

CHAPTER 4

How do activities up to the age of 19 vary according to special educational needs?

Introduction

This chapter looks at the differences in educational attainment at age 19 in 2010/11 between those with and without special educational needs for both males and females and compares this to their attainment at ages 16 and 18. It also includes details on the percentage of pupils with special educational needs who enter higher education from the maintained school sector. Post-16 participation and activities are no longer included in this chapter as this data is no longer collected for the cohort of young people.

See Data Annex 4 for further detail on the material covered in this chapter. Referenced figures can be found in the Statistical First Release *Level 2 and 3 Attainment by Young People in England Measured Using Matched Administrative Data: Attainment by Age 19 in 2011* at <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001059/index.shtml>.

Chapters 2 and 3 contain further information on the attainment of pupils with special educational needs.

Young people with special educational needs achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C

Key findings at GCSE level

The percentage of pupils who achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A* to C or equivalent (also known as level 2), by the age of 19 years was lower for pupils with special educational needs than for those with no identified special educational needs. However, the attainment gap between pupils with special educational needs and those without was smaller at age 19 than at age 16.

The primary types of special educational need with the highest percentage achieving the level 2 qualification threshold by the age of 19 years were the visually impaired and hearing impaired.

Gender

The percentage of females achieving the level 2 threshold by the age of 19 years was slightly higher than that of males for each level of provision for special educational need, with the exception of those with statements where males were slightly more likely to have achieved this expected level.

The widest attainment gap between males and females occurred at School Action Plus where 49.3 per cent of males achieved level 2 by 19 compared to 53.6 per cent of females.

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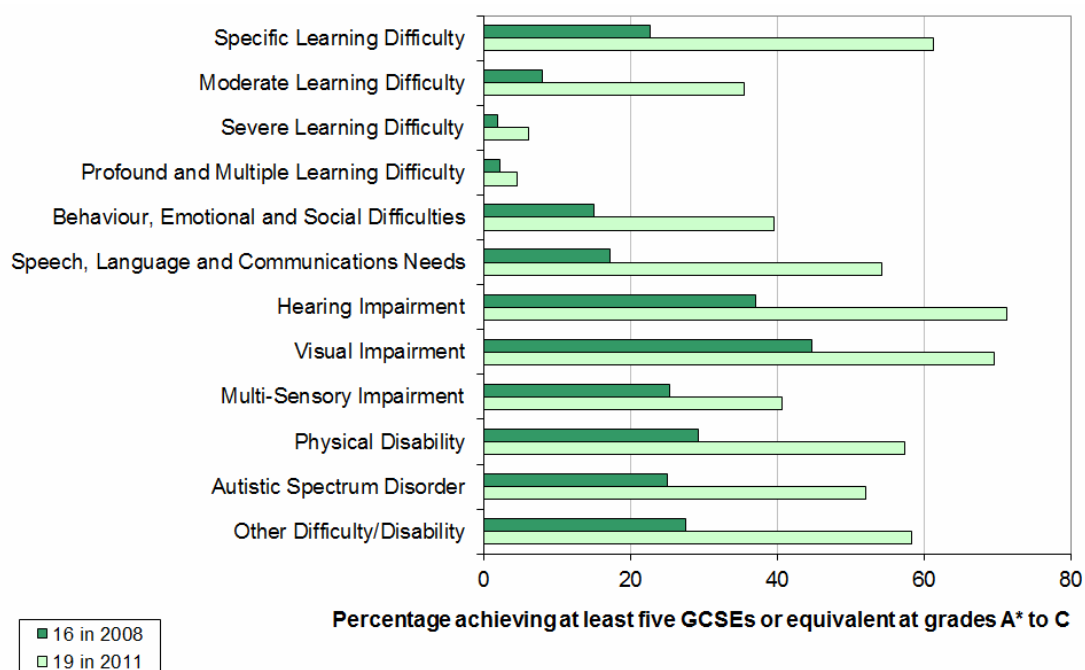
For both genders, pupils at School Action made the largest progress between the ages of 16 and 19 followed by those at School Action Plus, those with statements and finally those with no special educational needs.

Table 10 in the above Statistical First Release shows the percentage of pupils who, by the age of 19 years in 2010/11, had achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C. The figures are broken down by age and level of provision for special educational need. The percentages of pupils who had achieved level 2 by the age of 19 was much lower for pupils with special educational needs than for those with no identified special educational needs. However, the attainment gap was smaller at age 19 than age 16 as larger proportions of pupils with special educational needs attained to this level between the ages of 16 and 19.

