

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2023/24

Special Educational Needsⁱ and Disabilityⁱⁱ (SEND)

Summary points

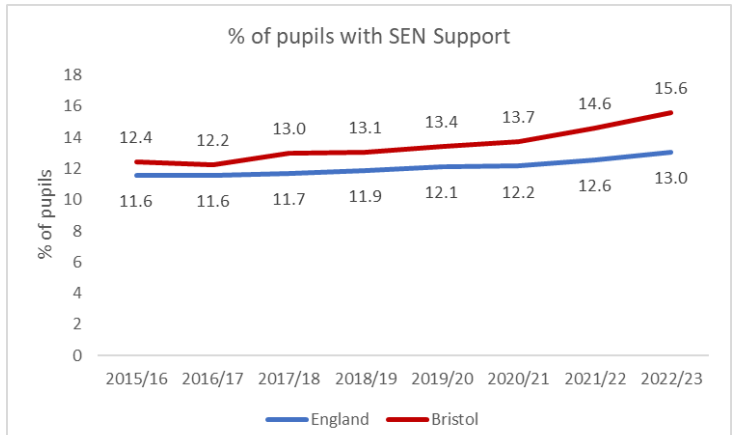
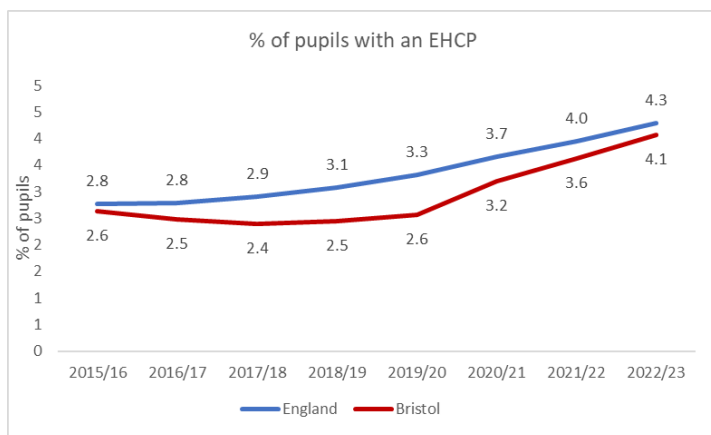
- The number of pupils with SEN continues to rise, both locally and nationally. There are just over 13,500 pupils in Bristol schools with Special Educational Needs (SEN), which is 19.6% of all pupils.
- Rates of sign vary significantly across the city. 26% of pupils living in Hartcliffe and Withywood have SEN compared to 12% in Redland.
- Speech, language and communication needs is the most common primary need type for SEN pupils in Bristol.
- Bristol has a high rate of pupils with SEN support.
- Approximately 6.1% of Bristol's child population have a "limiting long-term illness or disability", similar to the national average of 6.3%.

Numbers of children and young people with SEN in Bristol schools

As at January 2023, there were 70,635 children on roll in Bristol schools¹.

- 13,821 pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
 - 10,944 (15.6%) are receiving SEN support
 - 2,877 (4.1%) have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

Bristol has a higher than average proportion of pupils with SEN support but is lower than the national average for proportion of pupils with an EHC plan.



SOURCE: SCHOOL CENSUS

SEN is more prevalent in boys than girls, both locally and nationally.

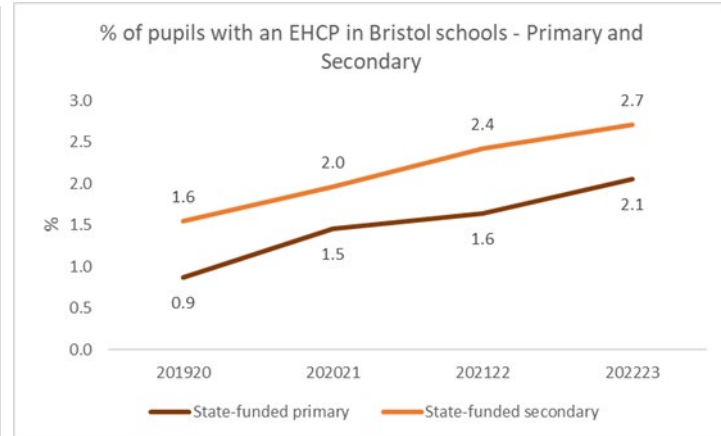
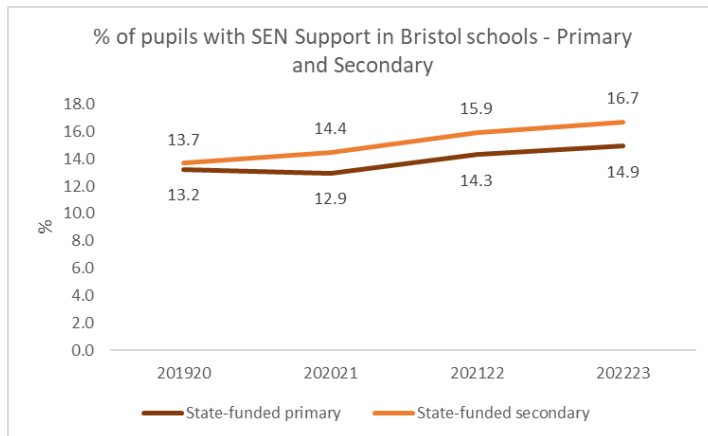
- 71% of pupils with an EHC plan are boys
- 62% of pupils with SEN Support are boys

In Bristol, rates of EHC plans and SEN support are higher in secondary schools than primary schools. Nationally the rates are higher in primary schools.

¹ All Bristol schools including academies and independent schools.

The proportion of pupils with SEN continues to increase in both primary and secondary schools.

