NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration Coventry

Data Catalogue – Information Pack 6

Children (Young People) – Best Start in Life

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Definition: How do we define Children (Young People) – best start in life?

Children (young people) is often referred to as adolescence, which is defined as the transitional stage of development between childhood and adulthood. While often associated with the “teenage” years, it is increasingly understood as a broader period which is driven by biological, cognitive and social milestones rather than a specific age range.

Key contact within Coventry City Council

If you are wanting to know more information about children (young people), have any specific questions about the accessible data, or are keen to do research on this topic, please contact:

Datateam.PD@coventry.gov.uk

Why is Children (young people) – best start in life a wider determinant of health?

Adolescence is a critical wider determinant of health because it acts as a ‘second sensitive period’ of development. During this time, rapid biological changes intersect with shifting social environmental to entrain life-long health trajectories.

Rather than just being a life stage, it acts as a ‘gateway’ where external social factors (such as education, family, stability, and peer influence) intersect with rapid brain development to local in health trajectories.

Establishment of lifelong health behaviours
Adolescence is the primary window for adopting habits that account for a massive portion of the adult disease burden:

- Risk initiation: most smokers usually start during their teens; those who do not start by the age of 20 are highly unlikely to ever smoke.
- Habit formation: patterns of diet, physical activity and substance use established now often persist throughout adulthood.
- Long-term impact: behaviours adopted in this period are major drivers of non-communicable disease (i.e., heart disease and cancer) in later life.

Critical life transitions
Adolescence is defined by major social transitions that determine future “life changes” and socioeconomic status:

- Education to work: successful transitions from school to employment protect against the poverty and social exclusion that drive poor adult health.
- Autonomy: young people move from family-led care to taking responsibility for their own health, making their early interaction with health systems a determinant of future health-seeking behaviour.

Key literature signposting

Aagaard-Hansen, J., Hindhede, A. L., & Maindal, H. T. (2023). A conceptual framework for selecting appropriate populations for public health interventions. *Frontiers, 11.*

Lancet Series on Adolescent Health. (2014). *Adolescence and the Social Determinants of Health.*

Likhar, A., Baghel, P., & Patil, M. (2022). Early childhood development and social determinants. *Cureus, 14*(9), e29500.

Mance, G. S., Grant, K. E., Roberts, D., Carter, J., Turek, C., Adam, E., Thorpe Jr, R. J. (2019). Environmental stress and socioeconomic status: Does parent and adolescent stress influence executive functioning in urban youth? *Journal of Prevent & Intervention in the Community, 47*(4), 279-294.

Nichols, M., Nemeth, L. S., Magwood, G., Odulana, A., Newman, S. (2016). Exploring the contextual factors of adolescent obesity in an underserved population through photovoice. *Family and Community Health, 39*(4), 301-309.

Ross, D. A., Friedman, H. S., Welch, D., Kaoma, N. S., Bhushan, R., & Rasmussen, B. (2022). Four powerful reasons for increasing investment in adolescents and their wellbeing. *The BMJ, 379.*

Scales, P. C., Benson, P. L., Oesterle, S., Hill, K. G., Hawkins, D., & Pashak, T. J. (2015). The dimensions of successful young adult development: A conceptual and measurement framework. *Applied Developmental Science, 20*(3), 150-174.

Viner, R. M., Ozer, E. M., Denny, S., Marmot, M., Resnick, M., Fatusi, A., & Currie, C. (2012). Adolescence and the social determinants of health. *Adolescent Health, 379.*

Yang, C. Y., Walsh, C. E., Johnson, M. P., Belsky, D. W., Reason, M., Curran, P., Aiello, A. E., Chanti-Ketterl, M., & Harris, K. M. (2021). Life-course trajectories of body mass index from adolescence to old age: Racial and educational disparities. *PNAS Social Sciences, 118*(17), e2020167118.

