Unexplained school transfers and managed moves

Local protocols, practice and outcomes for pupils

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Contents

Executive Summary

This report explores 'unexplained school transfers' for pupils in secondary school, as well as transfers agreed between headteachers, parents and pupils known as 'managed moves' and the local protocols which govern them. It builds on existing EPI work, in which we investigated 'unexplained exits' from schools and from the school system, which do not appear to be driven by family decisions or circumstances.

For the data analysis in this report, we use administrative data covering all pupils in England to identify school-to-school moves which *do not* appear to be driven by family decisions or circumstances including:

- a house or area move.
- a change in posting for military families.
- a social care placement change.
- a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller (GRT) community move.
- a move into a special school.

We call these 'unexplained school transfers' as the data does not contain explicit reasons for the moves. We also use data collected from local authorities on the number of managed moves – or transfers agreed between headteachers, parents and pupils for the pupil to move to a new school – occurring across secondary schools in England. Through the first analysis, we are capturing school-to-school moves which may not be classified by schools or LAs as 'managed moves', while in the second, we are capturing information on only some managed moves, as not all LAs hold the data from schools. Neither approach yields a complete picture but, in the absence of government data, together they provide insight into the number of managed moves occurring across the country.

Thousands of secondary pupils experience a school transfer which does not appear to be driven by family decisions.

- To estimate the number of unexplained school transfers, we looked at:
  - The cohort of pupils finishing year 11 in 2019.
  - All pupils in secondary school in the 2018/19 academic year.

- We found that around **34,000 pupils** of a total of 570,282 finishing year 11 in 2019 (around six per cent of the cohort) **experienced approximately 37,000 moves between schools** at some point during the five years of secondary school. **These moves did not occur due to any family reason we could detect in the data.**

- For the 2,959,950 pupils registered in a secondary school **in the 2018/19 academic year, we found that approximately 31,300 moves not related to reasons listed above were experienced by around 30,600** pupils, throughout the academic year (around 1 per cent of the secondary cohort). Whilst the data does not tell us whether these moves would all meet the definition of a managed move**,** this latter figure provides an upper bound estimate of the number of managed moves occurring in secondary schools across the country in 2018/19.

These pupils are disproportionately likely to come from disadvantaged groups, to experience permanent exclusion, and to finish secondary school in alternative provision.

- We found that **pupils with certain social and demographic characteristics are at increased risk of unexplained school transfers**. Overall, one in seventeen pupils in the cohort experienced at least one unexplained school transfer, compared with:
    - Almost one in five pupils with an identified social, emotional or mental health need.
    - One in seven pupils who were persistently absent.
    - One in ten pupils who were ever looked after by the local authority, designated as a 'child in need' or persistently disadvantaged.
    - Almost one in ten pupils from Black ethnic groups.

- We also found that **pupils who experienced an unexplained school transfer in the five years of secondary school were ten times as likely to finish secondary school in alternative provision and six times as likely to experience a permanent exclusion**, compared with pupils who did not experience an unexplained transfer.

According to the minority of local authorities which held relevant data, at least one in six of all 'unexplained school transfers' we identified were managed moves.

- Of the 138 LAs which responded to our information request about managed moves, 66 (or 44 per cent of all LAs) provided data.
- **This data provides a lower bound estimate of managed moves occurring in secondary schools in 2018/19: just over 5,300 moves**. In some cases, the data we were sent provides only a partial picture of managed moves in that area, as schools are not required to report managed moves to the local authority, and therefore only some do.

There is significant variation in local authority rates of 'unexplained school transfers', as well as in local fair access and managed move protocols.

- Local authority rates of unexplained school transfers in 2018/19 ranged from 0.4 to 2.5 per cent of all pupils in the area.
- We analysed each local authority's fair access and managed move protocol, if this existed, and found significant variation in:
    - **The existence of a dedicated managed move protocol**: one in five local authorities did not have a managed move protocol, for example, a separate document or section of a fair access protocol laying out processes for managed moves.
    - **The rationale and purpose of managed moves**: some LAs treat managed moves as a last resort and state that they should not be used for the most vulnerable pupils, including those with Education Health and Care Plans or who are looked after by the local authority. In others, they are employed as part of a supportive strategy specifically for children with additional needs. In some cases, managed moves are used for different purposes within the same LA: early intervention, a 'fresh start' for pupils, and if relationships break down at the school. In one London borough, managed moves are used explicitly to reduce the number of exclusions across the borough.

- o **Whether parental views and pupil needs are taken into account**: in fewer than a fifth of local authorities, protocols clearly state that parental preference and the views and/or needs of pupils are factored into decisions. In two areas, we found explicit evidence that pupils could be excluded if parents did not agree to a managed move. Using the threat of exclusion to obtain parental consent for a managed move directly contravenes government guidance.
- o **The length of trial periods, during which a pupil is dual registered at the home and receiving school:** trial periods during managed moves range from between four weeks to six months. We do not know the impact of different trial period lengths on pupils' wellbeing and learning, but some qualitative evidence suggests that framing moves as 'trials' can act as a barrier to a pupil's sense of belonging in a new school.
- o **The level of local oversight**: in most areas, there is evidence of limited or no local oversight of managed moves. Schools broker managed moves, sometimes with the explicit encouragement of the LA. Moves may be reported to LAs after they are agreed on, or not. There is some indication that a lack of LA oversight may be related to insufficient resources and/or academisation of secondary schools: one LA reported they used to be involved in the managed move process but no longer are, and another reported that 'all schools are academies' as a response to a question about the number of managed moves in their area.

- ▪ In an analysis of the relationship between six aspects of local protocols to do with parental involvement and consideration of the needs of pupils, **we found these features did not predict local rates of unexplained school transfers**. The features we tested included:
  - o Whether the LA had a managed move protocol
  - o Whether success of the move was monitored
  - o Whether parental preferences were part of the decision-making process
  - o Whether the suitability of the receiving school was considered
  - o Whether broader factors beyond the change in school were considered
  - o Whether parents could appeal a school decision to move a pupil

- ▪ There are several possible explanations for why we did not detect a significant association between protocol features and rates of unexplained transfers, including that our measure of unexplained transfers is not a direct proxy for managed moves, and that protocols do not fully account for local practice.

According to local authority data, many managed moves do not result in stable placements in new schools.

- ▪ According to around a quarter of LAs (38) which held data on outcomes following managed moves, **approximately three in five managed moves in secondary school in 2018/19 resulted in the pupil returning to the home school**. Some pupils then went on to experience another move (22 LAs reported this), a permanent exclusion (19 LAs), or a move into home education (10 LAs) or AP (seven LAs).
- ▪ **These findings raise questions about the number of managed moves across the country which result in a stable placement in a new school**, the extent to which managed moves

prevent permanent exclusion, and whether schools are using the threat of permanent exclusion to encourage parents and pupils to agree to a managed move – which would be a direct contravention of government guidance.

Findings from our analysis of protocols and LA data raise key concerns around support for vulnerable learners.

- We found that few local authority protocols addressed the question of whether a managed move is necessary or warranted. Amongst the LAs which have a managed move protocol, most focused on processes to be followed.
- Moreover, there was generally little focus on what support the new school will offer, and appeared to be an assumption that a pupil's behaviour will improve simply because they have been moved.
- According to data reported to us by a minority of LAs, a large proportion of managed moves do not lead to a stable placement and education in a new school.
- The level of local variation and high proportion of managed moves which do not result in a pupil staying on the receiving school's roll suggests a gap in school guidance and regulation. It also raises questions about the impact of this lack of oversight on vulnerable young people's learning and wellbeing.
- In a system that is intended to centre around school choice, in many cases, the choice and agency of families of vulnerable learners has been eroded.

Until 2023, there were only two directives included in exclusions guidance regarding managed moves: that all parties must consent to the managed move and the threat of exclusion must never be used. The new guidance, 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement', is slightly more detailed and states that:

- LAs should be involved in any managed move of a pupil with an EHCP.
- Schools should be able to evidence initial interventions prior to a managed move.
- Information on the pupil and circumstances should be shared between the two schools involved.
- Parents who feel pressured into a managed move can take up the issue through the school's formal complaint route.

However, the new guidance and ongoing lack of regulation do not address the lack of transparency in and oversight of the managed move process, along with the social and demographic inequalities in terms of the groups of pupils most affected. We therefore recommend the following:

Policy recommendations

1. To enable proper oversight of school inclusion, **a central data reporting system which captures all moves and the reasons for them, including managed moves and moves into home schooling, should be introduced.** This would enable better monitoring and research of inclusion, including for children with protected characteristics, who are at increased risk of unexplained exits from the school system and moves between schools. A long-promised

register of 'children not in school' was brought forward in the government's schools bill in 2022, but subsequently scrapped.

2. **Local authorities should monitor outcomes for pupils who experience managed moves**, as our findings suggest that for many, a managed move may be the beginning of a process of exclusion from mainstream education which results in additional moves, permanent exclusion, or a move into alternative provision. Local processes for administering managed moves required greater transparency, to ensure parties involved are acting in the best interests of children.

3. While the new 2023 guidance for schools is more detailed than previous versions, there remains a lack of clear advice around 'best practice' for managed moves and the cases in which they should be used. **Government guidance and policies regarding responses to behaviour challenges should be informed by the evidence around how to best support young people with mental health, emotional, and behavioural needs.** It should recognise the complex causes of difficulties, including experiences of trauma, poverty, and unsupported additional needs, as well as the evidence suggesting school mobility is particularly harmful for vulnerable pupils' outcomes.

4. **Local processes for administering managed moves should involve an independent representative of the child's best interests.** As we have previously noted in our unexplained exits work, this role cannot be effectively undertaken by local authority officials due to the conflict of interest they face as both the assessor of and provider/funder of support for special educational needs and disabilities support. This conflict needs to be resolved in order to ensure that there is better preventative support for children with SEND to reduce their likelihood of struggling at school.

Introduction

This report explores pupil moves between state secondary schools, including school transfers which do not appear to be related to family choice and those agreed between headteachers and parents known as 'managed moves', as well as the local protocols which govern them.

We build on existing work by EPI exploring 'unexplained exits' from schools and from the English school system which do not appear to be driven by family decisions or circumstances. In our previous analysis, we found that one in ten pupils finishing year 11 in 2017 experienced at least one 'unexplained exit' from school – either to another school or out of English state education. Three quarters of these pupils possessed at least one characteristic linked to poorer outcomes in education: a socioeconomically disadvantaged background; a social, emotional or mental health difficulty; and/or contact with the social care system.[1]

Through this report, we aim to explore the practice of 'managed moves' from multiple angles, including how prevalent they are in English secondary schools, how pupils experience them, how decisions are made and moves carried out, and what happens to pupils following a managed move. To do this we use multiple sources of information, including a review of existing studies, administrative data on pupils in England, local authority fair access and managed move protocols, and data collected from LAs.

We address the following research questions:

1) What does the existing quantitative and qualitative literature say about managed moves?
2) How many managed moves happen across secondary schools in England?
3) What do local fair access and managed move protocols include / omit?
4) How are features of local protocols related to local levels of managed moves?
5) What happens to pupils who experience a managed move?

First, we review what is known about managed moves in the literature.

Next, we turn to administrative data to address gaps in what is currently known about the prevalence of managed moves. Data on the number of managed moves which take place each academic year is not collected centrally; in some areas it is held locally, in others it is not held at all. Therefore, we look at data on pupil moves between schools, which are not due to usual transitions between phases (e.g. primary to secondary), official exclusions, or family-related reasons such as a house move. We explore how these moves vary over the terms and years of secondary, as well as the characteristics of pupils who experience them. For comparison, we also present data collected from local authorities on numbers of managed moves; as many LAs do not hold this data, it can only provide us with a partial picture.

We then assess local authority fair access and managed move protocols against a range of criteria in areas of decision-making, guidance on how managed moves should proceed, and record-keeping and transparency. Fair access protocols are developed by local authorities in partnership with schools in their area to ensure that vulnerable pupils, and those having difficulty securing a school

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[1] https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/unexplained-pupil-exits-data-multi-academy-trust-local-authority/

place in-year, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible. We test the relationship between key features of protocols and local authority rates of unexplained school transfers.

Finally, we explore destinations of pupils who experience school transfers in year 11. We also report on data collected from local authorities on the proportion of 'successful' managed moves – or moves which result in a pupil joining the receiving school's roll – and outcomes and destinations for pupils who do not join the receiving school's roll following a managed move.

Through our analysis of administrative data covering pupils in England, we are capturing school-to-school moves that may not be classified by schools or LAs as 'managed moves', while in information requests to local authorities, we are capturing information on only some managed moves, as not all LAs hold the data from schools. Neither approach yields a complete picture but together they provide some insight into different aspects of the processes and outcomes related to managed moves.

A note on terminology

Schools and local authorities may refer to processes in which pupils move schools with the agreement of heads and parents as managed moves, negotiated transfers, supported transfers, or other terminology. In this report, we refer to all moves of this nature as 'managed moves' and school-to-school moves identified in administrative data as 'unexplained school transfers' as we cannot fully identify reasons for moves in the data.

We acknowledge that some children have carers rather than parents; for simplicity's sake we use 'parent' throughout the report to refer to adults responsible for children in a household.

Background

Since the government introduced the opportunity for parental school choice in the late 1980s, some researchers have argued that the education system has been operating under 'quasi-market' forces.[2] Accordingly, the pressure placed on schools to be academically successful and move up in performance tables has brought the 'desirability' of students into question, as those who struggle in mainstream education pose a potential threat to how schools perform.[3] It has been argued that schools have therefore adopted a 'punitive' stance to thrive under these pressures, with the increasing use of permanent exclusions and suspensions being one manifestation of this approach.[4]

Rates of permanent exclusion (PX) are and have historically been higher in the UK compared with other European countries, and in England compared with other UK nations; rates have also been disproportionately high for certain groups of children and young people.[5] A PX is seven times more likely for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), four times more likely if they are eligible for free school meals (FSM), three times more likely if they have Roma or Traveller ethnicity, and more than twice as likely for mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils compared with White British pupils.[6]

In response to high exclusion numbers, the Labour Government (1997-2010) promoted alternatives to exclusion and officially introduced 'managed moves' around 2004. According to guidance, through a managed move, 'a pupil can transfer to another school […] where this occurs with the consent of the parties involved, including the parents and the admission authority for the new school'.[7] These are voluntary agreements for a pupil to change school or educational programme under controlled circumstances.

Although managed moves are intended to be a collaborative process between parents, the pupil and schools, there is no formalised process beyond this guidance or centralised monitoring of practice. The body of evidence on managed moves is small and studies are largely qualitative and small scale which makes drawing conclusions about how these processes generally play out difficult. According to one study, local authority (LA) fair access protocols are often brief and vague, leading to inconsistent practice between them; this results in many managed moves happening

[2] Anne West and Hazel Pennell, 'How New Is New Labour? The Quasi-Market and English Schools 1997 to 2001', *British Journal of Educational Studies* 50, no. 2 (1 June 2002): 206–24, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8527.t01-2-00199.

[3] Christopher Bagley and Susan Hallam, 'Managed Moves: School and Local Authority Staff Perceptions of Processes, Success and Challenges', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 20, no. 4 (2 October 2015): 432–47, https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2015.1053700; Vanessa Parffrey, 'Exclusion: Failed Children or Systems Failure?', *School Organisation* 14, no. 2 (1 January 1994): 107–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/0260136940140201.

[4] Carl Parsons, 'School Exclusion: The Will to Punish', *British Journal of Educational Studies* 53, no. 2 (1 June 2005): 187–211, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8527.2005.00290.x.

[5] Office of the Children's Comissioner, '"They Never Give Up On You". Office Of The Children's Commissioner School Exclusions Inquiry' (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2011), https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2017/07/They-never-give-up-on-you-final-report.pdf.

[6] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england

[7] Department for Education, 'Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England. Draft Statutory Guidance for Those with Legal Responsibilities in Relation to Exclusion.' (London, UK: Department for Education, 2017), 12.

