

Statistical First Release



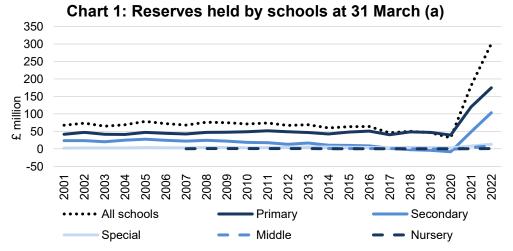


Reserves held by schools in Wales at 31 March 2022

27 October 2022 SFR 214/2022

Key points

- The overall level of reserves held by schools in Wales was £301 million at 31 March 2022, the equivalent of £659 per pupil. The overall level of reserves increased by £121 million compared with the previous year.
 Reserves in primary schools accounted for £175 million.
- Over the past two financial years, school reserves increased significantly
 due to the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic and extra core funding
 announced late in the year. Schools have continued to receive their
 normal core funding plus additional Covid-19 funding whilst having
 reduced expenditure on elements such as supply teachers, staff training,
 examinations, educational materials and utility bills due to various periods
 of school closure.
- Primary schools reserves increased by £55 million in the latest year and secondary school reserves increased by £55 million.
- Gwynedd had the highest level of reserves per pupil at £1,012 while Powys had the lowest with £531 per pupil.
- 28 primary, 12 secondary, 1 special, 1 nursery and 2 middle schools in Wales had negative reserves totalling £8 million. The remaining 1,435 schools had positive reserves, 994 of which had reserves in excess of 10% of their total delegated expenditure.



(a) Nursery schools are shown from 2007 and middle schools from 2014 onwards.

About this release

This statistical release provides an analysis of financial reserves held by schools in Wales for the financial years 2020-21 and 2021-22. Reserves are sums of money that schools carry forward from one year to the next. They arise from underspends and overspends against school allocations over time.

Additional information showing levels of school reserves by individual school is available on StatsWales.

In this release

Levels and per pupil	2
Year on year change	3
By sector	7
Glossary	8

Contact: Anthony Newby ~ 030 0025 5673 ~ stats.finance@gov.wales

Enquiries from the press: 0300 025 8099 Public enquiries: 0300 025 5050 Twitter: @StatisticsWales

Table 1 provides an analysis of the reserves position at 31 March 2022 and the delegated schools expenditure during the 2021-22 financial year. Gwynedd recorded the highest level of overall reserves per pupil (£1,012) while Powys recorded the lowest level (£531). Schools within each local authority can have positive or negative reserves and this is shown in more detail in tables 6 and 7.

Table 1 - Delegated schools expenditure, level of school reserves and reserves per pupil

	202	1-22	Level of school reserves at 31 March 2022								
		Delegated									
	Delegated	school				Positive	Negative	Total			
	school	expenditure	Positive	Negative	Total		reserves	reserves			
	expenditure	per pupil	reserves	reserves	reserves		per pupil	per pupil			
Authority	(£ million)	(£) (a)	(£ million)	(£ million)	(£ million)	(£) (a)	(£) (a)	(£) (a)			
Isle of Anglesey	58.2	6,118	7.8	0.0	7.8	823	0	823			
Gwynedd	108.5	6,575	16.7	0.0	16.7	1,012	0	1,012			
Conwy	100.0	6,556	10.7	0.0	10.7	702	0	702			
Denbighshire	96.2	6,177	12.5	-0.0	12.4	801	-1	799			
Flintshire	132.4	5,901	13.3	-0.7	12.6	593	-33	559			
Wrexham	115.1	6,202	14.7	0.0	14.7	793	0	793			
Powys	103.0	6,098	11.7	-2.7	9.0	694	-163	531			
Ceredigion	57.7	6,152	8.5	0.0	8.5	911	0	911			
Pembrokeshire	105.0	6,261	10.8	-0.1	10.7	644	-4	640			
Carmarthenshire	160.7	5,947	18.3	-3.1	15.2	677	-116	561			
Swansea	210.1	6,127	28.4	0.0	28.4	828	0	828			
Neath Port Talbot	114.5	5,647	13.4	-0.8	12.6	660	-37	623			
Bridgend	139.0	6,046	12.5	0.0	12.5	543	0	543			
Vale of Glamorgan	132.9	5,919	12.8	0.0	12.8	569	0	569			
Cardiff	340.6	6,231	32.6	-0.6	32.0	597	-11	586			
Rhondda Cynon Taf	216.3	5,633	20.6	0.0	20.6	536	0	536			
Merthyr Tydfil	55.8	6,183	6.3	0.0	6.3	703	0	703			
Caerphilly	156.7	5,865	17.3	0.0	17.3	646	0	646			
Blaenau Gwent	58.9	6,556	6.2	0.0	6.2	693	0	693			
Torfaen	84.0	6,099	11.8	0.0	11.8	860	0	860			
Monmouthshire	61.7	5,465	7.0	-0.1	6.9	620	-11	609			
Newport	150.2	5,690	15.8	-0.2	15.6	600	-7	593			
Wales	2,757.4	6,032	309.8	-8.4	301.4	678	-18	659			
Lowest		5,465	6.2	-3.1	6.2	536	-163	531			
Highest		6,575	32.6	0.0	32.0	1,012	0	1,012			

