

Education Business Intelligence Unit

# SIMS

## School Census Nursery and Primary - Spring 2024

A guide to support you in submitting your statutory  
School Census

- Census Data Preparation
- Producing Census
- Correcting Data Errors / Queries
- Submitting Census to the Local Authority

**SIMS**

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Unusual Circumstances .....	3
Census Return Data Preparation .....	4
Starting Census .....	18
Completing the Returns Panel .....	19
Validating the Census Return .....	22
Correcting Data Errors / Queries .....	23
Finalising the Return .....	24
Submit the Census File to the LA .....	26
Submitting the Census file – Academies.....	27
What Happens Next?.....	27
Resubmitting .....	28
Appendix A .....	29

## Icon Key:



Important



Quick Tip

# Introduction

The School Census Spring 2024 Return is required to be completed by maintained Nursery schools, Primary schools, Middle schools, Secondary schools, All-Through schools, Special schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), City Technology Colleges (CTCs) and Academies (including free schools) in England. Non-maintained Special schools are also required to submit the return.

The census collects detailed information about school characteristics and pupil details. Different data is collected depending on which return is being prepared, and your school phase.

**The Spring Census date is Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

## Unusual Circumstances

If unusual circumstances impact on the day of census, for example, severe weather conditions or religious observances, then schools may find that the numbers of pupils and/or staff who are not present on that day are unusually high. If any census figures are affected, then a day and time when the situation can be regarded as normal should be selected. Schools / LAs may interpret this literally as the next normal day or as an earlier day in census week or the previous Thursday if that reflects the usual situation. On occasions where other days / times are used, schools should record these for audit purposes.

Further DfE guidance about the School Census 2023/2024, including key dates, data collected and changes from the last Census, is available from:

[Complete the school census - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-census-2023-2024)



*Please ensure that you are on the latest SIMS release (version 7.214) and have the correct permissions to run the census. Also, filesets are required to validate the information in your census return to produce the validation errors summary. Additions or corrections are sometimes made to filesets after a SIMS release. If this happens, you will be informed by the EBIU Team as you will need to import the latest fileset into your SIMS system to produce your census correctly.*

*For more information on setting permissions in SIMS and importing filesets, please contact us 😊.*

# Census Return Data Preparation

Before attempting to create a census return, it is important to ensure that the information that will be collected in the census is complete and accurate. For example, ensure that school details are correct, all new pupils have been added to SIMS, all leavers have been recorded and where applicable, any suspensions or permanent exclusions, free school meal eligibility, etc., have been recorded.

Schools are encouraged to update their information regularly within SIMS rather than within the census return itself.



*Make it part of your school routine to add new pupils, leavers, suspensions and permanent exclusions, free school meal eligibility and any updates to pupil level data. Census will be a much easier task if this is done routinely 😊.*

## School Level Data

It is important to check that the school information and establishment details are accurate. A variety of information about the school can be recorded in SIMS and many of these data items are collected by the census. Since such information is unlikely to change from one census to the next, you are advised to record these details permanently rather than just in the return. The information displayed in your system may vary depending on your school and the details entered, e.g., Academy specific information.



*If your school has changed DfE number since the last census, e.g., due to sponsor led academy conversion, make sure this has been amended in SIMS.*

*Also make sure that the school governance section is correct in school type.*

## Childcare (only collected in Spring Census)

The childcare details can be recorded via the **Focus menu**, enabling the information to be updated at any time throughout the year.

- Select **Focus | School | School Details** to display the School Details page.
- Click the **Childcare hyperlink** to display the Childcare panel, where the current childcare details are displayed and update where required.

## Pupil Level Data

Pupil level data should routinely be updated and accurate in SIMS to ensure information is up to date and in line with safeguarding requirements.

The Bulk Update routine enables you to search for missing or invalid data then update in bulk. For example, it is possible to search for all pupils who do not have a **First Language** recorded against their name. From the pupils found, a value can be assigned to all or several pupils.

This prevents the need to enter/change values manually for individual pupils and lessens the administrative work for your office staff.

Below is a quick demonstration on how to do this:

- Select **Routines | Pupil | Bulk Update** to display the **Bulk update Student** browser.
- In the **Bulk Update** panel, select the required **Group Type** and **Group** from the drop-down list.



*Make sure the effective date is rolled back to the first date of the academic year, or the admission date of the relevant pupils.*



*Use the horizontal and vertical scroll bars to view additional columns or rows. To increase the number, right-click any column heading and select **Narrow Columns** from the pop-up menu. You can also fill in all rows and if there are multiple entries and then edit the exceptions 😊.*

## Pupil Basic Details

Ensure that basic details for all pupils are up-to-date and accurate. It may be necessary to make changes for several reasons, e.g., to correct inaccurately entered information, legal adoption, change of legal surname, etc.

