



Department
for Education

Special educational needs survey 2016

**Guide to the completion of the SEN2
return, version 1.3**

December 2015



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Version History

This gives details of any changes made to the content of this document.

Version	Comments	Date
1.0	Document drafted.	CSDSD, May 2015
1.1	Document updated to include more information on Annex B.	CSDSD, May 2015
1.2	<p>Document updated to include details of the following amendments;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 5. 2 Transfers to EHC plans (progress); amended to include planned numbers of transfers by calendar year instead of asking if local authorities are on target to meet the required timescales. Item 7 EHC plans going onto mediation; changed the title and amended the text and question to make it more clear. Item 8.3 DMO/DCO Function; option 'recruitment in progress' removed. <p>Additional information has been added to Section 1.4 to provide further clarification to pathfinder local authorities.</p>	CSDSD, July 2015
1.3	<p>Document updated to include details of the following amendments;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 part (f) date corrected for the number of LDAs at '21 January 2016' to at '15 January 2015'. 2.7 additional information provided to further clarification regarding data inclusion. 5.1 part (b) date corrected for the number of young people subject to an LDA by the local authority from 'at 21 January 2015' to at '15 January 2015' Title of part 5.1 was changed from 'Item 5.1 Transfers to EHC plans and LDAs at 21 January 2016' to 'Item 5.1 Transfers to EHC plans and LDAs at 15 January 2015' 	CSDSD, December 2015

1. SEN2 return

The information collected via the annual SEN2 survey form provides the major source of data collected on children and young people with statements of special educational need (statements) or education, health and care (EHC) plans. It is the only source of data on the totality of statements and EHC plans maintained by individual local authorities.

Without this information it would be very difficult for Ministers, Parliament, central and local government, external organisations and the public at large to monitor government policies and their effectiveness, and to see how many children and young people with statements and EHC plans there are in individual local authorities.

1.1 Main changes from SEN2 2015

There were changes to the 2015 collection as a result of the Children and Families Act 2014. The 2016 collection has a small number of changes that correspond to the transition from statements to EHC plans. In addition, there are three new items for the 2016 collection, two of which are voluntary for 2016. Some items have been reworded in order to remove ambiguity and clarify what is required. Details of the changes are listed below.

- (a) Item 2.4 Currently being assessed; references to assessments for statements have been removed from this section as they are no longer relevant here.
- (b) Item 2.5 Assessments refused; references to the refusal of requests for statements have been removed from this section as they are no longer relevant here.
- (c) Item 2.6 Transfers between establishments; EHC plans have been added to this section as they are now relevant here.
- (d) Item 2.7 Discontinued statements (compulsory school age); EHC plans have been added to this section as they are now relevant here.
- (e) Item 2.8 Discontinued statements (school leavers); EHC plans have been added to this section as they are now relevant here.
- (f) Item 5.1 Transfers to EHC plans, and LDAs at 15 January 2015:
 - the number of statements at 31 August 2014 has been removed.;
 - the number of LDAs at 31 August 2014 has been replaced with LDAs at 15 January 2015;
 - the time period for transfers is from 16 January to 21 January 2016.

- (g) Item 5.2 Transfers to EHC plans (progress); has been amended to include planned numbers of transfers by calendar year instead of asking if local authorities are on target to meet the required timescales.
- (h) Item 7 education, health and care plans going onto mediation; changed the title to 'Effectiveness of mediation' and amended the text and question to make it more clear.
- (i) Work based learning (Apprenticeships) has been removed from the list of establishments in Part 1 and Part 2: Items 1.2(i)(t) and 2.2(i)(t) in 2015.
- (j) Independent specialist providers have been replaced with specialist post-16 institutions in Items 1.2a(i)(t) and 2.2a(i)(t): Items 1.2(i)(u) and 2.2(i)(u) in 2015.
- (k) Two new items recording those on Apprenticeships, traineeships and Supported Internships have been added: 1.2b and 2.2b. These new items are voluntary for the 2016 collection and mandatory from 2017.
- (l) Part 8 is new and records if the local authority has a Designated Medical Officer (DMO) or Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) in place at 21 January 2016.
- (m) The items that have been reworded in order to remove ambiguity and clarify what is required are listed here: the 'NOTE' for Items 2.1 and 2.2, Items 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1.
- (n) Annex B: Exceptions to the time limits; updated to fully reflect what is given in the [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#).

1.2 Census date and return deadline

A SEN2 return is required from all local authorities in England. The census date is **Thursday 21 January 2016** and all completed SEN2 returns should be returned to the department by **Thursday 3 March 2016**.

1.3 Contact details

If you have any queries regarding the SEN2 return, please contact us via the [service request form](#).

Please use the [feedback form](#) if you have any comments about the content of this document, the Data Collection Helpdesk service, the COLLECT system or any other aspect of our data collection service.

1.4 Note on pathfinder EHC plans

In order to test the provisions set out in what was the Children and Families Bill the Department for Education funded 20 'pathfinders' covering 31 local authority areas and associated clinical commissioning groups.

