

Appendix 18 - Extracts From Department for Education Report – Class Size and education in England Evidence Report (22 December 2011)

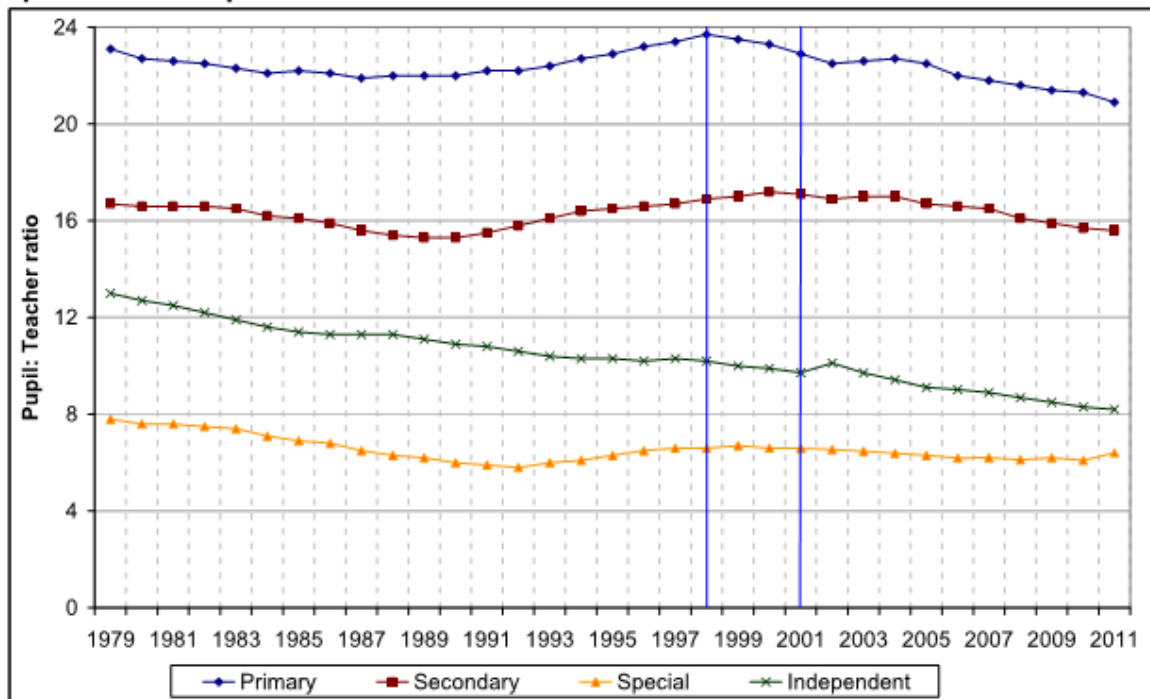
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3.3.2 Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) changes over time by school type

Figure 3-3 shows that primary school PTR has been falling during the period 1998 to 2009,

with the largest falls between 1998 and 2002, which again coincides with the introduction of the legal maximum Key Stage 1 class size of 30. Secondary PTR and special schools PTR have also fallen slightly during this period. Proportionally, the largest fall in PTR during this period was in independent schools. These changes need to be seen in light of the introduction of PPA time (as discussed in 1.3) that resulted in a lower proportion of primary school teachers' time teaching classes.

Figure 3-3 - Pupil Teacher Ratio changes over time for maintained Primary, Secondary, Special and Independent schools between 1979 and 2011



Source: School Workforce Census and 618g survey
 Data on Independent school and special school average class sizes are unfortunately not reliably reported.
 Note: 2011 figures are from November 2010.

Perhaps the strongest indication today of parents' concerns about class sizes is shown in lower independent school class sizes. PTR, and likely therefore class size, is significantly lower in independent schools. As Figure 3-3 indicates, in November 2010, PTR in independent schools was 8.2, compared to 15.6 in maintained secondary, and 20.9 in maintained primary schools. This is an indication that there is demand for small class sizes in the market for primary education. If this was not so, independent schools would allow PTR class sizes to increase. PTR in independent schools has fallen every year since 2002, suggesting that class size continues to be an important issue for parents, the consumers in the market for independent school education.

Evidence from a 2008 survey by Ipsos Mori for the Independent Schools Council²⁵ also points to class size as a reason why parents choose to send their children to independent schools, rather than to schools in the maintained sector. In the survey, 57% of parents said they would send their child to an independent school if they could afford to. The third most common reason parents expressed for choosing to send their child to an independent school, with 25% of respondents, was smaller class sizes²⁶. Another survey commissioned by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), found that out of all the reasons for dissatisfaction, class sizes being too large was only 7th, with 6% of respondents (GFK Social Research, 2008).