

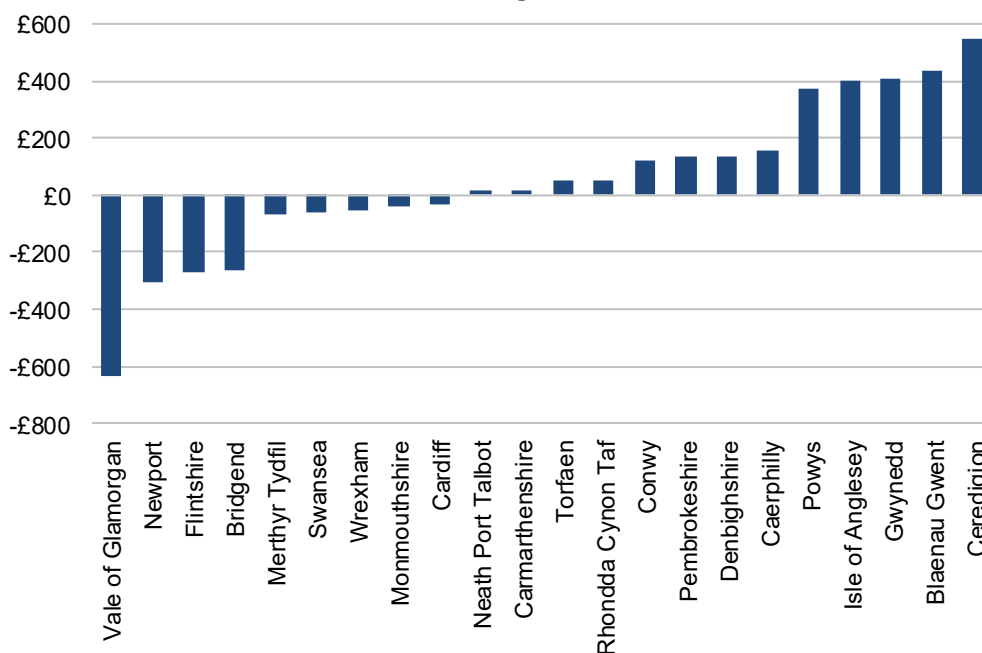
Local Authority Budgeted Expenditure on Schools: 2020-21

22 December 2020
SB 41/2020

Key points

- Schools expenditure is budgeted to be £2,822 million, an increase of 6.2% over the previous year.
- Schools expenditure per pupil is budgeted to be £6,192, a year-on-year increase of 5.7% or £335. This is a real terms increase of 3.7% and the largest real terms increase per pupil since 2007-08.
- The budget per pupil can be broken down into £5,183 per pupil delegated to schools and £1,009 per pupil retained for centrally funded school services.
- The funding delegated to schools is budgeted to be £2,362 million. The amount of funding that local authorities delegate directly to schools ranges between 77% and 90% of overall schools budgeted expenditure.
- 83.7% of the total schools budgeted expenditure is delegated directly to schools, a decrease of 0.2 of a percentage point compared to the previous year.

Chart 1: Schools budgeted expenditure per pupil: difference from the Wales average, 2020-21



About this release

This statistical bulletin analyses the resources that local authorities have budgeted to make available for education and school services in the financial year prior to March 2021.

Most budgets and forecasts were set prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is likely that there will be more differences between budget and outturn figures for 2020-21 than in a typical year.

Details of individual school budgets can be found on the [StatsWales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/) website.

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Net revenue expenditure is the amount of expenditure which is supported by council tax and general support from central government, net of specific grants, plus (or minus) any appropriations from (or to) financial reserves. Table 1 shows Newport has the largest percentage increase in education net revenue expenditure at 9.5% whilst Ceredigion has the smallest increase of 2.6%.

Table 1: Budgeted net revenue expenditure on education (a)

