



Statistical Bulletin 4/2016

School Meals in Northern Ireland, 2015/16.

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The purpose of this statistical bulletin is to provide results of the annual data collection relating to the uptake of school meals in Northern Ireland schools in 2015/16.

Key points:

- **Over 185,000 school meals**, both free and paid, were taken by pupils on census day, which equates to a **school meals uptake level of 60.6%** by pupils present for lunch on the day.
- The school meals uptake level for 2015/16 is **0.9 percentage points higher than the previous year.**
- The number of **pupils entitled to free school meals has surpassed the 100,000 mark**; at 101,063 this represents 30.6% of pupils.
- The **uptake level for free school meals by entitled pupils is 81.1%**; this represents an increase of half a percentage point from the previous year.

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Introduction

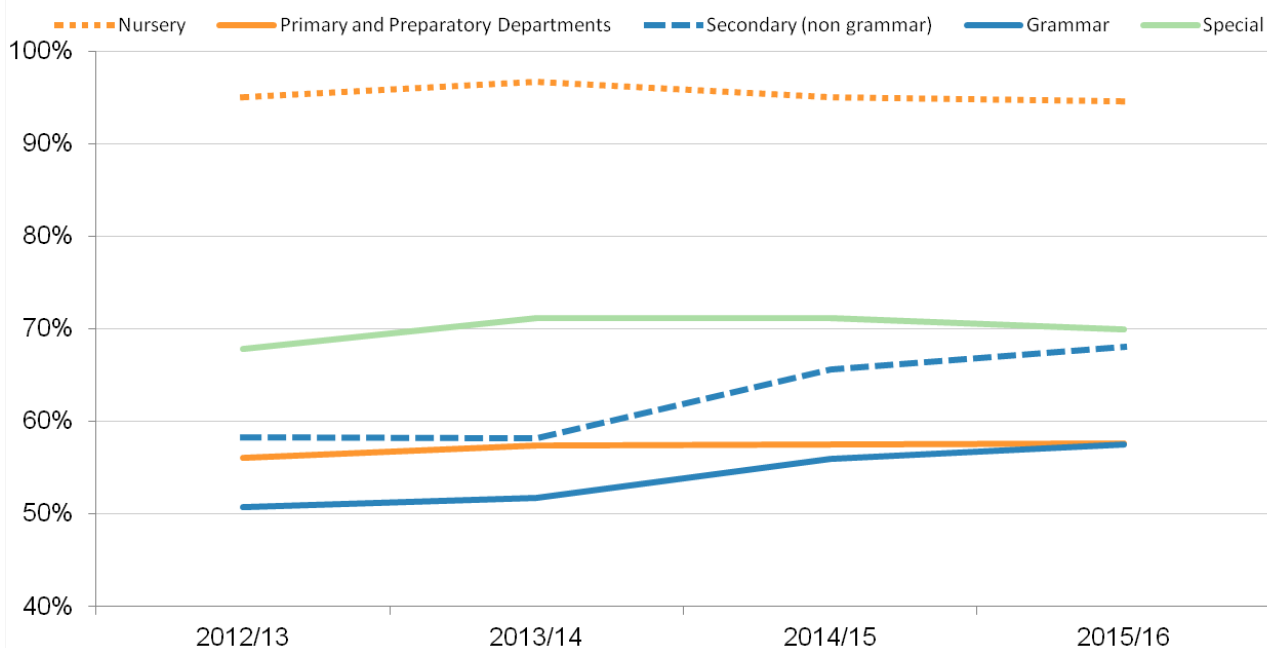
The purpose of this statistical bulletin is to provide results of the latest annual data collection relating to the uptake of school meals in Northern Ireland schools, commonly known as the school meals census. The information was collected with a reference point of 9 October 2015 and relates to all grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland.

Data collected through the school meals census are used by policy teams within the Department of Education and by other users across the education service, most notably by the Education Authority. The data are also used to inform a number of Assembly questions. The Department is responsible for formulating and developing policy and the associated financial arrangements in relation to school meals.

Section 1: Uptake of school meals (free and paid)

- Over 185,000 school meals, both free and paid, were taken by pupils on census day. Pupils not taking a school meal are making alternative arrangements for lunch, which can include bringing their own food into school. Around 40% of meals fall into this category (Tables 1 and 2).
- The school meals uptake level by pupils present for lunch on census day is 60.6%. The 2015/16 school meals uptake level is 0.9 percentage points higher than the previous year (Table 3).
- There is variation in the level of uptake across school types with nursery schools having the highest uptake at 94.6%. This is followed by special schools with 69.9% and secondary schools with 67.9%. Primary/preparatory schools and grammar schools have similar levels of uptake with 57.8% and 57.5% respectively (Table 3).

Figure 1: Uptake of school meals (free and paid), by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16

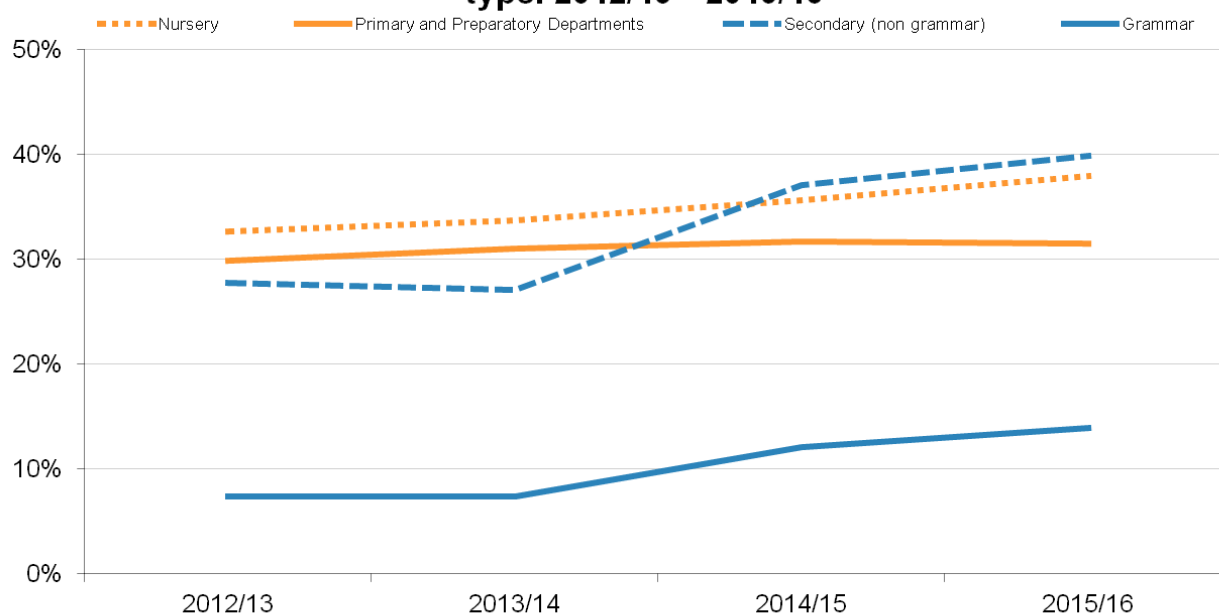


¹ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools
² Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes
³ Data taken from Table 3