Publicly accessible data on Children (Young People) – best start in life

1. Office for National Statistics https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-local-statistics/

Office for National Statistics (ONS) is an accessible platform which is funded by the UK government through the Open Government Licence. Within this platform, individuals can explore local statistics, exploring how a local area compares to the Great Britain average. Data is presented in graphs which are interactive, allowing for individuals to examine how their local area (Coventry) compares to the GB average, and other local authorities.
Data provided surrounding children (young people) on the ONS sits within three key categories:

- Education and skills – attainment and participation
- Education and skills – school attendance
- Education and skills – apprenticeships

Education and skills – attainment and participation

In the section of attainment and participation, ONS provides data on GCSE in English and Maths among those by age 19.

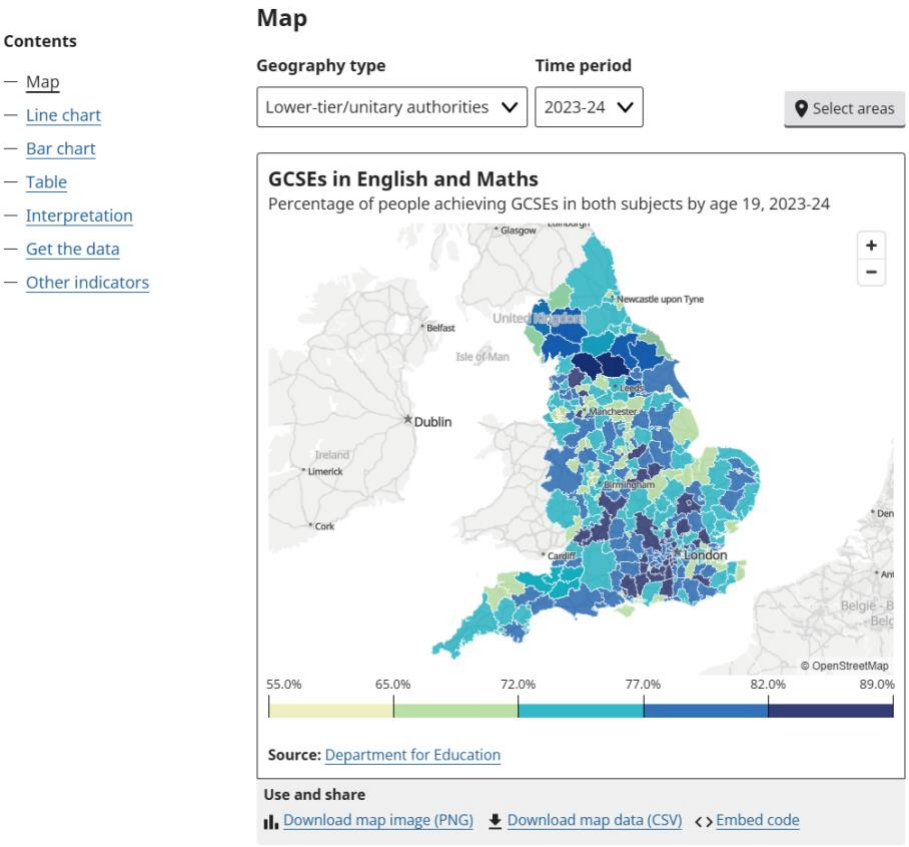
GCSEs in English and Maths

Within GCSEs in English and Maths, users can access data on "*the percentage of people achieving GCSEs in both subjects by age 19".* Data are available across different geography type, ranging from 2016/17-2023/24. There are four visualised formats for users to examine the data:

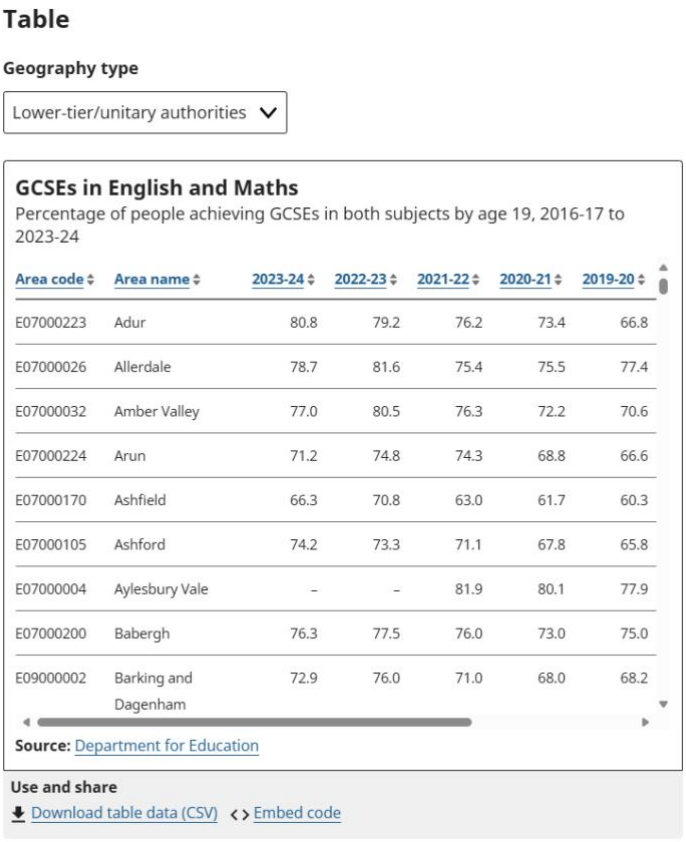
- interactive map,
- line chart,
- bar chart, and
- table.

This allows to examine performance differences within the local areas over time or compare those across the UK.

The interactive map allows individuals to change options on geography type and time to access the percentage of people achieving GCSEs in both subjects by age 19. Users can examine and compare performances of different local areas by referring to the colour chart attached to the bottom of the map. Users can view the exact percentage for an area by hovering the cursor over it on the map. Multiple geographic areas can be selected for comparison, and their values are highlighted on the colour chart. The selected areas are also displayed in the line chart and the bar chart, where they appear in coloured shades to distinguish them from other regions, enabling users to change over time (line chart) and compare across different regions (bar chart).



The line chart, bar chart, and table all allow users to examine and compare the same indicator across geographic areas. The line chart shows how the selected areas have changed over time, rather than displaying data for a single point in time. Users can adjust the time period by clicking on Options above the chart. In contrast, the bar chart presents data across regions at a single time point. The table provides data for all available time periods, enabling both cross-sectional and time-series comparisons.



Table

Geography type

Lower-tier/unitary authorities

GCSEs in English and Maths

Percentage of people achieving GCSEs in both subjects by age 19, 2016-17 to 2023-24

Area code	Area name	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
E07000223	Adur	80.8	79.2	76.2	73.4	66.8
E07000026	Allerdale	78.7	81.6	75.4	75.5	77.4
E07000032	Amber Valley	77.0	80.5	76.3	72.2	70.6
E07000224	Arun	71.2	74.8	74.3	68.8	66.6
E07000170	Ashfield	66.3	70.8	63.0	61.7	60.3
E07000105	Ashford	74.2	73.3	71.1	67.8	65.8
E07000004	Aylesbury Vale	–	–	81.9	80.1	77.9
E07000200	Babergh	76.3	77.5	76.0	73.0	75.0
E09000002	Barking and Dagenham	72.9	76.0	71.0	68.0	68.2

Source: Department for Education

Use and share

Download table data (CSV) Embed code

Please note: ONS acknowledges to users that, since the data are aggregated in this section, they may appear different from other published figures. The original data can be found on the Department for Education website.

Education and skills – school attendance

In the section of school attendance, ONS provides data on persistent absences for all pupils, persistent absences for pupils eligible for free school meals, persistent absences for pupils looked after by local authorities.

Persistent absences for all pupils

Within persistent absences for all pupils, users can access data on *'the percentage of pupils in state-funded primary, state-funded secondary and special schools that were persistently absent (those absent for 10% of schooling sessions) during the academic year, in England'.*

