their top ten dangers – but there was no difference at all in the proportions of children in children's homes and in foster care who listed bullying.**

**Care leavers were much more likely than others to list drugs, alcohol and knives, but much less likely to list strangers or bullying.**

**Boarders in boarding schools were much less likely than others to list drugs, strangers, knives or bullying amongst their top ten dangers.**

## **INJURIES TO CHILDREN**

As well as asking about what dangers children thought there were for their age group, this year we asked what injuries they had actually had in the last year, that were bad enough to need a doctor or a visit to hospital.

**Nearly a quarter (24%) of the 2,288 children who answered this question in 2013 told us they had had an injury in the past year that needed a doctor or hospital visit.**

There were no big differences in the proportions of girls and boys who had been injured, nor between children under 14 and young people aged 14 plus. There was no big difference

between disabled children and others in the proportion reporting injuries.

Many more children from children's homes reported injuries over the past year than children in foster care.

**Thirty seven percent of those in children's homes reported that they had been injured, compared with 21% of foster children.**

There were no other big differences for children living in other settings.

The most frequently reported injuries and causes of injury were (the percentages are out of the 474 children who reported being injured in the past year and who answered this question):

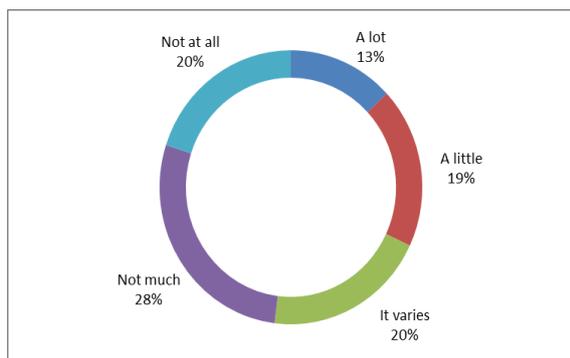
- Falls (18%)
- Fractures and sprains (13%)
- Sports accidents (13%)
- Violence against the child or young person (9%)
- Illnesses (including allergies) (8%)
- Road accident (8%)

Four percent reported injuring themselves when they were being violent (for example, punching or kicking a door), 3% said they had self-harmed, and another 3% that they had taken an overdose. Three percent said they had injured themselves while playing or 'messing around'.

## WORRYING ABOUT SAFETY

Children have told us that worrying about whether you are safe can be just as important as how safe you actually are. Figure six shows what the children told us in 2013 about how much they worry about their safety.

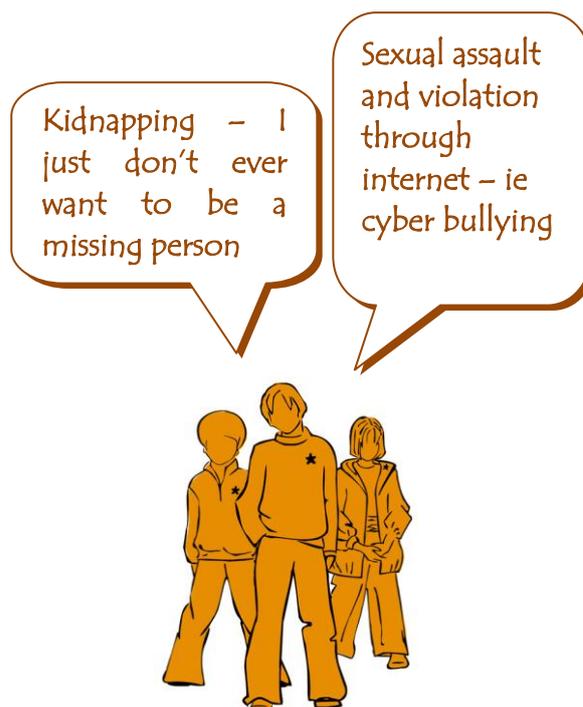
**Figure 6: How much children worry about their safety**



Based on answers from 2,285 children

As we found in our past surveys, children varied a lot in how much they worried about their own safety. But **over the last four years, there has been a big and steady reduction in how many children say they worry a lot or a little about their safety. In 2009, 43% said they worried a little or a lot about their safety; this went down to 36% in 2010, 34% in 2011, and in this 2013 survey it went down again to 32%.**

There were no big differences between boys and girls, disabled children and children generally, or over and under 14s, in how much children worried about their safety.



## ASKING FOR HELP

From many discussions with children over the years, we know that it is important to have someone you trust to go to if you don't feel safe. In the monitoring survey, we asked children who they would go to. Here are the top ten answers.

Who children would go to for help if they felt unsafe	% of the children giving this answer
A friend	57%
A teacher	56%
Police	53%
A parent	51%
Foster carer	48%
Social worker	46%
Someone else in the family (other than brothers or sisters)	40%
Brother or sister	37%
Staff who look after me where I live	31%
The person in charge of where I am	25%

Based on responses from 2,298

children; each child could give more than one answer.

Clearly, as in every year before, **a friend is overall the most likely person for a child or young person to go to if they feel unsafe.**

Teachers are the most likely adults for a child or young person to go to, and the police score highly, ahead of parents, foster carers or social workers.

Although there are some changes in the exact order of people to go to, there have been no big changes in who children would go to since we started the Monitor in 2008. In 2013, the percentages of children who would go to friends, parents, staff where they live, or the person in charge of where they are, are all exactly the same as in 2011. The other percentages are close to those in the last Monitor.

Out of the people who answered this question in 2013, 13% said they would use a telephone helpline for help if they didn't feel safe. This is much the same percentage as over the last four years.

**There were 93 children in the 2013 Monitor survey who told us that there is nobody they feel they could go to if they felt unsafe. This is 4% of all the children who answered this question – much the same as the figure in each of the last four years.**

**Children under 14 were much more likely than those over 14 to list teachers, social workers, other people in their families (apart from brothers and sisters), and if they were in foster care, their**

**foster carers, as people they would go to.**

There was no big difference between girls and boys, though girls were slightly more likely than boys to go to a friend for help if they felt unsafe.

**Disabled children were much more likely than others to say they would go to a parent, brother or sister, teacher, or staff looking after them. They were also more likely to make use of a telephone helpline (almost a quarter, 24%, of disabled children said they would use a telephone helpline if they felt unsafe).** Those completing our Widget symbol survey said they were most likely to go to a teacher if they felt unsafe, followed by house staff, a friend, a family member, and their parents.

Foster children were much more likely than children living in children's homes to say they would go to either a teacher or a social worker. Boarders in boarding schools were much more likely than others to go to a friend, their parents, or staff who look after them, but much less likely than others to say they would go to the police if they felt unsafe.

Children in residential special schools were more likely than others to say they would go to their parents, their teachers, brothers or sisters or other family members, staff looking after them, or the person in charge at the school. They were less likely than others to go to a social worker.

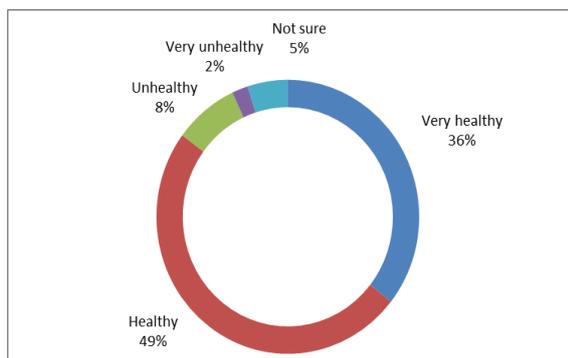
Children living at home with supervision from social care services were much more likely than others to say they would go to a friend, a

brother or sister, or someone else in their family (other than a parent, brother or sister) if they felt unsafe. They slightly more likely than others to go to a parent. Care leavers were much less likely than others to go to a parent, brother or sister if they felt unsafe – but like other groups, were most likely to go to a friend.

## STAYING HEALTHY

For this Monitor, we asked children some new questions about their health, and the help they get with staying healthy. Figure seven shows how healthy children thought they were in 2013.

**Figure 7: How healthy children believe they are**



Based on answers from 2,271 children.

Overall, **85% of the children thought they were healthy or very healthy. Ten percent thought they were unhealthy or very unhealthy** (the rest were not sure).

There was not a big difference between boys and girls in how healthy they thought they were, but **children aged under 14 were much more likely to rate themselves as healthy or very healthy than those**

**aged 14 plus.** Ninety one percent of under 14s rated themselves healthy or very healthy, compared with 81% of over 14s.

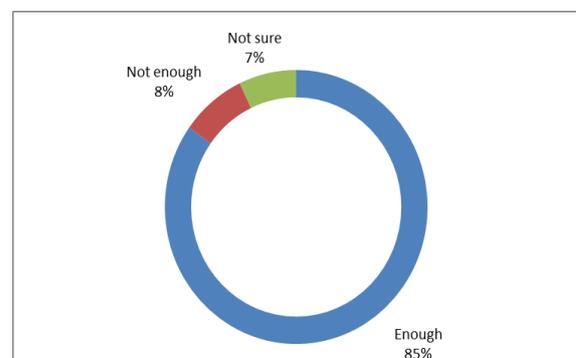
There was no big difference between disabled children and others on this; 84% of disabled children rated themselves as being healthy or very healthy, compared with 86% of all children and young people in the survey.

**Children in foster care were much more likely to rate themselves as healthy or very healthy than those in children's homes.** Ninety one percent of foster children rated themselves as healthy or very healthy, compared with 79% of those in children's homes.

**Care leavers were much less likely than others to rate themselves as healthy or very healthy;** 71% of care leavers rated themselves healthy or very healthy.

Our next new question was to find out how much help the children were getting to stay healthy. Their answers are set out in Figure eight.

**Figure 8: How much help children get to stay healthy**



Based on answers from 2,275 children.

As this figure shows, **85% thought they were getting enough help to stay healthy, with 8% saying they did not get enough help with their health.**

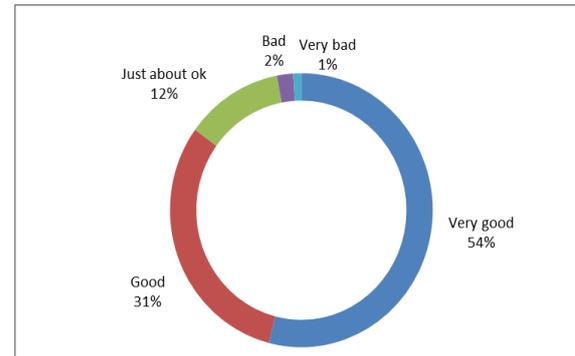
Again, there was no big difference between boys and girls on this question, **but those aged over 14 thought they were getting less help to stay healthy than under 14s did.** Eighty percent of over 14s said they were getting enough help to stay healthy, compared with 91% of under 14s.

**Eighty four percent of disabled children said they were getting enough help to stay healthy; almost the same percentage as children generally in the 2013 Monitor.**

There was no big difference between foster children and children in children's homes in the proportion saying they were getting enough help to stay healthy. However, **only 65% of care leavers reported getting enough help to stay healthy, much lower than either the 85% reported by children and young people generally, or the 80% of over 14s generally.**

The next figure shows how good the children and young people thought the help was.

**Figure 9: How good is the help children get to stay healthy?**



Based on answers from 2,263 children.

Again, the **children were generally positive about the help they were getting to keep healthy, 85% rating it as good or very good. Only 3% rated it bad or very bad.**

As in the previous questions on health, there was no big difference between boys and girls on this question, but those aged under 14 were much more positive than those aged 14 plus. **Ninety four percent of under 14s rated the help they were getting to stay healthy as good or very good, compared with only 81% of those aged 14 plus.**

There was not a big difference between foster children and those living in children's homes on this issue, though foster children were somewhat more likely than those in children's homes to rate the help they were getting to stay healthy as good or very good.

**Care leavers were less satisfied than children and young people generally with the help they did get with their health.** Only 64% rated it as good or very good,

compared with 85% of children and young people generally.

**The percentage of disabled children rating the help they were getting to stay healthy as good or very good was exactly the same as that for other children and young people.**

## **EMOTIONAL OR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**

Our final new question in 2013 was to find out how many children in care, getting social care services, or living away from home in boarding or other residential schools or colleges, thought they had emotional or mental health problems – and if they did, how much help they were getting with these.

Out of the 2,203 children who answered this question, **nearly half, 47%, told us they had mental health or emotional problems.** Of the rest, 44% said they did not, and 9% weren't sure in answering the question.

There were no big differences between girls and boys or between under and over 14s in the proportion who told us they had mental health or emotional problems at the time of the 2013 Monitor survey.

There were no big differences either between children in children's homes and foster children, children living at home with social care support and children in the survey generally, or care leavers and children in the survey generally, in the percentages reporting having mental health or emotional problems.

**Fifty percent of children in children's homes, 45% of foster children, and 43% of children at home with social care support, told us they had mental health or emotional problems, compared with 47% of all children and young people in the survey. Fifty four percent of care leavers said they had mental health or emotional problems.**

There were big differences between residential schools in the percentages of children and young people reporting mental health or emotional problems. **A third (33%) of boarders in 'mainstream' boarding schools reported having mental health or emotional problems – far fewer than children in the survey generally.**

**By contrast, 60% of children in residential special schools reported having mental health or emotional problems – a much higher percentage than children in the survey generally.** This is not surprising, given the special job of those schools.

**Disabled children were much more likely than children generally to report having mental health or emotional problems. In the 2013 Monitor, 63% of disabled children said they had mental health or emotional problems, compared with 47% of children generally in the survey.**

**Although there were relatively few (68) answering this question, asylum seeking children and young people were about half as likely as children generally in the**

**survey to report having mental health or emotional problems.**

**Of all children in the 2013 monitor who said they had mental health or emotional problems, 67% said they were getting enough help with them.**

There were no big differences between boys and girls, over and under 14s, between children in children's homes and foster children, or between disabled children and children generally, in the proportions saying they were getting enough help with any mental health or emotional problems they had.

**Care leavers were much less likely to report getting enough help with mental health or emotional problems. Fifty four percent of care leavers said they were getting enough help with mental health or emotional problems they had,** compared with the overall figure of 67% for the children and young people generally in the survey.

**Children in residential schools were much more likely than children generally in the survey to report getting enough help with any mental health or emotional problems they had, with 78% saying they were getting enough help.**

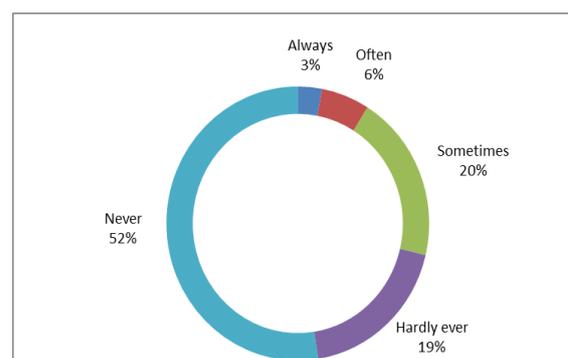
## BULLYING

### HOW MUCH BULLYING THERE IS

Bullying is a major issue identified by children for us to monitor each year with them. We do not say what we think counts as bullying, but, as in other reports which deal with bullying, we leave it to children themselves to decide whether what is happening to them counts as bullying. We do, though, ask them to tell us exactly what happens to them.

Figure ten gives the figures for how often children told us they are being bullied in 2013.

**Figure 10: How often children are bullied**



Based on answers from 2,260 children

**In 2013, nine percent of children said they are being bullied often or always.** This is exactly the same as in 2011, and the percentage of children who told us they are often or always bullied has stayed almost the same over the last five years. It has

been 8% or 9% in each of our Monitor surveys since 2008. Adding in those who said they were sometimes being bullied, **29% of children told us in 2013 that they were getting bullied sometimes, often or always.**

**Just over half the children (52%) in the 2013 survey told us they were never bullied.** This compares with only 38% saying they were never bullied in 2008, 45% in 2009, 52% in 2010, and 48% in 2011.

There was no big difference between boys and girls in reporting being bullied sometimes, often or always. As in earlier years, **those aged under 14 were more likely to report being bullied than those aged 14 plus.** In 2013, 36% of those under 14 said they were sometimes, often or always bullied, compared with 25% of those aged 14 plus. Sixty four percent of under 14s said they were never or hardly bullied, compared with 75% of over 14s. This is much the same difference as in 2010 and 2011.

**Children in children's homes were much more likely to report bullying than those in foster homes. Forty two percent of children in children's homes reported being sometimes, often or always bullied, compared with 27% of foster children.** The level of reported bullying in children's homes had gone up from 33% last year, but that for foster children was close to the 29% reported in 2011.

**Care leavers were much less likely to report bullying than children and young people generally in the monitor; 18% of care leavers said they were bullied sometimes,**

**often or always.** This was slightly up on the 13% reported in 2011.

**Less bullying was reported by boarders in boarding schools than by children generally in the monitor survey. Only thirteen percent of boarders reported being bullied sometimes, often or always, compared with 29% for the survey overall.** The percentage for boarders in 'mainstream' boarding schools was identical to that we found in 2011.

**More bullying was reported by children living in residential special schools than by children generally in the survey; 39% of those in residential special schools reported being bullied sometimes, often or always.** This was little changed from the 40% we found in 2011.

