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Department for Education

Reporting year 2026

Education, health and care plans

Children and young people in England with an education, health and care plan (EHC), including annual local authority activity on EHC requests and assessments.

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Headline facts and figures

Number of EHC plans as at January 2026

718,838

12.5% higher than at January 2025

► Number of EHC plans



Number of new EHC plans which started during 2025

110,708

13.3% higher than during 2024

► New EHC plans



Number of requests for an EHC needs assessment

162,702

5.3% higher than in 2024

► Requests



Number of EHC needs assessments carried out

118,821

12.8% higher than during 2024

► Assessments



Percentage of new plans issued within 20 weeks

46.1%

slightly lower than in 2024 when 46.4% were issued within 20 weeks

► 20 weeks



Number of plans ceasing during the year

50,346

12.2% higher than during 2024

► Ceased



The total number of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans has continued to increase

The number of children and young people with EHC plans increased to 718,800, as at census day in January 2026, 12.5% higher than at January 2025. This is the highest year on year increase since EHC plans were introduced in 2014. This relates to all children and young people (aged 0 to 25) with an EHC plan, including those where the child or young person attends early years settings, further education or is educated elsewhere.

The number of new EHC plans issued in the calendar year has continued to increase

There were 110,700 new EHC plans issued during the 2025 calendar year, 13.3% higher than the number issued during 2024. The number of new EHC plans has increased each year since their introduction in 2014.

The number of requests for, and number of EHC needs assessments carried out, has continued to increase

There were 162,700 requests for an EHC needs assessment received during 2025, 5.3% higher than the number received during 2024. Local authorities (LAs) decided to proceed to an assessment for 65.2% of these requests, this is a similar proportion to 2024 (65.4%).

There were 118,800 EHC needs assessments carried out during 2025, 12.8% more than in 2024. The decision

was to issue an EHC plan for 93.6% of assessments, the same as during 2024.

The percentage of plans issued with the statutory timeframe of 20 weeks has decreased

During 2025, 46.1% of new EHC plans were issued within the twenty week statutory timeframe. This is slightly lower than during 2024 when this figure was 46.4%. These figures exclude cases where exceptions apply.

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Education, health and care (EHC) plans as at January each year

There were 718,800 children and young people with an EHC plan active at January 2026, an increase of 12.5% from the 638,700 EHC plans which were active as at January 2025.

This year on year increase is the highest since the introduction of EHC plans in 2014.

A full breakdown is available showing [the number of EHC plans, by type of placement as at January each year, 2019 to 2026](#).

Information regarding EHC plans and SEN support in schools in England is available in the annual [Special Educational Needs in England](#) accredited official statistics.

Chart	Table
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► Export options

Total number of EHC plans in England between 2018/19 and 2025/26

	All EHC plans							
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total number of EHC plans	353,995	390,109	430,697	473,255	517,048	576,474	638,745	718,838

[Show full screen table](#)

[Data symbols](#) ?

Footnotes

1. Cambridgeshire and North East Lincolnshire were not able to return placements for significant numbers of plans for 2025. Brighton and Hove, and Wolverhampton, made significant numbers of errors in the data as to placement attended. Placement attended has been suppressed for these local authorities in 2025.
2. Figures for 2024 include the total number of EHC plans for Hackney and Peterborough. Both LAs submitted total figures but were unable to return individual level data. Figures do not therefore sum to the totals.

[Show 2 more footnotes](#)

Source: SEN2

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Characteristics of children and young people with EHC plans

Age

As in previous years, children of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 15) account for the majority of EHC plans, with around 7 in 10 of children and young people with an EHC plan being in this age group.

Just over a quarter (26.0%) of children and young people with an EHC plan were first issued with their plan when they were 4 or 5 years old, meaning their plan started around the start of compulsory school age.

A further 18.2% started their plan at age 10 or 11, around the time most children begin secondary school. Only 3.3% of all existing EHC plans started after the young person was 16 or over, i.e. after compulsory school age.

Chart

Table

► Export options

Number of EHC plans by the age of the child or young person at the start of the plan, England, 2023/24 to 2025/26

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Age when plan started	age 2 and under	4,446	4,829	5,217
	age 3 to 5	26,710	41,672	47,084

age 3	30,749	41,073	47,904
age 4	94,822	108,696	123,430
age 5	45,731	53,520	63,299
age 6	39,441	45,437	53,662
age 7	42,738	48,601	56,004
age 8	39,753	44,963	51,917
age 9	41,787	47,066	54,162
age 10	62,154	67,492	73,876
age 11	47,892	52,288	56,853
age 12	21,607	24,300	26,993
age 13	25,111	27,466	30,070
age 14	26,494	27,489	29,453
age 15	18,910	20,129	21,852
age 16	14,119	14,113	14,277
age 17	5,199	5,267	5,073
age 18	2,965	2,755	2,448
age 19	1,514	1,403	1,179
age 20 and over	1.293	1.226	1.047

unknown	104	32	42
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Footnotes

1. Cambridgeshire and North East Lincolnshire were not able to return placements for significant numbers of plans for 2025. Brighton and Hove, and Wolverhampton, made significant numbers of errors in the data as to placement attended. Placement attended has been suppressed for these local authorities in 2025.
2. Figures for 2024 include the total number of EHC plans for Hackney and Peterborough. Both LAs submitted total figures but were unable to return individual level data. Figures do not therefore sum to the totals.

[Show 2 more footnotes](#)

Source: SEN2

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The majority of children and young people with an EHC plan are male; 69.8% are male, and 30.2% female. The percentage of those with an EHC plan who are female is slightly higher than in 2025.

In 2026, 69.8% of those with an EHC plan are white, including 64.8% recorded as 'English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British'. 8.4% are recorded as 'Asian/Asian British' and 6.1% as 'Black / African / Caribbean / Black British'. These percentages are similar to those in 2025.

A further breakdown is available, showing [the number of EHC plans by the child or young person's age, sex, ethnicity and their age when their plan started.](#)

Placements attended by children and young people with EHC plans

This section includes information on the settings attended by children and young people with EHC plans on the census date in January to receive their education, this may be different to the placement named in the EHC plan.

Changes have been made to the way we count the placement attended, these changes have been applied retrospectively to 2024 therefore some figures may not match to previously published data. For more information on how we determine the primary placement attended please see the [methodology](#).

Most children and young people with an EHC plan attend an early years setting, a school (mainstream or special), alternative provision, or a further education establishment, with 649,500 (90.4%) of children and young people with an EHC plan attending one of these settings.

