



Department
for Education

Attainment of pupils with English as an additional language

Ad-hoc notice

June 2019

Background

Attainment of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is published in our regular statistical releases¹. These show that the attainment of EAL pupils is similar to that for pupils with English as their first language. However, the English language skills of this group will vary considerably;

- at one extreme, there are pupils who have lived in England all their life who are likely to have been fluent in English from a very young age
- at the other extreme, there are pupils who have arrived in England very recently who could have very little understanding of English.

We do not collect data on a pupil's arrival date in an English-speaking country. However, we have used the school census² to identify the academic year that each pupil first appeared in a state-funded school in England. This will be a good proxy for their arrival date in England though some pupils may have attended an independent school in England prior to attending a state-funded school. In addition, some pupils may have lived in an English-speaking country prior to arriving in England.

Academic year of joining English education

126,100 pupils at the end of key stage 2 had a first language other than English – this is 17% of all pupils at the end of key stage 2. 79% of these pupils joined an English school in reception.

86,000 pupils at the end of key stage 4 had a first language other than English – this is 14% of all pupils at the end of key stage 4. 63% of these pupils joined an English school in reception and 82% joined during primary school (see table 1).

¹ KS2 - www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-2-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised
KS4 - www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-4-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised

² Including the PRU and AP census.

Table 1: Number of pupils with English as an additional language

	Pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2017/18		Pupils at the end of key stage 4 in 2017/18	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Pupils with English first language	491,300	-	435,400	-
Pupils with other first language	126,100	-	86,300	-
of which arrived in:				
Reception	100,000	79%	54,400	63%
Year 1	4,800	4%	3,600	4%
Year 2	4,200	3%	2,700	3%
Year 3	4,600	4%	2,300	3%
Year 4	4,800	4%	2,400	3%
Year 5	4,700	4%	2,600	3%
Year 6	3,100	2%	2,700	3%
Year 7	-	-	3,500	4%
Year 8	-	-	3,400	4%
Year 9	-	-	3,700	4%
Year 10	-	-	3,700	4%
Year 11	-	-	1,300	1%
Unknown first language	1,900	-	1,900	-

Attainment of EAL pupils

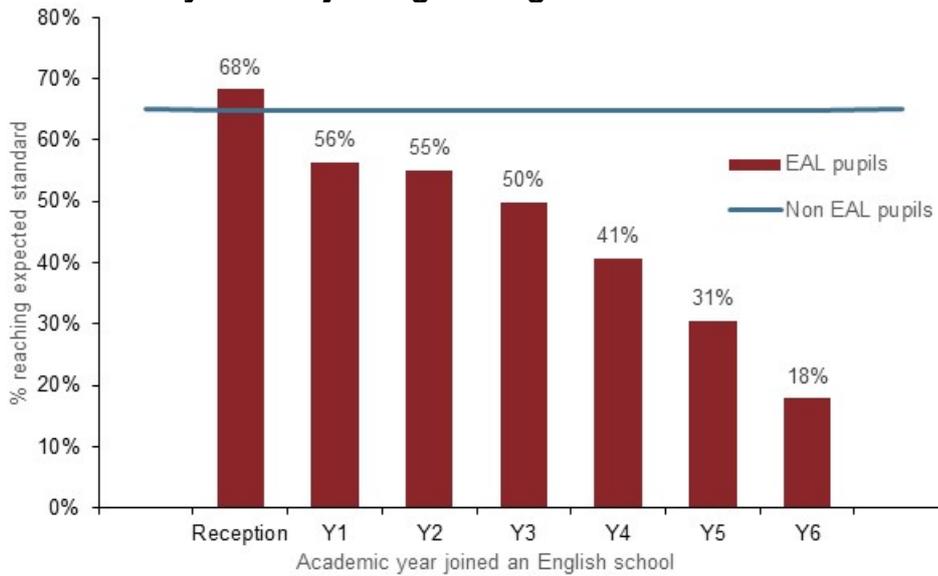
Key stage 2

Figure 1 shows attainment at the end of key stage 2 for EAL pupils by time of joining an English school³. The horizontal line shows the corresponding percentage for all pupils whose first language is English.

Those EAL pupils who joined an English school in reception were slightly more likely to reach the expected standard in reading, writing and maths than pupils whose first language was English. EAL pupils who joined an English school after reception were less likely to reach the expected standard than pupils whose first language was English, with the likelihood of a pupil meeting this standard declining the later they arrived.

³ We have not controlled for any differences in the characteristics of those arriving in the English education system at different times.

Figure 1: Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by time of joining an English school



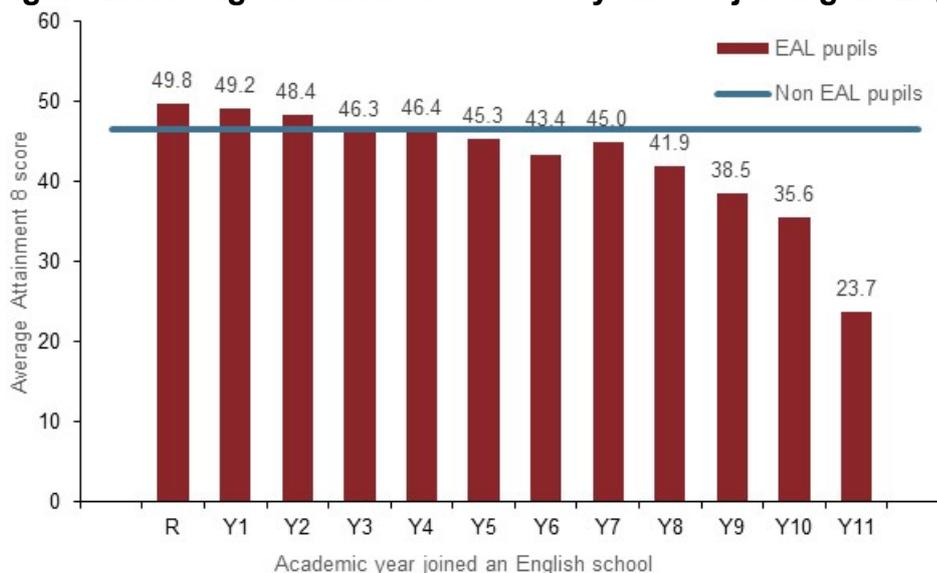
Base: pupils at the end of key stage 2 in state-funded schools, 2017/18

Key stage 4

Figure 2 shows the average Attainment 8 score for EAL pupils by time of joining an English school. The horizontal line shows the corresponding score for all pupils whose first language is English.

EAL pupils who joined an English school before year 2 have, on average, a slightly higher Attainment 8 score than pupils whose first language was English. EAL pupils who joined an English school after this tend to have lower Attainment 8 scores, with Attainment 8 scores declining noticeably for pupils who arrived after year 8.

Figure 2: Average Attainment 8 score by time of joining an English school



Base: pupils at the end of key stage 4 in state-funded schools, 2017/18



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