

Devon Education Forum

Inclusion & Learning Report

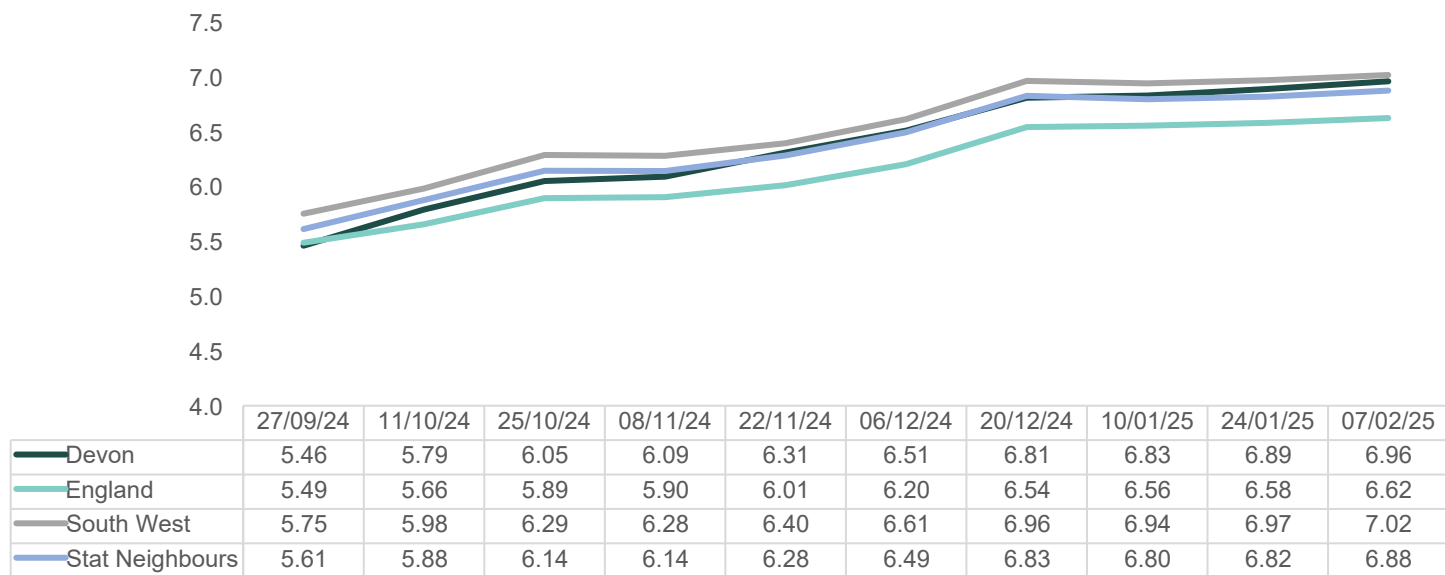
February 2025



Devon schools overall absence – year to date

- Overall absence rates continue to rise slightly, both in Devon and nationally.
- Devon’s overall absence rate continues to be slightly higher than nationally. Devon’s rate was on average 0.2 percentage points higher in the autumn term and 0.3 percentage points higher in the spring term.
- For week ending 07/02/25, Devon’s absence rate was 6.96% compared to 6.62% nationally. Devon’s rate is slightly lower than regionally and close to statistical neighbours.

Overall absence rates - all schools



Please note:

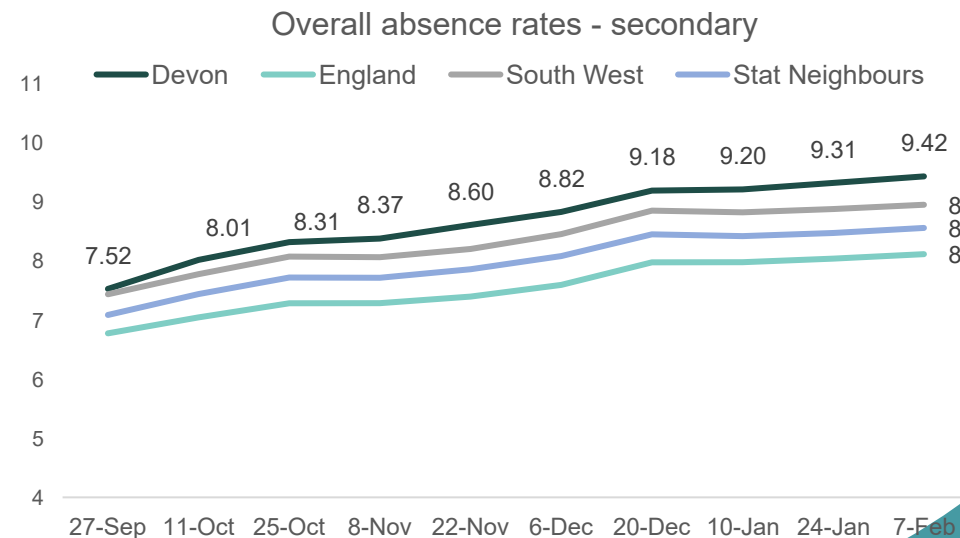
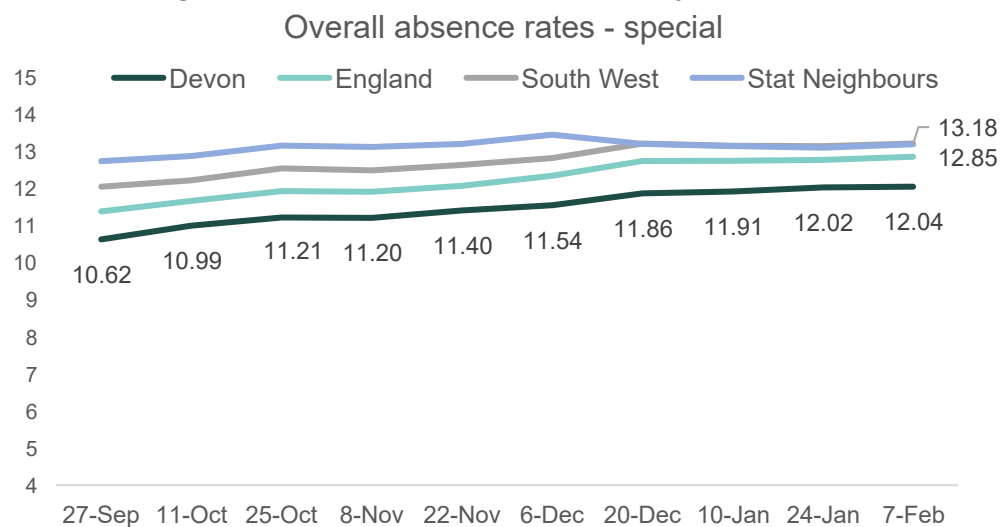
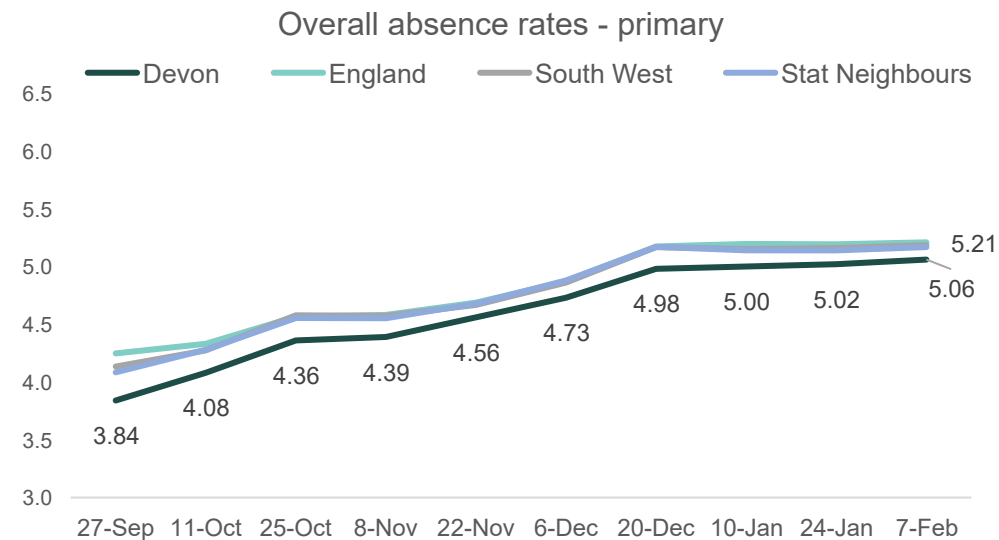
Benchmark rates are based on the DfE fortnightly attendance publications, where the DfE advise response rates vary.

Due to missing data for some Devon schools in these publications, Devon rates are based on local data sets which include all schools.

The next issue will focus solely on spring term absences

Overall absence rates by school phase – year to date

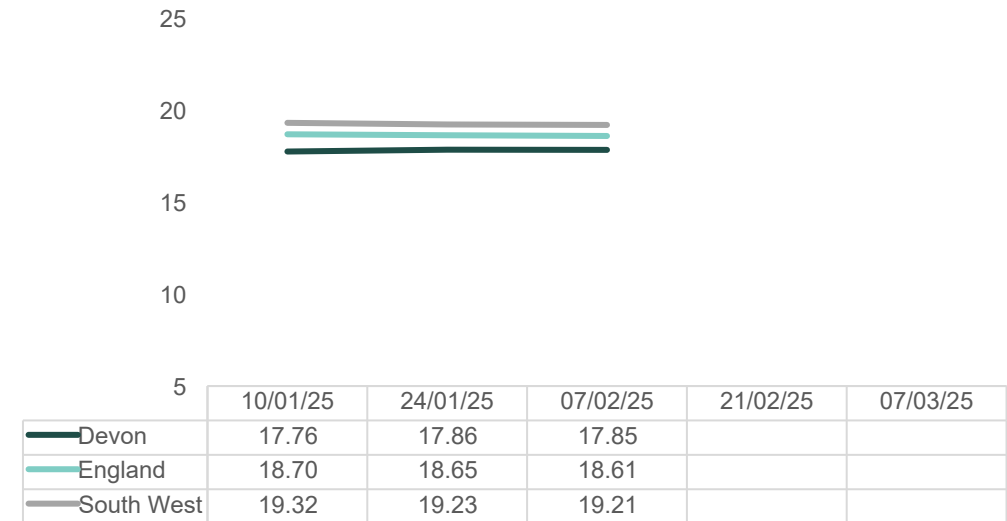
- Devon primary schools have lower absence rates than nationally, regionally and statistical neighbours. Devon’s absence rate is on average 0.2 percentage points lower than nationally.
- Devon secondary schools have higher absence rates than nationally, regionally and statistical neighbours. Devon is on average 1.1 percentage point higher than nationally. (autumn term average was 1.1 percentage point higher, but spring is 1.3 percentage points higher).
- Devon special schools have lower rates than nationally, regionally and statistical neighbours. Devon is on average 0.7 percentage points lower than nationally.



Devon schools persistent absence – year to date

- Persistent absence rates have now been published by the DfE so benchmarks are available for the spring term.
- Devon’s persistent absence rates for the spring term are lower than nationally and regionally. No overall rates are available for statistical neighbours.
- For week ending 07/02/25 Devon’s persistent absence rate was 17.85% compared to 18.61% nationally and 19.23% regionally.

Persistent absence rates - all schools



note: Stat Neighbours data not available as DfE have not published overall PA rates for combined primary, secondary & special schools

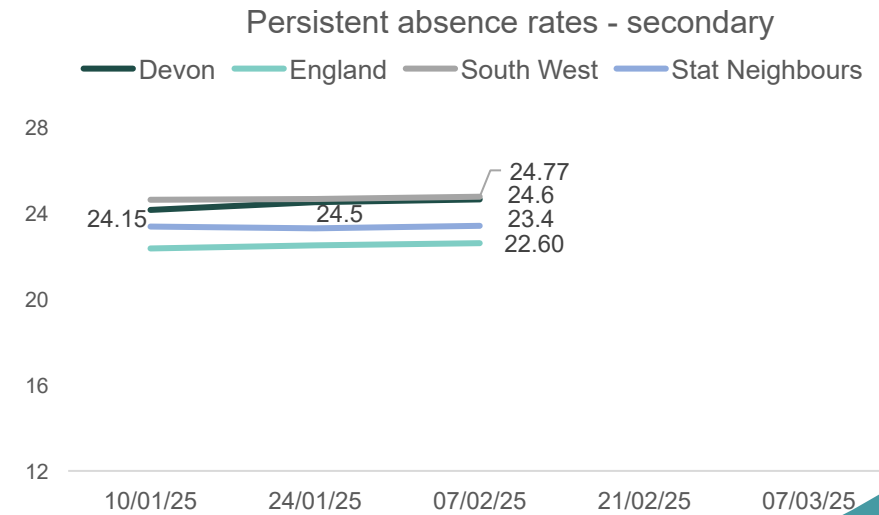
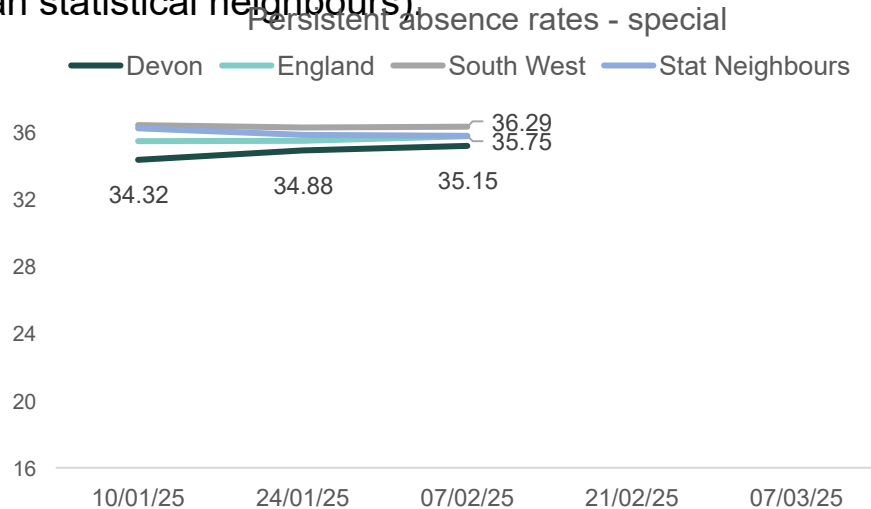
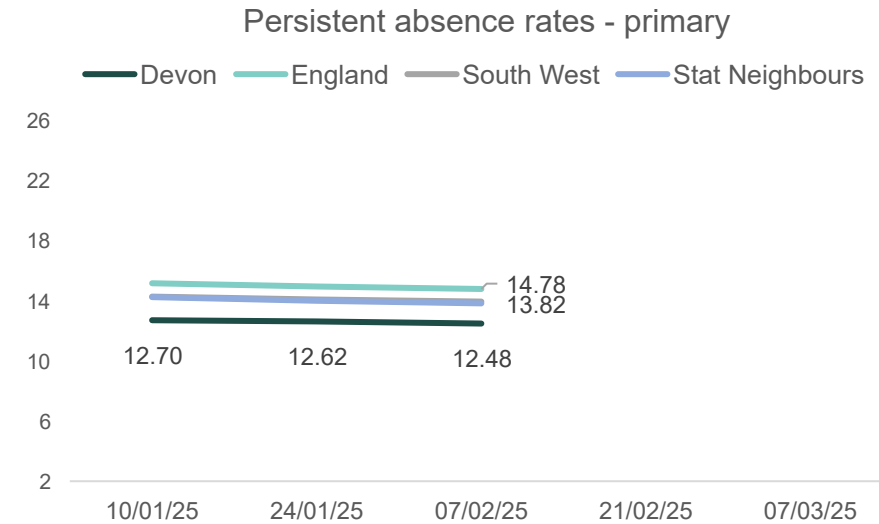
Please note:

Benchmark rates are based on the DfE fortnightly attendance publications, where the DfE advise response rates vary.

Due to missing data for some Devon schools in these publications, Devon rates are based on local data sets which include all schools.

Persistent absence rates by school phase – year to date

- Devon primary schools have lower persistent absence rates than nationally, regionally and statistical neighbours. Devon's rate is on average 2.4 percentage points lower than nationally.
- Devon secondary schools have higher persistent absence rates than nationally and statistical neighbours, they are slightly lower than regionally. Devon is on average nearly 2 percentage points higher than nationally and 1 percentage point higher than statistical neighbours.
- Devon special schools have lower rates than nationally, regionally and statistical neighbours. (0.8 percentage points lower than nationally, 1.5 lower than regionally and 1.1 lower than statistical neighbours).

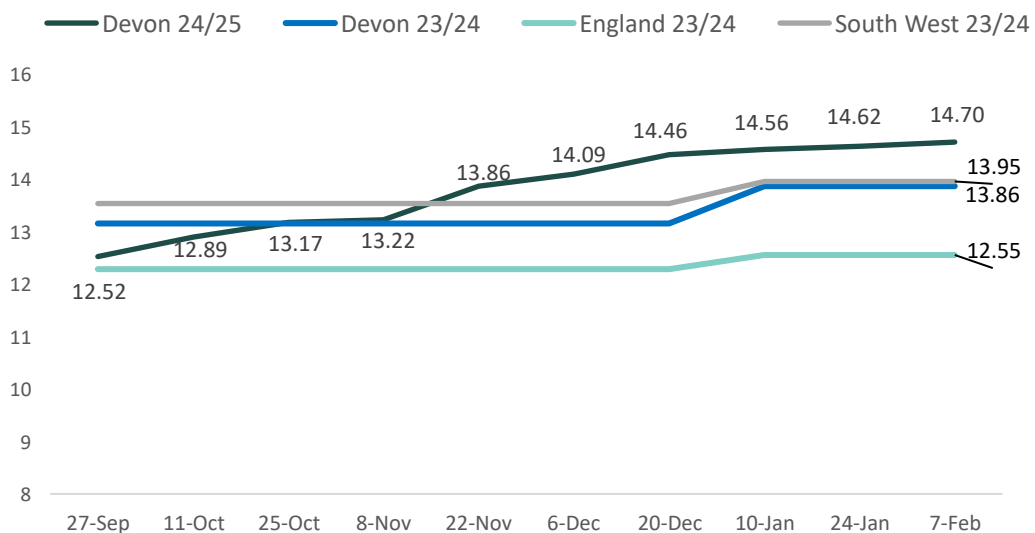


Overall Absence - Pupils with SEN

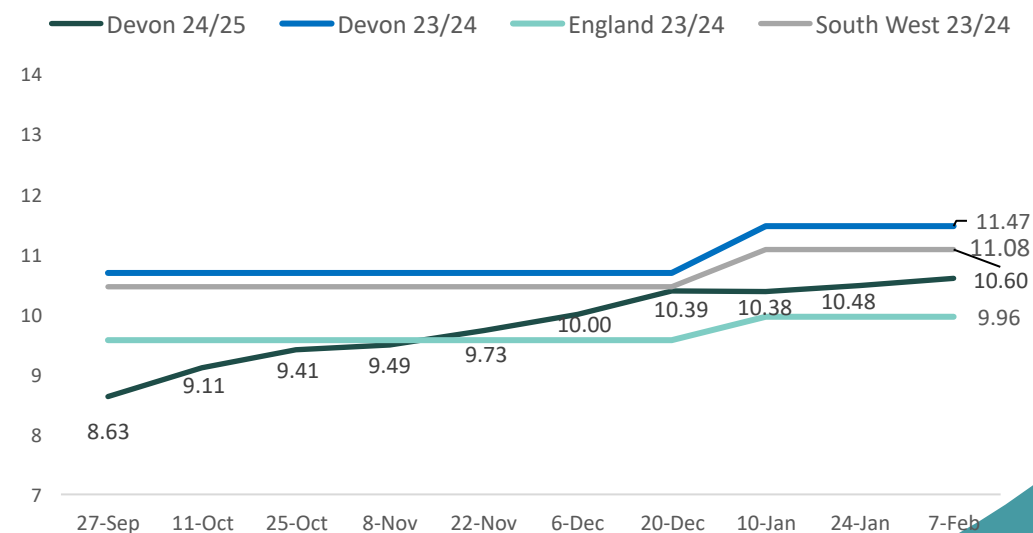
SEN pupils: those with an Education, Health and Care Plan and those with SEN Support, i.e. pupils have special educational needs but do not have an EHCP.

- Local information indicates that overall absence rates for pupils who currently have an EHCP are higher than those for pupils who are currently SEN Support.
- As there are no real-time national and regional benchmarks available, absence rates for the 2023/24 autumn and spring terms have been included for comparison purposes.
- Devon's absence rate for EHCP pupils has risen and is higher than spring 23/24 rates (currently 14.7% compared to 13.86% in 23/24). Devon SEN Support pupils currently have a lower absence rate than spring 23/24 (10.6% compared to 11.47%).

overall absence rates - pupils with EHCP



overall absence rates - pupils with SEN Support



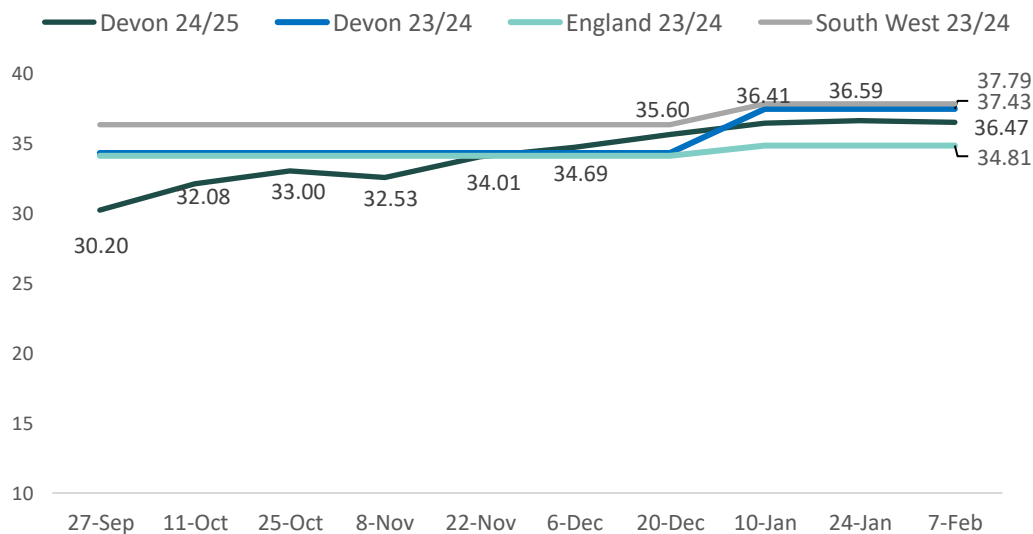
Persistent Absence - Pupils with SEN

SEN pupils: those with an Education, Health and Care Plan and those with SEN Support, i.e. pupils have special educational needs but do not have an EHCP.

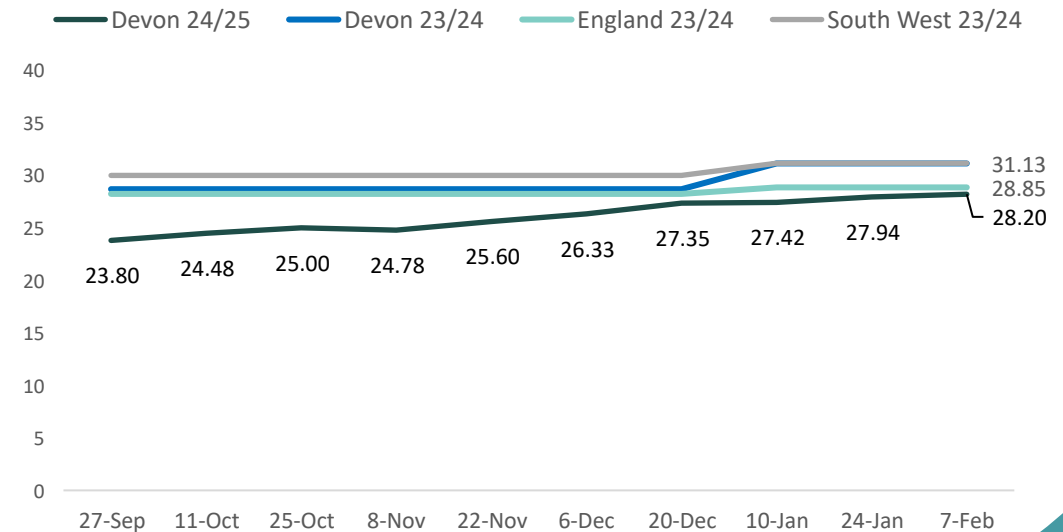
Note: there are currently no real-time national and regional benchmarks available for these pupil cohorts. Absence rates for autumn 23/24 have been included for comparison purposes.

- Persistent absentee rates for pupils who currently have an EHCP are higher than those with SEN Support.
- Local information indicates that Devon’s current persistent absence rate for pupils with an EHCP is slightly lower than spring 23/24 (36.47% compared to 37.43% in 23/24). The rate for SEN Support pupils is also lower than spring 23/24 (28.2% compared to 31.13% in 23/24).

persistent absentee rates - pupils with EHCP



persistent absentee rates - pupils with SEN Support



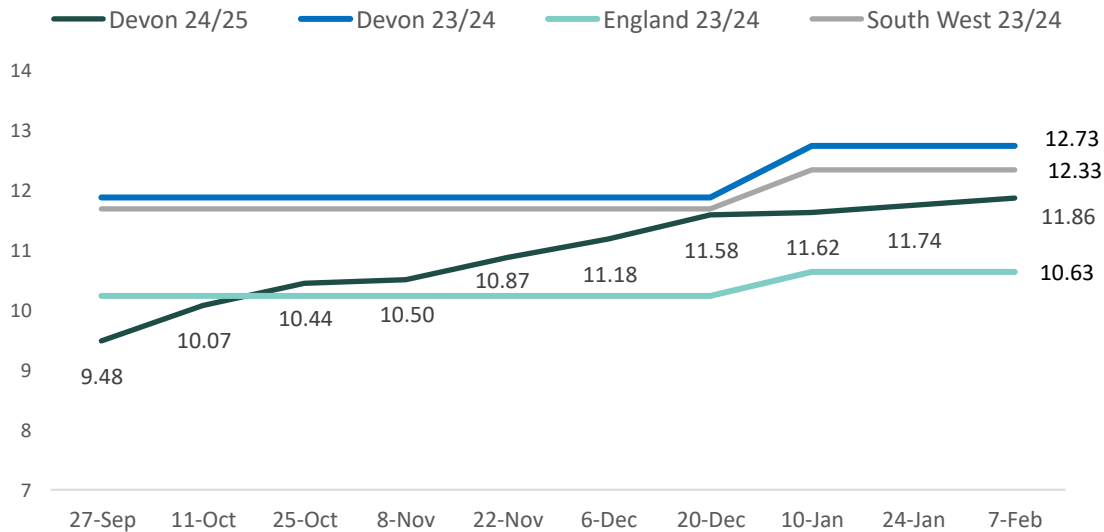
Absence - Free School Meal pupils

Note: there are no real-time national and regional benchmarks available for pupil cohorts. Absence rates for autumn 23/24 have been included for comparison purposes.

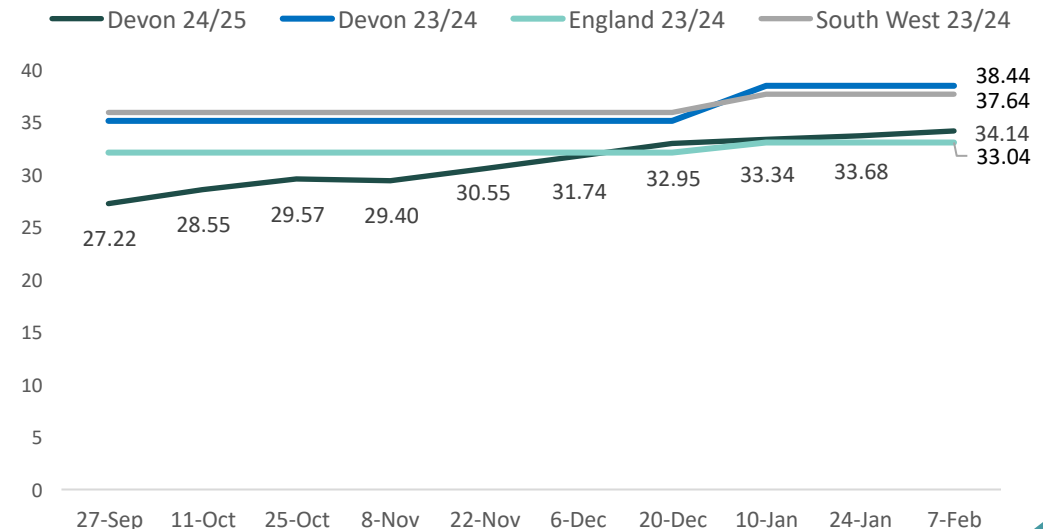
- overall absence rates for Devon pupils currently eligible for Free School Meals is lower than the spring 23/24 rate (11.86% compared to 12.73% for spring 23/24). It is higher than the national rate for 23/24 (11.86% compared to 10.63% nationally).

- Devon's persistent absentee rate for pupils currently eligible for Free School Meals is significantly lower than spring 23/24 (34.14% compared to 38.44% for Devon in 23/24). It is close to the national rate for spring 23/24 (33.14% compared to 33.04% nationally).

overall absence rates - FSM pupils



persistent absentee rates - FSM pupils



Permanent Exclusions – year to date

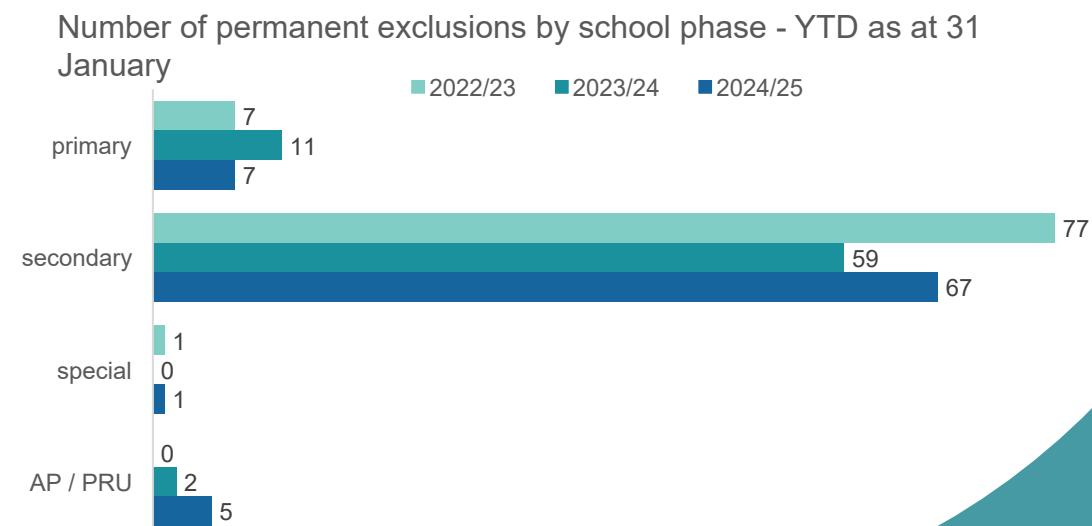
- Local information indicates that the number of permanent exclusions to date are higher than the same period last year (80 compared to 72) but are slightly lower than 2022/23 (85).
- Secondary schools have the highest permanent exclusion rate with 0.18% of the pupil population being permanently excluded. Primary schools have the lowest rate (0.01%).
- Primary schools - number of permanent exclusions issued is lower than last year and the same as two years ago.
- Secondary schools - permanent exclusions issued are higher than the same period last year (67 compared to 59) but lower than 2022/23 (77).
- Special schools - one permanent exclusion has been issued to date this year, compared to none for the same period last year.

Note: there are no real-time national and regional benchmarks available for suspensions and exclusions. Previous academic year performance has been used for comparison purposes.

YTD as at 31 January	school phase	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	change
Number of permanent exclusions in Devon	all schools *	85	72	80	↑
	primary	7	11	7	↓
	secondary	77	59	67	↑
	special	1	0	1	↑
Permanent exclusion rate **	all schools *	0.09%	0.07%	0.08%	↑
	primary	0.01%	0.02%	0.01%	↓
	secondary	0.20%	0.16%	0.18%	↑
	special	0.07%	0%	0.06%	↑

* all schools – primary, secondary inc. all-through, special and alternative provision

** exclusion & suspension rates are percentage of pupil population (spring school census)



Suspensions – year to date

- The total number of suspensions to date are lower than the same period for the previous two years, 7,198 compared to 9,452 and 7,632 previously.
- Secondary schools have the highest suspension rate with 16.55%, followed by special schools with 9.87%.
- Primary schools - number of suspensions issued is significantly lower than the same period last year but higher than two years ago.
- Secondary schools - the number of suspensions is significantly lower than last year (6,257 compared to 8,361 in 2023/24). They are also lower than 2022/23.
- Special schools - number of suspensions issued to date is higher than the same period in the previous two years (162 compared to 103 and 79 previously).

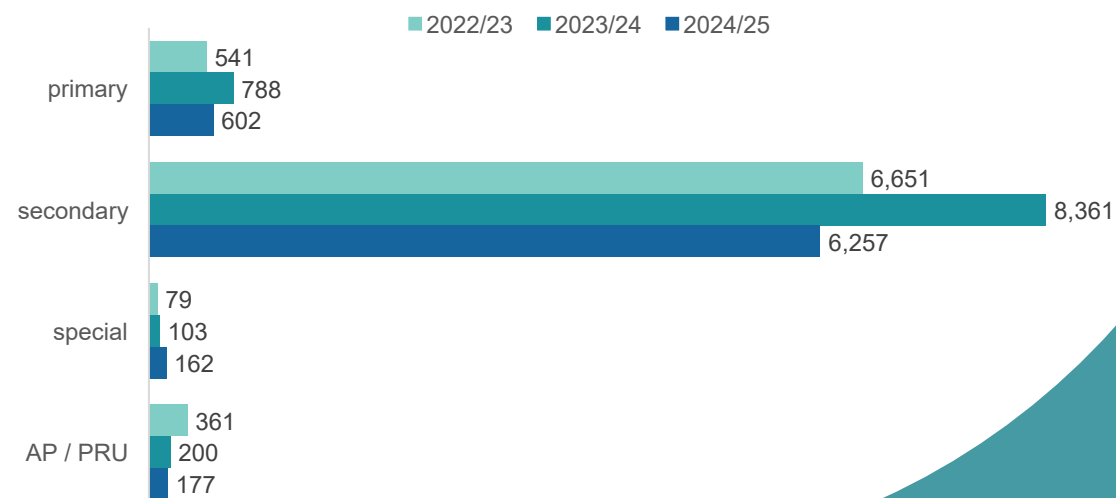
Note: there are no real-time national and regional benchmarks available for suspensions and exclusions. Previous academic year performance has been used for comparison purposes.

YTD as at 31 January	school phase	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	change
Number of suspensions in Devon	all schools *	7,632	9,452	7,198	↓
	primary	541	788	602	↓
	secondary	6,651	8,361	6,257	↓
	special	79	103	162	↑
Suspension rate **	all schools *	7.83%	9.75%	7.42%	↓
	primary	0.93%	1.37%	1.05%	↓
	secondary	17.65%	22.11%	16.55%	↓
	special	5.18%	6.28%	9.87%	↑

* all schools – primary, secondary inc. all-through, special and alternative provision

** exclusion & suspension rates are percentage of pupil population (spring school census)

Number of suspensions by school phase - YTD as at 31 January

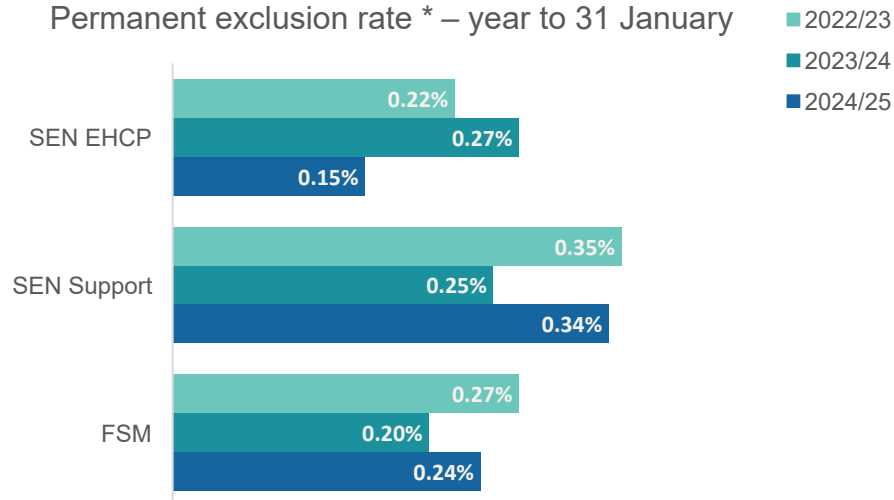


Exclusions & Suspensions pupil cohorts – year to 31 January

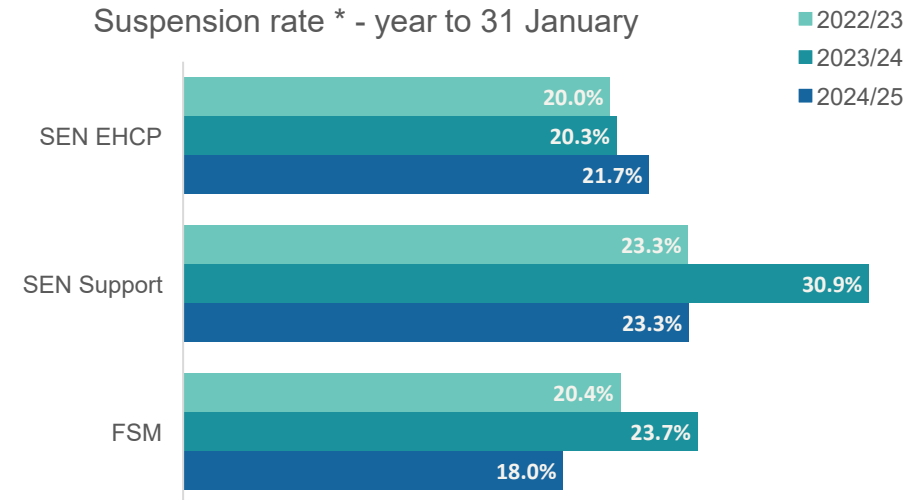
- Permanent exclusions have fallen for pupils with an EHCP, but have risen for both SEN Support and Free School Meals cohorts.
- There have been no permanent exclusions for Devon CiC.
- Suspensions for pupils with an EHCP have risen to 1,137, compared to 1,065 for the same period last year.
- Suspensions have fallen for SEN Support, Free School Meals and Devon CiC cohorts.

YTD as at 31 January	pupil cohort	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	change
Number of permanent exclusions	SEN EHCP	11	14	8	↓
	SEN Support	50	37	50	↑
	Free School Meals	50	40	48	↑
	Devon CiC	0	0	0	↔
Number of suspensions	SEN EHCP	983	1,065	1,137	↑
	SEN Support	3,369	4,530	3,417	↓
	Free School Meals	3,839	4,668	3,550	↓
	Devon CiC	108	135	122	↓

Permanent exclusion rate * – year to 31 January



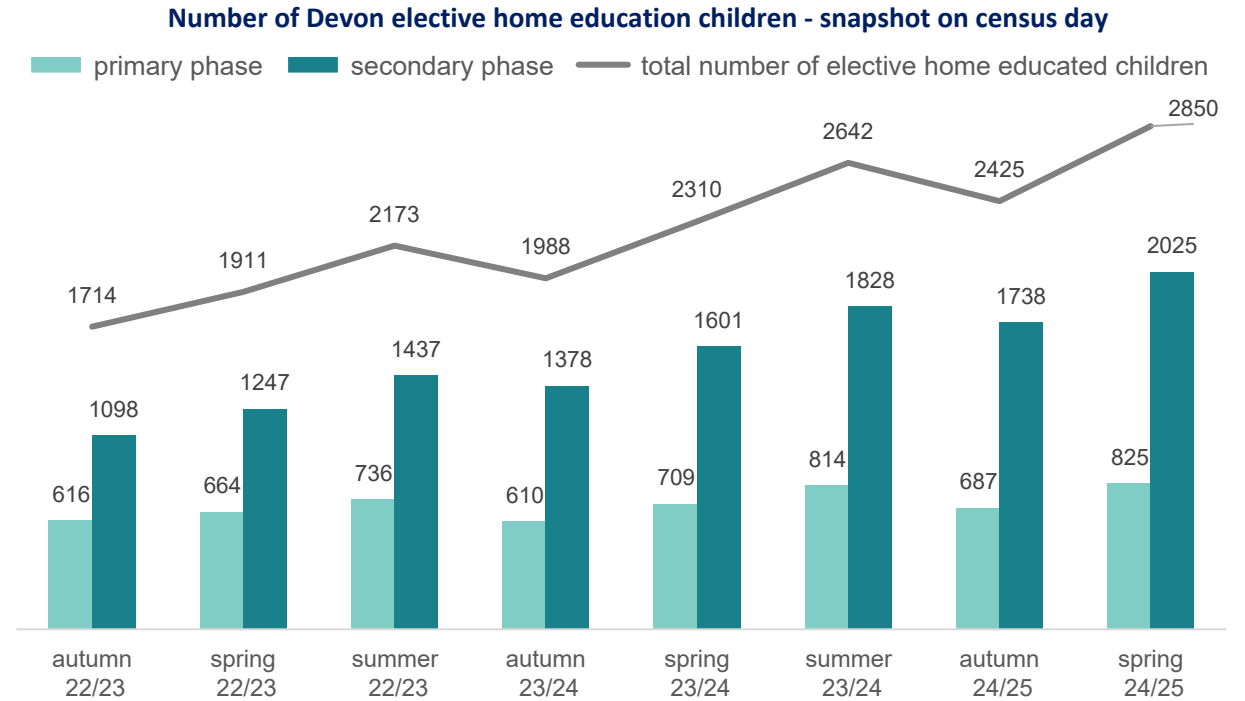
Suspension rate * - year to 31 January



* exclusion & suspension rates are percentage of pupil population (spring school census)

Elective Home Education on census days

- The spring census indicates that the number of EHE on census day is at its highest level (2,850 children on 16th Jan 2025). This is an increase of 23% compared to the same period last year (additional 540 EHE children).
- The number of EHE children increases each term but dips slightly between the summer term of one academic year and the start of the following year. The DfE advise the seasonal decrease from the summer term is expected as some children obtain their school preference and the cohort of the previous year 11 children cease to be of compulsory school age.
- Two thirds of EHE children are of secondary school age. The proportion of EHE children of secondary school age has risen in the last year (and so proportion of primary age has fallen). In 2022/23 the average proportion across the terms was 65% whilst in 2023/24 the average rose to 69%.



% of EHE of secondary school age	2022/23 average*	2023/24 average*	2022/23 Autumn	2023/24 Autumn	2024/25 Autumn
Devon	65%	69%	64%	69%	72%
England	67%	70%	66%	70%	71%
South West	66%	69%	66%	68%	72%
Stat Neighbours	68%	70%	67%	69%	70%

* average rate across the termly census returns in the academic year

Elective Home Education – primary reason (census day)

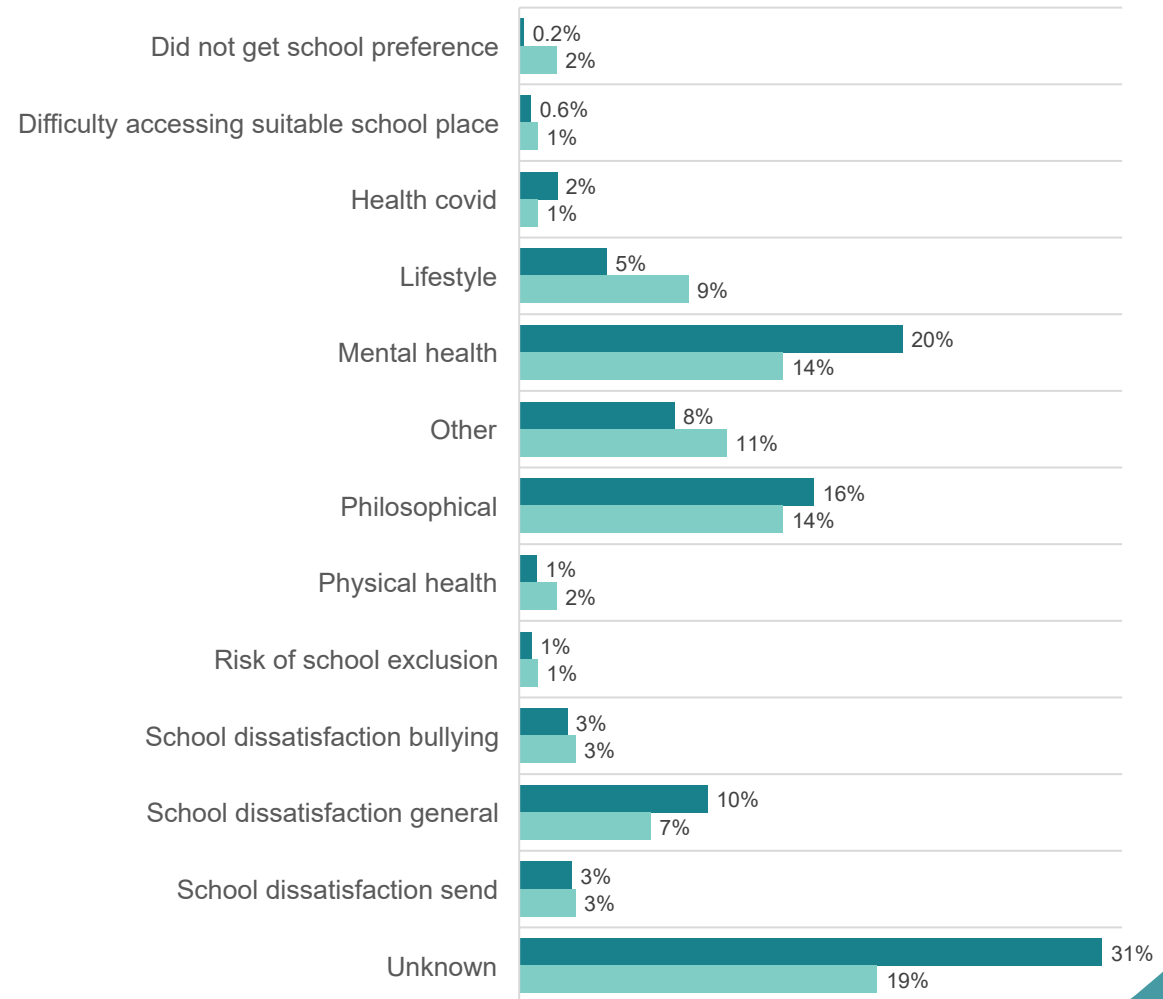
In the autumn 2024/25 census, of those reasons known or provided, the reason most reported nationally was philosophical and mental health, each accounting for 14% of pupils. Lifestyle choice was the third most reported reason (9%).

This is similar in Devon, however mental health is more prevalent, accounting for 20% of pupils, followed by philosophical (16%) and school dissatisfaction - general (10%).

In the recent spring 2024/25 census, mental health continues to be the most common reason in Devon (21% of its EHE pupils), followed by philosophical (15%) and school dissatisfaction – general (9%).

primary reason for EHE - autumn 24/25 census day

■ Devon ■ England



Elective Home Education – previous school type

This section is based on those who are EHE at any point during the academic year, with information collected once a year. They are cumulative counts of all pupils reported as EHE children at some point in the academic year and are not directly comparable to the point in time figures presented as at census day each term.

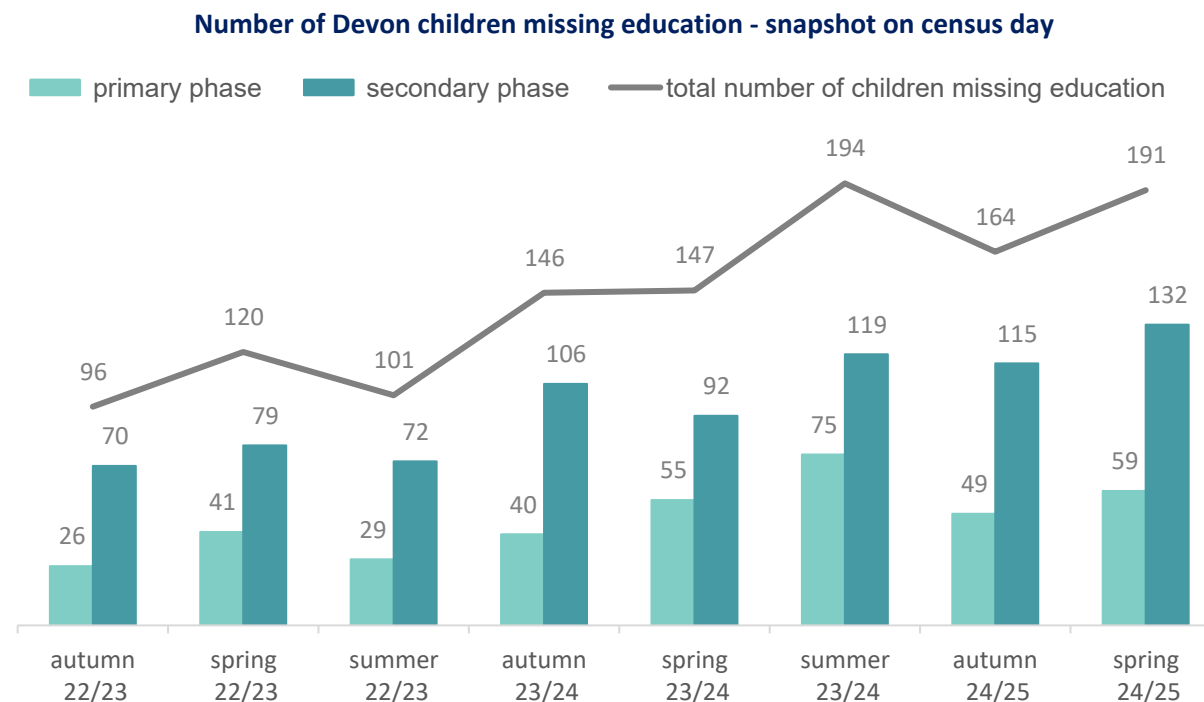
The table below shows, of those pupils who started EHE during the academic year, the previous school type attended by those pupils.

The largest proportion of EHE children have previously been in academies (57% in Devon and 49% nationally), followed by LA maintained schools (24% in Devon, 25% nationally). This is reflective of the fact that a large proportion of secondary schools are academies and a higher proportion of older children are EHE.

Previous school type of children who started EHE in the academic year	Devon			England			South West		
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
academy	56%	41%	57%	42%	47%	49%	52%	53%	61%
alternative provision			<1%			low			low
early years	2%	<1%		1%	1%	1%	1%	low	low
elsewhere/unknown	10%	5%	5%	19%	17%	17%	12%	15%	14%
free school	4%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
home educated outside the local authority		3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
independent	5%	3%	5%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
local authority maintained	19%	43%	24%	28%	27%	25%	25%	23%	17%
none (previously not compulsory school age)	5%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
special	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	low	low	low	low	low

Children Missing Education on census days

- The number of children missing education (CME) fell slightly between summer 23/24 and autumn 24/25. It rose again in spring 24/25 with 191 children missing education.
- Devon has a lower rate of CME than nationally, with 0.2% of the 5-16yr old population CME, compared to 0.5% nationally (autumn 24/25).
- Over two thirds of CME children are of secondary school age. In the spring 24/25 census this was 69% of Devon CME. A higher proportion of CME are of secondary school age in Devon than nationally (70% for Devon compared to 59% nationally in the autumn 24/25 census).
- The proportion of Devon CME of secondary school age fell slightly in the last year (so primary school age CME



% of CME of secondary school age	2022/23 average*	2023/24 average*	2022/23 Autumn	2023/24 Autumn	2024/25 Autumn
Devon	70%	66%	73%	73%	70%
England	54%	55%	54%	56%	59%
South West	63%	61%	66%	65%	57%
Stat Neighbours	66%	64%	71%	68%	56%

* average rate across the termly census returns in the academic year

Rate of CME on census day by population (5-16yrs)	2022/23 average*	2023/24 average*	2022/23 Autumn	2023/24 Autumn	2024/25 Autumn
Devon	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
England	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%
South West	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%
Stat Neighbours	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%

* average rate across the termly census returns in the academic year

Children Missing Education – main reasons (census day)

On the autumn 24/25 census day, of those reasons known for CME;

- nationally the reason most reported was ‘believed to have moved out of the country’, accounting for 13% of children, followed by ‘school application awaiting outcome’, accounting for 10% of children.
- in Devon, the most reported reason was ‘waiting for the outcome of a school application or admissions appeal’, accounting for 35% of the children, followed by ‘unsuitable elective home education’, accounting for 25% of children.

On the recent spring 24/25 census day in Devon,

- the most reported reason was unsuitable home education (24% of CME), followed by waiting the outcome of a school application or admissions appeal (15% of CME).
- 38% of CME had a reason of unknown, compared to 15% on autumn 24/25 census day

Main reasons for CME - autumn 24/25 census day

■ Devon ■ England

