

Benchmarking Inclusive Practice in the Northwest and Merseyside 2007

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Introduction

Welcome to the last regional benchmarking report of the NW Regional Partnership.

The benchmarking group had already decided, before the news that the funding for regional partnerships was to cease, that this exercise had run its course. The demise of the partnerships has come as a disappointment, but in terms of benchmarking, we believe that the growth in expertise we have experienced in our region in this area will enable individual authorities to move forward and produce their own customised information to suit local need.

Over the course of the past five years the National Performance Framework has developed substantially, although that development has perhaps stalled in the last 12 months due to personnel changes at DCSF. This is a great shame, as it seemed that work was being undertaken to make the NPF more responsive in terms of the timeliness of information, and also of the broadening agenda we are now engaged in. It remains a useful source of information, as long as you do not need very up-to-date figures.

Through our seminars we have also shared ways of working and systems for using benchmarking information, with active engagement from almost all the NW authorities.

As ever, the benchmarking group would like to pay tribute to the encouragement and support of Karen Gleave, the Regional Partnership Facilitator, whose tireless efforts and perceptive comments have influenced our work and spurred us on. We would also like to thank Ian Southern for providing administrative support, and Rebecca Underwood, who has had the task of collecting and collating the information, and producing the final report.

Into the future, I hope that the work of the regional hub will assist us in moving on regionally: it seems to me that there is a great strength in the links we have made over the years, and a huge enthusiasm here in the north-west for promoting good outcomes and opportunities for children with special and additional needs.

I hope this report will be useful to you in that work.

Claire Bibby
for the Benchmarking Group

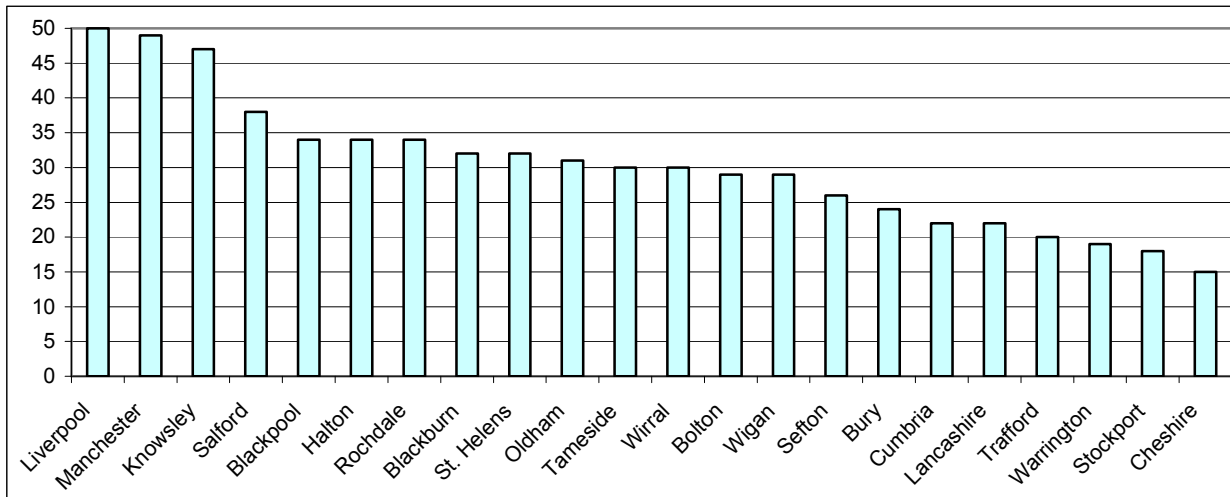
May 2008.

Section 1: Contextual Data

The following data has been extracted from the National Performance Framework, from information sent in by LAs via the SEN2 statistical return, that authorities are expected to complete in January of each year.

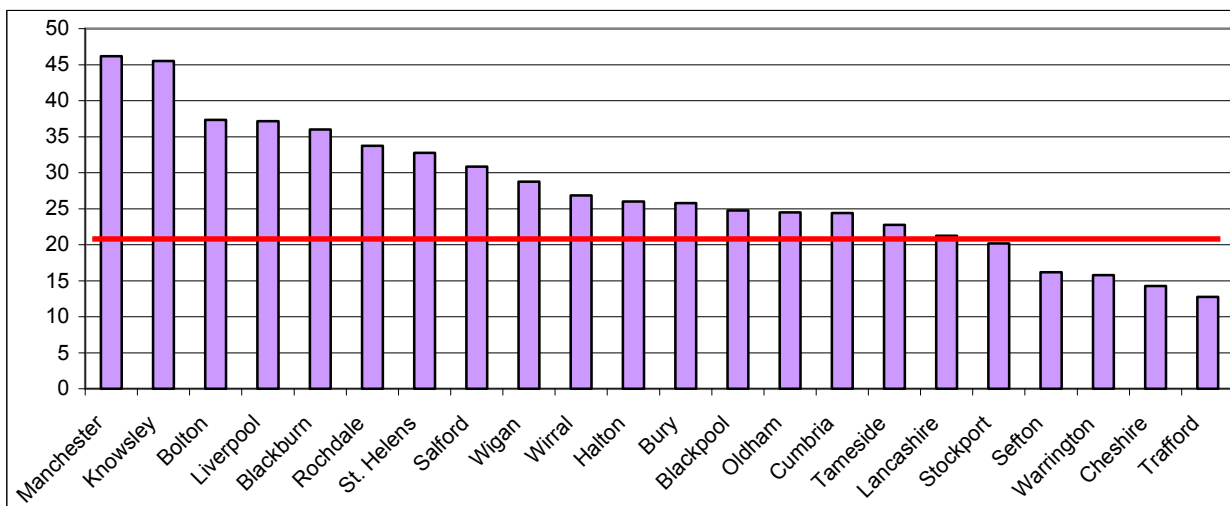
Both Graphs 1 and 2 are measures of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (Graph 1) takes into account deprivation in areas including income, education, employment, health and housing.

Graph 1: Index of Multiple Deprivation
Source: NPF 2004



The ordering in the two graphs, although not exactly the same does show some similarities, indicating that they are both measuring similar underlying factors.

Graph 2: % Pupils eligible for FSM
Source: NPF 2005

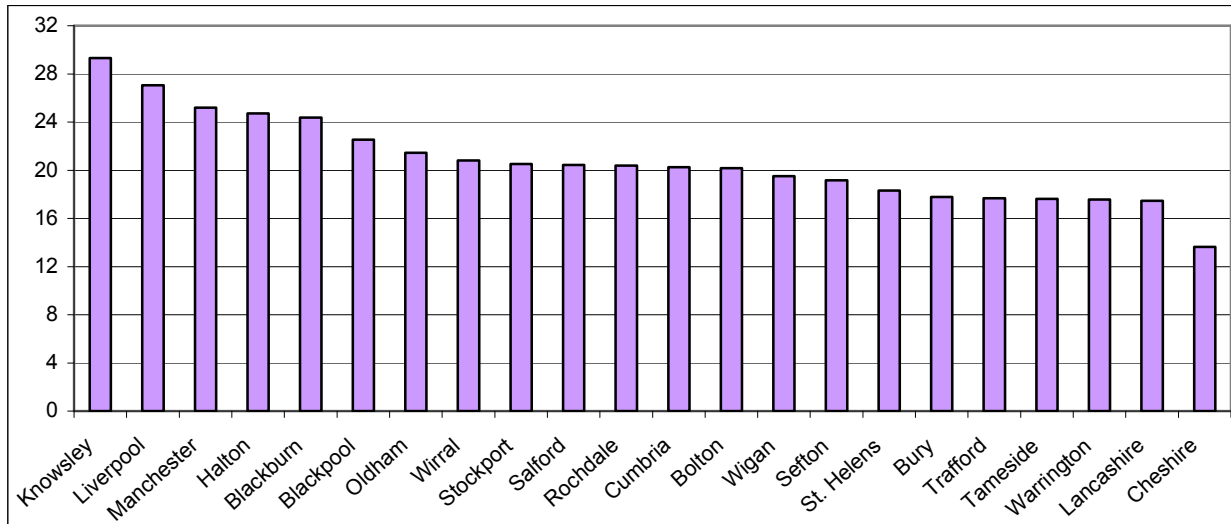


There is quite a significant variation between the most and least deprived LAs. Manchester IMD score is almost four times that of Trafford. Graph 2 also includes the National Average line. It can be noted that 16 out of the 22 authorities have FSM rates above the national average.

Section 2: Information relating to the Statutory Process

According to the Education Act (1981), 20% of children will have special educational needs at some point in their lives. This figure is still widely used as a comparison by many Local Authorities. Some of these children will require a statement, however as shown below, some can have their needs met without a statement.

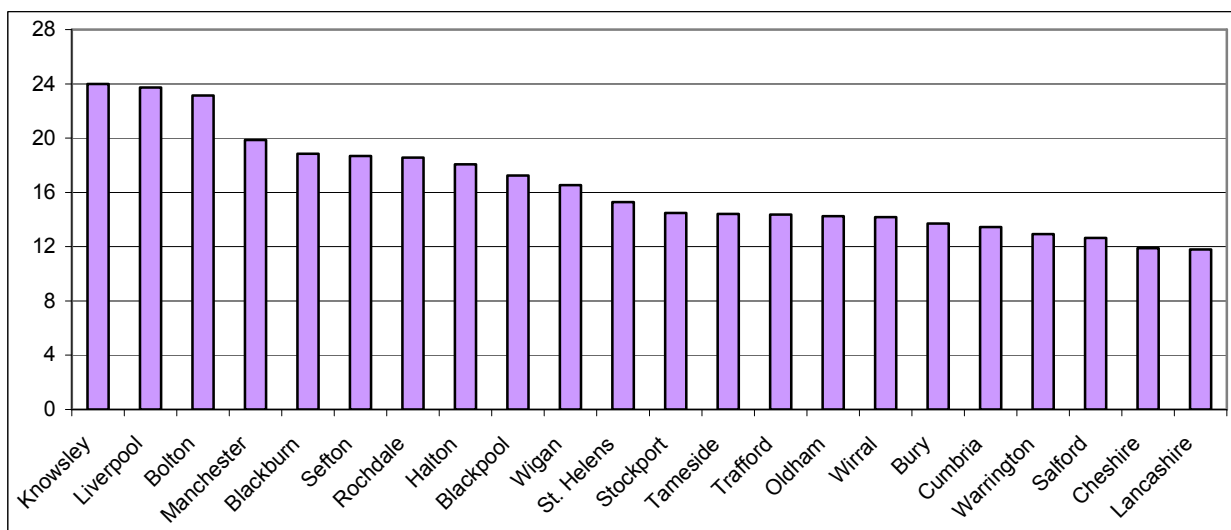
Graph 3: % Maintained Primary School population at School Action and School Action Plus Source: NPF 2006



As can be seen in the graph above, almost all LAs have 15% or more Primary School children receiving interventions at school action and school action plus. Knowsley, Liverpool, Manchester and Halton have over a quarter of their Primary School pupils on the SEN register.

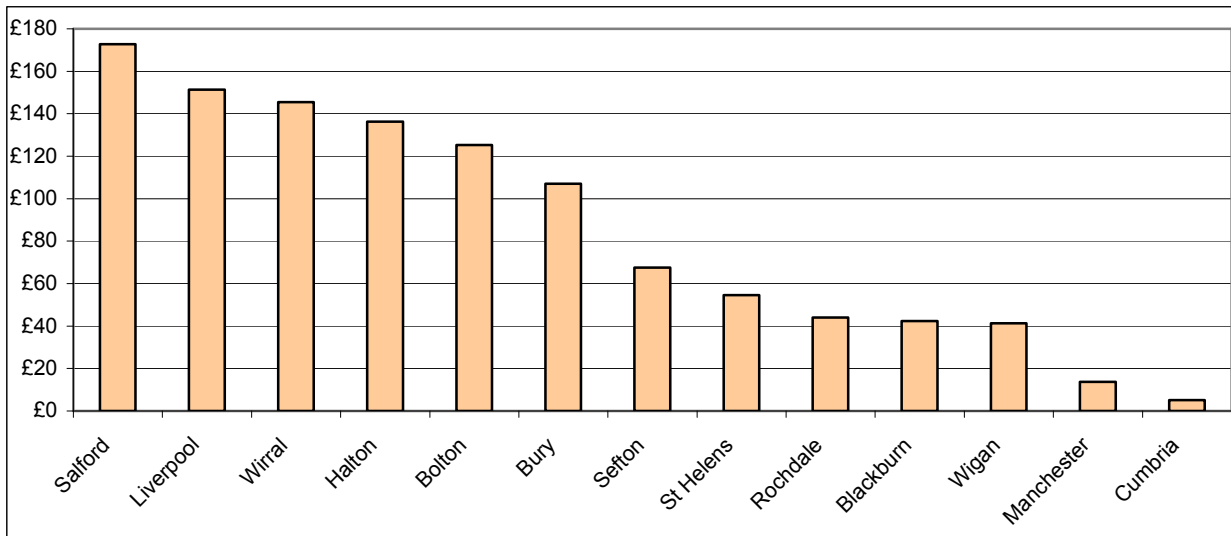
At Secondary School level, the proportion is generally lower, except for Bolton, which has a higher percentage of Secondary school pupils receiving action and action plus intervention.

Graph 4: % Maintained Secondary School Population at School Action and School Action Plus Source: NPF 2006



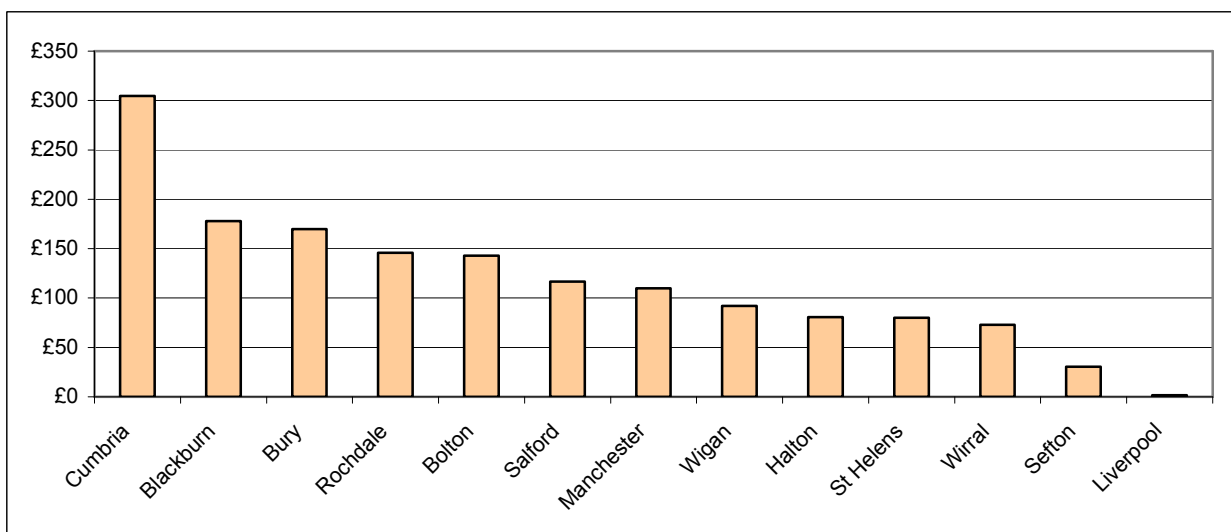
Graphs 3 and 4 correlate well with the Index of Multiple Deprivation index and Free School Meals graphs. Areas with a higher deprivation have a greater percentage of pupils with intervention at School Action and School Action plus.

Graph 5a. Delegated and Pupil Specific funding to schools to support SEN Pupils without a statement in mainstream schools per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/2007 Financial Year

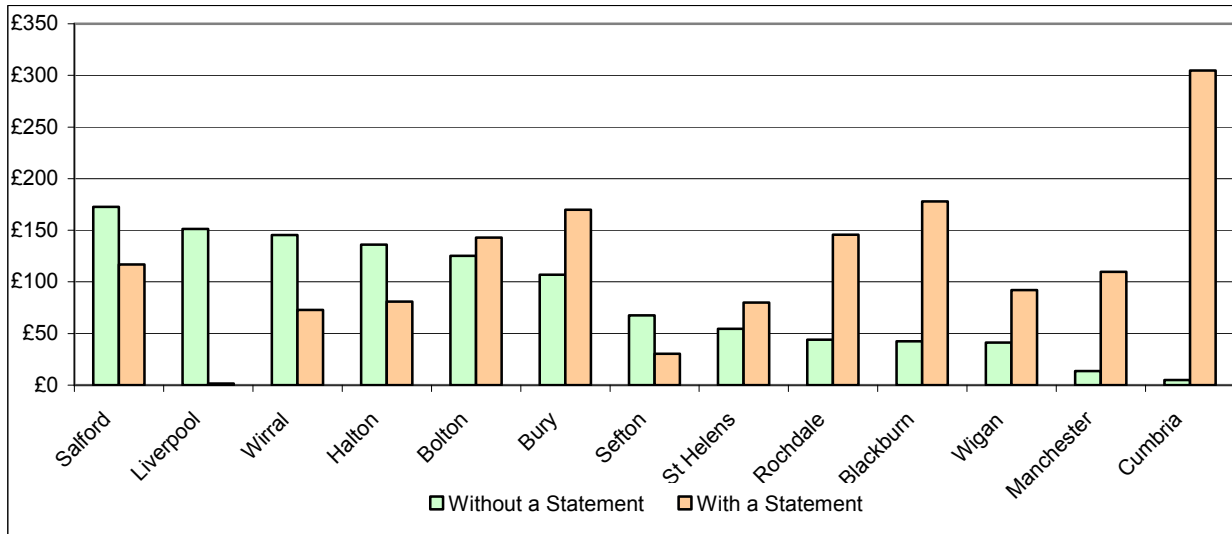


It was difficult for authorities to split the delegated and pupil specific funding to show figures for those pupils with statements and those without. However for those that were able to do so, we can see that there is quite a variation in spend to support those pupils without a statement and similarly for the graph highlighting spend on pupils with a statement.

Graph 5b. Delegated and Pupil Specific funding to schools to support SEN Pupils with a statement in mainstream schools per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/2007 Financial Year

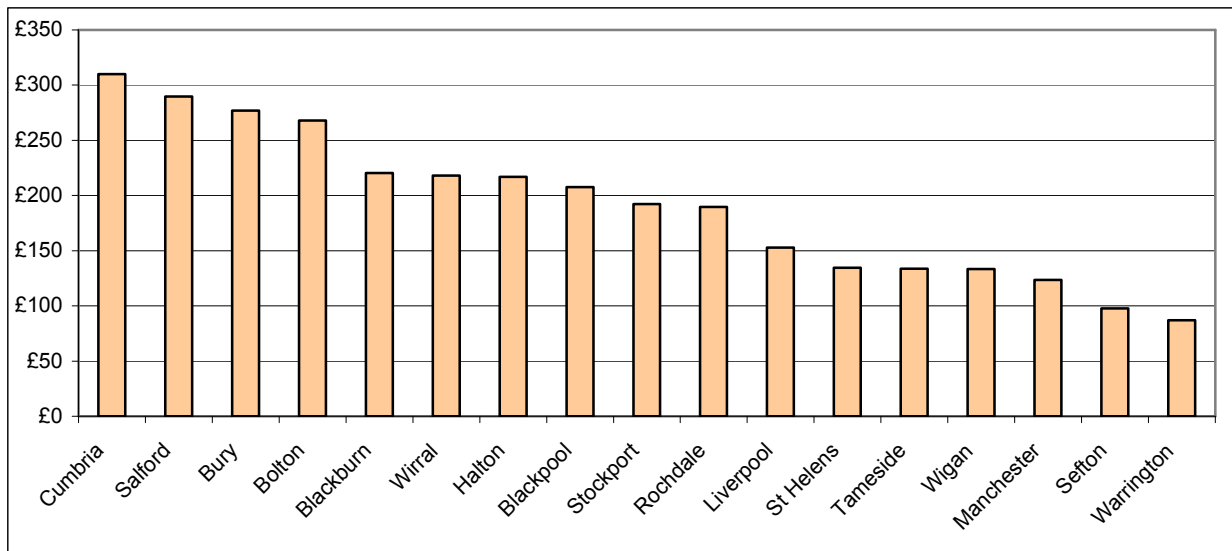


Graph 5c. Comparison of Delegated and Pupil Specific funding to schools to support SEN Pupils in mainstream schools per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/2007 Financial Year



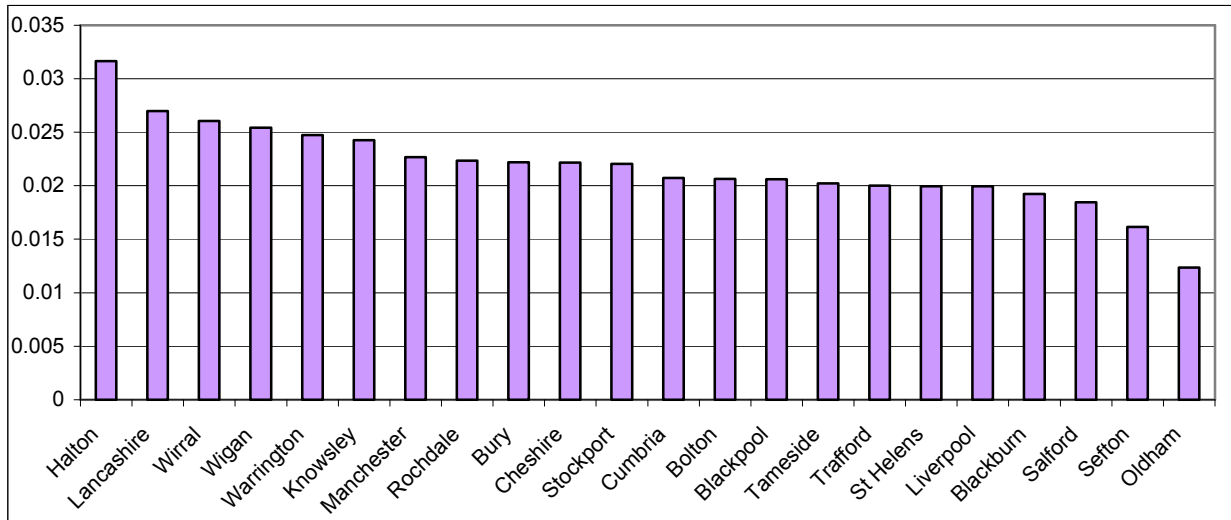
By looking at the graph above we can see there is an obvious trend. Where more money is spent on pupils without statements, less appears to be spent on those that do have statements, and vice versa.

