



















**Key Statistics:** There were **344,476** instances of participation in **30,044** sessions for the following library activities in **2022/23**.

Core Activity			 No. Instances of participation	 No. Sessions
<b>Class Visits</b>		 Children	88,196	3,753
<b>Clubs</b> (e.g. Creative Writing, Knit and Natter, Tea and Newspapers etc.)		 All	102,159 (74,853 adults, 27,306 children)	15,423
<b>Got IT</b>		 Adults	729	693
<b>Go On</b>		 Adults	1,546	727
<b>Reading Groups</b>		 All	10,949 (9,235 adults, 1,714 children)	1,655
<b>Reminiscence/Storytelling</b>		 Adults	1,925	149
<b>Rhythm and Rhyme</b>		 All	125,432 (56,437 adults, 68,995 children)	6,174
<b>Storytime</b>		 Children	13,540	1,470

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## Introduction

In **2022/23**, Libraries NI's **96 branch libraries** delivered a range of programmes and activities focused on promoting reading, learning and access to culture, heritage and information. Details on participation in these activities is recorded on the **Libraries NI Activity Database** and used to produce this bulletin.

Key findings on instances of participation in core library activities (i.e. **Class Visits, Clubs, Got IT, Go On, Reading Groups, Reminiscence/ Storytelling, Rhythm and Rhyme** and **Storytime**) during the period **1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023** are presented on the following pages. Due to the structure of the database and details collected when people participate in library activities, it is not possible to identify unique individuals: (e.g. 6 instances of participation may be 6 people attending once each or 2 people attending 3 times each etc.)

There are no participation statistics for **2018/19 to 2021/22** as a consequence of incomplete data returns for various reasons (including the closure of libraries/limited availability of services during the Covid-19 pandemic) so **comparison of 2022/23 participation statistics with these years** is therefore **not possible**. Also, as a result of the introduction of data collection on library activities not previously reported on and changes to definitions of existing activities for 2022/23, it is **not appropriate** to directly **compare 2022/23 overall participation statistics** with **earlier years**.

However **comparisons** will be made on a **like-for-like basis** with the most recently published statistics (i.e. 2017/18) and earlier years where possible for participation in the following activities only: **Class Visits, Got IT, Go On, Reading Groups, Rhythm and Rhyme** and **Storytime**. In addition, participation in the various activities for 2022/23, along with **year-on-year comparisons from 2012/13 to 2022/23** where possible, are presented in tables separate from this bulletin on the [Libraries NI website](#).

It is important to note the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and implementation of new public health regulations, guidance and advice may have fundamentally changed peoples' behaviour and attitudes with regard to visiting libraries. This may partly account for the fact that 2022/23 participation statistics in the library activities are generally lower than pre-pandemic figures.

## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years)

### ALL Core Activities

In 2022/23, overall there were **344,476 instances of participation** in **30,044 sessions** for the following library activities:

- **Class Visits**
- **Clubs**
- **Got IT**
- **Go On**
- **Reading Groups**
- **Reminiscence/Storytelling**
- **Rhythm and Rhyme**
- **Storytime**

As data collection for a number of library activities only commenced in 2022/23 (i.e. various new **Clubs** and **Reminiscence/Storytelling**) and the definitions of some existing activities changed (i.e. Creative Writing, Job Clubs, Knit and Natter, Mindful Colouring and Tea and Newspapers) it is not appropriate to make direct comparisons of overall participation statistics with earlier years.

It is also important to note that restrictions in place during the Covid-19 pandemic impacted Libraries NI's ability to deliver services in libraries and consequently prevented the public from accessing the full range of library activities and programmes. Although many normal branch library activities were constrained, programmes and activities were adapted and delivered online through the Libraries NI website and social media channels.

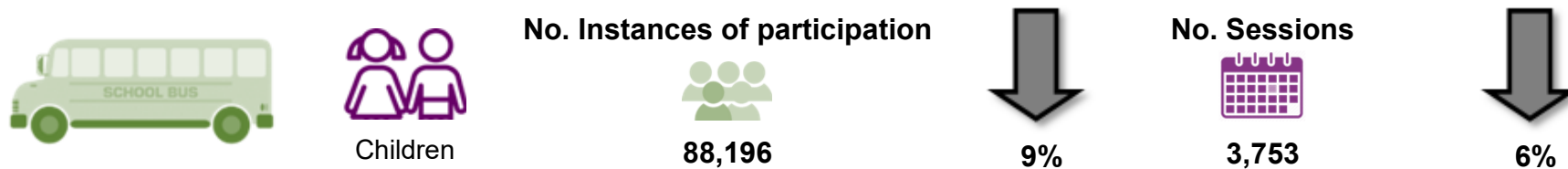
When restrictions were lifted in February 2022, Libraries NI focused on reinstating services that had been disrupted and reconnecting with people. As society returns to normal, any lasting effects of the impact of the pandemic on the behaviour and attitudes of the public and external organisations (e.g. schools, playgroups, community groups etc.) with regards to visiting libraries remain to be seen. The figures for 2022/23 should therefore be considered in this context when making comparisons for **individual activities** with 2017/18 and earlier years.

# Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years)

## Class Visits

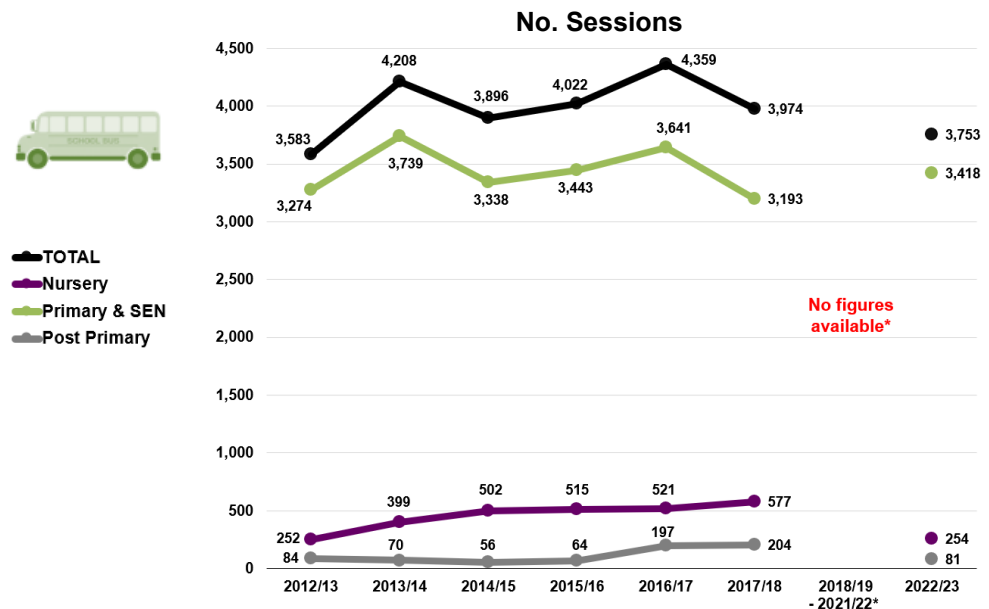
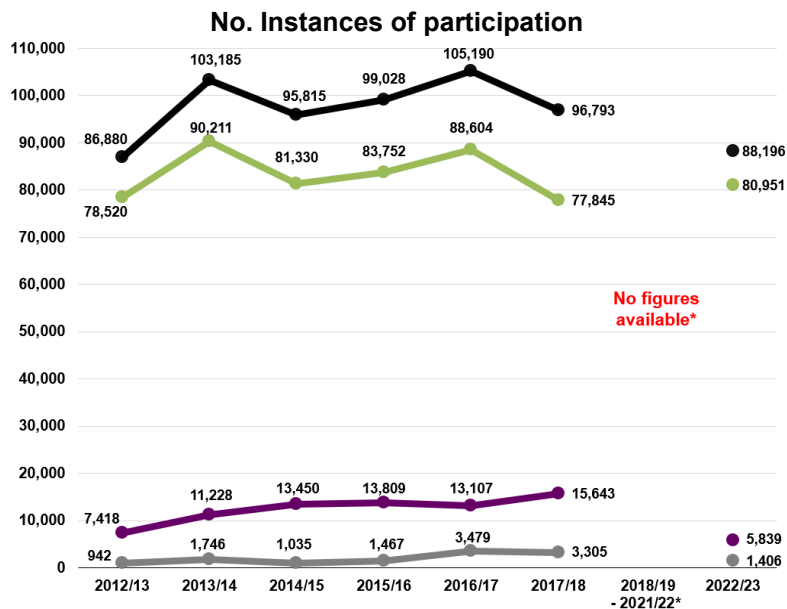
In 2022/23, a total of **88,196 children** took part in the school class visits programme (**3,753 sessions**), a **9% decrease in participation** and a **6% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (96,793 children and 3,974 sessions respectively). The 2022/23 figures are the second lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

