



**Seirbhís Tacaíochta
Oideachais Tusla**

Tusla Education Support Service

**School Attendance Data
Primary and Post-Primary Schools
And
Student Absence Reports
Primary and Post-Primary Schools**

2019-2022

June 2023

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1 Introduction

This report is the 15th publication of school attendance data in state-aided schools. In line with the Education (Welfare) Act of 2000, all primary schools, including special schools, and post-primary schools must report annually on student non-attendance in primary and post-primary schools at an aggregated level. This data is collected using the Tusla Portal hosted by the Child and Family Agency to generate two reports. The data is presented first from the Annual Attendance Report (AAR), which provides four pieces of data; total days lost by all students, total students absent for 20 or more days, total students suspended and total students expelled at the school level. The second, the School Absence Reports (SAR), are submitted by a school as a pupil-level report. These reports provide data on those students aged over six and under 16 absent for a cumulative total of 20 or more days by the reason for their absence. The SAR was first published for the 2017–18 school year.

This report is presented in three sections. Section 1 provides an introduction and executive summary of the main findings for primary and post-primary schools. Section 2 shows the result of the AAR, while section 3 shows the results of the SAR.

1.1 Executive Summary

1.1.1 Response Rates

The preparation and publication of this report, produced annually since 2004, has been severely interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, this report presents data for the three school years of 2019–20, 2020–21 and 2021–22. School closures and public health advice heavily impacted the school years of 2019–2020 and 2020–2021, while attendance in the school year 2021–2022 was affected by COVID public health advice. In February 2022, for example, schools were advised of the requirement for students and staff alike to stay at home if they had symptoms of Covid-19. One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 was to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. At that time the public health advice in place required individuals with symptoms of Covid-19 to self-isolate until 48 hours after symptoms resolve. In addition, confirmed cases of Covid-19 infection were required to self-isolate for 7 days.

A summary of school closures and reopening due to the pandemic is presented in Table 1.1. Further, some schools were also impacted by individual and regional closures. For most of the 2021–22 school year, while schools were generally fully open, high rates of COVID transmission forced absences in line with the government's public health advice. Primary schools had an estimated minimum closure of 64 for 2019–20 and 26 days for 2020–21 based on the standardisation of the school year. Post-primary were closed for an estimated minimum of 41 days for 2019–20 and for 28 days in 2020–21.

Table 1.1 Estimated closures for primary and post-primary schools due to the pandemic for two school years

School Level	Status	2019–20	2020–21
Primary	Fully Opened	2nd September 2019 – 11th March 2020	1st September 2020 - 22nd December 2020, March 15th 2021 – June 30th 2021
	Days Open	119	157
	Days Closed	64	26
Post-Primary	Fully Opened	2nd September 2019 – 11th March 2020	1st September 2020 - 22nd December 2020, March 15th 2021 – May 28th 2021
	Days Open	126	139
	Days Closed	41	28

The decisions taken on school closures during the pandemic has also impacted response rates to the data collection. The numbers and percentages of schools responding to the AAR are presented below for 2017–18 through 2021–22 (Table 1.2). Response rates initially fell in 2017–18 from 99.9% to 96.3% for primary and 91.5% for post-primary (Figure 2.1) as the follow-up with late non-responding schools was interrupted by school closures. Response rates further deteriorated for 2018–19, 2019–20 and 2020–21 due to the pandemic before increasing for the 2021–22 school year. A similar impact hampered submission rates for SARs.

Table 1.2 Response rates from primary and post-primary schools for Annual Attendance Reports, 2017–21

School Level	Measure	2017–18		2018–19		2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Primary	Total Schools	3,236		3,230		3,230		3,231		3,230	
	- Total schools responded	3,115	96.3	2,892	89.5	2,079	64.4	2,053	63.5	2,502	77.5
Post-Primary	Total Schools	710		717		723		730		728	
	- Total schools responded	650	91.5	596	83.1	436	60.3	334	45.8	471	64.7

1.1.2 School Days Lost

Total school days were calculated by multiplying the total number of students in schools that responded by the total academic days in the school year. School days lost are represented as a percentage of the total school days.

In the 2019–20 school year, some 2.6 million days were lost out of 45.7 million, resulting in 5.8% of days lost. Days lost rose to 3.4 million in 2020–21 (6.0%) and 8.7 million days in 2021–22 for primary schools (11.1%). The impact of the pandemic can be seen in the results, school closures at the end of 2019–20 led to fewer school days available, but school days lost were similar to previous years based on estimated days open. Pandemic absences began to impact the 2020–21 school year with reduced school days open and an increase in school days lost. The pandemic severely impacted school attendance in 2021–22 with fully opened schools. A similar pattern can be seen in post-primary education, with student days lost rising from 2.3 million days in 2019–20 (8.2%), 2.3 million days in 2020–21 (9.2%), to 5.4 million days in 2021–22, which was 12.6% of all days for 2021–22.

1.1.3 Students 20-Plus Days Absences

In 2019–20, there were 19,067 primary students with 20 or more absent days. These absences increased twofold in 2020–21, rising to 39,879, with a further fourfold increase to 173,072 in 2021–22. Post-primary students had a similar, albeit less severe pattern, rising from 20,977 in 2019–20 and 21,687 in 2020–21 to 69,097 in 2021–22. Post-primary students with 20 or more days of absences represented 26.8% of all responding students in 2021–22.

1.1.4 Students Suspended

For primary school, 741 students were suspended in 2019–20 and 701 in 2020–21. Suspensions rose to 979 in 2021–22 but remained at 0.2% for all sampled students. The rate of suspensions is higher in post-primary schools, with 7,263 (3.3%) in 2019–20, 5,269 (2.9%) in 2020–21, and 8,658 (3.4%) in 2021–22.

1.1.5 Students Expelled

Just ten students were expelled from primary schools in 2019–20, dropping slightly to eight in 2020–21 and seven in 2021–22. In post-primary schools, the numbers were 61, 55, and 85, respectively. These figures were lower compared to previous years due to the interruption of schooling.

1.1.6 DEIS Schools

The percentage of total days lost in DEIS Urban Band 1 (UB1) primary schools is higher than for all schools, standing at 5.4% in 2019–20, rising to 8.8% in 2020–21 and 15.1% in 2021–22. This increase aligns with the national rate of 3.8% in 2019–20, rising to 5.2% in 2020–21 and 11.1% in 2021–22.

DEIS schools have traditionally experienced higher rates of students absent for 20 or more days. In 2019–20, the rate of 20-plus day absences in DEIS UB1 stood at 12.1%, compared to 5.0% for all primary schools. This rate increased to 27.2% in 2020–21, compared to 11.1% for all schools. For the 2021–22 school year, the rate stood at 57.6% compared to the national rate of 40.3%. In post-primary DEIS schools, the 20-plus day absence rate stood at 17.1% in 2019–20, compared with 9.5% for all post-primary schools. This measure rose from 23.1% in 2020–21 to 36.8% in 2021–22.

1.1.7 School Absence Reports

From the SAR data, there were 16,501 students absent for 20-plus days in primary schools in 2019–20, rising to 38,419 in 2020–21. The total was 140,840 students for 2021–22. These 20-plus absences account for 29.5% of all responding students in 2020–21. In post-primary schools, 53,082 students or 16.9% of the total responding pupils, recorded 20-plus day absences in 2020–21. This rate rose from 6.9% in the 2020–21 school year. The figure for the 2019–20 school year was 5.4%.

The SAR report has six categories of absences: illness, urgent, holiday, suspended, other, and unexplained. In 2019–20 and 2020–21, the category “unexplained” accounted for the highest number of absences in primary schools, representing 40.9% and 38.0%. The highest reason was “illness”, accounting for 42.1% of days lost in 2021–22.

In post-primary, “unexplained” accounted for 59.7% of all absences in 2019–20, 61.7% in 2020–21, and 51.8% in 2021–22. The reason of illness was recorded for 23.0% out of all absences in 2019–20, decreasing in 2020–21 to 18.4%. This reason for absences rose again in 2021–22 to 28.2%.

2 School Non-Attendance

2.1 Response Rate

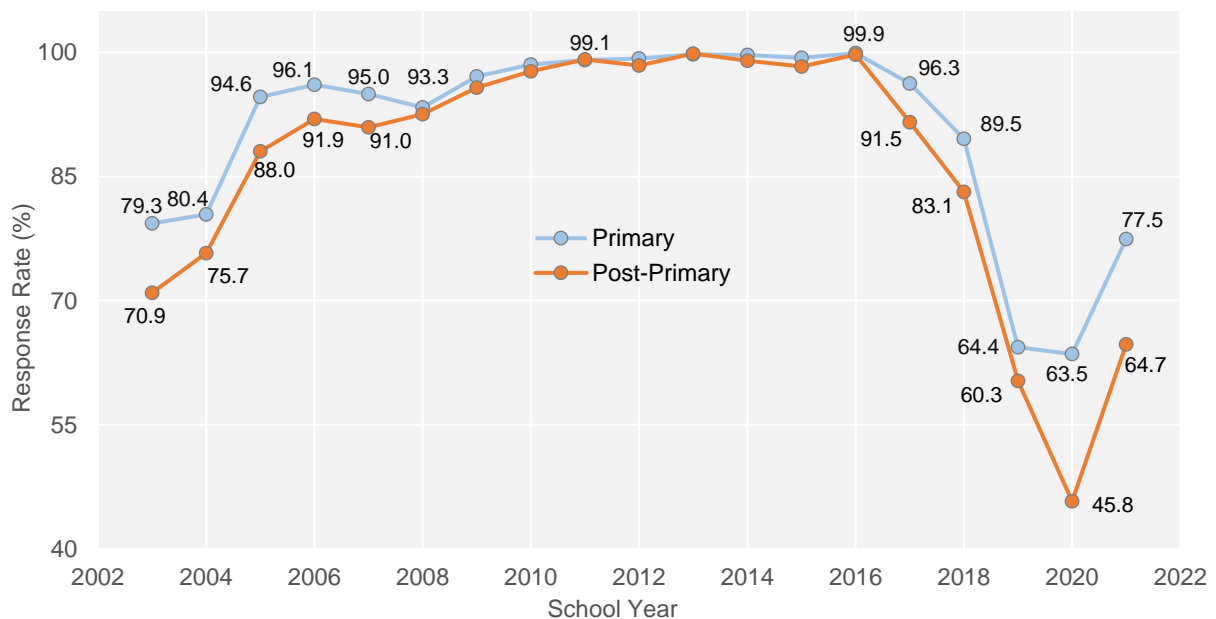
The response rates of non-attendance from state-aided schools and the associated represented students are shown in Table 2.1. The school response rate for the three school years closely matched the number of students represented in schools. The response rates were significantly decreased from previous years due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (Table 1.2).

Table 2.1 Response rates from primary and post-primary schools for Annual Attendance Reports, 2019–21

School Level	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Primary	Total Schools	3,230		3,231		3,230	
	- Total schools responded	2,079	64.4	2,053	63.5	2,502	77.5
	Total Students	567,430		561,101		554,464	
	- Total students in responding schools	383,766	67.6	359,629	64.1	429,084	77.4
Post-Primary	Total Schools	723		730		728	
	- Total schools responded	436	60.3	334	45.8	471	64.7
	Total Students	371,450		379,184		391,698	
	- Total students in responding schools	220,798	59.4	180,836	47.7	257,663	65.8

Since 2009–10, response rates above 95% were recorded (Figure 2.1). The collection process of late school returns was interrupted, affecting late responders for data collection during the three school years of analysis. This disruption continued through the pandemic, with the lowest response rate (45.8%) from post-primary schools for the 2020–21 school year.

Figure 2.1 Response rates from primary and post-primary schools for Annual Attendance Reports, 2003–21



2.2 Summary Results

Schools report four measures as part of the non-attendance report. The four variables are:

1. the total number of non-attendance (days lost) through student absence in the school year,
2. the number of students who were absent for 20 days or more in the school year,
3. the total number of students who were suspended, and
4. the total number of students expelled for whom all appeal processes have been exhausted.

The results from the four measures are displayed in Table 2.2 for primary and post-primary. The summary results are reported on a national level of the total represented student population, with percentages reflecting national measures recorded based on data collected from individual schools.

