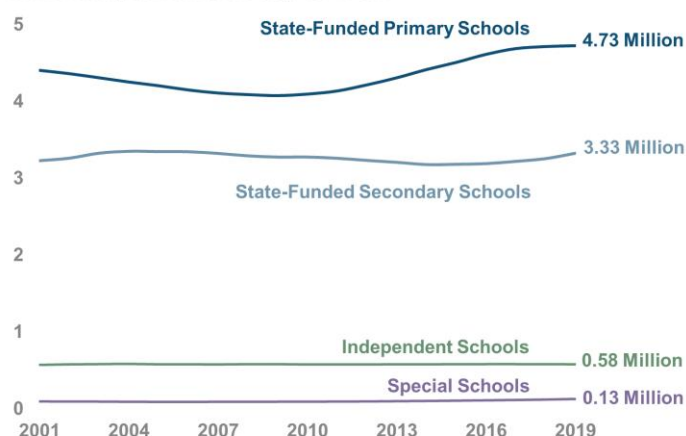




27 June 2019

There are 84,700 more pupils in the school system than in January 2018

Millions of pupils in schools, 2001-2019

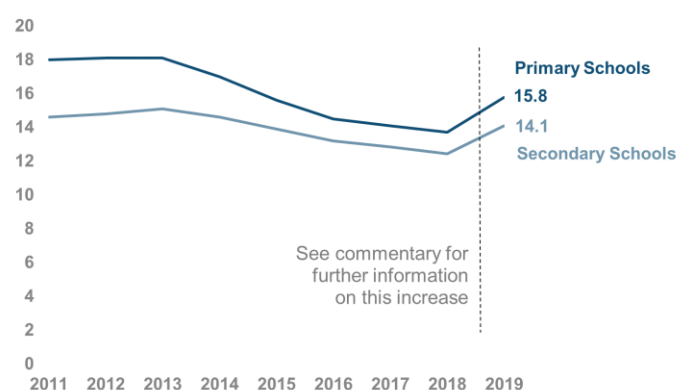


The number of pupils in state funded secondary schools rose for the fifth year in a row (69,500 more pupils), and in 2019 had a much greater increase in population than primary schools (10,800 more pupils). The increased number of primary pupils since 2010 have started to move into secondary schools so we expect to see the number of secondary pupils continue to increase in the coming years.

In addition there are 6,500 more pupils in special schools, while there are 900 fewer pupils in independent schools compared to 2018.

Following protections to free school meal eligibility during the roll out of Universal Credit, the proportion of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals increased

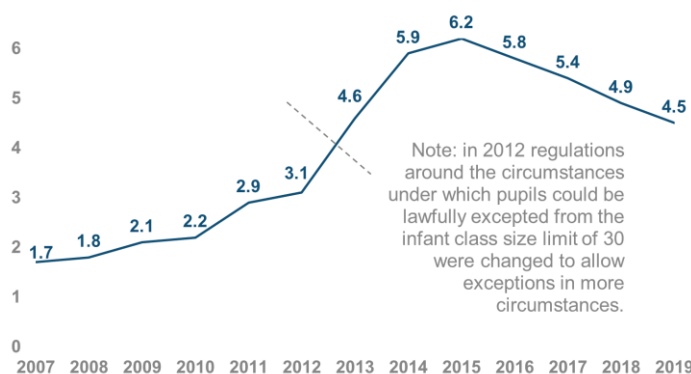
Percentage of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals, 2011-2019



In January 2019, for all school types, 15.4% of pupils were eligible for and claiming free school meals. This is the highest proportion since 2014, reversing the downward trend. Since April 2018, protections have been in place for FSM eligibility while Universal Credit is introduced nationwide. This has been the main driver in the increase in the proportion of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals as pupils continue to become eligible but fewer pupils stop being eligible.

The proportion of infant pupils in large classes has fallen for the fourth year

Percentage of infant pupils in classes of more than 30 pupils, 2007-19



4.5% of infant pupils are in classes of more than 30 pupils. This has decreased for the fourth year and is 1.7 percentage points lower than the peak of 2015.

Of infants in classes with more than 30 pupils, the vast majority (95.7%) are in classes with 31 or 32 pupils.

Overall in primary schools, average class sizes have remained stable, whilst secondary school class sizes have continued to increase.

Contents

1.	Headline school and pupil numbers	3
2.	School and pupil numbers by school characteristics	4
3.	Free School Meals Eligibility	6
4.	Ethnic Group	8
5.	First Language	9
6.	Class Sizes	10
	Accompanying tables.....	12
	Further information is available	13
	National Statistics	14
	Technical information.....	14
	Using this data.....	14
	Get in touch	14
	Media enquiries.....	14
	Other enquiries/feedback	14

About this publication

This statistical publication provides the number of schools and pupils in schools in England, using data from the January 2019 School Census, Independent School Census, General Hospital School Census and Alternative Provision Census.

Breakdowns are given for school types as well as for pupil characteristics including free school meal eligibility, English as an additional language and ethnicity. This release also contains information about average class sizes.

SEN tables previously provided in this publication will be published in the statistical publication 'Special educational needs in England: January 2019' scheduled for release on 4 July 2019.

In this publication

The following tables are included in the statistical publication:

Accompanying tables (Excel .xlsx)

Underlying data (open format .csv and metadata .txt)

The accompanying quality and methodology information document, provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at Schools.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

1. Headline school and pupil numbers (Tables 1a, 1c)

There is a total of 8.82 million pupils in all schools in England. This is an increase of 84,700 pupils (1.0%) since 2018. The total number of pupils has grown every year since 2009 and there are now 727,000 more pupils in schools than at that point.