	<i>£ thousand</i>			
			Change in	
	2019-20	2020-21	2020-21 over 2019-20	Percentage change
Isle of Anglesey	51,770	55,148	3,378	6.5
Gwynedd	93,393	98,705	5,312	5.7
Conwy	81,121	85,585	4,464	5.5
Denbighshire	84,400	88,218	3,818	4.5
Flintshire	111,658	119,409	7,751	6.9
Wrexham	98,364	106,423	8,060	8.2
Powys	94,512	102,837	8,326	8.8
Ceredigion	55,144	56,557	1,412	2.6
Pembrokeshire	88,360	96,140	7,780	8.8
Carmarthenshire	135,914	147,133	11,219	8.3
Swansea	171,921	182,656	10,735	6.2
Neath Port Talbot	107,381	113,060	5,679	5.3
Bridgend	115,304	119,840	4,536	3.9
Vale of Glamorgan	103,594	110,902	7,308	7.1
Cardiff	270,969	285,412	14,443	5.3
Rhondda Cynon Taf	198,400	211,114	12,714	6.4
Merthyr Tydfil	49,250	51,229	1,978	4.0
Caerphilly	144,438	154,284	9,847	6.8
Blaenau Gwent	51,642	54,192	2,550	4.9
Torfaen	77,002	80,562	3,559	4.6
Monmouthshire	57,571	62,380	4,809	8.4
Newport	118,329	129,626	11,297	9.5
Wales	2,360,437	2,511,413	150,976	6.4

Source: RA/Section 52 education budget statements

(a) The figures are on a 'net revenue' basis, i.e. excluding expenditure funded by specific government grants. The data includes all school and non-school expenditure.

Table 2 shows that Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire have the largest increases in schools budgeted expenditure of 9.7%. Torfaen has the smallest increase at 1.9%.

Table 2: Schools budgeted expenditure (a)

	<i>£ thousand</i>			
	Schools budgeted expenditure			
	2019-20	2020-21	Change in 2020-21 over 2019-20	Percentage change
Isle of Anglesey	57,735	61,604	3,869	6.7
Gwynedd	105,606	109,289	3,683	3.5
Conwy	92,549	97,255	4,706	5.1
Denbighshire	94,536	96,956	2,420	2.6
Flintshire	126,249	134,666	8,417	6.7
Wrexham	106,449	115,197	8,748	8.2
Powys	105,798	113,328	7,530	7.1
Ceredigion	61,738	63,671	1,933	3.1
Pembrokeshire	97,097	106,559	9,462	9.7
Carmarthenshire	153,658	168,518	14,861	9.7
Swansea	196,239	208,611	12,372	6.3
Neath Port Talbot	118,965	126,051	7,086	6.0
Bridgend	130,219	137,164	6,945	5.3
Vale of Glamorgan	115,404	123,569	8,165	7.1
Cardiff	314,752	329,845	15,093	4.8
Rhondda Cynon Taf	223,558	239,377	15,820	7.1
Merthyr Tydfil	52,927	54,804	1,877	3.5
Caerphilly	159,070	169,053	9,984	6.3
Blaenau Gwent	55,974	58,455	2,482	4.4
Torfaen	86,339	87,956	1,617	1.9
Monmouthshire	64,733	69,784	5,052	7.8
Newport	137,499	150,446	12,947	9.4
Wales	2,657,092	2,822,160	165,068	6.2

Source: RA/Section 52 education budget statements

(a) Includes all expenditure on schools i.e. the delegated/devolved schools budget and all expenditure by the LEA on behalf of schools. Covers all elements of LEA spending that relate to school provision, i.e. school budget plus the LEA budget, including central administration of the LEA, less spending on home to college transport and further education and training for young persons and adults. The figures include the cost of educating pupils with statements of special educational needs who are educated out of county.

Table 3 shows delegated schools budgets increased by 6.0% compared with the previous year. Newport has the highest percentage increase at 9.9%. Home to school transport costs have an effect on how much an individual authority can delegate to schools so delegation rates with and without these costs are shown.

Table 3: Delegated School Budget

£ thousand

	Delegated schools budget (a)					Memorandum: Delegation rate excluding home to school transport
	2019-20	2020-21	Change in	Percentage	Delegation	
			2020-21 over 2019-20	change	rate (b) 2020-21	
Isle of Anglesey	47,101	50,517	3,416	7.3	82.0%	85.5%
Gwynedd	87,141	90,407	3,266	3.7	82.7%	86.0%
Conwy	77,273	80,443	3,171	4.1	82.7%	87.1%
Denbighshire	78,920	82,823	3,903	4.9	85.4%	90.8%
Flintshire	108,197	115,300	7,104	6.6	85.6%	88.5%
Wrexham	91,905	97,639	5,734	6.2	84.8%	88.9%
Powys	81,646	86,703	5,057	6.2	76.5%	83.8%
Ceredigion	48,466	49,948	1,482	3.1	78.4%	84.5%
Pembrokeshire	81,661	88,454	6,793	8.3	83.0%	88.2%
Carmarthenshire	125,438	136,586	11,148	8.9	81.1%	86.1%
Swansea	163,479	174,722	11,243	6.9	83.8%	87.6%
Neath Port Talbot	97,105	103,138	6,034	6.2	81.8%	86.5%
Bridgend	111,406	117,910	6,504	5.8	86.0%	89.4%
Vale of Glamorgan	101,365	108,275	6,910	6.8	87.6%	90.1%
Cardiff	284,075	296,437	12,362	4.4	89.9%	91.7%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	185,925	195,634	9,709	5.2	81.7%	85.6%
Merthyr Tydfil	44,604	46,051	1,448	3.2	84.0%	87.7%
Caerphilly	128,942	136,213	7,271	5.6	80.6%	83.7%
Blaenau Gwent	47,956	50,092	2,136	4.5	85.7%	88.7%
Torfaen	69,182	72,285	3,103	4.5	82.2%	84.5%
Monmouthshire	53,549	57,626	4,078	7.6	82.6%	87.4%
Newport	113,929	125,237	11,308	9.9	83.2%	86.2%
Wales	2,229,263	2,362,440	133,177	6.0	83.7%	87.5%

