

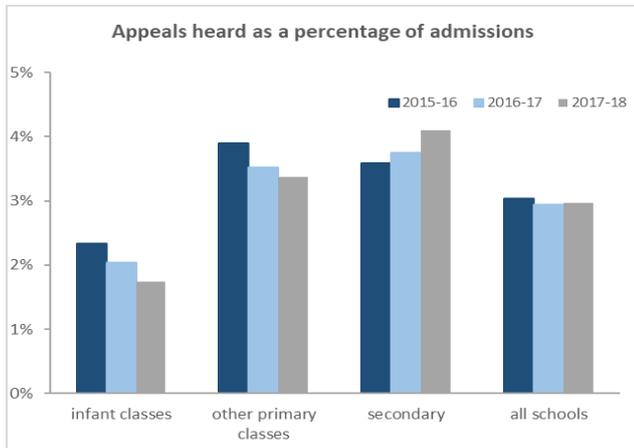


Admissions appeals for maintained and academy primary and secondary schools in England: 2017 to 2018



23 August 2018

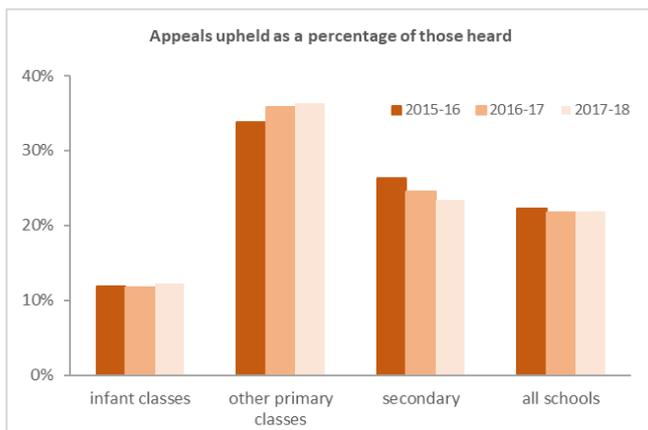
Overall proportion of appeals is stable, but results vary by phase



Applicants can lodge appeals for any school they have not been awarded a place in, but not all such appeals reach the stage of being heard by an appeals panel (for example if they are withdrawn). The heard rate is therefore a better measure of the general appeal rate.

In 2017-18 the highest percentage of appeals heard (4.1% of new admissions) was at secondary level. Infant class appeals heard dropped to 1.7%. Most of these appeals are likely to relate to the main school entry points, and 2017 saw a drop in the number of applications for a primary school place but an increase in the number applying for secondary school.

Difference in success rate of appeals widens between primary and secondary schools

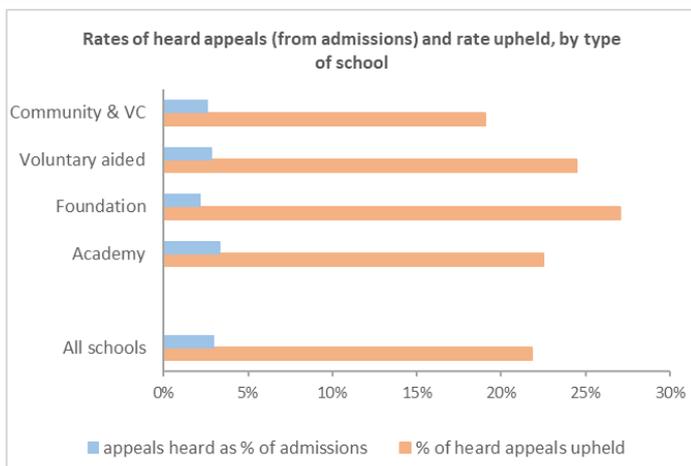


For all schools, the 2017-18 figure of 21.8% of heard appeals being upheld (that is, successful) was unchanged from 2016-17. Within that, however, the success rate at primary level increased whilst it decreased at secondary level.

The success rate varies significantly by school phase: non-infant primary classes continued to have the highest proportion of heard appeals being upheld, with a slight rise to 36.3% in 2017-18 (from 35.8%).

Infant class appeals upheld were much lower at 12.2%, although this figure also rose slightly in 2017-18 (from 11.7% in 2016-17).

Success rates also vary for different school types



The rate of appeals being heard (as a proportion of new admissions) and the chance of their success varies by school type. Overall, the rate of appeals heard was 3.0%, but results varied from 2.1% (foundation) to 3.3% (academy).

Once the appeals had been heard, those relating to foundation schools were the most likely to be successful at 27.1% of heard appeals. The lowest success rate was 19.1% for community & voluntary controlled schools.

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About this release

This statistical release provides information about admissions appeals. Most appeals are made when an applicant has not received an offer, in the annual coordinated admissions process, of a place at their first preference school for entry into primary or secondary school. They can appeal for a place at any school ranked higher than the one they were offered. In addition, there will be appeals where applications have been made to transfer to a different school for the beginning of other years, and that application has been refused.

The release reports on appeals relating to admissions at the start of the 2017 to 2018 academic year. It is based on appeals lodged with the appropriate admissions authority by 1 September 2017.

The publication details, by school phase, the number and percentage of appeals lodged and the number and percentage which are heard by an appeals panel. Of those heard, the number and percentage which are found in the parent's favour (that is, upheld) is also given. The data is additionally broken down by school type (community and voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation and academy) and, separately, by local authority.

In this publication

The following tables are included in the statistical release:

National tables (Excel .xls)

Local authority tables (Excel .xls)

Underlying data (open format .csv and metadata .txt)

The accompanying quality and methodology information document, provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

Feedback

We are always interested in improving how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at Admissions.appeals@education.gov.uk

1. Headline results

Overall 60,718 appeals were lodged and reported to the department, via the admissions appeals collection or the school census, relating to an application for a school place at the start of the 2017-18 academic year. This equates to 4.0 per cent of new admissions (table A below), the same as in 2016-17. These admissions, and appeals relating to them, cover both entry into the first year of a school and also new admissions into other years, for example due to a house move, as long as the appeal relates to a request to start the school at the beginning of the academic year.

Not all lodged appeals are heard as an appeal, as they can be withdrawn before that point (for example because the child has been offered a place at the school via the waiting list). This release focuses on the number of appeals which actually reach the stage of being heard by the appropriate authority. In 2017-18 this was 44,520, or 3.0% of new admissions, compared to 44,626 (2.9%) in 2016-17.

Overall the number of appeals which were successful was 9,715 - a success rate of 21.8% of those appeals which were heard by an appeals panel. This is unchanged from the number and percentage successful last year.

Table A

Admissions appeals: all maintained and academy schools, 2017-18

Admissions	1,500,820
Admission appeals lodged by parents	
Number:	60,718
Percentage of admissions	4.0
Appeals heard by an appeals panel	
Number:	44,520
Percentage of admissions	3.0
Appeals decided in parents' favour	
Number:	9,715
Percentage of appeals heard	21.8

A detailed breakdown of the number of appeals by the type of school can be found in table B (below). Figures for community & voluntary controlled schools were provided the by local authorities as aggregated totals. These school types reported the lowest percentage of appeals being upheld (19.1% of those heard).

The highest percentage found in favour of the applicant by school type was from foundation schools with 27.1% of appeals heard being successful. However, foundation schools had a smaller rate of appeals heard – 2.1% of new admissions into foundation schools – compared to other school types (between 2.6% for community & voluntary schools and 3.3% for academies).

The number of admissions and appeals by school type continue to be affected by the increased conversion of other school types into academies: more than half of the total appeals heard now relate to academies. The percentages are unaffected as they are calculated on the number of admissions into that particular school type (but note the caveats section of the methodology document relating to the recording of pupils in newly converted academies).

Table B
Appeals heard and upheld, by type of school, 2017-18

	Appeals heard		Appeals upheld	
	Num	%	Num	%
Community & voluntary controlled	13,602	2.6	2,594	19.1
Voluntary aided	4,495	2.9	1,100	24.5
Foundation	1,588	2.1	430	27.1
Academy	24,835	3.3	5,591	22.5
Total	44,520	3.0	9,715	21.8

2. Primary school results

At primary level the rate of appeals lodged was 3.0% of new admissions, with 2.0% reaching the next stage of being heard by an appeals panel (Table 1). The proportion of primary appeals heard has dropped from 2.6% in 2015-16 and 2.3% in 2017-18. Although we can't know why each appeal was lodged, this period had a reducing number of appeals for a primary school place and an increase in the number of applicants who were offered one of their preferred schools.

The primary level data is further split into infant (reception and years one and two) and other primary classes (generally years three to six although middle-deemed primary schools may include years seven or eight). For the infant classes, the rate of appeals lodged was 2.6% of admissions into those years, with 1.7% heard by an appeals panel. The figures for the other primary classes were higher at 5.3% and 3.4% respectively (see table C below).

There are legal restrictions in place which require infant classes (reception and years 1 and 2) to be limited to 30 children¹. This reduces the possibilities for appeal for these years, and indeed the figures show that the success rate was notably lower for infant years (12.2%) than it was for the other primary years (36.3%). Both figures are a rise of 0.5 percentage points on 2016-17.

Table C
Admissions appeals: primary appeals by infant and other primary classes, 2017-18

	infant appeals	other primary class appeals	primary total
Admissions	678,698	141,922	820,620
Admission appeals lodged by parents			
Number:	17,354	7,453	24,807
Appeals heard by an appeals panel			
Number:	11,856	4,787	16,643
Percentage of admissions	1.7	3.4	2.0
Appeals decided in parents' favour			
Number:	1,449	1,737	3,186
Percentage of appeals heard	12.2	36.3	19.1

¹ The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 prescribe certain limited circumstances in which pupils may be admitted as lawful exceptions to the infant class size limit of 30 for one-teacher classes. This means that a class of, for example, 32 pupils is lawful if two or more of those pupils have been admitted under lawful exceptions.

There was further variation in the rate of appeals heard and successful within both infant and other primary levels by school type (table 2). For infant classes, 9.7% of appeals heard relating to community and voluntary controlled schools were successful, compared to 18.9% for foundation schools. For other primary classes the success rate for foundation schools was similar at 18.2%. For other school types, however, success rates at this level were notably higher, ranging from 32.4% for academies to 42.0% for voluntary aided schools.

Figures are provided at LA level, both for infant classes, total primary appeals (including the infant appeals), and secondary classes (table 3). Because the number of appeals heard in each local authority varies widely, large differences in rates of appeals upheld (calculated as percentage of the appeals heard) can be driven by the results of a small number of appeals. Therefore some caution should be used when comparing figures within this dataset.

The proportion of appeals upheld for all primary schools for 2017-18 varied at local authority level from 57.8% (Cornwall, based on 109 appeals heard) to 0.0% (several local authorities in London plus Blackpool, Rutland and Plymouth). Of the local authorities who upheld no primary appeals, Rutland heard just one appeal and the authority with the highest number of appeals was Sutton with 40 from all primary years. The local authority with the highest number of appeals heard for all primary schools was Birmingham with 617 (of which 2.8% were upheld).

3. Secondary school results

At secondary level the rate of appeals lodged was higher than at primary, at 5.3% of new admissions, with 4.1% being heard by an appeals panel. The proportion of secondary appeals heard has increased from 3.6% in 2015-16 and 3.7% in 2017-18.

The success rate was higher than for primary schools as a whole at 23.4%. However, a better comparison is against other primary classes, as these do not have the restrictions of infant class size legislation. Other primary class appeals were more likely to be successful, at 36.3% against the 23.4% of heard appeals at secondary level.

Again the breakdown of appeals by school type shows a notable variation. As in previous years foundation secondary schools had the lowest rate of appeals heard, 2.6%, but the highest rate of those being successful at 30.9%. Success rates for the other school types varied from 22.7% (academies) to 24.7% (community and voluntary controlled schools).

Again the local authority data showed significant variation, both in the number of appeals heard and in the success rates for those that were. However, the small number of appeals being heard in many local authorities can affect the figures significantly. In 2017-18 the local authority with the highest proportion of appeals being upheld was Knowsley, with 100% of heard appeals being upheld (based on just five hearings), followed by Wigan with 83.9% of successful appeals (out of 93 hearings).

At the other end of the scale, the lowest secondary appeals success rate was found in Hounslow with 0.8% of the 239 appeals they heard being successful. The local authority with the highest number of secondary appeals heard was Kent with 2,169 (of which 30.5% were upheld).

4. List of tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics [website](#):

National tables

Table 1

Total appeals by parents against non-admission of their children to primary and secondary local authority maintained schools and academies, entry into the start of the 2015-16 to 2017-18 academic years, England.

Table 2

Appeals by parents against non-admission of their children to primary and secondary local authority maintained schools and academies, by type of school, entry into the start of the 2017-18 academic year, England

Local authority tables

Table 3

Appeals by parents against non-admission of their children to primary and secondary local authority maintained schools and academies, entry into the start of the 2017-18 academic year, by local authority area.

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

- The time series provided in table 1 was restarted in 2015-16 because the improvements to the data in that year meant the appeals in that year were not comparable with the previous years.
- Increased flexibility (through the academy and free school programmes) allows schools to choose their own school terms, which could include starting in August, and a number of schools exercise this option. To allow for this the admissions totals used in this release have been calculated including August admissions.
- The number of new admissions is calculated using the pupil level January 2018 school census and is based on the pupils' entry dates and the school they are recorded as attending, both in 2018 and also in the previous academic year. Schools converting to academies or amalgamating (for example individual infant and nursery schools combining into a single primary school) sometimes change both the entry dates of all of their existing pupils and their school codes. All attempts have been made to allow for this when calculating the number of new admissions but it is possible that for a very small number of schools the number of new admissions has been incorrectly counted.
- The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires we take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality. These data tables have been assessed as not requiring suppression to preserve confidentiality.

5. National statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation 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.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

6. Technical information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this statistical release. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

7. Get in touch

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