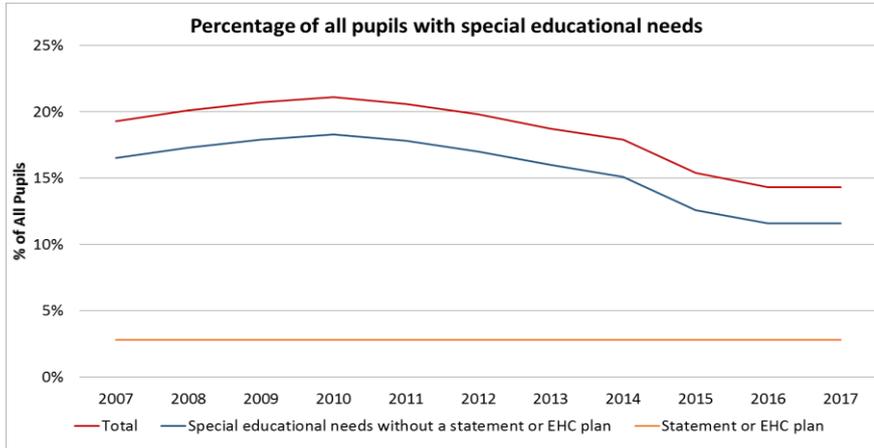




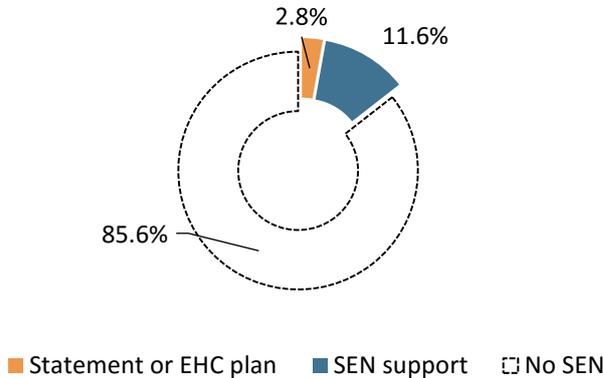
SFR 37/2017, 27 July 2017

The percentage of pupils with special educational needs remains at 14.4%...



The number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) has increased from 1,228,785 in January 2016 to 1,244,255 in January 2017. While this is the first annual increase since 2010, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs remains stable at 14.4%.

...and the percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan remains at 2.8%

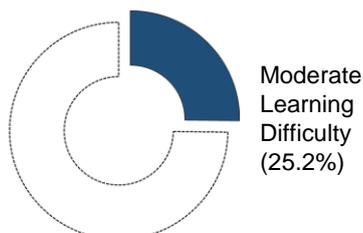


242,185 pupils have a statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. This is an increase of 5,380 since January 2016, but remains equal to 2.8% of the total pupil population.

A further 1,002,070 pupils are on SEN support. This is equal to 11.6% of the total pupil population and remains unchanged since January 2016.

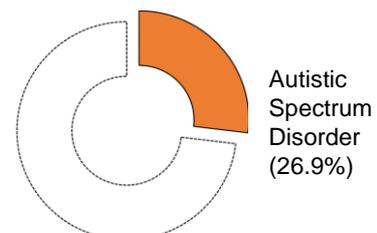
The most common primary types of needs have remained the same from 2016...

Primary type of need for pupils on SEN support



25.2% of pupils on SEN support have Moderate Learning Difficulty as a primary type of need in January 2017.

Primary type of need for pupils with a statement or EHC plan



26.9% of pupils with a statement or EHC plan have Autistic Spectrum Disorder as a primary type of need in January 2017.

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About this release

This statistical first release (SFR) publishes data from the January 2017 school census and about pupils with special educational needs and information about special schools in England. In addition, this SFR includes breakdowns by age, national curriculum year group, gender, ethnicity, English as a first language and free school meal eligibility. It includes data about special schools and SEN units, and an 'additional tables' document.

