

# Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2021 COVID-19 Impact on Education and Skills

# Education & Skills

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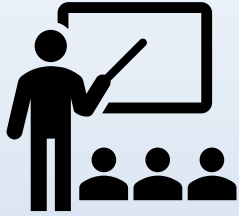
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Karen Linton and Sally Jack

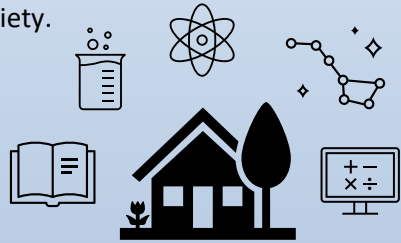
Further information – Sam Meadows

# Education & Skills

## Emerging Issues



Across N.E. Lincs, the areas where children were reported having fallen back the most were personal and social development and communication and language. Students' physical development, Mathematics, Arts and Design and Literacy largely stayed the same. The most common problem reported was separation anxiety.



There has been an increase in the number of students who have started Elective home Education, however it is not clear whether this is due to COVID-19 or due to the predicted increase in students being educated at home.



In N.E. Lincs, there has been an increase in the number of NEET students and a decline in the number of NEET students seeking employment.

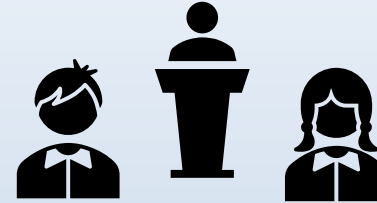


The exam series was cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020. This meant that Students were awarded either a centre assessment grade or their calculated grade using a Model developed by Ofqual.

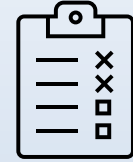


Children with neurocognitive disabilities have been frustrated with disruptions in their routines and struggled with staff in PPE. Children suffering from anxiety and depression have felt stressed and overwhelmed from fear of contracting COVID-19. This stress has been seen to worsen the obsessions and compulsions of children with OCD.

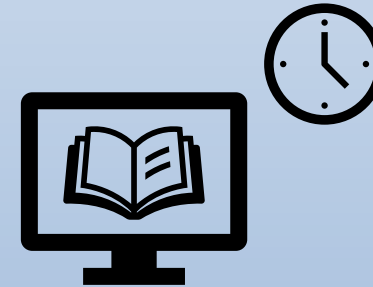
## Ongoing Solutions



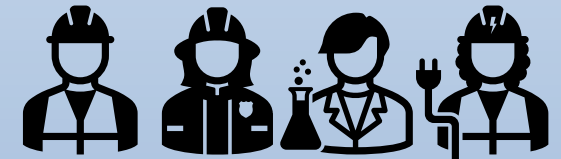
Ongoing support is being provided to students who have been affected the most by working from home (SEND students, pupil premium students etc). The LA distributed 1032 laptops to students from low income backgrounds and schools were opened for some of the pandemic to vulnerable children and children of key workers.



Student attainment scores within North East cannot be directly compared to previous years (as they were not exam assessed) however, attainment 8 scores were higher in 20/21 than previous years, indicating the change in assessment approach was beneficial to students. Regular GCSE assessments are also planned to roll out in 2022.



schools reported a positive picture with virtual learning. Many students in Tertiary/higher benefit from the additional 1 to 1 support which is available now that remote learning has become a norm in education and students who struggled with anxiety found it much easier to engage with online lessons



Provisions were put in place to support apprentices who lost their jobs in lockdown in finding new apprenticeships and many have since found new employment. Many Apprentices who were furloughed also appreciated the additional free time to consolidate their off-the-job learning

## Impact on early years development (1/2)

A Survey of childminders (71.79%) and private voluntary and independent providers (28.21%) was carried out across North East Lincolnshire by the children's public health provision.

Across all topics investigated, the areas where children were reported having fallen back the most were personal and social development (53.85%) and communication and language (35.90%).

Areas where students skills largely stayed the same were in the children's physical development (51.28%), Mathematics (60.53%), Expressive Arts and Design (63.16%) and Literacy (55.26%). The students understanding of the world was the most divided, with a large portion of children's level either staying the same (36.84%) or falling behind (28.55%).

However, the number of students who improved was lower than the number who stayed the same or fell behind across all categories.

Additionally, children's independence (their ability to tell time, put on coats independently, use the toilet on their own, manage their own behaviour and emotions etc) has been severely impacted by school closures.

The most common problem reported was separation anxiety. Many children struggling with being away from home, especially new starters who have found it extremely difficult to settle in. Students have also struggled with practitioners wearing masks/visors, which has had a further negative effect on children's speech and language skills

Solutions that have begun to be put in place include: providing help and training to parents; sourcing mental health training for staff; targeting interventions, 1-to-1 training and communication and learning programs for children who have fallen the most behind due to school closures

Early years local authority survey continues on a weekly basis. Nationally, 843,000 children are currently attending early years settings, approximately 80% of the usual daily level (accounting for some children attending early year settings full/part-time). (Children's public health provision, 2021).

The average attendance for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds over the year was approximately 3000 children a day pre-COVID. During the lockdowns there was a fluctuation in attendance as the restrictions changed. The most affected cohort were the 2-year-funded children who are entitled to 15 hours a week free early education; this is not a universal offer and they would be defined as potentially a disadvantaged/vulnerable cohort- the lowest attendance was in the summer term 2020 when just 68% of this cohort took up part/all of their entitlement in an early years setting/school. There was a slight drop in the number of 3 and 4-year-olds taking up their universal entitlements of 15 hours a week in the summer and autumn terms 2020, however, the actual percentage take up may have been lower as funding was allocated on expected take up rather than actual take up of places. There was a marked difference across different wards of children accessing their entitlements during COVID-19.

