Department for Education

Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016

Quality and methodology information

19 January 2016

Contents

Contact: Email: attainment.statistics@education.gov.uk   Press office: 020 7783 8300   Public enquiries: 0370 000 2288

Introduction

This quality and methodology document provides an overview of the key stage 4 attainment data used in the production of the key stage 4 statistical first releases (SFRs) and the secondary school performance tables. It provides information on the methodology used to calculate pupil attainment, as well as information on the data sources, their coverage and quality, and how the data is validated and processed.

This document is based on the Office for National Statistics' guidelines for measuring statistical quality.

Changes from the 2014-15 release

New accountability measures

In 2016 a new secondary school accountability system was implemented. It includes two new headline measures: Attainment 8 and Progress 8. Schools had the option to adopt the new performance measures a year early in 2015. A list of schools that opted in early to the Progress 8 measure can be found here. From 2016, the headline indicator of school performance determining the floor standard is Progress 8. This replaces the previous headline measure, 5+ A* to C including English and maths.

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school. It is a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils with the same prior attainment. As Progress 8 is a relative measure, the average Progress 8 score for all pupils nationally is zero, and it is therefore not published in the key stage 4 SFR.

Attainment 8 measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.

Detailed guidance on the new Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measures can be found in the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 guidance.

Further changes to the performance tables and measures include:

- publication of the percentage of pupils achieving English and maths GCSEs at grades A* to C as a headline measure

- publication of the percentage of pupils entering English Baccalaureate as a headline measure

- two new indicators published as additional information, looking at the percentage of pupils entering more than one language qualification and the percentage of pupils entering physics, chemistry and biology

- for the English requirement of the English Baccalaureate, pupils on the English language/literature pathway must take exams in both English language and English literature, and achieve a C grade or above in at least one of these qualifications

- for the threshold measure on percentage of pupils achieving English and maths, a C grade or above must be achieved in maths and **either** English literature or language. There is no requirement to enter **both** English literature and English language

- the point score scale for performance table measures in 2016 will change from the current 16 to 58 scale to a 1 to 8 point scale, where 1 is equivalent to a grade G GCSE and 8 equivalent to an A* GCSE

- the removal of disadvantage gap measures (measures of "in-school" performance gaps are removed, however the tables will still include measures on the difference between disadvantaged pupils at the school and other pupils nationally)

- changes to expected standards for schools (see Annex D for further details)

Methodology

The measures covered in the key stage 4 SFRs include qualifications which count towards the secondary performance tables. Following reforms to the performance tables in 2014, only a pupil's first attempt at a qualification is counted.

A list of qualifications that count in the performance tables each year up to 2018 can be found here. Further information on methodology used in the performance tables can be found on the performance tables guidance page. A timeline of changes in key stage 4 attainment measures can be found in Annex A.

For more information on coherence and comparability, see section 6 of this document.

Publication of provisional data at school level in the performance tables

In October 2015, we published for the first time provisional school level results for state-funded schools alongside the SFR. In 2016 we continued to publish provisional school level data; however the performance measures were amended to reflect the changes to accountability. The publication of provisional data in advance of the 31 October deadline for secondary school admission applications was to support parents who may have wished to use the information when applying for a secondary school place for their child. As in previous years, any amendments made between August and early November 2016 are reflected where appropriate evidence was provided, in the full performance tables release in January 2017. School level figures will not be published in the key stage 4 SFR.

The decision to publish the provisional results at school level, for state-funded schools only, was based on analysis of previous years' data which showed that provisional data is an accurate reflection of revised data for the vast majority of state-funded secondary schools. This is explained in more detail in section 4 of this document: reliability. Provisional results have not been released for independent schools because the level of change between provisional and revised data is higher as the current process means that independent schools are unable to check their data until September.

About the output

National and local authority (LA) information on pupil's attainment at the end of key stage 4 in 2015-16 for secondary school pupils in England is published in the following SFRs :

- Provisional GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (October 2016)

- Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (January 2017)

GCSE and equivalent results for previous years can be found on the Statistics: GCSEs (key stage 4) section of gov.uk

School level information for the end of key stage 4 is published in the secondary school [performance tables](#).

Data sources

The key stage 4 datasets are compiled using information matched together from three data sources:

   i.   prior attainment records (key stage 2 results)

   ii.   school census records

   iii. qualification entries and results collected from awarding bodies

Attainment data for all pupils at the end of key stage 4 is collected from the awarding bodies by the department's contractor.

Relevance

This section describes the degree to which the statistics meet current and potential needs of the users.

The key strength of the data is that it is derived from an administrative data collection. This means that it can supply accurate data down to small geographical areas (school level). In addition, the data is merged with other administrative data held by the department (the school census) to provide detailed information on sub-groups of the school population. Pupil level data from different key stages can also be merged together so that we can produce precise measures of pupil progress between one key stage and another.

Key users

Department for Education	Used to monitor national standards of key stage 4 attainment in secondary schools in England. The national figures are used to determine whether standards are improving or declining.
	Data for sub-groups of the population are also analysed to inform departmental policies aimed at closing gaps in attainment.
	School level figures are used to identify schools where intervention may be needed to bring standards up to an acceptable level.
Ofsted	Used as part of the background information to inform school inspections. For example, it enables inspectors to identify areas of the curriculum or groups of pupils where a school appears to be doing less well. This would then form part of the focus during the inspection.
Ofqual	Used as part of the evidence it reviews on the setting and maintenance of standards in key stage 4 examinations.
Local authorities	National data and that for other local authorities is used to set the attainment of their area into context.
	School level information is used to hold maintained schools to account.

Schools	Used to evaluate their own performance against national standards and other local schools.
	Used to identify high performing schools with similar circumstances to their own that they can work with to improve their own standards.
School governors	Used to hold schools to account, to identify strengths and weaknesses and to support school improvement.
Teachers and head teachers	Used for analysis and self-evaluation, and to aid planning of school improvement strategies.
	Used to inform decisions about whether to apply for vacancies in particular schools and also as background information when preparing for interviews.
Parents	Used to compare their own children's performance to others in their school, local authority and nationally.
	Used to hold their children's schools to account and identify areas where they feel the school needs to improve.
	Used to inform choice of a secondary school for their child.
	Performance of schools in the local area is also a key consideration for parents and prospective parents when moving house.
Others	Used by researchers from this country and abroad. Used by others to identify schools with particular levels of attainment that they may wish to market their services to.

