

## Scrutiny Inquiry - Provision of EHCP Support in Leeds

Date: 22 February 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services and the Director of Children and Families

Report to: Children and Families Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Children and Families Scrutiny Board has identified Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) as an item for detailed scrutiny in the 2023/24 municipal year.

As such the Board has initiated an inquiry into the provision of EHCP support in the city. Running concurrently with this is improvement work being led by the Children and Families directorate supported by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) aimed at delivering effective, sustainable change to improve outcomes for children and families accessing EHCP and SEND support services in Leeds.

At the January 2024 meeting of the Board these two work streams were brought together and included both evidence provided to the inquiry by the Leeds Parent Carer Forum (LPCF) which described parent/carer lived experiences in accessing EHCP support in Leeds, and an update on the improvement work following consideration at the December Executive Board.

At the same meeting, the Board also heard that part of the directorate led improvement work involves conducting a survey of parents, carers, young people and children who access additional support with their education. The Board has observed that hearing from stakeholders, particularly those that access support, is an important element of the inquiry and to enhance the evidence already heard it has been agreed that a summary of the survey to date will be provided to the Board.

The current target is to complete this inquiry in the 2023/24 municipal year. To facilitate the inclusion of feedback from the survey the inquiry timeline will be slightly adjusted to create sufficient time for this evidence to feature in the final inquiry report, this will see a draft inquiry report on 27 March and an additional meeting on 18th April at which it is hoped the final inquiry report can be agreed.

### Recommendations

Children and Families Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the content of this report and appendices and that evidence taken from the summary provided at Appendix 1 will be used to inform the final Inquiry Report.
- b) Note the adjustment to the inquiry timeline and additional meeting planned for 18 April and the intention to provide a final inquiry report at that meeting.

## What is this report about?

1. At a national level, demand for EHC assessments and EHCPs has been increasing exponentially in recent years, in Leeds demand for these services has increased by 118% since 2016 and demand has continued to increase following the Covid-19 pandemic. This, allied to increasing complexity of needs and funding pressure has placed significant strain on the Council's SENSAP service.
2. The significant increase in demand has led to difficulties in meeting statutory timescales associated with EHCPs and therefore an increase in concerns and complaints being raised by parents and carers accessing services. The Children and Families directorate has recognised these issues and initiated a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) – Review Process which commenced in the Summer of 2023 with the aim of identifying the key issues and delivering improved services to children and families in the city.
3. This review, supported by PWC, seeks to deliver improvements in the end-to-end process which focuses on the needs of the Child and their family. This includes how the Council responds to requests for SEND assessments through to the provision of support. Each stage of review work continues to be centred on understanding the requirements of stakeholders, most notably, parents and carers, to utilise their valuable feedback and lived experience which will inform changes to practice and process. Central to this is parents and carers feeling that their voices have been heard and acted upon and that they are able to shape and influence the ongoing delivery and development of services that exist to support them and their children.
4. At the Scrutiny working group meeting on the 22nd of September 2023 members were provided with an overview of the extent of engagement, which included the initial themes emerging at that time. A significant part of early engagement included feedback from parent carer support groups and from the learning network. A summary of that initial engagement and emerging themes is appended to this report (Appendix 1 pages 1 to 7)
5. Representatives from the Voice and Influence team and PwC subsequently met with Children and Young People at the Powerhouse (West SILC) at the end of October to gain an insight into their aspirations for the future, and how engaged they are in influencing their own EHCP's. Reassuringly the group were broadly aware of what was in their individual EHCP's and understood that their voice should be at the heart of plans and annual reviews. There was a desire expressed to be more involved in conversations in a meaningful way that took into full consideration their personal vision, including support for greater independence as they become young adults. This session also helped to inform the approach for further engagement with Children and Young People by survey.
6. Two surveys were shared by the directorate in mid-December 2023, to invite the views of parents, carers, children and young people on the provision of EHC assessment and planning. Both surveys are currently live.
7. The surveys ask a series of questions and invites parents, carers and children to feedback their experiences, with an aim to further establish the issues they are facing. This feedback will be used to inform how improvements can be made for those seeking support currently and in the future. Appendix 2a and 2b, provides full sets of questions on both surveys. The online survey is designed to route respondents to question sets depending on initial responses, therefore some questions are repeated in the appendices, however anyone completing the surveys online will not experience replication. The online surveys can be accessed on the following links:

Parent/Carer <https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/LeedsEHCSurvey/>

8. Members will recall that during the January meeting of the Board some concern was expressed around how far the survey had been communicated to families. Whilst it is clear that significant effort had been made to make sure the survey reached its intended audience further work was required to ensure that children and families accessing support receive the survey directly. Therefore, as a consequence of discussion at the Board's January meeting the survey deadline was extended to the 29<sup>th</sup> of February 2024 to ensure that there is sufficient time for additional responses.
9. As of the 8th of February, 786 parents and carers and 85 Children and Young People had completed the survey. Appendix 1 (pages 8 to 20) to this report provides a visual summary of the feedback received to date.
10. Many of the emerging themes in the survey responses have been highlighted through previous engagement, which is informing practice and process that needs focus and improvement. As the survey continues to facilitate feedback, additional themes may emerge and further diagnostic work will be done after the 29th of February. It should also be noted that the engagement and the survey work reflects a particular point in time. The Directorate's work engaging with schools and settings in particular is an ongoing activity and recent Senior Management engagement has increased with the appointment of the Deputy Director for Learning who has undertaken an intensive period of reaching out and engaging with stakeholders. Informal feedback has been positive and schools and settings are welcoming an increasing level of engagement. Notwithstanding this particular point the key themes from the survey so far are as follows:
  - Many parents report that an EHCP is seen as key to obtaining any support. Feedback suggests that SEND support is heavily focussed on securing funding and putting plans into place, therefore work is required to promote awareness across schools, families and the wider SEND partnership, of the full range of support available, and not dependant on an EHCP.
  - Delays in obtaining support and a lack of communication with parents continues to be raised, with parent and carers advising that, in their view, the development or education of children is being negatively impacted, as a result of waiting times.
  - The EHC needs assessment process is seen as lengthy and drawn out, with a lack of guidance around process and applications.
  - Children and young people provided positive feedback about how schools and settings work to meet their needs, although parents and carers reported difficulties in sometimes ensuring that the support specified in an EHCP is provided
  - The way provision and support is monitored and children missing education (CME), was highlighted as an area for improvement, with parents feeding back that some children and young people are on part-time timetables or not attending a setting at all for lengthy periods of time

The survey data provided to date has provided the following information:

- 71% of parents and carers agreed that they have an understanding of the outcomes that their child's support is aiming to achieve (343 of 488 responses)
- 50% of parents and carers agreed that they understand the support available for their child across education, health and care. (140 of 278 responses)
- 52% of parents and carers reported that their child is happy and thriving, (402 of 779 responses) whilst 69% of children and young people agreed that this was the case (58 of 84 responses)

- 71% of parents and carers do not feel that the right support is in place for their child (197 of 278 responses)
- 52% of parents and carers do not feel that they have a voice and are listened to when decisions are made about support for children and young people (145 of 278 responses)
- 57% of children and young people felt their voice was heard by the service when decisions were made. (13 of 23 responses)
- 50% of parents and carers stated that they do not feel confident about the support their child will receive in the future, (252 of 508 responses)
- 2/3 of children and young people stated they had been involved in some kind of support review (40 of 61 responses)

11. The Board has already heard in detail from service users through the evidence gathering session with the LPCF in November 2023, which was summarised and formally incorporated into the inquiry in January. This provided important feedback on the lived experiences of children and families accessing EHCP services. Consideration of feedback from the city wide survey will both add depth to the comments already received and introduce new sources of evidence provided directly by children and young people accessing support services.

