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Children's
Services

SWCU Annual Report England

January 2024-December 2024
Data Highlights

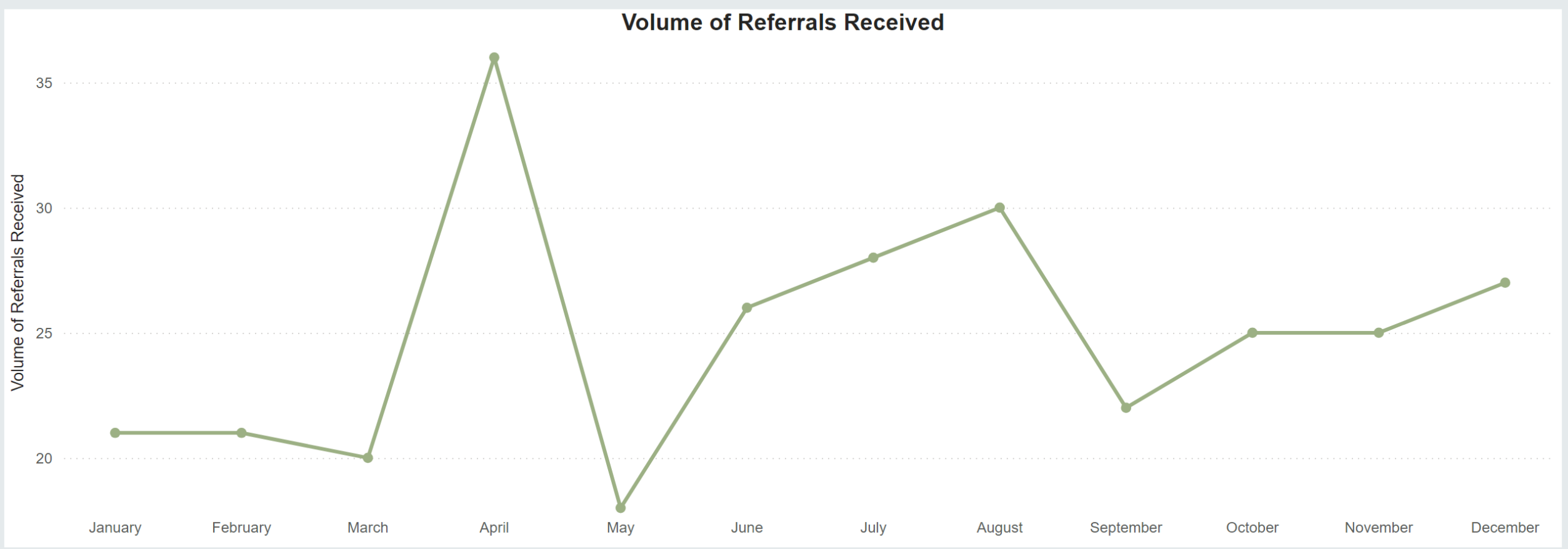


Hampshire
County Council

Secure Welfare Coordination Unit

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Referrals Received

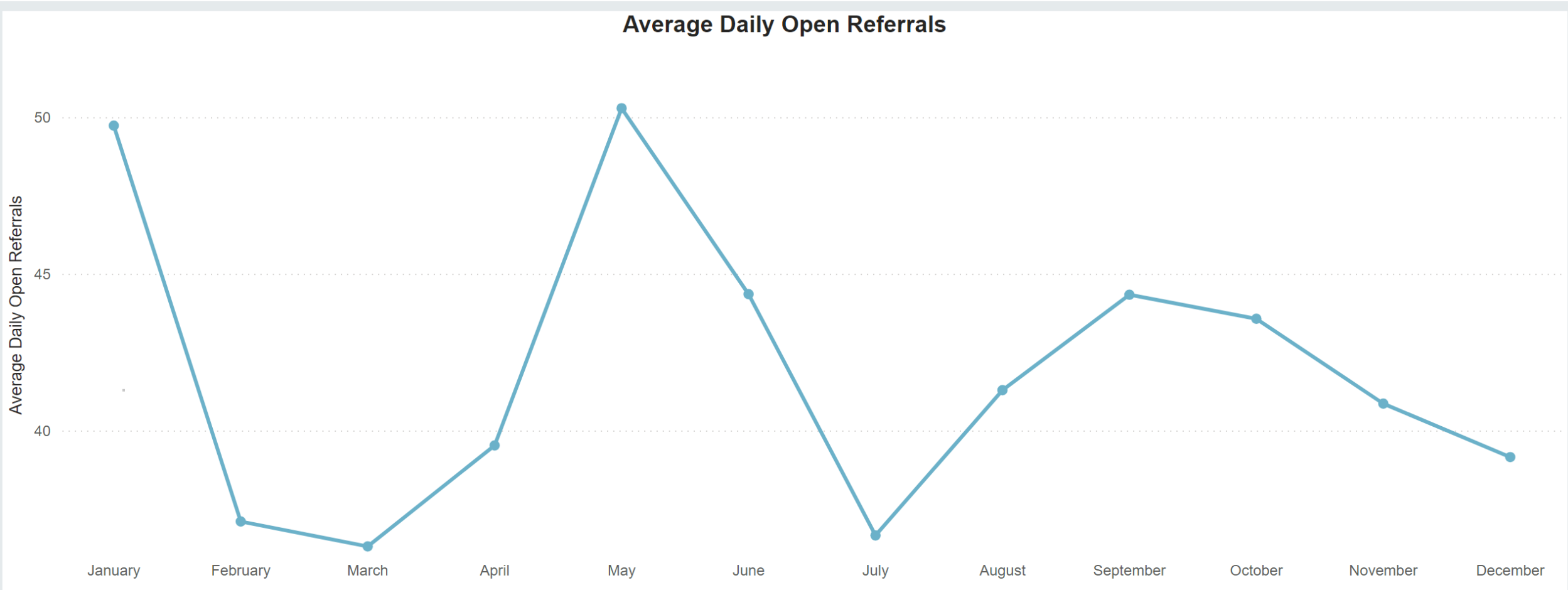


The volume of referrals received from English local authorities fluctuated significantly throughout the year.

There was a decrease in the volume of referrals received during 2024 in comparison to previous years, with the unit receiving 401 during 2022, 366 during 2023, and 299 during 2024.

The unit identified several months during the year where the number of referrals received rose or fell. The trends differed from those identified during the previous year, with a low number of referrals received in May, which had been a higher referring month during 2023. July and December were the lowest referring months in 2023. Data suggests that the pattern of referrals received across the year differs from the trends identified across previous years. A peak in the number of referrals received has frequently been identified between January to March, June to July and again between October to November. Whereas January-March 2024 were low referring months, April 2024 was the highest referring month, and December 2024 saw an increase of referrals rather than a decrease like previous years.

