

ISC ANNUAL CENSUS 2026

The ISC annual Census was carried out in January 2026. 1,455 schools in UK membership of the constituent associations completed the survey. The Census covers 526,611 pupils and provides a detailed snapshot of the schools and of the wider social and economic trends in the UK.



Schools

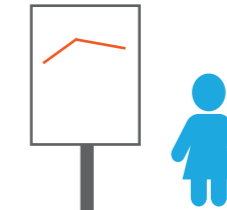
1,455

The total number of schools that are ISC members. Our membership has increased by 32 schools compared to last year.

Pupils

526,611

The number of pupils across all schools in ISC. This is a decrease of 3.5% from the 2025 Census.



New pupils

96,828

This represents a decrease of 5.6% from the 2025 Census – the biggest fall since this data began to be collected in 2011.

Teachers

58,949

Full time equivalent teachers. This is 1,276 fewer than in 2025.

Median school size

246

Half of schools have fewer than 250 pupils.



Means-tested assistance

£538.5m

The amount provided in means-tested fee assistance for pupils at ISC schools. Over half of all pupils on means-tested bursaries have more than half of their fees remitted. Overall, the amount of fee assistance available for independent school pupils was £2.1 billion.



Higher education

90%

The proportion of pupils who leave ISC schools to go on to higher education. Of these, 4% go to Oxbridge and 53% to one of the top 25 universities in the Sunday Times Good University Guide.

Overseas pupils

22,941

There are 22,941 pupils in ISC schools whose parents live overseas. This represents 4.4% of all pupils.



Charitable work

£9.1m

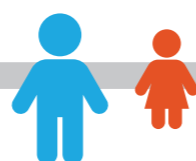
At least £9.1 million was raised for charities at ISC schools and 963 schools organised volunteering opportunities for staff and/or pupils.



Partnerships

9,985

Schools reported 9,985 partnerships with state schools in the 2025 calendar year across sports, arts, academic and other enrichment activities.



SEND

123,823

The number of pupils at ISC schools who have been identified as having SEND. Over 91% receive support without being in receipt of an education, health and care plan.



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