

Hours of arts teaching and number of arts teachers in England's secondary schools continue stable after years of decline

Briefing, June 2021

Department for Education figures¹ published 17 June 2021 show that between November 2019 and November 2020 the **number of hours the arts were taught in secondary schools overall increased by +2% and the number of arts teachers did not change**. However, Design & Technology continues to see falls; in the last year the number of teachers and hours taught fell by -7%. **The number of children in England's secondary schools went up by +2% over the same period².**

It is also worth noting History and Geography have continued to see increases in the number of hours taught in the last year, on top of existing increases in teacher numbers and hours over the last decade of 31% for History and 38% for Geography.

The 2020 figures were collected during the pandemic. These figures suggest that the anecdotal reports of the arts being removed wholesale from school curriculums due to the pandemic were isolated incidents, and not indicative of most schools.

No recovery in number of arts teachers or hours taught

Although the number of arts teachers and hours the arts are taught have remained stable for the past two years, we continue to be concerned that there has been no overall recovery in the number of arts teachers and hours taught over the last decade. The 2020 hours taught figures are between -10% and -51% lower than in 2010. There are -48% less Design & Technology teachers now as in 2010, -18% less drama teachers and -9% less music teachers.

These changes need to be seen in the context of rising student numbers; there are +7% more secondary school pupils now compared to the 2010/11 school year, and in the context of increases in teachers and hours taught for EBacc subjects. For example there are now 21% more Geography teachers than a decade ago and an increase of 38% in the hours taught.

Headcount of teachers by subject

Recorded in the November of each year	2010	2018	2019	2020	Percentage change 2010 to 2020	Percentage change 2019 to 2020
History	15,000	16,855	16,919	17,132	14%	1%
Geography	13,500	15,807	15,774	16,326	21%	3%
Design and Technology	15,000	9,010	8,312	7,728	-48%	-7%
Music	7,500	6,525	6,543	6,837	-9%	4%
Drama	11,100	8,899	8,963	9,059	-18%	1%
Art & Design	13,200	11,874	12,112	12,160	-8%	0%
All arts subjects	46,800	36,308	35,930	35,784	-24%	0%

¹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>

² Between the 2010/2011 and 2020/2021 school year the number of children in England's secondary schools increased by +7% (from 3,262,635 to 3,493,506) <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

Hours taught by subject

Recorded in the November of each year	2010	2018	2019	2020	Percentage change 2010 to 2020	Percentage change 2019 to 2020
History	153,400	190,873	192,708	201,039	31%	4%
Geography	138,700	176,241	179,547	192,035	38%	7%
Design and Technology	119,900	68,126	63,056	58,770	-51%	-7%
Music	92,700	79,305	79,633	83,663	-10%	5%
Drama	95,000	80,819	81,068	83,855	-12%	3%
Art & Design	159,800	133,713	134,985	138,136	-14%	2%
All arts subjects	467,400	361,963	358,742	364,424	-22%	2%

All data is from the Department for Education [School Workforce in England statistics](#), which is recorded in November and the [school census data](#) recorded in January of each year.

Data for Dance is not available in the released Department for Education figures.