Pathfinder local authorities will have issued non-statutory EHC plans issued before 1 September 2014. These non-statutory EHC plans do not have the same duties and rights associated with them as an EHC plan issued on or after 1 September 2014 and local authorities will need to undertake EHC needs assessments to transfer them to statutory EHC plans. While some may be suitable to be transferred to statutory EHC plans without significant changes, others may require additional assessment information and/or restructuring to comply with the 2014 Act and related Regulations.

Some children and young people who have been issued with non-statutory EHC plans before 1 September 2014 also have statements. Local authorities should aim to review and where appropriate transfer these children and young people to statutory EHC plans in 2014/15.

Only statutory EHC plans (ie EHC plans issued on or after 1 September 2014) should be counted in the SEN2 survey.

Non-statutory plans with statements issued alongside:

If a statement was issued alongside a non-statutory EHC plan, the statement should be counted as a statement. If the statement is transferred to a statutory EHC plan in the period 16 January 2015 to 21 January 2016, record the transfer in Part 5.

Non-statutory plans without statements issued alongside:

Those previously counted as a new statement in an SEN2 return:

If a pathfinder area counted a non-statutory EHC plan (without a statement issued alongside) as a new statement in a previous SEN2 return and reissues the EHC plan on a statutory basis in the period 16 January 2015 to 21 January 2016 they should count it as a transfer to an EHC plan and record it in Part 5. This is to avoid any double counting.

Those that have not been counted previously:

If a non-statutory plan (without a statement issued alongside) has not previously been counted as a new statement in an SEN2 return and is reissued as a statutory EHC plan in the 2015 calendar year, it is counted as a new plan in Part 2. In these circumstances, the time taken to issue the statutory EHC plan is recorded in Part 4.

1.5 Age limits

The relevant legislation states that:

- For statements: A child with a statement includes any person for whom a statement has been issued who has not attained the age of 19 and is a registered pupil at a school. Therefore, in Item 1.1 (number of statements maintained) there should be no young person with a statement who is aged 19 or over at 31 August 2015. In Item 2.1 (number of new statements issued), it is possible for a young person to be aged 19 at 31 August 2015.
- For EHC plans: A local authority may continue to maintain an EHC plan for a young person until the end of the academic year during which the young person attains the age of 25. Therefore, in Item 1.1 (number of EHC plans maintained) there should be no young person with an EHC plan who is aged 25 or over at 31 August 2015. In Item 2.1 (number of new EHC plans issued), it is possible for a young person to be aged 25 at 31 August 2015.

1.6 Cases that began as an assessment for a statement of special educational needs but resulted in an EHC plan

Where an assessment has been started under the Education Act 1996 and through agreement with parents or a young person ended with an EHC plan under the Children and Families Act 2014, the data should be recorded as follows:

- as a new EHC plan and recorded in Part 2 of the return appropriately (if issued in the 2015 calendar year);
- for these cases the timescales and exceptions will apply as for statements under the Education Act 1996 (26 week time limit). However, these cases should be recorded in **Part 4** of the return (EHC plans). The exceptions will apply as for statements and they can be recorded as having met the time limit for an EHC plan if they have met the time limit for a statement in these cases (26 weeks). Please make a note in COLLECT of the number of these types of cases.

2. Notes on individual items in the SEN2 return

Each local authority is required to provide information for each of the following items with the exception of the two new items recording those on Apprenticeships, traineeships and Supported Internships: Items 1.2b and 2.2b. These new items are voluntary for the 2016 collection and mandatory from 2017.

Part 1: Education arrangements

Education arrangements for all children and young people for whom the authority maintains a statement or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

For Part 1 please state the number of children and young people as at **21 January 2016**, for whom the authority maintains:

(A) a statement of special educational needs under the provisions of the Education Act 1996; or

(B) an education, health and care (EHC) plan under the Children and Families Act 2014.

Item 1.1 Age

The age breakdown refers to age as at **31 August 2015**.

The age categories are:

- (a) Under age 5
- (b) Aged 5 to 10
- (c) Aged 11 to 15
- (d) Aged 16 to 19
- (e) Aged 20 to 25
- (f) Total (sum of (a) to (e)).

Item 1.2a Establishment

(i) Of the children and young people entered in Item 1.1, please state the number on the roll of the following establishments. This should be the type of establishment named on the statement or EHC plan. Include children and young people whose statement/EHC plan is under appeal.

(a) Non-maintained early years settings in the private and voluntary sector

All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for free part-time nursery education from 1 September, 1 January or 1 April following their 3rd birthday until they reach compulsory school age.

Children can take up their free nursery education place in a range of settings in the maintained and independent sectors and those offered by private and voluntary providers. Providers delivering free nursery education places in the private and voluntary sector include:

- Day nurseries (privately owned or provided by the local authority - but this definition does not include maintained nursery schools or nursery units);
- Private Nursery Schools (not provided as part of an independent school as defined in Item 1.2a(i) (g) & (h) below);
- Pre-schools and pre-school playgroups (private or voluntary);
- Child-minders.

