



Department
for Education

Special educational needs: an analysis and summary of data sources

September 2016

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Introduction

This document provides a combination of analysis and links to the key data sources on children and young people with special educational needs (SEN). This is the third release in this format and follows on from the initial publication in November 2015. The document will now be updated twice a year to improve the timeliness of the information.

You may also wish to use this publication alongside benchmarking data tools, such as the Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT) and LG Inform. Further details are provided on page 20.

The table below lists the topics included in this publication with a link to the source data and whether time series and LA level data is available. Commentary on the data trends can be found by clicking on the link in the publication title column.

Topic	Publication title link	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available?	When next published and how often updated
Prevalence and characteristics	‘Special educational needs in England: January 2016’	Yes	Yes	July 2017, annual
Early years Foundation Stage profile (EYFSP)	‘Early years foundation stage profile results: 2014 to 2015’	Yes	Yes	November 2016, annual
Phonics screening check and Key Stage 1 attainment	‘Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England 2015’	Yes	Yes	September 2016, annual
Key Stage 2 attainment	‘National curriculum assessments at key stage 2: 2015 (revised)’	Yes	Yes	December 2016, annual
Key Stage 4 attainment	‘Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2014 to 2015’	Yes	Yes	January 2017, annual
Attainment by age 19	‘Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 19 in 2015’	Yes	Yes	April 2017, annual
Post-16 participation	‘Participation in education and training: local authority figures’	Yes	Yes	June 2016, 3 times a year
Further Education learning difficulty and disability numbers	‘FE data library: equality and diversity’	Yes	No	December 2016, annual

Topic	Publication title link	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available?	When next published and how often updated
Destinations measures	‘Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils: 2013 to 2014’	Yes	Yes	October 2016, annual
Absence (annual release)	‘Pupil absence in schools in England: 2014 to 2015’	Yes	Yes	March 2017, annual
Absence (two term release containing limited SEN data)	‘Pupil absence in schools in England: autumn 2014 and spring 2015’	Yes	No	October 2016, annual
Exclusions	‘Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2014 to 2015’	Yes	Not currently though it will be added alongside SFR in due course.	July 2016, annual
Timeliness of issuing statements and EHC plans	‘Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England 2016’	Yes	Yes	May 2017, annual
Appeals registered with the SEND tribunal	‘Tribunals statistics’	Yes	Yes	December 2016, quarterly
Outcomes for looked after children	‘Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2015’	Yes	Yes	March 2017, annual

Updates in this edition

This publication is updated twice a year; this edition contains updates to the following data sources:

Tribunals statistics –latest quarterly data published September 2016
Prevalence and characteristics – latest data published July 2016
Exclusions by SEN – 2014/15 data published July 2016

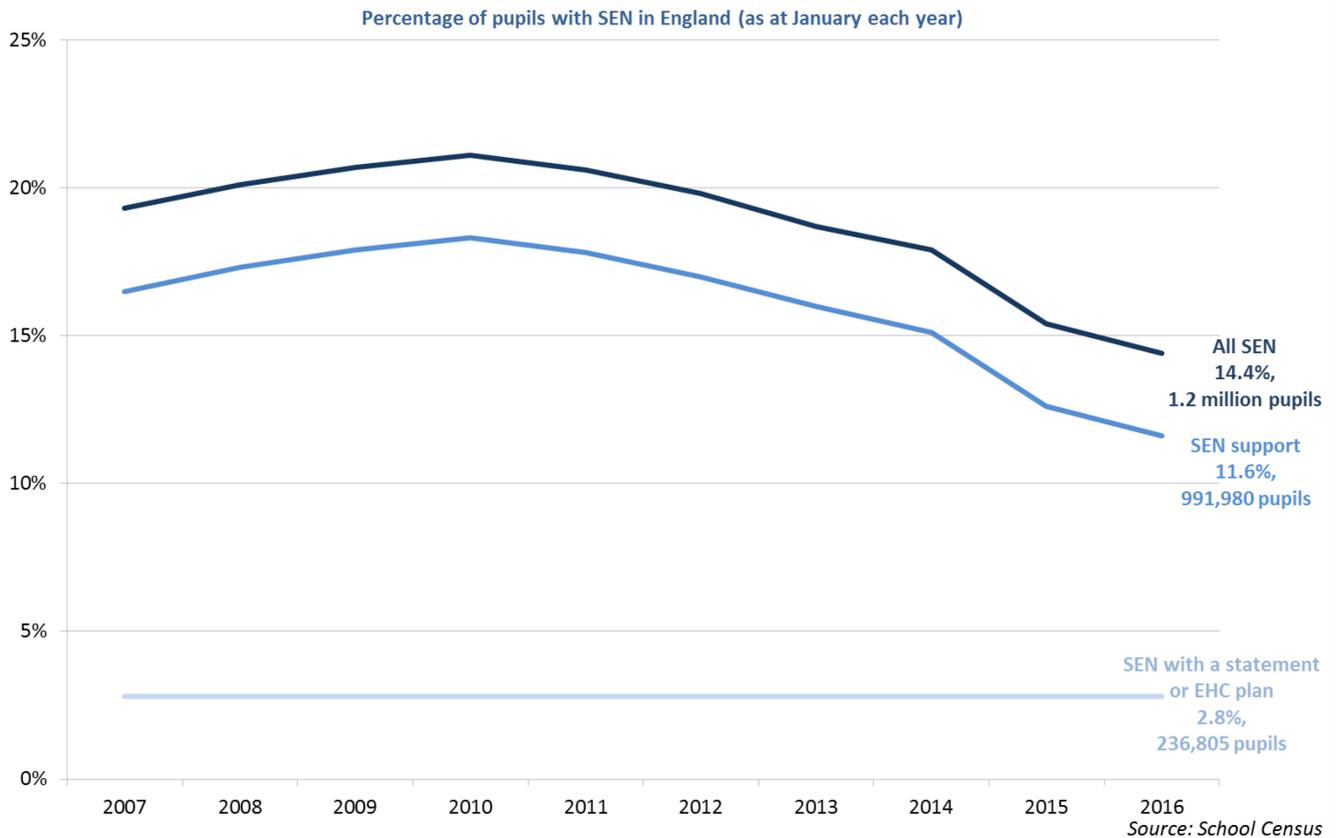
This edition also includes the following additional information which was not covered in the previous publication:

LG Inform: Further detail of SEND data items added to LG Inform tool, including information about the ‘Local Area SEND report’
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SEND local area inspections have now commenced. These are undertaken by Ofsted and CQC (Care Quality Commission). They will inspect all LAs over a 5 year period, details of their findings can be found here: [“SEND local area inspections link”](#).

Prevalence and characteristics

Key trends



Across all schools, the number of pupils with special educational needs has fallen from 1,301,445 in 2015 to 1,228,785 in 2016. 14.4% of pupils had special educational needs in 2016, a fall from 15.4% in 2015. This reduction is due to the decline in the number and percentage of pupils with special educational needs without a statement or EHC plan. This has declined in each of the past six years, falling from 18.3% of pupils in 2010 to 11.6% in 2016.

From 2015, the School Action and School Action Plus categories have combined to form one category of SEN support. This led to schools reviewing the needs of pupils previously under School Action and School Action Plus, and an increased expectation that parents/carers are informed of the decision.

236,805 pupils have a statement or EHC plan. This is an increase of 640 since 2015, but remains equal to 2.8% of the total pupil population. The percentage of pupils with statement or EHC plans has remained constant since 2007.

Pupils with SEN are currently categorised as follows:

SEN support: Extra or different help is given from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum. The class teacher and SEN Coordinator (SENCO) may receive advice or support from outside specialists. This category has replaced the former 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus' categories.

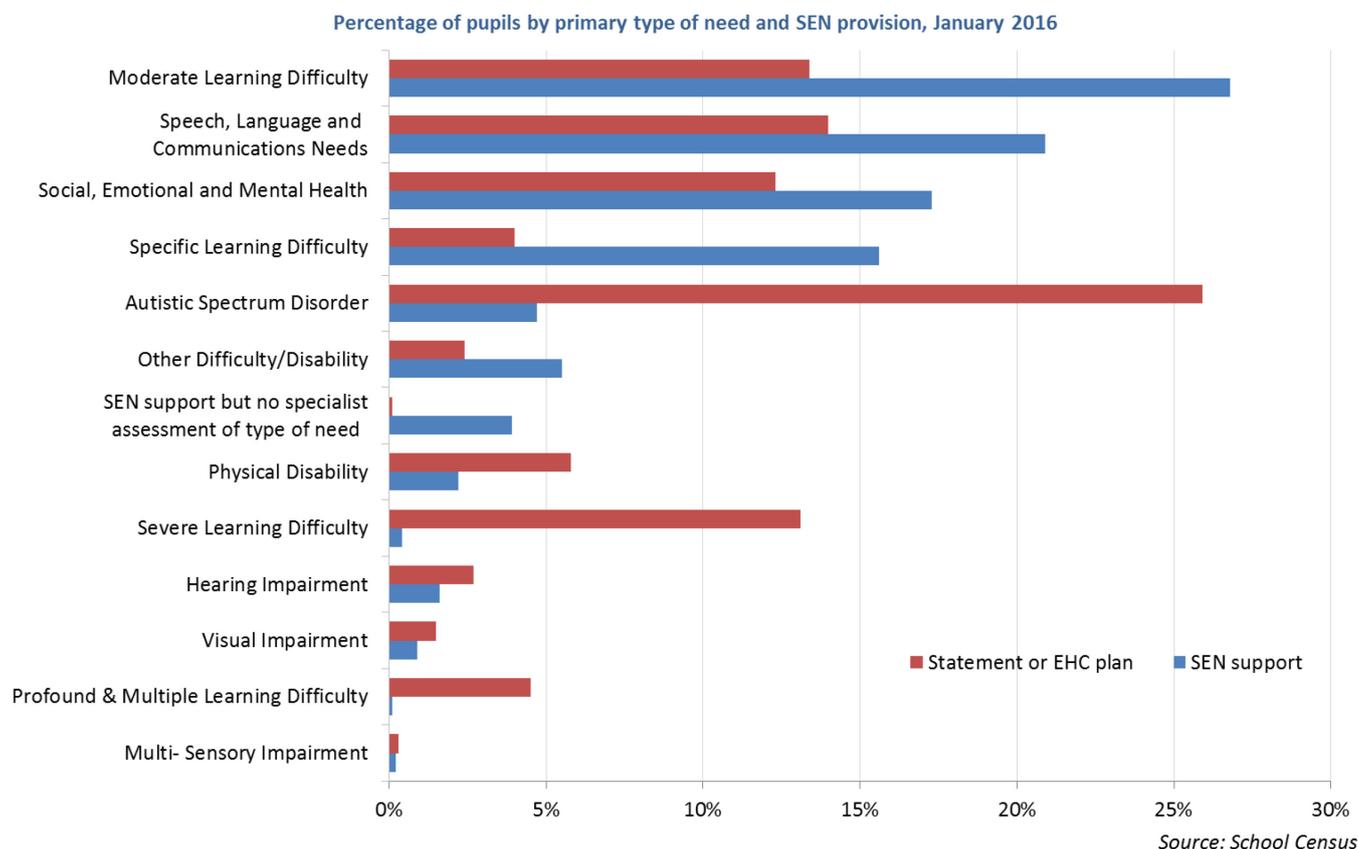
Statement/ Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan: A pupil has a statement of SEN or an EHC plan when a local authority issued one following a formal assessment. This document sets out the child's needs and the extra help they should receive.

Transferring children with statements to EHC plans is being phased and timescales set out in [Transition to the new 0 to 25 special educational needs and disability system: Departmental advice for local authorities and their partners \(March 2015\)](#).

Type of need

Moderate Learning Difficulty is the most common primary type of need overall. 24.2% of pupils with special educational needs have this primary type of need. This percentage has increased since last year, from 23.8%. Moderate Learning Difficulty is also the most common type of need for pupils on SEN support; 26.8% of pupils on SEN support had this primary type of need.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder remains the most common primary type of need for pupils with a statement or EHC plan, 25.9% of pupils with a statement or EHC plan had this primary type of need. This has increased slightly from 24.5% in 2015.



Characteristics

Age and gender

Special educational needs remain more prevalent in boys than girls. 14.7% of boys are on SEN support compared to 8.2% of girls. This is a reduction from last year when 16.0% of boys and 9.2% of girls were on SEN support. 4.0% of boys have a statement or EHC plan compared to 1.5% girls. This has fallen slightly from 4.1% boys and 1.6% girls in 2015.

Free school meal eligibility

Pupils with special educational needs are more likely to be eligible for free school meals. 27.2% of pupils with special educational needs are eligible for free school meals in 2016 compared to 12.1% of pupils without special educational needs. Pupils with statements or EHC plans are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils on SEN support (31.5% compared to 26.2%)

Ethnicity

Special educational needs is most prevalent in Travellers of Irish Heritage and Gypsy/Roma pupils with 35.5% and 30.9% respectively having special educational needs in 2016. The greatest percentage point

decrease was for travellers of Irish heritage pupils where the percentage with special educational needs has reduced from 40.2% in 2015. There has also been a reduction in black Caribbean pupils with special educational needs, from 23.5% in 2015 to 21.7% in 2016.

Travellers of Irish heritage and black Caribbean pupils had the highest proportion of pupils with statements or EHC plans (4.7% and 4.2% respectively). Indian pupils had the lowest percentage of pupils with statements or EHC plans at 1.9%, compared with 2.8% of all pupils nationally.

English as a first language

Pupils whose first language is known to be English were more likely to have special educational needs in 2016 than those whose first language is known to be other than English. 15.5% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be English had special educational needs compared to 13.6% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English.

3.2% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be English have a statement or EHC plan in 2016, whereas 2.5% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English have a statement or EHC plan.

Types of school

The percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan attending state-funded special schools has gradually increased each year. In 2010, 38.2% of pupils with statements attended state-funded special schools and this has increased to 42.9% of pupils with statements or EHC plans in 2016. The percentage of pupils with statements or EHC plans attending independent schools has also increased between 2010 and 2016, from 4.2% to 5.7%.

Percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan by type of provision, England, 2010-2016:

School type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Maintained nursery	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
State-funded primary	25.8	25.8	25.9	26.0	26.2	26.2	25.5
State-funded secondary	28.8	28.4	27.7	26.9	25.7	24.6	23.5
State-funded special	38.2	38.7	39.0	39.6	40.5	41.4	42.9
Pupil Referral Units	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6
Independent	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.7
Non-maintained special	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.6

More information on prevalence and characteristics can be found in the following publication:

[‘Special educational needs in England: January 2016’](#) Next update due June/ July 2017

Looked after children with SEN – prevalence and characteristics

Prevalence: 60.5% of looked after children had a special educational need in 2014/15, which consists of 27.6% with a statement or EHC plan and 32.9% with SEN support. This compares to 50.2% of children in need with SEN and 15.4% of all children with SEN.

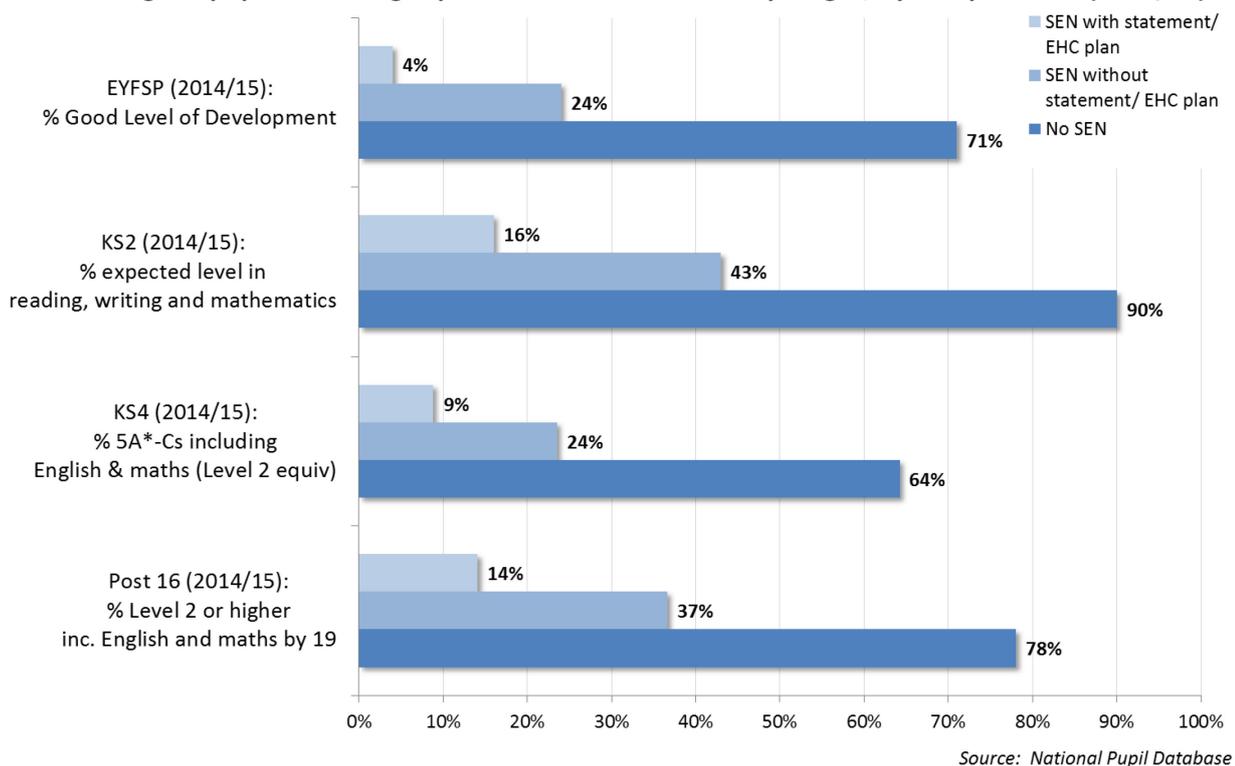
The most common type of need for looked after children was ‘Social, Emotional and Mental Health’ – 37.8% of looked after children with a statement or EHC plan had this type of need compared to 12.7% of all children with a statement or EHC plan.

More information on looked after children with special educational needs can be found in the following publication:

[‘Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2015’](#) Next update due March 2017

Attainment

Percentage of pupils achieving expected level at different Key Stages, by SEN provision (2014/15)



Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

21% of pupils with SEN achieved a good level of development in 2014/15; this is 50 percentage points lower than pupils without SEN (71%).

Phonics screening check

The attainment gap in 2014/15 was 44 percentage points with 39% of pupils with SEN meeting the required standard compared to 83% of pupils with no SEN.

Key Stage 1

Pupils with SEN performed significantly worse than pupils without SEN in 2014/15 and the attainment gap has widened in some subjects (mathematics and science). The gap is largest in writing (44 percentage points), and smallest in mathematics (31 percentage points).

Key Stage 2

39% of pupils with SEN achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014/15 compared to 90% of those with no SEN.

Key Stage 4

In 2014/15, 20.0% of pupils with SEN achieved 5+ GCSEs at A*-C or equivalent including English and mathematics, 44.2 percentage points lower than those with no SEN (64.2%). Note that due to reforms introduced in 2014 data is not comparable to earlier years.

Post-16 – attainment by age 19

32.8% of pupils with SEN achieved 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics by age 19 in 2014/15, which is 45.2 percentage points lower than pupils without SEN (78.0%).

More information on attainment can be found in the following publications:

[‘Early years foundation stage profile results: 2014 to 2015’](#) Next update due November 2016

[‘Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England 2015’](#) Next update due September 2016

[‘National curriculum assessments at key stage 2: 2015 \(revised\)’](#) Next update due December 2016

[‘Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2014 to 2015’](#) Next update due January 2017

[‘Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 19 in 2015’](#). Next update due April 2017

Looked after children with SEN - attainment

Key Stage 2 attainment: 33% of looked after children with SEN achieved the expected level in Key Stage 2 reading, writing and mathematics in 2014/15 (up from 32% in 2013/14). This compares with 39% of non-looked after children with SEN.

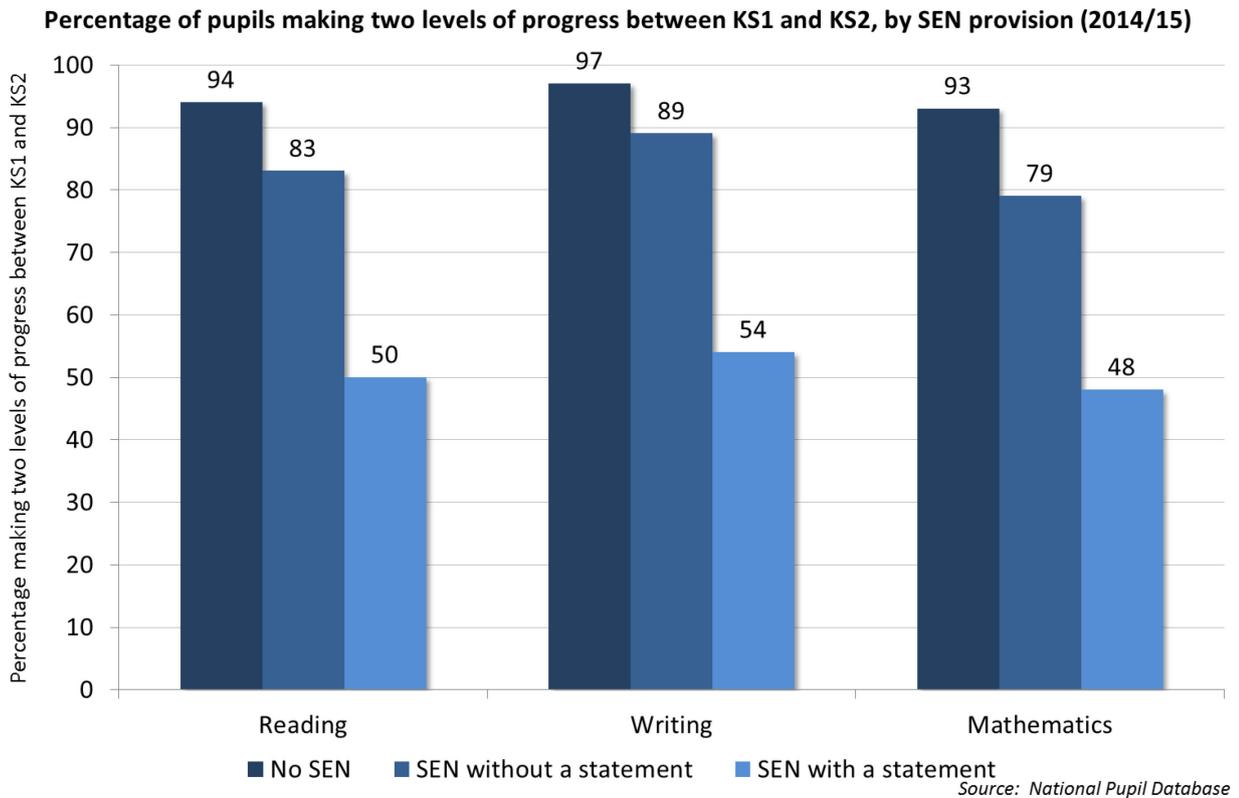
Key Stage 4 attainment: 8.2% of looked after children with SEN achieved 5+ GCSEs at A*-C or equivalent including English and mathematics in 2014/15 compared to 19.1% of non-looked after children with SEN. Note that due to reforms introduced in 2014 data is not comparable to earlier years.

More information on looked after children with special educational needs can be found in the following publication:

[‘Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2015’](#) Next update due March 2017

Progression

Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 progression



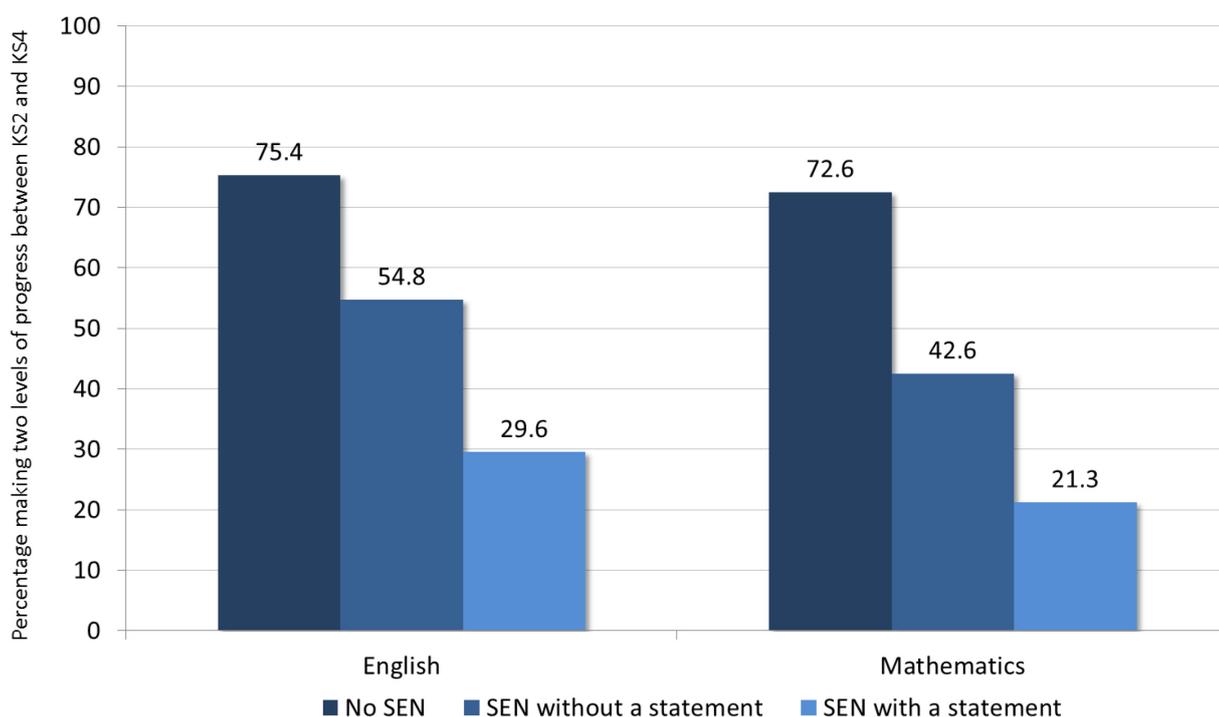
Pupils with SEN were most likely to make the expected progress (two levels of progress) in writing, then reading and then mathematics.

For writing the gap between those with SEN without a statement and those with no SEN was 8 percentage points, for those with a statement the gap was 43 percentage points. These gaps were larger for both reading and mathematics.

Pupils with hearing or visual impairments were the most likely to make the expected progress. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties were least likely to make the expected progress.

Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 progression

Percentage of pupils making two levels of progress between KS2 and KS4, by SEN provision (2014/15)



Source: National Pupil Database

Pupils were more likely to make the expected progress (two levels of progress) in English than mathematics. For English the gap between those with no SEN and those with SEN without a statement was 20.6 percentage points; and for those with a statement was 45.8 percentage points.

For mathematics the gap between those with no SEN and those with SEN without a statement was 30.0 percentage points; and for those with a statement was 51.3 percentage points.

Pupils with visual impairments were the most likely to make the expected progress in English (65.5%) and those with hearing impairments were more likely to make the expected progress in mathematics (60.2%). Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties were least likely to make the expected progress in English (3.2%) and those with severe learning difficulties were least likely to make the expected progress in mathematics (2.0%).

More information on progression can be found in the following publications:

[‘National curriculum assessments at key stage 2: 2015 \(revised\)’](#) Next update due December 2016

[‘Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2014 to 2015’](#) Next update due January 2017

Preparation for Adulthood

Post-16 learner participation

Participation for 16 and 17 year olds

87.3% of 16/17 year olds with SEN with a statement or EHC plan were in education and training in December 2015, this is 4.0 percentage points lower than those without SEN (91.3%).

Participation in Further Education

In the 2013/14 academic year approximately 190,610 learners in mainstream Further Education (FE) aged under 19, self-declared a learning difficulty or disability (LDD) (19.4% of all learners in this age group). There were 116,410 learners aged 19-24 in mainstream Further Education (FE) with a self-declared learning difficulty or disability (LDD) (15.6% of all learners in this age group).

Destinations

After Key Stage 4 - Young people at the end of compulsory schooling: 88% of pupils with a statement were in a sustained education destination compared to 82% of pupils with SEN without statements and 92% of those without SEN (2013/14 destinations).

After Key Stage 5 - Young people who took A levels/level 3 qualifications: 49% of pupils with SEN in schools progressed to Higher Education compared to 59% of those without SEN. 34% of those with Learning Difficulty or Disability (LDD) in colleges progressed to Higher Education compared to 40% of those without LDD (2013/14 destinations).

Employment status for adults with learning disabilities

In 2014-15, 6.0% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who are receiving support from social services were in paid employment, compared to 6.7% in the previous year (although the data collection system changed in 2014-15 which means time series comparisons should only be made with caution).

Accommodation status for adults with learning disabilities

In 2014-15, 73.3% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who are receiving support from social services lived in their own home or with families, compared to 74.9% in the previous year (although the data collection system changed in 2014-15 which means time series comparisons should only be made with caution).

More information on Preparation for adulthood can be found in the following publications:

['Participation in education and training: local authority figures'](#) Next update due June 2016

['FE data library: equality and diversity'](#) Next update due December 2016

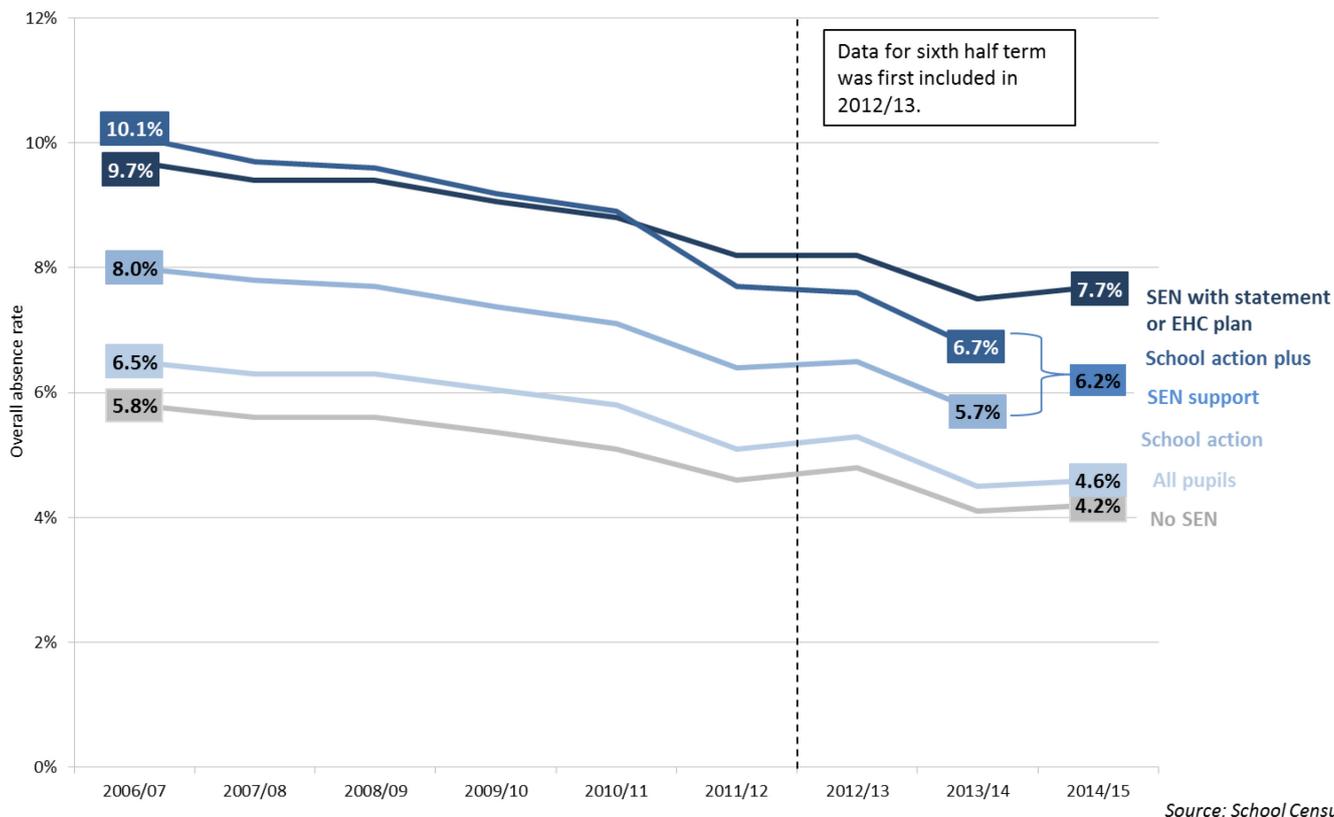
['Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils: 2013 to 2014'](#) Next update due October 2016

['Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England - 2014-15'](#) Next update due October 2016

Absence and exclusions

Absence

Percentage of sessions missed due to overall absence, by SEN provision, 2006/07-2014/15



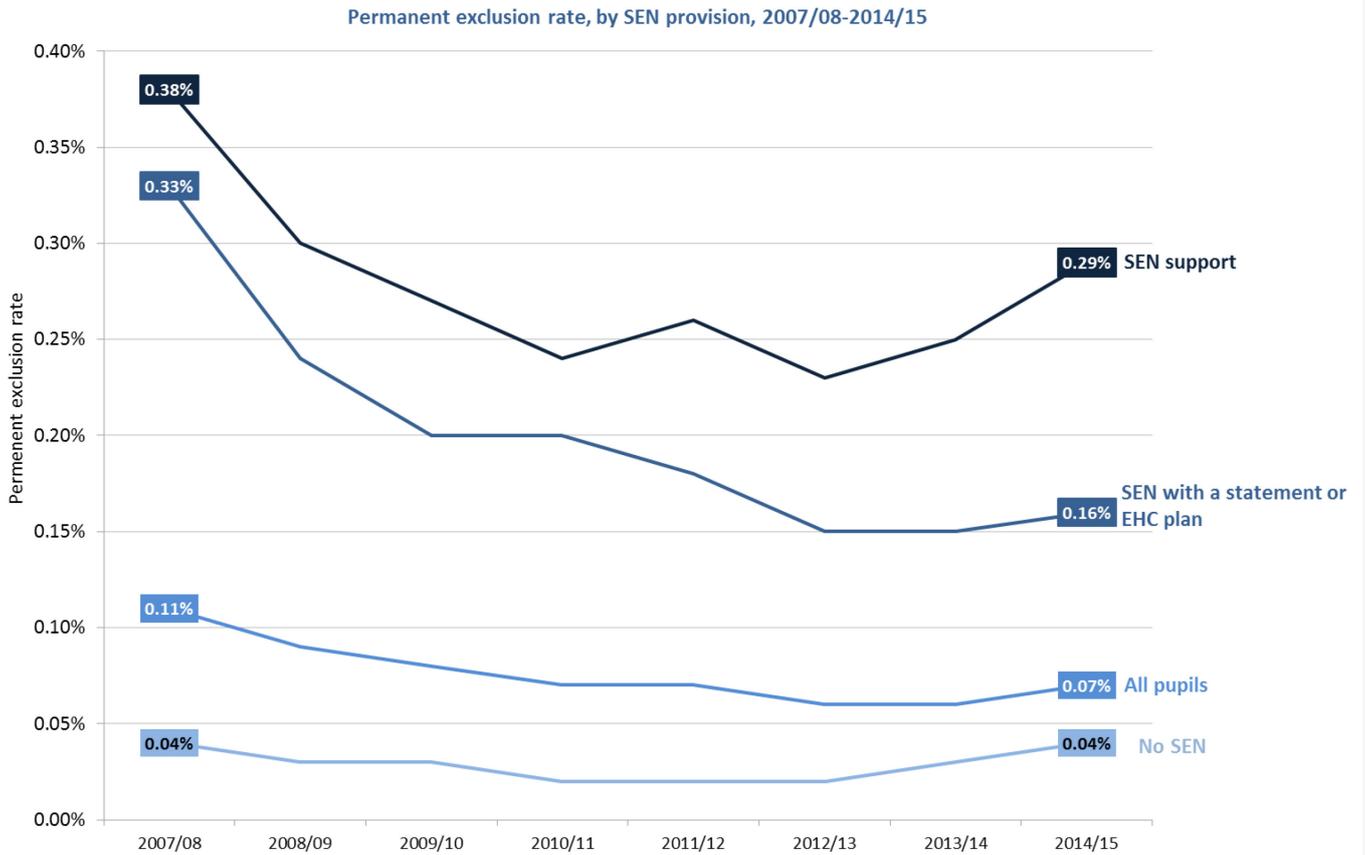
7.7% of sessions were missed for pupils with statements or EHC plans in 2014/15 compared to 6.2% for pupils on SEN support and 4.2% for pupils without SEN.

11.6% of pupils with statements or EHC plans were persistent absentees in 2014/15 compared to 7.3% for pupils on SEN support and 2.8% for pupils without SEN.

Pupils with primary SEN type of profound and multiple learning difficulties were most likely to be absent from school in 2014/15, these pupils missed 14.2% of sessions.

Exclusions

Permanent exclusions

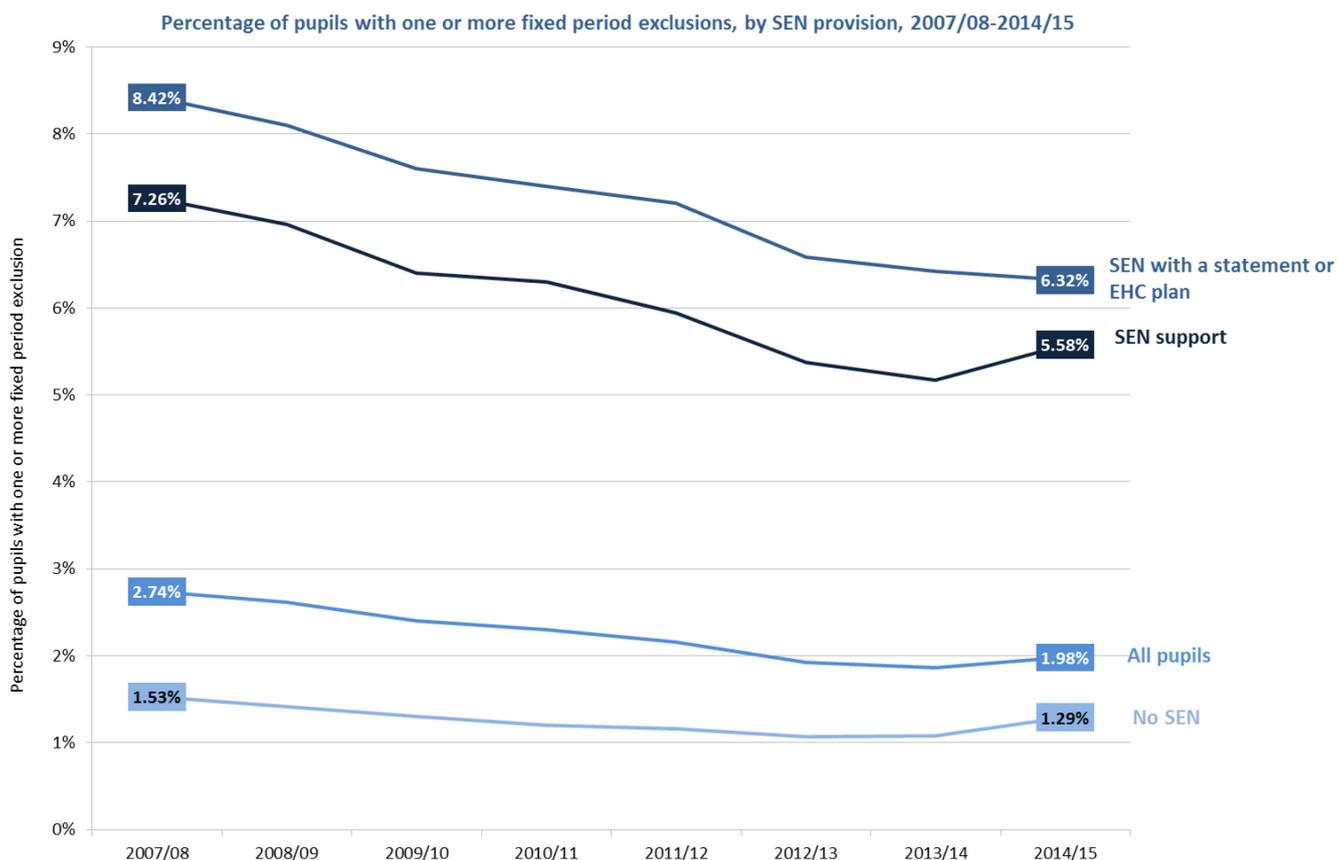


The permanent exclusion rate for pupils on SEN support in 2014/15 was 0.29%, compared to 0.16% for pupils with statements or EHC plans and less than 0.04% of pupils with no SEN.

Pupils with primary type of need 'Social, emotional and mental health' (SEMH) have the highest permanent exclusion rate at 0.38%.

Pupils with identified special educational needs (SEN) accounted for just over half of all permanent exclusions and fixed period exclusions. Pupils with SEN support had the highest permanent exclusion rate and were over 7 times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than pupils with no SEN.

Fixed period exclusions



5.58% of pupils on SEN support received one or more fixed period exclusion in 2014/15 compared to 6.32% of pupils with statements or EHC plans and 1.29% of pupils with no SEN.

Pupils with primary type of need 'Social, emotional and mental health' (SEMH) had the highest percentage of enrolments with one or more fixed period exclusion in 2014/15 at 6.38%.

More information on absence and exclusions can be found in the following publications:

['Pupil absence in schools in England: 2014 to 2015'](#) Next update due March 2017

['Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2014 to 2015'](#) Next update due July 2017

Experience of the SEND system

Total number of statements or EHC plans maintained by local authorities

There were 74,210 statutory EHC plans and 182,105 statements maintained by local authorities at January 2016. This gives a combined total of 256,315. The combined total of statements and EHC plans has increased each year since 2010.

Number of new statements or plans issued by local authorities

There were 24,655 new EHC plans and 3,270 new statements made during 2015 giving a combined total of 27,925. The combined number of statements and EHC plans made during 2015 is greater than 2014 but lower than 2013.

Progress transferring statements to EHC plans

Between January 2015 and January 2016 there were 42,005 transfers from statements to EHC plans. When accounting for null returns, this is equal to 18.2% of statements in place in January 2015. The period for local authorities to transfer statements to EHC plans began in September 2014 and is due to end by April 2018.

Timeliness of issuing statements and EHC plans

Of the statements made during 2015 (excluding cases where exceptions apply), 46.5% were issued within the 26 week time limit. This figure is lower than in 2014 where 89.0% were issued within the time limits. A lower figure was expected for 2015 than 2014 as new assessments for a statement should not have occurred after September 2014. Therefore, those statements that were issued in 2015 are more likely to be cases that took longer to complete.

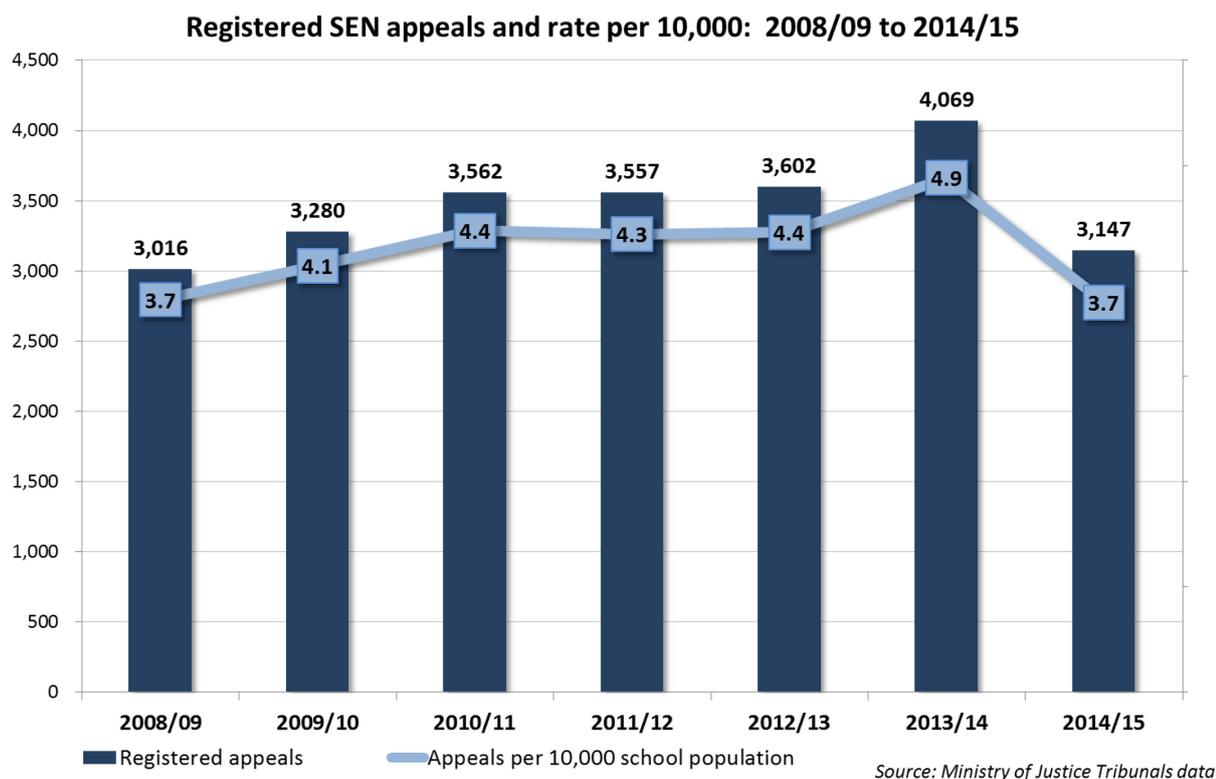
Of the new EHC plans made during 2015 (excluding cases where exceptions apply), 59.2% were issued within the 20 week time limit. This has reduced from last year when 64.3% were issued within the time limits. The percentage of EHC plans completed within the time limits is lower than the percentage of statements issued within the time limits in previous years. We would expect local authorities to take time to adjust to the new system, in particular, the addition of health and care elements.

Appeals registered with the SEND tribunal

There were around 3,150 appeals registered in 2014/15, which is equivalent to around 3.7 appeals per 10,000 of the school population. This is a decrease compared to the previous year where there were around 4,100 appeals registered equivalent to 4.9 per 10,000 of the school population.

In 2014/15, 52% of appeals were against the contents of the statement or EHC plan and 32% were against a refusal to assess.

In 2014/15, 76% of appeals were conceded or withdrawn. Of those that reached an outcome, 86% were successful to some extent.



The number of appeals registered in the latest quarter (April-June 2016) was 1,146, which is an increase of 29% compared to the same period 12 months earlier (there were 890 recorded between April-June 2015). Following an increase in appeals during 2013 and 2014, there was a fall in the number of appeals during 2015 which has now been followed by an increase.

More information on the experience of the SEND system can be found in the following publications:

[‘Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England 2016’](#) Next update due May 2017

[‘Tribunals statistics’](#) Next update due December 2016

Related information

Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

This tool is produced by the Department, it contains a range of LA level information relating to Education and Children’s services (including on SEND) and enables comparisons across all local authorities in England.

The LAIT is available to access at “[Local Authority Interactive Tool link](#)”.

LG Inform

The DfE has also worked with the LGA to produce a new local area SEND comparison tool on LG Inform, a local authority comparison tool similar to the LAIT. With the new SEND tool, users can view a range of SEND data on a local area in one report, enabling them to compare LA performance against LAs nationally, LAs in the same region and similar LAs.

The SEND data is drawn from key publications set out in this document and is intended to support local areas use of data and intelligence to measure progress and success. It includes data on attainment, exclusions, absences and LA SEN performance (such as timeliness of EHC plans and progress converting statements to plans). The report is available at the following link, and users can generate reports for individual local areas in seconds:

“[Local Area SEN report link](#)”

To generate a report, select a local area from the first dropdown box, and your comparison group from the second (NB users should select “All English single tier and county councils” as their comparison group to compare against other English LAs).

Feedback:

We have changed the way this publication looks to make it more accessible and more timely. We welcome feedback on any aspect of the publication at: SEN.Statistics@education.gsi.gov.uk .



Department
for Education

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