By school type, the latest data shows:

- The number of pupils in **state-funded primary schools** rose – as it has since 2009 – although at a slower rate than in recent years. There are 10,800 more pupils than in 2018.
- The number of pupils in **state-funded secondary schools** rose for the fifth year in a row, and in 2019 had a much greater increase in population than primary schools. The increased number of primary pupils since 2010 have started to move into secondary schools so, as can be seen in the [national pupil projections](#), we expect to see the number of secondary pupils continue to increase in the coming years.
- The number of pupils in **special schools** has been increasing since 2006. There are 6,500 more pupils in special schools in 2019 compared to 2018.
- The number of pupils in **independent schools** has been falling since 2017 and there are now 2,300 fewer pupils than at that point.

Table A: School population in 2019: primary, secondary and all pupils:

Year	State funded primary schools	State funded secondary schools	All schools types (including independent schools)
2006	4,150,595	3,347,500	8,231,055
2007	4,110,750	3,325,625	8,167,715
2008	4,090,400	3,294,575	8,121,955
2009	4,077,350	3,278,130	8,092,280
2010	4,096,580	3,278,485	8,098,360
2011	4,137,755	3,262,635	8,123,865
2012	4,217,000	3,234,875	8,178,200
2013	4,309,580	3,210,120	8,249,810
2014	4,416,710	3,181,360	8,331,385
2015	4,510,310	3,184,730	8,438,145
2016	4,615,170	3,193,420	8,559,540
2017	4,689,660	3,223,090	8,669,085
2018	4,716,245	3,258,450	8,735,100
2019	4,727,090	3,327,970	8,819,765

Source: School census

2. School and pupil numbers by school characteristics (Tables 1a-1b, 2a-2c, 3)

Types of Schools

State-funded primary schools and state-funded secondary schools – Primary schools typically accept pupils aged 5-10 and secondary schools aged 11 and above, but there are increasing numbers of **All-through schools**, who take pupils of all compulsory school ages. These schools include academies and free schools.

State-funded special schools – these are schools which provide tailored provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Alternative provision – these are education settings for children unable to attend a mainstream school. Local authority maintained establishments providing alternative provision, are often referred to as **pupil referral units**. There are also an increasing number of **alternative provision academies and free schools**.

Independent schools and non-maintained special schools – these are registered schools which do not receive government funding. They often charge fees for pupils to attend.

State-funded nursery – these are nurseries maintained by the local authority in which they operate. Other nurseries, such as private and voluntary nurseries, are not included in the school census. Schools with a nursery attached will complete the school census as a school rather than as a nursery.

There has been an overall increase of 7 schools, to 24,323 from January 2018 to January 2019. Despite a small increase in the number of schools, the increase in pupil numbers means schools are on average larger:

- The average **state-funded primary school** now has 282 pupils on its roll, up from 281 pupils in January 2018. Since 2009, the average size of primary schools has increased by 43 pupils, the equivalent of more than 1.5 extra classes per school.
- The average **state-funded secondary school** now has 965 pupils on its roll, up from 948 pupils in January 2018. While there was an increase in the total number of secondary pupils between 2014 and 2019, the average size of primary schools started to increase in 2017, when it was 946 pupils.
- There has also been a steady increase in **special schools**. The average special school has 120 pupils on its roll compared to 2007 when the average special school had 85 pupils on its roll.

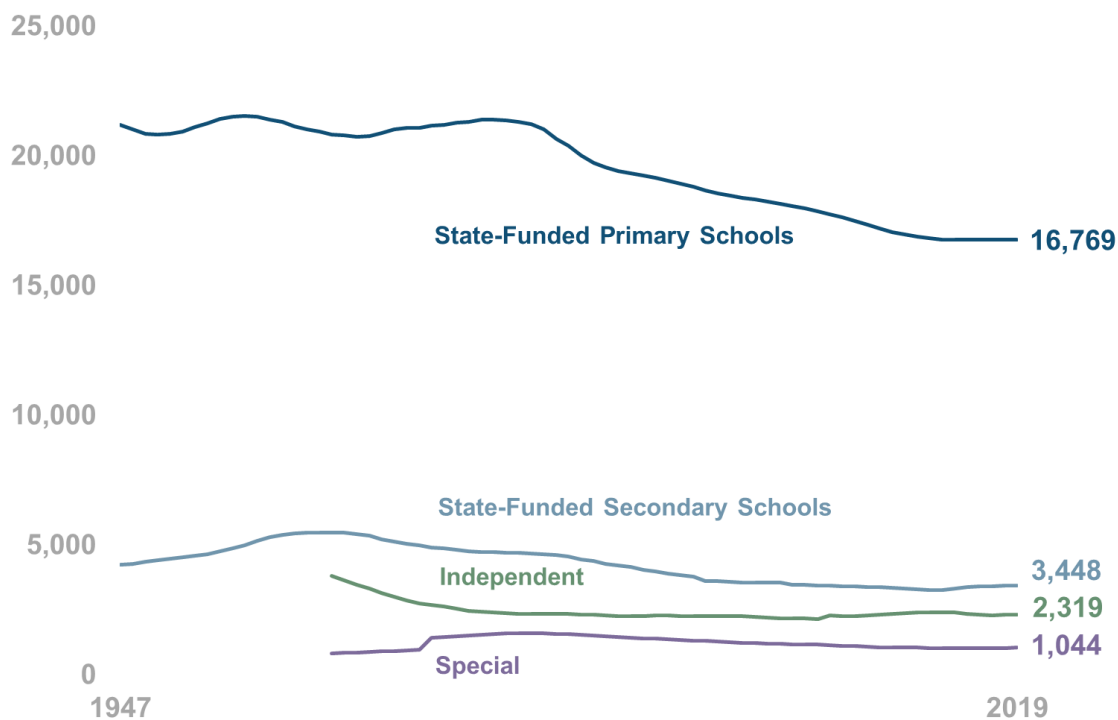
Schools which teach both primary and secondary year groups are growing in number. In January 2018 there were 163 such schools, but this figure has increased to 167 state-funded schools.

