

Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board

Headline Measures: Q1 2022/23

October 2022

Note: The Department for Education's annual figures on adoptions and timeliness for children who have been adopted are published in the [Children looked after in England including adoption](#) SFR. This is the most robust source of information on adoption.

CHILDREN

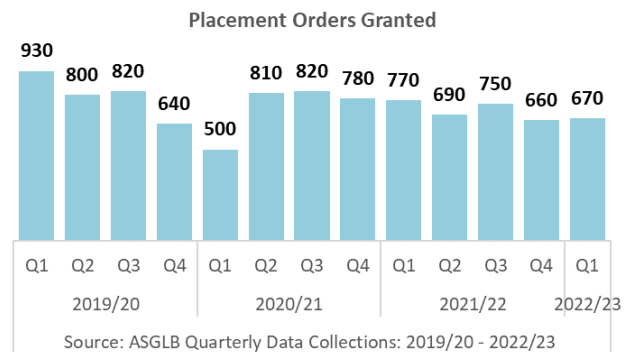
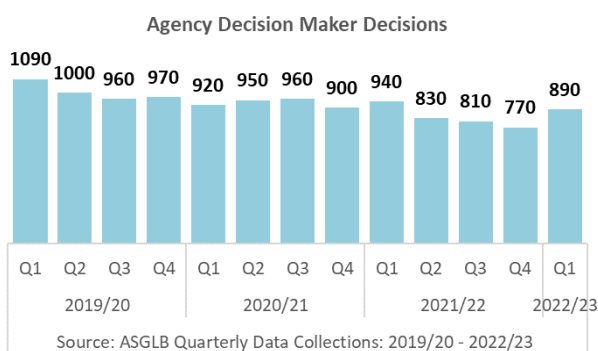
Quarter 1 2022/23 has seen an increase in activity for children when compared to Q4 2021/22. There has been an increase in the numbers of Agency Decision Maker decisions, Placement Orders, Adoption Orders and children matched and placed with adoptive parents. Timeliness is improving with some children's journey to permanence taking less time.

The number and proportion of children waiting with a Placement Order since entering care and since grant of Placement Order has stabilized, and these children are still waiting longer for permanence.

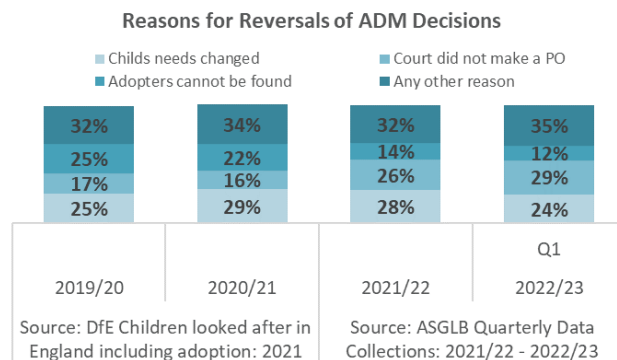
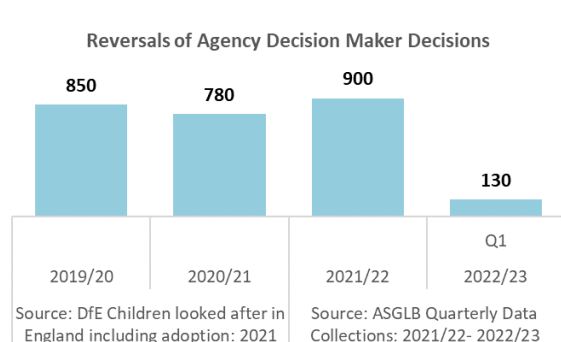
Although there has been a small decline in the number of Special Guardianship Orders granted, overall permanence has increased.

In Q1 2022/23 (30 June 2021) there were:

- **890** Agency Decision Maker decisions, an increase of **16% (120n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **5% (50n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- **670** Placement Orders granted, an increase of **2% (10n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **13% (100n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22



