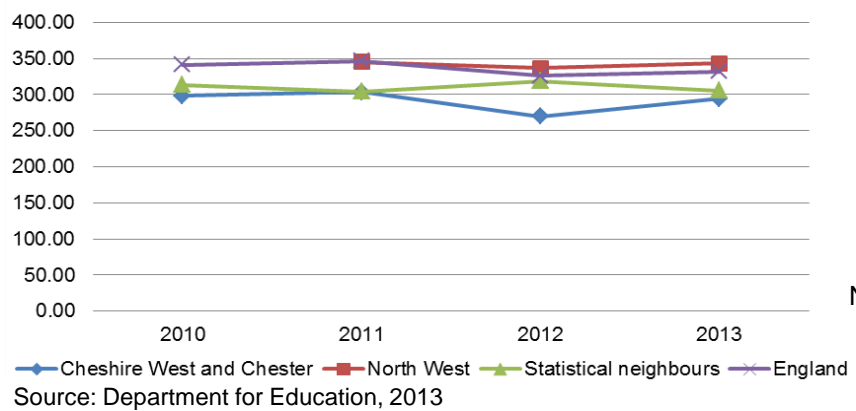
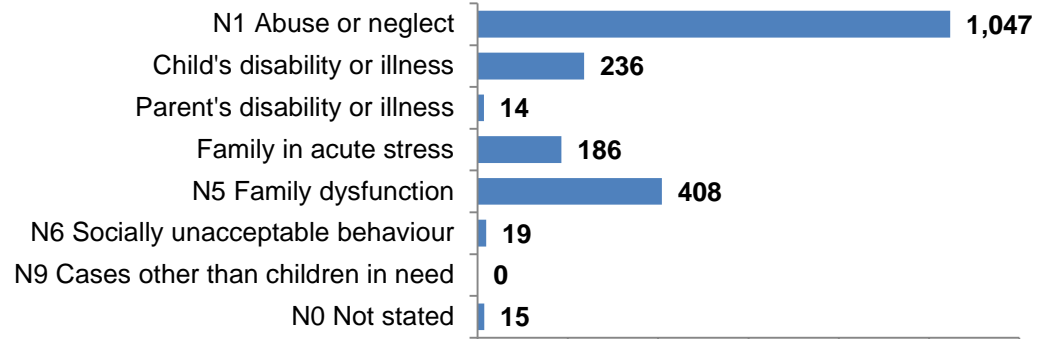




**Children in Need rate per 10,000**



**Numbers of children in need at 31 March 2013 by primary need at initial assessment**



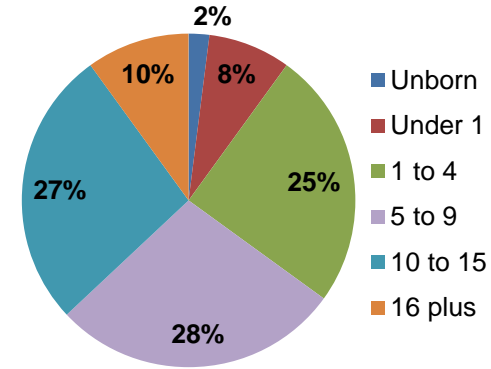
At 31 March 2013, there were 1,939 children in need in Cheshire West and Chester. This is a rate of 293.90 per 10,000 (2013), an increase from the 2012 rate of 270 per 10,000.

Since 2013, Children in need referrals to Children's Social Care showed a decline and remain below the North West and England averages. There is also a decrease in the number of referrals in which a previous referral has taken place.

Children aged between five and nine years have the highest number of referrals. The main factors identified at assessment relate to abuse or neglect, family dysfunction and the child's disability or illness. At 31 March 2013, 313 children in need had a disability, a rate of 16.1 per 10,000. 48% were reported as having learning difficulties, 29% with Autism or Asperger's Syndrome and 21% had communication issues.

36.5% of children in need had been an open case for two years or over. 1,907 children ceased to be in need in the year ending 31 March 2013. In 85% of these cases the child was deemed no longer in need and 54% had been an open case for three months or less.

**Age band of children referred to Social Care (June 2014)**



**Evidence of what works**

- The implementation of the revised continuum of need threshold document has led to clearer multi-agency understanding.
- Robust monitoring and referrals are sign posted to appropriate agency/level.
- Greater emphasis upon prevention and early intervention and the way we work with children and families and partner agencies.
- Specialist support for children and young people including options for therapy. Support for perpetrators focusing on learned behaviours and working to change them.

**Recommended actions**

- Monitor and evaluate the targeted commissioned services in respect of domestic violence, alcohol and mental health and outcomes improved for children and families.
- Progress the edge of care project which is a more integrated, targeted and responsive model for those on the 'edge of care' where family breakdown is imminent.
- Further development with teenagers around healthy relationships and the signs of domestic abuse.

**Rationale:** A child in need is one who has been assessed by children's social care to be in need of services. Providing support can help keep families experiencing difficulties together and target interventions to prevent children going into care.