**School Leavers**

The number of school leavers in the borough increased by 5.8% between 2020/21 and 2021/22 to a high of 2,761. This is the highest number of leavers of the years presented below.

|   | Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon |
| --- | --- |
| 2013/14 | 2,546 |
| 2014/15 | 2,393 |
| 2015/16 | 2,609 |
| 2016/17 | 2,554 |
| 2017/18 | 2,534 |
| 2018/19 | 2,520 |
| 2019/20 | 2,428 |
| 2020/21 | 2,609 |
| 2021/22 | 2,761 |

*Table 1: Number of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

*Figure 1: Number of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

The school leavers survey provides information on the achievements of school leavers at both A-level and GCSE. The data refers to the home residence of pupils. In 2021/22 almost 49% of school leavers in the borough achieved 2+ A-levels (or equivalent). This represents a further decrease on the previous school year when almost 51% of school leavers in the borough achieved 2+ A-levels (or equivalent) and is almost 9 percentage points below the Northern Ireland figure of 57.8% (which has also fallen since last year).

In 2021/22, just over 90% of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough achieved at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent). This remains lower than the Northern Ireland figure of 91.9% and represents a fall of 0.2 percentage points since the previous year.

|   | Achieved 2+ A-levels (or equivalent) | Achieved at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ABC** | **NI** | **ABC** | **NI** |
| 2013/14 | 48.7% | 55.7% | 76.3% | 78.6% |
| 2014/15 | 52.2% | 57.7% | 81.1% | 81.1% |
| 2015/16 | 49.1% | 57.3% | 78.2% | 81.7% |
| 2016/17 | 52.3% | 58.5% | 81.4% | 83.8% |
| 2017/18 | 49.0% | 56.7% | 79.9% | 85.2% |
| 2018/19 | 46.9% | 55.6% | 82.5% | 86.4% |
| 2019/20 | 52.8% | 59.8% | 88.9% | 91.3% |
| 2020/21 | 50.7% | 60.5% | 90.5% | 92.1% |
| 2021/22 | 48.9% | 57.8% | 90.3% | 91.9% |

*Table 2: School leaver achievements in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

*Figure 2: School leavers achieving 2+ A-levels (or equivalent) in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

*Figure 3: School leavers achieving at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

GCSE achievement figures are also available for those that include GCSE English and GCSE Maths. These results can further be broken down by those school leavers who were entitled to free school meals (FSME) and those who were not entitled to free school meals (Non-FSME).

Non-FSME have higher percentages of school leavers achieving at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) including GCSE English and GCSE Maths over the last nine years in both the borough and Northern Ireland overall. In 2021/22 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, approximately eight in every ten (81.1%) of non-FSME school leavers achieved at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) including GCSE English and GCSE Maths compared to 58.4% of FSME school leavers. GCSE attainment for FSME students increased by 3.7 percentage points between 2020/21 and 2021/22 although achievement levels for both non-FSME and FSME students were lower than Northern Ireland overall at 84.2% and 59.1% respectively.

|  | Achieved at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) including GCSE English and GCSE Maths |
| --- | --- |
| **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon** | **Northern Ireland** |
| **Non-FSME** | **FSME** | **Overall** | **Non-FSME** | **FSME** | **Overall** |
| 2013/14 | 67.8% | 39.3% | 63.4% | 69.7% | 34.9% | 63.5% |
| 2014/15 | 74.9% | 43.4% | 68.1% | 73.7% | 41.3% | 66.0% |
| 2015/16 | 74.1% | 43.6% | 66.8% | 75.8% | 44.8% | 67.7% |
| 2016/17 | 76.8% | 47.2% | 70.1% | 77.4% | 47.5% | 69.6% |
| 2017/18 | 75.2% | 44.0% | 67.2% | 78.1% | 48.6% | 70.6% |
| 2018/19 | 74.6% | 48.7% | 68.3% | 78.5% | 49.5% | 70.8% |
| 2019/20 | 80.7% | 51.7% | 74.6% | 83.4% | 55.7% | 76.2% |
| 2020/21 | 79.8% | 54.7% | 74.4% | 83.8% | 59.8% | 77.7% |
| 2021/22 | 81.1% | 58.4% | 76.0% | 84.2% | 59.1% | 78.0% |

*Table 3: School leavers achieving at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) including GCSE English and GCSE Maths by free school meal entitlement in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

*Figure 4: School leavers achieving at least 5 GCSE’s grades A\* - C (or equivalent) including GCSE English and GCSE Maths by free school meal entitlement in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

In 2021/22, 39.4% of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough entered Higher Education Institutions while 37.4% continued on to Institutes of Further Education. After increasing in 2020/21, the proportion entering higher education institutions has fallen again in 2021/22 while the proportions entering employment and training has increased again. With regards the proportions entering unemployment/unknown, at 4.3% in the borough this is now just above the rate for Northern Ireland overall for the first time since 2016/17. It appears that more people than ever are entering employment straight after school with the rate in the borough and Northern Ireland overall both the highest of the years presented.

|   | Higher Education | Further Education | Employment | Training | Unemployed / Unknown |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2013/14 | 40.0% | 43.9% | 3.9% | 8.9% | 3.3% |
| 2014/15 | 37.6% | 45.6% | 5.9% | 7.5% | 3.3% |
| 2015/16 | 36.9% | 43.1% | 5.7% | 9.4% | 4.8% |
| 2016/17 | 39.2% | 41.0% | 6.5% | 9.2% | 4.1% |
| 2017/18 | 39.8% | 40.9% | 5.6% | 10.3% | 3.4% |
| 2018/19 | 35.9% | 41.5% | 6.3% | 12.4% | 3.9% |
| 2019/20 | 39.7% | 42.1% | 4.9% | 9.8% | 3.5% |
| 2020/21 | 41.7% | 37.3% | 7.2% | 10.8% | 3.0% |
| 2021/22 | 39.4% | 37.4% | 7.4% | 11.5% | 4.3% |

*Table 4: Destination of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

*Figure 5: Destination of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, the proportions entering Higher Education Institutes is broadly similar to those entering Institutes of Further Education. However, in Northern Ireland overall, the proportion of school leavers entering Higher Education Institutes is much higher than those entering Further Education Institutes (43.7% and 27.4% respectively in 2021/22).

|  | Higher Education | Further Education | Employment | Training | Unemployed / Unknown |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2013/14 | 41.8% | 35.4% | 6.9% | 10.4% | 5.5% |
| 2014/15 | 42.3% | 35.0% | 8.4% | 9.8% | 4.5% |
| 2015/16 | 42.9% | 34.4% | 8.9% | 9.7% | 4.2% |
| 2016/17 | 43.3% | 34.0% | 8.8% | 9.8% | 4.0% |
| 2017/18 | 43.1% | 33.5% | 9.7% | 9.9% | 3.8% |
| 2018/19 | 42.0% | 32.9% | 6.3% | 12.4% | 3.9% |
| 2019/20 | 47.9% | 29.2% | 8.7% | 9.5% | 4.7% |
| 2020/21 | 47.9% | 27.0% | 10.6% | 10.6% | 4.0% |
| 2021/22 | 43.7% | 27.4% | 12.9% | 11.8% | 4.2% |

*Table 5: Destination of school leavers in Northern Ireland 2013/14 to 2021/22. Source: Northern Ireland School Leavers Survey, Department of Education.*

Further information on school leavers can be found via the following link:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/school-leavers>