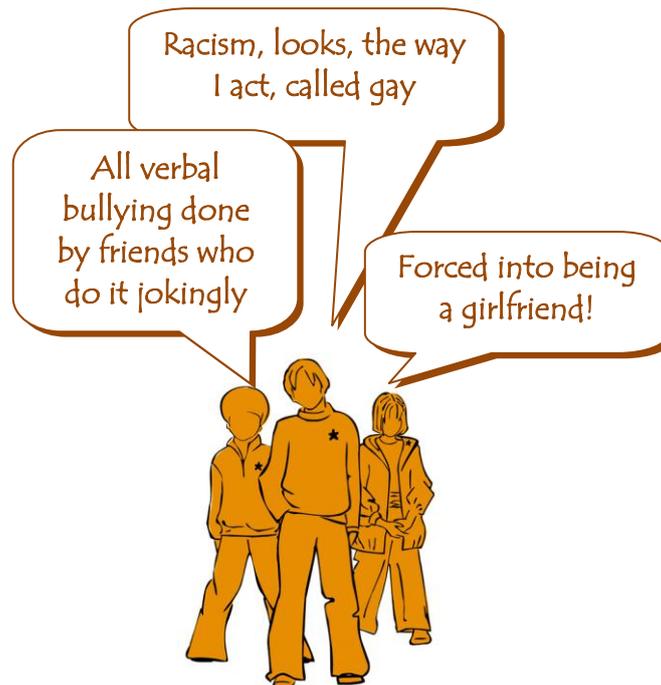
Disabled children were more likely to report being bullied than other children in the survey. We found the same in previous years' monitors. **In 2013, 38% of disabled children reported being bullied sometimes, often or always (compared with 29% of children generally in the survey),** and 61% of disabled children reported never or hardly ever being bullied (compared with 71% of children generally in the monitor survey).

This year, we checked whether there were any big differences in being bullied between children who said they were white, and children who said they were black, Asian or from mixed or other backgrounds. There were no big differences in the proportions of children saying they were always or often bullied, or that they were

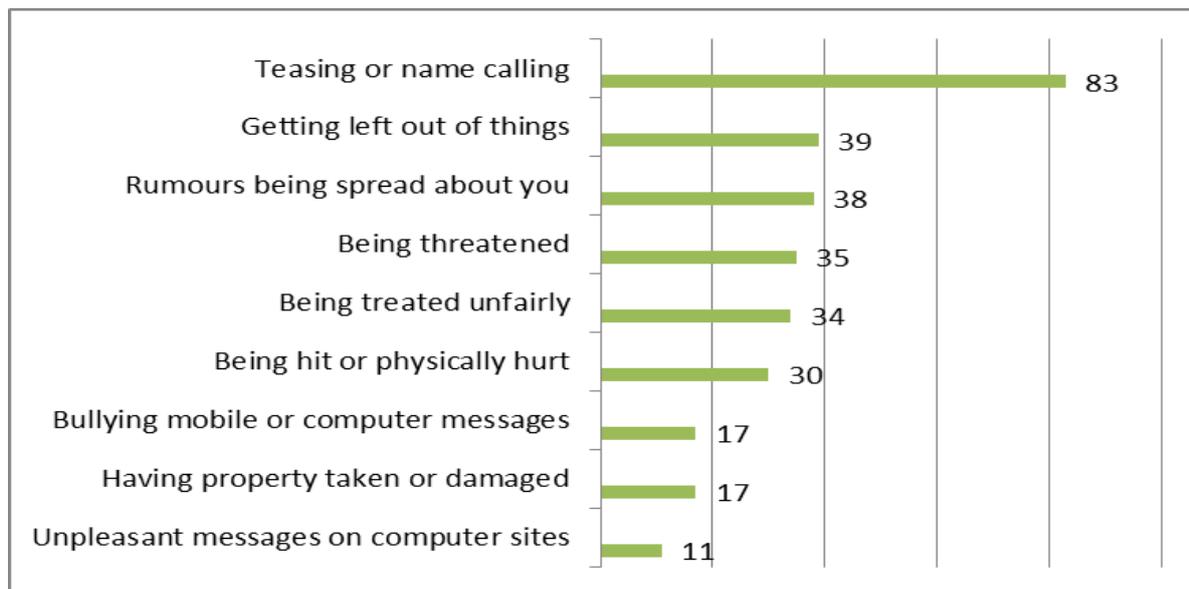
sometimes, always or often bullied. Many more children from black, Asian, mixed or other backgrounds than children who said they were white said they were never bullied (61% of those who said they were from black, Asian, mixed or other backgrounds said they were never bullied, compared with 50% of those who said they were white).

## WHAT BULLYING IS

Because we let people decide for themselves whether what happened to them counted as bullying, we then asked exactly happened when they were bullied. People could give more than one answer. Figure eleven gives all the types of bullying that were listed by at least one in 10 of the children who told us about bullying.



**Figure 11: Types of bullying**



Figures are percentages of 3,120 answers from 1,014 children.

**As in past years, the most usual type of bullying is teasing or name calling.**

There have been no changes of as much as five percentage points in any of these types of bullying since the findings of the 2011 survey. **The proportion of bullying through computer or mobile messaging has stayed exactly the same as in 2011.**

Using our usual rule that a difference of 10 percentage points counts as a big difference, there were some big differences between girls and boys in the sorts of bullying they reported. **Boys were much more likely to report being hit or physically hurt, and girls were much more likely to report rumours being spread about them, getting left out of things, or being treated unfairly.**

The only type of bullying where there was a big difference between children under 14 and young people over 14 was cyber bullying, by computer or

mobile or on social networking sites: **those over 14 reported much more cyber bullying than those under 14.**

**Compared with foster children, those in children's homes reported much more bullying by being threatened, and through cyber bullying. Those in residential special schools reported much less bullying by being threatened than children did in the survey generally.**

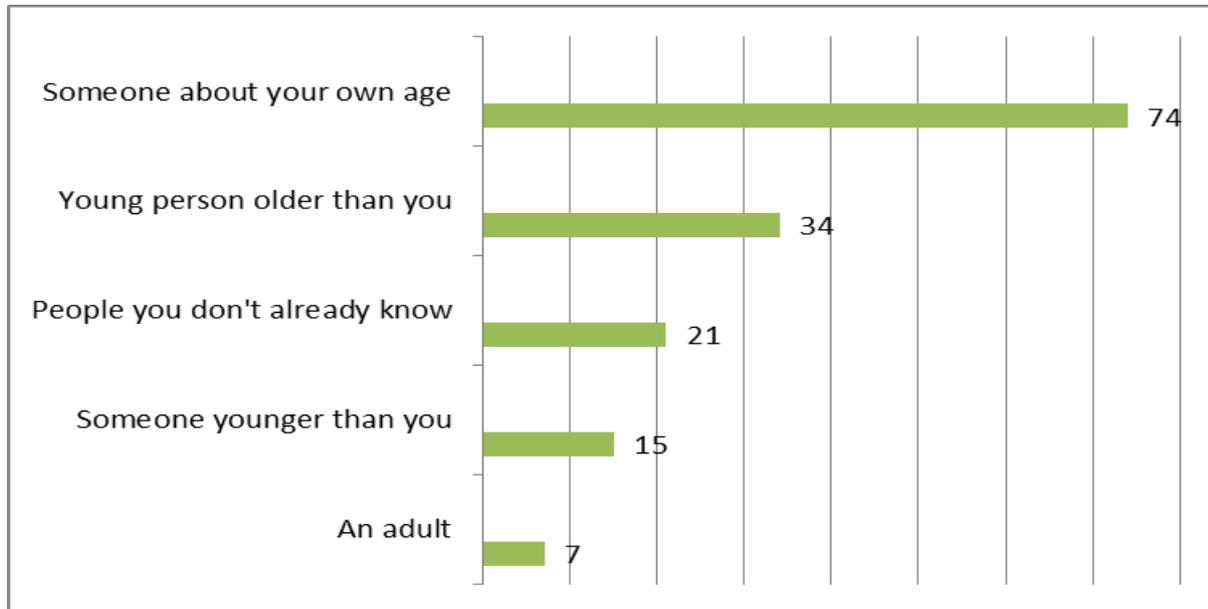
In 2013, there were no big differences between disabled children and others in the survey in reporting any of the specific types of bullying.

Most of these differences change a lot from one year to the next, so **over the years, there has been no clear pattern of different sorts of bullying always happening for children living in different sorts of places.**

## WHO DOES THE BULLYING

Figure twelve shows who children who answered the question told us they were usually bullied by.

**Figure 12: Who the bullies are**



Figures are percentages of 1,553 responses from 1,030 children.

**Nearly three quarters (74%) of the children who were being bullied were usually bullied by someone of much their own age.**

This is what we found in previous years too. There were no differences of as much as five percentage points in any of these figures when compared with our 2011 survey.

There were no big differences between boys and girls in who bullies them.

**Being bullied by a child or young person you didn't already know was much more likely to be reported to us by young people over 14 than by children aged under 14;** 26% of the over 14s who were being bullied reported this, compared with 16% of the under 14s.

Comparing children living in children's homes with those living in foster homes, **children in children's homes were more likely to be bullied by children younger than themselves, while foster children were more likely to be bullied by someone their own age.** Twenty percent of children who were being bullied in children's homes said this was by children younger than themselves, while only 10% of foster children who were being bullied said this. Eighty percent of the foster children who reported being bullied told us this was by someone of their own age, while 66% of those being bullied in children's homes said this.

The same was true of children living in **residential special schools, where**

**27% of those who reported being bullied said this was by children younger than themselves.**

**Disabled children who reported being bullied were much less likely to say that the bully was someone older than themselves** than children generally said in the survey. Twenty two percent of disabled children said this, compared with 34% of children and young people in the survey generally.

### **BEING BULLIED FOR BEING IN CARE**

From our four previous monitor surveys, and from our other consultations, we know that children in care can often be bullied just for being in care. In 2013, 1,389 children in care answered a question about this in our survey. **Sixteen percent of children in care reported being bullied for being in care.** There had been a slight but steady drop each year from 2008 (when 21% of children in care had told us they were being bullied for being in care) to 2011 when 15% said this; but with a figure of 16% this year, this slight trend seems to have stopped.

There were no big differences between girls and boys in care, between over or under 14s, or between disabled children and other children in care, in whether they reported being bullied just for being in care.

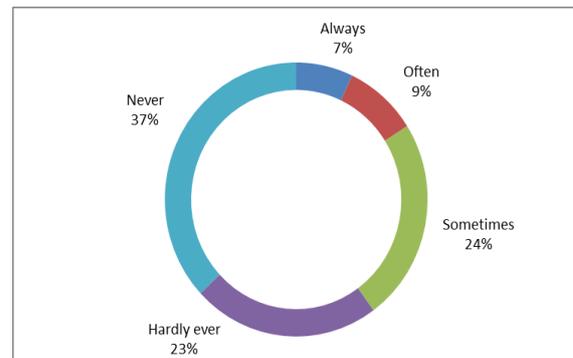
However, children in children's homes this year reported being much more likely than foster children to be bullied just for being in care. **Twenty four percent of children from children's homes reported being bullied for**

**being in care, compared with 13% of children from foster homes.**

### **WORRYING ABOUT BULLYING**

From our earlier surveys we know that many children worry about getting bullied, and that children can worry about this even if they are not actually being bullied. Figure thirteen shows how much children told us they worry about bullying in 2013.

**Figure 13: How often children worry about bullying**



Based on answers from 2,266 children

**Sixteen percent of the children in our 2013 survey were often or always worried about getting bullied. This is exactly the same as in 2011.**

**Sixty percent hardly or ever worried about getting bullied, which is close to the 63% who said that in 2011.**

**There is as in past years slightly more worrying about bullying than there is actual bullying. In 2013, 9% of the children reported being often or always bullied, but**

## 16% said they often or always worry about getting bullied.

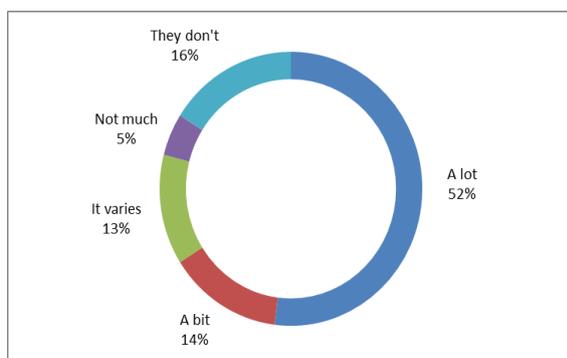
There were no big differences this year between boys and girls, over and under 14s, disabled children and children in the survey generally, or between children in children's homes, residential special schools or foster care, in levels of worrying about bullying. The lowest level of worrying about bullying was in 'mainstream' boarding schools (where 11% reported worrying often or always about bullying), and the highest (at 17%) was in residential special schools – but those reporting rates are not far enough apart to qualify as a big difference.

### HOW MUCH ADULTS HELP TO STOP BULLYING

We use the Monitor to keep a check on how well, according to children themselves, adults are working to counter bullying among children they are responsible for.

Figure fourteen shows how much children overall thought the adults looking after them helped to stop them being bullied in 2013.

**Figure 14: How much adults help to stop children being bullied**



Based on answers from 2,184 children.

Overall, **52% of children answering in our 2013 survey thought the adults looking after them helped a lot to stop them getting bullied. Sixteen percent thought that the adults looking after them didn't help at all to stop them being bullied.** These figures are not very different from the 54% and 12% we reported in the 2011 survey.

**Children aged under 14 thought their adults helped much more to stop bullying than did the children aged 14 plus.** Out of the children aged under 14 answering this question, 66% said the adults looking after them helped a lot to stop bullying, compared with 45% of the over 14s. We found this sort of age difference in the last monitor too.

There was no big difference between girls and boys, between children in children's homes and foster children, between those in residential special schools and children generally, or between disabled children and children generally in the survey, in how much they thought the adults looking after them countered bullying.

Forty one percent of boarders in 'mainstream' boarding schools reported that the adults looking after them helped a lot to counter bullying, compared with 52% of children in the survey generally. However, although **fewer boarders reported that the adults helped a lot to counter bullying, only 11% of boarders reported that the adults didn't help at all (a lower percentage than children in the survey generally) – the pattern reported**

by boarders was different from children in other settings in that a far higher percentage said the

help from adults varied or was 'not much'.

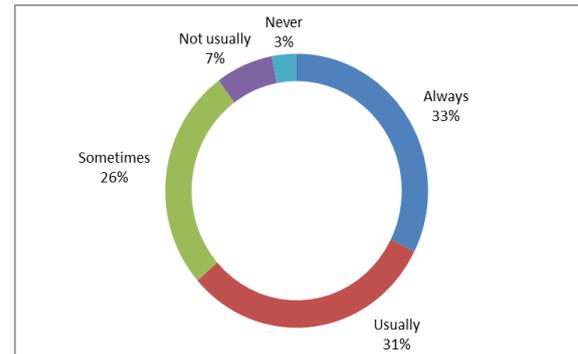
## HAVING A SAY IN WHAT HAPPENS

### HOW MUCH CHILDREN ARE ASKED FOR THEIR OPINION

There are many laws, government standards and guidelines saying that it is important that children, especially children in care or living away from home, are asked for their views, and that their views and feelings are taken into account in decisions about their lives. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (a treaty the UK has signed up to) says that children must be given a say in things that matter to them. The United Nations is due soon to check on how well this country has been keeping to this treaty.

This section of the monitor checks how far children say they are asked for their views, and how much difference they think their views and feelings make. Figure fifteen shows how often children told us they get asked for their opinions about things that matter to them.

**Figure 15: How often children are asked their opinion about things that matter**



Based on answers from 2,262 children.

**Nearly two thirds of the children (64%) said their opinions were usually or always asked on things that mattered to them. Ten percent said their opinions were not usually, or never, asked.**

**There has been a steady increase in asking children for their opinions over the past five years.** The percentage saying their opinions were usually or always asked has been steadily rising, and was this year up from 57% in 2011. Alongside this, the percentage saying their opinions are not usually, or never, asked has been going down steadily, and this year's figure of 10% is down from 14% in 2011.

There were no big differences between girls and boys, between children under or over 14, between disabled children and children in the survey generally, or

between care leavers and children and young people generally, in the percentages who said their opinions were usually or always asked.

There was no difference at all between children in children's homes and foster children in how often they said their opinions were usually or always asked – 69% of both groups said they were often or always asked for their opinions.

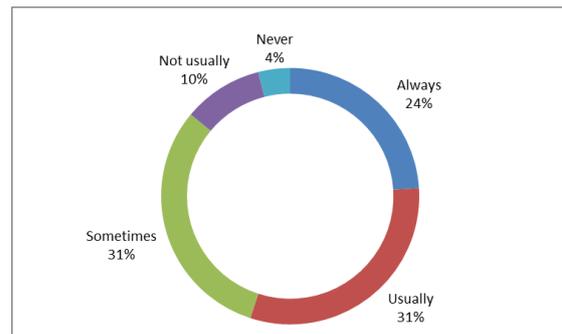
**Forty six percent of boarders in boarding schools said their opinions were often or always asked, a much lower percentage than the 64% for children generally in the 2013 monitor.**

### **HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE CHILDREN'S OPINIONS MAKE**

Being asked for your opinion is one thing, but your opinions making a difference to decisions about you is quite another. Children have told us in many other consultations that professionals are quite good nowadays at asking children for their views, but children have often told us that their views don't so often make a big difference to decisions being made about their lives.

Figure sixteen shows how much difference children said their opinions, once asked for, made to decisions about their lives.

**Figure 16: How often children's opinions make a difference to decisions about their lives**



Based on answers from 2,243 children.

**Overall, over half the children (55%) said their opinions usually or always made a difference to decisions about their lives, while 14% said their decisions didn't usually or ever make a difference.**

These figures are close to those we found in our 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 monitors.

There were no big differences between any groups of children in how much their opinions made to decisions about their lives. Boys and girls, under and over 14s, disabled children, and children in different types of setting, all reported much the same level of impact of their opinions on decisions about them.

