



## Statistical Bulletin 2/2015

### Attendance at grant-aided primary, post-primary and special schools in Northern Ireland - 2013/14: Detailed statistics

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The purpose of this statistical bulletin is to present detailed, final attendance figures for schools for the 2013/14 academic year. It includes information on the rates of absence, type of absence and reason for absence.

#### KEY FINDINGS

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 2013/14 was 94.6% of the total half days.
- 5.4% of the total half days in primary, post-primary and special schools were missed due to absence. This comprised:
  - 3.5 % authorised absence
  - 1.9% unauthorised absence.
- In 2013/14, the overall absence rate was 0.7 percentage points lower than in 2012/13, when overall absence accounted for 6.0% of the total half days. (Note: percentage point difference calculated using unrounded figures)
- In primary schools in 2013/14, 4.4% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 3.0% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised absence.
- In post-primary schools in 2013/14, 6.5% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 4.0% authorised and 2.5% unauthorised absence.
- In special schools in 2013/14, 9.7% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 6.4% authorised and 3.4% unauthorised absence.



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## Introduction

Attendance data are collected annually via the school census and 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 are also used by researchers, academics and students, as well as the general public for informing choices about service providers.

Initial findings for 2013/14 were published on 29 January 2015. This statistical bulletin supplements that information and includes analysis of attendance data by school type and characteristics such as management type, as well as pupil characteristics, for example gender and ethnicity.

Attendance data for the 2013/14 academic year was collected from all grant-aided primary, post primary and special schools in Northern Ireland via the school census which was conducted in October 2014.

## Section 1: All schools by Sector

### 1.1 Key Findings

#### Absence rates

While there does not tend to be large variation in absence rates year on year, overall absence was slightly lower in all phases in 2013/14 than in the previous year.

- In primary schools in 2013/14, 4.4% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 3.0% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised absence. See Table 1.1/Chart 1.1 overleaf. In 2012/13, overall absence accounted for 5.1% of the total half days (3.7% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised)<sup>1</sup>. The figures show a slight decrease in absence rates on the previous year for authorised absence, while unauthorised absence has remained the same.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

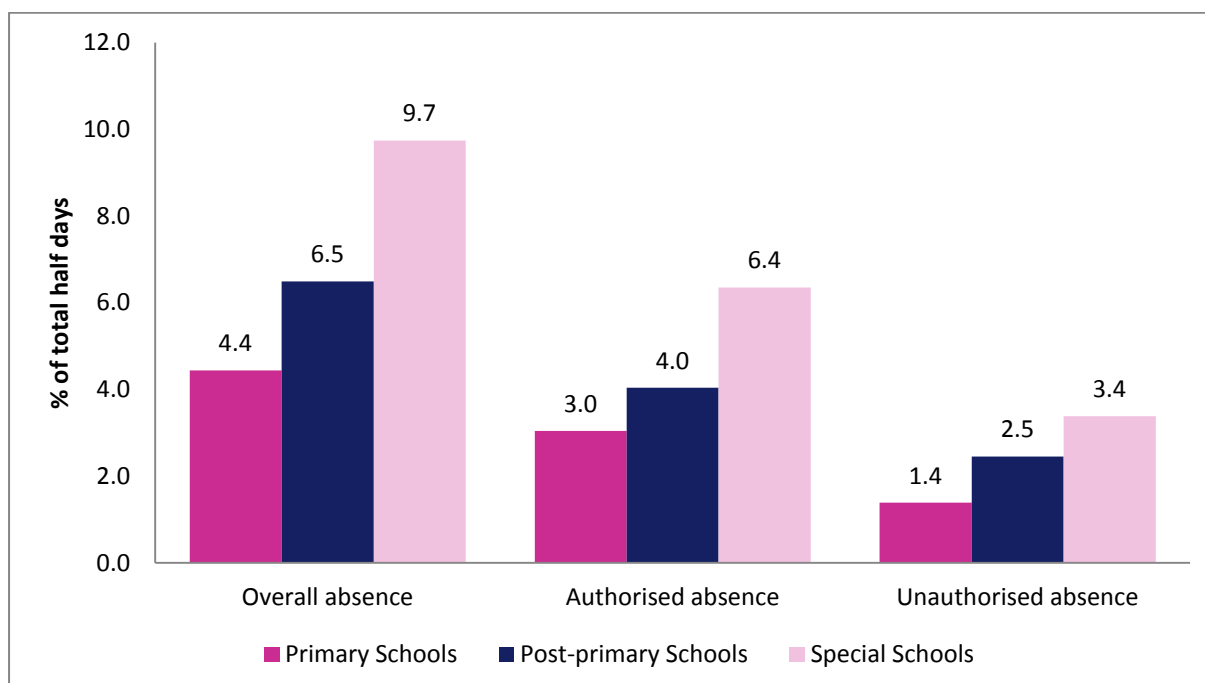
- In post-primary schools in 2013/14, 6.5% of all half days were missed due to absence, 4.0% was authorised absence and 2.5% was unauthorised absence. See Table 1.1/Chart 1.1 below. As with primary schools, this represents a decrease on 2012/13, when overall absence accounted for 7.1% of the total half days (4.5% authorised and 2.6% unauthorised).
- In special schools, 9.7% of all half days were missed due to absence in 2013/14, comprising 6.4% authorised and 3.4% unauthorised absence. See Table 1.1/Chart 1.1 below. These figures show a decrease in authorised absence since 2012/13<sup>2</sup> (7.4%), while unauthorised absence has remained the same.

**Table 1.1: Attendance and absence at school by school type, 2013/14**

	% of total half days		
	Primary Schools	Post-primary Schools	Special Schools
<b>Attended</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>90.3</b>
<b>Overall absence</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>9.7</b>
Authorised absence	3.0	4.0	6.4
Unauthorised absence	1.4	2.5	3.4

Note: In some cases, percentages may not sum due to rounding

**Chart 1.1: Absence from primary, post-primary and special schools, 2013/14**



<sup>2</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

## 1.2 Reasons for absence

The most common reason for absence in all schools was illness, which is an authorised absence. Illness accounted for 58.6% of all absent half days in primary schools, 48.4% in post-primary schools and 45.2% in special schools. This equates to 2.6%, 3.1% and 4.4% of the total half days respectively. See Table 1.2 below.

The rate of absence attributable to each reason tends to remain fairly consistent year on year, however, the proportion of absent half days attributable to 'Illness' has decreased in comparison to 2012/13, when it was 61.8% in primary schools, 49.2% in post-primary schools and 45.7% in special schools<sup>3</sup>. In 2012/13, this was 3.1%, 3.5% and 4.9% of the total half days respectively.

An increase in 'Other exceptional circumstances' was noted in 2012/13. By 2013/14, the proportion of absent half days attributed to this reason had decreased across all phases, most likely due to less severe weather conditions than in the previous year.

This decrease in absent half days attributable to 'Illness' and 'Other exceptional circumstances' accounts for the overall decrease in absence rates demonstrated in 2013/14, in comparison to 2012/13.

**Table 1.2: Absence from schools by reason, 2013/14**

	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
<b>Authorised absence</b>						
Illness	58.6	2.6	48.4	3.1	45.2	4.4
Medical / dental appointments	3.2	0.1	5.8	0.4	8.6	0.8
Other exceptional circumstances	3.1	0.1	4.0	0.3	7.7	0.7
Family holiday (agreed)	2.2	0.1	0.6	*	2.3	0.2
Bereavement	1.1	*	1.6	0.1	0.6	0.1
Artistic endeavour	0.3	*	0.4	*	0.0	*
Suspended	0.1	*	1.3	0.1	0.7	0.1
Religious observance	0.1	*	0.1	*	0.1	*
<b>Total authorised absence</b>	<b>68.7</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>65.2</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>						
No reason yet provided	19.1	0.8	30.3	2.0	28.2	2.7
Family holiday (not agreed)	7.5	0.3	2.3	0.2	2.3	0.2
Other	3.9	0.2	4.9	0.3	3.9	0.4
Late after registration closed	0.8	*	0.3	*	0.4	*
<b>Total unauthorised absence</b>	<b>31.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>
<b>Total overall absence</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9.7</b>

Note: \* denotes a figure greater than zero but less than 0.1. In some cases, percentages may not sum due to rounding

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

## 1.3 Comparisons with England, Scotland and Wales

Data for Scotland for 2013/14 is not available since it is now produced on a biennial basis.