Table 2.2 Summary of non-attendance measures for primary and post-primary schools, 2019–21

School Level	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Primary	Total students in responding schools	383,766		359,629		429,084	
	Total school days opened	119		157		182	
	- Total school days of students	45,668,154		56,461,753		78,093,288	
	- Total days lost	2,650,822	5.8	3,395,506	6.0	8,689,829	11.1
	Students who lost 20-plus days	19,067	5.0	39,879	11.1	173,072	40.3
	Students suspended	741	0.2	701	0.2	979	0.2
	Students expelled	10	0.003	8	0.002	7	0.002
Post-Primary	Total students in responding schools	220,798		180,836		257,663	
	Total school days opened	126		139		166	
	- Total school days of students	27,820,548		25,136,204		42,772,058	
	- Total days lost	2,274,128	8.2	2,316,234	9.2	5,378,078	12.6
	Students who lost 20-plus days	20,977	9.5	21,687	12.0	69,097	26.8
	Students suspended	7,263	3.3	5,269	2.9	8,658	3.4
	Students expelled	61	0.028	55	0.030	85	0.033

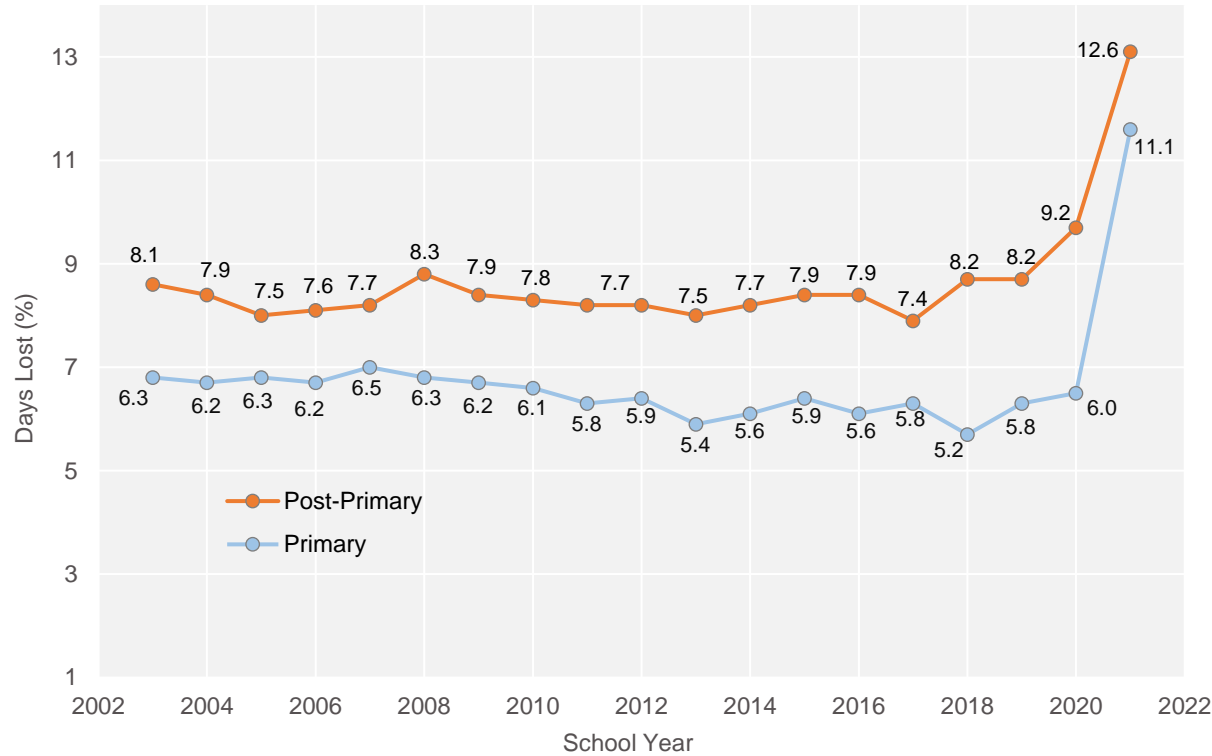
2.2.1 Days Lost

The percentage of days lost is calculated based on the number of days lost divided by the total number of represented student days. Student days are calculated based on students represented from responding schools (Table 2.1) multiplied by the number of days a school is open in the school year. School closures during the pandemic reduced the total number of

school days for 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years. An additional bank holiday was introduced in spring 2022, reducing school days by one from previous non-pandemic years for 2021–22.

The closure of all schools on March 12th 2020, reduced days lost to 5.8% for primary and 8.2% for post-primary for the 2019–20 school year. The average for the five years of 2014–18 was 5.6% for primary and 7.8% for post-primary. School closures in January 2021 and reopening in early spring 2021 at the primary and post-primary levels further affected days lost in 2020–21, with above average rates compared to the 2014–18 period. Schools fully reopened for the 2021–22 school year, but significant amount of school days were lost. This increase in total school days lost was associated with the pandemic public health advice and national COVID cases (Section 3). The impact of the pandemic resulted in the highest ever recorded days lost of 11.1% and 12.6% for primary and post-primary, respectively for 2021–22 (Figure 2.2).

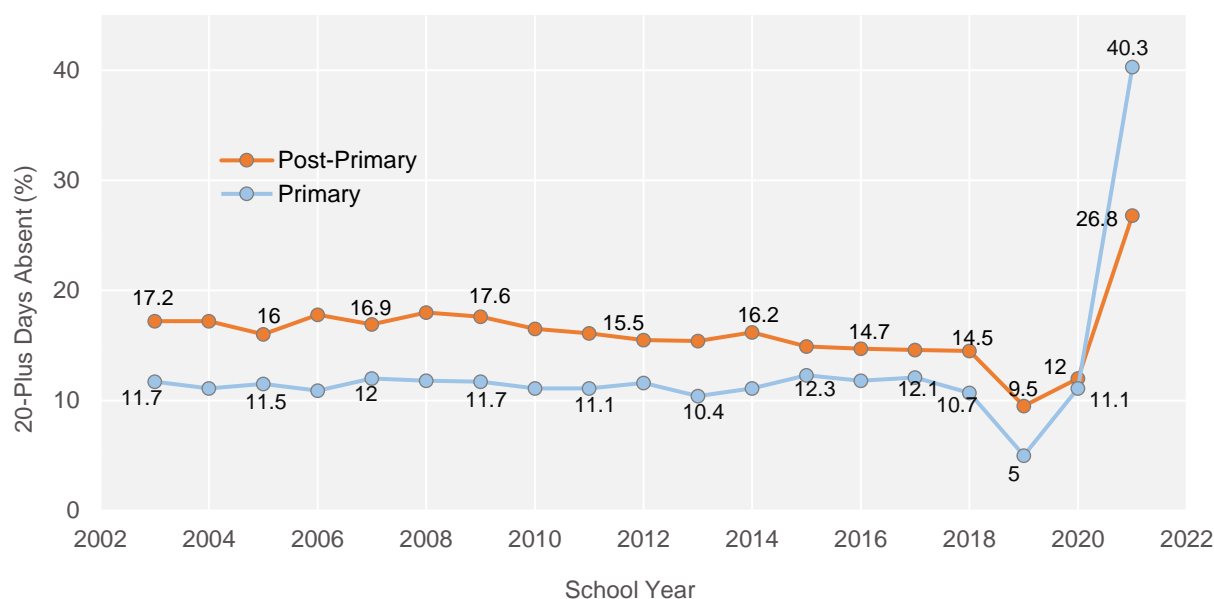
Figure 2.2 Percentage of days lost for primary and post-primary schools, 2003–21



2.2.2 20-Plus Day Absences

Schools submit the number of students absent for 20 days or more (Table 2.2). The numbers are presented as a percentage of the number of represented students. The average for the 2014–18 period was 11.6% and 15.0% for primary and post-primary, respectively. The percentages for 2019–20 were the lowest recorded, with 2021–22 being the highest recorded, corresponding to the peak of Ireland’s COVID-19 cases over winter in 2021–22.

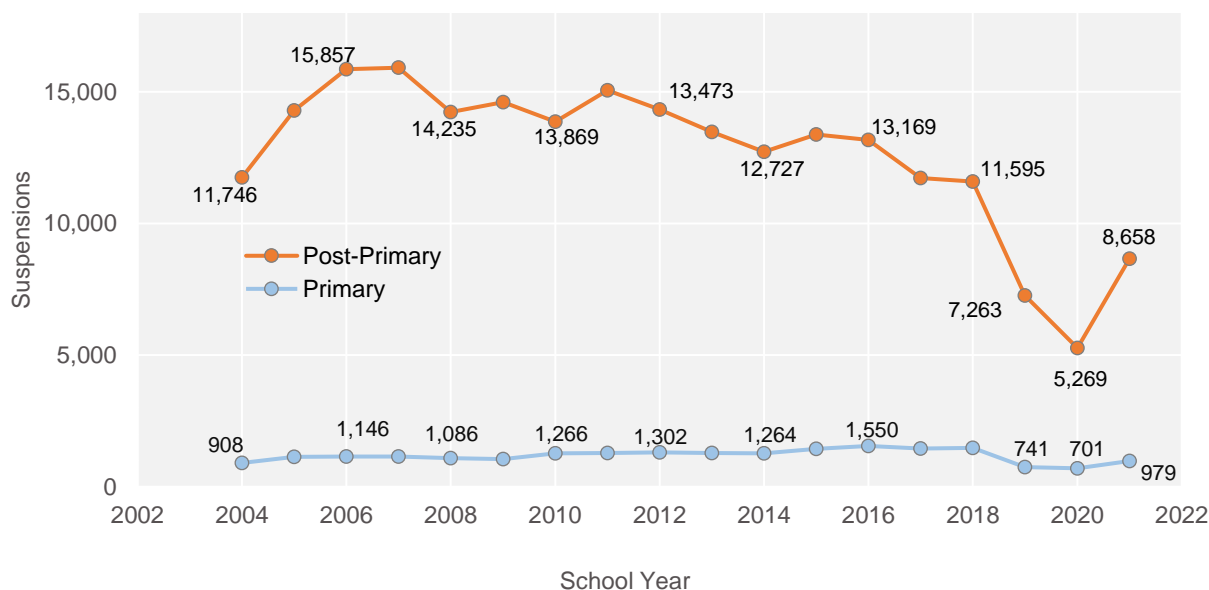
Figure 2.3 Percentage of 20-plus days absent for primary and post-primary schools, 2003–21



2.2.3 Suspensions

The reduction of physical school days in the school years of 2019–20 and 2020–21, and the increase of school days lost in 2021–22, suppressed the occurrence of suspensions. While the percentage of suspensions remained similar to previous years due to the small number of students compared to overall enrolments, the absolute number was reduced (Table 2.2). The average for the five years of 2014 to 2018 was 1,437 for primary and 12,519 for post-primary. The number of suspensions dropped to 741 in 2019–20 and 701 in 2020–21 but rose again to 979 in 2021–22 for primary schools (Figure 2.4). The same pattern is repeated in post-primary, dropping to 7,263 in 2019–20, dropping further 5,269 in 2020–21, and rising to 8,658 in 2021–22.

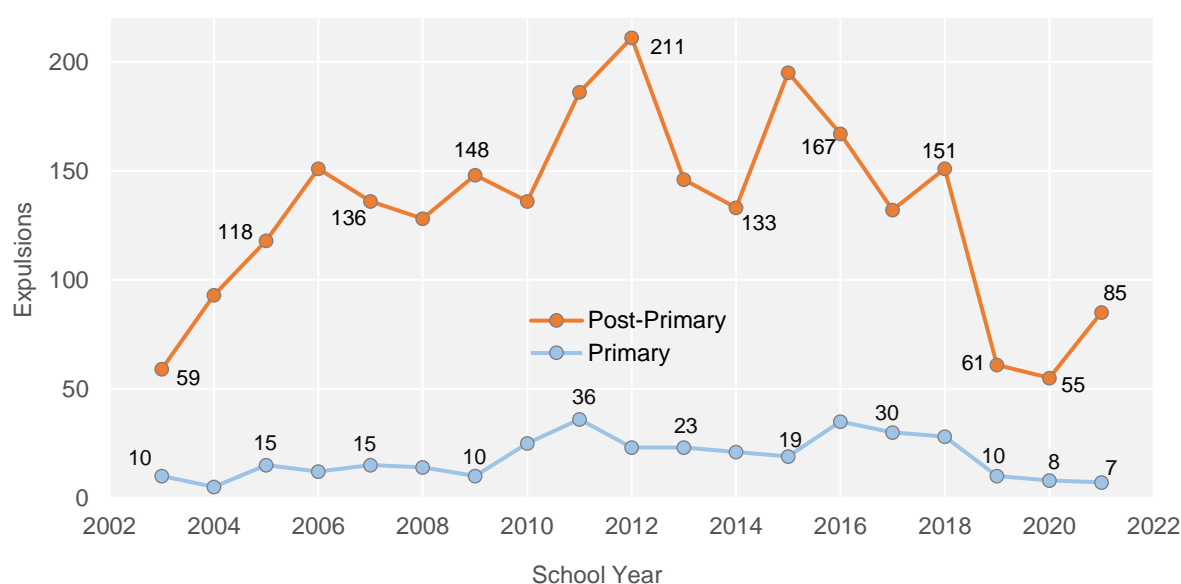
Figure 2.4 Number of student suspensions for primary and post-primary schools, 2004–21



2.2.4 Expulsions

The number of expulsions followed the same trend as suspensions (Table 2.2). Expulsions remained rare among the large school population but were curtailed for the three years of analysis by the pandemic. In the school years of 2019–20, 2020–21 and 2021–22, primary schools who submitted their Annual Attendance Report expelled ten, eight and seven students, respectively. The primary expulsions are below the five-year average of 27, which preceded. For post-primary, the five-year average from 2014 to 2018 was 156 expulsions. Due to reduced number of total school days during the pandemic, expulsions at post-primary (in schools who submitted their Annual Attendance Report) fell to 61 students for 2019–20, 55 for 2020–21, and 85 for 2021–22 (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Number of student expulsions for primary and post-primary schools, 2003–21



2.3 Primary Schools

The following section examines primary schools across three sub-categories: school type, DEIS status, and county. Unless otherwise stated, the percentages of the four main measures (days lost, 20-plus day absences, suspended and expelled) presented relate to the mean of the population of individual schools compared to the total population of represented students in section 2.2.