The school census contains pupil level data from all academies including free schools, maintained and non-maintained special schools, middle schools as deemed, all-through schools, city technology colleges, pupil referral units, university technology colleges, studio schools and direct grant nursery schools. Further data is collected in the General Hospital School census and the School Level Annual School Census.

In this publication

The following tables are included in the SFR:

- National Tables (Excel .xls)
- Local Authority Tables (Excel .xls)
- Additional Tables (by Primary type of Need) (Excel. xls)
- Underlying data (open format .csv and metadata .pdf)

The accompanying technical document provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at SEN.statistics@education.gov.uk

1. Pupils with special educational needs in schools (Table 1)

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Reforms

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provisions in the Children and Families Act 2014 were introduced on 1 September 2014. From September 2014, children or young people who are newly referred to a local authority for assessment are considered under the new Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan assessment process.

An EHC plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has Special Educational Needs (SEN) or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.

The legal test of when a child or young person requires an EHC plan remains the same as that for a statement under the Education Act 1996. Transferring children and young people with statements to EHC plans will be phased.

Timescales are set out in [Transition to the new 0 to 25 special educational needs and disability system: Departmental advice for local authorities and their partners \(September 2015\)](#).

In addition, the previous 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus' categories were replaced by a new category 'SEN support'. All transfers to this category have now taken place.

See the [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25](#) for more detailed information on the reforms. The Code of Practice provides improved guidance to help schools and others more accurately identify children with SEN.

Pupils with special educational needs are currently classified as follows:

SEN Support

From 2015, the School Action and School Action Plus categories have combined to form one category of SEN support. Extra or different help is given from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum. The class teacher and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) may receive advice or support from outside specialists. The pupil does not have a statement or education, health and care plan.

Statement of special educational needs (statement) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

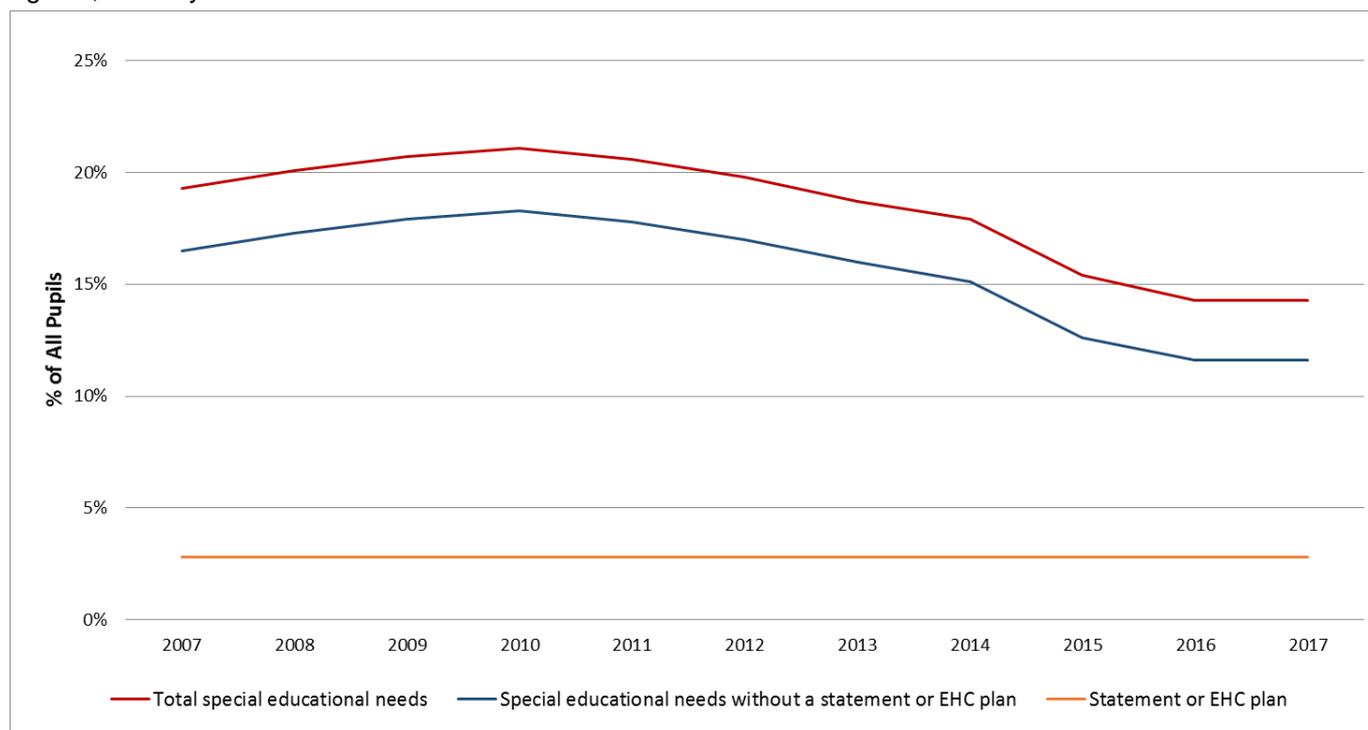
A pupil has a statement or EHC plan when a formal assessment has been made. A document is in place that sets out the child's need and the extra help they should receive.