12. The January Board meeting heard from officers, witnesses and board members when it was stated that listening and acting upon the voice of service users will be central to the changes and co-design that is being proposed through the directorate's improvement work. Introducing additional feedback from survey users will contribute to this aim and ensure that the work of scrutiny is informed by stakeholders and takes account of their lived experiences when accessing services.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

13. The Council's Vision for Scrutiny contained in Article 6 of the Constitution sets out the nationally agreed four principles of good scrutiny. Within these are a commitment to promote scrutiny as a means to ensure the voice and concerns of the public can be heard and to improve public services by ensuring that reviews of policy and service performance are focused.

14. The Scrutiny Boards continued consideration of items related to this inquiry will provide an element of check and challenge on the ongoing improvement work being undertaken by the Children and Families Directorate and will contribute to the commitment to codesign a future way of working with families and assist in putting the views and experiences of children, young people parents and carers at the heart of future service provision.

15. The inquiry into the provision of EHCP support will lead to recommendations that improve services for children with SEND in the city and enables the Board to continue to monitor, 'check and challenge' the ongoing progress in this service area.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

16. The terms of reference of Scrutiny Boards in Leeds promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities of the Best City Ambition. This work item is aimed at having a particular impact against health and well-being and inclusive growth by seeking to review and improve services for children and families who access EHCP support.

17. This will support health and well-being of children and families accessing support and longer term, as improvement is delivered, improve the skills and qualifications achieved by this cohort and contribute to the Council's Inclusive Growth ambitions.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes                       No

18. At the 7th of June Children and Families Scrutiny Board discussion with the Director and Executive Board members suggested that the Provision of EHCP Support would be a positive area of focus for the Board in 2023/24 and the Board supported the inclusion of the EHCP work item in its work programme for the year.
19. The draft terms of reference and final terms of reference for this inquiry have also been before the Board for comment and agreement in July and September along with a summary of a Working Group held in September, which was considered by the Board at its October 2023 meeting. A subsequent inquiry session also took place in January and included feedback from representatives of LPCF and a summary of an evidence gathering Working Group held on 23 November 2023 and an update position on the directorate led improvement work, supported by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).
20. The Survey summary contained at Appendix 1 is an example of direct engagement with children and families accessing EHCP services in Leeds. Information relating to the extent of engagement with wider stakeholders is also summarised in Appendix 1.

## What are the resource implications?

21. There are no specific resource implications associated with this report.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 22 Mitigating the risk of negative outcomes for Children and Young People is driving the programme of work being undertaken by the Children and Families Directorate. Using feedback, knowledge and experience of everyone supporting this work, including parents, carers and children will ultimately inform the approach for change to ensure that services respond in a timely and effective way.
- 23 There are a number of statutory requirements associated with the provision of EHCP support which have specific reputational and financial risks associated with the Council's arrangements not being legally compliant and the review work being led by the directorate needs to ensure that sufficient focus is maintained to ensure that those risks are mitigated by appropriate arrangements being in place and being consistently managed to ensure delivery remains in line with policy.

## What are the legal implications?

- 24 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report. Although it should be noted that there is a legal framework in place and therefore any new or revised arrangements should be legally sound and reflect the legal framework governing the EHC process. There is therefore a risk where the Local Authority does not meet its statutory duties.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

25 Not applicable.

### **How will success be measured?**

26 The completion of an inquiry report in the 2023/24 municipal year and a commitment to ongoing work in this area as part of the Scrutiny Board's future work programming. The Scrutiny Board will continue to monitor progress against any recommendation made as a result of its inquiry. The Directorate will continue to seek feedback from stakeholders including parents/carers, children and young people as change is developed and implemented, and will monitor performance information.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

27 The timetable will be dictated by the Board through regular consideration of the work programme at each public meeting that is held and during the inquiry work itself. The Board, in consultation with the Principal Scrutiny Advisor, will be responsible for production of the inquiry report.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Feedback Summary
- Appendix 2a & 2b –Survey Questions

## **Background papers**


- None

# Following engagement as part of a review period to September 2023 (Appendix 1)

Work to assess and review the current state of SEND and Inclusion services involved significant external engagement, which was summarised as part of the Scrutiny Working Group update in September 2023.

**15** Organisations consulted with as part of **advocacy focus group**

**290** Analysis of all **complaints** made over past 12 months

 Headteachers consulted through meetings and roundtables working with **Families of Schools and the AIP**, and feedback analysed as part of EHCP assessment


**9** Interviews carried out with **parents, carers, and SENCOs** to hear first hand experiences of process

Since this update, further engagement has taken place to obtain the views of stakeholders across Leeds. This has already proved to be vital in using these views to address issues across SEND and Inclusion services.

**~850** **Parent and carer responses to survey to assess current family experience**, summarised in this document

**20** Complaints analysed in detail and mapped to assess **journey and issues from family's perspective**

**5** Working groups with **headteachers and SENCOs** held around funding

 Post-16 cohort **focus group** held at West SILC

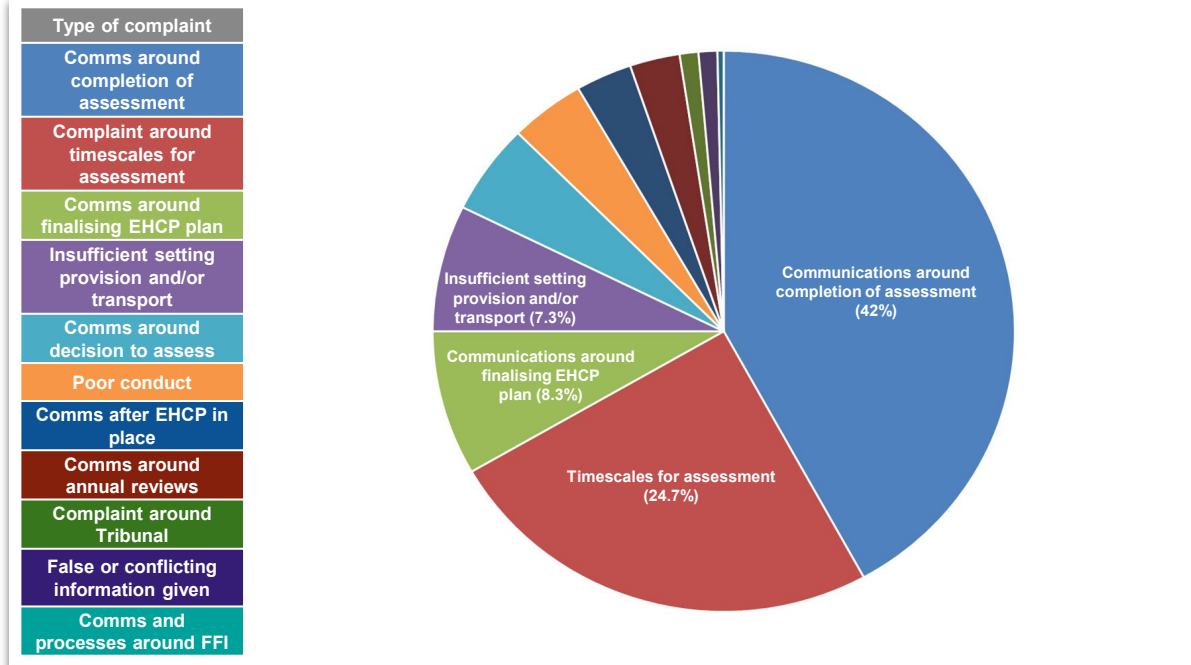
# The analysis of complaints assessed themes and outcomes over the past year

When complaints were analysed by type, a range of reasons as to why frustrations are growing among EHCP applicants can be seen, with most complaints focused around communications. This helped the service to understand the impact of poor performance, whilst providing insight into the root cause of performance issues.

