

NIGALA
NI Guardian Ad Litem Agency
*A voice for Children and Young People
in Family Courts*

Annual Statistics Report 2016/17



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Introduction

The Northern Ireland Guardian ad Litem Agency (NIGALA) was established by the DHSSPS in accordance with Article 60(7) of the Children (NI) Order 1995 and the Guardian ad Litem (Panels) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996. Article 60(1-2) of the Children (NI) Order 1995 requires the Court, in any case involving Specified proceedings (defined in Article 60(6) of the Order), to appoint a Guardian ad Litem for the child concerned unless satisfied that it is not necessary to do so. The role of the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is to ensure the independent representation of the wishes and feelings of the child/children who are the subject of Specified Public Law proceedings under the Children (NI) Order and/or proceedings under the Adoption (NI) Order 1987 and to ensure the safeguarding and promotion of the child's wishes and best interests. NIGALA therefore has a pivotal role in ensuring that the Children (NI) Order is implemented as intended.

This document provides comparative annual statistics for the years 2016/17 and 2015/16 in relation to: case numbers by proceedings type; case duration; Court transfers; Guardian ad Litem recommendations and Court Orders granted; the age and gender of children subject to proceedings during 2016/17.

Key statistics to emerge for the year 2016/17 include:

- An increase in the number of Guardian ad Litem appointments by 13% from 709 to 798 cases;
- An increase in the number of Care Application appointments by 33% from 313 to 417 cases;
- A 9% increase in the duration of Care applications from 327 to 358 days.

All statistics are correct as reported in the Guardian Case Information System (GCIS) at 31 March 2017.

Table 1A: Number of Cases Appointments Requested by Proceedings Type



Table 1A: Number of Case Appointments Requested by Proceedings Type

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Case Type	Number of Cases		Number of Children	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Adoption Placement	80	87	98	115
Adoption Abroad	0	1	0	2
Adoption Relative	2	5	2	6
Adoption Step Parents	15	21	17	24
Appeal	17	22	29	32
Care Application A.50	417	313	718	538
Change of Surname	0	1	0	1
Child Assessment	1	2	1	2
Contact Application A.53	38	27	69	42
Discharge of Contact	0	0	0	0
Discharge of Freeing	1	0	1	0
Discharge/Variation of SO/CO A.53	68	55	100	74
Emergency Protection A.63	1	3	2	9
Extension of EPO A.64(4)	0	0	0	0
Freeing Application (without consent)	46	55	57	67
Freeing Consolidated	3	18	6	18
Inter Country Adoption	1	3	1	3
Investigation in Child Circ. A.56	37	23	70	45
Live Abroad	0	1	0	1
Multiple Proceedings	13	8	20	8
No Contact	1	0	1	0
Parental Order (HEF Act)	2	3	2	3
Removal from Jurisdiction	2	2	2	2
Residence Order (Child in Care) A.8	8	9	11	9
Secure Accommodation A.44	32	42	32	44
Supervision Application A.50	11	6	22	13
Termination/Variation of Contact	1	2	1	2
Total	798	709	1263	1060

Table 1A illustrates the total number of appointments of Guardians ad Litem and the number of children involved from April 2016 to March 2017, and breaks these down by proceedings type. The total number of cases increased by 13% from 709 to 798 from the previous year, with the number of children subject to proceedings increasing by 19% from 1056 to 1060.

In Specified Public Law cases NIGALA witnessed a decrease in Care Order appointments, with an 11% decrease in 2015/16 from the previous year. 2016/17 has brought a reversal of this trend with the number of Care Order appointments increasing by 33% from 313 to 417 and the number of children subject to Care applications has increased from 538 to 718. Appointments relating to applications to Discharge or Vary Orders have increased by 23% from 55 to 68. Emergency Protection Orders have decreased in 2016/17 from 3 to 1 and Termination/Variation of Contact appointments have decreased from 2 to 1. However there has been an increase in Article 56 appointments (50%) from 24 to 37. Contact applications have increased by 40% from 27 to 38.

Step-Parent Adoption appointments have decreased by 40% from 21 to 15. There has been an 8% decrease in Placement Adoption appointments from 87 to 80, following a substantial increase of 52% in 2015/16. Freeing without Consent appointments have decreased (19%) from 55 applications in 2015/16 to 46 applications in 2016/17.