Across all schools, the number of pupils with special educational needs has risen from 1,228,785 in January 2016 to 1,244,255 in January 2017. The percentage of all pupils that have special educational needs remains at 14.4%, unchanged since January 2016, following a fall from 15.4% in January 2015.

The percentage of pupils with SEN Support, those with identified special educational needs but no Statement or EHC plan, has remained constant also, at 11.6%, following a decline in each of the previous six years from 18.3% of pupils in January 2010.

242,185 pupils have a statement or EHC plan. This is an increase of 5,380 since January 2016, but remains equal to 2.8% of the total pupil population. The percentage of pupils with statement or EHC plans has remained constant since 2007.

Figure A: Time series showing the percentage of pupils with special educational needs
England, January 2007-2017



Source: School census, SLASC and General Hospital School Census 2007-2017 (as at January each year)

2. Primary type of need (Table 8)

Coverage

Primary type of need is collected for those pupils on SEN support or with a statement or EHC plan. The coverage since 2015 is different from previous years. Prior to the introduction of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provisions in the Children and Families Act 2014 on 1 September 2014, pupils were registered as being on School Action or School Action Plus. School Action was used where a school identified that action needed to be taken to meet a special educational need and could be provided within the school. School Action Plus was used where School Action could not meet the requirements of the pupil and external support was also required.

Pupils who were on School Action were not required to have a primary type of need recorded. From 2015 pupils who were on School Action who have transferred to SEN support will be recorded as having a primary type of need. This led to an increase in the number of pupils recorded as having a primary type of need from 2015 to 2016. No pupils have been recorded as School Action since 2015.

Classification changes

There were changes to the classification of type of need in 2015: the previous code of 'Behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD)' was removed. A new code 'Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)' was introduced, although this was not intended to be a direct replacement. The code 'SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need' was also introduced in 2015. Due to the changes in coverage and classification, it is not possible to produce a direct comparison with data prior to 2015.

A list of the Primary types of needs is available within the accompanying technical document. Further detailed definitions are available within the [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25](#)

Moderate Learning Difficulty is the most common primary type of need overall, as was the case in January 2015 and January 2016. 22.7% of pupils with special educational needs have this primary type of need in January 2017. This percentage has decreased from 24.2% in January 2016.

Moderate Learning Difficulty is also the most common type of need for pupils on SEN support; 25.2% of pupils on SEN support had this primary type of need in January 2017.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder remains the most common primary type of need for pupils with a statement or EHC plan, with 26.9% of pupils with a statement or EHC plan had this primary type of need in January 2017. This has increased from 25.9% in January 2016.