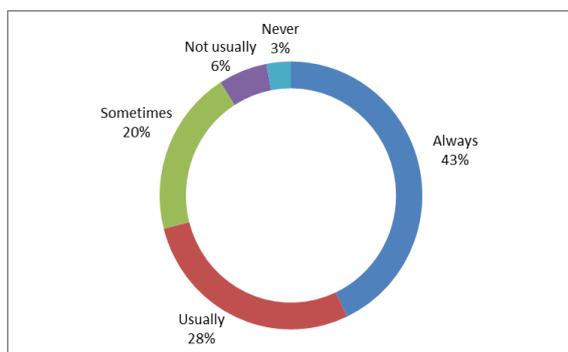
**Overall, for all groups of children except boarders in mainstream boarding schools, the percentage saying their opinions made a difference to decisions about their lives was lower than the percentage saying they were asked for their opinions. Sixty four percent were usually or always asked for their opinions, while 55% said that the opinions they gave usually or always made a difference to decisions about their lives.**

Boarders were the exception to this. **Although boarders in mainstream boarding schools reported that they were asked their opinions less often than children in other settings, their opinions once asked made more difference to their lives.** Forty six percent of boarders reported being usually or always asked for their opinions, while 54% said the opinions they gave usually or always made a difference to decisions about their lives.

### BEING TOLD ABOUT CHANGES IN YOUR LIFE

In many of our consultations, children tell us that being told what is happening to you, and why, can be as important as having a say in what is happening. In each year's monitor, we ask how often children are told about major changes that are going to happen in their lives. Figure seventeen shows what children told us in 2013.

**Figure 17: How often adults tell children about major changes that are going to happen**



Based on answers from 2,238 children

**Seventy one percent of children in the 2013 monitor told us that they are usually or always told**

**what is going on when major changes are going to happen in their lives. Nine percent said they are not usually, or never, told.**

There has been little change in these figures over the past five years.

There was no big difference between girls and boys in how many told us they were usually or always told what is going to happen, though boys were slightly more likely to be told than girls were. There were no big differences between disabled children and other children, or between asylum-seeking young people and others, in how many told us they were usually or always told what is going to happen.

As we found in each of the last three monitor surveys, **younger children were much more likely to be told what was going to happen than older young people were. Seventy eight percent of children aged under 14 said they were usually or always told when major changes were going to happen in their lives, compared with 67% of those aged over 14.**

There were no big differences between those living in different sorts of placement in how often children reported being told what is going to happen, nor between care leavers and children and young people in the survey generally.

### WHAT DECISIONS CHILDREN THINK THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE SAY IN

We asked what decisions children and young people thought they should have more say about than they usually do. We did not give any suggestions, so the answers came entirely from the

children and young people themselves. Three answers came from more than one in ten of the children who answered this question. Here are those top three answers.

What children should have more say about than they do now	% of the children giving this answer
Deciding on the placement for me to live in	15%
Decisions about contact with my family	13%
Decisions about my future	12%

Based on responses from 829 children; each child could give more than one answer.

The top three answers are exactly the same as in the last two monitor surveys. **The top three decisions where children believe they should have more say than they do now are care decisions: about the future, about placements to live in and about family contacts when living away from the family.**



Eighteen percent of the children answering this question told us that they did not think they should have more say about any particular decision.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, or between under and over 14s in answers to this question, or between disabled children and children generally. **Children in children's homes, and care leavers, were much more likely than others to want more say in their future placement or accommodation.** A quarter (25%) of those in children's homes wanted more say about their placements, compared with only 12% of those in foster homes. Boarders in 'mainstream' boarding schools wanted much more say in the food they were given than children did generally in the survey.

I pretty much get my point across if I feel there is something that needs to be said. Although my opinion may not always make a difference, it's always taken into consideration and that's what counts, rather than it just being pushed aside



Should have more say on things like family contact as I don't always want it but feel as if I have to

Asking young people what they think and listening to them

## MAKING COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

If children are not happy with the way they are being looked after, or with the social care help they are getting, they may need to make a complaint. Children in care or supported by social care services have the right to make a complaint. They also have the right to make a suggestion that might help to improve the services they are getting, whether or not something has gone wrong for them. Children in care also have the right to have the help of an advocate (someone to speak on their behalf) in making a complaint or a suggestion.

There are official complaints and 'representations' procedures set up by law for children to use. As well as having these to use, children and young people have often told us that they want to be able to raise worries and concerns, and have these sorted out for them, before having to think about having to use these formal procedures.

### MAKING A COMPLAINT

We had 2,251 answers to our question about whether children had ever made a complaint. **Nearly a third of the children (31%) told us they had made a complaint at some time.** This figure fell steadily for four years from 43% 2008 to 23% in 2011, but had risen again to 31% in 2013.

There were no big differences in 2013 in the proportions making complaints between boys and girls, under 14s and over 14s, or between disabled children

and children generally. **Children in children's homes were much more likely than foster children to have made a complaint.** In 2013, 47% of those in children's homes reported having made a complaint, compared with 25% of foster children.

Out of 686 children who told us how they had made their last complaint, **about a third (34%) had used the complaints procedure of the children's home, school or college they lived in.** This was up from about a quarter (24%) in 2011. Boys were much more likely to use this sort of procedure than girls were (41% of boys and 28% girls said they had used the procedure of the children's home, school or college where they lived). There was no big difference between over and under 14s in use of the complaints procedure of the home, school or college they lived in.

**Of children in care and care leavers who had actually made a complaint, 38% had made their last complaint through their social worker, and 17% had made it through the council's complaints procedure. Children under 14 were much more likely than young people over 14 to make a complaint through their social worker.**

**The most usual way for children in children's homes to make a complaint was to use the home's own procedure** (67% of those in children's homes who had made a complaint had made their last

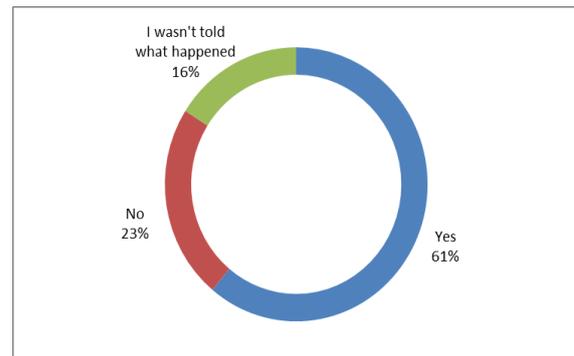
complaint that way). **The most usual way for foster children to make a complaint was through their social worker** (56% of foster children who had made a complaint had made their last complaint that way). Care leavers were most likely to use their care authority's complaints procedure if they made a complaint.

**Boarders in mainstream boarding schools, and children in residential special schools, were most likely to use their school's own procedure if they made a complaint.**

There were no big differences between disabled children and children in the survey generally in the pattern of ways of making a complaint in 2013. The most likely way for a disabled child to make a complaint was using their home or school procedure (40% of disabled children who had made a complaint had made their last complaint this way).

We asked children who had made a complaint how well their last complaint had turned out. We asked them whether they thought it had been sorted out fairly, not whether it had been upheld. We also wanted to find out whether children knew, or hadn't been told, what had happened to their complaint. Figure eighteen shows the answers.

**Figure 18: Was your last complaint sorted out fairly?**



Based on answers from 673 children

**Sixty one percent of children thought that their last complaint had been sorted out fairly.**

**Sixteen percent of the children told us they didn't know what had happened to the last complaint they made.** This is an improvement over the 2011 figure of 22%, but is no better than the situation back in 2009, when 15% of children said they didn't know what had happened to their last complaint.

There were no big differences in 2011 between boys and girls, or between over and under 14s, in how likely children were to be told the results of their complaints.

**In this monitor, boys were much more likely than girls to say their last complaint was sorted out fairly.** Sixty six percent of boys said this, compared with 56% of girls. There were no big differences between over and under 14's, between children in children's homes and foster children, or between disabled children and children generally, in whether they saw the results of their last complaints as being fair.

**Children in residential special schools were more likely than children generally to report that their last complaint was sorted out fairly.** Boarders in mainstream boarding schools were less likely than children in the survey generally to report that their last complaint had been sorted out fairly.

Eight out of the 32 children who filled in our Widget symbol questionnaire said they had made a complaint, and all of these said it had been sorted out fairly.

## **ADVOCATES**

Many children and young people have told us that having an advocate can be very important when making a complaint, and children in care have a legal right to have an advocate to help them whenever they use their council's complaints procedure. We asked children and young people whether they knew how to get hold of an advocate if they needed one to help them to make a complaint.

**Overall, over half (55%) of the children and young people both knew what an advocate is, and how to get hold of one.** This is exactly the same figure as in 2011. **But 29% didn't know what an advocate is.** (This is very close to last year's figure of 30%).

There was no big difference between girls and boys, nor between disabled children and children generally in the survey, in knowing about advocates and how to get in touch with one, but **young people over 14 were much more likely than children under 14 to know how to get hold of an**

**advocate, and children under 14 were much less likely than the over 14s to know what an advocate is.** Sixty one percent of over 14s knew what an advocate is and how to get hold of one, compared with 46% of the under 14s. Forty percent of those under 14 didn't know what an advocate is, compared with only 22% of the over 14s.

**Out of children in care and care leavers, 57% in 2013 both knew what an advocate is and how to get hold of one. Twenty seven percent of children in care and care leavers didn't know what an advocate was in 2013.**

**Children in children's homes were much more likely than foster children both to know what an advocate is and to know how to get hold of one.** Seventy four percent of those in children's homes both knew what an advocate is and how to get hold of one, compared with only 54% of foster children. These are very close to the 2011 figures. Thirty one percent of foster children in 2013 didn't know what an advocate is, compared with only 14% of those in children's homes.

## **MAKING A SUGGESTION**

As well as having the right to make a complaint, children in care or getting help from children's social care services have the right to make a suggestion about how their services could be improved. Boarding schools and colleges often have ways for boarders and residential students to make positive suggestions too.

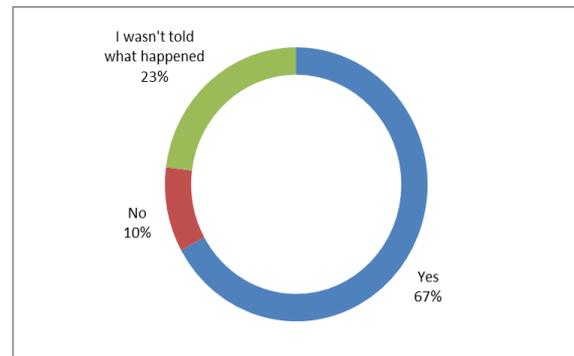
We asked children whether they had ever made a suggestion to improve how children and young people are cared for. **In 2013, 38% of the 2,197 children who answered this monitor question said they had made a suggestion to improve how children are looked after,** and 62% said they hadn't. The figures for 2011 were 34% and 66%.

There was no big difference between boys and girls in how likely they were to have made a suggestion. As in 2011, **those aged over 14 were much more likely to have made a suggestion to improve services than those under 14.**

Also as in 2011, **children living in children's homes were much more likely to have made a suggestion than children in foster care.** Over half the children in children's homes (56%) told us they had made a suggestion for improvement, compared with around a third (34%) of foster children.

Figure nineteen shows whether the children who had made a suggestion to improve something thought their suggestion had been dealt with properly, and whether they knew what had happened to their suggestion.

**Figure 19: Were suggestions dealt with properly?**



Based on answers from 844 children

Figure nineteen shows that **two thirds of the children (67%) who had made suggestions to improve something about their services thought their suggestion had been dealt with properly.** Twenty three percent said they weren't told what had happened to their suggestion. These figures are similar to those for the past four years.

There were no big differences between girls and boys or between those aged over or under 14, in the percentages who reported that suggestions they had made were dealt with fairly.

**Disabled children were somewhat more likely than children generally to report that their suggestions had been dealt with fairly;** approximately three quarters of disabled children (76%) said their last suggestion had been dealt with fairly.

There was no big difference in 2013 between the percentage of children in children's homes and the percentage of foster children reporting that suggestions had been dealt with fairly, or in the percentages who had not

been told what had happened to their suggestions.

Nineteen out of the 32 children who filled in our Widget symbol

questionnaire said they had made a suggestion, and all of them said their suggestion had been sorted out properly.

## EDUCATION

Even though this is a care monitor and not an education monitor, children have often told us in other consultations how important their education is to them. Those who are in care have told us how changes in their care, such as changing their living placement, can have a big effect on their education.

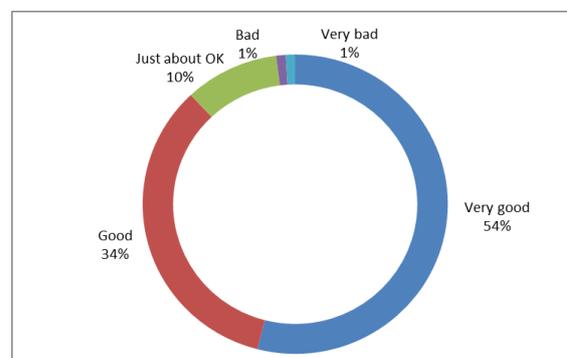
Out of all the children and young people answering the monitor survey, 2,012 were in some sort of education. This was 89% of the 2,249 who answered our question on this.

**Children living in foster care were much more likely to be in education than those living in children's homes. Ninety four percent of foster children answering our survey told us they were in education, compared with 79% of children living in children's homes.** We found this difference in the previous two monitor surveys too.

### HOW DO CHILDREN RATE THEIR EDUCATION?

Figure twenty shows how the children rated their education in 2013.

**Figure 20: How children rate their education**



Based on answers from 1,999 children

Overall, **88% of the children rated their education as good or very good, and 2% rated it as bad or very bad. These are close to the figures from the previous two monitor surveys.**

There were no big differences between girls and boys, or between over and under 14s, or between disabled children and others, in how well they rated their education.

**Out of 1,603 children and young people in care, care leavers, or living in residential special schools and taking part in this**

year's care monitor, 87% rated their education as good or very good. Again, this is close to the percentages in the two previous monitor surveys.

Children living in foster care were more likely than those living in children's homes to rate their education highly. Eighty nine percent of foster children rated their education as good or very good, compared with 67% of children in children's homes. In 2013, children in children's homes rated their education much lower than they had in 2011, when 77% had rated it as good or very good.

Boarders in boarding schools rated their education highest of all the different settings children were living in, with 94% of boarders rating their education as good or very good.

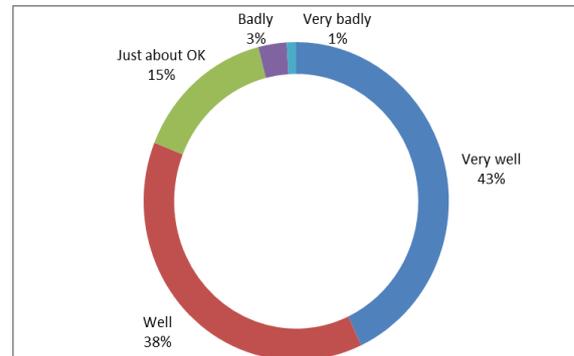
Eighty nine percent of children in residential special schools rated their education as good or very good.

### HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN DOING IN EDUCATION?

When people write about how well children are doing in their education, they usually rate this according to things like examination results. In our monitor reports, we ask the children themselves how they think they are doing in their education at school or college.

Figure twenty one shows how the children in our 2013 monitor thought they were doing in their education.

Figure 21: How well children say they are doing in education.



Based on answers from 1,997 children

Overall, 81% of the children and young people in education told us they were doing well or very well in their education in 2013. Four percent said they were doing badly or very badly. Those rating their education as good or very good was up from 78% in 2011, but there has been no big change over the past five years.

There were no big differences between girls and boys, or between over and under 14s, or between disabled children and others.

Out of the 1,606 children answering this question from children's homes, foster care, care leavers and residential special schools, 81% thought they were doing well or very well in their education; exactly the same as the percentage for the survey as a whole. This is up from the 77% who said this in the 2011 monitor. The percentage of children from these settings saying they were doing well or very well in education was exactly the same as the

percentage saying this in boarding schools in 2013.

The percentages of children in foster care and care leavers who thought they were doing well or very well in education was much higher than the percentage in children's homes. Eighty three percent of foster children thought

they were doing well or very well, compared with only 71% of children from children's homes – a big difference.

Eighty four percent of those in residential special schools and 83% of care leavers in education thought they were doing well or very well in 2013.

## BEING IN CARE

The final two sections of this report are about children either in care or leaving care, rather than all the children included in my work as Children's Rights Director for England.

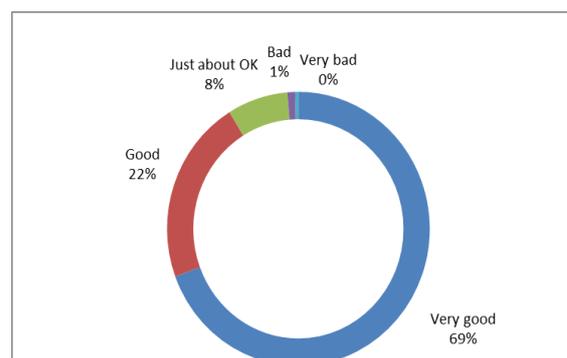
Altogether, 1,499 children and young people who completed our 2013 monitor survey were from care. Of those, 45% were boys and 55% girls, 45% were aged under 14 and 55% were 14 plus, and 12% said they were disabled.

Seventy two percent lived in foster homes, 18% in children's homes, 4% were placed in residential special schools, 4% lived at home with social care support, 1% were placed in boarding schools and 1% were placed in residential further education colleges.

### QUALITY OF CARE

In each year's monitor, we ask children to rate the quality of their own care for us. Figure 22 shows the overall ratings for 2013.