Timeliness and punctuality

Timeliness refers to the lapse of time between the period to which the data refer and the publication of the estimates.

The timeline of the key stage 4 data cycle is as follows:

May and June

Main GCSE examinations taken

Secondary schools performance tables June checking exercise takes place – this allows state-funded schools to check the pupils we have recorded as being on their roll

August

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) collects results data from the awarding bodies

JCQ publish GCSE results in the third week in August

The department's contractor receives results from the awarding bodies (data is collected throughout the year but the majority is collected in the summer)

September

The department receives provisional data from the contractor

Secondary schools performance tables checking exercise takes place

October

Provisional SFR containing headline figures published alongside the provisional performance tables (published on 13 October in 2016 – around four weeks after the department receives the unamended data from the contractor)

Scrutiny of amendment requests following checking exercise

November and December

The department receives three sets of revised data which includes further late results and later re-marks received from awarding organisations

January

Revised SFR published alongside the secondary school performance tables. Figures are also broken down by pupil characteristics. The performance tables include full breakdowns of school level data.

Errata period commences for schools to request additional amendments to data

February

Scrutiny of amendment requests made during the errata period

March

The department receives final data from the contractor and updates the performance tables and downloadable data file. The revised SFR is not updated, however the final data will be used to update any time series in the following year's SFR

Punctuality refers to the time lag between the actual and planned dates of publication.

The proposed month of publication is announced on gov.uk at least twelve months in advance and precise dates are announced in the same place at least four weeks prior to publication. In the unlikely event of a change to the pre-announced release schedule, the change and the reasons for it would be announced.

How the output is created

Data on pupils' attainment is collected from awarding bodies via the department's contractor. This information is linked with information on pupil characteristics taken from the school census and information on pupils' prior attainment. This data is used to produce the provisional SFR and provisional performance tables.

The data is checked with schools during the performance tables checking exercise. The revised pupil attainment data is then linked again with information on pupil characteristics and prior attainment to produce the revised/final datasets and all derived variables recalculated. This data is published in the revised SFR and the performance tables. Following publication of the performance tables, there is a short errata process where schools can inform us of any additional changes that should be made to the data. Following this process, the performance tables data is finalised and the performance tables website updated. The final data is used to update the time series in the following year's SFR.

A large number of variables are derived for publication in the key stage 4 SFR and in the secondary school performance tables. Annex B contains a summary of the key variables used in the publications.

Data added from other sources

Pupil characteristics

Information on pupil characteristics is taken from the school census. More detail can be found in the Pupil characteristics definitions and historical changes section this document.

School characteristics

Information on school characteristics is taken from Edubase. Annex C contains further information on the school characteristics used in the publication.

Accuracy

Accuracy describes the closeness between an estimated result and the (unknown) true value.

Data coverage

The target population for the key stage 4 data collection is all pupils who are at the end of key stage 4, typically those pupils starting the academic year aged 15.

We produce a provisional SFR in October based on the provisional data covering headline national and local authority information, alongside the provisional performance tables. Amendments made during the June checking exercise (for state-funded schools only) are reflected in the provisional SFR and provisional performance tables. The provisional SFR does not contain any characteristics breakdowns (other than gender) as these are more subject to change, particularly at local authority level.

This SFR has now been updated with revised 2015 data alongside publication of the full breakdown of school level information in the performance tables. During the September checking exercise schools are required to check the data and notify the department of any pupils that are included in their school in error, or of any missing pupils. Schools can also notify us of any other errors in the data such as errors in matching prior attainment results. Any changes requested are validated to ensure that they comply with the rules before being accepted. They are also able to apply for pupils to be removed from their figures, if they have recently arrived from overseas and their first language is not English. We allow the removal of these pupils from the school and local authority figures as they can have an impact on some schools' figures (since some schools have significant numbers of such pupils). However, we continue to include these pupils in the national figures so that they reflect the attainment of all pupils. Schools can also apply for pupils to be removed if a pupil has been admitted following a permanent exclusion from another school, if the pupil is not at the end of key stage 4, if the pupil has permanently left England or the pupil is deceased. Schools cannot be accountable for these pupils and therefore we allow the removal of them so they are not included in their performance measures.

Schools cannot remove pupils in certain circumstances, for example: pupil has been excluded from school after the January school census; the pupil left to go to another school in England; or the pupil is a persistent non-attender.

Following the checking exercise, the revised data is produced. This includes changes requested by schools during the checking exercise, changes resulting from any successful marking reviews and any late results. The data is published in the revised key stage 4 SFR and in the secondary school performance tables.

Characteristic breakdowns such as ethnicity, special educational needs and first language is published alongside the revised national and local authority figures in this SFR.

There are a small number of further changes to the data following publication of the performance tables. These changes are validated in the same way as those which are received during the checking exercise. The performance tables (national, local authority and school level figures) are updated with these changes but the SFR is not updated because the extent of the changes does not usually affect the national or local authority figures. However, the final data will be used to update any time series in the following year's statistical first release.

Measurement error

Measurement error is the difference between the actual value of a quantity and the value obtained by a measurement. Repeating the measurement will reduce the random error caused by the accuracy of the measuring instrument but not any systemic error caused by incorrect calibration of the measuring instrument.

This section describes the administration and marking of key stage 4 examinations, the re-marking process and the regulation of qualifications, all of which can affect the accuracy of key stage 4 attainment measures.

Clear guidance is provided to schools regarding the administration of the GCSE papers, including instructions for keeping the exam materials secure prior to the exams and storage of completed papers until they are collected for marking.

The exam papers are externally marked by the awarding bodies to ensure that marking is consistent between schools.

After marking, results are returned to schools. If schools have concerns over the marking of an exam paper, they may request for it to be re-marked. Outcomes of appeals are not reflected in the provisional data but are included in the revised data when received in adequate time by the departments contractors to process and check the data.