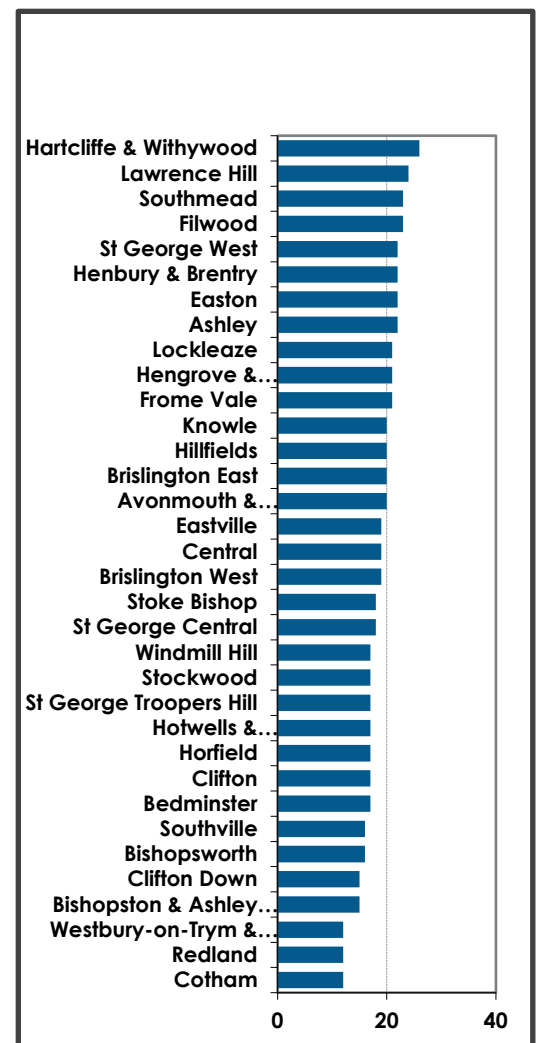
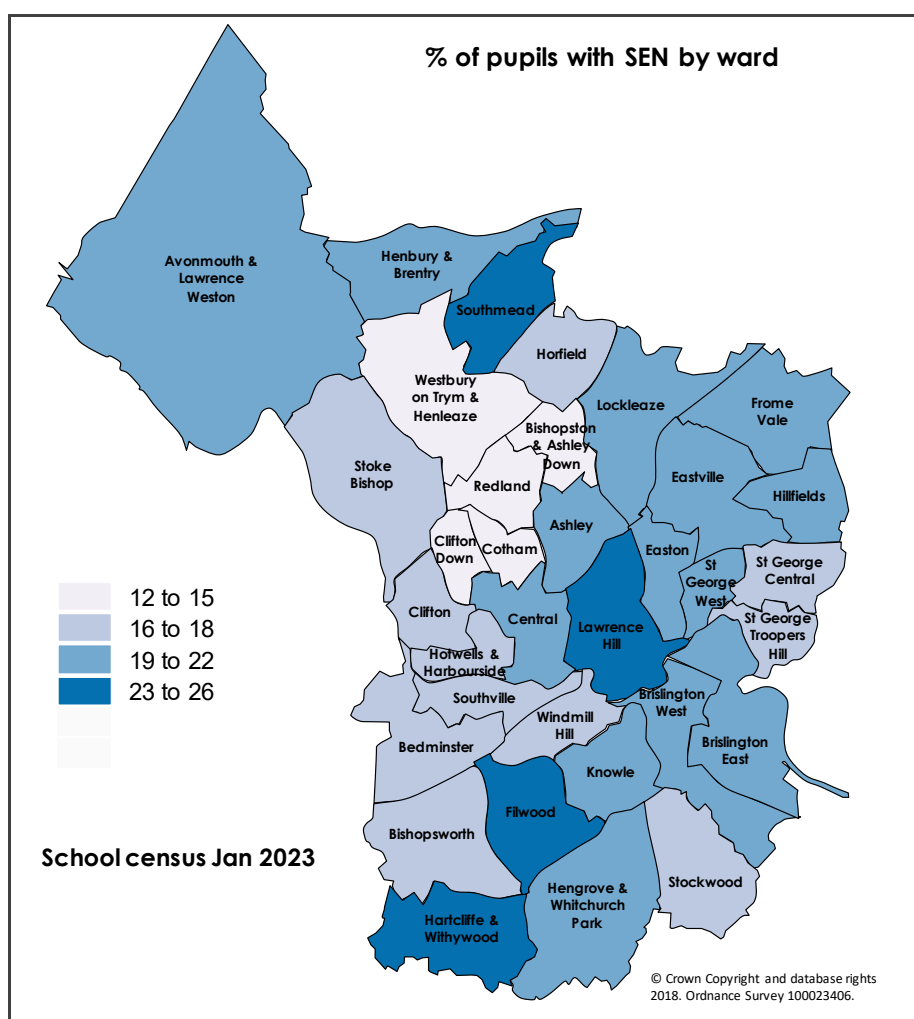
- In primary schools, 2.1% of pupils have an EHC plan and 14.9% have SEN support
- In secondary schools, 2.7% of pupils have an EHC plan and 16.7% have SEN support



SOURCE: SCHOOL CENSUS

Percentage of Pupils with SEN by Ward

Local school census data for pupils with SEN (EHC plans and SEN support) shows a wide variation across Bristol, ranging from 12% in Redland and Cotham to 26% in Hartcliffe and Withywood.



Ethnicity

SEN support is most prevalent in the Gypsy Roma ethnic group in Bristol and EHC plans are most prevalent in the White and Black Caribbean ethnic group.