Graph 5d. Delegated and Pupil specific funding to schools for all SEN pupils in mainstream schools per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07 Financial Year



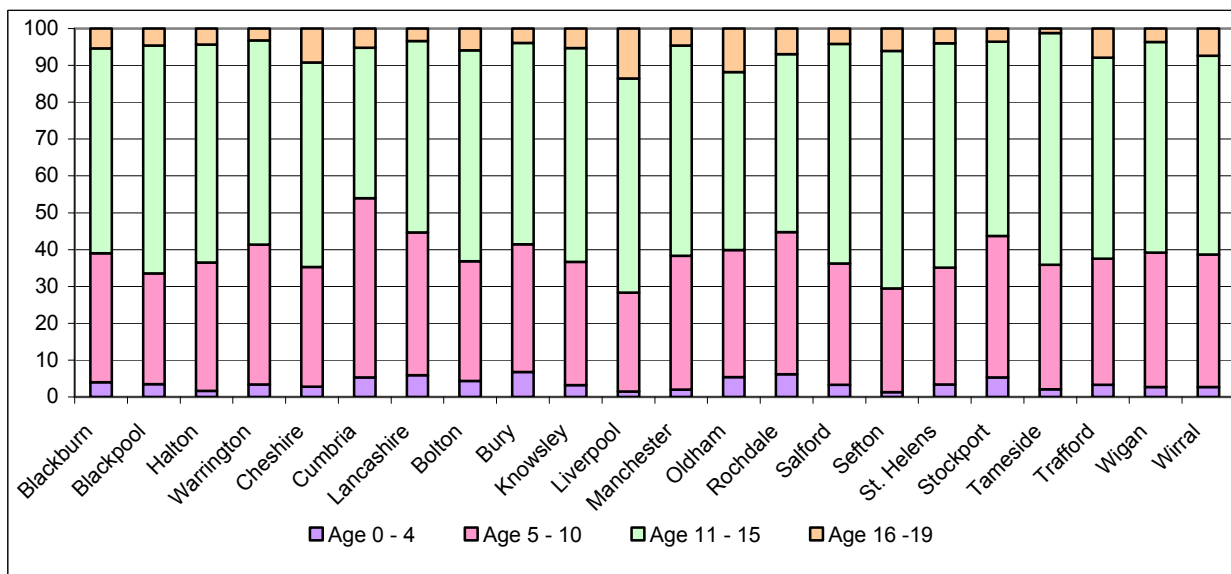
The graph above shows us the total amount spent on all SEN pupils in mainstream schools. The price differences vary greatly, with Cumbria spending three times that of Warrington.

Graph 6: % 0-19 year old population with a statement
Source: NPF 2006



Graph 6 shows that Halton has the highest population of 0-19 year olds with statements, and Oldham has the lowest amount of 0-19 years olds with statements. It's interesting that Halton and Lancashire are in the top two, as Halton actually have the lowest population of 0-19 years olds and Lancashire has the greatest population of 0-19 year olds.

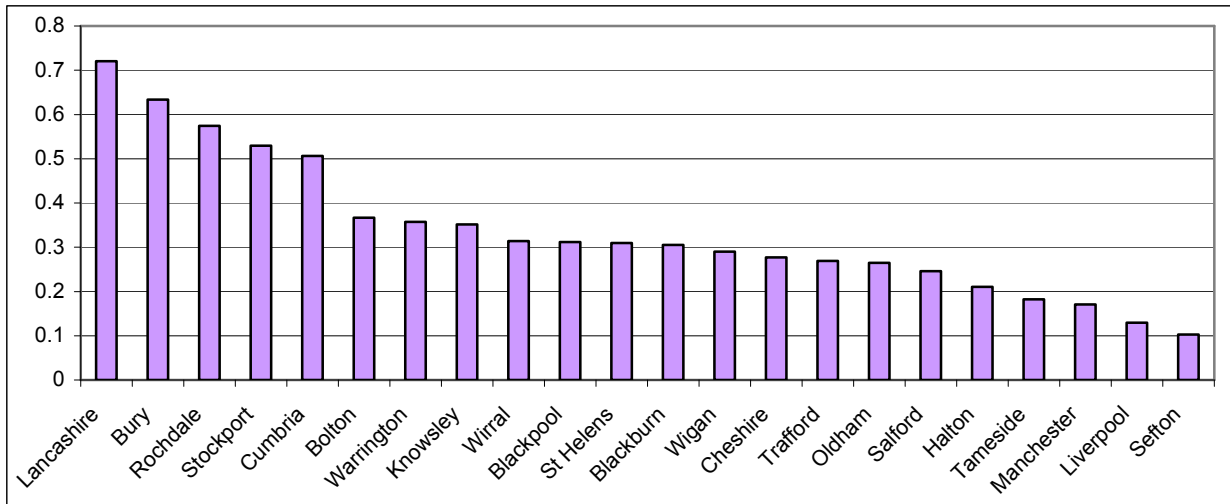
Graph 7a: % Pupils with Statements held by the LA grouped by age
Source: NPF Data 2005



All Local Authorities except for Cumbria have the most statements in the 11-15 age group. There does tend to be a trend for a greater number of statemented pupils at Secondary School.

As you can see in Graph 7a, the under five-age group tend to have the least statements as a proportion of the statemented population. This may well be because there are very few statements issued for children younger than the age of 3, so there are only two years pre-school, while there are 7 years at primary phase and five at secondary, when the statutory processes are followed through

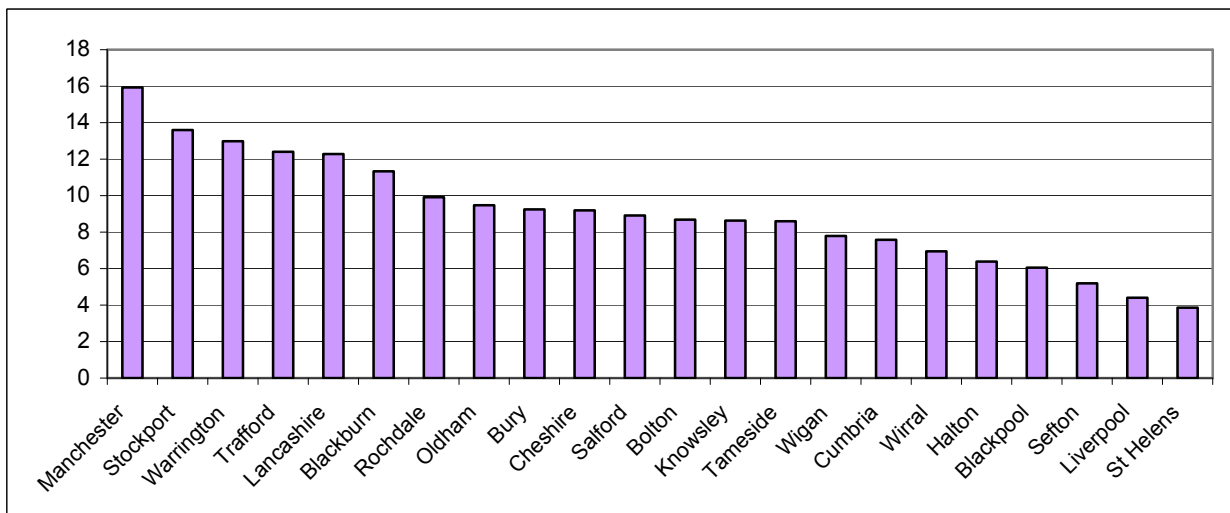
Graph 7b: % Children under 5 who have a Statement
Source: NPF Data Jan 2005



Graph 7b shows the actual percentages of children under 5 with statements, held by each authority.

As the graph above doesn't bare similarities with the Index of Deprivation, we have to assume that this can be explained by differences in working practices amongst the Local Authorities.

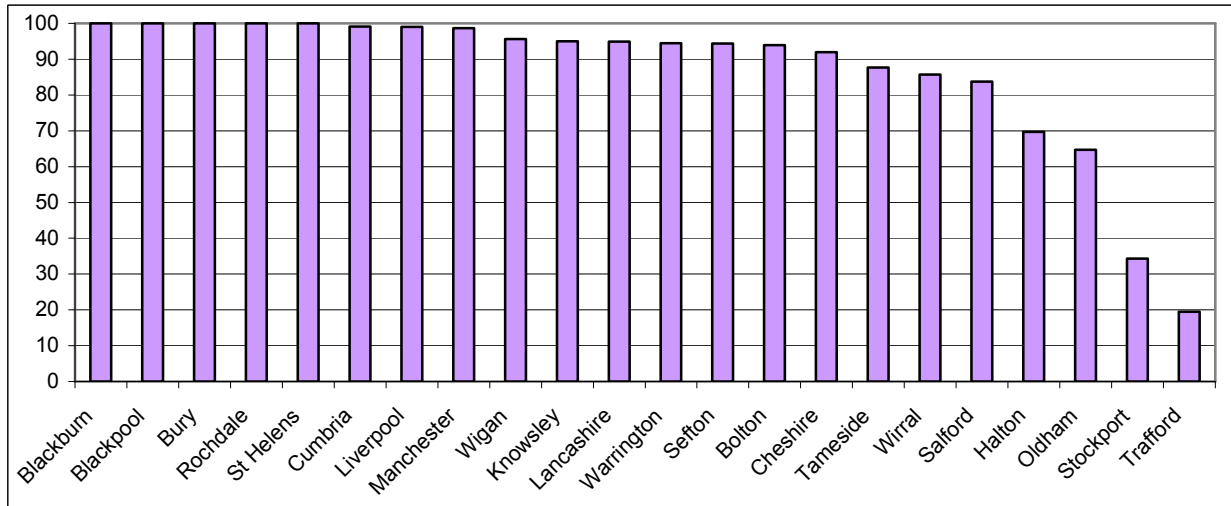
Graph 8: % Statements that are new in a year (Cal)
Source: NPF 2006



Graph 8 shows us that Manchester produce four times the amount of new statements in a year, than St Helens do.

There is no correlation with the IMD or FSM information (graphs 1 & 2). We can conclude that the primary factor which influences the production of new statements is not the educational needs of the population the LA serves, but relates to policy decisions within the LA.

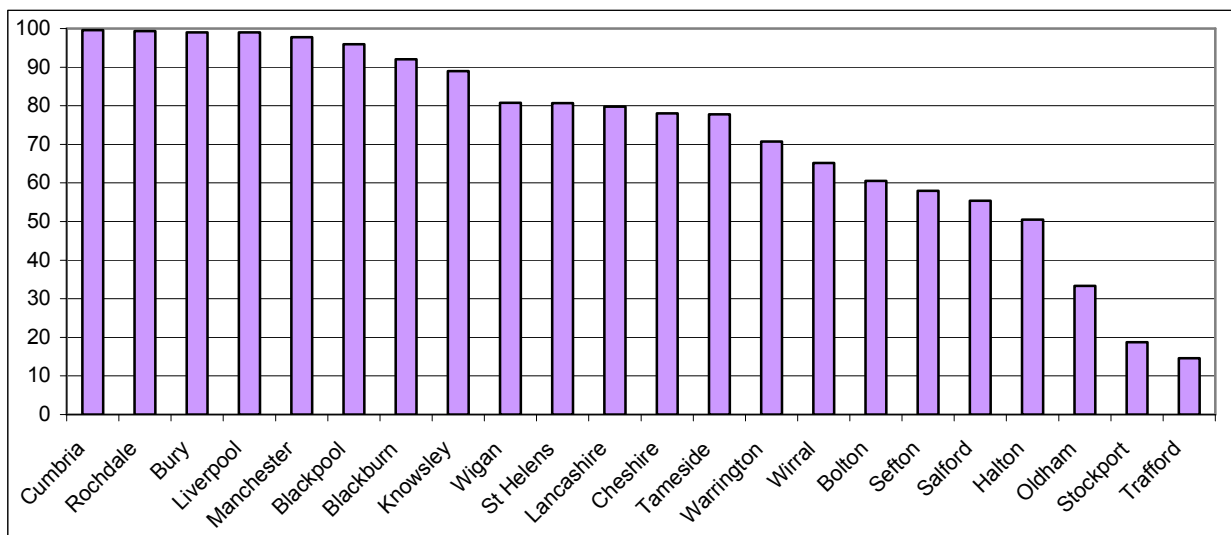
Graph 9a: % Statements issued within 18 weeks (excluding excepted assessments)
Source: NPF 2004/05



As we can see from graph 9a, 15 of the Local Authorities are issuing 90% of their new statements within 18 weeks where the assessment has not been subject to an exception

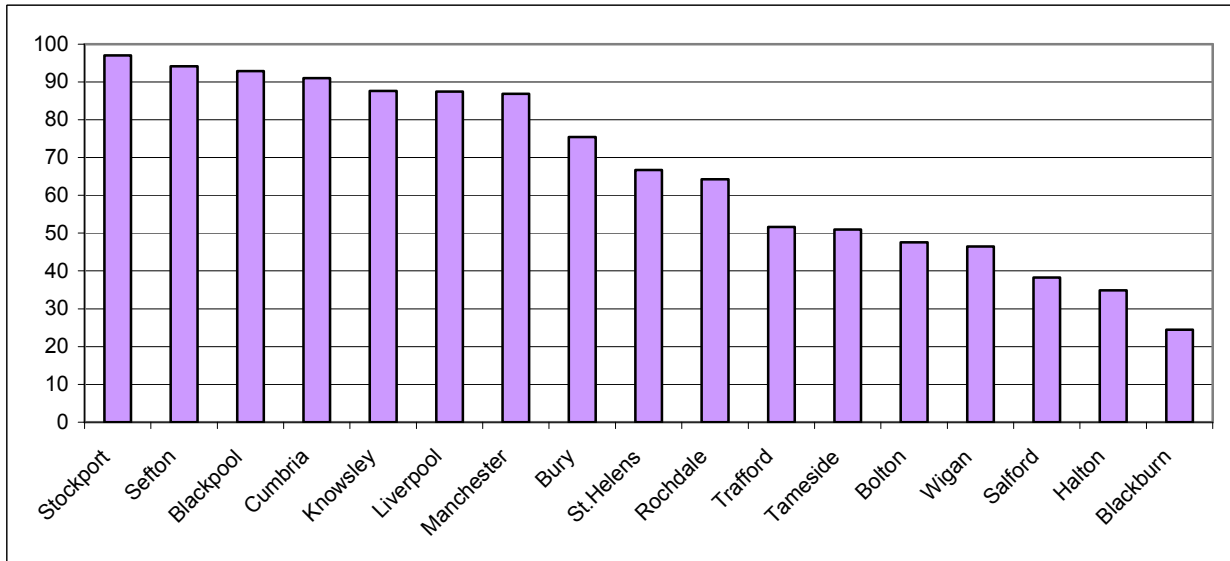
It can be surmised that those authorities with a high number of new statements may be the authorities that have the most difficulty in issuing statements within 18 weeks. Comparing the graphs 8 and 9a, we can see that out of the top five issuer's of new statements, Stockport and Trafford show this case to be true. However, Manchester, Warrington and Lancashire go against this idea.

Graph 9b: % Statements issued within 18 weeks (all)



Similarly, Blackpool, who are in the top five for issuing statements within 18 weeks, are the only one out of the top 5 to be in the bottom five for issuing new statements. It would appear that there is a limited link between the percentage of new statements issued and compliance with BVPI 43a. The biggest factor for the percentage of statements issued with 18 weeks seems to be local working practices more than the volume of new statements

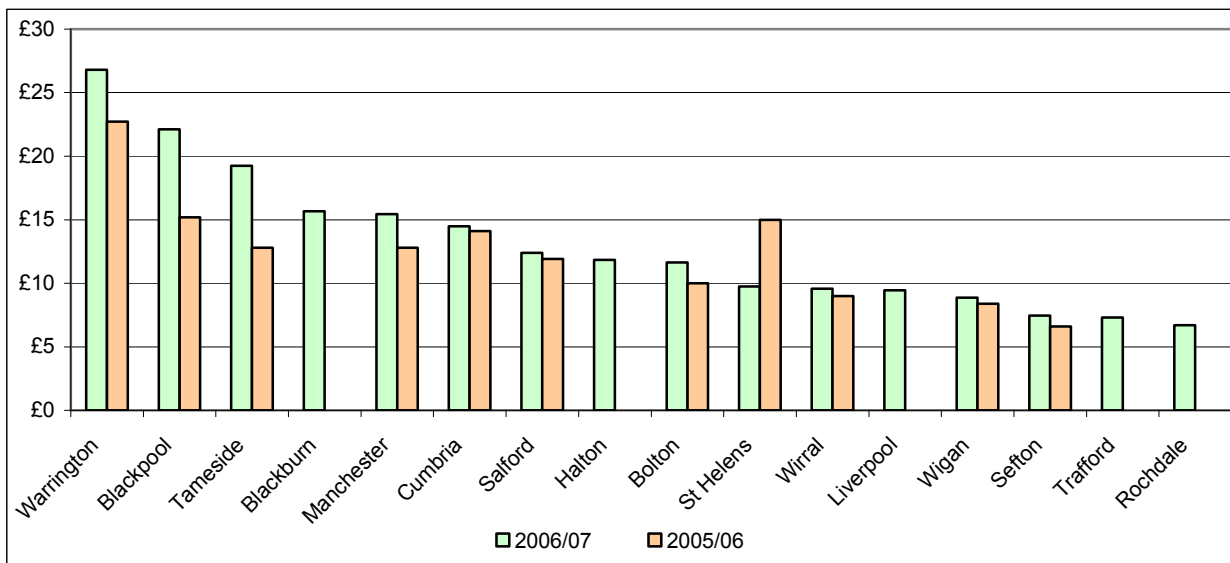
Graph 10: % Statements finalised in 26 weeks
Source: NPF 2005



Looking at Graph 10, we can see that Trafford’s performance in finalising statements within 26 weeks is interesting; while they issue only 15% of proposed statements within 18 weeks (graph 9a), they are able to finalise over 60% of statements within 26 weeks. One possible explanation for this is that they may be ready to finalise the statement when they issue the proposed.

Halton and Tameside are also more effective in issuing final statements within 26 weeks than they are with proposed in 18 weeks. Also despite Cumbria being the LA, which issues the highest number of proposed statements within 18 weeks, it has the fifth lowest performance in issuing

Graph 11: Spend on Statutory Assessment Service
(Processes and annual reviews, staff admin costs)
per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/7 Financial Year

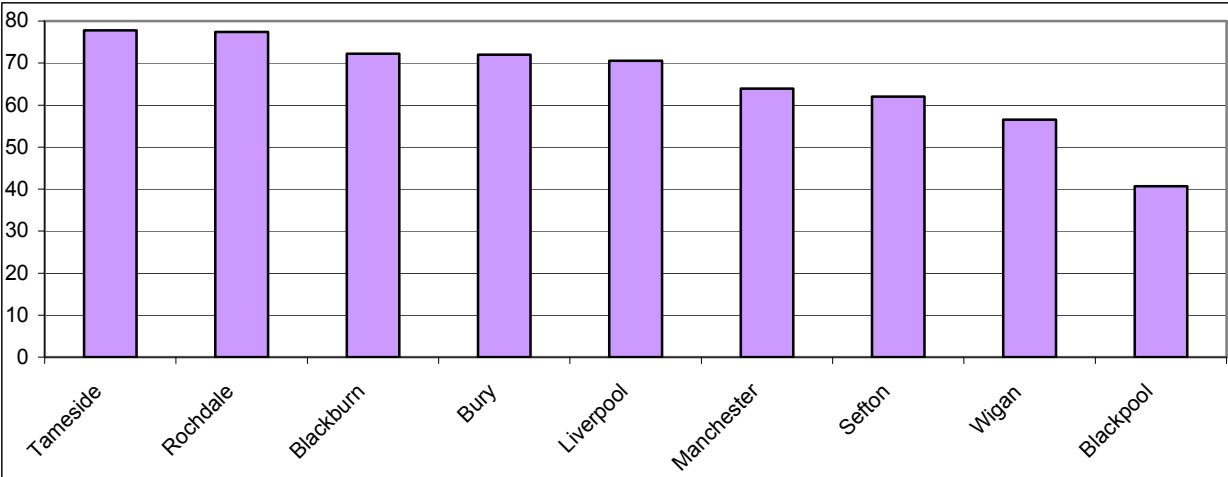


Graph 11 shows us the financial information from 2005/06 and 2006/07, so we can make a comparison between the two financial years.

For 2006/07 there are considerable differences in the range of spend on the Statutory Assessment service. Seven authorities spend less than £10 per head. There is little correlation between this spend and the number of statements each authority maintains (Graph 6). However, with the exception of Rochdale and Trafford, we could say there are similarities with the % of new statements (graph 8).

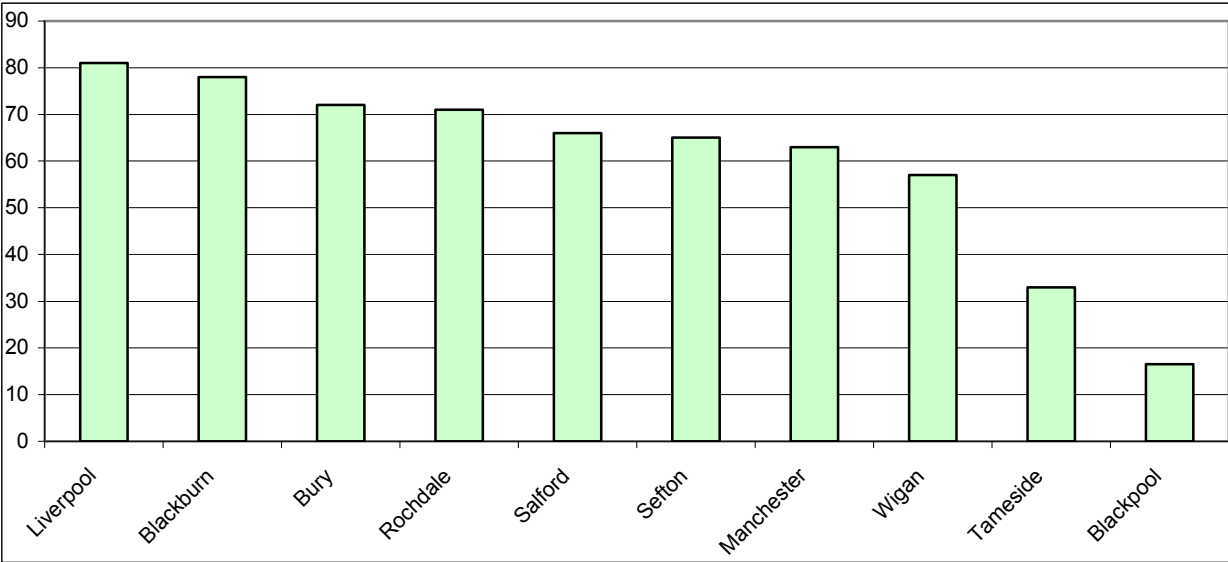
Most authorities have seen an increase in spend on the service, except for St. Helens who has seen a decrease from £15 per head in 2005/06 to less than £10 per head in 2006/07.

