



Department
for Education

Ad-hoc notice: pupil moves during secondary school

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Summary

How pupils move within and out of the school system is an area of interest for researchers and has received media coverage in recent years. This analysis follows six cohorts of secondary school pupils in state-funded schools who started Year 7 between 2010/11 and 2015/16 and were expected to reach Year 11 between 2014/15 and 2019/20.

Covid-19 caused disruption throughout education settings during 2019/20 and a complete analysis of moves during the year is not possible. Data for Summer 2020, the final census for the 2019/20 cohort, is not available for this analysis.

Main findings

- The proportion of the cohort that moved and the number of moves has increased: 13% of the cohort of pupils that ended KS4 in 2014/15 experienced a move (89,300 moves), compared to 16% of the 2018/19 cohort (107,900 moves). The 2019/20 cohort has experienced a further increase in moves: 108,700 moves are identified in the data available, 15% of pupils in the cohort moved.
- There is a consistent pattern in moves between school censuses. Moves peak after the Summer census (i.e. at the point pupils change year group when some types of move are presumably less disruptive).
- The majority of moves are to state-funded mainstream schools. In later year groups moves to Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision providers¹ increase, as do moves to unknown destinations.
- For moves in general, across all cohorts:
 - There is little difference in the proportion of moves by gender, though there is some variation in their destinations. A greater proportion of moves by boys are to Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision providers compared to girls.
 - There are small differences between major ethnic groups: pupils of Any Other Ethnic Group, Black and Mixed ethnicities are more likely to move.
 - Pupils are more likely to move if they are (at any time during secondary school): eligible for Free School Meals in the last 6 years (FSM6); or have Special Educational Needs (SEN); or are identified as Children in Need (CIN). A greater proportion of moves by these pupils are to Pupil Referral Units, Alternative Provision providers or special schools compared to pupils that move and are not FSM6, SEN, or CIN.

¹ This includes local authority maintained providers and local authority funded places.

- Pupils with behaviour, emotional, social and mental health difficulties or a Moderate Learning Difficulty are more likely to move compared to those who ever have other primary SEN types over the period.
- Between 5% and 6% of pupils in each cohort moved to unknown destinations at some point during their secondary school education, around 30,000 pupils per cohort. Nearly two thirds of these pupils do not reappear in the state school system by the end of KS4. These pupils may move to independent schools, migrate out of England, die, move to home learning, or may no longer be in education. They cannot be traced in the data available. The characteristics of pupils who move to unknown destinations are not representative of their cohort:
 - Boys are more likely to move to an unknown destination compared to girls.
 - Pupils of Any Other Ethnic Group, Black and Mixed ethnicities are more likely to move to unknown destinations than other major ethnic groups.
 - Pupils who move to an unknown destination are more likely to be FSM6, have SEN, or identified as CIN during secondary school compared to their cohort.
 - Pupils who have ever had behaviour, emotional, social and mental health difficulties over the period are more likely to move to unknown destinations than those with other primary SEN types.

Introduction

How pupils move within and out of the school system is an area of interest for researchers and has received media coverage in recent years. Analysis exploring pupil moves has been carried out by several organisations, and the risk of pupils being removed from education through ‘off-rolling’² has been raised.

This analysis follows six cohorts of secondary school pupils in state-funded schools who started Year 7 between 2010/11 and 2015/16 and were expected to reach Year 11 between 2014/15 and 2019/20. For each cohort, pupils who left a school have been identified and the number of moves are presented, including a breakdown by school term. The analysis compares moves over time and explores the characteristics and destinations of pupils that leave schools.

This analysis focuses on moves outside of the ‘normal’ functioning of the school system. For example, a pupil at the end of middle school moving to a secondary school would not count as a move, because it is expected to occur. Likewise, pupils being permanently excluded or pupils moving because their school has closed are not counted in this analysis as moves³. Alternatively, a pupil changing school between the Autumn and Spring terms is counted as a move, as is a move from a school to an unknown destination.

It is important to note that it is not possible to identify moves that are definitively ‘off-rolling’ events. Only the incidence of moves and the characteristics of the pupils affected can be identified from the data, not the reasons for a move. Though the population of pupils who move can be identified, this data alone cannot distinguish which of these pupils may have been ‘off-rolled’.

² Ofsted define ‘off-rolling’ as the practice of removing a pupil from the school register without formal, permanent exclusion, or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.

³ Statistics on school exclusions are published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions>

Data and Methodology

This analysis uses data from:

- School Census: termly records from Autumn 2010 to Spring 2020
- Get Information About Schools: records from August 2019 and January 2020⁴, and Establishment Links file
- Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) census: records from 2010/11 to 2012/13
- Alternative Provision (AP) census: records from 2010/11 to 2019/20
- Children in Need and Looked After Children census, 2011-12 to 2018-19⁵

Six cohorts of pupils that were expected to reach Year 11 in 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 are constructed for this analysis. Each cohort consists of all pupils in state-funded schools in Year 7 in the January School Census of the initial year (2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 respectively). These pupils act as a 'spine' from which each cohort is constructed. Each subsequent termly census is matched to this 'spine' of pupils using the unique combination of Pupil Matching Reference number, academic year and census term. Matching to the 'spine' of pupils in this way means any pupils who joined the school system after the initial January census of each cohort are not included in the analysis. The analysis includes all pupils who are sole or dual main registrations. Records from the PRU and AP censuses are also matched to the 'spine' of pupils, by Pupil Matching Reference number and academic year. PRU and AP records are substituted when a pupil does not appear in the main School Census but is in one of these alternative educational settings. They are coded as moves to PRU and AP providers.

Moves are identified where the Unique Reference Number (URN) of a pupil's school changes between consecutive censuses. Cases when a school changed URN, for example, Academy Converters, are not considered a move in this analysis.

Moves are defined as any time a pupil leaves their school, outside of the 'normal' functioning of the school system. As such the following move types are excluded from the total number of moves:

- Moves that coincide with the closure of a school.
- A move at the same time a pupil is permanently excluded.
- Moves from schools between academic years where the school does not cater for their pupils' age group next year, for example moves from middle schools.

⁴ Extract taken on 08/08/2019 for August 2019 data and 02/01/2020 for January 2020 data.

⁵ CIN data is collected by financial year. Data for 2010-11 and 2019-20 is not available therefore CIN analysis is not presented for the 2014/15 and 2019/20 cohorts.