Source: RA/Section 52 education budget statements

- (a) Figures are on a 'gross' basis, i.e. including funding from all sources. This is the amount of money the school receives through delegated funding from the LEA plus any specific government grants that have also been devolved to individual schools.
- (b) The delegation rate is calculated by dividing the amounts delegated to schools by the gross schools budgeted expenditure. Delegation rates will vary based on the services provided centrally by local authorities.

Cardiff has the highest delegation rate at 89.9%. Powys has the lowest delegation rate at 76.5% mainly due to high home to school transport costs which cannot be delegated.

Chart 2: Delegation rates: percentage point difference from the Wales average, 2020-21

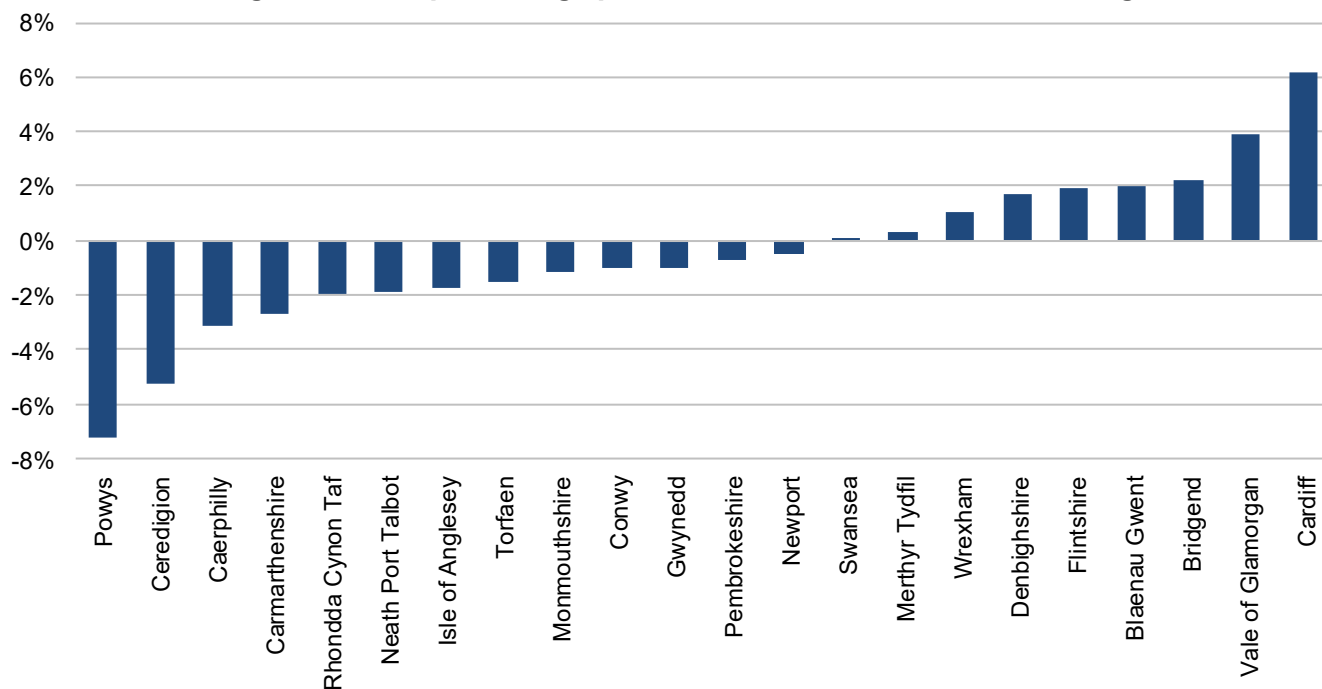
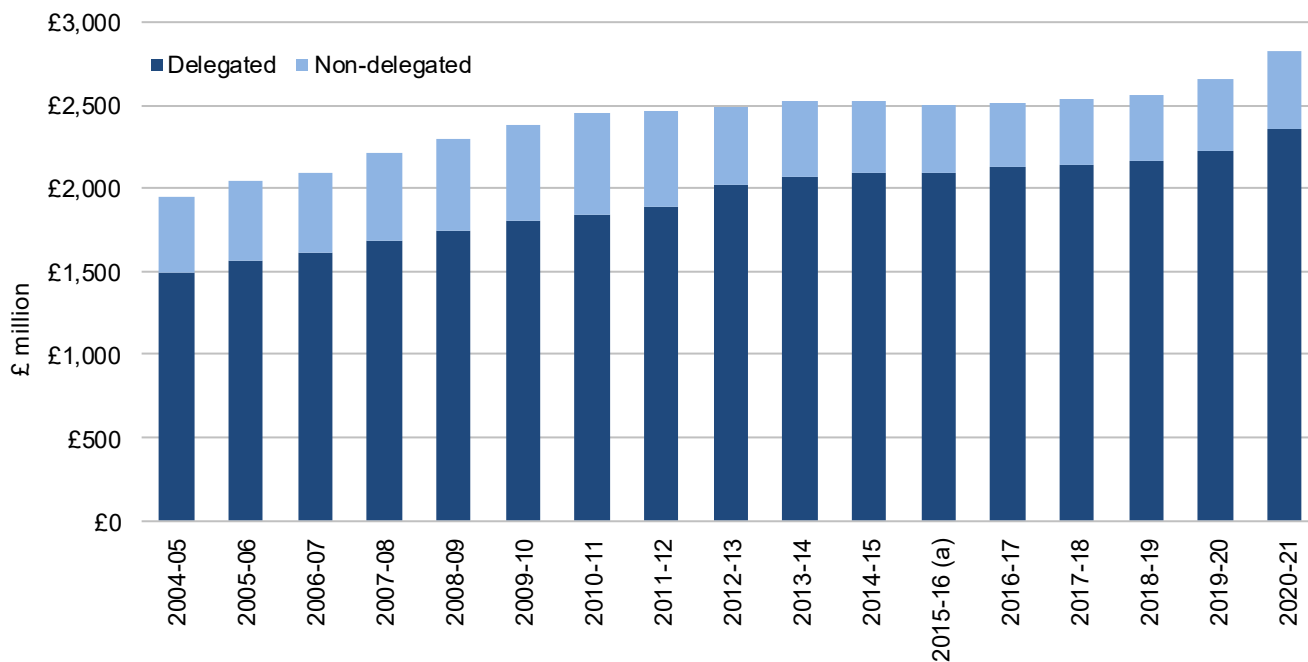


Chart 3 shows that schools budgeted expenditure is to increase by 6.2% in 2020-21.

Chart 3: Breakdown of schools budgeted expenditure over time



(a) The data is not wholly comparable with previous years due to the movement of Flying Start expenditure from Education to Social Services in 2015-16.

Table 4: Centrally funded schools budgets, 2020-21 (a)