- 27.5% of Gypsy Roma pupils (out of 120 pupils) in Bristol schools have SEN support, this is above the national average (22.2%).
- 6.8% of White and Black Caribbean pupils (out of 2,065 pupils) in Bristol schools have an EHC plan, higher than the national average (5.4%).

Bristol has a higher rate of Black Caribbean pupils with SEN support than the national average (26% compared to 16.5% nationally).

Ethnic group	EHCP		SEN Support	
	Bristol	England	Bristol	England
White British	4.5%	4.5%	16.7%	14.3%
Irish	4.2%	4.4%	12.1%	13.6%
Traveller Of Irish Heritage	2.0%	6.1%	25.5%	25.5%
Any Other White Background	2.7%	2.9%	10.8%	9.5%
Gypsy Roma	3.3%	4.8%	27.5%	22.2%
White And Black Caribbean	6.8%	5.4%	20.8%	17.0%
White And Black African	4.6%	4.5%	15.9%	12.6%
White And Asian	2.6%	3.4%	11.0%	10.1%
Any Other Mixed Background	4.6%	4.3%	15.5%	11.5%
Indian	2.0%	2.4%	7.3%	6.3%
Pakistani	3.8%	3.9%	14.1%	11.2%
Bangladeshi	5.2%	4.5%	12.4%	10.2%
Any Other Asian Background	3.5%	3.7%	8.4%	8.0%
Black Caribbean	7.0%	5.8%	26.0%	16.5%
Black African	4.7%	4.5%	14.1%	10.4%
Any Other Black Background	5.7%	5.6%	15.0%	12.7%
Chinese	2.6%	2.1%	5.3%	4.9%
Any Other Ethnic Group	4.1%	3.4%	11.4%	10.1%
Unclassified	4.8%	4.7%	13.8%	11.6%

SOURCE: SCHOOL CENSUS

Primary Need of children with SEN

Speech, language and communication needs are the most common primary need type for SEN pupils in Bristol. For pupils with SEN support the most common primary need type is also speech, language and communication needs, but for pupils with an EHC plan it is Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This is the same nationally.

Primary Need	State-funded primary	State-funded secondary
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	598	430
Hearing Impairment	102	62
Moderate Learning Difficulty	586	553
Multi- Sensory Impairment	17	8
Other Difficulty/Disability	191	317
Physical Disability	146	127
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	18	<5
SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of	281	82
Severe Learning Difficulty	25	34
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	1385	1320
Specific Learning Difficulty	455	1054
Speech, Language and Communications needs	2236	822
Visual Impairment	49	42

SOURCE: SCHOOL CENSUS JAN 23

The most common primary need in primary schools is speech, language and communication needs (2,236 pupils), with a much higher number of pupils with this need type compared to secondary schools (822 pupils).

In secondary schools the most common primary need type is social, emotional and mental health (1,320 pupils). In special schools the most common primary need type is Autistic spectrum disorder (527/40.3%).

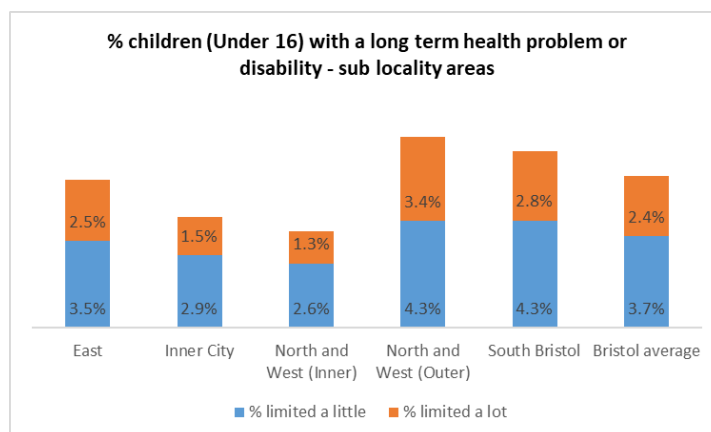
Social care (as of October 2023)²

- 19.3% (148 out of 767) of children in care have an EHC plan.
- 17.8% (71 out of 398) of current care leavers have an EHC plan.
- 17.8% (175 out of 983) of children in need have an EHC plan.
- 14.2% (59 out of 413) of children subject to a child protection plan have an EHC plan.

Number of disabled children and young people

While many children with a special educational need may also have a disability, a proportion will have either SEN or a disability.

According to the Census 2021, 5,077 children (under 16) in Bristol have physical or mental health conditions or illnesses that negatively impact their day-to-day activities. This fits with the Equalities Act definition of disability. This is 6.1% of the local child population, similar to the national average 6.3%. Of these, 2,000 children (2.4% of Bristol children) have their day-to-day activities limited a lot and 3,075 children (3.7%)