'under the radar' and becoming a form of exclusion without being recorded as such.[8,9] The Centre for Social Justice reported in 2011 that some headteachers 'abuse' the managed move process, and that quality varies considerably, leading to 'inconsistency, unfairness and an understandable degree of scepticism by some towards the process itself'.[10] Government guidance states that the threat of exclusion should never be used to carry out a managed move, as the fundamental distinction between a managed move and exclusion is its voluntary nature. Managed moves do not have the same protections for parents as permanent exclusions, including that a parent can appeal the decision, and if parents are coerced into a move, this becomes an unlawful exclusion. Despite this, there is evidence to suggest some schools do not involve parents or young people in the managed move process.[11] In 2004, the Department for Children, Schools and Families carried out an evaluation with 118 LAs and commented in a report that the practice of managed moves did not address underlying difficulties, but 'passed the problem onto other schools'.[12] The lack of regulation, accountability and established protocol has been identified as driving poor practice over the years, yet there has been no significant change in policy to address these issues.[13]

The number of children who move schools or enter alternative provision through a managed move is currently unknown. However, we do know from existing research that non-compulsory school moves at non-transition times are strongly related to disadvantage and are disproportionately experienced by disadvantaged groups; research also shows that higher rates of mobility are linked to worse outcomes for pupils in primary and secondary.[14,15] As managed moves are only recorded locally or by individual schools, they are less transparent than official exclusions. A managed move which occurs with parental consent is impossible to distinguish from an illegal exclusion in existing data and due to a paucity of case law. While it is plausible that managed moves are coercive and/or not aligned with a pupil's interests in some cases, it is also plausible that managed moves provide pupils with a necessary 'fresh start' in others. However, combined with the weakness of relevant regulation and lack of any genuinely independent and compulsory review of decisions taken by schools or local fair access panels, which are generally made up of headteachers and LA representatives, it is impossible to determine how many managed moves are genuinely in the best interests of pupils.

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[8] Hannah Jones, 'Understanding Young People's Experiences of a Managed Move' (Univeristy College London, 2020).

[9] Christopher Bagley, '"Pass the Parcel": Are Managed Moves an Effective Intervention: Is There a Role for Educational Psychologists in Facilitating the Process' (Institute of Education, Univeristy of London, 2013).

[10] Centre for Social Justice, 'No Excuses: A Review of Educational Exclusion' (London, UK, 2011), 151, https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/no-excuses-a-review-of-educational-exclusion.

[11] Office of the Children's Commissioner, '"They Never Give Up On You". Office Of The Children's Commissioner School Exclusions Inquiry'.

[12] Sarah Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals' (Sunderland: University of Sunderland, 2020), 10.

[13] Tamzin Messeter and Anita Soni, 'A Systematic Literature Review of the "Managed Move" Process as an Alternative to Exclusion in UK Schools', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 23, no. 2 (3 April 2018): 169–85, https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2017.1383676.

[14] Machin, S., Telhaj, S., & Wilson, J. (2006). The mobility of English school children. Fiscal Studies, 27(3), 253-280.

[15] RSA Action and Research Centre. (2013). Between the cracks: Exploring in-year admissions in schools in England. London: Rodda, M., Hallgarten, J., & Freeman, J.

Historical policy context

In our previous work, we found comparably high rates of 'unexplained exits' from schools and from the school system under the Labour, Coalition and Conservative governments, suggesting that the high levels of 'unexplained' pupil mobility around the education system are longstanding. However we also found the highest levels of unexplained exits from schools in the most recent cohort we looked at, pupils finishing year 11 in 2017, indicating that current concerns including funding and accountability pressures may be incentivising schools to shed pupils with additional needs associated with higher costs and lower attainment.

However, consistently high levels of mobility over time suggest other factors may be important to consider, including the evolution of the education system over the last half century. Prior to the 1978 Warnock Report on special educational needs, children identified with a special need were generally pulled out of mainstream schools; these children were overwhelmingly from working class and recent immigrant families.[16] In the Warnock Report, authors argued that too many pupils were being taught in special schools when their needs could and should be met in mainstream provision; as a result, the 1981 Education Act enshrined the policy of inclusion regarding children with special needs.[17] Yet despite these reforms, it is not clear if curriculum and staffing structures in mainstream schools fully adapted to support children with additional needs and from deprived backgrounds.[18]

Against this backdrop, weak regulation and a lack of data and transparency are plausibly playing a role in the high levels of mobility observed. Managed moves are a widely-used approach to managing behaviour, but schools are not required to record them, or the reasons for them. This means we know little about their prevalence, the circumstances in which they are used, and the impact they have on pupils.

The role of the Covid-19 pandemic

We do not know the impact pandemic has had on levels of managed moves, off-rolling, or other kinds of school-driven mobility around and out of the education system. Yet several data points indicate that vulnerable pupils, already at risk of marginalisation and exclusion, are worse off now.

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[16] 'Education and Skills - Third Report' (House of Commons Library, 2006).
[17] 'Warnock Report (1978)', n.d., https://doi.org/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803121057612; Geoff Lindsay, Klaus Wedell, and Julie Dockrell, 'Warnock 40 Years on: The Development of Special Educational Needs Since the Warnock Report and Implications for the Future', *Frontiers in Education* 4 (2020), https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2019.00164.
[18] Lindsay, Wedell, and Dockrell, 'Warnock 40 Years on: The Development of Special Educational Needs Since the Warnock Report and Implications for the Future'.

Research suggests that the pandemic and school closures have had a significant negative impact on pupil attendance, behaviour, and mental health – and that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds have been particularly affected.[19,20]

According to the latest DfE data, the overall pupil absence rate in the 2022/23 autumn term was 7.5 per cent compared to pre-pandemic levels which remained just below 5 per cent.[21] Additionally, 24.2 per cent of pupils were recorded as being persistently absent from schools, meaning they missed at least 10 per cent of possible sessions, compared with pre-pandemic rates which ranged from 10-12 per cent.[22] The negative effects of absence on attainment have concerning implications for social inequality as pupils eligible for free school meals miss, on average, almost twice as many days per term, according to 2022 data.[23]

The latest data also reveals that schools are issuing suspensions at a higher rate than before the pandemic, and the suspension rate for pupils eligible for free school meals is around three times the rate of those who are not eligible. In the 2021/22 summer term suspension rates surpassed pre-pandemic levels, reaching a sixteen-year high.[24] Permanent exclusion rates remain at slightly below pre-pandemic levels.

[19] Cathy Creswell et al., 'Young People's Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic', *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* 5, no. 8 (1 August 2021): 535–37, https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(21)00177-2; NHS England, 'Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2021 - Wave 2 Follow up to the 2017 Survey', NHS Digital, 2021, https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2021-follow-up-to-the-2017-survey.

[20] Knowles, Gemma, Charlotte Gayer-Anderson, Alice Turner, Lynsey Dorn, Joseph Lam, Samantha Davis, Rachel Blakey et al. "Covid-19, social restrictions, and mental distress among young people: a UK longitudinal, population-based study." Journal of child psychology and psychiatry 63, no. 11 (2022): 1392-1404.

[21] Department for Education, 'Pupil Absence in Schools in England, Autumn Term 2022/23', 2023, https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england.

[22] Department for Education.

[23] https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/examining-post-pandemic-absences-in-england-2/

[24] Department for Education, 'Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions in England, Summer Term 2021/22', 2023, https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england.

A review of the literature on managed moves

Whilst there is little existing quantitative research on managed moves, there has been some research in recent years focused on stakeholders' experiences of them, exploring the factors which can enable or be a barrier to a 'successful' managed move. Below we review what we know about the number of managed moves, and draw out some key themes from the qualitative literature. A table of the qualitative studies reviewed is available in Appendix 1.

Quantifying managed moves

There is little research which has estimated the number of managed moves happening across the school system. This is because a) these moves are not explicitly identified as such in government data and b) data on managed moves is not held by all local authorities.

Aside from EPI's unexplained exits work, which found that approximately 61,000 secondary pupils finishing year 11 in 2017 experienced a school or system exit apparently unrelated to a change in family circumstances, FFT Datalab generated an estimate of managed moves in 2015/16. Using data on pupil enrolment change from dual to single registration, to account for the managed move trial period, Datalab researchers found that just over 5,000 pupils in primary and secondary experienced a successful managed move, meaning the move resulted in the pupil joining the receiving school's roll.[25] As authors explain, this is a conservative estimate as it does not account for managed moves between local authorities, it does not take into account which moves are related to a permanent exclusion, and it cannot account for moves which happen between school censuses.

Relationship breakdown and vulnerability

The main reason for undertaking a managed move is the breakdown of the young person's relationships in the school, whether with school staff or peers. Bagley and Hallam conducted interviews with a small group of young people who experienced a managed move and identified difficulties with peer relationships such as bullying and social isolation as a common precursor for managed moves.[26] The young people expressed that they considered social acceptance to be more important than academic success.

Overall researchers found difficult relationships to not only be a catalyst for a managed move, but closely associated with feelings of vulnerability for pupils.[27] They posit that vulnerability throughout a managed move stems from feelings of anxiety, loss, rejection, injustice and upheaval, and that this feeling is generally not well understood given the lack of space given to young people's voices during the process. Martin-Denham considers the association between relationships and vulnerability from the perspective of social identity theory, which posits that an individual develops

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[25] D Thomson, 'Managed Moves vs Permanent Exclusions: Do Outcomes Differ', 2019.

[26] Christopher Bagley and Susan Hallam, 'Young People's and Parent's Perceptions of Managed Moves', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 21, no. 2 (2 April 2016): 205–27, https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2015.1081373.

[27] Georgina Turner, 'An Exploration of Secondary School Pupils' Experiences of Managed Moves Using a Resiliency Framework' (University of East London, 2020); Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'; Bagley and Hallam, 'Young People's and Parent's Perceptions of Managed Moves'.

their personal identity by comparing themselves to others in their social environment.[28] If the individual considers themselves to not 'fit in' and instead be part of the out-group, they will experience a lack of connectedness and vulnerability. A breakdown of relationships in the original school is already likely to put young people experiencing a managed move at risk of feeling like an outsider, which may be further exacerbated in their new school if the relevant support systems are not in place. Further negative experiences on top of this vulnerability within the new school could have long-term impacts on a young person's sense of self-worth.[29]

The role of 'stigmatising' narratives

Bagley & Hallam suggest that young people experiencing a managed move can become 'entrenched within intractable, sometimes unhelpful narratives as to their identity and that managed moves could be useful in assisting in changing this'.[30] However, school staff and local authority officers interviewed expressed that objectifying the young person and taking a judgemental stance was a major hindrance to successful managed moves. Examples of objectifying language included 'dumping' pupils, seeing pupils as 'rubbish', 'passing the parcel' or 'divvying out' pupils to education providers. An objectifying approach was also associated with approaching the managed move as a 'trial period' as opposed to a 'fresh start' accompanied by a sense of commitment and belief that the young person could successfully integrate into the new school.[31] Researchers state that descriptions like 'trial' can make pupils feel like the move is temporary, threatening their feelings of belonging in the receiving school. One researcher concluded that the narrow definition of a 'successful' managed move as one in which a pupil remains on roll in their new school can be seen as reductionist, and disregards the experiences and views of the young person involved.[32]

The importance of relationships and parental involvement

As discussed, relationships are at the forefront of young people's experiences of managed moves and therefore identified by several studies as an enabler to a successful managed move.[33] This

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[28] Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'; Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, 'An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict', in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1979), 33–37.

[29] Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'.

[30] Bagley and Hallam, 'Young People's and Parent's Perceptions of Managed Moves', 440.

[31] Deborah Flitcroft and Catherine Kelly, 'An Appreciative Exploration of How Schools Create a Sense of Belonging to Facilitate the Successful Transition to a New School for Pupils Involved in a Managed Move', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 21, no. 3 (2 July 2016): 301–13, https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2016.1165976.

[32] Turner, 'An Exploration of Secondary School Pupils' Experiences of Managed Moves Using a Resiliency Framework'.

[33] Savanna M. Craig, 'Storying Experiences of Managed Moves: An Interactional Performative Model' (University of Sheffield, 2015); Messeter and Soni, 'A Systematic Literature Review of the "Managed Move" Process as an Alternative to Exclusion in UK Schools'; Turner, 'An Exploration of Secondary School Pupils' Experiences of Managed Moves Using a Resiliency Framework'; Bagley and Hallam, 'Young People's and Parent's Perceptions of Managed Moves'; Holly Craggs and Catherine Kelly, 'School Belonging: Listening to the Voices of Secondary School Students Who Have Undergone Managed Moves', *School Psychology International* 39, no. 1 (1 February 2018): 56–73, https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034317741936; Martin-

includes the young person's relationships with the school and peers but also encompasses relationships more broadly between stakeholders involved in the process. These include school-parent relationships, parent-LA relationships, and school-school relationships.

Lawrence (2011) found that re-integration is successful when parents share responsibility and have 'realistic hopes' for the future.[34] The paper concludes that it is crucial for parents and schools to have common goals, which is dependent on open channels of communication between the school and the parent. Harris et al. (2006) found that parents expressed frustration at the lack of clarity through the managed move process.[35] Some felt 'forgotten' or 'missed', and felt a message was being sent about their value and position in the school. While certain parents challenged this through action and communication with the school, others did not feel they had the agency or confidence to be able to do this. Parental frustration was echoed in the findings of Hoyle (2016).[36] Chadwick (2013) suggests that schools need to 'reconsider their role to enable a coherent and transparent process which boosts parental inclusiveness and their feelings of being valued'.[37] Indeed, thematic analysis of interviews with LA officers, school professionals, pupils and parents conducted by Bagley (2013) and Bagley and Hallam (2015) confirmed home-school communication as a contributing factor to a 'successful' managed move.[38]

Bagley and Hallam (2016) identify inter-school communication to be a key protective factor during the managed move process.[39] Analysis of interviews with 11 school staff and 5 local authority staff demonstrated inter-school tensions, specifically honesty and information sharing, in unsuccessful transitions. The researchers note 'significant suspicion amongst most school staff regarding the extent to which other schools presented an accurate, up-to-date and honest picture' of the young person in question.[40] Participants highlighted this issue in relation to the character, learning needs, behavioural difficulties, and family challenges of the pupil. The authors argue that the lack of agreed format regarding the content or quality of information that is passed between schools gives way to misunderstanding, misrepresentations, and inter-school politics.

Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'.

[34] Nicola Lawrence, 'What Makes for a Successful Re-Integration from a Pupil Referral Unit to Mainstream Education? An Applied Research Project', *Educational Psychology in Practice* 27, no. 3 (1 September 2011): 213–26, https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2011.603530.

[35] Belinda Harris et al., 'Does Every Child Know They Matter? Pupils' Views of One Alternative to Exclusion', *Pastoral Care in Education* 24, no. 2 (1 June 2006): 28–38, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0122.2006.00362.x.

[36] Katherine Hoyle, 'Secondary School Pupils' Experiences of Managed Moves: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis' (Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust/University of Essex, 2016).

[37] Mark Chadwick, 'An Exploration of the Effectiveness of the "Managed Move" Protocol to Support the Integration of Secondary Aged Pupils' (The University of Manchester, 2013), 30.

[38] Bagley, '"Pass the Parcel": Are Managed Moves an Effective Intervention: Is There a Role for Educational Psychologists in Facilitating the Process'; Bagley and Hallam, 'Managed Moves: School and Local Authority Staff Perceptions of Processes, Success and Challenges'.

[39] Bagley and Hallam, 'Young People's and Parent's Perceptions of Managed Moves'.

[40] Bagley and Hallam, 349.

Schools' responsiveness to young people's needs

Schools' flexibility when responding to young people's behaviour was identified as an enabler in the managed move process.[41] Martin-Denham (2020) suggests that schools' behaviour policies are often too strict, not allowing the young person room to adapt in moves when children are moving from smaller classes with greater levels of support into larger mainstream classrooms.[42] They state that in some cases, the ceasing of a managed move is not 'rational, reasonable, fair or proportionate in terms of the Education and Inspections Act (2006) and the ECHR (2010)'. Instead, it could be argued they occurred due to inflexible behaviour policies, processes and a lack of understanding of individual needs and circumstances.[43]

An essential part of responding to a child's needs is an accurate assessment and, if relevant, diagnosis of their needs. Bagley (2013) reported that school professionals and LA officers raised concerns that schools initiating the move do not provide an accurate picture of the pupil's needs, with some LA officers being critical of school SEN policies and the rigour of assessment.[44] Here they note the important role that educational psychologists (EP) have in building an accurate understanding of the young person and taking a preventative approach to addressing their needs, a point noted by other researchers.[45] This can be used to inform the appropriateness of a managed move and put in place suitable support strategies.

