Norfolk annual special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) survey report

Summer 2022

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Introduction

Aims

To seek the views of thousands of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), their families, and the professionals who work with them to hear about what's going well and what still needs improvement.
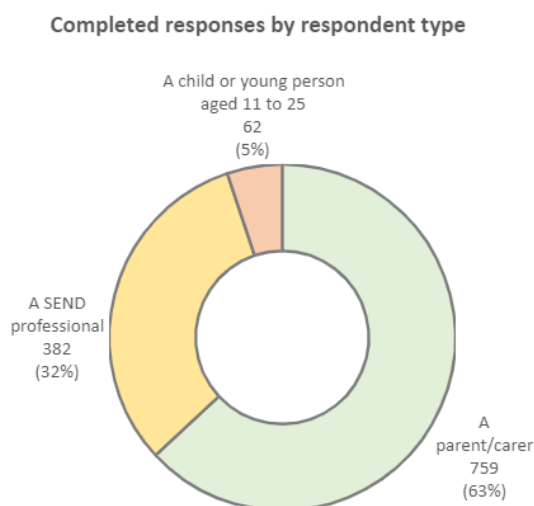
Purpose

The feedback will be used to make plans for the rest of 2022 and beyond. It was really important to hear from lots of people. The results will inform the refresh of the Norfolk Area SEND Strategy Action Plan which is co-produced and owned by the local area.

Approach

The survey was put together by Norfolk County Council working in partnership with parents, parent carer groups, and a range of professionals. It was designed to be as short and easy as possible, asking questions about support, education, health, Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) and social care. There were separate sets of questions for each of these three groups: children and young people aged 11 to 25; parents and carers; and professionals.

Context

Response rate

Completed responses by respondent type

A child or young person aged 11 to 25
62
(5%)

A SEND professional
382
(32%)

A parent/carer
759
(63%)

- Children and young people responses were very low despite a well-planned communications plan with a call to action
- Lessons learnt will inform the communications plan for 2023
- Compared with other similar surveys run in other areas, the response rate was encouraging
- This will be built on in 2023

Survey reach to parents/carers

The size of circle represents the proportion of respondents from that postcode area.
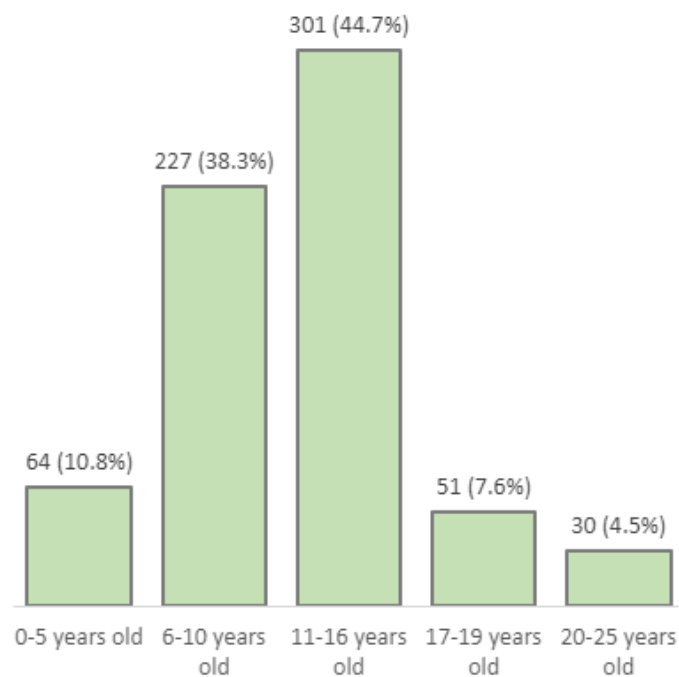
There was some variation in the rate of responses across Norfolk, however all areas are covered to some extent.

Parents/carers' information about their child

Parents/carers who completed the survey were most likely to have a child aged 6-16 years old.

Age of child - parent/carer survey

Autism was most reported need of the child that the parent/carer was thinking about.

What is the nature of the SEND of the child you are thinking about?

Category	Value
Autism	447 (59.8%)
Learning difficulties	287 (38.4%)
ADHD	230 (30.7%)
Mental health difficulties	210 (28.1%)
Dyslexia or dyspraxia	169 (22.6%)
Difficulties with talking and making themselves understood	161 (21.5%)
Other (No.)	156 (20.9%)
Physical disabilities	92 (12.3%)
Allergies or asthma	71 (9.5%)
Seeing or hearing difficulties	55 (7.4%)
Medical needs such as epilepsy or diabetes	50 (6.7%)
Down's syndrome	20 (2.7%)
Tourette's syndrome	15 (2.0%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

Professionals' information about the children they work with

The data shows that the professionals who responded to the survey worked with a wide range of ages and needs.

Ages of children professionals work with

Age	Value
0-5	161 (31.4%)
6-10	176 (34.3%)
11-16	176 (24.8%)
17-19	130 (18.3%)
20-25	67 (9.4%)
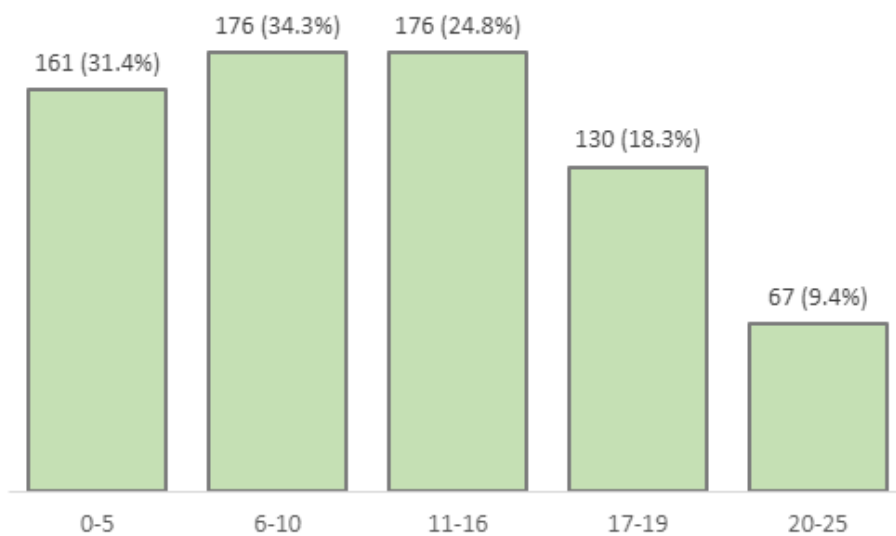
SEND of children that professionals work with

269 (11.6%)
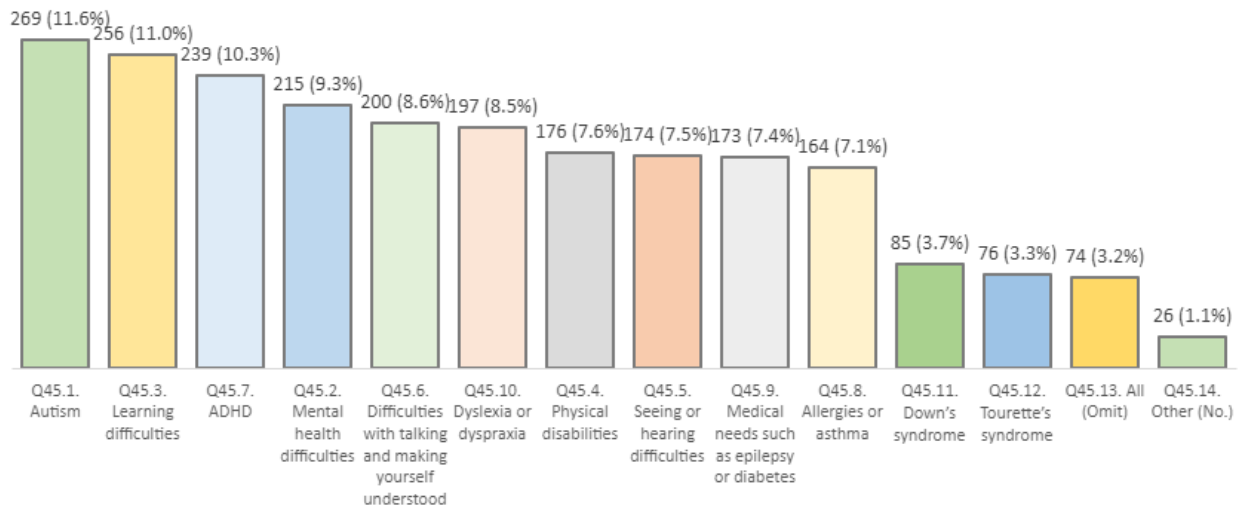256 (11.0%)
239 (10.3%)
215 (9.3%)
200 (8.6%)
197 (8.5%)
176 (7.6%)
174 (7.5%)
173 (7.4%)
164 (7.1%)
85 (3.7%)
76 (3.3%)
74 (3.2%)
26 (1.1%)

| Q45.1. Autism | Q45.3. Learning difficulties | Q45.7. ADHD | Q45.2. Mental health difficulties | Q45.6. Difficulties with talking and making yourself understood | Q45.10. Dyslexia or dyspraxia | Q45.4. Physical disabilities | Q45.5. Seeing or hearing difficulties | Q45.9. Medical needs such as epilepsy or diabetes | Q45.8. Allergies or asthma | Q45.11. Down's syndrome | Q45.12. Tourette's syndrome | Q45.13. All (Omit) | Q45.14. Other (No.) |

Children and young people

Although only a small number of children and young people completed the survey, the largest age group represented were 17–20-year-olds.

21-25
6
10%

11-16
19
30%

17-20
37
60%
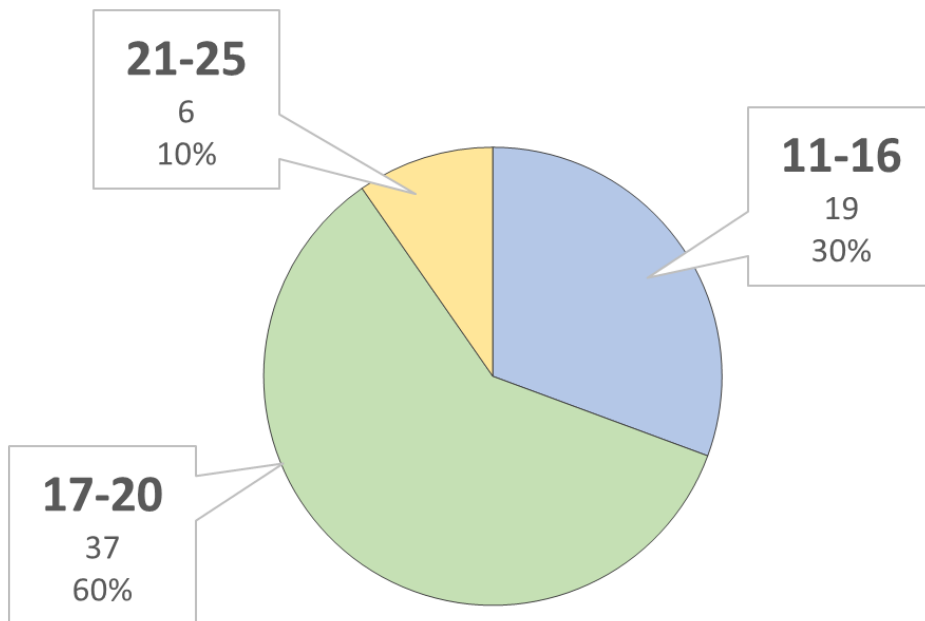
Learning difficulties and autism were the top two needs identified.

SEND of children and young people responding
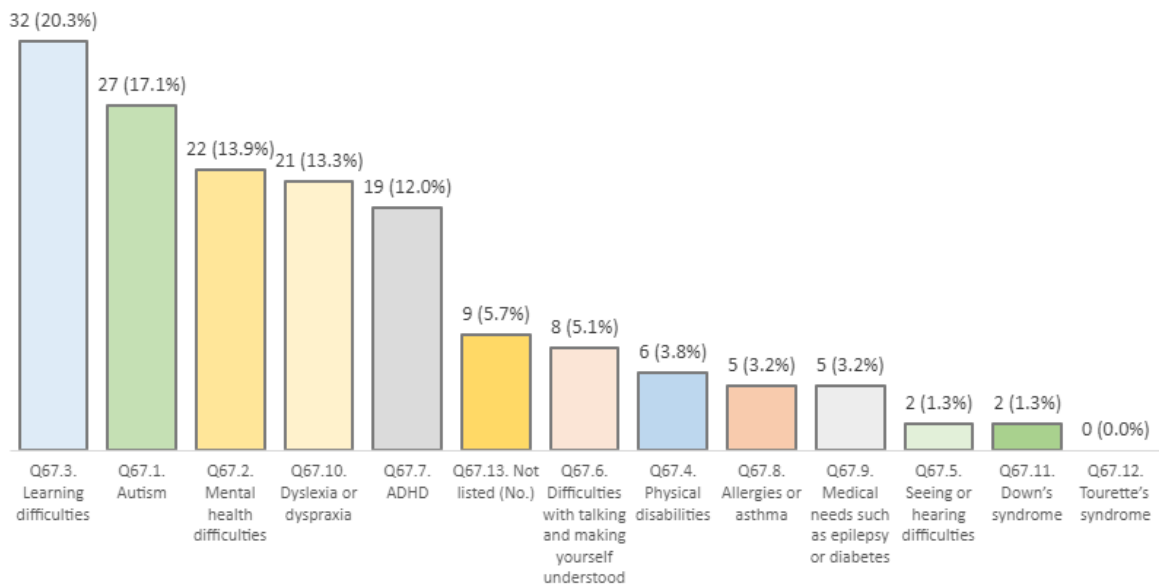
Themes

Help and support to find and use services

When children and young people (CYP) were asked **who helped them (Q71)** the most chosen answer was 'my family', followed by 'teachers'. The next two common choices were 'friends' and 'myself'.

Who helps you?

When children and young people (CYP) were asked **who had offered them the best support (Q72)** the most common answers were family, teachers and teaching assistants.

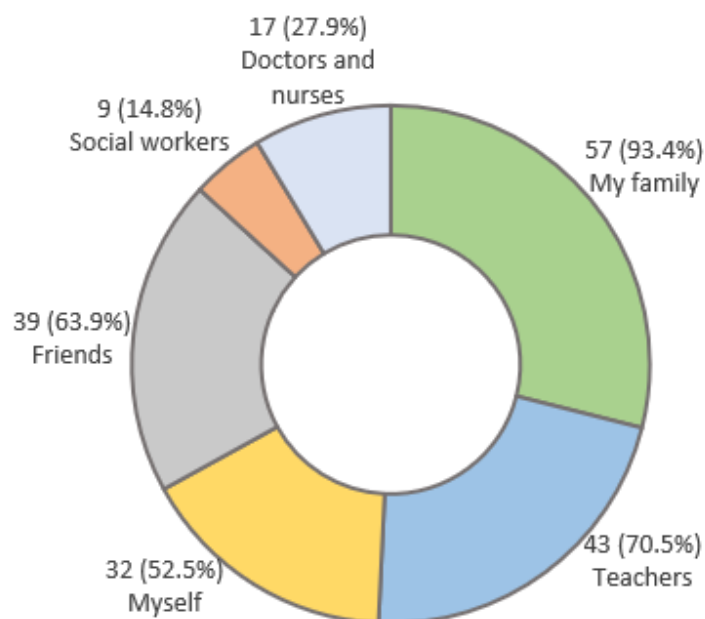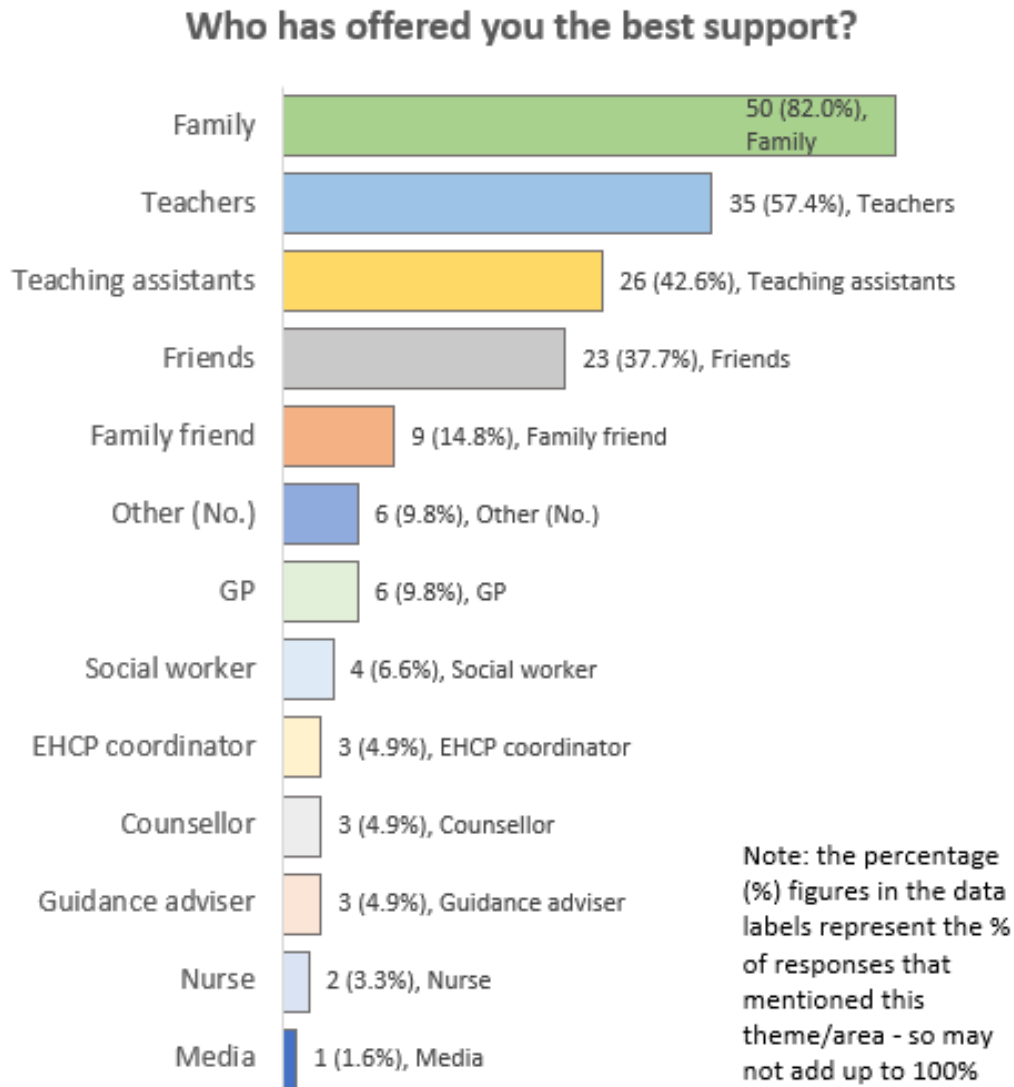When combined, teachers and teaching assistants representing places of learning were the most popular choices.