There has been significant changes in how secondary schools' attainment and progress is measured since 2016. Up to 2016 the standard measure for KS4 was 5+ GCSEs at grade C or above. In 2017, attainment 8 started for all schools, and English and mathematics GCSEs were measured in numerical grades from 1 to 9; in 2018 all other subjects were measured in the same numerical grades as English and mathematics. Over the previous three years, up to 2018, there were changes to the list of examinations valid for this measure, which has affected the proportion of students achieving. This means that the results prior to 2018 cannot be compared with subsequent years.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all exams due to be sat in summer 2020 were cancelled. Pupils scheduled to sit GCSE exams in 2020 were awarded (for each subject they were entered for) either a centre assessment grade submitted by their centre (school or college) or their calculated grade resulting from the standardisation model developed by Ofqual. Because of this, students attainment grades cannot be reported within this Impact Report and any of the national data which is discussed cannot be compared to previous years attainment. The national data published by Ofqual on GCSE grades achieved by 16 year olds in England showed that: the percentage of GCSE entries, for pupils aged 16, grade at 4 and above was 78.7% and an 8.9 percentage point increase on the equivalent 2019 figure (69.9%). The percentage of GCSE entries, for pupils aged 16, graded at 5 and above was 61.5% an 8.0 percentage point increase on the equivalent 2019 figure (53.5%).

However, the increases seen in the national attainment statistics reflect the changed method for awarding grade rather than demonstrating an improvement in standards, so pupil level attainment in 2019/20 and 2018/19 is not comparable. Various studies have tracked the effect that school closures have had on students educations when schools were unexpectedly closed for long periods of time.

Montebruno (2020) studied the effect of a wave of student protests (and resulting school closures) across Chile in 2011 and 2012. These protests resulted in 8 million total lost pupil days. It was found that ten days of lost schooling cost Chilean students approximately 13% of a standard deviation in achievement. This grade deficit rose to 24% when schools were closed for longer than 50 days.

Further to this, various other studies from Canada and Belgium (Baker, 2013; Johnson, 2011; Belot and Webbink, 2010) verify that students who's schools were affected by strikes lost out on 20-50% of a standard deviation in educational achievement. This was worse in less educated families.

Andrabi et al (2020) analysed the impact of school closures in Pakistan after the earthquake in 2005. Schools that were close to the fault area were closed for an average of 14 weeks, resulting in affected students becoming 1.5 years of schooling behind non-affected students when compared four years after the closures. This effect on education is intensified within low-income, low education households.

Similar results have been found from research carried out by OFSTED and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) during COVID-19 restrictions. The EEF found that, since the first lockdown, primary school children who were free school meal eligible have fallen a month behind their classmates. Additionally, there has been no sign of this gap narrowing since students returned to school in September 2020 (EEF, 2020). This research by OFSTED also verified that children who were especially impacted by COVID-19 were at an increased risk of regressing in their basic skills and learning.

However, their research found that a child's likelihood of being affected by COVID-19 restrictions was not solely decided by privilege or deprivation. Instead, they found that, regardless of background, children with good support systems (i.e. supportive parents/carers who are available to invest quality time into child's care and education) did better in their education and learning when compared to children who did not. Children who's parents were not able to spend time to facilitate their education from home deteriorated the most, with some families reporting children who can no longer eat with a knife and fork, have lost their early progress in numbers and words and, in some cases, have lapsed back into wearing nappies. (OFSTED, 2020).

Many tertiary and higher education settings in England stayed open, moving to provide their education remotely. This often led to course content being shifted around, and some lessons being changed to cover the impact COVID-19 has had on different industries. The quality of this education was influenced by the IT skills of teaching staff, however, as some were well equipped and prepared (particularly those in IT based subjects), whilst others required support getting to grips with technology. Students with high needs (i.e. SEND/EHCP students who would usually have access to a support worker) or from challenging circumstances (i.e. low income households, no space to work, no access to wi-fi or a laptop, difficult family relationships at home etc) were affected the most by the move to online learning. Also, the lack of practical work or social/group engagement in projects meant that many students struggled to focus during lessons. Despite this, many students benefited from the additional 1 to 1 support which was available once remote learning started and students who struggled with anxiety found it much easier to engage with online lessons. Students who struggled with working from home were the focus of support within tertiary and higher education and students affected by the lack of face-to-face contact will likely feel better as restrictions in education are lifted and on-site teaching resumes. (OFSTED, 2020).

Students in apprenticeships had a mixed experience during COVID-19. Although many apprentices were furloughed at the start of lockdown, many continued to work throughout 2020 and those who did not appreciated the additional free time to consolidate their off-the-job learning. The apprentices who were affected the most were those who were working in health and social care settings, who reported high levels of stress and anxiety. However, on a positive note, these apprentices later reported that the experience made them want to pursue careers in health and social care even more. Despite many apprentices being made redundant, provisions were put in place to support these apprentices in finding new employers and many have since found new employment. (OFSTED, 2020).

