

Chapter 5 – How does attainment at age 19 vary according to the level of provision and type of special educational need?

Introduction

This chapter looks at the differences in educational attainment at age 19 in 2009 between those with and without special educational needs for both boys and girls and compares this to their attainment at age 16. This chapter also contains, for the first time, information on the percentage of pupils with special educational needs who enter higher education. See Data Annex 5 for further detail on the material covered in this chapter. All referenced tables can be found in the accompanying downloadable spreadsheets at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STA/t000965/index.shtml>. **Chapters 2, 3 and 4** contain further information on the attainment of pupils with special educational needs.

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Key findings at GCSE level

The percentage of pupils who achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A* to C or equivalent (also known as level 2), by the age of 19 years was lower for pupils with special educational needs than for those with no identified special educational needs. However, the attainment gap between pupils with special educational needs and those without was smaller at age 19 than age 16.

The primary need groups with the highest percentage achieving the level 2 qualification threshold by the age of 19 years were the visually and the hearing impaired.

Gender

In general, the percentage of girls achieving the level 2 threshold by the age of 19 years was higher than that of boys for each provision for special educational need, except for those with statements, where boys were slightly more likely to have achieved this expected level.

The widest attainment gap between boys and girls occurred at School Action Plus, where 37.9 per cent of boys achieved level 2 by 19 compared to 43.0 per cent of girls.

Boys with statements of special educational needs made slightly more improvements in attainment than girls between the ages of 16 and 19 years, in terms of the proportions achieving level 2. However, girls made more improvements in attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 years at School Action Plus and School Action.

Young people with special educational needs achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C

Figure 5.1 shows the percentage of pupils who, by the age of 19 years in 2009, had achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (this is also known as the level 2 threshold). The figures are broken down by age and provision for special educational need (pupils at School Action, School Action Plus and with statements of special educational needs). Figure 5.1 shows the percentages of pupils aged 19 in 2009 that achieved the level 2 threshold and also shows the percentages of the same group of pupils who had achieved this level at ages 16, 17, 18 and 19. The percentage of pupils who had achieved level 2 by the age of 19 was much lower for pupils with special educational needs than for those with no identified special educational needs. However the attainment gap was smaller at age 19 than age 16 as larger proportions of pupils with special educational needs attained this level between the ages of 16 and 19.

Figure 5.1: Percentage of 19 year olds in 2009 who achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (level 2) by their age in 2009 and previous years by provision for need

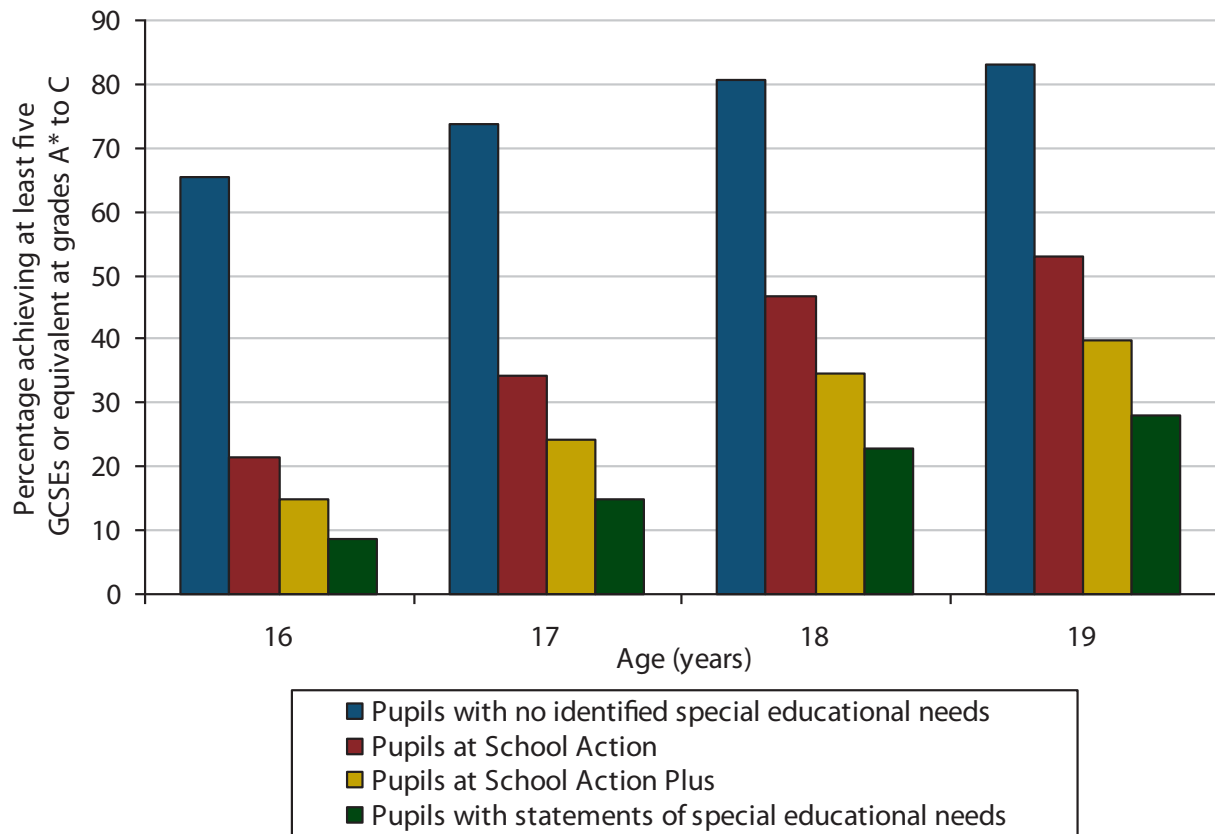


Figure 5.1 shows that 83.1 per cent of 19 year olds with no special educational needs achieved level 2 in 2009. This compared to 53.1 per cent for those at School Action, 39.8 per cent for those at School Action Plus and 28.1 per cent for those with statements of special educational needs.

