Early years foundation stage profile results, 2018/19: pupil characteristics

Technical document

November 2019

Contents

Introduction

This document provides an overview of the pupil characteristic information used in the production of the statistical release that reports on pupil attainment at the early years foundation stage in England. It provides information on the data sources, their coverage, quality and how the data is validated and processed and is based on the Office for National Statistics Guidelines for measuring statistical quality.

Summary details of the data used in the production of the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) statistical releases and the methodology used to calculate pupil attainment in these publications can be found in the EYFSP technical document which accompanies 'Early years foundation stage profile results: 2018 to 2019', which was published on the 17 October 2019.

About the output

EYFSP results by characteristics are taken from the national pupil database (NPD). The NPD is a longitudinal database linking assessment results and census data. The main data sources used in this publication are the EYFSP results and the school census.

The pupil characteristics reported in the EYFSP results additional tables are:

- Gender

- Free school meal (FSM) eligibility

- Ethnicity

- First language

- Special educational needs (SEN)

- Month of birth

Timeliness

The EYFSP collection in 2019 required local authorities to load the data into the DfE bespoke data collection system: COLLECT; by Friday 6 September 2019. Data received by this date has been taken as final and used to produce statistical releases. No amendments will be accepted after the database is closed and all published figures are considered final. The department is committed to providing local authority and national level analysis of performance as quickly as possible; therefore, headline attainment statistics were published on 17 October, 6 weeks after the collection closed. Attainment by pupil characteristics was published 6 weeks after this on 28 November following matching the EYFSP data to the NPD.

Punctuality

The proposed month of publication is announced on gov.uk at least twelve months in advance and precise dates are announced in the same place at least four weeks prior to

publication. In the unlikely event of a change to the pre-announced release schedule, the change and the reasons for it would be announced.

Accuracy

The school census is representative of all state-funded pupils. The school census covers nursery schools, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools including hospital schools, pupil referral units, community, foundation, voluntary-aided and voluntary-controlled schools, academies and non-maintained special schools. Independent schools and home-schooled pupils do not submit census returns.

Measurement error

The school census relies on information being submitted by each school which may produce measurement error. Schools collect certain information from parents including ethnicity and first language which parents might not always be able or willing to provide. The school is also required to classify pupils such as for SEN requirements. For general information on measurement error, please refer to the EYFSP technical document. For the school census, please refer to the school census business and technical specifications.

Data processing and validation

The school census data goes through various levels of checking. Schools input the data into a Management Information System (MIS). The MIS software has built in validation ensuring data is inputted in a consistent format. The validated school census returns are submitted to the Department via the data collection system COLLECT. Validation software routines, including checks against previous terms' returns to ensure historic consistency, are used by the Department before the return is finalised and authorised. Queries flagged by the validation checks are referred back to the LA/school to be resolved. Occasionally, a pupil will appear more than once on the school census, for example, due to a change of school or dual registration. Rules for deriving the main school census record have been agreed to eliminate these duplicates. Information on the validations carried out can be found in the school census business and technical specifications.

Accessibility

The additional tables have been published as underlying data. This will allow users to load the data into an analysis package of their choice. Please use the metadata file to help understand how to use the files. We have also published an excel table 'Table 1: Achievement in early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) teacher assessments by pupil characteristics'.

The changes to the way we are publishing our statistics are in advance of our move to using the new Explore Education Statistics dissemination platform.

The Explore Education Statistics platform will comprise of three main aspects for users: release pages, a table tool, and downloadable files. 'Release pages' will replace what has previously been produced in a .pdf format, providing an interactive .html page that allows users to easily engage with the information they are interested in. The 'table tool' will provide a user friendly way to explore the underlying data behind a publication, allowing users to select the breakdowns of data they are interested in. The created tables can then be downloaded as .csv files, or saved as a permanent URL for sharing. Complete underlying data files for the publication will also be downloadable in .csv format, now provided with a consistent structure across all publications for ease of analysis. Each of these underlying data files will also include a time-series of data from previous releases.

Any user wishing to conduct more detailed research or analysis may request an anonymised pupil level extract of the national pupil database.

Disclosure Control

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number which may result in some percentages not summing to 100. Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero.

Attainment gaps are calculated from unrounded percentages. Therefore, the gap may not always be the same as the difference between the two figures provided.

