



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

# Academic achievement of pupils at Key Stage 3: September 2022 to August 2023

A report looking at pupil achievements at Key Stage 3, including information by gender, free school meals and level of achievement for September 2022 to August 2023.

**First published:** 20 September 2023

**Last updated:** 20 September 2023

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

# Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Results for all pupils](#)

[Results for males and females](#)

[Results by free school meal eligibility](#)

[Further information](#)

[Quality and methodology information](#)

[Contact details](#)

**This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.**

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

# Introduction

Key Stage 3 teacher assessment results relate to 14 year olds. The data was not collected in 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. A [new curriculum for Wales](#) began being rolled out in schools and settings in September 2022. As a result, Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 teacher assessment results are no longer collected.

All data in this report is collected by the Welsh Government from schools in an electronic return called the National Data Collection (NDC).

## Results for all pupils

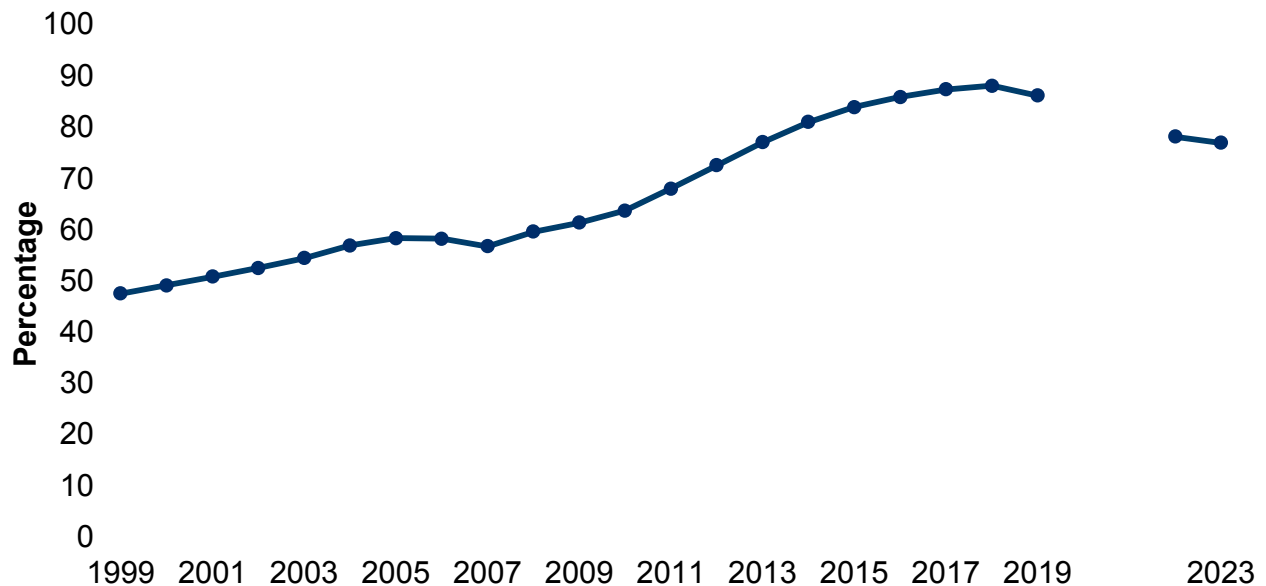
The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at Key Stage 3 represents the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (level 5 or above), based on teacher assessments, in English or Welsh (first language), Mathematics and Science in combination at the end of Key Stage 3, aged 14.

**This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.**

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

**Figure 1: Percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI, 1999 to 2023**



Description of Figure 1: A line chart showing the percentage of pupils achieving the CSI at Key Stage 3 increased in every year from 2007 to 2018 but has fallen since then.

### Percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI (StatsWales)

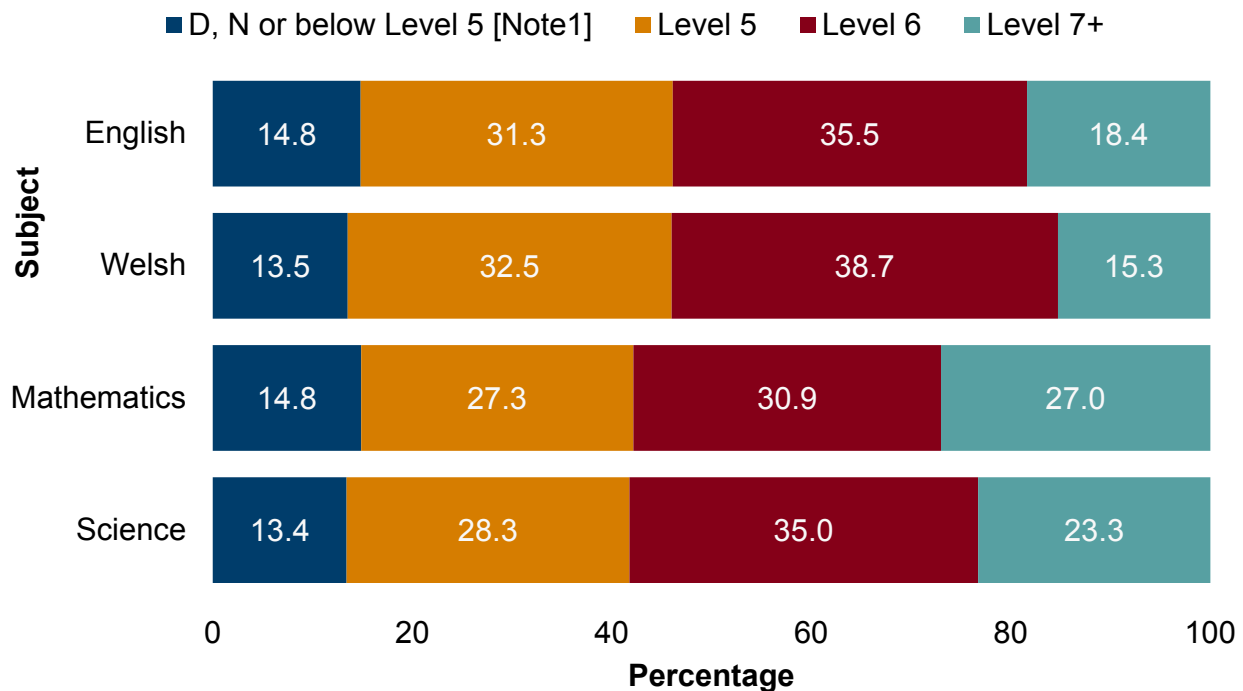
- 77% of pupils achieved the CSI at Key Stage 3 in 2023, down from 78% in 2022 and 86% in 2019.
- The fall between 2019 and 2022 may be partly due to the disruption to schools caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

**Figure 2: Percentage of pupils achieving Key Stage 3 levels in core subjects, 2023**



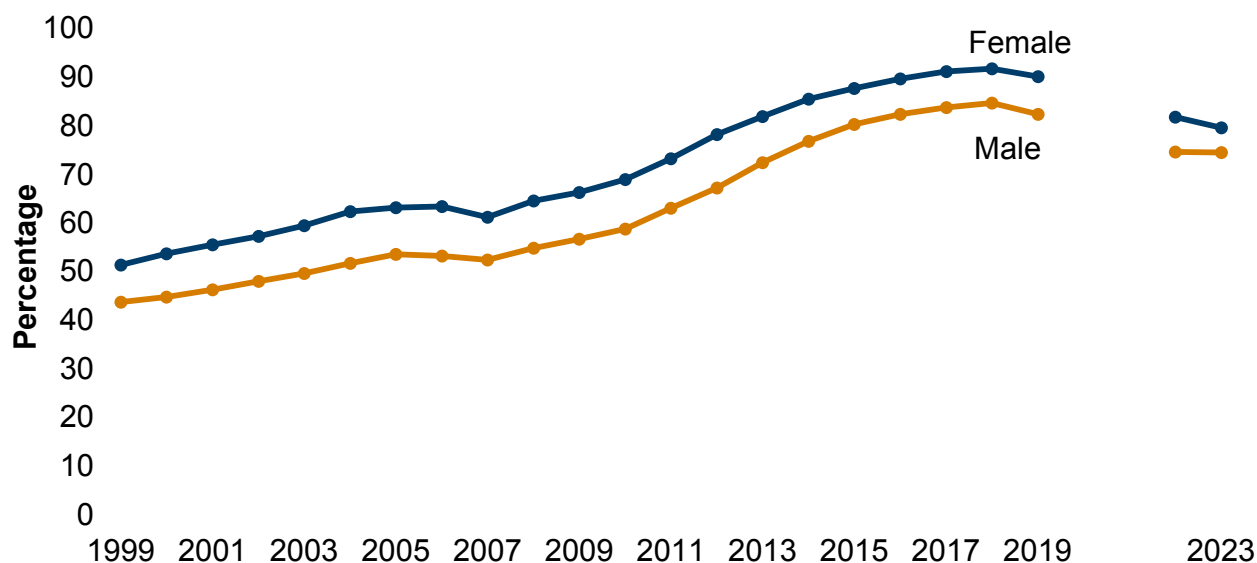
Description of Figure 2: A stacked bar chart showing that more than 85% of pupils achieved at least the expected level of Level 5 or above in each core subject in 2023. More than half of pupils achieved Level 6 or above in each subject.