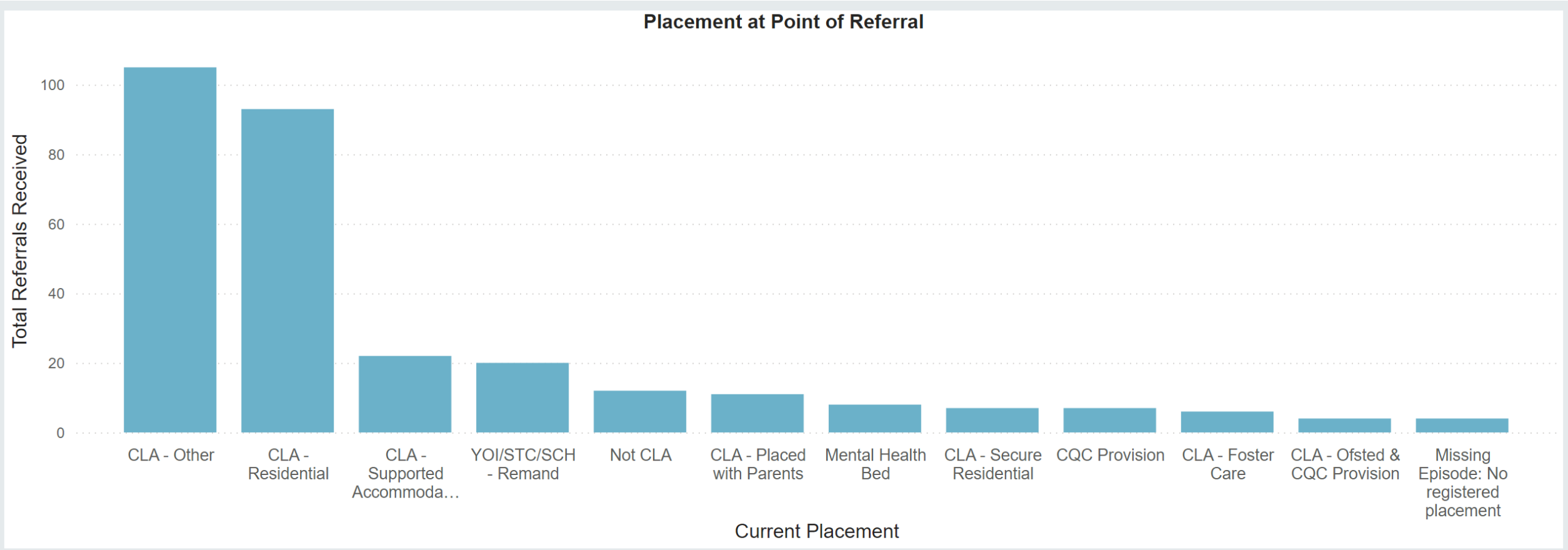
Open Referrals



The volume of open referrals highlights 36 open referrals in March being the lowest for the year, and the highest peaking at 50 during May. This is a decrease from figures identified during 2023 when 44 open referrals was the lowest identified and 77 open referrals was the highest identified.

On average during 2024 there were 42 referrals open daily; this is a decrease from 58 during 2023.

