

21 October 2021

Children in Care

1. How many looked after children do you support?

The data provided below relates to the number of looked after children that Belfast Health and Social Care Trust supports, as at the end of each year. This information is compiled in accordance with the Health and Social Care Trust's reporting arrangements to the Health and Social Care Board and Department Of Health (April – March).

Please give a breakdown for:

i) 2018 – 2019

The number of LAC as at 31/03/2019 - 824

ii) 2019 – 2020

The number of LAC as at 31/03/2020 - 866

iii) 2020 – 2021

The number of LAC as at 31/03/2021 - 875

2. How many of these looked after children were/are living in a placement outside your local authority area?

The data provided below relates to the number of looked after children in a placement outside the Belfast Trust area, as of 31 March for each year.

Please give a breakdown for:

i) 2018 – 2019

The number of looked after children in a placement outside the Belfast Trust area as at 31/03/2019 – 238

ii) 2019 – 2020

The number of looked after children in a placement outside the Belfast Trust area as at 31/03/2020 - 251

ii) 2020 – 2021

The number of looked after children in a placement outside the Belfast Trust area as at 31/03/2021 - 252

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3. How many of your looked after children were/are living in a placement more than 20 miles outside your local authority area?

Belfast Trust do not centrally collate data relating to the mileage incurred for each looked after child outside the Belfast Trust area, however in response to Question 3, 4 and 5 we can provide information relating to the number of looked after children living:

- In placements outside the Trust area but who remain in the Northern Ireland jurisdiction. The mileage from the Belfast Trust area to any location in Northern Ireland would not exceed 100 miles, and is provided in response to Question 4 below.
- In response to Question 5, we can provide data and mileage relating to the number of looked after children living outside the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland.

To provide a breakdown of the data requested for 20, more than 100 and more than 200 miles outside of the Belfast Trust area would exceed the timescale allocated for an FOI request, i.e. it would take more than 18 hours. We are therefore not able to provide a response to Question 3.

The Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit', as defined by the Freedom of Information Act under Section 12. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified as £450 for public authorities such as Belfast Trust. This represents the cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

4. How many of your looked after children were/are living in a placement more than 100 miles outside your local authority area?

The information below relates to placement of looked after children outside the Belfast Trust area who remain in the Northern Ireland jurisdiction. The mileage from the Belfast Trust location to any location in Northern Ireland would not exceed 100 miles.

Please give a breakdown for:

i) 2018 – 2019

The number of looked after children in a placement within Northern Ireland, outside of the Belfast Trust area as at 31/03/2019 - 229

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ii) 2019 – 2020

The number of looked after children in a placement within Northern Ireland outside of the Belfast Trust area as at 31/03/2019 - 239

iii) 2020 – 2021

The number of looked after children in a placement within Northern Ireland outside of the Belfast Trust area as at as at 31/03/2019 - 240

5. How many of your looked after children were/ are living in a placement more than 200 miles outside your local authority area?

The following information is based on placement of looked after children outside of the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland, in placement across the Republic of Ireland and the mainland of the United Kingdom, the mileage range is stated below

Please give a breakdown for:

i) 2018 – 2019

The number of looked after children in a placement outside of Northern Ireland as at 31/03/2019 - 9 placements

	Mileage range
Placement 1	333
Placement 2	84
Placement 3	264
Placement 4	265
Placement 5	102
Placement 6	101
Placement 7	272
Placement 8	180
Placement 9	180

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ii) 2019 – 2020

The number of looked after children in a placement outside of Northern Ireland as at 31/03/2020 - 12 placements

	Mileage range
Placement 1	333
Placement 2	84
Placement 3	265
Placement 4	101
Placement 5	101
Placement 6	101
Placement 7	406
Placement 8	348
Placement 9	348
Placement 10	348
Placement 11	348
Placement 12	348

iii) 2020 – 2021

The number of looked after children in a placement outside of Northern Ireland as at 31/03/2021 - 12 placements

	Mileage range
Placement 1	333
Placement 2	84
Placement 3	265
Placement 4	101
Placement 5	101
Placement 6	101
Placement 7	406
Placement 8	348
Placement 9	348
Placement 10	348
Placement 11	348
Placement 12	348

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6. How much did you spend on services for looked after children in:

The following information is based on spend for each year period, on staff and non-staff costings, within the Corporate Parenting department of the Children's Community Services Directorate. Staff and non-staffing costs are also incurred across other teams within Children's Services who also provide a service to looked after children. The services offered by the latter to looked after children are provided alongside other services to children/families and are not included in the figures below.

To identify the cost incurred by the teams specific to looked after children would exceed the 'Appropriate Limit' as defined by the FOI Act under Section 12 (as per Question 3 above).

i) 2018 – 2019

£32.69m

ii) 2019 – 2020

£36.318m

iii) 2020 – 2021

£38.905m

7. Can you provide a breakdown of how much of that spend was paid to private children's homes and accommodation providers?

Please note that the following spend is also included in the spending outlined in the response to Question 6 above.

For each of the following time periods:

i) 2018 – 2019

£6.27 m

ii) 2019 – 2020

£6.96 M

iii) 2020 – 2021

£7.79 M