



Department
for Education

Risk of NEET Indicator Tool

April Webinar

Introduction

Risk of NEET Indicators

A RONI is a process that uses data, collected by schools and local authorities, on young people, to identify those at increased risk of becoming NEET.

Using a list of characteristics that are associated with an increasing likelihood of becoming NEET, individual young people with those risk factors can be identified to provide an indication of their risk of becoming NEET.

Identified young people can be monitored and supported to help them stay in school and to effectively transition into post-16 education/training options.

Around half of local authorities already operate some form of RONI tool, though approaches vary. In the remaining areas, uptake has often been limited by local capacity, expertise, and organisational barriers.

Risk of NEET Indicators

This is why last year the Department for Education published [national guidance](#) to promote a more consistent approach across all local authorities. This was followed by a commitment in the Department's Post-16 White Paper to enable local authorities, Strategic Authorities, schools and further education providers to identify, track and share data about young people more effectively.

The Department committed to develop new RONI tools and guidance so that it is easier to identify young people with NEET risk characteristics in each local authority area, and to then enhance these tools using Artificial Intelligence.



Identify and support young people at risk of being NEET

**Local authority good practice guidance:
Using Risk of NEET Indicators (RONI) to
support young people to participate in
education, employment and training**

January 2025

Risk of NEET Indicators

The Department for Education has funded Access Ltd to develop a new RONI tool that integrates data on individuals' characteristics (recorded in local client caseload information systems) with pupil data (on absence, exclusions, care experience, children in need and free school meals) held by central government via the National Pupil Database. Each data point is individually weighted to generate a risk score for each young person currently in school year 11 in a local area. This score helps identify those at risk of becoming NEET during the coming academic year.

The tool was tested with a small group of local authorities in autumn 2025, using a previous National Pupil Database (NPD) data release. The January 2026 NPD release is the first of this academic year to include current Year 11 pupils, making it the appropriate point to begin wider testing of the tool as these Y11s transition into post-16 education or training over the summer.

The data you will see within the RONI tool relates to young people who are enrolled in Year 11 in academic year 2025/2026 from local authority extracts, DfE datasets and the School Census - a termly data collection that all state-funded schools in England complete. Information from Independent (private) schools are not routinely included.

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Risk of NEET Indicators

These risk factors include characteristics that are recorded in NCCIS such as:

- SEND
- SEN Support
- Looked-after / In care
- Parent - caring for own child
- Refugee / Asylum seeker
- Carer - not own child
- Client disclosed substance misuse
- Care Leaver
- Supervised by YOT (Youth Offending Team)
- Pregnant
- Parent - not caring for own child
- Alternative Provision
- Mental health

However, we know that there is other information on characteristics that put young people at risk such as those that:

- high levels of school absence;
- have been excluded;
- are in or have been in social care;
- are defined as Children in Need;
- in receipt of free school meals (FSM)

These characteristics are recorded by DfE but are not readily available to LAs, so we have been doing work to make them available through the NCCIS Portal.

Risk of NEET Indicators

The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a database controlled by the Department for Education in England, based on multiple data collections from individuals age 2-21 in state funded education and higher education. Data is matched using pupil names, dates of birth and other personal and school characteristics, including special educational needs, disability, and indicators for free school meals, a child in care, and families in the armed forces. Personal details are linked to pupils' attainment and exam results over a lifetime school attendance.

We have secured data extracts from NPD that show for each Y11 pupil leaving in 2026:

- high levels of school absence;
- have been excluded;
- are in or have been in social care;
- are defined as Children in Need*;
- in receipt of free school meals (FSM)

*Child in Need (CIN) is a broad definition spanning a wide range of children and adolescents, in need of varying types of support and intervention, for a variety of reasons. A child is defined as 'in need' under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, where:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for them of services by a local authority
- their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for them of such services; or
- they are disabled.

How are records matched

A match will only be performed for young people that are:

- Academic age year 11
- Have a lead LEA of the Local Authority
- Primary cohort

For the Young Person to have NPD data matched to them they must appear within the NPD data set.

NCCIS Field	NPD Field
UPN	UPN
Given Name	Forename
Family Name	Surname
Date of Birth	DOB

Example Output

Local Authorities will receive a list that contains the Young person's NCCIS ID with the following information appended:

- Column for each RONI indicator
- Weighting Value for the indicator
- Total RONI score

Data is recalculated after each new submission

Example Output

[illegible]