Who has offered you the best support?

Category	Value
Family	50 (82.0%), Family
Teachers	35 (57.4%), Teachers
Teaching assistants	26 (42.6%), Teaching assistants
Friends	23 (37.7%), Friends
Family friend	9 (14.8%), Family friend
Other (No.)	6 (9.8%), Other (No.)
GP	6 (9.8%), GP
Social worker	4 (6.6%), Social worker
EHCP coordinator	3 (4.9%), EHCP coordinator
Counsellor	3 (4.9%), Counsellor
Guidance adviser	3 (4.9%), Guidance adviser
Nurse	2 (3.3%), Nurse
Media	1 (1.6%), Media

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

As families and teachers are important givers of help and support to CYP, it is essential they can easily find and use the information.

When parents/carers were asked **if those working with them and their child had helped them to find support and opportunities in their local area (Q6),** just over half said no. The other half reported that they sometimes get help from those working with their child to find what is available in their local area.

Do those working with you and your child help you find support and opportunities in your local area?

They all do	58 (7.7%)
Most of them do	89 (11.9%)
Some of them do	301 (40.2%)
No	301 (40.2%)
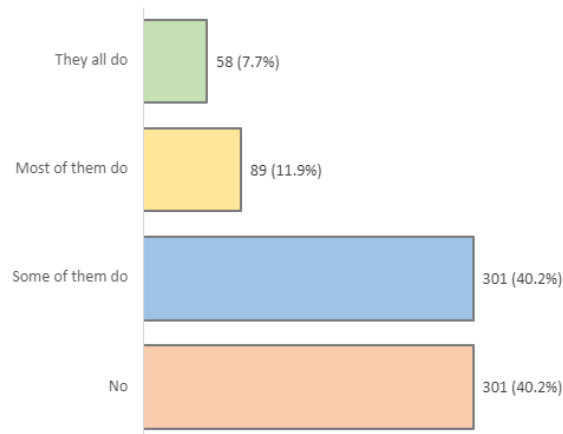
When professionals were asked if they help the children, young people and/or families they work with to find and access services and opportunities in their local area (Q48), most responded that they did. This is contradictory to the response from parents/carers.

162 (43.0%)	147 (39.0%)	68 (18.0%)
Yes, all the time/often	Yes, but only sometimes	No, this isn't part of my job
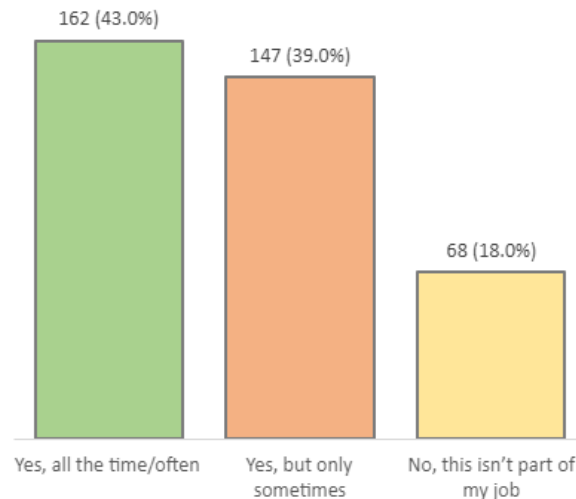
Action point: All those who work with CYP with SEND are aware of and confident users of the SEND Local Offer and Norfolk Community Directory.

When parents/carers were asked **what makes it harder for them and their child to use the services and support near them (Q7)** nearly a quarter responded with finding out what is on offer. The time of day when things were offered and staff knowledge/understanding also presented problems. NB it was possible to tick more than one option.

What makes it harder for you and your child to use the services and support near you?

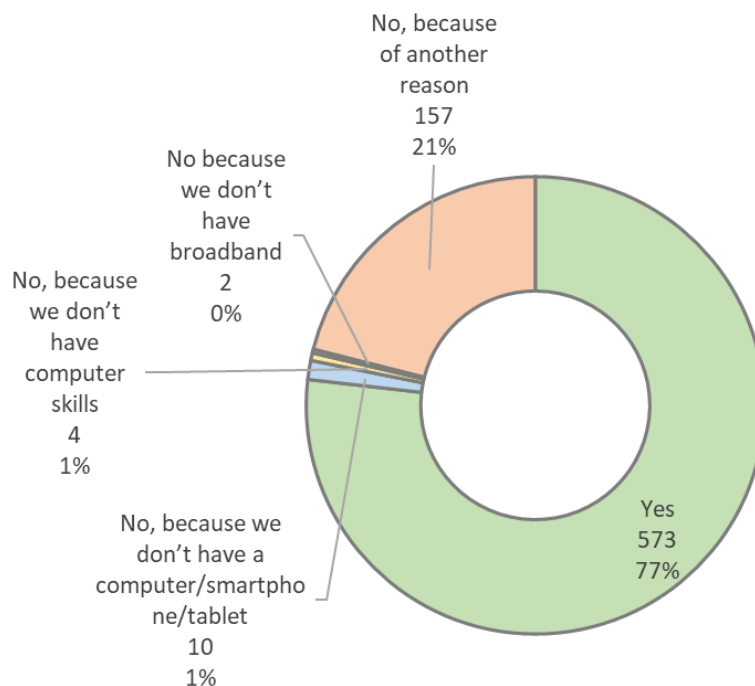| Category	Value
Finding out what's on offer	474 (66.9%)
The time of the day	214 (30.2%)
The staff don't have understanding and/or knowledge	196 (27.6%)
It's too stressful (eg a change in environment/routine is…	183 (25.8%)
Cost	182 (25.7%)
We need more support (eg it's difficult to manage alone)	148 (20.9%)
We've had some past negative experiences	142 (20.0%)
My child's physical health/wellbeing	122 (17.2%)
Getting there – a lack of public or our own transport	120 (16.9%)
My own physical health/wellbeing	84 (11.8%)
We don't feel welcome or included	79 (11.1%)
We don't have any problems accessing the services and…	51 (7.2%)
The general accessibility of the building(s) or environment,…	40 (5.6%)
There isn't the equipment we need	24 (3.4%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

Action point: To develop and promote guides that can be printed off to help parents/carers find services and support in Norfolk, for example Transition resources for parents and carers published in the SEND Local Offer.

Nearly a quarter of parents/carers said they do not use the internet to access services and support eg information and advice, specialist services or less formal help like social media support groups? (Q12).

Do you and/or your child use the internet to access services and support?

No, because of another reason
157
21%

No because we don't have broadband
2
0%

No, because we don't have computer skills
4
1%

No, because we don't have a computer/smartphone/tablet
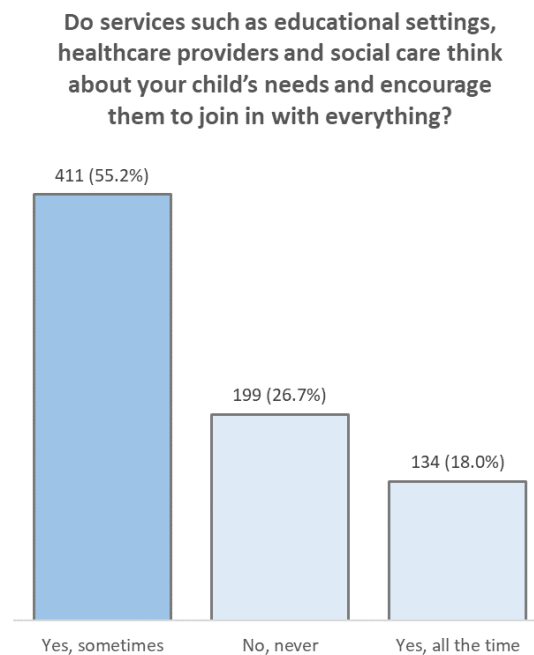10
1%

Yes
573
77%

The reasons most commonly given for not using the internet to access services and support:

- Do not know what to look for or what support is available
- Don't use social media because they don't like it or cannot afford to access the internet
- Don't have enough time
- Prefer to deal with people

Parents/carers that do use the internet to access services and support mentioned using Facebook support groups, particularly citing ASD Helping Hands and SENsational Families. Just One Norfolk also came up a lot.

Action point: Parents/carers must be offered a range of ways to access services and support, rather than assuming they all can and want to use the internet.

When parents/carers were asked if services such as educational settings, healthcare providers and social care think about their child's needs and encourage them to join in with everything (Q18), two thirds felt that services did consider their child's needs.

Do services such as educational settings, healthcare providers and social care think about your child's needs and encourage them to join in with everything?

Category	Count
Yes, sometimes	411 (55.2%)
No, never	199 (26.7%)
Yes, all the time	134 (18.0%)

However, when asked if services in local groups (eg youth groups/sports teams) think about their child's needs and encourage them to join in with everything they offer (Q19), half of parents/carers disagreed, and felt their child's needs were not considered and they were not encouraged to join in with everything they offer.

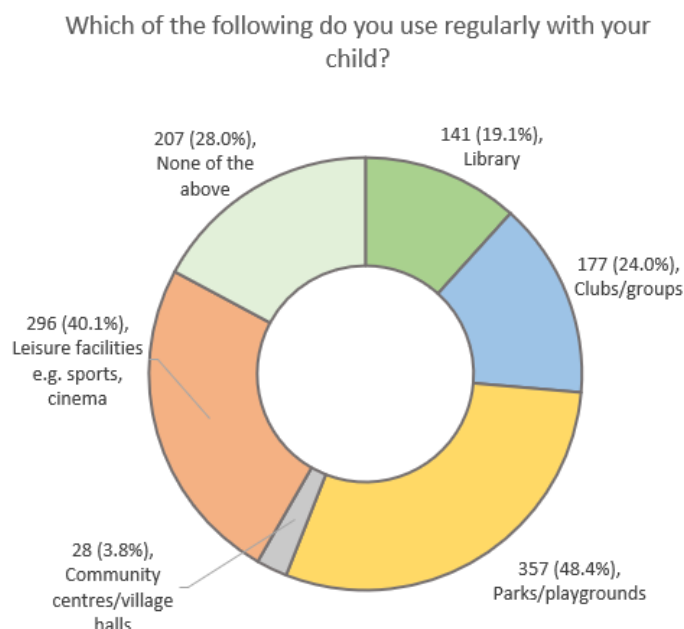**Do services in local groups (eg youth groups/sports teams) think about your child's needs and encourage them to join in with everything they offer?**

Yes, all the time
92
(13%)

No, never
333
(48%)

Yes, sometimes
266
(38%)
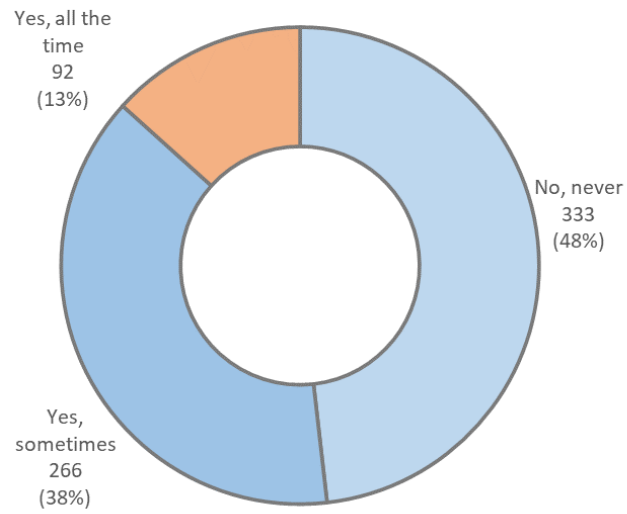
Action point: Work with voluntary groups to raise awareness of the importance of asking questions about children's needs and how they can be accommodated in clubs, teams outside of school.
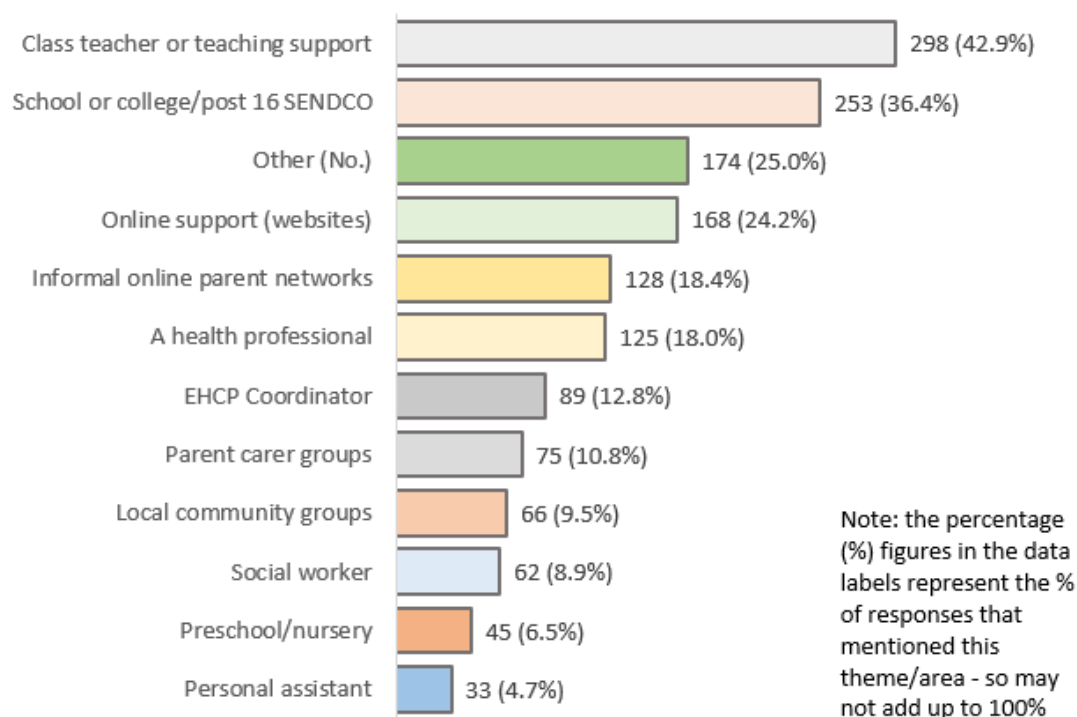
What is offered in your local area

Parents/carers were asked **which of the following they use regularly with their child (Q8).** Many parents/carers use local community services. However, some don't use any of the services listed in the survey and we need to consider why this might be.

Which of the following do you use regularly with your child?

207 (28.0%), None of the above

141 (19.1%), Library

177 (24.0%), Clubs/groups

296 (40.1%), Leisure facilities e.g. sports, cinema

28 (3.8%), Community centres/village halls

357 (48.4%), Parks/playgrounds

When asked **which support and/or services they have found particularly helpful for them and their child (Q10),** most parents/carers found SENCOs, teachers and teaching support staff to be the best for offering support and help.
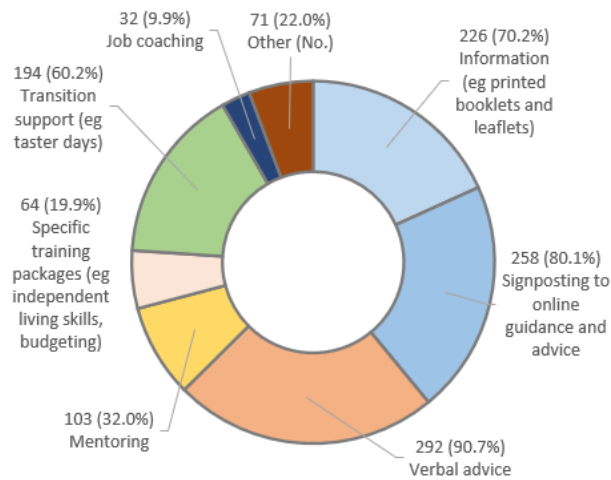
Please tell us which support and/or services you find particularly helpful for you and/or your child.

Service	Count (%)
Class teacher or teaching support	298 (42.9%)
School or college/post 16 SENDCO	253 (36.4%)
Other (No.)	174 (25.0%)
Online support (websites)	168 (24.2%)
Informal online parent networks	128 (18.4%)
A health professional	125 (18.0%)
EHCP Coordinator	89 (12.8%)
Parent carer groups	75 (10.8%)
Local community groups	66 (9.5%)
Social worker	62 (8.9%)
Preschool/nursery	45 (6.5%)
Personal assistant	33 (4.7%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

The new SENCO Guide will help more SENCOs to quickly find information and signpost parents/carers to the support and services they need.

