

School Census Autumn 2023 Preparation Guide

PURPOSE: To assist LA maintained schools & PRU in preparing for the School Census Autumn 2023.

KEY DATES

Thursday 5 October 2023	Census Day
Tuesday 10 October 2023	Deadline for Waltham Forest maintained schools & PRU submit a return to the Local Authority via COLLECT https://services.signin.education.gov.uk

SCHOOLS INCLUDED:

The school census collects individual school characteristics and pupil records, 3 times a year.

In England, all of the following schools are required to provide the information collected in this census to DfE:

- maintained nursery, primary, middle-deemed primary, middle-deemed secondary, secondary, all-through, special schools (including non-maintained special schools), pupil referral units / alternative provision (PRU / AP), academies (including free schools, university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools) and city technology colleges (CTCs).

PUPILS TO BE INCLUDED:

Individual data will be included in the return for the following pupils. You should ensure that all relevant data is maintained and up to date for:

- all pupils on the register on census day
- any additional pupils subject to any type of suspension or permanent exclusion in the previous 2 terms
- any additional pupils who attended the school in the previous term for which termly attendance information is required - not for nursery schools
- any additional pupils who attended the school in the previous academic year for which learning aims are submitted - autumn census for secondary, all-through, PRU and AP schools only
- any additional pupils who had an alternative provision (AP) placement within the collection period (since the last census day), not applicable for nursery schools
- any additional pupils who were recorded as in receipt of learner funding and monitoring since the start of the academic year – not applicable to nursery schools

FUNDING

The autumn school census will be used to fund the schools block of the dedicated schools grant and the pupil premium.

KEY CENSUS DATA ITEM COLLECTION PERIODS

Item	Period
Term dates	Start of the autumn term (from 2023-08-01) to 2023-12-31
Free school meal eligibility	(a) An FSM eligibility start date and no FSM eligibility end date; or, (b) An FSM eligibility end date since the previous census, that is, on or after 2023-05-19 and up to and including the autumn census day (2023-10-05)
Learner Funding and Monitoring (FAM) entity	Any Learner FAM assigned and hours, where applicable since the beginning of the 2023 to 2024 academic year (from 2023-08-01) to students who are either on roll or off roll on census day (2023-10-05)
Termly suspensions and permanent exclusions	2023-01-01 to 2023-07-31
Termly attendance	First half of the summer term From Easter Monday 2023-04-10 to the Sunday 2023-05-28 before spring bank holiday
Summer second half term attendance	From spring bank holiday Monday 2023-05-29 to 2023-07-31
Alternative provision (AP) placement module	Any current (open) AP placements and any previous placements where the pupil has already left an AP placement between: 2023-05-18 to 2023-10-04 inclusive
Post-16 learning aims	For the current academic year covering the period from 2023-08-01 for pupils with a status of 'C' (current – single registration) or 'M' (current main – dual registration) who have been on roll and in actual national curriculum year group 12 or above. For the previous academic year covering the period from 2022-08-01 to 2023-07-31 inclusive for pupils who were on roll at any point during this period in actual national curriculum year group 12 or above. Learning aims are only required for those pupils with a pupil status of 'C' (current – single registration) or 'M' (current main – dual registration) at the time of the learning aims.

More DfE items info at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2023-to-2024>

NEW, CHANGED & DELETED DATA ITEMS FOR AUTUMN 2023

0) NEW DATA ITEMS

New Data Item	Description	Schools applicable	More information
Sex and gender identity	<p>The gender current (N00065) data item has been replaced by the new sex (N00783) data item.</p> <p>The change from gender current to sex is being rolled out across all DfE collections over the next year or so. We will collect the sex data item (a value which identifies the sex of a person as recognised in law) on a mandatory basis.</p> <p>The gender ID (N00784) data item has been created so schools, children’s homes, local authorities and other institutions can record gender identity for local use, should they wish to. We will not collect this data item.</p>	All	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2023-to-2024

1) EXISTING DATA ITEMS

No changes to existing data items.

2) DELETED DATA ITEMS

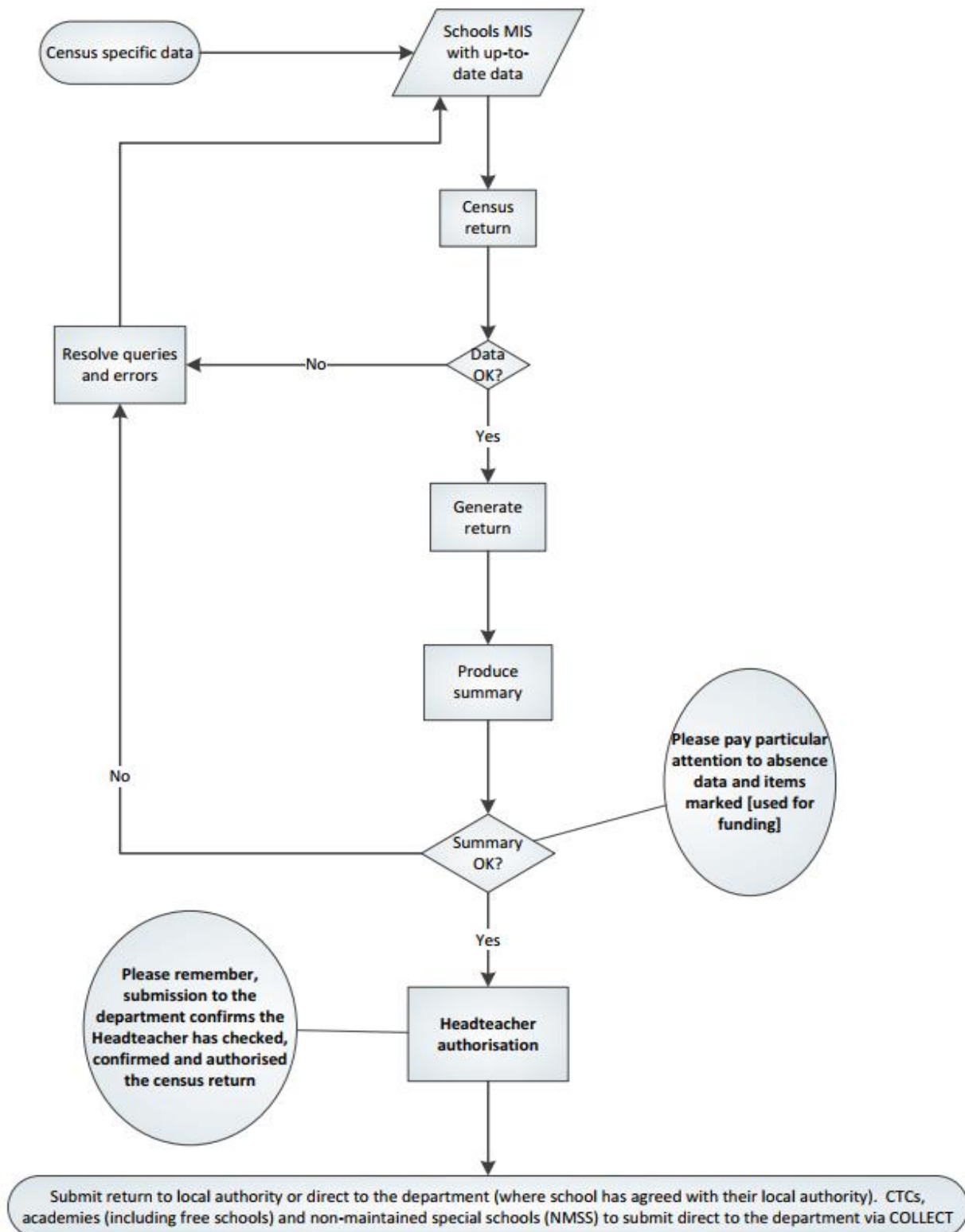
The gender current (N00065) data item has been replaced by the new sex (N00783) data item.

GUIDANCE ABOUT DATA ITEMS FOR THE AUTUMN 2023, SPRING 2024 AND SUMMER 2024 CENSUS

More information about data items is at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2023-to-2024>.

STEPS TO PRODUCING THE SCHOOL CENSUS RETURN

The process of producing the School Census can be separated into several steps, some of which might need to be repeated to eliminate validation errors and queries.



GENERATING, VALIDATING, AUTHORISING AND SUBMITTING THE RETURN

1) GENERATING & VALIDATING

All relevant pupil data has been entered and updated in your management information system (MIS) before the school census return is created.

Your MIS will have validation which will help you to identify and correct errors in your data before you generate your return. Follow your MIS support provider instructions to create, validate and authorise the return.

Schools should contact their MIS support provider for specific guidance on generating and validating the return.

2) AUTHORISING

Your MIS will automatically generate a summary of the data in the school census return that will:

- allow you to check that the data is accurate and complete before sending it to the Headteacher; and
- allow the Headteacher authorising the return to check it is accurate and complete before submitting it to the local authority or DfE.

It is strongly recommended that you inspect the MIS summary report carefully, paying particular attention to the sections that might show that some individual pupil data was not entered onto the system before generating the return such as free school meal eligibility, the number of pupils with SEN, absence data and [data items](#) marked [used for funding] etc.

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing and authorising census data before it is submitted.

3) SUBMITTING

Maintained schools including pupil referral units submit data to the Local Authority using COLLECT for further validation and approval before being submitted for DfE authorisation.

The act of submitting the data automatically confirms the return as authorised by the Headteacher.

To use COLLECT to submit your school census data, you will need to log in via DfE Sign-in <https://services.signin.education.gov.uk>. Contact your school approver, if you want to request a DfE sign-in username or password so you can access COLLECT, or 'school census' is not on the list of collections you can see in COLLECT.

All school census COLLECT errors are to be corrected. All queries checked and either amended (if there is an issue); or a notepad explanation is provided in the 'return level notes' section of COLLECT for DfE queries. A DfE list of acceptable notepad entries is at www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/check-your-data (section 'Adding explanatory notes for queries').

If the DfE has any queries about your return or any of the notes added, they may also add a note to the 'return level notes' section of COLLECT.

Note: Only add return-level notes for DfE queries to the COLLECT system. Explanatory notes for Local Authority queries should be added to your school validation report ('Comment' section of sheet 'ValidationReport') and sent securely to the Business Intelligence Team via [AnyComms+](#).

More DfE guidance on submitting the return can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/submit-your-data; and checking at www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/check-your-data

'Dry Run' & Testing

Schools should take the opportunity to do a 'dry run' of their school census return. The purpose of a dry run is to provide details about any corrections that need to be made to your data to make it acceptable for inclusion. So that you are aware of any potential issues, it is advisable to do this as early as possible, even if you know that your data has not yet been fully prepared or checked. Contact your management information system (MIS) Support Provider for any procedural guidance to facilitate a dry run.

COLLECT Familiarisation

A 'beta' release of the School Census live COLLECT blade will be available to schools in the Autumn Term 2023 prior to the 'live' collection.

COLLECT familiarisation will take place on the same system as the live collection and, therefore, can be accessed by logging into [COLLECT](#).

The DfE would strongly recommend that, if possible, all schools take the chance to load a file output from their management information system (MIS) into COLLECT during the familiarisation process. This will allow schools to check that all the required data is being output correctly from their MIS into the autumn census return and whether any validation errors or queries are generated against their data when loaded into COLLECT which need to be resolved before the collection goes live.

WHO TO CONTACT?

Contact	Support
Families Business Intelligence Team E-mail: edu.performance@walthamforest.gov.uk	School Census data collection and return queries.
Department for Education (DfE) https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Data-collections-service-request-form	DfE Data collections service request form.

AUTUMN 2023 SCHOOL CENSUS – CHECKLIST

This checklist indicates some of the tasks to undertake to prepare for the school census. Your MIS Support Provider may provide a more specific procedural list of tasks that you should follow. More information about school census data items is at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2023-to-2024>.

