



[Home](#) > [Local Authority School Places Scorecards 2017](#)



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

Contents

- [1. How to use the school places scorecards](#)
- [2. Quantity](#)
- [3. Preference](#)
- [4. Quality](#)
- [5. Cost](#)
- [6. More detailed information](#)

The Education & Skills Funding Agency publishes school places scorecards to enable everyone to see:

- the challenges local authorities face in making good school places available
- funding given to local authorities
- local authorities' progress in providing school places

1. How to use the school places scorecards

You can look at the school place situation for any local authority in England using the school places scorecards. To do this, use the drop-down option at the top of the scorecard to select your chosen local authority. The list is arranged in alphabetical order. You can look at primary or secondary places by using the adjacent drop-down option.

When a different local authority is selected, or the education phase is changed, the figures and charts in the scorecard will automatically update to reflect the chosen local authority and phase. This means that

you can compare the position in your own local authority with other local authorities.

2. Quantity

You can see how much progress your local authority is making in providing sufficient school places by looking at the quantity measure.

The dark green portion of the bar chart shows the places already added since academic year 2009/10, the light green portion shows the places planned up to 2019/20 and the final blue portion shows the estimated number of places needed in 2019/20 which are still to find. Local authorities with relatively small blue bars are making the best progress.

It is important to take care when making comparisons using the quantity measure. Some local authorities have long-standing place pressure, whereas for others it has emerged more recently. Those experiencing long-standing place pressures will have had more chance to demonstrate that they can add large quantities of places. For the first time, the estimated percentage of spare places is also shown in the box above the bar chart. It is common for a local authority to have both a need for additional places and spare capacity, reflecting pockets of localised need for places or pockets of localised spare places.

Estimating place pressure in future years relies upon the forecasts of pupil numbers made by local authorities. We have included two graphics, which illustrate the forecasting accuracy of the selected local authority. The blue arc swings from left to right to show under forecasts and over forecasts respectively. The bar extends to the position of the local authorities' forecast in the range of all local authorities forecasts.

3. Preference

You can use the scorecard to see how well your local authority is able to meet parents' school preferences. The scorecard shows the percentage of applicants who received an offer of a place in one of their top three preferences for entry in September 2017, in your local authority. This is presented alongside the same percentage for England.

The chart breaks down the percentage of applicants who received an offer of one of their top three preferences to those who received an offer of their first, second or third preferences. The blank section represents the proportion of pupils made an offer of a lower preference (where an LA allows four or more preferences) and the proportion not made a preferred offer. The latter can include applicants who were made an alternative offer and those who were not, on national offer day, made any offer.

4. Quality

You can check the quality measure to see where your local authority is choosing to add school places. When the Ofsted rating view is selected the quality measure bar chart shows the number of new places added in your local authority according to the Ofsted rating of the school in which they have been added. There are 4 possible Ofsted ratings: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate. The typical position is for around 91% of places to be added in good or outstanding schools.

It is important to take care when making comparisons using the quality measure as:

- the starting position for local authorities is different and some have more good or outstanding schools to

add places to - which is why we also provide the overall distribution of school places by Ofsted rating in the local authority chosen, and for England

- when deciding upon which schools to expand, some good or outstanding schools may be on sites that are not suitable for expansion
- we have used the most recent Ofsted rating available at 31 August 2017 and places may have been added before or after that rating was given
- where schools have amalgamated we have only used an Ofsted rating when we can be sure the rating is for the post-amalgamation school.

For secondary you can also change the view to look at the number of new places added according to key stage 4 Progress 8 performance. There are 5 possible Progress 8 bandings: well above average, above average, average, below average and well below average. The typical position is for around 41% of secondary places to be added in well above average or above average schools. (There is no alternative view for primary as there is no single key stage 2 progress measure.)

5. Cost

You can use the scorecard to see whether the average amount spent on each school place is relatively high or low compared with other local authorities.

The types of projects local authorities reported in 2015/16 and 2016/17 have been split into permanent expansions, temporary expansions and new schools. They have been separated so that you can compare more similar groups of projects between local authorities.

It is important to take care when making comparisons. Some local authorities have small numbers of projects to add places, so cost comparisons become very dependent upon the nature of individual projects. For the first time cost figures have been adjusted to take location factors and inflation into account when average cost per place is calculated.

6. More detailed information

If you wish to find out more detail on how the figures are constructed, please go to the 'Information' and 'Technical Notes' sheets of the scorecard document.

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