

SCRA Research Report



Children on Supervision Requirements for Five or More Years *Decisions and Outcomes*



Children on Supervision Requirements for Five or More Years – Decisions and Outcomes

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Executive Summary

There is increasing awareness and concern about the outcomes for children who are in care (looked after). The legal basis for most children who are looked after is a Supervision Requirement made by a Children's Hearing. Over 13,000 children in Scotland have Supervision Requirements and over 2,000 have had their Supervision Requirements for five or more years.

There is limited research evidence on the outcomes for children who have been looked after for large parts of their lives. Previous analysis by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) found that many of these children experience multiple moves and placements; and SCRA research on looked after children who go onto to be adopted found that they also experience multiple moves and delays in the care planning and permanency processes. These previous findings raised two questions which this research has answered:

Q1. What are the experiences of children who have Supervision Requirements and looked after for large parts of their lives?

A1. In the long-term, Supervision Requirements provided stability and security to children, and the numbers of children with positive outcomes increased with length of time on Supervision Requirements. However, in the early stages of their Supervision Requirements, children experienced multiple moves and in some cases continued exposure to risk.

Q2. Children who go onto to be adopted experience multiple delays and interventions – is this experience unique to this group of children or is it also faced by other looked after children?

A2. Looked after children experience similar multiple delays and interventions as those children who go onto to be adopted.

As well as answering these questions, this research was carried out to discover why some children remain on Supervision Requirements for over five years and the outcomes for them from being looked after.

Ninety cases were examined in detail from the point that the children were first known to services, and then through all their involvement in the Children's Hearings System. Cases were selected at random from three age groups: five to six years; 11 to 12 years; and 15 to 16 years, from eight Local Authority areas and data were collected from SCRA case files. Case studies are also presented to illustrate the backgrounds, decisions made and outcomes for these children.

Main findings

Most of the 90 children had been on Supervision Requirements for over half their lives. The shortest time was just over five years and the longest almost 16 years.

The main reasons that the children came to the attention of services, and then were placed on Supervision Requirements, were due to the poor levels of care and protection they received from their parents. Over a half of the children had at least one parent with problematic drug and/or alcohol use.

At least a third of children had a parent who had also been placed on a Supervision Requirement as a child.

Children and their families received or were offered an extensive range of supports and services. The most common service offered related to parenting, but over 90% of the children were removed from their parents' care.

The majority of the children experienced instability in terms of multiple moves. Over two thirds had at least three moves; 8% had 10 or more moves. Over a half of moves were not planned.

The extent to which the children experienced stability in where they lived varied depending on the type of Supervision Requirement:

- Placement with kinship carers proved the greatest stability in terms of length of placement and numbers of moves. Supervision Requirements were needed to secure these placements and provide support to carers.
- Placement with foster carers did lead to long-term stability for some children, however, most who were initially placed in foster care were later moved to other foster carers.
- The least stable type of Supervision Requirement was at home with parents. 85% of children whose first Supervision Requirement was at home were later accommodated. During their time on Supervision Requirements at home, most children continued to be exposed to neglect and their parents' addictions. The number of children reported as displaying emotional and behavioural difficulties almost doubled whilst on Supervision Requirements at home.

This study examined almost 1,700 Hearings. Over 94% of Hearings (where there was a substantive decision) fully agreed with Social Work recommendations. 21% of Hearings required further information and had to be continued, and 36% of Hearings were early reviews of Supervision Requirements.

Permanence was considered for 62% of the children. For a half of these children it took over two years from when their Supervision Requirements were made to decisions being made to proceed with permanence planning.

Hearings decided to continue Supervision Requirements of young people past their 16th birthdays to provide them with support and help them in the transition to adulthood, and for most this did appear to have resulted in positive outcomes in terms of where they lived and their plans for the future.

Children's outcomes from being on Supervision Requirements

This research analysed the outcomes for children after they had been on Supervision Requirements for one year, five years, and at point of study or when the Supervision Requirements were terminated. Outcomes were 'graded' as poor, mixed and positive.

At the point of the study, 11% of children had poor outcomes; 30% had mixed outcomes, and 59% had positive outcomes. However, these positive effects took over a year on Supervision Requirements to become apparent. Placements became more stable with time and children experienced fewer moves as their Supervision Requirements went on.

Questions for policy makers and practitioners

This report does not draw conclusions or make recommendations. Instead it raises questions for policy makers and practitioners to stimulate debate and find the answers.

- Should more be done to reduce the numbers of moves and placements, including repeated rehabilitation attempts, that looked after children experience?
- How can better financial and legal security be given to kinship carers?
- Can services alone change the history of some families where each generation of children is looked after? What can be done to break this cycle?
- Do we have enough evidence and research on the efficacy of services and interventions? How can services be targeted to directly intervene or provide treatment?
- Is there a need to review the effectiveness of Supervision Requirements at home where parents have a history of drug and/or alcohol misuse and failure or reluctance to engage with services?
- What areas of practice amongst all agencies could lessen the number of Hearings which take place for individual children?
- Is there a need to assess the quality and quantity of information provided for Children's Hearings and to what extent it supports good decision making?
- Is the high level of consensus between Social Work recommendations and Hearing decisions to be expected?
- What more could be done to reduce timescales for permanency within the care planning process?
- Should consideration be given to continuing more young people's Supervision Requirements past their 16th birthdays?

- How do we assess outcomes for children who are looked after? Is there a need for an agreed approach that can be applied to individual children and all looked after children?
- Can the positive outcomes experienced by children and young people on long-term Supervision Requirements be brought forward and, if so, how?

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1. Introduction

There is increasing awareness and concern about the outcomes for children from being in care (looked after). The Chief Medical Officer for Scotland has stated that: ***‘Children who require to be looked after and accommodated are among the most developmentally vulnerable’*** (Burns, 2007).

The Scottish Parliament is currently carrying out an inquiry to examine whether the decisions currently being made on care are delivering the best possible futures for children (Scottish Parliament, 2012). This follows on from the Scottish Parliament’s inquiry into the educational attainment for looked after children which found that these children have poorer educational outcomes than others, especially those children who are looked after at home (Scottish Parliament, 2011). In addition, the Scottish Government (2012a) has proposed a Children and Young People Bill which, among other provisions, aims to change the care system to one that provides effective, rapid support for children and young people, centred on their long-term as well as their short-term needs and focused on securing healthy, caring permanence.

There is evidence that looked after children can suffer from discrimination and social exclusion in many areas of their lives, including school and where they live (McClung and Gayle, 2010) and they are more likely as adults to have negative experiences such as homelessness and mental health problems (Audit Scotland, 2010). Children who have experienced maltreatment are significantly more likely to develop disorganised attachments and these can have life-long physical, emotional and social consequences (Furnivall, 2011).

For most children who are looked after in Scotland, the legal basis of this is a Supervision Requirement (Scottish Government, 2012b) (Table 1). A Children’s Hearing makes a Supervision Requirement when it decides that a child is in need of compulsory measures to protect him/her and/or to address their behaviour. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to implement Supervision Requirements and any conditions attached to them.

A Supervision Requirement must be reviewed by a Children’s Hearing at least every 12 months. Early reviews of Supervision Requirements can be held at the request of the Hearing, Social Work, parent(s) or the child.

17% of children who have Supervision Requirements have had them for at least five years. In 2011-12, this was 2,198 children. The Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) has previously carried out an analysis of its data on this group of children (SCRA, 2011a). The main findings were:

- 80% of children had further referrals to the Reporter, and the overall numbers of referrals increased by 28% over the period on Supervision Requirements.
- After five years, 61% of children who were first placed on Supervision Requirements with their parents were accommodated away from home.

- 60% of those first placed in foster care were in foster care after five years. Very few of these children had been returned to their parents.
- 81% had, on average, experienced 2.9 moves. 41% had three or more moves over the five years¹.

This analysis raised questions about the experiences of children who have Supervision Requirements and are looked after for large parts of their lives.

In addition, research by SCRA on looked after children who go on to be adopted or have some other form of permanence, **found that they experience multiple delays and interventions that could harm their emotional and physical well-being now and for the rest of their lives. This raised the question whether this experience is unique to children who go on to be adopted, or if it is also faced by other looked after children** (SCRA, 2011b, c).

Aim

This study aimed to answer these questions and find out why some children remain on Supervision Requirements for five or more years and the outcomes for them.

Background to children who have had Supervision Requirements for five or more years²

In 2011-12, there were 2,198 children in Scotland who had Supervision Requirements lasting for five or more years. This is 17% of all children with Supervision Requirements (of a total of 13,093 children).

The numbers of children on such long-term Supervision Requirements are increasing. This is against a trend of fewer children with Supervision Requirements. However, the total numbers of children looked after by Local Authorities has increased over the past four years (Table 1).

¹ This is a count of moves from first placement on a Supervision Requirement; for 52% of these children their first Supervision Requirement was at home (2011a).

² Analysis of data from SCRA's Referrals Administration Database (RAD).

Table 1. Numbers of looked after children in Scotland, numbers with Supervision Requirements and numbers with Supervision Requirements for five or more years

Year	Total no. looked after ³ children*	No. children with SRs	No. children who have had SRs for 5 or more years	% children who have had SRs for 5 or more years
2008-09	14,888	13,523	2,091	15.5%
2009-10	15,287	13,829	2,145	15.5%
2010-11	15,892	13,474	2,135	15.8%
2011-12	16,171	13,093	2,198	16.8%

* At 31 July (data published by Scottish Government (2012b)).

Grounds of referral

Before a Hearing can make a Supervision Requirement, the ground(s) for referral must be either accepted by the child and his/her parents or established by the Sheriff Court. An analysis was carried out on the accepted or established grounds for referral that led to the Supervision Requirements first being made for those children who had Supervision Requirements lasting more than five years⁴. The most common accepted or established ground for referral was 'lack of parental care'— this happened in 81% of cases (n=1,110), either singly or in combination with other grounds.

Table 2 shows that the reasons that Supervision Requirements were first made and then went onto last for five years and longer, for almost all these children, were related to the poor care and adversities they faced from their parents.

³ Children looked after by Local Authorities are children aged from birth to 18 years under compulsory measures through the Children's Hearings System (e.g. Supervision Requirements), those looked after by means of voluntary measures (e.g. under s25 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, After Care Services), and those with Orders granted by Courts (e.g. Permanence Orders).

⁴ This analysis was on data held in RAD. It excludes those grounds accepted/established more than nine years ago. This is because RAD was rolled out in 2002-03 and does not contain data prior to this.

Table 2. Accepted or established grounds of referral considered by Hearings when Supervision Requirements were first made

Accepted/established grounds of referral* when SR first made	Number of children with SRs lasting more than 5 years (at 30.06.12)
(c) lack of parental care	899
(c) lack of parental care and (d) victim of a schedule 1 offence	280
(d) victim of a schedule 1 offence	93
(h) not attending school	70
(c) lack of parental care and (e) member of the same household as a victim of a schedule 1 offence	52
(a) beyond control of any relevant person	50
(b) bad associations or moral danger and (c) lack of parental care	44
(c) lack of parental care, (d) victim of a schedule 1 offence and (e) member of the same household as a victim of a schedule 1 offence	26
(e) member of the same household as a victim of a schedule 1 offence	24
(f) member of the same household as a schedule 1 offender	23
(d), victim of a schedule 1 offence and (e) member of the same household as a victim of a schedule 1 offence	12
(a) beyond control of any relevant person and (c) lack of parental care	11
(i) has committed an offence	10
Other grounds and combinations of grounds	123
Total**	1,717

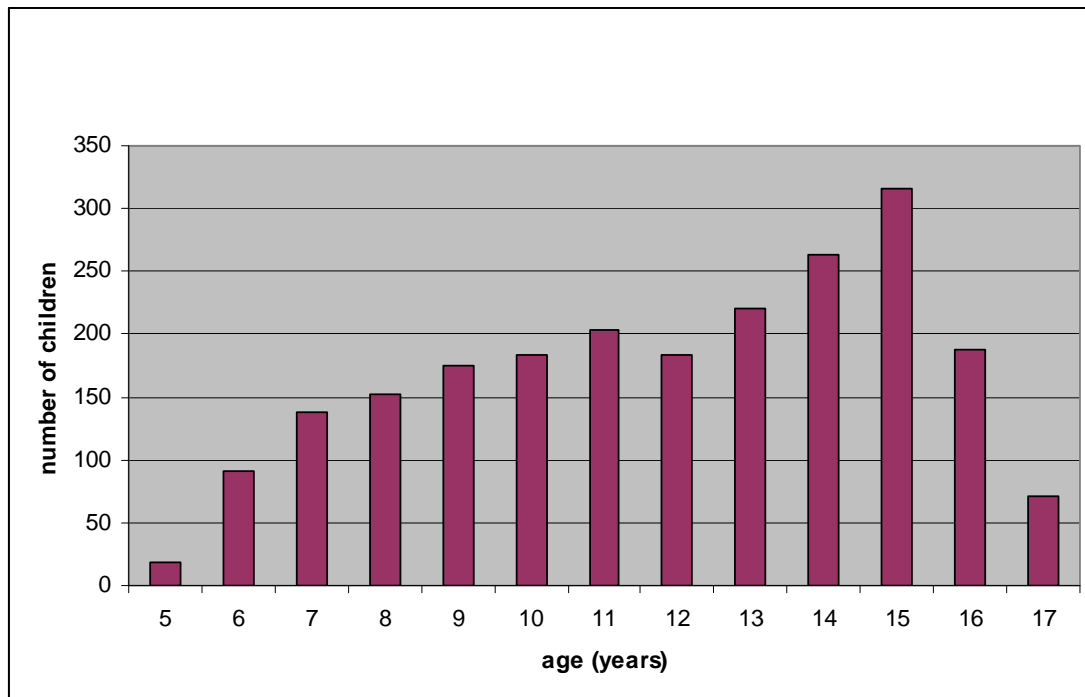
*s52(2) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995

** This analysis was on data held in RAD. It therefore excludes those grounds accepted/established more than nine years ago.

Ages of children

Figure 1 shows the ages of children who have had Supervision Requirements for five or more years. It demonstrates that many of these children will have had Supervision Requirements for a large part of their lives, and for the 110 children aged five or six years old, almost their whole lives.

Figure 1. Ages of children in Scotland who have had Supervision Requirements for five or more years*



* at 1 April 2012

686 children who had Supervision Requirements lasting more than five years, had them terminated in 2011-12. 248 (36%) of these children had been on Supervision Requirements for more than eight years.

The most common ages of children who had their long-term Supervision Requirements terminated were 16 and 17 years old. Almost half (337, 49%) were 16 or 17 years old when their Supervision Requirements were terminated.

2. Methods

Selection of the sample

Data were collected on 90 children who had Supervision Requirements lasting five years or more at 21 March 2010. There were 44 girls and 46 boys; and 83 of the 90 children had siblings.

The children were in three age groups (at 31 March 2010): five and six years (30 children), 11 and 12 years (31 children), and 15 and 16 years old (29 young people). These age groups were selected as they cover three important transition periods – starting school, moving to secondary school, and moving to independence.

