

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

School Estates Survey Statistics – new publication date

Purpose

1. To inform you of a new release schedule for statistics on school estates. These statistics were previously published in December but will now be published in September, on the same day as school Healthy Living Survey statistics.

Priority

2. Routine.

Background

3. Statistics on school estates, including information the condition and suitability of schools and the number of new builds, are published annually.
4. Historically they have been published in December alongside the statistics from the September school staff and pupil census (see Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Summarystatsforschools>). However, as the school estates source data is collected in May there is scope for the publication of the school estates statistics to be brought forward to earlier in the year. The benefits of earlier publication are outlined below.
5. Earlier publication will enable the School Infrastructure policy team to incorporate the most up to date evidence in their decision making, particularly when providing advice to Ministers of the new £1bn schools investment programme which is primarily to replace the worst condition schools throughout the country.
6. Publishing the statistics in a more timely fashion will ensure continued compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. The Code provides producers of official statistics with practices that they should adhere to when producing and releasing official statistics. One such practice, under the Code's Trustworthiness pillar, is that "Statistics and data should be released on a timely basis and at intervals that meet the needs of users as far as practicable. The statistics should be released as soon as they are considered ready".
7. Under the present timelines the school estates statistics may be subject to release prior to the planned date in response to a request under FOI legislation. Such unplanned releases are difficult to manage and undermine the value of the statistics upon their formal release.
8. Feedback from local authorities suggests that a reduction in length of the period between data collection and publication of the statistics would be welcomed as this would allow them maintain a coherent flow through data collection, quality assurance and release.

9. Production of the school staff and pupil census statistics to the December timescale is particularly resource intensive; separating the publication of school estates statistics from school staff and pupil census statistics means that analytical resource can be applied more consistently over the year.

Decision

10. Following consultation with communications and policy colleagues it has been agreed that, from this year onwards, the school estates statistics will be released on the same day as, but in a separate report from, the school [Healthy Living Survey statistics](#) which have already been announced for release in September.
11. The exact date of publication will be agreed in due course in consultation with communications and policy colleagues. Pre-release access to the statistics will be available in the usual way up to 5 working days before release.
12. Publication of the statistics from the school staff and pupil census will continue as normal in December this year.

Recommendation

13. The Minister is asked to note the intention to publish school estate statistics on the same day as the Healthy Living Survey statistics in September from this year onwards.

[redacted]

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Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Paul Johnston Colin McAllister [redacted] [redacted] Graeme Logan Clare Hicks Mick Wilson [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]					Director General Education, Communities and Justice Special Adviser Communications Smarter Communications Smarter Director of Learning Deputy Director Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform Deputy Director Education Analytical Services School Infrastructure School funding, Infrastructure and Organisation Support and Wellbeing Support and Wellbeing Learning Analysis Learning Analysis Learning Analysis