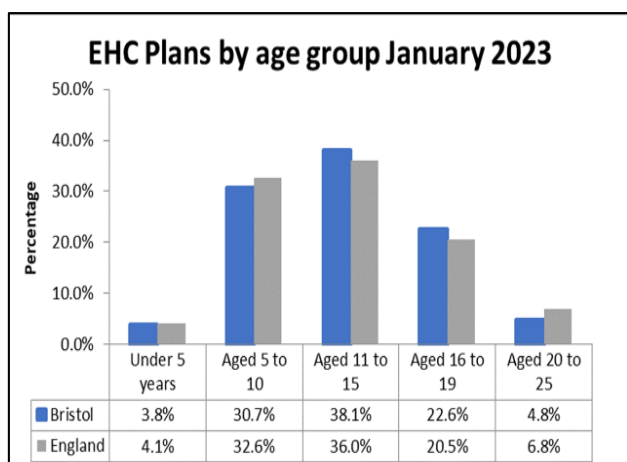
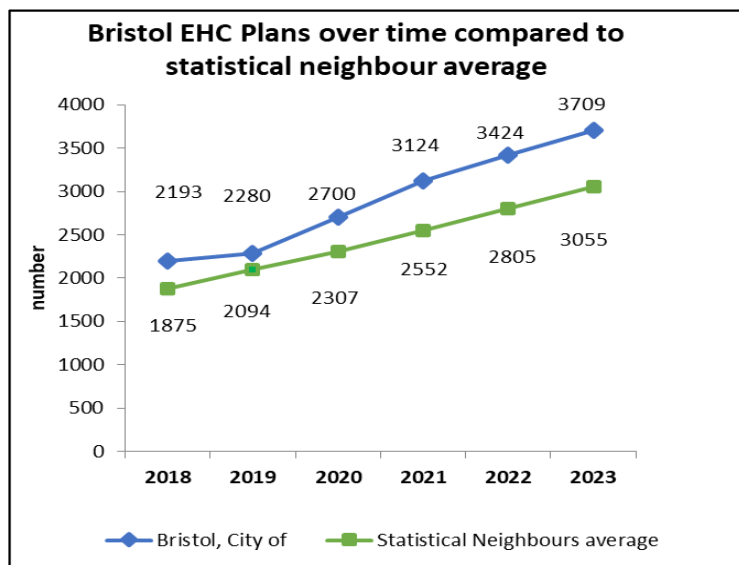
² Source: Bristol City Council Local data

limited a little. Across Bristol, the Census data highlights the variation in the proportion of children with a disability from 3.9% in North and West (Inner) to 7.1% in South and 7.7% in North and West (Outer).

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plansⁱⁱⁱ maintained by Bristol Local Authority

In January 2023, 3,709 0-25 year olds had an EHC plan maintained by Bristol City Council. This is a 8.5% increase on the previous year representing 285 EHC plans.

This includes all children and young people with an EHC Plan from Bristol City Council regardless of where they attend school. As of, January 2023, 2.3% of the children and young people (0 to 25 years) living in the City had an EHC plan (3,709/162,114). Nationally 3.0% of the population had an EHC plan.



SOURCE: SEN2 2023

Children aged 11 to 15 years old account for the largest proportion of children and young people with EHC plans (38.1% locally and 36.0% nationally) as at January 2023. Between Jan 2022 and Jan 2023 the proportion of EHC plans for 5-10 year olds in Bristol has increased by 2.2 percentage points and is now above the national average. The proportion of 20 – 25 year olds with an EHC plan in Bristol has decreased by 2.4 percentage points and is now below the national average (6.8%).

Of those 3,709 children and young people for whom Bristol maintains and EHC Plan (January 2023) there are significantly more males than females, with males accounting for **69.7%** (2,586) of the overall cohort.

66.6% (2,469) of the cohort of children and young people are classified as 'white/British', with less than 1.4% (51) classified as other ethnic group and 2.5% (94) unclassified. Nationally, 68.5% of children and young people are classified as 'white/British'.

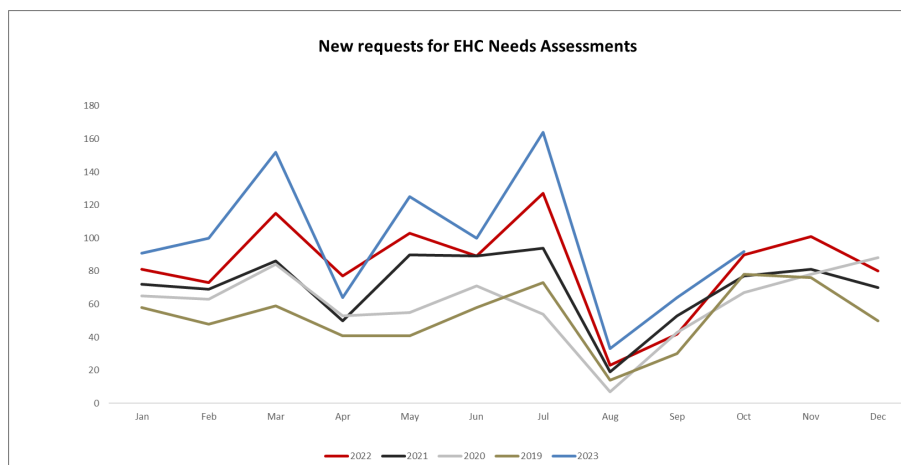
EHC Needs Assessments^{iv}

In January 2023, Bristol reported that in the calendar year 2022, **1,001** initial requests were made for an EHC Plan, this is a **growth of 60%** (375) in 2022 compared to 2018. An **increase of 17.8%** more recently between 2022 and 2021.

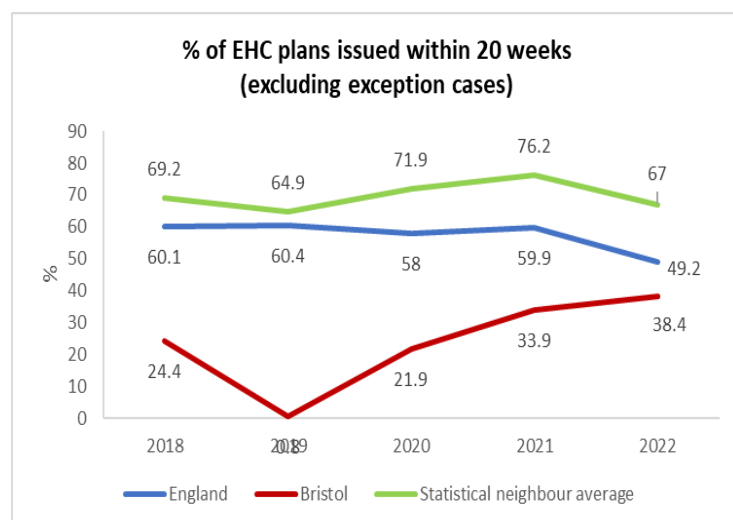
Requests received in 2022 were from the following school phases below:

- 57% primary
- 23% secondary
- 17% early years
- 3% post 16

Current year data shows 985 requests between January 2023 and October 2023.



