



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

Permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools: September 2020 to August 2021

Data on all pupils in maintained primary, middle, secondary and special schools and pupil referral units for September 2020 to August 2021.

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Introduction and overview

This release covers all permanent and fixed term exclusions from maintained schools in Wales from September 2020 to August 2021.

The period covered by this release was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Data collected in Spring 2022 includes exclusions during the 2020/21 academic year.

As a result of the pandemic schools were closed for specific periods between September 2020 and December 2020, all schools were closed between January 2021 and February 2021 with a phased return completed by April 2021. You can find more detail about when schools were closed in the [timeline of school closures](#).

The closures have meant there were fewer exclusions between September 2020 and April 2021. Further information can be found in the data tables that accompany this release

Exclusions are split by the length/type of exclusion, into 3 categories (further detail can be found in [Definitions](#)).

- Fixed term exclusions: 5 days or less
- Fixed term exclusions: over 5 days
- Permanent exclusions

Exclusions are recorded as part of the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) for the previous academic year. So, this year, when the PLASC was collected for the 2021/22 academic year in Spring 2022, the exclusions data refers to the 2020/21 academic year.

The charts below show the rate of exclusions over time, the shaded areas show

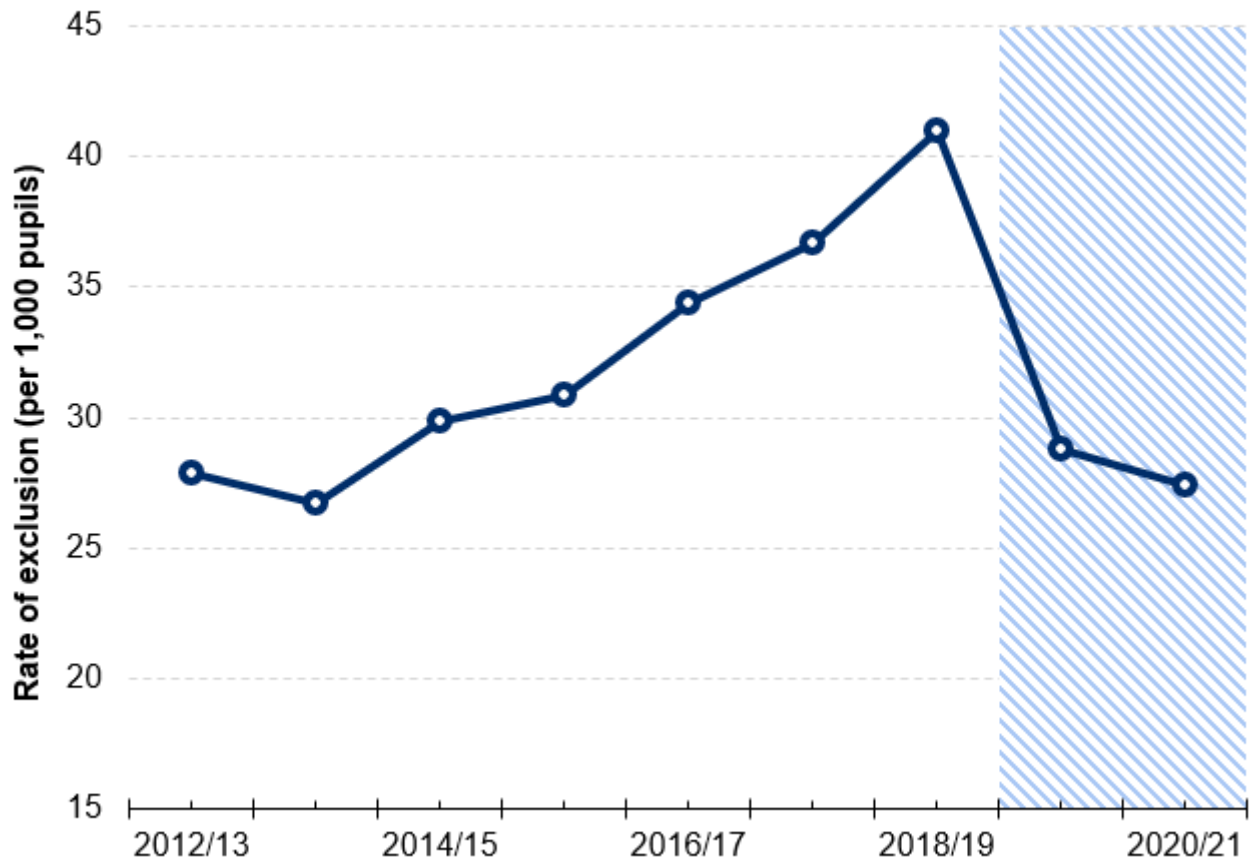
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years affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Chart 1: Rate of fixed term exclusions 5 days or less, 2012/13 to 2020/21