Lee (2020) evaluated the barriers to a successful move from the perspective of two models of motivation, Maslow's (1943) 'Hierarchy of Needs' and Deci and Ryan's (2013) self-determination model.[46] Lee argues that the managed move process presents multiple potential obstacles to young people fulfilling their psychological, social, and self-actualisation needs (see Figure 1).[47]

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[41] Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'; Flitcroft and Kelly, 'An Appreciative Exploration of How Schools Create a Sense of Belonging to Facilitate the Successful Transition to a New School for Pupils Involved in a Managed Move'.

[42] Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'.

[43] Martin-Denham, 49; 'European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)', Pub. L. No. c. 194 (2010); 'Education and Inspections Act 2006', Pub. L. No. c. 40 (2006).

[44] Bagley, '"Pass the Parcel": Are Managed Moves an Effective Intervention: Is There a Role for Educational Psychologists in Facilitating the Process'.

[45] Jones, 'Understanding Young People's Experiences of a Managed Move'.

[46] Harriet Lee, 'Exploring Young People's Views of Upcoming Managed Moves' (University of East London, 2020); A. H. Maslow, 'A Theory of Human Motivation.', *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (1943): 370–96, https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346; Edward L. Deci and Richaard M. Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Springer, 2013), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-2271-7.

[47] Lee, 'Exploring Young People's Views of Upcoming Managed Moves'.

Self-fulfilment needs

Self-actualisation: Success in all aspects of school important to young person
Barriers: Needs not met

Esteem needs: Engage and achieve in learning; feel heard, feel valued and respected; autonomy
Barriers: Trial period; lack of support; negative narrative; feeling powerless or rejected; poor self-concept

Psychological needs

Social needs: Good relationships with staff and peers; feel welcomed and accepted; develop a sense of belonging
Barriers: Managing change; not feeling valued; poor or volatile relationships; isolation; negative narrative

Safety needs: Feel safe and secure; emotional support; containing environment and relationships; positive school ethos; access to resources
Barriers: Controlling and repressive environment; poor teacher wellbeing; peer altercations

Basic needs

Physiological needs: School in good state of repair, warm and comfortable
Barriers: School is damaged, in need of repair, dirty

Figure 1. Hopes for a successful managed move and barriers to achieving these as identified by young people in relation to Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs' (1943), Lee (2020)

Expectations and boundaries

Turner (2020) evaluated pupils' experiences of managed moves through a resiliency framework.[48] According to this, high and consistent expectations, one facet of Milstein's Resiliency Wheel model, are an important factor in a successful managed move.[49] Interviews with students who had undergone a managed move revealed the importance of consistent boundaries for *all* pupils in the school, as opposed to being 'singled out' by school staff subjecting them to harsher rules, which

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[48] Turner, 'An Exploration of Secondary School Pupils' Experiences of Managed Moves Using a Resiliency Framework'.

[49] Nan Henderson and Mike M. Milstein, *Resiliency in Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators*, Resiliency in Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators, Updated Ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Corwin Press, 2003).

they often felt was the case in their starter school. On top of this, students appreciated high expectations from school staff as this was an acknowledgement of their strengths and potential.

Creating a sense of belonging

An important consideration for a 'successful' managed move is for schools involved to nurture a sense of belonging.[50] In guidance for mental health and resilience in schools, the DfE (2018) stated 'school should be a safe and affirming place for children where they can develop a sense of belonging and feel able to trust and talk openly with adults about their problems'.[51] Craggs and Kelly (2018) investigated how young people experienced a sense of belonging during the managed move process and how this could be supported by schools.[52] They highlighted the fundamental importance of forming positive peer relationships, as well as the difficulty in doing this. Young people felt they had sole responsibility for forming new friendships but also acknowledged the positive practices of school staff that were helpful in enabling new friendships, such as introductions to selected peers and information about safe and welcoming places to go at break and lunchtime. When a managed move is 'successful', positive peer relationships in the new school are key element.[53] LA officers and school staff also acknowledge that strategies of social support, for example, assigning a student buddy or introducing young people to peers over the first few days, are effective in overcoming feelings of rejection in the previous school.[54]

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[50] Messeter and Soni, 'A Systematic Literature Review of the "Managed Move" Process as an Alternative to Exclusion in UK Schools'; Craggs and Kelly, 'School Belonging: Listening to the Voices of Secondary School Students Who Have Undergone Managed Moves'; Hoyle, 'Secondary School Pupils' Experiences of Managed Moves: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis'; Martin-Denham, 'The Enablers and Barriers to Successful Managed Moves: The Voice of Children, Caregivers and Professionals'; Flitcroft and Kelly, 'An Appreciative Exploration of How Schools Create a Sense of Belonging to Facilitate the Successful Transition to a New School for Pupils Involved in a Managed Move'.

[51] Department for Education, 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools' (London, UK: Department for Education, 2018), 8.

[52] Craggs and Kelly, 'School Belonging: Listening to the Voices of Secondary School Students Who Have Undergone Managed Moves'.

[53] Bagley and Hallam, 'Young People's and Parent's Perceptions of Managed Moves'.

[54] Bagley and Hallam, 'Managed Moves: School and Local Authority Staff Perceptions of Processes, Success and Challenges'.

Data

This analysis uses administrative data covering pre-pandemic years to explore the prevalence of school transfers, including instances of managed moves, and data collected from local authorities on managed moves.

Administrative data

The following DfE data sources were included in the dataset constructed for this analysis:

- School Census termly records autumn 2007 to summer 2019 [Oct/Jan/May]
- Alternative Provision 'AP' Census 2008 to 2019 [Jan]
- Pupil Referral Unit 'PRU' Census 2012 to 2013 [Jan]
- Children Looked After 'CLA' Census 2006 to 2019 [Mar].
- Children In Need 'CIN' Census 2009 to 2019 [Mar].
- Get Information About Schools 'GIAS' records and link files [all records]

Core datasets

We analysed the cohort of young people finishing year 11 in 2018/19. Cohort membership was based on the academic year recorded for pupils in secondary school in each year of 2014/15 to 2018/19 ('the 2019 cohort'). This captures years 7 to 11 (inclusive) for most pupils.

We also analysed all pupils registered in secondary school through the 2018/19 academic year.

Matching

Records were matched across data sources, terms and years using the anonymised pupil matching reference as the sole matching key. Cohorts were constructed from the School Census, AP Census (and PRU Census records, where relevant) to form the core of the analytical dataset. Duplicate records for the same time period and census type were deleted based on file order to produce no more than one record per PMR at one point in time. It is possible to have records from the School Census, AP Census and/or PRU Census for the same child where they have been dual-registered or have moved between institutions over time; these records are retained in the analysis.

The time structure of the core dataset is longitudinal spanning 15 school terms. However, children only ever registered in the AP or PRU Censuses throughout years 7 to 11 only have data for five annual time points. All other datasets were matched to this core but retained for analysis only if they refer to children in the specified cohorts based on the School Census, AP census and/or PRU Census. The additional data were restructured to fit the termly structure of the core dataset.

If pupils in the core dataset appeared in the exclusions, CIN or LAC censuses, we generated a flag to identify them. We used the absence data files to generate flags for persistent absence for pupils in the core dataset.

Identifying schools and school types

When determining whether a pupil has moved schools by comparing schools' unique reference number 'URN' in two different terms, sometimes the URN changes, for example due to academy conversion, without the child having moved anywhere. In order not to spuriously count these URN

changes as moves, we also associate each child with a 'stable URN' for each term using the link files from GIAS.

Where two or more URNs are linked as predecessor or successor schools, we select one URN arbitrarily from each URN 'family' and recode the all variants of that school to create the 'stable URN' that determines whether a child has moved schools or not. This version of the URN is not used to attribute any characteristics of the school as these can change over time; it is solely used to identify when URN changes are a move of school.

Local authority data

We collected all policies to do with fair access, managed moves, and other negotiated transfers through Freedom of Information requests to local authorities in 2020.

In addition to our analysis of administrative data covering English pupils, we collected data through a Freedom of Information request to all local authorities asking for information on managed moves experienced by pupils in secondary school during the 2018/19 academic year. Specifically, we asked about:

- The number of managed moves (or any type of school-initiated negotiated transfer)
- The number of managed moves in which a pupil joined the receiving school's roll
- The number of managed moves in which a pupil returned to the home school following a managed move
- Possible outcomes for pupils who return to the home school following a managed move / trial period in the receiving school (including another managed move, a move into alternative provision, or a permanent exclusion)

Method

For this report, we have analysed the secondary school records of:

- 587,208 pupils registered in year 11 in 2018/19 ('the 2019 cohort'), to explore numbers of unexplained school transfers and demographic characteristics of pupils who experience them; and
- 2,959,950 pupils registered in years 7 through to 11 in the 2018/19 academic year ('secondary pupils in 2018/19'), to explore local authority rates of unexplained school transfers in 2018/19.

The first step of the analysis was to identify all pupils who left a school and joined another school between censuses. These exits can be divided into two categories:

- pupils who were permanently excluded; and
- pupils who changed schools between censuses.

Any moves into schools in the autumn term in which at least 20 pupils joined that school, and any moves out of a school in the summer term in which at least 80 per cent of pupils left that school were classified as transitions and not included in figures.

For pupils recorded as permanently excluded but who remained in the same school in the term following the exclusion, we assumed that this represents a time lag in removing the pupil from the school roll. We recoded the first subsequent school move in any census leading up to the next spring census as occurring in the term of the exclusion. As this was only the case for a small number of pupils, it will not have a significant impact on overall volumes.

The second step of the analysis was to identify the pupils moving schools for reasons which are likely to be unrelated to the school. These are listed below, along with further explanation and justification for why they were included. All 'ever' categories included records going back to Reception years for both cohorts.

We flagged and removed school-to-school moves for 'family-driven' reasons, including:

- Pupils with parents in military service. All pupils that were ever recorded as 'service children' were included in this group.
- Pupils with Gypsy, Roma or Traveller (GRT) ethnicity and pupils with any absences due to their family travelling for occupational purposes. We classified moves as 'family-driven' in cases where GRT pupils moved more than once in the five years of secondary, as an indicator of the family traveling for occupational purposes, or if the exit was part of a movement of other GRT pupils from that school at that time (as an indicator of traveller community mobility).
- Pupils who move from any type of school into a special school. These moves are likely to be decided with parental consent and in the interest of the pupil.
- Pupils who move to a different lower super output area (LSOA). We wanted to account for school moves that are driven by families moving to live and work somewhere different and making the original school inconvenient or impossible to attend. We include school moves which happen in the term after a change of address.

- Looked after pupils whose period of care ended because they were adopted or experience a change in their legal care status.

We are left with pupil moves to different schools that are plausibly, according to available data, driven by schools rather than family considerations. These will include instances of managed moves.

Part 1: The prevalence of unexplained school transfers and managed moves, and the pupils who experience them

Administrative data on school transfers

Figure 1.1 presents termly numbers and proportions (calculated based on the number of secondary school pupils registered in that term) of unexplained school transfers for the 2019 cohort. We find that a total of 37,573 unexplained school transfers occurred during the five years of secondary school for pupils finishing year 11 in 2019. The majority of these moves occurred in years 7 to 9, while numbers of moves dropped off in the latter two years of secondary school. In high stakes years 10 and 11, we find 7,869 instances of unexplained school transfers, accounting for around a fifth of all unexplained transfers across all year groups.

These moves were experienced by 34,257 pupils; 2,844 pupils (or around 8 per cent) experienced at least two unexplained school transfers in the five years of secondary school (see Figure 1.2).

As we used a slightly different approach for this analysis, these figures cannot be directly compared with figures we obtained for unexplained moves to other schools for the cohort of pupils finishing year 11 in 2017 in our 2019 report. For this reason, we have included figures for the 2017 cohort using this approach in Appendix 4 for comparison. In the 2017 cohort, we found that 34,350 unexplained school transfers were experienced by 31,298 pupils, indicating about a 9 per cent increase in the number of pupils experiencing a transfer between the earlier and later cohorts.

Figure 1.1 Numbers and proportions of termly unexplained school transfers in secondary school for pupils finishing year 11 in 2019
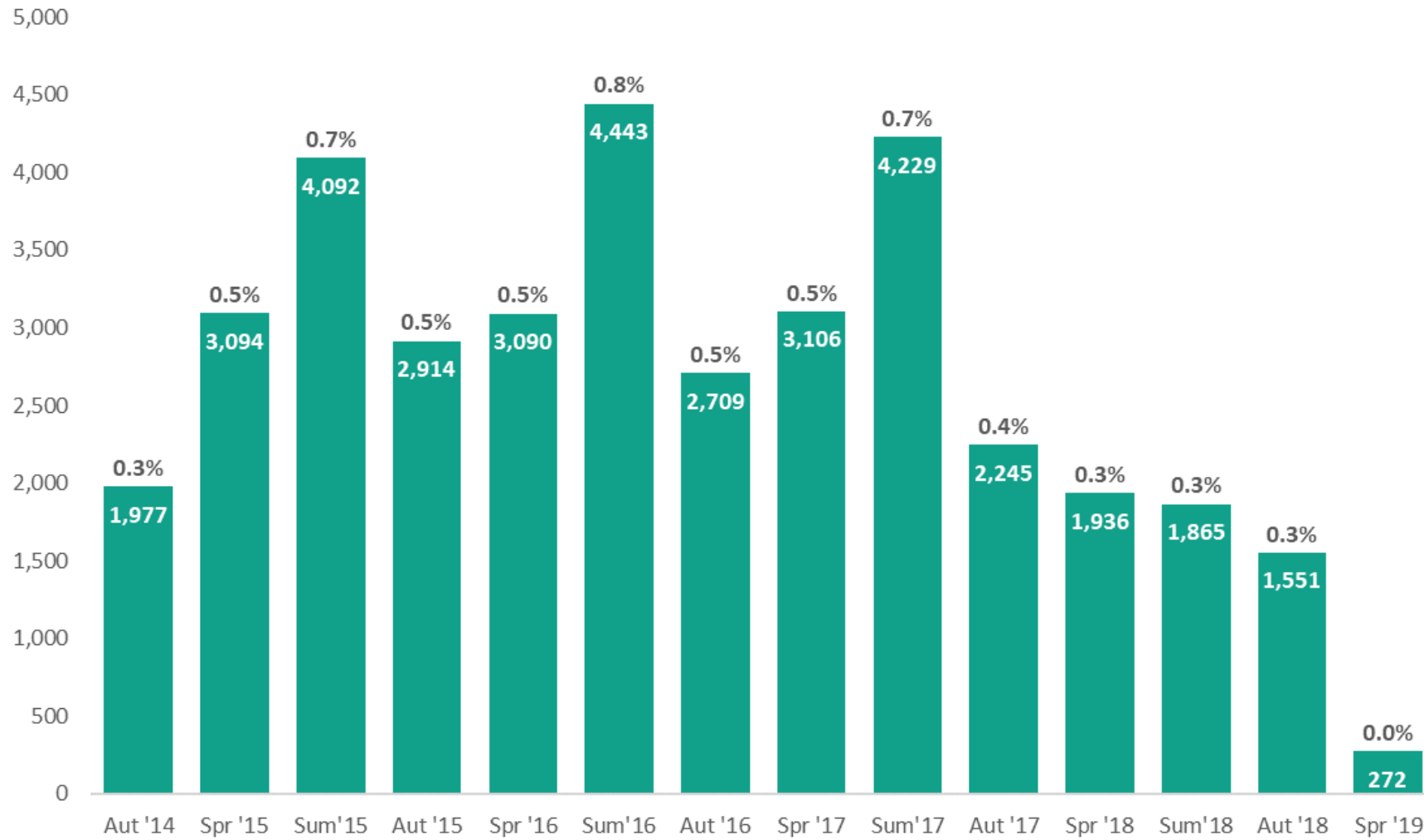
Figure 1.2 Number of unexplained school transfers per pupil
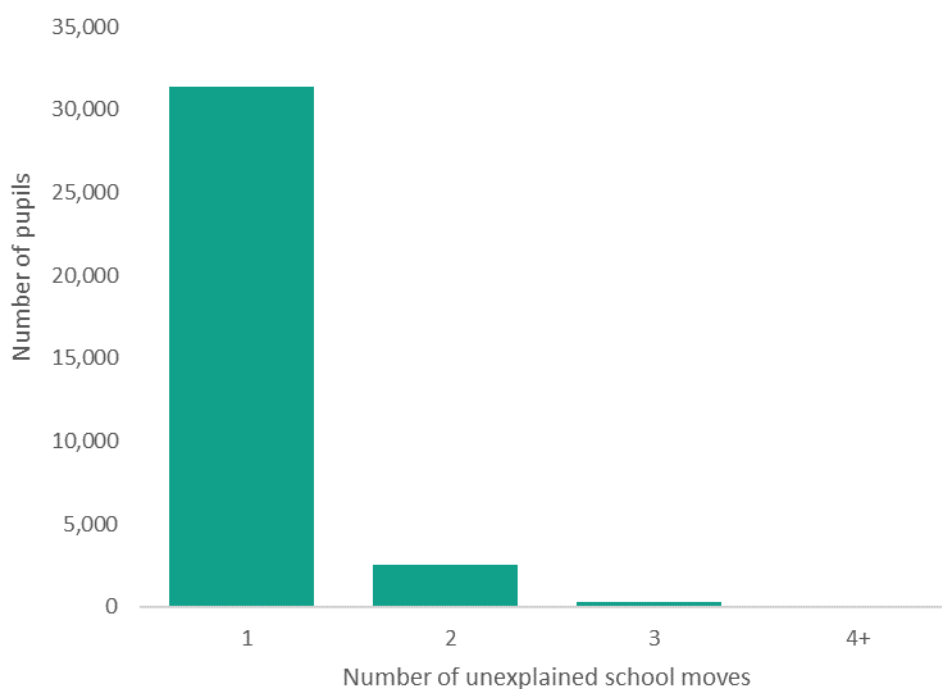
Local authority data on managed moves

In addition to our analysis of administrative data covering English pupils, we sent a Freedom of Information request to all local authorities asking for data on managed moves occurring in secondary schools in 2018/19. Questions included in the FOI request are available in Appendix 2.

