

Children & Young People (CYP) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Summary from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2025

Why is this important?

The number of CYP with SEND in Lewisham is increasing, with higher levels than similar boroughs, London & England. Levels of school absence and mental ill health are higher for children with SEND, than those who do not have support needs. In line with the national picture, academic attainment is lower for pupils with SEND at Key Stages 2 and 4 with SEN provision. The complex SEND system is easier for some individuals to navigate than others.

Key Facts and Figures

The ethnic distribution amongst pupils at SEN support level and pupils with an EHCP is similar to that of all pupils



21% of pupils in Lewisham schools have SEND



Among pupils with SEN, there are twice as many boys than girls



Levels of school absence are higher for those with SEN support and those with EHCPs than for other pupils



40.3% pupils at SEN support level have speech, language and communication needs

Capacity challenges mean that rising SEND demands are leading to longer waiting lists and variations in service access



What is happening nationally?

Department for Education's 2017 Study of Early Education and Development (SEED): Meeting the needs of children with SEND in the early years

- (i) Early years provision for children with SEND
- (ii) Identification of SEND
- (iii) Communication between parents and providers
- (iv) The introduction of EHC plans
- (v) Resources and funding

Education, Health and Care Plans - Examples of Good Practice (2016)

To help practitioners develop good quality EHC plans

What is happening locally?

Lewisham SEND strategy 2020-25

Currently under review

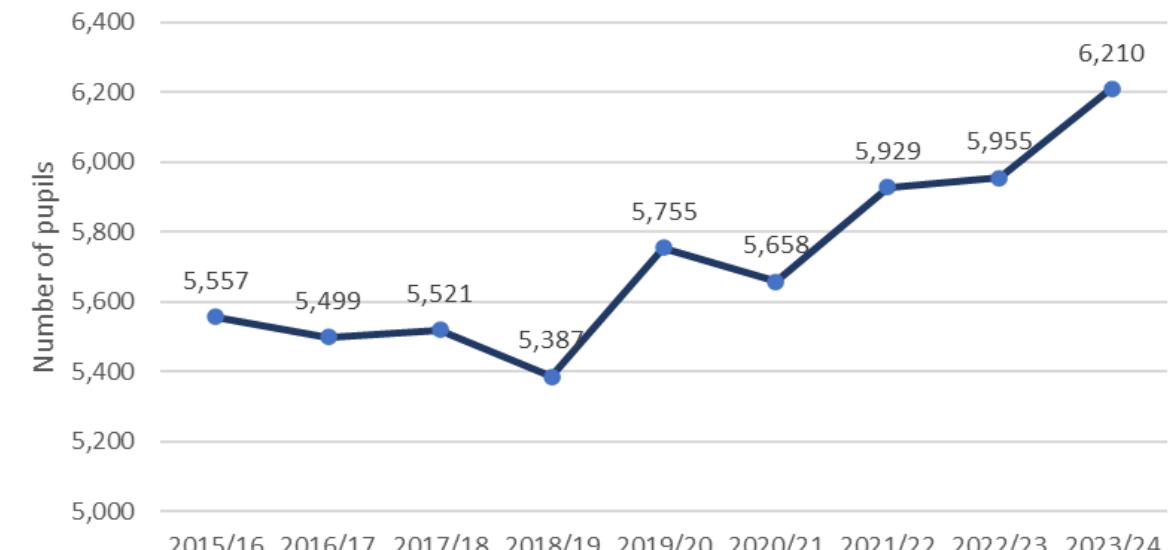
Developed jointly and collaboratively with the local area partnership incorporating the voices of CYP with SEND and their families to improve their life outcomes

Lewisham SEND Local Offer

Gathers information, advice and guidance and a range of local service providers who support CYP with SEND, as well as useful information across education, health and social care

The Lewisham Parent and Carer Guide

provides information, advice and support to parents and carers of CYP aged 0-25 years with SEND



Yearly trends for number of pupils with SEN support in Lewisham schools

What needs to be done?

- Clearer communication and support to help families navigate the complex SEND processes
- Improve inclusivity and equity by monitoring uptake and outcomes by protected characteristics
- Leaders across the partnership to strengthen post diagnosis support for the whole family and throughout the transition from childhood into adulthood
- Leaders across education, health and social care to ensure that a multi-agency quality assurance framework is in place for existing and amended EHC plans
- Health leaders to ensure that waiting times for specialist mental health pathways and neurodevelopmental assessments are reduced and that children and young people, and their families, consistently receive effective communication and support while waiting