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CHILDREN EDUCATED OUTWITH SCHOOL, 2002/03

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A Scottish Executive National Statistics Publication

The results of the 2002/03 survey of children educated outwith school are published today by the Scottish Executive Education Department.

These results have been collated from returns made by local authorities in Autumn 2003.

The main points are:

- In 2002/03, 1,867 children were recorded by local authorities as having received education outwith school at some point during the year, a 15 per cent increase from 2001/02. This rise was mainly due to increases in the number receiving education during prolonged periods of ill-health.
- There were 1,298 children who received education at home or in hospital due to prolonged ill health, or through special arrangements put in place as a result of family illness. This compares with 1,137 in 2001/02, an increase of 14 per cent.
- A further 89 children received education under 'other extraordinary circumstances', compared with 40 children in 2001/2. Examples of 'extraordinary circumstances' include pupils unable to attend school because of geographical remoteness, travellers' children who may spend part of the school year outwith school and prolonged adverse weather affecting the ability of island children to attend school.
- In 2002/03, 352 children were known by local authorities to be receiving home education as a result of parental choice, who had at some point in the past been in local authority school education. This figure had risen by 21 (six per cent) from the previous year. It is recognised however that more such children may be home educated, but are not currently in contact with their local authority.

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- Another 128 children who had never been in local authority school education were known by local authorities to be receiving home education as a result of parental choice, a rise of eight (seven per cent) from the previous year. It is recognised however that more children may be home educated, but are not currently in contact with their local authority.
- There was a large amount of variation between local authorities. Glasgow's figure was the highest proportion (compared to school-age population) educated out of school, mainly due to provision for those with prolonged ill health, while East Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire had the lowest proportion. The highest proportions of children receiving home education as a result of parental choice were in Shetland Islands, Orkney Islands and Perth & Kinross, though this may relate purely to the extent to which authorities know of such children.

TABLES

Table 1 - Children Educated Outwith School in Scotland 2000/01 to 2002/03.

Table 2 - Children Educated Outwith School, by local authority, 2002/03.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. This survey was run for the first time in Autumn 2001. Local authorities (LAs) provided details of all children who were educated outwith school at any point during the school year, whether out of necessity (Section 14 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980) or by parental choice (Section 30). The survey replaces and extends the previous survey of pupils educated outwith school (SC4) which provided only a snapshot picture of Section 14 children during a given week in September. This year's results are therefore comparable with figures from 2000/01 onwards, but not comparable with earlier figures.
2. Following the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 education authorities must make special arrangements for the education of children who are unable to attend school because of prolonged ill-health and exemptions caused by family illness. The rise in this figure this year is likely to reflect increased implementation of the Act. The Executive issued guidance to authorities on this duty in December 2001. Authorities may also make special arrangements for children who cannot attend because of extraordinary circumstances.
3. Section 30 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that parents have a duty to provide efficient education for their school age children which is suited to their age, ability and aptitude. They may do this by ensuring that their child attends a local authority school regularly, or by other means, including the provision of education at home. Children who receive education at home under Section 30 do so as a result of parental choice, and are distinct from those who, due to illness or exceptional circumstances, are unable to attend school.

4. Parents of children who have started to attend a local authority school must seek the LA's consent before withdrawing their child from school to educate them at home. LAs reported that they were aware of 352 such children who were educated at home in 2002/03, though there may be others. Parents of children who have never attended a local authority school are not required to seek the consent of their LA in order to educate them at home. LAs reported that they were aware of 128 such children, although there may be others. Some home educating families may not be in contact with the authorities, even though LAs have a responsibility, at least in principle, to ensure that an efficient education is being provided.
5. The Scottish Executive is preparing guidance for local authorities on the circumstances in which parents may choose to educate their children at home. The purpose of this guidance is to promote a consistency of approach across Scotland by setting out the legislative position, providing advice on the roles and responsibilities of education authorities and parents, and giving examples of good practice. A second draft of the guidance was issued for consultation in July 2003. This second consultation has now closed and the responses are being analysed.
6. This is a National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
7. Public enquiries (non-media) about the information contained in this News Release should be addressed to Mal Cooke, Statistician, Scottish Executive Education Department, Area 1-A, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ.
telephone 0131 244 1689
e-mail school.stats@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
8. Media enquiries about the information in this News Release should be addressed to: Rona Dunbar tel. 0131 244 2670

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Table 1:

Children Educated Outwith School in Scotland, 2000/01 - 2002/03

	Receiving education under Section 14		Receiving education under Section 30		Total
	due to prolonged ill-health or illness of family member	other extraordinary circumstances	withdrawn from local authority school	never attended local authority school	
2000/2001	1,016	739	261	88	2,104
2001/2002	1,137	40	331	120	1,628
2002/2003	1,298	89	352	128	1,867

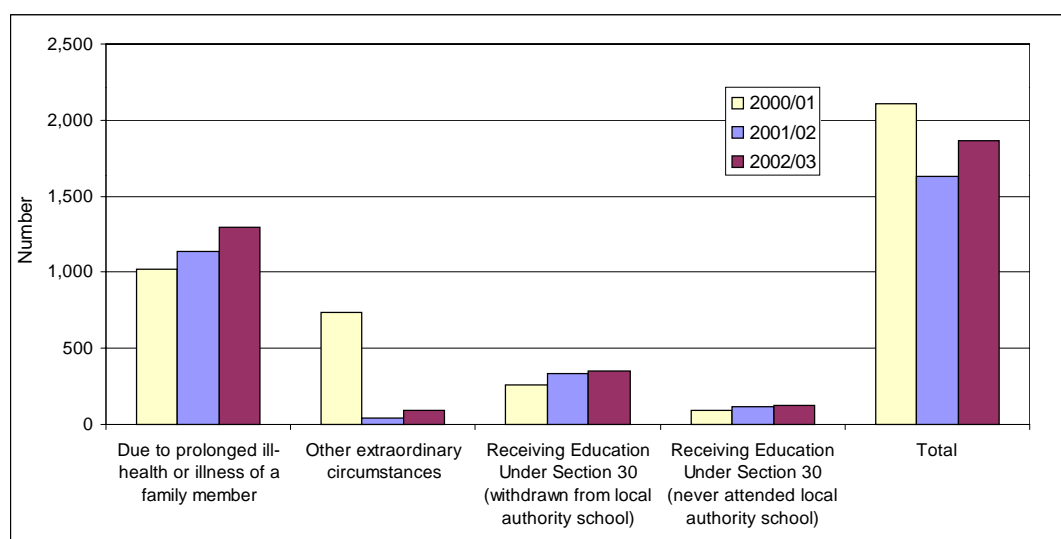


Table 2: Children Educated Outwith School, by Local Authority, 2002/03

	Receiving education under Section 14		Receiving education under Section 30		Population aged 5-15 ¹	Total
	due to prolonged ill-health or illness of family member	other extraordinary circumstances	withdrawn from local authority school	Never attended local authority school		
SCOTLAND	1,298	89	352	128	686,741	1,867
Aberdeen City	21	*	9	*	23,954	40
Aberdeenshire	7	8	6	6	34,334	27
Angus	6	*	*	*	14,656	15
Argyll & Bute	34	-	21	-	12,323	55
Clackmannanshire	11	*	5	*	7,189	21
Dumfries & Galloway	23	-	*	*	20,123	46
Dundee City	12	-	*	*	18,084	21
East Ayrshire	8	-	*	*	17,162	18
East Dunbartonshire	12	-	-	-	15,866	12
East Lothian	24	-	5	-	13,463	29
East Renfrewshire	*	*	*	*	13,854	2
Edinburgh, City of	174	-	-	-	50,542	174
Eilean Siar	*	-	*	5	3,629	13
Falkirk	22	9	23	-	20,011	54
Fife	53	14	66	12	48,833	145
Glasgow City	551	-	6	5	72,881	562
Highland	13	*	24	*	29,155	54
Inverclyde	6	-	-	5	11,600	11
Midlothian	21	*	*	-	11,850	32
Moray	10	5	11	5	12,456	31
North Ayrshire	*	-	23	*	19,704	44
North Lanarkshire	48	-	*	*	45,982	60
Orkney Islands	*	*	*	6	2,869	13
Perth & Kinross	10	-	36	24	18,323	70
Renfrewshire	14	-	*	*	23,621	22
Scottish Borders	*	-	28	*	14,618	41
Shetland Islands	-	-	7	7	3,449	14
South Ayrshire	18	*	*	*	14,562	33
South Lanarkshire	134	-	*	*	42,350	152
Stirling	17	*	*	*	11,851	28
West Dunbartonshire	5	-	-	-	13,147	5
West Lothian	*	12	*	-	24,300	23

* Number less than 5, or where if shown, it would be possible to calculate other values to be less than 5. These numbers are suppressed to protect the confidentiality of individuals. Where the figure is an authority total, it has been left in, but all detailed data, including zeros, have been suppressed.

1. Children being educated outwith school may be aged under 5 years or over 15 years.