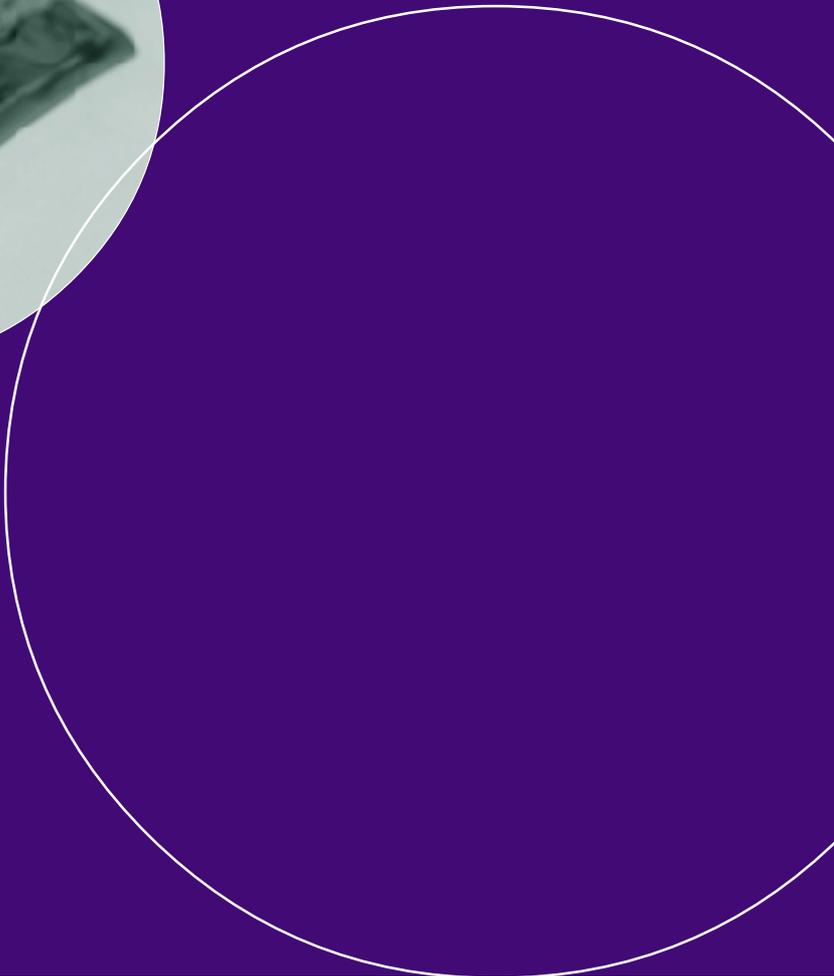
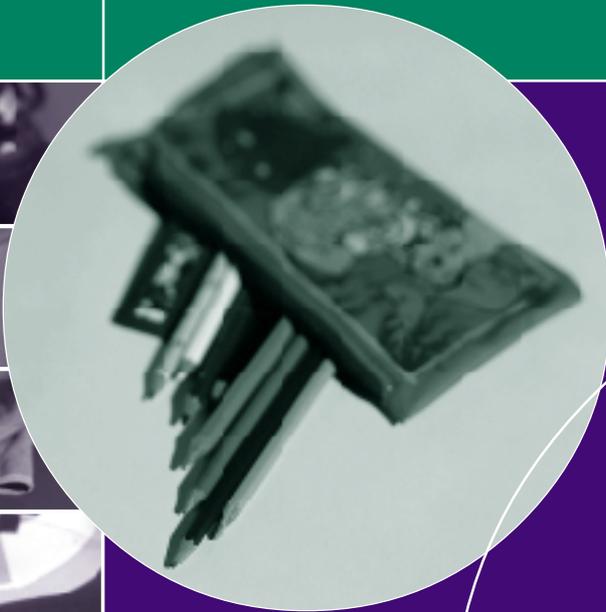


PERFORMANCE AUDIT

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 1999/2000

Education services

Comparing the performance of Scottish Councils



Introduction

Each year, councils publish a range of information to show people how well they are providing their services and how they compare with other councils.

This leaflet contains information on indicators relating to councils' management of education services in 1999/2000. They are:

- the provision of pre-school education
- the size of primary school classes
- the occupancy levels of primary schools
- the occupancy levels of secondary schools
- the assessment of special educational needs.

Other pamphlets published by the Commission cover:

- Fire and Police services
- Social work services
- Leisure and Library services
- Housing services
- Environmental services
- Regulatory services
- Benefits, Finance and Corporate issues

The Commission also publishes:

- a comprehensive compendium of the information for all the services for which there are performance indicators
- council 'profiles' analysing indicators on a council-by-council basis.

Using the information

For each activity we have set out why some of the differences in performance may have arisen. We also highlight particular features of the information – for example, the range in performance achieved by different councils or the overall change in councils' performance over time.

Several factors affect the way a council performs its activities. You need to be aware of these in order to understand why results may vary. Some of these factors are outwith the control of the council – for example, population size and density, geographical area, and the mix between urban and rural settlements. Others may be specific to a particular service or the groups of people it serves. These **local factors may mean that a council with a performance which, at first sight, appears to be worse than that of another has, in fact, done better** given the circumstances it faces.

In this pamphlet we have shown information for councils for 1999/2000 and, where appropriate, made comparison with previous years.

Key

Auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission have reviewed councils' arrangements for producing the performance information. In the tables and charts shown in this pamphlet, an asterisk (*) against a council's name indicates that the auditor expressed doubts about the reliability of the council's arrangements for producing the information.