Source: Pupils' Exclusions Record, Welsh Government

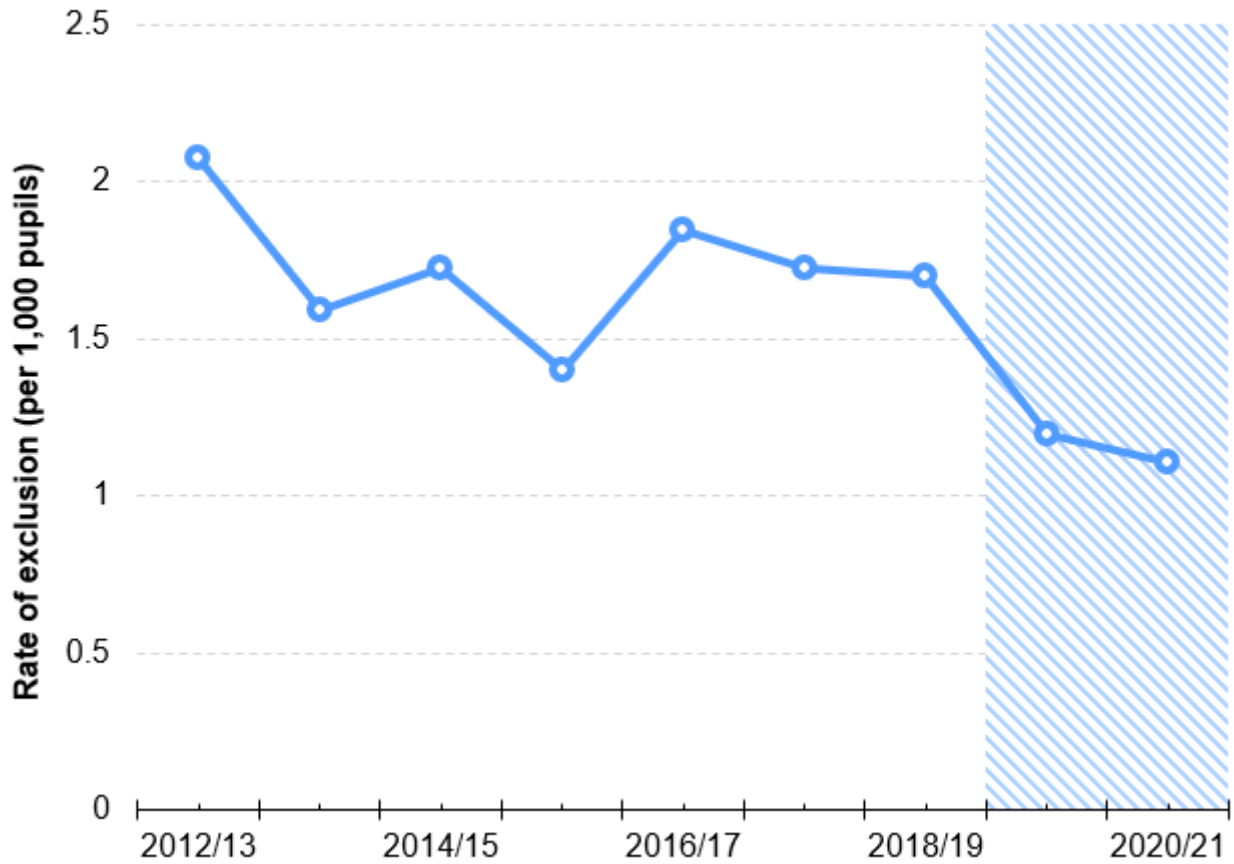
Rate of fixed-term exclusions 5 days or less and over 5 days (MS Excel)

