

May
2022

State of Dorset Children



Experiences in a child's early years lay a foundation for health and wellbeing and our services for children and families have an important role in building future resilience.

By identifying those most at risk of poorer outcomes later on, our resources can be targeted where they are needed most so that we can respond to risk and vulnerability.

The number of 0-4 year olds is expected to decrease by about 1,300, while the number of 5-15 year olds is projected to decrease by about 2,200 between 2019 and 2029¹.

Big Numbers Box

67,700² total children

44% Pupils with an EHC Plan educated in mainstream schools

449 Children and young people in care in Dorset

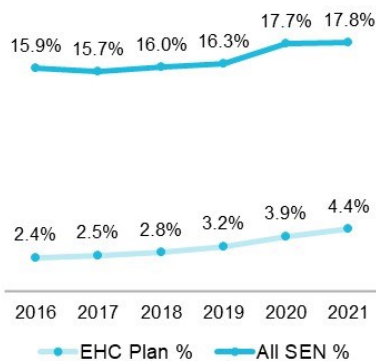
66 Looked after children in every 10,000 in Dorset

Primary school children with an EHC SEN plan 2.4%

21% Percentage of pupils achieving 9-5 in English and Maths (Free School Meals Gap)

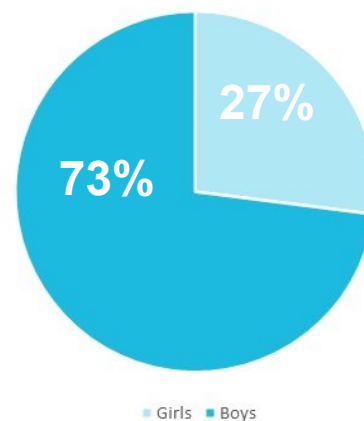
Box 1: Special Educational Need

SEN Pupils in Dorset Council Schools



The percentage of children with Special Educational Need has increased in Dorset each year since 2017. The percentage with either a statement or an EHC Plan has increased every year since 2016. There has been a more pronounced increase since Christchurch schools have been removed from the Pupil Census. Schools in Christchurch had a lower proportion of SENs pupils³.

Dorset Council School Pupils Education, Health and Care (EHC)



- One in four of pupils with an EHC SEN plan has an Autistic Spectrum Condition and just over one in five have speech language and communication needs.
- It is likely that a pupil may have more than one special educational need.
- 44% of pupils with an EHC Plan are educated in Mainstream Schools in Dorset.
- Three quarters of Dorset Council School Pupils with an EHC are boys and just under two thirds with SEN Support are boys. This is very similar to the national picture.

Sources

- 1 2019-trend based population projections (experimental), Dorset Council
- 2 2020 Mid-year estimates, 0-17 year-olds, ONS
- 3 Dorset Council, Children's Services
- 4 'Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics' National Statistics 2021

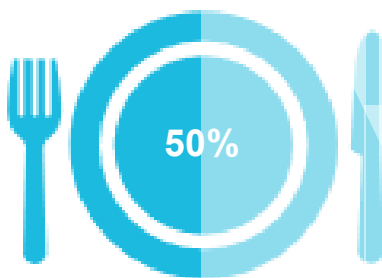
Acronyms

- EHC = Education, Health and Care Plan
FSM = Free School Meals
SEN = Special Educational Needs

Box 2: Education

- In 2019 72% of pupils achieved a 'Good Level of Development' at the end of Reception year, an increase of 1% on 2018 and the same as the national figure.
- 71% of pupils achieved the 'Basics' measure (standard pass or higher in English and Maths GCSE). For pupils eligible for Free School Meals the figure was 50%, in line with the national figure⁴.
- 11% of primary pupils claim Free School Meals, compared to the national average of 14%⁴.

Pupils eligible for FSM achieving Basics measure at GCSE



Percentage of Pupils GCSE pass English and Maths 2020/21

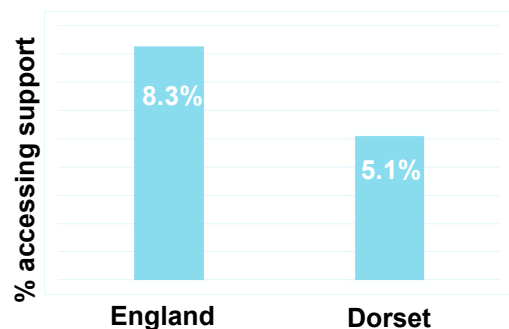


Box 3: Mental Health

- The number of children accessing mental health services has increased nationally, with more than 1 million children under 18 having first-time contact with mental health professionals.
- However, this number had fallen slightly across Dorset on the previous year, from 3925 to 3450.
- Increased referrals nationally may reflect that more young people are comfortable talking about their mental health and know where to get help.
- However, the pandemic led to more people needing help with their mental health and in 2020, more than 10,000 children and young people were waiting for support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- Early Support Hubs and the CAMHS Gateway are being expanded to meet service demand and mental health support in schools is being made more readily available.



National funding available for Family Hubs, perinatal mental health support and Supporting Families programme



Percentage of the under-18 population accessing first-time mental health support in 2020