	<i>£ per pupil</i>												Memo: Centrally funded schools budget (£ thousand)	
	Schools budget					LEA budget								Total centrally funded schools budget
	Special educational needs (b)	Inter authority recoupment	Other schools Staff budget	Capital expenditure charged to revenue account	Special educational needs	Access to education (excluding transport)	Home to school transport	Strategic management	Other LEA budget					
					School improvement									
Isle of Anglesey	288	27	1	115	0	14	54	65	273	327	22	1,187	11,087	
Gwynedd	183	22	3	163	74	76	93	65	252	209	0	1,141	18,882	
Conwy	188	12	2	321	0	31	63	33	318	124	0	1,092	16,811	
Denbighshire	158	-84	3	168	0	31	44	149	374	79	0	922	14,133	
Flintshire	285	102	0	50	0	37	58	59	193	68	0	852	19,366	
Wrexham	136	-22	53	310	0	6	21	37	289	74	31	936	17,558	
Powys	250	-29	2	382	17	41	47	102	575	154	0	1,542	26,625	
Ceredigion	268	-32	0	219	0	33	118	138	485	225	0	1,453	13,723	
Pembrokeshire	94	102	0	120	0	59	153	41	372	134	0	1,075	18,105	
Carmarthenshire	114	-10	4	225	0	88	164	43	366	182	0	1,176	31,932	
Swansea	362	29	68	37	0	56	38	107	268	32	0	996	33,889	
Neath Port Talbot	3	59	8	214	0	236	84	69	333	114	8	1,128	22,912	
Bridgend	167	-25	2	134	0	54	30	105	226	138	0	832	19,255	
Vale of Glamorgan	247	-45	1	101	0	70	43	18	151	88	13	687	15,293	
Cardiff	114	30	4	77	0	11	35	146	124	84	0	624	33,408	
Rhondda Cynon Taf	149	52	6	344	0	71	11	125	282	101	0	1,141	43,744	
Merthyr Tydfil	376	52	14	39	0	58	48	21	259	109	2	978	8,752	
Caerphilly	286	94	20	281	0	60	60	50	236	146	0	1,234	32,840	
Blaenau Gwent	262	-30	0	8	14	50	120	146	228	103	48	948	8,363	
Torfaen	56	103	1	166	0	46	93	151	173	323	0	1,112	15,672	
Monmouthshire	168	43	0	166	0	40	52	39	341	224	0	1,072	12,158	
Newport	184	101	0	98	0	14	0	149	199	144	97	987	25,209	
Wales	188	30	11	171	4	54	58	90	267	127	9	1,009	459,720	
Minimum	3	-84	0	8	0	6	0	18	124	32	0	624		
Maximum	376	103	68	382	74	236	164	151	575	327	97	1,542		

Source: RA/Section 52 education budget statements

(a) Includes all expenditure incurred by the LEA spent supporting schools. This is the total LEA expenditure outside of the delegated/devolved school budget.

(b) Figures include the cost of educating pupils with statements of special educational needs who are educated out of county. Expenditure on pupil referral units is included, however the pupil numbers are not included in the calculation of 'spend per pupil' as they are not available from the section 52 return. Please see glossary for definitions.

Table 5 shows the total schools budgeted expenditure per pupil. Ceredigion has the highest spend per pupil at £6,740 whilst the Vale of Glamorgan has the lowest at £5,554. Carmarthenshire has the largest increase in spend per pupil over the previous year of 9.8%. Denbighshire has the smallest increase of 1.6%.

Table 5: Total schools budgeted expenditure per pupil, 2020-21

	Delegated schools budget						Schools budgeted expenditure			
	Nursery	Primary	Middle	Secondary	Special	All sectors (a)	Centrally funded schools budget (a)	(a)		Percentage change
								2019-20	2020-21	
Isle of Anglesey	.	4,931	.	5,711	19,324	5,408	1,187	6,147	6,594	7.3
Gwynedd	.	5,012	5,510	5,569	20,055	5,464	1,141	6,403	6,605	3.2
Conwy	.	4,577	.	5,525	19,644	5,224	1,092	6,015	6,316	5.0
Denbighshire	.	4,520	5,388	5,834	20,698	5,405	922	6,227	6,327	1.6
Flintshire	.	4,675	.	5,292	19,496	5,073	852	5,579	5,925	6.2
Wrexham	15,403	4,680	.	5,607	16,868	5,202	936	5,641	6,138	8.8
Powys	.	4,579	4,279	5,042	21,414	5,022	1,542	6,408	6,564	2.4
Ceredigion (b)	.	4,741	5,639	5,813	.	5,287	1,453	6,545	6,740	3.0
Pembrokeshire	.	4,692	4,685	5,784	22,579	5,250	1,075	5,774	6,325	9.5
Carmarthenshire	4,530	4,470	.	5,490	29,993	5,031	1,176	5,653	6,208	9.8
Swansea	.	4,498	.	5,763	23,293	5,135	996	5,724	6,131	7.1
Neath Port Talbot	.	4,714	5,075	4,951	21,126	5,079	1,128	5,948	6,207	4.3
Bridgend	.	4,276	.	5,391	25,317	5,097	832	5,636	5,929	5.2
Vale of Glamorgan	8,197	4,231	4,588	4,812	33,328	4,867	687	5,232	5,554	6.2
Cardiff	14,005	4,859	.	5,919	23,813	5,533	624	5,944	6,157	3.6
Rhondda Cynon Taf	.	4,529	5,418	5,322	17,580	5,104	1,141	5,851	6,246	6.7
Merthyr Tydfil	.	4,750	.	5,066	20,277	5,146	978	5,979	6,124	2.4
Caerphilly	.	4,690	5,595	5,315	29,786	5,117	1,234	5,942	6,350	6.9
Blaenau Gwent	.	5,197	5,496	5,396	24,261	5,680	948	6,372	6,628	4.0
Torfaen	.	4,648	.	5,356	26,462	5,131	1,112	6,064	6,244	3.0
Monmouthshire	.	4,361	.	5,564	46,145	5,081	1,072	5,737	6,152	7.2
Newport	9,908	4,374	.	5,230	23,038	4,901	987	5,444	5,888	8.2
Wales	9,815	4,613	5,241	5,476	22,795	5,183	1,009	5,857	6,192	5.7
Minimum	4,530	4,231	4,279	4,812	16,868	4,867	624	5,232	5,554	1.6
Maximum	15,403	5,197	5,639	5,919	46,145	5,680	1,542	6,545	6,740	9.8