Table 1B: Number of Cases Allocated by Proceedings Type



Table 1B: Number of Cases Allocated by Proceedings Type

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Case Type	Number of Cases		Number of Children	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Adoption Placement	80	87	98	115
Adoption Abroad	0	1	0	2
Adoption Relative	2	5	2	6
Adoption Step Parents	15	21	17	24
Appeal	17	22	29	32
Care Application A.50	417	321	718	538
Change of Surname	0	1	0	1
Child Assessment	1	2	1	2
Contact Application A.53	38	27	69	42
Discharge of Contact	0	0	0	0
Discharge of Freeing	1	0	1	0
Discharge/Variation of SO/CO A.58	68	55	100	74
Emergency Protection A.63	1	3	2	9
Extension of EPO A.64(4)	0	0	0	0
Freeing Application (without consent)	46	55	57	67
Freeing Consolidated	3	9	6	10
Inter Country Adoption	1	3	1	3
Investigation in Child Circ. A.56	37	24	70	45
Live Abroad	0	1	0	1
Multiple Proceedings	13	8	20	8
No Contact	1	0	1	0
Parental Order (HEF Act)	2	3	2	3
Removal from Jurisdiction	2	2	2	2
Residence Order (Child in Care) A.8	8	9	77	9
Secure Accommodation A.44	32	42	32	44
Supervision Application A.50	11	7	22	15
Termination/Variation of Contact	1	2	1	2
Total	808	724	1283	1093

Table 1B illustrates the total number of cases allocated and children involved in 2016/17 compared with the previous year. There were a total of 808 cases allocated; an 11% increase in cases from the previous year. It included a 26% increase in Care applications. This marks a change from the previous year where the number of allocated cases had decreased from 733 cases in 2014/15 to 724 in 2015/16.

Table 2A: Total Number of Cases Completed by Proceedings Type



Table 2A: Total Number of Cases Completed by Proceedings Type

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Case Type (at the Start of the Case)	Number of Cases		Number of Children	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Adoption Placement	98	70	125	85
Adoption Abroad	0	1	0	2
Adoption Relative	3	2	4	2
Adoption Step Parents	23	15	25	17
Appeal	15	16	23	25
Care Application A.50	290	328	505	556
Change of Surname	0	1	0	1
Child Assessment	2	2	2	3
Contact Application A.53	39	21	71	37
Discharge/Variation of SO/CO A.58	65	53	93	78
Discharge of Contact	1	3	1	5
Discharge of Freeing	1	1	1	1
Emergency Protection	1	3	2	9
Freeing A.18 (without consent)	55	60	66	83
Freeing Consolidated	27	20	35	23
Inter Country Adoption	4	5	4	5
Investigation in Child Circ. A.56	27	30	43	49
Live Abroad	1	1	1	1
Multiple Proceedings	13	11	19	15
Parental Order (HEF Act)	3	4	3	5
Removal from Jurisdiction	1	3	1	3
Residence Order (Child in Care) A.8	8	5	11	5
Secure Accommodation A.44	33	41	34	42
Supervision Application A.50	7	9	15	12
Termination of Contact	1	2	3	5
Total	718	707	1087	1069

Table 2A illustrates the number of cases completed during 2016/17 compared with 2015/16 and indicates a 1% from 707 to 718 cases. This increase is the result of a higher number of Multiple proceedings, Residence Orders and a substantial increase (40%) in Placement Adoption cases completed.

Table 2B: Total Number of Cases Completed by Proceedings Group



Table 2B: Total Number of Cases Completed by Proceedings Group

Periods: **From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017**
 From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Case Type	Number of Cases	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Adoption Proceedings	184	154
Public Law Proceedings	531	549
Parental Order (HEF Act)	3	4
Total	718	707

There were 184 Adoption proceedings cases and 531 Public Law proceedings cases completed between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017. There were 2 Parental Orders (HEF Act). A 2% increase from the previous year

Table 2C: Total Number of EPO Cases where Guardians have been appointed and which have proceeded to become Care Applications



Table 2C: Total Number of EPO Cases where Guardians have been appointed and which have proceeded to become Care Applications

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Case Type	Number of cases		Number of children	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Emergency Protection Order	16	15	32	28

Between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, 16 Emergency Protection Orders proceeded to become Care applications; an increase of 6% from the previous year.