The following information is collected in the return:

- **Legal Forename** (mandatory information in SIMS)
- **Middle Names**
- **Legal Surname** (mandatory information in SIMS)

- **Former Surname**
- **Preferred Surname** (mandatory information in SIMS)
- **Sex** (mandatory information in SIMS)
- **Date of Birth** (mandatory information in SIMS)

If you do need to change a pupil's surname, the history of the previous name/names must be recorded along with the reason for the change. Below are instructions on how to do this:

- In the pupil's record **Basic Details** panel, edit the pupil's **Legal Surname** and click the **Save** button. The following message is displayed:

*'Is this a correction to the name or a legal change to the pupil's name?'* If it is a legal change, please select **Yes**.

- If appropriate, click **Yes** to display the **Reason for Change** dialog.
- Select the applicable reason from the drop-down list. The entry is optional but is recommended to maintain a complete history of name changes.
- The **Date of Change** defaults to today's date but can be amended by selecting an alternative date using the **Calendar** button.
- Click **OK** and **Save**.

The following pupil registration information is also collected in the return:

- **Enrolment Status** (mandatory information in SIMS)
- **Admission Date** (mandatory information in SIMS)
- **Year Taught In** (mandatory information in SIMS)
- **Boarder Status**
- **UPN**
- **Former UPN** (this is a read-only field, which is populated automatically if the UPN is changed)
- **Part-Time Details**

To amend any of these details:

- Select **Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details** to display the required record or click the **Pupil Details** icon.
- Click the **Registration** hyperlink in the pupil's record to display the **Registration** panel.



*Pay particular attention to dual registered pupils. This could flag up as an error in census if the correct information is not recorded 😊.*

## Unique Pupil Numbers (UPN)

Ensure that all pupils have a UPN recorded and that all UPN's are in the correct format.

**Permanent UPNs** are issued to a new pupil only when it is believed that they have never previously been allocated a UPN or to replace a temporary UPN.

**Temporary UPNs** are issued to a pupil when the permanent UPN is not known to the school, e.g., awaiting transfer file/applicant's information. A temporary UPN can be recognised by the **last character being a letter e.g., A**.



*Missing or duplicate UPN's will flag up as an error in Census if the correct information is not recorded.*

## School Arranged Alternative Provision Placement Details

The Alternative Provision detail report displays information about school arranged alternative provision placements that fall within the data collection period.

Schools who arrange an Alternative placement (AP) you will record the collected information within **Pupil Details** in the registration panel. Information will then pull through into the Census detailed report **Alternative Provision Report**.

More information on this data item can be found via [Complete the school census - Data items 2023 to 2024 - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census-data-items-2023-to-2024)

## Checking Part-Time Details

The collection of part-time details is mainly relevant to Nursery schools (or schools with nursery age children) and Primary schools with Reception years.

The classification of part-time if their attendance is anything less than 10 sessions per week (25 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.



*For dual registered pupils, time in other schools should be considered. For example, three full days in one school and two full days in another school **should not** be classified by either school as part-time.*

## Home Address Information

A pupil's current home address is required for the return. Where a pupil has multiple current addresses, details of all addresses should be recorded.

All aspects of the address are collected and therefore all address details should be recorded in order to avoid validation errors. It is particularly important to check that a **House Name** or **House Number** and a **Post Code** are entered in the correct fields.

Post codes must be entered in the correct format. A validation error is generated if a post code has not been entered (although it is understood that in some instances, such as Traveller children, a post code is not available). In this instance, a narrative on your census return to the LA would be required with an explanation.

The collection of the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) displayed in the address field for on-roll pupils is voluntary.

## Free School Meal Eligibility

Each of the census collections will require the inclusion of any periods of FSM eligibility since the previous census for those pupils on roll on census day.

Only pupils who have been approved by an LA to receive a free school meal should be recorded in SIMS as being eligible.

To record a pupil as eligible for free school meals, please follow the steps below:

- Select **Focus | Pupil | Pupil Details** to display the required record or click the **Pupil Details** icon.



- Click link **Dietary** to display the Dietary panel.
- Click the **New** button adjacent to the **Eligible for Free Meals** table.
- Enter a **Start Date**.
- Ensure the **Country** is correct.
- Click **OK** and **Save**.



*Free School Meal eligibility is different to pupils having a school dinner on census day. Under the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative, all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are offered a free school meal regardless of whether they are eligible for FSM. Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 must only be recorded as eligible for a free school meal if they meet the criteria for FSM.*

*This is a common query in the census return, and we get lots of schools who need to re-submit their census to us due to exceptional circumstances on census day. Often the re-submission is returned to you as schools sometimes re-submit and do not update the School Dinner Taken (UIFSM section) in the return. Please ensure that you keep a record of the school meals taken on the chosen 'normal' day and remember to complete the School Dinner Taken (UIFSM taken) information before you re-submit your census.*

If your school has signed up to the **EBIU Pupil Premium Checking Service**, our team will send you an up-to-date list prior to census day. This list should be used in conjunction with the list from the LA Innovation, Development and Quality Team (Benefits). If you have any questions about these lists, please contact the EBIU team.

