

Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board

Headline Measures: Q2 2020/21

January 2021

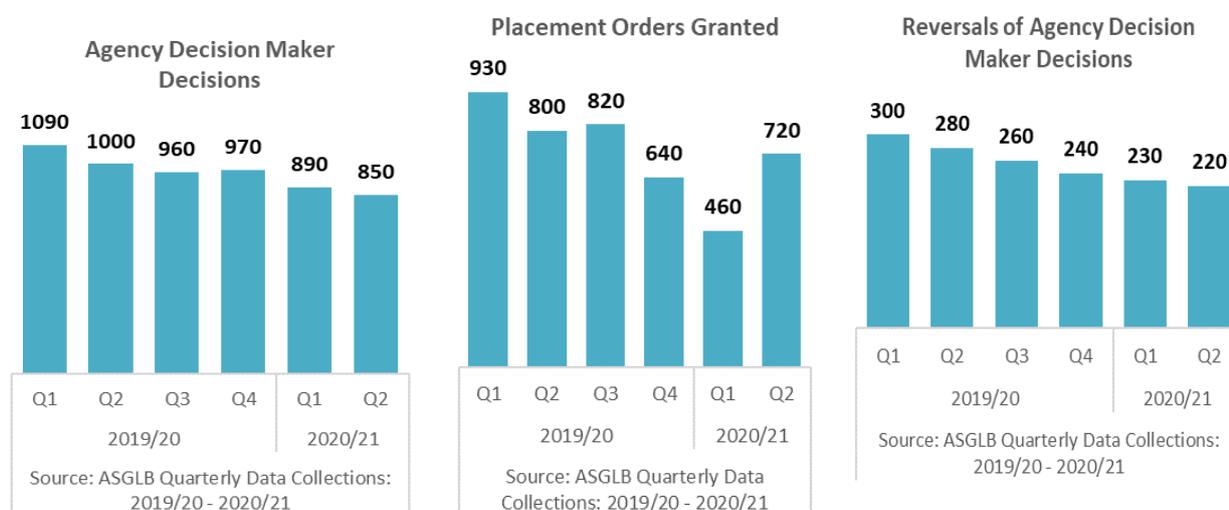
Note: The Department for Education's annual figures on adoptions and timeliness for children who have been adopted are published in the [Children looked after in England including adoption](#) SFR. This is the most robust source of information on adoption.

CHILDREN

The number of children moving into and through the adoption process is declining due to a decrease in the number of best interest decisions being made. The children who already have a best interest decision are waiting longer for permanence. The number of Agency Decision Maker decisions (ADMs) and Placement Orders (POs) and ADM reversals continue to decline. As at Q2 2020/21 (30 Sept 2020), there were a total of:

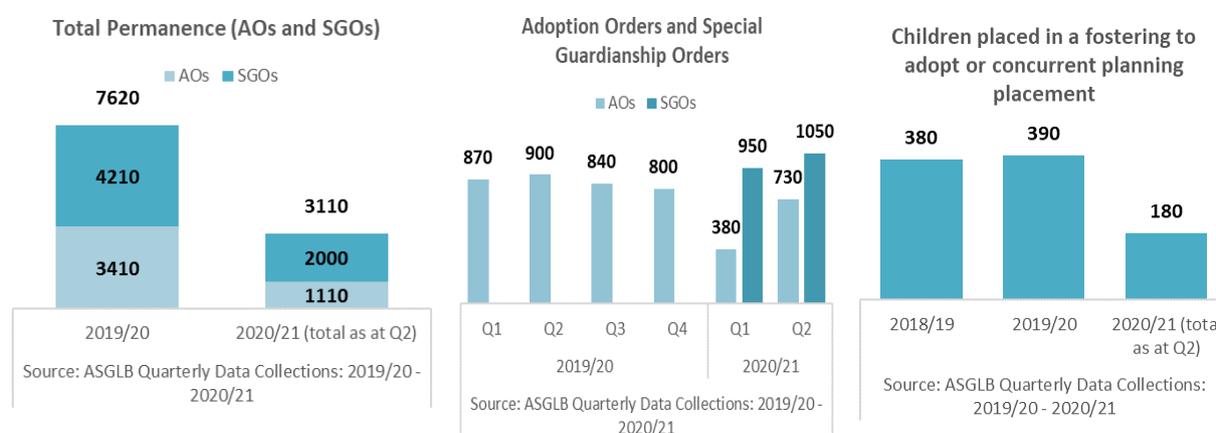
- **1740** Agency Decision Maker decisions: **890** Q1 and **850** Q2, a decrease of **17%** (**350n**) from Q2 2019/20
- **1180** Placement Orders granted: **460** Q1 and **720** Q2, a decrease of **32%** (**550n**) from Q2 2019/20
- **450** ADM reversals: **230** Q1 and **220** Q2, a decrease of **22%** (**130n**) from Q2 2019/20

