



Department  
for Education

# **Special educational needs and disability: an analysis and summary of data sources**

**August 2024**

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## Introduction

This document provides a compendium of official statistics and management information on children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability in England. This report analyses the headline trends across the publications and provides a summary of the key data sources with links for users to explore further. This is the eleventh release in [this collection](#)<sup>1</sup> 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 with the latest update in June 2024. Links to the latest publication can be found in the tables below, which may reflect more current data available. 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 [High needs benchmarking tool](#), the [Local Authority Interactive Tool](#) (LAIT), and [LG Inform](#). Further details are provided on page 31.

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<sup>1</sup> There were two updates to this document in 2016.

## Statistical publication sources used in this report

All publications are official statistics published by the Department for Education unless otherwise specified. More information on statistical classification can be found on the [UK Statistic Authority](#) website.

Figure 1: Statistical publication sources used in this report

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
Prevalence and characteristics	<a href="#">Special educational needs in England</a>	January 2024	Yes	Yes	June 2025
Early years SEN prevalence	<a href="#">Education provision: children under 5 years of age</a>	January 2024	Yes	Yes	July 2025
Early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP)	<a href="#">Early years foundation stage profile results</a>	2022 to 2023 (academic year)	Yes	Yes	November 2024
Phonics screening check and Key Stage 1 attainment	<a href="#">Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	October 2024
Key Stage 2 attainment	<a href="#">Key stage 2 attainment</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	September (provisional) and December (revised) 2024

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
<b>Key Stage 4 attainment</b>	<a href="#">Key stage 4 performance</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	October 2024 (provisional) and February (revised) 2025
<b>Attainment by age 19</b>	<a href="#">Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 16 to 25</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	April 2025
<b>Outcomes for looked after children and children in need</b>	<a href="#">Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities, in England</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	March 2025
<b>Absence (full year release)</b>	<a href="#">Pupil absence in schools in England</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	March 2024
<b>Suspensions and permanent exclusions</b>	<a href="#">Suspensions and permanent exclusions in England</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	November 2024
<b>Post-16 participation (Management Information)</b>	<a href="#">NEET and participation : local authority figures</a>	March 2023	Yes	Yes	Autumn 2024

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
Further Education learning difficulty and disability numbers	<a href="#">Further education and skills</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	No	November 2024
Destinations measures (KS4)	<a href="#">Destinations of key stage 4 students</a>	2021 to 2022	Yes	Yes	October 2024
Destination measures (16 to 18)	<a href="#">16-18 destination measures</a>	2021 to 2022	Yes	Yes	October 2024
Progression into higher education	<a href="#">Widening participation in higher education</a>	2021 to 2022	Yes	No	July 2025
Measures from Adult Social Care Outcomes framework. Official statistics published by NHS digital	<a href="#">Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England</a>	2022-23 (financial year)	Yes	Yes	October 2024
Education, health and care plans <sup>2</sup>	<a href="#">Education, health and care plans</a>	January 2024	Yes	Yes	June 2025

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<sup>2</sup> Section formerly known as: 'Statements and EHC plans – numbers, transfers and timeliness of issuing'



Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
<b>SEND tribunal Tables. Official statistics published by the Ministry of Justice</b>	<a href="#">Tribunals statistics</a>	2022 to 2023	Yes	Yes	December 2024
<b>SEND tribunal appeal rate. Official statistics published by the Ministry of Justice</b>	<a href="#">Tribunals statistics</a>	2023	Yes	Yes	June 2025
<b>Family Resources Survey (Disability data). Official Statistics covering the UK published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).</b>	<a href="#">Family Resources Survey</a>	2022 to 2023 financial year	Yes	No	March 2025
<b>Childcare and early years survey of parents</b>	<a href="#">Childcare and early years survey of parents</a>	2023	Yes	No	July 2025
<b>Children in need</b>	<a href="#">Children in need</a>	2023	Yes	No	October 2024

## Other statistical publication sources not used in this report

There are other statistical publications on related topics that may be of interest which are not used in this report. These are summarised below. All publications are official statistics published by the Department for Education unless otherwise specified.

**Figure 2: Other statistical publication sources not used in this report**

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available ?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
Employment of working-age disabled people in the UK. Official Statistics published by the DWP.	<a href="#">The Employment of disabled people 2023</a>	2023	Yes	No	October 2024
Earnings of those identified with SEN at the end of KS4 from LEO data, a research report.	<a href="#">Post-16 education and labour market activities, pathways and outcomes</a>	Key stage 4 cohorts 2001 to 2002, 2006 to 2007 over 15 years	Yes	No	N/A
Employment, earnings & learning outcomes of FE learners (including Learning Difficulties/ Disability breakdowns)	<a href="#">Further education: outcome-based success measures</a>	2020 to 2021	Yes	Yes	November 2024

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available ?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
<b>Autism waiting times. Official statistics under development published by NHS Digital <sup>3</sup></b>	<a href="#">Autism Waiting Time Statistics</a>	April 2023 to March 2024	Yes	No (but is at NHS Sub-ICB level).	September, quarterly
<b>Schools' workforce data, available by school type</b>	<a href="#">School workforce in England</a>	November 2023	Yes	Yes	June 2025
<b>Local Area SEND inspection and outcomes reports, management information published by Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)</b>	<a href="#">Inspection reports for joint Ofsted/CQC Area SEND inspections</a>	Most recent published inspection report	No	Yes, but by individual area (see below for dataset)	Individual reports published following each inspection

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<sup>3</sup>Statistics are official statistics under development, major changes to methodologies are made between reporting years. Note that users may be interested in the [Community health services waiting lists](#) more generally.

