



Department
for Education

Schools, school workforce and pupils statistical analysis 2026

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Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	3
Main findings	4
Headteacher metrics by deprivation	4
Definitions and methodology	5
Key stage 4 performance of schools before and after joining a School Trust	6
Definitions and methodology	7
Schools in financial deficit	9
Definitions and methodology	10
Schools' collection of data on pupils' sense of school belonging	11
Definitions and methodology	11
Comparing prevalence of statutory plans for SEN in schools in England and Wales	12
Definitions and methodology	13
Cumulative special educational needs identification	16
Cumulative SEN identification by Year 11	16
KS2 Attainment by SEN Status	17
Definitions and methodology	17

Introduction

This compendium brings together analyses on different aspects of the school system. It covers: headteachers' leaving and turnover rates by the levels of disadvantage in the schools that they lead; performance of secondary schools before and after joining a School Trust; the percentage of local authority maintained schools and academies in financial deficit; schools' collection of data on pupils' sense of school belonging; how the percentages of pupils with statements of SEN or Education, Health and Care plans in England and statements of SEN in Wales have changed over time; and the percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs by the end of their compulsory schooling.

Main findings

Headteacher metrics by deprivation

The Pupil Premium grant is funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in state-funded schools in England. In this analysis, schools are split into 10 equally sized groups ('deciles') based on the proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium. Decile 1 contains the 10% of schools with the greatest proportion of disadvantaged pupils, and decile 10 contains the 10% of schools with the lowest proportion of disadvantaged pupils. This is done separately for primary and secondary schools.

Tables 1 and 2 show leaver and turnover rates for headteachers by pupil premium decile, presented separately for primary and secondary schools, using [School Workforce in England](#) data from November 2023 and November 2024.

Table 1: Headteacher metrics by phase and pupil premium decile from 1 (most disadvantaged) to 10 (least disadvantaged) – nursery and primary schools

Pupil premium decile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Leavers %	9.9%	9.0%	8.9%	9.1%	9.1%	9.4%	9.9%	9.5%	9.0%	8.8%
Turn-over %	7.3%	5.8%	6.6%	5.8%	6.1%	5.8%	5.4%	4.8%	5.3%	4.5%

Source: School Workforce Census, Database of Teacher Records, Database of Qualified Teachers

Table 2: Headteacher metrics by phase and pupil premium decile from 1 (most disadvantaged) to 10 (least disadvantaged) – secondary schools

Pupil premium decile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Leavers %	14.0%	15.1%	10.2%	11.7%	11.7%	14.4%	14.2%	13.6%	10.7%	9.8%
Turn-over %	8.7%	6.9%	5.3%	9.1%	5.5%	6.5%	5.7%	4.9%	2.3%	2.3%

Source: School Workforce Census, Database of Teacher Records, Database of Qualified Teachers

For schools with a higher proportion of students eligible for pupil premium (more disadvantaged), the analysis shows a higher proportion of headteachers leaving the state-funded education system and a higher proportion of headteachers who moved schools within the state sector. This trend is more obvious in secondary schools than it is in primary schools.

Definitions and methodology

Pupil premium decile

The proportion of pupils within a school that are eligible for the Pupil Premium Fund provides a measure of the level of deprivation in a school. This is calculated as the proportion of pupils at the school who are eligible for the pupil premium, split by phase into 10 equally sized groups (decile), where decile 1 is the 10% of schools within the phase who have the highest proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium (most disadvantaged), and decile 10 is the 10% of schools within the phase who have the lowest proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (least disadvantaged). Each primary and nursery pupil premium decile contains 1,661 nursery and primary schools and each secondary decile contains 341 schools, except for deciles 8, 9, and 10, which contain 340 schools.

Leavers percentage

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of qualified headteachers who left the state funded school workforce between November 2023 and November 2024 for any reason including retirement or death, divided by the total FTE of qualified headteachers in the school phase in November 2023.

Turnover percentage

FTE of qualified headteachers who moved schools but stayed within the state funded school workforce between November 2023 and November 2024, divided by the total FTE of qualified headteachers in the school phase in November 2023.