If you have any queries for the Benefits Team, they can be contacted at the following email address:

[EducBenefits@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:EducBenefits@wigan.gov.uk)



*Best practise would be to record eligible pupils as soon as they are confirmed by the LA so that the records are accurate on census day 😊.*

## Ethnic and Cultural Information

The following ethnic and cultural information is collected in the return and will generate an error in the return if this information is missing from a pupil record:

- **First Language** - A First Language other than English should be recorded where a pupil/student was exposed to the language during early development and continues to be exposed to this language at home or in the community.
- **Ethnicity** – Data is required on ethnicity for all pupils. The school must not ascribe any ethnicity to the pupil. This information must come from the parent / guardian or pupil.

This information should be recorded in tab 8 of the student details page, **Ethnic/Cultural** as soon as possible when the pupil is admitted to your school.

## Additional Information

Additional information is collected in the return and should be recorded in SIMS. This information should be kept up to date and accurate:

- **Service Children in Education information.**

To record this information in a student's record, go to the pupil's details and navigate to the **Additional Information** panel.

- If the student is the child of a parent(s) in the armed forces, ensure that the correct value is selected from the **Service Children in Education** drop-down list.
- Select how the school was notified about the **Service Children in Education** information by selecting from the **Source of Service Children in Education** drop-down list.



*The Bulk Update routine can be used to assign **Service Children in Education**. You can then edit the values for a specific selection of pupil at the same time, if required. Again, recording this information as soon as it is received will save time when running the census 😊.*

To check and update information using the bulk update routine, select:

- **Routines | Pupil | Bulk Update** to display the browser and select the required **Group Type**, **Group**, **Data Item** and **Effective Date**.

This will then enable you to select in bulk whether a group of pupils are within this category.

## Checking SEN Information

SEN provision is collected for all pupils on roll on census day using the following codes:

- E (Education, Health, and Care Plan),
- or
- K (SEN support).

SEN provision at the time of any suspension or permanent exclusion and on entering and leaving an alternative provision placement will also be collected in the school census.

Pupils should be added to SIMS as soon as they fall into an SEN category. Please liaise with your school's SENCO to obtain and maintain this information. It may be that they are responsible for keeping these records up to date.

The **Spring census** will collect the following additional SEN fields:

- SEN Type Ranking.
- SEN Type.
- Time in a SEN Unit.
- Time in a Specialised Resourced Provision.



Please refer to our *EBIU Using the SEN Module* for more information around managing the SEN register 😊.

## Suspensions / Exclusions

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are collected for pupils for the previous 2 terms. Permanent exclusions should only be counted once it has been upheld by the governing body or Independent Review Panel (IRP). They should not be counted if the Headteacher withdrew them, or if the pupil was re-instated by the Discipline Committee or an Independent Appeal Panel.

The following exclusion related data items are collected for the return:

- Exclusion **Type**.

- Exclusion **Reason** (select one code to provide the main reason, but you can use up to 3 reasons if required).
- Exclusion **Start Date**.
- Actual number of sessions (**Length**) - required for Suspensions.
- **SEN Provision**
- **On roll status**



Please refer to the *EBIU Exclusions* booklet for guidance on how to add an exclusion for a pupil to SIMS 😊.

## Class Type

This data is collected to indicate which classes a pupil is a member of – either **Nursery** (if the pupil is currently in a LA designated Nursery Unit) or **Other** (any other class).

The values displayed on the **Update Class Type** page default to those of the previous return. Existing details (brought forward from last census) should be checked and edited, if necessary, and the details of any new pupils added.

- Select **Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Class Type** to display the **Update Class Type** page.



To locate any pupils who have not been allocated a Class Type, filter the display to show those pupils with a missing class type by selecting **No Class Type** from the **Status** drop down list. Then change the **Year Taught In** and filter to **All**. Class Types can then be added to the individual children for whom they are missing 😊.

## Pupils with Top-up Funding

Top-up funding is allocated to schools, in most cases by the Local Authority, to meet the additional costs of support for high needs pupils.

The **Top-up Funding** panel enables you to record the on-roll pupils for whom your school is receiving top-up funding on census day.

- Select **Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Top-up Funding**.

- If there are any pupils currently recorded as having top-up funding, these will be displayed in the **Top-up Funding** table at the bottom of the screen.
- From within this screen, you can use the **search criteria** to locate any additional pupils you wish to record as having top-up funding and add them to the **Top-up Funding table**.

To remove a pupil from this category, highlight the pupil in the **Top-up Funding** table and select **Remove**.

## Post Looked After Arrangements

The **Post Looked After Arrangements (PLAA)** panel enables you to record any pupils/students who were looked after immediately before adoption or prior to being the subject of a special guardianship, residence, or child arrangement order and whether documentary evidence exists to prove DfE/Ofsted compliance.

It will be up to those who have parental responsibility (adoptive parents, special guardians and carers of former looked after children on residence/child arrangements orders) to decide if they wish to self-declare their children's status to schools. Parents should be asked to provide supporting evidence, for example, a photocopy of the adoption order, and asked to confirm that their child was adopted from care.

All PLAA pupils that are still on roll need to be included in every census as being PLAA until they leave your school.



