

SFR 42/2013

23 October 2013

Coverage: England

**Theme: Children,
Education and Skills**

Issued by

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CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS 2013: AN ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Improving outcomes for children and young people is key to the ambitious vision for reform set out in Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability (<http://www.education.gov.uk/publication/eOrderingDownload/Green-Paper-SEN.pdf>) which included wide ranging proposals to improve outcomes for children and young people who are disabled or have special educational needs.

The information in this publication supports this vision as it will help teachers, parents, school governing bodies, local authorities and those they work with to assess the quality and efficiency of the provision they make with a view to improving those outcomes.

WHAT ARE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?

Pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most pupils of the same age. One in every five pupils has a special educational need; about 1.6 million. This is a large and very important group of young learners.

Pupils with special educational needs are currently¹ classified into three distinct levels of provision for need: School Action, School Action Plus or with statements of special educational needs:

- School Action – where extra or different help is given from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum.
- School Action Plus – where the class teacher and the SENCO² receive advice or support from outside specialists (a specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, a speech or language therapist or other health professionals).
- Statement – a pupil has a statement of special educational needs when a formal assessment has been made. A document setting out the child's needs and the extra help they should receive is in place.

Pupils with special educational needs may need extra help because of their type of need. These are listed in the Glossary and include: profound and multiple learning difficulty; behavioural, emotional and social difficulty; and speech, language and communication needs.

¹ Assessments and statements of special educational needs are to be replaced with a single assessment process and combined Education, Health and Care plan. The proposal is that School Action and School Action Plus will be replaced by a single school-based special educational needs category.

² A special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is a member of staff at school who has responsibility for coordinating special educational need provision within that school.

WHAT IS IN THIS PUBLICATION

This is an annual publication which draws together data from a number of key public data set and supports the Government's commitment to make information publicly available in a transparent way. It presents information at national and local levels about the characteristics and attainment of pupils with special educational needs.

THE PUBLICATION

This publication presents national level data and information by local authority is available in the additional tables on the publication webpage. Major breakdowns are available for all key areas on level of provision for special educational need and primary type of need.

Chapter 1 provides a basic breakdown of the prevalence and characteristics of pupils with special educational needs, by their school type, gender, age, ethnic origin, free school meal eligibility and whether they had been classed as a looked after child, as well as local authority indicators on the timeliness of statements of special educational needs.

Chapter 2 compares the attainment of pupils with special educational needs at Early Years Foundation Stage, phonics screening and Key Stage 1, 2, and 4, with attainment by the characteristics in Chapter 1, as well as the gap in attainment between pupils with special educational needs and their peers at Key Stages 2 and 4.

Chapter 3 looks at pupils with special educational needs making the expected progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4.

Chapter 4 looks at the attainment of 19 year olds with special educational needs and progression to Higher Education of pupils with special educational needs and their peers.

Chapter 5 compares the absence and exclusion data for pupils with special educational needs.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE TO THIS YEAR'S PUBLICATION?

The following changes have been made to this year's publication:

- General: Each chapter and data annex now takes the format of a separate statistical release to comply with data accessibility requirements.
- Characteristics and prevalence (Chapter 1): Updates to figures only.
- Attainment (Chapter 2): Detail has been added on children meeting the required standard of phonics decoding at Key Stage 1 by their level of provision for special educational needs and primary type of need.
- Progression (Chapter 3): Updates to figures only.
- Attainment by age 19 and Higher Education (Chapter 4): Updates to figures only.
- Absence and exclusion (Chapter 5): Updates to figures only.
- Web tables: Local authority figures on absence and exclusions by provision for special educational needs have been included.

FURTHER FEEDBACK

The Department thanks respondents for feedback in response to previous publications. Your views have influenced the changes made to this year's publication. In a similar spirit, we would welcome views again on this publication, in terms of:

1. What would you like to see included in future publications (additional breakdowns, difference analysis etc.)?
2. Was it easy to read and understand? If not, what did you find difficult or unclear?
3. Were the charts clear? If not, how could they be improved?
4. Was the content informative, interesting and well-presented?
5. What information did you find the least useful?
6. Any other comments.

Please send your comments to Andrew.Brook@education.gsi.gov.uk.

It would be helpful if you could also tell us why you are interested in pupils with special educational needs and agree whether we can consult you about future editions of this publication. We will not use your contact details for any other purpose.

LEGAL INFORMATION

On 1 January 2009 the Special Educational Needs (Information) Act 2008 came into effect. This requires the Secretary of State for Education to publish information about pupils in England, with special educational needs, each calendar year, in order to help improve the well-being of these pupils.

This information was published for the first time, under the Act on 8 October 2009 at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00949-2009>, for the second time on 19 October 2010 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-with-special-educational-needs-2010>, for the third time on 19 October 2011 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-with-special-educational-needs-an-analysis-2011> and for the fourth time on 17 October 2012 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-with-special-educational-needs-an-analysis-2012>.

This is the fifth annual publication under the Act.

STATISTICAL NOTE

The Special Educational Needs (Information) Act 2008 required the Secretary of State to publish information about pupils in England with special educational needs every calendar year. This annual statistical publication was designed by statisticians in collaboration with policy officials to meet this requirement. It provides commentary and analysis that aid interpretation and formats for the presentation of the statistics in charts and tables that enhance clarity, interpretability and consistency. It draws on a range of statistics, most of which have previously been published, some of them as National Statistics.

ENQUIRIES

Enquiries about the figures contained in this publication should be addressed to:

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