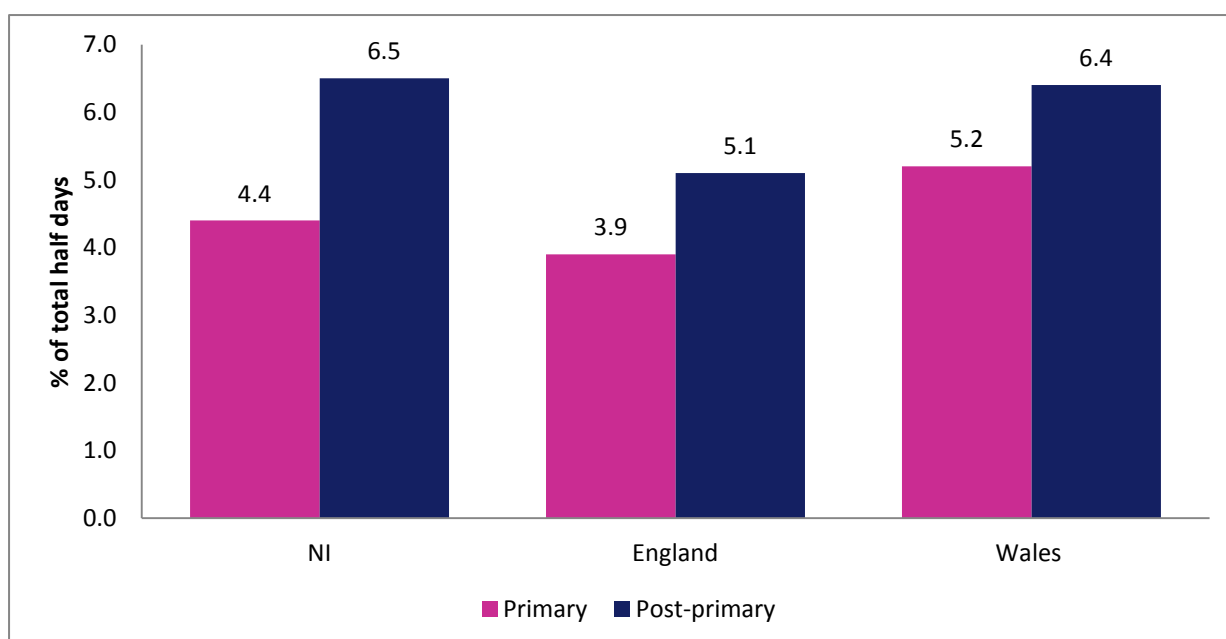
- The highest overall absence rates in primary schools were recorded in Wales – 5.2% of the total half days, compared with 4.4% in Northern Ireland and 3.9% in England. However, at 1.4% of the total half days, unauthorised absence was notably higher in NI primary schools than in any other region (1.0% in Wales and 0.7% in England). See Table 1.3/Chart 1.2 below.
- In post-primary schools, overall absence rates are very similar in Northern Ireland and Wales (6.5% and 6.4%, respectively), while, overall absence in England, at 5.1% is considerably lower. As with primary schools, unauthorised absence is notably higher in Northern Ireland post-primary schools than in England and Wales (2.5% in NI; 1.2% in England and 1.3% in Wales). See Table 1.3/Chart 1.2 below.

**Table 1.3: Absence rates for Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, 2013/14**

	% of total half days			
	Primary Schools		Post-Primary Schools	
	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence	Unauthorised absence	Overall absence
NI	1.4	4.4	2.5	6.5
England	0.7	3.9	1.2	5.1
Scotland	N/A <sup>#</sup>	N/A <sup>#</sup>	N/A <sup>#</sup>	N/A <sup>#</sup>
Wales	1.0	5.2	1.3	6.4

<sup>#</sup>: Data for Scotland not available for 2013/14

**Chart 1.2: Comparisons with England and Wales – overall absence, 2013/14**



## Section 2: Primary Schools

### 2.1 Key Findings

In primary schools in 2013/14, 4.4% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 3.0% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised absence (Table 1.1/Chart 1.1). The most common reason for absence in primary schools was illness, which is an authorised absence and accounted for 2.6% of the total half days or 58.6% of all absent half days in 2013/14 (Table 1.2).

### 2.2 School Level Analysis

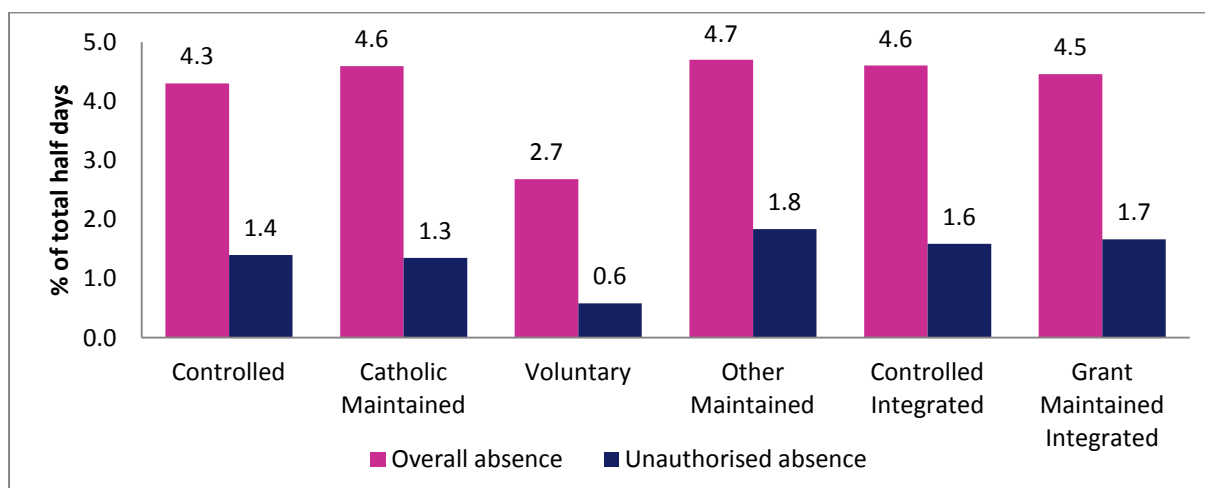
#### 2.2.1 Management Type

Other maintained primary schools had the highest rate of overall absence (4.7% of the total half days) while voluntary schools had the lowest at 2.7% of the total half days. See Table 2.1/Chart 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1 Attendance at primary school by management type, 2013/14**

Management Type	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Controlled	95.7	4.3	2.9	1.4
Catholic Maintained	95.4	4.6	3.2	1.3
Voluntary	97.3	2.7	2.1	0.6
Other Maintained	95.3	4.7	2.9	1.8
Controlled Integrated	95.4	4.6	3.0	1.6
Grant Maintained Integrated	95.5	4.5	2.8	1.7
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

**Chart 2.1: Absence from primary school by management type, 2013/14**





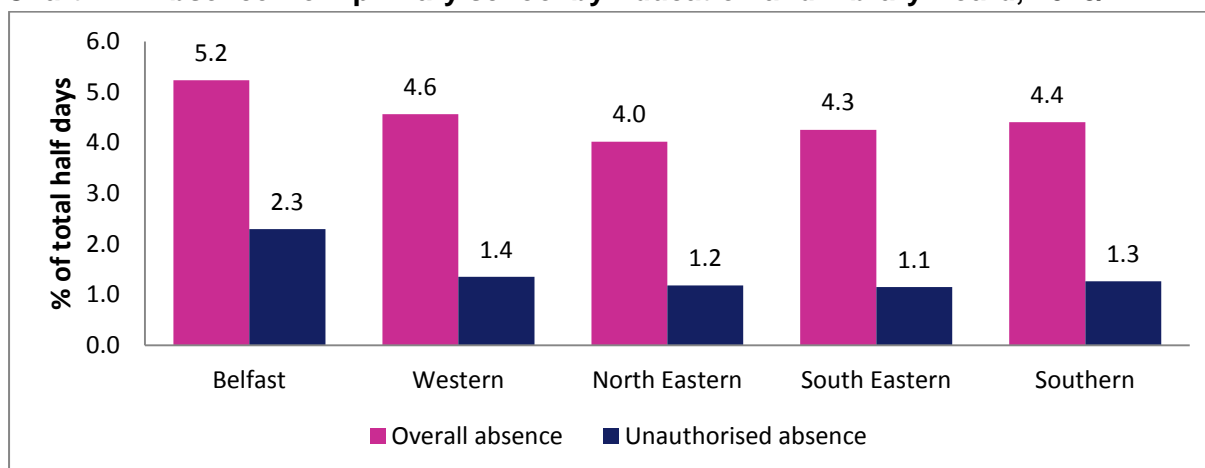
## 2.2.2 Education and Library Board (ELB)

At 5.2% of the total half days, the highest overall absence rate for primary schools was recorded by the Belfast Education and Library Board. The North Eastern Education and Library Board reported the lowest overall absence rate, with 4.0% of the total half days missed. See Table 2.2/Chart 2.2 below.

**Table 2.2: Attendance at primary school by Education and Library Board, 2013/14**

ELB	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Belfast	94.8	5.2	2.9	2.3
Western	95.4	4.6	3.2	1.4
North Eastern	96.0	4.0	2.8	1.2
South Eastern	95.7	4.3	3.1	1.1
Southern	95.6	4.4	3.1	1.3
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

**Chart 2.2: Absence from primary school by Education and Library Board, 2013/14**



## 2.2.3 Location<sup>4</sup> of school

Overall absence was higher for urban primary schools (4.8% of the total half days) than for rural primary schools (3.7% of the total half days), as was unauthorised absence (1.7% compared with 0.8% respectively). See Table 2.3 below.

**Table 2.3: Attendance at primary school by location of school, 2013/14**

Location	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Urban	95.2	4.8	3.1	1.7
Rural	96.3	3.7	2.9	0.8
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

<sup>4</sup> Location defined using NISRA Central Postcode Directory urban/rural classification. Boundaries are available for Northern Ireland as defined by the Planning Service. These areas are defined from Settlement Development Limits (SDLs) which are a statistical classification and delineation of settlements. See [http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/geography/digital\\_products/urban\\_rural\\_classifications/ur\\_report.pdf](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/geography/digital_products/urban_rural_classifications/ur_report.pdf) for more information.

