

Education

The national Census happens every 10 years and gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales. The last Census Day was on 21 March 2021. On 10th January 2023, ONS released a topic summary providing detail on Education.

This briefing focuses on analysis of **Education in Birmingham**. Other themes are analysed in subsequent briefing notes, and an interactive census dashboard is available on the **Birmingham City Observatory**.



KEY HEADLINES

- Of the population aged 5 and upwards, 27.7% (295,947) were school children and full-time students and 72.3% (773,949) not a student.
- 29.9% (265,806) of the population aged 16 years and over indicated that their highest level of qualification was at Level 4 or above, an increase of 6.9 percentage points since 2011 (23.0%, 190,335). However, it is 3.9 percentage points below the England and Wales average (33.8%).
- 23.9% (212,198) of the population aged 16 years and over indicated to have no qualification, a 4.4 percentage point decrease when compared to 2011 (28.2%, 233,835) but is above the England and Wales average (18.2%).

KEY FINDINGS

School child or full-time student

- At the time of the Census 2021, there were 295,947 school children and full-time students in Birmingham out of a total population of 1,069,896 aged five years and over. This equates to 27.7% of the Birmingham population aged 5 and upwards who categorised themselves as a 'student', 7.3 percentage points above the England and Wales average (20.4%).

Qualifications

- For the Birmingham population aged 16 and over, breakdown by qualification:
 - 10.1% (90,079) of the population indicated their highest level of qualification to be Level 1 and entry level
 - 12.5% (111,212) Level 2
 - 17.1% (152,046) Level 3
 - 29.9% (265,806) Level 4 or above
 - 23.9% (212,198) No qualifications
 - 2.9% (25,857) Other qualifications.
- In Birmingham, 29.9% (265,806) of the population aged 16 years and over indicated that their highest level of qualification was at Level 4 or above (for example, Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree and post-graduate qualifications), 6.9 percentage points above 2011 (23.0%, 190,335). This is the largest percentage point change in level of qualification when compared to 2011.
- Whilst Birmingham has seen an increase in Level 4 and above qualifications (to 29.9%), it is 3.9 percentage points below the England and Wales average of 33.8%.
- The second most common category was no qualification at 23.9% (212,198). This has decreased by 4.3 percentage points when compared to 2011 (28.2%, 233,835).
- The third most common category that people indicated their highest level of qualification was Level 3 (two or more A levels or equivalent qualifications), at 17.1% (152,046), compared to 13.0% (107,913) in 2011.
- Apprenticeship was the highest level of qualification for 3.6% (32,425) of people. This is a 1.5% increase from 2011 (2.1%, 17,654) but below the England and Wales average of 5.3%.

Education

COMPARISON WITH CORE CITIES:

School child or full-time student

- Nottingham (33.5%, 102,350), Manchester (30.2%, 156,241) and Newcastle upon Tyne (29.1%, 82,809) had the highest percentage of population aged 5 and over who classified themselves as a student.

Qualifications:

- Level 4:** Of all the Core Cities, Bristol (42.1%, 164,106), Cardiff (40.0%, 118,529) and Manchester (37.6%, 164,763) have the highest percentage of population who indicated Level 4 or above as their highest level of qualification. Birmingham was ranked in 8th place at 29.9% (265,806).
- Level 3:** Birmingham (17.1%, 152,046) has the lowest percentage of population who indicated Level 3 as their highest level of qualification. Nottingham 25.1% (66,236) has the largest percentage of population with a Level 3 qualification.
- Level 2:** Of the Core Cities, Birmingham (12.5%, 111,212) has the highest percentage of population who indicated Level 2 as their highest level of qualification.
- Level 1:** Of all the Core Cities, only Birmingham (at 10.1%, 90,079) has the highest percentage of population who indicated Level 1 as their highest level of qualification and this figure is above the England and Wales average (9.6%).
- No qualification:** Birmingham (23.9%, 212,198) is ranked in 8th place of all the Core Cities with the highest percentage of population with no qualifications. Bristol (14.5%, 56,657), Cardiff (16.3%, 48,399) and Leeds (18.2%, 119,597) has the lowest percentage of population with no qualifications, all below the England and Wales average (18.2%).
- Apprenticeship:** Sheffield (5.4%, 24,865) has the highest percentage of apprenticeship population across the Core Cities and is the only LA above the England and Wales average (5.3%).

COMPARISON WITH WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITIES:

School child or full-time student

- Of the WMCAs, Birmingham (27.7%, 295,947) had the highest percentage of population aged 5 and over who classified themselves as a student. Followed by Coventry (27.4%, 89,083) and Sandwell (23.7%, 75,641).

Qualifications:

- Level 4:** Solihull (35.4%, 61,847), Coventry (30.6%, 84,691) and Birmingham (29.9%, 265,806) were the top three WMCAs with the highest percentage of population who indicated Level 4 or above as their highest level of qualification.
- Level 3:** Of the WMCAs, Coventry (19.0%, 52,525), Dudley (17.2%, 45,064) and Birmingham (17.1%, 152,046) have the largest percentage of population with a Level 3 qualification as their highest level of qualification.
- Level 2:** Of the WMCAs, Birmingham (12.5%, 111,212) has the lowest percentage of population who indicated Level 2 as their highest level of qualification.
- Level 1:** Apart from Solihull, all the WMCAs have a higher percentage of population who indicated Level 1 as their highest level of qualification than the England and Wales average (9.6%), with Sandwell (11.5%, 30,586) having the highest percentage.
- No qualification:** Sandwell (28.9%, 76,839) has the highest percentage of population with no qualifications. All the WMCAs, except Solihull (17.6%, 30,642), have percentages above England and Wales average (18.2%) for population with no qualification.
- Apprenticeship:** Dudley (6.0%, 15,703) has the highest percentage of apprenticeship population across the WMCAs. Birmingham (3.6%, 32,425) is ranked in 8th place with the lowest percentage of apprenticeship population across the WMCAs.