**Is there any statistical backing for ‘the bias to inclusion’ SEN policy of the Coalition Government, towards disabled children and those with special educational needs in the English education system?**

Richard Rieser Campaign to Reverse the Bias to Segregation

It is being argued by David Cameron and then the Coalition Government that their is a bias to inclusion in the English Education System. What do government statistics tell us about this?

Table 1 is taken from Department for education Annual SEN Statistics and is based on the Pupil Level Annual School Census completed by Special Educational Coordinators (SENCO) in all state schools every January. It also draws on a return from Local Authority SEN sections. Colum A is the year from 1994 to 2011. Column B is the total number of children in the school system. Column C is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Column D is the percentage of the school population who have a statement. Column E gives the percentage of children with a statement in mainstream schools which include units and resource bases. Column F shows the number of pupils with SEN , but not with a statement. Column G shows the number of pupils in Local Authority and Non-maintained special schools. Column H shows the number of pupils with statements in Independent schools and in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). Column I shows the total pupils in special schools and those with statements in PRUs and in independent schools. Of course this figure would be much higher if all those with SEN in PRUs were added (J). This goes up considerably in 2007 when those in other provision an in FE colleges who are still of school age are Column K is the numbers segregated because they are disabled or have SEN in special schools, non-maintained special schools , PRU’s and other provision and is perhaps the best indicator of the level of segregation. This does not exclude those out of school altogether and not receiving education or those in hospital schools or juvenile detention centres.

While it is true the numbers in special schools fell by 205 (L) over the period and the numbers on their roll dropped by from 1994 to 2006 by 9,583, but the last four years have seen a resurgence in enrolment so overall special school numbers are only4,698 below the 1994 level in 2011. However if other locations where children with SEN are placed outside the mainstream school are added we get a very different picture. Two factors over the period are the number of children with local authority statements in independent schools that has risen from 5,485 to 9,750 over the period and Pupil Referral Units for excluded pupils, which started in 1995 with 5,043 and peeked in 2009 with 3,230 pupils with statements and 16,360 with non-statemented SEN. This figure from 2007 included pupils under 16 placed in Further Education, or in other provision who have SEN. The net effect has been despite New Labours commitment to developing inclusive education in the 1997 Green Paper and 2001 SEN Disability Act numbers with SEN in segregation have gone up from 103,848 in 1994 to 115,125 in 2011. It is true there was a small drop to 101,078 in 2006, but following Mary Warnock changing her mind about inclusion and the select committee and new flexibilities to place school students in FE the number segregated because of SEN has grown back to 115, 125. So where is the bias to inclusion?

**Table 1 England SEN Statistics 19945 to 2011.** (Source Research and Statistics DES, DfES, DCFS, DFE)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| YEAR  (A) | Total Pupils  (B) | Nos.  Statement (C) | %ST  (D) | % ST in  Main  (E) | Nos. SEN,No statment  (F) | Nos. in  Special  School (G) | State in Indep +  PRU (H) | Total  G+H  (I) | Nos. in PRU SEN no- statement  (J) | Total in Segregation  (K) | Nos. Special Schools  (L) |
| 1994 | 7,882,835 | 194,541 | 2.5 | 51.8 | - | 98,973 | 5,458 | 103,848 | - | 103,848 | 1310 |
| 1995 | 8,107,830 | 211,307 | 2.6 | 53.6 | 792,233 | 98,390 | 7,151 | 105,541 | - | 109,259 | 1291 |
| 1996 | 8,116,543 | 227,307 | 2.8 | 56 | 1,103,426 | 98,076 | 7,638 | 106,028 | 3,227 | 109,255 | 1263 |
| 1997 | 8,194,964 | 234,629 | 2.9 | 57.2 | 1,222,973 | 98,249 | 8,154 | 108,403 | 3,915 | 112,345 | 1239 |
| 1998 | 8,260,582 | 242,294 | 2.9 | 58.4 | 1,331,219 | 98,427 | 8,248 | 106,675 | 4,270 | 110,945 | 1229 |
| 1999 | 8,310,476 | 284,041 | 3.0 | 59.5 | 1,409,811 | 97,693 | 8,747 | 106,440 | 4,906 | 111,346 | 1209 |
| 2000 | 8,345,815 | 252,857 | 3.0 | 60.5 | 1,465,106 | 96,570 | 8,582 | 105,152 | 4,425 | 109,577 | 1197 |
| 2001 | 8,374,100 | 258,200 | 3.1 | 61.1 | 1,556,156 | 95,600 | 8,400 | 104,000 | 4,768 | 108,768 | 1175 |
| 2002 | 8,369,081 | 248,982 | 3.0 | 60.2 | 1,401,995 | 94,467 | 8,813 | 103,280 | 4,940 | 108,220 | 1161 |
| 2003 | 8,366,780 | 250,550 | 3.0 | 60.3 | 1,169,780 | 93,880 | 9,000 | 102,880 | 5,600 | 108,480 | 1160 |
| 2004 | 8,344,880 | 247,590 | 2.9 | 60.3 | 1,197,490 | 91,770 | 10,100 | 101,870 | 6,440 | 108,310 | 1148 |
| 2005 | 8,274,470 | 242,580 | 2.9 | 59.6 | 1,230,800 | 90,370 | 10,190 | 100,560 | 6,540 | 107,100 | 1122 |
| 2006 | 8,215,960 | 236,750 | 2.9 | 59.2 | 1,293,250 | 89,390 | 10,500 | 99,890 | 7,780 | 101,078 | 1105 |
| 2007 | 8,167,715 | 232,760 | 2.8 | 57.7 | 1,344,505 | 91,750 | 10,920 | 102,670 | 16,185 | 118,855 | 1077 |
| 2008 | 8,121,955 | 227,315 | 2.8 | 56.7 | 1,402,895 | 91,830 | 11,315 | 103,146 | 15,685 | 118,831 | 1065 |
| 2009 | 8,092,280 | 225,400 | 2.8 | 56.1 | 1,447,205 | 92,270 | 11,920 | 104,190 | 16,360 | 120,550 | 1056 |
| 2010 | 8,098,360 | 223,945 | 2.8 | 54.8 | 1,481,035 | 93,230 | 11,380 | 104,618 | 9,670 | 114,288 | 1050 |
| 2011 | 8,123,865 | 224,210 | 2.8 | 54.3 | 1,449,685 | 94,275 | 11,445 | 105,720 | 9,405 | 115,125 | 1046 |