In 1999/2000, 96% of four-year-old children had a place in pre-school education compared to just under 75% of eligible three-year-olds.

Just over 3% of four-year-old children in a place had fewer than five sessions per week, compared to nearly 31% of eligible three-year-olds.

[see indicator 1](#)

The overall average number of pupils per class decreased from 25 in 1998/99 to 24.6 in 1999/2000 and 27 councils reported a reduction in class size.

All councils other than the three Islands councils reported that some classes with P1 to P3 pupils had 31 or more pupils. However, overall, only 7.2% of classes with P1 to P3 pupils had more than 31 pupils.

[see indicator 2](#)

In 1999/2000, just under a third of Scotland's 2,280 primary schools (31.6%) were reported as less than 61% occupied. This level is similar to recent years.

[see indicator 3](#)

In 1999/2000, less than one in five of Scotland's 388 secondary schools (17.5%) were reported as less than 61% occupied. This level is similar to that reported last year.

[see indicator 4](#)

Overall, councils reported a welcome reduction in the average time taken for a special educational needs assessment. The average time fell by four weeks, from 34 weeks in 1998/99 to 30 weeks in 1999/2000.

[see indicator 5](#)

INDICATOR 1: PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION

The percentage of four-year old children and of three-year-old children who received grant-aided pre-school education from their council or other providers.

Of these children, the proportion who received fewer than five education sessions per week.

This indicator identifies the extent to which satisfactory provision is made and utilised for children eligible to receive government grant-funded pre-schooling in the two years before entering Primary 1. For each council area, it shows:

- the proportion of children with a pre-school education place
- the extent to which these places are provided through either the council or other providers
- the extent to which children with a place receive five sessions per week (eg five mornings or five afternoons).

Other providers include those in the private, voluntary and independent sectors.

Points to bear in mind

Direct comparison with pre-school provision in previous years is not appropriate since 1999/2000 was the first year for which the indicator showed data on the extent of provision by non-council providers.

Guidance on the planning of pre-school education and childcare and the establishment of childcare partnerships, issued by the then SOEID in October 1998, identifies a government policy goal to:

“secure a quality part-time pre-school education place for (a) every pre-school year child whose parents want one by the winter of 1998/99; and (b) for every three-year-olds whose parents want a place by 2002”

Factors affecting the number of sessions received by children will include:

- parents’ preferences – they may prefer that their children, particularly three-year-olds, attend for less than five sessions per week.
- councils’ policies – particularly where capacity is tight, councils may offer children, again particularly three-year-olds, a place with fewer than five sessions per week.

All providers of government grant-funded places are registered and inspected against quality standards and are required to follow the curriculum framework for three to five-year-olds.

In this indicator, the term ‘four-year-olds’ refers to children in their pre-school year. However, ‘eligible three-year-olds’ relates only to those ante-pre-school-year children who were three years old before the beginning of the 1999/2000 school year and eligible for a place in the first term.

Several councils have estimated the number of eligible three-year-old children based on information from the General Register Office for Scotland (GRO). However, where migration has been significant and the population is higher than that estimated by the GRO, the proportion of children with a place may be over-reported.

A full report on the provision of pre-school education across Scotland will be published by Audit Scotland on behalf of the Accounts Commission in the spring of 2001.

Commentary

General provision

In 1999/2000, 95.7% of four-year-olds had a grant-aided place in pre-school education compared to 74.6% of eligible three-year-olds (Table 1a).

The proportion of four-year-olds in a place ranged from 87.0% in Aberdeen City to 100% in 15 council areas. Only three councils reported overall provision for fewer than 90% of four-year-olds in their area (Aberdeen City, City of Edinburgh, Glasgow City).

The proportion of eligible three-year-olds in a grant-aided place varied more widely, from 36.4% in Highland to 100% in East Dunbartonshire. Only two councils reported that fewer than half of the eligible three-year-olds in their area had a place (Highland and West Lothian).

The extent to which other providers were used varied widely between council areas. The balance of council and other provision differed between four-year-old children and eligible three-year-olds. Just over 80% of four-year-olds were in a council place and a further 15.4% in a non-council place, compared to 47.6% and 26.6% respectively for eligible three-year-olds. The proportion of children with a place in a non-council centre ranged between 1.4% and 90.8% of four-year-olds and between 3.0% and 89.0% of eligible three-year-olds.

In only two council areas (Argyll & Bute and Eilean Siar) were the majority of places for four-year-olds provided in non-council centres. However, the majority of places for eligible three-year-olds were provided in non-council centres in 12 council areas.

Provision of five sessions per week

The proportion of children who received fewer than five sessions per week needs to be considered within the context of the overall proportion of children receiving provision.

The overall proportion of four-year-olds who were in pre-school education and who received fewer than five sessions was just over 3%. In two councils (Glasgow City, Perth & Kinross) all of the four-year-olds in a pre-school place received the full five sessions per week. However the proportion that received fewer than five sessions was as high as 26.7% in the Orkney Islands (Table 1b). More than 10% of four-year-olds received fewer than five sessions in the three Islands councils and Dumfries & Galloway.

The overall proportion of eligible three-year-olds receiving less than five sessions per week was 30.5%. A larger proportion of eligible three-year-olds than four-year-olds received fewer than five sessions a week in every council except Perth & Kinross, which reported that all children in pre-school education also received five sessions. In three council areas (Argyll & Bute, Dumfries & Galloway and North Ayrshire) none of the eligible three-year-olds in a place received five sessions per week.

