School Census in SIMS .net

Spring 2026

Coventry City Council

DIGITAL SERVICES
FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Data Protection Disclaimer

Screenshots used in this presentation

have been taken from a test system.

People depicted do not exist.

Screen shots are used for illustration purposes only.

Agenda and Objectives

- Part 1 – Statutory background, scope and key dates

- Part 2 – Preparing for the school census
  - Checking your data to make sure its ok for census
  - Entering the relevant data for census

- Part 3 – Producing the school census SIMS7
  - Starting a census return
  - Creating and validating your return
  - Correcting and validating errors by editing individual pupil records or using the bulk update tool
  - Authorising your return (a crucial step required to verify your data)
  - Printing detailed reports
  - Printing a summary of the census

- Part 4 – Census in SIMS Next Gen

Introduction

- Statutory data collection exercise run by central government with data from schools MIS systems.

- Data collected is determined by central government

- There are three (pupil) censuses each year – **Autumn**, **Spring** and **Summer,** there is also a school workforce census too.

- It is a snapshot of data in your system on census day – along with some historical data from previous periods.

- Different ranges and types of data are collected at each census – but the process to run the census in your MIS is broadly the same each time.

- **A wider variety of data is collected in the Spring census.**

- MIS providers incorporate changes to data requirements in each census by upgrading their software.

Statutory Requirement

- The submission of school census individual pupil records is a statutory requirement on schools under:
  - Section 537A of the Education Act 1996
  - The Education (Information about individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013
  - Section 99 of the Childcare Act 2006
  - Childcare (Provision of Information About Young Children (England) Regulations 2009
- This means
  - Schools do not need to obtain parental or pupil consent to the provision of information.
  - Ensures that schools are protected from legal challenge that they are breaching a duty of confidence to pupils
  - Helps to ensure that returns are completed by schools.

Key Dates

- Census Day – **Thursday 15th January 2026**

- Deadline for return to the LA (maintained schools) – **Friday 30th January 2026**

- Attendance data – **01/08/2025 to 31/12/2025** (not applicable to Nursery schools)

- Exclusions – **21/04/2025 to 31/12/2025** (not applicable to Nursery schools)

- Free School Meal Eligibility – **03/10/2025 to 15/01/2026**

- AP Placements – **02/10/2025 to 15/01/2026** (not applicable to Nursery schools)

- Funding and Monitoring – **01/08/2025 to 15/01/2026** (not applicable to Nursery schools)

- Learner Support (Secondary Only) – **01/08/2025 to 15/01/2026**

Future Census Dates

Dates for your diary:

- Summer Census - **Thursday 21st May 2026**

Webinar dates will be announced nearer to the census.

Pupils in Scope

- All pupils on the register on census date

- Any additional pupils subject to any type of suspension or permanent exclusion in the previous 2 terms (i.e. Summer 2025 and Autumn 2025)

- Any additional pupils who attended the school in the previous term for which termly attendance data is required (not nursery schools)

- Any additional pupils who had an alternative provision (AP) placement within the collection period (since the last census day) (not nursery schools)

- Any additional pupils who were recorded as in receipt of learner funding and monitoring since the start of the academic year (not nursery schools)

- Any additional pupils who attended the school in the previous academic year for which Post-16 learning aims are submitted (Secondary, All through and AP schools)

New & Discontinued Data Items

- There are no new data items for Spring 2026

Known Issues

Reporting Post-16 Maths Minimum Planned hours and English Minimum Planned Hours

- Currently the DfE validation specification for School Census Spring 2026 indicates that these minimum planned hours must be reported in the spring and summer school censuses as well as the autumn school. However, we understand that the requirement for providing the hours in the spring and summer censuses will be removed by a new version of the DfE specification. Fileset 3202 will correct this error.

Data Areas to Check

SIMS .net Census

Coventry City Council

DIGITAL SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Core Details & Extended Services

Focus | School | School Details

- Ensure that your core school details and childcare services are recorded in the Extended Services module

- Check your **School Time** is recorded

- Check the **Extended Services** box on panel 1

- Scroll to panel **6 Childcare** and review the information, if you need to edit a row, select it and and click **Open**

School Time

- **Not applicable to Nursery Schools**

- Schools should provide the total compulsory time pupils spend in school in a typical 5-day week. The number of hours must be recorded to 2 decimal places to the nearest 15 minutes (that is, where a school is open for 32 and a half hours, for example, this is recorded as 32.50, with 32 and three-quarter hours being 32.75).

- This includes the total time each day from the official start of the compulsory school day (the start of morning registration) to the end of the compulsory school day (official home time).

- This figure will be inclusive of breaks, as these form part of the total compulsory school day, but it will not include optional activities either before or after school. The data entered should be representative for pupils aged 5 to 16 in the school.

Pupil Level Data – Basic Details

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details

Basic Details panel

Addresses panel

Pupil Level Data: Registration Details

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details | Registration panel

Part Time Indicator

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details | Registration panel

- Collected for on and off roll pupils

- A pupil is considered part time if they attend school for 9 or less sessions each week. It does not indicate that a pupil is part-time at one or more establishments.

- For children in receipt of funded early education a child should only be recorded as full time where they attend education for 10 sessions a week, irrespective of the number of funded or extended childcare hours.

- Compulsory school-age pupils on a part-time timetable are recorded as full-time with the appropriate absence code used for the sessions they do not attend.

Alternative Provision Placements

- Alternative Provision Placements should be completed by all types of school, including:
  - primary
  - middle-deemed primary
  - middle-deemed secondary
  - secondary
  - all-through
  - special
  - PRU and AP schools

- **If your school has not arranged any AP placements during the collection period, you do not need to complete this module.**

Alternative Provision Placements (1)

- **Focus | Pupils | Pupil Details | Registration** panel

- Navigate to the School Arranged Alternative Provision Placements section of the Registration panel

- Click New to add a new provision

Alternative Provision Placements (2)

Specify the type of setting within which the AP placement has been arranged.

You MUST only return ONE of the following 3 options.

Option 1. AP URN

Record and submit the get information about schools (GIAS) unique reference number (URN), where available, of the establishment within which the AP placement has been arranged.

If the provider does not appear on GIAS, leave this field blank.

Option 2. AP UKPRN

If the establishment does not have a URN, record and submit the UK provider register number (UKPRN) of the establishment within which the AP placement has been arranged. The UK Register of Learning Providers provides details of UKPRNs.

If the provider does not have a UKPRN, you should leave this field blank.

Alternative Provision Placements (3)

Option 3. AP Setting (plus Companies House No and AP Postcode)

Where the placement does not have a URN or UKPRN the type of setting within which the pupil has taken up an alternative provision placement must be recorded instead.

Where the type of setting is completed, URN and UKPRN must be blank. If URN or UKPRN are completed, the type of setting must remain blank.

Companies House No and Setting Postcode

Where the type of setting is included, the setting's postcode must be returned. If the provision has one, its Companies House company number must also be included.

To help these fields are greyed out unless you enter an AP setting

Alternative Provision Placements (4)

- AP **placement reason**: records, for school commissioned placements, the main or primary reason why the AP was arranged (drop down list).

- AP **placement date of entry**: records the pupil's entry date into alternative provision.

- AP placement **attendance pattern**: records the pupil's planned attendance pattern at the alternative provision provider.

- AP placement **sessions per week**: records, where the pupil's attendance pattern is **part time**, the pupil's planned number of sessions per week

Alternative Provision Placements (5)

- AP placement **SEN provision on entry**: records SEN provision at the time of entry into alternative provision. *If this data is already in your MIS, this data item should be automatically populated*.
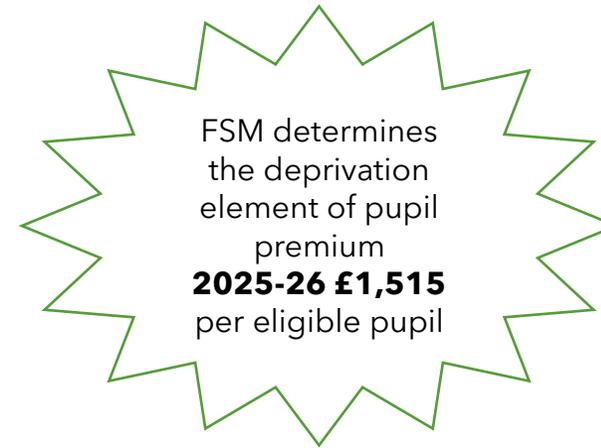
- AP placement **date of leaving**: records the date the pupil leaves alternative provision (where applicable).

- AP placement **SEN provision on leaving**: records SEN provision at the time of leaving alternative provision (where applicable). *If this data is already in your MIS, this data item should be automatically populated*.

