

Total number of notifications

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The Department is aware that, in some instances, not all incidents that meet the definition for a serious incident are notified. It is not possible to ascertain whether the fall in 2024 reflects a decrease in serious incidents or whether fewer notifications were reported compared with earlier years. Therefore, this needs to be considered when interpreting the fall.

Figures on serious incident notifications between 2015 and 2018 are based on [Ofsted published data \(opens in a new tab\)](#) and for 2019 onwards are based on Department for Education data.

The rate (of notifications per total child population) in this section was calculated based on the [2022 mid-year ONS population estimates \(opens in a new tab\)](#) for England as they were the latest available estimates at the time of publication.

In 2024, there were 405 notifications, down 51 from a year earlier and down 93 from 2019. The latest figure represents the lowest since the Department became responsible for producing and publishing these statistics.

The Department will continue to work with the Panel and local authorities to encourage the notification of serious incidents that meet the criteria as set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 \(opens in a new tab\)](#).

In 2024, there was approximately one notification per every 29,000 children (aged 0-17) in England, equivalent to 0.003% of the total child population.

It is not possible to ascertain from the figures whether the annual increase in 2021, which also represents the series peak, was linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Panel noted in their [2020 Annual report \(opens in a new tab\)](#) (page 9) 'Evidence from our analysis of Serious Incident Notifications and rapid reviews is that the COVID-19 outbreak continues to present a situational risk for vulnerable children and families, with the potential to exacerbate pre-existing safeguarding risks and bring about new ones.'

Figure 1: Number of serious incident notifications, 2015 to 2024, England

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of serious incident notifications	385	379	433	384	498	449	536	442	456	405

[Data symbols](#) ?

Footnotes

1. Figures between 2015 and 2018 are based on Ofsted published data.

Source: Child Safeguarding Incident Notification System