

Project Update June 2019

Phase one of the study ran from October 2014 to December 2018. It investigated decision making, permanence, progress, outcomes and belonging for a large cohort (1,836 children) of *all* children in Scotland who became looked after in 2012-13, when they were aged five or under. Using national data from the Children Looked After Statistics (CLAS) we analysed children's progress over four years (2012-2016). The study is the first to compare pathways and outcomes for such a large cohort of young children in Scotland. It is designed to be the first phase in a longitudinal study tracking children's progress into adolescence and beyond.

Phase One of the study has five strands, with a report and summary for each strand, published on 20 June 2019.

Pathways to Permanence for children who become looked after in Scotland (*Pathways strand*): This analysed the CLAS data for 1,836 children over four years. The report presents detailed information on their routes to permanence and the timescales.

Linking two administrative data sets about looked after children: Testing feasibility and enhancing understanding (*Linkage strand*): Data on children is collected by the Scottish Government (CLAS data) and by Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA). For the first time this study linked CLAS and SCRA data on 1,000 children. The report describes the process and the findings.

Children looked after away from home aged five and under in Scotland: experiences, pathways and outcomes (*Outcomes strand*): This presents findings from detailed questionnaires (433 social workers and 166 carers) alongside the CLAS data. The report provide valuable information about the circumstances of children and their families before they were accommodated, their pathways, current status and current wellbeing.

Decision making for children (*Decision making strand*): 160 decision makers across Scotland (including social workers, members of Children's Hearings and Reporters to the Children's

Hearing) were interviewed about their perspectives on decision making.

Perspectives on kinship care, foster care and adoption: the voices of children, carers and adoptive parents (*Children and Carers strand*): 20 carers and adoptive parents were interviewed, and 10 children aged 3-9 years participated in 'play and talk' about their experiences.

Information sheet for Children: this gives information about each of the strands. There is also an audio recording of the information sheet.