Further information on the general regulations for schools and how exams are conducted/marked can be found on the JCQ website: Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website.

Ofqual sets the standards and rules that awarding bodies need to meet when they design, deliver and award regulated qualifications. They monitor awarding bodies and qualifications to make sure that standards are maintained. They are a risk-based regulator and concentrate their resources to where they are most needed. For example, they may discover that an awarding body's processes need updating or that there are risks connected to a qualification taken by thousands of students every year. Further guidance on the role of Ofqual can be found at: How Ofqual regulate.

Further checks are done during the checking exercise and these are outlined in the data coverage section above.

Validation and quality assurance of source data

Once schools have completed their key stage 4 exams they are required to send their exam materials and attendance registers to the awarding bodies for external marking and data capture.

Key stage 4 results are made available to schools on results day: in 2016 this was 25 August. This data is then passed from the awarding bodies to the department's contractor who carries out checks on the data (eg checking the validity of Qualification Numbers). Depending on the volume and nature of discrepancies, the contractor reports these back to awarding organisations for review. Once these checks are completed the data is uploaded onto the contractor's main database and further checks are carried out.

After the contractor has finished processing the data, it is then passed onto the department for use in the SFRs and performance tables.

Data Processing

Key stage 4 data received from awarding bodies are combined with pupil characteristics from the school census and prior attainment by the department's contractor. Records are matched, using identifiers such as surname, forename, date of birth, UPN, gender and postcode. This successfully matches around 98 per cent of results.

At every stage in the data cycle, the department checks all calculations used in the production of the figures. The department carries out checks on the data to ensure that the files produced by the contractor comply with the specified format and contain the correct information. All indicators at school level, local authority level and national level are re-derived to ensure the contractor's systems are programmed correctly.

The entire process is subject to a 'dry run' during the summer. This involves producing a dummy dataset, from the previous year's dataset, which conforms to how the current year's data will be supplied (eg if new qualifications have been introduced, then dummy data would be added to last year's data to simulate these). This dummy dataset is used to test the contractor's systems and the department's checking processes. This allows potential problems to be resolved prior to the receipt of the live data.

Statistical first release production

All data in the SFR tables are produced by one person and quality assured by another. Any discrepancies in the data produced are discussed and resolved prior to publication. Examples of quality assurance are provided in the box below.

Examples of further quality assurance

Comparisons with previous year's figures to identify any large unexpected changes

Comparisons with provisional data to identify any large changes (revised/final data only)

Check totals are consistent across tables

Check patterns in the data (eg expected differences between subjects, high/low performing local authorities)

Check figures against those produced for the performance tables

---

Reliability

The extent to which a figure changes over different versions of the same data.

The key stage 4 data can change between provisional and revised data as the revised data contains:

- outcomes of the appeals process where schools ask for reviews for one or more of their pupils in the belief that a clerical error has been made or the mark scheme has not been correctly applied
- late results and remarks – where results were received after the data was provided in August to the contractor by awarding organisations
- changes resulting from requests from schools to remove pupils who have recently arrived from overseas, have been admitted following a permanent exclusion for another school, if the pupil is not at the end of key stage 4, if the pupil has permanently left England, the pupil has left the school before exams or the pupil is deceased

The national figures usually change by no more than plus or minus one percentage point or one decimal point between provisional, revised and final data. Table 1 shows the change in some key figures at national level in 2014-15. Changes in the local authority and school level figures can be slightly larger. Figures do not typically change at a national level between revised and final data and changes in local authority and school level data are small.

Table 1: Change in national key stage 4 data, 2014-15

All schools	2014-15		
	Provisional	Revised	Final
Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	47.0	47.4	47.4
Percentage of pupils achieving A* to C in both English and maths GCSEs	54.9	55.8	55.8
Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate	22.5	22.9	22.9
Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate	36.0	36.2	36.2

A longer time series showing change in the previous headline measure, 5+ A* to C including English and maths, is shown below.

Table 2: Change in national key stage 4 data

All schools	Publication	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (including English and maths):	Provisional	58.6	58.6	52.6	52.8
Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (including English and maths):	Revised	59.4	59.2	53.4	53.8
Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (including English and maths):	Final	59.4	59.2	53.4	53.8

In October 2016 provisional results were published at school level, for state-funded schools only, so that parents could use the latest performance data to inform their choice of secondary school for 2017-18.

For the vast majority of state-funded schools, provisional data is a reasonably accurate reflection of revised data.

Table 3 shows the percentage of schools whose provisional results were very close to their revised published results in 2015. For state-funded mainstream schools, this was above 90 per cent across each of the headline measures.

Table 3: Difference between provisional and revised data in 2015

Measure	Difference between provisional and revised data in 2015	Percentage of state-funded schools[1]	Percentage of independent schools

Average Progress 8 score[1]	within 0.05 decimal points	91%	N/A
Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	within 1 point	93%	71%
Percentage of pupils achieving A* to C in both English and mathematics GCSEs	within 2 percentage points	92%	79%
Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate	within 1 percentage point	96%	86%
Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate	within 1 percentage point	99%	87%

1. Average Progress 8 score is provided for state-funded mainstream schools only.

Provisional results were not released for independent schools because the level of change is higher (as shown in table 3). This is mainly because independent schools are not included in the June checking exercise and are therefore more reliant on the September checking exercise for making changes to their pupil cohort.

Accessibility

Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data. It also relates to the format(s) in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information.

The SFR text is published in pdf format so that it is accessible to all users irrespective of their choice of software. Care is also taken to ensure that the document meets accessibility guidelines. Key figures are highlighted in the SFR text which draws out the key messages such as changes over time and differences between groups of pupils. Small tables or charts illustrating key figures are also included in the text.

Each SFR is accompanied by formatted excel tables with clear titles which allow general users to find more detail than can be provided in the SFR text. Any important limitations or inconsistencies in the data are mentioned in footnotes so that users do not have to refer to the text or this document. Where there are large numbers of tables, these are split into manageable sections (eg national tables in one file, local authority tables in a separate file) so that users do not need to download larger files than necessary for their needs.