Section 2: Entitlement to free school meals

- Across all school types, including special schools, 101,063 pupils were entitled to free school meals. This represents 30.6% of the total school enrolment, which is an increase of 3,545 (3.6%) on the previous year (Table 5).
- There has been an increase in the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals in most school types; with secondary schools showing the greatest percentage point increase going from 37.1% in 2014/15 to 39.9% this year. This increase is likely to relate to the extension of the Working Tax Credit free school meal criterion to post-primary pupils in September 2014. Nursery schools have seen an increase from 35.6% of pupils entitled last year compared to 37.9% this year, grammar schools have increased from 12.1% in 2014/15 to 13.9% this year and special schools have seen a smaller increase from 52.5% to 53.3%. Primary and preparatory schools are the only school type that has not seen an increase, going from 31.7% in 2014/15 to 31.6% this year.

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16

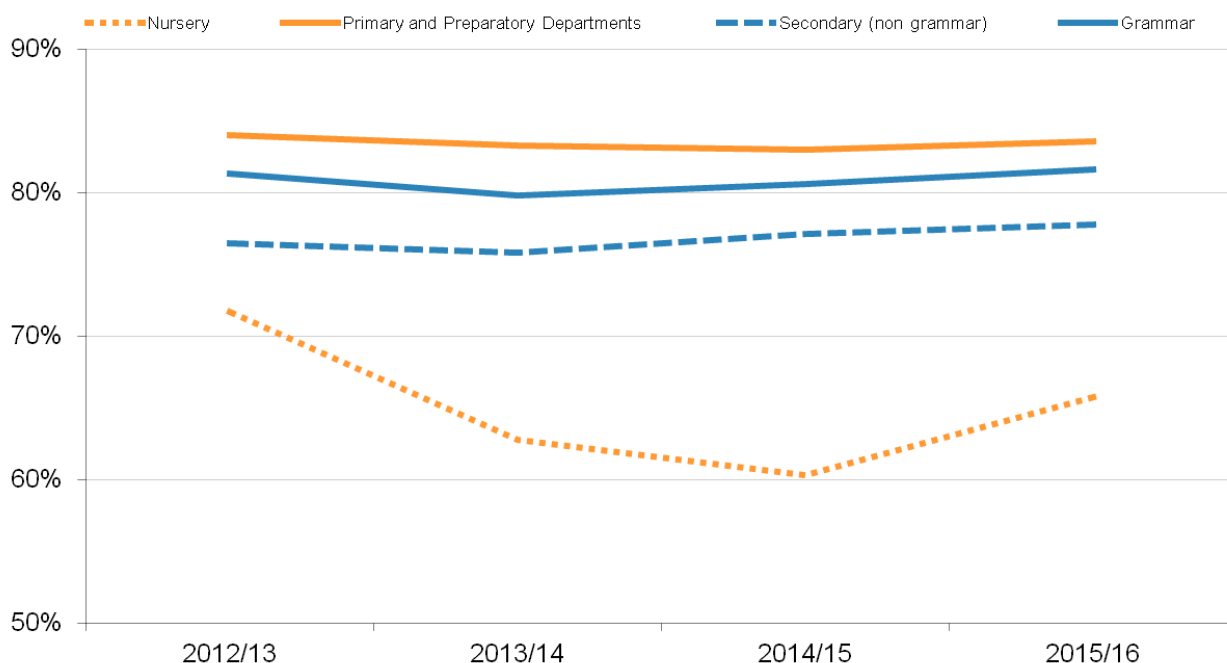


¹ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools
² Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes
³ Data taken from Table 5
⁴ Special schools are excluded (see background note 19)

Section 3: Uptake of free school meals

- There were 82,002 free school meals taken by pupils across all school types, this is an increase of 3,442 on the previous year (Table 8). This represents 44.3% of all meals provided by schools, which is an increase from 43.5% the previous year.
- When considering the number of free school meals provided as a proportion of the number of pupils entitled to free school meals, uptake of free school meals was 81.1%¹. This is an increase of half a percentage point from the previous year (Table 8).
- Primary and post primary schools have seen a modest increases of not more than one percentage point in their level of uptake of free school meals compared to the previous year. Nursery schools have seen a higher level of increase, going from 60.3% in 2014/15 to 65.8% in 2015/16. Special schools are the only school type that has seen a decrease in the level of free school meals uptake, going from 84.5% last year to 81.2% this year.

Figure 3: Uptake of free school meals, by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16



¹ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools
² Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes
³ Data taken from Table 8
⁴ See background note 13, 16
⁵ Special schools are excluded (see background note 19)

¹ Includes special schools.

Notes for readers

Official Statistics

1. This is an Official Statistics publication. Official statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
2. For general enquiries about the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Enquiry Service on 0845 601 3034
minicom: 01633 815044
E-mail: info@statistics.gov.uk
Fax: 01633 652747
Letters: Customer Contact Centre, Room D265, Office for National Statistics, Cardiff Road, Newport, NP10 8XG
3. You can also find Official Statistics on the Internet: www.statistics.gov.uk

Changes to Statistical Bulletin

4. On 1 April 2015, the Education Authority became operational and took over all of the roles and responsibilities of the former Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and the Staff Commission. It is no longer appropriate to include analyses by ELB as these entities no longer exist. All references and analyses by ELB in commentary, charts and tables have therefore been removed. The structure of statistical tables has been reworked to take account of the changes, resulting in six tables fewer.