Placement at Point of Referral

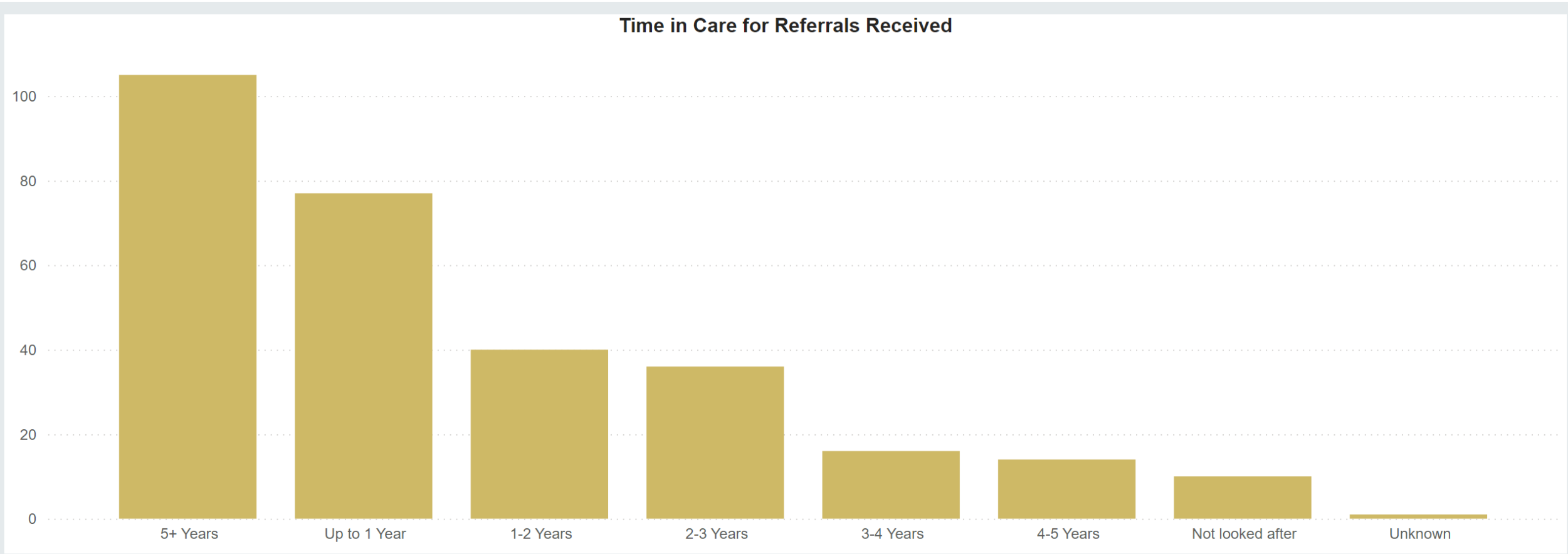


During 2024, the data identified 'CLA - Other' placements as the highest recorded placement at the point of referral. This is consistent with the data recorded during 2023, and in 2022 when the unit identified a change from 'CLA - residential' placements no longer being the most frequently recorded placement at point of referral.

'CLA - Other' placements consisted of 'Young person is receiving care and accommodation in a setting/provider not registered with Ofsted and/or CQC. This includes situations where the child is placed in temporary/short term arrangements such as Airbnb, holiday lets or motorhomes', 'Young person is receiving care and accommodation in a setting/provider registered with Ofsted to provide supported accommodation or independent fostering but is receiving an additional care package to what it is registered for' and 'Young person has a placement in a children's home registered with Ofsted, but they are currently living elsewhere and are not expected to return to that children's home. E.g. 28-day crisis placement'.

