



ATTENDANCE AT GRANT-AIDED PRIMARY, POST-PRIMARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS 2010/11: DETAILED STATISTICS

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INTRODUCTION

Attendance data for the 2010/11 academic year was collected from all grant-aided primary, post-primary and special schools via the school census in October 2011.

Initial findings for 2010/11 were published in a Statistical First Release on 26th January 2012. This statistical release supplements that information and includes analysis of attendance data by school characteristics such as management type and pupil characteristics, for example, gender and ethnicity.

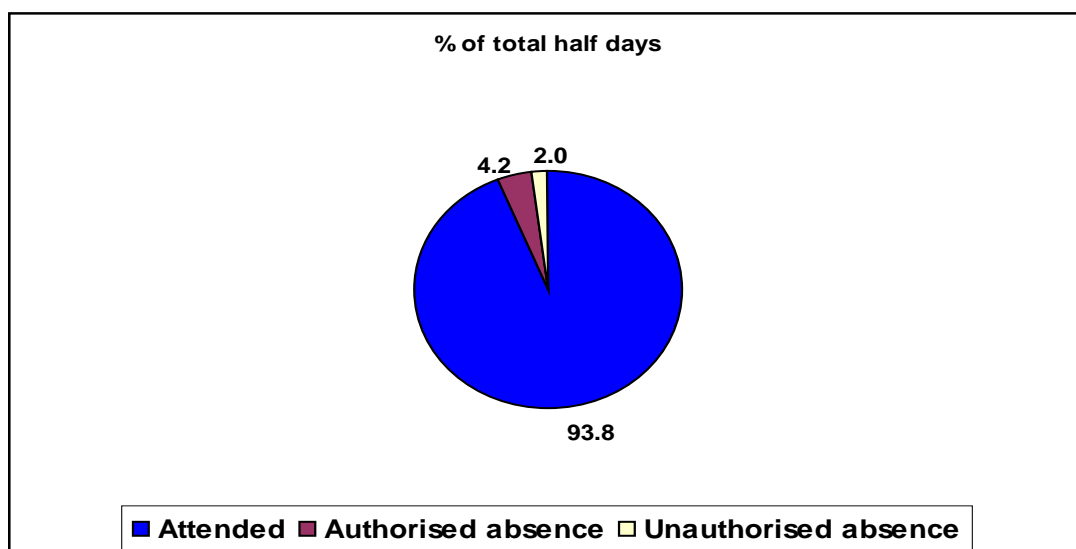
Attendance data are required by a range of organisations and individuals for a variety of purposes. Members of the NI Assembly, the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and the Education and Training Inspectorate use the data for benchmarking, policy making and performance monitoring. Responsibility for attendance policy lies with Additional Educational Needs Team in DE which monitors non-attendance and provides guidance to schools in relation to attendance. Attendance data are used for monitoring other Departmental policies for example, Achieving Belfast and Derry Bright Futures. The statistics are also used by other departments when developing and monitoring cross-departmental policies, for example, attendance is an indicator in the Education Domain of the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure as well as OFMDFM's 10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People. The data is also used by researchers, academics and students, as well as the general public for informing choices about service providers.

KEY FINDINGS - ALL SCHOOLS

Absence is reported by schools in half day sessions and recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

- The overall attendance rate for primary, post-primary and special schools in 2010/11 was 93.8%.
- In 2010/11, 6.2% of the total half days in primary, post-primary and special schools were missed due to absence.
- Of the total half days, 4.2% were recorded as authorised absence.
- Unauthorised absence accounted for 2.0% of the total half days in primary, post-primary and special schools throughout 2010/11.

Chart 1 Attendance at primary, post-primary and special schools, 2010/11



ALL SCHOOLS BY SECTOR

KEY FINDINGS

Absence rates

There has been little variation in overall absence rates over the last four years, particularly in primary and post-primary schools.

In primary schools in 2010/11, 5.1% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 3.7% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised absence. In 2009/10, overall absence accounted for 5.3% of the total half days (4.0% authorised and 1.3% unauthorised).

In post-primary schools in 2010/11, 7.4% of all half days were missed due to absence, 4.6% was authorised absence and 2.8% was unauthorised absence. In 2009/10, overall absence represented 7.7% of the total half days, 5.2% authorised and 2.6% unauthorised. As with primary schools, the figures show a small decrease in overall and authorised absence on the previous year, while unauthorised absence increased slightly.

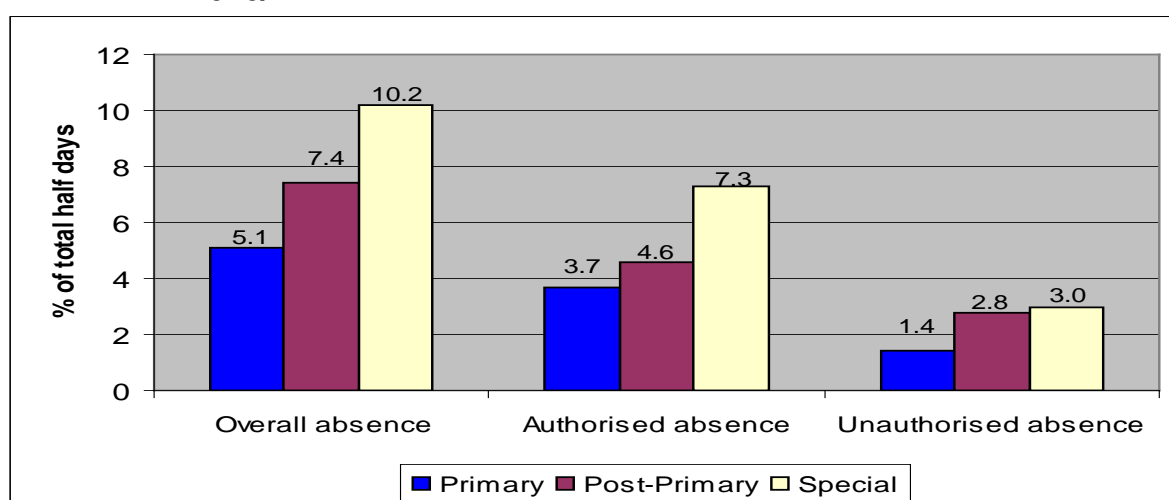
In special schools, 10.2% of all half days were missed due to absence in 2010/11, comprising 7.3% authorised and 3.0% unauthorised absence. This represents a decrease on the 2009/10 figures, from 11.0% overall absence (7.6% authorised and 3.4% unauthorised).

Table 1 Attendance at school, 2010/11

	% of total half days		
	Primary Schools	Post-primary Schools	Special Schools
Attended	94.9	92.6	89.8
Not attended	5.1	7.4	10.2
<i>Comprising:</i>			
Authorised absence	3.7	4.6	7.3
Unauthorised absence	1.4	2.8	3.0

Note: In some cases, percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Chart 2 Absence from primary, post-primary and special schools, 2010/11



Reasons for absence

The most common reason for absence in all schools was illness, which is an authorised absence. Illness accounted for 58.9% of all absent half days in primary schools, 47.7% in post-primary schools and 43.8% in special schools. This equates to 3.0%, 3.5% and 4.5% of the total half days respectively.

