

# Sufficiency of Education Provision for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Worcestershire

## 2022

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# 1. Introduction

Worcestershire County Council has a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure there is a sufficiency of school places available to meet the needs of all children and young people living within our authority. This includes having regard to the need to secure provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In addition, s315 of the Education Act 1996 requires that arrangements for children with SEND be kept under review.

'Special educational needs' is a legal definition and refers to children with learning problems or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children the same age. An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is ordinarily available through special educational needs (SEN) support and sets out the additional support required to meet those needs.

Worcestershire's Children and Young People's plan<sup>1</sup> outlines a belief in equity and excellence for all, and an aim to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. This can be met with a focus for special educational needs to be assessed and met in a timely and purposeful manner. Worcestershire's SEN strategy sets out the vision that 'in Worcestershire we want all children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities to be truly seen and respected as individuals and to be the best they can be'<sup>2</sup>. Further information regarding Worcestershire's aims for special educational needs can also be found in the All Age Autism Strategy<sup>3</sup> report.

In pursuit of this, the SEND local offer is a source of extensive local information to enable families to access help and support at the earliest possible opportunity. Training and support are offered to staff in early years settings, schools and colleges to enable them to develop an inclusive environment for a child with SEND, enable the child to sustain their place and remain within their local community. In cases where this cannot happen, then appropriate support is assessed and an EHC plan issued. This will name the school or setting that can meet the needs of the child.

In order to achieve these goals, future demand for places for children with SEND must be monitored to ensure the correct provision is in place at the correct time.

This report sets out to review historic demand for children with SEND to enable future demand to be assessed and a forecast for the next 4 years proposed (to 2025/2026).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cypp>

<sup>2</sup> [Our SEND strategy | Our SEND strategy | Worcestershire County Council](#)

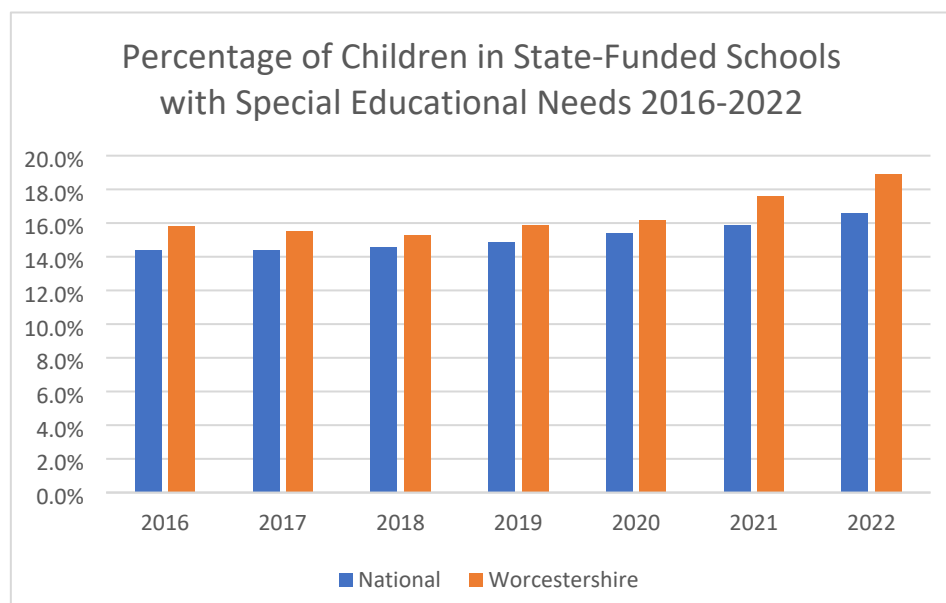
<sup>3</sup> [Appendix\\_1\\_\\_\\_All\\_Age\\_Autism\\_Strategy.pdf](#)

## 2. National Trends

### 2.1 Background

The school census, undertaken annually in January, records the special education needs of pupils attending State-Funded schools. This submission from all state funded schools enables Worcestershire County Council (WCC) to benchmark the needs of our school age children against national trends and assess changes. To provide the most accurate figures for Special Educational Needs, the January Census has been combined with the February SEN2 data to ensure all Worcestershire children with EHCPs, or SEN Support are included in the analysis.

The school census records pre-school age children in school nurseries, children in Reception to Year 14 (age 4 to 19) in all types of state funded schools including academies, free schools, alternative provision, special schools and pupils in sixth forms linked to schools. While this will include some nursery age children and some children over 16 years old, it will not include all those with EHC plans attending private, voluntary, independent (PVI) early years settings, colleges, elected home educated, independent schools or not holding a school place on census day. The SEN2 data report includes all children for whom the local authority has responsibility for the management of the SEN processes, under the 1996 Education Act and the 2014 Children and Families Act<sup>4</sup>. These children have an EHCP including those attending independent provision or Electively Home Educating.



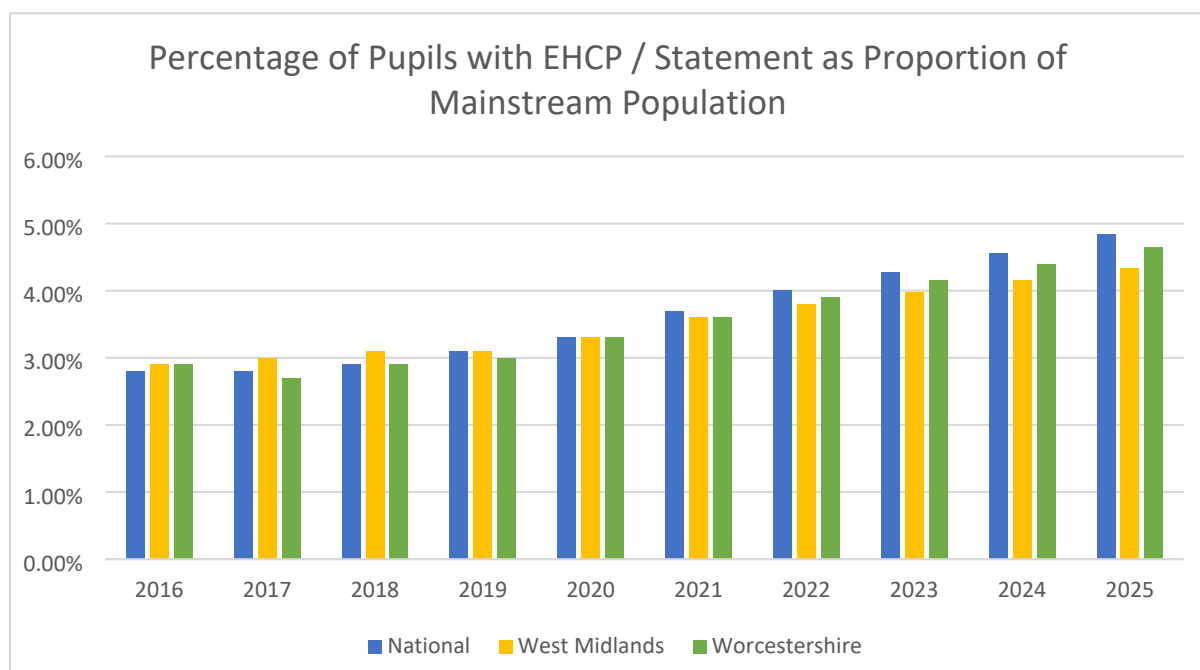
National DfE returns: Worcestershire January 2022 school census and SEN2

A review of the school census data for January 2022 shows that 18.9% of pupils educated in Worcestershire are identified as having special educational needs with 13.3% requiring SEN support and 5.6% have an EHC plan. The higher rate in Worcestershire compared to the national figures is mainly among those children receiving SEN support in mainstream

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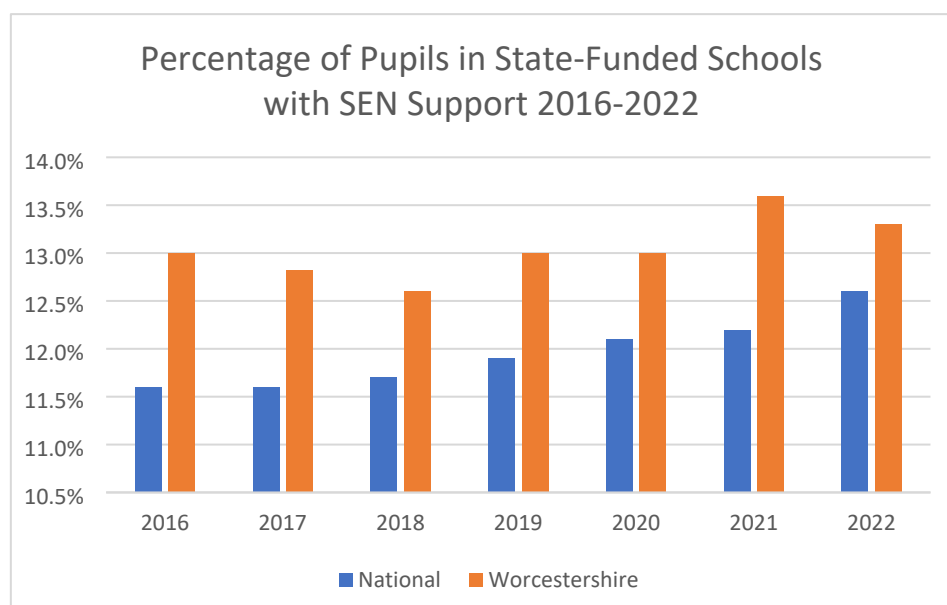
<sup>4</sup> Pg6, [SEN2 2022 Guide \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

schools. The current level of pupils with an EHC plan in Worcestershire is slightly higher (5.60%) than the latest known national rate (4% of mainstream pupil population).



Source: National DfE returns: Worcestershire January 2022 school census & Forecast

The chart above forecasts percentages of children with EHCPs from 2022 onwards, as the percentage appears to be rising at a steady rate.



National DfE returns: Worcestershire January 2022 school census and SEN2

The largest difference in distribution of children receiving SEN Support in Worcestershire compared to England appears to be the higher percentage of pupils in Worcestershire receiving support for Speech, Language & Communication Needs (SLCN), just over 4%

more than nationally. Evidence has shown that early intervention for children with SLCN needs has a significant impact on social, emotional and mental development<sup>5</sup>.

The number of pupils educated in Worcestershire as at the January school census has grown in recent years from 78,350 in January 2016 to 82,038 in January 2022. An increase of 400 pupils from January 2021. When the SEN2 unique data has been combined, this brings the total to 83,886. The level of children with identified SEND remained around 15% between 2016-2019, however rose to 17.6% in 2021 and is now at 18.9% for 2022. This is as a result of developing methods of early diagnosis of need and an emphasis on early intervention. It is therefore assumed that over the next several years the percentages of children benefiting from SEND support in schools will continue to increase in relation to the school population.

## 2.2 Type of needs

The 'SEND Code of Practice 2015: 0 to 25 years old' explains the duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools, and colleges to provide for those with special educational needs under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. It identifies 'four broad areas of special educational need as:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Although pupils may have a combination of needs, the school census can only record a primary and a secondary need.

The SEN Code of Practice emphasises that 'the purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category. In practice, individual children or young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. A detailed assessment of need should ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need.' (section 6.27).

Although government wishes to move away from assumptions about pupils' needs based upon their difficulty or disability, it is still necessary to record specific categories of need to allow government and local authorities to predict levels of future resource requirements. The following categories of need are collected through the statutory school census.

| Code | Type of Need                              |
|------|---|
| ASD  | Autistic spectrum disorder                |
| HI   | Hearing impairment                        |
| MLD  | Moderate learning difficulties            |
| MSI  | Multi-sensory impairment                  |
| NSA  | No specialist Assessment                  |
| OTH  | Other difficulty or disability            |
| PD   | Physical difficulty                       |
| PMLD | Profound and multiple learning difficulty |
| SEMH | Social, Emotional and Mental Health       |
| SLCN | Speech, Language & Communication Needs    |
| SLD  | Severe learning difficulty                |
| SPLD | Specific learning difficulty              |

<sup>5</sup> [Bercow Review of Services for Children & Young People with SLCN](#)

|    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| VI | Visual impairment |
|----|-------------------|

The following charts detail the distribution of primary needs for Worcestershire pupils with SEND Support or an EHCP.