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Chart 2: Rate of fixed term exclusions over 5 days, 2012/13 to 2020/21



Source: Pupils' Exclusions Record, Welsh Government

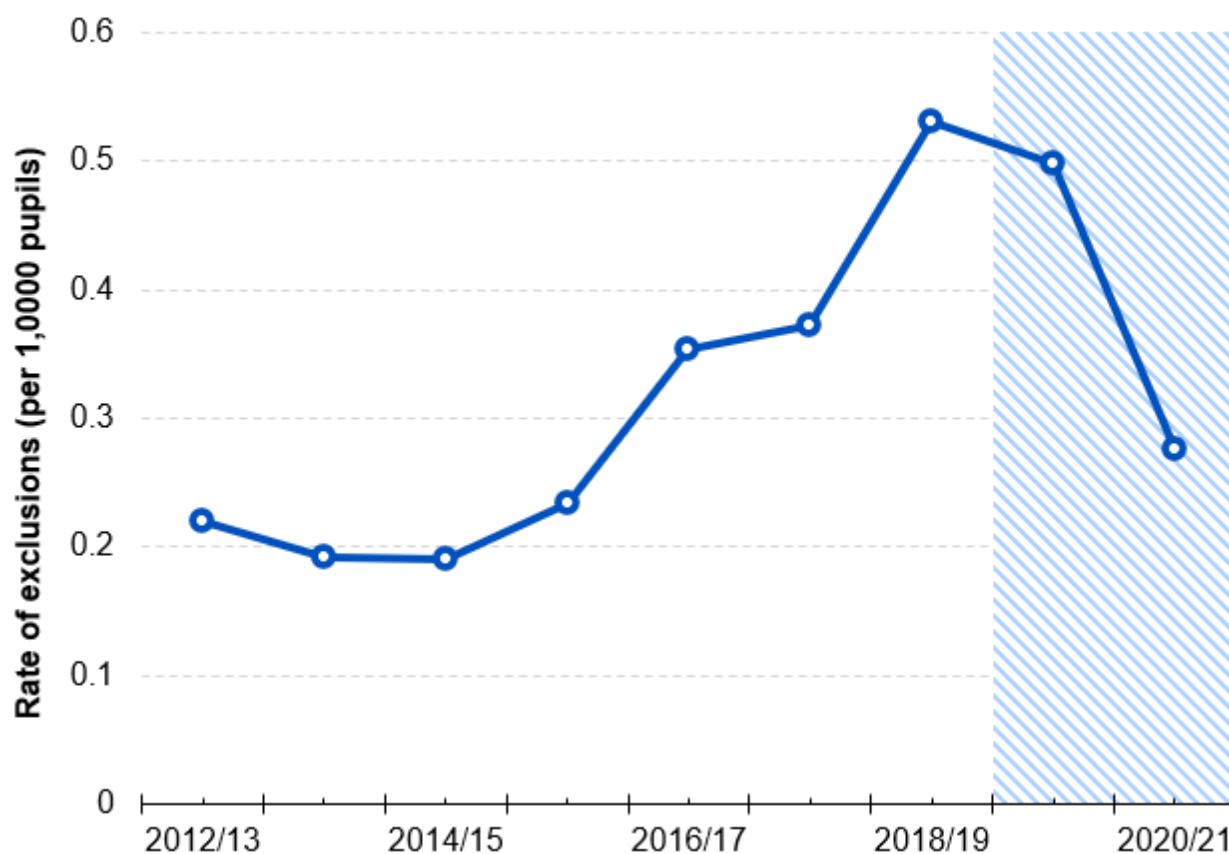
Rate of fixed term exclusions over 5 days (MS Excel)

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Chart 3: Rate of permanent exclusions, 2012/13 to 2020/21



Source: Pupils' Exclusions Record, Welsh Government

Rate of permanent exclusions (MS Excel)

Main points: maintained schools

Some of the fall in exclusions in the following categories may be due to the significant school closures during the 2020/21 school year.

- The rate of permanent exclusions has decreased to 0.3 per 1,000 pupils in 2020/21, compared to 0.5 per 1,000 pupils in 2019/20.

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- The rate of fixed term exclusions of over 5 days has decreased in 2020/21 to 1.1 exclusions per 1,000 pupils.
- The rate of fixed term exclusions of 5 days or less has decreased in 2020/21 to 26.4 per 1,000 pupils.

Types of school, 2020/21

Special schools had the highest rate of fixed-term exclusions of 5 days or less, and the highest rate of fixed-term exclusions over 5 days, whereas primary schools had the lowest. This is the same as in previous years.

Secondary schools had the highest rate of permanent exclusions.

Free school meal (FSM) eligibility

The rate of exclusions is consistently at least 3 times higher for those entitled to FSM than those not entitled to FSM for fixed term exclusions (5 days or less), fixed term exclusions (over 5 days) and permanent exclusions in the period 2012/13 to 2020/21.

Special educational needs (SEN) provision

The highest rates of exclusions for SEN Pupils have consistently been among students receiving School Action Plus provision. This is true across all categories of exclusion.

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Ethnic background

We do not have data for the ethnic background of all pupils. Some pupils prefer not to provide the information, and for some the information wasn't obtained. For pupils that we do have information for:

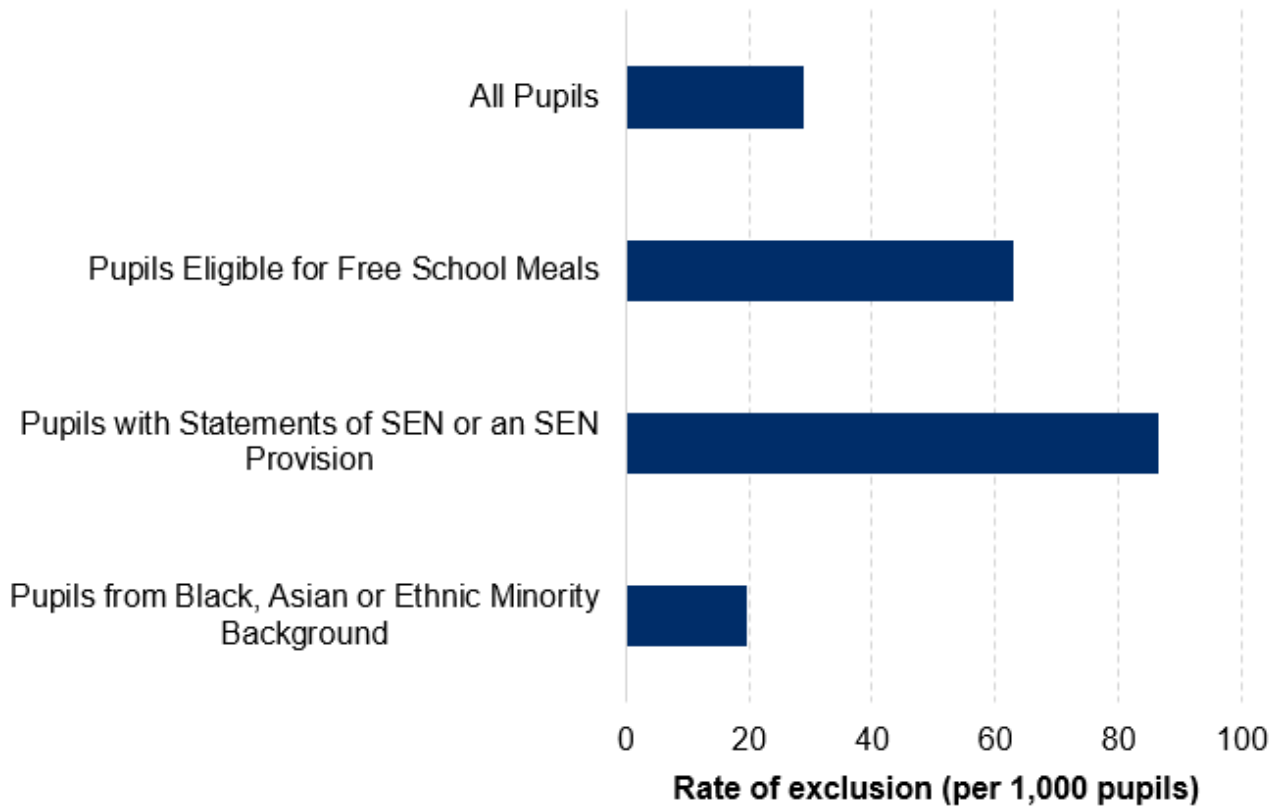
- pupils with a Caribbean ethnic background have the highest rate of fixed term exclusions (5 days or less)
- pupils with an Indian ethnic background have the lowest rate of fixed term exclusions (5 days or less)
- pupils with a White ethnic background have the highest rate of fixed term exclusions (over 5 days)
- pupils with an Chinese ethnic background have the lowest rate of fixed term exclusions (over 5 days)
- pupils with an Asian ethnic background have the highest rate of permanent exclusions
- pupils with a Chinese ethnic background have the lowest rate of permanent exclusions

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Chart 4: Rate of all exclusions by pupil characteristics, 2020/21



Source: Pupils' Exclusions Record, Welsh Government

[Rate of all exclusions by pupil characteristics \(MS Excel\)](#)

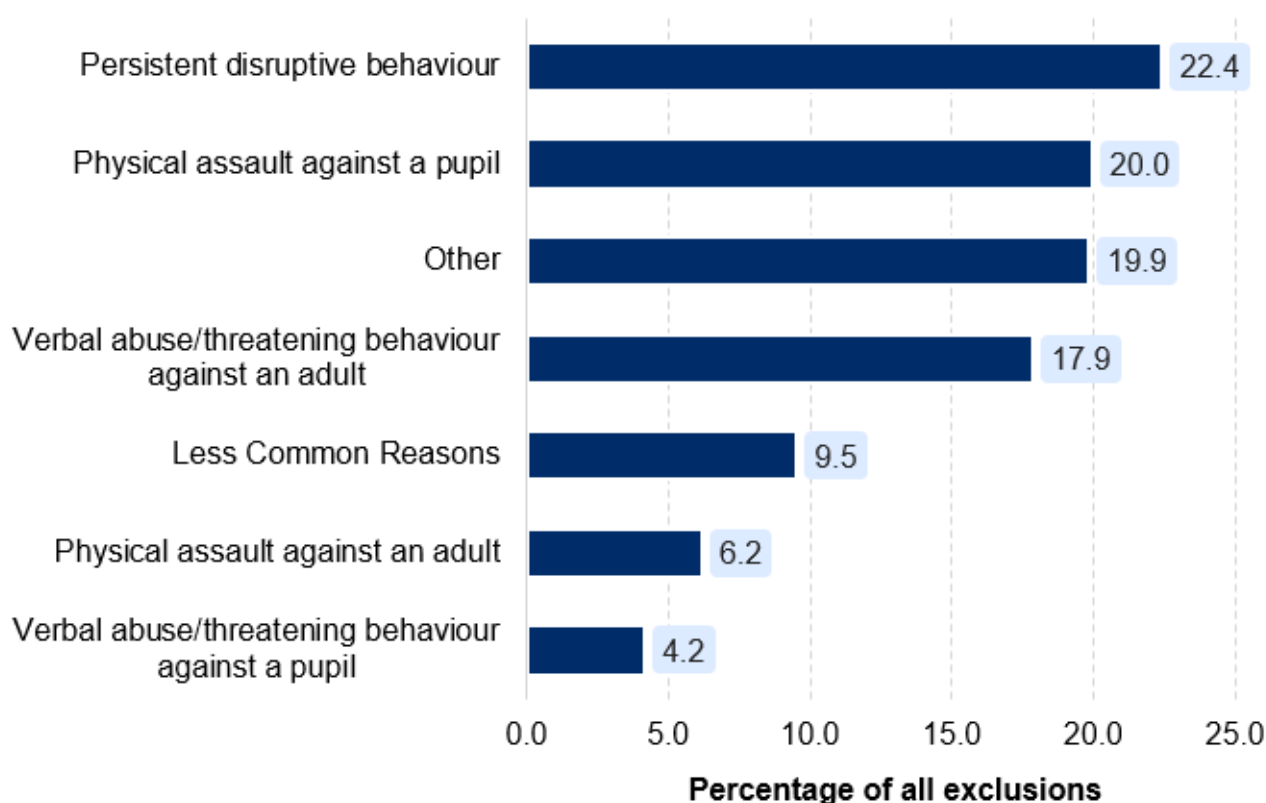
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Reasons for exclusions

Chart 5: Percentage of all exclusion lengths by exclusion reason, 2020/21



Source: Pupils' Exclusions Record, Welsh Government

Percentage of all exclusion lengths by exclusion reason (MS Excel)

The most common reason given for all exclusions in 2020/21 was 'persistent disruptive behaviour' at just under a quarter of all exclusions.

Looking at specific lengths of exclusions:

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- ‘persistent disruptive behaviour’ was the most common reason given for fixed-term exclusions of 5 days or less at 22.9% of those exclusions
- ‘physical assault against a pupil’ was the most common reason for fixed term exclusions of 5 days or more accounting for 25.4% of those exclusions
- the most common reasons for permanent exclusions were ‘physical assault against a pupil’ at 34.4% of those exclusions

Definitions

Types of exclusion and other definitions

Permanent exclusion

Refers to a pupil who is excluded and their name removed from the school register. This pupil would then be educated at another school or via some other form of provision.

Fixed-term exclusion

Refers to a pupil who is excluded from a school but remains on the register of that school because they are expected to return when the exclusion period is completed.

Managed move

An arrangement whereby parents of pupils in danger of exclusion agree with schools and local authorities that it is in the best interests of their child that they be removed from the roll of the current school and placed in another educational

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establishment. Data for managed moves are not currently available.

Quality and methodology information

Further quality information can be found the [quality report](#) for this release.

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. The designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in July 2010 following a [full assessment against the Code of Practice](#).

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- added to and refined information about dimensions of quality and described links to policy
- produced the latest release in a new format to include charts which provide

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further insight into some of the key information

- made more data available on Stats Wales
- added more detailed breakdown of ethnic background

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.

This section provides a summary of information on this output against five dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability. It also covers specific issues relating to quality of 2021 data and describes the quality management tool applied to this area of work.

Relevance

These statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government. Some of the key users are:

- ministers and the Senedd Research in the Senedd
- members of the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament
- education policy in the Welsh Government
- other areas of the Welsh Government
- Estyn
- the research community
- students, academics and universities
- individual citizens and private companies

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

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- resource allocation in the Welsh Local Government Finance Settlement and the Pupil Development Grant
- advice to ministers
- to inform the education policy decision-making process in Wales including school reorganisation
- to inform Estyn during school inspections
- the education domain of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation
- to assist in research in educational attainment

Accessibility and clarity

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

Comparability

England: [School attendance and absence \(GOV.UK\)](#)

Scotland: [School exclusion statistics \(Scottish Government\)](#)

Northern Ireland: [Pupil suspensions and expulsions \(Department for Education, Northern Ireland\)](#)

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous,

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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 wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Wellbeing 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 wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

Contact details

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