Table 2 Absence from schools by reason and school type, 2010/11

	Primary Schools		Post-Primary Schools		Special Schools	
	% of absent half days	% of total half days	% of absent half days	% of total half days	% of absent half days	% of total half days
Authorised absence						
Artistic endeavour	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bereavement	1.0	0.1	1.5	0.1	0.6	0.1
Suspended	0.1	0.0	1.4	0.1	0.7	0.1
Family holiday agreed	2.8	0.1	0.6	0.0	2.8	0.3
Illness	58.9	3.0	47.7	3.5	43.8	4.5
Medical / dental appointments	2.6	0.1	4.6	0.3	6.6	0.7
Other exceptional circumstances	7.5	0.4	6.2	0.5	16.2	1.7
Religious observance	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0
Total authorised absence	73.2	3.7	62.3	4.6	70.9	7.3
Unauthorised absence						
Family holiday not agreed	5.6	0.3	1.9	0.1	1.7	0.2
Other	4.9	0.2	6.5	0.5	5.3	0.5
No reason provided	15.7	0.8	28.9	2.1	21.9	2.2
Late after registration closed	0.6	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.0
Total unauthorised absence	26.8	1.4	37.7	2.8	29.1	3.0
Total overall absence	100.0	5.1	100.0	7.4	100.0	10.2

While the level of absence attributable to each reason tends to be similar year on year, there was an increase in 'other exceptional circumstances' in 2010/11. In 2009/10, this reason represented 4.4% of all absent half days in primary schools, 4.8% in post-primary and 12.0% in special schools. Levels increased to 7.5%, 6.2% and 16.2% respectively in 2010/11. It is likely that this increase was influenced by two factors. Firstly, the 'traveller absence' code was removed prior to the 2010/11 academic year and schools were advised to record absence due to travelling as 'other exceptional circumstances'. Secondly, severe weather conditions caused widespread

disruption to schools in the winter of the same year, with pupils affected being recorded as absent due to 'other exceptional circumstances'.

In relation to unauthorised absence, recent years have seen an increase in 'no reason yet provided' and a decrease in 'other reason', however this is mainly due to coding changes. Historically, 'no reason yet provided' was a temporary code therefore schools were advised to change this to 'other' if a reason was not provided within a certain time period. However, since 2009, schools have been advised not to change to 'other', resulting in a decrease in this code and a subsequent increase in 'no reason'.

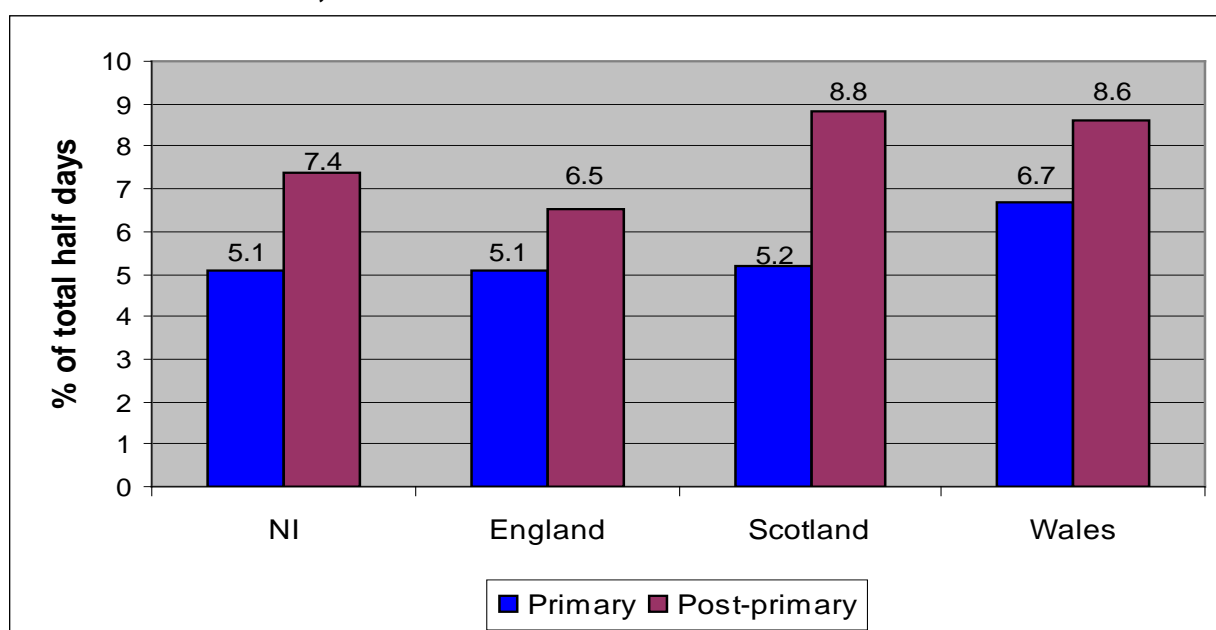
Comparisons with England, Scotland and Wales

The highest overall absence rates in the primary sector were recorded in Wales – 6.7% of the total half days. Scotland had the highest overall absence levels in post-primary, at 8.8% of the total half days. This compares with 5.1% and 7.4% respectively in Northern Ireland. Details of the sources for England, Scotland and Wales data can be found in the Notes to Readers section (see Note 8).

Table 3 Comparison with England, Scotland and Wales, 2010/11

	% of total half days			
	Primary Schools		Post-Primary Schools	
	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence
NI	1.4	5.1	2.8	7.4
England	0.7	5.1	1.4	6.5
Scotland	1.2	5.2	2.7	8.8
Wales	0.9	6.7	1.5	8.6

Chart 3 Comparisons with England, Scotland and Wales – overall absence, 2010/11



PRIMARY SCHOOLS

KEY FINDINGS

OVERALL

In primary schools in 2010/11, 5.1% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 3.7% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised absence (Table 1).

The most common reason for absence in primary schools was illness, which is an authorised absence and accounted for 3.0% of the total half days or 58.9% of all absent half days in 2010/11 (Table 2).

SCHOOL LEVEL ANALYSIS

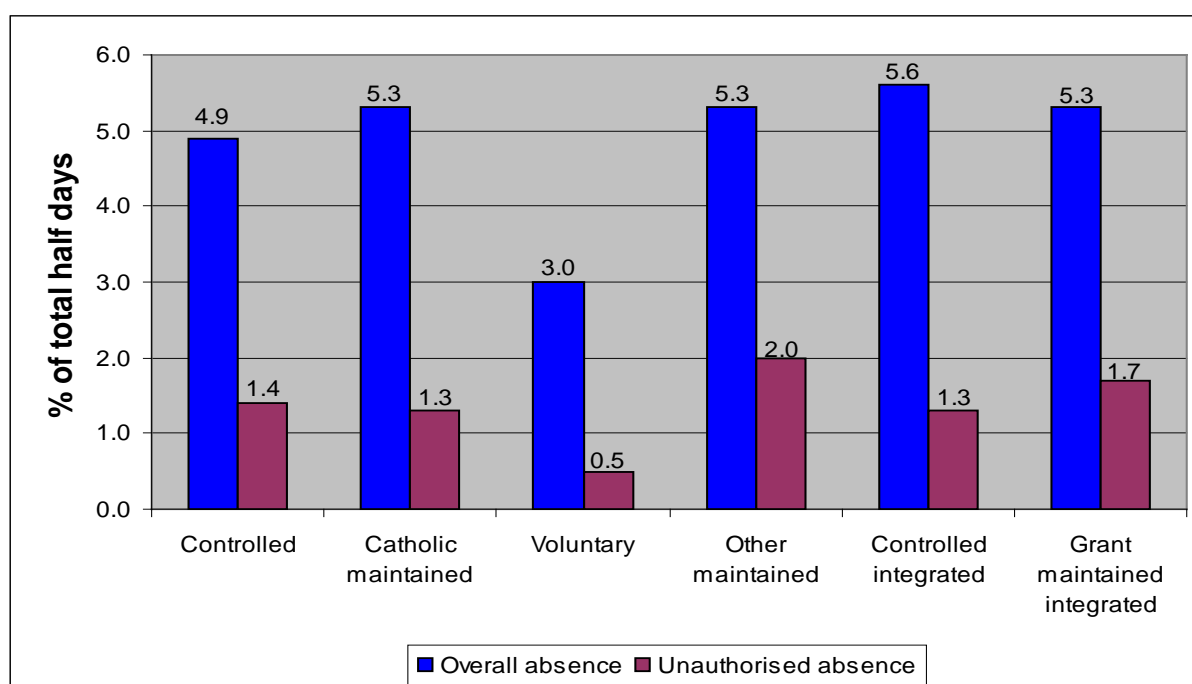
Management Type

Controlled integrated primary schools had the highest levels of average overall absence (5.6% of the total half days) while voluntary schools had the lowest at 3.0% of the total half days.