Figure B: Percentage of pupils with each primary type of need who are identified as SEN (either on SEN support or with a statement or EHC plan) in state funded primary, secondary and special schools England, January 2017



Source: *Schools census, January 2017*

3. Types of school (Table 1 and table 2)

The percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan attending maintained special schools has seen a year on year increase since January 2010. In January 2010, 38.2% of pupils with statements attended maintained special schools, and this has increased to 43.8% of pupils with statements or EHC plans in January 2017. The percentage of pupils with statements or EHC plans attending independent schools has also increased year on year between January 2010 and January 2017, from 4.2% to 5.8%.

Figure C: Percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan by type of provision
England, January 2010-2017

School type ¹	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Maintained nursery	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
State-funded primary	25.8	25.8	25.9	26.0	26.2	26.2	25.5	25.8
State-funded secondary	28.8	28.4	27.7	26.9	25.7	24.6	23.5	22.2
Maintained special	38.2	38.7	39.0	39.6	40.5	41.4	42.9	43.8
Pupil Referral Units	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7
Independent ²	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.7	5.8
Non-maintained special	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5

Source: *School Census and School Level Annual School Census 2010-2017 (as at January each year)*

The percentage of pupils with SEN without statements or EHC plans attending independent schools has gradually increased each year. In January 2010, 4.0% of pupils with SEN without statements or EHC plans attended independent schools and this has increased to 6.7% of pupils in January 2017.

¹ Includes all academies including free schools, maintained and non-maintained special schools, middle schools as deemed, all-through schools, city technology colleges, university technology colleges, studio schools, direct grant nursery schools, pupil referral units and general hospital schools.

² Registered Independent schools. Source: School Level Annual School Census 2017

The percentage of pupils with SEN without statements or EHC plans attending state-funded primary schools has also increased between January 2010 and January 2017, from 51.4% to 57.0%. Meanwhile, the percentage of pupils with SEN without statements or EHC plans attending state-funded secondary schools has declined over the same period, from 43.6% in January 2010 to 34.4% in January 2017.

Figure D: Percentage of pupils with SEN without statements or EHC plans by type of provision
England, January 2010-2017

School type ³	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Maintained nursery	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6
State-funded primary	51.4	51.2	51.8	52.4	53.4	55.2	56.3	57.0
State-funded secondary	43.6	43.6	42.5	41.5	40.2	37.2	35.4	34.4
Maintained special	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Pupil Referral Units	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.0
Independent ⁴	4.0	4.1	4.5	4.8	5.2	6.0	6.5	6.7
Non-maintained special	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: School Census and School Level Annual School Census 2010-2017 (as at January each year)

Pupils with special educational needs in academies

The percentage of pupils with SEN support in primary academies is 12.2%, the same as the overall percentage of pupils with support in all state funded primary schools. 10.5% of pupils in secondary academies have special educational needs, compared to 10.7% in all state funded secondary schools. The percentage of pupils in primary academies with a statement or EHC plan is 1.3%. This is unchanged from January 2016 and is the same as the overall percentage for all state funded primary schools. The percentage of pupils in secondary academies with a statement or EHC plan is 1.6%, compared to 1.7% in all state funded secondary schools).

Academies

Academies have exactly the same duties for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) as all other schools. All schools have a duty to adhere to the equality act for pupils with disabilities, to have regard for the [SEND code of practice](#) and to use their best endeavours to meet pupils' needs. This means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's special educational needs. All schools have a duty to admit a young person, where the school is named in an EHC plan and engage with parents on the support provided for their children and involve them in reviewing progress.

