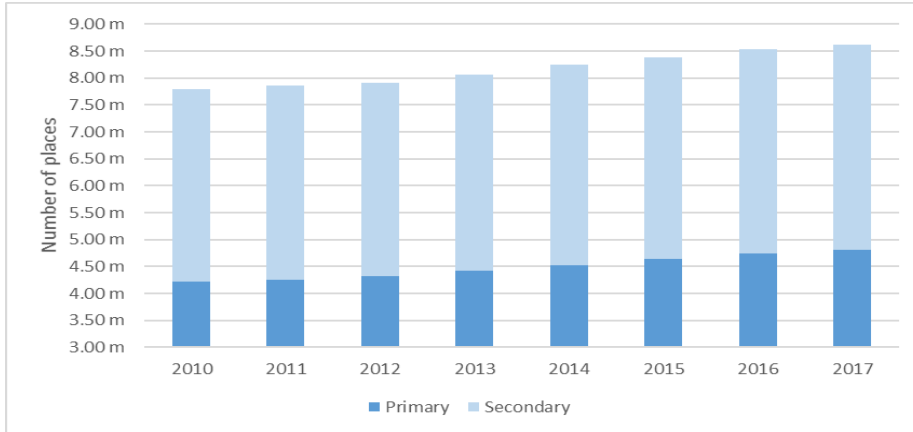




SFR 07/2018 15 March 2018

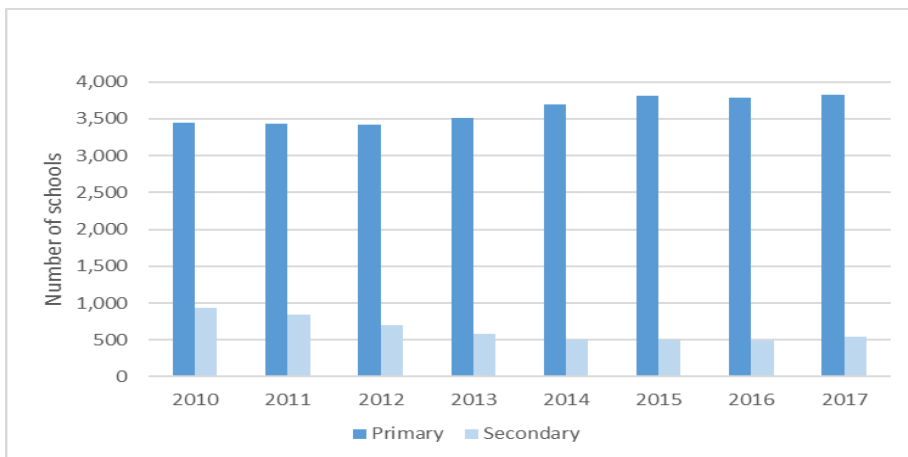
## Capacity: 825,000 mainstream school places added since 2010



825,000 places have been added to the school estate since 2010, a net increase of 577,000 primary places and 248,000 secondary places.

Between 2016 and 2017, 66,000 primary places and 23,000 secondary places were added.

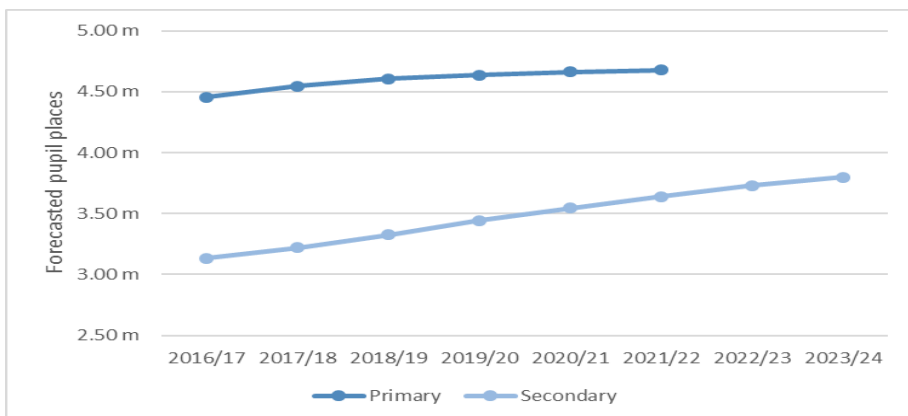
## Schools at or over capacity: the number of schools at or over capacity relatively stable in recent years, with a slight increase in 2017



The number of primary schools that are at or over capacity has remained relatively stable since 2015, following a long term increase.

