

strong pass at GCSE in English and Maths even 4 years after social worker involvement has ended. This confirms that a national focus should include children who have previously, as well as currently, needed a social worker.⁷

New data and analysis has played a powerful role in making these children visible – including a national first in being able to track over time their experiences, interactions with services, and outcomes. That is why we will regularly update our new longitudinal dataset so that in future we always have a strong and developing understanding. Where currently the absence of this group demonstrates their invisibility, we will look to include new breakdowns covering these children in relevant national schools statistics and consider how best schools can understand this scale within their pupil population. This is not the end point – it is a signal of our priority and commitment to embedding better awareness and understanding at a national level.

There is no quick fix to this, which is why we are making a long-term commitment to raise the visibility of this group nationally. This work has already begun. Its significance is reflected in Ofsted’s decision to reference this group as disadvantaged for the first time in its new schools inspection handbook.⁸ Starting with the reasons for being referred to social care, children must be recognised in the policy that affects them: domestic abuse and mental health are the two most prevalent factors identified by social workers, which is why we have made sure they have been recognised and considered in the Government consultation response [Transforming the Response to Domestic Abuse](#) and in implementing the [Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision green paper](#).⁹

Information sharing

Effective support depends on having a picture of a child’s circumstances, which necessitates information sharing across agencies. Through the review, we have seen that, in order to determine the right response, schools need an individual-level understanding of the circumstances facing pupils currently with a social worker – given the live safeguarding risks and the immediate day-to-day impact on their attendance, behaviour, and readiness to learn.

“The pastoral teacher and the form tutor should know” (young person)

Through the review, we have found that schools generally know which children currently have a social worker given their involvement in safeguarding. However, the systems for

⁷ [Children in Need: data and analysis: December 2018](#)

⁸ Ofsted: [education inspection framework](#) and [school handbook](#) (applies from September 2019)

⁹ Children in Need: data and analysis: June 2019