

Travel to School in Scotland

Hands Up Scotland Survey 2024: National Summary Report

June 2025



About Sustrans

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Executive Summary

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is an annual survey of school pupils and nursery children in Scotland. The survey is funded by Transport Scotland and is a joint project between Sustrans and Scottish local authorities. The survey has been designated an Official Statistic for Scotland by Parliamentary Order.

The survey is designed to provide reliable and up to date information on mode of travel to school in Scotland, both at national and local authority level as well as by school type and year group. The dataset informs and evidences school transport policies and initiatives.

The survey

The question posed to all school pupils and nursery children is, 'How do you normally travel to school?' with a choice of travel mode options.¹ The number of pupils present is recorded, and pupils are asked to raise their hand for one of the modes only. Each of these modes falls into one of four categories:

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

Response rates

All 32 local authorities in Scotland participated in the survey in 2024. Trends in the data are analysed for the last 10 years, with the baseline year in this report being 2015.

In 2024



461,727 school pupils and **40,798 nursery children** took part. **454,959** state school pupils participated, which equates to 64.8% of all state school pupils enrolled in Scotland.²

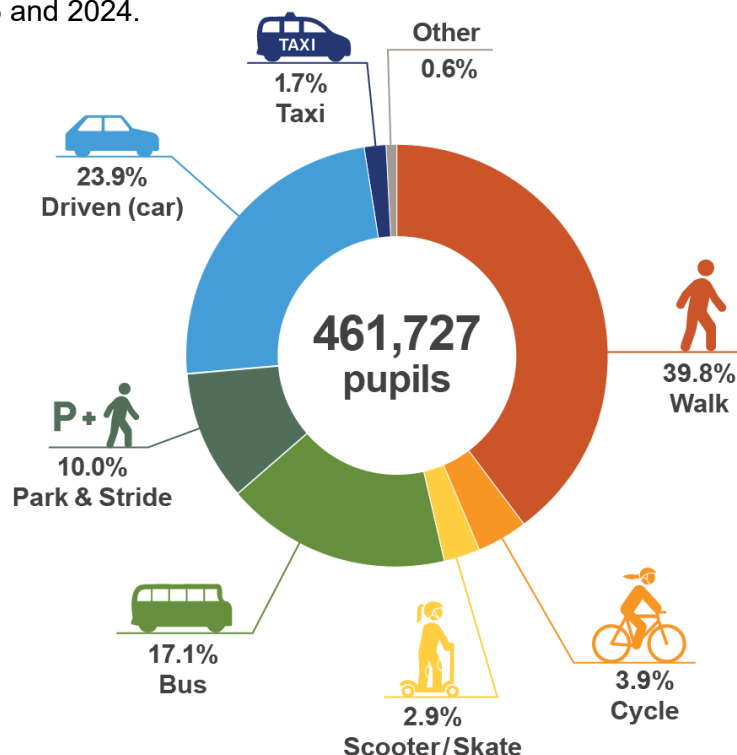
1,984 schools and **1,318 nurseries** took part. 1,962 state schools participated, which equates to 80.2% of all registered state schools in Scotland.

Between 2023 and 2024, there has been a 3.2 percentage point rise in state school pupil response rate, from 61.6% to 64.8%. The total number of state schools responding to the survey has risen from 1,938 in 2023 to 1,962 in 2024. This is 80.2% of state schools, the second highest response rate in the last 10 years. Schools can return data for the whole school or broken down by class. In 2024, 73.2% of all registered state schools in Scotland returned data broken down by class. This is a rise of 1.4pp on 2023 and the second highest proportion of registered state schools returning data broken down by class since the survey began. The highest proportion was 75.2% in 2017.

Active travel

Active travel to school has declined since 2023, and is the lowest it has been since the survey began (2008).

46.6% of school pupils surveyed in 2024 said they normally travel to school in an active way, without any form of motorised transport. Active travel has consistently remained the most frequently reported mode of travel to school in Scotland. After a falling trend between 2015 and 2019, 2020 saw a 3.4 percentage point rise to 51.2%, making it the highest of the last 10 survey years. Since then, active travel levels have fallen year on year. Walking to school fell from 43.3% in 2015 to 39.8% in 2024. This is a fall of 1.5 percentage points since 2023. Cycling, and scootering or skating to school have fallen from their highest recorded levels in 2023. However, over the past 10 survey years, cycling has risen from 3.5% in 2015 to 3.9% in 2024, and scootering or skating has a mode share of 2.9% in both 2015 and 2024.



Multi-modal travel

10.0% of school pupils surveyed in 2024 said they normally park and stride to school.

Overall, the percentage of pupils travelling to school by park and stride has risen from 7.8% in 2015 to 10% in 2024.

Private motorised travel

Private motorised travel to school has risen since 2023, and is the highest it is has been since the survey began (2008).

25.6% of school pupils surveyed in 2024 said they normally travel to school using only a private motorised mode of transport, a 1.6 percentage point rise since 2023.

The proportion of pupils being driven to school in a car showed an rising trend from 2015 to 2019 where it reached a mode share of 23.8%. From 2020 to 2023 it has fluctuated between 22.5% and 23.2%. In 2024, the proportion of pupils being driven to school rose to 23.9%, the highest level recorded since the survey began. Travel to school by taxi has remained stable, varying between 1.5% and 1.8%. In 2024 it rose by 0.1pp to 1.7%.

Public sustainable travel

17.1% of school pupils surveyed in 2024 said they normally travel to school by bus. This is the second highest level in the past 10 years.

The percentage of pupils travelling to school using the bus fell from 17.9% in 2015 to 14.1% in 2020. Since then, bus use has risen to 17.1% in 2024.

1 Introduction

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is an annual survey of school pupils and nursery children in Scotland. The survey is funded by Transport Scotland and is a joint project between Sustrans and Scottish local authorities.

The specific aims of the survey are to:

- Meet central and local government needs for policy relevant data on mode of travel to school in Scotland³
- Be understandable and useful to stakeholders and so lead to a high level of use of the Hands Up Scotland Survey data
- Produce high quality data in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Official Statistics.⁴

A Parliamentary Order designates Sustrans as an Official Statistics Provider⁵ as of 1st June 2012. The Hands Up Scotland Survey is guided by the three pillars laid out in the updated 2018 Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which are **'trustworthiness'**, **'quality'** and **'value'**. 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.⁶

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is designed to provide reliable annual information on mode of travel to school in Scotland, both nationally and at local authority level as well as by school type and year group.

2 The National Summary Report

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is conducted each September and has been running since 2008. Results are reported annually, with publication towards the end of the academic year.

This National Summary Report is designed to act as an introduction to the survey, presenting the results at a national level, as well as the policy context that the survey results can be used to evidence.

A shorter summary of key national level results for the Hands Up Scotland Survey 2024 is available in the form of an overview document. Supplementary National Results tables, including a breakdown of results at a local authority level and data collected from 2008 to 2024, are also available. These documents can be downloaded from Sustrans' website:

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey>

Each local authority also receives their results in a comprehensive range of tables, including breakdown by school. These local authority reports contain all data collected between 2008 and 2024.

Trends in the data are analysed for the last 10 years, with the baseline year in this report being 2015. Cases where a mode share value is at its highest, or lowest, level since the survey began, are also highlighted in this report.

The Sustrans' Hands Up Scotland Survey team can be contacted with feedback or enquiries.⁷ Where users wish to undertake more detailed analyses for a specific project and the national level documents do not provide the required information or format, a data request for local authority reports may be submitted to Sustrans' Hands Up Scotland Survey team.⁸

3 Policy context for school travel in Scotland

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is an important dataset for evidencing and informing decision making, policy and practice in a number of areas, including health, transport and the environment.

The Scottish Government has outlined its purpose as being to focus on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increased wellbeing and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It should also reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress. This purpose is set out within the National Performance Framework for Scotland⁹.

The Hands Up Scotland Survey data provides information relevant to a number of outcomes in the National Performance Framework as evidenced below. The most relevant National Performance Framework outcomes are:

- We are healthy and active
- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.

The Scottish Government's Active Travel Outcomes Framework¹⁰ brings together the key policy approaches to improving the uptake of walking and cycling in Scotland for travel. The Active Travel Outcomes Framework draws on the *Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030*¹¹. Developed in 2014, the long-term vision sets out an ambition that, by 2030, Scotland's communities are shaped around people and place, enabling walking and cycling to be the most popular mode of travel for short, everyday journeys. The Active Travel Outcomes Framework also links into a number of National Performance Framework outcomes.

The Hands Up Scotland Survey serves as a critical dataset for evidencing progress against several of the objectives of the long-term vision, including 'better health and safer travel for all'; 'cutting carbon emissions and other pollution', and 'delivering liveable, more pleasant communities'.

3.1 Healthy and Active



The Hands Up Scotland Survey data can be used to investigate progress towards a number of health outcomes and indicators in the National Performance Framework and the Active Travel Outcomes Framework through evidencing active travel (walking, cycling, scootering or skating) to school.

Active travel for health and wellbeing

The 2018-19 Programme for Government set out the vision to build an Active Nation, boosting investment in walking and cycling, and putting active travel at the heart of transport planning. Active Nation actions include making Scottish towns and cities friendlier and safer spaces for pedestrians and



cyclists by increasing investment that supports active travel and delivering world-class active travel infrastructure, as well as delivering projects which help people benefit from new and existing walking and cycling routes. In 2018, the Scottish Government launched Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan¹² detailing outcomes, actions and achievements in terms of the vision: 'A Scotland where more people are more active, more often.'

The Scottish Government's 2020 update on its *National Transport Strategy*¹³ highlights health and wellbeing improvement as one of its priorities, stating that Scotland's transport system should 'allow people to make active travel choices to improve their health and physical and mental wellbeing and seek to reduce health inequalities'.

The UK Chief Medical Officers' *Physical Activity Guidelines*¹⁴ recommends active travel as one way of making up the daily recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for children.¹⁵

A More Active Scotland: Building a Legacy from the Commonwealth Games sets out a number of objectives around active travel to school.¹⁶ These include more children and students using active travel to get to their places of learning by 2019, and active travel as the norm for short, everyday journeys by 2024.

The *Curriculum for Excellence*¹⁷ also acknowledges the important contribution active travel such as walking and cycling plays in promoting good physical health and mental wellbeing. Health and Wellbeing is a cross-cutting theme across the Curriculum for Excellence with specific health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes on travelling safely.

Hands Up Scotland Survey data is being used to evidence the 'Active' indicator that forms part of the *Children and Young People's Profile*.¹⁸ The profile aims to measure progress against the SHANARRI¹⁹ indicators of wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland,²⁰ outlined in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.²¹ SHANARRI indicators of wellbeing are part of the *Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)*²² approach of The Scottish Government. The GIRFEC approach is the Scottish Government's commitment to provide all children, young people and their families with the right support at the right time so that every child and young person can reach their potential. The SHANARRI indicator 'Active' states that children and young people should have opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.

Promoting active travel to school

The Scottish Government's *National Walking Strategy*²³ uses evidence from the Hands Up Scotland Survey to demonstrate current rates of walking to school and highlights the importance of walking in improving performance, concentration and learning.