Alternative Provision: single-registered pupils

- PRU and AP schools only should complete this module for all pupils who have been single-registered (those with an enrolment status of 'C', 'F' or 'O').

- This includes all:
  - single-registered pupils on roll on census day
  - pupils who were single-registered but who have been removed from the roll within the census period

- If your school has arranged placements in other AP settings for these pupils, you should also complete the alternative provision placements arranged by the schools module for each placement.

- Data to be submitted includes:
  - URN of Previous School: records the URN of the establishment that the pupil attended prior to attending the AP school.
  - Alternative provision reason records the main or primary reason why the AP was arranged.
  - Alternative provision placement SEN provision on entry: record SEN provision at the time of entry into the PRU or AP.

Free School Meals

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details | Dietary panel

- Free school meal information is collected for pupils with the following periods of eligibility
  - Start date is on or before **15/01/2026**
  - End date is either blank or between **03/10/2025 to 15/01/2026**

FSM determines the deprivation element of pupil premium **2025-26 £1,515** per eligible pupil

Free School Meal Eligibility

- Check your FSM list from the LA and ensure all eligible children have the correct dates entered

- **How to check if a child is FSM Eligible**

- Schools should have access to the FSM Portal/Connect which will give you access to view your live FSM list. If you do not have access, you can register directly through the website: https://coventrycc.capitaone.cloud/publicaccesslive/selfservice/citizenportal/login.htm

FSM: No recourse to public funds

- Since April 2022, free school meal eligibility was permanently extended to children from all groups with **no recourse to public funds** (NRPF), subject to the following income thresholds where applicable:
  - £22,700 per annum for families outside London with one child
  - £31,200 per annum for families within London with one child
  - £26,300 per annum for families outside London with 2 or more children
  - £34,800 per annum for families within London with 2 or more children

- These children should be marked as receiving free school meals on the school census, in the same way that children who are eligible for free school meals under the benefits-based criteria would be.

- Schools should retain any evidence of eligibility for audit purposes.

- Use this link for more information on free school meals for groups with NRPF

FSM: Advance Notice of changes coming in 2026/27

- Since 1 April 2018, all existing free school meals claimants have continued to receive free school meals whilst Universal Credit has been rolled out. This has applied regardless of any change in household circumstances, including if their earnings rise above the threshold during that time. **Protections will remain in place until the end of the 2025 to 2026 school year.**

- From the start of the 2026 to 2027 school year, DfE will extend the entitlement to free school meals to include all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit. The DfE will end transitional protections alongside this change in threshold. Eligibility for all pupils will revert to whether they meet the eligibility criteria, regardless of whether they were previously protected.

- The DfE will issue further guidance before September 2026.

Ethnicity & First Language

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details | Ethnic / Cultural panel

Service Children Indicator

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details | Additional Information panel

- This information is used to determine the service **pupil premium** allocations for schools.

- You must only record this information if it has come from the parent or guardian or the child

Youth Support Services Indicator

- **This is for PRU, AP, Special and Secondary Schools Only**

- There is a legal requirement under the Education and Skills Act 2008 for schools to pass information on request to the youth support service for pupils in or approaching the age of 13.

- Parents – or pupils themselves, if aged 16 or over – have the right to object to any information (over and above name, address and date of birth) being shared with the local authority or provider of youth support services. As part of a school's privacy notice, you must advise parents and pupils of their right to object.

Youth Support Services Indicator [2]

- You should return the youth support services agreement for all pupils who are aged 12 and above as at 31 August. If it is not completed, the system will default to 'unsought'.

- If the value 'No' is recorded, information beyond name, address and date of birth cannot be shared with the youth support service as the parent or pupil has successfully exercised their right to object to the data being shared.

Youth Support Services Indicator [3]

Focus | Pupil (or Student) | Pupil (or Student) Details | Additional Information panel

Select the applicable Youth Support Services Agreement (YSSA) status from the drop-down list

Young Carer

Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details | Welfare panel (Young Carer section)

- Schools are required to record whether a pupil has been identified as a young carer and by whom.

- A young carer is a person under the age of 18 who provides care and support for another person at home (not a contract or voluntary work).

- Select applicable **Identified by** information
  - Identified as a young carer by parent or guardian
  - o Identified as a young carer by the school
  - o Not declared

Special Educational Needs

Focus | Pupil | Special Educational Need or

Focus | Pupil Details | click SEN (in the Links panel on right handside) and add the necessary details in **Panel 3 Basic SEN details**

- Check with your SEN Co-ordinator that all children with a special educational need are marked as such.
    - All Students with current SEN provisions should have an SEN record with a valid **SEN status code**
    - Any Students who have transitioned to no longer having any kind of SEN requirement should have their latest record updated to include an **SEN status code** 'N' for No Special Educational Need
    - Any Student in possession of an SEN provision (other than N) should also have at least one **SEN Need** defined
    - Students with a provision but no specific type of need should be entered with the **SEN Need** of **No Specialist Assessment.**

Enrolment Status: Dual Registered Pupils

Routines | Pupil | Change Enrolment Status

- If you have any dual registered pupils, please ensure that you have recorded their status (and at the other school) as either **Main** or **Subsidiary**

- Attendance for Dual Registered students should only be entered at the Subsidiary school for the sessions they are expected to be attending there.

- The corresponding periods at the **Main** school should be populated with the attendance code **D**

Checking & Adding in Bulk

Pupil Level Data - Basic Checks

- All students should have a valid **UPN (Unique Pupil Number).**

- All relevant students should have a **ULN (Unique Learner Number)** are mandatory for students aged 14 and over on census day.

- All students should have a **valid address.**

- Students should have **first language** and **ethnicity entered**.

- All correct students should be admitted.

- Part-time details have been checked/updated.

- Any students who **did not** attend (any session) but who were admitted should be deleted.

- Leavers should have their date of leaving entered correctly.

- Any students with an exclusion (in the previous 2 terms) should have their data checked and missing items entered.

Adding information in bulk

Routines | Pupil | Bulk Update

- Many data items can be checked and entered using the **Bulk Update Student** routine

- Enables you to search for missing or invalid data, then update in bulk

- Choose a **Group Type** (e.g. Year) and a **Group** to work on.

- Then choose a data time to update e.g. Ethnicity

- Enter the correct **Effective Date** (defaults to today's date but it might be more appropriate to change this to the start of the academic year)

General Reminder about start dates

- Several data items have start dates

- For example, addresses

- Census will report missing data if the start date is after the census reference date e.g. 15/01/2026

So, please remember to put in the start date as before the census date
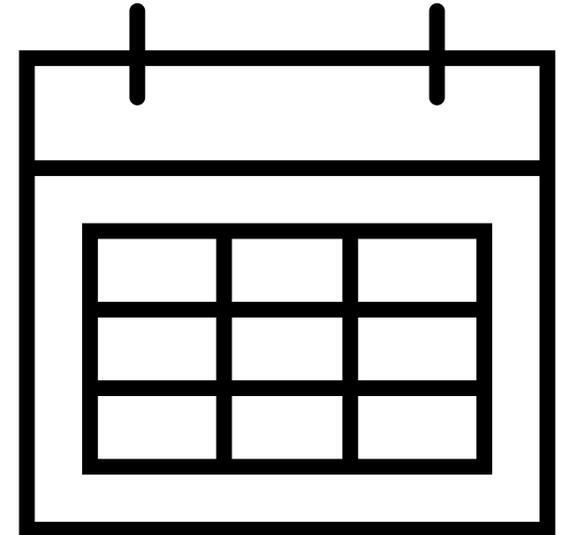
Attendance

- Spring Census looks back at Attendance data from the Start of the Autumn Term

1st August 2025 – 31st December 2025

- Check for **missing marks**, **N codes**, and students with any gaps in their attendance.

Attendance Data Checking for N Codes

- Locate **N codes** that have not yet been dealt with

- **Focus > Attendance > Deal with unexplained absences**
  - Enter the date range **01/08/2025 – 31/12/2026**
  - Run the report for the Whole School
  - Click Open
  - **Enter the missing information and save**

Attendance Data
Dealing with missing marks

- Locate N codes that have not yet been dealt with

- **Focus > Attendance > Deal with missing marks**
  - Enter the date range **01/08/2025 to 31/12/2025**
  - Run the report for the Whole School
  - Click Open
  - **Enter the missing information and save**

Top Up Funding

Tools | Statutory Return Tools |

Update Students with Top-up Funding

- If you are receiving top up funding for any children, ensure their details are recorded.

- Usually, but not always, the pupils for whom a primary or secondary mainstream school receives top-up funding are those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

- In the top section you search for children and chose to add them to the Top-up Funding panel.

- You can remove children if the Top-up Funding is no longer received.