**Figure 22: How children in care rate their care**



Based on answers from 1,490 children

**In 2013, 91% of the children in care in our monitor survey rated their care overall as good or very good.** This is slightly up from 89% in 2011. The figure was 90% in each of the two years before that. Only six children (under 0.5%) in 2013 rated their care as bad or very bad.

As we found in each of the last five years, there were no big differences between boys and girls, or disabled children and children in care generally in how well they rated their care.

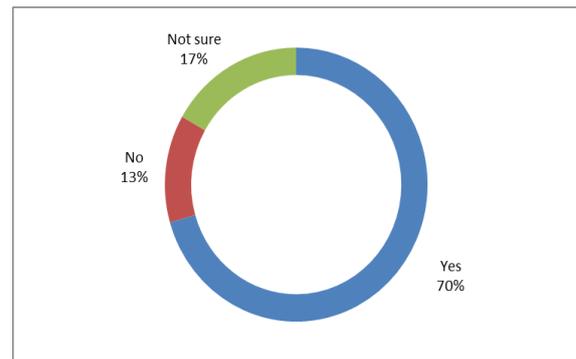
Those aged over 14 were slightly less likely than younger children to give their care a good rating. Eighty nine percent of those over 14 rated their care as good or very good, compared with 94% of those aged under 14.

**Children living in foster care rated their care much more highly than those living in children’s homes. Ninety four percent of foster children rated their care as good or very good, compared with 84% in children’s homes.** There has been no steady trend in these figures over recent years. The percentage of children in children’s homes rating their care as good or very good is up from 77% in the last monitor, but is now the same as it was in 2010.

### WHETHER IT IS RIGHT TO BE IN CARE

We asked children to tell us whether they thought coming into care had been the right thing for them at the time. Then we asked whether they thought being in care was the right thing for them now. Figure twenty three sets out children’s views on whether they thought coming into care was the right thing for them at the time.

**Figure 23: Was coming into care the right thing at the time?**

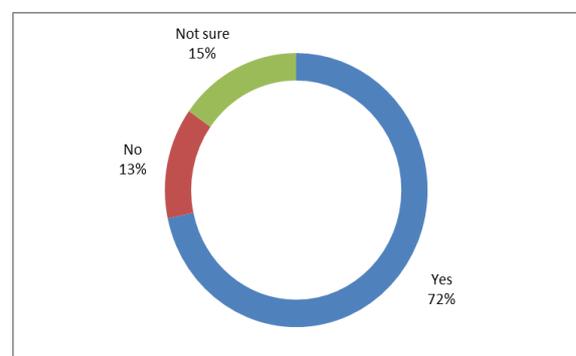


Based on answers from 1,487 children.

**Seven out of ten (70%) of the children in care told us that they thought coming into care had been the right thing for them at the time. Around one in six were not sure, and just over one in eight (13%) thought that coming into care was the wrong thing for them at the time.**

Our next question was whether the children and young people in care thought being in care was the right thing for them now, at the time they were filling in the monitor survey. This was to see how their views had changed now they were in care. Figure twenty four gives their answers.

**Figure 24: Is being in care the right thing for you now?**



Based on answers from 1,466 children.

**Overall, the views of children in our survey about whether they should be in care now were very**

**close to the views of children about whether coming into care was the right thing for them in the first place. Seventy percent said it was right for them to come into care in the first place, and 72% said it was right that they were still in care at the time they filled in the monitor survey.**

**The percentage who thought they should not be in care was exactly the same, 13%, as the percentage who said they should not have come into care in the first place.**

**Children in children’s homes at the time of the survey were somewhat more likely than foster children to say they shouldn’t have come into care in the first place, and much more likely to say they shouldn’t still be in care.**

Sixty four percent of those in children’s homes at the time of the monitor said they shouldn’t have come into care in the first place, compared with 72% of foster children. Sixty three percent of those in children’s homes thought they shouldn’t still be in care, compared with 73% of foster children.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, under or over 14s, or disabled children in care and others in care, on whether it had been right to come into care in the first place, or on whether it was right to be in care at the time of the monitor survey.

We asked children to give their reasons for saying whether or not coming into care had been right for them, and for saying whether they should or should not still be in care. We did not suggest any answers, so the findings below come straight from

the children themselves. Children could give more than one answer.

Here are the top three reasons children gave for saying it had been right for them to come into care in the first place. These are all the reasons given by more than one in ten of the children answering this question.

<b>Reasons for coming into care being the right thing at the time</b>	<b>% of children giving this answer</b>
Was not safe at home	26%
Had a better life in care	25%
Was not being looked after properly at home	20%

Based on answers from 716 children.

These are the same top three reasons that children gave in 2011. The percentage saying they had come into care because they were not safe at home has gone up slightly from 20% in 2011 to 26% in 2013.

Some quotes from children themselves put these reasons in their own words;

‘I didn’t want to be hurt by the people who are supposed to love me most anymore’

‘Because my foster carer helped me with any problems I had and made me feel part of a family again which is what I never felt before, she also included me with family activities and sometimes I forget she’s my foster carer’

‘Because my parents always used to hit me and neglect me’

'Now I'm being looked after and loved properly as I was not when with my parents'

'It's exactly what I needed, care stability and direction'

'Before I moved I had no idea of the love and support that really is out there and that people who you didn't even know offer. My confidence has grown and I have progressed in so many different ways, including education'

'I love my mummy and daddy and granddad, but I know they were not looking after me properly'.

There were two main reasons given by at least one in ten children answering this question for saying that it was still right for them to be in care.

Reasons for still being in care being the right thing	% of children giving this answer
Am being looked after well	34%
Doing better in care	18%

Based on answers from 690 children.

From these two tables, it is clear that **children thought coming into care was right if it meant they would be safer, have a better life, and be better looked after, than if they had not come into care. Being well looked after and having a better life than if they had not come into care were then seen by children as strong reasons for staying in care.**

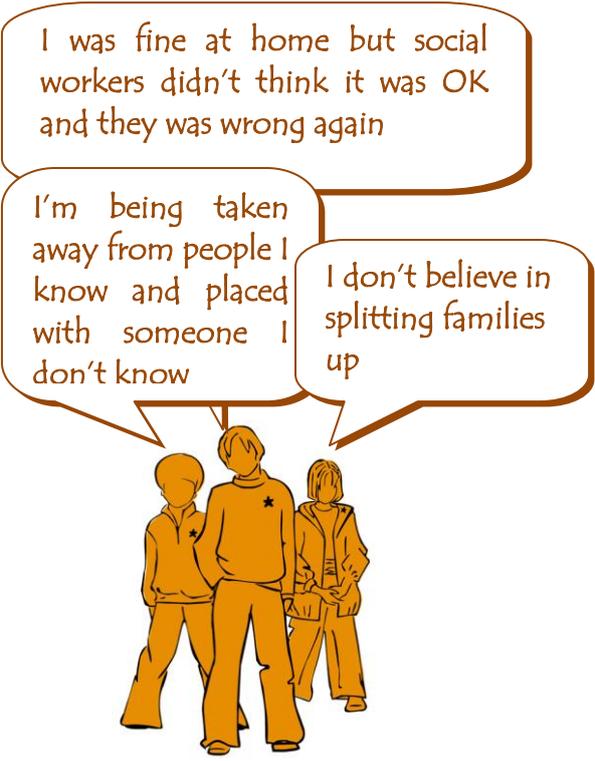
We asked the 13% of children in care who thought they should not have come into care in the first place why they thought this. Here are the reasons given by one in ten or more:

Reasons for coming into care being the wrong thing at the time	% of children giving this answer
Wanted to stay with my family	35%
I was being looked after OK at home	18%
My move into care wasn't handled properly	10%
I don't want to be in care	10%
I don't know why I am in care	10%

Based on answers from 126 children.

**By far the main reason for children saying they should not have come into care was that they had wanted to stay with their family. Almost one in six disagreed with the view that they weren't being looked after properly at home.**

**Two reasons, each from one in ten children who didn't think they should have come into care, are about the way they came into care. One in ten thought their admission to care had been badly handled at the time, and one in ten said that they didn't know the reasons for being taken into care.**



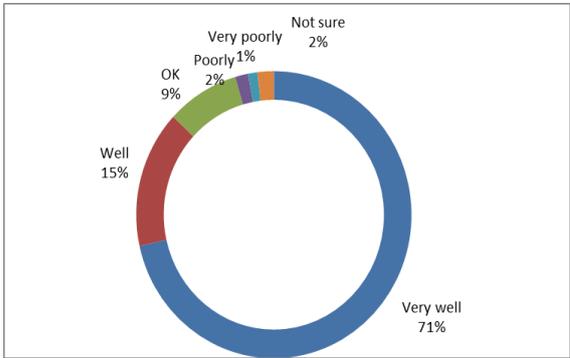
The two top reasons given by the 13% who thought they shouldn't still be in care at the time of our survey were the same as the top reasons for not thinking it was right to have been taken into care in the first place. One in five wanted to be living with their families instead, and 16% thought their families would be able to look after them OK.



**BEING KEPT SAFE IN CARE**

Many children come into care for their safety, and being kept safe in care is a priority for the care system. We asked children in care how well they thought they had been kept safe from abuse during their time in care so far. Figure twenty five gives the children's answers for 2013.

**Figure 25: How well have you been kept safe from abuse?**



Based on answers from 1,456 children.

Just over seven out of ten children in care (71%) thought they had been very well kept safe from abuse while in care, and a total of 86% that they had been protected well or very well from abuse.

Three percent of the children in care in the 2013 monitor survey thought they had been protected either poorly or very poorly from abuse while in care.

There was no big difference between girls and boys in how well they thought they had been protected, but those aged over 14 were much less likely than younger children to report that they had been well

protected from abuse during their time in care. Only 82% of over 14s reported being well or very well protected from abuse, compared with 92% of those aged under 14.

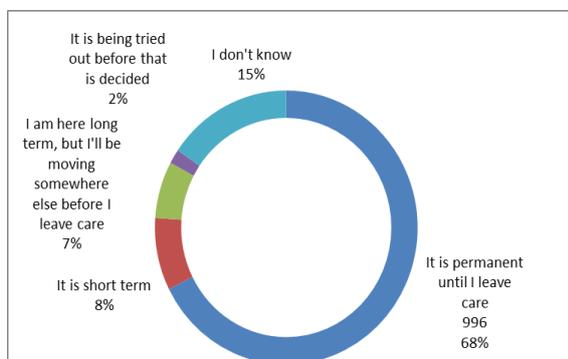
Children now in children’s homes were also much less likely than foster children to report that they had been well protected from abuse during their time in care. Only 75% of children now in children’s homes reported being well or very well protected from abuse, compared with 90% of foster children.

There was no big difference between disabled children and children in care generally in how well they reported being kept safe from abuse while in care.

### ARE PLACEMENTS PERMANENT?

For the first time we asked children whether they thought their present placement to be permanent until they left care.

Figure 26: How permanent is your placement?



Based on answers from 1,474 children.

Just over two thirds (68%) of the children in care in our 2013 survey thought they were in placements that would last until they left care. Just under one in ten (9%) were in placements they knew to be short term. Fifteen percent didn't know whether or not the placements they were in were intended to be permanent until they left care.

Those aged over 14 were much more likely than younger children under 14 to say they were now in permanent placements. Seventy nine percent of the over 14s said they were in permanent placements, compared with 65% of under 14s.

Foster children were much more likely than those in children’s homes to say they were in permanent placements. Nearly three quarters (74%) of foster children believed their placements to be permanent, compared with only half (50%) of those in children’s homes.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, nor between disabled children and children in care generally, in considering their placements to be permanent.

### HAVING A SOCIAL WORKER

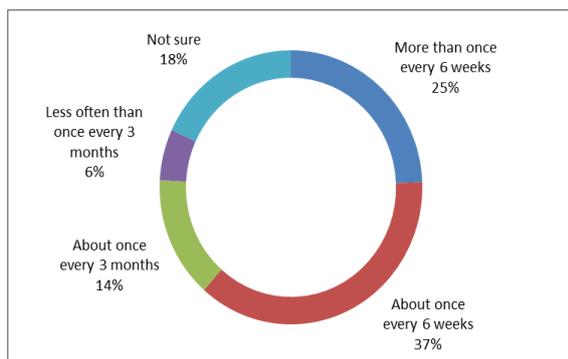
In many of our other consultations, children in care have told us that their social workers are very important to their lives. Every child in care should have a social worker, or another caseworker (like a leaving care worker). We checked this in our survey.

**In 2013, 94% of the children in care told us they have a social worker, and another 3% had another sort of caseworker (such as a leaving care worker or support worker). That left 3% who told us they didn't have a social worker or other caseworker at the moment.** These figures have stayed much the same over the past five years.

### HOW OFTEN SOCIAL WORKERS VISIT

The law sets out how often social workers or other caseworkers should visit children in care. The frequency depends on whether the child is in the first year of their placement, and whether their placement is intended to be permanent until they are 18. We asked this question for the first time in 2013 to set a 'baseline' so that people can check in future years whether children in care get more or fewer visits.

**Figure 27: How often social workers visit**



Based on answers from 1,419 children.

**In 2013, well over a third (37%) of children in care were visited by their social workers at the most**

**usual frequency of about every six weeks. A quarter were being visited more than this (as is necessary by law for some children), and one in seven were being visited at the new legal lower frequency of 3 months. Six percent of children reported being visited less than every three months, which would be less than legally required for a child in care.**

### SPEAKING TO A CAREWORKER IN PRIVATE

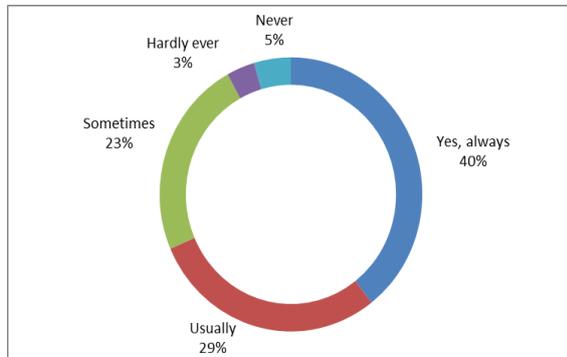
In the past, children have told us that they are not always able to speak to their social worker or other caseworker on their own when they visit, in private and without anyone else listening. They have told us being able to do this is very important if the social worker or caseworker is checking on how well they are being treated. They have said it is difficult to tell someone about any problems or ill treatment if other people, like the carers you want to talk about, are listening to what you are saying.

The law<sup>2</sup> changed in 2011 to say very clearly that a social worker or other caseworker visiting a child in care must speak to that child in private unless the child doesn't want to or isn't able to understand enough to have a private talk, or it just isn't possible for the social worker or caseworker to talk to the child in private.

Figure twenty eight shows how many children told us they are spoken to in private by their social workers or caseworkers in 2013.

<sup>2</sup> The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.

**Figure 28: When your social worker or caseworker visits you, do they talk to you on your own without anyone else listening?**



Based on answers from 1,410 children.

**Even though the law now says that visiting social workers or caseworkers should speak to children in care in private, only 40% of children in this year's monitor told us this happens on every visit.** This has hardly changed from 2011, when it was 39%.

**Just over two thirds (69%) told us their social workers always or usually talk with them in private. One in twenty (5%) told us it never happens.** That is exactly the same percentage as in 2011.

Sometimes it may be that there are reasons why the visiting social worker or caseworker cannot speak to the child in private. The child may not want to do that, and they do have the right to say no. Or it may be that there is some reason that makes it not possible on that visit. But it is not at all likely that children who were able to answer this monitor question would have been unable to understand

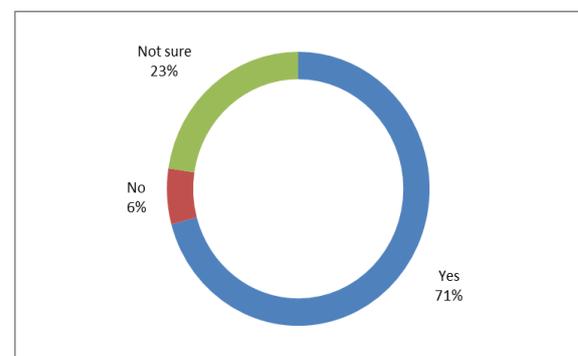
enough to talk with their social worker or caseworker in private.

There were no big differences in how many children reported speaking to their social worker or caseworker in private between boys and girls, those aged under or over 14, foster children and those placed in children's homes, or between disabled children and other children. Although the numbers were too small to be sure (only 53 children placed at home answered this question), as we had found in 2011 children in care but placed to live at home with their parents were less likely than other children in care to speak to their social workers in private.

## KEEPING THINGS CONFIDENTIAL

In our other consultations with children in care, many have told us they are worried that personal information about them is not always kept as confidentially as it should be. Figure twenty nine shows whether children in care in 2013 thought their personal information was kept confidential enough.

**Figure 29: Is personal information about you kept confidential enough?**



Based on answers from 1,460 children.

**Just over seven in ten (71%) children in care told us that they thought their personal information was kept confidential enough, with 6% saying they thought it wasn't.** Almost a quarter (23%) weren't sure about the confidentiality of their personal information. These figures are a slight improvement since 2011, when 69% said their information was kept confidential enough and 8% that it wasn't.

There were no big differences in 2013 between girls and boys, or between over and under 18s, between children in foster care and those living in children's homes, and between disabled children and children generally (though disabled children were somewhat more likely to say their information was treated more confidentially).