- Moves to schools at the start of their main admission year, for example Studio Schools or University Technical Colleges that have admissions in Year 9.
- Any move that is part of a simultaneous move of at least 20 pupils from a school to a single other school. This is used as a 'catch all' to prevent the inclusion of moves because of gaps or errors in the data⁶.

Data for the 2019/20 cohort is incomplete due to the disruption caused by Covid-19 when the vast majority of pupils did not attend educational settings between March and July 2020. Analysis of moves by pupils expected to finish Year 11 in 2019/20 covers the Autumn of Year 7 to the Spring of Year 11 and follows the same methodology.

Additional tables showing the data supporting the figures in this ad hoc are available in an annex on the [Pupil moves during secondary school](#) statistics.gov.uk page.

⁶ For example, in the 2018/19 cohort, around 30 instances of such simultaneous moves are identified, removing nearly 1,700 moves.

Quantifying pupil moves in the school system

Pupil moves from the six cohorts

Both the number of moves and the percentage of pupils moving has increased with each successive cohort (see Table 1). In the 2014/15 cohort there were 89,300 moves by 73,200 pupils (around 1 in 8 pupils). This has risen to 107,900 moves by 86,700 pupils in the 2018/19 cohort (around 1 in 6 pupils). Though data for the 2019/20 cohort is incomplete, both the total number of moves and pupils who move has increased compared to previous cohorts, however the percentage of the cohort who move is similar to the previous cohort.

Table 1: Number of pupils in the cohort, moves, pupils who move and percentage who move

Cohort	Number of pupils in cohort	Total number of moves	Number of pupils who move	Percentage of the cohort who move
2014/15	558,034	89,293	73,204	13.1%
2015/16	544,795	93,451	75,469	13.9%
2016/17	534,899	97,728	78,431	14.7%
2017/18	532,006	101,777	81,587	15.3%
2018/19	553,150	107,911	86,695	15.7%
2019/20 ⁷	571,330	108,726	88,491	15.5%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

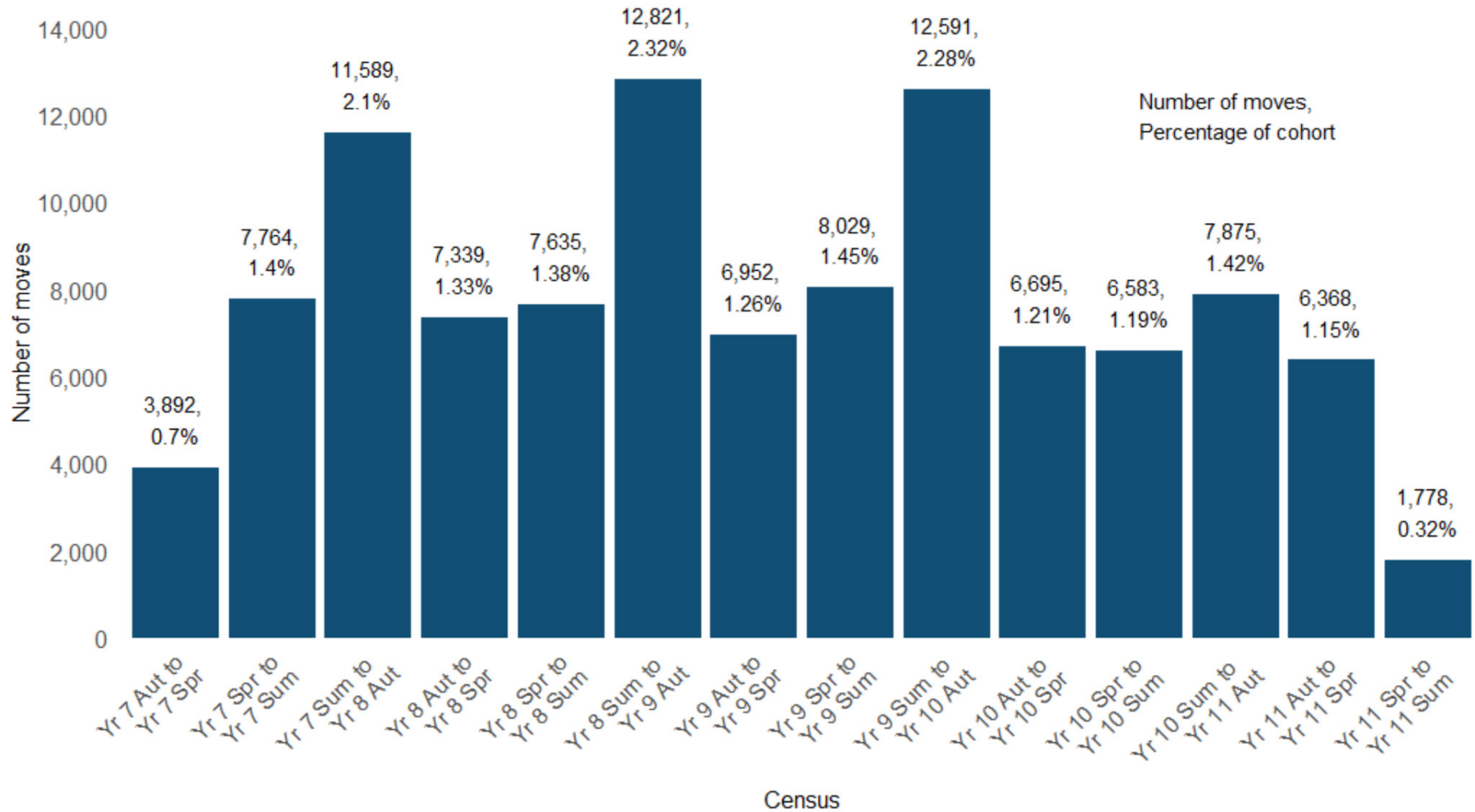
Throughout the analysis:

- When analysing *pupils*, a pupil is only counted once, for example when comparing characteristics.
- When analysing *moves*, pupils are counted every time they move, for example the number of moves by destination.

The structure of moves by term is similar for each cohort. The number of moves peaks in the censuses between school years (i.e. between the Summer and Autumn censuses), suggesting that pupils tend to complete their current year before moving from their school (Figure 1 shows the 2018/19 cohort).

⁷ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Figure 1: Number of moves by census, 2018/19 cohort



Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2014 to 2019

Pupils are less likely to move between Year 10 and 11 than between other year groups in all cohorts. The fewest moves occur between the Spring and Summer censuses of the final academic year.

The number of moves in each census generally shows an increase in successive cohorts (Table 2).

In this analysis no assumptions are made about the specific drivers of moves. Many moves will happen for reasons that are not related to education, for example, a family relocating for occupational reasons. To provide a sense of scale, nearly a quarter of school moves in each cohort (around 15,000 moves) coincide with a change in home address where the home-to-school distance from the new address to the initial school is at least 16km (suggesting that the school and residential move were associated in many cases)^{8,9}. These pupils are included in this analysis and are mentioned here to provide some context on the extent of moves that may be related to family circumstances rather than educational drivers.

⁸ 16km is used as the distance threshold because 98% of to-school travel distances (straight-line) are less than this. This provides a useful marker for 'large travel distance'.

⁹ Complete travel distance data is only available for the 2016/17 to 2018/19 cohorts, pupils with no distance information are excluded, just over a third of pupil moves have no distance information.

Table 2: Number of moves and percentage of the cohort who move

Time period	Moves, 2014/15 cohort	Pct of cohort, 2014/15	Moves, 2015/16 cohort	Pct of cohort, 2015/16	Moves, 2016/17 cohort	Pct of cohort, 2016/17	Moves, 2017/18 cohort	Pct of cohort, 2017/18	Moves, 2018/19 cohort	Pct of cohort, 2018/19	Moves, 2019/20 cohort ¹⁰	Pct of cohort, 2019/20
Yr 7 Aut to Yr 7 Spr	3,793	0.68%	3,833	0.70%	3,627	0.68%	4,040	0.76%	3,892	0.70%	4,572	0.80%
Yr 7 Spr to Yr 7 Sum	6,363	1.14%	6,442	1.18%	6,522	1.22%	7,046	1.32%	7,764	1.40%	7,821	1.37%
Yr 7 Sum to Yr 8 Aut	10,477	1.88%	10,777	1.98%	11,506	2.15%	11,591	2.18%	11,589	2.10%	12,908	2.26%
Yr 8 Aut to Yr 8 Spr	6,005	1.08%	5,928	1.09%	6,144	1.15%	6,275	1.18%	7,339	1.33%	7,296	1.28%
Yr 8 Spr to Yr 8 Sum	6,361	1.14%	6,611	1.21%	7,110	1.33%	7,453	1.40%	7,635	1.38%	8,580	1.50%
Yr 8 Sum to Yr 9 Aut	10,431	1.87%	11,191	2.05%	11,806	2.21%	11,381	2.14%	12,821	2.32%	13,996	2.45%
Yr 9 Aut to Yr 9 Spr	5,900	1.06%	6,197	1.14%	6,163	1.15%	6,907	1.30%	6,952	1.26%	7,675	1.34%
Yr 9 Spr to Yr 9 Sum	6,054	1.08%	6,781	1.24%	7,095	1.33%	7,010	1.32%	8,029	1.45%	7,942	1.39%
Yr 9 Sum to Yr 10 Aut	9,814	1.76%	10,721	1.97%	10,308	1.93%	11,369	2.14%	12,591	2.28%	12,519	2.19%
Yr 10 Aut to Yr 10 Spr	5,093	0.91%	5,206	0.96%	6,103	1.14%	6,020	1.13%	6,695	1.21%	6,479	1.13%
Yr 10 Spr to Yr 10 Sum	5,198	0.93%	5,585	1.03%	5,604	1.05%	6,552	1.23%	6,583	1.19%	6,530	1.14%
Yr 10 Sum to Yr 11 Aut	6,819	1.22%	6,642	1.22%	7,087	1.32%	7,617	1.43%	7,875	1.42%	7,492	1.31%
Yr 11 Aut to Yr 11 Spr	5,365	0.96%	6,049	1.11%	6,679	1.25%	6,777	1.27%	6,368	1.15%	4,916	0.86%
Yr 11 Spr to Yr 11 Sum	1,620	0.29%	1,488	0.27%	1,974	0.37%	1,739	0.33%	1,778	0.32%	N/A	N/A

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

¹⁰ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

The destinations of pupils who move

Over half of all moves in the cohorts analysed are to state-funded mainstream schools. Around 8% to 9% of moves are to PRU and AP providers, around 3% are to special schools and less than 1% are to University Technical Colleges (UTC), Studio Schools, City Technical Colleges (CTC) and other schools.

The remaining third of moves in each cohort are to unknown destinations. These include pupils who move to independent schools, migrate out of England, die, move to home learning, or may no longer be in education. Approximately 30,000 pupils in each cohort moved to an unknown destination for some length of time at some point during secondary school, representing 5% to 6% of each cohort. Of these pupils nearly two thirds do not reappear in the state school system¹¹, between 3% and 4% of each cohort.

The percentage of moves to each destination shows only a small variation between cohorts, see Table 3.

Table 3: Percentage of moves by destination and cohort

Destination	2014/15 cohort	2015/16 cohort	2016/17 cohort	2017/18 cohort	2018/19 cohort	2019/20 cohort ¹²
State-funded mainstream	54.7%	55.6%	55.1%	54.0%	52.7%	52.6%
PRU and AP	7.9%	8.5%	8.9%	8.8%	8.4%	7.4%
UTC/Studio/CTC	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.9%
Special	3.3%	3.3%	3.1%	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%
Unknown	33.5%	31.8%	32.2%	33.4%	35.2%	36.1%

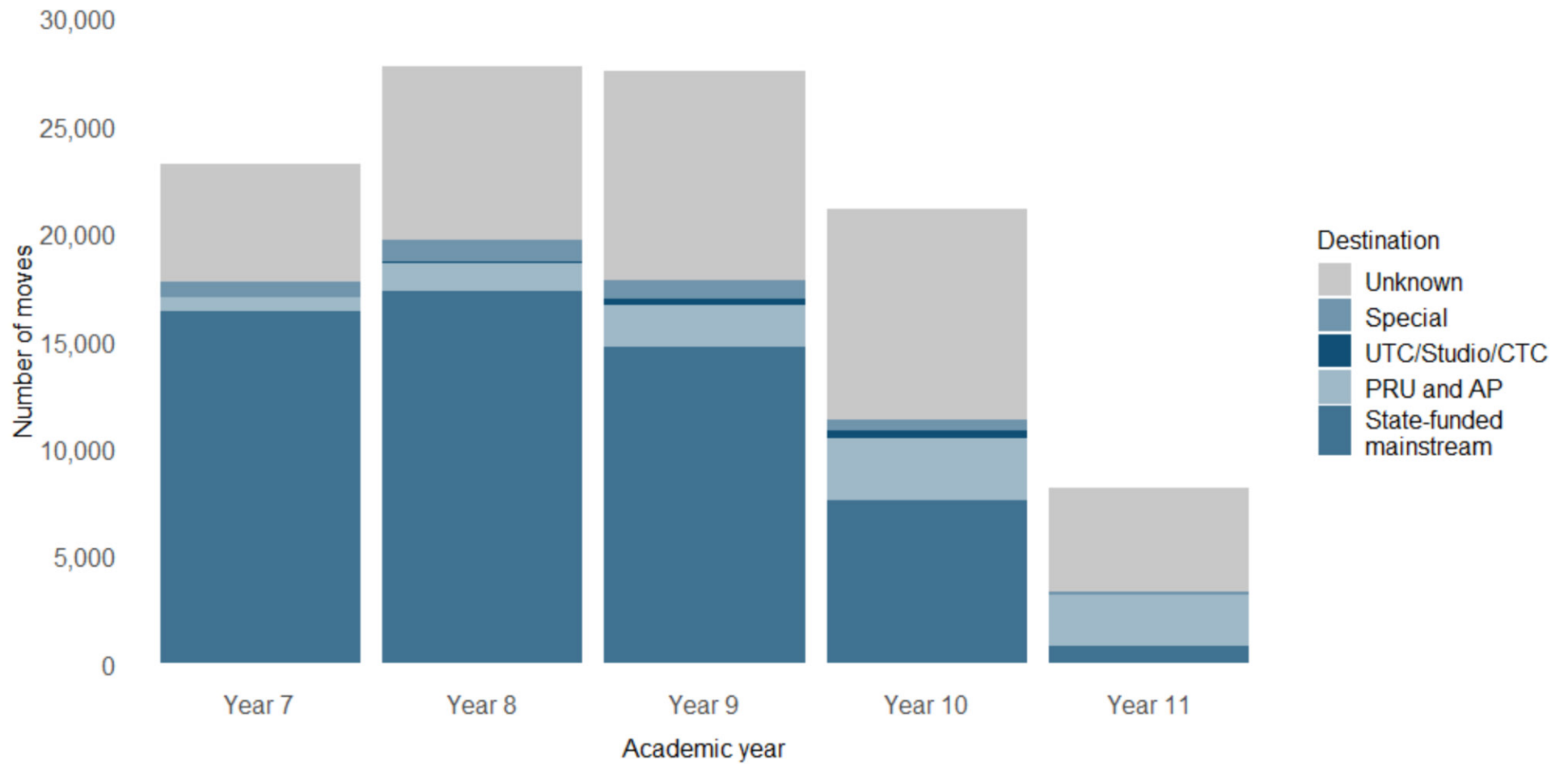
Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020, GIAS August 2019 and January 2020

There is a general trend in the destinations of moves as pupils progress through secondary school. Figure 2 shows that the number of moves peaks in Year 8, and proportionately, moves are progressively less likely to be to a state-funded school, and become more likely to be to a PRU, AP provider or an unknown destination. The number of moves to special schools is stable over the period, and moves to UTCs, Studio Schools and CTCs are low until the end of the second academic year, when pupils meet the age requirements for these schools.

¹¹ Pupils are counted if they do not appear in the state school system (school, AP or PRU census) in the Spring and Summer censuses of Year 11.

¹² Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Figure 2: Number of moves by destination, 2018/19 cohort



Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2014 to 2019, GIAS August 2019

Characteristics of pupils who move

The following tables compare the prevalence of characteristics in the whole cohort and amongst pupils who move. A difference of 0 means the prevalence of the characteristic is the same for all pupils in the cohort and pupils who move, positive differences indicate the characteristic is more prevalent amongst pupils who move and negative differences indicate the characteristic is less prevalent amongst pupils that move than among all pupils in the cohort.

Aggregate identifiers are used to compare pupils identified as receiving Free School Meals in the preceding 6 years (FSM6), having Special Educational Needs (SEN) and being Children in Need (CIN). The census records of each pupil are collated over the period to identify those who, during Years 7 to 11, are ever FSM6 or SEN or CIN. The same aggregation has been performed for primary SEN types – if a pupil ever has a SEN type over the period it is flagged and as a result some pupils have multiple SEN types.

Gender

Across all six cohorts, there is little difference in gender between all pupils in the cohort and pupils who move (Table 4).

Table 4: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move by gender

Cohort	Pupil group	Boys	Girls
2014/15	All pupils in cohort	51.2%	48.8%
	Pupils who move	51.4%	48.6%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	0.2	-0.2
2015/16	All pupils in cohort	51.2%	48.8%
	Pupils who move	50.7%	49.3%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	-0.5	0.5
2016/17	All pupils in cohort	51.1%	48.9%
	Pupils who move	51.1%	48.9%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	0.0	0.0
2017/18	All pupils in cohort	51.2%	48.8%
	Pupils who move	51.9%	48.1%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	0.6	-0.6
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	51.3%	48.7%
	Pupils who move	52.1%	47.9%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	0.9	-0.9
2019/20 ¹³	All pupils in cohort	51.2%	48.8%
	Pupils who move	51.5%	48.5%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	0.3	-0.3

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

The destinations of moves by boys and girls shows some variation, with larger proportions of boys moving to PRU, AP providers and special schools compared to girls in all years. Table 5 shows this for the 2018/19 cohort. Girls are more likely to move to state-funded mainstream schools than boys and slightly less likely to move to unknown destinations, except during Year 11 in all cohorts. In the 2018/19 cohort, 63% of moves by girls were to unknown destinations compared to 57% of moves by boys in Year 11.

¹³ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Table 5: Percentage of moves by destination and gender, 2018/19 cohort

Gender	Year of move	State-funded mainstream	PRU and AP	UTC/Studio /CTC	Special	Unknown
Boys	Year 7	66.0%	4.4%	0.0%	4.7%	24.8%
	Year 8	56.4%	6.9%	0.5%	5.5%	30.7%
	Year 9	47.0%	10.1%	1.4%	4.5%	36.9%
	Year 10	31.2%	17.1%	1.6%	3.5%	46.7%
	Year 11	8.9%	32.0%	0.2%	1.8%	57.0%
Girls	Year 7	75.7%	0.9%	0.0%	1.2%	22.2%
	Year 8	68.4%	2.2%	0.3%	1.4%	27.7%
	Year 9	59.7%	4.0%	0.7%	1.6%	34.0%
	Year 10	41.5%	9.6%	1.4%	1.6%	45.9%
	Year 11	11.1%	24.4%	0.2%	1.5%	62.8%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2014 to 2019, GIAS August 2019

Ethnicity

In all cohorts, some major ethnic groups are more prevalent in the population of pupils who move than in the cohort overall: Any Other Ethnic Group, Black, Mixed and Unclassified, see Table 6.

Considering more detailed ethnic groups across the six cohorts (see Annex C):

- Travellers of Irish Heritage are the most over-represented amongst pupils who move compared to the cohort (though the difference has been decreasing with each successive cohort), closely followed by Gypsy and Roma pupils. In 2018/19 there are nearly 3 times as many Travellers of Irish Heritage and Gypsy and Roma pupils amongst those who move compared to the whole cohort.
- Pupils of Indian and Bangladeshi ethnicities are most under-represented among pupils who move. In all cohorts there are around a third fewer pupils from these groups who move compared to the whole cohort.

Destinations of moves are similar for those of Black, Mixed, Unclassified and White ethnicities, the proportion of moves to state-funded mainstream schools decreases from Year 7 to Year 11 whilst the proportions to PRU, AP providers and unknown destinations increases, see Table 8.

The proportion of moves to unknown destinations by pupils of Any Other Ethnic Group and Asian pupils starts to increase after Year 9 but their likelihood of moving to PRU, AP providers and special schools is less than for other ethnic groups.

Table 6: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move by ethnic group

Cohort	Pupil group	Any Other Ethnic Group	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	Unclassified	White
2014/15	All pupils in cohort	1.3%	8.5%	4.6%	0.3%	4.0%	1.3%	80.0%
	Pupils who move	1.9%	7.6%	6.4%	0.3%	5.2%	1.6%	77.0%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>-0.9</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>-3.0</i>
2015/16	All pupils in cohort	1.3%	9.1%	4.8%	0.3%	4.2%	1.1%	79.1%
	Pupils who move	2.0%	8.0%	6.2%	0.3%	5.1%	1.5%	76.8%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>-1.1</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>-2.3</i>
2016/17	All pupils in cohort	1.4%	9.4%	5.0%	0.4%	4.4%	1.3%	78.2%
	Pupils who move	1.9%	7.6%	6.5%	0.3%	5.5%	1.7%	76.5%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>-1.8</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>-1.6</i>
2017/18	All pupils in cohort	1.4%	10.0%	5.2%	0.3%	4.6%	1.5%	77.0%
	Pupils who move	1.9%	7.8%	6.4%	0.2%	5.8%	2.1%	75.9%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>-2.2</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>-1.1</i>
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	1.5%	10.1%	5.4%	0.3%	4.8%	1.7%	76.2%
	Pupils who move	2.1%	7.6%	6.8%	0.3%	6.1%	2.2%	74.9%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>-2.4</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>-1.2</i>
2019/20 ¹⁴	All pupils in cohort	1.6%	10.2%	5.5%	0.3%	5.1%	1.6%	75.7%
	Pupils who move	2.2%	7.7%	7.1%	0.3%	6.2%	2.1%	74.5%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>-2.5</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>-1.2</i>

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

¹⁴ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Table 7: Percentage of moves by destination and ethnic group, 2018/19 cohort

Ethnic group	Year of move	State-funded mainstream	PRU and AP	UTC/Studio /CTC	Special	Unknown
Any Other Ethnic Group	Year 7	50.3%	1.4%	0.0%	1.0%	47.2%
	Year 8	51.7%	2.4%	0.9%	1.6%	43.4%
	Year 9	57.2%	3.4%	1.0%	1.6%	36.9%
	Year 10	36.0%	9.9%	2.0%	1.2%	50.9%
	Year 11	5.1%	30.3%	0.0%	1.0%	63.6%
Asian	Year 7	68.2%	0.9%	0.0%	1.7%	29.3%
	Year 8	60.3%	2.2%	0.6%	1.8%	35.1%
	Year 9	59.6%	4.5%	0.5%	1.9%	33.5%
	Year 10	41.3%	13.1%	1.0%	1.7%	42.8%
	Year 11	15.7%	28.3%	0.2%	1.8%	53.9%
Black	Year 7	65.9%	3.8%	0.0%	2.1%	28.2%
	Year 8	57.9%	6.0%	0.3%	2.4%	33.4%
	Year 9	56.5%	9.1%	0.8%	2.5%	31.1%
	Year 10	36.6%	16.9%	1.5%	2.6%	42.4%
	Year 11	12.4%	32.7%	0.4%	3.0%	51.4%
Chinese ¹⁵	Year 7	53.6%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	44.9%
	Year 8	57.1%	1.2%	1.2%	2.4%	38.1%
	Year 9	56.9%	1.5%	1.5%	3.1%	36.9%
	Year 10	60.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	36.7%
	Year 11	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%
Mixed	Year 7	68.8%	3.5%	0.1%	2.6%	25.1%
	Year 8	61.4%	5.9%	0.3%	3.2%	29.1%
	Year 9	54.5%	9.9%	0.6%	2.8%	32.2%
	Year 10	35.7%	16.4%	1.2%	2.0%	44.7%
	Year 11	12.0%	32.7%	0.2%	2.0%	53.1%

¹⁵ The number of moves by Chinese pupils is low, around 200, in each cohort and this is likely to cause some volatility in the percentages moving to each destination.

Ethnic group	Year of move	State-funded mainstream	PRU and AP	UTC/Studio /CTC	Special	Unknown
Un-classified	Year 7	66.6%	4.4%	0.0%	2.5%	26.5%
	Year 8	61.4%	3.7%	0.2%	3.2%	31.5%
	Year 9	50.8%	5.8%	0.3%	3.2%	39.8%
	Year 10	38.6%	13.1%	2.6%	1.5%	44.2%
	Year 11	11.4%	26.6%	0.6%	2.5%	58.9%
White	Year 7	72.4%	2.8%	0.0%	3.5%	21.3%
	Year 8	63.5%	4.7%	0.4%	3.8%	27.7%
	Year 9	52.5%	7.0%	1.2%	3.3%	36.1%
	Year 10	35.4%	13.2%	1.5%	2.8%	47.1%
	Year 11	9.0%	28.4%	0.2%	1.5%	60.9%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2014 to 2019, GIAS August 2019

Free school meals

Pupils who are ever FSM6 during secondary school were substantially more highly represented among pupils that move than among their cohorts as a whole. Over half of pupils who move have been FSM6 at some point between Years 7 to 11. This compares to around a third of pupils in the whole cohort (see Table 8). The percentage of pupils in the whole cohort who are ever FSM6 has increased slightly with each successive cohort, whilst the percentage of pupils who move that are ever FSM6 has fallen.

Table 8: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move by FSM6 status

Cohort	Pupil group	FSM6 at any time in Years 7 to 11
2014/15	All pupils in cohort	31.8%
	Pupils who move	53.5%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>21.7</i>
2015/16	All pupils in cohort	32.3%
	Pupils who move	53.3%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>21.0</i>
2016/17	All pupils in cohort	33.3%
	Pupils who move	53.6%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>20.3</i>
2017/18	All pupils in cohort	33.3%
	Pupils who move	52.8%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>19.4</i>
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	33.3%
	Pupils who move	52.4%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>19.1</i>
2019/20 ¹⁶	All pupils in cohort	33.1%
	Pupils who move	51.1%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>18.0</i>

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

Moves by pupils who are ever FSM6 during secondary school are more likely to be to PRU, AP providers and special schools in all years than moves by pupils who are never FSM6, and are less likely to be to unknown destinations (see Table 9).

¹⁶ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Table 9: Percentage of moves by destination and FSM6 status, 2018/19 cohort

FSM6 status	Year of move	State-funded mainstream	PRU and AP	UTC/Studio /CTC	Special	Unknown
Ever FSM6 in Year 7 to 11	Year 7	71.8%	4.4%	0.0%	4.2%	19.6%
	Year 8	62.1%	7.0%	0.4%	4.7%	25.9%
	Year 9	50.3%	9.7%	0.6%	3.9%	35.4%
	Year 10	33.1%	16.3%	1.2%	2.8%	46.6%
	Year 11	8.8%	30.4%	0.1%	1.8%	58.8%
Never FSM6 in Year 7 to 11	Year 7	69.3%	1.0%	0.1%	1.8%	27.9%
	Year 8	62.6%	1.9%	0.4%	2.1%	33.0%
	Year 9	57.2%	3.7%	1.6%	2.1%	35.5%
	Year 10	40.5%	9.3%	1.8%	2.4%	46.0%
	Year 11	11.7%	25.8%	0.3%	1.6%	60.6%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2014 to 2019, GIAS August 2019

Special educational needs

Across all cohorts, around half of pupils who move have SEN at some point during the period. This compares to around a third of the whole cohort (see Table 10). Pupils who move are also more likely than the whole cohort to ever have a SEN statement or an education, health and care (EHC) plan¹⁷ or SEN without a statement or plan. Both the percentage of pupils in the cohort and of pupils who move that have had SEN during secondary school falls with each successive cohort. The percentage of pupils in the cohort with SEN and a SEN statement or EHC plan during secondary school increases with each successive cohort, as does the percentage of pupils who move with SEN and a statement or plan. At the same time the percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move with SEN but without a statement or plan over the period decreases.

¹⁷ EHC plans replaced SEN statements during the period covered.

Table 10: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move by SEN status

Cohort	Pupil group	SEN at any time in Years 7 to 11	SEN with statement or EHC plan at any time in Years 7 to 11	SEN without statement or EHC plan at any time in Years 7 to 11
2014/15	All pupils in cohort	33.7%	4.3%	29.4%
	Pupils who move	53.3%	9.3%	44.0%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	19.6	5.0	14.6
2015/16	All pupils in cohort	32.4%	4.3%	28.1%
	Pupils who move	51.0%	8.8%	42.2%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	18.5	4.5	14.0
2016/17	All pupils in cohort	30.7%	4.3%	26.4%
	Pupils who move	48.1%	8.4%	39.7%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	17.4	4.1	13.3
2017/18	All pupils in cohort	28.6%	4.3%	24.3%
	Pupils who move	45.2%	8.5%	36.7%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	16.6	4.1	12.4
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	26.0%	4.4%	21.6%
	Pupils who move	42.0%	8.6%	33.4%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	16.0	4.2	11.8
2019/20 ¹⁸	All pupils in cohort	23.6%	4.5%	19.1%
	Pupils who move	38.2%	9.0%	29.3%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	14.7	4.5	10.2

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

Between the 2014/15 and 2018/19 cohorts, the percentage of moves in each Year by pupils who have SEN at the time of the move fell with successive cohorts, for example 39% of moves in Year 7 in the 2014/15 cohort compared to 30% in the 2018/19 cohort are by pupils with SEN at the time (see Table 11).

¹⁸ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

In general, the percentage of moves by pupils who have SEN at the time of the move increases between Years 7 to 11. In the 2018/19 cohort, 30% of moves in Year 7 are by pupils who had SEN at the time, by Year 11 this had risen to 46% of moves.

Table 11: Percentage of moves by pupils who have SEN at the time of the move

Year of move	2014/15 cohort	2015/16 cohort	2016/17 cohort	2017/18 cohort	2018/19 cohort	2019/20 cohort ¹⁹
Year 7	39.2%	37.5%	35.5%	33.3%	30.1%	26.5%
Year 8	41.0%	38.5%	36.9%	33.5%	29.5%	28.3%
Year 9	42.3%	41.0%	37.3%	31.9%	31.4%	31.3%
Year 10	50.5%	45.6%	39.0%	37.3%	36.3%	36.2%
Year 11	56.2%	52.7%	46.9%	46.3%	46.3%	44.3%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

In all year groups, a larger proportion of moves by pupils who have SEN at some point in Years 7 to 11 are to PRU and AP providers (which includes some special schools) and to special schools compared to moves by pupils who never have SEN, see Table 12.

Table 12: Percentage of moves by destination and SEN status, 2018/19 cohort

SEN status	Year of move	State-funded mainstream	PRU and AP	UTC/Studio /CTC	Special	Unknown
Ever SEN in Year 7 to 11	Year 7	63.9%	7.1%	0.0%	8.2%	20.8%
	Year 8	53.4%	10.4%	0.3%	8.4%	27.5%
	Year 9	43.0%	14.3%	0.8%	6.9%	35.1%
	Year 10	26.2%	22.8%	1.2%	5.0%	44.7%
	Year 11	6.6%	38.0%	0.1%	2.8%	52.4%
Never SEN in Year 7 to 11	Year 7	74.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	25.2%
	Year 8	68.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	30.5%
	Year 9	61.9%	1.1%	1.3%	0.0%	35.7%
	Year 10	46.6%	3.7%	1.7%	0.0%	48.0%
	Year 11	14.6%	15.3%	0.3%	0.0%	69.8%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2014 to 2019, GIAS August 2019

¹⁹ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Around 1 in 5 pupils in each cohort has a primary SEN type during secondary school, compared to 1 in 3 of pupils who move, see Table 13 and Annex G.

Some primary SEN types are more prevalent than others amongst pupils who move. Pupils who move are more likely to have a primary SEN type of Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD), Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), or a Moderate Learning Difficulty. However, most types of SEN are more prevalent amongst pupils who move compared to their cohort.

The apparent fall in prevalence of BESD and increase in SEMH in successive cohorts is due to a change in definitions. In 2014 DfE stopped using the categorisation of 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD)' and introduced a separate 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)' SEN type²⁰. This change affects the 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 cohorts, as BESD and SEMH were both in use whilst these pupils were in secondary school. For example a pupil with BESD in 2013 and SEMH in 2015 would be flagged as both BESD and SEMH during secondary school.

²⁰ In 2014, DfE stopped using the categorisation of 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD)', at which point it introduced a separate 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)' SEN type, although this was not intended to be a direct replacement. Of pupils identified with BESD in Spring 2013/14, 67.1% were recorded with SEMH in Spring 2014/15. Nonetheless, these types of need are distinct.

Table 13: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move by primary SEN type

Cohort	Pupil group	Any SEN type at any time in Years 7 to 11	Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties at any time in Years 7 to 11	Social, emotional and mental health at any time in Years 7 to 11	Moderate Learning Difficulty at any time in Years 7 to 11
2014/15	All pupils in cohort	19.1%	4.8%	3.6%	5.2%
	Pupils who move	35.2%	15.6%	10.9%	8.2%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>16.1</i>	<i>10.8</i>	<i>7.4</i>	<i>3.0</i>
2015/16	All pupils in cohort	20.5%	3.9%	4.4%	5.6%
	Pupils who move	35.6%	12.1%	13.6%	8.3%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>15.1</i>	<i>8.2</i>	<i>9.2</i>	<i>2.7</i>
2016/17	All pupils in cohort	21.0%	3.0%	4.8%	5.7%
	Pupils who move	35.4%	8.8%	14.8%	8.2%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>14.4</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>9.9</i>	<i>2.5</i>
2017/18	All pupils in cohort	21.5%	2.1%	5.2%	5.9%
	Pupils who move	35.8%	5.9%	15.8%	8.5%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>14.3</i>	<i>3.8</i>	<i>10.6</i>	<i>2.7</i>
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	22.4%	N/A	5.7%	6.1%
	Pupils who move	37.2%	N/A	16.7%	9.0%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>14.8</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>11.0</i>	<i>2.9</i>
2019/20 ²¹	All pupils in cohort	22.0%	N/A	5.8%	5.6%
	Pupils who move	35.7%	N/A	16.2%	8.1%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>13.7</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>10.4</i>	<i>2.4</i>

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

²¹ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11..

Children in Need (including looked after children)

The term ‘children in need’ should be taken at its broadest statutory definition. This encompasses all children receiving statutory support from local authority social care including those who are subject to a Child in Need Plan (CINP), Child Protection Plan (CPP), and Looked After Children (LAC) ²².

Around 30% of pupils who move in each cohort are identified as CIN at any time in secondary school; this compares to just over 12% of the whole cohort (see Table 14). The percentage of pupils who move who were ever identified as CIN fell slightly between the 2015/16 and 2018/19 cohorts, whilst the percentage in the whole cohort rose.

Table 14: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort and those who move by CIN type

Cohort	Pupil group	Any CIN type at any time in Years 7 to 11	LAC at any time in Years 7 to 11	CPP at any time in Years 7 to 11	CINP at any time in Years 7 to 11
2015/16	All pupils in cohort	12.3%	1.6%	1.5%	9.2%
	Pupils who move	30.5%	6.2%	4.2%	20.1%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>18.1</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>2.7</i>	<i>10.9</i>
2016/17	All pupils in cohort	12.4%	1.6%	1.6%	9.2%
	Pupils who move	29.8%	5.9%	4.3%	19.5%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>17.4</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>10.3</i>
2017/18	All pupils in cohort	12.5%	1.6%	1.7%	9.2%
	Pupils who move	29.4%	5.7%	4.5%	19.2%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>16.9</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>10.0</i>
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	12.6%	1.6%	1.8%	9.2%
	Pupils who move	29.5%	5.6%	4.9%	19.0%
	<i>Percentage point difference</i>	<i>16.9</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>9.8</i>

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census, Alternative Provision census and Children in Need and Looked After Children census 2010 to 2019

²² Children in Need is a broad definition spanning a wide range of children and adolescents in need of varying types of support and intervention, for a variety of reasons. A child is defined as ‘in need’ under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, where: they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for them of services by a local authority; or their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for them of such services; or they are disabled.

Destinations of moves by pupils who are ever CIN during secondary school are more likely to be to PRU, AP providers and special schools and less likely to be to all other destinations compared to those of pupils who are never CIN over the period in all year groups, see Table 15.

Table 15: Percentage of moves by destination and CIN status, 2018/19 cohort

CIN status	Year of move	State-funded mainstream	PRU and AP	UTC/Studio /CTC	Special	Unknown
Ever CIN in Year 7 to 11	Year 7	67.3%	7.2%	0.0%	6.7%	18.8%
	Year 8	57.1%	10.2%	0.2%	7.1%	25.4%
	Year 9	46.0%	13.4%	0.3%	5.5%	34.8%
	Year 10	29.4%	19.9%	0.9%	4.1%	45.8%
	Year 11	8.7%	32.5%	0.2%	2.3%	56.3%
Never CIN in Year 7 to 11	Year 7	71.8%	1.0%	0.1%	1.7%	25.4%
	Year 8	64.7%	2.0%	0.5%	1.8%	31.0%
	Year 9	57.2%	3.8%	1.4%	1.8%	35.7%
	Year 10	40.3%	9.5%	1.8%	1.7%	46.7%
	Year 11	10.6%	26.1%	0.2%	1.2%	61.8%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census, Alternative Provision census and Children in Need and Looked After Children census 2014 to 2019, GIAS August 2019

Pupils who move to unknown destinations

It is not possible to identify the destinations of all moves. Those that cannot be tracked are labelled as 'unknown'. Moves to unknown destinations include pupils who move to independent schools, migrate out of England, die, move to home learning, or may no longer be in education.

The percentage of pupils moving to unknown destinations increased from 5% of pupils in the 2014/15 cohort to 6% of pupils in the 2018/19 cohort. Over the same period a third of all moves are to unknown destinations.

Boys are slightly more likely than girls to move to unknown destinations (see Annex I). Of the pupils who move to unknown destinations in the 2018/19 cohort 54% are boys, compared to 51% boys in the whole cohort.

Pupils of some ethnicities are more likely to move to unknown destinations than others (see Table 16). In the 2018/19 cohort, pupils of Any Other Ethnic Group, Black, Mixed and Unclassified ethnicities are more likely to move to unknown destinations whilst all other ethnicities are under-represented amongst pupils who move to unknown destinations.

Travellers of Irish Heritage and Gypsy and Roma pupils are the most over-represented amongst pupils who move to unknown destinations. In the 2018/19 cohort, there are seven times as many Travellers of Irish Heritage in the population of pupils who move to unknown destinations and over six times as many Gypsy and Roma pupils compared to the whole cohort (see Annex C). Pupils of Bangladeshi and Indian ethnicities are the most under-represented amongst pupils who move to unknown destinations.

Table 16: Comparison of percentage of pupils in the cohort, those who move and those who move to an unknown destination by ethnic group

Cohort	Pupil group	Any Other Ethnic Group	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	Unclassified	White
2014/15	All pupils in the cohort	1.3%	8.5%	4.6%	0.3%	4.0%	1.3%	80.0%
	All pupils who move	1.9%	7.6%	6.4%	0.3%	5.2%	1.6%	77.0%
	Pupils who move to unknown destination	2.9%	8.9%	7.4%	0.3%	5.7%	1.9%	73.0%
2015/16	All pupils in the cohort	1.3%	9.1%	4.8%	0.3%	4.2%	1.1%	79.1%
	All pupils who move	2.0%	8.0%	6.2%	0.3%	5.1%	1.5%	76.8%
	Pupils who move to unknown destination	3.0%	8.9%	7.2%	0.2%	5.5%	1.7%	73.5%
2016/17	All pupils in the cohort	1.4%	9.4%	5.0%	0.4%	4.4%	1.3%	78.2%
	All pupils who move	1.9%	7.6%	6.5%	0.3%	5.5%	1.7%	76.5%
	Pupils who move to unknown destination	2.6%	8.0%	7.4%	0.3%	5.7%	1.9%	74.1%
2017/18	All pupils in the cohort	1.4%	10.0%	5.2%	0.3%	4.6%	1.5%	77.0%
	All pupils who move	1.9%	7.8%	6.4%	0.2%	5.8%	2.1%	75.9%
	Pupils who move to unknown destination	2.5%	7.7%	6.7%	0.3%	5.9%	2.2%	74.7%
2018/19	All pupils in cohort	1.5%	10.1%	5.4%	0.3%	4.8%	1.7%	76.2%
	Pupils who move	2.1%	7.6%	6.8%	0.3%	6.1%	2.2%	74.9%
	Pupils who move to unknown destination	2.6%	7.5%	6.8%	0.3%	6.1%	2.4%	74.4%

Cohort	Pupil group	Any Other Ethnic Group	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	Unclassified	White
2019/20 ²³	All pupils in cohort	1.6%	10.2%	5.5%	0.3%	5.1%	1.6%	75.7%
	Pupils who move	2.2%	7.7%	7.1%	0.3%	6.2%	2.1%	74.5%
	Pupils who move to unknown destination	2.8%	7.2%	6.5%	0.3%	6.3%	2.3%	74.7%

Source: School Census, Pupil Referral Unit census and Alternative Provision census 2010 to 2020

²³ Data for the 2019/20 cohort does not include the final census of Year 11.

Pupils who move to unknown destinations are more likely than all pupils in the cohort and pupils who move in general to be identified as FSM6 or SEN or CIN during the period (see Annex I). In the 2018/19 cohort:

- Around 33% of the whole cohort are ever FSM6 in secondary school compared to 52% of pupils who move and 53% of pupils who move to unknown destinations.
- Almost 26% of pupils in the whole cohort have SEN during the period, in contrast to 42% of pupils who move and 43% of pupils who move to an unknown destination.
- Just over 12% of pupils in the whole cohort are identified as CIN during Years 7 to 11, compared to 29% of pupils who move and 31% of pupils who move to unknown destinations.

Pupils with some primary SEN types are over-represented in the population of pupils who move to unknown destinations compared to pupils in the whole cohort (see Annex J). In 2018/19 the largest disparity is for pupils who, ever over the period, have a primary SEN type of Social, Emotional and Mental Health, 6% of pupils in the whole cohort compared to 16% of pupils who move to unknown destinations.

Pupils with all types of CIN during Years 7 to 11 are over-represented amongst those who move to unknown destinations compared to their cohort (see Annex K).

Conclusion

There are around 100,000 moves in each of the six cohorts of secondary school pupils analysed. The number of moves increases with each successive cohort, from 89,300 moves in the 2014/15 cohort to 107,900 for the 2018/19 cohort. This means 13% to 16% of pupils in each cohort experienced a move. Available data for the 2019/20 cohort shows this upward trend continues. Annually, across all cohorts, the number of moves peaks at the point pupils change year group (though this peak is less pronounced between Years 10 and 11).

Overall, most moves are to state-funded mainstream schools. As each cohort progresses from Year 7 to 11, the number of moves to state-funded mainstream schools decreases, whilst those to PRU, AP providers and unknown destinations increases. A third of moves in each cohort are to unknown destinations (partly reflecting a lack of data that can be linked to the school census on pupils who move to independent schools, migrate out of England, die, or move to home learning).

While there is very little difference in pupils who move in general by gender, boys are more likely to move to an unknown destination than girls. In all year groups, a greater proportion of moves by boys are to PRU and AP providers compared to moves by girls.

Pupils of Black, Mixed and Any Other Ethnic Group are slightly more likely to leave their school than those of other ethnicities. These groups are also more likely to move to unknown destinations than others.

Pupils that are ever identified as FSM6, SEN or CIN during the period are more likely to move generally and to move to unknown destinations. In all year groups, a greater proportion of moves by those who are FSM6, SEN or CIN at any time during secondary school are to PRU, AP providers and special schools compared to moves by pupils who are not FSM6, SEN or CIN during the period. Pupils who ever have a primary SEN type of Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (up to 2013/14); Social, Emotional and Mental Health (from 2014/15); or Moderate Learning Difficulty during secondary school are more likely to move compared to those with other primary SEN types and to move to unknown destinations.



Department
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