



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

People with Learning Disabilities in England

Education and children's social care:
2018 update

About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct delivery organisation with operational autonomy. We provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific and delivery expertise and support.

Public Health England

Wellington House

133-155 Waterloo Road

London SE1 8UG

Tel: 020 7654 8000

www.gov.uk/phe

Twitter: [@PHE_uk](https://twitter.com/PHE_uk)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland

Prepared by: Chris Hatton

For queries relating to this document, please contact: chris.hatton@lancaster.ac.uk

This document is available in other formats on request. Please email ldt@phe.gov.uk



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Data tables

Table 5.1: The number of children with a Statement of SEN or an EHC Plan and a primary SEN associated with learning disabilities in state funded primary and secondary schools and state funded and non-maintained special schools in England, 2010 to 2018

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
MLD	41,030	36,645	34,715	33,455	32,410	31,115	29,650	28,564	28,241
SLD	25,230	26,045	26,880	27,540	28,330	28,940	29,001	29,120	29,492
PMLD	8,680	9,100	9,460	9,715	9,810	10,010	9,955	10,010	10,032
Total	74,940	71,790	71,055	70,710	70,550	70,065	68,606	67,694	67,765

Data presented in: Special Educational Needs in England, January 2018

Table 5.2: The number of children at School Action Plus with a primary SEN associated with learning disabilities in state funded primary and secondary schools and state funded and non-maintained special schools in England, 2010 to 2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
MLD	130,620	124,105	114,805	104,900	97,420
SLD	3,620	3,225	3,055	2,900	2,715
PMLD	720	795	795	805	775
Total	134,960	128,125	118,655	108,605	100,910

Data presented in: Special Educational Needs in England, January 2014

Table 5.3: The number of children at SEN Support with a primary SEN associated with learning disabilities in state funded primary and secondary schools and state funded and non-maintained special schools in England, 2015 to 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
MLD	209,970	243,977	231,149	224,190
SLD	3,150	3,303	3,218	3,188
PMLD	905	959	971	937
Total	214,025	248,239	235,338	228,315

Data presented in: Special Educational Needs in England, January 2018

Table 5.4: Number and identification rate per 1,000 children of girls and boys with primary SEN (SEN support or with statement/EHC plan) associated with learning disabilities in January 2018, England

	Girls with type of Primary SEN		Boys with type of Primary SEN		Pupils with Primary Need of SEN Associated with Learning Disabilities	
	Number	Identification rate per 1,000 children	Number	Identification rate per 1,000 children	Number	Identification rate per 1,000 children
MLD	99,824	25.2	152,607	37.0	252,431	31.2
SLD	11,420	2.9	21,260	5.2	32,680	4.0
PMLD	4,710	1.2	6,259	1.5	10,969	1.4
Total	115,954	29.2	180,126	43.7	296,080	36.6
Data extracted from: Special Educational Needs in England, January 2018						

Table 5.5: Identification rate per 1,000 children of primary SEN associated with learning disabilities (SEN support or statement/EHC plan) by ethnicity , England January 2018

	MLD	SLD	PMLD	Any SEN associated with LD
White				
White British	32.49	3.99	1.20	37.68
Irish	28.52	3.10	1.61	33.23
Traveller of Irish heritage	102.18	7.25	2.36	111.79
Gypsy / Roma	101.22	6.10	1.06	108.38
Any other White background	24.13	2.89	1.11	28.13
Mixed				
White and Black Caribbean	38.56	3.53	1.23	43.32
White and Black African	25.96	3.87	1.30	31.13
White and Asian	21.93	3.46	1.18	26.57
Any other mixed background	23.82	4.00	1.71	29.53
Asian				
Indian	19.16	3.25	1.26	23.67
Pakistani	42.62	5.62	2.99	51.23
Bangladeshi	26.47	4.55	2.18	33.20
Any other Asian background	19.32	4.31	1.79	25.42
Black				
Black Caribbean	39.21	4.03	1.28	44.52
Black African	25.79	5.16	1.63	32.58
Any other Black background	29.79	5.82	1.79	37.40
Chinese	9.53	3.40	0.95	13.88
Any other ethnic group	27.65	4.06	1.77	33.48
Ethnic group unclassified	28.82	4.38	1.63	34.83
All	31.19	4.04	1.36	36.59
Data extracted from: Special Educational Needs in England, January 2018				