3.2 Inclusive, Empowered, Resilient and Safe Communities

The Hands Up Scotland Survey can also be used to inform place making and road safety interventions, and assist national government and local authorities to help communities flourish, become stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life.

Well-designed, sustainable places

The *Strategic Road Safety Plan* (2016)²⁴ sets out how Transport Scotland delivers road safety on the trunk road network. The policy is based on the assertion that death and injury is avoidable and unacceptable. As a trunk roads policy it is informed by *Designing Streets* (2010)²⁵, and the proximity of a trunk road to a school should provide additional rationale for design based on place and location, rather than a need to move vehicles.

*Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030*²⁶ targets a 60% reduction in fatal child casualties, and a 60% reduction in the number of children seriously injured, on Scotland's roads. Similarly the *Long Term Vision for Active Travel*¹¹ sets out a vision in which all schools have safe routes for pupils who are confident to walk or cycle to them. Data revealing trends in how children travel to school can inform school travel planning, place making, road safety improvements and targeted road safety improvements such as 20 miles per hour zones.

3.3 Value, Enjoy, Protect and Enhance our Environment

The Hands Up Scotland Survey can also be used to investigate progress towards the 'we value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment' national outcome²⁷ through evidencing private motorised travel (car and taxi) to school.

Improving air quality

As stated in the *Cleaner Air for Scotland* strategy²⁸ published in November 2015, active travel is inextricably linked to improving air quality, reducing environmental noise and easing congestion. In addition, the strategy states that the promotion of public transport use over private motorised travel is key to reducing congestion and air pollution.



Reducing the number of car-related school trips and associated congestion (particularly related to the school run) can have a positive impact in terms of contributing to the reduction in emissions of atmospheric pollutants. These emissions not only cause poor air quality in the local area but also add to greenhouse gases that lead to global climate change.

Scottish Ministers have a duty to report on proposals and policies setting out specific measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the *Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019*.²⁹ Levels of motorised travel have implications for greenhouse gas emissions, and Transport Scotland's updated *National Transport Strategy* recognises that transport is currently the largest contributor to Scottish carbon emissions and that 'this will be tackled through a range of actions including an ambition to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032, changing people's travel behaviour and managing demand'.³⁰

Levels of motorised travel also have implications for congestion, and the updated *National Transport Strategy* states ‘protecting our climate and improving lives’ as a core priority for transport in Scotland for the next 20 years. The Strategy sets out a modal hierarchy with walking, cycling, and then public transport priority modes to encourage as an alternative to car use.

4 Other relevant data sources

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is not directly comparable with any other relevant sources of National or Official Statistics in the UK.

The *Scottish Household Survey* also provides information on travel to school in Scotland³¹. The *Scottish Household Survey* typically receives responses from around 10,000 and 11,000 households per year, a smaller sample compared to the Hands Up Scotland Survey which typically receives between 400,000 and 500,000 school pupil responses per year. In addition, the scope of the *Scottish Household Survey* is broader, capturing a wide range of transport and travel information about adults and households, as well as reasons for the method of children's transport to school. A list of the main statistical publications in relation to transport in Scotland is available from the Transport Scotland website.³² The *Scottish Health Survey*³³ includes wider information on children's physical activity levels.

The *Pupil Level Annual School Census*³⁴ in England published data for usual mode of travel to school until 2011. Data was available at a school level and this question was made mandatory for schools with an approved School Travel Plan in January 2007. In 2011, the mandatory use of this question was discontinued. The *Health Survey for England*³⁵ includes wider information on children's physical activity levels.

Other sources of Official Statistics relating to travel to school in the UK include the *National Travel Survey*,³⁶ the *Travel Survey for Northern Ireland*,³⁷ and the *National Survey for Wales*.³⁸

5 Survey design

The Hands Up Scotland Survey is a joint project, managed by Sustrans and officers from each local authority in Scotland. The survey was first conducted in 2008 and has followed a consistent survey design and methodology since then.

Sustrans is responsible for producing survey participation guidance and forms, an email link for the online survey platform and distributing them to local authority officers. Local authority officers are then responsible for onward distribution to schools, and providing support where required.

5.1 Data collection

Data collection for the Hands Up Scotland Survey occurs annually in the second week of September. In 2024, data collection took place between the 9th and 13th of September. Data collection is conducted by school staff, as instructed by their local authority officer, with support from Sustrans.

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 (Special Educational Needs) and independent schools in Scotland.

The question asked is, 'How do you normally travel to school?' with the following 8 response options:

- Walk
- Scooter/skate
- Park & stride
- Taxi
- Cycle
- Bus
- Driven (car)
- Other

The survey can be conducted on a class-by-class or whole-school basis. The number of pupils present is recorded, and pupils are asked to raise their hand for one of the response options only.

All pupils of primary and secondary school age are asked to respond to the Hands Up Scotland Survey themselves. Assistance may be provided to nursery children 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.

Since 2016, an online survey platform has been made available to schools, in addition to the provision of paper survey forms to local authority officers for manual data entry. The majority of local authorities opted to use the online survey platform.³⁹

School staff return completed paper survey forms to their local authority officer, who inputs data for each school before submitting responses to Sustrans. Results entered via the online survey platform are downloaded directly by Sustrans. Once all of the responses have been submitted, quality assurance, analysis and reporting are conducted by Sustrans.

6 2024 Results

This section of the report details the results from the 2024 Hands Up Scotland Survey. Annual results highlight the extent of variation in travel behaviour between different school types.

Care should be taken when interpreting results between school types due to considerable variation in pupil population size and response rate. For example, the category 'all schools' (461,727 pupils) includes primary (281,013 pupils), secondary (171,318 pupils), SEN (2,628 pupils) and independent (6,768 pupils) schools.

Nursery data is presented separately as the characteristics of nurseries are considered to be different to that of other school types. For example, nurseries have very different operating times compared to other school types (see technical note 8.3.3). A nursery can provide day care for children aged from a few weeks old to those about to start primary school, so the age range of pupils responding to the survey may vary from nursery to nursery. Nurseries contacted to participate in the survey are those registered in the Scotland Care Inspectorate as providing daycare of children services (including private, voluntary, health board and local authority nurseries). After school clubs, holiday clubs and childminding services are not invited to participate in the study to ensure results are not duplicated with primary school results. The category 'all state schools' (454,959 pupils) includes primary, secondary, and SEN schools only.

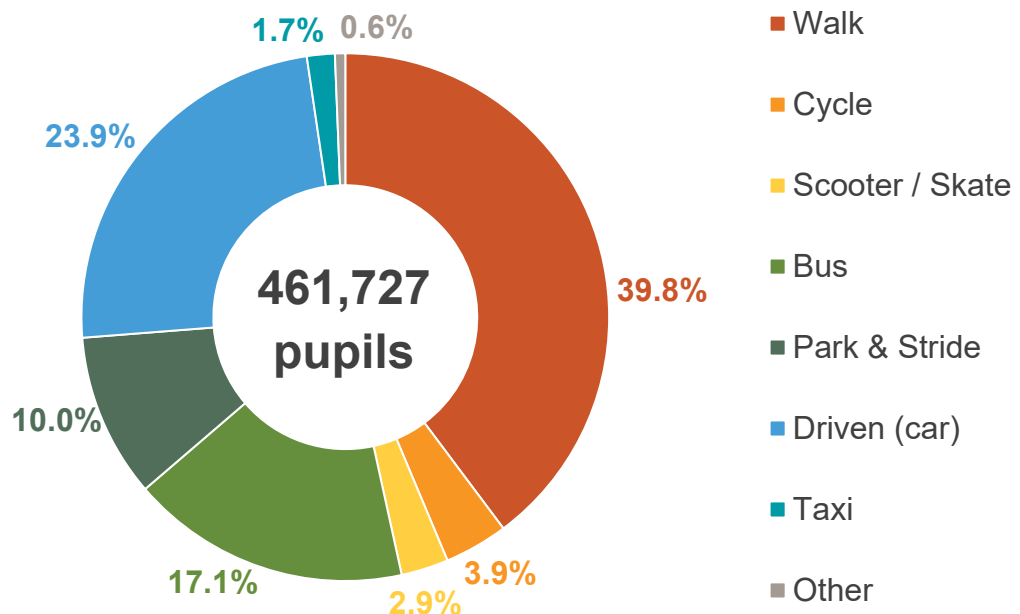
This report presents small percentage point changes, this is because a small percentage point change may relate to a sizeable number of pupils:

- The average number of state school responses over the past 5 years is 430,915 pupils. A 0.1 percentage point change in mode share is roughly equivalent to 431 pupils changing mode
- The average number of primary school pupils responding is 277,129 pupils over the past 5 years. A 0.1 percentage point shift for primary pupils is roughly equivalent to 277 pupils changing mode
- The average number of secondary pupils responding to the survey is 151,723. A 0.1 percentage point change is roughly equivalent to 152 pupils
- The average number of pupils from SEN schools responding to the survey is 2,062. A 0.1 percentage point change is roughly equivalent to 2 pupils.

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.

6.1 All school results

Chart 6-1: National travel modes: proportion of participating pupils travelling by different modes (all school pupil responses exc. nursery children), 2024.⁴⁰



Active travel

46.6% of pupils (215,019) across all schools⁴¹ surveyed in 2024 said they normally travel to school in an active way, without any form of motorised transport. Of the active modes, walking was the most frequent mode of travel with 39.8% of pupils (183,644) saying they normally walk to school. 3.9% of pupils (17,998) said they normally cycle to school and 2.9% (13,377) said they normally scooter or skate.

Public sustainable travel

17.1% of pupils (79,140) in 2024 said they normally travel to school by bus.

Multi-mode travel

10.0% of pupils (46,398) in 2024 said they normally park and stride to school.