Post Looked After

Tools | Statutory Return Tools |

Update Students Post Looked After Arrangements

- Information should be recorded for children, who have left local authority care in England and Wales through **adoption, a special guardianship order, a residence order or a child arrangements order** and are still subject to such orders on census day.

- These children will be eligible for the post looked-after element of the **pupil premium funding**.

- Ensure that any students on roll who were previously looked after by a local authority are recorded as such.

Funding and Monitoring

Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Funding and Monitoring

- For the 2025 to 2026 academic year, it will identify pupils:
  - in receipt of tutoring
  - resitting or retaking up to one year of 16 to 19 funded provision
- **There is no action required by schools where none of these attributes applies to the pupil.**

Updating Class Types

Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Class Type

- Applicable to Primary schools only

- Before starting the return, it is necessary to indicate which class a pupil is a member of – either Nursery (if the child is currently in a LA designated Nursery Unit) or Other (any other class).

Early Years

Tools | Statutory Returns | Update Early Years – Update Early Years

Eligibility codes are brought forward from the previous census – you will need to check these

- You need to enter:
  - hours at setting
  - funded hours
  - disability access fund
  - eligibility code
  - extended hours
  - expanded hours
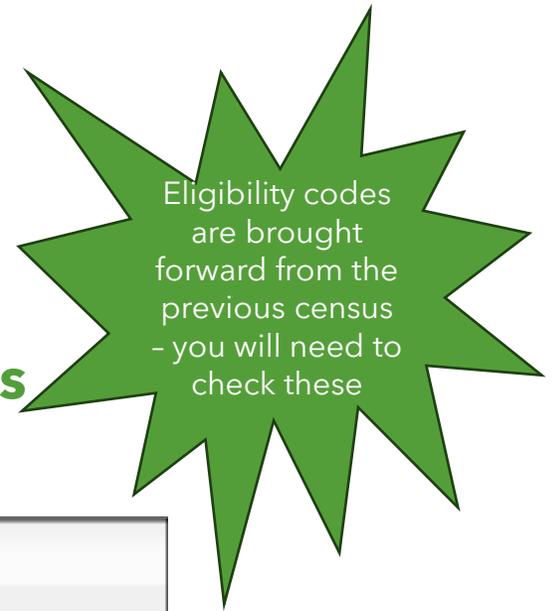
Update Early Years

Save | Undo

Census
Term [Autumn 2025 ▼] [Update Hours]

Pupils View
Age at 31/08/2025 [All ▼] YTI [All ▼] Reg [All ▼] Status [All ▼]

Pupils

Expanded Hours are collected for pupils aged 9 months to 2 at 31/08/2025 if they have an Eligibility Code.
Extended Hours are collected for pupils aged 3 & 4 at 31/08/2025 if they have an Eligibility Code.

Name	Date of Birth	AdNo.	YTI	Reg	Age at 31/08/2025	Hours at Setting	Funded Hours	Disability Access Fund	Eligibility Code	Extended Funded Hours	Expanded Funded Hours
Arnold,Rachel	01/01/2021	002024	N2		4	15	15	No			
Baltimore,Tessa-Louise	31/03/2021	002025	N2		4	30	15	No	99999999999	15	
Basudhara,Farah	01/09/2021	002026	N2		3	15	15	No	01234567892		
Bondar,Mykola	31/12/2021	002027	N2		3	30	15	No	01234567893	15	
Bondar,Yana	01/09/2022	002028	N2		2	15	0	No			
Hussain,Suki	08/05/2023	002029	N2		2	30	0	No	01234567895		30
Johnes,Jada	01/09/2023	002030	N2		1				01234567896		
Kalinski,Alicja	01/09/2024	002031	N2		0				01234567897		

Funded Hours (1)

- The following data is collected:
  - **Hours at Setting:** include **all funded hours** (universal, expanded, extended) **plus any additional hours funded by other means** e.g. by the parent.
  - **Funded Hours:**- are the **universal funded** childcare hours that a child receives (up to 15 hours for 3-year olds and eligible disadvantaged 2-year olds).
  - **Extended Childcare Hours:** up to 15 additional hours for 3- and 4-year-olds of working parents with a valid eligibility code
  - **Expanded Hours:** up to 30 hours for 9 months-2-year-olds of working parents with a valid eligibility code

Funded Hours (2)

- **2 Year Olds: Funded hours** + **<u>Expanded</u> hours** (+ **additional hours** funded by other means if applicable) MUST equal **Hours at Setting**

- **3 & 4 Year Olds: Funded hours**+ **<u>Extended</u> hours** (+ **additional hours** funded by other means if applicable) MUST equal **Hours at Setting**

- Funded hours are recorded as decimals and not hours and minutes. E.g. 10.5 is (10 hours 30 minutes), 10.33 (10 hours 20 minutes).

Early Years Extended & Expanded Hours

- **Expanded** hours (9-months to 2-year olds, working parents)
    - Up to 30 hours funded hours from September 2025
    - May be used in conjunction with 2-year funding for disadvantaged children

- **Extended** hours (3-year olds, working parents)
    - Number of hours in addition to the initial 15 funded hours that a child receives and is applicable to three- and four-year-olds only
    - Can double the universal 15 hours of free childcare to 30 hours per week.

- **Eligibility criteria**
    - Parents must obtain an **Eligibility code** from HM Revenues and Customs and provide this to the school.
    - Both parents must be working (or a sole parent working) and live in England.
    - Each parent earn a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours (minimum wage or living wage)
    - Each parent must have an income below the specified amount (circa £100,000)

- For dual registered pupils record the hours spent in education at each school. The main registration records funded hours in education at the main registration, with the subsidiary school recording funded hours in education at the subsidiary registration.

Eligibility Code

Tools > Statutory Return Tools > Update Early Years

- For a student to be correctly in receipt of extended or expanded hours of funding they should also have been provided with a valid 11-digit Eligibility code.

- This code should be entered in the provided Eligibility Code box within the Early Years panel.

Funded Universal Entitlement

Census	Date of birth ranges, school type and pupil national curriculum year group	Maximum funded entitlement hours
Spring 2026	2-year-olds born between 2023-01-01 and 2023-12-31 (inclusive) – all relevant schools and year groups	15 hours
Spring 2026	3-year-olds born between 2021-09-01 and 2022-12-31 (inclusive) – all relevant schools and year groups	15 hours
Spring 2026	4-year-olds born between 2021-01-01 and 2021-08-31 (inclusive) for pupils in national curriculum year groups 'E1', 'E2', 'N1' and 'N2' only	15 hours

Extended Funded Entitlement

Census	Date of birth ranges, school type and pupil national curriculum year group	Maximum funded entitlement hours
Spring 2026	3-year-olds born between 2021-09-01 and 2022-12-31 (inclusive) with an eligibility code – all relevant schools and year groups	15 funded universal free entitlement hours + 15 extended free entitlement hours equals 30 hours
Spring 2026	4-year-olds born between 2021-01-01 and 2021-08-31 (inclusive) with an eligibility code – for pupils in national curriculum year groups 'E1', 'E2', 'N1' and 'N2' only	15 funded universal free entitlement hours + 15 extended free entitlement hours equals 30 hours

Expanded Funded Entitlement

Census	Date of birth ranges, school type and pupil national curriculum year group	Maximum funded entitlement hours
Spring 2026	9-month-olds to one-year-olds born between 2024-01-01 and 2025-03-31 (inclusive) with an eligibility code – all relevant schools and year groups	30 hours
Spring 2026	2-year-olds born between 2023-01-01 and 2023-12-31 (inclusive) with an eligibility code – all relevant schools and year groups	30 hours

Stretched Funded Hours

- All cases of funded universal or extended entitlement should be recorded as 38 weeks, regardless of whether they are stretched or not.

- Where a child takes the full funded universal or extended entitlement (570 hours for each entitlement), this should be reported as 15 funded universal hours, extended hours or expanded hours irrespective of how many weeks of the year over which the entitlement is spread.

- However, where a child takes only part of the funded universal or extended entitlement a conversion is required to calculate how many hours they take over the year.

- For example, a child takes 11 hours a week over 45 weeks in the year, totalling 495 hours. To convert the funded universal or extended entitlement to the number of hours a child would attend each week if they were taking it over 38 weeks, divide 495 by 38 to get 13.03 hours.

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

Tools | Statutory Returns | Update Early Years - Update Early Years

- Early Years settings providing funded places for children in receipt of disability living allowance (DLA) are eligible to receive disability access funding (DAF)

- Payable as a lump sum once a year - £938 per child.