2.3.1 School Type

The Irish education system has three main school types: mainstream schools, mainstream with special classes, and dedicated special education schools. As percentages, the trend of all four measures rises from mainstream to mainstream with special classes, with special education schools having the highest rates (Table 2.3). The trend among primary school types was present in previous years, but the impact of COVID-19 increased the severity in 2021–22.

Table 2.3 Summary of non-attendance measures for primary schools by school types, 2019–21

School Type	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mainstream	Total Schools	2,587		2,584		2,579	
	- Total schools responded	1,682	65.0	1,657	64.1	2,012	78.0
	Total students in responding schools	277,688		258,437		305,100	
	- Total school days of students	33,044,872		40,574,609		55,528,200	
	- Total days lost	1,809,947	5.5	2,239,033	5.5	5,912,910	10.6
	Students who lost 20-plus days	11,603	4.1	24,614	8.6	116,365	37.0
	Students suspended	332	0.1	353	0.1	450	0.1
	Students expelled	6	0.002	7	0.006	3	0.001
Mainstream with Special Classes	Total Schools	519		523		525	
	- Total schools responded	331	63.8	327	62.5	410	78.1
	Total students in responding schools	101,567		96,731		118,896	
	- Total school days of students	12,086,473		15,186,767		21,639,072	
	- Total days lost	781,978	6.5	1,050,711	6.9	2,612,164	12.1
	Students who lost 20-plus days	6,648	6.8	13,674	14.3	53,770	45.3
	Students suspended	270	0.3	233	0.3	404	0.4
	Students expelled	1	0.001	0	0.0	2	0.001
Special Schools	Total Schools	124		124		126	
	- Total schools responded	66	53.2	69	55.7	80	63.5
	Total students in responding schools	4,511		4,461		5,088	
	- Total school days of students	536,809		700,377		926,016	
	- Total days lost	58,897	11.0	105,762	15.1	164,755	17.8
	Students who lost 20-plus days	816	18.9	1,591	34.7	2,937	56.4
	Students suspended	139	3.7	115	2.8	125	2.8
	Students expelled	3	0.144	1	0.012	2	0.035

2.3.2 DEIS Status

Urban schools have the highest rates for the three measures of days lost, 20-plus day absences, and suspensions, with DEIS Band 1 being the highest (Table 2.4). The trend moves downward through urban DEIS status bands to non-DEIS urban schools, to rural DEIS schools, with the lowest measures for non-DEIS rural schools. Expulsions remain rare.

Table 2.4 Summary of non-attendance measures for primary schools by DEIS status, 2019–21

School Type	DEIS Status	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Urban	Band 1	Total Schools	230		229		229	
		- Total schools responded	142	61.7	133	58.1	159	69.4
		Total days lost	325,578	8.3	489,485	10.2	989,464	15.1
		Students who lost 20-plus days	3,791	12.1	8,060	27.2	20,617	57.6
		Students suspended	221	0.8	212	0.9	332	1.0
		Students expelled	1	0.004	2	0.004	2	0.004
	Band 2	Total Schools	104		104		104	
		- Total schools responded	74	71.2	62	59.6	80	76.9
		Total days lost	170,259	6.9	229,546	8.0	556,708	13.0
		Students who lost 20-plus days	1,604	8.2	3,328	18.9	11,753	50.7
		Students suspended	80	0.5	68	0.6	119	0.8
		Students expelled	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.018
	Non-DEIS	Total Schools	911		915		914	
		- Total schools responded	605	66.4	578	63.2	688	75.3
		Total days lost	1,277,985	5.8	1,589,524	5.9	4,004,620	11.1
		Students who lost 20-plus days	8,963	6.2	18,182	13.0	79,818	42.0
		Students suspended	332	0.5	303	0.4	393	0.5
		Students expelled	7	0.017	3	0.003	3	0.002
Rural	DEIS	Total Schools	358		356		356	
		- Total schools responded	226	63.1	230	64.6	278	78.1
		Total days lost	123,006	5.9	164,629	5.9	419,647	11.0
		Students who lost 20-plus days	791	4.6	1,757	7.9	8,097	37.4
		Students suspended	25	0.1	12	0.1	20	0.1
		Students expelled	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Non-DEIS	Total Schools	1,627		1,627		1,627	
		- Total schools responded	1,032	63.4	1,050	64.5	1,297	79.7
		Total days lost	753,994	5.0	922,322	4.8	2,719,390	9.9
		Students who lost 20-plus days	3,918	3.2	8,552	6.9	52,787	34.7
		Students suspended	83	0.1	106	0.1	115	0.1
		Students expelled	2	0.003	3	0.008	1	0.002

2.3.3 County

Table 2.5 presents the mean percentages at the county level for days lost and 20-plus day absences. More populated counties have higher rates, with Dublin being the top for both measures in 2019–20 and 2020–21. However, this pattern changed in 2021–22, with Kildare having the most days lost and Offaly having the highest 20-plus day absences.

Table 2.5 Summary of total days lost and 20-plus day absences for primary schools by county level, 2019–21

Region	Total days lost			Students who lost 20-plus days		
	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Carlow	6.7	6.1	11.5	6.3	11.2	42.3
Cavan	5.4	5.2	10.1	4.2	8.3	33.1
Clare	5.6	4.9	9.7	5.0	8.4	32.8
Cork	5.4	5.2	10.8	4.4	8.3	36.7
Donegal	5.1	6.1	10.4	3.2	10.4	36.1
Dublin	6.7	7.6	12.3	7.7	16.5	45.5
Galway	5.4	4.9	10.0	4.4	7.5	34.6
Kerry	5.8	5.6	10.8	4.9	9.0	37.0
Kildare	6.1	6.6	12.4	5.3	10.5	43.5
Kilkenny	6.1	5.0	10.2	3.8	8.1	36.8
Laois	5.7	6.9	12.1	3.8	12.3	45.2
Leitrim	5.9	5.9	10.9	5.5	8.0	36.2
Limerick	5.6	6.8	11.4	4.8	13.6	40.1
Longford	6.3	7.2	11.3	6.3	14.9	43.6
Louth	6.0	6.6	11.9	5.2	11.8	44.3
Mayo	5.9	4.8	11.2	4.4	6.3	39.7
Meath	5.5	5.5	10.6	3.8	8.9	37.4
Monaghan	4.3	4.8	9.1	2.4	6.3	28.5
Offaly	6.1	6.0	11.1	5.4	11.1	46.1
Roscommon	6.1	6.2	11.2	5.5	10.0	36.6
Sligo	5.7	5.6	9.9	4.8	8.3	34.2
Tipperary	5.4	5.0	10.1	4.2	7.8	36.0
Waterford	5.8	5.5	10.3	4.6	9.3	37.0
Westmeath	6.2	6.2	11.1	6.0	11.9	41.1
Wexford	5.9	5.9	11.4	5.5	10.8	41.5
Wicklow	5.3	5.3	11.4	3.6	8.4	42.2
State	5.8	5.9	11.0	5.0	10.4	39.0

Suspensions and expulsions are rare events at the county level. The highest suspension rates were in Dublin for 2019–20 and 2021–22, with Limerick for 2020–21. For expulsions, only six counties were affected in 2019–20 and five counties for 2020–21 and 2021–22. Galway had the highest expulsions for 2019–20 and 2020–21, along with Offaly for 2021–22.

2.4 Post-Primary Schools

This section follows the same format as primary schools with three sub-categories: school type, DEIS status, and county. Unless stated, the percentages of the four main non-attendance measures presented relate to the mean population of individual schools.

2.4.1 School Type

At the post-primary level, there are three groupings of schools: community and comprehensive, voluntary secondary, and education and training boards (ETBs). Generally, voluntary schools have the lowest percentages for non-attendance measures but the highest number of students and schools (Table 2.6). Community and comprehensive schools have similar non-attendance figures to ETBs, but fewer students and schools.

Table 2.6 Summary of non-attendance measures for post-primary schools by school type, 2019–21

School Type	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Voluntary Secondary	Total Schools	381		383		385	
	- Total schools responded	235	61.7	170	44.4	249	64.7
	Total students in responding schools	125,327	62.1	95,287	46.5	140,789	67.0
	- Total school days of students	15,791,202		13,244,893		23,370,974	
	- Total days lost	1,166,335	7.4	1,062,407	8.0	2,622,590	11.2
	Students who lost 20-plus days	9,502	8.3	9,034	10.0	33,101	24.0
	Students suspended	3,094	2.8	1,885	2.2	3,418	2.6
	Students expelled	28	0.024	27	0.030	27	0.027
Community & Comprehensive	Total Schools	96		96		96	
	- Total schools responded	56	58.3	55	57.3	66	68.8
	Total students in responding schools	34,077	55.5	34,208	55.2	41,850	66.2
	- Total school days of students	4,293,702		4,754,912		6,947,100	
	- Total days lost	372,729	8.7	494,299	10.4	987,077	14.2
	Students who lost 20-plus days	4,372	12.0	5,168	15.8	12,280	31.1
	Students suspended	1,402	4.3	1,327	3.7	1,973	4.7
	Students expelled	10	0.030	8	0.018	17	0.049
Education and Training Boards	Total Schools	246		251		247	
	- Total schools responded	145	58.9	109	43.4	156	63.2
	Total students in responding schools	61,394	56.7	51,341	45.7	75,024	63.4
	- Total school days of students	7,735,644		7,136,399		12,453,984	
	- Total days lost	735,064	9.5	759,528	10.6	1,768,411	14.2
	Students who lost 20-plus days	7,103	13.3	7,485	17.0	23,716	33.2
	Students suspended	2,767	4.7	2,057	4.3	3,267	4.9
	Students expelled	23	0.035	20	0.042	41	0.055

2.4.2 DEIS Status

DEIS status schools at the post-primary level have the highest mean percentages of all four non-attendance measures (Table 2.7). While non-DEIS status schools have more days lost, 20-plus day absences and suspensions, this is disproportionately higher in DEIS schools.

Table 2.7 Summary of non-attendance measures for post-primary schools by DEIS status, 2019–21

DEIS Status	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
DEIS	Total Schools	197		198		197	
	- Total schools responded	126	64.0	88	44.4	136	69.0
	Total students in responding schools	47,904		36,941		56,747	
	- Total school days of students	6,035,904		5,134,799		9,420,002	
	- Total days lost	629,033	10.4	641,341	12.5	1,462,896	15.5
	Students who lost 20-plus days	7,498	17.1	7,681	23.1	20,663	36.8
	Students suspended	2,860	6.3	2,085	6.3	3,257	6.2
	Students expelled	22	0.048	20	0.060	49	0.087
Non-DEIS	Total Schools	526		532		531	
	- Total schools responded	310	58.9	246	46.2	335	63.1
	Total students in responding schools	172,894		143,895		200,916	
	- Total school days of students	21,784,644		20,001,405		33,352,056	
	- Total days lost	1,645,095	7.6	1,674,893	8.4	3,915,182	11.7
	Students who lost 20-plus days	13,479	7.7	14,006	9.7	48,434	24.5
	Students suspended	4,403	2.5	3,184	2.0	5,401	2.6
	Students expelled	39	0.020	35	0.022	36	0.020

2.4.3 County

The county with the highest mean percentage (11.7%) of days lost in post-primary schools was Laois for 2019–20 (Table 2.8). Leitrim was the highest for 2020–21 (17.8%) and 2021–22 (19.5%). For mean percentages of 20-plus day absences, Longford was highest for 2019–20 (16.5%), Westmeath for 2020–21 (26.3%), and Mayo for 2021–22 (44.6%).

For suspensions, Longford has the highest mean percentage at 8.2% in 2019–20, followed by the second lowest at 1.8% in 2020–21. For 2020–21, the highest mean suspension percentage rate was Carlow at 5.0%. Westmeath has the maximum at 7.8% for 2021–22. For recorded expulsions, Dublin had the highest at 12, 18 and 27 for all three years of analysis. Leitrim and Cavan had no expulsions for the three years of study.

Table 2.8 Summary of total days lost and 20-plus day absences for post-primary schools by county level, 2019–21

Region	Total days lost			Students who lost 20-plus days		
	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Carlow	10.7	11.7	15.2	13.1	15.9	24.0
Cavan	8.0	8.2	11.9	14.4	11.0	24.6
Clare	6.5	8.5	11.5	6.4	11.2	24.0
Cork	8.0	8.5	11.4	8.3	10.8	21.4
Donegal	9.0	12.4	14.1	11.0	17.7	33.6
Dublin	8.8	10.0	13.4	11.4	14.6	28.1
Galway	8.5	10.0	12.9	11.1	14.2	30.2
Kerry	8.5	10.0	13.3	10.9	14.6	28.6
Kildare	7.6	7.0	10.7	9.4	9.0	28.5
Kilkenny	7.9	8.7	10.6	10.3	12.8	26.1
Laois	11.7	10.4	12.1	11.0	23.7	44.6
Leitrim	9.5	17.8	19.5	8.5	15.8	18.9
Limerick	8.1	7.3	14.3	9.7	9.4	33.5
Longford	10.1	16.8	15.8	10.3	26.3	32.9
Louth	5.6	9.0	9.4	5.0	10.6	24.1
Mayo	9.6	9.0	13.5	10.9	12.2	31.0
Meath	5.4	6.4	12.5	6.6	7.9	29.0
Monaghan	7.4	6.4	11.4	9.8	13.4	30.8
Offaly	8.8	7.3	11.0	11.9	4.4	22.9
Roscommon	8.4	9.6	11.2	9.4	15.0	25.8
Sligo	8.4	11.9	17.2	9.9	18.0	30.9
Tipperary	8.4	6.6	10.9	8.1	7.4	24.2
Waterford	8.3	9.4	12.8	12.2	12.0	23.9
Westmeath	9.4	9.5	14.3	10.0	17.6	35.2
Wexford	11.3	10.0	14.6	16.5	14.5	34.5
Wicklow	8.6	9.6	13.8	12.1	14.2	31.5
State	8.5	9.5	12.9	10.4	13.3	28.0

3 Student Absences

This section presents data on students' reasons for 20-plus day absences supplied by schools through their SAR. SARs are restricted to only students over 6 and below 16 years of age, making the results similar but not directly comparable to the absences reported in the AAR. SARs are submitted twice within a school year. The first period is September to December, and the second is January to May/June. A SAR is submitted within either of the two periods when a pupil reaches a cumulative total of 20 days absent or more. If this occurs in the first period and additional days accrue in the second period, a second SAR is submitted to account for the extra days on top of period one. The reason for the duration of absences is recorded using six measures: illness, urgent, holidays, suspensions, other and unexplained.

