



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

BACKGROUND

Pupils educated other than at school, September 2020 to August 2021: quality report

Data relating to pupils known by local authorities to be receiving education outside of school from September 2020 to August 2021.

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Definitions

Definitions of pupils educated other than at school

In the context of this statistical release a pupil being educated other than at school (EOTAS) was recorded as receiving or awaiting education provision funded by the local authority otherwise than in a maintained school setting during the census week of the EOTAS Pupil Census.

A pupil may also be included in this category if:

- they attend an independent or non-maintained special school for which the local authority is responsible for paying all or part of the tuition fees

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- they are placed in a maintained school as part of their education funded by the local authority

The phrase EOTAS pupil is used to refer to a pupil educated other than at school as defined above.

An EOTAS pupil whose main education is other than at school is a pupil being educated other than at school who is either not on roll at a maintained school or is recorded as having a 'subsidiary' enrolment status at a maintained school in the January Pupil-Level Annual School Census.

An EOTAS pupil whose main education is in a maintained school is a pupil being educated other than at school with a 'main' or 'current' enrolment status in the January Pupil-Level Annual School Census.

Pupils being electively home educated are children whose parents have decided to educate at home rather than at school and are not classed as EOTAS pupils in this publication. Although by definition they are educated other than at school, education for these pupils is not funded by the local authority and there is no legal basis under which the local authority can collect personal data about them. Data on electively home educated pupils are restricted to headcounts by local authority and are provided voluntarily by the local authority. Figures related to pupils electively home educated have been reported in separate tables to those relating to EOTAS pupils.

Free school meal (FSM) eligibility

Children whose parents receive the following support payments are eligible to receive free school meals in maintained schools in Wales.

- Income Support.
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed £16,190.

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- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on'- the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit.

Children who receive income related employment and support allowance, Universal Credit, Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance in their own right are also eligible to receive Free School Meals.

Pupils should only be recorded as eligible if they have applied for free school meals to the local authority and:

- the relevant authority has confirmed their eligibility, or
- final confirmation of eligibility is still awaited but the school has seen documents that strongly indicate eligibility

Transitional protection for free school meals

On 1 April 2019 the Welsh Government introduced a new transitional protection for free school meals policy. This was brought in to ensure that pupils have their free school meals protected during the Universal Credit rollout period.

This protection applies to individual pupils and will continue until the end of their current schools phase, being the end of primary school or end of secondary school.

Any pupil that was eligible for free school meals on the introduction of the policy on 1 April 2019 should also be transitionally protected. In addition, any pupil that has become eligible at any point during the Universal Credit rollout under the new eligibility criteria should also be transitionally protected.

Special educational needs (SEN)

Pupils known to have special educational needs can be in one of the following categories.

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School Action

When a class or subject teacher identifies that a pupil has special educational needs they provide interventions that are additional to, or different from, those provided as part of the school's usual curriculum.

School Action Plus

When the class or subject teacher and the SEN Co-ordinator are provided with advice or support from outside specialists, so that alternative interventions additional to, or different from, those provided for the pupil through 'School Action' can be put in place.

Statement

Pupils for whom the local authority maintains a statement of special educational needs under Part IV of the Education Act 1996. A statement may be issued by the local authority after assessment of a child's needs.

Rounding and symbols

In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit, there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total shown.

The following symbols have been used throughout this publication:

- [n/a] data item is not applicable
- [unavailable] data item is not available
- [suppressed] data item is disclosive

National Statistics status

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 Statistics**.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2010 following a **compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation**. These statistics last underwent a **full assessment** against the Code of Practice in 2010.

Data source and coverage

The EOTAS Pupil Census is carried out annually and collects data on pupils educated other than at school from local authorities electronically via a secure website. The collection is carried out by the school statistics team in Knowledge and Analytical Services within the Welsh Government.

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The information in this Statistical First Release relates to pupils receiving local authority-funded education outside of the mainstream school environment during a census week each January and the number of pupils of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 15 on 31 August before the start of the academic year) known by local authorities to be electively home educated. For the 2020/21 academic year the census week was 19 to 23 April 2021.

In 2020/21, data were received on 2,186 pupils receiving education other than at school from all 22 local authorities in Wales. Of the 2,186 pupils receiving EOTAS provision, 394 were recorded in the April 2021 Pupil-Level Annual School Census as having 'main' or 'current' enrolment status in maintained primary, secondary or special schools and were therefore considered to be receiving their main education in a maintained school. The remaining 1,792 pupils were considered to be receiving their main education other than at school. The focus of this Statistical First Release is on pupils mainly educated other than at school, but to give a complete picture it was necessary to include all pupils receiving EOTAS provision in Table 1, Table 8 and Table 9.

Local authorities reported that in 2020/21, 4,022 pupils were known to be electively home educated. Of these pupils, 320 were known to not be of compulsory school age so they were excluded from the figures contained in this release, leaving a total of 3,702 pupils.

Data on electively home educated pupils is not mandatory for the local authority to provide. In some years, there is not full coverage from all local authorities for this data (presented in table 10).

Known under-coverage

- In 2012/13 Caerphilly did not submit data for home educated pupils.
- In 2016/17 and 2017/18 Carmarthenshire did not submit data for home educated pupils.
- The 2019/20 data collection was not completed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. For this reason, only 14 local authorities were able to submit data and the data only relates to those authorities.

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Users and uses

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor educational trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the underlying data. Some of the key users are:

- ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales
- other government departments
- local authorities and schools
- Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales
- The Department for Education and Skills in the Welsh Government
- other areas of the Welsh Government
- the research community
- students, academics and universities
- individual citizens, private companies and the media

These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- to advise ministers
- to inform the education policy decision-making process in Wales
- to inform Estyn during inspections
- to assist in research in educational attainment

Accuracy

The Welsh Government works closely with local authorities in order to ensure all data are validated before tables are published. Data are collated into an electronic return and submitted to the Welsh Government through DEWi, a secure online data transfer system developed by the Welsh Government. Various stages of automated validation and sense-checking are built into the process to ensure a high quality of data.

Starting in 2011/12, following the collection of the data an additional validation

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period was carried out in which local authorities were sent summary tables of their data and asked to check that they were correct. While most of the data were confirmed to be correct, these checking periods highlighted problems with several local authorities' data which were resolved, further improving the accuracy of the data.

Timeliness and punctuality

The 2020/21 data collection was delayed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from January to April. The local authorities are provided with a period to upload data and respond to validation queries prior to the publication of results.

Accessibility and clarity

This Statistical First Release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics section of the Welsh Government's website. It is accompanied by [more detailed tables](#) accompanying the release and on [StatsWales](#), a free-to-use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate and download data.

Comparability and coherence

Tables and charts in this statistical first release contain data about different groups of EOTAS pupils as defined in the [Definitions section](#) below. Whether the tables and charts are referring to EOTAS pupils whose main education is other than at school, whose main education is at a maintained school or all EOTAS pupils is clearly indicated, so before comparing two tables or charts please check that they are referring to the same group of EOTAS pupils.

Pupils by age (Table 3) and by SEN (Table 4) can be set in context by comparing to the general school population. The relevant data can be found in the

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publication of final **school census results**.

From 2017/18, **StatsWales tables** are published to accompany this statistical first release.

England publishes the number of pupils on roll at Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision in the statistical release entitled '**Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2021 (GOV.UK)**'.

Related statistics for Northern Ireland: **Education Outside of School (Department of Education, Northern Ireland)**

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