While the numbers attending each type of provision have increased on a yearly basis since 2019, the proportion of all children and young people with an EHC plan attending a special school has decreased, with 29.4% of those with an EHC plan attending a special school in 2026 compared to 38.6% in 2019. Over the same time period, the proportion attending a mainstream school has increased, with 45.5% attending a mainstream school in 2026, compared to 39.2% in 2019.

The proportion of children and young people with an EHC plan who are educated elsewhere (including elective

home education, and other arrangements made by the LA) gradually increased each year, with 8.7% being educated elsewhere in 2026 compared to 3.3% in 2019.

Chart

Table

► Export options

Percentage of plans by the type of setting attended, 2018/19 to 2025/16

	All EHC plans							
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total percentage mainstream schools	39.2%	39.0%	39.9%	40.5%	41.3%	43.3%	43.8%	45.5%
Total percentage special schools	38.6%	37.2%	35.8%	34.8%	33.2%	32.3%	30.5%	29.4%
Total percentage alternative provision	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Total percentage further education	16.2%	16.5%	16.7%	16.6%	14.8%	14.5%	14.1%	14.0%

**Turner
education
and post 16**

Non maintained early years percentage	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Total percentage educated elsewhere	3.3%	4.0%	4.5%	4.7%	6.1%	7.1%	7.8%	8.7%
Placement not recorded percentage	x	x	x	x	2.3%	1.2%	2.4%	1.0%

[Show full screen table](#)

[Data symbols](#) 

Footnotes

1. Includes service children's education, offshore schools, secure units, British schools overseas and establishments listed as "Miscellaneous" on [Get Information About Schools \(opens in new tab\)](#).
2. Cambridgeshire and North East Lincolnshire were not able to return placements for significant numbers of plans for 2025. Brighton and Hove, and Wolverhampton, made significant numbers of errors in the data as to placement attended. Placement attended has been suppressed for these local authorities in 2025.

[Show 3 more footnotes](#)

Source: SEN2

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Mainstream schools

326,800 children and young people with an EHC plan attended a mainstream school in 2026, 16.9% higher than in 2025. This represents 45.5% of all children and young people with an EHC plan. The proportion of those with an EHC plan who attend a mainstream school has increased each year since 2019.

Of those attending a mainstream school, 8.7% (28,500) were placed at a SEN unit or resourced provision within the mainstream school. This is similar to the percentage in 2025.

There were 8,600 children and young people with an EHC plan attending a mainstream independent school, this represents 2.6% of those attending a mainstream school, a similar percentage to 2025.

Special schools

The number of children with EHC plans attending special schools increased to 211,400 between 2025 and 2026, a rise of 8.5%. This increase is lower than the year on year increase in numbers seen in both mainstream schools (16.9%) and alternative provision (13.0%).

Although the overall number of children attending a special school increased, the proportion of all children and young people with an EHC plan attending a special school has continued to decrease. In 2019, 38.6% of

children and young people with an EHC plan attended a special school, this proportion has decreased in each subsequent year and in 2026 was 29.4%.

The majority of children and young people with an EHC plan who attend a special school, attend a state funded special school (81.0%). Independent special schools now account for 16.8% of all those with an EHC plan who attend special schools compared to 15.3% in 2025 and 10.1% in 2019.

Further education

There were 100,800 children and young people with EHC plans attending further education establishments at January 2026, an increase of 12.3% from 2025. Of these:

- 79,500 attended sixth form and FE colleges (10.0% higher than in 2025).
- 11,500 attended specialist post 16 establishments, a 13.9% increase from 2025.
- 9,900 attended establishments listed on the UK Register of Learning Providers, 31.8% higher than in 2025.

Alternative provision

In 2026, 5,500 children and young people attend alternative provision, an increase of 13.0% from 2025. The percentage of all children and young people with an EHC plan attending alternative provision was 0.8%, which has been broadly stable since 2019.

Early years establishments

There were 4,900 children with EHC plans attending an early years provider other than a school, an increase of 9.1% from 2025. This relates to 0.1% of children and young people with an EHC plan, these include private nurseries, independent early years providers and childminders.

Children and young people attending placements other than school, early years or further education

In 2026, there were 62,400 children and young people attending placements other than school, early years or further education, an increase of 25.3% from 2025. This equates to 8.7% of children and young people with an

EHC plan; this percentage has increased each year since 2019 (3.3%).

Key trends in this category include:

- 9,100 children and young people who are electively home educated, 27.1% higher than in 2025.
- 16,000 children and young people where alternative arrangements are made by the local authority (educated other than at school, EOTAS), 38.8% higher than in 2025.
- 22,000 young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), 22.0% higher than in 2025. This represents 3.1% of those with an EHC plan, slightly higher than in 2025 (2.8%) and in 2019 (1.7%).

A further breakdown is available showing the number of children and young people with an EHC plan who are [attending placements other than school, early years or further education for years since 2018/19](#).

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Primary type of need of EHC plans as at January each year

Primary type of need is collected for **all** children and young people where an EHC plan has been issued. Figures here will therefore be different to those presented in [Special Educational Needs in England](#) which includes only pupils with an EHC plan who attend schools in England.

Information on type of special educational need indicates the nature of the person's primary or secondary special educational need. It does not indicate prevalence of a medical condition or diagnosis within the population. For example, it is possible that an individual may have autistic spectrum

disorder or Down Syndrome but their special educational needs are recorded as Speech, Language and Communication Needs and Moderate Learning Difficulty.

The most common primary type of need among children and young people with an EHC plan is autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) at 31.5% of all EHC plans. The next most common type of need is speech, language and communication needs (22.3%), followed by social, emotional and mental health needs (21.4%).

These three primary types of need account for almost three quarters of all EHC plans, with similar percentages to those of 2025.

Chart

Table

► Export options

Number of education, health (EHC) plans, by their primary need, England, 2024/25 and 2025/26

		2025/26	2024/25
All EHC plans	Total number of EHC plans	718,838	638,745
	Autistic spectrum disorder	226,723	201,183
	Down Syndrome	1,222	x
	Hearing impairment	8,918	8,765
	Moderate learning difficulty	70,259	67,861
	Multisensory impairment	1,685	1,692
	Physical disability	25,501	24,897
	Profound & multiple learning difficulty	8,695	8,577
	Severe learning difficulty	24,538	25,025
	Social, emotional and mental health	153,880	132,218
	Specific learning difficulty	16,949	15,030
	Speech, language and communication needs	160,344	135,835
	Visual impairment	5,448	5,280
	Other difficulty/disability	6,844	7,512
	Primary need is not recorded	7,832	4,870

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[Data symbols](#) 

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Footnotes

1. Due to issues with data quality in the first year of collection, EHC plans where the primary need is Down Syndrome were included under "other difficulty/disability" for the year 2024/25. For further information please see the methodology document attached to this release.
2. Surrey submitted amended figures in 2025 for the primary type of need. The published figures include the amended totals they supplied. Information on the characteristics by primary type of need is not available for this authority..