### ALL Class Visits: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



Graph 1 below shows participation in the various types of Class Visits from 2012/13 to 2022/23.

### Graph 1: Class Visits – Year-on-year comparisons



## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Class Visits (continued)

The majority of class visits in 2022/23 were by pupils from **primary** and **special needs schools (80,951 children and 3,418 sessions)** which represents a **4% increase in participation** and a **7% increase in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (77,845 children and 3,193 sessions respectively). The 2022/23 participation figure is the third lowest, and the number of sessions is the fourth lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

#### Primary & Special Needs: Increases on 2017/18 figures



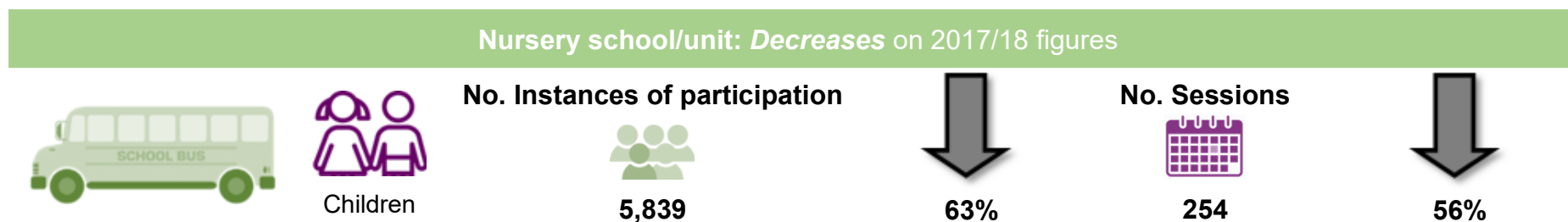
Of these visits:

- **29,658 children** participated in a set of structured activities aimed at pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 to support Key Stage 1 & 2 of the NI curriculum with regard to language and literacy skills (**1,160 sessions**), a **1% increase in participation** and practically **no change in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (29,236 children and 1,165 sessions respectively). The 2022/23 participation figure is the second lowest, and the number of sessions is the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.
- **431 children** took part in new cultural heritage class visits (**18 sessions**). These were first introduced in 2022/23 so there are no corresponding figures for comparison with earlier years.
- The remaining **50,862 children** exchanged books and/or listened to stories, took part in crafts etc. (**2,240 sessions**), which represents a **5% increase in participation** and a **10% increase in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (48,609 children and 2,028 sessions). The 2022/23 figures are the second highest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

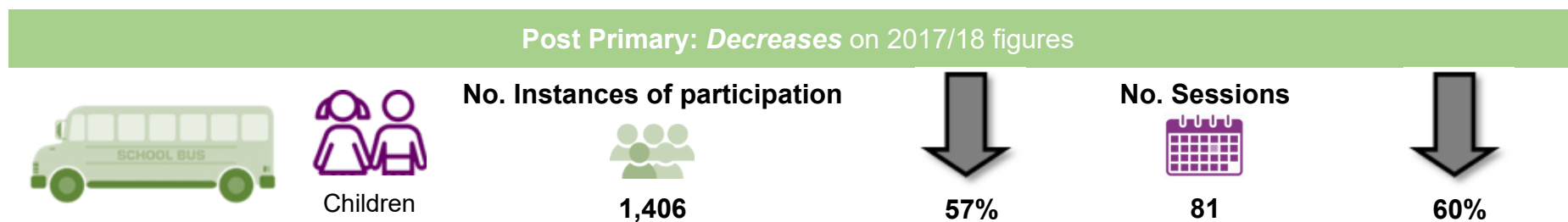
## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Class Visits (continued)

**5,839 children** were pupils from **nursery schools** or primary schools with an associated **nursery unit (254 sessions)**. This represents a **63% decrease in participation** and a **56% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (15,643 children and 577 sessions respectively). The 2022/23 participation figure is the lowest, and the number of sessions is the second lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.



**1,406** were pupils from **post primary schools (81 sessions)** which is a **57% decrease in participation** and a **60% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (3,305 children and 204 sessions). The 2022/23 participation figure is the third lowest, and the number of sessions is the fourth lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.



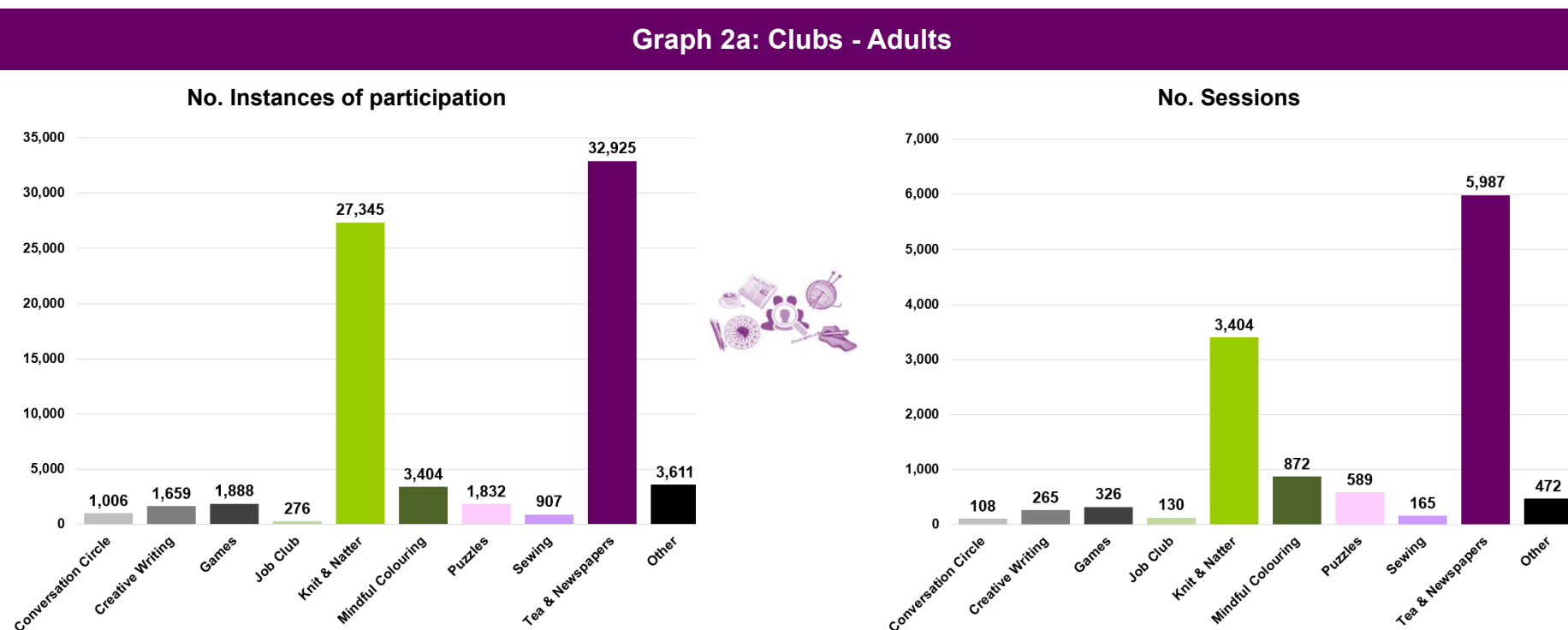
## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Clubs

