



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
An Pháirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta, Caladh an Treoigh, Luimneach
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10 July 2025

Deputy Brian Stanley
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 34347/25: To ask the Minister for Health the average age of children and their school class in the State when they have their first dental examination and screening under the school dental scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Stanley,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The Health Services Executive delivers dental services to children under the age of 16, provided through 17 Dental Areas, all of which continue to provide routine services.

The school dental service provides examination and any necessary preventive and restorative treatment noted at examination. The programme commences with 6th class and follows with 2nd and 4th - depending on available resources. As part of targeting of resources, each dental service maintains a commitment to urgent/emergency treatment for the relief of pain, infection, and the sequelae of trauma.

I wish to advise the Deputy that the data is not available as requested. The table below provides KPI data on the total number of dental examinations undertaken within the Community Dental Service in 2024 for those who are participating in a targeted programme (target group 6-8yrs of age /1st or 2nd class, target group 11-13yrs of age / 5th or 6th class and other target groups). The data provided will give an indication of the age of patients being targeted. It should be noted that the third data range - other target groups - includes children of other ages and adults who are being targeted as part of the special needs programme.

**No. of new oral health patients in target group 6-8yrs of age /1st or 2nd class attending
for scheduled assessment**

			2024
National Total			14,902.0
HSE Dublin & Midlands	Total		747.0
HSE Dublin & North East	Total		5,256.0
HSE Dublin & South East	Total		3,223.0
HSE Mid West	Total		3,040.0
HSE South West	Total		244.0
HSE West & North West	Total		2,392.0

**No. of new oral health patients in target group 11-13yrs of age / 5th or 6th class attending
for scheduled assessment**

National Total			51,807.0
HSE Dublin & Midlands	Total		7,389.0
HSE Dublin & North East	Total		10,339.0
HSE Dublin & South East	Total		6,269.0
HSE Mid West	Total		3,040.0

HSE South West	Total		16,469.0
HSE West & North West	Total		8,301.0
No. of new oral health patients in other target groups (other ages groups including special care adults) accessed in a planned manner for scheduled assessment			
National Total			40,255.0
HSE Dublin & Midlands	Total		11,134.0
HSE Dublin & North East	Total		12,347.0
HSE Dublin & South East	Total		9,443.0
HSE Mid West	Total		178.0
HSE South West	Total		314.0
HSE West & North West	Total		6,839.0

The HSE's 2025 National Service Plan aims to continue to develop services and implement waiting list initiatives across a range of dental and orthodontic services and maximise activity across these services to manage waiting lists and waiting times. The service plan supports the implementation of the Government's National Oral Health Policy, Smile Agus Sláinte, including the development of comprehensive oral healthcare packages for roll-out to children aged from birth to seven years of age.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but if you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

Anne O'Neill
Assistant National Director, Oral Health