Coherence and compatibility

For the early years foundation stage by pupil characteristics statistical release, there are slight differences between the numbers reported in this publication when compared to the results published on 17th October 2019. Headline attainment percentages are not affected. Differences are due to the exclusion in the national pupil database (NPD) of LA 702 (service children), shielded pupils, and NPD processing rules to identify duplicate pupil records. Occasionally, a pupil will appear more than once in data, resulting, for example, from a change of school, or dual registration. Rules for deriving the main census record have been agreed to eliminate duplicates based on factors such as enrolment and school type.

Pupil characteristics definitions and historical changes

Gender

The gender of the pupil is recorded as male or female on the school census. In exceptional circumstances a school may be unsure as to which gender should be recorded for a particular pupil. The advice from the department is to record the gender according to the wishes of the pupil and/or parent.

Free school meals

> **Free school meals (FSM)** is a binary indicator variable that states whether a pupil's family have claimed eligibility for free school meals. Parents are able to claim free school meals if they receive a qualifying benefit.
>
> Please note: From September 2014 all infant pupils in state-funded schools have been entitled to a free school meal. The FSM variable does not relate to pupils who actually received free school meals but those who are eligible to receive free school meals. Pupils not eligible for free school meals or unclassified pupils are described as 'All other pupils' in the statistical release.

The list of qualifying benefits has changed over time, but it is currently:

- Income Support

- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit

- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)

- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Since 2013, Universal Credit (UC) has been gradually rolling out nationwide replacing a number of income-related benefits, some of which provided families with entitlement to free school meals. As a temporary measure to ensure that any families moving on to Universal Credit in the early stages of rollout (for example, those in pilot areas) did not lose their entitlements, all families claiming UC were entitled to free school meals pending the introduction of eligibility criteria.

Free school meals is one of the key factors in the definition of disadvantage used in Department for Education statistics, and as Universal Credit rolls out in different areas of the country it will alter the make-up of the free school meals cohort, and consequently affect cohorts included in the disadvantage metrics to some degree. It may be hard to make direct comparisons between the performance of schools or local areas within the same year, or between a school or area's own performance between years.

In April 2018, the government updated its eligibility criteria for Free School Meals and the Early Years Pupil Premium under Universal Credit. We will continue to monitor the effect of the updated criteria, and will consider how we best present and explain disadvantage

measures to help users of statistics to interpret this data during the rollout of Universal Credit.

Ethnic Group

Ethnicity is broken down into two main variables: a minor grouping variable and a major groupings variable. Those pupils who have been classified according to their ethnic group and are other than white British are defined as minority ethnic.

From 2017, ethnicity has been a compulsory data item for all pupils. Where the information had not yet been collected it was recorded as not yet obtained. If a pupil or parent has declined to give the information then refused was recorded.

Prior to this (years 2013 to 2016), ethnicity was only required for pupils aged 5 and over as at the previous 31 August. Due to the non-mandatory nature of this data item for pupils at foundation stage, coverage at local authority level varied significantly. In 2016, for example, ethnicity was recorded for the large majority of EYFSP pupils; however, there were some local authorities where more than 50% of pupil's ethnicity were recorded as unclassified. The impact on national figures as a result of these unclassified pupils is considered negligible.

Ethnicity is a personal awareness of a common cultural identity. Ethnicity relates to how a person feels and not necessarily how they are perceived by others. It is a subjective decision as to which category a person places themselves in and therefore does not infer any other characteristics such as religion, country of origin etc. Ethnicity monitoring advice is available from the Department's website. Table 1 below outlines the DfE main ethnicity categories and descriptions:

Table 1: The Department's main ethnicity categories and descriptions

Main category	Code	Description
White	WBRI	White – British
White	WIRI	White – Irish
White	WIRT	Traveller of Irish Heritage
White	WOTH	Any Other White Background
White	WROM	Gypsy / Roma
Mixed	MWBC	White and Black Caribbean
Mixed	MWBA	White and Black African
Mixed	MWAS	White and Asian
Mixed	MOTH	Any Other Mixed Background
Asian or Asian British	AIND	Indian
Asian or Asian British	APKN	Pakistani

Asian or Asian British	ABAN	Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British	AOTH	Any Other Asian Background
Black or Black British	BCRB	Black Caribbean
Black or Black British	BAFT	Black – African
Black or Black British	BOTH	Any Other Black Background
Other Ethnic Groups	CHNE	Chinese
Other Ethnic Groups	OOTH	Any Other Ethnic Group
Refused	REFU	Refused
Information Not Yet Obtained	NOBT	Information Not Yet Obtained

First Language

> **First Language** is the language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.

