



Department
for Education

Special educational needs: an analysis and summary of data sources

May 2017

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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 fourth release in this format and follows on from the initial publication in November 2015.

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

This is a collated product from data published throughout the year. As such, trends across sections might not be directly comparable. More detail can be found in the text.

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.

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	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’	January 2016	Yes	Yes	July 2017, annual
Early years Foundation Stage profile (EYFSP)	‘Early years foundation stage profile results: 2015 to 2016’	2015/16 (academic year)	Yes	Yes	November 2017, annual
Phonics screening check and Key Stage 1 attainment	‘Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England 2016’	2015/16	Yes	Yes	September 2017, annual
Key Stage 2 attainment	‘National curriculum assessments at key stage 2: 2016 (revised)’	2015/16	Yes	Yes	December 2017, annual

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available?	When next published and how often updated
Key Stage 4 attainment	‘Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2015 to 2016’	2015/16	Yes	Yes	January 2018, annual
Attainment by age 19	‘Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 19 in 2016’	2015/16	Yes	Yes	March 2018, annual
Post-16 participation	‘Participation in education and training: local authority figures’	June 2016	Yes	Yes	July 2017, 3 times a year
Further Education learning difficulty and disability numbers	‘FE data library: equality and diversity’	2014/15	Yes	No	December 2017, annual
Destinations measures	‘Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils: 2015’	2014/15	Yes	Yes	October 2017, annual
Absence (annual release)	‘Pupil absence in schools in England: 2015 to 2016’	2015/16	Yes	Yes	March 2018, annual
Exclusions	‘Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2014 to 2015’	2014/15	Yes	Not currently though it will be added alongside SFR in due course.	July 2016, annual

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available?	When next published and how often updated
Timeliness of issuing statements and EHC plans	‘Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England 2017’	January 2017	Yes	Yes	May 2018, annual
Appeals registered with the SEND tribunal	‘Tribunals statistics’	October – December 2016	Yes	Yes	June 2017, quarterly
Outcomes for looked after children	‘Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2016’	2015/16	Yes	Yes	March 2018, annual
Measures from Adult Social Care Outcomes framework	Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England - 2015-16	2015-16 (financial year)	Yes	No, CCG level data available	October 2017, annual

Updates in this edition

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

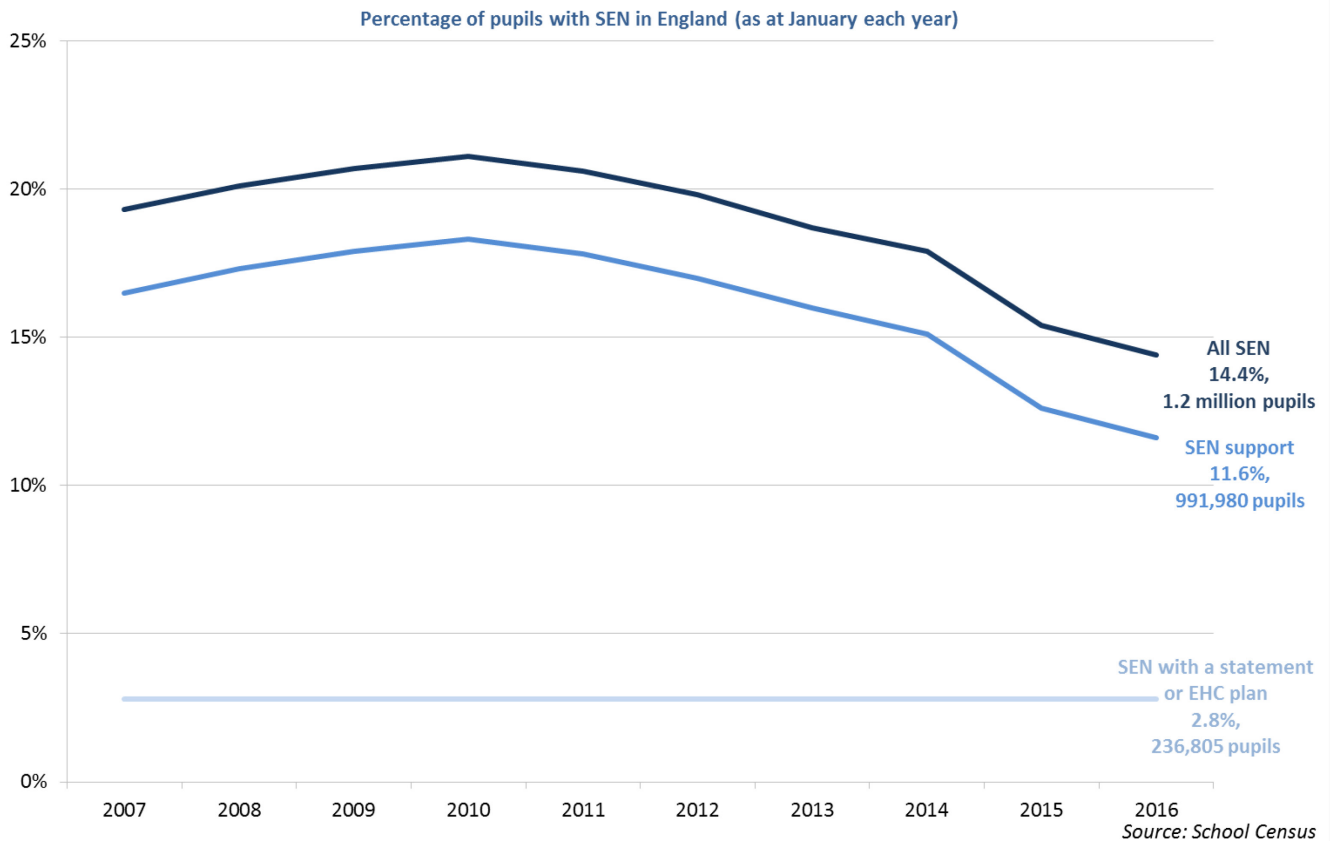
Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results – latest annual data published November 2016
Key Stage 1 and Phonics results – latest annual data published September 2016
Key Stage 2 results – latest annual data published December 2016
Key Stage 4 Results – latest annual data published January 2017
Post-16 attainment Results – latest annual data published March 2017
Participation by 16 and 17 year olds – latest quarterly data published October 2016
Participation in Further Education – latest annual data published in December 2016
Destinations measures – latest annual data published January 2017