Missing data – leaver and turnover rates

Some headteachers may leave a school to enter central trust leadership or have missing data if they are an executive leader working across multiple schools. The growth of these roles in recent years may mean more leaders appear as leaving the state-funded sector than is truly the case. For example, if a headteacher is present in the census for one year but is missing from the data in the following year because they moved to a central trust leadership role, they are identified as a leaver. Where a leader's data is missing in both years, for example because they are in a central trust leadership role in both years, they are not included in the analysis.

Key stage 4 performance of schools before and after joining a School Trust

As of 1 December 2025, 83.5% of secondary schools in England were academies and 83.9% of those schools are part of multi-academy trusts (MATs, or school trusts).

This analysis examines school performance relative to the point of joining a trust, to assess whether joining a school trust delivers improvement. It explores timing and durability of performance changes after joining a multi-school trust for voluntary converters and sponsored academies. Note also that DfE has previously published related research¹ on the performance of sponsored academies. This analysis does not aim to replicate the full methodology of the report, but its results are generally consistent.

Table 3: Mean difference to national average in percentage achieving grades A* to C / 9 to 4 in both English and maths GCSE by years relative to joining a multi-school trust (including sample size)

Years relative to joining a multi-school trust	Academy converters – performance difference	Academy converters – sample size	Academy sponsor led – performance difference	Academy sponsor led – sample size
-5	0.8	368	-10.6	285
-4	1.1	421	-13.4	356
-3	0.7	516	-15.8	432
-2	2.7	683	-15.3	486
-1	4.6	962	-12.9	519
0	4.4	976	-12.4	564
1	5.0	870	-11.9	483
2	5.0	750	-11.5	399
3	6.6	663	-11.4	351
4	6.7	601	-12.2	276
5	7.0	550	-12.9	200
6	8.1	461	-12.7	126
7	9.0	292	-11.0	69

Source: Compare School and College Performance, Get Information About Schools

¹ [An analysis of the performance of sponsored academies](#)

Table 3 illustrates how the percentage of pupils achieving grades A* to C / 9 to 4 in both English and maths GCSEs compares to the national average in relation to when the schools joined a multi-school trust, and distinguishes between two types of academies: converter academies (usually good schools that chose to convert) and sponsored academies (usually schools that were required to join a trust, often as a result of poor performance).

The data shows that sponsored academies' performance, in general, started well below the national average before joining a trust. The results for those in the run-up to joining a trust get closer to the national average and closer still for those sponsored academies that were 1-4 years after joining their trusts.^{2,3} Converter academies, on average, performed significantly above the national average both before and after conversion with those that had been in trusts for longest performing best.

The sample sizes show that the number of schools in the dataset varies over time as the number of new academies created in each year has varied. There are fewer schools for which there is a full 7 years of data following their joining a trust, and this is particularly true for sponsor-led academies. This has important implications for interpreting the results: averages in the later years are based on smaller samples and are therefore more sensitive to outliers. It should also be noted that the data shown does not track the same schools over time but represent pooled averages for different cohorts, which may vary in characteristics such as prior performance.

Definitions and methodology

This analysis uses publicly available school-level KS4 performance data from [Compare School and College Performance in England](#) for academic years 2010 to 2011 to 2018 to 2019. It focuses on the percentage of pupils achieving grades A* to C / 9 to 4 in both English and mathematics GCSEs for comparability over time. The name of the measure has changed over time due to methodological updates. A timeline of the changes to Key Stage 4 measures during the period covered by this analysis is given in Annex A of: [Key stage 4 performance 2019: quality and methodology information](#) [pdf].

[Get Information About Schools \(GIAS\)](#) data was used to obtain establishment links for all schools and trust membership history for academies.

