

What Does a Progress 8 Score Mean for Schools?

The [Progress 8 score](#) is a new rating for English secondary schools which shows how well students have progressed academically during their time there. It compares results from different schools so that their performance can be easily seen by parents.

The Progress 8 score was introduced in 2016. It is an average score for all pupils at a school, showing how well they have progressed academically from the end of primary school to when they finish in secondary education.

Pupils' results at a school are compared to those from children at other schools who had attained similar academic results at the end of their primary education. Results in eight GCSE (or equivalent subjects), from A* to G, are examined for each student, which is known as the Attainment 8 rating. A score for those results across the year group is then worked out.

In the Attainment 8 calculation, results in maths and English are double weighted. Three subjects included in the English Baccalaureate are also considered as part of the Attainment 8 score, along with three which can be non-GCSE qualifications on the Department for Education approved list.

Why was the Progress 8 Score Introduced?

Secondary schools were previously ranked according to the percentage of pupils attaining five A* to C grades in GCSEs, including maths and English. Teachers were unhappy with this method of rating schools because they felt it did not indicate the academic level of the students being taught there. It was felt the ratings were unfair on those schools who were teaching pupils from challenging backgrounds who had performed poorly at primary school.

Many in the teaching profession also wanted the score to reflect achievement down to G grades instead of only up to Cs. Because Progress 8 scores take into account performance across eight subjects, achievement in art subjects or vocational courses can now be reflected in a school's overall rating.

What Should Parents Look For in a School's Progress 8 Score?

There has been some criticism of the new Progress 8 measure because it is tougher for parents to understand than the previous system based on five GCSE results. This has been a key concern, because the new measures are more complicated to read than the old tables based on five GCSE scores.

A school will generally receive a Progress 8 score of somewhere from minus one to one. This score will then be graded as well above average, above average, average, below average or well below average. Parents should look for these ratings if they are deciding whether to send their child to a specific school or if they already have a child there.

It's important to recognise that a negative Progress 8 score doesn't mean those pupils made no academic progress or that the school is a failure. It indicates that students at the school made less progress than others across England who had similar results at the end of their Key Stage 2 education.

If a school records a zero Progress 8 rating it shows that pupils on average do as well at Key Stage 4 as other pupils who got similar results from their primary school years. A score above zero means students made more progress and a score below zero indicating less progress, in both cases when compared with children with similar Key Stage 2 results.

How do I Find Out a School's Progress 8 Score?

So we've established that Progress 8 scores are one of the most important considerations when choosing a secondary school for your child because it indicates that school's record in shaping a child's development after they move up from primary education. So where do you find a school's Progress 8 score and how can you compare its performance with other schools in the area?

It's quite simple. Go to <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/compare-schools> and click where it says 'search for schools and colleges to compare'. That will take you to a page where you can find an individual school's Progress 8 rating by ticking the 'school or college name' option.

To compare schools in your town or city, click just the 'location' option. Click the 'secondary' option in the education phase on the left and this will concentrate the search on secondary schools. Then click all the schools where it says 'add to comparison list' before clicking 'view comparison list' to see all the local schools compared.

Another way of checking a school's Progress 8 score is to go online to their website where many display the rating.