The performance tables website provides a number of ways of searching for schools of interest (eg by name of school, by town, within x miles of a postcode or all schools within a local authority) and presents the data in a series of web pages showing different aspects of the data. The selected schools are shown in alphabetical order by default but can be sorted by any measure if the user requires ranked data.

Key stage 4 information also forms part of the national pupil database (NPD) which is an education dataset holding a wide range of information about pupils and students and has provided invaluable evidence on educational performance to inform independent research, as well as studies commissioned by the department. Any user wishing to conduct more detailed research or analysis may request an anonymised pupil level extract of the national pupil database (NPD).

Disclosure Control

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.

In the statistical first releases, an 'x' indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to small numbers. Values of 1 or 2 or a percentage based on 1 or 2 pupils who achieved a particular level are suppressed. Percentages based on 1 or 2 pupils who did not achieve a particular level are suppressed in circumstances where non-suppression would lead to disclosure of pupils. Some additional figures have been suppressed to prevent the possibility of a suppressed figure being revealed. This suppression is consistent with the departmental statistical policy on confidentiality.

In the school level data, any figures relating to a cohort of 5 pupils or fewer will be suppressed. This applies to sub-groups of pupils as well as the whole cohort; for example, if there were 5 boys and 3 girls in a school, we would not publish attainment for boys or girls separately but would publish attainment for all pupils (as this is based on 8 pupils).

Pupil characteristics definitions and historical changes

The pupil characteristics reported in the SFR are:

- gender
- free school meal (FSM) eligibility
- disadvantaged pupils
- ethnicity
- first language
- special educational needs (SEN)

Gender

The gender of the pupil is recorded as male or female on the school census. In exceptional circumstances a school may be unsure as to which gender should be recorded for a particular pupil. The advice from the department is to record the gender according to the wishes of the pupil and/or parent.

Free school meals

> **Free school meals** (**FSM)** is a binary indicator variable that states whether a pupil's family have claimed eligibility for free school meals as reported at the time of the annual spring school census. Parents are able to claim free school meals if they receive a qualifying benefit.
>
> The FSM variable does not relate to pupils who actually received free school meals but those who are eligible to receive free school meals. Pupils not eligible for free school meals or unclassified pupils are described as 'All other pupils' in the SFR.

The list of qualifying benefits has changed over time, but it is currently:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income that does not exceed £16,190, as assessed

by HM Revenue & Customs. where a parent is entitled to the Working Tax Credit run on – the payment someone receives for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit – their children are entitled to free school lunches

- those on Universal Credit
- children who receive an eligible benefit in their own right are also eligible

In 2015, FSM information was not available for pupils at the end of key stage 4 who attended further education colleges with provision for 14 to 16 year olds. This is because FE colleges are not required to return the school census. These pupils were therefore omitted from FSM breakdowns and classed as unclassified. From 2016, FSM data for further education colleges have been obtained from Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data, using variables that identify learner's free school meal eligibility.

Free school meals are available to pupils who attend sixth forms attached to a maintained school, as long as the course of study began before the pupil reached age 18. Free school meal eligibility relates to those who meet the eligibility criteria and make a claim.

From September 2009 to July 2011, three local authorities participated in a pilot to provide free school meals to maintained primary school children. Durham and Newham provided universal free school meals to all primary pupils, and Wolverhampton extended the current eligibility criteria to include all families in receipt of Working Tax Credit, for primary and secondary pupils.

For the pilot authorities mentioned above, care should be taken when comparing January 2010 and 2011 free school meal data with previous years' data and subsequent data. It appears that in 2012, Newham continued providing universal free school meals to all their primary pupils.

In the academic year 2011-12, due to local area free school meal initiatives, there was both an under and an over recording of free school meal eligibility in some local authorities. In total the results from 77 schools were affected by this issue, including 70 from Southwark, 4 from Bromley and 1 each from Walsall, Bradford and North Somerset. FSM status has since been corrected for Southwark and therefore final 2012 data reported in this release will differ to provisional 2012 figures. The impact on national figures as a result of these mis-recordings in 2012 is considered negligible. This issue was also apparent in data back to 2008 but the impact on national and local figures for these years is considered negligible and no revisions to FSM status have been made.

Disadvantaged pupils

The **disadvantaged pupil** breakdowns presented for years 2012 to 2014 are defined as pupils known to be eligible for FSM in the previous six years as indicated in any termly or annual school census, pupil referral unit (PRU) or alternative provision (AP) census or are looked after children for more than 6 months during the year.

For 2015, and 2016 in addition to the above, they will include children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order. They will also include pupils who are looked after for at least for one day during the year.

Information on children looked after (CLA) is collected in the web-based SSDA903 return by local authorities in England. Information in the CLA database is collected at individual level and since 2005-06 includes the Unique Pupil Number (UPN) field. This data is collected annually between April and June for the previous financial year. Once the data has been collected and checked, an extract is produced which is

sent to our matching contractors for linking to the performance tables. The UPN is the main field used for matching purposes but other information about the child is also used such as date of birth, gender, ethnicity and responsible local authority.

Local authorities are required to update the database every year, including making amendments to previous years' records where there have been changes.

Further information on looked after children and the data items collected in the SSDA903 return can be found in the looked after children SFR series.

Pre 2012 the definition for disadvantaged pupils was any pupil known to be eligible for FSM on census date, or were looked after children for more than 6 months.

In 2015, disadvantaged information was not available for pupils at the end of key stage 4 who attended further education colleges with provision for 14 to 16 year olds. This is because FE colleges are not required to return the school census. These pupils were therefore omitted from disadvantage breakdowns and classed as unclassified. From 2016, disadvantage data for further education colleges have been obtained from Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data, using variables that identify learner's free school meal eligibility, and pupil premium funding eligibility (which gives the Adopted from Care element of disadvantage). Information on children looked after for pupils in FE colleges comes from the same return as that for other pupils (SSDA903).

Ethnic group

> Ethnicity is broken down into two main variables: a minor grouping variable and a major groupings variable. Those pupils who have been classified according to their ethnic group and are other than white British are defined as minority ethnic.