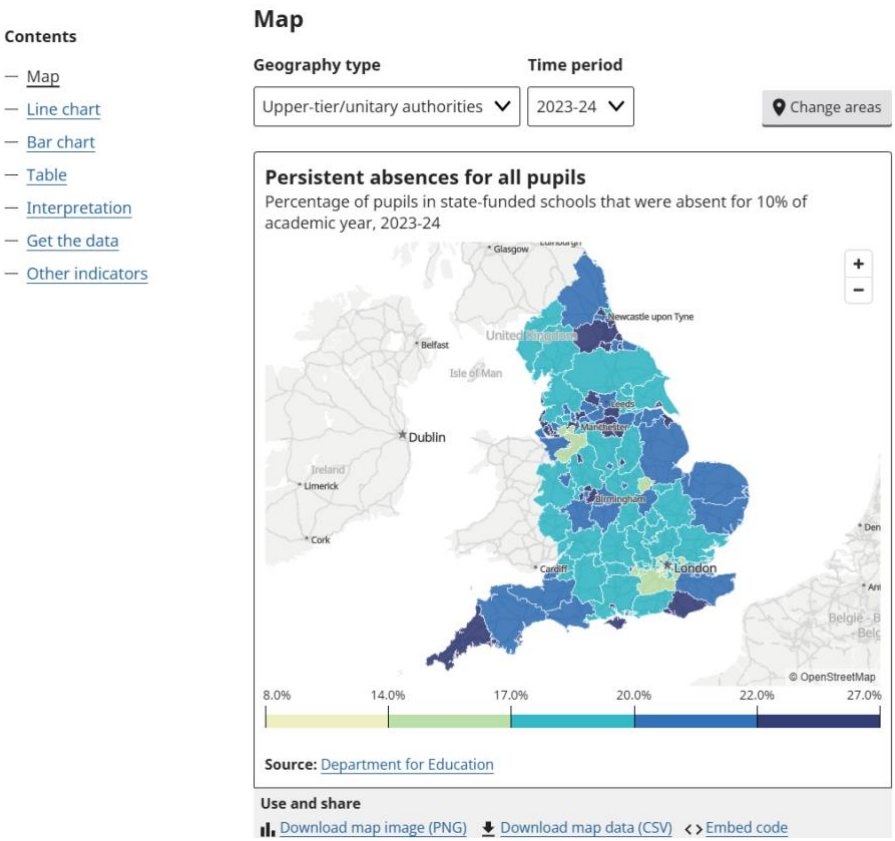
Data are available across different geography type, including countries and regions and upper-tier/unitary authorities, ranging from 2006/07-2023/24 (updated in September 2025).

There are four visualised formats for users to examine the data:

- interactive map,
- line chart,
- bar chart, and
- table.

This allows to examine performance differences within the local areas over time or compare those across the UK.

The interactive map allows individuals to change options on geography type and time period to access the percentage of pupils in state-funded schools that were absent for 10% of academic year. Users can examine and compare performances of different local areas by referring to the colour chart attached to the bottom of the map. Users can view the exact percentage for an area by hovering the cursor over it on the map. Multiple geographic areas can be selected for comparison, and their values are highlighted on the colour chart. The selected areas are also displayed in the line chart and the bar chart, where they appear in bold to distinguish them from other regions, enabling users to capture change over time (line chart) and compare across different regions (bar chart).



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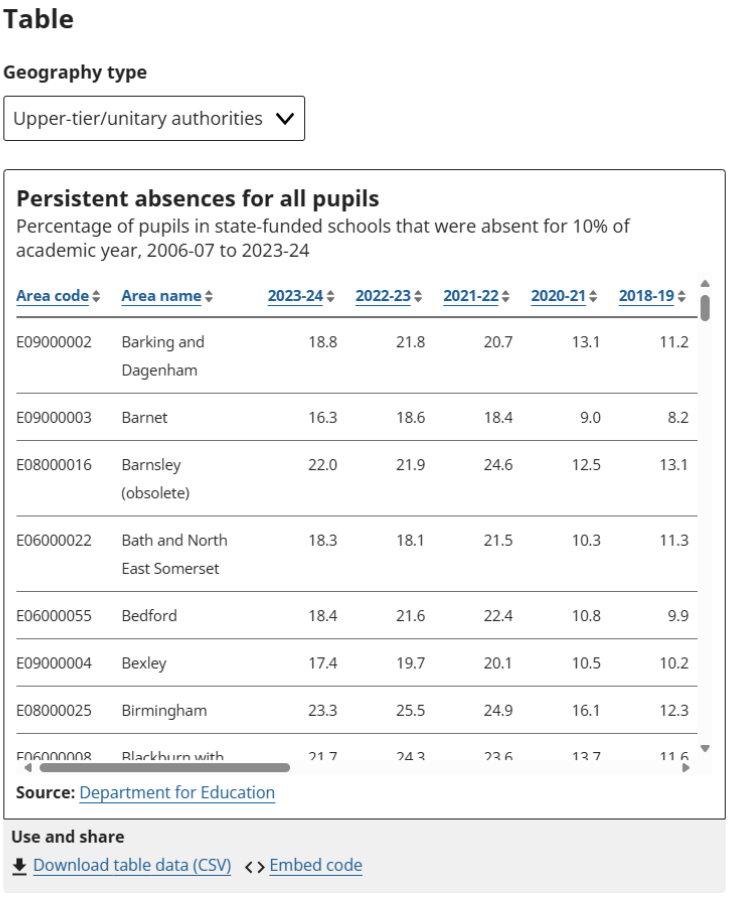


