



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

ATISN 14490

24 November 2020

Dear

## **ATISN 14490 – Statistics on Free School Meals**

### **Your request**

Thank you for your request which I received on 27 October. You requested the following information regarding the provision of free school meals in Wales, specifically:

- 1. How many Free School Meals were prepared in 2018-19, 2019-20 and in the last 6 months?*
- 2. How many Free School Meals were prepared during school holiday periods in 2018-19, 2019-20 and in the last 6 months?*
- 3. How many pupils were eligible for Free School Meals in 2018-19, 2019-20 and in the last 6 months?*
- 4. How many pupils have been in receipt of Free School Meals in 2018-19, 2019-20 and in the last 6 months?*
- 5. How many school meals has the Welsh Government made provision for in 2018-19, 2019-20 and in the last 6 months, and how many school meals have not been used in these time periods, including school holidays?*

### **Our response**

Normally, data on free school meals is collected once a year in January. This data collection counts the number of pupils who were eligible for free school meals and how many free school meals were provided on the day of the school census in January.

During the height of the pandemic in the summer term we undertook three ad hoc data collections to count the number of pupils who were receiving free school meals for the week commencing 20 April, week commencing 25 May and the week commencing 29 June.

In response to question 1: The Welsh Government does not collect data on the number of meals prepared.

In response to question 2: The Welsh Government does not collect data on the number of meals prepared.

In response to question 3: Data for 2018-19 and 2019-20 is published here:  
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and->

[Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/Provision-of-Meals-and-Milk/pupilseligibleforfreeschoolmeals-by-localauthorityregion-year](https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/Provision-of-Meals-and-Milk/pupilseligibleforfreeschoolmeals-by-localauthorityregion-year)

The number of eligible pupils is not available for the last 6 months.

In response to question 4: Data on the number of pupils receiving a free school meal on the day of the school census in January is published here:

<https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/Provision-of-Meals-and-Milk/pupilseligibleforfreeschoolmeals-by-localauthorityregion-year>

Data from the ad hoc data collections show:

- Over the week commencing 20 April 2020 over 60,000 pupils had been provided with a free meal that week
- Over the week commencing 25 May 90,205 pupils were provided with a free meal that week
- Over the week commencing 29 June 91,705 pupils were provided with a free meal that week

In response to question 5: Local authorities in Wales are responsible for the provision of free school meals. This information is not collected by the Welsh Government.

### **Next steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,  
Welsh Government,  
Cathays Park,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 3NQ

or Email: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office,  
Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane,  
Wilmslow,  
Cheshire,  
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,