## Complaints data overview

72% of the 290 complaints were upheld or partially upheld	Nearly 50% of complaints have had no direct contact made
Only 6% of complaints have been fully resolved	Over 50% of complaints cite "lack of communication" as a problem but only 16 are categorised as such

## What does this mean in practice?





# Headteacher and Schools feedback

Schools and headteachers have provided feedback that can be used to deepen the insight from complaints, how communications are managed and relationships with schools are maintained. Key themes from these meetings with schools are as follows.



## Better communications



There is a need to consider how communications between LA and associated services (including schools) can be improved



## Improved transparency around timelines



Many children without review or EHCPs within the statutory time frames are not being communicated with. This issue was raised at every meeting



## Setting types



Challenges around specialist schools not being able to accommodate children due to capacity



## Schools are the “front door” for everything



Schools are the primary port of call for parents and carers regarding any frustrations they face

# Findings from engagement with children and young people at the West SILC Power House - October 2023

In order to hear firsthand the experiences of children and young people in obtaining and being involved in their EHCPs, a focus group was held at the West SILC Power House to hear from a post-16 cohort of children and young people.

## Children and young people showed some awareness of what is in their EHCP

- When asked about their involvement, the group displayed some knowledge of what an EHCP is, why it is important to them, and the link to the support provided by the Power House
- The group also knew that their voice should be at the heart of an EHCP and annual reviews

“ I'd like to be more involved in my EHCP ”

## The Power House is keen to improve the way that childrens' input shapes support and focuses on outcomes

- There is appetite at the Power House for a review that more involves the children and young people in assessing how their support is contributing towards achievement of outcomes
- This may mean young people presenting back how their support has helped and where needs have changed, or focusing attention on outcomes

“ The EHCP meetings are too long and I'd like to be more involved ”

## It is important that this involvement is tailored to the child,

- This involvement in reviews of support can often be limited to filling out a form around family, what the young person likes, and achievements, combined with attendance at lengthy review sessions without feeling able to input
- This means the review process risks not feeding in the voice of the child in a genuine way which considers their views and influences the support provided

“ I came here because I was told to ”

## individual settings support input into reviews

- The role of settings in driving children's input in annual reviews may vary in the way children and young people are involved in shaping their support.
- The change to the way the service operates also provides the chance to focus the relationships with settings around the voice of the child, and ensuring settings have what they need to focus support and provision around childrens' needs and wants, especially when considering transition to adulthood

“ I want to travel independently by 19 but I don't know what that means for this year ”

# Parent and carer feedback

Interviews and a focus group were undertaken with parents and carers who had gone through the EHCP journey, as well as advocate groups for parent and carers. The engagement undertaken in person as part of this work is set out on the following slides, and enabled us to:

Hear voices and experiences firsthand and centre findings in quotes and themes

Understand the EHCP process end-to-end alongside parents and carers in order to hear experiences relevant to each stage of the process.

Obtain feedback from advocacy groups who represent a wide array of parents and carers across Leeds

Obtain feedback as to how we can productively engage going forward

As part of the focus group held, a recommendation was made to undertake surveys which obtains views from parents and carers, children and young people. This was shared in December 2023.

# Parent and carer feedback focused around decision-making as well as communication

Speaking to parents and carers made it clear that significantly more engagement is required, but this initial engagement helped us to substantiate thinking around service issues.

## The EHCP assessment is too focused on process, rather than the child's voice



This means that parents, carers and SENCOs feel they must 'play the game' in order to have an application granted, or use the process to obtain an alternative outcome, as opposed to always relying on the Council to engage and prioritise requests in a way which captures the child's voice and needs and use this to guide how need is met.

## In a number of cases communication has broken down between parents and carers and the service



Parents and carers communicating with the Council have found that communication can become adversarial 'by default', with a perceived lack of support for parents, and strained relationships between the Council, schools, and parents and carers.

## The process is not future-proofed



Parents and carers applying for an EHCP on the basis of a known future need struggle to progress this assessment due to the focus on how the child is progressing in their current setting.

## Signposting and messaging around EHCPs and beginning an application can be unclear

Parents reported being informed that an EHCP is not required until a transition in order to access the right specialist provision, and feeling lost around how to get into the process and make an application.

## There is a lack of comms, ownership or monitoring

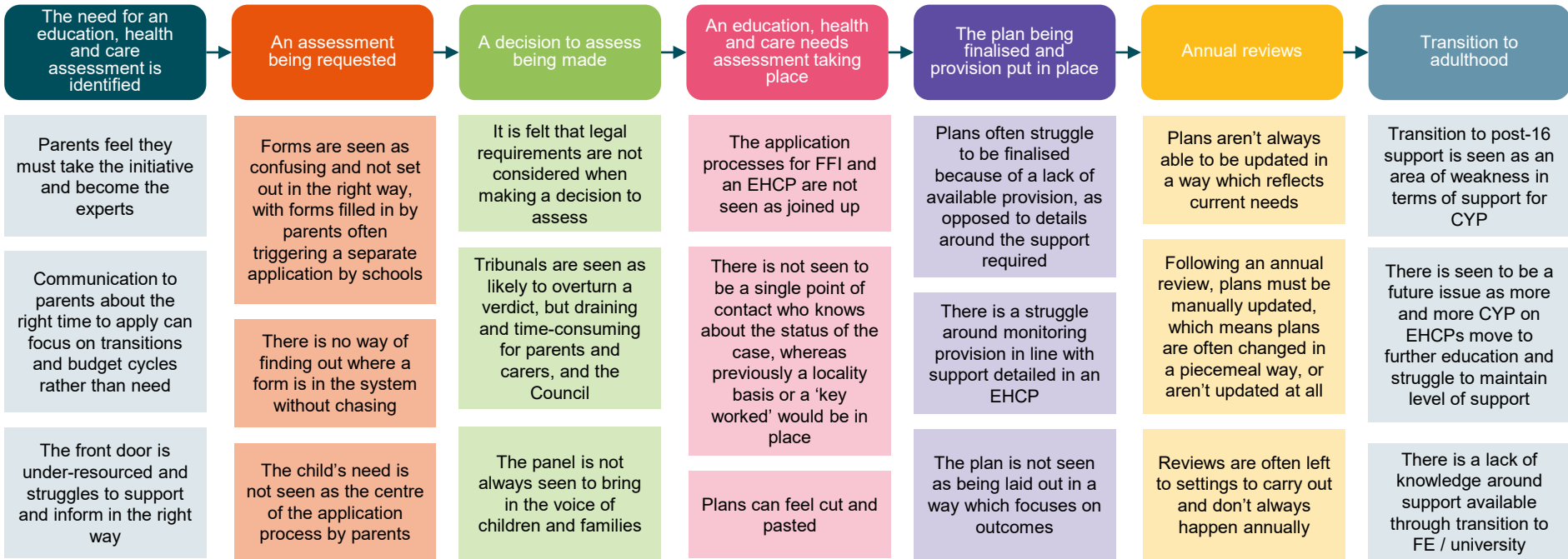
Parents have difficulties sometimes in being able to contact the Council to get an update on their case, and struggle to get a sense of ownership around their child's case. This extends to the process of annual reviews or performance monitoring, where monitoring of the provision of support detailed in the EHCP is not always felt to be sufficient.

## The EHCP process presents "barriers" for parents and carers trying to apply

The application process has made some parents and carers feel like they have to fight for their child to be supported, as opposed to the Council working with them to meet their child's need.

# The parent and carer advocacy focus group highlighted issues across the process

The focus group held with parents and carers drew out themes across the EHCP journey for children and families.



# 786 parents and carers and 85 CYP completed a survey about their experience, as part of an ongoing process of engagement to shape our service (Appendix 1 p 8 – 20)

In December 2023, a survey was circulated to parents and carers across Leeds in order to obtain feedback from all parents and carers who wished to provide views around their experiences with SEND and Inclusion services. In order to maximise the amount of feedback, the survey was subsequently sent to over **6,000** parents and carers with a request to provide feedback. Whilst this survey will close at the end of February, interim results taken on **8th February** have been analysed and are detailed on the following slides.

Feedback suggests that SEND support is viewed as predominantly being focussed on funding and plans, when other support may be available.

*“His special needs not being supported in the right way is causing disruption to the education delivery.”*

*“Any request for help is always met by the question ‘Does he have an EHCP?’”*

The assessment process as part of an EHC needs assessment was seen as lengthy and drawn out, with a view that there was a lack of guidance around applying and the process to be followed

*“It was a very long drawn out process that took far too long.”*

*“ The process is very stressful.”*

Communication and delays in obtaining support can potentially create a negative impact on child development and education

*“Seeing the progress in my child in such a short space of time now with the right setting makes me even angrier at the system that it took so long!”*

*“The Council never communicated between themselves or with me.”*

There is variation in individual settings and support available

*“Part-time never increased to full time due to a lack of appropriate support in school and failure to implement the EHCP”*

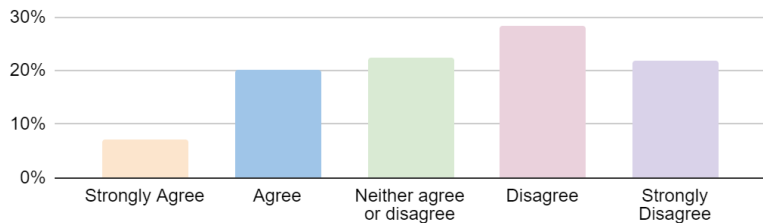
The way provision and support is monitored and risks around children missing out on education are flagged was highlighted as an area for potential improvement

*“The EHCP system is not fit for purpose in Leeds as it does not obtain timely outcomes or manage to adjust and engage the right people at the right time to make changes.”*

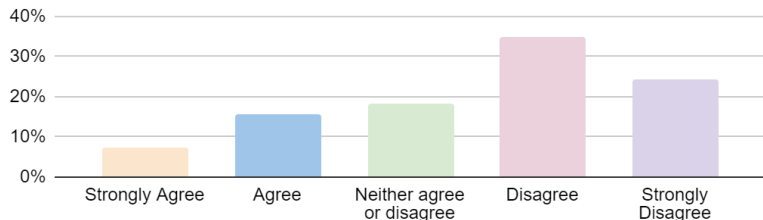
*“My child has needed a specific specialist setting for the last 3 years as stated in EHCP reviews yet still hasn't been allocated a suitable setting.”*

# Parents and carers reported difficulties in understanding support available for children and young people with SEND

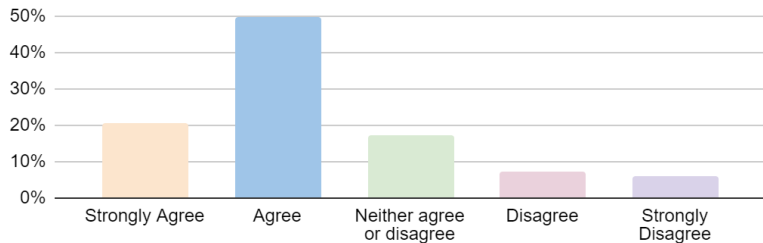
I understand the support available for my child across across education, health and care



I know where to access support for my child outside of the education, health and care formal processes and funding



I understand what my child's support is aiming to achieve



## Feedback from parents and carers

50% of parents and carers reported a lack of understanding around support available for their child or young person, whilst a higher proportion (59%) reported not knowing where to access this support, outside of formal support. However, there was positive feedback around the understanding of what a child's support aims to achieve. Feedback focused around the visibility of support offers and a greater problem around accessing this support, or ensuring this support is in place.

*"I understand what support should be in place but it isn't in place"*

*"If I need support I am able to look for it, although accessing it is a different issue"*

*"The support is not advertised enough. I often find out about support after a group or meeting has taken place. Education and healthcare do not communicate with each other"*

# Feedback around input into decisions made about children and young people focused around a lack of personalisation of this support

## Feedback from parents and carers

*“The Council is funding-led rather than needs-led”*

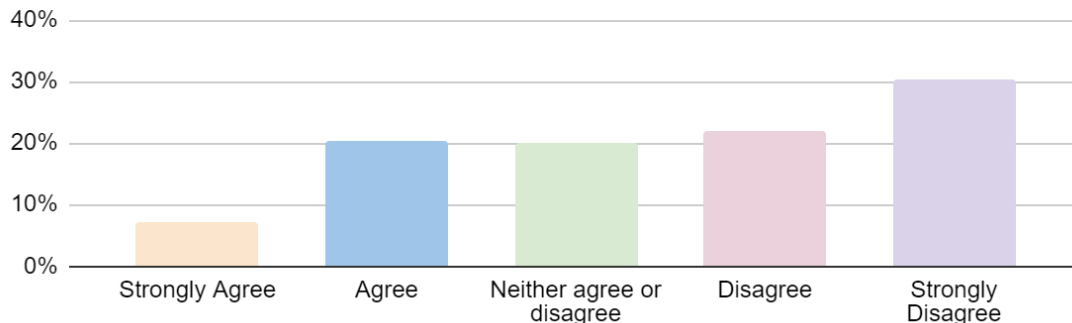
*“It very much depends on who you are assigned and which area it is that you are dealing with”*

*“I have been kept updated throughout”*

*“The decision was made to refuse progression to an EHC needs assessment without a single person setting eyes on my child”*

When parents and carers were asked about the way their views are listened to and taken into account as part of a plan, 28% responded that their views feel listened to. Feedback focused on the ways EHCPs are worded in comparison to parent or carer input, and sense that there was inconsistency in outcomes when working with the Council to progress a needs assessment.

When decisions are made about support for my child I feel that I have a voice, that my views are listened to and they are taken into account





# Parents and carers provided a wide range of feedback around sharing their child's views and aspirations, with much positive feedback focusing on the role of the setting

## Feedback from parents and carers

*"It's filled in every time but then ignored for the rest of plan. Pupil views and feedback not included in the right section."*

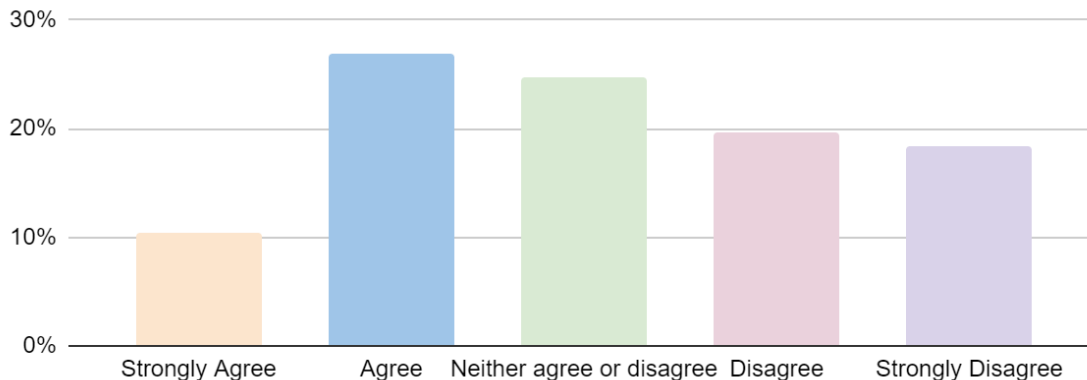
*"My son finds it hard to say what he wants"*

*"My child tells me what she needs and I make sure the school listens"*

Parents and carers provided mixed feedback around the way their child's voice is listened to when planning support as part of an EHCP. Some feedback focused on the difficulty of achieving this, or the difficulty of having the child's voice fed into the plan itself to ensure the right support is provided.