We heard back from 138 local authorities (91 per cent). One LA, the Isles of Scilly, has only one school and therefore is not counted in this analysis. Of the 138 LAs which responded, 66 (or 44 per cent of all LAs) provided data. Of the remaining LAs which not hold the data, one in the Midlands responded that the question did not apply to them as all schools in their area were academies. A full list of LAs which held and provided us with data on numbers of managed moves is available in Appendix 2.

This data provides a lower bound estimate of managed moves occurring in secondary schools in 2018/19: just over 5,300 moves. In some cases, the data we were sent provides only a partial picture of managed moves in that area, as schools are not required to report managed moves to the local authority, and therefore only some do.

Characteristics of pupils

We investigated the characteristics of pupils who experience at least one unexplained school transfer in the 2019 cohort (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4). More information on how we used social and demographic variables is presented in Appendix 3.

We found a significantly higher likelihood of experiencing an unexplained school transfer if pupils were identified with a social, emotional, or mental health difficulty (almost one in five) and for pupils who were persistently absent (one in seven). Around one in ten pupils who were ever

identified as 'children in need', who were looked after or who experienced persistent disadvantage experienced at least one unexplained school transfer.

Figure 1.3 Proportion of pupils in each group who have experienced at least one unexplained transfer in secondary school

Group	Percentage
All pupils	5.8%
Boys	5.6%
Girls	6.1%
Ever SEMH	17.9%
Persistent absentee	14.0%
Ever CIN	10.0%
Ever LAC	10.0%
Persistently disadvantaged	9.0%
Ever SEND	8.0%
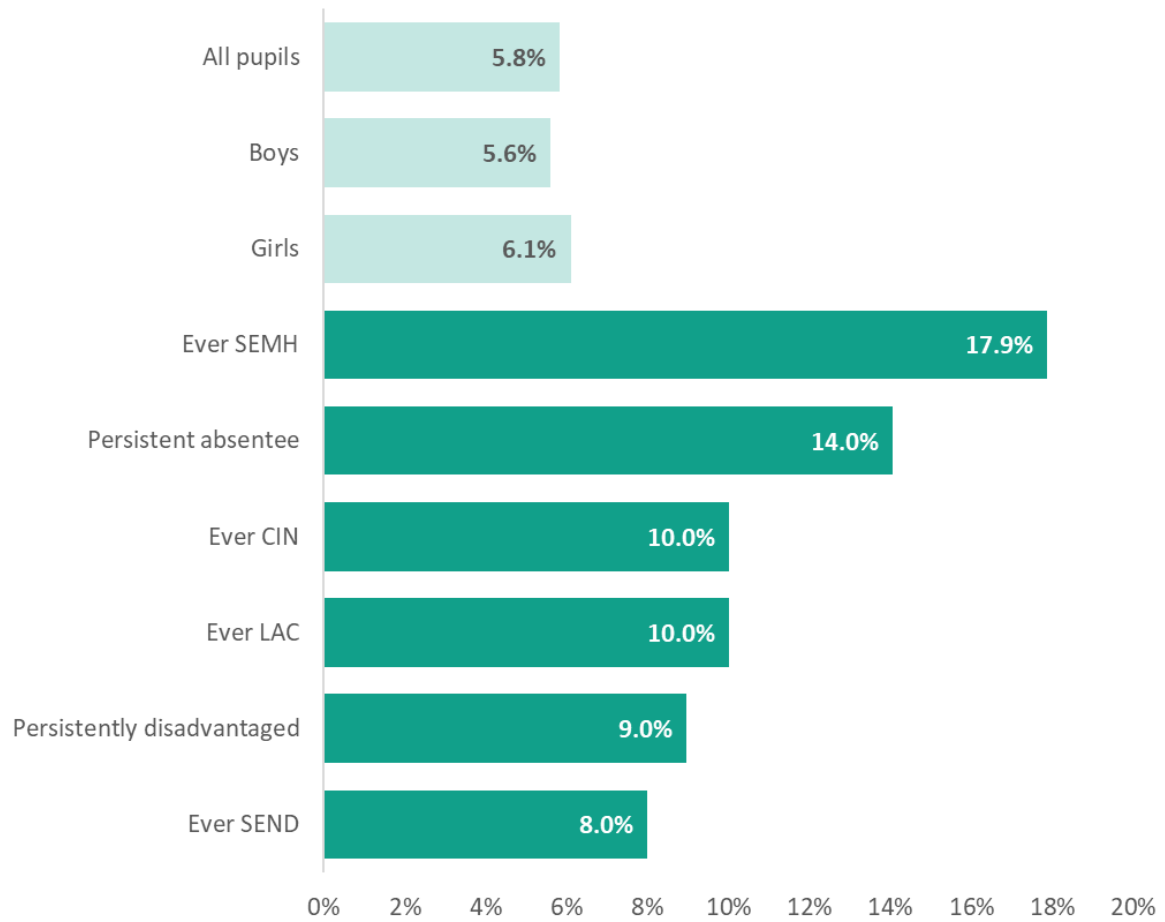
Turning to the effect of ethnicity, we found that pupils from all Black ethnic groups were at increased risk of experiencing an unexplained school transfer, compared with pupils overall and White British pupils. Unexplained school transfers were less common in most other minority ethnic groups compared with pupils overall and White British pupils.

Figure 1.4 Ethnic breakdown of pupils who have experienced at least one unexplained school transfer in secondary school
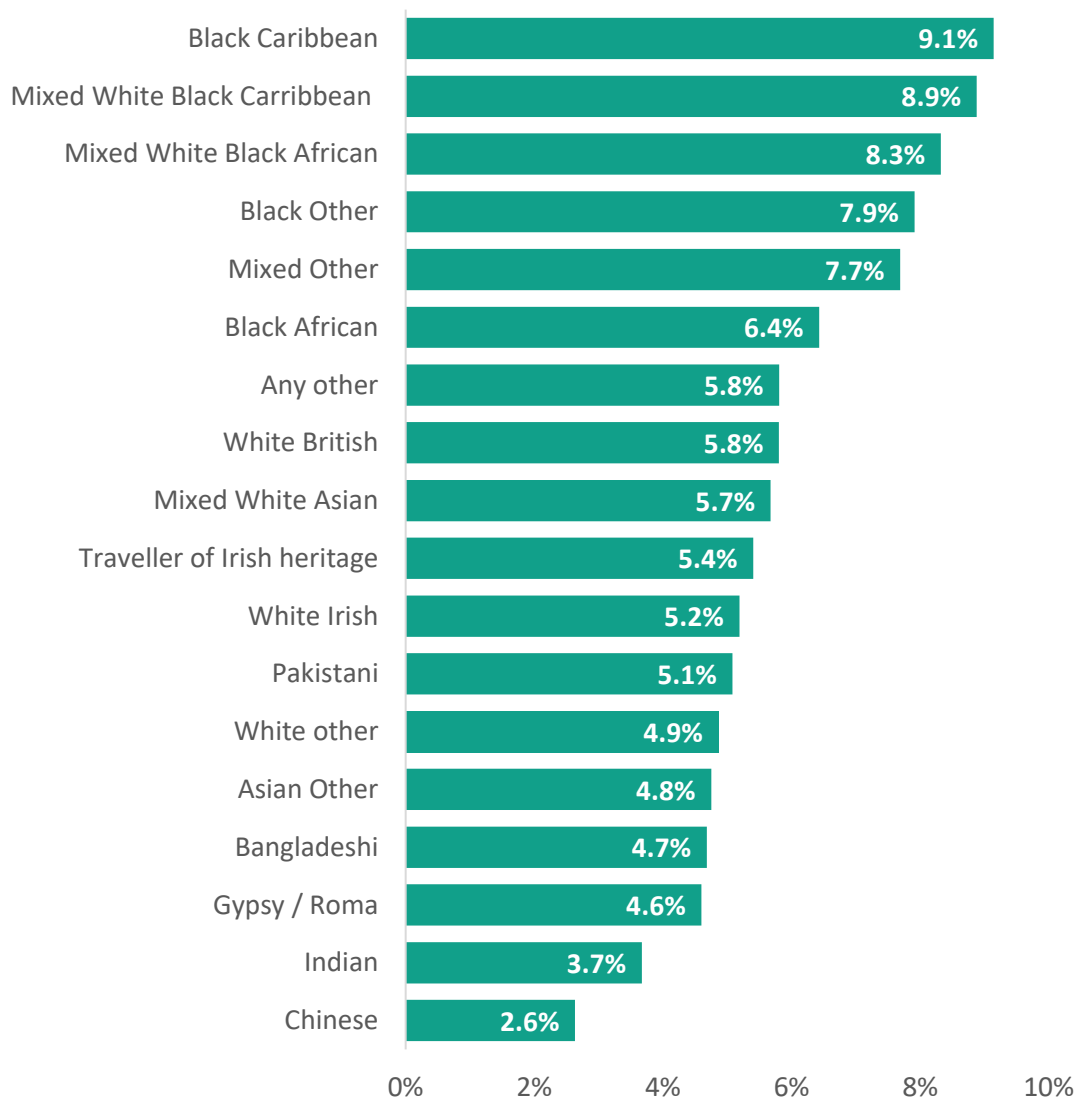
Inequalities in rates of unexplained transfers broadly accord with those seen in rates of official permanent exclusion (PX), with some notable differences. For example, permanent exclusion rates for disadvantaged pupils and those with identified SEND are several times higher than for pupils without these vulnerabilities.[55] Black Caribbean and mixed White and Black Caribbean young people are 1.5-2 times more likely to experience a permanent exclusion, while Black African young people have around the same PX rate as their White British peers. However, boys are considerably more likely than girls to experience a permanent exclusion, whereas we found that girls were

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[55] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions

slightly more likely than boys (6.1 per cent compared with 5.6 per cent) to experience an unexplained transfer.

Part 2: Local authority protocols and rates of unexplained transfers

We analysed local fair access and managed move protocols and, informed by the qualitative literature, investigated if certain features of these protocols were related to local authority rates of school transfers.

According to government guidance, every local authority must have a fair access protocol, the aim of which is to ensure that vulnerable children are allocated a school place as quickly as possible. All but two of the 152 upper tier local authorities had a fair access protocol in place in 2019/2020.

The School Admissions Code stipulates which groups of children are eligible to come before fair access panels. In 2020, these included:

- Children re-integrating from pupil referral units or the criminal justice system;
- Children out of education for two months or more;
- Gypsy, Roma or Traveller and refugee and asylum-seeking children;
- Children who are homeless;
- Unsupportive family background and a school place has not been sought;
- Children who are carers; and
- Children with SEND (without an EHCP).

Additional categories of children were added to this list in 2021:

- Children either subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan within the last 12 months;
- Children living in a refuge or in other Relevant Accommodation;
- Children who have been permanently excluded but are deemed suitable for mainstream education;
- Children in formal kinship care arrangements;
- Children who have been refused a school place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour;
- Children for whom a place has not been sought due to exceptional circumstances;
- Children who have been out of education for 4 or more weeks where it can be demonstrated that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home; and
- Previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place.

Government guidance on managed moves has historically been much less detailed. Until 2023, there were only two directives included in exclusions guidance: that all parties must consent to the managed move and the threat of exclusion must never be used. The new guidance, 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement', lays out slightly more detailed guidance for schools, including that the local authority should be involved in any managed move of a pupil with an EHCP, that schools should be able to evidence initial interventions prior to a managed move, that information on the pupil and circumstances should be shared between the two schools involved, and that parents who

feel pressured into a managed move can take up the issue through the school's formal complaint route.[56]

We assessed the extent to which protocols line up with government guidance, including for admissions following a permanent exclusion.

How fair access protocols compare with government guidance

We first looked at whether local fair access protocols complied with government guidance, focusing on the following features:

- The vulnerable groups of pupils covered by the fair access protocol;
- Whether any additional groups were included;
- Separate pathways or processes for behaviour-linked transfers;
- Whether there were specific arrangements for placements into AP or PRUs;
- Admissions following a permanent exclusion; and
- References to the non-participation of some schools.

Most local authorities (87 per cent) explicitly listed all vulnerable groups of pupils which should be covered by FAPs according to government guidance. All local authorities which listed the School Admissions Code groups also included additional groups, for example:

- Pupils known to services;
- New arrivals to the area who are unable to secure a school place;
- Persistently absent pupils;
- Year 11 pupils who arrive after the start of the school year; or
- Pupils who have experienced a permanent exclusion.

This suggests that in most areas, the wider range of need of pupils and families in and moving into the area were being considered and many categories added to the guidance in 2021 were pre-empted in most areas.

Twenty-seven protocols (18 per cent) referred to a specific behaviour pathway, and 63 (41 per cent) acknowledged behaviour as a factor which contributes to difficulty in finding a school place. Some examples of the behaviour-specific pathways a local authority may offer are:

- A pupil placement panel which meets regularly;
- Behaviour and attendance school partnerships;
- A 12-week social and emotional learning placement;
- A specific pathway for twice-excluded pupils;
- Year 10 or 11 pupils with social, emotional or behavioural issues might be dual registered in alternative provision or work with an educational psychologist;
- A behaviour intervention panel; or
- Separate thresholds for behaviour-related moves.

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[56]
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181584/Suspension_and_permanent_exclusion_guidance_september_23.pdf

In a minority of LAs (15), protocols mentioned the possibility of reduced or part-time timetables, which may be appropriate for pupils with certain additional needs.

As of 2021, all local authority fair access protocols should cover pupils who have been permanently excluded. According to documents we collected in 2020, in 65 local authorities (43 per cent), admissions and placements for pupils who have been permanently excluded were not explicitly covered by the fair access panel. It is unclear if a permanently excluded pupil would be eligible to be placed through the panel in these areas.

In 13 LAs (9 per cent), it was either unclear or not specified if all or the majority of schools must participate in the fair access protocol. In 43 areas (28 per cent), protocols clearly state the local authority has the power to direct the admission authority for any maintained school in its area to admit a child, including permanently excluded pupils. In practice, this is a more straightforward process for LA-maintained schools than for academies, as outlined in many of the protocols: where a LA considers that an academy will best meet the needs of a child, it can ask the academy to admit that child but has no power to direct it to do so. If the academy refuses to admit the child, the LA can ask the Secretary of State, who has the power under an academy's funding agreement to direct the academy to admit a child, to intervene.

Finally, there was evidence of dual, and potentially conflicting, purposes of local fair access protocols across the documents we reviewed. These were:

- Ensuring vulnerable children's needs are met; and
- Ensuring that no school in the area admits a disproportionate number of these pupils.