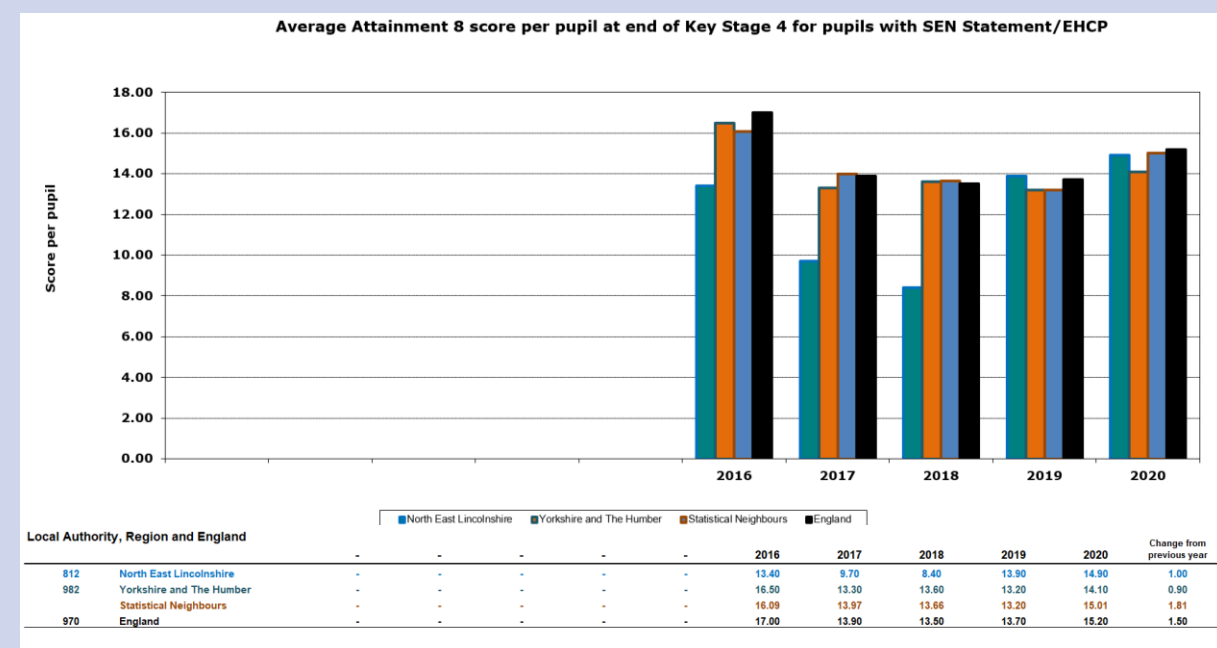
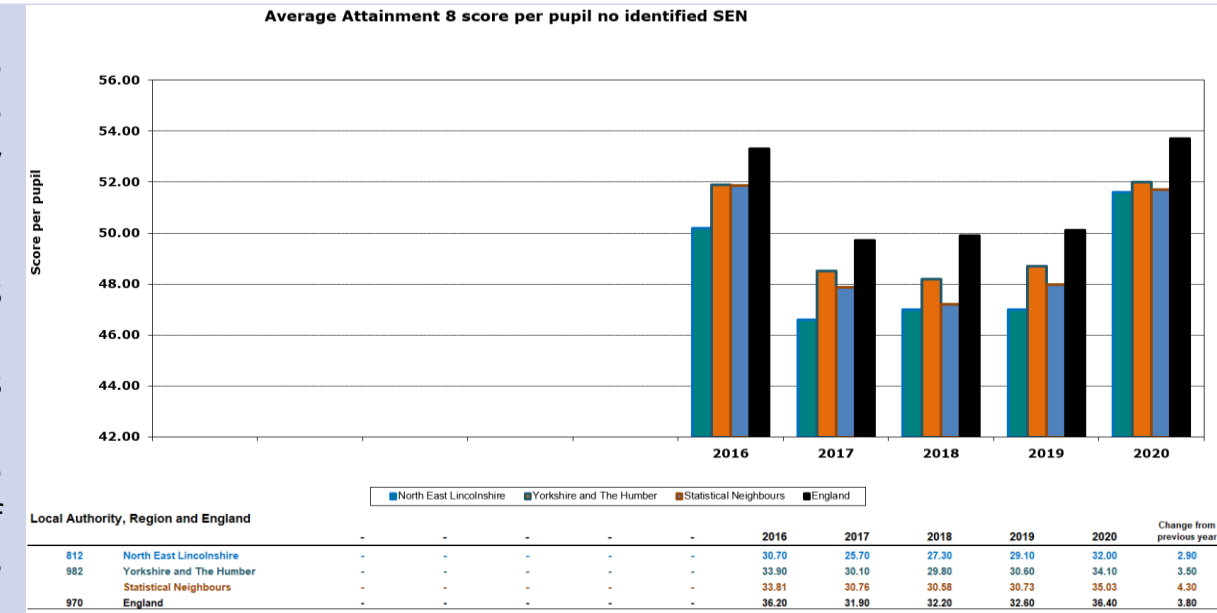
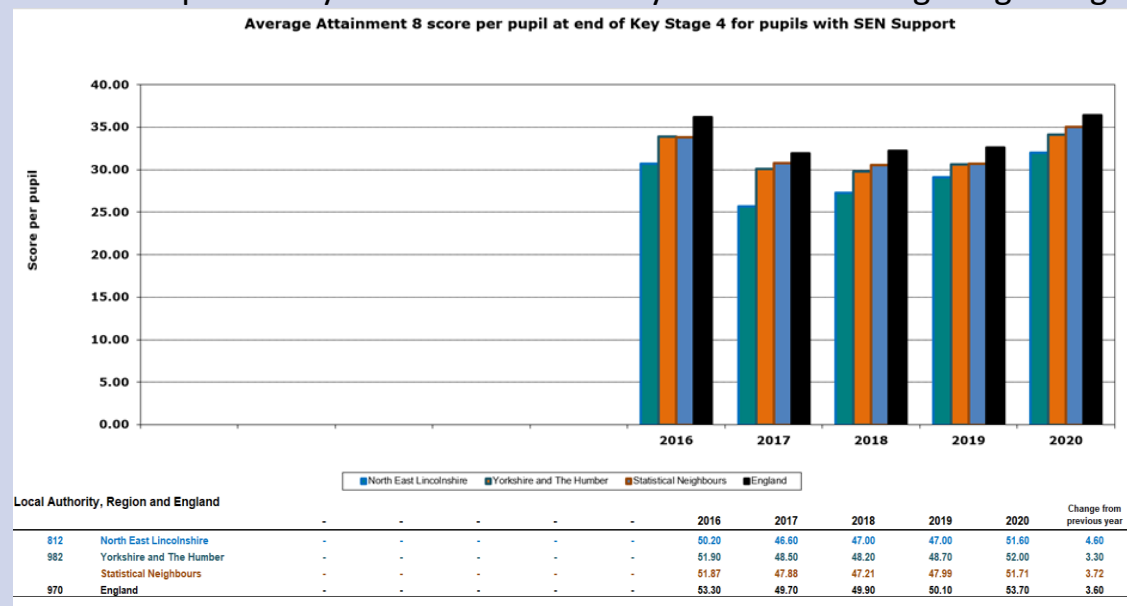
Nationally, attendance in state-funded primary schools was 92% on 25 March 2021, down from 93% on 18 March 2021. Attendance in state-funded secondary schools was 87% on 25 March 2021, down from 89% on 18 March 2021. Approximately 310,000 students attended colleges on-site on 24 March 2021, up from 299,000 on 17 March 2021 and up from 8,000 on 3 March 2021, when only vulnerable students and children of critical workers were expected to be on-site.

## Lost Learning (Attainment 8)

As mentioned earlier, the summer exam series was cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020. This meant that students were awarded either a centre assessment grade (based on what the school or college believed the student would most likely have achieved had exams gone ahead) or their calculated grade using a Model developed by Ofqual – whichever was the higher of the two.

We can still, however, look at the impact this has had on students attainment 8 grades. Each of the pupils level attainment statistics have increased – more than expected in a typical year – between the 2018/19 and 2019/20 academic years. This only reflects the change to the way GCSE grades were awarded rather than improvements in pupil performance. As a result, the 2019/20 data should not be directly compared to attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring changes in student performance. However, it is interesting to see how this change in approach to grading has proved beneficial for some students.