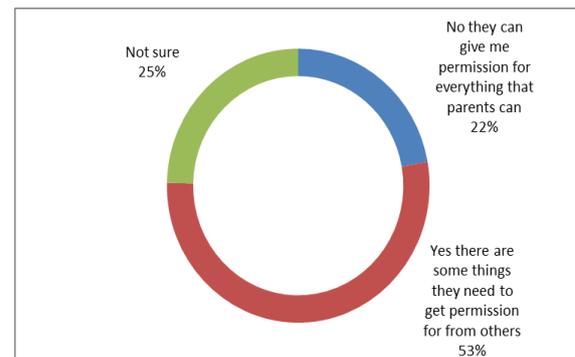
### **NEEDING SPECIAL PERMISSION FOR THINGS**

Children have often told us that a problem with being in care is that foster carers or children's home staff are not allowed to give permission themselves for things that other children's parents would be able to decide about. Because so many children have raised this with us, in 2011 the Children's Minister said that the carers or staff of children in care should be able to give the same sorts of permissions that other children's parents can give, unless the child's care plan clearly says differently.

Figure thirty shows the answers we got when we asked children whether there is anything their carers or staff

have to get special permission to let them do.

**Figure 30: Is there anything your carers or staff where you live have to get special permission to let you do?**



Based on answers from 1,459 children.

**Just over half the children in care (53%) reported that there are some things that their carers, or the staff looking after them, have to get special permission from other people before letting children do them, and only 22% said their carers or staff can give permission for everything that parents can.** These figures are much the same as in 2011.

Of course, sometimes there may be something in the child's care plan that says there is something their carers or staff must not let them do without someone else's permission first. Any changes in these figures in future years will help to show whether recent government initiatives on this are working.

There were no big differences between girls and boys, between foster children or children living in children's homes, or between disabled children and

others, on this question. Although not quite enough to qualify as a big difference, younger children did as in 2011 report that there were more things that their carers or staff needed to get someone else's permission for. **Fifty eight percent of those aged under 14 said their carers or staff needed to get special permission to allow some things, compared with 49% of those aged 14 and over.**

We asked children what sorts of things their carers or staff needed to get special permission to let them do. We did not make any suggestions of our own. Here are all the answers that came from more than one in ten of the children who answered this question.

Things carers or staff looking after children in care need to get someone else's permission to allow children to do	Percentage of children giving this answer
Going on a holiday	37%
Staying overnight with friends or having friends stay with you	22%
Going on school or other trips	21%
Health treatments	15%
Piercings, tattoos, new hairstyles	12%

Based on answers from 616 children.

Some of these might of course need approval of the money needed, but others are clearly things that children thought other people's parents would be able to agree to but their carers or home staff could not. Staying overnight with friends is something children have long told us is something their carers or staff are not allowed to

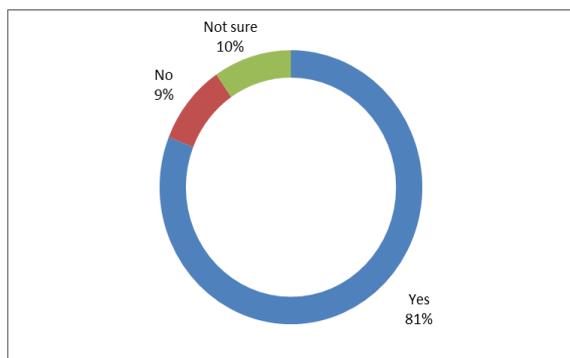
agree to on their own, like other children's parents do. There is a special question about this later in this monitor report.

There were big differences between groups of children in whether or not special permissions were needed for school or other trips, or for holidays. We heard that **staff or carers of boys were much more likely than those of girls, and that foster carers were much more likely than children's home staff, to need to get special permission to let them go on trips. We were also told that staff or carers of those aged over 14 were much more likely than those of younger children to need special permission for them to go on holidays. Disabled children reported that their staff or carers were more likely than those looking after children generally to need to get special permission for them to go on school or other trips.**

### **ARE FOSTER CHILDREN TREATED THE SAME AS FOSTER CARERS' OWN CHILDREN?**

Foster children have often told us that any differences in how they are treated, compared with their foster carers' own children, can be very important to them (though sometimes they tell us that they might want and need to be treated differently sometimes, for example if they have special needs or problems, are from a different culture, or are a very different age). Figure thirty one gives foster children's answers to this question in 2013.

**Figure 31: Are foster children treated the same as foster carers' own children?**



Based on answers from 1,040 foster children.

There were 1,164 foster children who answered this question, but 124 (11%) of them said their foster carers didn't have any children of their own. Figure thirty just gives the answers from the 1,040 who said their foster carers did have children of their own, as well as their foster children.

**Eight out of ten (81%) foster children whose foster parents had their own children told us that they were treated the same as their foster carers' children. This is up from 75% in 2011. Nine percent said they were treated differently.** The others weren't sure how to answer this question.

Forty nine children who had said they were treated differently by their foster carers told us the main way in which they were treated differently. Here are all the answers that came from more than one child:

How foster children say they are treated differently from their foster carers' own children	Number of children giving this answer
The foster carers' own children are treated better	12
Not allowed to do things the foster carers children are	10
Treated differently as carers' own children are much older	9
Foster carers have to get social worker permissions for things they can allow their own children to do	5
I'm not their child	5
More likely to be blamed when things go wrong	4
Carers are less strict with their own children	2

Based on answers from 49 children.

Although it is generally regarded as a good thing if foster children are treated fully as members of their foster families, alongside any children of the foster carers' own, not only do foster children acknowledge that there can be times when they do need some different treatment or support, but sometimes foster children can get support from social care services that their foster carers' children cannot get:

My foster carer treats me just like her own kids its great I feel like part of the family. Her kids are my sisters. However social services treat me differently to them. They have no support and nothing that I get. It's not fair on them.

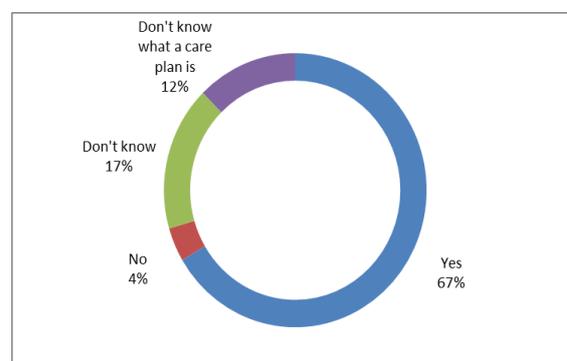


## CARE PLANS

Every child in care should have a care plan which sets out how they are to be cared for and the plans for their future care. Children should have a say in what goes into their care plan, their care plan should be regularly reviewed and kept up to date, and the plan should be carried out.

Figure thirty two shows whether the children in our 2013 monitor survey thought they did or didn't have a care plan.

**Figure 32: Do children in care have a care plan?**



Based on answers from 1,474 children

**In 2013, just over two thirds (67%) of the children in our survey told us they knew what a care plan is, and knew that they had one.**

**The percentage of children in care knowing they have a care plan has fallen slightly in recent years. From 2008 to 2010 it was steady at 72%, then it fell to 68% in 2011 and to 67% in 2013.**

Apart from the children who knew what a care plan is but didn't think they had one, there were still **12% of children in 2013 who told us they didn't know what a care plan is. That percentage is down from the 15% we found in 2009, 2010 and 2011.**

**In 2013, young people in care aged over 14 were much more likely than children under 14 to know about their care plans. Seventy two percent of over 14s knew what a care plan is, and knew that they had one, compared with only 60% of those under 14.**

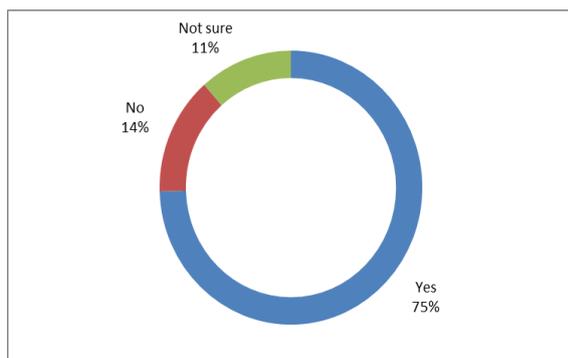
As we had found in the last three monitor surveys, **children in children’s homes were far more likely than children in foster care to know they had care plans.** In 2013, 83% of children in children’s homes knew they had care plans, compared with 64% of foster children.

Twenty six of the children who filled in our Widget symbol questionnaire told us about care plans, and 24 of those said they did have a care plan.

### KNOWING WHAT YOUR CARE PLAN SAYS

As we had found in the previous two care monitor surveys, children could know they had a care plan, but not know what was in it. The figures for this in 2013 are set out in Figure thirty three.

**Figure 33: Do children know what their care plan says?**



Based on answers from 967 children.

**In 2013, exactly three quarters of children who knew they had a care plan also knew what was in it.** This percentage increased from 73% in 2008 and 76% in 2009 to a

high of 81% in 2010, but then fell to a low of 72% in 2011. It is now back up to 75%.

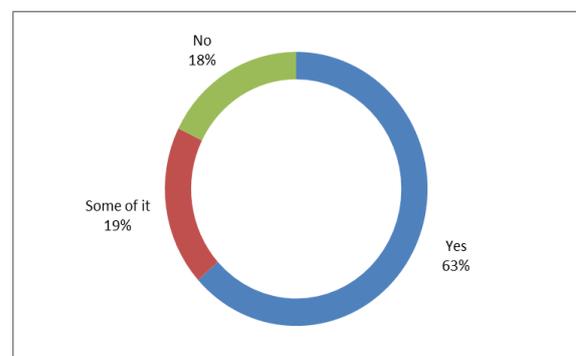
**Young people over 14 were much more likely than younger children to know what was in their care plan.** This difference has grown since 2011, and in the 2013 monitor 79% of over 14s knew what was in their care plan, compared with only 68% of children under 14.

### HAVING A SAY IN YOUR CARE PLAN

Children have told us in many past consultations how important it is that they have a real say in the big decisions about their lives and their future. Their care plans contain those decisions, and the law requires that children have a say in their care plans, depending on their age and understanding.

Figure thirty four shows how many children, out of those who knew they had a care plan, told us in 2013 that they had a say in what it said was planned for their future.

**Figure 34: Do children have a say in their care plan?**



Based on answers from 954 children

**In 2013, 63% of children who knew they had a care plan told us they had a say in what it said, and another 19% told us they had a say in some of it.** These figures are close to those we found in 2011.

**The percentage of children telling us they had no say in their care plan was 18% in 2013, much the same as in the last four years.**

As in 2011, **those aged over 14 were much more likely than children under 14 to tell us they had a say in their care plans.**

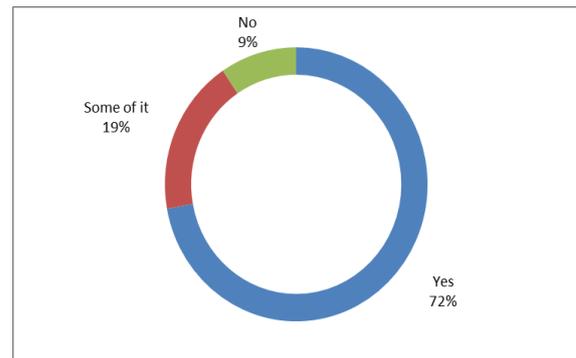
Seventy percent of over 14s said yes they had a say, compared with 54% of under 14s. Fourteen percent of over 14s said they had no say, compared with 23% of under 14s.

There were no big differences in answers to this question between boys and girls, disabled children and others, or between children in children's homes and foster children.

### **AGREEING WITH YOUR CARE PLAN**

We know from the answers to other questions in our annual monitor that children can be asked for their views, but sometimes their views may not make much difference. So each year we ask children who know what is in their care plan whether they agree with what their care plan says should happen. Their answers are in Figure thirty five.

**Figure 35: Do children agree with their care plan?**



Based on answers from 944 children

**Seventy two percent of the children who knew what their care plan said told us in 2013 that they agreed with it. Another 19% agreed with some of it. Nine percent did not agree with their care plan at all.**

**There has been a steady rise in children's agreement with care plans over recent years.** In 2010 65% agreed with their care plans, this rose to 69% in 2011 and is up again to 72% in 2013.

As in 2011, **boys were much more likely than girls to agree with their care plans.** Eighty percent of boys agreed with all of their care plans, compared with 66% of girls.

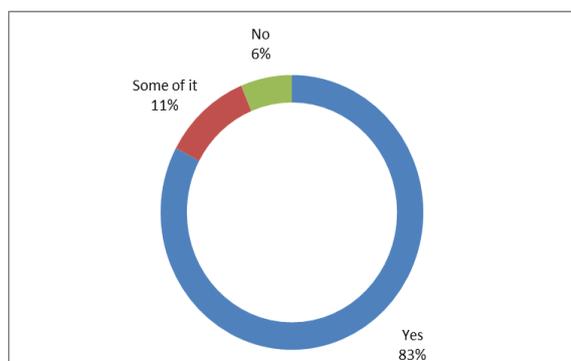
There were no big differences between those aged under and over 14, or between disabled children in care and children in care generally.

Foster children were somewhat more likely this year than children in children's homes to agree with their care plans, but the difference was not enough to qualify as a big difference.

## KEEPING TO CARE PLANS

Sometimes children in care contact with the Office of the Children's Rights Director for help and advice when a major change in their lives is made which was not in their care plan. We use the annual care monitor to check how well children's care plans are being kept to, according to the children who know what their care plans say. Figure thirty six gives the answers for 2013.

**Figure 36: Is your care plan being kept to?**



Based on answers from 934 children

From figure thirty six, **83% of children in care in 2013 told us that their care plan was being fully kept to.** This is close to the figures for the past five years. **Another 11% said that some, but not all, of their care plan was being kept to. Six percent said that their care plan was not being kept to at all.**

Boys were somewhat more likely than girls to report that their care plans were being kept to, although the difference was not a big one. There were no big differences between over and under 14s, children in foster care and children in children's homes, or

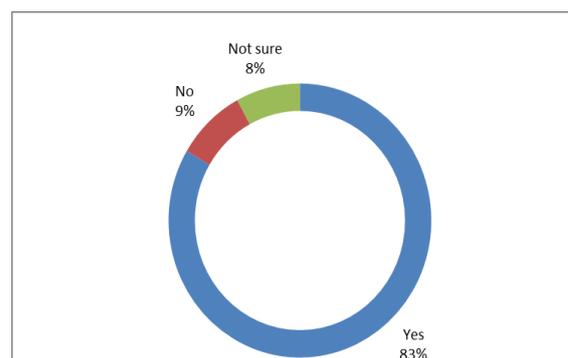
disabled children and other children in how well they said their care plans were being kept to.

## BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACEMENT

Getting the right placement for a child in care to live in is one of the biggest and most important decisions that can be made in their lives. We use our annual care monitor to check whether, across the country, children believe that they have been put in the right placement for them.

Figure thirty seven sets out the findings on placements for 2013.

**Figure 37: Are you in the right placement for you?**



Based on answers from 1,453 children

**In 2013, over eight out of ten children in care (83%) told us that they were in the right placement for them, and just under one in ten (9%) that the placement they were in was not right for them.** There is no steady trend upwards or downwards in these figures over recent years; in 2011 the figures were 80% and 10%, but the 2013 figures are exactly the same as in 2010.

There were no big differences between girls and boys, or between those aged over or under 14, or between disabled children and others, in the percentage saying they were in the right placement for them.

As we have found in every year so far, **children in foster homes were much more likely than children in children's homes to say that they were in the right placement for them. In 2013, 88% of foster children thought they were in the right placement for them, compared with 70% of children in children's homes.**

We asked the children who thought they were in the wrong placement for them to tell us why they said that. We listed reasons children had given us in past year's monitoring surveys. Here are the top five answers this year.

Reasons given by children for saying they were in the wrong placement	% of the children giving this answer
I would like to live independently in my own place	36%
I am in residential care and would like to be in foster care	19%
I don't get on with the other young people here	18%
I don't get along with the adults here	18%
I would rather be with my own family	12%

Based on answers from 125 children.

My foster carers are great but just want to be home with my mom and family



### CHANGING PLACEMENTS

**The children who took part in our 2013 monitor had most often had just one change of placement in their life in care so far. But some children had had a lot of changes; almost a third of the children (31%) had already had more than three different placements in care so far. Ten percent had already lived in eight or more different placements.**

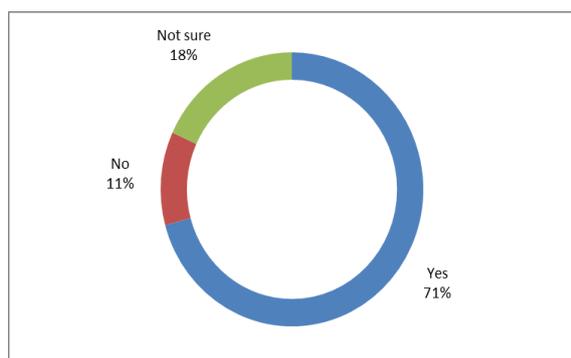
Many people see changes in living placements as something to be avoided if possible, and say that staying in the same placement should be the aim. In our past consultations though, children have often told us that sometimes a change of placement can be the right thing to happen, and can be a change for the better. On the other hand, some of the children we help through our individual children's casework tell us that they are told they are being moved to a new placement when they do not think this is the best thing for them. This is sometimes because of the cost of their placement, or because their placement was not

planned to be for a long time even though it has worked out well for them.

So in each monitor we check whether the last time each child moved to a new placement, the child thought the move was, or was not, in their best interests. As money becomes tighter for everyone, we can also see whether children’s assessment of whether placement changes are, or are not, in their best interests, is changing over time.

Figure thirty eight shows what children told us in 2013.

**Figure 38: Was your last placement change in your best interests?**



Based on answers from 1,335 children

**In 2013, 71% of the children in care in our monitor assessed their last placement change as being in their best interests.** The percentage was 69% in 2008, 68% in 2009, 70% in 2010 and 68% in 2011, so there has not been a steady trend in this assessment, but the 2013 assessment is (just) the most positive so far.

