

Quarterly update on VAA data in England as provided to the ASG – data to Q1 2025/26

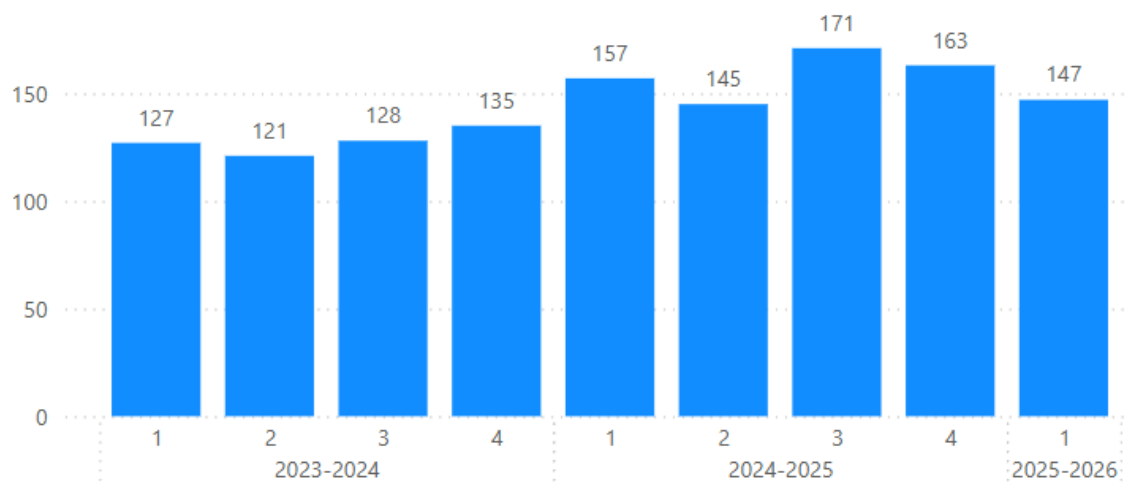
Headline messages

- The trends within the assessment and approval stages remain encouraging with numbers of prospective adopters keeping pace with last year.
- However the trends within the post approval stages are concerning with below average numbers for matches, placements and adoption orders.

Assessment and approvals

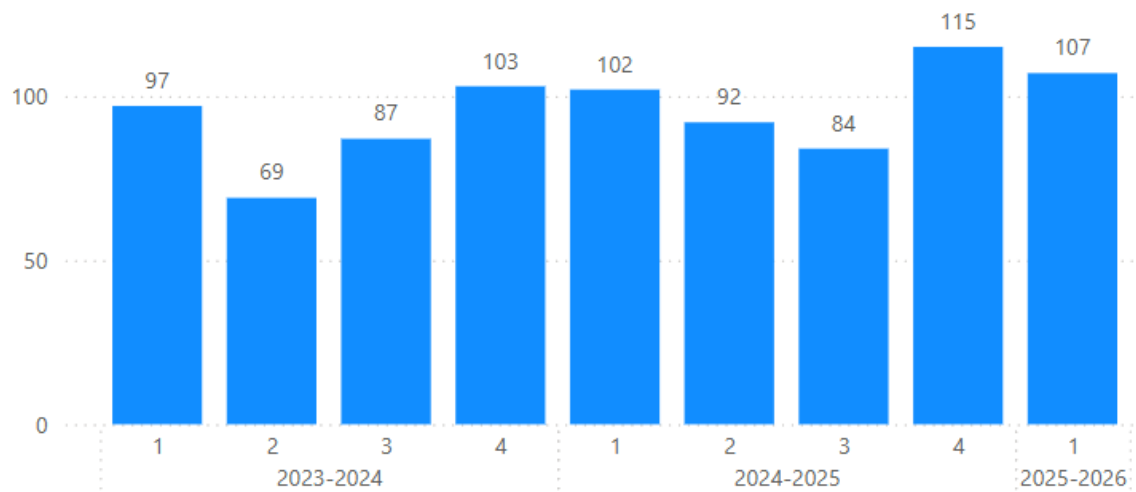
The latest VAA data to Q1 2025/26 shows that 147 adopter households have started the adoption process this financial year; an encouraging number maintaining the higher numbers seen in 2024/25.