Graph 12a: % Reviews of statements contributed to by a parent/carer
Source: LA Data 2006/2007



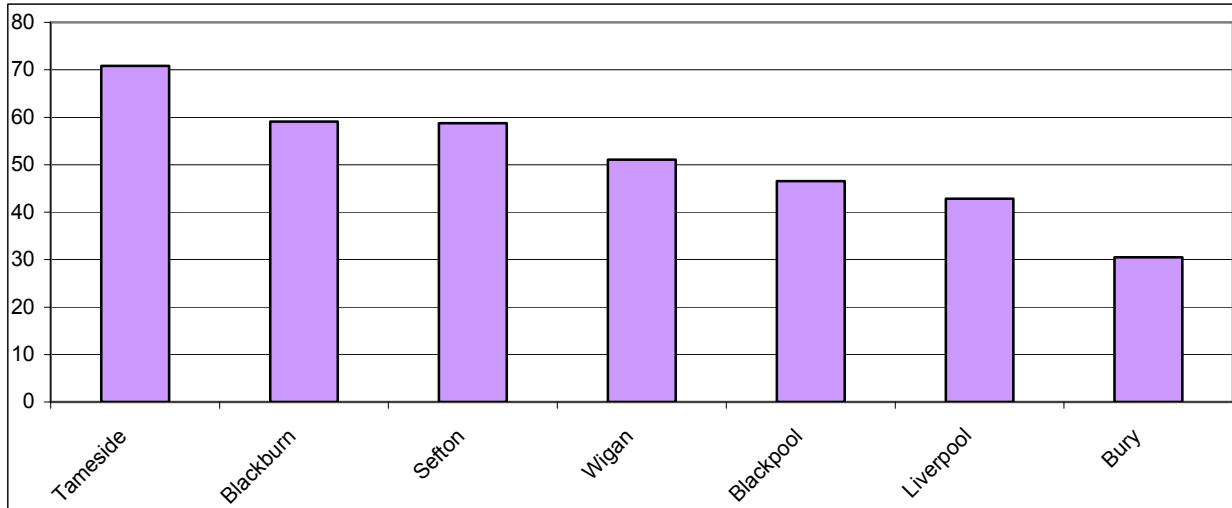
Only 9 authorities were able to return data on this item. This is one less than last year. This is a low figure given that there is a national focus on partnership with parents, so it may be helpful to LAs to monitor this area of work.

Graph 12b: % Reviews of statements contributed to by a parent/carer
Source: LA Data 2005/2006 Historic Data



A comparison with last years figures show that, Tameside have made a huge improvement, from 32% of parents contributing to 88 %. Rochdale too, have also seen an increase. Bury, Sefton, Manchester and Wigan have remained at similar levels. Liverpool, Blackburn and Blackpool have seen a fall.

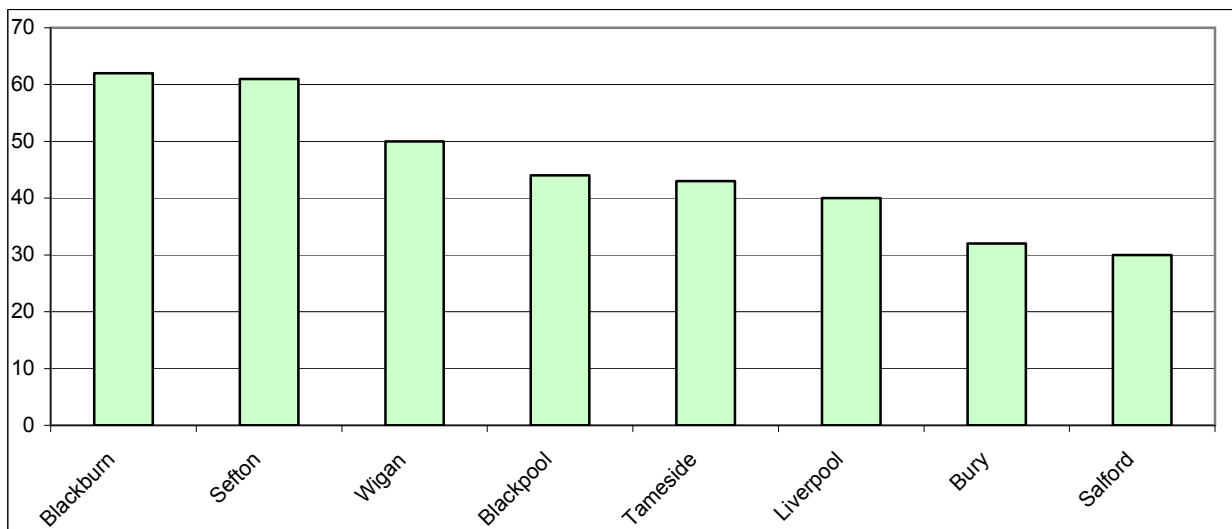
Graph 13a: % Reviews of statements contributed to by a child
Source: LA Data 2006/07



Only the Local Authorities, which provided parental contribution information, were able to provide data on statements contributed to by the child (except for Manchester, as this information was not available)

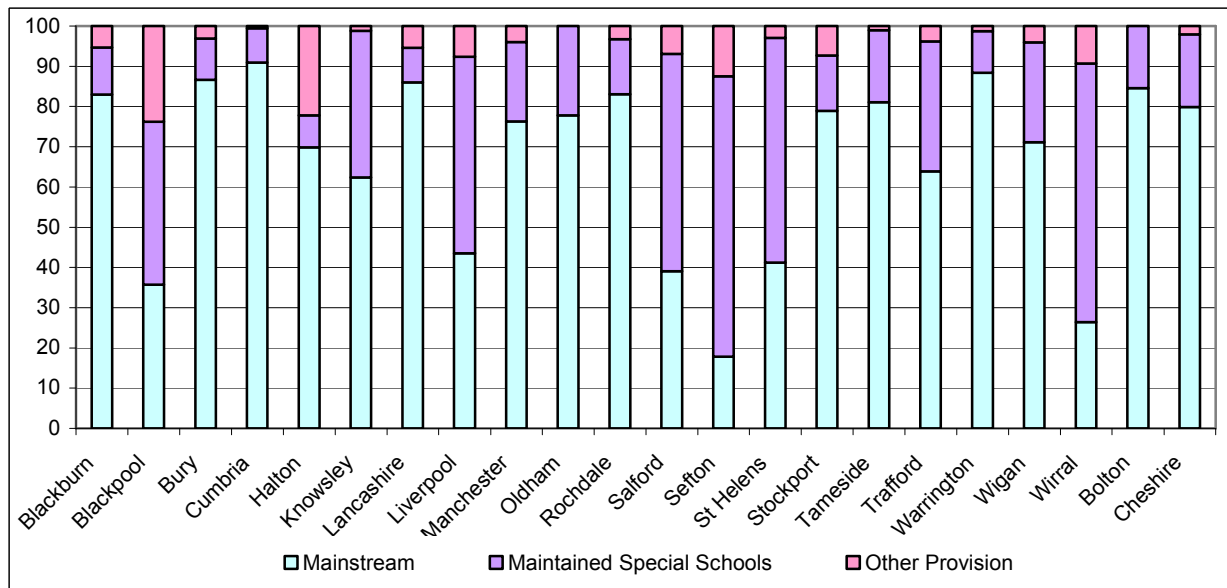
Comparing against last year, which was the first time this data was collected, we can see that Tameside have again made a huge improvement, almost doubling the amount from last year. All other authorities have maintained a similar level to the previous year.

Graph 13b: % Reviews of statements contributed to by a child
Source: LA Data 2005/06 Historic Data



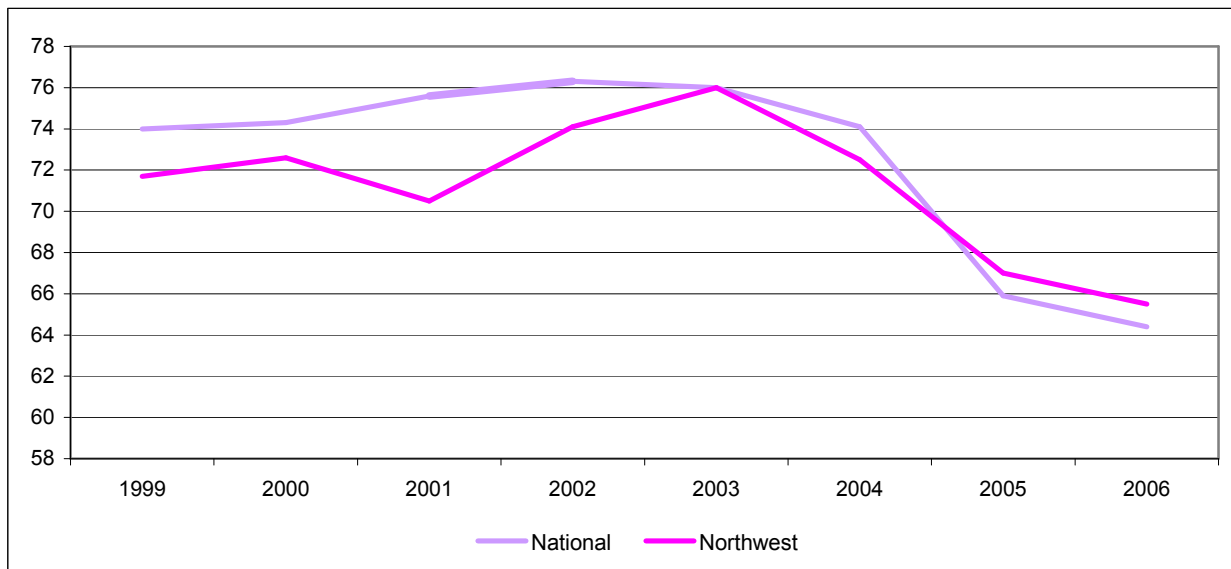
Section 3: Placement

Graph 14: Placement of Pupils with new statements
Source: NPF 2006



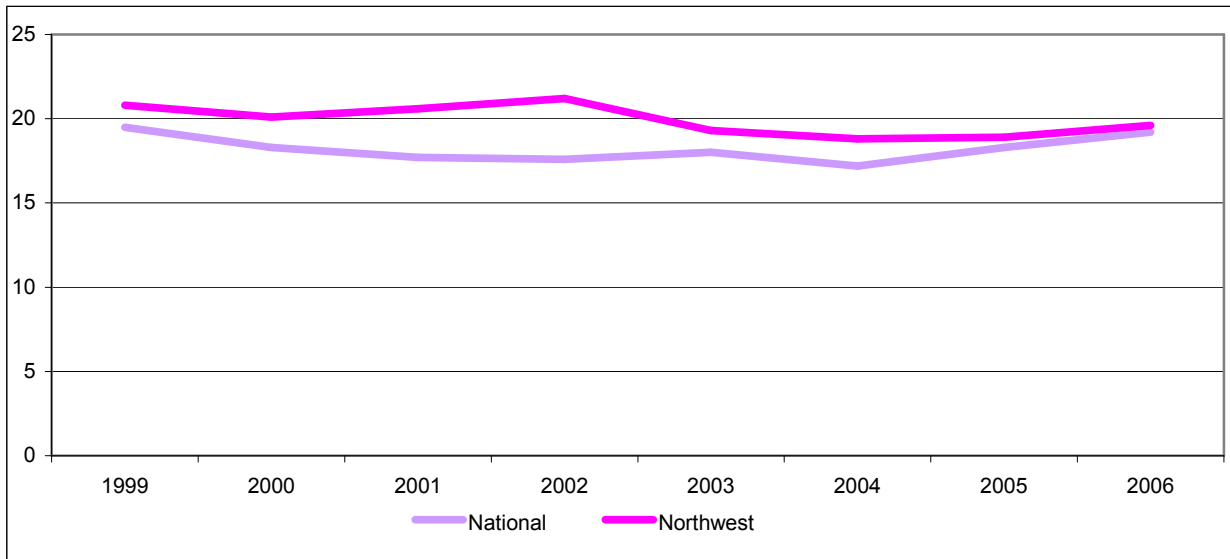
The graph above shows, in what provision pupils with new statements are being placed. The majority of authorities make placements in mainstream schools. Only Blackpool, Liverpool, Salford, Sefton, St. Helens and Wirral make more placements in maintained special schools for pupils with new statements.

Graph 15: % new statements that result in a mainstream school placement
Source: NPF 2006



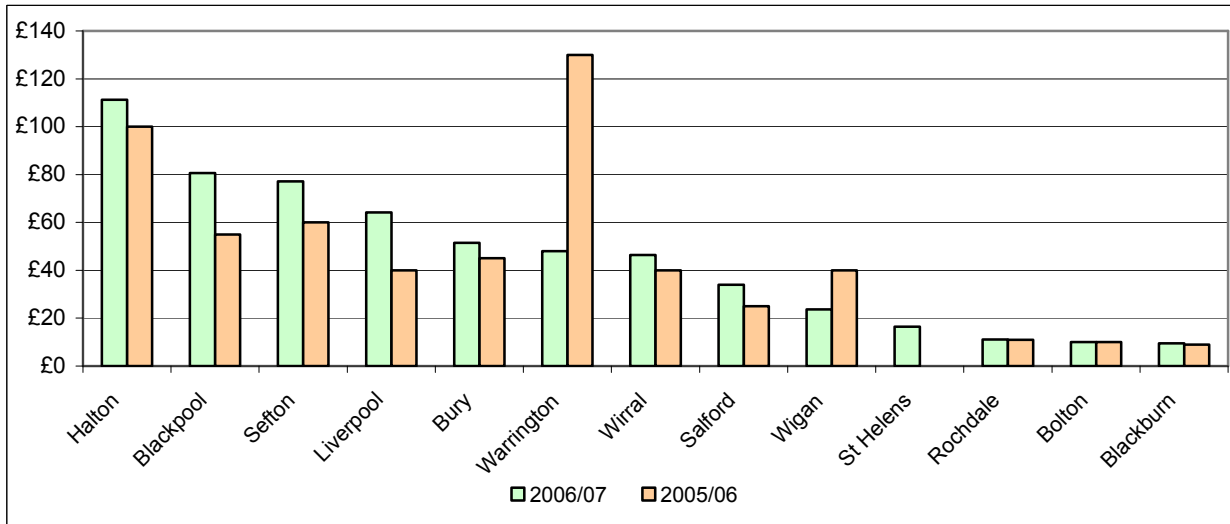
Graph 15 shows that the Northwest has followed the national trend, and new placements in mainstream schools for pupils with statements, have fallen since 2004 in the northwest and nationally.

Graph 16: % new statements that result in placements in a Maintained Special School
Source: NPF 2006



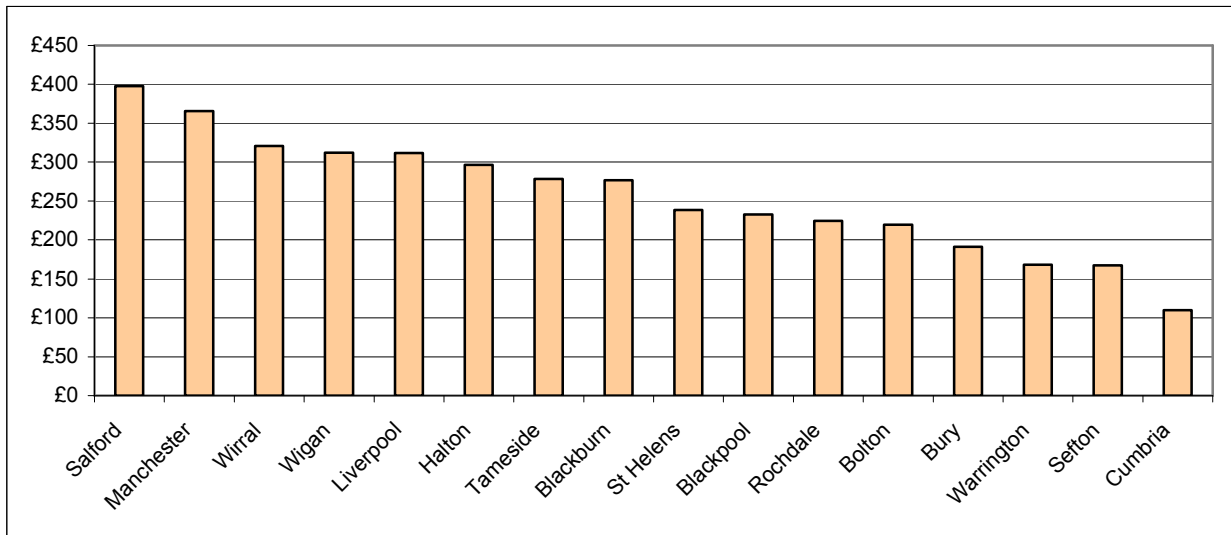
The Northwest has, since 1999, placed more pupils with new statements in maintained special schools than the national average. Since 2003 the difference between the northwest and the national average has shrunk significantly.

Graph 17: Funding for Maintained resource provision/ bases/ units in mainstream schools Per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07 Financial Year



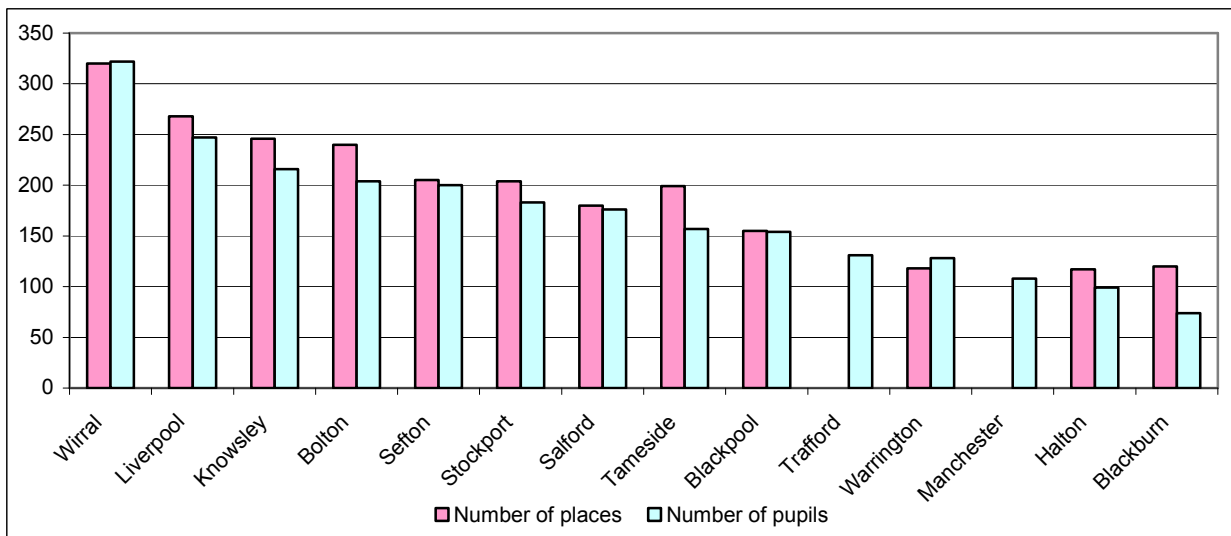
There is a varied level of spend on maintained resource provision/bases/units in mainstream schools per head, across the region. Compared with last year, most LAs saw a slight increase in spend. Rochdale, Bolton and Blackburn with Darwen maintained very similar levels to 2005/06. Warrington saw a significant fall in spend, from £140 per head down to £47 per head of 5-15 population.

Graph 18: Special School funding per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07 Financial Year



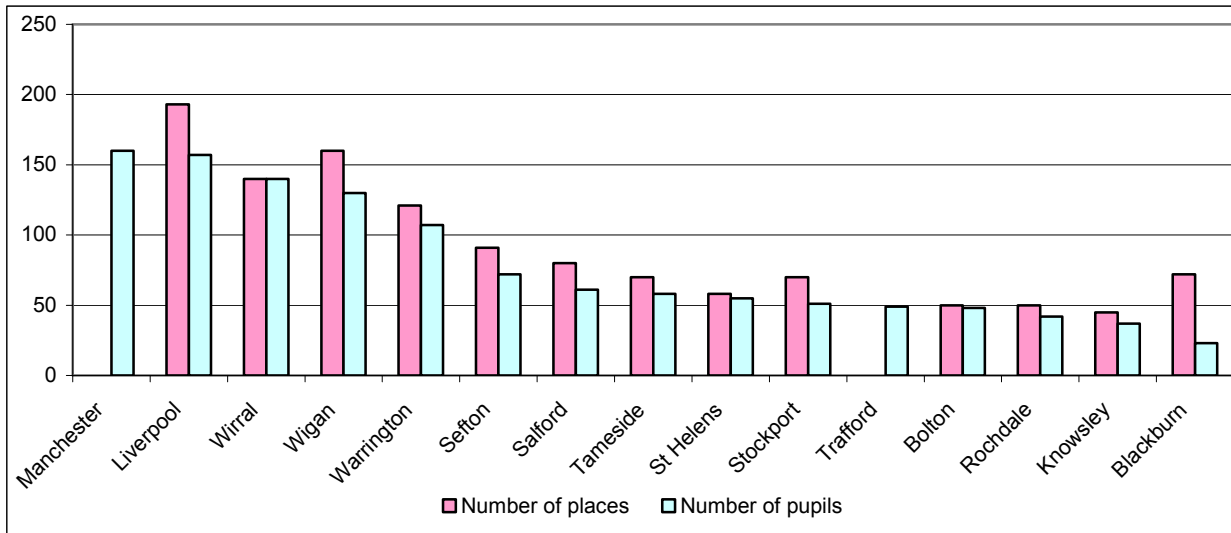
The funding provided to special schools across the region, varies greatly. Salford spends almost four times as much money per head of the population for its special schools than Cumbria.

Graph 19: Number of Places and Pupils at MLD schools in the LA
Source: LA Data 2007



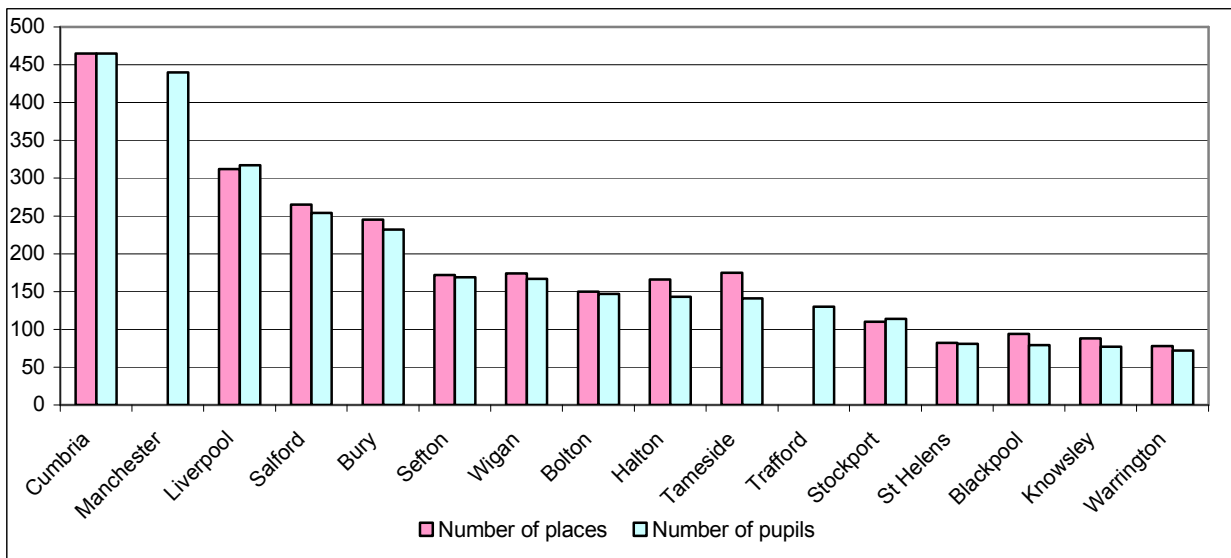
Graph 19 shows that with the exception of Wirral LA, who appear to be at full capacity and Warrington who have more pupils than places, other authorities have spare places in their MLD provision. Blackburn with Darwen has over 30% of their places still available.

Graph 20: Number of Places and Pupils at SEBD schools in the LA
Source: LA Data 2007



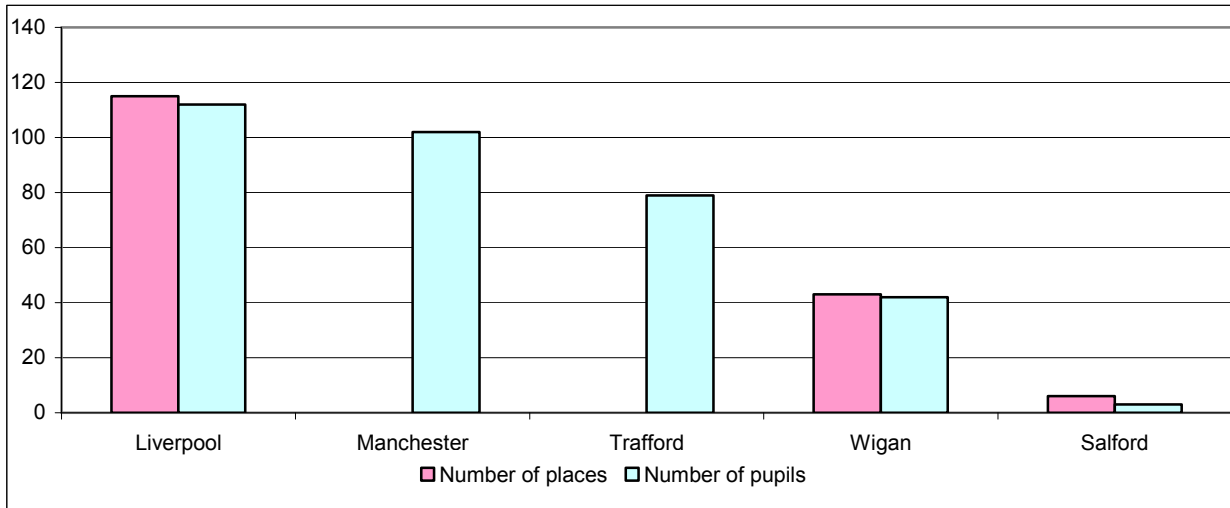
The graph above shows us that all authorities, except for Wirral, who are again at full capacity, have spare places within their SEBD provision. Blackburn with Darwen has significant capacity still available with around 30% of places taken up. Manchester and Trafford were unable to provide data on the number of places available within their SEBD provision.

Graph 21: - Number of Places and Pupils at SLD/PMLD schools in the LA
Source: LA Data 2007



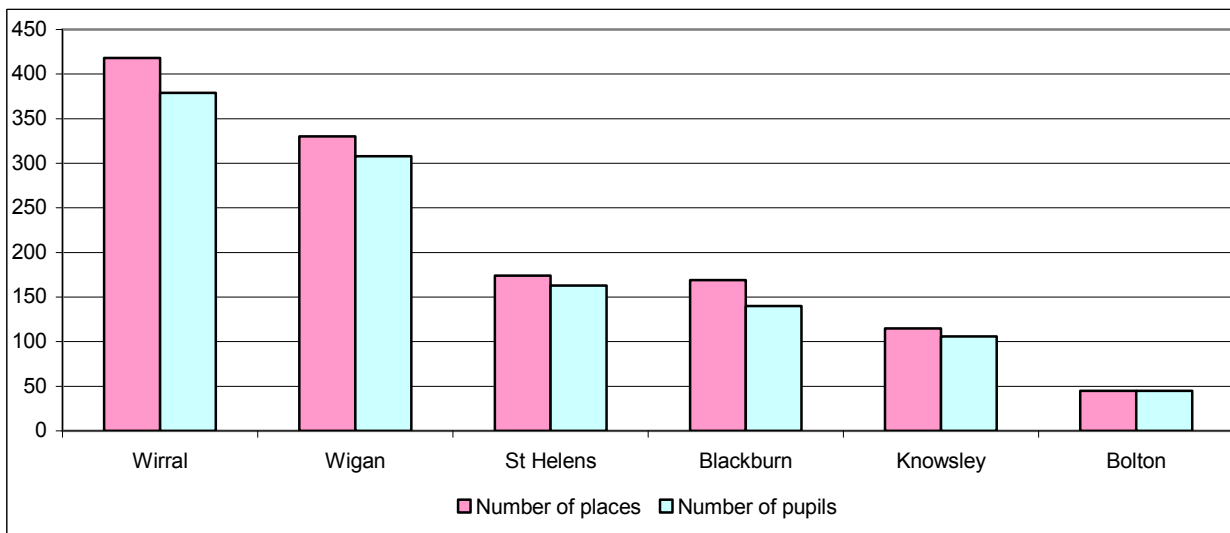
Cumbria and Manchester have a high proportion of pupils placed in SLD/PMLD schools. Cumbria, who is at full capacity, has 6 times the number of places/pupils compared to Warrington. However, all of Cumbria's special schools are categorized as SLD.

Graph 22: Number of Places and Pupils at ASD schools in the LA
Source: LA Data 2007



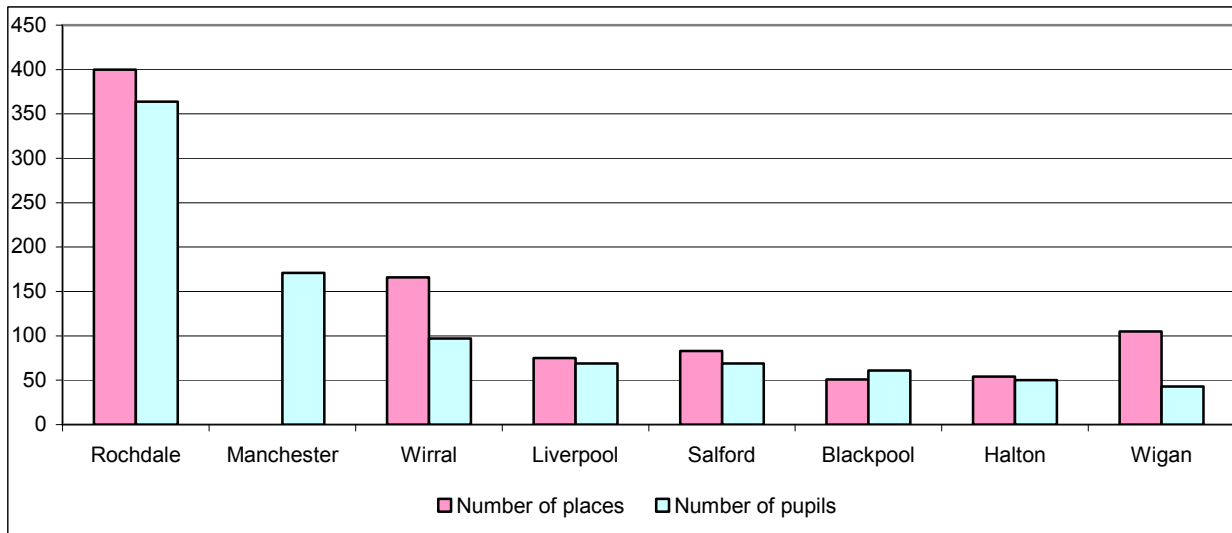
Only five authorities have schools for ASD provision. Liverpool, Wigan and Salford are almost at full capacity. Manchester and Trafford were unable to give information on the number of places available. Manchester's funded places are currently not categorised by type of SEN, it is by school.

Graph 23: Number of Places and Pupils at schools for pupils with complex needs in the LA
Source: LA Data 2007



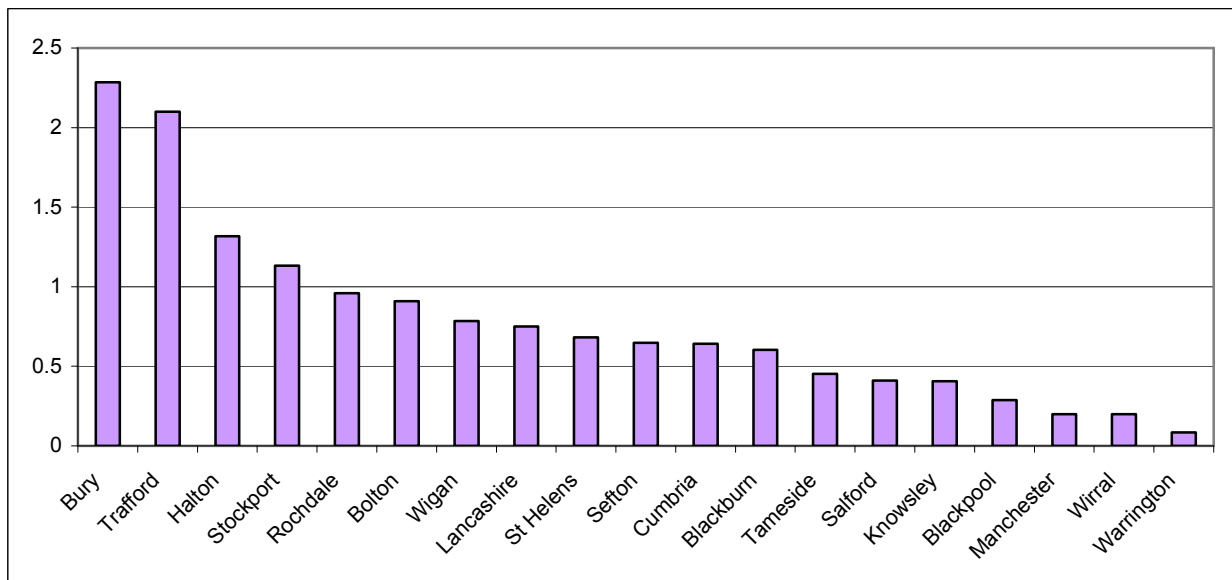
Six authorities have special schools for pupils with complex needs. Wirral has over seven times more place/pupils than Bolton. Bolton has 45 places and 45 pupils. However, comparing special schools by designation may not be reliable as it depends heavily on the definitions used by LAs.

**Graph 24: Number of Places and Pupils placed at 'Other' special schools in the LA.
Source: LA Data 2007**



Eight authorities have places and pupils placed in 'Other' provision. Blackpool have more pupils than places, the other authorities all have some spare places. Wigan has over 50% of their places spare, and Liverpool and Halton are almost at full capacity. The 'Other' special schools include those for children with physical difficulties and for children with specific learning difficulties.

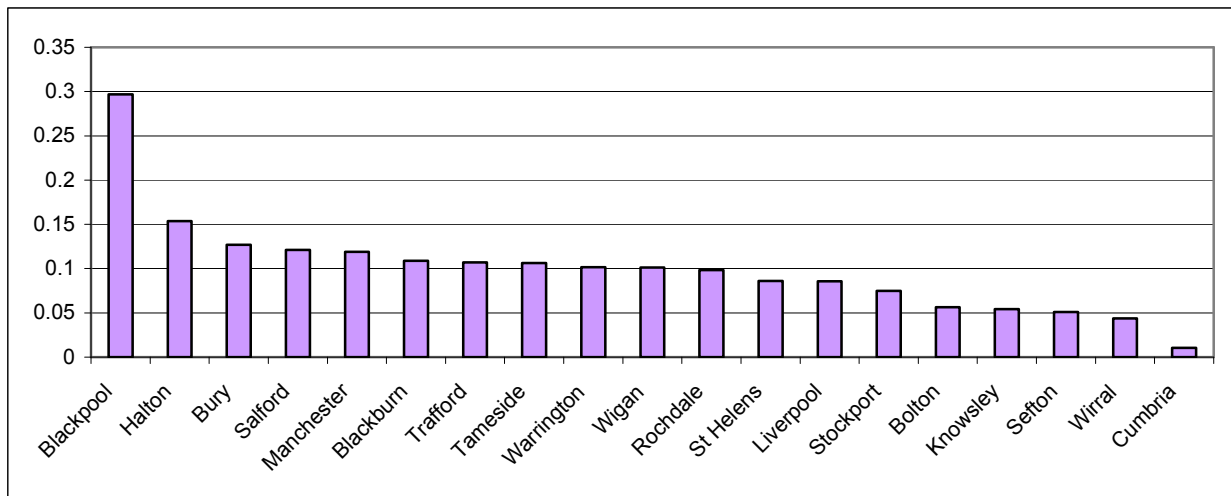
**Graph 25: % of Pupils with a statement in receipt of education in a PRU
Source: NPF 2006**



Across the region, there is quite a difference in the numbers of pupils with statements in receipt of education in a PRU. 2.28% of Bury's stated population are in receipt of education in a PRU, this is 27 times more than Warrington, who have 0.084% of their stated population in receipt of education in a PRU

Section 4: Out of Authority Placements

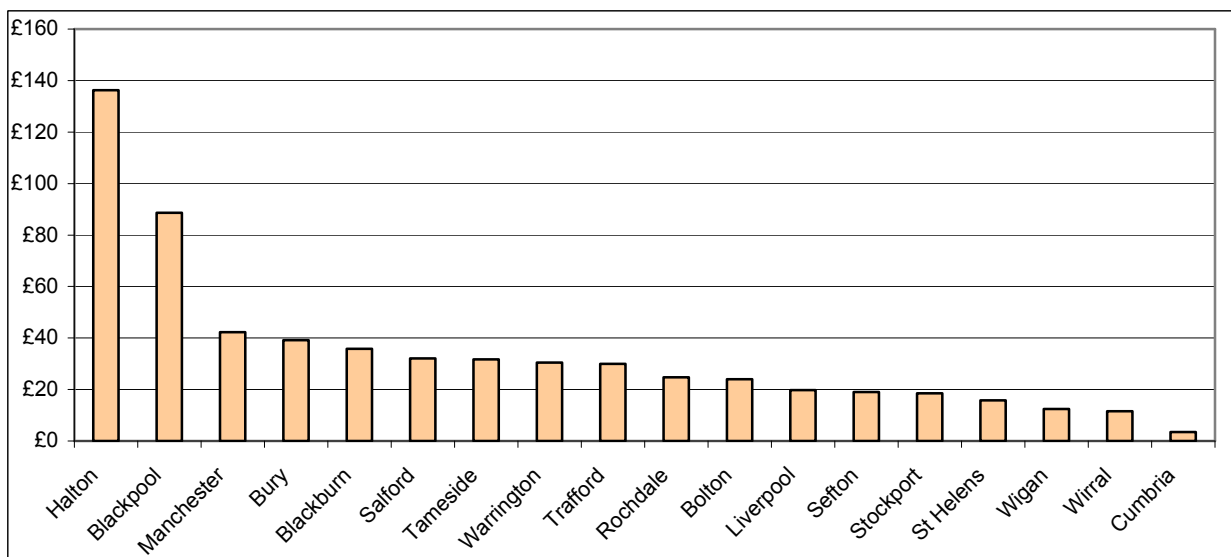
Graph 26: % 0-19 population placed in Special Schools maintained by other LA's
Source: LA Data 2007



Blackpool LAs noticeable high percentage of pupils placed in special schools is likely to be a result of the LA previously being a part of Lancashire County Council and strong links remaining between the two LAs.

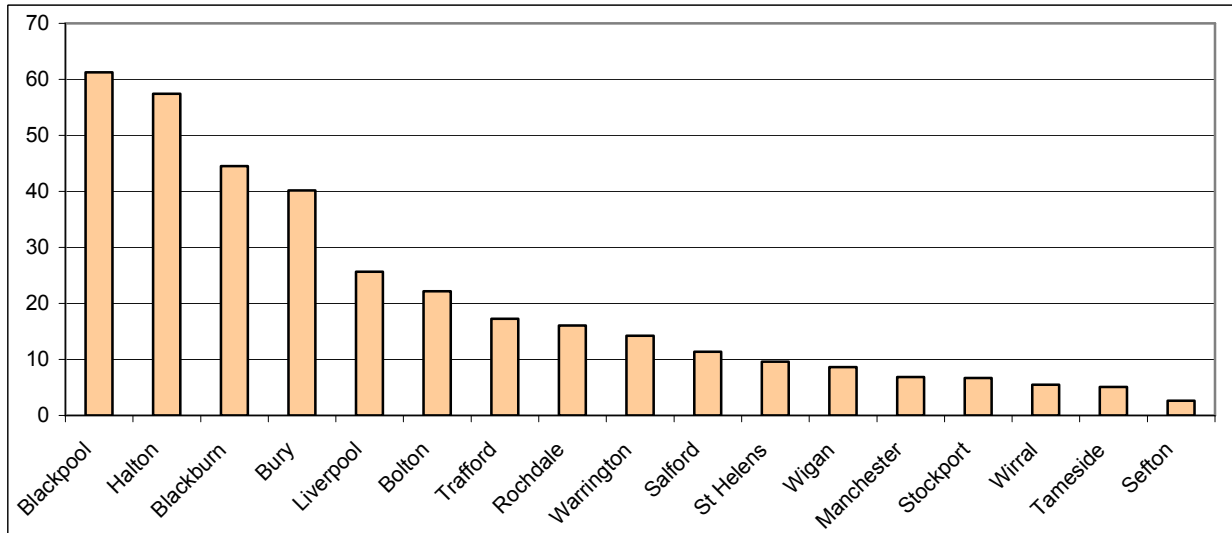
Surprisingly, looking at the graph below, Blackpool has the second highest inter-authority spend. Halton LA, who in the graph above, have half the percentage of Blackpool, have the greater spend.

Graph 27a: Inter Authority Spend per head of 5-15 population
Source- LA Data 2006 /07 Financial Year



Cumbria has the least pupils placed in out of authority special schools and the least spend. This is likely to be due to its location and geographic size.

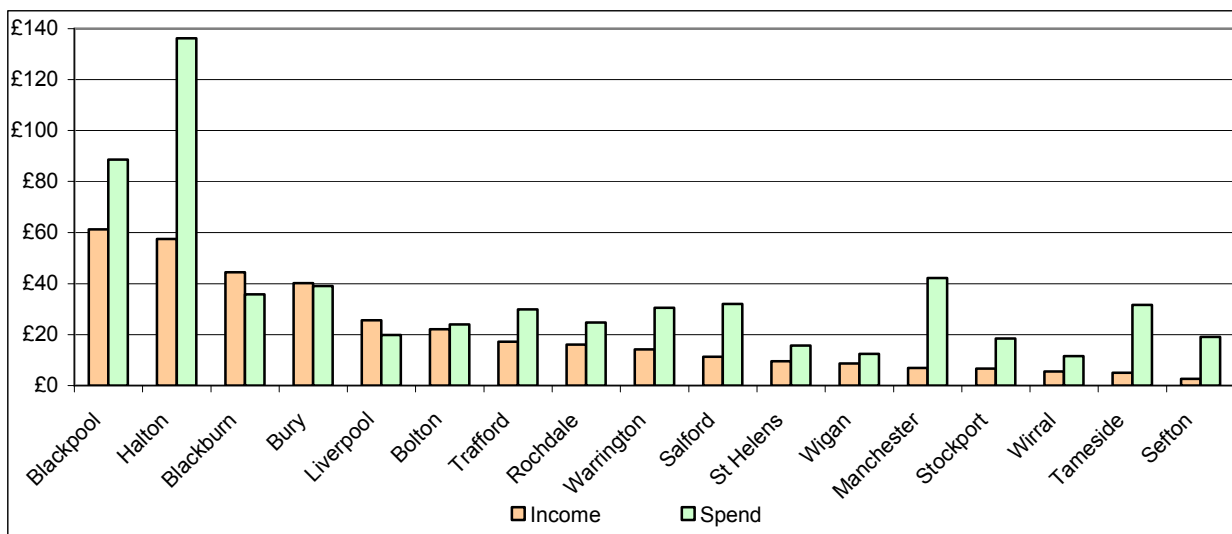
Graph 27b: Inter Authority Income per head of 5-15 population
Source- LA Data 2006/07 Financial Year



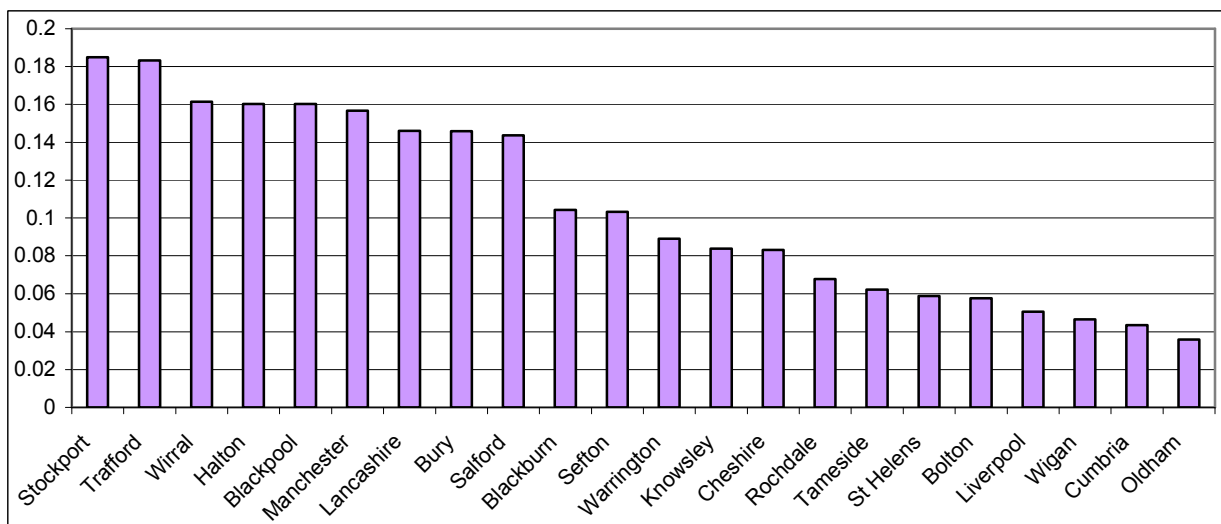
The graphs above and below, demonstrate that 14 out of the 17 LAs represented are spending more on out of authority placements than they are recouping in income. In 8 out of these 14 cases where this is so, spend can be seen to be twice that of that income, sometimes a lot more.