Table 1a: The percentage of children in a grant-aided pre-school place

COUNCIL	Council providers		Other providers		All providers	
	Three-year-olds (%)	Four-year-olds (%)	Three-year-olds (%)	Four-year-olds (%)	Three-year-olds (%)	Four-year-olds (%)
Aberdeen City	51.4	72.9	21.1	14.1	72.5	87.0
Aberdeenshire	9.4	80.2	68.0	19.8	77.4	100.0
Angus	36.9	82.4	43.2	11.7	80.2	94.0
Argyll & Bute	45.4	48.9	46.7	51.2	92.0	100.0
Clackmannanshire	59.0	91.2	37.9	6.5	96.9	97.7
Dumfries & Galloway	25.3	93.3	47.7	6.7	73.0	100.0
Dundee City	69.3	88.1	28.4	11.9	97.5	100.0
East Ayrshire	54.8	96.5	14.3	2.6	69.1	99.1
East Dunbartonshire	46.0	58.5	54.0	41.5	100.0	100.0
East Lothian	59.1	90.0	21.4	10.0	80.5	100.0
East Renfrewshire	39.4	83.4	58.1	16.6	97.5	100.0
Edinburgh, City of	51.4	69.7	23.1	18.5	74.5	88.3
Eilean Siar	0.0	9.1	89.0	90.8	89.0	100.0
Falkirk	74.3	90.0	7.2	3.3	81.5	93.3
Fife	38.2	94.8	12.0	4.5	50.2	99.1
Glasgow City	68.1	80.9	14.9	9.0	83.0	89.9
Highland	9.6	78.3	26.8	20.6	36.4	98.9
Inverclyde	53.6	66.9	27.4	28.4	81.1	95.3
Midlothian	70.4	94.8	8.6	5.2	79.0	100.0
Moray	32.1	69.6	67.3	30.5	99.4	100.0
North Ayrshire	32.3	75.1	46.2	23.4	78.6	98.5
North Lanarkshire	60.4	73.4	19.3	17.6	79.8	91.0
Orkney Islands	16.4	95.5	43.6	3.7	60.0	99.3
Perth & Kinross	37.8	77.9	25.3	22.1	63.1	100.0
Renfrewshire	53.2	77.3	27.9	17.7	81.2	95.1
Scottish Borders	37.7	91.6	57.5	8.4	95.3	100.0
Shetland Islands	46.4	68.6	38.6	23.4	85.0	92.1
South Ayrshire	49.2	83.8	22.7	16.2	71.9	100.0
South Lanarkshire	41.7	74.5	12.9	19.8	54.6	94.4
Stirling	60.3	87.8	32.5	12.2	92.8	100.0
West Dunbartonshire	83.3	96.5	12.6	3.5	95.9	100.0
West Lothian	37.5	97.3	3.0	1.4	40.5	98.8
All Scotland	47.6	80.3	26.6	15.4	74.6	95.7

Table 1b: The percentage of children in a grant-aided place, who received fewer than five sessions per week

COUNCIL	Three-year-olds (%)	Four-year-olds (%)
Aberdeen City	9.6	0.5
Aberdeenshire	62.0	1.8
Angus	30.6	3.2
Argyll & Bute	100.0	9.0
Clackmannanshire	17.1	3.3
Dumfries & Galloway	100.0	16.3
Dundee City	7.3	0.8
East Ayrshire	23.6	0.4
East Dunbartonshire	28.0	9.1
East Lothian	7.8	1.2
East Renfrewshire	21.0	0.6
Edinburgh, City of	10.8	2.8
Eilean Siar	49.6	14.2
Falkirk	20.0	2.4
Fife	20.4	3.3
Glasgow City	5.3	0.0
Highland	61.5	8.0
Inverclyde	6.1	1.8
Midlothian	0.8	0.3
Moray	18.1	2.2
North Ayrshire	100.0	1.5
North Lanarkshire	68.2	5.3
Orkney Islands	96.4	26.7
Perth & Kinross	0.0	0.0
Renfrewshire	5.2	1.1
Scottish Borders	56.1	2.8
Shetland Islands	44.5	12.9
South Ayrshire	54.3	1.1
South Lanarkshire	18.2	3.4
Stirling	53.0	7.9
West Dunbartonshire	4.5	2.8
West Lothian	3.1	0.3
All Scotland	30.5	3.3

INDICATOR 2: PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE

The average number of children per primary school class.

The number of primary school classes of these types: single-year, composite, and classes containing P1 to P3 pupils.

The proportion of classes that meet national class size standards.

This indicator reflects the typical class size in which primary school pupils are taught. It shows the proportions of classes of different sizes and the extent to which each council uses composite classes – ie classes where at least two year groups are taught in the same teaching area or class at the same time.

Points to bear in mind

Maximum class sizes for single-year and composite classes are subject to national agreement in Scotland. The maximum size is 33 pupils for single-year classes and 25 pupils for composite classes. The government is encouraging councils to reduce the class size for classes containing P1 to P3 pupils to no more than 30 pupils.

Schools use composite classes when there are few pupils or to adjust class sizes to meet the number of available teachers. Class sizes tend to be smaller in small schools. Therefore, councils with a higher proportion of small primary schools might also report smaller class sizes and a higher proportion of composite classes.

Changes in the number of children starting school each year will result in some variation between years in the total number of classes and the balance between composite and single-year classes.