The reasons given for the ADM reversals are: 'child's needs changed' **29%** (**130n**), 'court did not make a PO' **13%** (**60n**), 'adopters cannot be found' **22%** (**100n**) and 'any other reason' **36%** (**160n**).



The number of Adoption Orders (AOs) granted continues to decline and there continues to be more Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) granted than AOs. As at Q2 2020/21, there were a total of:

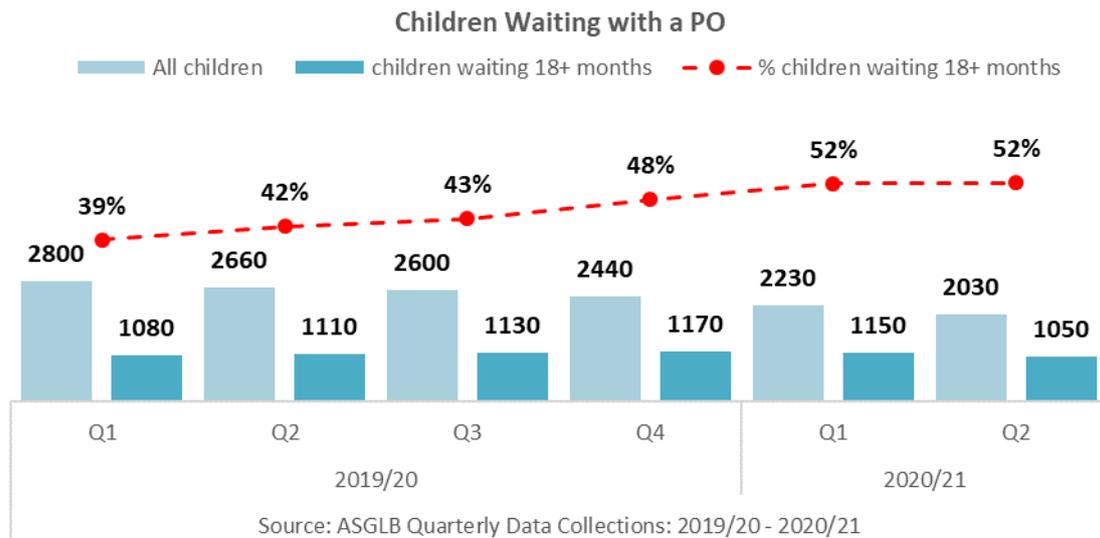
- **1110** Adoption Orders granted: **380** Q1 and **730** Q2, a decrease of **37%** (**660n**) from Q2 2019/20
- **2000** Special Guardianship Orders granted: **950** Q1 and **1050** Q2, **48%** of the total for 2019/20
- **3110** total permanence orders granted (AOs & SGOs): **1330** Q1 and **1780** Q2, **41%** of the total for 2019/20
- **180** children placed in an FFA/CP arrangement, **46%** of the total for 2019/20



