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Testing Times

Northern Ireland School Transfer without Tests in 2021

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Executive Summary

Key Findings

- Grammar schools exercised their freedom to set their own admissions criteria in the non-testing year, prioritising having an older sibling already at the school; having already registered for the AQE/GL tests in that year; being the eldest/first/only child in the family; having a sibling who was previously enrolled at the school; and attending a listed feeder primary school.

- Additional information provided to parents alongside the admissions criteria frequently highlighted grammar schools' commitment to academic selection as the principal method of entry to their school, and their intention to revert to academic selection in subsequent years. A majority also referred to fees payable.

- Analysis of the (non-testing) 2021-22 year 8 grammar and non-grammar school cohorts compared to the previous year 2020-21 showed very minimal differences in terms of gender, newcomer children, level of deprivation, distance travelled to school, and the percentage of the cohort with Free School Meal Entitlement and Special Educational Needs (including with statements). Figures for ethnicity and children in care were too low to allow a comparison to be made. System-level attainment data for the cohort were not available.

- While there was little change in the demographic composition of the year 8 cohort transferring to post-primary schools in 2021-22, the data reveal very stark differences (consistent over the past four years, including the non-testing year) in the pupil cohorts entering year 8 in grammar schools when compared to non-grammar schools. Using the 2021-22 year 8 cohort by way of example, these differences relate to:
    - Free School Meals (grammar: 15.8% vs non-grammar: 39%)
    - Special Educational Needs (grammar: 5.6% vs non-grammar: 25.2%)
    - Newcomer children (grammar: 1.1% vs non-grammar: 5.8%).
    - Level of Deprivation (grammar school intakes are skewed towards the higher (less deprived) MDM deciles and non-grammar school intakes are skewed towards the lower (more deprived) MDM deciles, though important differences were noted by school management type).

- Further qualitative research is needed to explore the perspectives and lived experiences of those most closely impacted by the non-testing year, especially the primary and post-primary schools (principals, teachers and governors), DE policy-makers, parents and of course the children themselves at the very heart of the process. Additional longitudinal research should also follow this unique year 8 cohort through the next few years, tracking their attainment but also, importantly, examining and supporting their emotional health and wellbeing.

Context

The issue of post-primary transfer by means of academic selection is the focus of a highly polarised policy debate in Northern Ireland (as in other jurisdictions), and has formed the subject of a series of highly critical reports published over the past quarter century (e.g. Gallagher & Smith, 2000; Gardner & Cowan, 2005; Jerrim & Simms, 2019, McMurray, 2020, Harris et al, 2021, Purdy et al, 2021, Brown et al, 2021; Demie, 2021; Pivotal, 2022; Hughes & Loader, 2022). These reports have frequently highlighted issues of educational inequity and social justice, and the detrimental impact of testing on children's emotional health and wellbeing. By contrast, proponents of academic selection argue that academic selection can promote social mobility (Brown et al., 2021) and point to the high attainment of pupils attending grammar schools and their higher rates of progression to university (Mansfield, 2019). There have been few, if any, recent developments in this policy arena which is notable for the associated policy stagnation, often heated debate, inter-party disagreement, and a widespread sense of frustration among many parents at the political impasse and the resulting impact on children (Black & McHugh, 2021).

Aims and Methods

This quantitative study set out to explore the learning from the unique circumstances created by the 'non-testing' year of post-primary transfer in Northern Ireland (for admission into post-primary schools in September 2021), when AQE and GL tests were postponed and eventually cancelled as a result of Covid-19 public health concerns. The research aimed to critically examine the range of entrance criteria used by grammar schools in the non-testing year; to assess the resulting demographic composition of the pupil cohort accepted into post-primary schools; and to consider the impact on the distance travelled to school by the pupils accepted into post-primary schools. Anonymised data were obtained from the Education Authority (all post-primary schools' admissions criteria for September 2021 entry) and from the Department of Education (demographic profile data disaggregated to focus on the year 8 cohort as a whole and by school management type to include details of Free School Meal entitlement, special educational needs, looked after children, newcomer children, ethnicity and Multiple Deprivation Measure [MDM] decile). Pre-calculated anonymised data were also provided by the Department of Education in respect of the distance travelled from home to school by pupils in the 2021-22 year 8 cohort. These data were also disaggregated by MDM decile and school management type.

Main Findings

The findings of this study highlight that individual grammar schools were obliged to 'have regard to' but not to follow DE's recommended (though non-statutory) guidance concerning admissions criteria. When the full range of 34 different admissions criteria (beyond the requirement of residency in Northern Ireland at the time of admission) are analysed to assess their frequency and weighted ranking, the results showed that the five highest ranking criteria were (in descending order of priority): having an older sibling already at the school; having already registered for the AQE/GL tests in that year; being the eldest/first/only child in the family; having a sibling who was previously enrolled at the school; and attending a listed feeder primary school. A total of 60 of the 63 grammar schools employed entirely non-academic criteria, the 3 outliers preferring to refer back to commercial (GL Assessment) standardised results from Progress Tests in English (PTE) and Progress Tests in Maths (PTM) held two

years previously. Many of the admissions criteria listed by grammar schools (e.g. familial criteria beyond sibling currently attending the school) are 'not recommended' by DE.

Further analysis of the additional information provided to parents highlights frequent mention by grammar schools of their strong and enduring commitment to academic selection as the principal method of entry to their school, and of their intention to revert to academic selection in subsequent years. Many grammar school admissions policies also referred to a wide variety of school fees. Total fees (where reported) were most commonly in the region of £75 to £150 per child per annum (excluding two much higher outliers).

A close reading of the additional information published by grammar schools suggests that their priority was to preserve as much as possible the identity of the cohort transferring into year 8 from the non-testing year. Further analysis of the demographic composition of the cohort suggests that changes have been very minimal in many respects and, if anything, numerically and therefore financially advantageous to grammar schools in the short term with slightly higher admissions (280 more pupils and a 1.3% increase in the share of the cohort in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21).

In terms of the particular characteristics of the year 8 grammar school cohort in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21, the key findings are summarised as follows:

- *Free School Meal Entitlement*: there was a slight increase in the percentage of children with Free School Meal Entitlement (up 0.7% from 15.1% to 15.8%);
- *Special Educational Needs:* there was a slight fall in the percentage of children with special educational needs at stages 1-5 of the Code of Practice (down 0.4% from 6.0% to 5.6%) and no change in the percentage of children with statements at Stage 5 of the SEN Code of Practice (1.3%);
- *Newcomer Children:* there was a slight fall (0.2%) in the percentage of newcomer children (down from 1.3% to 1.1%);
- *Gender:* the percentage of girls within the year 8 grammar school cohort rose slightly from 48.7% in 2020/21 to 49.7% in 2021/22, and the percentage of boys fell slightly from 51.26% in 2020/21 to 50.3% in 2021/22;
- *Children in Care:* figures for children in care (or 'looked after children') were so low (<5 in every grammar school) that a comparison could not be made;
- *Ethnicity: s*imilarly, the figures for ethnicity included too many unreported values or figures <5 to allow for reliable comparisons to be drawn;
- *Level of Deprivation*: any changes in terms of MDM decile composition of the grammar school cohort were negligible when the non-testing year was compared to the three previous years;
- *Distance travelled to school:* analysis of the distance travelled to school by the 2021/22 year 8 cohort has equally shown no notable differences in the spread when compared with the three previous years of post-primary transfer.

It can therefore be safely concluded, that differences in terms of the demographic make-up of the 2021/22 year 8 cohort admitted in the absence of AQE and GL tests are minimal when compared to previous year 8 cohorts.

However, while there has been little or no change in the demographic composition of the year 8 cohorts transferring to grammar and non-grammar schools in the non-testing year when

compared to previous years, the data reveal very stark differences (over the past four years, including the non-testing year) in the pupil cohorts entering year 8 in grammar schools when compared to non-grammar schools. These differences (using the year 8 cohort data for 2021-22) relate to the following key aspects:

- *Free School Meal Entitlement*: grammar: 15.8% vs non-grammar: 39%;
- *Special Educational Needs:* grammar: 5.6% vs non-grammar: 25.2%;
- *Newcomer Children:* grammar: 1.1% vs non-grammar: 5.8%;
- *Level of Deprivation (overall)*: analysis of the MDM decile data further highlights a consistent pattern where grammar school intakes are skewed towards the higher (less deprived) MDM deciles and non-grammar school intakes are skewed towards the lower (more deprived) MDM deciles. By way of example, for the 2021/22 year 8 cohort, just 20% of the grammar school intake came from the lowest three MDM deciles compared to 36% of the non-grammar school intake. Similarly, 39.2% of the 2021/22 year 8 grammar school cohort came from the top three (least deprived) MDM deciles, compared to just 18.7% of the non-grammar cohort.
- *Level of Deprivation (by school management type)*: For the first time, this study has also highlighted stark differences in the MDM profile between different grammar school management types, with Roman Catholic grammar schools consistently showing a much more evenly distributed spread of deprivation level (as measured by MDM decile) across their year 8 intake when compared to controlled and voluntary grammar schools.

Further Research

This was a purely quantitative study. Moving forward, there is a pressing need for more qualitative research into the different perspectives and lived experiences of those most closely impacted by the non-testing year, especially the primary and post-primary schools (principals, teachers and governors), DE policy-makers, parents and of course the children themselves at the very heart of the process. It would also be important to ascertain the attainment levels of the year 8 cohort in 2021/22 (grammar and non-grammar), using school-level data (where available and in the absence of system-level data) to explore whether there were any attainment differences in the non-testing cohort as a result of the application of non-academic criteria by almost all grammar schools. Finally, further longitudinal research is needed to follow this unique cohort of children through the next few years, tracking their attainment (where there is currently no cohort data) but also, importantly, examining and supporting their emotional health and wellbeing as the cohort whose transfer to post-primary school was arguably most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

Finally, the findings of this study must pose fundamental questions regarding the future of a selective education system which is characterised by such consistently stark differences in the social background of those pupils in year 8 transferring to grammar and non-grammar schools in Northern Ireland. It is our sincere hope that fresh data will help unlock the current policy paralysis and encourage evidence-based discussion among all interested parties (politicians, policy-makers, school leaders, parents and children) around the future of post-primary transfer in Northern Ireland.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The established political consensus of at least the past two decades in the UK, that educational inequality should be reduced (Francis et al., 2017; Reay, 2017), has generated successive policy changes that have not yet led to significant improvements in 'closing the gap' in educational outcomes or fostering social mobility (Social Mobility Commission, 2021).

In Northern Ireland, a system of academic selection at 11 remains, despite research highlighting its failings (e.g., Gallagher & Smith, 2000) and the subsequent abolition of the government regulated transfer tests in 2008. With no cross-party consensus to resolve the issue, however, almost all grammar schools have maintained a system of unregulated academic selection facilitated on their behalf by two private consortia who create and mark their own transfer tests. The Post-Primary Transfer Consortium's (PPTC) GL Assessment test is favoured by Catholic Grammar Schools (n=33 in 2019), while the Association for Quality Education (AQE) operated tests are used by most other schools (n=34 in 2019). The number of pupils sitting the tests remains high: around 15,700 children in 2022-2023 (around 61% of the total year 7 cohort[1]) of whom 8400 pupils sat AQE tests and around 7300 sat GL tests (Meredith, 2023). In a major development, this dual system (with around 1000 pupils sitting both sets of tests) will be replaced in November 2023 by a common test set by a new body, the Schools' Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG), established by the schools themselves (Meredith, 2023). This represents the most significant change to post-primary transfer test arrangements since 2008, the final year of DE-regulated testing.

Pre-covid, the number of children sitting transfer tests was even higher with 16,257 year 7 primary school children taking the tests in November 2019 (McMurray, 2020), representing 64.5% of the year 7 cohort that year[2]. It has long been highlighted that there are more disadvantaged pupils in non-grammar schools (Gallagher & Smith, 2000; Demie, 2021). Using free school meal entitlement (FSME) as a proxy for deprivation, figures for 2019/20 confirm that 21.9% of Year 8 pupils entitled to FSM attended a grammar school, while 78.1% attended a non-grammar school (McMurray, 2020). In addition, extensive research has established that the single strongest predictor of a pupil's educational achievement is whether they gain entrance to a grammar school for post-primary education (Harris et al., 2021). Further research has highlighted the significance of private tutoring and test preparation by wealthy parents (Jerrim & Sims, 2019), and has suggested that such testing can frequently misclassify pupils (Gardner & Cowan, 2005). The question of how to make our education system as equitable, accessible, and inclusive as possible, and thereby tackle the persistent problem of educational inequality, is therefore related to post-primary school placement and, in selective systems, to the effects of transfer tests.

In Northern Ireland, as elsewhere, the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing social and educational inequalities, with two local studies of home-schooling experiences highlighting the disproportionately negative impact on already disadvantaged families (Walsh et al., 2020; Purdy et al., 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic also led to the postponement and eventual cancellation of the November 2020 transfer tests. Due to these cancellations, post-primary admissions for the 2021/22 school year were determined by non-academic criteria set by each individual grammar school within the bounds of departmental guidelines, whilst the overall

[1] Total year 7 cohort numbers for 2022-2023 obtained directly from DE
[2] Total year 7 cohort numbers for 2019-2020 obtained directly from DE

system of academic selection remains otherwise unchanged. The 'non-testing' cohort of children therefore represent a unique cohort of children within grammar schools since they transferred using very different admissions criteria from previous or subsequent years.

There have been few, if any, recent developments in this policy arena which is notable for the associated policy stagnation, often heated debate, inter-party disagreement, and a widespread sense of frustration among parents at the political impasse and the impact on children (Black & McHugh, 2021).

Change may be on the way however. Post-primary transfer represents a key element in the Terms of Reference of Northern Ireland's Independent Review of Education (DE, 2020), established under the terms of the New Decade, New Approach political settlement of January 2020. In their Interim Report (Bloomer et al., 2022), the panel suggest that they will not "shirk" the challenge of addressing this issue in their final report, due for publication in the coming months:

> The transition from primary to post-primary schooling is surrounded by controversy; many stakeholders have highlighted strongly held views on the subject. The Final Report will not shirk these issues. (Bloomer et al., 2022, p.17)

The findings from this current project have the potential therefore to provide new, evidence-based insights, using the unprecedented example of the 2021-22 intake, to refresh the debate and to inform future policy direction.

The study builds on the existing work of the Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement whose recent reports (e.g., Harris et al., 2021; Social Mobility Commission, 2021; Purdy et al., 2021) have all highlighted the inequity inherent in a system of academic selection at 11, and have called for progress to be made to address this hitherto intractable challenge.

This unprecedented context, represents a unique opportunity to capture the learning from the non-testing year through impactful research to critically examine the range of non-academic entrance criteria used by selective schools; to assess the impact of these criteria on the background of the pupils accepted into post-primary schools; and to consider the impact on the distance travelled to school by the pupils accepted into post-primary schools.

This project aims to explore and rigorously capture the learning gained from a range of educational stakeholders following the suspension of the transfer tests.

The three central research questions are as follows:

1. What admissions criteria were used by selective schools in Northern Ireland in 2020/21 and how did these compare with the criteria from the previous year? (Strand 1)

2. What is the demographic profile of the 2021/22 Year 8 cohort across all post-primary schools in NI and how does this compare to the previous year's cohort? (Strand 2)

3. What is the spatial impact of the non-testing year, on the 2021/2022 Year 8 cohort, in respect to pupils' home locations, including distances from school, and multiple deprivation measures, and how do these considerations compare with previous years? (Strand 3)

Chapter 2: Academic Selection in Northern Ireland

Selective admission to grammar schools remains a central feature of Northern Ireland's political landscape, where there has been little change to post-primary transfer since 1947 (Brown et al, 2021). Prior to World War 2, grammar school entrance was subject to pupil fees (with some scholarships) and it was only as a result of the 1944 Education Act of England and Wales and the subsequent Northern Ireland Education Act in 1947 that a free and compulsory post-primary education system for all children between the ages of 5 and 15 years was established across the United Kingdom. Yet, as part of this social reform, an academic transfer test was introduced at the age of 11 to determine where pupils would continue their post-primary education: at a grammar school with a strong academic focus for the highest achieving pupils or a secondary school with a more vocational education at its core (Pivotal, 2022). Although over the years, particularly during the 60s and 70s, a shift towards a more comprehensive education system has gathered momentum across much of the UK, Northern Ireland has retained a form of academic selection where children are selected at the age of 11, and their future education determined according to their performance in a series of academic tests (Gallagher and Smith, 2000).

Yet the persistence of academic selection within the context of Northern Ireland has always been highly controversial and hugely politicised. Indeed, such an issue has attracted polarised views amongst political parties in Northern Ireland. Following the publication of two seminal reports i.e. the *Burns Report* (DENI, 2001) and the *Costello Report* (DENI, 2003), it was agreed that the final government-regulated academic selection tests would take place in November 2008 (Roulston & Milliken, 2021). In the absence of regulated academic testing, the Department of Education published guidance to which post-primary schools were required to give due regard, indicating that decisions on admissions should no longer relate to academic ability, priority should be given to pupils entitled to free school meals and that primary schools should deliver the entire Northern Ireland curriculum (rather than focusing unduly on numeracy and literacy as test preparation) and "should not facilitate unregulated tests in any way" (Perry, 2016, p.3).

However, grammar schools across Northern Ireland, extremely unhappy with the abolition of government run academic selection, responded by establishing their own system of unregulated transfer tests. This was undertaken by means of two consortia: the Post-Primary Transfer Consortium (PPTC) for principally Catholic grammar schools and the Association for Quality Education (AQE) for principally controlled and voluntary grammar schools (Pivotal, 2022), with the first tests taking place in November 2009.

Such a system of unregulated testing has continued since then. Three quarters of a century after its introduction, a form of academic selection therefore still prevails within Northern Ireland, and due to entrenched political positions, a consensus on such a contentious issue still remains far off (Pivotal, 2022).

Academic Evidence: Arguments against Academic Selection

A number of significant research studies over the past quarter century have been highly critical of academic selection in Northern Ireland. The most comprehensive piece of research

undertaken on academic selection within the context of Northern Ireland was led by Gallagher and Smith over 20 years ago, and published in 2000. Drawing on an array of qualitative and quantitative data from a pupil, teacher and society level, the findings highlighted the high academic standards achieved by many grammar schools, providing an ethos of academic and intellectual excellence.

Yet, Gallagher and Smith (200) also highlighted significant challenges to the practice of academic selection. The findings raised significant concerns regarding children's well-being, motivation and aspirations, where children were exposed to undue pressure at such a young age when completing the tests. In addition, it was reported by several secondary school teachers how much of their time was spent on rebuilding the self-confidence and self-esteem of several pupils who arrived at their school feeling a sense of failure as they had been 'unsuccessful' in accessing a grammar school place. In addition, another key area of concern reflected in their findings identified how a selective system appeared to produce a disproportionate number of schools which combine low ability and social disadvantage in their enrolments, thereby compounding issues of educational inequality (Gallagher & Smith, 2000).

Educational disadvantage

Although Gallagher and Smith's study was conducted over two decades ago, its key messages have been echoed in several more recent studies, in which, despite the success of grammar schools in terms of academic achievement, issues of educational inequality, inequity and social justice are cited as key determinants as to why an alternative to academic selection is a requisite within Northern Ireland (Jerrim & Simms, 2019; McMurray, 2020; Harris et al., 2021; Purdy et al., 2021; Brown et al., 2021; Pivotal, 2022). Drawing on an in-depth literature review and intensive interviews with teachers across school types, Brown et al. (2021) conclude that Northern Ireland may be praised as an education system that provides high-performance levels, particularly within grammar schools, but poses the question, at what cost? Academic selection, according to their evidence, exacerbates inequalities and results in a system of winners and losers, where the winners enjoy the advantages, but ultimately, the losers lose out (Brown et al., 2021). A recent paper by Hughes and Loader (2022) agrees with such thinking, but goes one step forward, arguing that academic selection not only breeds inequality and perpetuates middle-class advantage[3] but limits the potential for the development of a more integrated and inclusive education system. Drawing on three core dimensions of social cohesion theory namely distributive, relational and ideational, as well as recent and relevant research and empirical evidence, Hughes and Loader (2022, p.12) contend that 'equality and equity are not the only casualties of a system that had already been deemed deeply flawed'. In addition, from their perspective, the grammar school system presents a significant barrier to peace-building efforts within education in Northern Ireland and impedes progress towards building a more 'socially cohesive society' (Hughes & Loader, 2022, p.1).

[3] Recent evidence from the Social Mobility Commission (2021) indicates that the socio-economic divide in Northern Ireland between pupils at selective and non-selective schools has widened since 2010. In 2020-21, only 14% of pupils in selective schools were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), compared with 37% in non-selective schools. While grammar schools are theoretically accessible to all, the Social Mobility Commission (2022) argues that transfer test results at age 10/11 are affected by high parental aspirations and rates of private tutoring in high-income households which in reality means that grammar school places disproportionately go to children from more socio-economically advantaged backgrounds.

Research conducted by Gorard and Siddiqui (2017) into grammar schools in England supports these Northern Ireland findings in terms of the damaging impact of selection on social mobility. The findings reveal that grammar schools in England have a very low percentage of pupils who are or have ever been eligible for free school meals (2% as opposed to 14% nationally) and the few FSM-eligible pupils in grammar schools have been eligible for fewer years than in the rest of the school system. Gorard and Siddiqui (2017) argue that once the pupil intake of grammar schools is taken into account, based on factors such as chronic poverty, ethnicity, home language, special educational needs, and age in the year group, grammar schools are no more or less effective than any other schools. In this way, the findings suggest that the apparent success of grammar schools is due to pupils coming from more advantaged social backgrounds and already having higher academic attainment at the age of 11 (Gorard & Siddiqui, 2017). The authors conclude therefore, that segregating children by academic attainment from an early age does *not* lead to higher attainment for either those who are admitted to grammar schools or those who are not admitted to grammar schools. In this way, the findings suggest that grammar schools in England endanger social cohesion for no clear academic gain and for this reason, Gorard and Siddiqui (2017) recommend that the UK government should consider phasing out the remaining selective / grammar schools.

Children's Well-being

The negative impact of academic selection on children's well-being is another issue that many recent researchers (e.g. Hughes & Loader, 2022; Pivotal, 2022; Brown et al., 2021; Leitch et al., 2017; Henderson et al, 2020; McMurray, 2020 and Perry, 2016) have continued to emphasise, a finding that was also raised in Gallagher and Smith's large-scale study in 2000. Drawing on a review of academic literature within the field, Pivotal (2022) draws attention to the young age of children sitting the academic tests (10-11 years) and they argue that this can intensify the stress and pressure experienced on their part due to a lack of developmental maturity, the 'high stakes' nature of the transfer tests as they cannot be repeated, and the children's lack of experience in completing formal examinations. But it is those children, it seems, who have not succeeded in accessing a place at a grammar school, and those who do not apply to take the test, whose confidence and self-esteem are most at risk (Hughes & Loader, 2022), perceiving themselves as failures at such a young age (Leitch et al., 2017).

Indeed, a small-scale study conducted by Right to Education (2019) engaged with pupils, parents and teachers from a diverse group of schools across Northern Ireland using a mixed methods methodology. Over 300 pupils took part, including those who sat the test and those who did not, those who were successful and those who were unsuccessful and those from urban and rural communities. The findings indicate that 60% of the children surveyed felt that the test was bad for them and did not make them feel confident; while 92% of teachers surveyed felt that the transfer test system has had a significant negative impact on children's mental health.

Interesting research conducted by Jerrims and Simms (2018) on grammar schools in England found little evidence that attending a grammar school impacted children's social and emotional outcomes. The study highlighted that while many parents and families place great emphasis on their child accessing a grammar school place in terms of their future well-being, aspirations

and behaviour, all of these issues appear to be largely unaffected by going to a grammar school. Indeed, research by Murphy and Weinhardt (2020) into 'Big Fish, Little Pond' effects, found that grammar school pupils may actually develop lower levels of academic self-concept and self-efficacy, as their main reference point will be their high-achieving peers.

Academic Evidence: Arguments for Academic Selection

Research which supports or promotes selective schooling is, by contrast, relatively scarce, yet those who support a selective educational system tend to do so on the grounds that:

- Pupils generally perform better at grammar schools than they do at non-selective schools.
- The poorest children attending grammar schools do even better so that such schools actually reduce the poverty attainment gap and promote social mobility.
- There is little or no harmful consequence for the other pupils in the rest of the schools. (Brown et al, 2021, p.484)

Statistical data from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland (DENI) confirm that pupils who attend grammar schools consistently outperform their secondary school counterparts in GCSE examinations. Data from DENI (2020) indicate that 94% of pupils at grammar schools achieved five GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and maths compared to only 51% of students from non-selective schools, findings which are consistent with evidence on pupils attending selective schools in England (Andrews et al., 2016). Therefore, proponents of academic selection draw on such findings to highlight the impact of grammar school attendance on academic achievement (McMurray, 2020). Evidence also indicates that those pupils who attend grammar schools are much more likely to attend higher education (Lu, 2021). Drawing on NISRA data from 2019/2020, the statistics reveal that almost 76% of grammar school pupils in Northern Ireland went to University after completing their A-levels, compared to only 26% of pupils from non-grammar schools (Bain, 2021). Such attainment data however fails to take into account differences in pupil background or to take into account the disproportionately low outcomes for many pupils who fail to secure places at grammar schools, as reported in a recent English study (see House of Commons, 2022; BBC, 2023).

Research by Mansfield (2019) attempts to showcase that even those children from very disadvantaged backgrounds have a better chance of attending a highly selective university if they attend a selective (rather than a non-selective) school in England. Mansfield's findings suggest that there is an increase in propensity for children, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds in selective areas of England to progress to Oxbridge, not to mention the even larger propensity for those from BME backgrounds to do so. For instance, a state school pupil with a BME background is reported to be more than five times as likely to progress to Oxbridge if they live in a selective area rather than a non-selective area (Mansfield, 2019). As a result, Mansfield concludes that selective schools offer an "unrivalled ladder of opportunity" to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling them to progress to highly selective universities which would not be available to them under a comprehensive system of education (Mansfield, 2019, p.50).

Some proponents of selection also draw on the work of sociologists such as Heath, Ermisch and Gallie (2005). Their series of essays on understanding social change indicates that reforms designed to reduce inequalities of opportunity have been rather ineffective. They point particularly to the introduction of comprehensive schooling as being ineffectual in terms of addressing social inequalities. In this way, those in favour of academic selection draw conclusions that the removal of academic selection in other jurisdictions has had little impact on creating greater equality of educational opportunity.

After well over half a century of research and debate, the case of academic selection in Northern Ireland still remains unresolved. Despite the arguments purported in defence of academic selection, alongside the substantial concerns, academic selection continues to prevail in the context of Northern Ireland. Little consensus on the issue has been found (Pivotal, 2022), and few, if any, suitable alternatives have been brought to the fore. As Gallagher (2021:19) argues, the issue of academic selection has resulted in a form of 'policy paralysis' and there appears to be little hope for change in the very near future.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Strand 1: Analysis of school admissions criteria for the non-testing year (2020-2021).

The admissions criteria used by each of the grammar schools during the non-testing year were provided by the Education Authority (EA) in PDF format. The research team conducted a documentary analysis of these PDF documents, extracting key information pertaining: to school-level information and demographics; the admissions criteria presented; and additional relevant information (not presented as admissions criteria).

The coding process involved four key steps, each of which is presented below.

Demographics: Firstly, a range of different demographic data were extracted from each of the published admissions criteria, this included: the Department of Education's (DE) 6 digit reference; school name; school address; phone number; town; postcode; district; school management type (controlled, voluntary-other, voluntary-roman catholic); geographical location (urban/rural); single sex/co-educational.

Admissions criteria coding: All grammar schools (n=63[4]) in Northern Ireland were included in this analysis. Each school listed their selected criteria in rank order. For each school, criteria were assigned a code depending on where in the priority list these criteria were placed, where 1 represents first priority criterion, 2 the second etc. Where a criterion had not been included in the school's admissions criteria, a '0' was assigned. Using an iterative process, new codes (criteria) were added as and when new criteria emerged. In total, 35 different criteria were extracted across all 63 schools (see Table 1).

Inter-rater reliability: All coding was conducted by one consistent member of the research team (coder A). Additionally, three independent coders (members of the research team, coders B, C, and D) each analysed seven different admissions criteria documents, alongside coder A. Thus resulting in one third of the full sample (n= 21 schools' admissions criteria) being subjected to inter-rater reliability checks. After coders B, C and D had completed their analyses, coder A also analysed these same documents. All coders then met to discuss, address and remedy any discrepancies and challenges which emerged from this process.

Additional data extraction: Any relevant information that was included in the admissions criteria that could potentially influence choice or preference was also noted, for example, the nature and extent of any parental financial contributions. Further relevant information highlighted in the admissions criteria were also extracted. Specifically, this involved reference to the following in the admissions criteria: special provisions circumstances; residency in Northern Ireland; boarding provision; waiting lists; and any other information unique to the school.

All coding and analysis were conducted using Excel. Demographic data were analysed using descriptive statistics. Non-selection criteria codes were analyzed qualitatively, using thematic analysis (as per Braun & Clarke, 2012). Descriptive analysis (frequencies) established how frequently each criterion was used for all grammar schools, as well as an overview of how frequently each criterion featured in the priority list, e.g., how often was FSME ranked as a

[4] Two grammar schools were excluded from the analysis (Portadown College and Lurgan College) as these schools operate within the Dickson Plan where pupils transfer later (at the end of year 10, aged 14), having attended all-ability junior high schools in years 8-10.

first priority etc. Note, that a large number of admissions criteria (n=19) had frequency counts of less than 3 schools. Weighted scores (and totals) were also applied.

Table 1: List of all admissions criteria used by grammar schools.