This census data item is provided for all pupils aged 5 and over as at the previous 31 August. Where the information has not yet been collected then this is recorded as not yet obtained. If a pupil or parent has refused to give the information, then 'refused' is recorded and returned.

Ethnicity is a personal awareness of a common cultural identity. Ethnicity relates to how a person feels and not necessarily how they are perceived by others. It is a subjective decision as to which category a person places themselves in and therefore does not infer any other characteristics such as religion, country of origin etc. Ethnicity monitoring advice is available from the department's website. Table 1 below outlines the Department's main ethnicity categories and descriptions:

Table 1: The Department's main ethnicity categories and descriptions

Main category	Code	Description
White	WBRI	White – British
White	WIRI	White – Irish
White	WIRT	Traveller of Irish Heritage
White	WOTH	Any Other White Background
White	WROM	Gypsy / Roma
Mixed	MWBC	White and Black Caribbean
Mixed	MWBA	White and Black African
Mixed	MWAS	White and Asian
Mixed	MOTH	Any Other Mixed Background
Asian or Asian British	AIND	Indian

Main category	Code	Description
Asian or Asian British	APKN	Pakistani
Asian or Asian British	ABAN	Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British	AOTH	Any Other Asian Background
Black or Black British	BCRB	Black Caribbean
Black or Black British	BAFR	Black – African
Black or Black British	BOTH	Any Other Black Background
Other Ethnic Groups	CHNE	Chinese
Other Ethnic Groups	OOTH	Any Other Ethnic Group
Refused	REFU	Refused
Information Not Yet Obtained	NOBT	Information Not Yet Obtained

English as a first language

"**First Language**" is the language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community. It does not mean that pupils are necessarily fluent in a language other than English or cannot speak English.

This is a compulsory data item for all pupils aged 5 and over as at the previous 31 August.

If a child was exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early development the language other than English is recorded, irrespective of the child's proficiency in English. In the case of an older pupil who is no longer exposed to the first language in the home, and who now uses only another language, the school consults with the pupil or parent to determine which language should be recorded.

Where a pupil's first language is not English, schools may record specific languages from the extended language codeset or continue to use codes from the short codeset used in pupil level annual school census (PLASC) 2006. ENB (Not known but believed to be English) and OTB (Not known but believed to be other than English) are appropriate where a pupil's first language is not known with absolute certainty because the parents have not responded to enquiries, but the school can judge with a high degree of confidence whether it is English or not.

A local authority may specify that schools should use a particular subset of language codes but it is for the school to decide whether or not to record specific languages.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The **SEN** variable indicates whether a pupil has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age.

From 2015, pupils with SEN are categorised as follows:

SEN support - Extra or different help is given from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum. The class teacher and SEN coordinator (SENCO) may receive advice or support from outside specialists. This category replaces the former 'school action' and 'school action plus' categories.

Statement/EHC plan - A pupil has a statement of SEN or an education, health and care (EHC) plan when a formal assessment has been made.

Pre-2015, the SFR tables contain SEN data as per the definition below:

Pupils with special educational needs comprise those at school action, school action plus or with statements of SEN:

School Action – where extra or different help is given, from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum.

School Action Plus – where the class teacher and the SENCO receive advice or support from outside specialists (the specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or other health professionals).

Statement – a pupil has a statement of SEN when a formal assessment has been made. A document setting out the child's needs and the extra help they should receive is in place.

Pupil SEN provision

This data item is collected in the census collections for all pupils on roll on census day. Pupil SEN provision types and their codes are outlined in table 2. Two new codes were added to the SEN provision field within the 2015 School Census, as highlighted below.

Table 2: Valid provision types under the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25

Code	Description
N	No Special Educational Need
A	School action
P	School action plus
S	Statement
E (from 2015)	Education, health and care (EHC) plan
K (from 2015)	SEN support

Pupil SEN type

The pupil SEN type field records the nature of a pupil's special educational need. The primary need and, if appropriate, their secondary need should be recorded. In 2015, a new code entitled 'SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need' was introduced which was aimed at those transferring from school action to SEN support but were yet to be formally assessed for their type of need. The previous 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) has been replaced with 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) those with BESD in 2014 are not all expected to have transferred to SEMH from 2015. These changes are outlined in table 3.

Table 3: Pupil SEN type

Code	Description
SPLD	Specific learning difficulty
MLD	Moderate learning difficulty
SLD	Severe learning difficulty
PMLD	Profound & multiple learning difficulty
BESD (valid till 2014)	Behaviour, emotional & social difficulties
SLCN	Speech, language and communication needs
HI	Hearing impairment
VI	Visual impairment
MSI	Multi-Sensory impairment

Code	Description
PD	Physical disability
ASD	Autistic spectrum disorder
OTH	Other difficulty / disability
SEMH (from 2015)	Social, emotional and mental health
NSA (from 2015)	SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need

Pupil SEN Type ranking

This indicates the rank order of a pupil's special educational need, recorded in Pupil SEN type. The most significant, or primary need, is ranked as 1 and the secondary as 2. Only two rankings are collected in the school census and no two needs are given the same ranking.

Until 2014, this data item was collected in the spring census only for all pupils on roll on census day with an SEN Provision of P (School Action Plus or Early Years Action Plus) or S (Statement). From 2015, this coverage was extended to collect type of need for all pupils with a statement, an education, health and care plan, on school action plus or on SEN support. SEN support replaces school action and school action plus but some pupils remain with these provision types in first year of transition. It is anticipated that a history of provision should be recorded within a school's management information system (MIS).

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

> **IDACI** is provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The index is based on Super Output Areas (SOAs) in England defined by 2011 census data. Each SOA is given a rank between 1 and 34,844 where 1 is the most deprived SOA.

IDACI is a subset of the Income Deprivation Domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IoD). Each SOA is given a score showing the percentage of pupils aged under 16 that live in families that are income deprived, ie they are in receipt of certain benefits and their equivalised income is below 60% of median before housing costs. Further information about IDACI can be found at English indices of deprivation 2015.

