



**BEDFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

NHS

**Bedfordshire, Luton
and Milton Keynes
Integrated Care Board**



**Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and
Disabilities (SEND) aged 0 to 25**

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

**September 2023 – updated Jan 2024 for latest Population
projections**

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is to publish an accessible and concise summary of the status trends, projections and issues to inform strategic decision making, commissioning, and delivery across the local area over the coming five to ten years.

This chapter covers the needs of children and young people aged from birth to 25 years who have a special educational need or disability (SEND) and their families. This document will both stand alone and link with other sections of the JSNA that outline the needs of different population groups and services. The document should be accessible to members of the public as well as informative to commissioners.

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a new system of supporting children and young people with SEND. The SEND Code of Practice outlines the following principles:

- The views of the child or young person and their parents placed at the centre of all planning
- The child or young person and the child's parent participating as fully as possible in all decisions and being given the right information and support to enable them to participate
- Supporting the child or young person and their parents to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes preparing them effectively for adulthood¹.

These principles are designed to support early identification of needs; greater choice and control; collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support; high quality provision to meet needs².

The SEND Code of Practice recognises the importance of reaching a joint understanding of the needs of the local population and the services that are procured to meet those needs.

The 2023 SEND and Alternative Provision Implementation Plan (SENDAPIP) also details the requirement for Local Inclusion Partnerships and Plans to be created. Similarly, these bring together education, health and care services to improve outcomes for Children and Young people with SEND. The Bedford Borough Plan will need to be underpinned by this JSNA.

Finally, the BLMK Integrated Care Board published its joint forward plan at the end of June 2023. This outlines the ICB's strategy over the next five years and references children and young people and people with mental health, learning disabilities and autism. You can find the plan here:

blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org/publications/strategies/blmk-joint-forward-plan-core-final/?layout=default

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is the means by which the local Health and Wellbeing Board understands and agrees the needs of local people. It is the basis for the strategy that prioritises areas for joint action. It informs the commissioning decisions made for children and young people with SEND which in turn will be reflected in the services provided³.

Under Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and Section 312 of the 1996 Education Act, a child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions
- are under compulsory school age and fall within one of the definitions above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form a language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Special educational provision means:

- for children of 2 years or over, educational provision additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the local authority, other than special schools, in the area; or
- for children under 2, educational provision of any kind.

The SEND code of practice defines four categories of SEND⁴. These are:

Communication and interaction

Cognition and learning

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)

Sensory and/or physical needs

Appendix B gives further details on these categories

2. Summary Recommendations

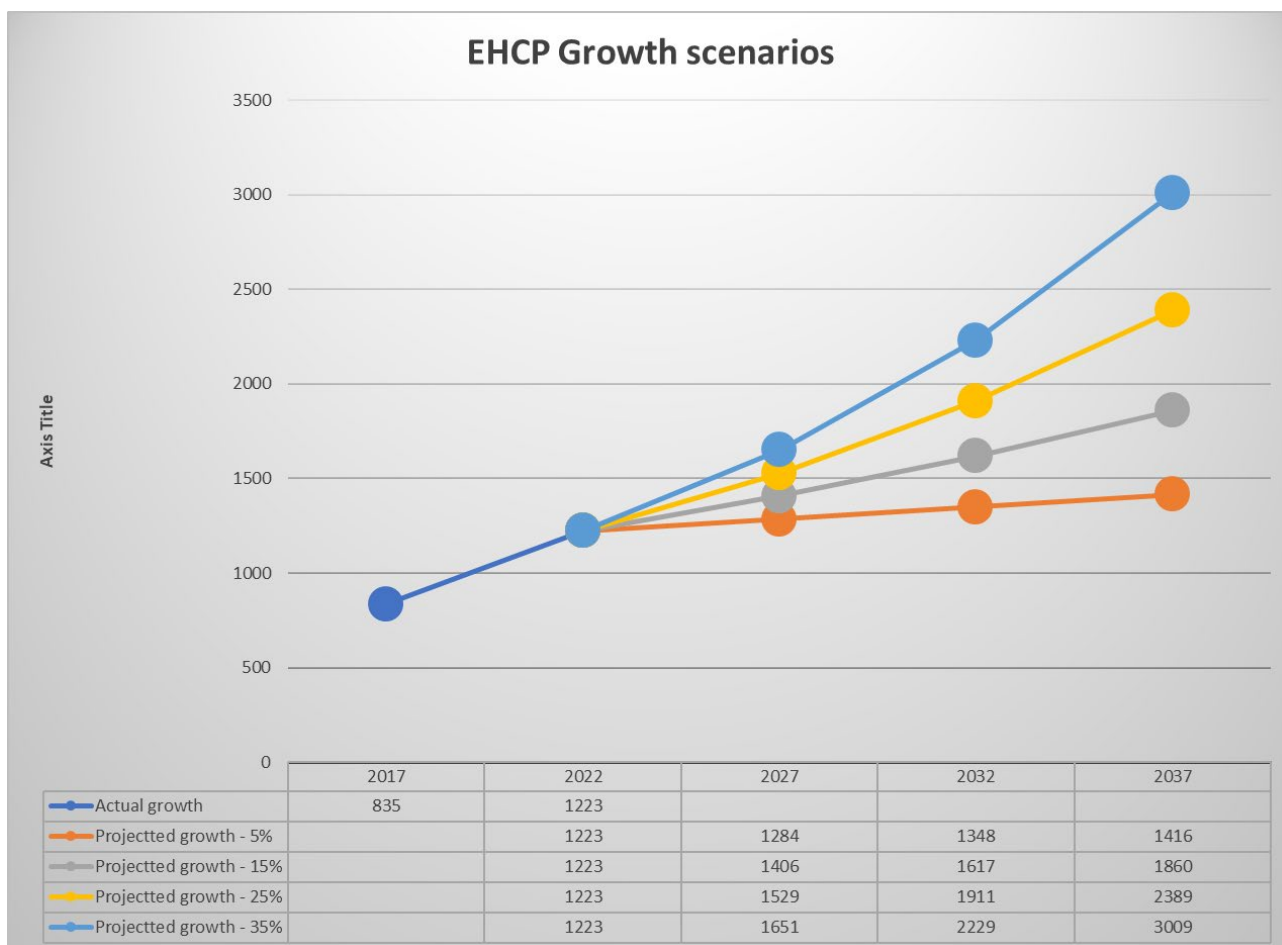
One of the key objectives of the JSNA is to identify gaps in needs that are currently not being met and to identify priority areas for joint action. This section provides an overview of the areas in this JSNA that might be interpreted as needs that are not being appropriately met, or needs that might be met more effectively by taking a different approach:

1. Many of the measures of the numbers of children and young people with SEND have increased significantly over the last 7 years and we anticipate that this will continue over the coming years.

All the key indicators for demand on services have increased over the last few years. For example

- The number of EHCPS / statements for school age children has increased by 46% between 2017 and 2022.
- The number of children on SEN support has grown by 8% between 2017 and 2022.
- The number of children and young people receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments have increased by 59% between 2014 and 2021
- The number of children attending special schools in Bedford Borough has increased by 18% between 2014 and 2021

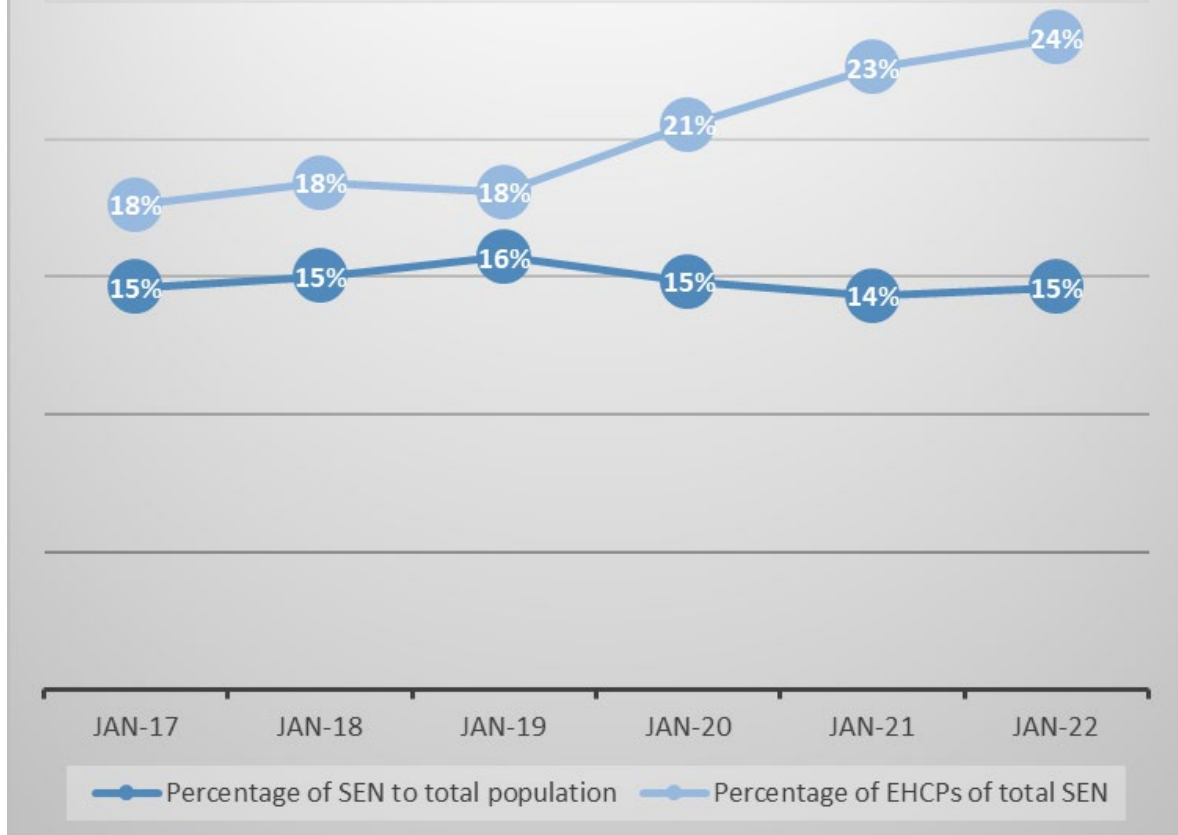
Different growth scenarios suggest that there may be up to another 1800 children and young people with an EHCP in Bedford Borough by 2037: All local services must anticipate and plan for these increases. Given the projected growth in the population of CYP in Bedford Borough (14% to 2035), it is likely that the growth will be at the higher end of these projections.



2. However, the total numbers of children with SEND have remained largely stable as a percentage of the total children’s population. Instead, it is clear that those needed greater levels of support (e.g. EHCPs, special school placements, qualification for DLA / PIP benefits) have increased significantly.

The proportion of children with SEN has not changed significantly over the last five years, remaining steady at approximately 15%. However, the percentage of children with an EHCP as a proportion of the total SEN population has increased significantly from 18% in 2017 to 24% in 2022. Of the total growth in EHCPs of 388 over this period, 292 can be attributed to this increase in proportion of CYP with an EHCP (i.e. if the proportion of CYP with an EHCP had remained constant at 18% there would be 930 EHCPs). In focus groups, parents, schools and health providers all expressed frustration at being able to access early and timely support from all services for children that they felt were driving additional demand for EHCPs.

Percentage of Total school population with CYP with SEN who have an EHCP



In focus groups, parents, schools and health providers all expressed frustration at being able to access early and timely support from all services for children that they felt were driving additional demand for EHCPs.

This triangulates with the learnings from BBPCF's outcomes survey which highlights the experiences of children with and without EHCPs in mainstream schools and contains recommendations about:

- Better co-ordination of health services for CYP in mainstream schools through an extension of the special school nursing service
- Promoting better coproduction in mainstream schools
- Further focus and emphasis on supporting children in mainstream schools through outreach and teaching and learning advisers

3. The EHCP process

There is some evidence that the EHCP process is under some strain:

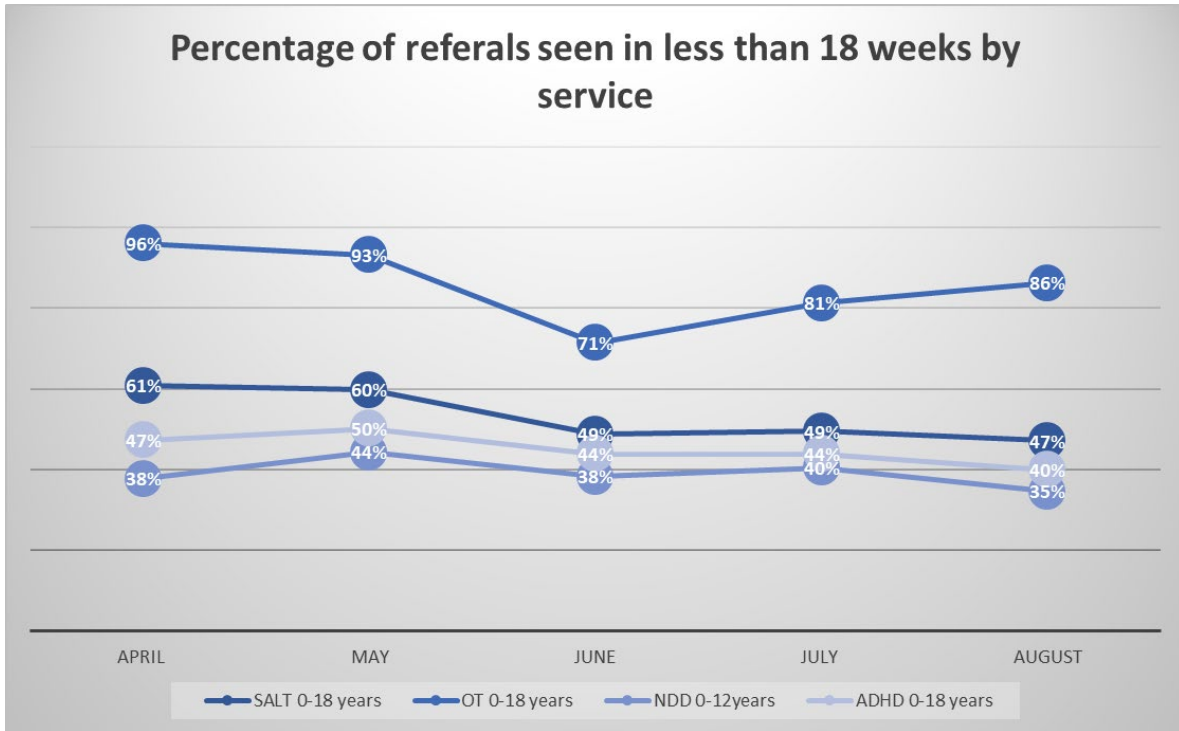
- The number of requests to assess for an EHCP has increased from 223 in 2020 to 361 in 2022
- The percentage of EHCPs completed in the 20 week timeline has fallen from 96% in 2020 to 77% in 2022.
- The tribunal rate based on percentage of appealable decisions has increased from 0.6% in 2018 to 1.3% in 2023.

This data closely triangulates with the findings in point 2 above – a greater proportion of families with SEND are seeking an EHCP.

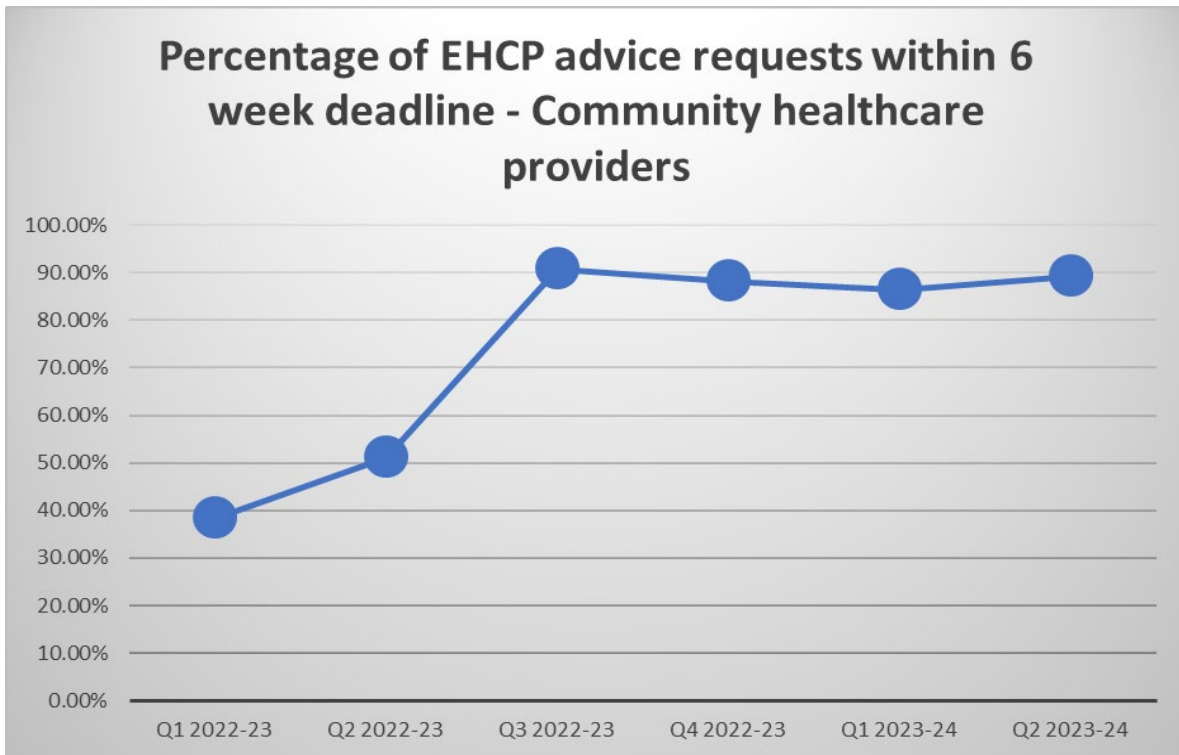
In response to this the local authority and health commissioners should seek to increase the focus on early help services: If families are not offered the right support at the right time the demand for EHCPs will continue to grow and demands on the SEND team will continue to grow in an unsustainable way. Otherwise, additional resources will be required for those services that assess, issue and support CYP with an EHCP.

4. Community based health services are struggling to meet waiting time and referral targets

Community based health services have very inconsistently met targets to see children within 18 weeks of referral. The chart below shows that it is not unusual for less than 50% of referrals to meet the 18 week target, with the exception of Occupational Therapy services.



However, looking at the data for meeting the targets for providing advice within 6 weeks for an EHCP request for advice, shows that the vast majority of these requests are being met. This suggests that community based health providers are prioritising the legal requirement to deliver EHCP requests for advice over the non-EHCP 18 week target.



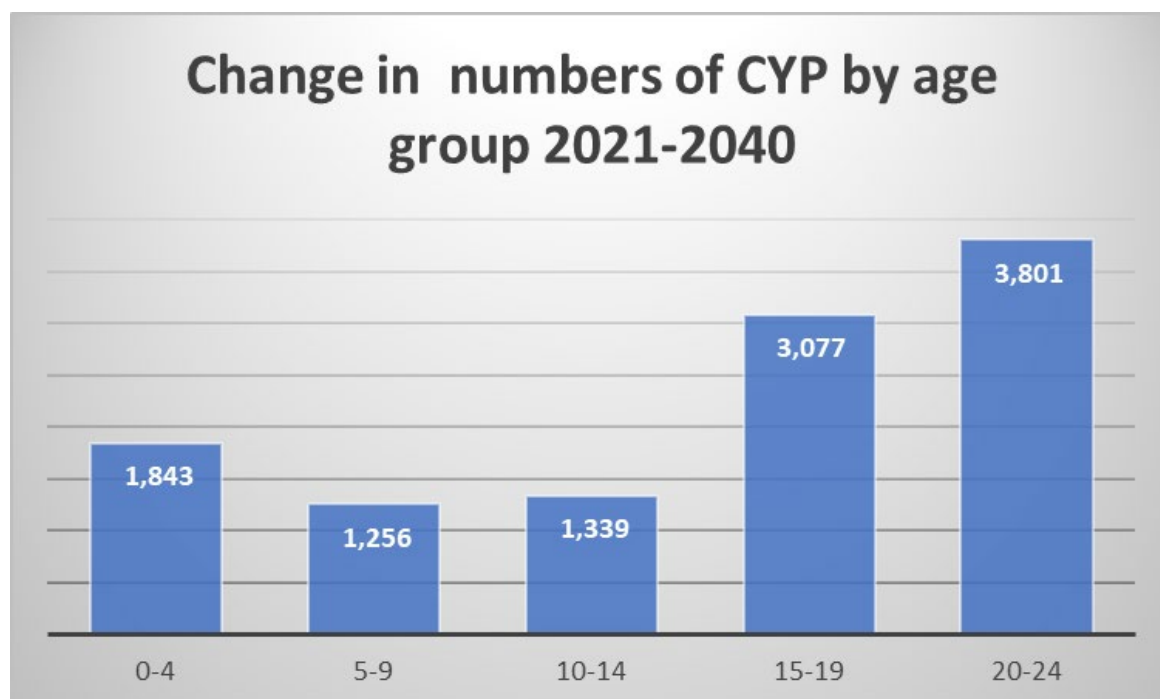
There is anecdotal evidence from families that this is one factor in the increase in applications for an EHCP.

This report does not make any comment about the appropriateness of this practice (if indeed it is happening) from the point of view of families or the prioritisation from healthcare providers.

The local authority, health commissioners and health providers should make a conscious decision about the prioritisation of EHCP requests for advice versus non EHCP referrals taking into consideration resource constraints. Future commissioning should make allowance for elevated levels of demand as per earlier recommendations in this report.

5. The population of children and young people in Bedford Borough is set to grow by 20% between 2021 and 2040. A larger part of this growth comes in older CYP which will most likely be reflected in SEND numbers.

Of the total projected growth of 11, 315 between 2021 and 2040, over half (6878) of this comes in the 15-24 age range.



This means that adult and preparing for adulthood services must be a high priority

These include:

- Adult social care services
- Adult health care services
- Support living and housing
- Supported internships, supported employment, voluntary work opportunities
- Day care and community-based activities

6. Educational attainment and exclusions

Educational attainment for children and young people with SEND in Bedford Borough remains lower than both the national average and that of statistical neighbours. Similarly, the rate of permanent exclusions for children with SEND is higher in Bedford Borough than the national average and statistical neighbours. The graphs and data in section 6 detail the differences.

The local authority should ensure that the provision it has put in place to support the learning and development of pupils with SEND in Borough schools is continued, reviewed and enhanced as necessary. In particular, the effectiveness of the specialist SEN outreach teachers is key to closing this gap.

The impact of Coronavirus on the SEND attainment gap should also be monitored with a risk that vulnerable children, including those with SEND have fallen further behind.

The local authority has performed a deep dive into exclusions of CYP with SEND. The recommendations of this report should be implemented and monitored at the SEND Implementation Board.

7. Intersectionality of CYP with SEND and other disadvantaged groups

The data in Bedford Borough (and nationally) shows an increased prevalence of CYP with SEND in other disadvantaged group:

- 57% of Children in need have SEND (either SEN support or an EHCP)
- 66% of Looked After Children have SEND

- Children at special school and alternative provision are 2-3 times more likely to be eligible for free school meals than those attending mainstream settings
- 27% of CYP in youth offending services have an EHCP

There is a strong argument for a weighting of resources and attention towards those CYP with SEND because this will also target children with other vulnerabilities.

8. Note on Health data

The data available with regard to health services for CYP with SEND in Bedford Borough has been very limited. The Integrated Care System has started a new form and basis of reporting in 2023 that makes comparisons with historical data and future trends difficult to analyse. Over time, as the body of data available builds up, greater analysis may be possible.

As a result, the recommendations pertaining to health provision including caps and issues in this JSNA are limited. This does not mean that there are no concerns with regard to health – just that the JSNA data does not provide meaningful insight.

Other sources such as the Bedford Borough Parent Carer Forum Outcomes report and focus groups should therefore be used to produce a more holistic picture.

3. Vision and strategic objectives

Bedford Borough has developed several key strategies and documents that are relevant to this JSNA. These are:

Children’s Services Strategy

The Children’s Services Strategy outlines a clear vision for children and young people in Bedford Borough. This is

“Our vision is to put Children, Young People and Families at the Heart of everything we do. We are ambitious for all Children, Young People and Families and we have a critical role to make difference to the lives of 172,000 people in Bedford Borough.”

Within this, the strategy sets out eight strategic priorities which overlap with SEND priorities including a specific aim to “Deliver SEND improvements” (Priority 7).

For further details see [bedford_borough_children_services_strategy_2022-2027.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)

Bedford Borough Joint SEND strategy 2022-27

The strategy describes a vision for children and young people with SEND:

“Our vision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is the same as for all children in Bedford – that they achieve well and fulfil their potential in their early years, at school and college, through transition to adulthood, have equal life chances and lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives.”

It goes on to describe how the work of improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND will be done. The JSNA plays a critical part in this work.

You can find the strategy here: [bedford_borough_joint_send_strategy_2022-2027_final.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)

4. National Context Data

In January 2023 there were 9,073,832 children in schools in England⁵. There were:

- A total of 517,026 Education Health and Care Plans in England at January 2023, this represents an increase in 66,356 on January 2022. There were a total of 114,457 requests for EHCPs and 50.7% of all plans were completed within 20 weeks⁶.
- 389,171 (4.3%) pupils in schools in England have an Education, health and care (EHC) plan, a rise from 271,165 (3.1%) in 2019. Prior to this, the percentage had remained at 2.8% of the total pupil population from 2007 to 2017⁷
- A further 1,183,384 (13.0%) pupils have SEN support, without an EHC plan, up from 1,047,163 (11.9%) in 2019.
- The most common type of need for pupils with an EHC plan is autistic spectrum disorders and for pupils with SEN support is speech, communication and language needs
- This gives a total of 1,572,555 school pupils with SEN, or 17.3% of all pupils. This has increased from 15.5% in 2020.

There were 32,160 children in need identified at 31 March 2022 because of a child's disability or illness⁸

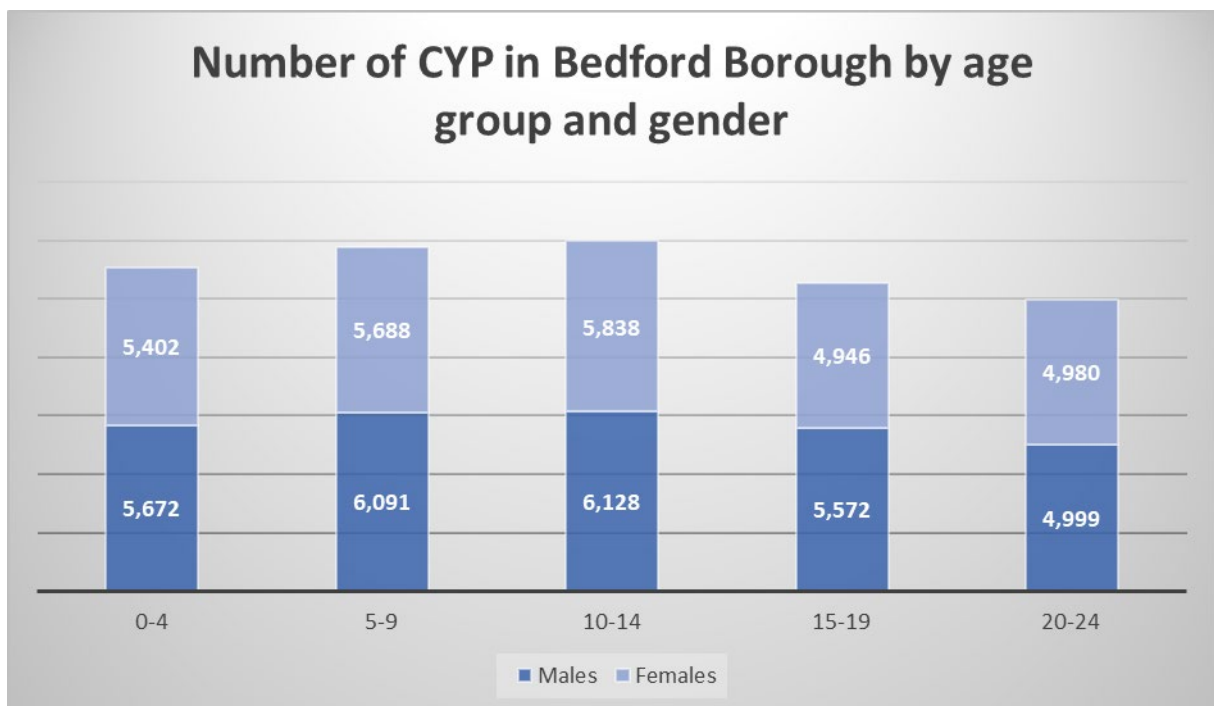
Nationally, there were 783,632 Personal Independent Payment and Disability Living Allowance claimants in England aged between 0 and 24 in April 2023⁹.

5. Local Context Data

How many children and young people under the age of 25 are there in Bedford Borough?

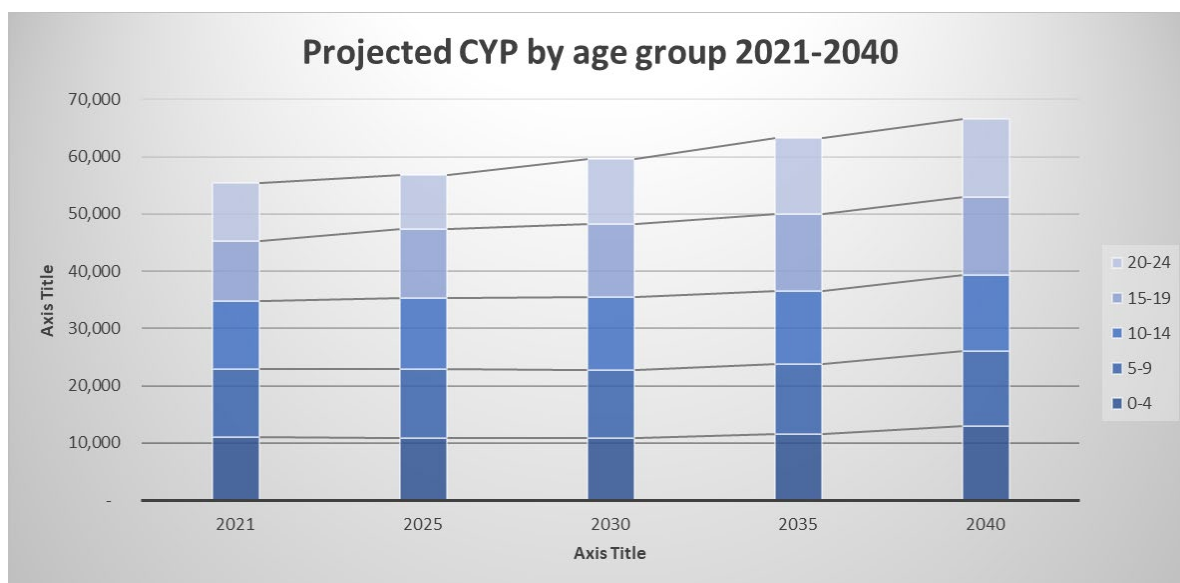
55,316 The number of children and young people under the age of 25 in Bedford Borough¹⁰

Age Group	Males	Females	Total
0-4	5,672	5,402	11,074
5-9	6,091	5,688	11,779
10-14	6,128	5,838	11,966
15-19	5,572	4,946	10,518
20-24	4,999	4,980	9,979
Total	28,462	26,854	55,316

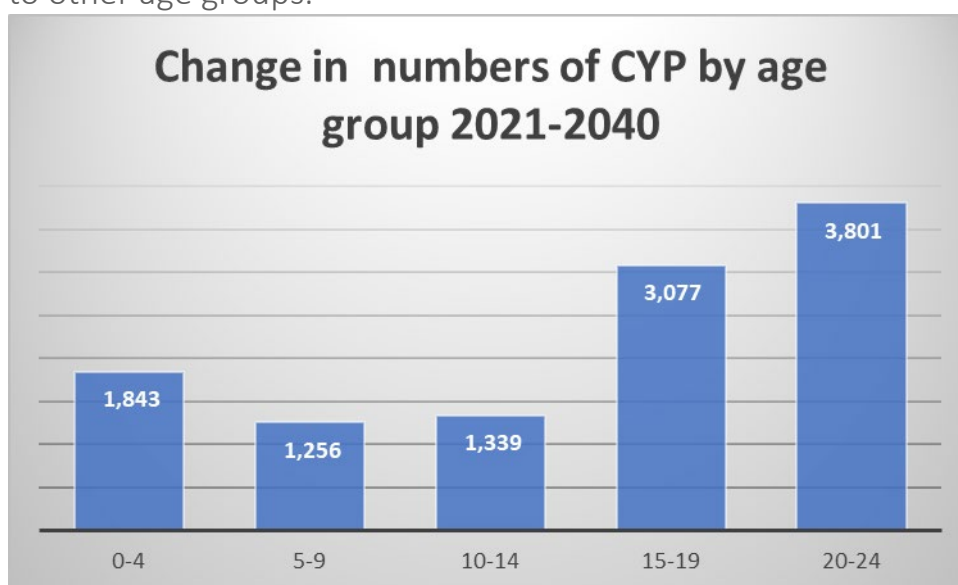


This is projected to grow by 11,315 between 2021 and 2040.¹¹

Age	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040
0-4	11,074	10,900	10,778	11,511	12,917
5-9	11,779	11,989	11,868	12,181	13,035
10-14	11,966	12,420	12,755	12,892	13,305
15-19	10,518	11,980	12,880	13,398	13,595
20-24	9,979	9,406	11,355	13,261	13,780
Total	55,316	56,694	59,636	63,242	66,631



However, this change in the population of children and young people is not even – the proportion and total number of older children and young people is growing. There is a disproportionate growth in the 15-24 age range compared to other age groups.



How many children and young people with SEND are there in Bedford Borough?

There are a number of different ways of measuring this.

The way that is most relevant to the planning, commissioning and delivery of services is to use the total number of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) or statements in addition to the number pupils in schools on SEN support.

There are 3,946 pupils on SEN support¹² and 1653 children and young people with EHCPs or statements¹³ within Bedford Borough.

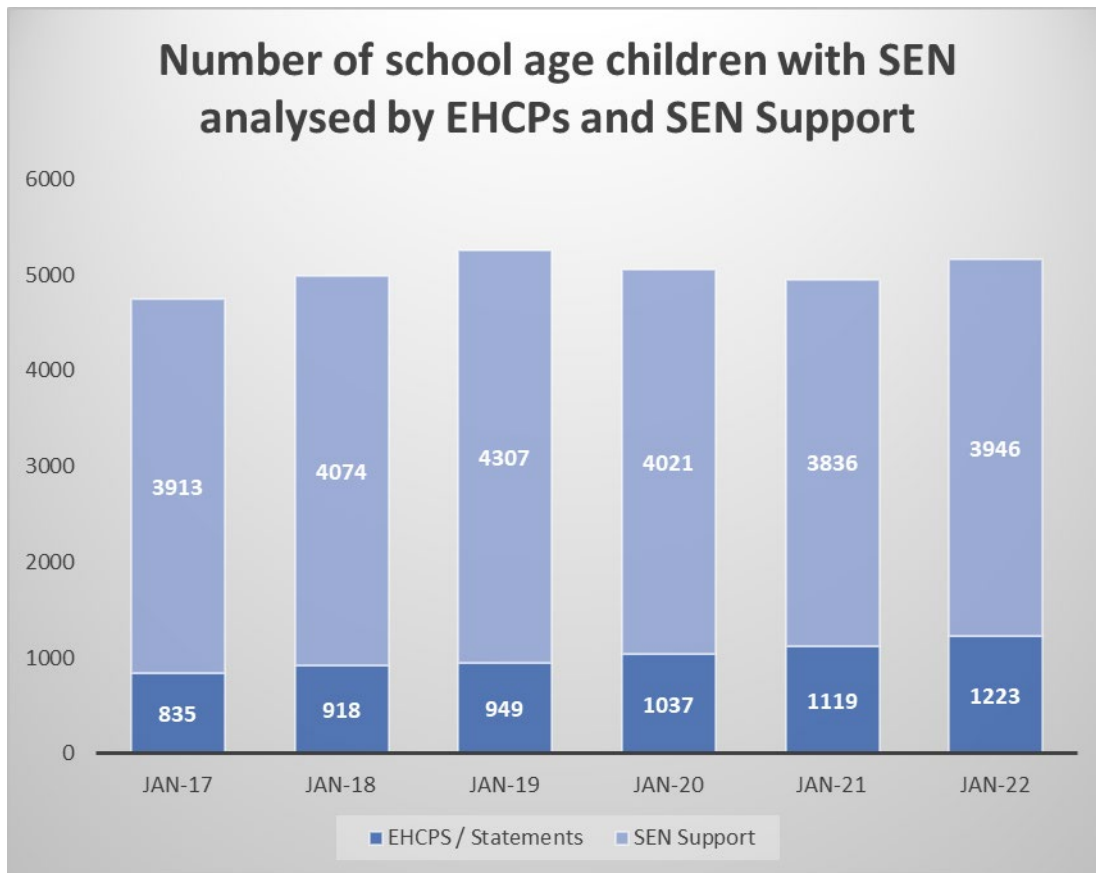
5,599 children and young people with a Special Educational Need or Disability in Bedford Borough. This has increased from 5,169 in 2020.

In 2015, the equivalent number was 4,455 (990 statements / EHCPs and 3465 on SEN support¹⁴) This represents a rise of 1,144 or an increase of 25% in 7 years.

5,169 The number of school age children and young people with a Special Educational Need or Disability in Bedford Borough (note EHCPs go until the age of 25)

The numbers of school age children and young people have changes as follows:

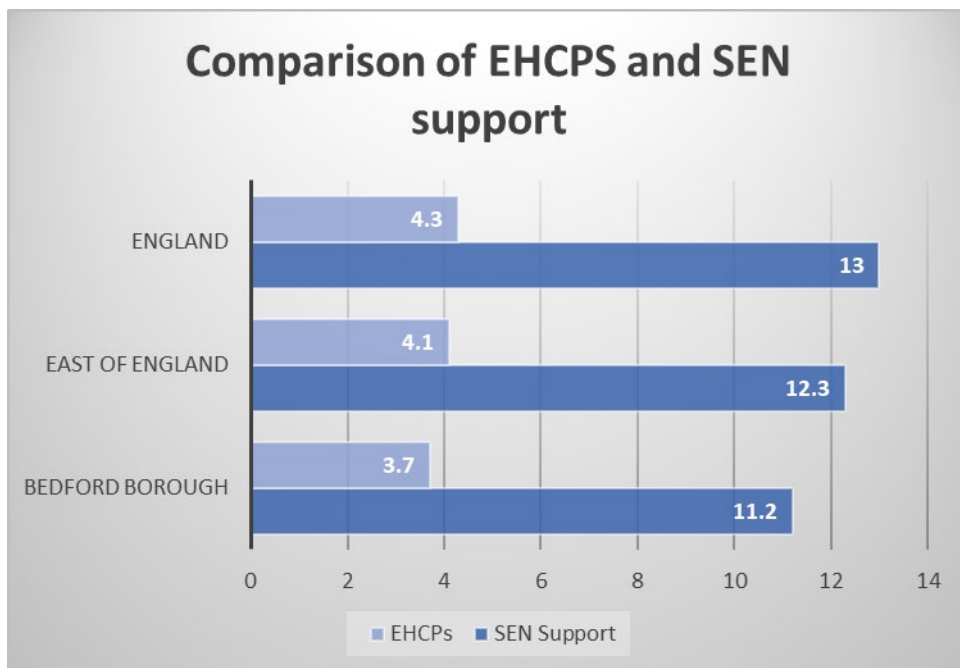
	Jan-17	Jan-18	Jan-19	Jan-20	Jan-21	Jan-22
EHCPs / Statements	835	918	949	1037	1119	1223
SEN Support	3913	4074	4307	4021	3836	3946
Total	4748	4992	5256	5058	4955	5169



The majority (74%) of children and young people with statements or EHCPs (1223 out of 1653) are of school age¹⁵. This was 79% in 2020.

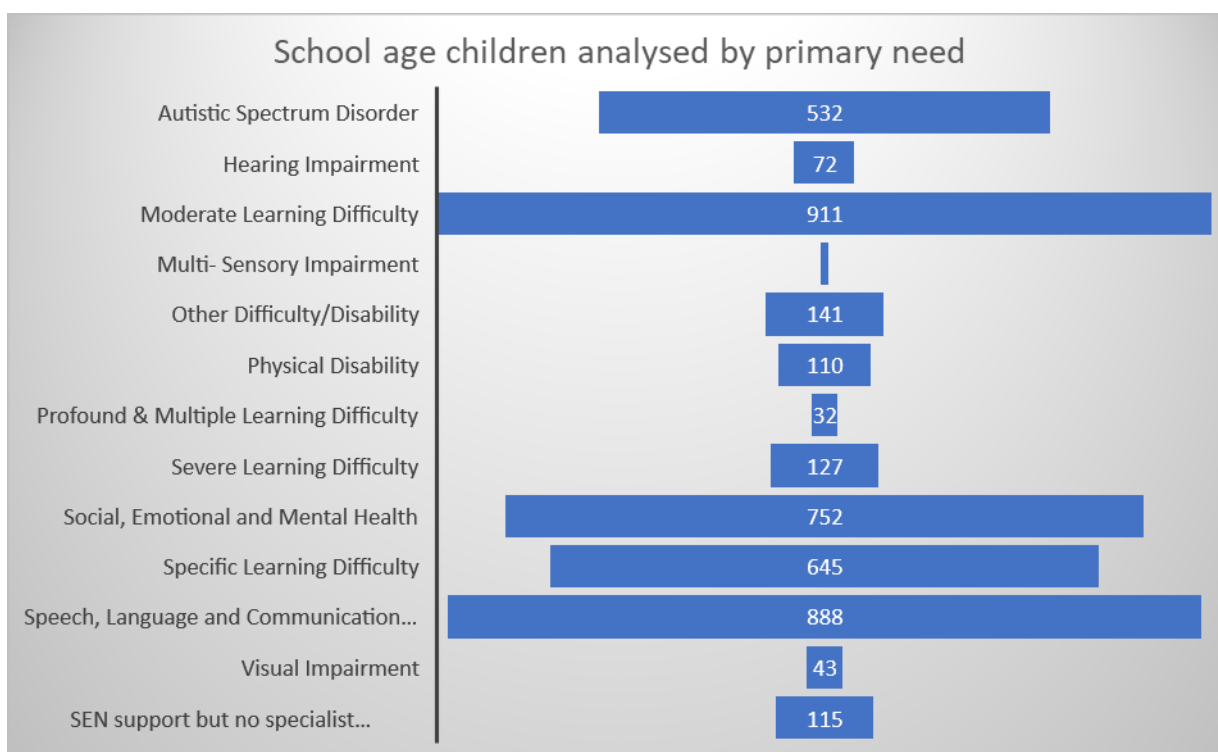
How does Bedford Borough compare to the regional and national picture?

Bedford has a slightly lower proportion of school age children and young people with EHCPs and on SEN support than regional and national averages¹⁶.



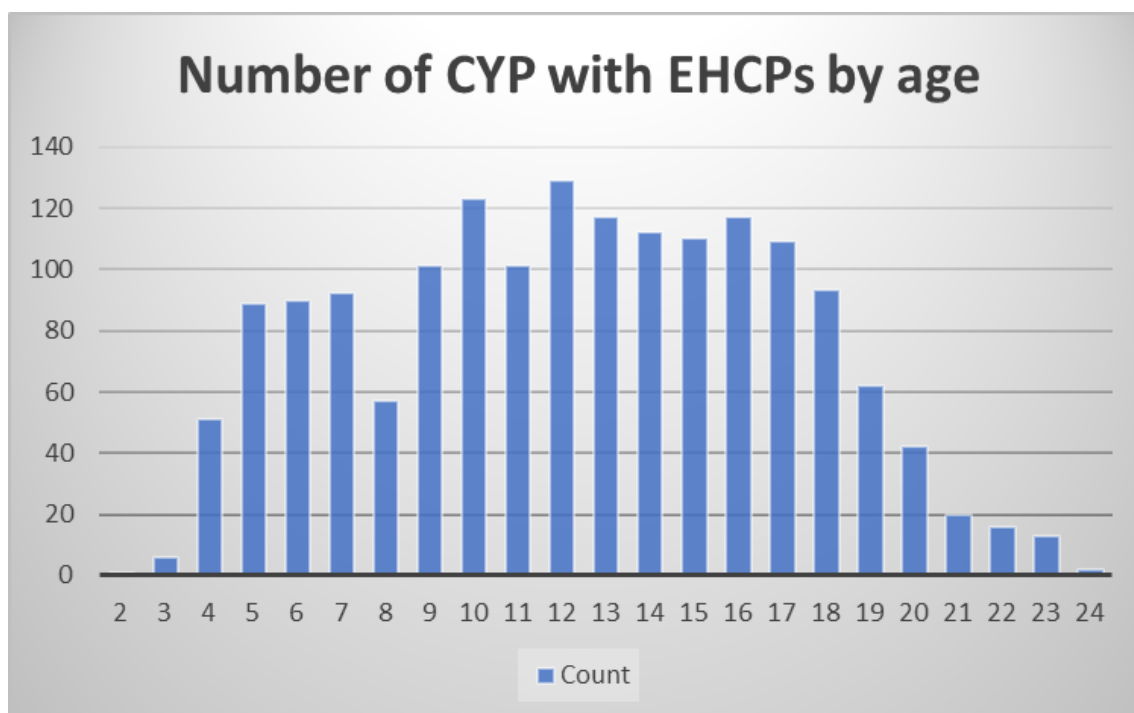
What sorts of needs do these children and young people have?

The best analysis of these numbers available is provided by Department for Education statistics from 2022¹⁷ which exclude children in nurseries, independent schools and pupil referral units. This analysis of 4378 children and young people shows the following needs analysis:



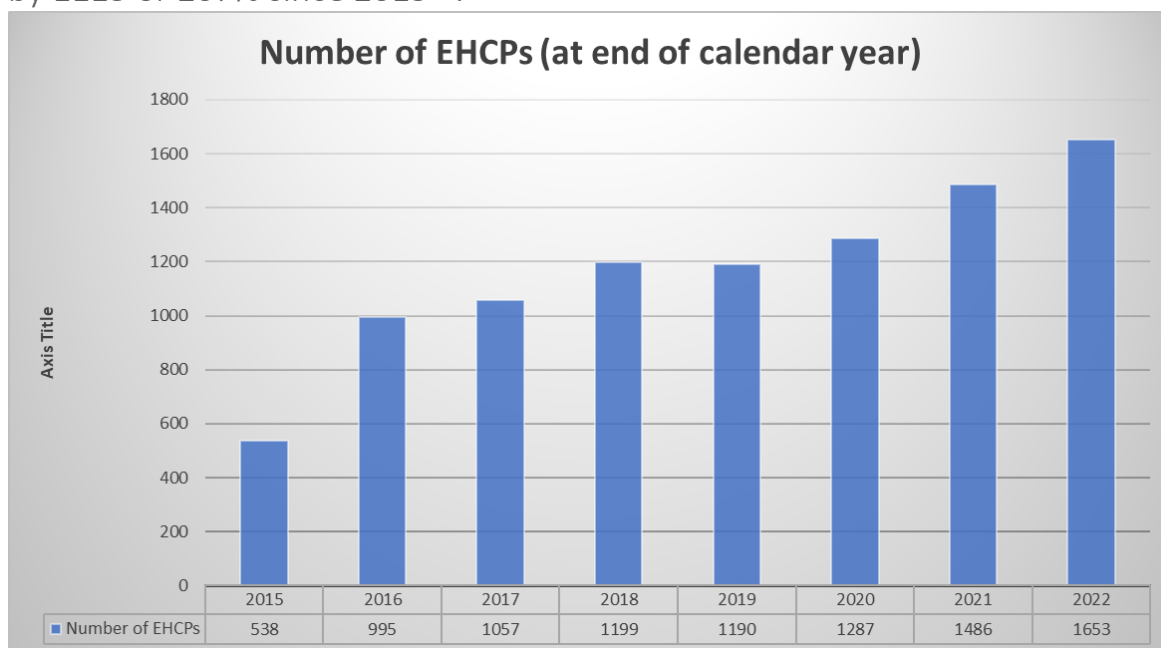
Ages of children and young people with EHCPs

The age of children and young people with an EHCP is analysed as follows:



Historical analysis of Children and Young People with EHCPs and Statements

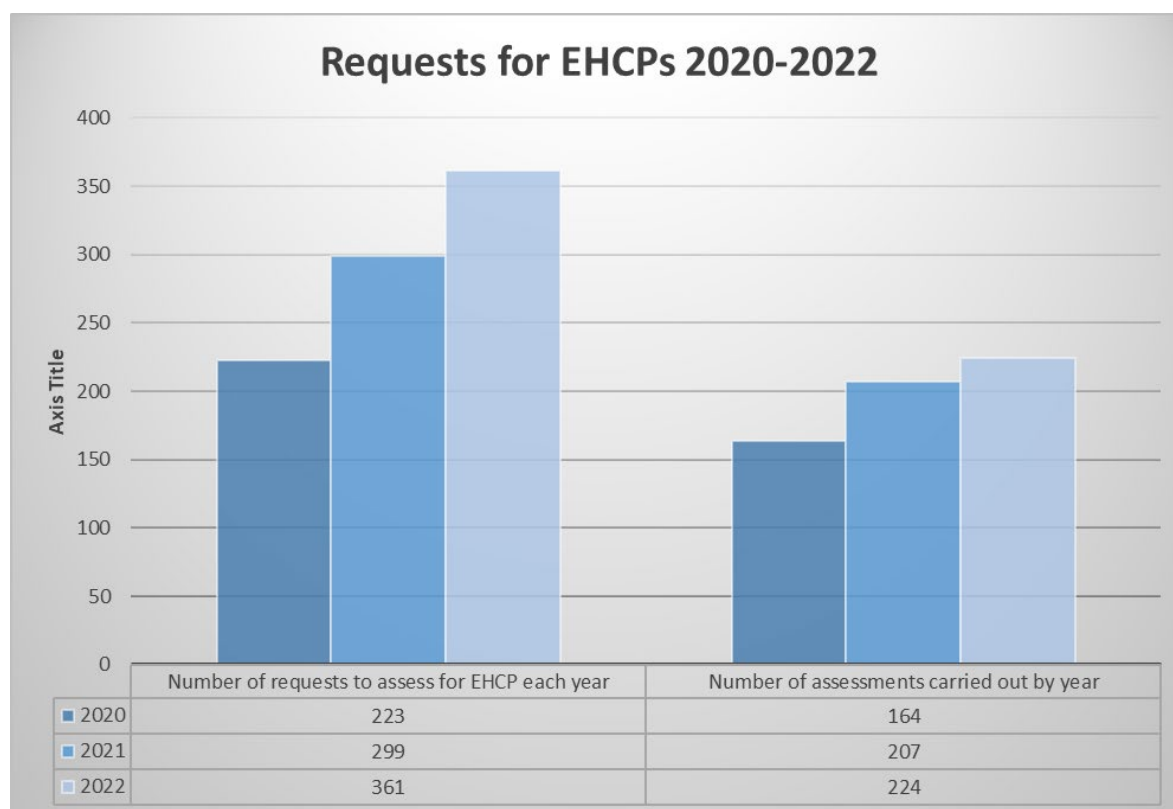
The number of children and young people with EHCPs or statements has grown by 1115 or 207% since 2015¹⁸.



6. Analysis of local needs: Education

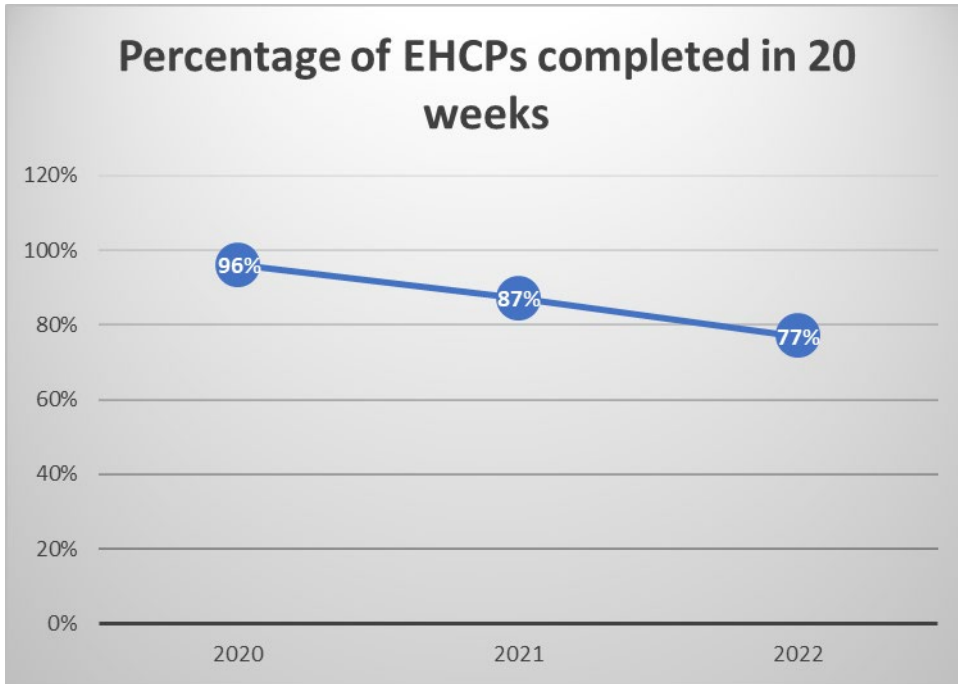
The process for Education Health and Care Plans

The demand for EHCPs has been growing over the last 3 years. Both the number of requests to assess and the number of assessments carried have grown¹⁹.

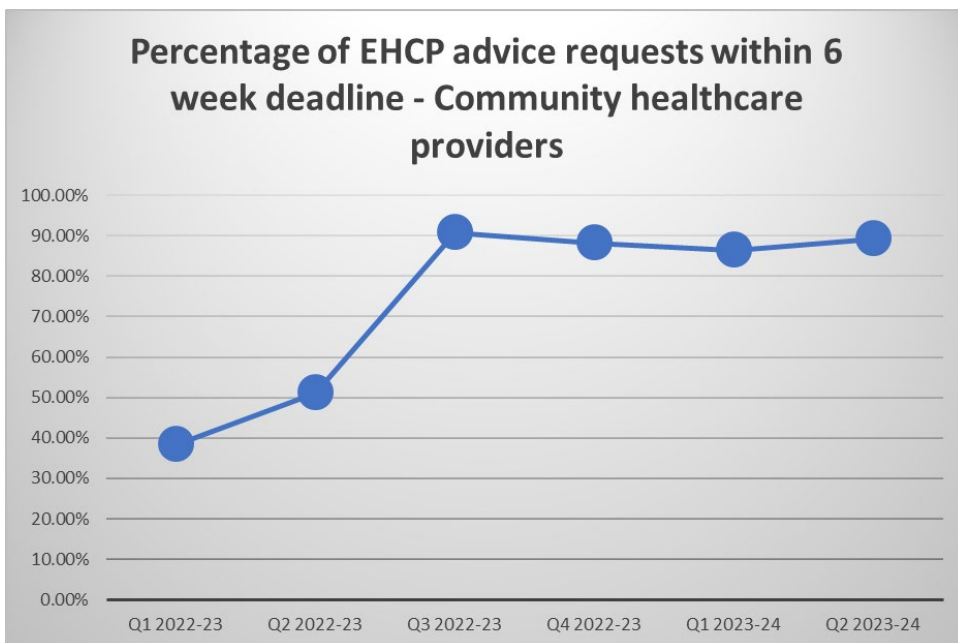


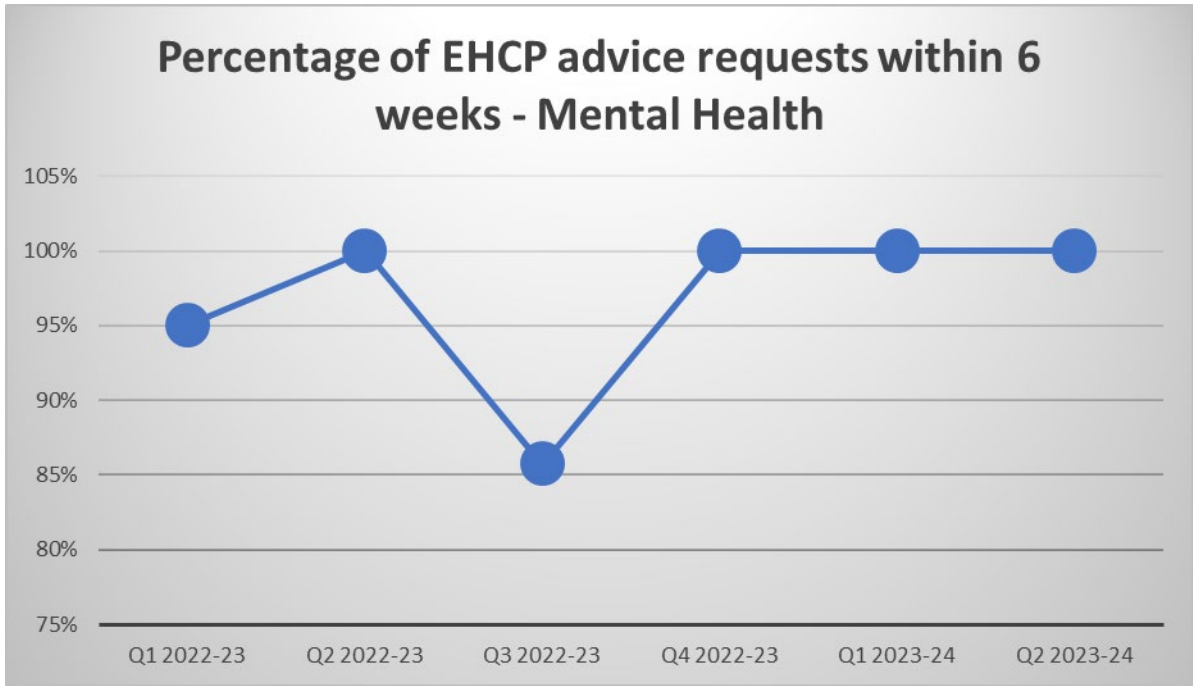
To obtain an EHCP a family must first request an assessment and then based on the outcome of that assessment, a plan may be issued. At both of these stages the local authority may refuse to progress a plan by either refusing to assess or by deciding not to issue an EHCP on the basis of the findings of an assessment.

The percentage of these requests completed within the statutory 20 week time limit has declined over the last 3 years²⁰.



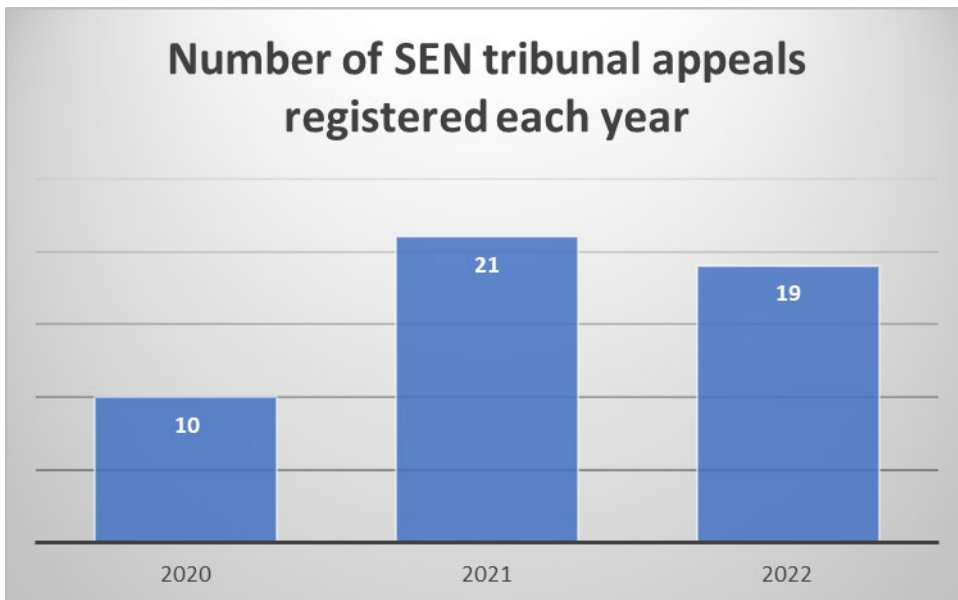
However, recent data shows that Community Health providers and CAMHS have been responding to requests for advice more promptly than previously. However, there is only very limited data available going back to Q1 2022-23²¹.





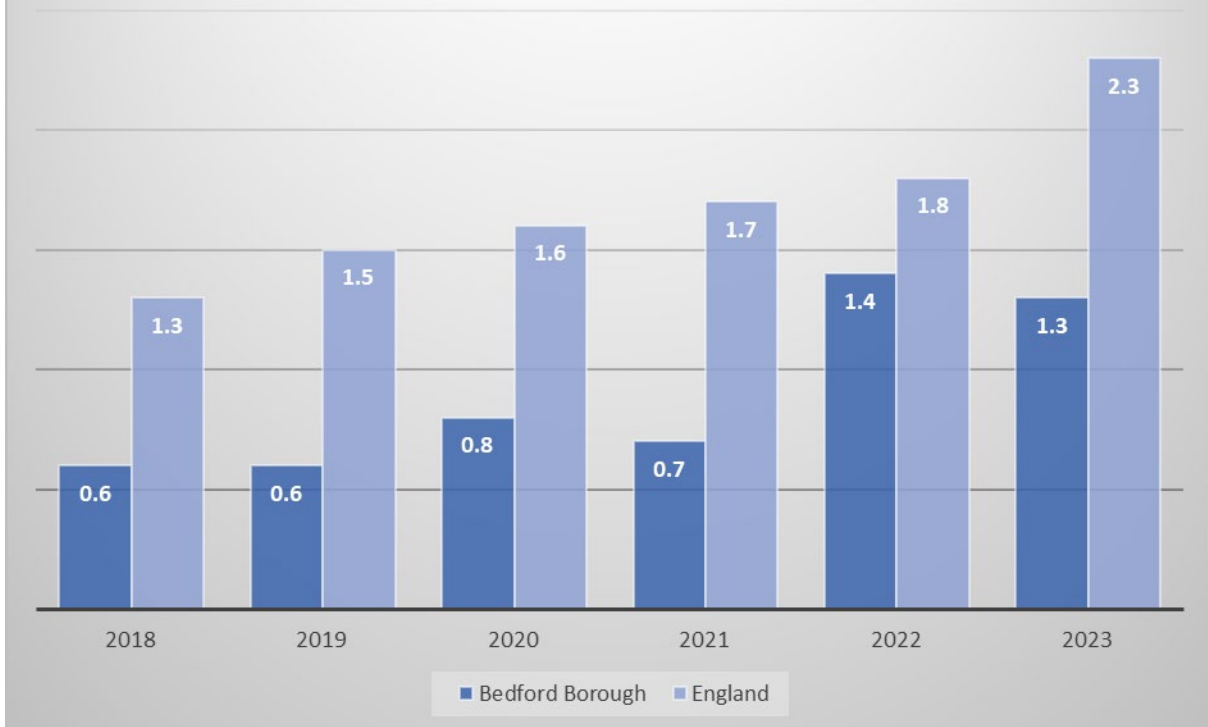
SEND tribunals

Over the last few years the number of tribunals in Bedford Borough has increased²².



Bedford Borough has historically had comparatively lower numbers of tribunals than the average across England²³.

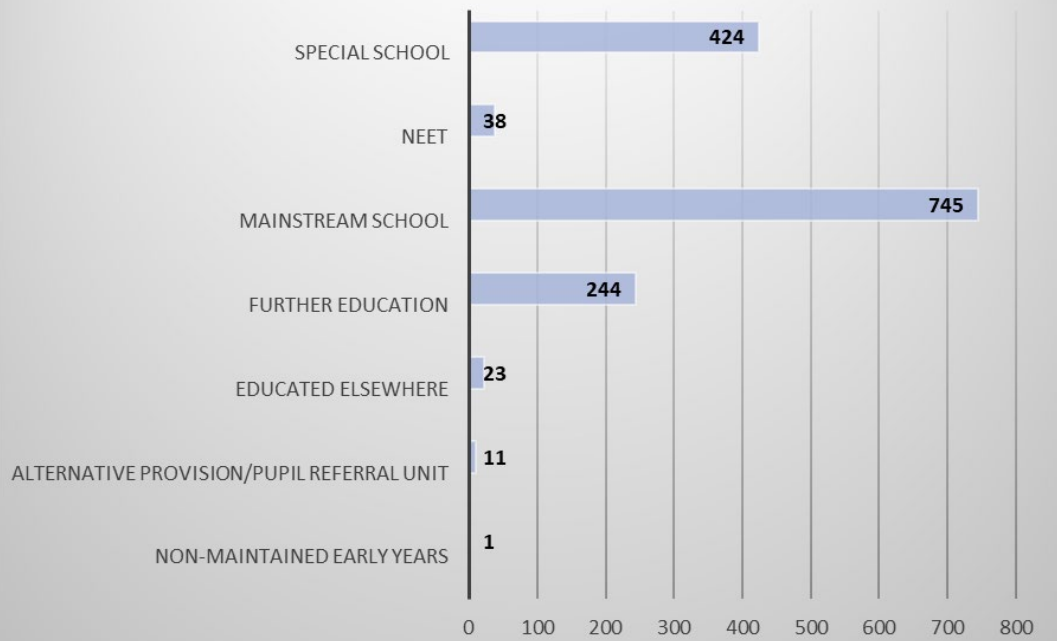
Comparison of SEND tribunal rates - by percentage of appealable decisions



Placement of children and young people of school and college age

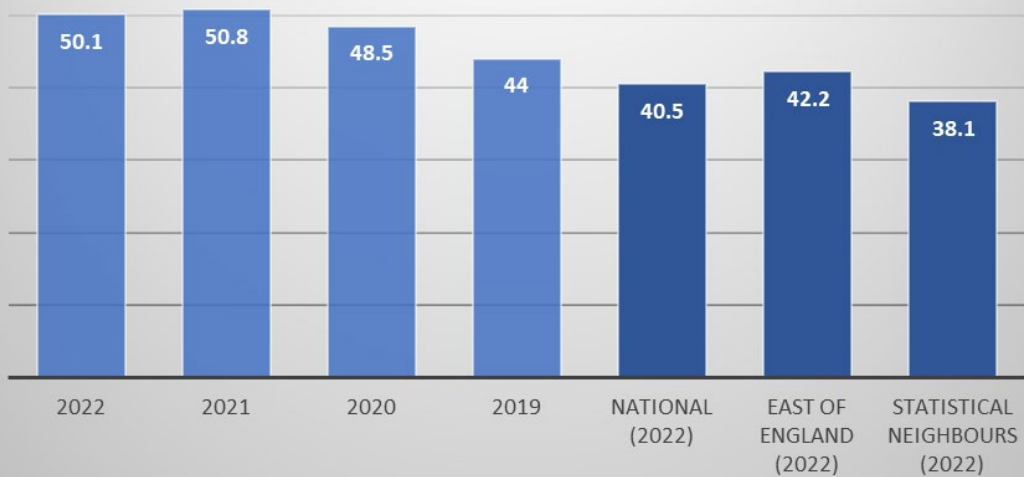
The majority of children and young people of school and college age are in a mainstream setting²⁴.

Placements of children and young people with an EHCP



Bedford Borough places a higher percentage of children with an EHCP in mainstream settings than the national average and comparators.

Percentage of CYP with an EHCPs receiving provision in mainstream schools

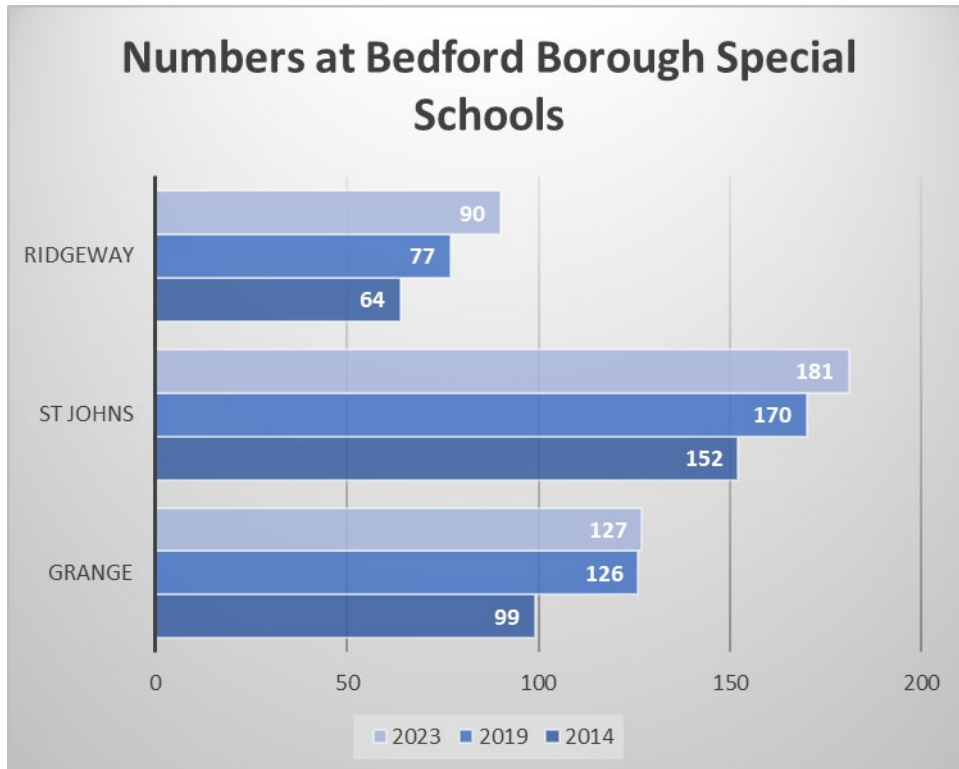


Special schools

398

the number of pupils in Bedford Borough special schools.

There are three special schools in Bedford Borough. All of them have seen an increase in the number of students over the last 2 years²⁵. In 2021 the equivalent number was 373. In 2014 there were 315 which represents a 26% increase.



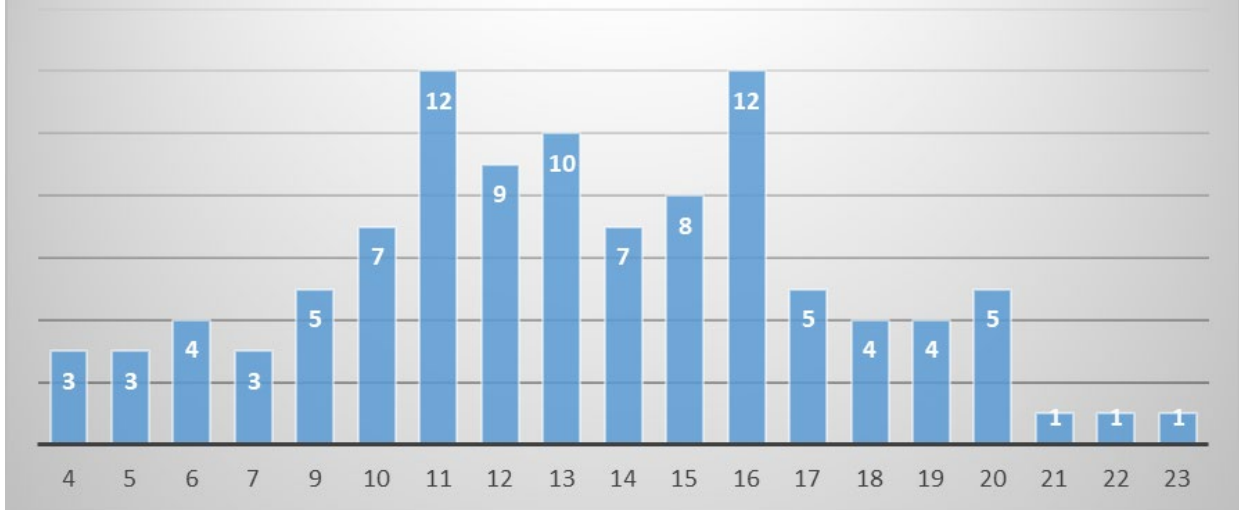
In addition there were an additional 29 children in independent school placements.

Out of Borough schooling

There were a total of 104 children and young people in out of borough school or college placements.

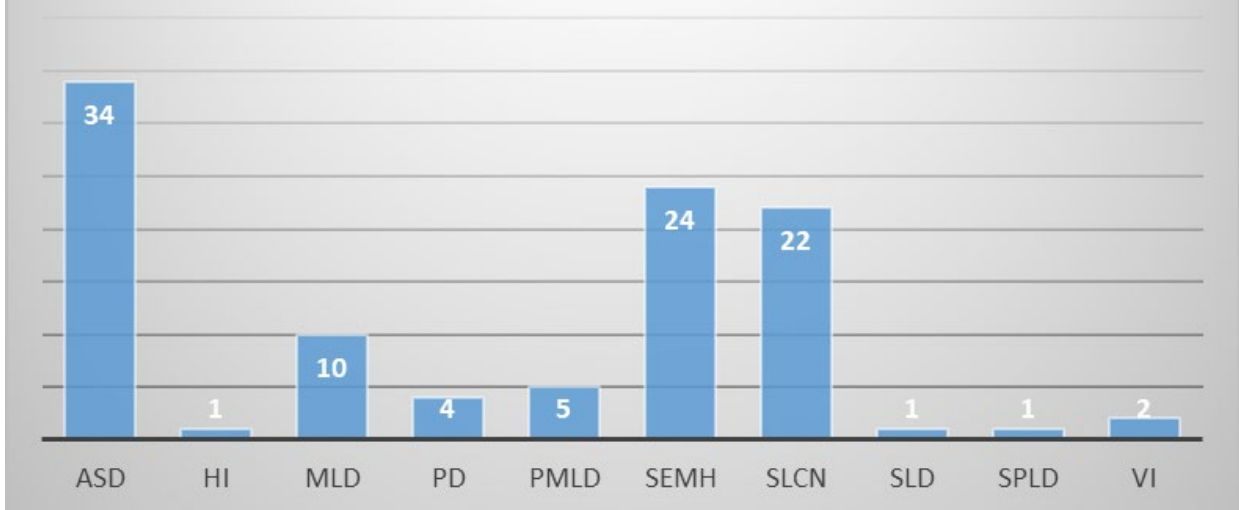
The age profile of CYP placed outside of the borough was as follows:

Age profile of out of Borough schooling

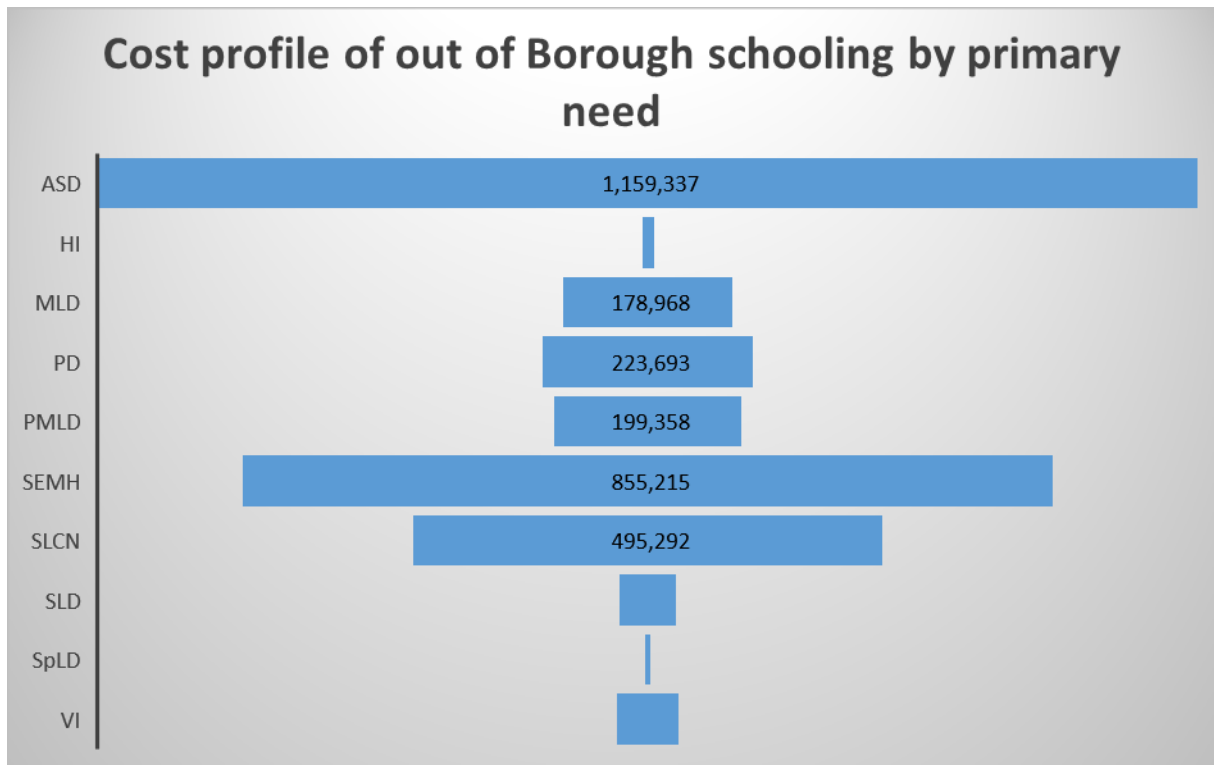


The most prominent needs for those placed out of borough are ASD, SEMH and SCLN.

Primary need of out of Borough schooling



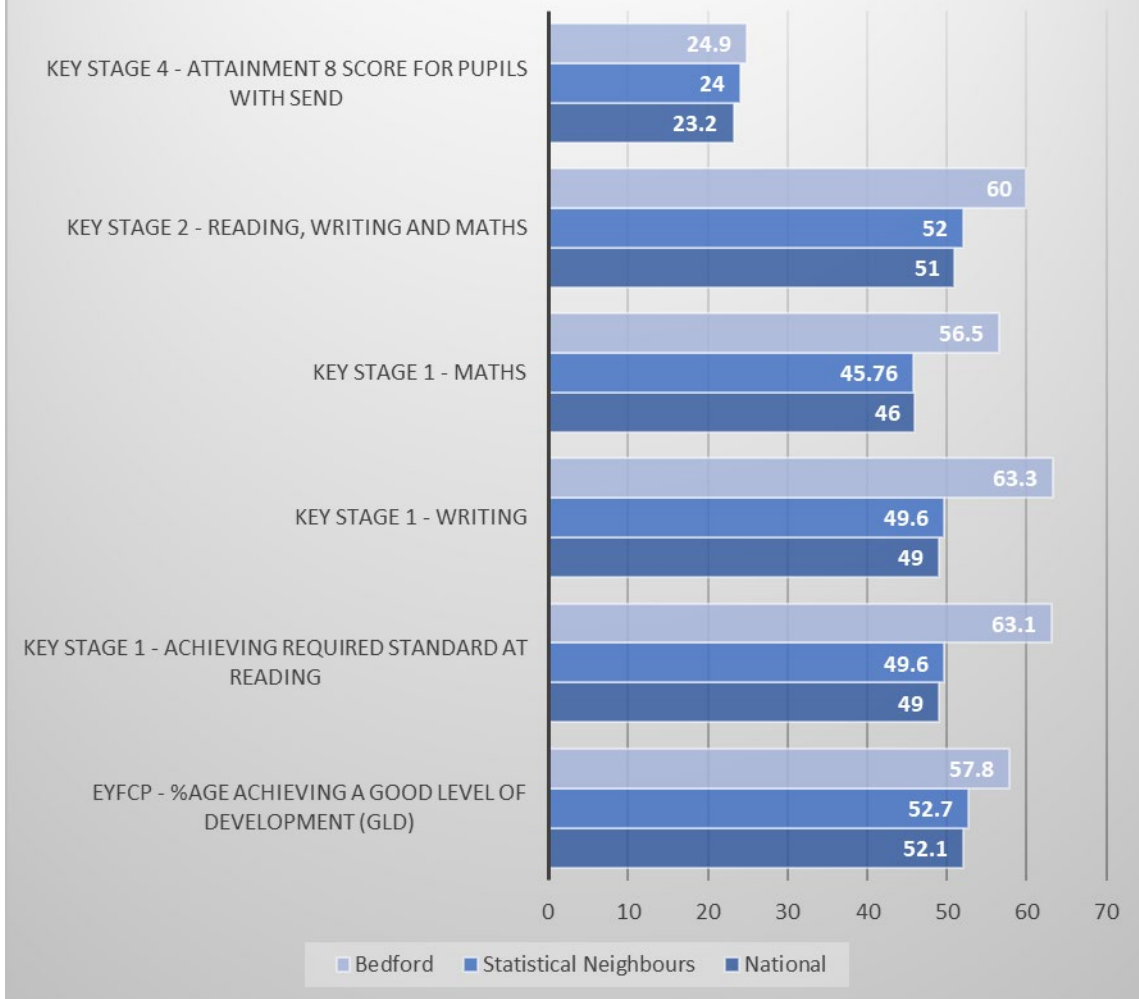
The total cost of these placements was approximately £3.25m. The most costly primary needs reflected the numbers of CYP in each category.



Educational attainment

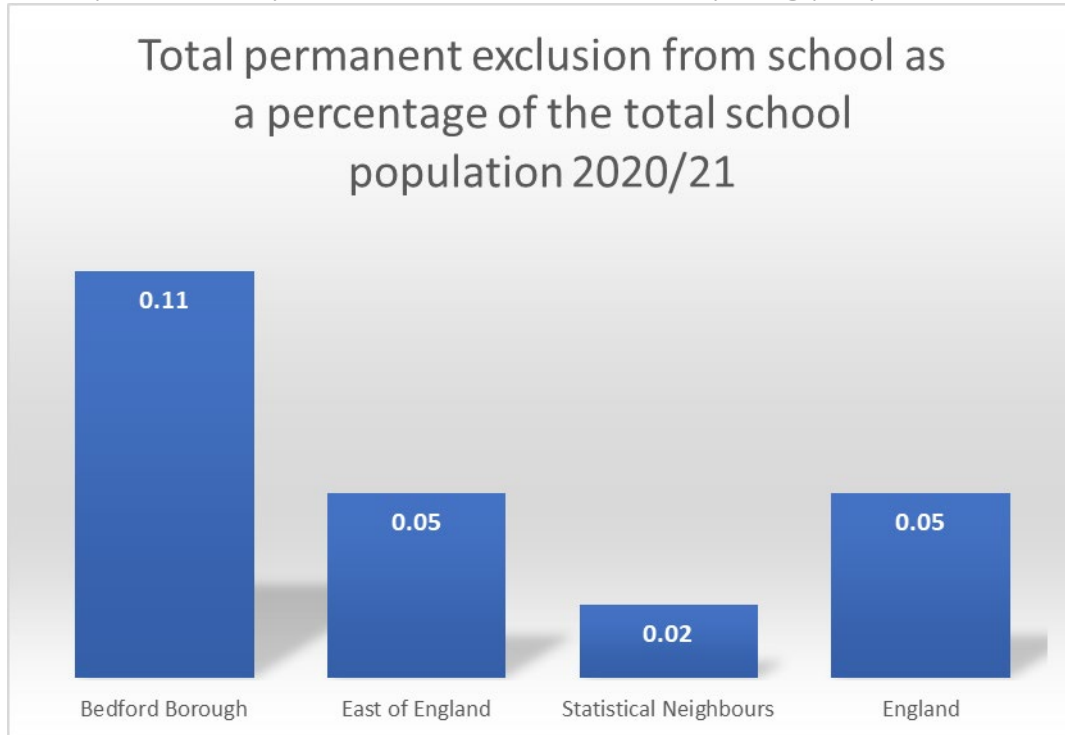
Educational attainment for pupils with SEND in Bedford Borough are significantly lower than national averages and statistical neighbours at all ages²⁶.

Gap in educational attainment between SEND and no SEND pupils

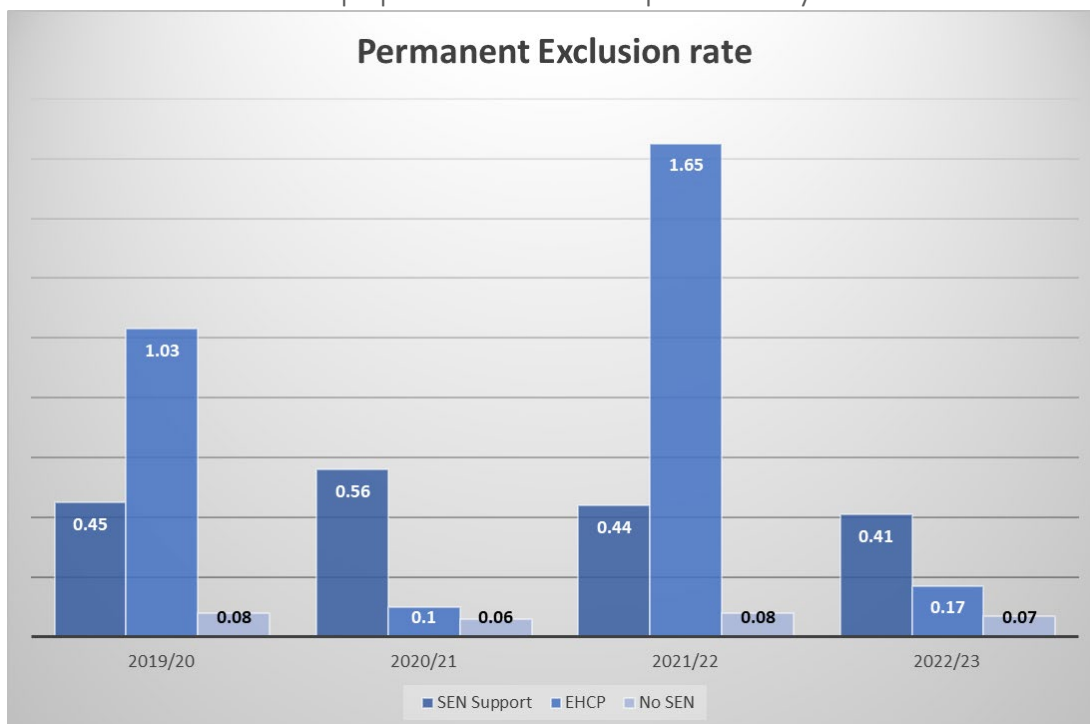


School exclusions

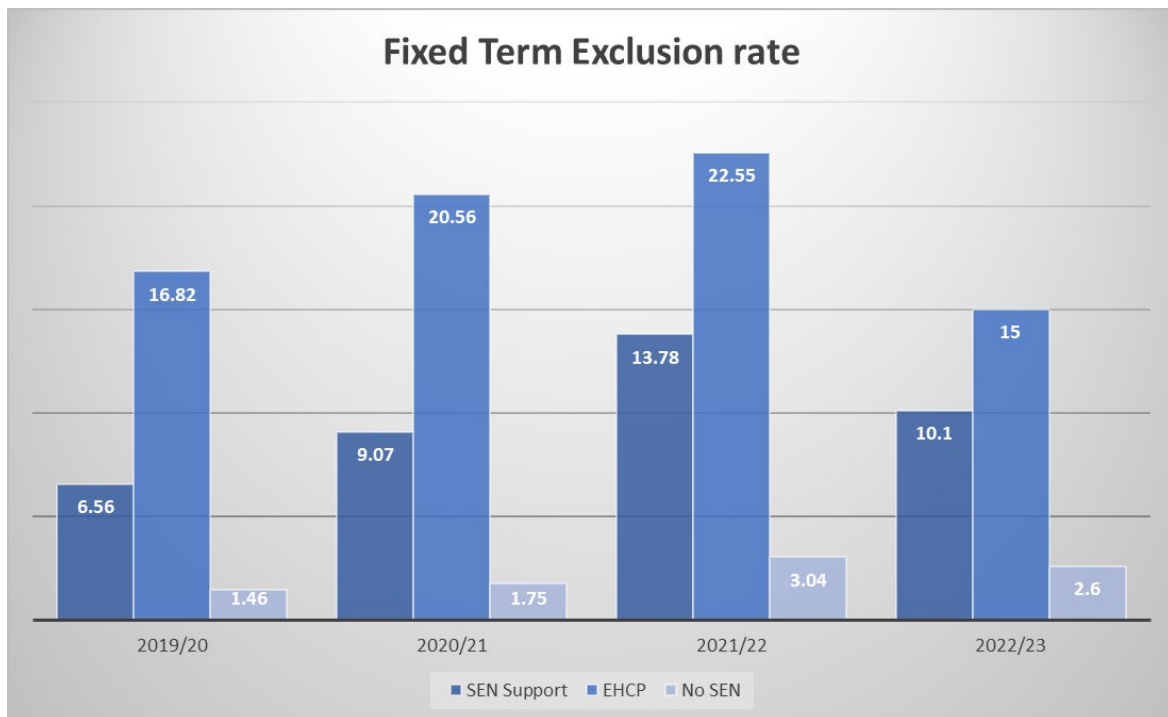
Children and young people with SEND are significantly more likely to be permanently excluded from schools in Bedford Borough than those in our statistical neighbours and nationally. In addition, they are 10 times more likely to be permanently excluded than children and young people with no SEND²⁷.



This is concentrated in pupils with SEN and particularly EHCPs.

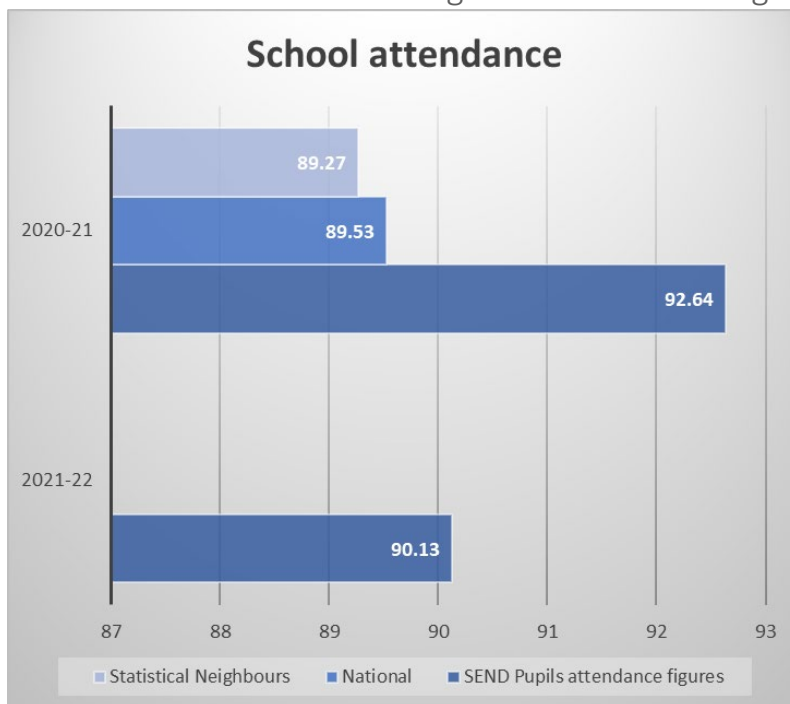


Fixed term exclusion rates for children with SEND with are marginally lower than statistical neighbours and the national average²⁸.

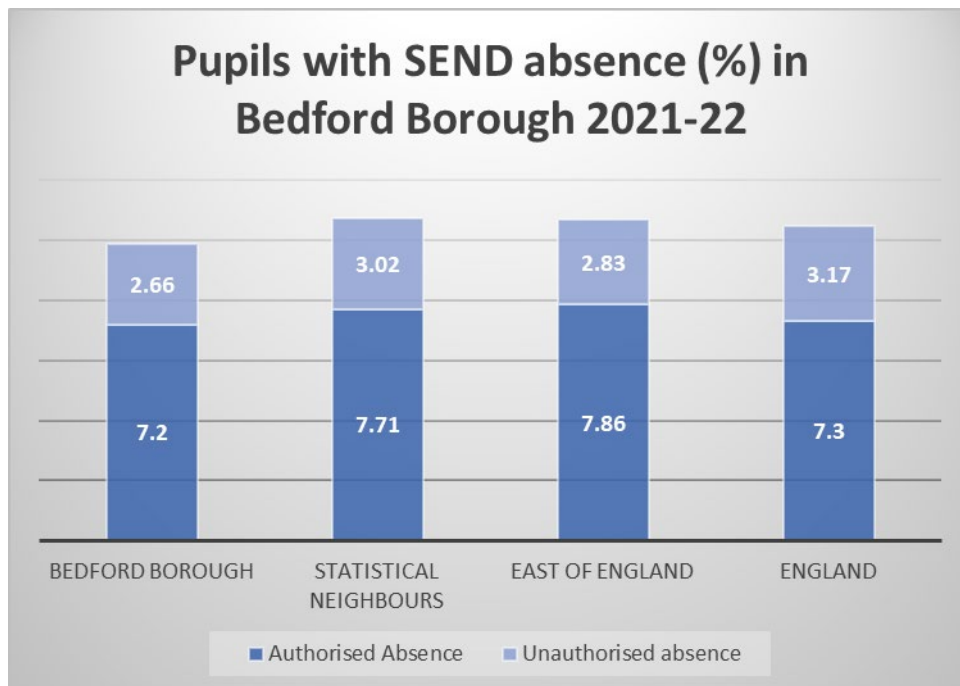


Attendance

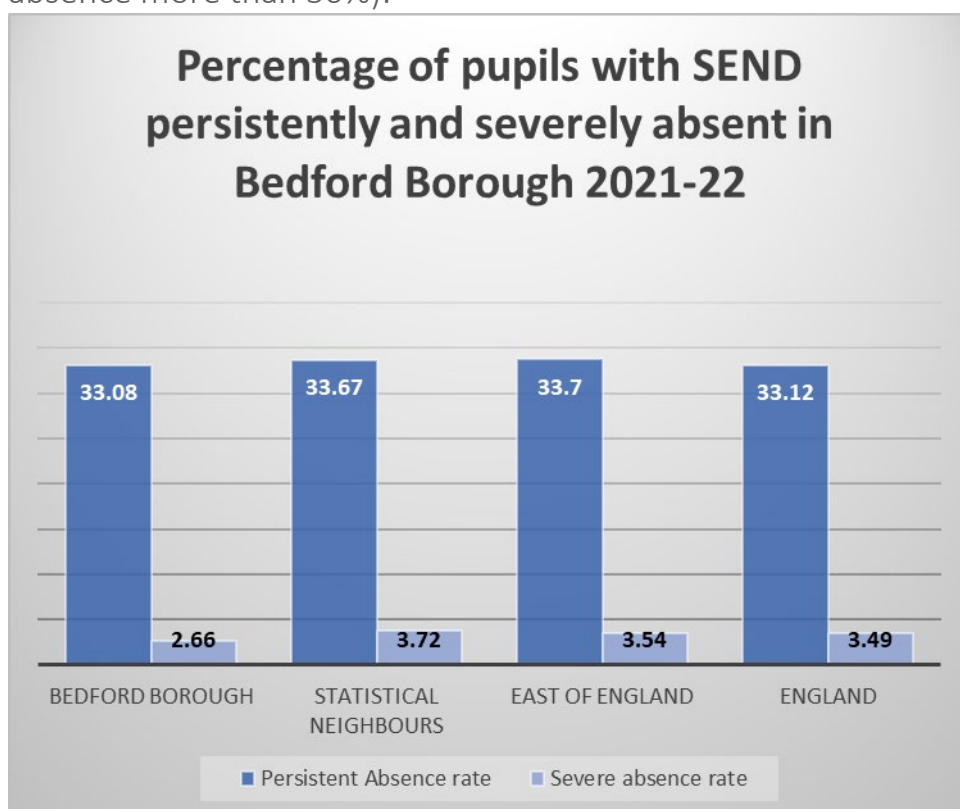
Bedford Borough has consistently higher attendance rates for children with SEND than the national average and statistical neighbours²⁹.



This is reflected in the absence rates for children with SEND in Bedford Borough:



It is also reflected in the persistent and severe absence rates for Bedford Borough (note persistent absence is more than 10% absence and severe absence more than 50%):



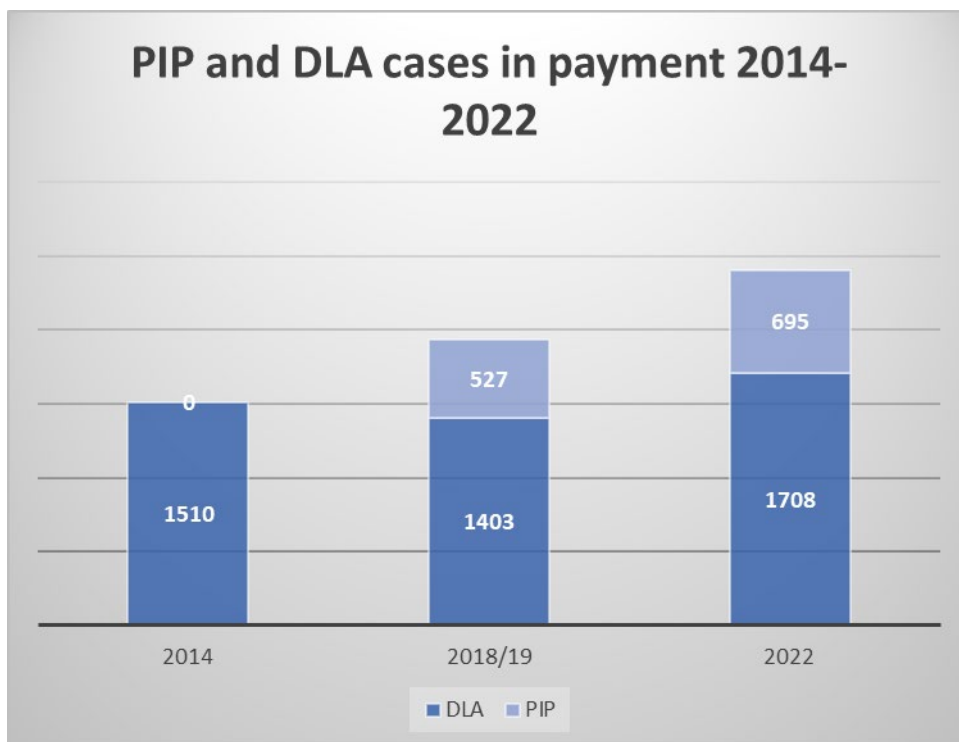
7. Analysis of local needs: Social Care

How many children and young people aged below 25 receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP)?

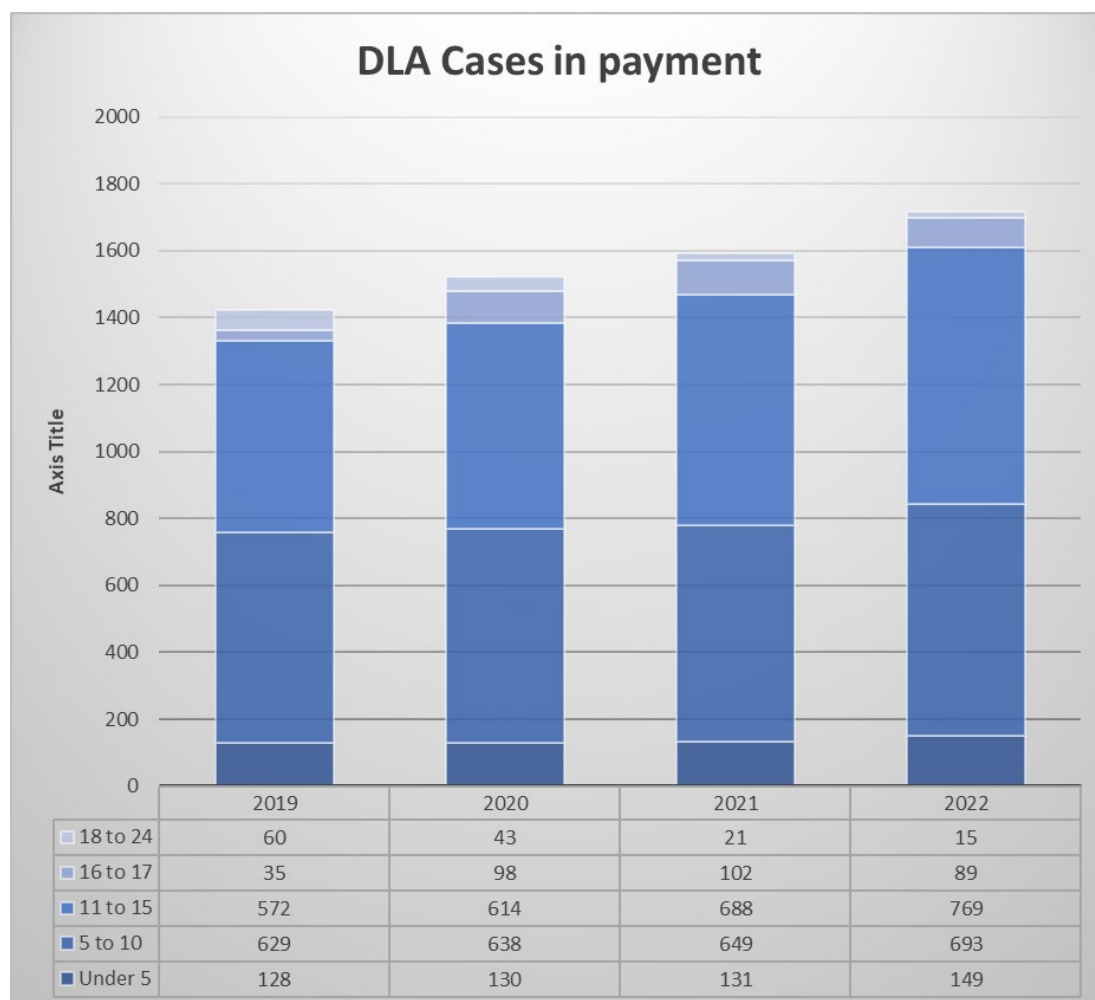
2,403

The total number of children and young people aged below 25 who receive DLA or PIP.

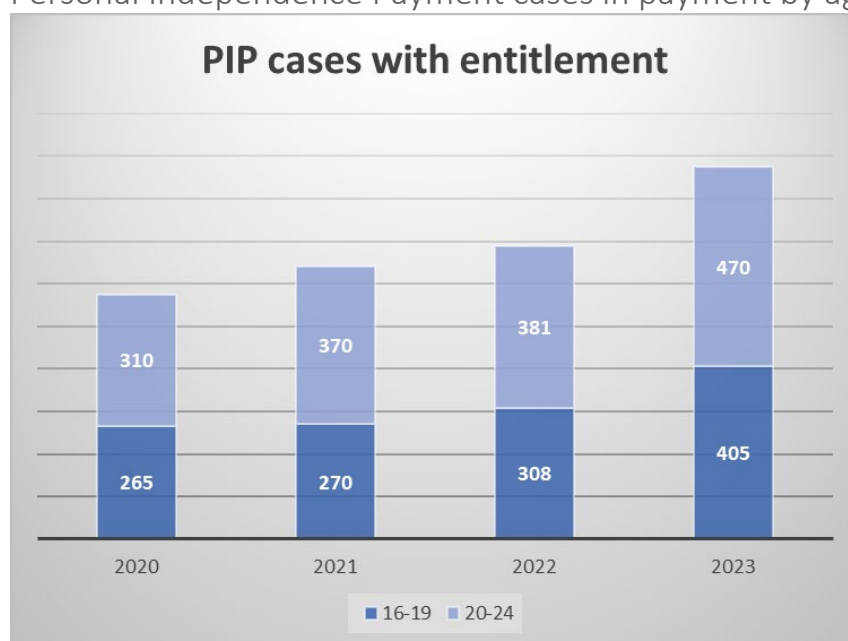
The number of cases of disability related payments has increased by 893 in the last 6 years³⁰, an increase of 59%.



Disability Living Allowance cases in payment by age group:



Personal Independence Payment cases in payment by age group

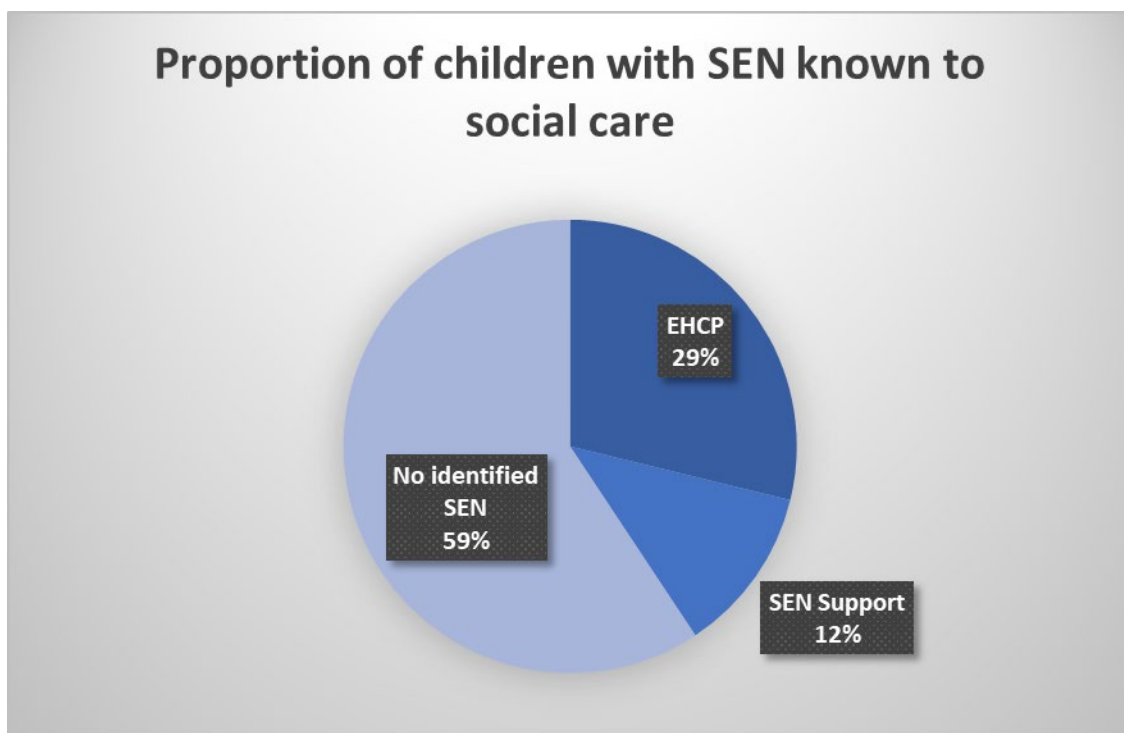


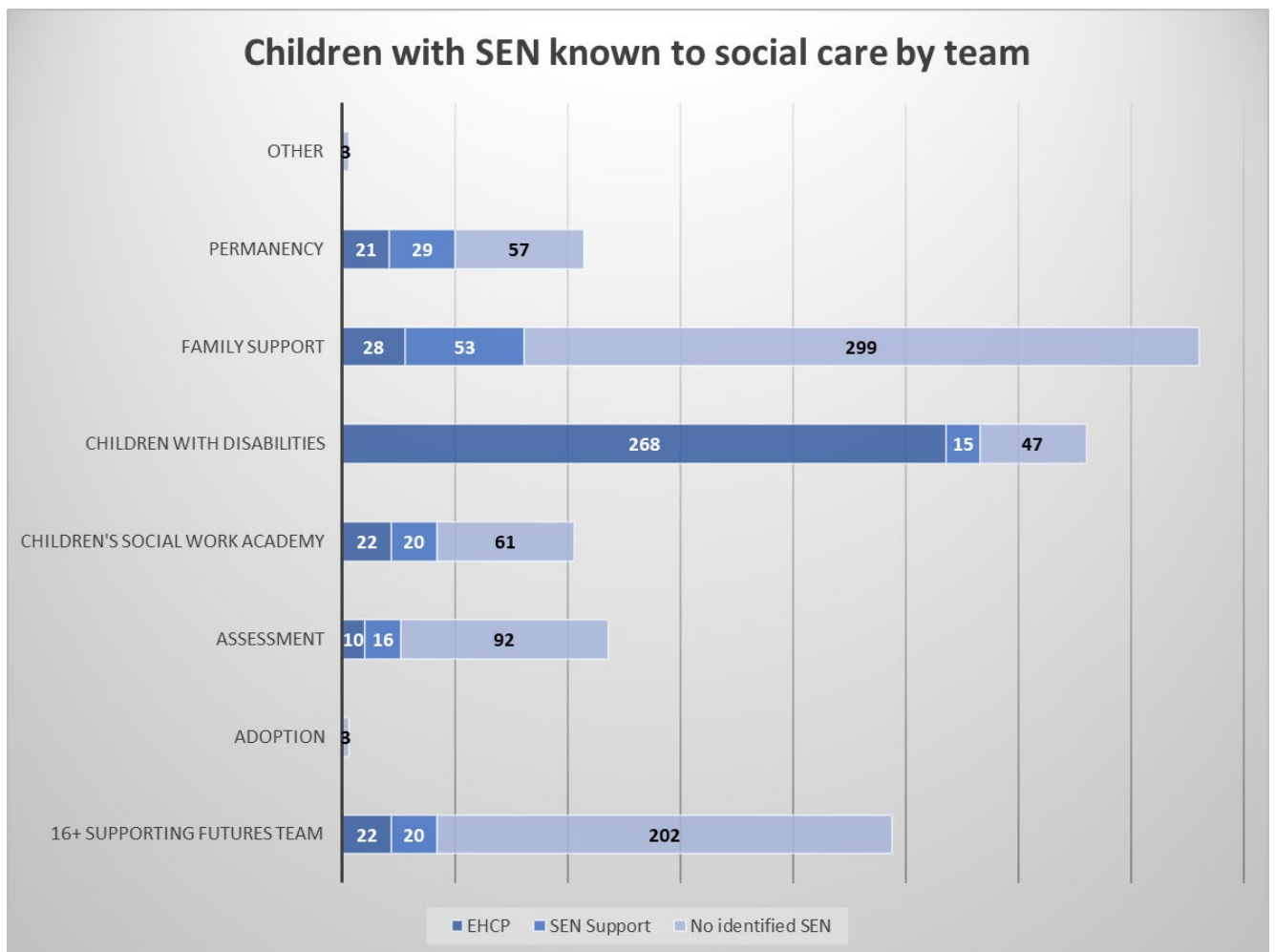
Bedford Borough Children's Social Care (including Youth Offending Services)

1,288 The total number of children known to social care in Bedford Borough³¹.

524 The total number of children known to social care who have some form of SEND (371 have an EHCP and 153 have SEN support). Overall 41% of children known to social care are recorded as having some form of SEND.

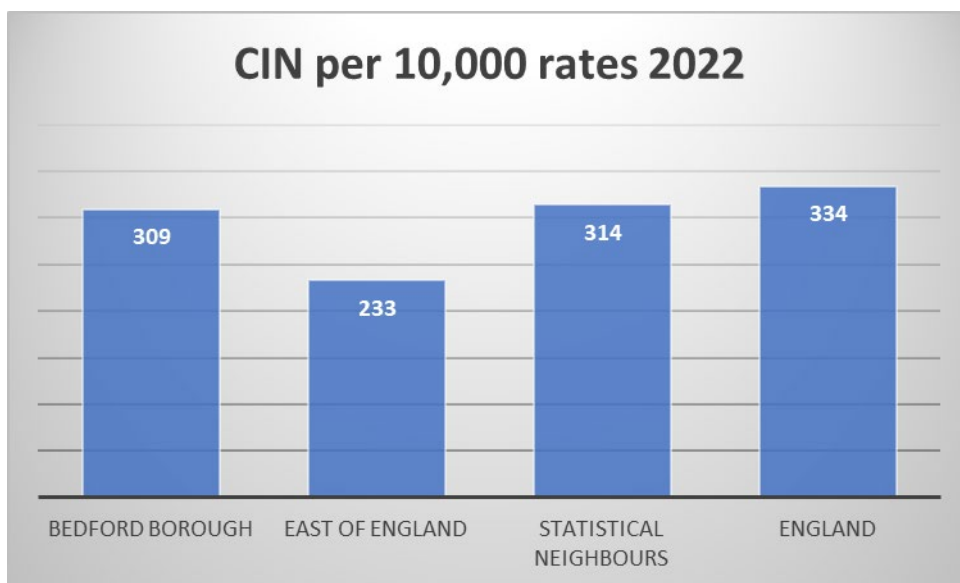
330 The total number of children in Bedford Borough under the Children with Disabilities team



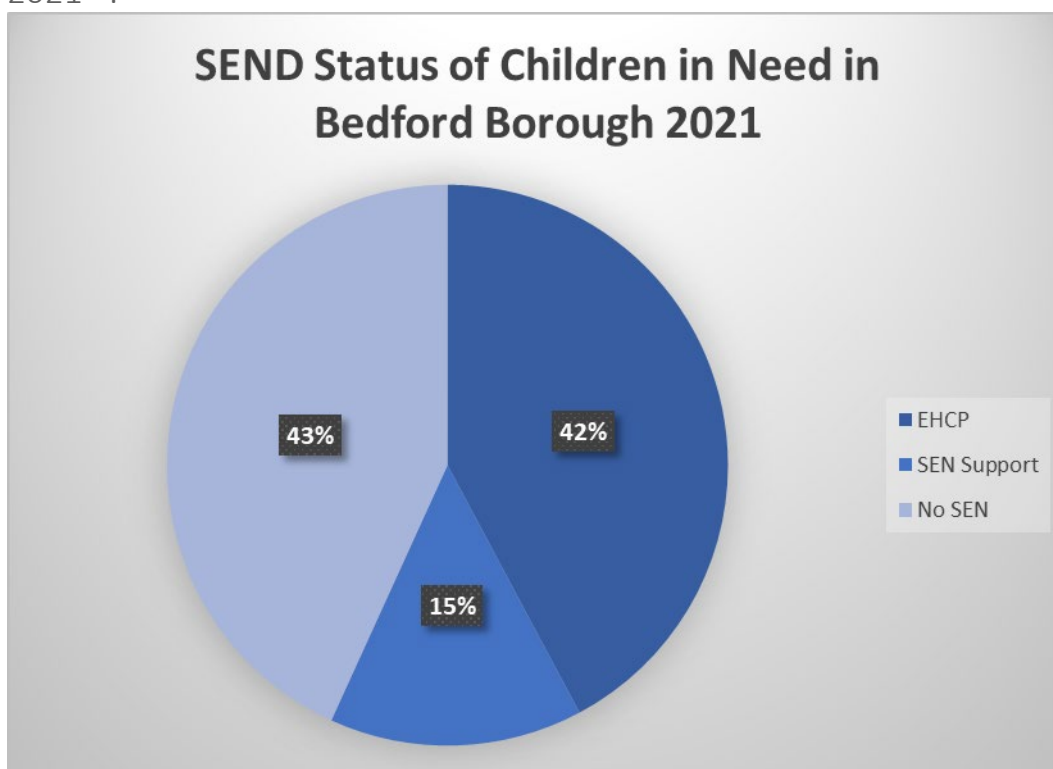


Children in Need

The rates of children in need in Bedford Borough compare as follows to neighbours and England³².

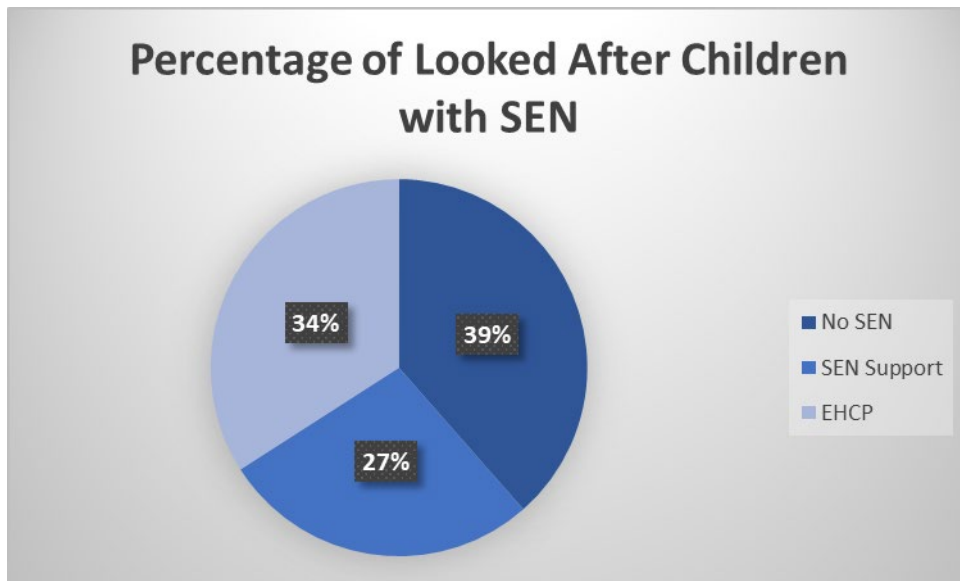


The SEND status of children in need in Bedford Borough was as follows in 2021³³:



Looked After Children

A high proportion of looked after children in Bedford Borough have a special educational need. A total of 61% of looked after children have some form of SEND.

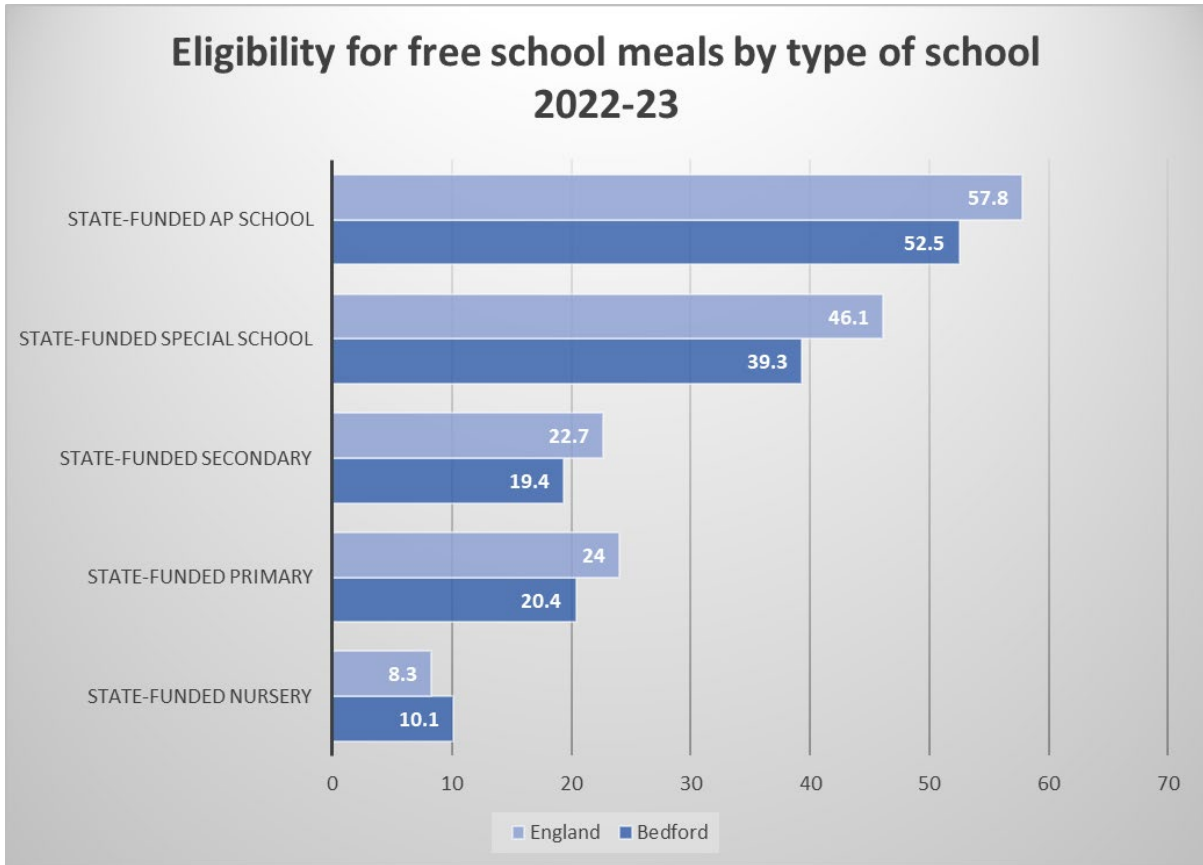


Special needs and child poverty

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation research in 2016³⁴ reported very strong links between poverty and SEND. They concluded that poverty is both a cause and an effect of SEND.

Analysis of eligibility for free school meals in 2022-23 supports this analysis for Bedford Borough.

Pupils attending special schools and pupil referral units are 2-3 times more likely to be eligible for free school meals than their mainstream counterparts³⁵.

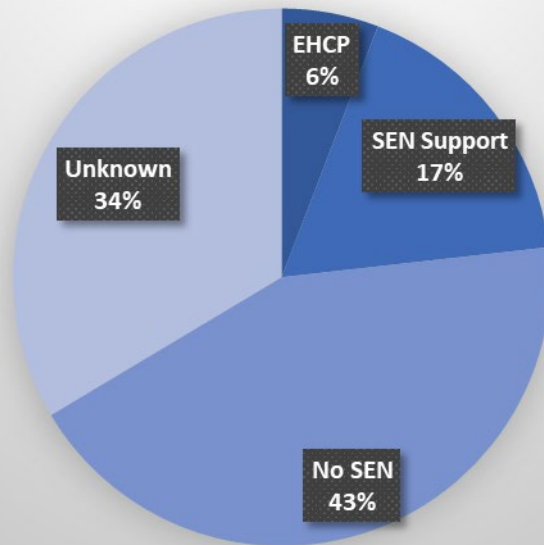


The numbers in Bedford Borough are roughly proportionate to national figures

Early Help

There were 840 early help referrals in 2022. Of these 195 had some sort of identified SEND³⁶.

Analysis of early help referrals 2022

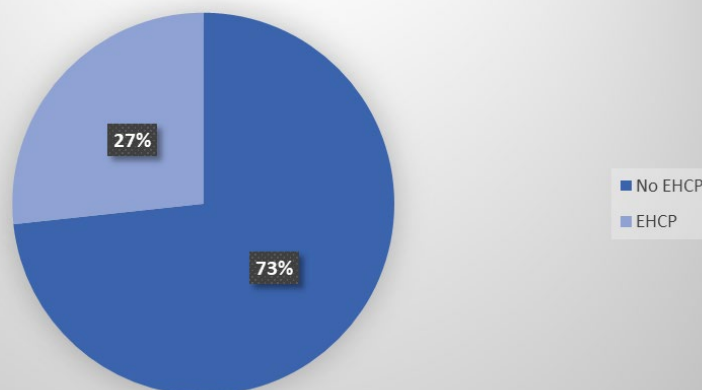


Youth Offending Services

Research has long established a link between young people with SEND and those in the criminal justice system. Research by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in 2015 found that 60% of those in the criminal justice system had a speech language and communication need.³⁷

In 2022, 27% of children and young people in youth offending services had an EHCP

Percentage of children in Youth Offending Services with an EHCP



8. Analysis of local needs: Health

Learning Disability Health Checks

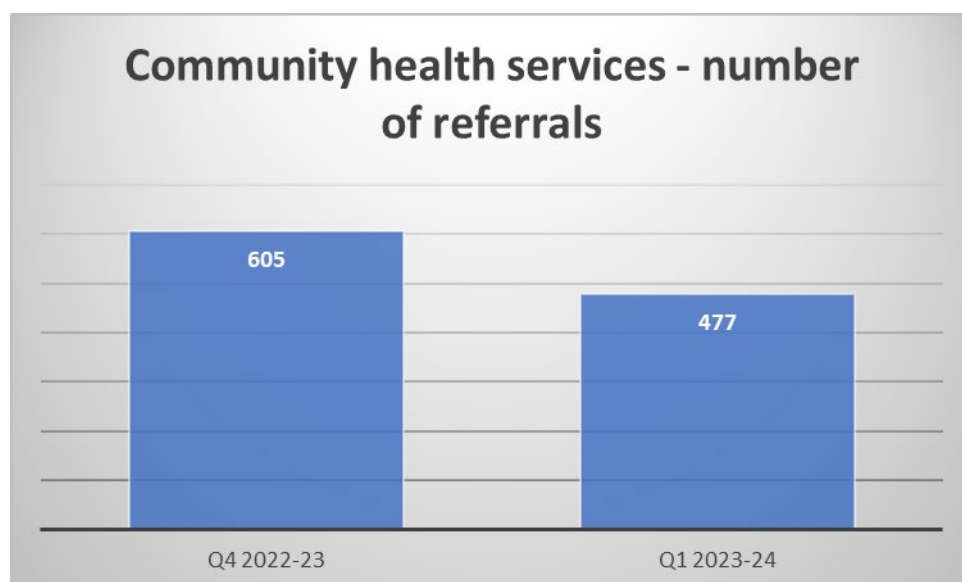
There are 2984 young people aged between 14 and 25 eligible for a learning disability health check. In 2022-23 1215 young people received a learning disability health check – 41%

This is a significant improvement since the last version of the JSNA in 2021 when only 170 young people aged between 14 and 25 were recorded on the Learning Disability register and only 52 had an annual health check with their GP – 31%.

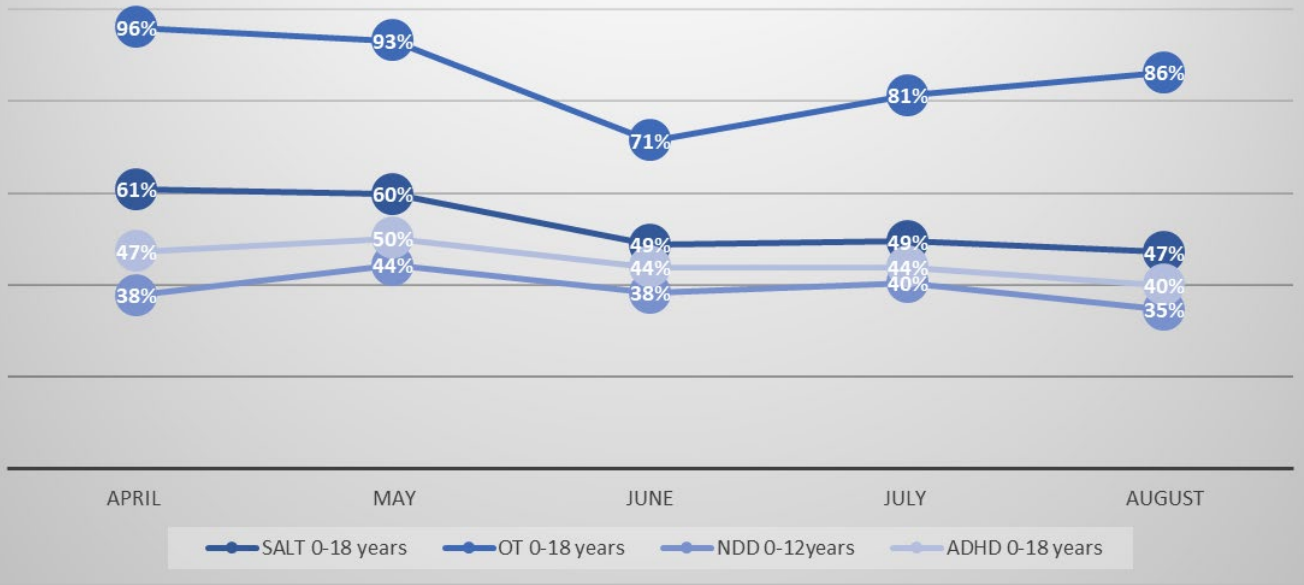
Community Health Services

The Integrated Care Board has recently implemented a new reporting methodology and basis. This means there is limited historical and trend data available at present about community health based services³⁸.

There were 477 referrals to community health services in Q1 of 2023-24.

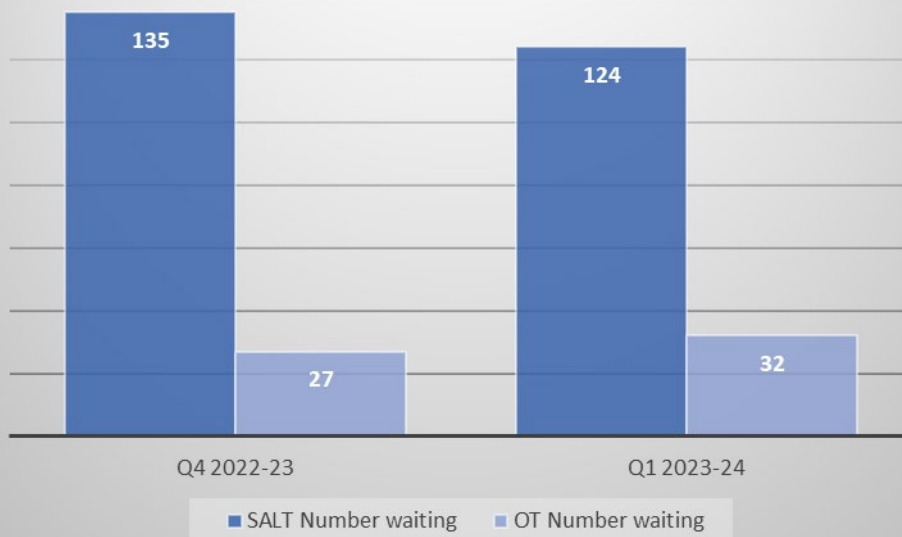


Percentage of referrals seen in less than 18 weeks by service



With the exception of OT referrals, often less than 50% of referrals to other services were seen within the NHS 18 week target. This contrasts with the high percentage of requests for EHCP advice to community health services met within the 6 week timeframe.

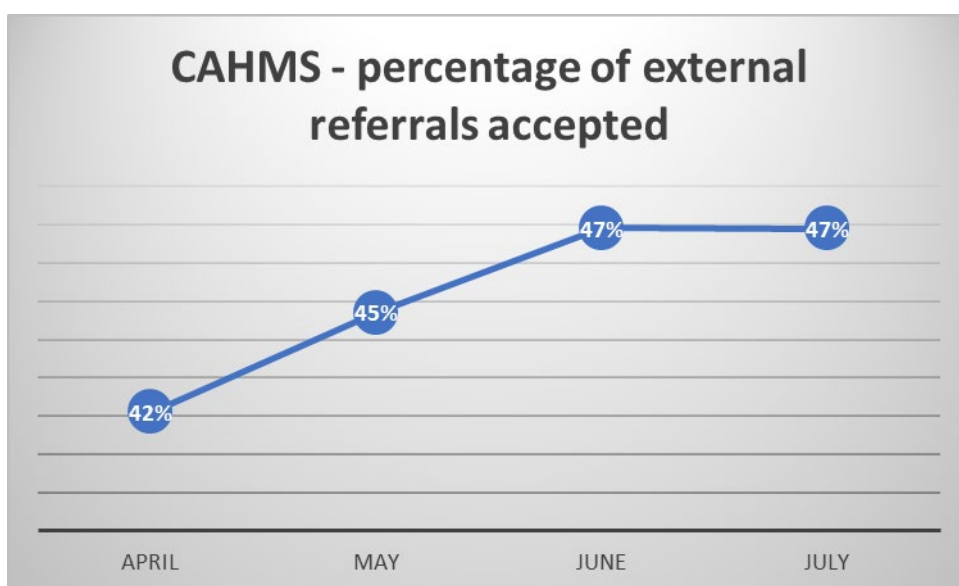
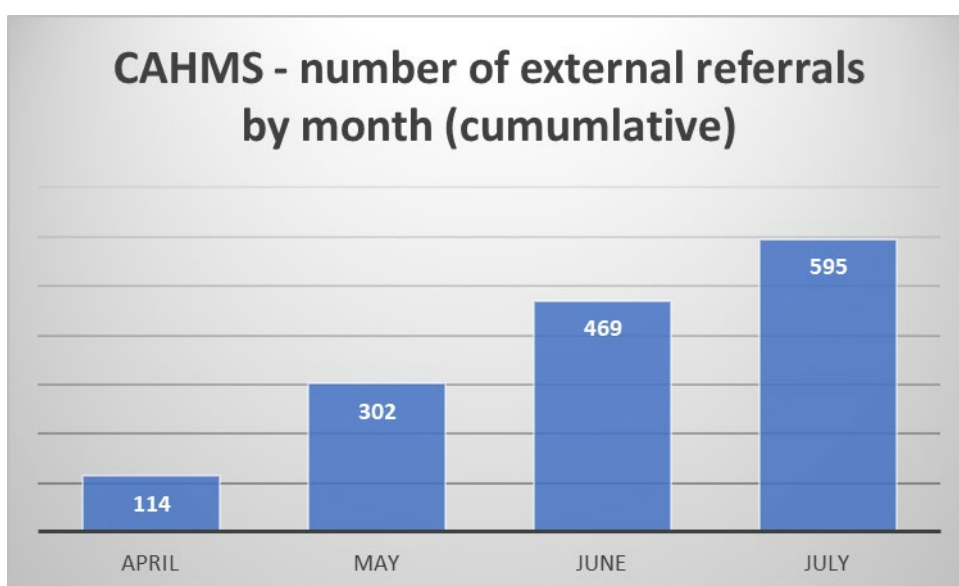
SALT and OT - Number on waiting list



As at the end of Q1 2023-24 there were 124 CYP on the waiting list for SALT and 32 CYP on the waiting list for OT.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

There were 595 referrals in the first 4 months of 2023-24 of which 279 were accepted 279 – an acceptance rate of 46.89%³⁹.



Dynamic Support Register

There are 4 people on the Dynamic Support Register (DSR) in Bedford Borough. One is in a hospital, one is in a youth offenders institution and two are in the community.

9. Links to other chapters of the JSNA

Children and young people with SEND and their families are an integral part of the community in Bedford Borough and as such the analysis of needs in this JSNA will also have implications for other parts of the JSNA for Bedford Borough.

This section cross references the implications for other sections of the Local Insight Profile within the JSNA from the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families:

Housing – Type: The growth in young people with SEND projected over the next 10 years means Bedford Borough will need more accessible and supported housing.

Housing – Affordability: The relative greater deprivation and poverty of young adults with SEND has implications for the provision of affordable housing.

Economy – Income and fuel poverty: The relative greater deprivation and poverty of families of CYP with SEND means increased pressures on household income and bills. In addition, research by the charity Contact shows that families of CYP with SEND are disproportionately impacted by increases in energy costs⁴⁰.

Economy - Job opportunities: The increase in the number of young adults with SEND will require greater focus on provision of local job opportunities for those with SEND.

Transport: The increase in the number of CYP with SEND means that more people will require support with their travel. Planning for rail, bus and taxi services should anticipate this increase – for example ensuring that public transport is accessible and things such as disability and autism awareness training for bus and taxi drivers.

Appendix A: Categories of SEND

The SEND code of practice defines four categories of SEND⁴¹. These are:

Communication and interaction

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives. Children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with *appropriate* differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may

include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder. Previously, this was sometimes referred to as behavioural, emotional and social disorders (BESD).

Sensory and/or physical needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

Further information can be found within Section 6.28 – 6.35 of the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

Appendix B: Sources of data available

There are a number of factors that need to be highlighted with regards to the data and information that is presented here.

Types of data and information available

There are four types of data and information that have been referenced in this chapter. Each has its relevant strengths and weaknesses.

1. Actual data from commissioners / services providers

This is the most reliable form of data in that it is sourced locally and can be fully reconciled back to individuals in Bedford Borough. However, this data tends to be very narrow and specific in nature and is often compiled using different bases (e.g. age groups). Therefore, it does not provide a complete picture of the population in scope for this paper.

2. Projected / predicted numbers

These have been prepared based upon the hard data sourced as above to fill in gaps where hard data is not available. Whilst this is based on real local numbers, any projections or predictions are clearly only as good as the assumptions made. All assumptions are made explicit when using this data.

3. Prevalence data

This sourced from national archives and analysis and is based upon an understanding of how national trends would apply to Bedford Borough. However, given the relatively small size of Bedford Borough such statistical estimates based on national trends may be only directional in nature.

4. Focus groups and anecdotal feedback

This can type of information is useful for highlighting and confirming trends and themes that may not otherwise be evident from the types of data above.

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- ¹ Department for Education and Department of Health SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years June 2014 section 1.1
- ² Department for Education and Department of Health SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years June 2014 section 1.2
- ³ Department for Education and Department of Health SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years June 2014 section 3.20 to 3.24
- ⁴ Department for Education and Department of Health SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years June 2014 section 6.28 to 6.35
- ⁵ Department for Education Schools pupils and their characteristics 2022/23 [Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- ⁶ Department for Education, Education Health and Care Plans Reporting Year 2023 [Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2023 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- ⁷ Special educational needs in England Academic Year 2022/23 [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- ⁸ Characteristics of Children in Need [Create your own tables, Table Tool – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- ⁹ Stats-Explore [Stat-Xplore - Home \(dwp.gov.uk\)](#)
- ¹⁰ ONS 2021 Mid Year Population Estimates, Published 21st December 2022
- ¹¹ Population projections for local authorities: Table 2 (Age Groups)
- ¹² Bedford Borough SEN Team
- ¹³ Bedford Borough SEN Team
- ¹⁴ Department for Education statistics tables SFR25-2015
- ¹⁵ Bedford Borough SEND team
- ¹⁶ Department for Education -Special Educational Needs in England 2023
- ¹⁷ Department for Education -Special Educational Needs in England 2022
- ¹⁸ Bedford Borough SEND team
- ¹⁹ Bedford Borough SEND team
- ²⁰ Bedford Borough SEND Performance report September 2023
- ²¹ BLMK ICB SEND dashboard Q1 2023-24
- ²² Department for Education statistics Tribunals SEND table SEND.5
- ²³ Department for Education Tribunals data 2023
- ²⁴ Bedford Borough Council
- ²⁵ Bedford Borough SEND Team 2023
- ²⁶ Bedford Borough SEND performance report March 2023
- ²⁷ Bedford Borough SEND performance report March 2023
- ²⁸ Bedford Borough SEND performance report March 2023
- ²⁹ Department for Education Pupil absence in schools in England: Academic year 2021:22
- ³⁰ Department of Work and Pensions Stats-explore – Bedford Borough
- ³¹ Bedford Borough Children’s social care team – data from Oct 2023 – e-mail from Tina Holt
- ³² LAIT 170323
- ³³ LAIT 120323
- ³⁴ Joseph Rowntree Foundation report 2016 [Special educational needs and their links to poverty | JRF](#)
- ³⁵ Department for Education – Schools Pupils and their Characteristics January 2024 [Create your own tables, Table Tool – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- ³⁶ Bedford Borough Council
- ³⁷ Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Criminal Justice Campaign Briefing 2015 [criminal-justice-campaign-briefing-2015.pdf \(rcslt.org\)](#)
- ³⁸ BLMK ICB SEND Dashboard Q1 2023-24, Bedford Borough data
- ³⁹ BLMK ICB SEND Dashboard Q1 2023-24, Bedford Borough data
- ⁴⁰ Contact [Out of Energy \(contact.org.uk\)](#)
- ⁴¹ Department for Education and Department of Health SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years June 2014 section 6.28 to 6.35
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