Source: RA/Section 52 education budget statements

(a) The £ per pupil figures shown here are an average across all sectors.

(b) There are no special schools within Ceredigion, although the LA has classes within mainstream education which cater for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

Chart 4: Breakdown of schools budgeted expenditure, 2020-21 (£ million)

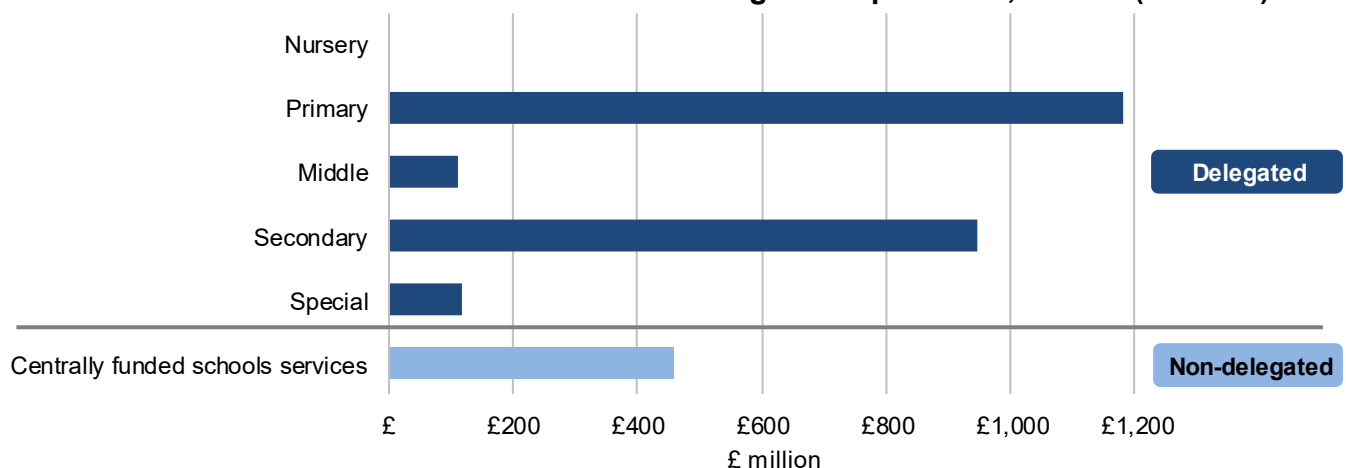
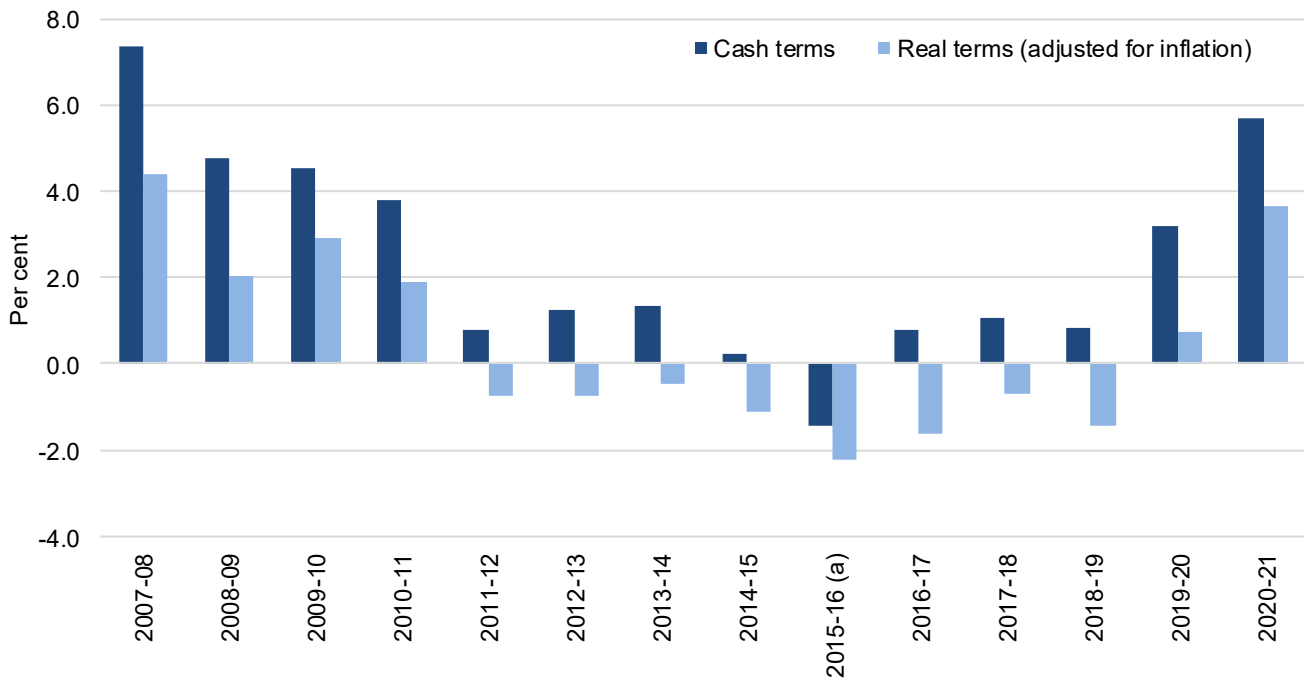


