



Independent Advocacy for Children
and Young People in County Durham, and
Aycliffe Secure Centre

NYAS offers a variety of services including:

- A national advocacy helpline.
- Advocacy for children in care and those in need – including children subject to child protection plans, care leavers, children and young people with disabilities.
- The provision of independent visitors for children in care.
- Legal representation of children in private family law.
- Advocacy to adults in inpatient mental health settings.
- Regulation 44 services to children's homes.
- Legal representation for children in private family law.

What is advocacy?

- enabling the young person to self-advocate wherever possible.
- empowering children and young people
- ensuring their rights are respected and their views and wishes are heard.
- representing the views, wishes and needs of children and young people to decision-makers, helping them to navigate their own care planning.

Advocacy services provide independent and confidential:

- Information
- Signposting
- Advocacy
- Representation
- Support
- Legal services



Core Principles

Advocacy services should be:

- **Independent**
- **Child-led**
- **Confidential**
- **Accessible**



Who receives support from an advocate?

- All Looked After children and young people
- Children and young people in foster care or residential children's homes
- Children and young people at home subject to care orders
- Children and young people in 'out of county' placements
- Children and young people who access short break care
- Care Leavers eligible under the Leaving Care Act
- Children and young people who wish to make a complaint, whether or not they are a Looked After Child
- All Children in Need
- Children who wish for support with transitions, or to appeal their Education, Health and Social Care Plan at Tribunal
- Children and young people subject to Initial or Review Child Protection Conferences

Advocacy and 'Best Interests'

- The advocate acts only upon the young person's express permission and instructions, even when these may not meet the advocate's view of the child or young person's best interests.
- Where there is conflict between the child or young person's wishes and those of others, advocates give precedence to those of the child.
- Advocates provide children and young people with all relevant information and support them in interpreting and understanding that information so that they can make well-informed decisions.

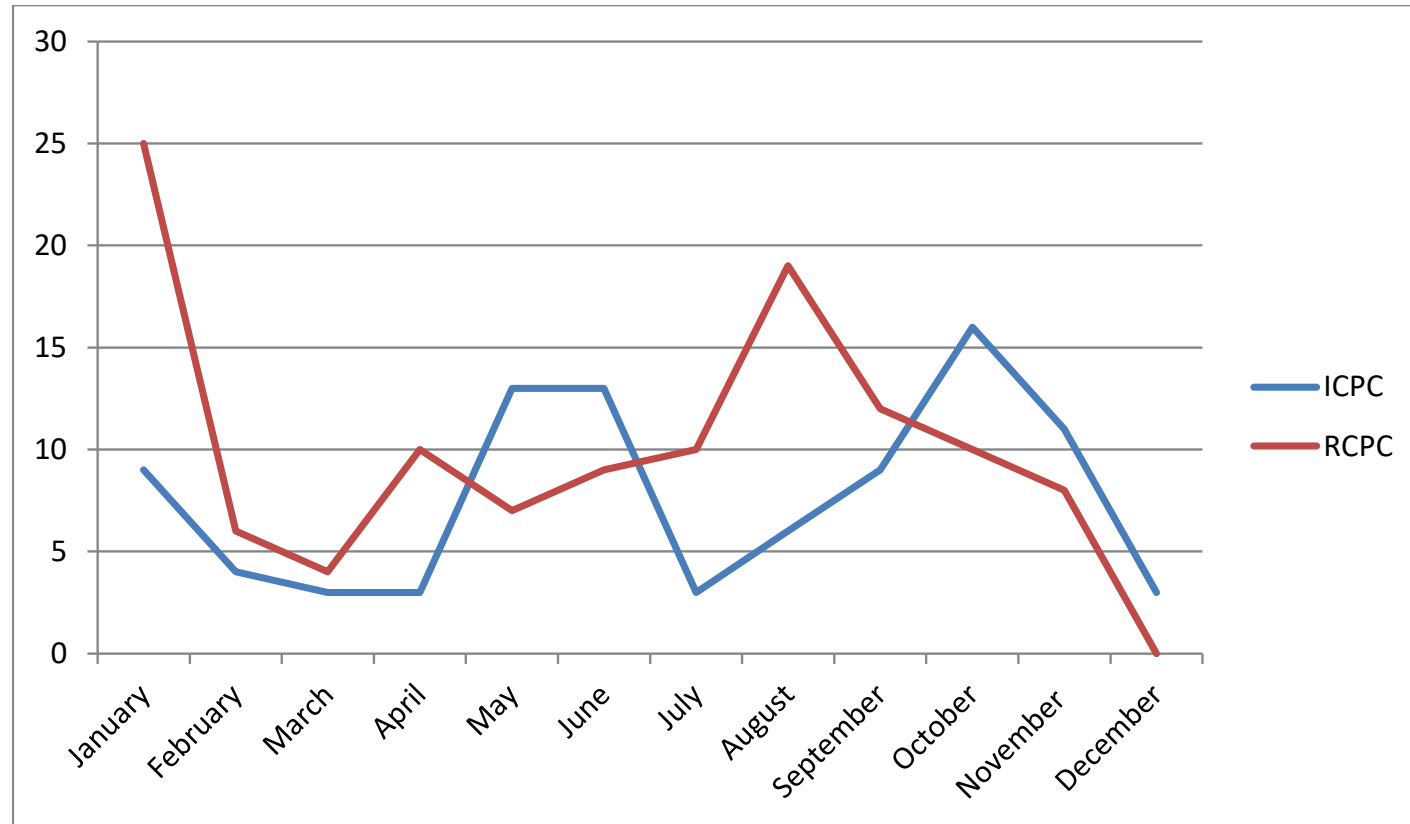
A statutory right...

