



Key stage 4 performance, 2019 (provisional)



Latest headline data for pupils at the end of key stage 4

State-funded schools, England¹

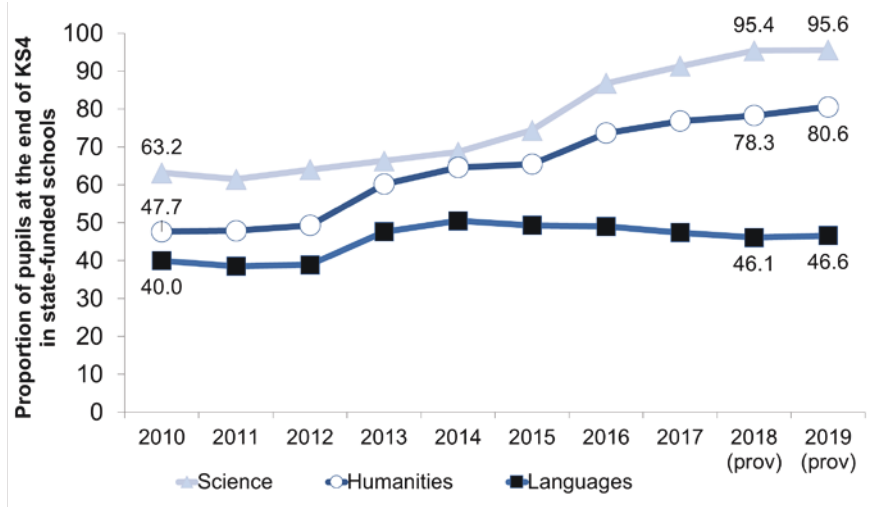
Measure	% EBacc entry	% English and maths, grade 5 or above	Attainment 8	EBacc Average Point Score
Change from previous year ²	↑	→	→	→
2019 provisional	40.0%	43.0%	46.5	4.06
2018 provisional	38.4%	43.0%	46.4	4.03

Compared with 2018 provisional data, for state-funded schools:

- EBacc (English Baccalaureate) entry rate has **increased** by 1.6 percentage points to 40.0%, the highest entry rate since the introduction of the EBacc measure in 2010.
- The percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 4 who achieved grade 5 or above in English and mathematics was **unchanged**.
- Average Attainment 8 score per pupil was **broadly stable**.
- The EBacc average point score (EBacc APS) remained **stable**.

EBacc entry

- Humanities, 80.6% in 2019, 2.3 percentage point **increase**
- Languages, 46.6% in 2019, 0.5 percentage point **increase** after consecutive decreases
- Science, 95.6% in 2019, 0.2 percentage point **increase**



¹ State-funded schools include academies, free schools, city technology colleges, further education colleges with provision for 14- to 16-year-olds and state-funded special schools. There were 3,965 schools and 542,689 end-KS4 pupils.

² Key stage 4 data in both years is based on provisional data for improved comparability.

- English, 95.8%, and mathematics, 97.3%, entry rates were both unchanged

About this release

This release summarises exam entry and achievements of pupils at the end of key stage 4³ (KS4) in 2019. Figures are available at national, regional and local authority level. For comparison of schools and colleges' performance, please use the [School Performance Tables](#) website.

The data in this release is provisional. The statistics in this release are based on the results data that awarding organisations supply to the department. This includes the vast majority of pupils' results; however, it will not take account of any amendment requests made by schools during the September checking exercise. These amendments will be incorporated into the revised release, due to be published in January 2020, alongside the revised secondary school performance tables.

The measures covered in this release include qualifications that count towards the secondary school performance tables⁴. Schools that offer unapproved qualifications, such as unregulated international GCSEs, will not have this data counted in the secondary school performance tables. Pupils' achievements in these qualifications are therefore not reflected in this release.

A section on considerations when using KS4 statistics can be found in the **Entry patterns and qualification reform** section.

About this report

This report will compare provisional results for 2019 to provisional results from 2018, to take into account the normal change in results between provisional and revised data. There is usually a slight increase in the key national statistics due to accepted amendment requests made by schools⁵. As such, users should be aware that the statistics in this release may be revised in a similar pattern in January 2020. For context, in 2018 there was an increase of 0.2 points in the Attainment 8 score in all schools, and 0.1 points in state-funded schools, between provisional and revised.

State-funded schools are the focus of the commentary for reasons given in the **Entry patterns and qualification reform** section.

Feedback

³ Pupils are identified as being at the end of key stage 4 if they were on roll at the school and in year 11 at the time of the January school census. Age is calculated as at 31 August at the start of the academic year, and the majority of pupils at the end of key stage 4 were age 15 at this point. Some pupils may complete this key stage in an earlier or later year group.

⁴ A list of qualifications that count in the secondary school performance tables each year up to 2021 can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-4-qualifications-discount-codes-and-point-scores>

⁵ E.g. adding outcomes of re-marks or late or missing results.

We welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

2019 headline accountability measures

The headline accountability measures for secondary schools include: Progress 8, EBacc entry, destinations of pupils after key stage 4⁶, attainment in English and mathematics, Attainment 8 and EBacc APS. For more information, see the [secondary accountability guidance](#).

Progress 8

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 (KS2) to the end of KS4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score (see below) – with the national average Attainment 8 score of all pupils who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment'), calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school. Progress 8 is a relative measure, therefore the national average Progress 8 score for mainstream schools is very close to zero⁷.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry

The EBacc was first introduced into the secondary school performance tables in 2010. It allows people to see how many pupils are entering GCSEs (or AS level qualifications) in core academic subjects at KS4. The EBacc consists of English, maths, science, a language, and history or geography. To count in the EBacc, qualifications must be on the [English Baccalaureate list of qualifications](#).

Attainment in English and mathematics (grades 5 or above)⁸

This measure looks at the percentage of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in both English and mathematics.

Attainment 8

Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications. This includes: English, double weighted if both GCSEs in language and literature are taken; maths, double weighted; three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc); and three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the [DfE approved list](#).

EBacc average point score

The EBacc average point score (EBacc APS) was introduced into secondary school performance tables in 2018. It measures pupils' point scores across the five pillars of the EBacc – with a zero for any missing pillars. This ensures the attainment of all

⁶ Destinations of pupils after KS4 are covered in a separate publication at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-destinations>

⁷ When including pupils at special schools the national average is not zero, as Progress 8 scores for special schools are calculated using Attainment 8 estimates based on pupils in mainstream schools.

⁸ This includes AS-level qualification passes at grades A-E

pupils is recognised, not just those at particular grade boundaries, encouraging schools to enter pupils of all abilities, and support them to achieve their full potential.

Entry patterns and qualification reform

New, reformed GCSEs in English and mathematics were taught from September 2015, with the first examinations taking place in Summer 2017. New GCSEs in other subjects were firstly phased in for teaching from September 2016, continued into 2017 and a very small number in 2018, 2019, and 2020. As they are introduced, only the newly reformed GCSEs will count in secondary school performance tables.

The impact of different entry patterns between schools is clear in table 1.

Table 1: Headline measures for state-funded, independent and all schools
England, 2019 (provisional)

2019 (provisional)	% EBacc entry	% English and maths, grade 5 or above	Attainment 8	EBacc Average Point Score
State-funded	40.0%	43.0%	46.5	4.06
Independent	8.8%	15.9%	33.2	2.59
All schools	36.5%	39.8%	44.5	3.86

The difference between the figures for all schools and state-funded schools is predominantly due to the impact of unregulated international GCSEs, which are popular in independent schools and do not count in secondary school performance tables. This should be considered when comparing between different school types, in particular independent schools. For this reason, this report will focus primarily on **state-funded schools only**.

Users should be cautious when comparing headline measures and additional measures (such as EBacc attainment at grades 5 or above and grades 4 or above) over time, as:

- only reformed GCSEs, as they are introduced, are included in the secondary school performance tables. Points awarded to unreformed GCSE qualifications have changed over the last few years (see Annex B of the [secondary accountability guidance](#)).
- Prior to 2017, an A*-C pass (equivalent to a grade 4 or above)⁹ was required to achieve the English and maths and EBacc attainment measure,

⁹ For details on how the old and new grade structures compare, see: <https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2018/03/02/gcse-9-to-1-grades-a-brief-guide-for-parents/>

whereas once reformed qualifications were introduced in relevant subjects, a grade 5 or above was required.

In 2019 secondary school performance tables, the only GCSE subjects yet to be reformed are: biblical Hebrew, Gujarati, Persian, Portuguese and Turkish.

KS4 entry and achievement

1. English and maths attainment at grade 5 or above is stable

In 2019, the proportion of pupils in state-funded schools who achieved a grade 5 or above in English and maths remained stable in comparison to 2018 at 43.0%. Considering different levels of prior attainment¹⁰:

- 76.2% of pupils with high prior attainment met this threshold
- 22.1% of pupils with middle prior attainment met this threshold
- 1.9% of pupils with low prior attainment met this threshold

2. Average Attainment 8 score per pupil is broadly stable

Attainment 8 scores for English, Mathematics, EBacc and Open slots were the same¹¹ between 2018 and 2019. There was a slight increase overall by 0.1 points (to 46.5) due to a combination of very small increases across slots (less than 0.1 points)

3. Progress 8

Progress 8 is a relative measure, which means that the overall national score remains the same between years. This measure is better compared between groups in the same year, e.g. by school or pupil type.

At school level, Progress 8 scores for state-funded mainstream schools¹² run from -2.4 to 2.2, with approximately 99% of schools' scores between -1.3 and +1.3 in 2019. Figure 1 shows the school level Progress 8 distribution.