- Parent/Guardian member of teaching/admin/ancillary staff
- Children of Methodist Ministers/children of Members or Attenders of the Religious Society of Friends
- Mother/Father previously attended school
- Older/Sibling attending school
- Sibling who was previously enrolled/completed education
- Eldest/First/Only child in family
- Eldest/ only child and registered for PPTC
- First in family to apply to a grammar school
- Child of the family currently enrolled in the secondary department of the school
- Child of the family accepted for the secondary department of the college
- Enrolled in named school's prep dept.
- Child enrolled at other named post-primary school
- Children transferring from Controlled PS
- Children transferring from Maintained PS
- Preference given to oldest child [2 or more children having the same birthday]
- Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)
- P5 PTE Score & Stanine/P5 PTM Score & Stanine
- The sum of the stanine scores achieved in PTE9 and PTM9 standardised tests.
- Child Registered for AQE/GL
- School named as first preference
- School named as second/lower preference
- Children from named schools and first preference
- Children from named schools and second preference
- First preference & sibling/other family member currently enrolled at school
- Pupil educated at home
- Reside in named catchment [parish] areas to school
- First preference and from local area (residing in or primary education in local area, as defined by diocesan boundaries)
- Attend primary school in listed Feeder schools
- Main' feeder schools
- Transferring from [Name of school]
- Attend primary school in the area
- Moved into listed parish by September 2021/eldest male
- Live closest to school
- If after all criteria have been used and places remain, then will open to non-AQE registered pupils
- Tie-breaker criteria (prioritised by surname/first name/Oldest/Youngest candidate DOB/random selection)

Strand 2: Exploring the demographic patterns and potential shift of year 8 pupils in selective and non-selective schools

Strand 2 involved the analysis of the pupil demographic profile data from all grammar (n=63) and non-grammar (n=125) schools in NI. The research team accessed demographic data[5] from the Department of Education, who routinely collect this information as part of the annual school Census. Specifically, the following data were extracted: number of children with special educational needs (SEN); those entitled to a free school meal (FSME); children in care / children who are looked after (LAC); as well as gender and ethnicity breakdowns. Additionally, the EA provided MDM deciles for each pupil, as calculated by pupil postcodes. Due to anonymity, the research team could not receive postcode raw data, and so analysis involved the pre-calculated (by DE) MDM data. All of this information was then used to establish the demographic profile of the 2021/22 year 8 cohort (n= 24,974 pupils) as well as year 8 cohorts from the previous three years, namely, 2020/2021 (n= 25,107 pupils), 2019/2020 (n= 25,201 pupils), and 2018/2019 (n=23,866 pupils).

For each demographic attribute, total frequency counts were calculated per school. These were then calculated as a percentage across all schools for each attribute across each of the four years in question. Additionally, attributes are also presented as a percentage across the total sample of pupils (N=>24000). The data were also disaggregated by school management type using Excel pivot table filters/ splicers. The MDM data were explored, using Excel pivot tables, by assessing the percentage of pupils in each MDM decile for grammar schools alone (not including the secondary school pupils in the total), across the four years, as well as further exploration of the average MDM decile for grammar school by management type. Data are presented in tables and graphs, depicting each attribute and comparing the percentage share of total pupils for secondary and grammar schools, as well as by management type, for all four years[6].

Strand 3: Distance travelled to school

Strand 3 involved the analysis of MDM decile data for each pupil, as well as anonymised data (calculated and provided by DE) reflecting the magnitude of the distances travelled by pupils from home to school, as the crow flies (scalar as opposed to vector data was used as no post-codes/direction was provided). In order to explore any spatial differences in terms of catchment/ distance travelled to school, the average (mean, x) distances (km) for non-selective school pupils with respect to MDM deciles across the four years, was calculated using Excel pivot tables. This was further disaggregated by school management type for each of the four years of interest. Furthermore, the multiple deprivation measure deciles for each pupil's home location were also analysed to ascertain any change in cohort deprivation in respect to the previous three years.

[5] Note that small values (n=</= 5) were suppressed across each school.
[6] Note that data error percentages calculated as percentage of each attribute as unknown values due to small numbers not being recorded

Ethical considerations

The data involved in each of the three strands were anonymised data provided by either DE or the EA, and where necessary, preliminary data cleaning/ preparation was executed by DE or the EA to ensure full anonymisation. Note also that ethical approval for the research was received from Stranmillis University College's Ethics Committee on 5th December, 2022.

Chapter 4: Results

Strand 1

Research Question 1: What admissions criteria were used by selective schools in Northern Ireland in 2020/21 and how did these compare with the criteria from the previous year?

A thorough analysis of admissions criteria for all grammar schools (n=63) in Northern Ireland for the target year of interest (2021/2022-year 8 cohort) was conducted. Each school's admissions criteria were analysed using a systematic approach informed by Bowen (2008).

Importantly, the findings reported here are explored against the admissions criteria guidance set out by DE to post-primary schools in Circular 2016/15 (revised 21 October 2020). The DE guidance states that in drawing up Admissions Criteria, Boards of Governors must "have regard to" DE's recommended criteria, but DE approval is not required, thereby giving schools considerable freedom to agree their own admissions criteria:

> "Admissions criteria will be used to decide which pupils should be admitted if there are more applicants than places. Article 16 of the Education (NI) Order 1997 requires Boards of Governors to draw up, and from time to time amend, the criteria to be applied in selecting pupils for admission to schools. The criteria are not subject to the Department's approval but the Department provides recommended, and not recommended, criteria which all Boards of Governors are required by law to have regard to." (DE, 2016/2020, §9.2, p.13)

The DE guidance (DE, 2016/2020, §9.6, p.14) further details a list of recommended criteria as follows:

- "Applicants who are entitled to Free School Meals (FSME): priority to be given so that the proportion of such children admitted is not less than the proportion of first preference FSME applications received within the total number of first preference applications received" (see paragraphs 9.8-9.13). Any school using this criterion **must** list it as the first criterion.
- Applicants from a feeder/named primary school;
- Applicants residing in a named Parish (with nearest suitable school);
- Applicants residing in a geographically defined/catchment area (with nearest suitable school);
- Applicants for whom the school is the nearest suitable school;
- Applicants who have a sibling currently attending the school; and
- Tie-breaker criteria."

The guidance adds that "The Department no longer specifically recommends the use of 'eldest child' criterion." (DE, 2016/2020, §9.7, p.14)

In a later section of the DE guidance to schools (DE, 2016/2020, §9.15, p.15), a list of non-recommended admissions criteria is also provided as follows:

- "Preference criteria i.e., the prioritising of applicants according to the level of preference of their application;
- Familial criteria beyond sibling currently attending the school;

- Criteria prioritising children of employees/governors of a school;
- Distance tie-breakers – as they disadvantage rural/outlying applicants;
- Criteria related to compelling individual circumstances."

The DE guidance adds detail of a 2018 court case where a judicial review of a primary school's admissions criteria led to a judge quashing familial criteria which extended beyond a sibling currently attending the school, and criteria prioritising family members of employees/governors of the school.

The DE circular further warns that schools choosing not to follow the guidance must minute the rationale for doing so, adding that legal cover may not be provided by the Education Authority:

> "Boards of Governors should carefully consider the content of their school's criteria and where guidance is not being followed the reasons for this should be clearly recorded (e.g. in the relevant Board of Governors minutes). If a school fails to follow guidance and does not have sufficient reason for doing so the school may not be indemnified by the Education Authority if legal proceedings are initiated against the school." (DE, 2016/2020, §9.16, p.16)

The DE guidance also makes it an obligation for schools to include a "tie-breaker" criterion, to prioritise children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the school, ahead of any child not resident in Northern Ireland, and to publicise their waiting list policy (DE, 2016/2020). Given the requirement in the DE guidance (as outlined above) that schools prioritise pupils resident in Northern Ireland ahead of those not resident in Northern Ireland, this was not coded as such in the analysis of schools' admissions criteria, even though some schools may have listed it within their formal criteria.

Finally, the DE guidance states that the Education Authority is required to publish details of fees applicable for each school. Details must include:

> "In the case of a voluntary grammar school, the school's capital fees (and tuition fees in the case of a Group B[7] voluntary grammar school)." (DE, 2016/2020, §6.2, p.9).

Differences between Schools

The management type and single sex/co-educational status of the grammar schools whose admissions criteria were analysed are detailed in Tables 2 below:

Table 2: Schools by Management Type[8] and gender.

Management Type	**Count (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
Controlled	14	22.2
Voluntary/Roman Catholic	28	44.4
Voluntary/Other	21	33.3
Total	63	100
Single-sex/Co-Educational	**Count (n)**	**Percentage (%)**

[7] Category B refers to two grammar schools which, although not fully private schools, receive no capital funding from the Department of Education.
[8] See DE website for description of school management types in Northern Ireland: https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/information-school-types-northern-ireland

Girls only	13	20.7
Boys only	12	19.0
Co-educational	38	60.3
Total	63	100

Analysis of Admissions Criteria

A bespoke coding framework was developed as described in the Methodology above. A list of 35 admission criteria was generated from the coding and analysis of grammar schools' admission criteria (n=63) for the non-testing year 2020-2021 (see Table 1). The average number of criteria used by schools was 6 (n=18 schools), the maximum was 10 (n=3 schools) and the minimum was 3 (n=1 school) (See Figure 1a below).

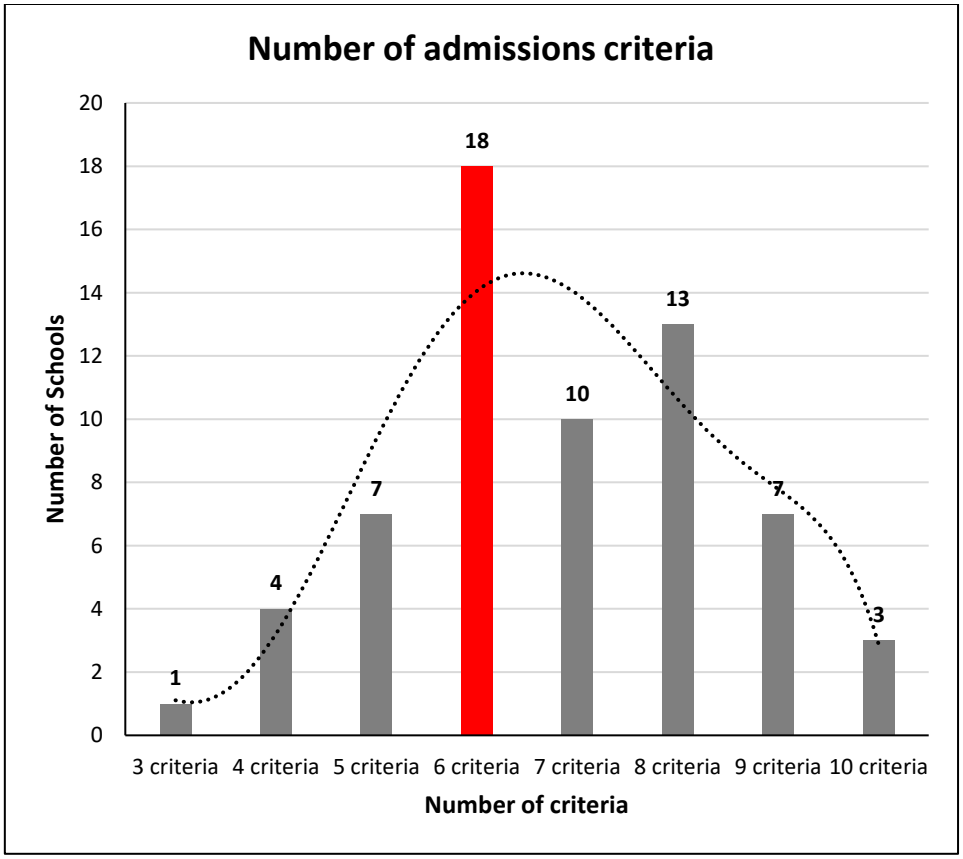

Figure 1a. Number of admissions criteria used by grammar schools for admission in 2021.

Coding analysis established how frequently each criterion was used by all selective schools with respect to each rank (r) e.g., as a first priority etc. Many admissions criteria (n=19) had frequency counts of less than 3 schools.

Initial analysis showed that 'AQE/GL registration' was ranked as the first admissions criterion in 47 out of 63 schools (75%). This was followed by sibling-related criteria (e.g., Older/Sibling currently attending school, Eldest/First/Only Child, Sibling previously enrolled/completed

education in named school), tie-breaker criteria, and attendance at one of the listed feeder primary schools etc. (See Table 3 and 4).

It is important to note that 3 grammar schools continued to use an academic criterion as their primary means of selection, though, *faute de mieux*, asked for evidence from standardised PTE and PTM tests[9] conducted two years previously.

However, a further formula[10] was applied to assess the relative weighted impact of the different criteria and their ranking by grammar schools, rather than relying on a simple total. By way of example, AQE/GL registration was cited as the first criterion by 47 schools (see Table 3). Using reverse ranking and the formula below, a weighted score is calculated of 47 x 10 = 470. This reflects the fact that this criterion was only used as a first criterion and did not feature as a lower ranking criterion for any of the schools. By contrast, if we consider the criterion of 'Older sibling attending the school', we see from Table 3 that this was used more widely as a criterion by 62 of the schools and ranked as criterion 1 (4 schools), criterion 2 (37 schools), criterion 3 (15 schools), criterion 4 (5 schools) and criterion 5 (1 school). Again, using reverse ranking and the formula above, a weighted score is calculated [(4x10) + (37x9) + (15x8) + (5x7) + (1x6)] = 534. The results in Figure 1c thus show a weighted profile of the ranked application of the range of criteria across all the grammar schools.

As shown in Figure 1c, the top 10 criteria with the highest α_{score} values (in order highest first) are as follows:

1. Older/Sibling currently attending school;
2. AQE/GL Registration;
3. Eldest/First/Only child in family;
4. Sibling who was previously enrolled/completed education at school;
5. Tie-breaker criteria;
6. Attend primary school in listed Feeder schools;
7. School named as first preference;
8. Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME);
9. Parent/Guardian member of teaching/admin/ancillary staff;
10. Mother/Father previously attended school.

Thus, it is apparent that when considering rank, frequency, and rank location (weighted α_{score} values), the order is different than for rank frequency (and weighted β_{score}) alone. Consequently, the criteria with the greatest weighted impact was 'older/sibling currently attending school'.

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[9] These refer to commercial tests operated by GL Assessment. PTE assesses a pupil's reading and writing ability, while PTM assesses a pupil's mathematical skills and concepts. See: https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/

[10] Frequencies of use (f) with respect to ranking (r) (see Table 3, 4 and Figure 1b) were not sufficient alone, in understanding the effective weight (and broader impact) of each criterion, given that there existed a rank location dimension (r) as shown in Table 3. Therefore, using Equation 1, a dimensionless scalar score (β_{score} – beta score) was calculated for each rank (1 – 10), for each of the criteria, taking into consideration criterion frequency of use across all grammar schools, and rank location through utilising a rank scoring system (r_s) of 1 (for rank 10) to 10 (for rank 1) or reverse-rank scoring.
The β_{score} values for ranks 1 – 10 were then totalled for each criterion (α_{score} – alpha score). The calculated individual β_{score} values, and α_{score} values, are conditionally formatted (using separate colour scales), and shown in Table 4 and Figure 1c.

$$\beta_{score} = f * r_s$$

… Equation 1

$$\alpha_{score} = \sum(f * r_s) = \sum(\beta_{score})$$

… Equation 2

Table 3. All frequency counts (f)/rank (r) of admissions criteria (rank 1 = first position, 2 = second position, 3 = third position etc.).

Criteria / rank (r)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total f	Not ranked	Total schools
Older/Sibling currently attending school	4	37	15	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	**62**	1	63
Eldest/First/Only child in family	1	6	23	17	6	6	1	1	0	0	**61**	2	63
Tie-breaker criteria	0	0	1	4	7	18	8	13	5	2	**58**	5	63
AQE/GL Registration	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**47**	16	63
Sibling who was previously enrolled/completed education at school	0	11	14	11	4	2	1	0	1	0	**44**	19	63
Attend primary school in listed Feeder schools	0	3	3	8	10	2	7	0	1	0	**34**	29	63
Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)	3	0	0	5	8	5	4	3	1	0	**29**	34	63
School named as first preference	7	6	1	1	5	2	0	0	0	0	**22**	41	63
Mother/Father previously attended school	0	0	0	3	5	6	3	2	0	0	**19**	44	63
Parent/Guardian member of teaching/admin/ancillary staff	2	3	5	0	3	1	3	0	0	0	**17**	46	63
Enrolled in named school's prep dept.	0	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**10**	53	63
Live closest to school	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	3	0	1	**9**	54	63
Reside in named catchment [parish] areas to school	1	0	0	2	0	3	1	0	0	0	**7**	56	63
Child enrolled at other named post-primary school	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	**6**	57	63
First in family to apply to a grammar school	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	**5**	58	63
Preference given to oldest child [2 or more children having the same birthday]	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	**5**	58	63
PTE/PTM scores	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3**	60	63
Main feeder schools	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	**3**	60	63
If after all criteria have been used and places remain, then will open to non-AQE registered pupils	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	**3**	60	63
Children of Methodist Ministers/Members or Attenders of the Religious Society of Friends	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**2**	61	63
Eldest/ only child and registered for PPTC	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	**2**	61	63
First preference & sibling/other family member currently enrolled at school	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**2**	61	63
Attend primary school in the area	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	**2**	61	63
Child of the family currently enrolled in the secondary department of the school	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Child of the family accepted for the secondary department of the college	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Children transferring from Controlled PS	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Children transferring from Maintained PS	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
School named as second/lower preference	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Children from named schools and first preference	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Children from named schools and second preference	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Pupil educated at home	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
First preference and from local area (residing in or primary education in local area, as defined by diocesan boundaries)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Transferring from [Name of school]	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63
Moved into listed parish by September 2021/eldest male	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1**	62	63

Table 4. Weighted β_{score} and totalled α_{score} values for all criteria (ordered by totalled criteria frequency, f).

Criteria / Rank (r)	**Total f**	**β_{score}**										**α_{score}**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	
Rank score (r_s)		**10**	**9**	**8**	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	
Older/Sibling currently attending school	62	40	333	120	35	6	0	0	0	0	0	534
Eldest/First/Only child in family	61	10	54	184	119	36	30	4	3	0	0	440
Tie-breaker criteria	58	0	0	8	28	42	90	32	39	10	2	251
AQE/GL Registration	47	470	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	470
Sibling who was previously enrolled/completed education at school	44	0	99	112	77	24	10	4	0	2	0	328
Attend primary school in listed Feeder schools	34	0	27	24	56	60	10	28	0	2	0	207
Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)	29	30	0	0	35	48	25	16	9	2	0	165
School named as first preference	22	70	54	8	7	30	10	0	0	0	0	179
Mother/Father previously attended school	19	0	0	0	21	30	30	12	6	0	0	99
Parent/Guardian member of teaching/admin/ancillary staff	17	20	27	40	0	18	5	12	0	0	0	122
Enrolled in named school's prep dept.	10	0	54	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
Live closest to school	9	0	0	0	0	12	0	12	9	0	1	34
Reside in named catchment [parish] areas to school	7	10	0	0	14	0	15	4	0	0	0	43
Child enrolled at other named post-primary school	6	0	9	8	7	6	5	4	0	0	0	39
Preference given to oldest child [2 or more children having the same birthday]	5	0	0	0	0	18	5	4	0	0	0	27
First in family to apply to a grammar school	5	0	0	8	0	0	10	8	0	0	0	26
PTE/PTM scores	3	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Main feeder schools	3	0	0	8	0	6	5	0	0	0	0	19
If after all criteria have been used and places remain, then will open to non-AQE registered pupils	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	0	8
Children of Methodist Ministers/Members or Attenders of the Religious Society of Friends	2	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
First preference & sibling/other family member currently enrolled at school	2	0	9	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Attend primary school in the area	2	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Eldest/ only child and registered for PPTC	2	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	10
First preference and from local area (residing in or primary education in local area, as defined by diocesan boundaries)	1	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Children transferring from Controlled PS	1	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Child of the family currently enrolled in the secondary department of the school	1	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Children transferring from Maintained PS	1	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Children from named schools and first preference	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Pupil educated at home	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Moved into listed parish by September 2021/eldest male	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Transferring from [Name of school]	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Child of the family accepted for the secondary department of the college	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
School named as second/lower preference	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Children from named schools and second preference	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6

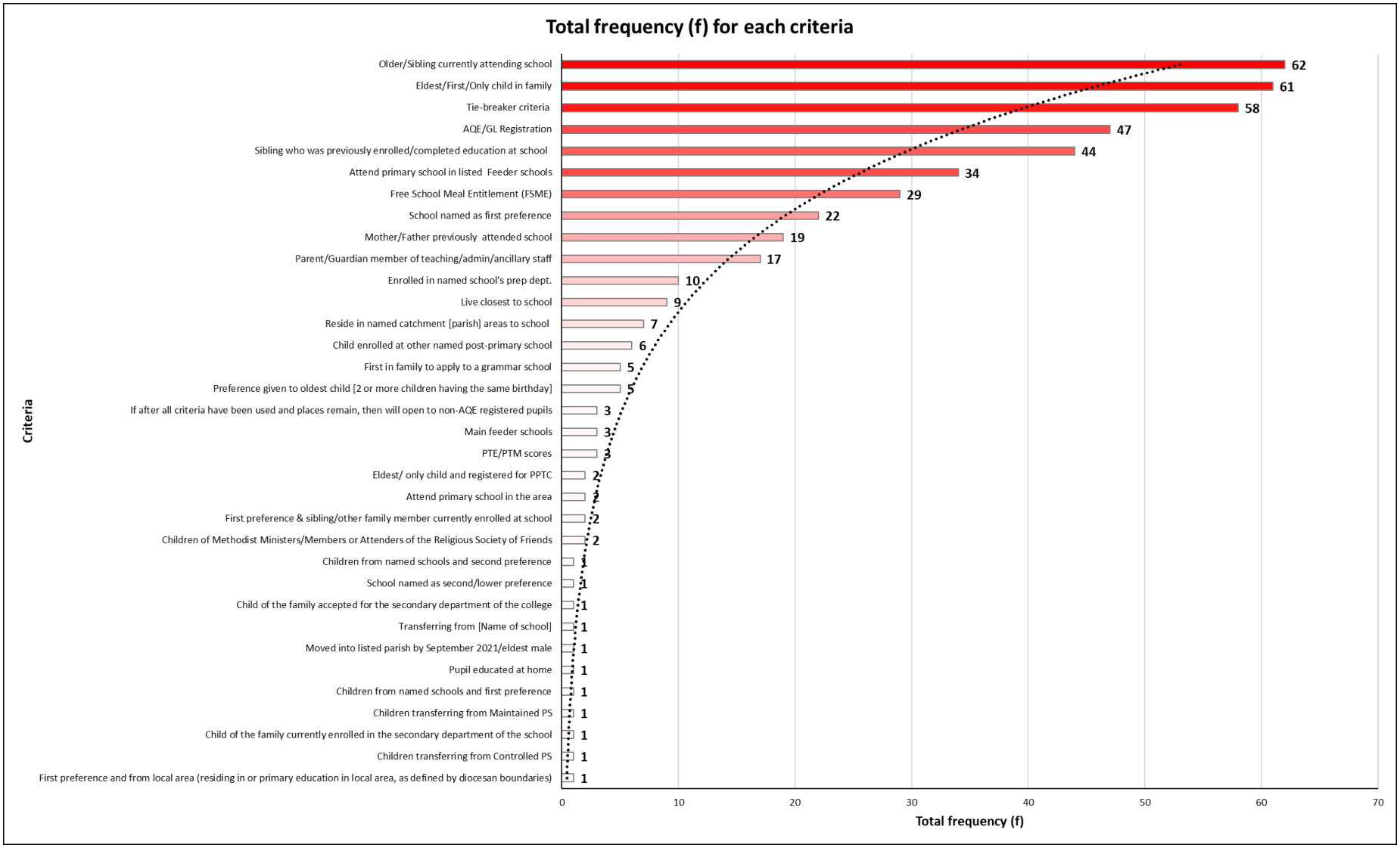


Figure 1b. Total frequency (f) for all criteria.

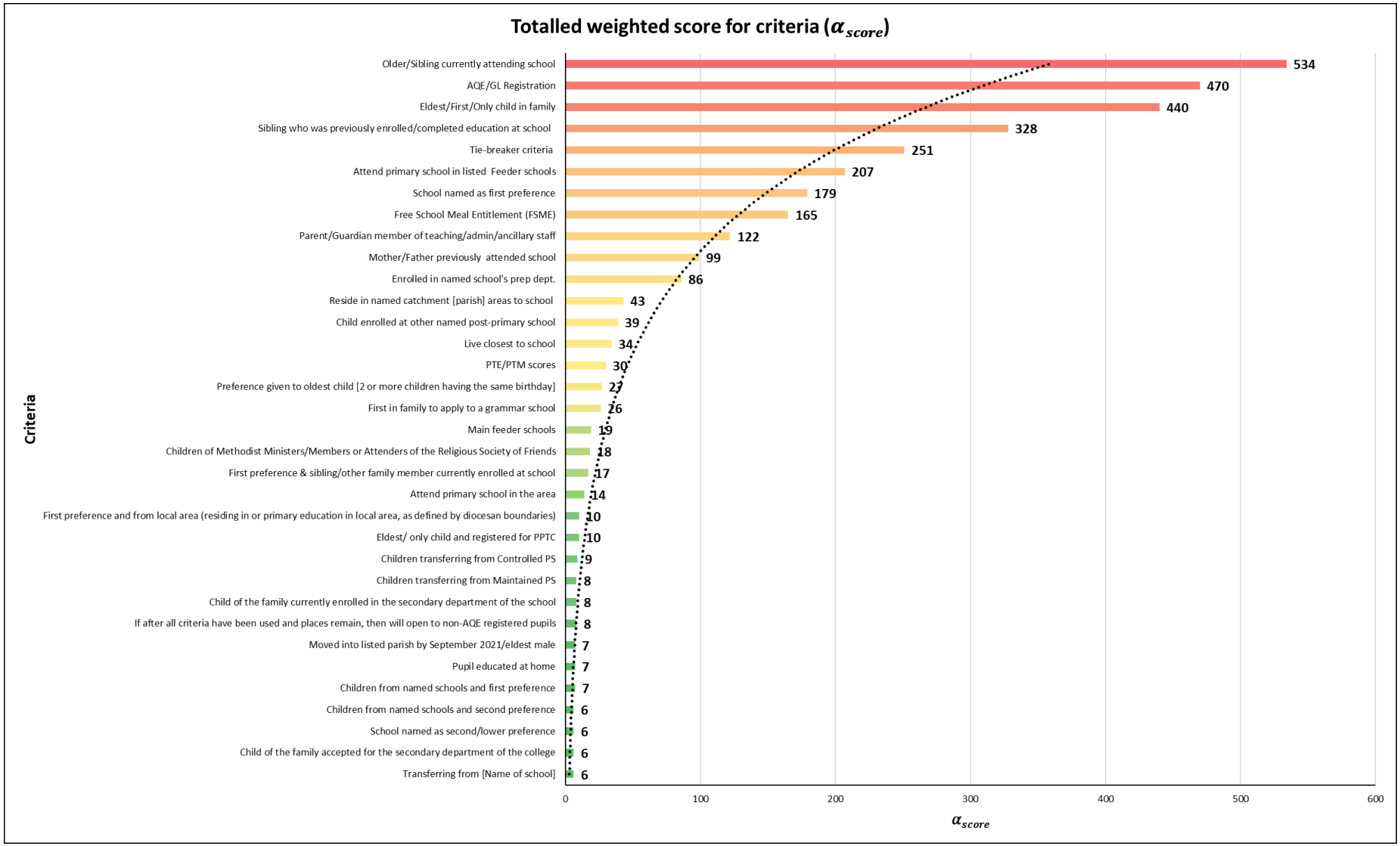


Figure 1c. Totalled weighted scores for all criteria (α_{score}).

The rank frequency distribution for the top ranked criteria are displayed below (Figures 2 – 7). Firstly, the rank frequency distribution for the 'older/sibling currently attending school' criterion is shown in Figure 2. The frequency distribution for this criterion is largely concentrated at rank 2, with a frequency of 37 schools. However, there are notable frequency counts at ranks 1 (n=1), 3 (n=15), 4 (n=5), and 5 (n=1), which are a factor in the high α_{score} for this criterion.

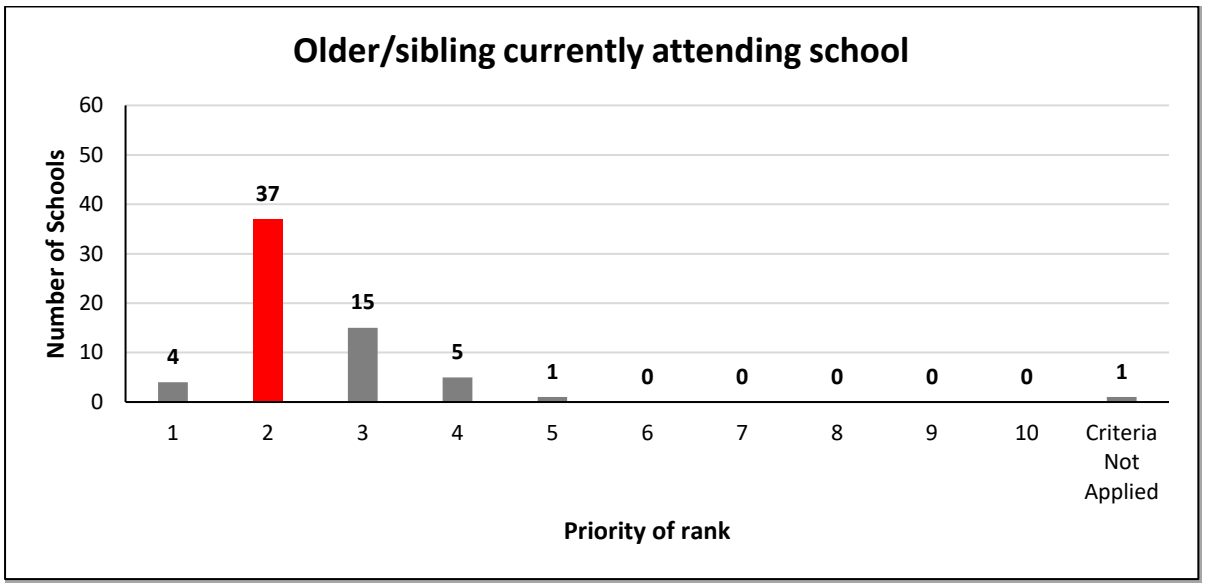


Figure 2. Frequency count and priority ranking order older/sibling currently attending named school.