In order to deliver free nursery education places a private or voluntary provider must be registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register (under Section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006).

(b) Resourced provision in local authority maintained mainstream schools

Resourced provisions are where places are reserved at a mainstream school for pupils with a specific type of SEN, taught mainly within mainstream classes, but requiring a base and some specialist facilities around the school. Resourced provisions:

- receive additional funding from the local authority (specially for the purpose of the provision);
- cater for a specific type or types of SEN (e.g. specific learning difficulties);
- are usually for pupils with statements or those with EHC plans (but could include pupils with SEN but without a statement or plan).

(Most local authorities include details of what will be provided through a resourced provision in a pupil's statement or EHC plan. It is extremely unlikely that a pupil would be placed in a unit and receive support from a resourced provision, but a school could have resourced provision for one type of need and a unit for another.)

(c) SEN units in local authority maintained mainstream schools

SEN units are special provisions within a mainstream school where the children are taught mainly within separate classes. Units:

- receive additional funding from the local authority specifically for the purpose of the provision;
- cater for a specific type or types of SEN (e.g. autistic spectrum disorders); and

- are usually for pupils with statements or EHC plans (but may also provide support for pupils with SEN who have neither statement nor plan).

(Most pupils placed in units will have the unit written into their statement or EHC plan. It is unlikely that a pupil would be placed in a unit and receive support from resourced provision, but a school could have resourced provision for one type of need and a unit for another.)

(d) Local authority maintained mainstream schools (including foundation schools)

This includes nursery schools, nursery units and children's centres as well as primary and secondary schools which are maintained by a local authority.

(e) Local authority maintained special schools (including foundation schools)

Special schools which are maintained by a local authority.

(f) Non-maintained special schools

Non-maintained special schools are non-profit-making independent schools run by charitable trusts and approved by the Secretary of State as a special school under Section 342 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998. They may receive grants from the Department for capital work and equipment but funding is primarily from fees charged to local authorities and parents for pupils placed there.

(g) & (h) Independent special schools and other independent schools

An independent school is one which is neither maintained by a local authority nor is in receipt of grants from the Department and funding is primarily from fees charged to local authorities and parents for pupils placed there. While there is no legal category, independent schools which cater wholly or mainly for children with SEN are deemed to be independent special schools.

(i) Hospital schools (including foundation schools)

A hospital school is a school operated in a hospital, generally a children's hospital, which provides instruction to all primary and secondary grade levels. These schools help children and young people sustain academic progress during periods of hospitalisation and rehabilitation.

(j) Local authority maintained pupil referral units

A pupil referral unit (PRU) is set up under the Education Act 1993 to make provision for pupils who are out of school for reasons such as exclusion or illness. This category is split into local authority maintained PRUs (j), AP academies (m) and AP free schools (p) to account for newly opened schools which were formerly PRUs. Pupils who are dually registered in both a PRU and a school should be recorded under the type of school they attend.

(k) Mainstream academies

Academies are state-funded independent schools that are accountable to the Secretary of State for the management of the school through a legally-binding Funding Agreement. Converter academies, i.e. previously Maintained Primary and Secondary schools which converted to an academy, should also be included in this section. Pupils who attend resourced provision or SEN Units within academies should be recorded under this category. There are separate categories for special academies and AP academies.

(l) Special academies

Special academies are previously Maintained or Non-Maintained Special schools which converted to an Academy.

(m) AP academies

AP academies are previously pupil referral units which converted to an Academy.

(n) Mainstream free schools

Free Schools are local schools funded by the Government, but have greater freedoms than local authority run schools. They are run by teachers and have freedom over things like the length of the school day, the curriculum, and how they spend their money.

(o) Special free schools

Special free schools are special schools established through the free school application process.

(p) AP free schools

AP free schools are pupil referral units established through the free school application process.

(q) General FE and tertiary colleges/HE

This includes General Further Education & tertiary colleges, special colleges (agriculture, horticulture, art & design and performing arts) and specialist designated colleges. Further Education courses studied in Higher Education institutions should also be included here.

(r) Other FE

This category includes other private or voluntary training providers such as a Local Authority or Private Limited Company.

(s) Sixth form college

This category includes sixth form colleges only; those attending sixth forms within secondary schools should not be included here.

(t) Specialist post-16 institutions

Specialist post-16 institutions (SPIs) provide education provision and learning support for students with high needs where provision cannot be made within mainstream educational settings.

(ii) Total of 1.2a(i)

(iii) Educated elsewhere

Section 319 of the Education Act 1996 empowers an authority to provide education for children with special educational needs “other than in school”. This may include education in centres run by social services or at home. Children would not normally be on another school register.

Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014 empowers an authority to provide education for children and young people with special educational needs “other than in school, post-16 institutions, etc”. This may include education in centres run by social services or where the local authority has named home education on an EHC plan.

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent of every child of compulsory school age must ensure that she/he receives full-time education suitable to her/his age, ability and aptitude either by regular attendance at school or by means other than in school.