The number of secondary schools that are at or over capacity has increased slightly since 2016, following a long term decrease.

## Forecasts: Demand for secondary places continues to rise



Local authority forecasts suggest primary pupil numbers may begin to plateau beyond 2020/21.

Secondary pupil numbers are forecast to continue to rise as the increase seen in primary pupil numbers arrives in the secondary phase.

# Contents

1.	School Capacity (Figure 1, 2, 3 and 4).....	3
2.	Pupil Forecasts (Figure 5).....	5
3.	LA Planned Places .....	6
4.	Place Planning Estimates .....	6
5.	Accompanying tables.....	6
6.	Further information .....	7
7.	Official Statistics .....	7
8.	Technical Information .....	7
9.	Get in touch .....	8
	Media enquiries .....	8
	Other enquiries/feedback.....	8

## About this release

This release reports on school capacity information in state-funded primary and secondary schools as of May 2017. Data are as reported by local authorities in the annual School Capacity (SCAP) Survey.

Information is included on the numbers of primary and secondary school places, unfilled school places and pupils in excess of school capacity. It also provides pupil number forecasts up to 2021/22 at primary level and 2023/24 at secondary level, and compares forecasts with capacity to estimate the future number of places needed.

Findings in this report are at a national level though information at regional and local authority (LA) level are included in the accompanying tables. School level information for capacity and planning area level information for forecasts and planned places is also provided in the release's underlying data section.

The numbers in this document are rounded to the nearest thousand, actual numbers are provided in the accompanying tables.

## In this publication

The following tables are included in the statistical release:

- School Capacity 2017 tables
- School Place Planning 2017 tables

The accompanying School Place Planning 2017 Technical Guidance provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the School Place Planning tables.

## Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at [SCAP.PPP@education.gov.uk](mailto:SCAP.PPP@education.gov.uk)

# 1. School Capacity

## Places added

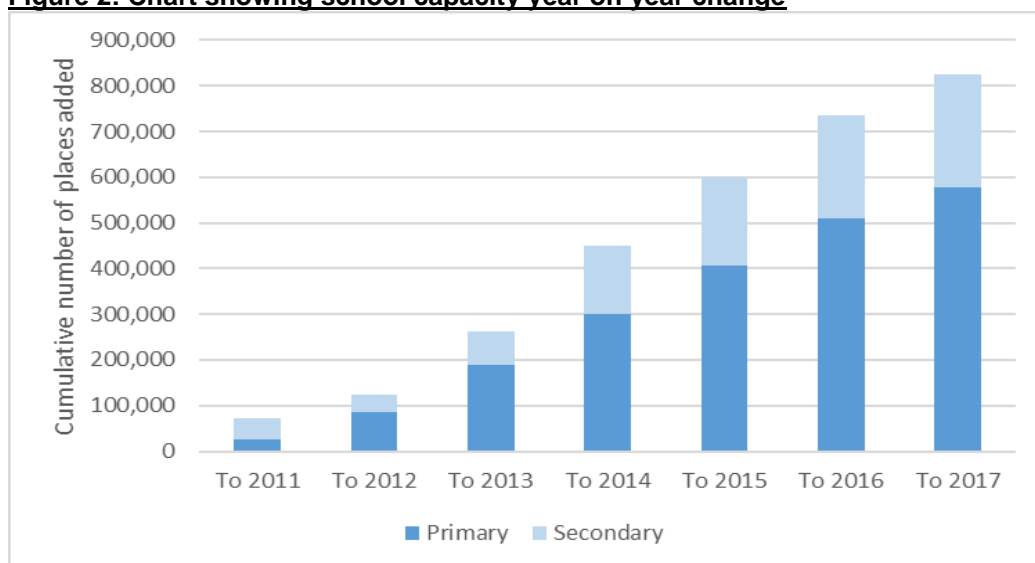
The net change in capacity reflects both increases and decreases in capacity within schools. Between 2016 and 2017, there has been a net increase of 66,000 primary places and 23,000 secondary places.

Combined with all the changes in previous years, there has been a net increase of 825,000 additional places since 2010, consisting of 577,000 primary places, and 248,000 secondary places. Places in middle schools and all through schools are reported as deemed (whether primary or secondary), and secondary places include those in sixth forms in schools.