The Children Act 2004 required “a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services”.

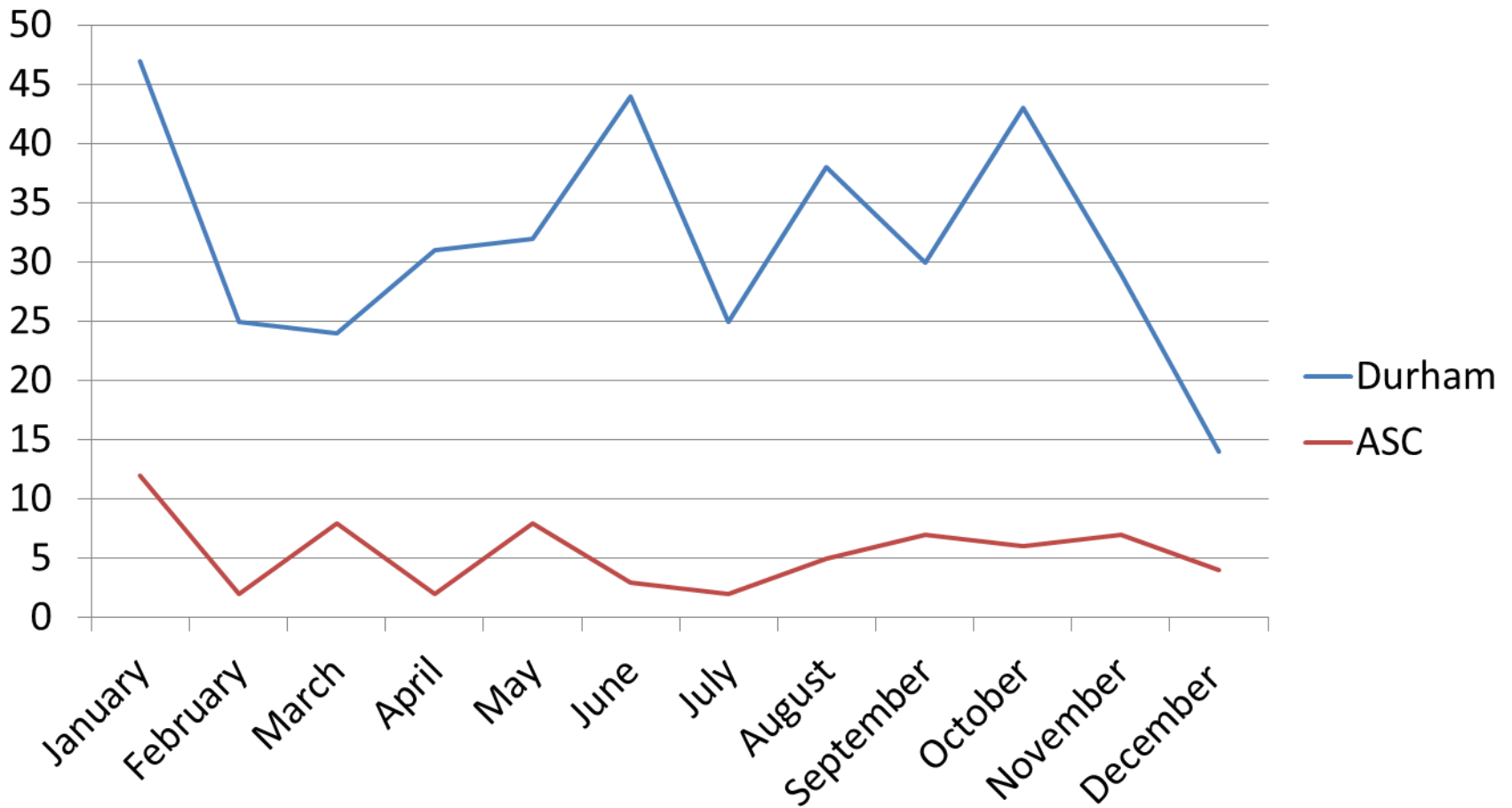
This was revisited in Working Together 2018.