*PLAA is a particularly sensitive data item and must be treated confidentially. Schools should ensure that, as for other pupil level data items, they comply with their responsibilities with respect to the data protection act when processing this data. Also please remember that all PLAA pupils still on roll need to be included in every census as being PLAA until they leave your school.*

To update PLAA data for pupils:

- Select **Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Post Looked After Arrangements** and search for the relevant pupil.
- Any pupils **currently recorded** as having post looked after arrangements are displayed in the **Post Looked After Arrangements** panel (**located in the bottom half of the page**).

- From within this screen, you can use the **search criteria** to locate any additional pupils you wish to record as having a Post Looked After Arrangement and add them to the **Post Looked After Arrangements** panel.
- To remove a pupil from this category, highlight the pupil in the **Post Looked After Arrangements** panel and select **Remove**.

## Young Carer Indicator (not applicable to Nursery Schools)

The young carer indicator identifies, for those children on roll on spring census day, whether they have been identified as a young carer and if so, by whom. If a child is identified as a young carer, two options are available for selection in SIMS:

- Identified by Parent or Guardian.
- Identified by School.

Young carer can be added to a pupil record in tab 10 Welfare:

- Click **New**.
- In the **Add Young Carer details** screen, select the relevant identifier from the drop down.
- Select the **Start Date**, and **End Date** if applicable.
- Add any relevant notes in the **Notes** section.
- Click **OK** and **Save**.

A new **Young Carer Identified By** column has been added to the On Roll Basic Details detail report, which can be accessed via the School Census menu route.

## Learner Funding and Monitoring (FAM)

Schools are receiving funding to subsidise the cost of tutoring for pupils who's learning has been disrupted. Pupils eligible for the funding are in National Curriculum years 1 to 11, Reception pupils are not eligible for NTP funding. This is recorded for pupils who are on roll on census day or became off roll since the start of the academic year.

For the 2023 to 2024 academic year, it will identify pupils:

- in receipt of tutoring provided via the National Tutoring Programme (this tutoring could be delivered via school-led tutoring, an academic mentor or a tuition partner)

The **Funding and Monitoring panel** enables you to record the pupils who have received school-led tutoring since the start of the 2023-24 academic year.

- Select **Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Funding and Monitoring**
- When a tick is entered in a **School Led Tutoring** cell, the corresponding 'cumulative hour' cells are then editable. The number of hours the pupil has received as at the census date can be entered (in increments of 0.5).

## Early Years Data (only applicable to Nurseries)

The Early Years data collected in the Census is used to determine the amount of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation to be provided to Local Authorities to fund their Early Years providers. Funded hours and hours at setting are collected.

**Hours at Setting** include funded hours plus any additional hours funded by other means. The hours collected in this return are for the week in which the census day falls.

**Hours at setting should exclude any hours of 'childcare'** and breaks where the pupils are not receiving education. Extended schools' services (e.g., breakfast clubs and after schools' clubs) should also be excluded as these are not considered education provision.

**Funded Hours** signifies the level of free entitlement of education attracted by the child in that setting.

**Extended Funded Hours and 30 Hour Code** are the number of hours that a child can receive in addition to the initial 15 funded hours. Parents who meet the eligibility criteria must obtain a 11-digit 30 Hour Code from the Tax Office.

**Disability Access Fund** is awarded to pupils who meet the criteria.

To update the **Early Years** panel:

- Select **Tools | Statutory Return Tools | Update Early Years** to display the **Update Early Years** page. The data in the **Early Years** panel (in census page) must be refreshed by clicking the **Recalculate** button after using the **Update Early Years routine**.

To add or edit the number of **Hours at Setting/ Funded Hours/ Extended Funded Hours** for an individual pupil, select the required criteria from the options in the **Pupils** panel. Highlight the required pupil then click the applicable cell and enter the required number of hours.

If most pupils are receiving the same number of hours, in the **Pupils** panel, either leave all search criteria set to **All** or select the required year or reg group from the **YTI (Year Taught In)** or **Reg** drop-down lists to display only those selected pupils.

- Right-click in the on one of the column headings for **Hours at Setting/ Funded Hours/ Disability Access Fund/ 30 Hour Code/Extended Funded Hours** then choose **Select All** from the drop-down list.
- Click in one of the highlighted cells of the column you wish to populate, i.e., **Hours at Setting (or Funded Hours/ Extended Funded Hours)**, then enter the number of hours that is applicable to the pupils. The number is entered automatically for all selected pupils.
- Click within an empty column to deselect all, or if this doesn't work click **Save**.
- You can then edit the entry for each pupil who is receiving a different number of hours. This is achieved by highlighting the required pupil, clicking in the associated **Hours at Setting (or Funded Hours/ Extended Funded Hours)** cell, as applicable, and then entering the required number.



*To locate any pupils with who have no hours recorded, filter the display to show those pupils selecting **No Hours at Setting** from the **Status** drop down list. Hours at setting can then be added to the individual children for whom they are missing 😊.*

A pupil will be eligible if they are receiving the 15 hours funded and meet additional eligibility criteria. For pupils in receipt of this additional funding schools will need to record a reason code which is available from the drop-down menu.