In 2022/23, **102,159 participants** engaged in a total of **15,423 club sessions**. As data collection for Clubs only commenced in 2022/23 and the definitions of some existing activities now included within this category changed (i.e. Creative Writing, Job Clubs, Knit and Natter, Mindful Colouring and Tea and Newspapers), it is not possible to make direct comparisons of participation statistics with earlier years.

**Adults: 74,853 adults** took part in **12,318 club sessions** in 2022/23. Not all the different types of clubs were offered in every library but in the vast majority of libraries, Tea and Newspapers (32,925 adults, 5,987 sessions) and Knit and Natter (27,345 adults, 3,404 sessions) were held at least once a month and were the most commonly attended clubs. Other types of clubs included Mindful Colouring, Games, Puzzles, Creative Writing, Conversation Circles, Gardening and Sewing.

**Graph 2a** below shows participation in the various types of Clubs for adults in 2022/23.

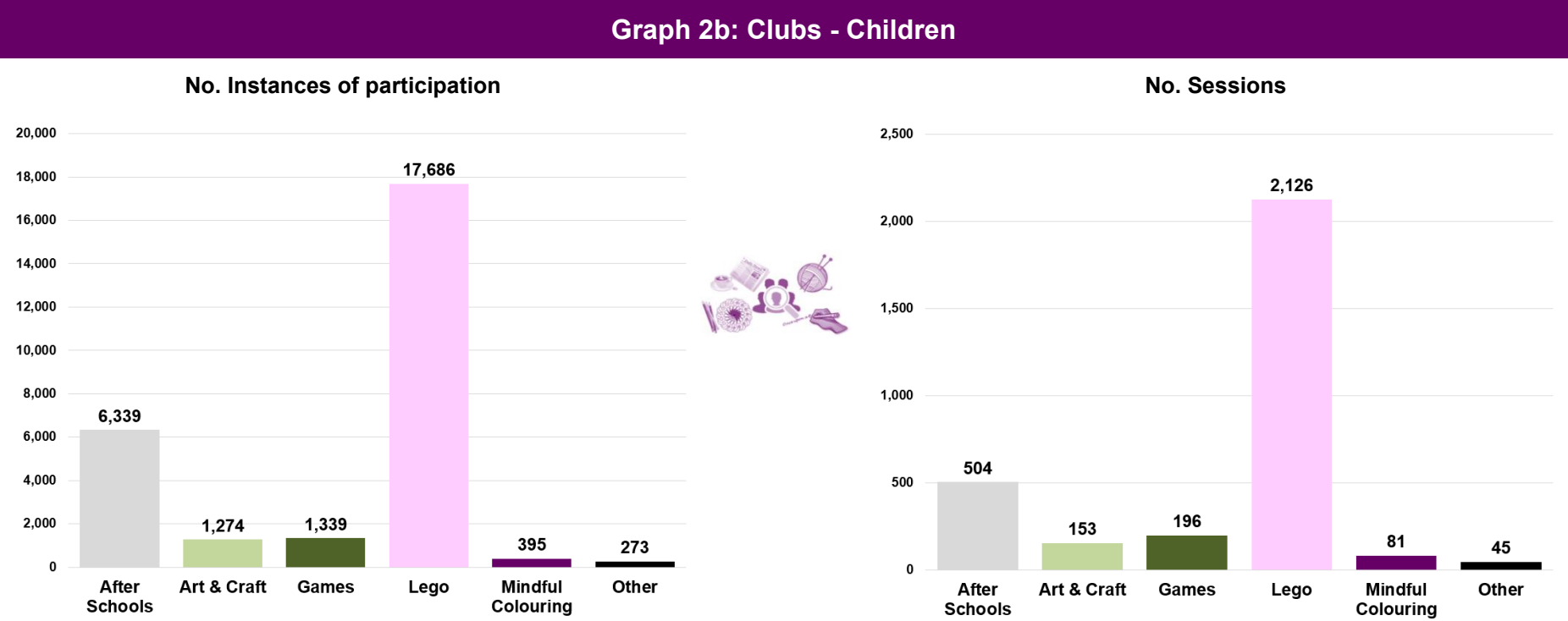


## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Clubs (continued)

**Children:** 27,306 children took part in 3,105 club sessions in 2022/23. Not all the different types of clubs were offered in every library but the most commonly held and attended clubs for children were Lego Clubs (17,686 children, 2,126 sessions) and After Schools Clubs (6,339 children, 504 sessions).

