

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**Paul Givan, Minister**  
Rathgael House, Balloo Road  
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**Mark Durkan MLA**  
**Parliament Buildings**  
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23 April 2025  
AQW 25662/22-27

Mark Durkan MLA has asked:

To ask the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of admissions for (a) pre-schools; (b) primary schools, in each of the last five years, broken down by constituency; and (ii) how many of these were deemed socially disadvantaged.

## ANSWER

A copy of the table containing the information requested has been placed in the Assembly Library.



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**Minister of Education**

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**Answer:**

A breakdown of the number of children admitted to (a) pre-school settings and (b) primary schools for each of the last five years is set out in the table below. Data on the number of children eligible for Free School Meals has been used as the definition of those children deemed to be socially disadvantaged and this data is also provided.

		<b>24/25</b>		<b>23/24</b>		<b>22/23</b>		<b>21/22</b>		<b>20/21</b>	
<b>Constituency</b>	<b>School type</b>	<b>FSME</b>	<b>Total Pupil</b>	<b>FSME</b>	<b>Total Pupil</b>	<b>FSME</b>	<b>Total Pupil</b>	<b>FSME</b>	<b>Total Pupil</b>	<b>FSME</b>	<b>Total Pupil</b>
BELFAST EAST	Preschool Admissions	293	997	N/A	1016	281	1027	287	1045	260	1029
	Reception Admissions	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Primary 1 Admissions	273	954	N/A	990	273	1022	294	1004	244	1023
BELFAST NORTH	Preschool Admissions	690	1423	N/A	1467	682	1441	642	1451	663	1478
	Reception Admissions	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Primary 1 Admissions	673	1383	N/A	1411	662	1367	754	1497	719	1522
BELFAST SOUTH	Preschool Admissions	243	1135	N/A	1179	283	1166	284	1182	260	1151
	Reception Admissions	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Primary 1 Admissions	258	1313	N/A	1330	311	1325	345	1331	320	1322
BELFAST WEST	Preschool Admissions	918	1495	N/A	1473	810	1449	819	1436	784	1458
	Reception Admissions	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Primary 1 Admissions	755	1258	N/A	1207	694	1228	778	1321	783	1363
EAST ANTRIM	Preschool Admissions	246	918	N/A	902	220	952	245	954	193	967
	Reception Admissions	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Primary 1 Admissions	196	838	N/A	864	217	861	228	880	201	885
EAST LONDONDERRY	Preschool Admissions	295	1018	N/A	1060	291	1068	343	1073	228	1137
	Reception Admissions	0	15	N/A	11	*	16	*	17	0	3
	Primary 1 Admissions	315	1095	N/A	1153	323	1106	351	1184	341	1173
FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE	Preschool Admissions	254	1348	N/A	1324	241	1320	262	1416	135	1349
	Reception Admissions	*	21	N/A	9	9	19	0	8	*	13
	Primary 1 Admissions	246	1362	N/A	1345	279	1460	282	1390	297	1517
FOYLE	Preschool Admissions	717	1375	N/A	1375	649	1430	653	1440	562	1443
	Reception Admissions	0	7	N/A	7	0	5	0	1	0	3
	Primary 1 Admissions	579	1266	N/A	1346	618	1389	663	1421	618	1457
LAGAN VALLEY	Preschool Admissions	260	1137	N/A	1198	260	1220	230	1222	153	1212
	Reception Admissions	0	3	N/A	2	*	3	0	3	0	3
	Primary 1 Admissions	236	1252	N/A	1262	241	1269	248	1279	231	1300
MID ULSTER	Preschool Admissions	286	1498	N/A	1460	220	1452	229	1487	165	1556
	Reception Admissions	*	18	N/A	8	*	10	0	6	0	5
	Primary 1 Admissions	284	1525	N/A	1508	267	1513	335	1627	314	1544
NEWRY AND ARMAGH	Preschool Admissions	433	1561	N/A	1562	401	1568	387	1613	305	1634
	Reception Admissions	5	32	N/A	40	*	28	6	33	*	47
	Primary 1 Admissions	412	1676	N/A	1680	436	1741	477	1788	458	1883
NORTH ANTRIM	Preschool Admissions	335	1241	N/A	1277	318	1300	235	1314	181	1381
	Reception Admissions	*	2	N/A	8	0	3	*	5	*	11

	Primary 1 Admissions	268	1236	N/A	1197	277	1317	315	1334	299	1331
NORTH DOWN	Preschool Admissions	185	842	N/A	888	139	897	156	894	126	925
	Reception Admissions	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Primary 1 Admissions	156	875	N/A	937	188	922	183	960	195	1017
SOUTH ANTRIM	Preschool Admissions	256	1041	N/A	1118	194	1079	210	1078	129	1091
	Reception Admissions	6	21	N/A	20	5	28	5	21	*	23
	Primary 1 Admissions	223	1146	N/A	1111	219	1164	224	1163	268	1298
SOUTH DOWN	Preschool Admissions	274	1274	N/A	1320	272	1372	305	1327	217	1322
	Reception Admissions	*	41	N/A	22	6	32	*	26	*	30
	Primary 1 Admissions	291	1417	N/A	1514	339	1453	352	1517	343	1593
STRANGFORD	Preschool Admissions	235	916	N/A	942	185	950	184	921	114	920
	Reception Admissions	0	2	N/A	7	0	7	*	7	0	9
	Primary 1 Admissions	231	974	N/A	990	204	965	229	985	233	1104
UPPER BANN	Preschool Admissions	499	1600	N/A	1613	427	1651	471	1663	374	1661
	Reception Admissions	*	6	N/A	8	0	7	0	6	0	6
	Primary 1 Admissions	353	1566	N/A	1637	400	1677	449	1688	415	1739
WEST TYRONE	Preschool Admissions	305	1146	N/A	1222	313	1196	346	1274	247	1218
	Reception Admissions	*	16	N/A	16	*	19	*	16	*	26
	Primary 1 Admissions	299	1174	N/A	1129	334	1221	332	1231	331	1245

Source: NI school census

## Notes

Data is based on pupils enrolled on Census day i.e. The Friday of the first full week in October (In 2024/25 this was the 11 October 2024)

Figures for 'preschool settings' include funded children in voluntary and private preschools, nursery schools, nursery units and pupils enrolled in preschool age SPiM settings (in nursery schools and nursery units).

Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance where an award of income-based job-seekers allowance has been converted, and the amount of the award remains unchanged; and Universal Credit are some of the benefits which determine eligibility for free school meals. As school meals are not universally available to children in pre-school education, parental receipt of these benefits is a better indicator of social disadvantage for the pre-school sector. Pupils who are recorded as entitled to free school meals in nursery classes in primary schools are also included in the totals.

Data relating to 2023/24 was impacted by industrial action, due to Action Short of Strike (ASOS). Although data was received from all schools, for 25% of schools (primary, post primary and special schools) pupil level information was not received in electronic format. It also meant it was not possible to fully undertake normal validation processes, some validations were impossible due to a lack of pupil information. Validation was undertaken on free school meals and a total was agreed per school, however due to the lack of pupil level information it was not possible to break this total down by year group. Further information can be found in the notes section of the enrolments bulletin (<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/annual-enrolments-schools-and-funded-pre-school-education-northern-ireland-202324>)

\* denotes fewer than 5 pupils suppressed due to sensitive nature and potential identification of individual pupils