Table

Geography type

Upper-tier/unitary authorities

Persistent absences for all pupils

Percentage of pupils in state-funded schools that were absent for 10% of academic year, 2006-07 to 2023-24

Area code	Area name	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2018-19
E09000002	Barking and Dagenham	18.8	21.8	20.7	13.1	11.2
E09000003	Barnet	16.3	18.6	18.4	9.0	8.2
E08000016	Barnsley (obsolete)	22.0	21.9	24.6	12.5	13.1
E06000022	Bath and North East Somerset	18.3	18.1	21.5	10.3	11.3
E06000055	Bedford	18.4	21.6	22.4	10.8	9.9
E09000004	Bexley	17.4	19.7	20.1	10.5	10.2
E08000025	Birmingham	23.3	25.5	24.9	16.1	12.3
E06000008	Blackburn with	21.7	24.3	23.6	13.7	11.6

Source: Department for Education

Use and share

Download table data (CSV) Embed code

Please note: ONS acknowledges to users that, data are not available for academic year 2019/20. The dataset covers state-funded primary and secondary schools as well as special schools, although data for special schools are only available from 2016/17 onwards. The original data can be found on the Department for Education website.

Persistent absences for pupils eligible for free school meals

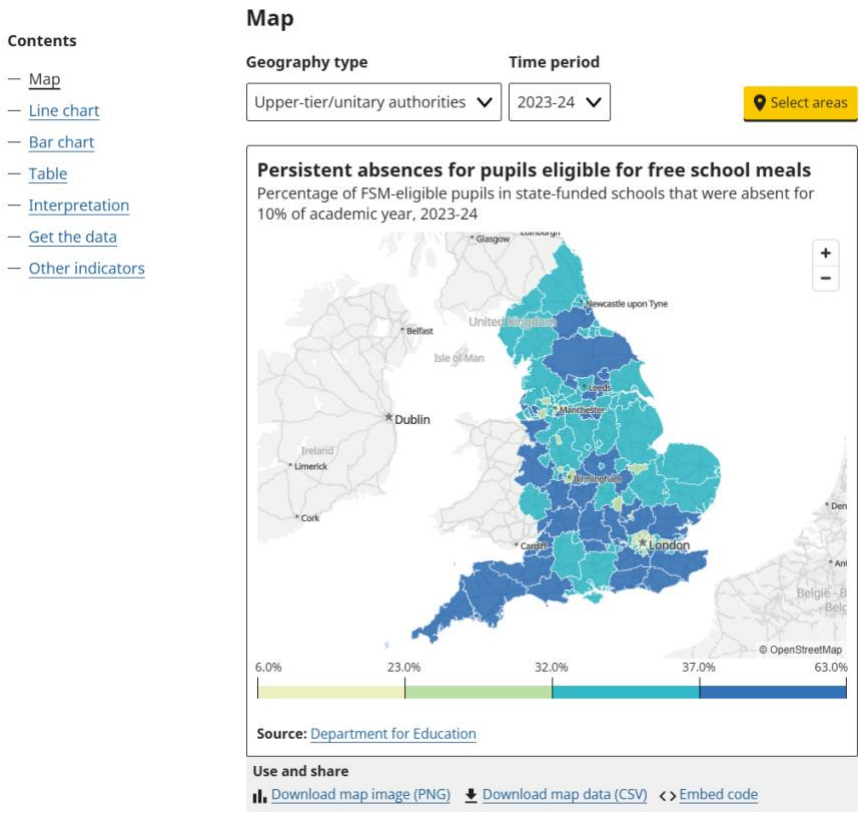
Within persistent absences for pupils eligible for free school meals, users can access data on "*the percentage of pupils in state-funded primary, secondary, and special schools who have been eligible for free school meals in the past 6 years that were persistently absent (those absent for 10% of schooling sessions) during the academic year, in England (state-funded schools), for academic years 2017/18-2023/24.*

