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The purpose of this statistical bulletin is to provide results of the annual data collection relating to the uptake of school meals in Northern Ireland schools in 2015/16.

## Key points:

- Over 185,000 school meals, both free and paid, were taken by pupils on census day, which equates to a school meals uptake level of $60.6 \%$ by pupils present for lunch on the day.
- The school meals uptake level for $2015 / 16$ is 0.9 percentage points higher than the previous year.
- The number of pupils entitled to free school meals has surpassed the 100,000 mark; at 101,063 this represents $30.6 \%$ of pupils.
- The uptake level for free school meals by entitled pupils is $81.1 \%$; this represents an increase of half a percentage point from the previous year.


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## Introduction

The purpose of this statistical bulletin is to provide results of the latest annual data collection relating to the uptake of school meals in Northern Ireland schools, commonly known as the school meals census. The information was collected with a reference point of 9 October 2015 and relates to all grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland.

Data collected through the school meals census are used by policy teams within the Department of Education and by other users across the education service, most notably by the Education Authority. The data are also used to inform a number of Assembly questions. The Department is responsible for formulating and developing policy and the associated financial arrangements in relation to school meals.

## Section 1: Uptake of school meals (free and paid)

- Over 185,000 school meals, both free and paid, were taken by pupils on census day. Pupils not taking a school meal are making alternative arrangements for lunch, which can include bringing their own food into school. Around $40 \%$ of meals fall into this category (Tables 1 and 2).
- The school meals uptake level by pupils present for lunch on census day is $60.6 \%$. The 2015/16 school meals uptake level is 0.9 percentage points higher than the previous year (Table 3).
- There is variation in the level of uptake across school types with nursery schools having the highest uptake at $94.6 \%$. This is followed by special schools with $69.9 \%$ and secondary schools with $67.9 \%$. Primary/preparatory schools and grammar schools have similar levels of uptake with $57.8 \%$ and $57.5 \%$ respectively (Table 3).

Figure 1: Uptake of school meals (free and paid), by school type: 2012/13-2015/16


## Section 2: Entitlement to free school meals

- Across all school types, including special schools, 101,063 pupils were entitled to free school meals. This represents $30.6 \%$ of the total school enrolment, which is an increase of 3,545 (3.6\%) on the previous year (Table 5).
- There has been an increase in the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals in most school types; with secondary schools showing the greatest percentage point increase going from $37.1 \%$ in $2014 / 15$ to $39.9 \%$ this year. This increase is likely to relate to the extension of the Working Tax Credit free school meal criterion to postprimary pupils in September 2014. Nursery schools have seen an increase from $35.6 \%$ of pupils entitled last year compared to $37.9 \%$ this year, grammar schools have increased from 12.1\% in 2014/15 to 13.9\% this year and special schools have seen a smaller increase from $52.5 \%$ to $53.3 \%$. Primary and preparatory schools are the only school type that has not seen an increase, going from 31.7\% in 2014/15 to 31.6\% this year.

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type: 2012/13-2015/16


## Section 3: Uptake of free school meals

- There were 82,002 free school meals taken by pupils across all school types, this is an increase of 3,442 on the previous year (Table 8). This represents 44.3\% of all meals provided by schools, which is an increase from 43.5\% the previous year.
- When considering the number of free school meals provided as a proportion of the number of pupils entitled to free school meals, uptake of free school meals was $81.1 \%^{1}$. This is an increase of half a percentage point from the previous year (Table 8).
- Primary and post primary schools have seen a modest increases of not more than one percentage point in their level of uptake of free school meals compared to the previous year. Nursery schools have seen a higher level of increase, going from $60.3 \%$ in 2014/15 to $65.8 \%$ in 2015/16. Special schools are the only school type that has seen a decrease in the level of free school meals uptake, going from 84.5\% last year to $81.2 \%$ this year.

Figure 3: Uptake of free school meals, by school type: 2012/13-2015/16


[^0]
## Notes for readers

## Official Statistics

1. This is an Official Statistics publication. Official statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
2. For general enquiries about the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Enquiry Service on 08456013034
minicom: 01633815044
E-mail: info@statistics.gov.uk
Fax: 01633652747
Letters: Customer Contact Centre, Room D265, Office for National Statistics, Cardiff Road, Newport, NP10 8XG
3. You can also find Official Statistics on the Internet: www.statistics.gov.uk

## Changes to Statistical Bulletin

4. On 1 April 2015, the Education Authority became operational and took over all of the roles and responsibilities of the former Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and the Staff Commission. It is no longer appropriate to include analyses by ELB as these entities no longer exist. All references and analyses by ELB in commentary, charts and tables have therefore been removed. The structure of statistical tables has been reworked to take account of the changes, resulting in six tables fewer.