There is a strong possibility that the reason for this difference in expenditure and income is because not all recoupment monies are included. Monies for the 2006/07 financial year tend to be collected in the next financial year, so in December when this data was gathered, not all money may have been recouped.

Graph 27c: Inter-authority Spend/Income per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07 Financial Year

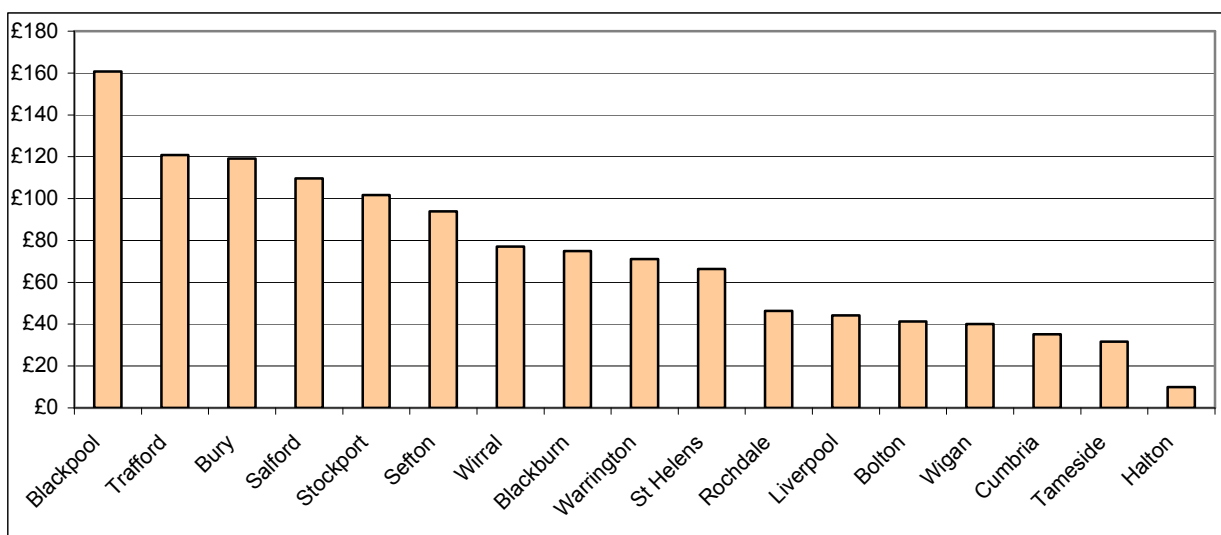


Graph 28: % 0-19 population placed in NMSS or Independent Schools
Source: LA Data 2007



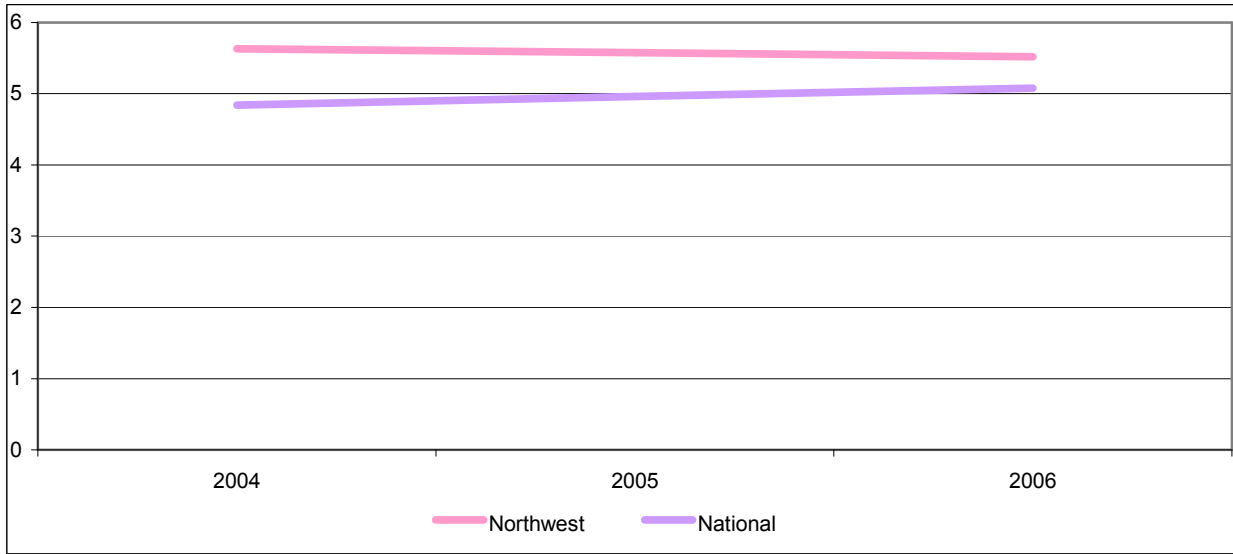
Comparing graph 28 to graphs 19-24, we can see that Stockport, who have the highest percentage of placements in NMSS and Independent Schools, still have availability in their MLD provision and their EBD provision, but are over capacity in their SLD/PMLD provision. Cumbria have the second lowest percentages of pupils placed in NMSS or Independent schools despite only having SLD/PMLD provision and being at full capacity.

Graph 29: Net spend on Independent and NMSS Fees
(Less any Health/Social Care contributions) per head 5-15 Population
Source: LA Data 2006/07 Financial Year



Blackpool's spend on Independent and Non Maintained placements are substantially higher than that of other authorities. They have the fifth highest proportion of pupils placed at these schools and yet their spend is 33% higher than that of Trafford who have the second highest proportion, and 60% higher than Stockport who have the largest proportion of placements in Independent and Non Maintained Schools.

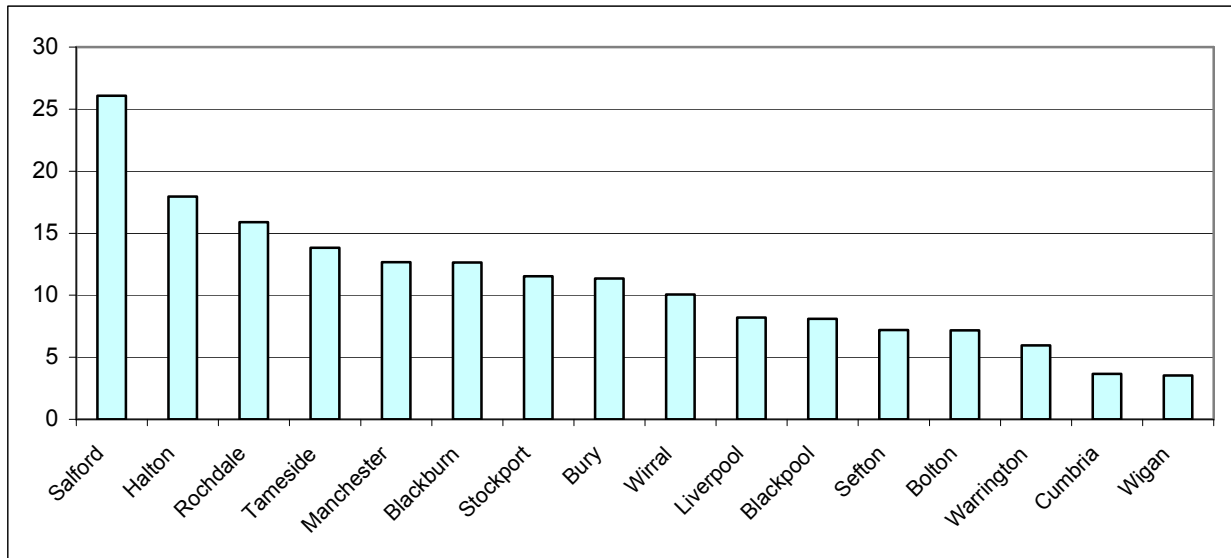
Graph 30: % 0-19 Population placed in Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools
Source: NPF 2006



As can be seen from the graph above, the Northwest has a greater reliance on placing pupils in Independent and Non Maintained Special schools than the rest of the Country. However, these placements have been falling for the Northwest, and increasing on a National level.

Section 5: Inclusion Matters

Graph 31a: Permanent Exclusions per 1000 school population
Source: LA Data 2007

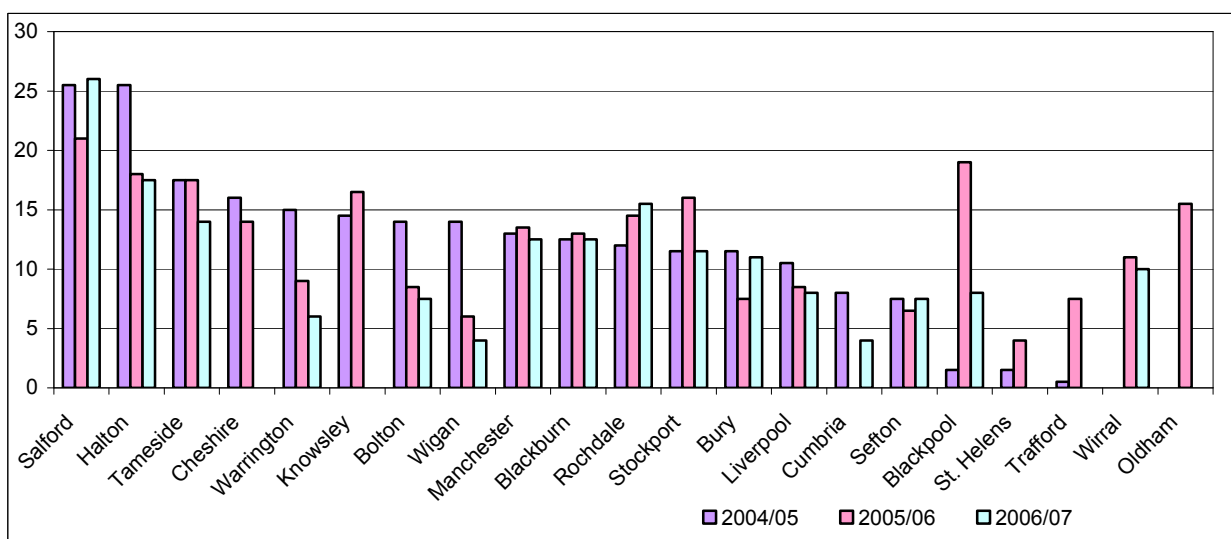


Graph 31a shows the number of pupils permanently excluded per 10,000-school population, and includes all pupils, not just those with special educational needs.

The variation between the local authorities is quite significant. Salford has over 6 times more exclusions than Wigan.

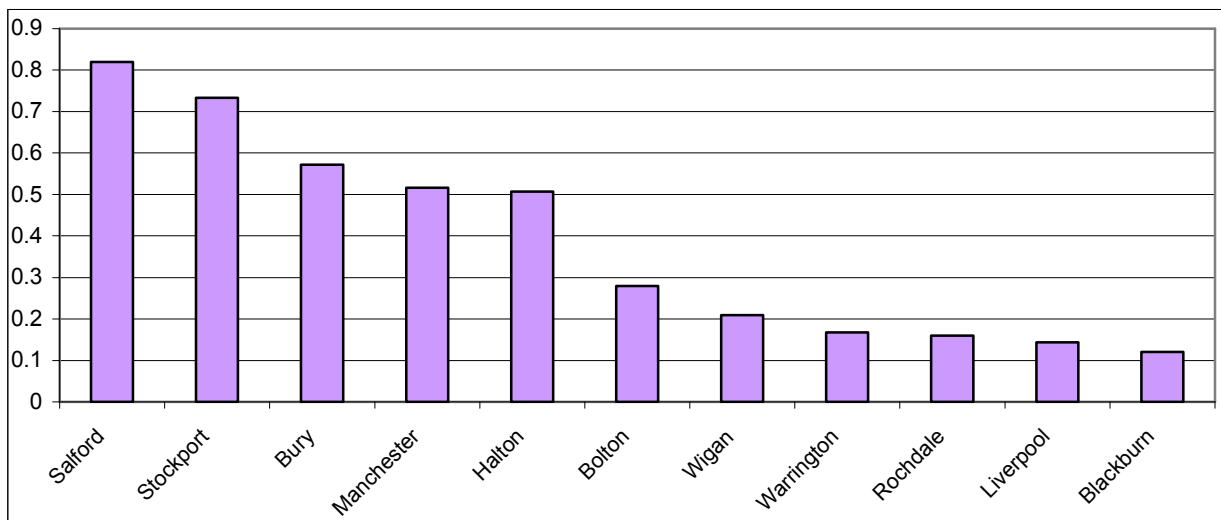
Comparing this graph to the IMD Graph 1, it can be seen that the majority of those in the top eight for permanent exclusions, are in the top eleven for deprivation, except for Stockport and Bury, and the majority of those in the bottom eight for permanent exclusions are in the bottom eleven of the IMD graph, except for Liverpool and Blackpool. There would appear to be some correlation between the IMD (graph 1) and exclusion rates. However, the differences could also be explained by Local Authority policies and School practices.

Graph 31b: Comparison
Permanent Exclusions per 1000 school population
Source: LA Data 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 Historic Data



Graph 31b shows that most authorities have seen a fall in the number of exclusions over the past three years. Only Rochdale has seen a steady increase. Salford having reduced the number of exclusions in 2005/06 saw the level increase again in 2006/07.

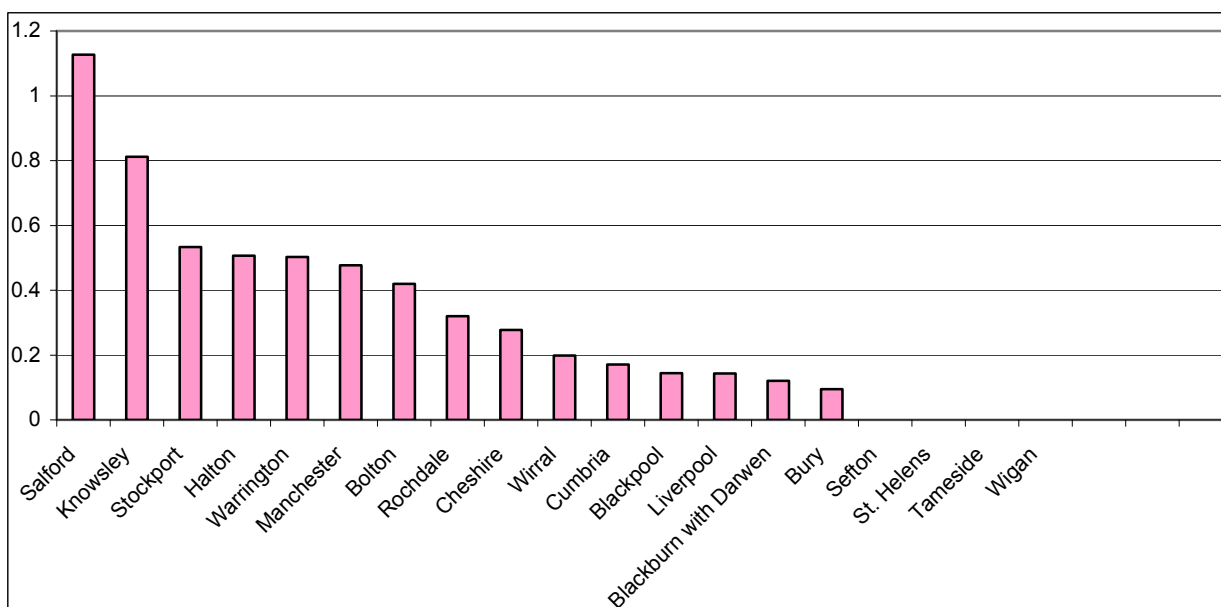
Graph 32a: % Pupils with statements permanently excluded
Source: LA Data 2007



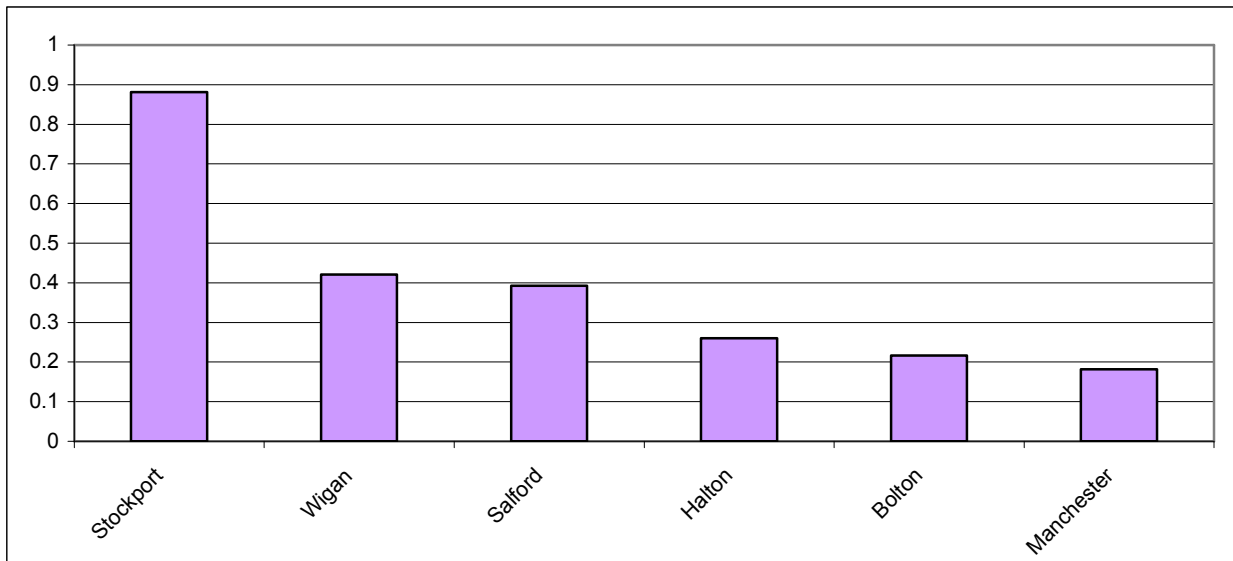
Salford's rate of exclusion for pupils with statements is consistent with their high rate of permanent exclusions for all pupils. Five LAs had no pupils with statements excluded.

Similar to last year, Tameside had no exclusions despite being the 4th highest excluder of all pupils. Sefton and St. Helens also again had no exclusions.

Graph 32b: % Pupils with statements permanently excluded
Source: Historic LA Data 2006



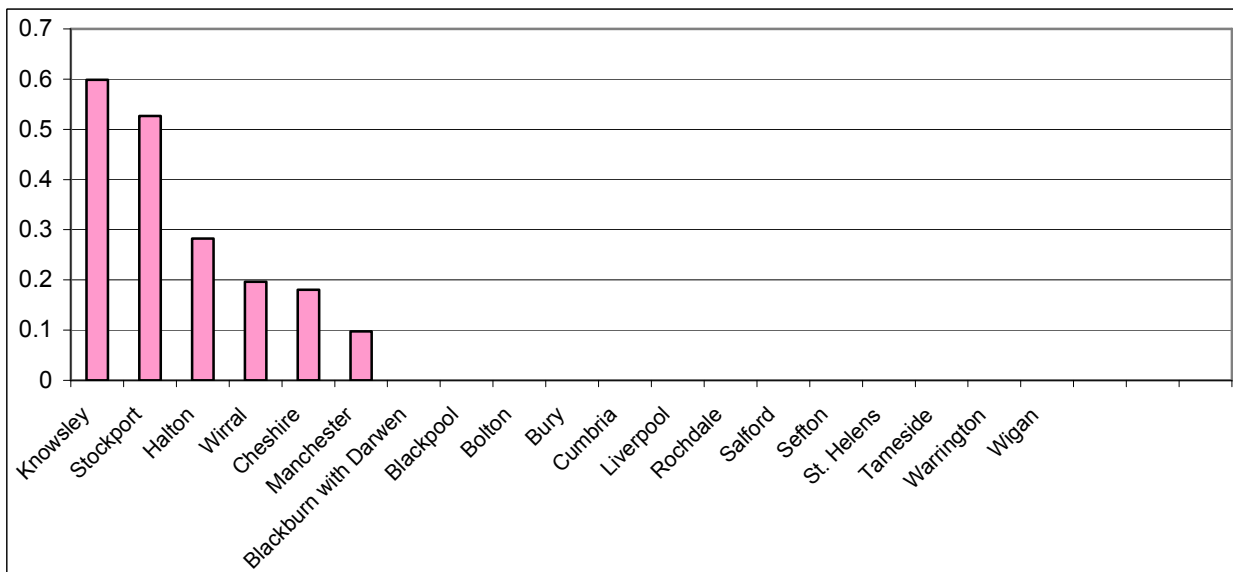
Graph 33a: % Pupils at Special schools permanently excluded
Source: LA Data 2007



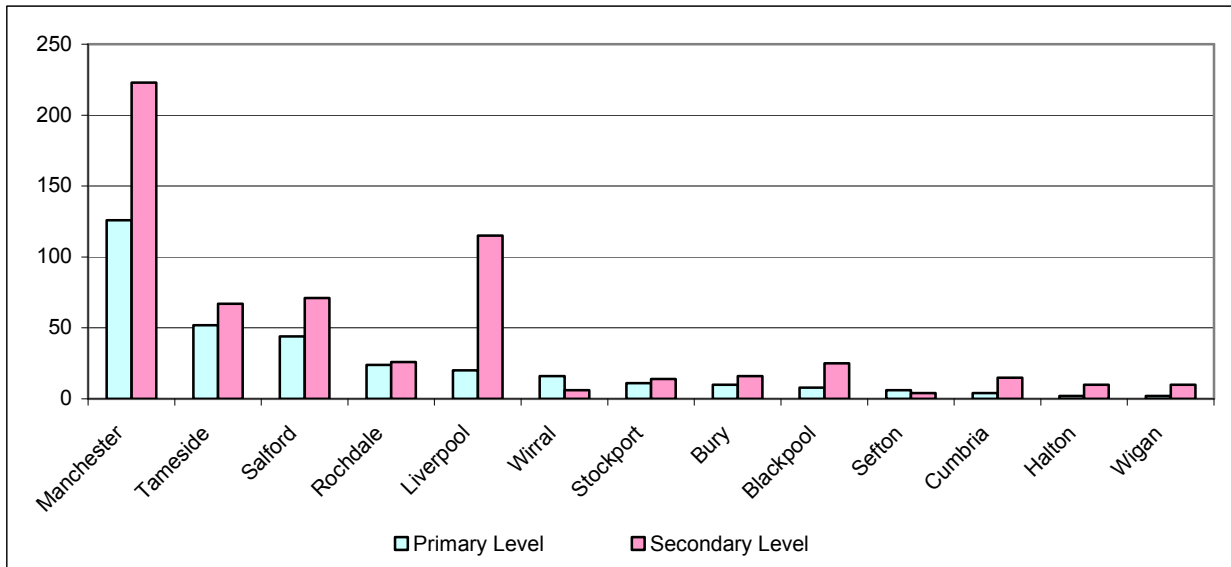
Only 6 authorities out of the 16 who returned data for this item had pupils permanently excluded from Special schools.

