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Reporting year 2025

Admission appeals in England

This is the latest release



Published 14 August 2025

Next update August 2026

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These statistics provide information about appeals made following the refusal of a school place application.

Most appeals are made when an applicant has not received an offer, via the annual coordinated admissions process, of a place at their first preference school for entry into primary or secondary school. However, appeals relating to other transfers at the start of the school year are also included. Appeals relating to 'in-year' admissions are not included.

Appeals relating to community and voluntary controlled schools are collected as aggregated totals by local authorities. Academy, foundation and voluntary aided schools provide school level appeal figures via the spring school census.

The latest data covers appeals relating to admissions at the start of the 2024/2025 academic year (reporting year 2025). The appeals must have been lodged with the appropriate admissions authority by 1 September 2024. A comparable time series back to the 2015/2016 academic year (reporting year 2016) is provided. The date referred to in the text is the reporting year.

The figures detail the number of appeals lodged, heard (by an appeals panel) and successful. Rates for appeals lodged and heard are calculated against an estimate of the total number of relevant new admissions based on school census data. The rate of successful appeals is calculated as the number successful divided by the number heard.

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The figures are provided by school phase, with primary schools split into infant and other primary classes. The data is also presented by school governance type and at national, regional and local authority level.

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Headline facts and figures - 2025

Primary appeals heard by an appeals panel

1.2%

Slightly down from 1.3% in 2024, and a return to 2023 level, representing 8,999 appeals heard

Primary successful appeals

17.7%

Down from 18.1% in 2024 but higher than 16.4% in 2023

Secondary appeals heard by an appeals panel

3.9%

Down from 4.2% in 2024 and 4.1% in 2023, representing 29,640 appeals heard

Secondary successful appeals

19.9%

Down from 20.7% in 2024 and 20.9% in 2023

8,999 appeals were heard relating to primary school places for entry in 2025, representing 1.2% of new admissions. This rate has remained stable in recent years while the number of admissions has fallen from 780k to approximately 755k between 2024 and 2025. Both the number of admissions and the number of appeals are the lowest since the series began in 2016.

1,595 primary appeals were successful, representing 17.7% of those heard. The success rate has varied year on year since the series began, between a low of

16.2% in 2021 and a high of 19.7% in 2019 with no overall trend.

29,640 appeals were heard relating to secondary school places for 2025, representing 3.9% of new admissions. This was a decrease from 2024, when 32,107 (4.2% of new admissions) appeals were heard. The total number of secondary admissions remained virtually unchanged at approximately 757k in 2024 and 2025.

5,903 secondary appeals were successful, representing 19.9% of those heard. There has been a trend for secondary appeals to be less successful over time, with the success rate declining from 26.3% in 2016 to 19.9% in 2025.

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Appeals lodged

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Applicants can lodge appeals for any school they have not been awarded a place in. Appeals can be withdrawn; for example, because the child has been offered a place at the school via the waiting list.

The text of this release refers mainly to the number of appeals which reach the stage of being heard by the appropriate authority. Figures for appeals lodged can be found in files in the data catalogue and via the table tool.

In 2025, 14,584 primary appeals were lodged (equating to approximately 1.9% of total primary admissions), and 8,999 (approximately 1.2% of admissions) were heard by an appeals panel. At secondary school phase, 37,289 appeals were lodged (approximately 4.9% of secondary admissions) and 29,640 (approximately 3.9%) were heard.

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Appeals by school type

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Academies had the highest rate of appeals heard in 2025 at 2.8%. Historically, academies have consistently had the highest rates of appeals heard, with the rate varying from 2.8% in 2022 and 2025 to 3.6% in 2020. By contrast, the rate for foundation schools has varied from 1.9% in 2017 to 2.7% in 2024.

Foundation schools had the highest rate of successful appeals in 2025, at 24.1% of appeals heard. Historically, foundation schools have consistently had the highest rates of successful appeals, with the rate varying from 24.1% in 2025 to 29.7% in 2016. By contrast, the rate for community and voluntary controlled schools has varied from 14.8% in 2021 to 19.1% in 2018, and is the lowest in 2025 at 15.6%.