Data is collected on the following;

- a) Pupils permanently excluded at 21 January 2016 and not yet placed elsewhere
- b) Other – arrangements made by the local authority in accordance with Section 319 of the Education Act 1996 or Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- c) Other – arrangements made by parents in accordance with Section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- d) Awaiting provision – final statement/EHC plan issued but awaiting placement

Item 1.2b Apprenticeships, traineeships and Supported Internships

Of the young people entered in Item 1.1, please state the number undertaking:

(a) Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine paid work with on and off the job training, qualifications and progression. They allow young people to get the training and skills they need to enter and progress in work, move into higher level skills development and build fulfilling careers.

(b) Traineeships

Traineeships are an education and training programme involving work experience which aim to help young people prepare for an apprenticeship or other sustainable employment. Traineeships equip young people with the skills and workplace experience they need to compete successfully for apprenticeships and jobs; and may also support progression into further education or training.

(c) Supported Internships

Supported internships are a study programme for young people with EHC plans, LDAs or statements, whose focus is an extended work placement doing a real job with an employer, supported by a job coach where appropriate.

This item is voluntary for the 2016 collection and mandatory from 2017.

Part 2: Assessments and placements

Assessments and placements by the local authority during the 2015 calendar year.

Item 2.1 and 2.2 continues to include new statements as it is possible there were some assessments for statements that began before September 2014 that were not complete before the end of 2014 and were completed in the 2015 calendar year.

Items 2.1 and 2.2

Please state the number of children and young people for whom:

(A) a statement of special educational needs under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 was made, or

(B) an education, health and care (EHC) plan under the Children and Families Act 2014 was made

for the **first time** during the 2015 calendar year.

NOTE: These do not include: reassessments of statements or EHC plans; or transitions from statements or learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) to EHC plans.

EHC plan pathfinder areas: please include transfers from non-statutory plans to statutory plans if the non-statutory plans have not previously been counted as a statement in previous SEN2 returns.

Transfers between local authorities: the child or young person should only be counted once and counted by the local authority that issued the statement or EHC plan. There are two scenarios for those with statements or EHC plans transferring between local authorities:

- Scenario 1: Exporting local authority carried out the assessment and issued the original statement or EHC plan during the 2015 calendar year: the exporting local authority SHOULD count these cases in Part 2, the importing local authority SHOULD NOT count these cases in Part 2.
- Scenario 2: Exporting local authority carried out the assessment but importing local authority issued the statement or EHC plan during the 2015 calendar year: the importing local authority SHOULD count these cases in Part 2, the exporting local authority SHOULD NOT count these cases in Part 2.

Item 2.1 Age

The age breakdown refers to age as at **31 August 2015**. (See [section 1.5](#) on age limits)

The age categories are:

- (a) Under age 5
- (b) Aged 5 to 10
- (c) Aged 11 to 15
- (d) Aged 16 to 19
- (e) Aged 20 to 25
- (f) Total (sum of (a) to (e)).

Item 2.2a Establishment

(i) Of the children and young people entered in Item 2.1, please state the number on the roll of the following establishments. This should be the type of establishment named on the statement or EHC plan. Include children and young people whose statement/EHC plan is under appeal. Note: further information for each establishment is provided under Item 1.2a(i) above.

- (a) Non-maintained early years settings in the private and voluntary sector
- (b) Resourced provision in local authority maintained mainstream schools
- (c) SEN units in local authority maintained mainstream schools
- (d) Local authority maintained mainstream schools (including foundation schools)
- (e) Local authority maintained special schools (including foundation schools)
- (f) Non-maintained special schools
- (g) Independent special schools
- (h) Other independent schools
- (i) Hospital schools (including foundation schools)
- (j) Local authority maintained pupil referral units
- (k) Mainstream academies
- (l) Special academies

- (m) AP academies
- (n) Mainstream free schools
- (o) Special free schools
- (p) AP free schools
- (q) General FE and tertiary colleges/HE
- (r) Other FE
- (s) Sixth form college
- (t) Specialist post-16 Institutions

(ii) Total of 2.2a(i)

(iii) Educated elsewhere (a),(b),(c),(d). Note: further information is provided under Item 1.2a(iv) above.

Item 2.2b Apprenticeships, traineeships and Supported Internships

Of the young people entered in Item 2.1, please state the number undertaking:

- a) Apprenticeships
- b) traineeships
- c) Supported Internships

This is voluntary for the 2016 collection and mandatory from 2017. Note: further information is provided under Item 1.2b above.

Item 2.3 Decisions not to issue

Please state the number of children and young people assessed under Section 323 of the Education Act 1996 and under Section 36 of the Children and Families Act 2014 for whom it was decided not to issue:

- a) a statement of special educational needs or
- b) an EHC plan

during the 2015 calendar year.

Do not include children and young people who are still being assessed or those where assessment has been completed but no decision taken on whether to issue a statement or EHC plan.

NOTE: These do not include: reassessments of statements or EHC plans; or transitions from statements or learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) to EHC plans.

Item 2.4 Currently being assessed

Please state the number of children and young people assessed for an EHC plan during the 2015 calendar year who are still being assessed or where assessment has been completed by 21 January 2016 but no decision taken for an EHC plan.

