Contrasting responses to diversity:
school placement trends 2014-2017 for all local authorities in England

Researched and written by:
Dr Alison Black and Professor Brahm Norwich

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
CSIE
supporting inclusion
challenging exclusion

Contrasting responses to diversity:
school placement trends 2014 - 2017 for all local authorities in England

Researched and written by Dr Alison Black and Professor Brahm Norwich
Graduate School of Education
University of Exeter
St Luke's Campus, Heavitree Road, Exeter EX1 2LU

Published by
Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE)
The Park Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol BS4 1DQ
tel: 0117 353 3150
fax: 0117 353 3151
email: admin@csie.org.uk
web: www.csie.org.uk

Edited for CSIE by Dr Artemi Sakellariadis

Designed by Jen Watts Design

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-872001-88-3

This project has been funded by the British Academy

The Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) is a registered charity that works to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in education. Founded in 1982, the Centre has been at the cutting edge of educational change for over 30 years. We believe that everyone is of equal value, regardless of age, impairment, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief. We work towards raising public awareness and transforming education so that everyone can feel welcome, visible and respected in ordinary local schools. In addition to research activities, CSIE produces a wide range of resources, provides training & consultancy and engages in lobbying & campaigning. The Centre receives no regular funding; its income comes from sales of resources & services and from charitable grants & donations. For more information please see www.csie.org.uk.

Registered charity 327805 Registered company 2253521

Contents

Foreword

Welcome to this new issue of our Trends series. CSIE has been reporting on school placement trends (i.e. the proportion of children placed in special schools or other separate settings) of all local authorities in England since the 1980s. This report presents information for the years 2014-2017. It indicates a gradual rise of the overall population of special schools and, like other Trends reports before it, reveals significant variation in the way local authorities respond to diversity: some rely more on ordinary local schools, while others regularly send high proportions of children to separate special schools.

Like other *Trends* reports before it, this presents the proportion of pupils placed in different types of settings without commenting on pupils' experiences or attempting to explain the trends observed, both of which are beyond the remit of this research.

This report is published at a time when there is greater clarity on disabled children's rights and on the meaning of inclusion in education for disabled children and young people. Article 24 (Education) of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities calls for an inclusive education system at all levels. In the time since our last Trends report the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which monitors the implementation of the Convention, published its General Comment no. 4 clarifying how Article 24 should be understood and implemented. It confirms that inclusive education implies a transformation of culture, policy and practice, so that schools and other educational settings can respond to the full diversity of individual students. It stresses that inclusive education should be understood as a fundamental human right of all learners, which respects their inherent dignity and autonomy, and which is a means of realising other human rights.

Most importantly, the Committee highlights the importance of recognizing the differences between exclusion, segregation, integration and inclusion. Segregation, not mentioned at all in Article 24, is defined in the General Comment as the education of disabled students in separate settings, isolated from non-disabled students. Integration, it says, is the process of placing disabled students in existing mainstream institutions and expecting them to adjust to the requirements of these institutions. Inclusion, on the other hand, is the process of "systemic reform" involving changes in content, methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education, so that all students can have an equitable and participatory learning experience. This, the Committee stresses, is what Article 24 means by inclusive education.

We hope that clear and detailed information on what routinely happens in neighbouring or distant local authorities will be of interest to parents, education professionals and campaigners alike. It can help people reach better informed decisions about individual children's school placements. It can also empower people to take action and to lobby for change locally or nationally.

Local authorities and Multi Academy Trusts interested in developing schools' capacity to include more disabled children may be interested in "The Welcome Workbook: a self-review framework for expanding inclusive provision in your local authority" available **from CSIE**.

We are deeply indebted to Dr Yi Liu for his data analysis and web design work, enabling findings to be presented online in an interactive and user-friendly way. We are also most grateful to Dr Alison Black and Professor Brahm Norwich for their unwavering support to this project and their hard work towards every step of the research, including writing this report and contributing to the dissemination of findings. Our most heartfelt thanks go to them too. Last but not least, many thanks are due to the British Academy, for appreciating the importance of this work and providing the funding for it.

Dr Artemi Sakellariadis
Director, CSIE

Introduction

This report is the eighth analysis of a longitudinal study investigating school placement trends (i.e. the proportion of pupils placed in special schools or other separate settings) both nationally, and in all local authorities (LAs) in England. It reports on school placement trends from 2014 to 2017, based on the official SEN2 data collected by the Department for Education (DfE), combined with population data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). It follows earlier analyses which started in 1983, conducted by Will Swann (1989), Brahm Norwich (1994, 1997, 1999, 2002), Sharon Rustemier/Mark Vaughan (2005) and Alison Black/Brahm Norwich (2014).

This is the first analysis in the Trends series which represents the findings in an interactive web application which contains supplementary material to this report. The web application has three functionalities:

1. **Interactive maps:** geographical distribution of rates of segregation at local authority level.

2. **Trends over time:** how rates of segregation change from year to year.

3. **LA Ranking:** the annual local authority ranking in rates of segregation.

The school place for each child with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan (and, previously, with a statement of special educational needs) is allocated by local authority officers, taking into account the views of the child, their parents and a range of professionals. Despite every local authority being subject to the same national policies and legislation (such as the Children and Families Act, 2014; and the Special educational needs and disability code of practice, written by the Department of Education and Department

Explore findings online at: https://sen-england.shinyapps.io/csie-trends/

of Health in 2015), CSIE Trends reports have brought to light significant local variations. For example the 2014 report revealed that as many as 1 in 100 children were regularly sent to separate special schools in one local authority, but only 1 in 500 in a neighbouring authority of similar size (Bexley and Newham respectively in 2013). This current report shows that in these two London boroughs in 2017 1 in 96 children were sent to special schools in Bexley, compared to 1 in 552 in Newham.