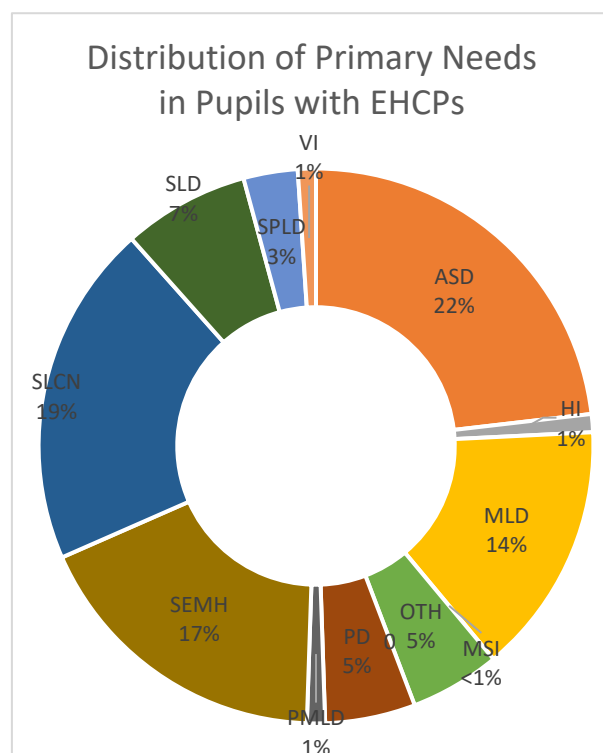
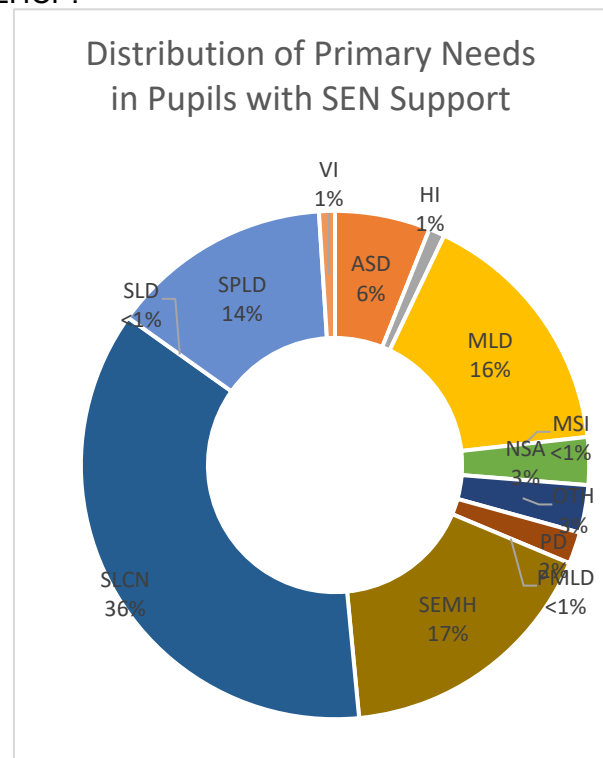


Chart 1 and 2: Distribution of Primary Needs with SEN and EHCPs Source: school census Jan 2022 & SEN2 February

This proportions are typical of the population as a whole and identifies categories of SEND that are more often supported without the need for an EHC plan. There are many more pupils with SEN Support with the needs of Specific Learning Difficulties, Moderate Learning Difficulties and Speech, Language and Communication Needs. These types of learning difficulties are more amenable to be managed within a mainstream setting. Conversely there is a much higher percentage of pupils with Severe Learning Difficulty and ASD who have EHC plans as they pose more constraints on teaching within a mainstream setting.

National data released by the DfE in January 2022 identifies Speech, Language and Communications Needs as the most common area of need for pupils receiving SEN support at 12%, and Social, Emotional and Mental Health at 9%. Whereas children with the primary need categorised as Autistic Spectrum Disorder is the most common need for pupils with EHC plans at 15%. The difference between distribution of EHC plans by primary need between Worcestershire and England suggests that ASD is under-represented particularly in younger children whilst Speech, Language and Communications Needs is being over-represented.

There is some debate regarding the effectiveness of this categorisation including the clarity of the definitions for each categorisation of need; the lack of grading for degenerative illnesses; the lack of autism diagnosis in young children; and the level of hands on support and difficulty in managing individual children.

A child's Primary Need may not be the only special educational need of the child. There is evidence gathered by the Council for disabled Children (CDC) whose research has found that the numbers of "Pupils with complex needs have increased by 50% since 2004" (Feb. 2017)<sup>6</sup>. This report considers children with life limiting conditions that are now better supported by health care advances, improved survival rates of pre-term births as well as the poor recording and tracking of children with multiple needs, as leading to an increase in the understanding of children with complex needs and therefore difficulty with ensuring suitable provision for children's special educational needs. For instance, Speech, Language & Communication Needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have needs across all areas, including particular sensory requirements.

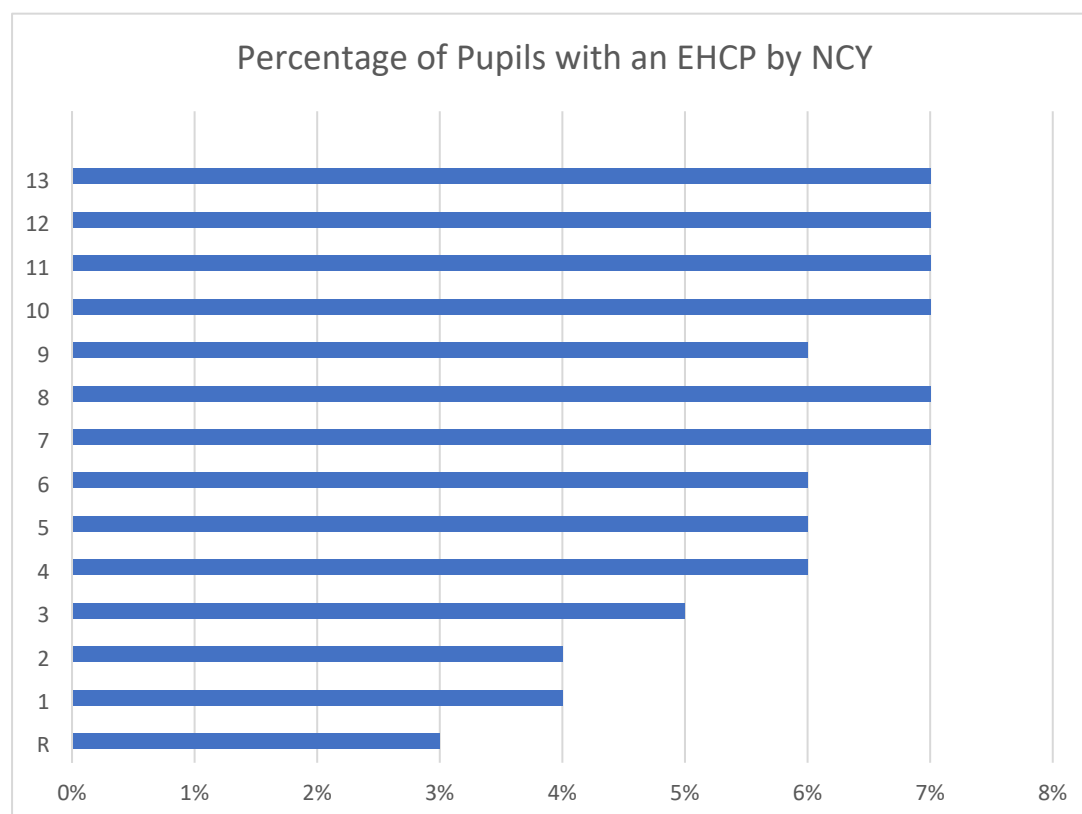
## 2.3 Need by age group

The needs of children vary by age and often become more acute for older children due to educational or environmental challenges. There are low numbers of identified SEN needs in earlier years due to the difficulty in diagnosis or even being aware there may be a need. In older years children tend to be better able to manage with many of the needs they may have through standard education support. The different profile for year groups of pupils with EHC plans and those requiring SEN support allow us to direct resources to the correct schools to reach the children in need of special educational support.

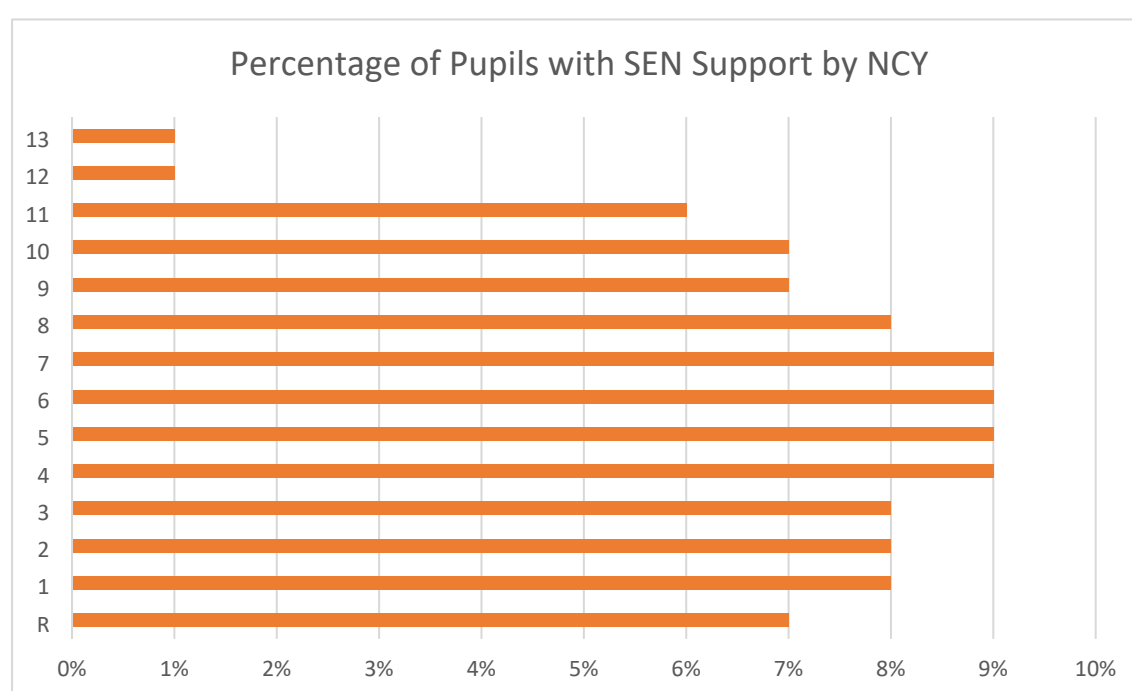
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<sup>6</sup> <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Data%20Report.pdf>

Further analysis of the children in schools in Worcestershire show that those in Secondary phase have the highest percentage of pupils with EHC plans.



Source: School Census, Jan 2022 & SEN2 (February)



Source: School Census, January 2022 & SEN2 (February)

The percentage of pupils receiving SEN support by age shows larger numbers in primary schools compared to secondary schools and a very small number in sixth form. The greatest percentage (7%) are in years 2 and 4 through to 7, whereas the number of EHC plans peaks in Year 10.

Note that this data is from the school census and therefore only includes a particular data set of children.

## 3. Provision for Children with Education, Health and Care Plans.

### 3.1 Trend in EHC plans

The January Census and SEN2 reported that there were 4,690 Worcestershire children and young people, with Education, Health and Care plans in 2022, to whom the Authority has responsibility<sup>7</sup>. This represents a 12.1% increase from 2021 however, new plans are not written uniformly through the year. The significant increase in the number of EHC plans in Worcestershire since 2016 has in part been a result of rising population numbers, however this does not explain the trend entirely. Over the last several years the number of EHC plans as a percentage of the total pupil population (including independent schools and post-16 establishments) has increased from 2.9% in January 2016 to 5.6% in January 2022. A significant contribution to this has been the rise in the post-16 population with an EHC plan following a change in Government Legislation<sup>8</sup> where the educational or training outcomes of the EHC plan are not achieved by age 18, the EHC plan can remain in place until the young person reaches 25.

When extracting the number of children with an EHC plan up to the age of 25 compared to the total pupil population of Worcestershire, 5.6% of all pupils have an EHC plan.

*Table 2: All pupils for whom the authority maintains a statement of special educational needs or an EHC Plan*

|   | Jan-17 | Jan-18 | Jan-19 | Jan-20 | Jan-21 | Jan-22 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>Under age 5 (NCY 0, -1 &amp; -2)</b> | 55     | 84     | 83     | 110    | 118    | 138    |
| <b>Aged 5 to 10 (NCY 0 - NCY 5)</b>     | 842    | 908    | 992    | 1,214  | 1,293  | 1,410  |
| <b>Aged 11 to 15 (NCY 6 - NCY 10)</b>   | 1,078  | 1,120  | 1,220  | 1,339  | 1,473  | 1,550  |
| <b>Aged 16 to 19 (NCY 11 - NCY 14)</b>  | 628    | 807    | 966    | 959    | 939    | 1,044  |
| <b>Aged 20 to 25 (NCY 15 - NCY 19)</b>  | 89     | 145    | 241    | 431    | 359    | 413    |
| <b>Total</b>                            | 2,692  | 3,064  | 3,502  | 4,053  | 4,182  | 4,555  |
| <b>Annual increase</b>                  | 7%     | 14%    | 14%    | 16%    | 3%     | 9%     |

*Table 2: EHC plans by age*

<sup>7</sup> SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25

<sup>8</sup> Children and Families Act 2014

|  | Jan-17 | Jan-18 | Jan-19 | Jan-20 | Jan-21 | Jan-22 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>All pupils for whom the authority maintains a statement of special educational needs or an EHC Plan</b> | 2,692  | 3,064  | 3,502  | 4,053  | 4,182  | 4,690  |
| <b>Special schools - LA funded</b>   | 1,228  | 1,332  | 1,385  | 1,517  | 1,524  | 1,641  |
| <b>Special schools - independent</b>   | 89     | 120    | 134    | 152    | 208    | 228    |
| <b>Mainstream schools - LA funded</b>  | 811    | 808    | 910    | 1,207  | 1,373  | 1,472  |
| <b>Mainstream - independent</b>  | 56     | 54     | 80     | 97     | 81     | 125    |
| <b>General Further Education</b>   | 394    | 553    | 669    | 702    | 696    | 752    |
| <b>Specialist Further Education</b>  | 43     | 88     | 88     | 93     | 90     | 111    |
| <b>Home educated</b>   | 37     | 40     | 39     | 44     | 48     | 31     |
| <b>NEET</b>  | 18     | 31     | 106    | 39     | 25     | 49     |
| <b>Alternative provision</b>   | 7      | 5      | 11     | 24     | 17     | 30     |
| <b>Awaiting placement</b>  | 8      | 9      | 24     | 45     | 55     | 28     |
| <b>Other</b>   | 1      | 24     | 56     | 133    | 65     | 106    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | 2,692  | 3,064  | 3,502  | 4,053  | 4,182  | 4,690  |

*Table 3: EHC plans by setting SEN2 and January Census*

Of the 4,690 children, 35% attend LA funded special schools, and 32% are supported within a state-funded mainstream schools in or out of Worcestershire.

863 young people (18%) are attending post 16 colleges. This corresponds to the responsibility to continue education opportunities up to the age of 25 for young people with EHC plans and is the age group which saw most growth in 2018-2019. Some of these colleges will be specialist independent institutions with residential facilities based out of county.

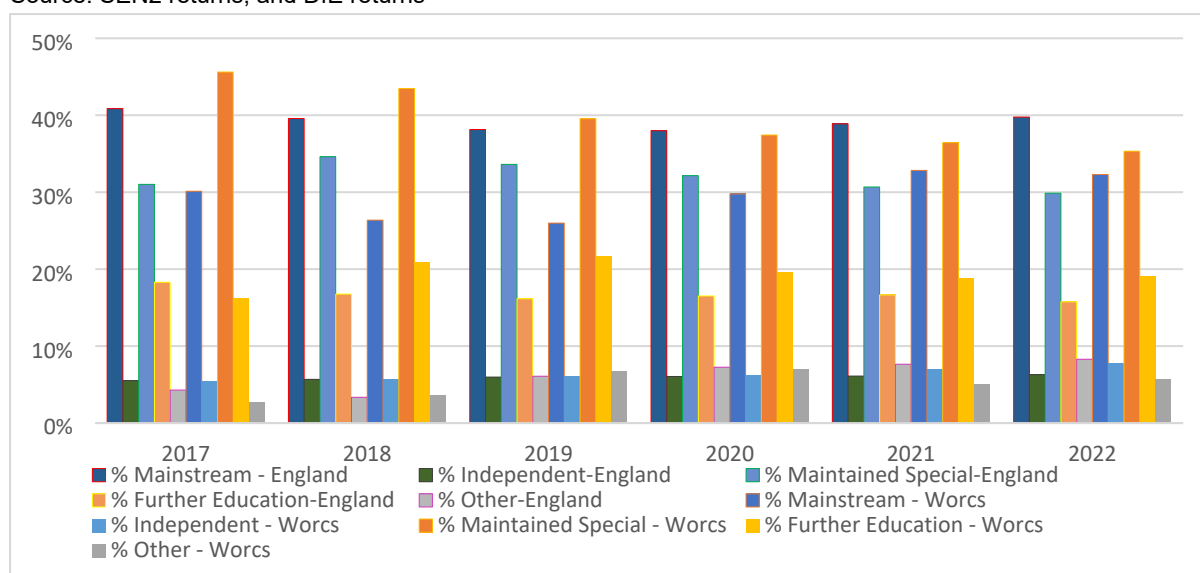
353 children (8%) are in independent schools, either special or mainstream. This demand is driven by the suitability of placements and parental choice but may be exacerbated by a shortage of spaces in LA funded special schools. However, we can see that the impact on independent schools from the rising numbers over the last several years has not been as great as those seen in other type of provision, particularly state-funded special schools.

Table 4 below compares the proportion of children with EHC plans going to mainstream, independent, or special schools using DfE statistics.

| EHCPs                       | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>All Schools</b>          | 2,692 | 3,064 | 3,502 | 4,053 | 4,182 | 4,555 |
| <b>Mainstream Schools</b>   | 811   | 808   | 910   | 1,207 | 1,373 | 1,471 |
| <b>Maintained Special</b>   | 1,228 | 1,332 | 1,385 | 1,517 | 1,524 | 1,609 |
| <b>Independent Schools</b>  | 145   | 174   | 214   | 249   | 289   | 353   |
| <b>Further Education</b>    | 437   | 641   | 757   | 795   | 786   | 865   |
| <b>Other</b>                | 71    | 109   | 236   | 285   | 210   | 256   |
| <b>% Mainstream</b>         | 30%   | 26%   | 26%   | 30%   | 33%   | 32%   |
| <b>% Independent</b>        | 5%    | 6%    | 6%    | 6%    | 7%    | 7.7%  |
| <b>% Maintained Special</b> | 46%   | 43%   | 40%   | 37%   | 36%   | 35%   |
| <b>% Further Education</b>  | 16%   | 21%   | 22%   | 20%   | 19%   | 19%   |
| <b>% Other (AP, EHE)</b>    | 3%    | 4%    | 7%    | 7%    | 5%    | 6%    |

Table 4: DfE Statistics, children with EHCPs in Mainstream/Independent/Special

Source: SEN2 returns, and DfE returns



The gap between the percentage of children attending maintained special schools and mainstream schools has continued to close between Worcestershire and nationally. In 2017, Worcestershire had 15% more than nationally, in 2022 the difference is now 5%. The percentage of young people in post-16 providers with EHC plans in Worcestershire is also higher than nationally with a 3% difference to national figures. The percentage of children with EHC plans going to mainstream schools in Worcestershire has dropped by 1% in the last year. The percentage of children with EHC plans in Worcestershire going to independent settings is 1.4% above the national average.

We can expect the rise in the percentage of children with EHC plans to continue over the next several years as the trends and changes in the system continue to have a positive impact on identification of support needed by pupils to achieve their full potential. However, this has an impact on the provision that is needed and available.

Following the rise of EHC plans in the last several years, we have seen growth in pupils placed in special schools. In 2021/22, nationally, 30.7% of children with EHC plans were

placed in maintained special schools, whereas in Worcestershire 35% of children with EHC plans were placed in maintained special schools.

## 4. Analysis of current pupils with EHC Plans

For the purposes of this analysis, we assume the number of EHCPs to rise with age and be more frequent among boys than girls in all areas of need except for physical/sensory. The Education Planning Areas (EPA) with more pupils, such as Worcester, Redditch and Kidderminster will also have more children with EHC plans. This analysis compares the actual spread of children with EHC plans against this expectation.

### 4.1 Communication and Interaction

1,020 children from the January Census and SEN2 data have an EHC plan with a diagnosis of ASD.

Wychavon has the highest number of children with an EHCP for ASD (206). Across all districts, there are far more boys with an ASD primary need EHCP, than girls. Wychavon also has the highest difference between boys and girls, with 119 more boys that have an ASD primary need compared to 44 girls.

This is consistent with national trends.

The highest number of children with an EHC plan with ASD primary need across all districts are within the age range of 11 to 15 years old.

Of the 1,020 children with an EHCP with ASD primary need, 33% are Post 16, followed by 22% in KS3 (NCY 7-9).

Children with primary need ASD are travelling large distances to attend provision, as will be detailed further in section 5.9 of this report.

WCF has submitted a bid to the Department for Education for a new Special Free School to support more pupils with ASD Primary need in a Worcestershire school.

There are 883 children with EHC plans and a primary SLCN need.

Boys with EHC plans with primary SLCN in Bromsgrove peaks in year 10, whereas the peaks for girls in Bromsgrove is in years 6 and 13.

Wyre Forest has a concentration of boys with EHC plans with primary SLCN through years groups 2 to 4.

Malvern has the lowest percentage of EHC plans with primary SLCN across the county.

The most children with an ECHP with primary SLCN are within Wychavon, 23% of the county figures.

### 4.2 Cognition and Learning

The cognition category includes children with MLD, PMLD, SLD and SpLD. Bromsgrove has the lowest number of EHCPs with primary cognition need across the districts. Wychavon has the largest number of children with cognitive needs within the county.

MLD makes up 55% of the 1,194 EHC plans with cognition and is therefore the largest cohort of the sub-categories.

The largest cohort of children with cognitive needs are Post-16, making up 36% of the total number.

### 4.3 Sensory and/or Physical

For Physical difficulties, there is a peak in year 7 across the county. Most EHC plans are within the Post-16 cohort for those with Sensory needs (hearing impairment and vision impairment).

Bromsgrove and Redditch have the highest percentage of children with physical/sensory needs within Worcestershire.

### 4.4 Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

EHC plans for SEMH are low for Early Years and KS1 in most places. The spread of EHC plans for boys and girls with SEMH are noticeably different. There are very high peaks for boys in Kidderminster at year 7, 9 and 10. There is another peak for Redditch at year 8 which aligns with the peak identified in year 7 in 2021. The peak may also be due to year 8 being a transition year for schools in Redditch. The biggest peak for girls is in Worcester at year 10, again aligning with the same peak at year 9 in Worcester for 2021.

Of the 812 EHC plans with primary need SEMH, 76% of these are for boys.

### 4.5 Trends by areas of need

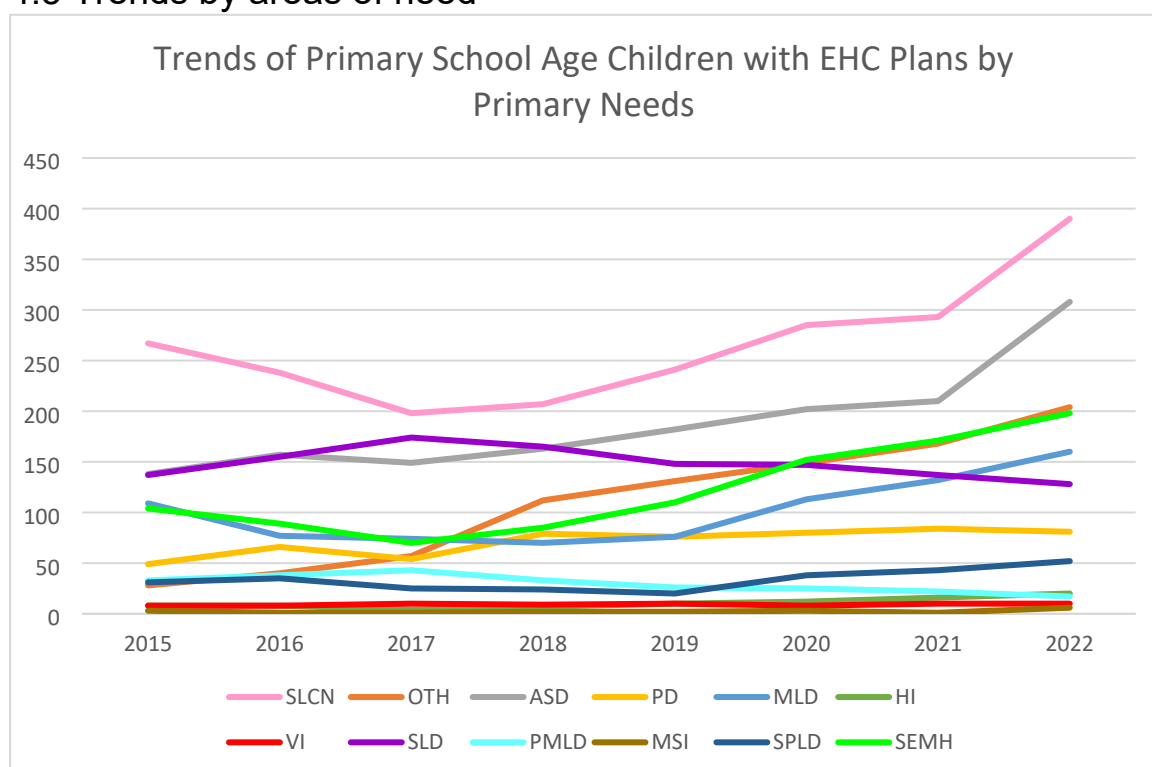


Table 5 Trends by primary need (Primary age)

Moderate Learning Difficulties, ASD, Speech, Language & Communication Needs and Social, Emotional & Mental Health difficulties are all on a rising trend since 2017 for the primary school age group. The same categories of need are also rising for secondary school age children.

Another noticeable trend is that the numbers described as “complex” have been rising steadily over the last 10 years. One of the possible reasons is the increased effectiveness of neonatal care. The “Other” category is sometimes used to classify complex cases which have aspects of ASD and either Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties or Severe Learning Difficulties. Some of the children with complex issues also have physical or sensory disabilities and may have emotional and mental health difficulties too. The schools completing the census may have assigned the primary need as ASD, PMLD, SLD or Other. The analysis of this data can only see trends by single needs, thus overlooks this complex aspect, only picked up via anecdotal evidence from schools. For instance, many children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues also have ASD, which is not always listed as a secondary need.

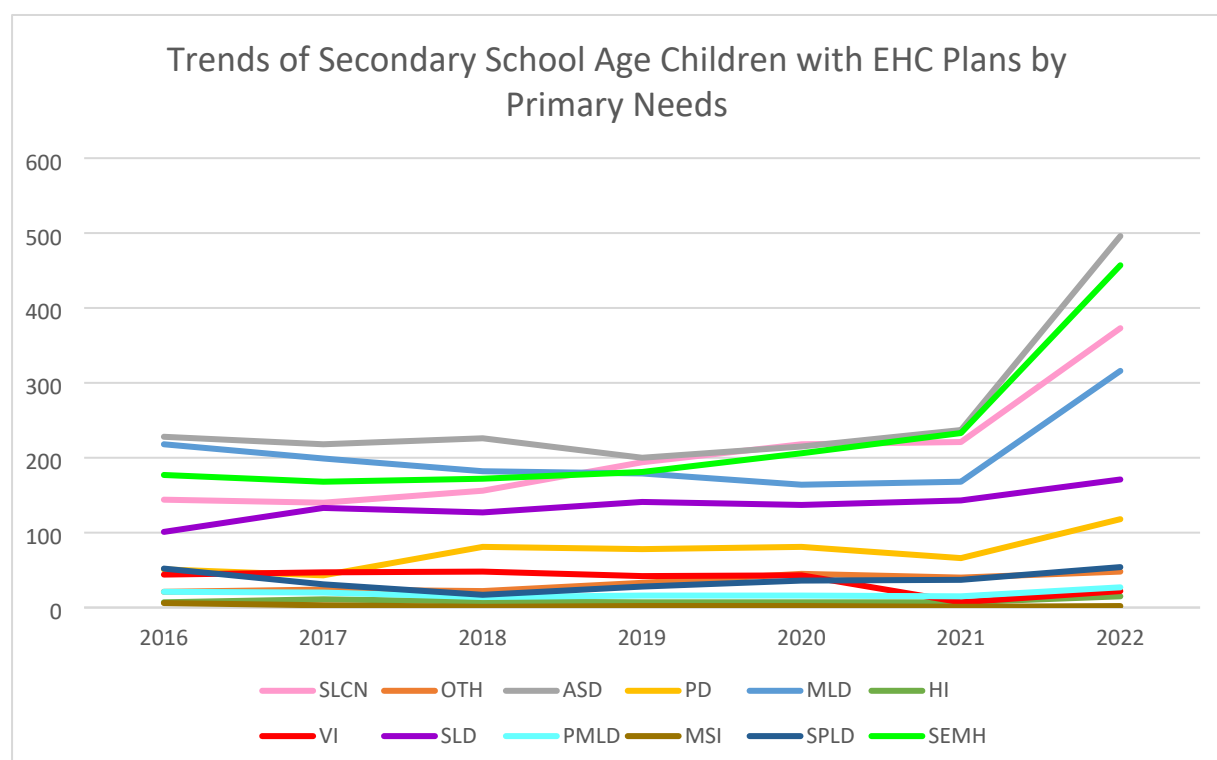


Table 6: Trends by primary need (Secondary age)

Speech, Language and Communication Needs are highest amongst primary school age children but is rising to prominence amongst secondary school age children. Moderate Learning Difficulties is increasing as a primary need in EHC plans at secondary school age. There are suggestions that this has been misapplied to forms of ASD. SEMH and ASD have had a significant increase in EHC plans for 2022.

## 4.6 Financial considerations

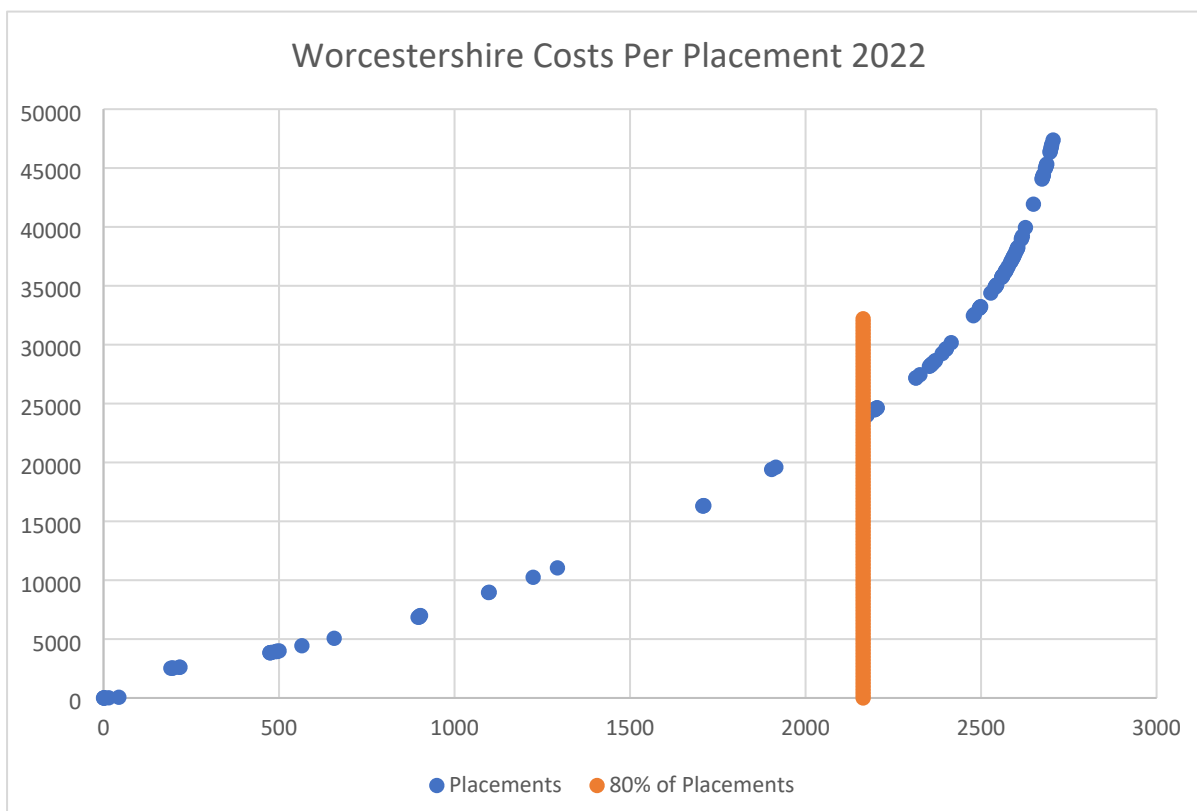
The diversity of provision for SEN is extensive. Broadly speaking there are 2 types of funding for SEN. Children attending mainstream and funded special schools attract funding from the High Needs Funding block, related to how much additional support is necessary for their education. Children and young people placed in independent settings are provided for at a unique cost based upon the individual child's needs and the setting's provision. These can have similar costs to mainstream provision but are frequently much more expensive. All the placements have different durations, so the costs have been annualised for the purpose of comparison as if all placements ran from April 2021 to March 2022.

| School Type         | Total FTE | Total Annualised Cost (£) | Avg. Cost per placement |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| FE                  | 492       | 3,927,242                 | 7,998                   |
| Independent         | 101       | 1,998,491                 | 19,787                  |
| Independent Special | 271       | 13,862,239                | 51,152                  |
| Mainstream          | 1,901     | 8,642,252                 | 4,546                   |
| Special             | 2,037     | 23,254,923                | 11,421                  |
| Specialist FE       | 148       | 5,254,715                 | 35,504                  |
| Grand Total         | 4,951     | 56,939,862                | N/A                     |

Table 7: Source: Worcestershire HNB Monitoring Costs per placement by Setting Type

The average cost per placement at Independent Special Schools is the highest at circa £51k, followed by Specialist FE placements at £35k.

The addition of a new ASD special school within Worcestershire would bring the average cost per placement for independent special down as these children can then attend a Worcestershire funded special school.



This graph shows that if all placement costs are added up smallest first, the lowest 80% of the placements together cost £347,515. Another way of saying this is that the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile placement has a cost per placement of £20,130 per year. At this point the graph curves rapidly upwards. The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile costs £36k per year and the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile costs £44,564k per year. In terms of cost alone, increased capacity of mainstream or funded special schools represents an investment opportunity.

| Primary Need       | KS1        |                  |                     | KS2          |                  |                     |
|--------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------|
|                    | FTE        | Annualised Cost  | Avg. Cost per place | FTE          | Annualised Cost  | Avg. Cost per place |
| ASD                | 80         | 678,437          | 8,480               | 221          | 1,739,370        | 7,870               |
| Cognition          | 90         | 592,803          | 6,586               | 275          | 1,640,891        | 5,966               |
| SEMH               | 30         | 308,815          | 10,293              | 214          | 1,845,247        | 8,622               |
| Sensory / Physical | 53         | 539,805          | 10,185              | 55           | 443,502          | 8,063               |
| Speech & Language  | 161        | 959,049          | 5,956               | 307          | 1,818,338        | 5,922               |
| Other              | 72         | 529,728          | 7,357               | 162          | 1,146,386        | 7,076               |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>486</b> | <b>3,608,637</b> | <b>7,425</b>        | <b>1,234</b> | <b>8,633,734</b> | <b>6,996</b>        |

Table 8: Cost per placement by Primary Need (KS1/KS2)

For KS1 we can see that speech and language is the most common need, however, has the lowest average cost per placement. The highest cost per placement is for primary need SEMH across KS1 and KS2,.

| Primary Need       | KS3        |                  |                     | KS4        |                  |                     |
|--------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|
|                    | FTE        | Annualised Cost  | Avg. Cost per place | FTE        | Annualised Cost  | Avg. Cost per place |
| ASD                | 232        | 3,036,135        | 13,086              | 122        | 2,194,109        | 17,984              |
| Cognition          | 242        | 2,174,411        | 8,985               | 173        | 1,303,796        | 7,536               |
| SEMH               | 203        | 2,604,066        | 12,827              | 114        | 1,770,725        | 15,532              |
| Sensory / Physical | 66         | 733,932          | 11,120              | 28         | 443,855          | 15,851              |
| Speech & Language  | 182        | 1,137,309        | 6,248               | 101        | 518,625          | 5,134               |
| Other              | 39         | 252,450          | 6,473               | 24         | 222,953          | 9,289               |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>964</b> | <b>9,938,303</b> | <b>10,309</b>       | <b>562</b> | <b>6,517,063</b> | <b>11,596</b>       |

Table 9: Cost per placement by Primary Need (KS3/KS4)

For KS3 there are no independent placements for physical/sensory needs. The largest cohort in KS3 are those with primary need ASD, 47% of those attend special or independent special schools, with a higher than average cost per placement. There are 30 independent placements for SEMH at KS3, giving reason to the high average cost per place total. KS4 average placement costs are higher in all categories excluding speech and language, with many higher cost independent placements for ASD and SEMH.

|                    | KS5 [16-19] |                  |                     | 19+       |                 |                     |
|--------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Primary Need       | FTE         | Annualised Cost  | Avg. Cost per place | FTE       | Annualised Cost | Avg. Cost per place |
| ASD                | 68          | 920,669          | 13,539              | 6         | 7,268           | 1,211               |
| Cognition          | 154         | 911,592          | 5,919               | 14        | 25,199          | 1,799               |
| SEMH               | 53          | 639,493          | 12,065              | 3         | 5,011           | 1,670               |
| Sensory / Physical | 30          | 309,941          | 10,331              | 6         | 15,338          | 2,556               |
| Speech & Language  | 53          | 459,430          | 8,668               | 6         | 8,109           | 1,351               |
| Other              | 10          | 29,217           | 2,921               |           |                 |                     |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>368</b>  | <b>3,270,342</b> | <b>8,886</b>        | <b>35</b> | <b>60,925</b>   | <b>1,740</b>        |

Table 10 Cost per placement by Primary Need (16+)

For both KS5 and 19+, cognitive needs were highest. While Sensory/Physical needs had the higher average cost per place for 19+. There were also some placements above £50k for ASD (5), physical disability (3), speech and language needs (2) and cognitive needs (11).

There are very few placements for 19+. However, there are 8 very high-cost placements at over £80k per year, of which 7 are at National Star College. Across all 19+ young people there are 41 placements above £20k per year of which 24 are above £40k per year. Therefore, state funded specialist provision for young adults 19+ Severe Learning Difficulties could be a worthwhile investment.

## 4.7 Predicted pupil numbers

We have seen so far in this report some of the trends and changes that are affecting the landscape of the number and type of special education needs across the County and the impact on the places that have been needed to meet these needs.

In order to forecast the number of pupils requiring SEND support or Specialist provision over the next 5 years, we must firstly look at trends in the total school population.

Places in mainstream schools for the next 5 years are forecast in a tested statistical model using the October annual school census, known pre-school children, and the historic 5 year average transfer rates for each year group. It also incorporates new housing assumptions for the period being considered. Using this method, by 2025 we can expect 81,123 pupils in mainstream schools in Worcestershire, an increase of 4% from the academic year 2021/22.

Over the period 2017-2022 there were on average 671 new EHC Plans created per year. Using the average number of EHC Plans per year per age group, a model can be made to forecast the number of EHC plans per year for the county. During the academic year of 2021/22, 291 EHC plans were discontinued. Featuring this in the model, the following table shows the number of EHC plans forecast to 2028.

| Age Range          | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Under 5</b>     | 314  | 283  | 246  | 246  | 246  | 246  | 246  |
| <b>6 - 10</b>      | 1551 | 1690 | 1794 | 1794 | 1804 | 1791 | 1779 |
| <b>11 – 15</b>     | 1358 | 1718 | 1860 | 2002 | 2164 | 2302 | 2422 |
| <b>16 – 19</b>     | 1054 | 843  | 953  | 1120 | 1118 | 1445 | 1533 |
| <b>20 – 25</b>     | 390  | 482  | 493  | 498  | 611  | 373  | 449  |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | 4667 | 5016 | 5346 | 5660 | 5943 | 6157 | 6429 |

Table 11: SEN forecasts to 2028

Using this forecast of total number of pupils (under 5 - 25) with an EHC plan in relevant provision in 2028, and distributing according to percentage of pupils in districts, and primary need, results in the following distribution across the county.

## Forecast Pupils with EHC Plans by Need and District 2028

|                      | ASD   | Cognition & Learning Difficulties | Speech & Language | Sensory / Physical | SEMH | Other | Grand Total |
|----------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------|-------|-------------|
| <b>Bromsgrove</b>    | 193   | 195                               | 179               | 126                | 126  | 30    | 849         |
| <b>Malvern Hills</b> | 147   | 172                               | 147               | 28                 | 119  | 103   | 716         |
| <b>Redditch</b>      | 234   | 308                               | 241               | 124                | 195  | 16    | 1,118       |
| <b>Worcester</b>     | 236   | 285                               | 248               | 96                 | 218  | 230   | 1,313       |
| <b>Wychavon</b>      | 230   | 427                               | 209               | 57                 | 158  | 87    | 1,168       |
| <b>Wyre Forest</b>   | 270   | 319                               | 386               | 57                 | 156  | 76    | 1,265       |
| <b>Grand Total</b>   | 1,311 | 1,705                             | 1,409             | 489                | 973  | 542   | 6,429       |

Table 12: SEN forecasts by district

Since 2017 the numbers of children with EHC plans going to mainstream schools have risen from 30% to 33% in 2021 and 32% in 2022. The numbers of children with EHC plans going to maintained special schools has reduced from 46% in 2017 to 35% in 2022.

|                             | Eng.   |        |        |        |        |        | Worcs. |       |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                             | 2017   | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   | 2022   | 2017   | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  |
| <b>EHCPs</b>                | 175k   | 279k   | 354k   | 390k   | 430k   | 468k   | 2,692  | 3,064 | 3,502 | 4,053 | 4,182 | 4,555 |
| <b>All Schools</b>          | 71,594 | 110.6k | 135k   | 148.2k | 167.4  | 186.4  | 811    | 808   | 910   | 1,207 | 1,373 | 1,471 |
| <b>Mainstream Schools</b>   | 54,352 | 96,734 | 118.9k | 125.3k | 132.1k | 140k   | 1,228  | 1,332 | 1,385 | 1,517 | 1,524 | 1,609 |
| <b>Maintained Special</b>   | 9,649  | 15,873 | 21,150 | 23,611 | 26,301 | 29,445 | 145    | 174   | 214   | 249   | 289   | 353   |
| <b>Independent Schools</b>  | 32,066 | 46,854 | 57,191 | 64,437 | 71,728 | 73,870 | 437    | 641   | 757   | 795   | 786   | 865   |
| <b>Further Education</b>    | 7,524  | 9,361  | 21,544 | 28,315 | 32,929 | 38,866 | 71     | 109   | 236   | 285   | 210   | 256   |
| <b>Other</b>                |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |       |       |       |
| <b>% Mainstream</b>         | 41%    | 40%    | 38%    | 38%    | 39%    | 40%    | 30%    | 26%   | 26%   | 30%   | 33%   | 32%   |
| <b>% Independent</b>        | 6%     | 5.7%   | 6%     | 6.1%   | 6.1%   | 6.3%   | 5.4%   | 5.7%  | 6.1%  | 6.1%  | 6.9%  | 7.7%  |
| <b>% Maintained Special</b> | 31%    | 35%    | 34%    | 32%    | 31%    | 30%    | 46%    | 43%   | 40%   | 37%   | 36%   | 35%   |
| <b>% Further Education</b>  | 18%    | 17%    | 16%    | 17%    | 17%    | 16%    | 16%    | 21%   | 22%   | 20%   | 19%   | 19%   |
| <b>% Other (AP, EHE)</b>    | 4%     | 3%     | 6%     | 7%     | 8%     | 8%     | 3%     | 4%    | 7%    | 7%    | 5%    | 6%    |

Table 13: Analysis of forecast SEN pupils

Comparing the placements of new EHC plans in 2021/22, Worcestershire placed 32% with mainstream schools, compared with 40% nationally. Worcestershire placed 35% of new EHC plans in maintained special schools, compared to 30% nationally. The percentage of children attended maintained special schools has decreased in line with the national data for the last 3 years (-1%).

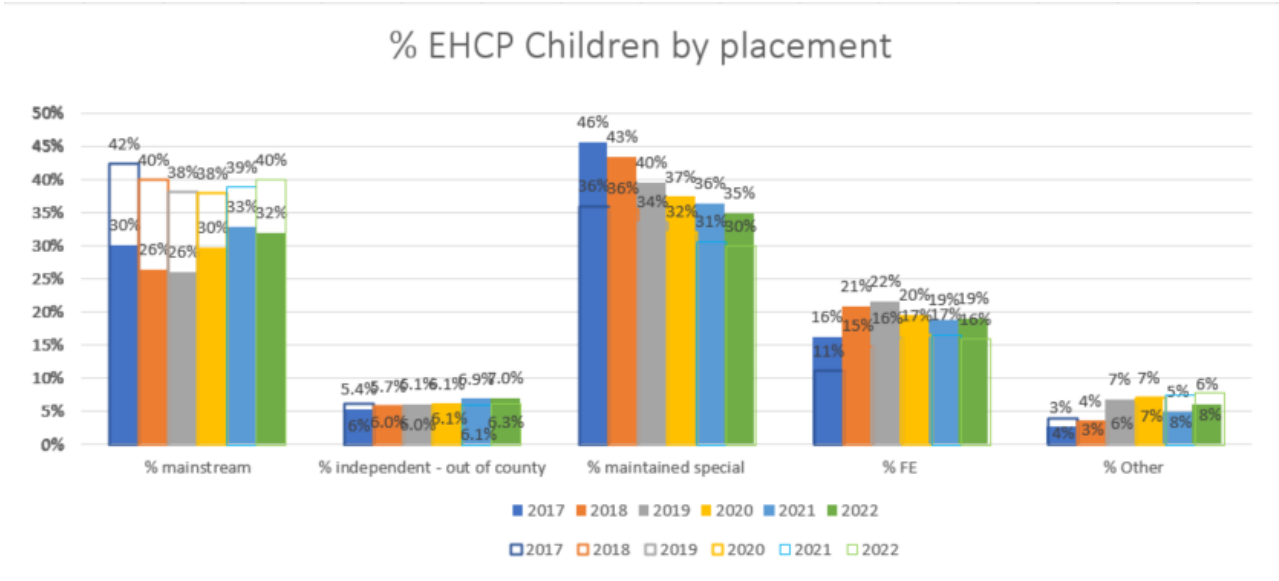


Table 14: Source DfE Statistics – National and Worcestershire EHCP Placements 2017-2022

## 5. Current Worcestershire Provision

To meet the needs of children with SEND, a range of education provision is available in Worcestershire, within mainstream and special schools to provide the best education to support individual pupil needs.

Each mainstream school has a named specialist to support children at the school. The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) works within mainstream settings and is the 'school teacher who is responsible for assessing, planning and monitoring the progress of children with special educational needs and disabilities'<sup>9</sup>. Schools can also employ additional specialist support for individual pupils.

Some schools have dedicated SEN Resource/units which are specially designed to support pupils with specific special educational needs alongside a mainstream education. Pupils attending Resourced Provision will attend specialist timetabled lessons as well as attend mainstream lessons with peers, where appropriate.

There is also a number of teams within the Local Authority who work with mainstream schools to support pupils including the Autism and Complex Communication Needs team, Learning Support Team, Medical Education Team, Sensory Impairment Team, Physical Disability Outreach and the Virtual Schools Team.

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust are also commissioned to provide certain services such as speech and language therapy, school nursing, and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) to support vulnerable children maintain a place in school. The demand for these services is reviewed separately.

### 5.1 Medical Education Provision

Section 19 of the Education Act (1996) states that "each local authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them". This duty applies to all children, whether they have special educational needs (SEN) or not.

There are a variety of pathways for children who do not attend school for more than 15 days, one of which is referral to the Medical Education Team. During the academic year of 2021-2022, the team provided education to 55 children of all ages on 3 sites; Lea Street (The Beacon) in Kidderminster, Easemore Road (The Beacon) in Redditch and Newbridge in Worcester,

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<sup>9</sup> [Special Educational Needs Coordinator \(SENCo\) | The Good Schools Guide](#)

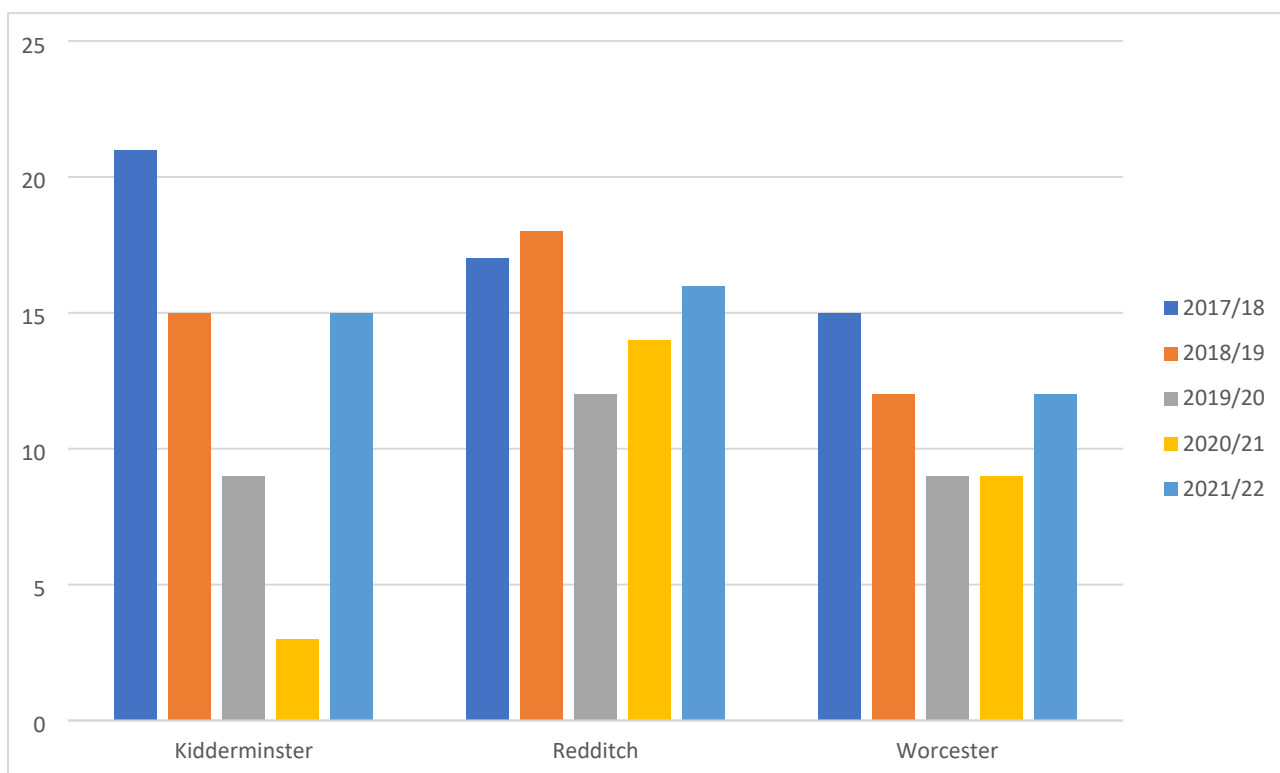
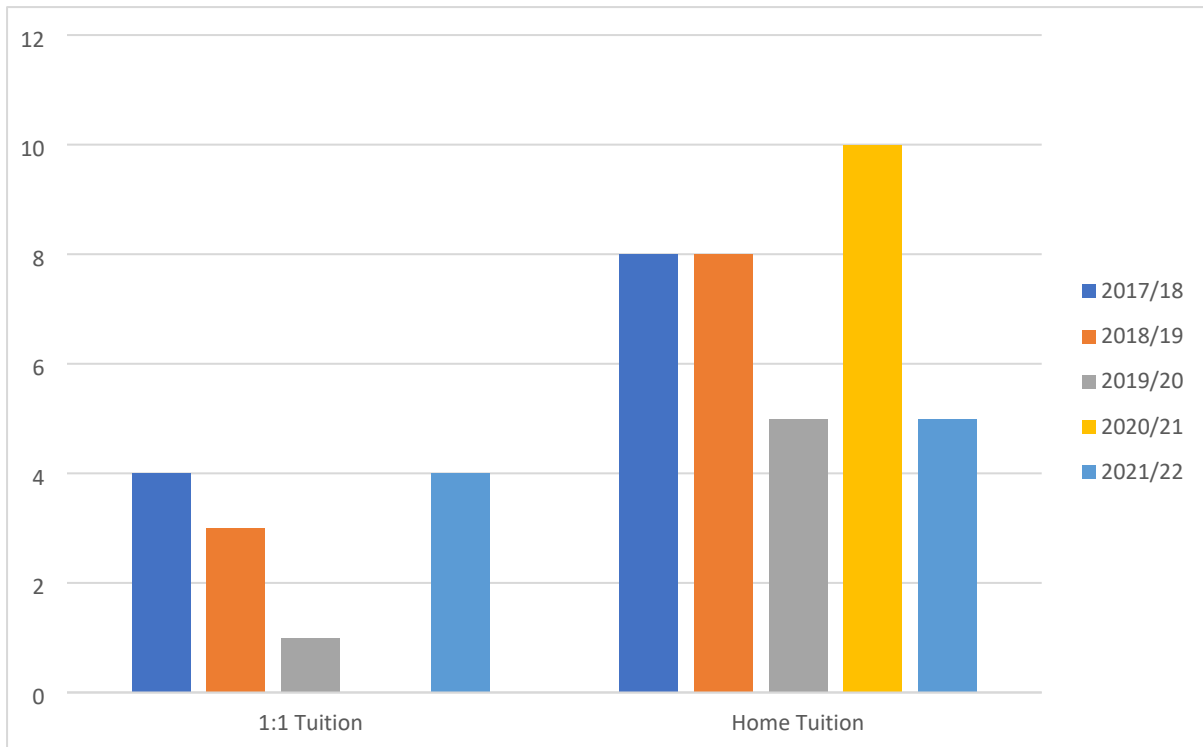


Table 14 Number of pupils attending MET per Academic Year

The above chart shows the number of children who attended one of the base provisions since 2017/18 academic year. Pupils attend between 1 and 22 hours per week as the sites are open 22 hours a week. The average amount of hours attended in 2021-2022 was 15.7 hours each in Worcester, 13.4 hours in Redditch and 14 hours in Kidderminster. Places in use in 2021/2022 were 12 in Worcester, 16 in Redditch and 14 in Kidderminster. Although Redditch had the most children attending the MET, they on average are accessing it the least amount of time when compared with the other 2 bases.

Out of the 55 pupils in 2021-2022 20 were in key stage 3 and 34 were in key stage 4, so the majority of pupils for the MET were secondary age. In 2021/22 academic year, 55 pupils were supported by the Medical Education Team. 81% had psychological health issues and 19% had medical issues. 16% of children attending with psychological health issues also have an Autism diagnosis.

Year on year more girls than boys that have accessed MET provision. Particularly in KS4. 62% of the referrals for 2021-2022 have come from CAMHS and the remaining 37% from hospitals.



With MET, there is also the option for 1:1 Tuition which can be carried out at school or hospital, or at home. The table above highlights that home tuition is the more preferred route.

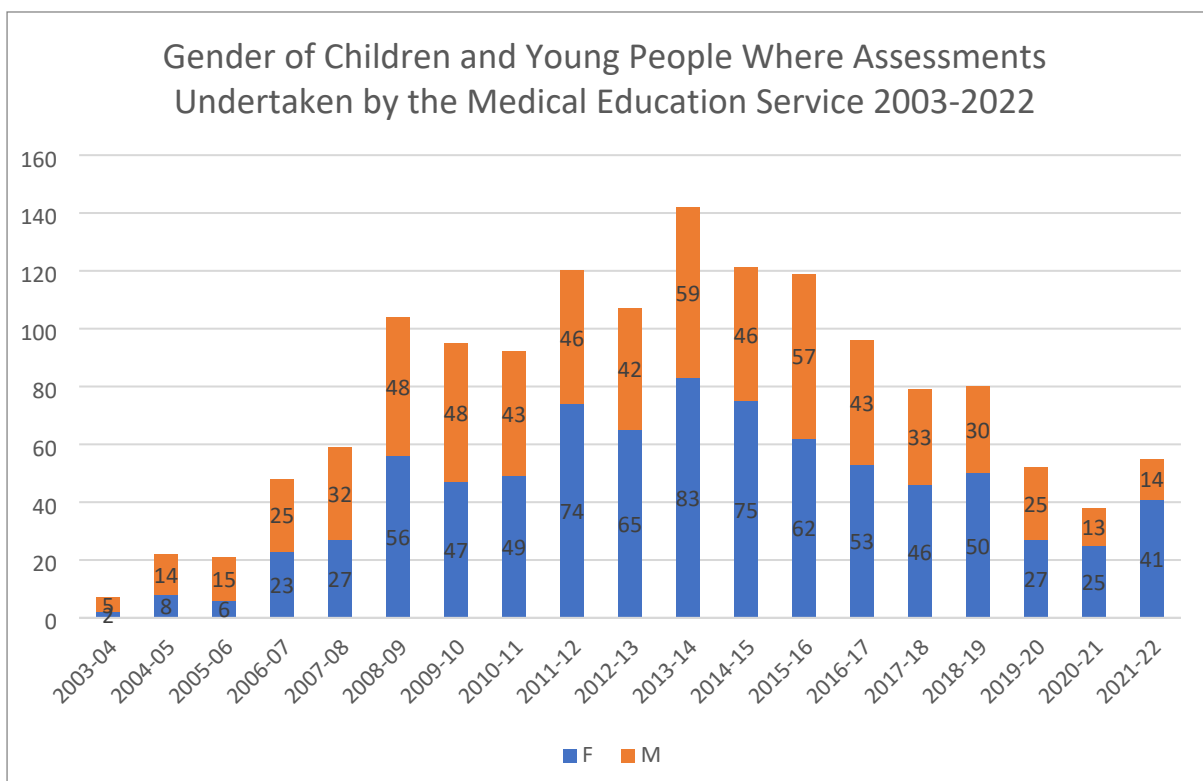


Table 15 Pupils at MET by gender

MET referrals reduced in 2019-2021, this could be due to COVID-19. Referrals are now beginning to rise again as children have better access to being assessed.

The majority of children are spending between 10-20 hours in MET provision, the largest cohort are within KS4. The most common outcome is a year 11 leaver. The second most common outcome is returning to their original school.

Following assessments in 2021/22, the main reason for needing MET provision was due to psychological illnesses.

## 5.2 Mainstream Autism Bases

Mainstream Autism Bases (MABs) are Resource Base provision within Worcestershire mainstream schools.

MABs are an integral part of the special education graduated response provision commissioned by WCF, providing focused educational provision for pupils whose academic needs are well matched to a mainstream setting, but who require specialised autism specific provision that is often difficult to replicate in mainstream schools<sup>10</sup>.

. EMABs (Enhanced Mainstream Autism Base) 'enables a higher level of need to be provided for with an enhanced range of provision and is anticipated that CYP may spend more time'<sup>11</sup> in this provision.

Current Mainstream Autism Bases across Worcestershire are listed in the table below with the total number of commissioned full-time equivalent places for 2021/22:

| District                | R                        | Y1 | Y2 | Y3 | Y4 | Y5                     | Y6 | Y7                         | Y8        | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----|----|----|----|------------------------|----|----------------------------|-----------|----|-----|-----|
| Bromsgrove (Rubery)     | Beaconside Primary (8)   |    |    |    |    |                        |    | Waseley Hills HS (10)      |           |    |     |     |
| Bromsgrove (Bromsgrove) | Meadows First >          |    |    |    |    | Parkside Middle (10)   |    |                            | NBHS (10) |    |     |     |
| Malvern Hills           |                          |    |    |    |    |                        |    | Dyson Perrins (12)         |           |    |     |     |
| Redditch                |                          |    |    |    |    | Walkwood Middle (8)    |    |                            |           |    |     |     |
|                         |                          |    |    |    |    |                        |    | TGAR Hive&Treetops (30)    |           |    |     |     |
| Worcester City          | Oldbury Park Primary (8) |    |    |    |    |                        |    | Christopher Whitehead (12) |           |    |     |     |
| Wychavon (Persore)      |                          |    |    |    |    | Abbey Park Middle (10) |    |                            |           |    |     |     |
|                         |                          |    |    |    |    |                        |    | Persore HS (12)            |           |    |     |     |
| Wyre Forest             | Chaddesley Corbett (10)  |    |    |    |    |                        |    | King Charles I HS (17)     |           |    |     |     |

Table 16: MABs by phase and 2021/22 commissioned places

<sup>10</sup> Pg 5, MAB Specification V6 amended Sept 22 final from Commissioning.

<sup>11</sup> Pg 8, MAB Specification V6 amended Sept 22 final from Commissioning.

| MAB Unit                           | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 | 21/22 |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Meadows/Parkside                   | 12    | 12    | 11    | 9     | 9     | 10    |
| North Bromsgrove High              | 8     | 8     | 10    | 10    | 10    | 10    |
| Beaconside Primary                 | 8     | 9     | 9     | 8     | 8     | 7     |
| Waseley Hills High                 | 7     | 9     | 11    | 7     | 10    | 11    |
| Dyson Perrins CofE Academy         | 13    | 10    | 10    | 11    | 12    | 12    |
| Walkwood Middle                    | 8     | 7     | 9     | 13    | 14    | 14    |
| TGAR Hive                          | 8     | 3     | 8     | 7     | 10    | 7     |
| TGAR Treetops                      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 12    | 18    | 25    |
| Oldbury Park Primary               | 8     | 8     | 8     | 8     | 8     | 8     |
| CWLC                               | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     |
| Abbey Park Middle                  | 11    | 10    | 8     | 7     | 8     | 8     |
| Pershore High                      | 14    | 12    | 11    | 13    | 14    | 18    |
| Chaddesley Corbett Endowed Primary | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     |
| King Charles I                     | 20    | 17    | 17    | 16    | 17    | 18    |

Table 17: MABs by phase and numbers attending year on year.

Malvern has no primary MAB provision and neither Pershore, Evesham or Redditch have first phase MAB provision. A place is accessed via a current EHC plan rather than normal school admissions.

It is important for MAB provision to exist through all phases in an Education Planning Area as this allows children to remain with their peer group throughout their mainstream education.

MABs have been shown to be extremely effective at meeting the needs of children with ASD and supporting them to remain within mainstream schools and therefore all MABs in Worcestershire are at or nearing capacity for 2021/22. Those in the north of the county are forecast to have space in 2022/23 onwards for new admissions but some of those in the south of the county are forecast to remain near or over capacity for the next few years. ASD is a complex area and every child's needs are unique which means that some children will still be best placed in special schools, however the provision of bases such as these allow

children that can, to remain with their peer group and access the benefits of mainstream schools and allow specialist schools to adapt more specifically to more complex needs.

Currently, 23% of the students in KS3 and 21% in KS4 attending a MAB have a primary need of ASD. In KS1 only 2.7% of those attending the MABs have a primary ASD need. In total, from those currently attending a MAB, 53% have an EHCP with a primary ASD need, this is followed by 19% having a primary need of SLCN.

Christopher Whitehead Secondary E-MAB in Worcester City is due to open in 2023. Chaddesley Corbett Primary E-MAB in Wyre Forest opened in Sept 2022. The tables above show that in KS3/4, 5 out of 6 of the MABs are either at capacity of commissioned places or over.

### 5.3 School Age Language units

The mainstream schools listed below have Resourced Base School age Language Units to support pupils at the school who have been referred for a place within an additionally resourced Language Class provision based on a recommendation from their Speech and Language Therapist. The Local Authority commission 52 primary school places and 11 high school places used to provide intensive specialised teaching for children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). As we have seen earlier in this report, SLCN is much more common before age 11, which, with the intensive support provided early on, means that there is less need for provision at secondary / high school phase.

| District    | Language Units           | School type | Commissioned Places | Children Attending Autumn 2022 |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wyre Forest | Burlish Park Primary     | Primary     | 10                  | 10                             |
| Wyre Forest | Sutton Park Primary      | Primary     | 10                  | 9                              |
| Wyre Forest | King Charles I High      | High        | 11                  | 5                              |
| Bromsgrove  | Lickey Hills KS1 Primary | Primary     | 21                  | 9                              |
| Bromsgrove  | Lickey Hills KS2 Primary | Primary     |                     | 8                              |
| Redditch    | Matchborough First       | First       | 11                  | 9                              |

Table 18: Language Units and Use 2021/2022 by district

Due to the nature of speech development from birth, the discovery of an SLC need and beginning of treatment is often before age 3 and therefore described below in the section on Nursery Provision.

### 5.4 Alternative provision

There is a relationship between Alternative Provision (AP), mainstream schools and special schools. Alternative Providers and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in Worcestershire are commissioned by the Local Authority to provide both Preventative and Permanent Exclusion places. Pupils may be dual registered with the maintained school or attend full-time. The aspiration in the first case is for the child to return to their original mainstream school where possible.

| District      | Alternative Provision           | Age Range | Commissioned Exclusion Places | Commissioned Preventative Places |
|---------------|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Redditch      | The Beacon Primary              | 5-11      | 20                            | 25                               |
| Kidderminster | The Beacon Primary (split site) | 5-11      |                               |                                  |
| Worcester     | Perryfields Primary             | 5-11      | 22                            | 30                               |
| Wyre Forest   | New Free AP school (Jan 2023)   | 5-11      | 60                            | TBC                              |
| Redditch      | The Forge Short Stay School     | 11-16     | 35                            | 13                               |
| Worcester     | Newbridge Academy               | 11-16     | 65                            | 3                                |
| Worcester     | The Aspire Academy              | 11-16     | 10                            | 95                               |

|                    |                      |       |    |    |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------|----|----|
| <b>Wyre Forest</b> | Continu Plus Academy | 11-16 | 40 | 50 |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------|----|----|

Table 19: Alternative Provision

A proportion of permanently excluded pupils 2021/22 supported by AP/PRUs have SEND at 25%. Of this, 77% of permanently excluded children attending primary level AP in had primary SEMH needs compared with 50% of the permanently excluded secondary age children with SEND attending AP in 2021/22 had the same need, SEMH was also the most frequently recorded primary need for pupils with SEN Support or EHC plans in Secondary phase permanent exclusions.

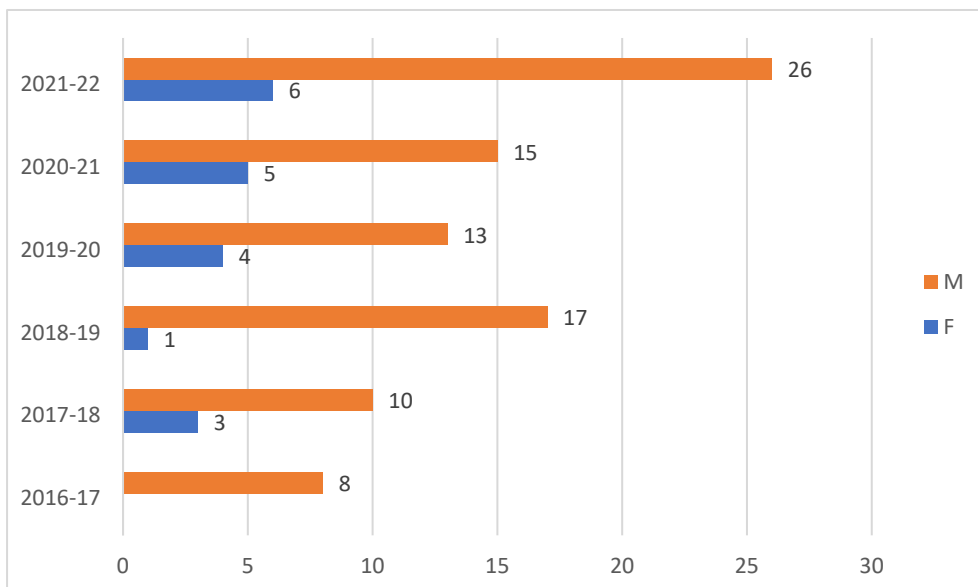


Table 20: Alternative Provision – Permanently Excluded CYP by Gender 2016/17-2021/22

Table 20 highlights that there are many more boys than girls who have been permanently excluded and accessed alternative provision over the years. 66% of boys permanently excluded over the years had a primary need of SEMH.

## 5.5 Special schools

If the needs of a child are more complex than reasonable adaptations can accommodate within mainstream schools, then a place at a special school may be required to ensure a child's needs can be met.

There are 9 LA-funded special schools across Worcestershire, of which 7 provide education for children with a variety of significant needs and 3 with an identified specialism. Four of the schools operate nursery provision, with a further nursery assessment unit at Batchley First School in Redditch.

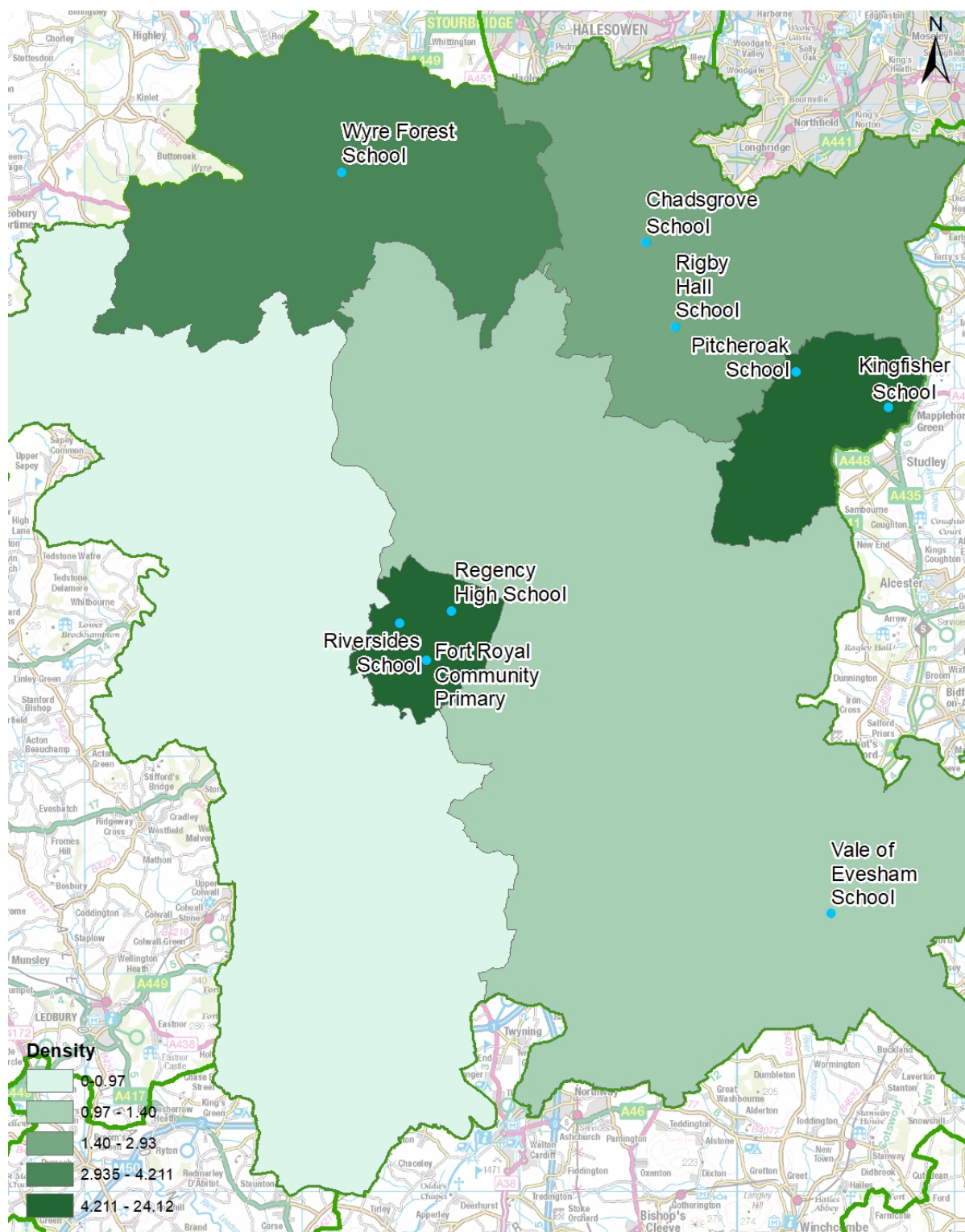
| District              | Special School                      | Age Range | Type            | Designation         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Bromsgrove</b>     | Chadsgrove School                   | 2-19      | Local Authority | Physical Disability |
| <b>Bromsgrove</b>     | Rigby Hall School                   | 4-19      | Local Authority | Generic             |
| <b>Redditch</b>       | Pitcheroak School                   | 4-19      | Academy         | Generic             |
| <b>Redditch</b>       | The Kingfisher School               | 7-19      | Academy         | SEMH                |
| <b>Worcester City</b> | Fort Royal Community Primary School | 2-11      | Local Authority | Generic             |

|                       |                            |       |                 |         |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------|-----------------|---------|
| <b>Worcester City</b> | Regency High School        | 11-19 | Academy         | Generic |
| <b>Worcester City</b> | Riversides School          | 7-16  | Academy         | SEMH    |
| <b>Wychavon</b>       | The Vale of Evesham School | 2-19  | Academy         | Generic |
| <b>Wyre Forest</b>    | Wyre Forest School         | 3-19  | Local Authority | Generic |

| <b>District</b> | <b>Supported Provision</b>  | <b>Age Range</b> | <b>Type</b> |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>Redditch</b> | Batchley First Nursery Plus | 2-4              | Community   |

*Table 20: Special Schools List*

There is no set pupil admission number (PAN) at a special school. Places are commissioned by the Local Authority with each school dependant on demand, needs of children and physical capacity of the accommodation.



|   |  |                     |  |  |
|---|--|---------------------|--|--|
| WORCESTERSHIRE<br>CHILDREN FIRST                        |  | Scale:<br>1:150,000 |  |  |
| County Hall,<br>Spetchley Road,<br>Worcester<br>WR5 2NP | Children attending Worcestershire State-Funded Special Schools |                     | © Getmapping Plc and Bluesky<br>International Limited 2018 |  |

As can be seen most of the schools are in the north of the county, there are no state funded special schools in Droitwich or Malvern. Based on population figures, more provision is required in Worcester, Kidderminster and Redditch.

Refer to Appendix 1 – details the Sufficiency of Special School provision in Worcestershire

## 5.6 Independent special schools and Out of County Provision

Independent special schools can provide places for pupils with very specific and often complex needs, meaning that in some instances, children will be placed in schools that are out of the County. Independent provision is not recorded on the school census as they are not Worcestershire LA-funded schools, however the EHC plan remains the responsibility of Worcestershire LA, the child's place of residence.

Data from January 2022 shows that 227 children and young people with EHC plans attend independent special schools. Around 56% of them have placements in one of the following 5 schools: Norton College (Norton), Gloverspiece, Cambian New Elizabethan (Hartlebury), Nurture Learning (Kidderminster) and the Bridge School (Malvern).

These places are funded as needed based on very specific and individual needs meaning they are difficult to predict or commission in a more structured long-term manner.

Do we have the data showing the primary areas of need, age range, travel of the children in Independent Special Schools?

The largest cohort of children with an EHCP attending out of county are within post 16 provision, followed by mainstream. 39% of children are attending Specialist settings. The majority attending out of county are males (64%).

| <b>Establishment Type</b> | <b>Number of Children Attending</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mainstream                | 112                                 |
| Independent               | 19                                  |
| Special                   | 94                                  |
| Independent Special       | 21                                  |
| FE                        | 161                                 |
| Specialist FE             | 79                                  |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>486</b>                          |

Source: Jan Census and SEN2 – children attending out of county provision by establishment type

A deeper dive into the needs of these children can be found below.

### Children with an EHCP attending out of county provision by Primary Need:

| <b>Establishment Type</b> | <b>ASD</b> | <b>Physical/Sensory</b> | <b>Cognitive</b> | <b>Other</b> | <b>SEM H</b> | <b>Speech and Language</b> |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Mainstream                | 21         | 8                       | 23               | 1            | 23           | 22                         |
| Independent               | 7          | -                       | 5                |              | 3            | 1                          |
| Special                   | 31         | -                       | 16               |              | 11           | 13                         |
| Independent Special       | 9          | -                       | 1                | 1            | 8            | -                          |
| FE                        | 38         | 12                      | 53               | 1            | 17           | 29                         |
| Specialist FE             | 13         | 21                      | 35               | 1            | 3            | 7                          |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>119</b> | <b>41</b>               | <b>133</b>       | <b>4</b>     | <b>55</b>    | <b>72</b>                  |

Source: Jan Census and SEN2 – children with known Primary Need

31% of children with an EHCP and known primary need have cognitive needs (MLD/SpLD/SLD/PMLD) the largest number of these are attending FE/Specialist FE

provision and are post 16. The top attended provisions for this cohort are Queen Alexandra College (Specialist FE) and Warwickshire College Group (FE).

Of the specialist state-funded schools, Alderman Knight (Tewkesbury) has the highest intake of children with EHCP in out of county provision. 41% of those attending, have a primary need of ASD.

This data highlights an insufficiency in post-16 provision within the county as this is largest cohort to be attending out of county provision – particularly for those with cognitive needs.

Accommodating children with EHCPs in out of county provision has a significant impact on costings of sending these children to these establishments.

## 5.7 Specialist Nursery provision

Most children aged 0-5 with SEND will be taught in local early years settings. All Ofsted registered Nursery Education Funded early years settings, are able to claim additional funding per hour to support the needs of children with SEND, known as the graduated response.

A multi-agency Pre-School Forum (PSF) panel meets termly to receive referrals from health visitors, Child Development Teams, GPs and Speech & Language service to ensure all children who may need an Education Health Care Needs Assessment are reviewed and actions agreed to assess whether specialist education provision is required in their pre-school years.

Some pre-school age children are referred for Specialist Nursery provision, these children are included in the school census. Other early years providers including child minders and private nurseries return child level details on the Early Years Census and these children are included in the planning for early years and school places.

Below shows the number of children for whom settings in Worcestershire were claiming an additional Graduated Response funding to support their emerging needs in Jan 2022 (GR1-4 plus EHC plan<sup>12</sup>)

### 2, 3 and 4-year-old children in funded early years settings

|   | Number       | Percentage  | 2           | % of 2s | 3           | % of 3s | 4           | % of 4s |
|---|--------------|-------------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| <b>No special educational need</b>                | 9007         | 84.68%      | 958         | 87.17%  | 4997        | 85.71%  | 3052        | 82.31%  |
| <b>Graduated Response 1 (GR1)</b>                 | 280          | 2.63%       | 33          | 3.00%   | 143         | 2.45%   | 104         | 2.80%   |
| <b>Graduated Response 2 (GR2)</b>                 | 608          | 5.72%       | 50          | 4.55%   | 313         | 5.37%   | 245         | 6.61%   |
| <b>Graduated Response 3 (GR3)</b>                 | 248          | 2.33%       | 14          | 1.27%   | 130         | 2.23%   | 104         | 2.80%   |
| <b>Graduated Response 4 (GR4)</b>                 | 350          | 3.29%       | 31          | 2.82%   | 196         | 3.36%   | 123         | 3.32%   |
| <b>Exceptional Early Years Funding / EHC plan</b> | 144          | 1.35%       | 13          | 1.18%   | 51          | 0.87%   | 80          | 2.16%   |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                | <b>10637</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>1099</b> |         | <b>5830</b> |         | <b>3708</b> |         |

Table 21: EY Graduated Response

<sup>12</sup> GR Ratings are explained on [WCC website](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)

The main Primary need for 2, 3 and 4 year olds funded through the Graduated Response/Early Years funding is SLCN. This is followed by ASD in 3 and 4 year olds, and PD/SpLD in 2 year olds.

The five nursery assessment units across the County support in assessing the education provision for pre-school age children due to start school. Four of these are attached to special schools (Chadsgrove, Fort Royal, Vale of Evesham, and Wyre Forest) and a further unit is attached to a first school in Redditch (Batchley). In January 2022, 122 children were being assessed in Nursery Assessment provision. Some of these children start school in a mainstream reception class with support and others start in Special School reception classes.

Specialist early years language units are delivered in each district of Worcestershire. This targeted intervention provides children with specialist provision for typically 6 hours per week to support their speech, language and communication needs, since early intervention with speech development can eliminate or much reduce the need for SEND support later.<sup>13</sup> It is found that around 10% of all children in early years have difficulty developing speech and 3.5% have significant enough needs to benefit from early years language classes.

| Provider                                | Area        | Full Time Equivalent places | No. of cyp per year | No. of Groups per week |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| WEYLC Cranham                           | Worcester   | 12 FTE                      | 33                  | 3 groups 6-8 cyp       |
| Batchley First School                   | Redditch    | 10 FTE                      | 29                  | 4 groups of 6 cyp      |
|   | Bromsgrove  | 7 FTE                       | 22                  | 4 groups of 6 cyp      |
| <i>Riverboats - Upton upon Severn</i>   | Malvern     | 3 FTE                       | 11                  | tbc                    |
|   | Wychavon    | 6 FTE                       | 19                  | tbc                    |
| <i>St Mary's CE (VA) Primary School</i> | Wyre Forest | 10 FTE                      | 29                  | tbc                    |

| District          | Known Children 2020 | 3YOs | 4YOs | Language class attendance | Setting   | % of Known Children |
|-------------------|---------------------|------|------|---------------------------|---|---------------------|
| <b>Bromsgrove</b> | 1,915               | 10   | 13   | 23                        | Charford First School                                 | 1.20%               |
| <b>Malvern</b>    | 1,183               | 0    | 7    | 7                         | Riverboats Speech and Language Class Centre           | 0.59%               |
| <b>Redditch</b>   | 1,812               | 13   | 11   | 24                        | Redditch Early Years Language Class                   | 1.32%               |
| <b>Worcester</b>  | 2,028               | 6    | 15   | 21                        | Cranham Primary Early Years Specialist Language Class | 1.04%               |

<sup>13</sup> [Bercow Review of Services for Children & Young People with SLCN](#)

|                    |        |    |    |     |   |       |
|--------------------|--------|----|----|-----|---|-------|
| <b>Wychavon</b>    | 2,338  | 0  | 0  | 0   |   | 0%    |
| <b>Wyre Forest</b> | 1,795  | 5  | 4  | 9   | Kidderminster<br>Early Years<br>Language Centre | 0.50% |
| <b>Total</b>       | 11,071 | 34 | 50 | N/A |   |       |

Table 22: Early Years SLCN units: source Tribal

## 5.8 Post-16 Specialist provision

Most specialist post-16 provision is not recorded as part of the school census, unless sixth form provision run by a school. Seven of the state funded special schools listed above offer Post 16 provision (NCY 12 -13) and a few young people stay on past this age (NCY14). Many (52%) of 16-25-year-old young people with EHC plans attend further education establishments with 18% in special schools and 8.5% in specialist further education.

Since the SEN reforms in 2014, 19 to 25-year-olds with EHC plans should have free access to further education in the same way as 16- to 18-year-olds have. This provides a further 6 years beyond sixth form, to achieve agreed outcomes and to help the young person prepare for adulthood: planning that should start in Year 9 (SEND Code of practice 2015). This means that young people need opportunities and places, which is beyond traditional education age, as well as support to transition to adult social care, if appropriate. There is no requirement to secure education or training for young people aged 19 to 25 who do not have EHC plans.

The number of young people aged 20 to 25 with an EHC plan has increased from 145 in January 2018 to 413 in January 2022. As the numbers of young people with EHC Plans grow there could be an increase in the number of post 16 young people needing specialist FE provision. However, there are a small number of young people between 16 and 25 who stop attending education, many for the reason of starting in employment.

66% of young people aged 20-25 with an EHC plan attend mainstream FE colleges, such as Heart of Worcestershire (HOW), Kidderminster colleges or the Warwickshire group of colleges (Malvern, Pershore and Evesham). 21% of young people in this age bracket attend independent specialist post-16 institutions such as National Star College, Gloucestershire; Queen Alexandra College, Birmingham; Glasshouse College, Stourbridge and Chadsgrove Educational Trust, Bromsgrove. WCF will continue to develop and improve the working partnership with local colleges to ensure that we continue to meet our statutory obligations to these young people.

## 5.9 Travel to Specialist provision

One way to monitor how well the needs of pupils with special needs are being met is to analyse the distances they are travelling to education settings.

| Distance Band | Mainstream | Independent | Special | Independent Special | FE | Specialist FE | Total |
|---------------|------------|-------------|---------|---------------------|----|---------------|-------|
| < 2km         | 827        | 3           | 315     | 14                  | 70 | 1             | 1230  |
| 2-5km         | 394        | 4           | 457     | 11                  | 82 | 1             | 949   |
| 5-10km        | 212        | 3           | 244     | 20                  | 60 | 8             | 547   |
| 10-20km       | 182        | 16          | 375     | 46                  | 98 | 27            | 744   |

|                 |             |           |             |            |            |            |             |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>&gt;20km</b> | 120         | 8         | 205         | 44         | 260        | 43         | <b>680</b>  |
| <b>No Data</b>  | 39          | 2         | 27          | 5          | 209        | 41         | <b>323</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>1774</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>1623</b> | <b>140</b> | <b>779</b> | <b>121</b> | <b>4473</b> |

Table 23: Travel Distance by setting type

This table shows there are similar numbers of pupils with EHC plans in funded Specialist and Mainstream provision. However, in general, pupils have to travel further to independent providers and specialist further education.

Although the number of young people at specialist further education settings are low, the majority to travel relatively long distances > 10km to access their education provision.

Some of the independent schools are beyond 50km away. Children with ASD and Social, Emotional and Mental Health EHC plans tend to have to travel further away.

The next section breaks this pattern down by primary SEN.

| Distance Band   | ASD          | Cognition    | Speech     | Sensory/Physical | SEMH       | Other      | No Data    | Total        |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>&lt; 2km</b> | 237          | 306          | 342        | 80               | 183        | 69         | 10         | 1,227        |
| <b>2-5km</b>    | 200          | 281          | 185        | 54               | 131        | 89         | 6          | 946          |
| <b>5-10km</b>   | 124          | 143          | 116        | 44               | 78         | 33         | 9          | 547          |
| <b>10-20km</b>  | 174          | 189          | 89         | 92               | 124        | 48         | 25         | 741          |
| <b>&gt;20km</b> | 156          | 171          | 76         | 41               | 170        | 14         | 48         | 676          |
| <b>No Data</b>  | 127          | 109          | 74         | 17               | 132        | 4          | 79         | 542          |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>1,018</b> | <b>1,199</b> | <b>882</b> | <b>328</b>       | <b>818</b> | <b>257</b> | <b>177</b> | <b>4,679</b> |

Table 24: Travel Distance by Primary Need

This table shows that the largest proportion of children with an EHCP are travelling to education provision within 2km of their home address. Whereas, 14.4% are travelling over 20km for provision.

| Distance Band   | KS1       | KS2       | KS3       | KS4       | KS5       | 19+       | Total      |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| <b>&lt; 2km</b> | 16        | 26        | 16        | 12        | 2         | 2         | 74         |
| <b>2-5km</b>    | 13        | 7         | 13        | 10        | 5         | 5         | 53         |
| <b>5-10km</b>   | 6         | 7         | 9         | 7         | 9         | 3         | 41         |
| <b>10-20km</b>  | 10        | 10        | 22        | 18        | 18        | 10        | 88         |
| <b>&gt;20km</b> | 1         | 1         | 6         | 2         | 7         | 23        | 40         |
| <b>No Data</b>  |           |           |           | 2         | 3         | 12        | 17         |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>46</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>66</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>44</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>313</b> |

Table 25: Travel Distance for PD by Key Stage

The table above shows that for children with physical disabilities at Primary school age, the travel distances are relatively low. This then increases, particularly for 19+.

*The no data records are where there was either no confirmed primary need, no school, or no home address available.*

| Distance Band | Ordinarily Available | E1         | E2          | E3         | E4         | Non-Banded | Total        |
|---------------|----------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| < 2km         | 17                   | 235        | 631         | 394        | 61         | 54         | 1,392        |
| 2-5km         | 21                   | 168        | 388         | 234        | 67         | 81         | 959          |
| 5-10km        | 9                    | 81         | 176         | 108        | 34         | 70         | 478          |
| 10-20km       | 3                    | 99         | 179         | 145        | 59         | 140        | 625          |
| >20km         | 3                    | 37         | 76          | 87         | 34         | 206        | 443          |
| No Data       | 0                    | 16         | 17          | 12         | 10         | 89         | 144          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>53</b>            | <b>636</b> | <b>1467</b> | <b>980</b> | <b>265</b> | <b>641</b> | <b>4,402</b> |

Table 26: Travel Distance by Funding Band

Table 26 shows the travel distances compared to the Top up funding bands of pupils. The majority of children across all funding bands are travelling less than 2km to education provision. However, 24% of funded children are travelling 10km+ to school.

Excluding further education settings entirely, when comparing travel distances by home Education Planning Area, those children from Malvern and Wychavon tend to travel the furthest.

| Distance Band | Bromsgrove | Malvern Hills | Redditch   | Worcester  | Wychavon   | Wyre Forest | Total        |
|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| < 2km         | 35         | 3             | 62         | 118        | 63         | 103         | 384          |
| 2-5km         | 71         | 15            | 126        | 154        | 49         | 83          | 198          |
| 5-10km        | 46         | 45            | 48         | 13         | 89         | 38          | 279          |
| 10-20km       | 50         | 121           | 54         | 22         | 130        | 48          | 425          |
| >20km         | 19         | 34            | 36         | 42         | 66         | 58          | 355          |
| No Data       | 6          | 1             | 4          | 3          | 3          | 5           | 22           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>227</b> | <b>219</b>    | <b>330</b> | <b>352</b> | <b>400</b> | <b>335</b>  | <b>1,863</b> |

Table 29: Travel Distance for Special Schools for Worcestershire districts.

This table shows only the travel distances across the districts to state funded and independent special schools. It shows that children residing in Wychavon are travelling greater distances (more than 10km) to a special school than children living in other districts. Most of these children have cognitive needs.

## 6 Combined Special School Forecast

All pupils attending the Worcestershire state funded special schools are recorded on the statutory school census completed in January each year. The demand trends can then be extrapolated forward to forecast likely future demand. For all special schools the future demand is based upon housing and admissions trends in the previous 5 years, therefore there is a risk that forecasts do not take in to account any unmet demand for Special School places in the County. Population in mainstream school has seen an increase of around 0.5-

1% year on year since 2017 with the most significant increase 2019/20, within special schools, this has increased around 4-5% year on year.

Over the last several years, demand for places in special schools has been high, driven by parental demand for high quality specialist education provision. Special schools in Worcestershire have very successfully adapted to high demand and increased the number of pupils attending the schools, with all 9 schools deemed Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. However, there are constraints to further growth for example the physical accommodation or school sites available to grow. So far schools have managed within existing facilities with managed expansion projects at various schools, however this growth in demand for special school places is not sustainable and broader solutions need to be considered.

The emphasis over the next several years is to ensure that where suitable mainstream schools can support as many pupils with EHCPs as possible.

In 2021/22 Worcestershire's statistical neighbour authorities placed between 4% and 28% of school-age children with EHC plans in LA maintained special schools. Worcestershire ranks third out of ten statistical neighbours, placing 21% of children in this provision. Worcestershire placed 7% of children in independent schools (both mainstream and special). This is ranked fourth out of ten amongst statistical neighbours. National statistics show that 30% of children with an EHC plan attending maintained special schools in 2021/22 whilst for Worcestershire it was 35%.

The 2022 figures are taken from the number on roll as reported from each school census. From this, the next 4 years are forecast using the combination of individual forecasts (as detailed in Appendix 1) for each special school.

|             | Chadsgrove | Rigby Hall | Pitcheroak | Kingfisher | Fort Royal | Regency High | Riversides | Vale of Evesham | Wyre Forest | TOTAL        |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>2022</b> | 137        | 202        | 152        | 135        | 241        | 248          | 69         | 184             | 323         | <b>1,691</b> |
| <b>2023</b> | 153        | 219        | 166        | 121        | 218        | 247          | 70         | 198             | 284         | <b>1676</b>  |
| <b>2024</b> | 157        | 231        | 169        | 115        | 232        | 262          | 77         | 211             | 300         | <b>1754</b>  |
| <b>2025</b> | 153        | 244        | 167        | 118        | 243        | 275          | 79         | 217             | 314         | <b>1810</b>  |
| <b>2026</b> | 151        | 250        | 165        | 122        | 263        | 275          | 80         | 228             | 332         | <b>1866</b>  |
| <b>2027</b> | 153        | 263        | 171        | 127        | 287        | 278          | 84         | 241             | 350         | <b>1954</b>  |

Table 32: Combined Special School Forecast

Numbers across all schools are expected to be at their highest by 2027 as population grows in Worcestershire, therefore, the demand for Special School places is expected to continue to rise. There is forecast to be a particular significant rise in totals for Rigby Hall (Bromsgrove), Fort Royal (Worcester), Regency High (Worcester), Vale of Evesham (Wychavon) and Wyre Forest. These projections align with mainstream pupil forecasts in these areas also.

Although Droitwich is within Wychavon district the distance to special schools in Worcester City and Bromsgrove are less than to the Vale of Evesham school, therefore we expect children from Droitwich to mainly attend Worcester City or Bromsgrove Special Schools.

More in-depth analysis of each special school can be found in the appendix 1.

## 7 Conclusion

This report assesses the sufficiency of current provision to meet the needs of children with SEND living within Worcestershire.

Ambitions for all children, is a sustainable school placement in their community and to receive a good education. To achieve this, a suite of provision is needed to support each individual's unique special educational needs and disabilities and enable them to reach their potential.

The percentage of children identified with special educational needs and disabilities has increased slowly over the last 10 years in Worcestershire. This is likely to continue to increase slightly year on year as a percentage of the total population following continual advancement in identification and diagnoses. Where previously babies with difficulties of various causes wouldn't survive early childhood, today they are living fulfilling lives through school and beyond, but with a variety of special needs.

This has meant that our reliance on providers who are able to quickly adapt to meet the needs of pupils with SEND has increased, including state-funded special schools, specialist FE as well as independent schools which are currently supporting 450 children and young people with EHC plans in Worcestershire.

At the same time, research is constantly being undertaken into ways to support children with various needs to remain within mainstream settings, alongside their peers, in their local communities.

Most schools report that children's needs are becoming more complex which supports the trend seen nationally that special schools are providing places for more complex children. High level of complex needs more often require more physical space for equipment, or breakout areas and quiet rooms. As mainstream schools develop their expertise on special needs education, they will be able to accept more children with EHCPs. MABs and language units also provide resourced provision within mainstream schools, enabling special schools to meet the needs of pupils with the most complex needs.

There is a significant cohort that are attending other provision within Worcestershire and outside of the county, such as Independent Specialist, non-maintained specialist and NEET. For 2021/22, 49 children are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) which has almost doubled since 2020/21. The total of children attending specialist independent/non-maintained special schools has steadily increased from 2017 (54) to 2021/22 (228).

A key focus over the last several years has been on the improvement and expansion of provision to enable more children to access the best education within mainstream settings. At the same time, there are increasing numbers of children within mainstream schools identified as needing SEN support. From a review of the January 2022 census' the number of children requiring SEN support increased to 13.6%. Making it even more important to improve and expand on the inclusivity of mainstream provision across the County. Change will be slow, but this work will continue and have a positive impact on children and young people with SEND, supported in state funded mainstream and special schools over the next several decades.

We have also seen in this report the major impact that the change in legislation has had on meeting the needs of young people aged 19-25 with SEND. A prime opportunity in our understanding of sufficiency across the County is in understanding the provision of places for young people of this age group. WCF will continue to work closely with colleges in the area to develop our understanding of demand and to match supply of appropriate places with the growth in numbers of older children with EHC plans wishing to access higher level courses and qualifications, ensuring their relevance to the lifestyle and adulthood these young people can expect.

During 2021/2022, there has been internal work with Fort Royal special school to create additional places for Sept 2022. Kingfisher also expanded to enable places for 20 more children from September 2021.

Chadsgrove special school now has post 16 provision, with the Chadsgrove Educational Trust Specialist College catering to those aged 19-25 years old.

Moving forward, there are many projects in which will have an impact on our SEND Sufficiency. We have agreed to expand Tudor Grange Academy Treetops MAB which will aid with the continuing growth of children with Autism needing access, the opening of Christopher Whitehead MAB and the addition of a MAB to the new Worcester City Secondary school will also help to ease pressure.

In Oct 2022, we have also submitted a bid application for an ASD special school, this is to be located within Malvern should it be successful. It is highlighted in the special school appendix that there is a significant need for specialist provision within Malvern.

In early 2023, we will be in open discussion with Worcestershire's special schools to address the provision need for 2023 to ensure we are meeting our sufficiency duties.

The planning process for education places will now use this data, along with current local policies, and budget restrictions, to support children and young people and ensure that places are available for all children with SEND which meets their needs.