Professionals responded with the types of support they offer to children and young people and their families. It was found that they are most likely to offer verbal advice, with signposting to online guidance and information also common practice.

Which of the following types of support do you offer to children and young people and their families?

32 (9.9%) Job coaching

71 (22.0%) Other (No.)

226 (70.2%) Information (eg printed booklets and leaflets)

194 (60.2%) Transition support (eg taster days)

258 (80.1%) Signposting to online guidance and advice

64 (19.9%) Specific training packages (eg independent living skills, budgeting)

103 (32.0%) Mentoring

292 (90.7%) Verbal advice

All professionals would benefit from links to information gathered in one place so that they can quickly find information that will help them to provide the right support at the right time. For example, the SENCO guide has been well received. A similar guide for different groups of professionals will be helpful eg Preparing for Adult Life.
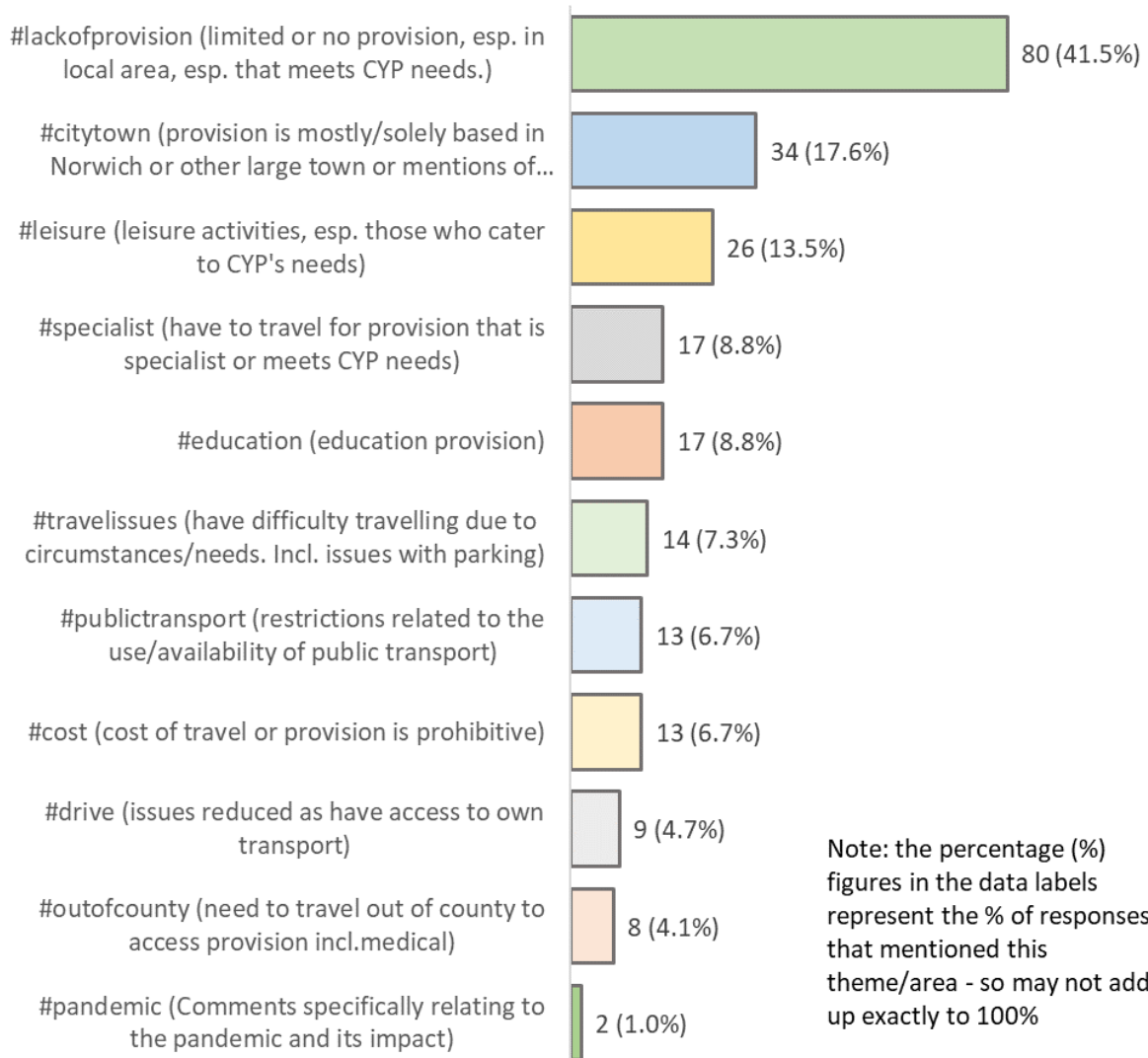
Over half of parents/carers said they did not **need to regularly travel outside of their local area to access services, support or activities (Q9).** However, there was a significant number who do have to travel to access services.

Do you and/or your child regularly need to travel outside of your local area to access services, support or activities?

Yes 346 40%

No 512 60%
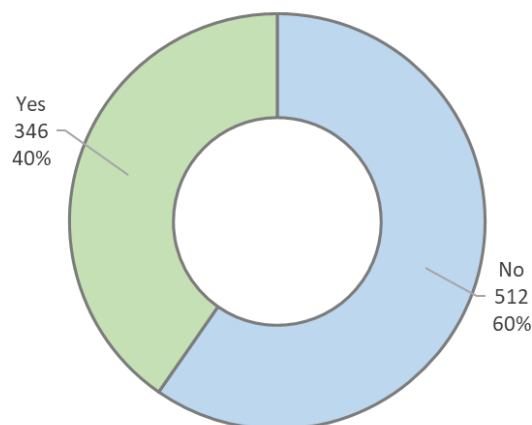
There were several comments saying that services are mostly based in larger urban areas. The cost of travel is a barrier. CYP with the most specialist needs are likely to have to travel further to access services.
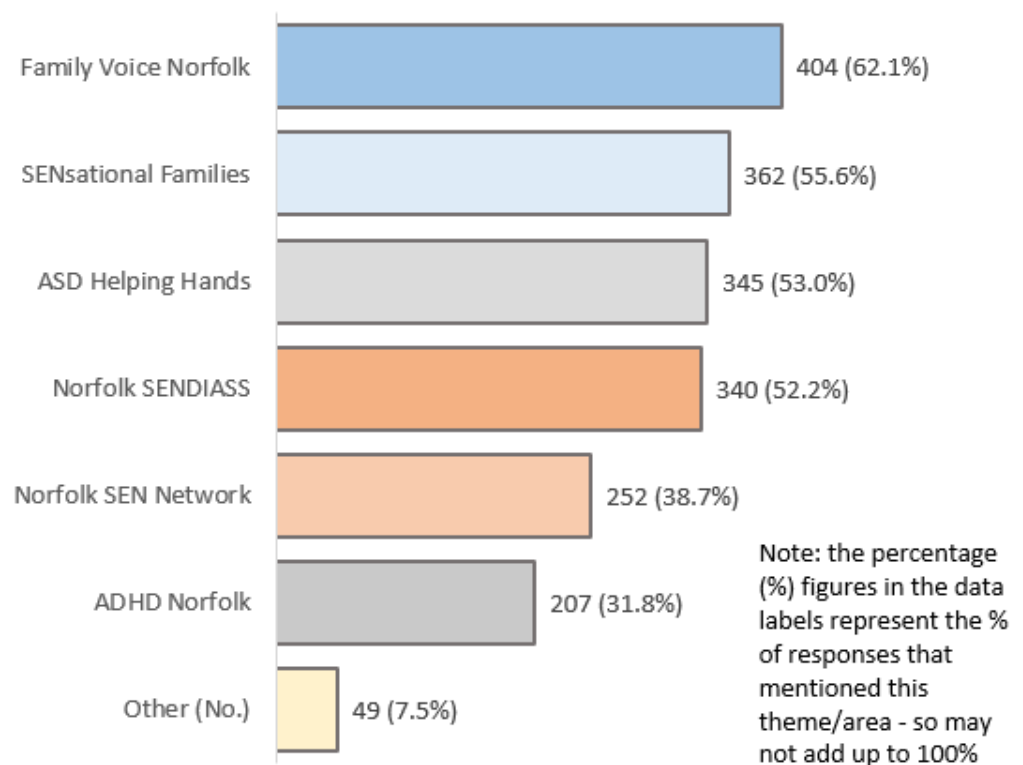
Do you and/or your child regularly need to travel outside of your local area to access services, support or activities? If yes, tell us more.

Theme	Count (%)
#lackofprovision (limited or no provision, esp. in local area, esp. that meets CYP needs.)	80 (41.5%)
#citytown (provision is mostly/solely based in Norwich or other large town or mentions of…	34 (17.6%)
#leisure (leisure activities, esp. those who cater to CYP's needs)	26 (13.5%)
#specialist (have to travel for provision that is specialist or meets CYP needs)	17 (8.8%)
#education (education provision)	17 (8.8%)
#travelissues (have difficulty travelling due to circumstances/needs. Incl. issues with parking)	14 (7.3%)
#publictransport (restrictions related to the use/availability of public transport)	13 (6.7%)
#cost (cost of travel or provision is prohibitive)	13 (6.7%)
#drive (issues reduced as have access to own transport)	9 (4.7%)
#outofcounty (need to travel out of county to access provision incl.medical)	8 (4.1%)
#pandemic (Comments specifically relating to the pandemic and its impact)	2 (1.0%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up exactly to 100%

Action point: Undertake further analysis to find out if there are any particular needs that struggle to access local services or areas of Norfolk where services are sparse.

Many parents/carers who responded to the survey had heard of the main parent/carer groups that operate in Norfolk (Q11).

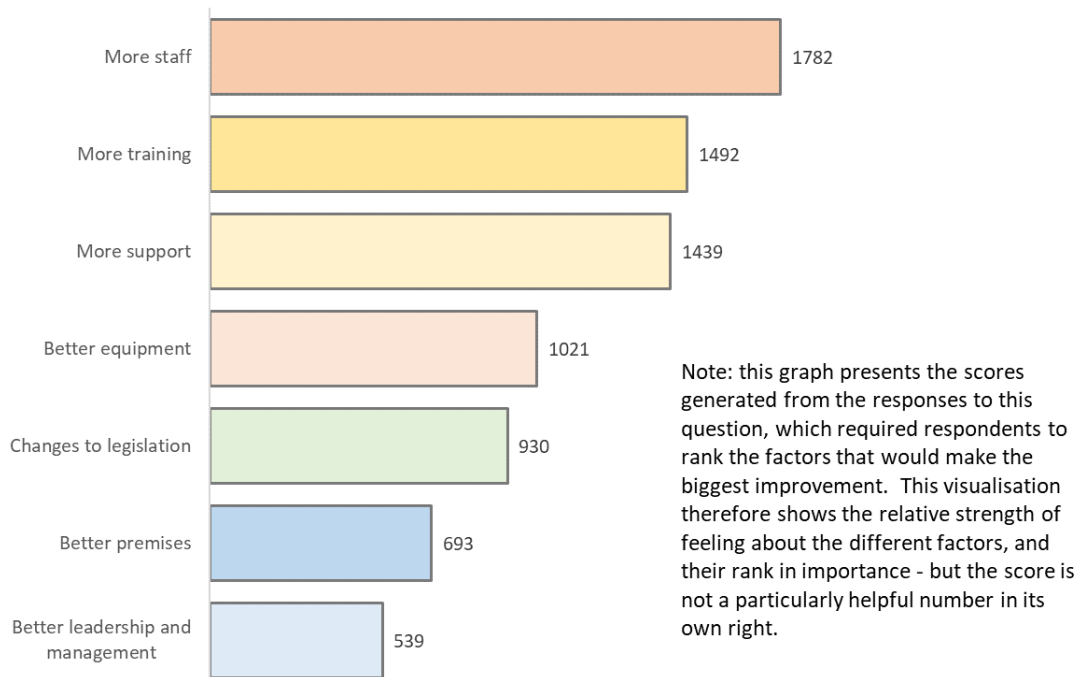## Which of the following parent/carer groups have you heard about

Family Voice Norfolk — 404 (62.1%)

SENsational Families — 362 (55.6%)

ASD Helping Hands — 345 (53.0%)

Norfolk SENDIASS — 340 (52.2%)

Norfolk SEN Network — 252 (38.7%)

ADHD Norfolk — 207 (31.8%)

Other (No.) — 49 (7.5%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

Others mentioned were Norfolk Autistic Society (NAS) West Norfolk, Twinkles and NANSA.

Action point: Continue to promote SEND support groups and events through the SENCO guide, SEND Bulletin and social media to make more parents/carers aware of this valuable support.

Professionals were asked to order several options into a ranking that they thought would make the biggest improvement to the service they offered in terms of improving what is in place for families and professionals (Q54a). The highest-ranking answer was more staff, closely followed by more training and more support.

Please order the following options into a ranking that you think would make the biggest improvement to the service you offer (1 - it would make the biggest improvement, 7- it would make the least improvement)

Option	Score
More staff	1782
More training	1492
More support	1439
Better equipment	1021
Changes to legislation	930
Better premises	693
Better leadership and management	539

Note: this graph presents the scores generated from the responses to this question, which required respondents to rank the factors that would make the biggest improvement. This visualisation therefore shows the relative strength of feeling about the different factors, and their rank in importance - but the score is not a particularly helpful number in its own right.

When asked **what one area of SEND training they need the most (Q54b), professionals** most commonly answered ASD (with a significant proportion including ASD for sensory issues) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) for CYP but also for those who work with them.

Others mentioned:

- More on SEND inclusion in a classroom setting
- Speech and language therapy
- British Sign Language
- Behaviour management
- EHCP writing
- Funding and governance guidance
- Dyslexia
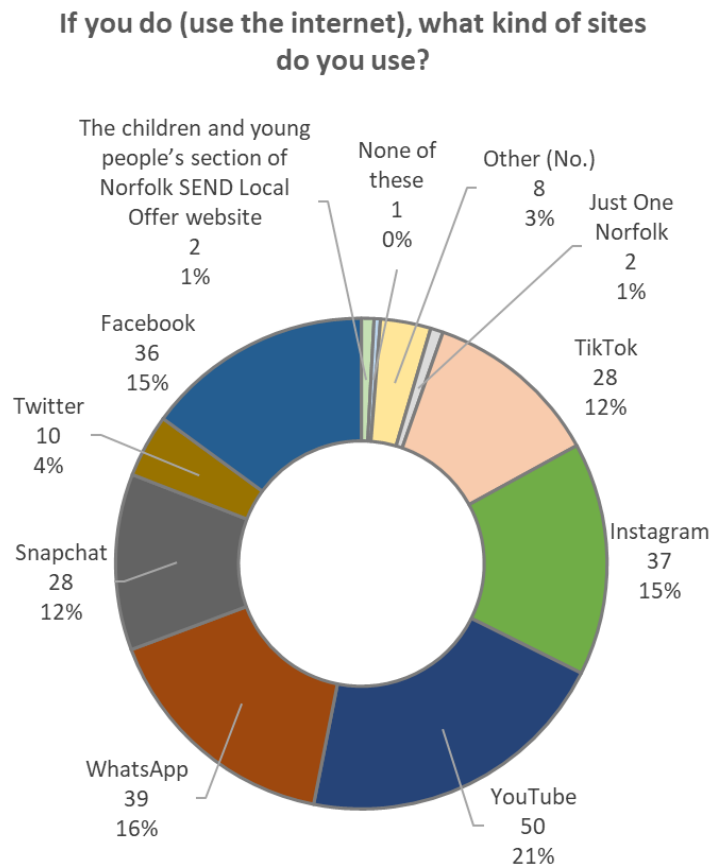- Training on how best to include and support parents

Action point: Continue to develop a training framework, training platform and improved SEND training offer.
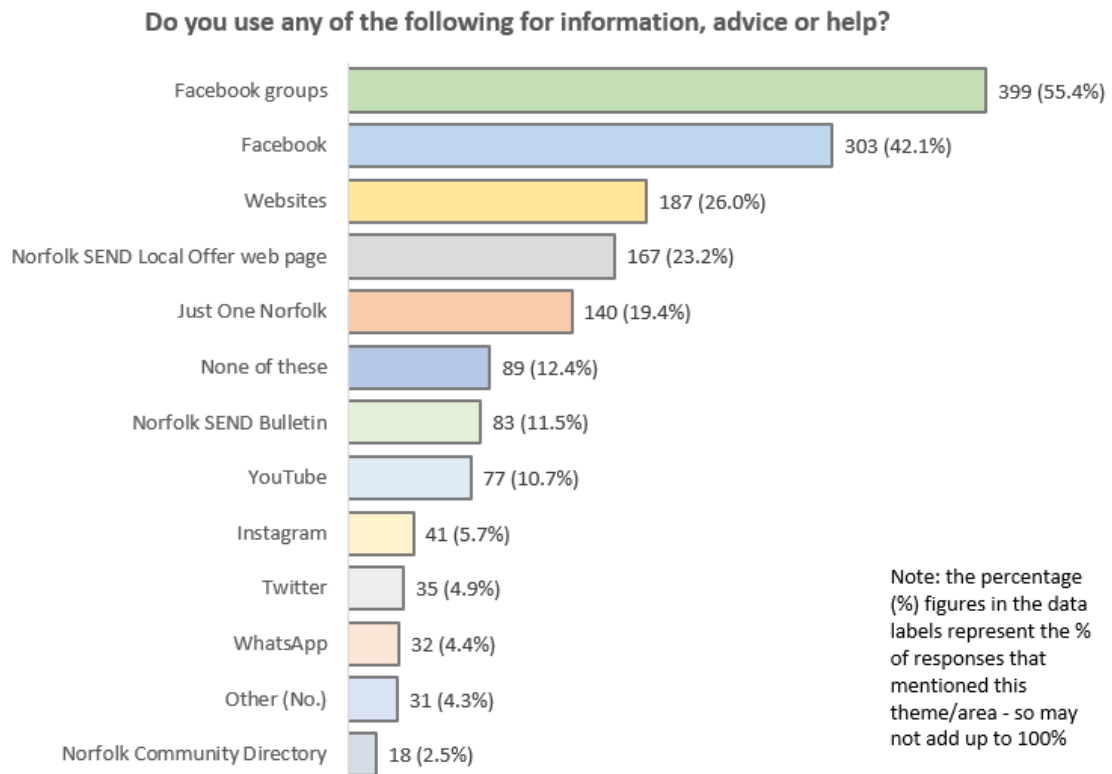
Communication

When asked if they **use the internet (Q69)**, all but one of the children and young people who responded said yes.