As the proportion of schools that are academies continues to grow, the proportion of appeals accounted for by academies has increased year on year. In 2025, 70.5% of appeals lodged were for places in academies compared with 69.5% in 2024 and

68.0% in 2023.

This looks across school phases and does not take account of differences in governance type by phase which may explain some variation; for example, if primary schools are more likely to be community and voluntary controlled than secondary.

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Number of appeals heard, as a percentage of estimated admissions, and number and percentage of appeals heard that were successful 2025

	2025			
	Appeals heard by an appeals panel	Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage)	Successful appeals	Successful appeals (percentage)
Academy	27,257	2.8	5,526	20.3
Community and voluntary controlled	7,375	2.0	1,153	15.6
Foundation	1,332	2.5	321	24.1
Voluntary aided	2,675	2.5	498	18.6
Total	38,639	2.6	7,498	19.4

[Data symbols](#) ?

Source: 2025 admissions appeals collection and 2025 spring school census

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Primary appeals

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Primary and infant classes

Primary admissions and appeals are split between infant (reception and years one and two) and other primary classes. Restrictions embodied in the [The School Admissions \(Infant Class Sizes\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(opens in a new tab\)](#) require infant classes to be limited to 30 children apart from a number of lawful exceptions. This reduces the possibilities of appeals for these year groups.

Parents and carers are accordingly less likely to lodge appeals for these year groups (1.3% of admissions vs 4.6% for older primary year groups), less likely to pursue them to a hearing (0.8% vs 2.8%) and less likely to experience a successful outcome (9.7% vs 28.3%).

► Export options

Primary school admissions appeals lodged and heard, and as a percentage of estimated admissions, and the number and percentage successful, by type of primary class 2025

	2025		
	Primary (infant classes)	Other primary classes	Primary
Admissions	617,802	137,153	754,955
Admission appeals lodged by parents	8,250	6,334	14,584
Admission appeals lodged by parents (percentage)	1.3	4.6	1.9
Appeals heard by an appeals panel	5,128	3,871	8,999
Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage)	0.8	2.8	1.2
Successful appeals	499	1,096	1,595
Successful appeals (percentage)	9.7	28.3	17.7

[Data symbols](#) ?

Source: 2025 admissions appeals collection and 2025 spring school census

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The proportion of appeals heard decreased from 2.6% in 2016 to 1.2% in 2022 and has since remained stable. The proportion of appeals that were successful varied over time between a low of 16.2% in 2021 and a high of 19.7% in 2019 with no overall trend.

Note that the underlying data gives breakdowns by primary sub-group. In light of relatively small numbers and methodology changes in 2025, caution is advised when comparing the 2025 rates for other (non-infant) primary appeals lodged and heard with earlier years. See the methodology document for explanation of how estimates of admission numbers have been derived for purposes of calculating rates in 2025.

► Export options

Number and rate of primary appeals heard and number and proportion of those heard that were successful, 2016 to 2025

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Primary	Admissions	865,069	841,532	820,620	815,051	812,953
	Appeals heard by an appeals panel	22,820	19,336	16,643	14,086	12,465
	Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage)	2.6	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.5
	Successful appeals	4,152	3,494	3,186	2,779	2,310
	Successful appeals (percentage)	18.2	18.1	19.1	19.7	18.5

Source: admissions appeals collection (APAD) and spring school census

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Geographic variations in primary appeals

There is some regional variation in rates of primary appeals heard and success rates. In 2025 the North East region had the lowest rate of appeals heard (0.6%) but the highest success rate at 34.3%. This was considerably higher than South West region with the second highest success rate at 24.9% and joint second lowest rate of appeals heard at 0.7%.

Low appeal rates are not always associated with high success rates. The appeal heard rate across London local authorities was 0.7% but the success rate was the lowest of any region at 6.7%.