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results – latest annual data published November 2016
Absence statistics – latest annual data published March 2017
Timeliness of issuing statements – latest annual data published May 2017
Tribunals statistics –latest quarterly data published March 2017
Looked After Children & Children in need prevalence and outcomes – latest annual data published March 2017
Measures from Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework – latest annual data published October 2016

This publication also contains additional related links to Ofsted/ Care Quality Commission (CQC) local area inspection outcomes letters and related publications released by NHS England.

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 a statement or EHC plan has remained constant since 2007.

Pupils with SEN are currently categorised as follows:

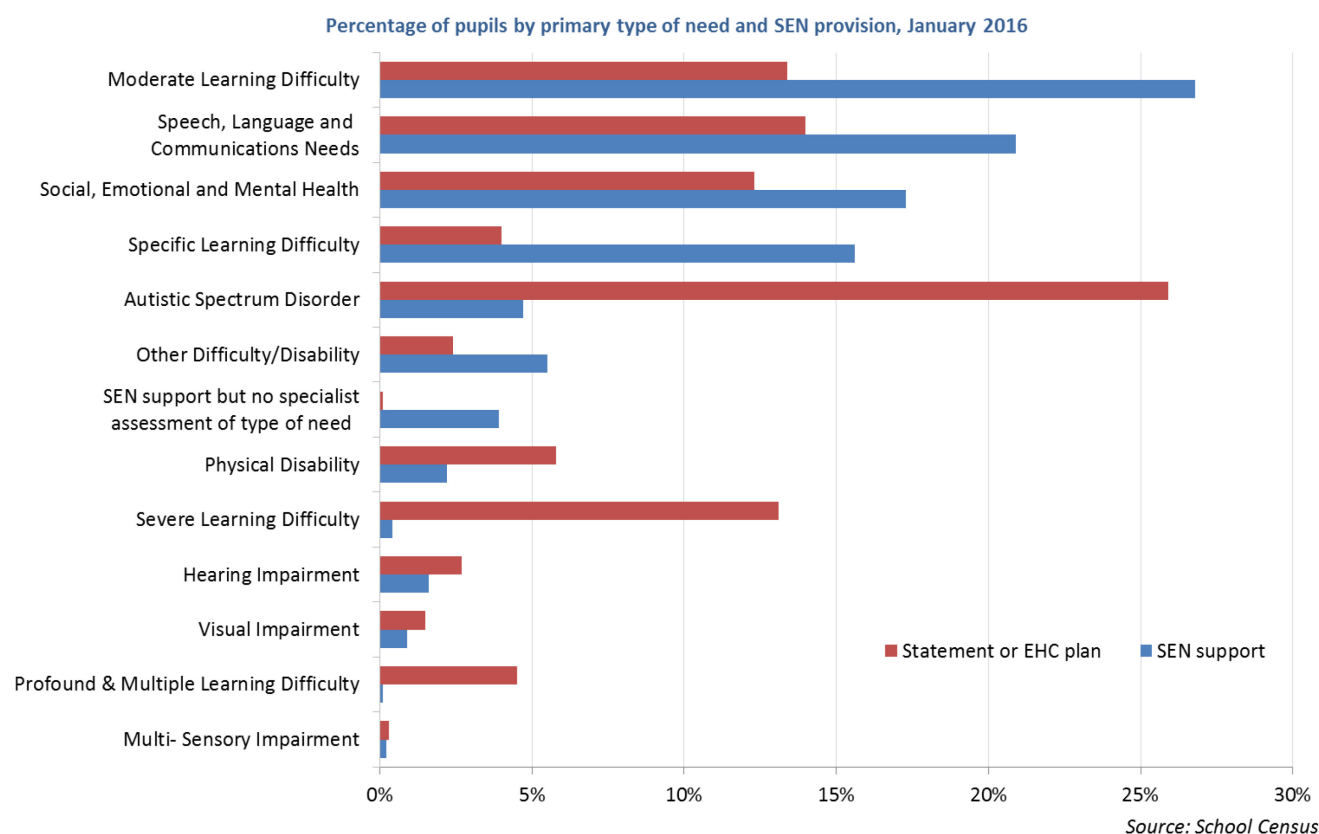
SEN support: Extra or different help is given from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum. The class teacher and SEN Coordinator (SENCO) may receive advice or support from outside specialists. This category has replaced the former 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus' categories.