Do you use the internet?

No
1
(2%)

Yes
61
(98%)
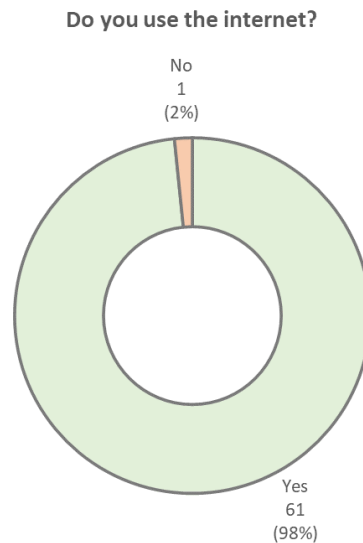
The children and young people that do use the internet were asked **what kind of sites they use (Q70).** The most common site was YouTube, with other popular sites being WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook. A small number said they had used the Local Offer for CYP and also Just One Norfolk.

If you do (use the internet), what kind of sites do you use?

The children and young people's section of Norfolk SEND Local Offer website
2
1%

None of these
1
0%

Other (No.)
8
3%

Just One Norfolk
2
1%

Facebook
36
15%

TikTok
28
12%

Twitter
10
4%

Instagram
37
15%

Snapchat
28
12%

WhatsApp
39
16%

YouTube
50
21%

Parents/carers were asked to **select any sources that they use for information, advice or help (Q14).** Results show that parents/carers were most likely to turn to Facebook groups and Facebook. Other popular sources of information were websites eg SEND Local Offer and Just One Norfolk. There were a few 'other' answers but there was no significant other source of information.

Do you use any of the following for information, advice or help?

Source	Value
Facebook groups	399 (55.4%)
Facebook	303 (42.1%)
Websites	187 (26.0%)
Norfolk SEND Local Offer web page	167 (23.2%)
Just One Norfolk	140 (19.4%)
None of these	89 (12.4%)
Norfolk SEND Bulletin	83 (11.5%)
YouTube	77 (10.7%)
Instagram	41 (5.7%)
Twitter	35 (4.9%)
WhatsApp	32 (4.4%)
Other (No.)	31 (4.3%)
Norfolk Community Directory	18 (2.5%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

Action point: Monitor the impact of the SEND communications strategy including the paid promotion of SEND Local Offer Facebook in raising awareness of the SEND Local Offer website.

Half of parents/carers who responded to the survey said that **information about services is easy to understand sometimes** and the remaining answers were roughly split between yes and no (Q15).

**Is information about services easy to understand?**

No 175 (24%)
Sometimes 356 (49%)
Yes 202 (28%)
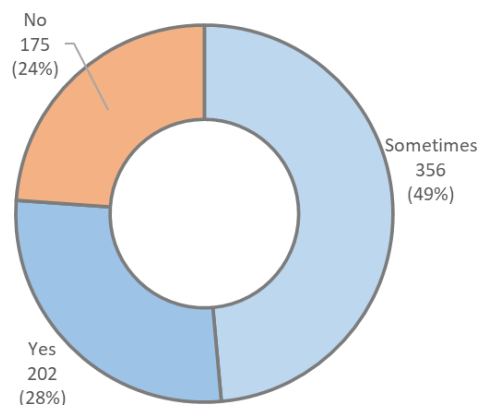
As a large number of parents/carers did not always find information easy to understand this has to continue to be an area of focus.

Action point: Continue to promote the SEND Communications Guide to all services and model this as best practice.
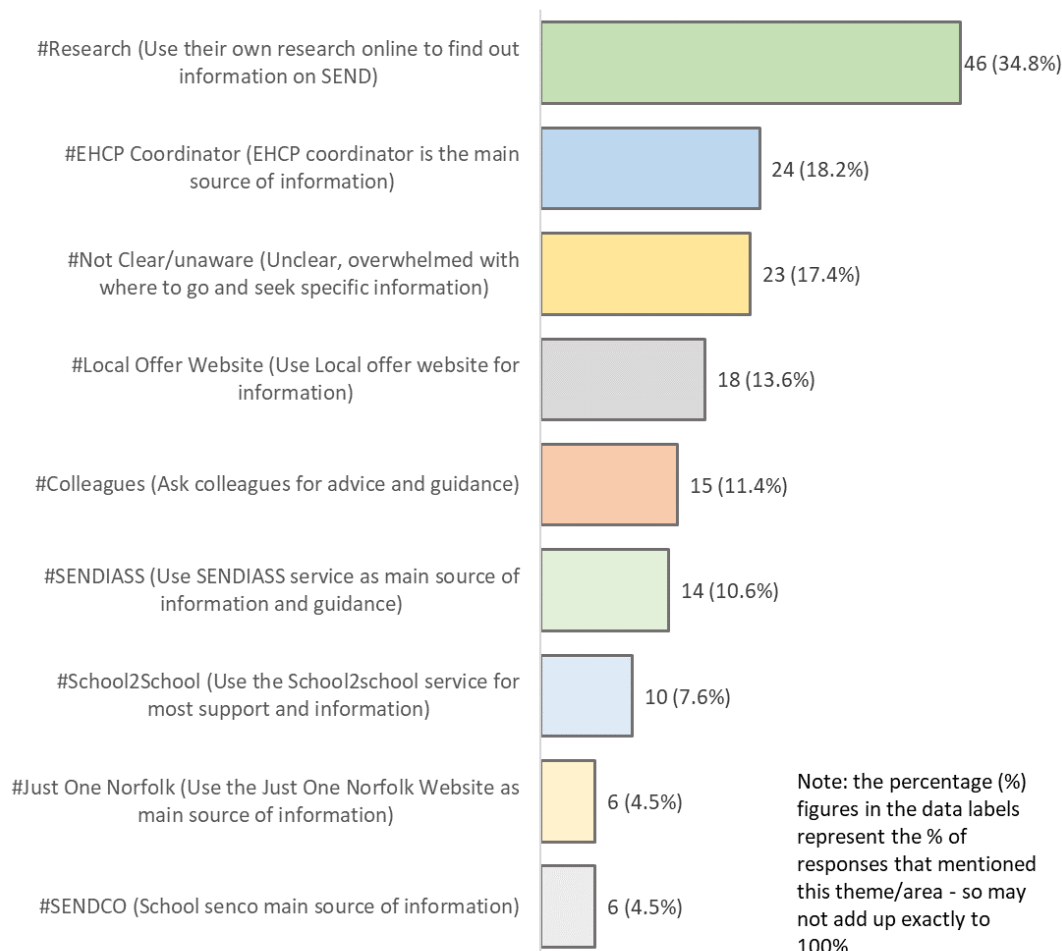
Most professionals know where to go for support and advice about SEND to help them do their job (Q49).

Do you know where to go for support and advice about SEND to help you do your job?

No
24
6%

Yes
354
94%
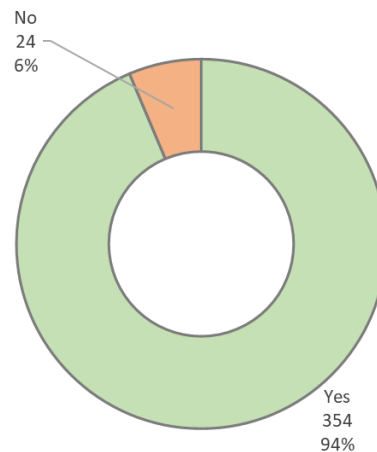
A range of types of support and advice were mentioned and typically people use several to help them do their job. People tend to go online to research the information they need to do their job. Over a third used the SEND Local Offer website. Just One Norfolk (JON) was also mentioned. Other sources of information mentioned were the SENCO, SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), SEND Forums, Educational Psychology Specialist Support (EPSS), School 2 School (S2S) Support Service, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Coordinators and colleagues. A small number did not know where to go for information.

Do you know where to go for support and advice about SEND to help you do your job?

Theme	Value
#Research (Use their own research online to find out information on SEND)	46 (34.8%)
#EHCP Coordinator (EHCP coordinator is the main source of information)	24 (18.2%)
#Not Clear/unaware (Unclear, overwhelmed with where to go and seek specific information)	23 (17.4%)
#Local Offer Website (Use Local offer website for information)	18 (13.6%)
#Colleagues (Ask colleagues for advice and guidance)	15 (11.4%)
#SENDIASS (Use SENDIASS service as main source of information and guidance)	14 (10.6%)
#School2School (Use the School2school service for most support and information)	10 (7.6%)
#Just One Norfolk (Use the Just One Norfolk Website as main source of information)	6 (4.5%)
#SENDCO (School senco main source of information)	6 (4.5%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up exactly to 100%

Action point: Promotion of SEND training, events, workshops and the SENCO Guide.

When asked if their organisation has regular updates and accessible information online about the services and/or support they offer, most professionals reported that their organisation does (Q50).

Does your organisation have regularly updated and accessible information online about the services and/or support you offer?

No
66
(18%)

Yes
310
(82%)
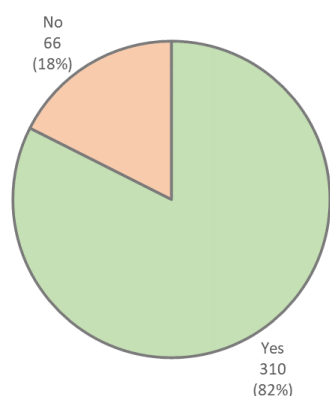
In most cases, this information is published on the organisation's own website or the SEND Local Offer. Organisations without online information must be supported to address this.

Professionals were asked which online tools their organisation uses to promote itself/interact with children, young people and families (Q51), and responded with a wide range of answers.

Which online tools does your organisation use to promote itself/interact with children, young people and families?

Tool	Responses
Norfolk SEND Local Offer web page	249 (67.8%)
Just One Norfolk	169 (46.0%)
Newsletters	151 (41.1%)
Norfolk SEND Bulletin	135 (36.8%)
Norfolk Schools website	134 (36.5%)
Facebook	134 (36.5%)
Twitter	92 (25.1%)
Norfolk Community Directory	76 (20.7%)
Facebook groups	57 (15.5%)
Instagram	48 (13.1%)
Other (No.)	38 (10.4%)
None of these	21 (5.7%)
WhatsApp	16 (4.4%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

It is important that organisations recognise the importance of Facebook and Facebook groups as a source of information for parents/carers.

Action point: All organisations encouraged to publish easy to read and understand information online about their services and support for children and young people with SEND and their families. This will make it easier for it to be shared to parents/carers via social media.
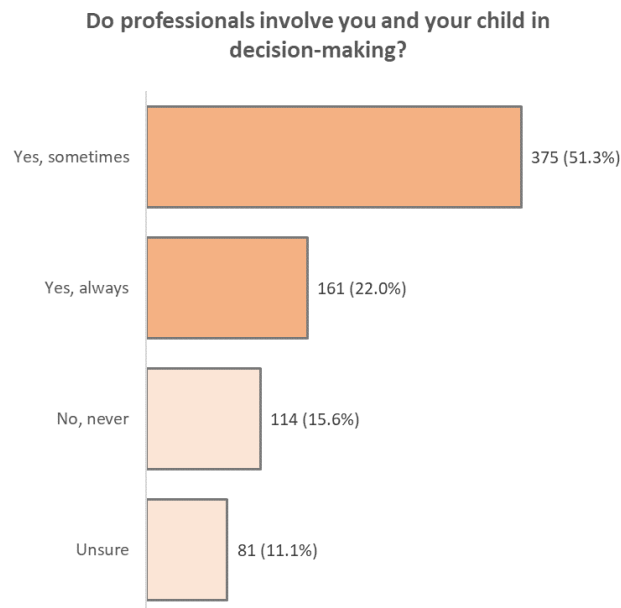
Working together

Children and young people were asked if they **get the chance to make choices about their life. (Q73)** Most children and young people agreed that they did to some extent.

Do you get the chance to make choices about your life?

No
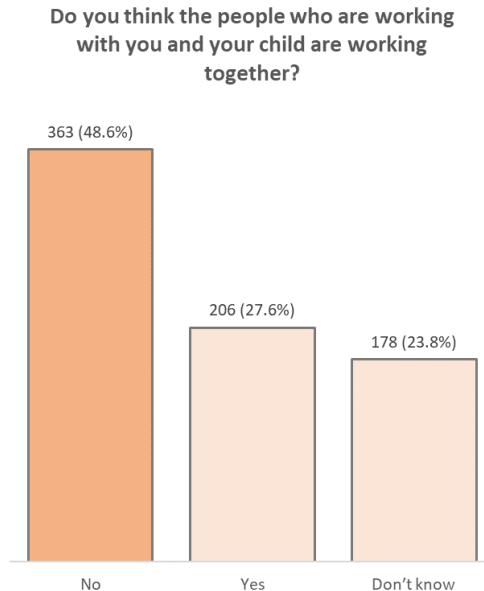3
(5%)

Not sure
1
(2%)

Sometimes
21
(34%)

Yes
37
(60%)
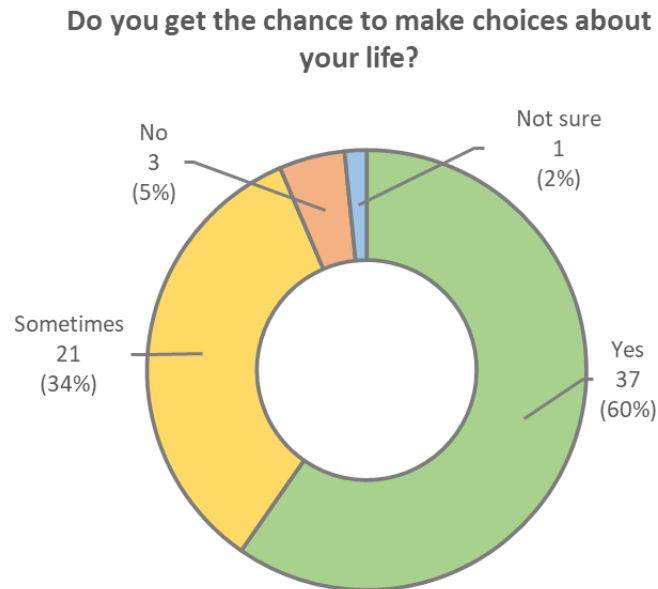
They were also asked **if those supporting them involved them in decisions about them and their life (Q75)**, and again, most agreed. A small number of children and young people said no, or that they were unsure.

Do those supporting you involve you in decisions they make about you and your life?

No, never
4
(6%)

Unsure
4
(6%)

Yes, always
29
(47%)
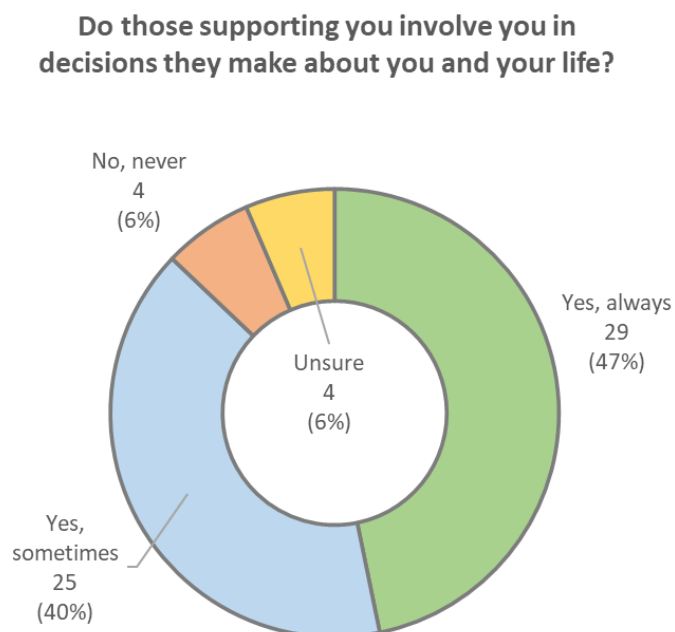
Yes, sometimes
25
(40%)

When parents/carers were asked **if professionals involve them and their child in decision-making (Q23),** nearly a quarter said that they always do. Just over half said they sometimes did and the remaining quarter were either unsure or said they never did.

Do professionals involve you and your child in decision-making?

Response	Value
Yes, sometimes	375 (51.3%)
Yes, always	161 (22.0%)
No, never	114 (15.6%)
Unsure	81 (11.1%)

49% of parents/carers think the people who are working with them and their child are not working together (Q16). Just over a quarter feel that they are working together.

Do you think the people who are working with you and your child are working together?