Chart 5 shows the percentage change over time in school budgets per pupil in cash and real terms. Over the past 10 years, school budgets have been increasing in cash terms in most years but the 3.7% increase in real terms in 2020-21 represents the largest real terms increase per pupil since 2007-08.

Chart 5: Percentage change in school budgets per pupil over time: cash and real terms (2019-20 prices)



(a) The data is not wholly comparable with previous years due to the movement of Flying Start expenditure from Education to Social Services in 2015-16.

Comparison with England

In January 2012 we published a [statistical article](#) explaining why the Wales data on school funding cannot be compared with England. This situation arose due to the rollout of Academies in England and the separate funding and data arrangements that followed. The [Chief Statistician published an update on this issue in March 2015](#).

In 2018, the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) [published a paper comparing Wales and England school expenditure per pupil](#) having identified a new data source that enabled academies and maintained schools data in England to be combined and thus enabled a comparison of trends with Wales. Whilst there still may be some issues in the comparability of the data at a detailed level, we worked with the IFS researchers to consider their methods and believe it is the most robust comparison that currently exists of trends in recent years. It is important to note that the IFS analysis is on a different basis to our previous statistical publications and therefore cannot be directly compared.

The IFS report that school funding per pupil in England has fallen at a faster rate than in Wales over the last few years largely due to the growth in pupil numbers in England.

The latest UK comparisons have been included in section 3.3 of the [latest IFS publication on education spending in England](#).

Glossary

Data sources

The main sources of information about Local Authority Budgeted Expenditure on Schools are the Revenue Account (RA) and Section 52 (S52) returns from county councils.

The numbers of pupils used for the calculations are based on full-time equivalent pupil numbers in nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, as shown in S52 Part 1 returns, i.e. the pupil numbers on which Local Authorities (LAs) based their budgets.

The real terms data has been calculated using the [GDP deflators published by the Treasury](#).

Background

Sources of funding

Local authority budgets for education services are funded mainly from shares of revenue support grant, council tax and redistributed non-domestic rates. In addition, funding is provided through specific grants provided by the Welsh Government, including grants for post-16 provision in schools. The grant for post-16 provision in schools forms part of core funding for schools and is part of a local authority's schools budget.

The provisions of the Education Act 2002 brought into force for financial year 2004-05 through the "LEA Budget, Schools Budget and Individual Schools Budget (Wales) Regulations 2003" require local authorities to allocate expenditure to 3 budgets. These are: **LEA budget** (covers central LA functions involved in Additional Learning Needs; school improvement; access to education; further education and training for young persons and adults and strategic management - as set out in Schedule 1 to the 2003 Regulations), **the schools budget** (covers expenditure directly aimed at supporting schools and comprises of expenditure on services for which the LA retains funding centrally, such as: Additional Learning Needs services, school meals and milk and the **Individual Schools Budget** or funding delegated/devolved to schools.

