

Analysis based on data from households. 12 out of 12 districts were surveyed in ASER 2018.

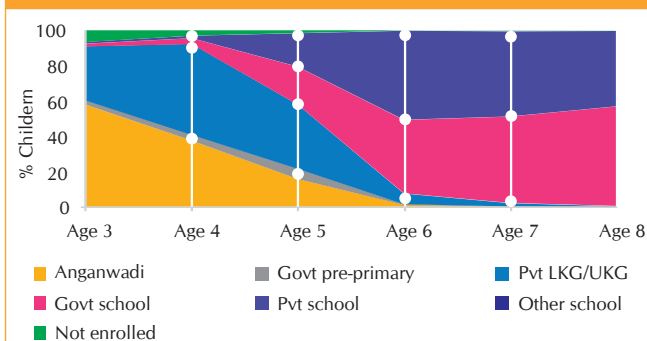
Early access to a supportive environment and exposure to developmentally appropriate activities can help children develop a solid foundation for future learning, both for school and for life. All major education policy and program documents in India now recognize this fact. However, recent ASER data shows major gaps between official norms and actual practice. These gaps are evident both when young children enter school and in what they are able to do in terms of foundational skills like reading and arithmetic. The gap between expectations and ground realities starts very early and needs to be addressed urgently. Once children fall behind, it is very difficult to catch up.

## Age 3 to 8 years: Where are young children enrolled?

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by age 2018**

Age	Pre-school			School			Not enrolled	Total
	Anganwadi	Govt pre-primary	Pvt LKG/UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 3	57.6	2.6	30.6	1.6	1.0	0.0	6.6	100
Age 4	37.4	3.4	51.4	3.3	1.3	0.0	3.1	100
Age 5	15.8	5.9	36.3	21.4	18.9	0.0	1.7	100
Age 6	1.2	0.5	6.0	41.5	50.4	0.0	0.3	100
Age 7	0.1	0.4	1.8	48.8	48.2	0.3	0.4	100
Age 8	0.3	0.0	0.3	56.3	42.7	0.1	0.3	100

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by age 2018**



This table shows the proportion of children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by age. For example, at age 3, 57.6% children are enrolled in anganwadis, 2.6% in government pre-primary classes, 30.6% in private LKG/UKG, 1.6% in government schools, and 1% in private schools. 'Other' includes children going to any other type of institution. 6.6% children are not enrolled anywhere. Chart 1, a stacked area chart, is a visual representation of Table 1.

### Key takeaways:

Children's pathways through pre-school and school do not always follow policy prescriptions or curriculum expectations.

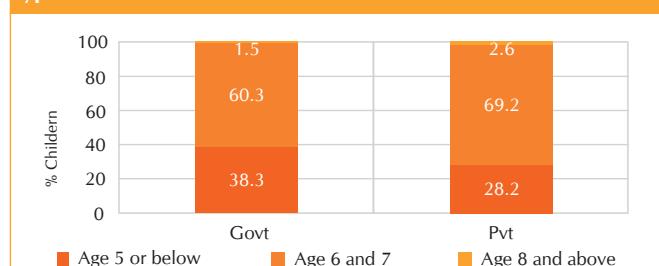
- **High enrollment in pre-school age group:** From age 3 onwards, over 90% of children are enrolled in some type of pre-school. At age 4, more children are enrolled in private pre-schools (51.4%) as compared to anganwadis (37.4%). (Table 1)
- **Private school children enter Std I at an older age:** Children enrolled in private schools are older when they enter Std I as compared to those in government schools. For example, 38.3% of children in Std I in government schools are 5 years or younger, whereas this figure is 10 percentage points lower in private schools (28.2%). However, grade expectations are the same for all children regardless of age. (Chart 2)
- **Age makes a difference:** Comparing children in Std I in same type of school by age, it is clear that older children are able to do more. For example, among children in Std I in government schools, 65.7% of 5 year olds can read at least letters, as compared to 75.1% of 6-7 year olds. (Table 3)

## Std I: Can young children read letters and recognize numbers?

**Table 2: % Children enrolled in Std I by school type 2018**

% Children in Std I enrolled in	Govt	Pvt	Total
	49.1	50.9	100

**Chart 2: % Children enrolled in Std I by age and school type 2018**



This chart shows the distribution of Std I children enrolled in different types of schools by age.