As was also the case in 2023, a high volume of young people were placed in 'CLA -residential' placements at the point of referral.

Time in Care for Referrals Received



The data highlights that the majority of young people referred for a secure placement had been in care for over five years, this follows the trend identified across previous years.

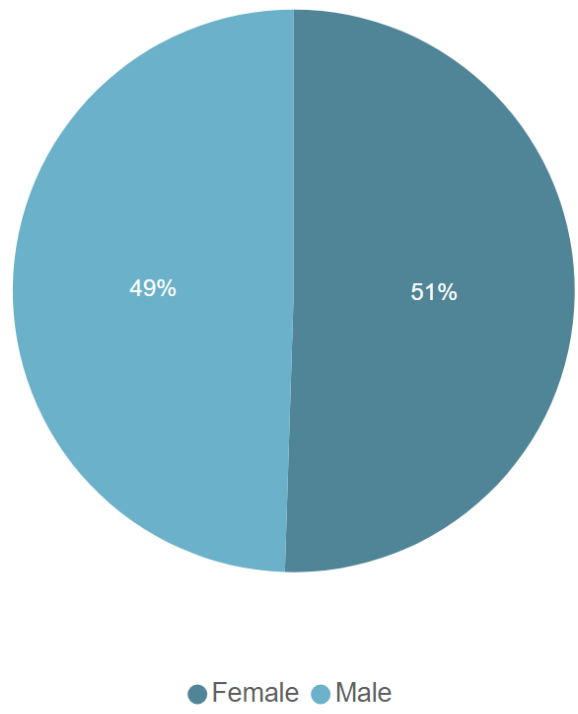
The data continues to identify a low number of young people referred that were 'Not looked after' at 3.3%, similar to 3.2% in 2023.

The data identified some young people as having up to 40 placement moves at point of a secure welfare referral being submitted.

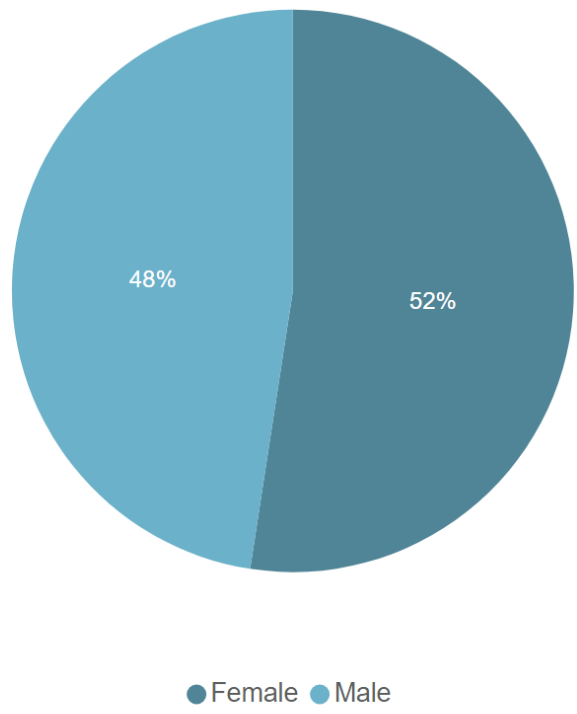
One referral received in 2024 was recorded as 'unknown' as they had been adopted and therefore their placement history prior to adoption was unavailable.

