

Attendance of workforce and pupils in Northern Ireland

The management information presented in this bulletin was derived from two sources. Firstly, a weekly data collection from grant-aided schools to gather information on workforce attendance, collected every Tuesday starting on the 18th August. Secondly, a cumulative weekly report on pupil attendance that began the week commencing 24th August when pupils returned to school. This report is taken direct from the School Information Management System (SIMS) at no further burden to the schools.

Workforce Attendance – 29th September to 10th November 2020

	29-Sep	06-Oct	13-Oct	03-Nov	10-Nov
Teaching staff - on site	93.9%	92.0%	89.3%	92.7%	91.5%
Teaching staff - not on site - working remotely	2.6%	3.7%	5.8%	2.8%	3.8%
Teaching staff - not on site - other	3.5%	4.3%	4.9%	4.5%	4.7%
Non-teaching staff - on site	94.5%	92.1%	89.7%	93.6%	92.1%
Non-teaching staff - not on site - working remotely	1.2%	2.6%	4.3%	1.3%	2.4%
Non-teaching staff - not on site - other	4.3%	5.3%	6.0%	5.1%	5.5%

Source: DE Weekly Survey

Based on responses to the weekly survey, on 10th November:

- The percentage of teaching staff in schools decreased by 1.2 percentage points to 91.5%.
- The percentage of non-teaching staff in schools decreased by 1.5 percentage points to 92.1% from the previous week.

Pupil Attendance w/c 24 August to w/c 2 November 2020

	In school	P – Approved Activity / Learning remotely from home	8 – Intensive Support Learning / Self-isolating due to Covid-19	Total Present	Total Absent
W/C 2 November 2020	91.8%	0.7%	2.1%	94.6%	5.4%
W/C 12 October 2020	84.7%	2.4%	5.6%	92.7%	7.3%
W/C 5 October 2020	88.7%	1.3%	3.7%	93.7%	6.3%
W/C 28 September 2020	91.3%	0.6%	2.1%	94.1%	5.9%
W/C 21 September 2020	91.2%	0.6%	1.9%	93.7%	6.3%
W/C 14 September 2020	90.2%	0.9%	1.2%	92.3%	7.7%
W/C 7 September 2020	89.6%	0.9%	1.1%	91.6%	8.4%
W/C 31 August 2020	92.0%	2.1%	0.6%	94.6%	5.4%
W/C 24 August 2020	85.5%	9.2%	0.3%	95.0%	5.0%

Note: Please read methodological note for explanation on (i) missing marks, (j) for NI average and (k) for In school

Source: SIMS DE

Based on the weekly SIMS report:

- Overall attendance rate for w/c 2nd November has increased by 1.9 percentage points to 94.6% since the previous week.

Pupil Attendance breakdown by school type w/c 2 November 2020

	In school	P – Approved Activity / Learning remotely from home	8 – Intensive Support Learning / Self-isolating due to Covid-19	Total Present	Total Absent
Primary	94.2%	0.1%	1.9%	96.2%	3.8%
Non Grammar	86.7%	1.5%	2.7%	91.0%	9.0%
Grammar	93.3%	0.8%	1.7%	95.7%	4.3%
Special	84.4%	0.6%	5.2%	90.1%	9.9%
Total	91.8%	0.7%	2.1%	94.6%	5.4%

Note: Please read methodological note for explanation on (i) missing marks, (j) for NI average and (k) for In school

Source: SIMS DE

Based on the weekly SIMS report:

- In School attendance was greatest in the primary sector at 94.2% of total possible attendance.

NOTES

Temporary Data Collection

The figures presented are derived from two sources; a temporary management data collection in the form of a weekly survey and a standard report run from the Schools Information Management System (SIMS) of all primary, post primary, special and educated other than at school (EOTAS) settings. The weekly survey began on the 18th August before pupils started back to school and will run until at least the end of the calendar year. The weekly attendance report from (SIMS) contains pupil attendance information relating to the previous school week.

Data Validation

These figures have been collected in response to COVID-19 and to monitor attendance patterns as the new academic year begins. Data collected are deemed to be management information and have not undergone the same rigorous quality assurance checks that are carried out prior to the publication of Official Statistics, due to the need for a quick turnaround for policy colleagues.

Methodology - survey

- On 18th August 2020, a weekly survey was issued to educational establishments. During this week educational establishments in Northern Ireland were first open to staff but not pupils. Information collected included workforce attendance, intended learning models, use of 'bubbles'.
- On 25th August & 1st September the survey collected workforce attendance, learning models being used, vulnerable children attendance and use of 'bubbles'. Schools were open for priority cohorts (years 7, 12 & 14) and vulnerable children, there is also evidence that some schools opened for other year groups.
- It was originally planned that the survey would be for three weeks only but it was decided that the survey would continue beyond these three weeks to collect workforce data only. The survey is the only method presently to capture workforce absence on a weekly basis.

- d) The survey covers Primary, Prep. Departments, Secondary (Non-grammar), Grammar, Special and EOTAS settings. It does not cover Independent Schools or Further Education establishments.
- e) Reasons for not being on site:
 - They or member of household has confirmed COVID19
 - Identified by PHA testing and Tracing to self-isolate
 - They or member of household showing symptoms of COVID-19
 - Vulnerable category/shielding
 - In quarantine
 - Other
- f) Survey response rate: On 10th November the survey had a response rate of 66%.
- g) A 'pre-school' survey that covers playgroups, day nurseries and nursery schools is also being undertaken with results not yet available for publishing which includes pupil attendance, due to these settings not having SIMS.

Methodology – SIMS pupil attendance

- h) C2K – The Education Authority generate a pupil attendance report for all primary, post primary, special and EOTAS settings for the entire school week. This report requires no input from schools other than entering their attendance data for pupils as normal.
- i) Circular 2020/08, issued on 14th August, informed schools that they must update attendance records on a daily basis in order to facilitate the running of attendance reports. However this has not always been the case with some marks from the latest download not recorded before data extraction the following Monday. In order to produce meaningful management information these missing marks have been removed from the denominator to allow a fairer representation of attendance rates to be produced.
- j) 2017/18 NI Average is the most recent available. Attendance data for the 2018/19 academic year was not processed due to resourcing issues. However attendance data for the 2019/20 academic year will be processed and published in January 2021.
- k) In School includes Present AM, Present PM, Late before registration closed, Study Leave, Educational Visit, Work Experience, AEP, Home hospital provision, Pupil Referral Unit, Entitlement Framework, Training- Entitlement Framework, FE College Entitlement Framework and CAMHS.
- l) Attendance is reported by schools in half day sessions.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES

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