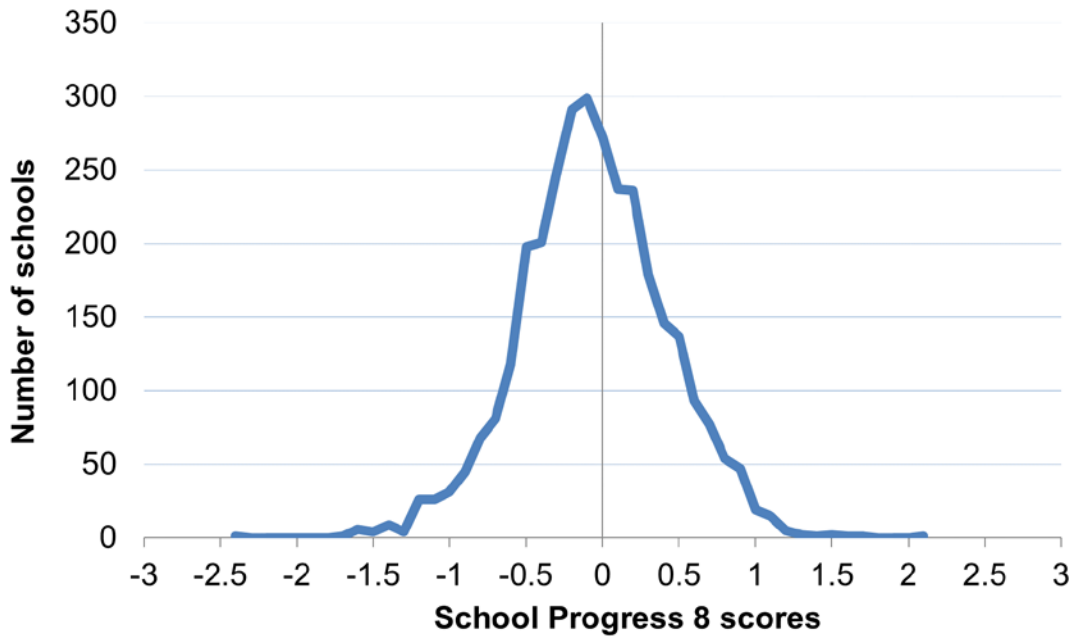
¹⁰ "Low" is below level 4, "middle" is level 4 and "high" is above level 4 at KS2

¹¹ Based on average Attainment 8 scores rounded to one decimal place

¹² Excludes further education colleges with 14-16 provision

Figure 1: Distribution of adjusted Progress 8 scores

State-funded mainstream schools (excluding FE colleges), England, 2019



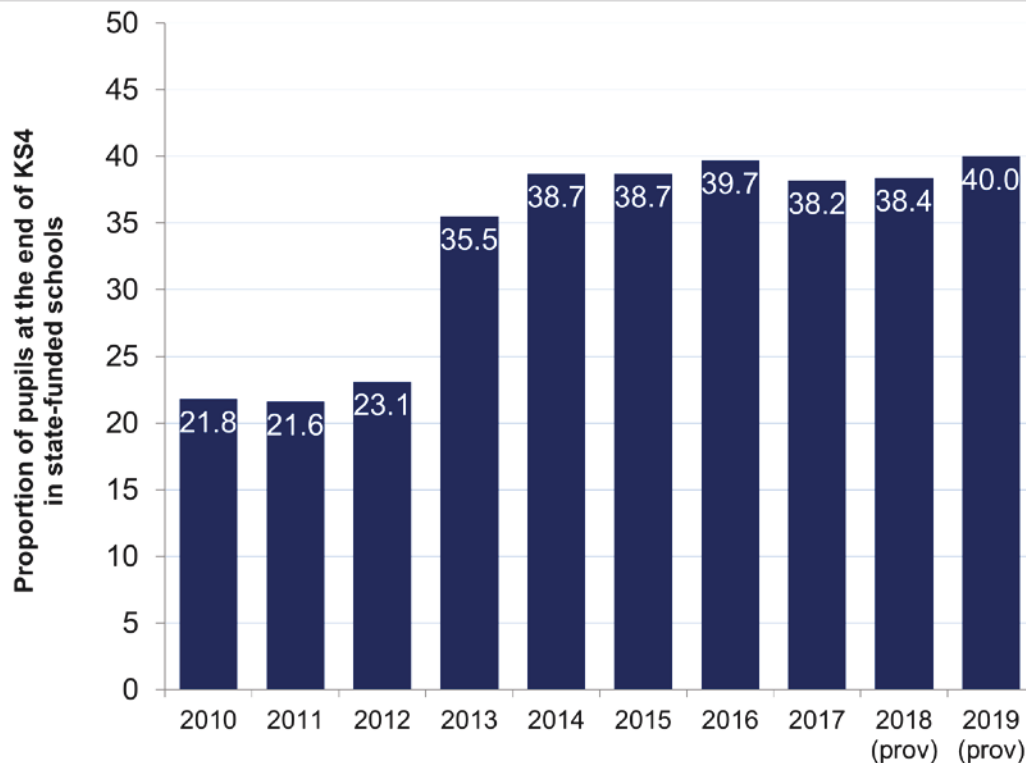
Source: Key stage 4 provisional attainment data

4. Entry into the EBacc has increased by 1.6 percentage points

The percentage of pupils entered for all five EBacc components¹³ rose from 38.4% to 40.0% in 2019. Since the introduction of the EBacc in 2010, this is the highest entry rate. The following chart shows the trend of EBacc entry over the last 10 years^{14, 15, 16}.