[Show 3 more footnotes](#)

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

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Explore data

Placements and primary type of need

Mainstream schools are the most common type of placement, with 45.5% of all those with an EHC plan attending a mainstream school, and 29.4% attending a special school. This follows for most primary types of need but there are some variations.

- Those with a primary type of need of social, emotional and mental health account for 21.4% of all EHC plans, and form the largest proportion of those with an EHC plan who attend alternative provision, at 63.0%.
- Those with a primary type of need of speech, language and communication account for 21.3% of all EHC plans, and form the largest proportion of those who attend early years settings, at 48.5%.
- Those with a primary type of need of ASD account for 31.5% of all EHC plans and are slightly more likely to attend a special school, accounting for 37.2% of EHC plan needs in special schools.

A further breakdown gives full details of [the number of EHC plans, by primary type of need and type of placement for the year 2025/26](#).

Characteristics and primary need

Age

The prevalence of some types of primary need increases with age, while for others the prevalence is higher in lower age groups. The primary type of need may change over time, other primary types of need may not present and/or require the support of an EHC plan until the child or young person is older.

At aged 5 the most common primary needs are:

- Speech, language and communication needs, 16,000 EHC plans (48.5%).
- Autistic spectrum disorder, 10,500 EHC plans (31.7%).

At aged 15 the most common primary needs are:

- Autistic spectrum disorder, 16,200 EHC plans (30.9%).
- Social, emotional and mental health needs, 16,100 EHC plans (30.8%).

For other primary types of need the proportion of plans stays relatively constant across ages.

This is similar to the school pupil data published in [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

Sex

There are also differences in primary type of need when looking between males and females with an EHC plan. Males and females have the same most common primary needs, however in different proportions. For example, autistic spectrum disorder is the primary need for 33.7% of males compared to 26.5% of females.

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New EHC plans issued in the calendar year

There were 110,700 new EHC plans issued during the 2025 calendar year, an increase of 13.3% compared to 2024. This rate of increase is slowing: between 2022 and 2023 requests increased by 26.6% and between 2023 and 2024 they increased by 15.8%.

Of all EHC plans active in January 2026, 15.4% were first issued during the 2025 calendar year, a similar proportion to that seen in January 2025.

Chart

Table

► Export options

The number of new EHC plans, which started during each calendar year, 2019 to 2025

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All new EHC plans	53,899	60,097	62,180	66,706	84,428	97,747	110,708

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[Data symbols](#) 

Footnotes

1. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

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Explore data

Characteristics of children and young people issued with new EHC plans

Almost two thirds of new plans (61.8%) were issued for those of primary school age (aged 4 to 10), with just under a third of new plans (29.7%) being issued for secondary school age children (aged 11 to 16). Only 4.6% of new EHC plans were issued for young people aged 16 and over. These proportions are similar to those of 2024.

Of new EHC plans issued during 2025, almost two thirds are issued to males (65.4%), with slightly more than one third issued to females (34.6%). The proportion issued to females is slightly higher than in 2024.

Of children and young people with a new EHC plan:

- 69.5% are white, with 64.8% recorded as 'English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British'.
- 7.6% were 'Asian/Asian British'.
- 6.0% were 'Black/African/Caribbean/Black British'.

A further breakdown is available showing [the number of new EHC plans issued during the calendar years 2023 to 2025 by characteristic](#).

Placements of children and young people with new EHC plans

The majority of children and young people who were issued with an EHC plan for the first time in 2025 attend a mainstream school:

- 85,400 children and young people with a new EHC plan starting in 2025 attended a mainstream school. This represents 77.1% of all new EHC plans issued. This has increased gradually each year, from 68.2% in 2019, and from 75.4% in 2024.
- 8,700 attended a special school, representing 7.8% of all new EHC plans issued. This has decreased gradually each year, from 18.7% in 2019, and from 9.3% in 2024.

A further table is available showing the [number of new EHC plans by the type of placement for the calendar years 2019 to 2025](#).

Primary type of need for children and young people issued with new EHC plans

Of all new plans issued during 2025, most were for a primary type of need of:

- Social, emotional and mental health needs, 31,700 EHC plans (28.6%)
- Speech, language and communication needs, 31,300 EHC plans (28.3%)
- Autistic spectrum disorder, 28,600 EHC plans (25.8%)

These three primary type of needs account for just over 8 in 10 of all new EHC plans issued, similar to 2024. However, at 28.6%, a slightly higher percentage of new plans were issued with social, emotional and mental health needs compared to 2024 when the figure was 26.3%. There was a corresponding decrease in the percentage of plans issued due to autistic spectrum disorder (27.5% in 2024).

A further breakdown is available showing [the number of new EHC plans issued during the 2025 calendar year, for each primary type of need, by the placement attended](#).

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Requests for an EHC needs assessment received in the calendar year

During the 2025 calendar year there were 162,700 requests for an EHC needs assessment, 8,200 more than in 2024, an increase of 5.3%. While this continues the trend of rising numbers of requests, the rate of increase is lower than in any year since 2021.

It was decided not to proceed with an assessment for 43,300 requests (26.6%), this is slightly higher than in 2024 (25.2%). The LA agreed to secure an EHC needs assessment for 65.2% of requests, slightly lower than in 2024. A small number of requests were withdrawn before a decision whether to assess was made (1.0%) while

the remainder were ongoing at the end of the calendar year.

Chart

Table

► Export options

The total number of requests for an EHC needs assessment received during the calendar year by local authorities in England between 2019 and 2025

		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All requests for an EHC needs assessment	Total requests for an EHC needs assessment	82,329	75,951	93,302	114,482	138,242	154,489	162,702
	Number of requests where LA decided to proceed with an assessment	x	x	x	x	92,985	101,045	106,062
	Number of requests where LA decided not to proceed with an assessment	18,755	16,406	20,830	25,255	33,141	38,889	43,289

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[Data symbols](#) 

Footnotes

1. Leicester were unable to provide request or assessment dates in the 2026 data collection. This will affect

calculation of assessments, requests and the numbers of plans issued within 20 weeks during the 2025 calendar year. Where "no data" is shown no dates were returned.

2. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

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Explore data

Characteristics of children and young people with request for EHC needs assessment

Age

The most common time to request an EHC needs assessment is prior to starting compulsory schooling or prior to the transfer to secondary school. This is consistent with the number of new plans issued.