Cases were selected randomly from SCRA's Referrals Administration Database (RAD), and were from eight Local Authority areas: Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Dumfries & Galloway, Glasgow, Highland, North Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian. This provided a mix of urban and rural areas and also those areas with some of the highest (e.g. Glasgow, West Lothian) and lowest proportions (e.g. Highland) of children on long-term Supervision Requirements (Appendix 1).

Information collection

Information was collected from children's case files held by SCRA. These contain reports from Social Work, Police and other agencies as well as all the referrals and decisions made by Reporters and Children's Hearings. They provide a comprehensive record of children's cases from when they first came to the attention of services.

All information collected was recorded against a defined set of variables (criteria) (see Appendix 2 for a full list of research variables).

Information was collected between May 2011 and March 2012.

Information was recorded and analysed using MS Excel.

Quotes in the text are from the 'Having Your Say' and 'All about Me' forms completed by the children and young people for their Hearings.

Confidentiality

All information was held electronically and securely on encrypted laptops or in an electronic folder accessible only by members of the SCRA research team. No names or identifying information of any child or person related to the child's case were recorded. Thus the data extracted were non-identifiable and used for the purposes of this research only. All data collected were destroyed when analysis was complete.

The members of the research team have Enhanced Disclosure Scotland clearance.

Findings are reported on an anonymised and aggregated basis. Case studies are anonymised and pseudonyms used. Some details in case studies are changed to ensure anonymity.

3. Care and Protection, and Services

All the children in this study, by definition, had been on Supervision Requirements for at least five years. The proportions of their lives on Supervision Requirements varied according to age group (at point of the study⁵):

- **Five and six years group** – had been on Supervision Requirements for, on average, 6.42 years and 89% of their lives. The shortest time was 5.14 years and the longest was 7.29 years (for both these children this was 93% of their lives).
- **Eleven and 12 years group** – the average length of Supervision Requirements was 8.51 years which was 65% of their lives. The shortest time was 6.17 years (45%) and the longest was 11.83 years (98%).
- **Fifteen and 16 years group** – had on average been on Supervision Requirements for 9.77 years and 59% of their lives. This ranged from 6.34 years (37%) to 15.84 years (95%).

The 90 children were all first placed on Supervision Requirements due to concerns surrounding the level of care and protection they were experiencing with their parent(s) or carers. Over half of the children (59%) had at least one parent with significant drug or alcohol misuse, and over a third (38%) were living with a parent experiencing domestic violence. There were also concerns over home conditions, parental mental health, bereavement, and the risk or experience of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. For 12 children (13%) there were also concerns over the child's behaviour at the time of referral. Behavioural concerns spanned across a spectrum of severity from being unmanageable, to displaying violent or sexualised behaviour which had been observed at primary school or nursery. Four children were born whilst their mother was still a teenager. These issues did not stand alone, and many children faced adversity across multiple factors.

69% of the children had been placed on the Child Protection Register at least once, and 30% had been under a Child Protection Order (CPO) at some point in their lives.

Many of these factors were deep rooted and this is clearly shown through the longevity of concerns surrounding the parents which often stemmed back to their own childhoods. **Notably, almost a third of the children (31%) had a parent or carer who had also been placed on a Supervision Requirement when they were younger.** This was usually the child's mother, in three cases it was both parents, and for four children it was their father only. For one child, their grandmother had previously been subject to a Supervision Requirement. It may also be the case that the number of parents and carers who had also been on Supervision Requirements was an underestimate as it was only known they were so if it was stated within a Social

⁵ The sample was selected from those children with Supervision Requirements for five or more years on 31 March 2010 and who were then aged five and six years, 11 and 12 years, and 15 and 16 years old. Data were collected from May 2011 to March 2012. This means that the children were all at least a year older when the data were collected, and hence had been on Supervision Requirements for at least a further year.

Work report. More parents or carers may have been placed on Supervision Requirements when they were younger, but this was not stated and therefore not recorded in this study.

First Services

There were 41 children (46%) for whom it was not fully possible to determine which services or individuals first raised concerns about their welfare. This was because Social Work were already working with the family at the time or Social Work had come to know the family but it was not stated how within the child's file. For the other children, there was a variety of services and individuals who first raised concerns (primarily to Social Work) about the children's welfare. Eighteen children (20%) were first identified through the Police due to an incident which they attended, and 14 children (16%) were identified by health services through either a Health Visitor or a medical examination.

Table 3 shows the range of people who first raised concerns about the children. It shows that it was not just agencies and services who identified the need for support; siblings, relatives and members of the community also contacted relevant bodies over their concerns.

Table 3. Range of agents who first raised concerns about the children

	No. of children		No. of children
Prison Service	1	Supported accommodation/service	3
Sibling - to police	2	Member of community	4
Relative	2	Health	14
Nursery	2	Police	18
School	3	Social Work	41

Age at first service

From the SCRA case files it was possible to see how old the children were when services first became involved in their lives. Table 4 shows the ages of the children across the three age groups. As all children were selected on the basis of being subject to a Supervision Requirement for at least five years, the age at which they were identified is curtailed for some of the younger children.

Table 4. Ages of children at first service

Age at 1 st service	No. of children 5-6 years group	No. of children 11-12 years group	No. of children 15-16 years group
0 - <6 months	26	6	3
6 - <12 months	2	4	3
1 year	2	2	1
2 years	-	6	2
3 years	-	3	4
4 years	-	6	3
5 years	-	4	6
6 years	-	0	1
7 years	-	0	3
8 years	-	-	1
9 years	-	-	1
10 years or more	-	-	1
Total	30	31	29

As expected for the youngest children (5-6 years), there is a concentration of children being identified as at risk very early in their lives, in fact 26 of the 30 (87%) were identified before they were six months old. For the older children the ages were more spread out though there was still a further nine children identified before they were six months, and a further seven before they were 12 months old. Out of the middle and oldest age groups, 27 children (45%) were known to services by the age of two years old. Within the oldest group, seven of the 29 children (24%) were at least six years old when they were first identified by services.

Support for families

The core services of Social Work, Education, Health and the Police were key to working with families when children were first identified as in need of support, and they continued to be involved with families for a number of years. Beyond this, however, was an extensive range of support services that were used by (or offered to) children, parents and carers whilst the children had Supervision Requirements. These support services were provided by a number of agencies and third sector organisations.

Over 100 different services were used by (or offered to) the families in this study, with some families accessing many different supports over the years. Table 5 shows the services involved with the families whilst the children were on Supervision Requirements. These services were specifically sourced for the children and families and go beyond services such as GPs, Criminal Justice and even Residential Schools or Children's Units. It also does not include programmes that are also conducted whilst a child was living in a residential placement or in secure care.

Table 5. Support services used by children, parents and carers.

Type of service	Services used	Type of service	Services used
Addictions	Al-Atteen; Back on Track /Bounce Project /Circle /Hearth; Counselling; Day Centre; Local Authority drug and alcohol teams; Rehabilitation projects	Legal	Child Advocacy; Children's Rights Officer; Legal Representation (child); Scottish Adoption Advice Service; Youth Advocacy Project
Careers	Careers Scotland; Getting Ready for Work; Go Further Project (LAC)	Other	Behaviour specialist; Gypsy Traveller Education and Information Project, Leaving Care Services; Through Care and After Care; Who Cares? Scotland; Young Carers; Young Runaways Project
Carers	Connections Club (social and respite for carers and children), evening respite for carers; overnight/weekend respite for carer; financial support kinship carers	Parenting / Family	Attachment specialist; Family Assessment and Support Service; Family Centres; Family Support Worker; Homestart; Mediation, Parenting Classes; Sure Start
Domestic Violence	Women's Aid	Practical	Home support or Home Help (e.g. to help get child ready for school in mornings, assist keeping house clean and bathing child).
Education	1:1 classroom assistance; Adult Learning; Additional Support / Learning needs; After school care; Breakfast Club; Educational Support Worker (Barnardos); Calm Project, Early Intervention Teacher; Educational Psychologist; Nursery placement; School escort (taxi); School Nurture Group	Psychological / Emotional	Anger management; Bereavement Counselling; CAMHS; Child and adolescent psychotherapist; Clinical forensic Psychologist; Counselling; Community Psychiatric Nurse; DCFP (Yorkhill Hospital)
Financial	Advice Shop; Social Works Services (e.g. children's clothes, home decoration grants)	Social	Active Steps (social inclusion through sport); Befriender; Child minder; Community Link Worker; Dance teacher; Intensive Community Support; Kick Start (football placement); Summer play

			scheme
General Health	Child and Family Disability team; Child Development Clinic; Community Nursing; Occupational Health; Occupational Therapy	Therapy	Art therapy; Corrieneuchin Project (recovery from abuse); Life story work; Music therapy; Play therapy; Speech and language therapy
Housing	Homeless accommodation; Housing services; Penumbra (practical and emotional support); Supported Accommodation	Women's	Vulnerable Women's Project; Young Mums Project
		Youth Justice	ISMS; Quarriers; SACRO; Welltree Foundation

One of the Scottish Government's aims for children under Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) is that children receive services that are timely and proportionate (Scottish Government, 2008). It was not possible to tell from analysing case files as to whether or not certain services should have been received at an earlier point in the child's life. However, it could be noted (where it had been recorded) when services were received or at least identified as a need, either within the Social Work report or at the Children's Hearing.

For 57 of the 90 families (63%), services had been identified as a need **within the first six months** of their first Children's Hearing. These services were either already in place by this Hearing or were in the process of being established. For some of these families, more than one service was required, and in fact within these 57 families there was a total of 101 placements with services. The most common type of service required was related to parenting and family programmes, where 29 placements were sought for 17 families. This also showed that often more than one placement of a similar nature was sought at this time, showing the depth of support these families needed. The other services sought or offered were addiction services (18 families), Home Maker/Home Help (11), psychological/emotional support for parents (nine), psychological/emotional support for the child (six), housing (six), nursery/childminder (four), Befriender (four), extra school support (four), Educational Psychologist (three), respite care (three), financial help (two), Women's Aid, adult learning, Child Development Clinic and recovery therapy (all one family each).

"I want my mum to get help to get off the drink so I can get home quicker coz am doing my bit."

Appendix 3 shows the services identified and sought by agencies for the 90 children across their periods of being looked after.

Case study 1 Jake

Jake is seven years old when he is first referred to the Reporter by his school as he is displaying very challenging behaviour. The school is also concerned about his safety. At his first Hearing, Social Work recommends a Supervision Requirement at home, with support from a Family Centre, Parenting Classes, a Family Support Worker and also a Befriender for Jake.

Jake is placed on a Supervision Requirement when he is eight years old, and the family receive support for over two years. Jake continues to receive befriending support and gains educational support, but his mother is reluctant to engage with the services offered. Further concerns arise about Jake and he moves to live with his grandmother when he is 11 years old.

Case study 2 Caitlin

When Caitlin is a baby the police are called to her house as there are a number of disturbances between her parents. The police refer Caitlin to the Reporter. There are concerns over Caitlin's care and the family is given a placement at a Family Centre with additional guidance and home-based support. Progress is made by Caitlin's parents, but then this begins to slip and Caitlin moves into kinship care when she is three years old.

Caitlin thrives in her new home, she has a nursery placement and her carers receive respite care one weekend a month. When she starts school she requires help through a nurture group and also has a Befriender. Later her carers are not well and Caitlin receives support from an Educational Psychologist to support her transition to a new school as she moves home again. Caitlin is happy where she is living and with her new school. She is nearly seven years old.

Case study 3 Megan

Megan is living with a relative when she is placed on a Supervision Requirement when she is one and a half. There are concerns about the home conditions and her carer receives support from a Homemaker. Her mother has support with her addiction and Megan attends nursery. Megan starts school, but is often late and unkempt. The family receive help from Home Support to get Megan ready for school, and they also receive help in the evenings to clean the house and help with bathing Megan. Concerns continue and Megan needs support with her social skills and is given a Befriender.

Due to a change in circumstance Megan moves to another relative when she is six years old. Improvements are made, but the Hearing recommends a psychological assessment. However, her placement is breaking down and psychological services recommend a more settled placement is needed first. Megan moves in with another relative when she is nine years old, which is what she wants. She starts Play Therapy, but due to moves in accommodation this is interrupted.

As Megan gets older further intensive community support is given, but this ends when she is 14 years old as it is felt no further progress can be made. Extra support is given in school but her attendance is slipping. Support now focuses on housing and her future as Megan is pregnant.

For five of the 90 children it appeared that no extra support was provided to the child or their family. In these five cases, the children were known to core services at birth and were accommodated either at birth or within their first year. The children remained in either foster placements or kinship care throughout the period of their Supervision Requirements, with only one child experiencing a short rehabilitation attempt.

4. Placements

There were seven children who had never been accommodated and remained on Supervision Requirements 'at home'⁶. For the remaining 83 children, the age at which they were first accommodated is shown below.

The data presented in this section relate to the whole period of the child's life where services were involved. Therefore it includes the time leading up to the Supervision Requirement being made and the time the child was subject to a Supervision Requirement.

Table 6. Ages of the 83 children when first accommodated

Age 1 st accommodated	No. of children 5-6 years group	No. of children 11-12 years group	No. of children 15-16 years group
0 - <6 months	13	1	0
6 - <12 months	3	0	3
1 year	7	1	1
2 years	2	2	1
3 years	2	2	2
4 years	1	5	2
5 years	0	10	2
6 years	0	1	1
7 years	-	4	2
8 years	-	1	3
9 years	-	1	3
10 years or more	-	1	6
Total	28	29	26

Over half (57%) of the children from the 5-6 years group had been accommodated before they were six months old. For the 11-12 years group, just over a third (35%) were accommodated when aged five years; and for the oldest age group, 54% were moved from home before they were eight years old.

For the majority (63, 76%) of the 83 children, the basis of their first move from home and their parents' care, and to being looked after and accommodated was not a Supervision Requirement:

- 32 (39%) - voluntary basis (s25 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995)
- 29 (35%) – emergency basis (Place of Safety Warrants and CPOs)
- 18 (22%) - Supervision Requirements
- 2 (2%) - under s61(5) or s37(4) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- 2 (2%) - not recorded.

⁶ See Chapter 7 for further discussion on the children who were never accommodated.

Numbers of moves⁷ and placements

For those children who were accommodated, a proportion experienced one (14%) or two moves (10%). Table 7 shows the number of moves for the children in the different age groups.

Table 7. Total number of moves⁷ per child

Total no. of moves ⁷	No. of children 5-6 years group	No. of children 11-12 years group	No. of children 15-16 years group	Total no. of children
0	2	3	2	7
1	6	5	2	13
2	6	2	1	9
3	5	4	4	13
4	2	5	5	12
5	3	4	1	8
6	2	2	1	5
7	2	3	4	9
8	1	1	1	3
9	0	1	3	4
10	0	1	0	1
11 or more	1	1	4	6
Total	30	31	29	90

The most common number of moves was one or three (14% of children in each).