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils entering the EBacc

State-funded schools, England, 2010-2019



Source: Key stage 4 attainment data

In 2019, 217,132 pupils (40.0%) entered for all five EBacc components. Of these, 63.7% had high prior attainment at KS2, 33.5% had middle prior attainment, and only 2.8% had low prior attainment.

86.5% of pupils entered four or more EBacc components

Entry to all five components of the EBacc rose to 40.0% in 2019, resulting in the proportion of pupils entered for four or more components reaching 86.5%, up from 84.9% in 2018 and 51.3% in 2010.

¹³ English, maths, science, a language, and history or geography

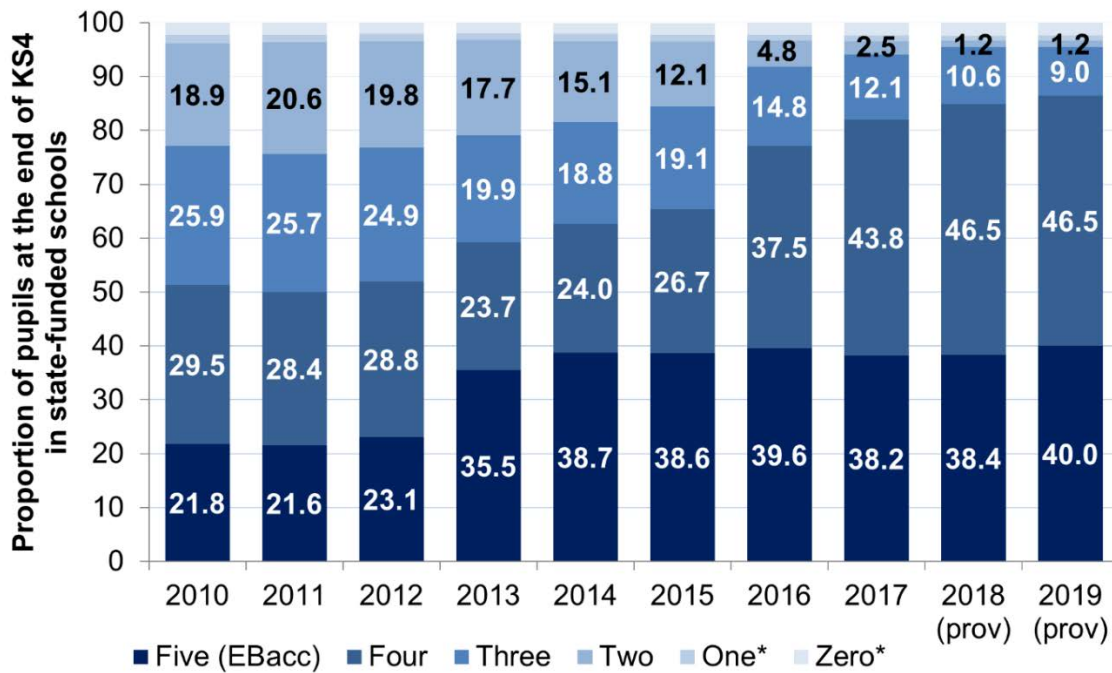
¹⁴ Provisional data used for latest two years, the rest use final data

¹⁵ In 2012/13, EBacc entry rose due to a large increase in the proportion of pupils at the end of KS4 entered for humanities (up 10.9 percentage points to 60.2%) and languages (up 8.7 percentage points to 47.6%). This likely came about due to a change in school behaviour as this data contained the first cohort to fully complete key stage 4 following the introduction of the EBacc.

¹⁶ In 2017, EBacc entry figures are also likely to have been impacted by over 30,000 pupils continuing to be entered solely for unreformed English and maths GCSEs, despite these qualifications not counting in performance tables in that year. The main driver of this decrease was due to a reduction in entries to EBacc language.

Figure 3: Number of EBacc components entered

State-funded schools, England, 2010-2019



*A data label for the percentage entering zero or one components is not shown on the chart

Source: Key stage 4 attainment data

Of those pupils who entered four out of the five EBacc components in state-funded schools:

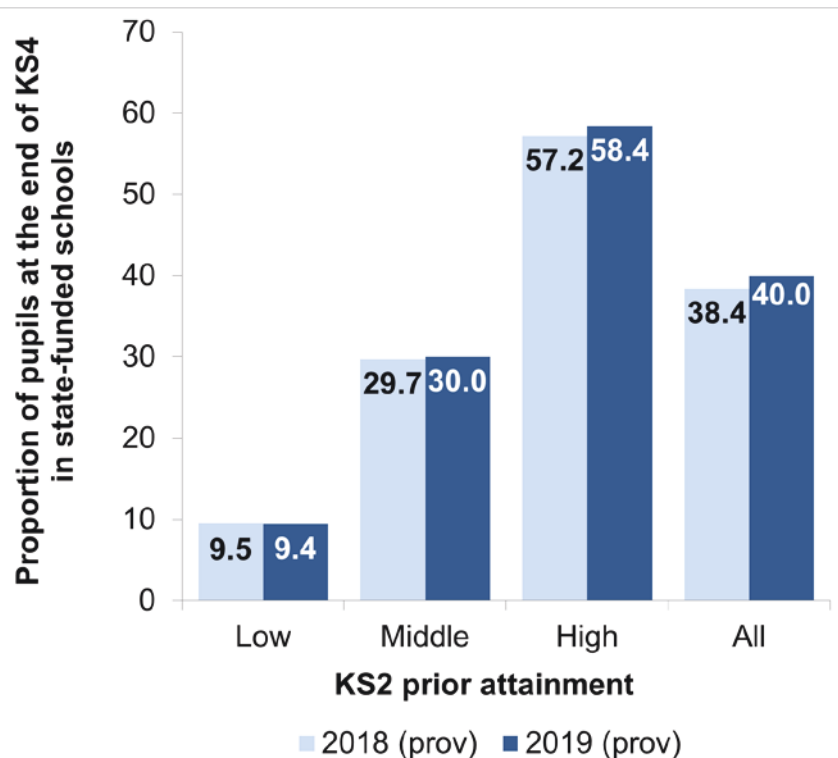
- 86.0% were missing the languages component in 2019, up from 83.8% in 2018.
- 13.6% were missing the humanities component in 2019, down from 15.5% in 2018.

The proportion of pupils entered for three EBacc components decreased by 1.6 percentage points from 10.6% in 2018 to 9.0%. Entry across other EBacc components remained similar. The percentage of pupils who did not enter any EBacc components was 2.5% and has been similar since 2010.

Entry to EBacc varies for pupils with low, middle and high attainment. In 2019, 58.4% of pupils with high prior attainment were entered into the EBacc compared with 30.0% with middle prior attainment and 9.4% of those with low prior attainment. Additionally, a higher proportion of pupils with middle and high prior attainment were entered for the EBacc compared to 2018. The entry rate decreased slightly for pupils with low prior attainment.

Figure 4: EBacc entry by prior attainment

State-funded schools, England, 2010-2019



EBacc components – humanities and languages entry increases

In 2019, both humanities and foreign language GCSE entry rates increased and contributed to an increase in the proportion of pupils entered for all five EBacc components. The proportion of pupils entered for humanities rose by 2.3 percentage points from 78.3% in 2018 to 80.6% 2019. The languages entry rate increased by 0.5 percentage points, from 46.1% in 2018 to 46.6%. Table 2 shows the proportion of pupils entered for each EBacc component.

Table 2: EBacc entry for each EBacc component in 2018 and 2019

State-funded schools, England, 2018 and 2019 (provisional)

EBacc subject	2018 (provisional)	2019 (provisional)
English	95.8%	95.8%
Mathematics	97.3%	97.3%
Sciences ¹⁷	95.4%	95.6%
History or Geography	78.3%	80.6%

¹⁷ Sciences includes the double award GCSE in combined science, and single GCSEs in biology, chemistry, physics and computer science.

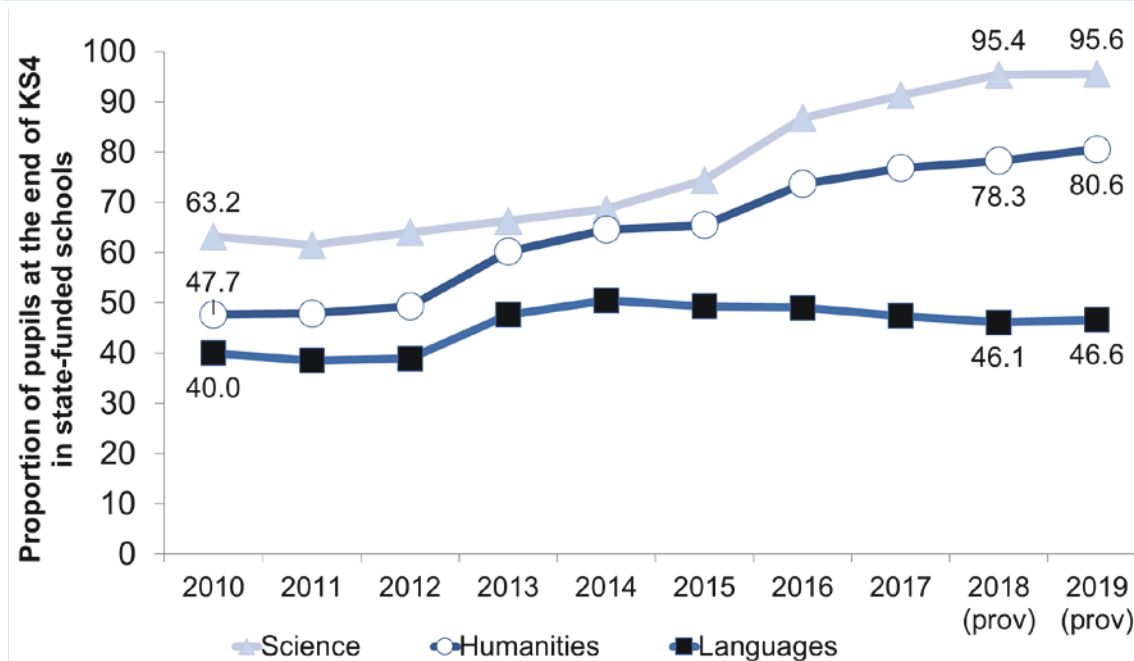
EBacc subject	2018 (provisional)	2019 (provisional)
Languages	46.1%	46.6%

Along with English and mathematics, science is compulsory for pupils in state-funded schools at key stage 4¹⁸. English and maths entry has varied from 96% to 98% since 2010. The science entry rate was 63.2% in 2010, and has increased rapidly in recent years to 95.6% in 2019.

Entry into Humanities (History or Geography) also increased over this timeframe. In 2010, the entry rate was 47.7%, increasing to 80.6% in 2019 (up by 32.9 percentage points).

Entry into EBacc languages had been declining since 2014. In 2010, the entry rate was 40.0%. It increased over the next four years to 50.5% in 2014, followed by a steady decline to 46.1% in 2018, before increasing slightly to 46.6% in 2019.

Figure 5: EBacc entry in Science, Humanities and Language since 2010
State-funded schools, England, 2010-2019



Science entries up slightly

The proportion of pupils entered for science rose from 95.4% to 95.6% since 2018. In 2019, 68.9% of pupils were entered for the combined science (double award) pathway, up by 1 percentage point in comparison to 2018. Over the same time, triple science entry (three of: biology, chemistry, physics or computer

¹⁸ Education reform Act, 1988

science) dropped by 0.8 percentage points to 26.6%. Entry into any science¹⁹ had a similar decline.

Humanities entries (up 2.3 percentage points) – largest EBacc component increase

The increase was primarily driven by an increase in the proportion of pupils entered for history, rising by 1.9 percentage points from 44.7% in 2018 to 46.6% in 2019. Entries into geography increased by 0.5 percentage points from 42.9% to 43.4%. The proportion of pupils entered for both slightly decreased from 9.1% to 9.0%.

EBacc languages entries (up 0.5 percentage points) - increase following 4 year-on-year decreases

French had the highest number of entrants, with 116,097 entrants (21.4%), followed by Spanish with 91,668 (16.9%) and German with 38,952 (7.2%). The number of pupils entered for other modern foreign languages was 19,000 (3.5%)

Of the modern foreign languages, the GCSE Spanish entry rate increased the most, up by 1.3 percentage points. GCSE French entry increased by 0.4 percentage points. Both the entry rate for German and other modern languages were down in 2019 by 0.4 percentage points and 1.2 percentage points respectively.

5. EBacc average points score (APS)

In 2019, EBacc APS was 4.06 which means it was above grade 4 on average, which is stable in comparison to 2018 (4.03). The maximum GCSE score is 9, and if achieving an A* at AS level this becomes 10.75. Table 3 shows the EBacc APS for each EBacc component in 2018 and 2019.

Table 3: EBacc APS for each EBacc component in 2018 and 2019

State-funded schools, England, 2018 and 2019 (provisional)

EBacc component	2018 (provisional)	2019 (provisional)
English	4.93	4.95

¹⁹ Combined Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Computer Science, Astronomy, Electronics, Geology, Environmental Science (AS)

EBacc component	2018 (provisional)	2019 (provisional)
Mathematics	4.50	4.52
Sciences ²⁰	4.49	4.49
History or Geography	3.54	3.67
Languages	2.25	2.27

Source: Key stage 4 provisional attainment data

The EBacc APS for the humanities component rose from 3.54 in 2018 to 3.67 in 2019. For wider context, the proportion of pupils who achieved all components of the EBacc at grades 5 or above was 17.0% in 2019, up from 16.6%, and at grades 4 or above, it was 24.8%, up from 24.0%.

A slight increase in proportion of pupils entered to arts subjects, following three year-on-year decreases

Percentage of pupils entered for at least one arts subject

State-funded schools, England, 2010-2019

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (prov)	2019 (prov)
Pupils entered for at least one arts subject	47.2%	45.8%	44.7%	44.8%	48.3%	49.6%	48.0%	46.5%	44.3%	44.5%

Source: Key stage 4 provisional attainment data

KS4 Performance by gender, and by school type

Attainment and progress by gender

As in previous years, girls continue to do better than boys across all headline measures.