NB: quarterly breakdown for SGOs not available for 2019/20

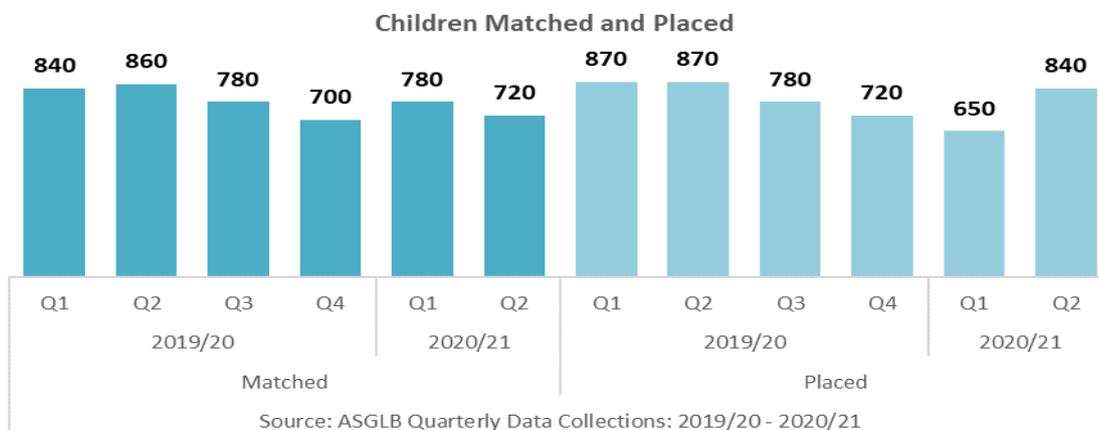
There continues to be a decrease in the number of children waiting with a PO, however the proportion of children waiting with a PO 18+ months continues to increase. As at Q2 2020/21, there were a total of:

- **2030** (Q2) children with a PO waiting to be matched, a decrease of **24% (630n)** when compared to Q2 2019/20, and a decrease of **17% (410n)** when compared to Q4 2019/20
- **1050** (Q2) children with a PO waiting to be matched 18+ months, a decrease of **5% (60n)** when compared to Q2 2019/20, and a decrease of **10% (120n)** when compared to Q4 2019/20
- **52%** (Q2) of children with a PO have been waiting to be matched 18+ months, an increase of **10** percentage points when compared to Q2 2019/20 and an increase of **4** percentage points when compared to Q4 2019/20



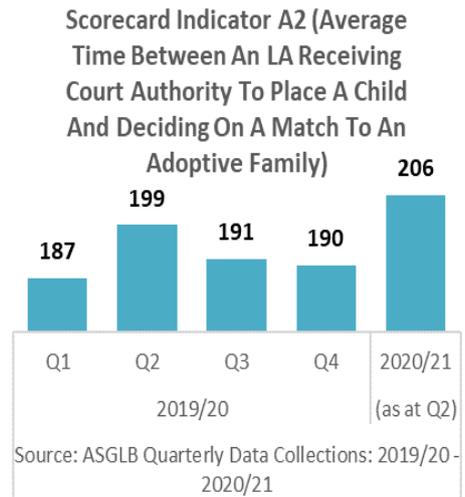
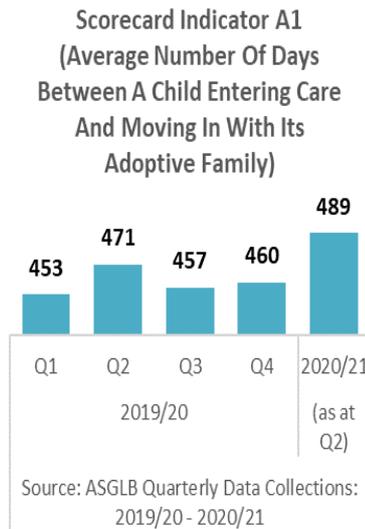
The decrease in the number of children waiting with a PO can be attributed to the decrease in POs granted in 2019/20 rather than more children achieving permanence, as the number of children matched and placed with adoptive families continues to decrease. As at Q2 2020/21, there were a total of:

- **1500** children matched with an adoptive family: **780** Q1 *and* **720** Q2, a decrease of **12% (200n)** from Q2 2019/20
- **1490** children placed with an adoptive family: **650** Q1 *and* **840** Q2, a decrease of **14% (250n)** from Q2 2019/20