Response	Value
No	363 (48.6%)
Yes	206 (27.6%)
Don't know	178 (23.8%)

Reflecting on the last 12 months, parents/carers were asked **if they think those working with them and their child involved them more now than they did before (Q17)**. 24% of parents/carers felt they were more involved, however 46% had not observed any improvement, with a further 30% saying it varied.

Do you think those working with you and your child involve you better now than they did 12 months ago?

341 (45.9%)

226 (30.4%)

176 (23.7%)

No   It varies   Yes
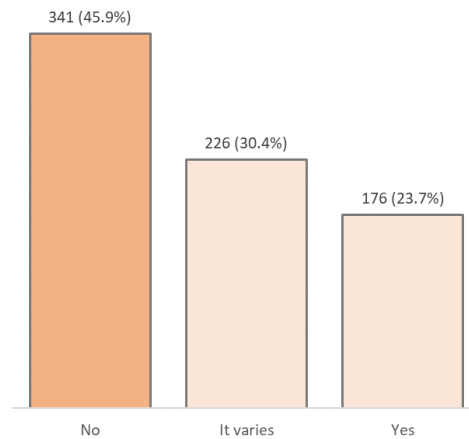
The challenge is to make sure that everyone is involved in decision-making and working together. All those working with parents/carers and CYP must involve them in everything they do – 'nothing about us, without us'.

More than three-quarters of parents/carers had not been asked to give their views of the services their child uses in the last 12 months (Q26).

In the last 12 months have you been asked to give your views of the services your child uses?

Yes
176
(24%)

No
572
(76%)
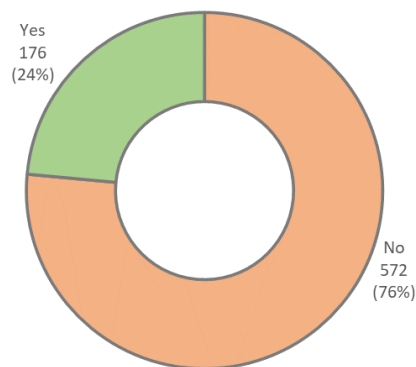
Most parents/carers had not given any feedback to services in the last 12 months (Q27).

Have you given feedback to any services in the last 12 months?

Yes
245
(33%)

No
502
(67%)
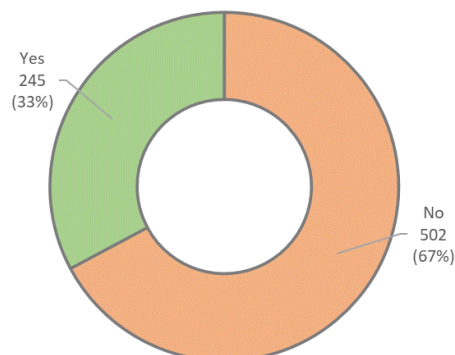
If parents/carers **hadn't given any feedback in the last 12 months, they were asked to explain why (Q28).** Over half of the parents/carers who responded to this question had not been given the opportunity to give feedback. Others responded that there weren't any services available to provide feedback on. A small number of parents/carers were new to Norfolk and had not had the chance to give feedback yet. Others felt that some feedback methods were not accessible, too time-consuming or stressful to complete.

If no, (to Q7, "Have you given feedback...") please tell us more if you would like to about why you haven't given feedback?

Theme	Value
#haventbeenasked (have not been asked to give feedback about service(s))	46 (43.0%)
#noservices (no services/support available/provided to give feedback on)	20 (18.7%)
#nothingchanges (feedback does not change anything/low confidence it will make a difference)	11 (10.3%)
#School (communicate with school mainly/solely)	8 (7.5%)
#new (new to area/EHCP/services)	7 (6.5%)
#difficult/irrelevant (feedback methods too difficult, time consuming or irrelevant to circumstances)	5 (4.7%)
#poorcommunication (where communication has occurred, it has been lacking)	5 (4.7%)
#pandemix (Comments specifically relating to the pandemic and its impact)	2 (1.9%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

The challenge is to make sure that views and feedback is regularly asked for from all parents/carers.

Action point: To further promote and expand the opportunities to get involved and give feedback and work to harder to engage the hard to reach.

Parents/carers were asked **how they like to give feedback (Q29).** Their preferred way of giving feedback is by survey, closely followed by email/text and talking in a meeting face-to-face. A small number of parents/carers commented that they did not know whether their

feedback was acted upon. Some parents/carers said they like to have a paper trail (email/text) to keep as a record.

How do you like to give feedback?

23 (3.2%) Other

107 (14.7%) By post

313 (42.9%) Talking in a meeting/face to face

385 (52.7%) By email/text

197 (27.0%) By phone

479 (65.6%) By survey (online or paper)
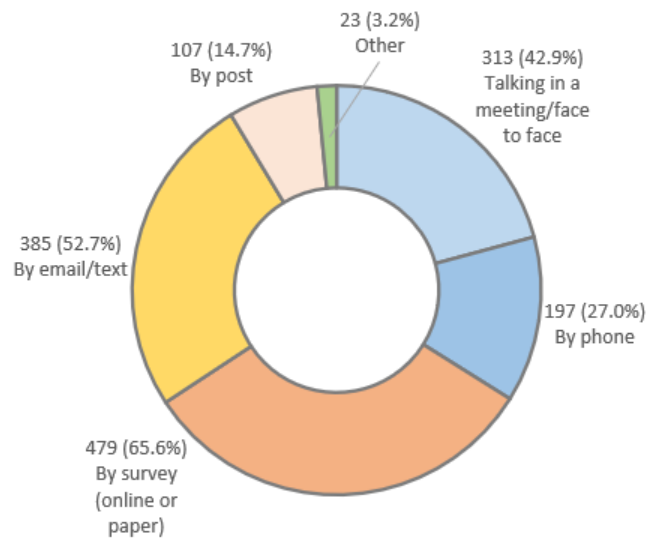
Action point: Professionals need to respond to feedback in a timely way.

Only a small number of parents/carers **believe changes have been made by services following feedback (Q30).** Most parents/carers did not know about any changes made to services following feedback.

Do you believe changes have been made by services following feedback?

Yes 69 (9%)

No 301 (41%)

Unsure 365 (50%)
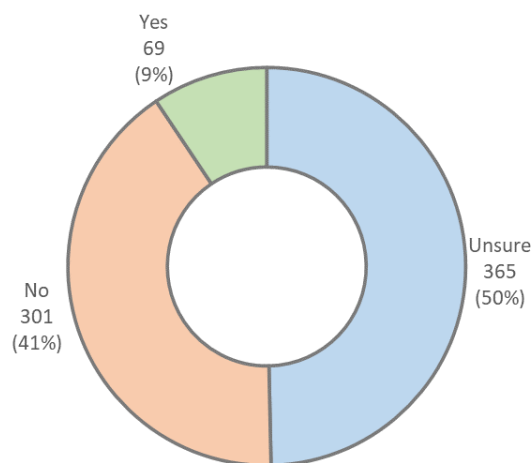
Action point: Services need to actively promote the improvements they make to services following feedback from CYP and parents/carers.

27

The professionals' response to the question "do you think the professionals from different settings/services/teams show commitment to working together? For example, do you link in with professionals from other fields and share information?" was positive, with three quarters saying yes. This shows a strong commitment to multi-agency working, a practice which needs to be promoted, strengthened and communicated to parents/carers and CYP.

Do you think the professionals from different settings/services/teams show commitment to working together?

284 (74.9%)

60 (15.8%)

35 (9.2%)

Yes   No   Don't know
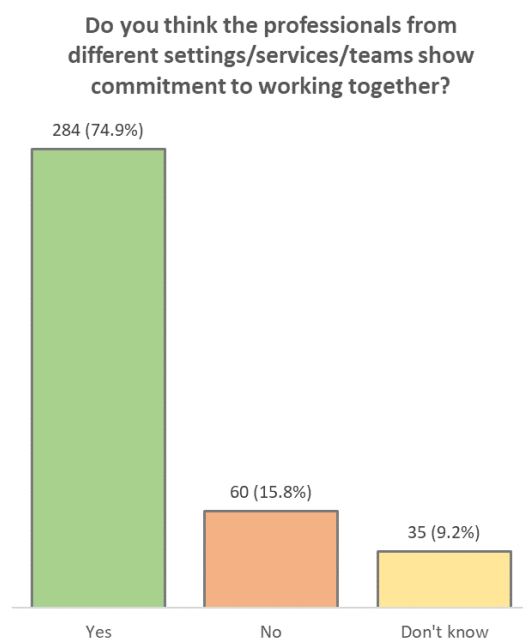
Professionals told us about the changes they have made in the way they involved children, young people and parents/carers in the last 12 months (Q53). Just under half of all professionals reported an increase in the amount of communication between themselves and with parents/carers. Around a quarter reported adapting their method of communication with parents/carers by offering more online information, contact and support. Some of this was felt to be positive and would be carried forward into a blended in-person and online offer. A quarter of professionals had increased their gathering and use of CYP voice in the last 12 months.
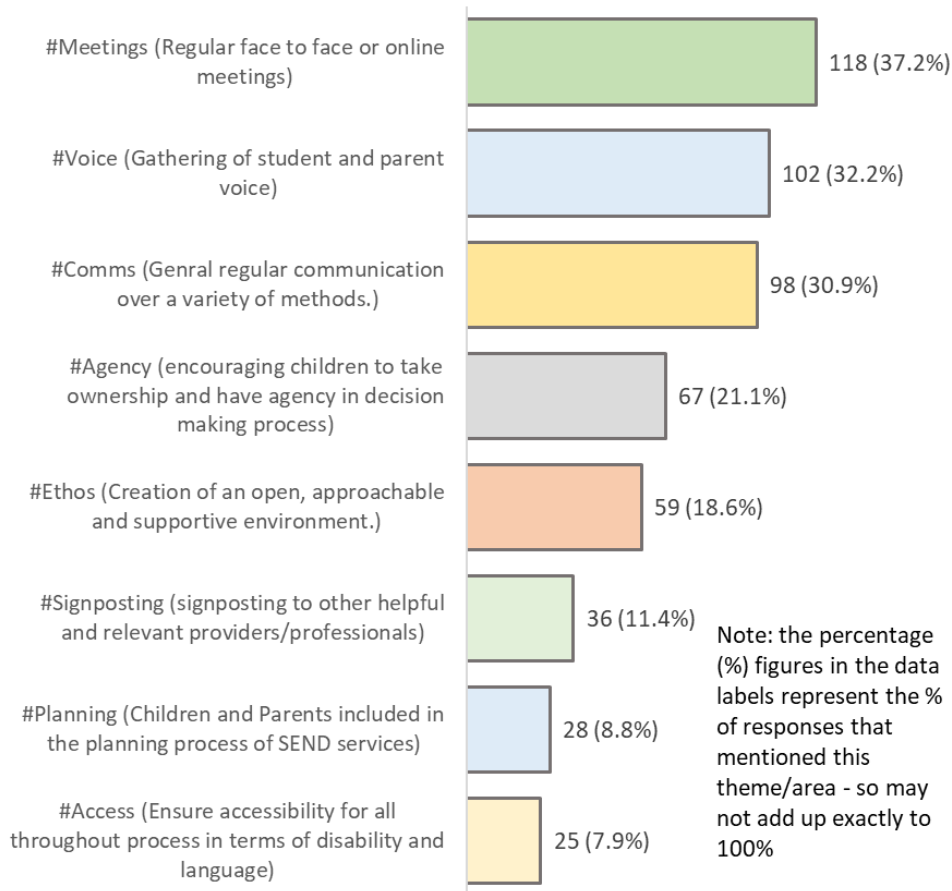
Please tell us about any changes you have made in the way you involve children, young people and parents/carers in the last 12 months
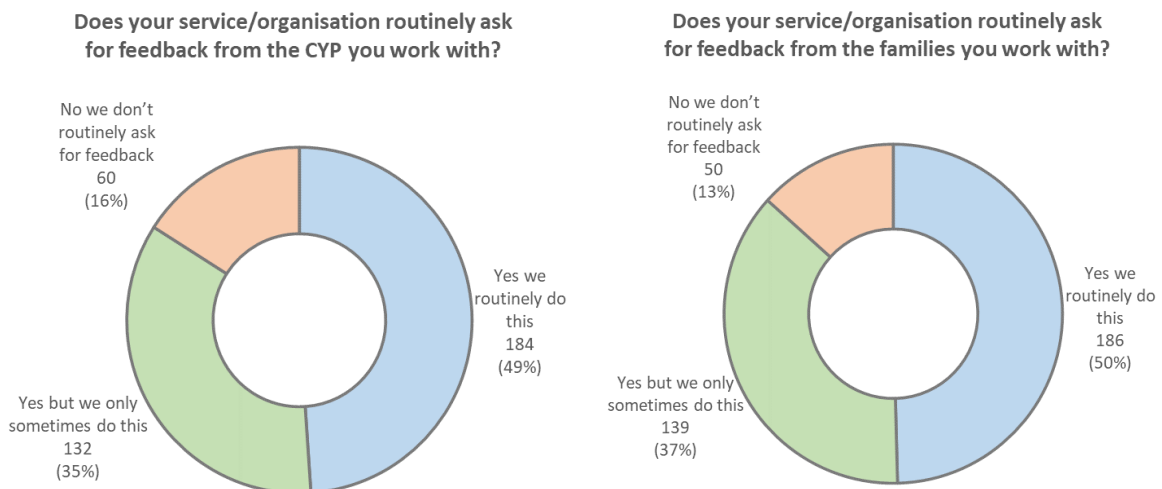
Theme	Value
#Comms (Increased communications with parents and professionals)	92 (43.6%)
#Voice (Increase in gathering and use of Pupil and parental voice)	59 (28.0%)
#pandemic (Adaptations made due to covid - more virtual than before or blended approach)	57 (27.0%)
#CPD (Examples of CPD undertaken)	27 (12.8%)
#F2F (Return to more face to face meetings beneficial)	17 (8.1%)
#Stretched (Increase in case loads, not enough staff leading to backlog)	11 (5.2%)
#MHSupport (more use of mental health support for CYP)	9 (4.3%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up exactly to 100%

Professionals reported **using a variety of ways to involve children and young people and their parents/carers in decision-making (Q55)**. A third of professionals prefer regular meetings to involve them. Another third sought CYP and parent/carer voices to inform the planning process for SEND services. There are a wide range of methods used to engage CYP and their parents/carers including:

- Conversations and discussions (in-person and online) within:
  - ✓ SEN Support meetings
  - ✓ EHCP annual review meetings
  - ✓ Keeping in touch calls
- Surveys
- Child-led play and listening to parents/carers wishes

How do you support children and young people and their parents/carers to be involved in decision-making?
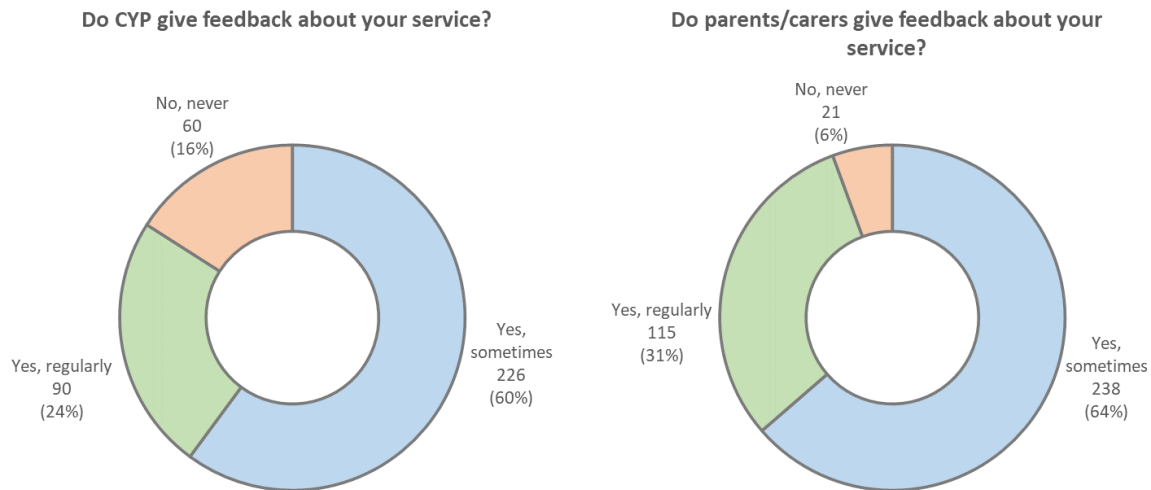
#Meetings (Regular face to face or online meetings) — 118 (37.2%)

#Voice (Gathering of student and parent voice) — 102 (32.2%)

#Comms (Genral regular communication over a variety of methods.) — 98 (30.9%)

#Agency (encouraging children to take ownership and have agency in decision making process) — 67 (21.1%)

#Ethos (Creation of an open, approachable and supportive environment.) — 59 (18.6%)

#Signposting (signposting to other helpful and relevant providers/professionals) — 36 (11.4%)

#Planning (Children and Parents included in the planning process of SEND services) — 28 (8.8%)

#Access (Ensure accessibility for all throughout process in terms of disability and language) — 25 (7.9%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up exactly to 100%

We asked professionals if their service/organisation routinely asks for feedback from the children and young people they work with, as well as their families (Q56 & 57). Nearly half the professionals who responded to the survey said they routinely ask for feedback from the CYP and families they work with. Over a quarter said they sometimes ask for feedback. A small number of those who responded do not routinely ask CYP for their views.

Does your service/organisation routinely ask for feedback from the CYP you work with?

No we don't routinely ask for feedback 60 (16%)

Yes we routinely do this 184 (49%)

Yes but we only sometimes do this 132 (35%)

Does your service/organisation routinely ask for feedback from the families you work with?

