

Demographic context of SEND in Camden

Numbers of children

In January 2024, there were 1,534 children and young people aged 0 to 25 on Camden's EHCP Register and 4,057 pupils with SEND. Camden schools report that 14% of children receive SEN Support and 5% have an EHCP.¹ 211 children (within the SEN Support group) are currently in receipt of an Exceptional Needs Grant.

The rate of growth of EHCPs in Camden was 2% or less between 2019 and 2023, between January 2023 and 2024 the cohort increased by 6% (88 plans).² We cannot tell yet whether the rapid increase in the last year is the start of a new trend.

The increase in the number of children with EHCPs has been slower than national rates of increase, but the falling school rolls in Camden mean that the proportion of children with SEND is increasing more rapidly. The number of children with SEN increased by around 10% between 2018 and 2023 but the proportion of children with SEND has increased by 17% over the same period.³

The majority of children with SEND are educated in mainstream settings.

For children with EHCPs:

- 58.3% attend mainstream state-funded school (30.2% primary; 28.2% secondary)
- 30.3% attend state-funded special school
- 8.4% attend independent school
- 2.8% attend alternative provision
- 0.2% attend state-funded nursery

For children receiving SEN support

- 69% attend mainstream state-funded school (38.1% primary; 30.9% secondary)
- 1.7% attend state-funded special school
- 28.2% attend independent school
- 0.5% attend alternative provision
- 0.5% attend state-funded nursery⁴

School attendance in Camden is significantly below national average and attendance is lower for children with SEND. For children with no identified SEND, absence is 5.4%, whereas for children with SEN Support it is 7.8% and with an EHCP it is 9.9%.⁵ Emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA) is more common for children with SEND.

Profile of need

72% of children with EHCPs are male and 28% are female and this is similar across primary and secondary schools. For children receiving SEN support without an EHCP, there is a greater difference between primary and secondary schools and the gender split is more

¹ SEN2, Camden residents aged 0-25

² SEN2, Camden residents aged 0-25

³ SEN1 School Census returns, ages 2-18

⁴ : <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/594bdfd5-efc9-4c0c-01f1-08dc0d2b9581>

⁵ DfE School Census

equal. At primary school, 38% are female and 62% male and at secondary school, 46% are female and 54% are male.⁶

Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) is the most common primary need identified in EHCPs, and the number of children with ASD as the primary need on their EHCP has increased by 57% between 2019 and 2024 (410 vs. 643). Reflecting national trends associated with raised awareness and adjustments to diagnostic definitions, this increase is partially offset by a decrease in listings of moderate learning difficulty (55 fewer children), and speech language and communication needs (62 fewer children). It is hard to predict whether growth will continue at a similar rate or level off.⁷

There has also been a steady growth in social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs from 202 to 241 or 19%. SEMH is now the biggest driver of new EHCPs in secondary school.⁸ The percentage of children with SEND varies by age, with the highest percentage currently at age 8 to 10, with more than one in four 10-year-olds receiving SEN Support or with an EHCP.⁹ Growth in the rate of new EHCPs has been fastest for primary school age children. As these children grow older and move on to secondary school, we expect to see the proportion of children with SEND at secondary schools increase.

Local funding mechanism

Camden's funding model aims to support early intervention by ensuring the funding reaches schools and pupils more quickly. A higher notional funding level (£11,000, compared to £6,000 nationally) is devolved to all mainstream schools to provide greater stability. We also provide Exceptional Needs Grants (ENG) which provide high needs funding without the need for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment.

School places

Over recent years demand for school places within Camden and London has seen a significant fall. In response, the Council in co-operation with our family of schools, have reduced school capacity by 10 forms of entry in the primary sector. Whilst difficult decisions have led to four school closures, in the medium term most of the current and future reduction will be achieved by reducing admission numbers, meaning that some schools will have additional space on their school estates.

We have also seen increased pressure on places in special schools and additionally resourced provision, and all specialist places are currently full.

We have also seen an increase in the number of children accessing independent and non-maintained placements, as well as those accessing EOTAS packages. Funding for non-state maintained settings and EOTAS packages has increased over recent years. Attendance of children with SEND at independent and non-maintained special schools has risen from 63 pupils in 2020/21 to 78 pupils in 2023/24.

In response to this, we have commissioned public health to refresh a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which will help inform our medium-term commissioning of school places. This work will be closely aligned to the School Places Planning Strategy and will feature in Lot 3, which will commence in the autumn term.

⁶ SEN1 DfE School Census

⁷ SEN2: Camden residents aged 0-25

⁸ SEN2: Camden residents aged 0-25

⁹ DfE School Census, Autumn 2023

Specialist school places in Camden

Swiss Cottage School is a large, five times outstanding special school, accommodating 232 children aged 2 to 19 with complex learning difficulties.

Frank Barnes School is a specialist primary school for deaf children. Frank Barnes makes provision for children from the age of 2 to 11 and offers a range of courses and training opportunities both for families of pupils, the wider deaf and hearing community, and other professionals.

We have three primary schools that have an additionally resourced provision for children with autism:

- Netley Primary School's Woodlands ASD additionally resourced provision
- Kentish Town C of E Primary School
- Primrose Hill Primary School.

In addition, Acland Burghley secondary school has an additionally resourced provision for children with autism.

Torriano Primary School has an additionally resourced provision for children with complex language and communication difficulties. This language resource base has two places in each year from Reception to Year 6.

We also have a primary school additionally resourced provision for children with physical disabilities at Kentish Town C of E Primary School.

For secondary age, we also have additionally resourced provisions at:

- Hampstead School, and
- Regent High School.

We have hospital schools at Royal Free Hospital, Great Ormond Street Hospital and University College Hospital.

We have alternative provision for primary school age children at Robson House and for secondary school age children at the Heath School.