The rank frequency distribution for the 'child registered for AQE/GL' criterion is shown in Figure 3. The frequency distribution for this criterion is largely concentrated at rank 1, with a frequency of 47 schools. There are no frequency counts across the other ranks, which impacted the α_{score} for this criterion. 16 schools did not apply this criterion.

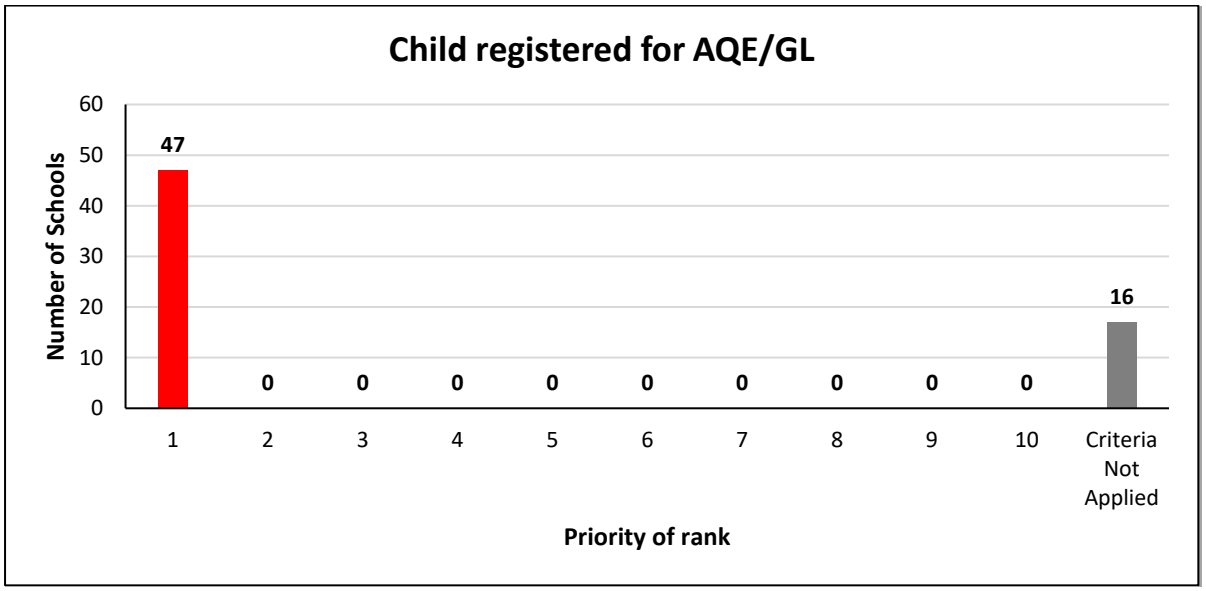


Figure 3. Frequency count and ranking for AQE criterion.

The rank frequency distribution for the 'eldest/first/only child in family' criterion is shown in Figure 4. The frequency distribution for this criterion is concentrated at rank 3, with a frequency of 23 schools. However, there are notable frequency counts at ranks 1 (n=1), 2 (n=6), 4 (n=17), 5 (n=6), 6 (n=6), 7 (n=1), and 8 (n=1) which are a factor in the high α_{score} for this criterion.

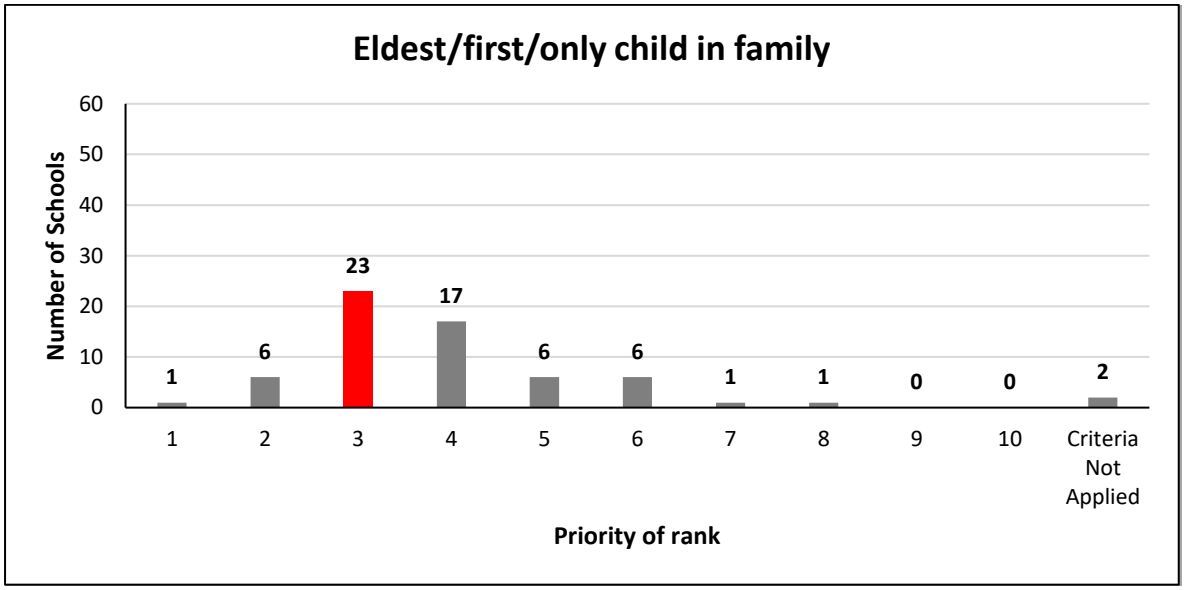


Figure 4. Frequency count and priority ranking order eldest/first/only child.

The rank frequency distribution for the 'sibling who was previously enrolled/completed education at school' criterion is shown in Figure 5. The frequency distribution for this criterion is concentrated at rank 3, with a frequency of 14 schools. However, there are notable frequency counts at ranks 2 (n=11), 4 (n=11), 5 (n=4), 6 (n=2), 7 (n=1), and 9 (n=1) which are a factor in the high α_{score} for this criterion. 19 schools did not apply this criterion.

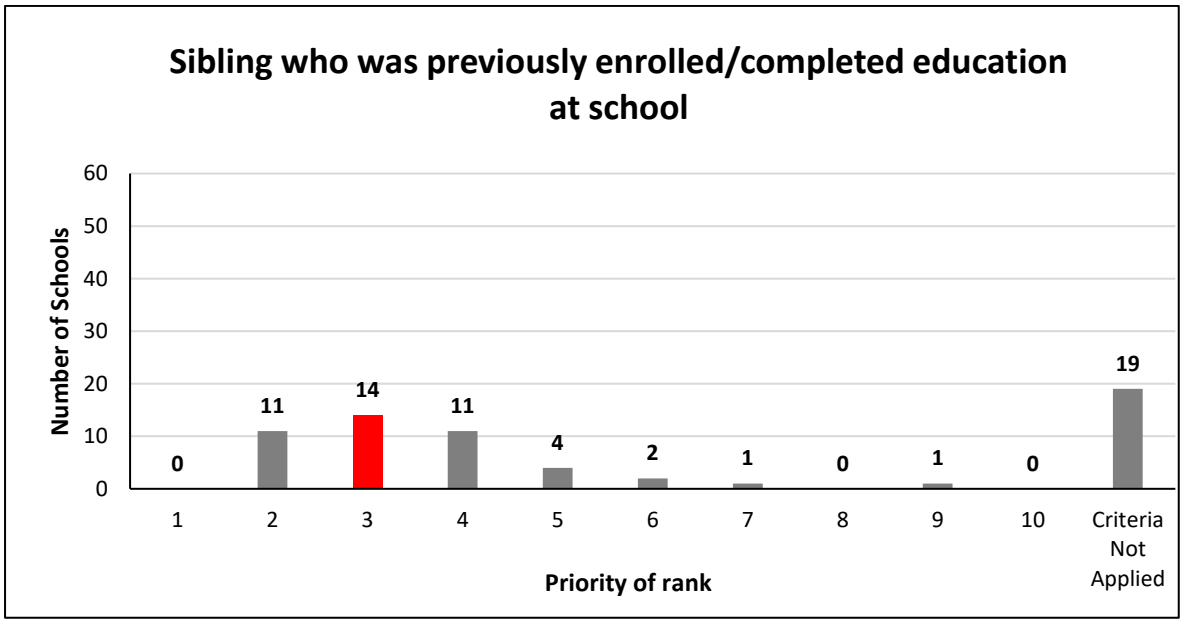


Figure 5. Frequency count and priority ranking order sibling previously enrolled/completed education at named school.

The rank frequency distribution for the 'attend primary school in listed feeder schools' criterion is shown in Figure 6. The frequency distribution for this criterion is concentrated at rank 5, with a frequency of 10 schools. However, there are notable frequency counts at ranks 2 (n=3), 3 (n=3), 4 (n=8), 6 (n=2), 7 (n=7), and 9 (n=1) which are a factor in the high α_{score} for this criterion. 29 schools did not apply this criterion.

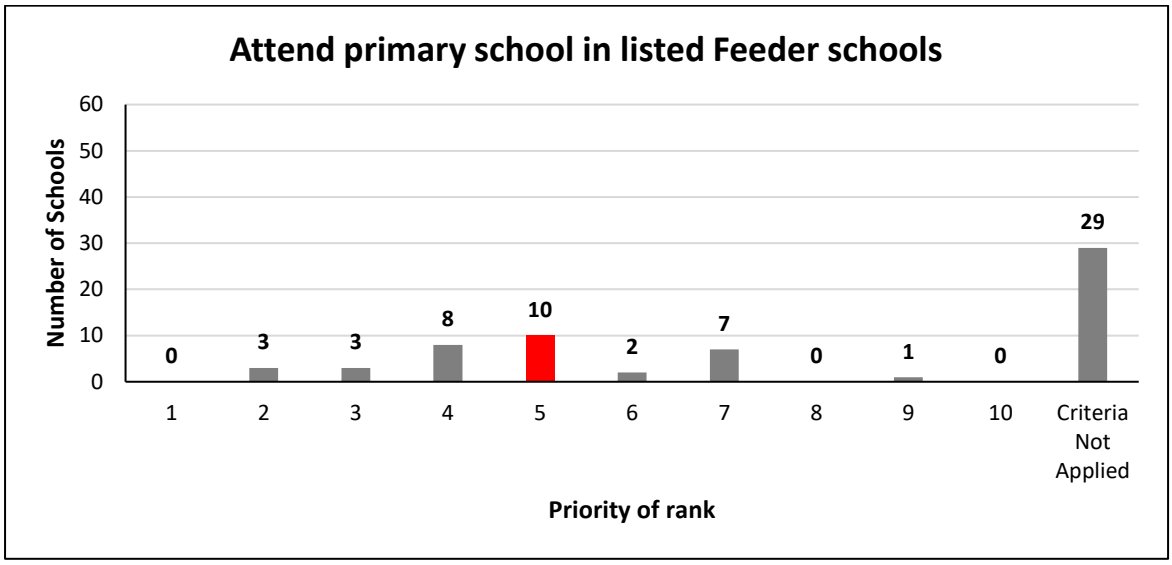


Figure 6. Frequency count and priority ranking order attended primary school in listed Feeder school.

In the DE guidance issued to schools, free school meal entitlement (FSME) was a criterion schools were recommended to use; and any school using this criterion **must** list it as the first criterion (DE, 2016/2020, §9.6, p.14). FSME was used in admissions criteria for 29 schools (46%); 34 schools **did not** use FSME as an admissions criterion (54%). FSME was not a high-ranking criterion for a significant number of schools (Figure 7). Only 3 (5%) schools listed FSME in as the first criterion as per the DE recommended guidance.

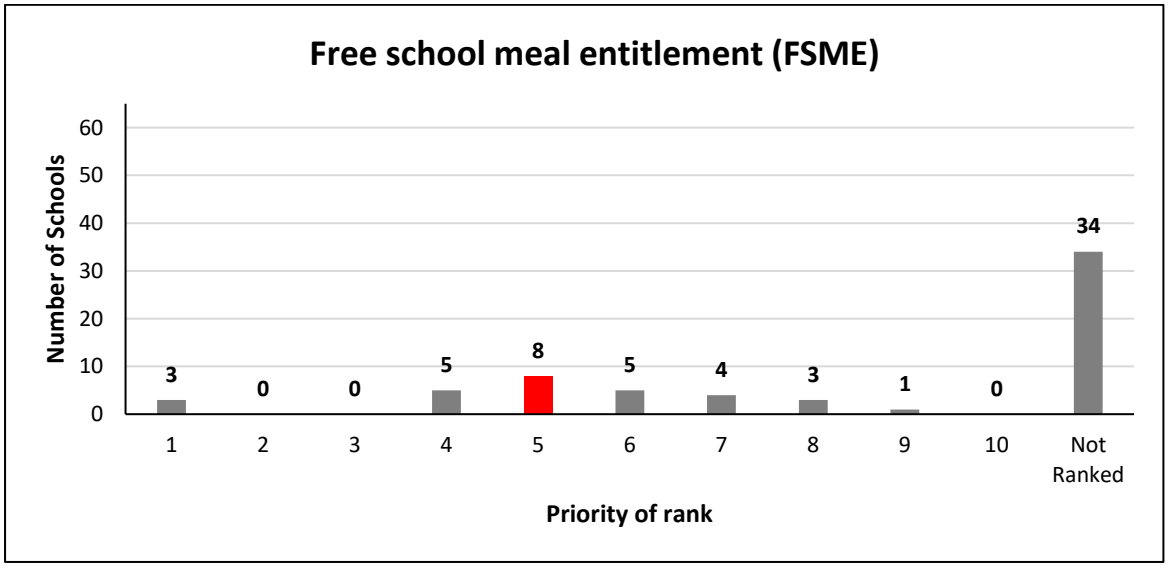


Figure 7. Frequency count and priority ranking order for FSME criterion in schools admission criteria.

Analysis of Additional Information in Schools' Admissions Guidance

The guidance to schools issued by DE advised schools on the information to be provided to parents to assist them in the transfer process in the non-testing year (as in previous years). The guidance states that parents should be encouraged "to think carefully about the preferences they express for their child's post-primary school" (DE, 2016/2020, p.27), taking into account the following:

- The child's own views on where he/she would be happiest;
- The child's aptitudes and the school(s) and provision to which they would best be suited;
- The impression of schools gained from a range of sources e.g. from visits to the schools, reading school prospectuses, talking to other parents etc;
- The arrangements schools make for pupils who may require special help;
- The arrangements schools make to provide support for pupils who are not able to keep up with their class in specific subjects;
- The admissions criteria of schools - whether the schools are traditionally oversubscribed and therefore likely to apply their admissions criteria, and if so, to what extent the child meets these criteria;
- The information that will be published in schools' prospectuses;
- School fees (if relevant) and other additional costs (e.g. are pupils required to participate in certain activities such as particular sports, which also have costs associated with kit etc.);
- Transport entitlement (see paragraphs 13.1 – 13.3);
- Travelling time and travel arrangements." (DE, 2016/2020, p.27-28)

The guidance implicitly acknowledges that some children may be less suited to the more traditionally academic approach typical of a grammar school, and also implicitly acknowledges that school fees and additional costs may be a factor in parents' decision-making. Further research into how such factors may impact on the decision-making of parents and children lies outside the scope of the current project.

However, 3 key themes did emerge from the documentary analysis of non-academic selection criteria set out by 63 grammar schools in Northern Ireland: the schools' strong commitment to academic selection; their commitment to protecting the established character of the school; and the reference to fees (voluntary, capital and other). These themes highlight "context-bound, positioned and situated" (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p. 591) detail about each school's requirements and expectations for potential pupils and parents; combined with admissions criteria. Furthermore, this information may also play a critical (yet important) role in school choice. Each theme is discussed in turn below:

Strong commitment to academic selection

The dominant theme in the Admissions documentation published by grammar schools was their strong commitment to academic selection, against which it was stressed by many of the schools that the extraordinary arrangements of the non-testing year were a temporary disruption to normal procedures, as the following examples from the documentation illustrate:

> "The Board of Governors of [name of school] remains firmly committed to academic selection as a method of entry to the school" (Voluntary-Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"It is the intention of the Board of Governors of [name of school] to revert to the use of academic selection for future Year 8 admissions to the main school" (Voluntary RC, Rural, Co-educational grammar school)

"[Name of school] remains committed to its own ethos and academic focus on high quality teaching and learning. Those who would normally apply to be admitted are encouraged to continue to do so" (Voluntary RC, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"The Board of Governors agreed, in light of the current Covid-19 circumstances and for one year only, that academic admissions criteria will not be used for the academic year 2021-22" (Voluntary RC, Urban, Boys grammar school)

"[Name of school] remains committed to academic selection as the principal method of entry to the School" (Voluntary Other, Urban, Boys grammar school)

"[Name of school] is an academically selective school and the Board of Governors remains fully committed to the restoration of academic selection in our Admissions Criteria in future years. Parents/Guardians are advised that the College has a longstanding tradition of academic and pastoral excellence." (Voluntary RC, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

Protecting the established character of the school

A second important theme to emerge from the analysis of school's admissions criteria was a focus on maintaining and protecting the established character of the school during the temporary postponement of academic selection and beyond. This is linked to the espoused commitment to academic selection (outlined above) but often goes further and refers to ethos, aims and character. Once again, there is a clear message that the temporary deviation from the norm as a result of the non-testing year should not change the long-established character of the school. Whether this should be viewed as a reassurance to some (traditional) parents or as a challenge to some other (non-traditional) parents is a theme which deserves further exploration but is beyond the scope of this small-scale project, not least since the precise nature of what is meant by the grammar school 'character' or 'ethos' is not defined in detail in the Admissions documents. It is clear however that the wording represents a commitment by the grammar schools to preserving a cherished ethos, and that those parents who would "normally" consider applying to the school should not fear that the exceptional circumstances will lead to any dilution of that ethos in the longer term.

The following examples once again illustrate the language used:

"[Name of school] is a Non-Denominational, Co-educational Voluntary Grammar School seeking to preserve the established character and academic ethos of the School" (Voluntary Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"The school wishes to accept boys who are academically suited for the type of education it offers and whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the philosophy and aims of the school" (Voluntary RC, Urban, Boys grammar school)

"[Name of school] remains committed to its own ethos and academic focus on high quality teaching and learning. Those who would normally apply to be admitted are encouraged to continue to do so" (Voluntary RC, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"[Name of school], as a co-educational grammar school, provides secondary education for girls and boys in the upper band of the range of academic ability" (Voluntary Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"This school wishes to accept girls who will benefit from the education it offers and whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the philosophy and aims of the school "(Voluntary RC, Urban, Girls grammar school)

Financial expectations and requirements for prospective parents

A total of 39 of the 63 grammar schools (62%) explicitly referred to parental fees in their admissions criteria documentation (see Table 5.1). The nature and extent of the fees varied considerably between schools and includes:

- **Capital fees** ranged from £70 – £140 (with upper cap set by DE), however, some schools had consolidated charges on top of capital fees e.g., capital fee £12 per annum and consolidated charge £178 charged in relation to all pupils
- **Consolidated charges** (school fund) ranged from £80 - £178
- **Voluntary/parental contribution** ranged from £50 - £250
- **School fee** £70 - £150
- **Capital fees** from £1020 - £2965 for B grammar schools (who do not receive DE funding), with higher fees for non-NI pupils e.g., capital fee dayboys UK/Irish £2965, dayboys EU £5000, dayboys rest of world £9145, boarding UK/Irish £15960
- Six grammar schools stipulate that they have no capital fees and some ask for voluntary contributions
- Three schools note that they no longer charge tuition fees, but that capital fees and consolidated charges still apply
- There is great variation in how schools discount fees for additional children, with some offering a percentage decrease for each subsequent child, some schools only charge a family once, and other schools charge the same fees for every child from the same family
- One school has a stationary charge of £20

Table 5.1. Fee details (as extracted/derived, and summarised from school criteria documents).

Fee details	Category note
Voluntary 130 (eldest), 100 (additional children)	
Voluntary 60 (minimum), 20 (2nd and 3rd), no fee (additional children)	
£140 (set by DE) capital fee (all parents payable), £120 suggested voluntary contribution education enrichment fund	
Capital fee £140	
Capital fee dayboys UK/Irish £2965, dayboys EU £5000, dayboys rest of world £9145, boarding UK/Irish £15960	B (no DE funding)
Parental contribution £200 payable as £20 per month (x10) for first child, with 25% reduction for the second, and 50% reduction for third or subsequent child up to maximum contribution per family of £45 per month (x10)	
Capital fee £12 per annum and consolidated charge £178 charged in relation to all pupils	
No capital fee payable, voluntary contribution £120 (£10 per month if desired)	
No capital fee, voluntary contribution £100 per pupil	
Parental contribution £10 per month for each child in school (notes income tax/gift aided school claim basic rate tax relief from HMRC)	
Capital fee of £140 charged to all parents	

Capital fee £140	
Capital fee £100 per pupil ((pupils in receipt of free school meals are exempt from the capital fee and a sibling discount of £40 per child applies) and requests a voluntary school fund contribution of £80 per pupil per year (subject to annual review)	
There are no school fees though a contribution, currently of £60 per pupil/£100 per family per annum, is requested for the school fund	
Capital fee of £100 per pupil is charged	
Voluntary subscription of £100 per family	
Capital fee £140	
Voluntary contribution of £75 per student /£150 per family, per annum, is payable by all students	
No capital fee, voluntary contribution of £150 per family per annum	
School Fee: £70 per annum (under review)	
Every pupil in the school pays an annual school fee, currently £150	
There is no capital fee, all pupils are asked to pay a voluntary contribution (currently £120 per annum)	
Capital fee (currently £75) is reviewed annually	
Voluntary contribution of £60 per annum is charged in regard to all pupils	
Parental contribution of £50 per family	
Parent are asked to pay a voluntary contribution (currently £100 per annum for the first child in the family, £50 per subsequent child)	
Parents/guardians/carers are requested to make an annual contribution of £100 per pupil, up to a maximum of £200 per family, no capital fee	
Voluntary contribution £60.00 p.a. (maximum £150 per family)	
All pupils are asked to pay a voluntary contribution (currently £100 per annum)	
All pupils are asked to pay a voluntary contribution (currently £60 per annum)	
Parents are requested to make an annual voluntary contribution of £100 per pupil, up to a maximum of £200 per family, in addition, there is a £20 stationery fee	
Capital contribution is £140 per annum	
Capital fee is £140 per annum	
Capital fee £1,020 –20/21(2021/22 tbc)	B (no DE funding)
From September 1990 parents of all pupils admitted to the [school name] (except in the case of pupils who are not resident in Northern Ireland and who are non E.U. nationals) will not be required to pay Tuition Fees. (Capital and consolidation fees still apply). A Capital Fee (currently £140 per annum) and a Consolidated Charge (currently £175 per annum) are charged in regard to all pupils	
From September 1990 parents of all pupils admitted to the [school name] (except in the case of pupils who are not resident in the UK or Ireland) will not be required to pay tuition fees. Capital and consolidation fees still apply. A capital fee (currently £70.00 per annum) and a consolidated charge, known as the school fund (currently £80.00 per annum for the first child and £40.00 for a second child and with no charge for other siblings), are charged in regard to all pupils, with the exception of pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals and who are thus exempt from these fees	
Parental contribution of £50 per family	
Capital fee £140 per annum	
Mandatory capital fee of £140 per child per annum, reduced to £70 for the third and subsequent children in a family, parents are asked to make an additional voluntary contribution of between £80 and £250 per child, the school's "Charges and Remissions Policy" outlines optional extras of which parents may avail for their children, can be found at [school website]	

Box plot and descriptive statistics for fee potential, for compulsory and voluntary fees for grammar schools (assuming first child is transferring), including and excluding Category B grammar schools, are provided in Table 5.2, Table 5.3, Figure 8a and Figure 8b below. Figure 8a and Table 5.2 show the fee potential of all grammar schools including the two Category B grammar schools and show that they can be seen as outliers, charging much higher fees than all Category A grammar schools.

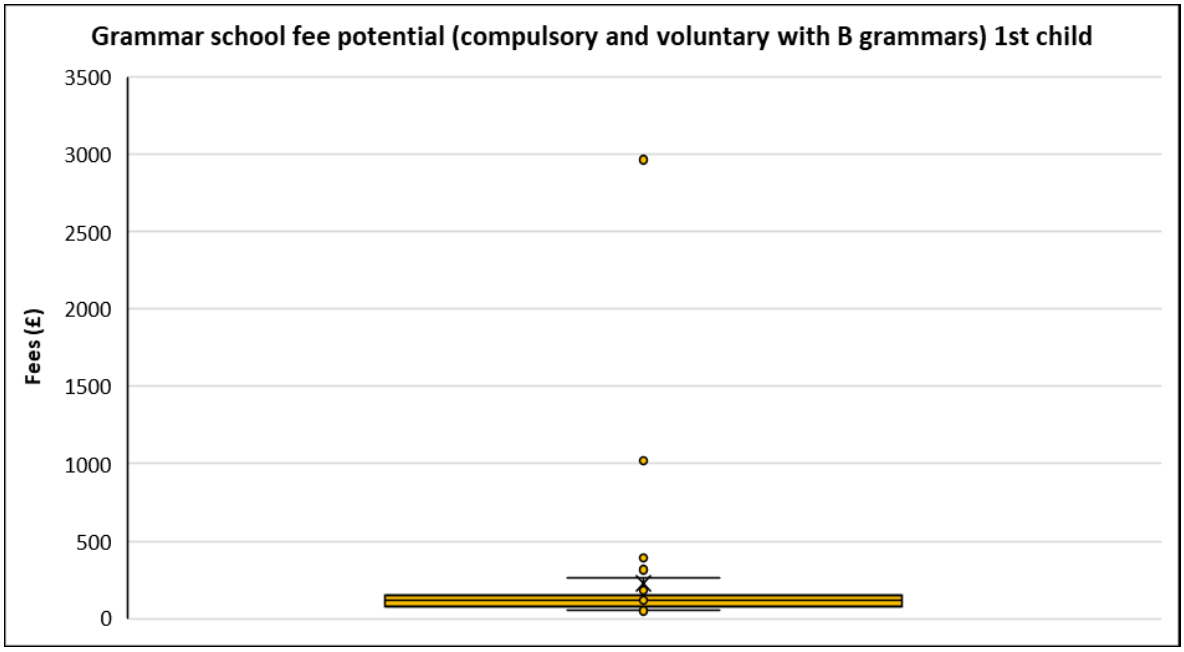


Figure 8a. Grammar school fee potential (compulsory and voluntary), including B grammars.

Table 5.2. Descriptive statistics for grammar school fee potential (compulsory and voluntary), including B grammars.

Fee potential (compulsory + voluntary with B grammars)	**Descriptive statistics**
Number of schools	38
Median	120
Minimum	50
Maximum	2965
First quartile	75
Third quartile	150
Interquartile Range	75
Outliers	2965, 1020, 390, 315
Mean	226.84

By contrast, Figure 8b and Table 5.3 (where the two Category B grammar schools are excluded as 'outliers') show that almost all the (Category A) grammar schools which provided details of their fees along with their admissions criteria charge fees between £75 and £150 per child (mean = £129).

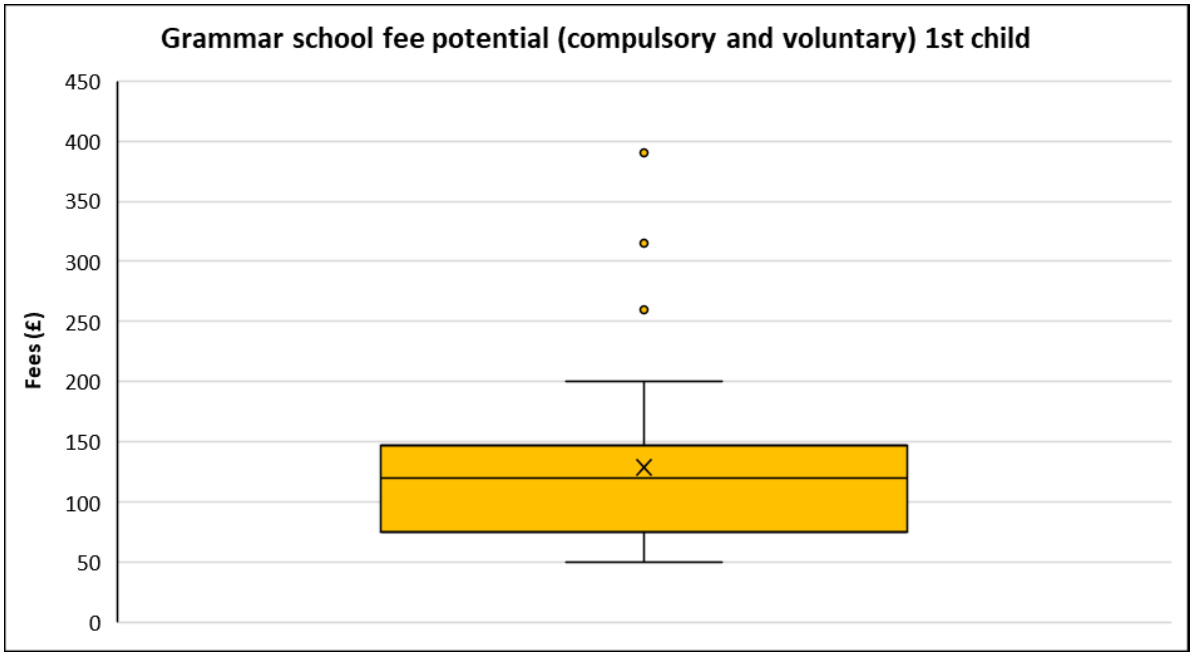


Figure 8b. Grammar school fee potential (compulsory and voluntary), excluding B grammars.