The biggest increase in levels of attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 years was shown by pupils at School Action, where those who achieved level 2 increased from 21.5 per cent to 53.1 per cent (an increase of 31.6 percentage points).

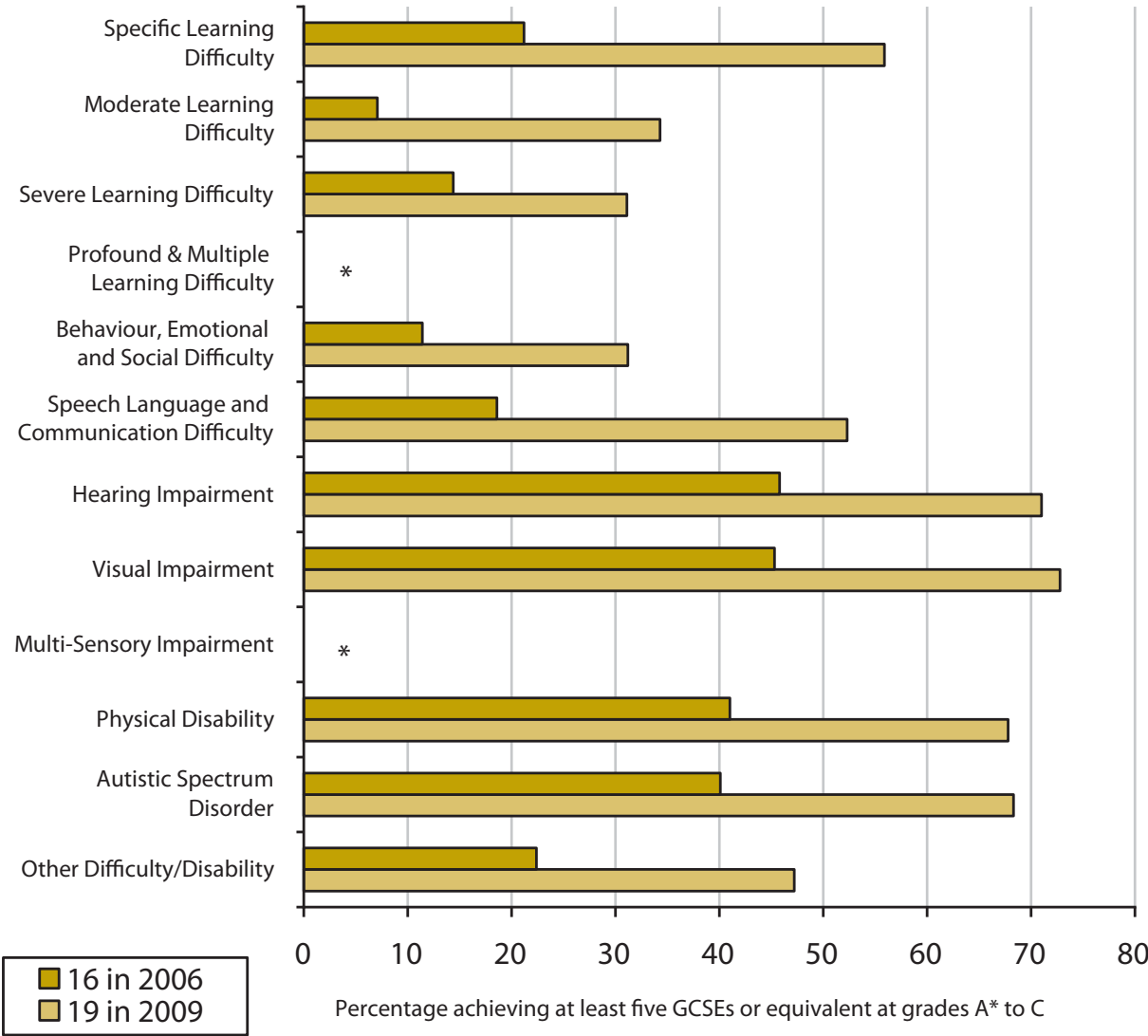
The smallest increase in levels of attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 years was shown by pupils with no special educational needs (an increase of 17.7 percentage points from 65.4 per cent to 83.1 per cent). However, this can be partly explained by the fact that these pupils were already performing at a higher level in the first place. There was a similar increase in levels of attainment between 16 and 19 amongst pupils with statements and pupils with no special educational needs.

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GCSE achievements of those at School Action Plus by primary type of need

Figure 5.2 shows the percentage of pupils at School Action Plus in 2009 who, by the ages of 19 in 2009 and 16 in 2006, had achieved level 2 by primary type of need (pupils with specific learning difficulties, visual impairments, etc). In 2009, the groups with the highest percentage achieving this level by age 19 were the visually impaired at 72.8 per cent and the hearing impaired at 71.0 per cent.

Figure 5.2: Percentage of pupils at School Action Plus aged 19 years in 2009 who had achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (level 2) by age 19 in 2009 and 16 in 2006 by primary type of need



* The percentages for profound and multiple learning difficulties and multi-sensory impairments were not displayed as fewer than five pupils achieved the qualification in the groups.