- Schools need to submit relevant information through the Early Years portal and the LA will confirm eligibility

- Schools record eligibility in SIMS for inclusion in the census return

- Disability Access Fund data is collected in this return for pupils who are in receipt of the fund on census day

Disability Access Fund

Census	Date of birth ranges, school type and pupil national curriculum year group
Spring 2026	9-month-olds to one-year-olds born between 2024-01-01 and 2025-03-31 (inclusive) - all relevant schools and year groups
Spring 2026	2-year-olds born between 2023-01-01 and 2023-12-31 (inclusive) - all relevant schools and year groups
Spring 2026	3-year-olds born between 2021-09-01 and 2022-12-31 (inclusive) - all relevant schools and year groups
Spring 2026	4-year-olds born between 2021-01-01 and 2021-08-31 (inclusive) - for pupils in national curriculum year groups 'E1', 'E2', 'N1' and 'N2' only

Suspensions & Permanent Exclusions

Focus | Pupil | Exclusions

- Exclusions are collected for the previous two terms.

- Exclusion data is required for **21/04/2025 to 31/12/2025**

- Permanent Exclusions **MUST** have **the governor's decision** and **date decision** notified completed

Exclusions, a reminder

For permanent exclusions, these children will be off roll. However, some of their data may need to be completed, e.g. missing ethnicity, addresses etc. if it was missing when they were on roll.
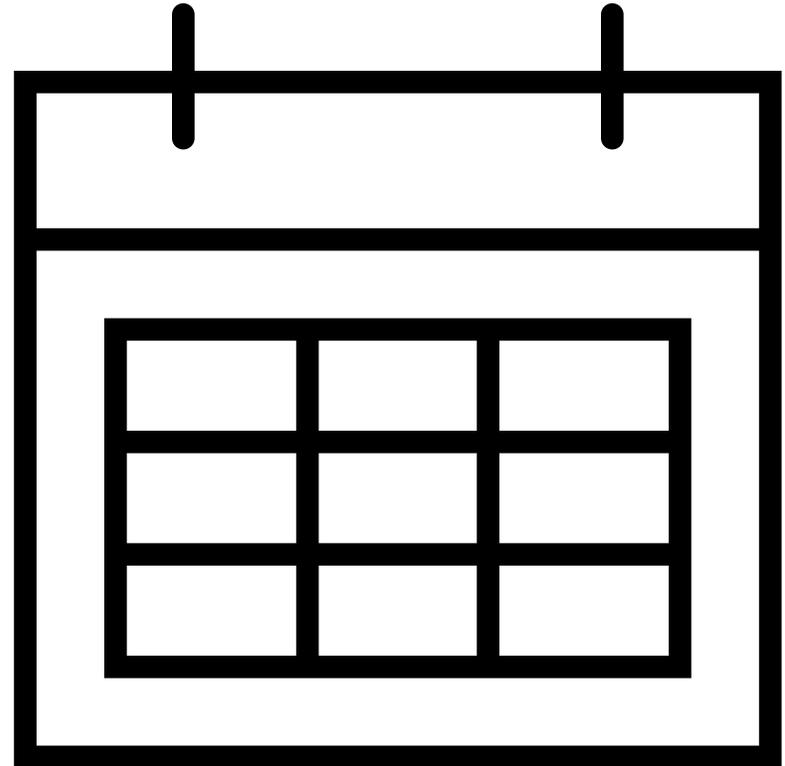
Creating your census return

Using SIMS

Coventry City Council

DIGITAL SERVICES
FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Generate Your Census

- **Routines > Statutory Returns > School Census**

- Check the file set is **3202**

- If it is not, please contact Digital Services

Census Return for Spring 2026 Term [Fileset ID: 3201 imported on 06/01/2026]

New   Search   Open   Delete   Browse   Next   Previous   Copy
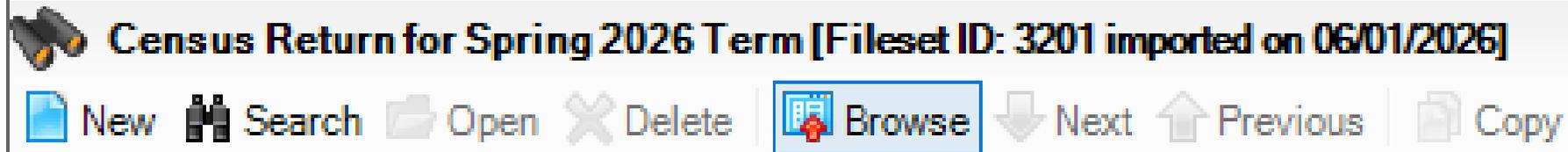
Calculate all Details

- Check the dates provided are correct and you are generating the correct return.

- Click New to generate a new return

- Click **Calculate All Details**

School Information panel

- This information is pulled from the School Detail screens (Focus | School | School Details)

- If anything is wrong, click the **School Details** button and update it.

Special Schools Only

- You may be asked to confirm these details.

- Please enter the correct information in the boxes.

- Ask your Headteacher if you are unsure.

Focus | School | School Details to display the School Details page. 2. Click the **Special Schools Information** hyperlink to display the Special Schools Information panel.

Childcare panel

- Check to make sure the information contained is correct. If you need to make any changes do this through Focus | School | School Details or click **Edit.**

- Then click **Recalculate** on this panel.

Early Years panel

- Panel 4 – applicable to schools with Early Years children only

- Data can be recorded via the **Edit** button in this **Early Years panel** <u>or</u> if you have prepared in advance this will be pulled through from **Tools | Statutory Returns | Update Early Years – Update Early Years** page

- You need to enter their hours at setting, funded hours, expanded hours and extended hours

- Click **Recalculate** (on the panel) to pull existing data through and then click **Edit** to add in the relevant data

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

- EYPP is additional funding for early years settings to improve the education they provide for disadvantaged pupils

- EYPP is paid by local authorities direct to schools.

- Schools will submit the parent application information captured from the Early Years funding forms to the LA via the Early Years portal. The local authority will use the eligibility checking service to verify the application against benefits-related data.

- Schools will receive confirmation of eligibility via a report in the portal. **This confirmation is usually received after census day and schools will be required to update the census with this information before it is submitted**.

- Children are eligible to receive EYPP if they are taking any of the following:
    - universal funded entitlement for 3- and 4-year-olds
    - disadvantaged entitlement for 2-year-olds
    - expanded entitlement for 9-month-olds to 2-year-olds

Basis of 2-year old funding for disadvantaged children

- Primary Schools should record the basis of funding for 2-year olds in receipt of the 15-hours funding for disadvantaged children. You can record multiple basis:
  - Economic criteria
  - High-level SEN or disability
  - Looked after or adopted from care

Early Years PP & 2-Year-Old Basis for funding

- Record eligibility for Early Years pupil premium in the **Basis for EYPP Eligibility** column

- Record eligibility for 2-year old funding for disadvantaged children in the **2 Year Old Basis for Funding** box, include the basis for funding (more than one can be selected)

Early Years Pupil Premium Receipt

Name	Date of Birth	AdNo.	YTI	Reg	Age at 31/08/2025	In Care	Basis for EYPP Eligibility
Cracknell,Luke	15/01/2022	002136	N2	PM	3	No	Receipt - economic
Dean,Rosanna	20/05/2022	002137	N2	PM	3	No	Not Eligible
Franklinson,Alexis	14/05/2022	002138	N2	PM	3	No	Not Eligible
Franklinson,Tyreece	14/05/2022	002139	N2	PM	3	No	Receipt - other

2 Year Old Basis for Funding

Name	Date of Birth	AdNo.	YTI	Reg	Economic Criteria	High level SEN or Disability	Looked After or Adopted From Care
Aditya,Safia	22/04/2021	001964	N2	AM	Yes	Yes	Yes
Basir,Zoya	28/04/2021	001965	N2	PM	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dawson,Andrew	14/11/2021	001968	N2	AM			

Class Type panel

- Complete the class type as necessary, click **Edit.**

- You should mark every child who is a member of a **nursery** class as such. And all other children as Other. This can be done in bulk by using the filter options to filter by the **year (YTI)** and **Reg** drop down menus.

- You can then mark all students with the correct class type by clicking on the appropriate column heading and selecting **Check All**

- If editing in bulk, you may need to click **Recalculate**
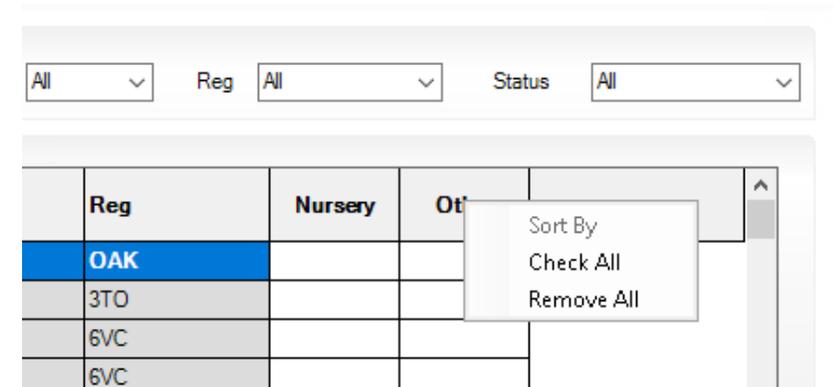
Top Up Funding panel

- If you are receiving top up funding for any children, ensure their details are shown on this panel.