**Graph 2b** below shows participation in the various types of Clubs for children in 2022/23.



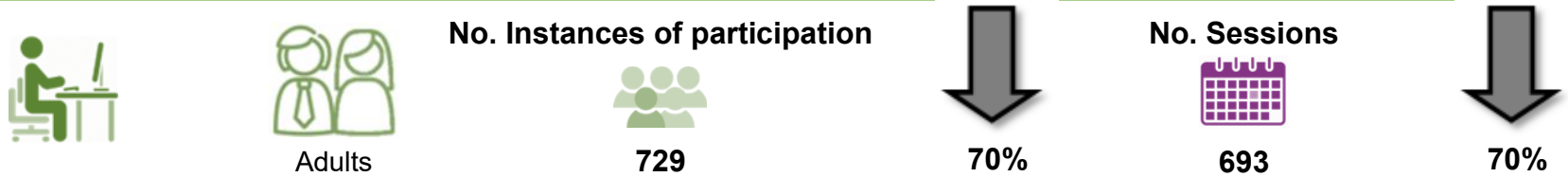


# Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

## Got IT

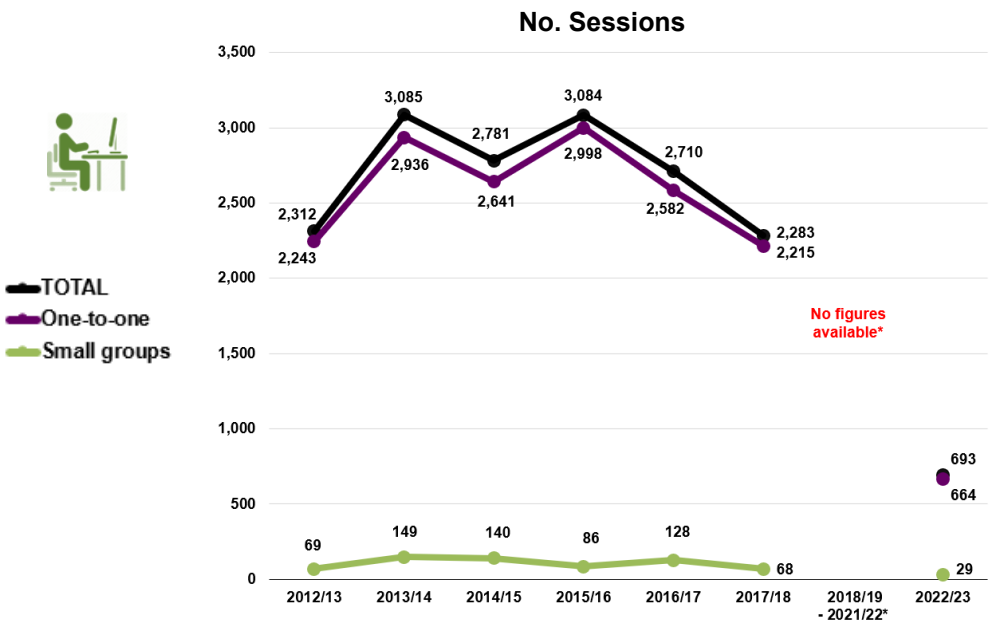
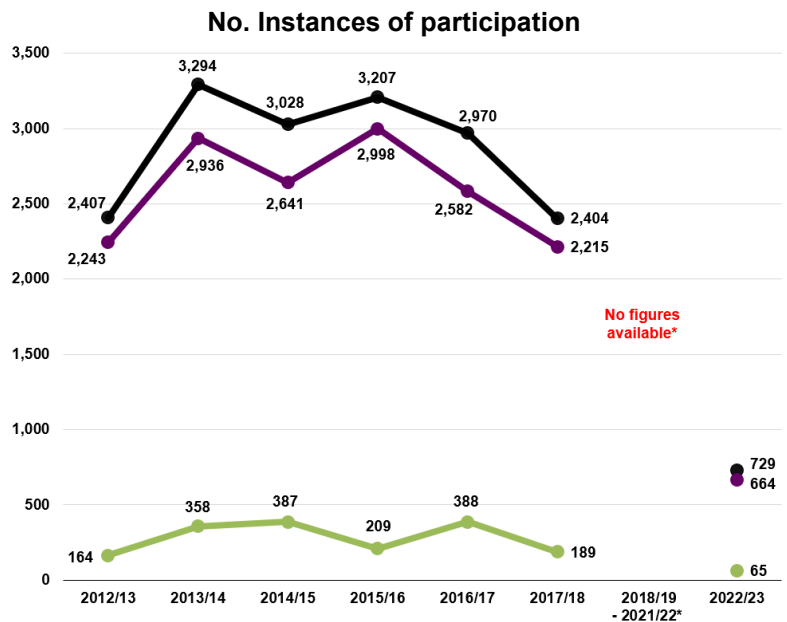
**729 adults** participated in **693 Got IT sessions** in 2022/23, compared with 2,404 adults and 2,283 sessions in 2017/18, which is a **70% decrease** in both participation and the number of sessions. The 2022/23 figures are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

### ALL Got IT: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



Graph 3 below shows participation in Got IT sessions from 2012/13 to 2022/23

### Graph 3: Got IT - Year-on-year comparisons



## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Got IT (continued)

**664 adults** participated in **Got IT on a one-to-one basis** in 2022/23 compared with 2,215 in 2017/18, a **decrease of 70%**. The 2022/23 figures are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.



**65 adults** took part in **29 small group Got IT sessions**, which represents a **66% decrease in participation** and a **57% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (189 adults and 68 sessions). The 2022/23 figures are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.



Overall:

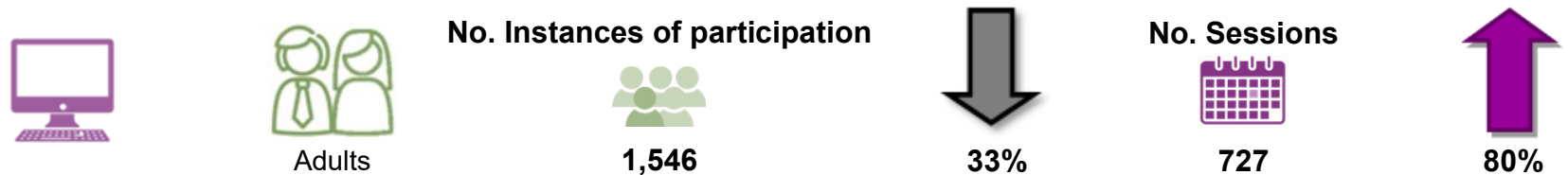
- **327 adults** took part in **313 Introduction to computers** sessions.
- **223 adults** took part in **208 Introduction to the Internet** sessions.
- **179 adults** took part in **172 Introduction to email** sessions.

# Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

## Go On

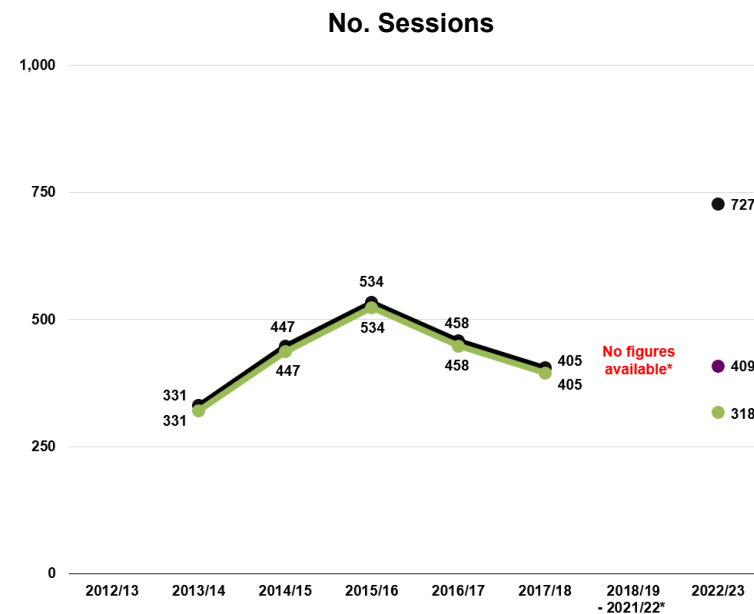
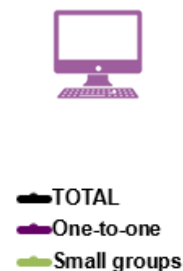
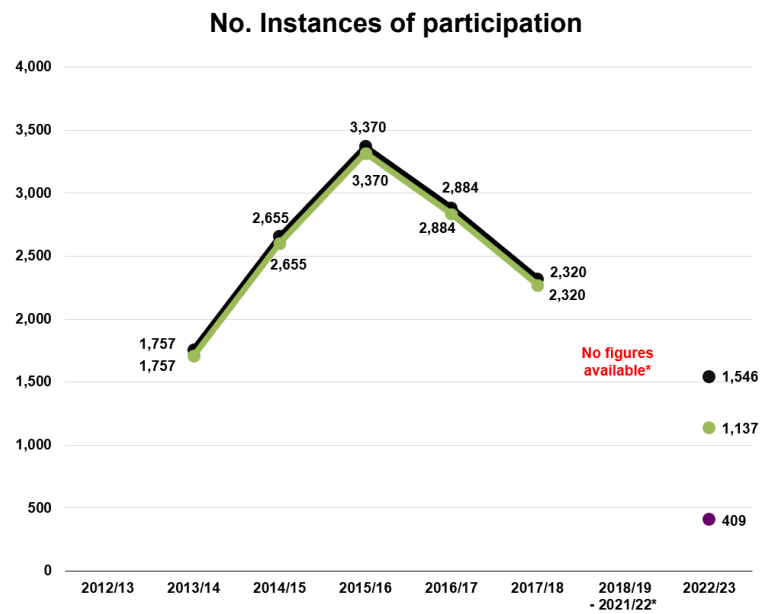
**1,546 adults** participated in **727 Go On sessions** in 2022/23, compared with 2,320 adults and 405 sessions in 2017/18 which is a **33% decrease in participation** and an **80% increase in the number of sessions**. The 2022/23 participation figure is the lowest when compared with 2013/14 (when Go On was first recorded) to 2017/18 but the number of sessions is the highest.