The IDACI bands used in this publication are based on 2015 IDACI scores. IDACI band breakdowns for 2011 to 2014 are based on 2010 IDACI scores, breakdowns for 2008, 2009 and 2010 are based on 2007 IDACI scores and IDACI tables for 2007 and earlier are based on 2004 IDACI scores, so care should be taken when using IDACI scores from earlier years.

In the past, the Department for Education has used figures for children who reside in the 30 per cent most deprived super output areas in England (IDACI deciles 0-10, 10-20 and 20-30) as a marker for deprivation. This target was introduced following the 2004 Spending Review and was a recognised way of identifying deprived wards. These figures are no longer used to measure progress against Government Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets and have not been since 2008.

Geography

Geographic data which is matched to the department's data collections and used in all official statistics is provided by ONS Geography, a business unit of ONS that provides the geographic data and services that support the production of high quality statistics.

The ONS's presentation guidance for administrative areas sets out the recommended standard for presenting and publishing statistics at regional and sub-regional levels in the UK ONS guidance: presenting statistics for administrative areas.

The geography structures and codes used in the production of pupil characteristic SFRs can be downloaded from the ONS geography portal.

Local authority

Local authority (LA) tables show the LA that maintains the school which returned a pupil's attainment record for the relevant key stage. This data is collected as part of the key stage collection.

The current local government structure has 152 'upper tier' authorities, which all have the function of local education authority.

School location and pupil residency

Tables showing attainment by either school location or pupil residency are created by matching the relevant school or pupil postcode to a cut of the National Statistics Postcode Lookup (NSPL), an ONS product available on the ONS open geography portal. Since 2012 the February cut of the NSPL has been used annually to match on geography fields. Prior to 2012 the May version of the NSPL was used.

The local authority district is an example of a geographic field matched from the National Statistics Postcode Lookup (NSPL). Tables are included in the pupil characteristic SFRs showing the LAD based on either the pupil's postcode or the school's postcode (KS2 and KS4 only).

The term 'local authority district (LAD)' refers to the lower tier of local government. This includes non-metropolitan districts, metropolitan districts, unitary authorities and London boroughs. Structural changes to local government in England were effected on 1 April 2009, whereby a number of new unitary authorities were created in parts of the country which previously operated a 'two-tier' system of counties and districts. The current structure consists of 326 'lower tier' authorities (LADs).

Further changes to the LADs of St Albans and Welwyn Hatfield have been operative from 1 April 2012. Changes to the unitary authority of Northumberland, the metropolitan district of Gateshead and the non-metropolitan districts of East Hertfordshire and Stevenage, have all been operative from 1 April 2013. As the boundaries have changed new codes have been allocated, although the names remain the same. Codes are shown in the tables as those relevant to the district at the start of the academic year reported.

Further information on local government restructuring can be found at ONS guidance: local government restructuring.

Rurality

The rural-urban classification of postcodes for 2016 is based on the 2011 classification of output areas released in August 2013. Census output areas forming settlements with populations of over 10,000 are defined as urban, which can be further sub-divided into three broad morphological types based on the predominant settlement component. The remainder are defined as one of three rural types.

Further information can be found at 2011 rural urban classification.

Coherence and comparability

Coherence is the degree to which the statistical processes, by which two or more outputs are generated, use the same concepts and harmonised methods. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time, region or other domain.

We use the same methodology to produce the data within our SFRs and the performance tables. We also use a dataset produced at the same time for the performance tables and the provisional and revised SFRs. As a result, the national and local authority figures included in the provisional and revised SFRs and the performance tables will match when comparing measures with the same definition.

There have been a number of changes to key stage 4 data which can make comparisons over time difficult. These changes are listed in Annex A. Where time series are shown in the tables, any discontinuities will be indicated in the tables by the use of a dotted line and footnotes will be included to explain the reason for the discontinuity. Where possible (for example, when methodology rather than test structures change), figures for previous years will be recalculated using the current methodology following major changes in methodology.

Care should be taken when comparing results between years. This is because changes to methodologies means that different rules have been applied meaning that direct comparisons are not always possible.

Got a query? Like to give feedback?

If from the media	Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.
	020 7783 8300
If non-media	Ali Pareas, Education Data Division, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.
	attainment.statistics@education.gov.uk

Annex A: Timeline of changes in key stage 4 attainment

2009-10	Publish per cent attaining the new English Baccalaureate.
	Publish per cent attaining the "Basics" (A*-C English and maths).
	Count accredited International GCSEs (and their precursors) for first time[1]
2010-11	GCSE only measures introduced to performance tables.
	AS levels counted in English Baccalaureate
2011-12	First cohort to know of English Baccalaureate measure when making course choices
2012-13	New biology, chemistry, physics and additional science GCSEs.
	Marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar in English literature, history, geography and religious studies exams
2013-14	Wolf Review recommendations come into force in performance tables:
	• only Wolf-approved qualifications counted
	• each equivalent of one GCSE only
	• no more than two non-GCSE qualifications
	• new discounting rules
	Only the first attempt at a qualification counts in the performance tables and SFR in English Baccalaureate subjects.
	GCSEs no longer unitised (modular) but linear.
	New GCSE geography exam.
	Unregulated International GCSEs no longer counted[1]
	Further information on the Wolf Review can be found in the Review of vocational education: the Wolf report
	Further guidance on discounting and early entry rules can be found in the key stage 4 discounting and early entry guidance.
2014-15	Early entry policy expanded to include all subjects.
	Schools had the option to adopt a new accountability system a year early in 2015. It included two new headline measures: Attainment 8 and Progress 8. 327 schools chose to adopt the new accountability system early and for these schools Attainment 8 scores were published in the 2015 performance tables.
	AS level computer science now contributes towards the EBacc science pillar.
	Provisional performance tables published for the first time.
	Key stage 2 attainment data was affected by the 2010 boycott and Single Level Tests pilot - see the 2015 quality and methodology document for further details.
2015-16	New headline measures from 2016 onwards include:
	• Progress 8
	• Attainment 8
	• percentage of pupils achieving the threshold in English and maths
	• percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate
	• percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate
	The English requirement for the threshold measure on percentage of pupils achieving English and maths, and the English requirement for the English

Baccalaureate has changed.