Commentary

In 1999/2000 there were just over 430,000 pupils and 17,488 primary school classes, of which 12,803 (73%) were single-year classes and 4,685 (27%) were composite classes (Table 2a). These proportions are similar to those in previous years.

The average number of pupils per class ranged from 15.4 in Eilean Siar to 27.6 in East Renfrewshire, and all councils other than the three Islands councils had an average class size of over 20 pupils (Table 2a).

The overall average number of pupils per class decreased from 25 in 1998/99 to 24.6 in 1999/2000 and 27 councils reported a reduction in class size.

The extent to which councils needed to have single-year or composite classes of above the nationally agreed class size was very low. Only 10 councils, three fewer than in 1998/99, reported that any classes had more than 33 pupils. Sixteen councils, the same number as in 1998/99, reported that a few composite classes had more than 25 pupils.

All councils other than the three Islands councils reported that some classes with P1 to P3 pupils had 31 or more pupils. However, **overall, only 7.2% of classes with P1 to P3 pupils had more than 31 pupils.** Nine councils reported that more than 10% of the classes containing P1 to P3 pupils had more than 30 pupils (Table 2b).

Table 2a: Primary school pupil and class numbers 1999/2000

COUNCIL	Number of pupils		Number of classes		
	Total	Average per class	Total	Single-year	Composite
Aberdeen City	15,387	25.6	602	519	83
Aberdeenshire	21,310	23.5	908	503	405
Angus	9,338	24.3	384	256	128
Argyll & Bute	7,779	21.3	365	174	191
Clackmannanshire	4,415	25.5	173	140	33
Dumfries & Galloway	12,699	23.4	542	255	287
Dundee City	11,708	25.3	463	416	47
East Ayrshire	10,971	25.2	436	353	83
East Dunbartonshire	10,573	26.7	396	322	74
East Lothian	8,063	25.9	311	247	64
East Renfrewshire	8,763	27.6	318	292	26
Edinburgh, City of	29,877	25.9	1,152	1,025	127
Eilean Siar	2,378	15.4	154	27	127
Falkirk	12,480	26.5	471	387	84
Fife	29,932	24.2	1,236	896	340
Glasgow City	46,098	24.9	1,853	1,482	371
Highland	18,854	21.6	873	399	474
Inverclyde	7,464	24.8	301	253	48
Midlothian	7,424	24.7	300	233	67
Moray	8,028	24.6	327	216	111
North Ayrshire	12,408	24.9	499	403	96
North Lanarkshire	29,218	24.8	1,177	886	291
Orkney Islands	1,757	19.5	90	52	38
Perth & Kinross	10,834	23.9	453	301	152
Renfrewshire	15,332	26.6	577	510	67
Scottish Borders	8,935	23.0	389	236	153
Shetland Islands	2,215	18.0	123	64	59
South Ayrshire	9,238	25.4	364	287	77
South Lanarkshire	26,472	25.0	1,061	777	284
Stirling	6,823	23.6	289	197	92
West Dunbartonshire	8,828	26.0	339	260	79
West Lothian	14,783	26.3	562	435	127
All Scotland	430,384	24.6	17,488	12,803	4,685

Table 2b: Classes with P1 to P3 pupils

COUNCIL	Number of classes	0-30 pupils %	31 or more pupils %
Aberdeen City	272	94.6	5.5
Aberdeenshire	421	96.2	3.8
Angus	178	93.3	6.7
Argyll & Bute	180	98.9	1.1
Clackmannanshire	78	93.6	6.4
Dumfries & Galloway	267	98.2	1.9
Dundee City	209	97.1	2.9
East Ayrshire	192	92.8	7.3
East Dunbartonshire	174	85.5	14.4
East Lothian	144	93.8	6.3
East Renfrewshire	143	77.7	22.4
Edinburgh, City of	519	89.6	10.4
Eilean Siar	66	100.0	0.0
Falkirk	207	82.6	17.4
Fife	563	96.6	3.4
Glasgow City	823	88.1	12.1
Highland	440	99.0	1.0
Inverclyde	135	95.6	4.4
Midlothian	139	96.4	3.6
Moray	154	96.0	3.9
North Ayrshire	207	91.7	8.2
North Lanarkshire	537	97.1	2.8
Orkney Islands	43	100.0	0.0
Perth & Kinross	220	92.2	7.8
Renfrewshire	251	82.5	17.5
Scottish Borders	185	96.8	3.2
Shetland Islands	65	100.0	0.0
South Ayrshire	157	86.6	13.4
South Lanarkshire	482	96.7	3.3
Stirling	133	97.8	2.3
West Dunbartonshire	149	86.5	13.4
West Lothian	254	81.1	18.9
All Scotland	7,987	92.8	7.2

INDICATOR 3: PRIMARY SCHOOL OCCUPANCY

The total number of primary schools, and the percentage of schools where the ratio of pupils to places is less than 60%, 61% to 100% and 101% or more.

The occupancy level is a measure of how many school places have been taken up. For example, if a school has 150 places and pupils fill 120, the occupancy level is 80%.

Points to bear in mind

Councils have some discretion in the way that they measure occupancy levels, so there may be minor differences in approach among them. Some of the factors which may be important are:

- whether or not gymnasiums are counted as teaching rooms
- how non-teaching rooms are treated
- how rooms used for only part of the curriculum are treated
- whether surplus accommodation is given over to community or other use and is no longer treated as available for school use.

In 1995 the Accounts Commission published a report *'Room for learning'* on the management of surplus capacity in schools. It highlighted the need for action to be taken to reduce surplus capacity, while recognising that the restructuring of education provision was a difficult task.