The proportion of requests for an EHC needs assessment where the LA proceeds with an assessment broadly decreases with age:

- For children aged 3, 75.4% of requests result in an EHC needs assessment
- For children aged 10, this falls to 60.9%
- For children aged 15, it falls further to 56.6%
- For young people aged 19 it falls to 37.7%.

► Export options

Number of requests for an education, health and care (EHC) needs assessment, by age at time of request, and the outcome of the request, received by local authorities during the calendar year 2025

		2025				
		Total requests for an EHC needs assessment	Number of requests where LA decided to proceed with an assessment	Number of requests where LA decided not to proceed with an assessment	Number of requests withdrawn	Number of requests ongoing
Child or young persons age	Aged 2 and under	2,930	1,992	755	28	155
	Aged 3	18,604	14,023	2,899	144	1,538
	Aged 4	16,835	12,600	2,909	156	1,170
	Aged 5	11,432	8,693	1,904	84	751
	Aged 6	10,973	7,778	2,264	88	843
	Aged 7	10,404	7,216	2,122	64	758

Aged 7	10,491	7,210	2,423	94	730
Aged 8	11,371	7,551	2,828	111	881
Aged 9	13,224	8,454	3,670	138	962
Aged 10	15,582	9,496	4,808	157	1,121
Aged 11	9,342	5,142	3,465	103	632
Aged 12	8,835	4,850	3,290	83	612
Aged 13	10,020	5,844	3,413	96	667
Aged 14	8,967	5,278	2,992	84	613
Aged 15	7,287	4,121	2,554	81	531
Aged 16	3,502	1,748	1,422	60	272
Aged 17	1,709	697	842	32	138
Aged 18	734	279	383	17	55
Aged 19	382	144	197	5	36
Aged 20 and over	477	156	270	11	40
Age unknown	5	0	1	1	3

[Show full screen table](#)

Footnotes

1. Age is calculated as on the date the request for the EHC needs assessment was received.
2. Leicester were unable to provide request or assessment dates in the 2026 data collection. This will affect calculation of assessments, requests and the numbers of plans issued within 20 weeks during the 2025 calendar year. Where "no data" is shown no dates were returned.

[Show 1 more footnote](#)

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

Explore data

Sex

More requests are made for males: 63.2% of requests for an EHC needs assessment are for males compared to 36.8% for females.

A slightly lower proportion of requests for an EHC needs assessment are approved for females: 62.1% of requests for an EHC needs assessment proceed to assessment for females, compared to 67.0% of requests for males.

Ethnicity

In 2025, 69.1% of requests for an EHC needs assessment were for white children and young people, including 64.8% recorded as 'English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British'. 6.6% were recorded as 'Asian/Asian British' and 5.3% as 'Black / African / Caribbean / Black British'.

A further breakdown is available showing [the number of requests for an EHC needs assessment received, by the outcome of that request, for each age, sex and ethnicity for the calendar year 2025](#).

Timeliness of request decisions

The time between a local authority receiving the request for an EHC needs assessment, and them informing the parent or young person of outcome of that request must be no more than 6 weeks. This is a timeframe [set out in legislation \(opens in new tab\)](#).

In the figures presented, the calculation is based on requests where a decision has been made and that decision was communicated in the calendar year. For the purposes of this data collection, the 6-week period does not include the day of receipt of the request and ends with the date on which the local authority sends the parent or young person the decision following the request.

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Mediations and tribunals related to requests for an EHC needs assessment

It is possible to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Tribunal if there is a disagreement with the decision made by the local authority about a child or young person's EHC plan, including if there is disagreement with the content of the plan or refusal to carry out an assessment.

Mediation must usually be considered in cases of disagreement. Mediation is a meeting between the parent or young person, and the LA to help resolve disputes regarding decisions which could be appealed to the tribunal. It is convened at the request of the parent or young person and is chaired by an independent mediator.

More information about the Tribunal can be found at: [First-tier Tribunal \(Special Educational Needs and Disability\) \(opens in new tab\)](#) and statistics covering all First-tier Tribunals (Special Educational Needs and Disability) are published by the Ministry of Justice and can be found at: [Tribunals statistics - GOV.UK \(opens in new tab\)](#).

The 162,700 requests for EHC needs assessment which were received by local authorities during 2025, resulted in:

- 11,200 mediations related to the decision not to conduct an EHC needs assessment, 6.9% of all requests, a similar proportion to 2024 (6.8%).
- 5,100 tribunals related to the decision not to conduct an EHC needs assessment, 3.1% of all requests. Again this is similar to 2024 (3.0%).
- Of the 11,200 mediations, 1,600 were subject to a tribunal following this mediation, 1.0% of all requests.

Mediations were more likely for requests for children at upper primary school age, and in the early years of secondary school. Of all requests for children aged between 10 and 12 at the time of the request, 9.3% were referred for mediation, with 4.2% subject to tribunal. This compares to 4.1% of requests referred to mediation for children aged under 5.

Last year the Department for Education published the number of tribunals and appeal rate by local authority, which was previously published by the Ministry of Justice: [Tribunals statistics quarterly: January to March 2024 - GOV.UK \(opens in new tab\)](#) . [\(opens in new tab\)](#) This coincided with the first time information was collected on annual reviews and allowed for a new methodology to calculate the rate of appealable decisions. This new methodology was first published as official statistics in development and, following a second year of annual review data collection, we have determined that

this methodology is appropriate to maintain within this statistical publication, no longer in development. Further information can be found in the [methodology](#). The department continues to welcome feedback regarding this publication using the contact details below.

Information on tribunals and appeal rates by local authority, which relates to all appealable decisions (e.g. annual reviews, assessments, plans ceasing) is available as a supporting file within this publication.

Source of request for an EHC needs assessment

The source of the request for an EHC needs assessment was collected for the first time for the 2025 calendar year. It was returned for 90.5% of all requests.

The most common source of the EHC needs request was school or another educational setting, at 55.8% of all requests, followed by the parent or young person themselves at 29.3% of all requests.