The point score scale for performance table measures has changed from the 16-58 scale used in 2015 and earlier to a 1-8 scale.

Expected standards for schools have changed (see annex D for further details).

1. In 2010, new regulated versions of International GCSEs were approved. This allowed them to be taken in state-funded schools and included in the performance measures for the first time. At the same time, any results achieved by pupils in the legacy unregulated International GCSEs in these subjects were also valid for inclusion in performance indicators.

The period for inclusion of the unregulated legacy International GCSEs in measures was set for two years, commencing from the point at which the replacement regulated certificates became available for teaching, with the expectation being that pupils should be moved to the regulated certificates after this period. In independent schools, pupils have continued to be entered for unregulated International GCSEs that do not count in performance measures and they have not been moved across to the regulated certificate versions.

Annex B: Derived variables

A large number of variables are derived for publication in the key stage 4 SFRs and in the secondary school performance tables. The performance measures contained within the SFR are based on the same rules used to produce the measures shown in the secondary school performance tables.

A full list of the derived variables that will be published in the provisional performance tables can be found in the 2016 performance tables statement of intent.

The table below summarises key variables used in the publications:

Total pupils	Number of pupils at the end of key stage 4
Eligible pupils	Used to identify the pupils to be included in school, local authority and national level calculations
Progress 8	Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school. It is a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils with the same prior attainment.
	School scores should be interpreted alongside their associated confidence intervals. If the lower bound of the school's confidence interval is greater than zero, it can be interpreted as meaning that the school has achieved greater than average progress compared to pupils nationally, and vice versa if the upper bound is negative.
	Further guidance can be found in the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 guidance
Attainment 8	Attainment 8 scores form the basis of Progress 8. It measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.
	To calculate a pupils' Progress 8 score, their Attainment 8 score is compared with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment')
A* to C in both English and maths	Number/percentage of pupils achieving grades at A* to C in both English and maths GCSEs.
English Baccalaureate (EBacc)	Percentage of pupils entering and achieving a core of selected academic subjects which are English, maths, sciences, a humanities subject (history or geography) and a language.
	A list qualifications included in the English Baccalaureate is available at EBacc List

Low/middle/high prior attainment	Pupils are grouped based on their performance in English and maths at key stage 2. Indicators are shown for:
	Low attainers = those below the expected level (level 4) at key stage 2
	Middle attainers = those at the expected level (level 4) at key stage 2
	High attainers = those above the expected level (level 4) at key stage 2
	Further guidance can be found on:
	[Defining high, middle and low attainers](#)

Annex C: Further detail on school characteristics

This annex provides further details of school characteristics taken from Edubase.

School Admission Basis

The school admission basis is taken from Edubase and is self-declared by the school. They are given as at 12 September at the start of the academic year.

In the revised SFR we have moved to an alternative classification, which is expected to be a more accurate reflection of the current admissions basis of a school.

The new groupings are defined as:

Selective schools	Admits pupils wholly or mainly with reference to ability. These schools were formally designated as grammar schools
Non-selective schools in highly selective areas	All schools in local authorities where 25% or more of secondary places are in selective schools
All other non-selective schools	Includes schools in local authorities with some selection, as well as those with no selection

The previous definition for school admission basis will be published alongside the new definition in the accompanying tables to the revised SFR.

The previous groupings were defined as:

Comprehensive schools	Takes all pupils, usually regardless of their ability, aptitude or whether they have been selected for a place at a selective school
Modern schools	Takes pupils regardless of their ability or aptitude, including those who have not been selected for a place at a local selective school
Selective schools	Admits pupils wholly or mainly with reference to ability. These schools were formally designated as grammar schools

School Type and groupings

The school types are taken from [Edubase](#) and are given as at 11 September at the start of the academic year. They are defined as follows:

School types

Academy sponsor led	Sponsored academies are all-ability, state-funded schools established and managed by sponsors from a wide range of backgrounds, including high performing schools and colleges, universities, individual philanthropists, businesses, the voluntary sector, and faith communities
Academy converter	Schools that have chosen through Governing Body Resolution and application to the Secretary of State to become an academy under the Academies Act 2010
Free school	Free schools are all-ability state-funded schools set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community. They have the same legal requirements as academies and enjoy the same freedoms and flexibilities
University technical college (UTC)	UTCs are all-ability and mixed sex state-funded schools, independent of local authorities. They are not extensions of or conversions from existing provision, but new 14 to 19 academies, typically with 500 to 800 pupils. UTCs specialise in subjects that need modern, technical, industry-standard equipment, such as engineering and construction, and teach these disciplines alongside business skills and a broad, general education. Pupils integrate academic study with practical learning, studying core GCSEs alongside technical qualifications
Studio school	Studio schools are all-ability and mixed sex state-funded schools, independent of local authorities. They are an innovative new model of educational provision, delivering mainstream qualifications through practical project-based learning. They are not extensions or conversions from existing provision, but are new 14 to 19 academies, typically with around 300 pupils
City technology college (CTC)	Independent all-ability, non-fee-paying schools offering pupils the opportunity to study a curriculum geared, with the help of private sector sponsors, towards the world of work. There are currently only three CTCs as most converted to sponsor led academies a few years ago
Further education college with provision for 14 to 16 year olds	General further education colleges and sixth-form colleges with provision for 14 to 16 year olds who wish to study high-quality vocational qualifications alongside general qualifications including English and maths within the key stage 4 curriculum. 2015 was the first year in which colleges have pupils at the end of key stage 4
Pupil referral unit (PRU)	A PRU is established and maintained by a local authority which is specially organised to provide education for children who are excluded, sick or otherwise unable to attend mainstream school and is not a special or other type of school

Alternative Provision (AP)	Alternative provision takes place when a local authority takes direct responsibility for the education of a young person who is unable to attend a mainstream school. Common reasons for a young person receiving alternative provision include exclusion, medical needs or school refusal
Non-maintained special schools	A school which has been approved as a special school and is not maintained by a LA
Independent school	Any school which provides full time education for 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age, which is not state-funded or a non-state-funded special school
Independent special schools	Approved by the Secretary of State for Education. They are run on a not-for-profit basis by charitable trusts and normally cater for children with severe and/or low incidence special educational needs. This group includes non-maintained special schools
State-funded mainstream schools	Includes local authority maintained mainstream schools, academies, free schools, city technology colleges (excluding all special schools, pupil referral units, alternative provision and independent schools)
LA maintained school	Schools fully or partially under local authority control that are state-funded, mainly by the Dedicated Schools Grant. These include community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided school and voluntary controlled schools and also local authority maintained special schools
State-funded special schools	Includes local authority maintained special schools, academy sponsor led special schools, academy special schools and special free schools
State-funded school	Includes local authority maintained schools, academies, free schools, city technology colleges and state-funded special schools (excluding hospital schools, pupil referral units, alternative provision and independent schools)
All independent	Includes independent schools, independent special schools and non-maintained special schools

Religious character

Religious character is taken from Edubase and is the legal designation of each school.