Chart 2: Level of reserves per pupil at 31 March 2022 £1,200 Wales average £1,000 £800 £600 £400 £200 £0 Rhondda Cynon Taf Powys Carmarthenshire Cardiff Newport **Monmouthshire Neath Port Talbot** Pembrokeshire Blaenau Gwent Conwy Wrexham Denbighshire sle of Anglesey Swansea Torfaen Ceredigion Flintshire Merthyr Tydfil Gwynedd Bridgend /ale of Glamorgan Caerphilly

⁽a) Calculated using provisional data. Full-time equivalent pupil numbers are calculated from the Pupil Level Annual School Census 2022. They are based on numbers at February 2022 so will not reflect changes throughout the year.

Table 2 shows the annual changes in school reserves. Compared to the previous year, the overall level of positive reserves increased by £112.5 million and the level of negative reserves increased by £8.4 million. These figures combine to show an increase of £120.8 million in total reserves.

Table 2 - Year on year changes in school reserves

£ million

Per cent

			Level	of scho	ool rese	rves at 3°	1 March	1		perce	School reserves as a percentage of delegate school expenditure at 3			
		Positiv	/e		Negati	/e		Total		Tc	tal			
												Percentage		
A 41 - 14	0004	0000	01	0004	0000	01	0004	0000	01	0004	0000	point		
Authority	2021	2022	<u> </u>	2021	2022	<u>_</u>	2021	2022	Change	2021	2022	change		
Isle of Anglesey	4.3	7.8	3.5	-0.3	0.0	0.3	4.0	7.8	3.8	7.5	13.5	5.9		
Gwynedd	10.8	16.7	5.9	-0.0	0.0	0.0	10.8	16.7	5.9	10.9	15.4	4.4		
Conwy	6.2	10.7	4.5	-0.3	0.0	0.3	5.9	10.7	4.8	6.5	10.7	4.2		
Denbighshire	7.3	12.5	5.1	-1.7	-0.0	1.6	5.7	12.4	6.8	6.4	12.9	6.5		
Flintshire	8.8	13.3	4.5	-1.9	-0.7	1.2	6.9	12.6	5.7	5.6	9.5	3.8		
Wrexham	9.9	14.7	4.8	-0.3	0.0	0.3	9.7	14.7	5.1	9.2	12.8	3.6		
Powys	6.9	11.7	4.8	-3.7	-2.7	0.9	3.2	9.0	5.8	3.4	8.7	5.3		
Ceredigion	6.3	8.5	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	8.5	2.2	11.8	14.8	3.0		
Pembrokeshire	6.5	10.8	4.3	-0.0	-0.1	-0.0	6.5	10.7	4.3	6.9	10.2	3.4		
Carmarthenshire	11.0	18.3	7.3	-3.8	-3.1	0.6	7.3	15.2	7.9	4.9	9.4	4.6		
Swansea	20.8	28.4	7.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.8	28.4	7.6	10.7	13.5	2.8		
Neath Port Talbot	8.3	13.4	5.1	-1.1	-0.8	0.3	7.2	12.6	5.4	7.5	11.0	3.6		
Bridgend	8.6	12.5	3.9	-0.1	0.0	0.1	8.5	12.5	4.0	6.5	9.0	2.5		
Vale of Glamorgan	6.4	12.8	6.4	-0.1	0.0	0.1	6.3	12.8	6.5	5.3	9.6	4.3		
Cardiff	21.9	32.6	10.8	-0.8	-0.6	0.1	21.1	32.0	10.9	6.6	9.4	2.8		
Rhondda Cynon Taf	12.6	20.6	7.9	-0.6	0.0	0.6	12.0	20.6	8.5	6.0	9.5	3.5		
Merthyr Tydfil	4.3	6.3	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	6.3	2.1	8.2	11.4	3.1		
Caerphilly	11.6	17.3	5.7	-0.3	0.0	0.3	11.3	17.3	5.9	7.6	11.0	3.4		
Blaenau Gwent	4.0	6.2	2.2	-0.3	0.0	0.3	3.7	6.2	2.5	6.6	10.6	3.9		
Torfaen	6.2	11.8	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.2	11.8	5.6	7.9	14.1	6.2		
Monmouthshire	3.6	7.0	3.4	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	3.4	6.9	3.5	5.8	11.1	5.3		
Newport	10.9	15.8	4.9	-1.4	-0.2	1.2	9.6	15.6	6.1	6.9	10.4	3.5		
Wales	197.4	309.8	112.5	-16.8	-8.4	8.4	180.6	301.4	120.8	7.1	10.9	3.8		
Lowest										3.4	8.7			
Highest										11.8	15.4			