Additionally, students with SEND and EHCP plans have achieved higher attainment 8 scores than previous years. This is also likely due to the change in grading.





1. Andrabi, T., Daniels, B., & Das, J. (2021). Human capital accumulation and disasters: Evidence from the Pakistan earthquake of 2005. *Journal of Human Resources*, 0520-10887R1.
2. Baker, M. (2013). Industrial actions in schools: strikes and student achievement. *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue canadienne d'économie*, 46(3), 1014-1036.
3. Belot, M., & Webbink, D. (2010). Do teacher strikes harm educational attainment of students?. *Labour*, 24(4), 391-406.
4. Johnson, D. R. (2011). Do Strikes and Work-to-Rule Campaigns Change Elementary School Assessment Results?. *Canadian Public Policy*, 37(4), 479-494.
5. Montebruno Bondi, P. (2020). Disrupted schooling: impacts on achievement from the Chilean school occupations
6. Ofsted (2021)

Covid-19 restrictions have had an extremely negative impact on children with special educational needs, given their reliance on many on carefully established routines and relationships as well as professional and informal support (Daniel, 2020). Children with autism spectrum disorders and/or neurocognitive disabilities have experienced frustration due to disruptions in their daily routines. Children suffering from anxiety and depression have experienced stress and feelings of being overwhelmed, due to the constant news of death and disease, as well as fear of contracting the virus. This stress has also been seen to worsen the obsessions and compulsions of children with OCD. (Imran, Zeshan & Pervaiz, 2020)

Guidelines provided by world health (and national) health agencies have issued guidance on safeguarding children's mental health whilst schools are shut. These guidelines have included maintaining daily scheduled activities with special needs children (ASD/ID) who struggle with disruptions to routines, involvement with online programs and group teletherapy visits to provide physically distanced emotional support and making sure all material they are exposed to regarding the virus is developmentally appropriate. (Lee, 2020)

As students are returning to school, Particular issues for students with SEN include: struggling to understand and comply with new changes and restrictions; difficulties concentrating during less interactive lessons as well as SEN staff being unable to work physically closely with students and a lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to facilitate this. (Lorenc, Kidger, Langford & Horwood, 2021).

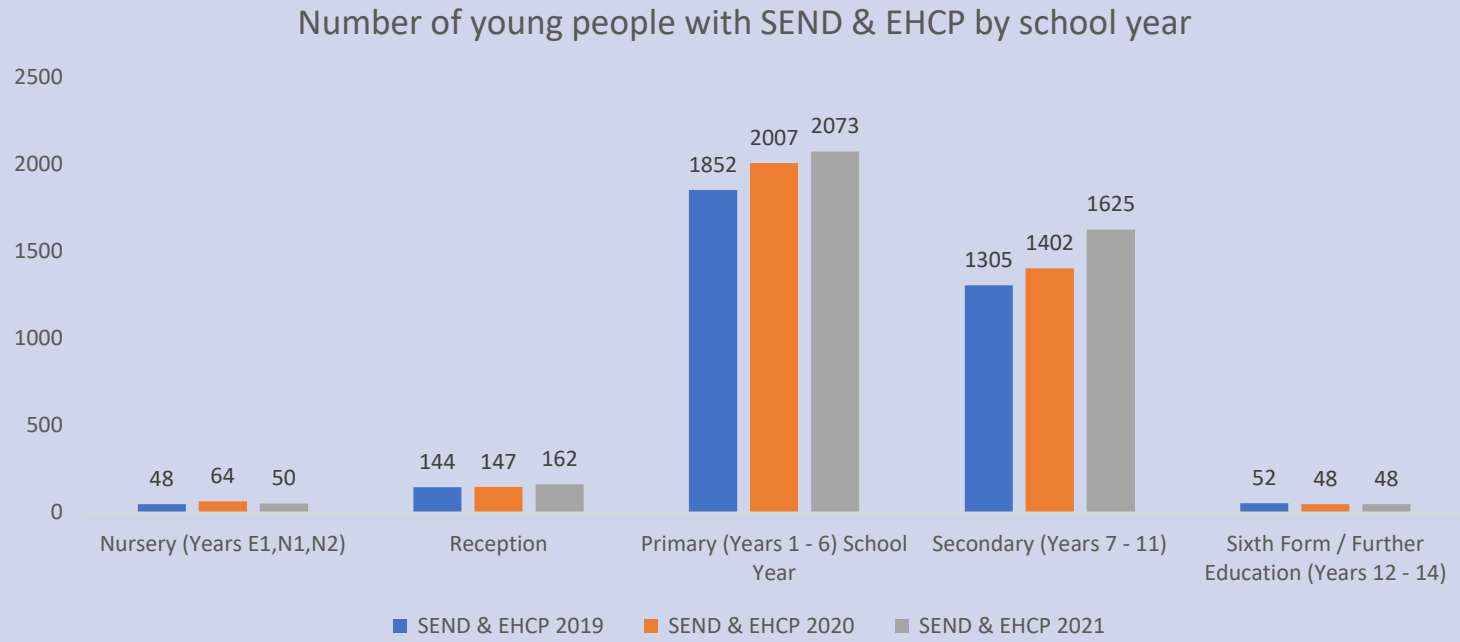
Across all age groups, children with SEND have been seriously affected in both their care and education, as the services that families relied on – particularly speech and language services – were unavailable. (OFSTED, 2020)

1. Imran, N., Zeshan, M., & Pervaiz, Z. (2020). Mental health considerations for children & adolescents in COVID-19 Pandemic. *Pakistan journal of medical sciences*, 36(COVID19-S4), S67.
2. Lee J. Mental health effects of school closures during COVID-19. *Lancet Child Adolesc Health*. 2020 doi:10.1016/S2352-4642(20)30109-7
3. Lorenc, A., Kesten, J. M., Kidger, J., Langford, R., & Horwood, J. (2021). Reducing COVID-19 risk in schools: a qualitative examination of secondary school staff and family views and concerns in the South West of England. *BMJ paediatrics open*, 5(1).
4. Ofsted (2021)

Below is the number of young people with SEND (Special Educational Need and Disabilities) who also qualify for an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) in 2019 compared to the number in 2021, as well as a comparison of the number of SEN by type in 2019 and 2021.