Generally, in order to refuse a placement directed by the fair access panel, schools had to provide evidence of the high number of fair access pupils, or pupils with behaviour challenges, already in the school; however, in some areas it appeared that schools would still be allowed to refuse the admission of pupils even if the admissions team states that there is no legal basis for the refusal.

Next, we evaluated the protocols based on a list of features which some of the literature suggests may be barriers or enablers to 'successful' managed moves, as well as clarity of guidance for schools, level of oversight, and the extent to which parents and pupils are involved. We have grouped these into the following three areas:

- How decisions are made and who is involved;
- Protocols for managed moves, including considerations for placements; and
- Records, transparency, and independence.

Below, we discuss the features of local authority fair access and managed move protocols. For each of the features under three areas listed above, we have assigned a red, amber or green (RAG) rating; here we present the numbers and proportions of local authorities rated red, amber and green on the features explored. More information on how we rated LA protocols' features is available in Appendix 6.

How decisions around managed moves are made and the parties involved

We explored 12 aspects of the decision-making process around managed moves (or other school-initiated transfers):

- A rationale or theory for pursuing a managed move;
- A process in place to initiate a move;
- Timelines or the schedule of meetings for panel or relevant participants;
- External checks on schools regarding prior efforts to avoid a move;
- Where alternatives to a move are considered;
- Participants in decision-making regarding new placements;
- Suitability of the receiving school for the pupil;
- Consideration of factors apart from a change of school;
- Level of consideration of parental preference;
- Information provided to parents and the format of this information;
- What happens if parents reject an offer (and whether permanent exclusions are mentioned); and
- Parental consent forms used.

The proportion of the 152 local authorities rated as 'green', 'amber' and 'red' against these items is presented in Figure 2.1. LA protocols were mainly rated 'red' if they did not address the feature. For the features 'participants' (stakeholders which participate in decision-making) and 'rejection' (contingency if parents do not agree to a move), LA protocols which made clear that only schools were involved and that a PX might occur respectively were rated 'red' as well. Protocols were generally rated 'amber' if they addressed the feature but in a vague way; for 'participants', protocols which stated that the panel or LA professionals were not involved or did not have to be involved in the process, but parents and/or pupils were, were also rated 'amber'. More information on how we rated protocols is available in Appendix 6.

Figure 2.1: The proportion of local authorities rated red, amber, and green on features related to decision making
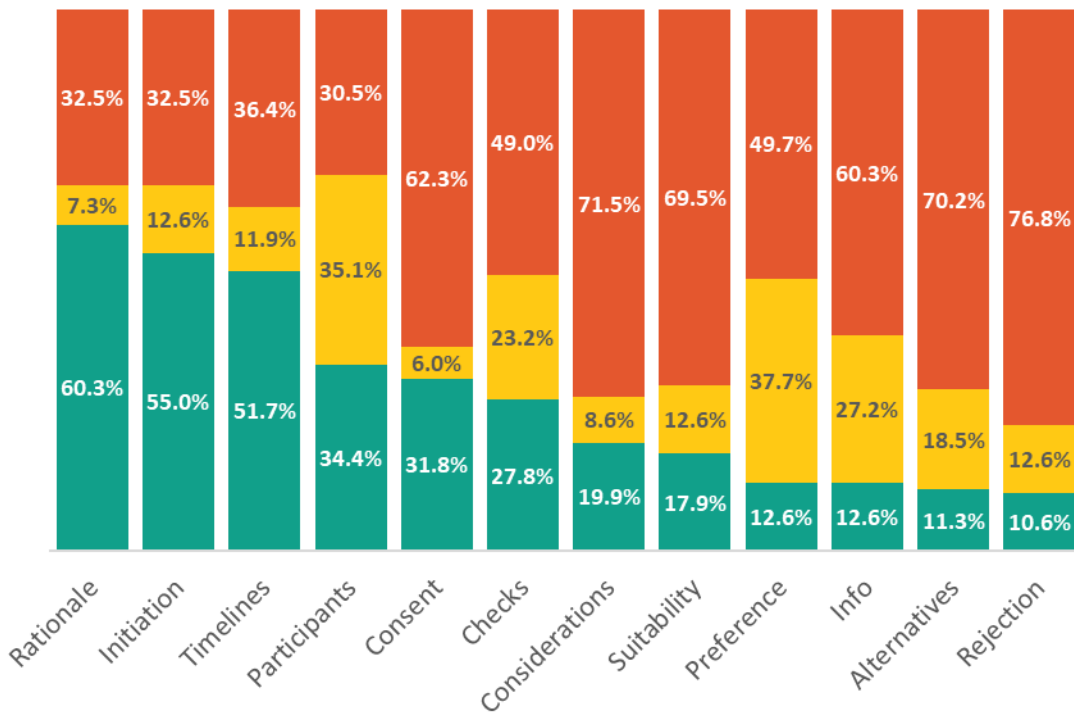
The majority of local authorities scored amber or red for features related to decision-making, with the exception of providing a rationale, laying out an initiation process for managed moves, and specifying timelines for meetings between stakeholders and check-ins during the trial period.

Over half of LAs stated a rationale, and laid out a process to initiate a move and for monitoring how a move was progressing. In most cases, managed moves are described as providing a 'fresh start' for pupils and explicitly, in some, as an alternative to a permanent exclusion. There is evidence of contradictory rationales across LAs: in some areas, managed moves are stated to be part of an early intervention strategy, in others they are considered a last resort, to be used only for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion, once other strategies have been exhausted.

In just over a third of LAs, the fair access panel or relevant external professionals (for example, local authority inclusion leads) were involved in the process. In the majority of areas, the LA is not involved in the managed move process, although managed moves brokered by schools may be reported to them. In at least one area, it was clear that managed moves used to be centrally coordinated and are now private arrangements between individual head teachers or groups of schools.

A third of LAs provided a consent form for parents to sign; in a few areas, LAs provided forms for pupils to consent to the move as well.

In over a quarter of LA protocols, there was evidence that the fair access panel included an LA representative and/or specified, relevant LA professional who was involved in verifying that a school had tried other approaches to supporting a pupil before considering a move. In fewer than a fifth of areas, there was evidence that the suitability of the receiving school for a pupil's needs was considered; in a similar proportion, there was evidence that additional factors aside from the change in personalities were considered. These included:

- The pupil's views, needs and/or interests;
- The proximity, size, teaching staff, peer group and/or specialism of the receiving school;
- How the move will help the pupil;
- How the new school will support them;
- The religious affiliation of the pupil and receiving school.

It was explicitly stated in only 13 per cent of protocols that parental preference would be factored into decisions, and in 11 per cent of areas there was a rejection contingency for parents who did not agree to the move, for example, the pupil would be referred back to the panel, the parent could pursue admission to another school through the normal admissions process, or the school would 'continue to support' the pupil. In one area in the South East, the protocol stated that parents were informed of the move and could consent after the receiving school had already agreed to accept the pupil. These findings suggest that the principle of school choice is less available to the most vulnerable pupils.

In one London LA, there was evidence that a dual approach was taken: when the panel was involved in a decision around a placement, parental views were taken into account as well as how a different school might meet a pupil's needs. This was not specified in the case of school-brokered moves: in these cases, parental views are 'considered but they are expected to accept the offer.'

In at least one area, there was evidence that a pupil may be excluded if the move is not agreed to: the protocol states that parents can refuse the offer and a PX may be considered. In another LA, the protocol states that 'schools will abide by their disciplinary policy' in cases of refusal.

In one in ten protocols, there was evidence that alternatives to a move had been considered.

The remainder of local authority protocols were mostly either vague or did not specify the LA's approach in each area of decision-making.

Protocols for managed moves

Next, we looked at protocols for managed moves once they are agreed. A quarter of local authorities (38) did not have a specific managed move protocol, but some fair access protocols addressed some aspects of the managed move process.

Some protocols provided additional guidance around groups of pupils for whom managed moves are not appropriate, for example pupils with an EHCP, pupils in year 11, pupils with a Child Protection Plan or those who are looked after. Yet, in other areas, LA guidance states that moves are appropriate for looked after children and those with EHCPs, if the virtual school head or SEND team respectively are involved. In one local authority, the protocol states that a pupil considered for a managed move is 'normally at least at SEND support on the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice'. This is potentially in conflict with the SEND code of practice, as schools are not permitted to remove pupils because they have SEND, and school placements should be considered through the EHCP process and not as managed moves – and only if the school is genuinely unable to meet the pupil's SEND needs because a specialist place or SEN unit place is required.[57]

We explored the following eight features related to managed move protocols:

- Whether trial periods were used;
- Whether pupils were dual registered at the home and receiving schools during the trial period;
- Whether the trial period was monitored;
- Whether attendance was monitored;
- Outcomes following an 'unsuccessful' managed move, i.e., one which does not result in the pupil joining the receiving school's roll;
- Evidence of the purpose of the move;
- Which parties sign off on the outcome; and
- The points during the process at which parental consent is sought.

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[57] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Figure 2.2: The proportion of local authorities rated red, amber and green on protocols for managed moves
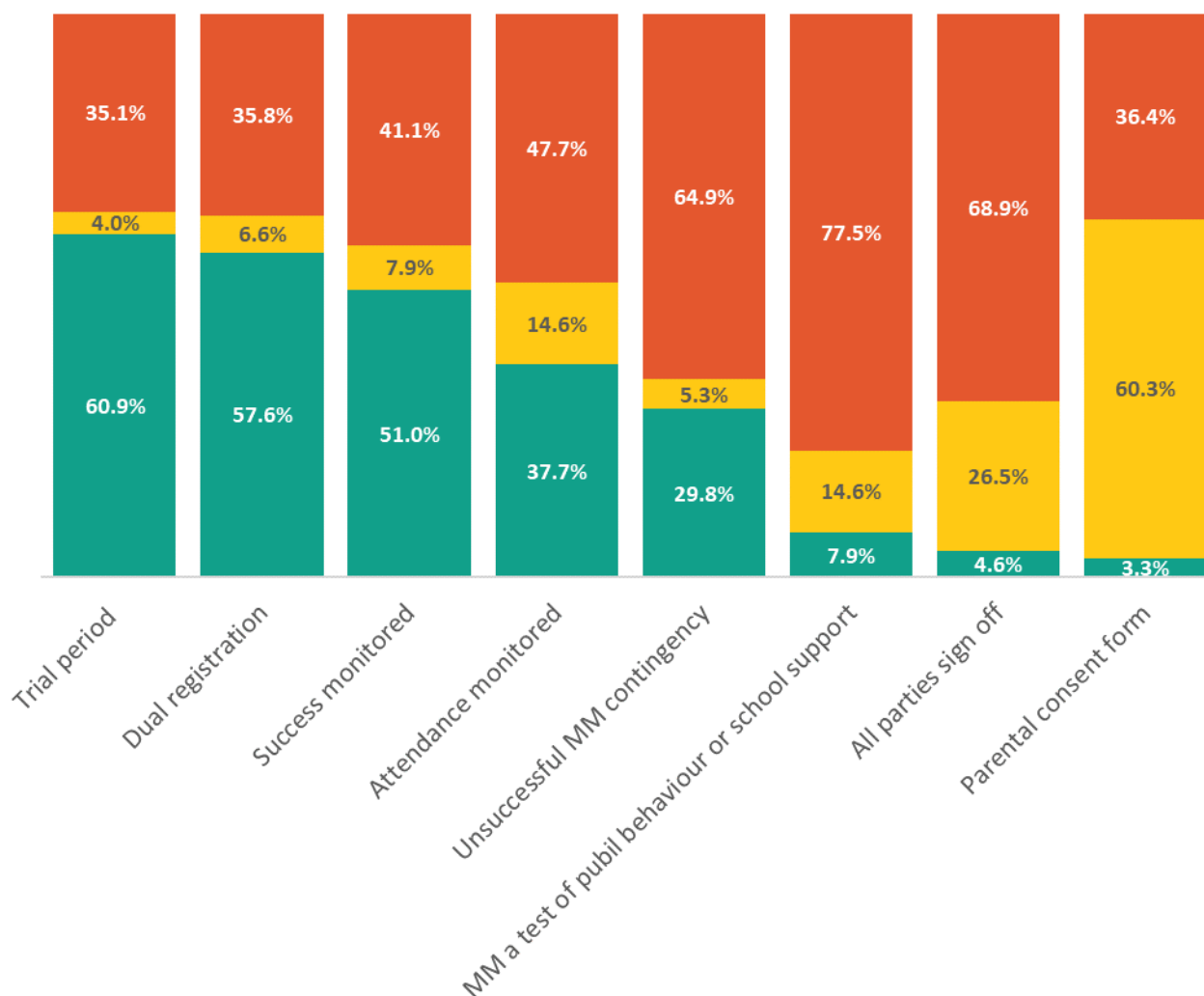
As seen in Figure 2.2, most LA protocols stated that trial periods should be used. According to the qualitative evidence on managed moves, moves framed as 'trials' can act as a barrier to a pupil's sense of belonging in the new school – however, most managed moves are characteristically trial periods which involve a period of dual registration. The issue of framing should not be conflated with dual registration for the purpose of ensuring pupils have a school place should the move not work out. The majority of LAs specify the length of trial periods for managed moves. However, there is significant variation in the length of trial periods, with some lasting four weeks, and others up to a term or six months. A majority of LAs also specified that pupils should be dual registered at the home and receiving schools during the trial.

In about half of LAs, the pupil's experience at the receiving school was monitored. Approaches to review meetings varied – in some cases, specific targets for 'success' were set at beginning of the trial period. Meetings could be held every few weeks, and the number of meetings expected was occasionally specified; this could also depend on the length of the trial period. In most cases, an additional meeting is held at the end of the trial period to decide whether to extend the trial. In a

handful of LAs, monitoring was more reactive, with a meeting only occurring if there are 'signs the placement is breaking down'.

In Figure 2.3, we highlight the proportion LAs which we rated red for the following reasons:

- Parental consent was only sought before the move;
- The move appeared to be solely a trial of the pupil's behaviour;
- The protocol states that the pupil may be excluded if the managed move 'fails'; and
- Only the school signs off on the outcomes following the conclusion of the trial period.

In around half of areas, parental approval for the move was only secured before the move took place, raising questions about provisions for parents who do not feel the move, as it progresses, is working for their child. In nine out of ten areas *with a managed move protocol* and a third of LAs overall, success of the move was judged based solely on a pupil's behaviour in the receiving school. In most of these, pupils returned to their home school if the receiving school judged the managed move to have failed.

In about a fifth of local authorities (32), pupils may be placed on another managed move, into alternative provision, or face a suspension or permanent exclusion if the move 'fails'; seven LA protocols state that a permanent exclusion is an option. In two cases, protocols stated that a permanent exclusion may be part of the original agreement if the managed move does not work out.

In at least six local authorities, a pupil could be suspended or permanently excluded during a trial move. One LA in the East of England stated that during a trial period, education may take place off site, but it is not clear if this would be recorded.

Figure 2.3: Proportion of local authority protocols which included the following features

Parents only consent before the move: 53.6%
Move is a trial of pupil's behaviour: 29.1%
Possible PX if pupil returns: 21.2%
School signs off: 9.9%
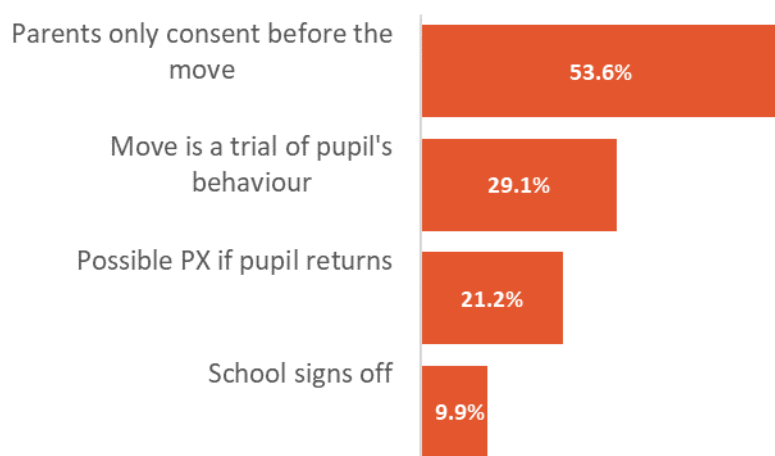
Records, transparency, and independence

Next, we explored transparency and independence in the managed move process, including:

- Whether minutes were kept;
- Whether any records of decisions cover discussion with parents or only the panel, if the latter is involved;
- Whether there is a truly independent member who is part of the decision-making process;
- The LA professionals / roles involved in decisions; and
- Contingency if agreement cannot be reached by mutual consent of all parties.