Data are available across different geography type, including countries and regions and upper-tier/unitary authorities, ranging from 2017/18-2023/24 (updated in September 2025). There are four visualised formats for users to examine the data:

- interactive map,
- line chart,
- bar chart, and
- table.

This allows to examine performance differences within the local areas over time or compare those across the UK.

The interactive map allows individuals to change options on geography type and time period to access the percentage of free school meal eligible pupils in state-funded schools that were absent for 10% of academic year. Users can examine and compare performances of different local areas by referring to the colour chart attached to the bottom of the map. Users can view the exact percentage for an area by hovering the cursor over it on the map. Multiple geographic areas can be selected for comparison, and their values are highlighted on the colour-shaded map. The selected areas are also displayed in the line chart and the bar chart, where they appear in coloured shades to distinguish them from other regions, enabling users to capture change over time (line chart) and compare across different regions (bar chart).



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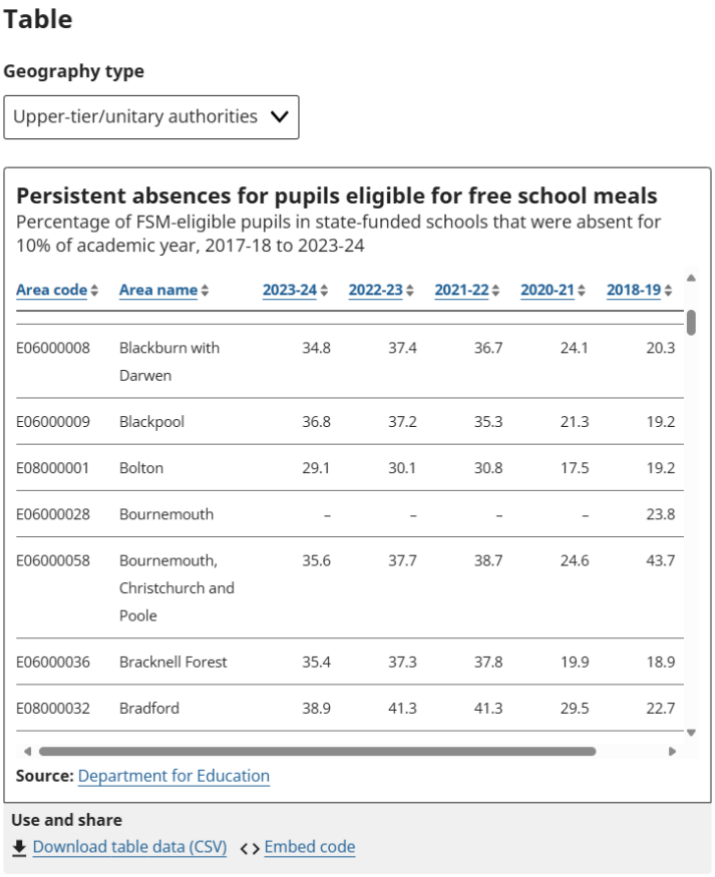


Table

Geography type

Upper-tier/unitary authorities

Persistent absences for pupils eligible for free school meals

Percentage of FSM-eligible pupils in state-funded schools that were absent for 10% of academic year, 2017-18 to 2023-24