Number of prospective adopter households starting stage 1



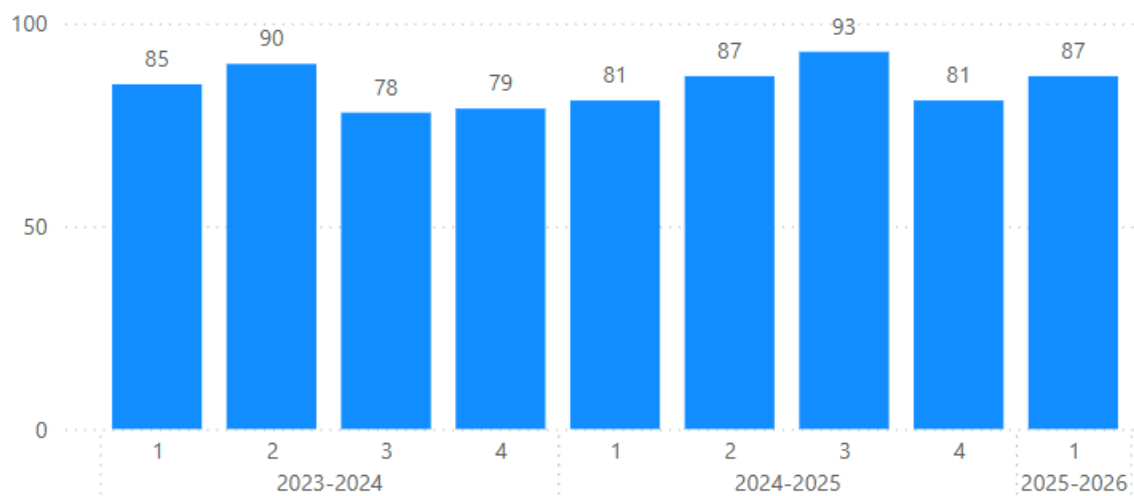
Just over 100 adopters started Stage 2 in Q1, slightly ahead of the figures for the same quarter over the last two years.

Number of prospective adopter households starting Stage 2



The number of approvals has remained fairly steady over the last two years averaging 82 approvals per quarter. For Q1, the number of approvals is slightly above average and VAA approvals are not seeing the slight downwards shift that is noted in the latest ASG national figures.