Figure 2.6 shows that overall, most LAs rank poorly for keeping records of panel meetings, including recording parental views. Most also do not specify if parents have the right to appeal decisions, and a minority explicitly state that they do not have the right of appeal in the case of a managed move decision. According to government guidance, managed moves are intended to be agreed by mutual consent of all parties, and therefore the right to appeal may be considered not applicable.

Figure 2.6 The proportion of local authorities rated red, amber, and green on features related to records and transparency

	LA roles specified	Parent can appeal	Minutes kept	Parents' views recorded	Parent can invite independent advocate
Red	38.4%	72.8%	76.8%	89.4%	36.4%
Amber	13.9%	11.9%	7.9%	8.6%	62.9%
Green	47.7%	15.2%	15.2%	2.0%	0.7%
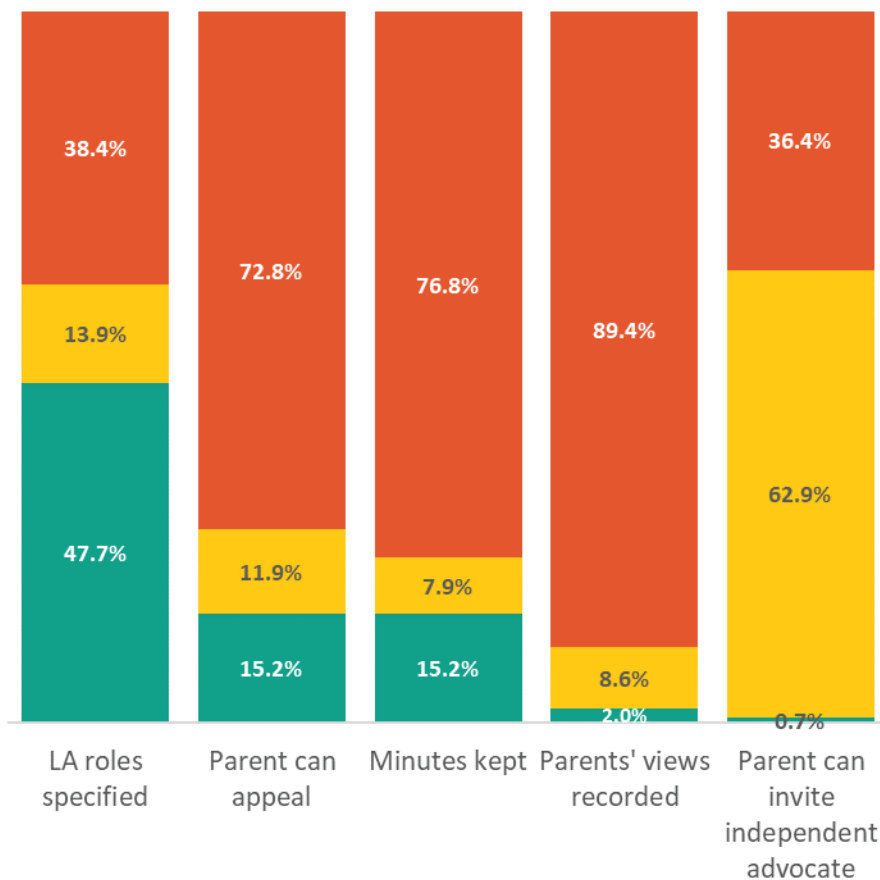
Local authority rates of unexplained school transfers and features of managed move protocols

Next, we looked at unexplained school transfers occurring in all years of secondary school in the 2018/19 academic year and variation in rates across local authorities, as well as the relationship between levels of unexplained school transfers and key features of local protocols.

We found that a total of 31,301 moves were experienced by 30,613 pupils in the 2018/19 academic year. We generated local authority rates of unexplained school transfers – or the total number of transfers divided by the total number of pupils in the LA – in secondary school for the 2018/19 academic year. These ranged from 0.4 per cent to 2.5 per cent (see Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7 Local authority rates of unexplained school transfers in secondary schools in 2018/19

Local Authority	Rate
Rutland	0.38%
Warrington	0.56%
Trafford	0.59%
Brent	0.63%
Sutton	0.65%
Nottinghamshire	0.67%
Telford and Wrekin	0.67%
Barnsley	0.68%
Bolton	0.69%
Cambridgeshire	0.71%
Northumberland	0.71%
Rotherham	0.75%
Redcar and Cleveland	0.76%
Windsor and Maidenhead	0.76%
Stockport	0.76%
Middlesbrough	0.77%
Nottingham	0.79%
Warwickshire	0.79%
Gloucestershire	0.79%
Dudley	0.80%
Surrey	0.80%
Worcestershire	0.81%
Lancashire	0.81%
County Durham	0.82%
Staffordshire	0.82%
Stockton-on-Tees	0.83%
York	0.84%
Wirral	0.84%
Bradford	0.85%
Leicestershire	0.85%
West Berkshire	0.85%
Buckinghamshire	0.86%
Ealing	0.86%
Walsall	0.86%
Herefordshire, County of	0.87%
East Riding of Yorkshire	0.87%
Merton	0.87%
Kingston upon Thames	0.88%
Stoke-on-Trent	0.88%
Oldham	0.88%
Wakefield	0.89%
Wiltshire	0.89%
Solihull	0.89%
North Yorkshire	0.90%
Essex	0.90%
Westminster	0.90%
Hertfordshire	0.90%
Calderdale	0.91%
Medway	0.92%
Oxfordshire	0.92%

Norfolk	0.92%
Wolverhampton	0.92%
Sheffield	0.93%
Cheshire West and Chester	0.94%
Derbyshire	0.96%
Shropshire	0.96%
Dorset	0.96%
Somerset	0.97%
Kent	0.98%
Southwark	1.00%
Leeds	1.01%
Cumbria	1.01%
Cheshire East	1.02%
North Somerset	1.03%
Kirklees	1.03%
Blackburn with Darwen	1.04%
Richmond upon Thames	1.04%
Rochdale	1.04%
Newham	1.06%
Hampshire	1.06%
Central Bedfordshire	1.06%
Bromley	1.07%
Torbay	1.07%
Wigan	1.07%
Cornwall	1.09%
East Sussex	1.09%
Manchester	1.09%
Devon	1.09%
Peterborough	1.10%
West Sussex	1.10%
Barnet	1.10%
Tameside	1.11%
Darlington	1.12%
Halton	1.12%
Newcastle upon Tyne	1.13%
Luton	1.15%
Milton Keynes	1.16%
Hammersmith and Fulham	1.16%
Haringey	1.17%
Redbridge	1.17%
Northamptonshire	1.19%
Doncaster	1.19%
Leicester	1.19%
Lambeth	1.21%
Sunderland	1.21%
Thurrock	1.22%
Portsmouth	1.22%
Birmingham	1.22%
Bracknell Forest	1.23%
Salford	1.24%

Region	Percentage
Bath and North East Somerset	1.24%
Hounslow	1.26%
Sandwell	1.26%
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	1.27%
Slough	1.29%
Wokingham	1.30%
Hackney	1.30%
Enfield	1.30%
Swindon	1.31%
Blackpool	1.31%
Southend-on-Sea	1.31%
Brighton and Hove	1.33%
Southampton	1.33%
Suffolk	1.34%
Liverpool	1.34%
Lewisham	1.36%
Sefton	1.38%
North East Lincolnshire	1.38%
Coventry	1.39%
Havering	1.40%
Bury	1.41%
Camden	1.41%
Kensington and Chelsea	1.42%
Hillingdon	1.42%
Derby	1.45%
Lincolnshire	1.46%
Croydon	1.46%
Bristol, City of	1.49%
Harrow	1.49%
Plymouth	1.50%
Gateshead	1.51%
Wandsworth	1.52%
Barking and Dagenham	1.52%
Bexley	1.52%
North Lincolnshire	1.53%
Bedford	1.55%
Hartlepool	1.56%
North Tyneside	1.57%
Isle of Wight	1.62%
Waltham Forest	1.67%
South Gloucestershire	1.68%
Reading	1.71%
Greenwich	1.78%
St. Helens	1.82%
Tower Hamlets	2.01%
Islington	2.02%
Kingston upon Hull, City of	2.05%
Knowsley	2.08%
South Tyneside	2.45%

We tested the relationship between local authority rates of transfers and certain features of local protocols. We chose features which, according to our literature review, are related to the success of managed moves, and therefore may be related to overall levels of unexplained school transfers, which include all instances of managed moves. We posit that local authorities which have these features in place may see a higher proportion of managed moves which result in a stable placement in the receiving school, or a lower proportion of 'unsuccessful' managed moves in which the pupil returns to the home school or fair access panel and is placed on another move, and therefore a lower rate of unexplained transfers overall. These features included:

1. Whether the LA had a managed move protocol (yes / no);
2. Whether success of the move was monitored (yes / no);
3. Whether parental preferences were factored into decisions (yes / no);
4. Whether the suitability of the receiving school was considered (yes / no);
5. Whether broader factors beyond the change in school were considered (yes / no); and
6. Whether parents could appeal a school decision to move a pupil (yes / no).

We treated the six explanatory variables as binary and tested the relationship between each feature and LA rates of unexplained transfers using regression analysis.

We found no significant difference in mean rates of unexplained transfers between local authorities which did possess the six features of interest and those which did not. In separate models for each feature of interest, the association between each feature and the LA rate of unexplained transfers was not significant at the 95 per cent level. Next, we controlled for the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM), rurality of the local authority, and the proportion of minority ethnic pupils in the LA – all factors associated with pupil mobility around the education system and significantly associated with LA rates of unexplained transfers in bivariate tests. While the proportion of pupils eligible for FSM remained significantly associated with LA rates of unexplained transfers in separate models for each feature of interest, no other variables were significantly associated with the rate of unexplained transfers.

Results from our regression analysis are available in Appendix 7.

Possible reasons for why we did not detect any significant association between features of protocols and transfer rates include:

- Our analysis picks up all instances of school transfers which appear unrelated to family choice. These will include managed moves and other forms of 'grey' exclusion, but we cannot precisely identify cases of managed moves using this approach. In any case, the definition of a managed move may vary across local authorities, given there is little to no regulation and guidance around them.
- There is a disconnect between written protocols and practice in LAs. For example, LAs which did not explicitly state that the suitability of the receiving school will be taken into account may still consider this in their decision to move a pupil there.
- Regarding features three and six, in many areas, and according to government guidance, managed moves are meant to be agreed by mutual consent of all parties, and therefore parents' views and right to appeal may be considered irrelevant after initial consent is given. However, it is unclear what provision is made for parents to withdraw consent as the

managed move progresses and/or if they decide the move is no longer in the child's best interests.

- For this analysis, we recoded all 'vague' or 'unclear' responses to 'no', given that there was no explicit evidence in the protocol that any given feature was included – however, we conducted sensitivity analysis in which we kept the original coding, and this did not affect the results.

- It is possible that even if factors identified in the qualitative literature as important for a 'successful' managed move, or one which is a positive experience for the pupil, are in place in a local authority (for example, parental involvement in the decision-making process, or consideration of the suitability of a school) this does not contribute to the overall number of managed moves in an area.

- The lack of guidance and regulation from central government, and the resulting wide range of local approaches to managed moves, mean that factors aside from protocols are more likely to predict levels of moves.

Part 3: Destinations for pupils who experience an unexplained transfer or managed move

In this section, we present findings from our analysis of all secondary pupils finishing year 11 in 2019 and from a Freedom of Information request to local authorities about destinations following managed moves.

Pupils who experience a school transfer: permanent exclusions and year 11 destinations

We investigated destinations in year 11 for pupils in the 2019 cohort who experienced an unexplained school transfer (see Figure 3.1). These pupils were more likely to finish secondary school in alternative provision (9.8 per cent compared with 0.7 per cent of pupils without an unexplained transfer) and were less likely to be in a mainstream converter academy or free school, (39.4 per cent compared with 49.3 per cent of pupils without an unexplained transfer). Additionally, 9.8 per cent of pupils who experienced an unexplained school transfer in secondary school were not recorded in a school in year 11, compared with 7.2 per cent of pupils who did not experience an unexplained move.

Figure 3.1 The proportion of pupils who experience at least one unexplained school transfer (UT) in the 2019 cohort in each school type in the spring term of year 11
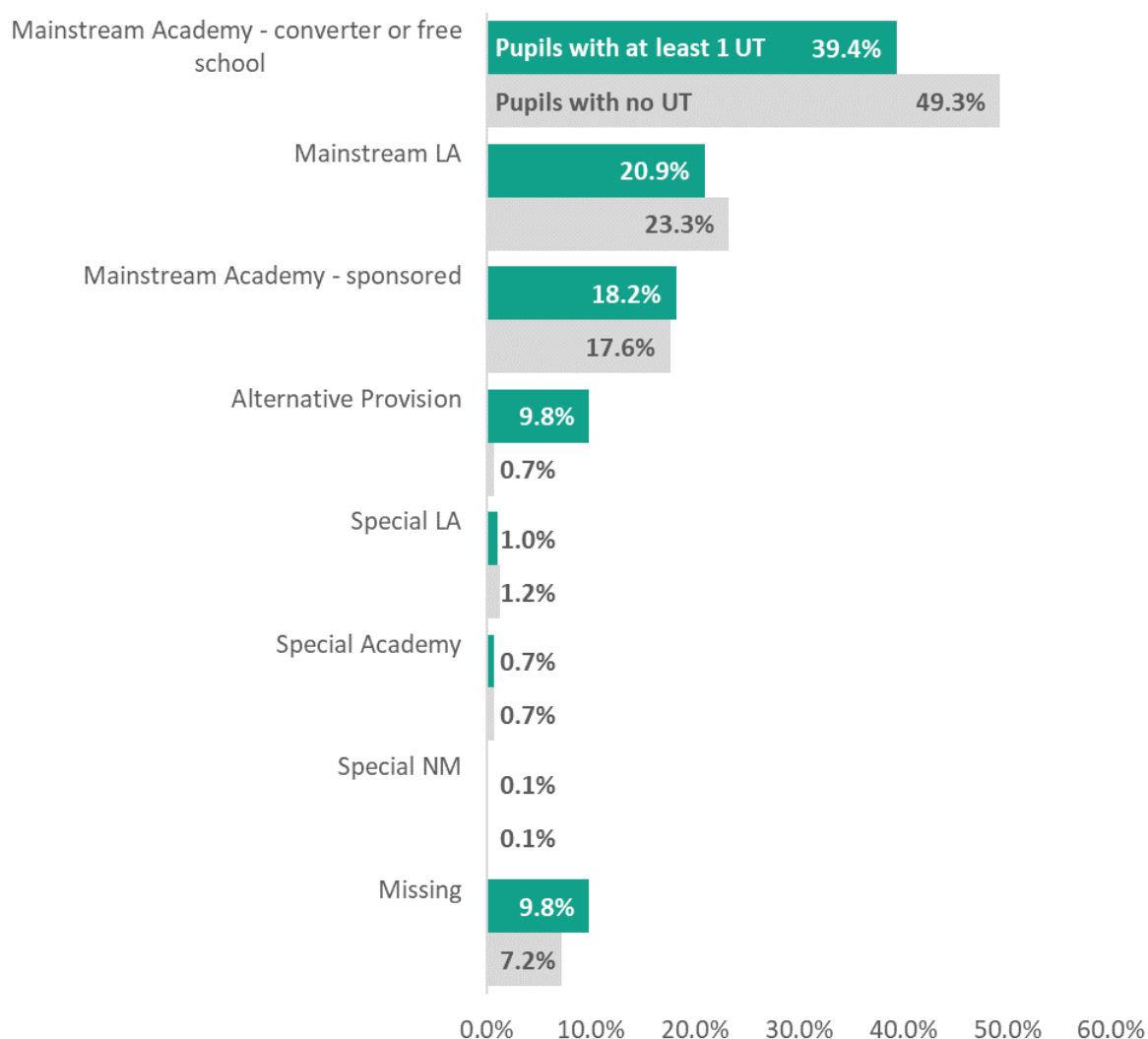
As seen in Figure 3.2, the majority of pupils in the 2019 cohort did not experience a permanent exclusion. However, around 4.5 per cent of pupils who experienced an unexplained school transfer also experienced a permanent exclusion, compared with 0.8 per cent of those who did not experience any unexplained moves.