Improvement in GCSE attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 years for those at School Action Plus by primary type of need

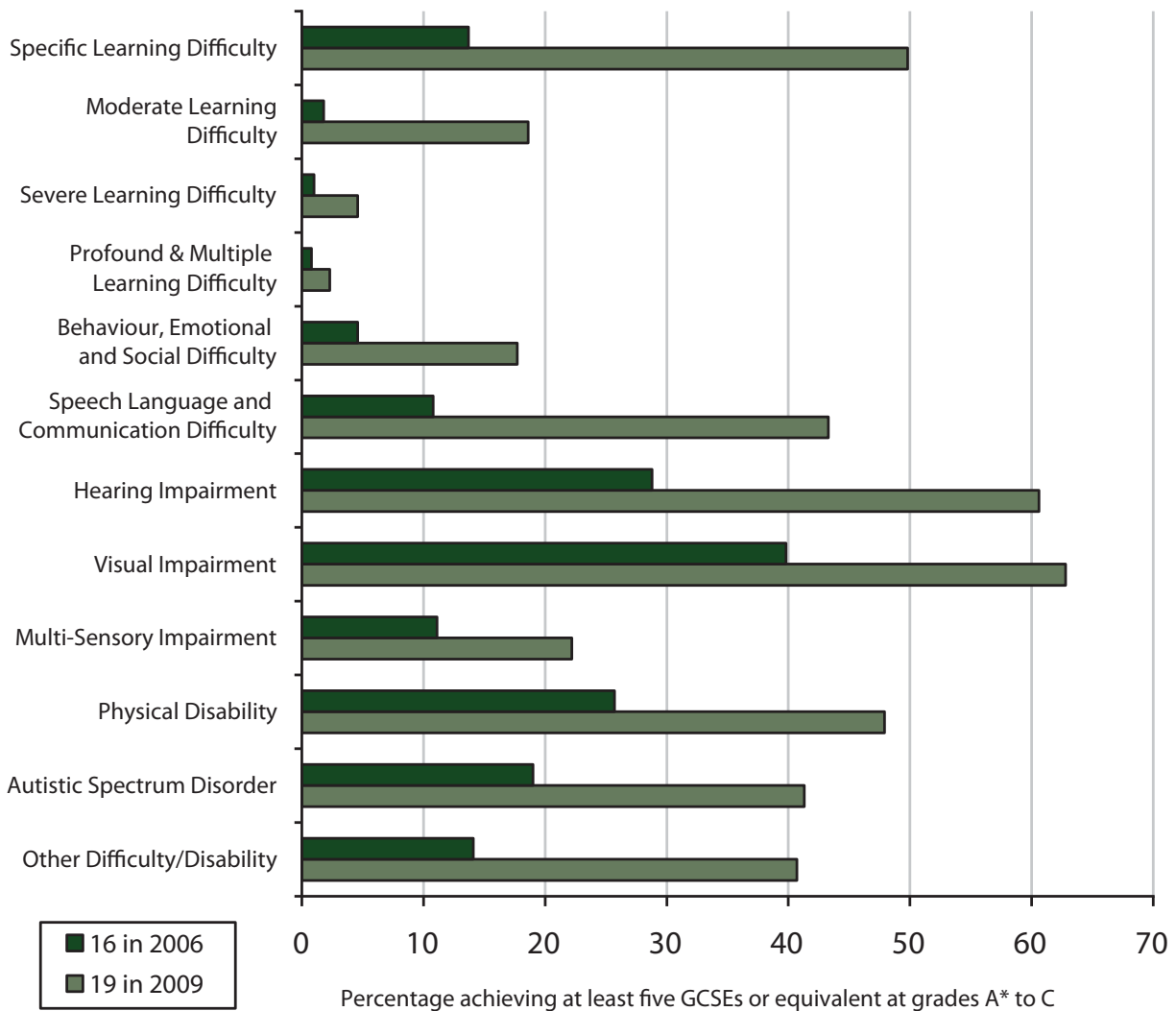
Figure 5.2 shows that of those young people at School Action Plus in 2009, those with specific learning difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties improved the most in terms of the percentage achieving level 2, between the ages of 16 and 19 years. Pupils with visual impairments and hearing impairments were still most likely of all the primary need groups to achieve level 2 at age 19 and also when they were aged 16.

GCSE achievements of those with statements of special educational needs by primary type of need

Figure 5.3 shows the percentage of pupils with statements in 2009 who, by the ages of 19 years in 2009 and 16 in 2006, had achieved level 2 by primary type of need. Caution should be used when interpreting the percentage in the multi-sensory impairment group due to small numbers of pupils in the cohort. There was a bigger variation in the percentage achieving this qualification for those with statements compared to those at School Action Plus.

In 2009, the groups with the highest percentage achieving the level 2 qualification by age 19 were the visually impaired (62.8 per cent) and the hearing impaired (60.6 per cent). The group with the lowest percentage achieving this level of qualification were those with profound and multiple learning difficulties (2.3 per cent).

Figure 5.3: Percentage of pupils with statements aged 19 years in 2009 who had achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (level 2) by age 19 in 2009 and 16 in 2006 by primary type of need



Improvement in GCSE attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 years for those with statements by primary type of need

Figure 5.3 shows that of those young people with statements, level 2 attainment increased the most for pupils with specific learning difficulties between the ages of 16 and 19 years. Pupils with visual impairments and hearing impairments were still most likely of all the primary need groups to achieve level 2 at age 19 and also when they were aged 16.

Differences in attainment between the genders by level of special educational needs provision