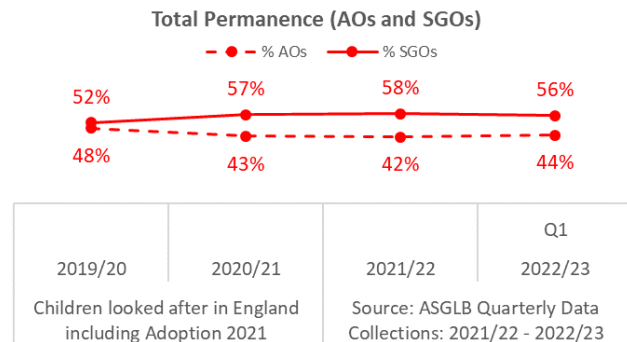
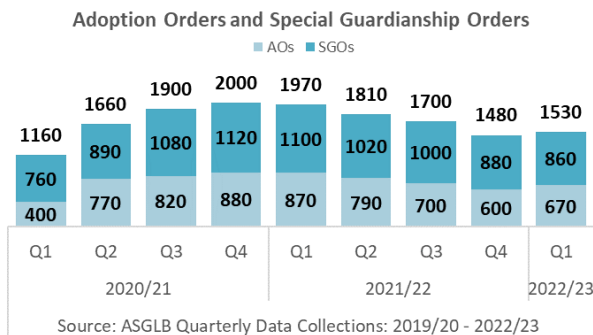
- **130** ADM reversals, **14%** of the total for 2021/22
- **24%** of reversals were due to 'Child's needs changed', a decrease of **4** percentage points when compared to 2021/22 and **12%** were due to 'Adopters cannot be found', a decrease of **2** percentage points when compared to 2021/22



There has been an increase in Adoption Orders and total permanence, despite a small decrease in the number of Special Guardianship Orders granted.

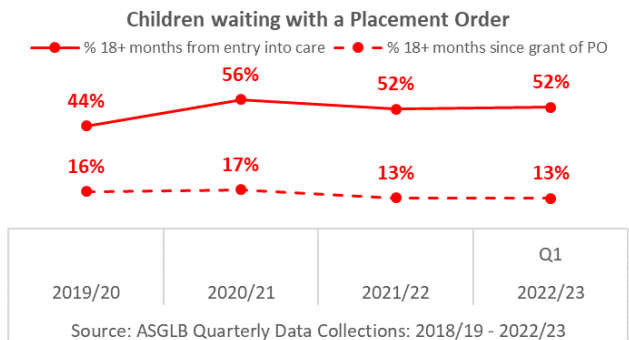
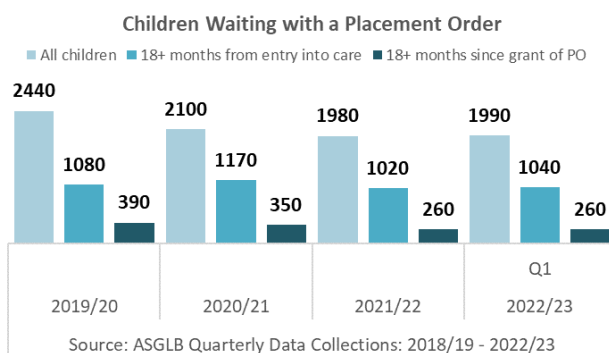
In Q1 2022/23, there were:

- **670** Adoption Orders granted, an increase of **12% (70n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **23% (200n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- **860** Special Guardianship Orders granted, a decrease of **2% (20n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **22% (240n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22



- **1530** total permanence orders granted (AOs & SGOs), an increase of **3% (50n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **22% (440n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- SGOs accounted for **56%** of all permanence, a decrease of **2** percentage points when compared to 2021/22
- **120** children were placed in an FFA/CP arrangement, **24%** of the total for 2021/22

The number of children waiting with a Placement Order, waiting 18+ months since entering care, and waiting 18+ months since grant of Placement Order are similar to last year.



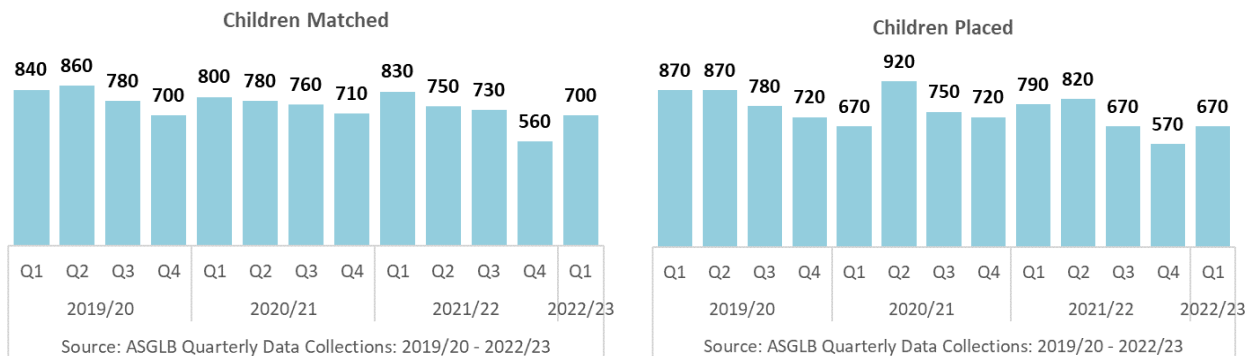
In Q1 2022/23 there were:

- **1990** children with a PO waiting to be matched, an increase of **1% (10n)** from Q4 2021/22
- **1040** children with a PO waiting to be matched 18+ months since entering care, an increase of **1% (10n)** from Q4 2021/22
- **52%** of children with a PO have been waiting to be matched 18+ months since entering care
- **260** children with a PO waiting to be matched 18+ months since grant of PO, the same as Q4 2021/22
- **13 %** of children with a PO have been waiting to be matched 18+ months since grant of PO

There has been an increase in the number of children matched and placed with adoptive parents

In Q1 2022/23 there were:

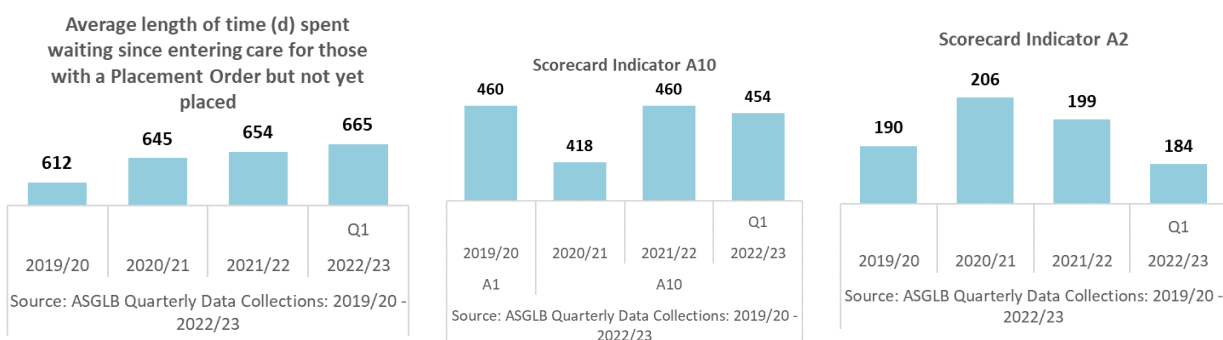
- **700** children matched with an adoptive family, an increase of **25% (140n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **16% (130n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- **670** children placed with an adoptive family, an increase of **18% (100n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **15% (120n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22



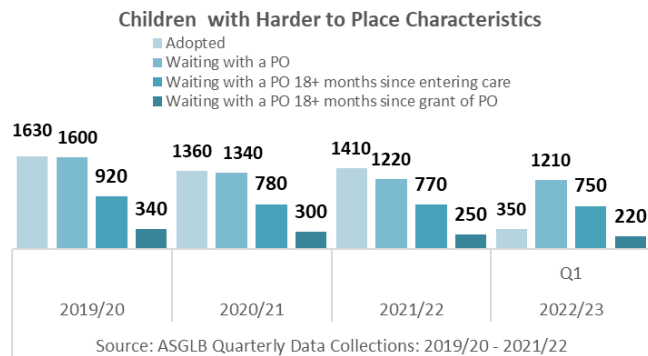
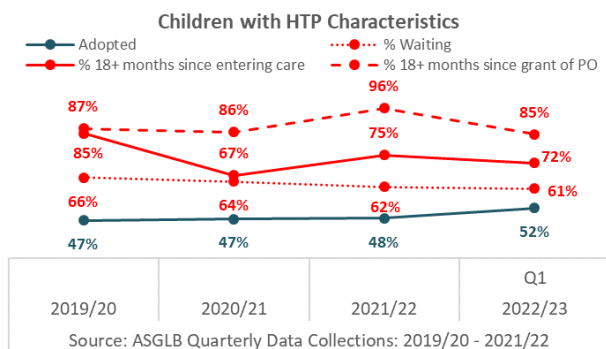
Timeliness is improving with some children's journey to permanence taking less time, however those children who are waiting to be placed with an adoptive family are waiting longer

In Q1 2022/23:

- The average number of days spent waiting to be placed with Placement Order since entering care was **665 days**, an increase of **11 days** from Q4 2021/22
- Scorecard Indicator A10 (average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family adjusted for foster care adoptions) was **454 days**, a decrease of **6 days** from Q4 2021/22
- Scorecard Indicator A2 (average time between an LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match to an adoptive family) was **184 days**, a decrease of **15 days** from Q4 2021/22