Figure 3.2 The number and proportion of pupils who experienced at least one unexplained school transfers (UT) and one permanent exclusion (PX)

	At least 1 UT	No UTs
At least 1 PX	1,555 (4.5%)	4,612 (0.8%)
No PX	32,702 (95.5%)	548,339 (99.2%)

These figures do not demonstrate a causal relationship between unexplained school transfers, including managed moves, and permanent exclusion, or between experiencing an unexplained

move and finishing secondary school in alternative provision. However, they indicate that these experiences are associated, and pupils who experience one are more likely to experience the other.

Pupils who experience a managed move: local authority data on outcomes

In addition to our analysis of administrative data covering pupils in England, we sent a Freedom of Information request to all local authorities asking for data on managed moves experienced by pupils in secondary schools in 2018/19. Specifically, we asked about:

- The number of managed moves in which a pupil joined the receiving school's roll ('successful').
- The number of managed moves in which a pupil returned to the home school following a managed move ('unsuccessful').
- Outcomes for pupils who return to the home school following a managed move/trial period in the receiving school (including another managed move, a move into alternative provision, or a permanent exclusion).

'Successful' v 'unsuccessful' managed moves

We asked LAs about the proportion of 'successful' managed moves, or moves which resulted in the pupil moving onto the receiving school's roll, in 2018/19. We heard back from 138 local authorities (91 per cent). Amongst the 59 LAs (about 40 per cent of all LAs) which held this data:

- 12 per cent reported that less than a quarter of all managed moves resulted in the pupil moving to the receiving school permanently.
- 49 per cent reported that between a quarter and a half of moves resulted in the pupil staying in the receiving school.
- 30 per cent reported that between a half and three quarters of moves resulted in the pupil staying in the receiving school.
- 9 per cent reported that at least three quarters of moves resulted in the pupil staying in the receiving school (see Figure 3.3).

Across the LAs which provided us with data, only around two in five managed moves in 2018/19 were 'successful' or resulted in the pupil staying on the receiving school's roll.

Figure 3.3: The proportion of managed moves which result in a pupil staying on the receiving school's roll

Legend: ■ Proportion of LAs that responded with data on MMs ■ Proportion of all LAs

Data by category:
- Less than 25%: 12.3% / 4.6%
- Between 25% and 50%: 49.1% / 18.5%
- Between 50% and 75%: 29.8% / 11.3%
- More than 75%: 8.8% / 3.3%
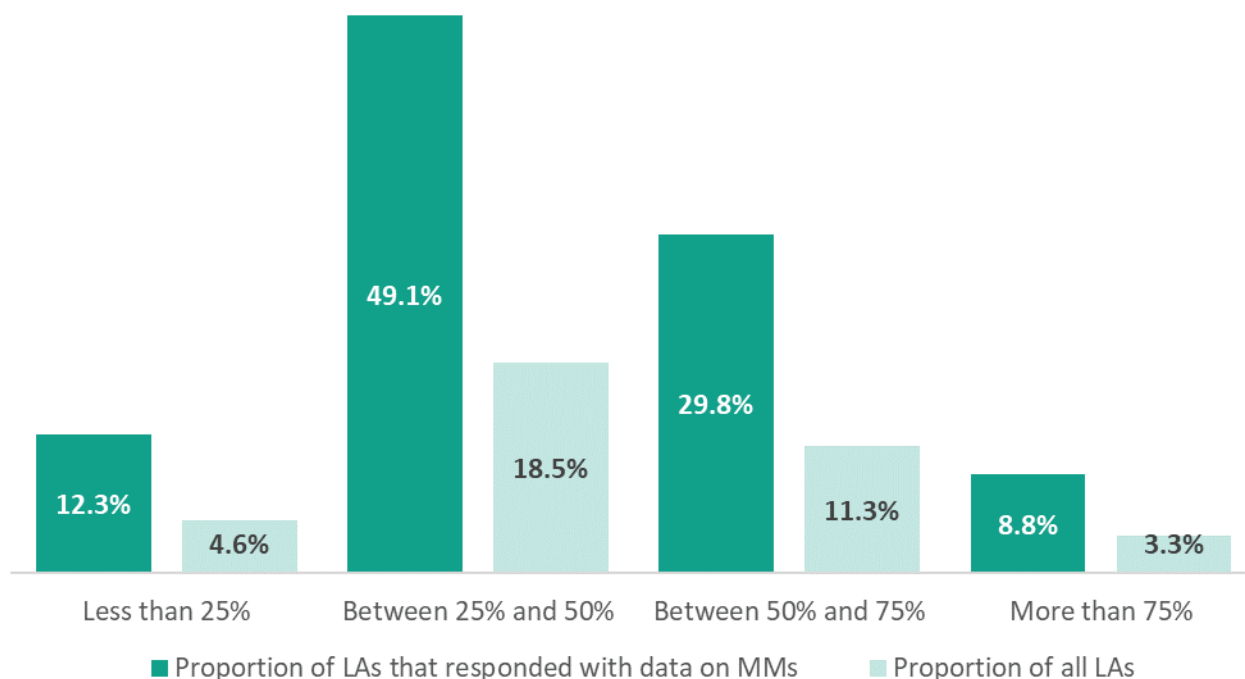
As one LA pointed out, periods of placement or dual registration in another school can be 'respite placements' meaning that the pupil would be expected to return to the home school at the end of the placement. However, according to government guidance, off-site direction as a short-term measure to improve behaviour is a distinct approach; the purpose of a managed move is for a pupil to join the receiving school's roll.

Outcomes for pupils who return to their home school

We asked local authorities about destinations of pupils who return to their home school after a managed move. Thirty-eight held relevant data. In 22 LAs, pupils had been placed on another managed move. Nineteen local authorities reported that pupils had been subsequently permanently excluded. One LA in the East of England responded that 'there are times when having returned to the original school, the school will then permanently exclude. We try to combat this and offer support to schools to ensure they can keep the pupil on roll.'

Ten LAs reported that pupils had subsequently moved into 'elective home education' following an 'unsuccessful' managed move – which raises questions about the extent to which the decision for parents or carers to home educate in these cases is, in fact, elective. Seven LAs reported moves into AP or a PRU following a return to the home school (it was unclear if pupils were also permanently excluded), and a similar number reported that pupils had moved out of the area. Two LAs reported pupils had moved into specialist provision and one that pupils were in custody. One LA in the South East reported that for a handful of pupils, there was 'no school offer' raising significant safeguarding concerns about where these children ended up.

Despite the partial picture provided by this data, there is a clear indication that for many children managed moves do not result in a stable placement in a new school.

Conclusion

This analysis shows that, prior to the pandemic, more than 30,000 secondary pupils experienced at least one school transfer for reasons apparently unrelated to family choice or circumstance, according to available data. According to data collected from the local authorities which held it, we can be sure that at least a sixth of all these school exits were officially 'managed moves'. However, many LAs do not have oversight of the number of managed moves occurring across schools in their area.

Our analysis shows that pupils with additional needs, including those with social, emotional and mental health issues, those who are persistently disadvantaged, and those who have been in contact with children's services, are at significantly higher risk of experiencing a move between schools seemingly unrelated to family choice. Pupils from historically marginalised ethnic groups are also more likely to experience an unexplained school transfer.

Whilst we do not know the precise impact of the pandemic on levels of school-driven mobility including managed moves, existing research shows that disadvantaged pupils' learning and wellbeing has been particularly negatively affected by the pandemic and its attendant disruptions – absence and suspension rates are considerably higher, especially for this group, while permanent exclusion figures have remained broadly similar to pre-pandemic rates.

In this report, we have also explored the significant variation in protocols and practice which govern managed moves across local authorities in England. This variation can be seen across the whole lifecycle of a managed move, from the rationale behind it, to the groups of pupils eligible for moves, the extent to which parental views and pupils needs are considered, the level of local oversight, and the proportion of moves which result in a stable new placement for the pupil.

Our findings chime with existing research and suggest that protocols have not improved significantly: according to studies from the last 20 years, brief and vague fair access protocols have led to inconsistent practice and many managed moves happening under the radar. This inconsistency is concerning because, as this report and previous research shows, school mobility disproportionately affects vulnerable pupils already at risk of worse education outcomes.

Our findings also suggest a dearth of government guidance and regulation around this aspect of school disciplinary practice and raise questions about the impact of this longstanding lack of oversight on vulnerable young people's learning and wellbeing. Few local authorities address the question of whether a managed move is necessary or warranted. There is generally little focus on what support the new school will offer, as well as an assumption that a pupil's behaviour will improve simply because they have been moved. In a system that is aimed at being centred around school choice, the choice and agency of many families of vulnerable learners is, in many cases, being ignored.

Policy recommendations

1. To enable proper oversight of school inclusion, **a central data reporting system which captures all moves and the reasons for them, including managed moves and moves into home schooling, should be introduced.** This would enable better monitoring and research of inclusion, including for children with protected characteristics, who are at increased risk

of unexplained exits from the school system and moves between schools. A long-promised register of 'children not in school' was brought forward in the government's schools bill in 2022, but subsequently scrapped.

2. **Local authorities should monitor outcomes for pupils who experience managed moves**, as our findings suggest that for many, a managed move may be the beginning of a process of exclusion from mainstream education which results in additional moves, permanent exclusion, or a move into alternative provision. Local processes for administering managed moves required greater transparency, to ensure parties involved are acting in the best interests of children.

3. While the new 2023 guidance for schools is more detailed than previous versions, there remains a lack of clear advice around 'best practice' for managed moves and the cases in which they should be used. **Government guidance and policies regarding responses to behaviour challenges should be informed by the evidence around how to best support young people with mental health, emotional, and behavioural needs.** It should recognise the complex causes of difficulties, including experiences of trauma, poverty, and unsupported additional needs, as well as the evidence suggesting school mobility is particularly harmful for vulnerable pupils' outcomes.

4. **Local processes for administering managed moves should involve an independent representative of the child's best interests.** As we have previously noted in our unexplained exits work, this role cannot be effectively undertaken by local authority officials due to the conflict of interest they face as both the assessor of and provider/funder of support for special educational needs and disabilities support. This conflict needs to be resolved to ensure that there is better preventative support for children with SEND to reduce their likelihood of struggling at school.

Appendix 1: Qualitative studies included in the evidence review

Author	Date	Source type	Construct measured	Methodology	Participants	Strengths	Limitations
Christopher Bagley	2013	Primary study: PhD thesis	The reasons managed moves (MM) take place, what constitutes and influences success, the problems associated with the procedure and how educational psychologists can have a positive impact.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis	5 children or young people (CYP), 5 parents, 5 LA officers, 11 school professionals (SP)	Multiple stakeholders' perspectives. Solution-focused approach. Discusses role EPs can play.	Only considered those who went through 'successful' managed moves. Retrospective – a common limitation.
Christopher Bagley, Susan Hallam	2015	Primary study: journal article	Understanding of the processes of managed moves for children at risk of exclusion from school, particularly exploring factors which contributed to success and the nature of the challenges experienced.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis	11 school staff, 5 LA officers from 1 LA	Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for thematic analysis followed – this was common to many studies but sometimes not stated as a strength.	Small sample size. From 1 LA only. Interviewer was an employee of LA: risk of bias.
Christopher Bagley, Susan Hallam	2016	Primary study: journal article	The experiences of young people and their parents of managed moves, what contributed to success and the nature of the challenges experienced.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis.	5 CYP aged 10-14, 5 parents.	Gives a voice to a slightly younger sample, including one primary-aged pupil. Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines followed.	From 1 LA only. Limited sample size.

Christopher Bagley, Susan Hallam	2017	Primary study: journal article	The extent to which school professionals and LA staff perceived that there was a role for educational psychologists in the processes involved in implementing, monitoring and offering support to young people for whom a managed move was being arranged.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis.	11 school staff, 5 LA officers from 1 LA	Focused on a particular support strategy.	From 1 LA only. Limited sample size.
Dave Trotman, Linda Enow, Stan Tucker	2019	Primary study: journal article	Reports the findings of four separately commissioned evaluations of alternative provision (AP) undertaken in three local authorities in the UK. Elicits the experiences of young people in conjunction with the viewpoints of key stakeholders.	Qualitative research methods and documentary analysis.	200 CYP, 30 managers and stakeholders, 8 parents of non-attending pupils and LA officers and school governors.	Large scale, encompassing multiple viewpoints from relatively large cohorts. Includes quantitative and qualitative research methods. Longitudinal. Included 3 different LAs.	Relatively few.
Deborah Flitcroft, Catherine Kelly	2016	Primary study: journal article	How schools in one local authority create a sense of belonging to facilitate a fresh start for pupils involved in a managed move to a new school.	Focus group using an appreciative inquiry (Ai) 4-D cycle. Analysed through thematic analysis	6 headteachers, 1 LA staff	A selection of codes and themes were checked by a second Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP)	From 1 LA only. Limited sample size.

						rater. Participants were given an opportunity to check the codes and themes generated.	
Georgina Turner	2020	Primary study: PhD thesis	Young people's feelings and experiences throughout the managed move process, their perception of what changed after their managed move, as well as in-school and within-child factors that supported them in their new school.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through theory-driven analysis (resilience theory).	9 CYP	Researcher used an audit-trail to establish dependability. Followed established methodology (Braun and Clarke, 2006) for transparent thematic analysis.	Theory-driven methodology: could bias responses. Gender bias: 7 males and 2 females. Doesn't include voices of other stakeholders – this was a common limitation.
Hannah Jones	2020	PhD thesis	To explore CYP's perceptions of the managed move process and the impact of a managed move over time.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis.	5 CYP in KS4, 5 school staff (for context)	Took perspectives at three different time points during the MM process, avoiding bias of retrospect.	Possible sample bias towards pupils who got on well with PRU staff. Limited sample size.
Harriet Lee	2020	Primary study: PhD thesis	The hopes and concerns of young people for a managed move, and their sense of autonomy in the process.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis	6 CYP aged 13-15 due to undergo a MM	Previous research has been retrospective: unique investigation into MM experience prior to move. Creativity in	From 1 LA only. Limited sample size. Gender bias: 5 male, 1 female CYP.

						interview technique: participants drew or built their 'ideal school' through the Ideal School Technique.	
Holly Craggs, Catherine Kelly	2018	Primary study: journal article	How secondary school pupils who have undergone a managed move experience school belonging. Exploring factors which secondary school pupils who have experienced a managed move feel would make it easier for other managed-moved pupils to feel a sense of school belonging.	Interviews analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).	4 CYP in years 9/10	IPA is idiographic and therefore gives a voice to pupils' unique experiences. Participants able to read interview transcripts and amend anything that is not representative. Transcript partially coded by peers to ensure reliability.	Small sample size. Heterogeneity of length of time since managed move between students – a common limitation.
Katherine Hoyle	2016	Primary study: PhD thesis	An exploration of pupil experience of the managed move process.	Semi-structured interviews analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).	6 CYP in years 10/11	IPA is idiographic and therefore gives a voice to pupils' unique experiences.	Participants from 1 LA. Mostly White British.

Kerry Vincent, Belinda Harris, Pat Thomson & Richard Toalster	2007	Primary study: journal article	Evaluation of managed move scheme Coalfields Alternatives to Exclusion (CATE) involving 7 neighbouring secondary schools, to describe a number of positive outcomes associated with the scheme and to explore how these were achieved.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis. Observation and document analysis.	7 non-school panel members, 7 deputy head teachers, 7 head teachers, 5 parents and 14 pupils.	Included perspectives of multiple stakeholders. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis to build a wholistic evaluation of CATE.	From 1 LA only.
Mark A. Chadwick	2013	Primary study: PhD thesis	The within-school factors and out-of-school factors facilitating integration and factors that may improve the managed move process in the future.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through thematic analysis	3 CYP in 3 LAs	Cross-checked data using triangulation.	Limited sample size. Sample bias: school staff organised which pupils would participate in research.
Patrick Thomas Mahon	2017	Primary study: PhD thesis	Pupils' experience of self-determination in their managed move.	Interviews analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).	3 CYP	None	Limited sample size. Sample bias: school staff organised which students would participate in research.
Sally Power & Chris Taylor	2020	Primary study: journal article	To probe beneath the surface of official statistics and explore the diverse, and often hidden, forms of exclusion that are taking place.	Interviews and thematic analysis.	Welsh heads	Able to identify system-level issues surrounding MMs.	Number of participants, details of interview and analysis process not specified.