3.1 Submission Rate

The submissions of SARs for the past five years (Figure 3.1) follow the same pattern as the non-attendance measure of 20-plus day absences (Figure 2.3) with disruption during the pandemic. The submission of SARs steadily rose during the three years of analysis for both primary and post-primary schools (Table 3.1). The submission rate from schools has steadily increased from the initial introduction of SARs submission through the Tusla Portal in the school year 2017–18 (Figure 3.2). The most significant increase was in primary schools in 2021–22, driven by 29.5% of total students having 20-plus day absences compared to 8.6% the previous school year. The submission rate is 7.6 percentage points higher than the AAR response rate for primary schools in the same school year.

Figure 3.1 Number of submissions from primary and post-primary schools for School Absence Reports, 2017–21

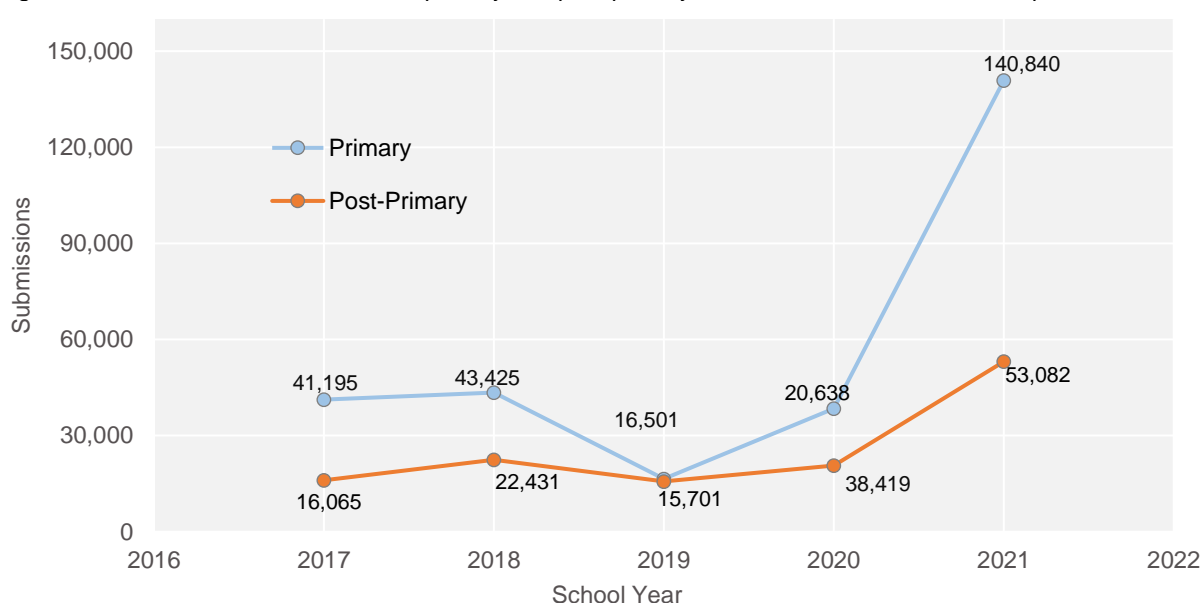
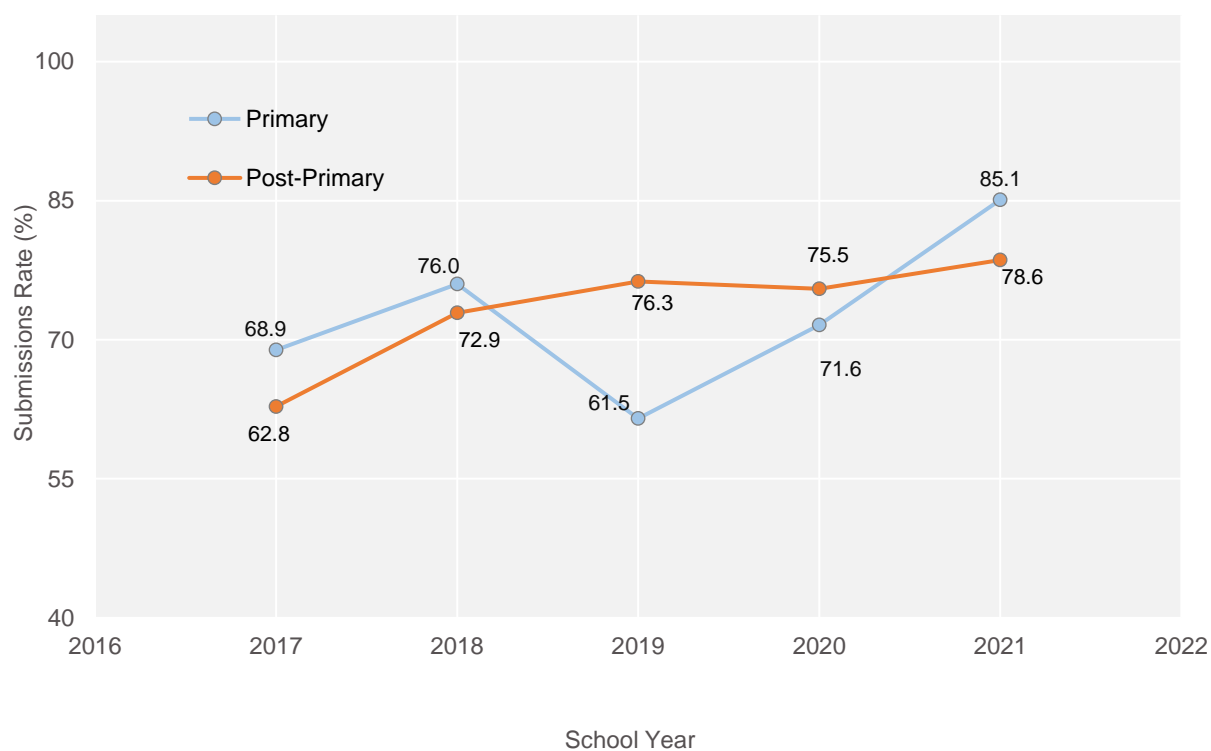


Table 3.1 Submission rates from primary and post-primary schools for School Absence Reports, 2019–21

School Level	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Primary	Total Schools	3,230		3,231		3,230	
	- Total schools responded	1,988	61.5	2,312	71.6	2,749	85.1
	Total Students	567,430		561,101		554,464	
	- Total students in responding schools	424,631	74.8	448,123	79.9	476,729	86.0
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	16,501	3.9	38,419	8.6	140,840	29.5
Post-Primary	Total Schools	723		730		728	
	- Total schools responded	552	76.3	551	75.5	572	78.6
	Total Students	371,450		379,184		391,698	
	- Total students in responding schools	289,558	78.0	297,296	78.4	313,672	80.1
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	15,701	5.4	20,638	6.9	53,082	16.9

Figure 3.2 Submission rates from primary and post-primary schools for School Absence Reports, 2017–21



3.2 Summary Results

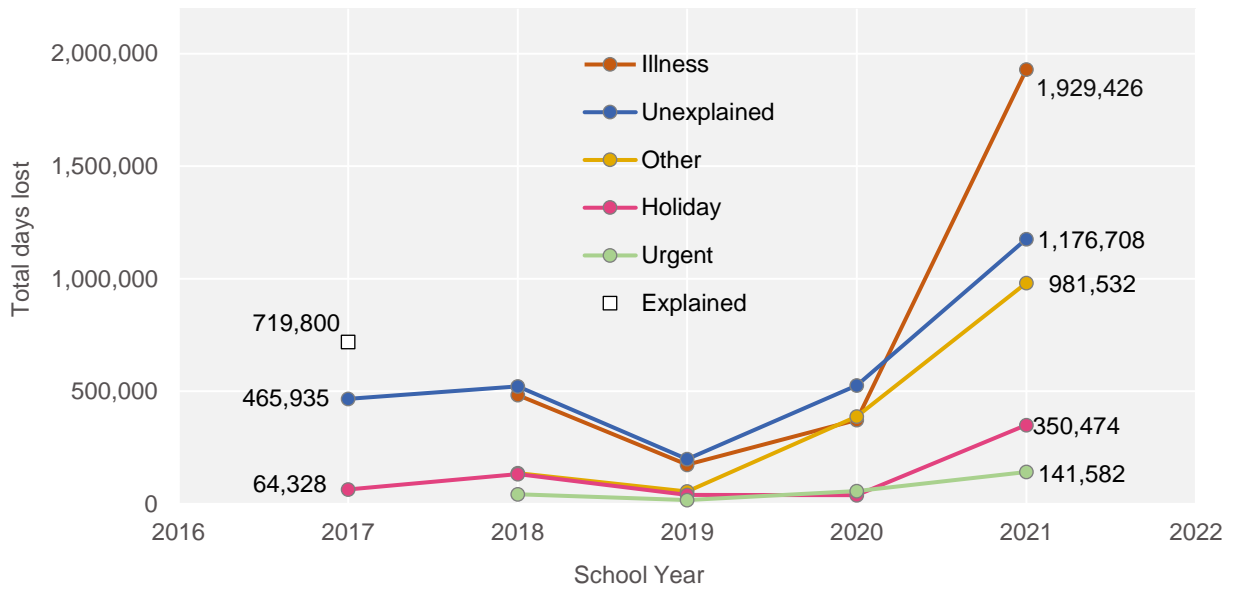
The results from the SAR are presented in Table 3.2. At the primary level, unexplained absences accounted for the highest number of total days lost, in 2019–20 and 2020–21. The reason changed in 2021–22, when illness accounted for the most days lost (42.1%). Unexplained absences accounted for the most days lost for the three years of analysis at post-primary level.

Table 3.2 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary and post-primary schools, 2019–21

School Level	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Primary	Total Schools	3,230		3,231		3,230	
	- Total schools responded	1,988	61.5	2,312	71.6	2,749	85.1
	Total Students	567,430		561,101		554,464	
	- Total students in responding schools	424,631	74.8	448,123	79.9	476,729	86.0
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	16,501	3.9	38,419	8.6	140,840	29.5
	Total days lost	485,766		1,385,331		4,581,690	
	- Illness	174,197	35.9	372,188	26.9	1,929,426	42.1
	- Urgent	16,985	3.5	57,505	4.2	141,582	3.1
	- Holiday	39,508	8.1	38,604	2.8	350,474	7.6
	- Suspended	1,513	0.3	2,165	0.2	1,968	0.0
	- Other	54,851	11.3	388,413	28	981,532	21.4
	- Unexplained	198,712	40.9	526,456	38	1,176,708	25.7
Post-Primary	Total Schools	723		730		728	
	- Total schools responded	552	76.3	551	75.5	572	78.6
	Total Students	371,450		379,184		391,698	
	- Total students in responding schools	289,558	78.0	297,296	78.4	313,672	80.1
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	15,701	5.4	20,638	6.9	53,082	16.9
	Total days lost	575,698		797,367		2,052,811	
	- Illness	132,688	23.0	146,931	18.4	578,363	28.2
	- Urgent	7,870	1.4	15,234	1.9	40,896	2.0
	- Holiday	4,865	0.8	1,259	0.2	12,127	0.6
	- Suspended	8,858	1.5	7,116	0.9	13,180	0.6
	- Other	77,811	13.5	134,459	16.9	345,043	16.8
	- Unexplained	343,606	59.7	492,368	61.7	1,063,202	51.8