There has been a considerable increase in the number of young people with SEND between 2019 and 2021 across all age groups. This is interesting, as many services have seen a reduction in referral and diagnosis due to these services not having the capacity to provide diagnosis services at the same level as they could before COVID-19.

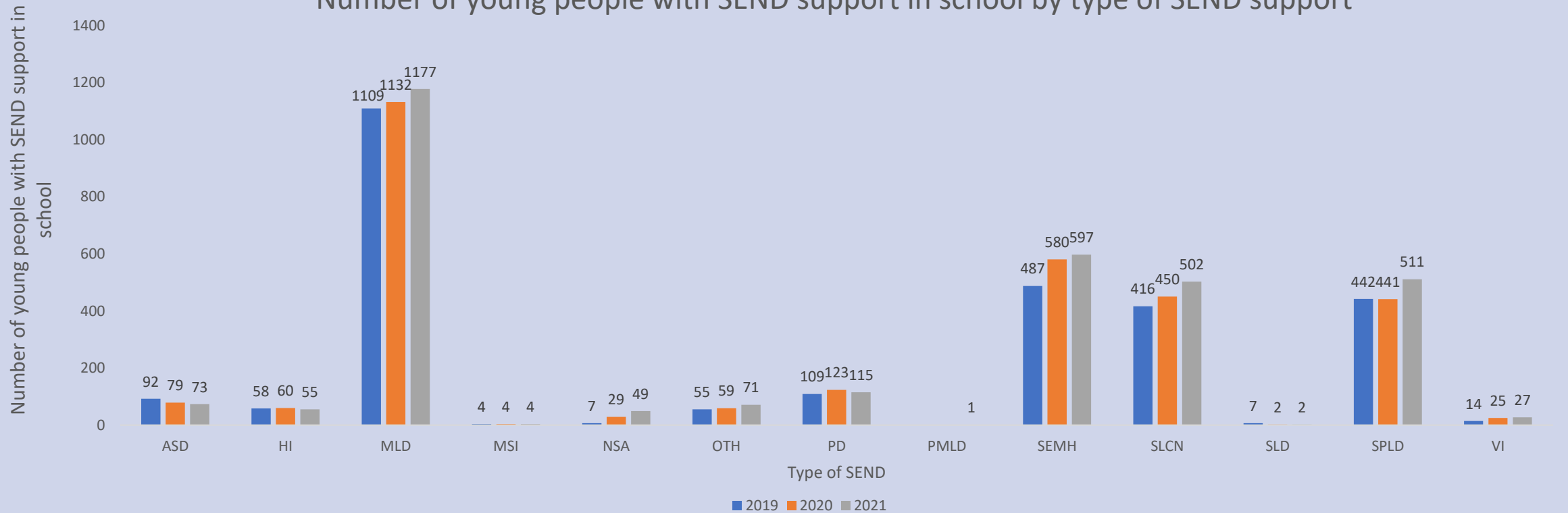
KEY:	
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
HI	Hearing Impairment
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
NSA	SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need
OTH	Other Difficulty
PD	Physical Disability
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty
SEMH	Social, Emotional & Mental Health
SLCN	Speech, Language & Communication Needs
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
SPLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
VI	Vision Impairment



The graph below shows the number of young people receiving SEND support within school. The number of young people with Social Emotional and Mental Health, Speech Language and Cognitive Needs, Mild Learning Disabilities and Specific Learning Disabilities have risen considerably. Other conditions have not risen considerably. Interestingly, the number of people given SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need has risen from 7 in 2019 to 49 in 2021. This indicates that, as services have had reduced capacity to provide assessments, more people have been provided SEN support without a full understanding of what the young persons full needs were.

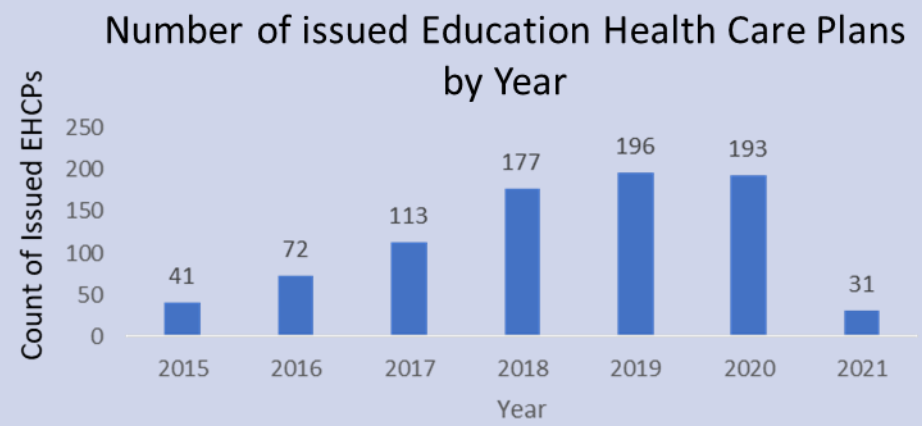
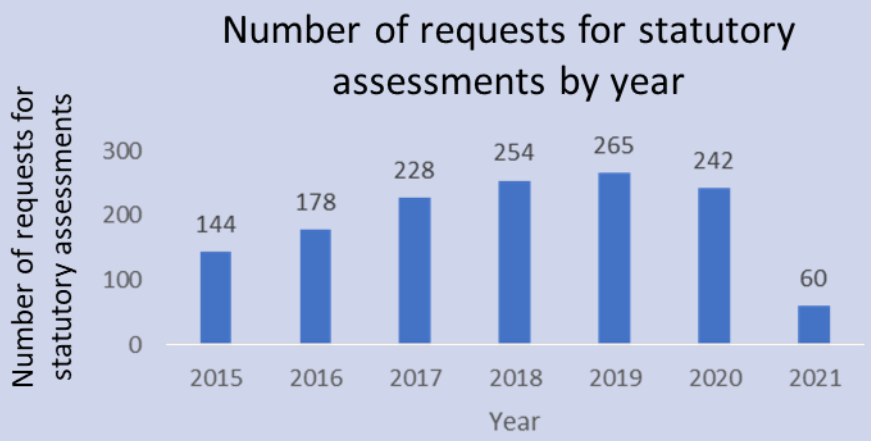
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VI	Vision Impairment

