



Social Care & Support for Children

At a glance:

- Referrals to social care services for children are below national rates.
- The total number of 'Children in Need' in Bradford during 2016/17 was 8,246.
- The number of children being looked after as at 31 March 2017 was 925.

Children in need of care and protection

The numbers of referrals to Children's Social Care peaked in Bradford in mid-2009 with just under 600 referrals per 10,000 children following the high profile deaths of children elsewhere in the UK. There has since been a reduction in demand for higher-level social work interventions, with referrals over the past few years remaining at about 350 per 10,000 children. In 2016-17 there were 5,038 referrals (356 per 10,000 children); this is not significantly higher than the most recently published England average of 339 referrals per 10,000 children (31 March 2017).

Bradford has lower than average numbers of children recorded by social care as 'Children in Need'¹. The total number of 'Children in Need' in Bradford during 2016/17 was 8,246. Of the 3,975 children's cases open at 31 March 2017, about 44% were of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) origin, where ethnic origin was recorded.

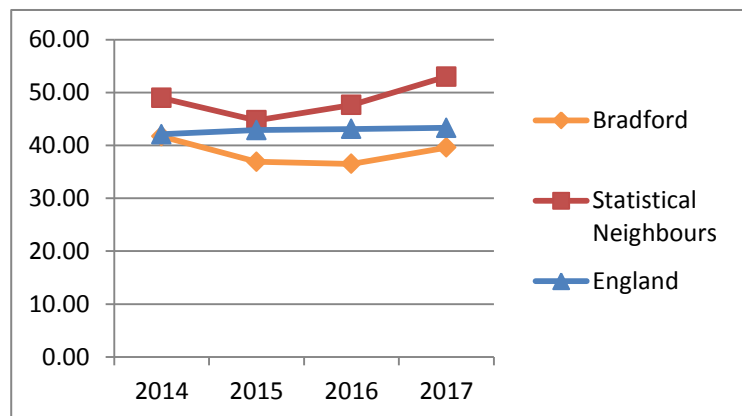


Figure 1 - Child Protection Plans per 10,000 children under 18

A smaller proportion of children in Bradford were the subject of a Child Protection Plan compared to national rates. The rate had risen sharply in 2014 to 41.7 per 10,000 children, but fell in the following two years to 36.5 per 10,000 children in March 2016. The number has risen by 31 March 2017 to 39.6 per 10,000 children, still well below the averages of 43.3 per 10,000 children across England and 53.0 per 10,000 across our Statistical Neighbours² (31 March 2017).

The number of children being looked after as at 31 March 2017 was 925, a rate of 66 children per 10,000 children; higher than the England rate of 62 per 10,000 but below the Statistical Neighbours average of 81.80 per 10,000. The number of Looked After Children in Bradford increased during the year 2016-17 compared to 845 in 2015-16.

¹ Under the 1989 Children Act, a child in need is one assessed as requiring a service from the local authority if they are not to experience poor outcomes.

² The Department for Education divides Local Authorities into Statistical Neighbour groups with similar local demographics. Bradford has ten Statistical Neighbours including Kirklees, Rochdale, Walsall and Derby.