

Home Education Numbers

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Home Education Numbers

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In July 2014 local authorities in England recorded 27,292 home educated children. The figure for July 2013 was 23,243. Overall, the number of home educated children increased across the country by 17% between July 2013 and July 2014. For fuller details on numbers, click [here](#)

BBC journalists [collected figures at the end of 2015](#) which apparently suggested a 65% increase in children recorded as home educated IN THE WHOLE UK over six years. THE NUMBER GIVEN IN THE BBC ARTICLE INCLUDES WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND. 65% over six years works out at an average of 8.7% rise a year $[(165/100) ^{(1/6)}]$. Taking my figures from 2014, this would indicate AROUND 29.5K ENGLAND in 2015, and 32K ENGLAND in 2016. The other thing about the BBC figures (which I have not seen) is that we don't know whether local authorities provided a snapshot or "numbers this year" (ie total) or "only compulsory school age children" which could make a difference of 20/30% in some cases. I specifically asked for a SNAPSHOT in my FOIs.

In April 2016 [the Guardian said](#) "Responses from 134 of England's 153 local education authorities list 30,298 children as receiving home education in 2014-15. Of these, 13,007 are of primary age, and 17,291 of them are between 11 and 16."

In April 2018 [the BBC reported](#) that "*the number of children being homeschooled has risen by about 40% over three years, the BBC has found. Across the UK 48,000 children were being home-educated in 2016-17, up from about 34,000 in 2014-15. Mental health issues and avoiding exclusion are two reasons parents gave for removing children from classrooms.*" The article went on to say "*The BBC contacted councils in England, Wales and Scotland and the Northern Ireland Department of Education for figures on homeschooling. Of the 177 authorities that were able to provide data for all three years, 164 reported an increase.*"

The participation age was [raised](#) in September 2013 requiring young people to participate in education or training (including home education) for a further year.

Essex FOI Counting 300+ Over School Age

[FOI 1 January 5th 2016](#)

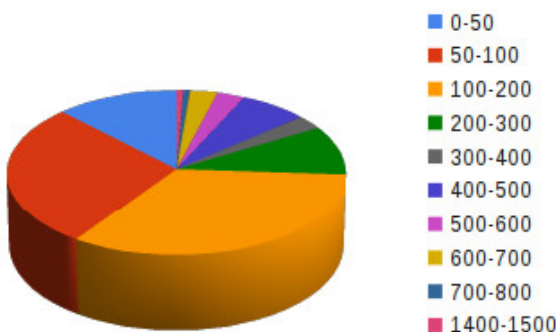
The number of children and young people registered with Essex County Council as being electively home educated on 21st December 2015 is 1440, of which 1088 children and young people currently fall within statutory school age.

[FOI 2 January 27th 2016](#)

"I note that 352 children are registered as being home educated but are not "within statutory school age." Please could you tell me the age distribution of these 352 children? For example, are they below compulsory school age or above compulsory school age?"

"9 of the children are below compulsory school age. Their parents, in response to reminders that they are entitled to apply for a school place, have responded to the LA and notified us that they will be educating their child at home. The remainder of the young people are above statutory school [age]"

Local Authority Home Education Numbers 2014



There are 152 local authorities in England, ranging from London Boroughs and small unitary authorities to large shire counties.

I have comparable figures for 2013 and 2014 from 148 out of 152 authorities.

72% of local authorities have fewer than 200 home educated children.

The smallest local authority had just 1 home educated child while the largest had almost 1500. Only 10% of local authorities have more than 500 home educated children. For fuller details on numbers, click [here](#)

Comparison July 2013 and July 2014

19% numbers went down (29 authorities)

4% numbers stayed the same (6 authorities)

27% numbers increased but by less than the national average (40 authorities)

1% numbers increased by the national average of 17% (2 authorities)

36% numbers increased more than the national average of 17% but less than 50% (53 authorities)

9% numbers increased by more than 50% (13 authorities)

(Does not sum to 100 because of rounding)

For fuller details on numbers, click [here](#)

Numbers In Flux

Over 15,000 children entered home education across the country during the academic year 2013-14, but by the end of the year the total was only 4,000 higher than the previous year. Therefore, it must be the case that many thousands of children also ceased to be home educated. For more details of variable numbers including new cases 2013-14, click [here](#)

Local authorities commented that numbers of home educated children change all the time *"with pupils being added and taken off the register."* Several authorities told me that children might only be home educated for a matter of days.

One LA commented that the home educated population is *"in constant flux"*, while another said it was *"relatively turbulent over the year with a large number home educated for a relatively short time as many return to school or move away."*

I was told that *"parents may find the reality of home education more difficult than they had anticipated, or they were only planning to home educate for a short time anyway"* echoed by another LA saying that *"many return to school or move away."*

Local authorities tell me that some children are home educated while parents wait for a place at their preferred school.

Sutton said that a quarter of the children had been home educated for less than a year by the time they left.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that a relatively higher proportion of young people are home educated in their last years of compulsory schooling ie close to age 16.

At the end of the academic year, the number of home educated children dips after the Y11s are taken off the list. For example Hackney told me that 26% of the children taken off the list in July had reached the end of compulsory schooling.

Authorities Where Numbers Went Up Most

Numbers went up by more than 50% in 9% of local authorities, namely Barnsley, Bedford, Bradford, Brent, Bury, Hillingdon, Knowsley, Northamptonshire, North Tyneside, Peterborough, Slough, Solihull, and Stoke (total 13).

11 out of these 13 authorities had fewer than 100 home educated children to start with, so a large percentage increase still didn't represent very many children.

For example in North Tyneside home education numbers increased by 90% but this only meant an increase of 10 children from 10 in 2013 to 21 in 2014. In Slough the numbers increased by 78% but this only represented 25 children as numbers went up from 32 to 57.

Authorities Where Numbers Went Down Most

Numbers went down in 19% of local authorities, namely Barnet, Bournemouth, Buckinghamshire, Camden, Cornwall, Enfield, Essex, Hammersmith, Herefordshire, Kingston on Thames, Lewisham, Luton, Manchester, Middlesbrough, North Lincolnshire, Rotherham, Rutland, Salford, South Gloucestershire, South Tyneside, Southend, Sunderland, Tameside, Warrington, West Berkshire Westminster, Wiltshire, and Windsor and Maidenhead. (Total 28)

For fuller details on numbers, click [here](#)

Average Increase

91 authorities (61%) have between 50 and 200 home educated children. Numbers went up in 68 (75%) of these authorities.

For authorities with 50 – 100 home educated children the average increase was 15% and an example would be Poole where numbers went up from 62 to 70.

For authorities with 100 to 200 home educated children the average increase was 26% and an example would be Central Bedfordshire where numbers went up from 135 to 166.

8 authorities (9%) have between 200 and 500 home educated children and numbers went up in 23 (82%) of these authorities.

The average increase was 20% and an example would be Suffolk where numbers went up from 317 to 386.

9 authorities (6%) have between 500 and 1000 home educated children. These are the larger shire counties, plus Birmingham. Numbers went up in all but one of these authorities and the average increase was 19%.

However, within this group, numbers in Devon went up by 49% - from 354 to 526 (+ 172)- which skews the average. If Devon is taken out, the average increase for this group was 15% and an example would be Lincolnshire where numbers went up from 473 to 534 (+61). The one area where numbers went down was Essex, from 690 to 679 (-11)

For fuller details on numbers, click [here](#)

Authorities with fewer than 50 home educated children

Total 18: 6 in North East; 5 in North West; 4 in London; 1 in South West; 1 in South East; 1 in East Midlands. 7 where numbers increased; 5 where numbers stayed the same; 6 where numbers went down

Authorities with between 50 and 100 home educated children

Total 43: 12 in London; 11 in North West; 6 in South East; 3 in North East; 3 in East Midlands; 3 in South West; 2 in West Midlands; 2 in Eastern England; 1 in Yorkshire and Humberside. 26 where numbers increased; 7 where numbers stayed the same; 10 where numbers went down

Authorities with between 100 and 200 home educated children

Total 48: 14 in London; 8 in North West; 5 in South West; 5 in West Midlands; 5 in Yorkshire and Humberside; 4 in South East; 4 East Midlands; 2 in North East; 1 in Eastern England. 42 where numbers increased; 1 where numbers stayed the same; 5 where numbers went down

Authorities with between 200 and 300 home educated children

Total 15: 4 in South East; 4 in Yorkshire and Humberside; 2 in West Midlands; 2 in North West; 1 in South West; 1 in East Midlands; 1 in London. 12 where numbers increased; 1 where numbers stayed the same; 2 where numbers went down

Authorities with between 300 and 400 home educated children

Total 4: 1 in South East; 1 in Eastern England; 1 in East Midlands; 1 in West Midlands. 4 where numbers increased

Authorities with between 400 and 500 home educated children

Total 9: 3 in East Midlands; 2 in South West; 2 in South East; 1 in North West; 1 in Eastern England. 7 where numbers increased; 1 where numbers stayed the same; 1 where numbers went down

Authorities with between 500 and 600 home educated children

Total 4: 2 in South West; 1 in South East; 1 in East Midlands. 4 where numbers increased

Authorities with between 600 and 700 home educated children

Total 4: 2 in Eastern England; 1 in South East; 1 in West Midlands. 3 where numbers increased; 1 where numbers went down

Authorities with between 700 and 800 home educated children

Total 1: 1 in South East (Surrey). 1 where numbers increased

Authorities with between 1400 and 1500 home educated children

Total 1: 1 in South East (Kent). 1 where numbers increased

North East

Total 11 LAs: 6 have fewer than 50 home educated children; 3 have between 50 and 100; 2 have between 100 and 200. 8 LAs where numbers increased; 3 LAs where numbers went down

North West

Total 27 LAs: 5 have fewer than 50 home educated children; 11 have between 50 and 100; 8 have between 100 and 200; 2 have between 200 and 300; 1 has between 400 and 500 (Lancashire). 21 LAs where numbers increased; 2 LAs where numbers stayed the same; 4 LAs where numbers went down

Yorkshire and Humberside

Total 10 LAs: 1 has between 50 and 100 home educated children; 5 have between 100 and 200; 4 have between 200 and 300. 9 LAs where numbers increased; 1 LA where numbers went down

East Midlands

Total 14 LAs: 1 has fewer than 50 home educated children; 3 have between 50 and 100; 4 have between 100 and 200; 1 has between 200 and 300; 1 has between 300 and 400; 3 have between 400 and 500; 1 has between 500 and 600. 11 LAs where numbers increased; 2 LAs where numbers stayed the same; 1 LA where numbers went down

West Midlands

Total 11 LAs: 2 have between 50 and 100 home educated children; 5 have between 100 and 200; 2 have between 200 and 300; 1 has between 300 and 400; 1 has between 600 and 700. 10 LAs where numbers increased; 1 LA where numbers went down

Eastern England

Total 8 LAs: 2 have between 50 and 100 home educated children; 1 has between 100 and 200; 1 has between 300 and 400; 1 has between 400 and 500; 3 have between 600 and 700. 5 LAs where numbers increased; 1 LA where numbers stayed the same; 2 LAs where numbers went down

London

Total 31 LAs: 4 have fewer than 50 home educated children; 12 have between 50 and 100; 14 have between 100 and 200; 1 has between 200 and 300. The highest number is in Newham (206). 18 LAs where numbers increased; 6 LAs where numbers stayed the same; 7 LAs where numbers went down

South West

Total 14 LAs: 1 has fewer than 50 home educated children; 3 have between 50 and 100; 5 have between 100 and 200; 1 has between 200 and 300; 2 have between 400 and 500; 2 have between 500 and 600. 9 LAs where numbers increased; 2 LAs where numbers stayed the same; 3 LAs where numbers went down

South East

Total 21 LAs: 1 has fewer than 50 home educated children; 6 have between 50 and 100; 4 have between 100 and 200; 4 have between 200 and 300; 1 has between 300 and 400; 2 have between 400 and 500; 1 has between 500 and 600; 1 has between 700 and 800; 1 has between 1400 and 1500. 16 LAs where numbers increased; 1 LA where numbers stayed the same; 4 LAs where numbers went down

Survey Autumn 2014

In Autumn 2014 I asked all local authorities in England the following questions:

1. The number of children recorded as being home educated in your authority at the beginning of July 2013 (ie a snapshot of the number of home educated children recorded at this time)
2. The number of children who started to be home educated at some point during the academic year 2013-14
3. The number of children recorded as being home educated in your authority at the beginning of July 2014 (ie a snapshot of the number of home educated children recorded at this time)

For fuller details on numbers, click [here](#)

Mike Fortune Wood Numbers Research

In 2006 Mike Fortune Wood published *The Face of Home-Based Education 2: Numbers, Support, Special Needs*. FOIs were sent to LAs in England and Wales during 2005 asking about home education numbers. 109 LAs in England and Wales responded, with a total of 10,682 home educated children. By dividing the number of home educated children by the number of all school age children in the relevant areas, Mike Fortune Wood obtained a ratio for estimating home education numbers from the third of authorities who had not responded. This provided an estimated figure of 18,100 for England and Wales in 2005.

In addition, Mike Fortune Wood reported that Alan Thomas had previously obtained figures from 5 London authorities in 1999, which - if multiplied across England and Wales - would give a figure of 7,000 home educated children known to the authorities at that time. It is therefore postulated that there was an annual increase of 17% between 1999 and 2005, and that if this rate continued there would be 54,000 home educated children known to LAs in England and Wales by 2015. [More](#)

Channel 4

In 2007, Channel 4 published numbers on home educated children in England Wales and Scotland, alleging "a massive rise in homeschooling" between 2002 and 2007. I have **not** taken my figures from Channel 4, but from private FOIs. The Channel 4 numbers are no longer available on their website, please contact me for a copy.

Local Authority Spending Home Education

[Click here](#) for details of local authority spend on staffing costs related to elective home education.

Related Pages

[Bar Charts](#)

[2013-14 Numbers Alphabetical](#)

[Line Graphs 2005-14](#)

[Home Education Service Funding](#)

Link Reference

This article is <http://edyourself.org/articles/numbers.php>. The following links to other websites are contained in the article, displayed as citations to aid you in printing the document.

1. LINK http://edyourself.org/numbers_archived.pdf
2. here <http://edyourself.org/ednumchart.php>
3. collected figures at the end of 2015 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-35133119>
4. the Guardian said <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/apr/12/home-schooling-parents-education-children-england>
5. the BBC reported <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-42624220>
6. raised <http://edyourself.org/articles/leavingage.php>
7. FOI 2 January 27th 2016 http://webapps1.essexcc.gov.uk/FOldotNET/view_doc.aspx?DocID=9732
8. here <http://edyourself.org/ednumchart.php>
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19. Home Education Service Funding <http://edyourself.org/articles/costhomeeducation.php>