No we don't routinely ask for feedback 50 (13%)

Yes we routinely do this 186 (50%)

Yes but we only sometimes do this 139 (37%)

Action point: All professionals need to routinely gather feedback and act upon it.

We then asked professionals **if children and young people or families give them feedback about their service (Q58 & 59).** Most professionals who responded to this question said that children and young people as well as parents/carers either regularly or sometimes give their feedback. A number of professionals said that children and young people never give feedback about their service.

Do CYP give feedback about your service?

No, never
60
(16%)

Yes, regularly
90
(24%)

Yes, sometimes
226
(60%)

Do parents/carers give feedback about your service?

No, never
21
(6%)

Yes, regularly
115
(31%)

Yes, sometimes
238
(64%)

Action point: Professionals must acknowledge that parents/carers do not feel they are given opportunities to give feedback to services and actively encourage children and young people and their parents/carer to give their views in a variety of ways, to ensure everybody has the chance to give feedback.

Professionals reported on **how they ask for feedback from children and young people and their parents/carers (Q60 and 61).** Half the professionals who responded to the survey asked for feedback in-person (in a meeting or by phone). The rest gathered feedback in writing (by survey, email/text or post). Some respondents mentioned getting views as part of the EHCP or annual review process. Some also mentioned social media and other online platforms. It is worth noting that not all professionals work directly with parents/carers and therefore may get feedback from other professionals about their service.

How do you and/or your service/organisation ask for feedback from parents/carers?

- 42 (11.6%) By post
- 40 (11.0%) Other (No.)
- 287 (79.3%) Talking in a meeting face to face (in-person or online)
- 193 (53.3%) By email/text
- 201 (55.5%) By survey (online or paper)
- 188 (51.9%) By phone
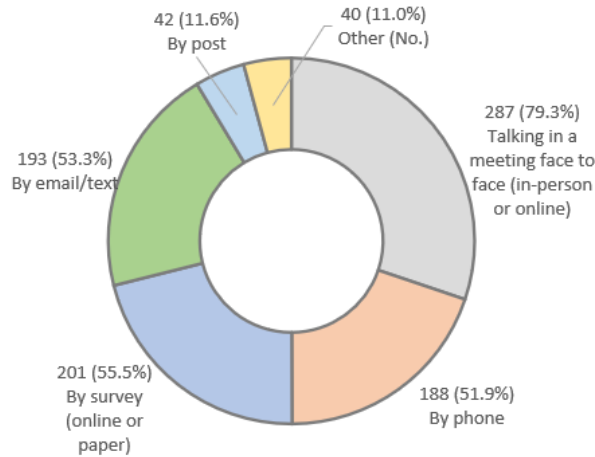
Professionals most commonly ask for feedback from children and young people in a face-to-face meeting. Other methods are also used, but less so. Quite a few professionals said they are working with children who are too young to give feedback, or they do not work directly with children and young people. Some professionals use photographs or film to record the wishes and feelings of non-verbal children and young people.

How do you and/or your service/organisation ask for feedback from CYP? Other (please specify)

- 10 (2.9%) By post
- 48 (14.1%) Other (No.)
- 283 (83.0%) Talking in a meeting face to face (in-person or online)
- 69 (20.2%) By email/text
- 170 (49.9%) By survey (online or paper)
- 40 (11.7%) By phone
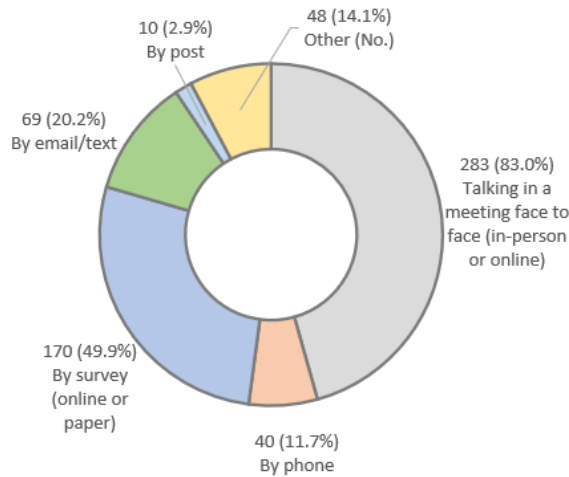
Action point: Professionals should aim to give parents/carers a variety of options for giving feedback.

When asked **if their service/organisation then made changes following feedback from their service users (Q62)**, most professionals said that they did. A small number said this question was not applicable because they do not proactively seek feedback.

Does your services/organisation make changes following feedback from your service users?

- Yes: 313 (84.6%)
- Not applicable because we don't proactively seek feedback: 45 (12.2%)
- No: 12 (3.2%)
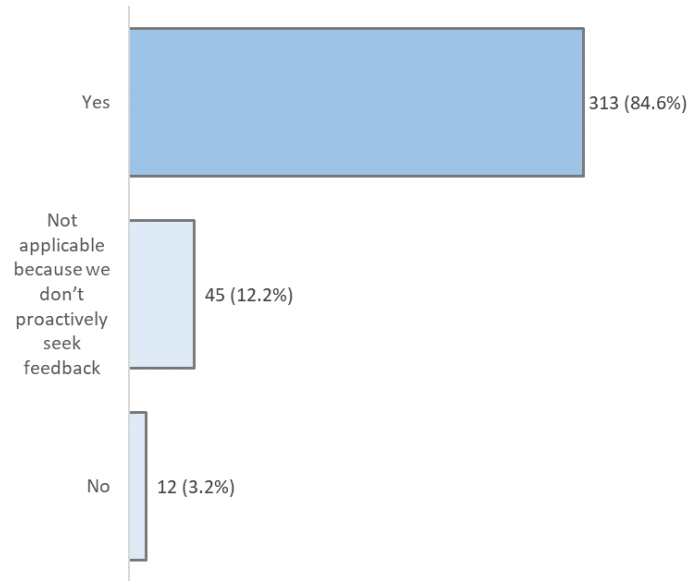
Learning

Children and young people were asked if they are in a place of learning or training that is helping them to make progress (Q76), and most agreed that they are.

**Are you in a place of learning or training which is helping you to make progress?**

- Yes: 50 (80.6%)
- No: 8 (12.9%)
- Not sure: 4 (6.5%)
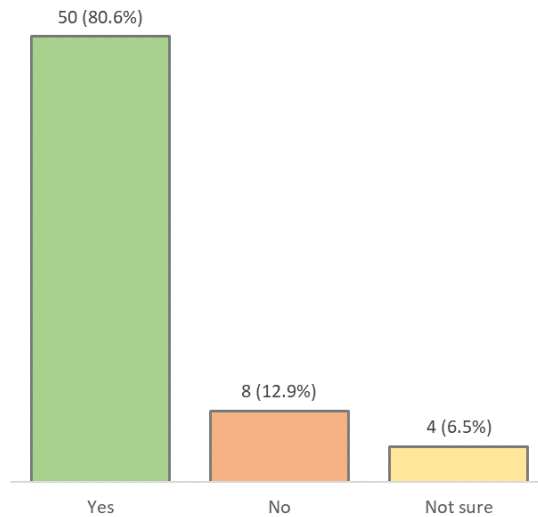
The majority of parents/carers agreed that their child was in a place of learning or training that was allowing them to make progress (Q24). However, 37% of parents/carers did not respond positively to this question.

Is your child in a place of learning or training that allows them to make progress?

469 (62.9%)

163 (21.8%)

114 (15.3%)

Yes   No   Unsure
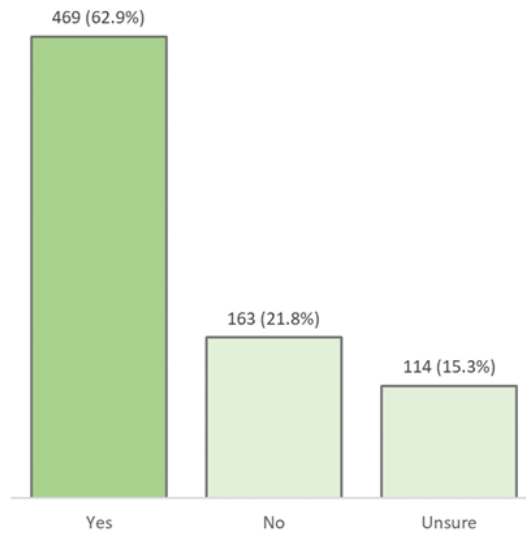
Just over a quarter of parents/carers who responded to the survey said that **their child had had support to get ready for their next steps in education, training or employment (Q25).** However, most parents/carers were not aware that any support had been given.

Have you and your child had support to get ready for their next steps in education, training or employment?

Not sure 128 (17%)

No 404 (54%)

Yes 214 (29%)
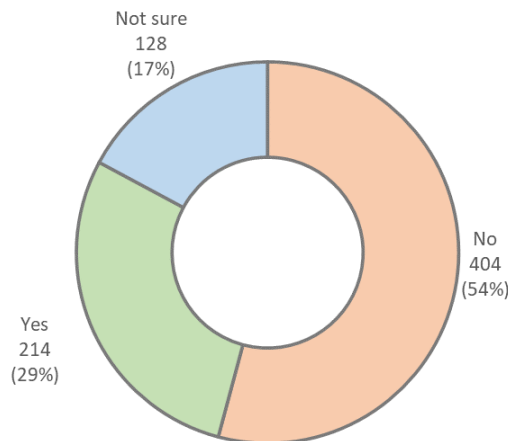
Action point: Places of learning need to acknowledge parents/carers are not always aware of the support they are giving and actively work to make sure parents/carers are aware of the support they given to all pupils and the support given specifically to their child.

SEN support and Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)

Parents/carers were asked **if they felt that their child's needs are being clearly identified (Q20),** and just over half agreed. Just under half of parents/carers said although needs were identified, the correct support for children and young people in places of learning was not available. A quarter of all respondents said the biggest barrier was long waiting lists for assessment and diagnosis. Following a diagnosis, there was sometimes disagreement about

its accuracy. Some parents/carers said that their child's needs were unclear due to ongoing assessment and/or inconclusive findings. In desperation, a small number of parents/carers said their CYP's needs had only been clearly identified after privately funding the assessment process. Some parents/carers raised concerns that staff working with CYP have insufficient knowledge about needs and are unable to support effectively.

Do you feel that your child's needs are being clearly identified?

314 (42.6%)

271 (36.8%)

152 (20.6%)

| No | Some are | Yes |
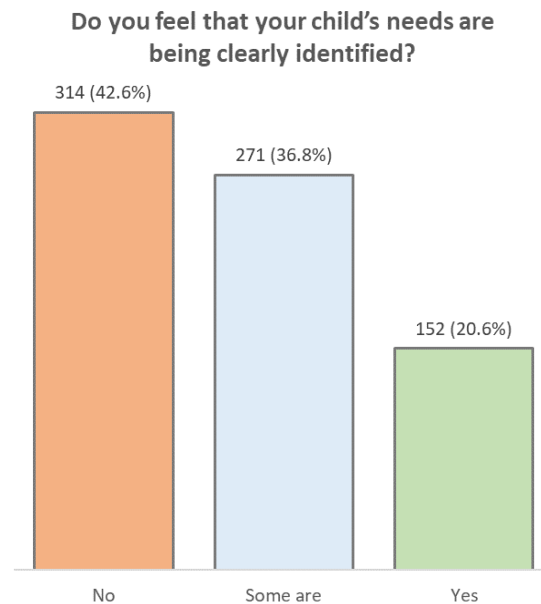
Action points: Evidence the graduated approach to identification of needs. Reduce waiting lists for assessment and diagnosis. All teaching staff and teaching assistants to receive regular SEND training to include training on specific areas of need.

Of the children and young people who answered the survey, 75% had an Education Health Care Plan (EHC Plan), (Q78).

Do you have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)?

No
15
(25%)

Yes
46
(75%)
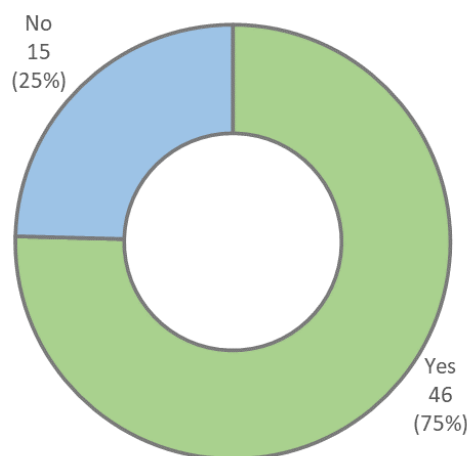
Just over half of the children and young people with EHC Plans agreed that their EHC Plan helps them to make progress in education and training (Q80).

Do you think your EHC Plan helps you to make progress in education and training?

No
4
(9%)

Sometimes
9
(19%)

Yes
24
(51%)

Don't know
10
(21%)
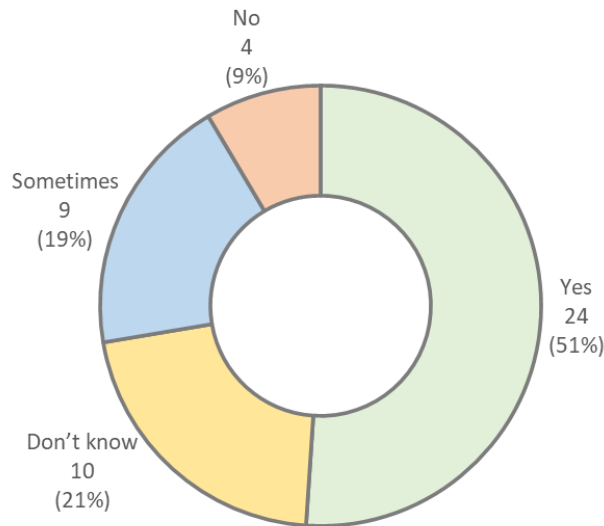
They were then asked **if they felt they were able to give their views when their EHC Plan was being discussed at school or college (Q79).** Nearly half of children and young people said that they felt able to give their views, a quarter said sometimes or were unsure or could not remember. A few were not currently in education and couple said they give written feedback.

**When your EHCP is being discussed at school or college do you feel able to give your views?**

#Yes (simple yes response) — 22 (46.8%)

#sometimes/not sure (provides written feedback) — 11 (23.4%)

#No (simple sometimes or not sure response) — 8 (17.0%)

#notined (not currently in education) — 4 (8.5%)

#written (simple no response) — 2 (4.3%)
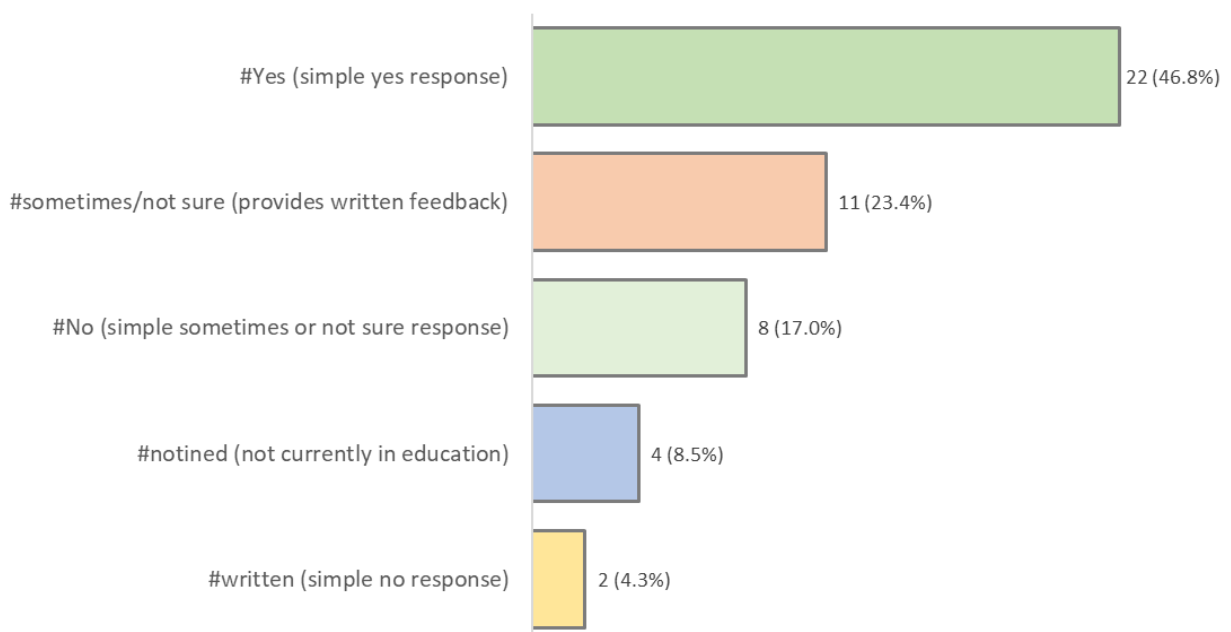
Over half of all parents/carers who responded to the survey said **their child had an EHCP (Q33).**

Does your child have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?

No
274
(37%)

Yes
471
(63%)
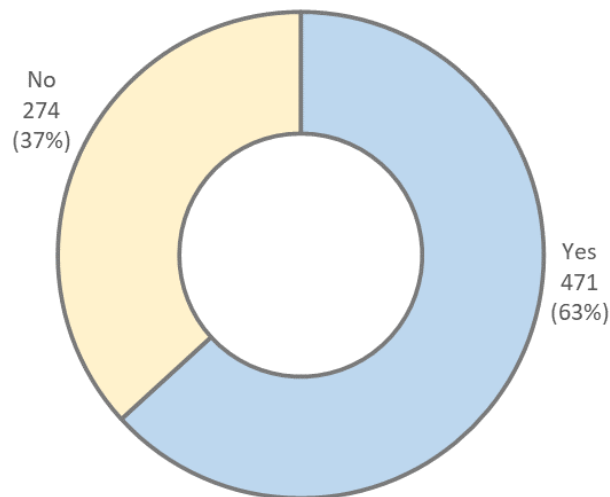
When asked whether they believed their child's EHCP helps their child to make progress in their education and training (Q34), most parents/carers agreed it had all or some of the time.