Table 4: Headline measures for boys and girls

England, 2019 (provisional)

2019 (provisional)	Average Progress 8 score ²¹	% EBacc entry	% English and maths, grade 5 or above	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	EBacc Average Point Score
Girls	0.23	45.9%	46.4%	49.3	4.31
Boys	-0.27	34.3%	39.7%	43.9	3.83

²⁰ Sciences includes the double award GCSE in combined science, and single GCSEs in biology, chemistry, physics and computer science.

²¹ Confidence intervals can be found in the national tables of this statistical release

2019 (provisional)	Average Progress 8 score ²¹	% EBacc entry	% English and maths, grade 5 or above	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	EBacc Average Point Score
Difference	0.50 points	11.6 points	6.7 points	5.4 points	0.48 points

Compared to 2018, the differences in measures between boys and girls are as follows:

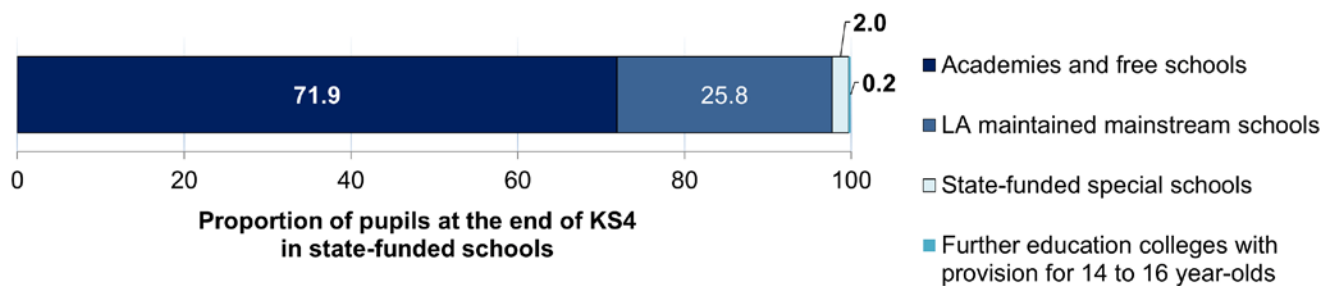
- EBacc entry: up by 0.2 percentage points,
- English and maths at grade 5 or above: down by 0.1 percentage points,
- Average Attainment 8 score per pupil: down by 0.2 points
- EBacc APS: stable

School type performance

Most pupils at the end of key stage 4 in state-funded schools were in academies²² and free schools (69.3% in academies and 1.7% in free schools).

Figure 6: Main school types at KS4

State-funded schools, England, 2019 (provisional)



Academies²³ (sponsored or converter) and local authority (LA) maintained mainstream schools include 516,165 (95.1%) of pupils at state-funded schools at the end of KS4. There are reasons to treat headline measure comparisons with other school types with caution:

- Pupils typically attend these school types in the year after the end of KS2. This is not the case in other school types such as university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools where entry is often at the start of KS4 (year 10). The further education colleges included in secondary school performance tables have provision for 14-16 year olds. Therefore, it may not be a fair to make comparisons to institutions that have had pupils on roll in that school since year 7.

²² Comprised of converter academies and sponsored academies. Converter academies are high performing schools that chose to convert to academies and have on average higher attainment across the headline measures. Sponsored academies are schools that were low performing prior to conversion and tend to perform below the average for state-funded schools.

²³ Excludes free schools, university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools.

- Many of the pupils in free schools are not yet at the end of KS4, so the group may not be wholly representative.

Due to the above, this section compares data for sponsored academies, converter academies and LA maintained mainstream only.

Performance across school types

- Pupils in converter academies had higher average Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores (see table 5) than the state-funded mainstream national average.
- On the same basis, sponsored academies were below the state-funded mainstream national average.

Table 5: Headline measures Attainment 8 and Progress 8 by school types (selected)

England, 2019 (provisional)

	Number of pupils at the end of key stage 4	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	Average Progress 8 score
Local authority maintained mainstream schools	140,187	46.6	-0.03
Sponsored academies	103,965	41.9	-0.18
Converter academies	272,013	50.3	0.11

Performance by local authority varies considerably

Performance varies considerably across the country. As shown in the following table, provisional performance by local authority varies considerably across headline measures.

Table 6: Minimum and maximum local authority performance in headline measures

State-funded schools, England, 2019

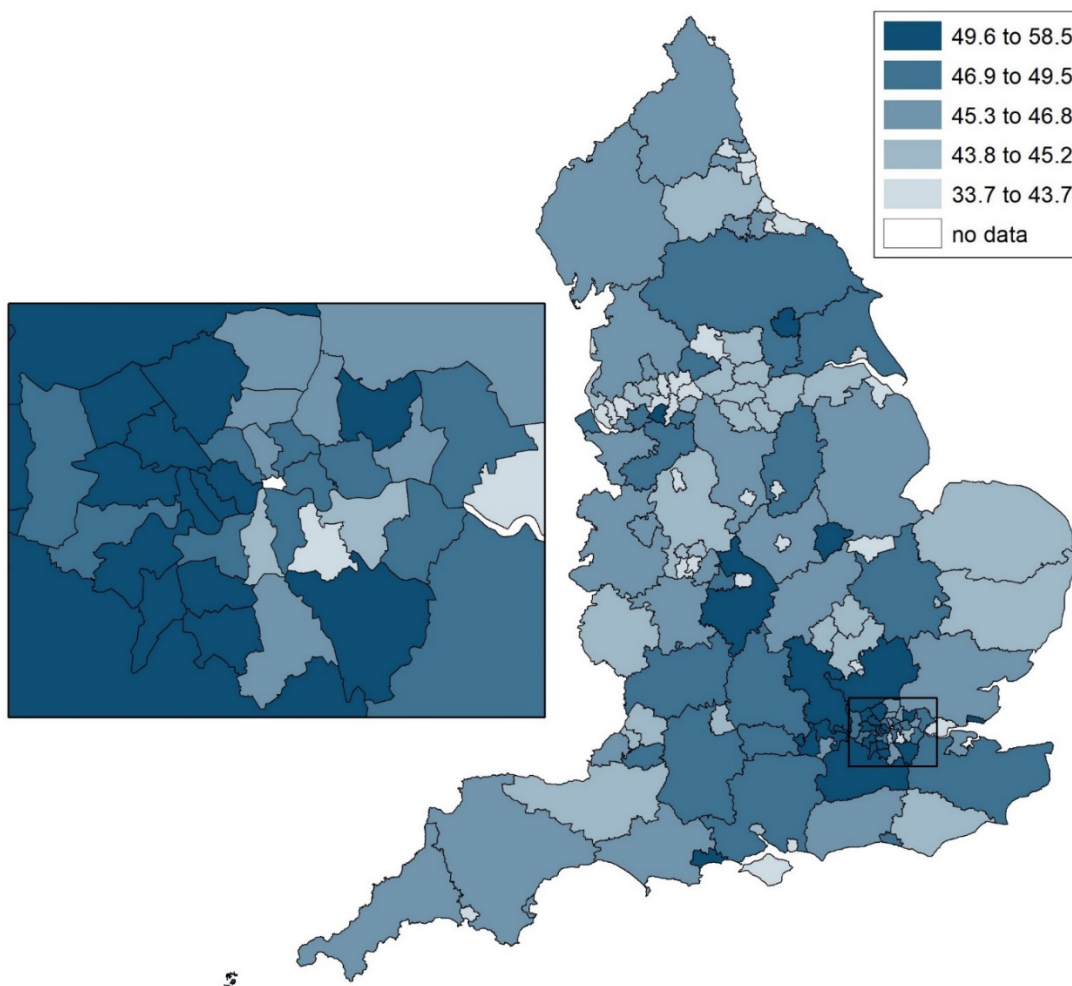
	Minimum	Maximum	Range
Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	33.7	58.5	24.8 points
% achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths	17.5	64.2	46.7 points
% entering EBacc	21.4	72.7	51.3 points
EBacc average point score	2.76	5.35	2.59 points

Source: Key stage 4 provisional attainment data

The highest performing local authorities tend to be concentrated in London and the south with the majority of the lowest performing local authorities located in the northern and midland regions (as shown in the map in figure 6). This is similar to patterns seen in recent years.

Figure 6: Average Attainment 8 score per pupil by local authority

State-funded schools, England, 2019



Source: Key stage 4 provisional attainment data

Further information is available

School level figures	Provisional school level data is published in the performance tables .
Characteristics breakdowns	Characteristics breakdowns are not included in this release, but will be published in the revised release in January 2020.
Previously published figures	Key stage 4 and multi-academy trust performance 2018 (revised)
Attainment for other key stages	Data on other key stages can be found at the following links: Early years foundation stage profile Key stage 1 Key stage 2 16-19 attainment School performance tables
Destination measures	Figures for young people who went into education, employment or training destinations the year after they completed key stage 4 or key stage 5 can be found at the following link: Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils
Attainment in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland	Information on educational attainment for secondary schools in Wales is available from the Welsh Government website . Information on educational attainment for secondary schools in Scotland is available from the Scottish Government website . Information on educational attainment for secondary schools in Northern Ireland is available from the Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI) website .

School level figures	Provisional school level data is published in the performance tables .
Information published by Ofqual	<p>Ofqual follows the principle that if the cohort of students taking a subject is similar to previous years, then the proportions of students at each grade will be similar. A key piece of evidence in determining if the cohort is the same is prior attainment at key stage 2 for GCSE qualifications. Background on the methodology and history of setting and maintaining exam standards can be found on GOV.UK – Setting GCSE and A level grade standards.</p> <p>Ofqual have also published information on variability in GCSEs for schools and colleges which is available on Variability in GCSE results for schools and colleges 2017-2019.</p>
Sponsored academy performance	<p>For information on the complexities of comparing sponsored academies data over time, navigate to: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sponsored-academy-performance</p>

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.

Technical information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this 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.

Get in touch

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