

Children whose first Supervision Requirements or Orders are at home with their parent(s)



*Analysis of data held by the
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration*



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Introduction

There are 16,248 looked after children in Scotland¹. For most, the statutory basis of this is a Supervision Requirement or Order made by a Children's Hearing².

Supervision Requirements can have conditions of residence at home with parent(s) or require that the child is accommodated away from home - 48% of the 12,783 children with Supervision Requirements in 2012 lived at home. Questions have been raised about outcomes for looked after children and in particular those who are 'looked after' at home³.

The Scottish Government requested that SCRA carry out an analysis of data held in its Data Warehouse on children whose first Supervision Requirement is at home with their parent(s)/relevant person(s). This analysis is intended to help identify what further research is needed on children who are looked after at home to inform Scottish Government policy on improving the outcomes for this group of children.

Methods

Data on children who had their first Supervision Requirement made in the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 (i.e. 2009-10), and this Supervision Requirement was at home, were extracted from SCRA's Data Warehouse. Data on these 2,805 children were tracked from the dates when their Supervision Requirements were made by Children's Hearings to 31 December 2012 (i.e. a maximum of 45 months)⁴. Where case studies are given, these are anonymised and pseudonyms used. Some details in case studies have been changed to ensure anonymity.

All the information in this report relates to The Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

First Supervision Requirement

There were 4,175 children who had their first Supervision Requirement made in 2009-10. For 2,805 of these children (i.e. 67%), the residence condition of their Supervision Requirements was at home with their parent(s)/relevant person(s) (Figure 1).

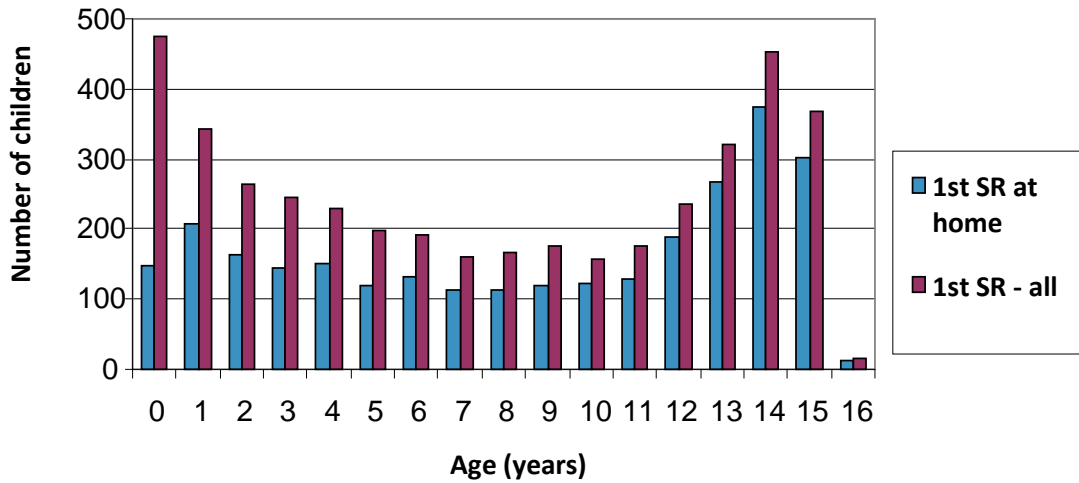
¹ Scottish Government. (2013). Children's Social Work statistics Scotland, 2011-12.

² The term Supervision Requirement is used in the rest of this report, as it covers the period up to 31 December 2012. The term Compulsory Supervision Order was introduced in June 2013 by the Children Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

³ Scottish Parliament Education and Culture Committee (2013). Report on Decision Making on Whether to Take Children into Care.