Table 5.6: Number of children with primary SEN associated with learning disabilities being educated in mainstream and special schools 2010 to 2018

		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Children with a statement/EHC plan										
MLD	Mainstream	19,530	18,520	17,285	16,325	15,360	14,410	13,066	12,396	12,393
	Special	18,590	18,125	17,430	17,130	17,050	16,745	16,584	16,168	15,848
SLD	Mainstream	4,300	4,230	4,165	4,155	4,000	4,090	3,904	3,615	3,483
	Special	20,980	21,815	22,715	23,385	24,330	24,850	25,097	25,505	26,009
PMLD	Mainstream	1,260	1,315	1,310	1,305	1,300	1,405	1,437	1,497	1,503
	Special	7,510	7,790	8,150	8,410	8,515	8,600	8,518	8,513	8,529
Children at SEN Support (2015-2018 only)										
MLD	Mainstream						209,885	243,858	231,026	224,080
	Special						80	119	123	110
SLD	Mainstream						2,705	2,795	2,751	2,749
	Special						445	508	467	439
PMLD	Mainstream						640	687	710	714
	Special						265	272	261	223

Table 5.7: Percentage of children with primary SEN associated with learning disabilities being educated in mainstream schools 2009 to 2018

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Children with a statement/EHC plan										
MLD	52.4%	51.2%	50.5%	49.8%	48.8%	47.4%	46.3%	44.1%	43.4%	43.9%
SLD	18.0%	17.0%	16.2%	15.5%	15.1%	14.1%	14.1%	13.5%	12.4%	11.8%
PMLD	14.6%	14.4%	14.5%	13.8%	13.4%	13.3%	14.0%	14.4%	15.0%	15.0%
Total	36.4%	34.8%	33.5%	32.0%	30.8%	29.3%	28.4%	26.8%	25.9%	25.6%
Children at SEN Support (2015-2018 only)										
MLD							99.96%	99.95%	99.95%	99.95%
SLD							85.9%	84.6%	85.5%	86.2%
PMLD							70.7%	71.6%	73.1%	76.2%
Total							99.6%	99.6%	99.6%	99.7%

Table 5.8: Average percentage of half-day sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absences, 2007/8 to 2016/17 (statement/EHCP and SEN Support minus School Action in 2015/16 and 2016/17)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2015/16	2016/17
Authorised									
MLD	6.8	6.7	6.4	6.1	5.4	5.4	4.7	4.2	4.2
SLD	7.3	7.5	7.2	7.1	6.6	6.7	6.1	6.3	6.4
PMLD	12.6	13.4	13.7	13.3	12.9	13.3	12.9	13.1	13.2
All children	n/a	5.2	5.0	4.7	3.7	4.2	3.5	3.4	3.4
Unauthorised									
MLD	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.1
SLD	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0
PMLD	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.0
All children	n/a	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.3
Total absences									
MLD	9.0	9.0	8.6	8.3	7.4	7.5	6.6	6.1	6.3
SLD	8.2	8.5	8.2	8.0	7.4	7.5	6.9	7.3	7.5
PMLD	13.3	14.2	14.4	14.0	13.6	14.2	13.7	14.0	14.1
All children	6.3	6.3	6.0	5.8	4.4	5.3	4.5	4.6	4.7