However, 10% of children moved seven times, and 8% moved 10 times or more.

Whilst most of the children who had a higher number of moves were in the oldest age group, there were still children from the younger groups who had a high number of moves. There were two children in the 5-6 years group who had seven moves, one who had eight moves and one who had 16 moves.

“I don't want to move because I have already been taken away from my family and I'll be taken away from my friend.”

The most common type of *initial* placement for the children was to a foster carer, with 42 children (51% of accommodated children) first placed in this type of placement. The average length of time in this first foster placement was 1 year and 2 months, with the shortest placement being five days and the longest being over seven years. Four children remained with their initial foster carer for the long term.

Over a third (39%) of the children had their first placement in kinship care (32 children). Here the average length of initial time with a relative was just over three years. The shortest kinship placement was 11 days and the longest was over eight years. Nine children remained with their initial kinship carer for the long term.

⁷ Number of moves includes first move from parents

Other types of initial placements were: Assessment Centres with a parent (three children), Children's Units (two children), Residential School, with their father, a childminder and hospital (all one child each).

Appendix 4 shows the types of placements made across the different moves for all the children.

Foster care and kinship placements were commonly used at different points in children's lives, along with rehabilitation attempts to parents. 53% of children who were initially placed in kinship care had another kinship placement later on, whether returning to their initial carer or moving to a different relative. 69% of children initially placed in foster care, had a further placement in foster care at a later date.

49% of those accommodated (29 children) experienced a rehabilitation attempt with their parent(s). Seven of these 29 children (24%) had a successful rehabilitation in that this was their last placement at the time of the study, with a further two children being returned to a parent at their last Hearing recorded.

Across all the different types of placements, there were children who experienced long-term placements as well as short-term placements. There were children who experienced only one type of placement (35%) and there were those who experienced three or more types of placement⁸ (17%). There were also various reasons as to why children were moved from one placement to another. Appendix 5 shows the categories of reasons as to why children were moved.

For the 83 children, there was a total of 380 moves (Appendix 5). Reasons for moving vary, but can be broadly discussed in terms of whether a move was planned or not planned. Planned moves included: a rehabilitation attempt with parent(s), child moved to allow assessment, child moved as part of the long-term plan, child wants to move, and a Residential Unit considered best to meet the child's needs. Unplanned moves included: parent's behaviour (excluding first move); to an emergency placement, child's behaviour affecting themselves or other children; a change in circumstances with carer; carer no longer wants child, and allegations made about foster carer.

Excluding the first move for each child (usually away from parents), **44% of moves were planned and 56% were not planned**⁹. The most common reason for a planned move was a rehabilitation attempt with a parent (18%), and the most common unplanned move was due to the parent's behaviour (15%) (excluding the first move children made away from home) (Table 8).

⁸ Other than with a parent

⁹ Categories of 'more than one reason' (13 moves), 'other or not known' (30 moves) and 'parents behaviour' (where this was the first move – 65 moves) are not included in Table 8 as they can be a combination of planned or unplanned moves. For purposes of this analysis the total number of single planned or unplanned moves is 272.

“I’ve been told I am going leaving my nana and go to fostering. I am not leaving my nana. I trust my nana.”

Table 8. Reasons for moves

Reason	Planned moves		Reason	Unplanned moves	
	No. moves	% moves		No. moves	% moves
Rehabilitation attempt with parent(s)	50	18%	Parent’s behaviour (excluding 1 st move)	42	15%
Child moved to allow assessment	9	3%	To an emergency placement	30	11%
Child moved as part of the long-term plan	38	14%	Child’s behaviour affecting themselves or other children	36	13%
Child wants to move	10	4%	Change in circumstances with carer	23	8%
Residential Unit considered best to meet the child’s needs	12	4%	Carer no longer wants child	16	6%
			Allegations made about foster carer	6	2%
Total moves	119	44%	Total moves	153	56%

The most common reason for children first being moved away from home (whether on a voluntary basis (s25), CPO, Warrant or Supervision Requirement) was their parent(s) behaviour (65 of the 83 children, 78%). The most common concerns were related to parent(s) substance misuse (29%), poor parenting and/or home conditions (23%), physical abuse of child or child abandoned by parents (both 8%). In an additional 20% of cases, the child was moved to kinship carers due to their parent(s) behaviour, with many of these being planned moves (for example, from hospital after birth).

With so many of the children being accommodated and then moving between placements, Supervision Requirements were considered necessary to secure these placements. Despite the fact that over a half of moves were not planned, the majority of placements lasted a number of months if not years. For example, there were 207 foster placements altogether, and 84 (41%) lasted for at least one year. Similarly there were 68 placements with kin, and 42 (62%) lasted for at least one year.

Long-term placements

Despite the number of moves, and various placements experienced by the children, this was very often combined with at least one long period of stability with a carer or there were proceedings in place for permanence but this was taking a long time (see Chapter 8 for a broader discussion on permanence). **Out of the 90 children, seven (8%) remained at home under their Supervision Requirements, 26 children (29%) had permanence proceedings underway and 29 children (32%) lived in a placement**

away from home for at least five years where there were no permanence proceedings underway. Altogether this accounts for 69% of the children in the study.

For the 29 children who had a placement for five years or more, 14 were in kinship care, 10 were with foster carers, two were in Children's Units, two were in a Residential Unit, and one was with their father who did not have Parental Rights and Responsibilities.

Kinship care

Across the 14 long-term kinship placements, it was clear that children were benefiting from the care and stability that they received, and eight of the 14 placements turned into stable ones, in that this was their final placement.

"I am happy to stay with aunt, uncle and cousins and dogs because they make me happy."

"I don't want to stay with my mum. I just want to stay here with my gran."

The length of time in kinship placements varied from just over five years to just over eight years. Out of these eight stable placements, it had not been recorded in four case files if there was ever any discussion about the carer (usually grandparent(s)) moving for a Permanence Order or a Residential Order. For the remaining four children, legal Orders had been discussed, but in three cases the carer felt they were not in the financial position for this to be achieved. In the final case, the carer had instructed their solicitor to apply for Parental Rights and Responsibilities but this was not done.

Also, in one of the kinship placements where legal Orders were discussed, it was clear that the carer did not want to apply for permanence as it might initiate contact from the child's parents whom they had not seen for a number of years. A Supervision Requirement was therefore necessary to legally secure the child's kinship placement.

For the five children who moved on from their long-term kinship carers, the children either returned to the care of their parents or went to live with another relative. One child moved from their long-term kinship carer to a series of other placements including secure care.

Foster care

There were 10 children who had long-term placements in foster care. Eight of these 10 resulted in stable placements, with two children having a six or seven year placement which later broke down.

For the eight stable placements, four of these were still ongoing at the time of the study, and it was recorded by Hearings that the Supervision Requirements provided the security and legal basis for the children living there. For the other four children,

their Supervision Requirements had been terminated as they had reached the age of 16 years, Hearings recorded that there was no longer a legal need for the Supervision Requirement and in all cases the child continued living with their carers on a voluntary basis. Through care legislation took over for these children. The length of these eight stable placements varied between five and 13 years, with the children benefiting from their long-term care and protection. In six of these eight placements, legal Orders for permanence had been discussed at an earlier point in the child's life but had not been progressed, often it had not been recorded as to why not. In one case, a foster carer needed to be assessed to adopt the child, but three years later the file stated this had 'been delayed'.

Residential care

There were four children who had long-term placements in Children's Units or Residential School. Three children had previous placements and then two settled in Children's Units and one in Residential School. The third child spent over five years in a Residential School and was then moved to other Residential Units for permanent care.

"[residential school] staff are good to me"

Other

One child was living with their father for over six years. Here a Supervision Requirement was needed as the father had no Parental Rights and Responsibilities at the time the child moved in. The father was encouraged to pursue this by the Local Authority and Hearings, but this did not occur.

These long-term placements clearly benefited the children, even if they did not end in Permanence Orders. The care and guidance they received often meant the child was able to thrive and develop.

Case study 4 James

James is moved to foster care on a voluntary basis when he is eight years old as his home situation is deteriorating and his mother is struggling with his behaviour. After a few months he returns home but again his mother struggles and feels his behaviour impacts on his siblings. He moves to a second foster carer. James's behaviour improves and he is doing well at school. His mother and services feel foster care is the best place for him.

James has some respite placements whilst his main foster carers are on holiday, but after three years his main placement breaks down as his carers feel they cannot look after him anymore. When he is 12 years old, he is moved on an emergency basis to a Children's Unit whilst alternative foster carers are found.

James is very unsettled in the Unit and is transferred to another one. After a few months he is moved to Residential School where he stays for two years. James is now older and looking to go to college. His behaviour has settled down and both he and his mother feel he should return home. James moves home when he is 15 years old and this works well, his Supervision Requirement is no longer needed.

Case study 5 Peter

Peter is first placed with his aunt as a baby on an emergency basis. His parents gradually decrease contact with him, until as a young child he no longer sees them. His placement is recognised as a permanent one but his aunt is concerned that she will not be able to look after him financially if a legal Order is secured for him.

When he is seven years old, his aunt moves for permanence for him and his Supervision Requirement is terminated.

Case study 6 Jenny

When she is two, Jenny moves to a Residential Unit with her mother for mother's parenting to be assessed. After a few months mother and child return home as her mother is assessed as being able to safely care for Jenny. After ten months with her mother Jenny is moved on a CPO to foster care. A few days later she moves again from the emergency placement to a new foster placement. After six weeks it is said that this placement is 'coming to an end' and a more long-term placement is sought.

After 2.5 years with her foster carer, Jenny needs to move again as her carer has ill health. Jenny moves to her fourth foster carer and settles. After one year Jenny moves again to her final foster carer who is looking to adopt her. Jenny is seven years old.

5. Children’s Hearings

The numbers of Hearings held for the 90 children varied considerably depending on the individual family and circumstances. All children had at least five Hearings as they had been on Supervision Requirements for at least five years and aside from their initial ‘grounds’ Hearing, a Hearing will have been held each year¹⁰.

Table 9. Number of Hearings held

Total no. of Hearings whilst on SR (inc. SR made)	No. of children 5-6 years group	No. of children 11-12 years group	No. of children 15-16 years group	Total no. of children
1-5	0	0	0	0
6-10	7	3	1	11
11-15	13	8	8	29
16-20	6	9	8	23
21-25	3	6	4	13
26-30	0	3	1	4
31-35	0	1	3	4
36-40	0	0	1	1
41-45	1	0	2	3
46 or more	0	1	1	2
Total children	30	31	29	90

A third of children in the youngest age group had had at least 16 Hearings; one child had over 40 Hearings. For the 11-12 years group, over a third (36%) had had 21 Hearings or more. In the oldest age group, 28% had had over 25 Hearings; three children had over 40 Hearings (Table 9). The highest number of Hearings for any child in the study was 56.

It should be noted, however, that children do not always attend their Hearings. Whilst a child is obligated to attend and has the right to do so, a Hearing can release a child from this obligation if it considers that it is not in the child’s best interest and would be detrimental to them to attend. This is usually arranged through a Business Meeting prior to the Hearing, but can also be decided at the Hearing itself. Alternatively, where a child is not in attendance and the Hearing feels it is necessary to have the child there to hear their views, then the Hearing can be continued for their attendance, and a s45 Warrant issued if required. It was not possible to determine in this study how many Hearings each child attended.

¹⁰ All children on a Supervision Requirement have an Annual Review Hearing to decide whether to continue the Supervision Requirement or to terminate it. Sometimes Hearings are requested around the same time as an Annual Review, for example by a Hearing or the Local Authority and as such can be recorded as a different type of Hearing. Therefore the number of Annual Reviews recorded in this study may be lower than the number of years a child is on a Supervision Requirement.

Hearing types

Appendix 6 shows a breakdown of the most common types of Hearings held for the different age groups of children, and Appendix 7 Table 1 shows the total amount of Hearings held across all the Hearings types along with Hearings decisions.

Review Hearings

The most common type of Hearing held across all the age groups was an Annual Review. 34% of Hearings for the youngest age group, 33% for the 11-12 year olds, and 38% for the older children were Annual Reviews. **Overall, Annual Reviews accounted for 35% of all Hearings.**

The second most common type of Hearing was that requested by a Hearing (Hearing review s70/7) with the 11-12 year olds having the highest proportion of this type – 24%, and the youngest children having the lowest proportion at 16%. **Overall, 20% of Hearings were section 70/7 Hearings.**

The third most common type of Hearing held, was a Hearing requested by the Local Authority (LA review s73/4). Again the 11-12 years group had the highest proportion of this type of Hearing at 18%. **Overall, 16% of Hearings were requested by the Local Authority.**

The most common decision of a Hearing was to continue the Supervision Requirement. **Nearly two thirds (64%) of Hearings decisions continued the Supervision Requirements**, with just over half (54%) of these continuations being without any variation in conditions. Interestingly, for those in the youngest age group, variations to Supervision Requirements were slightly higher than those without variation.

Continued Hearings

For 21% of the Hearings held, the single outcome was that no substantive decisions were made and the Hearings continued. However, there were Hearings where the outcomes were to issue Warrants but substantive decisions were not made and thus the Hearings were continued, this means that some Hearings in Appendix 7 Table 2 where the outcome was 'Warrant issued' were also continued Hearings. **Altogether, there were 433 continued Hearings, making them 26% of all Hearings.**

There were a number of different reasons why a Hearing decided to continue to another Hearing, and Table 10 shows the reasons why this was done. It was sometimes the case that the Hearing was continued for two reasons, in which case, both reasons were recorded in the data collection. Therefore the total number of reasons shown below is higher than the number of continued Hearings stated above.

Table 10. Reasons why Hearings were continued

Reason why Hearing was continued	No. of Hearings
Non attendance	191
Late / No report	113
Safeguarder appointed	71
Further information required	70
Other	57
Continue to the scheduled Hearing	10
No reason evident / No Hearing details on file	9
Transfer to Hearing for different Local Authority	6
Refer grounds for proof	5
Total reasons	532

The most common reason for continuing a Hearing was non-attendance, accounting for 36% of continued Hearings. This was mainly for the child or parents, but 10 Hearings were continued as neither the family or Social Worker were in attendance, and 11 Hearings continued because of Social Worker non-attendance alone.

21% of continued Hearings were due to there being no Social Work report for the Hearing, or the report was received on the day of the Hearing. Twenty one of these 113 late reports were not received by the family only. In 13% of continued Hearings it was felt that the Hearing could not make a decision and that it was necessary to appoint a Safeguarder.

The Hearing decided that further information or investigation was needed in 13% of these Hearings¹¹. This was often due to the child having recently been placed with a carer and further information was required about the placement before a decision could be made or, similarly, further information or investigation was needed for the child to be returned home from a placement. It was also the case, though less common, that a Hearing requested a report or assessment from a specialist to help it make a substantive decision.

For 11% of these Hearings the reason for the continuation was recorded as 'other'. Examples of continuing the Hearing here were: for further assessments to be made, for the child or family to have more time to follow the Care Plan, an emergency transfer had been made and a new Care Plan was needed, a Panel Member was unable to attend, a parent wanted to seek legal advice, there was non-attendance of a legal representative, and court proceedings were underway over Relevant Person status.