SOURCE: BCC SEND TEAM



SOURCE: SEN2 2023

In 2023, 38.4%³ of EHC plans were finalised within the statutory 20 week timescale.

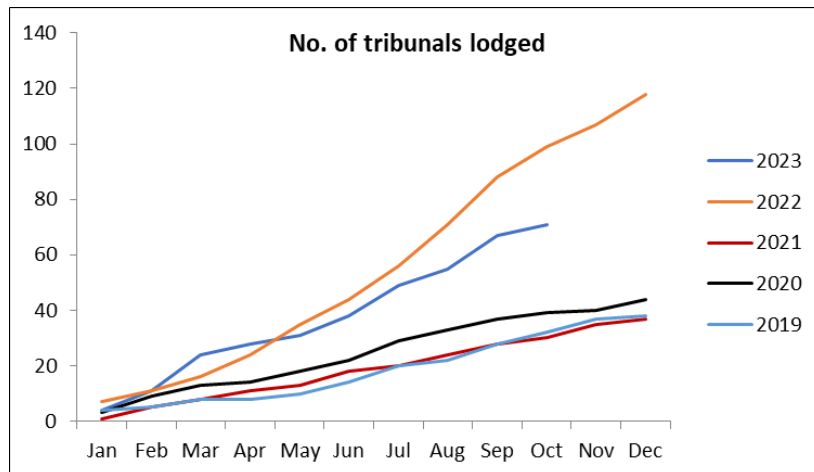
EHC Plans issued by Bristol within the statutory 20-week period has shown a year-on-year improvement since 2020. Nationally performance has decreased in 2022 (49.2%) compared to previous years. In the South West performance dropped from 50.7% to 35.2%, the poorest regional performance nationally.

³ DfE Key performance measure – excludes plans issued after a mediation and/or tribunal and any exception cases

Mediation and tribunals

The number of mediations lodged increased between 2021 and 2022 from 32 to 93. Between January and October 2023, there have been 111 mediations lodged.

In 2022, there were 118 appeals lodged compared to 37 in 2021. Between January and October 2023 there have been 71 appeals lodged.



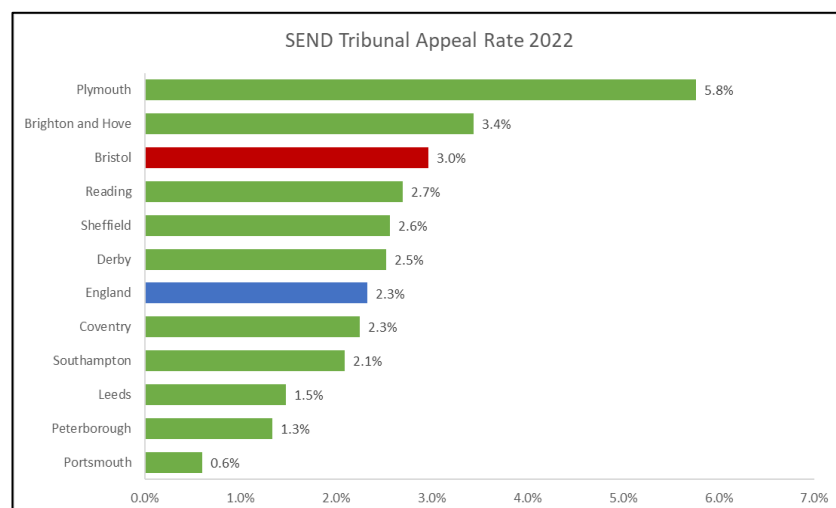
Source: BCC monthly reporting

The Department for Education (DfE) calculates appealable decisions using the SEN2 data. The Total Appealable Decisions figure is calculated as the sum of the following:

Number of initial requests for Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessments refused.

1. Number of assessments completed and a decision made not to issue an EHC plan.
2. Number with an EHC plan as at January each year.
3. Number of EHC plans ceased because the special educational needs of the child or young person are being met without an EHC plan.

The rate of appeals for Bristol in 2022 was 3%, higher than 2021 (1%) and above the national average of 2.3% (1.8% in 2021). Bristol was the third highest of core cities. Data for the first ten months of 2023 shows that Bristol's rate of appeals has decreased to 1.5%, lower than the national average. It is important to recognise that whilst Bristol's rate of appeals has decreased, appealable decisions have risen by 13% compared with 2022.



Source: DfE tribunal statistics

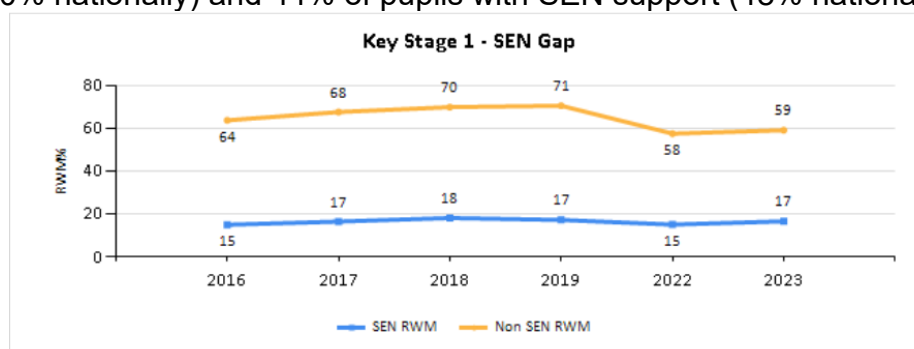
Education

Early years

- In 2023, 25.6% of children receiving SEN support achieved a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage, compared to the England average of 24.3%. For Bristol this is an increase of 5.6 percentage points when compared to the previous year but still falls well below children with no identified SEN (72.3%).
- 6% of children with an EHCP achieved a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage, higher than the England average of 3.8%.