School meal provision

5. The Education Authority is responsible for the day to day operation of the school meals service in all grant-aided schools, with the exception of voluntary grammar schools and grant-maintained integrated schools, where the responsibility lies with the Trustees/Boards of Governors.
6. The service is provided in line with the Approved Arrangements for the Provision of Milk, Meals and Related Facilities made under Articles 58 and 59 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 drawn up by the Department of Education (DE), which will be referred to as 'the Arrangements' in the remainder of this document.
(<https://www.deni.gov.uk/articles/school-milk-and-meals-background>)
7. Two main types of school meal service exist:
 - A traditional meal comprising a main course and dessert; and
 - A cash cafeteria service, where items are priced separately.

Free school meal provision

8. With regard to free school meal provision the following terms are used:
 - Eligibility: When a pupil within a family meets one of the criteria contained in paragraph 6 of the Arrangements for the provision of milk, meals and related facilities.
 - Entitlement: When an application for free school meals is made on behalf of a pupil and the application is successful.
 - Uptake: When a pupil who is entitled to free school meals makes use of the free school meal provision by taking a free school meal.

9. Certain categories of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Details of the qualifying criteria are contained in paragraph 6 of the Arrangements. The Education Authority is responsible for administering the award of free school meals. Entitlement to free school meals is widely used as an indicator of deprivation.
10. From the start of the 2010/11 school year the eligibility criteria for free school meals was extended to include full-time nursery and primary school children whose parents are in receipt of Working Tax Credit and have an annual taxable income which does not exceed £16,190 (in 2015/16). The new criterion was introduced on a phased basis with nursery, foundation stage and key stage 1 pupils eligible from September 2010. This was extended in September 2011 to key stage 2 pupils. It was further extended to post-primary school pupils from September 2014.

School Meals Census

11. The main statistics in this statistical bulletin have been derived from the annual school meals data collection, commonly known as the school meals census. The data collection for the 2015/16 school meals census was undertaken by the Department, with data collected directly from each grant-aided school. Prior to 2012/13 the former ELBs were responsible for the collection of data in relation to schools in the controlled and maintained sectors and provided a collated return for their area to the Department.
12. The 2015/16 school meals census figures in this statistical bulletin are based on information as at 9th October 2015². Some tables in this statistical bulletin include data on school enrolments and the number of pupils entitled to free school meals. Data on school enrolments and free school meal entitlement (FSME) were collected as part of the annual school enrolments data collection exercise and are also based on information as at 9th October 2015.
13. In nursery and primary schools, new pupils often have a phased introduction to school with some pupils not starting school until late October. Also new pupils may have a shorter day initially, without a lunch break. The school meals census date is usually the Friday of the first full week in October. This means that not all pupils will have started school, or be staying for lunch break. While pupils due to start later in the month will be counted in school enrolment, and free school meal entitlement figures, they will not be present to take a meal and will not therefore be counted in school meals census figures. Figures presented for free school meal uptake in nursery and primary schools, but particularly nursery, will therefore be lower than would be the case with a later census date. In 2012/13 the school meals census date was delayed and took place on 19th October 2012. This is likely to explain the higher uptake of free school meals in nursery schools in 2012/13, which returned to previous levels in 2013/14.
14. From 2012/13, data collection and validation activities have been carried out by the Department rather than by each former Education and Library Board. Some changes were made to the methodology employed and data collected from schools in order to facilitate validation of the data and to improve the clarity of the information presented. These changes mainly affected the count of pupils present used in the calculation of school meal uptake figures, the number of equated paid meals and the number of pupils making other arrangements. **For this reason caution should be used in drawing any comparison between data from 2012/13 onwards and data from previous years.**

² If school meals were not being provided by the school on census day the school could choose to conduct the census on the nearest day on which meals are provided.

15. In schools with a cash cafeteria system, school meal numbers are calculated from lunchtime income. Schools also include income from sales at morning break (and in previous years income from breakfast clubs may also have been included – this was excluded from the 2012/13 data collection onwards). The cost of a fixed price meal is used to convert income from lunch and break-time sales to equated meal numbers. Equated meal numbers will not exactly match pupils present for meals.
16. There were 7,596 pupils who were recorded as being present on census day but schools indicated they were not availing of a school lunch break. These pupils were mainly in nursery and primary schools. This will include part-time nursery pupils and primary pupils whose school day, by census date, did not yet include a lunch break. From the 2012/13 school meals census data onwards these pupils have been excluded from the count of pupils present for the purposes of calculating uptake of school meals.
17. There were 12 schools indicating that they do not provide a school meals service. Of these schools 9 are nursery schools where none of the pupils have a lunch break included as part of their hours of attendance. A total of 53 pupils at the remaining three schools do receive a lunch break. These 53 pupils are recorded as ‘making other lunch arrangements’ and are included in the count of pupils present for lunch when calculating percentage uptake of school meals (Tables 3 and 7).
18. For the 2013/14 data collection the categories of ‘other lunch arrangements’ and ‘taking own food’ were merged together to create a ‘pupils making other lunch arrangements’ category, which includes pupils taking their own food. This was due to difficulties, expressed by some schools, in capturing accurate data for the categories previously used.
19. Free school meal entitlement (FSME) data for special schools was not validated prior to 2014/15.
20. Figures for primary schools may include nursery and/or reception pupils attending primary schools and preparatory departments.
21. Information presenting uptake of school meals in Northern Ireland, England and Scotland has been discontinued as policy differences between the regions and availability of up-to-date information for other regions make comparisons difficult.
22. The figures in this statistical bulletin may be subject to minor revision and these will be notified in accordance with our revisions policy. This can be accessed at <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Statistical%20Revisions.pdf>
23. More detail about the collection of data on school meals can be found on the DE website. This can be accessed at <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/school-meals-census-information-and-procedures-2015-16.pdf>
24. The Statistics and Research section of the DE website (www.deni.gov.uk) also presents data from the school meals census. Statistics on school enrolments, school performance, pupil attendance, teacher numbers, pupil:teacher ratios, school leaver destinations and qualifications may also be accessed via the website.