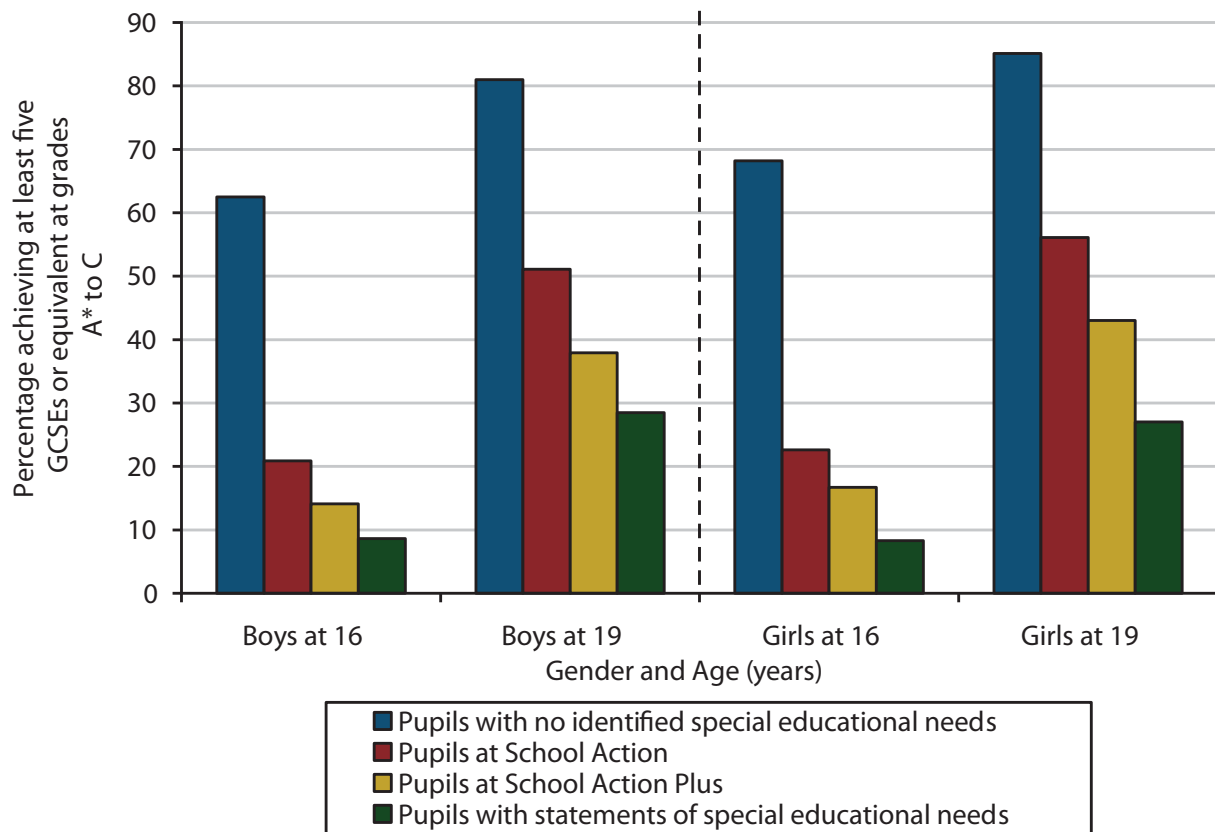
Figure 5.4 shows the percentage of boys and girls who achieved level 2 in 2009 by age and provision for special educational need.

In general, the percentage of girls achieving this level by the age of 19 years was higher than that of boys for each provision for special educational need. 81.0 per cent of 19 year old boys with no identified special educational needs achieved level 2 compared to 85.1 per cent of girls.

The widest attainment gap between boys and girls occurred at School Action Plus, where 37.9 per cent of boys achieved level 2 by 19 compared to 43.0 per cent of girls. A very similar attainment gap exists between boys and girls at School Action. The exception to this trend was in relation to pupils with statements, amongst which boys were slightly more likely to achieve level 2 by age 19 (28.5 per cent) compared to girls (27.0 per cent).

Level 2 attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 increased more amongst boys with statements than amongst girls with statements. The opposite was true for School Action and School Action Plus, with attainment levels increasing more amongst girls than boys.

Figure 5.4: Percentage of boys and girls aged 19 years in 2009 who achieved at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C (level 2) by the age of 19 in 2009 and 16 in 2006 and provision for need



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Young people with special educational needs achieving two A levels

Key findings at A level

The percentage of 19 year old pupils who achieved two A levels or equivalent (also known as level 3), was lower for pupils with special educational needs than for pupils without.

Amongst pupils with special educational needs the primary need types that had the highest percentage achieving the level 3 qualification by the age of 19 were the visually impaired and hearing impaired.

Gender

The proportion of girls achieving the level 3 qualification by age 19 was higher than that of boys for each provision for special educational need.

The widest attainment gap between boys and girls occurred for pupils with no special educational needs, where 50.5 per cent of boys achieved level 3 by 19 compared to 59.0 per cent of girls.

Levels 3 attainment increased by a similar amount between the ages of 18 and 19 for boys and girls with statements.

Figure 5.5 shows the percentage of pupils who, by the age of 19 years in 2009, had achieved two A levels or equivalent (this is also known as the level 3 threshold). The figures are broken down by age and provision of special educational need (pupils at School Action, School Action Plus and with statements of special educational needs). Figure 5.5 shows the percentages of pupils aged 19 in 2009 that achieved the level 3 threshold and also shows the percentages of the same group of pupils who had achieved this level at the age of 18.

The percentage of pupils aged 19 years who achieved level 3 was lower for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with statements made less improvement in terms of the percentage achieving level 3 between the ages of 18 and 19 years compared to pupils at School Action Plus. In turn, pupils at School Action Plus made less improvement than those at School Action, and those at School Action made slightly less improvement than those with no special educational needs.

Figure 5.5: Percentage of those aged 19 years in 2009 who achieved two A levels or equivalent (level 3) by their age in 2009 and a year earlier by provision for need