Does your child's EHCP help your child to make progress in their education and training?

Sometimes — 168 (35.7%)

Yes — 151 (32.1%)

No — 105 (22.3%)

Don't know — 47 (10.0%)
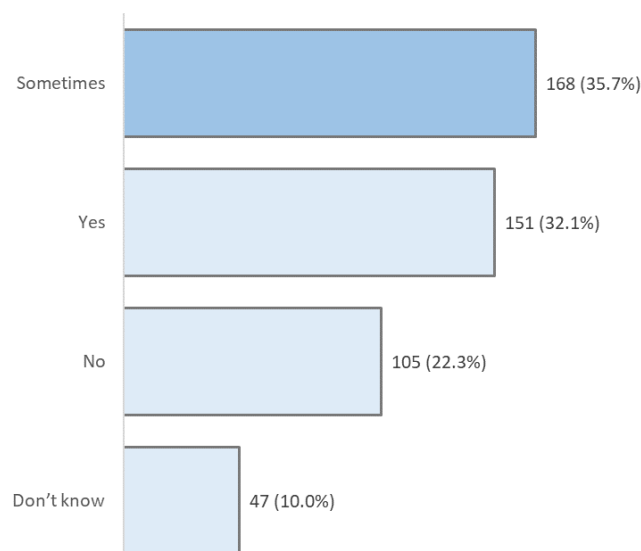
However, this question prompted several critical comments under the following themes:

- CYP place of learning not found/not suitable for meeting their needs
- EHCP not followed/recommended support not put in place
- EHCP assessment/agreement/review is overdue

- EHCP process is not fit for purpose
- Local authority communication with parents/carers throughout the process can be poor
- Places of learning can be inflexible and unwilling to put in place the provision and support
- Several said that EHCPs are not available/in place/working for older CYP moving between phases of learning
- A few parents/carers had a tribunal pending/underway with regard to their CYP's EHCP

Action point: Address parent/carer concerns through better communication

It is encouraging to see that over half of parents/carers that commented **felt that their CYP's EHCP was making a positive difference (Q35).**

Has your child's EHCP made a positive difference?

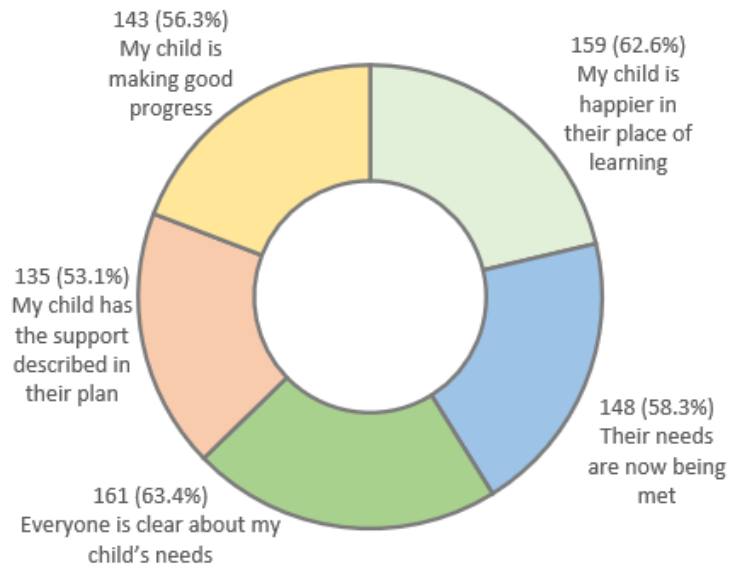|	
Yes	252 (53.6%)
No	113 (24.0%)
I don't know	105 (22.3%)
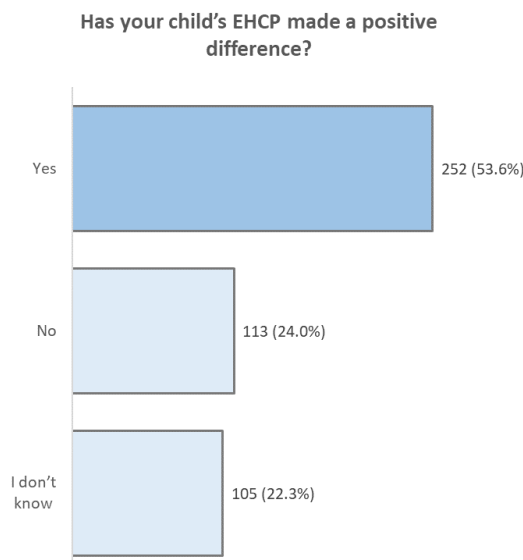
Many parents/carers were positive about the impact of an EHCP on their child. It has helped to get the right place of learning for the CYP, helped meet their CYP's needs and improved communication and attendance. A few responses stated that having an EHCP has empowered the parent/carer or the CYP to speak up for their rights and get the support needed.

Critical comments were about delays, EHCPs not being followed, support not put in place, places of learning not found, not accurately reflecting the needs of the CYP. Some spoke about the battle to get an EHCP agreed which led them to tribunal.

There were several comments about the Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) service not meeting needs.

How (do parents/carers think the EHCP made a positive difference)?

143 (56.3%) My child is making good progress

159 (62.6%) My child is happier in their place of learning

135 (53.1%) My child has the support described in their plan

148 (58.3%) Their needs are now being met

161 (63.4%) Everyone is clear about my child's needs

Parents/carers were asked **if they have found it easy to contact the EHC Plan team using the EHC Plan telephone number (Q37).** There was a mixed response to this question. Some parents/carers have made use of the telephone line but in most cases it had not been used or heard about.

Have you found it easy to contact the EHC Plan team using the EHC Plan contact telephone number ?

156 (33.1%) — No

115 (24.4%) — Didn't know about the number

111 (23.6%) — I have not tried

89 (18.9%) — Yes
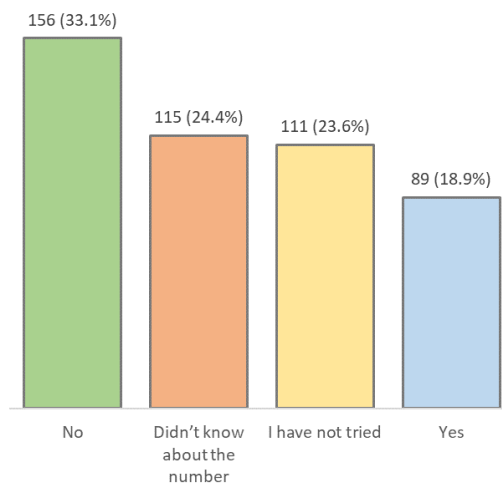
Action point: further promote the EHCP helpline.

On a positive note, over three-quarters of parents/carers who responded to the survey said that they felt their views and wishes were listened to and acted upon when discussing their child's EHC Plan (Q38).

When discussing your child's EHC Plan did you feel your views and wishes were listened to and acted upon?
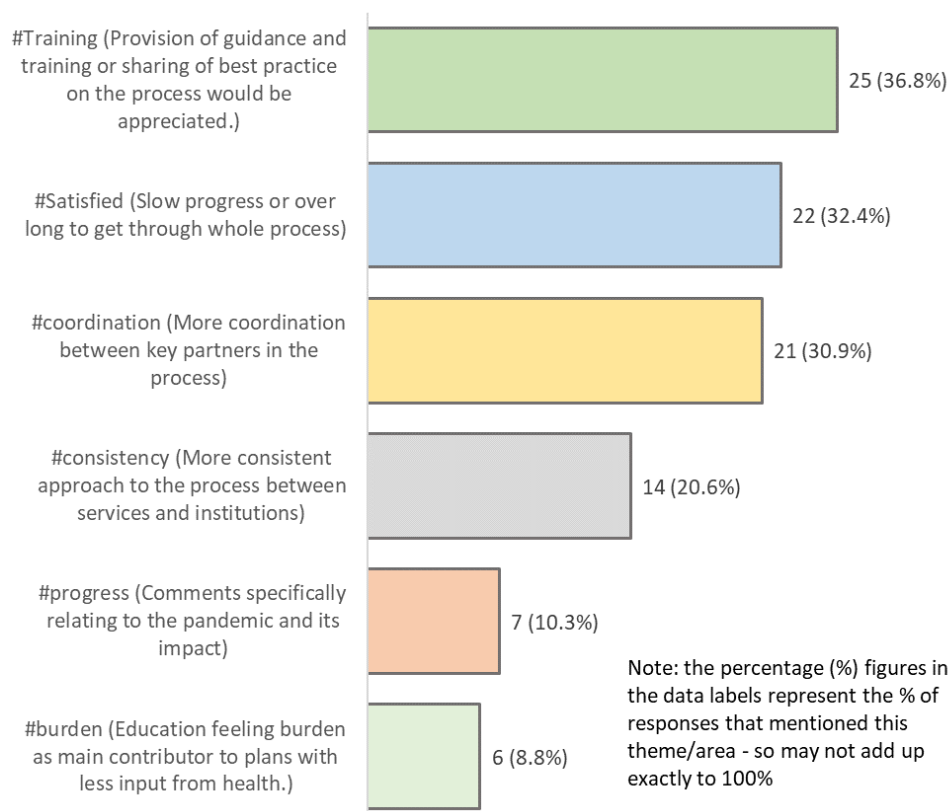

No
112
(24%)

Sometimes
174
(38%)

Yes
172
(38%)
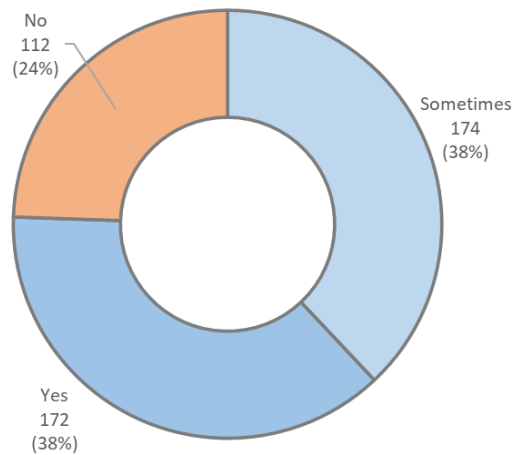
Action point: Professionals to actively listen and respond to the views and wishes of parents/carers.

When asked **if there was anything else they wanted to tell us about EHCPs (Q39)**, parents/carers gave a wide variety of answers. There were positive comments about the professionals involved and the EHCP process. However, most responses to this question outlined challenges with:

- Accessibility, helpfulness, and attitude of the professionals involved
- Lack of services or support in respect of EHCPs not being followed
- Lack of clarity about the EHCP process
- Approach of the LA in decision-making
- The voice of parents/carers not being sought, listened to, taken into account and/or acted upon
- Struggles and battles throughout the process, sometimes leading to tribunal
- Communication

We asked professionals for their feedback on whether they are clear about what is required from their service/organisation in giving advice and/or instruction for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) needs assessments or annual reviews (Q63). Over a third of professionals said they would benefit from additional training in the EHCP process. About a third said they want a stronger coordinated approach between key partners throughout the process. Some said they want more consistency in the completion of the process between different professionals and institutions.

Are you clear about what is required from your service/organisation in giving advice and/or instructions for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) needs assessments or annual reviews?

Theme	Count (%)
#Training (Provision of guidance and training or sharing of best practice on the process would be appreciated.)	25 (36.8%)
#Satisfied (Slow progress or over long to get through whole process)	22 (32.4%)
#coordination (More coordination between key partners in the process)	21 (30.9%)
#consistency (More consistent approach to the process between services and institutions)	14 (20.6%)
#progress (Comments specifically relating to the pandemic and its impact)	7 (10.3%)
#burden (Education feeling burden as main contributor to plans with less input from health.)	6 (8.8%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up exactly to 100%

Action points: More training for professionals in the EHCP process. A stronger co-ordinated approach between key partners throughout the process. More consistency in the completion of the process between different professionals and institutions.

Professionals were also asked if they think EHC Plans help children and young people to progress in education and training (Q64).

Do you think EHC Plans help children and young people to progress in education and training

Don't know
13
(3%)

No
5
(1%)

Yes
147
(39%)

Sometimes
209
(56%)
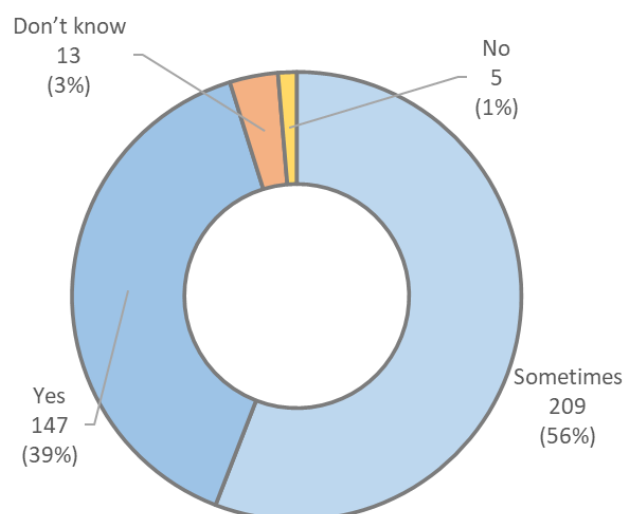
A third of professionals who responded to the survey said that an EHCP's success was dependent on a variety of factors and elements of the process being properly coordinated, updated and planned. Just under a quarter said EHCPs were let down by unrealistic target setting in the Plan. A fifth said that many Plans rely on specialist support that is difficult or not always possible to provide and/or facilitate.

Other issues mentioned in the comments were:

- Paperwork takes an enormous amount of time as it very evidence heavy. However other comments were that the process had become more streamlined, faster and less time-consuming. Even better if it was digitised.
- Lack of time within the working day to complete paperwork as resources are limited.
- Funding to put provision and support in place is insufficient.
- More training for staff in dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, ASC and other SEND needs.
- There are not enough consultants/clinicians available to give advice as part of the process.
- Getting additional assessments is difficult and waiting times are so lengthy that parents/carers pursue private assessments.
- EHCPs are still very education focused.

Action point: [Quality assurance of all EHC Plans](#) to ensure they are realistic so places of learning can action the provision and support required.

Preparation for adulthood

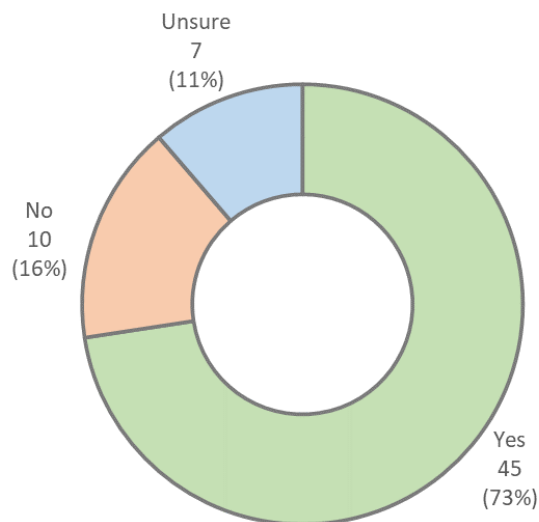Over half of the children and young people who completed the survey said **they had been supported to think about and plan for their future (Q74).**

Have you been supported to think about and plan for your future?

No
9
(15%)

Not sure
17
(27%)

Yes
36
(58%)
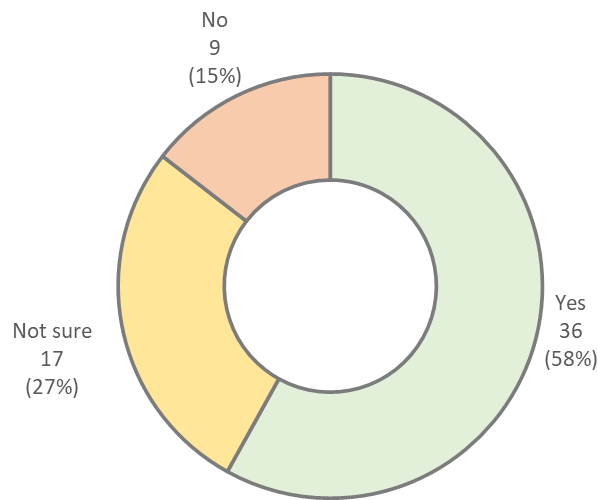
Almost three-quarters of children and young people that responded to the survey felt they had been given support to get ready for the next steps in education, training or employment (Q77).

Have you had support to get ready for the next steps in education, training or employment?

Unsure
7
(11%)

No
10
(16%)

Yes
45
(73%)

Action point: Places of learning must make sure that they clear about the support they are giving to children and young people to prepare them for transition <u>and</u> to communicate this to their parents/carers.

We asked parents/carers if their child gets chances to make choices and be independent in their life (Q21), to which 81% said they do or do sometimes.

Does your child get chances to make choices and be independent in their life?

Not sure
34
(5%)

No
107
(14%)

Sometimes
373
(50%)

Yes
230
(31%)
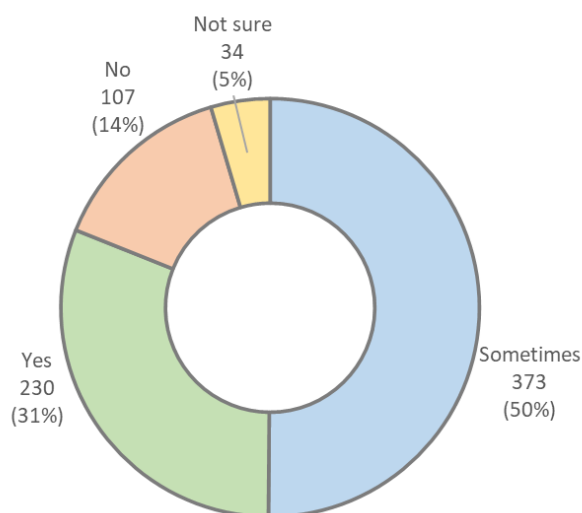
Only a quarter of parents/carers said **their child had been supported to think about and plan for their future (Q22),** with the rest saying they hadn't been supported or they weren't sure. Parents/carers who answered the survey most often commented that their CYP received the best support in their place of learning or at home.
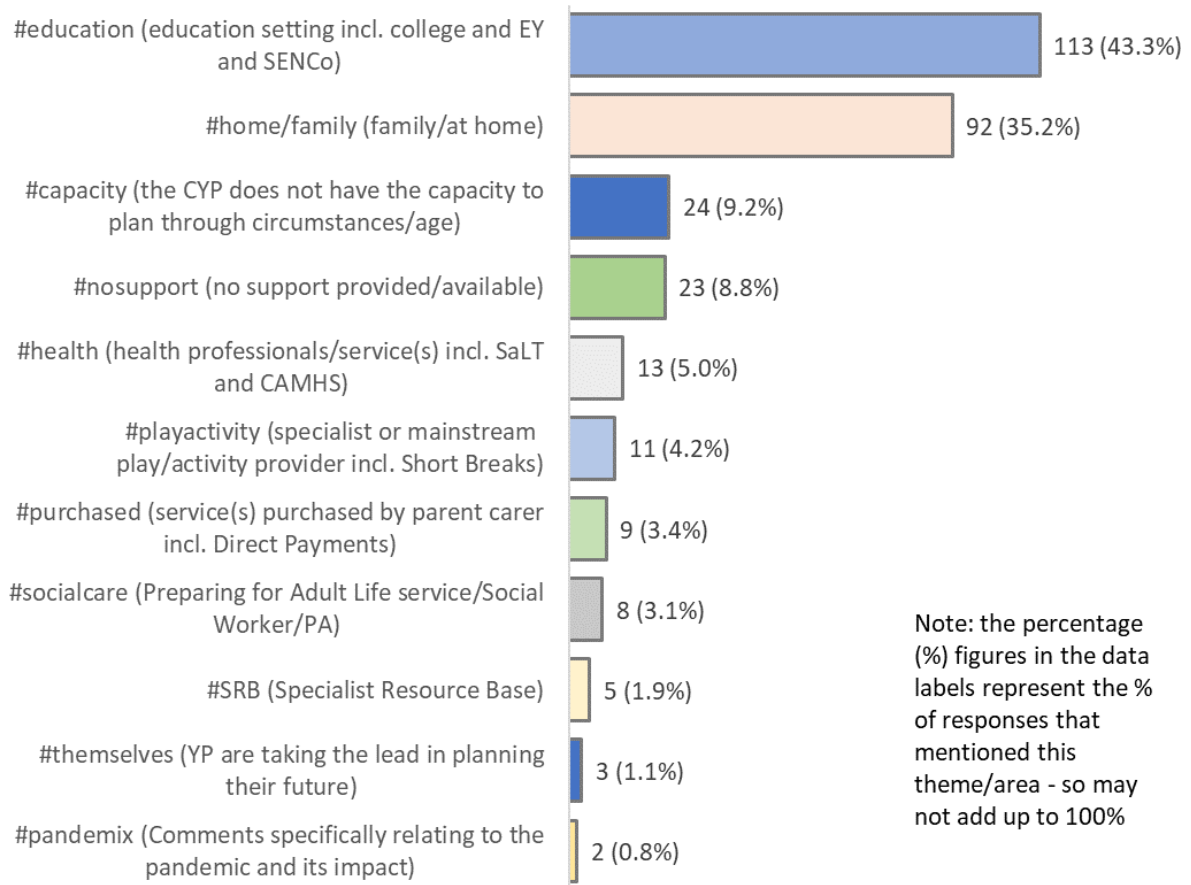
Has your child been supported to think about and plan for their future?

Yes
193
(26%)

No
336
(46%)

Not sure
209
(28%)
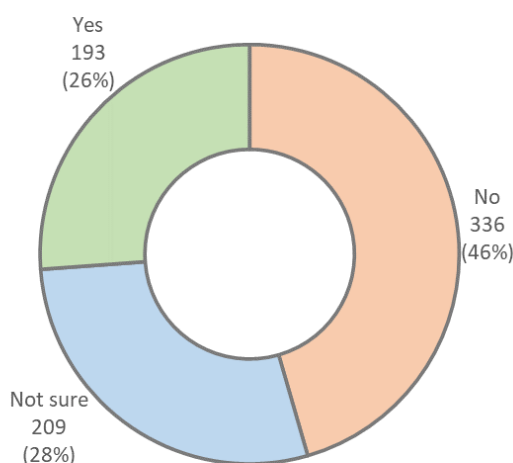
Action point: Places of learning must work together with children and young people and their parents/carers to help them think about and plan for their future.

When asked where their child had received the best support for thinking about and planning their future (Q22b), parents/carers most commonly answered their place of learning or at home.

Has your child been supported to think about and plan for their future? Please tell us where your child has had the best support?

Theme	Value
#education (education setting incl. college and EY and SENCo)	113 (43.3%)
#home/family (family/at home)	92 (35.2%)
#capacity (the CYP does not have the capacity to plan through circumstances/age)	24 (9.2%)
#nosupport (no support provided/available)	23 (8.8%)
#health (health professionals/service(s) incl. SaLT and CAMHS)	13 (5.0%)
#playactivity (specialist or mainstream play/activity provider incl. Short Breaks)	11 (4.2%)
#purchased (service(s) purchased by parent carer incl. Direct Payments)	9 (3.4%)
#socialcare (Preparing for Adult Life service/Social Worker/PA)	8 (3.1%)
#SRB (Specialist Resource Base)	5 (1.9%)
#themselves (YP are taking the lead in planning their future)	3 (1.1%)
#pandemix (Comments specifically relating to the pandemic and its impact)	2 (0.8%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

Professionals were asked **how they give the children and young people they work with the opportunity to make choices and be independent (Q46).** They reported a wide variety of methods, with many mentioning building skills and confidence in self-advocacy, decision-making and independence. A quarter talked about speaking directly to CYP and listening to what they said using appropriate communication methods and tools.

Examples given:

- ✓ Questionnaires/questions
- ✓ Free-flow play
- ✓ Choice cards/boards
- ✓ Small groups
- ✓ Talking mats
- ✓ Pupil voice and/or council
- ✓ Eye gaze
- ✓ Picture Exchange Communication books
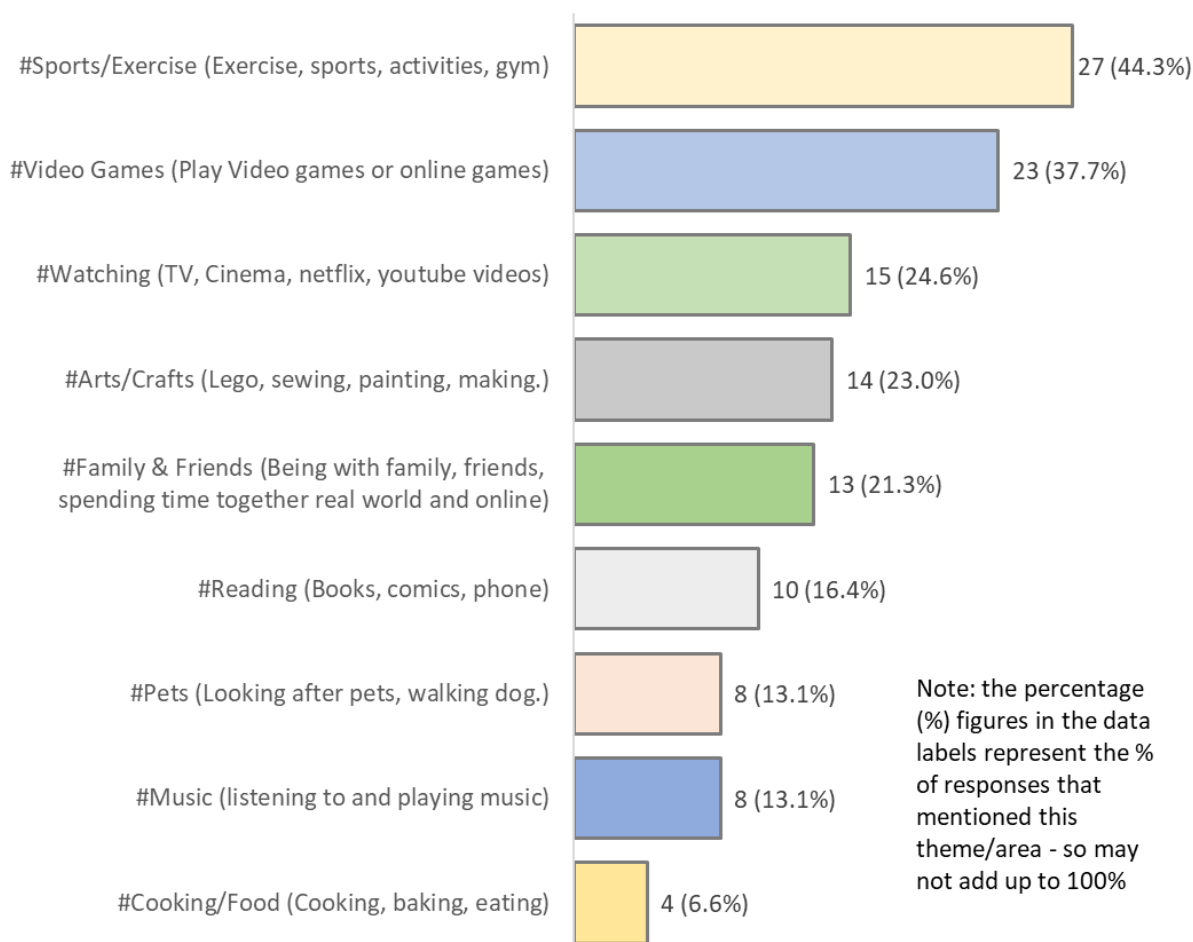- ✓ Sign-along/signing
- ✓ Gestures
- ✓ SEND Youth Forum

Support, positive reinforcement, encouragement and praise were also directly mentioned in nearly a quarter of all answers. A minority mentioned using plans, particularly EHC Plans and

learning plans, and involving CYP (sometimes their families too) in their development and individual goal/target setting.

Health and well-being

We asked children and young people **what things they like to do in their free time (Q68).** Many of the young people who answered this question liked doing physical activity, closely followed by video games.

Please tell us about the things you like doing in your free time?

Category	Count (%)
#Sports/Exercise (Exercise, sports, activities, gym)	27 (44.3%)
#Video Games (Play Video games or online games)	23 (37.7%)
#Watching (TV, Cinema, netflix, youtube videos)	15 (24.6%)
#Arts/Crafts (Lego, sewing, painting, making.)	14 (23.0%)
#Family & Friends (Being with family, friends, spending time together real world and online)	13 (21.3%)
#Reading (Books, comics, phone)	10 (16.4%)
#Pets (Looking after pets, walking dog.)	8 (13.1%)
#Music (listening to and playing music)	8 (13.1%)
#Cooking/Food (Cooking, baking, eating)	4 (6.6%)

Note: the percentage (%) figures in the data labels represent the % of responses that mentioned this theme/area - so may not add up to 100%

Parents/carers were asked **if their child gets the support and information they need to have good mental health (Q31).** Just over a quarter agreed that they do, reflecting that schools provide good mental health support. However, just under half of the parents/carers who responded disagreed, noting that schools were worsening their child's mental health problems or not supporting them.

Does your child get the support and information they need to have good mental health?

Unsure
186
(25%)

No
350
(47%)

Yes, most of
the time
209
(28%)
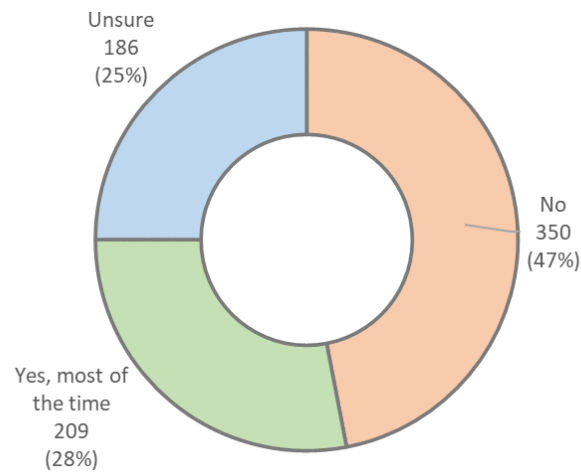
- 1 in 7 parents/carers referred to long delays and waiting lists particularly for CAMHs and Point 1 and services not being available, withdrawn, or inadequate.
- 1 in 12 parents/carers specifically talked about services not being available or being refused due to CYP having ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder).
- A small minority said they had privately funded mental health support services, often because no funded alternative was available.
- Some also mentioned that their CYP's mental health had worsened during the pandemic.

Responses to the question **does your child get the support and information they need to stay physically healthy (Q32)** were much more positive, with over half of parents/carers agreeing that they do.

Does your child get the support and information they need to stay physically healthy?

Unsure
125
(17%)

No
196
(26%)

Yes, most of
the time
420
(57%)
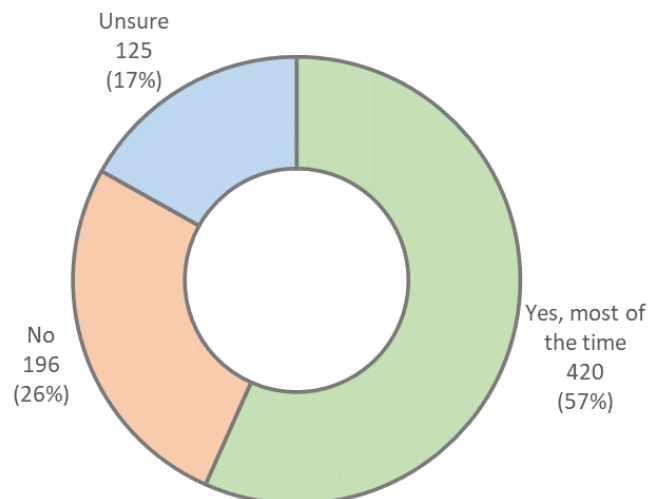
- Information on health was flagged as lacking by a third of parents/carers. Some parents/carers said their CYP's health condition was not adequately understand or provided for.
- A quarter of parents/carers who responded said that information and support for being healthy was provided at home by them.
- 1 in 10 parents/carers mentioned a lack of support or inclusion in physical education lessons in their place of learning.

Priorities and actions

Priority 1 – working together with children and young people with SEND

Action points

Professionals need to acknowledge that parents/carers do not feel they are given opportunities to give feedback and address this by:

- giving parents/carers a variety of options for giving feedback
- considering how to ensure everybody has the chance to give feedback (including those who are harder to reach)
- routinely gather feedback and act upon it in a timely way
- actively listen and respond to the views and wishes of parents/carers
- responding to parent/carer concerns through better communication

Priority 2 – improving what is in place for families and professionals to support children and young people with SEND

Action points

Community services:

- Work with voluntary groups to raise awareness of the importance of asking questions about children's needs and how they can be accommodated in clubs, teams outside of school
- Undertake further analysis to find out if there are particular needs that struggle to access local services or areas of Norfolk where services are sparse

Support for learning:

- Place of learning must evidence the graduated approach to identification of needs. Services must reduce waiting lists for assessment and diagnosis.
- A stronger co-ordinated approach between key partners throughout the process
- [Quality assurance of all EHC Plans](#) to ensure they are realistic so places of learning can action the provision and support required

Training of staff:

- All teaching staff and teaching assistants to receive regular SEND training to include training on specific areas of need
- Continue to develop a training framework, training platform and improved SEND training offer
- More training for professionals in the EHCP process eg more consistency in the completion of the process between different professionals and institutions
- All those who work with CYP with SEND are aware of and confident users of the SEND Local Offer and Norfolk Community Directory

Priority 3 – communicating the SEND services and support available in Norfolk

Action points
- Develop ways to engage all parents/carers who have children with SEND (focus on the hard-to-reach sections of the population)
- Parents/carers must be offered a range of ways to access services and support, rather than assuming they all can and want to use the internet
- All organisations publish online easy to read and understand information about their services and support so it can be shared via social media
- Monitor the impact of the SEND communications strategy in raising awareness of information about services and support

Carry on promoting:
- the EHCP helpline
- the SEND Communications Guide to all services and model this as best practice
- opportunities to get involved and give feedback and
- SEND training, events, workshops
- the SENCO Guide
- SEND support groups and events improvements they make to services following feedback from CYP and parents/carers
- guides that can be printed off to help parents/carers find services and support in Norfolk

Priority 4 – preparing young people for adult life

Action points
Places of learning should:
- actively promote the support they are giving to prepare young people for transition to their next steps in education, training or employment
- keep parents/carers informed about the transition support they are giving to young people with SEND
- help young people and their parents/carers to think about and plan for their future