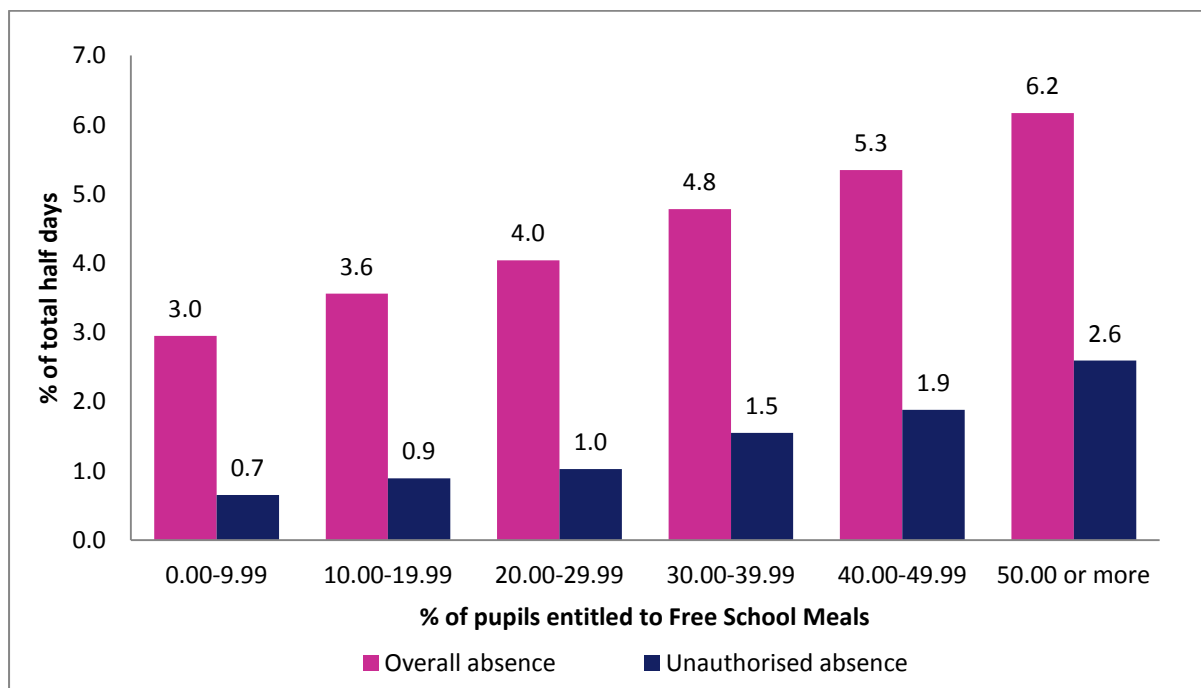
## 2.2.4 Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)

The figures show that overall absence rates generally increase in line with the percentage of pupils enrolled who are eligible for free school meals. In schools where less than 10% of enrolled pupils were eligible for free school meals, the overall absence rate was 3.0% of the total half days. This compares with 6.2% of the total half days for schools with more than 50% of enrolled pupils 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. See Table 2.4/Chart 2.3 below.

**Table 2.4: Attendance at primary school by FSME, 2013/14**

% of pupils entitled to Free School Meals	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
0.00-9.99	97.0	3.0	2.3	0.7
10.00-19.99	96.4	3.6	2.7	0.9
20.00-29.99	96.0	4.0	3.0	1.0
30.00-39.99	95.2	4.8	3.2	1.5
40.00-49.99	94.7	5.3	3.5	1.9
50.00 or more	93.8	6.2	3.6	2.6
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

**Chart 2.3: Absence from primary school by FSME, 2013/14**



## 2.3 Pupil Level Analysis

### 2.3.1 Gender

Overall absence rates were similar for boys and girls of primary school age (4.5% and 4.4% of the total half days respectively). See Table 2.5 below.

**Table 2.5: Attendance at primary school by gender, 2013/14**

Gender	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Male	95.5	4.5	3.1	1.4
Female	95.6	4.4	3.0	1.4
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

### 2.3.2 Year group

The highest rate of overall absence occurred in Year 1 of primary school when 4.9% of the total half days were missed. See Table 2.6 below. Further analysis shows that, with the exception of illness, rates 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 (3.2% compared with a low of 2.4% in Years 4, 5 and 6).

**Table 2.6: Attendance at primary school by year group, 2013/14**

Year Group	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Year 1	95.1	4.9	3.6	1.3
Year 2	95.4	4.6	3.2	1.4
Year 3	95.7	4.3	2.9	1.4
Year 4	95.8	4.2	2.8	1.4
Year 5	95.7	4.3	2.8	1.5
Year 6	95.8	4.2	2.8	1.4
Year 7	95.6	4.4	3.0	1.4
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

### 2.3.3 Ethnicity

Irish Traveller children attending primary school had a markedly higher absence rate than any other ethnic group. They missed 27.7% of the total half days, compared with 4.3% for white children and 5.7% for children from a minority ethnic background. See table 2.7 below. The absence rate for Irish Traveller children has increased since 2012/13<sup>5</sup>, when it was 26.0%. In comparison, the absence rate for White children and those from a “Minority Ethnic Background” has decreased since 2012/13, when it was 4.9% and 7.0%, respectively.

**Table 2.7: Attendance at primary school by ethnicity, 2013/14**

Ethnicity	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
White	95.7	4.3	3.0	1.3
Minority Ethnic Background <sup>6</sup>	94.3	5.7	3.2	2.5
Irish Traveller	72.3	27.7	11.9	15.8
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

Note: Ethnicity was not available for 42 enrolments at primary schools representing 0.03% of the total enrolments.

### 2.3.4 Home Language

Table 2.8 below shows the attendance of primary pupils for the top ten reported home languages. At 3.0%, the lowest absence rate is reported for pupils whose home language is Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua), while the highest absence rate (10.3%) is reported for pupils whose home language is Slovak. The lowest rate of unauthorised absence is reported for pupils whose home language is Irish (0.7%).

**Table 2.8: Attendance at primary school by home language, 2013/14**

Home Language	% of total half days				Proportion of enrolments
	Attended	Absent	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	
English	95.7	4.3	3.0	1.3	94.0
Polish	92.0	8.0	5.0	3.1	1.8
Lithuanian	91.3	8.7	5.2	3.5	0.8
Portuguese	93.5	6.5	4.0	2.5	0.4
Malayalam	94.3	5.7	3.3	2.4	0.3
Tagalog/Filipino	95.2	4.8	3.4	1.4	0.2
Latvian	92.0	8.0	4.7	3.3	0.2
Irish	96.6	3.4	2.7	0.7	0.2
Slovak	89.7	10.3	6.2	4.1	0.2
Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua)	97.0	3.0	1.6	1.4	0.1
Other <sup>7</sup>	93.2	6.8	3.5	3.3	1.8
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: The table is presented in descending order of proportion of enrolments. Some rates are based on a small number of enrolments, in which case the attendance of one pupil may significantly impact on that attendance rate. Home language is not known for 47 enrolments, representing 0.03% of the total enrolments.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Minority Ethnic Background includes Black African, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Bangladeshi, Chinese/Hong Kong, Indian/Sri Lankan, Korean, Malaysian, Pakistani, Roma, Vietnamese, Mixed, Other

<sup>7</sup> ‘Other’ includes a further 69 languages. For a full list of the languages included here, see Table A1 in Annex 1.

### 2.3.5 Looked After Children<sup>8</sup>

Looked After Children in primary schools had a lower absence rate (3.4%) than those who were not in care (4.4%). This difference is evident year-on-year, however in previous years, the unauthorised absence rate was higher for Looked After Children than for those not in care. 2013/14 was the first year (of reported data) that unauthorised absence was lower for Looked After Children (1.1%) than for those not in care (1.4%). See Table 2.9 below.

**Table 2.9: Attendance of Looked After Children at primary school, 2013/14**

Looked after status	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Looked after children	96.6	3.4	2.3	1.1
Other	95.6	4.4	3.1	1.4
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

### 2.3.6 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas<sup>9</sup> (NRAs)

At 6.2%, the absence rate for pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas was 2.1 percentage points higher than for pupils who did not live in an NRA. See Table 2.10 below.

**Table 2.10: Attendance rates for primary pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, 2013/14**

Area	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Neighbourhood Renewal Area	93.8	6.2	3.6	2.6
Other	95.9	4.1	2.9	1.2
<b>Primary rate</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

### 2.3.7 Duration of absence

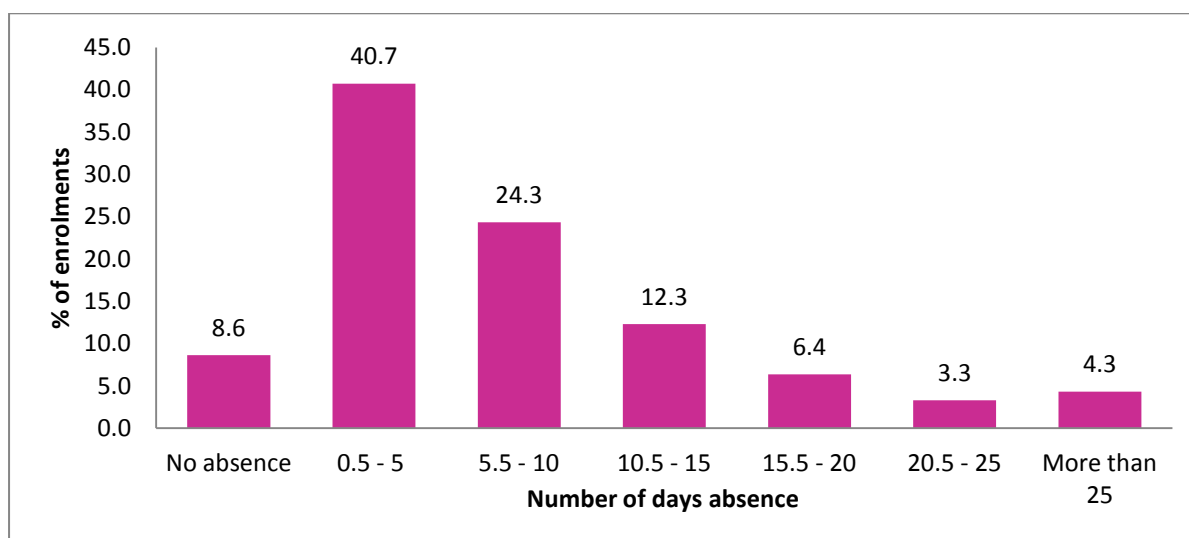
Chart 2.4 overleaf shows the number of days absence for all primary pupils enrolled in 2013/14. Of all pupils enrolled in this group in 2013/14, 8.6% had no absence, an increase on the 6.5% with full attendance in 2012/13<sup>10</sup>. At 40.7% of total enrolments, between '0.5 and 5 days' absence was the group reported most frequently in 2013/14. Approximately 4.3% of pupils enrolled were absent for more than 25 days, a decrease on the 5.4% reported in 2012/13.