Academy and free schools now make up 32% of primary schools and 75% of secondary schools¹. More than 4.1 million pupils now attend academies and free schools. Nearly 2.5 million of these are in secondary schools (75% of all secondary school pupils) and over 1.6 million in primary schools (34% of all primary school pupils). The remainder of the total academy population are in special and alternative provision academies.

¹ For up-to-date information on open academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs, see the [monthly transparency data](#).

Figure A: The number of secondary schools in England has increased in the last year, while primary school numbers have increased slightly. Overall, the number of schools has increased exceeding the 2015 level.

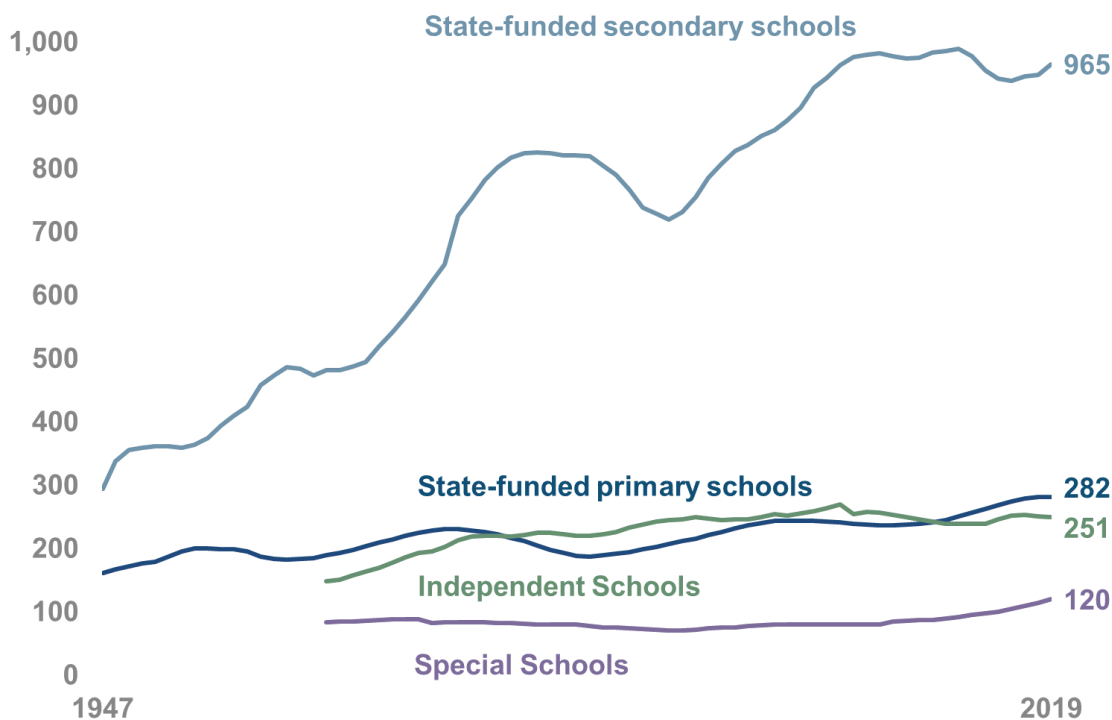
Number of schools in England, 1947-2019



Source: Get Information about Schools

Figure B: The average size of all school types apart from independent schools increased in 2019, with secondary schools reversing the drops in average size in recent years

Average pupil numbers in state-funded primary and secondary schools in England, 1947-2019



Source: School Census

3. Free School Meals Eligibility (Tables 4a-4d)

Important note: Entitlement to free school meals is determined by the receipt of income-related benefits (see blue box below). Since 1 April 2018, transitional protections have been in place which will continue to be in place during the roll out of Universal Credit. This has meant that pupils eligible for free school meals on or after 1 April 2018 retain their free school meals eligibility even if their circumstances change. This has been the main driver in the increase in the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals as pupils continue to become eligible but fewer pupils stop being eligible. For further information, see "[Free school meals: guidance for schools and local authorities](#)" and this release's methodology document.

Free School Meals: who was entitled?

In England in January 2019, children in state-funded schools were entitled to receive free school meals if a parent or carer were in receipt of any of the following benefits:

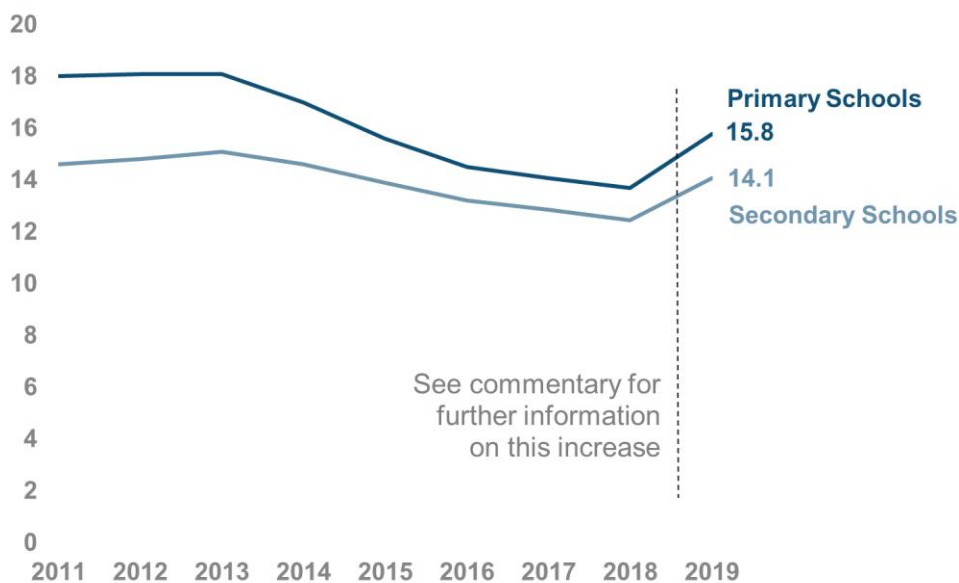
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they were not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and had an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- 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).

In January 2019, for all school types, 15.4% of pupils were eligible for and claiming free school meals. This is the highest proportion since 2014, reversing the downward trend.

In primary schools, 15.8% of pupils are known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals, 14.1% in secondary schools, 37.5% in special schools and 42.5% in pupil referral units it is 42.5%.

Figure C: Rates of eligibility for free school meals show sharp rise

Percentage of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals in England, 2011-2019 (excludes universal infant free school meals)



Source: School Census

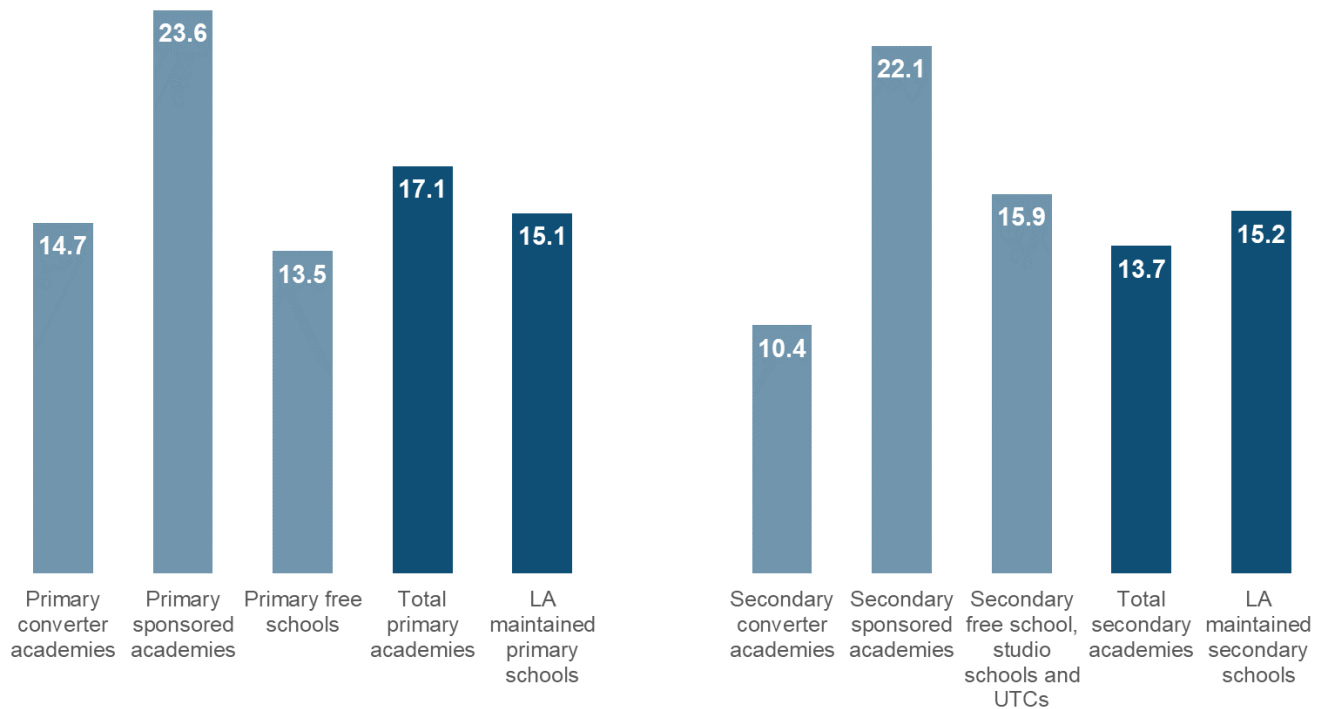
Note: The 2019 figure in the chart above includes primary schools only, while in the previous years it includes primary and nursery schools. The combined rate for primary and nursery schools is 15.7%.

When compared to all primary schools, primary academies have a higher than average rate of eligibility, with 17.1% of pupils eligible for FSM, compared with 15.1% in local authority maintained primary schools. However, the FSM rate varies notably between academy types, see chart below.

Conversely, all secondary academies combined have a lower than average rate, with 13.7% of pupils eligible for, and claiming FSM compared with 15.2% in local authority maintained secondary schools. By academy types, a similar pattern is seen as for primary schools, see chart below.

Figure D: Primary and secondary, sponsored academies have the highest rate of eligibility for, and claiming, free school meals while primary and secondary, converter academies have the lowest rate

Percentage of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals, by type of school in England, 2019 (excludes universal infant free school meals)



Source: School Census

4. Ethnic Group (Table 5)

Minority Ethnic Origin

Those pupils of all school age who have been classified according to their ethnic group and are of any origin other than White British are defined as being of minority ethnic origin.