The Trends report of 2014 showed that the 30-year national trend towards inclusion had been reversed and that, in the period from 2007 to 2013, there had been a small (0.04 %) increase in the proportion of pupils placed in special schools. Since then the DfE has released further evidence that numbers of pupils in special schools are rising, reporting in its annual Statistical First Release Special Educational Needs in England that "[the] percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC Plan attending special schools has seen a year on year increase since January 2010" (DfE, 2017, p. 6). This is understood to reflect major changes in legislation (Children and Families Act 2014) and in national policy and practice, for example the sharp rise in the number of schools converting to academies and the ongoing issue of schools' funding.

This report is based on secondary analysis of data collected by the DfE, to determine, out of all children and young people who live in each local authority, the proportion of those who attend special schools or other separate settings within or outside the boundary of their home local authority. It has been calculated for each local authority by:

- taking the number of this local authority's children and young people aged 0-19 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan, (statement of SEN prior to 2015), and are placed in this or another local authority's special schools or other separate settings, as described by each element in the formula described below (numerator);
- dividing this by the total number of children and young people aged 0-19 for whom the local authority has responsibility (denominator). The data for the denominator was sourced from the Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates.
- then multiplying the result by 100 to express the proportion as a percentage.

In this document we report in detail on one aspect of describing rates of segregation: the proportion of 0-19-year-olds who have a statement or EHC Plan and are in special schools of various types.

We make reference to some key findings when other indicators are used, such as pupils aged 0-19 with statements or EHC Plans in separate settings INCLUDING pupil referral units, internal units[1] and special schools.

The web application that accompanies this report contains data on school placements for pupils with statements or EHC Plans for each local authority on the following indicators:

i. special schools: percentage of 0-19-year-olds in separate special schools or special academies;
ii. special classes: percentage of 0-19-year-olds in separate units, classes or resource bases within ordinary schools;
iii. PRUs: percentage of 0-19-year-olds in pupil referral units (PRUs) or alternative provision academies;
iv. non-mainstream: percentage of 0-19-year-olds in separate special schools, PRUs or alternative provision academies (i + iii);
v. separate schools or classes: percentage of 0-19-year-olds in any separate provision, within or outside ordinary schools (i + ii + iii).

This document reports on the pattern of population in special schools since 1983, it charts the population of pupils in special schools in England between the years 2014 and 2017, and it ranks local authorities by the proportion of pupils in special schools.

The City of London and The Isles of Scilly are not included in this report because their small size makes the figures statistically insignificant.

1. We acknowledge that pupils who have EHC Plans or statements who are recorded as attending units/resource bases ON-SITE of ordinary schools are not necessarily segregated from their peers, and that practice will vary on an institutional level.

Trends over time

This section looks at the national picture of pupils in special schools, comparing historical trends to the current picture. This gives some indication of the development (or otherwise) of inclusion across England in the years examined. It should be remembered that due to different data sets and formula used, the first two separate sets of figures are not directly comparable to the latter two.

Figure 1 shows the the general trend of the proportion of pupils in special schools falling until 2007, with evidence of some plateuing in the 2000s. Since 2007 the proportion of pupils in special schools appears to be rising.

As discussed in Black and Norwich, 2014, the apparent drop in pupil numbers between 2001 and 2002 is likely to be caused by the difference in formula used: Rustemier and Vaughan's 2005 data includes children aged 0-4 and 16-19 which the previous data set did not use. Likewise, the drop in pupil numbers between 2004 and 2007 is also caused by the different formula – Black and Norwich only report on pupils in special schools, whereas Rustemier and Vaughan report on the proportion of pupils in all segregated settings.

The formula used by Black and Norwich has been replicated in this current study so the results are directly comparable. When 2007-2017 are examined in detail (see Figure 2), it is clear that the proportion of children and young people in special schools is increasing, with a particularly dramatic leap between 2013- 2016 in comparison with previous patterns. As of 2017, it is unclear whether this will continue to rise or plateau.