This is the first year for which councils have reported the extent to which they have schools with some level of over-occupancy. However, the extent of over-occupation within individual schools is not reported.

Commentary

In 1999/2000, there were 2,280 primary schools in Scotland, a reduction of two schools on the number in 1998/99 and 28 fewer than in 1996/97. Of these, just under a third (31.6%) were reported as 60% occupied or less (Table 3a). This is a similar proportion to that in recent years.

About one in fourteen primary schools were reported as having some level of over-occupation (ie 101% occupied or more) (Table 3b). However, the proportion of primary schools in the different occupancy bands varied widely among councils.

East Lothian was the only council that reported having no schools less than 61% occupied. However, four councils (Clackmannanshire, Eilean Siar, Glasgow City and Shetland Islands) reported that at least half of their primary schools were less than 61% occupied.

In four councils (East Dunbartonshire, East Lothian, Midlothian and Renfrewshire) more than 80% of primary schools were occupied to between 61% and 100%.

Twenty-two councils reported a number of schools having some level of over-occupation. More than a fifth of primary schools were over-occupied in three councils (Aberdeenshire, East Renfrewshire and City of Edinburgh).

Table 3a: The overall number of primary schools, and the proportions that were less than 61% occupied

	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
Number of schools	2,280	2,282	2,294	2,308
Percentage with occupancy level of 0-60%	31.6	30.9	32.1	32.2

Table 3b: The proportion of primary schools in each occupancy band 1999/2000

COUNCIL	Number of schools	Percentage occupancy		
		0-60%	61-100%	101% or more
Aberdeen City	58	20.6	63.8	15.5
Aberdeenshire	157	17.8	52.9	29.3
Angus	62	33.9	61.2	4.8
Argyll & Bute	82	48.8	50.0	1.2
Clackmannanshire	19	52.6	47.3	0.0
Dumfries & Galloway	116	25.9	74.2	0.0
Dundee City	41	36.6	53.7	9.8
East Ayrshire	46	37.0	60.9	2.2
East Dunbartonshire	36	11.1	86.1	2.8
East Lothian	35	0.0	100.0	0.0
East Renfrewshire	24	4.2	75.0	20.8
Edinburgh, City of	103	20.4	59.2	20.4
Eilean Siar	43	76.7	23.3	0.0
Falkirk	48	33.4	66.7	0.0
Fife	146	23.3	72.6	4.1
Glasgow City	203	57.2	37.9	4.9
Highland	191	41.9	56.1	2.1
Inverclyde	32	37.5	59.4	3.1
Midlothian	36	16.7	83.3	0.0
Moray	49	22.5	67.3	10.2
North Ayrshire	52	23.1	71.2	5.8
North Lanarkshire	133	30.1	64.0	6.0
Orkney Islands	22	31.8	68.2	0.0
Perth & Kinross	77	27.3	54.6	18.2
Renfrewshire	52	17.3	80.8	1.9
Scottish Borders	72	13.9	70.8	15.3
Shetland Islands	34	50.0	44.1	5.9
South Ayrshire	45	44.5	51.1	4.4
South Lanarkshire	124	33.9	66.1	0.0
Stirling	42	28.5	71.4	0.0
West Dunbartonshire	35	34.3	65.7	0.0
West Lothian	65	16.9	66.2	16.9
All Scotland	2280	31.6	61.0	7.4

INDICATOR 4: SECONDARY SCHOOL OCCUPANCY

The total number of secondary schools, and the percentage of schools where the ratio of pupils to places is less than 60%, 61% to 100% and 101% or more.

The occupancy level is a measure of how many school places have been taken up. For example, if a school has 1000 places and pupils fill 800, the occupancy level is 80%.

Points to bear in mind

Councils have some discretion in the way that they measure occupancy levels, so there may be minor differences in approach among them. Some of the factors which may be important are:

- whether or not gymnasiums are counted as teaching rooms
- how non-teaching rooms are treated
- how rooms used for only part of the curriculum are treated
- whether surplus accommodation is given over to community or other use and is no longer treated as available for school use.

In 1995 the Accounts Commission published a report '*Room for learning*' on the management of surplus capacity in schools. It highlighted the need for action to be taken to reduce surplus capacity, while recognising that the restructuring of education provision was a difficult task.

This is the first year for which councils have reported the extent to which they have schools that suffer from any level of over-occupancy. However, the extent of over-occupation within individual schools is not reported.

Commentary

In 1999/2000, there were 388 secondary schools in Scotland, 14 fewer than in 1996/97 following local government re-organisation. Of these, less than one in five (17.5%) were reported as 60% occupied or less (Table 4a). This is similar to that reported last year.

About 15% of secondary schools were reported as having some level of over-occupation (ie 101% occupied or more) (Table 4b). However, the proportion of secondary schools in the different occupancy bands varied widely among councils.

Eleven councils reported having no schools that were less than 61% occupied. However, two councils (Eilean Siar, and Orkney Islands) reported that at least half of their secondary schools were less than 61% occupied. Ten councils reported at least a fifth of their secondary schools in this occupancy band.

Twelve councils reported that more than 80% of their secondary schools were occupied to between 61% and 100% and both Clackmannanshire and Stirling reported that all their secondary schools were in this occupancy band.

Twenty councils reported a number of schools having some level of over-occupation and seven councils (Aberdeenshire, East Dunbartonshire, City of Edinburgh, Midlothian, Inverclyde, Perth & Kinross and Scottish Borders) reported that at least 30% of their secondary schools have some level of over-occupation.