Number of young people with SEND support in school by type of SEND support

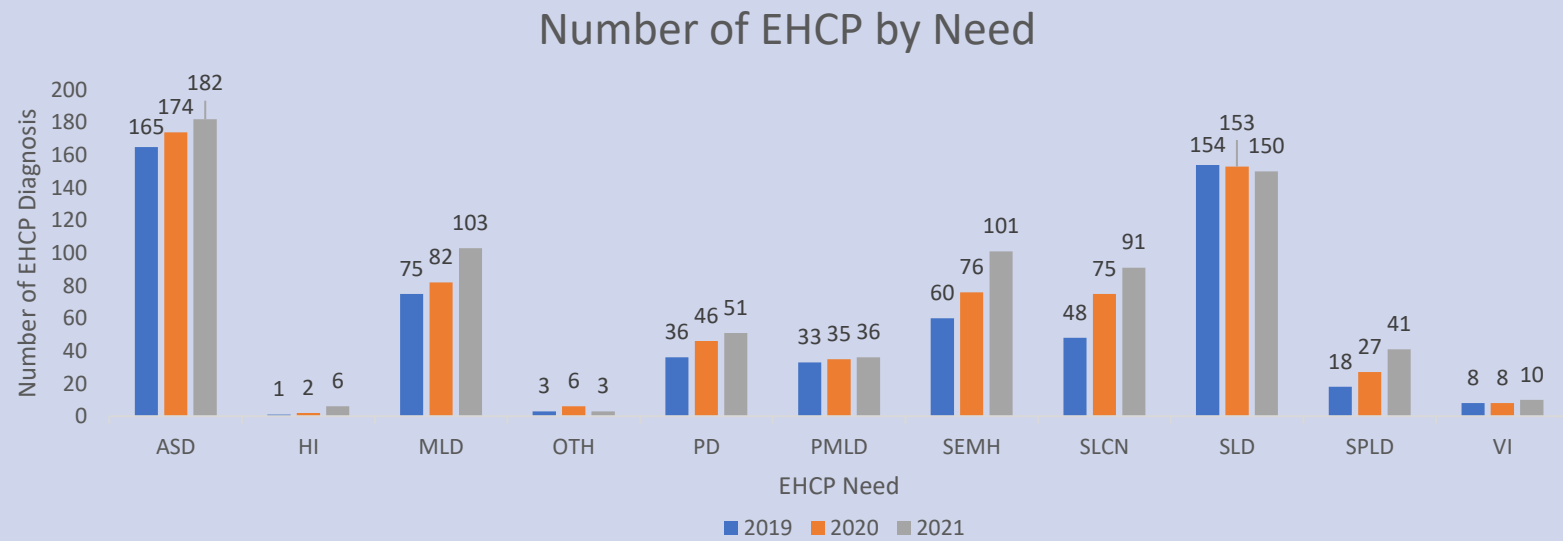


Children who require more support than their school or SEN support is able to provide can request an assessment for an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The number of requests for statutory assessments for EHCPs and the number of issued EHCP's rose every year until 2020, where they began to drop. The number for statutory assessments was considerably higher than the number of successful assessments that resulted in an EHCP being issued, however, the fact that both of these numbers have reduced indicates that the service has likely been impacted by COVID-19.



KEY:
ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder)
HI (Hearing Impairment)
MLD (Mild Learning Disability)
PD (Physical Disability)
SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health)
SLCN (Speech Language and Cognitive Needs)
SLD (Severe Learning Disability)
SPLD (Specific Learning Disability)
VI (Visual impairment)



1. Capita One (2021)  
 2. Census (2021)

However, there have also been two recent changes to the EHCP process, which may have impacted the number of EHCP assessments carried out in 2020/2021.

### **1: Establishment of an online EHCP hub**

Online case management system using a multi agency approach to provide a more holistic assessment of a child's needs. This process is much more transparent and efficient, allowing for more information to be used in deciding whether a child would benefit from an EHCP plan. Children who are not eligible for an EHCP can be provided other support and signposting to more appropriate services. This has been in place since the first of October 2020.

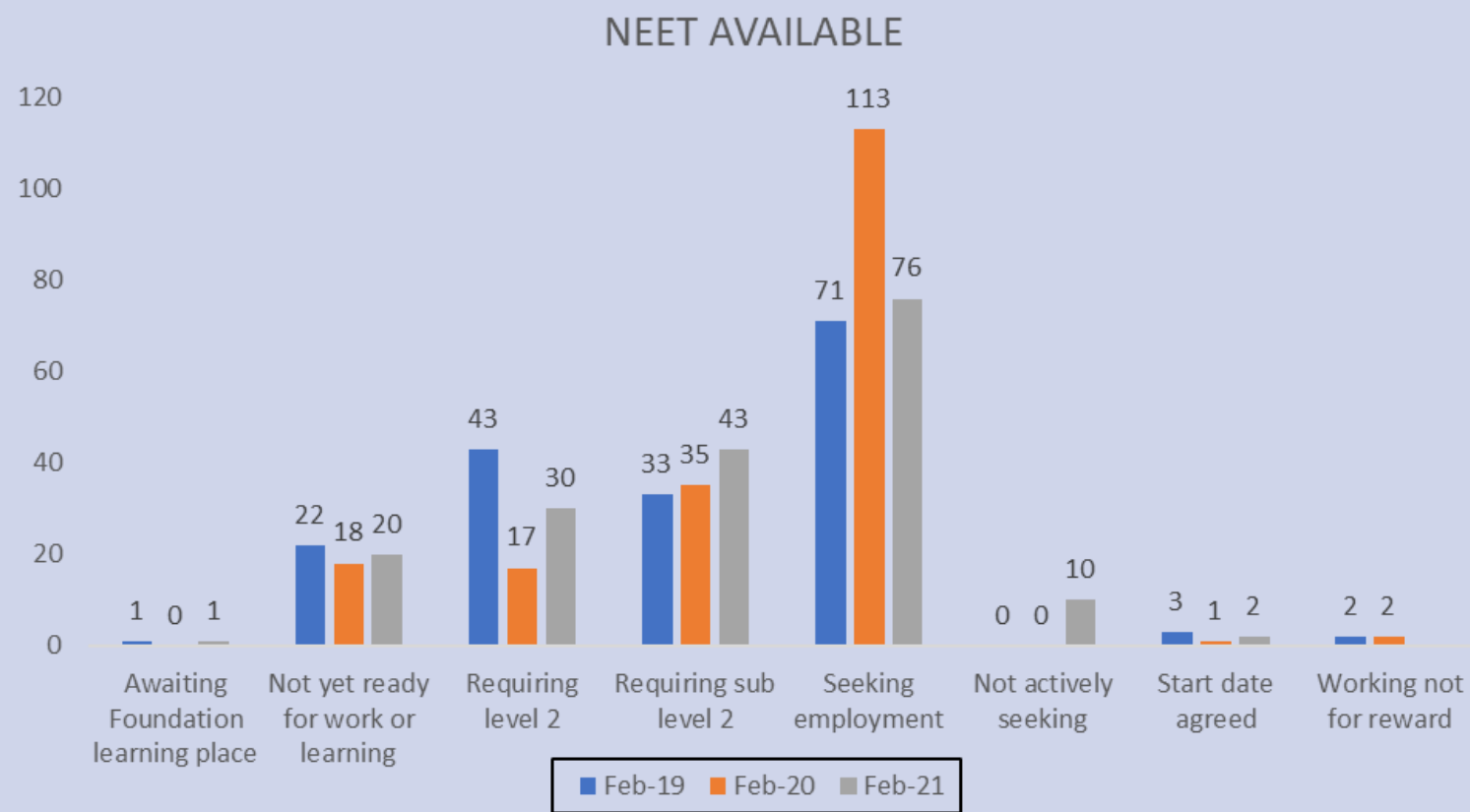
### **2: Decision making panels implemented for EHCP assessments**

