

Distribution Sub-Group (2022) Paper 13 – Impact of 2022 PLASC pupil numbers on the settlement

This discussion paper has been written by officials of the Welsh Government. Ministers have not had an opportunity to comment on the contents. Exemplifications of changes are provided simply to inform discussion by DSG members. They are not Welsh Government proposals or statements of Government policy for or against changes.

Impact of 2022 PLASC pupil numbers on the settlement

Summary

1. This paper provides analysis of the latest pupil numbers taken from the February 2022 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC).
2. Tables 1 compares the 2022 counts with 2021 for each Local Authority. Table 2 exemplifies the impact of the updated data on the 2022-23 Total AEF.

Views sought

3. DSG members are asked to consider whether or not to update to the latest PLASC data.

Related Papers

Distribution Sub-Group (2021) - Paper 12 - Impact of 2021 PLASC pupil numbers on the settlement

Distribution Sub-Group (2020) - Paper 15 - Impact of 2020 PLASC pupil numbers on the settlement

Distribution Sub-Group (2019) - Paper 15 - Impact of 2019 PLASC

Distribution Sub-Group (2018) - Paper 19 - 2018 PLASC data

Distribution Sub-Group (2017) - Paper 08 - Impact of the 2017 PLASC data

Background

4. The Settlement indicators relating to pupil numbers are updated on an annual basis using the latest Pupil Level Annual School Census. The most recent data in this analysis relates to the situation as at February 2022. The Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) would usually take place in January. However, due to the level of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in January 2022, the Census date was delayed to 15 February 2022.
5. The PLASC is the most accurate and robust source of data for pupil numbers and using this as a proxy for need to spend on education services ensures that the Settlement remains reactive to real movements in the number of pupils requiring education.

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6. Updates to pupil numbers affect the following IBAs within the settlement:
- Nursery and primary school teaching and other services;
 - Secondary school teaching and other services;
 - Secondary school transport services;
 - Adult and continuing education transport;
 - Education administration; and
 - General administration.

Analysis

Changes to pupil numbers

7. Table 1 in Annex A shows the provisional relative change in each of the main settlement pupil categories between 2022 PLASC and 2021 PLASC.
8. For the primary pupils and modelled nursery school pupils indicator we see a relative change of between a 0.03 percentage point decrease in Conwy to a 0.07 percentage point increase in Newport. For context, in 2022-23 this data set was used to distribute £1,036m of Standard Spending Assessment (SSA), therefore a 0.01 percentage point change would equate to £103k change in SSA.
9. For the Secondary school pupils in year groups 7 to 11, the relative changes range from a decrease of 0.08 percentage points in Powys to an increase of 0.15 percentage points in Cardiff. This data set was used to distribute around £790m in 2022-23 settlement.
10. In the third column, the relative changes range from a decrease of 0.08 percentage points in Flintshire to an increase of 0.09 percentage points in Newport. This data set was used to distribute around £44m in 2022-23 settlement.
11. For the secondary school pupils in year 10 and 11, the relative changes ranged from a decrease of 0.19 percentage points in Rhonda Cynon Taf and 0.21 percentage points in Cardiff. This data set was used to distribute £76m of Standard Spending Assessment (SSA)

Redistribution of Aggregated External Finance (AEF)

12. Table 2 in Annex A exemplifies the impact of the 2022 PLASC on the 2022-23 Total AEF. The changes in AEF range from a £1.4m (or 0.3%) increase in Cardiff to a £0.9m (or 0.2%) decrease in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Conclusion

13. The provisional exemplifications are based on the isolated effect of the PLASC 2022 pupil numbers only on the 2022-23 Settlement. The exemplifications do not account for any other changes in data that will be made for the 2023-24 Settlement, for example: the impact of transfers in and out, for the impact of changes in formulae resulting from IBA reviews or any other structural changes to the overall formula.

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14. A separate DSG paper will provide further analysis on the updated eFSM data.

Recommendations

15. For the 2022-23 Settlement DSG agreed to use the 2021 pupil numbers data. The group are asked to agree to use the 2022 PLASC data, in the calculation of the 2023-24 settlement.