Topic	Publication title link	Latest data reference point	Time series data available ?	LA level data by SEN available ?	Next publication (annual unless otherwise indicated)
Local Area SEND inspection outcomes management information data published by Ofsted <sup>4</sup>	<a href="#">Area SEND inspections and outcomes in England: management information and official statistics</a>	As at 31 December 2023	No	Yes	Between July and August 2024, 3 times a year (termly)
ONS Disability statistics (various publications, see individual publication for statistics classification)	<a href="#">Disability: The lives of disabled people in the UK, including disparities, outcomes for disabled people and impact on day-to-day activities</a>	Publication depended	Yes – time series varies by publication	No	See publication link
Labour market status of disabled people, official statistics in development covering the UK published by the Office for National Statistics	<a href="#">Labour market status of disabled people</a>	January to March 2024	Yes	No	August 2024

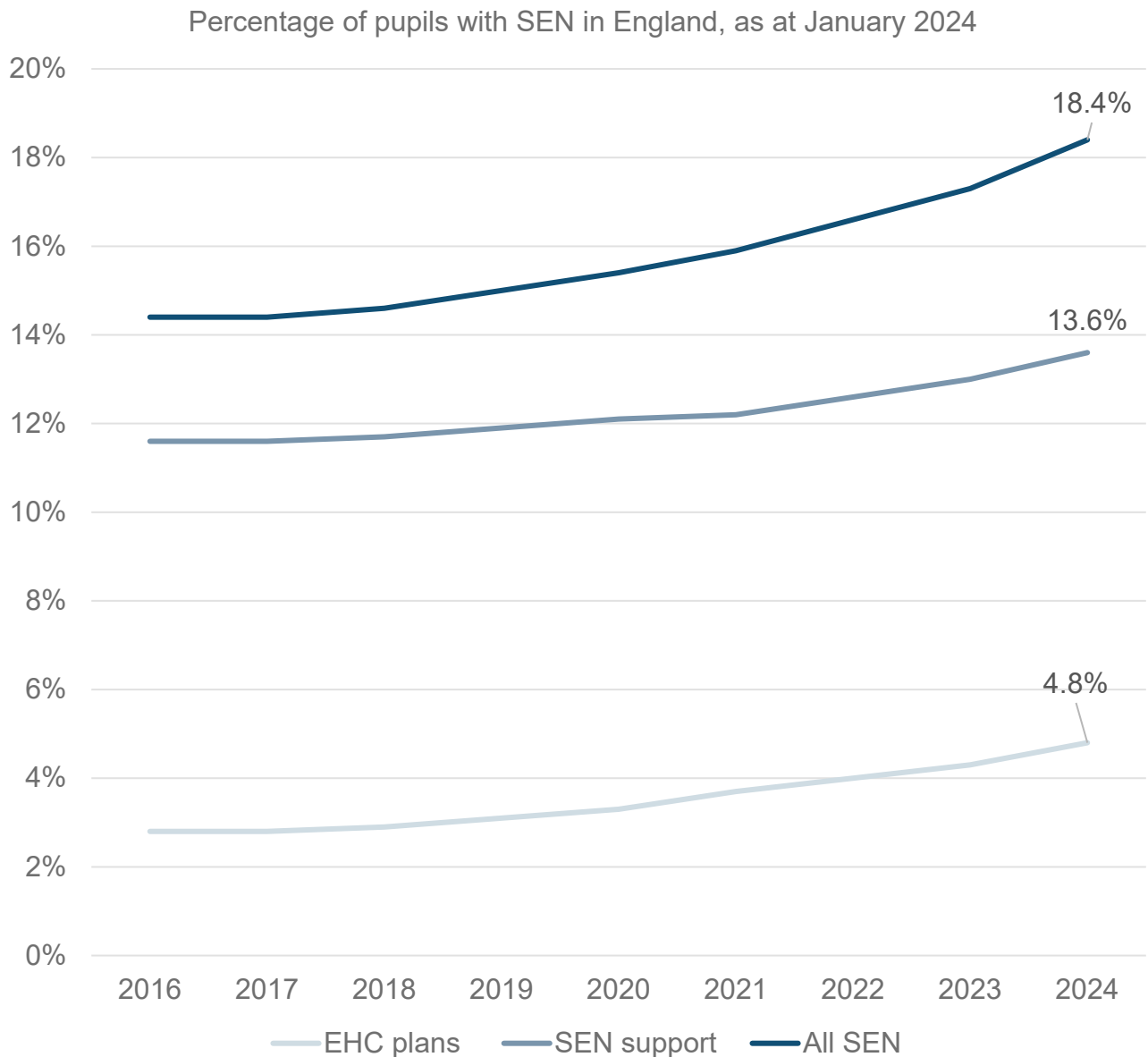
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<sup>4</sup> Readers may also be interested in Ofsted’s Children’s social care data for the [Ofsted Annual Report publication](#)

# Prevalence and characteristics of pupils with SEND in schools.

## Key trends

Figure 3: Percentage of pupils with SEN in England, as at January 2024



Source: School Census

The number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) increased to 1.7 million pupils in schools in 2024, representing 18.4% of all pupils. The proportion of pupils with SEN had been decreasing since 2010 (21.1%), however it has increased for the last 8 years.