**Figure 1: School capacity year on year change**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of primary places	4,228,000	4,253,000	4,314,000	4,416,000	4,528,000	4,634,000	4,738,000	4,804,000
Primary year on year change		26,000	60,000	102,000	112,000	106,000	104,000	66,000
Number of secondary places	3,563,000	3,609,000	3,601,000	3,637,000	3,712,000	3,756,000	3,788,000	3,811,000
Secondary year on year change		46,000	8,000	37,000	75,000	44,000	32,000	23,000

**Figure 2: Chart showing school capacity year on year change**



## Schools in excess of capacity

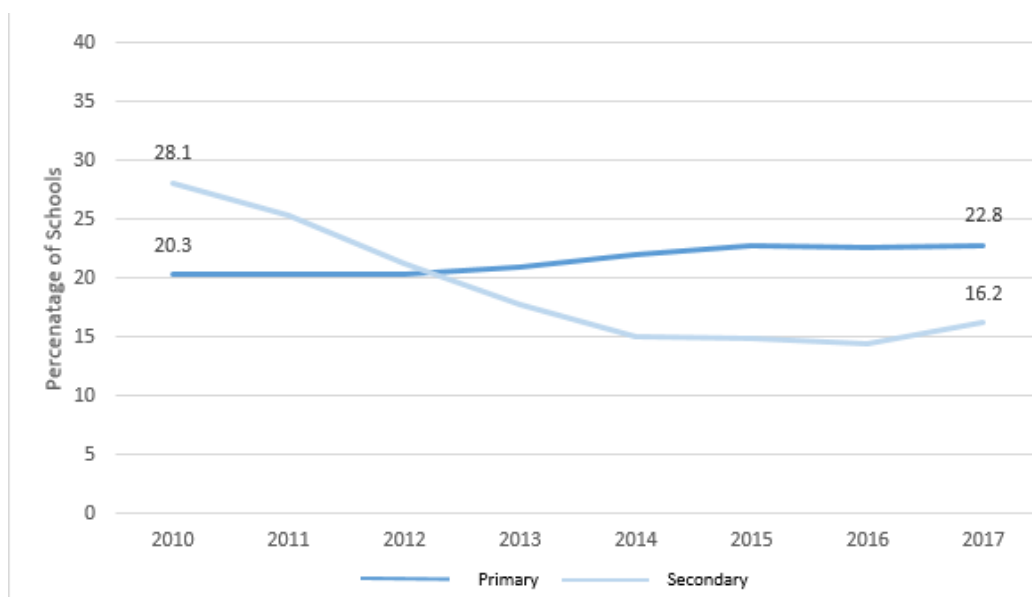
A school is identified as in excess of capacity when their number on roll is greater than or equal to capacity. Number on roll figures are taken from the summer (May 2017) census, except for new schools (including schools that have become academies) where figures are based on data gathered during the school capacity collection.

The percentage of state-funded primary schools that were full or had pupils in excess of capacity showed a slight increase from 22.5 per cent (3,781 schools) in May 2016 to 22.8 per cent (3,826 schools) in May 2017.

For state-funded secondary schools, the percentage of schools that were full or had pupils in excess of capacity showed an increase from 14.4 per cent (487 schools) in May 2016 to 16.2 per cent (548 schools)

in May 2017. This increase follows a long-term downward trend; overall there has been a decrease of 382 schools that were full or had pupils in excess of capacity since 2010.

**Figure 3: The percentage of schools that are full or have one or more pupils in excess of school capacity**



### Pupils in excess of capacity

Where the number on roll is higher than capacity, the number of pupils in excess of capacity is the difference.

The number of pupils in excess of capacity has decreased since 2010, from 97,000 in 2010 to 54,000 in 2017. However, compared to 2016, the 2017 figures indicate a rise of 4,000.

In primary schools, there were 30,000 pupils in excess of capacity which has remained at a similar level to 2016.

In secondary schools, there were just over 24,000 pupils in excess of capacity in 2017, a noticeable increase compared to around 20,000 pupils for the years 2014 to 2016. This is still less than the 56,000 secondary pupils in excess of capacity reported in 2010.

### Unfilled places

The number of unfilled places is the extent of capacity above number on roll. Therefore, a school is identified as having unfilled places if the capacity is higher than the number of pupils on roll.

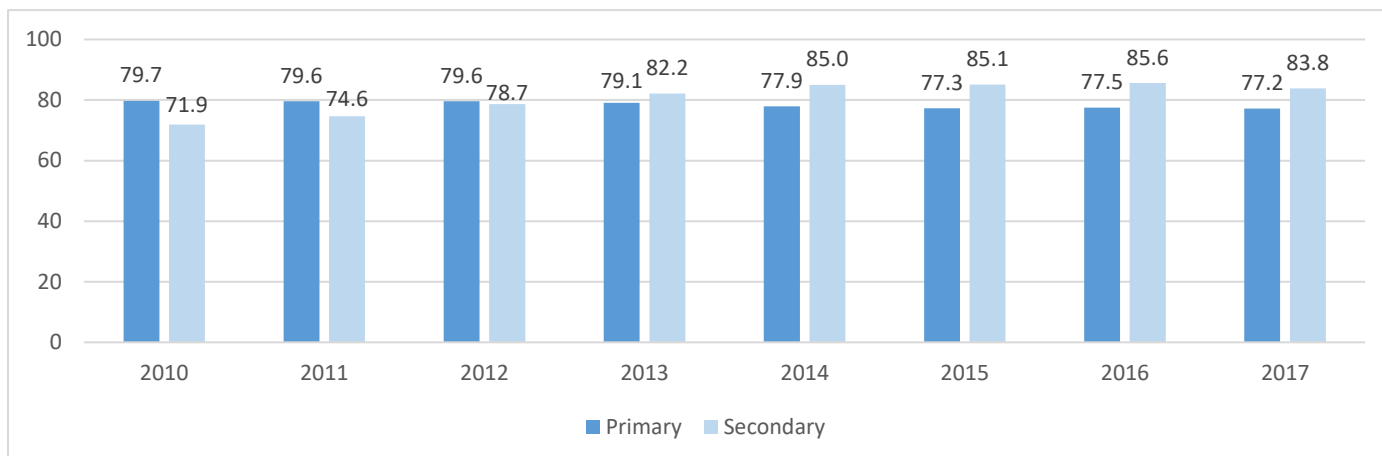
For primary and secondary schools, the total number of unfilled places has been increasing across recent years, from 814,000 places in 2010 to 1,091,000 places in 2017.

In 2017, there were 453,000 unfilled places in primary schools, the first decrease since 2012, and 638,000 unfilled places in secondary schools, a slight increase compared to the figure of 636,000 in 2016.

The percentage of schools with unfilled places has been decreasing very gradually in primary schools since 2010; over the same period it has been gradually increasing in secondary schools. As of May 2017, 77.2 per cent of primary schools and 83.8 per cent of secondary schools had one or more unfilled places.

Unfilled places can be evidence of local authorities planning ahead for future need, as the increase in pupil numbers at primary level over recent years is moving into secondary level, and will continue to do so over the coming years. Unfilled places can also be attributed to the building of whole new schools, which fill up from the bottom, leaving space in the upper years until those year groups work their way through. In some areas, low or declining need for places will also contribute to the number of unfilled places.

**Figure 4: Percentage of schools with unfilled places**



## 2. Pupil Forecasts

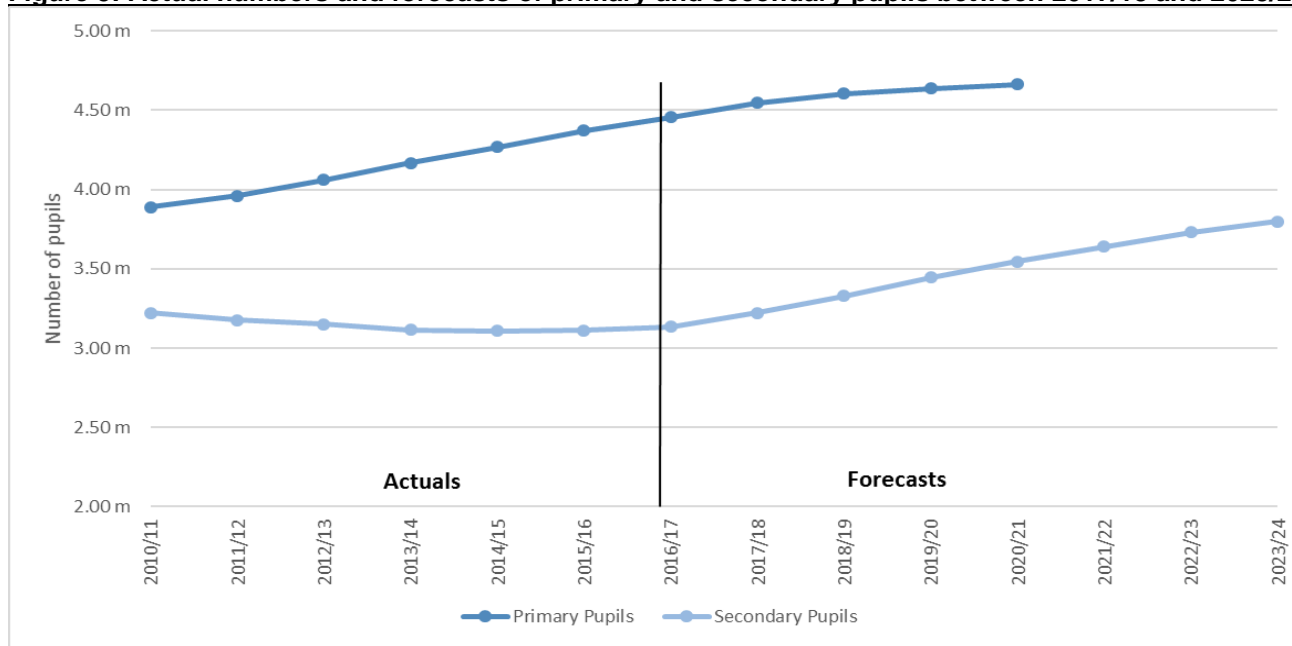
Each local authority uses their local knowledge to generate pupil forecasts, which reflect the number of pupils they expect to provide a place for in each academic year. These forecasts include places which are funded through developer contributions (Section 106/CIL).

Local authorities provide forecasts 5 years ahead for primary pupils (from reception to year group 6) and 7 years ahead for secondary pupils (from year group 7 through to sixth form).

The forecast number of primary pupils continues to rise. However the rate of increase in the forecast number of primary school pupils has declined such that between between 2020/21 and 2021/22 the forecast increase is less than 14,000 pupils. The reception intake is forecast to be at its lowest point in 2018/19. In contrast, the rate of increase in the forecast number of secondary school pupils increases through to 2019/20, with over 116,000 pupils forecast to be added between 2018/19 to 2019/20. Beyond that, there is still strong growth, but declining to an increase of around 70,000 pupils between 2022/23 and 2023/24.

As with all forecasts, the level of accuracy is expected to reduce as forecasts are made further into the future and care should be taken when using forecasts from the later years.

**Figure 5: Actual numbers and forecasts of primary and secondary pupils between 2017/18 and 2023/24**



### 3. LA Planned Places

LA planned places are collected via the Capital Spend survey. They are the number of places local authorities plan to create, where funding has been committed. LA planned places exclude those created through centrally funded DfE programmes.

Local authorities have reported that they are planning to create 185,000 additional mainstream places between 2017/18 and 2019/20.

### 4. Place Planning Estimates

The place planning tables show the estimated number of places needed in order to meet future demand. These tables are provided for readers interested in planning new school place provision.

The estimates factor in existing capacity reported at 1 May 2017, additional capacity that local authorities have reported they have firm plans for, and additional capacity being provided through centrally funded programmes (e.g. Free Schools). This capacity is then compared with the forecasts provided by the local authorities. The starting premise of the estimates is that identification of forecast need and identification of the corresponding capacity is carried out at planning area level and national curriculum year group level, i.e. places have to be available in the correct planning area and year group. Further information on how these estimates are calculated, how to interpret them and their limitations is provided in the technical guide (School Place Planning Tables 2017: Technical guidance).

Two versions of the place planning tables are provided in this publication. The first version (tables B1-B4) identifies place needed only, setting aside spare places identified within the calculation. The second version (tables B5-B6) retains spare places within the calculation, and allows for examination of the extent of spare places alongside places needed. The national and regional figures for the second version are not provided because pockets of demand and pockets of spare places are lost in the aggregation.

According to the data provided at 1 May 2017 and the analysis applied, an estimated 33,000 primary places were needed across England in order to meet demand in academic year 2017/18. Alternatively, looking further ahead, an estimated 79,000 primary places are needed across England to meet demand for academic year 2021/22. This translates to between 10,000 and 14,000 primary places needed each year. The profile at secondary shows a growing need for places over time. At secondary, an estimated 87,000 places are needed in order to meet demand for 2021/22. This translates to an annual need of around 10,000 extra places needed between 2017/18 and 2018/19 rising to around 26,000 places needed between 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Care should be taken with interpretation of these estimates. Please refer to the technical guide.

## 5. Accompanying tables

The following tables and underlying data are available in Excel format on the department's statistics website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-capacity-academic-year-2016-to-2017>):

### Main tables

School Capacity 2017 tables (A1-A7)

School Capacity 2017 underlying data

School Place Planning 2017 tables (B1-B6)

School Place Planning 2017 underlying data

## 6. Further information

- Previous releases can be found at: [Statistics: school capacity](#)

## 7. Official Statistics

These are Official Statistics and have been produced in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

This can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

The Department has a set of statistical policies in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

## 8. Technical information

### Data collection

1. Information in this release has been derived from four data sources, more information can be found in the School Place Planning 2017 Technical Guidance
  - a) School Capacity survey – an annual survey returned by local authorities that collects capacity and forecast information.
  - b) Capital Spend survey – an annual survey returned by local authorities that collects information on local authority planned places and associated costs, excluding DfE centrally funded programmes.
  - c) School census – a termly census of all schools in England, used to provide number on roll figures.
  - d) Central Programmes data – administrative data about the provision of places through centrally funded programmes (further detail in the School Place Planning Technical Guidance).

### Data coverage and quality

2. Guidance on how the data supplied through the School Capacity Collection should be reported by local authorities can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-capacity-survey-2016-guide-for-local-authorities> All the data submitted have undergone a thorough data cleaning process with validation at source and at the Department. Anomalies have been raised with local authorities to check that the guidance has been followed. All data have been signed off by Directors of Children's Services (or equivalent roles) as complete and accurate.
3. Forecast data is generated by local authorities based on their own data and local knowledge. These forecasts are challenged extensively during data cleaning processes. There are variations in the forecasting methodologies and data sources used across local authorities. This means there is the

potential for local anomalies within the methodology. As with any forecast figures, there will be variation between the forecasts and the subsequent actual pupil numbers. Forecasting accuracy measures are calculated and published for each local authority in the School Place Scorecards.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-school-places-scorecards-2016>)

Forecasting accuracy is derived retrospectively, once actual pupil numbers for the forecast data become available. Most local authorities' forecasting accuracy tends to be within +/-1% one year ahead.

4. LA planned places are based on local authority estimates. Only places added in valid SCAP 17 planning areas are included.

## Notes for users

5. For capacity, schools are reported as deemed. Therefore, for a middle-deemed primary school all capacity is counted as primary and for a middle-deemed secondary school all capacity is counted as secondary. Pupil forecast data is spilt by phase, so primary includes year groups R-6 only, and secondary includes year groups 7-13.
6. Number on roll is the number of sole and dual main registered pupils attending a school as reported via the school census. Number on roll (actuals) within the forecast tables are based on the January 2017 census. Number on roll figures are taken from the summer (May 2017) census, except for new schools (including schools that have become academies) where figures are based on data gathered during the School Capacity survey. There are 10 schools that show zero number on roll where the local authority has not provided information. Number on roll relates to pupils in reception year group and above.
7. Academies are not required to complete a net capacity assessment. Therefore, their final net capacity is reported as per their funding agreement (subject to any information that the local authority holds in addition).
8. Free Schools are reported at their final intended capacity and in their final intended planning area. The capacities of local authority maintained schools are reported as built and ready-to-use.

## 9. Get in touch

### Media enquiries

Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8300

### Other enquiries/feedback

Pupil Place Planning team

Email: SCAP.PPP@education.gov.uk





Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

© Crown copyright 2018

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence.

To view this licence,

visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or e-mail: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

About this publication:

Enquiries: Pupil Place Planning Team

Email: [SCAP.PPP@education.gov.uk](mailto:SCAP.PPP@education.gov.uk)

Reference: SFR 07/2018