

Key Findings

Demand for SEND pathways is increasing

The 0-25 population is predicted to increase by 6% in the next ten years (compared with a 1.5% increase nationally). As the youth population increases, so too will demand for SEN Support, EHCP and health and social care pathways. Based on population growth alone, **by 2033, an estimated 146 additional residents will require an EHCP and an additional 507 will require SEN Support.**

As of January 2022, **2,023 Solihull residents with an EHCP**, an increase of 16.1% on 2021 (1,743).

This is the largest recorded annual increase and is partially explained by previous under-reporting in the 16-25 age bracket

(the increase reduces to 6% if additional EHCPs in the 16-25 age bracket are removed).

A relatively high proportion of residents with an EHCP attend special schools (43% compared with 35% nationally) which runs counter to the principle of inclusion and has cost implications.

It is **not presently understood why more mainstream schools cannot accommodate SEND** as identified by EHCP. Recent consultancy work exploring inclusion practices in mainstream settings provides a useful starting point therein.

Insufficient special school provision in Solihull?

In 2022, around **200 children and young people were attending independent specialist provision** outside Solihull which suggests their needs could not be fully met locally. A mapping exercise which maps the SEND needs of local children against Solihull-based specialist provision would help increase understanding of any gaps in provision.

Attainment by pupils with SEND is at least as good as the average for England and statistically similar local authorities

at Key Stage 2, GCSE and post-16. **In 2020/21 the percentage of young people with SEND achieving Level 3 qualifications (two A-levels or equivalent) by age 19 was notably higher for both SEN Support and EHCP** compared with England and statistical neighbours, suggesting good practice in relation to facilitating children and young people with SEND to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Evidence suggests more could be done to improve outcomes for adults with learning disabilities.

In particular, the proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment (3.2%) was low in 2021/22 compared to England (4.8%) and statistically similar local authorities. However, provisional results for 2022/23 indicate **performance has improved** as Solihull builds on working with employers locally to develop support for organisations and individuals with a learning disability looking to work.

Available data suggests a mixed picture in terms of how long local children are waiting for initial paediatric assessments

from services accessed by children and young people with SEND (physiotherapy, speech and language therapy (SLT), occupation therapy, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessment, ADHD assessment, CMN service).

For some services, children were waiting no more than 18 weeks on average, in line with the 18-week target. Exceptions to this are ASD assessments and SLT assessments which have an average wait of 38 weeks and 23 weeks respectively. **In some cases, children are waiting much longer than average;** for example, ASD, SLT and ADHD assessments had longest waits of 103 weeks, 88 weeks and 63 weeks respectively. Waiting times are also longer for Physiotherapy assessment (43 week longest wait) however these appointments are based on a clinical priority criteria and not in order of referral.

Data suggests demand for SOLAR mental health service is increasing and outstripping capacity.

At the end of February 2023, **284 children and young people had been waiting longer than 18 weeks** for an initial assessment (compared with 0 in December 2021), exceeding the six week target. Moreover, demand for crisis level support is higher than previous years which could suggest a need for more timely (earlier) intervention. This reflects national trends which show increasing prevalence of youth mental health problems and an increase in the acuity of problems post-pandemic. Within a national context, children and young people's mental health service waiting times in Birmingham and Solihull were lower than the national average.

Solihull has a relatively high rate of residents with an EHCP

compared with England and statistical neighbours. **A combination of pressures on the system over time may have contributed to this,** including a relatively low 'refusal to assess' rate (pre-2020) and a relatively large volume of children being assessed for EHCPs.

Prevalence of SEND diagnosis is not equally distributed across the population.

For example, those eligible for Free School Meals are over-represented in the SEND population, as are care experienced children and young people. The combination of interlinking factors associated with SEND means that some children face multiple barriers in addition to those associated with their SEND needs. This intersectionality reaffirms the importance of a holistic, coordinated approach to SEND in Solihull.

A larger proportion of Solihull pupils with SEND have Autism Spectrum Disorder

compared to the average (19.9% vs 13.7% for England and 13.8% for statistical neighbours).

Reasons for this are currently unknown, requiring further investigation.

Compared to the national average, a smaller proportion of pupils accessing early education receive SEN Support

(the proportion with an EHCP is similar to the average). This could **suggest a gap in terms of the identification of Under 5s** that require SEN Support specifically.

Some SEND support mechanisms appear to be under-utilised.

There is **low uptake of personal budgets for children and young people** with an EHCP, with only four in place across all EHCPs in 2021. However personal budgets are more established in children's social care, so this presents opportunities for sharing processes and expertise. Spend on respite for disabled children is relatively low compared to England.

Overview of SEND Population



There are 64,284 children and young people aged 0-25 residing in Solihull



16.9% of the pupils studying in Solihull have special educational needs (4% have an EHCP and 13% receive SEN Support which equates to 1,498 pupils with an EHCP and 5,327 pupils receiving SEN Support).



At time of publishing, there are 2,204 children and young people for whom the local authority maintains an EHCP7.

Link between SEND and deprivation



26% of Solihull pupils with SEND lived in the top 10% most deprived areas nationally compared with 20% of pupils with no SEND.

School readiness



In 2021/22, a similar percentage of pupils studying in Solihull with SEN reached a good level of development by age 5 (16%) compared to the average for England (19%) and statistically similar local authorities (17%). The difference between the Solihull 'All SEN' cohort and the average for England and statistical neighbours is not statistically significant. For the no SEN cohort, Solihull performance (73%) was similar to England (71%) and Statistical Neighbours (72%).

Geographical prevalence of SEND



The highest proportions of residents with an EHCP are found in the north of the borough in Chelmsley Wood (4.5%), Kingshurst and Fordbridge (4.4%) and Smith's Wood (4.4%).

The lowest prevalence is seen towards the south of the borough in Knowle (1.8%), St Alphege (2%) and Dorridge and Hockley Heath (2.2%) wards.

Quality of setting



90% of children and young people with a Solihull EHCP attend a provision that is rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

How many residents have SEND?

	Solihull rate of EHCPs per 1,000 population (2022)	England rage of EHCPs per 1,000 population (2022)
Under 5	9.5	5.9
Age 5-10	36.7	38.4
Age 11-15	57.5	49.6
Age 16-19	46.7	38.3
Age 20 to 25	6.5	8.3



Compared with its ten statistical neighbours, Solihull had the second highest percentage of appeals that go to SEND Tribunal in 2021 (3.25%), a level that exceeds the statistical neighbour (1.28%) and England (1.84%) averages by some margin and suggests a relatively high level of dispute in Solihull in relation to local authority decisions and/or a gap in terms of the efficacy of the mediation process. The extent to which this trend is a contributing factor in the overall EHCP rate is unknown, requiring further investigation.



A greater proportion of Solihull residents with an EHCP attend special schools (43.4%) compared to the national profile (34.8%) and comparable local authorities (32.8%), and fewer attend mainstream schools (32.5%) compared to England (40.5%) and statistically similar local authorities (44.3%).



Overall, of the 1,876 residents with an EHCP that attended the principal provider types in 2022 (93% of all EHCPs), 1 in 4 did so in another local authority area (24%).

Primary Need



- A larger proportion of Solihull pupils with SEND have Autism Spectrum Disorder (19.9% vs 13.7% for England and 13.8% for statistical neighbours)
- A smaller proportion of Solihull pupils with SEND have Speech, Language & Communication needs compared to the national profile in particular (17.6% vs 24.1% for England and 20.1% for statistical neighbours)
- A smaller proportion of Solihull pupils with SEND have Moderate Learning Difficulty compared to the statistical neighbour average in particular (14.6% vs 17.3% for England and 19.5% for statistical neighbours)
- A higher proportion of Solihull pupils with SEND have Specific Learning Difficulty (15.1% vs 12.3% for England and 12.3% for statistical neighbours).

Overview of SEND population in Solihull schools



The percentage of secondary school pupils with an EHCP or receiving SEN Support (16%) is relatively high compared to statistical neighbour (13%) and England (14%) averages and this is driven by the prevalence of SEN Support pupils at secondary level in particular (14% vs 12% for England and 11% for statistical neighbours).

Impact on Educational Attainment - Key Stage 2 and 4



At Key Stage 2, a higher percentage of Solihull pupils with SEN are reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics compared with the national average. In particular, the percentage of SEN pupils (without an EHCP) meeting the standard (27%) exceeds the average for England (21%).

The picture is equally positive for Key Stage 4 attainment. In 2021/22, pupils with SEND achieved a higher average attainment 8 score compared to the national average and scores were at least as good as the average for statistically similar authorities.

Inclusivity in mainstream schools



Overall, 43% of residents with an EHCP attend special schools, a higher proportion compared with England (35%) and statistically similar local authorities (33%).

Absence and exclusion



- A higher percentage of pupils with SEND are persistent absentees (35%) compared with pupils without SEND (21%) and it's similar nationally.
- Pupils with SEND have a higher overall absence rate (11%) compared with pupils without SEND (7%) and it's the same nationally
- Pupils with SEND have a higher unauthorised absence rate (3%) compared with pupils without SEND (2%) and it's the same nationally.
- Pupils with SEND have a higher rate of fixed period and permanent exclusions compared to pupils that do not have SEND. For all categories except 'permanent exclusion - SEND without an EHCP', Solihull performed slightly better than the national average in terms of its SEND exclusion rates in 2020/21.

Transition to Adulthood



In 2022, the percentage of 16-17 years olds with SEND that were recorded as being in education or training (EET) was similar to the average for the EHCP cohort (90% for Solihull compared to 89% for England and statistical neighbours) and slightly higher than the average for the SEN Support cohort (89% for Solihull compared to 87% for England and statistical neighbours).

In 2020/21, the percentage of young people with SEND achieving Level 2 qualifications (five GCSEs 9-4 or equivalent) by age 19 was higher for both SEN Support (68% in Solihull vs 62% and 64% for England and Statistical Neighbours) and for EHCP (38% for Solihull vs 29% and 33% for England and Statistical Neighbours).

In 2020/21, the percentage of young people with SEND achieving Level 3 qualifications (two A-levels or equivalent) by age 19 was notably higher for both SEN Support (44% in Solihull vs 35% and 36% for England and Statistical Neighbours) and for EHCP (22% for Solihull vs 14% and 16% for England and Statistical Neighbours).

In 2020/21, the percentage of students with SEND recorded as being in a sustained education, employment or training destination after the end of 16-18 study (90.2%) was higher than the England average (83.1%).

How long does it typically take local children and young people with SEND to be assessed by paediatric community health Services?



- For some services, children are currently waiting no more than 18 weeks on average for their initial assessment, in line with the 18-week maximum waiting time commitment for non-urgent, consultant-led NHS treatments. Exceptions to this are ASD assessment and SLT assessment which have an average wait of 38 weeks and 23 weeks respectively.
- For some services, the average wait does not sufficiently describe the range of possible wait time experiences. For example, ASD assessments had a longest wait of 103 weeks as children and young people are seen in referral order. Moreover, SLT and ADHD assessments had longest waits of 88 weeks and 63 weeks respectively. For other services, longest wait time was closer to the average.
- Physiotherapy assessment had a longest wait of 43 weeks in April 2023 however these appointments are based on a clinical priority criteria and not in order of referral.

Mental health support



Recent analysis using matched pupil data has found that SEMH in the EHCP population is not evenly distributed geographically. For example, North Solihull has an SEMH EHCP rate of 59 per 10,000 compared with 36.9 for Solihull overall.

In terms of mental health support pathways, referral data for SOLAR - Solihull's children and young people's mental health service - shows an increase in demand and an increase in waiting times. SOLAR accepted more referrals in 2021/22 than in any previous year of their contract, with an increase of 42.5% compared with 2019/20.

Annual health check for young people with learning disabilities



62% of 14-19 year olds with a learning disability have received their AHC in 2022/23 to date. This compares favourably with the England average for 14-17 year olds (45%) and the Midlands average for 14-17 year olds (45%) during the same period (equivalent national and regional figures covering the 14-19 cohort were not available).

In Solihull, a tenth of 0-24 year olds are disabled (10%) which is slightly higher than the national average (9%)

- 21% of Children in Need episodes included mental health as a recorded factor (vs 13% in 2018)
- 14% of episodes included learning disability as a recorded factor (vs 10% in 2018)
- 4% of episodes included physical disability as a recorded factor (vs 6% in 2018)

Children in need



In Solihull, 19.9% of Children in Need (CiN) are receiving SEN Support and 23.6% have an EHCP and this is notably higher than prevalence in the general pupil population (13.1% and 3.5% respectively).

Children looked after



In Solihull, 26.0% of children looked after (CLA) have SEN without an EHCP and 24.9% have an EHCP and this is notably higher than prevalence in the general pupil population (13.1% and 3.5% respectively).

Young people aged 18-25 with care needs



At time of publishing, there are 160 young people aged 18-25 accessing social care services in Solihull. The main services received are direct payments (61%), supported living (16%) and day care (14%), with fewer accessing home support (4%), residential placements (3%), adult college placements (1%) and shared lives scheme (1%) as their main service.

In 2021/22, the proportion of adults with learning disabilities who live in their own home or with their family (77.3%) was slightly lower than the average for England (78.8%) and mid-range for CIPFA Nearest Neighbour authorities (range of 56.4% - 92.6%, 11th of 16).

In 2021/22, the proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment (3.2%) was lower than the England average (4.8%) and low for CIPFA Nearest Neighbour authorities (range of 3.1% - 12.4%, 15th out of 16) 72. However, in 2022/23, the proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment in Solihull rose to (a provisional) 5.2%, up from 3.2% in 2021/22

Children with experience of the justice system



In line with national patterns, initial analysis at a local level suggests that around half of children and young people known to the youth offending service (YOS) in March 2023 had a SEND need which is an over-representation (only 17% of the total pupil population had SEND in 2021/22). More research is needed (larger sample size) to verify these results.

EHCP Assessment Process



In 2021, 39% of initial requests for assessment were refused which is relatively high compared to the average for England (22%) and statistical neighbours (28%).

In terms of timeliness, although improved, the percentage of EHCPs issued within the 20 week target (excluding exceptions) in 2021 (50%) was lower than the average for England (60%) and statistical neighbours (57%). This has increased to 64% in 2022, with monthly performance data showing further improved performance in the second half of the year.

The results of the latest parent/carer survey help shed some light on satisfaction with the EHCP service (218 respondents):

- 46% of respondents answered 'yes' when asked if they had seen any improvements to the support for children and young people in Solihull since January 2022 and of these 97% said they had experienced these improvements personally.
- Of those respondents that had experienced improvements personally and provided detail on this (50 respondents), 62% mentioned EHCPs/EHCP service or team/annual reviews/EHCP assessment process.

Feedback from children and young people



Results suggest low awareness of the additional needs strategy, relatively high confidence in terms of knowing who to go to when they need help or have a question, relatively low confidence in terms of support from their community, support with thoughts and feelings and feeling welcomed and included.

Feedback from parents and carers



Parents/carers: Initial questions - have you heard and seen? Around two thirds of respondents had heard of the additional needs strategy, most had been able to understand the strategy to a certain degree, around half had seen improvement in the support provided, half had not.