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.

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 slightly 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 very 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. However, Travellers of Irish Heritage have seen the greatest decrease in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs since 2015, reducing by 4.7 percentage points from 40.2% to 35.5%.

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 July 2017

Looked after children with SEN – prevalence and characteristics

Prevalence: 57.3% of children who had been looked after continuously for 12 months for whom data were available had a special educational need (SEN) in 2015/16, which consists of 27.0% with a statement or EHC plan and 30.4% on SEN support. This compares to 46.7% of children in need with SEN and 14.4% of all children with SEN.

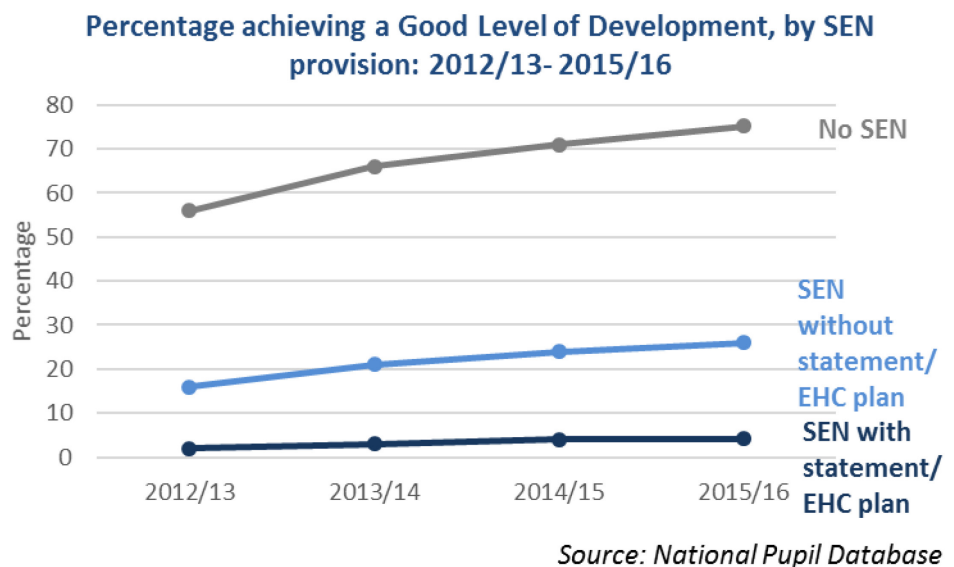
The most common type of need for looked after children was 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health' – 37.1% of looked after children with a statement or EHC plan had this type of need compared to 12.3% of all children with a statement or EHC plan.

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 2016'](#) Next update due March 2018

Attainment

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)



23% of pupils with SEN achieved a good level of development in 2015/16; this is 52 percentage points lower than pupils without SEN (75%). (A new Foundation Stage Profile was introduced in 2012/13 and data for earlier years is not comparable).

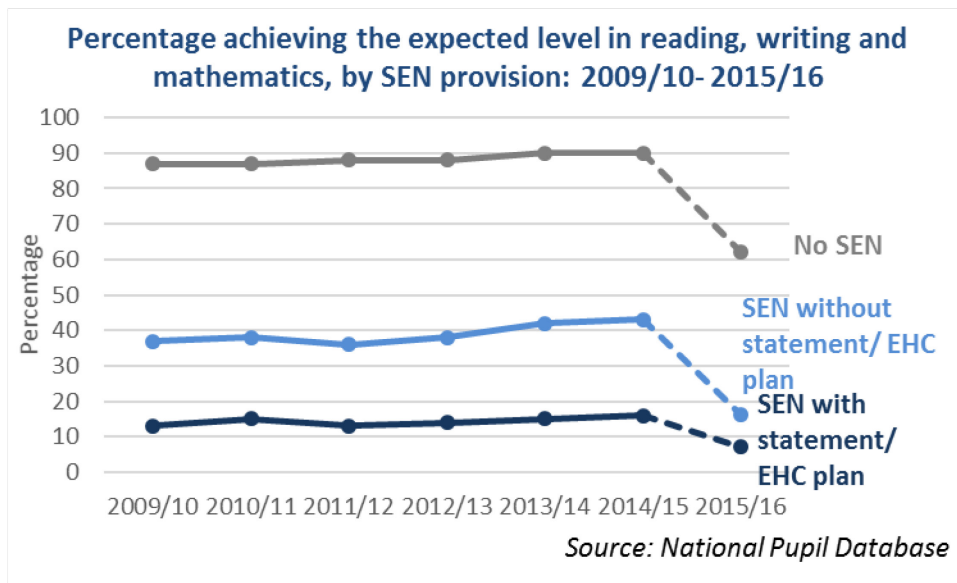
Phonics screening check

The attainment gap in 2015/16 was 44 percentage points with 42% of pupils with SEN meeting the required standard compared to 86% of pupils with no SEN.

Key Stage 1

Pupils with SEN performed significantly worse than pupils without SEN in 2015/16, the attainment gap is largest in writing (54 percentage points), and smallest in science (47 percentage points).