**Local Government Finance Policy and Sustainability Division
Welsh Government**

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Annex A

Table 1 – Relative change of main settlement indicators of pupil numbers from 2022 PLASC compared to 2021 PLASC

	Primary pupils and modelled nursery school pupils	Secondary school pupils in year groups 7 to 11	Population aged 11 to 15 (projected) and secondary school pupils in year groups 12 to 14	Secondary school pupils in year groups 10 and 11
Isle of Anglesey	-0.01%	0.00%	0.01%	-0.03%
Gwynedd	-0.02%	0.00%	-0.01%	0.08%
Conwy	-0.03%	-0.01%	0.00%	-0.10%
Denbighshire	0.00%	0.02%	0.00%	-0.01%
Flintshire	-0.01%	0.01%	-0.08%	0.09%
Wrexham	-0.02%	0.01%	-0.04%	0.01%
Powys	0.03%	-0.08%	-0.05%	-0.06%
Ceredigion	-0.03%	0.03%	-0.01%	0.01%
Pembrokeshire	-0.01%	0.04%	0.03%	0.07%
Carmarthenshire	0.04%	-0.02%	-0.04%	0.07%
Swansea	0.01%	0.02%	0.07%	0.14%
Neath Port Talbot	-0.02%	-0.06%	0.05%	-0.13%
Bridgend	-0.03%	-0.03%	0.08%	-0.06%
The Vale of Glamorgan	0.01%	-0.01%	0.02%	0.03%
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	-0.02%	-0.06%	-0.03%	-0.19%
Merthyr Tydfil	0.05%	-0.03%	0.01%	-0.02%
Caerphilly	-0.01%	-0.04%	-0.06%	-0.03%
Blaenau Gwent	-0.01%	0.04%	-0.02%	-0.01%
Torfaen	-0.01%	-0.01%	-0.01%	-0.08%
Monmouthshire	0.02%	-0.03%	-0.07%	-0.09%
Newport	0.07%	0.06%	0.09%	0.10%
Cardiff	0.01%	0.15%	0.04%	0.21%
Wales	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

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Table 2 - Exemplification to show the impact of updated pupil numbers only on the 2022-23 AEF

	2022-23 AEF	PLASC 2022 Exemplification	Difference (£000s) %	
Isle of Anglesey	114,551	114,474	-78	-0.1%
Gwynedd	213,214	213,033	-181	-0.1%
Conwy	183,311	182,804	-507	-0.3%
Denbighshire	173,640	173,831	191	0.1%
Flintshire	232,179	232,212	33	0.0%
Wrexham	207,064	206,967	-97	0.0%
Powys	210,261	209,937	-324	-0.2%
Ceredigion	119,421	119,350	-71	-0.1%
Pembrokeshire	196,257	196,458	201	0.1%
Carmarthenshire	311,603	311,931	328	0.1%
Swansea	386,592	386,923	330	0.1%
Neath Port Talbot	258,073	257,339	-733	-0.3%
Bridgend	232,368	231,841	-527	-0.2%
The Vale Of Glamorgan	186,015	186,019	4	0.0%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	441,441	440,553	-888	-0.2%
Merthyr Tydfil	110,617	110,940	323	0.3%
Caerphilly	317,459	316,970	-488	-0.2%
Blaenau Gwent	130,797	130,963	166	0.1%
Torfaen	160,120	159,864	-256	-0.2%
Monmouthshire	112,278	112,181	-96	-0.1%
Newport	265,617	266,879	1,261	0.5%
Cardiff	544,726	546,134	1,408	0.3%
Total Unitary Authorities	5,107,603	5,107,603		

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Table 3 - PLASC numbers 2022

UA	Primary pupils and modelled nursery school pupils	Secondary school pupils in year groups 7 to 11	Population aged 11 to 15 (projected) and secondary school pupils in year groups 12 to 14	Secondary school pupils in year groups 10 and 11
Isle of Anglesey	5,477	3,375	4,660	1,290
Gwynedd	9,027	6,610	7,907	2,628
Conwy	8,400	5,555	7,827	2,174
Denbighshire	8,197	6,278	6,932	2,400
Flintshire	12,748	8,627	11,106	3,403
Wrexham	11,611	6,548	8,975	2,535
Powys	9,561	6,393	8,376	2,527
Ceredigion	4,955	3,599	4,550	1,421
Pembrokeshire	9,642	6,212	8,244	2,460
Carmarthenshire	14,922	10,188	12,992	3,984
Swansea	19,503	12,993	15,485	5,096
Neath Port Talbot	11,422	8,000	8,932	3,127
Bridgend	12,271	8,048	10,380	3,106
The Vale of Glamorgan	12,138	8,214	10,119	3,141
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	20,242	14,384	17,197	5,606
Merthyr Tydfil	5,429	3,114	3,811	1,190
Caerphilly	15,357	10,194	12,124	3,976
Blaenau Gwent	5,521	3,116	3,977	1,166
Torfaen	8,051	5,630	5,861	2,213
Monmouthshire	6,672	4,043	6,362	1,566
Newport	15,064	9,630	12,212	3,636
Cardiff	31,092	19,750	25,435	7,535
Wales	257,302	170,501	213,464	66,180