Table 5.9: Reasons for absences from school of children with primary SEN associated with learning disabilities, England 2013/14				
	MLD	SLD	PMLD	No Identified SEN
Authorised				
Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	49.2%	56.7%	61.7%	60.5%
Medical/dental appointments	7.8%	15.6%	16.6%	6.6%
Agreed family holiday	1.7%	5.7%	3.4%	2.9%
Excluded, no alternative provision	2.6%	0.5%	0.1%	0.7%
Study leave	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.8%
Religious observance	0.7%	0.9%	0.6%	1.1%
Traveller absence	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Other authorised circumstances	7.3%	8.3%	11.5%	5.3%
Unauthorised				
Family holiday not agreed	3.8%	2.3%	1.0%	6.6%
Arrived late	1.9%	1.0%	0.5%	1.2%
Other unauthorised circumstances	21.7%	7.4%	3.9%	11.9%
No reason yet	2.4%	1.4%	0.8%	2.1%

Table 5.10: Percentage of children with primary SEN associated with learning disabilities excluded from school, England 2006/7 to 2015/16 (statement/EHCP and School Action Plus to 2013/14; statement/EHCP and SEN Support minus School Action from 2014/15 to 2016/17)

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Fixed Period											
MLD	6.8%	6.4%	n/a	5.8%	5.8%	6.3%	5.1%	4.9%	4.0%	4.4%	4.5%
SLD	2.3%	2.0%	n/a	1.4%	1.8%	1.6%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
PMLD	0.7%	0.6%	n/a	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%
Children without SEN	1.8%	1.5%	n/a	1.5%	1.5%	1.8%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%
Permanent											
MLD	0.3%	0.2%	n/a	n/a	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
SLD	0.2%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	0.1%	0.0%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%
PMLD	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	0.0%	0.0%	n/c	n/c	n/c	0.0%	<0.1%
Children without SEN	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%

Table 5.11: Reasons given for exclusion of pupils, 2013/14 (percentage of exclusions)				
	Children without SEN	MLD	SLD	PMLD
Fixed Period	[181,010 exclusions]	[27,060 exclusions]	[870 exclusions]	[90 exclusions]
Persistent disruptive behaviour	26.9%	31.2%	19.0%	16.7%
Physical assault against a pupil	18.8%	15.9%	17.8%	22.2%
Other	21.2%	19.5%	10.3%	5.6%
Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against an adult	16.2%	16.8%	14.4%	11.1%
Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against a pupil	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%	X
Drug and alcohol related	3.5%	1.6%	0.6%	0.0%
Physical assault against an adult	2.4%	5.6%	28.2%	38.9%
Theft	1.5%	1.1%	0.6%	x
Damage	1.8%	1.9%	2.3%	X
Bullying	1.4%	7.6%	x	0.0%
Racist abuse	1.3%	1.2%	0.6%	X
Sexual misconduct	0.7%	5.2%	0.6%	0.0%
Permanent	[3,405 exclusions]	[450 exclusions]	[20 exclusions]	[0 exclusions]
Persistent disruptive behaviour	31.9%	36.7%	25.0%	0.0%
Physical assault against a pupil	13.4%	13.3%	X	0.0%
Other	18.5%	14.4%	x	0.0%
Drug and alcohol related	11.7%	5.6%	X	0.0%
Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against an adult	9.0%	10.0%	X	0.0%
Physical assault against an adult	6.2%	11.1%	25.0%	0.0%
Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against a pupil	5.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Theft	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Sexual misconduct	1.0%	1.1%	X	0.0%
Damage	1.5%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Bullying	0.7%	X	0.0%	0.0%
Racist abuse	0.3%	X	0.0%	0.0%

X= fewer than 5 exclusions

Table 5.12: Children in need, England 2015/16

	MLD	SLD	PMLD	All children
Children in need				
LAC pupils	4,610	1,210	470	68,260
CPP pupils	2,480	230	60	48,630
CINP pupils	10,930	8,210	4,320	277,250
ALL CIN pupils	18,030	9,650	4,860	394,130
All other pupils	256,290	22,790	6,160	8,559,540