Placements Offered by Gender

Gender of Referrals Received



Gender of Young People Offered Placements

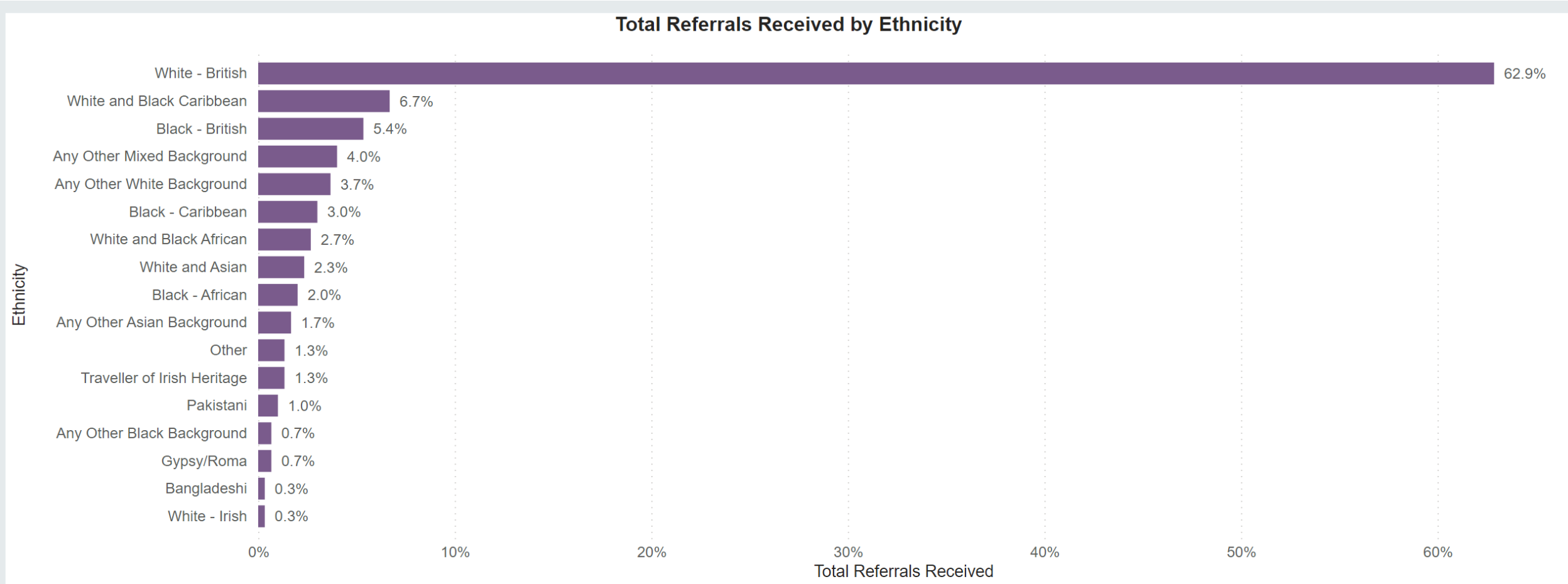


During 2024, the overall volume of female referrals received was higher than male referrals. The volume of female referrals has decreased slightly from 55% during 2023 to 51% during 2024.

There has been a return to identified trends prior to 2023, where throughout the year in 2024 the volume of female referrals has fluctuated month on month with the number of male and female referrals varying. In 2023, the volume of female referrals was consistently higher than those for males.

The gender of the placements offered correlates with the referrals received. Not all offered placements resulted in a young person residing in a secure children's home, predominantly due to no longer meeting threshold or finding an alternative provision to meet needs.