## **2-Year-Old Basis for Funding** (only for the Spring census).

If a 2-year-old pupil has had their place at school funded, you will need to enter a reason code and you can enter more than one code as applicable.

## **Termly Attendance**

Termly attendance data (including attendance codes and the number of sessions missed) should be provided for non-boarder pupil and leavers who were on roll during the collection period 31/08/2023 to 31/12/2023.

The attendance data collected in this return includes:

- Attendance Codes (i.e., the reasons for absence).



- Number of Sessions Missed.

If you use SIMS Attendance or SIMS Lesson Monitor, attendance data is entered in the return automatically, provided there are no missing marks.

## Starting Census

Once you have checked and updated the information held within SIMS, you can now set up your census return file. This can be done in advance of census day and will give you chance to check that your data is complete and accurate. Dry runs are recommended to identify any missing data.

In school you should have a folder already created to which files from previous census returns were saved. Please check with your technical provider if you are uncertain of the location of this folder.



*Due to the sensitive nature of the data in census, please be mindful when specifying the location of any folder into which you save the data. Consider which users have access to the area in the drive that the folder is saved.*

To run the Census, select:

- **Routines | Statutory Return | School Census**
- Click **New** to the top left of the screen to create a **new Census return**.

By default, the return is displayed as **School Census Spring 2024**. If desired and if you are undertaking a dry run, in the **Description field**, edit the description to read **School Census Spring 2024A** (anticipating the creation of further returns e.g., B, C, D, etc.)

- Click **Save**.

## Calculate Census Details

Click onto **School Information** on the census return panel to check that all establishment details are correct.



*You can click on the **School Detail** button to make amendments as required; however, any changes will only apply to the current census file. If you need to make any permanent changes, go through **Focus | School | School Details** outside of the return.*

Once you have confirmed that the school information is correct, select **Calculate All Details** and select **Yes** to the prompt. This will extract the required information from SIMS and display the results in the applicable panels of the Census Return Details.

With a large data set, the system may take several minutes to retrieve the data and calculate details.

Once the calculation of the data is complete, select **Save** to retain the calculated details.

## Completing the Returns Panel

Once you have calculated all details, you should now complete the remaining panels in the census return file.

To reopen your census file once created, select **Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census**.

- Click **Search** to populate the browse with a list of returns.
- Double click to open the required return.
- Check all the panels within the census return. Class Type, Top-up Funding and PLAA can be updated at this point within the census software.

## School Dinner Taken

All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 in English state-funded schools are entitled to a Universal Infant School Meal. This applies to Academies, Free Schools, and Pupil Referral Units, as well as to schools maintained by the Local Authority. The census return collects information about pupils in these year groups who receive a Universal Infant School Meal (school dinner) on census day.

If any unusual circumstance absences occur and 'school lunches taken' are affected, a day and time when the situation is regarded as normal is to be substituted. Schools can use the next normal day, an earlier day in census week or another day that reflects the normal situation. Where other days or times are used, schools must record these for audit purposes.

However, there are some scenarios which do not qualify as an unusual circumstance and therefore pupils must be recorded as **NOT** having taken a school lunch, for example:

- If the school kitchen is closed and the school have not offered any alternative provision.
- Pupils who have changed their preference to bring a packed lunch.

If your school uses SIMS Attendance, the attendance data recorded for census day morning can be used to calculate all pupils who are present **and likely to be taking a school dinner**. In this case, select the **Calculate from Attendance** button.

If your school is not using SIMS Attendance to update the panel, the number of school dinners taken on census day can be entered manually.

- Click **Tick All** (to the right of the panel) to populate the **School Dinner Taken** column. All pupils are ticked indicating that they received a school dinner on census day.
- Edit individual records by clicking the applicable **School Dinner Taken** cell to toggle between a tick and blank (no meal taken).

## Classes (only collected in Spring Census)

The DfE needs details of all classes running at a selected time on spring census day, the selected time / period can be calculated using the below process. This will advise you of what time to use to identify the classes that the children are in and the activity that you need to record within the school census class panel.

**The selected period** is based on the last digit of your DfE establishment number.

Code	Descriptor
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

**Where the selected time is not appropriate to the school timetable**, for example, where 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 / period that reflects a 'normal' class time that applies at the selected time each Thursday of the term.

### Explanation of the following terms:

**Teachers** - all qualified or unqualified teachers - excluding those wholly or mainly providing support to individual pupils.

**PPA Teachers** - number of teachers who are on planning and preparation time (PPA) or learning manager time (LMT) or newly qualified teacher (NQT) time at the selected time.

**Support Staff** - education support-staff present in the class. Include teaching assistants, special needs support staff, minority ethnic pupils support staff, and other education support staff. Exclude non-teaching staff wholly or mainly providing support to individual pupils.