Young people with special educational needs achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C by primary type of special educational need

Figure 4.1 shows the percentage of pupils at School Action Plus or with statements in 2010/11 who, by the ages of 19 in 2011 and 16 in 2008, had achieved level 2 by primary type of special educational need. In 2010/11, the groups with the highest percentage achieving this level by age 19 were those with hearing and visual impairments. The groups with the lowest percentage achieving this level were those with profound and multiple or severe learning difficulties. Figures for those with profound and multiple learning difficulty or with multi-sensory impairment should be treated with caution due to the low numbers involved.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of young people at School Action Plus or with statements aged 19 years in 2010/11 who achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (level 2) by age 19 in 2011 and 16 in 2008 by primary type of special educational need



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Figure 4.1 shows that, of young people at School Action Plus or with statements in 2010/11, those with specific learning difficulty and with speech, language and communications needs improved the most in terms of the percentage achieving level 2 between the ages of 16 and 19 years. Pupils with hearing impairments were most likely of all the primary types of special educational need to achieve level 2 at age 19 and those with visual impairments were the most likely when they were aged 16.

Young people with special educational needs achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C by gender

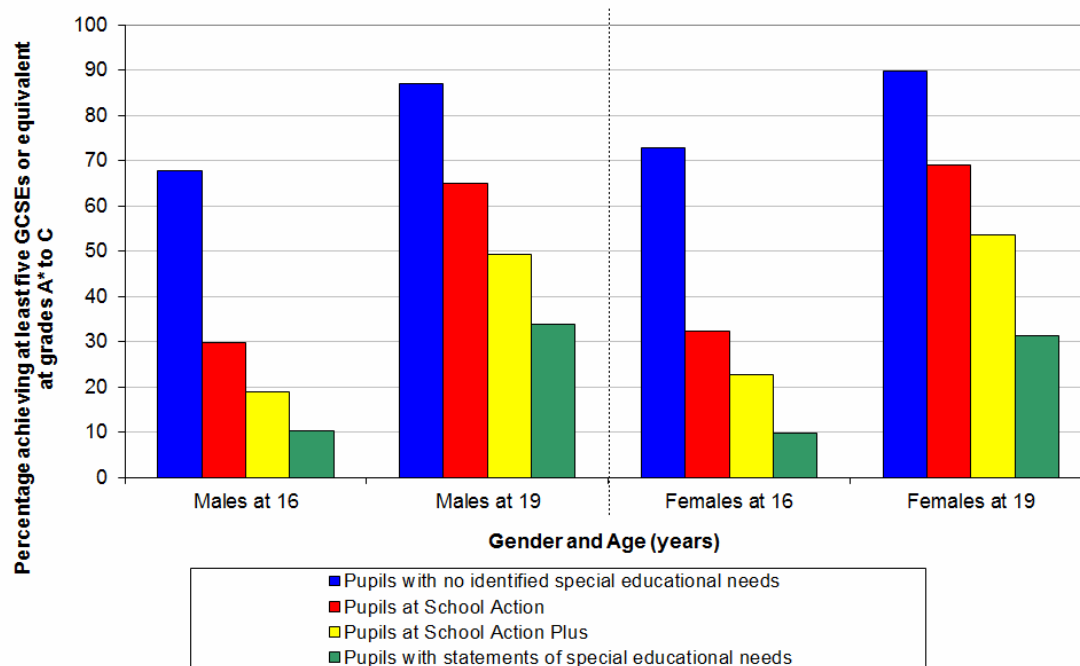
Figure 4.2 shows the percentage of males and females who achieved level 2 in 2010/11 by level of provision for special educational need. At both 16 and 19 years old females were more likely to achieve the expected level for all levels of provision with the exception of those with statements for whom males were more likely to achieve this level.

The widest attainment gap between males and females occurred at School Action Plus, where 49.3 per cent of males achieved level 2 by age 19 compared to 53.6 per cent of females. Similar attainment gaps existed between males and females at School Action Plus and for those with no special educational needs. The exception to this trend was in relation to pupils with statements, amongst which males were slightly more likely to achieve level 2 by age 19 (33.9 per cent) compared to females (31.3 per cent).

Level 2 attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 increased more among males with statements than amongst females with statements. The opposite was true for School Action and School Action Plus, with attainment levels increasing slightly more amongst females than males.

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Figure 4.2: Percentage of males and females aged 19 years in 2010/11 who achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (level 2) by the age of 19 in 2011 and 16 in 2008 and level of provision for special educational need



Young people with special educational needs achieving two A levels

Key findings at A level

The percentage of 19 year old pupils who achieved two A levels or equivalent (also known as level 3), was lower for pupils with special educational needs than for pupils without.

Amongst pupils with special educational needs the primary need types that had the highest percentage achieving the level 3 qualification by the age of 19 were the visually impaired and hearing impaired.

Gender

The proportion of females achieving the level 3 qualification by age 19 was higher than that of males for each level of provision for special educational need with the exception of those with statements for whom males were slightly higher.