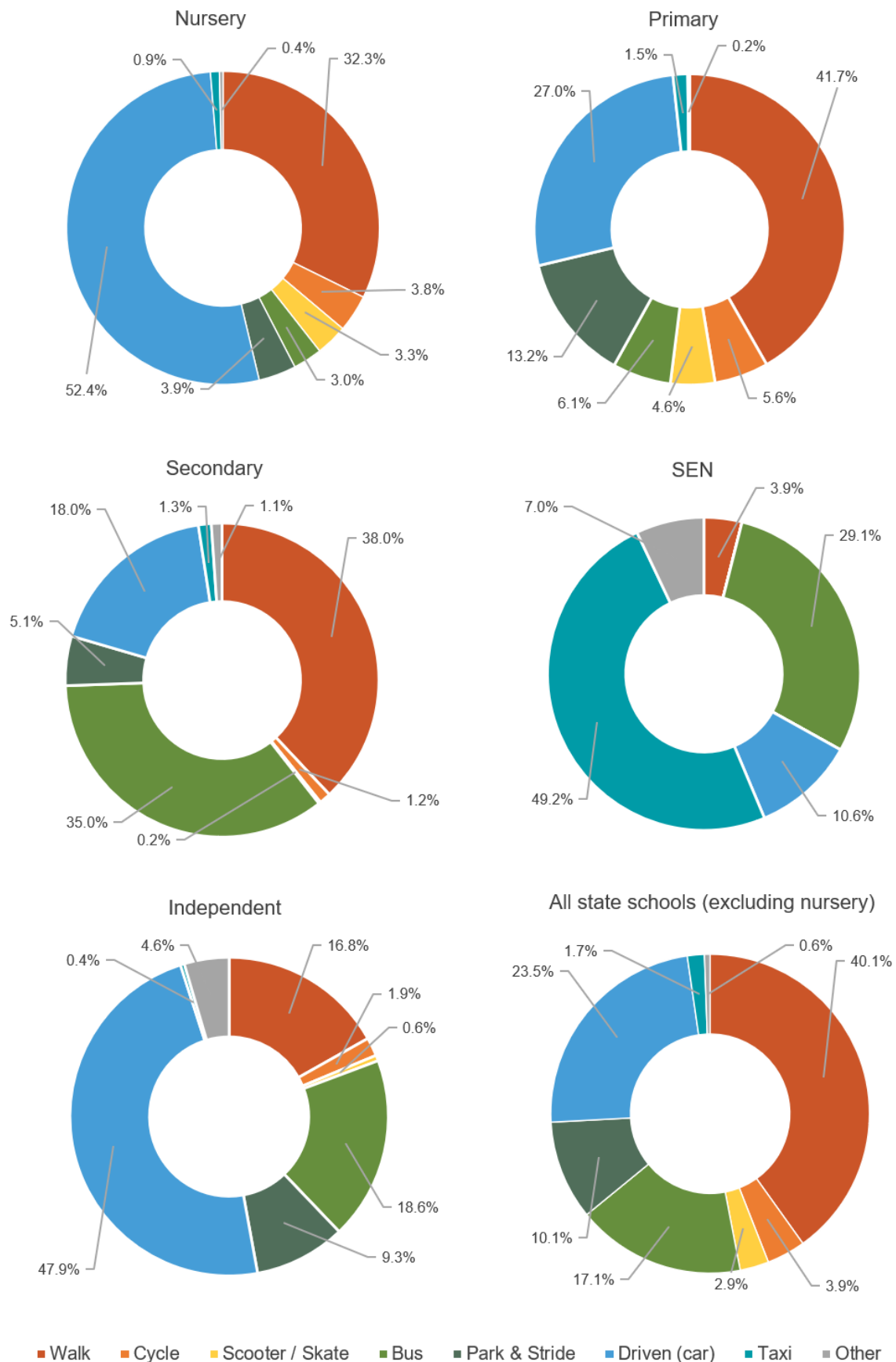
Private motorised travel

25.6% of pupils (118,256) in 2024 said they normally travel to school using only a private motorised mod of transport. 23.9% of pupils (110,376) said they are normally driven to school (in a private car), and 1.7% (7,880) normally travel to school by taxi.

Other

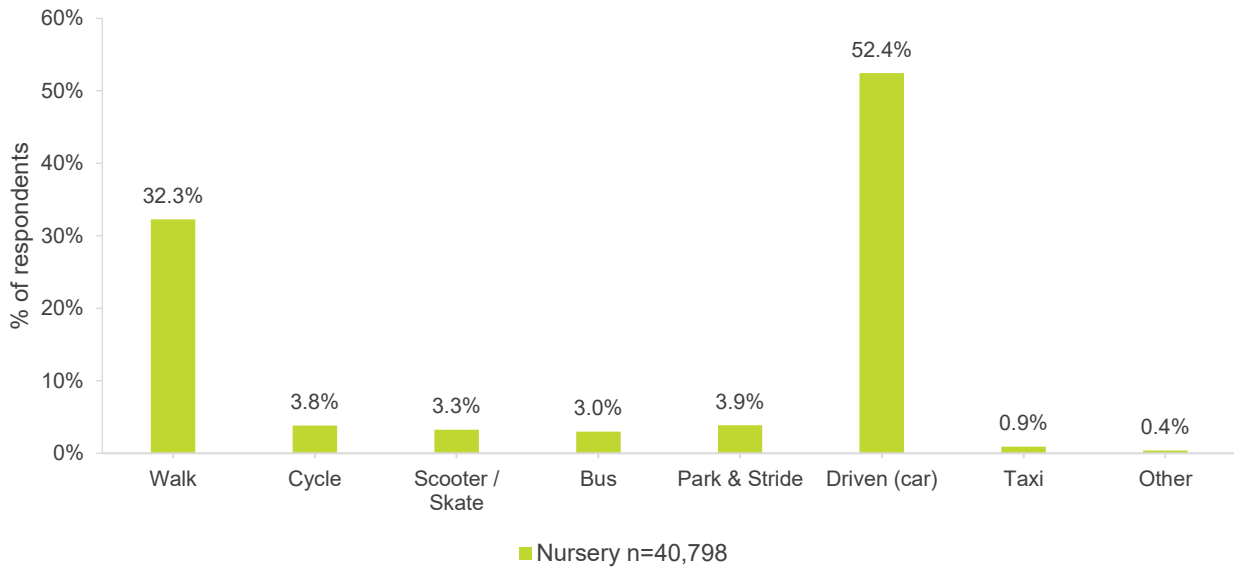
0.6% of pupils (2,914) indicated they travel to school by other means.⁴²

Chart 6-2: National travel modes: pupil responses by school type, 2024.⁴³



6.2 Nursery results

Chart 6-3: National travel modes: proportion of participating nursery children travelling by different modes, 2024. ⁴⁴



Active travel

39.4% of nursery children surveyed in 2024 said they normally travel to nursery in an active way, without any form of motorised transport. Of the active modes, walking was the most frequent mode, reported by 32.3% of nursery children. 3.8% of nursery children said they normally cycle to nursery, and 3.3% said they normally scooter or skate.

Public sustainable travel

3.0% of nursery children in 2024 said they normally travel to nursery by bus.

Multi-mode travel

3.9% of nursery children in 2024 said they normally park and stride to nursery.

Private motorised travel

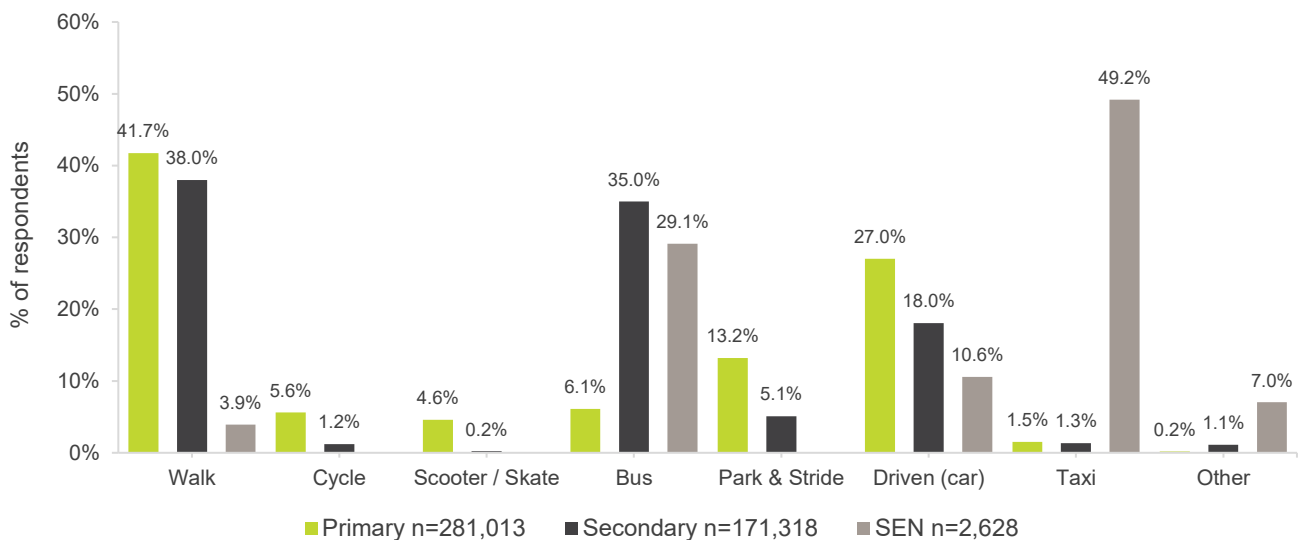
53.3% of nursery children in 2024 reported normally travelling to school by private motorised transport, 52.4% driven by car and 0.9% by taxi.

Other

0.4% of nursery children in 2024 indicated they travel to nursery by other means.⁴²

6.3 All state school comparison

Chart 6-4: National travel modes: proportion of participating pupils travelling by different modes, by state school type (primary, secondary and SEN), 2024.⁴⁴



Active travel

In 2024, primary school pupils reported the highest level of active travel to school out of all school types, at 52.0%, followed by secondary school pupils at 39.4%. 41.7% of primary school pupils reported normally walking to school compared to 38.0% of secondary and 3.9% of SEN school pupils. 5.6% of primary school pupils reported normally cycling to school compared to 1.2% of secondary school pupils. 4.6% of primary school pupils reported normally scootering or skating to school compared to 0.2% of secondary school pupils.

Public sustainable travel

In 2024, secondary school pupils reported the highest levels of bus usage, at 35.0% of pupils, compared to 29.1% of SEN pupils and just 6.1% of primary school pupils.

Multi-mode travel

In 2024, 13.2% of primary school pupils reported park and stride as their usual mode of travelling to school, compared to 5.1% of secondary school pupils.

Private motorised travel

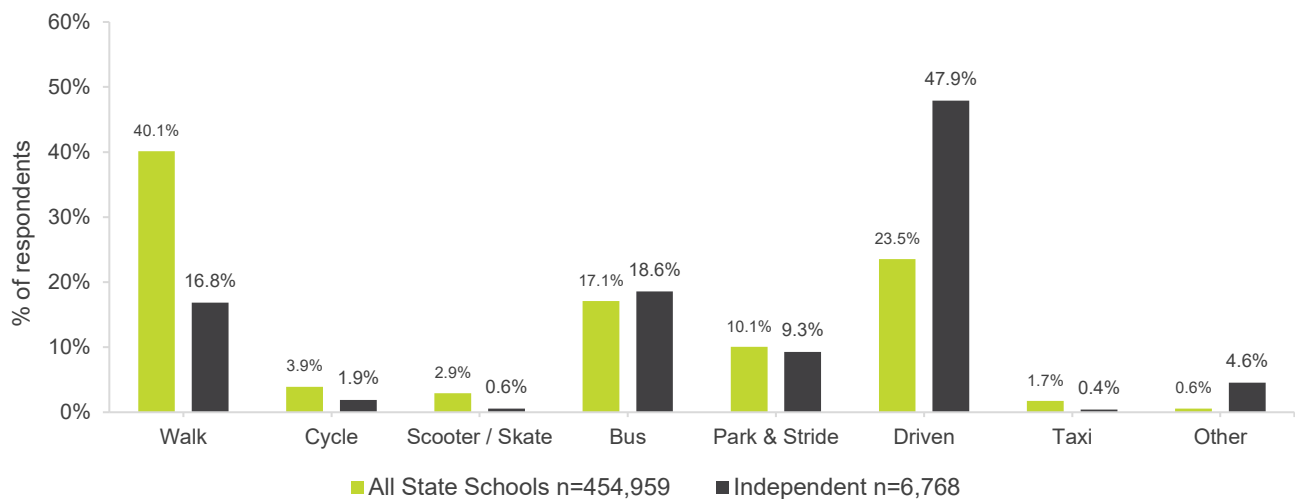
Secondary school pupils in 2024 reported the lowest levels of travel to school using private motorised transport of all school types, at 19.4%. This is lower than the 28.5% of primary school pupils and 59.8% of SEN school pupils who reported normally doing so. 10.6% of SEN pupils are normally driven to school in a car, compared to 18.0% of secondary and 27.0% of primary school pupils. 49.2% of SEN pupils reported normally using a taxi to travel to school. Neither primary (1.5%) nor secondary (1.3%) school pupils reported high levels of normally using a taxi to travel to school in 2024.

Other

7.0% of SEN pupils indicated that they travel by other means. Primary and secondary pupils reported lower levels of travel by other means at 0.2% and 1.1%, respectively.⁴²

6.4 State and independent school comparison

Chart 6-5: National travel modes: proportion of participating pupils travelling by different modes, by state schools (exc. nursery) and independent schools, 2024.⁴⁵



Active travel

In 2024, state school pupils reported higher active travel levels compared to independent school pupils, with 47.0% of state school pupils either walking, cycling, scootering or skating, compared to 19.3% of independent school pupils. This trend is consistent among each active mode of travel. For state schools, 40.1%, 3.9% and 2.9% of pupils reported normally travelling to school by walking, cycling and scootering or skating, respectively, compared to 16.8%, 1.9% and 0.6% of independent school pupils.

Public sustainable travel

17.1% of state school pupils reported normally travelling to school by bus compared to 18.6% of independent school pupils.

Multi-mode travel

10.1% of state school pupils reported normally travelling to school using multiple modes, compared to 9.3% of independent school pupils.

Private motorised travel

25.3% of state school pupils normally travel to school using private motorised modes compared to 48.3% of independent school pupils. A higher proportion of independent school pupils are normally driven to school by car (47.9%) than state school school pupils (23.5%). 1.7% of state school pupils reported normally travelling to school by taxi compared to 0.4% of independent school pupils.

Other

0.6% of state school pupils indicated that they travel by other means, compared to 4.6% of independent school pupils.

6.5 Response rates: schools

In 2024, a total of 3,302 schools and nurseries took part in the survey. All 32 local authorities in Scotland participated in the Hands Up Scotland Survey during the designated survey week (9th to 13th September 2024).

2,765 nurseries and 2,531 schools received the survey, either directly from their local authority officers (electronically) or via an email link sent by the online survey platform. The survey was sent to 2,446 state schools⁴⁶, representing 100.0% of all state schools in Scotland⁴⁷.

A total of 1,318 nurseries and 1,984 schools responded to the survey. 1,962 state schools took part, representing 80.2% of state schools receiving the survey and 80.2% of all state schools in Scotland.

Table 6-1: National response rates: number and proportion of schools responding to the survey, 2024.⁴⁸

School type	Number of schools which received survey	% of all schools in Scotland which received survey	Number of schools which returned data	% of schools receiving survey which returned data	% of all schools in Scotland which returned data
Nursery	2,765	N/A	1,318	47.7%	N/A
Primary	1,979	100.1%	1,631	82.4%	82.5%
Secondary	360	100.0%	286	79.4%	79.4%
SEN	107	100.0%	45	42.1%	42.1%
Independent	85	N/A	22	25.9%	N/A
All state schools (exc. nursery)	2,446	100.0%	1,962	80.2%	80.2%
All schools (exc. nursery)	2,531	N/A	1,984	78.4%	N/A

6.6 Response rates: pupils

Responses were received from 40,798 nursery children and 461,727 school pupils, amounting to 502,525 pupil responses overall. 454,959 state school pupils took part, which equates to 64.8% of all state school pupils enrolled in Scotland.

Table 6-2: 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, 2024.⁴⁹

School type	Number of pupil respondents	% of Scottish state school roll
Nursery	40,798	N/A
Primary	281,013	74.1%
Secondary	171,318	54.4%
SEN	2,628	32.8%
Independent	6,768	N/A
All state schools (exc. nursery)	454,959	64.8%
All schools (exc. nursery)	461,727	N/A
All schools and nurseries	502,525	N/A

For further information on response rates, please see Technical Notes 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4.

6.7 Data tables: 2024 results

These data tables contain a more detailed breakdown of results presented throughout section 6.

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.

Table 6-3: National travel categories: by school type, 2024.⁴⁴

School type	Active	Public sustainable	Multi-mode	Private motorised	Other	Total
Nursery	39.4%	3.0%	3.9%	53.3%	0.4%	40,798
Primary	52.0%	6.1%	13.2%	28.5%	0.2%	281,013
Secondary	39.4%	35.0%	5.1%	19.4%	1.1%	171,318
SEN	*	29.1%	*	59.8%	7.0%	2,628
Independent	19.3%	18.6%	9.3%	48.3%	4.6%	6,768

Table 6-4: National travel modes: by school type, 2024.⁴⁴

School type	Walk	Cycle	Scooter/ Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
Nursery	32.3%	3.8%	3.3%	3.0%	3.9%	52.4%	0.9%	0.4%	40,798
Primary	41.7%	5.6%	4.6%	6.1%	13.2%	27.0%	1.5%	0.2%	281,013
Secondary	38.0%	1.2%	0.2%	35.0%	5.1%	18.0%	1.3%	1.1%	171,318
SEN	3.9%	*	*	29.1%	*	10.6%	49.2%	7.0%	2,628
Independent	16.8%	1.9%	0.6%	18.6%	9.3%	47.9%	0.4%	4.6%	6,768

Table 6-5: National travel modes: by school type and year group, 2024.⁵⁰

School Type Year Group	Walk	Cycle	Scooter /Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
Primary									
P1-4	38.7%	5.4%	5.3%	5.7%	13.6%	29.6%	1.6%	0.2%	147,131
P5-7	45.3%	6.1%	3.7%	6.6%	13.1%	23.7%	1.4%	0.2%	113,961
Secondary									
S1-3	37.8%	1.4%	0.2%	35.8%	5.5%	16.9%	1.5%	0.9%	84,004
S4-6	38.6%	0.9%	0.2%	33.7%	4.7%	19.8%	1.2%	1.0%	57,652
SEN									
P1-4	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	25.4%	0.0%	14.4%	48.2%	8.5%	515
P5-7	5.0%	0.0%	*	32.7%	*	11.9%	38.4%	11.6%	404
S1-3	4.6%	0.0%	0.0%	25.6%	0.0%	8.1%	53.5%	8.1%	540
S4-6	4.9%	*	0.0%	31.6%	*	10.1%	43.7%	9.3%	535
Independent									
P1-4	13.3%	4.9%	1.8%	7.6%	10.2%	61.4%	*	*	1,584
P5-7	17.3%	1.3%	*	13.5%	14.9%	50.7%	*	1.8%	1,876
S1-3	17.1%	1.0%	*	25.0%	7.2%	41.7%	*	7.5%	1,671
S4-6	18.9%	*	*	29.7%	4.5%	37.5%	0.7%	8.2%	1,483

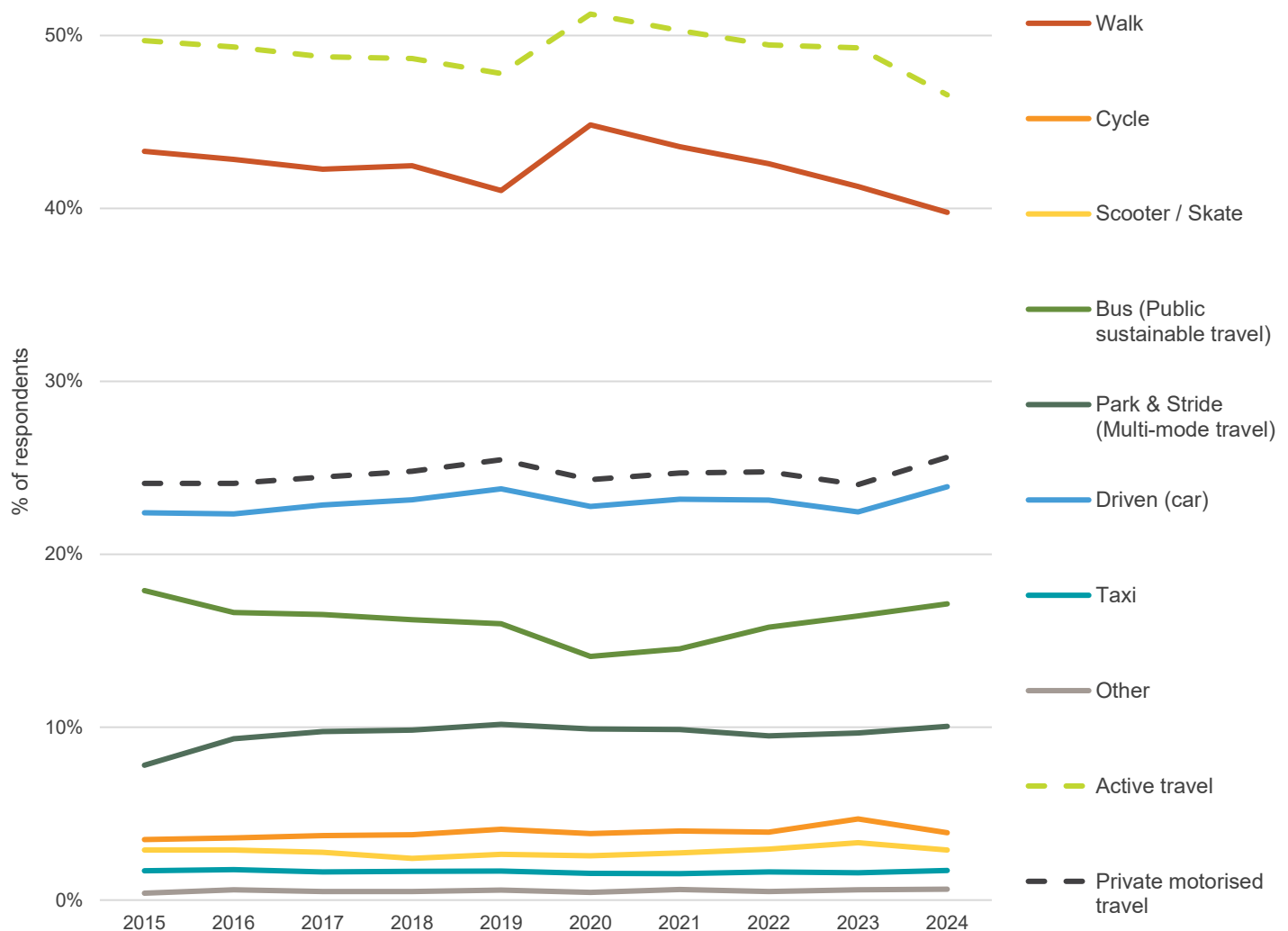
7 Trends in the 2015-2024 results

A number of factors 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. In 2020 and 2021, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on schools was a substantial additional factor.

Percentage point (pp) change has been calculated based on the rounded figures presented in this summary report.⁵¹ Where the number of responses is low, care should be taken when interpreting results, and fields with a small number of responses may see large changes in percentages between years.

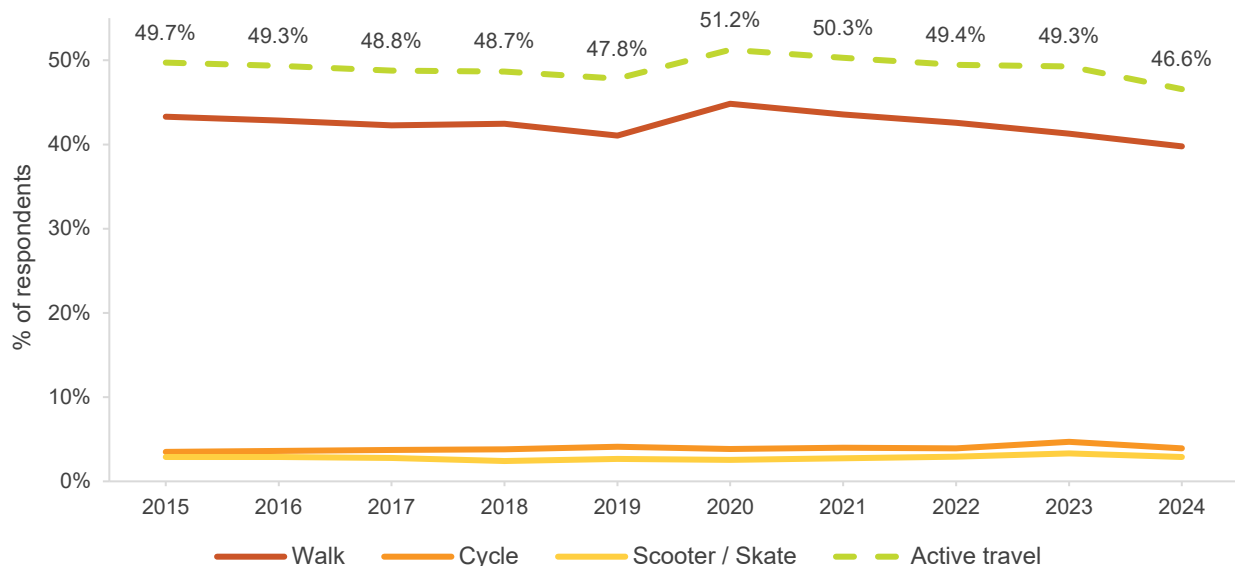
7.1 All school results

Chart 7-1: National travel modes and categories: all schools (exc. nursery), 2015-2024⁵²



Active travel

Chart 7-2: Active travel mode share amongst participating pupils from all schools (exc. nursery), 2015-2024.⁴⁰



Since 2015, active travel to school has remained the **most frequently reported mode of travel to school** in Scotland.

In 2015, 49.7% of pupils in all schools (exc. nursery) reported travelling actively to school. This percentage has fluctuated, peaking at 51.2% in 2020. Active travel to school has since fallen. Between 2023 and 2024 it fell by 2.7pp from 49.3% to 46.6%. Active travel to school is at its lowest level since the survey began (2008).

- Active travel fell in nurseries, primary and secondary schools in 2024, from 42.6% to 39.4%, 54.3% to 52.0%, and from 42.1 to 39.4%, respectively. For nurseries and secondary schools this is the lowest level of active travel to school since the survey began. For primary schools, it is the second lowest level of the last 10 survey years.
- Active travel in independent schools has also fallen, from 21.0% to 19.3%, between 2023 and 2024.⁵³

Walking

After a sharp rise to 44.8% in 2020, walking to school has fallen to its lowest level since the survey began, falling from 41.3% in 2023 to 39.8% in 2024.

- The number of nursery children walking has fallen from 34.3% in 2023 to 32.3% in 2024, the lowest walking level since the survey began
- Primary schools have seen a downward trend in walking since the sharp rise seen in 2020. Walking fell from 42.6% in 2023 to 41.7% in 2024, a fall of 0.9pp, and the second lowest level of the past 10 survey years

- Walking levels in secondary schools have fallen by 2.6pp between 2023 and 2024 to 38.0%, the lowest walking level since the survey began
- Walking levels in SEN schools have risen from 2.4% to 3.9% in 2024. This is the highest walking levels recorded in SEN schools over the past 10 years
- Walking levels in independent schools have fallen since 2023, by 2.3pp, to 16.8% in 2024.

Cycling

The survey had recorded a general rising trend in cycling over the past 10 survey years across all schools, from 3.5% in 2015 to a high of 4.7% in 2023. This trend was bucked in 2024, falling 0.8pp to 3.9%, the same level as in 2022.

- Among nursery children, 3.8% normally cycled to nursery in 2024. This is a drop from 4.7% in 2023, but cycling levels are still the fourth highest of the past 10 years
- Cycling levels among primary pupils have broadly risen over the past 10 survey years, from 5.1% in 2015 to 5.6% in 2024, though are 1pp lower than 2023 levels
- Cycling levels in secondary schools fell from 1.4% in 2023 to 1.2% in 2024. There was a broad rising trend in cycling, from 1.0% in 2015 to 1.8% in 2020, followed by a broad falling trend between 2021 and 2024
- Independent schools have seen a rise in cycling, from 1.3% in 2015 to 1.9% in 2024. The direction of change between years has been variable, with notably higher levels of cycling between 2018 and 2021, followed by a drop to 1.3%, which was maintained across 2022 and 2023.

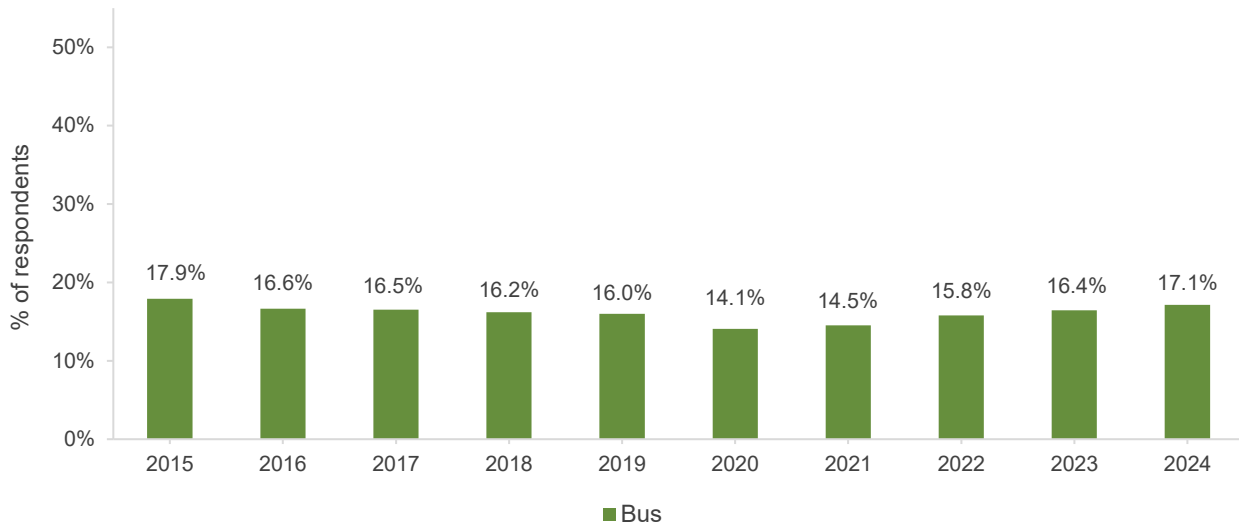
Scooter/skate

The percentage of pupils who say they normally scooter or skate to school has varied very little over the past 10 years, generally varying between 2.4% and 2.9%, with the exception of 3.3% in 2023. 2.9% of pupils normally scooted or skated to school in both 2015 and 2024.

- Scootering or skating levels among nursery children have fluctuated over the past 10 survey years. Compared to 2023, levels fell by 0.2pp to 3.3% in 2024
- In 2024, primary pupils saw a 0.5pp fall from 2023, to 4.6%, the second highest level of the past 10 years
- Levels of scootering or skating among secondary pupils in 2024 returned to 0.2%, the same as nine of the last 10 years. In 2023 this was 0.1%
- Scootering or skating levels among independent pupils have remained under 2.0%. In 2024, scootering or skating rose by 0.1pp compared to 2023 levels, to 0.6%. This is the second lowest level of the past 10 years.

Public sustainable travel

Chart 7-3: Mode share amongst participating pupils from all schools (exc. nursery) within the public sustainable travel category, 2015-2024.⁴⁰

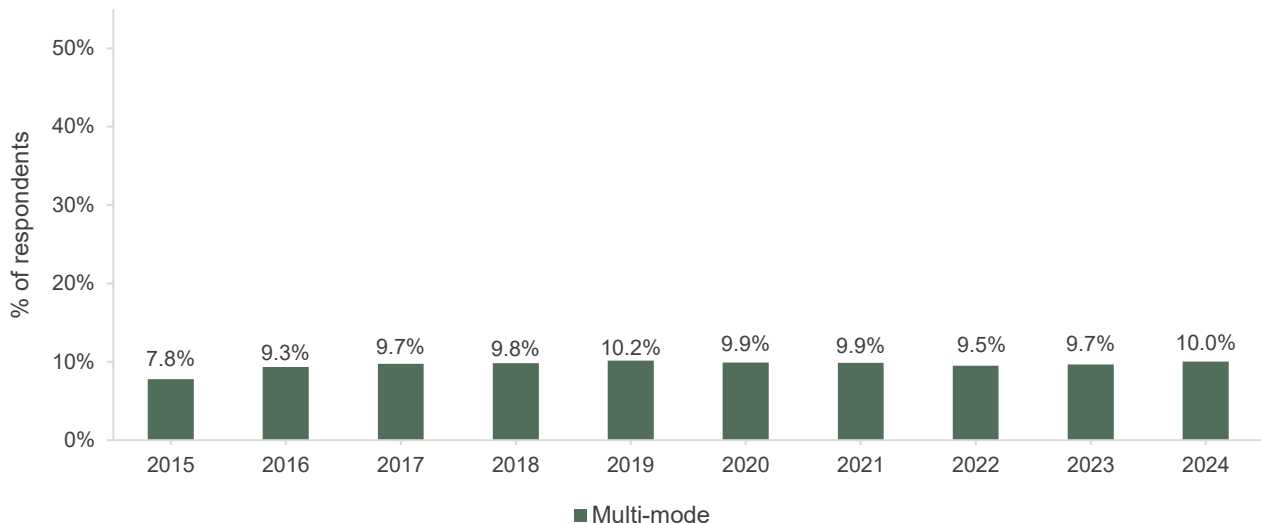


Overall, the proportion of pupils travelling to school by bus has fallen over the past ten survey years, from 17.9% in 2015 to 17.1% in 2024. However, in 2024, bus use rose for the fourth year in a row, rising by 0.7pp from 16.4% in 2023.

- Nursery children travelling to nursery by bus rose 0.5pp since 2023, to 3% in 2024. This is its third highest level of the past 10 years
- Bus use in primary schools has been broadly falling over the past 10 survey years. Levels in 2024 were at 6.1%, a fall of 0.2pp compared to 2023. This is still above the 10 year low of 5.3% in 2020
- In secondary schools, bus use is at its third highest level of the past 10 years at 35.0%. This is the same level as in 2023, and represents a 0.9pp fall compared to 2015 levels
- Following a sharp rise in 2022 to a 10 year high of 23.7%, bus use in independent schools has fallen over the past couple of years to 18.6% in 2024. This is a 5.0pp fall since 2023
- Bus use among pupils attending SEN schools has fluctuated between 41.0% (2015) and 26.5% (2021 and 2022). Since 2023, bus use has fallen, by 0.1pp, to 29.1% in 2024.

Multi-mode travel

Chart 7-4: Mode share amongst participating pupils from all schools (exc. nursery) within the multi-mode travel category, 2015-2024.⁴⁰

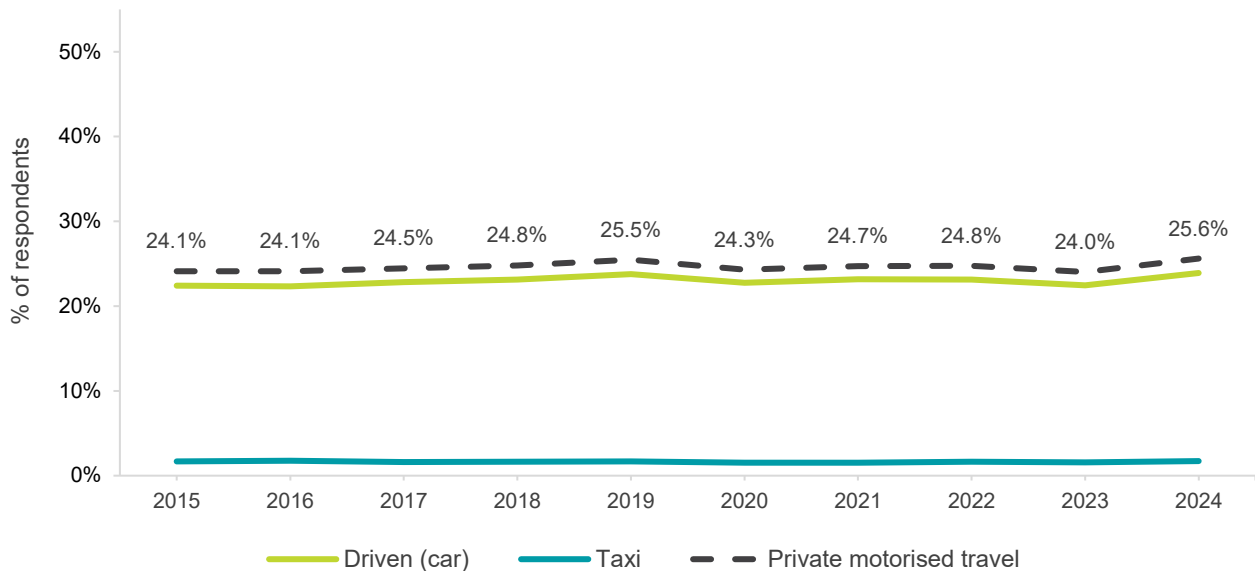


The proportion of pupils travelling to school by park and stride has shown an overall upward trend over the past 10 survey years from 7.8% in 2015 to 10.0% in 2024. This is only 0.2pp lower than the high recorded in 2019 (10.2%).

- Levels of park and stride among nursery children have fluctuated between a high of 4.5% (in 2016) and a low of 3.7% (in 2020) over the past 10 survey years. In 2024, park and stride levels fell by 0.3pp, to 3.9%
- Following a steady rise in park and stride among primary school pupils, from 10.0% in 2015 to 13.1% in 2019, levels slowly fell. 2024 shows a continuation of a rising trend in park and stride levels over the past couple of years. Park and stride levels in primary schools are at their highest since the survey began, at 13.2%
- Despite some fluctuations, there has been an overall rising trend in the proportion of secondary pupils using park and stride since 2015 (4.1%). 2024 shows a return to a rise in park and stride levels after a fall in both 2022 and 2023. 5.1% of secondary pupils normally used park and stride to get to school in 2024, 0.3pp short of the high in 2021
- The proportion of independent school pupils using park and stride has fluctuated and was at its highest in 2020 at 23%. Since then, levels have fallen. Since 2023 levels have fallen by 3.0pp to 9.3%, the lowest level in the past 10 years.

Private motorised travel

Chart 7-5: Mode share amongst participating pupils from all schools (exc. nursery) within the private motorised travel category, 2015-2024.⁴⁰



Levels of pupils in all schools travelling to school using private motorised transport have fluctuated over the past 10 years. In 2024, levels rose to 25.6%, from 24.0% in 2023. This is the highest level of private motorised transport use to school since the survey began.

- The proportion of children travelling to nursery using private motorised transport in 2024 is the highest since the survey began, at 53.3%. It has risen by 3.1pp since 2023
- Use of private motorised transport amongst primary school pupils in rose to 28.5% in 2024, from 26.9% in 2023. Private motorised transport use is at its second highest level of the last 10 years, and is at the same level as in 2015
- Private motorised travel among secondary school pupils has risen from 15.5% of pupils in 2015 to 19.4% in 2024. This is a 2.1pp rise compared to 2023, and the highest level since the survey began
- Between 2015 and 2024, levels of private motorised travel to independent schools have fluctuated. However, 2024 levels are the highest of the past 10 years, at 48.3%. This is a 9.7pp rise from a 10 year low in 2023
- SEN school pupils reported the highest proportion of private motorised travel, of all the different school types, at 59.8% in 2024. This is a rise from 57.4% in 2023.

Driven (car)

The proportion of pupils being driven to school has risen by 1.4pp from 22.5% in 2023 to 23.9% in 2024, and is now the highest it has been since the survey began. This rise is a general trend over the past 10 years, rising from 22.4% in 2015.

- The proportion of nursery children being driven to nursery has fluctuated. In 2024 it was 52.4%, the highest it has been since the survey began. This is a 3.2pp rise since 2023

- The proportion of primary pupils being driven to school has risen from 25.5% in 2023 to 27% in 2024. This is the second highest level of the past 10 years
- The proportion of secondary pupils being driven to school has risen from 16.0% in 2023 to 18% in 2024. This is the highest level it has been since the survey began
- For SEN schools and independent schools, levels of pupils being driven to school has fluctuated. The proportion of SEN and independent school pupils being driven to school have both risen since 2023, up 2.1pp to 10.6% and 9.6pp to 47.9%, respectively.

Taxi

Taxi use has remained fairly consistent over the past 10 survey years, typically ranging between 1.5% and 1.8%. In 2024, levels rose 0.1pp to 1.7%.

- The proportion of nursery children travelling to nursery by taxi has been low since 2015, with a high of 1.2% in 2016 and low of 0.6% in 2020. Since 2023, levels have fallen 0.1pp to 0.9%
- In primary schools, the proportion of pupils travelling to school by taxi rose 0.2pp, since 2023, to 1.5%. This breaks a falling trend of 9 years, from 1.7% in 2015 to 1.3% in 2023
- In independent schools, the proportion of pupils normally taking a taxi to school rose by 0.1pp, compared to both 2015 and 2023, to 0.4%
- The proportion of secondary pupils travelling to school in a taxi has fluctuated since 2015. In 2024 it is 1.3%, the same as in 2023. Of the last five years, three have shown levels of 1.3% and the other two have been 0.1pp either side of this
- Taxi is consistently the most common mode of travel for SEN school pupils. In 2024, taxi was 49.2% of the mode share, a rise of 0.3pp from 2023 levels, and a rise of 0.7pp from 2015 levels.

Other travel

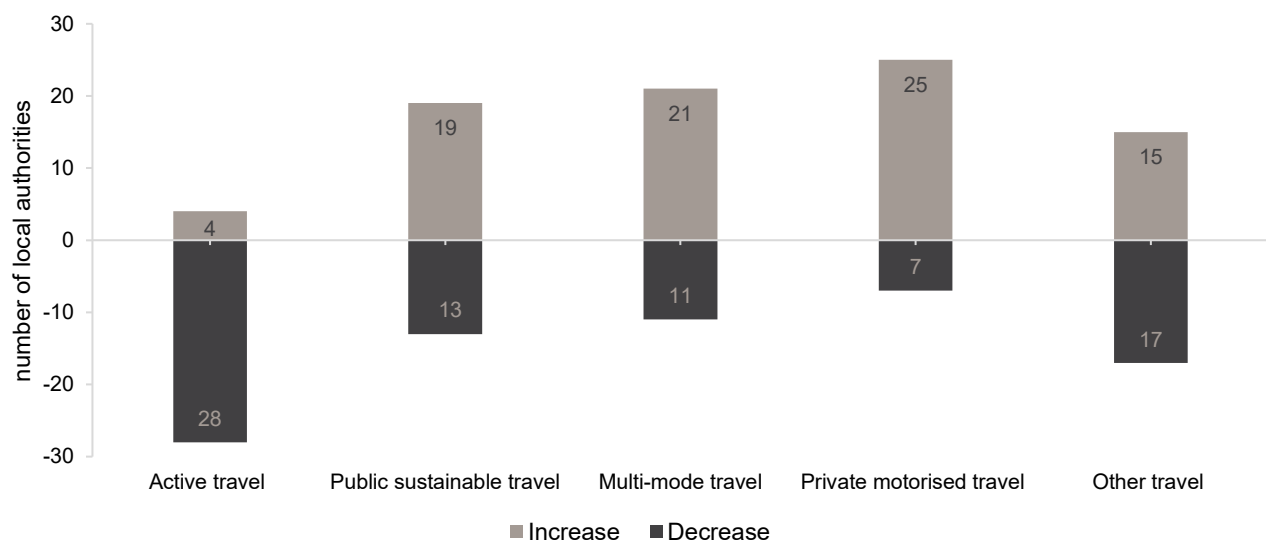
The percentage of pupils in all schools (exc. nursery) travelling to school by other modes has remained consistent, varying only between 0.4% and 0.6% over the past 10 survey years. In 2024 it was 0.6%, the same as in 2023.

- The percentage of pupils from independent schools travelling to school by other modes rose by 0.1pp since 2023, to 4.6% in 2024. This is the highest level recorded in the past 10 years
- The percentage of SEN pupils that reported travelling by other means has varied considerably over the last 10 survey years, from a low of 3.9% in 2017 to a high of 15.9% in 2021. Levels have fallen by 3.8pp since 2023, to 7.0% in 2024. It is possible that 'other' in the context of SEN schools refers to local authority taxis or other transport provided by the local authority or school.

7.2 Changes in mode share at local authority level

The number of local authorities experiencing a rise or fall in the proportion of pupils travelling by each mode type between 2023 and 2024 is shown below. The statistics below cover all 32 local authorities that responded in both 2023 and 2024. The full individual local authority results are not shown here. For more detailed information on individual local authority mode share, refer to table 3.1 onwards in the national excel summary report.⁵⁴

Chart 7-6: Change in pupil travel mode share between 2023 and 2024 at the local authority level.



Active travel: There was a rise in active travel levels in 4 local authorities, and a fall in 28, between 2023 and 2024.

Public sustainable travel: There was a rise in public sustainable travel levels in 19 local authorities, and a fall in 13, between 2023 and 2024.

Multi-mode travel: There was a rise in multi-mode travel levels in 21 local authorities, and a fall in 11, between 2023 and 2024.

Private motorised travel: There was a rise in private motorised travel levels in 25 local authorities, and a fall in 7, between 2023 and 2024.

Other travel: There was a rise in other travel levels in 15 local authorities, and a fall in 17, between 2023 and 2024.

7.3 Response rates

Survey receipt and response rates as a percentage of all schools in Scotland and Scottish school roll are calculated using the Scottish Government Education Statistics. Data on both the number of schools and their pupil roll are available for state primary, secondary and SEN schools. Pupil roll numbers are not published for state nursery or independent schools in Scotland. It is therefore not possible to calculate receipt or response rates for nursery or independent school types.

Local authority participation

All 32 local authorities in Scotland participated in the Hands Up Scotland Survey in 2015 and again from 2017 to 2024. 31 local authorities participated in 2016.

School responses (exc. nursery)

A total of 1,984 schools took part in this year's survey. This represents 29 more schools than in 2023.

The total number of state schools responding to the Hands Up Scotland Survey rose by 24 schools to 1,962. This is 206 more schools than in 2020, when the lowest response rate of the last 10 survey years was recorded.

State school responses as a proportion of all state schools in Scotland were at 80.2% in 2024. This is the second highest response level of the last 10 years, after 2015.

Table 7-1: National response rates: number of state and all schools (exc. nursery) responding to the survey, and state schools responding as a proportion of all state schools in Scotland, 2015-2024.⁴⁸

Year	Number of state schools responding	% of Scottish state schools	Number of schools responding
2015	2,045	81.1%	2,060
2016	1,923	76.0%	1,938
2017	1,989	79.1%	2,009
2018	1,917	76.5%	1,930
2019	1,968	78.9%	1,981
2020	1,756	70.9%	1,771
2021	1,861	75.3%	1,879
2022	1,952	79.3%	1,973
2023	1,938	78.9%	1,955
2024	1,962	80.2%	1,984

Pupil responses

Responses were received from 461,727 school pupils in 2024. This represents 18,456 more school pupils than in 2023.

The total number of pupils from all schools (exc. nursery) responding to the Hands Up Scotland Survey has varied year by year, but has fallen from 480,161 in 2015 to 461,727 pupils in 2024. Of the past 10 survey years, the highest number of pupil responses was 480,161 in 2015, and the lowest number of responses was 405,917 in 2020.

454,959 state school pupils took part in the 2024 survey, which equates to 64.8% of all state school pupils enrolled in Scotland. This has risen since 2023 when the state school participation was 434,967 (61.6%).

Chart 7-7: National response rates: number of responses from state school pupils and all school pupils (exc. nursery), 2015-2024.⁴⁹

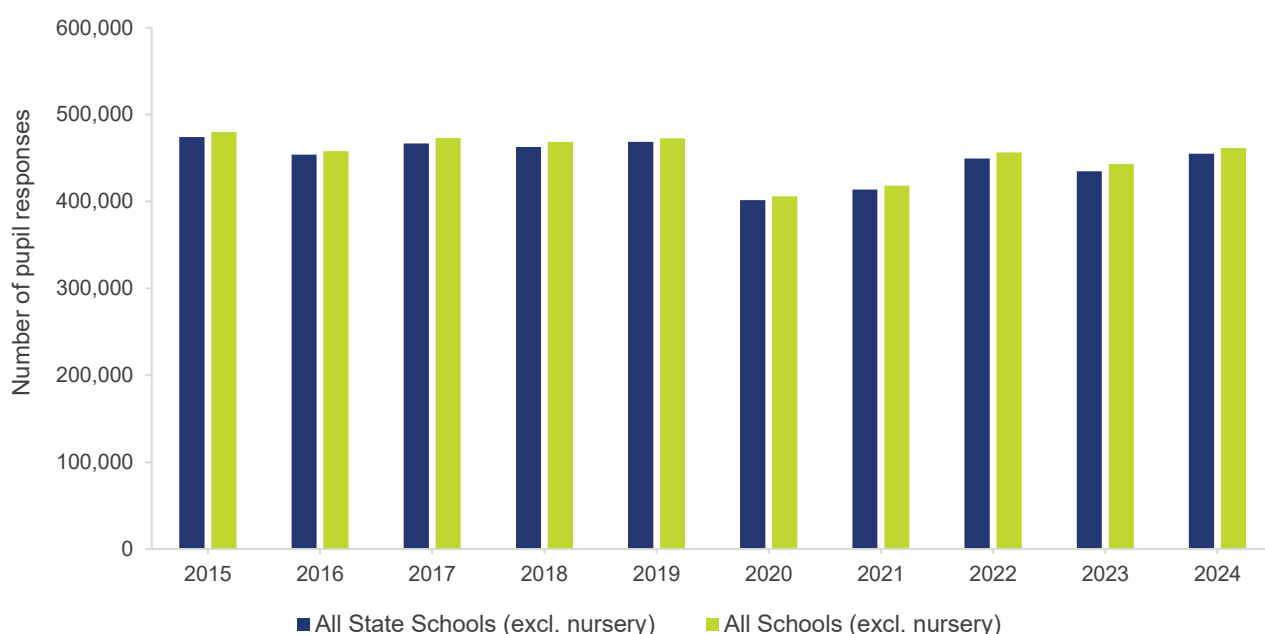


Table 7-2: National response rates: number of state and all school pupils (exc. nursery) responding to the survey, and state school pupils responding as a proportion of all pupils in Scotland, 2015-2024.

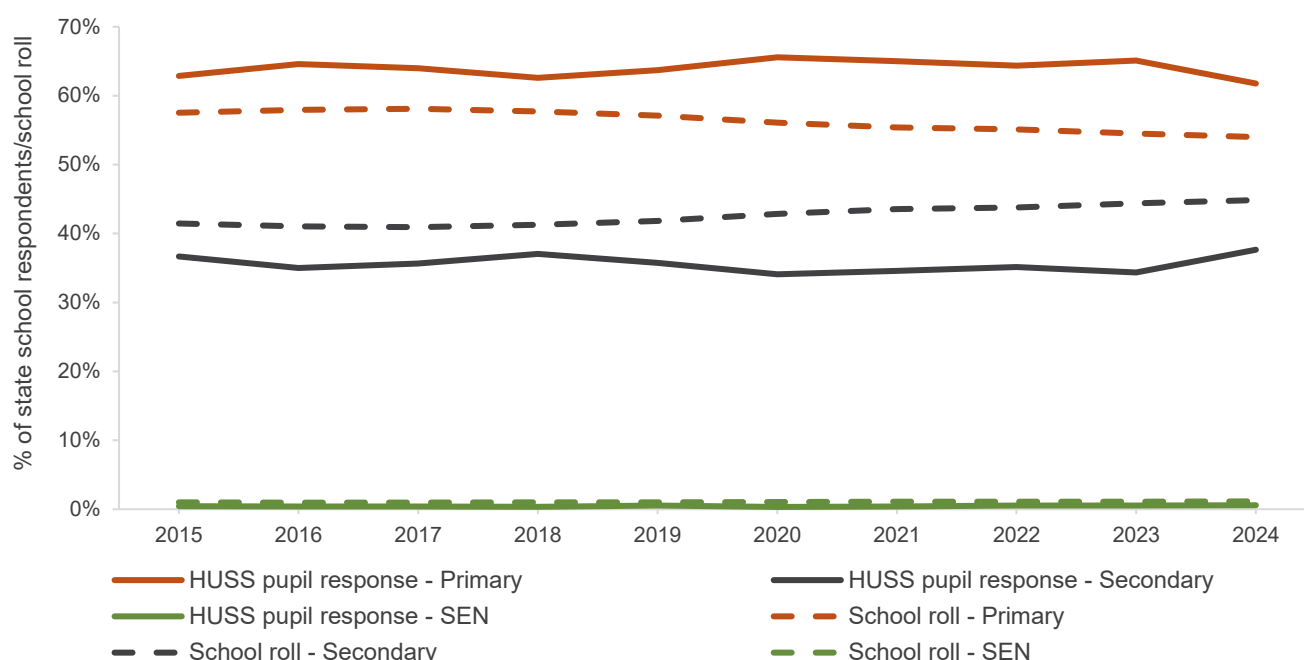
Year	Number of state school pupil respondents	% of Scottish state school roll	Number of school pupil respondents
2015	474,200	69.7%	480,161
2016	454,037	66.3%	458,145
2017	466,956	67.8%	473,160
2018	462,940	66.8%	468,537
2019	468,588	67.2%	472,617
2020	401,656	57.2%	405,917
2021	413,616	58.7%	418,147
2022	449,376	63.7%	456,695
2023	434,967	61.6%	443,271
2024	454,959	64.8%	461,727

The proportions of state school pupils that are in each of the three school types (primary, secondary and SEN)⁵⁵, and the proportions of Hands Up Scotland Survey responses from each of those same school types⁵⁶, differ.

Chart 7-8 shows that while the representation of pupils from different school types varies between years, there is consistent over-representation of primary school pupils, and under-representation of secondary school pupils, in the Hands Up Scotland Survey responses. This influences the complexion of results when summarised at the 'All schools' or 'All state schools' levels.

In 2024, these representation gaps are slightly smaller than they were in 2023.

Chart 7-8: National State school pupils: proportion of Scotland school pupil roll, and proportion of Hands Up Scotland Survey responses, from each state school type, 2015-2024.



For considerations relating to response rates, please see Technical Notes 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4.

Nursery schools responses

No nursery schools were approached to participate in the first Hands Up Scotland Survey in 2008. Since then, a concerted effort has been made to improve participation among nursery schools. The total number of nurseries responding to the Hands Up Scotland Survey rose from 590 in 2015 to 1,318 in 2024.

Since 2017, automated emails have been sent to nurseries and day care of children establishments, inviting them to participate in the survey and providing them with a link to access the survey.

The greatest number of nursery children responding was recorded in 2017, with 41,845 responses. 2024 saw the third highest number of responses of the past 10 survey years, with 40,798 nursery children responding – a rise of 909 since 2023.

Table 7-3: Nursery participation: number of nursery schools and children responding to the survey, 2015-2024.⁵⁷

Year	Number of nurseries responding	Number of nursery children respondents
2015	590	21,398
2016	452	17,933
2017	1,225	41,845
2018	1,077	36,352
2019	1,128	35,552
2020	1,108	32,688
2021	1,274	37,071
2022	1,307	40,945
2023	1,274	39,889
2024	1,318	40,798

Schools returning data by class

In 2024, 91.1% of schools returned data by class compared to a high of 95.0% in 2017, a 3.9pp fall. However, the proportion of schools returning data by class in 2024 is the third highest of the last 10 survey years, and is much higher than the years prior to 2017, which varied between a low of 62.9% in 2016 and a high of 77.9% in 2015.

Of the state primary and secondary schools that returned data, 92.5% and 86.0% returned data by class, respectively, in 2024.⁵⁸

7.4 Data tables: 2015-2024 results

These data tables contain the full set of travel mode (and category) share values for the last 10 survey years for all schools (exc. nursery).