- Click **Edit** to add and update any information.

- If you recorded this via **Tools | Statutory Returns | Update Students with Top-up Funding** page ahead of creating the census the information will pull through. Click **Recalculate** (on the panel) to pull existing data through.

Post Looked After Arrangements panel

- Ensure that any children who are subject to post looked after arrangements (i.e. children who were previously in local authority care).

- Data can be recorded via the **Edit** button in this **Post Looked After Arrangements** panel <u>or</u>

- If you recorded this via **Tools | Statutory Returns | Update Post Looked After Arrangements** page ahead of creating the census the information will pull through. Click **Recalculate** (on the panel) to pull existing data through.
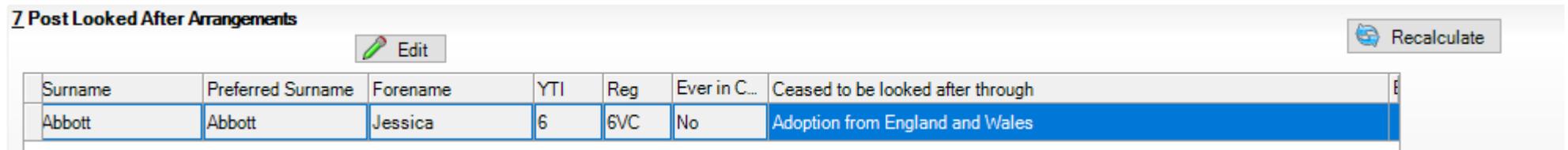
7 Post Looked After Arrangements

							Recalculate
Edit							

Surname	Preferred Surname	Forename	YTI	Reg	Ever in C...	Ceased to be looked after through	
Abbott	Abbott	Jessica	6	6VC	No	Adoption from England and Wales	

Funding and Monitoring panel

- Ensure any children who are receiving tutoring are recorded on this panel.

- If you recorded this via **Tools | Statutory Returns | Update Post Looked After Arrangements** page ahead of creating the census the information will pull through. Click **Recalculate** (on the panel) to pull existing data through.

- Click Edit to update.
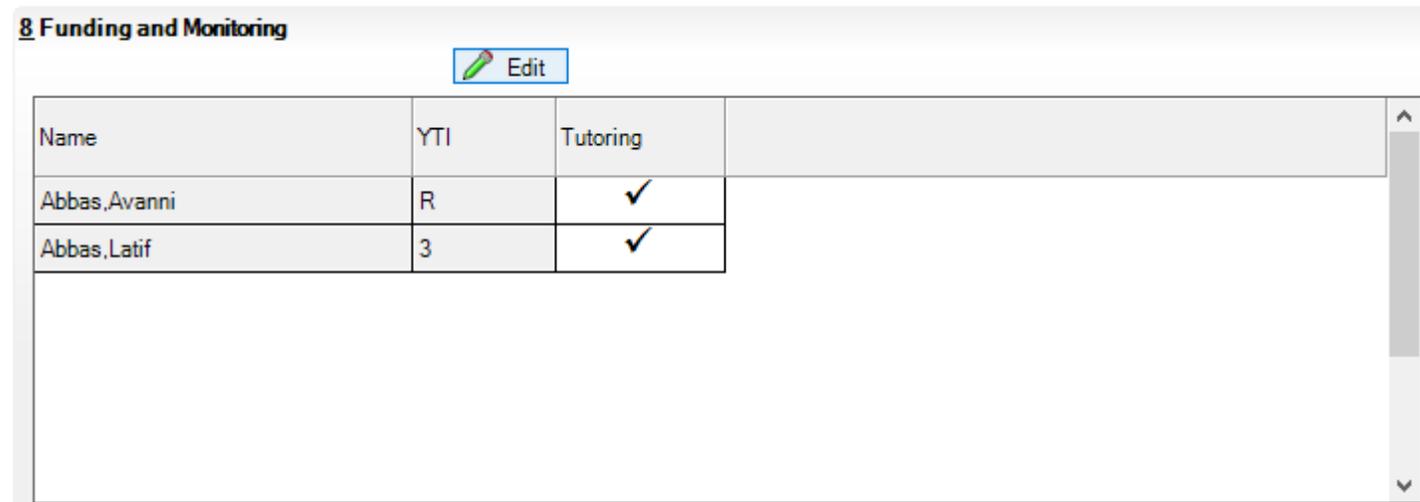
8 Funding and Monitoring

Edit

Name	YTI	Tutoring	
Abbas,Avanni	R	✓	
Abbas,Latif	3	✓	

School Dinner Taken panel

- This panel records the pupils who have taken a school dinner on census day.

- If your school is using **Dinner Money** then the information can be calculated from dinner money – click **Calculate from Dinner Money** otherwise click **Calculate from Attendance**

- Manual edits can also be made if required.

School Lunches Taken on census day

- Information about school lunches taken on Census day (Years R, 1 & 2) is used for allocating funding for universal infant free school meals (UiFSM). Schools should try to maximise take up of UiFSM on census day.

Classes panel

- This panel records the details of the classes taking part at the **designated** time.

- Staff numbers (Teachers, PPA Teachers, Support Staff).

- Key Stage

- Class Type – Other or Nursery

- Activity – pick from the list the activity that the class is undertaking at the specified time.

Class Information – selected time

- The class information is taken at a selected time based on the last digit of your school's DfE Establishment number e.g. 331/299**6**

- The data collected is:
  - Class name, year group, class type, key stage
  - Number of on roll and guest students
  - Number of teachers and support staff
  - Activity undertaken – e.g. the subject being taught

Last digit of your departmental number	Selected time
0, 1 or 5	the selected time is one hour before the end of morning school
2, 3 or 6	the selected time is one hour after the start of afternoon school
4, 7, 8 or 9	the selected time is one hour after the start of morning school

Class information – unusual circumstances

- **Where the selected time is not appropriate** to the school timetable - for example, if the selected time is when the whole school or a large proportion of the school is in an assembly with the headteacher, schools can **choose an hour or period that reflects a 'normal' class** situation that applies at the selected time each Thursday of the term.

- **Do not record unusual situations** (such as class amalgamation or school closure) which may have occurred on census day due, for example, to staff training or absence, severe weather conditions or religious observances. See the section on unusual circumstances for more information.

- **Any group of pupils receiving instruction outside the normal class framework** at the selected time, such as pupils in a special educational needs (SEN) unit, **are treated as a separate 'class as taught'** unless this is an atypical or temporary arrangement.

Class Information – Infant Class Guidance (1)

- [The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012](#) limit the size of an infant class to 30 pupils per schoolteacher. Applies to Key Stage 1 and reception classes.

- Schools with these classes are asked to ensure that the selected period is one in which their infant classes are engaged in an ordinary teaching session.

- Ordinary teaching sessions does not include, school assembly, or any other school activity usually conducted with large groups of children such as PE /games, music, singing, drama, watching television or listening to the radio

Class Information – Infant Class Guidance (2)

- If at the time of the count, infant class children be involved in a group activity the count should be deferred to the next ordinary teaching session. **This change of selected time is for the whole school not just the infant classes**.

- Where an infant class has a pupil to teacher ratio greater than 30, schools MUST record in their MIS where this is due to:
    - any pupils within the class record as excepted
    - a teacher being on planning and preparation or learning manager time and the class is being supervised by a teaching assistant

Class Information – Infant Class Guidance (3)

- The calculation is based on the pupil:teacher ratio not pupil:adult ratio therefore, regardless of the number of teaching assistants, if there are no exceptions or teachers on PPA reported, the class will be treated as unlawful in Department for Education (DfE) publications if there are more than 30 pupils to one teacher.

Pupil Reconciliation: Pupil Numbers

- In relation to **Class Information**, the **Spring Census** checks that the number of pupils included in the return **matches** the number of pupils reported in classes as taught, taking into account any registered pupils who were not in class at the **selected time.**

- This information is recorded in the **Pupil Reconciliation** panel, which automatically draws the figures for **Pupils on Roll and in Classes** from the **Class Information** panel. **Schools must account for any pupils not in classes by entering the relevant figures in the appropriate groups within the panel.**

- It is important to ensure that the totals for **Total Pupils** and **Number of Pupils on Roll** match; otherwise, an error will appear when attempting to **Save & Validate**

Pupil Reconciliation panel

- Much of this information, will be pulled through from the **Class Information** panel

- So please make sure that is completed first

- For any information not on the panel, e.g. Private study, unscheduled part time, etc. you can enter the data directly

Attendance panel

- This panel will indicate to you if you have any missing marks for attendance.