Table 3: Number of Adoption and Specified Case Appointments Requested by Trust/Adoption Agency Area



Table 3: Number of Adoption and Specified Case Appointments Requested by Trust/Adoption Agency Area

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Trust/Agency	Number of Cases		Number of Children	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Adoption				
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	31	34	36	40
Family Care Society	1	5	1	5
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	31	60	39	81
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	28	27	34	31
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	22	26	25	33
Western Health & Social Care Trust	32	21	41	27
Total	145	173	176	218
Non-Adoption				
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	173	145	301	229
HEF Act	2	1	2	1
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	140	89	204	145
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	132	113	229	166
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	101	106	165	161
Western Health & Social Care Trust	105	82	186	136
Total	653	536	1087	838
Overall Total for Proceedings	798	709	1263	1060

Table 3 details the number of appointments of Guardians as a result of applications made by Trusts, Adoption Agencies and individuals within the respective Trust areas, as well as the number of children subject to these proceedings. There has been a 19% decrease in the number of Adoption proceedings from 173 to 145 cases. The Western Trust accounted for the majority of cases (32) followed by the Northern Trust (31) and the Belfast Trust (31) and the South Eastern Trust (28) in 2016/17. This marks a change from the previous year where the Northern Trust accounted for the majority of cases (60), followed by the Belfast Trust (34), the South Eastern Trust (27), the Southern Trust (26) and the Western Trust (21).

In the Non-Adoption proceedings there has been a 22% increase from 536 to 653 cases. The Northern Trust instigated the largest increase of applications (57%) from 89 applications in 2015/16 to 140 applications in 2016/17. The Western Trust had an increase of 29%, the Belfast Trust had an increase of 19%, the South Eastern had an increase of 18%, while the Southern Trust had a decrease of 6%. The Belfast Trust had the largest number of Public Law proceedings applications in 2016/17 - 173, an increase of 19% from the previous year of 145.

Table 4: Number of Guardians Appointed in Period by Name and Level of Court



Table 4: Number of Guardians Appointed in Period by Name and Level of Court

Periods: **From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017**
From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Adoption Proceedings		Number of Cases	
Court Name	Court Level	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Belfast County Court	County Court	3	5
Belfast Family Care Centre	Care Centre	65	69
Craigavon Country Court	County Court	7	18
Craigavon Family Care Centre	Care Centre	13	10
Craigavon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	0	1
Dungannon Family Care Centre	Care Centre	5	6
Fermanagh & Tyrone County Care	County Court	0	2
Londonderry County Court	County Court	7	3
Londonderry Family Care Centre	Care Centre	7	7
Londonderry Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	0	2
Omagh County Court	County Court	8	2
Royal Courts of Justice	High Court	30	44
Total		145	173
Care Proceedings		Number of Cases	
Ards Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	71	43
Ballymena Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	49	36
Belfast Family Care Centre	Care Centre	76	54
Belfast County Court	County Court	6	3
Belfast & Newtownabbey Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	131	108
Belfast Recorders Court	Care Centre	1	0
Coleraine Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	4	0
Craigavon County Court	County Court	3	1
Craigavon Family Care Centre	Care Centre	15	21
Craigavon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	46	21
Dungannon Family Care Centre	Care Centre	7	6
Dungannon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	24	27
Lisburn Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	20	22
Londonderry County Court	County Court	1	1
Londonderry Family Care Centre	Care Centre	14	9
Londonderry Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	36	45
Newry & Mourne Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	19	29
Omagh County Court	County Court	1	1
Omagh Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	20	6
Royal Court of Justice	High Court	33	30
Total		577	462
Emergency Proceedings		Number of Cases	
Ards Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	1	1
Dungannon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	0	1
Lisburn Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	0	1
Total		1	3

Secure Proceedings		Number of Cases	
Ards Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	4	9
Ballymena Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	3	2
Belfast & Newtownabbey Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	8	12
Craigavon Family Care Centre	Care Centre	1	1
Craigavon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	2	3
Dungannon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	1	2
Lisburn Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	1	4
Londonderry Family Care Centre	Care Centre	1	1
Londonderry Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	6	4
Newry Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	3	4
Omagh Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	2	0
Royal Courts of Justice	High Court	2	1
Total		34	43
Other Proceedings		Number of Cases	
Ards Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	2	4
Ballymena Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	1	2
Belfast Family Care Centre	Care Centre	4	10
Belfast & Newtownabbey Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	6	4
Coleraine Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	1	0
Coleraine Family Care Centre	Care Centre	1	1
Craigavon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	0	1
Dungannon Family Care Centre	Care Centre	2	3
Dungannon Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	3	0
Lisburn Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	1	0
Londonderry Family Care Centre	Care Centre	2	0
Londonderry Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	3	1
Newry Family Proceedings Court	Magistrates Court	0	1
Royal Courts of Justice	High Court	15	15
Total		41	42
Overall Total for Proceedings		798	709