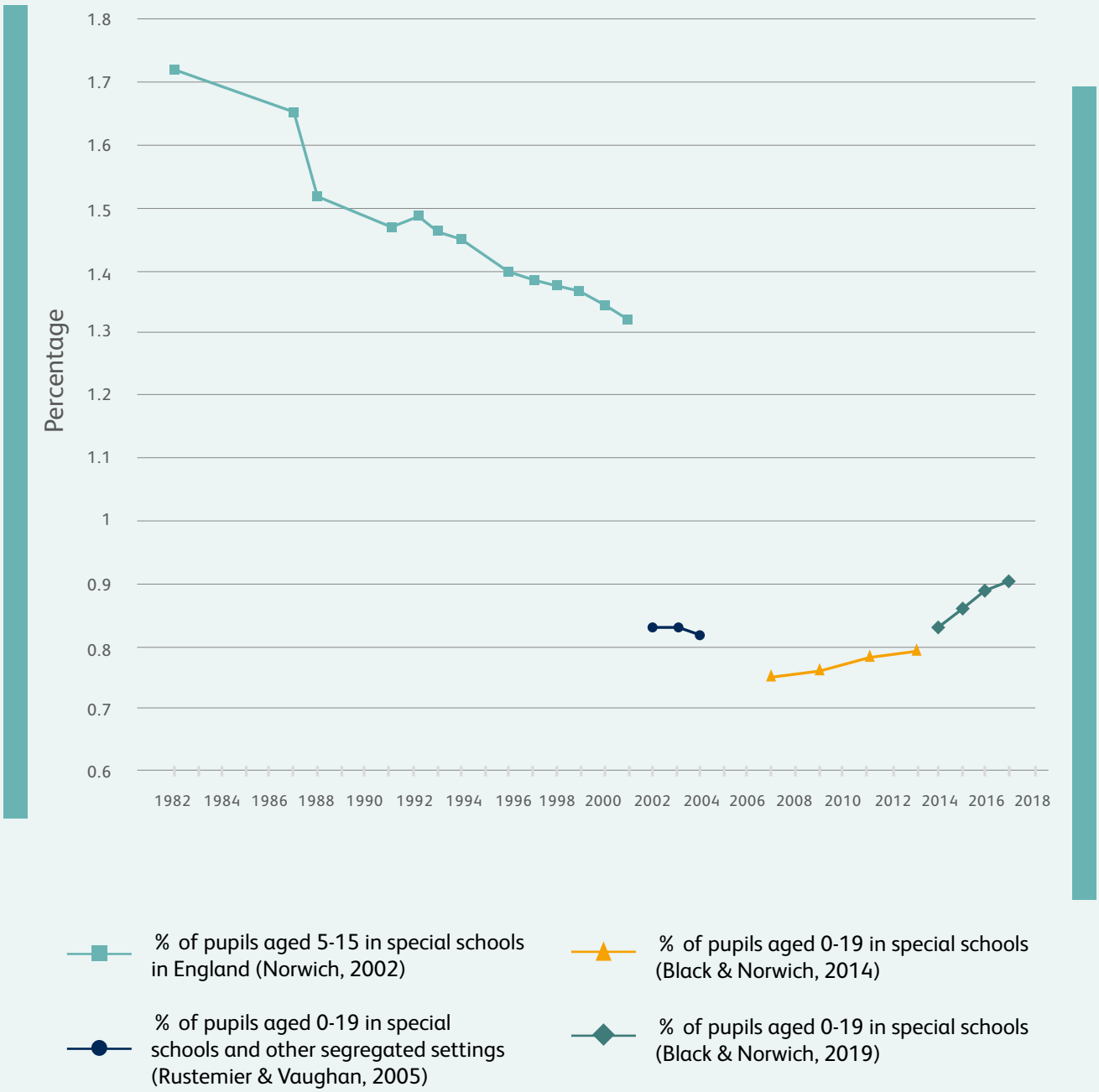

Figure 1: Percentage of pupils in separate settings in England 1982-2017

Percentages of pupils with statements/EHC Plans placed in special schools

This section looks at the national picture: how local authorities in England place in special schools pupils for whom they maintain a statement/EHC Plan in the years 2014-2017.

The national and local percentages show the proportion of children aged 0-19 out of the total child population of this age placed in special schools. Figures 2-4 include information from the previous report to get an overview of patterns from 2007.

The information in this report is based on the number of 0-19-year-olds for whom the local authority is responsible, who have a statement or EHC Plan and are in the following types of special schools:

a. maintained special schools;
b. non-maintained special schools;
c. independent special schools;
d. special academies and free schools.

It does not include pupils with statements or EHC Plans who go to independent schools that are not special schools. The figures reported in this section do not include the number of pupils in any other separate setting, such as PRUs or resourced provision/SEN units on site of maintained schools.

The data supplied by the DfE in the SEN2 forms takes account of an LA sending a pupil to another authority, and of an LA having pupils from other LAs within its own schools. This negates the need to collect separate data on "imports" and "exports" as it accurately reflects how an LA has placed the pupils for whom it is responsible.

A national increase in special school placement of pupils with statements or EHC Plans

The national average percentage of pupils placed in special schools has risen over the years examined in this analysis. In 2014 it was 0.84 %, rising to 0.90 % in 2017 (see figure 2). In England in 2014 approximately 1 in every 119 children and young people went to special schools, compared with approximately 1 in every 110 in 2017. This 0.064 % increase between 2014 and 2017 is greater than the 0.04 % increase in the proportion of children and young people placed in special schools reported in the last analysis between 2007-2013.

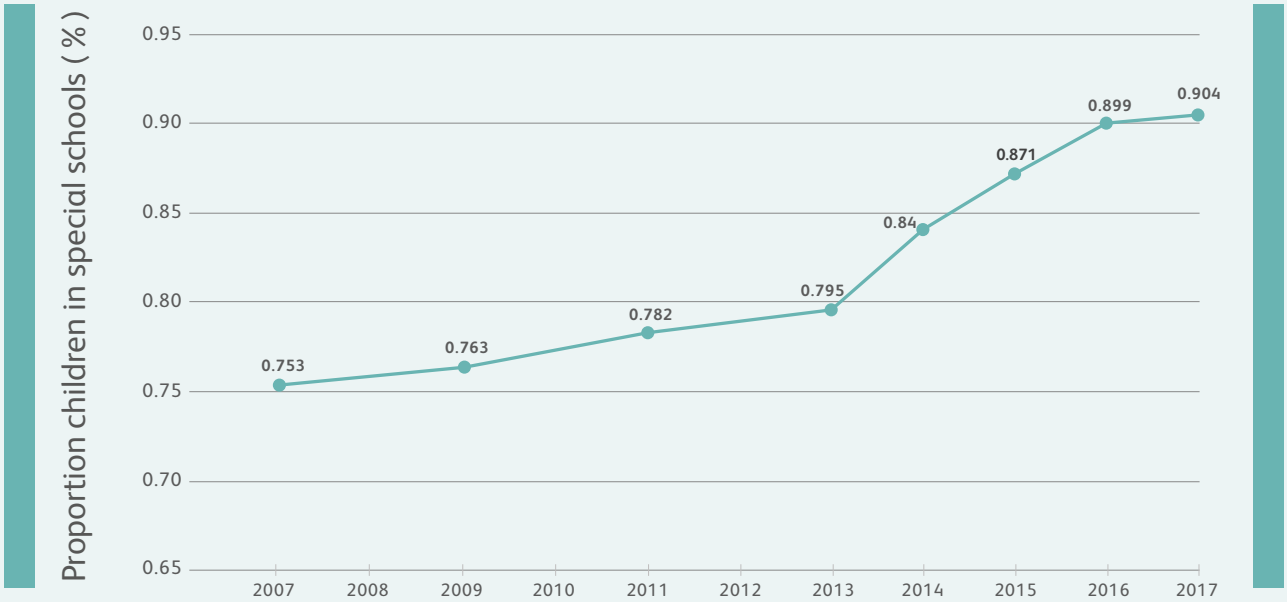

Figure 2: Percentage of 0-19 population given a statement or EHC Plan and placed in special schools 2007-2017

This 0.064 % [2] increase in the proportion of pupils placed in special schools represents an increase of 10,767 placements in special school, from 107,743 pupils in 2014, to 118,510 pupils in 2017 (see figure 3 below).