The widest attainment gap between males and females occurred for pupils with no special educational needs, where 58.6 per cent of males achieved level 3 by 19 compared to 65.0 per cent of females.

Level 3 attainment increased by a similar amount between the ages of 18 and 19 for males and females for all levels of provision for special educational need.

Table 11 in the above Statistical First Release shows the percentage of pupils who, by the age of 19 years in 2010/11, had achieved two A levels or equivalent. The figures are broken down by age and level of provision for special educational need. The

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percentages of pupils who had achieved level 3 by the age of 19 was much lower for pupils with special educational needs than for those with no special educational needs. The attainment gap was smaller at age 17 than at ages 18 or 19 as a lower percentage of pupils with no special educational needs had achieved level 3 by this age.

Young people with special educational needs achieving two A levels by primary type of special educational need

Figure 4.3 shows the percentage of young people at School Action Plus or with statements in 2010/11 who, by the ages of 19 in 2011 and 18 in 2010, had achieved level 3 by primary type of special educational need. The groups with the highest percentage achieving the level 3 qualification by age 19 in 2011 were visual impairments (41.4 per cent) and hearing impairments (37.2 per cent). Figures for those with profound and multiple learning difficulty or with multi-sensory impairment should be treated with caution due to the low numbers involved.

Figure 4.3: Percentage of young people at School Action Plus or with statements aged 19 years in 2010/11 who had achieved two A levels or equivalent (level 3) by age 19 in 2011 and 18 in 2010 by primary type of special educational need

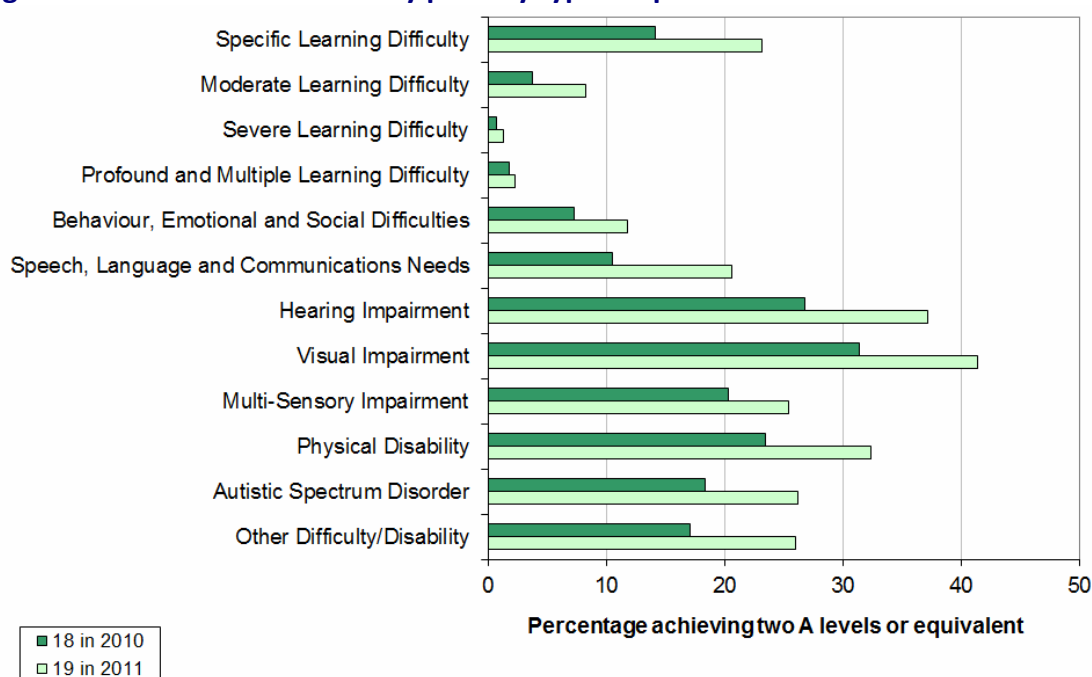


Figure 4.3 shows that, of young people at School Action Plus or with statements in 2010/11, those with hearing impairments, speech, language and communication needs and visual impairments improved the most in terms of the percentage achieving level 3 between the ages of 18 and 19 years. Young people with visual impairments were most likely to achieve level 3 at age 19 and also when they were aged 18.

Young people with special educational needs achieving two A levels by gender

Figure 4.4 shows the percentage of males and females who had achieved level 3 in 2010/11 by level of provision for special educational need by age 18 and 19.