Adoption

Table 4 indicates that in the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 there were a total of 145 appointments of Guardians in the field of Adoption; a decrease of 19% over the same period last year. The majority of Adoption/Freeing appointments came from the Belfast Family Care Centre (65 appointments) and the Royal Courts of Justice (30 appointments).

Care Proceedings

With respect to the Care proceedings group (which includes applications for Care, Supervisions, Contact and Freeing Consolidated), there were a total of 577 appointments in 2016/17; an increase of 25% from the previous year. This marks a reversal of the trend identified the previous year which saw a decrease of 11% in cases. Outside of Belfast, the busiest Courts in terms of Care proceedings are Newtownards, Ballymena, Craigavon, Londonderry and Dungannon.

Table 5: Number of Days between Notification of Court Appointment and the Final Hearing Date by Proceedings Type



Table 5: Number of Days between Notification of Court Appointment and the Final Hearing Date by Proceedings Type

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Case Type (at the end of case)	Number of Cases		Average Days	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Adoption Placement	98	70	150.62	171.77
Adoption Abroad	0	1	0	84.00
Adoption Step Parents	23	2	252.65	254.73
Adoption Relative	3	15	230.00	162.50
Appeal	15	16	108.60	91.06
Care Application A.50	290	328	358.52	326.89
Change of Surname	0	1	0	196.00
Child Assessment	2	2	79.00	118.50
Contact Application A.53	39	21	129.15	129.71
Discharge/Variation of SO/CO A.58	65	53	111.28	125.38
Discharge of Contact	1	3	170.00	158.67
Discharge of Freeing	1	1	123.00	116.00
Emergency Protection A.63	1	3	5.00	4.33
Freeing A.18 (without consent)	55	60	176.73	223.17
Freeing Consolidated	27	20	535.22	430.75
Inter Country Adoption	4	5	134.25	175.40
Investigation in Child Circ. A.56	27	30	209.63	207.57
Live Abroad	1	1	463.00	351.00
Multiple Proceedings	13	11	279.69	474.00
Parental Order (HEF Act)	3	4	124.67	197.50
Removal from Jurisdiction	1	3	79.00	66.33
Residence Order (Child in Care) A.8	8	5	138.50	67.40
Secure Accommodation A.44	33	41	83.42	80.83
Supervision Application A.50	7	9	163.57	374.11
Termination of Contact	1	2	431.00	364.00
Total Case	718	707		

Table 5 records the range and duration of cases before the Courts in Northern Ireland from the date of notification of Court appointment of the Guardian ad Litem, to the date of Final Hearing and the discharge of the Guardian. Up until 2014/15 an increase in the duration of Care application cases under Article 50 had been a concern for all involved in these cases.

However there was a small decrease in the average number of days in 2014/15 (8%) and in 2015/16 (5%) required for Care application cases. In contrast there has been a 9% increase in the average number of days (358) required for Care application cases in 2016/17.

While there was a 14% decrease in the average duration of Placement Adoptions from 172 days in 2015/16 to 151 days in 2016/17, there was a 42% increase in the average duration of Relative Adoptions from 162 days to 230 days.

2016/17 saw a substantial decrease in the average duration of supervision applications from 374 days to 163 days (129%). Freeing without Consent has decreased in average duration by 26% decreasing from 223 days to 177 days. There has been a 19% increase in the average duration of Appeal applications in 2016/17 from 91 days to 108 days.