Ethnicity of Young People Referred



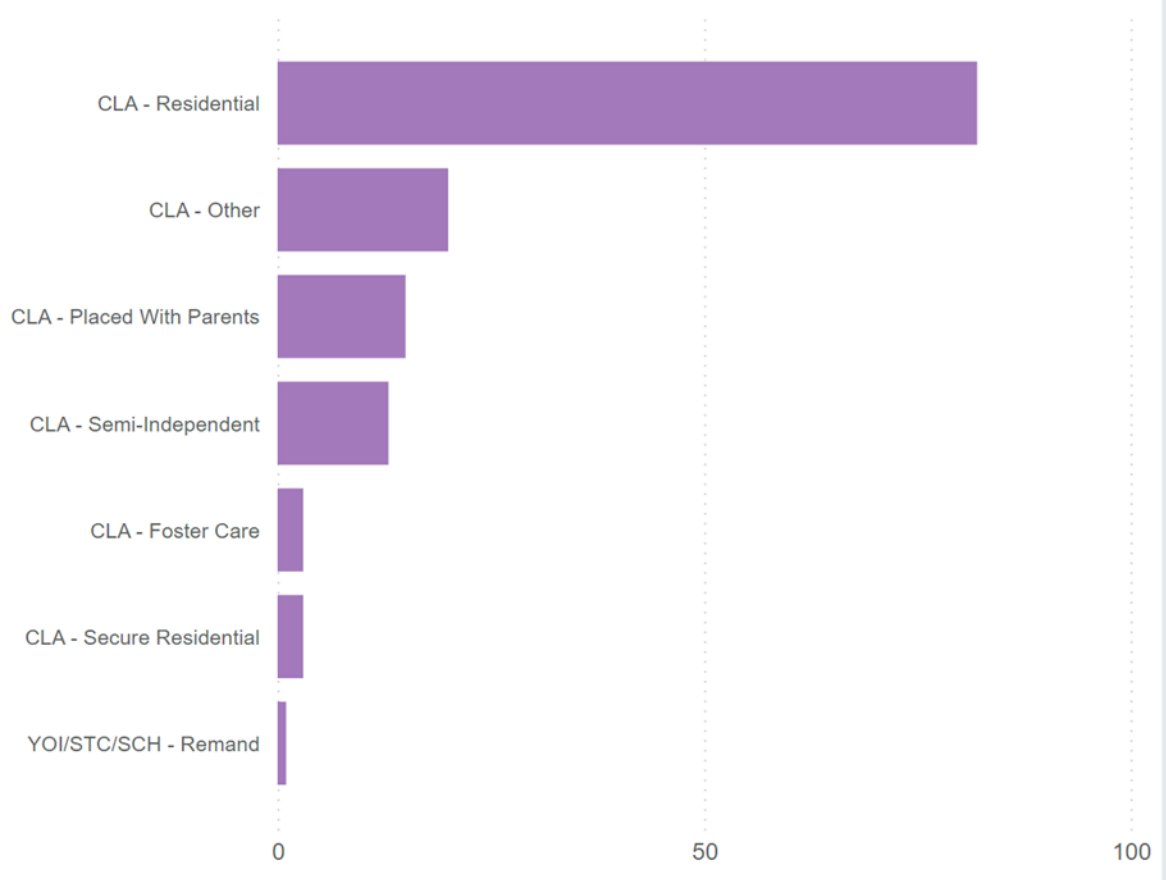
Throughout the year the majority of referrals received were for 'White British' young people, identified as 62.9% of the referrals; this is consistent with 2023.

The second most frequently recorded ethnicity was 'White and Black Caribbean'; this is consistent with 2023.