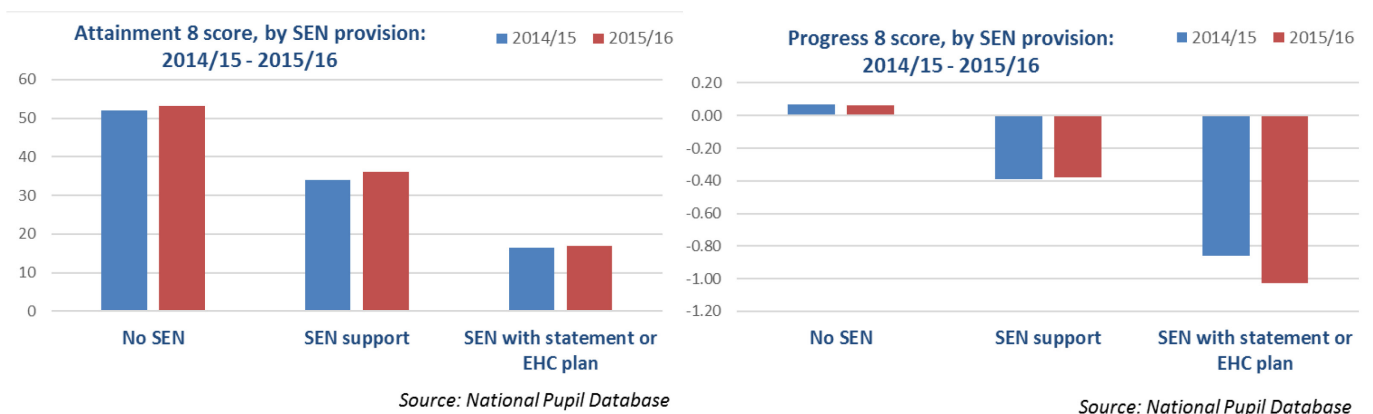
Key Stage 2



14% of pupils with SEN achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015/16 compared to 62% of those with no SEN. (Changes to the National Curriculum tests were introduced in 2015/16 and data for earlier years is not comparable, see source publication (linked below) for details).

Pupils with SEN have lower progress scores compared to those with no SEN and the score is lowest in writing. For reading the progress score is -1.5 for SEN pupils and 0.3 for those with no SEN; for writing the progress score is -2.6 for SEN pupils and 0.5 for those with no SEN and for mathematics the progress score is -1.4 for SEN pupils and 0.3 for those with no SEN. A progress score of -1 would mean that the pupil achieved the equivalent of 1 scaled score point lower in that subject than all pupils with similar prior attainment nationally. See source publication (link below) for detail of definitions.

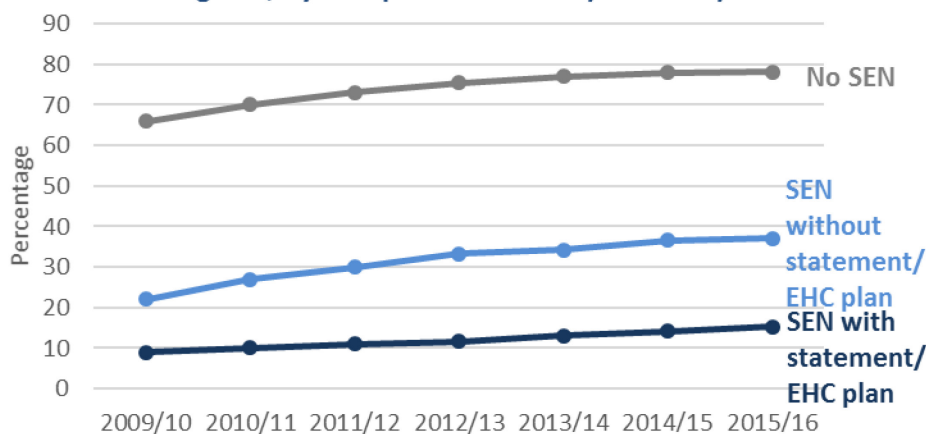
Key Stage 4



New attainment indicators were introduced in 2015/16 at Key Stage 4 – Attainment 8 and Progress 8. The attainment 8 score for pupils with SEN in 2015/16 was 31.2 compared to 53.2 for those with no SEN. The progress 8 score for pupils with SEN was -0.55 compared to 0.06 for those with no SEN. The score of -0.55 indicates that pupils with SEN achieve on average half a grade lower per subject than other pupils with the same KS2 attainment. See source publication (link below) for detail of definitions.

Post-16 – attainment by age 19

Percentage achieving Level 2 including English and mathematics by age 19, by SEN provision: 2009/10- 2015/16



Source: National Pupil Database

32.9% of pupils with SEN achieved Level 2 including English and mathematics by age 19 in 2015/16, which is 45.1 percentage points lower than pupils without SEN (78.1%).

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

[‘Early years foundation stage profile results: 2015 to 2016’](#) Next update due November 2017

[‘Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England 2016’](#) Next update due September 2017

[‘National curriculum assessments at key stage 2: 2016 \(revised\)’](#) Next update due December 2017

[‘Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2015 to 2016’](#) Next update due January 2018

[‘Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 19 in 2016’](#). Next update due March 2018

Looked after children with SEN - attainment

Key Stage 2 attainment: 11% of looked after children with SEN achieved the expected level in Key Stage 2 reading, writing and mathematics in 2015/16. This compares with 14% of non-looked after children with SEN.

Key Stage 4 attainment: The attainment 8 score for looked after children with SEN in 2015/16 was 17.2 compared to a score of 29.3 for non-looked after children with SEN. The progress 8 score for looked after children with SEN in 2015/16 was -1.39 compared to -0.74 for non-looked after children with SEN.

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 2016’](#) Next update due March 2018

Preparation for Adulthood

Post-16 learner participation

Participation for 16 and 17 year olds

86.8% of 16/17 year olds with SEN with a statement or EHC plan were in education and training in June 2016, this is 4.4 percentage points lower than those without SEN (91.2%).

Participation in Further Education

In the 2014/15 academic year 188,530 learners in mainstream Further Education (FE) aged under 19, self-declared a learning difficulty or disability (LDD) (19.6% of all learners in this age group). There were 113,100 learners aged 19-24 in mainstream Further Education (FE) aged 19-24 with a self-declared learning difficulty or disability (LDD) (16.5% of all learners in this age group).

Destinations

After Key Stage 4 - Young people at the end of compulsory schooling: 91% of pupils with a statement were in a sustained education or employment/ training destination six months after completing Key Stage 4, compared to 88% of pupils with SEN without statements and 95% of those without SEN (2014/15 destinations).

After Key Stage 5 - Young people who took A levels/level 3 qualifications: 86% of pupils with SEN in schools progressed to a sustained education or employment/ training destinations six months after completing Key Stage 5, compared to 90% of those without SEN. 84% of those with Learning Difficulty or Disability (LDD) in colleges progressed to a sustained education or employment/ training destination compared to 86% of those without LDD (2014/15 destinations).

Employment status for adults with learning disabilities

In the 2015-16 financial year, 5.8% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who were receiving support from social services were in paid employment, compared to 6.0% in the previous year.

Accommodation status for adults with learning disabilities

In the 2015-16 financial year, 75.4% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who were receiving support from social services lived in their own home or with families, compared to 74.0% in the previous year.

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

[‘Participation in education and training: local authority figures’](#) Next update due July 2017

[‘FE data library: equality and diversity’](#) Next update due December 2017

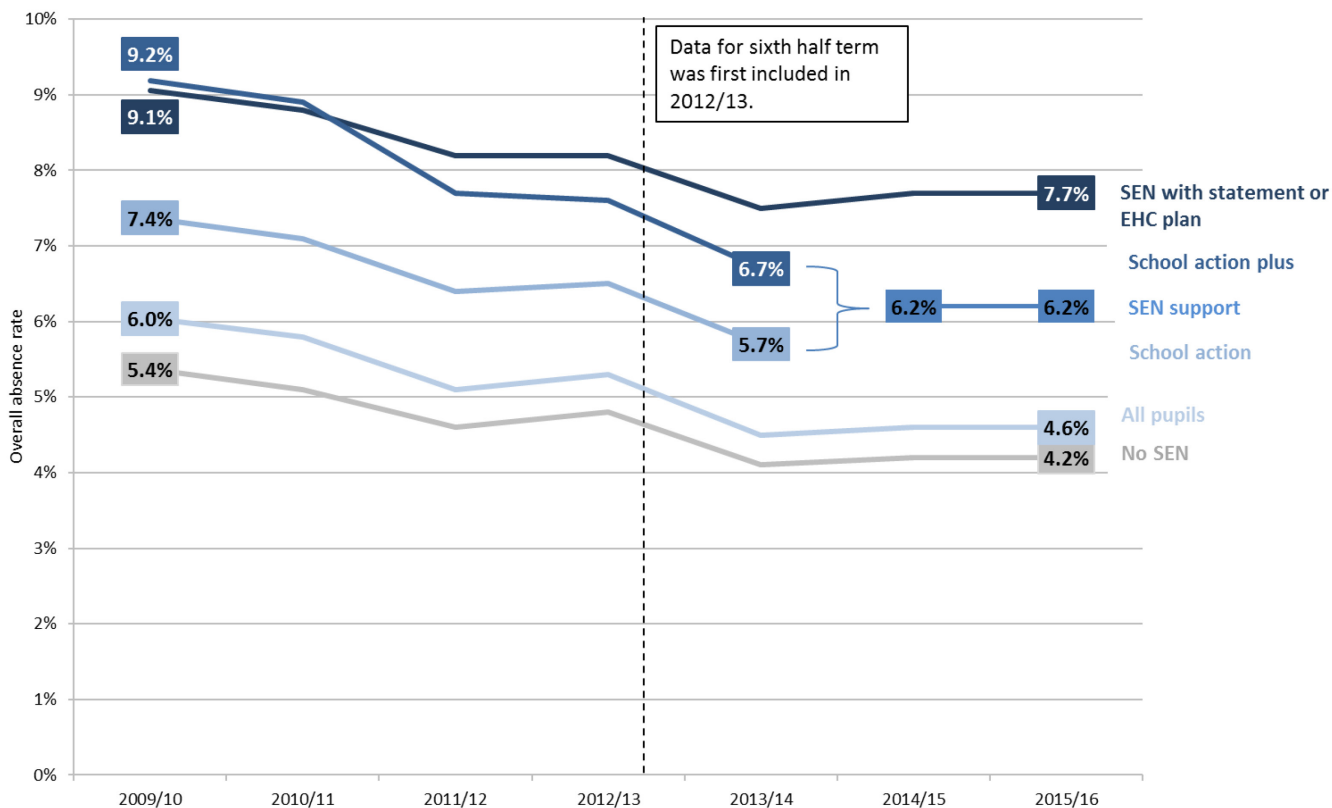
[‘Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils: 2015’](#) Next update due October 2017

[‘Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England - 2015-16’](#) Next update due October 2017

Absence and exclusions

Absence

Percentage of sessions missed due to overall absence, by SEN provision: 2009/10 - 2015/16



Source: School Census

7.7% of sessions were missed for pupils with statements or EHC plans in 2015/16 compared to 6.2% for pupils on SEN support and 4.2% for pupils without SEN.

22.6% of pupils with statements or EHC plans were persistent absentees in 2015/16 compared to 17.5% for pupils on SEN support and 8.8% for pupils without SEN.

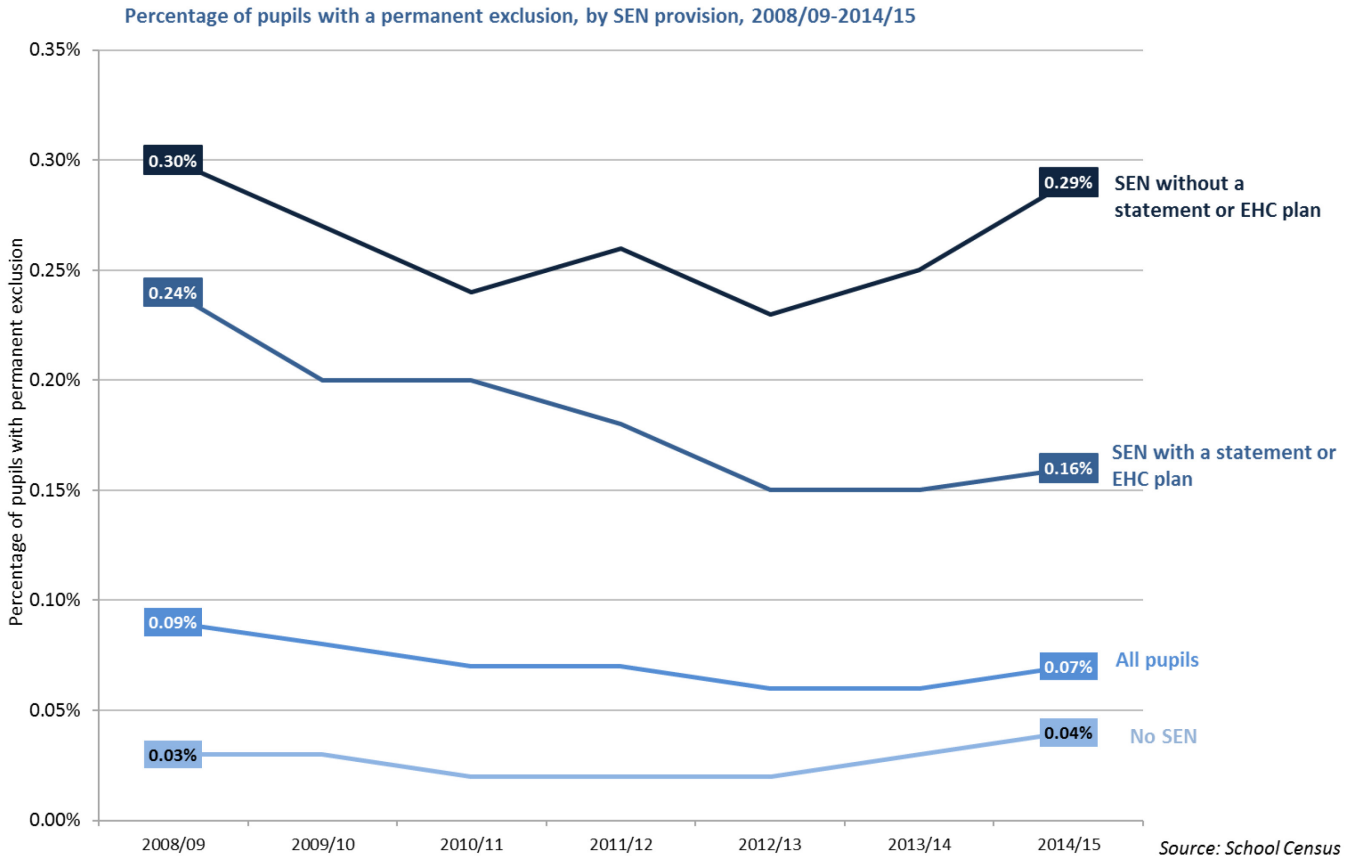
Pupils with primary SEN type of profound and multiple learning difficulties were most likely to be absent from school in 2015/16, these pupils missed 14.0% of sessions.

From 2014/15 school action and school action plus categories have combined to form one category of **SEN support**.

Pupil enrolments missing 10 percent or more of their own possible sessions (due to authorised or unauthorised absence) are classified as **persistent absentees**.

Exclusions

Permanent exclusions

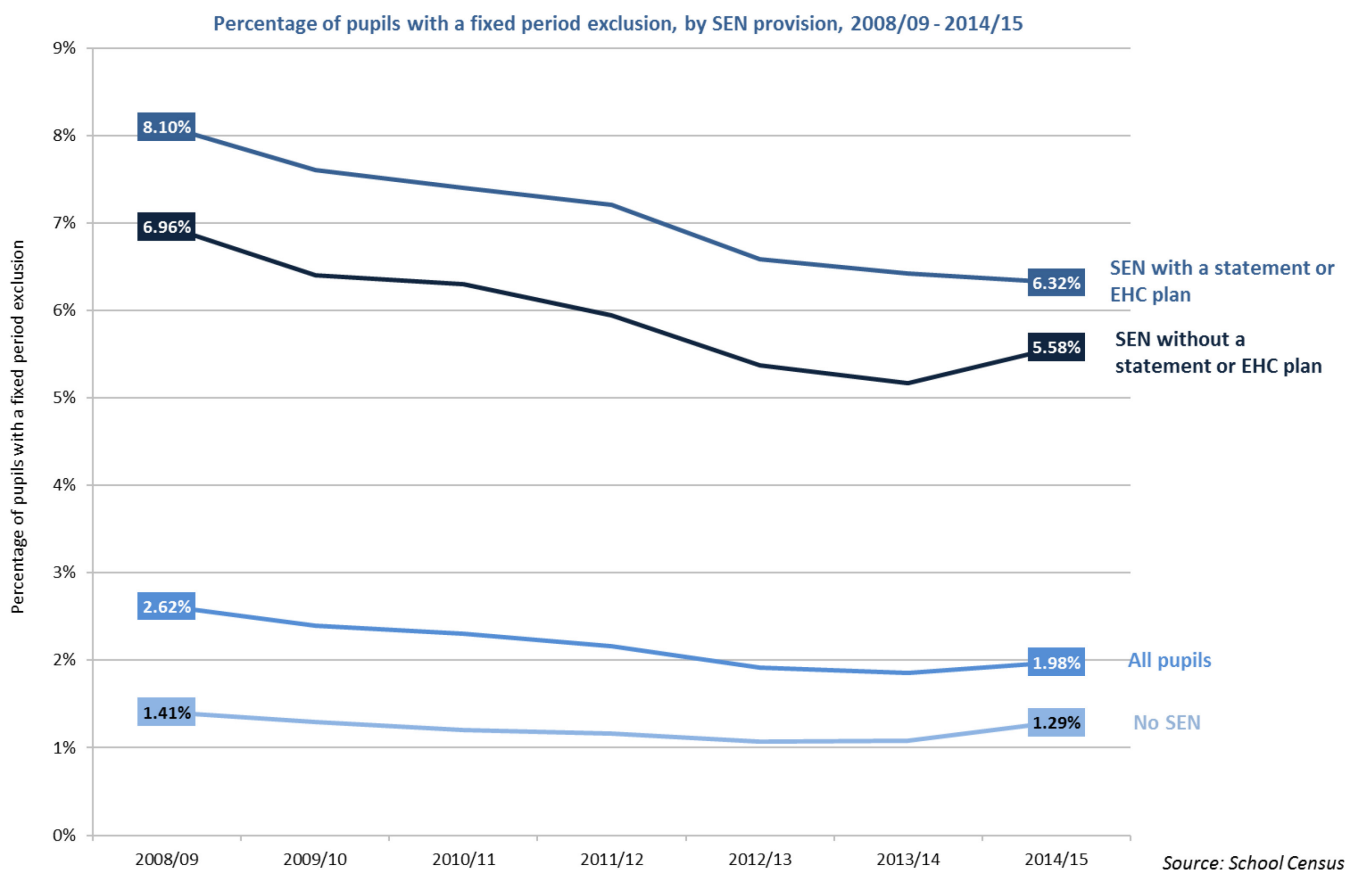


The permanent exclusion rate for pupils on SEN support in 2014/15 was 0.29%, compared to 0.16% for pupils with statements or EHC plans and less than 0.04% of pupils with no SEN.

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

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) accounted for just over half of all permanent exclusions and fixed period exclusions.

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: 2015 to 2016'](#) Next update due March 2018

['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 175,233 statutory EHC plans and 112,057 statements maintained by local authorities at January 2017. This gives a combined total of 287,290. The combined total of statements and EHC plans has increased each year since 2010.

Number of new statements or EHC plans issued by local authorities

There were 36,094 new EHC plans made during 2016. No new statements were made during 2016. The number of new EHC plans made during 2016 is greater than the combined number of new statements and EHC plans in 2015 (27,923).

Progress transferring statements to EHC plans

Between January 2016 and January 2017 there were 59,545 transfers from statements to EHC plans. When accounting for null returns, this is equal to 32.7% of statements in place in January 2016. 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

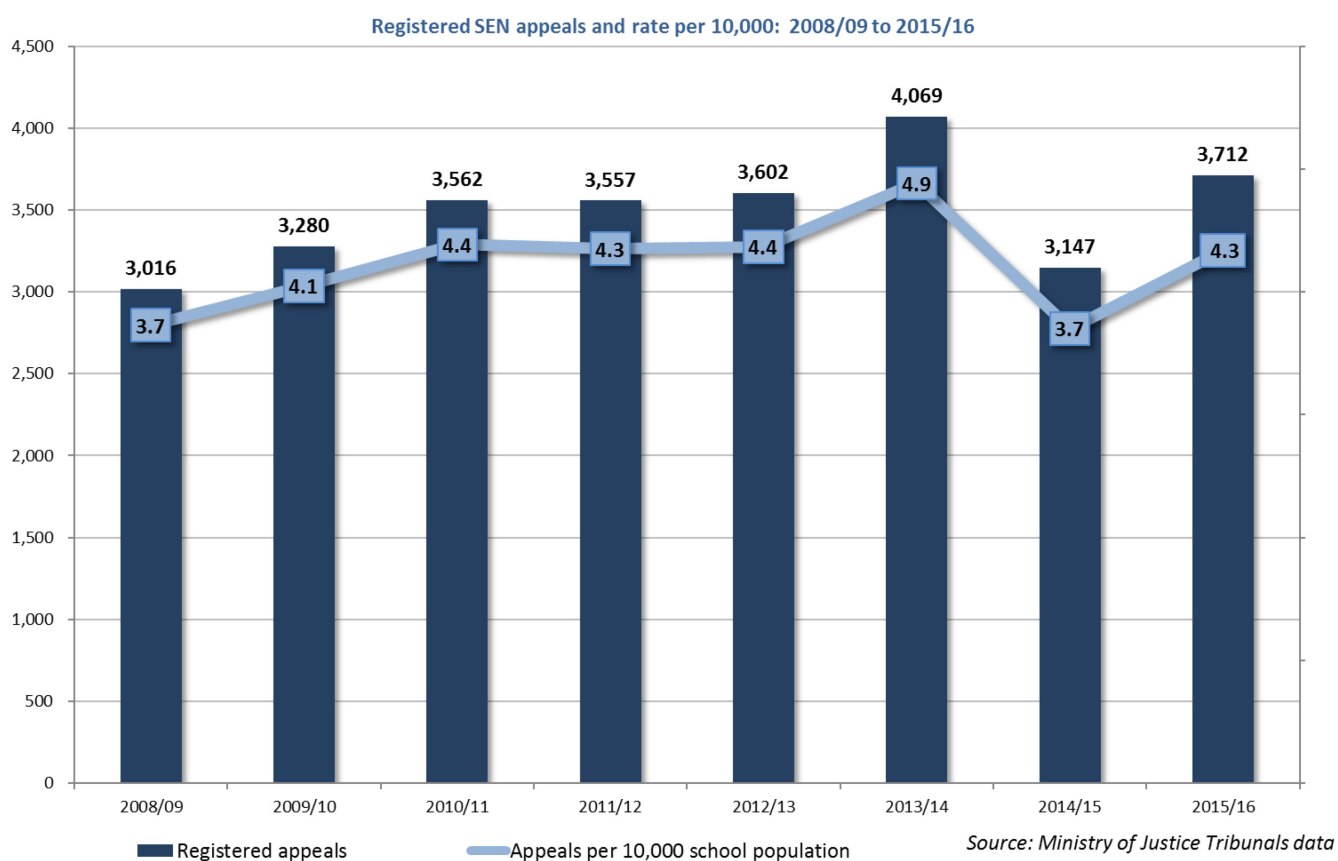
Of the new EHC plans made during 2016 (excluding cases where exceptions apply), 58.6% were issued within the 20 week time limit. This has reduced slightly from last year when 59.2% were issued within the time limits. The percentage of EHC plans completed within the time limits is lower than the percentage 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

Parents/ carers and young people can register an appeal with the SEND tribunal if, for example, there is a refusal to assess or they are unhappy about the contents of the plan. There were 3,712 appeals registered in 2015/16, which is equivalent to around 4.3 appeals per 10,000 of the school population. This is an increase compared to the previous year when there was 3,147 appeals registered equivalent to 3.7 per 10,000 of the school population. *(Although year-on-year comparisons should be treated with caution due to the change in eligibility for registering an appeal following SEND reforms).*

A total of 3,154 outcomes were recorded for SEN appeals, which is broadly in line with previous years. Of these, 28% were decided at tribunal and the remaining 72% of cases were withdrawn or conceded.

In 2015/16, 54% of appeals were against the contents of the statement and 32% were against a refusal to assess.



The number of appeals registered in the latest quarter (October-December 2016) was 874, which is an increase of 15% compared to the same period 12 months earlier (there were 763 recorded between October-December 2015).

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

[‘Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England 2017’](#) Next update due May 2018

[‘Tribunals statistics’](#) Next update due June 2017

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

LG Inform

The DfE has also worked with the Local Government Association (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: [“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).

Ofsted/ CQC inspections

Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspect local areas’ effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Read more about these inspections in the inspection framework and handbook. Outcome letters from these inspections can be found here: [“Ofsted/ CQC outcomes link”](#)

NHS England publications

NHS England publish some information of relevance to special educational needs:

- [Children and young peoples health service statistics](#)
- [Clinical Commissioning Group \(CCG\) improvement and assessment framework](#) (For SEN use the Well-led domain).

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.gov.uk



Department
for Education

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Download: www.gov.uk/government/publications

Reference: DFE-00148-2017



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