The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic origins has been rising steadily over recent years. In primary schools, 33.5% of pupils of school age are of minority ethnic origins (up from 33.1% in January 2018). In secondary schools, 31.3% of pupils are of minority ethnic origins (up from 30.3%).

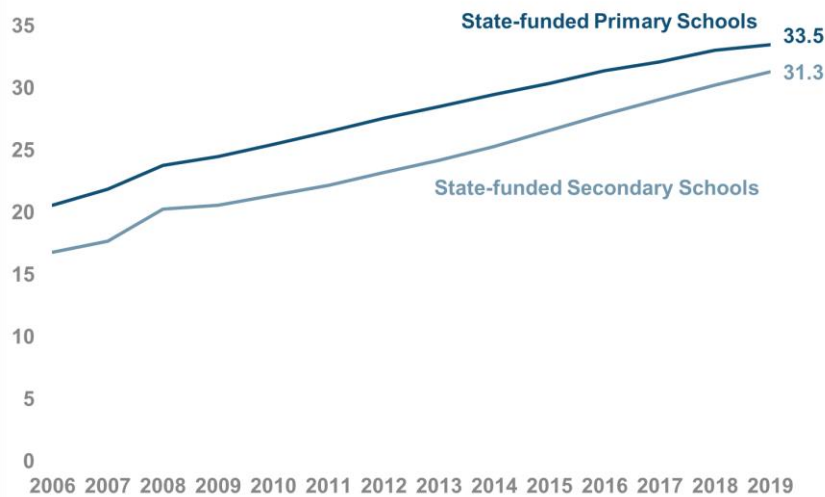
Pupils from Asian origins are the largest minority in all school types except pupil referral units.

White non-British pupils now make up 8.1% of the population in primary schools and 6.2% of the population in secondary schools. This is the sixth year that this ethnic group is the second largest ethnic minority in primary schools.

In pupil referral units, there are a greater proportion of Black pupils and pupils from mixed ethnic origins than in mainstream schools with the proportion of black pupils falling slightly compared to last year.

Figure E: The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins has increased

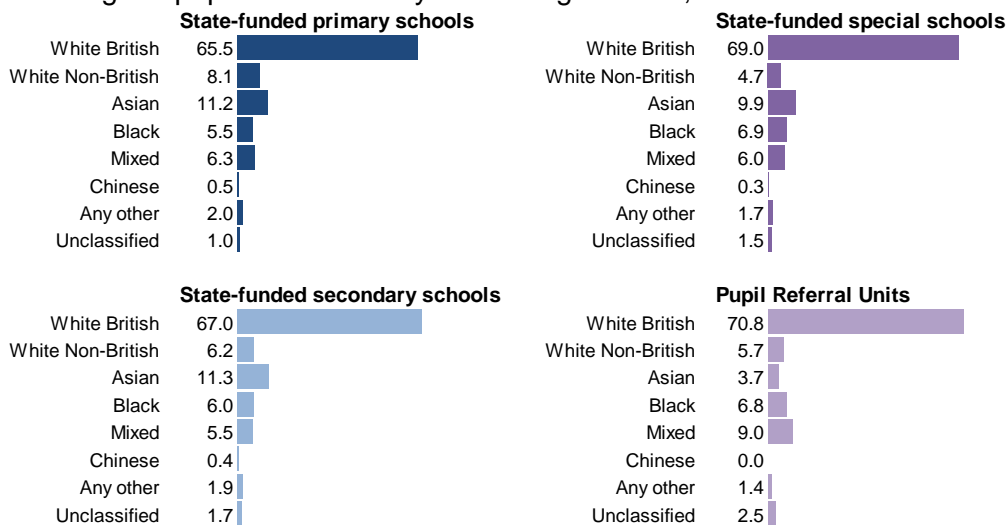
Percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins 2006-2019, primary and secondary schools



Source: School Census

Figure F: Percentage of pupils by ethnic origin

Percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins 2019, state-funded schools