Area code	Area name	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2018-19
E06000008	Blackburn with Darwen	34.8	37.4	36.7	24.1	20.3
E06000009	Blackpool	36.8	37.2	35.3	21.3	19.2
E08000001	Bolton	29.1	30.1	30.8	17.5	19.2
E06000028	Bournemouth	-	-	-	-	23.8
E06000058	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	35.6	37.7	38.7	24.6	43.7
E06000036	Bracknell Forest	35.4	37.3	37.8	19.9	18.9
E08000032	Bradford	38.9	41.3	41.3	29.5	22.7

Source: Department for Education

Use and share

Download table data (CSV) Embed code

Please note: ONS acknowledges to users that, data are not available for academic year 2019/20. Sessions recorded as not attending due to COVID circumstances are included as possible sessions in 2020/21 and 2021/22 only, but not as an absence within absence rates. The original data can be found on the Department for Education website.

Persistent absences for pupils looked after by local authorities

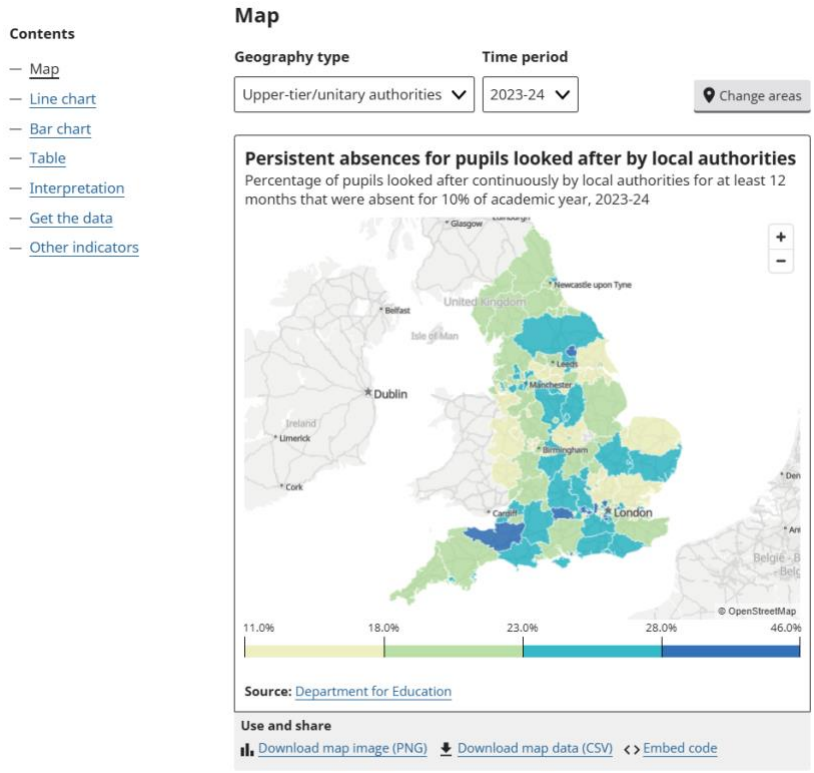
Within persistent absences for pupils looked after by local authorities, users can access data on "*the percentage of pupils in state-funded primary, secondary, special schools, and pupil referral units who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months (as of 31 March of that year) by local authorities who were persistently absent (those absent for 10% of schooling sessions) during the academic year, in England, for financial years 2017/18-2023/24".*

Data are available across different geography type, ranging from 2017/18-2023/24 (updated in September 2025). There are four visualised formats for users to examine the data:

- interactive map,
- line chart,
- bar chart, and
- table.

This allows to examine performance differences within the local areas over time or compare those across the UK.

The interactive map allows individuals to change options on geography type and time period to access the percentage of pupils looked after continuously by local authorities for at least 12 months that were absent for 10% of academic year. Users can examine and compare performances of different local areas by referring to the colour chart attached to the bottom of the map. Users can view the exact percentage for an area by hovering the cursor over it on the map. Multiple geographic areas can be selected for comparison, and their values are highlighted on the colour-shaded map. The selected areas are also displayed in the line chart and the bar chart, where they appear in coloured shades to distinguish them from other regions, enabling users to capture change over time (line chart) and compare across different regions (bar chart).