Table 4 Attendance at primary school by management type, 2010/11

Management Type	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Controlled	95.1	4.9	3.5	1.4
Catholic maintained	94.7	5.3	4.0	1.3
Voluntary	97.0	3.0	2.5	0.5
Other maintained	94.7	5.3	3.2	2.0
Controlled Integrated	94.4	5.6	4.3	1.3
Grant Maintained Integrated	94.7	5.3	3.5	1.7
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Chart 4 Absence from primary school by management type, 2010/11



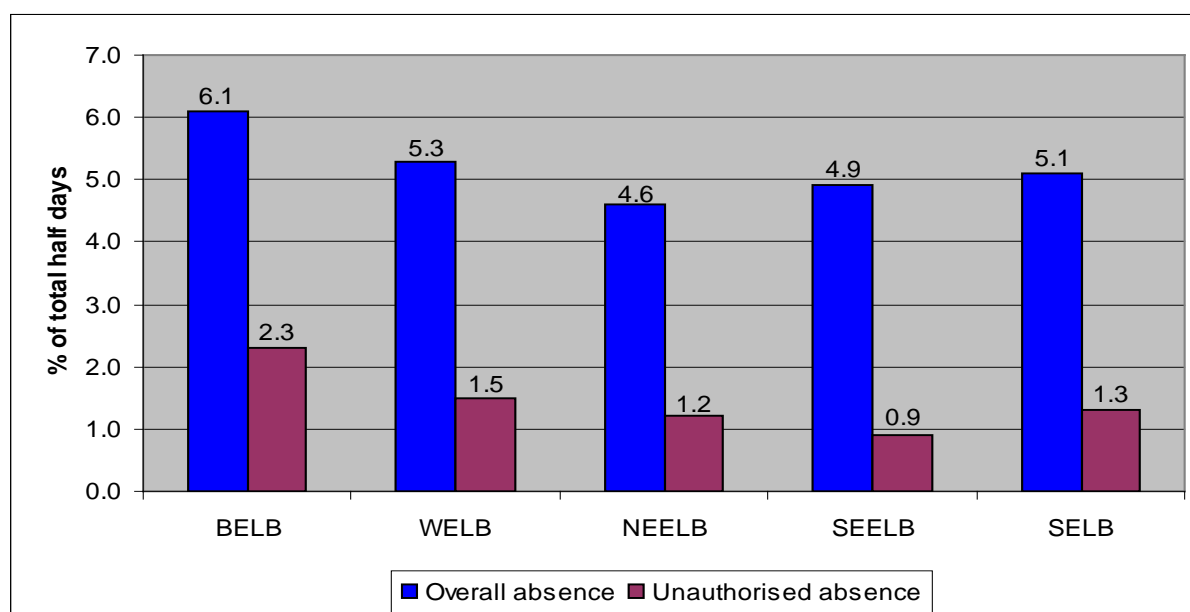
Education and Library Board

At 6.1% of the total half days, the highest average overall absence for primary schools was recorded by the Belfast Education and Library Board. The North Eastern Education and Library Board reported the lowest average overall absence, with 4.6% of the total half days missed.

Table 5 Attendance at primary school by Education and Library Board, 2010/11

ELB	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
BELB	93.9	6.1	3.8	2.3
WELB	94.7	5.3	3.8	1.5
NEELB	95.4	4.6	3.4	1.2
SEELB	95.1	4.9	4.0	0.9
SELB	94.9	5.1	3.8	1.3
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Chart 5 Absence from primary school by Education and Library Board, 2010/11



Location

Overall absence was higher for urban primary schools (5.6% of the total half days) than for rural primary schools (4.3% of the total half days).

Table 6 Attendance at primary school by location of school, 2010/11

Location	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Urban	94.4	5.6	3.9	1.7
Rural	95.7	4.3	3.5	0.8
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

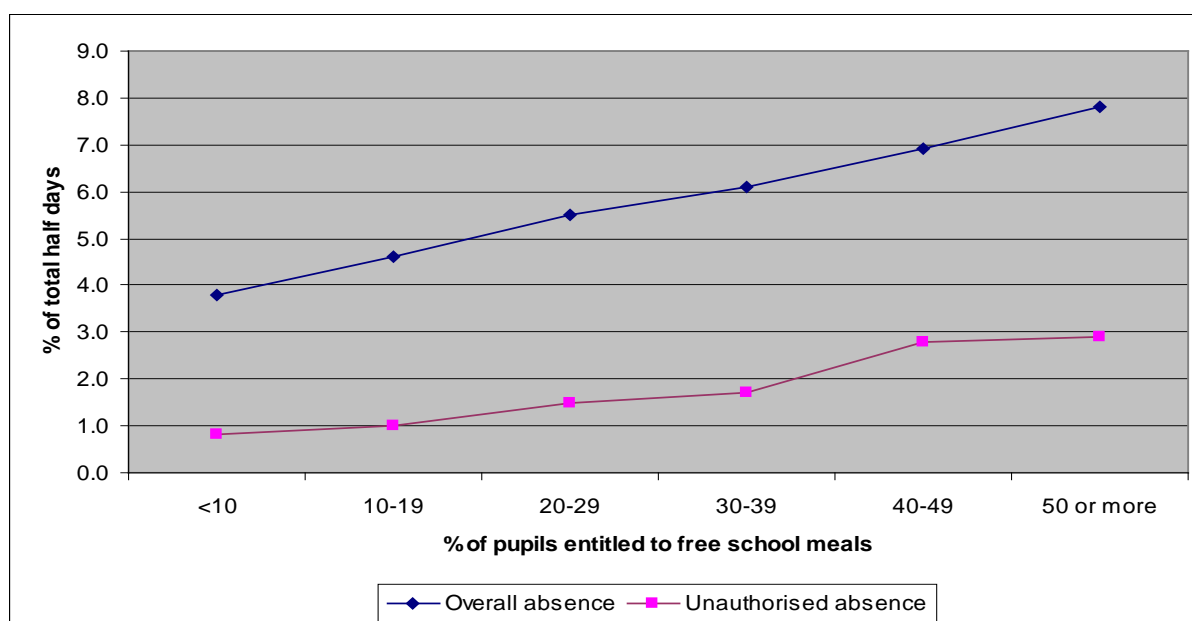
Free school meal entitlement

The figures show that average overall absence levels generally increase in line with the percentage of pupils enrolled who are eligible for free school meals. In schools where less than 10% of pupils enrolled were eligible for free school meals, the average overall absence level was 3.8% of the total half days. This compares with 7.8% of the total half days for schools with more than 50% of pupils enrolled eligible for free school meals. Since the level of free school meal eligibility is indicative of levels of deprivation, the data suggest that absence tends to be higher in more disadvantaged areas.

Table 7 Attendance at primary school by free school meal entitlement, 2010/11

Percentage of pupils entitled to Free School Meals	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
0.00 - 9.99%	96.2	3.8	3.1	0.8
10.00 – 19.99%	95.4	4.6	3.5	1.0
20.00 – 29.99%	94.5	5.5	4.0	1.5
30.00 – 39.99%	93.9	6.1	4.4	1.7
40.00 – 49.99%	93.1	6.9	4.1	2.8
50% or more	92.2	7.8	4.9	2.9
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Chart 6 Absence from primary school by free school meal entitlement, 2010/11



PUPIL LEVEL ANALYSIS

Gender

Average overall absence rates were similar for boys and girls of primary school age (5.2% and 5.1% of the total half days respectively).

Table 8 Attendance at primary school by gender, 2010/11

Gender	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Male	94.8	5.2	3.8	1.4
Female	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.3
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Year group

The highest average overall absence occurred in Year 1 of primary school when 5.7% of the total half days are missed. Further analysis shows that, with the exception of illness, levels of absence tend to be similar for all reasons regardless of year group. Year 1 pupils miss more total half days due to illness than any other year group (3.6% compared with a low of 2.8% in Years 4, 5 and 6). They are only slightly more likely to be absent due to medical or dental appointments (0.2% of the total half days in Year 1 compared with 0.1% for all other year groups).

Table 9 Attendance at primary school by year group, 2010/11

Year Group	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
1	94.3	5.7	4.3	1.3
2	94.7	5.3	3.9	1.4
3	95.0	5.0	3.6	1.4
4	95.1	4.9	3.5	1.3
5	95.1	4.9	3.6	1.3
6	95.1	4.9	3.5	1.4
7	94.8	5.2	3.7	1.5
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Ethnicity

Irish Traveller children attending primary school had a higher average overall absence rate than any other ethnic group. They missed 30.0% of the total half days, compared with 5.0% for white children and 7.3% for children from a minority ethnic background.