Table 3 shows the number of schools in Wales with reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure at 31 March 2022 broken down by school sector. The table groups schools according to whether the level of reserves is negative (i.e. a deficit), under 5%, between 5% and 10%, or over 10% of their delegated school expenditure. 28 primary and 12 secondary schools had negative reserves at 31 March 2022. 866 primary and 94 secondary schools had reserves of over 10% of their expenditure.

Table 3 - Number of schools with reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure

					number
•		Less	Between	Over	All
Sector	Negative	than 5%	5% and 10%	10%	schools
Nursery	1	0	0	9	10
Primary	28	63	267	866	1,224
Middle	2	6	9	6	23
Secondary	12	23	53	94	182
Special	1	3	17	19	40
Total	44	95	346	994	1,479

Source: Section 52 Outturn forms

Table 4 shows the total value of reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure. The total deficit for primary schools with negative reserves was £2 million and £5 million for secondary schools. Reserves in schools with over 10% of their delegated expenditure amounted to £145 million for primary and £76 million for secondary schools.

Table 4 - Level of school reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure

					£ million
		Less	Between	Over	All
Sector	Negative	than 5%	5% and 10%	10%	schools
Nursery	-0.1	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.9
Primary	-2.2	2.4	29.4	145.3	174.9
Middle	-0.1	1.5	4.3	3.5	9.2
Secondary	-5.1	5.1	27.9	75.5	103.5
Special	-0.9	0.5	5.0	8.3	13.0
Total	-8.4	9.5	66.6	233.7	301.4

Source: Section 52 Outturn forms

Table 5 and Chart 3 show the proportion of schools with reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure. Primary schools are less likely to have negative reserves than all other sectors.

Table 5 - Proportion of schools across each sector with reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure

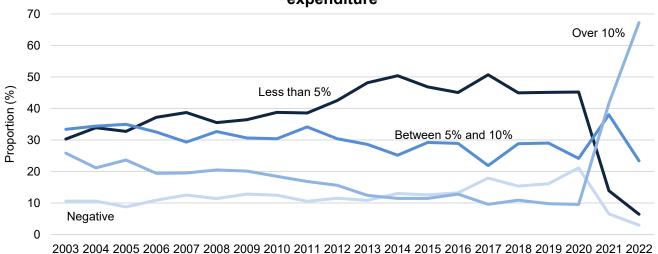
			per	cent	Percentage point change over previous year						
		Less	Between	Over			Less	Between	Over		
Sector	Negative	than 5%	5% and 10%	10%		Negative	than 5%	5% and 10%	10%		
Nursery	10	0	0	90		-1	0	-22	23		
Primary	2	5	22	71		-2	-7	-16	25		
Middle	9	26	39	26		-13	-13	17	9		
Secondary	7	13	29	52		-11	-12	-12	35		
Special	3	8	43	48		-5	-12	-1	18		
Total	3	6	23	67		-4	-7	-15	26		

Table 6 shows the proportion of schools whose level of reserves is negative (i.e. a deficit), under 5%, between 5% and 10%, or greater than 10% of their delegated schools expenditure. Carmarthenshire had the highest proportion of schools with negative reserves (19%). Gwynedd had the highest proportion of schools (96%) with reserves of over 10%.

Table 6 - Proportion of all schools across each local authority with reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure

	per cent							
		Less	Between	_				
-	Negative	than 5%	5% and 10%	10%				
Isle of Anglesey	0	7	2	91				
Gwynedd	0	1	3	96				
Conwy	0	5	17	78				
Denbighshire	4	7	9	80				
Flintshire	3	6	35	56				
Wrexham	0	3	18	79				
Powys	7	9	9	76				
Ceredigion	0	0	7	93				
Pembrokeshire	2	2	31	66				
Carmarthenshire	19	11	24	46				
Swansea	0	0	22	78				
Neath Port Talbot	10	2	19	69				
Bridgend	0	17	32	51				
Vale of Glamorgan	0	15	29	56				
Cardiff	2	8	46	44				
Rhondda Cynon Taf	0	10	38	52				
Merthyr Tydfil	0	4	37	59				
Caerphilly	0	10	21	69				
Blaenau Gwent	0	4	24	72				
Torfaen	0	0	9	91				
Monmouthshire	3	3	32	62				
Newport	3	7	28	62				
Wales	3	6	23	67				
Lowest	0	0	2	44				
Highest	19	17	46	96				

Chart 3: Proportion of schools with reserves as a percentage of delegated schools expenditure



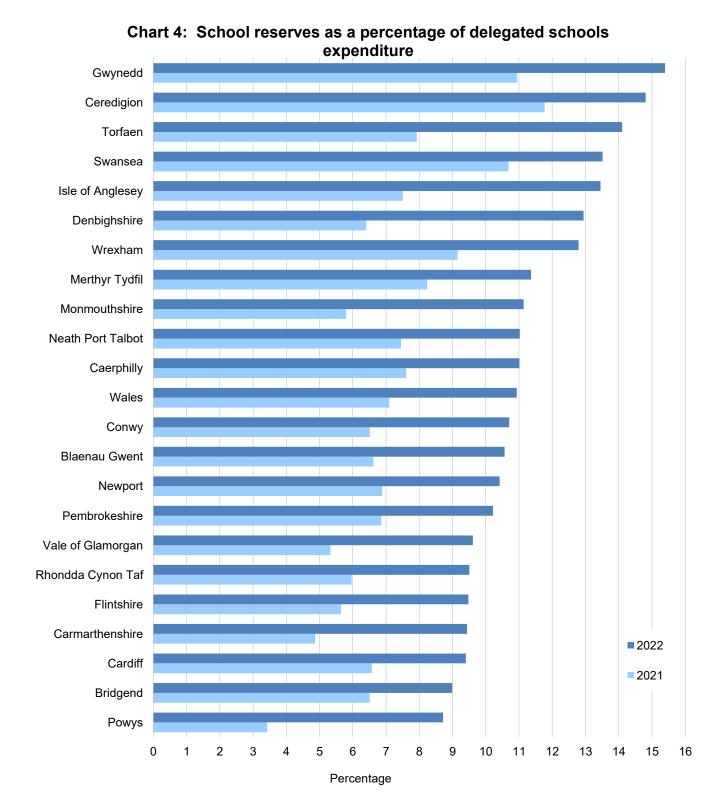


Table 7 shows the level of school reserves by local authority and school sector. The overall level of reserves were £174.9 million in primary schools and £103.5 million in secondary schools.

Table 7 - Level of school reserves at 31 March 2022, by school sector

															į	£ million
		Nursery			Primary			Middle		S	Secondary			Special		Overall
Authority	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	Total
Isle of Anglesey				4.9		4.9				2.8		2.8	0.1		0.1	7.8
Gwynedd				9.1		9.1	0.8		8.0	6.1		6.1	0.7		0.7	16.7
Conwy				7.2		7.2				2.8		2.8	8.0		8.0	10.7
Denbighshire				6.9	-0.0	6.9	0.1	-0.0	0.1	4.6		4.6	0.9		0.9	12.4
Flintshire				8.4		8.4			-	4.2	-0.7	3.5	0.6		0.6	12.6
Wrexham	0.1		0.1	9.3		9.3				5.0		5.0	0.3		0.3	14.7
Powys				8.1	-0.1	8.0	0.9		0.9	1.8	-2.6	-0.8	1.0		1.0	9.0
Ceredigion				4.2		4.2	1.7		1.7	2.6		2.6				8.5
Pembrokeshire				6.3		6.3	0.3	-0.1	0.2	4.0		4.0	0.3		0.3	10.7
Carmarthenshire	0.1		0.1	8.7	-1.3	7.5			-	9.2	-1.0	8.3	0.2	-0.9	-0.6	15.2
Swansea				15.6		15.6				12.4		12.4	0.5		0.5	28.4
Neath Port Talbot				7.6	-0.8	6.9	1.5		1.5	3.5		3.5	0.7		0.7	12.6
Bridgend				7.0		7.0				4.8		4.8	0.7		0.7	12.5
Vale of Glamorgan	0.2		0.2	6.2		6.2	0.6		0.6	5.0		5.0	8.0		8.0	12.8
Cardiff	0.5		0.5	16.4	-0.0	16.4				13.7	-0.6	13.1	2.0		2.0	32.0
Rhondda Cynon Taf				10.5		10.5	2.3		2.3	6.5		6.5	1.3		1.3	20.6
Merthyr Tydfil				3.7		3.7				2.2		2.2	0.4		0.4	6.3
Caerphilly				11.2		11.2	0.3		0.3	4.9		4.9	0.9		0.9	17.3
Blaenau Gwent				4.0		4.0	0.9		0.9	1.0		1.0	0.4		0.4	6.2
Torfaen			•	6.6		6.6			-	4.6		4.6	0.6		0.6	11.8
Monmouthshire				4.6		4.6				2.4	-0.1	2.3				6.9
Newport	0.2	-0.1	0.0	10.5		10.5			-	4.6	-0.1	4.6	0.5		0.5	15.6
Wales	1.0	-0.1	0.9	177.1	-2.2	174.9	9.3	-0.1	9.2	108.6	-5.1	103.5	13.8	-0.9	13.0	301.4

Source: Section 52 Outturn forms

. not applicable

Glossary

Definitions

Reserves are sums of money that schools carry forward from one year to the next. They arise from underspends and overspends against school allocations over time.

Delegated school expenditure is actual education spending that is purely delegated or devolved by local authorities to schools and does not include any money held centrally by the local authority and spent on behalf of schools.

Background

Schools are responsible for managing their own finances. The level of reserves held by an individual school at any point in time will depend on a number of factors. These will include the timing of receipt of income and of payments, the level of contingency fund the school governing body considers appropriate and the particular plans each school has for expenditure.

School Closures due to Covid-19

On Wednesday 18 March 2020 it was announced that all educational establishments in Wales would close at the latest on Friday 20 March 2020. The exception was provision for children of critical workers and vulnerable children due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. During 2020-21 schools in Wales opened or closed a number of times for all other pupils.

<u>Timeline of school closures during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, March 2020 to April</u> 2021

Pupil numbers

The most recent data in this report relates to the situation as at February 2022.

Key quality information

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 reference.

This section provides a summary of information on this output against six dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, Coherence, and Comparability.

Relevance

The statistics are important and have a number of uses, for example: advice to Ministers; local government finance revenue settlement calculations; unitary authority comparisons and benchmarking; expenditure in Wales compared to other countries; informing the debate in the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament and beyond; assisting in research in public expenditure issues; economic analysis.

Accuracy

The main source of information about local education authority expenditure is the Section 52 outturn (S52) return required under Section 52 of the <u>Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998</u>, provided by local authorities. Data has been collated in this way from 2001. Prior to this, the data was not aggregated centrally to provide a Wales position. The latest returns relate to the final accounts for the financial year.

Local authorities in the United Kingdom are required to keep their accounts in accordance with 'proper practices'. <u>SeRCOP</u> (previously BVACOP) establishes 'proper practice' with regard to consistent financial reporting below the Statement of Accounts level. <u>SeRCOP</u> is reviewed continuously and is normally updated annually.

The data that is collected adhere to these recognised professional standards. Specifically, the finance data is required under legislation and also must adhere to CIPFA accounting procedures. However, <u>further guidelines</u> are also issued on the interpretation of these standards to ensure consistency across authorities.

We collect 100% of returns from all twenty-two county councils. The collection is a 100% survey and as such no estimation of the figures is calculated, and hence there is no sampling error. The survey itself has built-in rigorous validation and historical data to aid the users complete the data collection accurately.

Local authorities extract the data from their accounting systems in order to complete the data collection exercise. Each authority has a nominated contact whose responsibility it is to ensure that the data is correct before submission. All further validation and verification checks are then carried out by the same contact.

Once we receive the data, it goes through further comprehensive validation and verification checks, for example:

- spend per head by local authority;
- arithmetic consistency checks;
- cross checks with other relevant data collections;
- thorough tolerance checks;
- outturn comparison with budgets;
- cross checks with data from other government departments;
- verification that data outside of tolerances are correct.

In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.

Timeliness and punctuality

The data collection is carried out over the summer. The data is normally published in October, this allows time to collect, collate and validate the data.

In 2020, local authorities were given deadline extensions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and data was received throughout the year up until publication.

All outputs adhere to the Code of Practice by pre-announcing the date of publication through the upcoming calendar web pages.

Accessibility and clarity

Welsh local government finance statistics are published in an accessible, orderly, pre-announced manner on the Welsh Government website at 9:30am on the day of publication. Simultaneously the releases are also published on the National Statistics Publication Hub. All releases are available to download for free.

More detailed data are also available at the same time on the StatsWales website and this can be manipulated online or downloaded into spreadsheets for use offline.

We aim to use Plain English in our outputs and all outputs adhere to the Welsh Government accessibility policy. Furthermore, all our headlines are published in Welsh and English.

We regularly peer review our outputs.

Comparability and coherence

Adhering to the professional code (CIPFA's SeRCOP) has meant that changes over time have been minimal. Where there have been time series which are not comparable from the start of the time series to the end this will be shown clearly in the outputs. Where advance warning is known of future changes these will be pre-announced in accordance with Welsh Government arrangements.

The existence of a professional code and our adherence to it provides assurance that the data are consistent across domains, such as local authorities.

Statistics on education expenditure are also published in both England and Scotland.

Impact of COVID-19

The data collection period for this release ran from mid-May and had a deadline in August. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data was received throughout the year up until publication.

Over the past two financial years, school reserves increased significantly due to the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic and extra core funding announced late in the year. Schools have continued to receive their normal core funding plus additional Covid-19 funding whilst having reduced expenditure on elements such as supply teachers, staff training, examinations, educational materials and utility bills due to various periods of school closure.

National Statistics status

The <u>United Kingdom Statistics Authority</u> has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in March 2019 following a <u>compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation</u>. These statistics last underwent a <u>full assessment against the Code of Practice</u> in 2011.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Added extra information on the validation checks that are performed on the data;
- Explained the role of CIPFA's code of practice in local authority accounting;
- Included a link to the guidance document that accompanies the data collection.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the <u>Wellbeing of Wales report</u>.

Further information on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

Next update

October 2023 - Statistical first release and StatsWales update for 2022-23 outturn.

Further details

The document is available at: https://gov.wales/reserves-held-schools

Further data is available on our StatsWales website:

StatsWales: Delegated School Outturn

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.finance@gov.wales

Open Government Licence

All content is available under the Open Government Licence v3.0, except where otherwise stated.