### ALL Go On: *Decrease and increase on 2017/18 figures*



Graph 4 below shows participation in Go On sessions from 2013/14 to 2022/23

### Graph 4: Go On - Year-on-year comparisons



## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

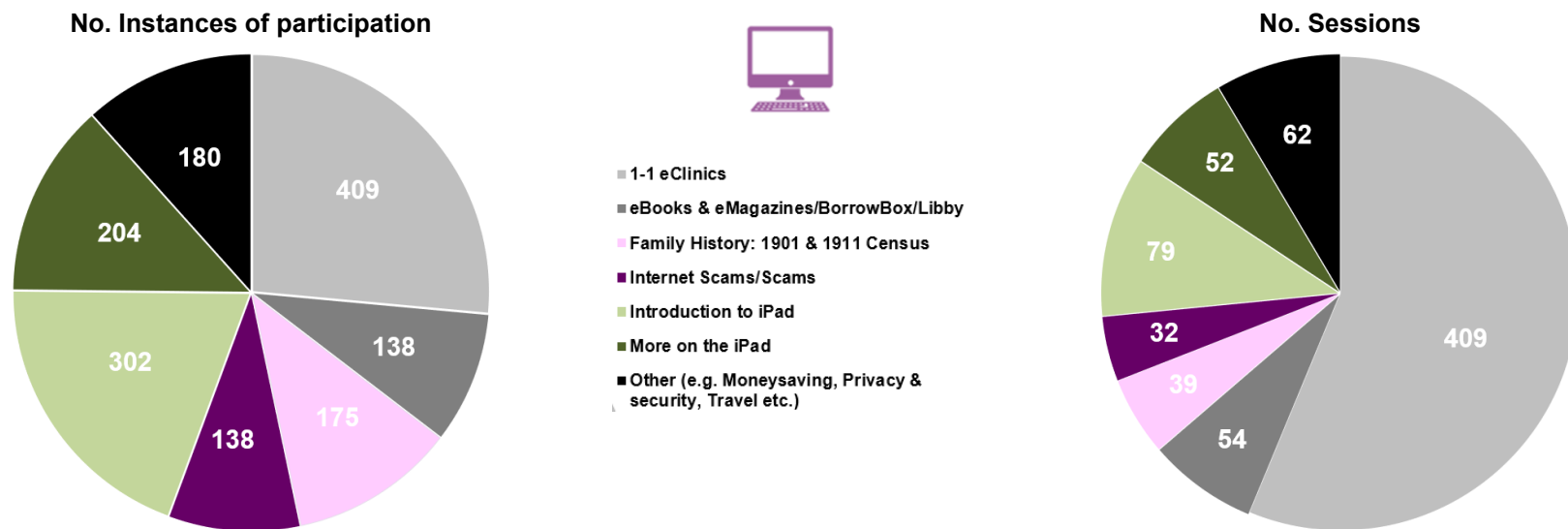
### Go On (continued)

**409 adults** participated in **Go On eClinics** on a **one-to-one basis** in 2022/23. This was the first time participation in one-to-one eClinics was recorded so there are no corresponding figures for comparison with earlier years.

**1,137 adults** took part in **318 small group Go On sessions**, which represents a **51% decrease in participation** and a **21% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (2,320 adults and 405 sessions). However, these decreases may partly be due to the introduction of one-to-one eClinics in 2022/23, which reduced the number of small group sessions offered and therefore had an impact on the respective participation figures.



Overall, participation in the various Go On modules in 2022/23 is as follows:



# Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

## Reading Groups

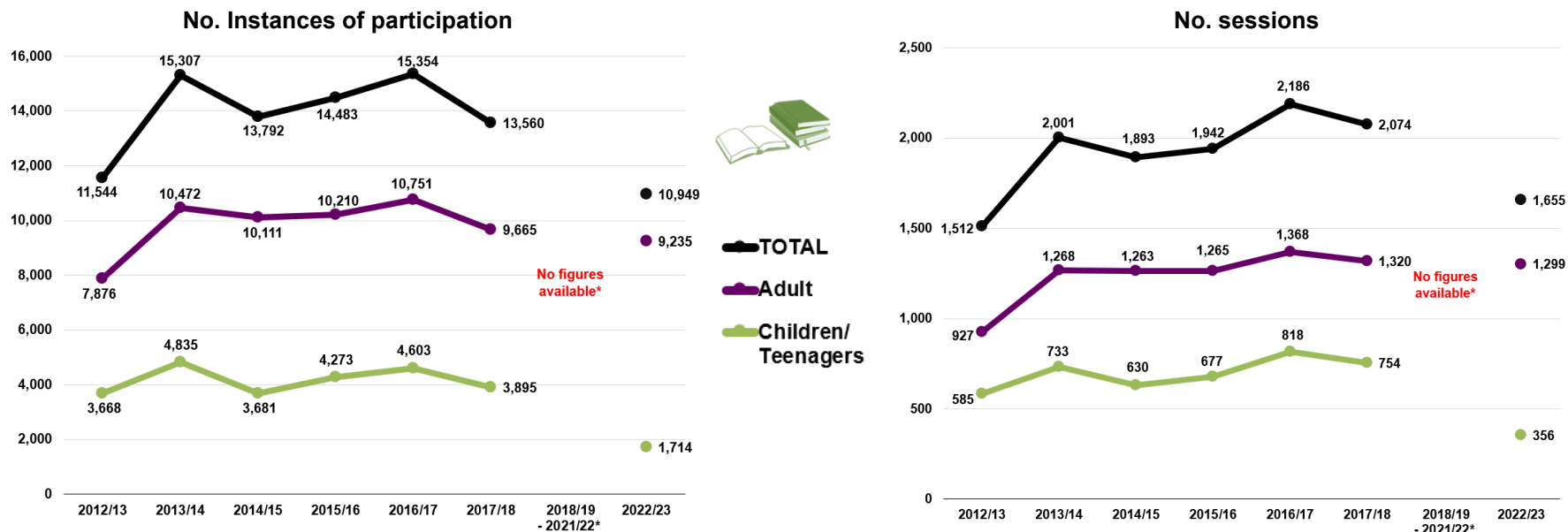
In 2022/23, **10,949 participants** engaged in **1,655 reading group sessions** compared with 13,560 participants and 2,074 sessions in 2017/18, a **19% decrease in participation** and a **20% decrease in the number of sessions**. The participation figure in 2022/23 is the lowest, and the number of sessions is the second lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

### ALL Reading Groups: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



Graph 5 below shows participation in Reading Groups from 2012/13 to 2022/23

### Graph 5: Reading Groups - Year-on-year comparisons



## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Reading Groups (continued)

**Adults:** In 2022/23, **9,235 adults** took part in **1,299 reading group sessions** compared with 9,665 adults and 1,320 sessions in 2017/18 which is a **4% decrease in participation** and a **2% decrease in the number of sessions**. While the participation figure in 2022/23 is the second lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18, the number of sessions is the third highest.

