

SEND Trends and the Academisation Effect

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Background of the study

Background on academisation in England

- Establishment of Academies and Free schools
 - Existing schools encouraged to convert to Academies and be self-governing (*converter* type of Academies).
 - Existing schools required to convert because of poor performance to become an Academy under the control of a sponsor (*sponsored* type of Academies).
 - New schools set up under the initiative of parents, voluntary organisations or religious groups (free schools).
- All have more autonomy than maintained schools (organisation, curriculum and staffing) though they are not permitted to formally select pupils by attainment / abilities.
- Maintained schools (under control of Local Authority) still exist.

Breakdown of Schools by classifications

Type	Year	Primary	Secondary	State Special	PRU / AP	Total
Maintained schools	2011	16800	2911	956	425	21092
	2014	14961	1426	842	333	17562
	2017	13009	1070	728	236	15043
Sponsored Academies	2011	0	255	0	0	255
	2014	500	454	11	0	965
	2017	1069	601	38	15	1723
Converter Academies	2011	35	98	0	0	133
	2014	1186	1276	89	16	2567
	2017	2514	1455	171	43	4183
Free schools	2011	0	0	0	0	0
	2014	53	68	8	18	147
	2017	118	137	23	34	312
Total	2011	16385	3264	956	425	21030
	2014	16700	3224	950	367	21241
	2017	16710	3263	960	328	21261

Background on SEND and policy change

- All pupils with a Statement of SEN or EHC Plan have to be admitted to an Academy if the school is named in the Statement or Plan (DfE, 2014).
- Proportion of all pupils with significant SEN in English special schools:
 - Decrease from early 1980s to early 2000s (Norwich, 2002).
 - 2000 - 2006 more or less unchanged.
 - Since 2006 has started to increase, for the first time in 30 years (Black and Norwich, 2014; Ofsted, 2016).
- New Education Act and Code of Practice (DfE, 2014) changed identification processes regarding classification of SEN
 - Pupils with most severe SEN (Statements before 2014; Educational, Health, Care (EHC) Plans after).
 - Pupils identified with SEN at less severe level (School Action and School Action plus before 2014; SEN support after).

Background on SEND and policy change

- Different percentages of pupils with significant SEN between academies and maintained English secondary schools (Norwich and Black, 2015)
 - Converter Academies (the most autonomous of the types) had the lowest percentage of pupils with Statements of SEN,
 - Sponsored Academies (required to convert and governed by outside sponsor) had the highest percentage of Statements,
 - Maintained schools (remaining as local authority schools) had percentages between these levels.
- Anecdotal evidence of Academies being more unwilling to offer places to pupils with significant SENs, deploying covert selection (IPPR, 2014).

- “National statistics on special educational needs in England”
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-special-educational>
- Underlying data file for each year (2011 – 2017)

National Statistics

Special educational needs in England: January 2017



From: Department for Education
Part of: Statistics: special educational needs (SEN) and Special educational needs and disability (SEND)
Published: 27 July 2017
Applies to: England

Information from the school census on pupils with special educational needs (SEN), and SEN provision in schools.

Documents



[Main text: SFR37/2017](#)

PDF, 726KB, 14 pages



[National tables: SFR37/2017](#)

MS Excel Spreadsheet, 163KB

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)



[Local authority tables: SFR37/2017](#)

MS Excel Spreadsheet, 456KB

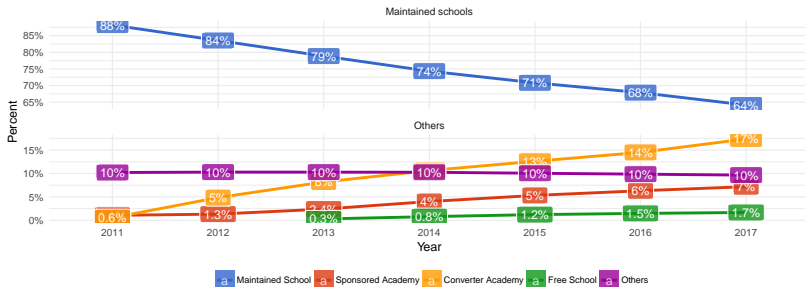
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- **School level data**
- Number of pupils with statements / EHC Plans
- Number of children on SEN support
- Type of schools
- Date of conversion (if applicable)

