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## **PUPIL ABSENCE IN SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND, AUTUMN TERM 2009 AND SPRING TERM 2010**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Statistical First Release (SFR) reports on absence in maintained primary schools, maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies in England in autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010. It is based on pupil level absence data collected via the School Census; data is combined from autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 returns.

This release provides information on the levels of absence (authorised, unauthorised and overall) by type of school, summary statistics on persistent absentees and the proportion of absence by reason, as well as absence rates by pupil characteristics.

The main changes from last year's SFR are:

- Table 3 has been amended to show reason for absence by gender
- The addition of an absence by pupil characteristics table (Table 4) and an absence by ethnic group table (Table 5)

Local authority tables for maintained primary, maintained secondary and state-funded secondary schools are also provided as additional tables on the Department's website.

Final data for the academic year 2009/10 will be published in March 2011 and will include further analysis on absence and pupil characteristics.

### **KEY POINTS**

#### **ABSENCE RATES FOR AUTUMN TERM 2009 AND SPRING TERM 2010**

For maintained primary and state-funded secondary schools the percentage of half days missed due to absence for the combined autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 are (figures in brackets refer to autumn term 2008 and spring term 2009):

Authorised Absence	5.03 per cent (5.28 per cent)
Unauthorised Absence	1.01 per cent (1.03 per cent)
Overall Absence	6.04 per cent (6.31 per cent)

The rate of overall absence in primary schools was 5.34 per cent (compared with 5.46 per cent in autumn term 2008 and spring term 2009). The rate for state-funded secondary schools was 6.84 per cent (7.28 in autumn term 2008 and spring term 2009). (Table 1)

## PERSISTENT ABSENTEES

A persistent absentee (PA) is defined as having 52 or more sessions of absence (authorised and unauthorised) across the two terms, around 20 per cent overall absence rate. Please see Technical Notes 7 and 16 for more information on persistent absence thresholds and the effect of term length on PA rates.

- Across the two terms there were 59,380 persistent absentees in maintained primary schools (1.8 per cent of pupil enrolments) and 130,930 in state-funded secondary schools (4.5 per cent of pupil enrolments). (Table 2)
- The rate of overall absence (authorised and unauthorised) for persistent absentees is 33.5 per cent, which is over 5 times higher than the rate for all pupils. (Table 2)
- Across primary and state-funded secondary schools, persistent absentees account for 16.8 per cent of overall absence – 12.0 per cent of authorised absence and 40.6 per cent of unauthorised absence. (Table 2)

## REASON FOR ABSENCE

- The most commonly reported reason for pupil absence was “**illness (not medical or dental appointments)**” which accounted for 3.65 per cent of sessions (where reason was provided). (Table 3)
- Absence for **family holidays** accounted for 0.51 per cent of sessions – this equates to around 3.9 million school days in the autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010. Some 76 per cent of these sessions were authorised by the school. (Table 3)

## ABSENCE BY PUPIL CHARACTERISTICS

- The rate of overall absence decreases to national curriculum year group 4 and then increases from national curriculum year group 6 to year group 12 and above. The rate of overall absence for pupils in national curriculum year group 11 (8.09 per cent) was 1.5 times the rate of overall absence for those pupils in national curriculum year group 7 (5.37 per cent). (Table 4)
- The rate of overall absence for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals (8.63 per cent) is 1.4 times higher than that for all pupils (6.04 per cent). (Table 4)
- With regard to pupils with special educational needs, the highest rates of overall absence were amongst those pupils at *School Action Plus* (9.26 per cent). This is 1.7 times that for those pupils with no identified special educational needs. (Table 4)

- Absence rates were highest for Traveller of Irish Heritage (23.22 per cent overall absence) and Gypsy /Roma (17.87 per cent overall absence) ethnic groups. The rate of overall absence for pupils of Asian and Mixed ethnic origin were above the national average (6.25 per cent and 6.48 per cent, respectively); for pupils of Black and Chinese ethnic origin the rates were well below the national average (4.83 per cent and 3.61 per cent, respectively). The overall absence rate for all pupils was 6.04 per cent. Caution is recommended in interpreting the data for Traveller of Irish Heritage children and Gypsy/Roma children due to potential under-reporting for, and low numbers, of these ethnic classifications. (Table 5)