#### Adult Reading Groups: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



**Children:** In 2022/23, **1,714 children** took part in **356 reading group sessions** compared with 3,895 children and 754 sessions in 2017/18 which is a **56% decrease in participation** and a **53% decrease in the number of sessions**. Both the participation figure and the number of sessions in 2022/23 are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

#### Children's Reading Groups: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



Of these:

- **267 children** took part in **55 Chatterbooks sessions for 7-11 year olds**, a **74% decrease in participation** and a **70% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (1,045 children and 185 sessions respectively).
- **393 children** took part in **84 sessions for 7-9 year olds**, a **53% decrease in participation** and a **42% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (835 children and 146 sessions respectively).
- **826 children** took part in **179 sessions for 9-11 year olds**, a **48% decrease in participation** and a **43% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (1,587 children and 316 sessions respectively).
- **228 children** took part in **38 sessions for those aged 12+ years**, a **47% decrease in participation** and a **64% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (428 children and 107 sessions respectively).

## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Reminiscence/Storytelling

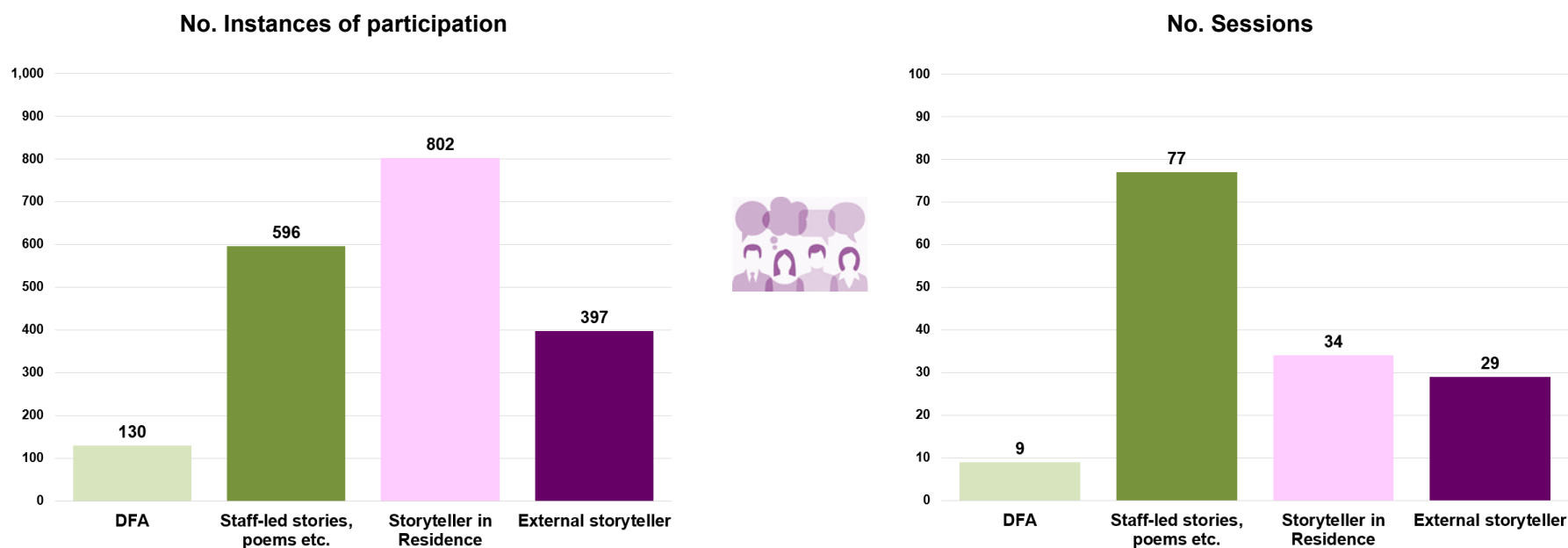
In 2022/23, **1,925 adults** engaged in a total of **149 sessions**. As data collection for this activity only commenced in 2022/23 there are no corresponding figures for comparison with earlier years.

Of these:

- **130 adults** took part in **9 sessions** where Digital Film Archive (DFA) was used.
- **596 adults** took part in **77 sessions** where library staff led the sessions involving stories, poems etc.
- **802 adults** took part in **34 sessions** taken by the Libraries NI Storyteller in Residence.
- **397 adults** took part in **29 sessions** taken by an external storyteller.

**Graph 6** below shows participation in the various types of Reminiscence/Storytelling in 2022/23.

**Graph 6: Reminiscence/Storytelling**



# Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

## Rhythm and Rhyme

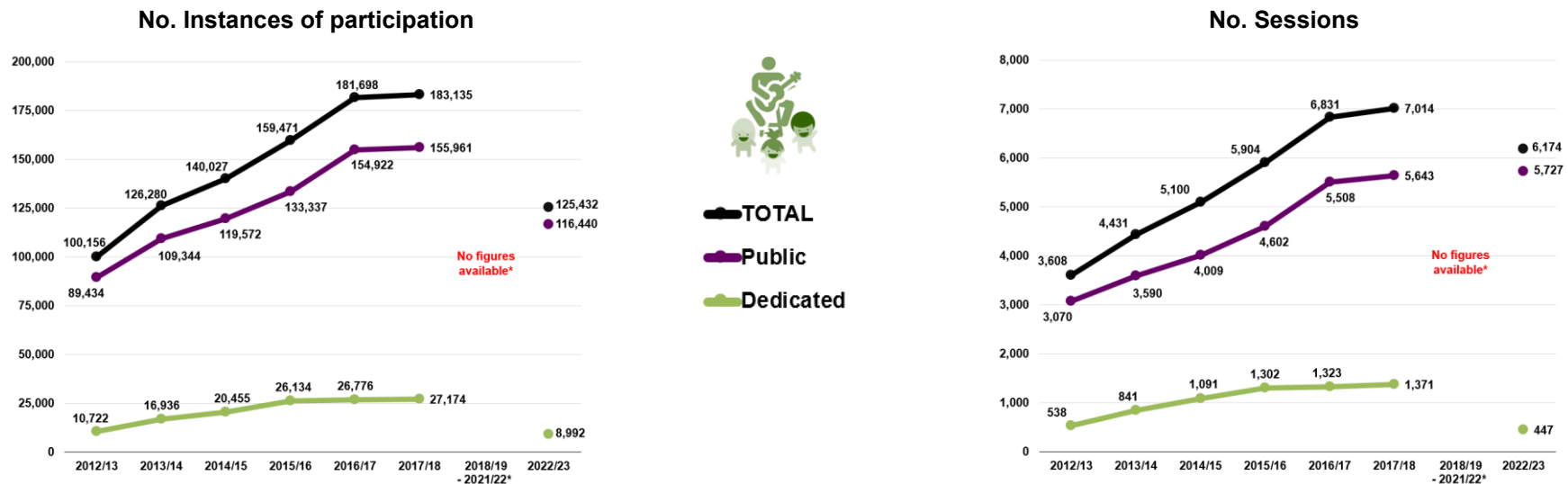
In 2022/23, **125,432 participants** (56,437 adults and 68,995 children) engaged in a total of **6,174 Rhythm and Rhyme sessions** for pre-school age children (0-4 years), which represents a **32% decrease in overall participation** and a **12% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (183,135 participants and 7,014 sessions respectively). While the number of sessions in 2022/23 is the third highest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18, the overall participation figure is the second lowest.