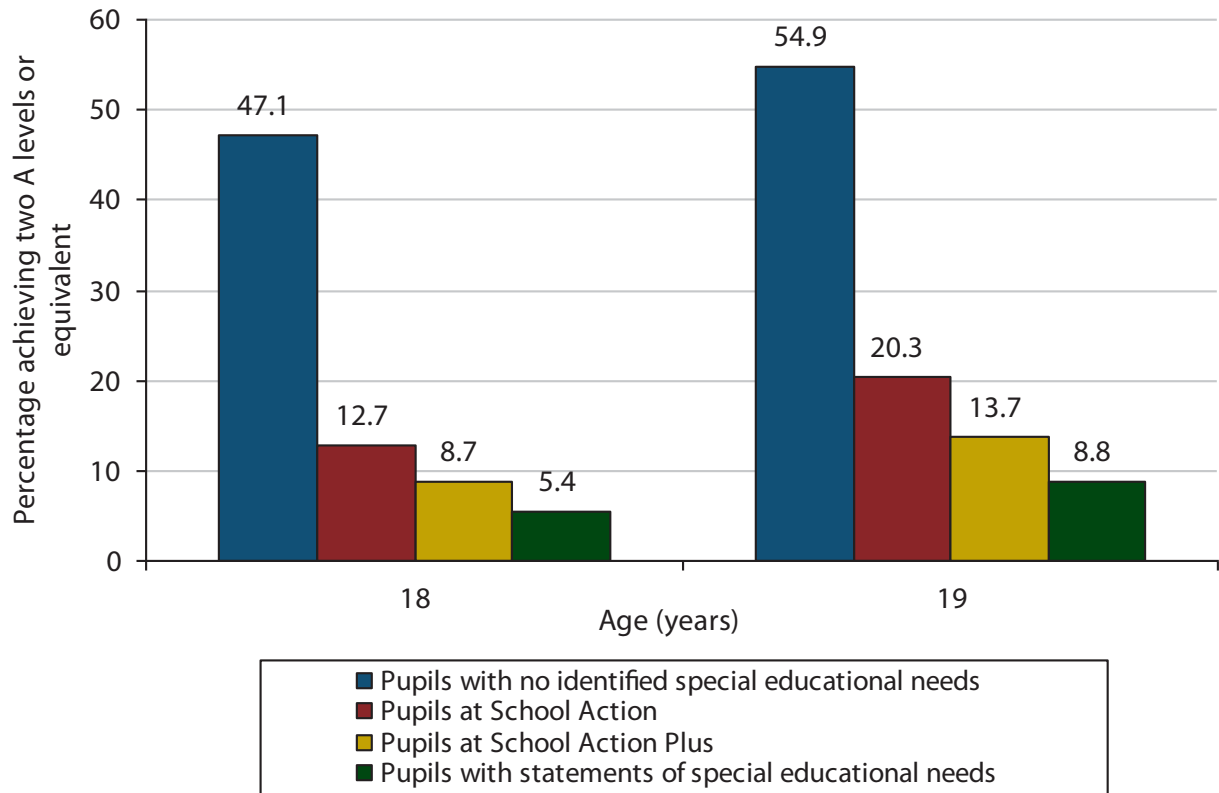


Figure 5.5 shows that 54.9 per cent of pupils aged 19 years in 2009 without special educational needs achieved level 3. This compared to 20.3 per cent at School Action, 13.7 per cent at School Action Plus and 8.8 per cent for those with statements of special educational needs.

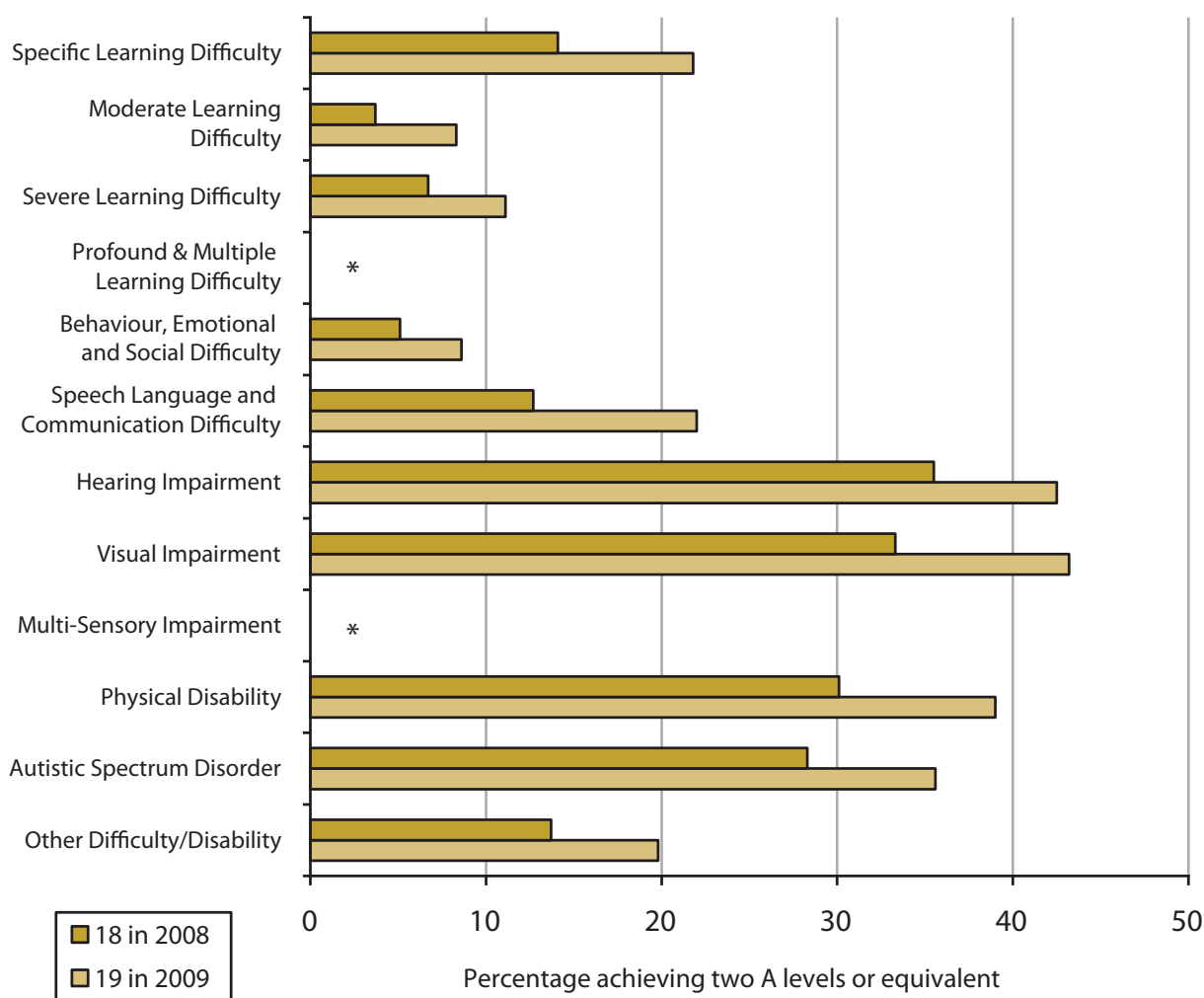
A level achievements of those at School Action Plus by primary type of need

Figure 5.6 shows the percentage of pupils at School Action Plus in 2009 who, by the ages of 19 in 2009 and 18 in 2008, had achieved level 3 by primary type of need.