4. Age and gender (table 3)

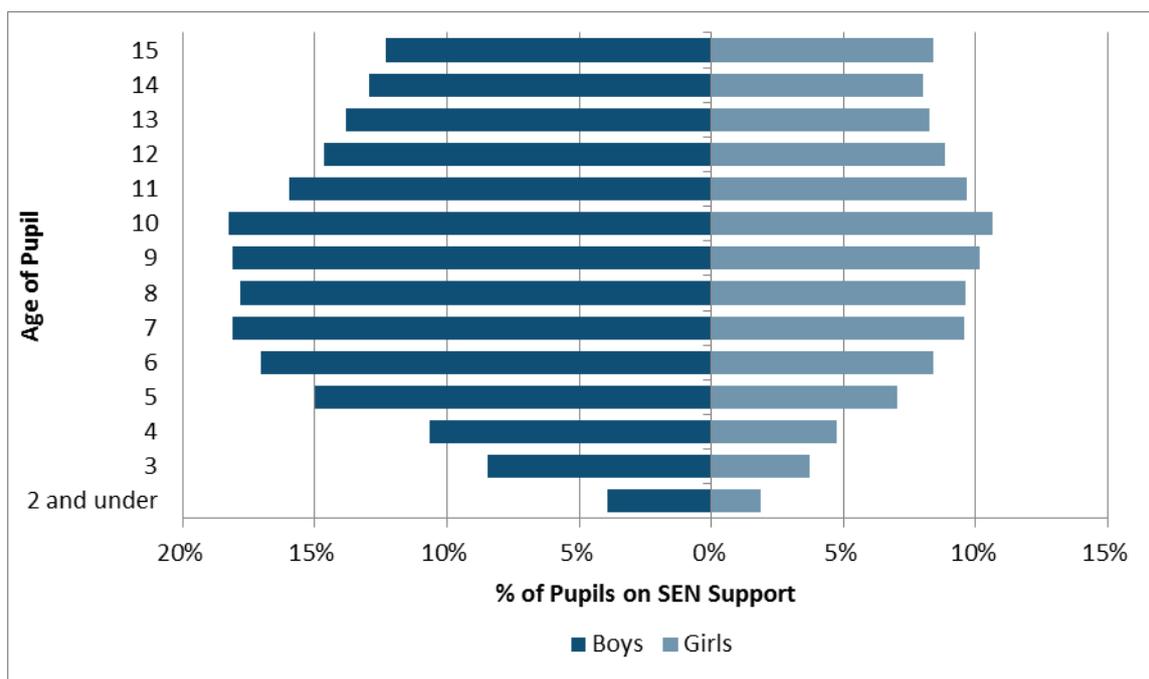
Special educational needs remain more prevalent in boys than girls in January 2017: 14.6% of boys were on SEN support compared to 8.1% of girls. There is little change from January 2016 when 14.7% of boys and 8.2% of girls were on SEN support.

4.0% of boys have a statement or EHC plan in January 2017, unchanged from January 2016. 1.6% of girls have a statement or EHC plan in January 2017; this has increased slightly from 1.5% of girls in January 2016.

³ Includes all academies including free schools, maintained and non-maintained special schools, middle schools as deemed, all-through schools, city technology colleges, university technology colleges, studio schools, direct grant nursery schools, pupil referral units and general hospital schools.