## TABLES

- Table 1** Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools: Rates of absence in England, autumn term 2006 and spring term 2007 to autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010
- Table 2** Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools: Persistent absentees in England, autumn term 2006 and spring term 2007 to autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010
- Table 3** Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools: Absence by reason and gender in England, autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010
- Table 4** Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools: Pupil absence by characteristics in England, autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010
- Table 5** Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools: Pupil absence by ethnic group in England, autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Supplementary tables containing figures at Local Authority (LA) and Government Office Region (GOR) level are available on the DfE statistics website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000962/index.shtml>

- Table 6** Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools: Pupil Absence by type of school, by Local Authority Area and Government Office Region in England, autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010
- Table 7** Maintained Secondary Schools: Pupil Absence, by Local Authority Area and Government Office Region in England, autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010

## RELATED PUBLICATIONS

DfE: Pupil Absence in Schools in England, Including Pupil Characteristics: 2008/09

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000918/index.shtml>

DfE: Pupil Absence in Schools in England: Autumn Term 2008 and Spring Term 2009

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000882/index.shtml>

DfE: Pupil Absence in Schools in England - Spring Term 2010

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000946/index.shtml>

DfE: Statistical Release - Pupil Absence in Autumn Term 2009

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000928/index.shtml>

Guidance on school and pupil characteristics collected via the School Census is available on the DfE Statistics website: <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/schoolcensus.shtml>

## TECHNICAL NOTES

### Definitions

1. The more reliable measures of absence are deemed to be rates of overall absence, persistent absentees and reason for absence rather than rates of authorised and unauthorised absence. The decision to authorise an absence is a local decision leading to unmeasured variation both between and within schools. In addition, some 2.92 per cent of all possible sessions missed were due to “unauthorised absence – no reason yet”. Until the reason for absence is known, schools should record a pupil as “no reason yet”. So some cases of unauthorised absence may change to authorised absence at a later stage (once an explanation has been reported to the school). However, if the reason for absence is supplied to the school after the School Census database has closed, the absence will still be recorded as “no reason yet”. Using overall absence rates and the rate of persistent absentees removes variation and gives more suitable data for performance reporting. Both sets of measures are given in this release, although limitations in comparing rates of authorised and unauthorised absence should be noted.
2. The Department has published specific guidance ‘Keeping Pupil Registers’, which provides guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006; and ‘Absence and Attendance Codes’ which provides guidance on the use of codes to record pupil attendance and absence in schools. Both are available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/schoolattendancedata/a0010008/pupil-registration-regulations-and-guidance>.
3. In law, parents of children of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 15 at the start of the school year) are required to ensure that they receive a suitable education by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Failure to comply with this statutory duty can lead to prosecution. Local Authorities (LAs) are responsible in law for making sure that pupils attend school.
4. Schools are required to take attendance registers twice a day: once at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. In their register, schools are required to distinguish whether pupils are present, engaged in an approved educational activity or are absent. Where a day pupil of compulsory school age is absent, schools have to indicate in their register whether the absence is authorised by the school or unauthorised.
5. Authorised absence is absence with permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (for example, illness).
6. Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences. Arriving late for school, after the register has closed, is recorded as unauthorised absence.
7. The Department’s key measure of persistent absence (PA) relates to the school year and is defined in term of those missing 64 or more sessions, around 20 per cent overall absence. For the autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 this is taken as being absent for 52 or more possible sessions. For autumn term 2007 and spring term 2008 a persistent absentee was taken as being absent for 48 or more possible sessions. This reduction was needed because of the shorter spring term in 2008, due to the early date of Easter in 2008. This term was shorter by approximately 20 possible sessions in the majority (approximately 82 per cent) of schools. To aid transparency and simplicity our termly PA thresholds don’t tend to change from year to year (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

## **Data Collection**

8. To account for the growth in the academies sector, the majority of tables include city technology colleges and academies along with LA maintained secondary schools in a category labelled "state-funded". However, in cases where there is expected to be continued interest, the figures for LA maintained secondary schools only have also been provided. Figures for academies and city technology colleges are not shown separately. Specific analyses of absence in academies were published in SFR 07/2010 for the 2008/09 academic year (<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000918/index.shtml>) and will be published in March 2011 for the 2009/10 academic year.