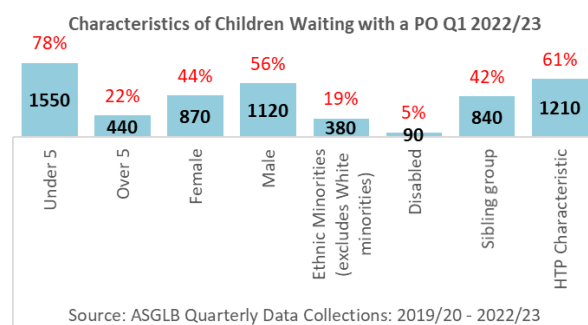
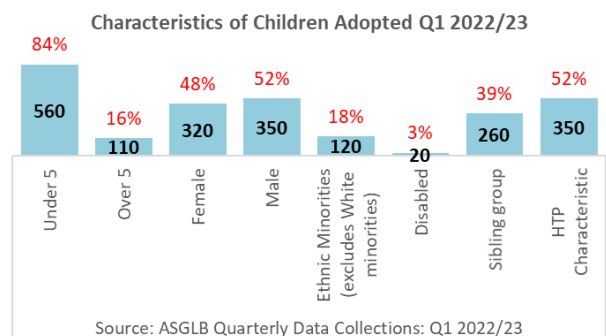
There has been an increase in the proportion of children adopted who have harder to place characteristics and a decrease in the proportion of children with harder to place characteristics waiting with a PO, waiting 18+ months since entering care and waiting 10+ months since grant of PO.



In Q1 2022/23 there were:

- **350** children with HTP characteristics adopted, **25%** of the total number of children with HTP characteristics adopted in 2021/22
- **1210** children with HTP characteristics waiting with a PO, a decrease of **1% (10n)** from Q4 2021/22
- **750** children with HTP characteristics waiting with a PO 18+ months since entering care, a decrease of **3% (20n)** from Q4 2021/22
- **220** children with HTP characteristics waiting with a PO 18+ months since grant of PO, a decrease of **12% (30n)** from Q4 2021/22

The charts below give a breakdown of the number of children adopted and waiting with a PO by characteristics.



In Q1 2022/23:

- Children who were aged under 5, female and not from an Ethnic Minority (excludes White minorities) background were more likely to be adopted and less likely to be waiting with a PO
- Children aged over 5, male, from an Ethnic Minority (excludes White minorities) background, with a disability and in a sibling group were more likely to be waiting with a PO and less likely to be adopted

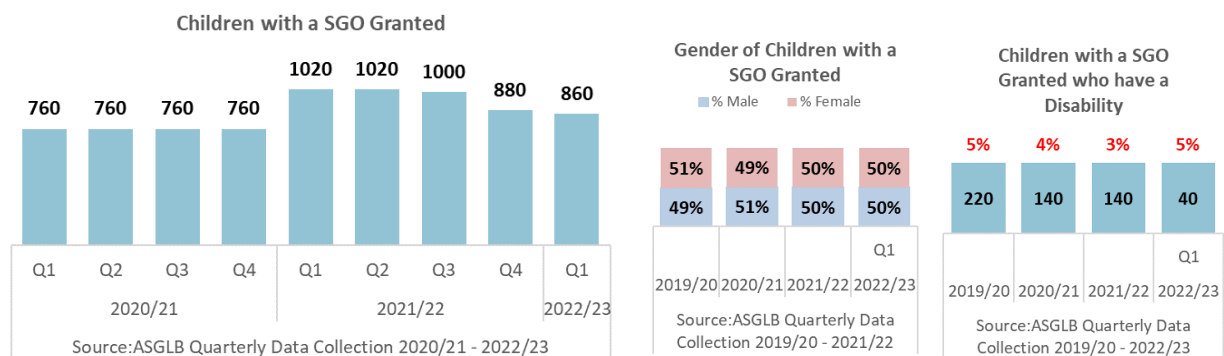
NB: "Harder to place" is defined as a child who is any of the following: 5 years or over, with an Ethnic Minority (excludes White minorities) background, disabled, or part of a sibling group. Children with more than one harder to place characteristic will be counted in each characteristic.

SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS

There has been a decline in the number of children leaving care with a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) but more children are still leaving care with via a SGO than an adoption order with SGOs accounting for **56%** of all permanence.