**In 2013, 11% of children in care assessed their last change of placement as not being in their**

**best interests.** This figure has been falling slightly over the past four years, from 16% in 2009, to 15% in 2011 and now to 11%.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, between those aged over or under 14, or between disabled children and other children, in whether children and young people rated their last placement change as being in their best interests.

**As in the last monitor survey, children now in foster care were much more likely to rate their move into their present foster home as being in their best interests, than children in children’s homes were to rate their move into their present children’s home as being in their best interests.** Nearly three quarters (73%) of foster children rated their last move as in their best interests, compared with 63% of children in children’s homes.

We asked children to tell us what they understood had been the reason for their last placement move. We gave them the list of what children had told us were the main reasons in our earlier monitor surveys, but children could add other reasons to the list. Out of 1,213 children who answered this question, here are the reasons given by over one in ten of the children answering:

Reasons given by children for their last change of placement	% of the children giving this answer
To go to a more permanent placement	34%
Unhappy / did not settle	32%
My behaviour	22%

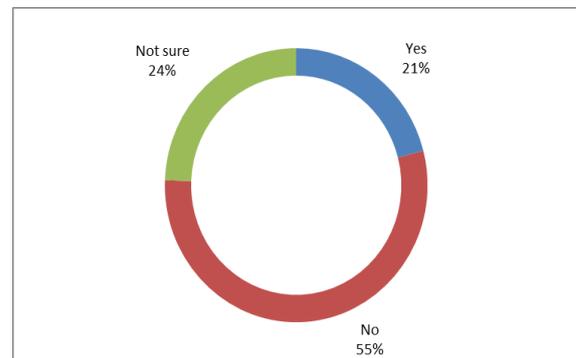
For approximately a third of children, the reason for their last placement change was to move from a short term to a more permanent placement. In past monitors, children have told us that being happy and settled in a placement was the top reason for feeling that a placement is the right one, and as in previous years, being unhappy and not settling in a placement are major reasons for having to change placements. The 2013 figures are close to those we found in 2011.



### HAVING A CHOICE OF PLACEMENTS

We asked children whether there had been a choice of different placements for them the last time they had moved placement. Figure thirty nine gives their answers.

**Figure 39: Last time you moved placement was there a choice of placements for you?**



Based on answers from 1,217 children.

**Well over half (55%) of the children answering this question told us there had been no choice of placement the last time they moved to a new placement. Almost another quarter (24%) were not sure whether or not there had been a choice. One in five (21%) said there had been a choice of new placements for them.** The figures in the previous monitor were similar, at 57% and 23%.

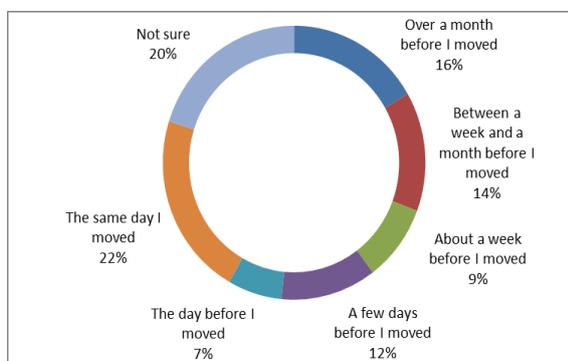
There were no big differences between boys and girls, between over and under 14s, or between disabled children and children generally, in having a choice of placement.

**Children in children's homes were much less likely than foster children to have had any choice of placement last time they moved. Almost two thirds (65%) of children now in children's homes reported that they had no choice of placement when they moved into their current home, compared with 53% of foster children.**

## HOW MUCH NOTICE CHILDREN GET BEFORE MOVING TO A NEW PLACEMENT

We use the monitor to check how much notice children are given before they were moved from where they were living to a new placement. Figure forty sets out the position in 2013.

**Figure 40: Last time you moved to live in a new placement, when were you told you would be moving?**



Based on answers from 1,244 children.

**Forty one percent of children told us that they had less than a week's notice last time they had to move to a new placement. Over one in five (22%) reported that they had only been told on the day they moved.**

These figures are very slightly improved on those for 2011, when 43% reported having less than a week's notice and 23% that they had only been told on the day they moved.

**But the percentage reporting having had more than a month's notice that they were to move however fell slightly from 2011 to 2013, from 25% to 17%.**

There were no big differences between girls and boys or between those over or under 14 in how much notice children were given before moving to a new placement. Disabled children were slightly less likely than others to have moved at less than a weeks' notice.

Although it didn't quite qualify as a big difference, children now in children's homes were somewhat more likely than foster children to report having less than a week's notice of their last move. **Forty eight percent of children now in children's homes reported moving there with less than a week's notice, compared with 39% of children now in foster homes.**

## WHETHER CHILDREN VISIT NEW PLACEMENTS BEFORE MOVING THERE

As well as how much notice you get before you are moved, and how much choice there was between possible placements, children have told us that visiting and gradually getting to know a new placement before you actually move in is important to how you settle in, and helps to make a placement work out well and last. We had answers on this question from 1,342 children for the 2013 monitor.

**Fifty four percent of children said they had visited the placement they are living now before they moved in. Forty six percent said they had not visited it before they moved in to live there. These figures are slightly worse than in 2011, when 58% had visited before they moved, and 42% had not.**

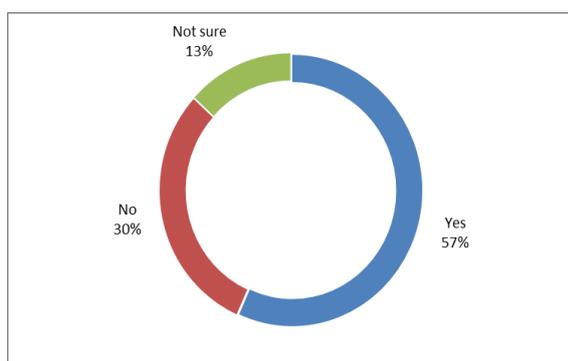
Neither boys nor girls, under 14s nor over 14s, and neither foster children nor children in children's homes were much more or less likely to be taken to visit a new placement before they moved in.

**Disabled children were much more likely than children in care generally to be taken to visit a new placement before they moved in. Two thirds of disabled children (66%) had visited before moving.**

### **WHETHER CHILDREN ARE GIVEN ENOUGH INFORMATION ABOUT NEW PLACEMENTS**

Children have also told us in previous consultations that it is important that they have information about placements they are going to move in to. Figure forty one gives the children's views on this issue in 2013.

**Figure 41: Were you given enough information about the placement you are in before you moved there?**



Based on answers from 1,346 children.

**Fifty seven percent of children told us they had been given enough information about their present placement before they had moved in, and 30% that they had not.** These figures are close to those in the previous monitor.

**Boys were much more likely than girls to say they had been given enough information about their current placement.** Sixty three percent of boys said they had been given enough information, compared with 52% of girls. There were no other big differences between different groups of children in answering this question.

### **CHANGING SCHOOLS WHEN CHANGING PLACEMENTS**

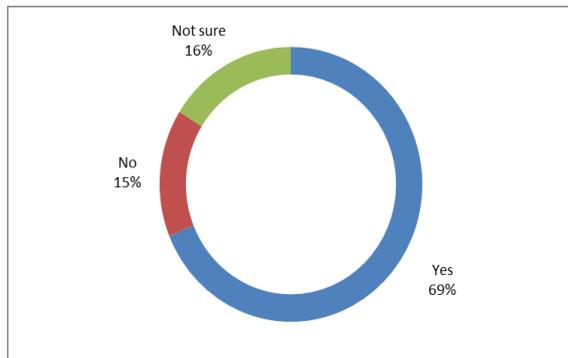
When children in care move to live in a new placement, they often have to change to a new school as well. Just over half (52%) the children in care in our 2013 monitor survey had changed schools at least once because of a change of living placement. Up to the time of our survey, eighteen percent of the children taking part in the monitor had already changed school three or more times because of a change of placement.

**The percentage of children who have changed schools because of a change in placement has fallen from 67% in 2010, to 56% in 2011 and now to 52% in 2013.**

Often, it is said that having to change school is a bad thing for children in care. But children have told us in the past that a change of school has been a good thing for them. It all depends on whether the new school is a better

one for their education, or whether they settle better there than at their old school. In the monitor, we ask children whether the last time they had to change school because they moved to a new placement, they thought the change of school was in their best interests. Figure forty two gives their answers for 2013.

**Figure 42: Last time you had to change schools because you moved to a new placement, was the change of school in your best interests?**



Based on answers from 675 children

**Over two thirds (69%) of the children who had changed schools on their last placement change reported that the change of schools was in their best interests. Only 15% thought the change of school had definitely not been in their best interests.**

As we have found in every one of our monitor surveys since the start of the monitor, **according to children themselves, changing school when changing placement is much more likely than not to be in the child's best interests.**

**The percentage of children reporting that their change of school at their last placement change was in their best interests has risen since 2010.** In 2009 and 2010 the figure was 54%, in 2011 it had risen to 64%, and it is up to 69% in 2013.

**Foster children were much more likely than children in children's homes to report that a change of school last time they changed placement was in their best interests.** Nearly three quarters of foster children (73%) said this, compared with 56% of those in children's homes.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, those over 14 and those under 14, or disabled children and children generally, in whether they thought their last change of school when changing placement was in their best interests.

## **DESIGNATED TEACHERS**

Schools are now expected to have a member of staff especially there to help and support children in care in the school. These are usually called 'designated teachers'. Colleges may also have a member of staff with the specific job of helping young people in care while they are at the college.

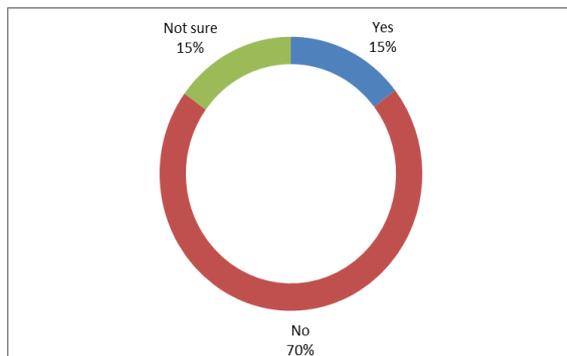
Out of 1,353 children in care in school or college who answered our question on this, **just under two thirds (64%) said they had a member of staff at school or college who was there specifically to help children in care.** This percentage has varied since 2010, without any clear trend.

There were no big differences between different groups of children in answers to this question.

### **WHETHER CHILDREN IN CARE ARE MADE TO FEEL THEY 'STAND OUT' FROM OTHERS AT SCHOOL**

Children in care have often told us that at school they want to be given help they need, but in a way which does not make them feel that they 'stand out' as different from other children at their school. Figure forty three gives the children's experience on this issue.

**Figure 43: Do you feel you are made to 'stand out' from others at school or college because you are in care?**



Based on answers from 1, 243 children.

**Seven out of ten (70%) of children and young people in care told us that they do not feel they are made to 'stand out' from other children or young people at school or college because they are in care. Fifteen percent told us they did feel made to 'stand out'.**

There were no big differences on this between girls and boys, those under or

over 14, or between disabled children and children generally.

Although the difference did not quite qualify as a big difference, **children in children's homes were somewhat more likely than foster children to report being made to feel they 'stood out' at school because they are in care. Twenty one percent of children from children's homes reported this, compared with 12% of foster children.**

Some children have told us that although they do feel made to 'stand out' at school or college, this is because they get extra help or better treatment than others, and so feeling you 'stand out' is not always a bad thing. So we asked those who said they did feel they were made to 'stand out' whether this was helpful or a problem for them. Out of the 181 children who had told us they do feel made to 'stand out', 174 answered this question about whether it was helpful or a problem.

**Thirty four percent of the children in care who said they felt they 'stood out' as children in care at school told us that this was a problem for them, but 39% that it was helpful to them. Although you can be made to feel you 'stand out' at school as a child in care, this is slightly more likely to be helpful than a problem for you. We found the same in 2011.**

**Boys were somewhat more likely than girls to report that being made to feel you stood out at school or college was helpful rather than a problem. Forty four percent of boys reported it as helpful, compared with 35% of girls.**

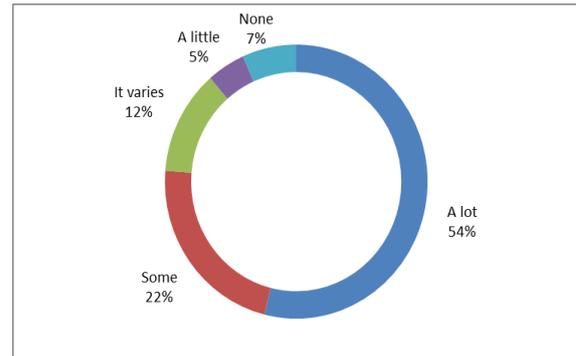
Those aged over 14 had mixed feelings about being made to feel they stood out at school or college as young people in care. **Young people over 14 were more likely than children under 14 to report that it was helpful, but there was no age difference in the percentages reporting it to be a problem.** Forty three percent of over 14s reported it as helpful, compared with 33% of under 14s, while the percentage of under and over 14s reporting it as a problem was exactly the same, at 33%. Fewer over 14s were unsure about whether it was helpful or a problem.

**Children from children’s homes who reported feeling made to ‘stand out’ as children or young people in care at school or college were more likely than foster children to report that this was helpful, while foster children were more likely than those from children’s homes to report it as a problem.**

### HELP AT HOME WITH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE WORK

We use the monitor to assess how much help children in care get with their school or college work in their children’s home, foster home or other placement. The answers for 2013 are in figure forty four.

**Figure 44: How much help do your carers or staff give you with your school or college work?**



Based on answers from 1,189 children.

**Almost three quarters (76%) of the children in the 2013 monitor told us their carers or staff at home gave them some or a lot of help with their school or college work. Over half (54%) said their carers or staff gave them a lot of help. Seven percent said they got no help from them.** These figures show slight improvement since 2011, when the figures were 73%, 52% and 8%.

There were no big differences between girls and boys in how much help they said they got from carers or staff with their school or college work. As we had expected, those aged under 14 were much more likely to get help than those over 14. There was no big difference between foster children and children in children’s homes in how much help they reported getting at home.

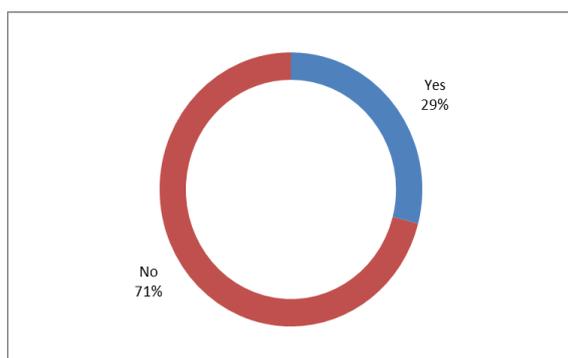
**Disabled children were much more likely than other children to say they got a lot of help with their school or college work. Eighty six percent of disabled children reported getting some or a lot of help, compared with 76% of children generally.**

## SEPARATION OF SIBLINGS IN CARE

In our consultations, children in care have told us that siblings (brothers and sisters) are often separated and placed in different placements in care. Many have told us that this is a major issue for children in care, and that siblings should be placed together unless there is a good reason for them to be separated in their best interests. This is something we check regularly in the care monitor.

Out of 1,417 children and young people in care who answered the question in the 2013 monitor, 63% had at least one brother or sister who was also in care. Figure forty five shows the proportion of children who told us they were living in the same placement as any brothers or sisters in care.

**Figure 45: Do children with brothers or sisters in care live in the same placement together?**



Based on answers from 889 children who had brothers or sisters also in care

**In 2013, 71% of the children in care who had one or more siblings**

**also in care were separated from brothers or sisters by being placed to live in different placements. This percentage is falling steadily over the years.** In 2009, the figure was 76%, in 2010 it was 74% and in 2011 it was 72%.

**Boys, young people aged over 14, and those now living in children's homes were all more likely to be separated from one or more siblings in care. Ninety five percent of those in children's homes were separated from one or more siblings in different placements, compared with 68% of children who were fostered.**

These are very close to the 2011 figures of 96% and 69%, and we have now found children in children's homes more likely to be separated than foster children in four monitor surveys running.

**Disabled children in care were much more likely to be separated from siblings, often in specialist placements, than children in care generally.** Over eight out of ten disabled children in the survey in 2013 reported being separated from one or more siblings in different placements.

We also asked both the children who had been separated from one or more of their siblings, and the children who were placed in the same placement with all their siblings, whether they thought what had happened was right in their case. **Ninety one percent of those who had been placed together with their siblings thought this had been right in their case. Forty five percent of those who had been separated from one or more siblings in a**

different placement thought that this was right in their case.

About half (51%) of the young people aged over 14 who were separated from siblings thought this separation was right in their case – far more than the 40% of younger children who were separated.

Just under half (48%) of the foster children who were separated from siblings in different placements thought this was right, compared with just over a third (34%) of those in children's homes who were separated from siblings.

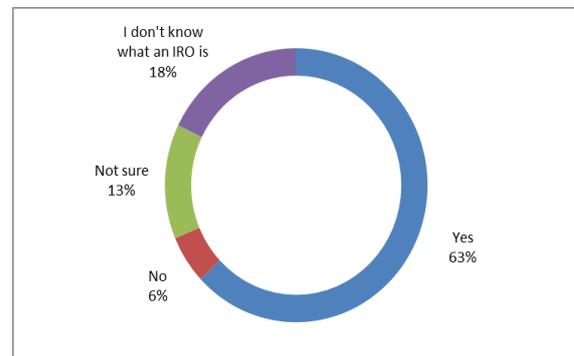
Just over half the disabled children who were separated from siblings in different placements thought this was right in their case.

## INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS

Every child in care should have an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). Among other things, their job is to make sure the council is doing what it should be doing for the child, to go to all the child's care reviews to make sure these are done properly, and to make sure the council takes proper notice of the child's wishes and feelings when it makes decisions and plans for the child.

Figure forty six shows how many children told us in 2013 that they had an IRO.

**Figure 46: Do you have an Independent Reviewing Officer at the moment?**



Based on answers from 1,401 children.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of the children answering this question knew they had an IRO. Thirteen percent knew what an IRO was, but weren't sure whether they had one or not. These figures are a slight improvement on 2011, when 57% reported having an IRO and 16% not being sure.

There were no big differences between boys and girls, between over and under 14s, or between disabled children in care and others in care, in the percentages who knew they had an IRO.

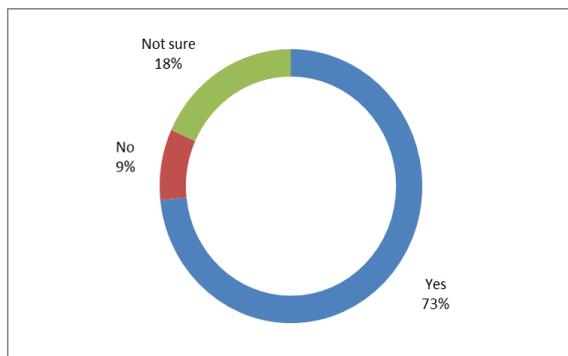
**Children in children's homes were much more likely than foster children to say they had an IRO. Three quarters (75%) of those in children's homes said they had one, compared with just under two thirds (63%) of foster children. Foster children were much less likely to know what an IRO is; 19% of foster children didn't know what an IRO is, compared with only 9% of children in children's homes who didn't know.**

**Overall, 18% of children in care in the 2013 monitor didn't know what an Independent Reviewing Officer is. This figure has been falling over the past four years, from 23% in 2010, to 21% in 2011, and now to 18%.**

There were no big differences between boys and girls, over and under 14s, or disabled children and children generally, in knowing what an IRO is.

We also asked those who had an IRO whether they were able to get in touch with their IRO if they needed to. Figure forty seven gives their answers.

**Figure 47: Do children know how to get in touch with their Independent Reviewing Officer?**



Based on answers from 871 children.

**Nearly three quarters (73%) of children who have an IRO know how to get in touch with them if they need to.** This is slightly up from 70% in 2011.

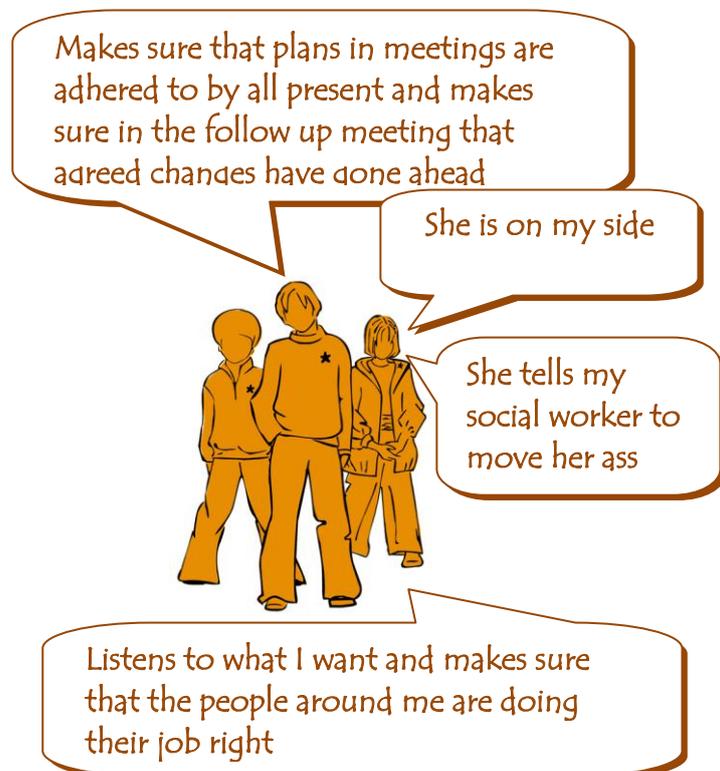
We asked what support children had been given by their Independent Reviewing Officer. We did not suggest any answers. Here are all the answers which came from at least one in ten of

the children who answered this question.

Support children had received from their Independent Reviewing Officers	% of the children giving this answer
Making sure the child gets their point of view across in reviews	26%
Listening to the child's views and wishes	15%
Giving advice and explaining things when decisions are made	12%
Visits the child	10%
Making sure the child is being looked after properly	10%

Based on answers from 493 children.

These types of help are similar to those reported by children in 2011.



The independence of IROs and their power to challenge decisions are important, and we use the monitor to find out whether children think their IRO is independent and powerful enough for them. Here is their assessment for 2013:

- **70% of children said their IRO is independent enough**
- **71% said their IRO is powerful enough to make sure things are being done as they should for them.**

(859 children answered the question on independence, and 844 that on power).

**The children's assessment is that IROs have increased slightly in both independence and power since 2011, when the figures were 64% and 66%).**

### **INDEPENDENT VISITORS**

For the first time we asked children in care whether they had an Independent Visitor, a volunteer appointed to visit and befriend them.

Out of 1,402 children who answered this question, **17% said they had an Independent Visitor, but a high proportion, 20% were not sure whether they had one or not.**

There were no big differences between girls and boys, over and under 14s, or disabled children and children in care generally, in reporting having an Independent Visitor. **Children in children's homes were much more**

**likely than foster children to have an Independent Visitor. Just over a quarter of those in children's homes had one, compared with 15% of those in foster care.**

### **DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE IN CARE**

We asked children in care whether or not they felt they were discriminated against for being in care. We had answers on this from 1,381 children.

**In 2013, one in eight (12%) of children in care said they were experiencing discrimination for being in care.** In 2011, 17% had said they sometimes or often experienced discrimination.

There were no big differences in reporting discrimination for being in care between girls and boys, over and under 14s, or disabled children in care and children in care generally.

**Those from children's homes were much more likely than foster children to experience discrimination for being in care. One in five (20%) of children from children's homes reported experiencing such discrimination, compared with one in ten foster children.**

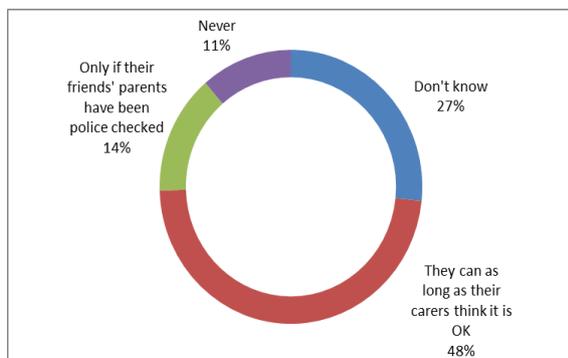
### **OVERNIGHT STAYS WITH FRIENDS**

In very many of our consultations over the past thirteen years, children in care have told us that they are not allowed to stay overnight with friends unless their friends' parents have been police checked first.

There is no government rule (and never has been) that says that friends' parents have to be police checked before children in care can come to stay overnight. Government Ministers have issued guidance saying there is no such rule, and that unless there is some special reason in their care plans, children in care should be allowed to stay overnight with friends without any police checks being needed, if their carers or staff think it is OK, in exactly the same way as other children of their age.

Because this is a problem so often raised by children, we are keeping watch on this through the monitor. The situation in 2013 according to children in the care monitor is set out in Figure forty eight.

**Figure 48: Are children in care allowed to stay overnight with friends?**



Based on answers from 1,400 children

**The percentage of children in care saying they can stay with friends if their carers say it is OK, without their friends' parents needing police checks first, was 48% in 2013. This figure has been slowly rising, from 45% in 2010, to 46% in 2011, and now 48% in 2013.**

**The percentage saying they are only allowed to stay overnight with friends if their friends' parents have been police checked first was 14% in 2013. This figure has been steadily falling, from 21% in 2010 to 17% in 2011 and now to 14% in 2013.**

In 2013, 11% said they were never allowed to stay with friends overnight, down slightly from 13% in the previous two monitor surveys.

**However, children are increasingly uncertain about the rules for staying overnight with friends. The percentage who simply don't know whether or not they can stay overnight with friends was 20% in 2010, rose to 24% in 2011, and has risen again to 27% in 2013.**

There were no big differences between boys and girls, or those over and under 14, in the percentages able to stay overnight with friends if their carers say it is OK, or whose friends' parents would need to be police checked first.

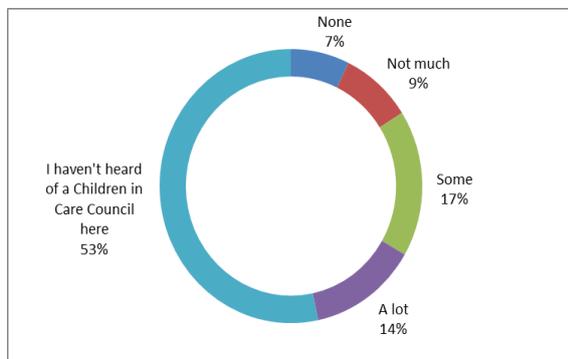
**Foster children were much more likely than children in children's homes to report being able to stay overnight with friends if their carers say it is OK. Just over half (52%) of the foster children said this, compared with just over a third (36%) of those in children's homes.**

## CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCILS

Children in care councils have been set up in all local care authorities in

England to represent the views of children in care in their areas. We asked children in care whether they thought their children in care council's opinions made a difference to what happens for children in care in their areas. Their answers are in Figure forty nine.

**Figure 49: How much difference do the opinions of the Children in Care Council make to what happens for children in care in your area?**



Based on answers from 1,386 children.

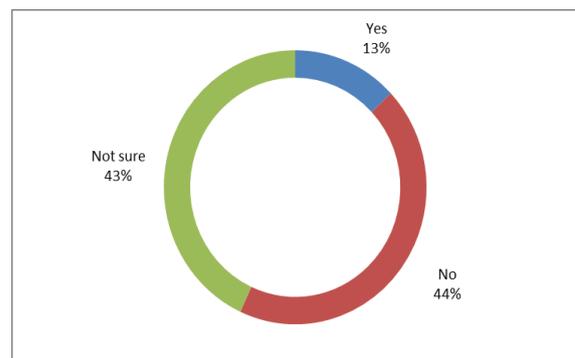
**Overall, 31% of all children in care answering this question in our 2011 monitor thought their local children in care council made some or a lot of difference for children in care in their area. Sixteen percent thought it made not much or no difference.** The figures for 2011 were 29% and 14%, so there has not been a clear increase in the impact of Children in Care Councils.

**Over half the children (53%) told us they didn't know about a Children in Care Council in their area.** This figure has varied over recent years. It was 49% in 2010, went up to 57% in 2011, and is now down again to 53% for 2013.

## EFFECTS OF BUDGET CUTS

We use the monitor to check whether children in care experience being personally affected by any local council budget cuts. Figure fifty gives the position for 2013.

**Figure 50: Is there any way that your Council having less money these days has actually affected you personally?**



Based on answers from 1,326 children.

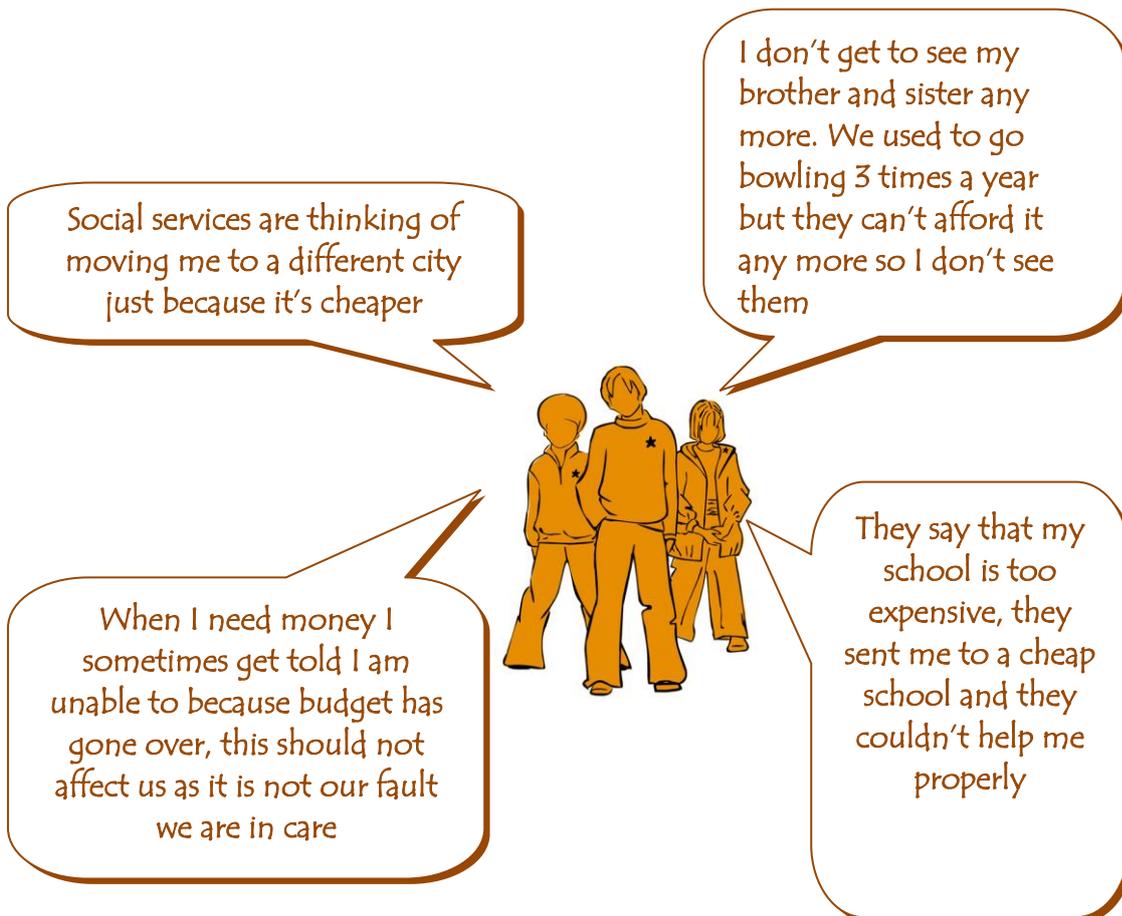
Similar numbers of children answering this question were unsure whether any cuts were affecting them, or were sure that they weren't. **Forty four percent of children in care in the 2013 monitor reported that their local council having less money was not affecting them personally. Thirteen percent reported that it was affecting them personally. The percentage reporting being affected by cuts was slightly down from 15% in 2011.** There were no big differences in reporting being affected by cuts between different groups of children.

We asked those who said they were being affected by budget cuts to tell us in what way they were being affected. Out of the 172 children who told us they were being affected by cuts, 125

told us how they thought they were being affected. The top three effects of budget cuts they told us about are shown in the table below. These were all the effects that more than one in ten of these 125 children told us about.

How children reported budget cuts as affecting them personally	% giving this answer
Fewer activities available to do	32%
Less educational help	20%
Lower personal allowances	18%

**Overall, in 2013, almost a third of children and young people reporting being personally affected by reductions in local council budgets said this was through a reduction in the available activities for them to do, one in five saw a reduction in the educational support they received, and just under a fifth reported a reduction in allowances for things like clothing and toiletries.**



## LEAVING CARE

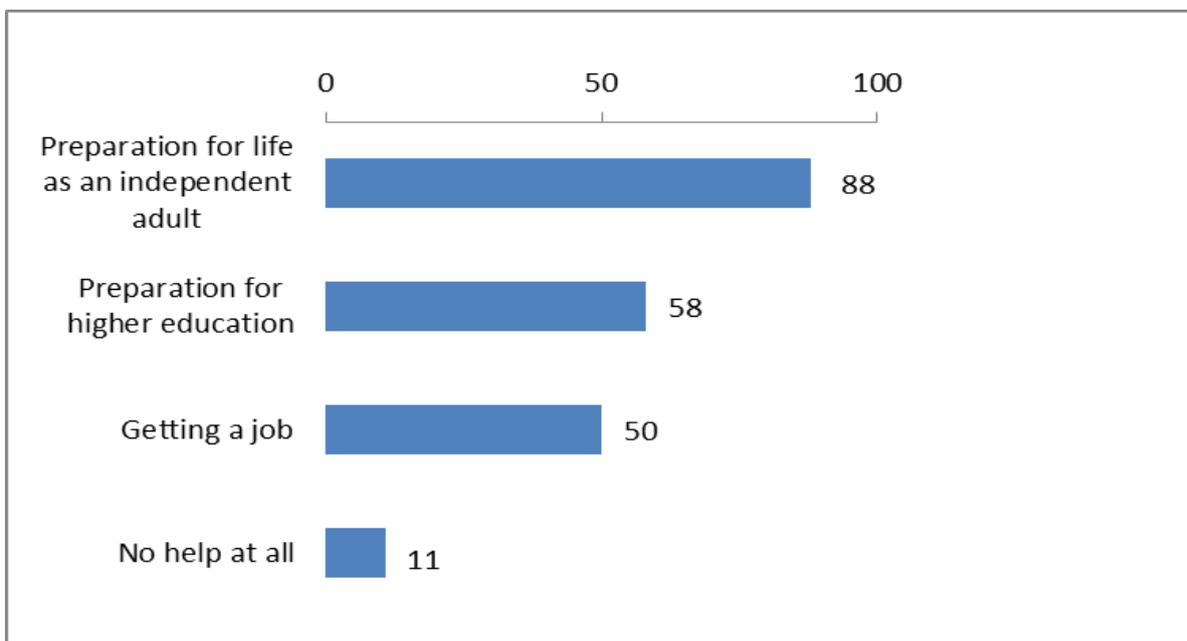
The last section of the care monitor is about children and young people leaving care.

