



Department
for Education

School admissions appeals data collection 2026

**Information for local authorities about
the submission of their 2025 to 2026 data**

October 2025

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References

Any enquiries regarding this publication, before or during the submission period, should be sent to the department via a [data collections service request form](#).

1 Section A: summary of collection

1.1 Scope of this document

This guide provides local authorities with information about the statutory school admissions appeals data collection (also known as APAD) 2026. It is intended to assist local authorities with returning the required data to the Department for Education (DfE, or the department) and provides information on the scope of the collection, the data that should be included in the return, and the mechanism for submission. This guide should be read in conjunction with the relevant instructions on how to use the department's COLLECT web-based system.

1.2 Background to the collection and a summary of recent changes

The data collection collects information about appeals that parents have submitted (or lodged) before 1 September because their child was not admitted to their preferred school. It is a statutory return which covers community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools (including middle-deemed schools). It includes the total number of appeals lodged, the number heard and withdrawn, and the appeal outcomes for each school phase.

Where the information being returned relates to primary schools (or middle deemed or all through schools with infant intake), figures are also required for the number of infant appeals. This will be a subset of the primary appeals figures.

The information will be collected separately from schools who have their own admissions authority (foundation, voluntary aided and academy schools, see below) via the spring school census in January 2026.

The return should only include appeals lodged by the 1 September relating to entry at the start of the school year. For 2026, therefore, local authorities should return information on appeals lodged prior to Monday 1 September 2025 relating to entry at the start of the academic year 2025 to 2026 (see sections C and D for further details).

If any community or voluntary controlled school is converting to an academy during the academic year 2025 to 2026, then the local authority should only include that school's appeals if the school will convert after the date of the spring school census (15 January 2026). If the school has already converted by that date then it should submit its own appeal data via the spring school census. The local authority may need to provide the appeal figures to such recently converted schools to enable them to make their return.

The live period for this collection will run from Monday 12 January to Friday 23 January 2026.

1.3 Uses of the data

The data is due to be published in August 2026 in the statistical release, [‘Admission appeals in England, Reporting year 2025 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#) . It will be added to the figures provided by community, voluntary aided and academy schools in the January 2026 spring school census (admissions appeals module) to give a complete picture of the number of appeals lodged, heard and either rejected or found in favour of the parent.

The department will also use the appeal and outcome figures and the trends identified as part of a continuing review of admission policies and practice.

2 Section B: important dates

The following are the deadlines for the academic year 2025 to 2026:

- appeal deadline – Monday 1 September 2025
- data collection opens – Monday 12 January 2026
- statutory deadline for returns – Friday 23 January 2026

3 Section C: content of the return

A parent has the right of appeal against a decision not to allow their child into a requested school. Appeals can be made when an applicant has not received an offer of a place into their first preference school. They can appeal for a place at any school ranked higher than the one they were offered. Their appeal is submitted to the admissions authority for the school (which is the local authority in the case of community and voluntary controlled schools). The return to be made by local authorities to the department should include the following information about these appeals:

Field name	Description	Additional notes
LANumber	The number of the local authority.	
PrimaryLodged	The total number of appeals lodged against non admission into primary school.	This includes middle deemed primary schools.
PrimaryWithdrawn	Of the primary appeals lodged, the number which were withdrawn before reaching an appeals panel.	To include those withdrawn as a result of the child being offered a place at the school via the waiting list.
PrimaryHeard	Of the primary appeals lodged, the number heard by an appeals panel.	
PrimaryFavour	Of the primary appeals heard, the number which were decided in the parent's favour.	The number decided in the parent's favour plus the number rejected should equal the total number heard.
PrimaryRejected	Of the primary appeals heard, the number which were rejected.	
InfantLodged	The total number of appeals lodged against non admission into an infant class in primary school.	Infant class figures are a subset of those provided for primary schools. The total should include all appeals into an infant class (reception and years 1 and 2), not just those relating to infant class size appeals.
InfantWithdrawn	Of infant class appeals lodged, the number which were withdrawn before reaching an appeals panel.	To include those withdrawn as a result of the child being offered a place at the school via the waiting list.

Field name	Description	Additional notes
InfantHeard	Of the infant class appeals lodged, the number heard by an appeals panel.	
InfantFavour	Of the infant class appeals heard, the number which were decided in the parent's favour.	The number decided in the parent's favour plus the number rejected should equal the total number heard.
InfantRejected	Of the infant class appeals heard, the number which were rejected.	
SecondaryLodged	The total number of appeals lodged against non admission into secondary school.	This includes middle deemed secondary schools.
SecondaryWithdrawn	Of the secondary appeals lodged, the number which were withdrawn before reaching an appeals panel.	To include those withdrawn as a result of the child being offered a place at the school via the waiting list.
SecondaryHeard	Of the secondary appeals lodged, the number heard by an appeals panel.	
SecondaryFavour	Of the secondary appeals heard, the number which were decided in the parent's favour.	The number decided in the parent's favour plus the number rejected should equal the total number heard.
SecondaryRejected	Of the secondary appeals heard, the number which were rejected.	