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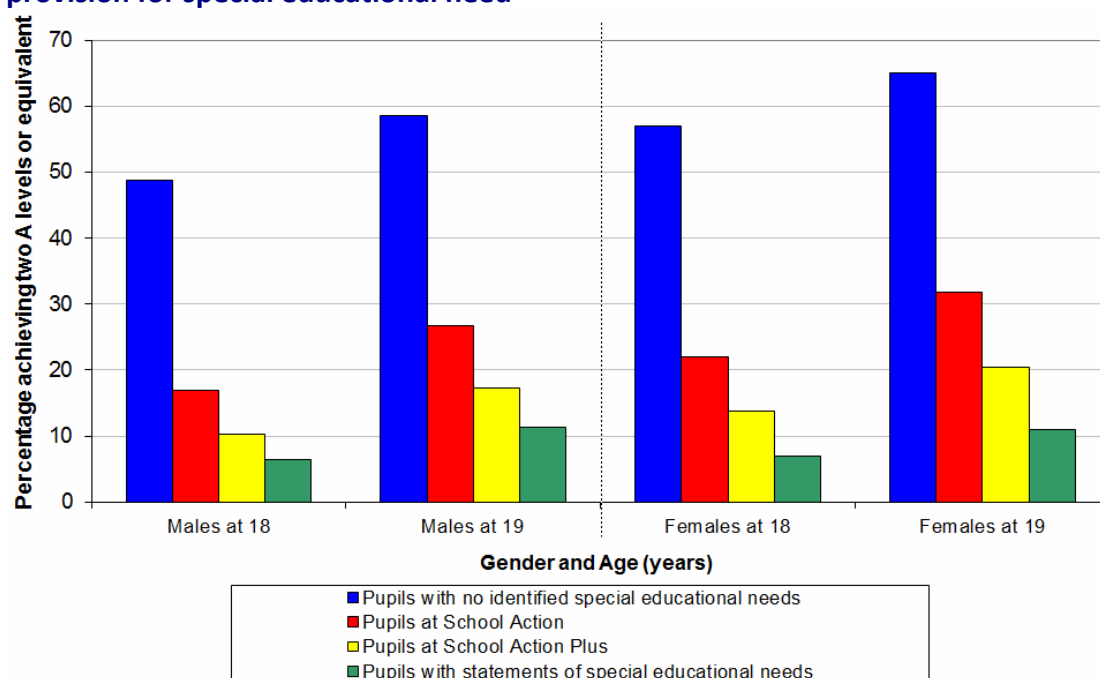
The proportion of 19 year old females achieving level 3 was higher than that of males for each level of provision for special educational need with the exception of those with statements where males were slightly more likely to achieve this level. Females, however were more likely than males to achieve the level at age 18 regardless of their level of provision.

58.6 per cent of 19 year old males with no identified special educational needs achieved level 3 compared to 65.0 per cent of females.

11.3 per cent of 19 year old males with statements of special educational needs achieved level 3 compared to 10.9 per cent of females.

Level 3 attainment increased by a similar amount between the ages of 18 and 19 for males and females for all levels of provision for special educational need.

Figure 4.4: Percentage of males and females aged 19 years in 2010/11 who achieved two A levels (level 3) by the age of 19 in 2011 and 18 in 2010 and level of provision for special educational need



Young people with special educational needs progressing to higher education

Key findings

Pupils with special educational needs are around four times less likely to be in higher education compared to those with no special educational needs.

Introduction

Data on pupils entering higher education is collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), which is the official agency for the collection, analysis and

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dissemination of quantitative information about higher education. Further information about HESA is available in Data Annex 4.

Higher education students are defined by HESA as those on courses for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 (i.e. above A level and equivalent) of the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency National Qualifications Framework (e.g. courses at the level of Certificate of Higher Education and above).

Progression of young people into higher education by age 19 in 2009/10

HESA data on enrolments in higher education for 18 and 19 year olds were matched to the National Pupil Database, which is a longitudinal database for pupils in England linking pupil/student characteristics to school and college learning aims and attainment. Progression rates cover the proportion of pupils who enrolled in higher education courses in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or English Further Education Colleges either at age 18 in the academic year 2008/09, or at age 19 in the academic year 2009/10.

Figure 4.5 shows the proportion of pupils who progressed to higher education by the age of 19 years in 2009/10 by their level of provision for special educational need in January 2006 (i.e. in academic year 11 when taking GCSEs). Pupils with special educational needs were around four times less likely to be in higher education compared to those with no special educational needs. 39 per cent of those with no special educational needs in January 2006 progressed to higher education by age 19 in 2010 compared to 12 per cent for those at School Action, 9 per cent for those at School Action Plus and 6 per cent for those with statements.

Progression rates into higher education are much higher when looking at those who obtained at least 80 A level points (roughly equivalent to two A levels) for all levels of provision for special educational need. Figure 4.5 also shows that 80 per cent of those with no special educational needs in January 2006 who obtained 80 A level points, enrolled in higher education courses by age 19 in 2010. This compares to 74 per cent for those at School Action, 75 per cent for those at School Action Plus and 76 per cent for those with statements.

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Figure 4.5: Progression to higher education by age 19 in 2009/10 by level of provision for special educational need