From 2017, first language has been a compulsory data item for all pupils. Where the information had not yet been collected it was recorded as not yet obtained. If a pupil or parent has declined to give the information then refused was recorded.

Prior to this (years 2013 to 2016), first language was only required for pupils aged 5 and over as at the previous 31 August. Due to the non-mandatory nature of this data item for pupils at foundation stage, there was significant variation in the proportion unclassified when looking at local authority level results. Nationally, first language was recorded for the large majority of pupils and therefore the impact on national figures as a result of these unclassified pupils is considered negligible. As with ethnicity, pupils with no first language reported appeared as 'unclassified' in the national tables and data was not shown in the EYFSP local authority tables for those local authorities where more than 50% of pupil's first language were recorded as unclassified.

A first language other than English is where a child was exposed to the language during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.

If a child was exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early development the language other than English is recorded, irrespective of the child's proficiency in English. In the case of an older pupil who is no longer exposed to the first language in the home, and who now uses only another language, the school consults with the pupil or parent to determine which language should be recorded.

Where a pupil's first language is not English, schools may record specific languages from the extended language code set or continue to use codes from the short code set used in PLASC 2006. ENB (Not known but believed to be English) and OTB (Not known but believed to be other than English) are appropriate where a pupil's first language is not known with absolute certainty because the parents have not responded to enquiries, but the school can judge with a high degree of confidence whether it is English or not.

A local authority may specify that schools should use a particular subset of language codes but it is for the school to decide whether or not to record specific languages.

Special Educational Needs

The **SEN** variable indicates whether a pupil has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age.

From 2015, pupils with SEN are categorised as follows:

SEN support - Extra or different help is given from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum. The class teacher and SEN Coordinator (SENCO) may receive advice or support from outside specialists. This category replaces the former 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus' categories.

Statement/EHC plan - A pupil has a statement of SEN or an EHC plan when a formal assessment has been made.

Pre-2015, the tables contain SEN data as per the definition below:

Pupils with special educational needs comprise those at School Action, School Action Plus or with statements of SEN:

School Action – where extra or different help is given, from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum.

School Action Plus – where the class teacher and the SENCO receive advice or support from outside specialists (the specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or other health professionals).

Statement – a pupil has a statement of SEN when a formal assessment has been made. A document setting out the child's needs and the extra help they should receive is in place.

Pupil SEN provision

This data item is collected in the census collections for all pupils on roll on census day. Pupil SEN provision types and their codes are listed below. Two new codes were added to the SEN provision field within the 2015 School Census, as highlighted below.

Table 2: Valid provision types under the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25

Code	Description
N	No Special Educational Need
A	School Action
P	School Action Plus
S	Statement
E (from 2015)	Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
K (from 2015)	SEN support

Pupil SEN Type

The pupil SEN type field records the nature of a pupil's special educational need. The primary need and, if appropriate, their secondary need should be recorded. In 2015, a new code entitled 'SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need' was introduced which was aimed at those transferring from school action to SEN support but were yet to be formally assessed for their type of need. The previous 'Behaviour,

Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) has been replaced with 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). These changes are outlined in table 3.

Table 3: Pupil SEN type

Code	Description
SPLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty
BESD (valid till 2014)	Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
HI	Hearing Impairment
VI	Visual Impairment
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
PD	Physical Disability
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
OTH	Other Difficulty / Disability
SEMH (from 2015)	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
NSA (from 2015)	SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need

Pupil SEN Type ranking

This indicates the rank order of a pupil's special educational need, recorded in Pupil SEN type. The most significant, or primary need, is ranked as 1 and the secondary as 2. Only two rankings are collected in the School Census and no two needs are given the same ranking.

Until 2014, this data item was collected in the Spring Census only for all pupils on roll on census day with an SEN Provision of P (School Action Plus or Early Years Action Plus) or S (Statement). From 2015, this coverage was extended to collect type of need for all pupils with: a statement; an education, health and care plan; on school action plus; or on SEN support. SEN support replaced school action and school action plus but some pupils remained with these provision types in the first year of transition. It is anticipated that a history of provision should be recorded within a school's management information system (MIS).