### PREPARING TO LEAVE CARE

Figure fifty one shows how many children in care told us they were being helped in various ways to prepare for their future after leaving care. For this question we gave a list of suggested answers, which was the

same as in the last three monitor surveys, so that we could compare the percentages over time. Children could give more than one answer. The question was answered in 2013 by 532 young people who told us they would soon be leaving care.

**Figure 51: Percentage of those soon to leave care who are getting each kind of support**



Based on answers from 532 children

**The most usual help for the future after care was general help to prepare for independence as an adult, followed by help to prepare for higher education and then help to prepare for getting a job. Eleven percent of those about to leave care told us they were not getting any help they needed in**

**preparing for their future life after care.**

The percentage saying they were being helped to prepare for higher education fell from 65% in 2009 to 56% in 2011, but this fall has now stopped and the figure has risen slightly to 58% in 2013.

The percentage who said they were not getting any help they needed has varied over the past three years, from 13% to 15%, but the 2013 figure of 11% is lower than in previous monitors.

**The percentage of those leaving care shortly who said they were getting general help to prepare for independence as an adult has varied over the last four years,**

**As in 2011, a much higher percentage of children about to leave care from children's homes in 2013 reported getting general help to prepare for independence as an adult, compared with children about to leave foster care.** Ninety five percent of those about to leave care from a children's home said they were being helped to prepare for life as an independent adult, compared with only 84% of those about to leave care from foster homes.

Although numbers were small, **the 67 disabled children about to leave care who answered this question were more likely than other children about to leave care to say that they were being helped to prepare for life as an independent adult.**

**but has now risen.** The 2013 figure of 88% is much increased from the 2009 figure of 78%, and from the 2011 figure of 75%.

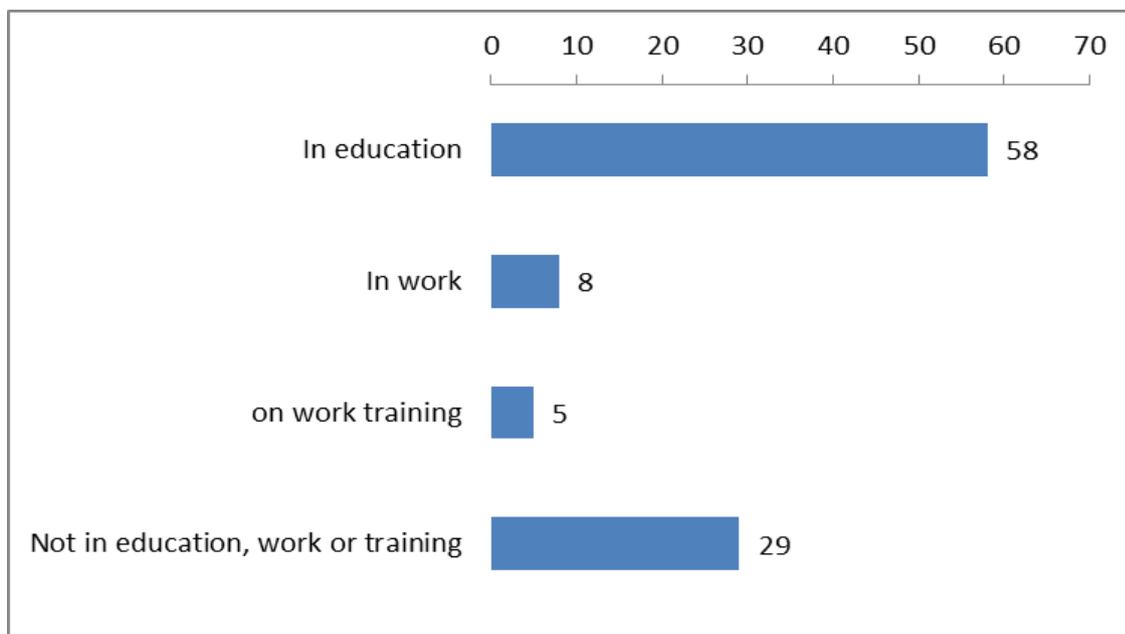
**The percentage of those about to leave care saying they are getting help to prepare for getting a job has fallen steadily over recent years,** from 60% in 2010, to 52% in 2011 and now down to 50% in 2013.

## EDUCATION AND WORK

A total of 310 young people who had left care took part in the 2013 care

monitor. Out of these, 304 told us what they were now doing. This is shown in Figure fifty two.

**Figure 52: What care leavers are doing**



Percentages, based on answers from 304 care leavers.

**Of the care leavers taking part in the 2013 care monitor, 58% were in some sort of education, 8% were in work, and another 5% were in some form of work training. Nearly one in three (29%) were not in education, employment or training.**

training reflects this pattern, falling from a high of 36% in 2009 to 21% in 2010, since when it has stayed steady at 29%. The percentage in work or

Looking over the past four years, there was a big increase between 2009 and 2010 in the percentage of care leavers staying in some form of education, but the percentage then stayed exactly the same, at 64%, in 2010 and 2011, and has now fallen to 58%. The percentage not in education, work or

training has fallen over the past four years, from 17% in 2009 to 12% in 2011 and 13% now.

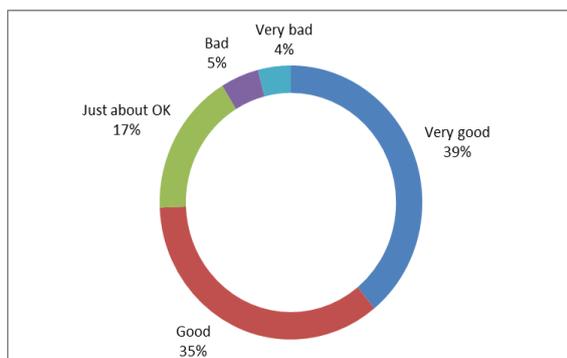
## SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS

In 2013, 60% of care leavers in the monitor survey told us they had a social worker, and another 24% that they had another sort of caseworker, making a total of **84% of these care leavers who had either a social worker or other caseworker**. This is close to the figure of 83% in 2011.

We had answers from 292 care leavers about other support workers they had in 2013. **Forty four percent told us they had a personal adviser, and 9% that they still had support from a volunteer Independent Visitor.**

Figure fifty three shows how care leavers in 2013 rated the support they were getting.

**Figure 53: How care leavers rate the support they are getting**



Based on answers from 297 care leavers.

Overall, **74% of care leavers in the 2013 care monitor rated the support they were getting as good or very good, and 9% as bad or very bad**. Over the past four years,

ratings of support to care leavers fell from 70% in 2009 to 61% in 2010, but

then it rose to 64% in 2011 and rose much further again to 74% in 2013.

## ACCOMMODATION

We know from our past consultations with care leavers that accommodation is an important issue for many. In each monitor we check where care leavers are living, how they rate their accommodation, and whether they think the place they are living is right for them. In the 2013 monitor survey, 294 care leavers told us where they were living. The most usual places were:

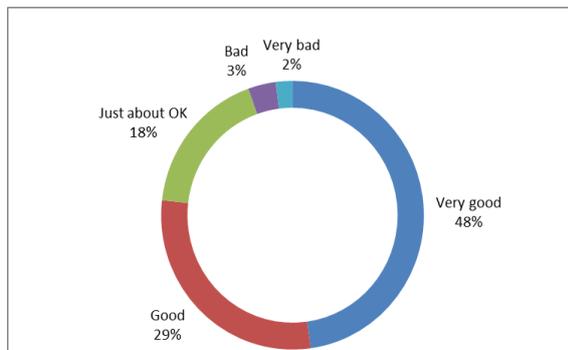
- **Alone in their own flat (39% of care leavers)**
- **Supported lodgings (15% of care leavers)**
- **With their parents (11% of care leavers)**

There were no other places where as many as one in ten of the care leavers were living.

The percentage living in their own flat was up on the 29% we found in 2011, but there was no steady trend in the percentage living in their own flat over previous years. In 2011, 12% were living in supported lodgings. The percentage living back with their parents rose steadily from 2009 to 2011, but has now fallen again from 16% in 2011 to 11% in 2013.

Figure fifty four shows how care leavers rated their accommodation in the 2013 care monitor.

**Figure 54: The quality of care leavers' accommodation**



Based on answers from 293 care leavers.

**Overall, in 2013, 77% of care leavers rated their accommodation as either good or very good, and 5% as bad or very bad. These figures show an improvement in the quality of care leavers' accommodation since 2011, when 70% rated their accommodation as good or very good, and 11% as bad or very bad.**

We also ask care leavers whether they think they are in the right accommodation for them. This is very different from whether the accommodation itself is good or bad. **In 2013, 69% of the 302 care leavers who answered this question told us that they were living in the right accommodation for them, and 24% that they were not (the others were not sure).** These figures have steadily improved over the years, and are again slightly better than the 2011 figures of 66% and 21%.

We asked care leavers who thought their accommodation was right for them to tell us their reasons for that. We had answers to this question from 119 care leavers. **The top reason for thinking their accommodation was right for them was (as it was in the last monitor) that they felt happy, safe and settled there.** This was followed by those who said they thought their accommodation was right simply because it was where they wanted to be. Then came those who said it was right because they were well supported there, next those who thought it was right because their accommodation suited their needs, and then those who thought it was right because they had moved back to live at home with relatives.

*After years of moving it's nice to settle down. I struggle financially, but I love my home itself*



We also received the reasons from 53 care leavers for thinking their accommodation was the wrong place for them. **The most common reason for thinking their accommodation was wrong for them was that it was not where**

**they wanted to be**, followed by it being unsuitable for their needs (which included some who reported that they had children of their own and their accommodation was not suitable for a parent and child), and then by wanting to live alone rather than in accommodation with others.

### CARE LEAVERS' EXPERIENCE OF BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

We asked care leavers whether they were being bullied because they had been in care, and in 2013, 219 care leavers answered this question.

**Twenty three percent of these care leavers told us they are being bullied because they have been in care.** This has not changed significantly in recent years, and the 2011 figure was 24%.

We also asked care leavers whether they felt they were discriminated against because they had been in care.

**Twenty one percent of the 282 care leavers who answered this question told us they are sometimes or often discriminated against for having been in care.**

### EFFECTS OF BUDGET CUTS

We know that 13% of children still in care who answered our question about budget cuts reported that they were being personally affected by their council having less money. We asked the same question of care leavers.

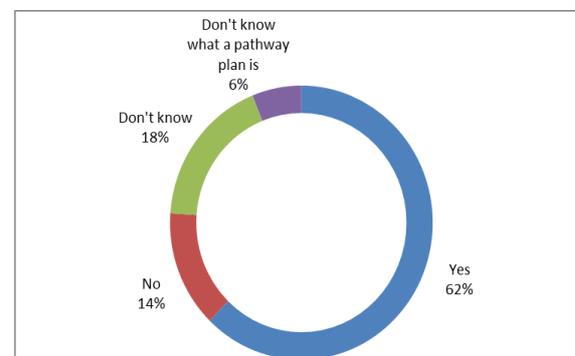
**Twenty five percent of care leavers said that their Council having less money had affected them personally.** This is little different from the figure of 24% in 2011.

We asked those care leavers who said they were being personally affected by budget cuts to tell us how they were being affected. The most common ways were having fewer opportunities available, having insufficient money, and having less support than they had before.

### PATHWAY PLANS

Plans for care leavers and their support are called 'pathway plans'. Just as we asked children in care about their care plans, we asked care leavers about their pathway plans. Figure fifty five shows our findings for 2013.

**Figure 55: Do care leavers have pathway plans?**



Based on answers from 297 care leavers.

**Just over six out of ten care leavers (62%) told us they had a pathway plan. Eighteen percent didn't know what a pathway plan is. Fourteen percent knew what a pathway plan was but didn't know whether or not they had one. Six percent knew what a pathway plan was but told us they**

**definitely didn't have one.** In the 2011 monitor, 60% had said they had a pathway plan, and 12% didn't know what a pathway plan was. There has not been any clear trend in these figures over the past four years.

**Out of the care leavers who told us they had pathway plans in 2011, 83% told us they knew what was in it.** The 2011 figure was 87%.

**Eighty two percent of care leavers who knew about their pathway plans told us they had a say in what was in their plans.** The 2011 figure was 82%, but there has not been any consistent trend over the past four years.

**Eighty one percent of the care leavers who knew about their pathway plans told us in 2013 that it said what they needed it to say to do well as an independent adult. A further 10% said that some, but not all, of it said what they thought it should say.**

**Finally, in 2013, 73% of care leavers who knew about their pathway plans told us their plans were being kept to.** This is up from 70% in 2011, but again there has been no steady trend in this figure over the past four years, and the 2013 figure remains lower than the 77% reported by care leavers in 2009.

## APPENDIX

I am grateful as always to the children and staff of the establishments, local authorities and services who took part in the children's care monitor.

Children and young people from the following all took part in the 2013 monitor.

### **BOARDING SCHOOLS**

Brentwood School  
Burgess Hill School For Girls  
Denstone College  
Downe House School  
Haydon Bridge High School - Ridley  
Hall Boarding Wing  
Kingswood School  
Oswestry School  
Queen Elizabeth's Community College  
Queenswood School  
Royal Hospital School  
Sandroyd School  
Slindon College  
St Bede's School (The Dicker)  
St Christophers School  
St George's School  
St Michael's School  
The Westgate School  
Thomas Adams School  
Tockington Manor School  
Woodhouse Grove School

### **RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOLS**

Alfriston School  
Appleford School  
Ashley School  
Brantridge School  
Chaigeley Educational Foundation  
Charlton Park Academy  
Cloughwood Special School  
Coln House

Downland School  
Fred Nicholson School  
Gosden House School  
Hebden Green Special School  
High Close School  
Laleham Gap School  
Moor House School  
Mulberry Bush School  
Parkwood Hall School  
Potterspury Lodge School  
Ratcliffe School  
Romans Field  
Royal School for the Deaf Derby  
Shenstone Lodge School  
St Bernard's School  
St Catherine's School  
St Elizabeth's School  
St Francis Community Special School  
St Mary's School  
St Rose's School  
Stanbridge Earls School  
The Grange Therapeutic School  
The National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy  
Valence School  
Welburn Hall School  
Wennington Hall School  
West Kirby Residential School  
Westlands School  
William Henry Smith School

### **CHILDREN'S HOMES**

Ashfern House  
Malon Way  
Maple House  
New Croft  
Rose House  
The Lilacs  
Verona House  
Wellington House

## **INDEPENDENT FOSTERING AGENCIES**

Action for Children Intensive Fostering Service  
Action for Children: Fostering Wessex  
Anglia Fostering Agency  
Barnardo's Fostering South East  
Bridging Gaps Fostering Agency  
By The Bridge  
Channel FosterCare Ltd  
Families@FamilyCare (Midlands)  
Families@FamilyCare (North West)  
Flying Colours Foster Care  
Footprints Foster Care Ltd  
Fostering Options  
Fostering Yorkshire  
Futures for Children  
Hope Fostering Services  
Oasis Fostering Services  
Phoenix Fostering  
Supported Fostering Services  
The Adolescent and Children's Trust  
The Fostering Partnership

## **FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES**

Bales College  
Bicton College  
Bridgwater College  
Chichester College  
Doncaster College for the Deaf  
Easton & Otley College  
Hadlow College  
John Leggott College  
Loughborough College  
Moulton College  
Myerscough College  
Peter Symonds College  
Shuttleworth College  
Walford & North Shropshire College  
Wiltshire College

## **LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

Bath and North East Somerset Council  
Birmingham City Council  
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council  
Blackpool Borough Council

Brighton And Hove City Council  
Bristol City Council  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Cheshire West and Chester Council  
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
City of London Corporation  
City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council  
City of York Council  
Cornwall Council  
Coventry City Council  
Darlington Borough Council  
Derby City Council  
Devon County Council  
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council  
Dorset County Council  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
East Sussex County Council  
Essex County Council  
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council  
Gloucestershire County Council  
Hampshire County Council  
Hertfordshire County Council  
Isle of Wight Council  
Kent County Council  
Kirklees Metropolitan Council  
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Lancashire County Council  
Leeds City Council  
Leicester City Council  
Leicestershire County Council  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Liverpool City Council  
London Borough of Barnet  
London Borough of Bexley  
London Borough of Bromley  
London Borough of Croydon  
London Borough of Enfield  
London Borough of Hackney  
London Borough of Haringey

London Borough of Harrow  
London Borough of Hillingdon  
London Borough of Hounslow  
London Borough of Islington  
London Borough of Lambeth  
London Borough of Newham  
London Borough of Redbridge  
London Borough of Westminster  
Medway Council  
Middlesbrough Borough Council  
Milton Keynes Council  
Norfolk County Council  
North Lincolnshire Council  
Northumberland County Council  
Nottingham City Council  
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Oxfordshire County Council  
Peterborough City Council  
Portsmouth City Council  
Reading Borough Council  
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council  
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough  
Council  
Royal Borough of Greenwich  
Royal Borough of Kensington and  
Chelsea  
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council  
Sheffield City Council  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
Southampton City Council  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council  
St Helens Metropolitan Borough  
Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
Stockport Metropolitan Borough  
Council  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Swindon Borough Council  
Telford & Wrekin Council  
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council  
West Sussex County Council  
Wiltshire County Council  
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council  
Wolverhampton City Council