Weightings

RONI Characteristic	Description	Weighting Score	Source
Absence_Persistent	A pupil is classed as persistently absent if they have 10% absence or more	3	NPD
Absence_Severe	A pupil is classed as severely absent if they have 50% absence or more	7	NPD
Exclusion_Once	A pupil has received one exclusion	2	NPD
Exclusion_Multiple	A pupil has received multiple exclusions	5	NPD
Exclusion_Permanent	A pupil has received a permanent exclusion	10	NPD
CLA	Child looked after	4	NPD
CIN	Child in Need (CIN) is a broad definition spanning a wide range of children and adolescents, in need of varying types of support and intervention, for a variety of reasons. A child is defined as 'in need' under section 17 of the Children Act 1989,	5	NPD
FSM_Eligible	Flag to indicate if pupil has ever been recorded as eligible for free school meals	3	NPD
Characteristic_110_LookedAfter	A young person is looked-after by an LA	0*	CCIS
Characteristic_120_ParentCaringOwn	A young person who provides regular and on-going care for their own child whether as part of a larger family unit or as a single parent.	8	CCIS
Characteristic_130_RefugeeAsylum	A Refugee / Asylum seeker	2	CCIS
Characteristic_140_CarerNotOwn	Young people who provide regular and on-going care and emotional support to family members who are physically or mentally ill, disabled or have drug/alcohol addiction.	6	CCIS
Characteristic_150_SubstanceMisuse	A young person who misuses substances or drugs	4	CCIS
Characteristic_160_CareLeaver	A care leaver is a young person aged 16-25, who had been looked after by a local authority	5	CCIS
Characteristic_170_YOT	A young person who is under the supervision of the local Youth Offending Team (YOT).	8	CCIS
Characteristic_180_Pregnant	A young woman who is pregnant.	8	CCIS
Characteristic_190_ParentNotCaring	A young parent who does not provide regular and on-going care for their own child.	8	CCIS
Characteristic_200_AlternativeProvision	The code should be added to the young person's record if they have had or are undertaking any form of alternative provision.	5	CCIS
Characteristic_210_MentalHealth	This characteristic identifies a young person who LAs are aware is experiencing poor mental health. This information can be obtained from the young person themselves, a parent/carer or other sources	8	CCIS
SEND_EHCP	Young people who have an EHC plan or had an EHC plan at the time of completing compulsory education.	3	CCIS
SEN_Support	A learner with a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them, but whose needs do not meet the criteria for an EHC plan	2	CCIS
* Currently null to prevent double counting with NPD CLA . LA can choose to assign a weighting if they wish.			

Weightings

RONI Variable Weightings

Adjust the weighting values for each RONI variable. Leave blank to use no weighting (NULL).

Category	Source	Description	Default	Custom Weighting
Absence	NPD	Severe (50%<=)	7	
Absence	NPD	Persistent (90%<=)	3	
Exclusions	NPD	Once	2	
Exclusions	NPD	Multiple	5	
Exclusions	NPD	Permanent	10	
Care	NPD	CLA	4	
Care	NPD	CIN	5	
FSM	NPD	FSM Eligible	3	

Characteristics	CCIS	Looked After	4	
Characteristics	CCIS	Parent Caring Own	8	
Characteristics	CCIS	Refugee/Asylum	2	
Characteristics	CCIS	Carer Not Own	6	
Characteristics	CCIS	Substance Misuse	4	
Characteristics	CCIS	Care Leaver	5	
Characteristics	CCIS	YOT	8	
Characteristics	CCIS	Pregnant	8	
Characteristics	CCIS	Parent Not Caring	8	
Characteristics	CCIS	Alternative Provision	5	
Characteristics	CCIS	Mental Health	8	
SEN	CCIS	SEND / EHCP	3	
SEN	CCIS	SEN Support	2	

Local Authorities can email the NCCIS helpline if they wish for their weightings to be a different value from the standard weighting.

When is new data made available?

Month	Data Set	Year/Period
January	Autumn Census Data – Free School Meals (FSM)	Autumn 2025 for current (2025/26) Y11s (Included)
March	Absence Data	3 term (2024/25) Y11s, i.e. when in Y10
April	CiN Data CLA data	2024-25, so when in Y10
July	Exclusion Data	3 term (2024/25) Y11s, i.e. when in Y10
August	Summer Census Data - Free School Meals (FSM)	Summer 2026 for current (2025/26) Y11s

Next Steps

Local Authorities can download a file that contains the Young person's NCCIS ID with the following information appended:

- Column for each RONI indicator
- Weighting Value for the indicator
- Total RONI score

This is an opportunity for local authority teams to review the new tool.

Future work

- The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) has developed a RONI tool for schools. The tool is embedded into Compass+, a system used by 94% of schools to track their careers provision, enabling a whole school approach to NEET identification from Key Stage 3. CEC has made this available in February.
- The CEC and LA RONI tools represent foundational steps in strengthening early identification, operating as stand-alone tools for now but with the intention that they become part of broader local data systems over time.
- We will be issuing local authorities with a survey over the next few weeks to evaluate the Tool.