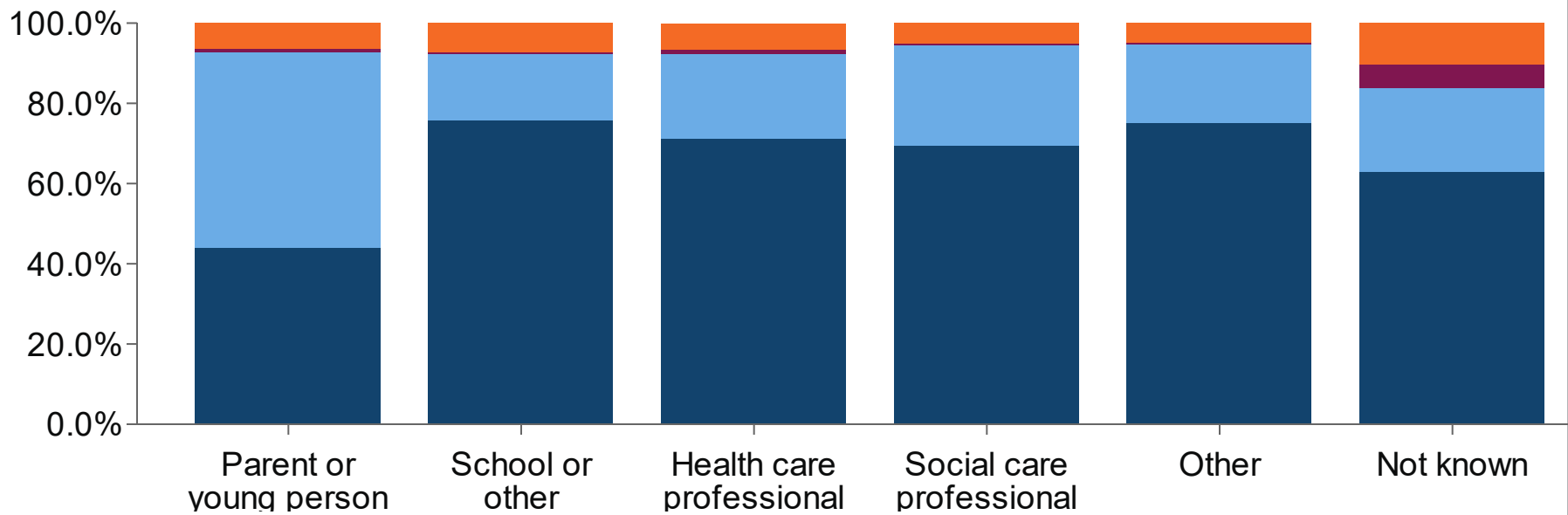
Local authorities were more likely to proceed to an EHC needs assessment where the request was made by the school or another educational setting, with 75.8% of requests from schools or other educational settings being approved for assessment. This compares to 44.0% of requests from the parent or young person themselves being approved for assessment.

Chart

Table

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Requests for an EHC needs assessment are more likely to be approved when they come from a school or other educational setting



- % of requests ongoing
- % of requests withdrawn
- % of requests where LA decided not to proceed with an assessment
- % of requests where LA decided to proceed with an assessment

Footnotes

1. Leicester were unable to provide request or assessment dates in the 2026 data collection. This will affect calculation of assessments, requests and the numbers of plans issued within 20 weeks during the 2025 calendar year. Where "no data" is shown no dates were returned.
2. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

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EHC needs assessments carried out during the calendar year

During 2025, there were 118,800 EHC needs assessments carried out, an increase of 13,500 (12.8%) from 2024.

Of these, it was decided to issue an EHC plan for 111,200 (93.6%) of EHC needs assessments. For 7,200 EHC needs assessments, it was decided not to issue an EHC plan (6.0%). For a small number of assessments (0.3%) the request was withdrawn before a decision on whether to issue an EHC plan was made. For the remaining 0.1% of assessments, the decision on whether to issue an EHC plan was outstanding at the end of the year.

Chart

Table

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Number of EHC needs assessments, by outcome, England, 2019

to 2025

	All EHC needs assessments						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total number of EHC needs assessments	x	x	x	73,040	91,023	105,340	118,821
Number of assessments where a plan was issued	53,899	60,097	62,180	68,665	85,924	98,547	111,243
Number of assessments where a plan was not issued	3,368	3,122	3,903	4,199	4,614	6,404	7,161
Number of assessments where the decision is outstanding	x	x	x	x	123	62	71
Number of assessments where the request was withdrawn	x	x	x	306	362	327	346

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Footnotes

1. Leicester were unable to provide request or assessment dates in the 2026 data collection. This will affect calculation of assessments, requests and the numbers of plans issued within 20 weeks during the 2025 calendar year. Where "no data" is shown no dates were returned.

2. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

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Characteristics of children and young people for whom an EHC needs assessment is carried out

Age

The age of children and young people assessed for an EHC plan closely follows that of requested EHC need assessments with:

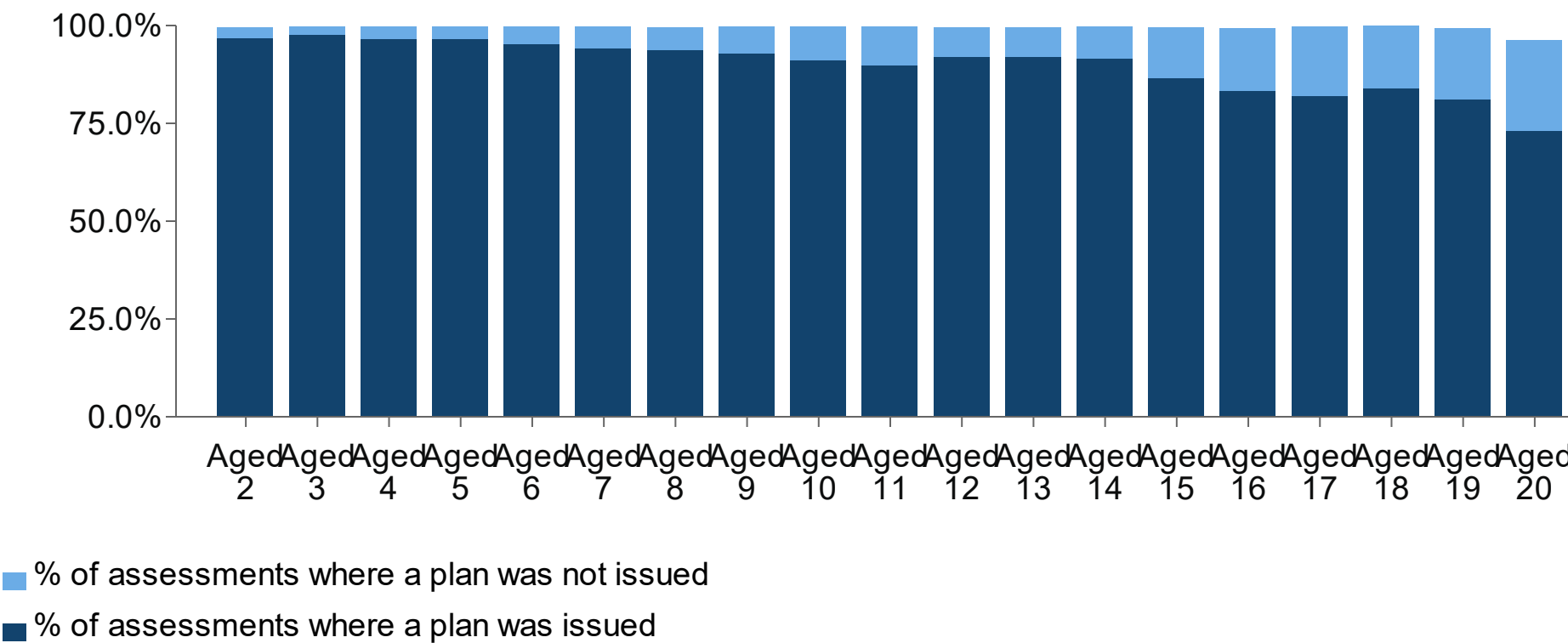
- 72.7% of EHC needs assessments being made for children aged under 11.
- 24.5% of EHC needs assessments being made for children aged 11 to 15.
- 2.8% of EHC needs assessments being made for young people aged 16 and over.