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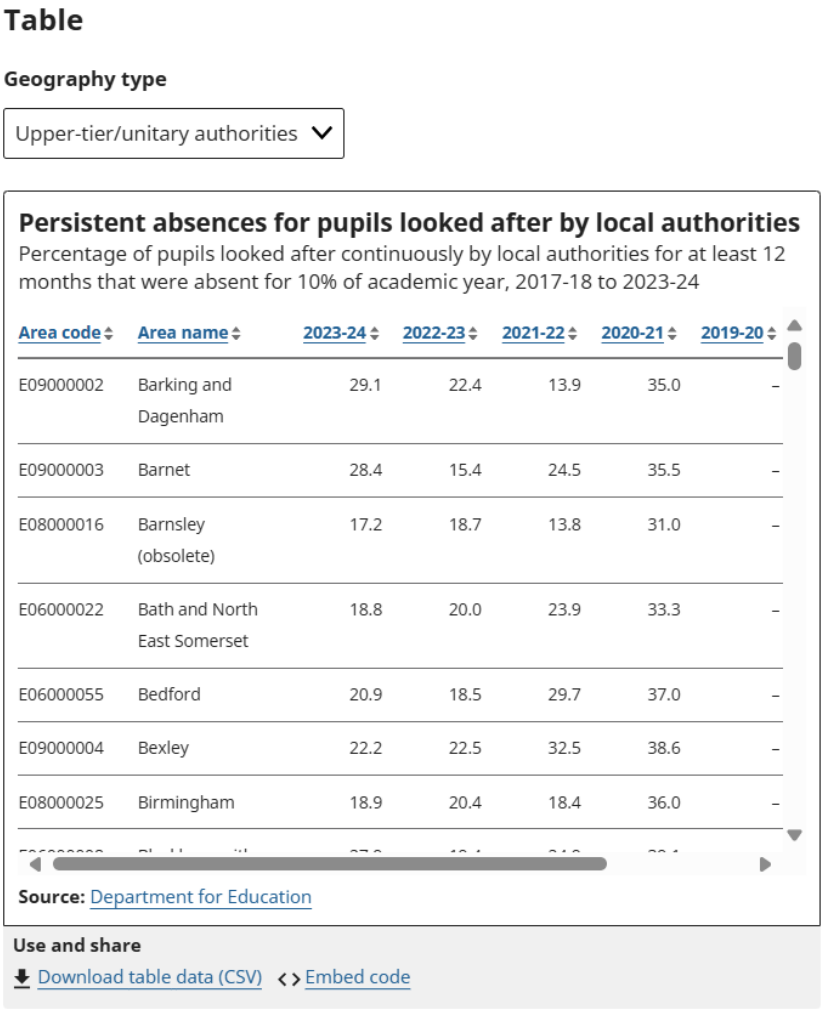

Table

Geography type

Upper-tier/unitary authorities

Persistent absences for pupils looked after by local authorities

Percentage of pupils looked after continuously by local authorities for at least 12 months that were absent for 10% of academic year, 2017-18 to 2023-24

Area code	Area name	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
E09000002	Barking and Dagenham	29.1	22.4	13.9	35.0	–
E09000003	Barnet	28.4	15.4	24.5	35.5	–
E08000016	Barnsley (obsolete)	17.2	18.7	13.8	31.0	–
E06000022	Bath and North East Somerset	18.8	20.0	23.9	33.3	–
E06000055	Bedford	20.9	18.5	29.7	37.0	–
E09000004	Bexley	22.2	22.5	32.5	38.6	–
E08000025	Birmingham	18.9	20.4	18.4	36.0	–

Source: Department for Education

Use and share

Download table data (CSV) Embed code

Please note: ONS acknowledges to users that, the absence data in this section are matched to school census data for each school type. This means that pupils included in the dataset are those having absence data on the school census. Persistent absence figures for all pupils and those eligible for free school meals are taken from the national absence figures. They are produced and analysed in a different way from the data in this section, so it is not appropriate to compare these figures with those for looked after children. Additionally, data are not available for year 2019/20 due to COVID. The original data can be found on the Department for Education website.