For 1% of continued Hearings a previous grounds Hearing had been sent for proof and this Hearing was arranged, but the grounds had still not been established.

¹¹ This is classified as reasons of 'further information required outwith s69' and 'further investigation, s69(2), no requirement' in the Children Scotland (1995) Act.

Whilst 20% of children had not experienced a continued Hearing, or had only one continued Hearing (17%), some children experienced a number of continued Hearings, as shown in Table 11¹².

Table 11. Number of continued Hearings for each child across age groups.

No. of continued Hearings whilst on SR	No. of children 5-6 years group	No. of children 11-12 years group	No. of children 15-16 years group	Total no. of children
0	7	5	6	18
1	7	6	2	15
2	2	3	4	9
3	4	3	4	11
4	3	4	1	8
5	2	2	0	4
6	2	3	4	9
7	1	0	1	2
8	1	1	2	4
9	0	1	1	2
10	0	0	1	1
11 or more	1	3	3	7
Total	30	31	29	90

Out of the 90 children, seven children (8%) individually had 11 or more Hearings continued, with one child being in the youngest age group. The most number of continued Hearings for a child was 19, with one child in the 11-12 years group, and another child in the older group experiencing this.

There were 150 occasions where Hearings were continued back to back. Out of this there were 34 times where Hearings were continued three times or more.

Early review Hearings

It is also possible for a Hearing to make a substantive decision but to also request an 'early review' of the Supervision Requirement. Here, the Hearing will request that another Hearing is arranged within a stipulated time for a particular reason.

Out of all the Hearings that had a substantive decision (1,253), 21% also requested early reviews. There were nearly one third (31%) of children where there was an early review requested at the Hearings where their Supervision Requirements were first made. Here, early reviews were requested for four to six weeks, three months or six months time. These early reviews were mainly requested to see how well the family and child were progressing with their supports. Early reviews were also requested to hear the outcomes of assessments and in two cases were requested by Social Work and agreed by the Hearing as close monitoring of the child was needed.

¹² This figure does not include Hearings that were continued but the outcome was recorded as 'Warrant issued'.

There was also 45 occasions where early reviews were requested back to back. In 11 of these times, the reason for the second early review was similar or the same as the first one. Seven of the 11 were to check for improvements or progress with the child or parents, one time was for two similar but different assessments, one time was to check twice if rehabilitation was an option, one time was for risk assessments to be completed and another for the Local Authority to fulfil their duties regarding placements.

Hearing decision making and Social Work recommendations

For the 1,686 Hearings recorded in this research, data were also collected as to what the Social Work recommendations were in the Social Work reports and whether or not Hearings agreed with them. Out of all the Hearings, it was not possible to say whether the Hearings agreed or not in 511 cases, this was either due to there being no Social Work recommendation evident or that the Hearing was continued (bearing in mind that 71 Hearings were continued for a Safeguarder’s report).

Table 12. Number of Hearings which agreed with Social Work recommendations

Hearing agreed with recommendation	No. of Hearings
Yes	1100
No	49
In part	26
Total	1,175

There were 49 Hearings where the Hearing did not agree with the Social Work recommendation, and 26 Hearings where part of the recommendation was agreed with, but other parts were not agreed to (Table 12). This was mainly that the Supervision Requirement was continued but the conditions were not agreed to. Altogether, Hearings agreed with the Social Work recommendations in 94% of Hearings. If Hearings that were continued for a Safeguarder’s report are included as a ‘No’ then it is the case that 88% of Hearings agreed with Social Work recommendations.

There were 17 Hearings where the Social Work recommendations were to terminate the Supervision Requirements, but these were continued by the Hearings. At nine Hearings it was felt that the child or family were still in need of support. At four Hearings there was a lack of information present to decide to terminate the Supervision Requirement. At four Hearings the child or family did not attend and therefore were not able to give their views. In three Hearings the Supervision Requirements were not terminated to secure placements or services, and at one Hearing the Supervision Requirement was continued to see if it could be transferred to another jurisdiction.

Inversely, there were four Hearings where the recommendation was to continue the Supervision Requirement, but the Hearing terminated it. The reasons given were that the Supervision Requirement was of no further benefit to the child (two), that

the child felt they no longer needed the Supervision Requirement and was at an age where they could make decisions and that the initial grounds no longer applied.

There were also 18 Hearings where the recommendation was to reduce contact with the child's family, but this was not agreed to by the Hearing. In half the cases, the Hearing kept contact at the same level, in eight cases it was reduced but not to the extent recommended, and in one case it was increased. At a further six Hearings, the Hearing made contact less restricted than the Social Work recommendation (contact allowed, or unsupervised, or arranged by family), and in three Hearings it was made with greater restriction or stipulation. At three Hearings, contact was reduced by the Hearing to a greater extent than the recommendation. There were 278 Hearings where specific recommendations were made with regards to contact and the Hearings were able to make a substantive decision. Thus in examining contact alone, Hearings agreed with the Social Work recommendation with regard to contact 89% of the time.

"It would be nice to see my mummy on my own."

"I would like to go out with my mum without the social worker."

There were 14 Hearings where the recommended placement was not agreed to by the Hearing. At five Hearings, the recommendation had been a placement away from home, but the child was kept at home. At three Hearings the inverse occurred where the recommendation was at home, but the child was placed away. At five Hearings the Hearing made an alternative condition away from home to the one recommended, these were: three kinship placements, one Secure Authorisation and one specialised unit.

It was also the case that the Hearing did not agree with the recommendation of varying the Supervision Requirement and instead it issued a Warrant. This occurred at five Hearings.

Finally there were four Hearings where other recommendations were not made. In one case Social Work recommended voluntary measures but a Supervision Requirement was made, in another Social Work requested a continued Hearing but the Hearing made a decision to continue the Supervision Requirement, at one Hearing Social Work considered a Parenting Order but the Hearing asked for alternative accommodation to be considered, and finally one Hearing could not vary the Supervision Requirement as there was a Permanence Order submitted in court and the Hearing was awaiting a s95 report from the Sheriff.

Whilst the majority of Hearings agreed in full with the recommendations given, the times where there was not a full agreement were spread out across a number of different children. Overall, there were 42 children (46%) where a Hearing did not fully agree with the Social Work recommendation. As shown, the areas of disagreement included continuing or terminating Supervision Requirements, amending contact arrangements, recommended placements, issuing Warrants

rather than changing Supervision Requirements, the consideration of Parenting Orders and other legal matters arising. In considering these 42 children alone, on average, Hearings were still in agreement with the Social Work recommendations for 86% of the time.

6. Young people aged 16 and 17 years old

Most Supervision Requirements are terminated before young people are 16 years old. In 2011-12, 658 young people aged 16 years and 192 aged 17 years still had Supervision Requirements. This is 6.5% of the 13,093 children with Supervision Requirements in 2011-12.

At 1 April 2012, there were 188 young people aged 16 years old, and 71 aged 17 years who had been on Supervision Requirements for five or more years. This is 12% of the 2,204 children who had Supervision Requirements for five or more years.

Young people aged 16 and 17 years old who have had Supervision Requirements for five or more years constitute almost a third of young people in this age group with Supervision Requirements.

The cases of 29 young people aged 15 or 16 years¹³ were examined in this study to find out the reasons why Hearings decided to continue their Supervision Requirements past their 16th birthdays, and the outcomes for these young people.

The average time these 29 young people had Supervision Requirements was 9.8 years. Seven young people had been on Supervision Requirements for more than 12 years (Table 13).

Table 13. 15 and 16 year olds - length of time on Supervision Requirements

Length of Supervision Requirement	No. of young people
6 – 7 years	6
7 – 8 years	5
8 – 9 years	4
9 – 10 years	4
10 – 11 years	0
11 – 12 years	3
> 12 years	7
Total	29

The proportion of their lives spent on Supervision Requirements was, on average, 59%. One young person had a Supervision Requirement for 95% of his life.

Over the periods of their Supervision Requirements, the 29 young people had an average of 22 Hearings. The lowest number was nine, the highest was 51 Hearings.

Supervision Requirements continued after 16th birthday

One of the 29 young people had their Supervision Requirement terminated before their 16th birthday.

¹³ At 31 March 2010.

Six young people were 17 years old. Two of whom had their Supervision Requirements terminated when they were 17 years old and five still had Supervision Requirements at the time of the study.

Twenty two were 16 years old. Six still had Supervision Requirements and 16 had had their Supervision Requirements terminated when they were 16 years old.

There were a variety of reasons that Hearings decided to extend young people's Supervision Requirements until they were 16 and 17 years old. There were 98 Hearings where this was considered, 24 of these Hearings were continued (15 because the child and or parents were absent, five because there was no report from Social Work, and four for other reasons). For the 74 Hearings, where there was a substantive decision, the reasons the Supervision Requirements were continued were (some Hearings had more than one reason):

- Young person required the support of services (36 Hearings)
- Support the young person in transition to independent living (16 Hearings)
- Ensure the security of the young person's placement (seven Hearings)
- Support the young person in the transition from school to college (five Hearings)
- Young person's risk taking behaviour (four Hearings)
- Engagement with education (four Hearings)
- Support young person in transition from secure accommodation (three Hearings)

The majority of Hearings for this group of 28 young people agreed with the Social Work recommendations. There were three Hearings for two young people that did not agree with the Social Work recommendations that the Supervision Requirements be terminated. These Hearings instead decided to continue the Supervision Requirements because they considered that the two young people still required the support of services, and for one the Hearing needed further information on the supports available.

Supervision Requirements terminated after 16th birthday

Eighteen of the 28 young people had their Supervision Requirements terminated when they were 16 or 17 years old.

The most common reasons why Hearings decided to terminated Supervision Requirements were because the young person would engage with services on a voluntary basis (13 Hearings) and/or the young person was taking responsibility for themselves (11 Hearings). Three Hearings considered that the Supervision Requirement was no longer necessary to secure the young person's placement. One young person had his Supervision Requirement terminated because he had received a custodial sentence.

Young people's views about their Supervision Requirements being terminated were recorded in 15 cases.

- Four young people stated that they did not want to be on Supervision Requirements or were happy that they were being terminated.
- Three young people wanted to continue living with their foster carers on a voluntary basis.

“I feel like part of [foster carers’] family.”

- Three were happy to work with services on a voluntary basis, one young person was very clear that he wanted the stigma of being on a Supervision Requirement removed. Another explained:

“I hope at the Hearing that my SR will be removed however I still wish to stay at the [residential unit]. I feel I need the support and guidance from the staff to explore moving on options and when the time is right I will hopefully move into my own tenancy or supported accommodation.”

- Two young people expressed anxieties about their Supervision Requirements terminating and how this would affect them.
- One young person was keen to move on with their life and start college, and another wanted to move to a supported unit.
- And one wanted to continue to live with her mother.

Two Hearings disagreed with the Social Work recommendations to continue the Supervision Requirements. The Hearings’ reasons for terminating these Supervision Requirements were that one young person was living independently and the other that the young person no longer needed a Supervision Requirement to secure their placement and was taking responsibility for their own life. It was also the wishes of both these young people that their Supervision Requirements be terminated.

Young people’s outcomes when Supervision Requirements were terminated

Most of the young people had positive outcomes at the end of their Supervision Requirements in terms of their plans for where they would be living and their education.

Stability of final placement on Supervision Requirement

Twelve of the 18 young people had experienced long periods of stability in where they lived up until their Supervision Requirements were terminated. Three had lived in a Residential Unit for over five years, five had lived with foster carers for over four years (two of these young people had lived with their foster carers for over 10 years), two had always lived at home, two had lived at home for over five years, and one had lived with relatives for over four years.

The other four young people had spent less than a year in their final residential placement (three) or at home (one).

Residence at end of Supervision Requirement

- Five young people were going to continue to live with their foster carers on a voluntary basis.
- Four had moved on to living independently.
- Three were in Residential Units.
- Three lived with their parents and one with relatives.
- One lived part of the week with parents and part in a Residential Unit.
- One was in prison.

Education/employment

- Eight of the young people had secured a college place or were at college when their Supervision Requirements were terminated.
- Three were in fifth or sixth year at school.
- Three were actively looking for employment.
- One had an apprenticeship.
- One had recently had a baby.
- Two were not in education or employment.

Case study 7

Callum

Callum has lived with his long-term foster carers since he was 13 years old. He is happy in this placement and wants to stay there until he is 18. He has regular contact with some of his family. He has had no contact with his parents for many years due to the abuse he suffered from them. After he is 16 years old, a Hearing continues his Supervision Requirement to secure his placement. A few months before his 18th birthday a Hearing terminates his Supervision Requirement. Through care and other services are in place to support his move to independent living and starting college.

Case study 8

Isla

Isla has lived in a Residential Unit since she was 11 years old. She has no family members who can care for her. When she is almost 15 she says that she wants to remain in the Unit and complete her education. No Social Work report is available for her Hearing, and an early review Hearing is requested for Social Work to produce a Plan for Isla's long-term future. This is not available for the next Hearing and this Hearing requests that a Leaving Care Plan is produced. It takes over a year for the Plan to be produced and presented to a Hearing. Isla is 16.5 years and a Hearing terminates her Supervision Requirement as it is no longer needed. The Leaving Care Team will support her in going to college. Isla is anxious about her Supervision Requirement terminating and how this could affect her.

7. Supervision Requirements at home

Only Supervision Requirement is at home

Seven of the 90 children remained on Supervision Requirements at home with one or both their parents, and were never accommodated. Three of the children were under two years old when first placed on Supervision Requirements and four were aged between five and nine years.

Three of the seven children had one or more Child Protection Registrations after being placed on Supervision Requirements at home.

In the main, Hearings decided to continue the Supervision Requirements at home to provide support to the child if their parent(s) were not cooperating with services or to help secure services for the child and their family. For three children, there were conditions to their Supervisions Requirements to prevent the children having contact with abusive adults.

"I feel safe."

For five children, their Supervision Requirements did appear to support them and help address concerns. This ranged from improved school attendance and engagement with education to the children feeling safe and secure at home and in the community. Two children had less positive outcomes, home conditions and parental care continued to be poor and both become involved in offending at an early age.

The risk factors (listed in Table 16) that led to the Supervision Requirements at home being made for these seven children were similar to those of the 39 children who had their first Supervision Requirement at home and who were later accommodated. The main difference was that none of the seven children, whose only Supervision Requirement was at home, had a parent who misused drugs.

Case study 9

Jon

A pre-birth Child Protection Case Conference is held due to concerns about Jon's mother's alcohol use and care of her other children. A Supervision Requirement at home is made when Jon is one year old.

When he is 3.5 years there is a Child Protection Registration under the category of Physical Neglect. Also at this time, the Social Work Department requests that a Hearing is held to review Jon's Supervision Requirement, with a recommendation that he be accommodated away from home. The Hearing does not agree and decides to continue the Supervision Requirement at home, with an early review to check on his mother's progress and his attendance at nursery.