Child Protection Conferences

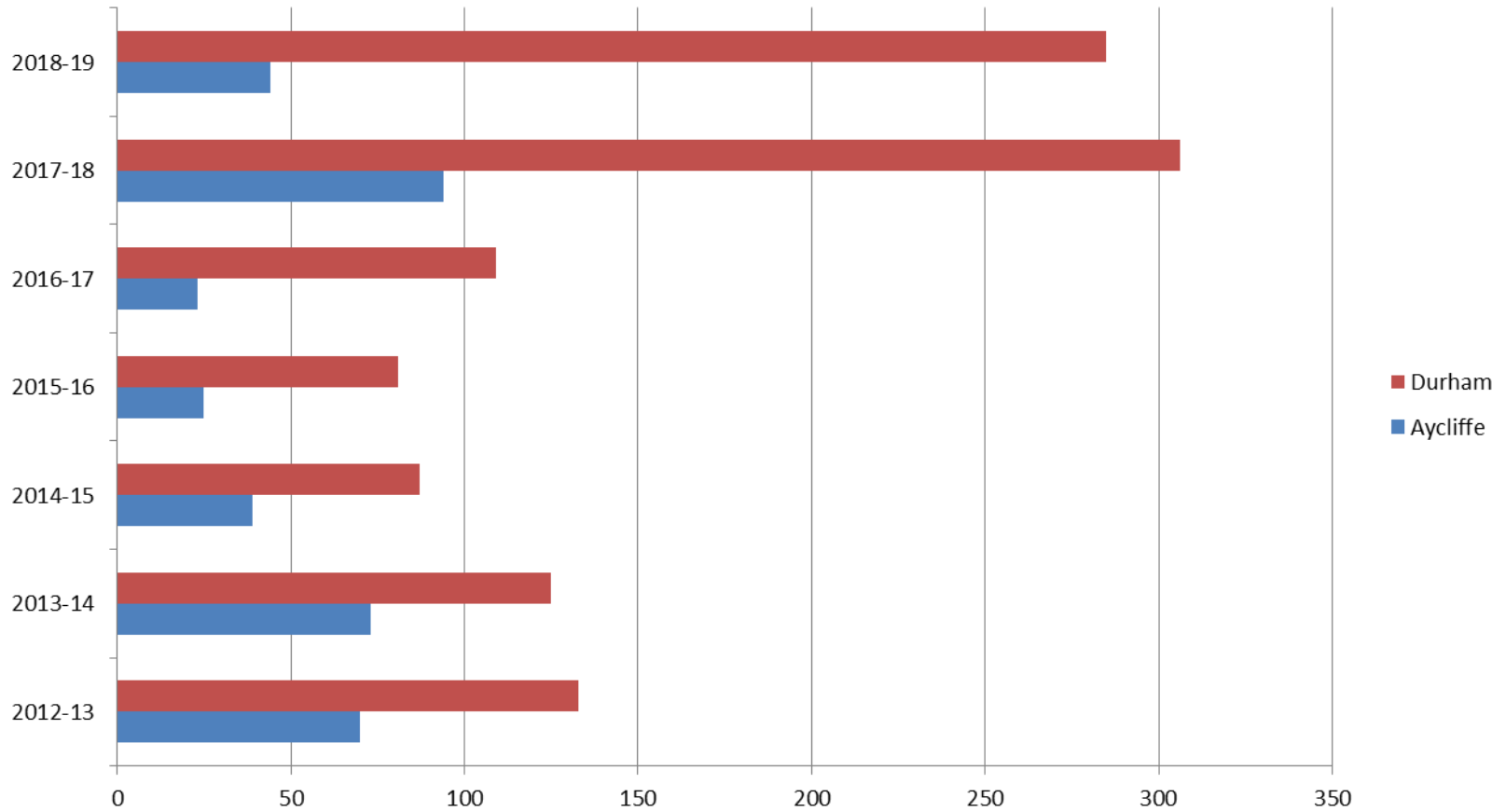
ICPC and RCPC referrals during 2018



Advocacy referrals received in 2018



Case load from 2012



Referring young people for advocacy

Contact Steve Percival to discuss a referral: 07899 790 689

Call: 0808 808 1001

Email: help@nyas.net

Referrals: <https://www.nyas.net/referral-form/>