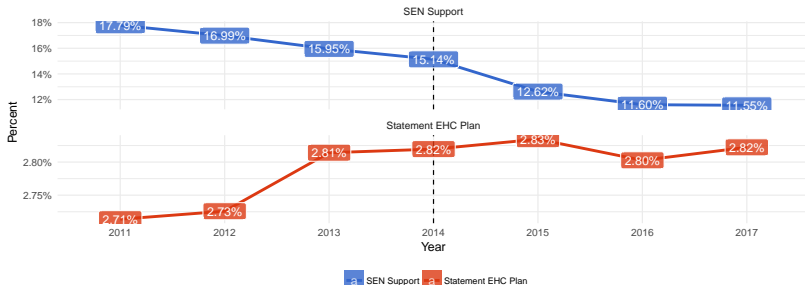
Descriptive statistics and statistical analysis

Academisation and SEN – overall trends

Schools

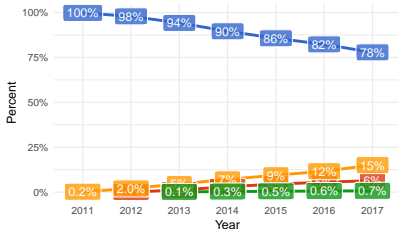


SEN variables

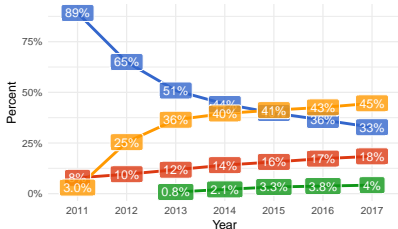


Academisation of schools

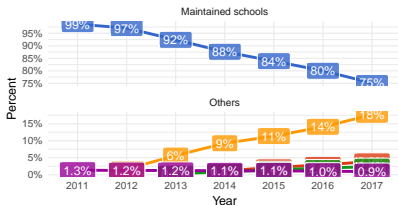
Primary Mainstream Schools



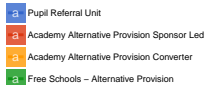
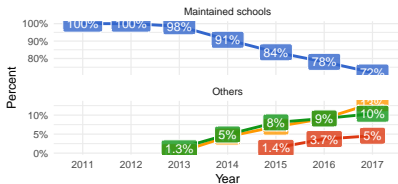
Secondary Mainstream Schools



State Special Schools

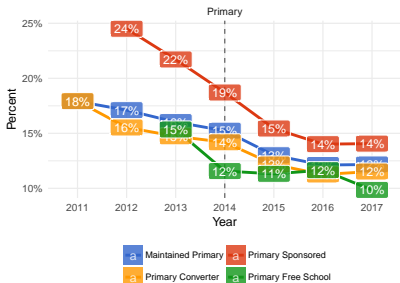


Pupil Referral Units

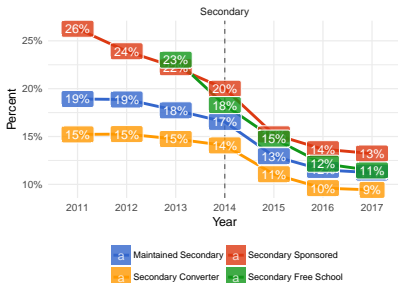


SEN support

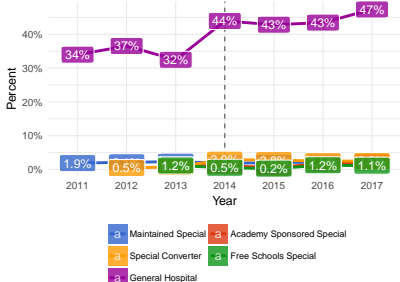
SEN Support, Primary Mainstream Schools



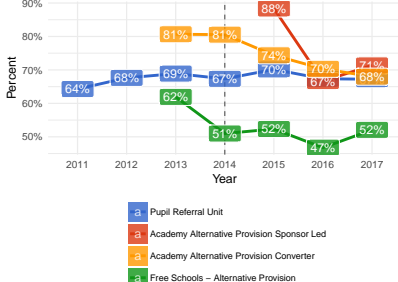
SEN Support, Secondary Mainstream Schools



