

Statistical Update

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Government of South Australia
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Schools

TERM 3 2014 JUNIOR PRIMARY CLASS SIZES

This publication provides summary statistics relating to junior primary class sizes in South Australian government schools as at Term 3 2014. These data are derived from roll class information collected as part of the Term 3 Enrolment Data Collection held on Friday, 1 August 2014.

Introduction

Roll class information was first collected in the Term 1 2003 Census. The roll class is used as an estimate for the measure of class size for junior primary classes.

Prior to 2014 junior primary class size statistics were calculated using validated Term 1 Data Collection data. However due to the introduction of the Same First Day policy, from 2014 onwards the junior primary class size statistics are calculated using validated Term 3 Enrolment Census data. **This must be taken into account in any comparison of the 2014 data with that from previous years.**

A comparison has been made between Term 1 2013 (validated) and Term 3 2013 (unvalidated) class sizes data. The average class size for Term 3 2013 was 22 students, which is slightly higher than the total average for the state for Term 1 2013 (21).

Comparison has also been undertaken between Term 3 2013 (unvalidated) and Term 3 2014 (validated) class sizes data. The average class size for Term 3 2013 was 22 students, the same as the total average for the state for Term 3 2014.

The data used include classes that have years Reception, Year 1 and/or Year 2 students. In some schools, junior primary classes also include students from higher year levels. The scope of the analysis has been limited to only those junior primary classes up to Year 3, where the Year 3 students are the older age group in a combined class. Special schools and classes were excluded from the analysis due to different class arrangements in these settings.

In Term 3, 2014, the average junior primary class size for the state was 22 students per class (with a standard deviation of 3.83), and there has been little difference since 2003 when this information was first collected.

In 2014, class sizes ranged from less than 5 to 31, with the most frequently occurring class size being 25 students.

Average Class Sizes

| Table 1: Average Junior Primary Class Size by Portfolio | |
|---|-------------|
| Education Portfolio | Term 3 2014 |
| Berri | 20 |
| Clare | 18 |
| Elizabeth 1 | 23 |
| Elizabeth 2 | 22 |
| Elizabeth 3 | 21 |
| Elizabeth 4 | 23 |
| Felixstow 1 | 24 |
| Felixstow 2 | 24 |
| Flinders Park 1 | 20 |
| Flinders Park 2 | 23 |
| Gawler | 23 |
| Mount Barker 1 | 23 |
| Mount Barker 2 | 24 |
| Mount Gambier | 21 |
| Murray Bridge | 20 |
| Noarlunga 1 | 22 |
| Noarlunga 2 | 24 |
| Port Lincoln | 20 |
| Port Pirie | 21 |
| Whyalla | 20 |
| Total Average for State | 22 |

Note: Education portfolios replaced regions from 2014

The portfolios with the highest average junior primary class size in 2014 were Felixstow 1, Felixstow 2, Mount Barker 2 and Noarlunga 2 (24 students each).

The portfolios with the lowest average junior primary classes were Clare (18 students) and Flinders Park 1, Berri, Murray Bridge, Whyalla and Port Lincoln (20 students each).

Number of Students by Class Type

The Same First Day policy was introduced in 2014, where reception students start school at the beginning of the year. This has affected the average number of students in classes with Reception students as in previous years the census was based on Term 1. (Table 2 shows the comparison between Term 1 2012 and 2013 and Term 3 2014 data).

Prior to 2014, reception classes in term 1 were smaller in most primary schools as additional students commenced schooling during terms 2 to 4. This is likely to be a major factor in the apparent increase in class sizes when comparing term 3 2014 with term 1 enrolments in previous years.

| Table 2: Average Number of Students per Class Type | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Class Type | Term 1 2012 | Term 1 2013 | Term 3 2014 |
| Reception | 17 | 17 | 21 |
| Reception/Year 1 | 19 | 19 | 22 |
| Rec/Year 1/Year 2 | 16 | 16 | 18 |
| Rec/Yr 1/Yr 2/Yr 3 | 13 | 13 | 13 |
| Year 1 | 22 | 22 | 23 |
| Year 1/Year 2 | 23 | 23 | 23 |
| Year 1/Year 2/Year 3 | 19 | 18 | 19 |
| Year 2 | 23 | 24 | 24 |
| Year2/Year 3 | 24 | 25 | 24 |
| Total for State | 20 | 21 | 22 |

The class type with the highest number of students per class in 2014 was the Year 2/Year 3 classes with an average of 24 students; a decrease since 2013.