General

25. The following symbols are used in the tables in this statistical bulletin:

* = Relates to fewer than 5 cases

= Number (5 or more) suppressed to prevent disclosure of small numbers elsewhere

- = Indicates no schools in this category

Further enquiries

26. For more details about the statistics contained in this statistical bulletin, to request further information and analysis, or to provide any feedback on this publication please contact:

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27. DE Statistical Bulletins can be accessed on the DE website (www.deni.gov.uk) under the Statistics and Research section.

28. Press enquiries should be made to the Department's Press Office at the same address, telephone (028) 9127 9207.

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School Meals in Northern Ireland, 2015/16

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Table 1: Number and type of meals taken on school meals census day, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

School Type	Management Type	Meals provided by school			Other meals ¹	Total ¹
		Paid school meals ²	Free school meals	All school meals ²	Pupils making other lunch arrangements (including own food)	
Nursery ³	Controlled	1,084	807	1,891	64	1,955
	RC Maintained	544	666	1,210	112	1,322
	TOTAL	1,628	1,473	3,101	176	3,277
Primary ⁴ and Preparatory Departments	Controlled	21,662	19,185	40,847	35,768	76,615
	Voluntary	1,089	20	1,109	490	1,599
	RC Maintained	23,346	24,081	47,427	28,847	76,274
	Other Maintained	793	1,306	2,099	1,136	3,235
	Controlled Integrated	835	1,056	1,891	1,886	3,777
	Grant Maintained Integrated	1,645	1,353	2,998	2,690	5,688
TOTAL	49,370	47,001	96,371	70,817	167,188	
Secondary (non grammar)	Controlled	8,310	7,108	15,418	9,157	24,575
	RC Maintained	11,149	13,110	24,259	9,806	34,065
	Other Maintained	100	281	381	207	588
	Controlled Integrated	458	648	1,106	1,135	2,241
	Grant Maintained Integrated	3,475	2,951	6,426	2,012	8,438
TOTAL	23,492	24,098	47,590	22,317	69,907	
Grammar	Controlled	6,558	1,372	7,930	6,366	14,296
	Voluntary	21,219	5,819	27,038	19,426	46,464
	TOTAL	27,777	7,191	34,968	25,792	60,760
Post-Primary Total	51,269	31,289	82,558	48,109	130,667	
Special	Controlled	986	2,061	3,047	1,332	4,379
	RC Maintained	22	157	179	40	219
	Other Maintained	16	21	37	32	69
	TOTAL	1,024	2,239	3,263	1,404	4,667
All grant-aided schools	Controlled	38,600	30,533	69,133	52,687	121,820
	Voluntary	22,308	5,839	28,147	19,916	48,063
	RC Maintained	35,061	38,014	73,075	38,805	111,880
	Other Maintained	909	1,608	2,517	1,375	3,892
	Controlled Integrated	1,293	1,704	2,997	3,021	6,018
	Grant Maintained Integrated	5,120	4,304	9,424	4,702	14,126
GRAND TOTAL	103,291	82,002	185,293	120,506	305,799	

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Excludes pupils present on school meals census day whose school day did not include a lunch break, including part-time nursery pupils and some P1 pupils (see background note 16).

² Paid meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income. Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).

³ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

⁴ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 2: Percentage and type of meals taken on school meals census day, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

School Type	Management Type	Meals provided by school			Other meals ¹	Total ¹
		Paid school meals ²	Free school meals	All school meals ²	Pupils making other lunch arrangements (including own food)	
		%	%	%	%	
Nursery ³	Controlled	55.4	41.3	96.7	3.3	100.0
	RC Maintained	41.1	50.4	91.5	8.5	100.0
	TOTAL	49.7	44.9	94.6	5.4	100.0
Primary ⁴ and Preparatory Departments	Controlled	28.3	25.0	53.3	46.7	100.0
	Voluntary	68.1	1.3	69.4	30.6	100.0
	RC Maintained	30.6	31.6	62.2	37.8	100.0
	Other Maintained	24.5	40.4	64.9	35.1	100.0
	Controlled Integrated	22.1	28.0	50.1	49.9	100.0
	Grant Maintained Integrated	28.9	23.8	52.7	47.3	100.0
	TOTAL	29.5	28.1	57.6	42.4	100.0
Secondary (non grammar)	Controlled	33.8	28.9	62.7	37.3	100.0
	RC Maintained	32.7	38.5	71.2	28.8	100.0
	Other Maintained	17.0	47.8	64.8	35.2	100.0
	Controlled Integrated	20.4	28.9	49.4	50.6	100.0
	Grant Maintained Integrated	41.2	35.0	76.2	23.8	100.0
TOTAL	33.6	34.5	68.1	31.9	100.0	
Grammar	Controlled	45.9	9.6	55.5	44.5	100.0
	Voluntary	45.7	12.5	58.2	41.8	100.0
	TOTAL	45.7	11.8	57.6	42.4	100.0
Post-Primary Total		39.2	23.9	63.2	36.8	100.0
Special	Controlled	22.5	47.1	69.6	30.4	100.0
	RC Maintained	10.0	71.7	81.7	18.3	100.0
	Other Maintained	23.2	30.4	53.6	46.4	100.0
	TOTAL	21.9	48.0	69.9	30.1	100.0
All grant-aided schools	Controlled	31.7	25.1	56.8	43.2	100.0
	Voluntary	46.4	12.1	58.6	41.4	100.0
	RC Maintained	31.3	34.0	65.3	34.7	100.0
	Other Maintained	23.4	41.3	64.7	35.3	100.0
	Controlled Integrated	21.5	28.3	49.8	50.2	100.0
	Grant Maintained Integrated	36.2	30.5	66.7	33.3	100.0
GRAND TOTAL		33.8	26.8	60.6	39.4	100.0

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Excludes pupils present on school meals census day whose school day did not include a lunch break, including part-time nursery pupils and some P1 pupils (see background note 16).

² Paid meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income. Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).

³ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

⁴ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 3: Uptake of school meals (free and paid) - number and percentage of pupils present for lunch on school meals census day, by school type and school management type: 2012/13 - 2015/16

School Type	Management Type	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
		School meals provided ¹	Uptake ² %	School meals provided ¹	Uptake ² %	School meals provided ¹	Uptake ² %	School meals provided ¹	Uptake ² %
Nursery ³	Controlled	1,934	96.7	1,740	97.2	1,745	96.2	1,891	96.7
	RC Maintained	1,254	93.0	1,133	95.8	1,177	93.3	1,210	91.5
	TOTAL	3,188	95.2	2,873	96.6	2,922	95.0	3,101	94.6
Primary ⁴ and Preparatory Departments	Controlled	37,424	53.0	39,505	54.3	39,909	53.7	40,847	53.5
	Voluntary	1,113	67.8	1,035	68.1	1,068	67.2	1,109	69.7
	RC Maintained	43,332	60.1	44,652	60.9	46,186	61.7	47,427	62.3
	Other Maintained	1,653	60.7	1,833	64.1	1,980	65.2	2,099	64.9
	Controlled Integrated	1,473	44.7	1,628	47.9	1,813	50.6	1,891	50.1
	Grant Maintained Integrated	2,555	47.3	2,707	49.7	2,776	49.6	2,998	52.7
TOTAL	87,550	56.2	91,360	57.4	93,732	57.5	96,371	57.8	
Secondary (non grammar)	Controlled	14,738	55.3	14,119	54.4	15,337	61.4	15,418	62.8
	RC Maintained	22,666	61.4	22,071	60.9	24,365	68.4	24,259	70.7
	Other Maintained	316	63.5	246	47.1	358	65.1	381	66.4
	Controlled Integrated	914	38.7	825	36.7	901	40.8	1,106	49.1
	Grant Maintained Integrated	5,326	62.0	5,516	63.8	6,231	72.6	6,426	76.4
TOTAL	43,960	58.6	42,777	58.1	47,192	65.6	47,590	67.9	
Grammar	Controlled	6,831	46.8	7,046	48.4	7,787	51.8	7,930	55.4
	Voluntary	23,632	51.9	24,050	52.9	25,787	57.3	27,038	58.2
	TOTAL	30,463	50.7	31,096	51.8	33,574	55.9	34,968	57.5
Post-Primary	TOTAL	74,423	55.1	73,873	55.3	80,766	61.2	82,558	63.1
Special	Controlled	2,686	67.6	2,877	70.4	3,044	70.2	3,047	69.6
	RC Maintained	157	83.1	163	80.7	175	86.6	179	81.7
	Other Maintained	30	73.2	38	97.4	40	100.0	37	53.6
	TOTAL	2,873	68.4	3,078	71.2	3,259	71.2	3,263	69.9
All grant-aided schools	Controlled	63,613	54.0	65,287	54.8	67,822	56.3	69,133	56.8
	Voluntary	24,745	52.5	25,085	53.4	26,855	57.7	28,147	58.6
	RC Maintained	67,409	61.0	68,019	61.3	71,903	64.2	73,075	65.2
	Other Maintained	1,999	61.3	2,117	61.9	2,378	65.5	2,517	64.9
	Controlled Integrated	2,387	42.2	2,453	43.4	2,714	46.8	2,997	49.7
	Grant Maintained Integrated	7,881	56.3	8,223	58.3	9,007	63.5	9,424	66.9
GRAND TOTAL	168,034	56.3	171,184	57.0	180,679	59.7	185,293	60.6	

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income. Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).

² Uptake is expressed as the number of school meals provided (free and paid) as a percentage of the number of pupils present for lunch on census day. Pupils present for lunch excludes pupils present on school meals census day whose school day did not include a lunch break, including part-time nursery pupils and some P1 pupils (see background note 16).

³ Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

⁴ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 4: Number and percentage of school meals provided (free and paid) by type of meal provision, school type and school management type: 2015/16

School Type	Management Type	Traditional meals		Cash cafeteria meals ¹	
		Number	%	Number	%
Nursery ²	Controlled	1,891	100.0	0	0.0
	RC Maintained	1,210	100.0	0	0.0
	TOTAL	3,101	100.0	0	0.0
Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	Controlled	40,236	98.5	611	1.5
	Voluntary	962	86.7	147	13.3
	RC Maintained	45,883	96.7	1,544	3.3
	Other Maintained	2,099	100.0	0	0.0
	Controlled Integrated	1,891	100.0	0	0.0
	Grant Maintained Integrated	2,998	100.0	0	0.0
	TOTAL	94,069	97.6	2,302	2.4
Secondary (non grammar)	Controlled	882	5.7	14,536	94.3
	RC Maintained	1,918	7.9	22,341	92.1
	Other Maintained	292	76.6	89	23.4
	Controlled Integrated	0	0.0	1,106	100.0
	Grant Maintained Integrated	418	6.5	6,008	93.5
	TOTAL	3,510	7.4	44,080	92.6
Grammar	Controlled	0	0.0	7,930	100.0
	Voluntary	2,210	8.2	24,828	91.8
	TOTAL	2,210	6.3	32,758	93.7
Post-Primary Total		5,720	6.9	76,838	93.1
Special	Controlled	2,905	95.3	142	4.7
	RC Maintained	157	87.7	22	12.3
	Other Maintained	37	100.0	0	0.0
	TOTAL	3,099	95.0	164	5.0
All grant-aided schools	Controlled	45,914	66.4	23,219	33.6
	Voluntary	3,172	11.3	24,975	88.7
	RC Maintained	49,168	67.3	23,907	32.7
	Other Maintained	2,428	96.5	89	3.5
	Controlled Integrated	1,891	63.1	1,106	36.9
	Grant Maintained Integrated	3,416	36.2	6,008	63.8
	GRAND TOTAL		105,989	57.2	79,304

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Cash cafeteria meal figures presented are equated meals: Where schools have a cash cafeteria system for lunch the meal numbers are calculated based on lunchtime income. Income from morning break provision is also included in the calculation of meal numbers (see background note 15).

² Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

³ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 5: Number and percentage¹ of pupils entitled to free school meals by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total enrolment	Nursery ²	5,910	5,852	5,882	5,904
	Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	168,034	171,548	175,042	178,222
	Secondary (non grammar)	83,059	81,339	79,840	77,753
	Grammar	62,599	62,634	62,713	63,359
	Special	4,653	4,832	5,064	5,173
	All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools)	319,602	321,373	323,477	325,238
	All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	324,255	326,205	328,541	330,411
Entitlement to free school meals	Nursery ²	1,934	1,977	2,096	2,240
	Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	50,175	53,197	55,526	56,265
	Secondary (non grammar)	23,094	22,046	29,626	30,990
	Grammar	4,607	4,606	7,610	8,811
	Special ⁴	-	2,460	2,660	2,757
	All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools)	79,810	81,826	94,858	98,306
	All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	-	84,286	97,518	101,063
Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals¹	Nursery ²	32.7	33.8	35.6	37.9
	Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	29.9	31.0	31.7	31.6
	Secondary (non grammar)	27.8	27.1	37.1	39.9
	Grammar	7.4	7.4	12.1	13.9
	Special ⁴	-	50.9	52.5	53.3
	All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools)	25.0	25.5	29.3	30.2
	All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	-	25.8	29.7	30.6

Source: NI school census 2011/12 - 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Percentages express the number of pupils entitled to free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of the total pupil enrolment in the same category.