The proportion of pupils in schools with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan<sup>5</sup> increased to 4.8% in 2024, continuing a trend of increases since 2017. Prior to this, the rate had remained steady at 2.8%. Pupils with an EHC plan made up 26.0% of all pupils with SEN in January 2024. The number of pupils with an EHC plan has increased by 11.6% between 2023 and 2024, and by a total of 83.4% since 2016.

The proportion of pupils in schools who are on SEN support has increased to 13.6%, following a trend of increases since 2018. The number of pupils on SEN support has increased by 4.7% between 2023 and 2024 and by 24.9% since 2016.

### **Pupils with SEN are classified as follows:**

SEN support: SEN support means support that is additional to, or different from, the support generally made for other children of the same age in schools. It is provided for pupils who are identified as having a learning difficulty or a disability that requires extra or different help to that normally provided as part of the school's usual curriculum offer. A pupil on SEN Support will not have an Education, Health and Care plan.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan: A local authority may issue an EHC plan for a pupil who needs more support than is available through SEN Support. This will follow a statutory assessment process whereby the local authority considers the pupil's special educational needs and any relevant health and social care needs; sets out long term outcomes; and specifies provision which will deliver additional support to meet those needs.

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

[Special educational needs in England](#) Next update due June 2025

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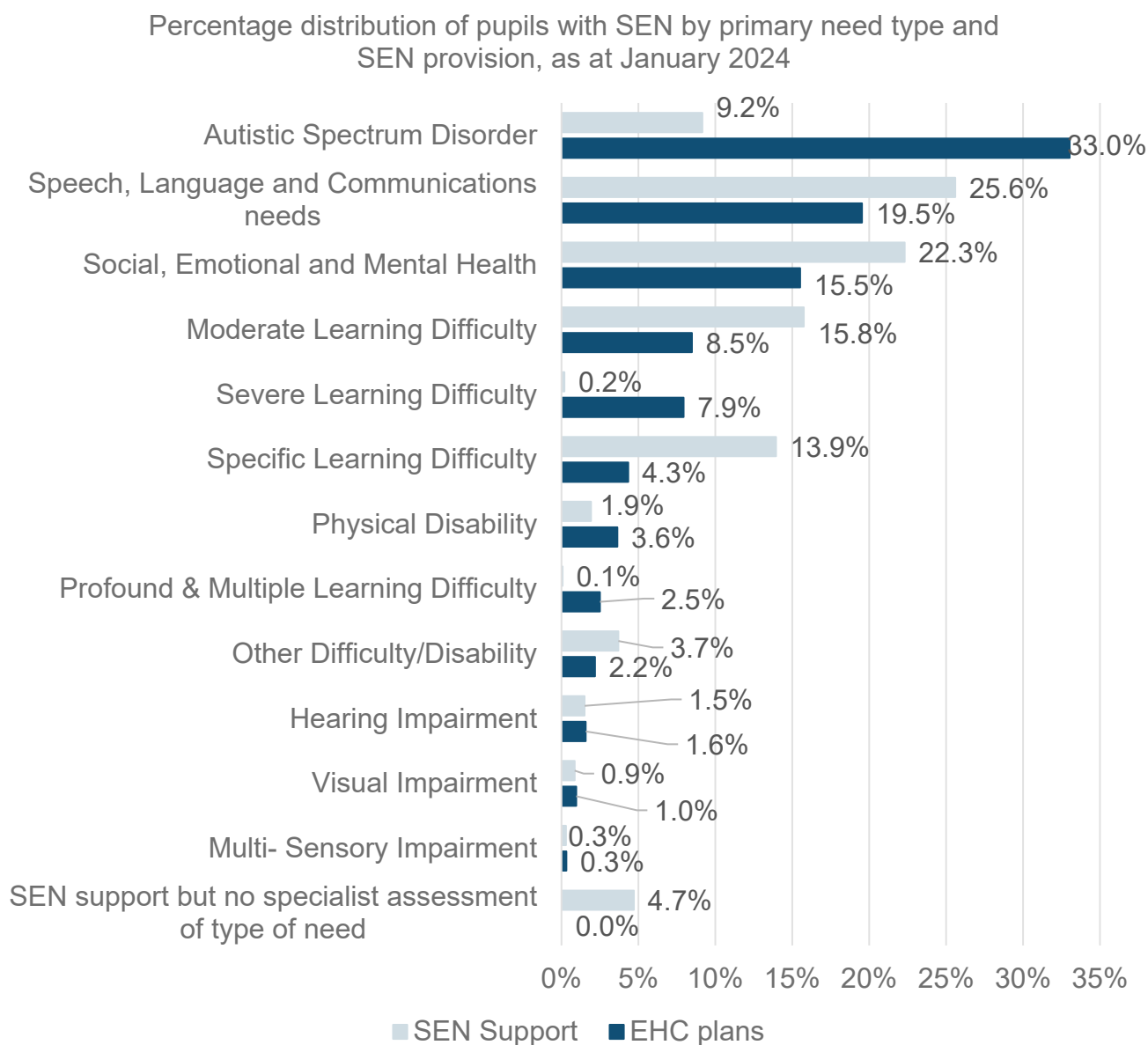
<sup>5</sup> Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans were introduced in September 2014. Statements of SEN had previously been issued under a different legal framework and these were phased out over the next 4 years. Wherever this document refers to EHC plans for the period 2014-2018, this refers both to such plans and to Statements of SEN.