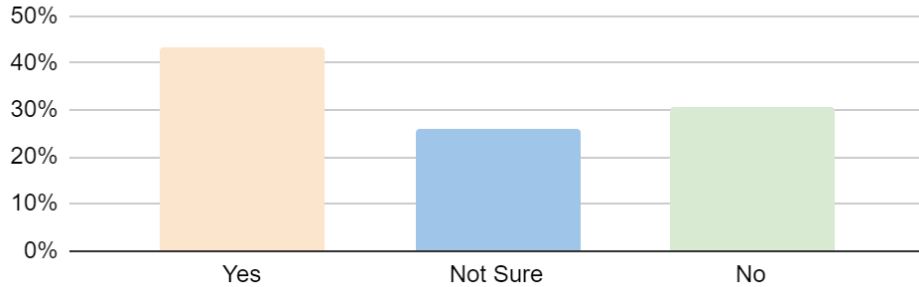
However, there was positive feedback around the way parents work with schools and SENCOs to ensure their child's voice is listened to and factored in as part of the support provided.

**My child has a voice to share their views and aspirations, and is listened to in the decisions about the support they receive and in their plan**

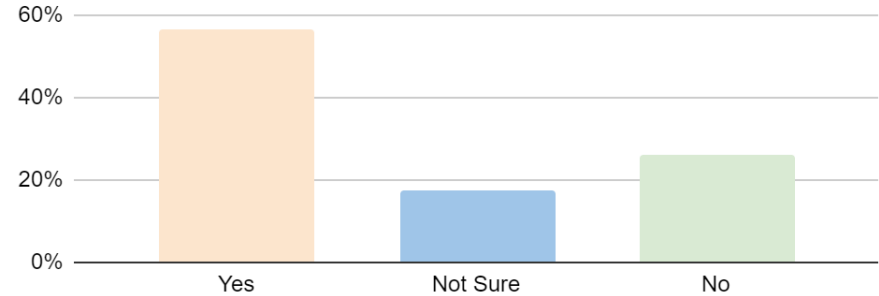


# Children and young people in these settings also provided more positive feedback around the way they are encouraged to share their wants and needs

Are you asked about your feelings and what would help you to do well and learn?



Have you been able to share your hopes and dreams for the future?



## Feedback from children and young people

Children and young people responded positively around the inclusion of their voice, with 43% agreeing that they are asked about their feelings and voice, and 57% asked about their hopes for the future.

Positive feedback focused on the way this has built excitement for the future and the way time is often scheduled in, although some felt that wants and needs have not been listened to.

*"My mum and dad asked me about my wants and needs when filling out some forms before."*

*"I have and I can't wait. I'm excited for my future!"*

*"I have been asked this before, but no one has got it right. Things change too much, it's busy and I don't feel safe"*

*"My teachers are interested in me and what my interests are. They want to do what they can to help me achieve"*

*"I've had scheduled meetings with parents, SENCO and my teacher, with ad hoc discussions for support"*

# Children and young people also provided positive feedback around the way settings ensure they are aware of an EHCP and its importance

*“Students know they have one, but not really sure what it's for”*

*“It was to help me learn, and provide me with support”*

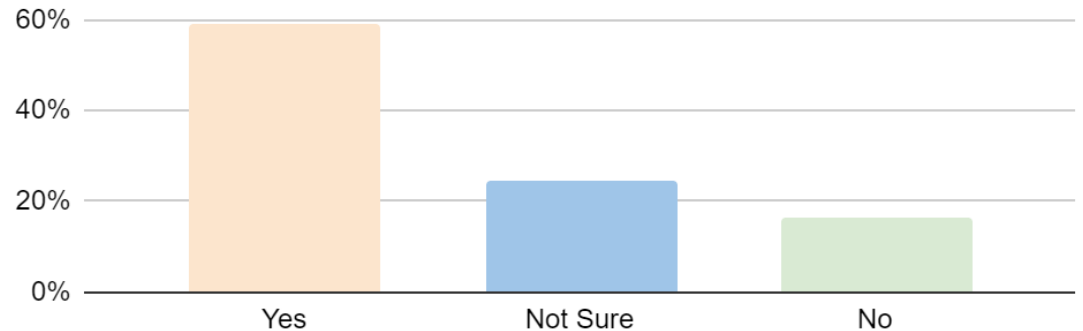
*“I've had EHCP meetings, which basically act as my academic New Year's resolutions!”*

*“I had to do a lot of research independently around the forms and processes, and I used SENDIASS services for help too.”*

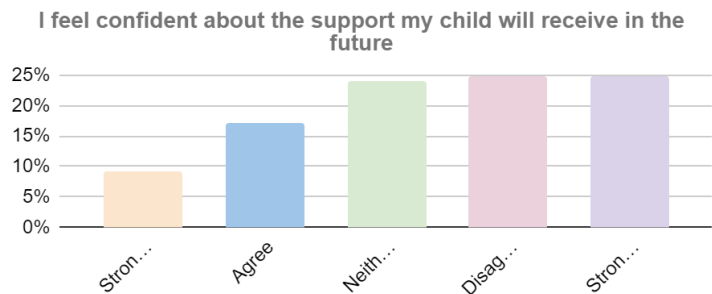
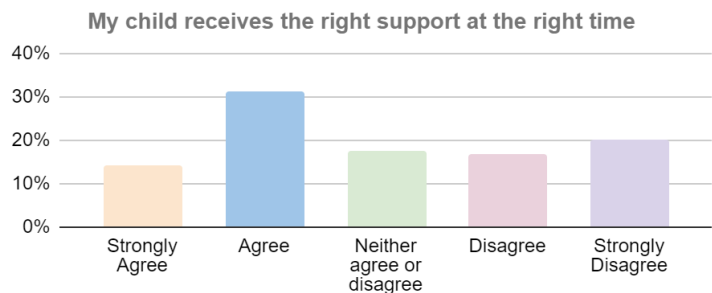
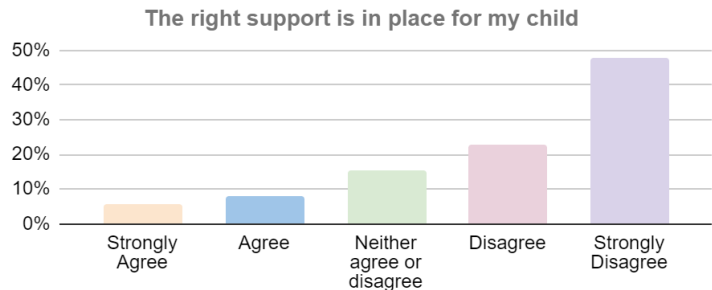
## Feedback from children and young people

High proportions of children and young people reported being asked about what an EHCP means and involved. For some children and young people, this meant knowing the definition, whilst some showed awareness of what this means on an ongoing basis as part of a regular review of provision. Some children and young people reported knowing they have one, but not what it means in practice.

When you got an EHCP were you spoken to about what having an EHCP means and involves?



# Parents and carers highlighted the difficulty in obtaining the right support, with waiting times highlighted



## Feedback from parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers disagreed that the right support is currently in place for their child (71%), and displayed low confidence around the support their child would receive in the future. More positive feedback was provided around the child receiving the right support at the right time.

Feedback focused around a delay in support being provided due to waiting times or a lack of assessment.

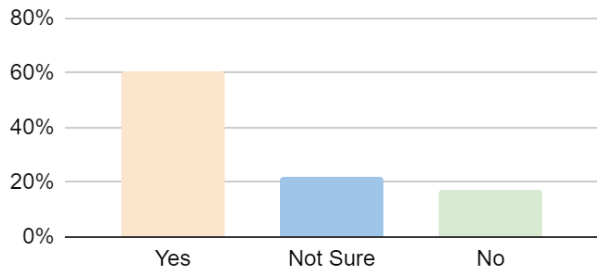
*“Currently the right support is in place, but we are worried about his transition to Secondary School.”*

*“The college are supporting him but haven’t had the in-depth info about his needs. This is long, long overdue”*

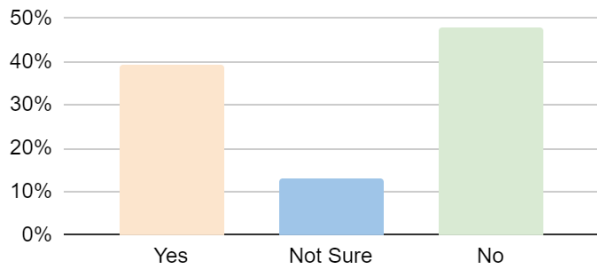
*“Waiting times are ridiculous. Parents having to jump through hoops to get the correct support needed.”*

# Children and young people highlighted support provided by both settings and school support teams, in addition to the effort required to obtain this

Do you receive support from school to help you do well?



Have you been asked about your health and care support, to help you do well in your learning?



## Feedback from children and young people

Children and young people responded positively to questions around support from school. A higher proportion of children reporting no health and care involvement may be due to the limited amount of cases where this is relevant.

Positive feedback focused on the relationships with teachers and the noticeable support provided by school support teams from the Council, whilst others noticed that there have been many meetings and forms filled in without support being provided.

*"I filled in the form for the EHCP but nothing has been done"*

*"My teachers are amazing and help me to understand my lessons. They have helped me to develop and succeed"*

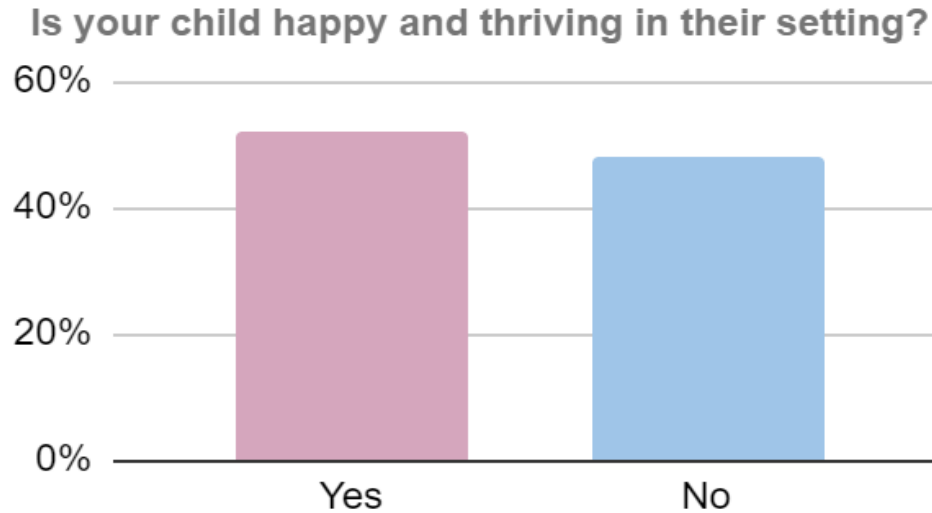
*"I have meetings with the Health & Wellbeing team to help with emotions and reactions, and I meet with the Visual Impairment Team every two weeks."*

*"My mum and dad have been trying to get me support for a very long time. I know they have a lot of meetings with school to try get it sorted."*

# Feedback around existing settings highlighted the importance of an EHCP, but also the delay in development caused through delays in obtaining support

## Feedback from parents and carers

When asked about how happy children and young people are in their current setting, 59% of parents indicated that they are. Feedback focused around the ways obtaining an EHCP can often act as a turning point in the quality of support for a child or young person, but that the process for obtaining an EHCP can be a significant barrier, and any significant delay to a child's education can permanently affect their progress.



*"His special needs are not being supported in the right way, which is causing disruption to the delivery of his education"*

*"I wouldn't say they are thriving - but they are now both getting an education and their mental health is good. Having an EHCP should mean at least some form of equity in terms of education, but it doesn't."*

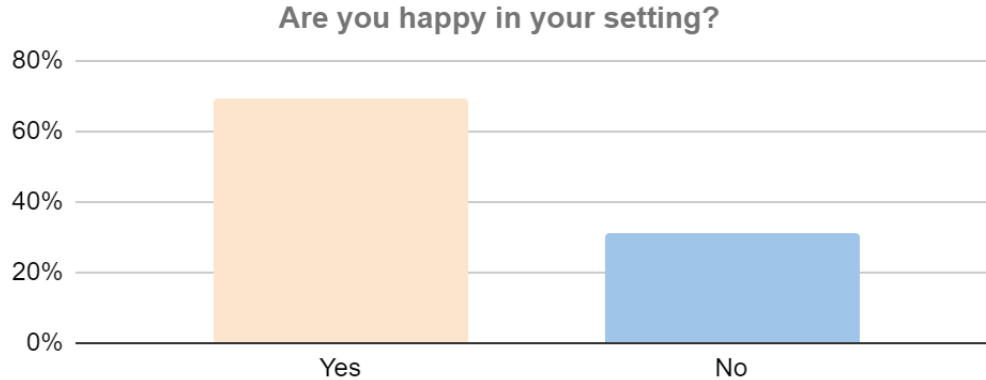
*"The lack of joined up assessment and service provision means that they are years behind their peers, and no closer to getting into the special school setting where they are on the list"*

*"My child is now happy to attend school. Before having an EHCP she was stuck in a school who didn't know how to meet her needs. She was often left upset and deregulated."*

# Children and young people provided positive feedback around existing settings, in particular support provided by schools

## Feedback from children and young people

A higher proportion of children and young people (69%) reported being happy in their current setting. Children and young people talked about the way they are able to work with their teachers to ensure their needs are met and they thrive in their setting, and the importance of asking for support. Some indicated discomfort with their current setting due to size or disruption.



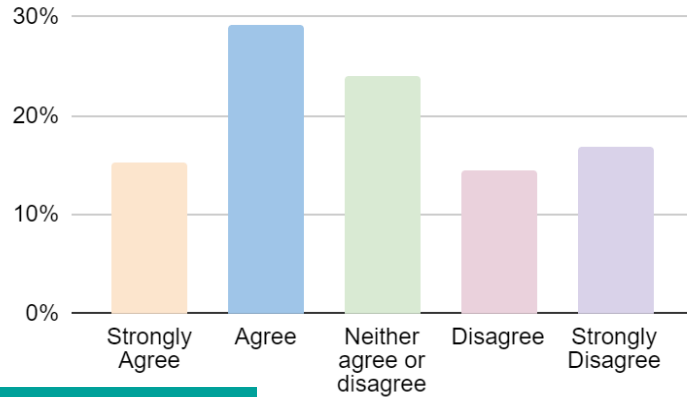
*“The teachers in my school help me study and improve my skills, while also taking my wellbeing into importance.”*

*“I am too distracted by everything. It’s a big school with a lot happening.”*

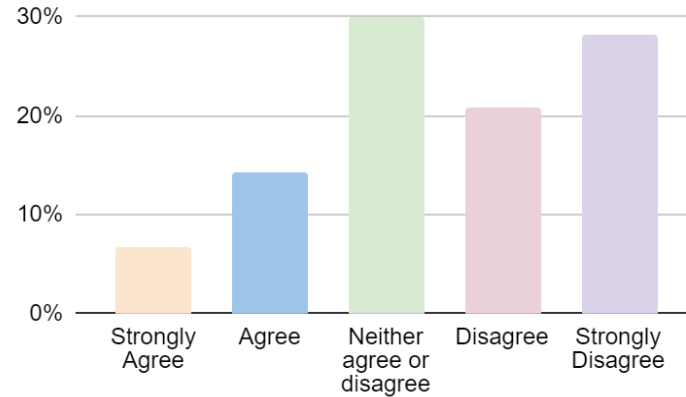
*“Most people with my issues need help, but will never ask for help as they think it’s normal, and don’t realise they would benefit.”*

# Feedback around preparing for next steps was positive, but highlighted the importance of making up for a delay in receiving support

The support my child receives has enabled them to be as independent as possible



The support received from different agencies is joined up



## Feedback from parents and carers

Families provided positive feedback around the way support received enabled children and young people to be as independent as possible, with 44% agreeing or strongly agreeing. However, the breadth of this support across both health and social care was seen to be limited, with only 21% agreeing that this feels joined up. Feedback focused around the effectiveness of services providing independent travel training.

*"It's allowed him into a specialist setting but we are still struggling in regards to health issues and lack of support"*

*"He still has a long way to go as he only had an EHCP issued in Year 6. It is crucial that he has the support he gets from an EHCP now more than ever to help him with this."*

*"The independent travel service provided by the authority was excellent in enabling our daughter to gain independence."*



# Children and young people reported being involved in reviews of this provision ahead of key transition stages

*"I was asked my thoughts on where I'd like to live, and what I'd like to do."*

*"I sit in the room and get spoken about in an unflattering way"*

*"I've told them I want be able to communicate in a safe and positive way, and to remain a happy content boy without struggling"*

*"My future depends on what is available after college"*

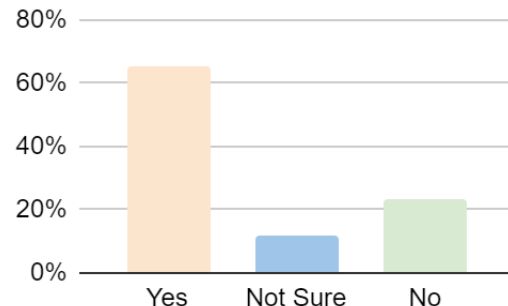
*"I am hoping to be independent in the future"*

## Feedback from children and young people

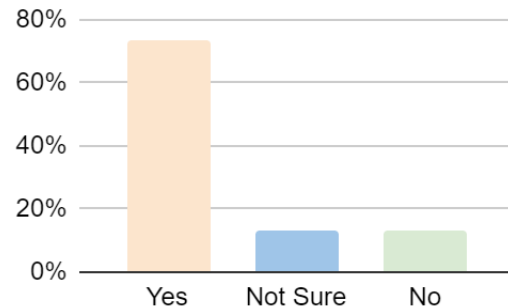
High proportions of children and young people reported being involved in a review of their EHCP, and being able to talk about their wants for the future as part of this.

Positive feedback played back some of these wants and needs and the way their voice is included, although some children and young people reported not feeling empowered or valued as part of this review.

## Have you been involved in a review of your EHCP?

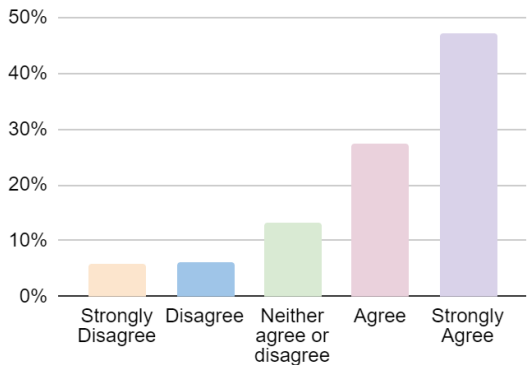


## Have you shared your hopes and dreams for the future in your EH...

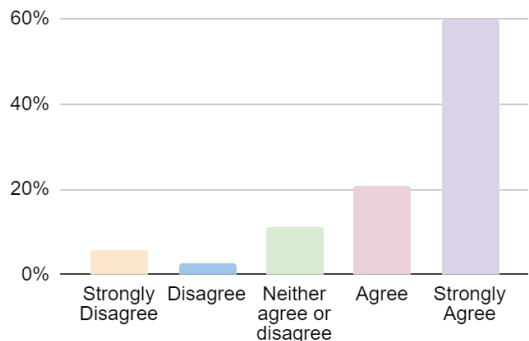


# The role EHCPs and FFI play in a child's journey was evident in responses to all questions

I feel an Education, Health and Care Plan is the only way to get the support my child needs



I feel an Education, Health and Care Plan and Funding for Inclusion are the only way to get the support my child needs



## Feedback from parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers reported feeling as if an EHCP or FFI is the only way to obtain support, with a higher proportion of FFI recipients agreeing with this statement. This indicates that FFI and EHCP are seen as a goal to achieve in and as of themselves.

Some feedback focused on the need to avoid any sense of EHCPs being a 'golden ticket' and emphasised the need for EHCPs to be seen as a legal document which enables the right support to be provided.

*"This is a legal document and it is essential that he still has this, so I am secure in the knowledge that the schools and services are meeting this by law. This means meeting my child's needs for as long as he needs it."*

*"An EHCP is just the start. Ensure it's actually adhered to and maintained is a whole different game!"*

*"We don't think that EHCPs are a "Golden Ticket" as some want to believe. We are just trying to get an education for our child, which is what they are legally and morally entitled to, and which parents of children without SEND don't have to fight for."*

*"Any request for help is always met by the question 'Does he have an EHCP?'"*

# Leeds EHC Assessment - Parent Carer Survey

Appendix 2a

## 1. Introduction

In August this year the Children and Families Directorate at Leeds City Council started a full scale review of the Education Health and Care assessment and planning process. A number of people, including parents, advocates, professionals and young people have so far openly shared their feedback, which has been incredibly useful in outlining some of the experiences encountered during this process.

To expand upon the conversations that have already taken place we are seeking your feedback through this survey. Your input is valuable as it will help us to resolve challenges and to understand aspects that work well. As we continue in our review, your feedback will help us to start addressing the way we provide our services, by informing the way that we work and the way that we engage with parents and carers.

Committed to improving how we support children and families, your feedback will also be used to ensure assessment and planning is focused on the needs of your children.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

If you wish to provide any supplementary feedback in addition to your response to this survey, please email [ehcpreview@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ehcpreview@leeds.gov.uk)

## 2. Privacy statement

By submitting your response, you are giving your consent for us to use the information you provide.

We will keep your information safe and secure in line with UK data protection law. Your data will be processed by the relevant teams within Leeds City Council. Our software supplier, SmartSurvey Ltd, will also process your data on our behalf but will never use these for its own purposes. We will store your response for up to 2 years.

You have rights under UK data protection law including withdrawing your consent for us to use your information. Visit [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) (the data protection regulator) to learn more.

We use cookies to improve your experience of using our website. If you continue without

changing your cookie settings, we assume that you are happy with this usage

What does this mean?

The message above says, because you have filled in the survey you are happy for us to use your answers to help us to work better. We will keep your answers safe and only use the answers you have given to help us to improve support to Children and Young People with their Education Health and Care assessments and plans. At any point in the future you can tell us if you have sent information in this survey that you no longer want us to use.

'Cookies' help you when you are using the internet or filling out forms and surveys. You can change the settings or leave them as they are. \*

I give my consent for my personal information to be used as described in the privacy notice.

### 3. About you

How old is your child? \*

Relationship to child \*

If other, please tell us your relationship

What setting is your child currently in? \*

If other, please tell us what setting your child attends

Is your child happy and thriving in this setting?

Yes

No

Comments:

**Is your child currently waiting an Education, Health and Care Assessment, has an Education, Health and Care Plan or receiving Funding for Inclusion? \***

- Has an education, health and care plan
- Receiving funding for inclusion
- Both - Education, Health and Care Plan and Funding for Inclusion
- Waiting an education, health and care assessment
- None of the above

## **4. Support for your child**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements**

**I understand the support available for my child across across education, health and care \***

Comments:

**I know where to access support for my child outside of the education, health and care formal processes and funding \***

Comments:

**When decisions are made about support for my child I feel that I have a voice, that my views are listened to and they are taken into account \***

Comments:

**My child has a voice and is listened to in the decisions about the support they receive \***

Comments:

**The right support is in place for my child \***

Comments:

## **5. Funding for Inclusion**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements**

**My child has a voice and their views are included when planning support \***

Comments:

**The support my child receives is clear and aims and goals identified \***

Comments:

**My child receives the right support at the right time \***

Comments:

**The support my child receives has enabled them to be as independent as possible \***

Comments:

**The support received from different agencies is joined up \***

Comments:

**I am happy with the support my child is receiving \***

Comments:

**I feel confident about the support my child will receive in the future \***

Comments:

## **6. Education, Health and Care Plans**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements**

**My child is able to share their views and aspirations, and they are included in their support and plan \***

Comments:

**I understand what my child's support is aiming to achieve \***

Comments:

**My child receives the right support at the right time \***

Comments:

**The support my child receives has enabled them to be as independent as possible \***

Comments:

**The support received from different agencies is joined up \***

Comments:

**I feel an Education, Health and Care Plan is the only way to get the support my child needs \***

Comments:

**I feel confident about the support my child will receive in the future \***

Comments:

## **7. Education, Health and Care Plan and Funding for Inclusion**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements**



**My child is able to share their views and aspirations, and they are included in their support and plan \***

Comments:

**I understand what my child's support is aiming to achieve \***

Comments:

**My child receives the right support at the right time \***

Comments:

**The support my child receives has enabled them to be as independent as possible \***

Comments:

**The support received from different agencies is joined up \***

Comments:

**I feel an Education, Health and Care Plan and Funding for Inclusion are the only way to get the support my child needs \***

Comments:

**I feel confident about the support my child with receive in the future \***

Comments:

## **8. Further comments and feedback**

**Tell us about your experience of the Education, Health and Care assessment process.**

**Please share with us your suggestions for improving the Education, Health and Care needs assessment process.**

**Tell us about your experience of the Funding for Inclusion process**

**Please share with us your suggestions for improving the Funding for Inclusion process.**



# Leeds EHC Assessment - Children and young people

## 1. Introduction



Hello,



This is a survey is being carried out by Leeds City Council .



The survey is to be completed by children and young people who have additional needs, and may have an Education Health and Care Plan (also known as an EHCP).



An Education Health and Care Plan is a plan that describes what is important to you, your needs, and says what support you should get.



If you receive additional support to help you with your learning or your work, then it would be brilliant to hear from you.



We want to know how the process of getting support worked for you and what difference it has made, so we can help improve things for you and others who may need support in the future.



People who work for Leeds City Council will read your answers but they will not know who wrote them.



You do not have to answer this survey on your own and you can ask someone you trust to help you to complete it.



If you do not want to complete the survey then that is fine.



If you want to tell us about how you feel in a different way that is fine too. Please send your feedback to Leeds City Council using this email address [ehcpreview@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ehcpreview@leeds.gov.uk)

widgit symbols (c) widgit software 2022-23 [www.widgit.com](http://www.widgit.com)

## 2. Privacy statement

By submitting your response, you are giving your consent for us to use the information you provide.

We will keep your information safe and secure in line with UK data protection law. Your data will be processed by the relevant teams within Leeds City Council. Our software supplier, SmartSurvey Ltd, will also process your data on our behalf but will never use these for its own purposes. We will store your response for up to 2 years.

You have rights under UK data protection law including withdrawing your consent for us to use your information. Visit [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) (the data protection regulator) to learn more.

We use cookies to improve your experience of using our website. If you continue without changing your cookie settings, we assume that you are happy with this usage

What does this mean?

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‘Cookies’ help you when you are using the internet or filling out forms and surveys. You can change the settings or leave them as they are. \*

I give my consent for my personal information to be used as described in the privacy notice.

### 3. About you

How old are you? \*

Where do you receive your education? \*

If other, please tell us where

Are you happy in this setting? \*

Yes

No

Comments:

**Do you have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)? \***

Yes

No

Not sure

## 5. Support you receive with your education



We want to make sure that the Council is working with you, schools, parents and carers, to make sure you have the support to do well in school and enjoy your education.

We want to hear about your experiences and your feelings when you've needed support in school / education.

**Do you receive support from school to help you do well? \***

Please tell us about your experience

**Are you asked about your feelings and what would help you to do well and learn? \***

Please tell us more about your experience

**Have you been able to share your hopes and dreams for the future? \***

Please tell us about your experience

**Have you been asked about your health and care support, to help you do well in your learning? \***

Please tell us about your experience

## **6. Support you receive to do well at work**



**We want to make sure that the Council is working with you, your employer, parents and carers, to make sure you have the support to do well in your employment / job.**

**We want to hear about your experiences and your feelings when you've needed support. .**

**Do you receive support from your employer to help you do well in your job? \***

Please tell us about your experience

**Are you asked about your feelings and what would help you to do do well in your job? \***

Please tell us more about your experience



**Have you been able to share your hopes and dreams for the future with your employer, the council and with your parents/carers? \***

Please tell us about your experience

**Have you been asked about your health and care support, to help you do well in your job? \***

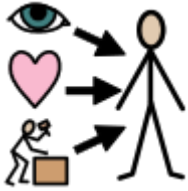
Please tell us about your experience

**Do you have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)? \***

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you have an ECHP please tell us how you were involved in your EHCP review

## **7. Experiences of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**



**We want to make sure that the Council is working with you, schools, and parents and carers, to make sure you have the support to do well in school and enjoy your education.**

**We want to hear about your experiences and your feelings when you've needed support in school / education.**

**When you got an EHCP were you spoken to about what having an EHCP means and involves? \***

Please tell us about your experience

**What support do you get to help you at school / with your education? \***

Please tell us about the support you receive

**Have you shared your hopes and dreams for the future in your EHCP reviews / with teachers at your school? \***

Please tell us about your experience

**Have you been involved in a review of your EHCP? \***

If yes, please tell us how you were involved and what it was like

## 8. Further comments and feedback

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about EHCPs?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the support you receive with your education, learning or in your job?