4 Section D: further detail on the information to be included

- a) The local authority must only include appeal figures for their community and voluntary controlled schools. Schools who have their own admissions authority (foundation, voluntary aided and academy schools) will provide their appeal figures separately via the spring school census in January 2026.
- b) This will be the case even for those foundation, voluntary aided or academy schools who contract the local authority to administer their appeals. The local authority may need to provide these schools with the figures they will be submitting.
- c) The local authority must only return data for appeals relating to entry into the academic year 2025 to 2026 that were lodged by parents before 1 September 2025. The date of the hearing can be after 1 September.
- d) Appeals relating to entry into any school year including sixth form year groups should be included, whether the main entry point of the school or another year, as long as the parent was applying for their child to move to the school at the start of the academic year.
- e) Academies will provide their admission appeals data to the department via the spring school census. However, community or voluntary controlled schools that are in the process of converting to an academy during the current academic year should be included in the local authority's return if they will still be under its control on spring school census day (Thursday 15 January 2026).
- f) If the newly converting school will be an academy by 15 January 2026 then it will need to return its own appeal figures via the spring school census. It may need to be provided with the figures by the local authority.
- g) Infant class figures are a subset of primary school appeals and relate to appeals against non-admission into reception class or years 1 and 2. They should include all appeals for those years, not just those relating to infant class size appeals.
- h) The number of appeals withdrawn will include any not pursued, any not yet resolved, and any where the parents have withdrawn from the appeal process as they have been offered a place at the school via the waiting list.

5 Section E: submitting the data

5.1 Methodology

The data should be submitted via [COLLECT](#) (Collections Online - Learners, Education, Children and Teachers) from the department's website. This is the route by which a number of data collections from local authorities and schools are sent securely to the department.

Sections C and D give details of the data which is required to be provided. Once you have generated and checked the data, it should be loaded and submitted in COLLECT.

A separate COLLECT [guide](#) has been published to help schools and local authorities complete and submit data in COLLECT.

5.2 Validation checks

On loading your local authority's data the COLLECT system will automatically run a number of verification checks and you will receive an error notification if any of them fail and the data requires amendment.

If this occurs you will need to correct the errors in the data before you are able to submit the data to the department. Only once the corrections have been made and COLLECT shows no error notices will you be able to submit your data.

You may also receive a query notification to ask you to check certain figures to ensure they are correct – for example, where the values look unusual but could logically still be correct in some situations. If any queries do not require amendments, COLLECT has the functionality for local authorities to add a note to the data item, specifying that it is correct.

5.3 Further checks

Additional sense checks will be undertaken by the department and where there are concerns or queries about the figures, the department will contact the local authority concerned to ask for further information. This may result in rejecting the submissions for changes to be made. We will complete these additional checks as soon as possible.

If there is anything about your local authority's data, which you think may give the department cause to query the figures, then it would be advisable to enter notes in your COLLECT return. An example of this would be if a number of community or voluntary controlled schools have converted into academies and therefore their appeals are no longer administered by the local authority.

5.4 Authorisation

For each return, once the data has been checked and accepted by the department the status on COLLECT will change to authorised and your local authority's return will be complete.

5.5 Further assistance

If you have any queries you can contact the Data Collections Helpdesk by submitting a query via a [DfE Sign-in help](#).

6 Section F: data protection and data sharing

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 mandate certain safeguards regarding the use of personal data by organisations, including the department, local authorities and schools. Both give rights to those (known as data subjects) about whom data is processed such as pupils, parents and teachers. This includes (amongst other information that we are obliged to provide):

- the right to know the types of data being held
- why it is being held
- to whom it may be communicated

For the purposes of data protection legislation, the terms 'process', 'processed' or 'processing' apply to any activity involving the personal data, such as:

- collecting
- storing
- sharing
- destroying
- other - please note: this list is not exhaustive

The legal duties information below provide additional information on two aspects of data protection legislation - namely privacy notices and data security. However, as data processors and controllers in their own right, it is important that schools and local authorities process all data (not just that collected for the purposes of the school census) in accordance with the full requirements of the UK GDPR. Further information on the UK GDPR can be found in the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) [overview of the UK General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#).

Legal duties under the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018: privacy notices

Being transparent and providing accessible information to individuals about how you will use (process) their personal data is a key element of both the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018. The most common way to provide such information is through a privacy notice. Please see the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website for [further guidance on privacy notices](#).

For schools and local authorities, this means that you must provide clear and accessible privacy notices that inform parents, pupils and staff:

- what data is collected about them
- for what purposes the data is collected

- how the data is used (processed)
- what the lawful basis is for processing
- for how long the data is retained
- with whom the data is shared
- why the data is shared
- whether you intend to transfer it to another country, and
- whether you do automated decision-making or profiling

The department provides suggested wording for [privacy notices](#) that schools and local authorities may wish to use. However, where the suggested wording is used, the school / local authority must review and amend the wording to reflect local business needs and circumstances. This is especially important, as the school will process data that is not solely for use within census data collections. As such, to comply with UK GDPR and DPA 2018, the privacy notice should contain details of all uses of data within the school / local authority, which may include, for example, information used locally for pupil achievement tracking and (where relevant) the use of CCTV data. The privacy notice should also include [this link](#) to the gov.uk webpage, which provides information on how the department processes data.

It is recommended that the privacy notice is included as part of an induction pack for pupils and staff, is made available on the school website for parents, as well as featuring on the staff notice board / intranet. Privacy notices do not need to be issued on an annual basis, where:

- new pupils and staff are made aware of the notices
- the notices have not been amended
- they are readily available in
 - electronic, or
 - paper format

Legal duties under the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018: data security

Schools and local authorities have a (legal) duty under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure that any personal data they process is handled and stored securely. Further information on data security is available from the <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/security/>.

Where personal data is not properly safeguarded, it could compromise the safety of individuals and damage your reputation. Your responsibility as a data controller extends to those who have access to your data beyond your organisation where they are working on your behalf; for example, where external IT suppliers can remotely access your information. The [‘School procurement: selecting a school MIS’](#) pages provide further guidance and advice.

It is vital that all staff with access to personal data understand the importance of:

- protecting personal data
- being familiar with your security policy
- putting security procedures into practice

As such, you should provide appropriate initial and refresher training for your staff.



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