The percentage of EHC needs assessments where it was decided to issue a plan decreased with age: for children aged 5 at the time of request a plan was issued for 96.6% of all EHC needs assessments carried out during 2024. For children aged 10 this figure drops to 91.2%, and for children aged 15 it drops further to 86.5%.

A full breakdown is available showing the number of [assessments carried out during 2025 by their outcomes and age at request, sex and ethnicity of the child or young person for whom the assessment was carried out.](#)

► Export options

The percentage of EHC needs assessments where it was decided that a plan would not be issued increases with age



Footnotes

- 1. Age is calculated as on the date the request for the EHC needs assessment was received.
- 2. Leicester were unable to provide request or assessment dates in the 2026 data collection. This will affect calculation of assessments, requests and the numbers of plans issued within 20 weeks during the 2025 calendar year. Where "no data" is shown no dates were returned.

[Show 1 more footnote](#)

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

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Timeliness of assessment notifications

Following an EHC needs assessment the local authority, if the local authority decides not to issue an EHC plan, must inform the parent or young person of this decision within 16 weeks of the date the request for an EHC needs assessment was received. This is a timeframe [set out in legislation \(opens in new tab\)](#).

In the figures presented, the calculation is based on requests where an EHC needs assessment was carried out, where a request received date, and date of outcome assessment was provided and where the decision not to issue a plan was made during the calendar year. For the purposes of this data collection, the 16-week period does not include the day of receipt of the request and ends with the date on which the local authority sends the parent or young person the decision following the EHC needs assessment.

During 2025, 37.4% of decisions where an EHC plan was not to be issued were notified within 16 weeks, which is a higher proportion than in 2024 (34.1%).

Mediations and tribunals related to EHC needs assessments

The parent or young person has the right to bring an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), otherwise known as SEND Tribunal, if following an EHC needs assessment the local authority refuses to issue an EHC plan. The parent or young people also have the right to bring an appeal if they disagree with the content of the plan, this includes section B (SEN), section F (special educational provision) or section I (placement).

The parent or young person also has the right to mediation, a more informal method where an independent mediator will help the parent or young person, and the local authority reach agreement. Following mediation, the parent or young person continues to have the right to bring an appeal to the SEND Tribunal.

In relation to the decision not to issue an EHC plan, during 2025 there were:

- 2,400 mediations related to the decision not to issue an EHC plan, meaning slightly over a third (34.1%) of decisions not to issue a plan resulted in mediation.
- 1,700 tribunals related to the decision not to issue an EHC plan, meaning almost a quarter (23.9%) of decisions not to issue a plan resulted in tribunal.
- Of the 2,400 mediations, 520 (21.4%) were then subject to a tribunal.

In relation to content of the plan (following a decision to issue a plan), during 2025 there were:

- 2,100 mediations related to the plan content; this may be the special educational need detailed in the plan or the establishment named which can be attended by the child or young person. This represents 1.9% of all assessments where an EHC plan was issued.
- 3,700 tribunals related to the plan content, 3.1% of all assessments where an EHC plan was issued.
- Of the 2,100 mediations, 600 (28.6%) were then subject to a tribunal.

► Export options

Number of mediations and tribunals relating to EHC needs assessments, England, 2023 to 2025

	All EHC needs assessments		
	2023	2024	2025
Total number of EHC needs assessments	91,023	105,340	118,821
Number of assessments where a plan was issued	85,924	98,547	111,243
Number of assessments where a plan was not issued	4,614	6,404	7,161
Number of assessments where the decision is outstanding	123	62	71
Number of assessments where the request was withdrawn	362	327	346
Number of mediations related to assessment decision	1,549	2,124	2,444
Number of mediations related to assessment for other reasons	1,275	1,862	2,094
Number of tribunals following mediation related to assessment decision	333	475	522
Number of tribunals following mediations related to assessment for other reasons	343	701	599
Number of tribunals related to assessment decision	1,048	1,445	1,712
Number of tribunals related to assessment for other reasons	1,887	3,088	3,722

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Footnotes

1. Leicester were unable to provide request or assessment dates in the 2026 data collection. This will affect calculation of assessments, requests and the numbers of plans issued within 20 weeks during the 2025 calendar year. Where "no data" is shown no dates were returned.
2. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

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Use our table tool to explore this data.

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Timeliness - EHC plans issued within the statutory 20 week timeframe in the calendar year

The whole process of EHC needs assessment and EHC plan development, from the point when an EHC needs assessment is requested (or a child or young person is brought to the local authority's attention) until any final EHC plan is issued, must take no more than 20 weeks. [The relevant legislation \(opens in new tab\)](#) provides for exceptions to the time limits in certain situations.

In the figures presented, the calculation is based on assessments where the decision to issue a plan was reported as 'Yes', the date of that outcome was within the calendar year, and the request for assessment or the decision to assess was not subject to mediation or a tribunal.

For the purposes of this data collection, the 20-week period (or 140 calendar days) does not include the day of receipt of the request and ends with the date on which the local authority sends the parent or young person the final EHC plan. All figures shown in this section exclude cases where exceptions to the 20 week time limit apply.

EHC plans issued within 20 weeks

Of those plans where a decision to issue a new plan was made within the 2025 calendar year, 46.1% were issued within the 20-week timeframe, a slight decrease from 46.4% in 2024. These figures exclude cases where exceptions apply.