Decisions about carrying out EHCP assessments are now made by multi-disciplinary panels, from Education, Health and Social Care backgrounds. This allows for a broad and timely assessment of a child's needs. This has been in place since the first of April 2021.

These changes allow for some pushback on requests for assessment and allows for staff to sign-post to other services where necessary. The complete impact of these changes is not yet clear, but it is believed that these changes will have massive benefits across the EHCP assessment process.

# NEETs

Below is a graph which breaks down the details of students classified as “Not in Education, Employment, or Training,”. There has been little change in most of the NEET sub-categories. Interestingly, there has been a decline in the number of NEET students seeking employment in 2021 (76) compared to 2020 (113). This either indicates that more NEET students have managed to find jobs or most students who have entered NEET have given up on looking for jobs due to the effect of COVID-19 on the job market.



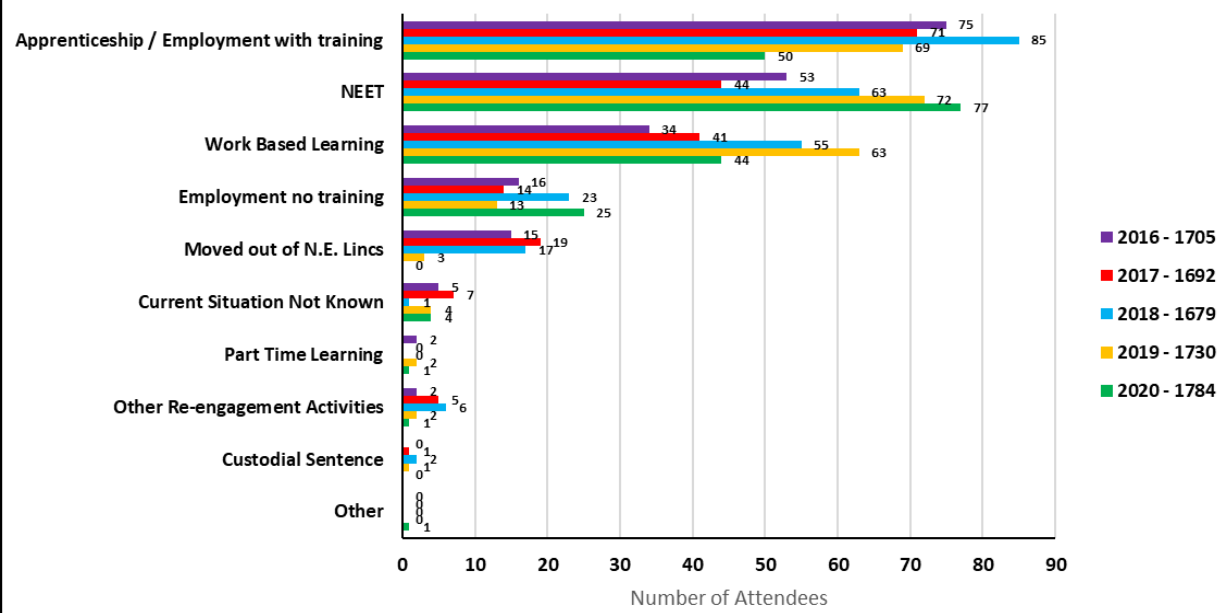
# NEETs/Access to further and higher education/Apprenticeships

The number of entries to Grimsby Institute in 2020 (743) was higher than previous years whilst the number of entries to Franklin College in 2020 (514) was the lowest since 2016. However, it is important to recognise that this only covers the number of NEL school leavers, as Franklin College has seen an increase in entries from students out of the area. Other sixth forms and colleges within North East Lincolnshire have not seen a large change in their student uptake in 2020. In addition to local FE provision, the number of students who entered FE provision out of the borough (e.g. Bishop Burton, John Leggott College, North Lindsay College etc) increased in 2020.

