

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER 2018**

**Question**

Will the Minister advise Members how many children have been sent to homes or institutions in the United Kingdom by Social Services in each of the last five years and state whether the Royal Court gave its consent to these placements prior to them travelling to the U.K. and whether parental or guardian consent was also obtained beforehand?

**Answer**

The numbers of children placed in 'homes or institutions' in the UK in each of the last four years are shown in the table below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
2014	3
2015	0
2016	3
2017	3
2018 (to date)	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>

There is a current total of 20 children placed in the UK with six children placed in residential homes and the remainder in long term fostering arrangements either with relatives/friends or other carers. There are no children in short term foster placements off island.

When a care order is in place Article 26 of the Children (Jersey) Law (the Law), provides that no person may remove the child from the Island without either the written consent of every person with parental responsibility, or with leave of the Court. The exception to this is that the Law provides for the Minister to remove the child for a period of less than one month without obtaining consent. This is intended for example to facilitate holidays.

When a child is to be placed outside the Island for more than one month the Schedule 2, paragraph 4 of Law enables the Minister to make arrangements for a child who is the subject of a care order to live outside Jersey with the approval of the Court. Before granting approval the Law requires the Court to be satisfied amongst other things that both the child and any person with parental responsibility has consented. In relation to the child, the Court can dispense with the child's consent if it is satisfied that the child does not have sufficient understanding to give consent. In relation to a person with parental responsibility the Court can dispense with their consent if the court is satisfied that the person is incapable of consenting or is withholding consent unreasonably. The Law does not require the consent of the Guardian to be obtained, the Court does however take into account the views of the Guardian.

All of the above cases, with one exception, had court approval prior to placement and parental consent was either provided or the Court dispensed with parental consent.