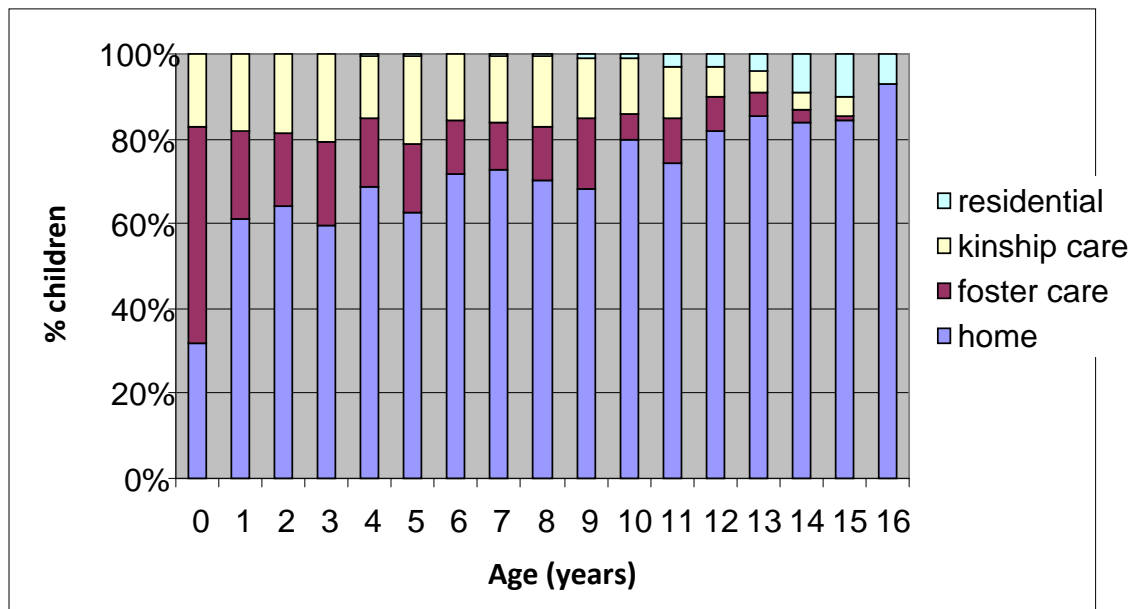
⁴ A cut off of 31 December 2012 was used as SCRA's new Case Management System was introduced in 2013. The period selected allowed for the source data to be only from SCRA's Referrals Administration Database to allow consistency.

Figure 1. Ages of children when Supervision Requirement made – all children and those with 1st Supervision Requirement at home



The proportion of children whose first Supervision Requirement was at home increased with age – over 80% of 13 to 16 year olds had home Supervision Requirements. The lowest proportion was for children less than one year old – 31% had home Supervision Requirements, and the most common first Supervision Requirement for this age group was with foster carers (50%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. First type of Supervision Requirement by age (% children)*



*Kinship – SR types ‘Relative/friend approved foster carer’ and ‘Relative/friend other’.
Residential – SR types ‘Local Authority home’, ‘Other residential placement’, ‘Residential school’, and ‘Special school’.

Grounds for referral

The grounds for referral⁵ that were accepted or established and considered by the Hearings in 2009-10 that made the Supervision Requirements at home are shown in Table 1.

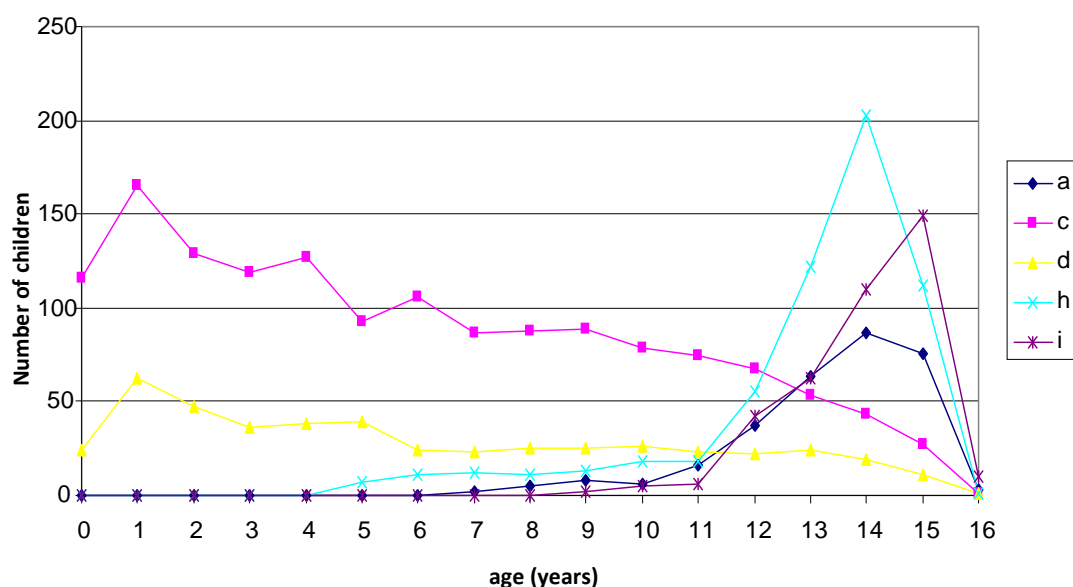
Table 1. Accepted or established grounds

Ground for referral ⁵	Number of children
a (beyond control)	304
b (moral danger)	81
c (lack of parental care)	1,465
d (victim of a schedule 1 offence)	469
e (MSH as child who is victim of schedule 1 offence)	97
f (MSH as a schedule 1 offender)	54
g (MSH – incest)	<5
h (not attending school)	583
i (committed an offence)	387
j (misused alcohol or any drug)	38
k (misused solvents)	<5
Total children	2,805*

*The sum is greater than the total as some children have had two or more grounds.

The most common accepted/established ground for children placed on Supervision Requirements at home was 'lack of parental care' – 52% of children. However, there were differences in the accepted/established grounds depending on the ages of the children. For older children 'grounds' were more likely to be related to their behaviour and for younger children their parent(s) care (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Accepted/established grounds ('a', 'c', 'd', 'h', 'i') when Supervision Requirement at home made



⁵ Grounds for referral – s52(2) Children (Scotland) Act 1995

For example:

Lack of parental care – accepted/established ground

81% of children aged under 5 years old (656 of 813 children)

45% of the 1,465 children with this ground were aged under 5 years old

Not attending school - accepted/established ground

46% of children aged 13 to 15 years old (437 of 950 children)

75% of the 583 children with this ground were aged 13 to 15 years old.

Evan

Evan is 6 years old and lives with his mother and siblings. His father is violent and has threatened to harm the children and their mother. His mother is finding it hard to cope with this situation and is drinking heavily, and this is affecting her care of the children. Following an incident between his parents, the police refer Evan to the Reporter on lack of parental care grounds. A Children's Hearing makes a Supervision Requirement at home, with conditions to prevent Evan having contact with his father. A package of services are put in place to support his mother and for Evan at school. His mother fully co-operates with services and there are no further referrals. After 2 years the Supervision Requirement is terminated as it is no longer needed.

James

When he is 15 years old his mother contacts social work as she is concerned about his behaviour at home and in the community. About the same time, the police refer James to the Reporter after a series of offences involving vandalism and breach of the peace. At the Hearing, James and his parents accept the grounds of referral and a home Supervision Requirement is made; James is to get support from Youth Justice Services. There are further offence referrals whilst James is on a Supervision Requirement. When he is nearly 16 years old he agrees to work with SACRO to address his offending. His Supervision Requirement is terminated.

Referrals after Supervision Requirement made

1,725 children (62%) had at least one further referral to the Reporter after being placed on Supervision Requirements at home (Table 2). 1,080 children (38%) had no further referrals.

Table 2. Further referrals after Supervision Requirement made (up to 31 December 2012)

Ground for referral ³	Number of children
a (beyond control)	357
b (moral danger)	166
c (lack of parental care)	681
d (victim of a schedule 1 offence)	656
e (MSH as child who is victim of schedule 1 offence)	81
f (MSH as a schedule 1 offender)	30
g (MSH – incest)	0
h (not attending school)	136
i (committed an offence)	709
j (misused alcohol or any drug)	104
k (misused solvents)	4
l (special measures)	8
Total children	1,725*

*The sum is greater than the total as some children had two or more referrals

14 and 15 year olds accounted for 57% of the 1,725 children with referrals after their Supervision Requirements were made (Figure 4). The majority of these referrals were related to the child’s behaviour and/or offending (Figure 5).

Children of all ages (except 17 year olds) were referred for ‘lack of parental care’ after their Supervision Requirements were made; over a quarter were aged 2 to 4 years old (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Ages of children referred to Reporter after Supervision Requirement made (up to 31 December 2012)

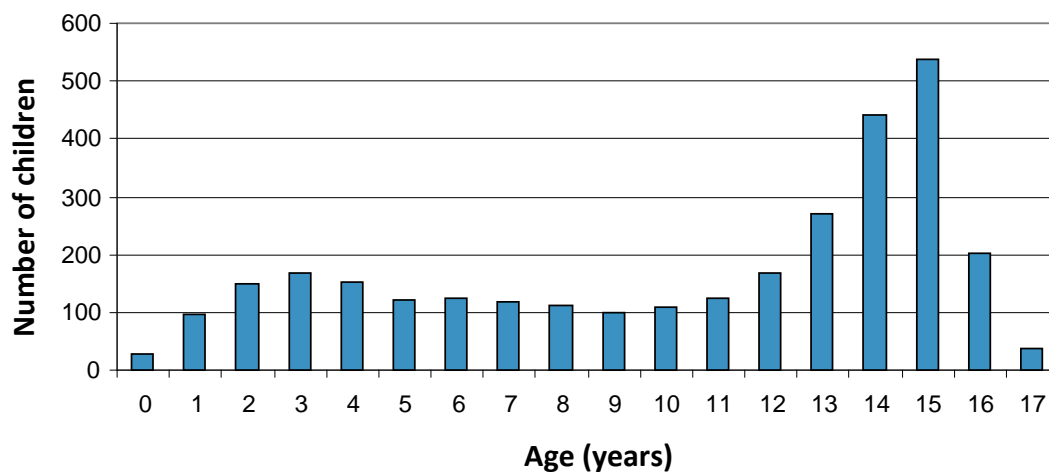
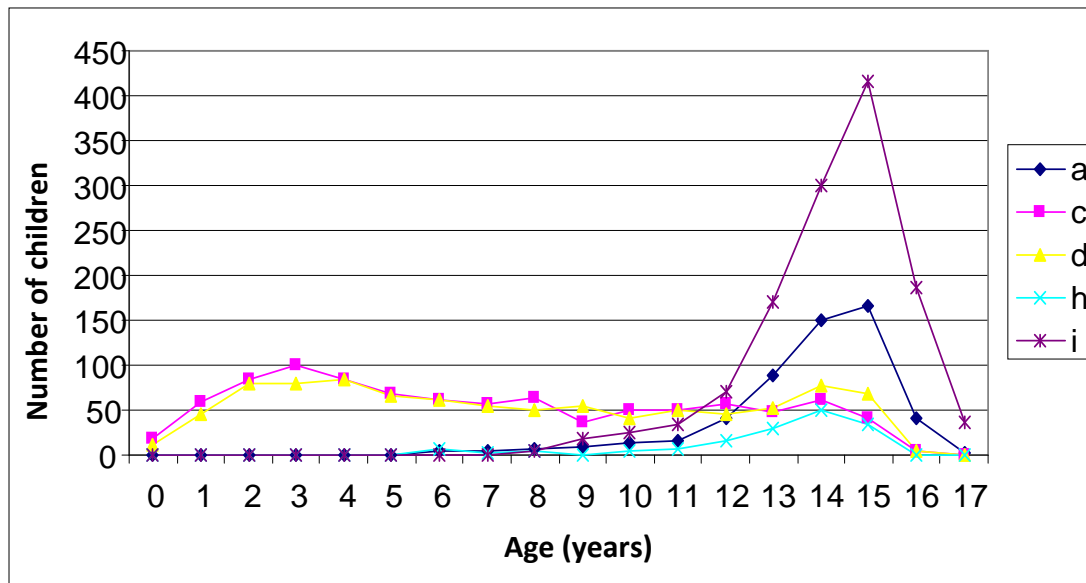


Figure 5. Children referred to Reporter after Supervision Requirement made - by type of referral grounds (up to 31 December 2012)*



*Some children had 2 or more referral grounds.

365 children and young people were jointly referred on offence grounds, as a result this led to 145 being taken by the Procurator Fiscal and 220 by the Reporter.

The most common Reporter decision, was not to refer to a Hearing as current measures were in place (1,281 children).

For 564 children, there was insufficient evidence to proceed.

For 416 children, the Reporter decided to refer the grounds to a Hearing. This was most commonly for offence (221 children) or lack of parental care grounds (118 children).

Kelly

Kelly is referred to the Reporter by the police and her school when she is 14 years old because of her antisocial behaviour in the community and because she hasn't been at school for over 3 months. There are no concerns about her care at home and her parents are very worried about her. Grounds are accepted and the Children's Hearing makes a Supervision Requirement at home. A year later, and concerns about Kelly are escalating and there are further referrals from the police on beyond control grounds – she is putting herself at risk with an older peer group, is sexually active, and is using alcohol and drugs. She refuses to go to school and engage with services to address her behaviour, and is aggressive towards her parents and siblings. Shortly before her 16th birthday, she commits a violent offence and it is decided that this will be prosecuted by the Procurator Fiscal. Her Supervision Requirement is terminated.

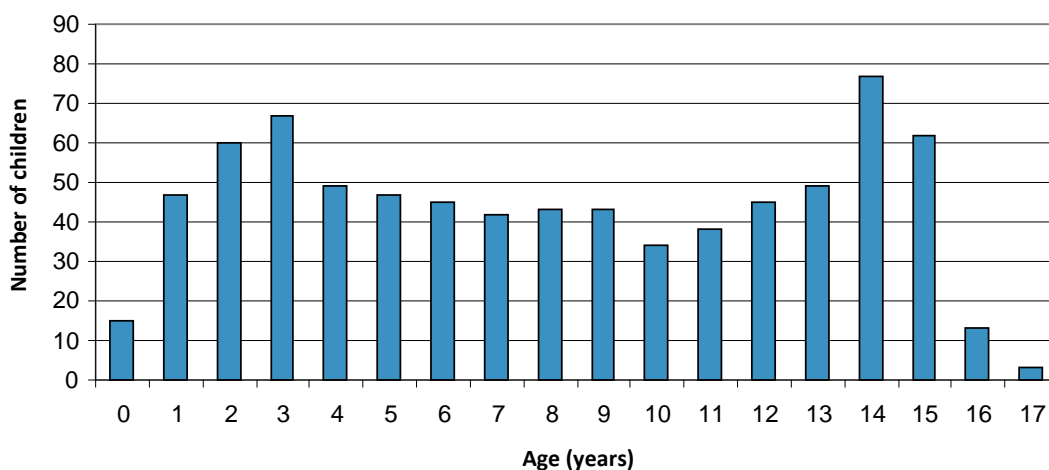
Kenzie

There is a case conference before he is born due to concerns about Kenzie's mother's mental health and drug use. He is placed in the Child Protection Register at birth, an intensive care plan is put in place to support his mother and a Supervision Requirement at home is made. For the first two years of his life Kenzie lives at home with his mother, and is said to be thriving. When he is two and a half, his mother suffers a sudden deterioration in her mental health, and there are referrals from the police to the Reporter related to concerns about her ability to care for Kenzie and poor home conditions. Kenzie's mother agrees voluntarily for him to live with his grandmother. His mother's mental health continues to deteriorate, and his Supervision Requirement is varied to his grandmother. It is planned that this will be a permanent placement.

Subsequent types of Supervision Requirements

779 children (i.e. 28%) had their Supervision Requirements varied to them being accommodated away from home; and their ages when this happened are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Ages of children when Supervision Requirement first varied to child being accommodated away from home



The most common type of Supervision Requirement away from home was with foster carers (347 children) or in kinship care (378 children) (Table 3).

Table 3. Subsequent Supervision Requirements away from home (at any point up to 31 December 2012)

SR type	Number of children
Assessment centre	<5
Independent living	5
In hospital	<5
Local authority home	93
Not recorded	127
Other	22
Other approved foster carer	347
Other residential placement	31
Relative/friend – approved foster carer**	157
Relative/friend – other**	221
Residential school	53
Special school	<5
Voluntary home	<5
Total children	779*

*The sum is greater than the total as some children have had two or more types of Supervision Requirement

**Kinship – SR types ‘Relative/friend approved foster carer’ and ‘Relative/friend other’.

Supervision Requirements at 31 December 2012

870 children were still on a Supervision Requirement at 31 December 2012 (i.e. 31% of children first placed on Supervision Requirement at home in 2009-10) (Table 4).

The most common type of Supervision Requirement was at home - 466 children (i.e. 54%).

404 children were on Supervision Requirements away from home, most commonly these were foster care (186 children, 21%), and kinship care (126 children, 14%).

Table 4. Supervision Requirement type at 31 December 2012

SR type	Number of children
Assessment centre	<5
Independent living	<5
Local authority home	21
Not recorded	26
Other	6
Other approved foster carer	186
Other residential placement	10
Parent/relevant person	466
Relative/friend – approved foster carer*	60
Relative/friend – other*	66
Residential school	24
Special school	<5
Total children	870

*Kinship – SR types ‘Relative/friend approved foster carer’ and ‘Relative/friend other’.

The 404 children whose Supervision requirements were varied away from home and were still on Supervision Requirements at 31 December 2012, were followed to see how long they remained on Supervision Requirements at home. After a year (i.e. by 31 March 2011), 99% had been accommodated away from home, and 3 months later (i.e. by 30 June 2011) all were on Supervision Requirements away from home.