The overall pattern of regional variation between 2016 and 2025 is consistent. North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East Midlands and West Midlands have been the regions with the highest rates of primary appeals heard and London has generally had the lowest. North East, Yorkshire and The Humber and South West regions have generally had the highest successful primary appeal rates, and London has had the lowest.

Each year a small number of local authorities hear no primary appeals. City of London has only one primary school with around 30 admissions annually and hears appeals rarely. In 2025 Redcar and Cleveland was the only other LA recording no primary appeals heard. Of those that recorded hearing at least one appeal, 24 LAs recorded no successful appeals. These included Havering (68 appeals heard), Solihull (46), Brent (37), Greenwich (34) and Luton (24). The others had all heard fewer than 20 appeals each.

Tables showing geographic variations over time can be found in the featured tables: [appeal rates by region](#) and [number of appeals by LA](#).

Chart

Table

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Rates of primary appeals heard and proportion of primary appeals heard that were successful by region 2020 to 2025

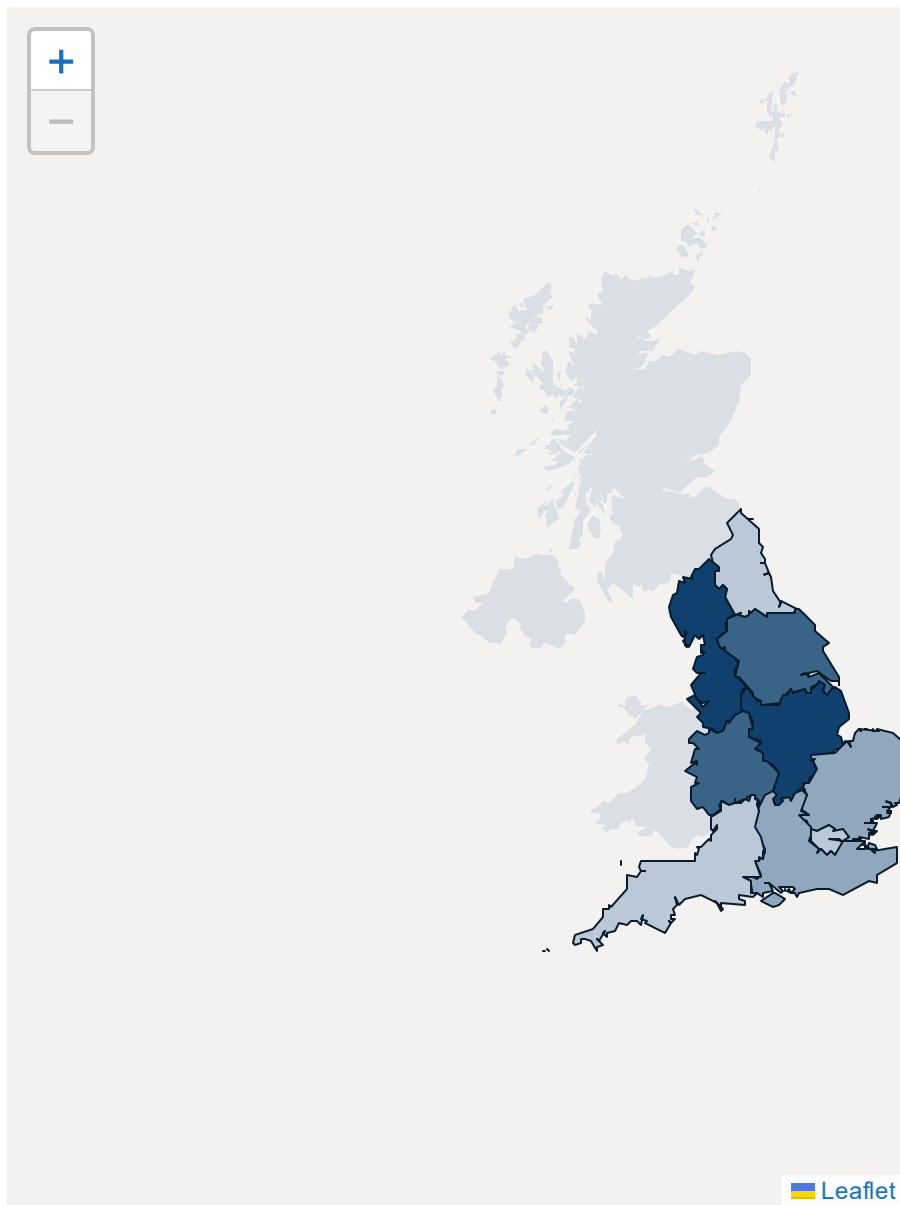
Rates of primary appeals heard and the proportion of primary appeals heard that were successful, English regions 2020 to 2025

1. Select data to view

Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage) (▼)

2. Select a Region

None selected (▼)



Key to Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage) (Primary, 2025)

0.6 to 0.8

0.9 to 1.1

1.2 to 1.4

1.5 to 1.7

1.8 to 1.9

Footnotes

1. This map uses the boundary data Regions England BUC 2022/12

Source: admissions appeals collection (APAD) and spring school census

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Use our table tool to explore this data.

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Secondary appeals

 Hide

Secondary appeals over time

Overall, the proportion of appeals heard was similar in 2016 (3.6%) and 2025 (3.9%), although it rose as high as 4.9% in 2020 before falling back over subsequent years. The proportion of appeals that were successful has decreased fairly consistently from 26.3% in 2016 to 19.9% in 2025.

► Export options

Number and rate of secondary appeals heard and number and proportion of those heard that were successful, 2016 to 2025

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Secondary	Admissions	640,705	674,790	680,200	695,861	724,740
	Appeals heard by an appeals panel	22,964	25,290	27,877	31,769	35,640
	Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage)	3.6	3.7	4.1	4.6	4.9
	Successful appeals	6,040	6,220	6,529	7,398	7,900
	Successful appeals (percentage)	26.3	24.6	23.4	23.3	22.2

[Data symbols](#) ?

Source: admissions appeals collection (APAD) and spring school census

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Geographic variations in secondary appeals

There is some regional variation in rates of secondary appeals heard and success

rates. In 2025 the South West region had the lowest rate of appeals heard (2.5%) and the second highest success rate at 25.3%. The North West region had the highest rate of appeals heard (5.9%) and a mid-range success rate of 19.3%. The highest success rate was 27.6% in North East region, and the lowest was London at 10.1%, driven by an Inner London low of 9.6%.

The overall pattern of regional variation between 2016 and 2025 is fairly consistent. North West has been consistently the region with the highest rates of secondary appeals heard, usually followed by South East. East of England and South West have had consistently the lowest. The North East and South West generally have the highest successful secondary appeal rates. London has always had the lowest since 2016, with the successful secondary appeal rate for Inner London mostly lower than Outer London.

City of London has no secondary schools and therefore records no secondary appeals. In 2025, no other LA recorded having no secondary appeals heard. Only three LAs recorded having no successful secondary appeals: Reading (63 appeals heard), Westminster (58) and Rutland (13).

Tables showing geographic variations over time can be found in the featured tables: [appeal rates by region](#) and [number of appeals by LA](#).

Chart

Table

► Export options

Rates of secondary appeals heard and proportion of secondary appeals heard that were successful by region 2020 to 2025

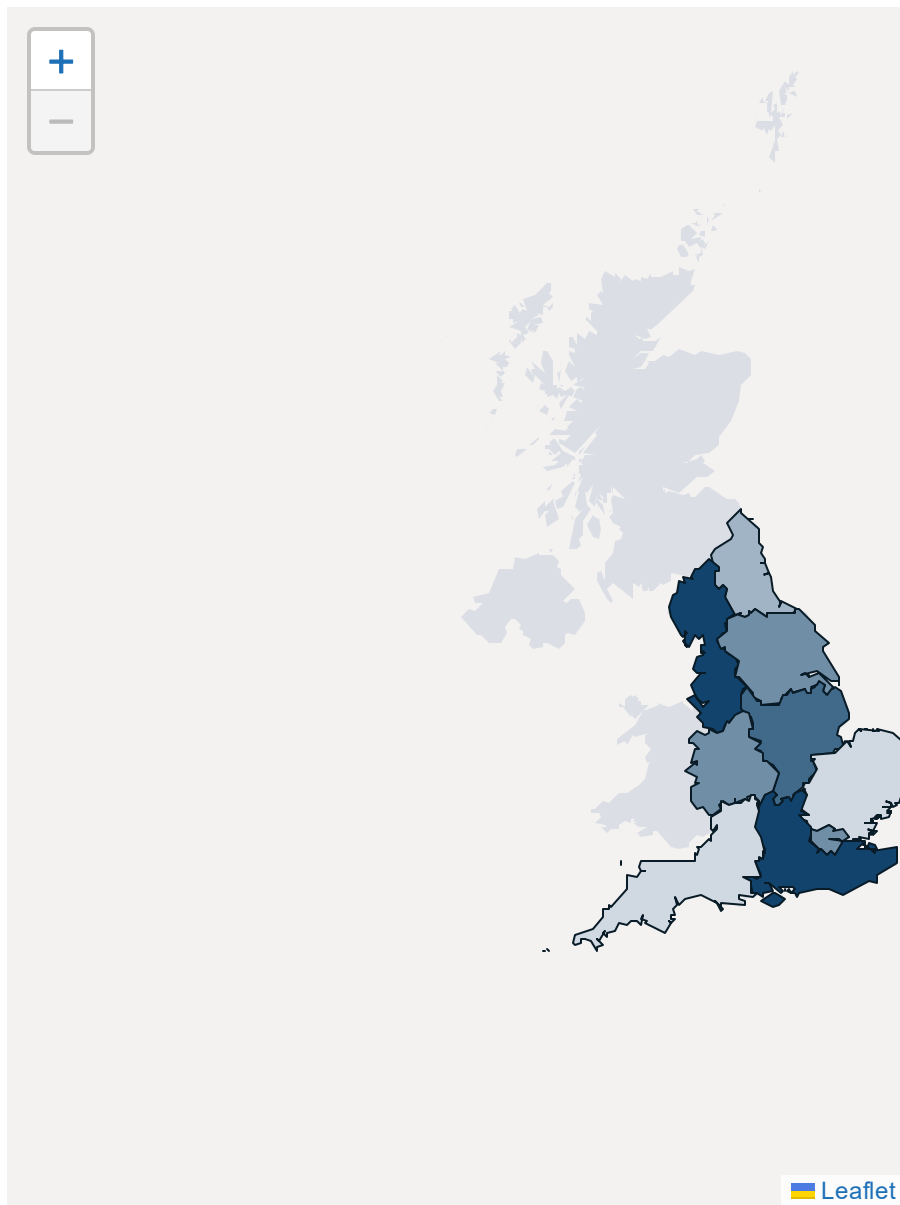
Rates of secondary appeals heard and the proportion of secondary appeals heard that were successful, English regions 2020 to 2025

1. Select data to view

Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage) (▼)

2. Select a Region

None selected ▼



Key to Appeals heard by an appeals panel (percentage) (Secondary, 2020)

2.8 to 3.5

3.6 to 4.3

4.4 to 5.1

5.2 to 5.9

6.0 to 6.6

Footnotes

1. This map uses the boundary data Regions England BUC 2022/12

Source: admissions appeals collection (APAD) and spring school census

Explore and edit this data online

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Further information available

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This release concentrates on the headline figures for the proportion of appeals heard and which were successful by school phase. However, the underlying data provides more information including:

- The governance of the school being appealed by school phase
- The number and proportion of appeals initially lodged
- A full list of local authority and regional figures

For data on the outcome of applications for primary and secondary places via the local authority applications and offers process, see [Primary and secondary school applications and offers](#).

Help and support

Methodology

Find out how and why we collect, process and publish these statistics.

[Admission appeals in England](#)

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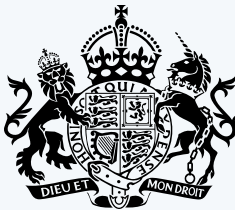
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