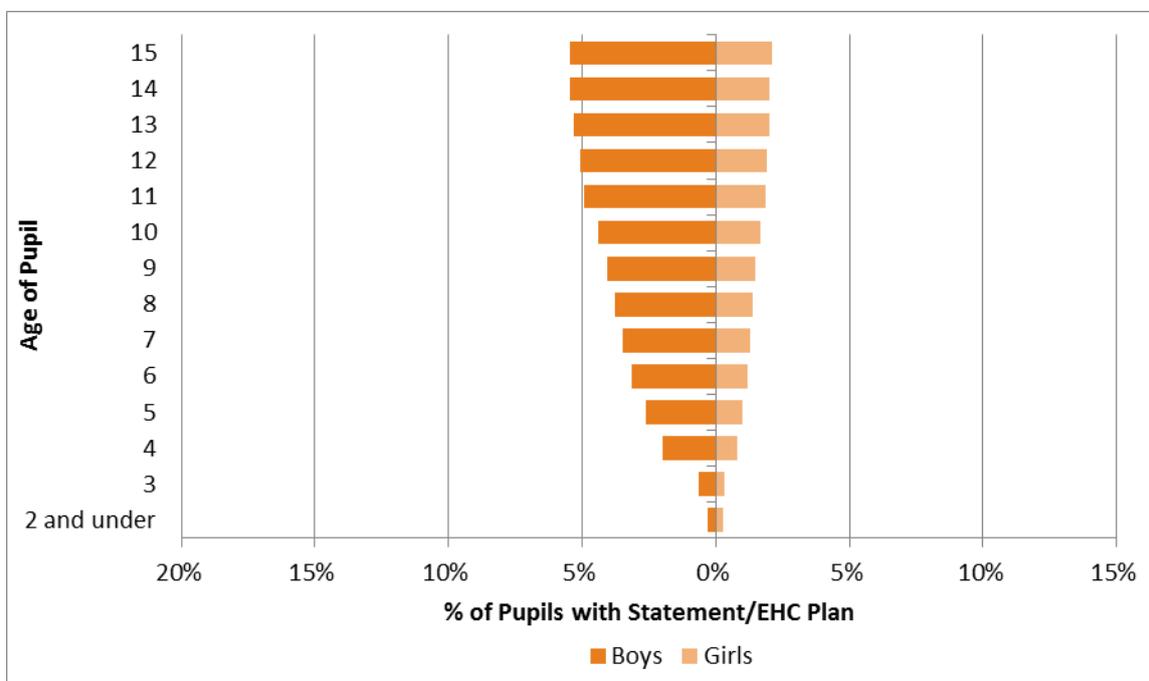
⁴ Registered Independent schools. Source: School Level Annual School Census 2017

Figure E: Percentage of pupils on SEN support by age and gender in state-funded primary, secondary and special schools
 England, January 2017



Source: School Census 2017

Figure F: Percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan by age and gender in state-funded primary, secondary and special schools
 England, January 2017



Source: School census 2017

SEN support is most prevalent among 10 year-olds. This is consistent with previous years. 14.5% of 10 year-old pupils were on SEN support in January 2017. Statements or EHC plans are most prevalent at age 15, where 3.8% of pupils have a statement or EHC plan in January 2017.

5. Other characteristics (table 5, 6 and 7)

Free school meal eligibility

Pupils with special educational needs remain more likely to be eligible for free school meals. 26.6% of pupils with special educational needs are eligible for free school meals compared to 11.8% of pupils without special educational needs. Pupils with statements or EHC plans are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils on SEN support (31.4% compared to 25.4%).

Ethnicity

Special educational needs are most prevalent in travellers of Irish heritage and Gypsy/Roma pupils with 30.8% and 26.9% respectively.

Travellers of Irish heritage and black Caribbean pupils had the highest percentage of pupils with statements or EHC plans (4.4% and 4.0% respectively). Indian pupils had the lowest percentage of pupils with statements or EHC plans at 1.8%, compared with 2.8% of all pupils nationally.

English as a first language

Pupils whose first language is known to be English are more likely to have special educational needs than those whose first language is known to be other than English.

11.7% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be English were on SEN support in January 2017, a reduction from 12.4% in January 2016. 10.2% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English were on SEN support in January 2017, a reduction from 11.1% in January 2016.

2.9% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be English have a statement or EHC plan, compared to 3.2% in January 2016. 2.3% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English have a statement or EHC plan, a reduction from 2.5% in January 2016.

6. Special schools (tables 9 and 10)

There are 1,037 state-funded and non-maintained special schools in England. The approved provision type is the type of special need for which the school is formally approved to make provision. The most common approved provision type for special schools is Autistic Spectrum Disorder. In total, 662 state funded and non-maintained special schools are approved for this provision type. 556 schools have approved provision for Severe Learning Difficulty, and 537 schools have approved provision for Moderate Learning Difficulty.