Table 6: Number of Court Transfers by Proceedings Type



Table 6: Number of Court Transfers by Proceedings Type

Periods: From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Proceedings Type	FPC-CC/RC		CC/RC-HC	
	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16	4/16 – 3/17	4/15 – 3/16
Appeal	1	1	1	1
Care Application A.50	65	21	13	3
Contact Application A.53	1	0	0	0
Discharge of Order	4	3	0	1
Freeing A.18 (without Consent)	2	1	0	0
Freeing Consolidated	5	1	1	0
Investigation in Child Circ. A.56	4	0	0	0
Multiple Proceedings	1	0	0	0
Secure Accommodation A.44	0	1	0	0
Supervision Application A.50	2	2	0	0
Total	85	30	15	5

FPC = Family Proceedings Court; CC = County Court/Care Centre;

RC = Recorders Court; HC = High Court

Table 6 records the transfer of Court proceedings through the three tiers of Court from Family Proceedings level to Care Centre/County Court level and finally to the High Court.

Table 7: Guardian Recommendation in Relation to Initial Applications and Court Orders Granted



Table 7: Guardian Recommendation in Relation to Initial Application and Court Orders Granted

Cases completed between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017

Initial Application Applied For	Guardian Recommendation	Number of Guardian Recommendations	Court Order Granted	Number of Court Orders Granted
Adoption Placement	Adoption Order	123	Adoption Order	123
			Withdrawn	2
Inter Country Adoption	Adoption Order	4	Adoption Order	4
Appeal	Appeal Rejected	18	Appeal Rejected	18
	Appeal Upheld	1	Appeal Upheld	1
	Freeing Order	2	Freeing Order	2
			Withdrawn	2
Adoption Step Parents	Adoption Order	22	Adoption Order	22
	Residence Order	3	Residence Order	3
Adoption Relative	Adoption Order	4	Adoption Order	4
Care Application	Care Order	364	Care Order	347
			Case Dismissed	1
			Contact Order	4
			Family Assistance Order	3
	No Order	21	No Order	20
	Residence Order	33	Residence Order	37
	Supervision Order	66	Supervision Order	73
		Withdrawn	20	

Initial Application Applied For	Guardian Recommendation	Number of Guardian Recommendations	Court Order Granted	Number of Court Orders Granted
Child Assessment	Child Assessment Order	1	Child Assessment Order	1
			Withdrawn	1
Contact Application	Case Dismissed	10	Case Dismissed	10
	Contact Order	29	Contact Order	34
	Discharge/Variation of Order	1	Discharge/Variation of Order	1
	No Order	21	No Order	11
			Withdrawn	13
Discharge of Contact	Discharge/Variation of Order	1	Discharge/Variation of Order	1
Discharge/Variation of SO/CO	Discharge/Variation of Order	45	Discharge/Variation of Order	45
	No Order	3	No Order	1
	Order to Remain	27	Order to Remain	25
			Withdrawn	22
Discharge of Freeing	Discharge/Variation of Order	1	Discharge/Variation of Order	1
Emergency Protection	Order Lapsed	2	Order Lapsed	2
Freeing (Consolidated)	Care Order	6	Care Order	6
	Freeing Order	2	Freeing Order	2
	Freeing and Care Order	26	Freeing and Care Order	25
			No Order	1
			Withdrawn	1

Initial Application Applied For	Guardian Recommendation	Number of Guardian Recommendations	Court Order Granted	Number of Court Orders Granted
Freeing A.18 (without Consent)	Freeing Order	51	Freeing Order	50
	Freeing and Care Order	4	Freeing and Care Order	4
	No Order	2	No Order	3
			Withdrawn	9
Investigation into Child Circ. A.56	Care Order	3	Care Order	3
			Contact Order	3
			Family Assistance Order	4
	No Order	23	No Order	16
	Residence Order	8	Residence Order	19
	Supervision Order	4	Supervision Order	3
		Withdrawn	4	
Live Abroad	No Order	1	No Order	1
Multiple Proceedings	Care Order	12	Care Order	12
	No Order	1	No Order	1
	Removal from Jurisdiction	1	Removal from Jurisdiction	1
	Supervision Order	4	Supervision Order	3
			Withdrawn	2
Parental Order (HEF Act)	Parental (HEF Act)	3	Parental (HEF Act)	3
Removal from Jurisdiction	Removal from Jurisdiction	1	Removal from Jurisdiction	1
Residence Order	Residence Order	9	Residence Order	9
	Discharge/Variation of Order	1	Discharge/Variation of Order	1
			Withdrawn	1