² As school meals are not universally available to children in pre-school education, receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is used as a proxy for free school meal entitlement. Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

³ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

⁴ Prior to 2014/15 free school meal entitlement data for special schools was not validated.

Table 6: Number and percentage¹ of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

School Type	Management Type	Pupils entitled to free school meals	Free school meal entitlement %
Nursery²	Controlled	1,300	31.6
	RC Maintained	940	52.5
	TOTAL	2,240	37.9
Primary³ and Preparatory Department	Controlled	23,776	29.0
	Voluntary	22	1.3
	RC Maintained	27,937	34.5
	Other Maintained	1,459	42.3
	Controlled Integrated	1,389	35.6
	Grant Maintained Integrated	1,682	27.0
TOTAL	56,265	31.6	
Secondary (non grammar)	Controlled	9,493	34.7
	RC Maintained	16,702	44.1
	Other Maintained	400	64.5
	Controlled Integrated	928	37.4
	Grant Maintained Integrated	3,467	36.8
TOTAL	30,990	39.9	
Grammar	Controlled	1,760	11.8
	Voluntary	7,051	14.6
	TOTAL	8,811	13.9
Post-Primary	TOTAL	39,801	28.2
Special	Controlled	2,551	52.3
	RC Maintained	173	76.9
	Other Maintained	33	44.6
	TOTAL	2,757	53.3
All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	Controlled	38,880	29.2
	Voluntary	7,073	14.1
	RC Maintained	45,752	37.8
	Other Maintained	1,892	45.7
	Controlled Integrated	2,317	36.3
	Grant Maintained Integrated	5,149	32.9
GRAND TOTAL	101,063	30.6	

Source: NI school census 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Percentages express the number of pupils entitled to free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of the total pupil enrolment in the same category.

² As school meals are not universally available to children in pre-school education, receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is used as a proxy for free school meal entitlement. Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

³ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools.

Table 7: Number and percentage of pupils taking free school meals as a proportion of all school meals provided and as a proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type and school management type: 2015/16

School Type	Management Type	Free school meals taken by pupils present	Free meals as a proportion of all school meals provided¹ %	Free school meals taken as a proportion of pupils entitled %
Nursery²	Controlled	807	42.7	62.1
	RC Maintained	666	55.0	70.9
	TOTAL	1,473	47.5	65.8
Primary³ and Preparatory Department	Controlled	19,185	47.0	80.7
	Voluntary	20	1.8	90.9
	RC Maintained	24,081	50.8	86.2
	Other Maintained	1,306	62.2	89.5
	Controlled Integrated	1,056	55.8	76.0
	Grant Maintained Integrated	1,353	45.1	80.4
	TOTAL	47,001	48.8	83.5
Secondary (non grammar)	Controlled	7,108	46.1	74.9
	RC Maintained	13,110	54.0	78.5
	Other Maintained	281	73.8	70.3
	Controlled Integrated	648	58.6	69.8
	Grant Maintained Integrated	2,951	45.9	85.1
	TOTAL	24,098	50.6	77.8
Grammar	Controlled	1,372	17.3	78.0
	Voluntary	5,819	21.5	82.5
	TOTAL	7,191	20.6	81.6
Post-Primary	TOTAL	31,289	37.9	78.6
Special	Controlled	2,061	67.6	80.8
	RC Maintained	157	87.7	90.8
	Other Maintained	21	56.8	63.6
	TOTAL	2,239	68.6	81.2
All grant-aided schools	Controlled	30,533	44.2	78.5
	Voluntary	5,839	20.7	82.6
	RC Maintained	38,014	52.0	83.1
	Other Maintained	1,608	63.9	85.0
	Controlled Integrated	1,704	56.9	73.5
	Grant Maintained Integrated	4,304	45.7	83.6
	GRAND TOTAL	82,002	44.3	81.1

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Percentages express the number of pupils taking free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of all school meals provided in the same

² Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

³ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

Table 8: Uptake of free school meals - number and percentage¹ of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Free school meals taken by pupils present	Nursery ²	1,386	1,240	1,264	1,473
	Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	42,158	44,292	46,078	47,001
	Secondary (non grammar)	17,656	16,715	22,838	24,098
	Grammar	3,745	3,674	6,132	7,191
	Special	1,792	2,001	2,248	2,239
	All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools)	64,945	65,921	76,312	79,763
	All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	66,737	67,922	78,560	82,002
Pupils entitled to free school meals	Nursery ²	1,934	1,977	2,096	2,240
	Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	50,175	53,197	55,526	56,265
	Secondary (non grammar)	23,094	22,046	29,626	30,990
	Grammar	4,607	4,606	7,610	8,811
	Special ⁴	-	2,460	2,660	2,757
	All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools)	79,810	81,826	94,858	98,306
	All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	-	84,286	97,518	101,063
Free school meals taken as a proportion of pupils entitled¹	Nursery ²	71.7	62.7	60.3	65.8
	Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	84.0	83.3	83.0	83.5
	Secondary (non grammar)	76.5	75.8	77.1	77.8
	Grammar	81.3	79.8	80.6	81.6
	Special ⁴	-	81.3	84.5	81.2
	All grant-aided schools (excluding special schools)	81.4	80.6	80.4	81.1
	All grant-aided schools (including special schools)	-	80.6	80.6	81.1

Entitlement Source: NI school census 2011/12 - 2015/16

Uptake Source: NI school meals census 2011/12 - 2015/16

Notes:

¹ Percentages express the number of pupils entitled to free school meals in a particular category (e.g. those at primary school) as a proportion of the total pupil enrolment in the same category.

² As school meals are not universally available to children in pre-school education, receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is used as a proxy for free school meal entitlement. Only includes pupils at nursery schools.

³ Includes pupils in reception and nursery classes of primary schools

⁴ Prior to 2014/15 free school meal entitlement data for special schools was not validated.

Table 9: Adults taking school meals, by school type: 2015/16

	Adults taking school meal (free or paid)	Adults taking free school meal¹ %
Nursery ²	312	98.4
Primary ³ and Preparatory Departments	5,952	91.0
Secondary (non grammar)	2,606	83.7
Grammar	1,824	61.8
Post-Primary Total	4,430	74.7
Special	716	95.0
All grant-aided schools	11,410	85.1

Source: NI school meals census 2015/16

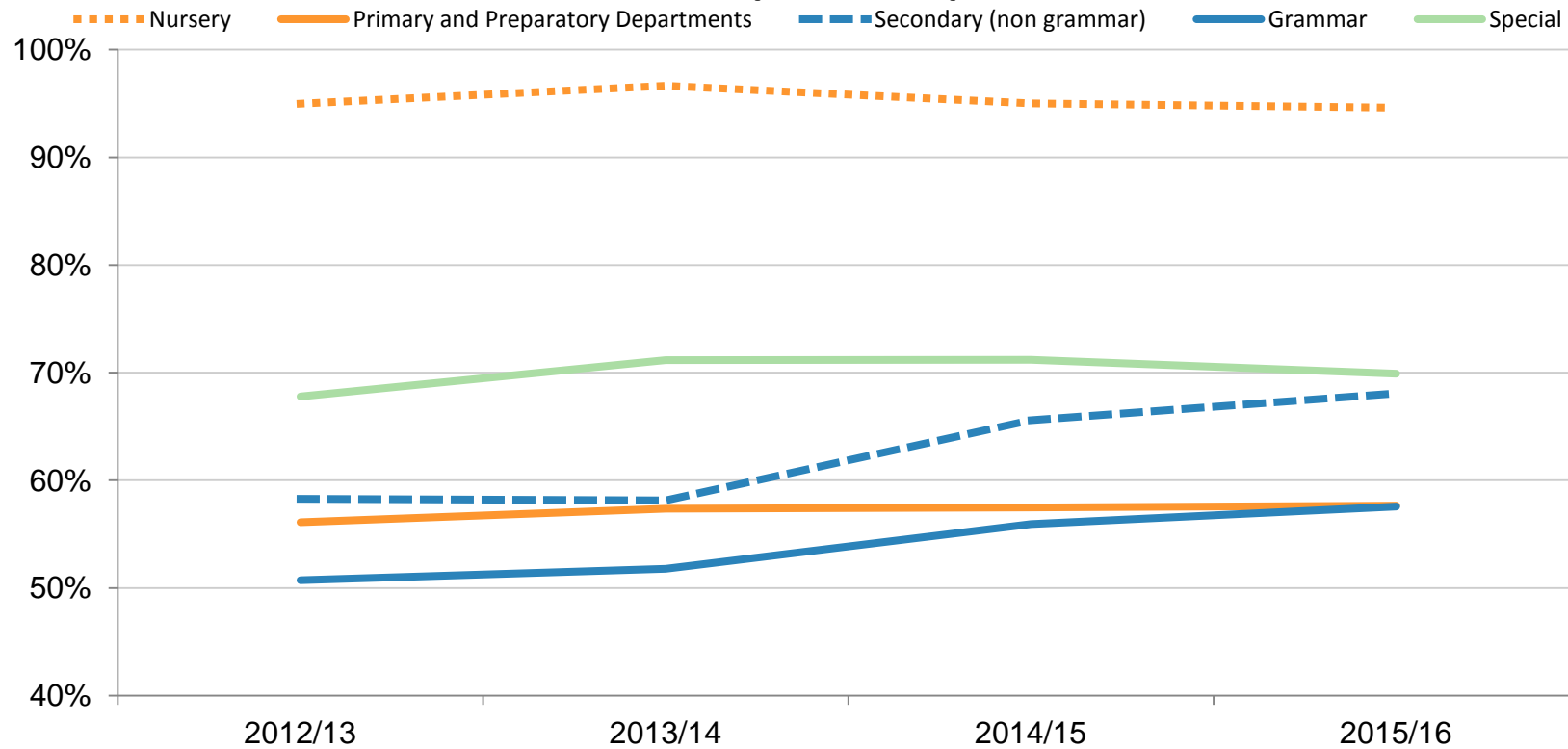
Notes:

¹ Depending on their terms and conditions kitchen staff and mid-day supervisors may be entitled to a free mid-day meal.

² Only includes nursery classes in nursery schools.

³ Includes reception and nursery classes in primary schools.

**Figure 1: Uptake of school meals (free and paid), by school type:
2012/13 - 2015/16**

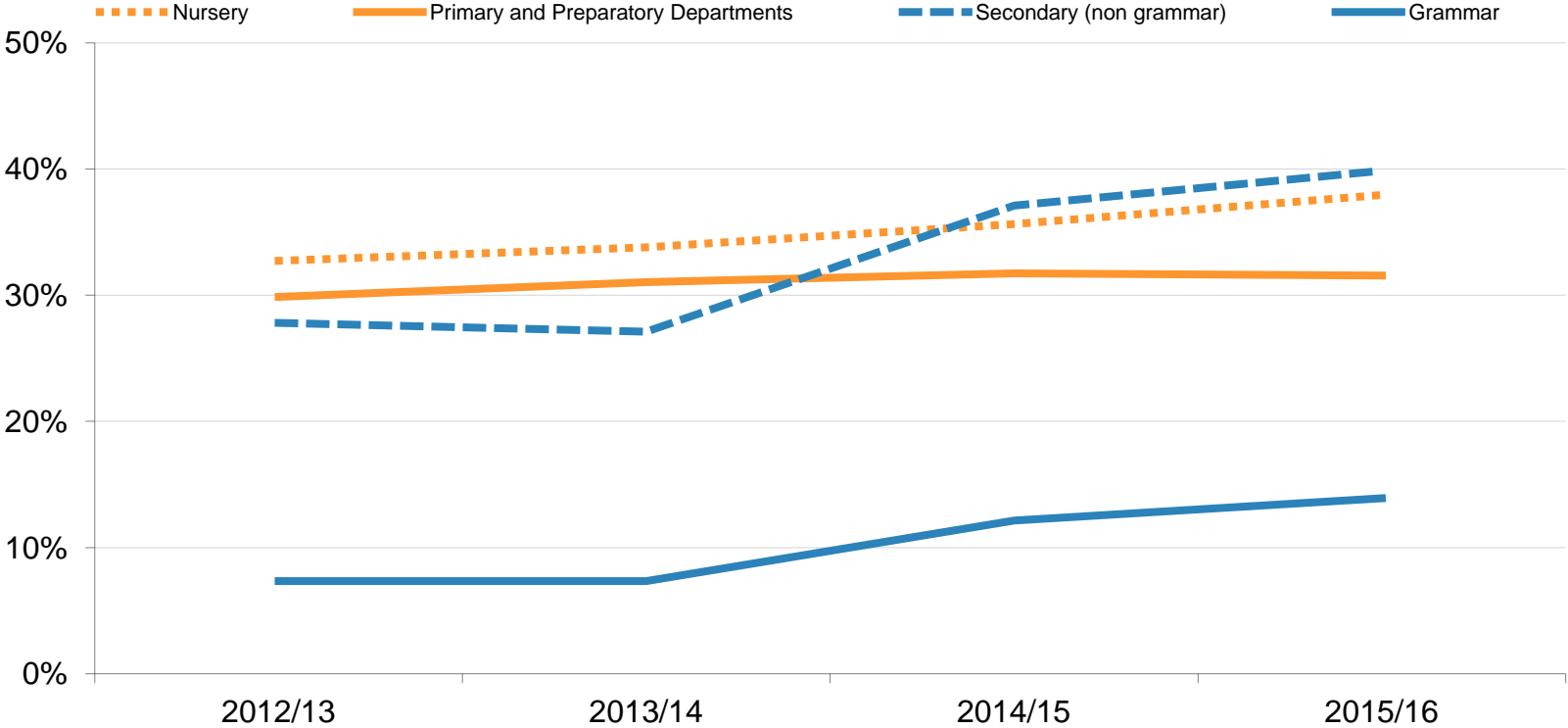


¹ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools

² Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes

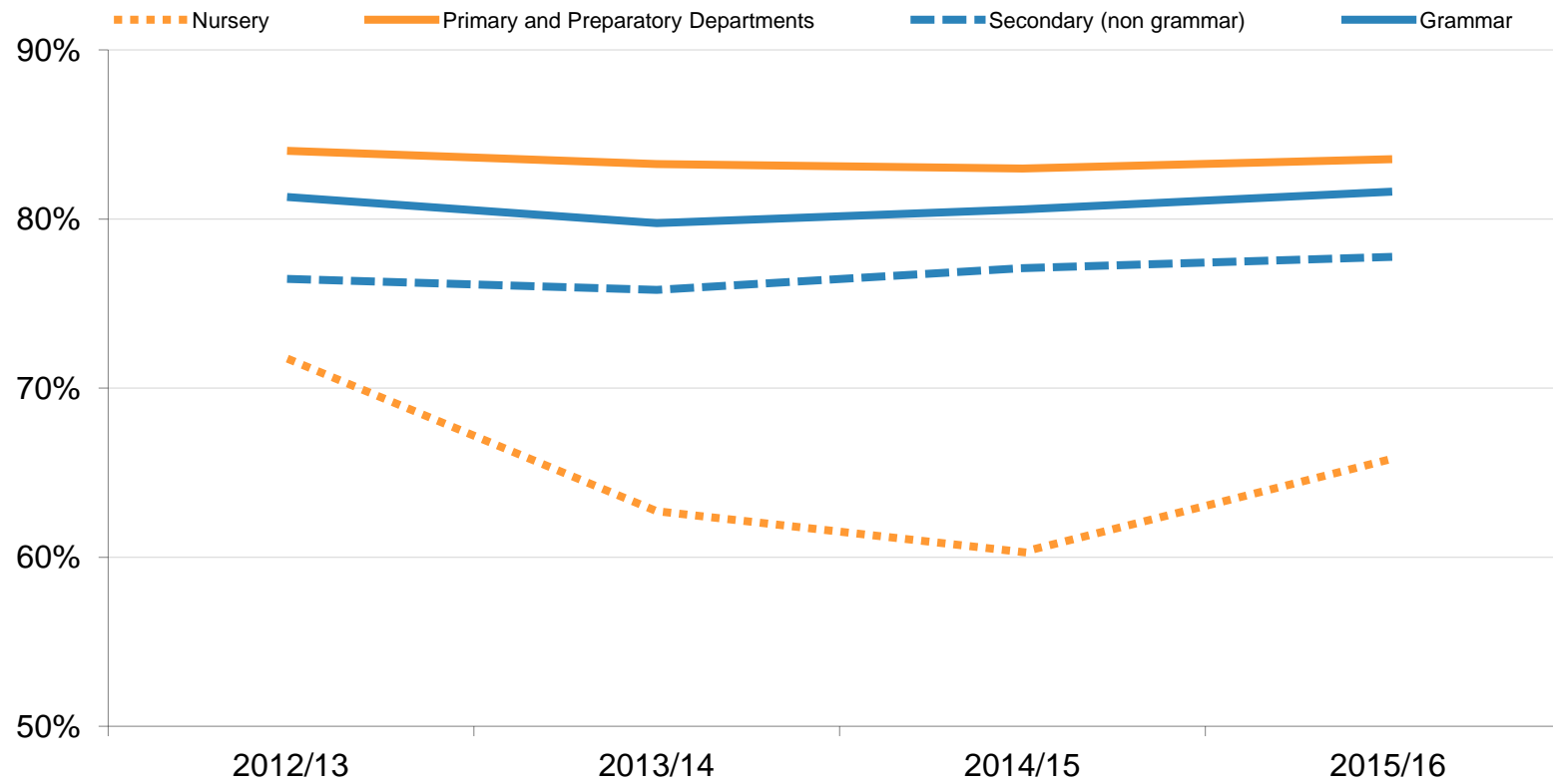
³ Data taken from Table 3

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16



¹ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools
² Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes
³ Data taken from Table 5

Figure 3: Uptake of free school meals, by school type: 2012/13 - 2015/16



¹ Nursery only includes pupils in nursery schools

² Primary includes pupils in reception and nursery classes

³ Data taken from Table 8