Sarah Martin-Denham	2020	Systematic review and primary research study (commissioned by Together for Children)	To elicit perceptions and experiences of multiple stakeholders, including those who managed moves aim to support, i.e. those who were deemed to be on the verge of school exclusion.	Semi-structured interviews analysed through quantitative and qualitative content analysis.	20 CYP, 12 caregivers of excluded children, 11 SENCOs, 2 health professionals , 3 heads	Comprehensive synthesis of perspectives. Collected primary data from LAs on the data they hold on managed moves. Included perspectives of pupils who had an unsuccessful managed move. Both quantitative and qualitative content analysis.	Retrospective: could lead to bias
Suzanne Craig	2015	Primary study: PhD thesis	The stories of CYP who have experienced a managed move, parents and professionals involved in managed move protocols in an attempt to access a specific knowledge set	Interviews analysed using interactional-performative analysis.	2 CYP, 1 parent, 1 LA officer	Multiple viewpoints.	Limited sample size. From 1 LA only.

Tanzim Messeter, Anita Soni	2018	Systematic review	What CYP, their parents and LA staff perceive as factors facilitating a positive managed move as well as the associated difficulties and the impact of the move.	Total studies = 9. Semi-structured interviews (7), unstructured interview (1), focus group (1).	38 CYP, 16 parents, 39 school staff, 13 LA officers	Able to capture the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. The first systematic review of MM literature.	Little is known about the LAs in which the studies took place. All the research reviewed was conducted in LA schools therefore the way in which the process may take place within an academy trust or a free school has not been represented here. No insight into long-term outcomes – a common limitation.

Appendix 2: Freedom of Information request questions to local authorities

1. How many secondary school managed moves or negotiated transfers occurred in the 2018/19 academic year?

2. How many of the total number of managed moves in secondary schools in 2018/19 were 'successful', i.e. the pupil joined the receiving school's roll after the trial period?

3. How many of the total number of managed moves in secondary schools in 2018/19 were 'unsuccessful', i.e. the pupil returned to the home school?

4. What were the outcomes for pupils who experienced an 'unsuccessful' managed move?

    a. Return to the home school

    b. Permanent exclusion

    c. Another managed move or negotiated transfer

    d. Other (please specify)

Appendix 3: Additional information on socio-demographic data

We looked at differences in the prevalence of total school transfers over the five years of secondary school by the characteristics listed below. Here we include an explanation for how we coded these characteristic variables from the original records:

Gender

We classified all pupils ever recorded as being male as male, and all other pupils as female.

Ethnicity

We used pupils' most recent ethnicity records:

- Any other ethnicity
- Bangladeshi
- Black African
- Black Caribbean
- Chinese
- Indian
- Other Asian background
- Other Black background
- Other mixed background
- Other White background
- Pakistani
- White and Asian
- White and Black African
- White and Black Caribbean
- White British
- White Irish

FSM eligibility

We included pupils ever recorded as being eligible for free school meals.

Looked after status

We classified these pupils into three groups:

- pupils who have ever been in the care system;
- pupils who entered the care system in secondary school; and
- pupils in care who experienced a change in legal status in secondary school.

We considered these groups to have different risk profiles and wanted to test differences in the prevalence of unexplained moves in each. These groups are not mutually exclusive, so the same pupil can appear in more than one of them.

Child in need status

We looked at two groups of children in need which we considered to have different risk profiles (not mutually exclusive):

- pupils who have ever been recorded as a child in need; and
- pupils who became a child in need in secondary school.

SEND type

We looked at the prevalence of unexplained moves among pupils ever identified with each type of SEND:

- specific learning difficulty;
- moderate learning difficulty;
- severe learning difficulty;
- profound and multiple learning difficulty;
- behavioural, emotional and social difficulty or (after 2014) social, emotional and mental health difficulty;
- speech, language and communication difficulty;
- hearing impairment;
- visual impairment;
- multi-sensory impairment;
- physical disability;
- autism spectrum disorder; or
- any other SEND.

Absence record

We used the Department for Education's threshold for persistent absentee pupils: any pupil that misses at least 10 per cent of sessions in a term. We looked at pupils who met the threshold for persistent absence (missing at least 10 per cent of possible sessions) across all 14 terms of secondary school for the following reasons:

- overall absences regardless of reason;
- illness and medical appointment absences; authorised absences including exclusions and 'other;' and
- unauthorised reasons, including lateness, unexplained and 'other' unauthorised reason.

Fixed period exclusion record

We included pupils ever recorded as having at least one fixed period exclusion.

Permanent exclusion record

We included pupils ever recorded as having at least one permanent exclusion.

Appendix 4: Number and proportion of unexplained school transfers amongst secondary pupils finishing year 11 in 2017

Period	Number	Proportion
Aut '12	1,781	0.3%
Spr '13	2,259	0.4%
Sum '13	3,738	0.7%
Aut '13	2,444	0.4%
Spr '14	3,001	0.5%
Sum '14	3,975	0.7%
Aut '14	2,613	0.5%
Spr '15	2,761	0.5%
Sum '15	3,532	0.6%
Aut '15	2,300	0.4%
Spr '16	1,835	0.3%
Sum '16	1,861	0.3%
Aut '16	1,868	0.3%
Spr '17	382	0.1%
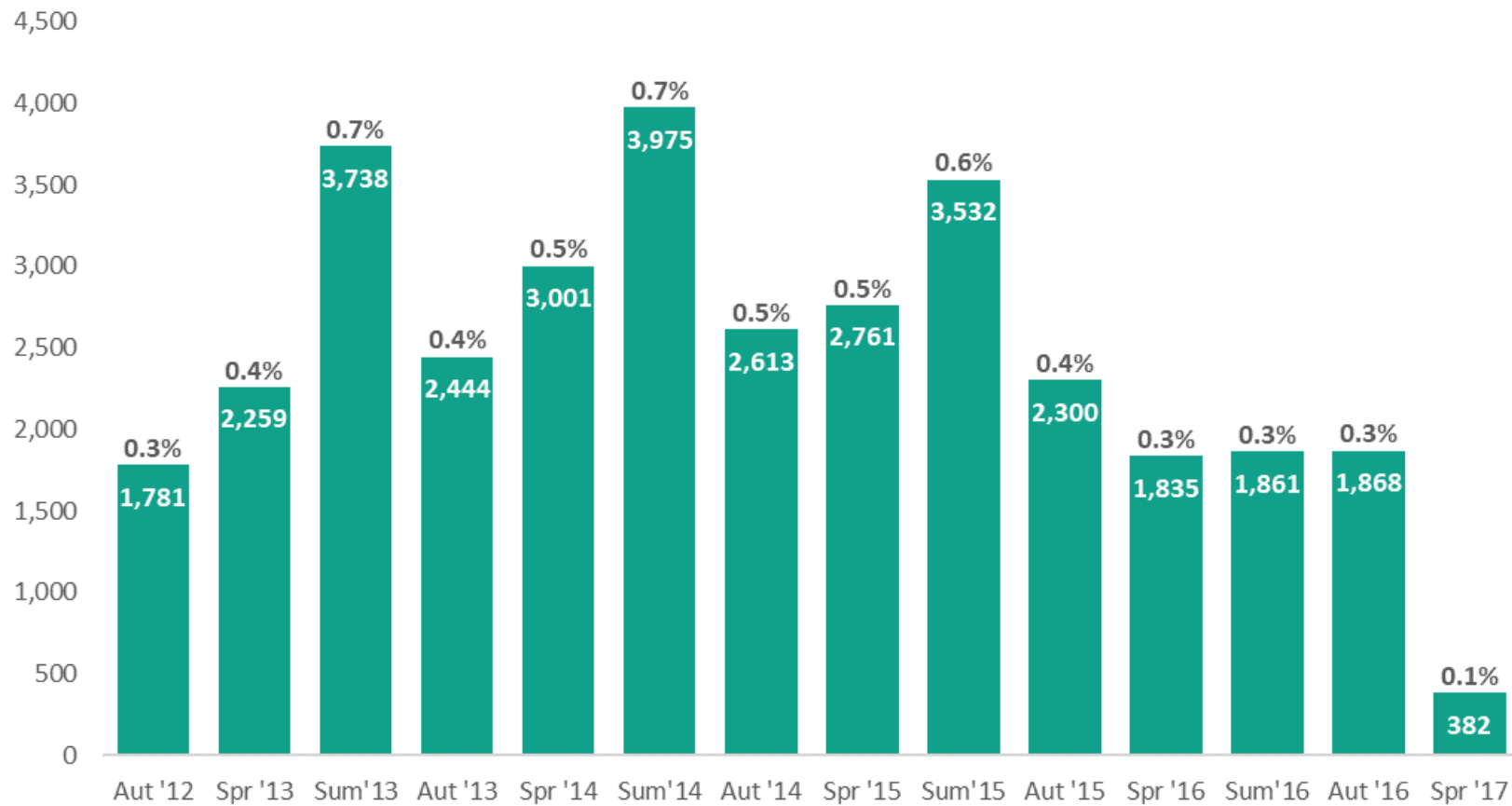
Appendix 5: Local authorities which held and provided data on managed moves in secondary schools in 2018/19

LA	Provided data on managed moves
Barking and Dagenham	x
Barnet	
Barnsley	x
Bath and North East Somerset	x
Bedford	x
Bexley	
Birmingham	
Blackburn with Darwen	
Blackpool	
Bolton	
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	
Bracknell Forest	x
Bradford	
Brent	
Brighton and Hove	x
Bristol	
Bromley	
Buckinghamshire	x
Bury	
Calderdale	
Cambridgeshire	x
Camden	x
Central Bedfordshire	
Cheshire East	
Cheshire West and Chester	
City of London	
Cornwall	
Coventry	x
Croydon	x
Cumbria	
Darlington	x
Derby	
Derbyshire	x
Devon	x
Doncaster	x
Dorset	
Dudley	
Durham	x
Ealing	

East Riding of Yorkshire	x
East Sussex	x
Enfield	x
Essex	
Gateshead	x
Gloucestershire	
Greenwich	x
Hackney	
Halton	
Hammersmith and Fulham	
Hampshire	x
Haringey	
Harrow	
Hartlepool	x
Havering	
Herefordshire	
Hertfordshire	x
Hillingdon	
Hounslow	
Isle of Wight	
Isles of Scilly	
Islington	
Kensington and Chelsea	
Kent	
Kingston upon Hull	
Kingston upon Thames	
Kirklees	
Knowsley	
Lambeth	x
Lancashire	x
Leeds	
Leicester	
Leicestershire	
Lewisham	
Lincolnshire	x
Liverpool	x
Luton	x
Manchester	
Medway	x
Merton	x
Middlesbrough	
Milton Keynes	
Newcastle upon Tyne	
Newham	x
Norfolk	x

North East Lincolnshire	x
North Lincolnshire	x
North Northamptonshire	
North Somerset	x
North Tyneside	x
North Yorkshire	
Northumberland	x
Nottingham	x
Nottinghamshire	x
Oldham	x
Oxfordshire	
Peterborough	
Plymouth	x
Portsmouth	x
Reading	x
Redbridge	x
Redcar and Cleveland	
Richmond Upon Thames	
Rochdale	x
Rotherham	x
Rutland	
Salford	x
Sandwell	
Sefton	
Sheffield	x
Shropshire	
Slough	x
Solihull	
Somerset	
South Gloucestershire	
South Tyneside	x
Southampton	
Southend on Sea	
Southwark	
St Helens	x
Staffordshire	
Stockport	
Stockton-on-Tees	
Stoke-on-Trent	
Suffolk	x
Sunderland	x
Surrey	x
Sutton	
Swindon	x
Tameside	

Telford and Wrekin	x
Thurrock	
Torbay	
Tower Hamlets	
Trafford	
Wakefield	
Walsall	
Waltham Forest	
Wandsworth	
Warrington	x
Warwickshire	x
West Berkshire	x
West Northamptonshire	
West Sussex	x
Westminster	
Wigan	
Wiltshire	
Windsor and Maidenhead	
Wirral	x
Wokingham	
Wolverhampton	
Worcestershire	
York	x

Appendix 6: List of local protocol features and EPI rating system

Decision-making

Item	Red	Amber	Green
Rationale / theory supporting MM	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Initiation process	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Panels / meetings / timelines specified	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Checks on school efforts prior to MM	Not specified	Vague; guidance suggests other approaches should be taken prior to MM	Yes
Alternatives considered at panels	Not specified; no; PX	Vague	Yes
Participants in decision-making	Not specified	Panel or LA not involved or not required to be involved	FA panel or relevant professionals involved
Suitability criteria for placements	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Consideration of what will be different	Not specified	Vague	Factors beyond change of school considered
Parental preference matters	Not specified	Vague; protocols state 'no duty to comply' but considered	Taken into account in decisions
Information provided to parents	Not specified; up to the school	Vague	Information sheet or info from LA
Consequences of rejecting an offer	Not specified; PX; parents can apply to another school through normal in-year process	Vague	Parents can reject
Parental consent forms mentioned	Not specified	Vague	Parents sign form

Protocols for managed moves

Item	Red	Amber	Green
Trial periods	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Dual registration	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Arrangements for recording attendance	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Arrangements for monitoring success	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Sign-off on whether placement becomes permanent	Not specified	School	All parties
Parental consent before, after or both	Not specified	Vague; before the move	Parent can withdraw support at any time
Next steps if trial is not permanent	Not specified; possible PX	Vague	Return to home school
Trial of pupil behaviour, support, or both	Pupil behaviour only	Vague	Both school support and pupil behaviour

Records, transparency, and independence

Item	Red	Amber	Green
Minutes kept	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Records cover discussion with parents or only professionals	Not specified	Vague	Yes
Independent member on panel	Not specified; no	Vague; LA involved	Parent can invite independent advocate
LA official roles	Not specified	Vague	Specified
Next steps if agreement cannot be reached	Not specified	Vague; parent can apply through normal in-year admissions process	Parent can appeal

Appendix 7: Results of regression analysis

Table A7.1 Linear regression analysis of the impact of LA protocol features on LA rates of UT

	Unadjusted			+ %FSM, %rural, %minority ethnic		
	Estimate	SE	p-value	Estimate	SE	p-value
No MM protocol	-0.0004	0.0007	0.534	-0.0004	0.0006	0.539
% FSM				0.0152	0.0044	0.001
% rural				-0.0017	0.0013	0.221
% minority ethnic				0.0004	0.0012	0.735

	Unadjusted			+ %FSM, %rural, %minority ethnic		
	Estimate	SE	p-value	Estimate	SE	p-value
Success monitored	-0.0007	0.0006	0.232	-0.0003	0.0005	0.562
% FSM				0.0150	0.0044	0.001
% rural				-0.0017	0.0013	0.203
% minority ethnic				0.0090	0.0012	0.837

	Unadjusted			+ %FSM, %rural, %minority ethnic		
	Estimate	SE	p-value	Estimate	SE	p-value
Preferences factored in	0.0010	0.0008	0.222	0.0013	0.0008	0.090
% FSM				0.0155	0.0044	0.001
% rural				-0.0016	0.0013	0.232
% minority ethnic				0.0006	0.0012	0.623

	Unadjusted			+ %FSM, %rural, %minority ethnic		
	Estimate	SE	p-value	Estimate	SE	p-value
Suitability of school	0.0008	0.0007	0.283	0.0008	0.0007	0.226
% FSM				0.0153	0.0044	0.001
% rural				-0.0017	0.0013	0.215
% minority ethnic				0.0004	0.0011	0.756

	Unadjusted			+ %FSM, %rural, %minority ethnic		
	Estimate	SE	p-value	Estimate	SE	p-value
Broader considerations	0.0005	0.0007	0.452	0.0005	0.0006	0.398
% FSM				0.0155	0.0044	0.001
% rural				-0.0016	0.0013	0.236
% minority ethnic				0.0004	0.0012	0.751

	Unadjusted			+ %FSM, %rural, %minority ethnic		
	Estimate	SE	p-value	Estimate	SE	p-value
Disagreement contingency	-0.0009	0.0008	0.270	-0.0004	0.0008	0.603
% FSM				0.0150	0.0044	0.001
% rural				-0.0018	0.0013	0.194
% minority ethnic				0.0002	0.0012	0.859

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