Source: School Census

5. First Language (Table 6)

English as an additional language

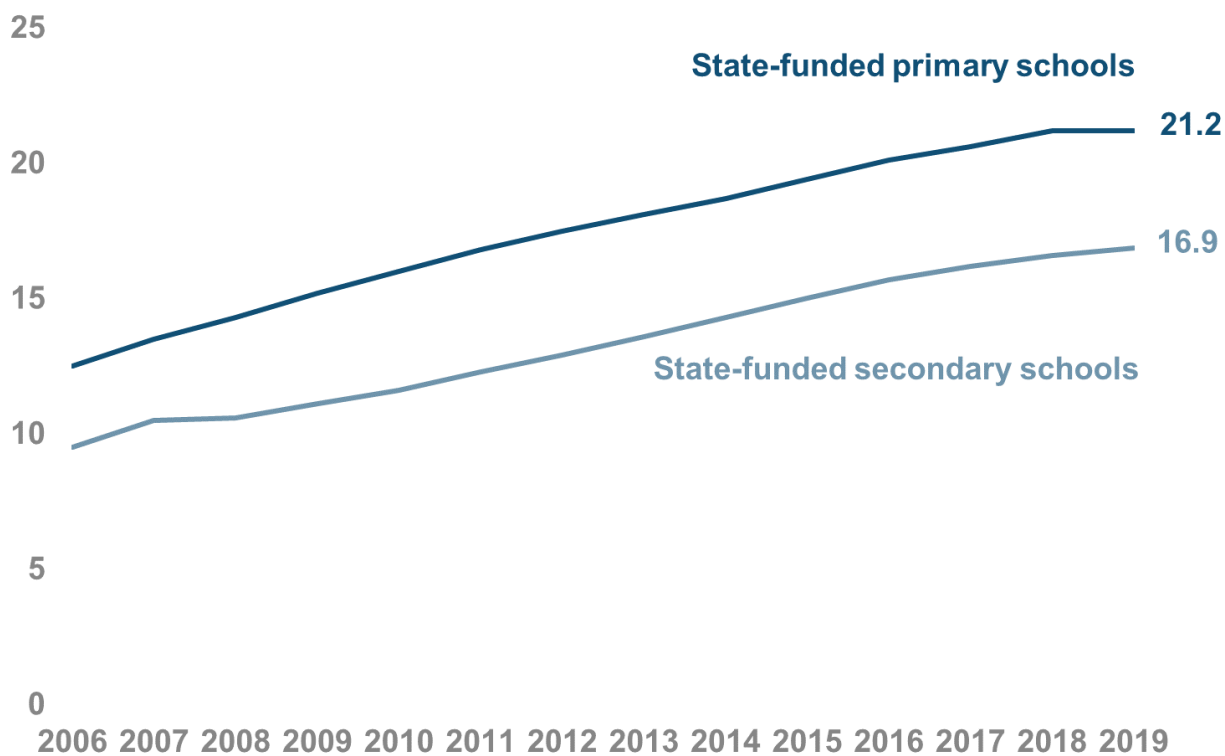
A pupil is recorded to have English as an additional language if she/he is exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. This measure is not a measure of English language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration.

The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language has increased steadily over recent years:

- In primary schools, the proportion was 21.2%, the same as in January 2018.
- In secondary schools, the proportion was 16.9%, up from 16.6% in January 2018.
- In special schools, the proportion was 14.7%, down from 14.8% in January 2018.
- In pupil referral units, the proportion was 7.7%, down from 8.1% in January 2018.

Figure G: The percentage of pupils exposed to a language other than English at home has increased in secondary schools, while remained stable in primary schools

Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language 2006-2019, primary and secondary schools



Source: School Census

Why the increase?

This is related to the breakdown in the increase in the number of pupils. This increase in pupil numbers is largely driven by increases in the birth rate (rather than direct current immigration), which is driven in turn by an increase in the number of children born to non-UK born women (compared to those born to UK-born women). The number of children born to non-UK born women increased by around 75 per cent between 2002 and 2013 (the years in which most children currently in schools were born), although this was a period of increased births generally. For more information about this, we recommend the following links:

[Parents' country of birth statistics 2015, ONS](#)

[England and Wales birth summary tables 2015, ONS](#)

[Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales: 2017](#)

6. Class Sizes (Tables 7a-c)

Large Classes

An infant class is described as 'large' when it exceeds the statutory limit of 30 pupils. There are no formal policy restrictions on any other class sizes.

Lawful and unlawful infant classes

The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 prescribe certain limited circumstances in which pupils may be admitted as lawful exceptions to the infant class size limit of 30 for one-teacher classes. This means that a class of, for example, 32 pupils is lawful if two or more of those pupils have been admitted under lawful exceptions. If fewer than two have been admitted as lawful exceptions then the class is termed 'unlawful'.

Following concerns about the accuracy of the unlawful / lawful split of large infant classes in 2014 the national statistics designation was removed from this data item. Following improvement to the quality of the data this has now been designated as a national statistics. For ease of reference all years data are presented in this publication but data on the number of unlawfully large classes in 2014 should be treated with caution.

The number and proportion of infants in large classes has continued to fall, from 4.9% in 2018 to 4.5% in 2019. The average infant class size decreased slightly to 27.1 from 27.3 in 2018 having remained unchanged between 2014 and 2017 at 27.4. This is an increase from 25.6 in 2006.

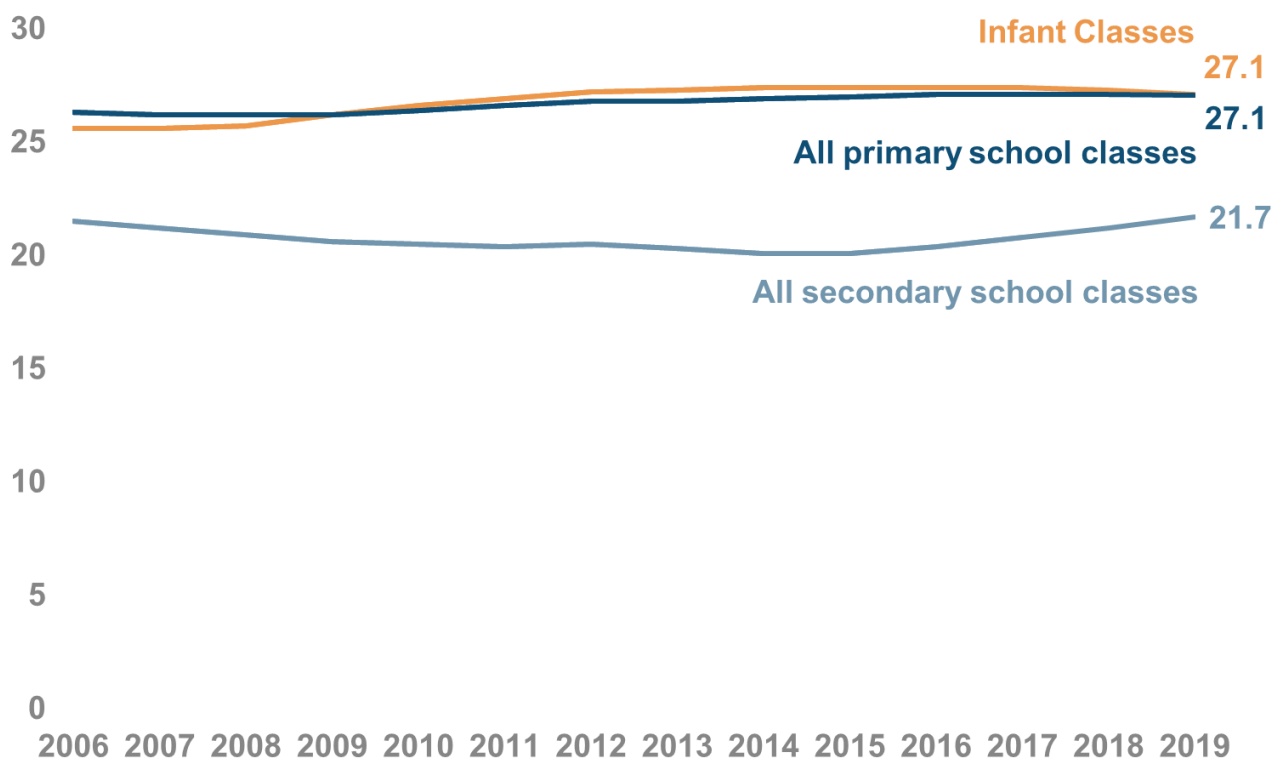
The average class size for all primary school classes is unchanged compared to 2018.

The average class size for all secondary school classes increased from 21.2 in 2018 to 21.7 in 2019 and has been increasing since 2015.

Figure H: Average one-teacher class sizes

Infant, primary and secondary school classes in England, 2006-2019

Average Class Size

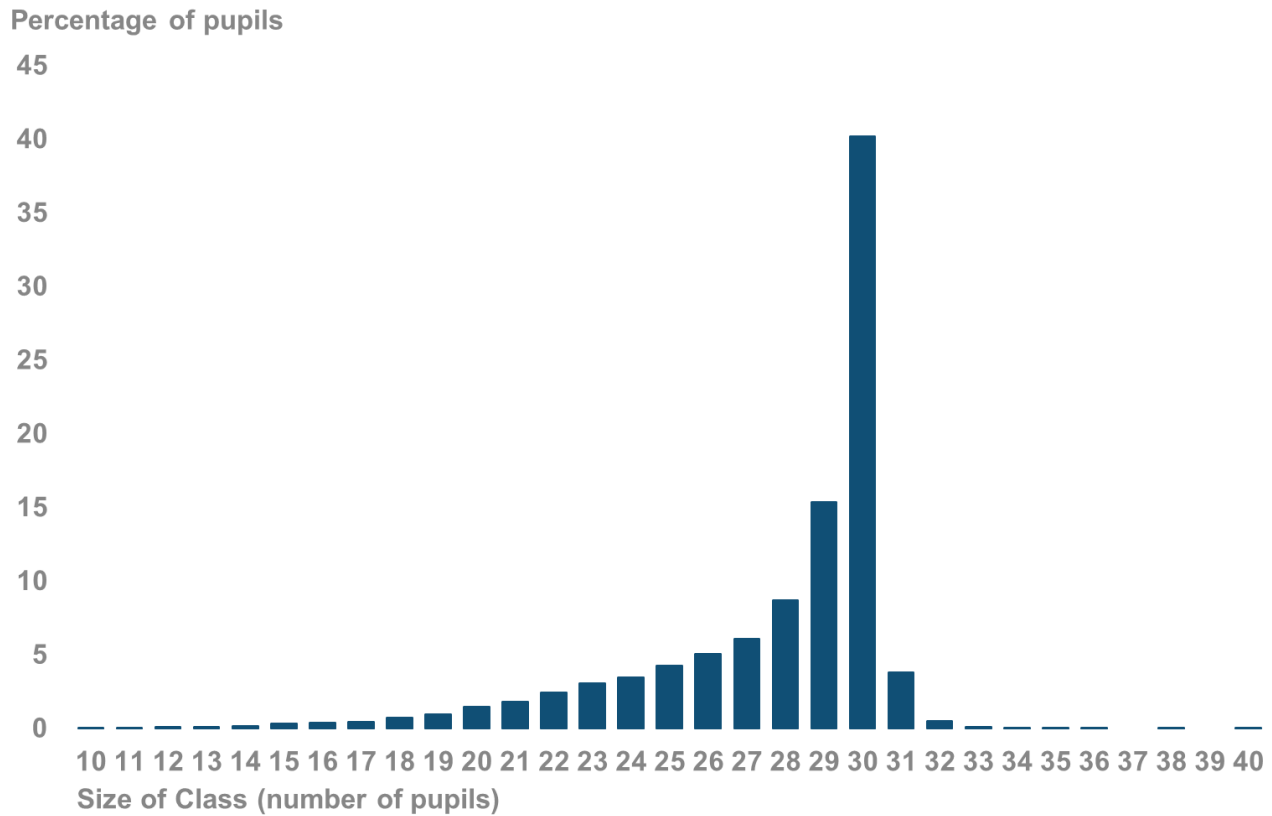


Source: School Census

More than half of one-teacher Key Stage 1 classes have either 29 or 30 pupils in them, with 40.2% of infant pupils being in classes of exactly 30 pupils.

Classes larger than 32 pupils are uncommon with 4.3% in classes of 31 or 32 pupils and under 0.2% in classes of 33 or more.

Figure I: Infant pupils are most commonly in classes of exactly 30
Infant class size distribution, January 2019



Source: School Census

Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics [website](#):

1 **Headline school and pupil numbers**

- 1a Number of schools and pupils by type of school, January 2003 to 2019
- 1b Number of schools by type of school, by local authority area and region in England, January 2019
- 1c Number of pupils by type of school, by local authority area and region in England, January 2019

2 **School and pupil numbers by school characteristics**

- 2a Number of schools and pupils by school characteristics, January 2019
- 2b Number of schools and pupils by type of academy, January 2019
- 2c Number of schools and pupils by the size of their school, January 2019

3 **Age and gender**

- 3 Number of pupils by age, gender and type of school, January 2019

4 **Free School Meals eligibility**

- 4a Number of pupils known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals by age, January 2011 to 2019
- 4b Number of pupils known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals by age, January 2019
- 4c Number of pupils known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals by type of school, by local authority area and region in England, January 2019

5 **Ethnicity**

- 5 Number and percentage of pupils by ethnic group, January 2019

6 **First Language**

- 6 Number and percentage of pupils by first language, January 2019

7 **Class Sizes**

- 7a Classes as taught, as at January each year, January 2006 to 2019
- 7b Key stage 1 and 2 classes, as at January each year, January 2010 to 2019
- 7c Key stage 1 and 2 classes, by local authority area and region in England, January 2019

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

- **Independent schools** – Pupil numbers have been imputed for 384 independent schools where data was not received on time. Please see the methodology note accompanying this release for further information.
- **Free school meals tables** – Free school meals tables include pupils of all ages.
- **There are 47 non-independent schools which do not complete the school census** – These schools are counted in school number counts, but not pupil number counts.
- **Pupils are counted based on enrolment status** – Pupils are counted at the school where they have either a sole or main dual registration. This means that pupil referral units and alternative provision institutions often teach more pupils than listed in these tables, but their additional pupils are counted at another institution.
- **These figures are a snapshot** – Figures are correct as at January 2019. They may no longer reflect the situation on an individual school level due to pupil movements.

Further information is available

- **Underlying data including school level figures**

The following underlying data files have been published alongside this release:

Statistics covered	Underlying data file name
Pupil numbers by age, gender, national curriculum year group, free school meals eligibility, ethnicity and first language at national, regional, LA and school level	_Pupil_characteristics_UD
School and pupil numbers by school type (including academy type and status), admissions policy and religious character at national level, regional and LA level	_School_characteristics_UD
Class Sizes at national level, regional, LA and school level	_Classes_UD
Alternative provision at national, regional and LA level	_APcensus_UD

- **Cross border movement tables**

These figures show the number of pupils residing in one local authority, but attending school in another. Figures will be added to this release in due course when the data becomes available.

- **Figures from previous years**

Previous statistical releases can be found at [‘Statistics: school and pupil numbers’](#).

- **SEN data**

Statistics related to SEN are available in the [special educational needs statistics collection](#) on the department’s website.

‘Special educational needs in England: January 2019’ will be published on 27th July 2019.

- **Figures for other UK countries**

The School Census only collects information from schools in England. For information for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, contact the departments below or access their statistics at the following links:

Wales: email school.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk or visit [StatsWales](#). This includes comparable information about [pupil numbers](#), [classes](#), [free school meals eligibility](#), and [ethnicity](#), [language](#) and [special educational needs](#).

Scotland: email school.stats@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or visit [Scottish Government - School Education Statistics](#). This includes comparable information on [pupil numbers](#), [class sizes](#), [ethnicity and English as an additional language](#) and [free school meal eligibility](#)

Northern Ireland: email statistics@deni.gov.uk or visit [Department of Education - Education Statistics](#). This includes comparable [information about pupil numbers](#), [free school meals eligibility](#), and [ethnicity](#).

Note that any data from these locations may refer to different time periods, and each administration may have its own way of defining key statistics. However, [‘Education and training statistics for the United Kingdom’](#) brings together information from each administration, which is directly comparable. Chapter 1 covers schools and includes breakdowns of pupil numbers.

- **Data from the January 2020 School Census**

This is an annual publication, usually released in June each year. Information from the January 2020 school census is likely to be available in June 2020. When a release date is known, it will be given in the department’s [Forthcoming Publications](#) list.

National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics in [October 2017](#) in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed. Information on improvements made to these statistics to continue their compliance with the Code of Practice are provided in the accompanying methodology document.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Technical information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this statistical publication. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

Using this data

We know that there is a wide range of users of the data from this publication, including Local Authorities, academic researchers, journalists, museums, businesses, schools and other Government departments. Please see the methodology document for a list of uses and limitations of the statistics in this publication.

Get in touch

Media enquiries

Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Tel: 020 7783 8300

Other enquiries/feedback

Dr. Anastasia Ioannou, Data Insight and Statistics Division, Department for Education, 2 St Paul's Place, 125 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2FJ.

Tel: 0370 000 2288

Email: Schools.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk



Department
for Education



© Crown copyright 2019

This publication (not including logos) is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

To view this licence:

visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

email psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk

write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

About this publication:

Enquiries: Dr. Anastasia Ioannou, Data Insight and Statistics Division, Department for Education, 2 St Paul's Place, 125 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2FJ. Tel: 0370 000 2288

Email: infrastructure.statistics@education.gov.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers>

Reference: Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2019



Follow us on Twitter:
[@educationgovuk](https://twitter.com/educationgovuk)



Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/educationgovuk