More than half of Scotland's councils (18) had some level of both over-occupied primary and secondary schools.

Table 4a: The overall number of schools, and the proportions that are less than 61% occupied

	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
Number of schools	388	390	399	402
Percentage with occupancy level of 0-60%	17.5	16.9	21.1	21.1

Table 4b: The proportion of secondary schools in each occupancy band 1999/2000

COUNCIL	Number of schools	Percentage occupancy		
		0-60%	61-100%	101% or more
Aberdeen City	13	23.1	61.6	15.4
Aberdeenshire	16	0.0	43.8	56.3
Angus	8	12.5	75.0	12.5
Argyll & Bute	10	10.0	90.0	0.0
Clackmannanshire	3	0.0	100.0	0.0
Dumfries & Galloway	16	18.8	81.3	0.0
Dundee City	10	20.0	70.0	10.0
East Ayrshire	9	0.0	88.9	11.1
East Dunbartonshire	9	11.1	55.5	33.3
East Lothian	6	0.0	83.3	16.7
East Renfrewshire	7	0.0	71.5	28.6
Edinburgh, City of	23	8.7	56.5	34.8
Eilean Siar	13	61.6	38.5	0.0
Falkirk	8	12.5	87.5	0.0
Fife	19	10.5	89.5	0.0
Glasgow City	29	41.4	51.7	6.9
Highland	28	21.4	60.7	17.9
Inverclyde	8	37.5	25.0	37.5
Midlothian	6	0.0	66.7	33.3
Moray	8	0.0	87.5	12.5
North Ayrshire	10	10.0	90.0	0.0
North Lanarkshire	26	26.9	73.1	0.0
Orkney Islands	6	66.6	33.4	0.0
Perth & Kinross	10	0.0	40.0	60.0
Renfrewshire	14	21.4	57.2	21.4
Scottish Borders	9	0.0	55.5	44.4
Shetland Islands	9	11.1	66.6	22.2
South Ayrshire	9	11.1	77.7	11.1
South Lanarkshire	21	23.8	76.2	0.0
Stirling	7	0.0	100.0	0.0
West Dunbartonshire	7	14.3	85.7	0.0
West Lothian	11	0.0	91.0	9.1
All Scotland	388	17.5	67.5	14.9

INDICATOR 5: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The average time taken to complete an assessment of special educational needs, and the percentage of assessments completed within the following time bands: up to 18 weeks, 19 to 26 weeks, 27 to 39 weeks, 40 to 52 weeks, and more than a year.

This indicator reports the average length of time that it takes each council to carry out an assessment of a child over the age of five, who may have special educational needs.

Points to bear in mind

It may be necessary to assess a pupil's special educational needs if the child has a learning difficulty, physical disability, psychological problem, or any combination of these. These needs cannot normally be met from the resources typically available in schools. Following an assessment, the council must notify the child's parent or guardian as to whether or not it intends to record the child as having special educational needs, and the reasons for its decision. The council must provide for the special educational needs of a child for whom it creates a record of need.

The key factors that influence this indicator are:

- the number and complexity of the referrals received by the council
- the time taken by the staff of other organisations to respond to requests for information.

In some cases, an assessment is delayed to allow for a change in a child's circumstances or personal development. In other cases, a longer time to complete an assessment is agreed with the parents or guardian of a child, or stems from a request from them for a delay.

Commentary

In 1999/2000, councils carried out 1,879 assessments of special educational needs, nearly 11% more than in the previous year (Table 5a).

Overall, councils reported a welcome reduction in the average time taken for an assessment. In 1999/2000 the average time fell by four weeks, from 34 weeks in 1998/99 to 30 weeks. It varied among councils from 16 weeks (Angus and Stirling) to 49 weeks in Scottish Borders. Eighteen councils reduced the average time taken for an assessment.

Sixteen councils completed assessments in an average time of 28 weeks or less, five more councils than in 1998/99. No council took an average of over a year to complete assessments, compared to three councils in 1998/99.

The average time to complete an assessment conceals wide variations among councils in the proportions of assessments completed within various time bands (Table 5b).

Councils completed an average of 27.3% of assessments within 18 weeks. The proportion ranged from 0% in two councils (Scottish Borders and Shetland Islands) to 50% or more in six councils (Angus, Clackmannanshire, City of Edinburgh, Perth & Kinross, Stirling, West Dunbartonshire).

Within 26 weeks, an average of just over a half of the assessments were completed – with slightly fewer than 23% taking between 19 and 26 weeks. Angus and Clackmannanshire reported that they completed all assessments in 26 weeks or less.

On average, councils completed a further 28.6% of assessments in between 27 to 39 weeks. Stirling reported that it completed all assessments in 39 weeks or less.

A further 12.7% of assessments were completed in between 40 and 52 weeks, leaving only about one in twelve assessments taking longer than a year to complete. Three councils (Aberdeenshire, Scottish Borders and West Lothian) reported that more than a quarter of their assessments took longer than a year to complete.

Table 5a: The average time taken to complete an assessment of special educational needs

COUNCIL	Number of assessments carried out	Average time taken to complete an assessment of educational needs (weeks)			
		1999/2000	1998/99	1997/98	1996/97
Aberdeen City	59	34	34	35	31
Aberdeenshire	95	39	40	32	35
Angus	17	16	18	17	18
Argyll & Bute	33	29	30	25	37
Clackmannanshire	28	17	19	26	33
Dumfries & Galloway	54	44	39	18	36
Dundee City	64	33	18	18	25
East Ayrshire	20	34	63	48	25
East Dunbartonshire	41	28	43	41	29
East Lothian	16	23	35	40	33
East Renfrewshire	23	26	46	45	68
Edinburgh, City of	159	20	24	33	31
Eilean Siar	13	25	40	43	32
Falkirk	102	32	31	24	27
Fife	88	26	29	23	37
Glasgow City	301	39	43	35	33
Highland	78	22	20	16	18
Inverclyde	64	34	32	30	38
Midlothian	15	34	49	30	28
Moray	35	35	34	30	32
North Ayrshire	12	32	41	36	54
North Lanarkshire	66	26	37	56	44
Orkney Islands	10	28	27	23	25
Perth & Kinross	47	17	18	21	24
Renfrewshire	115	27	27	30	34
Scottish Borders	39	49	42	35	45
Shetland Islands	8	37	57	28	35
South Ayrshire	55	23	23	24	52
South Lanarkshire	149	40	37	33	30
Stirling	16	16	13	17	18
West Dunbartonshire	18	21	25	32	18
West Lothian	39	47	62	43	30
All Scotland	1,879	30	34	31	33

Table 5b: The proportion of assessments completed in different time bands

COUNCIL	Percentage of assessments carried out within each time band				
	Up to 18 weeks (%)	19-26 weeks (%)	27-39 weeks (%)	40-52 weeks (%)	More than a year (%)
Aberdeen City	32.2	13.6	18.6	16.9	18.6
Aberdeenshire	11.6	20.0	24.2	18.9	25.3
Angus	52.9	47.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Argyll & Bute	30.3	15.2	24.2	27.3	3.0
Clackmannanshire	67.9	32.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dumfries & Galloway	3.7	16.7	33.3	27.8	18.5
Dundee City	18.8	25.0	25.0	18.8	12.5
East Ayrshire	15.0	35.0	30.0	10.0	10.0
East Dunbartonshire	41.5	14.6	19.5	14.6	9.8
East Lothian	37.5	37.5	12.5	12.5	0.0
East Renfrewshire	26.1	26.1	39.1	4.3	4.3
Edinburgh, City of	53.5	21.4	18.2	4.4	2.5
Eilean Siar	30.8	15.4	46.2	7.7	0.0
Falkirk	15.7	25.5	49.0	2.9	6.9
Fife	33.0	25.0	29.5	10.2	2.3
Glasgow City	10.0	16.9	33.9	20.3	18.9
Highland	48.7	26.9	15.4	6.4	2.6
Inverclyde	6.3	23.4	39.1	20.3	10.9
Midlothian	6.7	20.0	53.3	13.3	6.7
Moray	11.4	31.4	34.3	5.7	17.1
North Ayrshire	8.3	41.7	25.0	16.7	8.3
North Lanarkshire	33.3	24.2	31.8	7.6	3.0
Orkney Islands	20.0	10.0	60.0	10.0	0.0
Perth & Kinross	68.1	25.5	4.3	2.1	0.0
Renfrewshire	11.3	39.1	44.3	4.3	0.9
Scottish Borders	0.0	5.1	20.5	35.9	38.5
Shetland Islands	0.0	0.0	75.0	25.0	0.0
South Ayrshire	34.5	30.9	25.5	9.1	0.0
South Lanarkshire	8.1	14.8	32.9	26.2	18.1
Stirling	75.0	18.8	6.3	0.0	0.0
West Dunbartonshire	50.0	22.2	22.2	0.0	5.6
West Lothian	10.3	10.3	20.5	25.6	33.3
All Scotland	27.3	22.9	28.6	12.7	8.7

Contacts

If you have any specific queries about the performance information, you may wish to contact your council. A contact person for each council is given below. If you have general queries about this pamphlet, you may wish to contact Alec Taylor or Jim Lachie at Audit Scotland.

Aberdeen City, Martin Murchie, Strategic Support Officer, Aberdeen City Council, Office of Chief Executive, Town House, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1FY. Tel: 01224 522008 email: mmurchie@ceo.aberdeen.net.uk

Aberdeenshire, Roger White, Head of Policy, Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB. Tel: 01224 664059 email: rlwhite.ce@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Angus, Jan Adam, Performance Co-ordinator, Angus Council, Chief Executive's Department, The Cross, Forfar, DD8 1BX. Tel: 01307 473018 email: adamj@angus.gov.uk

Argyll And Bute, Russ Weedon, Performance Information Co-ordinator, Argyll and Bute Council Headquarters, Corporate Policy, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT. Tel: 01546 604479 email: russ.weedon@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Clackmannanshire, Andrew Wilson, Development Officer (Best Value), Clackmannanshire Council, Greenfield, Alloa, FK10 2AD. Tel: 01259 450000 email: awilson3@clacks.gov.uk

Dumfries And Galloway, Charlie Proctor, Consultant (Modernising Services Team), Dumfries & Galloway Council, Department for Finance and Corporate Services, Carruthers House, English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2DD. Tel: 01387 260000 email: charliep@dumgal.gov.uk

Dundee City, Rod McKay, Principal Accountant, Finance Department, Dundee City Council, Tayside House, Floor 4, 28 Crichton Street, Dundee, DD1 3RF. Tel: 01382 433522 email: rod.mckay@dundeecity.gov.uk