## Type of need

In January 2024, for pupils with EHC plans, 'Autistic Spectrum Disorder' was the most common primary type of need, with 132,200 (33.0%) pupils with EHC plans having this recorded as their primary type of need.

For pupils on SEN support, 'Speech, language and communication needs' was the most common type of need, with 291,700 (25.6%) pupils on SEN support having this recorded as their primary type of need.

**Figure 4: Percentage distribution of pupils with SEN by primary need type and SEN provision, as at January 2024**



Source: School Census

## Characteristics

### Gender

Special educational needs are more prevalent in boys than girls. 72.0% of pupils with an EHC plan in 2024 are boys, and 62.0% of pupils with on SEN support are boys. Both of these rates have been slowly decreasing in recent years.

### Free school meal eligibility

Pupils with special educational needs are more likely to be eligible for free school meals. 42.2% of pupils with an EHC plan and 38.3% of pupils on SEN support were eligible for free school meals in January 2024 compared to 21.4% of pupils without identified special educational needs.

### Ethnicity

In January 2024, among the different ethnic groups, those recorded as 'Traveller of Irish heritage', 'Black Caribbean' and 'Other Black background' had the highest proportion of pupils with an EHC plan, with percentages of 7.3%, 6.4% and 6.3% respectively. Conversely, those recorded as 'Chinese' ethnic group had the lowest percentage of pupils with an EHC plan at 2.2%.

### English as a first language

84.2% of pupils who have SEN support and 84.2% of pupils with an EHC plan have a first language known to be or believed to be English. This is a slight decrease from the previous year and compares to 78.7% of all pupils in schools.

### Types of school

In January 2024, 81.3% of pupils with SEN were in state-funded mainstream school, similar to the January 2023 figure of 81.6%. Although the number of pupils with an EHC plan in special schools has increased between 2023 and 2024, the percentage of pupils with an EHC plan attending state-funded special schools has dropped from 37.9% to 35.8%. These trends continue patterns seen since 2018.

The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan attending independent schools has increased significantly in recent years. In January 2015, 5.3% of all pupils with statements attended independent schools, and this has increased to 7.7% of all pupils with an EHC plan in January 2024.



**Figure 5: Percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan by type of provision,**

School type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Maintained nursery	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
State-funded primary	27.4	28.3	29.4	29.7	30.3	31.5
State-funded secondary	20.4	20.4	21.0	21.6	22.4	23.0
State-funded special	43.8	42.6	40.6	39.4	37.9	35.8
State-funded Alternative Provision schools	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Independent	6.1	6.4	6.7	7.0	7.4	7.7
Non-maintained special schools	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9

Source: School Census

## Early years

In 2023, the number of children registered for the 15-hour entitlements was at the lowest point in each series, down to 1,196,000<sup>6</sup>. Of these children, the percentage all of children with SEN, that is both SEN support and EHCPs, increased from 7.0% in 2022 to 8.0% in 2023.

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

[Special educational needs in England](#) Next update due June 2025

[Education provision: children under 5 years of age](#) Next update due July 2025

<sup>6</sup> The **take-up rate of 3 and 4-year-olds registered for the 15-hour entitlement needs to be treated with caution** and likely underestimates the true rate by up to 5 percentage points. See the linked publication for full details.

## Looked after children and children in need with SEN – prevalence and characteristics

Prevalence: 58.1% of children who had been looked-after continuously for 12 months at 31 March 2023 for whom data were available had SEN , which consists of 30.8% with an EHC plan and 27.3% with SEN support. This compares with 50.0% of children in need with SEN. In the overall pupil population, 17.1% of pupils are identified with SEN.

The most common type of need for all looked after children at 31 March 2023 was ‘Social, Emotional and Mental Health’.

**Note: Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked-after by a local authority if they fall into one of the following:**

-is provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours [Children Act 1989, sections 20 and 21]

-is subject to a care order [Children Act 1989, Part IV]

-is subject to a placement order [Children Act 1989, section 21]

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of children's social care services, or the child is disabled.

**More information on outcomes for looked after children and children in need SEN can be found in the following publication:**

[Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities in England](#) Next update due March 2025.

## Outcomes

Outcomes data is published by a range of characteristics, including pupils identified with special educational needs, for those in state-funded schools. The section below gives a summary of the available data, further information can be found in the source publications.

### Note:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department for Education cancelled the 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021 national curriculum assessments.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021 data collections and subsequent statistical releases were cancelled.

## Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

Pre COVID-19 pandemic, there was a steady increase over time in the percentage of children with SEN achieving a good level of development<sup>7</sup>. Following the pandemic, in 2022 to 2023, 19.8% of children with SEN were assessed at a good level of development, which is 1.0 percentage points higher than the figure for 2021 to 2022 of 18.8%. Of these, 24.3% of children with SEN support had a good level of development, up from 22.9% and 3.8% of children with an EHCP did, up from 3.6%. The percentage of children with no identified SEN with a good level of development also increased to 74.0% in 2022 to 2023 from 70.9% in 2021 to 2022, an increase of 3.1 percentage points.

## Phonics screening check

The percentage of year 1 pupils who met the expected standard in the phonics screening check is similar to pre-pandemic levels. In 2022 to 2023, 42% of pupils with SEN met the expected standard in the latest measurement period, compared with 38% in 2021 to 2022 and 43% in 2018 to 2019. Of those pupils with SEN, 48% of those on SEN support and 20% of those with an EHC plan met the expected standard in 2022 to 2023. The proportion of pupil with no identified SEN meeting the expected standard in the phonics

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<sup>7</sup> Children are defined as having a good level of development at the end of the [EYFS](#) if they are at the expected level for the 12 ELGs within the 5 areas of learning relating to: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; physical development; literacy; and mathematics.

screening check is also similar to pre-pandemic levels, 86% in 2022 to 2023 compared to, 82% in 2021 to 2022 and 88% in 2018 to 2019.

## Key Stage 1

The percentage of pupils who achieved the expected standard in KS1 teacher assessments (TA) has dropped in both SEN and non-SEN categories following the COVID-19 pandemic. Teacher assessments were not collected in 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021 due to the COVID pandemic.

**Figure 6: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS1 teacher assessments (TA) by SEN provision, 2018 to 2019.**

Teacher Assessment	EHCP	SEN support	No SEN
Reading TA	13	33	83
Writing TA	9	25	78
Maths TA	14	36	84

Source: National Pupil Database (NPD)

**Figure 7: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS1 teacher assessments (TA) by SEN provision, 2021 to 2022.**

Teacher Assessment	EHCP	SEN support	No SEN
Reading TA	12	30	75
Writing TA	7	20	66
Maths TA	14	33	75

Source: National Pupil Database (NPD)

**Figure 8: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS1 teacher assessments (TA) by SEN provision, 2022 to 2023**

Teacher Assessment	EHCP	SEN support	No SEN
Reading TA	12	32	77
Writing TA	8	22	69
Maths TA	15	37	79

Source: National Pupil Database (NPD)

## Key Stage 2

24% of pupils on SEN support and 8% of pupils with EHCPs achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of KS2 in 2022 to 2023 compared to 70% of those with no identified SEN – these figures have increased compared to 2021 to 2022 where 21% of pupils on SEN support, 7% of pupils with an EHCP and 69% of pupils with no identified SEN reached the expected standard but are reductions in comparison to 2018 to 2019 when the figures were 25%, 9% and 74% respectively.

Pupils with SEN have lower progress scores compared to those with no identified SEN and the score is lowest in writing TA.

**Figure 9: Average progress scores by SEN provision, 2022 to 2023**

	<b>EHCP</b>	<b>SEN support</b>	<b>No identified SEN</b>
<b>Reading</b>	-4.36	-0.58	0.42
<b>Writing TA</b>	-4.41	-1.53	0.62
<b>Maths</b>	-4.12	-0.84	0.45

*Source: National Pupil Database (NPD)*

### **Note:**

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. As writing is teacher assessed, point scores rather than scaled scores are used to calculate progress. See source publication (link below) for detail of definitions.

## Key Stage 4

The average attainment 8 score for pupils with SEN support in 2022 to 2023 was 33.3 compared to 50.0 for those with no identified SEN. For those with an EHC plan this was 14.0. For context, a higher attainment 8 score means greater attainment at the end of KS4.

In 2022 to 2023, 20.7% of pupils with SEN support achieved grades 5 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs, compared to 51.0% of pupils with no identified SEN. For those with an EHC plan this was 6.9%

See source publication (link below) for detail of definitions.

## Post-16 – attainment by age 19

56.3% of pupils who were in state-funded mainstream schools and identified with SEN in year 11 achieved Level 2 (equivalent to 5+ 9-4 at GCSE) by age 19 in 2022 to 2023, which is 32.8 percentage points lower than pupils with no identified SEN (89.1%).

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

[Early years foundation stage profile results](#) Next update due November 2024

[Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England](#) Next update due October 2024

[Key stage 2 attainment](#) Next update due September 2024

[Key stage 4 performance](#) Next update due October 2024

[Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 16 to 25](#) Next update due April 2025

## Absence, exclusions and suspensions

### Absence

12.3% of sessions were missed for pupils with EHC plans over 2022 to 2023 compared to 10.2% for pupils on SEN support and 6.6% for pupils without SEN.

36.0% of pupils with EHC plans were persistent absentees<sup>8</sup> over 2022 to 2023 compared to 31.1% for pupils on SEN support and 18.4% for pupils without SEN.

2022 to 2023 was the second academic year which was entirely “post-pandemic” with no disruptions caused by periods of lockdown since 2018 to 2019, with the first being 2021 to 2022. Due to the disruptions faced during previous years, caution should be taken comparing current data with historical data.

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<sup>8</sup> A pupil enrolment is identified as persistently absent if 10% or more of possible sessions are missed.

## Exclusions

The rate of suspensions in the Spring term of 2022 to 2023 among pupils with EHC plans is 6.98, which is lower than for those on SEN support at 8.04. This compares to 2.18 for pupils with no SEN.

The rate of permanent exclusions in the same period among those pupils who have an EHC plan is 0.07, which, like suspensions, is lower than for those on SEN support at 0.12. This compares to 0.02 for pupils with no SEN.

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

[Pupil absence in schools in England](#) Next update due March 2024

[Suspensions and permanent exclusions in England](#) Next update due November 2024

# Preparation for adulthood

## Post-16 learner participation

### Participation for 16- and 17-year-olds

Raising the participation age (RPA) legislation was introduced in 2013 to 2014 increasing the age to which all young people in England are required to remain in education or training. 87.2% of 16–17-year-olds flagged as having an EHC plan<sup>9</sup> were in education and training in March 2023 compared with 93.2% of those flagged with having no identified SEN. These are similar to the previous year's figures of 88.7% and 93.7% respectively.

### Participation in Further Education

In the Academic Year 2022 to 2023, out of all adults aged 19+ in government-funded further education and skills, learners recorded as having a Learning difficulty/disability or health problem (LLDD) account for 18.5% of the cohort (325,470) an increase of 11.8% from 291,010 in 2021 to 2022.

## Destinations

### After Key Stage 4

Pupils with SEN at the end of KS4 were 5.7 percentage points less likely to have any sustained destination than those with no identified SEN. 88.9% of pupils with SEN went onto education, employment or apprenticeships compared to 94.6% of those with no identified SEN (2021 to 2022 destinations). To be counted in a destination, young people have to have sustained participation for a 6 month period in the destination year.

### After Key Stage 5

Students with recorded special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools were 5.2 percentage points less likely to have an overall sustained destination than those students without SEN (83.9% compared to 89.1%, respectively, for 2021 to 2022 destinations). 69.8% of those with self-declared Learning Difficulty, Disability or health problem (LLDD) in state-funded mainstream colleges progressed to a sustained education, employment or apprenticeship destination compared to 78.5% of those without LLDD (2021 to 2022 destinations).

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<sup>9</sup> The SEND flag applies where a young person: i) Has an EHC plan, or ii) Had an EHC plan or statement of SEN at the time of completing compulsory education.



## Progression to higher education (HE)

In 2021 to 2022, 8.9% of pupils with an EHC plan at the end of KS4 progressed to HE by age 19, compared to 24.2% of pupils with SEN support at the end of KS4 and 51.2% for pupils with no identified SEN. The progression rate for pupils with an EHC plan, SEN support and pupils with no identified SEN all increased from 8.7%, 22.5% and 48.6% respectively in the previous year.

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

[NEET and participation: local authority figures](#) (Management Information, Data for previous years can be found here [Participation in education and training: local authority figures](#)) Next update due Autumn 2024

[Further education and skills](#) Next update due November 2024

[Destinations of key stage 4 students](#) Next update due October 2024

[16-18 destination measures](#) Next update due October 2024

[Widening participation in higher education](#) Next update due July 2025

## Employment status

In the 2022 to 23 financial year, 4.8% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who were receiving support from social services were in paid employment.

### More information on Employment status can be found in the following publication:

[Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England](#) Next update due October 2024

## Experience of the SEND system

### Total number of EHC plans maintained by local authorities

There were 576,000 children and young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans as of January 2024<sup>10</sup>. This is an increase of 11.4% from 517,000 as at January 2023. This follows similar increases in recent years.

### Number of new EHC plans issued by local authorities

84,400 new EHC plans were issued during 2023, an increase of 26.6% when compared against 2022. This is significantly higher than the increase of 11.0% from 2021 to 2022.

### Number of initial requests for assessment

There were 138,200 initial requests made for assessment for an EHC plan during 2023, up from 114,500 in 2022 and the highest number since data was first collected in 2016.

### Timeliness of issuing statements and EHC plans

Of those plans where a decision to issue a new plan was within the 2023 calendar year (excluding cases where exceptions apply), 50.3% were issued within the statutory 20 week time limit. This is an increase from 2022 when 49.2% of new plans were issued within the time limit.

This figure excludes cases where under the legislation exceptional circumstances mean that the local authority need not comply with the 20 week time limit if it is impractical to do so.

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

[Education, health and care plans](#) Next update due June 2025

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<sup>10</sup> Following the SEND reforms introduced in September 2014 there was a period of transition to move all those with a statement of SEN onto an EHC plan. This transition period formally ended on 31 March 2018 and as at January 2019 there were no pupils remaining on a statement of SEN.

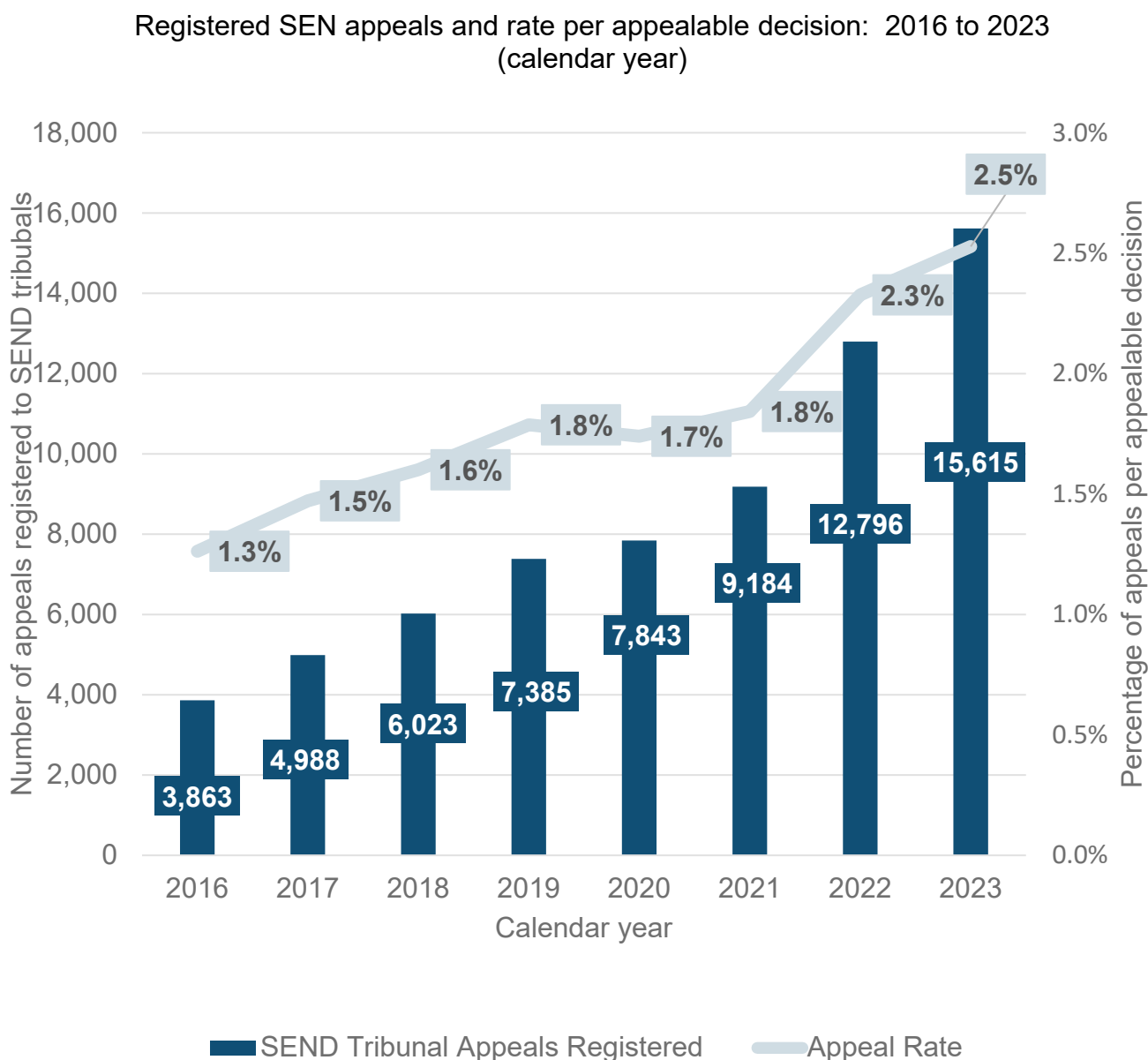
## Appeals registered with the SEND tribunal

Parents/carers and young people can register an appeal with the SEND tribunal if they disagree with a decision their Local Authority (LA) has made regarding an EHC plan or needs assessment. There were 15,615 appeals registered in 2023 (calendar year), which is equivalent to an estimated 2.5% of appealable decisions. This is an increase of 22% compared to the previous year when there were 12,796 appeals registered equivalent to an estimated 2.3% of appealable decisions.

**Note: The total appealable decisions figure is calculated as the sum total of the following:**

- Number of initial requests for Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessments refused
- Number of assessments completed and a decision made not to issue an EHC plan
- Number with an EHC plan as at January each year
- Number of EHC plans ceased because the special educational needs of the child or young person are being met without an EHC plan

**Figure 10: Registered SEN appeals and rate per appealable decision: 2016 to 2023 (calendar year).**



Source: HMCTS Tribunals statistics

Of the 13,658 registered SEND appeals in 2022 to 2023 (academic year), 58% were in relation to the content of EHC plans and 28% were against 'refusal to secure an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment'.

The most common primary type of need identified in SEND appeals continues to be Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), accounting for 45% (1,935) of all SEND appeals.

In 2022 to 2023 His Majesties Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) recorded 11,711 outcomes in relation to SEN appeals, an increase of 29% compared to 2021 to 2022

**Figure 11: Tribunal outcomes in relation to SEN appeals, 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023**

	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
<b>Total outcomes</b>	9,076	11,711
<b>Withdrawn</b>	11% (1,035)	10% (1,187)
<b>Conceded</b>	27% (2,441)	22% (2,556)
<b>Outcomes decided by tribunal</b>	62% (5,600)	68% (7,968)
<b><i>Of outcomes decided, decisions found to be at least part in favour of appellant</i></b>	96% (5,393)	98% (7,829)

Source: HMCTS Tribunals statistics

The quarterly tribunal statistics, which were published in June 2024, show 18,000 tribunal receipts<sup>11</sup> with the SEND tribunal between January-March 2024, the highest amount in any year in the timeseries and an increase of 31% compared to the previous year (there were 14,000 between January-March 2022).

**More information on SEND tribunals can be found in the following publication:**

[Tribunals statistics](#) Next update for the academic year due December 2024 and appeal rates for the calendar year due June 2025

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<sup>11</sup> Tribunal receipts is a volumetric term covering the acceptance of a case by a HMCTS Tribunal. Also known as a 'case' for Employment Tribunals.

## Disability

The DWP Family Resources Survey shows that in 2022-23, 11% of children in the UK had a disability. This proportion has increased from 6% in 2011-12. For disabled children, the most common impairment type was social or behavioural impairments, with half reporting this. This was followed by a learning impairment, at 32%; then a mental health impairment, at 30%

The DfE Childcare and Early Years survey of Parents for 2021 suggests that 8% of children have longstanding health conditions or disabilities. Children in lone parent families are more likely to have a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability (11%) or a special educational need (18%) compared with children in couple families (7% and 11% respectively).

The Children in Need (CIN) census is an annual survey from 2008-09 onwards that includes the numbers of disabled CIN in England. The CIN census enables DfE to support future policy development by achieving a better understanding of these vulnerable children. Latest figures show that of those recorded as children in need as at 31 March 2022, 12.8% had a recorded disability. This figure has remained stable over the last few years.

## Housing status for adults with learning disabilities receiving support from social services

In the 2022 to 2023 financial year 80.5% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who were receiving support from social services lived in their own home or with their families.

### **More information on disability can be found in the following publications:**

[Family Resources Survey](#) Next due March 2025

[Childcare and early years survey of parents](#) Next update due July 2025

[Characteristics of children in need](#) Next update due October 2024

[Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England](#) Next update due October 2024

## Related information

### High Needs benchmarking tool

This tool estimates gross spend per head on specialist provision using section 251 data by school type, a collection of official statistics and management information published by the Education Skills and Funding agency. It is available to access at [High needs benchmarking tool](#)

### Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

This tool is produced by the Department for Education, 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 Department for Education has also worked with the Local Government Association (LGA) to produce a local area SEND comparison tool on LG Inform, a local authority comparison tool similar to the LAIT. With the 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 report is available at the following link, and users can generate reports for individual local areas: [Local Area SEN report link](#).

### Ofsted/ CQC inspections

Ofsted and the 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 [Area SEND inspection framework and handbook](#). Outcome letters from these inspections can be found here: [Ofsted/ CQC outcomes link](#).

### How do I find related research published by government?

All research and statistics publication published by government can be found on [the government website](#).

This publication summarises the key statistics publications related to SEND, but there are multiple research reports also published that users may find useful. To access this, please use the following steps:

- Step 1: Go to [the research and statistics page](#)
- Step 2: Select “Education, training and skills” under ‘Topic’ and then select “Special educational needs and disability (SEND) and high needs” under ‘Sub-topic’. Then select “Department for Education (DfE)” under ‘Organisation’.
- Step 3: The documents that match these chosen filters will be then presented. You can look through the research reports of interest, and download them.

## How do I create my own tables on Explore Education Statistics?

Rather than going to each publication referenced here to look through the other statistics available, for DfE publications, you may want to create your own tables by using the functionality available on Explore Education Statistics (EES). To do this, use the following steps.

- Step 1: Go to [ESS](#).
- Step 2: Select ‘Create’ under the create your own table heading and click through the filters to make a table of your choice. For example, to retrieve KS4 destination figures by SEN status, you select ‘Create’ then select ‘Destinations of pupils and students’ then select ‘Key Stage 4 destination measures’. Then select ‘Next step’ followed by ‘KS4 destinations SEN break-down’. You can then edit the chosen filters, if required.
- Step 3: You can download the table and/or edit the measures you want to present.



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[SEN.Statistics@education.gov.uk](mailto:SEN.Statistics@education.gov.uk)



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