- It will also show you if you have used any invalid attendance codes (i.e. old codes)

- If you do have any missing marks or incorrect codes these will need to be fixed, and you will need to click **Recalculate** to update the census return.

9 Attendance

Your attendance codes are DfE compliant

This will be rechecked at the Create & Validate stage

Recalculate
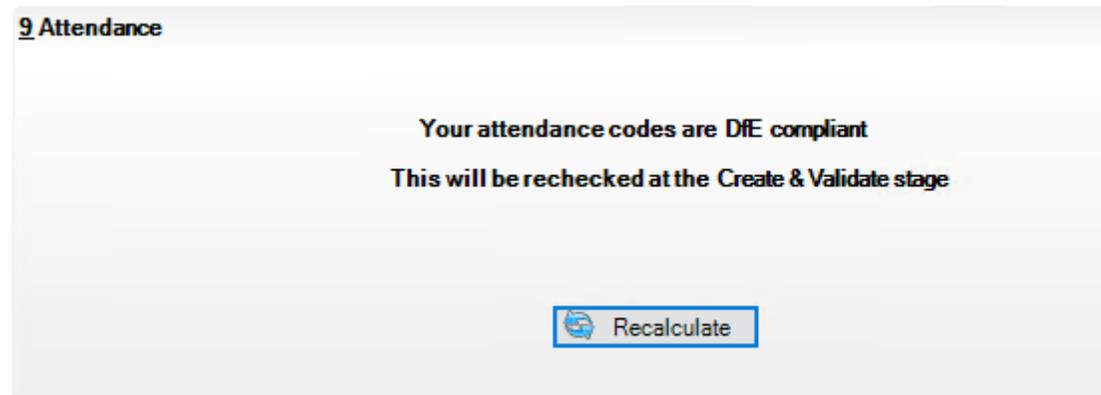
General panel

- Enter the number of free school meals taken on census day.

- This figure should **EXCLUDE** universal infant free school meals, but it should **INCLUDE** children in Year R, 1 and 2 who are eligible for free school meals for other reasons (e.g. deprivation).

13 General

| Number of free school meals taken on census day | 0 | FSM taken excludes the infant pupil universal entitlement (except for pupils in R,1,2 who are eligible for FSM) |

Admissions Appeals panel

- **Only returned in the Spring Census**

- **Only applicable to schools who are responsible for their own admission appeals.**

- Figures on admission appeals are collected in the spring census from schools that were responsible for their own appeals related to applicants having not received a requested offer of a place for the start of the current academic year.

- DfE do not need information about:
  - appeals lodged on or after 1 September in the current academic year
  - in-year appeals (appeals against a refusal to admit a pupil during the course of the current academic year) - just those that relate to entry at the start of the academic year

- Recent academy converters (including a conversion of an existing school into a sponsored academy) should complete this module if they converted before spring census day.

Admissions Appeals (2)

- You should only include appeals that are the responsibility of the school's governing body. If a school has contracted another agency, such as their home local authority, to administer their admissions appeals process and the school's governance code is 'VA', 'FO' or 'CA', the school should complete the module. If your school operates arrangements jointly with other schools, your return will include appeals for your school only.

- Further information can be found https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2025-to-2026

Admission Appeals (3)

- Information is required on the number of appeals:

  - lodged
  - withdrawn
  - heard
  - rejected
  - upheld - decided in favour of the parent

Admission Appeals (5)

- The admission appeals panel looks like this:-

- **Primary and all-through schools include their admission appeals figures for infants in both the infant and primary admission appeals modules.**

14 Infant Admissions Appeals

Foundation Schools/Voluntary Aided Schools/Academies must complete this section.(this does not include AP Academies, AP Free Schools, Academy Special Schools)

Independent Admissions Committee

Lodged	0	Heard	0
Withdrawn	0	Upheld	0
		Rejected	0

15 Primary Admissions Appeals

Foundation Schools/Voluntary Aided Schools/Academies must complete this section.(this does not include AP Academies, AP Free Schools, Academy Special Schools)

Independent Admissions Committee

Lodged	0	Heard	0
Withdrawn	0	Upheld	0
		Rejected	0

Validate the census

- Once you have entered the information into the panels click **Save**

- Next click **Create and Validate** this may take a while SIMS generates your census file.

- You will be shown a list of errors and queries.

Errors must be fixed.

**Queries may be ok, but you should review each
one and make a note on COLLECT if necessary.**

Dealing with errors & queries (1)

- Review each error/query and then double click the row to fix the error.

- After each batch of errors you have created, click **Create and Validate** again. This will reconfirm your census and refresh the list of errors displayed.

Reports

- Once you have saved and validated a census return, you can run the census reports.

- The reports are found under **DetailReport** we recommend that you run each report and check it for errors and show it to your headteacher so they know what data you are submitting.

Authorise the Return

Using SIMS

Coventry City Council

DIGITAL SERVICES
FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Authorise the return

- Once you have dealt with all errors and as many queries as possible, you should
    - View the summary of the return.
    - This should be presented to the headteacher for their sign off. You may want to keep a copy of this report with your headteachers authorisation.
    - **The return will influence your school's funding, so it's imperative that it is correct.**
- Once you are happy the data is correct, you can authorise the return using the Authorise button.

Authorise the return

- This process converts the **Census Return file** into the required **XML** format for uploading to the **COLLECT** website. Multiple **authorised** files can be retained, each **date-stamped** to assist in identifying the correct version for submission.

- The return is saved in the file location specified on your system.

Census Return for Autumn 2024 Term [Fileset ID: 2800 (SIMS.net)]

New   Search   Open   Delete   Browse   Next   Previous   Copy

Term   Autumn 2024   Census Folder   D:\MIS\Census
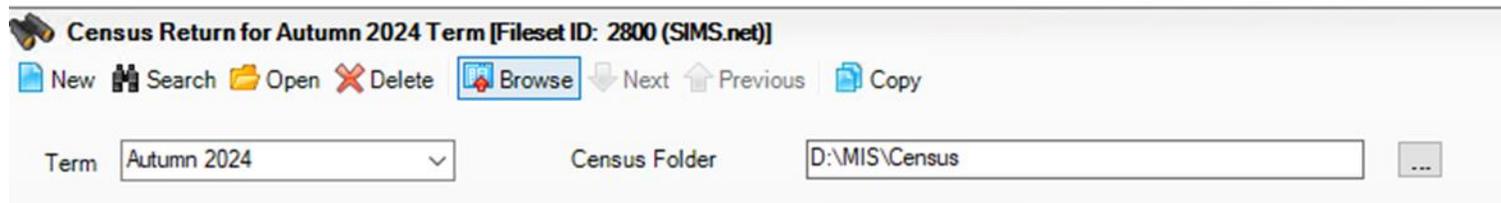
Upload the return

- Once authorised, locate the file on your system.

- The file name will be in the formation
  - **3314567_SC1_331LL24_001.XML**
    - Where 3314567 is your school's DfE number

- You should now upload this file to COLLECT.

- You can only upload .XML files to collect, don't try to upload any other file.

Using COLLECT

- To use COLLECT to submit your school census data, you'll need to register and log in with DfE sign-in

- Contact your school or local authority approver if:
  - you want to request a DfE sign-in username or password so you can access COLLECT
  - 'school census' is not on the list of collections you can see in COLLECT
  - If you do not know who your approver is, use the DfE sign-in request form.
  - If you've forgotten your password, use DfE sign-in to reset it. You'll need to click 'start now' and then the 'I've forgotten my password' link.

- COLLECT guides for school and local authorities are available for assistance with submitting your return to DfE.

Deadline

- Maintained schools please make sure you have uploaded your census file to Collect by

Friday 30th January 2026

- This is to enable the LA to undertake checks on your data prior to final submission to the DfE.

- Academy schools must have uploaded your file to collect by **Wednesday 11 February 2026**

Any Questions?

Further guidance & Help

- **SIMS Handbooks and error resolution available at [ICT Services for schools website](#)**

- **SIMS: Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census | Census Communication**
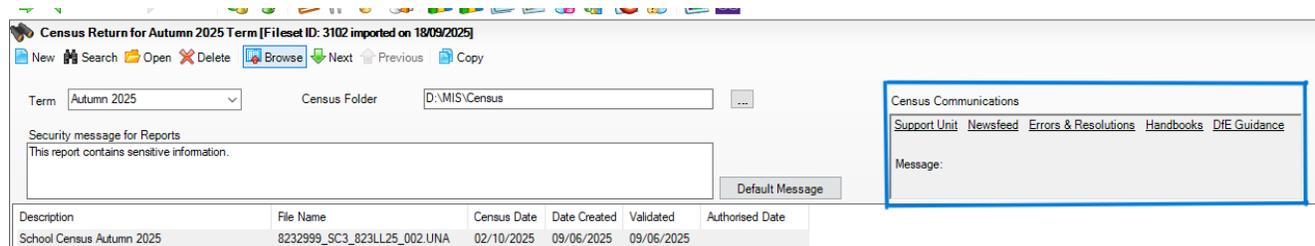
- **DfE Guidance – complete the school census**
  - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census

- **DfE Guidance – Data items 2025/26**
  - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2025-to-2026

- **DfE Guidance – Generate and submit the return**
  - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/submit-your-data

Further guidance & Help

- **Data Queries – Contact Data Team**

    - datateam.pd@coventry.gov.uk

- **Issues with SIMS – Contact Digital Services**

    - 024 7678 6620 or email schoolsict@coventry.gov.uk

SIMS Next Gen

Spring Census 2026

Coventry City Council

DIGITAL SERVICES
FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Census in Next Gen

- Census will be moving to SIMS Next Gen from Summer 2026

- SIMS Next Gen is available now for you to start using

- Next Gen roadmap for primary

- Next Gen roadmap for secondary

- If you would like some more information about SIMS Next Gen please get in touch

Census	Available in SIMS7	Available in SNG
Autumn Census 25	√	√ (early adopters only)
Spring Census 26	√	√
Catholic Census Spring 26	√	x
Summer Census 26	x	√
Autumn Census 26	x	√
SWC Autumn 26	√	√

Access Spring Census in SNG

- The Spring Census is available under the burger menu at **Statutory Processes | Statutory Returns**.

- The Statutory Returns page displays the census applicable to your school region and phase under **Your current and upcoming returns [1]**.

- To access the selected census, click on the corresponding census **[1]** button
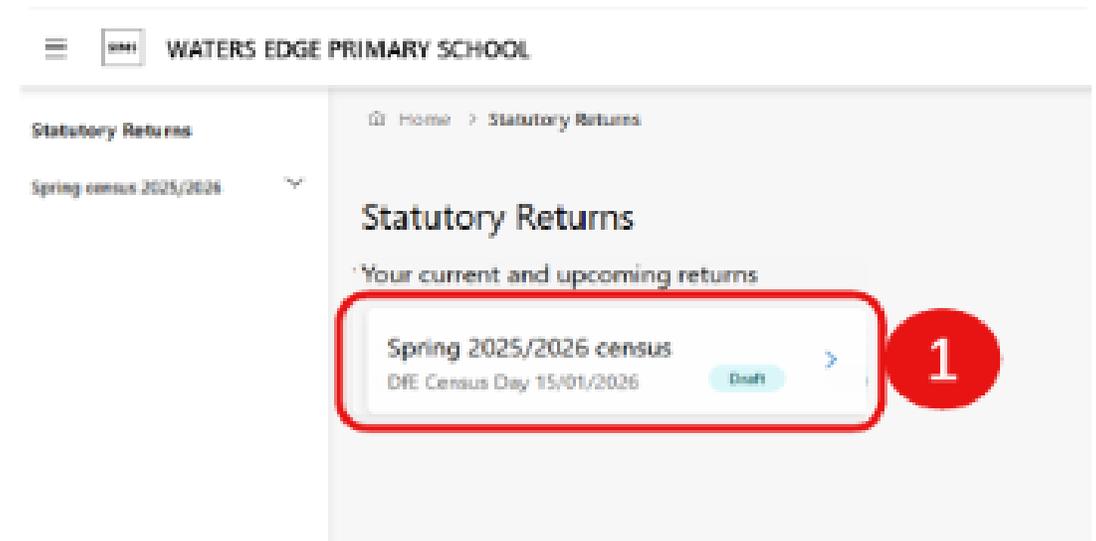
Census SNG – Overview Page

- The Census details page summarises high-level information about the state of the census return.

Census SNG – Section Pages

- Within sections, data is organised under sub-sections. For example:
    - the School characteristics section has three sub-sections: School identifiers, School childcare and Pupil reconciliation and Classes.
    - the Pupil characteristics section has three sub-sections: Pupils On-roll, Home addresses and Pupils Off-roll.
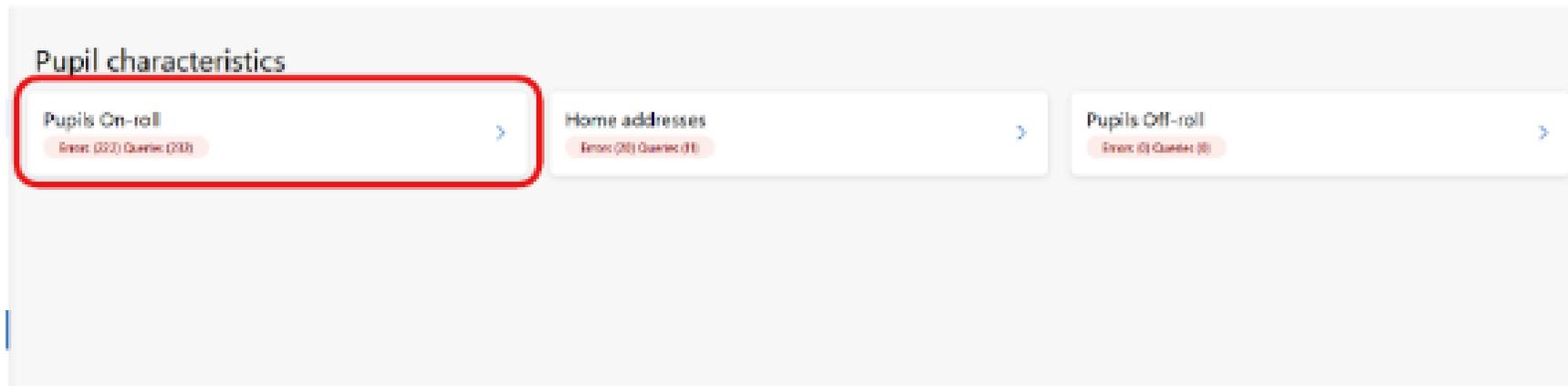
- Each sub-section is shown in an overview, with Errors and Queries against that section identified.

Census SNG – Errors & Queries

- Click the sub-section to view the errors and queries in that sub-section.
  - In SIMS Next Gen, error codes are displayed against individual pupils to assist in easy resolution.
  - In SIMS Next Gen, errors are coloured red.
  - In SIMS Next Gen, queries are coloured orange.

Click the **Error status [2a]** filter button and select the "Pupils with errors" option from the dropdown list to view only those pupils who have errors and queries.

Click the **View all errors and queries [2b]** button to display a list of all the errors and queries associated with the section; errors are shown first, followed by queries.

Errors and queries relating to a **single pupil** ("This pupil") are listed at the top of the section.

Those relating to a **Group of pupils** are listed at the bottom.

Selecting each error and query in turn will show all the pupils' with this error / query, with a link to their Pupil Profile.

Click the button in the coloured cell to view errors (coloured red) **[2c]** or queries (coloured orange) **[2d].**
All errors and queries for individual pupils can also be viewed by selecting **View Errors [2e]** in the cell adjacent to their name.

- Additional information and guidance on resolution is displayed in the sidebar **[3a]**. This shows the relevant DfE error codes, what the error means and how to resolve it.

- Currently, some errors cannot be resolved in SIMS Next Gen. Such errors will be identified as only editable in SIMS7. Where errors can be resolved in SIMS Next Gen, a link is available to the **Pupil Profile [3b]**. From here, you can navigate to the relevant tab and resolve the data.

Errors and queries 3a

Queries (1)

⚠ This pupil's age is out of the range for your School Type. 2b ⌃

Error code: 1601Q

This pupil's age doesn't fit within the range available for your School Type, so you'll need to amend one of these.

To correct the pupil's age, please go to their profile and correct their Date of Birth.

You can also amend your school's School Type by opening SIMS 7 and going to Focus|School|School Details.

If the pupil's age is correct, please add a note to COLLECT when you submit your census.

Pupil Profile 3b

Errors and queries 3a

Errors (1)

❗ This pupil's Year Taught In is missing or not a valid entry. ⌃

Error code: 2000

Valid entries for Year Taught In include Early Years 1-2, Nursery 1-2, Reception, Years 1-14, M - Mixed year class or X - National curriculum not followed.

Please note that Year Group X is only valid for pupils in special schools.