² The performance of sponsored academies may have been temporarily negatively affected by the change to the GCSE grading system from A to G to 9 to 1 which was introduced for English and maths from 2017, and by the introduction of reforms whereby only the first attempt at a qualification counts towards performance measures in 2014. These changes impacted disproportionately on lower performing schools with more disadvantaged pupils. See [Making the Grade \(2019\)](#) [pdf] for analysis of the impact of reformed GCSEs, and [A closer look at pupils who did not achieve the basics at GCSE - FFT Education Datalab](#) for analysis of results for disadvantaged pupils.

³ It should be noted that the number of schools in the dataset that have been sponsored academies for 6+ years is relatively small.

These datasets allowed us to link school performance to trust membership over time. We used establishment links to connect to predecessor schools' performance data. This was particularly important for sponsored academies, which typically receive a new URN on conversion.

From trust history data, we identified cohorts of schools that joined a multi-school trust in each year from 2010 to 2011 to 2018 to 2019. For each school within a cohort, we extracted its KS4 performance and calculated the difference from the national average for that year (as recorded in the KS4 dataset). We then converted academic years into years relative to academisation. For example, for the cohort of schools that converted in the 2011 to 2012 academic year, 2010 to 2011 is designated as Year -1, 2011 to 2012 as Year 0 and 2012 to 2013 as Year +1.

We aggregated differences across all schools in trusts by academy type (converter vs sponsored) and relative year, producing the mean difference from the national average for each academy type by relative year.

Why we use difference from the national average

This approach allows us to compare academies against other schools in the same academic year, controlling for changes in national performance standards.

We do not use absolute attainment scores because they are not directly comparable over time as exam standards and grading systems changed during the period studied. Using differences ensures more comparability across years and avoids misleading conclusions.

Schools in financial deficit

This analysis looks at the number of local authority maintained schools and academies in financial deficit. Being in financial deficit is defined as having a negative revenue reserve balance, which occurs when the school or trust's total expenditure exceeds the sum of its total income and any revenue reserves accumulated from previous years.

Table 4 shows that a higher percentage of local authority maintained schools are in deficit than academies, and a higher percentage of Single Academy Trusts are in deficit than multi-school trusts.

Table 4: Number and percentage of schools in financial deficit by type

Type of school/group	Total number	Number in deficit ⁴	Percentage in deficit
Local authority maintained schools	11,362	1,745	15.4%
Academies in Single Academy Trusts	995	53	5.3%
Academies in multi-school trusts	10,112	288	2.8%

Source: Consistent Financial Reporting 2023-24, Academies Accounts Return 2023/24

A range of influences may contribute to this disparity. Academies are not allowed to incorporate until they have a zero balance and maintained schools in deficit pass on their debt to the local authority prior to conversion (in the case of converter academies, debt is then recovered from the academy through abatement of the General Annual Grant).⁵ Trusts can redistribute resources across academies within the trust in a way local authorities cannot and, by definition, an academy is only in deficit if the trust overall is in deficit. However, these two factors do not explain all of the disparity between local authority maintained schools and trusts, so it is likely that other differences in financial management practices exist between them. For example, this could be linked to the higher proportion of School Business Managers in trusts who hold higher levels of qualifications compared to local authority maintained schools.⁶

⁴ Multi-school trusts manage their finances on a consolidated basis, producing a single set of audited accounts. If a trust is in deficit, all its schools are in deficit, and vice-versa.

⁵ [Academy conversion: surplus and deficit balance transfer process - GOV.UK](#)

⁶ See Tables 23 and 24 in the [Survey of school and trust business professionals research report](#) (2023).

Definitions and methodology

Being in financial deficit is defined as having a negative revenue reserve balance, which occurs when the school or trust's total expenditure exceeds the sum of its total income and any revenue reserves accumulated from previous years.

This analysis uses publicly available data from [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool - GOV.UK](#). The statistics on local authority maintained schools refer to the 2023 to 2024 financial year and are drawn from the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) 2023-24 dataset. Statistics on academies are for the 2023 to 2024 academic year and are drawn from the Academies Accounts Return (AAR) 2023/24 dataset.

Total income, total expenditure, and revenue reserves are reported directly in the CFR and AAR datasets. The values for academies are aggregated at a trust level, and combined with any expenditure, income, and revenue reserves held by the trust's central services to determine whether the trust overall is in financial deficit. The number of academies in deficit, as reported in Table 4, refer to the number of academies which are in a trust which is in deficit.

Schools' collection of data on pupils' sense of school belonging

In the December 2025 School and College Voice survey, school leaders were asked whether they collect data on a range of topics in relation to pupil wellbeing and experience in their school, with the results shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Percentage of school leaders who responded that their school collects data on pupils' sense of school belonging

School phase	Percentage	Lower estimate	Higher estimate
All	60%	56%	64%
Primary	49%	43%	55%
Secondary	76%	71%	80%

Source: School and College Voice, December 2025 wave

Overall, 60% of school leaders that responded to the survey said their school collects data about pupils' sense of school belonging, however this varies by phase. More secondary school leaders reported that their school collects data about pupils' sense of school belonging compared to primary schools (76% of secondary school leaders compared to 49% of primary school leaders; this is a significant difference).

Definitions and methodology

DfE commissioned Verian (formerly known as Kantar Public) to recruit and maintain a panel of school and college leaders and teachers in England, known as the School and College Voice (SCV). The SCV is designed to collect robust evidence to help DfE understand the perspectives of teachers and leaders. This allows us to make more effective policy. More information about the School and College Voice can be found at: [Omnibus surveys - GOV.UK](#)

The SCV works as a series of short surveys across the academic year, covering a range of new and longstanding policy issues. This analysis reports findings from the December 2025 survey wave of the School and College Voice, which ran between 2 and 15 December 2025. There were 828 survey responses received for this wave; 370 from primary school leaders and 458 from secondary school leaders. The confidence intervals presented in Table 5 to show the level of uncertainty in the survey resulting from the sample size are calculated at the 95% level.

Comparing prevalence of statutory plans for SEN in schools in England and Wales

England and Wales have historically shared broadly comparable frameworks for supporting pupils with special educational needs (SEN), until reforms taking effect in September 2014 with the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans) in England and the introduction of Individual Development Plans (IDPs) in September 2021 in Wales. Further detail on the changes in each system is included below.

The data presented in this section covers 2011 to 2021, which can be split into two distinct time periods. Between academic years 2010 to 2011 and 2013 to 2014 the systems in England and Wales were broadly similar. Between academic years 2014 to 2015 and 2020 to 2021, following England's introduction of EHC plans in the 2014 to 2015 academic year, and prior to the 2021 reforms in Wales, Wales's system remained broadly similar to the system in England prior to England's reforms. Looking at the change between the 2014 to 2015 and 2020 to 2021 academic years therefore serves as a natural experiment allowing us to compare rates for the issue of EHC plans or statements over this period.

Table 6 shows how the percentages of pupils with statements or EHC plans in England and statements in Wales have changed over time. It shows that rates and trends in the percentage of the pupil population with statements or EHC plans (in England) and statements (in Wales) were broadly similar between England and Wales until England's rate began to rise in academic year 2017 to 2018.

Wales's statement rate increased by 0.40 percentage points between the 2014 to 2015 and 2020 to 2021 academic years, while England's increased by 0.85 percentage points over the same period. This suggests that around half of the rise in the number of EHC plans for pupils over that period in England was due to England-specific factors (including but not necessarily limited to the 2014 SEN Reforms in England).

Table 6: Percentage of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans)/statements of SEN in England and statements of SEN in Wales

Academic year	Percentage of pupil population with statements of SEN in Wales	Percentage of pupil population with statements of SEN or EHC plans in England
2010 to 2011	2.99%	2.76%
2011 to 2012	2.90%	2.76%
2012 to 2013	2.86%	2.78%
2013 to 2014	2.81%	2.79%
2014 to 2015	2.80%	2.80%
2015 to 2016	2.79%	2.77%
2016 to 2017	2.84%	2.79%
2017 to 2018	2.92%	2.90%
2018 to 2019	2.97%	3.07%
2019 to 2020	3.02%	3.32%
2020 to 2021	3.20%	3.65%

Source: School census, Wales; School census, England

Definitions and methodology

Comparing the systems in England and Wales

Until reforms in 2014 and 2021 respectively, England and Wales had a similar system of statements of SEN and School Action/School Action Plus; following these reforms neither England nor Wales uses statements of SEN and School Action/School Action Plus.

In September 2014 England introduced EHC plans, with statements of SEN being phased out by 2018. EHC plans provide individualised support that integrates education with any related health and social care support. School Action/School Action Plus was also replaced in the 2014 to 2015 academic year by SEN Support. In 2018, Wales introduced the [Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act \(ALNET\)](#). This moved Wales to a new legislative framework replacing statements of SEN and School Action/School Action Plus with IDPs. Despite the legislation being laid in 2018, the law commenced and changes started to become operational from September 2021, although there may have been behavioural changes in anticipation of the new system during the run up to commencement.

Between academic years 2014 to 2015 and 2020 to 2021, following England's introduction of EHC plans, and prior to the 2021 reforms in Wales, Wales's system remained broadly similar to the system in England prior to England's reforms. Looking at 2015 to 2021 therefore serves as a natural experiment allowing us to compare rates for the issue of EHC plans or statements over this period. It is not a perfect comparison, as there were broader system changes in Wales over that period, such as curriculum reform towards a new learner-centred, inclusive curriculum, a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing and measures to boost workforce and support pupil wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Nevertheless, overall, in respect of SEN policy our judgement is that there is a sufficient degree of consistency in Wales pre- and post-2014, up to 2021, that the comparison to England is informative of the impact of any England-specific changes.

Wales

All data was provided by Welsh Government. The figures for Wales include pupils in nursery, primary, middle, secondary, special and independent schools and all forms of Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision, which includes pupil referral units.

The numerator for Wales includes pupils with statements of SEN in maintained schools, drawn from: [Pupils in maintained schools with additional learning or special educational needs by local authority, type of provision and year | StatsWales](#), the number of pupils with statements of SEN in independent schools, drawn from: [Pupils in independent schools with additional learning or special educational needs by year | StatsWales](#), and the number of pupils with statements of SEN in all forms of provision for those EOTAS drawn from [Pupils educated other than at school | GOV.WALES](#).

The denominator is the total number of pupils in nursery, primary, middle, secondary and special schools in Wales drawn from: [Pupils by sector in Wales](#), the number of pupils in independent schools in Wales, drawn from: [Pupils in independent schools by local authority, age group, sex and year | StatsWales](#), and the number of pupils in EOTAS provision, drawn from [Pupils educated other than at school | GOV.WALES](#).

The 2019 to 2020 independent school census in Wales was not fully completed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and therefore data for academic year 2019 to 2020 is the average of the figures for 2018 to 2019 and 2020 to 2021.

England

England's provision rate includes all state-funded nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools, pupil referral units and independent schools, and covers statements prior to 2014 and both statements and EHC plans for the years following reform from 2014 to 2015.

Data is drawn from the following sources for England:

- academic years 2010 to 2011 to 2013 to 2014: [Special educational needs in England: January 2015 - GOV.UK](#)

- academic year 2014 to 2015: [Special educational needs in England: January 2016 - GOV.UK](#)
- academic years 2015 to 2016 to 2020 to 2021: '[Pupils in all schools, by type of SEN provision - 2016 to 2021](#)' from '[Special educational needs in England](#)', [Permanent data table - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

Cumulative special educational needs identification

Identification of special educational needs (SEN) is not a fixed designation. This analysis looks at whether a pupil in the cohort that reached Year 11 during the 2024 to 2025 academic year had ever been recorded as having special educational needs (SEN) in any spring school census return up to Year 11. The data used in this analysis includes the following categories:

- Ever EHC plan: pupil has ever had an Education, Health and Care Plan
- Ever SEN support: pupil has ever been recorded as SEN support (but may also have had an EHC plan at some point)
- Ever Only SEN Support: pupil has only ever been recorded as SEN support (no EHC plan at any point)
- Ever Any SEN: pupil has ever had either an EHC plan or SEN support

The analysis then looks at the proportion of those not achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at key stage 2 have been identified with SEN, and go on to be identified by Year 11. [Key stage 2 attainment data](#) shows that pupils with SEN are less likely to achieve the expected standard at KS2, and this analysis shows a fuller picture of SEN identification for pupils who did not achieve the expected standard.

Cumulative SEN identification by Year 11

Table 7 shows that, for pupils in Year 11 during the 2024 to 2025 academic year, 32.4% (almost 1 in 3) had SEN at any point up to and including Year 11. Looking at EHC plans and SEN support only separately, 5.9% (about 1 in 17) had an EHC plan, and 26.5% (just over 1 in 4) received SEN support only.

Table 7: Number and percentage of the 2024/25 Year 11 cohort who had been recorded as having SEN at any point up to and including Year 11

Measure	Total pupils	Percentage of total pupils
Total Ever EHC Plan	37,263	5.9%
Total Ever SEN Support	198,780	31.2%
Total Ever Only SEN Support	168,974	26.5%
Total Ever Any SEN	206,237	32.4%
Total pupils	636,620	100.0%

Source: School census

KS2 Attainment by SEN Status

Table 8 looks at pupils in the latest Year 6 cohort who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, and the percentage of these pupils who had been identified with SEN up to and including that point. For pupils in Year 6 in academic year 2024 to 2025, of those who did not achieve expected standards, 51.6% had been identified with SEN at some point up to and including Year 6. Looking at EHC plans and SEN support only separately, 13.9% by then had had an EHC plan, and 37.8% by then had received SEN support only.

Table 8: Ever SEN provision rates by Year 6, of those in who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2

Key stage 2 cohort in academic year	Percentage with an EHC plan by Year 6	Percentage with SEN support only by Year 6	Percentage with any SEN by Year 6
2024 to 2025	13.9	37.8	51.6

Source: School census, KS2 attainment data

We can also follow those not achieving the expected key stage 2 standard in reading, writing and maths through to Year 11, for the Year 6 cohort from academic year 2018 to 2019 (later cohorts have not yet reached Year 11). Table 9 shows that, of those who did not achieve the expected standards in academic year 2018 to 2019, 59.9% were identified with SEN at some point up to and including Year 11. 13.2% had an EHC plan by then, and 46.7% received SEN support only.

Table 9: Ever SEN provision rates by Year 11, of those who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2

Key stage 2 cohort in academic year	Percentage with an EHC plan by Year 11	Percentage with SEN support only by Year 11	Percentage with any SEN by Year 11
2018 to 2019	13.2	46.7	59.9

Source: School census, KS2 attainment data

Definitions and methodology

These analyses use data from the [school census](#), integrating spring census records with Key Stage 2 (KS2) assessment results for the KS2 ever SEN analysis. The data is deduplicated to closely match published DfE figures for pupils in state-funded schools from ages 3-18. Alternative provision (AP) census data was not used in this analysis, resulting in the omission of 5,859 Year 11 pupils in state-funded AP schools or about 1% of the Year 11 cohort in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Calculations use SEN provision status as collected in the spring census only. KS2 SEN provision status that is collected at the time of the tests is not used, therefore pupils only recorded as having an EHC plan or SEN support at the time of the tests, but not before or after are not recorded as ever SEN in this analysis.

The Ever EHC plan category includes both pupils with an EHC plan and Statement of SEN (which preceded EHC plans). SEN support includes SEN support, school action and school action plus pupils.

This analysis has the following limitations:

- Administrative data quality: SEN status depends on accurate school recording, which may vary by school and over time
- Incomplete educational journeys: gaps may exist in individual pupil records where pupils joined the state sector part-way through their education, previously attended independent schools, or spent a period abroad. In such cases, earlier SEN information may be incomplete or unavailable
- No outcome linkage: This analysis doesn't examine whether SEN identification led to improved outcomes



Department
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