Table 5.3. Descriptive statistics for grammar school fee potential (compulsory and voluntary), excluding B grammars.

Fee potential (compulsory + voluntary), except B grammars	**Descriptive statistics**
Number of schools	36
Median	120
Minimum	50
Maximum	390
First quartile	75
Third quartile	147.5
Interquartile Range	72.5
Outliers	390, 315, 260
Mean	128.75

The following examples illustrate how grammar schools explained the fees to prospective parents:

> "There is a capital fee of £140 per annum (set by the Department of Education), which is payable by all Parents/Guardians of pupils enrolled in the school. Parents/Guardians are also asked to make a voluntary contribution to the Education Enrichment Fund. This voluntary contribution helps to support the educational and co-curricular provision within the school. The suggested contribution for 2020/2021 was £120.00. (Voluntary Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

> "A Capital Fee (currently £70.00 per annum) and a Consolidated Charge, known as the School Fund (currently £80.00 per annum for the first child and £40.00 for a second child

and with no charge for other siblings). FSME exempt from fees. (Voluntary Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"A voluntary contribution of £75 per student / £150 per family, per annum, is payable by all students". (Voluntary RC, Urban, Girls grammar school)

"Parents are requested to make an annual voluntary contribution of £100 per pupil, up to a maximum of £200 per family, to help develop existing facilities. This should be paid by October of each year. Charges for educational trips/visits will be made according to DFE regulations. In addition, there is a £20 stationery fee." (Voluntary RC, Urban, Co-educational)

"There are no school fees though a contribution, currently of £60 per pupil/£100 per family per annum, is requested for the School Fund". (Controlled, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

"A capital Fee (currently £12 per annum) and a Consolidated Charge (Currently £178) are charged in relation to all pupils. (Voluntary Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)"

"[Name of school] has an annual parental contribution of £200 payable as £20 per month (x10) for the first child, with a 25% reduction for the second child and 50% reduction for the third child or subsequent child up to a maximum contribution per family of £45 per month (x10)" (Voluntary Other, Urban, Co-educational grammar school)

The highest fees charged are those charged by the two Voluntary B grammar schools. However, it is important to remember that Category B schools do not receive DE capital funding.

"CAPITAL FEE £1,020 – 20/21 (2021/22 tbc)" (Voluntary Other, Urban, Boys grammar school)

"As a Voluntary B Grammar School, [Name of school] charges an annual fee to all pupils for development and maintenance. The Board of Governors seeks to support applications to the College by offering scholarships, further details may be found in the Prospectus. GBP £ Per Annum 2021-22 Dayboys (UK & Irish citizens) Years 8-14 £2,965; Dayboys (EU citizens) Years 8-14 £5,000; Dayboys (Rest of the World) Years 8-14; £9,145 Boarding (UK & Irish citizens) Years 8-14 £15,960."

Strand 2

Year 8 demographics for 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20 and 18/19

The demographic results for Northern Ireland secondary (n=125) and grammar school (n=63) year 8 pupils are presented in this section. A few schools were removed due to them not being relevant to the research aim, i.e., Dickson Plan[11] schools. The term 'Secondary' refers to all non-grammar schools. Demographic attributes included total admission, gender, ethnicity, free school meals, special educational needs (SEN 1-5), statemented pupils (SEN 5), newcomer pupils, looked after children, and MDM deciles in respect to pupil's home locations. The demographic attributes for year 8 cohorts are compared for the 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19 years, to ascertain any change.

Year 8 total admissions

The total admissions counts are shown in Table 6, and as percentage share of all secondary and grammar school pupils in Table 7 and Figure 9, across the four years.

Grammar schools experienced an increase in percentage share of total admissions and secondary schools experienced a drop in percentage share of total admissions (see Table 7).

Table 6. Total admissions counts.

School type	Total enrolment 18/19	Total enrolment 19/20	Total enrolment 20/21	Total enrolment 21/22
All Grammar	**9194**	**9518**	**9541**	**9821**
Grammar: Controlled	1946	2037	2057	2058
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	2981	3050	3010	3091
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	4267	4431	4474	4672
All Secondary	**14672**	**15683**	**15566**	**15153**
Secondary: Controlled	5550	5951	6006	5779
Secondary: Controlled integrated	558	617	590	587
Secondary: GMI	1769	1886	1779	1786
Secondary: Other maintained	140	211	235	217
Secondary: RC maintained	6655	7018	6956	6784
Grand Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**	**25201**	**25107**	**24974**

Table 7. Total admissions as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

School type	Total enrolment 18/19	Total enrolment 19/20	Total enrolment 20/21	Total enrolment 21/22
All Grammar	**38.5**	**37.8**	**38.0**	**39.3**
Grammar: Controlled	8.2	8.1	8.2	8.2
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	12.5	12.1	12.0	12.4

[11] The Dickson Plan is a two-tier post-primary system of education introduced within the controlled sector in a small area of Northern Ireland (Lurgan, Portadown and Tandragee) in 1969. All primary pupils transfer to a Junior High School for three years without sitting a transfer test. Examinations at the end of these three years determine year 11 admissions to two local grammar schools or one non-grammar school. These two grammar schools were removed from the sample since they do not accept pupils in year 8.

Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	17.9	17.6	17.8	18.7
All Secondary	**61.5**	**62.2**	**62.0**	**60.7**
Secondary: Controlled	23.3	23.6	23.9	23.1
Secondary: Controlled integrated	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4
Secondary: GMI	7.4	7.5	7.1	7.2
Secondary: Other maintained	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.9
Secondary: RC maintained	27.9	27.8	27.7	27.2
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

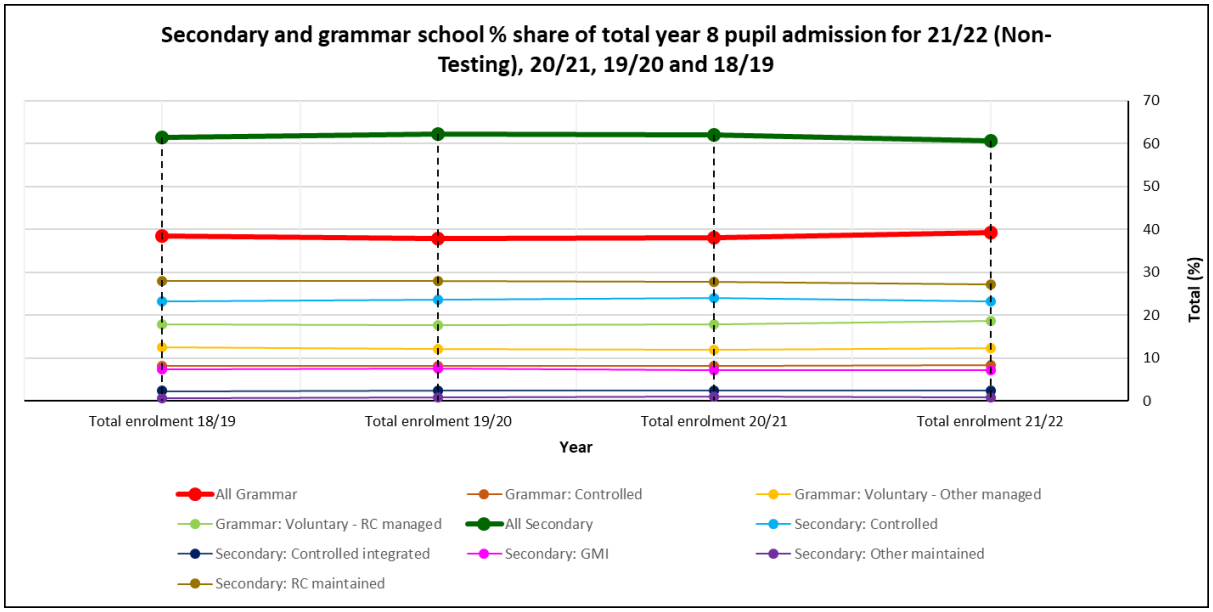


Figure 9. Total admissions as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

Analysis by Gender

The gender counts are shown in Table 8, as percentage share of total year 8 male or female gender in Table 9 and Figure 10a (male) and Figure 10b (female), and as percentage share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils in Table 10 and Figure 11 and Figure 12, across the four years.

It appears that grammar schools have gained in percentage share of male and female students (1% and 1.8%, respectively), that secondary schools have lost (see Table 9). Likewise, in Table 10, the distribution with respect of all year 8 pupils, shows a similar outcome.

In terms of the relative share by gender, the figures presented in Table 10 highlight that the percentage of girls in the year 8 grammar school cohort rose slightly from 48.7% in 2020/21 to 49.7% in 2021/22, and the percentage of boys fell slightly from 51.26% in 2020/21 to 50.3% in 2021/22.

Table 10 also highlights that the gender gap in grammar schools when considered in relation to the entire secondary school cohort (grammar + non-grammar) is least in 2021/22 (0.3 percentage points) when compared to the three preceding years.

Table 8. Gender counts.

	18/19		19/20		20/21		21/22	
School type	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
All Grammar	**4727**	**4467**	**4867**	**4651**	**4891**	**4650**	**4939**	**4882**
Grammar: Controlled	842	1104	897	1140	876	1181	877	1181
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	1582	1399	1633	1417	1623	1387	1594	1497
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	2303	1964	2337	2094	2392	2082	2468	2204
All Secondary	**7493**	**7179**	**7974**	**7709**	**7930**	**7636**	**7699**	**7454**
Secondary: Controlled	2886	2664	3131	2820	3154	2852	3068	2711
Secondary: Controlled integrated	295	263	317	300	319	271	311	276
Secondary: GMI	964	805	1036	850	934	845	948	838
Secondary: Other maintained	77	63	121	90	108	127	104	113
Secondary: RC maintained	3271	3384	3369	3649	3415	3541	3268	3516
Total (all male or female)	**12220**	**11646**	**12841**	**12360**	**12821**	**12286**	**12638**	**12336**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**		**25201**		**25107**		**24974**	

Table 9. Gender as % share of total year 8 male or female gender.

	18/19		19/20		20/21		21/22	
School type	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
All Grammar	**38.7**	**38.4**	**37.9**	**37.6**	**38.1**	**37.8**	**39.1**	**39.6**
Grammar: Controlled	6.9	9.5	7.0	9.2	6.8	9.6	6.9	9.6
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	12.9	12.0	12.7	11.5	12.7	11.3	12.6	12.1
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	18.8	16.9	18.2	16.9	18.7	16.9	19.5	17.9
All Secondary	**61.3**	**61.6**	**62.1**	**62.4**	**61.9**	**62.2**	**60.9**	**60.4**
Secondary: Controlled	23.6	22.9	24.4	22.8	24.6	23.2	24.3	22.0
Secondary: Controlled integrated	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.2
Secondary: GMI	7.9	6.9	8.1	6.9	7.3	6.9	7.5	6.8
Secondary: Other maintained	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9
Secondary: RC maintained	26.8	29.1	26.2	29.5	26.6	28.8	25.9	28.5
Total % (all male or female)	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

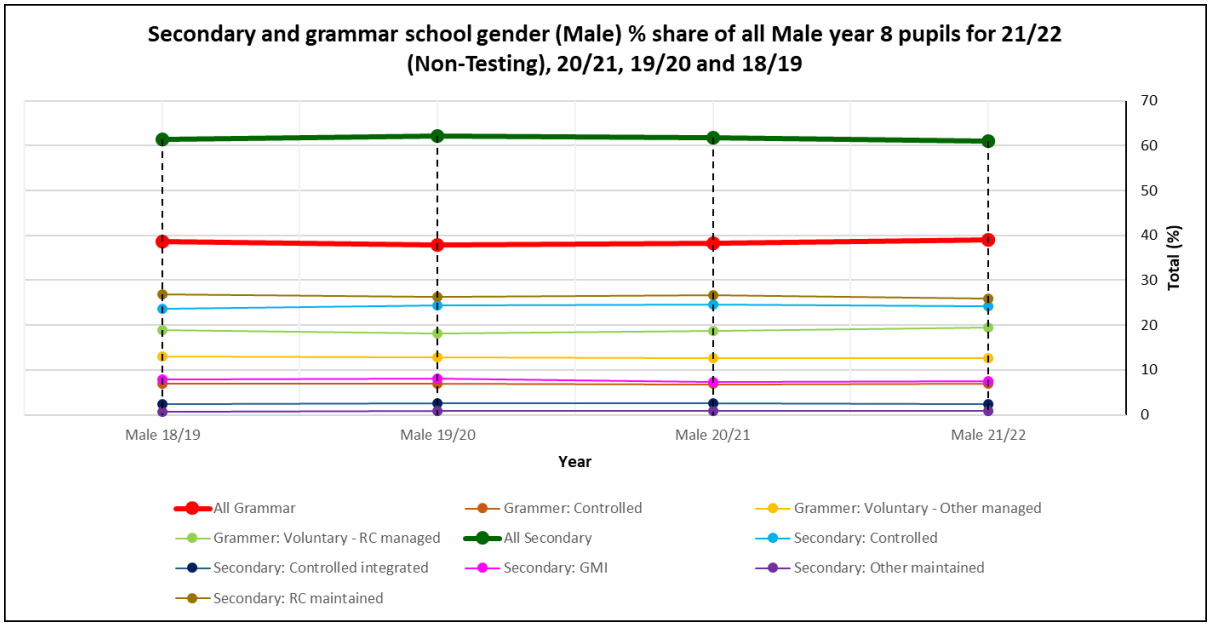


Figure 10a. Gender as % share of total year 8 male gender.

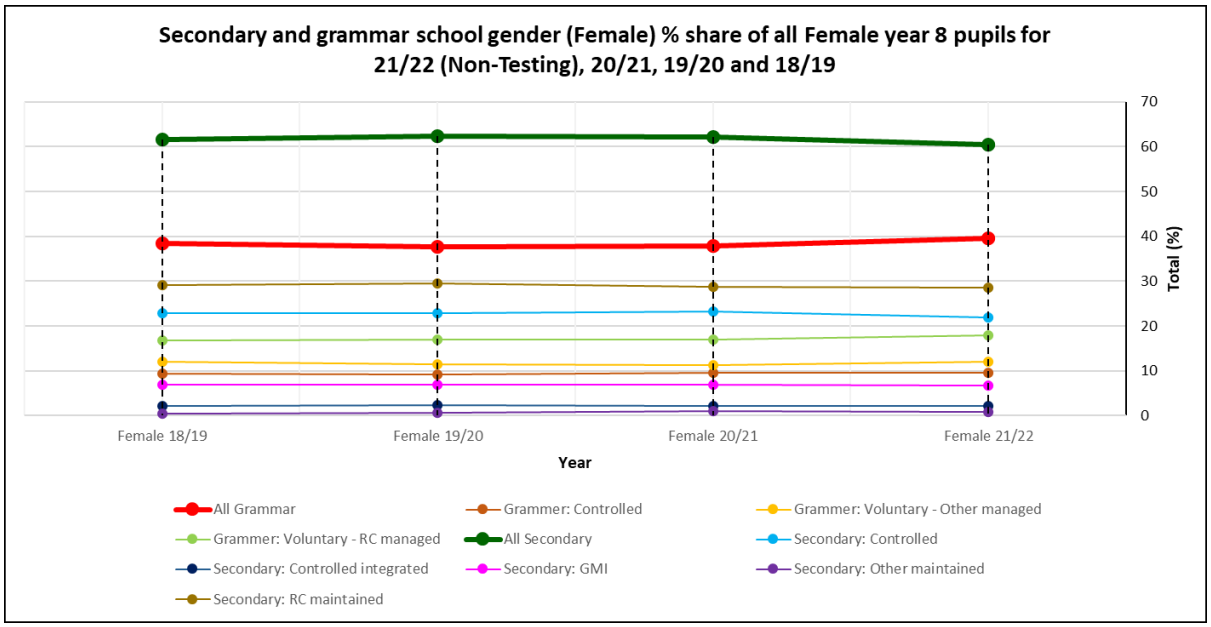


Figure 10b. Gender as % share of total year 8 female gender.

Table 10. Gender as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils.

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
School type	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
All Grammar	**19.8**	**18.7**	**19.3**	**18.5**	**19.5**	**18.5**	**19.8**	**19.5**
Grammar: Controlled	3.5	4.6	3.6	4.5	3.5	4.7	3.5	4.7
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	6.6	5.9	6.5	5.6	6.5	5.5	6.4	6.0
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	9.6	8.2	9.3	8.3	9.5	8.3	9.9	8.8

All Secondary	31.4	30.1	31.6	30.6	31.6	30.4	30.8	29.8
Secondary: Controlled	12.1	11.2	12.4	11.2	12.6	11.4	12.3	10.9
Secondary: Controlled integrated	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.1
Secondary: GMI	4.0	3.4	4.1	3.4	3.7	3.4	3.8	3.4
Secondary: Other maintained	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5
Secondary: RC maintained	13.7	14.2	13.4	14.5	13.6	14.1	13.1	14.1
Total % (all year 8 pupils)	**51.2**	**48.8**	**51.0**	**49.0**	**51.1**	**48.9**	**50.6**	**49.4**

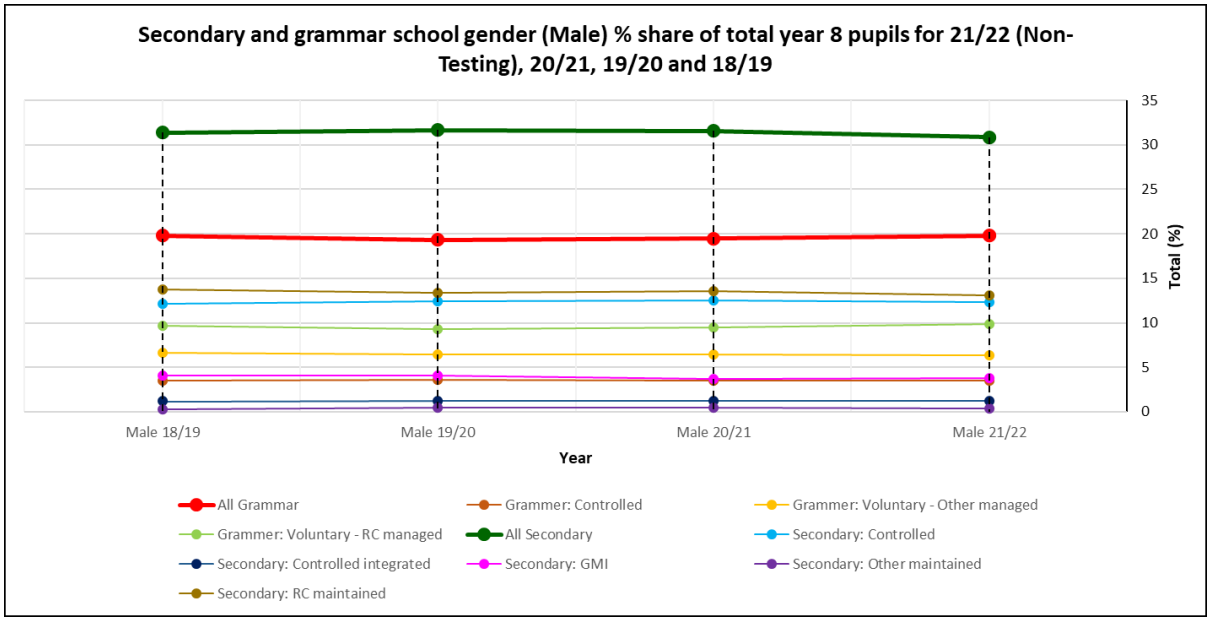


Figure 11. Gender (male) as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils.

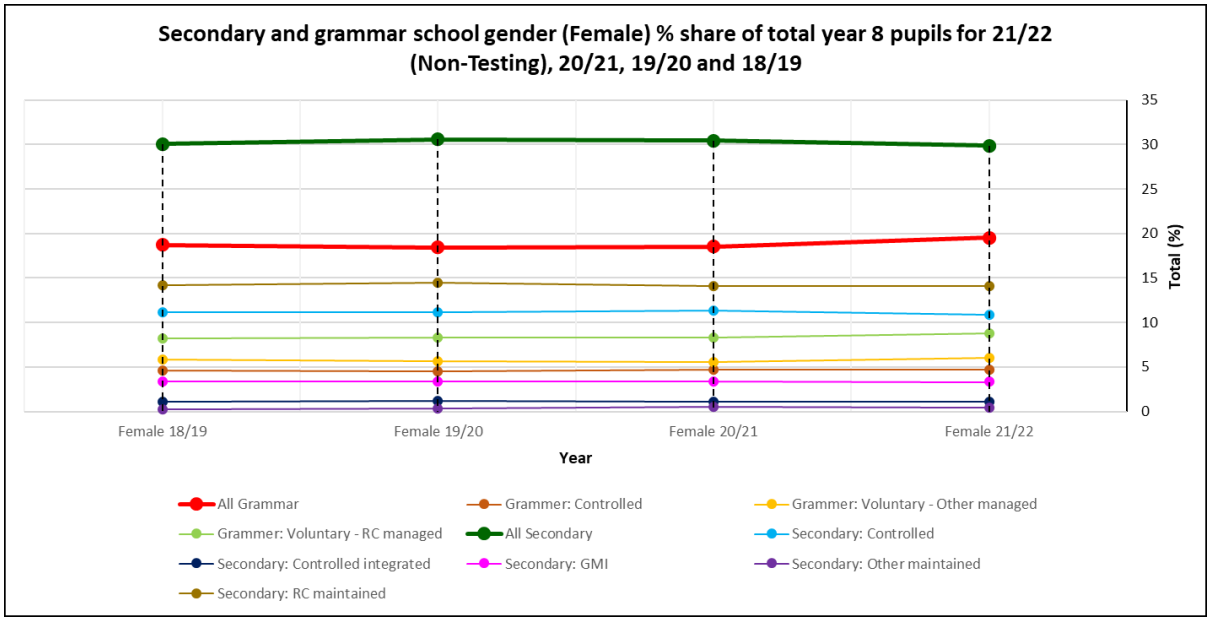


Figure 12. Gender (female) as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils.

Analysis by Ethnicity

The ethnicity counts are shown in Table 11, across the four years. Due to the significant number of unreported values of unknown size, coupled with the unknown values for <5 pupils, the statistical error is too great to fully analyse ethnicity in this case, with greater than 10,000 pupils unaccounted for across the four years.

Table 11. Ethnicity counts.

	18/19		19/20		20/21		21/22	
School type	**Ethnicity White**	**Ethnicity Non - White**	**Ethnicity White**	**Ethnicity Non - White**	**Ethnicity White**	**Ethnicity Non - White**	**Ethnicity White**	**Ethnicity Non - White**
All Grammar	**5479**	**399**	**5481**	**442**	**5839**	**469**	**6567**	**520**
Grammar: Controlled	1076	60	1068	85	1291	89	1494	104
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	2169	190	2107	189	2302	205	2473	228
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	2234	149	2306	168	2246	175	2600	188
All Secondary	**5837**	**477**	**6860**	**563**	**7622**	**631**	**6854**	**638**
Secondary: Controlled	2168	116	2291	123	2918	161	3016	196
Secondary: Controlled integrated	486	33	353	30	509	47	330	31
Secondary: GMI	818	79	1214	106	961	102	909	100
Secondary: Other maintained	0	0	148	7	0	0	153	8
Secondary: RC maintained	2365	249	2854	297	3234	321	2446	303
Total (all white or non-white ethnicity)	**11316**	**876**	**12341**	**1005**	**13461**	**1100**	**13421**	**1158**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**		**25201**		**25107**		**24974**	

Analysis by Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME)

The FSM counts are shown in Table 12 (including % FSM of individual grammar and secondary school totals), as % share of total year 8 FSM in Table 13 and Figure 13, and as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils in Table 14 and Figure 14, across the four years.

The percentage of FSM, in respect to individual grammar school, and secondary school totals, have remained largely consistent (Table 12), although there was a 0.7% increase in percentage of grammar school pupils with FSM in 21/22, and likewise, a 0.7% decrease in percentage of secondary school pupils with FSM.

Grammar schools have gained the percentage share (1.3 percentage points) of pupils entitled to free school meals that secondary schools have lost (see Table 13) in 21/22 compared with 20/21. This is a small but notable increase. Similarly, when looking at the percentage distribution for all year 8 pupils (Table 14), there is a similar small increase of 0.4 percentage points in the share of pupils with FSM admitted to grammar schools in relation to the total (grammar + secondary combined).

The percentage of all year 8 pupils with FSM entitlement rose slightly from 29.5% in 20/21, to 29.9% in 21/22, showing little change. Both these years show lower FSM percentages in the year 8 cohort than the previous two years, 18/19 (31%) and 19/20 (30.4%).

Error percentage/range for FSM was negligible (Table 15).

Table 12. FSM counts including % FSM of individual grammar and secondary school totals.

School type	FSM 18/19	FSM 19/20	FSM 20/21	FSM 21/22
All Grammar	**1422**	**1460**	**1444**	**1552**
Grammar: Controlled	260	299	297	270
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	322	305	294	374
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	840	856	853	908
All Secondary	**5982**	**6190**	**5959**	**5903**
Secondary: Controlled	2073	2108	2116	2075
Secondary: Controlled integrated	229	226	233	242
Secondary: GMI	714	749	691	664
Secondary: Other maintained	76	104	111	106
Secondary: RC maintained	2890	3003	2808	2816
Total (FSM)	**7404**	**7650**	**7403**	**7455**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**	**25201**	**25107**	**24974**
Grammar total pupils	**9194**	**9518**	**9541**	**9821**
Grammar % total pupils FSM	**15.5**	**15.3**	**15.1**	**15.8**
Grammar % total pupils non-FSM	**84.5**	**84.7**	**84.9**	**84.2**
Secondary total pupils	**14672**	**15683**	**15566**	**15153**
Secondary % total pupils FSM	**40.8**	**39.5**	**38.3**	**39.0**
Secondary % total pupils non-FSM	**59.2**	**60.5**	**61.7**	**61.0**

Table 13. FSM as % share of total FSM.

School type	FSM 18/19	FSM 19/20	FSM 20/21	FSM 21/22
All Grammar	**19.2**	**19.1**	**19.5**	**20.8**
Grammar: Controlled	3.5	3.9	4.0	3.6
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	11.3	11.2	11.5	12.2
All Secondary	**80.8**	**80.9**	**80.5**	**79.2**
Secondary: Controlled	28.0	27.6	28.6	27.8
Secondary: Controlled integrated	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.2
Secondary: GMI	9.6	9.8	9.3	8.9
Secondary: Other maintained	1.0	1.4	1.5	1.4
Secondary: RC maintained	39.0	39.3	37.9	37.8
Total % (FSM)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

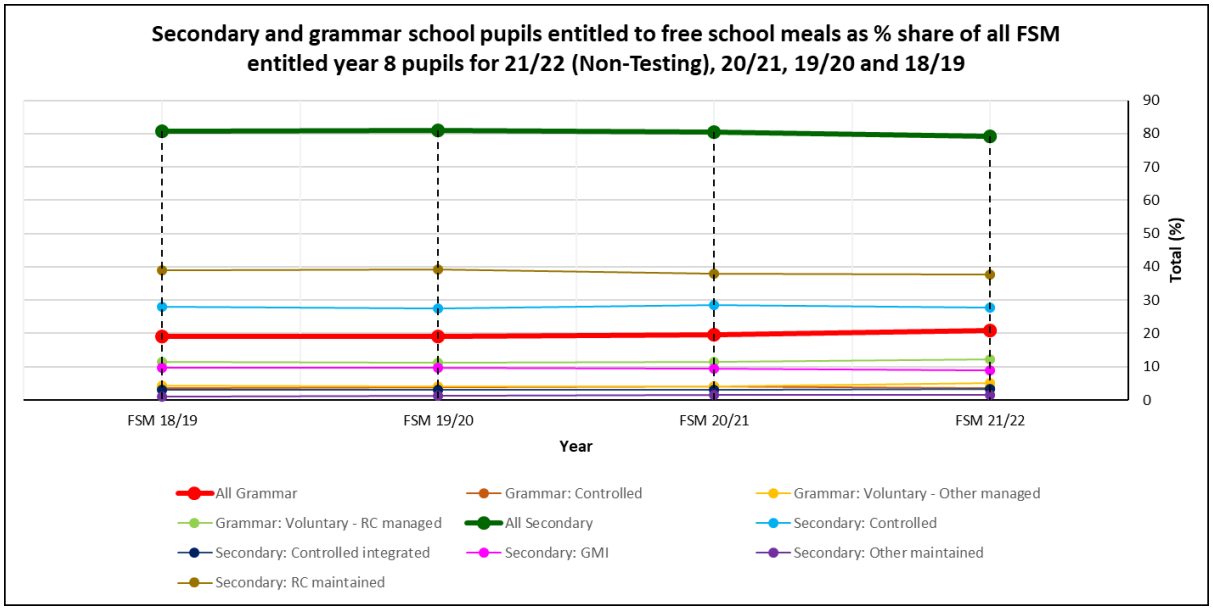


Figure 13. FSM as % share of total FSM.

Table 14. FSM as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

School type	FSM 18/19	FSM 19/20	FSM 20/21	FSM 21/22
All Grammar	**6.0**	**5.8**	**5.8**	**6.2**
Grammar: Controlled	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.5
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.6
All Secondary	**25.1**	**24.6**	**23.7**	**23.6**
Secondary: Controlled	8.7	8.4	8.4	8.3
Secondary: Controlled integrated	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0
Secondary: GMI	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.7
Secondary: Other maintained	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4
Secondary: RC maintained	12.1	11.9	11.2	11.3
Total % (all year 8 pupils)	**31.0**	**30.4**	**29.5**	**29.9**

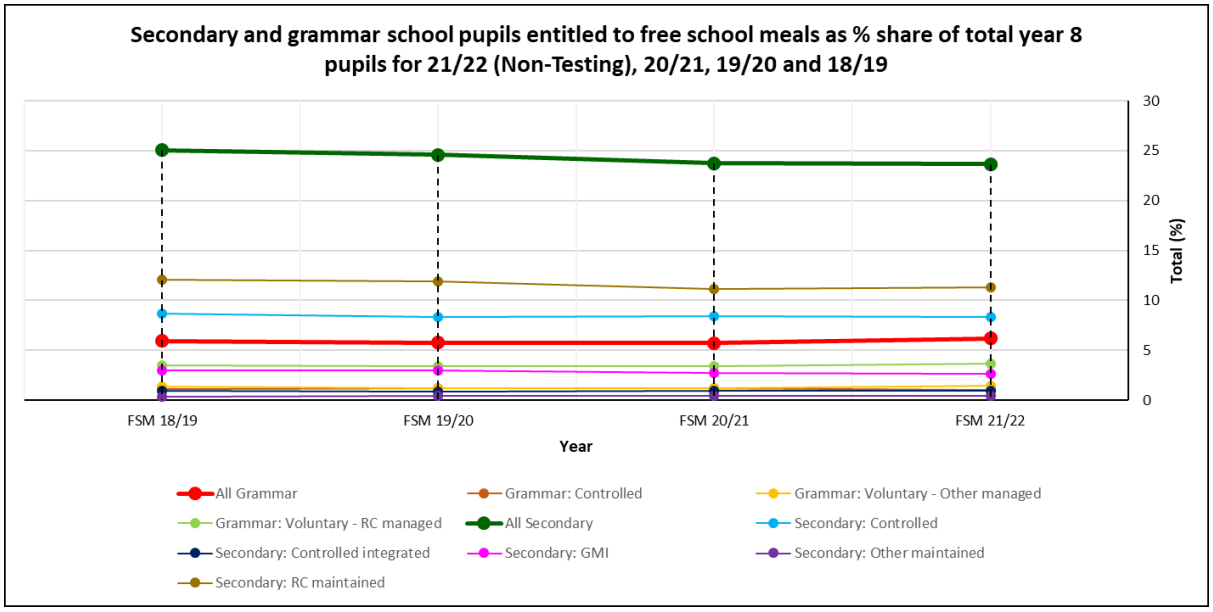


Figure 14. FSM as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

Table 15. FSM data error.

Year	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
FSM error row count (<5 pupils)	0	2	2	1
FSM error % of rows (<5 pupils)	0.0	1.1	1.1	0.5
FSM error range (<5 pupils)	0:0	0:10	0:10	0:5

Analysis by Special Educational Needs

The SEN (Stages 1-5 of the Code of Practice) counts including % SEN (1-5) of individual grammar and secondary school totals are shown in Table 16, as % share of total year 8 SEN (Stages 1-5 of the Code of Practice) in Table 17 and Figure 15, and as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils in Table 18 and Figure 16, across the four years.

Grammar schools gained percentage share (1.1 percentage points) of pupils with SEN (Stages 1-5 of the Code of Practice), which secondary schools lost, in the non-testing year (see Table 17), though it is notable that numbers of pupils with SEN are falling over time in both grammar and non-grammar schools. When looking at the percentage distribution of pupils with SEN (Stages 1-5) with respect to all pupils (Table 18), it is clear to see that 21/22 showed the lowest percentage of pupils with SEN (Stages 1-5) across the four years. There was a decrease from 2.3% to 2.2% for grammar schools, and 17.6% to 15.3% for secondary schools, or a decrease from 19.9% of all pupils recorded as having SEN (1-5), to 17.5% in the non-testing year.

It is important to note here that, due to many unrecorded values (where the figure was <5), there is potentially a high margin of error in these SEN statistics, so the results must be interpreted with some caution (Table 19).

Table 16. SEN (1-5) counts including % SEN (1-5) of individual grammar and secondary school totals.

School type	SEN 1-5 18/19	SEN 1-5 19/20	SEN 1-5 20/21	SEN 1-5 21/22
All Grammar	**867**	**505**	**576**	**552**
Grammar: Controlled	159	76	49	84
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	237	152	185	123
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	471	277	342	345
All Secondary	**4496**	**4196**	**4424**	**3820**
Secondary: Controlled	1590	1534	1645	1344
Secondary: Controlled integrated	212	190	187	165
Secondary: GMI	639	524	524	482
Secondary: Other maintained	48	65	70	68
Secondary: RC maintained	2007	1883	1998	1761
Total (SEN 1-5)	**5363**	**4701**	**5000**	**4372**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**	**25201**	**25107**	**24974**
Grammar total pupils	**9194**	**9518**	**9541**	**9821**
Grammar % total pupils SEN 1-5	**9.4**	**5.3**	**6.0**	**5.6**
Grammar % total pupils non-SEN 1-5	**90.6**	**94.7**	**94.0**	**94.4**
Secondary total pupils	**14672**	**15683**	**15566**	**15153**
Secondary % total pupils SEN 1-5	**30.6**	**26.8**	**28.4**	**25.2**
Secondary % total pupils non-SEN 1-5	**69.4**	**73.2**	**71.6**	**74.8**

Table 17. SEN (1-5) as % share of total SEN (1-5).

School type	SEN 1-5 18/19	SEN 1-5 19/20	SEN 1-5 20/21	SEN 1-5 21/22
All Grammar	**16.2**	**10.7**	**11.5**	**12.6**
Grammar: Controlled	3.0	1.6	1.0	1.9
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	4.4	3.2	3.7	2.8
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	8.8	5.9	6.8	7.9
All Secondary	**83.8**	**89.3**	**88.5**	**87.4**
Secondary: Controlled	29.6	32.6	32.9	30.7
Secondary: Controlled integrated	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.8
Secondary: GMI	11.9	11.1	10.5	11.0
Secondary: Other maintained	0.9	1.4	1.4	1.6
Secondary: RC maintained	37.4	40.1	40.0	40.3
Total (SEN 1-5)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

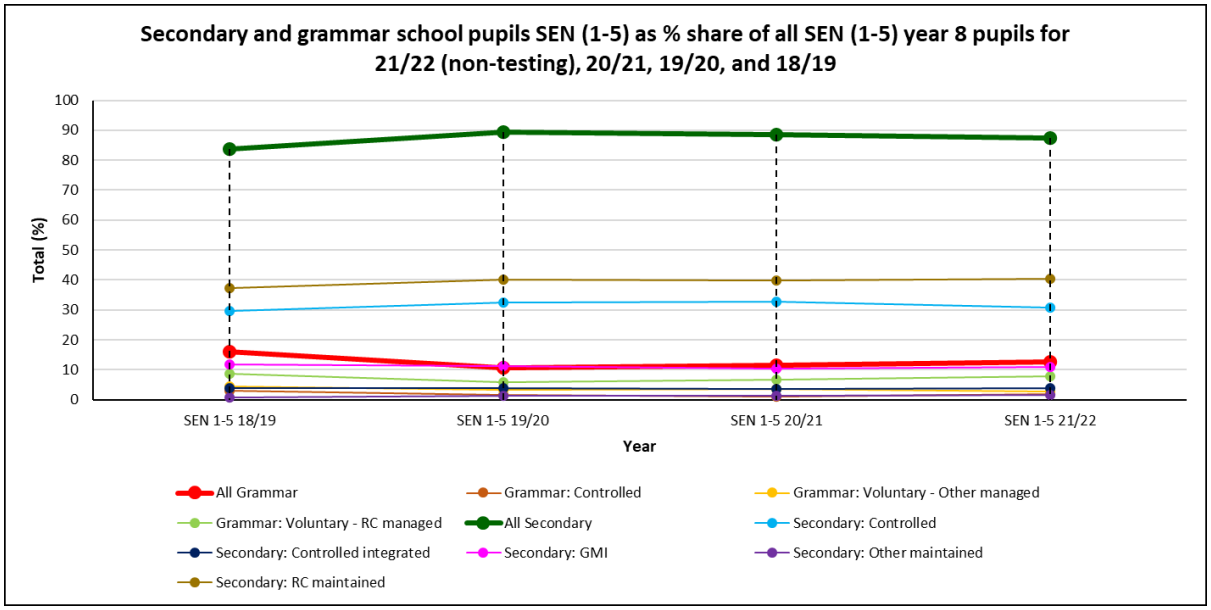


Figure 15. SEN (1-5) as % share of total SEN (1-5).

Table 18. SEN (1-5) as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

School type	SEN 1-5 18/19	SEN 1-5 19/20	SEN 1-5 20/21	SEN 1-5 21/22
All Grammar	**3.6**	**2.0**	**2.3**	**2.2**
Grammar: Controlled	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.5
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	2.0	1.1	1.4	1.4
All Secondary	**18.8**	**16.7**	**17.6**	**15.3**
Secondary: Controlled	6.7	6.1	6.6	5.4
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7
Secondary: GMI	2.7	2.1	2.1	1.9
Secondary: Other maintained	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3
Secondary: RC maintained	8.4	7.5	8.0	7.1
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**22.5**	**18.7**	**19.9**	**17.5**

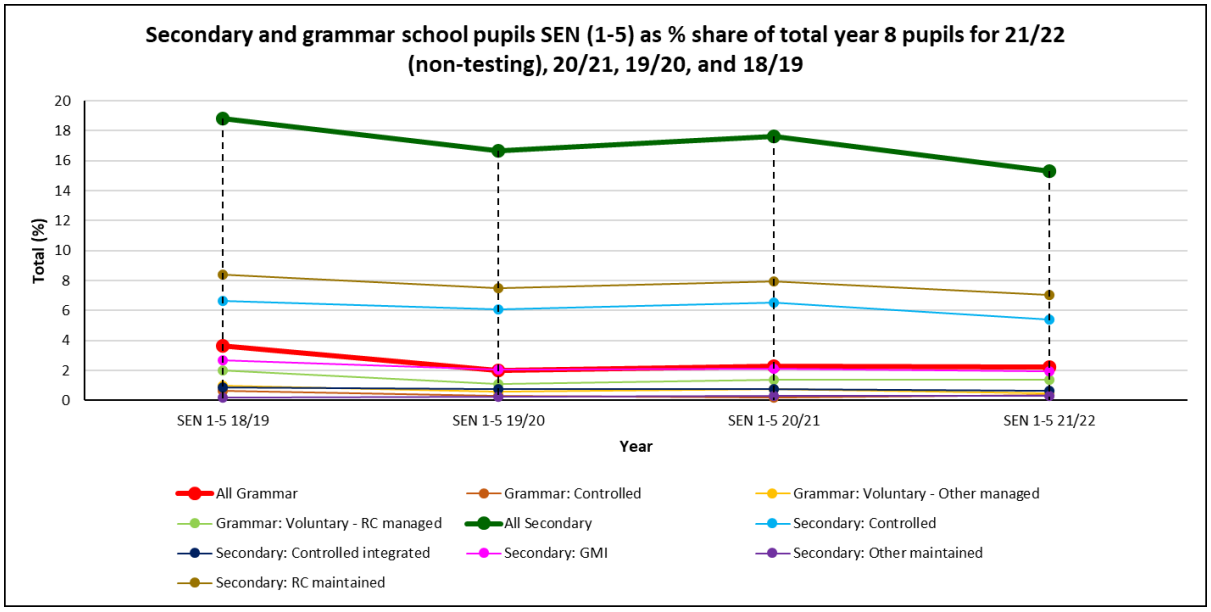


Figure 16. SEN (1-5) as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

Table 19. SEN (1-5) data error.

Year	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
SEN (1-5) error row count (<5 pupils)	91	101	90	85
SEN (1-5) error % of rows (<5 pupils)	48.4	53.7	47.9	45.2
SEN (1-5) error range (<5 pupils)	0:455	0:505	0:450	0:425

Year 8 statemented (SEN 5 only)

The statemented counts including % SEN 5 of individual grammar and secondary school totals are shown in Table 20, as % share of total year 8 statemented in Table 21 and Figure 17, and as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils in Table 22 and Figure 18, across the four years.

The percentage of statemented pupils in secondary schools (as a percentage of the total number of statemented pupils in grammar and secondary) appears to have increased, by 0.6 percentage points, in 2021/22 (89.8%), but varied over the four years. The percentage of statemented pupils in grammar schools (as a percentage of the total number of statemented pupils in grammar and secondary) showed a decrease by 0.6 percentage points in 2021/22, but again, varied over the four years. The percentage of statemented year 8 pupils in grammar schools is consistently very low compared with secondary schools (see Table 21).

When looking at the distribution of statemented pupil percentages with respect to all pupils, it is clear to see that the percentage of all pupils recorded as statemented has increased across the four years, to 5.1% in 21/22, the non-testing year. However, the portion of this has remained consistent for grammar schools (approximately 0.5% each year), whereas, it has increased for secondary schools, 3.7% in 18/19 to 4.6% in the non-testing year (Table 22).

It is important to note here that too, due to many unrecorded values (where the figure was <5), there is potentially a high margin of error in these SEN statistics, so the results must be interpreted with some caution (Table 23).

Table 20. Statemented counts including % SEN 5 of individual grammar and secondary school totals.

School type	Statemented pupil's 18/19	Statemented pupil's 19/20	Statemented pupil's 20/21	Statemented pupil's 21/22
All Grammar	**108**	**72**	**126**	**129**
Grammar: Controlled	6	5	18	10
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	38	35	42	34
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	64	32	66	85
All Secondary	**885**	**1033**	**1037**	**1138**
Secondary: Controlled	318	345	379	414
Secondary: Controlled integrated	41	61	40	50
Secondary: GMI	116	130	122	141
Secondary: Other maintained	0	10	8	13
Secondary: RC maintained	410	487	488	520
Total (statemented)	**993**	**1105**	**1163**	**1267**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**	**25201**	**25107**	**24974**
Grammar total pupils	**9194**	**9518**	**9541**	**9821**
Grammar % total pupils SEN 5	**1.2**	**0.8**	**1.3**	**1.3**
Secondary total pupils	**14672**	**15683**	**15566**	**15153**
Secondary % total pupils SEN 5	**6.0**	**6.6**	**6.7**	**7.5**

Table 21. Statemented as % share of total statemented.

School type	Statemented pupil's 18/19	Statemented pupil's 19/20	Statemented pupil's 20/21	Statemented pupil's 21/22
All Grammar	**10.9**	**6.5**	**10.8**	**10.2**
Grammar: Controlled	0.6	0.5	1.5	0.8
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	3.8	3.2	3.6	2.7
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	6.4	2.9	5.7	6.7
All Secondary	**89.1**	**93.5**	**89.2**	**89.8**
Secondary: Controlled	32.0	31.2	32.6	32.7
Secondary: Controlled integrated	4.1	5.5	3.4	3.9
Secondary: GMI	11.7	11.8	10.5	11.1
Secondary: Other maintained	0.0	0.9	0.7	1.0
Secondary: RC maintained	41.3	44.1	42.0	41.0
Total % (statemented)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

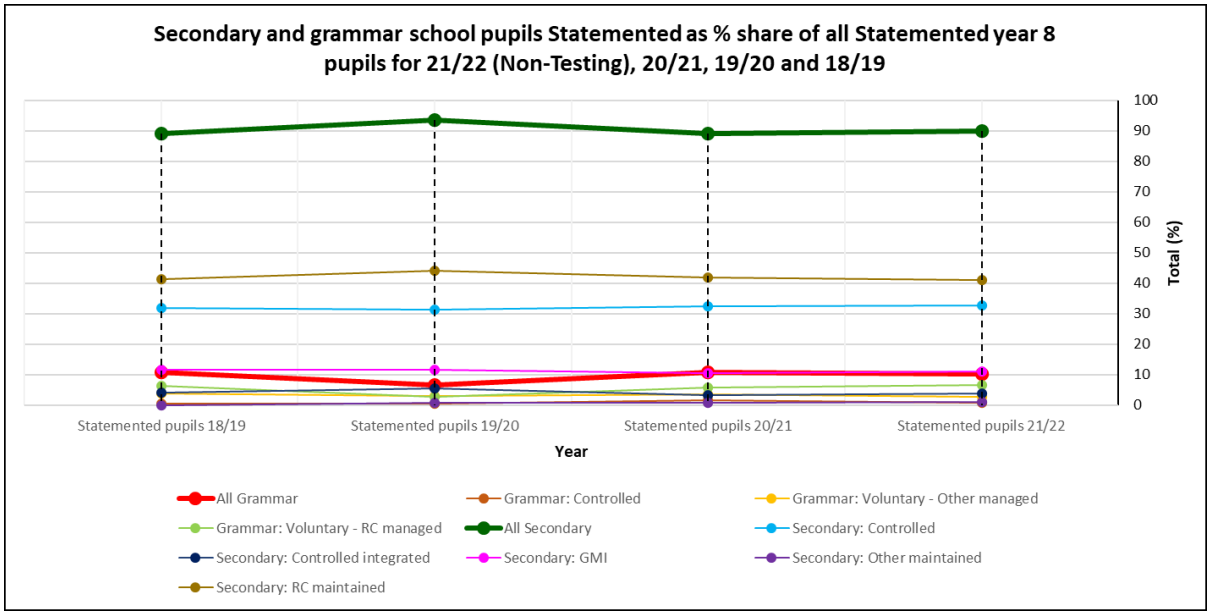


Figure 17. Statemented as % share of total statemented.

Table 22. Statemented as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

School type	Statemented pupil's 18/19	Statemented pupil's 19/20	Statemented pupil's 20/21	Statemented pupil's 21/22
All Grammar	**0.5**	**0.3**	**0.5**	**0.5**
Grammar: Controlled	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3
All Secondary	**3.7**	**4.1**	**4.1**	**4.6**
Secondary: Controlled	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.7
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Secondary: GMI	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
Secondary: Other maintained	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Secondary: RC maintained	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.1
Total % (all year 8 pupils)	**4.2**	**4.4**	**4.6**	**5.1**

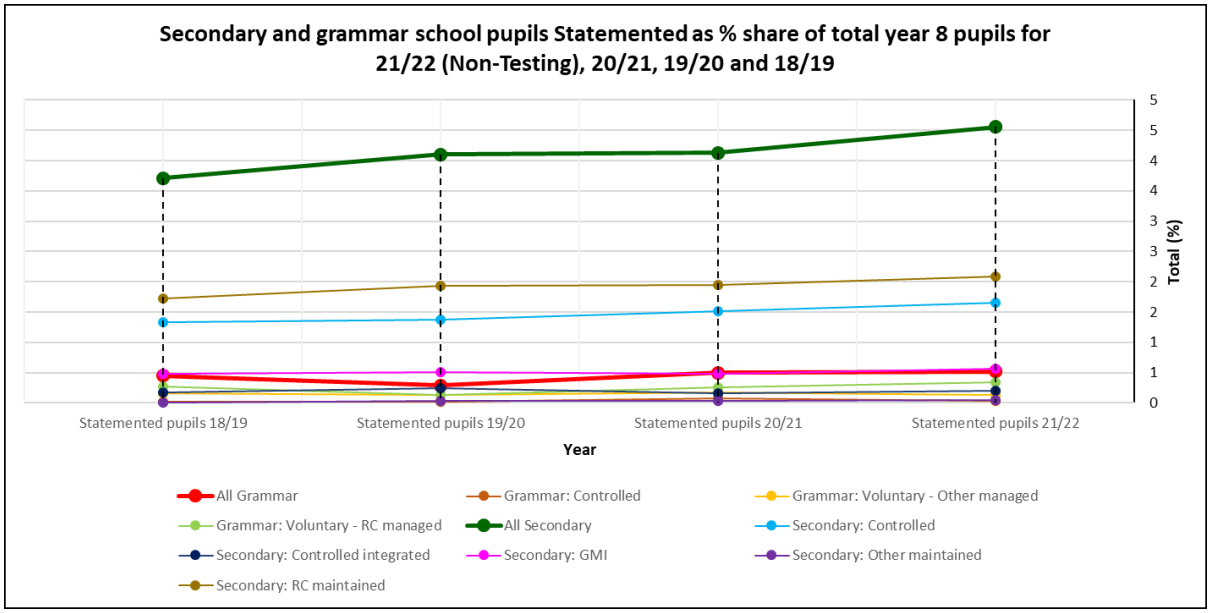


Figure 18. Statemented as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

Table 23. Statemented data error.

Year	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Statemented error row count (<5 pupils)	75	72	66	64
Statemented error % of rows (<5 pupils)	39.7	38.1	34.9	33.9
Statemented error range (<5 pupils)	0:375	0:360	0:330	0:320

Analysis by Newcomer Pupils

The newcomer counts including % newcomer of individual grammar and secondary school totals are shown in Table 24, as % share of total year 8 newcomer in Table 25 and Figure 19, and as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils in Table 26 and Figure 20, across the four years. The newcomer data error statistics are shown in Table 27.

The percentage share of newcomer pupils in secondary schools (as a percentage of the total cohort of grammar + secondary) increased, by 1.3 percentage points in 21/22 to 88.6%. The percentage of newcomer year 8 pupils in grammar schools (as a percentage of the total cohort of grammar + secondary) decreased by 1.3 percentage points in 21/22 to 11.4%. The percentage share of newcomer pupils for both secondary and grammar schools varied however over the four years (see Table 25).

The distribution of percentages for newcomer pupils with respect to all pupils (see Table 26), shows that the percentage of all pupils recorded as newcomer, has remained consistent across the previous 3 years, at approximately 3.8 – 3.9%, of all secondary and grammar pupils. Grammar schools showed a decrease in proportion from 0.5% in 20/21 to 0.4% in 21/22, and some variation across all four years, compared with secondary schools showing a steady

increase across all four years, including an increase from 2.5% in 18/19, to 3.5% in the non-testing year.

It is important to note here that too, due to many unrecorded values (where the figure was <5), there is potentially a high margin of error in these newcomer statistics, so the results must be interpreted with some caution.

Table 24. Newcomer counts including % newcomer of individual grammar and secondary school totals.

School type	Newcomer pupil's 18/19	Newcomer pupil's 19/20	Newcomer pupil's 20/21	Newcomer pupil's 21/22
All Grammar	**58**	**123**	**123**	**112**
Grammar: Controlled	0	20	19	18
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	8	9	24	17
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	50	94	80	77
All Secondary	**595**	**829**	**845**	**874**
Secondary: Controlled	144	216	213	226
Secondary: Controlled integrated	20	31	28	35
Secondary: GMI	71	113	121	134
Secondary: Other maintained	0	0	0	0
Secondary: RC maintained	360	469	483	479
Total (newcomer)	**653**	**952**	**968**	**986**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**	**25201**	**25107**	**24974**
Grammar total pupils	**9194**	**9518**	**9541**	**9821**
Grammar % total pupils newcomer	**0.6**	**1.3**	**1.3**	**1.1**
Secondary total pupils	**14672**	**15683**	**15566**	**15153**
Secondary % total pupils newcomer	**4.0**	**5.3**	**5.4**	**5.8**

Table 25. Newcomer as % share of total newcomer.

School type	Newcomer pupil's 18/19	Newcomer pupil's 19/20	Newcomer pupil's 20/21	Newcomer pupil's 21/22
All Grammar	**8.9**	**12.9**	**12.7**	**11.4**
Grammar: Controlled	0.0	2.1	2.0	1.8
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	1.2	0.9	2.5	1.7
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	7.7	9.9	8.3	7.8
All Secondary	**91.1**	**87.1**	**87.3**	**88.6**
Secondary: Controlled	22.1	22.7	22.0	22.9
Secondary: Controlled integrated	3.1	3.3	2.9	3.5
Secondary: GMI	10.9	11.9	12.5	13.6
Secondary: Other maintained	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	55.1	49.3	49.9	48.6
Total % (newcomer)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

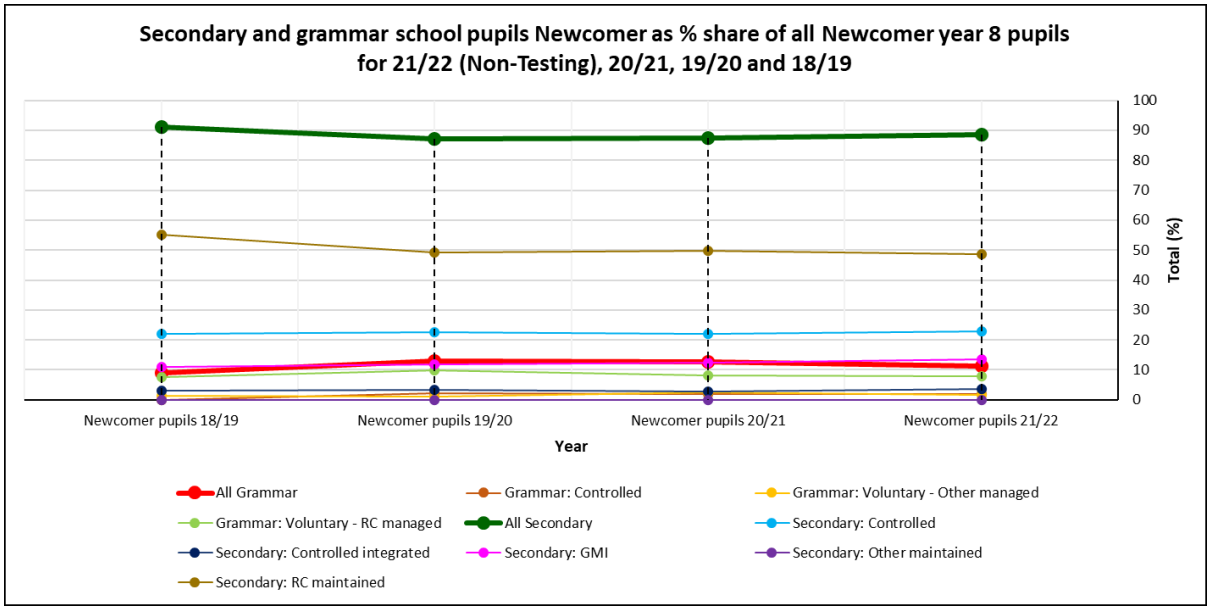


Figure 19. Newcomer as % share of total newcomer.

Table 26. Newcomer as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

School type	Newcomer pupil's 18/19	Newcomer pupil's 19/20	Newcomer pupil's 20/21	Newcomer pupil's 21/22
All Grammar	**0.2**	**0.5**	**0.5**	**0.4**
Grammar: Controlled	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.3
All Secondary	**2.5**	**3.3**	**3.4**	**3.5**
Secondary: Controlled	0.6	0.9	0.8	0.9
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Secondary: GMI	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
Secondary: Other maintained	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.9
Total % (all year 8 pupils)	**2.7**	**3.8**	**3.9**	**3.9**

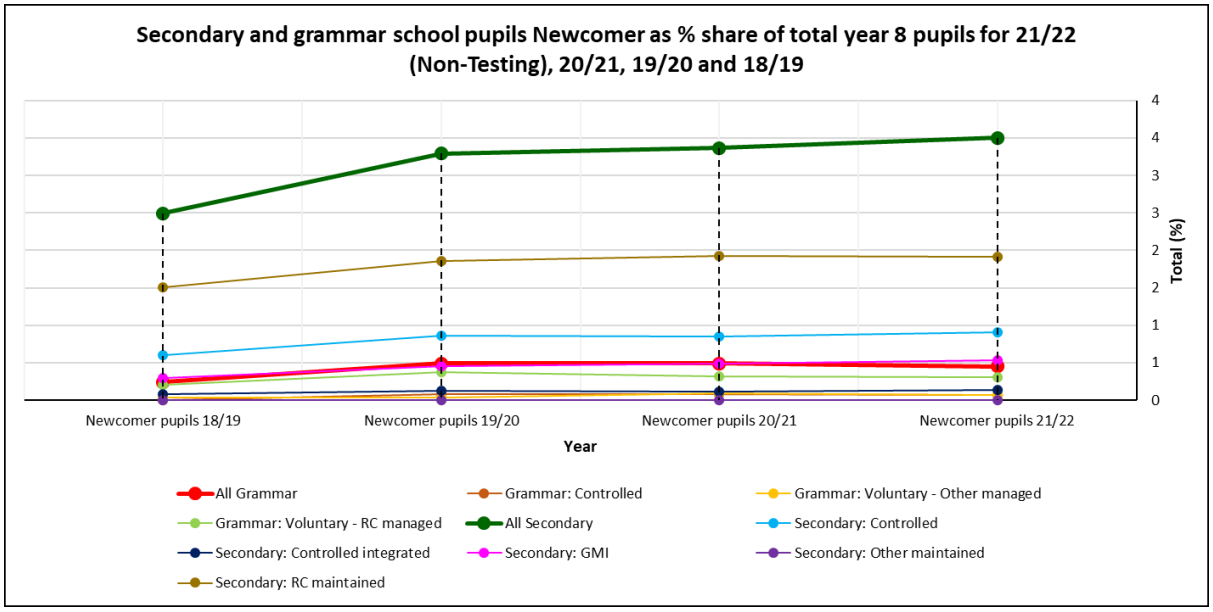


Figure 20. Newcomer as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

Analysis by Looked After Children

The looked after counts are shown in Table 27, as % share of total year 8 looked after in Table 28 and Figure 21, and as % share of all secondary and grammar school year 8 pupils in Table 29 and Figure 22, across the four years.

The number of looked after children is low across all four years for secondary schools, however, grammar schools have no children recorded as looked after (0%) (see Table 28 and 29).

It is important to note here that too, due to many unrecorded values (where the figure was <5), there is potentially a high margin of error in these Looked After Children statistics, so the results must be interpreted with some caution.

Table 27. Children looked after counts.

School type	Children looked after 18/19	Children looked after 19/20	Children looked after 20/21	Children looked after 21/22
All Grammar	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Grammar: Controlled	0	0	0	0
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0	0	0	0
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	0	0	0	0
All Secondary	**17**	**35**	**23**	**45**
Secondary: Controlled	6	0	11	20
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0	8	0	5
Secondary: GMI	5	16	12	8
Secondary: Other maintained	0	0	0	0

Secondary: RC maintained	6	11	0	12
Total (looked after)	**17**	**35**	**23**	**45**
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**23866**	**25201**	**25107**	**24974**

Table 28. Children looked after as % share of total children looked after.

School type	Children looked after 18/19	Children looked after 19/20	Children looked after 20/21	Children looked after 21/22
All Grammar	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Grammar: Controlled	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Secondary	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Secondary: Controlled	35.3	0.0	47.8	44.4
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.0	22.9	0.0	11.1
Secondary: GMI	29.4	45.7	52.2	17.8
Secondary: Other maintained	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	35.3	31.4	0.0	26.7
Total (looked after)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

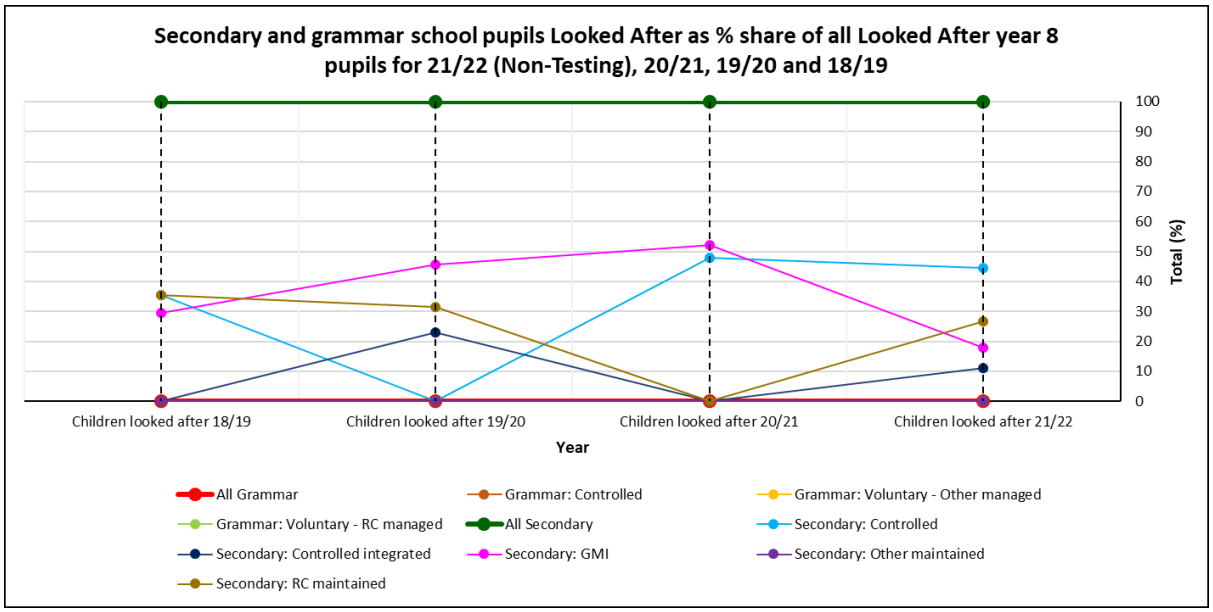


Figure 21. Children looked after as % share of total children looked after.

Table 29. Children looked after as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

School type	Children looked after 18/19	Children looked after 19/20	Children looked after 20/21	Children looked after 21/22
All Grammar	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**
Grammar: Controlled	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
All Secondary	**0.07**	**0.14**	**0.09**	**0.18**
Secondary: Controlled	0.03	0.00	0.04	0.08
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.02
Secondary: GMI	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.03
Secondary: Other maintained	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Secondary: RC maintained	0.03	0.04	0.00	0.05
Total (all year 8 pupils)	**0.07**	**0.14**	**0.09**	**0.18**

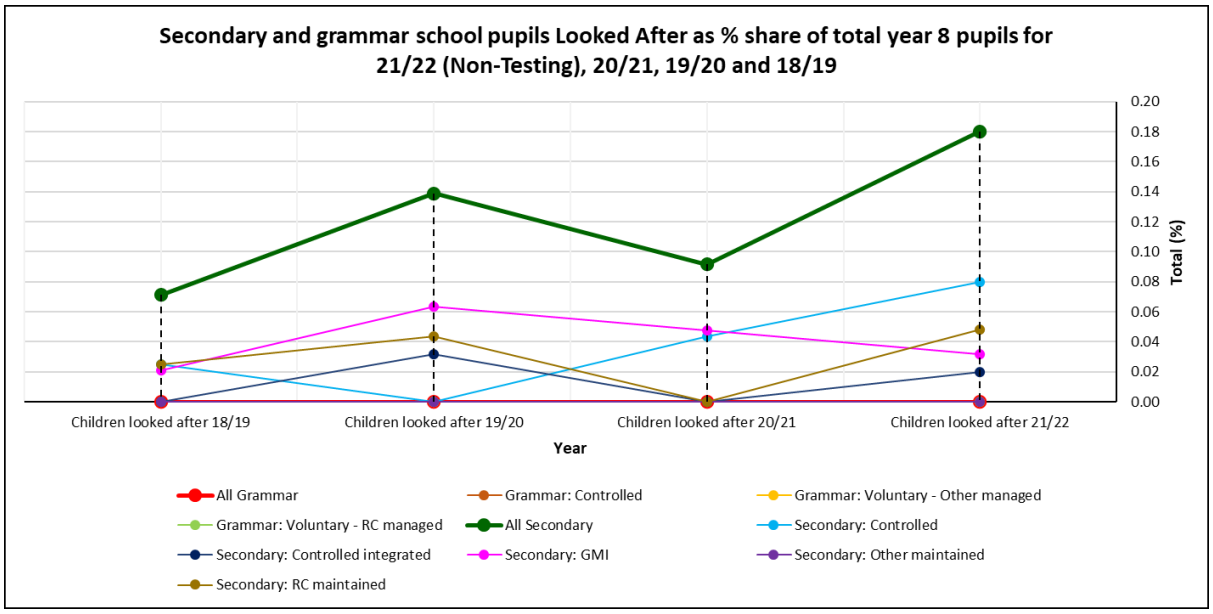


Figure 22. Children looked after as % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

Analysis by MDM Decile

Table 30 show the MDM decile counts. Table 31 and Figures 23 – 26 show MDM Deciles % share of each decile total, and Table 32 and Figures 27 – 30 show MDM Deciles % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils. Table 33 shows the MDM decile data error statistics.

Secondary schools show a positive trend towards the lower, more deprived deciles, and grammar schools show a positive trend towards the less deprived, higher deciles, across all years (Figures 23 – 30). However, for the RC managed grammar schools, there is greater variation across all deciles, across all years, with no clear trend. It is a similar situation for controlled secondary schools. There is a low number of pupils from the controlled integrated, GMI, and other maintained secondary schools. However, controlled integrated and GMI secondary schools appear to have similar numbers of pupils across all MDM deciles, with the other maintained secondary schools, showing a positive trend towards the lower, more deprived deciles. There was very little change from 20/21 to 21/22. There was a small number of unknown addresses ranging from 33 to 63 pupil addresses over the four years, representing a negligible impact (Table 33).

Table 30. MDM Decile counts.

21/22 (non-testing cohort)	MDM decile 1	MDM Decile 2	MDM Decile 3	MDM Decile 4	MDM Decile 5	MDM Decile 6	MDM Decile 7	MDM Decile 8	MDM Decile 9	MDM Decile 10
All Grammar	**523**	**701**	**730**	**931**	**990**	**921**	**1155**	**1290**	**1175**	**1376**
Grammar: Controlled	35	112	156	145	147	239	233	326	364	299
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	57	139	160	186	230	269	388	459	489	689
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	431	450	414	600	613	413	534	505	322	388
All Secondary	**1874**	**1805**	**1818**	**1848**	**1826**	**1603**	**1531**	**1173**	**1066**	**585**
Secondary: Controlled	446	556	533	731	657	764	622	565	616	287
Secondary: Controlled integrated	27	30	81	80	77	24	97	70	54	47
Secondary: GMI	152	175	191	206	209	220	189	162	142	135
Secondary: Other maintained	75	42	14	16	20	13	14	5	11	7
Secondary: RC maintained	1174	1002	999	815	863	582	609	371	243	109
Decile Total	**2397**	**2506**	**2548**	**2779**	**2816**	**2524**	**2686**	**2463**	**2241**	**1961**
Total (MDM pupils)	**24921**									
Total (all pupils)	**24974**									

20/21	MDM decile 1	MDM Decile 2	MDM Decile 3	MDM Decile 4	MDM Decile 5	MDM Decile 6	MDM Decile 7	MDM Decile 8	MDM Decile 9	MDM Decile 10
All Grammar	**505**	**666**	**665**	**902**	**1040**	**940**	**1133**	**1224**	**1178**	**1282**
Grammar: Controlled	42	127	150	152	178	252	203	310	395	248
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	67	139	150	172	240	283	381	420	487	665
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	396	400	365	578	622	405	549	494	296	369
All Secondary	**1933**	**1784**	**1779**	**1907**	**1822**	**1623**	**1561**	**1404**	**1136**	**590**
Secondary: Controlled	436	533	535	785	680	773	676	664	652	265
Secondary: Controlled integrated	37	41	84	88	50	23	69	90	61	47
Secondary: GMI	180	198	176	205	199	185	171	178	137	147
Secondary: Other maintained	99	35	8	10	19	15	21	8	18	2
Secondary: RC maintained	1181	977	976	819	874	627	624	464	268	129
Decile Total	**2438**	**2450**	**2444**	**2809**	**2862**	**2563**	**2694**	**2628**	**2314**	**1872**
Total (MDM pupils)	**25074**									
Total (all pupils)	**25107**									

19/20	MDM decile 1	MDM Decile 2	MDM Decile 3	MDM Decile 4	MDM Decile 5	MDM Decile 6	MDM Decile 7	MDM Decile 8	MDM Decile 9	MDM Decile 10
All Grammar	**489**	**666**	**653**	**862**	**1029**	**883**	**1113**	**1289**	**1186**	**1332**

Grammar: Controlled	36	132	148	150	157	221	194	334	409	253
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	67	123	130	185	259	283	397	432	470	693
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	386	411	375	527	613	379	522	523	307	386
All Secondary	**1866**	**1799**	**1866**	**1853**	**1803**	**1721**	**1596**	**1370**	**1177**	**585**
Secondary: Controlled	412	546	551	726	599	845	681	655	661	268
Secondary: Controlled integrated	28	30	84	60	72	40	91	93	69	50
Secondary: GMI	166	201	212	194	206	226	190	184	161	142
Secondary: Other maintained	78	32	14	10	22	11	18	9	12	4
Secondary: RC maintained	1182	990	1005	863	904	599	616	429	274	121
Decile Total	**2355**	**2465**	**2519**	**2715**	**2832**	**2604**	**2709**	**2659**	**2363**	**1917**
Total (MDM pupils)	**25138**									
Total (all pupils)	**25201**									

18/19	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**467**	**628**	**597**	**887**	**986**	**898**	**1116**	**1252**	**1109**	**1244**
Grammar: Controlled	36	102	135	151	169	217	212	324	355	241
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	64	119	102	206	245	286	394	446	460	655
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	367	407	360	530	572	395	510	482	294	348
All Secondary	**1830**	**1678**	**1810**	**1708**	**1778**	**1585**	**1451**	**1246**	**995**	**549**
Secondary: Controlled	398	515	497	674	683	725	592	606	582	264
Secondary: Controlled integrated	43	44	73	65	48	41	68	80	49	47
Secondary: GMI	181	168	182	189	196	216	203	160	135	139
Secondary: Other maintained	49	22	12	4	15	6	17	4	10	1
Secondary: RC maintained	1159	929	1046	776	836	597	571	396	219	98
Decile Total	**2297**	**2306**	**2407**	**2595**	**2764**	**2483**	**2567**	**2498**	**2104**	**1793**
Total (MDM pupils)	**23814**									
Total (all pupils)	**23866**									

Table 31. MDM Deciles % share of each decile total.

21/22 (non-testing cohort)	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**21.8**	**28.0**	**28.6**	**33.5**	**35.2**	**36.5**	**43.0**	**52.4**	**52.4**	**70.2**
Grammar: Controlled	1.5	4.5	6.1	5.2	5.2	9.5	8.7	13.2	16.2	15.2
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	2.4	5.5	6.3	6.7	8.2	10.7	14.4	18.6	21.8	35.1

Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	18.0	18.0	16.2	21.6	21.8	16.4	19.9	20.5	14.4	19.8
All Secondary	**78.2**	**72.0**	**71.4**	**66.5**	**64.8**	**63.5**	**57.0**	**47.6**	**47.6**	**29.8**
Secondary: Controlled	18.6	22.2	20.9	26.3	23.3	30.3	23.2	22.9	27.5	14.6
Secondary: Controlled integrated	1.1	1.2	3.2	2.9	2.7	1.0	3.6	2.8	2.4	2.4
Secondary: GMI	6.3	7.0	7.5	7.4	7.4	8.7	7.0	6.6	6.3	6.9
Secondary: Other maintained	3.1	1.7	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.4
Secondary: RC maintained	49.0	40.0	39.2	29.3	30.6	23.1	22.7	15.1	10.8	5.6
Decile Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Total (MDM pupils)	**100**									

20/21	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**20.7**	**27.2**	**27.2**	**32.1**	**36.3**	**36.7**	**42.1**	**46.6**	**50.9**	**68.5**
Grammar: Controlled	1.7	5.2	6.1	5.4	6.2	9.8	7.5	11.8	17.1	13.2
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	2.7	5.7	6.1	6.1	8.4	11.0	14.1	16.0	21.0	35.5
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	16.2	16.3	14.9	20.6	21.7	15.8	20.4	18.8	12.8	19.7
All Secondary	**79.3**	**72.8**	**72.8**	**67.9**	**63.7**	**63.3**	**57.9**	**53.4**	**49.1**	**31.5**
Secondary: Controlled	17.9	21.8	21.9	27.9	23.8	30.2	25.1	25.3	28.2	14.2
Secondary: Controlled integrated	1.5	1.7	3.4	3.1	1.7	0.9	2.6	3.4	2.6	2.5
Secondary: GMI	7.4	8.1	7.2	7.3	7.0	7.2	6.3	6.8	5.9	7.9
Secondary: Other maintained	4.1	1.4	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.8	0.1
Secondary: RC maintained	48.4	39.9	39.9	29.2	30.5	24.5	23.2	17.7	11.6	6.9
Decile Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Total (MDM pupils)	**100**									

19/20	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**20.8**	**27.0**	**25.9**	**31.7**	**36.3**	**33.9**	**41.1**	**48.5**	**50.2**	**69.5**
Grammar: Controlled	1.5	5.4	5.9	5.5	5.5	8.5	7.2	12.6	17.3	13.2
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	2.8	5.0	5.2	6.8	9.1	10.9	14.7	16.2	19.9	36.2
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	16.4	16.7	14.9	19.4	21.6	14.6	19.3	19.7	13.0	20.1
All Secondary	**79.2**	**73.0**	**74.1**	**68.3**	**63.7**	**66.1**	**58.9**	**51.5**	**49.8**	**30.5**
Secondary: Controlled	17.5	22.2	21.9	26.7	21.2	32.5	25.1	24.6	28.0	14.0
Secondary: Controlled integrated	1.2	1.2	3.3	2.2	2.5	1.5	3.4	3.5	2.9	2.6
Secondary: GMI	7.0	8.2	8.4	7.1	7.3	8.7	7.0	6.9	6.8	7.4
Secondary: Other maintained	3.3	1.3	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.2

Secondary: RC maintained	50.2	40.2	39.9	31.8	31.9	23.0	22.7	16.1	11.6	6.3
Decile Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Total (MDM pupils)	**100**									

18/19	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**20.3**	**27.2**	**24.8**	**34.2**	**35.7**	**36.2**	**43.5**	**50.1**	**52.7**	**69.4**
Grammar: Controlled	1.6	4.4	5.6	5.8	6.1	8.7	8.3	13.0	16.9	13.4
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	2.8	5.2	4.2	7.9	8.9	11.5	15.3	17.9	21.9	36.5
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	16.0	17.6	15.0	20.4	20.7	15.9	19.9	19.3	14.0	19.4
All Secondary	**79.7**	**72.8**	**75.2**	**65.8**	**64.3**	**63.8**	**56.5**	**49.9**	**47.3**	**30.6**
Secondary: Controlled	17.3	22.3	20.6	26.0	24.7	29.2	23.1	24.3	27.7	14.7
Secondary: Controlled integrated	1.9	1.9	3.0	2.5	1.7	1.7	2.6	3.2	2.3	2.6
Secondary: GMI	7.9	7.3	7.6	7.3	7.1	8.7	7.9	6.4	6.4	7.8
Secondary: Other maintained	2.1	1.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.1
Secondary: RC maintained	50.5	40.3	43.5	29.9	30.2	24.0	22.2	15.9	10.4	5.5
Decile Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Total (MDM pupils)	**100**									

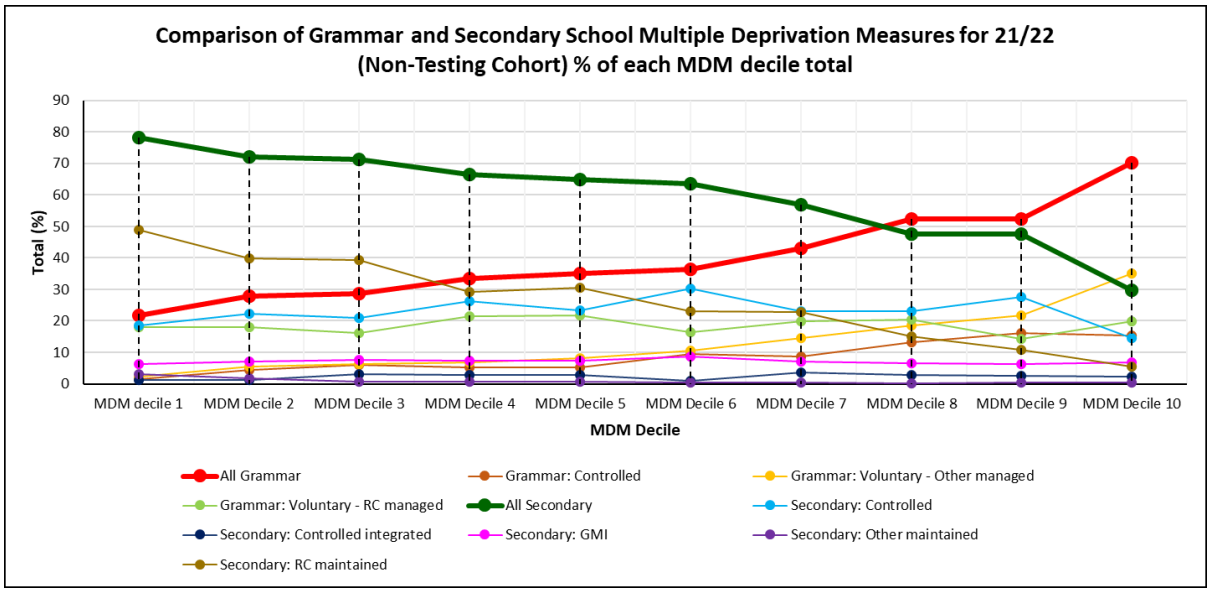


Figure 23. MDM Deciles % share of each decile total 21/22.

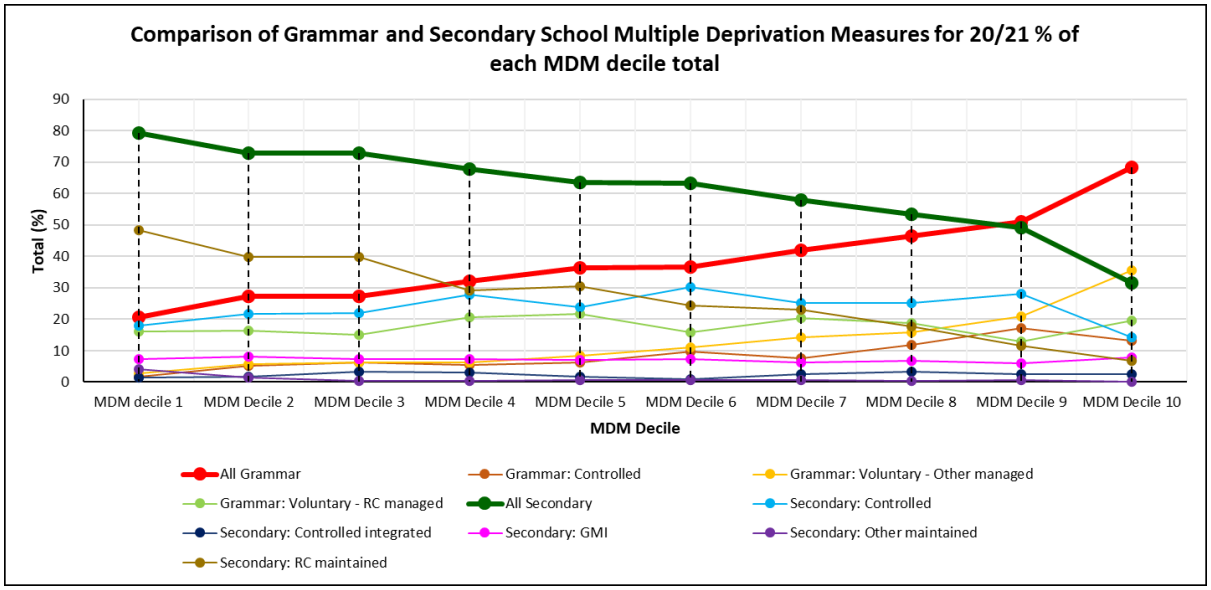


Figure 24. MDM Deciles % share of each decile total 20/21.

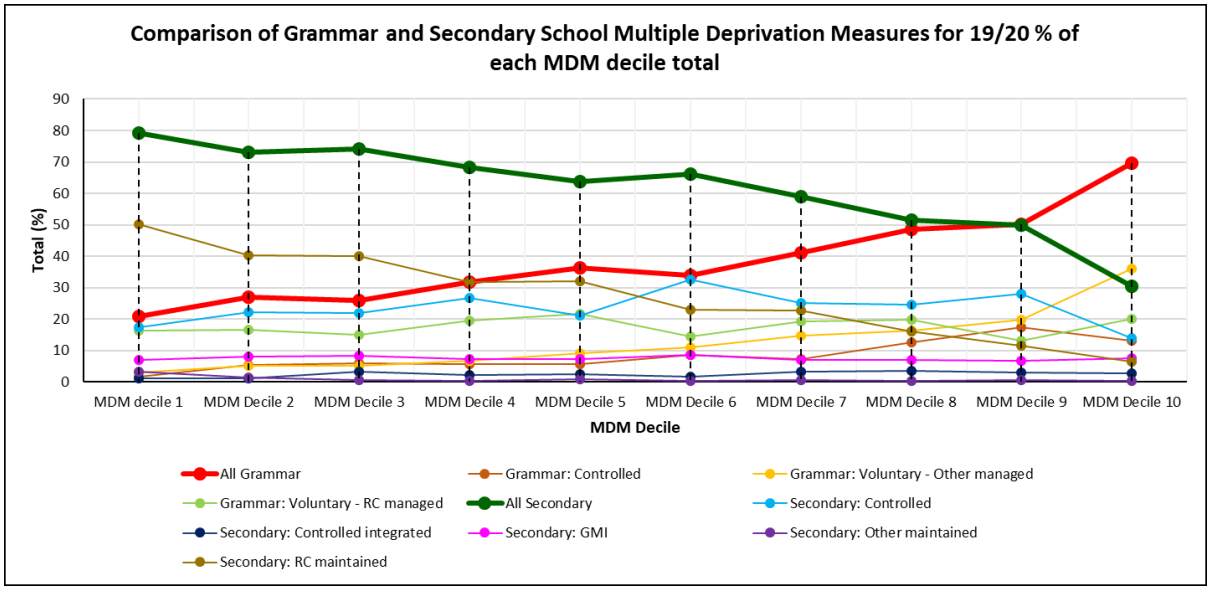


Figure 25. MDM Deciles % share of each decile total 19/20.

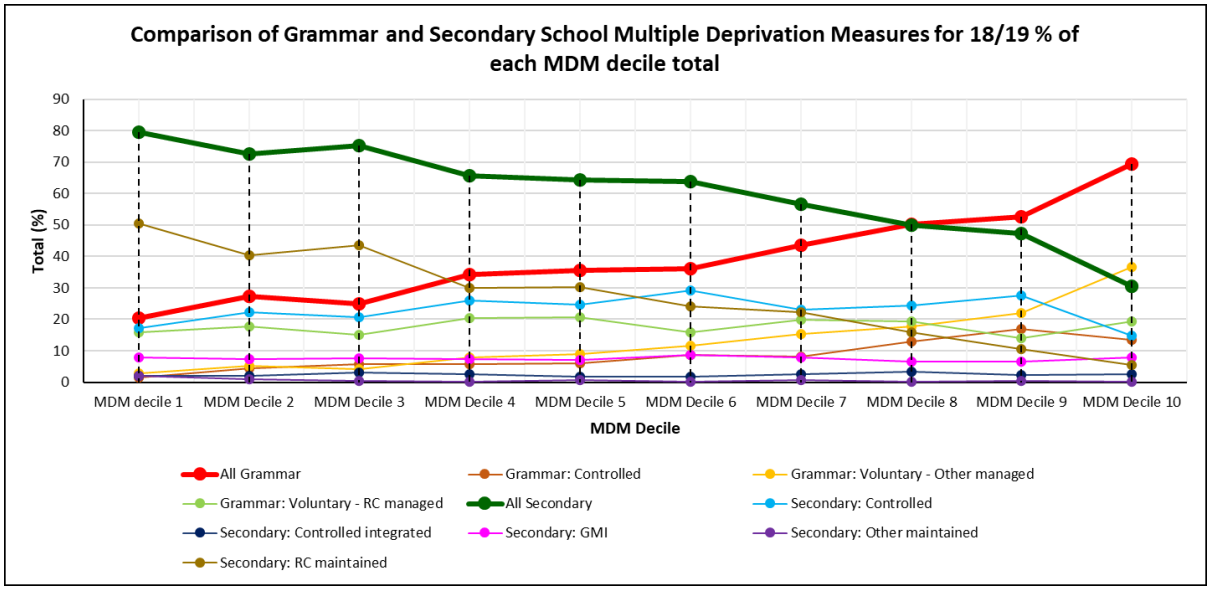


Figure 26. MDM Deciles % share of each decile total 18/19.

Table 32: MDM Deciles % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils.

21/22 (non-testing cohort)	MDM decile 1	MDM Decile 2	MDM Decile 3	MDM Decile 4	MDM Decile 5	MDM Decile 6	MDM Decile 7	MDM Decile 8	MDM Decile 9	MDM Decile 10
All Grammar	**2.1**	**2.8**	**2.9**	**3.7**	**4.0**	**3.7**	**4.6**	**5.2**	**4.7**	**5.5**
Grammar: Controlled	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.3	1.5	1.2
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.8
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	1.7	1.8	1.7	2.4	2.5	1.7	2.1	2.0	1.3	1.6
All Secondary	**7.5**	**7.2**	**7.3**	**7.4**	**7.3**	**6.4**	**6.1**	**4.7**	**4.3**	**2.3**
Secondary: Controlled	1.8	2.2	2.1	2.9	2.6	3.1	2.5	2.3	2.5	1.1
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2
Secondary: GMI	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.5
Secondary: Other maintained	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	4.7	4.0	4.0	3.3	3.5	2.3	2.4	1.5	1.0	0.4
Decile Total	**9.6**	**10.0**	**10.2**	**11.1**	**11.3**	**10.1**	**10.8**	**9.9**	**9.0**	**7.9**
Total (all pupils)	**99.8**									

20/21	MDM decile 1	MDM Decile 2	MDM Decile 3	MDM Decile 4	MDM Decile 5	MDM Decile 6	MDM Decile 7	MDM Decile 8	MDM Decile 9	MDM Decile 10
All Grammar	**2.0**	**2.7**	**2.6**	**3.6**	**4.1**	**3.7**	**4.5**	**4.9**	**4.7**	**5.1**
Grammar: Controlled	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.2	1.6	1.0
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.7	1.9	2.6
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	1.6	1.6	1.5	2.3	2.5	1.6	2.2	2.0	1.2	1.5

All Secondary	**7.7**	**7.1**	**7.1**	**7.6**	**7.3**	**6.5**	**6.2**	**5.6**	**4.5**	**2.3**
Secondary: Controlled	1.7	2.1	2.1	3.1	2.7	3.1	2.7	2.6	2.6	1.1
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2
Secondary: GMI	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6
Secondary: Other maintained	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	4.7	3.9	3.9	3.3	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.8	1.1	0.5
Decile Total	**9.7**	**9.8**	**9.7**	**11.2**	**11.4**	**10.2**	**10.7**	**10.5**	**9.2**	**7.5**
Total (all pupils)	**99.9**									

19/20	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**1.9**	**2.6**	**2.6**	**3.4**	**4.1**	**3.5**	**4.4**	**5.1**	**4.7**	**5.3**
Grammar: Controlled	0.1	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.8	1.3	1.6	1.0
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.7
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	1.5	1.6	1.5	2.1	2.4	1.5	2.1	2.1	1.2	1.5
All Secondary	**7.4**	**7.1**	**7.4**	**7.4**	**7.2**	**6.8**	**6.3**	**5.4**	**4.7**	**2.3**
Secondary: Controlled	1.6	2.2	2.2	2.9	2.4	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.6	1.1
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2
Secondary: GMI	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6
Secondary: Other maintained	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	4.7	3.9	4.0	3.4	3.6	2.4	2.4	1.7	1.1	0.5
Decile Total	**9.3**	**9.8**	**10.0**	**10.8**	**11.2**	**10.3**	**10.7**	**10.6**	**9.4**	**7.6**
Total (all pupils)	**99.8**									

18/19	**MDM decile 1**	**MDM Decile 2**	**MDM Decile 3**	**MDM Decile 4**	**MDM Decile 5**	**MDM Decile 6**	**MDM Decile 7**	**MDM Decile 8**	**MDM Decile 9**	**MDM Decile 10**
All Grammar	**2.0**	**2.6**	**2.5**	**3.7**	**4.1**	**3.8**	**4.7**	**5.2**	**4.6**	**5.2**
Grammar: Controlled	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.4	1.5	1.0
Grammar: Voluntary - Other managed	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.7
Grammar: Voluntary - RC managed	1.5	1.7	1.5	2.2	2.4	1.7	2.1	2.0	1.2	1.5
All Secondary	**7.7**	**7.0**	**7.6**	**7.2**	**7.4**	**6.6**	**6.1**	**5.2**	**4.2**	**2.3**
Secondary: Controlled	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.8	2.9	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.4	1.1
Secondary: Controlled integrated	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2
Secondary: GMI	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.6
Secondary: Other maintained	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary: RC maintained	4.9	3.9	4.4	3.3	3.5	2.5	2.4	1.7	0.9	0.4
Decile Total	**9.6**	**9.7**	**10.1**	**10.9**	**11.6**	**10.4**	**10.8**	**10.5**	**8.8**	**7.5**
Total (all pupils)	**99.8**									

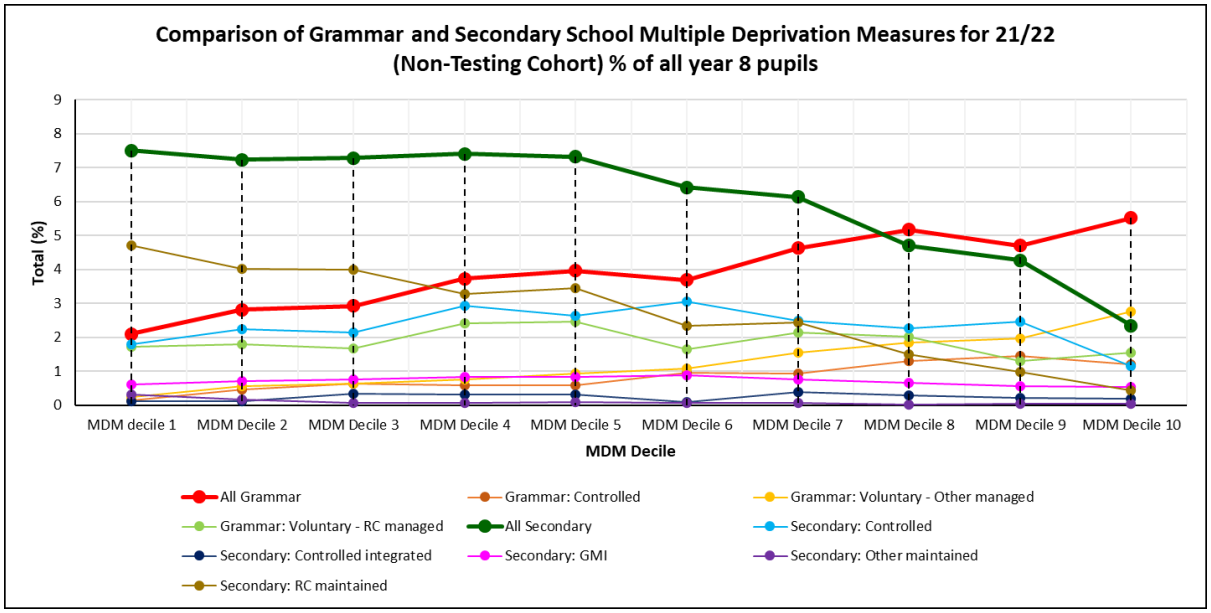


Figure 27. MDM Deciles % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils 21/22.

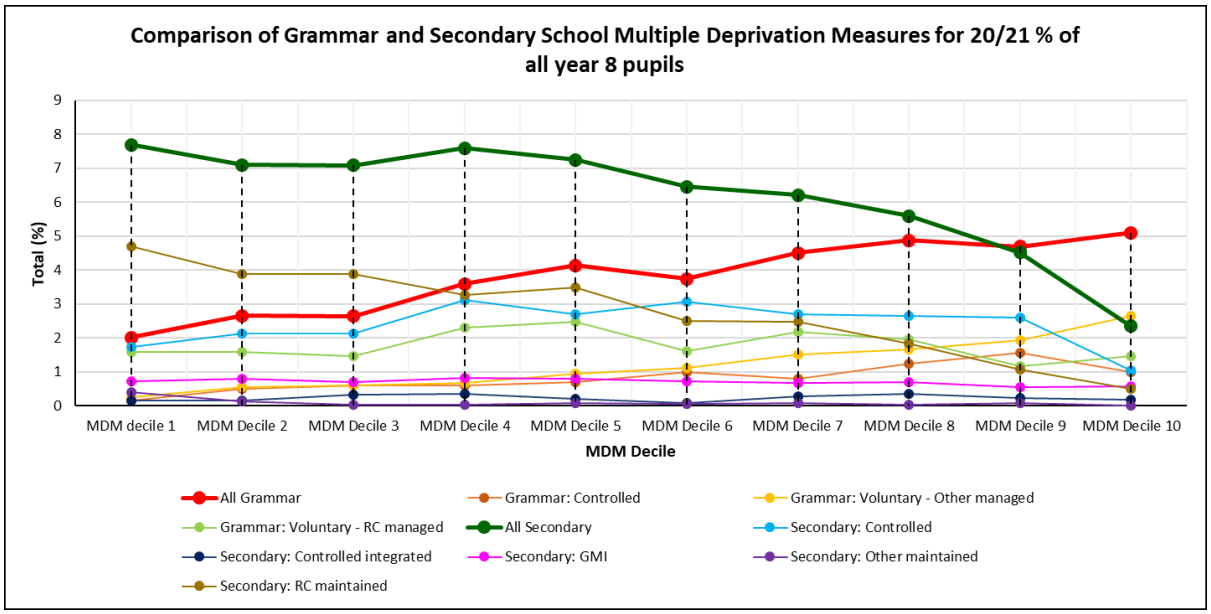


Figure 28. MDM Deciles % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils 20/21.

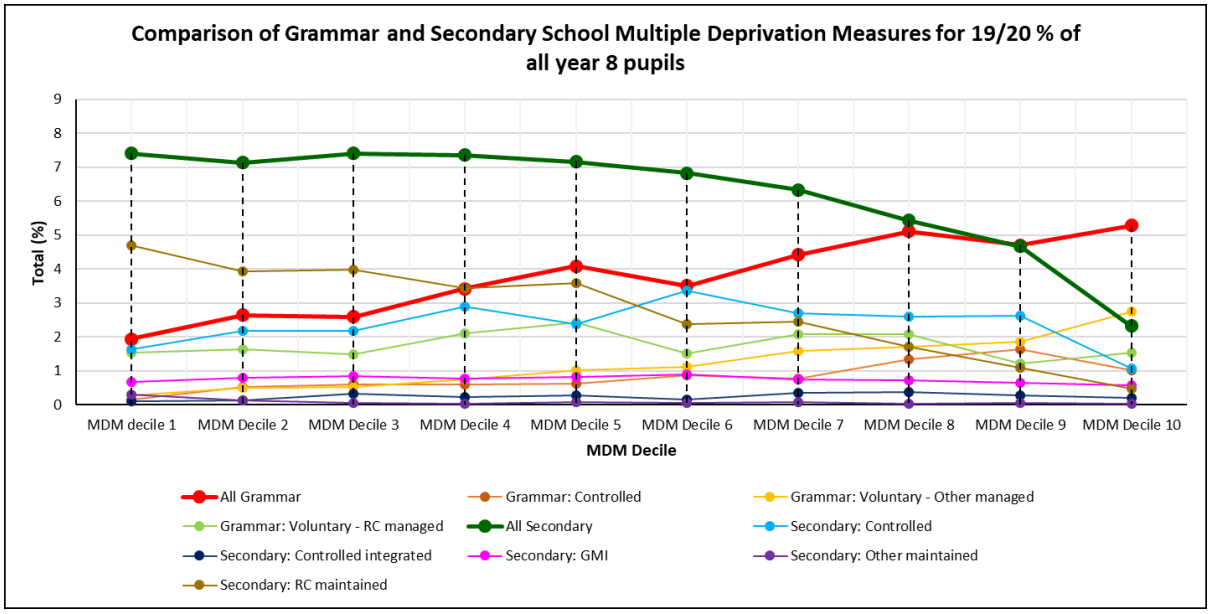


Figure 29. MDM Deciles % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils 19/20.

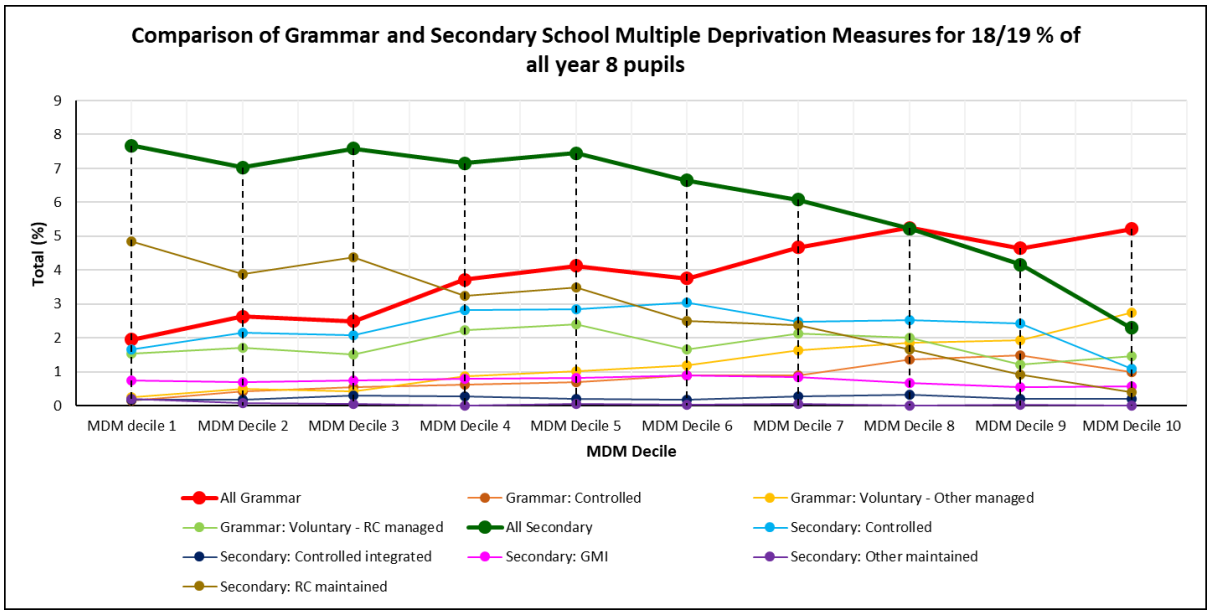


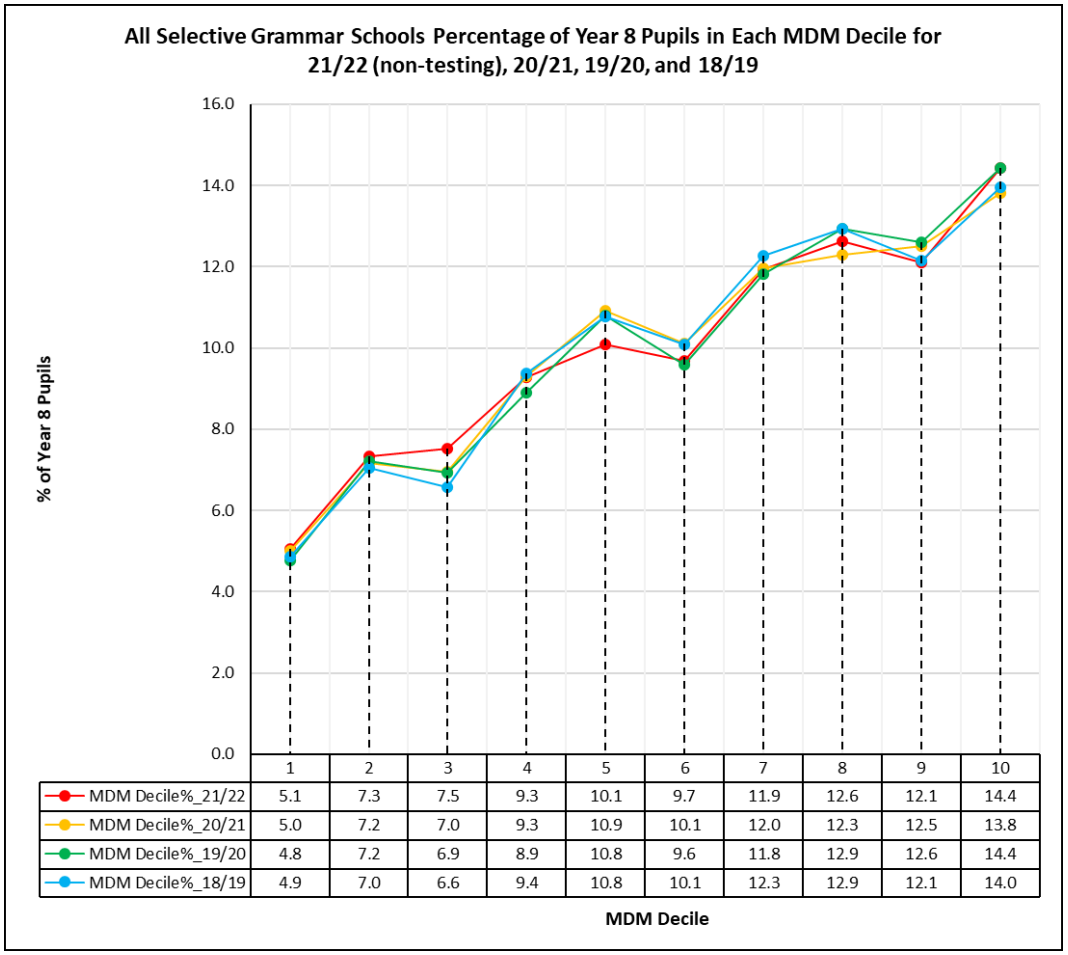
Figure 33. MDM Deciles % share of all secondary and grammar school pupils 18/19.

Table 33: MDM Deciles data error.

Year	21/22	20/21	19/20	18/19
MDM error (unknown addresses)	53	33	63	52
MDM error (unknown addresses) % (all pupils)	0.21	0.13	0.25	0.22

Percentage of year 8 pupils in each MDM Decile for grammar schools alone

The percentages of year 8 pupils in each MDM decile for grammar schools (in 21/22, 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19) are shown in Figure 31. Four-year average percentages are shown in Figure 32. As is shown, the profiles for grammar schools, in respect to percentages of year 8 pupils in each MDM decile, are broadly the same, with a positive trend towards the higher 'more well-off' deciles. In fact, for the past four years, grammar schools have admitted between 4.9% and 5.1% of year 8 pupils from the 1st (most deprived) decile, in contrast to between 13.8% and 14.4% from the 'most well-off' 10th decile. The 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th (top 5) deciles accounted for 60.7% of year 8 pupils admitted in 21/22, compared with 39.4% for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th (lowest 5) deciles in 21/22.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MDM Decile%_21/22	5.1	7.3	7.5	9.3	10.1	9.7	11.9	12.6	12.1	14.4
MDM Decile%_20/21	5.0	7.2	7.0	9.3	10.9	10.1	12.0	12.3	12.5	13.8
MDM Decile%_19/20	4.8	7.2	6.9	8.9	10.8	9.6	11.8	12.9	12.6	14.4
MDM Decile%_18/19	4.9	7.0	6.6	9.4	10.8	10.1	12.3	12.9	12.1	14.0

Figure 31. All Selective Grammar Schools Percentage of Year 8 Pupils in Each MDM Decile for 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19.

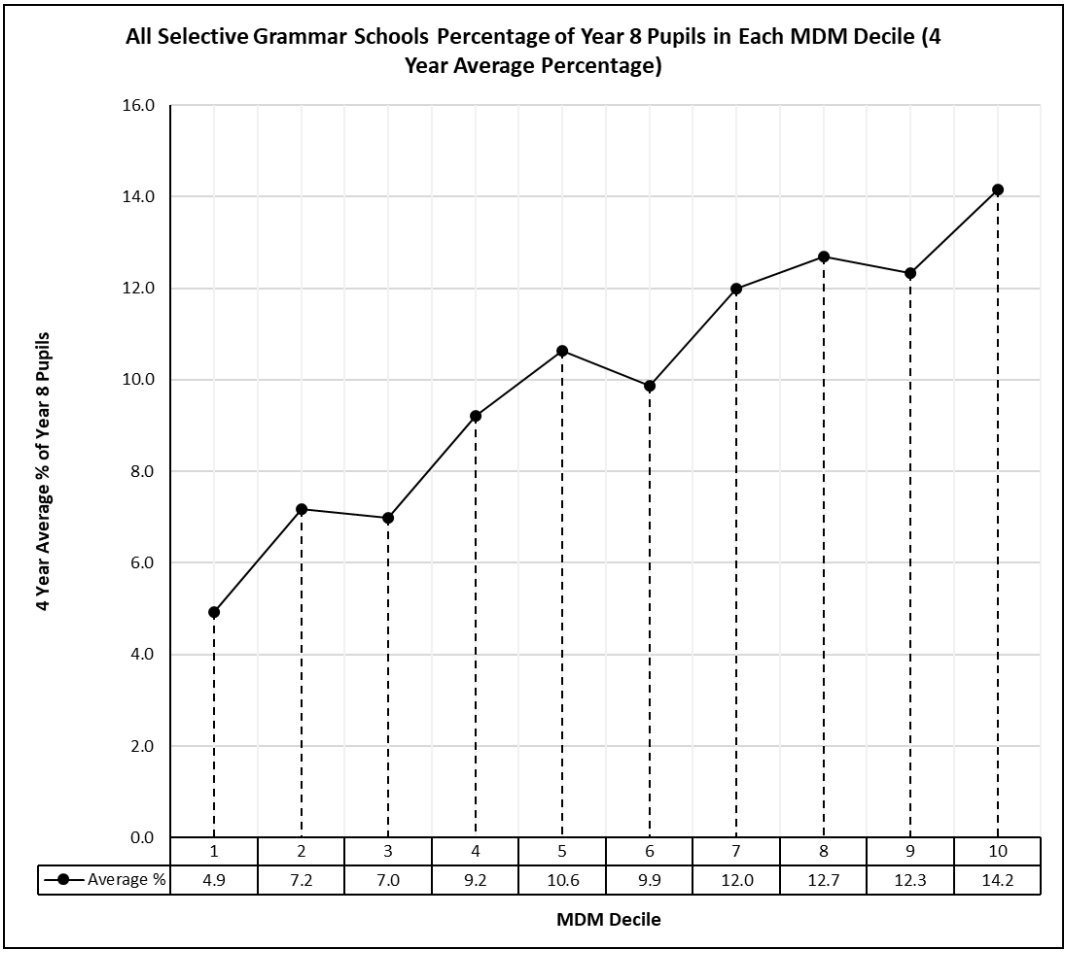
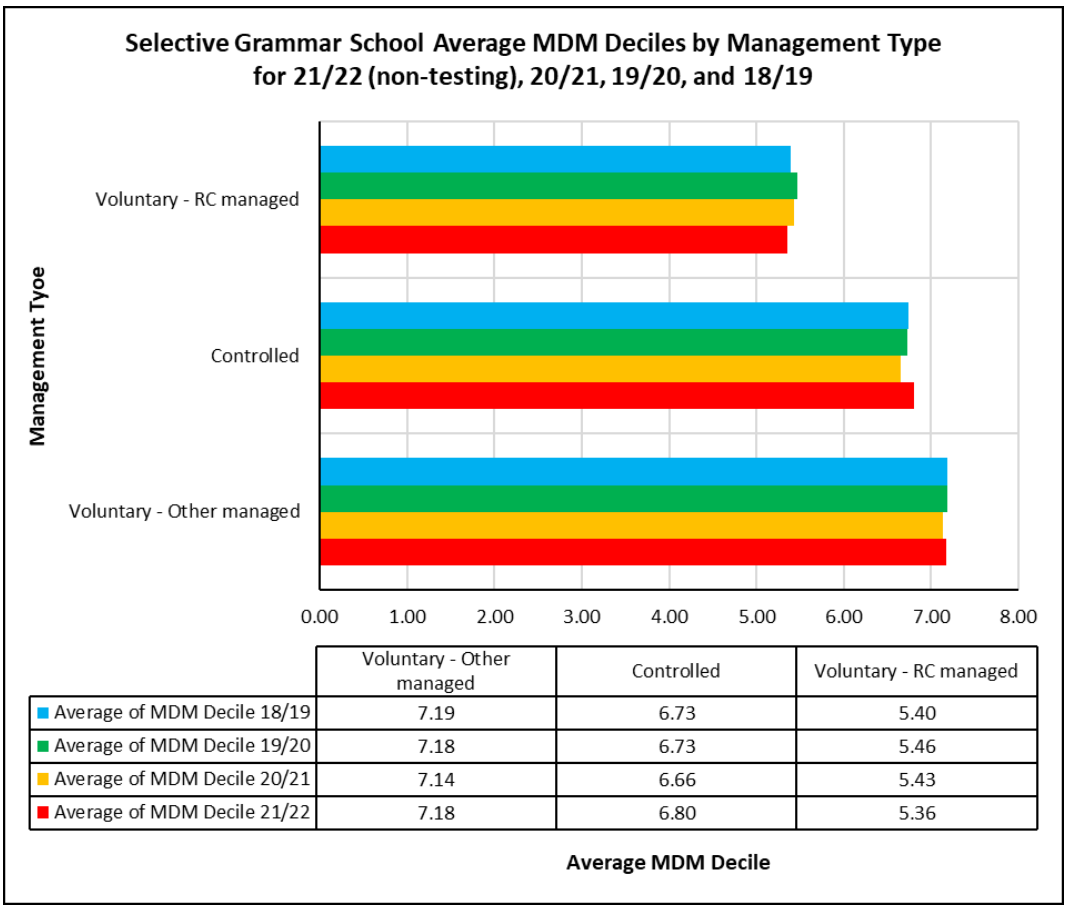


Figure 32. All Selective Grammar Schools Percentage of Year 8 Pupils in Each MDM Decile (4 Year Average Percentage).

Average MDM Deciles by grammar school management type

The average MDM deciles by grammar school management type, for the years 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19, are shown in Figure 33. Grammar schools with the voluntary – other managed type, have consistently the highest average MDM decile, reaffirming the positive trend towards pupils from less deprived areas (x=7.18, 7.14, 7.18, and 7.19 for 21/22, 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19, respectively). This is followed by the controlled management type, again consistent, across the four years. The voluntary – RC managed type has the lowest average MDM decile for selective grammar schools across all years, as shown. There was very little variation in MDM average across the four years, in respect to management types, and no discernible change in the non-testing year (21/22).



	Voluntary - Other managed	Controlled	Voluntary - RC managed
Average of MDM Decile 18/19	7.19	6.73	5.40
Average of MDM Decile 19/20	7.18	6.73	5.46
Average of MDM Decile 20/21	7.14	6.66	5.43
Average of MDM Decile 21/22	7.18	6.80	5.36

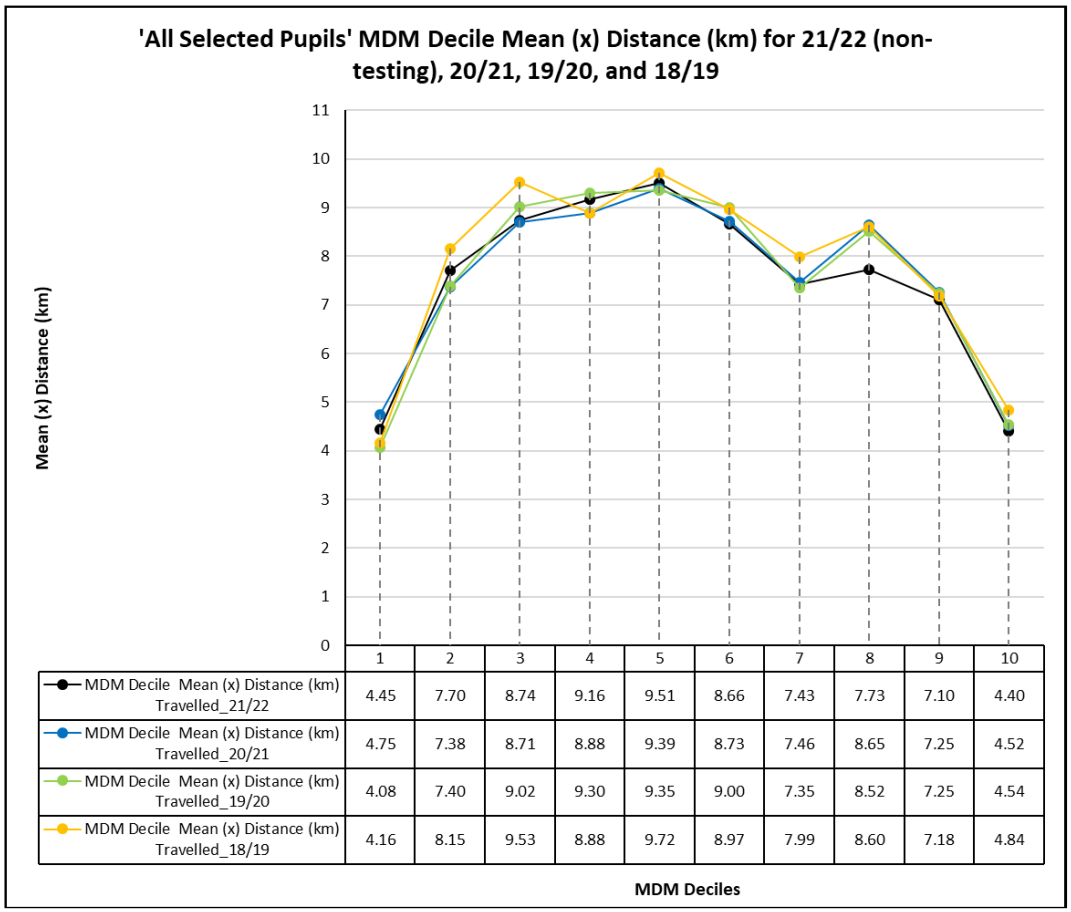
Figure 33. Average MDM deciles by selective school management type, for the years 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19.

Strand 3

The results for Northern Ireland selective grammar school (n=63) year 8 pupils home distances (as the crow flies) are presented in this section. The distances are analysed in respect to MDM deciles based on pupils' home locations. Furthermore, the distances are broken down by management type. The results are compared for the 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19 years.

Grammar school year 8 pupil mean distances across MDM Deciles

Figure 34. shows a breakdown of mean distances (km) across MDM deciles for grammar school year 8 pupil home locations (for 21/22, 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19). As shown, the resulting graph is non-linear, and almost follows a quadratic-shaped trend. This is similar across all four years. The 21/22 curve cuts through the curves for the previous three years. However, there is a drop in the 8th decile mean distance travelled (x=7.73km), compared with the previous three years (x=8.65km, x=8.52km, and x=8.6km, respectively). It appears that as the level of deprivation decreases, the pupils are travelling, on average, increasingly further to get to school, up to the 5th decile. After which, the average distance starts to decrease with further decreasing level of deprivation.

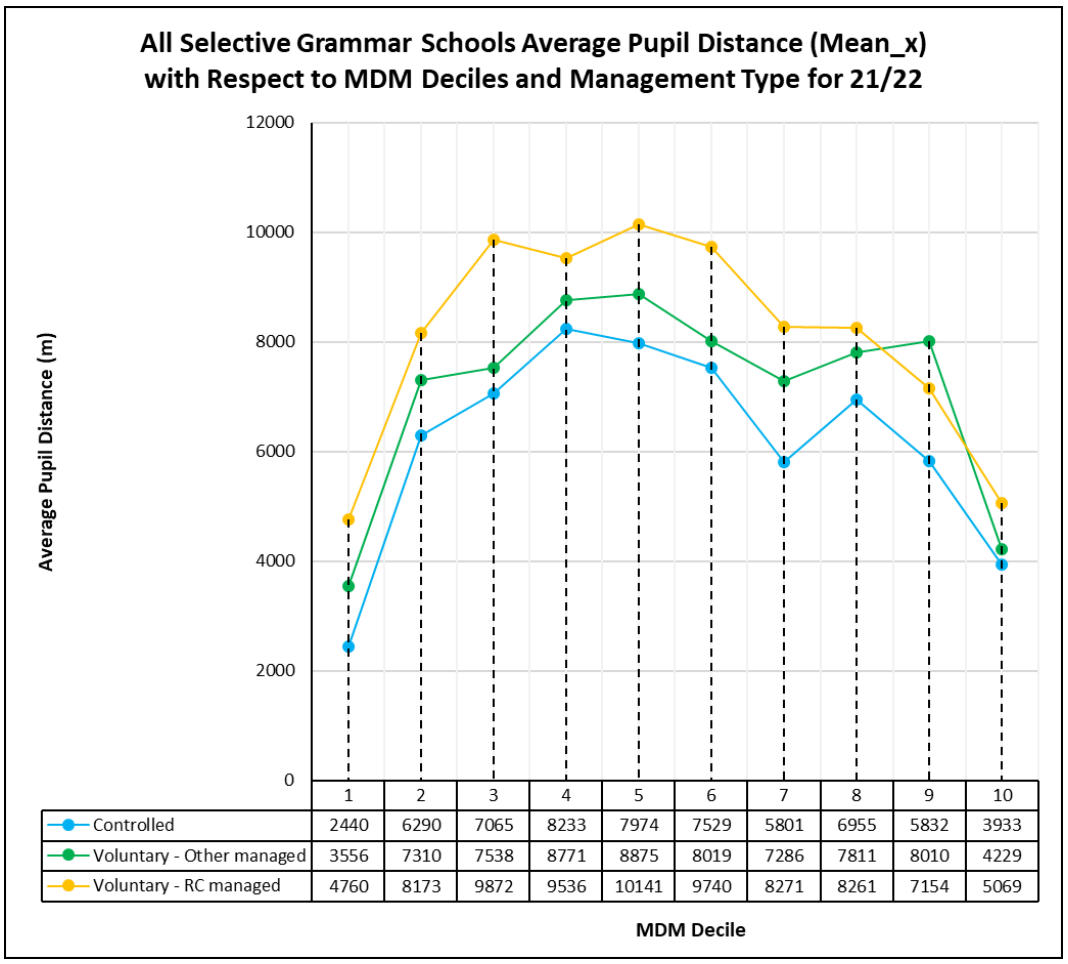


	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MDM Decile Mean (x) Distance (km) Travelled_21/22	4.45	7.70	8.74	9.16	9.51	8.66	7.43	7.73	7.10	4.40
MDM Decile Mean (x) Distance (km) Travelled_20/21	4.75	7.38	8.71	8.88	9.39	8.73	7.46	8.65	7.25	4.52
MDM Decile Mean (x) Distance (km) Travelled_19/20	4.08	7.40	9.02	9.30	9.35	9.00	7.35	8.52	7.25	4.54
MDM Decile Mean (x) Distance (km) Travelled_18/19	4.16	8.15	9.53	8.88	9.72	8.97	7.99	8.60	7.18	4.84

Figure 34. All selected year 8 pupils mean distances from grammar school with MDM deciles across the years 21/22 (non-testing), 20/21, 19/20, and 18/19.

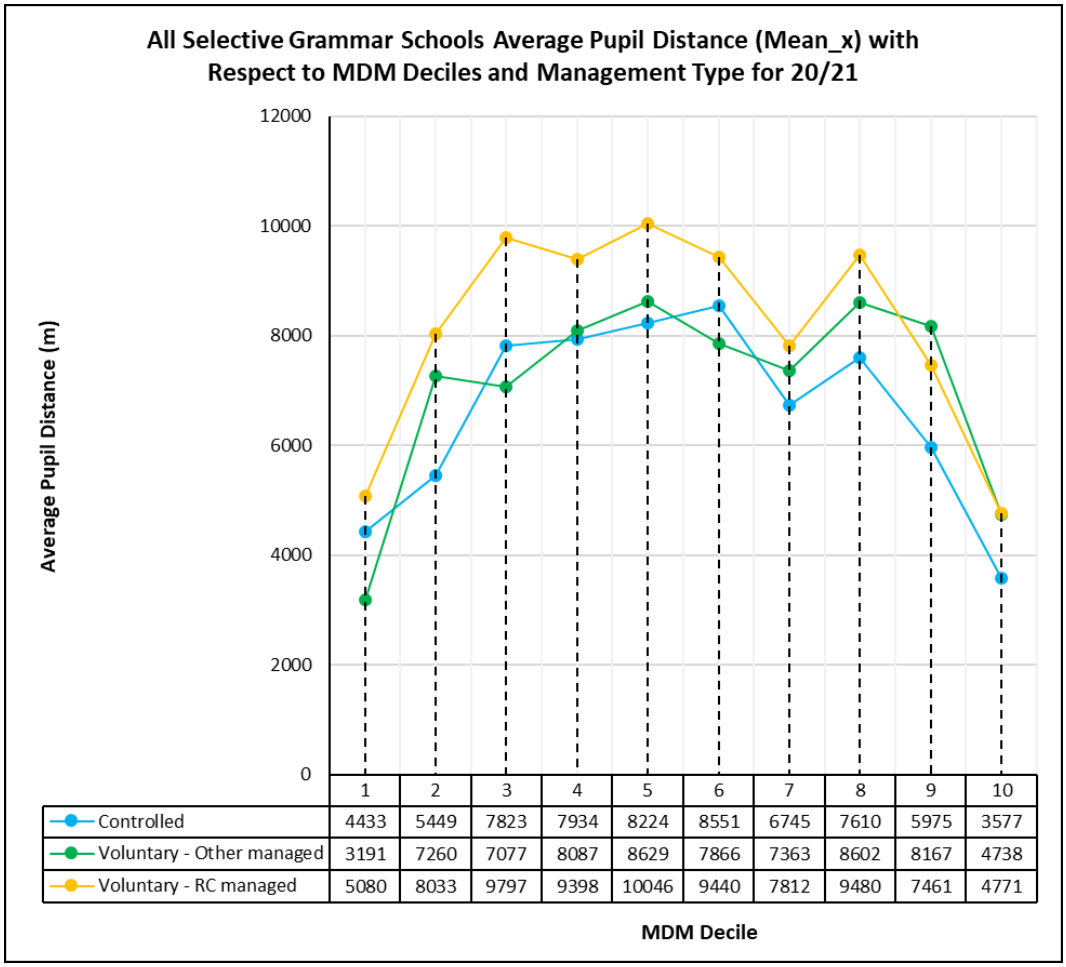
Mean year 8 pupil distances from grammar school by management type

A breakdown of mean year 8 pupil home distances (m) from grammar school by management type (for the four years) is shown in Figure 35 – 38. As illustrated, they almost follow a quadratic profile. However, voluntary – RC managed school pupils appear to consistently travel the furthest across deciles 1 – 8, and 10, for all years. There is some variation for other managed and controlled school pupils across the years, but generally, the voluntary – other managed type shows the second highest mean distances across most of the deciles for most years. The controlled management type, generally, shows the lowest mean distances, across all deciles for most years. Although, 20/21 is more variable for these two management types. The 9th decile is interesting as the other managed type consistently shows higher mean travel distances than RC managed.



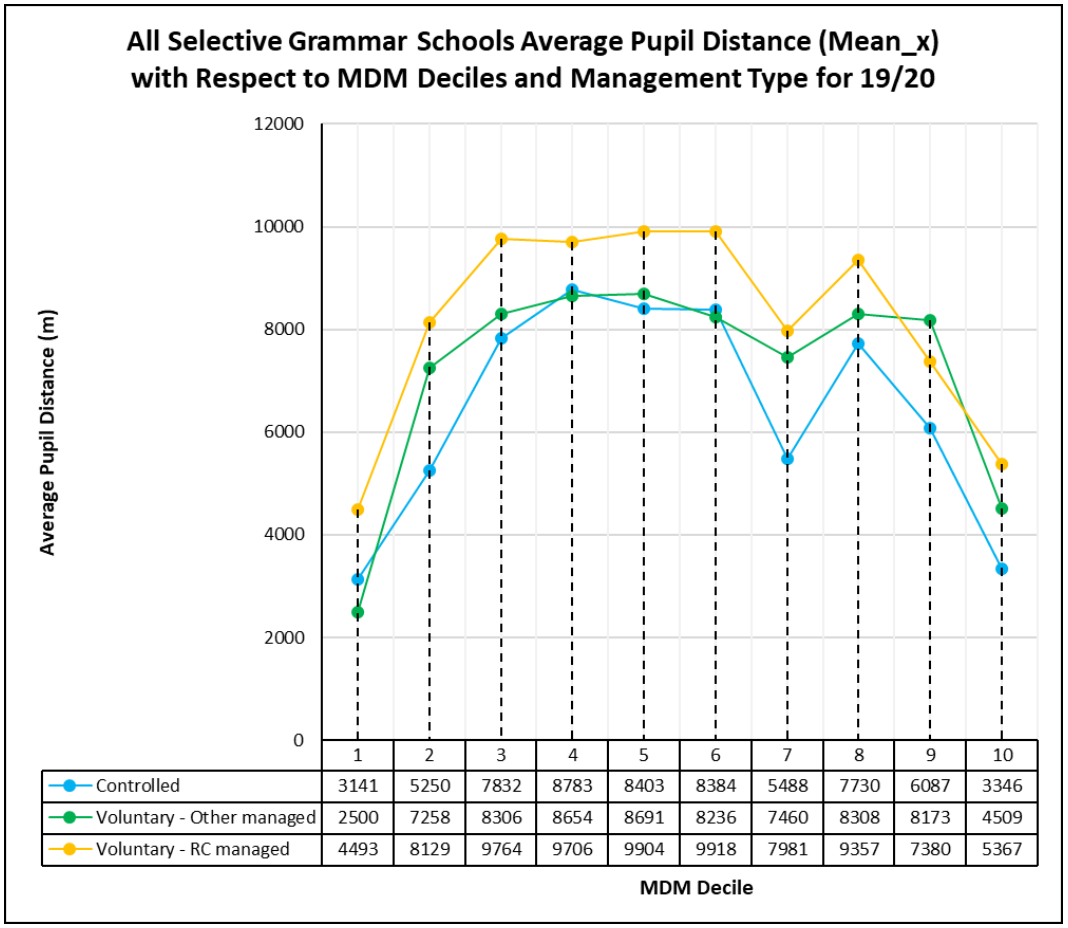
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Controlled	2440	6290	7065	8233	7974	7529	5801	6955	5832	3933
Voluntary - Other managed	3556	7310	7538	8771	8875	8019	7286	7811	8010	4229
Voluntary - RC managed	4760	8173	9872	9536	10141	9740	8271	8261	7154	5069

Figure 35. All selective grammar schools average year 8 pupil distance (mean_x) with respect to MDM deciles and management type for 21/22.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Controlled	4433	5449	7823	7934	8224	8551	6745	7610	5975	3577
Voluntary - Other managed	3191	7260	7077	8087	8629	7866	7363	8602	8167	4738
Voluntary - RC managed	5080	8033	9797	9398	10046	9440	7812	9480	7461	4771

Figure 36. All selective grammar schools average year 8 pupil distance (mean_x) with respect to MDM deciles and management type for 20/21.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Controlled	3141	5250	7832	8783	8403	8384	5488	7730	6087	3346
Voluntary - Other managed	2500	7258	8306	8654	8691	8236	7460	8308	8173	4509
Voluntary - RC managed	4493	8129	9764	9706	9904	9918	7981	9357	7380	5367

Figure 37. All selective grammar schools average year 8 pupil distance (mean_x) with respect to MDM deciles and management type for 19/20.

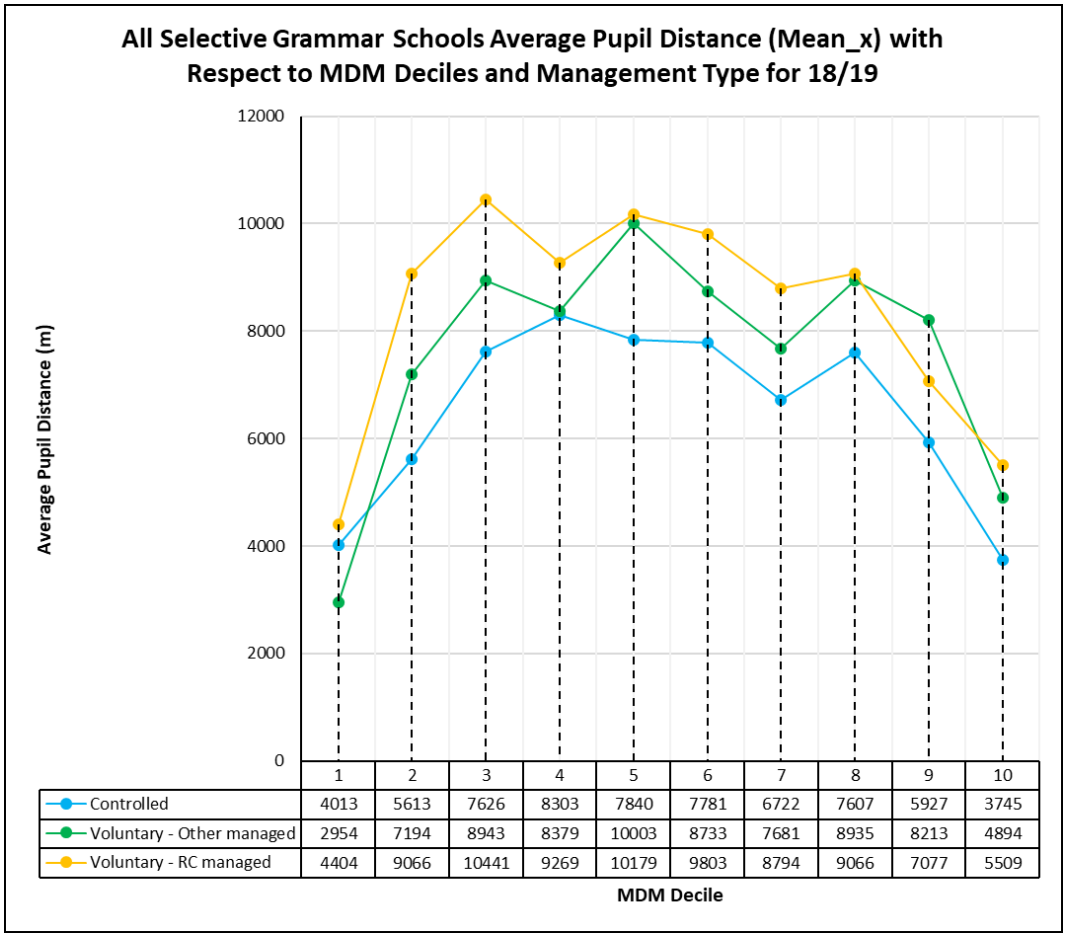


Figure 38. All selective grammar schools average year 8 pupil distance (mean_x) with respect to MDM deciles and management type for 18/19.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This quantitative study set out to explore the learning from the unique circumstances created by the 'non-testing' year of post-primary transfer in Northern Ireland (for admission into post-primary schools in September 2021), when AQE and GL tests were postponed and eventually cancelled as a result of Covid-19 public health concerns. The research aimed to critically examine the range of entrance criteria used by grammar schools in the non-testing year; to assess the resulting demographic composition of the pupil cohort accepted into post-primary schools; and to consider the impact on the distance travelled to school by the pupils accepted into post-primary schools.

The study is situated within a highly polarised policy debate in Northern Ireland (as in other jurisdictions), and has formed the subject of a series of highly critical reports published over the past quarter century (e.g. Gallagher & Smith, 2000; Gardner & Cowan, 2005; Jerrim & Simms, 2019, McMurray, 2020, Harris et al, 2021, Purdy et al, 2021, Brown et al, 2021; Demie, 2021; Pivotal, 2022; Hughes & Loader, 2022). These reports have frequently highlighted issues of educational inequity and social justice, and the detrimental impact of testing on children's emotional health and wellbeing. By contrast, proponents of academic selection argue that academic selection can promote social mobility (Brown et al., 2021) and point to the high attainment of pupils attending grammar schools and their higher rates of progression to university (Mansfield, 2019). There have been few, if any, recent developments in this policy arena which is notable for the associated policy stagnation, often heated debate, inter-party disagreement, and a widespread sense of frustration among many parents at the political impasse and the resulting impact on children (Black & McHugh, 2021).

This research involved three key strands. In summary, Strand One highlighted that individual grammar schools were obliged to 'have regard to' but not necessarily to follow to the letter DE's recommended (though non-statutory) guidance concerning admissions criteria (DE, 2016/2020). When the full range of 34 different admissions criteria (beyond the requirement of residency in Northern Ireland at the time of admission) were analysed to assess their frequency and weighted ranking, the results showed that the five highest ranking criteria were (in descending order of priority): having an older sibling already at the school; having already registered for the AQE/GL tests in that year; being the eldest/first/only child in the family; having a sibling who was previously enrolled at the school; and attending a listed feeder primary school. A total of 60 of the 63 grammar schools employed entirely non-academic criteria, the 3 outliers preferring to refer back to commercial (GL Assessment) standardised results from Progress Tests in English (PTE) and Progress Tests in Maths (PTM) held two years previously.

This followed instruction from the Minister of Education, Peter Weir MLA, in his correspondence to post-primary principals on 20 January 2021, in which he reiterated his earlier instruction (from 12 January 2021) that Boards of Governors should ensure that their criteria are "robust" and could stand up to legal challenge:

> "In light of the cancellation of entrance tests, there may be greater risk of legal challenge to schools' admissions criteria this year and, as a result, I would like to take this opportunity to remind schools of the advice, contained in my letter of 12 January 2021, that Boards of Governors (BoGs) should satisfy themselves that their

> admissions criteria are sufficiently robust to enable them to prioritise children for admission up to their approved admissions number. BoGs may wish to take legal advice to satisfy themselves of the robustness of their criteria.
>
> In particular, I would also wish to remind schools considering using academic selection within admissions criteria that in the absence of the AQE and GL assessments they should ensure that any alternative approaches are robust, are supported by legal advice and that any process adopted can clearly and objectively select applicants." (Weir, 2021, p1-2).

The DE guidance (DE, 2016/2020) makes it clear that grammar school Boards of Governors have a high level of autonomy in terms of deciding which criteria to use. It notes that:

> The criteria are not subject to the Department's approval but the Department provides recommended, and not recommended, criteria which all Boards of Governors are required by law to have regard to." (DE, 2016/2020, §9.2, p.13)

In reality, while the guidance recommends certain criteria, which include Free School Meal entitlement and proximity to the nearest suitable school, and lists non-recommended criteria such as familial criteria beyond 'sibling currently attending the school' and 'preference criteria', grammar schools exercised their right to 'have regard to' the criteria but then to define the criteria as they saw fit. There were therefore few instances of schools which prioritised Free School Meal entitlement (n=3 as first criterion, n=29 as any criterion) or living closest to the school (n=0 as first criterion, n=9 as any criterion). By contrast there were many examples of grammar schools which prioritised non-sibling familial connections (n=2 as first criterion, n=36 as any criterion) or preference criteria (n=7 as first criterion, n=22 as any criterion).

Further analysis of the additional information provided to parents highlights frequent mention by grammar schools of their strong and enduring commitment to academic selection as the principal method of entry to their school, and of their intention to revert to academic selection in subsequent years. As one school explained "Those who would normally apply to be admitted are encouraged to continue to do so". Some grammar schools went further and referred to their commitment to protecting the established (academic) ethos of the school and, as one school outlined, confirmed their desire "to accept boys who are academically suited for the type of education it offers and whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the philosophy and aims of the school". Most grammar schools (n=39/63) also noted the level of capital, voluntary and other fees which would apply if their child gained admission to the school. The relevant amount varied considerably between schools, with most (of those which mentioned fees) charging a capital fee and many of the voluntary grammar schools referring (using a range of terminology) to additional voluntary contributions, often offering reductions for second and subsequent children attending the school. Total fees (where reported) were most commonly in the region of £75 to £150 per child per annum (excluding two much higher outliers).

The findings from Strands 2 and 3 of this study confirm that, if it was indeed the aim of grammar school Boards of Governors to preserve the essential character of the 2021-22 year 8 cohort (in line with previous year 8 cohorts), then this aim was met in many respects. With almost all grammar schools employing non-academic criteria, one might have expected a more varied demographic profile when compared with preceding year groups. This was not the case however, and this study (based on disaggregated DE cohort data) has shown that changes to the demographic composition of the non-testing year 8 cohort have been minimal in many

respects and, if anything, numerically and therefore financially advantageous to grammar schools in the short term with slightly higher admissions (280 more pupils and a 1.3% increase in the share of the year 8 cohort in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21).

There was a slight increase in the percentage of children admitted to grammar schools with Free School Meal Entitlement (up 0.7% from 15.1% to 15.8% of the year 8 grammar school cohort), a slight fall in the percentage of children with special educational needs at stages 1-5 of the Code of Practice (down 0.4% from 6.0% to 5.6%), no change in the percentage of children with statements at Stage 5 of the SEN Code of Practice (1.3%), and a slight fall (0.2%) in the percentage of newcomer children (down from 1.3% to 1.1% of the year 8 grammar school cohort). The percentage of girls rose slightly from 48.7% in 2020/21 to 49.7% in 2021/22, and the percentage of boys fell slightly from 51.26% in 2020/21 to 50.3% in 2021/22. Figures for children in care (or 'looked after children') were so low (<5 in every grammar school) that a comparison could not be made, while, similarly, the figures for ethnicity included too many unreported values or figures <5 to allow for reliable comparisons to be drawn.

Similarly, the changes in terms of MDM decile composition of the grammar school cohort were negligible when the non-testing year was compared to the three previous years. It is clear, that, to all intents and purposes, the demographic make-up of the 2021/22 year 8 cohort that has been admitted in the absence of AQE and GL tests, is almost identical to previous year groups.

Moreover, Strand 3, which examined the distance travelled to school by the 2021/22 year 8 cohort has equally shown no notable differences when compared with the three previous years of post-primary transfer: those who are most deprived and least deprived seem to travel least far to school, suggesting perhaps that those who are most deprived choose (predominantly non-grammar) schools closest to them, thus reducing travel costs to a minimum, while those who are wealthiest are perhaps able to afford houses close to the (predominantly grammar) schools of their choice. Pupils transferring to Catholic grammars travel on average further to attend school compared to pupils transferring to controlled and non-Catholic voluntary grammar schools. This is undoubtedly an area where further research is needed.

However, while there has been little change in the demographic composition of the year 8 cohorts transferring to grammar and non-grammar schools in the non-testing year, the data reveal very significant and consistent differences in the pupil cohorts entering year 8 in grammar schools compared to non-grammar schools. For instance, the data for the non-testing year 8 cohort show that only 15.8% of the pupils admitted to grammar school were entitled to Free School Meals, compared to 39% of the pupils admitted to non-grammar schools. Furthermore, it can be seen that only 20.8% of all 2021/22 year 8 pupils entitled to Free School Meals were in grammar schools while 79.2% were in non-grammar schools. This 4:1 ratio has changed little over the past 4 years.

In terms of special educational needs, the picture is similar. This study has found that 5.6% of the year 8 grammar school cohort in 2021/22 had special educational needs (Stages 1-5 of the Code of Practice) and only 1.3% were statemented (Stage 5). This compares to 25.2% of the year 8 non-grammar school cohort at Stages 1-5 and 7.5% with statements (Stage 5). Excluding special schools, this means that 87.4% of all the children with special educational needs (at Stages 1-5) transferred to non-grammar schools compared to just 12.6% to grammar schools, representing a ratio of 7:1.

While the numbers are smaller, there is a similar and consistent disparity in the post-primary destination of newcomer children in Northern Ireland. In 2021/22, 1.1% of the grammar school year 8 cohort were newcomer children compared to 5.8% of the non-grammar school year 8 cohort, representing a ratio of over 5:1. This means that 89% of all newcomer children in the mainstream year 8 cohort (grammar + non-grammar) were in non-grammar schools.

Finally, the detailed analysis of the MDM decile data highlights a consistent pattern where grammar school intakes are skewed towards the higher (less deprived) MDM deciles and non-grammar school intakes are skewed towards the lower (more deprived) MDM deciles. By way of example, for the 2021/22 year 8 cohort, just 20% of the grammar school intake came from the lowest three MDM deciles compared to 36% of the non-grammar school intake. Similarly, 39.2% of the 2021/22 year 8 grammar school cohort came from the top three (least deprived) MDM deciles, compared to just 18.7% of the non-grammar cohort.

For the first time, this study has however highlighted important differences in the MDM profile between different grammar school management types, with Roman Catholic managed grammar schools consistently showing a much more evenly distributed spread of MDM decile intake when compared to controlled and voluntary grammar schools. The reasons for this also merit further exploration but are also beyond the scope of this study.

There are of course limitations to this research study and a resulting need for further research:

- This was a purely quantitative study which examined admissions criteria and a range of statistical data provided by the Education Authority and/or the Department of Education. While informative, the data provided was generally at a cohort level, rather than on a school or individual level. There were, for instance, many instances where counts were <5 and so could not be included. This meant inevitably that, in the case of numbers of Looked After Children, for instance, reliable comparisons cannot be drawn.
- The analysis presented the full list of admissions criteria published by each grammar school but did not report how many of the criteria were actually used by each grammar school to select the pupils for entry. For instance, some grammar schools may have used fewer or more criteria than others. This information is not publicly available, though would be held by individual grammar schools, and would merit further research.
- The scope of this particular research was limited to the quantitative investigation presented. Moving forward, there is a pressing need for more qualitative research into the different perspectives and lived experiences of those most closely impacted by the non-testing year, especially the primary and post-primary schools (principals, teachers and governors), DE policy-makers, parents and of course the children themselves at the very heart of the process. For instance, it would be interesting to explore the extent to which parents were influenced in their selection of post-primary school by the level of fees charged and the distance to travel; how many children received private tutoring; and, the experience and perspectives of grammar school Boards of Governors who were required to respond quickly to a fast-changing public health context.
- It would also be important to ascertain the attainment levels of the year 8 cohort in 2021/22 (grammar and non-grammar), using school-level data (where available and in the absence of system-level data) to explore whether there were any attainment differences in the non-testing cohort as a result of the application of non-academic criteria by almost all grammar schools.

- Finally, longitudinal research is needed to follow this unique cohort of children through the next few years, tracking their attainment but also, importantly, examining and supporting their emotional health and wellbeing.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Academic selection remains one of the most divisive and contentious educational and political debates in Northern Ireland. This study has uniquely explored the very particular circumstances and impact of the non-testing year of post-primary transfer, and has revealed that, the cohort which transferred into year 8 of Northern Ireland's grammar schools in 2021-22 was very similar to previous year groups in terms of its demographics. However, it is not possible to say (in the absence of system wide attainment data) whether, academically, the cohort is also similar to previous cohorts. While grammar school Boards of Governors were clearly in an unenviable position of trying to respond quickly to a fast-moving set of public health messages and instructions from DE, the results of this study highlight that their priority was clear: to maintain the academic character and ethos of their schools, and to arrive at an entry cohort as similar as possible to what might have been achieved through testing. This study has revealed that grammar schools also exercised their right to develop their own admissions criteria (as in previous years) which were not subject to the Department's approval. The legitimacy of such a system in which grammar schools may 'have regard to' but effectively ignore Departmental guidance has to be questioned.

Further fundamental questions must be posed as to the validity of a selective education system which, as this study has highlighted, is characterised by stark differences in the background of those pupils in year 8 transferring (each year) to grammar and non-grammar schools in Northern Ireland. This study has highlighted for the first time the huge disparity in terms of the demographic profile, and in particular, the low percentage of pupils from more socially deprived backgrounds (as measured by the MDM decile) represented in grammar compared to non-grammar schools. Additionally, and interestingly, this study has also highlighted important variations between the MDM profile of children transferring to the different management types of grammar schools (with Catholic voluntary grammars showing the most even spread of MDM decile intake). It has also confirmed stark differences in terms of the relative family income of children attending grammar and non-grammar schools (as measured by the percentage of children entitled to Free School Meals), their respective learning support needs (as measured by the relative percentages of children on the special educational needs register and with statements), and in terms of the ratio of newcomer children in grammar and non-grammar schools. Across each of these criteria, grammar schools consistently report a much smaller proportion of children compared to non-grammar schools.

The social composition of grammar schools thus remains very positively skewed towards children from more affluent postcodes, while the reverse applies to non-grammar schools. This broad pattern has been highlighted elsewhere in terms of the percentage of children with Free School Meals at grammar and non-grammar schools, but this level of granular detail based on MDM profiles (and including differences by school management type) has been hitherto unreported.

This study thus confirms that we have a grammar school sector in Northern Ireland which, consistently, has very few children from the most socially deprived areas, very few children entitled to Free School Meals, very few children with Special Educational Needs and very few newcomer children. There are, for instance in the 2021/22 year 8 cohort, 4 times as many children with Free School Meal entitlement, 7 times as many children with special educational

needs and 5 times as many newcomer children in non-grammar schools compared to grammar schools. Consequently, there is evidence to support the claim that in Northern Ireland it is the non-grammar sector which has to do most of the 'heavy lifting' in terms of meeting the often complex and demanding social and learning needs of a much more diverse cohort of children.

In conclusion, the findings of this study must raise fundamental questions regarding the future of a selective education system which is characterised by such consistently stark differences in the social and demographic background of those pupils in year 8 transferring to grammar and non-grammar schools in Northern Ireland. It is our sincere hope that this fresh data will help unlock the current policy paralysis and encourage evidence-based discussion among all interested parties (politicians, policy-makers, school leaders, parents and children) around the future of post-primary transfer in Northern Ireland.

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