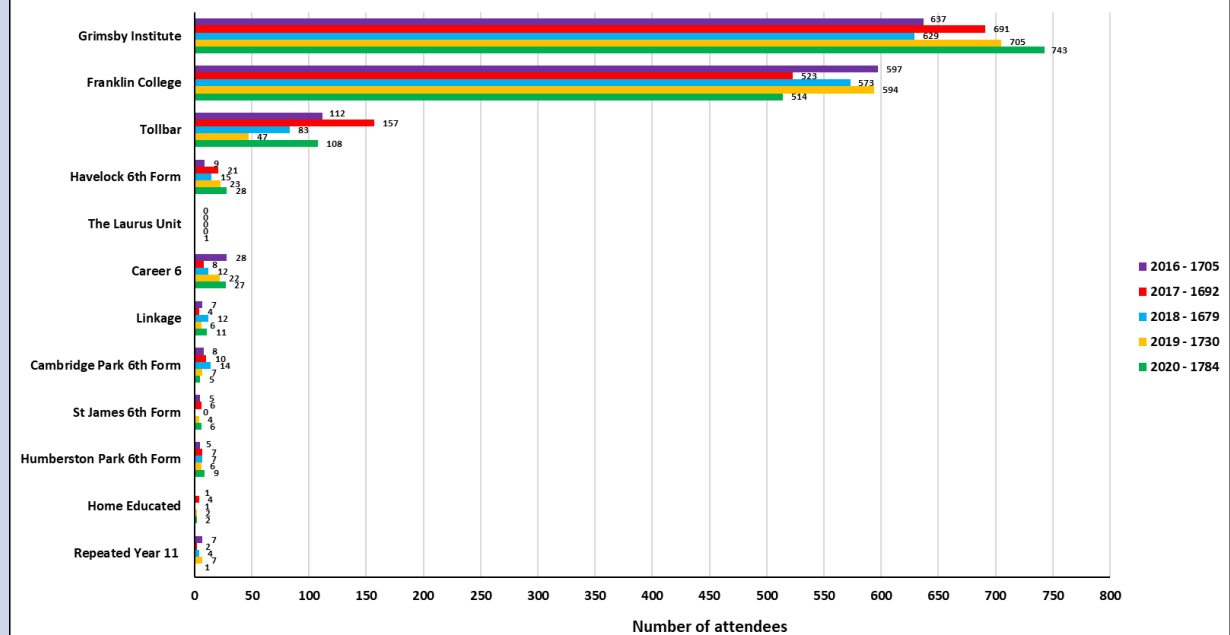
YEAR	Number of students who entered FE provision out of the borough
2016	82
2017	61
2018	77
2019	78
2020	126

The number of students who have joined apprenticeships/employment with training and work based learning has reduced whilst the number of students who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) has risen considerably. The number of students entering employment with no training is also higher in 2020 than 2019, indicating that less students are seeking trained employment and more students have dropped out of education and schooling altogether. This is possibly indicative of a reduction in employment opportunities for students due to COVID-19 so more students have ended up doing nothing once their statutory education has ended.

**Destinations collated by YPSS as of 1st November of the year the pupils left statutory education for the last 5 years**



**Destinations collated by YPSS as of 1st November of the year the pupils left statutory education for the last 5 years**





## Learning from home (Including Elective Home Education)

In terms of virtual learning, schools on the whole reported a positive picture, with engagement being stronger in the second lockdown. Schools supported with laptops and devices, and also had to publish their VL plans on their websites as per DfE requirements

In terms of EHE, the team have maintained contact with families via a newsletter, signposting to various points of support, including education sites, health, and wellbeing support. The numbers have increased, but this has been the picture nationally.

There has been an increase in the number of students who have started Elective home Education due to COVID-19, as well as an increase in anxiety cited as a reason for EHE.

## Pupil Premium

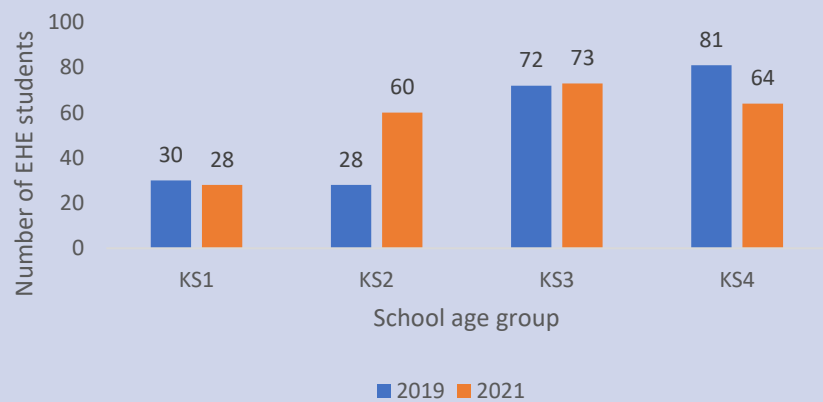
The pupil premium grant is designed to allow schools to help disadvantaged pupils by improving their progress and the exam results they achieve.

The graph below shows eligibility for free school meals within North East Lincolnshire. Eligibility for free school meals was higher in 2021 than in previous years (28.6). It was also higher than the national average in 2021 (20.4).

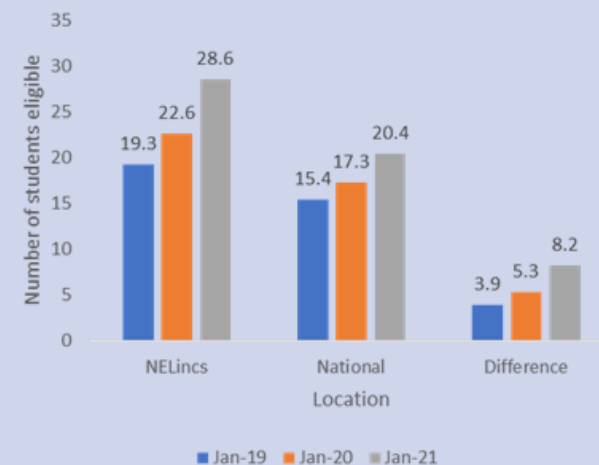
The LA received 889 laptops and 101 Wi-Fi dongles in the first allocation in June 2020. After this, a further set of 143 laptops were delivered to our maintained schools by January 2021, so the total laptops is 1032. However, the number of Laptops given out by schools was likely much higher, as schools were able to place their own orders for supplies outside of the LA.

Students who require additional help from the pupil premium scheme are more likely to struggle academically, so it has been suggested that the pupil premium scheme is expanded to provide additional support to these children (in the form of catch up lessons, 1-to-1 tutoring, etc.). (Whitehead, Taylor-Robinson, Barr, 2021; Montacute, 2020; Major, Machin, 2020; Sharp et al, 2020).

Number of Electively Home Educated (EHE) students by School age group



FSM Eligibility



1. Whitehead, M., Taylor-Robinson, D., & Barr, B. (2021). Poverty, health, and covid-19.
2. SOCIAL MOBILITY AND COVID-19 - Montacute, R. (2020). Social mobility and Covid-19. Implications of the Covid-19 crisis for educational inequality. Sutton Trust, London, UK.
3. Covid-19 and social mobility Major, L. E., & Machin, S. (2020). Covid-19 and social mobility.
4. Sharp, C., Nelson, J., Lucas, M., Julius, J., McCrone, T., & Sims, D. (2020). Schools' Responses to COVID-19: The Challenges Facing Schools and Pupils in September 2020. National Foundation for Educational Research.