**Methodology for 18 August, 2020 to 21 June, 2021 data**:

1. From 18 August, 2020 to 21 June, 2021, surveys were issued weekly to educational establishments. These were mainly to monitor trends in staff attendance, and did not cover Independent Schools or Further Education establishments. The Department used the survey information to examine possible trends or common themes, which may have required further guidance or clarification, and to assess emerging issues. The survey was a snapshot of one day in the week and was understood not to reflect differences in activity with other days of the week. Respondents were asked to provide data to reflect the day of the survey and not to try to aggregate data for other days. The information was also part of the Department’s published data on schools and settings during the pandemic (available at [Management information on attendance of pupils and workforce in schools | Department of Education (education-ni.gov.uk)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/topics/statistics-and-research/management-information-attendance-pupils-and-workforce-schools)). In addition, information was shared with the Education Authority and other partner organisations to inform their ongoing support for schools and settings.
2. Due to the changing restrictions in place in different educational establishments, and as the survey evolved to meet policy requirements, it was not possible to send the same survey throughout this period, therefore:
3. From 18 August, 2020 to 15 December, 2020 [data relate to Tuesdays]:
	1. a survey was sent to all pre-school settings and nurseries (n.b. the surveys of 18 and 25 August and 1 September, 2020 were not sent to 95 nurseries).
	2. a survey was sent to all primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, Special, and EOTAS centres (n.b. the surveys of 18 and 25 August and 1 September, 2020 were also sent to 95 nurseries).
4. On Tuesday, 12 January, 2021:
	1. an amended survey with additional questions was sent to all settings i.e. all pre-school, nursery, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, Special, and EOTAS centres.
	2. educational settings reported difficulties in completing the additional questions and this impacted on the survey response rate. Therefore, data for 12 January are not presented.
5. From 18 January, 2021 to 1 March, 2021 [data relate to Mondays]:
	1. a modified survey, to reduce the burden on survey respondents, was sent to all Special schools.
	2. a modified survey, to reduce the burden on survey respondents, was sent to all nursery, pre-school, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, and EOTAS centres.
6. From 8 March, 2021 to 22 March, 2021 [data relate to Mondays]:
	1. a survey was sent to all Special schools.
	2. a survey was sent to all pre-school, nursery, primary, and prep. department settings.
	3. a survey was sent to all secondary (non-grammar), grammar, and EOTAS centres.
7. From 12 April, 2021 to 21 June, 2021 [data relate to Mondays apart from the Early May (3 May) and Spring (31 May) bank holidays when they relate to Tuesdays]:
	1. a survey was sent to all pre-school, nursery, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, Special, and EOTAS centres.
8. The information reported had a cut-off time of 10.00 a.m. two days after the survey date. For example, a survey collecting data related to a Monday would have a cut-off time of 10.00 a.m. on the Wednesday. The figures only include the survey responses made by the cut-off time.
9. Policy requirements with regard to using the survey to collect attendance data for children changed throughout the period:
10. Available figures for children in pre-school settings and nurseries are presented from 25 August to 15 December 2020.
11. Available figures for children in all other schools and settings i.e. Special, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, and EOTAS centres are presented from 25 August to 15 December 2020.
12. From 12 January, 2021 all schools and settings were only open for key worker and vulnerable children, apart from Special Schools, which were open for all children. A single survey, which included additional questions, was issued to all schools and settings. Given the difficulties educational settings reported in completing the additional questions and the differences between this survey and both the pre- and post-Christmas data collections, figures are not presented for 12 January.
13. From 18 January, 2021 a streamlined survey to reduce the burden on respondents was issued separately to: Special schools; and to all other schools and settings (excluding Special schools).
14. Available figures for children in all nursery, pre-school, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, and EOTAS centres are presented from 18 January to 1 March 2021.
15. On 8 March, 2021 children in pre-schools and nurseries, and in P1 to P3 classes returned for face-to-face teaching.
16. From 22 March, 2021 children in P4 to P7 classes and children in Years 12 to 14 also returned for face-to-face teaching. Questions on pupil attendance were only asked of post‑primary schools but were not asked of Special schools; primary and prep schools; or pre-schools and nurseries.
17. From 12 April, 2021 there was one survey for all schools and settings, due to the return to face-to-face teaching. Questions on pupil attendance numbers were not asked.
18. Available figures for children in Special schools are presented from 18 January to 15 March, 2021.
19. Surveys were not issued during the weeks around the main school holidays, including:
20. extended October half-term (weeks commencing 19 October and 26 October);
21. Christmas (weeks commencing 21 December, 28 December and 4 January);
22. February half-term (week commencing 15 February); and
23. Easter (weeks commencing 29 March and 5 April).
24. The final survey was issued on 21 June, 2021.
25. Average survey response rate: 63%.

Source: Department of Education.

Temporary Data Collection: The figures presented are derived from a temporary management data collection of attendance in educational settings during the period of COVID-19. Data were collected via a survey.

Data Validation: These figures have been collected in response to COVID-19. Data collected are as submitted by schools and other settings and may not be internally consistent. They 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.

**Notes on data for 18 August, 2020 to 21 June, 2021**:

- Survey not issued, or specific question not asked.

c Denotes figure not disclosed under rules of statistical suppression i.e. figure greater than zero and less than five, or where such figures could be discerned.

1. Total number of survey responses received by the survey cut-off time (see Methodology note c, for more detail).
2. Total number of educational settings (see Methodology note b, for more detail) that have responded to the survey as being open. The percentage of settings open would be calculated by dividing the number of settings open, as defined, by whichever of the following figures is the total number of settings invited to participate in the weekly survey:
	1. 457 for all pre-school settings and nurseries i.e. the total of the 95 nursery schools and 362 non-statutory settings that were invited to participate in the weekly survey (n.b. Pre-school survey data for 18 and 25 August and 1 September 2020 do not include responses from the 95 nursery schools).
	2. 1,047 for all settings excluding pre-school settings and nurseries i.e. primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, Special, and EOTAS centres (n.b. Main survey data for 18 and 25 August and 1 September 2020 include responses from 95 nursery schools).
	3. 40 for all Special schools i.e. the total of the 39 Special schools plus the Belfast Hospital School.
	4. 1,464 for all settings excluding Special schools i.e. nursery, pre-school, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, and EOTAS centres. This is the total of the 1,007 settings (including EOTAS but excluding Special schools) that had previously been invited to participate in the ‘main’ survey from 18 August to 15 December, 2020, plus 457 settings i.e. 95 nursery schools and 362 non-statutory settings.
	5. 1,260 for all pre-school, nursery, primary, and prep. department settings.
	6. 204 for all secondary (non-grammar), grammar, and EOTAS centres.
	7. 1,504 for all settings i.e. pre-school, nursery, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, Special, and EOTAS centres. This figure is the total of the 1,047 settings (including EOTAS or Special schools) that had previously been invited to participate in the ‘main’ survey from 18 August to 15 December, 2020, plus the 458 settings (95 nursery schools and 362 non-statutory settings) that had been invited to participate in the pre-school survey.
	8. The figure of 1,504 is taken from Table 1a and 1b (page 22 and 23) of the 2020/21 school enrolments publication (<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-enrolments-2020-21-statistical-bulletins>) and includes funded voluntary and private pre-schools, nursery schools, primary, prep. departments, secondary (non-grammar), grammar, hospital and Special schools and EOTAS centres.