**Schools with infant classes**, i.e., reception and/or Key Stage 1 classes

- Should ensure that the selected period is one in which their infant classes are engaged in an **academic activity** rather than that of excepted activities, e.g., games, music, watching television, etc.
- Where a pupil:teacher ratio is greater than 30, schools must record in their census screen by using the **Class Size Exceptions** button where this is due to:
  - any pupils within the class recorded as excepted
  - a teacher being on planning and preparation time or learning manager time and the class is being supervised by a teaching assistant

## Pupil Reconciliation (only collected in Spring Census)

This checks that the number of pupils on roll for whom the census return contains individual pupil data, is consistent with the number of pupils reported in classes as taught - after allowing for the fact that some registered pupils may not have been in class at the selected time.

The values in the **Total Pupils** and **Pupils On Roll** fields must be the same

## Attendance

Academy trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities must use the guidance the DfE have produced 'Working together to improve school attendance' which gives advice to the attendance codes to be used. More information can be found at:

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

## General (only collected in Spring Census)

The **General** panel deals with the number of students who receive Free School Meals on census day.

Enter the total number of children who are **'free school meal eligible'** who had one on census day.

**Do not count:**

Pupils who get a free lunch **only due to the universal infant free school meal entitlement**

## Infant Admissions Appeals (only collected in Spring Census)

Collects information about admissions appeals from schools that have infant classes. It is a subset of the primary figure provided.

All fields in this panel must be populated manually.

## Primary Admission Appeals (only collected in Spring Census)

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

All fields in this panel must be populated manually.

## Validating the Census Return

A return must be created, validated, and authorised before it can be sent to the Local Authority or uploaded to the DfE COLLECT data collection website.

Validating the return creates an unauthorised return file, which is then run against a set of DfE rules. When the validation is complete, a list of errors and queries is displayed.

- An error is caused by either missing or inaccurate data.
- A query highlights data which is unusual or not as expected, e.g., there are no pupils with special educational needs.

The easiest way to view and correct data that will fail the census return validation is to create a return and then work through the data failures and queries. This will enable you to resolve most problems well before census day.



*If an error appears, stating that here are missing attendance marks, check **Focus | Attendance | Deal with missing marks** to view any missing data. You can also select **Yes** and undertake this task later 😊.*

Once the validation is complete, the **Validation Errors Summary** report will be produced at the bottom of the **Census Return Details** page:

The report could be printed off if you wish to view a hard copy whilst you deal with any errors and/or queries.

The list of errors can be filtered to display those with a particular error or query code.

- Click on the drop-down arrow at the **Error Search** field.
- From the drop-down list, you can select any of the error or query codes listed.
- By default, when **ALL** is selected in the **Error Search** field, the errors are displayed at the top of the list, followed by the queries.

## Correcting Data Errors / Queries

Once you have produced your validation report you should begin to resolve your errors. This can be done by dealing with each error on an individual basis, or, where there are several errors of the same type, using the bulk update facility to resolve them all together.



*If you have validated your census as part of a dry run before completing the **Census Return** panels, you will find that some errors relate to missing data in the remaining panels, such as those relating to **School Dinners Taken**. These can be ignored until you have completed these panels. If EBIU have asked you to resubmit your Census due to errors / queries, please remember to take a note of the **School Dinners Taken** on census day to complete when you resubmit.*

Individual errors / queries may require information to be input which is unique to a particular pupil such as UPN number or address. In such cases, these errors must be resolved individually as each case will be different and cannot be flood filled with a standard response.

Although editing individual pupil/student details is a valid way to correct data, it may be more efficient to correct omissions in SIMS by using the bulk update routine.

**Routines | Pupil | Bulk Update.**

Once you are satisfied that all the information within the census file is correct and any outstanding queries are acceptable to the school, remember to **Create & Validate the Census return once again**. Once this is completed you will be ready to start looking at the other items of information required by the Census panels.

## Finalising the Return

Once you have completed all the panels of the census return and carried out a final validation to ensure all errors have been resolved and only acceptable queries remain, you can then carry out final checks of your data and submit your return.

## Reports

You must **Save** your return and **Create & Validate** it first before it is possible to run these reports.

The **Detail Report** button can be found alongside the **Create & Validate**, **Summary** and **Authorise** buttons.

This will allow you to run individual data reports, by ticking or unticking the relevant boxes according. **You must run these reports, to check that the data collected in your census is correct** and the reports allow you more easily to identify errors.

Multiple reports can be run by selecting the option at the foot of the Detail Report drop down.

## Producing the Summary Report

**The Summary report** enables the school staff, who are involved in the return's preparation, to assess the accuracy and completeness of the return data. It should then be passed to the Headteacher for authorisation.

The **Summary** button at the top of the screen produces a version of the summary report in HTML format and opens in an Internet Explorer browser.

- Click **Summary** to open the Summary Report.



- Scroll through the collected data to confirm that all the reported data is correct.