**Table 3: Reading and arithmetic levels for Std I children by age and school type 2018**

Age	% Children who	
	Can read at least letters	Can recognize at least numbers (1-9)
Government schools		
Age 5	65.7	76.9
Age 6 and 7	75.1	82.4
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient	
All	71.8	80.5
Private schools		
Age 5	89.5	89.9
Age 6 and 7	92.3	94.6
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient	
All	91.4	93.1

This table shows the proportion of children in Std I who can read at least letters and recognize at least numbers up to 9.

## Age 4 to 8 years: Where are young boys and girls enrolled?

**Table 4: % Children age 4-8 enrolled in Govt pre-schools/schools by sex 2018**

Age	Enrolled in govt pre-schools/schools		Sex-wise difference in enrollment in percentage points
	Boys	Girls	
Age 4	43.3	45.0	1.7
Age 5	44.2	41.9	-2.3
Age 6	39.9	47.3	7.4
Age 7	47.4	51.2	3.8
Age 8	52.8	60.6	7.9

Note: Government pre-schools/schools include anganwadis, government pre-primary classes and government primary schools.

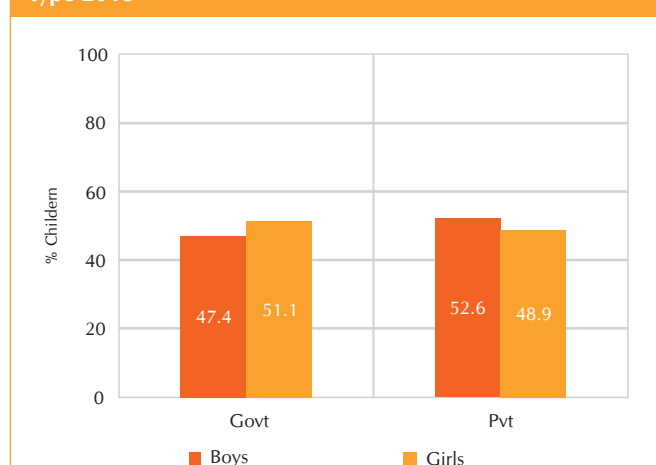


### Key takeaways:

- **No clear patterns based on sex for enrollment in schools or pre-schools by school type:** For some age groups, there are more girls enrolled in government institutions and for others, more boys are enrolled. In Std I, a slightly higher proportion of girls are enrolled in government schools (51.1%) as compared to boys (47.4%). (Table 4 and Chart 3)
- **In government schools in Std I, boys outperform girls:** At age 6-7, in government schools, 77.1% of boys can read at least letters as compared to 73.0% of girls. Similarly, 87.2% of boys can recognize at least single digit numbers as compared to 77.4% of girls. (Table 5)
- **In private schools in Std I, learning levels of girls are better than that of boys:** Across all age groups, girls in private schools perform significantly better than boys in terms of their ability to read letters and numbers. (Table 5)

## Std I: Can young boys and girls read letters and recognize numbers?

**Chart 3: % Children enrolled in Std I by sex and school type 2018**



The chart shows the distribution of Std I children enrolled in different types of schools by sex. For example, of all boys enrolled in Std I, 47.4% of boys are enrolled in government schools and 52.6% of boys are enrolled in private schools. Of all girls enrolled in Std I, 51.1% of girls are enrolled in government schools and 48.9% of girls are enrolled in private schools.

**Table 5: Reading and arithmetic levels for Std I children by age, sex, and school type 2018**

Age	% Children who			
	Can read at least letters		Can recognize at least numbers (1-9)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Government schools				
Age 5	Data insufficient			
Age 6 and 7	77.1	73.0	87.2	77.4
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient			
All	72.3	71.3	82.3	78.5
Private schools				
Age 5	Data insufficient			
Age 6 and 7	89.8	95.6	93.3	96.3
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient			
All	88.2	95.4	90.8	96.0

This table shows the proportion of children in Std I who can read at least letters and recognize at least numbers up to 9. The data shows patterns by age and sex.