Comparing against last year, we can see that 3 of the authorities on this year's graph were on last year's and, Salford and Manchester have seen an increase in exclusions.

Graph 33b: % Pupils at Special schools permanently excluded
Source: Historic LA Data 2006

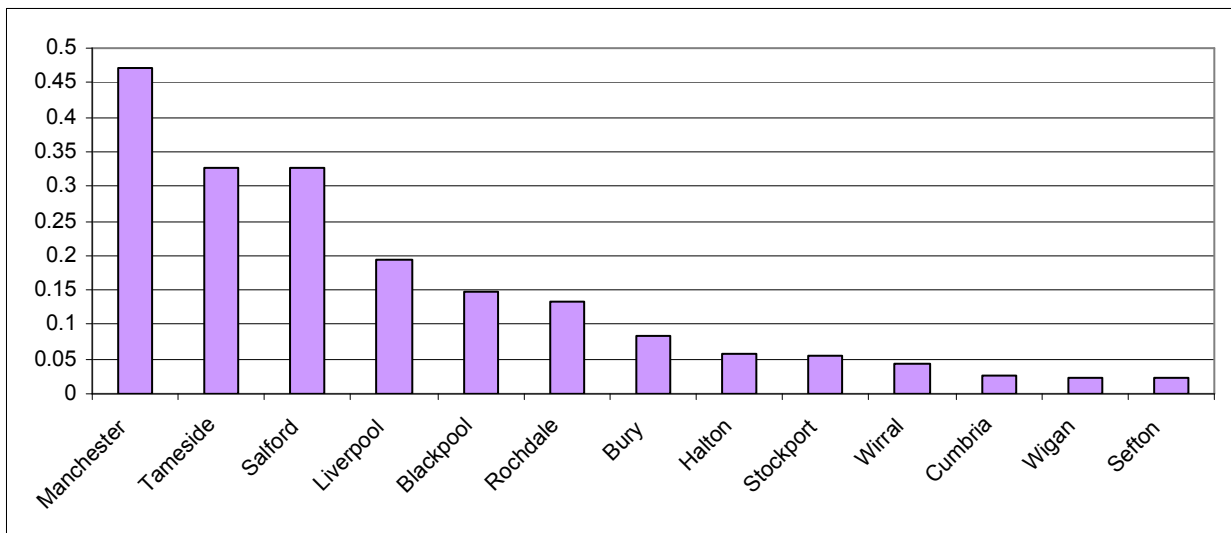


Graph 34: Number of children out of School at Primary Level and Secondary Level
Source: LA Data 2007



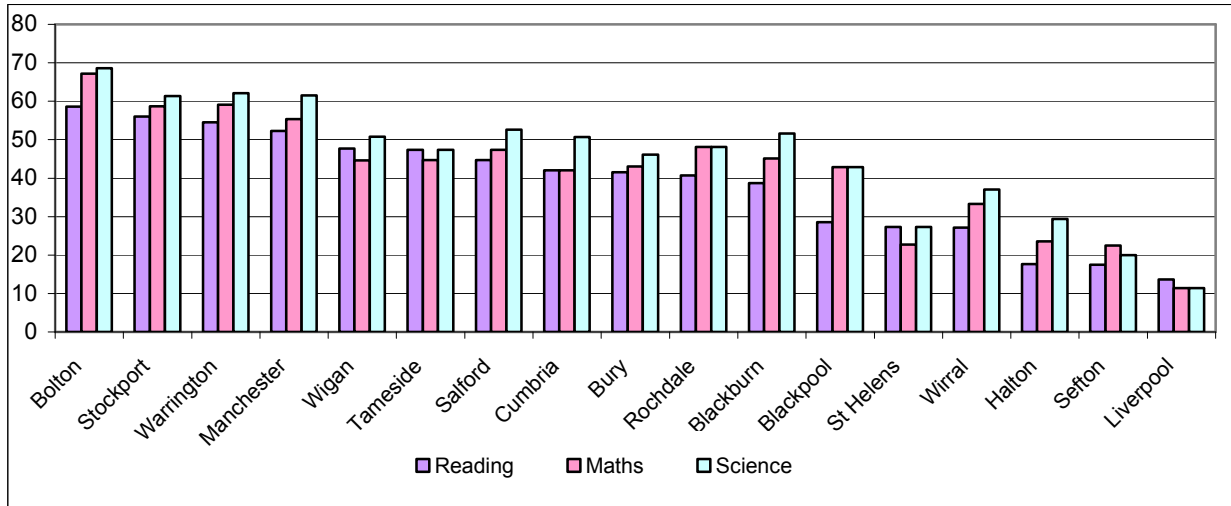
Manchester has the highest number of children out of school at Primary and Secondary level, and significantly more so than the other 12 authorities. However, Manchester has one of the largest 0-19 age group populations out of all the authorities. As a percentage of the population therefore, Manchester's figures are not as high, there being only a 0.125% difference between Manchester and Tameside.

Graph 35: % Pupils out of school at Primary and Secondary level
Source: LA Data 2007



Section 6: Attainment

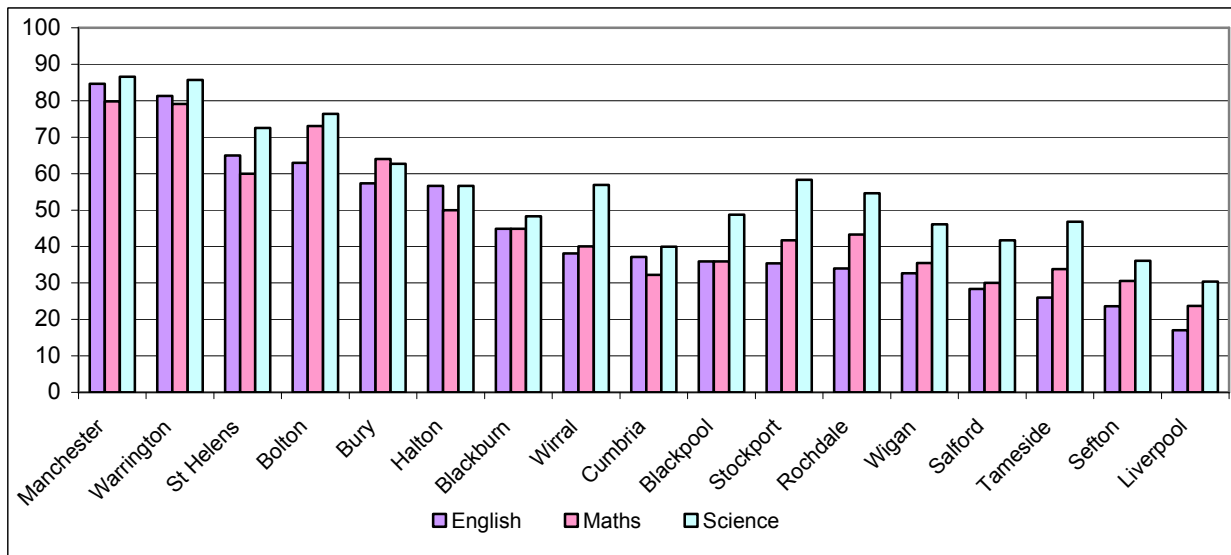
Graph 36: % Pupils with a statement aged 7 achieving Level 1 or above at Key Stage 1
Source: LA Data 2007



We must remember when analysing the attainment graphs that the different statementing policies of the LAs mean the make-up of stated populations differ from LA to LA. Some authorities will have a greater proportion of stated pupils with complex needs than others.

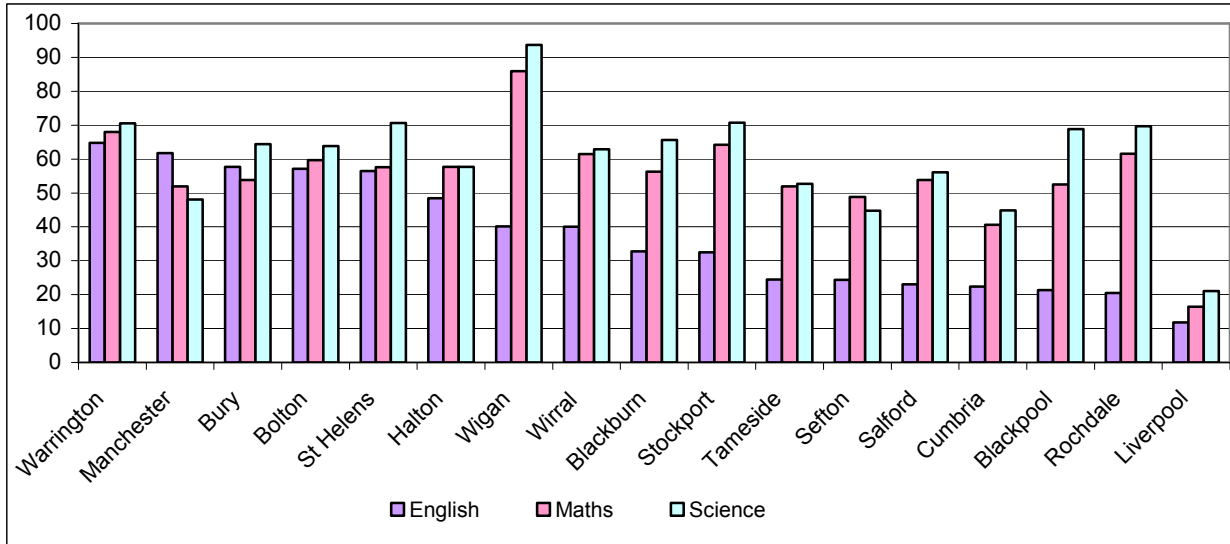
There is a considerable difference between the achievements of pupils at KS 1. Only four authorities had over 50% of their pupils attaining Level one or above in all subjects at KS 1.

Graph 37: % Pupils with a statement aged 11 achieving Level 2 or above at Key Stage 2
Source: LA Data 2007



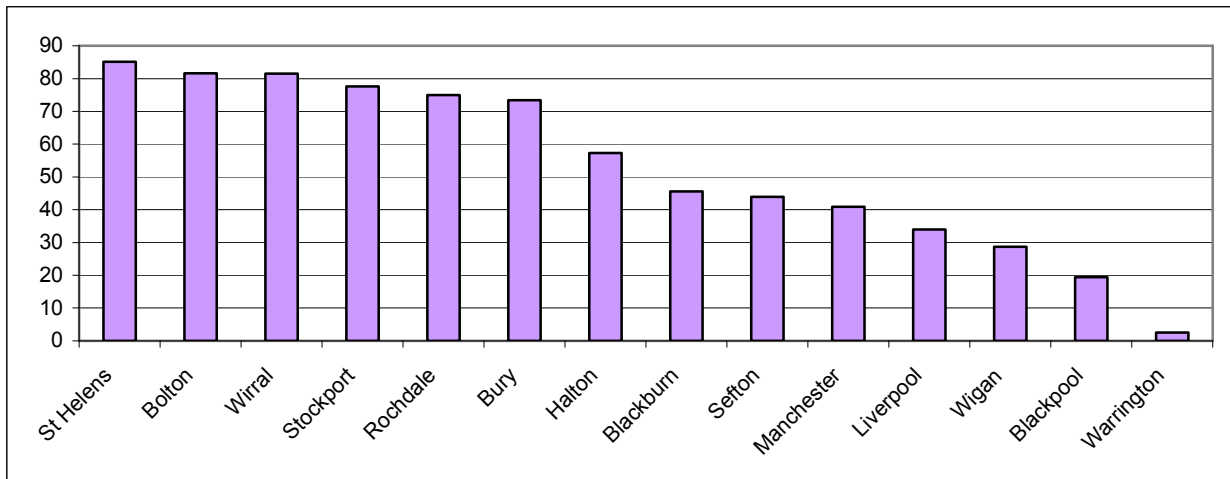
Significantly more pupils achieved at KS 2 than at KS 1. Six authorities have over 50% of their pupils attaining Level 2 or above in all subjects at KS 2. This suggests that pupils with statements are making progress. However, we must also remember that more pupils are stated as they get older (graph 7a), meaning for some LAs the pupils measured at KS1 will be fewer in numbers and are likely to have more complex needs.

Graph 38: % Pupils with a statement aged 14 achieving Level 3 or above at Key Stage 3
Source: LA Data 2007



There is a drop in attainment from KS2 to KS3. This suggests that for those authorities where this is the case, they are more effective at supporting pupils in KS 2 than KS 3. KS 3 results show that there tends to be better performance in Science and Maths results. The figures for the other two Key stage levels show that, English has been the subject that pupils have been least successful in compared to Maths and Science.

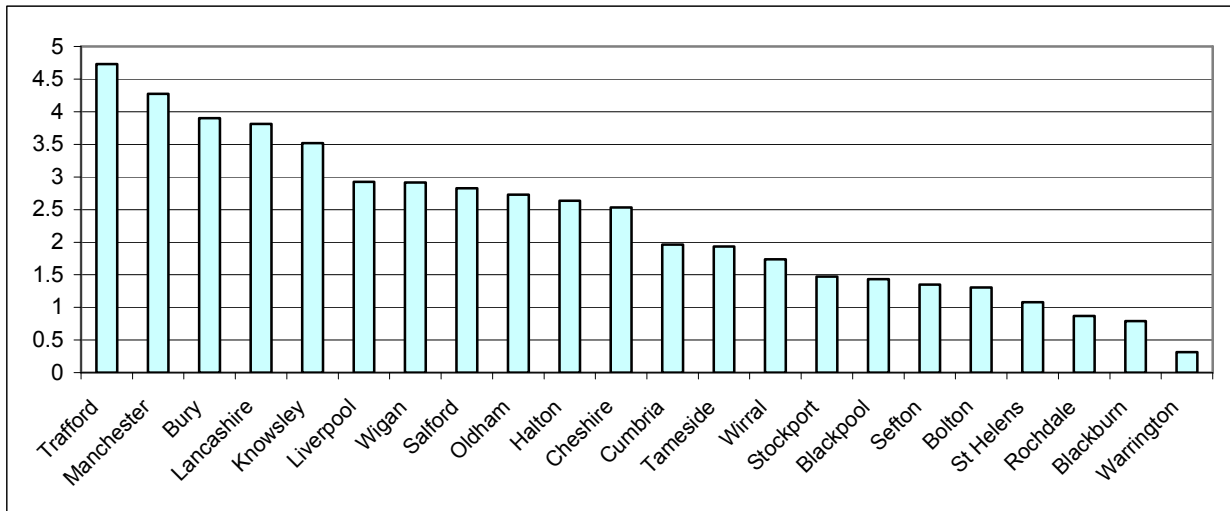
Graph 39: % Pupils with statements aged 16 achieving at least 16 pts at end of KS4
Source: LA Data 2007



There is quite a large difference in results here. Only 2.54% of Warrington's pupils aged 16 achieved at least 16 points at the end of Key Stage 4, whereas within St Helens 85.11% achieved this level. These differences can be explained by the make-up of the stated population of the LAs and the working practices adopted within them.

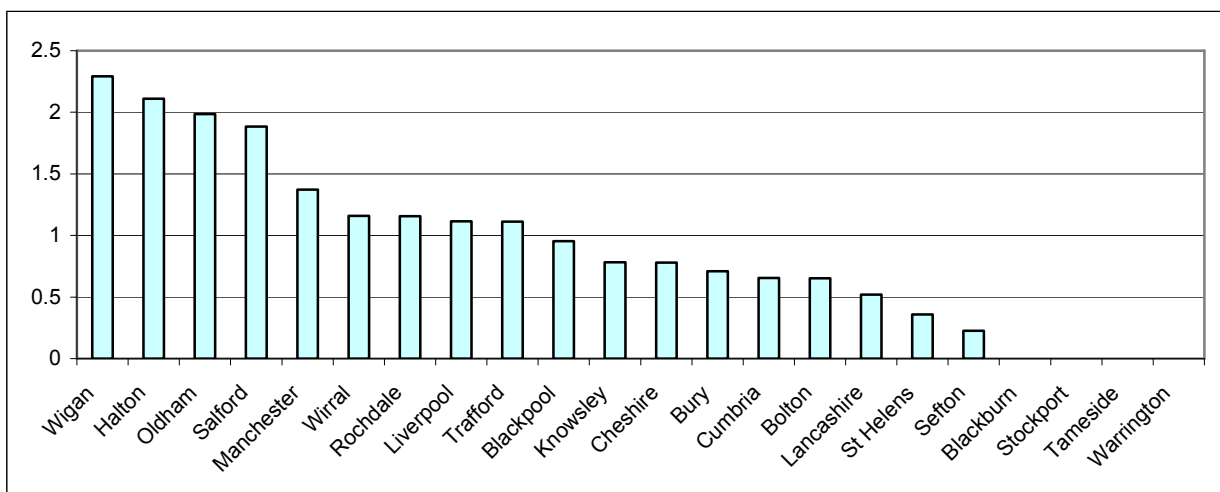
Section 7: Working with Parents

Graph 40: SEN Tribunals lodged per 10000 school population
Source: NPF 2005/06



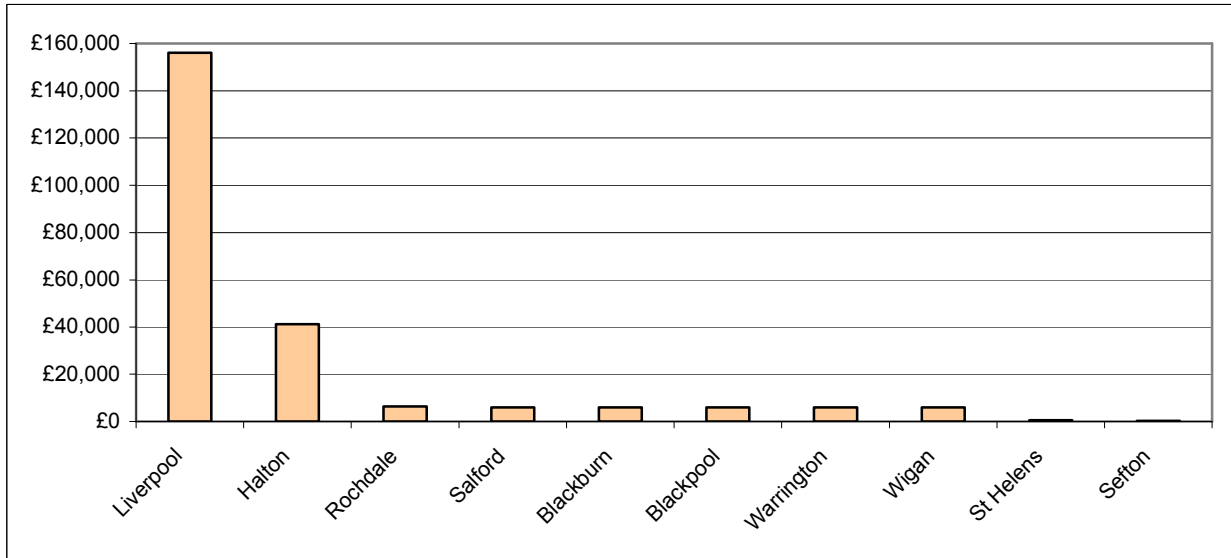
There is a significant variance between the authority with the highest number of SEN tribunals lodged than the authority with the lowest. Trafford had 9 times more referrals to the SEN tribunal than Warrington.

Graph 41: SEN Tribunals heard per 10000 school population
Source: NPF 2005/06



The contrast between the amounts of tribunals heard with those referred is very interesting. Comparing graphs 40 and 41 we can see that Trafford have the most referrals but are able to resolve cases without there being a full hearing, with almost 3 in every 4 cases resolved locally.

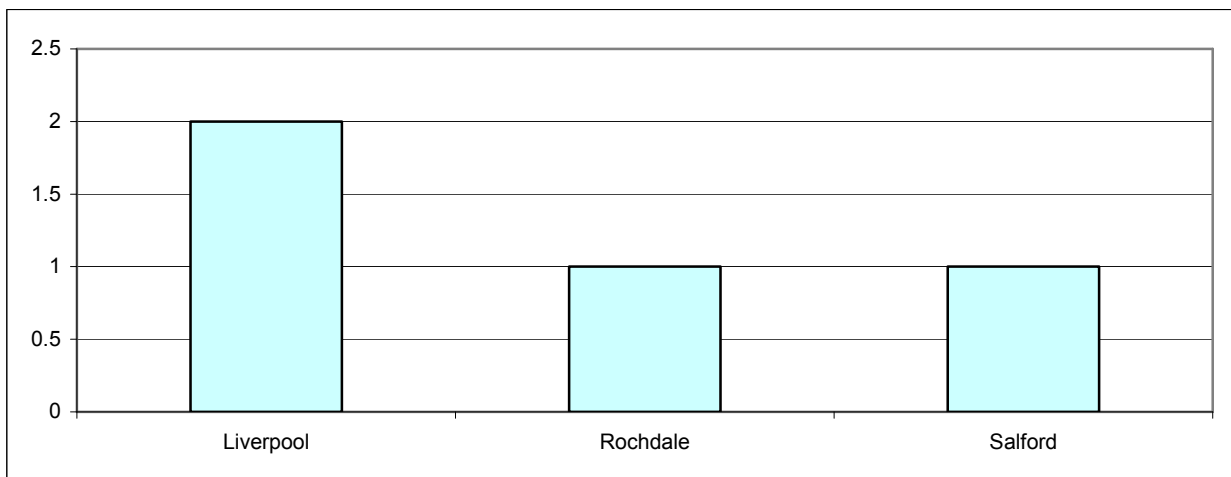
Graph 42: Spend on disagreement resolution service per referral to Disagreement resolution
Source: LA Data 2006/07



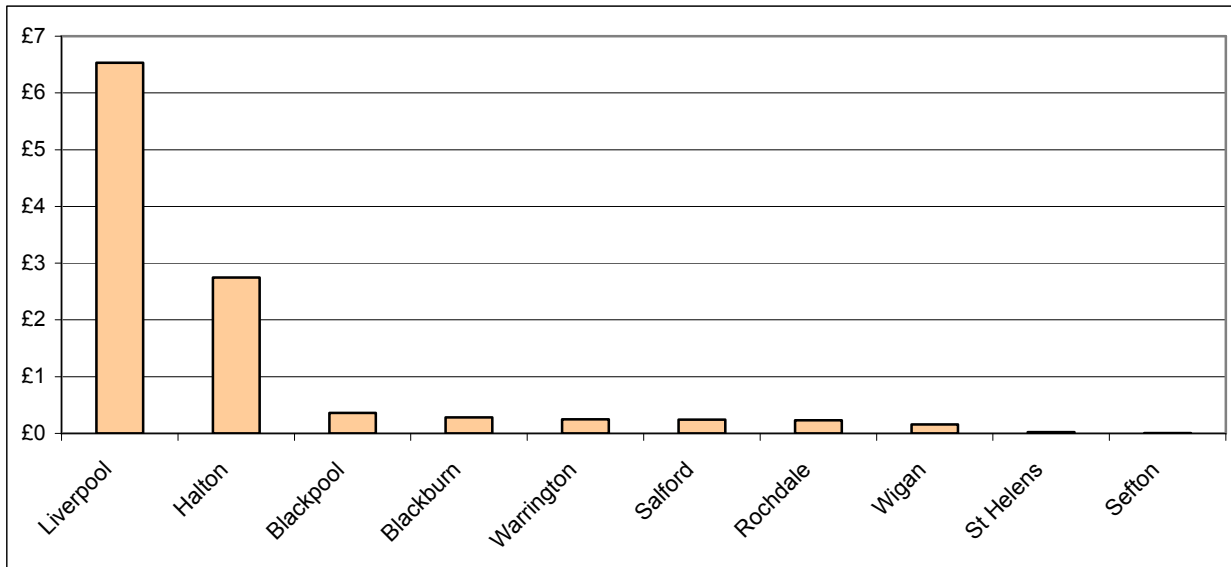
Sefton and St Helens spent relatively little on the disagreement resolution service, £500 and £250 respectively. Liverpool have the highest spend on the resolution service; with a total spend of around £300,000 in 2006/07.