### ALL Rhythm and Rhyme: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



Graph 7 below shows participation in Rhythm and Rhyme from 2012/13 to 2022/23

### Graph 7: Rhythm and Rhyme - Year-on-year comparisons

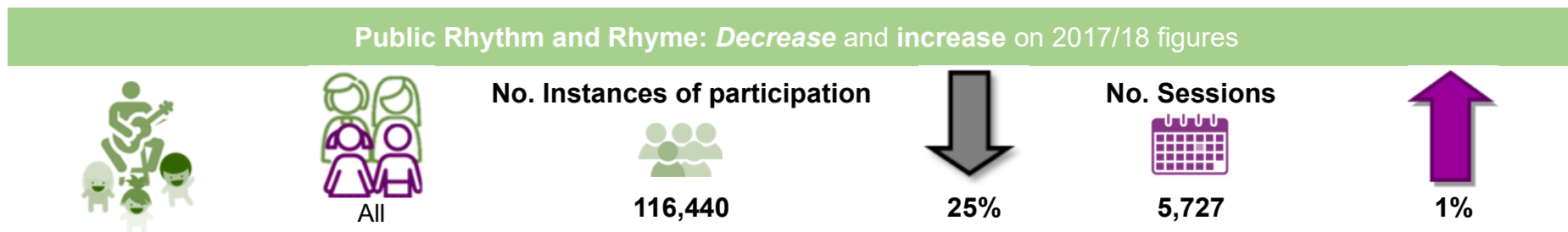




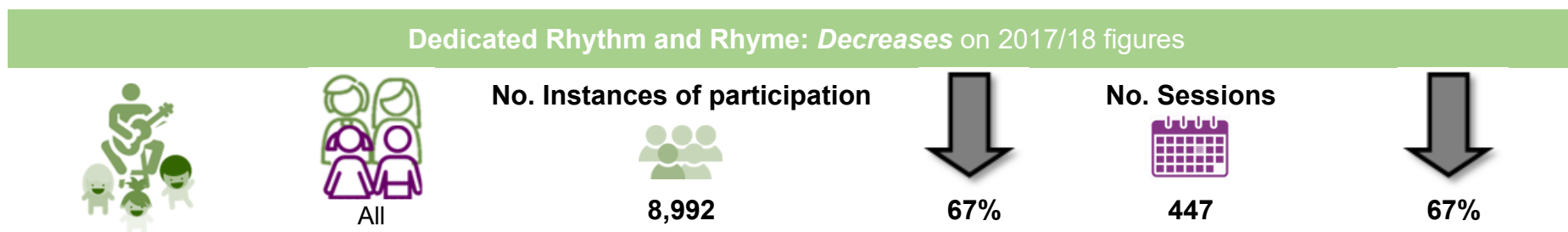
## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Rhythm and Rhyme (continued)

**116,440 participants** (53,599 adults and 62,841 children) took part in **5,727 sessions open to the public**, a **25% decrease in overall participation** and a **1% increase in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (155,961 participants and 5,643 sessions respectively). While the number of public sessions in 2022/23 is the highest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18, the overall participation figure is the third lowest.



**8,992 participants** (2,838 adults and 6,154 children) took part in **447 dedicated sessions** held exclusively for day nurseries, playgroups, parent and toddler groups etc., which is a **67% decrease in both overall participation and the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (27,174 participants and 1,371 sessions respectively). The 2022/23 figures are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.



# Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

## Storytime

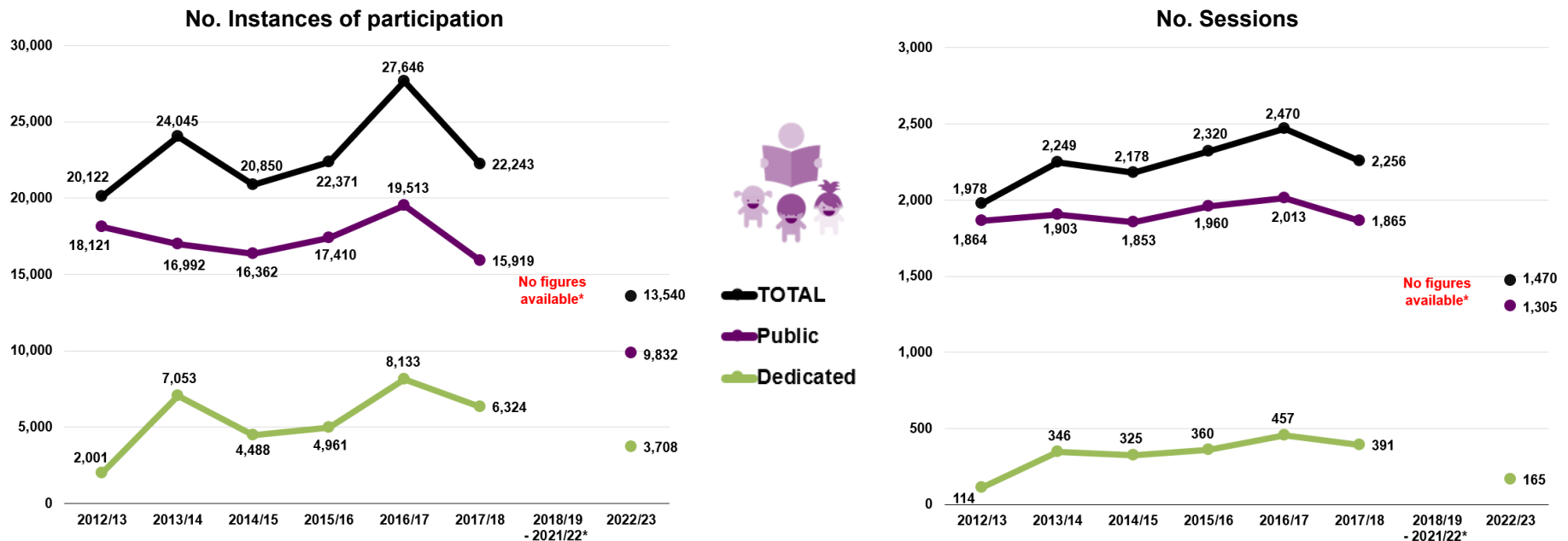
In 2022/23, **13,540 children** engaged in a total of **1,470 Storytime sessions** for 4-8 year olds, a **39% decrease in participation** and a **35% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (22,243 children and 2,256 sessions respectively). The 2022/23 figures are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

### ALL Storytime: Decreases on 2017/18 figures



Graph 8 below shows participation in Storytime from 2012/13 to 2022/23

### Graph 8: Storytime - Year-on-year comparisons



## Activity participation statistics: 2022/23 (and comparisons with earlier years) - continued

### Storytime (continued)

**9,832 children** took part in **1,305 sessions open to the public**, a **38% decrease** in participation and a **30% decrease** in the number of sessions compared with 2017/18 (15,919 children and 1,865 sessions respectively). Both the participation figure and the number of public sessions in 2022/23 are the lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

#### Public Storytime: *Decreases* on 2017/18 figures



Children

No. Instances of participation



9,832



38%

No. Sessions



1,305



30%

**3,708 children** took part in **165 dedicated sessions** held exclusively for external organisations attended by children of an equivalent age range such as Rainbows/Cygnets/Brigíní (Guides), Beavers/Squirrels (Scouts), Explorers (Girls' Brigade), Anchors (Boys' Brigade) or after school day care facilities etc., which is a **41% decrease in participation** and a **58% decrease in the number of sessions** compared with 2017/18 (6,324 children and 391 sessions respectively). Both the participation figure and the number of dedicated sessions in 2022/23 are the second lowest when compared with 2012/13 to 2017/18.

#### Dedicated Storytime: *Decreases* on 2017/18 figures



Children

No. Instances of participation



3,708



41%

No. Sessions



165



58%

## Definitions and technical notes

### Core Activities

#### Class Visits

The Class Visits programme is open to all Northern Ireland nursery, primary, post primary and special needs schools (including both English and Irish medium schools) and aims to give pupils an insight into the range of services available at their local library, and to encourage them to become members. Classes can come to the library for book exchange, storytelling, craft sessions, to use computers, view heritage collections (where available) etc.

Within the Class Visits programme, there is a set of activities specifically aimed at primary school age children in Years 4 and 6 and supports Key Stage 1 and 2 language and literacy skills as detailed in the NI Curriculum. This element of the programme offers a series of 3 one hour visits for pupils in these year groups which include a general introduction and tour of the library, activities to help explain the layout of library stock and instruction on the various uses of computers in the library. One-off visits are also available which give pupils a general overview of library services and resources. At the end of each visit, the pupils will listen to a story and there will be an opportunity for them to browse and exchange books.

Libraries NI staff also deliver outreach visits to many schools to promote the various library services and read stories to the pupils.

#### Clubs

These are where groups of adults or children meet on a regular basis mainly in the library to take part in shared activities that are scheduled, advertised and led by library staff. These social activities contribute to promoting libraries as community hubs, although the various types of clubs listed below are not held in every library.

<u>Adult</u>		<u>Children</u>
• Conversation Circle/Language class	• Knit and Natter	• After Schools/Homework Club
• Creative Writing	• Mindful Colouring	• Art and Craft Club
• Family/Local History Club	• Music Club	• Creative Writing
• Film Club	• Puzzles Club (e.g. Crosswords, Sudoku, Jigsaws etc.)	• Games Club (e.g. Board/Card/Dice games etc.)
• Games Club (e.g. Board/Card/Dice games etc.)	• Sewing Club	• IT Club (e.g. Coding, Minecraft, Microbits etc.)
• Gardening Club	• Tea and Newspapers	• Lego Club
• IT Club (e.g. iPad, computer club etc.)	• Topical Discussion Group	• Mindful Colouring
• Job Club	• Walking Club	• Music Club
		• Puzzles Club (e.g. Crosswords, Sudoku, Jigsaws etc.)

## Definitions and technical notes - continued

### Got IT

Got IT is a free programme to support people with little or no knowledge of computers and help them develop basic IT skills. The programme is aimed at adults and delivered by Libraries NI staff on a one-to-one or small group basis in the library, with sessions covering the following topics:

- Introduction to computers
- Introduction to the Internet
- Introduction to email

### Go ON

Go ON is a free programme to support people who are able to use a computer, email and the Internet and want to further develop their IT skills with regard to everyday computer tasks, such as paying utility bills or shopping online, online banking, social networking, digital photography, online health enquiries etc. The programme is aimed at adults and modules are delivered by Libraries NI staff on a small group basis or as a 1-2-1 eClinic, mostly in the library but occasionally at another location or online.

The current Go On programme gives people the opportunity to take part in one or more of the various modules below:

- 1-2-1 eClinics
- Android
- Art on Your iPad
- Cloud Storage
- Creative Photos for Fun
- eBooks & eMagazines
- Email on an iPad
- Entertainment/iPlayer
- Facebook
- Family History: 1901 & 1911 Census
- Family History: Irish birth, death & marriage civil records for beginners
- Fun Puzzle Apps
- Handmade Marketplace
- Internet Scams
- Introduction to iPad
- Introduction to iPad: iMovie
- Introduction to Microsoft Word
- Introduction to the Cloud
- iPad Camera
- Libby
- Library Online Service
- Media Literacy
- Messenger via Facebook
- Moneysaving
- More on the iPad
- Organise Your Life Online
- Practice Using Zoom
- Press Reader
- Privacy & Security
- Scams
- Shopping Online
- Spotify
- Start Your Own Business
- Travel
- Twitter, Pinterest & Instagram
- Voice Activated Technology
- Web based email
- WhatsApp
- Your Health Online

## **Definitions and technical notes - continued**

### **Reading Groups**

Reading groups cater for both children and adults and encourage people to read for pleasure, read adventurously, share their enthusiasm about books and develop the confidence to formulate and express opinions about reading.

Libraries NI staff host reading groups for adults and children/teenagers, including those aimed at specific groups in society (e.g. visually impaired, deaf etc.). Such groups generally meet in the library, although some are run by Libraries NI staff in other locations or occasionally online. Reading groups hosted by external organisations that meet in the library premises with input from library staff and/or use library resources are also facilitated. A flexible type of children's reading group called Chatterbooks, co-ordinated through The Reading Agency, was introduced in libraries in 2014/15 and sessions are suitable for 7-11 year olds of all different abilities.

### **Reminiscence/Storytelling**

This is an activity for adults where stories are told, often including the recollection of events and experiences of the past. Sessions are led by library staff, the Libraries NI Storyteller in Residence or organised by library staff and delivered by an external storyteller. They are mostly held in the library for the general public or specific groups (e.g. Age NI, Alzheimer's society, Dementia Café etc.) but outreach sessions may also take place at other locations (e.g. Nursing Homes, Folds etc.). Some reminiscence sessions may also incorporate the use of Digital Film Archive (DFA).

### **Rhythm and Rhyme**

Rhythm and Rhyme is a free programme of stories, rhymes and songs delivered on a regular or occasional basis by Libraries NI staff for parents, carers and pre-school children (aged 0-4 years). The aim of the programme is to improve children's language and communication skills before they enter formal education.

In addition to sessions that are open to the public, the activity is also available to young children attending day nurseries, playgroups, parent and toddler groups etc. These dedicated sessions are mostly held on the library premises but some are also delivered by Libraries NI staff at other locations (e.g. on playgroup premises, at community centres etc.). On occasions, public sessions are also delivered at other locations as part of community festivals etc.

## Definitions and technical notes - continued

### Storytime

Storytime is a free programme of stories, rhymes and poems delivered on a regular or seasonal basis by Libraries NI staff for children aged 4-8 years.

In addition to sessions that are open to the public, the programme is also available to external organisations attended by children of an equivalent age range (e.g. Guides (Rainbows/Cygnets/Brigíní), Scouts (Squirrels/Beavers), Girl's Brigade (Explorers), Boy's Brigade (Anchors) or after school day care facilities etc.). Such dedicated sessions are mostly held on the library premises but some are also delivered by Libraries NI staff at other locations (e.g. at community centres, church/parish halls etc. or to groups of children who are unable to come to the library, e.g. those in hospice care). On occasions, public sessions are also delivered at other locations as part of community festivals etc.

### Metadata

Data from the Libraries NI Activity Database are used for this publication. The data are input to this system by the 96 branch library managers on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and are downloaded into MS Excel at the end of each month and then read into SPSS. Validations are carried out to ensure that the data are reliable and robust for use. Any inconsistencies or inaccuracies are reported back to branch library managers and the data is amended where necessary. Once all amendments have been made to the data, SPSS syntax is used to produce the tables in the bulletin. Information is presented at Northern Ireland Library Authority level.

### Notes to users

1. All participant numbers refer to instances of participation rather than individual people.
2. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.
3. Year-on-year comparisons are figures compared with corresponding ones from the previous year or the most recent year available where data are missing.

## Definitions and technical notes - continued

### Official Statistics

The statistics presented in this bulletin are 'Official Statistics' as defined in Section 6 of the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007. A statistician from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency is seconded to Libraries NI and is responsible for ensuring that the statistics comply with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the OSR website.

Copies of this bulletin are available on the [Libraries NI website](#).