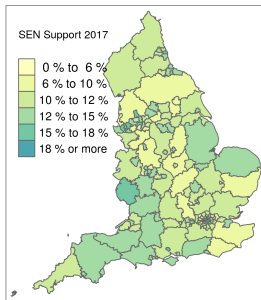
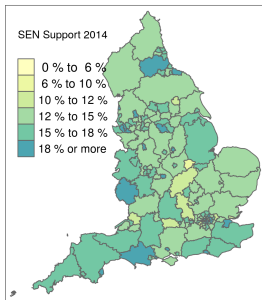
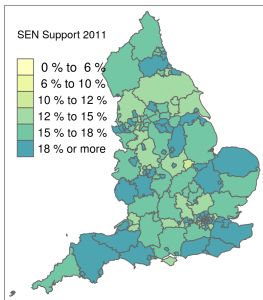
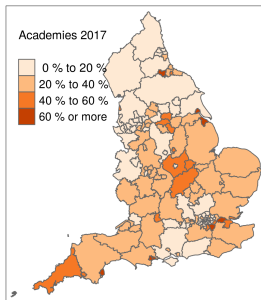
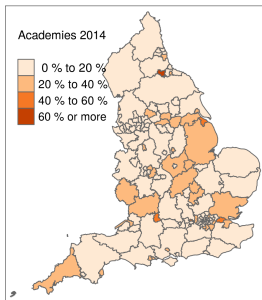
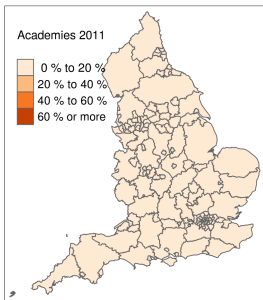
SEN Support, State Special Schools



SEN Support, Pupil Referral Units



Academisation and SEN support – regional breakdown



Statistical approach – propensity-score matching

First, from the sample (2011 - 2017) of *never-academised* schools and *predecessor* schools, we select four subsamples: **primary schools**, **secondary schools**, **state special schools**, and **pupil referral units**.

And for the following academisation treatment policies:

1. Conversion to a sponsored academy or a converter academy (general effect);
2. Conversion to a sponsored academy;
3. Conversion to a converter academy,

we construct their respective balanced sample using propensity-score matching, with these baseline (2011) covariates: **total pupils**, **local authority**, **SEN support proportion**, **SEN statement EHC plan proportion**.

Statistical approach – regression model

We then estimate the following regression model with fixed effects:

$$Y_{it} = \delta A_{it} + \gamma_i + \lambda_t + \epsilon_{it}$$
$$i = 1, \dots, N;$$
$$t = 2012, \dots, 2017$$

- Y_{it} : Percentage of pupils with SEN support $\frac{\text{SEN Support}}{\text{Total Pupils}} \times 100$;
- $A_{it} \in \{0, 1\}$: = 1 when school i has received the *academisation treatment* at time t ;
- δ : $\delta\%$ change to pupils with SEN support associated with academisation;
 - Whole sample: $\hat{\delta} = E(y_{it}^1) - E(y_{it}^0)$
 - PSM sample: $\hat{\delta} = E(y_{it}^1 | A_{it} = 1) - E(y_{it}^0 | A_{it} = 1)$
- γ_i, λ_t : Individual idiosyncratic effects and time effects.