*Please remember that the Headteacher must confirm that the information produced by the Summary report is correct.*

*For Audit purposes, a hard copy of the Summary report must be signed and dated by the Headteacher. Only then can the census file be authorised and returned to the LA.*

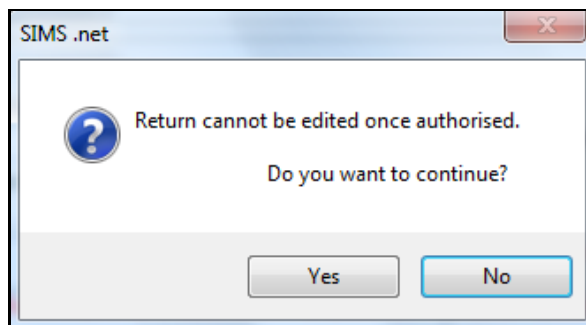
## Authorising the Return

Once the Summary Report has been confirmed / authorised as correct by the Headteacher, you can then authorise the Return in SIMS.



*Please remember that, once the census return is authorised, you are unable to open the file and make amendments.*

- Click **Authorise**.
- Click **Yes** to the following warning:



- The Headteacher authorisation screen will appear, which requires you as the Administrator to confirm that you have sourced authorisation from the Headteacher to authorise the census.
- Click **Continue** to proceed.

Once the return is authorised, if you wish to amend the file, you must create a copy of the authorised file and make amendments within the copy.

The return files are now in the designated folder ready for transfer to the LA.

Print the School Census Spring 2024 Authorisation Report and keep for your own records.

## Submit the Census File to the LA

Once the school census return is authorised, you should submit your census files to the LA.

We ask that you please submit your census to the LA via **Perspective**, which is a secure method of sending school information to us. If you do not have access to Perspective, your Headteacher can set you up via **Settings (Cog icon) > Manage Users > Create New User**.

The following files need to be uploaded:

- **XML** file which contains your Census data.
- **Summary Report**
- **Either a Word document** with your school's name / DfE number, along with details/ explanation of your acceptable outstanding errors and queries

**OR**

- **Authorisation Report** incorporating details/ explanation of your outstanding acceptable errors and queries

All files will have the Wigan LA number 359 followed by your school's DfE number.

You may find that after you have submitted your census return to the LA you are asked to make amendments and resubmit the file.

Once changes have been made, you must produce a new Summary report for each new file sent to the LA. A hard copy of the new Summary report must be authorised and dated by the Headteacher.

# Submitting the Census file – Academies

If the EBIU team process your census return on your behalf, please follow the instructions above regarding uploading your file to Perspective.

However, if you submit the census file to the DfE yourself there are additional guidance documents provided by the DfE to assist:

[Complete the school census - Generate and submit your return - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census-generate-and-submit-your-return)

## What Happens Next?

EBIU will upload your school census file to a website called **COLLECT**, which is managed by the Department for Education (DfE).

**COLLECT flags up errors and queries** in the file which you may need to correct that haven't / have been flagged previously through the Create and Validate process.

If any **queries** were flagged up **within SIMS**, these may relate to queries flagged up in **COLLECT**. If you have put an **explanatory note** on your email regarding these, we may not need to contact you.

We also produce **internal validation reports** which we distribute to teams within the Council. Again, these may show up anomalies between the data we hold for your school and what you have submitted.

You may be contacted by the LA once your census file has been processed. This could be a member of the **EBIU team, the schools finance team or a member of staff from one of the teams** that an internal validation report has been sent to (for example the SEND Team).

It may be that we are contacting you for an **explanation of a query** on COLLECT – if this is the case, you may not need to resubmit. The explanation you give will be recorded as a note on COLLECT.

It may be that we are contacting you to **correct some data** in your SIMS system. If this is the case, please **make the amendments**, updating the history to a date pre-census if necessary, and **save** the changes.



*Appendix A' provides a list of common errors and queries that are often generated from the census submission (WIG queries), along with resolutions from EBIU 😊.*

## Resubmitting

You may find that after you have submitted your census return to the LA you are asked to make amendments and resubmit the file, you can undertake this process by:

- Selecting **Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census** to display the census browser.
- Click **Search** to ensure that the list of returns is displayed.
- Highlight the file you want to copy.
- Click **Copy**.
- A message requests confirmation that you wish to make a copy of the selected return.
- Click **Yes**.
- Rename the copied return, for example **School Census Spring 2024B**, by highlighting it then click **Open** to display the Census Return Details page.
- In the Census Details panel, edit the Description e.g., adding A, B etc.
- Click **Save**.

Once changes have been made within census, you must produce a new Summary Report. The census must then again be authorised by the Headteacher. You can then follow the **Submit the Census File to the LA** process above.



