

Source: Northern Ireland School Census, 2025/26

## Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)



**90,858**

**Total**

Pupils entitled to Free School Meals



**26%**

of pupils

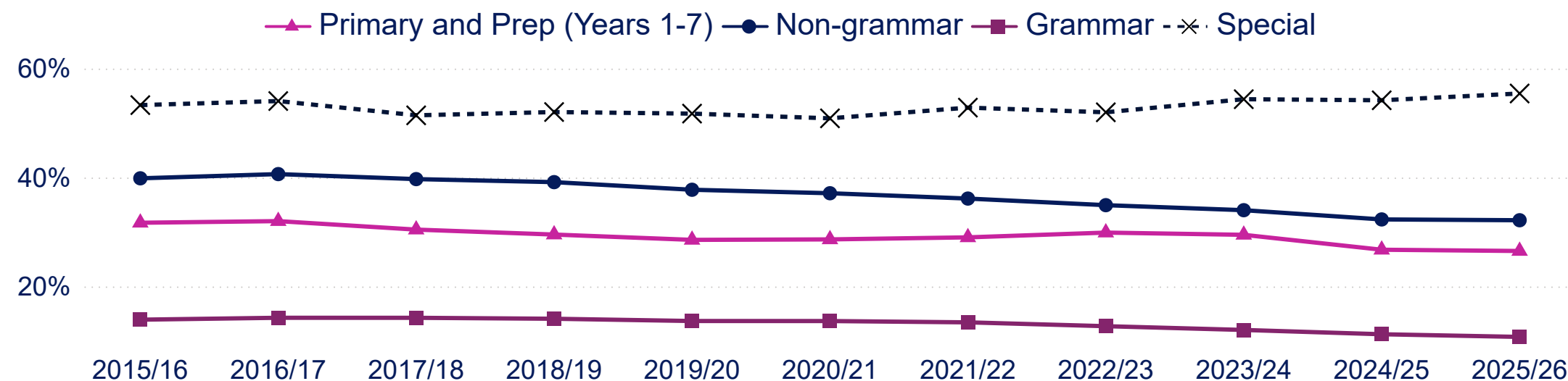
### Information

Figures for pupils in nursery schools/units and pre-schools also includes parents who are in receipt of Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance where an award of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance has been converted and the amount of the award remains unchanged; and Universal Credit. These are some of the benefits which determine eligibility for free school meals. Voluntary and Private Pre-schools have been included in totals as settings have started transitioning to full-time from September 2025.

Find out more at the [Education Authority Website](#).

Voluntary and Private Pre-school	1,083	17%
Special	4,284	55%
Primary and Prep (Years 1-7)	43,675	27%
Primary - Nursery and Reception	3,380	34%
Nursery Schools	2,302	41%
Non-grammar	28,969	32%
Grammar	7,165	11%

## Free School Meal Entitlement Over Time



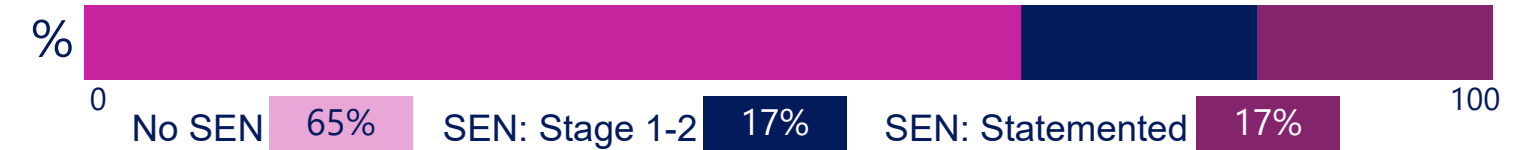
## Special Educational Needs (SEN)

\* Voluntary and Private Pre-school and Nursery School data are not included as pupil level data is not available for these settings



**30,377**

pupils entitled to FSM are on the SEN register



## Irish Medium



**2,520**

pupils entitled to FSM are in Irish Medium Education

**34%**

of pupils in Irish Medium Education are entitled to FSM

**25%**

of pupils in English Medium Education are entitled to FSM

## Integrated Education



**8,088**

pupils entitled to FSM are in Integrated Education

**28%**

of pupils in Integrated schools are entitled to FSM

**25%**

of pupils in Non Integrated schools are entitled to FSM

## Newcomers

\* Voluntary and Private Pre-school and Nursery School data are not included as pupil level data is not available for these settings



**4,958**

newcomers are entitled to FSM

**24%**

of newcomer pupils are entitled to FSM

**26%**

of Non-newcomer pupils are entitled to FSM