East Ayrshire, Carol Foote, Principal Officer, Corporate Development, East Ayrshire Council, Chief Executive's Department, London Road, Kilmarnock, KA3 7BU. Tel: 01563 576578 email: carol.foote@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

East Dunbartonshire, Tom Duncan, Best Value Advisor, East Dunbartonshire Council, Tom Johnston House, Civic Way, Kirkintilloch, G66 4TJ. Tel: 0141 5788000 email: tom.duncan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

East Lothian, Lianne Stapleton, Policy Officer, East Lothian Council, Policy and Performance, John Muir House, Haddington, East Lothian EH41 3HA. Tel: 01620 827884 email: lstapleton@eastlothian.gov.uk

East Renfrewshire, Janice Gibson, Corporate Policy Officer, East Renfrewshire Council, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Rouken Glen Road, Giffnock, East Renfrewshire, G46 6UG. Tel: 0141 5773167 email: gibsonj@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

City Of Edinburgh, Steven Diponio, Policy Officer (Research & Information), City of Edinburgh Council, Corporate Services, 12 St Giles Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1PT. Tel: 0131 4693858 email: steven.diponio@edinburgh.gov.uk

Eilean Siar, (Western Isles), Mark Luntley, Depute Director of Finance, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Council Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2BW. Tel: 01851 703773 email: mluntley@cne-siar.gov.uk

Falkirk, Brian Forbes, Senior Performance Review Officer, Corporate Services, Falkirk Council, Municipal Buildings, Falkirk, FK1 5RS. Tel: 01324 506037 email: bforbes@falkirk-council.demon.co.uk

Fife, Philo Wood, Team Leader (Policy Planning & Review), Corporate Policy, Fife Council, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes, Fife, KY7 5LT. Tel: 01592 413617 email: philo.wood@fife.gov.uk

Glasgow City, Jim Mearns, Senior Policy Development Officer, Glasgow City Council, Corporate Policy & Development, City Chambers, George Square, Glasgow, G2 1DU. Tel: 0141 287 3625 email: jim.mearns@ced.glasgow.gov.uk

Highland, Tom Waters, Head of Accounting, Finance Department, Highland Council, Council Offices, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX. Tel: 01463 702426 email: tom.waters@highland.gov.uk

Inverclyde, Brian Purdie, Head of Customer Services, Inverclyde Council, Chief Executive's Office, Municipal Buildings, Greenock, PA15 1LY. Tel: 01475 712748 email: Brian.Purdie@inverclyde.gov.uk

Midlothian, Janice Long, Policy Manager, Midlothian Council, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1LY. Tel: 0131 2713461 email: janice.long@midlothian.gov.uk

Moray, Cynthia Carswell, Chief Executive's Office, The Moray Council, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX. Tel: 01343 543451 email: cynthia.carswell@chief.moray.gov.uk

North Ayrshire, Jim Montgomery, Principal Performance Review Officer, North Ayrshire Council, Chief Executive's Office, Cunninghame House, Irvine, KA12 8EE. Tel: 01294 324125 email: jmontgomery@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

North Lanarkshire, Ian Nicol, Senior Information & Research Officer, North Lanarkshire Council, Chief Executive's Office, PO Box 14, Civic Centre, Motherwell, ML1 1TW. Tel: 01698 302584 email: nicoli@northlan.gov.uk

Orkney Islands, Gareth Waterson, Financial Manager, Orkney Islands Council, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY. Tel: 01856 873535 email: gareth.waterson@orkney.gov.uk

Perth and Kinross, Carol Calder, Strategic Planning Officer, Perth and Kinross Council, Strategic Policy, Council Buildings, 2 High Street, Perth, PH1 5PH. Tel: 01738 475070 email: clcalder@pkc.gov.uk

Renfrewshire, Ian McArthur, Policy Planning Manager, Renfrewshire Council, Council Headquarters, North Building, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1WB. Tel: 0141 8403268 email: ian.mcarthur@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Scottish Borders, Brian Emmerson, Performance Management Officer, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Chief Executive's Department, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA. Tel: 01835 825058 email: bemmerson@scotborders.gov.uk

Shetland Islands, Averill Dorrat, Assistant Resources Officer, Chief Executive's Office, Shetland Islands Council, Town Hall, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0HB. Tel: 01595 744564 email: averill.dorrat@sic.shetland.gov.uk

South Ayrshire, Nicola Gemmell, Performance Review Assistant, South Ayrshire Council, County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr, KA7 1DR. Tel: 01292 612213 email: nicola.gemmell@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

South Lanarkshire, Paul Manning, Research Supervisor, South Lanarkshire Council, Finance Services, Council Offices, Brandongate, 1 Leechlee Road, Hamilton, ML3 0AX. Tel: 01698 453338 email: paul.manning@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Stirling, Lesley J Graham, Corporate Performance Officer, Stirling Council, Chief Executive's Services, Policy Unit, Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET. Tel: 01786 442982 email: grahaml@stirling.gov.uk

West Dunbartonshire, Amanda Watson, Policy Assistant, West Dunbartonshire Council, Chief Executive's Department, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU. Tel: 01389 737528 email: liz.cochrane@sol.co.uk

West Lothian, Jim McIvor, Principal Officer, Best Value Manager, West Lothian Council, West Lothian House, Almondvale Boulevard, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 6QG. Tel: 01506 777122 email: jim.mcivor@westlothian.gov.uk

Western Isles, see Eilean Siar



110 GEORGE STREET EDINBURGH EH2 4LH

T. 0131 477 1234 F. 0131 477 4567

www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

ISBN 1 903433 27 4