*Please remember to take a note of the **School Dinners Taken on census day** to complete should you need to resubmit 😊.*

# Appendix A

Error ID	Error Message	Resolution
<b>Wig00</b>	Enrolment Status Clash with this UPN - Pupil attending this school but also registered at another school. Please investigate - is the pupil dual registered and recorded with the correct enrolment status?	If amendments are made to the enrolment status of this pupil in your MIS, please rerun and resubmit your School Census.
<b>Wig01</b>	There is also a child with the same forename, surname, and DOB at another school with a different UPN on our DfE checks report. Please confirm attendance as this may simply 2 different children.	Please confirm attendance on census day as this may simply 2 different children, <b>OR</b> please obtain and import this student's CTF into your school's MIS to update the UPN. If amendments are made to the enrolment status of this pupil in your MIS, please re-run and resubmit your School Census.
<b>Wig03</b>	N1 & N2 - Part Time indicator is TRUE, hours at setting are more than 25hrs.	If the hours at setting are correct, please remove the part time details.
<b>Wig07</b>	Dual Registered Pupil - check which other setting attended.	Please confirm the other setting this pupil attends. If this pupil was only on roll at one setting on census, please amend registration status, back date, and resubmit your school census.
<b>Wig08</b>	Temporary UPN	If pupil has previously attended another educational setting, please acquire UPN from that setting. Alternatively, if certain the pupil has never attended another setting, please apply a permanent UPN in your MIS. After amendments are made, please re-run and resubmit your School Census.
<b>Wig09</b>	The number of pupils in receipt of Top Up Funding differs to that of what is expected.	The LA has no record of this pupil's Top up Funding. Please confirm if this is from another LA. If you have any questions about this pupil's funding, please contact the SEND team.  <b>OR</b> The LA has a record of this pupil's Top Up Funding; however, you have not returned any in the census. If any amendments are made, please rerun, and resubmit your school census. If you have any questions about this pupil's funding, please contact the SEND team.
<b>Wig10</b>	E1, E2, N1 & N2 - Part Time Indicator is FALSE, with less than 25hrs at setting. If the pupil attends less than 10	Please amend part-time indicator to reflect part-time status of the pupil. Alternatively, if the child attends full time, please amend the Hours at Setting. Once

	sessions, part time details need to be added to the child's record.	amendments are made, please re-run and then resubmit your School Census.
<b>Wig12</b>	E1, E2, N1 & N2 - Funded Hours are less than 15 with different hours recorded at setting. Please confirm this is correct.	If this is correct, then no action needs to be taken. Alternatively, amend where incorrect. If amending, please re-run and resubmit your School Census.
<b>Wig13</b>	E1, E2, N1 & N2 - Part Time indicator is TRUE, with more than 25 hours at setting. If the pupil attends for the maximum 10 sessions, part time details need to be removed from the child's record.	Please review this pupils' hours at setting, if the pupil attends for the maximum 10 sessions (25 hours or more), part time details need to be removed from the child's record. If amending, please re-run and resubmit the Census.
<b>Wig14</b>	School Lunch Taken Check - Pupil is recorded as in receipt of 2 school lunches on Census Day.	Please amend accordingly.
<b>Wig16</b>	N1 & N2 - 0 Funded Hours Recorded within pupil's record. Pupil is recorded as in receipt of Extended Hours. Please confirm this is correct.	Please confirm if this is correct.
<b>Wig17</b>	Funded Hours Exceeding the Maximum 15 Funded Hours.	Please confirm if this is correct.
<b>Wig18</b>	Part-Time Indicator is TRUE, however less than 25 Hours at Setting.	Please amend the part-time details or hours at setting accordingly. If amending, please rerun and resubmit the Census.
<b>Wig19</b>	Part-Time Indicator is FALSE; however, Hours at Setting & Funded Hours are recorded.	Please confirm the Funded Hours and Hours at Setting are correct. If correct, please record Part-Time Details for this pupil. If amending, please rerun and resubmit the Census.
<b>Wig20</b>	30 Hour pupils, hours at setting greater than 30.	Please confirm that this pupil attends your setting for more than 30 hours per week.
<b>Wig22</b>	E1, E2, N1 & N2 - No hours at setting recorded. Please check this is recorded correctly.	Please check this is recorded correctly, if it is not and any amendments are made, please resubmit.
<b>Wig23</b>	No Nursery pupils have a 30 Hour Code at your school.	Please investigate. If this is correct, then no action needs to be taken. However, if any changes are made, please rerun and resubmit your school census.
<b>Wig 30</b>	We have noticed that there is not an AP setting for this child - is this dual registration (Main) a part of a managed move? Please confirm.	Please confirm if this is part of a managed move. If this is not part of a managed move and is part of an alternative provision organised by school, then the AP panel would need to be completed.
<b>Wig31</b>	Pupil is single registration with your setting however no previous URN has been entered.	Record and submit the URN (unique reference number) of the establishment that the pupil attended prior to becoming single-registered at your school. You can find the URN on get information about schools (GIAS). If the pupil has not had a previous school prior to your setting, please add a narrative to confirm this.

<b>Wig32</b>	Pupil has an open AP placement with a URN or UKPRN however is single registered.	Please confirm if this is correct or if required amend your enrolment status for this pupil, you may wish to speak to the other establishment to agree the enrolment status.
<b>Wig50</b>	The SEN status which you have recorded is different from what the LA has recorded.	Please confirm if this is from another LA. If not, please amend and resubmit. If you have any questions, please contact the SEN team.

# EBIU School Support Team

Helpdesk

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