Please go to the pupil profile and add in the Year Taught In or check that entry maps to one of the above values.

Pupil profile 3b

- Return to the relevant census overview page from the section using the menu at the top **[4]**.

- Click the **Revalidate section [5]** option in the **... menu** to re-fetch and **revalidate** the data for an individual section as you resolve errors and queries. In this way, you see the ever-reducing list of errors and queries

Adding Notes

- The notes field allows you to record helpful information about each section as you work through it, resolving errors and queries and reviewing data.

- Click **Add Note [6a]**.
  A sidebar opens for that section. Click the **+ Add note** button.
  Two fields are shown. **Title** is a free-form entry field limited to 100 characters. It is advisable to give your note a short but clear title. **Note** is a free-form entry field limited to 1000 characters, allowing you to add more detail.

- Click the **Save** button to save your note or **Cancel** to discard the changes. Further notes can be added by selecting the **+ Add note** button.

- Notes are displayed in chronological order, with the most recent note displayed in the Notes column.

School Characteristics section

- Continue to work through each sub-section in turn, checking the data and resolving errors and queries. Where changes are made, and errors and queries are resolved, revalidate the sections.

- This section has three sub-sections:

Pupil Characteristics section

- This section has 3 sub-sections: On roll pupils, Off roll pupils and Home addresses

Under each sub section, the total number of errors and queries are displayed

Special Circumstances section

This section has 4 sub-sections:

- Free school meal eligibility

- Service children

- Post looked after arrangements

- Funding and monitoring

Meals Taken section

This section allows the school to record the meals taken on the census day

High Needs section

- This section has 2 sub-sections: Top Up funding and SEN

Attendance section

This section has 4 sub-sections:

- Boarder status
- Alternative provision placement
- Suspension and exclusion
- Attendance

Ready for Review stage

- Once all the data has been reviewed, all errors resolved, data refreshed and ready for review.

- You can take a snapshot of the data by moving the status of the census to "Ready for Review".

- All data will be refreshed, and further changes will be prevented.

Reports

- Once the return has reached the review stage, users can **View summary report [1a]**

- The report can be printed if required.

- Select the **...** menu for each row and click **Export section [1b]**. This will create and automatically download the detail report for that section as an Excel file
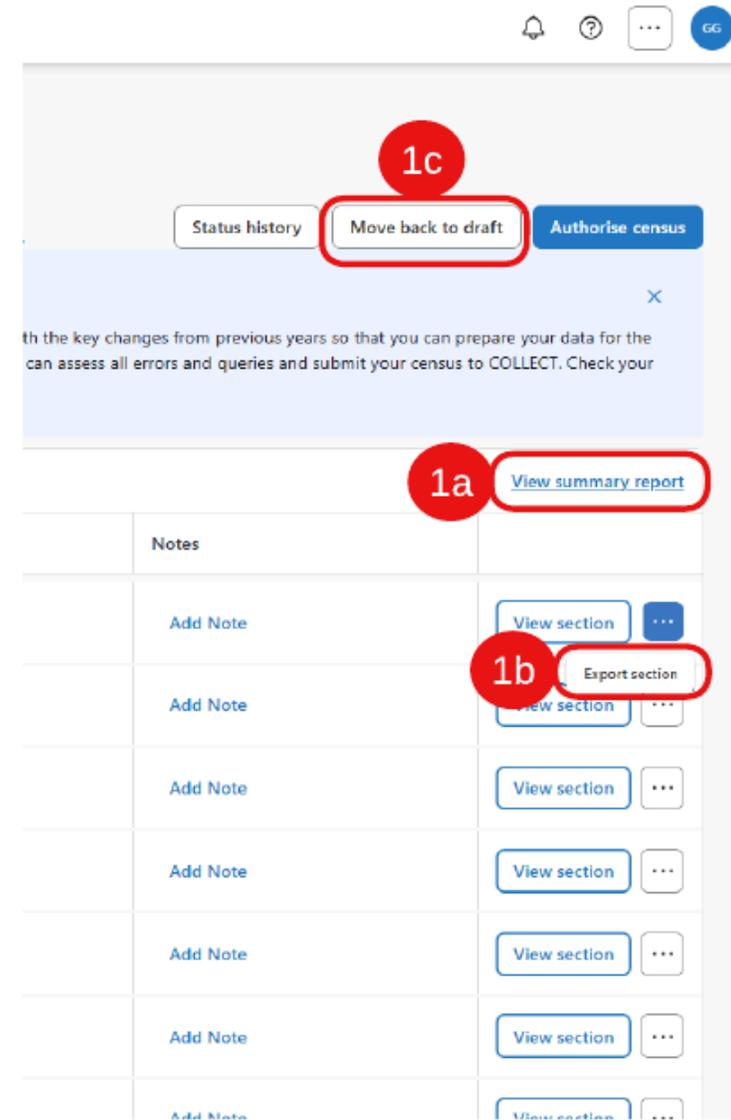
Making changes

- If changes are required after review with the Headteacher or department heads:

- Move the census back to draft status by clicking the **Move back to draft [1c]** button (previous slide).

- Make the required changes in the relevant sections.

- Refresh and revalidate each amended section.

- Click the **Mark as ready to review** button to restore the census return to ready for review status.
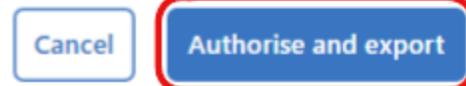
Authorise census

- Once the headteacher has approved the return you can authorise the census

- Only census with a status of "Ready for Review" stage can be authorised

- From the census return overview page, click the **Authorise census [1]** button.
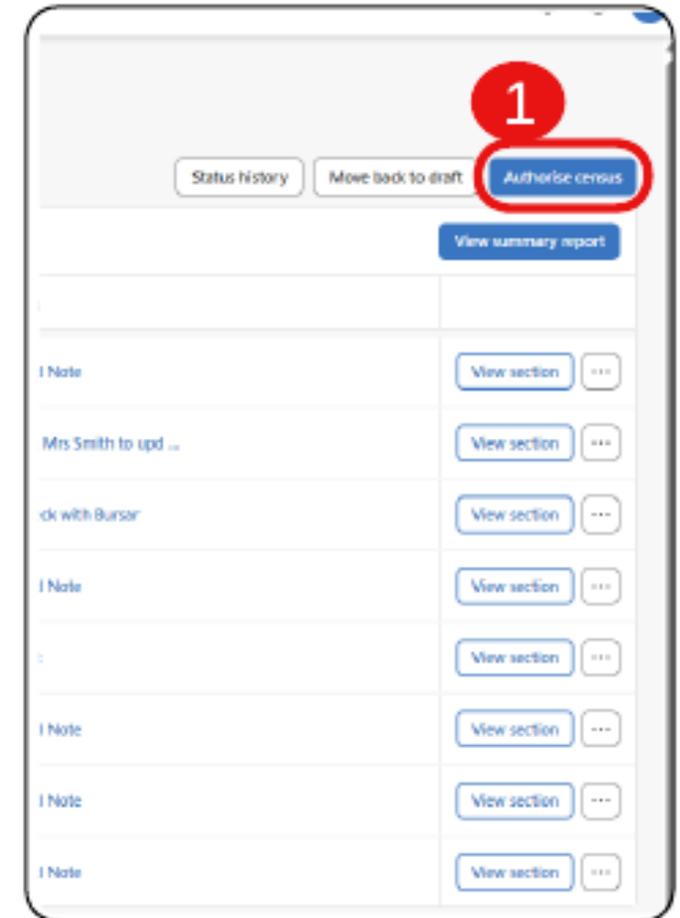
Making post-authorisation changes

- Update the relevant data in the MIS.

- Change the census back to **Draft** status.

- Refresh relevant sections and review.

- Move through the **Ready for review** and **Authorised stages** again.

- A new version of the census **Summary report** and **XML** will be generated with the latest set of changes.

Tracking status changes

- It is possible to track status changes in the census lifecycle. This serves as an audit trail, allowing users to view the status history for the return

- From the census overview page, click the **Status history [1]** button

Upcoming new features

- Ability to view historic censuses

- Completed censuses will move to the Historic returns section after the end of the term

- You will be able to view the data (read only) that was submitted and access the summary report and the XML files too. Removes the need to store local copies on hard drives

Next steps

- If you are set up with access you can run your Spring Census end to end in SIMS Next Gen.

- You can still check and record the data through SIMS 7 and create and authorise the census in SNG. The sync between SIMS 7 and SIMS Next Gen will support working in both systems.

- If you haven't yet set up any users with access to SIMS Next Gen, please raise a ticket via schoolsict@coventry.gov.uk and let us know the full name and work email address of the users to be added.

Thank you for your time

Coventry City Council

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