The DRS is not widely used in the Northwest, and was used less this year than in 2004/05.

Graph 43: Number of referrals to the Disagreement Resolution Service
Source: LA Data 2007



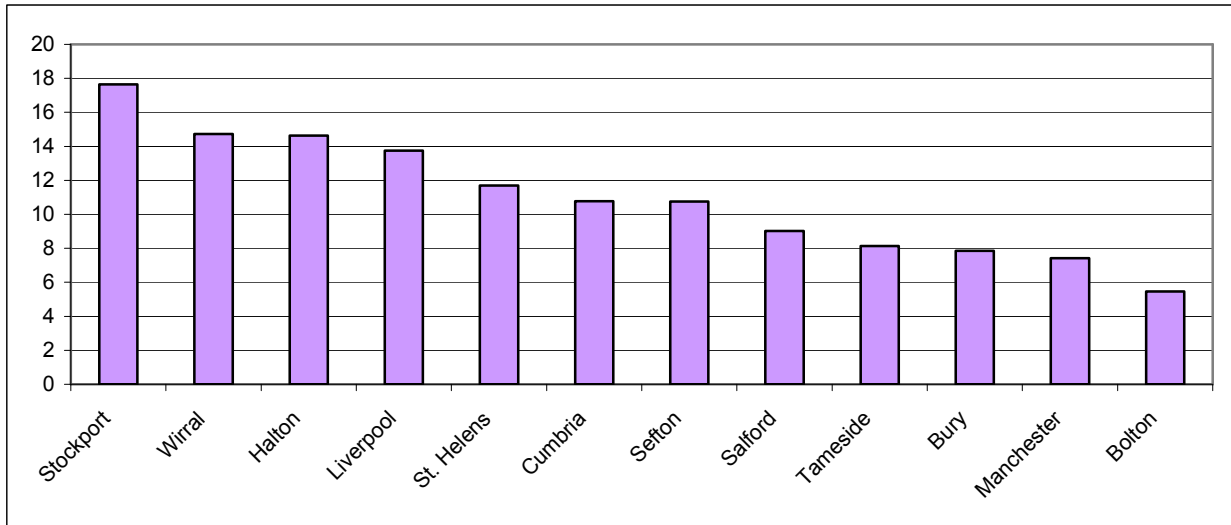
Graph 44: Spend on disagreement resolution service per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07



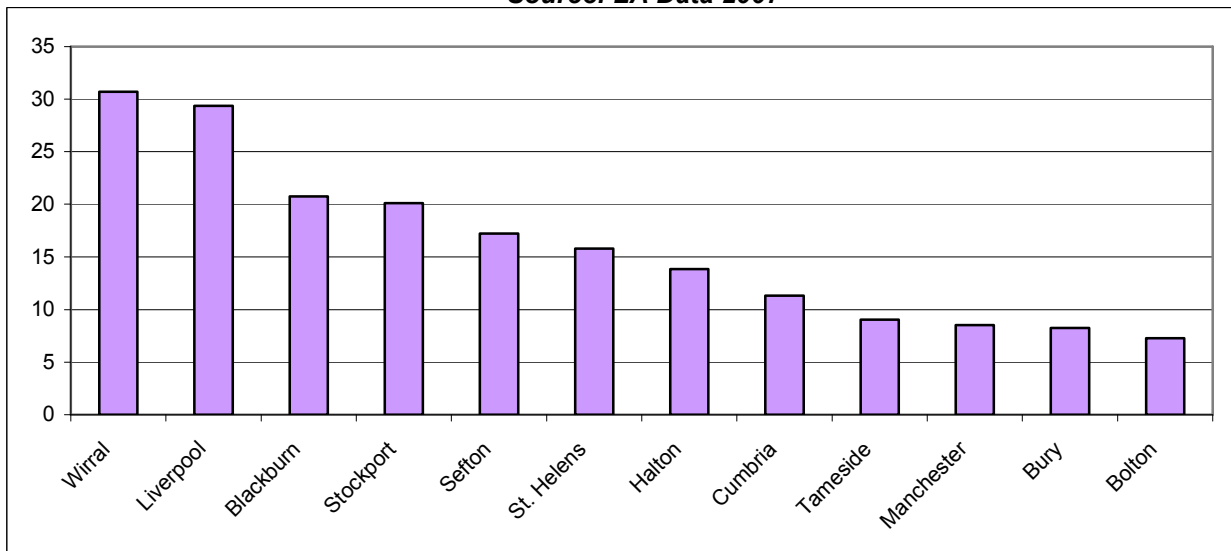
Liverpool spends the most per head of the population on the disagreement resolution. But as mentioned previously the spend in general was a lot greater than all other authorities this year.

Section 8: Looked After Pupils

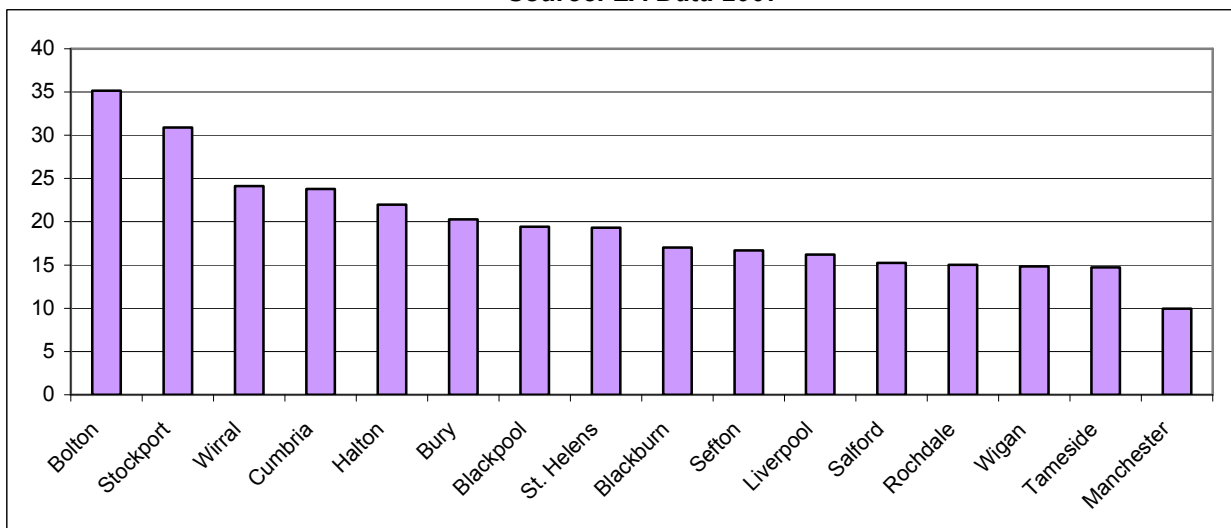
Graph 45: % LAC at School Action
Source: LA Data 2007



Graph 46: % LAC at School Action Plus
Source: LA Data 2007



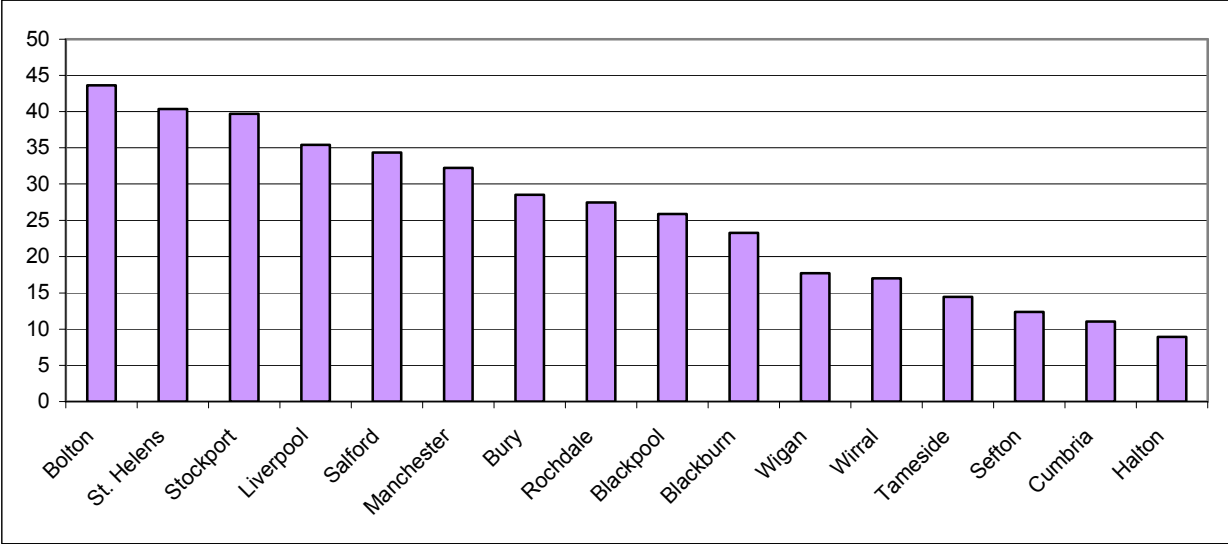
Graph 47: % LAC who have a statement of SEN
Source: LA Data 2007



The graphs above highlight that children who are looked after, are more likely to appear on the SEN register than other pupils.

Bolton and Stockport have a higher percentage of LAC pupils with statements, three times greater than Manchester. As Stockport LA produces the second highest amount of new statements (graph 8), it is no surprise that they have a high proportion of statemented LAC pupils.

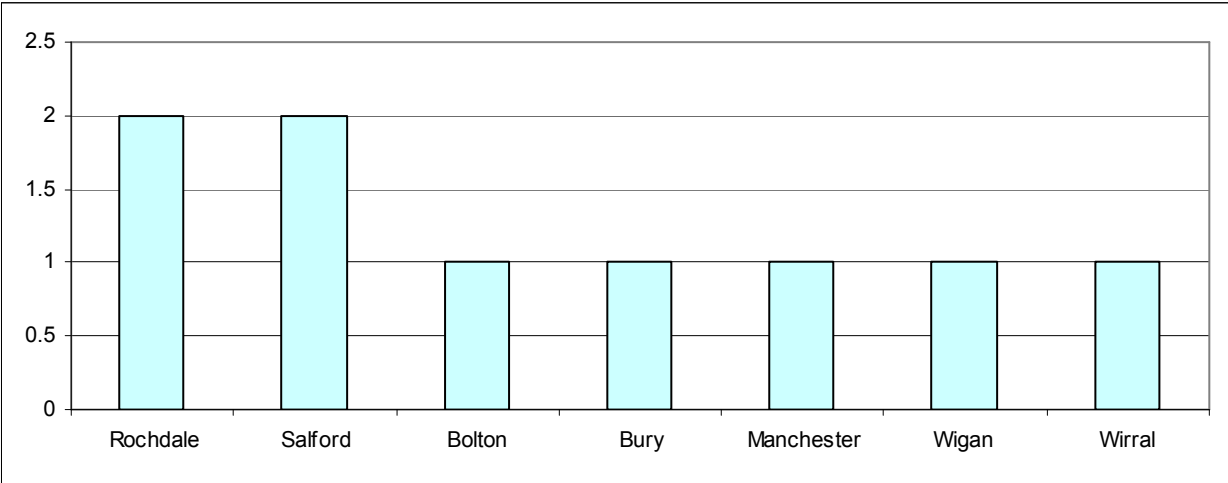
Graph 48: % LAC attending schools out of authority
Source: LA Data 2007



The process of placing children who are 'looked after', has been under review recently. It is generally accepted that placing children closer to home produces better outcomes and all LAs are striving to do this. However, in some cases this may not be possible.

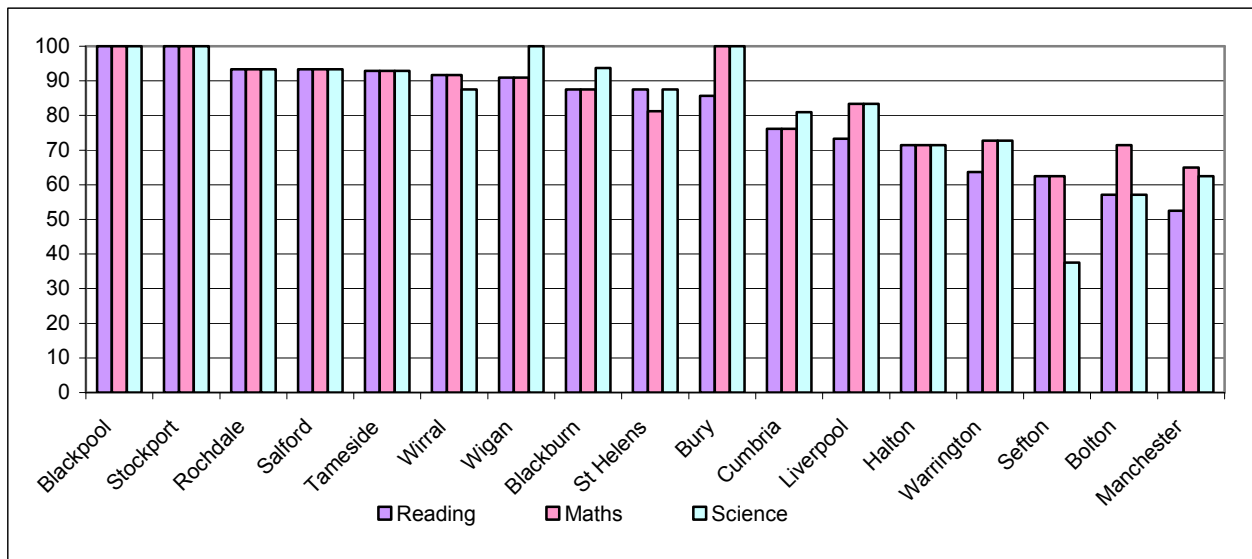
Graph 48 shows that there are significant differences within the region in numbers of LAC pupils attending schools that are out of authority. Nine authorities have over 25% attending schools out of authority. This high number may be attributable to lower levels of independent provision in some LAs.

Graph 49: Number of LAC permanently excluded
Source: LA Data 2007



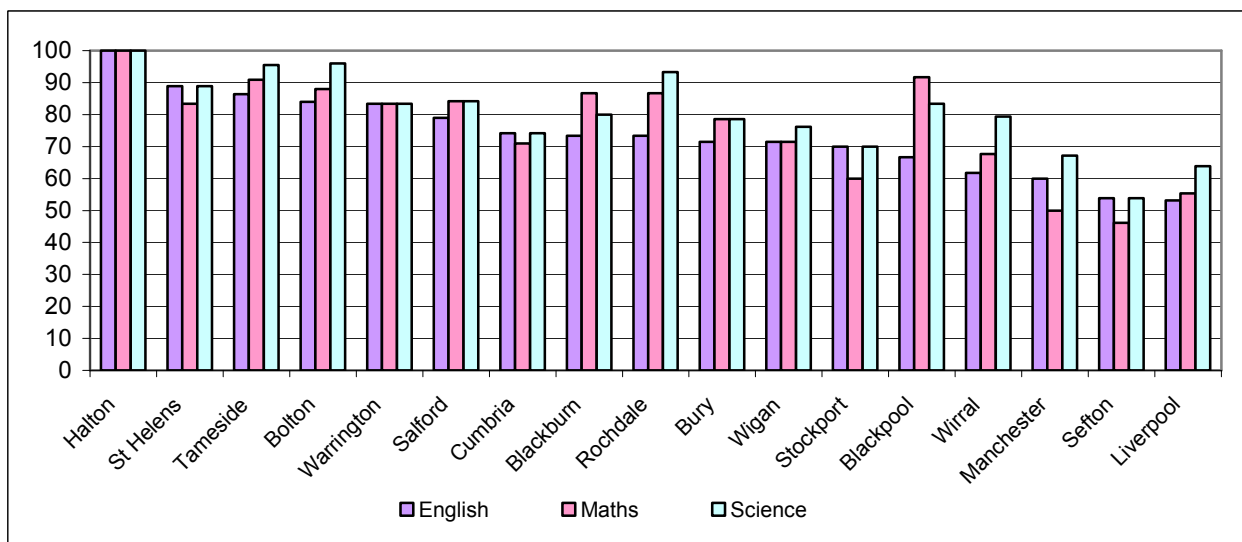
Only seven authorities had a LAC pupil permanently excluded from school. Nine authorities had no LAC pupils excluded. Salford, in the top two for LAC exclusions, also has high number of exclusions for all pupils. Rochdale too, is also in the top three for exclusions for all pupils.

Graph 50: % LAC aged 7 achieving Level 1 or above at Key Stage 1
Source: LA Data 2007



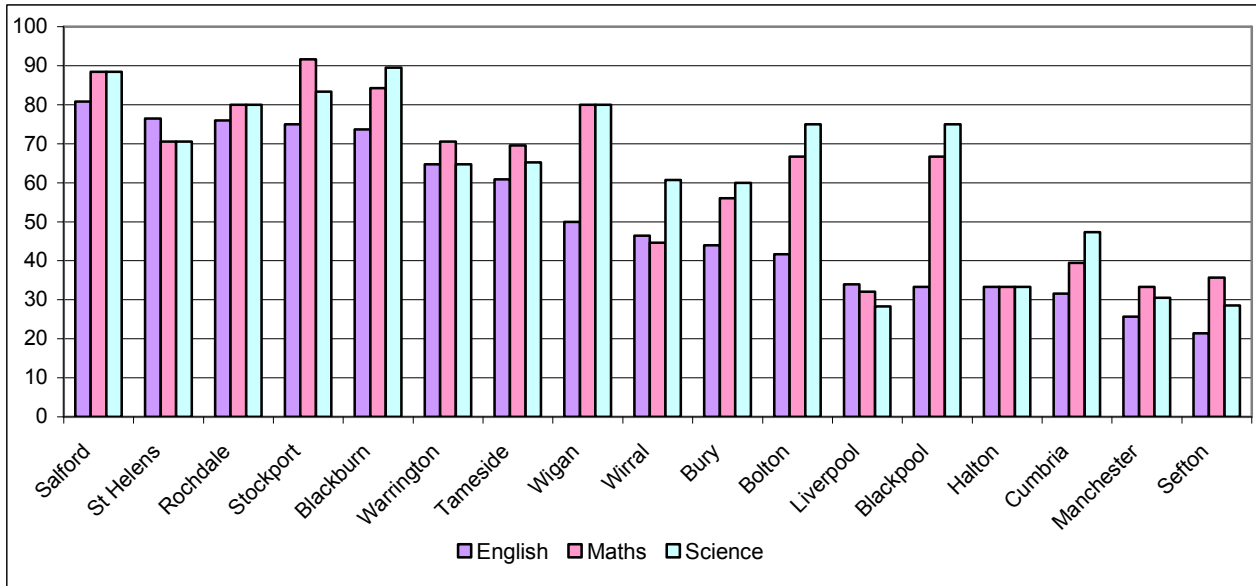
Across the region, LAC pupil's achievement at Key Stage one is excellent. All authorities had 50% or more achieving level one or above. Blackpool and Stockport had 100% attainment in all three subjects.

Graph 51: % LAC aged 11 achieving at least Level 2 or above in Key Stage 2
Source: LA Data 2007



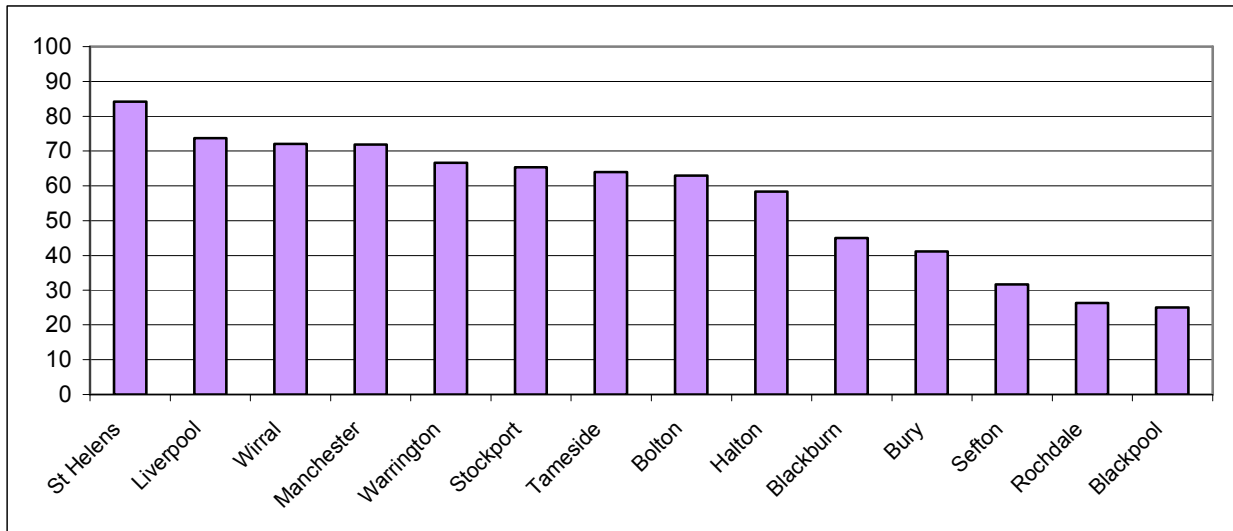
Although levels of attainment for LAC at KS2 are lower than KS1, they are still higher than results for pupils with statements (Graph 37). All authorities had at least 50% achieving level 2 or above. Halton had 100% attainment for all three subjects.

Graph 52: % LAC aged 14 attaining at least Level 3 in Key stage 3
Source: LA Data 2007



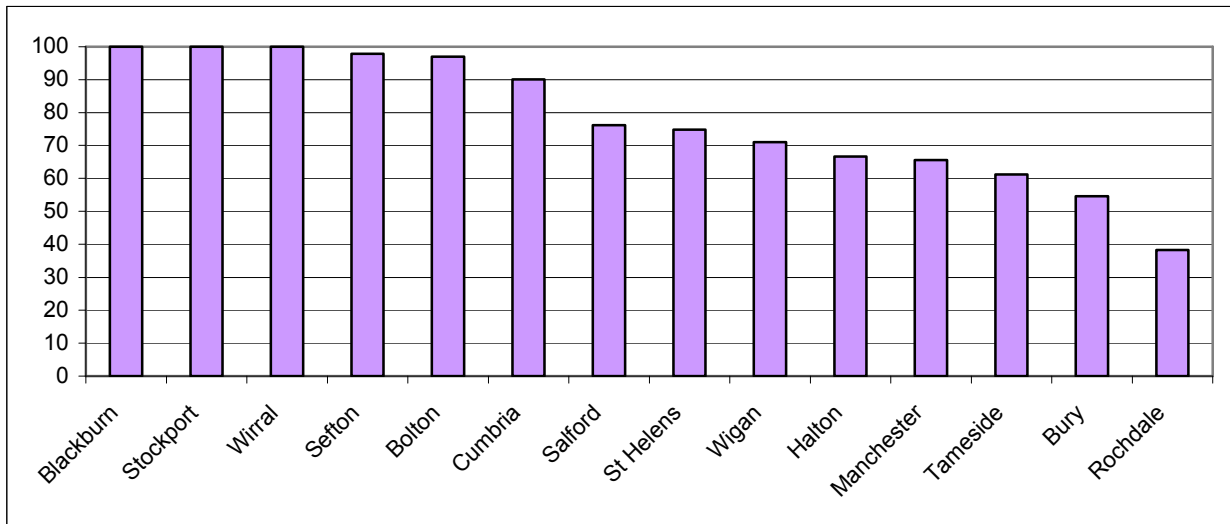
Levels of attainment for KS3 are lower compared to KS1 and KS2. However, as previously mentioned, levels are still higher than results for pupils with statements (Graph 38). Only eight authorities had 50% or more achieving at least Level 3 or above at Key stage 3.

Graph 53: % LAC aged 16 attaining at least 16pts at end of KS4
Source: LA Data 2007



Nine authorities have over 50% of their LAC attaining at least 16pts at the end of KS4. St. Helens has over three times more pupils achieving than Blackpool.

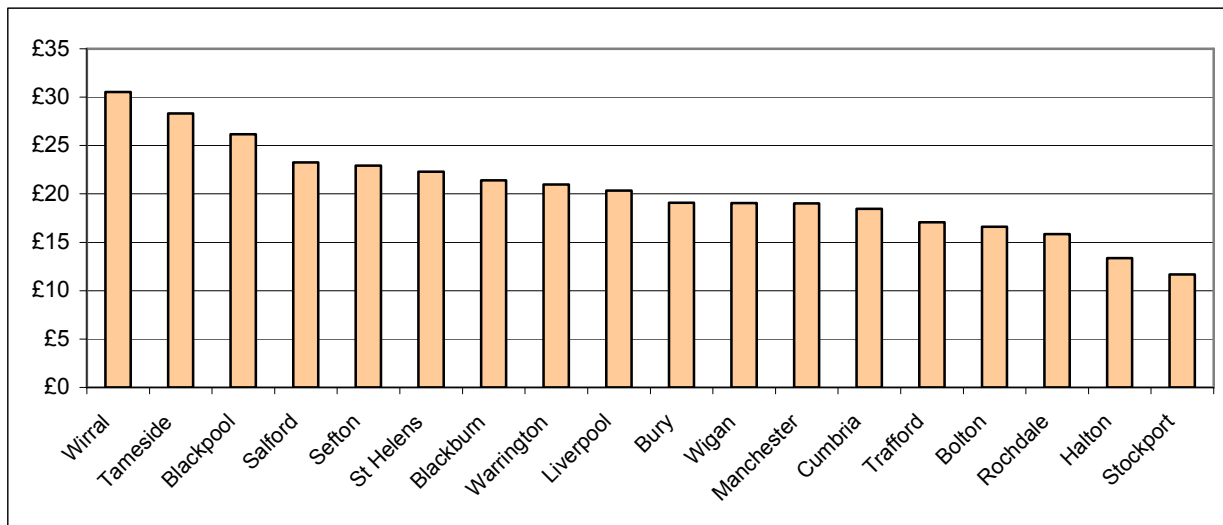
Graph 54: % LAC who have a PEP in place
Source: LA Data 2007



It is a statutory requirement that every Looked after Child has a Personal Education Plan. As we can see Blackburn with Darwen, Stockport and Wirral has 100% of their PEPs in place for LAC pupils. All other authorities with the exception of Rochdale have 50% or more in place.

Section 9: Educational Psychologists and Support Staff

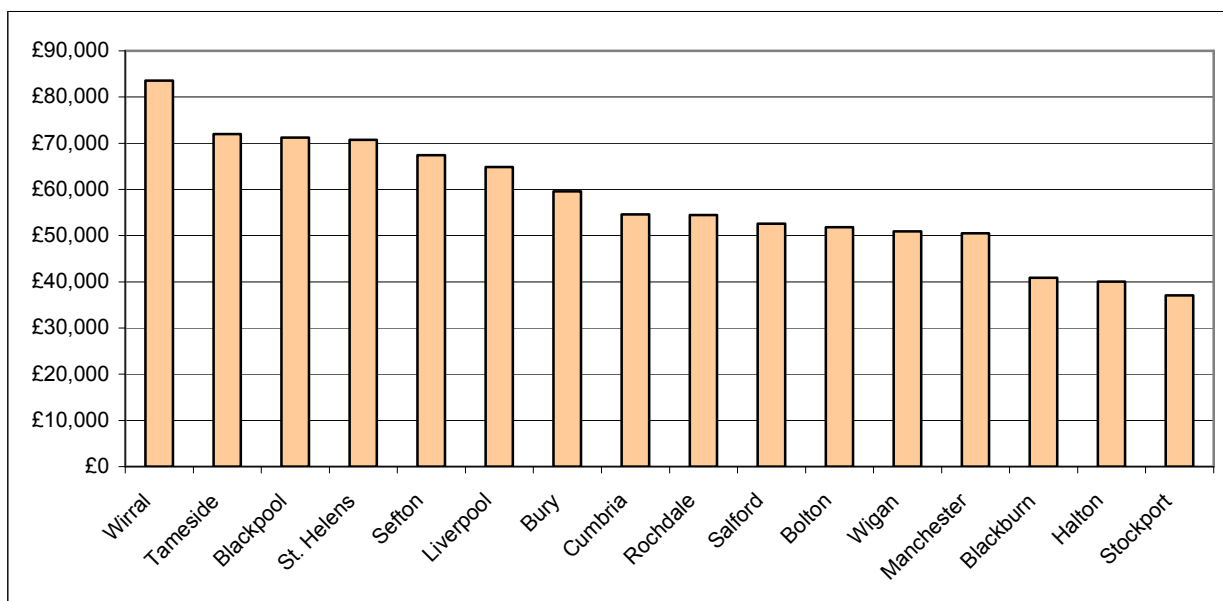
Graph 55: Spend on Educational Psychology Service per head of 5-15 population
Source: LA Data Financial Year 2006/07



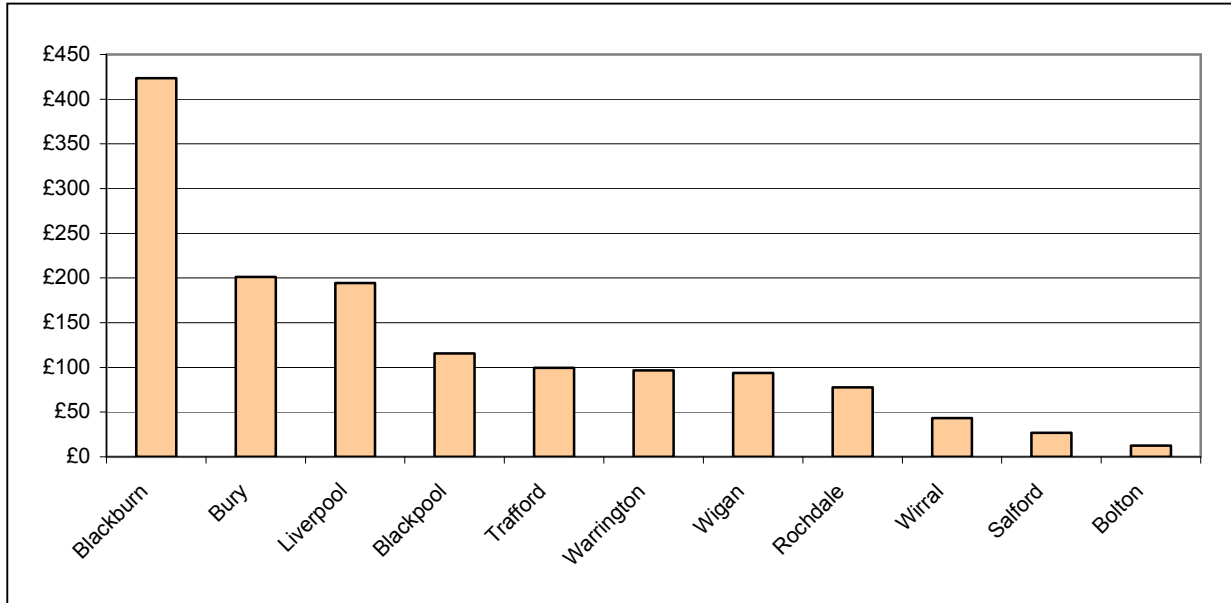
Wirral LA, spend almost three times the amount of Stockport on the Educational Psychology service per head of 5-15 population.

This figure becomes less when we calculate spend per Education Psychologist, to Wirral LA spending just twice that of Stockport.

Graph 56: Spend on Educational Psychology Service per Education Psychologist
Source: LA Data Financial Year 2006/07



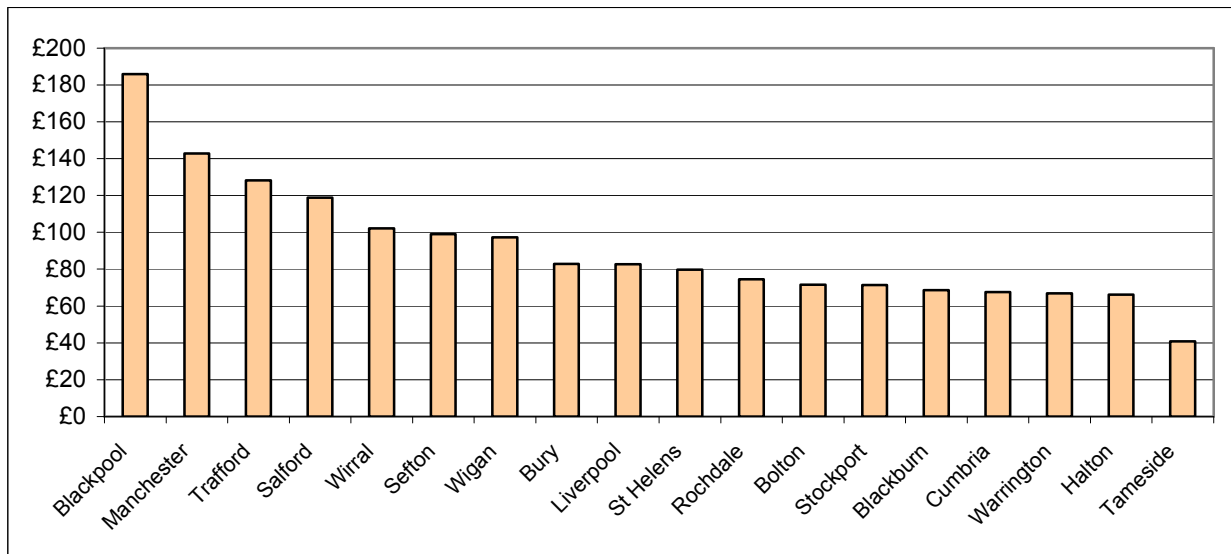
**Graph 57: Total spend on LA Support costs
(Not Inc spend on Educational Psychology/Stat Assessment)
per head 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07 Financial year**



A number of LAs were unable to return this information. The data available shows a large variation between authorities, with Blackburn spending considerably more than any other authority. It is possible, however that further refinement to improve the validity of the data is required.

Section 10: SEN Home to School Transport

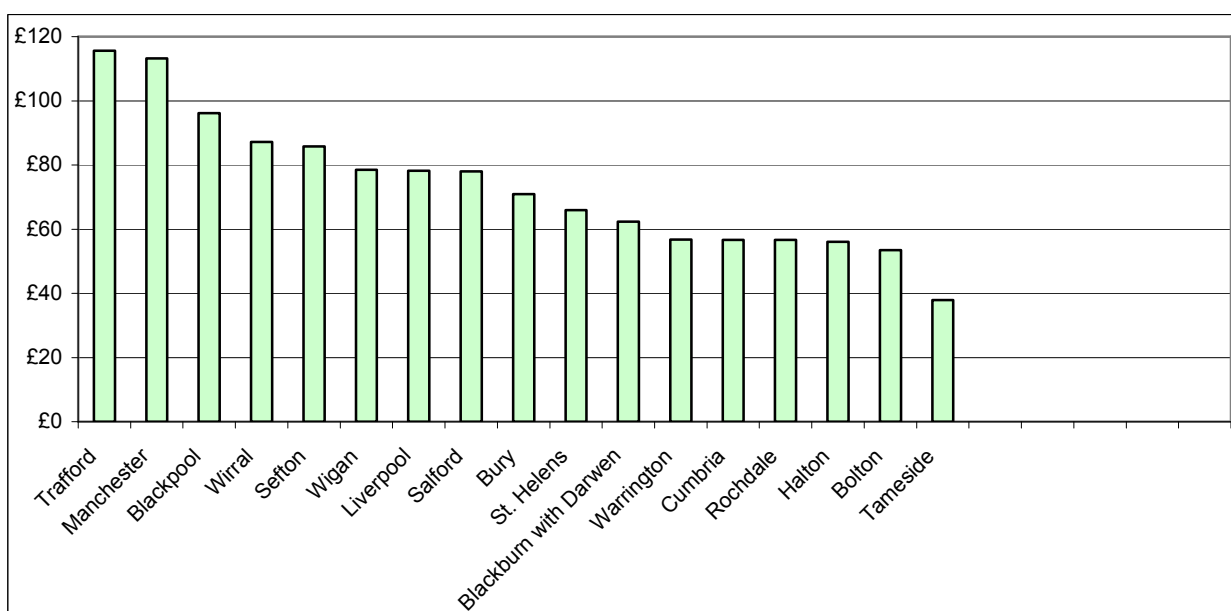
Graph 58a: Spend on SEN home on school transport per head 5-15 population
Source: LA Data 2006/07



There is a significant variation between the spend on home to school transport between the authorities. Blackpool spends over four times as much as Tameside do. However it is likely that this is due to the fact that Blackpool has a high proportion of pupils placed out of authority. However their spend has doubled from last year. The differences in spend can be affected by the number of out of authority and special school placements, individual authority transport policies and the local transport market.

Most authorities have seen a small increase in spend, as you would expect with cost of living increases.

Graph 58b: Spend on SEN home on school transport per head 5-15 population
Source: Historic LA Data 2005/06



Conclusion

We hope that colleagues have found the results of the benchmarking exercise interesting, informative and most importantly useful. The commentary to the graphs is entirely our own and is only to highlight, how data can be interpreted. LAs should be aware that if the hypotheses made are not true, they are the result of taking the data at face-value, and this may also been done by others.

For the first time, we have been able to compare financial data, spread over two years. Where we have been able to this, we are able to see those authorities that have managed to reduce costs.

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Appendix B: Contacts for Participating LAs

Authority	Contact	Email
Blackburn	Cath Hitchen	Cath.hitchen@blackburn.gov.uk
Blackpool	Linda Dawes	Linda.dawes@blackpool.gov.uk
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Bury	S Bullen	s.bullen@bury.gov.uk
Cheshire	Fintan Bradley	bradleyf@cheshire.gov.uk
Cumbria	David Henderson	David.henderson@cumbria.gov.uk
Halton	Jennifer John	Jennifer.john@halon-borough.gov.uk
Knowsley	Matt Carey	Matt.carey@knowsley.gov.uk
Lancashire	Sally Riley	Sall.riley@ed.lancscc.gov.uk
Liverpool	Lesley Wright	Lesley.wright@liverpool.gov.uk
Manchester	Brian Seaborn	b.seaborn@manchester.gov.uk
Oldham	Elaine Siddall	Elaine.siddall@oldham.gov.uk
Rochdale	Maria Boyle	Maria.boyle@rochdale.gov.uk
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Wigan	Lorna Hulme	l.hulme@wiganmbc.gov.uk
Wirral	Bob Franks	bobfranks@wirral.gov.uk

Appendix C: Benchmarking User Guide

1. Introduction

This guide is for the reader who is not familiar with graphs or doesn't use them in their day-to-day work and possibly could find this benchmarking report imposing. It could also be the case that the data is often collected from various sources within a local authority, and on occasion the results of this can surprise even the closest of colleagues.

Authorities have become acutely aware of the power of data, and the ways in which combinations of datasets can be interpreted in ways, which give an entirely erroneous picture of the activity within an area. It is vital, that the data are as accurate as possible. LAs may find a need to cross-reference their data more carefully, perhaps checking within their various multi-agency managers' groups.

The narrative, which accompanies the graphs helps address these issues, and shows the rich seam of interesting information that is just beneath the surface of the graphs. However, the narrative only shows two people's views on the data and has only limited space to explore ideas so it will be invaluable for you to use your own detailed knowledge and experience of your LA to analyse the data. This will hopefully identify good practice and areas of weakness, allowing you to capitalise in good practice and will allow you to identify areas for future work.

This user guide aims to equip you with the tools necessary to read the data and more importantly to make conclusions about the data and to plan to change practice or capitalise on good practice. There is a danger that any guide could be too prescriptive and be seen as setting up rules which would constrain the reader rather than liberating their thinking so I would emphasise that this one person's method of data analysis and that there are innumerable other ways that you may prefer which are just as valid.

2. Uses of Data

This benchmarking data can be used to:

- Share the data with colleagues in departments to identify strengths and weaknesses in performance
- Understand better how performance in your LA compares to other local LAs
- Where weakness appear, try and identify causes and possible solutions if appropriate
- Contact colleagues in other LAs to discuss why their strategies have resulted in successful performance
- Reflect on the effect policy decisions by your LA have had on the population
- Reflect on the data to inform and challenge policy decisions
- Celebrate areas where the LA is achieving well or interventions have been successful
- Share information with elected members to help create a greater understanding of the context in which LAs work and how performance relates to that of other LAs in the region
- Share information with schools to celebrate success and as evidence to support decisions
- Use in JAR
- Setting local Pis

3. A worked example of analysis

We will look closely at a graph from the benchmarking report; graph 31a Permanent Exclusions per 10,000-school population. This is on page 23 of the report. We are going to look specifically at Tameside LA's performance and what conclusions we can draw from this.

Initial thoughts:

Looking at the graph we can see that Tameside has the fourth highest permanent exclusions of the region. I will now brainstorm some ideas about what could be the causes of this, which can then be tested against other data:

1. The level of exclusions is affected by deprivation levels
2. Tameside does not have enough SEBD provision
3. Tameside spends less supporting pupils in mainstream school
4. Tameside pupils' behaviour is more difficult

You will see that these hypotheses are basic and indeed readers will probably feel they know the answers already. However the process of checking these hypotheses is valuable. In confirming or disproving theories, valuable insight is sometimes achieved. We will test the theories by comparing them to other benchmarking graphs.

1. The level of exclusions is affected by deprivation levels

We can test this theory by comparing it to graphs 1 and 2, which measures levels of deprivation. If deprivation was the most important factor in exclusions we would expect Tameside to be one of the most deprived LAs. We can see however, that Tameside is in the middle range of deprivation in the region.

Also graphs 1 and 2 don't generally correlate with graph 31a so we can say that deprivation is not the most important factor in determining the number of pupils excluded. We must look elsewhere for answers.

2. Tameside does not have enough BESD provision

We can see by looking at Graph 20 that Tameside's SEBD provision is typical to the region. We can also see in Graph 20 there is spare capacity in Tameside's SEBD provision. There does not seem to be any evidence that a shortfall in SEBD places is resulting in the relatively high exclusion rate.

3. Tameside spends less supporting pupils in mainstream school

Graph 5d shows us that Tameside is one of the smaller funding LAs but other seemingly smaller funding LAs such as Wigan, Sefton and Warrington have much smaller exclusion rates. We can conclude then that there does not appear to be a regional link between funding and exclusions, but it could be a factor that is contributing. We must of course add a health warning to this conclusion because of the reliability of data.

4. Tameside's pupils' behaviour is more difficult

This a factor which is tricky to gauge. We can look at the numbers of pupils on the SEN register as a guide to the needs of the pupils. We can see in Graph 3 & 4 that Tameside

has relatively few pupils on the SEN register, particularly at the primary stage. This would suggest that behaviour may not be worse.

We can perhaps draw a new hypothesis from this data: The narrative for graphs 3 & 4 shows that there is a link between the deprivation of an area and the number of pupils on the SEN register. Tameside is the 11th most deprived LA but has the 4th smallest percentage of pupils on the SEN register at primary school. It is possible that there is an under identification of pupils at primary which could contribute to the high number of placements that break down. We unfortunately can't test this with the data in the benchmarking but it raises interesting questions for the LA.

Further analysis

We can see there are a number of other graphs that relate to exclusions now we have exhausted our initial theories we will look at these graphs to see what else we can find out.

Graph 32a shows the proportion of pupils with statements who are permanently excluded. This graph holds some very interesting information. Tameside had no exclusions of statemented pupils; this is in stark comparison with the relatively high levels for other pupils. We can conclude that the LA has got very good practice in maintaining statemented pupils which could help maintain placements for non-statemented pupils. Officers from the LA may wish to investigate this good practice further.

Conclusions

We have seen that the number of exclusions can't be written off as a result of deprivation or a lack of SEBD provision. We have identified that further analysis is required of financial information and there may be an under identification of need in Primary Schools. We have been able to identify some good practice that exists within the LA as well as highlighting that there is a relatively high number of exclusions and action might need to be taken.

3. Analysing your own data

I hope the above example shows that analysing data need not be complicated. The primary requirement for successful analysis is sufficient time to compare the graphs and produce some working conclusions. Your specialist knowledge of local conditions and of pupils with additional needs will be invaluable in understanding data but sometimes proving the obvious can be a worthwhile exercise as well.

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