## School meal provision

5. The Education Authority is responsible for the day to day operation of the school meals service in all grant-aided schools, with the exception of voluntary grammar schools and grant-maintained integrated schools, where the responsibility lies with the Trustees/Boards of Governors.
6. The service is provided in line with the Approved Arrangements for the Provision of Milk, Meals and Related Facilities made under Articles 58 and 59 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 drawn up by the Department of Education (DE), which will be referred to as 'the Arrangements' in the remainder of this document.
(https://www.deni.gov.uk/articles/school-milk-and-meals-background)
7. Two main types of school meal service exist:

- A traditional meal comprising a main course and dessert; and
- A cash cafeteria service, where items are priced separately.


## Free school meal provision

8. With regard to free school meal provision the following terms are used:

- Eligibility: When a pupil within a family meets one of the criteria contained in paragraph 6 of the Arrangements for the provision of milk, meals and related facilities.
- Entitlement: When an application for free school meals is made on behalf of a pupil and the application is successful.
- Uptake: When a pupil who is entitled to free school meals makes use of the free school meal provision by taking a free school meal.

9. Certain categories of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Details of the qualifying criteria are contained in paragraph 6 of the Arrangements. The Education Authority is responsible for administering the award of free school meals. Entitlement to free school meals is widely used as an indicator of deprivation.
10.From the start of the 2010/11 school year the eligibility criteria for free school meals was extended to include full-time nursery and primary school children whose parents are in receipt of Working Tax Credit and have an annual taxable income which does not exceed $£ 16,190$ (in 2015/16). The new criterion was introduced on a phased basis with nursery, foundation stage and key stage 1 pupils eligible from September 2010. This was extended in September 2011 to key stage 2 pupils. It was further extended to post-primary school pupils from September 2014.

## School Meals Census

11.The main statistics in this statistical bulletin have been derived from the annual school meals data collection, commonly known as the school meals census. The data collection for the 2015/16 school meals census was undertaken by the Department, with data collected directly from each grant-aided school. Prior to 2012/13 the former ELBs were responsible for the collection of data in relation to schools in the controlled and maintained sectors and provided a collated return for their area to the Department.
12.The 2015/16 school meals census figures in this statistical bulletin are based on information as at $9^{\text {th }}$ October 2015². Some tables in this statistical bulletin include data on school enrolments and the number of pupils entitled to free school meals. Data on school enrolments and free school meal entitlement (FSME) were collected as part of the annual school enrolments data collection exercise and are also based on information as at $9^{\text {th }}$ October 2015.
13. In nursery and primary schools, new pupils often have a phased introduction to school with some pupils not starting school until late October. Also new pupils may have a shorter day initially, without a lunch break. The school meals census date is usually the Friday of the first full week in October. This means that not all pupils will have started school, or be staying for lunch break. While pupils due to start later in the month will be counted in school enrolment, and free school meal entitlement figures, they will not be present to take a meal and will not therefore be counted in school meals census figures. Figures presented for free school meal uptake in nursery and primary schools, but particularly nursery, will therefore be lower than would be the case with a later census date. In 2012/13 the school meals census date was delayed and took place on 19th October 2012. This is likely to explain the higher uptake of free school meals in nursery schools in 2012/13, which returned to previous levels in 2013/14.
14.From 2012/13, data collection and validation activities have been carried out by the Department rather than by each former Education and Library Board. Some changes were made to the methodology employed and data collected from schools in order to facilitate validation of the data and to improve the clarity of the information presented. These changes mainly affected the count of pupils present used in the calculation of school meal uptake figures, the number of equated paid meals and the number of pupils making other arrangements. For this reason caution should be used in drawing any comparison between data from 2012/13 onwards and data from previous years.

[^1]15. In schools with a cash cafeteria system, school meal numbers are calculated from lunchtime income. Schools also include income from sales at morning break (and in previous years income from breakfast clubs may also have been included - this was excluded from the 2012/13 data collection onwards). The cost of a fixed price meal is used to convert income from lunch and break-time sales to equated meal numbers. Equated meal numbers will not exactly match pupils present for meals.
16. There were 7,596 pupils who were recorded as being present on census day but schools indicated they were not availing of a school lunch break. These pupils were mainly in nursery and primary schools. This will include part-time nursery pupils and primary pupils whose school day, by census date, did not yet include a lunch break. From the 2012/13 school meals census data onwards these pupils have been excluded from the count of pupils present for the purposes of calculating uptake of school meals.
17. There were 12 schools indicating that they do not provide a school meals service. Of these schools 9 are nursery schools where none of the pupils have a lunch break included as part of their hours of attendance. A total of 53 pupils at the remaining three schools do receive a lunch break. These 53 pupils are recorded as 'making other lunch arrangements' and are included in the count of pupils present for lunch when calculating percentage uptake of school meals (Tables 3 and 7).
18.For the 2013/14 data collection the categories of 'other lunch arrangements' and 'taking own food' were merged together to create a 'pupils making other lunch arrangements' category, which includes pupils taking their own food. This was due to difficulties, expressed by some schools, in capturing accurate data for the categories previously used.
19. Free school meal entitlement (FSME) data for special schools was not validated prior to 2014/15.
20.Figures for primary schools may include nursery and/or reception pupils attending primary schools and preparatory departments.
21.Information presenting uptake of school meals in Northern Ireland, England and Scotland was has been discontinued as policy differences between the regions and availability of up-to-date information for other regions make comparisons difficult.
22. The figures in this statistical bulletin may be subject to minor revision and these will be notified in accordance with our revisions policy. This can be accessed at https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Statistical\ Revisions .pdf
23. More detail about the collection of data on school meals can be found on the DE website. This can be accessed at https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/school-meals-census-information-and-procedures-2015-16.pdf
24.The Statistics and Research section of the DE website (www.deni.gov.uk) also presents data from the school meals census. Statistics on school enrolments, school performance, pupil attendance, teacher numbers, pupil:teacher ratios, school leaver destinations and qualifications may also be accessed via the website.

## General

25.The following symbols are used in the tables in this statistical bulletin:

* = Relates to fewer than 5 cases
\# = Number (5 or more) suppressed to prevent disclosure of small numbers elsewhere
- = Indicates no schools in this category


## Further enquiries

26.For more details about the statistics contained in this statistical bulletin, to request further information and analysis, or to provide any feedback on this publication please contact:

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27.DE Statistical Bulletins can be accessed on the DE website (www.deni.gov.uk) under the Statistics and Research section.
28. Press enquiries should be made to the Department's Press Office at the same address, telephone (028) 91279207.

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Table 1: Number and type of meals taken on school meals census day, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

| School Type | Management Type | Meals provided by school |  |  | Other meals ${ }^{1}$ | Total ${ }^{1}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Paid school meals ${ }^{2}$ | Free school meals | All school meals ${ }^{2}$ | Pupils making other lunch arrangements (including own food) |  |
| Nursery ${ }^{3}$ | Controlled | 1,084 | 807 | 1,891 | 64 | 1,955 |
|  | RC Maintained | 544 | 666 | 1,210 | 112 | 1,322 |
|  | TOTAL | 1,628 | 1,473 | 3,101 | 176 | 3,277 |
| Primary ${ }^{4}$ and Preparatory Departments | Controlled | 21,662 | 19,185 | 40,847 | 35,768 | 76,615 |
|  | Voluntary | 1,089 | 20 | 1,109 | 490 | 1,599 |
|  | RC Maintained | 23,346 | 24,081 | 47,427 | 28,847 | 76,274 |
|  | Other Maintained | 793 | 1,306 | 2,099 | 1,136 | 3,235 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 835 | 1,056 | 1,891 | 1,886 | 3,777 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 1,645 | 1,353 | 2,998 | 2,690 | 5,688 |
|  | TOTAL | 49,370 | 47,001 | 96,371 | 70,817 | 167,188 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | Controlled | 8,310 | 7,108 | 15,418 | 9,157 | 24,575 |
|  | RC Maintained | 11,149 | 13,110 | 24,259 | 9,806 | 34,065 |
|  | Other Maintained | 100 | 281 | 381 | 207 | 588 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 458 | 648 | 1,106 | 1,135 | 2,241 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 3,475 | 2,951 | 6,426 | 2,012 | 8,438 |
|  | TOTAL | 23,492 | 24,098 | 47,590 | 22,317 | 69,907 |
| Grammar | Controlled | 6,558 | 1,372 | 7,930 | 6,366 | 14,296 |
|  | Voluntary | 21,219 | 5,819 | 27,038 | 19,426 | 46,464 |
|  | TOTAL | 27,777 | 7,191 | 34,968 | 25,792 | 60,760 |
| Post-Primary Total |  | 51,269 | 31,289 | 82,558 | 48,109 | 130,667 |
| Special | Controlled | 986 | 2,061 | 3,047 | 1,332 | 4,379 |
|  | RC Maintained | 22 | 157 | 179 | 40 | 219 |
|  | Other Maintained | 16 | 21 | 37 | 32 | 69 |
|  | TOTAL | 1,024 | 2,239 | 3,263 | 1,404 | 4,667 |
| All grant-aided schools | Controlled | 38,600 | 30,533 | 69,133 | 52,687 | 121,820 |
|  | Voluntary | 22,308 | 5,839 | 28,147 | 19,916 | 48,063 |
|  | RC Maintained | 35,061 | 38,014 | 73,075 | 38,805 | 111,880 |
|  | Other Maintained | 909 | 1,608 | 2,517 | 1,375 | 3,892 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,293 | 1,704 | 2,997 | 3,021 | 6,018 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 5,120 | 4,304 | 9,424 | 4,702 | 14,126 |
|  | GRAND TOTAL | 103,291 | 82,002 | 185,293 | 120,506 | 305,799 |

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Excludes pupils present on school meals census day whose school day did not include a lunch break, including part-time nursery pupils and some P1 pupils (see background note 16 ).
${ }^{2}$ Paid meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income.
Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).
${ }^{3}$ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{4}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 2: Percentage and type of meals taken on school meals census day, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

| School Type | Management Type | Meals provided by school |  |  | Other meals ${ }^{1}$ | Total ${ }^{1}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Paid school meals ${ }^{2}$ \% | Free school meals \% | All school meals ${ }^{2}$ \% | Pupils making other lunch arrangements (including own food) \% |  |
| Nursery ${ }^{3}$ | Controlled | 55.4 | 41.3 | 96.7 | 3.3 | 100.0 |
|  | RC Maintained | 41.1 | 50.4 | 91.5 | 8.5 | 100.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 49.7 | 44.9 | 94.6 | 5.4 | 100.0 |
| Primary ${ }^{4}$ and Preparatory Departments | Controlled | 28.3 | 25.0 | 53.3 | 46.7 | 100.0 |
|  | Voluntary | 68.1 | 1.3 | 69.4 | 30.6 | 100.0 |
|  | RC Maintained | 30.6 | 31.6 | 62.2 | 37.8 | 100.0 |
|  | Other Maintained | 24.5 | 40.4 | 64.9 | 35.1 | 100.0 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 22.1 | 28.0 | 50.1 | 49.9 | 100.0 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 28.9 | 23.8 | 52.7 | 47.3 | 100.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 29.5 | 28.1 | 57.6 | 42.4 | 100.0 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | Controlled | 33.8 | 28.9 | 62.7 | 37.3 | 100.0 |
|  | RC Maintained | 32.7 | 38.5 | 71.2 | 28.8 | 100.0 |
|  | Other Maintained | 17.0 | 47.8 | 64.8 | 35.2 | 100.0 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 20.4 | 28.9 | 49.4 | 50.6 | 100.0 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 41.2 | 35.0 | 76.2 | 23.8 | 100.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 33.6 | 34.5 | 68.1 | 31.9 | 100.0 |
| Grammar | Controlled | 45.9 | 9.6 | 55.5 | 44.5 | 100.0 |
|  | Voluntary | 45.7 | 12.5 | 58.2 | 41.8 | 100.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 45.7 | 11.8 | 57.6 | 42.4 | 100.0 |
| Post-Primary Total |  | 39.2 | 23.9 | 63.2 | 36.8 | 100.0 |
| Special | Controlled | 22.5 | 47.1 | 69.6 | 30.4 | 100.0 |
|  | RC Maintained | 10.0 | 71.7 | 81.7 | 18.3 | 100.0 |
|  | Other Maintained | 23.2 | 30.4 | 53.6 | 46.4 | 100.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 21.9 | 48.0 | 69.9 | 30.1 | 100.0 |
| All grant-aided schools | Controlled | 31.7 | 25.1 | 56.8 | 43.2 | 100.0 |
|  | Voluntary | 46.4 | 12.1 | 58.6 | 41.4 | 100.0 |
|  | RC Maintained | 31.3 | 34.0 | 65.3 | 34.7 | 100.0 |
|  | Other Maintained | 23.4 | 41.3 | 64.7 | 35.3 | 100.0 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 21.5 | 28.3 | 49.8 | 50.2 | 100.0 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 36.2 | 30.5 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 100.0 |
|  | GRAND TOTAL | 33.8 | 26.8 | 60.6 | 39.4 | 100.0 |

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Excludes pupils present on school meals census day whose school day did not include a lunch break, including part-time nursery pupils and some P1 pupils (see background note 16 ).
${ }^{2}$ Paid meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income
Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).
${ }^{3}$ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{4}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 3: Uptake of school meals (free and paid) - number and percentage of pupils present for lunch on school meals census day, by school type and school management type: 2012/13-2015/16

| School Type | Management Type | 2012/13 |  | 2013/14 |  | 2014/15 |  | 2015/16 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | School meals provided ${ }^{1}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Uptake }^{2} \\ \% \end{gathered}$ | School meals provided ${ }^{1}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Uptake }^{2} \\ \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | School meals provided ${ }^{1}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Uptake }^{2} \\ \% \end{gathered}$ | School meals provided ${ }^{1}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Uptake }^{2} \\ \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Nursery ${ }^{3}$ | Controlled | 1,934 | 96.7 | 1,740 | 97.2 | 1,745 | 96.2 | 1,891 | 96.7 |
|  | RC Maintained | 1,254 | 93.0 | 1,133 | 95.8 | 1,177 | 93.3 | 1,210 | 91.5 |
|  | TOTAL | 3,188 | 95.2 | 2,873 | 96.6 | 2,922 | 95.0 | 3,101 | 94.6 |
| Primary ${ }^{4}$ and Preparatory Departments | Controlled | 37,424 | 53.0 | 39,505 | 54.3 | 39,909 | 53.7 | 40,847 | 53.5 |
|  | Voluntary | 1,113 | 67.8 | 1,035 | 68.1 | 1,068 | 67.2 | 1,109 | 69.7 |
|  | RC Maintained | 43,332 | 60.1 | 44,652 | 60.9 | 46,186 | 61.7 | 47,427 | 62.3 |
|  | Other Maintained | 1,653 | 60.7 | 1,833 | 64.1 | 1,980 | 65.2 | 2,099 | 64.9 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,473 | 44.7 | 1,628 | 47.9 | 1,813 | 50.6 | 1,891 | 50.1 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 2,555 | 47.3 | 2,707 | 49.7 | 2,776 | 49.6 | 2,998 | 52.7 |
|  | TOTAL | 87,550 | 56.2 | 91,360 | 57.4 | 93,732 | 57.5 | 96,371 | 57.8 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | Controlled | 14,738 | 55.3 | 14,119 | 54.4 | 15,337 | 61.4 | 15,418 | 62.8 |
|  | RC Maintained | 22,666 | 61.4 | 22,071 | 60.9 | 24,365 | 68.4 | 24,259 | 70.7 |
|  | Other Maintained | 316 | 63.5 | 246 | 47.1 | 358 | 65.1 | 381 | 66.4 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 914 | 38.7 | 825 | 36.7 | 901 | 40.8 | 1,106 | 49.1 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 5,326 | 62.0 | 5,516 | 63.8 | 6,231 | 72.6 | 6,426 | 76.4 |
|  | TOTAL | 43,960 | 58.6 | 42,777 | 58.1 | 47,192 | 65.6 | 47,590 | 67.9 |
| Grammar | Controlled | 6,831 | 46.8 | 7,046 | 48.4 | 7,787 | 51.8 | 7,930 | 55.4 |
|  | Voluntary | 23,632 | 51.9 | 24,050 | 52.9 | 25,787 | 57.3 | 27,038 | 58.2 |
|  | TOTAL | 30,463 | 50.7 | 31,096 | 51.8 | 33,574 | 55.9 | 34,968 | 57.5 |
| Post-Primary | TOTAL | 74,423 | 55.1 | 73,873 | 55.3 | 80,766 | 61.2 | 82,558 | 63.1 |
| Special | Controlled | 2,686 | 67.6 | 2,877 | 70.4 | 3,044 | 70.2 | 3,047 | 69.6 |
|  | RC Maintained | 157 | 83.1 | 163 | 80.7 | 175 | 86.6 | 179 | 81.7 |
|  | Other Maintained | 30 | 73.2 | 38 | 97.4 | 40 | 100.0 | 37 | 53.6 |
|  | TOTAL | 2,873 | 68.4 | 3,078 | 71.2 | 3,259 | 71.2 | 3,263 | 69.9 |
| All grant-aided schools | Controlled | 63,613 | 54.0 | 65,287 | 54.8 | 67,822 | 56.3 | 69,133 | 56.8 |
|  | Voluntary | 24,745 | 52.5 | 25,085 | 53.4 | 26,855 | 57.7 | 28,147 | 58.6 |
|  | RC Maintained | 67,409 | 61.0 | 68,019 | 61.3 | 71,903 | 64.2 | 73,075 | 65.2 |
|  | Other Maintained | 1,999 | 61.3 | 2,117 | 61.9 | 2,378 | 65.5 | 2,517 | 64.9 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 2,387 | 42.2 | 2,453 | 43.4 | 2,714 | 46.8 | 2,997 | 49.7 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 7,881 | 56.3 | 8,223 | 58.3 | 9,007 | 63.5 | 9,424 | 66.9 |
|  | GRAND TOTAL | 168,034 | 56.3 | 171,184 | 57.0 | 180,679 | 59.7 | 185,293 | 60.6 |

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income. Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).
${ }^{2}$ Uptake is expressed as the number of school meals provided (free and paid) as a percentage of the number of pupils present for lunch on census day. Pupils present for lunch excludes pupils present on school meals census day whose school day did not include a lunch break, including part-time nursery pupils and some P 1 pupils (see background note 16 ).
${ }^{3}$ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{4}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 4: Number and percentage of school meals provided (free and paid) by type of meal provision, school type and school management type: 2015/16

| School Type | Management Type | Traditional meals |  | Cash cafeteria meals ${ }^{1}$ |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Number | \% | Number | \% |
| Nursery ${ }^{2}$ | Controlled | 1,891 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
|  | RC Maintained | 1,210 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 3,101 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Primary ${ }^{3}$ and Preparatory Departments | Controlled | 40,236 | 98.5 | 611 | 1.5 |
|  | Voluntary | 962 | 86.7 | 147 | 13.3 |
|  | RC Maintained | 45,883 | 96.7 | 1,544 | 3.3 |
|  | Other Maintained | 2,099 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,891 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 2,998 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 94,069 | 97.6 | 2,302 | 2.4 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | Controlled | 882 | 5.7 | 14,536 | 94.3 |
|  | RC Maintained | 1,918 | 7.9 | 22,341 | 92.1 |
|  | Other Maintained | 292 | 76.6 | 89 | 23.4 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 0 | 0.0 | 1,106 | 100.0 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 418 | 6.5 | 6,008 | 93.5 |
|  | TOTAL | 3,510 | 7.4 | 44,080 | 92.6 |
| Grammar | Controlled | 0 | 0.0 | 7,930 | 100.0 |
|  | Voluntary | 2,210 | 8.2 | 24,828 | 91.8 |
|  | TOTAL | 2,210 | 6.3 | 32,758 | 93.7 |
| Post-Primary Total |  | 5,720 | 6.9 | 76,838 | 93.1 |
| Special | Controlled | 2,905 | 95.3 | 142 | 4.7 |
|  | RC Maintained | 157 | 87.7 | 22 | 12.3 |
|  | Other Maintained | 37 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 3,099 | 95.0 | 164 | 5.0 |
| All grant-aided schools | Controlled | 45,914 | 66.4 | 23,219 | 33.6 |
|  | Voluntary | 3,172 | 11.3 | 24,975 | 88.7 |
|  | RC Maintained | 49,168 | 67.3 | 23,907 | 32.7 |
|  | Other Maintained | 2,428 | 96.5 | 89 | 3.5 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,891 | 63.1 | 1,106 | 36.9 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 3,416 | 36.2 | 6,008 | 63.8 |
|  | GRAND TOTAL | 105,989 | 57.2 | 79,304 | 42.8 |

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Cash cafeteria meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income. Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15)
${ }^{2}$ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{3}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 5: Number and percentage ${ }^{1}$ of pupils entitled to free school meals by school type: 2012/13-2015/16


Source: NI school census 2011/12-2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Percentages express the number of pupils entitled to free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of the total pupil enrolment in the same category.
${ }^{2}$ As school meals are not universally available to children in pre-school education, receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's
Allowance is used as a proxy for free school meal entitlement. Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{3}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools
${ }^{4}$ Prior to 2014/15 free school meal entitlement data for special schools was not validated.

Table 6: Number and percentage ${ }^{1}$ of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

| School Type | Managment Type | Pupils entitled to free school meals | Free school meal entitlement $\%$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Nursery ${ }^{2}$ | Controlled | 1,300 | 31.6 |
|  | RC Maintained | 940 | 52.5 |
|  | TOTAL | 2,240 | 37.9 |
| Primary ${ }^{3}$ and <br> Preparatory <br> Department | Controlled | 23,776 | 29.0 |
|  | Voluntary | 22 | 1.3 |
|  | RC Maintained | 27,937 | 34.5 |
|  | Other Maintained | 1,459 | 42.3 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,389 | 35.6 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 1,682 | 27.0 |
|  | TOTAL | 56,265 | 31.6 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | Controlled | 9,493 | 34.7 |
|  | RC Maintained | 16,702 | 44.1 |
|  | Other Maintained | 400 | 64.5 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 928 | 37.4 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 3,467 | 36.8 |
|  | TOTAL | 30,990 | 39.9 |
| Grammar | Controlled | 1,760 | 11.8 |
|  | Voluntary | 7,051 | 14.6 |
|  | TOTAL | 8,811 | 13.9 |
| Post-Primary | total | 39,801 | 28.2 |
| Special | Controlled | 2,551 | 52.3 |
|  | RC Maintained | 173 | 76.9 |
|  | Other Maintained | 33 | 44.6 |
|  | TOTAL | 2,757 | 53.3 |
| All grant-aided schools (including special schools) | Controlled | 38,880 | 29.2 |
|  | Voluntary | 7,073 | 14.1 |
|  | RC Maintained | 45,752 | 37.8 |
|  | Other Maintained | 1,892 | 45.7 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 2,317 | 36.3 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 5,149 | 32.9 |
|  | GRAND TOTAL | 101,063 | 30.6 |

Source: NI school census 2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Percentages express the number of pupils entitled to free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of the total pupil enrolment in the same category

${ }^{3}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools.

Table 7: Number and percentage of pupils taking free school meals as a proportion of all school meals provided and as a proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

| School Type | Management Type | Free school meals taken by pupils present | Free meals as a proportion of all school meals provided ${ }^{1} \%$ | Free school meals taken as a proportion of pupils entitled \% |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Nursery ${ }^{2}$ | Controlled | 807 | 42.7 | 62.1 |
|  | RC Maintained | 666 | 55.0 | 70.9 |
|  | TOTAL | 1,473 | 47.5 | 65.8 |
| Primary ${ }^{3}$ and Preparatory Department | Controlled | 19,185 | 47.0 | 80.7 |
|  | Voluntary | 20 | 1.8 | 90.9 |
|  | RC Maintained | 24,081 | 50.8 | 86.2 |
|  | Other Maintained | 1,306 | 62.2 | 89.5 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,056 | 55.8 | 76.0 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 1,353 | 45.1 | 80.4 |
|  | TOTAL | 47,001 | 48.8 | 83.5 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | Controlled | 7,108 | 46.1 | 74.9 |
|  | RC Maintained | 13,110 | 54.0 | 78.5 |
|  | Other Maintained | 281 | 73.8 | 70.3 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 648 | 58.6 | 69.8 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 2,951 | 45.9 | 85.1 |
|  | TOTAL | 24,098 | 50.6 | 77.8 |
| Grammar | Controlled | 1,372 | 17.3 | 78.0 |
|  | Voluntary | 5,819 | 21.5 | 82.5 |
|  | TOTAL | 7,191 | 20.6 | 81.6 |
| Post-Primary | TOTAL | 31,289 | 37.9 | 78.6 |
| Special | Controlled | 2,061 | 67.6 | 80.8 |
|  | RC Maintained | 157 | 87.7 | 90.8 |
|  | Other Maintained | 21 | 56.8 | 63.6 |
|  | TOTAL | 2,239 | 68.6 | 81.2 |
| All grant-aided schools | Controlled | 30,533 | 44.2 | 78.5 |
|  | Voluntary | 5,839 | 20.7 | 82.6 |
|  | RC Maintained | 38,014 | 52.0 | 83.1 |
|  | Other Maintained | 1,608 | 63.9 | 85.0 |
|  | Controlled Integrated | 1,704 | 56.9 | 73.5 |
|  | Grant Maintained Integrated | 4,304 | 45.7 | 83.6 |
|  | GRAND TOTAL | 82,002 | 44.3 | 81.1 |

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Percentages express the number of pupils taking free school meals in a particular category
(e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of all school meals provided in the same
${ }^{2}$ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{3}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 8: Uptake of free school meals - number and percentage ${ }^{1}$ of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type: 2012/13-2015/16

|  |  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Free school meals taken by pupils present | Nursery ${ }^{2}$ | 1,386 | 1,240 | 1,264 | 1,473 |
|  | Primary ${ }^{3}$ and Preparatory Departments | 42,158 | 44,292 | 46,078 | 47,001 |
|  | Secondary (non grammar) | 17,656 | 16,715 | 22,838 | 24,098 |
|  | Grammar | 3,745 | 3,674 | 6,132 | 7,191 |
|  | Special | 1,792 | 2,001 | 2,248 | 2,239 |
|  | All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools) | 64,945 | 65,921 | 76,312 | 79,763 |
|  | All grant-aided schools (including special schools) | 66,737 | 67,922 | 78,560 | 82,002 |
| Pupils entitled to free school meals | Nursery ${ }^{2}$ | 1,934 | 1,977 | 2,096 | 2,240 |
|  | Primary ${ }^{3}$ and Preparatory Departments | 50,175 | 53,197 | 55,526 | 56,265 |
|  | Secondary (non grammar) | 23,094 | 22,046 | 29,626 | 30,990 |
|  | Grammar | 4,607 | 4,606 | 7,610 | 8,811 |
|  | Special ${ }^{4}$ | - | 2,460 | 2,660 | 2,757 |
|  | All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools) All grant-aided schools (including special schools) | 79,810 | 81,826 84,286 | 94,858 97,518 | 98,306 101,063 |
| Free school meals taken as a proportion of pupils entitled ${ }^{1}$ | Nursery ${ }^{2}$ | 71.7 | 62.7 | 60.3 | 65.8 |
|  | Primary ${ }^{3}$ and Preparatory Departments | 84.0 | 83.3 | 83.0 | 83.5 |
|  | Secondary (non grammar) | 76.5 | 75.8 | 77.1 | 77.8 |
|  | Grammar | 81.3 | 79.8 | 80.6 | 81.6 |
|  | Special ${ }^{4}$ | - | 81.3 | 84.5 | 81.2 |
|  | All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools) | 81.4 | 80.6 | 80.4 | 81.1 |
|  | All grant-aided schools (including special schools) | - | 80.6 | 80.6 | 81.1 |

Entitlement Source: NI school census 2011/12-2015/16
Uptake Source: NI school meals census 2011/12-2015/16
Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Percentages express the number of pupils entitled to free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of the total pupil enrolment in the same category.
${ }^{2}$ As school meals are not universally available to children in pre-school education, receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's
Allowance is used as a proxy for free school meal entitlement. Only includes pupils at nursery schools.
${ }^{3}$ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools
${ }^{4}$ Prior to 2014/15 free school meal entitlement data for special schools was not validated.

Table 9: Adults taking school meals, by school type: 2015/16

|  | Adults taking school <br> meal (free or paid) | Adults taking free <br> school meal ${ }^{1} \%$ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Nursery $^{2}$ | 312 | 98.4 |
| Primary ${ }^{3}$ and Preparatory <br> Departments | 5,952 | 91.0 |
| Secondary (non grammar) | 2,606 | 83.7 |
| Grammar | 1,824 | 61.8 |
| Post-Primary Total | 4,430 | 74.7 |
| Special | 716 | 95.0 |
| All grant-aided schools | $\mathbf{1 1 , 4 1 0}$ | $\mathbf{8 5 . 1}$ |

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:
${ }^{1}$ Depending on their terms and conditions kitchen staff and mid-day supervisors may be entitled to a free mid-day meal.
${ }^{2}$ Only includes nursery classes in nursery schools.
${ }^{3}$ Includes reception and nursery classes in primary schools.

Figure 1: Uptake of school meals (free and paid), by school type:
2012/13-2015/16


Figure 2: Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type:
2012/13-2015/16

${ }^{1}$ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools
${ }^{2}$ Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes
Data taken from Table 5

Figure 3: Uptake of free school meals, by school type: 2012/13-2015/16



[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Includes special schools.

[^1]:    ${ }^{2}$ If school meals were not being provided by the school on census day the school could choose to conduct the census on the nearest day on which meals are provided.

