

Hands Up Scotland Survey 2019

Statistical News Release (18 June 2020)

An Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

This statistical news release reports key results from the 2019 Hands Up Scotland Survey on mode of travel to schools and nurseries in Scotland. This document accompanies the Hands Up Scotland Survey 2019 National Summary Report and National Results tables.¹

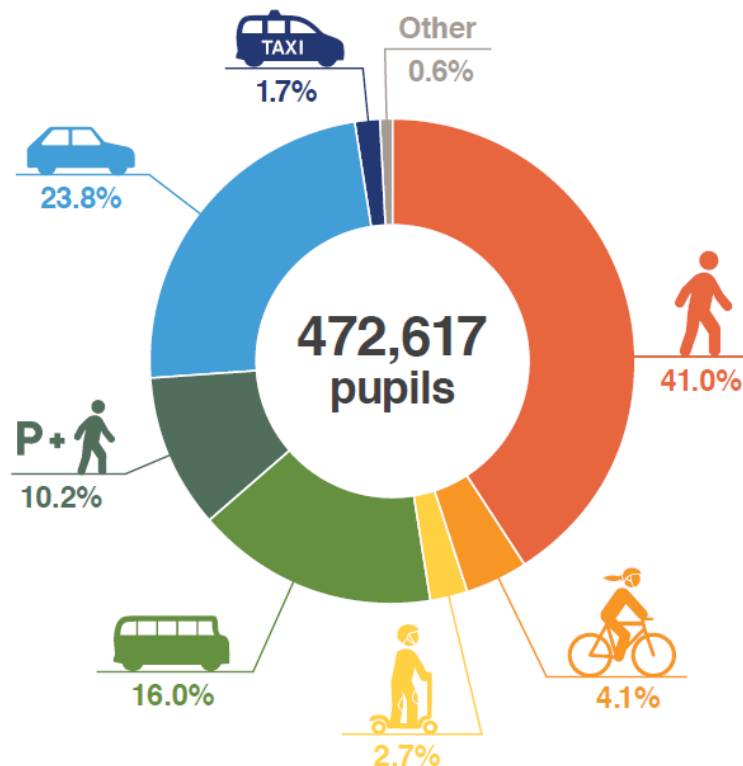
The annual Hands Up Scotland Survey is published by Sustrans as an Official Statistic in Scotland. The survey is funded by Transport Scotland to provide an accurate and up-to-date picture of how pupils travel to school. The survey is now in its twelfth year.

The travel modes are categorised as follows:

- **Active travel:** walking, cycling and scootering or skating
- **Public sustainable travel:** bus
- **Multi-mode travel:** park and stride (driven part of the way by car and walk the rest)
- **Private motorised travel:** driven (car) and taxi.

National results 2019

Chart 1: National travel modes: proportion of participating pupils travelling by different modes (all school pupil responses excluding nursery children), 2019.²



Active travel

47.8% (225,908 out of 472,617) of school pupils (state and independent schools combined) said they normally travel to school in an active way, with walking as the most common mode of travel to school.

- 41.0% of school pupils (193,984) said they normally walk to school
- 4.1% of school pupils (19,395) said they normally cycle to school
- 2.7% of school pupils (12,529) said they normally scooter or skate to school.

Public sustainable travel

16.0% of school pupils (75,525) said they normally travel to school by bus.

Multi-mode travel

10.2% of school pupils (48,039) said they normally park and stride to school.

Private motorised travel

25.5% of school pupils (120,390) said they normally travel to school using private motorised transport:

- 23.8% of school pupils (112,440) said they are normally driven to school in a car
- 1.7% of school pupils (7,950) said they normally travel to school by taxi.

Response rates 2019

School response rates

In 2019, a total of 3,109 schools and nurseries took part in the survey from all 32 local authorities in Scotland. 1,981 were schools and 1,128 were nurseries. Of this, 1,968 state schools (primary, secondary and SEN) participated, which equates to 78.9% of all registered state schools in Scotland.

The total number of state schools, responding to the survey has increased from 1,917 in 2018 to 1,968 in 2019. The highest number of state schools ever to respond to the survey was recorded in 2015 at 2,045 state schools.

Table 1: National response rates: number and proportion of schools responding to the survey, 2019.³

School type	Number of schools which received survey	% of all schools in Scotland which received survey ⁴	Number of schools which returned data	% of schools receiving survey which returned data	% of all schools in Scotland which returned data
Nursery	2,841	N/A	1,128	39.7%	N/A
Primary	2,008	100.1%	1,648	82.1%	82.2%
Secondary	357	99.7%	273	76.5%	76.3%
SEN	116	89.2%	47	40.5%	36.2%
Independent	80	N/A	13	16.3%	N/A
All state schools (excluding nursery)	2,481	99.5%	1,968	79.3%	78.9%
All schools (excluding nursery)	2,561	N/A	1,981	77.4%	N/A

Pupil response rates

In total, 508,169 nursery children and school pupils took part the survey. 472,617 were school pupils and 35,552 were nursery children. 468,588 state school (primary, secondary and SEN) pupils participated, which equates to 67.2% of all state school pupils enrolled in Scotland. Compared to 2018, the proportion of all state school pupils responding has increased by 0.4 percentage points (pp).

Table 2: National response rates: number of pupils responding to the survey by school type, and proportion of respondents from the total roll by each school type, 2019.⁵

School type	Number of pupil respondents	% of Scottish state school roll
Nursery	35,552	N/A
Primary	298,555	74.9%
Secondary	167,448	57.3%
SEN	2,585	37.5%
Independent	4,029	N/A
All state schools (excluding nursery)	468,588	67.2%
All schools (excluding nursery)	472,617	N/A
All schools and nurseries	508,169	N/A

National results 2019: by school type

Annual results highlight the extent of variation in travel behaviour between different school types and care should be taken when interpreting results across school types due to considerable variation in pupil response numbers. Due to rounding, row percentages may not always add up to 100%, and category totals may not always add up to the values presented for individual travel modes.

Nursery schools

- 43.0% of nursery children reported normally travelling to school by an active mode
- 2.9% of nursery children reported normally travelling to school by public sustainable transport
- 4.0% of nursery children reported normally travelling to school using multi-mode travel
- 49.5% of nursery children reported normally travel to school using private motorised transport.

All state schools (primary, secondary and SEN) comparison

- Primary school pupils reported the highest level of active travel to school of all school types, at 51.3%, followed by secondary school pupils at 42.9%
- The highest level of bus usage is reported in secondary schools, at 33.2% of pupils compared to 29.2% of SEN school pupils and just 6.2% among primary school pupils
- 13.1% of primary school pupils reported park and stride as their usual mode of travelling to school, compared to 4.8% of secondary school pupils
- Secondary school pupils reported the lowest levels of travel to school using private motorised transport of all school types, at 18.0% compared to 29.1% of primary school pupils and 59.7% of SEN school pupils.

Table 3: National travel modes: by school type (nursery and state schools), 2019.⁶

School type	Walk	Cycle	Scooter /Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
Nursery	35.9%	3.9%	3.2%	2.9%	4.0%	48.5%	1.1%	0.5%	35,552
Primary	41.6%	5.7%	4.0%	6.2%	13.1%	27.7%	1.5%	0.2%	298,555
Secondary	41.3%	1.4%	0.2%	33.2%	4.8%	16.6%	1.4%	1.1%	167,448
SEN	1.8%	*	*	29.2%	*	12.6%	47.1%	9.0%	2,585

All state schools (primary, secondary and SEN) and independent schools comparison

- Pupils in state schools reported higher active travel levels (48.0%) compared to independent schools pupils (20.6%)
- A higher percentage of state school pupils (16.0%) reported normally travelling to school by bus, compared to 13.9% of independent school pupils
- 10.1% of state school pupils reported travelling to school using multiple modes, compared to 17.6% of independent school pupils
- A lower percentage of state school pupils normally travel using private motorised modes at 25.3% compared to 45.2% of independent school pupils. 23.6% of state school pupils reported normally travelling to school by car compared to 44.5% of independent school pupils. However, a higher proportion of state school pupils (1.7%) travel to school by taxi, compared to independent school pupils (0.7%).

Table 4: National travel modes: by school type (state schools and independent schools), 2019.⁶

School type	Walk	Cycle	Scooter /Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
All state schools	41.3%	4.1%	2.7%	16.0%	10.1%	23.6%	1.7%	0.6%	468,588
Independent	16.1%	2.7%	1.9%	13.9%	17.6%	44.5%	0.7%	2.7%	4,029

National results comparison: 2010-2019

Trends in the data are analysed for the last 10 years, with the baseline year in this report being 2010. Percentage point (pp) change has been calculated based on the rounded figures presented in this statistical news release. For reference, with regard to national all school trends, a 0.1pp change is equivalent to roughly 500 pupils.

Active travel

Since 2010, active travel to school has remained the most frequently reported mode of travel to school across Scotland.

- Overall, there has been a steady decline in school pupils reporting walking to school, from 45.8% in 2010 to the lowest recorded level of 41.0% in 2019.
- The increasing trend in cycling amongst school pupils has continued in 2019, increasing from 2.8% in 2010 to the highest recorded levels of 4.1% in 2019.
- The percentage of pupils who say they normally scooter or skate to school increased from 0.7% in 2010 to 2.8% in 2013. Between 2014 and 2019 levels have remained fairly stable, between 2.7% and 2.9%, although there was a fall to 2.4% in 2018.

Public sustainable travel

Bus use has decreased from 18.2% in 2010 to the lowest recorded level of 16.0% in 2019.

Multi-mode travel

The percentage of pupils normally travelling to school by park and stride has increased from 7.4% in 2010 to a high of 10.2% in 2019. Between 2010 and 2015 park and stride to school rose slowly to 7.8%. Between 2015 and 2016, this increased by 1.5pp (to 9.3% in 2016), and has since increased by a further 0.8pp in 2019.

Private motorised travel

Levels of private motorised transport use have fluctuated slightly over the last ten years, but since the low of 23.0% in 2013 there has been a trend of increasing private motorised transport use, with a high of 25.5% in 2019.

- The proportion of pupils being driven to school in 2019 is 23.8%, representing the highest recorded percentage of pupils being driven. Since 2013, where a low of 21.4% was recorded, the trend has been towards an increase in pupils being driven to school.
- Taxi use is the least frequently reported of the motorised travel modes and use has remained fairly consistent over the past ten years of the survey, ranging between 1.6% and 1.8%.

Table 5: National travel categories: all schools (excluding nursery) 2010 – 2019.

Year	Active travel	Public sustainable travel	Multi-mode travel	Private motorised travel	Other	Total
2010	49.3%	18.2%	7.4%	24.5%	0.5%	439,401
2011	49.9%	18.2%	7.5%	24.0%	0.3%	427,104
2012	49.7%	18.2%	7.8%	23.9%	0.5%	457,488
2013	50.3%	18.8%	7.5%	23.0%	0.4%	467,397
2014	50.4%	17.7%	7.8%	23.5%	0.5%	487,147
2015	49.7%	17.9%	7.8%	24.1%	0.4%	480,161
2016	49.3%	16.6%	9.3%	24.1%	0.6%	458,145
2017	48.8%	16.5%	9.7%	24.5%	0.5%	473,160
2018	48.7%	16.2%	9.8%	24.8%	0.5%	468,537
2019	47.8%	16.0%	10.2%	25.5%	0.6%	472,617

Technical Notes

Data collection

Data collection for the Hands Up Scotland Survey occurs on an annual basis in the second week of September. In 2019 data collection took place between 9th and 13th September. However, data from schools conducting the survey within a grace period of 1 week either side of the official survey date was accepted and included in the analysis.

All 32 local authorities in Scotland are invited to take part in the Hands Up Scotland Survey. The survey is designed to record information about any and all pupils enrolled in nursery, primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools in Scotland.

This approach is designed to produce a large national dataset which can be used to examine information on mode of travel to school in detail at a national, local authority and school level as well as by school type and year group.

Pupils of primary and secondary school age are asked to respond to the Hands Up Scotland Survey themselves. Assistance may be provided to nursery or SEN school pupils by a parent, guardian or member of school staff when responding to the survey, depending on the level of support required.

Response rates

There are limitations to the comparability of data across years and school types; although survey design and methodology have remained consistent, response rates vary considerably over the 12 years that the Hands Up Scotland Survey has been conducted, and across school types. Survey receipt and response rates as a percentage of equivalent schools in Scotland and equivalent Scottish school roll are calculated using the Scottish Government Education Statistics. Data on the number of schools and their pupil roll are available for state primary, secondary and SEN schools from the Scottish Government. Pupil roll numbers are not published for state nursery or independent schools in Scotland.

Survey receipt and response rates as a percentage of Scottish/LA school roll and as a percentage of all schools in Scotland/LA are calculated using Scottish Government Education Statistics. As these data are not available for state nursery or independent schools, it is not possible to calculate receipt or response rates for these school types.

School type

'All state schools' includes primary, secondary and SEN schools only.

'All schools' includes primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools only.

Nursery data is presented separately as the number of nursery school respondents has more than tripled since data was first collected. This large increase in nursery pupils participating over a short space of time, had the potential to skew the national statistic in favour of nursery pupil travel and potentially present drastic changes in school travel modes over the years. In addition to this, nurseries have very different operating times compared to the other school types. For example, some nursery pupils only attend mornings, afternoons, and part of the week. Whereas those aged primary and up are in full time education.

Interpreting results

The aggregated national level results do not necessarily include the same pupils over time as the same local authorities/schools/pupils might not respond to the survey each year. The survey data is not weighted to take this into account. This may have implications for inter-year comparisons; particular caution should be applied when attempting to draw conclusions from small percentage point changes. For further information regarding school participation please refer to Table 1.5 *Local authority response rates: number of schools surveyed*, and Table 1.6 *Local authority response rates: number of schools returning data*, in the Hands Up Scotland Survey National Results data tables, available from Sustrans' website, available at:

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

Where the number of responses is low (less than 100), care should be taken when interpreting results. Percentage statistics based on a small number of responses may see large annual fluctuations.

A number of variables may impact on travel behaviour from year to year (e.g. weather conditions, school mergers, closures and relocations) as well as policies and schemes introduced by central government, local government or individual schools. Therefore, caution should be applied when seeking to interpret annual variations.

As the Hands up Scotland Survey is carried out over a one week period, weather conditions may differ considerably from year to year. It should be noted that weather conditions have an impact on travel choices and may influence pupil response to the survey, although the phrasing of the survey question aims to overcome this limitation as much as possible ('How do you normally travel to school?').

Due to rounding, row percentages may not always add up to 100%, and category totals may not always add up to the values presented for individual travel modes.

In 2008, the first year of the survey, Sustrans Scotland offered a prize draw as an incentive for school participation. In 2013, Sustrans Scotland offered a prize draw as an incentive to receive responses from all year groups. Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of state schools responding to the survey increased from 77.0% to 78.7%. However, it is not possible to ascertain whether a proportion of these schools were encouraged by the incentive or whether this increase in school responses was the continuation of an overall trend. It is not possible to ascertain whether the survey mode options were read out in the same order in each school or class that participated between 2008 and 2015, as the mode options presented on the survey form were tabulated. The order of presentation was consistent between 2008 and 2012, and 2013 to 2015, but inconsistent between these two time periods. Since 2016, the modes have been listed, removing any ambiguity. It is not possible to ascertain whether any observed differences in mode share between these years were as a result of these changes, or other unrelated factors. An online survey platform was made available to schools and nurseries from 2016, as an alternative to sending paper survey forms to local authority officers. Local authority officers decided which method was most suitable to offer to schools in their area. The majority of local authorities opted to use the online survey platform but some continued with manual data entry by collecting paper survey forms.

Percentage point changes have been calculated based on the rounded figures presented in this summary report. If users wish to calculate percentage point change based on unrounded figures, please refer to the relevant tables in the Hands up Scotland Survey National Results data tables, available from Sustrans' website, available at: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

Confidentiality

Where a percentage represents a value of between one and four pupils, it has been suppressed to maintain anonymity of respondents and replaced with an asterisk (*). Where suppressed data is included in the mode category calculation, the value for that category has also been suppressed.

Official Statistics Publication

The Hands up Scotland Survey has been designated an Official Statistic in Scotland by Parliamentary Order and is produced in line with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The code covers a range of measures, such as relevance, integrity, quality, accessibility, value for money and freedom from political influence.

A Parliamentary Order was passed designating Sustrans as Official Statistics Providers as of 1st June 2012, prior to the publication of Hands up Scotland Survey 2011 results. The primary aim of Official Statistics in Scotland is to provide an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful picture of the economy and society to support the formulation and monitoring of economic and social policies by government and others.

More information on the standards of Official Statistics in Scotland is available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/About>

Enquiries

For media enquiries relating to the information contained in this, or any other Hands Up Scotland Survey documents, please contact Sustrans' Press Office on 0131 346 3010 or email at press@sustrans.org.uk

Non-media enquiries about Hands Up Scotland Survey should be made to Sustrans' Hands Up Scotland Survey team, Sustrans Research & Monitoring Unit, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ or email:

HandsUpScotland@sustrans.org.uk

Where users wish to undertake more detailed analyses for a specific project and these documents do not provide the required information or format, a data request may be submitted. To submit a data request, please read the information and download the data request form at:

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit assesses the impacts of Sustrans' work and evaluates the interventions of partners and clients across the UK, including extensive work with schools and young people. More information is available at:

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/for-professionals/research-monitoring-and-evaluation/>

Endnotes

¹ Documents available at: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

² Table 2.1 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

³ Table 1.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

⁴ 7 primary schools not listed in Scottish Government education statistics were surveyed. 4 primary schools listed in Scottish Government education statistics were not surveyed.

⁵ Table 1.1 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

⁶ Table 2.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>