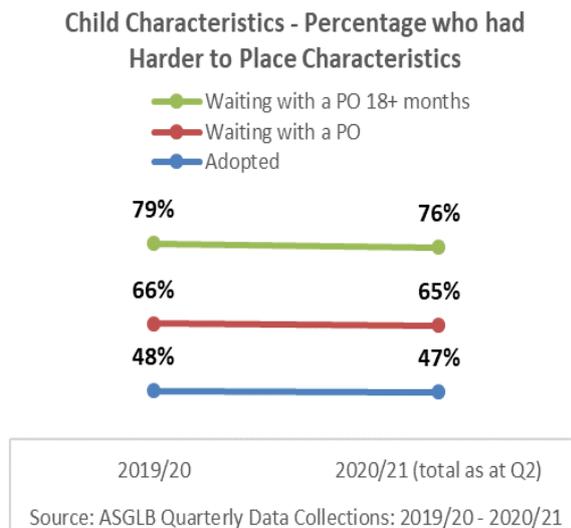
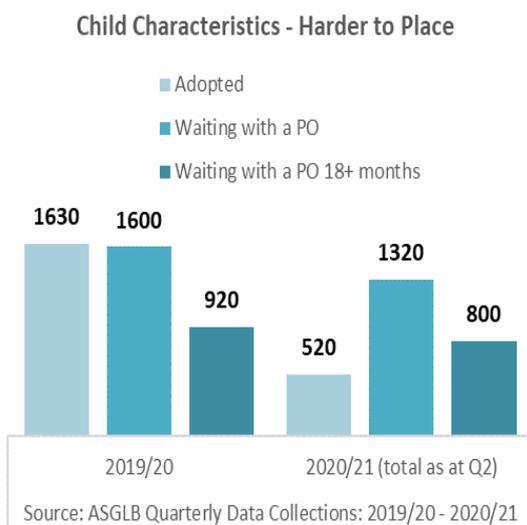


Timeliness for children is increasing with children waiting longer for permanence As at Q2 2020/21:

- The average number of days spent waiting to be placed with Placement Order since entering care was **647 days** (Q2), an increase of **77 days** when compared to Q2 2019/20 and an increase of **35 days** when compared to Q4 2019/20
- Scorecard Indicator A1 (average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family) was **489 days** (Q2), an increase of **18 days** when compared to Q2 2019/20, and an increase of **29 days** when compared to Q4 2019/20
- 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 **206 days** (Q2), an increase of **7 days** when compared to Q2 2019/20, and an increase of **16 days** when compared to Q4 2019/20



There has been a decrease in the proportion of children with harder to place (HTP) characteristics adopted, waiting with a PO, and waiting with a PO 18+ months.



However, these decreases can also be attributed to the decrease in POs granted in 2019/20 rather than more children with HTP characteristics being matched and placed with an adoptive family. There has also been a decrease in the number of children with HTP characteristics adopted.

As at Q2 2020/21 there were:

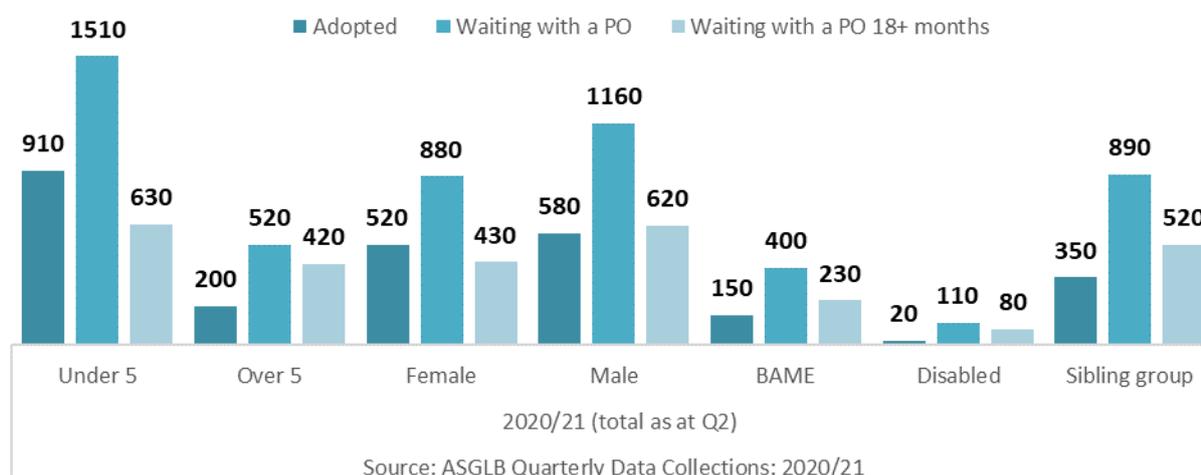
- **520** children with HTP characteristics adopted, **32%** of the total number of children with HTP characteristics adopted in 2019/20
- **1320** children waiting with a PO, **83%** of the total number of children with HTP characteristics waiting with a PO in 2019/20
- **800** children waiting with a PO 18+ months, **87%** of the total number of children with HTP characteristics waiting with a PO 18+ months in 2019/20