The groups with the highest percentage achieving the level 3 qualification by age 19 in 2009 were the visually impaired (43.2 per cent) and the hearing impaired (42.5 per cent).

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Figure 5.6: Percentage of pupils at School Action Plus aged 19 years in 2009 who had achieved two A levels or equivalent (level 3) by age 19 in 2009 and 18 in 2008 by primary type of need



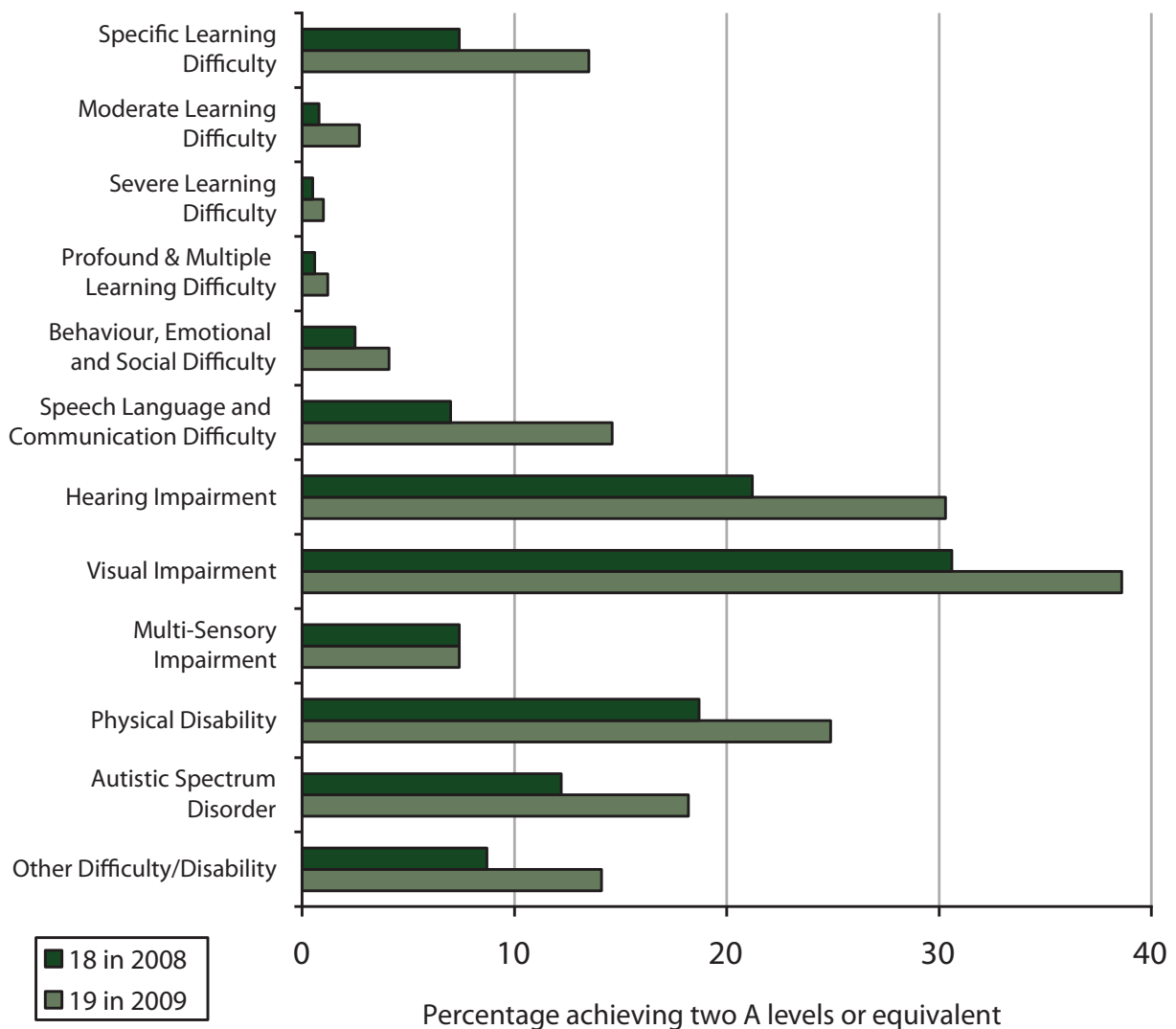
Improvement in A level attainment between the ages of 18 and 19 years for those at School Action Plus by primary type of need

Figure 5.6 shows that of the young people at School Action Plus in 2009, those with visual impairments and those with speech language and communication difficulties improved the most in terms of the percentage achieving level 3, between the ages of 18 and 19 years. Pupils with visual impairments and hearing impairments were still most likely of all the primary need groups to achieve level 3 at age 19 and also when they were aged 18.

A level achievements of those with statements of special educational needs by primary type of need

Figure 5.7 shows the percentage of 19 year old pupils with statements in 2009 who, by the ages of 19 in 2009 and 18 in 2008, had achieved level 3 by primary type of need. Caution should be used when interpreting the percentages in the multi-sensory impairment group due to small numbers of pupils in the cohort. The group with the highest percentage achieving level 3 by 19 in 2009 were the visually impaired (38.6 per cent).

Figure 5.7: Percentage of pupils with statements aged 19 years in 2009 who had achieved two A levels or equivalent (level 3) by age 19 in 2009 and 18 in 2008 by primary type of need



Improvement in A level attainment between the ages of 18 and 19 years for those with statements by primary type of need

Figure 5.7 shows that young people with hearing impairments improved the most in terms of the percentage achieving level 3, between the ages of 18 and 19 years. Pupils with visual impairments and hearing impairments were still most likely of all the primary need groups to achieve level 3 at age 19 and also when they were aged 18.