NOTE: These do not include: reassessments of EHC plans; or transitions from statements or learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) to EHC plans.

Item 2.5 Assessments refused

Please state the number of initial requests for assessment for an EHC plan that were refused during the 2015 calendar year.

NOTE: These do not include: reassessments of EHC plans; or transitions from statements or learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) to EHC plans.

Item 2.6 Transfers between establishments

For children and young people with a statement of special educational needs (A) or an EHC plan (B) made before 1 January 2015:

(a) Please state the number who transferred during the 2015 calendar year:

- i) from mainstream settings to special schools etc;
- ii) from special schools etc to mainstream settings.

(b) Please state the number, during the 2015 calendar year, who were taken out of school by their parents to be home educated:

- i) from mainstream settings;
- ii) from special schools, etc.

Mainstream settings refer to the establishments detailed in Item 1.2a under (b), (c), (d), (k), (n) and (s). Special schools etc. refer to the establishments detailed in Item 1.2a under (e), (f), (g), (i), (l) and (o).

Item 2.7 Discontinued statements (compulsory school age)

Please state the number of statements of special educational needs (A) or EHC plans (B) that have been reviewed and discontinued in the 2015 calendar year. Only include children of compulsory school age. For pupils who have:

- (a) Transferred to another LA
- (b) Special needs being met without a statement or plan
- (c) Other.

Please do not include pupils whose statement has ended because they have left school at the end of compulsory schooling. Please see school leaving age guide. Please define pupils below compulsory school age as those aged under 5 at the time the statement or EHC plan was discontinued and do not include them in this section.

Item 2.8 Discontinued statements (school leavers)

Please state the number of statements of special educational needs (A) or EHC plans (B) that have been discontinued in the 2015 calendar year because pupils have left school at the end of compulsory schooling or after.

Part 3: Statements of special educational needs issued within 26 weeks

This section continues to be included as it is possible there were some assessments for statements that began before September 2014 that were not complete before the end of 2014 and were completed in the 2015 calendar year.

The data collected measures the percentage of statements which are issued within 26 weeks from when the local authority receives a request for an assessment or informs the parents that it is considering an assessment to the issuing of the final statement, in each calendar year. This only includes statements that are completed within the calendar year, that is, statements issued between 1 January and 31 December 2015. Such statements will principally be those where the process began in 2014 and were completed in 2015. Data should only cover statements issued for the **first time** (not reassessments) in the 2015 calendar year.

Please refer to Annex A for details of the exceptions to the time limits.

Transfers between local authorities: the child should only be counted once and counted by the local authority that issued the statement. There are two scenarios for children with statements transferring between local authorities:

- Scenario 1: Exporting local authority carried out the assessment and issued the original statement during the 2015 calendar year: the exporting local authority SHOULD count these cases in part 3, the importing local authority SHOULD NOT count these cases in part 3.
- Scenario 2: Exporting local authority carried out the assessment but importing local authority issued the statement during the 2015 calendar year: both the importing and exporting local authorities SHOULD NOT count these cases in part 3.

Item 3.1 Statements issued within 26 weeks (including exceptions)

(a) **Total number of statements issued including exception cases.** All statements of special educational needs issued in the calendar year 2015. This figure should match the total number of statements issued as recorded in Item 2.1 except for cases where a statement was issued following a tribunal or reconsideration of the original decision not to issue a statement, or a transfer between local authorities occurred as in Scenario 2 above. In which case, the number in Item 3.1(a) should be less than total number of statements issued as recorded in Item 2.1 and you should provide details in the return notes in COLLECT.

(b) **Of which, the number of statements including exception cases issued within 26 weeks.** All statements produced in the calendar year 2015 which were issued within 26 weeks, including those where one or more of the allowable exceptions to the time limits have been called upon.

Item 3.2 Statements issued within 26 weeks (excluding exceptions)

(a) **Total number of statements issued excluding exception cases.** The total number of statements of special educational needs produced within the calendar year 2015, excluding exception cases. This figure should be the sum of 3.2b and any non-exception cases produced outside the 26 weeks' timescale.

(b) **Of which, the number of statements issued excluding exception cases within 26 weeks.** The number of SEN statements produced within the calendar year 2015 which were issued within 26 weeks, where none of the allowable exceptions to the time limits set out in the guide have been called upon.

Part 4: Education, health and care plans issued within 20 weeks

The data collected measures the percentage of EHC plans, in each calendar year, which are issued within 20 weeks from the initial request (or the child or young person otherwise coming to the local authority's attention) until the final issuing of the plan. This only includes plans that are completed within the calendar year, that is, plans issued between 1 January and 31 December 2015. Data should only cover plans issued for the **first time** (not reassessments) in the 2015 calendar year.

Please refer to Annex B for details of the exceptions to the time limits.

EHC plan pathfinder areas: please include transfers from non-statutory plans to statutory plans if the non-statutory plan has not been counted as a statement in previous SEN2 returns.

Transfers between local authorities: the child should only be counted once and counted by the local authority that issued the EHC plan. There are two scenarios for children with EHC plans transferring between local authorities:

- Scenario 1: Exporting local authority carried out the assessment and issued the original EHC plan: the exporting local authority SHOULD count these cases in part 4, the importing local authority SHOULD NOT count these cases in part 4.
- Scenario 2: Exporting local authority carried out the assessment but importing local authority issued the EHC plan: both the importing and exporting local authorities SHOULD NOT count these cases in part 4.

Item 4.1 EHC plans issued within 20 weeks (including exception cases)

(a) **Total number of EHC plans issued including exception cases.** All EHC plans issued in the calendar year 2015. This figure should match the total number of EHC plans issued as recorded in Item 2.1 except for cases where an EHC plan was issued following mediation, or a tribunal or reconsideration of the original decision not to issue an EHC plan, or a transfer between local authorities occurred as in Scenario 2 above. In which case, the number in Item 4.1(a) should be less than the total number of EHC plans issued as recorded in Item 2.1 and you should provide details in the return notes in COLLECT.

(b) **Of which, the number of EHC plans including exception cases issued within 20 weeks.** All EHC plans issued in the calendar year 2015 which were issued within 20 weeks, including those where one or more of the allowable exceptions to the time limits have been called upon.

Item 4.2 EHC plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exception cases)

- (a) **Total number of EHC plans issued excluding exception cases.** The total number of EHC plans issued within the calendar year 2015 excluding exception cases. This figure should be the sum of 4.2(b) and any non-exception cases produced outside the 20 weeks' timescale.

- (b) **Of which, the number of EHC plans excluding exception cases issued within 20 weeks.** The number of EHC plans issued within the calendar year 2015 which were issued within 20 weeks, where none of the allowable exceptions to the time limits have been called upon.

Part 5: Progress transferring children and young people with statements and learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) to the new system

This should only include EHC plans that have been converted from **existing** statements or learning difficulty assessments.

Item 5.1 Transfers to EHC plans and LDAs at 15 January 2015

Please state:

- (a) i) the number of children and young people with statements who were issued with an EHC plan in the period 16 January 2015 to 21 January 2016,
 - ii) the number of children and young people with statements who were assessed for an EHC plan and a decision not to issue an EHC plan made in the period 16 January 2015 to 21 January 2016;
- (b) the number of young people subject to an LDA by the local authority at 15 January 2015;
- (c) i) the number of young people with LDAs who were issued with an EHC plan in the period 16 January 2015 to 21 January 2016,
 - ii) the number of young people with LDAs who were assessed for an EHC plan and a decision not to issue an EHC plan made in the period 16 January 2015 to 21 January 2016.

Item 5.2 Transfers to EHC plans (progress)

How many transfers of statements (A) and LDAs (B) are you planning to undertake in each of the following years:

A: 2016

B: 2017

C: 2018 (1 January to 31 March)

Note: Local authorities have a statutory duty to complete the transfer of all LDAs to EHC plans by 31 August 2016 and statements by 1 April 2018.

Part 6: Number of personal budgets

Item 6.1 Personal budgets

Please state for the 2015 calendar year the number of personal budgets in place for all EHC plans issued or reviewed in 2015.

Item 6.2 Personal budget types

Of those in Item 6.1, please give the number of personal budgets that have:

- (a) organised arrangements where the local authority or partner retains the funding and commissions the support specified in the plan (sometimes called notional arrangements);
- (b) direct payments (including payments to nominees and third parties) and whether these are for
 - i. education,
 - ii. social care,
 - iii. health, or
 - iv. integrated payment for a combination of the above.

A personal budget can be a mixture of organised arrangements and direct payments. Such cases should be counted under both (a) and (b). Therefore it is possible for the sum of 6.2(a) and 6.2(b) to be greater than 6.1.

Part 7: Effectiveness of mediation

Parents or young people who wish to register an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) may do so only after they have contacted an independent mediation adviser and discussed whether mediation might be a suitable way of resolving the disagreement. After receiving information, it is for the parents and young person to decide whether to take part in mediation or appeal to the Tribunal without taking part in mediation. If they decide to take part in mediation, once it has finished they can then decide whether or not to appeal to the Tribunal. These arrangements do not apply when the appeal is solely about the name of the school, college or other institution named in the EHC plan, the type of school, college or institution or the fact that no school, college or institution is named. Local authorities will arrange for the provision of mediation information and mediation itself where the parent or the young person wishes to take part in this.

Item 7.1 Effectiveness of mediation

- (i) Please state, for the 2015 calendar year, the number of mediation cases that have been held; i.e. where a mediation meeting has occurred, regardless of the outcome.

- (ii) Of those in 7.1(i), please state the number of cases which were followed by appeals to the Tribunal.

Part 8: Designated Medical / Clinical Officer (DMO / DCO)

A Designated Medical Officer (DMO) supports relationships across the health sector and between education, health and care partners. The role is non-statutory and set out in the 0- 25 SEND Code of Practice. Often the DMO will be a consultant paediatrician, but they can also be a nurse or therapist, in which case they will be a Designated Clinical Officer (DCO). There is no difference between the role of a DMO and a DCO. It is common for one DMO/DCO to cover a number of Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) areas.

Some areas may choose to cover this strategic role with staff who are not medically or clinically qualified but who work in a health setting. They will have the appropriate knowledge and can carry out the functions listed in the SEND Code of Practice.

The 'Recruitment in progress' indicator is meant to cover those areas that are recruiting to the post or are in discussion with their CCG(s) and others about how to ensure the strategic function of the DMO/DCO is covered.

Item 8.1 Designated Medical Officer

Does your local authority area have a Designated Medical Officer (DMO) in place on 21 January 2016?

Yes / No / Recruitment in progress

Item 8.2 Designated Clinical Officer

Does your local authority area have a Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) in place on 21 January 2016?

Yes / No / Recruitment in progress

Item 8.3 DMO/DCO Function

Is the function of the DMO / DCO carried out by another member of staff on 21 January 2016?

Yes / No

General note

References to specific education legislation are only made to highlight provisions that may be relevant. You would need to form your own view of what the law requires in any specific case.

Annex A: Guide for local authorities completing statements of special educational needs (SEN) issued within 26 weeks

1. Timelines for assessments and drawing up statements

The Education Act 1996 and the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Consolidation) Regulations 2001 set out the structure and the time limits for the process of assessing a child's special educational needs (SEN) and drawing up a statement of SEN. The whole process from when the local authority receives a request for an assessment or informs the parents that it is considering an assessment to issuing the final statement should take no longer than 26 weeks.

The 26 week period is made up of:

- 6 weeks from when the local authority receives the parental, school or setting request for an assessment, or informs the parent that it is thinking of carrying out an assessment, until the decision whether to assess or not;
- 10 weeks in which to carry out the assessment and decide whether to draw up a statement, including 6 weeks for the local authority to seek and receive advice;
- 2 weeks in which to draw up a proposed statement; and
- 8 weeks to finalise the statement.

2. Definitions

The start of the 26 week period is the date on which a request for assessment is received from a responsible body – parents, school or early years setting – or the date on which the authority issues a notice to parents that a statutory assessment is being considered; this is 'Day 1'. A referral from another agency, such as Health, is not a request from a responsible body. In these circumstances, the timescale would start from the date that the authority issues a notice to parents that a statutory assessment is being considered. The 26 week period comprises Day 1 + 181 calendar days.

The end of the period is the date on which the authority issues the final statement. Only count Day 1 as the date that the authority issues a notice to parents if the request for a statement is not received from a 'responsible body' – e.g. a health authority.

Refusal to assess: Where a request is refused, it should not be included in the count. If an order to carry out an assessment is later made by the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), the authority must notify the child's parent that they will make an assessment within 4 weeks of the date of the order. (See Part IV,

Regulation 25 (2) (a) of the Consolidation Regulations 2001). In this case the assessment should be included in the count with the date that the child's parent was notified as the start date.

Refusal to statement: Where an assessment has been carried out and the decision is made not to make a statement, it should not be included in the count. If an order is later made to make and maintain a statement by the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) (see Part IV, Regulation 25 (2) (b) of the Consolidation Regulations 2001) it should also not be included in the count.

Where an exception is known to apply to the statutory time limits for the assessment, the assessment should only be included in Item 3.1. Where no exception is known to apply, the assessment should be included in both Items 3.1 and 3.2.

3. Exceptions to the time limits

The 2001 Regulations allow for the following exceptions to these time limits. These are set out at Regulations 12(5), 12(7), 12(9) and 17(4). The exceptions are as follows.

The authority need not comply with the initial **6 week time limit** if it is impractical to do so because:

- it has requested advice from the head teacher of a school or the head of SEN or other person responsible for a child's education at an early education provider, during a period beginning 1 week before any date on which that school or early education provider was closed for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks from that date ending 1 week before the date on which it reopens;
- exceptional personal circumstances affect the child or his parent during the 6 week period; or
- the child or their parent are absent from the area of the authority for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks during the 6 week period.

The authority need not comply with the **10 week time limit** if it is impractical to do so because:

- in exceptional circumstances after receiving advice it is necessary for the authority to seek further advice;
- the child's parent has told the authority that they wish to provide advice after the expiry of the 6 week period from the date on which a request for such advice was received, and the authority has agreed to consider such advice before completing the assessment;

- the authority has requested advice for the assessment from the head teacher of a school or the head of SEN or other person responsible for a child's education at an early education provider, during a period beginning 1 week before any date on which that school or early education provider was closed for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks from that date and ending 1 week before the date on which it reopens;
- the authority has requested advice for the assessment from health or social services and they have not complied with that request within 6 weeks from the date on which it was made;
- the authority has requested advice for the assessment from health or social services and they have not complied with that request within 6 weeks from the date on which it was made;
- exceptional personal circumstances affect the child or their parent during the 10 week period of the assessment;
- the child fails to keep an appointment for an examination or a test during the 10 week period of the assessment.