To focus comparisons, non-school expenditure such as further education and training for young persons and adults, youth service and home to college transport have been excluded throughout with the exception of table 1 which shows net revenue expenditure on total education i.e. all school and non-school expenditure.

The figure below shows the different strands of education expenditure within local authorities. For the purposes of this schools release, we focus on the first 3 strands and ignore any non-school expenditure (except in table 1 which shows the net revenue budget for total education).

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Delegated/devolved school budget (also called the individual school budget)} \\ & \quad + \\ & \quad \text{School budget (held by LEA)} \\ & \quad + \\ & \quad \text{LEA budget spent on schools (held by LEA)} \\ & \quad = \\ & \quad \textbf{Total school budget} \\ & \quad + \\ & \quad \text{LEA budget spent on non-school services} \\ & \quad = \\ & \quad \textbf{Total education budget} \end{aligned}$$

Flying Start expenditure

For 2015-16 onwards, authorities were asked to report flying start consistently and class all related expenditure as Social Services rather than Education.

Key quality information

Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political reference.

This section provides a summary of information on this output against six dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, Coherence, and Comparability.

Relevance

The statistics are important and have a number of uses, for example: advice to Ministers; local government finance revenue settlement calculations; unitary authority comparisons and benchmarking; expenditure in Wales compared to other countries; informing the debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond; assisting in research in public expenditure issues; economic analysis.

Accuracy

The main sources of information about Local Authority Budgeted Expenditure on Schools are the Revenue Account (RA) and Section 52 (S52) returns from county councils. The returns relate to the financial year.

We collect 100% of returns from all twenty-two county councils. The collection is a 100% survey and as such no estimation of the figures is calculated, and hence there is no sampling error.

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 as shown.

Once we receive the data, it goes through further validation and verification checks, for example:

- spend per head by local authority;
- arithmetic consistency checks;
- cross checks with other relevant data collections;
- thorough tolerance checks;
- outturn comparison with budgets;
- cross checks with data from other government departments;
- verification that data outside of tolerances are correct.

The data that is collected adhere to recognised professional standards. Specifically, the finance data is required under legislation and also must adhere to CIPFA accounting procedures. However, further guidelines are also available on the interpretation of these standards to ensure consistency.

Timeliness and punctuality

The data collection is carried out between April and June. The data is published in July, this allows time to collect, collate and validate the data.

All outputs adhere to the Code of Practice by pre-announcing the data of publication through the [upcoming calendar](#) web pages.

Accessibility and clarity

The Welsh local government finance statistics are published in an accessible, orderly, pre-announced manner on the Welsh Government website at 9:30am on the day of publication. All releases are available to download for free.

More detailed data are also available at the same time on the StatsWales website and this can be manipulated online or downloaded into spreadsheets for use offline.

We aim to use Plain English in our outputs and all outputs adhere to the Welsh Government accessibility policy. Furthermore, all our headlines are published in Welsh and English.

We regularly peer review our outputs.

Comparability and coherence

Adhering to the professional code (CIPFA's SeRCOP) has meant that changes over time have been minimal. Where there have been time series which are not comparable from the start of the time series to the end this will be shown clearly in the outputs. Where advance warning is known of future changes these will be pre-announced in accordance with Welsh Government arrangements.

The existence of a professional code and our adherence to it provides assurance that the data are consistent across domains, such as local authorities.

Data on school budgets are also available for [England](#) and [Scotland](#). The council tax system does not apply to Northern Ireland.

Impact of COVID-19

The data collection period for this release ran from mid-February and had a deadline in April. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, budget data was received throughout the year up until November therefore some local authorities who submitted later in the year may have made adjustments as a result of the outbreak.

It is likely that there will be more differences between budget and outturn figures than in a typical year.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/local-authority-budgeted-expenditure-schools>

Further data is available on our [StatsWales website](#):

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|-------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------|
| →Local Government | →Finance | →Revenue | →Education |
| →Local Government | →Finance | →Revenue | →Budgets |
| →Local Government | →Finance | →Revenue | →Delegated Schools Budgets |

Individual school level data is also available from the [My Local School website](#).

Data on school budgets are also available for [England](#) and [Scotland](#).

Open data

The data is also accessible directly via the StatsWales OData service. Links to data and metadata can be found below each view on the StatsWales website within the 'Open Data' tab.

Next update

July 2021 - Statistical first release and StatsWales update for 2021-22.

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.finance@gov.wales

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