KS1

- 17% of pupils with SEN achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS1 compared to 59% of pupils with no SEN.
- 16% of pupils with an EHC plan met the expected standard for phonics at the end of year 1 in Bristol (20% nationally) and 44% of pupils with SEN support (48% nationally).



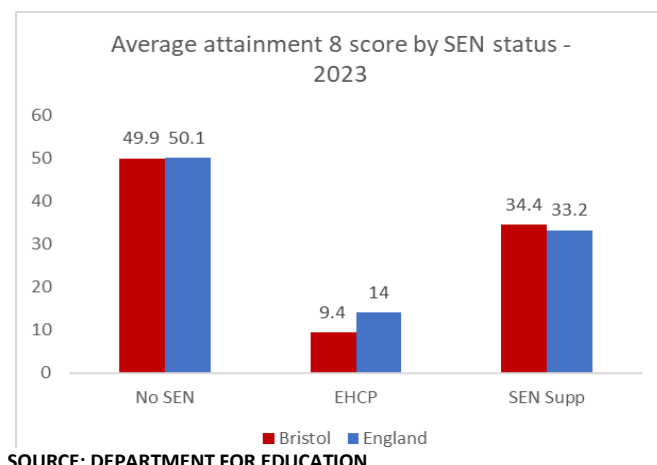
SOURCE: BCC DATA AND ANALYSIS TEAM

KS2

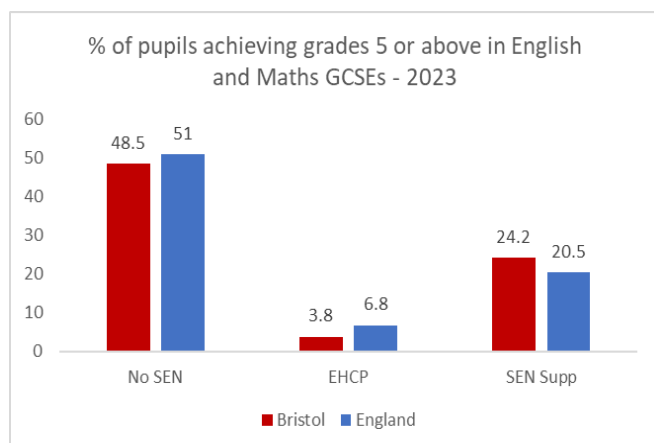
- In 2022 (latest data available), 7% of pupils with an EHC plan and 25% of pupil with SEN support met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2.
- The rate for pupils with an EHC Plan is the same nationally and for pupils with SEN support the national average is slightly below Bristol at 21%.

KS4

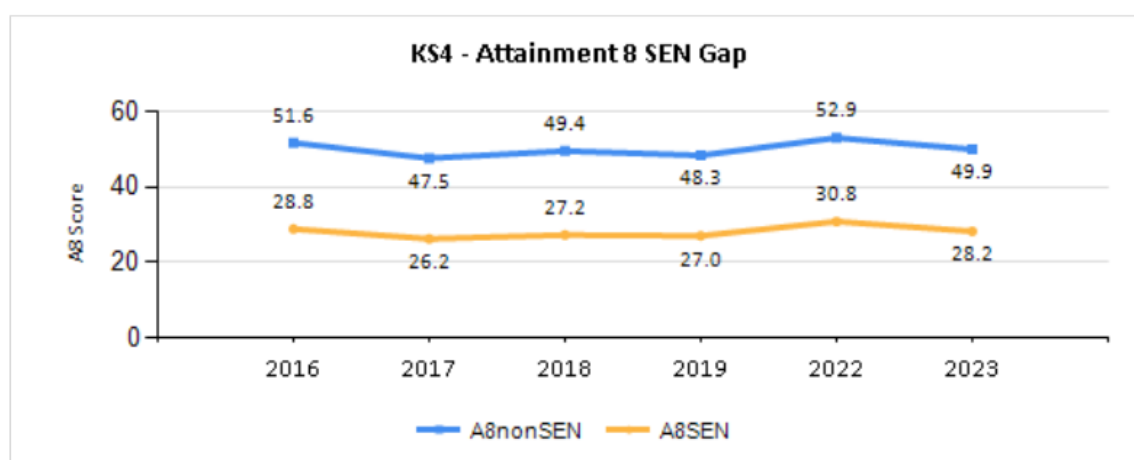
- In 2023, the average attainment 8 score for pupils with SEN support was 34.4 (33.2 nationally).
- The average score was 9.4 for pupils with an EHC plan, below the England average of 14.
- 24.2% of pupils with SEN support achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs and 3.8% of pupils with an EHC plan. This compares to 48.5% of pupils with no SEN.



SOURCE: DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION



Whilst KS4 performance for pupils with SEN remains significantly lower than pupils without SEN, the gap has narrowed slightly in the last year. The gap for percentage achieving grades 5 and above in English and maths has narrowed from 34 percentage points in 2022 to 29.3 percentage points in 2023. The reduction in the gap for attainment 8 is smaller dropping from 22.1 points in 2022 to 21.7 points in 2023.