MIS Permissions: Check with your System Administrator/Manager that you have the appropriate permissions to run the School Census and record associated data.	<input type="checkbox"/>
MIS is the correct version? Upgrade to the correct MIS version to run School Census.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dry Run: Carry out a dry run to determine what information needs to be updated.	<input type="checkbox"/>
School information: Check school level information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leavers: Check that leavers and re-admissions have been recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance: Check attendance data.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enrolment Status – dual registrations: All pupils on roll at your school and another school/PRU must have the correct enrolment status recorded (i.e. M = Dual Main or S = Dual Subsidiary).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>FSM: Check free school meal eligibility information.</p> <p>Transitional protections ensure that any pupil in receipt of free school meals on 31 March 2018 or after, should continue to receive free school meals until the end of the universal credit roll out period, and then until their phase of education ends. This covers until at least March 2025 and applies even if their circumstances change and they would no longer meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>You should not enter end dates unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a parent has said that they do not wish the child to be recorded as eligible for free school meals and receive a free school meal • a pupil transfers from another UK country – their non-English free school meals must have an end date • a parent notifies the school that their support under the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 or the pension credit has ended • a parent notifies the school that they no longer qualify for free school meals under the criteria for families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full-time/part-time status for pupils who are not of statutory school age: Please ensure that each pupil in these year groups is correctly shown as full-time or part-time.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funded hours for pupils aged 2, 3 or 4: Check the funded entitlement hours information.	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Hours at setting for pupils aged 2, 3 or 4: Check that it is the total of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any hours funded under the free early education entitlements, plus any hours funded under extended funded entitlement, plus any additional hours of education funded from other sources such as parents. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>First Language: Check first language information. Collected for all pupils including nursery schools.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Learner Funding and Monitoring (FAM): Update Funding and Monitoring details as required by the DfE. For the 2023 to 2024 academic year, it will identify pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in receipt of tutoring funded by the National Tutoring Programme funding (this tutoring could be delivered via school-led tutoring, an academic mentor or a tuition partner) in receipt of tutoring funded by the 16 to 19 tuition fund resitting or retaking full or part of their 16 to 19 study programme 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Post-16 learning aims: Check Post-16 learning aims information (secondary, all-through and PRU/AP schools with sixth forms) [Autumn Term only]</p> <p>The DfE have produced an interactive school census tool aimed at helping institutions return accurate data.</p> <p>In addition, there are several ESFA post-16 reports available on the COLLECT https://services.signin.education.gov.uk portal which summarise the post 16 data in your census return to help institutions return accurate data.</p> <p>All 16 to 19 funded schools and academies should use both the interactive census tool and COLLECT post 16 reports before submitting a final autumn census return to ensure data in the return is accurate.</p> <p>More information about the data items to be provided is at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2023-to-2024 (sections 'Post-16 data', 'Post-16 student data' & 'Post-16 learning aims')</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Post Looked After pupils: Check information collected for pupils who are on-roll on census day. Post looked after arrangements collects information regarding children, who have left local authority care in England and Wales through adoption, a special guardianship order, a residence order or a child arrangements order and are still subject to such orders on census day.</p> <p>Children who have left care under one of the measures listed above will be eligible for the post looked after element of the pupil premium.</p> <p>From autumn 2022, the DfE have extended these options to include code 'O' - children adopted from state care outside of England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Pupil SEN provision: Check special educational needs information. SEN provision is collected for all pupils on roll on census day using the following codes:</p> <p>‘E’ (education, health and care plan) or</p> <p>‘K’ (SEN support)</p> <p>SEN provision at the time of any suspension or permanent exclusion and on entering and leaving an alternative provision placement will also be collected in the school census.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>School lunches taken: This data item records whether an infant pupil has taken a school lunch on census day. This may include packed lunches provided by the school to children on school trips. This data item is collected each term from all schools with an appropriate age range and for the following pupils regardless of whether they are eligible for free school meals:</p> <p>all pupils on roll on census day in reception (NCYearActual equals ‘R’); year 1 (NCYearActual equals ‘1’); year 2 (NCYearActual equals ‘2’); and aged 4 to 6 not following the national curriculum (NCYearActual equals ‘X’ and pupil born between 2016-09-01 and 2019-08-31 inclusive)</p> <p>The DfE collect this data each term from all schools and use it to allocate funding.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Termly suspensions and permanent exclusions: Check information.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Top-Up Funding Indicator: Check this information for those pupils on roll for whom the school receives, on census day, high needs top-up funding either from a local authority or, in the case of a PRU / AP, a local authority or another school.</p> <p>Usually, but not always, the pupils for whom a primary or secondary mainstream school receives top-up funding are those with an education, health and care plan (EHCP). More information is at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items-2023-to-2024 (‘Top-up funding indicator’ section).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Unique Learner Numbers (ULN): ULNs are mandatory for all pupils on roll aged 14 and over on census day and for pupils no longer on roll who were aged 14 as at their leaving date.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Unique Pupil Numbers (UPN): If you have pupils with a temporary UPN or new pupils that require a UPN, check whether they already have a permanent UPN assigned to them.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Youth Support Services Agreement (YSSA) [Middle-deemed primary, middle-deemed secondary, secondary, all-through, special and PRU/AP schools]:</p> <p>There is a legal requirement under the Education and Skills Act 2008 for schools to pass information on request to the youth support service for pupils in or approaching the age of 13.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>