Annex D: Floor standard and coasting schools

Floor standard

The floor standard is the minimum standard for pupil attainment and/or progress that the government expects schools to meet.

In 2016 a school will be below the floor standard if its Progress 8 score is below -0.5, and the upper band of the 95% confidence interval is below zero. If a school's performance falls below this floor standard, then the school may come under scrutiny through inspection. Confidence intervals are explained in more detail in the [Progress 8 and Attainment 8 guidance](#).

Floor standards do not apply to special schools, independent schools, pupil referral units, alternative provision or hospital schools. Schools will be excluded from a Progress 8 floor standard in a particular year where they have fewer than 6 pupils at the end of key stage 4, or where less than 50% of pupils have key stage 2 assessments that can be used as prior attainment in the calculations of Progress 8.

Coasting schools

The coasting schools definition considers schools' performance over a three year period. A school must fall below the defined standard in each of the three years to meet the definition for coasting. Coasting schools are those that consistently fail to ensure pupils reach their potential.

In 2016, the definition applies to schools which:
- in 2014 and 2015 had fewer than 60% of children achieving 5+ A* to C GCSEs including English and maths, and below the median percentage of pupils making expected progress in English and mathematics[1]; and
- in 2016, the school has a Progress 8 score below -0.25 and the upper band of the 95% confidence interval is below zero.

Schools will be excluded from the coasting definition if one of the following applies in at least one of the three years:

- the number of eligible pupils is fewer than 11 in 2014 or 2015, or fewer than 6 in 2016
- the school does not have published results against all relevant performance measures
- fewer than 50% of pupils have tests or assessments that can be used as prior attainment in the calculation of progress measures or
- the school closed within the academic year and did not re-open as a converter academy

---

[1] Schools that chose to opt in to Progress 8 early must also have a 2015 Progress 8 score below -0.25 to meet the coasting definition

Annex E: Glossary

Attainment 8 score	The achievement of a pupils across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.
Checking exercise	In September each year, schools are asked to check the provisional KS4 data that we hold for their school during the performance tables checking exercise. The data is uploaded to a secure website and schools can inform us via this website of any pupils that are included in their school in error, or of any missing pupils. They can also notify us of any other errors in the data such as errors in matching prior attainment results and apply for pupils to be discounted from their figures, if they have recently arrived from overseas and their first language is not English. Any changes requested are validated to ensure that they comply with the rules before being accepted.
Designated religious character	An Order made by the Secretary of State for Education under section 69(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998(a), as applied in relation to independent schools by section 124B(1)(b) of that Act.
English Baccalaureate	(EBacc) A school performance measure. It allows people to see how many pupils get a grade C or above in the core academic subjects at key stage 4.
Edubase	EduBase is a register of educational establishments in England and Wales, maintained by the department. It provides information on establishments providing compulsory, higher and further education. The information included is provided from the establishments themselves and also from LAs and teams within the department.
Floor Standard	The floor standard is the minimum standard for pupil attainment and/or progress that the Government expects schools to meet. In 2016 a school will be below the floor standard if its Progress 8 score is below -0.5, and the upper band of the 95% confidence interval is below zero. If a school's performance falls below this floor standard, then the school may come under scrutiny through inspection. Confidence intervals are explained in more detail in the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 guidance.
JCQ	Joint Council for Qualifications. A membership organisation comprising the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK.
KS2	Key stage 2. This covers years 3 to 6 in primary schools. Pupils are normally 10 or 11 years old at the end of key stage 2.
KS4	Key stage 4. This covers years 10 and 11 in secondary schools. Pupils are normally aged 15 years old at the end of key stage 4.
LA	Local authority

National Pupil Database (NPD)	The NPD contains detailed information about pupils in schools and colleges in England. It includes test and exam results, prior attainment and progression at different key stages and also includes information about pupils' characteristics.
Ofqual	The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation. Regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.
Performance tables	Secondary school performance tables are published in October (provisional, state-funded schools only) and January (revised, all schools) each year. Primary school performance tables are published in December and post-16 performance tables are published in January each year. They give information on the achievements of pupils in primary, secondary and 16-18 provision in schools and colleges, and how they compare with other schools and colleges in the Local Authority (LA) area and in England as a whole.
Progress 8 score	The progress a pupil makes from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school. It is a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils with the same prior attainment. As Progress 8 is a relative measure, the average Progress 8 score for all pupils nationally is zero, and it is therefore not published in the key stage 4 SFR.
Provisional data	Provisional KS4 data is published in October of each year. The provisional data is subject to change though the impact on national data is usually minimal.
Reviews	If schools believe that the mark scheme has not been correctly applied or a clerical error has been made, they may ask for a paper to be re-marked. This may result in a change to the mark or scaled score awarded.
Revised data	Revised key stage 4 data is published in January each year. This updates the national and local authority information published in the provisional SFR and also includes school level information in the performance tables.
School census	A statutory census which takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms.
SFR	Statistical First Release. All of the department's SFRs are published on gov.uk.
Threshold measures	'Threshold measures' refer to any figures where we show the percentage of pupils who have achieved a particular standard in a subject or combination of subjects, for example, the percentage achieving A*to C in English and maths.

Ali Pareas, Education Data Division, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

0207 340 7490, Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

This document is also available from our website:
www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4