9. In 2006 the School Census (SC) started to collect pupil level absence data on a termly basis (spring, summer and autumn collections) from maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies relating to absence during the 2005/06 school year. For the 2006/07 school year the scope of collection of the SC was extended to include maintained primary schools and special schools. The SC collects information for a pupil's attendance in the term prior to the census. For example, the spring SC collects information on absence during the autumn term. Special schools provide annual absence data in the autumn SC and are therefore not included in this release.

10. Reason for absence was collected for the first time for the autumn term 2006. Schools are able to provide absence data using a reason code or by using total figures for the number of sessions missed due to authorised or unauthorised absence. A small proportion of schools have provided both a breakdown of absence by reason and totals. In addition, some schools do not have the required software to provide absence data by reason, and therefore are only able to provide overall totals. To derive absence rates, the sum of absence by reason has been used unless this is missing or is less than the total provided, in which case overall totals have been used.

11. Data are collected a term in arrears, meaning that where a school closes, data are not collected for the last term the school was open. For schools which close at the end of the autumn term, data for the autumn term will not be collected. In 2009/10 there were 3 schools which closed at the end of the autumn term and were superseded by new academies (other schools will also have closed). No adjustments have been made in the SFR in relation to the school absences, but this will have had little effect on the national data. Year on year comparisons of local authority data may be affected due to schools converting to academies.

## **Data Coverage and Quality**

12. Schools have provided, via the SC, individual level attendance data relating to the autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 for pupils aged 5 to 15 (at the start of the school year), who are non-boarders at the time of the census. In each term, the SC has collected the number of possible sessions of attendance; and the number of sessions missed, broken down by reason for absence, and overall totals of sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence.

13. The School Census collects information for a pupil's attendance in the term prior to the census. Absence data for the autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 have been derived by linking pupil records collected in the spring 2010 SC and summer 2010 SC to derive overall two-term totals for the number of possible sessions; the number of sessions missed by reason for absence and the number of sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence for each enrolment. Pupil characteristic data are not collected retrospectively. For example, the spring 2010 SC collects a pupil's national curriculum year group as at spring 2010 together with their attendance in the previous autumn 2009 term. Derived two-term absence totals have been linked to characteristic data collected in the spring SC. Where characteristic data are missing in the spring SC, information collected in the summer SC has been used. For free school meals and special educational needs, where this characteristic data was still missing, information collected in the autumn 2009 census, or, finally, the spring 2009 census has been used.
14. Information relating to pupil absence counts the number of pupil enrolments rather than the number of pupils. Where a pupil has moved school throughout the year, they will be counted more than once as they have recorded attendance data in more than one school. Pupil absence is recorded for the period a pupil is enrolled at a school. Where a pupil has a dual registration their absence may be returned from both schools, if both schools return absence data via the School Census.
15. For a pupil enrolment, if the number of possible sessions in a term is zero/missing or is less than the total number of sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence, or if the total number of possible sessions exceeds the limit for the term, then the absence variables have been set to zero for that term only, and that term's information has been discounted from this SFR. If the total number of possible sessions for each and every term equals zero, then the enrolment has not been included.
16. Termly data can be affected by changes in term length and this appears to be the case for autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 when compared to autumn term 2008 and spring term 2009. Our data shows variability in the number of possible sessions in autumn term 2009 when compared to autumn term 2008 - school closures caused by extreme weather and swine flu may have contributed to this variability. Some school closures were also reported in spring term 2010, as a result of bad weather. Where a school closes, neither the sessions missed or the possible sessions during the affected period are reported on the SC, therefore absence rates are largely unaffected. However, fewer possible sessions provide less opportunity for pupils to become PAs based on the fixed threshold of 52 sessions, but there has been no adjustment to account for this. Consequently, comparisons between two-term data should be treated with caution. End year results provide the definitive view of PA.
17. The information shown for attendance and absence is for two terms of the 2009/10 academic year. Data for schools which have since closed is included for the reporting period prior to their closure.
18. The information in this SFR is based on data returned by schools as part of the School Census. It does not include data which has been submitted by local authorities or schools outside of the School Census data collection.
19. The data presented here are based on the attendance registers which are taken twice a day: once at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. It therefore does not include "internal unauthorised absence". This is defined as unauthorised absence by pupils between the school's twice daily registrations, i.e. a pupil is effectively recorded as attending during morning or afternoon registration but is physically not present at another part of the relevant session. The Department's current data systems are limited insofar as they only record and measure the registrations, not any subsequent absence.

20. The data contained in this SFR relates only to those pupils on the roll of a maintained primary or secondary school, city technology college or academy. It does not include those children who are not registered at a school or who attend special schools.

## General

21. For all national tables (tables 1 to 5), enrolment numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure was also zero.

22. For all local authority level tables (tables 6 and 7), national and government office region enrolment numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. Enrolment numbers from 1 to 4 inclusive have been suppressed, being replaced in the table by an 'x'. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure was also zero. Where the numerator or denominator of any percentage calculated on enrolment numbers is from 1 to 4 inclusive, this has been replaced by an 'x'.

23. All percentages have been rounded to two decimal places, except where they refer to persistent absentees, where one decimal place has been used.

24. The following symbols have been used within this publication:

- 0 - zero
- x - small number suppressed to preserve confidentiality (see Technical Note 22)
- .

25. Final absence statistics relating to the full 2009/10 school year are intended for publication as National Statistics in March 2011. This product will add value to the emerging findings published in the termly reports and this SFR by presenting whole year findings (cumulative results from the three termly collections) and providing more detailed analyses of absence by pupil characteristics and persistent absentees.

26. This is a National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. We have included the additional pupil characteristic tables as a result of user consultation on our absence statistics, carried out in 2010. We would welcome further feedback; please contact [schools.statistics@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:schools.statistics@education.gsi.gov.uk).

27. Further information, including local authority level analyses, are available through the following link:- <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000962/index.shtml>.

28. There are no planned revisions to this SFR, however, if at a later date we need to make a revision, this will comply with the departmental revisions policy which is published at <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/nat-stats.shtml>.

29. Enquiries (non-media) about information contained in this document should be addressed to Schools Data Unit, Room 1F Area H, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington, Co Durham, DL3 9BG or e-mail [schools.statistics@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:schools.statistics@education.gsi.gov.uk)

30. Media enquiries about information contained in this Statistical First Release should be made to the Department's Press Office at DfE, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT or telephone 020 7925 6789.



Table 1

**MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND STATE-FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS (1)(2):  
RATES OF ABSENCE**Autumn Term 2006 and Spring Term 2007 to Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010  
England

	Autumn Term 2006 and Spring Term 2007	Autumn Term 2007 and Spring Term 2008	Autumn Term 2008 and Spring Term 2009	Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010
<b>Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)</b>				
Number of pupil enrolments (3)	6,444,630	6,352,360	6,287,410	6,265,000
Percentage of half days missed due to: (4)				
Authorised absence	5.47	5.29	5.28	5.03
Unauthorised absence	0.97	0.97	1.03	1.01
Overall absence	6.44	6.26	6.31	6.04
<b>Maintained Primary Schools (1)</b>				
Number of pupil enrolments (3)	3,428,390	3,377,690	3,346,350	3,344,410
Percentage of half days missed due to: (4)				
Authorised absence	4.73	4.79	4.81	4.67
Unauthorised absence	0.52	0.56	0.65	0.68
Overall absence	5.26	5.35	5.46	5.34
<b>State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)</b>				
Number of pupil enrolments (3)	3,016,240	2,974,670	2,941,060	2,920,590
Percentage of half days missed due to: (4)				
Authorised absence	6.30	5.86	5.81	5.44
Unauthorised absence	1.48	1.43	1.47	1.40
Overall absence	7.78	7.30	7.28	6.84

*Source: School Census*

(1) Includes middle schools as deemed.

(2) Includes maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies (including all through academies).

(3) Includes pupils aged 5 to 15 who were on roll for at least one session between 1 September and the end of the Spring term each year, even if they are no longer on the school roll, excluding boarders. Some pupils may be counted more than once (if they moved schools during the school year or are registered in more than one school). See Technical Notes 12 to 14.

(4) The number of sessions of authorised/unauthorised/overall absence expressed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions.

*Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component part because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.*

Table 2

**MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND STATE-FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS (1)(2):  
PERSISTENT ABSENTEES (3)**Autumn Term 2006 and Spring Term 2007 to Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010  
England

	Autumn Term 2006 and Spring Term 2007	Autumn Term 2007 and Spring Term 2008	Autumn Term 2008 and Spring Term 2009	Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010
<b>Maintained Primary and State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)</b>				
Number of pupil enrolments that are persistent absentees (3)(4)	283,080	272,760	241,200	190,310
Total number of pupil enrolments (4)	6,444,630	6,352,360	6,287,410	6,265,000
Percentage of pupil enrolments that are persistent absentees	4.4	4.3	3.8	3.0
Percentage of half days missed by persistent absentees due to (5):				
Authorised Absence	22.6	21.2	20.2	19.9
Unauthorised Absence	11.7	11.7	12.5	13.6
Overall absence	34.3	32.9	32.6	33.5
Percentage of absence for which persistent absentees are responsible (6):				
Authorised Absence	18.1	17.2	14.6	12.0
Unauthorised Absence	52.9	51.7	46.1	40.6
Overall absence	23.4	22.5	19.8	16.8
<b>Maintained Primary Schools (1)</b>				
Number of pupil enrolments that are persistent absentees (3)(4)	73,940	81,530	72,600	59,380
Total number of pupil enrolments (4)	3,428,390	3,377,690	3,346,350	3,344,410
Percentage of pupil enrolments that are persistent absentees	2.2	2.4	2.2	1.8
Percentage of half days missed by persistent absentees due to (5):				
Authorised Absence	22.4	21.3	20.4	20.5
Unauthorised Absence	7.2	7.2	7.7	8.5
Overall absence	29.6	28.5	28.2	29.0
Percentage of absence for which persistent absentees are responsible (6):				
Authorised Absence	10.2	10.8	9.2	7.8
Unauthorised Absence	29.9	30.9	26.0	22.3
Overall absence	12.2	12.9	11.2	9.6
<b>State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)</b>				
Number of pupil enrolments that are persistent absentees (3)(4)	209,140	191,240	168,600	130,930
Total number of pupil enrolments (4)	3,016,240	2,974,670	2,941,060	2,920,590
Percentage of pupil enrolments that are persistent absentees	6.9	6.4	5.7	4.5
Percentage of half days missed by persistent absentees due to (5):				
Authorised Absence	22.7	21.2	20.1	19.6
Unauthorised Absence	13.3	13.7	14.5	16.0
Overall absence	36.0	34.9	34.6	35.6
Percentage of absence for which persistent absentees are responsible (6):				
Authorised Absence	24.8	23.1	19.7	16.1
Unauthorised Absence	62.1	60.8	56.2	50.8
Overall absence	31.9	30.5	27.1	23.2

Source: School Census

(1) Includes middle schools as deemed.

(2) Includes maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies).

(3) Persistent Absentees are defined as having 52 or more sessions of absence (authorised and unauthorised) across the two terms, around 20 per cent overall absence rate. (This figure was 48 or more sessions for Autumn 2007 and Spring 2008 terms.) See Technical Note 7.

(4) Includes pupils aged 5 to 15 who were on roll for at least one session between 1 September and the end of the Spring term each year, even if they are no longer on the school roll, excluding boarders. Some pupils may be counted more than once (if they moved schools during the school year or are registered in more than one school). See Technical Notes 12 to 14.

(5) The number of sessions missed due to authorised/unauthorised/overall absence expressed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions.

(6) The total number of sessions missed due to authorised/unauthorised/overall absence by persistent absentees expressed as a percentage of the total number of sessions missed due to authorised/unauthorised/overall absence by all pupil enrolments.

*Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.*

Table 3

**MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND STATE-FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS (1)(2):  
ABSENCE BY REASON AND GENDER**

 Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010  
 England

	Maintained Primary Schools (1)			State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)			Total (1)(2)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</b>									
Percentage of absent sessions due to (4):									
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	62.46	63.37	62.91	57.78	59.67	58.73	60.03	61.38	60.70
Medical/dental appointments	4.98	4.60	4.80	5.69	6.45	6.07	5.35	5.59	5.47
Religious observance	1.70	1.69	1.70	0.93	0.84	0.88	1.30	1.23	1.27
Study leave	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.46	0.45	0.45	0.24	0.24	0.24
Traveller absence	0.32	0.33	0.33	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.21	0.21	0.21
Agreed family holiday	9.23	9.57	9.40	3.51	3.53	3.52	6.25	6.33	6.29
Agreed extended family holiday	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.19	0.18	0.18
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.54	0.05	0.30	3.31	1.16	2.22	1.98	0.65	1.32
Other authorised circumstances	7.70	7.50	7.60	7.61	7.35	7.48	7.65	7.42	7.54
<b>Total Authorised Absence</b>	<b>87.26</b>	<b>87.44</b>	<b>87.35</b>	<b>79.47</b>	<b>79.59</b>	<b>79.53</b>	<b>83.21</b>	<b>83.23</b>	<b>83.22</b>
Percentage of absent sessions due to (4):									
Family holiday not agreed	2.31	2.36	2.34	1.77	1.79	1.78	2.03	2.06	2.04
Arrived late	1.13	1.13	1.13	1.11	1.10	1.11	1.12	1.11	1.12
Other unauthorised circumstances	7.09	6.91	7.00	13.99	14.01	14.00	10.69	10.72	10.70
No reason yet	2.21	2.16	2.18	3.65	3.51	3.58	2.96	2.88	2.92
<b>Total Unauthorised Absence</b>	<b>12.74</b>	<b>12.56</b>	<b>12.65</b>	<b>20.53</b>	<b>20.41</b>	<b>20.47</b>	<b>16.79</b>	<b>16.77</b>	<b>16.78</b>
<b>Total Overall Absence</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</b>									
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (4):									
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.33	3.37	3.35	3.84	4.17	4.00	3.56	3.74	3.65
Medical/dental appointments	0.27	0.24	0.26	0.38	0.45	0.41	0.32	0.34	0.33
Religious observance	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.08
Study leave	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01
Traveller absence	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Agreed family holiday	0.49	0.51	0.50	0.23	0.25	0.24	0.37	0.39	0.38
Agreed extended family holiday	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.22	0.08	0.15	0.12	0.04	0.08
Other authorised circumstances	0.41	0.40	0.40	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.45	0.45	0.45
Unclassified (5)	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
<b>Total Authorised Absence</b>	<b>4.66</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>5.31</b>	<b>5.57</b>	<b>5.44</b>	<b>4.96</b>	<b>5.09</b>	<b>5.03</b>
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (4):									
Family holiday not agreed	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.12
Arrived late	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.07
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.38	0.37	0.37	0.93	0.98	0.95	0.63	0.65	0.64
No reason yet	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.18	0.18	0.18
Unclassified (5)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Unauthorised Absence</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>1.37</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>1.40</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>1.01</b>
<b>Total Overall Absence</b>	<b>5.34</b>	<b>5.34</b>	<b>5.34</b>	<b>6.68</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>6.84</b>	<b>5.96</b>	<b>6.12</b>	<b>6.04</b>

Source: School Census

(1) Includes middle schools as deemed.

(2) Includes maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies).

(3) The number of sessions absent by reason expressed as a percentage of the total number of sessions absent as reported by reason (not overall totals). See Technical Notes 10 and 12.

(4) The number of sessions absent by reason expressed as a percentage of the total number of sessions possible. See Technical Notes 10 and 12.

(5) Includes absence returned as either authorised or unauthorised totals but not broken down by reason.

Table 4

**MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND STATE-FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS (1)(2):  
PUPIL ABSENCE BY CHARACTERISTICS (3)**

 Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010  
England

	Maintained Primary Schools (1)				State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)				Total (1)(2)			
	Pupil enrolments in schools during autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 (4)	Percentage of half days missed (5):			Pupil enrolments in schools during autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 (4)	Percentage of half days missed (5):			Pupil enrolments in schools during autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 (4)	Percentage of half days missed (5):		
Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	Overall absence	Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	Overall absence	Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	Overall absence	
<b>Gender</b>												
Boys	1,708,510	4.66	0.68	5.34	1,482,130	5.31	1.37	6.68	3,190,640	4.96	1.00	5.96
Girls	1,635,900	4.67	0.67	5.34	1,438,460	5.57	1.43	7.00	3,074,360	5.09	1.03	6.12
Total	3,344,410	4.67	0.68	5.34	2,920,590	5.44	1.40	6.84	6,265,000	5.03	1.01	6.04
<b>Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility</b>												
Known to be eligible for FSM	630,850	5.90	1.55	7.45	455,220	7.02	3.24	10.26	1,086,070	6.37	2.26	8.63
Other pupils (6)	2,713,560	4.38	0.48	4.86	2,465,370	5.15	1.07	6.22	5,178,930	4.75	0.76	5.51
Total (6)	3,344,410	4.67	0.68	5.34	2,920,590	5.44	1.40	6.84	6,265,000	5.03	1.01	6.04
<b>National Curriculum Year Group:</b>												
1 and below	572,330	5.22	0.73	5.95	1,750	5.32	1.16	6.48	574,090	5.22	0.73	5.95
2	555,470	4.69	0.68	5.37	1,600	4.69	1.07	5.75	557,070	4.69	0.68	5.37
3	533,860	4.44	0.64	5.08	1,540	4.40	1.07	5.48	535,400	4.44	0.65	5.09
4	537,440	4.46	0.63	5.08	1,520	4.63	0.88	5.51	538,960	4.46	0.63	5.08
5	526,140	4.46	0.62	5.09	21,650	4.64	0.40	5.04	547,790	4.47	0.61	5.08
6	535,140	4.49	0.61	5.09	25,370	4.91	0.43	5.33	560,510	4.51	0.60	5.10
7	4,370	5.24	0.45	5.69	553,370	4.74	0.63	5.37	557,740	4.75	0.63	5.37
8	70	4.57	0.33	4.90	571,710	5.35	0.95	6.30	571,780	5.35	0.95	6.30
9	20	4.87	0.29	5.16	562,930	5.59	1.28	6.87	562,950	5.59	1.28	6.87
10	10	4.23	0.17	4.40	570,290	5.56	1.75	7.31	570,300	5.56	1.75	7.31
11	20	3.35	0.38	3.73	567,010	5.81	2.28	8.09	567,020	5.81	2.28	8.09
12 and above	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	760	5.36	4.41	9.78	760	5.36	4.41	9.78
Total (6)	3,344,410	4.67	0.68	5.34	2,920,590	5.44	1.40	6.84	6,265,000	5.03	1.01	6.04
<b>First Language</b>												
First language is known or believed to be other than English	547,870	5.12	1.11	6.23	340,240	4.65	1.42	6.06	888,120	4.94	1.23	6.17
First language is known or believed to be English	2,791,210	4.58	0.59	5.17	2,567,580	5.54	1.40	6.94	5,358,790	5.04	0.98	6.02
Total (6)	3,344,410	4.67	0.68	5.34	2,920,590	5.44	1.40	6.84	6,265,000	5.03	1.01	6.04
<b>Special Educational Needs</b>												
Statements of SEN	55,290	6.78	0.83	7.61	62,360	7.04	2.19	9.23	117,650	6.92	1.55	8.47
School Action Plus	252,880	5.86	1.18	7.04	218,100	7.75	4.10	11.85	470,980	6.73	2.52	9.26
School Action	465,030	5.40	1.10	6.49	414,550	6.32	2.21	8.53	879,580	5.83	1.62	7.45
No identified SEN	2,562,590	4.37	0.54	4.91	2,219,930	5.00	0.97	5.97	4,782,520	4.66	0.74	5.40
Total (6)	3,344,410	4.67	0.68	5.34	2,920,590	5.44	1.40	6.84	6,265,000	5.03	1.01	6.04

Source: School Census

(1) Includes middle schools as deemed.

(2) Includes maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies).

(3) See Technical Note 13 for further information on how absence and pupil characteristic data have been linked.

(4) Includes pupils age 5 to 15 who were on roll for at least one session between 1 September 2009 and the end of the Spring term 2010, even if they are no longer on the school roll, excluding boarders. Some pupils may be counted more than once (if they moved schools during the school year or are registered in more than one school). See Technical Notes 12 to 14.

(5) The number of sessions missed due to authorised/ unauthorised/ overall absence expressed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions.

(6) Includes pupil enrolments for whom characteristic data were unclassified or missing. Total rates may be higher than rates for each subgroup.

Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Table 5  
**MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND STATE-FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS (1)(2):**  
**PUPIL ABSENCE BY ETHNIC GROUP (3)**  
Autumn Term 2009 and Spring Term 2010  
England

