

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE GROWING UP IN IRELAND STUDY

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**Educational
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Foras Taighde ar Oideachas

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OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- A very selective look at the findings – time is limited!
- Prevalence and stability
- A selection of key findings:
 - Children's outcomes at age 13
 - Progress and change between age 9 and age 13
 - Change and progress over time: What matters?
- Discussion and Conclusion

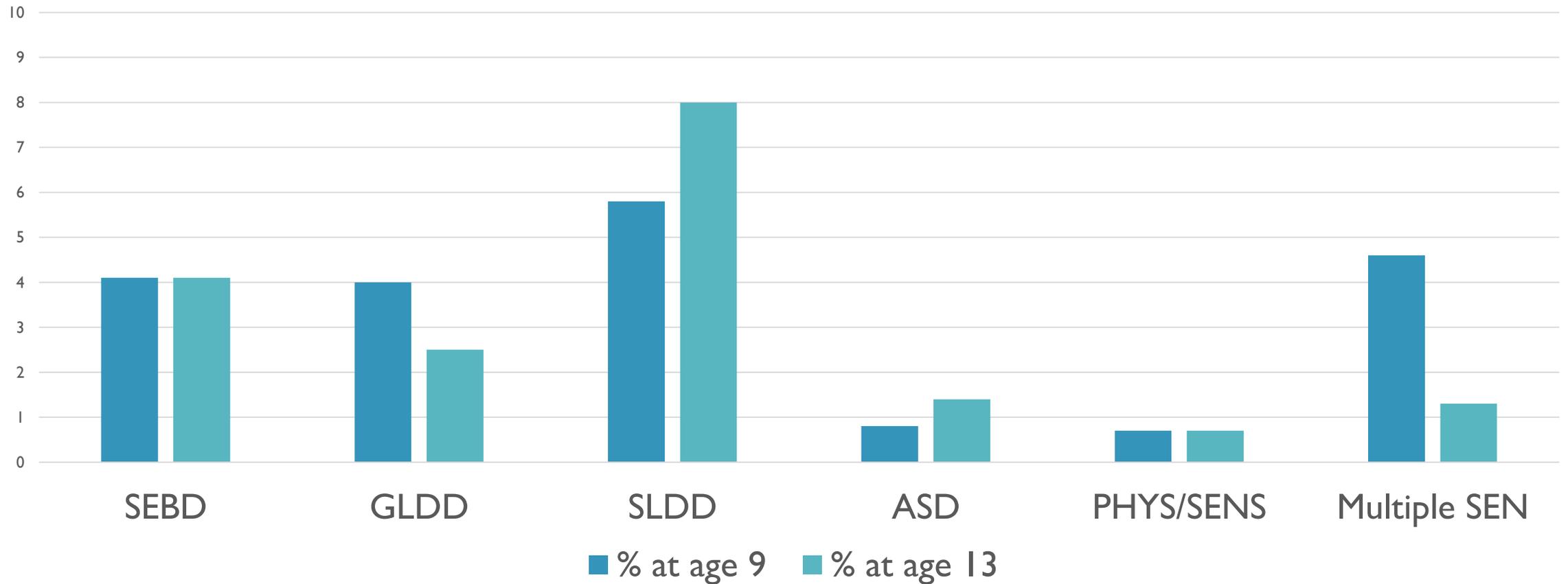


Prevalence and Stability

PREVALENCE OF SEN AT AGE 9 AND 13 (1)

Group	% at age 9	% at age 13
Children without special educational needs	79.9	82.1
Children with special educational needs	20.1	17.9
All children (N = 7525)	100.0	100.0

PREVALENCE OF SEN AT AGE 9 AND 13 (2)



STABILITY OF SEN (1)

SEN group	%
No SEN	73.2
SEN at age 9 only	8.9
SEN at age 13 only	6.8
SEN at age 9 and age 13	11.2
Total	100.0

STABILITY OF SEN (2)

Children with SEN at both age 9 and age 13:

- Children with ASD were the most stable group (85%)
- Children with multiple SEN and children with GLDD were the least likely to stay in the same group between age 9 and 13.
- About half of the children with PHYS/SENS and SEBD remained in their groups at age 13.

STABILITY OF SEN (3)

SEN at age 9 only:

- 3 in 10 children - SEBD
- 3 in 10 children - GLDD
- 1 in 6 children - SLDD.

SEN at age 13 only:

- 4 in 10 children - SEBD
- 1 in 7 children - GLDD
- 3 in 10 children - SLDD.

SES AND SEN

- Strong relationship between SES and SEN found among the 13 year old children. This was also found in the data when the children were age 9.
- There is evidence of clustering of SEN in certain types of schools.
- Bi-directional evidence from the financial stress indicators: higher percentages of families of children with SEN were worse off and better off at age 13, than for families with children without special educational needs.



Children's outcomes at age 13
&
Progress and change between
age 9 and age 13

CHILDREN'S LIKING OF SCHOOL AT AGE 13 (1)

Group	N	Like it very much	Like it quite a bit	Like it a bit	Don't like it very much	Hate it	Total
Children without special educational needs	5404	30.4	34.3	25.8	7.5	2.1	100.0
Children with special educational needs	1944	24.5	27.8	30.2	10.7	6.7	100.0
All children	7348	28.9	32.6	26.9	8.3	3.3	100.0

CHILDREN'S LIKING OF SCHOOL AT AGE 13 (2)

- A large majority of children with or without SEN report liking school at least 'a bit'.
- Reports of disliking school were twice as frequent among children with SEN compared to children without SEN.
- Children with PHYS/SENS are almost ten times more likely to hate school than children without SEN.
- Children with SEBD also reported high rates of disliking school (13.3%).
- Almost one-third (30.3%) of children with ASD reported liking school very much.

WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AT AGE 13 (1)

- All groups of children with SEN reported significantly lower total wellbeing scores than children without SEN.
 - On the **Freedom from Anxiety** subscale, 5 of the 7 groups of children had significantly lower scores than children without SEN. Children with SEBD, and children with multiple SEN had the lowest scores, that were moderate to large in difference.
 - On the **Happiness and satisfaction** subscale, children with SEBD, children with multiple SEN, and children with SEN at 9 years only had significantly lower scores than children without SEN.

WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AT AGE 13 (2)

- After taking into account wellbeing at age 9:
 - Compared to children with no SEN, children in all seven groups were significantly more likely to report lower wellbeing
 - Children with SEBD, ASD, PHYS/SENS, GLDD, and Multiple SEN were most likely to report lower wellbeing
 - Children with SEBD were 5 times more likely to report lower wellbeing, compared to children without SEN.

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENT IN VERBAL REASONING AND NUMERIC ABILITY AT AGE 13 (1)

Compared to children without SEN:

- Four of the seven groups had significantly lower scores on the Verbal Reasoning test, SEBD, GLDD, SLDD and SEN at age 9 only.
- Five of the seven groups had significantly different scores on the Numeric Ability test, SEBD, GLDD, SLDD, ASD, SEN at age 9 only.
- Children with PHYS/SENS, and children with Multiple SEN did not have statistically different scores on both tests compared to children without SEN, nor did children with ASD on the Verbal Reasoning test.

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENT MATHS/NUMERIC ABILITY AT AGE 13 (2)

- Before adjustment for maths score at age 9, six of the seven groups (except PHYS/SENS) had significantly lower scores.
- After adjusting for maths scores at age 9, the differences between children without SEN are smaller. Four groups have significantly lower scores:
 - Children with GLDD had the largest differences in maths achievement, the difference is medium to large in size.
 - Differences for children with SLDD, SEN at age 9 only and SEBD are in the small to medium range.

TRANSITION TO POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL

- A large majority of parents reported that their children settled well into a post-primary setting.
- However, one in five parents reported that their child did not settle in well.
 - In each of the seven groups, parents of children with SEN reported lower transition scores than parents of children without SEN, in particular for children with ASD, SEBD, and GLDD.



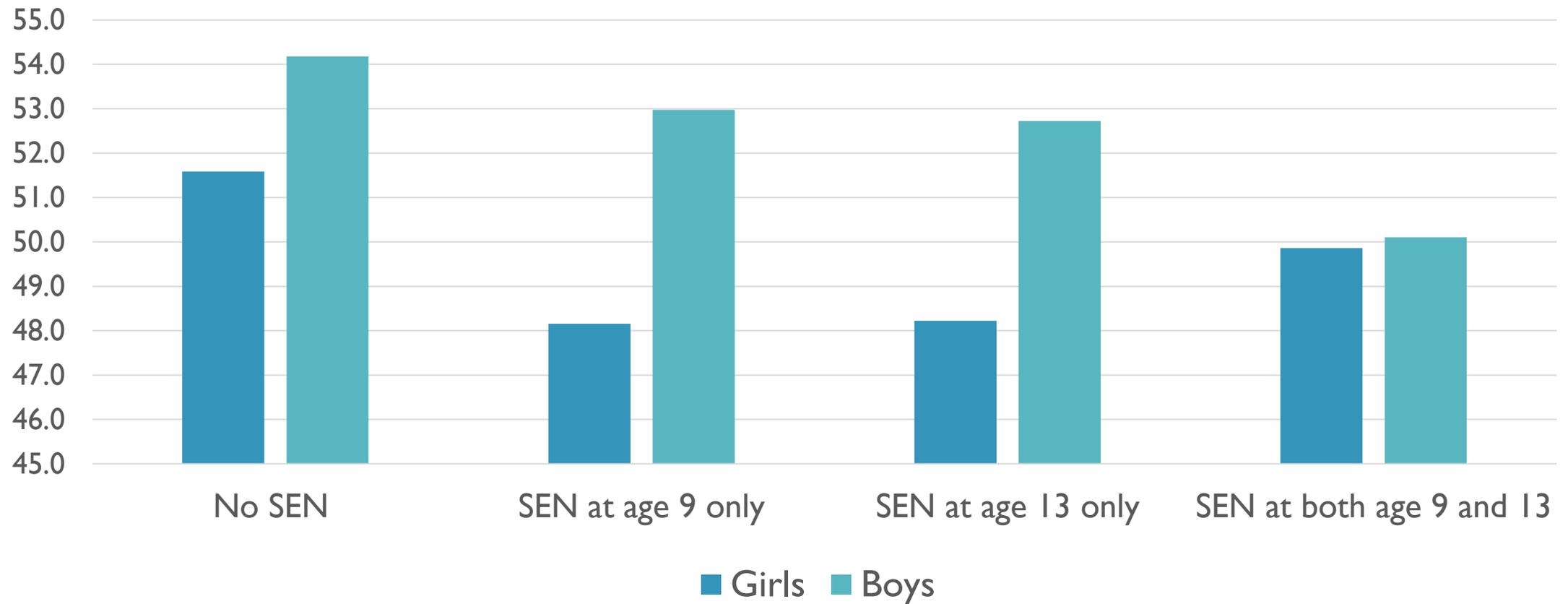
**Change and progress over time:
What matters?**

PREDICTORS OF WELLBEING AT AGE 13 (PIERS- HARRIS)

- SEN at both ages 9 and 13, SEN at age 13 only
- Being bullied at age 9
- Being a girl
- Being in second year
- Being part of a one-parent household at age 9 and age 13

- Being bullied at age 13 is associated with lower wellbeing scores. Being bullied at age 9 had a moderate-sized association, with lower wellbeing at age 13. This suggests a longer-term negative impact of bullying.

GENDER AND WELLBEING AT AGE 13



GENDER AND WELLBEING AT AGE 13 (2)

- For all children, boys have significantly higher wellbeing than girls.
- The gender difference in favour of boys is larger for children with SEN at age 9 only, and at age 13 only.
- Therefore, girls are more vulnerable than boys when identified at age 9 or age 13 only.
- Surprisingly, similar levels of wellbeing were observed for boys and girls with SEN at both ages 9 and 13.

PREDICTION OF MATHS ACHIEVEMENT AT AGE 13 (1)

- After taking into account of children's maths scores at age 9, children with SEN have lower than expected maths scores at age 13.
- Children with SEN at both ages 9 and 13 have the lowest maths achievement, a difference that is small to medium in size.
- Children with SEN at age 9 only and at age 13 only have scores that have a small but significant difference in maths achievement to children without SEN.

PREDICTORS OF MATHS/NUMERIC ABILITY ACHIEVEMENT AT AGE 13 (2)

- Being in a SEN group
- Having a lower maths score at age 9
- Being a girl
- Being in second year
- Having parents with lower educational attainment
- Being in a DEIS Band 1 primary school
- Reporting a lower liking of school
- Being in a post-primary DEIS status



Key Findings and Implications

PREVALENCE AND STABILITY

- Prevalence estimates of SEN are similar for ages 9 and 13. However, there is movement in within and between groups of children with and without SEN.
- Looking at the profile of children who had SEN at age 9 only and age 13 only, there is more pronounced variation in prevalence for some groups, particularly SEBD.
- Ongoing assessment of children is required, recognising the variation in prevalence over time. This has an impact on professional development and support.
- The availability of assessment tools is important to identify social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This was also raised in the Wave 1 (Age 9) report.
- The literature on point and cumulative prevalence suggests that it is worth monitoring children with SEBD as they progress into adolescence, particularly children with internalising behaviours that 'wax and wane' over time.

SES, GENDER AND SEN

- A close association between SES and SEN is evident in the findings, at individual **and** school levels.
- Gender differences for children with SEN are also highlighted in the findings.
- Strong evidence from this analysis to support the inclusion of socio-economic disadvantage measures and gender in the new model for resource allocation.

OTHER FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS (1)

- Continuity in many outcomes for children, however, outcomes for many groups of children with SEN are still lower than for children without special educational needs.
- A majority of children of SEN report that they like school. However, children with SEN are more likely to report a lower liking of school. Poor student engagement can start early, and the results show that for some children it worsens over time.
- 4 out of 5 parents report that their children with SEN transition well to post-primary school. However, children with SEN transition less well to post-primary school than children without SEN.
- Given the higher rates of less positive transition experiences in this study for children with SEN, targeted supports may be better placed to support some children, covering educational and socio-emotional elements.

OTHER FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS (2)

- Children with SEN have significantly lower maths/numeric ability achievement than expected. There is a difference in children's achievement in reading and mathematics; the gap in mathematics achievement is widening over time.
- Dislike of school at primary (age 9) is associated with lower achievement in mathematics at age 13.
- A rebalancing between literacy and numeracy supports in schools may be required.

OTHER FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS (3)

- For some children their wellbeing has improved, compared to their wellbeing at age 9. This was more pronounced for children with SEN which is positive.
- However, at age 13, each of the seven groups of children with SEN report significantly lower levels of wellbeing than children without SEN.
- Looking at the scores for children with SEN, significantly lower wellbeing in particular for SEBD, GLDD and Multiple/Unclassified SEN.
- Children with SEN at age 9 only are doing less well than expected, suggesting a long-term impact of having special educational needs in childhood.