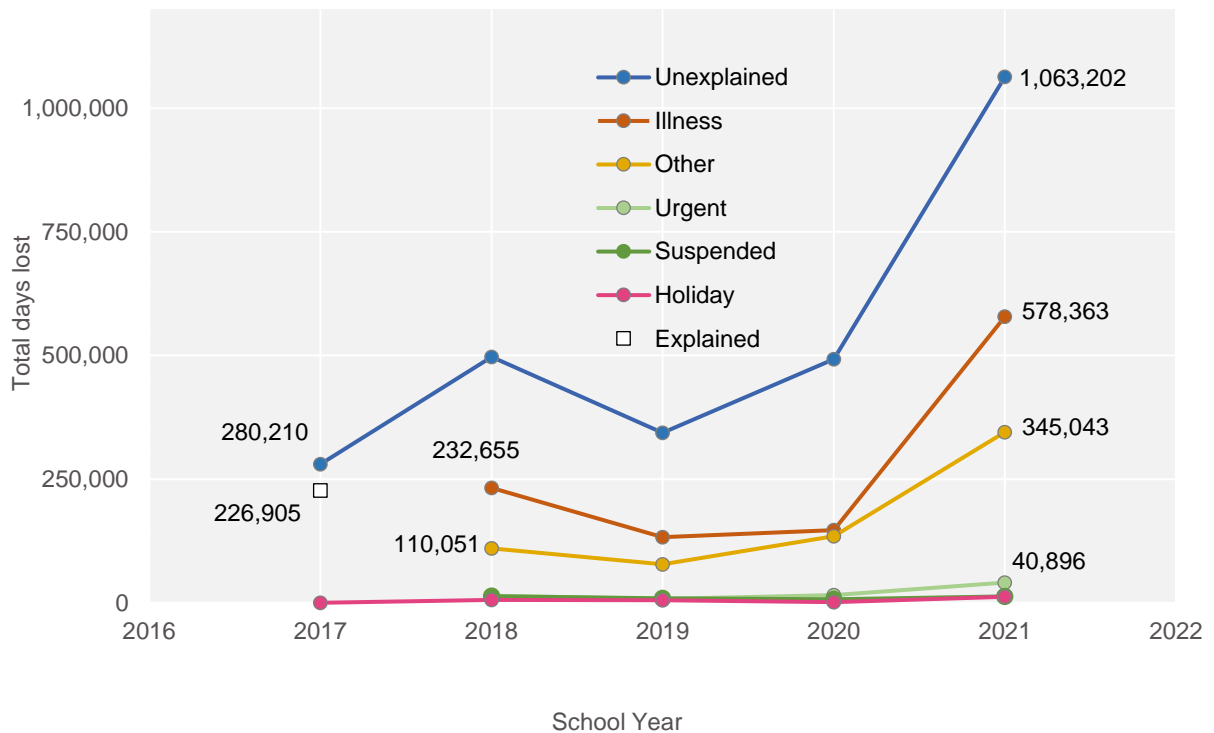
The first SAR report in 2017–18 had three reasons for 20-plus days of absences: explained, unexplained and holidays. Explained reasons were further subdivided in the 2018–19 report into illness, suspensions, other, and urgent. The school year of 2021–22 recorded the highest ever total of days lost for five categories in primary schools (Figure 3.3). Suspensions were excluded from the primary graph due to the relatively small number compared to other possible reasons. The highest number of total days lost due to suspensions was 4,400 days in 2018–19.

Figure 3.3 Number of total days lost for primary schools by reason, 2017–21



For post-primary, the order of reasons for 20-plus day absences of SAR has remained relatively consistent for the past five years (Figure 3.4). The impact of the pandemic amplified absences, similar to the primary level, except for increases in holidays or illness.

Figure 3.4 Number of total days lost for post-primary schools by reason, 2017–21



3.3 Primary Schools

This section follows the same structure as section 2.3, providing reasons for 20 or more day absences by school type, DEIS status and county, but with the addition of the student's class year. Class year relates to individual standards within a school, from junior infants to sixth class.

3.3.1 School Type

For mainstream schools and those with special classes, the main reason for 20-plus days of absences was illness in the 2021–22 school year (Table 3.3). For special schools, the main reason was “other” for the 2020–21 and 2021–22 school years, compared to 2019–20, where illness was the main reason for prolonged absenteeism.

Table 3.3 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by school type, 2019–21

School Type	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mainstream	Total Schools	2,587		2,584		2,579	
	- Total schools responded	1,503	58.1	1,792	69.3	2,193	85.0
	Total students in responding schools	293,859		315,032		340,364	
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	10,025	3.4	23,733	7.5	96,000	28.2
	Total days lost	286,923		838,954		3,045,480	
	- Illness	105,004	36.6	233,603	27.8	1,323,407	43.5
	- Urgent	10,705	3.7	35,291	4.2	92,200	3.0
	- Holiday	24,116	8.4	23,327	2.8	237,949	7.8
	- Suspended	505	0.2	686	0.1	897	0.0
	- Other	30,387	10.6	235,287	28.0	642,382	21.1
	- Unexplained	116,206	40.5	310,760	37.0	748,645	24.6
Mainstream with Special Classes	Total Schools	519		523		525	
	- Total schools responded	400	77.1	428	81.8	455	86.7
	Total students in responding schools	124,918		127,126		129,699	
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	5,579	4.5	13,127	10.3	41,688	32.1
	Total days lost	162,449		466,299		1,388,140	
	- Illness	54,420	33.5	118,604	25.4	558,053	40.2
	- Urgent	5,743	3.5	21,390	4.6	47,940	3.5
	- Holiday	14,346	8.8	14,522	3.1	108,450	7.8
	- Suspended	566	0.3	729	0.2	569	0.0
	- Other	16,502	10.2	120,969	25.9	288,854	20.8
	- Unexplained	70,872	43.6	190,085	40.8	384,274	27.7
Special Schools	Total Schools	124		124		126	
	- Total schools responded	85	68.5	92	74.2	101	80.2
	Total students in responding schools	5,854		5,965		6,666	
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	897	15.3	1,559	26.1	3,152	47.3
	Total days lost	36,394		80,078		148,070	
	- Illness	14,773	40.6	19,981	25.0	47,966	32.4
	- Urgent	537	1.5	824	1.0	1,442	1.0
	- Holiday	1,046	2.9	755	0.9	4,075	2.8
	- Suspended	442	1.2	750	0.9	502	0.3
	- Other	7,962	21.9	32,157	40.2	50,296	34.0
	- Unexplained	11,634	32.0	25,611	32.0	43,789	29.6

3.3.2 DEIS status

For 2021–22, the main reason for absenteeism in UB1 DEIS schools was “unexplained”, accounting for 42.4% of total absences (Table 3.4). This reason contrasts with other types of schools, where “illness” was the main reason for the 2021–22 school year.

Table 3.4 Summary of reasons for student absences of total days lost from primary schools by DEIS status, 2019–21

School Type	DEIS Status	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Urban	Band 1	Illness	23,887	28.2	55,442	19.4	182,690	30.9
		Urgent	2,276	2.7	8,969	3.1	16,585	2.8
		Holiday	5,818	6.9	6,782	2.4	30,980	5.2
		Suspended	412	0.5	373	0.1	489	0.1
		Other	8,943	10.5	66,751	23.4	109,896	18.6
		Unexplained	43,451	51.2	146,966	51.5	250,616	42.4
	Band 2	Illness	10,377	29.1	26,883	22.7	114,906	38.0
		Urgent	1,746	4.9	5,323	4.5	10,979	3.6
		Holiday	3,400	9.5	5,307	4.5	24,951	8.2
		Suspended	213	0.6	136	0.1	213	0.1
		Other	4,063	11.4	30,524	25.8	61,732	20.4
		Unexplained	15,908	44.6	50,127	42.4	89,871	29.7
	Non-DEIS	Illness	88,103	37	180,188	28.6	895,952	42.5
		Urgent	8,675	3.6	27,929	4.4	74,087	3.5
		Holiday	20,981	8.8	18,419	2.9	186,709	8.9
		Suspended	703	0.3	1,086	0.2	1,012	0.0
		Other	26,061	11	178,581	28.4	462,873	22.0
		Unexplained	93,410	39.3	223,224	35.5	486,162	23.1
Rural	DEIS	Illness	6,550	33.1	18,478	29.4	106,194	46.6
		Urgent	1,080	5.5	2,963	4.7	6,290	2.8
		Holiday	1,238	6.3	968	1.5	11,534	5.1
		Suspended	24	0.1	17	0	53	0
		Other	2,260	11.4	18,529	29.4	44,365	19.5
		Unexplained	8,627	43.6	21,967	34.9	59,601	26.1
	Non-DEIS	Illness	45,280	42.1	91,197	31.5	629,684	46.5
		Urgent	3,208	3	12,321	4.3	33,641	2.5
		Holiday	8,071	7.5	7,128	2.5	96,300	7.1
		Suspended	161	0.1	553	0.2	201	0
		Other	13,524	12.6	94,028	32.5	302,666	22.4
		Unexplained	37,316	34.7	84,172	29.1	290,458	21.5

3.3.3 County

At the county level, the number of days lost is proportional to the population. Across all reasons for the three years of analysis, Dublin had the highest amount of days lost. In contrast, County Leitrim has the least days lost for reasons recorded with the lowest population (Appendix: Table 0.4, Table 0.5, and Table 0.6).

3.3.4 Class Year

Within primary schools, the general trend is for absences to increase as the standard progresses for all three years of analysis. A SAR is submitted for pupils over six years of age. Seven-year-olds are generally enrolled in senior infants and first class, with the most in the latter. Subsequently, junior infants have the lowest number of total absences for days lost compared to sixth class, which has the highest. The reason for absences due to holidays went against this trend, with first class being the highest number of absences. (Appendix: Table 0.1, Table 0.2, and Table 0.3).

3.4 Post-Primary Schools

This section provides reasons for 20 or more day absences by school type, DEIS status, county, and class year. The divisions of a class year within post-primary schools are from first year to sixth year. SAR is only required for students under 16, typically enrolled in the Junior Cycle programme or transition year (fourth year).

3.4.1 School Type

The main reason for absences across the three years of analysis, by school type, was “unexplained”. Voluntary schools have the lowest record of “unexplained” reasons for days lost for the three years of analysis, with the lowest at 46.8% for the 2021–22 school year (Table 3.5). The second highest reason for absences is “illness” across school types in 2021–22. Generally, “other” is the third highest reason for 20-plus day absences across the three years.

Table 3.5 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by school type, 2019–21

School Type	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Voluntary Secondary	Total Schools	381		383		385	
	- Total schools responded	296	77.7	297	77.5	301	78.2
	Total students in responding schools	159,642		161,221		169,014	
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	6,785		8,686		23,303	
	Total days lost	246,778		326,649		862,983	
	- Illness	66,589	27.0	71,279	21.8	278,025	32.2
	- Urgent	3,931	1.6	8,232	2.5	21,477	2.5
	- Holiday	1,972	0.8	935	0.3	6,222	0.7
	- Suspended	3,272	1.3	2,117	0.6	3,957	0.5
	- Other	36,094	14.6	59,362	18.2	149,852	17.4
	- Unexplained	134,920	54.7	184,724	56.6	403,450	46.8
Community & Comprehensive	Total Schools	96		96		96	
	- Total schools responded	73	76.0	77	80.2	82	85.4
	Total students in responding schools	45,341		48,684		53,510	
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	2,602		3,918		9,849	
	Total days lost	95,670		152,876		383,467	
	- Illness	18,159	19.0	25,421	16.6	109,212	28.5
	- Urgent	1,197	1.3	2,849	1.9	7,675	2.0
	- Holiday	732	0.8	110	0.1	2,218	0.6
	- Suspended	1,914	2.0	1,892	1.2	3,116	0.8
	- Other	10,589	11.1	23,227	15.2	61,416	16.0
	- Unexplained	63,079	65.9	99,377	65.0	199,830	52.1
Education and Training Boards	Total Schools	246		251		247	
	- Total schools responded	183	74.4	177	70.5	189	76.5
	Total students in responding schools	84,575		87,391		91,148	
	- Students who lost 20-plus days	6,314		8,034		19,930	
	Total days lost	233,250		317,842		806,361	
	- Illness	47,940	20.6	50,231	15.8	191,126	23.7
	- Urgent	2,742	1.2	4,153	1.3	11,744	1.5
	- Holiday	2,161	0.9	214	0.1	3,687	0.5
	- Suspended	3,672	1.6	3,107	1.0	6,107	0.8
	- Other	31,128	13.3	51,870	16.3	133,775	16.6
	- Unexplained	145,607	62.4	208,267	65.5	459,922	57.0

3.4.2 DEIS Status

DEIS schools at the post-primary level have the highest level of “unexplained” compared to non-DEIS schools for each of the three years of analysis (Table 3.6). Non-DEIS schools had slightly lower with “unexplained” absences but remained over 50% for 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years.

Table 3.6 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by DEIS status, 2019–21

DEIS Status	Measure	2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
DEIS	Total Schools	197		198		197	
	- Total schools responded	162		151		154	
	Students who lost 20-plus days	6,086		7,574		16,678	
	Total days lost	229,811		305,249		685,442	
	- Illness	39,404	17.1	42,043	13.8	147,430	21.5
	- Urgent	2,473	1.1	4,809	1.6	9,001	1.3
	- Holiday	2,243	1.0	274	0.1	3,461	0.5
	- Suspended	5,361	2.3	4,190	1.4	6,491	0.9
	- Other	25,650	11.2	45,075	14.8	110,599	16.1
	- Unexplained	154,680	67.3	208,858	68.4	408,460	59.6
Non-DEIS	Total Schools	526		532		531	
	- Total schools responded	390		400		418	
	Students who lost 20-plus days	9,615		13,064		36,404	
	Total days lost	345,887		492,118		1,367,369	
	- Illness	93,284	27.0	104,888	21.3	430,933	31.5
	- Urgent	5,397	1.6	10,425	2.1	31,895	2.3
	- Holiday	2,622	0.8	985	0.2	8,666	0.6
	- Suspended	3,497	1.0	2,926	0.6	6,689	0.5
	- Other	52,161	15.1	89,384	18.2	234,444	17.1
	- Unexplained	188,926	54.6	283,510	57.6	654,742	47.9

3.4.3 County

At the county level, populated counties with large cities have the highest total student absences, with Dublin, Cork, Galway and Wexford being the top four in 2019–20. During the pandemic years of 2020–21 and 2021–22, counties Donegal and Kildare displaced Galway and Wexford. The principal reason for the loss of days for all three years of absent days was “unexplained” (Appendix: Table 0.10, Table 0.11, and Table 0.12).