7. Other characteristics by primary type of need (additional tables)

Gender

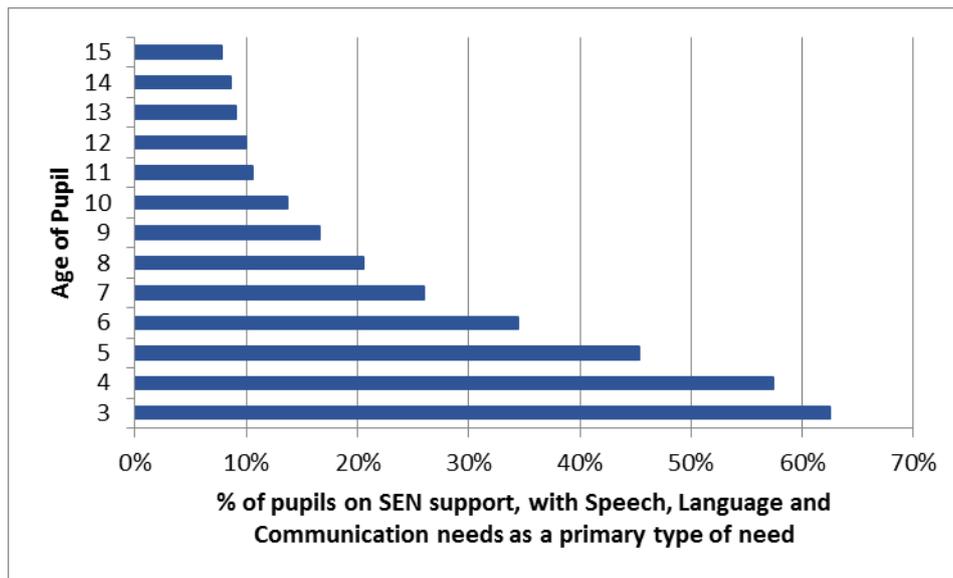
In January 2017, Autistic Spectrum Disorder is the most prevalent primary type of need for boys with a statement or EHC plan. 31.1% of boys with a statement or EHC plan have this primary type of need, compared with 15.7% of girls. Speech, Language and Communication needs was the most prevalent primary type of need among boys with SEN support (23.4%), compared with 19.3% of girls.

The most prevalent primary type of need among girls with a statement or EHC plan is Severe Learning Difficulty. 16.7% of girls have this primary type of need, compared to 11.5% of boys in January 2017. Moderate Learning difficulty was the most prevalent primary type of need among girls with SEN support (28.7%), compared with 23.3% of boys.

Age

There is some variation among age groups for primary type of need. 62.5% of 3 year-olds on SEN support have a primary type of need of Speech Language and Communication needs. This reduces to 13.7% of 10 year-olds and 7.8% of 15 year-olds.

Figure G: Percentage of pupils on SEN support, with speech language and communication needs as a primary type of need by age in state funded primary, secondary and special schools England, January 2017



Source: School census 2017

Specific Learning Difficulty is more prevalent in secondary aged pupils with SEN support than primary aged pupils. 26.0% of 15 year olds on SEN support had this primary type of need compared with 10.4% of 7 year olds. The difference between age groups is less distinct for pupils with a statement or EHC plan, however Moderate Learning Difficulty and Social Emotional and Mental Health are both more prevalent in older pupils.

Autistic Spectrum disorder is the most prevalent primary type of need across ages 4 to 18 for those pupils with a statement or EHC plan. This is highest at age 4, with 35.2%.

Ethnicity

Moderate Learning Difficulty was the most common primary type of need in January 2017 for pupils on SEN support for White (25.0%), Mixed (22.9%) and Asian (30.0%) ethnic groups. The most common primary type of need for Chinese (44.1%) pupils was Speech, Language and Communication Needs in January 2017. The most common primary type of need for Black pupils was also Speech, Language and Communication Needs in January 2017 (30.3%).