Effect of academisation on SEN

Sample	Treatment	δ	
		Matched sample	Whole sample
Main primary	General Academy	-0.562 *** (0.113)	-0.991 *** (0.106)
	Sponsored Academy	-0.314 (0.234)	-1.862 *** (0.207)
	Converter Academy	-0.623 *** (0.125)	-0.635 *** (0.119)
Main secondary	General Academy	-0.256 (0.281)	-0.877 *** (0.235)
	Sponsored Academy	-1.177 ** (0.532)	-2.176 *** (0.484)
	Converter Academy	0.232 (0.283)	-0.229 (0.249)

Effect of academisation on SEN

Sample	Treatment	δ	
		Matched sample	Whole sample
State special	General Academy	-0.043 (0.309)	0.484 * (0.265)
	Sponsored Academy	1.708 *** (0.564)	0.951 ** (0.407)
	Converter Academy	-0.106 (0.347)	0.398 (0.302)
PRU	General Academy	0.986 (9.853)	-7.517 ** (3.331)
	Sponsored Academy	-20.680 ** (9.869)	-6.526 (5.286)
	Converter Academy	-24.170 * (13.530)	-8.074 ** (4.026)

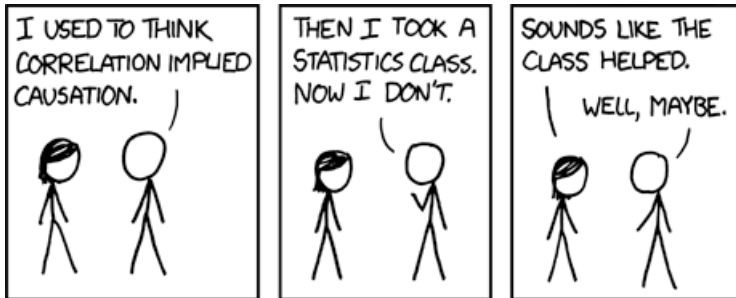
What we found so far

Effect of academisation on SEN support:

- Effect sizes are small in magnitude;
- Effects vary by school types.

We do not make claims on causal relationships, because:

- We need to control for more confounding factors;
- We need to understand more about the underlying mechanisms.



Conclusions

- We see some academisation effect, however ...
- Need to engage with many other variables that might have causal effects, which is why we are engaging with pupil level data in the NPD.

Thank you for your attention!

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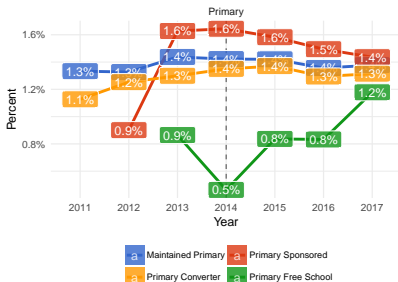
References

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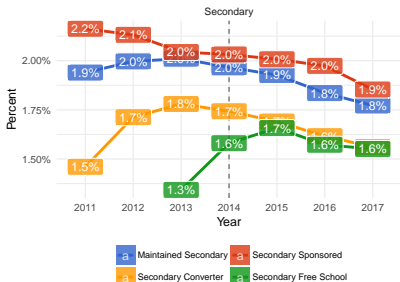
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- Ofsted (2016), *The Annual Report of HM Chief Inspector of Education, 2015-2016*, Ofsted.

Appendix: SEN Statement EHC plans

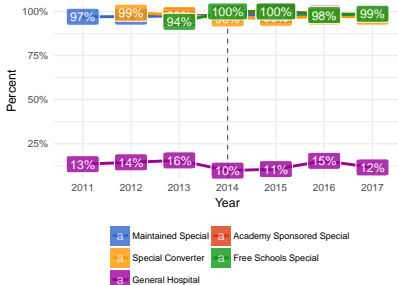
Statement EHC Plans, Primary Mainstream Schools



Statement EHC Plans, Secondary Mainstream School



Statement EHC Plans, State Special Schools



Statement EHC Plans, Pupil Referral Units