As noted earlier, up until 2010/11, there was a 'traveller' absence code which was specifically for the purpose of recording any absence by traveller pupils while they were travelling with their families. This 'T' code was classified as an authorised absence. From 2010/11 onwards, schools were advised to record this as 'other exceptional circumstances' which was also an authorised absence. It is possible that the previous 'T' code was used on occasion to record all traveller absence rather than just the authorised absences, thus contributing to the marked increase in unauthorised absence recorded for travellers between 2009/10 and 2010/11 (from 10.6% to 18.0%).

Table 10 Attendance at primary school by ethnicity, 2010/11

Ethnicity	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
White	95.0	5.0	3.7	1.3
Minority Ethnic Background	92.7	7.3	4.4	2.8
Irish Traveller	70.0	30.0	12.0	18.0
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Note: Ethnicity was not provided for 109 enrolments at primary schools, representing 0.07% of the total.

Looked after children

Looked after children in primary schools had a slightly lower overall absence rate (4.8%) than those who were not in care (5.1%), however levels of unauthorised absence are slightly higher.

Table 11 Attendance of looked after children at primary school, 2010/11

Status	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Looked after children	95.2	4.8	3.3	1.5
Other	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA)

At 7.3%, the overall absence rate for pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas was 2.4 percentage points higher than for pupils who did not live in an NRA.

Table 12 Attendance rates for primary pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, 2010/11

Area	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Neighbourhood Renewal Area	92.7	7.3	4.7	2.6
Other	95.1	4.9	3.8	1.1
Primary average	94.9	5.1	3.7	1.4

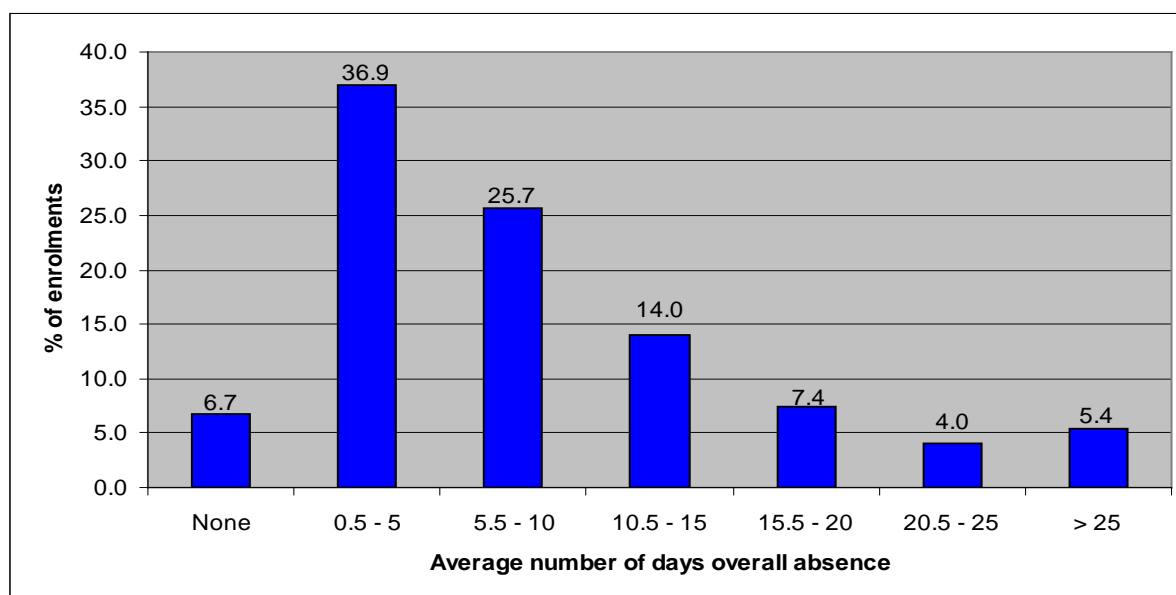
Duration of absence

Of all pupils enrolled in primary schools in 2010/11, 6.7% had no absence throughout the year. Most of those who were absent from school (36.9%) were absent for between 0.5 and 5 days in 2010/11. Approximately 5.4% of pupils enrolled were absent for more than 25 days.

Table 13 Percentage of enrolments at primary school by average number of days overall absence, 2010/11

Average number of days overall absence	Percentage of enrolments
No absence	6.7
0.5 – 5 days	36.9
5.5 – 10 days	25.7
10.5 – 15 days	14.0
15.5 – 20 days	7.4
20.5 – 25 days	4.0
>25 days	5.4

Chart 7 Absence from primary school by average number of days absence, 2010/11



Levels of absence

More than half of pupils enrolled at primary school (56.7%), had an absence rate of between 0.01% and 5.00% of the total days while 5.1% missed more than 15% of the total half days. Schools tend to consider referral of pupils to the Education Welfare Service for non-attendance if absence is more than 15% however, the final decision is at the discretion of the school on consideration of individual circumstances.

Table 14 Percentage of enrolments at primary school by overall absence rates, 2010/11

Overall absence rate	Percentage of enrolments
No absence	6.7
0.01% to 5.00% of total half days	56.7
5.01% to 10.00% of total half days	23.8
10.01% to 15.00% of total half days	7.8
More than 15% of total half days	5.1

Less than 85% attendance

Table 15 provides an analysis of those pupils with absence levels of more than 15%, along with a profile of all pupils for comparative purposes. As explained previously, this is a point when schools may consider referring a child to the Education Welfare Service for non-attendance. Looking at the characteristics of the pupils with absence levels of more than 15%, almost half were from Catholic maintained schools and over one-fifth (22.7%) from the Belfast Education and Library Board. The largest proportion of pupils with absence levels of more than 15% were in Year 1.

Table 15 Characteristics of primary school pupils enrolled with absence levels of more than 15% in 2010/11

Characteristics	% of pupils enrolled with absence levels of more than 15%	% of total pupils enrolled
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS:		
Management Type		
Controlled	44.7	46.1
Catholic maintained	47.8	45.7
Voluntary	0.2	1.1
Other maintained	1.3	1.5
Controlled Integrated	2.8	2.1
Grant Maintained Integrated	3.2	3.4
Education and Library Board		
BELB	22.7	14.8
WELB	18.1	17.5
NEELB	17.4	22.8
SEELB	18.6	20.9
SELB	23.1	23.9
PUPIL CHARACTERISTICS:		
Gender		
Male	52.7	51.1
Female	47.3	48.9
Year Group		
1	18.6	14.7
2	15.4	14.6
3	12.4	14.4
4	12.3	14.0
5	13.0	14.0
6	14.1	14.0
7	14.2	14.3
Ethnicity		
White	88.9	96.6
Minority ethnic background	6.0	2.9
Traveller	5.1	0.4

Note: Ethnicity was not provided for 29 enrolments with absence levels of 15% or more, representing 0.4% of the total. Ethnicity was not provided for 109 enrolments overall, representing 0.07% of the total.

POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

KEY FINDINGS

OVERALL

In post-primary schools in 2010/11, 7.4% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 4.6% authorised and 2.8% unauthorised absence (Table 1).

