

May
2019

State of Dorset Children



Experiences in a child's early years lay a foundation for health and wellbeing and our services for children and families have an important role in building future resilience.

By identifying those most at risk of poorer outcomes later on, our resources can be targeted where they are needed most so that we can respond to risk and vulnerability.

The number of 0-4 year olds is expected to decrease by about 600, but the number of 5-15 year olds will increase by about 800 between 2017 and 2027¹.

Big Numbers Box

59,800² total children

44 child protection rate per 10,000 children

415 children and young people in care in Dorset

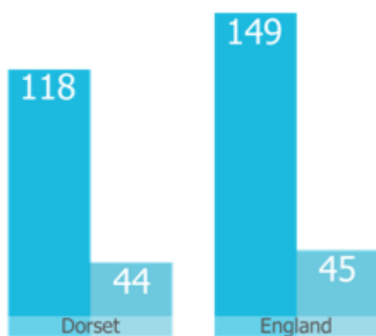
61 looked after children in every 10,000 in Dorset

Primary school children with a SEN or EHC plan **2.2%**

43% of deprived children achieved the Basics measure at GCSE

Box 1: Vulnerable children

Child protection



■ Enquiries (s47) ■ Child protection rate

- Vulnerable groups include:
 - those from deprived socio-economic backgrounds;
 - those with special educational needs;
 - children from particular ethnic groups.
- As of January 2019, 405 pupils are designated with a Special Educational Need defined as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan)³.
- In April 2019, there were 415 children and young people in care in Dorset³.

Looked after children

- The child protection rate in April 2019 was 44 per 10,000 children compared with 45 in England (2018)³.
- The rate of looked after children was 61 per 10,000 children in April 2019, compared to 64 in England (2018)³.



England 64 per 10,000



Dorset 61 per 10,000

Sources

1 2017-based trend population projections, ONS

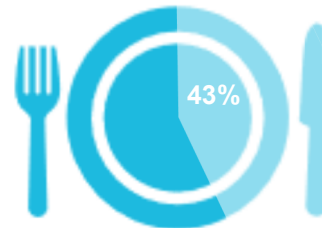
2 2017 Mid-year estimates, 0-15 year-olds, ONS

3 Dorset Council, Children's Services

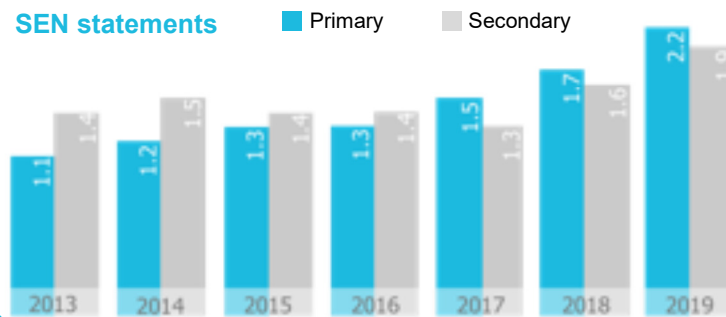
Box 2: Education

- In 2018 71% of pupils achieved a 'Good Level of Development' at the end of Reception year, an increase of 2% on 2017, but 1% below the national³.
- Schools are now scored on pupil progress between KS2 and KS4 (Progress 8). A score above zero shows that pupils made more progress than the national average (England=0). Dorset scored 0.04 in 2018, a big improvement on 2017 when it scored below average⁵.
- 65% of pupils achieved the 'Basics' measure (standard pass or higher in English and Maths GCSE), this is above the national figure of 64%. For pupils eligible for Free School Meals the figure was 43% compared to the national figure of 40%³.
- 15% of primary pupils claim Free School Meals, marginally below the national average⁴.

Pupils eligible for FSM achieving Basics measure at GCSE



SEN statements



- In January 2019, 2.2% of primary school pupils had a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or education, health and care plan, as did 1.9% of secondary school pupils⁷.

What are we doing about it?

There is evidence to show that what a child experiences in early years, starting in the womb, affects health and wellbeing in later life. Early intervention is therefore key and cutbacks in spending on this for short term financial gain can lead to greater long term costs, both financial and social⁶.

By creating Family Partnership Zones, the council is working with partners and communities to ensure children get the right help, at the right time and in the right place, to prevent difficulties for families from becoming bigger problems. The idea is that organisations work together to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people and support them all the way from birth to getting a job.

Through working with our partners to ensure that we all take a 'whole family approach', the council uses early intervention programmes, such as the Troubled Families programme, which aims to reduce demand and dependency on costly reactive public services by families experiencing complex issues, and deliver better value for the taxpayer.

The council works with partners to support parents and children in the early years through a range of Early Childhood Services. This includes information and advice; parenting support; group work activities; support to access childcare; help with preparing for school; and education and training opportunities.

Evidence suggests that smarter working with the whole family leads to improved outcomes and better value for money and, as some will need ongoing support, there needs to be a continuum of services to support vulnerable people over time.

Sources

4 Pupil Census January 2019, DC

5 Dorset Achievement Update Summary, 2019, Dorset County Council

6 C4E0 Grasping the Nettle: early intervention for children, families and communities

7 Pupil Census January 2019, DCC (excludes special schools)