Absence/suspensions

- In 2021/22 (latest data available) the suspension rate for children with an EHC Plan was 24.7 (17.6 nationally). For pupils with SEN support, the Bristol fixed term exclusion rate was 24.9 (18.6 nationally).
- The permanent exclusion rate for pupils with an EHC plan was 0.08% (0.13% nationally). For pupils with SEN support the rate was 0.09% (0.25% nationally).
- In 2021/22, absence rates for children and young people with an EHC plan in Bristol was 14.8%, compared to the England average of 12.1%.
- Absence rates for children and young people at SEN Support level in Bristol was 10.9%, compared to the England average of 10%.
- Absence rates for both pupils with SEN support have increased between 2020/21 and 2021/22 both locally and nationally but have decreased for pupils with an EHC plan.

Post 16

- At the end of 2021/22, 90.2% of KS4 pupils with an EHC plan who left KS4 in 2020/21 remained in education, employment and apprenticeships, higher than the national average of 89.8%
- 90.2% of KS4 pupils with SEN support remained in education, employment and apprenticeships, above the national average of 89.8%⁴.
- 8.1% of 16-17 year olds with an EHC plan are recorded as NEET or Not Known for 2023⁵. This is below the national average of 10.1%.

⁴ Source: DfE: Key stage 4 destination measure 2021 to 2022. Data is for pupils in state funded mainstream and special schools.

- In 2022, 17.1% of 19 year olds with an EHC plan and 48.8% with SEN support were qualified to Level 2 in English and maths. This compares to 76.0% of pupils with no identified SEN⁶.
- 12% of 19 year olds with an EHC plan were qualified to level 3 and 39.6% of pupils with SEN support.

The Bristol Pupil Voice Survey 2021-2022

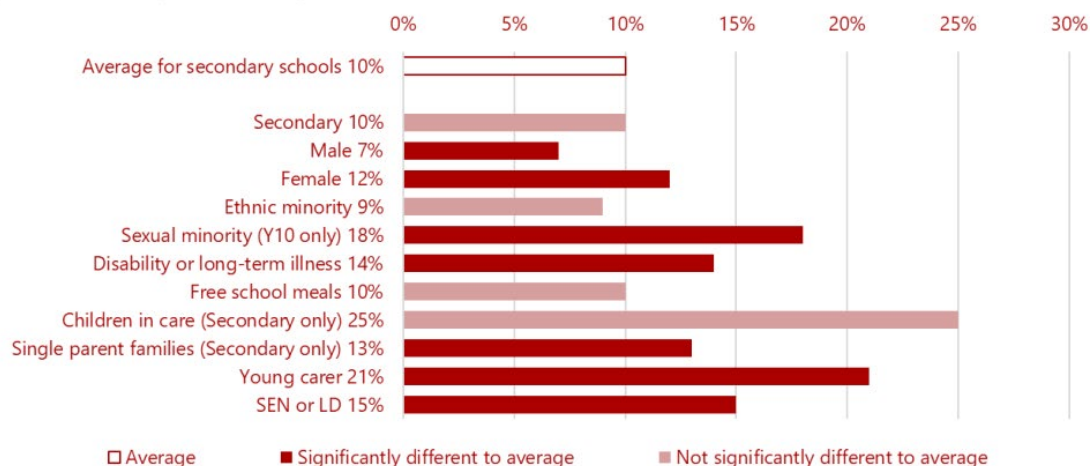
In 2022, over 4,500 young people took part in the Bristol Pupil Voice survey⁷, from 31 schools. 339 (13%) pupils self-reported that they had a special educational need or a learning difficulty.

Pupils who self-reported having a special educational need or a learning difficulty (SEN/LD) are presented in the Bristol Pupil Voice summary report, primarily in the 'variation charts' (example below), as a sub-analysis the group "SEN or LD". All sub-groups are part of the 'all respondents' or 'average for all schools' response group presented at the top of the chart.

Statistical significance testing (at $p < 0.05$) has been performed, and where a group has an average value for the indicator that is significantly different to the average for all respondents, this is indicated by a slightly darker tone on the bar.

Variation in Bristol – Ever taken illegal drugs

Chart 34: Variation chart: percentages of respondents who reported ever taking illegal drugs, all and by group (secondary schools only)



Pupils describing themselves as having a special educational need and/or learning difficulty, were on average **significantly more likely** to report:

- ever taking illegal drugs than the secondary school average (15% vs 10%).

⁵ Data is an average of the rates for Dec 2022, Jan 2023 and Feb 2023.

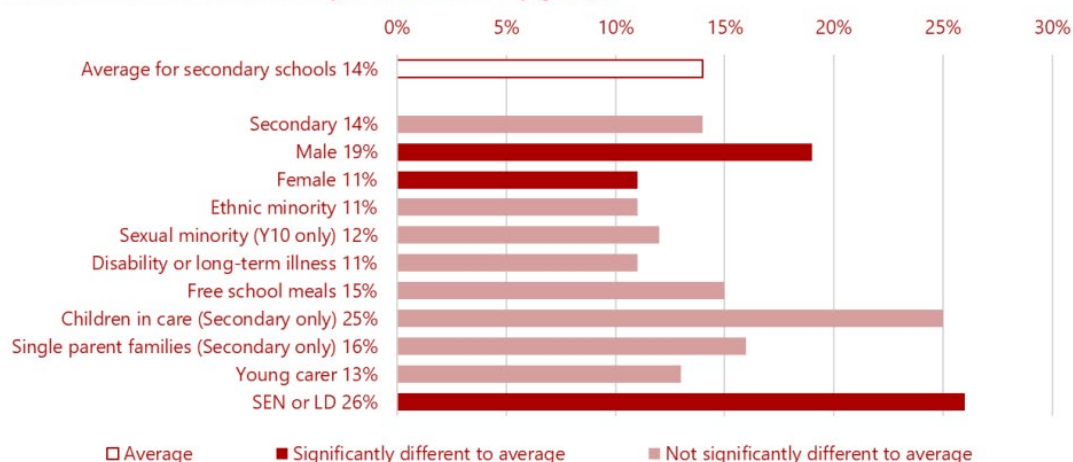
⁶ Source: DfE: Level 2 and 3 attainment age 16-25