Autistic Spectrum Disorder was the most common primary type of need for pupils with a statement or EHC plan for all ethnic groups in January 2017.

Free school meal eligibility

Pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health as their primary type of need are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils with other primary types of need in January 2017. 32.3% of pupils with SEN support and 42.0% of pupils with a statement or EHC plan with this type of need were eligible for free school meals. This is comparable to January 2016, where 33.0% of pupils on SEN support and 42.5% of pupils with a statement or EHC plan with Social, Emotional and Mental Health as their primary need were eligible.

English as a first language

In January 2017, the most common primary type of need for pupils with SEN support for whose first language is known to or believed to be other than English is Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (30.4%). The least common primary type of need for the same group of pupils is Specific Learning Difficulty (8.9%).

For pupils with a statement of SEN or EHC plan, the most common primary type of need for pupils whose first language is known to or believed to be other than English is Hearing Impairment (36.9%). The least common primary type of need for the same group of pupils is Social, Emotional and Mental Health (4.4%).

8. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics website: [Special educational needs statistics](#)

National tables

1. All Schools: Number of pupils with SEN by school type and type of provision
2. a. Academies: Number of pupils with SEN by type of academy
2. b. Academies: Number of pupils with SEN time series
3. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by age and gender
4. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by national curriculum year group
5. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals
6. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by ethnic group
7. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by first language
8. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by primary type of need
9. Special schools: Types of provision for which schools have been approved
10. Special schools: Number of schools by size
11. State-funded primary and secondary schools: number of schools with SEN units and resourced provision

Local authority and regional tables

12. All Schools: Number of pupils with a statement or EHC plan
13. All Schools: Number of pupils with SEN support
14. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN
15. All Schools: Number of pupils with SEN
16. State-funded primary schools: Number of pupils with SEN by primary type of need
17. State-funded secondary schools: Number of pupils with SEN by primary type of need
18. Special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by primary type of need
19. State-funded primary and secondary schools: Number of pupils with SEN attending SEN units or placed in resourced provision

Additional tables

- A. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by gender and primary type of need
 - B. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by age and primary type of need
 - C. 1. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN support by ethnic group and primary type of need
-

- C. 2. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with statements or EHC plans by ethnic group and primary type of need
- D. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by free school meal eligibility
- E. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by national curriculum year group and primary type of need
- F. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by first language and primary type of need
- G. State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: Number of pupils with SEN by primary and secondary type of need

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

We preserve confidentiality	The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires we take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.
We round numbers and percentages	National figures in table 1 have been rounded to the nearest 5. This is consistent with the Departmental statistical policy which can be found at: Departmental statistical policy .
And adopt symbols to help identify this	Symbols are used in the tables as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . not applicable .. not available

9. Further information is available

Previous publications	Previous versions of this publication can be found on our SEN statistics home page: Statistics: Special educational needs
Other SEN Statistical publications	Statistics on pupils with SEN, including numbers with statements or EHC plans, information on educational attainment, destinations, absence, exclusions, and characteristics Statistics: Special educational needs
SEND code of practice	Explains the duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide for those with special educational needs under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 SEND code of practice: 0- 25 years

Special educational needs and disability regulations

Regulations supplement the procedural framework assessing a child or young person with special educational needs, and the procedure for making, reviewing, amending and ceasing to maintain an EHC plan

[Special educational needs and disability regulations 2014](#)

For regulations applicable to Statements of Special Educational Needs, see -

[The Education \(Special Educational Needs\) \(England\) \(Consolidation\) Regulations 2001](#)

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) information

Includes links to guidance and regulations about supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

[Special educational needs and disability \(SEND\)](#)

10. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

11. Technical information

A technical document accompanies this SFR. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

12. Get in touch

Media enquiries

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Department
for Education



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