At the review Hearing three months later, Jon's mother is engaging more with services and he is attending nursery regularly. The Hearing decides that the Supervision Requirement is still needed to support this progress and that there should be a further review in six months time. Social Work also recommend that the Supervision Requirement at home is continued.

When Jon starts school, he is always late and has chronic headlice. These concerns continue for almost two years. Despite this, Jon is described as doing well at school with lots of friends and is meeting his developmental milestones.

Jon is now seven years old and still has a Supervision Requirement at home, and is described as healthy, happy and settled in school. A Hearing decides that a Supervision Requirement is still needed as there are ongoing issues with his mother's alcohol addiction and her lack of co-operation with school and Social Work.

First Supervision Requirement is at home

Thirty nine of the 90 children (43%) were first placed on Supervision Requirements with their parent(s), and their Supervision Requirements were then later varied and the children accommodated. In 11 cases (28% of the 39 children), the Hearings that made the first Supervision Requirements had concerns for the children at home and requested early Review Hearings. These were either to monitor the parent(s)' care of the children and/or to check that services had been put in place. For one child, the Hearing wanted an assessment by an Educational Psychologist. In six cases (15%), a reason the Hearing made the Supervision Requirement was to secure services for the child and their family.

Table 14 shows the types of placements when children were first accommodated on Supervision Requirements and those at point of data collection.

Table 14. Placement types of Supervision Requirements from first Supervision Requirement to final placement

Type of placement	No. of children		
	First SR	First accommodated SR	Final placement SR
Kinship	0	15	7
Foster care	0	21	10
Foster care – permanent/adoptive parents	0	0	6
Residential Unit/school	0	3	9
Home/parent	39	0	7
Total	39	39	39

Some children were moved quickly away from home. Most (28 children, 72%) spent at least a year on Supervision Requirements at home before being placed away from home (Table 15). The longest continuous time on a Supervision Requirement at home, before being accommodated, was six years.

Table 15. Length of time on Supervision Requirements at home before first being accommodated

	No. of children
Less than 6 months	5
6 – 12 months	6
1 – 2 years	6
2 – 3 years	13
3 – 4 years	5
4 – 5 years	1
Over 5 years*	3
Total	39

* One of these children had had their first Supervision Requirement terminated, and was placed on a second some years later.

Risks when on Supervision Requirements at home

Fourteen (36%) of the 39 children had Child Protection Registrations during the periods of their Supervision Requirements at home. Thirteen were registered once, one child had three separate registrations over a four year period. The most common Child Protection Registration category was Physical Neglect (11 children).

For thirteen (33%) of the 39 children, concerns escalated while they were on Supervision Requirements at home and Place of Safety Warrants were made to quickly accommodate them away from home. Four of these children were removed first from their parents' care under CPOs, and then placed on Place of Safety Warrants. Six of these 13 children also had Child Protection Registrations while on Supervision Requirements at home.

To try to assess and compare the risk factors present when a Supervision Requirement at home was made and when the Supervision Requirement was varied to the child being accommodated away from home, the papers presented to the

both these Hearings and the Hearings' decisions were examined. Table 16 shows the different risk factors that were described in the Hearings' papers and decisions.

Table 16. Risk factors reported when Supervision Requirement at home was made and when varied to the child being accommodated

Risk factor	SR made - at home		SR varied - accommodated	
	No. children	% children*	No. children	% children*
Neglect**	26	67%	24	62%
Parental drug use	18	46%	16	41%
Poor home conditions	17	44%	11	28%
Parents not engaging with services	15	38%	17	44%
Domestic violence	13	33%	9	23%
Child – emotional and/or behavioural problems	14	36%	24	62%
Poor parenting	13	33%	9	23%
Parental alcohol use	10	25%	10	25%
Parent – offending/custodial sentence(s)	8	20%	5	13%
Poor school attendance	6	15%	12	31%
Bereavement of care giver	5	13%	2	5%
Parent(s) – mental health	5	13%	4	10%
Child – health	3	8%	4	10%
Child – contact with Schedule 1 offender	3	8%	2	5%
Child – physical abuse	2	5%	6	15%
Parent(s) – physical health	1	2%	3	8%
Child abandoned by parent(s)	1	2%	3	8%
Child – sexual abuse	0	0	3	8%
Child – offending	0	0	2	5%

*n=39

**Neglect – covers at least one of: parent(s) lack of emotional warmth and attachment to child, parent(s) failure to get medical attention for child and/or to keep medical appointments for child, child has poor diet and/or is often hungry, child has poor hygiene and/or chronic headlice, child left alone or unattended for long periods, child left with unsuitable carers, lack of stimulation in home.

Children experienced multiple risks when their Supervision Requirements were first made and when they were varied from home to the children being accommodated. On average children experienced four of the risk factors listed in Table 16 at both stages. One child was reported to have had seven of these risk factors when the Supervision Requirement was first made and when it was varied.

Although the numbers of risk factors in the children's lives were similar when first on Supervision Requirement at home to when decisions were made to vary the Supervision Requirement for the child to be accommodated, there were differences in the types of risks reported (Table 16). Some children were already accommodated under Place of Safety Warrants when their Supervision Requirements were varied, so the risks to them from being at home were less prevalent.

Neglect was the most common risk factor which was reported in 26 (67%) cases when the Supervision Requirements were made and in 24 cases (62%) when the Supervision Requirements were varied.

The main change was the increase in the number of children who were reported as displaying emotional and/or behaviour difficulties whilst on Supervision Requirements at home. When their Supervision Requirements were made, this was 14 children (36%), when the Supervision Requirements were varied this had increased to 24 children (62%). There was also an increase in the numbers of children reported as not attending nursery or school from six children (15%) to 12 children (31%). The numbers of children who were reported as being victims of abuse also increased while on Supervision Requirements at home from two children (5%) (physical abuse) to eight children (20%) (five - physical abuse, two – sexual abuse, one – both sexual and physical abuse).

There was little change in the numbers of children reported to be affected by their parent(s)' substance abuse. Ten children (25%) had parents who misused alcohol and over 40% (18 and 16 children) had parents with drug addictions at the start and end of Supervision Requirements at home.

Hearings decisions to vary Supervision Requirements from home to children being accommodated

In most cases the reason the Hearing decided to vary the Supervision Requirement to the child being accommodated away from home, was to due to parents' behaviour adversely impacting on their care of the child. There were a variety of factors behind this, and some children experienced several of these.

"I want to live with my mum and sister because I love them. I don't want to go to foster care."

The most common reason why Hearings decided to vary Supervision Requirements away from home was an escalation in one or both parents drug or alcohol use. This was a factor in over a half of cases. Some parents had tried hard to control their addictions and had received supports to help them, but were unsuccessful.

"I would be safe if i stay here because my mum doesn't feel very well sometimes."

In almost a half of cases, the reasons Hearings decided to vary the Supervision Requirements were because parents became increasingly unwilling to work with services or disengaged completely.

Acrimonious parental relationships or breakdowns in relationships led to a deterioration in their care of the child and/or exposed the child to violence. This was a factor in Hearings' decisions in about a fifth of cases. In a similar number of cases,

parent(s) offending and custodial sentences were a factor in the Hearing's decision for the child to be accommodated away from home.

"I don't want to see my dad."

Case study 10 Sam

Sam first comes to the attention of services when he is two years old following a police 'drugs raid' at the family home. Both Sam's parents use and deal drugs and the home is described as very unhygienic with drugs and drug equipment scattered on the floor amongst discarded food.

When he is almost three years old, a Children's Hearing makes a Supervision Requirement at home to provide support to the family in their new tenancy and the parents' attempts to reduce their drug use. During the first year of Sam's Supervision Requirement, his father leaves the family and his mother finds it increasingly difficult to cope with her children and her own drug dependency. The Supervision Requirement is continued at home for a further two years to provide support to Sam and his mother.

Sam starts school and his attendance is erratic. At his next Annual Review Hearing, his Supervision Requirement is varied to his grandparents, with a Review Hearing in two months. During this period, he becomes more settled in school with good attendance and is described as a bright, polite boy.

Sam's Supervision Requirement is continued at his grandparents as his mother cannot provide him with a safe home and she has had several custodial sentences for drugs offences. This is an arrangement that is supported by his grandparents as they want the security of an ongoing Supervision Requirement. Sam states that he is happy living with his grandparents and does not want this to change.

Sam is now 14 years old still living with his grandparents and has never been returned to his mother's care.

Case study 11

Lauren

Lauren is five when her first Supervision Requirement is made at home. There is domestic violence and her mother has problems with alcohol use; the Supervision Requirement is intended to provide the family with support. Over the next six months there are two Child Protection Registrations both under category of Physical Neglect. Social Work request a review of Lauren's Supervision Requirement with the recommendation that she lives with her grandparents. The Hearing agrees and varies the Supervision Requirement to her grandparents.

Six months later, Lauren's mother is making progress in controlling her alcohol addiction and Social Work request a further review Hearing so that Lauren can be returned to her mother's care. The Hearing agrees and the Supervision Requirement is varied to her mother's care.

Within a few months, concerns escalate and a CPO is made and Lauren placed with short-term foster carers. Lauren is described as being confused and worried about her mum and doesn't want to leave her.

There follows a series of Place of Safety Warrants while assessments are made on whether her grandparents should be her long-term carers or if Lauren should remain in foster care. It is decided that she should live with her grandparents and her Supervision Requirement is varied accordingly. After a year, her grandparents request that the Supervision Requirement be reviewed as they want more help from Social Work, and the Hearing supports them in this.

Less than three months later, Social Work requests a review Hearing to recommend that Lauren be placed in foster care. The Hearing agrees that foster care would offer more stability and varies the Supervision Requirement to foster carers. Lauren is worried about her mum and she runs away from her foster carers to see her.

Lauren is moved to a Residential Unit under a Place of Safety Warrant. She is nine years old. The Hearing that made the Warrant and subsequent Hearings over the next three years state that the Residential Unit placement is not the best place for a child of Lauren's age, but no fosters carers can be found. Lauren is described as being frustrated at the delay in finding her a foster carer, and that she wants to live closer to her school and family. During this period, she regularly has nightmares and unsettled sleep.

By age of 13 years, she has settled in the Unit and says she wants to stay there. Her family have failed to keep in contact with her. The Supervision Requirement is continued to provide Lauren with the support that is not provided by her family. Lauren has excellent reports from school and leaves to go to college with clear ambitions for her future career. Her Supervision Requirement is terminated when she is 17 years old as it is no longer necessary, and this is what Lauren wants. She will remain in the Residential Unit until Through Care Services are in place.

Rehabilitation home

Fifteen of the 39 children experienced rehabilitation attempts with their parents after being accommodated. Ten children had one period of rehabilitation, three had two periods, one child had three and another had four attempts. For seven children rehabilitation was successful and they were returned to and remain in their parent(s)' care – this is 18% of the 39 children who were first placed on Supervision Requirements at home.

Case study 12 **Chloe**

When she is one year old, Chloe is placed on the Child Protection Register under category of Emotional Abuse and a Supervision Requirement at home is made. There are concerns about her parents' volatile relationship, poor home conditions, and her mother's apparent lack of feeling and attachment to Chloe. Due to increasing concerns about her mother's ability to care for her, Chloe's Supervision Requirement is varied to her grandparents when she is four years old. Contact with her mother is stopped as it is causing Chloe distress. Her father maintains contact.

Chloe's grandparents want to pursue permanency but due to their ill health, Chloe is gradually rehabilitated to her father's care. Her Supervision Requirement is varied to her father when she is seven years old. Supports are in place, including respite foster care, to help her father. Chloe is happy to be living with her father and still wants to see her grandparents. Her Supervision Requirement is continued to secure the placement with her father and to maintain the condition of no contact with her mother.

8. Permanence

Hearings

Twenty Hearings were specifically held to consider permanence recommendations and provide advice to the Sheriff on applications for Freeing Orders, Adoption Orders, Parental Responsibility Orders (PRO) or Permanence Orders (PO)¹⁴. Sixteen of these Hearings were for 11 children in the 5-6 years group; and four Hearings were for four children in the 11-12 years group. No such permanence-related Hearings had been held for any of the children in the 15-16 years age group.

For four of the 20 Hearings, Panel Members could not make a substantive decision and the Hearings were continued. The reasons for this were that no report from Social Work had been provided for the Hearing (two Hearings) and in another for the mother to attend to give her views. It is not clear why the remaining Hearing was continued. The four continued Hearings were all held for the youngest age group, and all were followed by a second permanence-related Hearing where the Hearing provided advice to the Sheriff.

One child had two permanence-related Hearings which both provided advice to Sheriff. The first was for a Freeing Order application. Shortly after this Hearing, the prospective adoptive placement broke down and the child was placed in a Residential Unit where he has remained. Eighteen months after the first permanence Hearing, advice is provided to the Sheriff to support the Local Authority's application for a Permanence Order.

None of the 20 permanence-related Hearings disagreed with the Social Work recommendations.

Permanence planning and decisions

Orders made by the courts (Freeing Orders, Parental Responsibility Orders, Adoption Orders, Permanence Orders, Residence Orders, Parental Rights and Responsibilities) provide the legal basis for children to be placed and remain with long-term carers until adulthood. When these Orders are made, Supervision Requirements are usually terminated.

For 56 of the 90 children (62%), permanence was considered at some stage over their period on Supervision Requirements. After this initial consideration, the decision to proceed with permanency planning was made for 42 of these children (47%). Permanence was achieved or (at time of data collection) planning or proceedings were underway for 26 children (29%).

¹⁴ Freeing Orders and Parental Responsibility Orders were made under the 1978 Adoption Act. The 2008 Adoption Act introduced Permanence Orders.

Consideration of permanence was first evident at LAC Reviews, in reports for or at Children’s Hearings and at Permanency Reviews. Decisions to proceed with permanence planning were most commonly made at Permanency Panels and Permanency Reviews.

Although there had been some initial considerations of permanence, these did not proceed any further for 14 children. Reasons for this were available for eight children:

- In three cases, kinship carers decided not to pursue Parental Rights and Responsibilities or Residence Orders – one was concerned that she would no longer receive financial support from the Local Authority; reasons not recorded for two cases.
- A kinship carer’s application for a Residence Order was considerably delayed because the Local Authority delayed approving funding for her legal expenses.
- Poor health of the kinship carer.
- Permanency Panel decided there should be a rehabilitation with parents, which was not successful.
- Placement with prospective permanent carers broke down.

For 42 children, decisions were made to proceed with permanence plans. The time between first considerations to when decisions were made to proceed with permanence planning is shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Time between first consideration of permanence to decision to proceed with permanency plans

	No. of children
Less than 1 month	8
1 – 6 months	9
6 – 12 months	7
1 – 2 years	6
2 – 3 years	2
3 – 4 years	1
4 – 5 years	3
Over 5 years	2
Not known	4
Total	42

For 24 children (57%) the decision to proceed with permanence planning was made within a year of first consideration of permanence. For six children (14%) it took over three years. The longest time was six years.

Length of time of Supervision Requirements and decisions about permanence

Of the 42 children where permanence was planned, a half had been on Supervision Requirements for over two years before permanence was first considered. The longest time was 4 years and 10 months and this child has lived with his foster carer

for eight years; at time of data collection the Local Authority was considering making an application for a Permanence Order.

For three children, considerations about permanence were already underway before their Supervision Requirements were made, and decisions to proceed with permanence planning were made within two years. A PRO has been made for one of these children with their long-term foster carers, permanence plans were dropped for one child, and the third continues to live with long-term foster carers on a Supervision Requirement.

For 28 children (67%) it took over two years from when their Supervision Requirements were made to where a decision was made to proceed with permanence planning. Nine children (21%) had been on Supervision Requirements for over five years before decisions were made to plan for permanence; the longest time was almost seven years (Table 18).

Table 18. Time between Supervision Requirements made to first consideration of permanence and decision to proceed with permanence plans

Time	No. of children	
	Date SR made to first consideration of permanence	Date SR made to decision to proceed with permanence
Before SR made	3	0
0 – 6 months	3	0
6 – 12 months	3	4
1 – 2 years	10	8
2 – 3 years	6	9
3 – 4 years	9	6
4 – 5 years	4	4
Over 5 years	0	9
Not known	4	2
Total	42	42

For 16 of the 42 children (38%) there was a decision to proceed with permanency plans, but these were not progressed. There was information on the reasons for this for 10 of the children:

- Three cases - applications for Orders fail to be made to the court, in two cases this lay with the Local Authority and in another it was the grandparents' solicitor.
- Two cases - there were breakdowns in the intended permanent foster placements.
- Two cases - decision was made to move child to permanent carers and secure this through PRO/PO, but move not made and child remained with foster carers and plans for permanence were dropped.
- Two cases – child placed in Residential Unit and PRO plans were not progressed.
- In one case, the child's mother successfully overcame her addiction and the child was returned to her.

Permanent placements

Twenty six children had Orders to provide permanence or planning or proceedings for these were underway at time of the study.

The most common final and permanent placement was with the foster carers the child had already been living with – this was 16 of the 26 children. These children now remain with their long-term foster carers through: Adoption Orders (two children), Residence Order (one child), and Permanence Orders or PROs (13 children).

Four children had been or were to be adopted by adoptive parents (not related to them and not their foster carers).

Three children were with kinship carers who had applied for or had been granted Residence Orders or Parental Rights and Responsibilities.

The Local Authority had applied for Permanence Orders for two children for them to remain permanently in Residential Units.

Final placement of one child was not available.

Attachment to parents and permanent carers

Most of the 26 children who went on to have permanent placements had little or no attachment with their birth parents.

“Never, never, never want to see mum.”

For many this was because they had been accommodated at an early age and their parents did not keep in touch and attend contact. A few children expressed strong views that they did not want returned to their parents.

“Its lovely to live here. I’m not frightened of my dad anymore and I don’t want to go home.”

For four children, contact with their parents was important to them and they wanted it to continue whilst living permanently with their carers. Most of the children had strong attachments to their permanent carers and regarded them as their parents.

“I want to stay with [foster carers] forever.”

Two children experienced the breakdown of their permanent placements. Two further children had only been with prospective adoptive parents for a short time.

Case study 13 Leanne

Leanne was placed with her grandparents shortly after she was born. This was initially on a voluntary basis under s25, and less than a year later a Supervision Requirement was made to secure this placement. When she is three her grandparents decide to apply for a Residence Order, their plans were then delayed. The Order was granted when Leanne was seven years old, and her Supervision Requirement terminated. Leanne has had consistent contact with both her parents throughout her life which she enjoys and is important to her. She is very close to her grandparents and wants to stay with them.

Case study 14 Oliver

There were concerns about Oliver from birth due to poor care of his siblings and who had already been adopted or placed in foster care. A Supervision Requirement is made when he is five months old for him to stay with his parents with supports for them to care for him. His parents become more unwilling to work with services, and when he is three years old Social Work recommend that his Supervision Requirement be varied to foster carers. The Children's Hearing does not agree and continues the Supervision Requirement at home to give his parents a final chance to work with services. When aged 4.5 years old he is first placed in foster care. Shortly after, a LAC review recommends permanency and this is endorsed by Permanency Panel six months later. Four months later, a Children's Hearing terminates contact with his parents. He experiences four short-term foster placements before being matched with prospective adoptive parents. He is seven when the Adoption Order is made.

Case study 15 Robbie

Robbie's family have been known to services since before he was born because of poor home conditions and neglect of his siblings who are all in foster care. He is placed with his third foster carers aged nine months. When he is three years old there is a rehabilitation attempt with his family which lasts only a few months. Over this period, Robbie goes from being described as a happy, content child to being sad and withdrawn. He is returned to his foster carers. When he is five years old a Permanency Panel meets and two months later he is linked with his foster carers as his permanent placement. Around this time, a Children's Hearing reduces contact with his family to four times a year. A year later, his foster carers decide to apply to adopt Robbie. Adoption proceedings were underway in summer 2011 when Robbie was seven years old. Robbie states that he wants to stay with his foster carers for ever and to have their surname.

9. Outcomes

Information was recorded from the case files of the children as to how their lives were progressing. This information was taken from Social Work reports, school or Residential Unit reports, Hearings reasons and Having Your Say/All About Me forms. To capture the impact of their Supervision Requirements, the child's outcomes after one year, five years and at the point of the study (or termination of the Supervision Requirement) were analysed.

These snapshots were also given a 'grading' of poor, mixed and positive. These grades were made according to the information available which was usually made with regard to educational engagement, the child's behaviour and emotional well being, the stability of the child's living arrangements and any relationship issues.

This range of factors were assessed together and the rating given was made according to the child's levels of difficulties and problems and to what degree these difficulties affected the child's overall progress. Farmer and Lutman (2012) used a similar way of assessing outcomes according to well-being though they used a four scale assessment with ratings of good, satisfactory, poor and very poor.

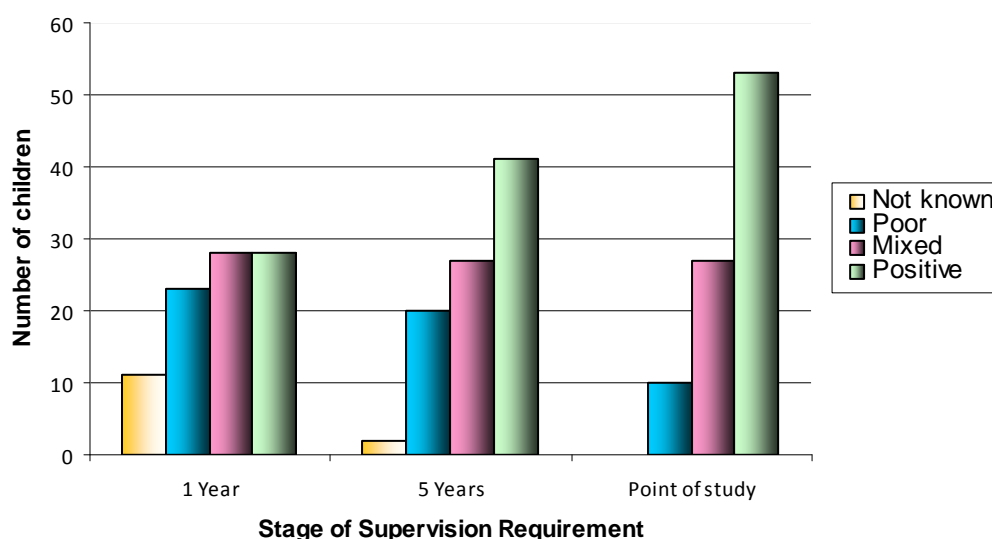
Examples of each 'grade' used in this study are shown below:

Poor	Child has had a number of different foster carers as is unable to settle anywhere. The child is socially excluded and frightens other children at school.	Child had a long-term foster placement but this broke down as child began truanting from school and picking up offences. Accommodated to a Children's Unit but is still absconding and has poor behaviour in the community.
	Child experienced a number of traumatic experiences including multiple bereavements, at the end of the Supervision Requirement the child is in independent living but is using drugs and has no plans for the future.	Child hates being away from their parents but is unable to return home. In secondary school the child begins to socialise with the 'wrong crowd' and does not reach her potential. Child has been charged with a number of offences and plans to move in with boyfriend when 16.
Mixed	The child is happy in their kinship placement but had poor school attendance and exam results.	Child developed some behavioural issues as he got older, including risk taking but when Supervision Requirement is terminated he is going to college.
	Child has thrived in the care of the foster carer where he lived for over 10 years. Child is very upset by remaining in the Children's Hearings System when he is part of a family.	Child is settled into the care of the foster carer and attending college. Child is self-harming at the thought of having to leave their foster carer due to their age.

Positive	Child settled well with their final foster carer and is doing well at school. The foster carer is seeking permanence for the child.	The child had very challenging behaviour and emotions when young but remained in the care of their grandparents where he was able to thrive and do well at school. The child states he feels safe with grandparents.
	In the beginning there were serious concerns about the child's safety and living conditions. At the end of his Supervision Requirement the child has settled in a Children's Unit, sat exams, and looking to go to college.	Child has a strong attachment to their carer and is described as a 'model pupil' by teachers.

Figure 2 shows the 'gradings' across all children at the different stages of their Supervision Requirements.

Figure 2. Outcomes at different stages of Supervision Requirements



At the first year and five year stage, for 11 and two of the cases the outcome was unknown as it was not available in the child's file. Overall it is possible to see that the number of children with poor outcomes reduced over time from 23 to 20 to 10, whilst those with positive outcomes increased from 28 to 41 and to 53 children. However, this is not to say that outcomes for the children varied in a uniform or linear way as for many children their lives were characterised by ups and downs. It does show though that for the majority of children the length of time on a Supervision Requirement was of benefit.

Poor Outcomes

Ten children at the point of study, had outcomes that were categorised as poor. Six of these children were still on a Supervision Requirement and for four the Supervision Requirement had been terminated. For those whose Supervision

Requirements had been terminated, all were 16 years or were about to turn 16 years old.

Six of the ten children had service support before they were one year old, one child was two years old, one three, one five and one was seven years old when services became involved. The outcomes found across these children at the point of study were that they showed difficult behaviour (seven), lack of engagement with education (five), social exclusion (five), emotional needs (four), offending (three), had a high number of moves (four), and lack of Social Work support (four).

All of these children and their families had a range of support services whilst on Supervision Requirements, but most of the children also had poor outcomes at the first and five year stages. Only one child had positive outcomes at the earlier stages as the child was settled in foster care and was popular in school. However, as the child got older they began truanting, absconding and offending.

Case study 16 Ben

Outcomes after one year - poor

Ben is four years old and living at home with mum, he is an extremely boisterous child but there are no boundaries at home. Ben is entitled to a nursery placement but mum has not enrolled him. Ben has also been left in the care of relatives who physically abuse him.

Outcomes after five years - poor

Due to circumstances with carers, Ben's behaviour and plans for more long-term care, Ben is in his fifth foster care placement and is now nine years old. He struggles to get on with other children as he is aggressive and lacks social skills.

Outcomes at the point of study – poor

Ben is 13 years old. He experienced a period in Residential School as he needed a more therapeutic environment. He is now with his eighth foster carer as it is felt a family environment is still best but this change has just been made. Ben still has ongoing anger and attachment issues and is in need of support.

Mixed Outcomes

For the 27 children, who were categorised as having mixed outcomes, the majority were in stable placements or were living at home but had other issues that were affecting their outcomes. The common issues found were low engagement with education, challenging behaviour, emotional needs, poor social skills, vulnerability, a lack of motivation to seek work or training and drug use. Some children had settled well into a new family life and school and presented no concerns to services. However, the fact that they remained in the Children's Hearings System was itself very distressing and/or made the child anxious about their future.

"I hate doing this and I refuse to do anymore, I don't want to come [to the Hearing]."

"Please stop calling meetings cos its getting on my nerves."

Case study 17 David

Outcomes after one year – mixed

David is five years old, and parents and his primary school have been struggling to contain his violent behaviour. His behaviour is improving with respite care but is only just contained.

Outcomes after five years – poor

David is becoming a greater danger to himself and others and in urgent need of more professional help. David is receiving medication and has been removed from mainstream school.

Outcomes at the point of study – mixed

A residential placement has been made for David and after an unsettled start he is now enjoying it. David wants to see his parents as he has attachment anxieties. His behaviour and confidence is improving but still needs managing. He is 13 years old.

Positive outcomes

The 53 children in this category had positive outcomes in their final placements and were also able to overcome adversities from the previous years. Many were said to be doing well at school, they had good attachments to their carers and some had overcome behavioural and emotional difficulties. Some children no longer had contact with their parents whilst for others contact had been maintained and was considered beneficial. Some children in this category also expressed dissatisfaction with remaining in the Children's Hearings System but this was not having an emotional effect on them.

Case study 18 Jenny

Outcomes after one year – Mixed

Jenny was accommodated at birth due to concerns over her safety with her parents. Her foster carers have decided to change their employment and so Jenny moves to different carers.

Outcomes after five years – Poor

There has been two more changes in placement due to changes in circumstances with her carers and also as her behaviour has deteriorated and her carers request she is moved. There are concerns over her development.

Outcomes at the point of study – Positive

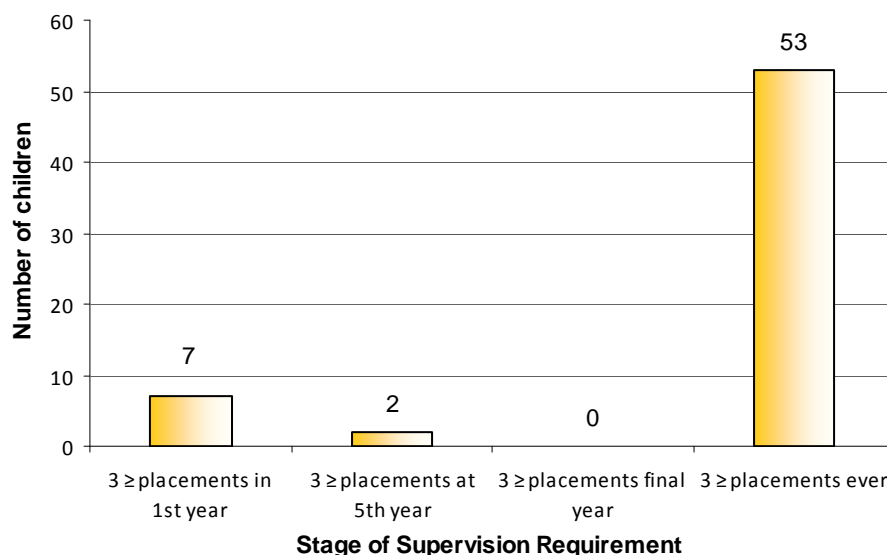
Jenny is with her fifth foster carers. She is very happy with them. The previous concerns about her development are believed to be attachment anxieties which have now settled down and is no longer displaying difficult behaviour. Jenny is seven years old, feels she belongs to the family and the Local Authority has secured a PRO.

Placement¹⁵ Outcomes

The Scottish Government and Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (formally the Social Work Inspection Agency) record outcomes for looked after children with regard to placements. Two measures that they use are also used here as a comparison: the number of children who had three or more placements, and the number of children whose placement has lasted at least 12 months. These measures were analysed at the end of the first year, fifth year and end stages examining the number of children where this applied in the *previous* year. The measures are also shown for whether this applied to the children at all.

Figures 3 and 4 show the placement outcomes for the children during their periods on Supervision Requirements.

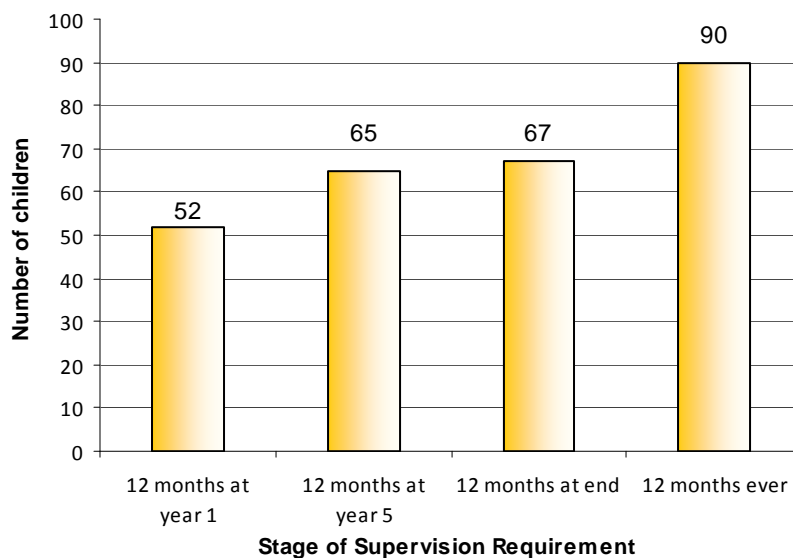
Figure 3. Three or more placements at different stages of Supervision Requirements



There were 53 children (59%) who had experienced three or more placements whilst on their Supervision Requirements. Seven children experienced this in the first year, and two children in the fifth year of their Supervision Requirements. There were no children who experienced this in the final year of their Supervision Requirements. This suggests that placements whilst on Supervision Requirements became more stable over time.

¹⁵ This section considers placements whilst on Supervision Requirements.

Figure 4. Placements for at least 12 months at different stages of Supervision Requirements



All of the children experienced at least one placement that lasted for at least 12 months. There were 52 children (58%) who had experienced a placement for 12 months at the end of the first year on Supervision Requirement. This increased to 65 children (72%) at the five year point and 67 children (74%) at the point of study or termination of their Supervision Requirements. Whilst this also shows some increase in stability, it also shows that for almost a quarter of the children placement moves were still ongoing after a long period of time.

Offending outcomes

There were 26 children (29%) who had been referred to the Reporter for offending whilst they were on their Supervision Requirements and this occurred most often as the children got older. This is a similar pattern to other children referred for offending (SCRA, 2012d). Only one child was referred for an offence in the first year of his Supervision Requirement, when he was eight years old. The majority of the 26 children had been referred for offences in the year prior to the study point/end of Supervision Requirement, where 16 children were referred. Of these children, five were in the 11-12 years group and 11 children were in the 15-16 years group. A total of 93 offence referrals were made for the 16 children in the year prior to the study point/end of Supervision Requirement. The highest number of offence referrals per child was 27 (one child) and the lowest was one (four children).

Seven young people had been jointly referred to the Procurator Fiscal and Reporter¹⁶. All of these young people were already 16 years old or about to turn 16 years old. One young person had a high number of offences which were then dealt

¹⁶ This is in accordance with the Lord Advocate's Guidelines to Chief Constables Reporting to Procurators Fiscal of Offences Alleged to Have Been Committed by Children.

with by the Procurator Fiscal and another young person had committed a serious assault which was dealt with by the Procurator Fiscal. For a third young person there was a serious incident involving the possession of a knife and this was dealt with by the Reporter. For the other four young people, their offences were not considered serious.

For the 16 children who had recently been referred for offending, two children had lived at home throughout their Supervision Requirements, a further four children had their final placement with a parent. Two children had a final placement in a kinship placement and eight children were living in Children's Units, Residential Schools or another community setting. Twelve of the 14 children who had been accommodated had also experienced at least one failed rehabilitation attempt back home. Five of these children had two failed attempts at returning home and two children had experienced three attempts to return them home but were accommodated again.

10. Discussion

As well as answering the two original research questions:

Q1. What are the experiences of children who have been on Supervision Requirements and looked after for large parts of their lives?

A1. In the long-term, Supervision Requirements provided stability and security to children, and the numbers of children with positive outcomes increased with length of time on Supervision Requirements. However, in the early stages of their Supervision Requirements, children experienced multiple moves and in some cases continued exposure to risk. Such early childhood experiences can have long-term consequences for children's development and well-being.

Q2. Children who go onto be adopted experience multiple delays and interventions – is this experience unique to this group of children or is it also faced by other looked after children?

A2. Looked after children experience similar multiple delays and interventions as those children who go onto be adopted.

This study has raised a number of new questions for policy makers and practitioners.

Questions for policy makers and practitioners

Most of the 90 children in this study had been on Supervision Requirements for over half their lives. Children in the youngest age group had their Supervision Requirements for, on average, almost 90% of their lives. In the long-term, Supervision Requirements did provide stability and security to most of the children: after five years on Supervision Requirements, 72% of children had been in their placements for over a year, and there were indications that placements became more stable with time. In addition, permanence in terms of Orders made by the Courts was either achieved or underway for 29% of the children.

Children initially experienced multiple moves and placements. The majority had been accommodated before their Supervision Requirements were made. After being placed on Supervision Requirements, 59% of children experienced at least three placements.

Overall (before and whilst on Supervision Requirements), 68% of children had at least three moves with 8% experiencing 10 or more moves. Over a half of moves (56%) were not planned. 44% of moves were planned and were usually rehabilitation attempts with parent(s), which in most cases were unsuccessful.

All but seven children in this study had been separated from their parents. A third were accommodated before they were three years old. This was highest for the youngest age group where 76% were accommodated before they were three years old, with 57% being under six months old. The majority of children across all three age groups had also experienced instability in terms of multiple moves. That these

moves were largely experienced in the first years of being accommodated and placed on Supervision Requirements supports previous findings that services are not achieving long-term security for children quickly enough (Social Work Inspection Agency, 2010). It also indicates that children who are looked after experience similar instability and delay in getting stable placements as those who go onto be adopted (SCRA, 2011 b, c).

There is a body of evidence that children who experience instability and poor attachment experiences in their early years are at greatest risk of failure to thrive and develop behaviour problems, lowered self-esteem and schooling difficulties in childhood and adolescence (Ward *et al*, 2006; Burns, 2007). It is also known that early environments and experiences have an exceptionally strong influence on brain development (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2007). That these risks have been known for some years, raises the question:

Should more be done to reduce the numbers of moves and placements, including repeated rehabilitation attempts, that looked after children experience?

The extent to which children experienced stability varied according to the type of Supervision Requirement:

- Placement with **kinship carers** (usually grandparents) offered the greatest stability with 39% of children being first placed with relatives and staying with them for, on average, at least three years.
- The most common initial placement was in **foster care** (51% of children). However, most children (69%) who were initially placed in foster care were later moved to other foster carers.
- The least stable type of Supervision Requirement was **at home with parents**. For 46 children, their first Supervision Requirement was at home. Only seven (15%) of these children remained at home and were never accommodated. The 39 children (85%) who remained on Supervision Requirements at home before being accommodated were exposed to multiple risks throughout this time.

Research in England that followed the outcomes for looked after children, found that children living stably away from home were more likely to have good overall well-being (Farmer and Lutman, 2010). This study has found that children accommodated away from home were more likely to experience stable placements, particularly if living with relatives. However, Supervision Requirements were required to provide the legal basis for these kinship placements and, in some cases, to secure financial support for the carers. The Children and Young People's Bill proposes that a new 'order' is put on statute to support the parenting role of kinship carers (Scottish Government, 2012).

How can better financial and legal security be given to kinship carers?

Almost a third of the children in this study had a parent or carer who themselves had been on a Supervision Requirement as a child. This figure is likely to be an underestimate, as it is on those cases where this was recorded in Social Work reports and not all reports included detailed information on parents' backgrounds.

Over half the children had a parent with significant drug and/or alcohol use, and over a third had a parent experiencing domestic violence. Such adversities can affect a parent's ability to care for their child. 'For the parent, her ability to provide secure attachment is influenced by her own experiences of being parented, mental health or addiction problems, and domestic violence' (Burns, 2007).

For many of the children in this study, this indicated that the adversities they faced were entrenched in their family and experienced across generations.

Can services alone change the history of some families where each generation of children is looked after? What can be done to break this cycle?

Families received or were offered many services, a half of these were to provide support to parents themselves (Appendix 3). However, only seven of the 90 children (8%) were never removed from their parents' care.

Do we have enough evidence and research on the efficacy of services and interventions? How can they be targeted to directly intervene or provide treatment?

Children whose first Supervision Requirements were at home experienced multiple risks throughout this time and over 60% continued to be exposed to neglect, indicating that their Supervision Requirements and associated supports were having little impact on protecting them or improving their well-being. Recent research has found large inequalities in developmental outcomes for children living in multiple risk households compared with the rest of children (Sabates and Dex, 2012).

For some children, concerns escalated whilst on Supervision Requirements at home, 14 (36%) had further Child Protection Registrations, and 13 (39%) had to be removed away from home to a place of safety secured by a Warrant (six had both Child Protection Registrations and Warrants). This has parallels with research in England which found that decisive action in cases of neglect often awaited a trigger incident of abuse or a particularly serious incident of domestic violence (Farmer and Lutman, 2012).

The number of children reported to be displaying emotional and/or behaviour problems almost doubled (from 36% to 62%) whilst on Supervision Requirements at home. Parents failed to address their drug and/or alcohol addictions, and to engage with services.

Is there a need to review the effectiveness of Supervision Requirements at home where parents have a history of drug and/or alcohol misuse and failure/reluctance to engage with services?

Supervision Requirements are required to be reviewed by a Hearing at least every 12 months. These Annual Review Hearings accounted for 35% of Hearings held for the children in this study. However, a further 20% of Hearings were early reviews requested by Hearings and a further 16% by the Local Authority. For 21% of Hearings, no substantive decision could be made and the Hearing was continued to another date. There was also 150 occasions where Hearings were continued back to back. This meant that the children and families in this study experienced multiple Hearings with the associated uncertainty and anxiety that this can cause. It also has resource implications for agencies and others (e.g. carers, Panel Members) involved in the Children's Hearings System, for example production of reports, attending Hearings, etc. Minimising the numbers of Hearings required would offer benefits to all involved.

The main reason for continued Hearings was related to the Hearing not having sufficient information or requiring further information to make a substantive decision. This was mainly either due to non-attendance of child and/or parents and the Hearing needed to hear their views (36%), or the report from Social Work was late or not provided (21%), or further information was needed (13%).

Requests by Hearings for early reviews of Supervision Requirements were also related to the Hearing requiring information – for example on how well the child and family were engaging with supports or to hear the outcomes of assessments.

What areas of practice amongst all agencies could lessen the number of Hearings which take place for individual children?

One of the aims of GIRFEC is that any child who requires additional help should have a plan to address their needs and address their well-being. Where more than one agency is involved with a child (and this will be most children on Supervision Requirements), this should be an integrated, multi-agency Child Plan. Guidance on how to produce Child Plans has been in place since 2007 (Scottish Executive, 2007), and therefore covers most of the period when children in the 5-6 years group had been on Supervision Requirements. 16% of Hearings for this age group were reviews requested by Hearings and 19% of Hearings were continued (Appendix 7). This raises the question:

Is there a need to assess the quality and quantity of information provided for Children's Hearings and to what extent it supports good decision making?

There have been anecdotal reports that a cause of delays for children in the Hearings System is Hearings' disagreement with Social Work recommendations (SCRA, 2011b). However, this had not been quantified. It was an underlying aim of this study to find

out the extent to which Hearings agree or disagree with Social Work recommendations.

For the 1,175 Hearings, where there was a Social Work recommendation and a substantive Hearing decision, 1,100 (94%) Hearings fully agreed with the recommendation and 26 (4%) agreed in part. Research carried out over 15 years ago also showed a high level of consensus with Social Work, with 84% of Hearings agreeing with recommendations (Hallet and Murray, 1998).

Is the high level of consensus between Social Work recommendations and Hearing decisions to be expected?

It has been recommended that planning for permanence should be the primary objective for all placements and should begin as soon as possible (Social Work Inspection Agency, 2010). For 56 of the 90 children (62%) in this study, there was some consideration of permanence, and decisions were made to proceed with permanency planning for 42 of these children. Firm plans and/or applications to Court for Orders to secure permanence were in place for 26 children – this is less than half of those where there was some initial consideration of permanence.

Most (67%) of the 42 children, where there was a decision to plan for permanence, had been on Supervision Requirements for at least two years before this decision was made. Nine of these children had been on Supervision Requirements for over five years before this decision was made.

The final and permanent placement for the 19 of the 26 children (73%), where permanence was achieved, was with the foster or kinship carers the children were already living with.

There was therefore a pattern of delay and drift in progressing permanence plans for these children.

What more could be done to reduce timescales for permanence within the care planning process?

Hearings decided to continue the Supervision Requirements of young people past their 16th birthdays to provide them with support and help them in the transition to adulthood; and in a smaller number of cases to secure their placements. Most of these young people had experienced long periods of stability in their final placements and had ambitions to continue their education and/or secure employment. When Hearings terminated these young people's Supervision Requirements, it was because the young people would engage with services on a voluntary basis and/or they were taking responsibility for their own lives. Usually it was also the young person's wish that their Supervision Requirement be terminated.

The Scottish Government is rolling out a Whole System Approach to young people who offend. One part of this is to prevent young people aged 15 to 17 years entering the Criminal Justice System, and instead that they are continued to be supported on Supervision Requirements (Scottish Government, 2012c).

Most of the young people in this study aged 16 or 17 years old were not involved in offending, and being on Supervision Requirements did appear to have resulted in positive outcomes for them in terms of where they lived and their plans for the future.

Should consideration be given to continuing more young people's Supervision Requirements past their 16th birthdays?

There is no single approach to assess outcomes for looked after children. Those developed in England to assess and monitor changes to children's well-being (Rees *et al*, 2010; Children's Society, 2012) and in Scotland to assess how GIRFEC is contributing to children's well-being (Stradling and McNeil, 2012) are designed to cover all children. For this study, we wanted to assess outcomes that were more specific to looked after children and which considered the adversities they experience which other children do not. A qualitative approach was taken which is similar to that used by Farmer and Lutman (2010, 2012) to assess outcomes for children returned to their parents' care.

How do we assess outcomes for children who are looked after? Is there a need for an agreed approach that can be applied to individual children and all looked after children?

The numbers of children with poor outcomes decreased over time on Supervision Requirements, and those children with positive outcomes increased. However, this change in pattern took over a year to become evident which could be taken to mean that it took some time for the interventions provided by the children's Supervision Requirements to have an effect.

Placements became more stable with time and children experienced fewer moves as their Supervision Requirements went on. The Supervision Requirements were therefore contributing to positive outcomes in providing the children with stability.

Can the positive outcomes experienced by children and young people on long-term Supervision Requirements be brought forward and, if so, how?

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Appendix 1

Proportion of children with Supervision Requirements who have had them for five or more years – by Local Authority area (2011-12)

Local Authority Area	% of children on SR
Aberdeen City	16.1 %
Aberdeenshire	11.2 %
Angus	17.2 %
Argyll & Bute	22.4 %
Clackmannanshire	14.6 %
Dumfries & Galloway	10.3 %
Dundee	13.7 %
East Ayrshire	11.3 %
East Dunbartonshire	10.4 %
East Lothian	17.9 %
East Renfrewshire	13.1 %
Edinburgh, City of	17.8 %
Eilean Siar	13.9 %
Falkirk	8.7 %
Fife	14.4 %
Glasgow	24.0 %
Highland	10.4 %
Inverclyde	8.7 %
Midlothian	15.6 %
Moray	6.2 %
North Ayrshire	18.2 %
North Lanarkshire	14.3 %
Perth & Kinross	9.1 %
Renfrewshire	19.1 %
Scottish Borders	8.3 %
Shetland	11.8 %
South Ayrshire	15.7 %
South Lanarkshire	17.0 %
Stirling	8.1 %
West Dunbartonshire	17.9 %
West Lothian	23.0 %
Scotland	16.8 %

Research variables

Early Background

- Date of birth
- Gender
- Local Authority area
- 1st services – date
- 1st services – type
- Known (to services) at birth?
- Number of siblings
- Number of siblings accommodated
- Any CPR?
- 1st CPR – date
- 1st CPR – type
- 2nd CPR – date
- 2nd CPR – type
- 3rd CPR – date
- 3rd CPR – type
- Any CPO?
- 1st CPO – date
- 2nd CPO – date
- 3rd CPO – date
- Background concerns
- Parent previously on SR?
- Summary narrative of child's case

Placements

- Date 1st accommodated
- 1st accommodated – type
- SR, s25 or warrant?
- Reason moved to 1st accommodation
- Details of move
- Date moved

[above repeated for each placement move¹⁷]

- Ever returned home?

Permanence

- Permanence considered?
- Permanence achieved?
- Date permanence 1st discussed
- Permanence 1st discussed – type of meeting
- Date permanence planning decided

¹⁷ Excludes respite care

- Permanence planning decided – type of meeting
- Dates of next 3 meetings
- Details of next 3 meetings
- Information on progress
- Attachment to parents
- Attachment to carers

Children’s Hearings¹⁸

The following information was collected for every Hearing for the child:

- Type of Hearing
- SR varied?
- SR varied – details
- Social Work recommendation (brief description)
- Current care plan?
- Did Hearing agree with SW recommendation?
- Reasons Hearing agreed or disagreed with SW recommendation
- Hearing continued or cancelled?
- Reasons Hearing continued or cancelled
- Contact details
- Childs’ views
- Parents’ views
- Carers’ views
- Other services
- Child outcomes
- Early review recommended?
- Early review – reason
- Is young person 15 or 16 years old?
- If 15/16 years – reasons why SR continued or terminated

¹⁸ Excludes Business meetings

Support services received across the 90 families whilst children on Supervision Requirements¹⁹

Type of Support Service	Number of referrals
Parenting / family	89
Psychological / emotional child	73
Education	63
Addictions	56
Social	51
Practical	36
Carers	31
General Health	28
Educational Psychologist	25
Therapy	25
Other	22
Housing	21
Psychological / emotional parent	21
Nursery	20
Youth Justice	7
Careers	6
Domestic Violence	6
Legal	5
Adult learning	3
Women's	3
Financial	2
Total	593

¹⁹ This table gives an indication of the level of support required by the children and carers in this study. Support services may not have been recorded within a report or Hearing decisions and thus are not included here. Services were counted where it was stated that a referral had been made or it was known that the service was being used.

Types of placements across number of moves²⁰

Move number	Foster	Kinship	Parent / RP	Children's Unit	Residential School	Secure Care	Other community	Total number of children
1	42	32	4	2	1	0	2	83
2	31	12	24	1	2	0	0	70
3	36	8	10	4	2	0	1	61
4	28	7	10	1	0	0	2	48
5	21	2	8	4	0	0	1	36
6	16	3	4	3	1	1	0	28
7	8	1	5	6	2	1	0	23
8	6	1	2	1	1	2	1	14
9	7	0	2	0	1	0	1	11
10	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	7
11 or more	7	2	3	5	0	0	1	6

²⁰ Number of moves includes first move from parents

Categories of reasons why children moved from placements

Move number	Parent's behaviour	Child's behaviour	To an emergency placement	Change in circumstance for carer	Carer no longer wants child	Allegations made about foster carer	Rehabilitation attempt	Long term placement part of plan	Residential unit required to meet needs	Child wants to move	Moved to allow assessment	More than one reason	Other or not known	Total number of children
1	65	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	83
2	9	1	5	8	6	1	18	3	2	2	2	2	11	70
3	12	9	6	4	1	1	7	10	3	1	1	3	3	61
4	8	5	2	4	1	2	9	6	0	1	1	2	7	48
5	5	5	2	0	2	0	6	5	0	3	1	2	5	36
6	5	3	1	3	4	0	3	5	2	0	0	0	2	28
7	3	4	2	1	1	1	3	3	4	0	0	1	0	23
8	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	11
9	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	7
10	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
11 or more	0	3	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	2	0	1	0	4
Total	107	36	30	23	16	6	50	38	12	10	9	13	30	

Numbers and types of Children's Hearings

No. of Hearings	No. of children 5-6 years group					No. of children 11-12 years group					No. of children 15-16 years group				
	Grounds ²¹	Annual Review	LA 73/4	Ch/RP 73/6	Hearing 70/7	Grounds	Annual Review	LA 73/4	Ch/RP 73/6	Hearing 70/7	Grounds	Annual Review	LA 73/4	Ch/RP 73/6	Hearing 70/7
0	10	2	7	19	10	15	0	6	18	3	13	0	4	14	5
1	18	1	7	4	3	12	0	4	4	7	13	0	8	4	7
2	1	0	5	2	3	4	0	2	3	4	2	0	4	8	4
3	1	2	5	0	6	0	0	5	3	5	0	0	2	1	1
4	0	5	3	0	3	0	8	3	1	2	0	2	4	1	2
5	0	9	2	1	2	0	7	5	1	1	0	3	1	0	0
6	0	6	0	4	1	0	4	3	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
7	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	1	0	2	0	4	1	1	3
8	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	0	2	0	6	0	0	2
9	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	7	1	0	1
10 or more	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	1	1	4	1	5	2	0	4
	30	30	30	30	30	31	31	31	31	31	29	29	29	29	29

²¹ There are 38 children for whom the data shows they had no grounds Hearings. All children did in fact have a grounds Hearing but for these children, the grounds Hearing where their Supervision Requirement was made, was recorded along with another type of Hearing, usually a Remit Hearing as grounds had been established at Court and remitted back to the Hearing. The grounds Hearings held prior to the Supervision Requirement being made are not recorded here.

Table 1. Types of Hearings arranged

Type of Hearing	No. of Hearings arranged 5-6 years group	No. of Hearings arranged 11-12 years group	No. of Hearings arranged 15-16 years group	Total
Annual Review	152	198	244	594
Ch/RP 73/6	37	43	34	114
CPO	7	4	4	15
Emergency Transfer	21	11	18	50
Grounds	23	20	28	71
Hearing 70/7	70	139	133	342
LA 73/4	64	106	95	265
Other	5	14	13	32
Permanency related	16	4	0	20
Remit	12	14	16	42
Review & new grounds	4	14	22	40
Warrant related	32	27	40	99
Not evident	0	2	0	2
Total	443	596	647	1,686

Table 2. Hearing decisions

Decision of Hearing	No. of Hearings arranged 5-6 years group	No. of Hearings arranged 11-12 years group	No. of Hearings arranged 15-16 years group	Total
Continue Hearing	83	127	137	347
Continue CPO	6	3	4	13
Sent for Proof	3	6	4	13
SR continued with variation	146	181	173	500
SR continued without variation	137	210	234	581
SR made	30	31	29	90
SR terminated	7	8	19	34
Warrant issued	31	29	44	104
Not evident	0	1	3	4
Total	443	596	647	1,686

Glossary of terms

Accommodated under section 25 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995

Where a child or young person is voluntarily accommodated away from home by a Local Authority (i.e. not through compulsory measures from a Children's Hearing or through the courts).

Adoption Orders

Place the parental rights and responsibilities to a child with his/her adoptive parents. The birth parents have no parental rights to the child. Adoption Orders are permanent and have lifelong consequences. (Section 28 of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007)

Adoption/Permanence Panel

Every Adoption Agency which plans for children and/or approves adopters must have an Adoption Panel. It is a panel of persons with experience of permanence and adoption, such as Adoption Agency and Local Authority social work staff, adopters, foster carers and adopted people. Each Panel must also have a medical and legal adviser. The Panel makes recommendations (not decisions) on all matters referred to it by the Agency, particularly about adoption plans for children, approval of adopters and the matching of children with adopters. Its recommendations are passed to the Agency Decision Maker for decisions.

Advice Hearing

A Children's Hearing which is arranged to review the child's Supervision Requirement and to provide advice to the Court on proposed permanence plans.

Child Protection Order (CPO)

A Local Authority can apply to the Sheriff for a CPO if it considers that the child is or is likely to be suffering significant risk of harm under section 57(2) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

Child Protection Register (CPR)

A confidential list of children and young people in an area who are identified at a child protection conference (a multi-agency group of professionals involved with the child/young person) as being at risk of significant harm.

Children's Hearing

A Children's Hearing is a tribunal and comprises of three Children's Panel Members (volunteers from local community).

Children's Reporter

The Children's Reporter is the first contact that a child and family will have with the Children's Hearings System. Children are referred to the Reporter if it is considered that they may need compulsory measures of supervision. The Reporter investigates each and then makes a decision as to whether the child should be referred to a Children's Hearing (sections 52, 53 and 56 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995).

Continued Hearing

If a Children's Hearing does not have sufficient information to make a decision, and cannot obtain that information in the course of that Hearing, it can continue the Hearing to another date. A continued Hearing can, again, continue the Hearing and there is no limit on the numbers of times this can be done. (section 69(2) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995)

Freeing Orders

The purpose of a Freeing Order was to remove the rights of the birth parents to the child (Section 18 of the Adoption (Scotland) Act 1978). Once granted, parental rights lay with the Adoption Agency which is the Local Authority. The birth parents' agreement was not then required for the adoption of the child. Freeing Orders were repealed by the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.

GIRFEC

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is a national programme that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland. GIRFEC seeks to provide a framework for all services and agencies working with children and families to deliver a co-ordinated approach which is appropriate, proportionate and timely.

Grounds of referral to the Children's Reporter

The reasons for the referral to the Reporter as listed in section 52(2) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

Looked After Children (LAC)

Children who are looked after away from home by the Local Authority in terms of section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. Children are 'looked after' if they are subject to a Supervision Requirement, a CPO, a Hearing or court warrant, or a Parental Responsibilities Order or Permanence Order; or if they are cared for on a voluntarily basis under section 25 of the 1995 Act.

Looked After Child Review (LAC Review)

The regular meeting between the child, carers, parents and Social Work Department (and other agencies, if involved) to share information on progress and discuss ongoing/future plans and possible placements. The purpose of this meeting is to review and make sure the Child's Plan is meeting the needs of the child.

Matching Panel

An adoption/permanence panel meeting which recommends a match for a specific child with specific adopter(s) or long-term carers.

Parental Responsibilities Orders

Were intended to safeguard the long-term welfare of a child. They differed from Adoption and Freeing Orders in being made under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 (section 86) rather than adoption legislation. The effect of a PRO was to grant the local authority all the rights and responsibilities for the child, except the right to

agree (or not) to the child being freed for adoption or adopted. PROs were repealed by the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.

Permanence Order

The child will remain looked after. Parental responsibilities and rights can be removed or conferred on individuals, such as foster carers, including the local authority. Permanence Orders are obtained by Local Authorities and often follow a period where a child has been in care, usually on a Supervision Requirement. They are designed in part to provide a stable, long-term placement option. Depending on how parental rights and responsibilities are allocated, the Local Authority may provide some support to a long-term carer (section 80 of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007).

Place of Safety Warrant

This is when a child or young person who is in danger of being hurt or not looked after properly, is taken from their home to a safe place. The Local Authority will decide where this is to be, but it could be with another family member, with foster carers or in a Children's Unit (sections 66 and 69 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995).

Residence Order

This is an Order under section 11 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. A Residence Order regulates the arrangements about where a child under 16 years should live, it can also grant parental responsibilities and rights and take parental responsibilities and rights away. Although it is possible for a child to be subject to a Residence Order and a Supervision Requirement simultaneously, in general, Residence Orders can provide for the semi-permanent and safe care environment needed to deem a Supervision Requirement unnecessary. Under a Residence Order, there is no statutory requirement for a Local Authority to provide support.

Review Hearing

Under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the Local Authority (section 73 (3)) or a Children's Hearing (section 70(7)) can request that a Hearing be held to review a Supervision Requirement. A child or relevant person can request a review at any time after three months from the imposition of the Supervision Requirement or its last review (section 73(4)).

Safeguarder

A Safeguarder is appointed by a Children's Hearing or the Court, to provide an independent assessment of what is in the child's best interests. He or she should speak to the child, carers, parents and professionals and submit their report and recommendations to the Children's Hearing or Court.

Schedule 1 offence

An offence listed in Schedule 1 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995. This is a list of offences against children, including violent offences, sexual offences and neglect and abandonment.

Supervision Requirement

A Children's Hearing makes a Supervision Requirement where it decides that compulsory measures are necessary to protect the child and/or address his or her behaviour. Supervision Requirements must be reviewed by a Children's Hearing at least every 12 months (Annual Review). Local Authorities have a statutory obligation to implement Supervision Requirements (sections 70 and 71 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995). A Supervision Requirement makes a child 'looked after' under section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

Through Care and Aftercare

Local authorities have a statutory duty to prepare young people for when they will stop being looked after (known as 'throughcare') and to provide advice, guidance and assistance for young people who have ceased to be looked after (or 'aftercare') over school age up to 18 years and a power to do so up to 21 years (Children (Scotland) Act 1995 sections 17, 29 and 30).



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