	Maintained Primary Schools (1)			State-funded Secondary Schools (1)(2)				Total (1)(2)				
	Pupil enrolments in schools during autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 (4)	Percentage of half days missed (5):			Pupil enrolments in schools during autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 (4)	Percentage of half days missed (5):			Pupil enrolments in schools during autumn term 2009 and spring term 2010 (4)	Percentage of half days missed (5):		
		Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence		Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence		Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence
<b>White</b>	<b>2,614,040</b>	<b>4.62</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>5.20</b>	<b>2,378,270</b>	<b>5.60</b>	<b>1.41</b>	<b>7.01</b>	<b>4,992,310</b>	<b>5.08</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>6.06</b>
White British	2,452,790	4.54	0.53	5.08	2,261,920	5.59	1.37	6.96	4,714,710	5.04	0.94	5.98
Irish	10,750	4.91	0.88	5.79	10,040	6.04	1.60	7.64	20,790	5.46	1.23	6.69
Traveller of Irish heritage	3,610	15.27	6.64	21.91	1,270	15.77	10.93	26.70	4,880	15.40	7.82	23.22
Gypsy/ Roma	8,580	11.40	5.60	17.00	4,040	10.31	9.33	19.64	12,620	11.05	6.82	17.87
Any other White background	138,310	5.37	1.09	6.46	101,000	5.52	1.83	7.35	239,310	5.43	1.40	6.83
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>146,750</b>	<b>4.90</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>5.88</b>	<b>103,780</b>	<b>5.57</b>	<b>1.76</b>	<b>7.32</b>	<b>250,530</b>	<b>5.18</b>	<b>1.30</b>	<b>6.48</b>
White and Black Caribbean	44,570	5.01	1.20	6.21	36,230	6.00	2.18	8.19	80,800	5.46	1.64	7.10
White and Black African	16,990	4.50	0.91	5.41	10,650	5.10	1.64	6.74	27,640	4.73	1.19	5.93
White and Asian	31,710	4.87	0.75	5.63	21,020	5.33	1.38	6.71	52,730	5.06	1.00	6.06
Any other Mixed background	53,470	4.95	0.94	5.89	35,890	5.40	1.58	6.97	89,360	5.13	1.20	6.33
<b>Asian</b>	<b>323,890</b>	<b>5.41</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>6.44</b>	<b>224,760</b>	<b>4.80</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>5.98</b>	<b>548,650</b>	<b>5.16</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>6.25</b>
Indian	84,510	4.76	0.66	5.42	66,250	4.14	0.72	4.85	150,750	4.48	0.68	5.17
Pakistani	136,510	5.79	1.22	7.01	86,760	5.52	1.50	7.03	223,270	5.69	1.33	7.02
Bangladeshi	56,000	5.94	1.36	7.30	37,090	4.95	1.49	6.44	93,080	5.55	1.41	6.96
Any other Asian background	46,880	4.81	0.79	5.60	34,670	4.13	0.94	5.07	81,540	4.52	0.85	5.37
<b>Black</b>	<b>174,410</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>130,920</b>	<b>3.79</b>	<b>1.21</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>305,330</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>4.83</b>
Black Caribbean	47,430	4.18	1.28	5.46	41,230	4.59	1.57	6.16	88,660	4.37	1.41	5.78
Black African	106,200	3.47	0.79	4.26	75,140	3.25	0.93	4.18	181,340	3.38	0.85	4.23
Any other Black background	20,770	4.01	1.10	5.11	14,550	4.29	1.57	5.86	35,330	4.12	1.30	5.42
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>11,690</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>10,490</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>22,180</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>3.61</b>
<b>Any other ethnic group</b>	<b>50,880</b>	<b>5.03</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>6.27</b>	<b>35,190</b>	<b>4.61</b>	<b>1.52</b>	<b>6.14</b>	<b>86,060</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>6.22</b>
<b>Minority Ethnic Pupils (6)</b>	<b>868,860</b>	<b>5.01</b>	<b>1.08</b>	<b>6.09</b>	<b>621,490</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>6.32</b>	<b>1,490,340</b>	<b>4.95</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>6.19</b>
<b>All pupils (7)</b>	<b>3,344,410</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>5.34</b>	<b>2,920,590</b>	<b>5.44</b>	<b>1.40</b>	<b>6.84</b>	<b>6,265,000</b>	<b>5.03</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>6.04</b>

Source: School Census

(1) Includes middle schools as deemed.

(2) Includes maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies).

(3) See Technical Note 13 for further information on how absence and pupil characteristic data have been linked.

(4) Includes pupils age 5 to 15 who were on roll for at least one session between 1 September 2009 and the end of the Spring term 2010, even if they are no longer on the school roll, excluding boarders. Some pupils may be counted more than once (if they moved schools during the school year or are registered in more than one school). See Technical Notes 12 to 14.

(5) The number of sessions missed due to authorised/ unauthorised/ overall absence expressed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions.

(6) Pupils who have been classified according to their ethnic group, excluding White British.

(7) Includes pupil enrolments for whom information on ethnic group was unclassified or missing.

Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.