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Differences in attainment between the genders by level of special educational need provision

Figure 5.8 shows the percentage of 19 year old boys and girls who had achieved level 3. The statistics are broken down by age and provision for special educational need.

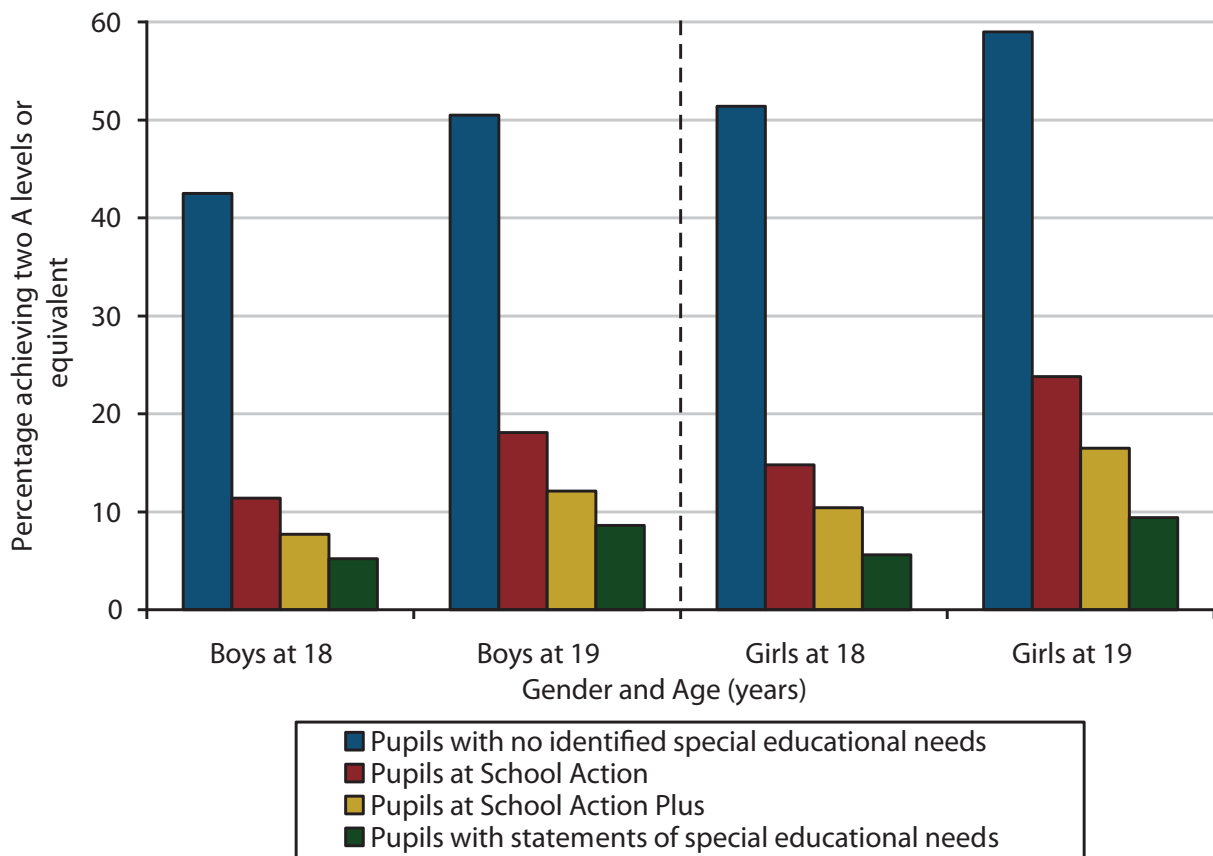
The proportion of 19 year old girls at School Action, School Action Plus and with statements achieving level 3 was higher than that of boys.

50.5 per cent of 19 year old boys with no identified special educational needs achieved level 3 compared to 59.0 per cent of girls.

8.6 per cent of 19 year old boys with statements of special educational needs achieved level 3 compared to 9.4 per cent of girls.

Level 3 attainment increased by a similar amount between the ages of 18 and 19 for boys and girls with statements. Level 3 attainment for pupils at School Action and School Action Plus increased more amongst girls than boys.

Figure 5.8: Percentage of boys and girls aged 19 years in 2009 who had achieved two A levels or equivalent (level 3) by the age of 19 in 2009 and 18 in 2008 and provision for need



Young people with special educational needs progressing to higher education

Key findings

Pupils with special educational needs are four to five times less likely to be in higher education compared to those with no special educational needs.

Introduction

Data on pupils entering higher education is collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), which is the official agency for the collection, analysis and dissemination of quantitative information about higher education. Further information about HESA is available in Data Annex 5.

Higher education students are defined by HESA as those on courses for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 (i.e. above A level or equivalent) of the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (e.g. courses at the level of Certificate of higher education and above).