3.4.4 Class Year

Within post-primary class years, most 15-year-olds are found in third year or transition year (fourth year), with a smaller proportion in the first years of the Leaving Certificate programmes (fifth year). SAR is only required if a pupil is aged under 16. While some 15-year-olds are found

in other class year groupings up to and including sixth year, they are extremely rare. The figures beyond third year should be treated with caution. The number of students with 20 or more days of absences peaked in third year, possibly due to the criteria for under 16 years of age for a SAR submission. The main universal reason for absences is “unexplained” across all class years for the three years of analysis (Appendix: Table 0.7, Table 0.8, and Table 0.9).

4 Methodology

4.1 Data

The legal reason for data collection and reporting are outlined in the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 21(1–6) which states that:

“(1) The principal of a recognised school shall cause to be maintained in respect of each school year a record of the attendance or non-attendance on each school day of each student registered at that school...(2)(b) where a student fails to so attend, the fact of his or her failure and the reasons for such failure...(4) Where—(a) a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days, (b) the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from a recognised school during a school year is not less than 20,...(d) a student is, in the opinion of the principal of the recognised school at which he or she is registered, not attending school regularly,...(6) The board of management of a recognised school shall, not later than 6 weeks after the end of each school year, submit a report to“ the educational welfare officer and the parents’ association of the recognised school.

Unlike previous reports, no proxy data was used for anomalous data as the three years of analysis were not representative of earlier years due to the impact of the pandemic.¹

4.2 Schools

Hospital schools and schools with only children younger than seven are excluded at the primary level. Post-primary schools where students are all over 15 years of age were also excluded. The excluded post-primary schools provide only Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses or Repeat Leaving Certificate programmes.

4.2.1 Closures

For the first two years of the analysis, schools had closure periods due to the pandemic. Primary and post-primary schools were closed from March 12th until the end of the 2019–20 school year. Primary and post-primary schools reopened from the beginning of the 2020–21

¹ The data collection process of late school returns initially affecting late responders for the 2017–18 data collection.

school year until January 2021. Schools closed from the beginning of 2021 and remained closed until the second term, with phased reopening depending on school types.

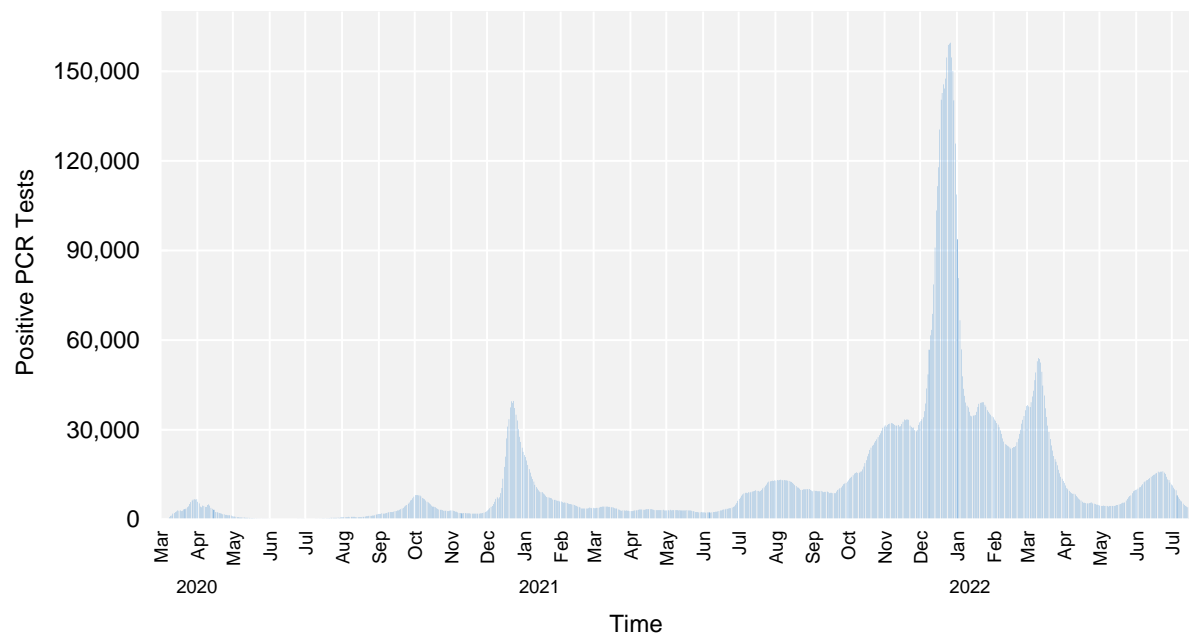
Special education schools reopened on February 11th 2021 but on a 50% basis of attendance. Mainstream schools with special classes reopened on February 22nd 2021. On March 1st 2021, full-time attendance for all students in special schools returned, along with mainstream classes for early start pre-school classes, junior infants, senior infants, first class and second class. On March 15th 2021, the remaining mainstream classes, third to sixth classes, returned to full-time education in schools.

For post-primary in 2020–21, special classes within schools reopened on February 22nd 2021. From March 1st, Leaving Certificate students in sixth year returned to full-time education. Students in fifth year returned to full-time education on March 15th 2021. The remaining years of first to fourth year returned on April 12th. Individual schools may have been closed during these periods of reopening due to high rates of self-isolation of staff and students.

The graph below (Figure 4.1) shows daily confirmed cases of COVID-19 based on polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests. School closures correspond to periods of low positive tests during 2020 and 2021. The high number of positive cases during the 2021–22 school year correspond to high number of days lost and 20-plus day absences when schools were fully open.

In February 2022, for example, schools were advised of the requirement for students and staff alike to stay at home if they had symptoms of Covid-19. One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 was to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. At that time the public health advice in place required individuals with symptoms of Covid-19 to self-isolate until 48 hours after symptoms resolve. In addition, confirmed cases of Covid-19 infection were required to self-isolate for 7 days.

Figure 4.1 Number of daily confirmed COVID-19 cases, 2020–22



Appendix

Only mainstream schools used in the analysis, with special schools excluded, concerning class year.

Table 0.1 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by class year, 2019–21

Class year	Total students				Total days lost											
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Junior Infants	49,769	237	0.5	7,398	2,759	37.3	341	4.6	355	4.8	11	0.1	729	9.9	3,203	43.3
Senior Infants	50,596	1,719	3.4	48,466	17,253	35.6	2,136	4.4	4,849	10	35	0.1	3,763	7.8	20,430	42.2
First Class	50,775	2,014	4.0	56,988	18,692	32.8	2,204	3.9	5,651	9.9	50	0.1	5,982	10.5	24,409	42.8
Second Class	51,375	1,868	3.6	52,470	17,253	32.9	2,207	4.2	5,233	10	99	0.2	5,189	9.9	22,489	42.9
Third Class	52,904	2,034	3.8	58,158	21,051	36.2	2,169	3.7	5,144	8.8	67	0.1	6,324	10.9	23,403	40.2
Fourth Class	52,913	2,195	4.1	63,433	22,026	34.7	2,509	4	5,636	8.9	134	0.2	6,525	10.3	26,603	41.9
Fifth Class	53,179	2,477	4.7	72,051	27,089	37.6	2,368	3.3	5,567	7.7	239	0.3	7,315	10.2	29,473	40.9
Sixth Class	52,313	2,662	5.1	76,439	28,079	36.7	2,141	2.8	5,208	6.8	314	0.4	8,479	11.1	32,218	42.1
Special Class	4,953	461	9.3	13,969	5,222	37.4	373	2.7	819	5.9	122	0.9	2,583	18.5	4,850	34.7
Total	418,777	15,667	3.7	449,372	159,424		16,448		38,462		1,071		46,889		187,078	

Table 0.2 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by class year, 2020–21

Class year	Total students			Total days lost												
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Junior Infants	51,037	586	1.1	20,400	4,885	23.9	894	4.4	575	2.8	0	0	5,408	26.5	8,638	42.3
Senior Infants	53,057	3,643	6.9	132,732	31,213	23.5	7,090	5.3	4,518	3.4	3	0	38,589	29.1	51,319	38.7
First Class	53,866	4,671	8.7	166,747	41,373	24.8	8,251	4.9	5,986	3.6	49	0	46,423	27.8	64,665	38.8
Second Class	54,024	4,793	8.9	172,613	41,607	24.1	7,345	4.3	5,859	3.4	69	0	49,990	29	67,743	39.2
Third Class	54,377	4,660	8.6	161,575	42,813	26.5	7,008	4.3	5,308	3.3	98	0.1	45,142	27.9	61,206	37.9
Fourth Class	56,534	5,364	9.5	187,276	51,609	27.6	8,146	4.3	5,328	2.8	310	0.2	49,586	26.5	72,297	38.6
Fifth Class	56,514	5,726	10.1	197,956	59,814	30.2	7,884	4	4,623	2.3	297	0.2	50,813	25.7	74,525	37.6
Sixth Class	56,996	6,400	11.2	222,065	67,304	30.3	8,092	3.6	4,661	2.1	453	0.2	55,344	24.9	86,211	38.8
Special Class	5,753	1,218	21.2	43,889	11,589	26.4	1,971	4.5	991	2.3	136	0.3	14,961	34.1	14,241	32.4
Total	442,158	37,061	8.4	1,305,253	352,207		56,681		37,849		1,415		356,256		500,845	

Table 0.3 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by class year, 2021–22

Class year	Total students				Total days lost											
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Junior Infants	55,486	1,744	3.1	60,433	24,126	39.9	1,466	2.4	3,793	6.3	7	0	10,465	17.3	20,576	34
Senior Infants	55,292	15,287	27.6	482,432	213,400	44.2	15,495	3.2	40,816	8.5	71	0	95,819	19.9	116,831	24.2
First Class	57,226	18,539	32.4	588,421	249,328	42.4	19,423	3.3	50,791	8.6	118	0	121,012	20.6	147,749	25.1
Second Class	57,873	18,640	32.2	585,434	246,598	42.1	18,631	3.2	50,954	8.7	82	0	123,190	21.0	145,979	24.9
Third Class	57,619	18,537	32.2	587,919	246,957	42	19,432	3.3	49,920	8.5	99	0	125,396	21.3	146,115	24.9
Fourth Class	58,594	19,155	32.7	614,669	260,162	42.3	18,932	3.1	48,343	7.9	179	0	129,525	21.1	157,528	25.6
Fifth Class	60,810	20,776	34.2	674,882	287,586	42.6	20,932	3.1	49,803	7.4	247	0	145,116	21.5	171,198	25.4
Sixth Class	60,791	21,285	35.0	704,279	293,401	41.7	21,949	3.1	42,576	6.0	541	0.1	150,045	21.3	195,767	27.8
Special Class	6,372	4,005	62.9	135,151	59,902	44.3	3,880	2.9	9,403	7.0	122	0.1	30,668	22.7	31,176	23.1
Total	470,063	137,968	29.4	4,433,620	1,881,460		140,140		346,399		1,466		931,236		1,132,919	

Table 0.4 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by county, 2019–20

Region	Total students			Total days lost												
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Carlow	5,765	402	7.0	11,395	4,139	36.3	649	5.7	900	7.9	35	0.3	1,386	12.2	4,286	37.6
Cavan	7,169	380	5.3	11,071	4,209	38.0	377	3.4	1,021	9.2	0	0.0	966	8.7	4,498	40.6
Clare	9,641	355	3.7	9,939	4,312	43.4	330	3.3	670	6.7	31	0.3	1,061	10.7	3,535	35.6
Cork	47,684	1,513	3.2	43,953	16,297	37.1	1,456	3.3	3,584	8.2	113	0.3	5,985	13.6	16,518	37.6
Donegal	10,360	357	3.4	10,482	4,086	39	813	7.8	821	7.8	0	0	1,005	9.6	3,757	35.8
Dublin	112,613	4,435	3.9	130,939	41,648	31.8	4,237	3.2	11,886	9.1	643	0.5	14,880	11.4	57,645	44
Galway	20,316	627	3.1	17,730	6,846	38.6	632	3.6	1,327	7.5	48	0.3	2,015	11.4	6,862	38.7
Kerry	11,180	685	6.1	20,584	7,224	35.1	793	3.9	2,117	10.3	34	0.2	1,842	8.9	8,574	41.7
Kildare	25,930	940	3.6	27,591	10,929	39.6	1,034	3.7	2,024	7.3	57	0.2	2,883	10.4	10,664	38.7
Kilkenny	8,481	319	3.8	9,396	3,677	39.1	260	2.8	899	9.6	13	0.1	1,251	13.3	3,296	35.1
Laois	8,497	312	3.7	9,261	2,767	29.9	172	1.9	737	8	33	0.4	1,105	11.9	4,447	48
Leitrim	2,591	139	5.4	3,927	1,007	25.6	163	4.2	369	9.4	6	0.2	308	7.8	2,074	52.8
Limerick	16,407	671	4.1	21,016	7,277	34.6	789	3.8	1,332	6.3	112	0.5	2,645	12.6	8,861	42.2
Longford	4,048	198	4.9	5,368	1,640	30.6	162	3	462	8.6	3	0.1	361	6.7	2,740	51
Louth	14,393	627	4.4	19,900	7,245	36.4	533	2.7	1,235	6.2	39	0.2	2,346	11.8	8,502	42.7
Mayo	8,623	328	3.8	9,793	4,046	41.3	395	4	765	7.8	39	0.4	1,007	10.3	3,541	36.2
Meath	24,542	684	2.8	19,520	7,809	40	578	3	1,701	8.7	34	0.2	2,192	11.2	7,206	36.9
Monaghan	5,807	183	3.2	4,999	1,619	32.4	200	4	408	8.2	0	0	315	6.3	2,457	49.1
Offaly	7,104	358	5.0	10,077	4,039	40.1	358	3.6	735	7.3	11	0.1	740	7.3	4,194	41.6
Roscommon	4,814	249	5.2	7,799	2,832	36.3	407	5.2	573	7.3	0	0	1,081	13.9	2,906	37.3
Sligo	5,120	173	3.4	5,407	1,524	28.2	163	3	520	9.6	11	0.2	489	9	2,700	49.9
Tipperary	14,958	539	3.6	16,330	6,141	37.6	636	3.9	1,105	6.8	86	0.5	2,123	13	6,239	38.2
Waterford	11,800	479	4.1	13,466	5,437	40.4	376	2.8	1,071	8	64	0.5	1,554	11.5	4,964	36.9
Westmeath	7,976	429	5.4	12,850	5,077	39.5	552	4.3	1,164	9.1	65	0.5	1,363	10.6	4,629	36
Wexford	13,975	624	4.5	18,774	6,538	34.8	497	2.6	1,071	5.7	21	0.1	2,292	12.2	8,355	44.5
Wicklow	14,837	495	3.3	14,199	5,832	41.1	423	3	1,011	7.1	15	0.1	1,656	11.7	5,262	37.1
State	424,631	16,501	3.9	485,766	174,197		16,985		39,508		1,513		54,851		198,712	

