



Department  
for Education

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**Ref: Department for Education**

# **Special Educational Needs and Disability Data Descriptors**

**To** Colleges, training organisations, local authorities, employers (FE providers), schools, parents; young people; those with an interest in SEND policy and implementation; and data development.

**Issued** 5 August 2014

**Enquiries To** If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the Department on 0370 000 2288

email: [SEN.Data@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEN.Data@education.gsi.gov.uk)

## Contact Details

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the Ministerial and Public Communications Division by e-mail: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's '[Contact Us](#)' page.

## **Executive Summary**

This consultation seeks views from the sector on aligning data descriptors in the Schools Census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) with regards to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

The new Children and Families Act introduces a broad range of reforms for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). For the first time SEND will be viewed as a 0-25 system which aims to improve the experience for children, young people and their families and carers. It should also improve the transition from early years into schools, colleges and beyond.

Colleges, training organisations, local authorities and employers (FE providers) return learner data in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and Schools return pupil data in the school census.

The ILR and School Census contain different fields for SEND and our long term aim is to move to a consistent data collection on the basis of the categories set out in Table 1 below.

We are therefore proposing some small changes in the description of the needs in the School Census and ILR to help move toward our long term goal.

## **Background and Context**

We propose to align indicators to:

- allow for better monitoring and tracking of pupils, cohorts and specific needs groups. Currently data is collected against special educational needs descriptions, disability descriptions, learning difficulties, medical conditions and temporary disabilities. This leads to confusion and difficulty in tracking cohorts of pupils across the system. It may identify some data collection is not required;
- help to improve data quality, which can be used to improve the support provided by schools and colleges. Improved data quality will also enable better evaluation of value for money in schools, colleges, local authorities and nationally; and
- move toward a consistent data collection across all age ranges.

This proposal does not seek to alter how the data is collected.

The new descriptors will apply to all learners with SEND, not just those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) Plan. They will also apply to learners who are over 25 with SEND as well to ensure consistency in how needs are recorded.

The new descriptors will be in place for the academic year 2015 to 2016 School Census and ILR.

We are proposing to achieve the single set of indicators shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: SEN indicators**

No	Special Educational Need	Data Descriptor
1	Visual Impairment	The learner is declared to have a Visual Impairment
2	Hearing Impairment	The learner is declared to have a Hearing Impairment
3	Multi-Sensory Impairment	The learner is declared to have a Multi-Sensory Impairment
4	Physical Disability Affecting Mobility	The learner is declared to have a Physical Disability affecting Mobility
5	Other Physical Disability	The learner is declared to have another Physical Disability
6	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	The learner is declared to have Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs or Difficulties
7	Other Difficulty/Disability	The learner is declared to have an Other Difficulty/Disability
8	Moderate Learning Difficulty	The learner is declared to have a Moderate Learning Difficulty
9	Severe Learning Difficulty	The learner is declared to have a Severe Learning Difficulty
10	Specific Learning Difficulty	The learner is declared to have a Specific Learning Difficulty
11	Speech, Language and Communication Needs	The learner is declared to have Speech, Language and Communication Needs
12	Autism (including Asperger's syndrome)	The learner is declared to have Autism (including Asperger's Syndrome)
13	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	The learner is declared to have a Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty

We are not proposing any changes relating to number 8 and 9.

## **Proposals**

The proposals can be viewed online in the consultation response form at <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>.

## **How To Respond**

Consultation responses can be completed online at <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations> by emailing [SEN.Data@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEN.Data@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by downloading a response form which should be completed and sent to:

Gareth Ashcroft, Floor 1, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith St, Westminster, London SW1P 3BT, UK.

## **Additional Copies**

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from the Department for Education e-consultation website at: <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>

## **Plans for making results public**

The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be published on the DfE e-consultation website on .gov.uk at the end of this year.