Of the plans issued after the statutory 20 week timeframe, most were issued between 20 and 52 weeks after the request for an EHC needs assessment was made, with 43.5% of new EHC plans issued within this timeframe. This is lower than in 2024 when 46.2% were issued between 20 and 52 weeks.

There were a further 10.3% of plans issued more than a year after the request was received. The percentage issued a year after the request has increased in each of the last 2 years, from 5.2% in 2023 and 7.3% in 2024.

A further breakdown is available showing [the number and percentage of EHC plans issued within, and over, the statutory 20 week timeframe, by age, sex and ethnicity](#).

The mean average time to issue a plan, excluding exceptions, was 24.0 weeks in 2025.

► Export options

Percentage of EHC plans issued with the statutory 20 week timeframe, both including and excluding exceptions, England, 2019 to 2024

		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All EHC plans	EHC plans issued within 20 weeks exc. exceptions - %	60.4%	58.0%	59.9%	49.2%	50.3%	46.4%	46.1%
	EHC plans issued within 20 weeks inc. exceptions - %	58.7%	55.6%	57.9%	47.7%	49.1%	45.9%	45.5%

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[Data symbols](#) ?

Footnotes

1. For the 2024 calendar year, Dorset and City of London have classed all newly issued EHC plans as having permitted exceptions to the 20 week statutory timeframe. For 2025, Norfolk classed all newly issued EHC plans as having permitted exceptions to the 20 week statutory timeframe while Halton identified issues after publication. These LAs data has been suppressed.
2. For 2024, Lewisham have informed us that data is incorrect, therefore timeliness figures for Lewisham are suppressed.

[Show 2 more footnotes](#)

Source: SEN2

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The percentage of new plans issued within the statutory 20 week timeframe varies by the type of primary need, with 37.5% of EHC plans with a primary need of multi-sensory impairment were issued with 20 weeks, compared to 51.8% of plans where the primary need was severe learning difficulty.

A further breakdown is available showing [the percentage of EHC plans issued within, and over 20 week timeframe in 2025, by primary type of need](#).

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Annual reviews of EHC plans

Annual reviews

To ensure that EHC plans continue to meet the needs of the child or young person, they must be reviewed as a minimum every 12 months. This annual review is the statutory process of looking at the needs, provision and outcomes specified in the EHC plan, and deciding whether the content of the plan needs to change. One element of a review is a formal review meeting. The first review of the EHC plan must be completed within 12 months of the EHC plan being finalised, with subsequent reviews being completed within 12 months of the completion of the previous review. The decision regarding the outcome of the review meeting must be communicated to the parent or young person within 4 weeks of the review meeting. Where the decision is to amend the plan, an amended draft plan must be issued to the same timeframe. This timeframe is [set out in legislation \(opens in new tab\)](#).

Information on annual reviews was collected as a compulsory data item for the first time in 2025, and published for the first time in June 2025. Following user feedback we have developed and improved the indicators presented here. For full information on how we calculate these, please see the [methodology](#) document.

Of the 718,800 EHC plans active as at January 2026, 83.0% (597,000) were expected to have had an annual review completed during 2025. It is possible for the review meeting that is part of this to have occurred during 2024, with the outcome due in 2025.

Of the 597,000 plans where the conclusion of a review was expected during 2025, 56.8% (339,000) had a review completed during the year.

Of the 339,000 reviews expected and completed during 2025, the decision was communicated within 4 weeks for 47.6% of reviews (161,400):

- the decision for 59.0% (200,000) was to amend the plan
- the decision for 35.5% (120,500) was to maintain the plan
- the decision for 1.0% (3,300) was to cease the plan
- the remaining 4.5% (15,300) did not have a decision recorded.

► Export options

Number of annual reviews of EHC plans expected and completed during the 2025 calendar year, England

		2025
All reviews of EHC plans	Total number of EHC plans	718,838
	Annual review was expected in 2025	596,987
	Annual review was not expected in 2025	121,851
	Numbers of reviews completed during 2025	339,027
	Numbers of reviews completed prior to 2025	100,079
	Numbers of reviews not recorded as completed	157,881
	Review completed where decision was to maintain the plan	120,460
	Review completed where decision was to amend the plan	199,980
	Review completed where decision was to cease the plan	3,300
	Review completed where no outcome recorded	15,287
	Annual review decision communicated within 4 weeks	161,396
	Annual review decision communicated over 4 weeks	177,631

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Footnotes

1. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

Explore data

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Phase transfers - Official Statistics in Development

Official Statistics in Development

Information on phase transfers was collected for the first time, on a voluntary basis in 2025 with information returned by 29 of 153 local authorities. In 2026, the return of phase transfer information was mandatory, and 138 local authorities provided data to the department.

These statistics are undergoing development. They have been developed under the guidance of the Head of Profession for Statistics and published to involve users and stakeholders at an early stage in assessing their suitability and quality. As a new data item, we expect the quality of data to improve over time as the collection becomes established.

Find out more about the standards we follow to produce these statistics through our [DfE official statistics: standards and policies guidance \(opens in new tab\)](#).

The department continues to welcome feedback regarding this publication using the contact details below.

When a child or young person with an EHC plan is due to move to a new phase of education, for example from primary to secondary school, the local authority must review and amend the EHC plan before that new phase. This is known as a phase transfer. It must start within 12 months of the planned transfer date.

During 2025, there were 12,200 EHC plans recorded with a phase transfer due in the 2025 calendar year. There were a further 142,300 EHC plans recorded as being due in the 2026 calendar year. It should be noted that this information was collected in January 2026, therefore reflects data returned by LAs looking retrospectively at 2025 and prospectively at 2026 and beyond.

There were 38,900 EHC plans issued following a phase transfer review during the 2025 calendar year, with a further 600 recorded as being issued in the first 2 weeks of 2026, prior to the census date of 15th January 2026.

Residential and work based placements

This section covers those placements attended which are identified as being either residential or work based. The placements here form a subset of the placement types included in previous sections.

Residential placements

Some children will require education provision which includes board and lodging at the school or college they attend. These are termed residential placements. They may be termly boarding (38 to 51 weeks per year) with time at home during school holidays or they may remain in the provision for the full year.

There were 2,000 children and young people with an EHC plan in a residential setting as at January 2026, a decrease of 10.8% from 2025. The majority (61.8%) resided in the setting for 38 to 51 weeks of the year, which is similar to 2025.

Residential settings were mostly used for older children and young people: 71.4% of those placed in a residential settings were aged 14 or over.

The majority of children and young people with an EHC plan placed in a residential setting are placed in special schools or specialist post 16 provision, with 87.9% attending these settings.

Work based placements

These may be:

- Apprenticeships - a form of further education which offers on the job training for the individual to gain a nationally recognised qualification whilst studying part-time with an apprenticeship training provider.
- Supported internship - these are [work based learning placements for young people aged 16-24 with an EHC plan. \(opens in new tab\)](#)
- Traineeships - a skills development programme including work experience, development in maths and English skills. It may be undertaken prior to an apprenticeship.

At January 2026, there were 4,600 young people with an EHC plan with an active work based placement, 5.0% more than in 2025. Most work based placements are supported internships (62.3%), a similar percentage to 2025.

The majority of work based placements are in an FE setting, with 78.5% recorded in a college, specialist post-16 provider or UKRLP, and a further 16.2% educated elsewhere (including other arrangements made by the LA).

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Personal Budgets

An optional personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority to deliver provision set out in an EHC plan where the parent or young person is involved in securing that provision. One type of personal budget is direct payments. See the [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 \(opens in new tab\)](#) for further information on personal budgets.

Data on personal budgets was provided by 144 out of 153 local authorities in 2025, slightly lower than the number who provided data last year (145). Figures have not been scaled to account for missing data.

■

At January 2026, there were 19,200 EHC plans with a personal budget attached, 1.9% lower than in January 2025. Of all EHC plans, 2.7% had a personal budget in place in 2026, lower than in 2025.

Most personal budgets (60.1%) are to cover social care payments only; 20.9% of EHC plans with a personal budget in place had direct payments for education, while 1.0% had direct payments for health.

Further information on personal budgets, including information by characteristics, is available in the table builder.

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EHC plans which ceased during the calendar year

During 2025, 50,300 EHC plans ceased, 12.2% more than during 2024.

Plans which ceased during 2025 account for 7.9% of all EHC plans active as at January 2025, a similar percentage to the percentage of plans ceasing during 2024.

The most common reason reported for an EHC plan to cease was that the young person no longer wishes to engage in education or training, this accounted for 17,900 (35.5%) ceased plans. The next most common reason was a transfer to another local authority, which accounted for just over a third of ceased EHC plans (33.8%). These have consistently been the top reasons for an EHC plan ceasing.

The proportion of plans that have ceased due to transferring to another LA, moving to higher education, and due to moving outside of England has been increasing over time, whereas the proportion ceasing due to the maximum age being reached or the educational needs being met without a plan have been decreasing.

Chart

Table

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The number of EHC plans which ceased during the calendar years 2022 to 2025, by the reason they ceased, England

		2022	2023	2024	2025
All ceased EHC plans	Number where maximum age reached	2,141	2,009	1,990	1,946
	Number moved to higher education	1,454	1,922	2,579	2,994
	Number moved to paid employment	2,734	3,455	4,053	3,981
	Number transferred to another LA	9,400	11,231	13,953	17,021
	Number who have moved outside England	490	841	928	1,237
	Number where young person no longer wishes to engage in education or training	11,734	15,052	16,091	17,867
	Number where educational or training needs met without a plan	4,054	3,317	3,955	3,922
	Number where child or young person deceased	519	440	475	516
	Number ceased for other reasons	2,198	1,152	838	862
	Total number of ceased EHC plans	34,724	39,419	44,862	50,346

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[Data symbols](#) 

Footnotes

1. Isle of Wight and Leicester were unable to provide ceased dates for the majority of plans which ceased

in 2025, we have therefore suppressed data for the 2025 calendar year for these authorities.

2. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

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Characteristics of children and young people when their plan ceases

Age on ceasing

For the majority of young people with an EHC plan, the local authority continue to maintain the plan at least until age 18. Of plans which ceased during the 2025 calendar year, 63.0% were for young people aged 18 or over.

Where the child is aged under 18, the main reason for an EHC plan to cease is that the child or young person moves. During 2025, 79.8% of plans which ceased when the child was aged under 18 was due to them transferring to another LA with a further 6.2% ceasing as the child moved outside England.

Chart

Table

► Export options

The number of EHC plans which ceased during the calendar

year, by age and reason for ceasing, England, 2023 to 2025

		2025	2024	2023
All ceased EHC plans		50,346	44,862	39,419
Age plan ceased	age 2 and under	8	8	7
	age 3	82	72	62
	age 4	464	428	336
	age 5	945	721	579
	age 6	1,165	817	621
	age 7	1,139	839	644
	age 8	1,070	888	650
	age 9	1,090	858	703
	age 10	1,378	1,060	913
	age 11	1,214	1,011	908
	age 12	1,103	976	844
	age 13	1,320	1,116	911
	age 14	1,438	1,200	987
	age 15	1,605	1,356	1,074

age 16	2,107	1,714	1,458
age 17	2,504	2,073	1,816
age 18	5,690	5,113	4,479
age 19	7,391	6,004	5,438
age 20 and over	18,617	18,576	16,977
Age unknown	16	32	12

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[Data symbols](#) 

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Footnotes

1. Isle of Wight and Leicester were unable to provide ceased dates for the majority of plans which ceased in 2025, we have therefore suppressed data for the 2025 calendar year for these authorities.
2. Figures for the Isle of Wight for the 2025 calendar year and 2025/26 academic year are suppressed due to issues with data quality.

Source: SEN2

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

Length of time plan was in place

Very few EHC plans cease within a year of the start date: during 2025, 5,200 (10.3%) of plans ceased within a year of the start date. In most cases (87.1%) this is due to the plan transferring to another local authority.

Most plans have been in place for 5 years or more when they cease. Excluding transfers to other local authorities, just over three quarters (75.8%) of EHC plans have been in place for 5 years or more when the plan ceases, indicating that most plans are maintained until the child or young person finishes their education.

Last placement attended when EHC plan ceased

For the majority of children and young people, the last setting they attended before their plan ceased was either further education or they were not in education or training.

Of all plans which ceased during 2025, the final placement for 13,100 (25.9%) was further education, 17.8% mainstream schools and 12.3% special schools.

There were 17,500 young people who were not in education or training when their EHC plan ceased, this represents over a third (34.7%) of ceased plans.

A further breakdown is available showing [the number of EHC plans which ceased during 2025, by reason for ceasing, by age of the child or young person on ceasing, sex, their final placement and length of time the plan was in place.](#)

Contact us

If you have a specific enquiry about Education, health and care plans statistics and data:

School Census Statistics team

Email: sen.statistics@education.gov.uk

Contact name: Special Educational Needs statistics lead

Press office

If you have a media enquiry:

Telephone: 020 7783 8300

Public enquiries

If you have a general enquiry about the Department for Education (DfE) or education:

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