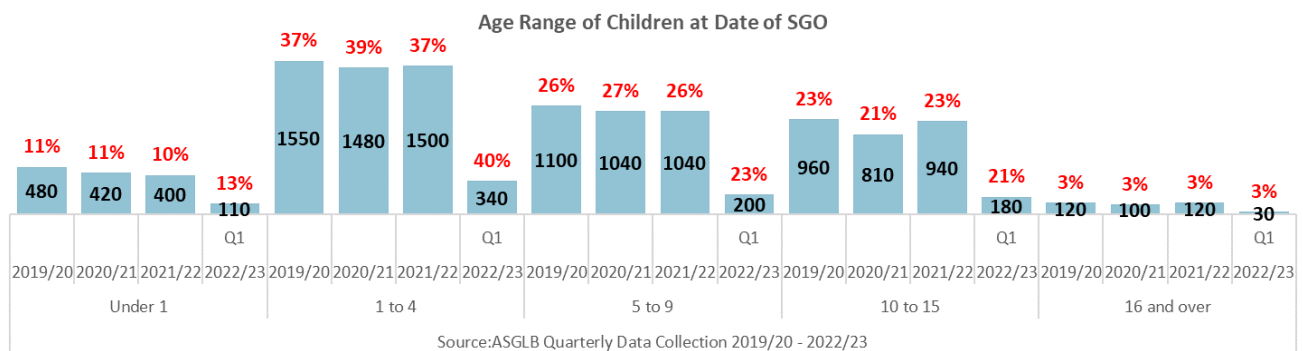
In Q1 2022/23, there were:

- **860** SGOs granted, a decrease of **2% (20n)** from Q4 2021/22, a decrease of **24% (240n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- **50%** of the children were male, **50%** female and **5%** had a disability, **22%** had an Ethnic Minority (excluding White minorities) background and **42%** were in a sibling group



Children aged 1 to 4 continue to be the largest group of children who leave care with a SGO (**40%**), followed by children aged 5 to 9 (**23%**).

In Q1 2022/23 there was an increase in the proportion of children who left care with a SGO aged under 1 and 1 to 4, and a decrease for children aged 5 to 9 and 10 to 15. The proportion of children aged 16 and over remained the same

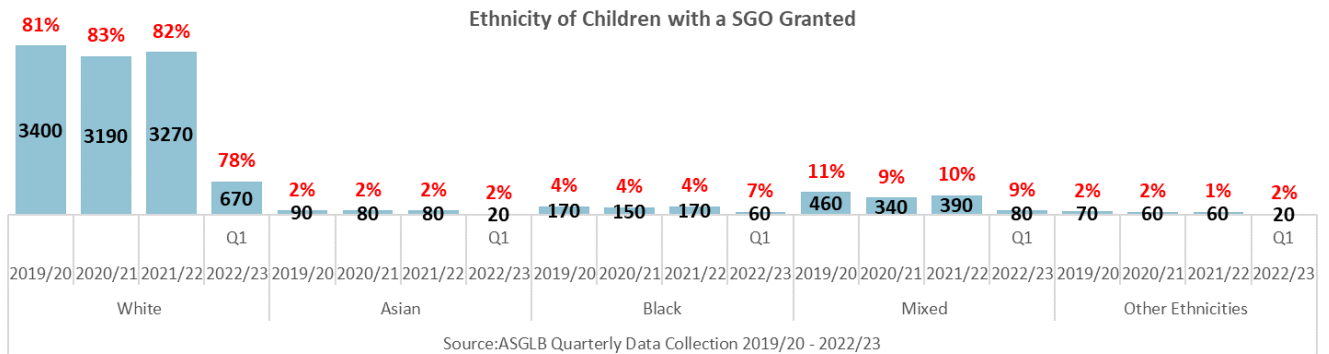


Although children with a White ethnic background continue to be the largest ethnic group who leave care with a Special Guardianship Order, there has been a decrease in the proportion of SGOs granted to children with a White background and an increase to children with an Ethnic Minority (excludes White minorities) background

In Q1 2022/23:

- **78%** of SGOs were granted for children with a White ethnic background, a decrease of **4** percentage points when compared to 2021/22

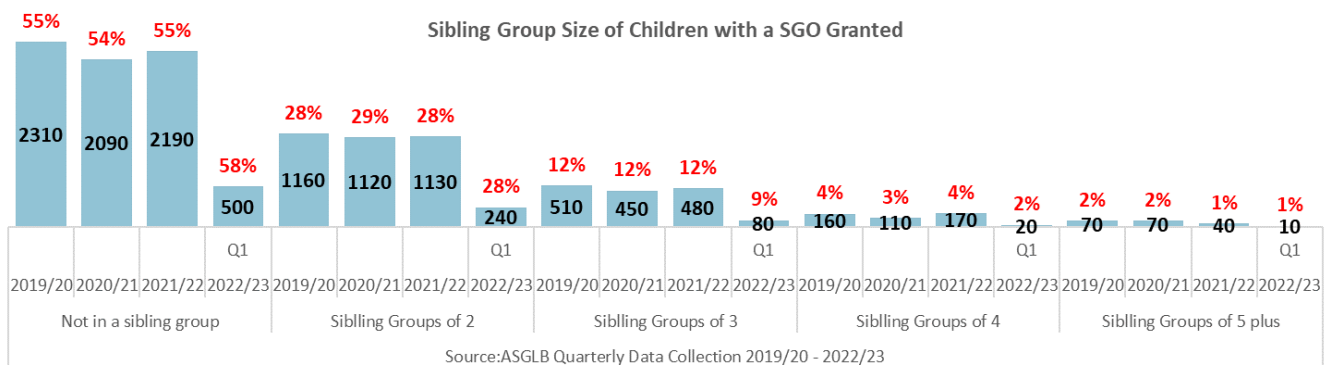
- **22% of SGOs were granted for children with an Ethnic Minority (excludes White minorities) background** an increase of **4** percentage points when compared to 2021/22



Children not in a sibling group continue to be the largest group of children who leave care with a Special Guardianship Order.

In Q1 2022/23:

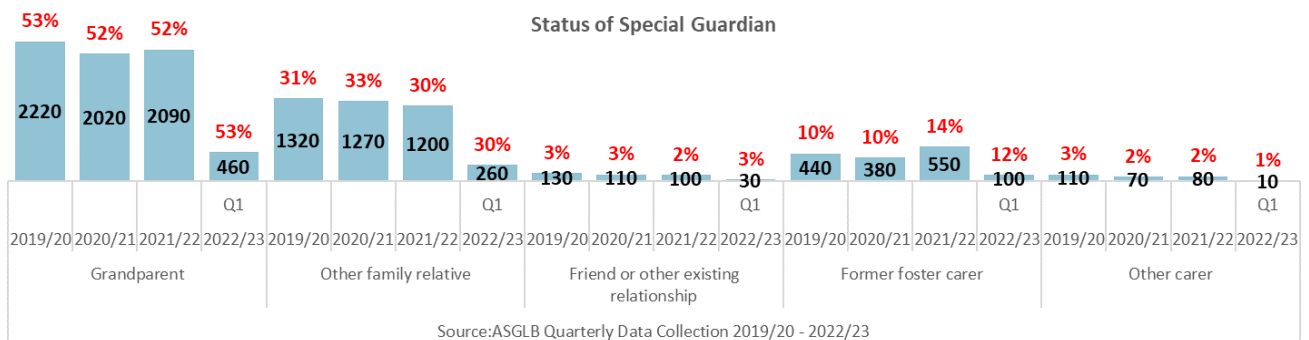
- **58% (500n)** of SGOs were granted to children not in a sibling group, an increase of **3** percentage points when compared to 2021/22



Grandparents were the largest represented group of Special Guardians.

In Q1 2022/23:

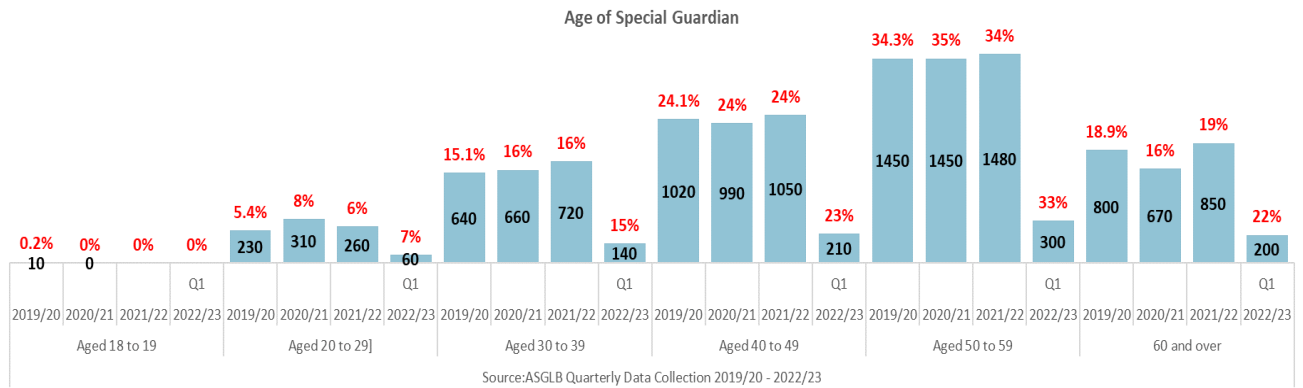
- **53% (460n)** SGOs were granted to grandparents, an increase of **1%** when compared to 2021/22



Special Guardians aged 50 to 59 are the oldest represented age group.

In Q1 2022/23:

- **33% (300n)** Special Guardians were aged 50 to 59; the largest represented age range
- There has been a small increase in the proportion of Special Guardian aged 20 to 29, from **6%** to **7%** and aged 60 and over, **19%** to **22%** when compared to 2021/22



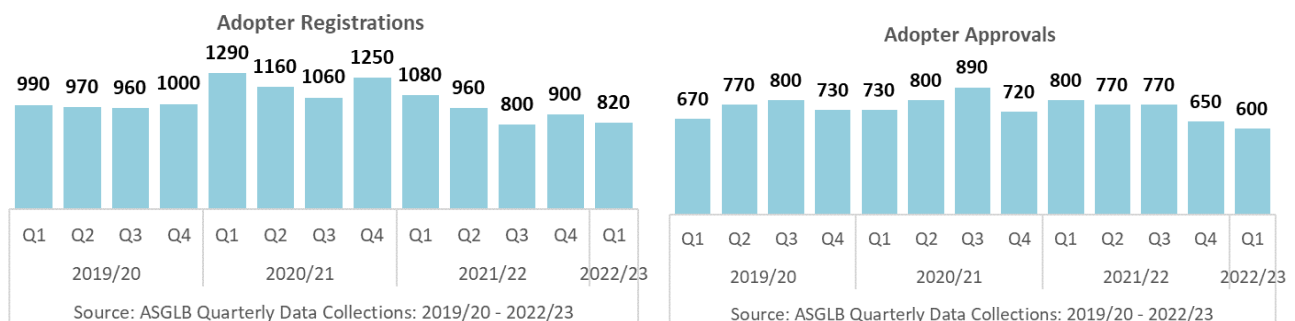
ADOPTERS

The number of approved adoptive families has begun to decline with there being decrease in both the number of adopters not yet approved, and adopters approved and waiting to be matched. Adopter registrations and approvals have decreased, and there has been an increase in the number of adopters withdrawing from the process after approval.

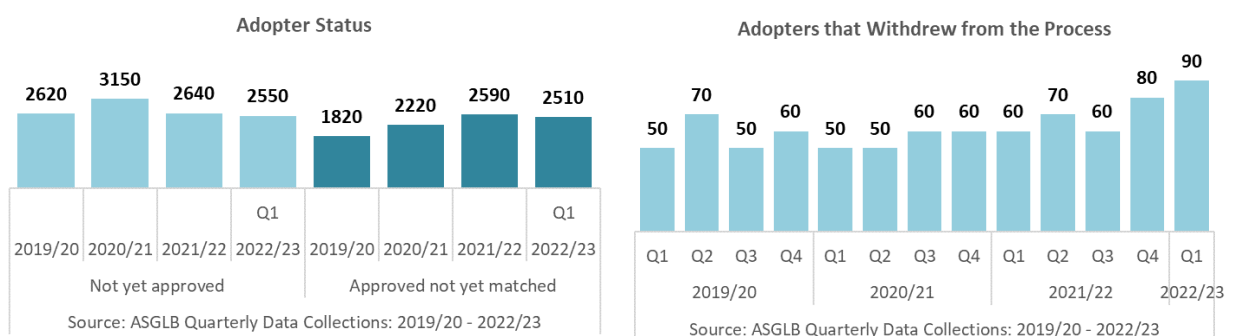
The number of adopters matched with and having a child placed with them has increased in line with the increased seen in matches and placements for children this quarter.

In Q1 2022/23 there were:

- **820** Registrations, a decrease of **9% (80n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **24% (260n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- **600** Approvals, a decrease of **8% (50n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **25% (200n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22



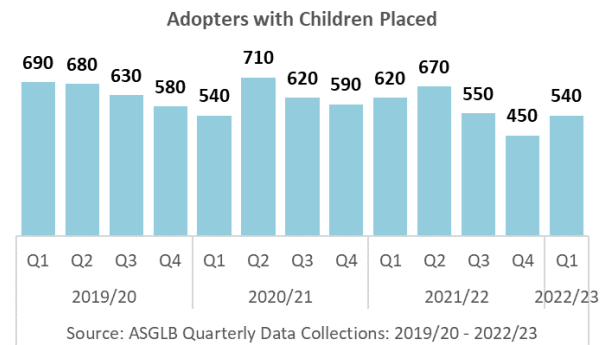
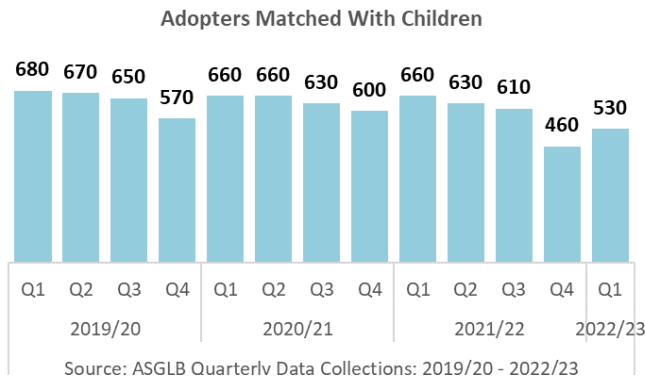
- **2550** Prospective adoptive families not yet approved, a decrease of **3% (90n)** from Q4 2021/22
- **2510** Approved adoptive families waiting to be matched, a decrease of **3% (80n)** from Q4 2021/22
- **90** approved adopters withdrew from the process after approval, an increase of **13% (10n)** when compared with Q4 2021/22 and **33%** of the total for 2021/22



The number of adopters being matched and having a child placed with them increased.

In Q1 2022/23 there were:

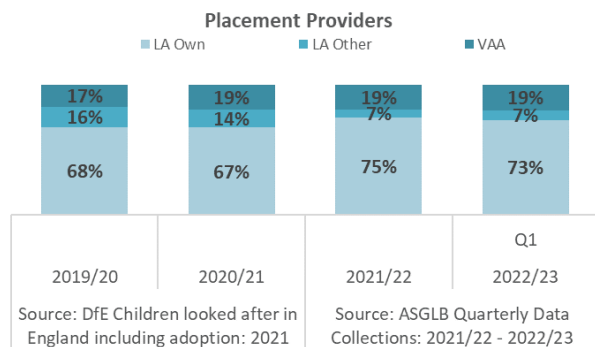
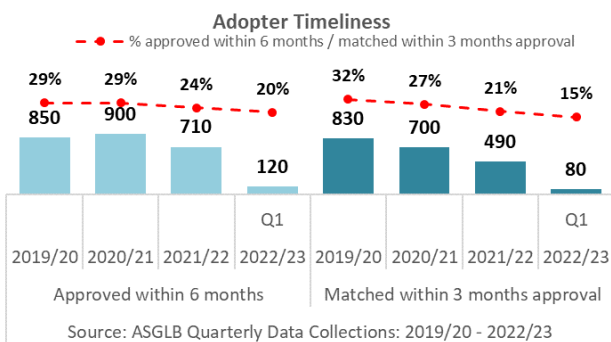
- **530** Adoptive families matched to children, an increase of **15% (70n)** from Q4 2021/22 and a decrease of **20% (130n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22
- **540** Adoptive families with a child placed: an increase of **20% (90n)** from Q1 2021/22 and a decrease of **13% (80n)** when compared to Q1 2021/22



Timeliness for adoptive family approvals and for adoptive families being matched has declined.

In Q1 2022/23:

- **20%** of adoptive families were approved within 6 months of registration, a decrease of **4** percentage points from Q4 2021/22
- **15%** of approved adoptive families had a child matched with them within 3 months of approval, a decrease of **6** percentage points from Q4 2021/22



The proportion of placement providers has remained fairly stable over the last three years.

In Q1 2022/23:

- **73%** of placements were provided by LAs themselves (via their RAAs)
- **7%** of placements were provided by other LAs (other RAAs)
- **19%** of placements were provided by VAAs

NB: Percentages may not add due to rounding of numbers

DATA SOURCES

ASGLB Quarterly Data Collection

In quarter 1 2022/23 the response rate from local authorities for the child level section was 100% and the adopter level sections was 100%. The response rate for the adopter level section from Voluntary Adoption Agencies was 100%. Therefore, national and regional figures on adoptions and adopters do not include estimates made for non-responses.

SSDA 903 Data Collection

Local authorities provide data on their looked after children using the SSDA903 collection. Data are collected from all local authorities. The information is collected at child level and includes information about the child's characteristics and their dates for each stage of the care process, including adoption. The data goes through thorough quality assurance and local authorities are able to update their historic data annually. We therefore view this as the most robust source of information on adoption. It is used to produce the [Children looked after in England including adoption](#) (SFR) and the [Adoption Scorecards](#). The most recent data covers the year ending 31 March 2021.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication was produced by The Children and Social Care Secretariat, delivered by Coram-i on behalf of the Department for Education.

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