Health and social services need not comply with the **6 week time limit** for providing advice if it is impractical to do so because:

- exceptional personal circumstances affect the child or his parent during the 6 week period;
- the child or his parent are absent from the area of the authority for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks during the 6 week period;
- the child fails to keep an appointment for an examination or a test made by health or social services during the 6 week period.

The authority need not comply with the **8 week time limit** if it is impractical to do so because:

exceptional personal circumstances affect the child or their parent during the 8 week period;

- the child or their parent are absent from the area of the authority for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks during the 8 week period;
- the child's parent indicates that they wish to make representations to the authority about the content of the proposed statement after the expiry of the 15 day period for making such representations;
- a meeting between the child's parent and an officer of the authority has been held and the parent has asked for another such meeting to be arranged or has required

a meeting with a person who gave advice for the assessment or any other person who, in the opinion of the authority, is the appropriate person to discuss it with the parent.

Annex B: Guide for local authorities completing Education, health and care (EHC) plans issued within 20 weeks

1. Timelines for assessments and drawing up education, health and care plans

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 set out the time limits for the process of assessing a child or young person's special educational needs (SEN) and drawing up an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The whole process from:

‘Day 1’: when the local authority receive a formal request for an EHC needs assessment, or the local authority becomes responsible for the child or young person because he or she is in the authority's area and has been:

- identified by the authority as someone who has or may have special educational needs, or
- brought to the authority's attention by any person as someone who has or may have special educational needs.

to the issue by the local authority of a finalised EHC plan must take no more than 20 weeks. The local authority needs to conclude this process as soon as is practicable, and in any case within that 20 weeks.

The key timescales, beginning in each case on ‘Day 1’, are:

- 6 weeks to make a decision whether or not an assessment is necessary and to communicate that decision to the parents of the child or to the young person; with the authority to do this as soon as is practicable and in any case before the end of that period;
- where a local authority decides following an assessment that it is not necessary for special educational provision to be made for a child or young person in accordance with an EHC plan, it must inform the parents of the child or the young person as soon as is practicable and in any case within 16 weeks;
- 20 weeks to finalise and issue a plan; with the authority to do this as soon as is practicable and in any case before the end of that period.

2. Definitions

The 20 week period comprises Day 1 + 139 calendar days. The end of the period is the date on which the authority writes to the parents of the child or the young person with the final EHC plan.

Refusal to assess: Where a request is refused, it should not be included in the count. If an assessment is made following mediation or a First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), the assessment should be included in the count with 'Day 1' as the start date.

Refusal to issue an EHC plan: Where an assessment has been carried out and the decision is made not to issue an EHC plan, it should not be included in the count, even if an EHC plan was later issued following mediation or a tribunal or reconsideration of the original decision not to issue an EHC plan.

Where an exception is known to apply to the statutory time limits for the assessment, the assessment should only be included in Item 4.1. Where no exception is known to apply, the assessment should be included in both Items 4.1 and 4.2.

3. Exceptions to the time limits

Where there are exceptional circumstances, it may not be reasonable to expect local authorities to comply with the time limits above. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 set out in Regulations 5(4), 10(4) and 13(3) specific exemptions as follows.

The authority need not comply with the initial **6 week limit** if it is impractical to do so because:

- (a) the local authority has requested advice from the head teacher or principal of a school or post-16 institution during a period beginning one week before any date on which that school or institution was closed for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks from that date and ending one week before the date on which it re-opens;
- (b) the authority has requested advice from the person identified as having responsibility for SEN (if any), in relation to, or other person responsible for, a child's education at a provider of relevant early years education during a period beginning one week before any date on which that provider was closed for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks from that date and ending one week before the date on which it re-opens;

- (c) exceptional personal circumstances affect the child, the child's parent, or the young person during the 6 weeks; or
- (d) the child, the child's parent, or the young person, are absent from the area of the authority for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks during the 6 weeks.

The authority need not comply with the **16 week** and **20 week time limit** if it is impractical to do so because:

- (a) the authority has requested advice from the head teacher or principal of a school or post-16 institution during a period beginning one week before any date on which that school or institution was closed for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks from that date and ending one week before the date on which it re-opens;
- (b) the authority has requested advice from the person identified as having responsibility for SEN (if any) in relation to, or other person responsible for, a child's education at a provider of relevant early years education during a period beginning one week before any date on which that provider was closed for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks from that date and ending one week before the date on which it re-opens;
- (c) exceptional personal circumstances affect the child or the child's parent, or the young person during that time period; or
- (d) the child or the child's parent, or the young person, are absent from the area of the authority for a continuous period of not less than 4 weeks during that time period.

The local authority should inform the child's parent or the young person if exemptions apply so that they are aware of, and understand, the reason for any delays. Local authorities should aim to keep delays to a minimum and as soon as the conditions that led to an exemption no longer apply the local authority should endeavour to complete the process as quickly as possible. All remaining elements of the process must be completed within their prescribed periods, regardless of whether exemptions have delayed earlier elements.



Department
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