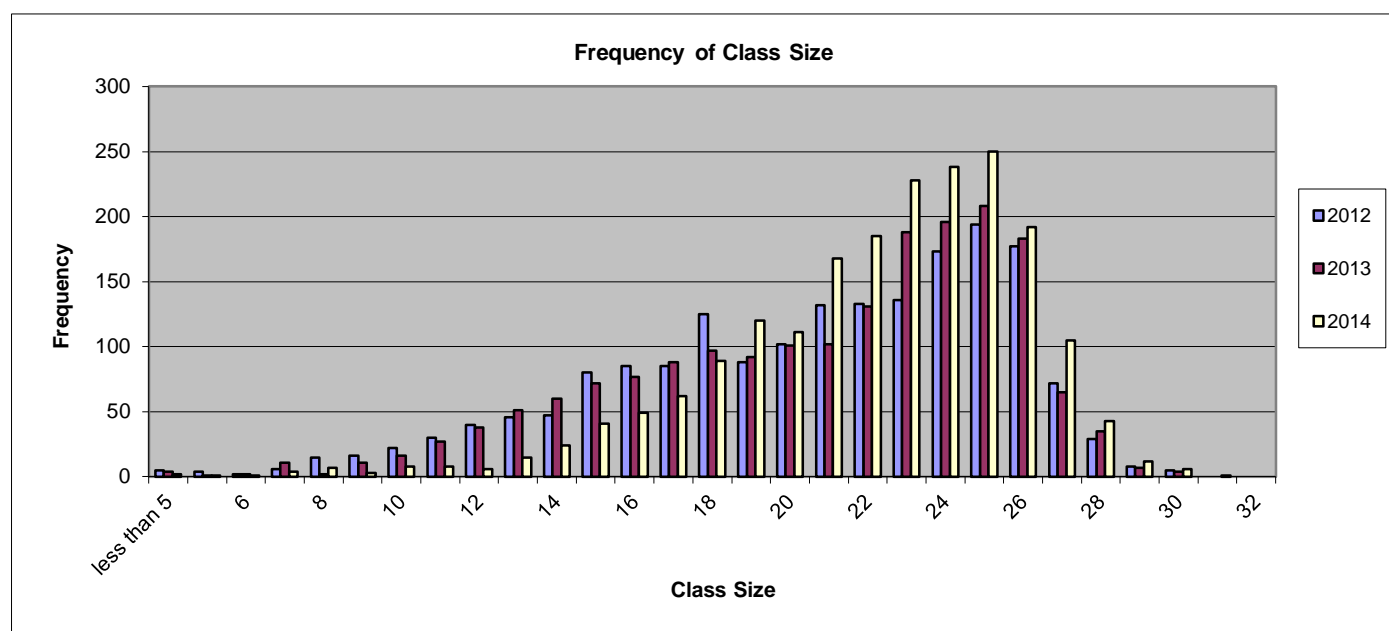


Figure 1: Frequency of Class Size 2012, 2013 and 2014

Note: 2012 and 2013 data is for term 1, 2014 data is for term 3

Frequency of Class Size

Figure 1 provides a frequency distribution of class sizes

The most frequently occurring class sizes were 24 students (238 classes) and 25 students (250 classes).

Class Size by School Subtype

Aboriginal Schools and Anangu Schools had the smallest average class sizes, with 11 and 13 students respectively.

Primary Schools, Junior Primary Schools, Primary/Secondary Schools and Area Schools all had larger junior primary class sizes with the average number of students per class ranging between 19 and 23.

Class Size by Class Type

Of junior primary classes 82% had less than 26 students per class, a decrease from 84% in 2013.

Of junior primary classes 22% had less than 20 students per class; a decrease from 35% in 2013.

| Table 3: Class Type Percentage of Junior Primary Classes Below 20 and 26 Students, Term 3 2014 | % Classes Below 20 Students per Class | % Classes Below 26 Students per Class |
|---|--|--|
| Reception | 30% | 96% |
| Reception/Year 1 | 26% | 89% |
| Reception/Year 1/Year 2 | 66% | 95% |
| Reception/Year 1/Year 2/Year 3 | 100% | 100% |
| Year 1 | 13% | 79% |
| Year 1/Year 2 | 13% | 78% |
| Year 1/Year 2/Year 3 | 55% | 91% |
| Year 2 | 13% | 71% |
| Year 2/Year 3 | 11% | 60% |
| Total | 22% | 82% |

Class Size by Index of Disadvantage

When class size is examined by Index of Educational Disadvantage, it is evident that more disadvantaged schools have lower average class sizes. The average class size for the most disadvantaged schools (index category 1) was 18, compared with 24 for the least disadvantaged schools (index category 7).

| Table 4: Index of Disadvantage, 2012-2014 in Average Junior Primary Class Size | Average Number of Students per Class | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Term 1 2012 | Term 1 2013 | Term 3 2014 |
| 1 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 2 | 17 | 18 | 20 |
| 3 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 4 | 21 | 20 | 22 |
| 5 | 21 | 21 | 23 |
| 6 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 7 | 23 | 23 | 24 |
| Total for State | 20 | 21 | 22 |

In summary, it can be seen that between 2012 and 2014 class sizes have remained stable, with only minor variations over time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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