**Percentage of pupils achieving Key Stage 3 levels in core subjects (StatsWales)**

[Note 1] D (Disapplied) represents pupils who were exempt from all or part of the National Curriculum under sections 113 to 116 of the 2002 Education Act, or pupils for whom teachers were unable to provide an assessment. N represents pupils not awarded a level for reasons other than disapplication.

## Results for males and females

**Figure 3: Percentage of males and females achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI, 1999 to 2023**



Description of Figure 3: A line chart showing that the percentage of females achieving the core subject indicator at Key Stage 3 has been higher than males in every year since 1999, but the gap has been smaller since 2015 than in previous years.

### Percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI, by gender (StatsWales)

- 79.6% of females and 74.4% of males achieved the CSI at Key Stage 3 in 2023, a gap of 5.2 percentage points; this is the smallest gap since data collection began in 1999.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

**Table 1: Percentage of males and females achieving the Key Stage 3 expected level in core subjects, 2023**

Subject	Female	Male
English	89.0	81.6
Welsh	91.0	81.8
Mathematics	85.5	84.8
Science	88.2	85.1
Core Subject Indicator	79.6	74.4
Reading, Writing and Mathematics	80.0	72.9
Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science	77.6	70.5

The table shows that a higher percentage of females than males achieved the Key Stage 3 expected level in all core subjects in 2023.

- The gap between females and males in the percentage achieving at least the expected level was largest in Welsh (9.2 percentage points) and smallest in Mathematics (0.7 percentage points).
- The gap between females and males in the percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected level in Reading and Writing (English or Welsh) and Mathematics and in Reading and Writing (English or Welsh), Mathematics and Science was 7.1 and 7.2 percentage points respectively in 2023.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

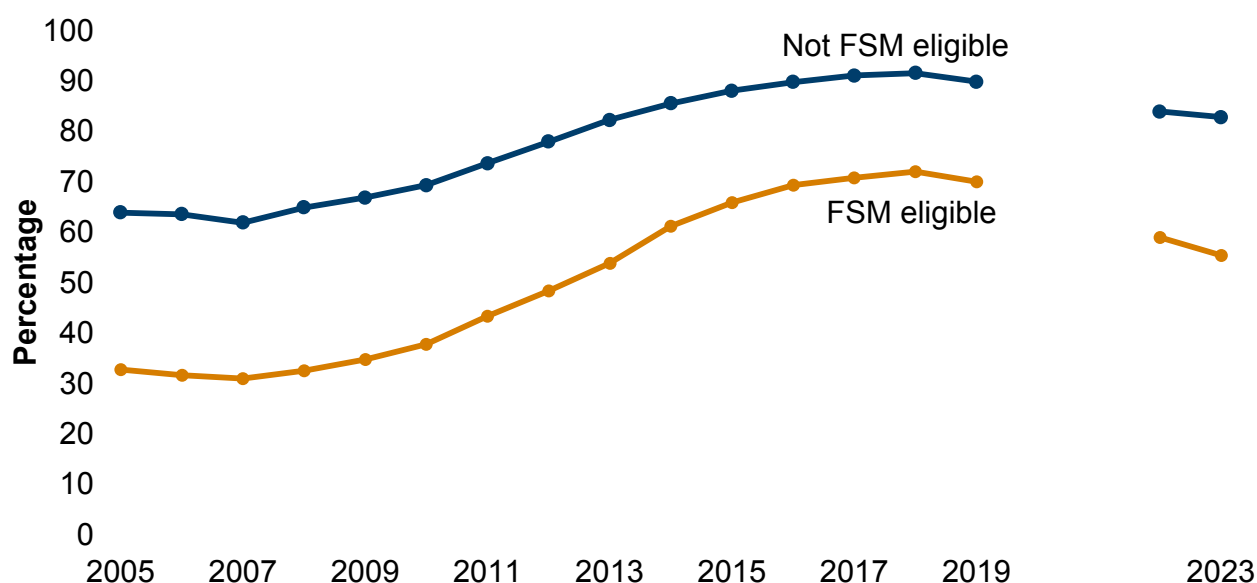
Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

## Results by free school meal eligibility

Pupils are eligible for **free school meals** if their parents or guardians are in receipt of certain means-tested benefits or support payments. Following validation of free school meals data for January 2023 it has come to light that the number of pupils eligible for free school meals through the means-tested criteria may have been over recorded in 2020 to 2022, which may have a small impact on comparisons between 2022 and other years. See quality notes for further information. It is not possible to revise this 2022 data. See **Schools' census results: as at January 2023** for more information.

**Figure 4: Percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI, by free school meal (FSM) eligibility, 2005 to 2023**



Description of Figure 4: A line chart showing that the gap in the percentage of pupils not eligible for free school meals and pupils who were eligible for free

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).



school meals achieving the core subject indicator at Key Stage 3 was lowest between 2016 and 2019.

### Percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI, by free school meal (FSM) eligibility (StatsWales)

- 83% of pupils not eligible for FSM and 55% of pupils eligible for FSM achieved the CSI at Key Stage 3 in 2023, a gap of 27 percentage points; this is higher than the gap of around 20 percentage points seen in the 4 years before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; the gap decreased each year between 2008 and 2018

## Table 2: Percentage of pupils achieving Key Stage 3 levels in core subjects, by free school meal (FSM) eligibility, 2023

Subject	Not FSM eligible	FSM eligible
English	89.6	69.3
Welsh	88.6	70.0
Mathematics	89.6	68.8
Science	90.6	72.5
Core Subject Indicator	82.8	55.5

The table shows that the gap between pupils not eligible for FSM and pupils eligible for FSM in the percentage achieving at least the expected level was largest in Mathematics (20.8 percentage points) and smallest in Science (18.1

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

percentage points).

## Further information

**Key Stage 3 results for core subjects by pupil characteristics can be found on StatsWales.**

In general:

- pupils from a Chinese or Chinese British ethnic background had higher results than pupils from other ethnic backgrounds
- pupils studying English as an Additional Language had higher results where they were classified as 'competent' or 'fluent'
- pupils with lower levels of additional learning or special educational needs had higher results
- pupils born earlier in the academic year had higher results than pupils born later in the year; this is consistent with analysis from previous years

**Key Stage 3 results for non-core subjects can also be found on StatsWales.** The non-core subjects are Art and design, Design and technology, Geography, History, Information and communication technology, Modern foreign languages, Music, Physical education and Welsh second language.

## Quality and methodology information

### National Statistics status

The **United Kingdom Statistics Authority** has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

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
- made more data available on StatsWales
- improved the format to include charts which provide further insight into some of the key information.

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 2023 data and describes the quality management tool applied to this area of work.

**This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.**

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023.html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

## Relevance

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 Senedd Research in the Senedd
- members of the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament
- education policy in the Welsh Government
- other government departments
- the research community
- LAs, schools and consortia
- ESTYN
- 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:

- general background and research
- inclusions in reports and briefings
- advice to Ministers
- to inform the education policy decision-making process in Wales including school reorganisation
- the education domain of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation
- to assist in research in educational attainment

## Accuracy

The Welsh Government works closely with schools and LAs in order to ensure all data are validated before tables are published. If there are any anomalies in the data compared with the previous year, the Welsh Government challenges

**This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.**

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

schools and LAs on anomalies in the data. Final data are signed off by schools and LAs each year. Data is collated into an electronic return called the National Data Collection (NDC) 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.

More information on the Key Stage 3 levels can be found in the [National Data Collection technical completion notes](#) and [2008 curriculum guidance](#).

Following a [written statement by the Minister for Education in July 2018](#) and a [consultation which ended in January 2018](#), teacher assessment data is no longer published at a school, local authority and consortia level. This is a significant move away from gathering information about young people's performance on a school by school basis for accountability purposes.

The percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected level fell in 2019 in all core subjects/areas of learning at the end of Foundation Phase and for both Key Stages. This could be a reflection of these changes, whereby the prime purpose of teacher assessments has started to shift back to individual learners and away from holding schools to account.

Following validation of free school meals data for January 2023 it has come to light that the number of pupils eligible for free school meals through the means-tested criteria may have been over recorded in 2020 to 2022, which may have a small impact on comparisons between 2022 and other years. The gap in the percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 CSI by free school meal eligibility was 25.0 percentage points in 2022. The gap is 24.7 percentage points if all pupils eligible for free school meals or transitionally protected are included.

**This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.**

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

**Table 3: Percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 3 core subject indicator, by free school meal (FSM) eligibility and transitional protection (TP), 2022**

Measure	KS3 CSI
Eligible for FSM	59.0
Not eligible for FSM	84.0
Eligible for FSM or TP	60.0
Not eligible for FSM or TP	84.7

## Timeliness and punctuality

DEWi was available for uploading files on 16 May 2023, with schools asked to submit data for every pupil on roll at the school on 16 May for the relevant Phase/Key Stages. Schools and LAs were then asked to validate their data within the validation period, which closed on 30 June 2023.

## 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.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

## Comparability

Data for Wales is not comparable with other UK countries.

- [England education statistics \(Department for Education\)](#)
- [Scotland education statistics \(Scottish Government\)](#)
- [Northern Ireland education statistics \(Department of Education\)](#)

## 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, 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 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](#).

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

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

Statistician: Steve Hughes

Email: [school.stats@gov.wales](mailto:school.stats@gov.wales)

Media: 0300 025 8099



SFR: 75/2023

**This document may not be fully accessible.**

For more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

**This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.**

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/academic-achievement-pupils-key-stage-3-september-2022-august-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).