Termination of Supervision Requirements

60% of children first placed on Supervision Requirements at home were on Supervision Requirements for more than a year.

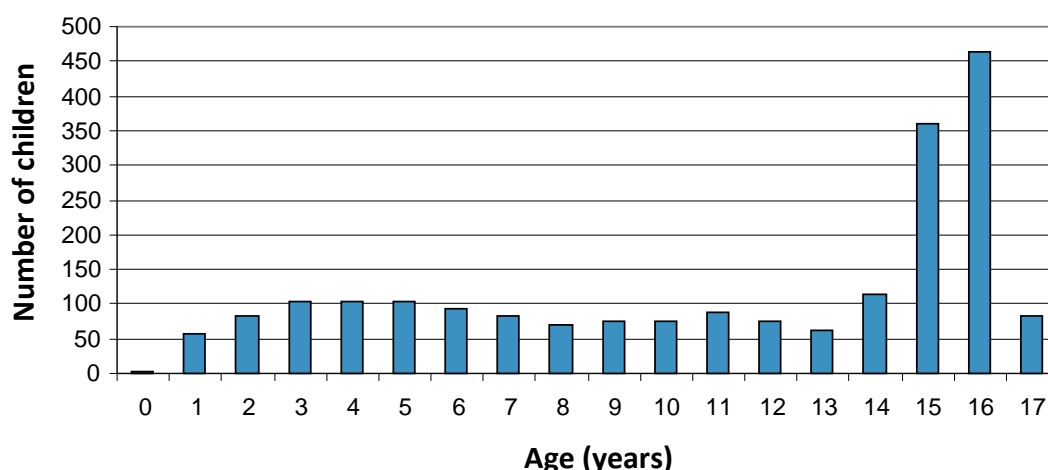
Table 5 shows the length on time that children were on Supervision Requirements before these were terminated, and the number who were on Supervision Requirements at home when these were terminated. The majority of children (92%) were on Supervision Requirements at home when these were terminated.

Table 5. Length of time on Supervision Requirements for children whose first Supervision Requirement was at home

Time from SR start to termination (months)	No. children	No children on SR at home
0-6	161	160
7-12	670	657
13-18	361	330
19-24	363	325
25-30	231	190
31-36	217	186
37-42	90	71

The ages of children (whose first Supervision Requirements was at home) when their Supervision Requirements were terminated is shown in Figure 7. 40% were 15 or 16 years old.

Figure 7. Ages of children when Supervision Requirements terminated



Other measures

Child Protection Orders (CPOs) and Place of Safety Warrants require that the child is placed away from home.

CPOs were made for 57 children who had first been placed on Supervision Requirements at home (i.e. 2%). Their ages ranged from under one to 14 years old. 56% were under 5 years old and 11 of these 32 children were 3 years old.

Place of Safety Warrants were made for 348 children (i.e. 12%).

Non Disclosure Orders were made for 221 children (i.e. 8%).

Secure authorisations were made for 38 children (i.e. 1%).

Conclusions

Home Supervision Requirements are the most common type of first Supervision Requirements – 67% of children whose first Supervision Requirement was made in 2009-10. Young people are most likely to have their first Supervision Requirement at home (over 80% of 13 to 15 year olds), and children under one year old are least likely (31%). Young people’s Supervision Requirements tended to have been made due to concerns about their behaviour or offending or not attending school. Younger children’s home Supervision Requirements were made for grounds related to concerns about their parents care.

An analysis of this type cannot provide answers but can and does raise questions. It identifies that young people aged over 13 years old are more likely to be placed on Supervision Requirements at home and that these young people will continue to be referred to the Reporter, most commonly on offence grounds.

How can home Supervision Orders be used to help reduce the risk for young people involved in offending and behaviour which places themselves and/or others at risk?

For those aged over 13 years old, the most common accepted established ground of referral that lead to Supervision Requirements at home being made was not attending school.

How can home Supervision Orders be used to improve attendance and achievement at school?

What earlier measures are deployed within or without the Hearings System to promote effective intervention?

60% of children remained on Supervision Requirements for more than a year, and most of these children remained on Supervision Requirements at home. However, 28% (779 children) had their Supervision Requirements varied to them being accommodated away from home - usually foster or kinship care. For virtually all these children this variation to being accommodated away from home happened within a year of their home Supervision Requirements being made.

What are the implications of this finding for whether earlier decisions should be used to allow children to be accommodated away from home?



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June 2014*