Term of birth

Autumn born children may have attended nursery for a longer period of time before they enter the final year of the EYFS (i.e. reception year) than pupils born at other times of the year. For this reason attainment by term of birth has been included in the additional tables on EYFSP attainment by pupil characteristics.

Term of birth for each pupil has been classified as below:

Autumn born = September, October, November or December

Spring born = January, February, March or April

Summer born = May, June, July or August

In 2019 the standard dates of birth for the EYFS academic year run from the 1st September 2013 to the 31st August 2014. Pupils born outside of the standard reported academic year have been classified as the lower or upper grouping e.g. a pupil born on 31st August 2013 or before will be classified as autumn born and a pupil born 1st September 2014 or after summer born.

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

IDACI is provided by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The index is based on Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England defined by 2011 census data. Each LSOA is given a rank between 1 and 32,844 where 1 is the most deprived LSOA.

IDACI is a subset of the Income Deprivation Domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IoD). Each LSOA is given a score showing the percentage of pupils aged under 16 that live in families that are income deprived. Further information about IDACI can be found here.

Pupil Residency figures are based on 2015 IDACI scores and includes data for 2016 to 2019 only. In previous year's publications, these figures were based on 2010 IDACI scores. Data for 2014 to 2016 based on 2010 IDACI can be found in the 2016 publication.

Geography

Geographic data which is matched to DfE data collections and used in all official statistics is provided by ONS Geography, a business unit of ONS that provides the geographic data and services that support the production of high quality statistics.

The ONS's presentation guidance for administrative areas sets out the recommended standard for presenting and publishing statistics at regional and sub-regional levels in the UK ONS guidance: presenting statistics for administrative areas.

The geography structures and codes used in the production of pupil characteristic statistical releases can be downloaded from the ONS geography portal.

Local authority

Local authority underlying data show the local authority that maintains the school which returned a pupil's attainment record. The current local government structure has 151 'upper tier' authorities, which all have the function of local education authority.

School location and pupil residency

Data showing attainment by either school location or pupil residency are created by matching the relevant school or pupil postcode to a cut of the National Statistics Postcode Lookup (NSPL) and ONS Postcode Directory (ONSPD), ONS products available on the ONS open geography portal. Since 2012, the February cut of the NSPL

and ONSPD has been used annually to match on geography fields. Prior to 2012, the May version of the NSPL and ONSPD was used.

The local authority district is an example of a geographic field matched from the ONS Postcode Directory (ONSPD). Tables are included showing the LAD based on the pupil's postcode.

The term 'local authority district (LAD)' refers to the lower tier of local government. This includes non-metropolitan districts, metropolitan districts, unitary authorities and London boroughs. Structural changes to local government in England were effected on 1 April 2009, whereby a number of new unitary authorities were created in parts of the country which previously operated a 'two-tier' system of counties and districts. The current structure consists of 326 'lower tier' authorities (LADs).

As the boundaries have changed new codes have been allocated, although the names remain the same. Codes are shown in the tables as those relevant to the district at the start of the academic year reported.

West Somerset and Taunton Deane LADs merged in 2019 to form Somerset West and Taunton. Data is also shown for West Somerset alone as this is one of the Opportunity Areas.

Further information on local government restructuring can be found at ONS guidance: local government restructuring.

Feedback and user engagement

Feedback on methodology and presentation is welcomed and encouraged. If you have any comments on the information collected, the timing or format of our outputs or whether these statistics are meeting your requirements, please email: EarlyYears.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

Definitions

The full guidance notes relating to the EYFSP can be viewed at the DfE collection website:

a) **Area of Learning** – Refers to the grouping of children`s learning and development into seven areas. There are three prime areas which focus on the earliest experiences which are foundations for learning: Personal, social and emotional development, Communication and language and Physical development. There are four specific areas in which the prime skills are applied: Literacy, Mathematics, Expressive arts and design and Understanding the world.

b) **Early learning goal (ELG)** – A collection of statements which sets out the expected level of attainment at the end of the EYFS. There are 17 ELGs drawn from seven areas of learning.

c) **Emerging development** – Describes attainment at a level which has not reached that expressed by the ELGs.

d) **Expected development** – is the development expected by the end of the EYFS and is described by 17 ELGs drawn from seven areas of learning.

e) **Exceeding development** – describes attainment beyond that which is expected at the end of the EYFS.

f) **Good level of development** – children will be defined as having reached a good level of development at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the expected level in: the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and; the early learning goals in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

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