⁷ [Bristol Pupil Voice Report 2022](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/jsna)

- having drunk alcohol in the 4 weeks before the survey than the secondary school average (18% vs 12%).
- that they smoked regularly than the secondary school average (4% vs 2%).
- had had an unintentional injury during the last year compared to the average for all respondents (45% vs 31%).
- that they did not intend to remain in full-time education at the end of school compared to the secondary school average (26% vs 14%).

Variation in Bristol - Pupils not intending to stay in education – Secondary only

Chart 58: Variation chart: percentages of respondents reporting they **do not** intend to stay in full-time education at the end of secondary school, all and by group.



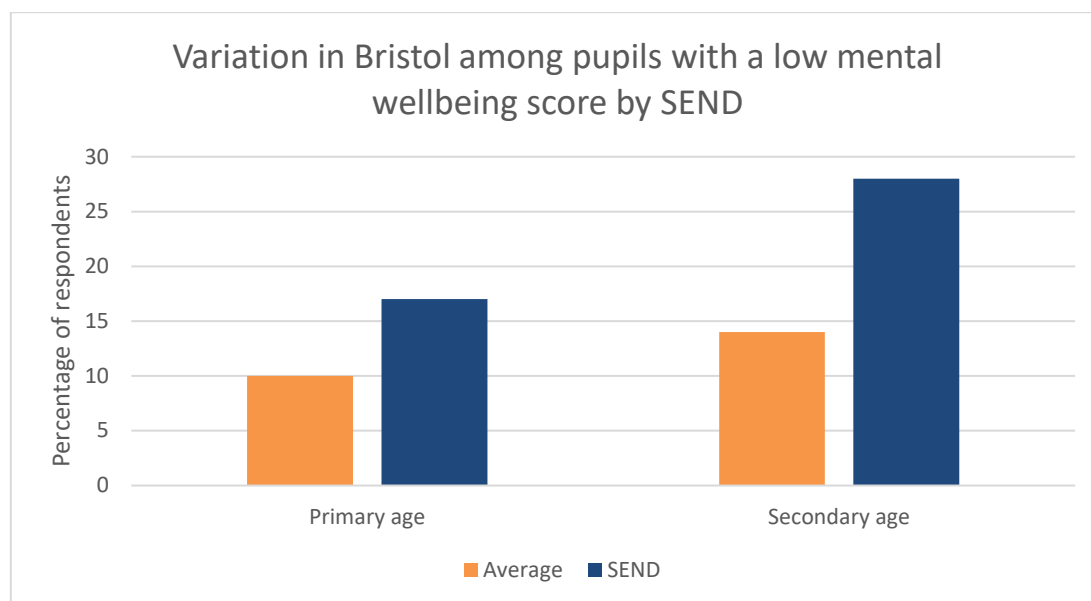
Mental health and wellbeing of children and young people with SEND

Responses to the 2022 Bristol Pupil Voice survey suggest that pupils with SEND have poorer mental health than the wider school age population. This is measured using validated tools, where low scores indicate poor mental wellbeing.

Among primary respondents 17% of pupils who had self-identified as having SEND had low scores using the Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale, compared to 10% across the whole primary aged population.

Among secondary respondents 28% of pupils who self-identified as having SEND had low scores using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, compared to 14% across the whole secondary population in Bristol.

In both school age groups, these differences were statistically significant.



Pupils with SEND also reported higher levels of some experiences that are likely to have an impact on mental health. For example, 42% of respondents with SEND reported daily or frequent experiences of being bullied, compared to 31% of all pupils. This was a statistically significant difference.

Further data / links

- Bristol's SEND Local Offer – www.Bristol.gov.uk/web/bristol-local-offer
- [Special educational needs in England: January 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2023)
- [Education, health and care plans: England 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-health-and-care-plans-england-2023)
- [Education, Health and Care plans | Open Data Bristol](#)

Covid-19 impact:

It should be noted this chapter covers the global pandemic period. In this time there was significant disruption to the education system including periods of absence from school for all children and young people. Requests for education, health and care needs assessments have risen significantly throughout this time. This is likely related to the impact of Covid-19 on pupils and their families and the interruption to schooling. Work is ongoing to further understand the impact of Covid-19 in this area.

Date updated: December 2023

Date of next update: November 2024

Endnotes: Definitions

i Special educational needs (SEN)ⁱ

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or young person is considered to have a learning difficulty if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age. A child or young person has a learning disability if they 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.

ii Disability

A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial, long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Statutory guidance and the SEND [Code of Practice](#) provide additional information to help with the interpretation and application of these definitions. The statutory definitions of special educational needs (SEN) and disability which are described above are found in Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and section 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

iii Education health and care plan (EHCP)

An EHC plan is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person to achieve what they want to in their life.

iv Education, health and care needs assessment (EHCNA)

The majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within local mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges. Some children and young people may require an EHC needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan. The assessment seeks to establish and record the views, interests and aspirations of the parents and child or young person to provide a full description of the child or young person's special educational needs, and any health and social care needs. It establishes outcomes across education, health and social care based on the child or young person's identified needs and aspirations. It specifies the provision required and how education, health and care services will work together to meet the child or young person's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes.