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ADCS Comment – Pressures on children's social care continue to rise, DfE figures show today.

Commenting on the release today of statistics on children referred to children's social care, Matt Dunkley, the President of ADCS said:

“These figures show the ever increasing pressure being faced by children's social care services in local authorities. Looking at the rise in care proceedings and the number of those proceedings resulting in children coming into care suggests that these children are in very real need of protection, and that the increase reflects previously unmet need, rather than a change in the thresholds for accepting a child onto the children's social care caseload. Teams doing this very challenging and difficult work are seeing increased demand for their services year on year and, with a duty to protect every child in need of protection, local authorities are committed to providing as much resource as possible to support this work. We know that many local authorities have decided, rightly, to protect child protection services in recent budget cuts, but that leaves some challenging choices elsewhere, particularly in investment in preventative and early intervention services that might help to reduce the numbers needing child protection services over time.

“Child protection and services for looked after children are looking for ways to do more with less, but in these straightened financial circumstances these efforts are simply allowing local authorities to maintain current levels and volume of services - coupled with rising demand, the available resources may well not go far enough.”

Notes to Editors:

- 1) The statistics on referrals, assessments and children subject to a child protection plan can be found here:
<http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/datasets/a00195066/dfe-referrals-assessments-and-children-who-were-th>

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