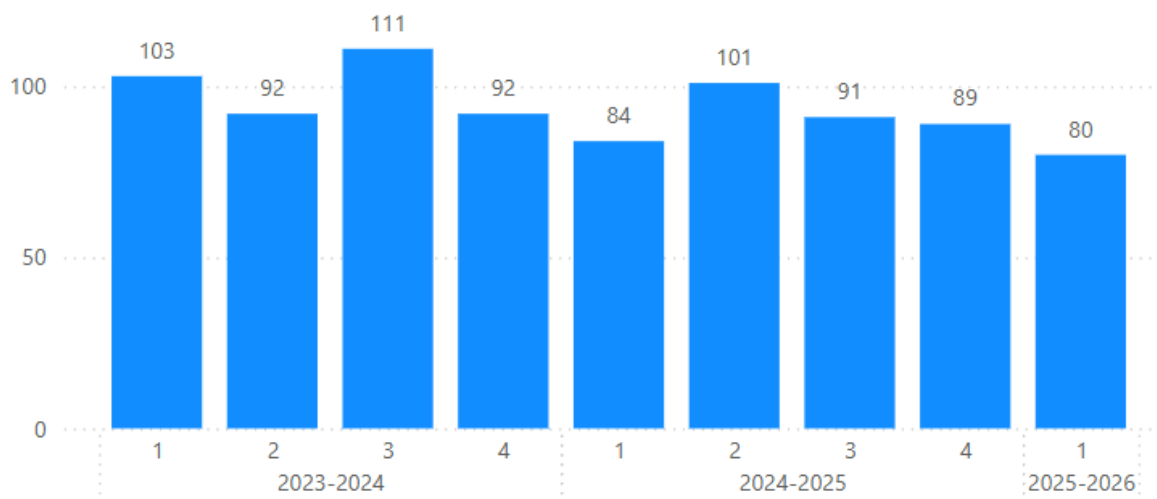
Approvals by year



Post approval stages

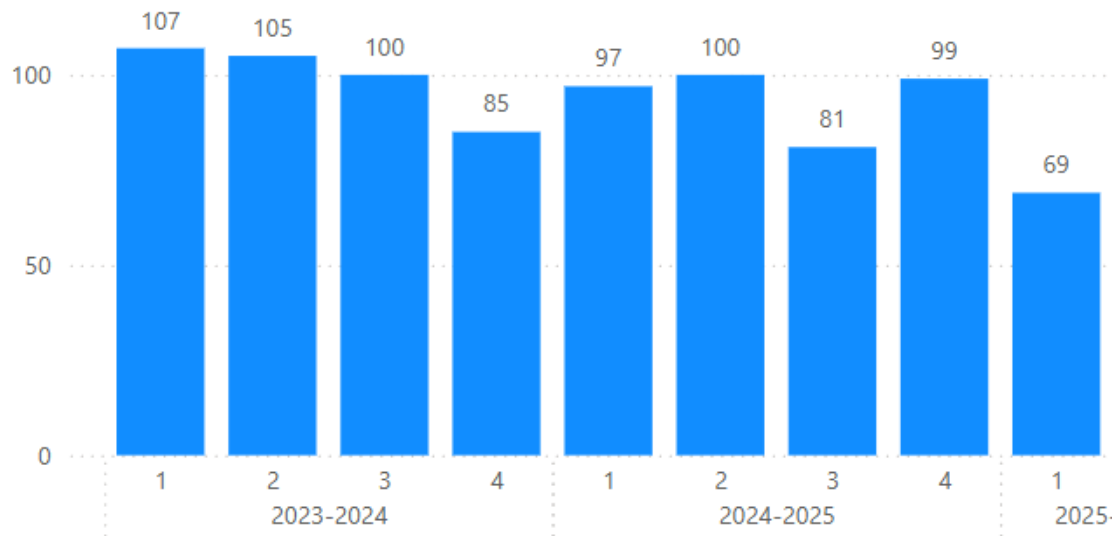
The quarterly number of households being matched is on a downward trend; since a high of 101 households in Q2 2024/25 the number has been falling, now standing at a low of 80 households. This decline is similarly reflected in the latest ASG report.

Number of households matched with children



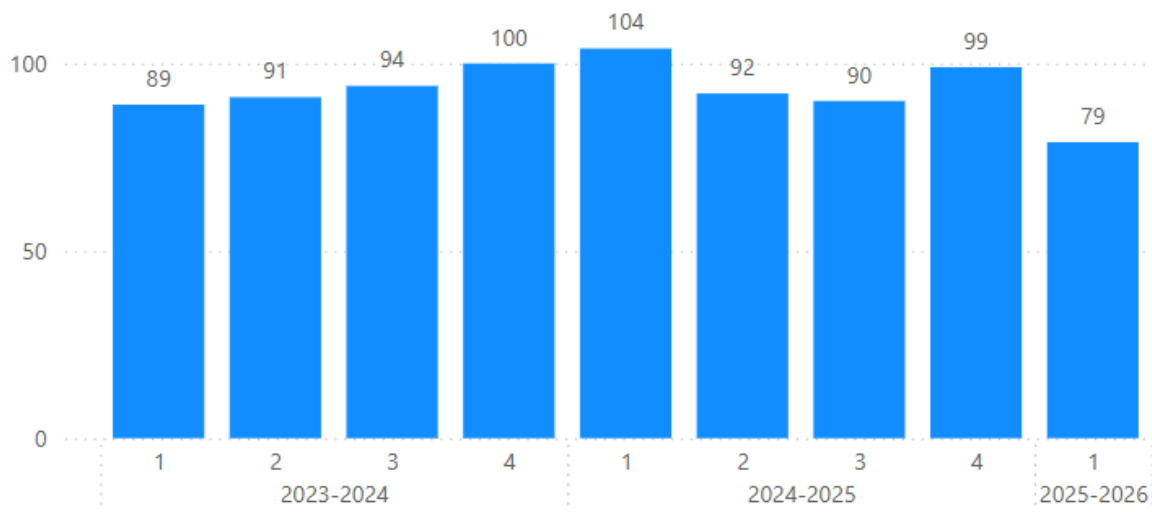
The number of households having children placed with them decreased to 377 in 2024/25 from 397 in 2023/24 (-5.0%), similar to the ASG national figures. However, the number has dropped in Q1 2025/26 to just 69 households, a more significant drop than the ASG report is showing.

Number of households with children placed



The total number of adoption orders for VAA families stands at 385 for 2024/25, slightly higher than the 374 adoptions in 2023/24. Likewise, the ASG data shows an increase in Adoption Orders granted by 3% over the same time period. The number for Q1 has fallen to the lowest point seen (also reflected in the ASG data) and we will continue to monitor this when Q2 figures are available.

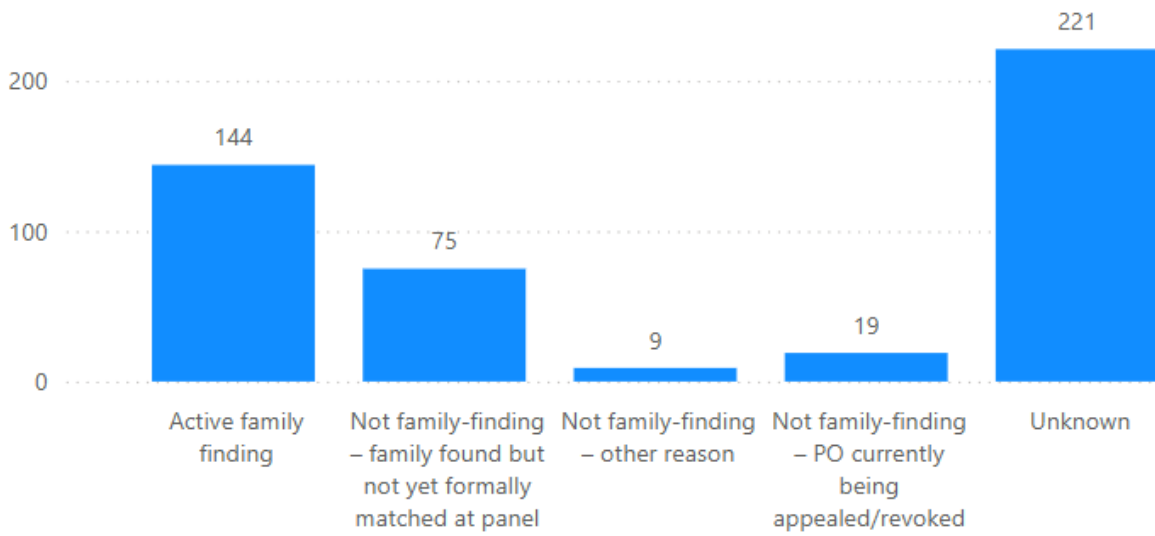
Number of households granted AOs



As of Q1 2025/26:

- 144 households were actively family finding
- 75 had found a family but were not yet formally matched
- 9 were expected to go on hold or withdraw
- 221 have an unknown status; this is high due to the family finding status not being introduced into the data collection until 2023/24

Family finding status for approved households waiting to be matched



The data shown in this document is based on 13 VAAs where we have data for each time period analysed meaning we are showing a like-for-like comparison.