Initial Application Applied For	Guardian Recommendation	Number of Guardian Recommendations	Court Order Granted	Number of Court Orders Granted
Secure Accommodation	Discharge/Variation of Order	2	Discharge/Variation of Order	2
			No Order	1
	Order Lapsed	11	Order Lapsed	11
	Secure Accommodation Order	11	Secure Accommodation Order	10
			Withdrawn	10
Supervision Application	Care Order	1	Care Order	1
	Supervision Order	11	Supervision Order	11
			Withdrawn	3
Termination/Variation of Contact	Termination of Contact Order	3	Termination of Contact Order	3
Total		1087		1087

Table 7 indicates the number of Court Orders granted and Guardian ad Litem recommendations on each child in Adoption and Specified Public Law cases. It does not chart the changes influenced by the Guardian during the progress of the case before the Court either generally in terms of service to the child or specifically within the context of the Care Plan.

Across Adoption cases and Care proceedings there was a very high correlation between the Guardian's recommendations and the final Order made. In Adoption cases the main application was Adoption Placement in which there was a 100% correlation between the Guardian's recommendation and the final Order made. There were 123 Adoption Placement Orders and 22 Adoption Step Parents. Within Care proceedings the main application was for a Care Order, Guardians recommended a Care Order in 364 cases and the Court granted 347. With regard to Article 56 Orders, Guardians recommended No Order in 23 cases and Courts granted 16 in final outcomes.

There is agreement where Guardians recommended the Contact application being dismissed in 10 cases and the Court granted 10 dismissals. However Guardians recommended a Contact Order in 29 cases and the Court granted 34 Orders. Guardians recommended the Contact application being withdrawn in 8 cases and the Court granted withdrawals in 13 cases. There was a high correlation between the Guardian's recommendation that the Order should remain and the final Order made in Discharge/Variation of Care cases, where the Guardians recommended the Order to remain in 27 cases and the Court granted 25.

In 45 cases Guardians recommended Discharge/Variation of Order and the Court granted 45. There was a 100% correlation between the Guardian's recommendation and the final outcome of the Court in both Supervision Order cases (11 cases) and in Multiple proceedings (12 cases) where the Orders were recommended and granted.

Table 8: Age and Gender of Children by Case Type Requested between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017



Table 8: Age and Gender of Children by Case Type Requested between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017

Case Type	Age (years)		Less than 1		1 – 4		5 – 9		10 – 15		16 – 17		Other		Totals
	Gender		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
Adoption Placement			3	2	38	32	12	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	98
Inter Country Adoption			0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Appeal			1	0	7	3	5	4	6	2	0	1	0	0	29
Adoption Step Parents			0	0	0	0	5	5	1	5	0	1	0	0	17
Child Assessment			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Care Application A.50			84	56	92	96	89	93	99	98	7	3	0	1	718
Contact Application			1	0	12	7	18	14	8	9	0	0	0	0	69
Discharge/Variation of SO/CO			0	1	12	11	20	18	19	13	1	5	0	0	100
Discharge of Freeing			0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Emergency Protection A.63			0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Freeing Consolidated			0	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Freeing A.18 (without Consent)			5	1	22	15	5	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	57
Investigation into Child Circ. A.56			1	0	7	7	9	19	10	15	2	0	0	0	70
Multiple Proceedings			1	0	1	2	2	2	6	5	1	0	0	0	20
No Contact			0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Parental Order (HEF Act)			1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Adoption Relative			0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Removal from Jurisdiction			0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Residence Order (Child in Care)			0	0	2	2	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
Discharge of Contact			0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Secure Accommodation			0	0	0	0	0	0	9	11	3	9	0	0	32
Supervision Application			0	3	1	3	6	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	22
Termination/Variation of Contact			0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total			97	66	196	184	176	183	165	162	14	19	0	1	1263
Total Per Age Group			163		380		359		327		33		1		

Table 8 breaks down statistics with regard to all proceedings by way of age and gender. In 2012/13 NIGALA saw a reversal from the trend of the previous four years when there were more females than males who were subject to proceedings. This reversal to the more traditional position where slightly more males than females have been subject to proceedings continued in 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17. These figures also continue a trend identified in the previous two years where children aged between one and five represented the majority (380), followed by five to nine year olds (355). Ten to fifteen year olds are also in the majority (322) in 2016/17. The number in the one to four age category has increased by 5% from the previous year and there has been a large increase (44%) in children aged between five and nine in 2016/17 from 246 to 355 children. What is notable is the 53% increase in the numbers of ten to fifteen years olds 2016/17 from 210 to 322.