When the years 2013 to 2017 are considered, thus overlapping with the previous report, the percentage increase is 0.109 % , an increase of just under 17,000 pupils in 4 years.

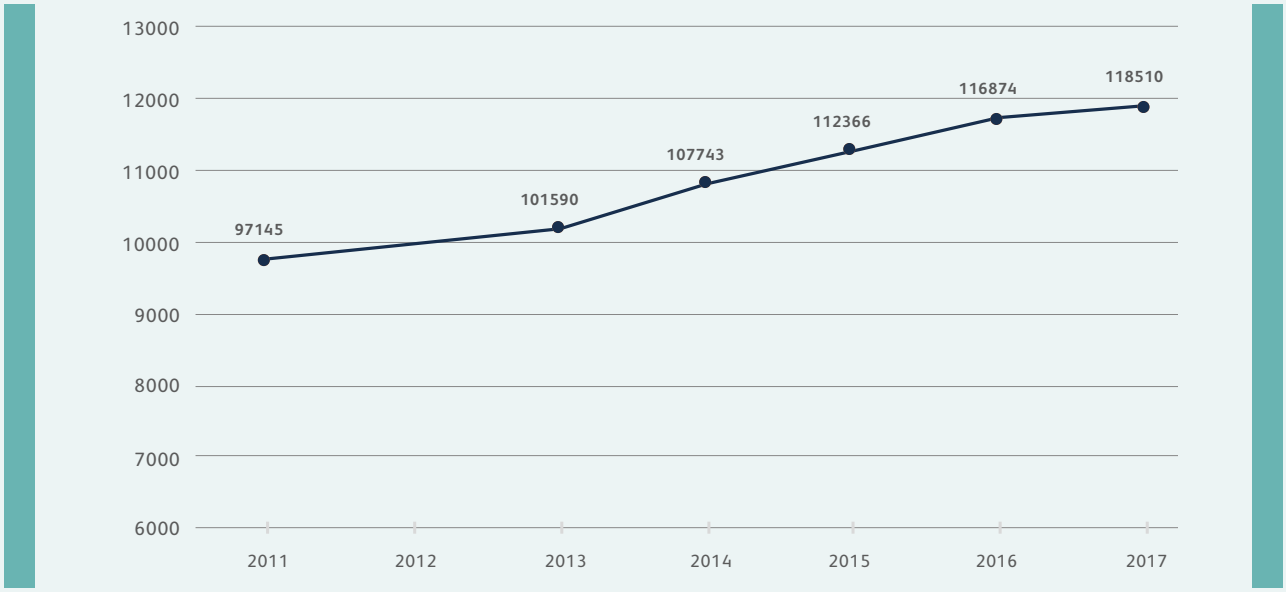

Figure 3: Number of pupils given a statement or EHC Plan and placed in special schools, 2011-2017

The increase in placements in special schools occurs against a rise in the total 0-19 population across the country (see Figure 4). The total population increased from 12,833,194 in 2014 to 13,106,976 an increase in population of 273,782 (2.1 %). When compared to the 9.1 % increase in placements in special school (an increase of 16,920 placements) this demonstrates a clear trend towards segregation.

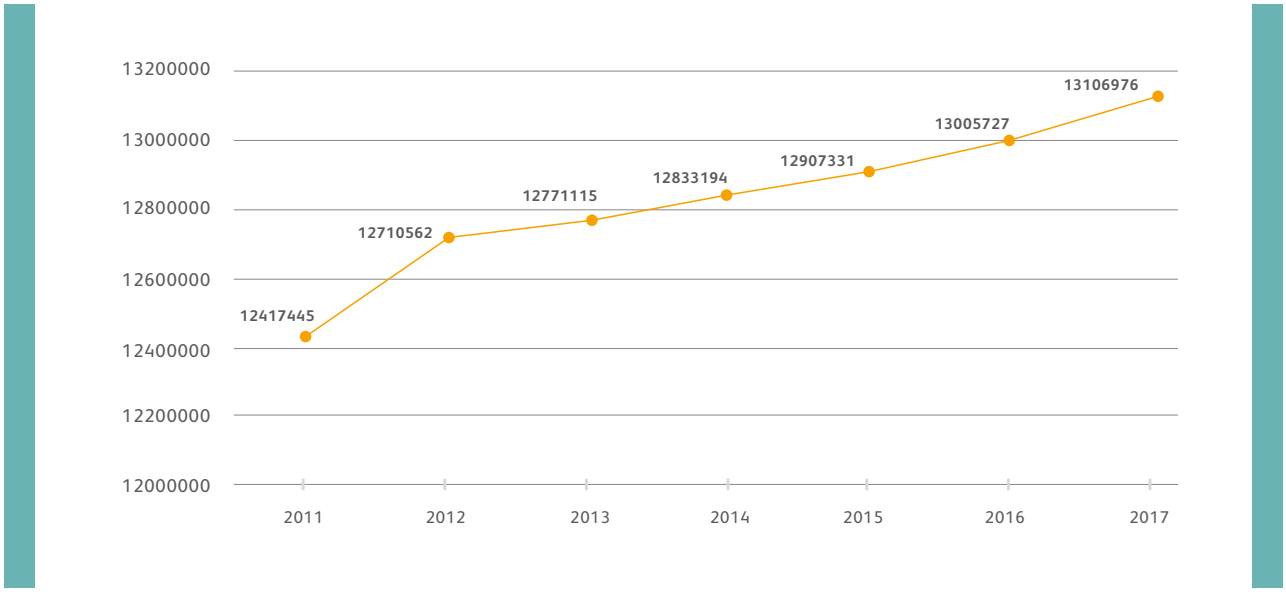

Figure 4: 0-19 population in England 2011-2017

2. based on figures before rounding to 2 decimal places

Local Authority variations

The London Borough of **Newham** had the smallest proportion of pupils with statements/ EHC Plans in special schools. Newham has been the LA with the smallest proportion of pupils in segregated settings since CSIE started publishing Trends reports in 1988. **Torbay**, a unitary authority, had the highest percentage of pupils in special schools in 2014-2017. It became the authority with the largest proportion of pupils in special schools in 2013.

	England	Newham	Torbay
2014	1 in 119	1 in 429	1 in 68
2015	1 in 115	1 in 562	1 in 64
2016	1 in 111	1 in 585	1 in 58
2017	1 in 111	1 in 552	1 in 57

Table 1: Proportion of pupils in special schools

Tables 2 and 3 show the 20 LAs with the lowest and highest percentages of pupils in special schools. The colour coding represents the local authority type.

Unitary authority
Metropolitan district
County authority
London borough

Low percentage in special schools

Three LAs were consistently those which had the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools for the period 2014-2017: **Newham, Cornwall** and **York** (**Newham** and **Cornwall** have consistently been among the authorities with the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools since 2007). As in previous Trends reports, Newham had the lowest percentage for all four years by a substantial margin. **Rutland** and **Kensington & Chelsea** were among the five LAs with the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools for two years, **Bradford**, **Leeds** and **Somerset** for one year.

Somerset fell from 5th position in 2015 to 15th in 2016 and 13th in 2017. **Rutland**[3] dropped from 4th position in 2014 and 2015 to 13th position in 2016 and 16th in 2017.

Kensington & Chelsea, and **Leeds** were also among the five authorities with the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools.

Kensington & Chelsea moved from 18th position in 2014 to 6th in 2015, 4th in 2016, and 5th in 2017. **Leeds** moved from 14th position in 2014 to 12th in 2015 and 5th in 2016, but fell to 20th position in 2017.

3. Rutland County Council is the smallest local authority in this analysis, which makes interpreting changes less reliable. Rutland had a population of approximately 8,587 children and young people aged 0-19 in 2017. It has 17 primary schools, three secondary schools and one special school, as well as six independent schools, three of which special and alternative schools. The next smallest authority is Hartlepool with approximately 22,144 children and young people aged 0-19 in 2017.

14 local authorities were among the 20 LAs with the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools for all four years explored in this study. These were **Newham, York, Cornwall, Rutland, Somerset, Havering, Derbyshire, Cumbria, Nottingham, Wakefield, Leeds, Nottinghamshire, Kensington & Chelsea** and

Barnet. (**Wakefield** and **Kensington & Chelsea** are the only ones in the list who were not continuously among the 20 LAs with the lowest percentage in the last trends analysis.) Four of these are county councils, four are unitary authorities, four are london boroughs and two are metropolitan authorities.

All LA types are represented in the five local authorities with the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools over the years looked at in the study. However, most LAs in this group are unitary authorities or London boroughs, with the exception of one county council (**Somerset**) in 2014, and one metropolitan authority (**Leeds**) in 2016.

In 2015, 2016 and 2017, four authorities had a proportion of pupils in special schools below the 0.5 % mark (there were five in 2015). This is in marked difference to the beginning of the 2007-2013 analysis where in 2007 12 authorities had a proportion of pupils in special schools below the 0.5 % mark (the equivalent of 1 in every 200 pupils). This fell to ten in 2009, nine in 2011 and five in 2013.

	2014	%	2015	%	2016	%	2017	%
1	Newham	0.233	Newham	0.178	Newham	0.171	Newham	0.181
2	York	0.387	Cornwall	0.384	Cornwall	0.402	Cornwall	0.407
3	Cornwall	0.392	York	0.426	York	0.420	York	0.434
4	Rutland	0.432	Rutland	0.495	Kensington & Chelsea	0.464	Kensington & Chelsea	0.472
5	Somerset	0.466	Kensington & Chelsea	0.527	Leeds	0.574	Havering	0.548
6	Havering	0.507	Wakefield	0.552	East Riding of Yorkshire	0.582	Barnet	0.584
7	Derbyshire	0.527	Havering	0.554	Wakefield	0.582	Cumbria	0.600
8	Cumbria	0.528	Cumbria	0.564	Nottingham	0.585	Nottingham	0.603
9	Nottingham	0.538	Derbyshire	0.569	Barking & Dagenham	0.585	Wakefield	0.608
10	Wakefield	0.550	Nottingham	0.572	Havering	0.588	Derbyshire	0.613
11	East Riding of Yorkshire	0.550	Leeds	0.572	Derbyshire	0.593	Nottinghamshire	0.619
12	North Yorkshire	0.557	Barking & Dagenham	0.579	Cumbria	0.610	Somerset	0.624
13	Blackburn with Darwen	0.569	Blackburn with Darwen	0.583	Rutland	0.612	Haringey	0.626
14	Leeds	0.576	Somerset	0.593	Suffolk	0.617	Suffolk	0.634
15	Wiltshire	0.587	Barnet	0.607	Somerset	0.623	Rutland	0.640
16	Bradford	0.587	North Yorkshire	0.609	Barnet	0.629	Barking & Dagenham	0.663
17	Nottinghamshire	0.601	Kirklees	0.625	Blackburn with Darwen	0.643	Kirklees	0.665
18	Kensington & Chelsea	0.606	Suffolk	0.632	Kirklees	0.645	Camden	0.665
19	Barnet	0.611	Nottinghamshire	0.633	Calderdale	0.645	Leeds	0.678
20	Calderdale	0.616	Bradford	0.642	Nottinghamshire	0.645	Richmond upon Thames	0.692

Table 2: LAs with the lowest percentage of pupils in special schools 2014-2017

High percentage in special schools

Torbay, Knowsley and **Wirral** were among the five LAs with the highest percentage of pupils attending special schools, for the four years looked at in this study. **Torbay** had the highest percentage over the four years studied in this Trends report (and had the highest proportion in 2013).

Stockton-on-Tees appeared in this group in 2016, from 145th position in 2014 to 144th in 2015, 148th in 2016 and 146th in 2017. **Stoke-on-Trent** entered this group in 2017, from 141st place in 2014, 143rd in 2015, 145th in 2016 to 149th position in 2017. **Solihull** disappeared from the group of five LAs with the highest proportion of pupils in special schools after 2014 when it was in 146th position; it then moved up to 140th position in 2015, 141st in 2016 and 139th in 2017.

South Tyneside was among this group in 2015 when it was ranked in 146th position. In 2014 it was in 144th position and after that rose to 139th position in 2016 and moved back to 145th position in 2017. **Middlesbrough** also oscillated in and out of the group of five local authorities with the highest percentage of pupils in special schools: in 147th place (out of 150) in 2014 and 2016, 145th in 2015 and 144th in 2017.

Birmingham appeared in 147th position in 2015 (1.348 %), from 139th position in 2014 (1.162 %). It then rose to 140th position in 2016 (1.274 %), and 105th position in 2017 (1.039 %).
14 of the local authorities were among the 20 LAs with the highest percentage of pupils in special schools over all four years looked at. These were **Torbay, Knowsley, Wirral, Middlesbrough, Solihull, Stockton-on-Tees, South Tyneside, Telford & Wrekin, Redcar & Cleveland, Stoke on Trent, Durham, Peterborough, Warwickshire** and **Staffordshire**. Six of these are unitary authorities, six are metropolitan authorities. There are no london boroughs or county councils consistently represented across the four years explored.

There are no london boroughs or county councils among the five local authorities with the highest percentage of pupils in special schools over the years looked at in the study. Looking at the 20 LAs with the highest percentage of pupils in special schools, there are no London boroughs and only two or three county councils in each of the years examined.

	2014	%	2015	%	2016	%	2017	%
131	Buckinghamshire	1.065	Liverpool	1.125	Wolverhampton	1.169	Medway	1.188
132	North Tyneside	1.071	Lincolnshire	1.125	Redcar & Cleveland	1.182	Warwickshire	1.189
133	Liverpool	1.076	Sunderland	1.126	Sunderland	1.193	Southend-on-Sea	1.195
134	Staffordshire	1.099	Blackpool	1.128	County Durham	1.202	Telford & Wrekin	1.196
135	Warwickshire	1.119	Peterborough	1.149	Telford & Wrekin	1.203	Staffordshire	1.199
136	Wolverhampton	1.145	Staffordshire	1.153	Staffordshire	1.219	Halton	1.204
137	Peterborough	1.156	Warwickshire	1.165	Northumberland	1.230	County Durham	1.260
138	Gateshead	1.161	Redcar & Cleveland	1.174	Warwickshire	1.231	Northumberland	1.263
139	Birmingham	1.162	Medway	1.183	South Tyneside	1.235	Solihull	1.272
140	County Durham	1.163	Solihull	1.207	Birmingham	1.274	Peterborough	1.297
141	Stoke-on-Trent	1.163	Telford & Wrekin	1.208	Solihull	1.281	Blackpool	1.318
142	Redcar & Cleveland	1.181	County Durham	1.211	Gateshead	1.284	Gateshead	1.352
143	Telford & Wrekin	1.198	Stoke-on-Trent	1.247	Peterborough	1.306	Redcar & Cleveland	1.366
144	South Tyneside	1.218	Stockton-on-Tees	1.326	Medway	1.310	Middlesbrough	1.383
145	Stockton-on-Tees	1.274	Middlesbrough	1.340	Stoke-on-Trent	1.330	South Tyneside	1.398
146	Solihull	1.276	South Tyneside	1.344	Wirral	1.381	Stockton-on-Tees	1.399
147	Middlesbrough	1.278	Birmingham	1.348	Middlesbrough	1.405	Wirral	1.428
148	Wirral	1.334	Wirral	1.356	Stockton-on-Tees	1.466	Knowsley	1.502
149	Knowsley	1.384	Knowsley	1.460	Knowsley	1.510	Stoke-on-Trent	1.548
150	Torbay	1.460	Torbay	1.572	Torbay	1.730	Torbay	1.748

Table 3: LAs with the highest percentage of pupils in special schools 2014-2017

Rates of segregation by type of local authority

In the previous Trends report it was recorded that seven LAs had more than 1.10 % of pupils in special schools (1 pupil in every 91) in 2007, rising to eight LAs in 2009, 10 in 2011 and 12 in 2013. The measure of 1.10 % is no longer a useful barometer as in 2017. 32 out of the 150 LAs exceeded this bench mark, over 20 % of LAs. In 2014, seven LAs had more than 1.20 % of pupils in special schools (1 pupil in every 82), rising to 11 LAs in 2015, 17 in 2016, but dropping slightly to 15 in 2017.

When the type of LAs appearing among the 20 with the largest and smallest proportions of pupils in special schools is considered, some interesting disparities emerge; these are summarised in table 3. London boroughs are only found in the group with the smallest, with no London boroughs in the group with the largest proportion in special schools. County authorities are found more frequently in the group with the smallest than the group with the largest proportion in special schools. By contrast, unitary and metropolitan authorities are found more frequently in the group with the largest than with the smallest proportion in special schools.

Local authority type (based on type after 2009)	frequency in 20 LAs with lowest proportion of children in special schools	frequency in 20 LAs with highest proportion of children in special schools
London borough	21	0
County	21	10
Metropolitan	15	29
Unitary	23	41
Total	**80**	**80**

Table 4: Comparison of LA types represented in the 20 LAs with highest and lowest percentage pupils in special schools

Changes between 2014 and 2017

Whilst the increase in the overall percentage of pupils placed in special schools nationally has shown only a small increase over the years studied (0.064 %, see Figure 2 above), the picture varies by local authority. 20 of the LAs showed an overall decrease over the period, eight showed no, or very little change (between a fall of 0.01 % to a rise of 0.01 %), and 122, i.e. almost half of all LAs, showed an increase. (Compare this to the 2007-2013 pattern where 35 of the LAs showed an overall decrease over the period, 19 showed no, or very little, change and 93 showed an increase.)

Table 5 shows the 20 LAs with the largest decreases in the percentages of pupils in special schools overall. Table 6 shows the 20 with the largest increases of pupils in special schools. The value of 0.01 % as a measure of change is no longer a useful benchmark. If the value of 0.05 % is used (chosen as it is the rate Newham, consistently the LA with the lowest proportion of children placed in special schools has changed by). 13 of the LAs showed an overall decrease over the period, 35 showed no, or very little, change (between a fall of 0.05 % to a rise of 0.05 %), and 102 showed an increase.

LAs showing significant decreases

There are 12 LAs that have a significant decrease in proportion of pupils in special schools (see table 5).

Camden's reduction of 0.136 percentage points represents a rise from 61st (0.801 % or 1 in 125 pupils), to 41st (0.753 % or 1 in 133 pupils), 31st (0.725 % or 1 in 138 pupils) and 19th position (0.665 % or 1 in 150 pupils). There was a reduction of 0.134 percentage points in **Kensington & Chelsea**, which seems interesting as it moved from 18th position in 2014 (0.606 % or 1 in 165 pupils), to 6th in 2015 (0.527 % or 1 in 190 pupils), 4th in 2016 (0.464 % or 1 in 216 pupils), and 5th position in 2017 (0.472 % or 1 in 212 pupils). **Birmingham** shows a fall in proportion of pupils in special schools of 0.124 %. This represents a fall from 1.162 % in 2014 (1 in 86 pupils) to 1.039 % in 2017 (1 in 96 pupils). **Birmingham** was mentioned above as a LA that moved from being among the 20 LAs with the largest proportion of pupils in special schools for three years to being ranked in 46th position.

Westminster	-0.170
Bracknell Forest	-0.149
Camden	-0.136
Kensington & Chelsea	-0.134
Birmingham	-0.124
Slough	-0.100
Haringey	-0.098
Lewisham	-0.081
Thurrock	-0.077
Islington	-0.064
Brighton and Hove	-0.063
Newham	-0.052
Lambeth	-0.036
Waltham Forest	-0.030
Wandsworth	-0.029
Barnet	-0.028
Walsall	-0.022
Kent	-0.020
Cambridgeshire	-0.016

Table 5: LAs with the largest decreases in the percentage of their pupils in special schools, 2014-2017

LAs showing significant increases

Southend-on-Sea	0.183
Redcar and Cleveland	0.185
Barnsley	0.188
Newcastle upon Tyne	0.190
Gateshead	0.191
Cheshire West and Chester	0.191
Northamptonshire	0.192
Bath and North East Somerset	0.201
Rutland	0.208
Northumberland	0.209
Medway	0.213
Oldham	0.219
Bolton	0.235
Halton	0.237
Southampton	0.265
Torbay	0.288
Blackpool	0.289
Hartlepool	0.303
Stoke-on-Trent	0.384

Table 6: LAs with the largest increases in the percentage of their pupils in special schools, 2014-2017

Of interest here is Stoke-on-Trent whose move from 141st place in 2014 to 149th place in 2017 is an increase in proportion of pupils in special schools of 0.384 % (from 1 in 90 to 1 in 65).

Again, it is interesting to compare types of authorities represented in these groups. If we look at the 10 LAs with the largest decrease in proportion of pupils in special schools (i.e. the upper part of table 5) there are six London boroughs, three unitary authorities and one metropolitan district (with no County authorities being represented), whereas if we look at the 10 LAs with the largest increase in proportion of pupils in special schools (i.e. the lower part of table 6) there are seven unitary authorities and three metropolitan districts, with no county authorities or London boroughs.

Summary and recommendations

Summary

This report demonstrates:

- An increase in the proportion of pupils placed in special schools, at a national level and in 122 local authorities.
- As in previous Trends analyses there is a large variation in the proportion of pupils attending special schools by local authority.
- The clearest example of this is between Newham as lowest and Torbay as highest percentage LAs – Newham having as few as 1 in 552 pupils in special schools, Torbay having as many as 1 in 57 pupils attending special schools.
- There appears to be some variation by LA type, with london boroughs tending to have a smaller proportion of pupils in special schools.

In this report we have focused only on the proportion of 0-19-year-olds who have a statement or EHC Plan and are in special schools of various types. As mentioned on page 2 the web application provides data on the proportion of pupils educated in separate settings, such as PRUs, or special units, classes resource bases attached to ordinary schools.

The percentage of 0-19-year-olds in England who are placed in special units, classes or resource bases attached to ordinary schools has decreased over time. In 2007 it was 0.150 % (1 in 667), falling to 0.083 % in 2017 (1 in 1,205). In England in 2007 a very small percentage of pupils attended PRUs - 0.018 % (1 in 5,556). This has continued to decline, in 2017 it is 0.01 % - 1 in 10,000.

It could be argued that reduction in these types of provision may account for the increased provision in special schools, as pupils move from resource bases and PRUs into special schools. However, when the cumulative figures are calculated, showing the percentage of 0-19-year-olds who are placed in any separate provision on and off site of ordinary schools we can see an increase from 0.920 % , in 2007 to 0.997 % in 2017.

Recommendations

Parent perspective: The local authority variations shown in these analyses mean that parents in different areas will encounter different patterns of provision of special compared to ordinary school provision for their children with EHC Plans. Individual parents and voluntary organisations could use these data in the form of the web application to call on the Government to issue a clear statement on what parents can expect from their local schools.

Government perspective: In the context of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities the Government had, in June 2009, issued this declaration in the process of ratifying the Convention: "The United Kingdom Government is committed to continuing to develop an inclusive system where parents of disabled children have increasing access to mainstream schools and staff, which have the capacity to meet the needs of disabled children." The trends shown in this report about the patterns of provision for pupils with SEN call for a thorough, transparent, values-based and evidence-informed national strategy.

Data collection needs: Current data collection practices for national, local and school level data, with regard to school placements of disabled children or those identified as having special educational needs need to be reviewed and updated. These could include the percentage of time that children spend in different settings, for example, between ordinary and special schools for children in dual placements. For children in special classes, units or resource bases in ordinary schools, no information is available on the percentage of time they spend alongside, or separated from, other pupils in the school. Such a time-based approach to data collection is already in use in USA data collection systems. We acknowledge that proximity to peers is only a limited indicator of inclusive provision but is nevertheless an important one.

Possible future research
There is scope for further study of the differences between local authority areas, in terms of type of authority, rural-urban settings as indications of population density, the presence of grammar schools and the dominant political traditions in different areas. There is also scope for examining the processes involved in these patterns of provision, as we are doing in a small-scale study investigating stakeholders' accounts of local practice. There are also plans for larger scale studies of how parents decide to place their children in special schools and how ordinary schools decide who they can make accommodations for and who not.

Methods and data accuracy

The data that underpin this report are from two sources:

1. Data request from DfE - Form SEN2[1]
2. ONS "Mid-year Population Estimates: Single year of age and sex for local authorities in the United Kingdom; estimated resident population".

We were unable to access data about type of school placements for pupils without statements/ EHC Plans. Though current legislation ensures that very few, if any, pupils without a statement/EHC Plan would be placed in special schools, this lack of information dictated that we had to use data about the placement of pupils issued with statements/EHC Plans, not about placement itself.

Formula used in this analysis:

The proportion of pupils in special schools or other settings is calculated for each local authority by: taking **the number of this LA's pupils aged 0-19 who have a statement of special educational needs or an EHC Plan and are placed in this or another LA's schools special schools/other separate settings**, as described by each element in the formula (numerator), dividing this by the **total number of children aged 0-19 for whom the local authority has responsibility** (denominator), then multiplying the result by 100 to express it as a percentage.

This formula consists of several elements, described in the table below. Element (i) is discussed in the main part of this report; information on elements (ii)-(v) is presented in the web application that accompanies this report.

Assumptions made in using this formula:

The formula does not include pupils with statements or EHC Plans who go to independent schools that are not special schools; this information was not available to us.

The SEN2 data covers all pupils with statements or EHC Plans in a local authority wherever they go to school, whether in that LA area or in another LA (this takes into account 'imports'/'exports' of pupils). When there are dual placements we count the main provision as sole placement, following current Government data collection practice.

The City of London and The Isles of Scilly are not included in this report because their small size makes the figures statistically insignificant. We have included Rutland in the analysis, but it should be remembered it has a significantly smaller population than the other authorities in the analysis and thus more prone to incremental changes appearing large.

Element of formula	i. maintained, non-maintained & independent special schools and special academies	ii. separate special units, classes or resource bases attached to ordinary schools	iii. pupil referral units (PRUs) and alternative provision academies	iv. any provision off site ordinary schools (i+iii)	v. any separate provision on and off site of ordinary schools (i+ii+iii)
Source of numerator data	These data come from DfE statistics collected in **Form SEN2** January of the identified year (this is mid school year data and relates to the total number of pupils in all schools collected in the **preceding** year as used in denominator.)			These data come from combining totals from the previous columns.	
Numerator data	a. Maintained special schools b. Non-maintained special schools c. Independent special schools d. Special academies and free schools	a. Resourced provision in maintained ordinary schools b. SEN units in maintained ordinary schools	a. PRUs b. Alternative provision academies	i. Pupils in separate special schools of various types iii. Pupils in PRUs/alternative provision academies	i. Pupils in separate special schools of various types ii. Pupils in separate special units/classes/ resources on site of ordinary schools iii. Pupils in PRUs/ alternative provision academies
Source of denominator data	This is the **total number of children and young people** from birth (age 0) to year 14 (age 19) for whom the LA is responsible. These data come from the Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates (of the preceding year to the SEN2 form), from the table "*Mid-year Population Estimates: Single year of age and sex for local authorities in the United Kingdom; estimated resident population*". Totals for ages 0-19 were calculated from this dataset. (These relate to the SEN data collected mid-school year, for the period from September to July of the previous academic year.)				

1. NB The data originally supplied by the DfE revealed inconsistencies for two local authorities, suggesting more than a 50% change from one year to the next. We sought confirmation of accuracy and received an acknowledgement that these data points were, indeed, the outcome of human error. Amended figures were supplied by the local authorities in question (Bradford and East Riding of Yorkshire; our analysis and report are based on this updated information. No data for any other local authority indicated such sharp fluctuations from one year to the next.

References

Black, A and Norwich, B (2014) *Contrasting responses to diversity: school placement trends* 2007-2013. Bristol: CSIE

Children and Families Act 2014. Retrieved March 2019 from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted

DfE (2017) Special Educational Needs in England SFR 37/2017. Retrieved March 2019 from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633031/SFR37_2017_Main_Text.pdf

DfE and DoH (2015) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Retrieved March 2019 from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Norwich, B (1994) *Segregation and Inclusion: English LEA Statistics* 1988-92. Bristol: CSIE

Norwich, B (1997) *A trend towards inclusion: Statistics on special school placements and pupils with statements in ordinary schools.* England 1992-96. Bristol: CSIE

Norwich, B (1999) *Inclusion 1996-98 A continuing trend: Statistics on special school placements and mainstream pupils with statements in England*. Bristol: CSIE

Norwich, B (2002) *LEA inclusion trends in England 1997-2001: Statistics on special school placements and pupils with statements in special schools.* Bristol: CSIE

Rustemier, S and Vaughan, M (2005) *Segregation trends – LEAs in England 2002-2004: Placement of pupils with statements in special schools and other segregated settings.* Bristol: CSIE

Swann, W (1989) Integration statistics – LEAs reveal local variations. Bristol: CSIE

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
The Park Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol BS4 1DQ, UK

tel 0117 353 3150
admin@csie.org.uk
www.csie.org.uk

csie.uk csie_uk

Registered Charity 327805 | Registered Company 2253521