Progression of pupils into higher education by age 19 in 2007

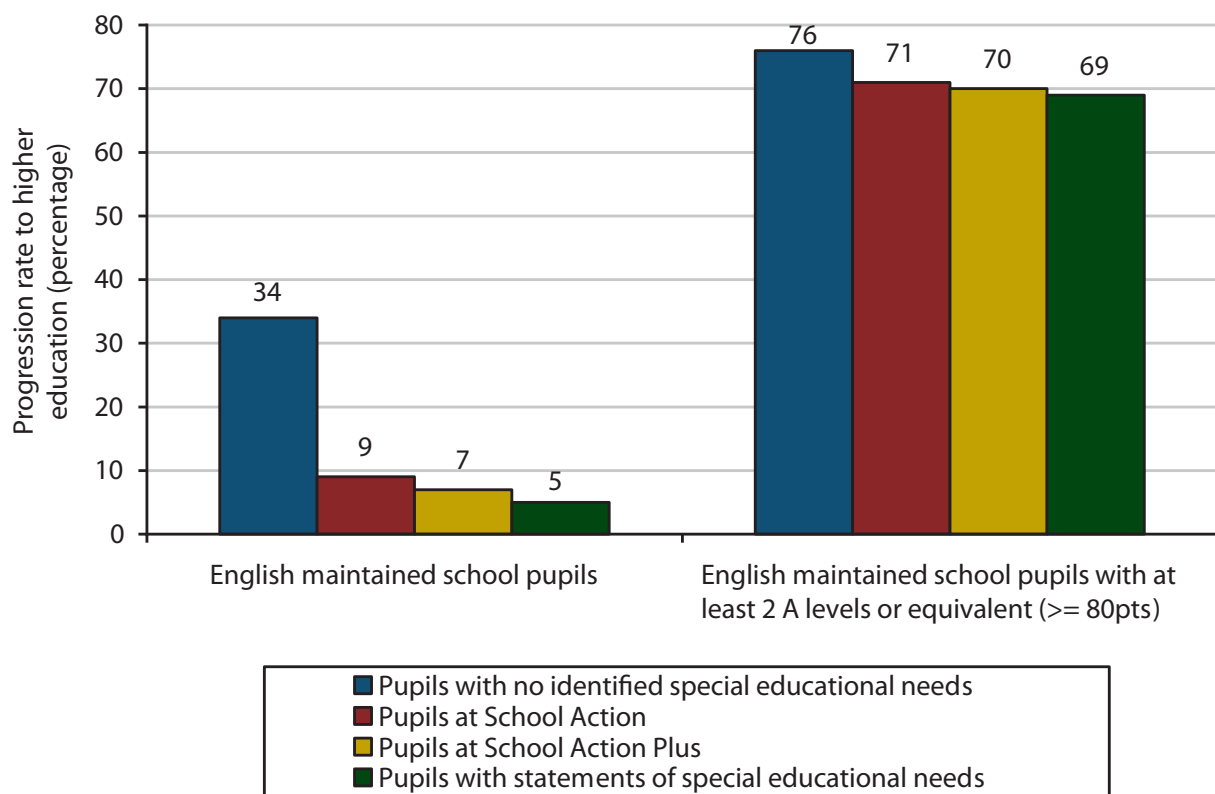
HESA data on enrolments in higher education for 18 and 19 year olds were matched to the National Pupil Database (NPD), which is a longitudinal database for children in England linking pupil/student characteristics to school and college learning aims and attainment. Progression rates cover the proportion of pupils who enrolled in higher education courses in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or English Further Education Colleges (FECs) either at age 18 in academic year 2006, or at age 19 in academic year 2007. All references to 2007 in the following section refers to the academic year 2006/07.

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Figure 5.9 shows the proportion of pupils who progressed to higher education by the age of 19 years in 2007 by their provision for special educational needs in January 2003 (i.e. when they were taking their GCSEs aged 15 or 16). Pupils with special educational needs were four to five times less likely to be in higher education compared to those with no special educational needs. 34 per cent of those with no special educational needs in January 2003 progressed to higher education by age 19 in 2007 compared to 9 per cent for those at School Action, 7 per cent for those at School Action Plus and 5 per cent for those with statements.

Progression rates into higher education are much higher when looking at those who obtained two A levels or equivalent. Figure 5.9 also shows that 76 per cent of those with no special educational needs in January 2003 who obtained two A levels or equivalent, enrolled in higher education courses by age 19 in 2007. This compares to 71 per cent of those at School Action, 70 per cent at School Action Plus and 69 per cent of those with statements. Web based tables 5.4 and 5.5 contain the data used to produce Figure 5.9.

Figure 5.9: Progression to higher education by Age 19 (in 2007) by provision for special educational needs for English Maintained School Pupils



Data Annex 5: Attainment at age 19 years for pupils with special educational needs

The attainment by 19 data included in Chapter 5 was provided as additional analysis following the publication of Statistical First Release (SFR) entitled 'Level 2 and 3 Attainment by Young People in England Measured Using Matched Administrative Data: Attainment by Age 19 in 2009 (Provisional)' available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000917/index.shtml>

Details on the data source used and the different groups of pupils which were included in this analysis can be found at the weblink above. All numbers which appear in data tables 5.1 to 5.3 were rounded to the nearest 10. Numbers from 1 to 4 inclusive were replaced in the tables by a star (*). Percentages were rounded to one decimal place unless the numerator and/or denominator was four or less, in which case they were suppressed and replaced by a star. Note that percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Data on the number of children with special educational needs progressing to higher education is sourced from matched Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and National Pupil Database (NPD) data. Further information about HESA can be found at <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/4/54/> and further information on the NPD can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cmpo/plugin/support-docs/>. The NPD holds the tests and exam results at each Key Stage for all pupils at maintained schools in England. It also holds individual pupil level attainment data for pupils in non-maintained and independent schools who take the tests/exams. Pupil characteristic information for maintained schools only are also included in the NPD (such as age, gender, ethnicity, special educational needs etc), which is obtained by matching records to the School Census. The numbers in Tables 5.4 and 5.5 were rounded to the nearest 100 and the percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number. Data for 2006/07 is used in Tables 5.4 and 5.5 as this was the most readily available data at the time of production.

The five tables referenced within Chapter 5 are listed below. The tables can be found in the accompanying web based spreadsheets on the publication webpage.

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Table 5.1: Proportion of young people with five or more GCSEs or equivalent and two A levels, by age, special educational need provision and primary need type for the 19 in 2009 cohort

Table 5.2: Proportion of males with five or more GCSEs or equivalent and two A levels, by age, special educational need provision and primary need type for the 19 in 2009 cohort

Table 5.3: Proportion of females with five or more GCSEs or equivalent and two A levels, by age, special educational need provision and primary need type for the 19 in 2009 cohort

Table 5.4: Pupils enrolled in higher education by age 19 in 2006/07 by special educational need (SEN) provision in January 2003

Table 5.5: Pupils enrolled in higher education by age 19 in 2006/07 who previously achieved 2 A levels by special educational need (SEN) provision in January 2003