Table 0.5 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by county, 2020–21

Region	Total students			Total days lost												
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Carlow	6,550	617	9.4	21,017	6,698	31.9	582	2.8	598	2.8	56	0.3	5,931	28.2	7,152	34
Cavan	8,165	832	10.2	30,054	6,618	22.0	1,356	4.5	870	2.9	1	0.0	8,022	26.7	13,187	43.9
Clare	11,287	780	6.9	27,006	8,639	32	1,766	6.5	499	1.8	178	0.7	6,919	25.6	9,005	33.3
Cork	49,072	3,232	6.6	115,913	34,030	29.4	4,607	4	3,302	2.8	100	0.1	33,857	29.2	40,017	34.5
Donegal	14,545	1,423	9.8	46,843	13,212	28.2	1,833	3.9	715	1.5	14	0	16,517	35.3	14,552	31.1
Dublin	115,165	10,788	9.4	388,976	94,984	24.4	16,530	4.2	12,857	3.3	714	0.2	104,323	26.8	159,568	41
Galway	22,735	1,452	6.4	52,234	13,573	26	1,578	3	1,380	2.6	50	0.1	14,464	27.7	21,189	40.6
Kerry	12,815	1,234	9.6	48,374	11,492	23.8	1,844	3.8	1,040	2.1	19	0	14,422	29.8	19,557	40.4
Kildare	26,360	2,164	8.2	76,563	21,501	28.1	4,239	5.5	1,794	2.3	80	0.1	22,705	29.7	26,244	34.3
Kilkenny	9,042	613	6.8	20,827	7,910	38	840	4	512	2.5	66	0.3	5,353	25.7	6,146	29.5
Laois	9,904	1,043	10.5	38,619	11,280	29.2	2,494	6.5	1,194	3.1	73	0.2	11,489	29.7	12,089	31.3
Leitrim	3,061	287	9.4	11,999	2,132	17.8	335	2.8	213	1.8	18	0.2	3,521	29.3	5,780	48.2
Limerick	18,691	1,964	10.5	67,935	18,396	27.1	2,402	3.5	1,891	2.8	142	0.2	20,873	30.7	24,231	35.7
Longford	4,477	732	16.4	29,983	5,115	17.1	717	2.4	758	2.5	4	0	7,922	26.4	15,467	51.6
Louth	14,591	1,469	10.1	55,697	14,624	26.3	2,016	3.6	1,633	2.9	146	0.3	15,439	27.7	21,839	39.2
Mayo	8,851	642	7.3	24,845	6,682	26.9	820	3.3	776	3.1	168	0.7	8,274	33.3	8,125	32.7
Meath	22,366	1,617	7.2	56,891	17,451	30.7	2,660	4.7	1,807	3.2	33	0.1	16,377	28.8	18,563	32.6
Monaghan	4,595	293	6.4	10,596	2,839	26.8	336	3.2	557	5.3	2	0	3,277	30.9	3,585	33.8
Offaly	8,100	879	10.9	32,112	8,155	25.4	1,139	3.5	725	2.3	46	0.1	8,039	25	14,008	43.6
Roscommon	4,752	490	10.3	19,055	5,461	28.7	529	2.8	588	3.1	0	0	6,033	31.7	6,444	33.8
Sligo	5,584	422	7.6	16,000	4,012	25.1	489	3.1	231	1.4	8	0	4,766	29.8	6,494	40.6
Tipperary	14,947	972	6.5	33,032	10,188	30.8	1,376	4.2	658	2	40	0.1	7,927	24	12,843	38.9
Waterford	12,242	982	8.0	35,026	11,064	31.6	1,335	3.8	898	2.6	29	0.1	8,361	23.9	13,339	38.1
Westmeath	8,649	885	10.2	33,093	8,398	25.4	1,533	4.6	934	2.8	76	0.2	9,152	27.7	13,000	39.3
Wexford	15,478	1,523	9.8	54,441	14,669	26.9	2,486	4.6	1,433	2.6	74	0.1	13,881	25.5	21,898	40.2
Wicklow	16,099	1,084	6.7	38,200	13,065	34.2	1,663	4.4	741	1.9	28	0.1	10,569	27.7	12,134	31.8
State	448,123	38,419	8.6	1,385,331	372,188		57,505		38,604		2,165		388,413		526,456	

Table 0.6 Summary of reasons for student absences from primary schools by county, 2021–22

Region	Total students			Total days lost													
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained		
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Carlow	7,002	2,741	39.1	90,700	43,388	47.8	2,962	3.3	6,143	6.8	22	0	23,906	26.4	14,279	15.7	
Cavan	9,010	2,713	30.1	89,140	37,573	42.2	3,169	3.6	5,449	6.1	13	0.0	19,521	21.9	23,415	26.3	
Clare	12,316	3,607	29.3	113,717	54,395	47.8	3,700	3.3	8,769	7.7	82	0.1	24,668	21.7	22,103	19.4	
Cork	51,901	13,927	26.8	441,155	196,738	44.6	13,882	3.1	34,545	7.8	161	0	95,359	21.6	100,470	22.8	
Donegal	15,532	4,545	29.3	141,174	66,005	46.8	4,223	3	8,038	5.7	22	0	29,218	20.7	33,668	23.8	
Dublin	120,848	35,152	29.1	1,162,781	448,005	38.5	38,954	3.4	110,420	9.5	659	0.1	244,449	21	320,294	27.5	
Galway	25,716	6,674	26.0	215,795	90,806	42.1	6,295	2.9	16,076	7.4	166	0.1	43,412	20.1	59,040	27.4	
Kerry	14,748	4,238	28.7	142,344	56,951	40	3,956	2.8	9,483	6.7	76	0.1	28,963	20.3	42,915	30.1	
Kildare	26,567	7,918	29.8	253,395	107,508	42.4	8,066	3.2	20,493	8.1	49	0	59,894	23.6	57,385	22.6	
Kilkenny	10,179	2,986	29.3	93,629	41,828	44.7	2,800	3	6,737	7.2	7	0	20,471	21.9	21,786	23.3	
Laois	9,654	3,277	33.9	107,425	46,222	43	3,576	3.3	6,975	6.5	48	0	23,981	22.3	26,623	24.8	
Leitrim	3,020	862	28.5	27,114	11,712	43.2	913	3.4	1,264	4.7	5	0	6,050	22.3	7,170	26.4	
Limerick	19,488	5,357	27.5	168,594	74,421	44.1	5,527	3.3	11,900	7.1	118	0.1	36,100	21.4	40,528	24	
Longford	4,580	1,788	39.0	64,441	20,362	31.6	1,392	2.2	3,311	5.1	6	0	11,344	17.6	28,026	43.5	
Louth	15,392	4,931	32.0	165,991	61,958	37.3	3,788	2.3	10,219	6.2	85	0.1	35,774	21.6	54,167	32.6	
Mayo	10,329	3,101	30.0	96,691	48,262	49.9	2,479	2.6	5,639	5.8	39	0	20,306	21	19,966	20.6	
Meath	23,076	7,182	31.1	228,310	100,330	43.9	6,936	3	19,498	8.5	44	0	50,804	22.3	50,698	22.2	
Monaghan	7,086	1,712	24.2	53,964	21,587	40	1,208	2.2	3,099	5.7	4	0	13,615	25.2	14,451	26.8	
Offaly	6,989	2,385	34.1	79,267	35,874	45.3	1,646	2.1	3,903	4.9	46	0.1	16,365	20.6	21,433	27	
Roscommon	6,231	1,790	28.7	59,798	24,869	41.6	1,991	3.3	2,686	4.5	4	0	11,898	19.9	18,350	30.7	
Sligo	5,756	1,680	29.2	51,557	22,298	43.2	1,043	2	3,757	7.3	5	0	11,077	21.5	13,377	25.9	
Tipperary	16,958	4,840	28.5	155,247	69,544	44.8	4,683	3	9,332	6	136	0.1	31,707	20.4	39,845	25.7	
Waterford	12,391	3,936	31.8	127,168	53,395	42	3,604	2.8	9,796	7.7	32	0	24,875	19.6	35,466	27.9	
Westmeath	9,500	3,186	33.5	108,871	44,489	40.9	3,355	3.1	8,036	7.4	56	0.1	23,190	21.3	29,745	27.3	
Wexford	16,010	5,011	31.3	168,420	70,378	41.8	4,812	2.9	10,621	6.3	8	0	36,055	21.4	46,546	27.6	
Wicklow	16,450	5,301	32.2	175,002	80,528	46	6,622	3.8	14,285	8.2	75	0	38,530	22	34,962	20	
State	476,729	140,840	29.5	4,581,690	1,929,426		141,582		350,474		1,968		981,532		1,176,708		

Table 0.7 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by class year, 2019–20

Class year	Total students				Total days lost											
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
First Year	53,381	2,501	4.7	84,844	21,345	25.2	1,406	1.7	970	1.1	1,545	1.8	12,307	14.5	47,271	55.7
Second Year	51,130	3,848	7.5	139,456	33,989	24.4	1,788	1.3	1,305	0.9	2,943	2.1	19,315	13.9	80,116	57.4
Third Year	50,867	4,346	8.5	167,739	38,233	22.8	2,317	1.4	1,115	0.7	3,052	1.8	22,453	13.4	100,569	60
Fourth Year	38,056	2,264	5.9	74,533	18,278	24.5	1,143	1.5	816	1.1	243	0.3	12,374	16.6	41,679	55.9
Fifth Year	49,769	1,587	3.2	60,755	12,618	20.8	734	1.2	445	0.7	571	0.9	6,492	10.7	39,895	65.7
Sixth Year	46,349	940	2.0	37,102	7,136	19.2	405	1.1	180	0.5	189	0.5	4,103	11.1	25,089	67.6
Other		295		11,269	1,089	9.7	77	0.7	34	0.3	315	2.8	767	6.8	8,987	79.7
Total	289,552	15,781	5.5	575,698	132,688		7,870		4,865		8,858		77,811		343,606	

Table 0.8 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by class year, 2020–21

Class year	Total students			Total days lost													
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained		
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
First Year	55,828	3,520	6.3	129,896	25,873	19.9	2,478	1.9	203	0.2	1,344	1	23,225	17.9	76,773	59.1	
Second Year	54,199	5,333	9.8	205,458	38,979	19.0	3,692	1.8	382	0.2	2,309	1.1	35,349	17.2	124,747	60.7	
Third Year	51,053	5,900	11.6	233,581	45,193	19.3	4,314	1.8	348	0.1	2,319	1	37,558	16.1	143,849	61.6	
Fourth Year	37,246	2,690	7.2	96,326	16,654	17.3	2,830	2.9	136	0.1	227	0.2	17,688	18.4	58,791	61	
Fifth Year	51,481	1,797	3.5	70,733	11,520	16.3	1,030	1.5	61	0.1	491	0.7	9,864	13.9	47,767	67.5	
Sixth Year	47,483	986	2.1	38,567	6,475	16.8	563	1.5	47	0.1	191	0.5	6,382	16.5	24,909	64.6	
Other		527		22,806	2,237	9.8	327	1.4	82	0.4	235	1	4,393	19.3	15,532	68.1	
Total	297,290	20,753	7.0	797,367	146,931		15,234		1,259		7,116		134,459		492,368		

Table 0.9 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by class year, 2021–22