The chart below gives a breakdown of the number of children adopted, waiting with a PO and waiting with a PO 18+ months by characteristics.

As at Q2 2020/21:

- **82% (910n)** of children adopted were under 5, **52% (580n)** were male, **14% (150n)** had a BAME background, **2% (20n)** had a disability and **32% (350n)** were part of a sibling group
- **74% (1510n)** of children waiting were under 5, **57% (1160n)** were male, **20% (400n)** had a BAME background, **5% (110n)** had a disability and **44% (890n)** were part of a sibling group
- **60% (630n)** of children waiting with a PO 18+ months were under 5, **59% (620n)** were male, **22% (230n)** had a BAME background, **8% (80n)** had a disability and **50% (520n)** were part of a sibling group

Breakdown of Children's Characteristics

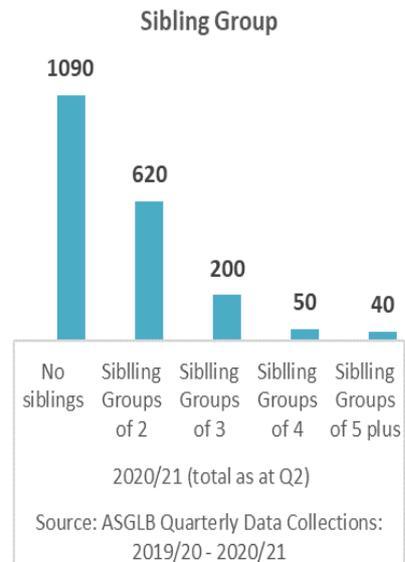
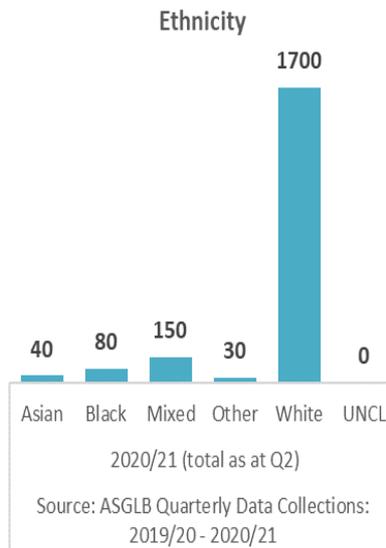
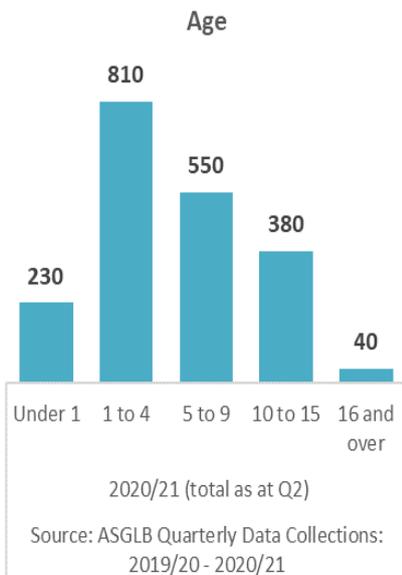


NB: "Harder to place" is defined as a child who is any of the following: 5 years or over, BME, disabled, or part of a sibling group. Children with more than one harder to place characteristic will be counted in each characteristic.

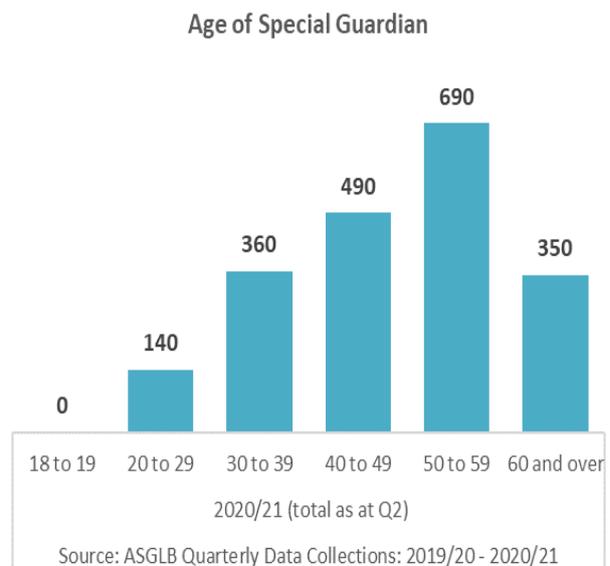
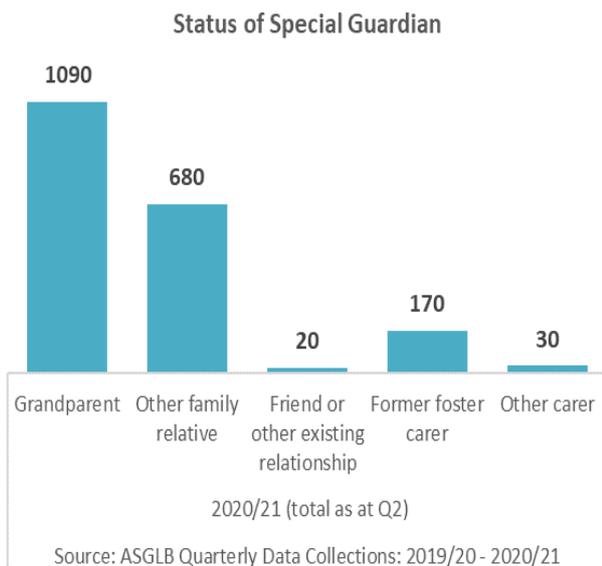
SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS

Data for Special Guardianship Orders is collected at aggregate-level for all Local Authorities on a quarterly basis. As at Q2 2020/21, there were **2000** SGOs granted: **950** Q1 *and* **1050** Q2, **48%** of the total for 2019/20.

- **52% (1040n)** of the children were male, **48% (950n)** were female,
- **52% (1040n)** SGOs were granted for children under 5 years
- **15% (300n)** SGOs were granted from children with a BAME background
- **46% (910n)** children were in a sibling group of two or more



- **55% (1090n)** children were placed with grandparents
- **35% (690n)** of special guardians were in the age range 50 to 59



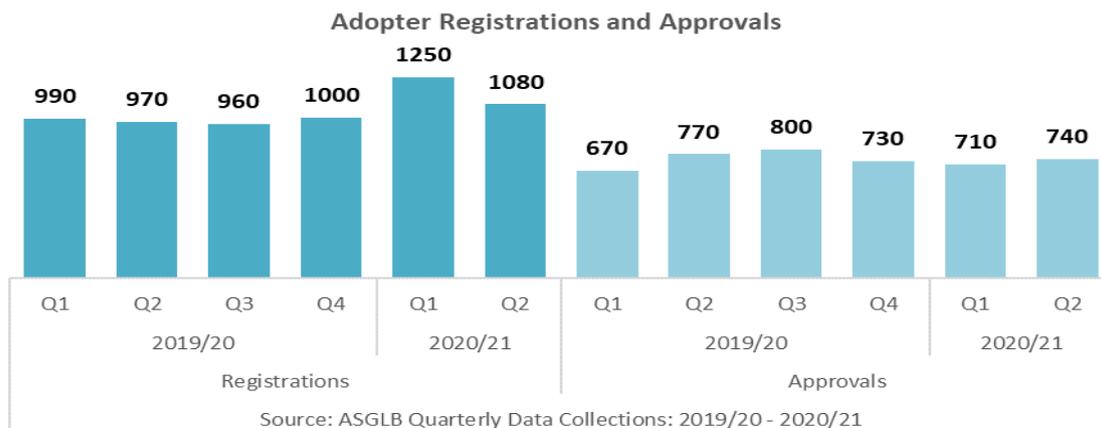
NB: 2020/21 is the first year that robust quarterly data is being collected for SGOs. Please note some figures may not add to the total due to rounding

ADOPTERS

The number of adoptive families has increased. There has been an increase in the number of adopter registrations and approvals, prospective adopters not yet approved and approved adopters waiting to be matched with a child. The increased availability of adopters can be attributed to both the increase in adopter registrations and the steady rate of approvals as well as the decrease in the number of children being matched and placed with adoptive families.

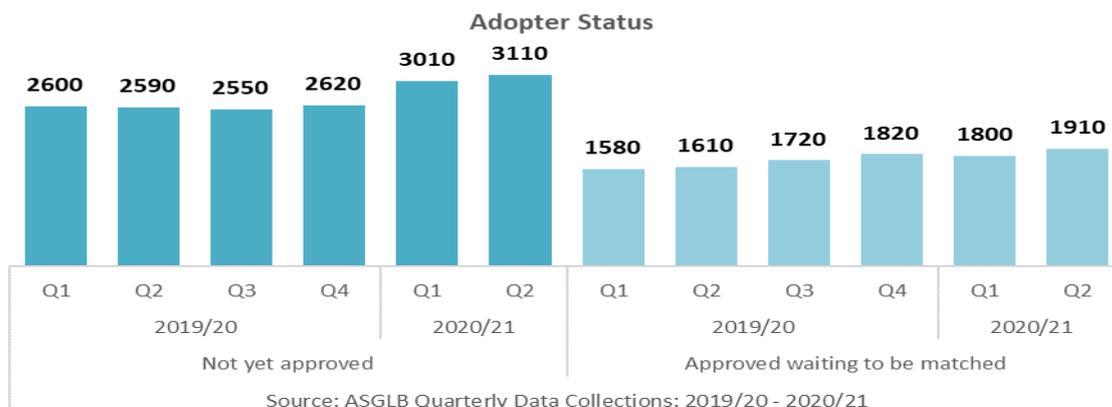
Adopter registrations increased in the first two quarters of 2020/21 and adopter approvals have remained stable. As at Q2 2020/21, there were a total of:

- **2330** Registrations: **1250** Q1 and **1080** Q2, an increase of **19%** (**370n**) from Q2 2019/20
- **1450** Approvals: **710** Q1 and **740** Q2, an increase of **1%** (**10n**) from Q2 2019/20



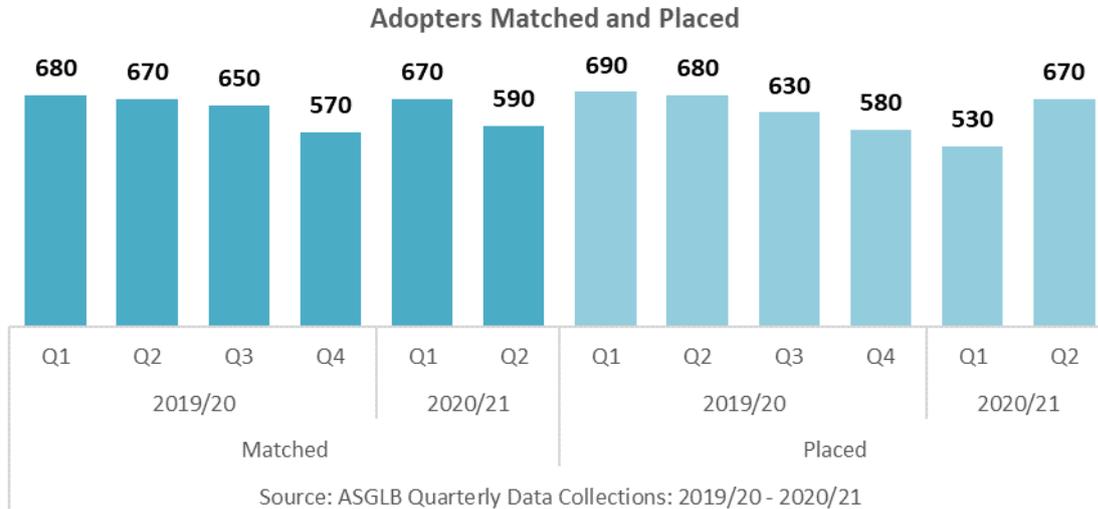
There have been increases in both the number of adopters not yet approved and the number of approved adopters waiting to be matched with a child. As at Q2 2020/21, there were a total of:

- **3110** (Q2) Prospective adoptive families not yet approved, an increase of **20%** (**520n**) when compared to Q2 2019/20 and an increase of **19%** (**490n**) when compared to Q4 2019/20
- **1910** (Q2) Approved adoptive families waiting to be matched, an increase of **19%** (**300n**) when compared to Q2 2019/20 and an increase of **5%** (**90n**) when compared to Q4 2019/20



There has been a decline in both the number of adoptive families matched with a child, and the number of adoptive families with a child placed with them. As at Q2 2020/21, there were a total of:

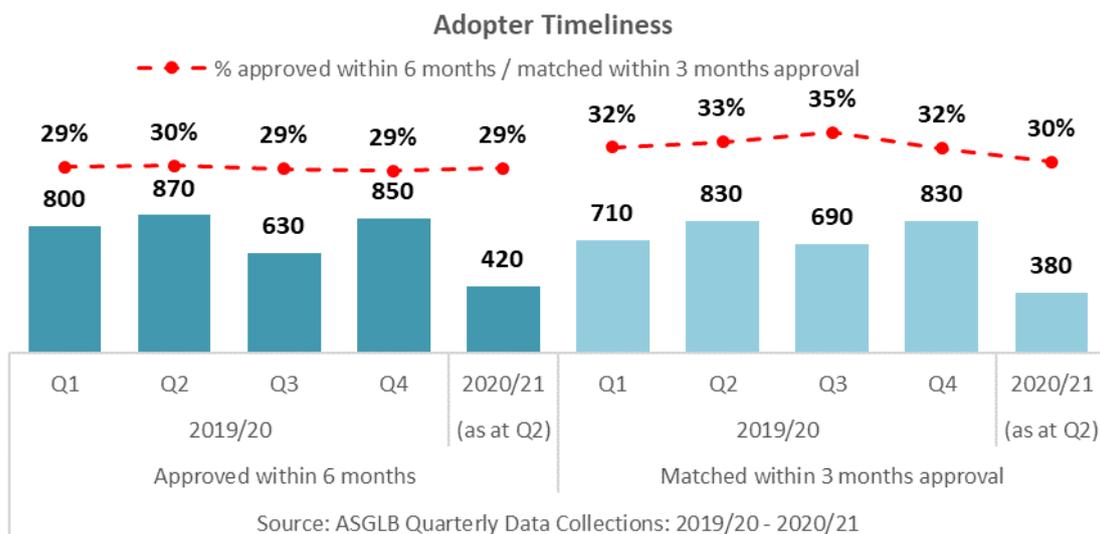
- **1260** Adoptive families matched to children: **670** Q1 and **590** Q2, a decrease of **7% (90n)** from Q2 2019/20
- **1200** Adoptive families with a child placed: **530** Q1 and **670** Q2, a decrease of **12% (170n)** from Q2 2019/20



2019/20

Timeliness for adoptive family approvals have remained stable but the timeliness for adoptive families being matched has declined. As at Q2 2020/21):

- **29%** of adoptive families were approved within 6 months of registration
- **30%** of approved adoptive families had a child matched with them within 3 months of approval



DATA SOURCES

ASGLB Quarterly Data Collection

In quarters 1 and 2 2020/21 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 2020.

Ofsted Data

Ofsted have previously published annual data on the recruitment of adopters and the children placed with them. From quarter 4 2014-15 the Ofsted data collection became part of the quarterly survey.

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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