The most common reason for absence in post-primary schools was illness, which is an authorised absence and accounted for 3.5% of the total half days (47.7% of all absent half days). (Table 2)

SCHOOL LEVEL ANALYSIS

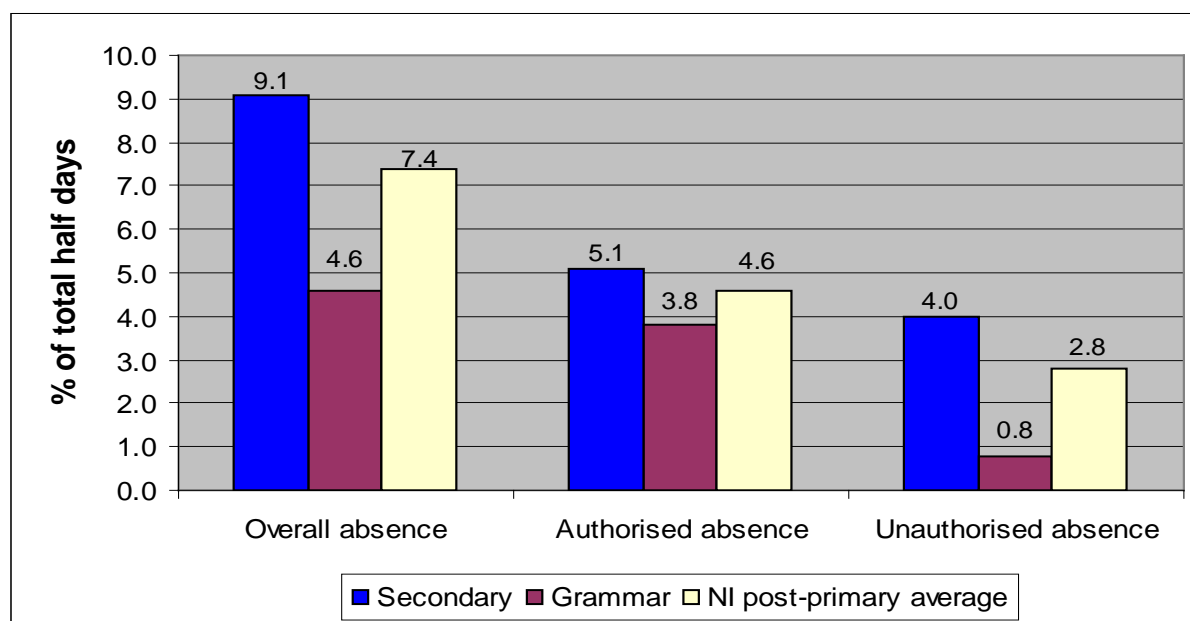
School type

At 9.1% of the total half days, average levels of overall absence in secondary schools were higher than in grammar schools (4.6%). There was a marked difference in the levels of unauthorised absence in secondary and grammar schools (4.0% and 0.8% of the total half days respectively).

Table 16 Attendance at post-primary school by school type, 2010/11

School Type	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Secondary	90.9	9.1	5.1	4.0
Grammar	95.4	4.6	3.8	0.8
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Chart 8 Absence from post-primary school by school type, 2010/11



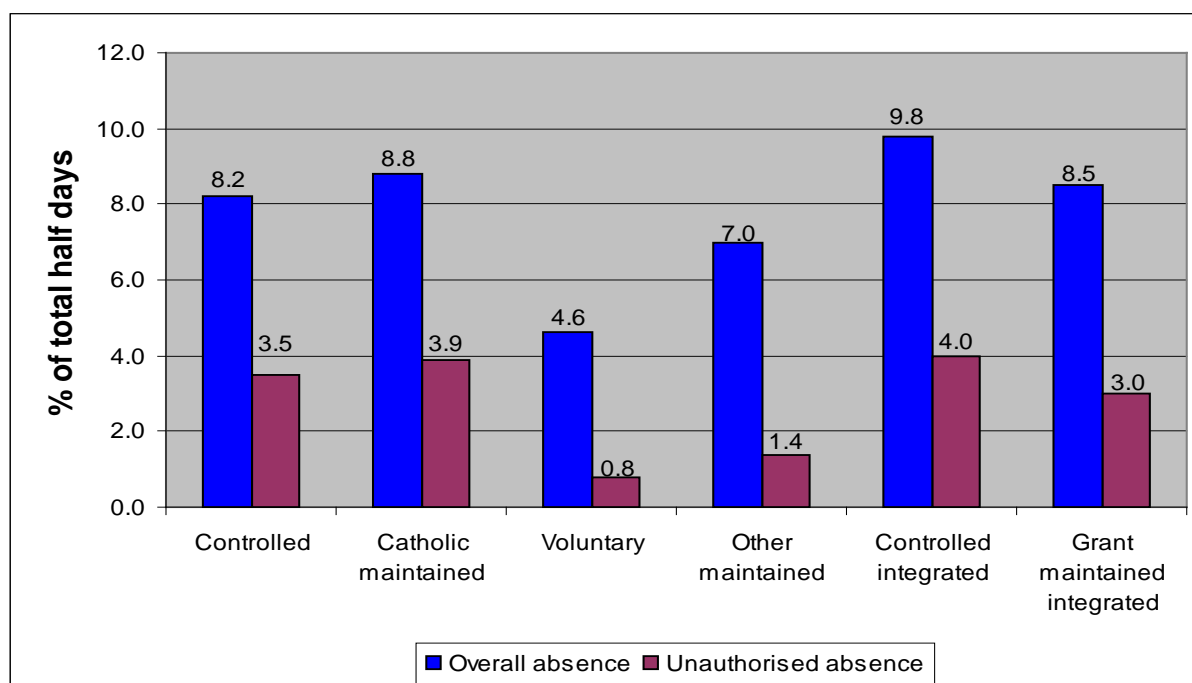
Management type

Controlled integrated schools had the highest levels of overall absence (9.8% of the total half days) while voluntary schools had the lowest at 4.6% of the total half days.

Table 17 Attendance at post-primary school by management type, 2010/11

Management Type	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Controlled	91.8	8.2	4.7	3.5
Catholic maintained	91.2	8.8	4.9	3.9
Voluntary	95.4	4.6	3.8	0.8
Other maintained	93.0	7.0	5.5	1.4
Controlled Integrated	90.2	9.8	5.8	4.0
Grant Maintained Integrated	91.5	8.5	5.5	3.0
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Chart 9 Absence from post-primary school by management type, 2010/11



Education and Library Board

At 7.8% of the total half days, average overall absence was highest in the South Eastern Education and Library Board post-primary schools. The North Eastern Education and Library Board reported the lowest level of overall absence (7.1% of the total half days).

Table 18 Attendance at post-primary school by Education and Library Board, 2010/11

ELB	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
BELB	92.8	7.2	4.8	2.4
WELB	92.4	7.6	4.3	3.3
NEELB	92.9	7.1	4.6	2.6
SEELB	92.2	7.8	4.9	2.8
SELB	92.8	7.2	4.4	2.8
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Location of school

Only one-fifth of post-primary schools are located in a rural area. Overall and authorised absence rates were very similar in 2010/11 and, at 2.8% of the total half days, the rate of unauthorised absence was the same for urban and rural schools.

Table 19 Attendance at post-primary school by location of school, 2010/11

Location	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Urban	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8
Rural	92.7	7.3	4.5	2.8
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

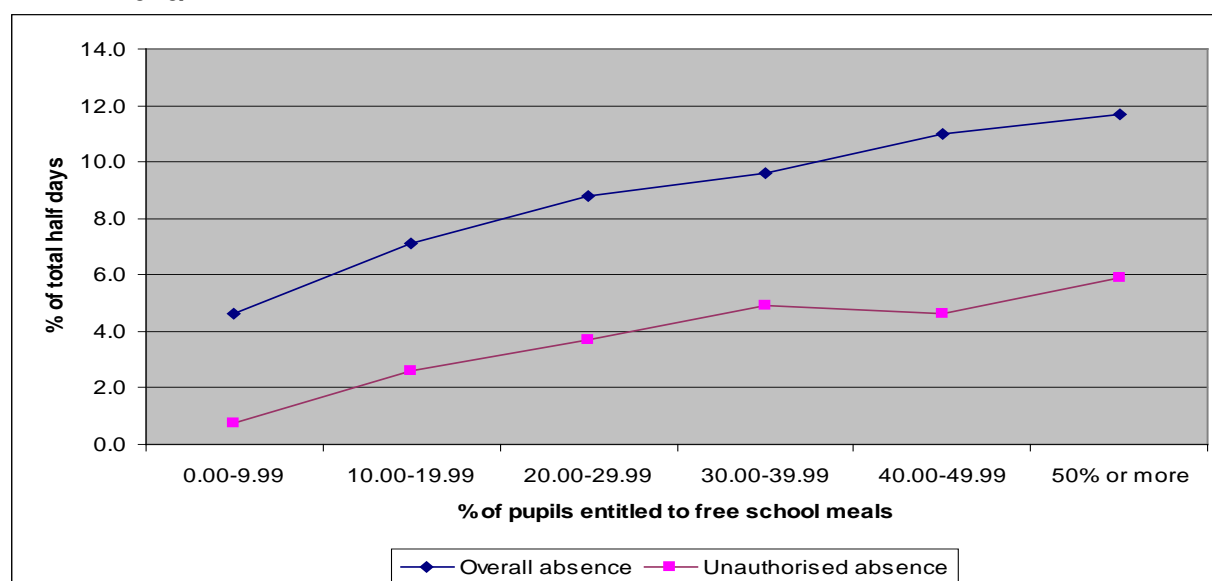
Free school meal entitlement

The figures indicate that generally, absence levels increase in line with the percentage of pupils enrolled who are eligible for free school meals. In schools where less than 10% of pupils enrolled were eligible for free school meals, the average overall absence level was 4.6% of the total half days. This compares with 11.7% of the total half days for schools with more than 50% of pupils enrolled eligible for free school meals. Since the level of free school meal eligibility is indicative of levels of deprivation, the data suggest that absence tends to be higher in more disadvantaged areas.

Table 20 Attendance at post-primary school by free school meal entitlement, 2010/11

Percentage of pupils entitled to Free School Meals	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
0.00 - 9.99%	95.4	4.6	3.8	0.8
10.00 – 19.99%	92.9	7.1	4.6	2.6
20.00 – 29.99%	91.2	8.8	5.0	3.7
30.00 – 39.99%	90.4	9.6	4.7	4.9
40.00 – 49.99%	89.0	11.0	6.4	4.6
50% or more	88.3	11.7	5.8	5.9
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Chart 10 Absence from post-primary school by free school meal entitlement, 2010/11



PUPIL LEVEL ANALYSIS

Gender

At 7.5% and 7.3% of total half days respectively, average overall absence was similar for males and females. While the predominant cause of absence for both genders was illness, females missed a greater proportion of the total half days for this reason than males. The proportion of total half days missed due to suspension from school was more than three times higher for males than for females.

Table 21 Attendance at post-primary school by gender, 2010/11

Gender	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Male	92.5	7.5	4.5	3.0
Female	92.7	7.3	4.7	2.6
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

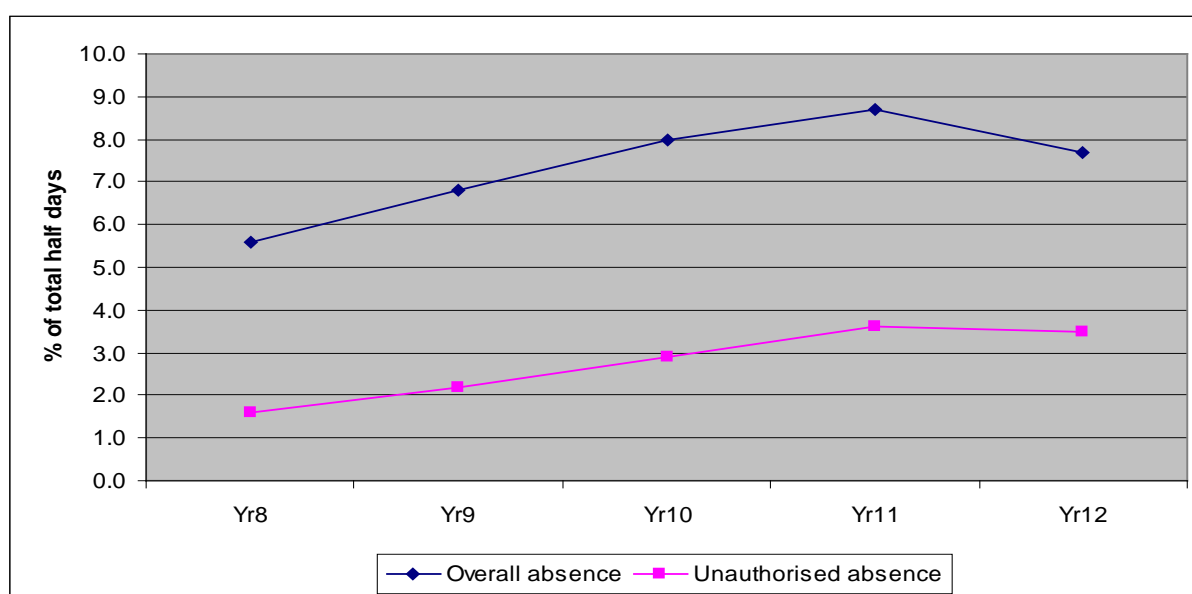
Year group

Average absence levels increased steadily between Year 8 and Year 11 (from 5.6% to 8.7% of the total half days), before decreasing to 7.7% of the total half days in Year 12. Levels of unauthorised absence followed the same pattern, increasing from 1.6% in Year 8 to 3.6% in Year 11 before falling slightly to 3.5% in Year 12.

Table 22 Attendance at post-primary school by year group, 2010/11

Year Group	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
8	94.4	5.6	4.0	1.6
9	93.2	6.8	4.7	2.2
10	92.0	8.0	5.1	2.9
11	91.3	8.7	5.1	3.6
12	92.3	7.7	4.1	3.5
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Chart 11 Absence from post-primary school by year group, 2010/11



Ethnicity

At 43.2% of their total half days, average level of overall absence was higher for Irish Traveller children than for any other ethnic group. This compares with 7.3% for white children and 7.2% for children from a minority ethnic background.

As with primary school figures, the proportion of unauthorised absence among post-primary traveller pupils increased markedly between 2009/10 and 2010/11, from 23.2% to 32.7%. As explained earlier, the removal of the 'T' absence code in 2010/11 is likely to be a major factor in this increase.

Table 23 Attendance at post-primary school by ethnicity, 2010/11

Gender	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
White	92.7	7.3	4.6	2.7
Minority Ethnic Background	92.8	7.2	4.0	3.2
Irish Traveller	56.8	43.2	10.4	32.7
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Looked after children

Absence rates were generally higher for looked after children in post-primary schools, particularly unauthorised absence (6.5% of the total half days compared with 2.8% for other children) which in turn impacts on the overall absence (11.6% compared with 7.3%).

Table 24 Attendance of looked after children at post-primary school, 2010/11

Status	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Looked after children	88.4	11.6	5.1	6.5
Other	92.7	7.3	4.6	2.8
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA)

At 10.3%, the overall absence rate for pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas was 3.5 percentage points higher than for pupils who did not live in an NRA.

Table 25 Attendance rates for post-primary pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, 2010/11

Area	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Neighbourhood Renewal Area	89.7	10.3	5.6	4.7
Other	93.2	6.8	4.4	2.4
Post-primary average	92.6	7.4	4.6	2.8

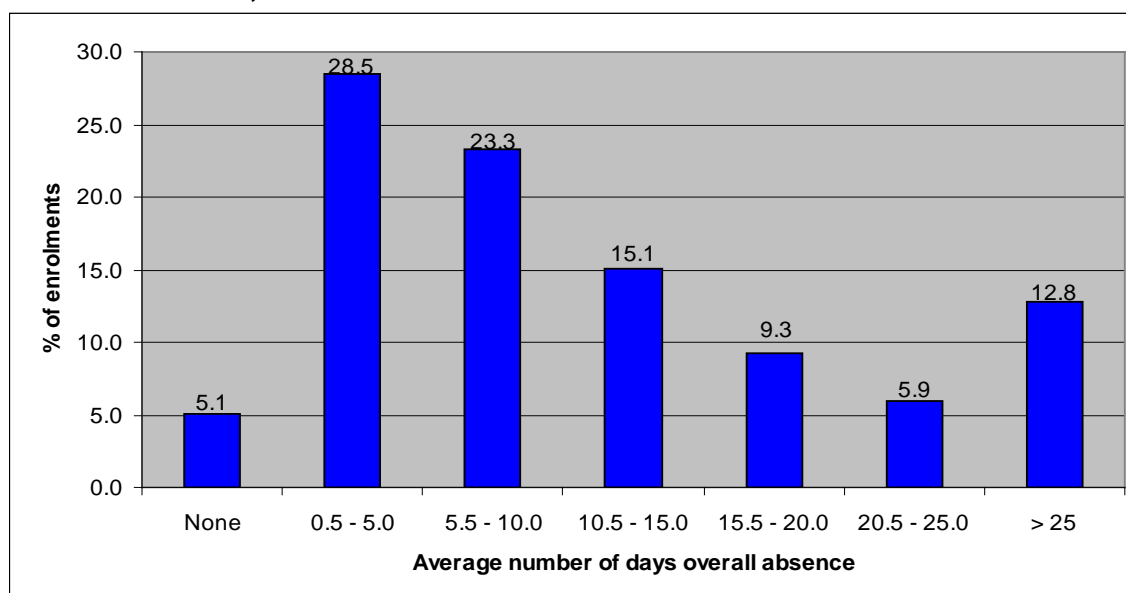
Duration of absence

Just over 5% of pupils enrolled in Year 8 to Year 12 at post-primary schools had no absence during 2010/11. Most pupils enrolled (28.5%) were absent from school for between 0.5 and 5.0 days in 2010/11; 12.8% of pupils enrolled were absent for more than 25 days.

Table 26 Percentage of enrolments at post-primary school by average number of days absence, 2010/11

Average number of days overall absence	Percentage of enrolments
No absence	5.1
0.5 – 5 days	28.5
5.5 – 10 days	23.3
10.5 – 15 days	15.1
15.5 – 20 days	9.3
20.5 – 25 days	5.9
>25 days	12.8

Chart 12 Absence from post-primary school by average number of days absence, 2010/11



Levels of absence

Looking at absence rates (number of half days absent as a proportion of all half days), 46.7% of post-primary pupils had an absence rate of between 0.01% and 5.00% of total half days. Almost 12% of pupils enrolled were absent for more than 15% of the total half days. Schools tend to consider referral of pupils to the Education Welfare Service for non-attendance if absence is more than 15% however, the final decision is at the discretion of the school on consideration of individual circumstances.

Table 27 Percentage of enrolments at post-primary school by overall absence rates, 2010/11

Overall absence rate	Percentage of enrolments
No absence	5.1
0.01% to 5.00% of total half days	46.7
5.01% to 10.00% of total half days	25.5
10.01% to 15.00% of total half days	10.9
More than 15% of total half days	11.7

Less than 85% attendance

Table 28 provides an analysis of those pupils with absence levels of more than 15%, along with a profile of all pupils for comparative purposes. As explained previously, this is a point when schools may consider referring a child to the Education Welfare Service for non-attendance. Analysis of pupils with more than a 15% overall absence rate highlights that almost nine out of ten attended secondary schools and the largest group in this absence band were Year 11 pupils.

Table 28 Characteristics of post-primary pupils enrolled with absence levels of more than 15% in 2010/11

Characteristics	% of pupils enrolled with absence levels of more than 15%	% of total pupils enrolled
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS:		
School type		
Secondary	88.8	58.7
Grammar	11.2	41.3
Management Type		
Controlled	41.3	31.8
Catholic maintained	37.8	28.0
Voluntary	8.1	31.5
Other maintained	0.3	0.4
Controlled Integrated	3.9	2.0
Grant Maintained Integrated	8.6	6.4
Education and Library Board		
BELB	18.1	19.2
WELB	18.1	17.7
NEELB	22.4	22.5
SEELB	20.3	17.5
SELB	21.0	23.1
PUPIL CHARACTERISTICS:		
Gender		
Male	51.8	50.8
Female	48.2	49.2
Year Group		
8	11.2	20.9
9	16.9	20.4
10	24.0	20.1
11	26.0	18.9
12	21.9	19.7
Ethnicity		
White	96.4	98.0
Minority ethnic background	2.0	1.9
Traveller	1.6	0.0

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

KEY FINDINGS

OVERALL

In special schools in 2010/11, 10.2% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 7.3% authorised and 3.0% unauthorised absence (Table 1).

The most common reason for absence in special schools was illness, which is an authorised absence and accounted for 4.5% of the total half days (43.8% of all absent half days) (Table 2).

SCHOOL LEVEL ANALYSIS

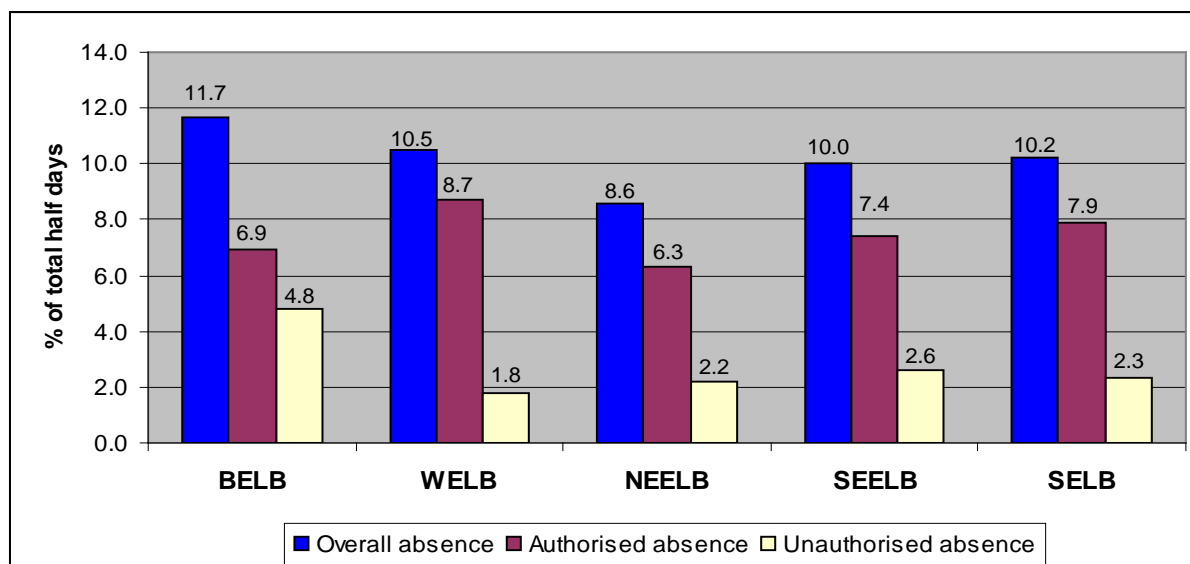
Education and Library Board

Average overall absence was highest (12.5% of total half days) in Belfast Education and Library Board in 2010/11 and lowest in the North Eastern Education and Library Board (9.8% of total half days).

Table 29 Attendance at special school by Education and Library Board, 2010/11

ELB	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
BELB	88.3	11.7	6.9	4.8
WELB	89.5	10.5	8.7	1.8
NEELB	91.4	8.6	6.3	2.2
SEELB	90.0	10.0	7.4	2.6
SELB	89.8	10.2	7.9	2.3
Special average	89.8	10.2	7.3	3.0

Chart 13 Absence from special school by Education and Library Board, 2010/11



PUPIL LEVEL ANALYSIS

Gender

Overall absence rates were slightly higher for females attending special schools than for males (11.2% and 9.8% of total half days respectively).

Table 30 Attendance at special school by gender, 2010/11

Gender	% of total half days			
	Total attended	Total not attended	Total authorised absence	Total unauthorised absence
Male	90.2	9.8	6.7	3.1
Female	88.8	11.2	8.4	2.8
Special average	89.8	10.2	7.3	3.0

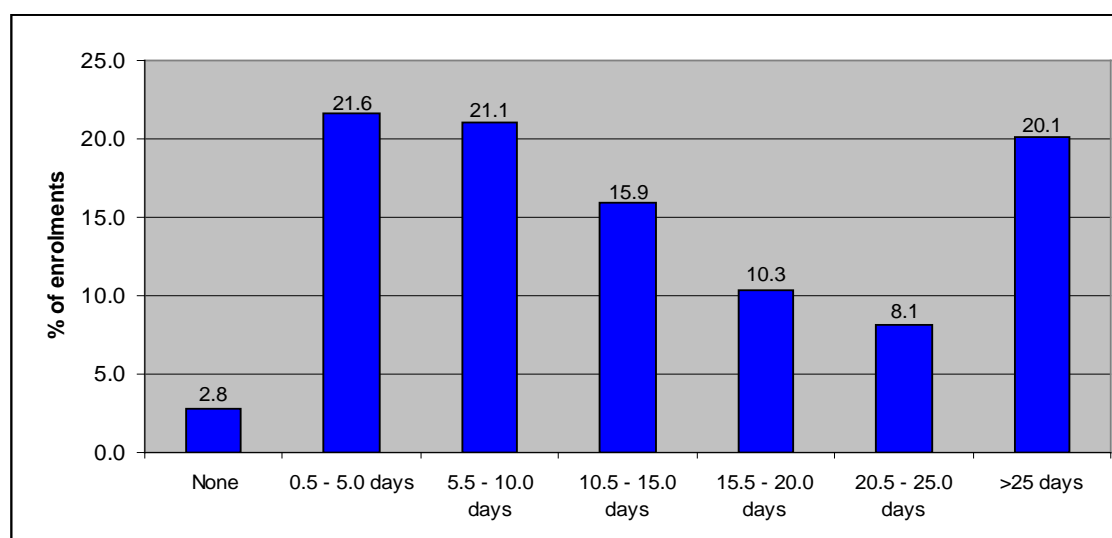
Duration of absence

Almost three per cent of pupils enrolled at special schools had no absence throughout 2010/11. In terms of days missed, one-fifth (20.1%) of pupils enrolled missed more than 25 days in the same year.

Table 31 Percentage of enrolments at special school by average number of days absence, 2010/11

Average number of days overall absence	Percentage of enrolments
No absence	2.8
0.5 – 5.0 days	21.6
5.5 – 10.0 days	21.1
10.5 – 15.0 days	15.9
15.5 – 20.0 days	10.3
20.5 – 25.0 days	8.1
>25 days	20.1

Chart 14 Percentage of enrolments at special school by average number of days absence, 2010/11



Levels of absence

Over one-third (37.0%) of pupils enrolled had an overall absence rate of between 0.01% and 5.00% of the total half days. Almost one-fifth (19.2%) were absent for more than 15% of the total half days.

Table 32 Percentage of enrolments at special school by overall absence rates, 2010/11

Overall absence rate	Percentage of enrolments
No absence	2.8
0.01% to 5.00% of total half days	37.0
5.01% to 10.00% of total half days	26.0
10.01% to 15.00% of total half days	14.9
More than 15% of total half days	19.2

Notes to readers:

Background information

National Statistics

1. 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 Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

2. The statistics in this release have been derived from the annual School Census. More information about the collection of school attendance data can be found at http://www.deni.gov.uk/updated_data_collection_procedures.doc
3. The 2010/11 figures in this statistical release are based on information as at 7th October 2011. They may be subject to minor revision and these will be notified in accordance with our revisions policy. This can be accessed at http://www.deni.gov.uk/de_statement_on_statistical_revisions-2.doc

The data is produced at aggregate level only therefore individual pupils cannot be identified. More information on confidentiality can be found in the DE Confidentiality and Access Statement at the following link

http://www.deni.gov.uk/de_statement_on_confidentiality_new.doc

Definitions

4. Attendance or absence is measured for every pupil in half day sessions (am and pm).

Attendance

In addition to actual attendance within the school premises, attendance also includes:

- Late (before registration closed)
- Approved sporting activities
- Study leave
- Educational visits
- Work experience
- Alternative education provision (organised by the ELB)*
- Home/hospital tuition (organised by the ELB)*
- Pupil referral unit*
- Another mainstream school (under Entitlement Framework)*
- Training Organisation (under Entitlement Framework)*
- FE College (under Entitlement Framework)*
- Intensive Support Learning Unit*
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)*

Authorised absence

An authorised absence is absence with permission from an authorised school representative on provision of a satisfactory explanation. This includes:

- Artistic endeavour**
- Bereavement
- Suspension
- Agreed family holiday (in very exceptional circumstances)
- Illness
- Medical / dental appointments
- Other exceptional circumstances (includes an exceptional event outside control of the school, for example, travelling children, court appearance)
- Religious observance

Unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence is absence without permission from an authorised school representative due to unexplained or unjustified absence. This includes:

- Family holiday not agreed
- Other absence (includes absence not covered by any other code or a reason which is not acceptable to the school, for example, pupil's / parent's or sibling's birthday).
- No reason provided for absence
- Late (after registration closed)

* In 2010/11, the code 'E – Educated offsite' was removed and broken down into 8 new codes, providing more detail on the type of alternative educational provision.

** New code added in 2010/11.

Note: The code 'T – Traveller absence' was removed prior to the 2010/11 academic year.

Data quality and coverage

5. As with the data for England, Scotland and Wales, overall absence is considered to be a more reliable measure of absence than authorised and unauthorised absence. Prior to September 2009, schools were advised to record unexplained absence initially as 'no reason yet provided', however, if a reason was not provided within a specified period of time, these should be changed to 'other'. From September 2009 onwards, schools were instructed that, if a reason was never provided, the code should remain as 'no reason provided'. This has resulted in higher levels of unauthorised absence being recorded as 'no reason provided' and lower figures for 'other' than in previous years.

Both figures have been provided, however limitations in comparing rates of unauthorised and authorised absence should be noted.

In addition, for those absences which are not covered by a specific code, the decision to allocate the absence as authorised or unauthorised is taken by the school.

6. Primary and post-primary data refer to pupils in Years 1 to 12 only, which aligns with the compulsory school age in Northern Ireland. Figures for special schools include all pupils attending special schools in 2010/11.
7. Attendance information was not available for 13 primary schools which had closed or amalgamated with another prior to the data being collected. This accounts for 1.5% of the total primary schools and 0.7% of all primary school pupils in Years 1 to 7 in 2010/11.
8. Comparative data was obtained from the following sources:

Pupil Absence in Schools in England, Autumn Term 2010 and Spring Term 2011
Absenteeism from Primary Schools, 2010/11 (Wales)
Absenteeism from Secondary Schools, 2010/11 (Wales)
Attendance and Absence in Scottish Schools, 2010/11

There are slight differences in definitions between the regions, for example, England statistics include study leave in authorised absence while the DENI statistics categorise it as present. There are also methodological differences in collecting the information. For example, the statistics for England are reported on a termly basis.

9. For the purpose of this analysis, urban and rural are defined according to the findings of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group which can be accessed using the following link:
http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme_towns/Reports/ur_report.pdf
10. In some cases, percentages may not add due to rounding.

Pupil level data

11. Pupil level information refers to the number of pupil enrolments rather than the number of pupils. A pupil can move schools during the year and will therefore have an attendance record at more than one school.
12. Comparison of the number of looked after children recorded in the school census and the number recorded by the DHSSPS Children Order Statistical Tables suggests some under-reporting of looked after children in the school census. It is possible that schools are unaware of the child's looked after status. Also, since attendance data is collectively retrospectively from schools and matched with current pupil characteristics, the looked after status may have changed. Despite this, attendance rates for looked after children have been included in this publication since the data are sufficiently robust to produce indicative figures.
13. As stated earlier, attendance is measured for each pupil in half day sessions. In order to provide information on the actual number of school days missed, these totals have been divided by two. While this is useful to provide an indication of school days missed, it is generally more accurate to report in terms of half days.

Schools are required to be in operation for 190 days in the school year, less any School Development Days (SDDs). Schools can apply for up to five SDDs, which can produce slight variations between the numbers of days individual schools are open to pupils.

Users and uses of the data

14. The statistics are widely used by a range of groups including members of the NI Assembly, the Department of Education, other government departments, Education and Library Boards, schools, the Education and Training Inspectorate, researchers, students and the public. The data is used for benchmarking, performance indicators, policy development and monitoring, cross-departmental indicators e.g. NI Multiple Deprivation Measure, OFMDFM 10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People and research studies.

Further information

15. Requests for further information should be addressed to:
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Special analyses of the attendance information can be undertaken on request.

DE Statistical Releases can be accessed on the DE website (www.deni.gov.uk) under the Statistics and Research section.

If you have any comments or suggestions in relation to attendance data or this release, please let us know via the short questionnaire at the following link:
http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_statistics_user_questionnaire.doc