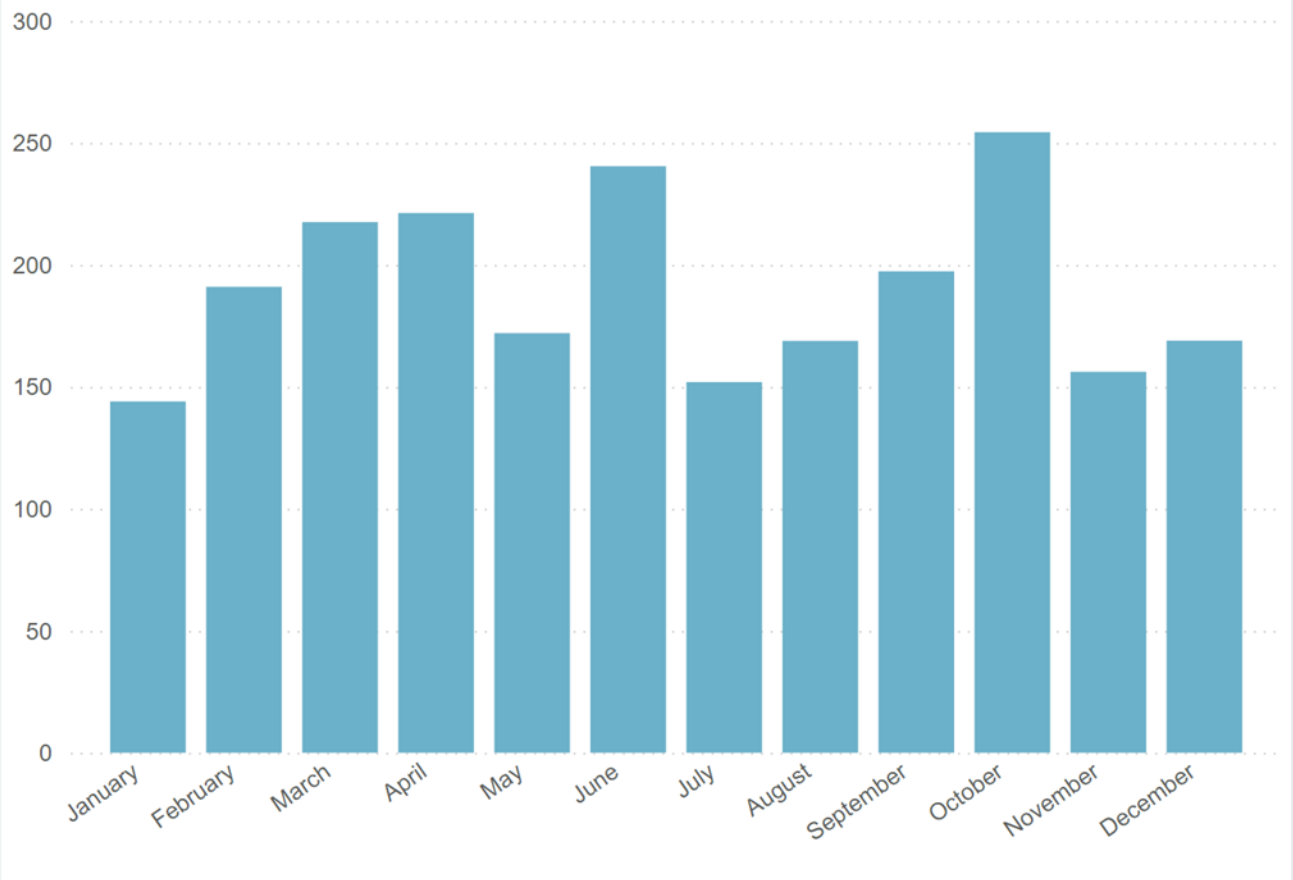
Of the 'White British' young people referred 43% were male and 57% female. Of the further ethnicity referrals received 40% were female and 60% male.

Discharges from Secure Welfare

Discharge Placements



Average Length of Secure Welfare Placement (Days)



During 2024, the majority of English young people discharged from a secure children's home were placed within a residential children's home setting. Data collected by the SWCU since 2017 has identified that young people are most commonly discharged from a secure placement to a residential children's home. The second highest discharge placement was 'Other', examples of these were unregistered placements, hospital and family members.

The number of young people discharged from secure placements has remained consistent with 2023. The average length of a secure welfare placement was 187 days, which is slightly higher than the average for the preceding year which was 186.4 days.