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Department
for Education

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We are reviewing support for children in need to help us understand why their outcomes are so poor and what further support they might require.

We want to develop the evidence to understand:

- what makes a difference to the educational outcomes of children in need
- what works in practice to improve those outcomes

Taking the review forward

We are working closely with professionals and organisations who support children in need in order to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and build an evidence base for what support works for them.

We are working with the Education Endowment Foundation, Early Intervention Foundation, and the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care.

As part of the review we are committed to engaging with children in need and their families, order to listen to and learn from their personal experiences.

Data and analysis

We've released [new data and analysis on children in need](#) using a range of DfE data sources and linked up several datasets for the first time.

Our initial analysis offers insights about children in need including:

- the characteristics of children in need
- the overlaps with other areas of disadvantage such as special educational needs
- their experiences through children's social care and school
- their outcomes from the early years, through education and into adulthood

The data shows that while children in need overall have poorer educational outcomes than other children, there is variation in the progress that children make across local areas. Despite children in need being less likely to achieve than their peers overall, some children are able to succeed despite the challenges they face.

Call for evidence

As part of the review we are launching a [call for evidence of effective practice to improve educational outcomes](#).

We want to understand:

- what it is that makes the difference to the educational outcomes of children in need
- how some children in need can achieve better outcomes than others
- what helps children in need to achieve their potential

The call for evidence will:

- bring together and build on the evidence of what support is currently being given both in and out of school
- look at how effectiveness is being measured and evaluated
- confirm what influences the educational outcomes of children in need

Data sources

We are also interested in data sources that could improve our analysis of the educational outcomes of children in need. If, having read our publications, you believe you could contribute relevant data, please contact us at CIN.REVIEW@education.gov.uk.

Background

Who are children in need?

Children in need of help and protection make up a small minority of all children, those assessed and

supported through children's social care. Over the course of a year, it is estimated that around 6% of all children in England will be in need at some point.

Children in need are a group supported by children's social care, who have safeguarding and welfare needs, including:

- children on child in need plans
- children on child protection plans
- looked after children
- young carers
- disabled children

All of these children have needs identified through a children's social care assessment or because of their disability, meaning they are expected to require services and support in order to have the same health and development opportunities as other children.

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