<sup>8</sup> 'Looked after children' includes children defined in 'The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995', i.e., 'a child who is looked after by an authority is a reference to a child who is: (a) in the care of the authority; or (b) provided with accommodation by the authority.' This includes children who are fostered.

<sup>9</sup> Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRAs) are neighbourhoods identified as experiencing the most severe multiple deprivation and have been chosen to receive support under the Department of Social Development People and Place strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

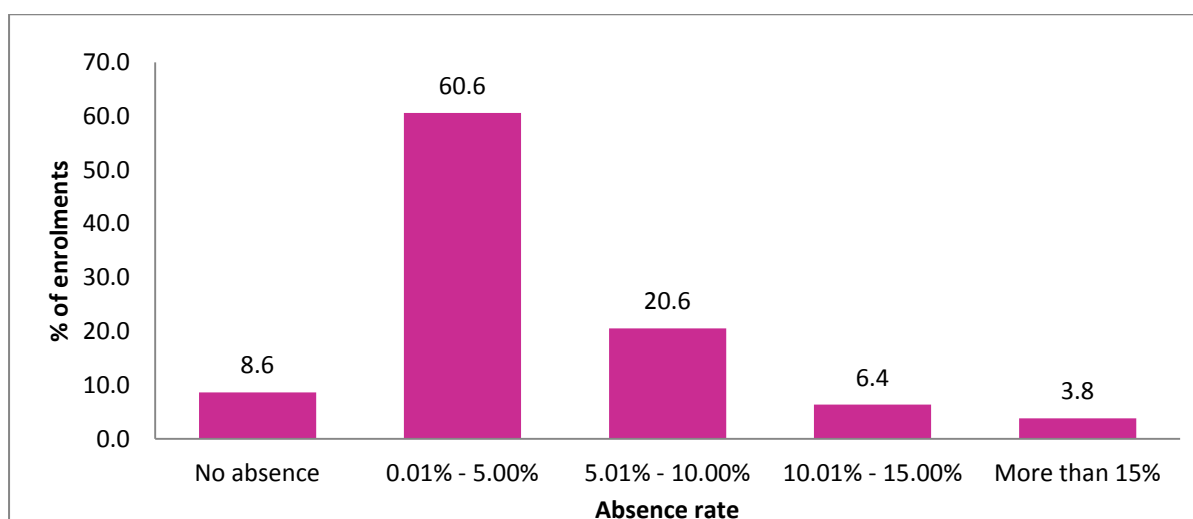
**Chart 2.4: Number of days absence, 2013/14**



### 2.3.8 Levels of absence

Chart 2.5 below shows that over three-fifths of pupils enrolled at primary school (60.6%) had an absence rate of between 0.01% and 5.00% of the total half days, while 3.8% missed more than 15% of the total half days. This shows a decrease in the proportion of pupils with less than 85% attendance on the previous year (4.8%)<sup>11</sup>. 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.

**Chart 2.5: Percentage of enrolments at primary school by overall absence rates, 2013/14**



<sup>11</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

### 2.3.9 More than 15% absence

Table 2.10 provides an analysis of those pupils with an absence rate of more than 15%, along with a profile of all pupils for comparative purposes. As explained previously, this is one of the points when schools may consider referring a child to the Education Welfare Service for non-attendance. Looking at the characteristics of the pupils with absence rates of more than 15%, almost half were from Catholic maintained schools (47.3%), with just slightly fewer from Controlled schools (45.6%); over one-fifth (23.9% and 22.8%, respectively) were from the Belfast Education and Library Board and Southern Education and Library Board. The largest proportion of pupils with absence rates of more than 15% were in Year 1 (19.2%).

**Table 2.10: Characteristics of primary school pupils with absence rates of more than 15% in 2013/14**

	School and pupil characteristics of those with >15% absence	School and pupil characteristics of all pupils
<b>SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS:</b>		
<b>Management type</b>		
Controlled	45.6	46.3
Catholic maintained	47.3	45.4
Voluntary	0.3	1.0
Other maintained	1.5	1.7
Controlled integrated	2.4	2.2
Grant Maintained Integrated	3.0	3.4
<b>Education and Library Board</b>		
Belfast (BELB)	23.9	15.1
Western (WELB)	16.6	16.9
North Eastern (NEELB)	16.8	22.6
South Eastern (SEELB)	19.9	21.4
Southern (SELB)	22.8	24.1
<b>PUPIL CHARACTERISTICS:</b>		
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	54.1	51.1
Female	45.9	48.9
<b>Year Group</b>		
Year 1	19.2	15.3
Year 2	15.1	15.4
Year 3	14.1	14.6
Year 4	12.0	13.9
Year 5	12.8	13.8
Year 6	13.2	13.6
Year 7	13.6	13.3
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White	86.3	96.0
Minority Ethnic Background	6.9	3.6
Traveller	6.7	0.4

Note: Ethnicity was not provided for 7 enrolments with absence levels of 15% or more, representing 0.1% of the total. Ethnicity was not provided for 22 enrolments at primary schools, representing 0.03% of the total enrolments.

## Section 3: Post-primary schools

### 3.1 Key Findings

In post-primary schools in 2013/14, 6.5% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 4.0% authorised and 2.5% unauthorised absence (Table 1.1/Chart 1.1). The most common reason for absence in post-primary schools was illness, which is an authorised absence and accounted for 3.1% of the total half days (48.4% of all absent half days) (Table 1.2).

### 3.2 School Level Analysis

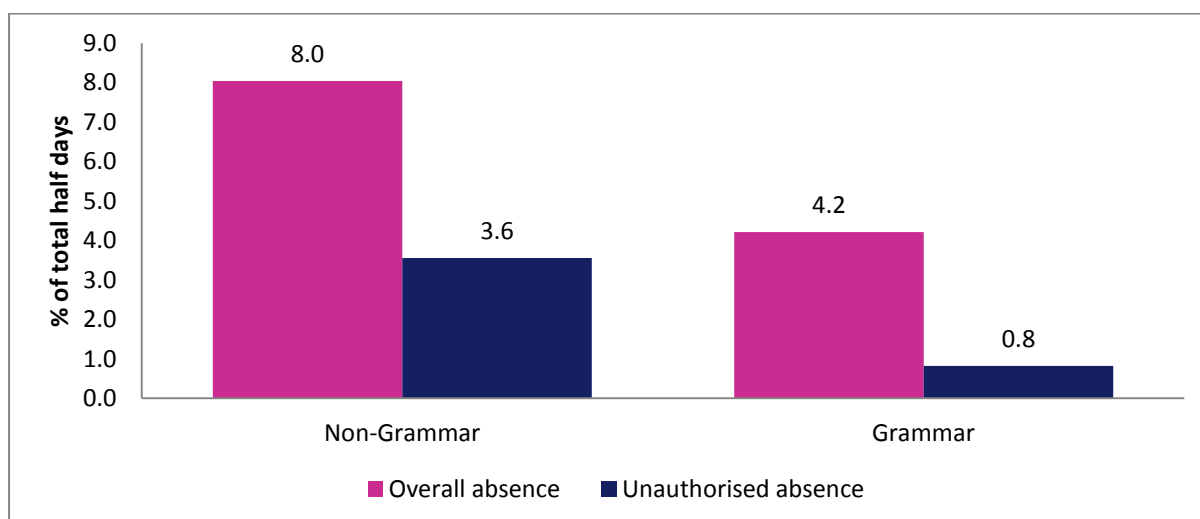
#### 3.2.1 School Type

At 8.0% of the total half days, the rate of overall absence in non-grammar schools was higher than in grammar schools (4.2%). There was a marked difference in the rates of unauthorised absence in non-grammar and grammar schools (3.6% and 0.8% of the total half days respectively). See Table 3.1/Chart 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Attendance at post-primary school by school type, 2013/14**

School Type	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Non-Grammar	92.0	8.0	4.5	3.6
Grammar	95.8	4.2	3.4	0.8
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

**Chart 3.1: Absence from post-primary school by school type, 2013/14**





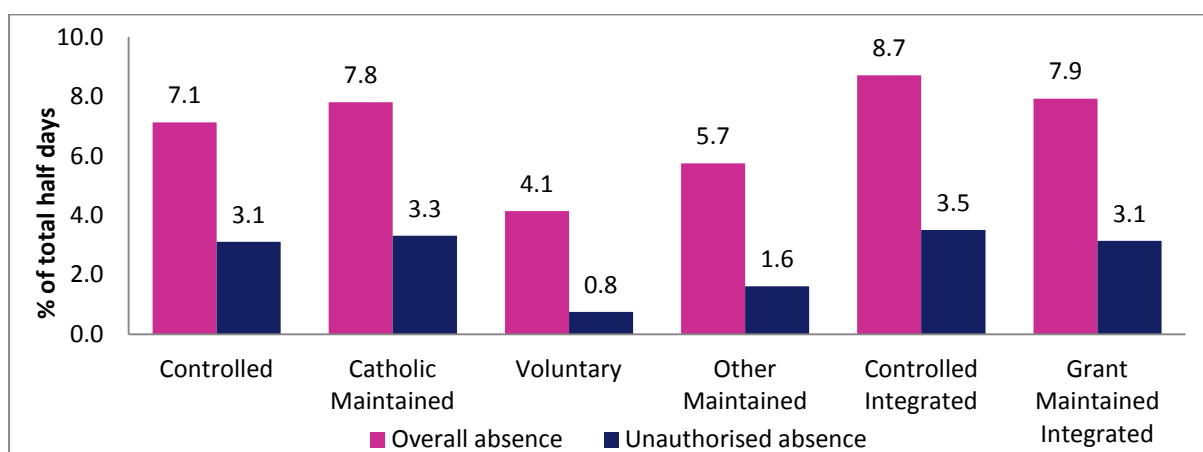
### 3.2.2 Management type

Controlled integrated schools had the highest rate of overall absence (8.7% of the total half days) while voluntary schools had the lowest at 4.1% of the total half days. See Table 3.2/Chart 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2: Attendance at post-primary school by management type, 2013/14**

Management Type	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Controlled	92.9	7.1	4.0	3.1
Catholic Maintained	92.2	7.8	4.5	3.3
Voluntary	95.9	4.1	3.4	0.8
Other Maintained	94.3	5.7	4.1	1.6
Controlled Integrated	91.3	8.7	5.2	3.5
Grant Maintained Integrated	92.1	7.9	4.8	3.1
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

**Chart 3.2: Absence from post-primary school by management type, 2013/14**



### 3.2.3 Education and Library Board (ELB)

At 7.1% of the total half days, Western Education and Library Board had the highest overall absence rate for post-primary schools. The North Eastern Education and Library Board reported the lowest rate of overall absence (6.1% of the total half days). See Table 3.3 below.

**Table 3.3: Attendance at post-primary school by Education and Library Board, 2013/14**

ELB	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Belfast	93.6	6.4	4.2	2.2
Western	92.9	7.1	4.0	3.1
North Eastern	93.9	6.1	3.8	2.3
South Eastern	93.3	6.7	4.2	2.5
Southern	93.7	6.3	4.0	2.3
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

### 3.2.4 Location<sup>12</sup> of school

Only one-fifth of post-primary schools are located in a rural area. In 2013/14 overall and authorised absence was higher in rural schools than in urban schools, however unauthorised absence was slightly lower in rural schools than in urban schools. See Table 3.4 below.

**Table 3.4: Attendance at post-primary school by location of school, 2013/14**

Location	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Urban	93.6	6.4	4.0	2.5
Rural	93.2	6.8	4.4	2.4
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

### 3.2.5 Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)

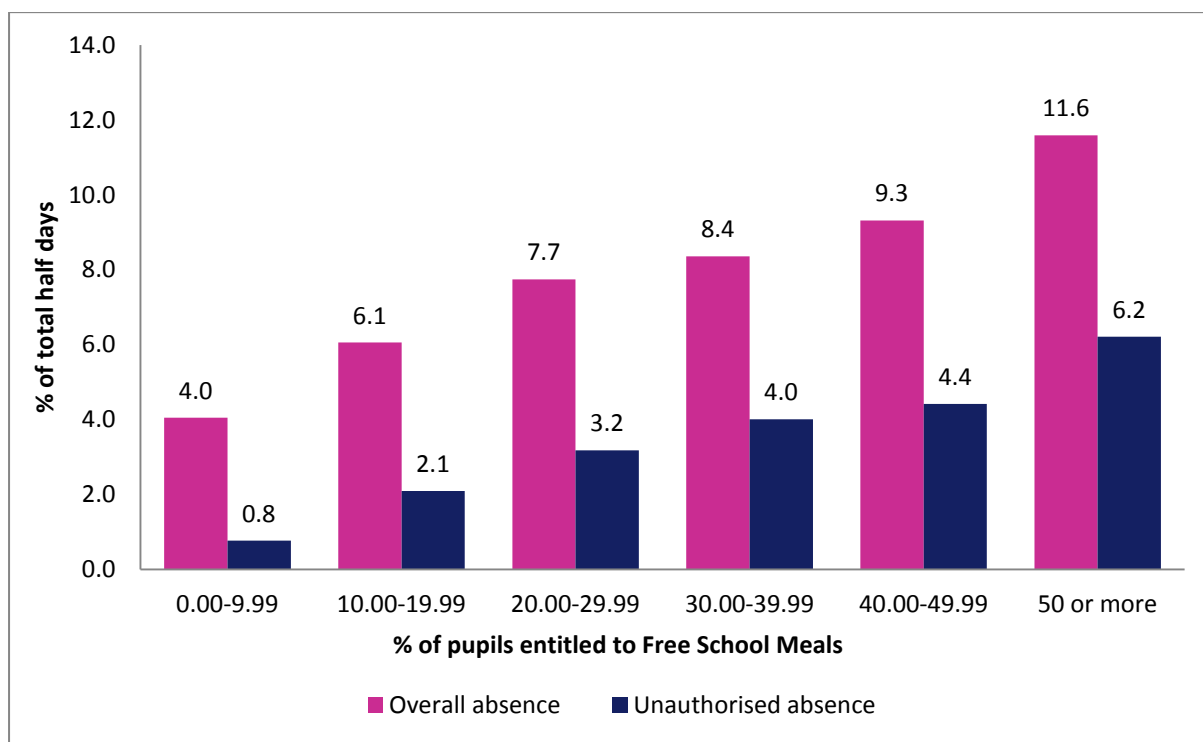
The figures indicate that for the most part, absence rates increase in line with the percentage of pupils enrolled who are eligible for free school meals. In schools where less than 10% of pupils enrolled were eligible for free school meals, the overall absence rate was 4.0% of the total half days. This compares with 11.6% of the total half days for schools with more than 50% of pupils enrolled eligible for free school meals. Unauthorised absence is notably higher for schools with high levels of FSME. 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. See Table 3.5 below/Chart 3.3 overleaf.

**Table 3.5: Attendance at post-primary school by FSME, 2013/14**

% of pupils entitled to Free School Meals	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
0.00-9.99	96.0	4.0	3.3	0.8
10.00-19.99	93.9	6.1	4.0	2.1
20.00-29.99	92.3	7.7	4.6	3.2
30.00-39.99	91.6	8.4	4.4	4.0
40.00-49.99	90.7	9.3	4.9	4.4
50 or more	88.4	11.6	5.4	6.2
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

<sup>12</sup> Location defined using NISRA Central Postcode Directory urban/rural classification. Boundaries are available for Northern Ireland as defined by the Planning Service. These areas are defined from Settlement Development Limits (SDLs) which are a statistical classification and delineation of settlements. See [http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/geography/digital\\_products/urban\\_rural\\_classifications/ur\\_report.pdf](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/geography/digital_products/urban_rural_classifications/ur_report.pdf) for more information.

**Chart 3.3: Absence from post-primary school by FSME, 2013/14**



### 3.3 Pupil Level Analysis

#### 3.3.1 Gender

At 6.5% and 6.4% of total half days, respectively, overall absence was similar for males and females. See Table 3.6 below. 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 (51.0% and 45.9% of the total absent half days, respectively). The proportion of total half days missed due to suspension from school was almost four times higher for males than for females.

**Table 3.6: Attendance at post-primary school by gender, 2013/14**

Gender	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Male	93.5	6.5	3.9	2.6
Female	93.6	6.4	4.2	2.3
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

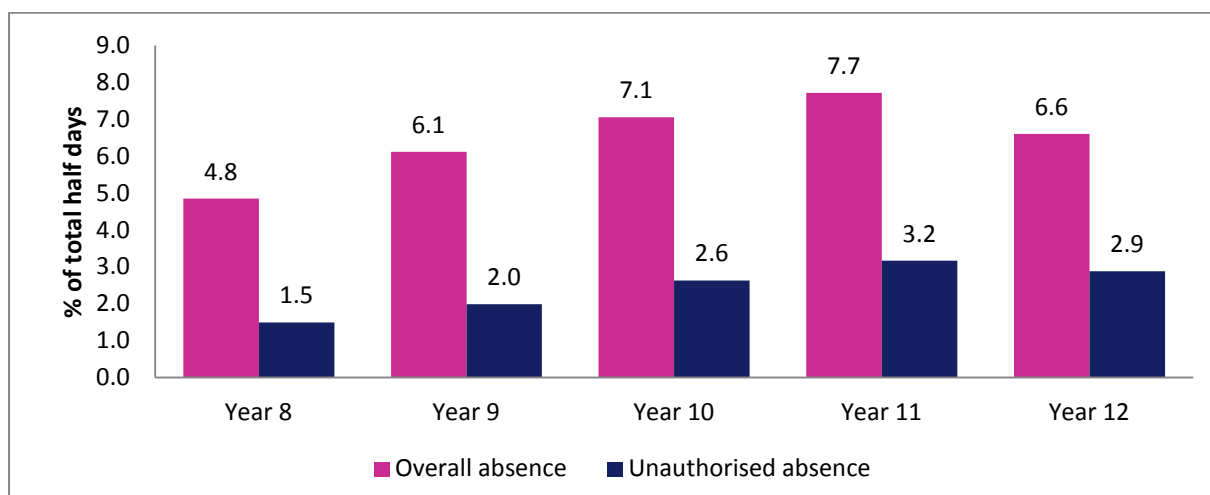
### 3.3.2 Year group

Absence rates increased steadily between Year 8 and Year 11 (from 4.8% to 7.7% of the total half days), before decreasing to 6.6% of the total half days in Year 12. Rates of unauthorised absence followed the same pattern, increasing from 1.5% in Year 8 to 3.2% in Year 11 before falling slightly to 2.9% in Year 12. See Table 3.7/Chart 3.4 below.

**Table 3.7: Attendance at post-primary school by year group, 2013/14**

Year Group	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Year 8	95.2	4.8	3.4	1.5
Year 9	93.9	6.1	4.1	2.0
Year 10	92.9	7.1	4.4	2.6
Year 11	92.3	7.7	4.6	3.2
Year 12	93.4	6.6	3.7	2.9
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

**Chart 3.4: Absence from post-primary school by year group, 2013/14**



### 3.3.3 Ethnicity

At 42.8% of the total half days, the rate of overall absence was higher for Irish Traveller children than for any other ethnic group. This compares with 6.4% for white children and 5.8% for children from a minority ethnic background. See Table 3.8 below. The absence rate for Irish Traveller children has increased marginally since 2012/13<sup>13</sup>, when it was 42.4%. In comparison, the absence rate for White children and those from a minority ethnic background has decreased since 2012/13, when it was 7.0% and 6.7%, respectively. See Table 3.8 overleaf.

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

**Table 3.8: Attendance at post-primary school by ethnicity, 2013/14**

Ethnicity	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
White	93.6	6.4	4.0	2.4
Minority Ethnic Background <sup>14</sup>	94.2	5.8	3.2	2.6
Irish Traveller	57.2	42.8	12.5	30.3
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

### 3.3.4 Home Language

Table 3.9 below shows the attendance of post-primary pupils for the top ten reported home languages. At 2.8%, the lowest absence rate is reported for pupils whose home language is Malayalam, while the highest absence rate (15.0%) is reported for pupils whose home language is Slovak.

**Table 3.9: Attendance at primary school by home language, 2013/14**

Home Language	% of total half days				Proportion of enrolments
	Attended	Absent	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	
English	93.6	6.4	4.0	2.4	95.7
Polish	90.6	9.4	5.2	4.2	1.2
Lithuanian	89.9	10.1	5.2	4.9	0.6
Portuguese	92.6	7.4	3.2	4.2	0.3
Irish	94.8	5.2	3.8	1.4	0.3
Tagalog/Filipino	96.1	3.9	2.4	1.5	0.3
Chinese (Cantonese)	96.2	3.8	2.4	1.4	0.2
Malayalam	97.2	2.8	1.8	1.0	0.1
Latvian	89.7	10.3	5.4	4.9	0.1
Slovak	85.0	15.0	7.1	8.0	0.1
Other <sup>15</sup>	92.4	7.6	3.7	4.0	1.1
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: The table is presented in descending order of proportion of enrolments. Some rates are based on a small number of enrolments, in which case the attendance of one pupil may significantly impact on that attendance rate. Home language is not known for 4 enrolments, representing 0.004% of the total enrolments.

<sup>14</sup> Minority Ethnic Background includes Black African, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Bangladeshi, Chinese/Hong Kong, Indian/Sri Lankan, Korean, Malaysian, Pakistani, Roma, Vietnamese, Mixed, Other

<sup>15</sup> 'Other' includes a further 64 languages. For a full list of the languages included here, see Table A2 in Annex 1.

### 3.3.5 Looked after children<sup>16</sup>

Rates of overall and unauthorised absence were notably higher for looked after children in post-primary schools (9.7% and 5.6% of the total half days respectively), compared with 6.5% and 2.4% for all other children. See Table 3.10 below.

**Table 3.10: Attendance of looked after children at post-primary school, 2013/14**

Looked after children	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Looked after children	90.3	9.7	4.1	5.6
Other	93.5	6.5	4.0	2.4
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>

### 3.3.6 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas<sup>17</sup> (NRAs)

At 9.2%, the overall absence rate for pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas was 3.2 percentage points higher than for pupils who did not live in an NRA. See Table 3.11 below.

**Table 3.11: Attendance rates for post-primary pupils living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, 2013/14**

NRA	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Neighbourhood Renewal Area	90.8	9.2	5.0	4.2
Other	94.0	6.0	3.9	2.1
<b>Post-primary rate</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>

### 3.3.7 Duration of absence

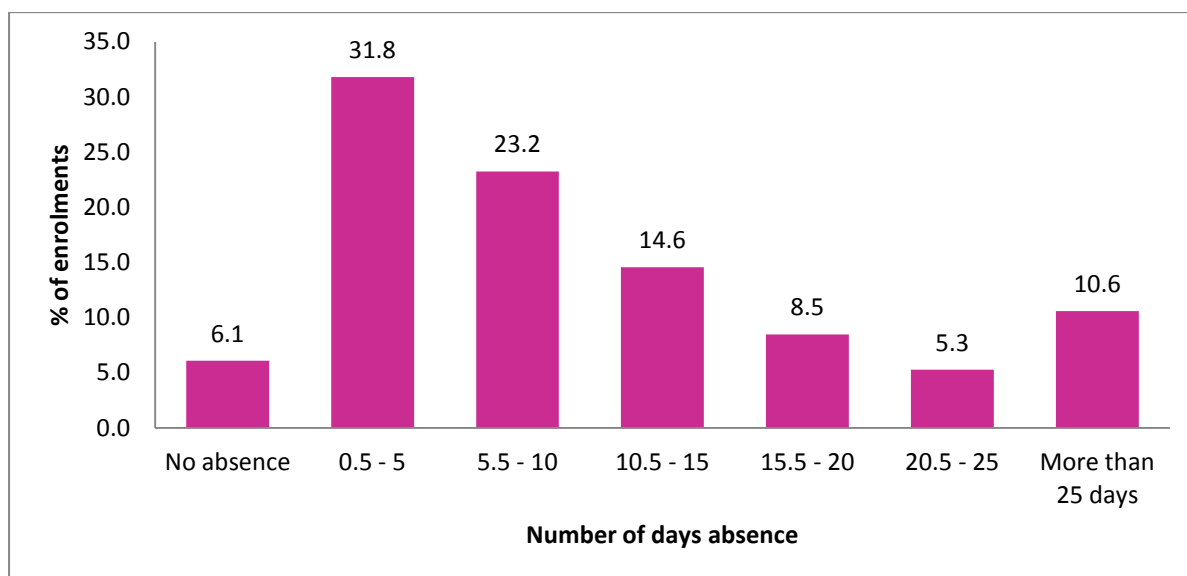
Chart 3.5 overleaf shows the number of days absence for post-primary pupils enrolled in 2013/14. Of all pupils enrolled in Year 8 to Year 12 at post-primary schools, 6.1% had no absence during 2013/14, an increase on the 4.9% that had full attendance in 2012/13<sup>18</sup>. At 31.8% of total enrolments, between '0.5 and 5.0 days' absence was the group reported most frequently in 2013/14; 10.6% of pupils enrolled were absent for more than 25 days, a decrease on the equivalent figure from 2012/13 (12.1%).

<sup>16</sup> 'Looked after children' includes children defined in 'The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995', i.e., 'a child who is looked after by an authority is a reference to a child who is: (a) in the care of the authority; or (b) provided with accommodation by the authority.' This includes children who are fostered.

<sup>17</sup> Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRAs) are neighbourhoods identified as experiencing the most severe multiple deprivation and have been chosen to receive support under the Department of Social Development People and Place strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

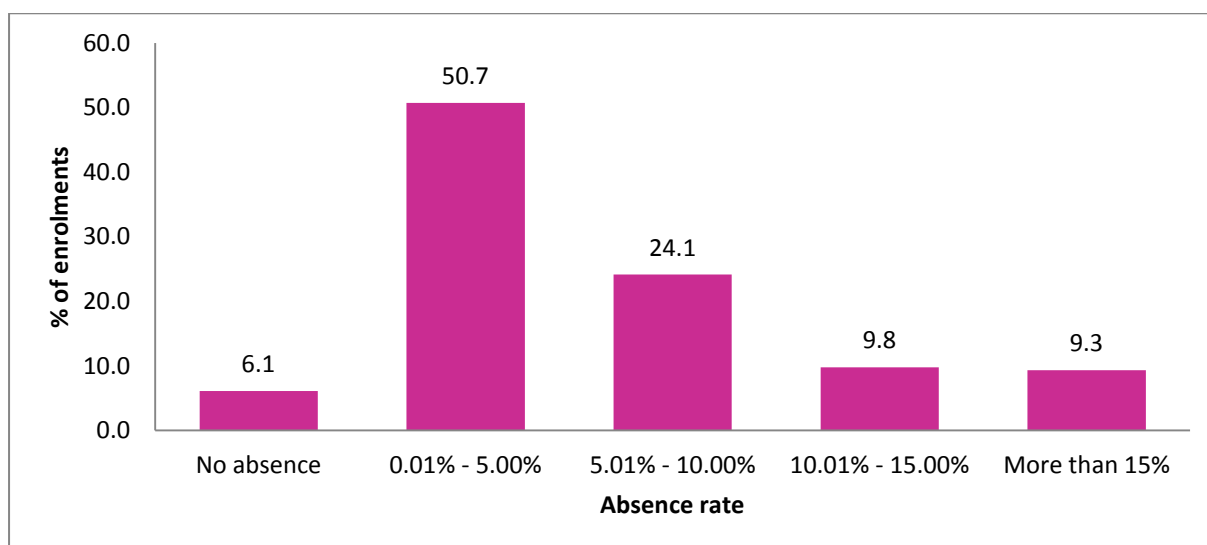
**Chart 3.5: Number of days absence, 2013/14**



### 3.3.8 Levels of absence

Looking at absence rates (number of half days absent as a proportion of all half days), 50.7% of post-primary pupils had an absence rate of between 0.01% and 5.00% of total half days. Of the total enrolments, 9.3% of pupils enrolled were absent for more than 15% of the total half days, a decrease on the 10.8% reported in 2012/13<sup>19</sup>. 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. See Chart 3.6 below.

**Chart 3.6: Percentage of enrolments at post-primary school by overall absence rates, 2013/14**



<sup>19</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

### 3.3.9 More than 15% absence

Table 3.12 provides an analysis of those pupils with an absence rate of more than 15%, along with a profile of all pupils for comparative purposes. As explained previously, this is one of the points when schools may consider referring a child to the Education Welfare Service for non-attendance. Analysis of pupils with an absence rate of more than 15% highlights that almost nine out of ten (87.7%) attended non-grammar schools and the largest group in this absence band were Year 11 pupils.

**Table 3.12: Characteristics of post-primary pupils with absence rates of more than 15% in 2013/14**

	School and pupil characteristics of those with >15% absence	School and pupil characteristics of all pupils
<b>SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
<b>School type</b>		
Non-grammar	87.7	60.0
Grammar	12.3	40.0
<b>Management type</b>		
Controlled	40.3	31.6
Catholic maintained	37.3	28.6
Voluntary	8.4	30.3
Other maintained	0.2	0.4
Controlled integrated	3.9	2.1
Grant Maintained Integrated	9.9	7.0
<b>Education and Library Board</b>		
Belfast (BELB)	18.7	19.3
Western (WELB)	19.4	17.6
North Eastern (NEELB)	21.0	22.1
South Eastern (SEELB)	19.6	17.6
Southern (SELB)	21.4	23.4
<b>PUPIL CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	51.8	51.0
Female	48.2	49.0
<b>Year Group</b>		
Year 8	10.6	19.3
Year 9	16.4	19.3
Year 10	22.4	19.8
Year 11	28.5	20.8
Year 12	22.1	20.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White	95.7	97.2
Minority Ethnic Background	2.3	2.5
Traveller	2.0	0.2



## Section 4: Special schools

### 4.1 Key Findings

In special schools in 2013/14, 9.7% of all half days were missed due to absence, comprising 6.4% authorised and 3.4% unauthorised absence (Table 1.1/Chart 1.1). The most common reason for absence in special schools was illness, which is an authorised absence and accounted for 4.4% of the total half days (45.2% of all absent half days) (Table 1.2).

### 4.2 School Level Analysis

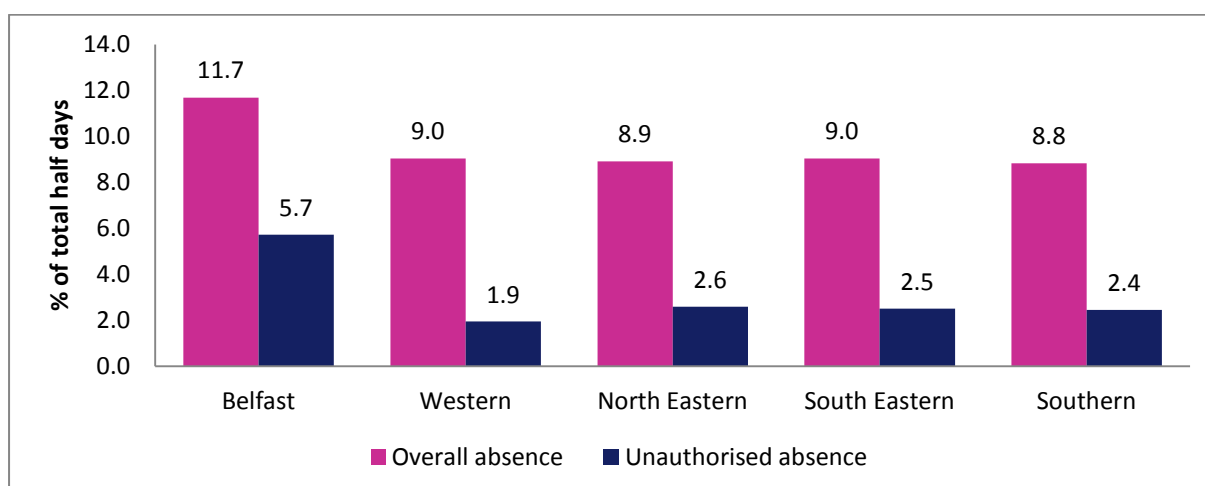
#### 4.2.1 Education and Library Board (ELB)

Overall absence was highest (11.7% of total half days) in Belfast Education and Library Board in 2013/14 and lowest in the Southern Education and Library Board special schools (8.8% of total half days). See Table 4.1/Chart 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Attendance at special school by Education and Library Board, 2013/14**

ELB	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Belfast	88.3	11.7	6.0	5.7
Western	91.0	9.0	7.1	1.9
North Eastern	91.1	8.9	6.3	2.6
South Eastern	91.0	9.0	6.5	2.5
Southern	91.2	8.8	6.4	2.4
<b>Special school rate</b>	<b>90.3</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>

**Chart 4.1: Absence from special school by Education and Library Board, 2013/14**



## 4.3 Pupil Level Analysis

### 4.3.1 Gender

Overall absence rates were higher for females attending special schools than for males (10.4% and 9.4% of the total half days, respectively). See Table 4.2 below.

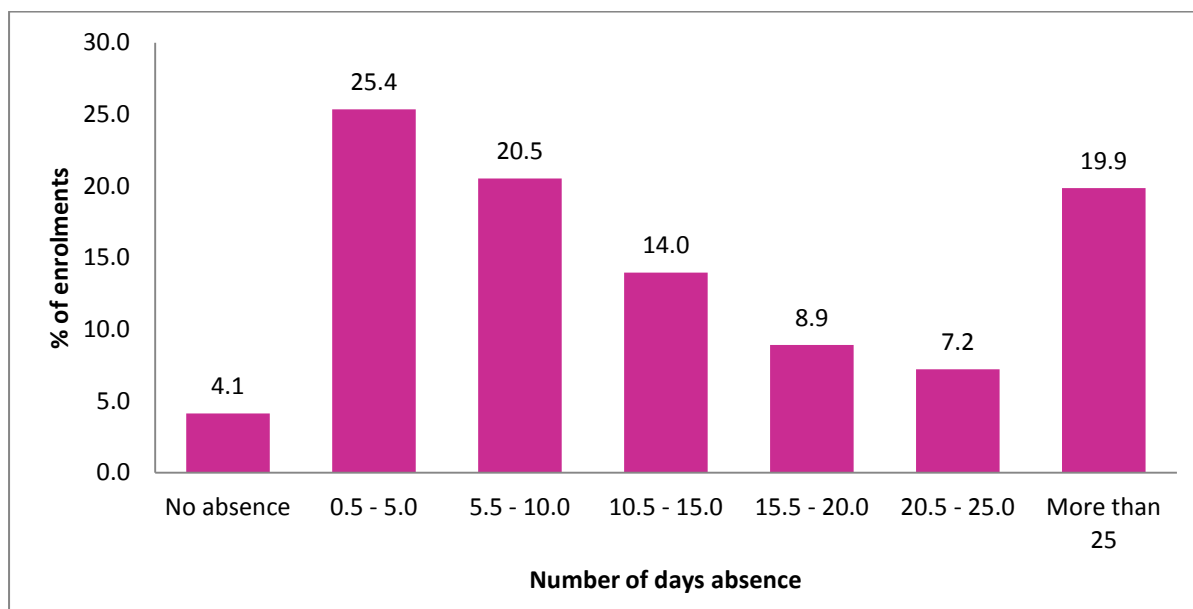
**Table 4.2: Attendance at special school by gender, 2013/14**

Gender	% of total half days			
	Attended	Overall absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Male	90.6	9.4	5.9	3.5
Female	89.6	10.4	7.3	3.1
<b>Special school rate</b>	<b>90.3</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>

### 4.3.2 Duration of absence

Of all pupils enrolled in special schools in 2013/14, 4.1% had no absence, an increase on the 3.0% that had full attendance in 2012/13<sup>20</sup>. In terms of days missed, just under one-fifth (19.9%) of pupils enrolled missed more than 25 days in the same year. This is a slight decrease on the equivalent 2012/13 figure of 21.7%. See Chart 4.2 below.

**Chart 4.2: Absence from special school by number of days absence, 2013/14**

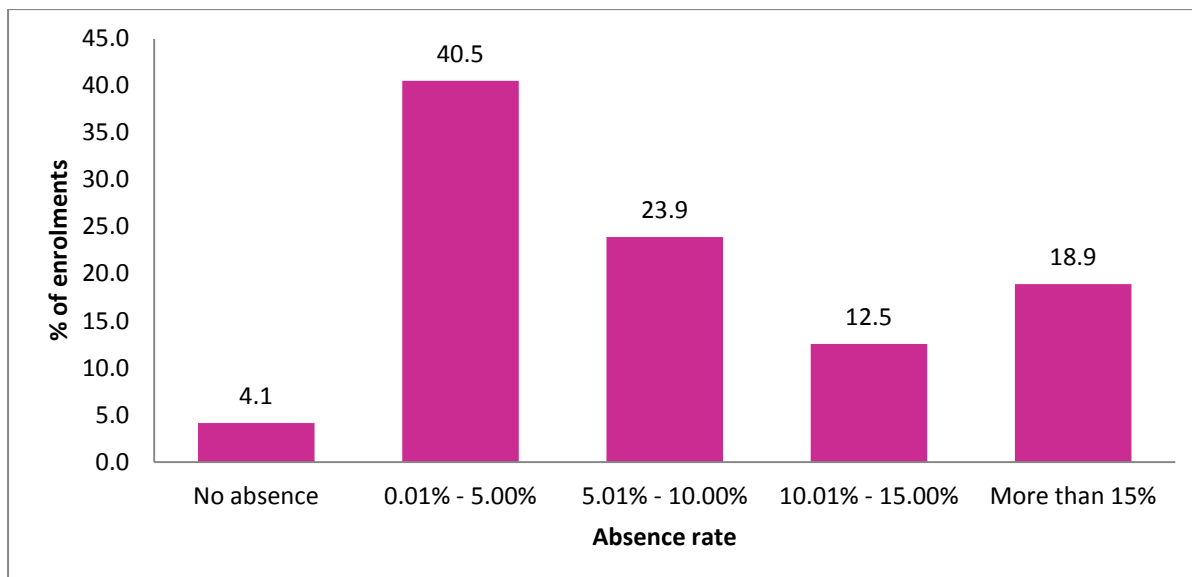


<sup>20</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

### 4.3.3 Levels of absence

Over two-fifths (40.5%) of pupils enrolled had an overall absence rate of between 0.01% and 5.00% of the total half days. Under one-fifth (18.9%) were absent for more than 15% of the total half days, a decrease on the equivalent 2012/13<sup>21</sup> figure of 21.1%.

**Chart 4.3: Percentage of enrolments at special school by overall absence rates, 2013/14**



<sup>21</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_at\\_grant-aided\\_primary\\_post-primary\\_and\\_special\\_schools\\_2012\\_13\\_summary\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_at_grant-aided_primary_post-primary_and_special_schools_2012_13_summary_statistics.pdf)

## Notes for 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. For general enquiries about National Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Enquiry Service on 0845 601 3034  
minicom: 01633 812399  
E-mail: [info@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:info@statistics.gov.uk)  
Fax: 01633 652747  
Letters: Customer Contact Centre, Office for National Statistics, Rm 1.101, Government Buildings, Cardiff Road, Newport, NP10 8XG
3. You can also find National Statistics on the Internet: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>
4. 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\\_1415.doc](http://www.deni.gov.uk/updated_data_collection_procedures_1415.doc)
5. The 2013/14 figures in this statistical release are based on school census information as at 10 October 2014. 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\\_r1.doc](http://www.deni.gov.uk/de_statement_on_statistical_revisions_r1.doc)
6. 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\\_data\\_confidentiality\\_and\\_access\\_r1.doc](http://www.deni.gov.uk/de_statement_on_data_confidentiality_and_access_r1.doc)

#### Definitions

7. Attendance or absence is measured for every pupil in half day sessions (am and pm). Absence can be either authorised or unauthorised.

### Attendance

In addition to actual attendance within the school premises, the following are also considered as attendance at school:

- 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)

### Notes

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

\* 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.

See [http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance\\_circular\\_2010\\_07\\_-\\_3rd\\_issue\\_-\\_september\\_2011-2.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/attendance_circular_2010_07_-_3rd_issue_-_september_2011-2.pdf) for further information.

## Data quality and coverage

8. Overall absence is considered to be a more reliable measure of absence than authorised and unauthorised absence. Both figures have been provided, however limitations in comparing rates of unauthorised and authorised absence should be noted - 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.
9. 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 yet provided'. This has resulted in higher rates of unauthorised absence being recorded as 'no reason yet provided' and lower figures for 'other' than in previous years.
10. 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 2013/14.
11. Attendance information was not available for five primary schools, two post-primary schools and two special schools which had closed prior to the data being collected. This accounts for 0.6%, 1.0% and 5.0% of the total primary schools, post-primary schools and special schools, respectively, and 0.5% of all pupils in Years 1 to 7 of primary school, 0.2% of all pupils in Years 8 to 12 of post-primary school, and 5.2% all pupils in special schools.
12. Comparative data was obtained from the following sources:  
Pupil Absence in Schools in England, Autumn Term 2013 and Spring Term 2014:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-autumn-2013-and-spring-2014>  
Absenteeism from Primary Schools, 2013/14 (Wales):  
<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/absenteeism-primary-schools/?lang=en>  
Absenteeism from Secondary Schools, 2013/14 (Wales):  
<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/absenteeism-secondary-schools/?lang=en>  

There are slight differences in definitions between the regions, for example, statistics for England include study leave in authorised absence while the DE statistics categorise it as present. Figures for England do not include Summer Term 2014 (when the majority of study leave is recorded), meaning it is still possible to compare their data with NI with the appropriate caveats. There are also methodological differences in collecting the information. For example, the statistics for England are reported on a term by term basis. Overall absence is considered to be a better measure of comparison, rather than authorised or unauthorised absence.
13. In some cases, percentages may not sum due to rounding.
14. 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.
15. 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.

16. For this publication, analysis by the home language of the pupil is included for the first time. This variable is the closest approximation available for Country of Birth.
17. 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.
18. 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**

19. 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 are used to monitor performance, benchmarking against other schools and areas, and to inform DE's corporate goal of "Raising standards for all". The DE policy area particularly concerned with attendance is Additional Educational Needs Team, which is responsible for related policies, guidance to schools in relation to attendance and monitoring non-attendance referrals. Attendance data feeds into other policies, for example it is a performance indicator in the Achieving Belfast and Derry Bright Futures programme and informs policies on traveller children. DE's Every School A Good School policy emphasises the importance of using data to promote improvement. Attendance data is being used within other departments, for example, it is a key indicator in the Education Domain of the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister has developed a suite of indicators to monitor performance against their 10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People. Attendance data feeds into one of the six high level outcomes – Enjoying, Learning and Achieving. It is in turn, also monitored at local level under the Regional Children's Services Plan.
20. Requests for further information should be addressed to:

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Balloo Road  
Bangor  
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BT19 7PR  
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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:  
<http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/facts-and-figures-new.htm>

Attendance at grant-aided primary, post-primary and special schools in Northern Ireland 2013/14: Detailed statistics

Feedback on this publication can be provided directly to Helen Irwin (contact details above) or via the feedback section on our website:

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/feedback.htm>



## Annex 1

**Table A1: List of languages included under 'Other' in Table 2.7**

<b>Countries recorded under 'Other'</b>
Afrikaans
Akan/Twi-Fante
Albanian/Shqip
Arabic
Bengali/Bangla/Sylheti
Edo/Bini
British Sign Language
Bulgarian
Chinese (Any Other)
Chinese (Cantonese)
Chinese (Hakka)
Creole English
Creole French
Czech
Danish
Dutch/Flemish
Estonian
Fijian
Finnish
French
German
Greek
Gujarati
Hindi
Hungarian
Igbo
Icelandic
Italian
Japanese
Kannada
Korean
Kurdish
Luganda/Ganda
Macedonian
Marathi
Malay/Indonesian
Maltese
Ndebele
Nepali
Oriya

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Other Language
Pashto/Pakhto
Pahari/Himachali (India)
Panjabi
Persian/Farsi
Romany
Romanian
Russian
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian
Sinhala/Sinhalese
Slovenian
Shona
Somali
Spanish
Swahili/Kiswahili
Swedish
Tamil
Telugu
Tetum
Thai
Tswana/Setswana
Turkish
Ukrainian
Urdu
Vietnamese
Welsh/Cymraeg
Xhosa
Yoruba
Zulu

**Table A2: List of languages included under 'Other' in Table 3.9**

<b>Countries recorded under 'Other'</b>
Afrikaans
Albanian/Shqip
Arabic
Bengali/Bangla/Sylheti
Edo/Bini
British Sign Language
Bulgarian
Chinese (Any Other)
Chinese (Hokkien/Fujianese)
Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua)
Creole French
Czech
Dutch/Flemish
Estonian
Fijian
Finnish
French
German
Greek
Gujarati
Hebrew
Hindi
Hungarian
Igbo
Icelandic
Italian
Japanese
Kannada
Korean
Kurdish
Macedonian
Marathi
Malay/Indonesian
Nepali
Norwegian
Other Language
Pashto/Pakhto
Pahari/Himachali (India)
Panjabi
Persian/Farsi

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Romany
Romanian
Russian
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian
Sinhala/Sinhalese
Slovenian
Shona
Somali
Spanish
Swahili/Kiswahili
Swedish
Tamil
Telugu
Tetum
Thai
Tswana/Setswana
Turkish
Ukrainian
Urdu
Vietnamese
Xhosa
Yiddish
Yoruba
Zulu