Table 7-4: National travel modes: all schools (exc. nursery), 2015-2024.⁴⁰

Year	Walk	Cycle	Scooter /Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
2015	43.3%	3.5%	2.9%	17.9%	7.8%	22.4%	1.7%	0.4%	480,161
2016	42.8%	3.6%	2.9%	16.6%	9.3%	22.3%	1.8%	0.6%	458,145
2017	42.3%	3.7%	2.8%	16.5%	9.7%	22.8%	1.6%	0.5%	473,160
2018	42.5%	3.8%	2.4%	16.2%	9.8%	23.1%	1.7%	0.5%	468,537
2019	41.0%	4.1%	2.7%	16.0%	10.2%	23.8%	1.7%	0.6%	472,617
2020	44.8%	3.8%	2.6%	14.1%	9.9%	22.8%	1.5%	0.4%	405,917
2021	43.6%	4.0%	2.7%	14.5%	9.9%	23.2%	1.5%	0.6%	418,147
2022	42.6%	3.9%	2.9%	15.8%	9.5%	23.1%	1.6%	0.5%	456,695
2023	41.3%	4.7%	3.3%	16.4%	9.7%	22.5%	1.6%	0.6%	443,271
2024	39.8%	3.9%	2.9%	17.1%	10.0%	23.9%	1.7%	0.6%	461,727

Table 7-5: National travel categories: all schools (exc. nursery), 2015-2024.

Year	Active	Public sustainable	Multi-mode	Private motorised	Other	Total
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
2020	51.2%	14.1%	9.9%	24.3%	0.4%	405,917
2021	50.3%	14.5%	9.9%	24.7%	0.6%	418,147
2022	49.4%	15.8%	9.5%	24.8%	0.5%	456,695
2023	49.3%	16.4%	9.7%	24.0%	0.6%	443,271
2024	46.6%	17.1%	10.0%	25.6%	0.6%	461,727

8 Technical notes

8.1 Data collection

- 8.1.1 Hands Up Scotland Survey data is collected every year in September. In 2024, data collection took place between 9th and 13th September. Data from schools conducting the survey within a grace period of one week either side of the official survey date was accepted and included in the analysis.
- 8.1.2 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.
- 8.1.3 Pupils of primary and secondary school age are asked to respond to the Hands Up Scotland Survey themselves. Assistance may be provided to nursery children or SEN school pupils by a parent, guardian or member of school staff.

8.2 Response rates

- 8.2.1 There are limitations to the comparability of data between years and school types because whilst survey design and methodology have remained consistent, response rates have varied considerably between years and also between school types.
- 8.2.2 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 both the number of schools and their pupil roll is 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.
- 8.2.3 Survey receipt and response rates as a percentage of Scottish/local authority school roll and as a percentage of all schools in Scotland/local authority are calculated using Scottish Government Education Statistics. This is available only for state primary, secondary and SEN schools. It is therefore not possible to calculate receipt or response rates for nursery or independent school types.

8.3 School type

- 8.3.1 'All state schools' includes primary, secondary and SEN schools only.
- 8.3.2 'All schools' includes primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools only.
- 8.3.3 Nursery data is presented separately as the characteristics of nurseries are considered to be different to that of other school types. For example, some nursery children only attend mornings, afternoons, and part of the week, whereas those aged primary and up are in full time education. In addition to this, the number of nursery school respondents has more than quadrupled since data was first collected. This large rise 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.

8.4 Interpreting results

- 8.4.1 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 at: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey>
- 8.4.2 Where the number of responses is low (fewer than 100), care should be taken when interpreting results. Percentage statistics based on a small number of responses may see large annual fluctuations.
- 8.4.3 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.
- 8.4.4 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?').
- 8.4.5 Due to rounding, row percentages may not always add up to 100.0%, and category totals may not always add up to the values presented for individual travel modes.
- 8.4.6 In 2008, the first year of the survey, Sustrans Scotland offered a prize draw as an incentive for school participation.
- 8.4.7 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 rose 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 rise in school responses was the continuation of an overall trend.
- 8.4.8 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.
- 8.4.9 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/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey>

8.5 Confidentiality

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

8.6 Official Statistics Publication

- 8.6.1 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.
- 8.6.2 A Parliamentary Order was passed designating Sustrans as Official Statistics Providers as of 1st June 2012. 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.
- 8.6.3 More information on the standards of Official Statistics in Scotland is available at:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/producing-official-statistics/>

8.7 Enquiries

- 8.7.1 For media enquiries relating to the information contained in this, or any other Hands Up Scotland Survey documents, please contact Sustrans' media team at Mediateam@sustrans.org.uk or on 07833 057601.
- 8.7.2 Non-media enquiries about Hands Up Scotland Survey should be made to Sustrans' Hands Up Scotland Survey team, Sustrans' Strategy, Impact and Evidence, 1 Exchange Crescent, Conference Square, Edinburgh, EH3 8RA or email:
HandsUpScotland@sustrans.org.uk
- 8.7.3 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:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- 8.7.4 Sustrans' Strategy Impact and Evidence team 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 For more information regarding the Hands Up Scotland Survey questions, please refer to: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ² For more information regarding response rates, please refer to section 7.3 (page 28).
- ³ For more information regarding the policy context, please refer to section 3 (page 5).
- ⁴ For more information on the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice, please refer to: <https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/the-code/>
- ⁵ Official Statistics in Scotland are produced by the Scottish Government, Crown Bodies and a number of other public bodies named by Parliamentary Order in line with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Official Statistics.
- ⁶ For more information on Official Statistics in Scotland, please refer to: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/producing-official-statistics/>
- ⁷ Email: HandsUpScotland@sustrans.org.uk / Telephone: 0131 346 1384
- ⁸ To submit a data request, please read the information and download the data request form at: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁹ For more information on the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, please refer to: <http://nationalperformance.gov.scot>
- ¹⁰ For more information about Transport Scotland's Active Travel Outcomes Framework, please refer to: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/active-travel-framework-1/>
- ¹¹ For more information on Transport Scotland's 'A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030,' please refer to: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/33649/long-term-vision-for-active-travel-in-scotland-2030.pdf>
- ¹² For more information on Scotland's physical activity delivery plan, please refer to: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2018/07/active-scotland-delivery-plan/documents/00537494-pdf/00537494-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00537494.pdf>
- ¹³ For more information on Transport Scotland's National Transport Strategy and the National Transport Strategy 2 in detail, please refer to: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/national-transport-strategy/>; <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47052/national-transport-strategy.pdf>
- ¹⁴ For more information on The UK Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines, please refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report>
- ¹⁵ The Hands Up Scotland Survey is not a direct measure of the achievement of the Chief Medical Officers' recommended level of physical activity, but may inform evidence of this in conjunction with other sources of data.
- ¹⁶ For more information on 'A more active Scotland: Building a Legacy from the Commonwealth Games,' please refer to: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0044/00444577.pdf>
- ¹⁷ For more information on the 'Curriculum for Excellence' please refer to: <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/health-and-wellbeing-eo.pdf>
- ¹⁸ For more information on the Children and Young People's Profile, please refer to: <https://www.scotpho.org.uk/population-groups/children-and-young-people/key-points/>
- ¹⁹ The SHANARRI indicators of wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland are: 'Safe', 'Healthy', 'Achieving', 'Nurtured', 'Active', 'Respected', 'Responsible' and 'Included'.
- ²⁰ For more information on the SHANARRI indicators, please refer to: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/wellbeing>
- ²¹ For more information on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, please refer to: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/section/96/enacted>
- ²² For more information on the GIRFEC approach, please refer to: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>
- ²³ For more information on the Scottish Government's 'National Walking Strategy' please refer to: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00452622.pdf>
- ²⁴ For more information on Transport Scotland's 'Strategic Road Safety Plan,' please refer to: https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/10323/ts_strategic_road_safety_plan_2016_digital_sep_2016.pdf
- ²⁵ For more information on 'Designing Streets' please refer to: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2010/03/22120652/0>

- ²⁶ For more information on 'Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030', please refer to:
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/scotland-s-road-safety-framework-to-2030/>
- ²⁷ For more information on the 'Environment' outcome in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, please refer to: <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/national-outcomes/national-outcomes/environment>
- ²⁸ For more information on the Scottish Government's 'Cleaner Air for Scotland strategy', please refer to:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/cleaner-air-scotland-road-healthier-future/>
- ²⁹ For more information on the Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 and the Climate Change Plan: third report on proposals and policies 2018-2032 (RPP3) please refer to:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/15/contents/enacted>;
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-governments-climate-change-plan-third-report-proposals-policies-2018/>
- ³⁰ For more information on Transport Scotland's National Transport Strategy priority 'Takes Climate Action', please refer to:
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/national-transport-strategy/national-transport-strategy-takes-climate-action/>
- ³¹ For more information on Travel to School as measured by the Scottish Household Survey, please refer to:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings/pages/7/>
- ³² A list of the main statistical publications in relation to transport in Scotland is available from the Transport Scotland website:
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publications/?publicationtype=935905eb-0b3c-47ef-9687-075d7130f47b&q=>
- ³³ For more information on the Scottish Health Survey, please refer to:
<https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/>
- ³⁴ For more information on the Pupil Level Annual School Census in England, please refer to:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/school-census>
- ³⁵ For more information on the Health Survey for England, please refer to:
<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-survey-for-england>
- ³⁶ For more information on the UK National Travel Survey, please refer to:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics>
- ³⁷ For more information on the Northern Ireland Travel Survey, please refer to:
<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/travel-survey-northern-ireland>
- ³⁸ For more information on travel data from the National Survey for Wales, please refer to:
<https://gov.wales/national-survey-wales>
- ³⁹ Clackmannanshire, Fife and Midlothian opted for manual entry of the 2024 Hands Up Scotland Survey data by local authority officers and did not use the online survey platform.
- ⁴⁰ Table 2.1 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>
- ⁴¹ All schools: primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools in Scotland, excluding nursery.
- ⁴² Other modes of travel may include local authority transport and train, among others.
- ⁴³ Values for SEN pupils have been suppressed for cycle, scooter/skate and park & stride, and are therefore not presented here. Please see Technical Note 8.5.1.
- ⁴⁴ Table 2.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁴⁵ Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁴⁶ All state schools: primary, secondary and SEN schools in Scotland, excluding nursery.
- ⁴⁷ This percentage may be less or more than 100% due to variation in the number of schools listed in Scottish Government Education Statistics, between years. In addition, there are occasions on which a school may not be sent the survey by accident.
- ⁴⁸ Table 1.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁴⁹ Table 1.1 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁵⁰ Table 2.4 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁵¹ For considerations relating to calculations of percentage point change, please see Technical Note 8.4.9.

- ⁵² Active travel is the combination of Walk, Cycle and Scooter / Skate. Private motorised travel is the combination of Driven (car) and Taxi.
- ⁵³ Specific values are not reported here due to there being several years of suppressed data for cycling and scooter/skate for SEN schools
- ⁵⁴ Tables 3.1 onwards in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁵⁵ Table 1.1b in Pupil census supplementary statistics, for pupil school roll numbers for proportion calculations, available to download from:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-census-supplementary-statistics/>
- ⁵⁶ Table 1.1 in supplementary National Results Excel file, for pupil response numbers for proportion calculations, available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁵⁷ Table 1.1 and Table 1.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>
- ⁵⁸ Further details of data returned by class can be found in tables 1.4, 1.7, 2.4 and 3.4 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/hands-up-scotland-survey/>