Class year	Total students				Total days lost											
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
First Year	58,473	11,118	19.0	394,222	127,280	32.3	8,866	2.2	3,272	0.8	2,909	0.7	69,719	17.7	182,176	46.2
Second Year	57,891	14,519	25.1	549,162	169,606	30.9	12,010	2.2	3,858	0.7	3,900	0.7	91,502	16.7	268,286	48.9
Third Year	55,350	14,826	26.8	597,769	168,587	28.2	11,322	1.9	2,837	0.5	4,306	0.7	95,480	16	315,237	52.7
Fourth Year	38,273	6,014	15.7	220,406	52,325	23.7	4,706	2.1	1,241	0.6	549	0.2	46,000	20.9	115,585	52.4
Fifth Year	53,925	3,804	7.1	160,979	37,663	23.4	2,386	1.5	640	0.4	834	0.5	24,054	14.9	95,402	59.3
Sixth Year	49,756	1,980	4.0	82,150	16,695	20.3	1,107	1.3	204	0.2	178	0.2	13,518	16.5	50,448	61.4
Other		950		48,123	6,207	12.9	499	1	75	0.2	504	1	4,770	9.9	36,068	74.9
Total	313,668	53,211	17.0	2,052,811	578,363		40,896		12,127		13,180		345,043		1,063,202	

Table 0.10 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by county, 2019–20

Region	Total students			Total days lost												
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total <i>n</i>	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Carlow	4,691	231	4.9	8,078	2,147	26.6	19	0.2	89	1.1	114	1.4	883	10.9	4,826	59.7
Cavan	4,083	167	4.1	5,860	1,448	24.7	62	1.1	59	1.0	13	0.2	1,069	18.2	3,209	54.8
Clare	4,530	204	4.5	6,966	2,946	42.3	47	0.7	21	0.3	76	1.1	635	9.1	3,241	46.5
Cork	33,655	1,436	4.3	51,160	14,510	28.4	811	1.6	454	0.9	714	1.4	7,089	13.9	27,582	53.9
Donegal	12,172	693	5.7	24,227	6,935	28.6	431	1.8	436	1.8	319	1.3	3,347	13.8	12,759	52.7
Dublin	73,813	4,902	6.6	187,343	31,470	16.8	2,509	1.3	1,521	0.8	3,495	1.9	22,041	11.8	126,307	67.4
Galway	13,492	849	6.3	30,652	6,424	21	300	1	193	0.6	653	2.1	5,232	17.1	17,850	58.2
Kerry	8,155	624	7.7	22,877	4,608	20.1	274	1.2	187	0.8	147	0.6	7,905	34.6	9,756	42.6
Kildare	16,939	740	4.4	27,530	7,140	26	396	1.4	358	1.3	277	1	3,936	14.2	15,423	56.1
Kilkenny	5,933	191	3.2	6,437	2,362	36.7	73	1.1	92	1.4	42	0.7	1,181	18.3	2,687	41.7
Laois	3,808	291	7.6	11,519	1,467	12.7	78	0.7	46	0.4	207	1.8	492	4.3	9,229	80.1
Leitrim	2,683	123	4.6	3,737	1,061	28.4	73	2	24	0.6	30	0.8	455	12.2	2,094	56
Limerick	12,919	552	4.3	18,248	4,972	27.2	606	3.3	191	1	385	2.1	2,358	12.9	9,736	53.4
Longford	2,912	182	6.3	6,299	1,159	18.4	189	3	81	1.3	159	2.5	332	5.3	4,379	69.5
Louth	10,463	419	4.0	14,993	4,945	33	54	0.4	155	1	142	0.9	1,547	10.3	8,150	54.4
Mayo	8,624	465	5.4	16,857	3,993	23.7	202	1.2	28	0.2	241	1.4	2,466	14.6	9,927	58.9
Meath	9,909	474	4.8	16,474	6,305	38.3	297	1.8	167	1	223	1.4	1,366	8.3	8,116	49.3
Monaghan	3,711	169	4.6	6,218	1,846	29.7	11	0.2	91	1.5	74	1.2	1,725	27.7	2,471	39.7
Offaly	4,634	174	3.8	6,652	959	14.4	51	0.8	16	0.2	59	0.9	276	4.1	5,291	79.5
Roscommon	3,578	241	6.7	8,465	2,711	32	115	1.4	14	0.2	103	1.2	732	8.6	4,790	56.6
Sligo	5,101	236	4.6	8,618	2,572	29.8	325	3.8	75	0.9	106	1.2	1,248	14.5	4,292	49.8
Tipperary	10,141	498	4.9	18,219	5,929	32.5	226	1.2	98	0.5	140	0.8	893	4.9	10,933	60
Waterford	7,130	358	5.0	12,871	3,096	24.1	109	0.8	31	0.2	325	2.5	576	4.5	8,734	67.9
Westmeath	6,305	256	4.1	8,458	1,770	20.9	61	0.7	139	1.6	114	1.3	3,018	35.7	3,356	39.7
Wexford	11,324	741	6.5	29,499	5,034	17.1	410	1.4	252	0.9	291	1	4,171	14.1	19,341	65.6
Wicklow	8,853	484	5.5	17,441	4,879	28	141	0.8	47	0.3	409	2.3	2,838	16.3	9,127	52.3
State	289,558	15,700	5.4	575,698	132,688		7,870		4,865		8,858		77,811		343,606	

Table 0.11 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by county, 2020–21

Region	Total students			Total days lost												
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Carlow	3,883	369	9.5	14,317	4,250	29.7	97	0.7	107	0.7	410	2.9	1,638	11.4	7,815	54.6
Cavan	4,762	337	7.1	12,131	3,537	29.2	361	3.0	156	1.3	149	1.2	1,786	14.7	6,142	50.6
Clare	4,062	303	7.5	10,772	3,939	36.6	130	1.2	53	0.5	95	0.9	974	9	5,581	51.8
Cork	33,780	2,256	6.7	80,703	27,437	34	1,288	1.6	582	0.7	745	0.9	10,633	13.2	40,018	49.6
Donegal	10,924	1,153	10.6	43,124	11,326	26.3	649	1.5	211	0.5	563	1.3	6,302	14.6	24,073	55.8
Dublin	68,131	5,981	8.8	241,966	57,342	23.7	3,705	1.5	1,698	0.7	4,814	2	28,724	11.9	145,683	60.2
Galway	11,623	1,109	9.5	44,002	12,999	29.5	305	0.7	146	0.3	563	1.3	6,201	14.1	23,788	54.1
Kerry	9,546	755	7.9	30,128	8,569	28.4	818	2.7	192	0.6	233	0.8	5,197	17.2	15,119	50.2
Kildare	14,805	1,136	7.7	43,573	11,627	26.7	388	0.9	296	0.7	512	1.2	5,557	12.8	25,193	57.8
Kilkenny	4,291	250	5.8	10,446	2,629	25.2	52	0.5	118	1.1	107	1	1,135	10.9	6,405	61.3
Laois	3,815	467	12.2	18,996	2,907	15.3	93	0.5	34	0.2	425	2.2	1,231	6.5	14,306	75.3
Leitrim	2,568	143	5.6	6,303	1,963	31.1	56	0.9	67	1.1	23	0.4	628	10	3,566	56.6
Limerick	13,144	1,094	8.3	40,738	10,546	25.9	1,488	3.7	249	0.6	650	1.6	4,653	11.4	23,152	56.8
Longford	3,336	312	9.4	11,711	1,642	14	148	1.3	80	0.7	108	0.9	943	8.1	8,790	75.1
Louth	9,216	580	6.3	21,767	6,917	31.8	342	1.6	259	1.2	441	2	1,738	8	12,070	55.5
Mayo	7,236	719	9.9	27,468	7,755	28.2	674	2.5	133	0.5	249	0.9	4,567	16.6	14,090	51.3
Meath	11,314	797	7.0	31,918	12,672	39.7	298	0.9	150	0.5	354	1.1	2,557	8	15,887	49.8
Monaghan	3,658	220	6.0	7,779	2,242	28.8	328	4.2	199	2.6	42	0.5	1,522	19.6	3,446	44.3
Offaly	4,157	295	7.1	11,899	3,580	30.1	386	3.2	1	0	110	0.9	1,047	8.8	6,775	56.9
Roscommon	3,023	255	8.4	10,618	3,309	31.2	238	2.2	62	0.6	109	1	1,203	11.3	5,697	53.7
Sligo	4,946	402	8.1	15,337	4,708	30.7	489	3.2	240	1.6	112	0.7	2,032	13.2	7,756	50.6
Tipperary	9,221	649	7.0	23,605	7,212	30.6	423	1.8	113	0.5	223	0.9	1,224	5.2	14,410	61
Waterford	5,592	425	7.6	16,591	4,890	29.5	142	0.9	109	0.7	347	2.1	905	5.5	10,198	61.5
Westmeath	6,363	516	8.1	22,297	7,013	31.5	92	0.4	171	0.8	245	1.1	6,289	28.2	8,487	38.1
Wexford	11,021	1,049	9.5	45,559	6,430	14.1	576	1.3	393	0.9	1,153	2.5	5,544	12.2	31,463	69.1
Wicklow	8,982	859	9.6	33,301	9,560	28.7	368	1.1	137	0.4	570	1.7	5,821	17.5	16,845	50.6
State	273,399	22,431	8.2	877,049	237,001		13,934		5,956		13,352		110,051		496,755	

Table 0.12 Summary of reasons for student absences from post-primary schools by county, 2021–22

Region	Total students			Total days lost												
	In responding schools	Lost 20-plus days		Total	Illness		Urgent		Holiday		Suspended		Other		Unexplained	
		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Carlow	3,883	369	9.5	14,317	4,250	29.7	97	0.7	107	0.7	410	2.9	1,638	11.4	7,815	54.6
Cavan	4,762	337	7.1	12,131	3,537	29.2	361	3.0	156	1.3	149	1.2	1,786	14.7	6,142	50.6
Clare	4,062	303	7.5	10,772	3,939	36.6	130	1.2	53	0.5	95	0.9	974	9	5,581	51.8
Cork	33,780	2,256	6.7	80,703	27,437	34	1,288	1.6	582	0.7	745	0.9	10,633	13.2	40,018	49.6
Donegal	10,924	1,153	10.6	43,124	11,326	26.3	649	1.5	211	0.5	563	1.3	6,302	14.6	24,073	55.8
Dublin	68,131	5,981	8.8	241,966	57,342	23.7	3,705	1.5	1,698	0.7	4,814	2	28,724	11.9	145,683	60.2
Galway	11,623	1,109	9.5	44,002	12,999	29.5	305	0.7	146	0.3	563	1.3	6,201	14.1	23,788	54.1
Kerry	9,546	755	7.9	30,128	8,569	28.4	818	2.7	192	0.6	233	0.8	5,197	17.2	15,119	50.2
Kildare	14,805	1,136	7.7	43,573	11,627	26.7	388	0.9	296	0.7	512	1.2	5,557	12.8	25,193	57.8
Kilkenny	4,291	250	5.8	10,446	2,629	25.2	52	0.5	118	1.1	107	1	1,135	10.9	6,405	61.3
Laois	3,815	467	12.2	18,996	2,907	15.3	93	0.5	34	0.2	425	2.2	1,231	6.5	14,306	75.3
Leitrim	2,568	143	5.6	6,303	1,963	31.1	56	0.9	67	1.1	23	0.4	628	10	3,566	56.6
Limerick	13,144	1,094	8.3	40,738	10,546	25.9	1,488	3.7	249	0.6	650	1.6	4,653	11.4	23,152	56.8
Longford	3,336	312	9.4	11,711	1,642	14	148	1.3	80	0.7	108	0.9	943	8.1	8,790	75.1
Louth	9,216	580	6.3	21,767	6,917	31.8	342	1.6	259	1.2	441	2	1,738	8	12,070	55.5
Mayo	7,236	719	9.9	27,468	7,755	28.2	674	2.5	133	0.5	249	0.9	4,567	16.6	14,090	51.3
Meath	11,314	797	7.0	31,918	12,672	39.7	298	0.9	150	0.5	354	1.1	2,557	8	15,887	49.8
Monaghan	3,658	220	6.0	7,779	2,242	28.8	328	4.2	199	2.6	42	0.5	1,522	19.6	3,446	44.3
Offaly	4,157	295	7.1	11,899	3,580	30.1	386	3.2	1	0	110	0.9	1,047	8.8	6,775	56.9
Roscommon	3,023	255	8.4	10,618	3,309	31.2	238	2.2	62	0.6	109	1	1,203	11.3	5,697	53.7
Sligo	4,946	402	8.1	15,337	4,708	30.7	489	3.2	240	1.6	112	0.7	2,032	13.2	7,756	50.6
Tipperary	9,221	649	7.0	23,605	7,212	30.6	423	1.8	113	0.5	223	0.9	1,224	5.2	14,410	61
Waterford	5,592	425	7.6	16,591	4,890	29.5	142	0.9	109	0.7	347	2.1	905	5.5	10,198	61.5
Westmeath	6,363	516	8.1	22,297	7,013	31.5	92	0.4	171	0.8	245	1.1	6,289	28.2	8,487	38.1
Wexford	11,021	1,049	9.5	45,559	6,430	14.1	576	1.3	393	0.9	1,153	2.5	5,544	12.2	31,463	69.1
Wicklow	8,982	859	9.6	33,301	9,560	28.7	368	1.1	137	0.4	570	1.7	5,821	17.5	16,845	50.6
State	273,399	22,431	8.2	877,049	237,001		13,934		5,956		13,352		110,051		496,755	



TúsLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency