



SEND pupil school attendance and experience survey report

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Introduction

Family Voice Peterborough parent reps work closely with parent carers, Local Authority, Health Services and Third-Party Organisations in order to share parental experiences and help to improve the current services and provision for children with SEND. We also work regularly with SENCOs' through PCC conferences, SENCO forum, SEND training as well as directly through schools, having regular coffee mornings and signposting sessions.

Through regular contact with parent carers a number of key themes are cropping up, mostly in relation to access to educational provision and support. In order for us to understand the issues that parent carers and their children are experiencing, on 24th July we published a SEND pupil school attendance and experience survey.

The findings provide a basic snapshot of current lived experiences of 40 parent carers and are not intended to be used to make any assumptions about wider concerns/ issues/ needs of SEND households in relation to SEND pupil school attendance and experience. However, the findings help us to understand the current lived experience from a cross section on local SEND households.

Respondents

40 parent carers from a range of back grounds completed the survey; of those who completed approximately 57% self-describe as White British and the other 43% self-describe as from other ethnic back grounds.

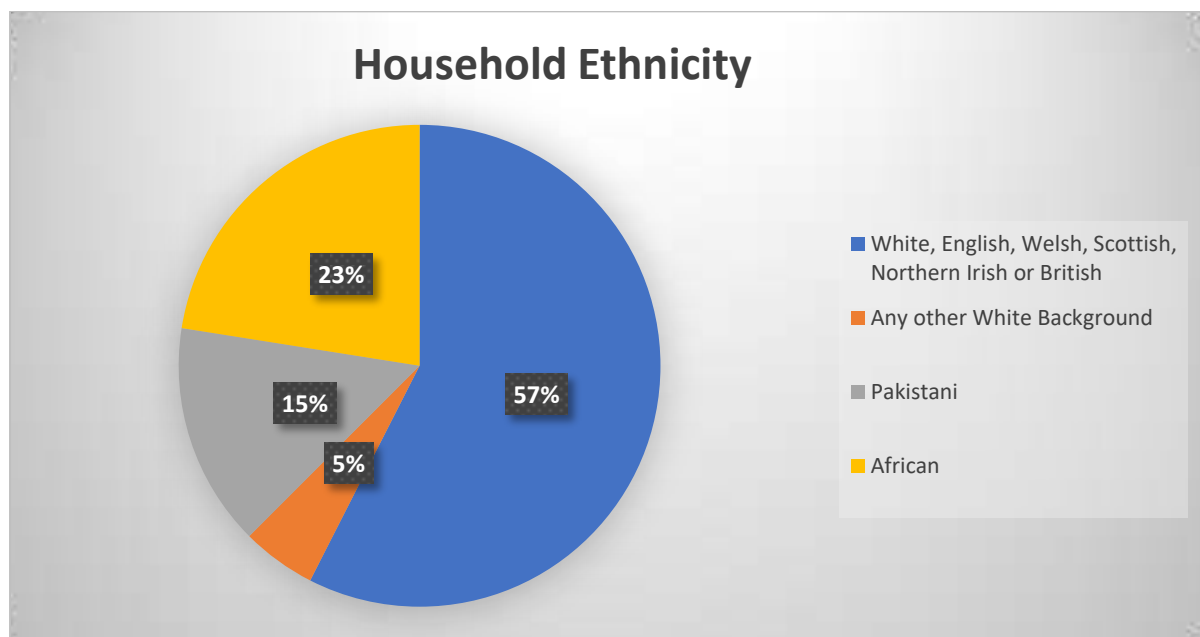


Figure 1 shows household ethnicity.

Respondents have also provided more details about their wider household, including needs, economic and marital status:

<i>Married living in rented accommodation I suffer with fibromyalgia and very under active thyroid so can't work my husband works full time</i>
<i>British / white</i>
<i>Black African married family of five</i>
<i>2 parent family both working</i>
<i>British Aspergers ADH D with learning disability</i>
<i>Single mum no health needs</i>
<i>Single british</i>
<i>White british mum with children of mixed background</i>
<i>Black African Married employed</i>
<i>british pakistani divorced</i>
<i>married 2 working family 3 children 2x medical 1x adult medical long covid asthma</i>
<i>Divorced disabled</i>
<i>British muslim</i>
<i>White british female singel</i>
<i>Polish divorced carer</i>
<i>I have a lot of health issues</i>
<i>British pakistani married</i>
<i>pakistani separated from husband no health needs</i>
<i>White unemployed disabled single parent epilepsy</i>
<i>White, British, Solo parent household for last 4 years, divorced, self employed, claims UC</i>
<i>Autism adhd tourettes</i>
<i>Single fibromyalgia income support</i>
<i>White, British, Employed, Married no other disabilities or health concerns.</i>
<i>White British, married, poor (~7k annually)</i>
<i>White British, mum (me) currently cant work due to (daughter) needs. Parents split last year but dad didnt move out till beginning of the year. I have depression and anxiety. Also have blood pressure issues. Dad suffers with depression and some other issues</i>
<i>Single British</i>
<i>We are family of four , me and my partner work full time, living in 3 bedroom house</i>

Some of the determinants listed above can have an impact on how families access the services available to themselves and their children/young people. Many households have adults who have needs themselves and there is evidence of families experiencing economic difficulties which could impact on whether the parents feel able to engage positively with their CYP's educational setting.

Main Findings

We asked parent carers to provide us what educational support does their child/ young person receive at their educational setting:

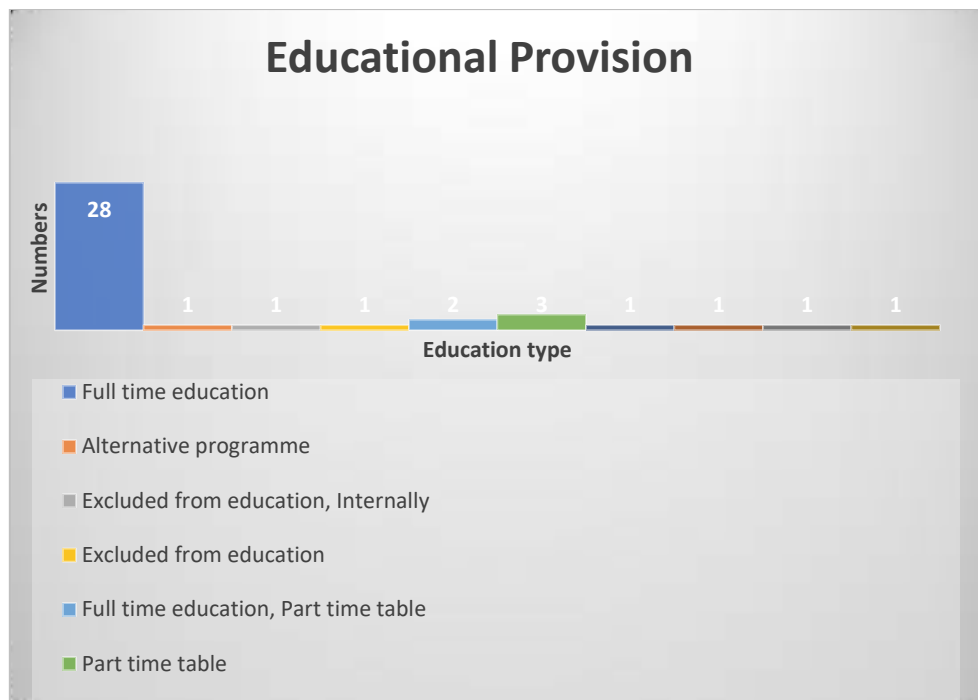


Figure 2 shows the type of educational provision for children and young people.

The table above shows the number of children attending full time education as well as those who are on a part time timetable, in alternative provision, etc. Respondents also shared their children's educational settings, which shows us that the respondents have children from different types of education, including mainstream primary and secondary, specialist education as well as Alternative Provision. It is concerning to see that 43% of children and young people do not currently attend full time education.

We asked parent carers whether they had enough information about available provision *before* their children and young people started their education. This is what the respondents have told us:

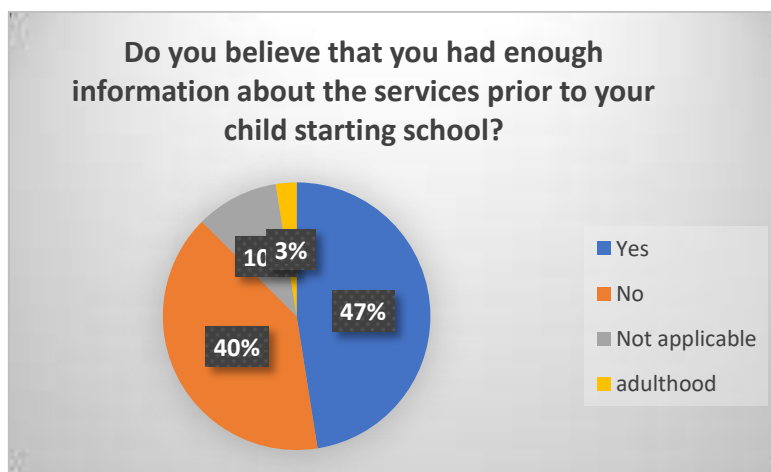


Figure 3 shows available information for new school/college starters.

Although 47% of respondents felt that they had enough information about the services, however others felt they needed more. When parent carers are unaware of the services available to their children, it hinders them to ensure that they receive appropriate support at school and have the best possible outcomes.

We asked what kind of support children receive at school:

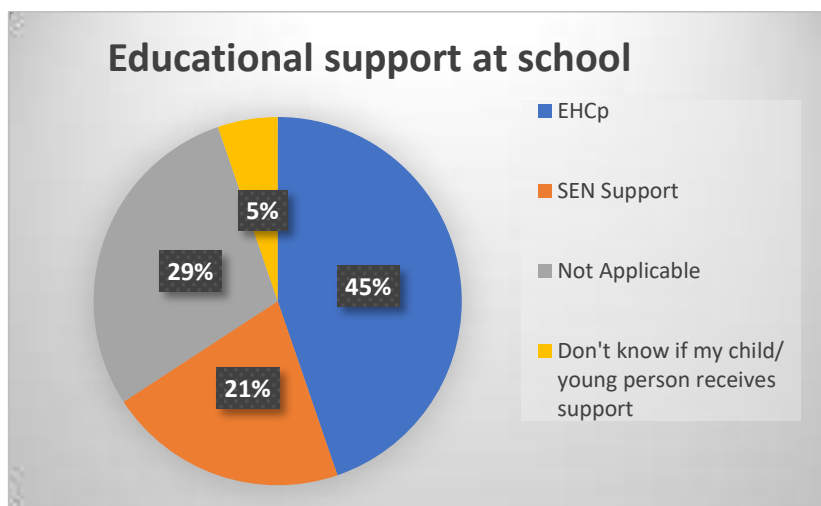


Figure 4 shows what type of educational support children and young people receive.

Some respondents have also told us that:

'Autism advisory service have met with her. Not much they can do. TAF meetings with sen lead and staff. None is great.'

'My middle son gets none my eldest son has a ehcp'

'Has an EHCP, not sure if this has been taken into consideration at all.'

'13yr old Sen support, 17yr old EHCP'

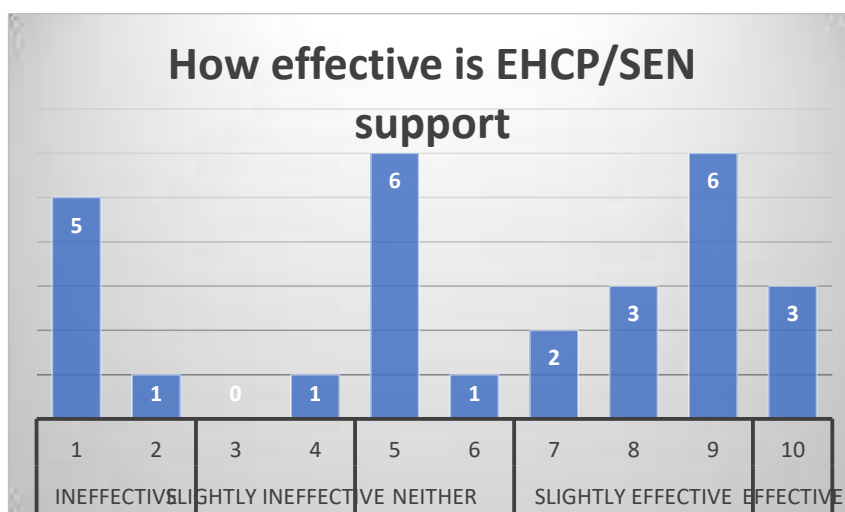


Figure 5 shows the rating on the effectiveness of the support.

It is important to understand what difference the support has made to the children at their educational settings - whether the support has been suitable and whether it allowed the children and young people to access the national curriculum. This is what parent carers have told us:

<i>(Son) is slipping he can't write or spell</i>
<i>She has progressed enormously cannot thank the school enough</i>
<i>Heltwaite school gave (Son) lots of support and helped with life skills</i>
<i>Very settled</i>
<i>Attendance improved in classroom with the correct support</i>
<i>She is able to do what they have learned at school cooking and songs</i>
<i>Supported difficult transition through monitoring</i>
<i>one to one</i>
<i>Helped improve his speech and creativity his learning and understanding simple tasks and instructions</i>
<i>Confidence has grown writing and reading is better believes in herself more</i>
<i>It was not enough</i>
<i>SENCO Having an educational plan has been helpful because it means child can achieve reasonable goals</i>
<i>Really depends on the teacher approach not enough information how to get help from school</i>
<i>Still to be seen.</i>
<i>Not much</i>
<i>Poor</i>
<i>My child would not have achieved what she has without the support, she would have faded into the background and not be on target for GCSE's, or her issues would have escalated - anxiety, misunderstandings through miscommunications - without the support she would have struggled more than she does now. It's not been easy the past 10 years is a constant revisit of all things, parents need to be involved at every stage had I not pushed as a parent we would not have the support in place for success.</i>
<i>It has made her calmer and more confident, and is the reason she is doing so well at school now.</i>
<i>Little to no support, no educational outcome.</i>
<i>N/a as only official handed it to us at end of year term. But school was following plan early on with little help</i>
<i>17yr old get amazing support at college</i>
<i>13yr old needs more support at school</i>
<i>No fines for parent of children who are unable to attend</i>

It is pleasing to hear that some children receive appropriate support at their educational setting, however some negative feedback above is rather concerning.

We asked parent carers if they have 'anything positive, neutral or negative to feedback in your experience working with the Local Authority as part of the EHC process if applicable?' This is what the respondents have told us:

<i>Local authorities have been really helpful an the ehcp is great if followed</i>
<i>It was not up to standard some years ago but it has improved tremendously</i>
<i>Really helpful</i>
<i>In mainstream found it difficult to meet their needs need one tone</i>
<i>More info and access to parents</i>
<i>Bit of pressure and judgement but its concern and worry especially regarding his behaviour and home life</i>
<i>positive</i>
<i>The whole process to get the child the help they need is far too long and there is not enough communication with parents with how the process is long making the parents feel in limbo</i>
<i>Not clear how to receive personal budget</i>
<i>They need to stay in touch and be able to be there to answer phone calls</i>

<i>There's no personal touch with local authority, it's just a case number and process procedure requirements. However where a Teacher of the Deaf is involved this is where the process becomes more engaged, more personal, quick feedback.</i>
<i>The part they played was fair even if the answer wasn't what I wanted.</i>
<i>Negative. Process seemed rushed. Yes it's just another form and paperwork for the council, but this is also a child that needs additional help. If she's working between 12-18 months developmentally, then she needs to be treated as such. Would anyone else send their 1 year old to school and expect them to fit in with other 5 year old and do the same things.</i>
<i>They don't seem to be able to help a bulk of familys till its too late. They first said no to her ehc saying school should be able to manage. But I appealed this and before meeting suddenly its approved so there is clearly a fault somewhere with helping kids and schools</i>
<i>We had to end up going to mediation to get support was stressful and cost my daughter years education not done day at school yet the echp review also took long time to complete get back and communication was not very good.but have other support social worker key worker and little miracles going to start school end September</i>
<i>Needs to be a quicker process,, also shorter waiting list to be seen by CAMHS is needed</i>
<i>All good, but not to good at communication once finalised.</i>

As you can see from the statements above, there is a mixed experience with the Local Authority.

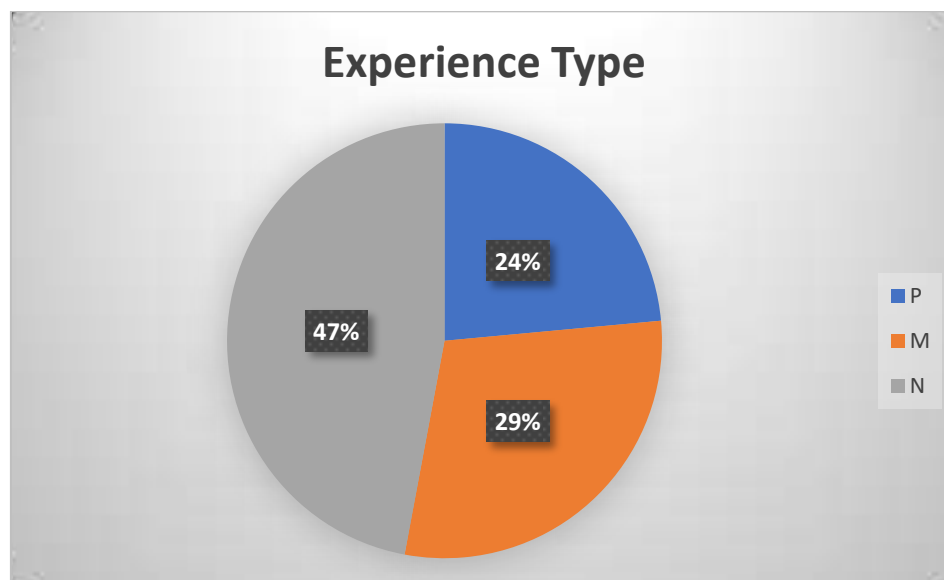


Figure 6 shows the percentage of Positive, Mixed and Negative experiences.

We asked parent carers to share the experiences with the specific educational settings. Please see the table below about what parent carers told us:

<i>(School) tent to forget that (daughter) has Sen need</i>
<i>(School) are brilliant</i>
<i>(School) the senco is absolutely useless has called my son a liar several times doesn't do what's in (son's) ehcp</i>
<i>Awaiting paperwork I've requested for ages</i>
<i>Its quite hard to speak someone if I have a concern, getting to SEN teacher takes over few weeks</i>
<i>Positive</i>
<i>My child enjoys going to school and seems happy at the moment he has made friends</i>
<i>positive</i>
<i>very psoitive</i>

<i>(School) positive gave all the skills (son) needed john mansfield difficult to understand (daughter) needs not very supportive</i>
<i>It was very negative in the start but once things were in place it was very positive</i>
<i>No understanding of child needs lack of understanding</i>
<i>My child is happy at her school I am satisfied by the school with the support she receives</i>
<i>Excellent special needs school</i>
<i>Primary we have had issues with safeguarding with bullying in a negative way Positive both school informative and sup[port transitions</i>
<i>positive</i>
<i>Within the infant setting at a previous school we had a negative experience since moving in yr 8 we have had a positive experience</i>
<i>Primary school was not doing enough to serve my child she was struggling it went ignored in mainstream school the school tried their best but still not providing enough adjustments which caused removing my child from school register by me</i>
<i>Everything is positive at the moment</i>
<i>positive</i>
<i>positive</i>
<i>Everything is positive at the moment although sometimes it can be challenging with kids behaviour</i>
<i>positive environment good education and support child to achieve their best</i>
<i>Listen very well to my concerns but just did not have the time to allow me to go into depth to explain child's needs</i>
<i>positive</i>
<i>My children's schools have been very in general</i>
<i>Child started to school avoid on odd days in late yr8 early Yr 9 then covid hit. Did no work online as couldn't engage with online learning. Went back to school and school avoidance increased dramatically. A child who previously was in top set and excelled couldn't do the work. By end Yr 10 had pulled from 1 GCSE. Yr 11 not in lessons but in Bridge. Put in for lower papers of GCSEs sat no mocks. Horrific meltdowns (self harm, lits of suicide talk) at start of GCSEs and after a fight with school I pulled her from 2 more GCSE subjects as she did not know content. Sat Eng, Math, 3 x sciences got grade 5s in all subjects even in English where she missed a paper. By end of GCSEs in a room alone without ticking clock, and with spinning chair, extra time. Had to fight for all this. Went in during school summer hols to sit a higher paper for bio and chem to prove she could do them at A Level. Now doing 3 a levels at schools 6th form. Attends lessons but struggles with other parts of the school day so usually comes home. Exams still major problem. Last kocks screwed up as room she was in had people shouting out side it.</i>
<i>School lied about how far behind they are academically tried to get me to send them to mainstream school had to fight for 10years to get help and support for the didn't listen to me when I told the my child had special needs</i>
<i>Poor bad communication between the school and myself</i>
<i>Positive now. Encountered bullying, discrimination from teaching staff, uneducated in hearing loss, Teacher of Deaf supported, as well as in school SEN department and all things are now positive following several years of ironing issues out.</i>
<i>Very positive - a refreshing change from what was experienced at primary school.</i>
<i>No support for my child even though the school recognised the needs, lots of false promises and passed from one person to the next and each time having to start over again, which has led to my child not being in school at all for months at a time. Lack of communication between staff to ensure child's needs are met, things put in place but again no communication between teachers so they failed. My child's mental health has been extremely affected by all of this aswel as the other struggles of his additional needs</i>
<i>Negative.. No 1:1 (Ehcp says she needs one), lack of time in class with peers, lack of communication with me about the school day, if my child does something they don't like - they phsically pick her up and move her! been left with so many marks and bruises - been told these are 'justified' as she needed to be moved out the situation 'for everyone's safety'. If a negative situation occurs in the classroom, it's mentioned to be by a CHILD in the class along with their parent, rather than the school staff letting me know.</i>

<i>I hate it, always feel like it's my fault. Some teacher seems to be understandable but Alice still can't seem to be able to be in school for a full day. Harry shows time where he struggles too but currently unsure whether copying sister behavior or shows signs he has additional needs but some of the teachers don't seem to assess him as an individual just a naughty kid.</i>
<i>Her previous mainstream school have been supportive to find new school and could always call they did do home visits and supportive with home school work</i>
<i>Our 13yr old didn't get proper settling in period when transferring to secondary school because of Covid</i>
<i>School have supported us and know our children can never return. Alternative provision in place for September.</i>

As you can see from the quotes above there is a mix of positive and negative experiences with the educational settings. We will look into the data thoroughly to see whether there are some schools that are coming up more than other in order to see whether we could work with them more closely and find the ways to help them to support their children.

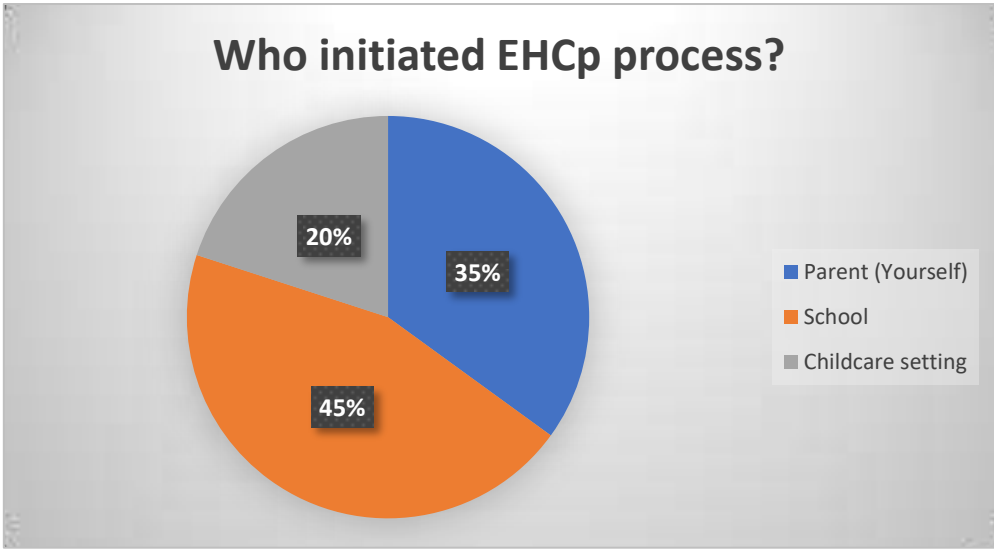


Figure 7 shows who initiated EHCp process.

When asked ‘What are your thoughts on the EHCP/ SEN support process and implementation if applicable?’ this is what our respondents told us:

<i>It's brilliant to have and if setting do what is stated</i>
<i>Slow</i>
<i>At my child's school it is very thorough easy to understand and well explained</i>
<i>(son) school was very supportive, (daughter) ehcp was not changed this year</i>
<i>Done brilliant with (daughter)</i>
<i>Was difficult took free times to see my son who needed support she struggled every day at school</i>
<i>Difficult to get any for and support</i>
<i>Not enough regular meeting having to initiate contact with schools to arrange meetings around family meetings</i>
<i>The EHCP helps my daughter to receive the support she needs from the teachers and makes me aware of the progress she is making as well and how she is going to receive support</i>
<i>very slow</i>
<i>Helps track (son) progress</i>
<i>Incredibly difficult to obtain</i>

<i>Not enough information available not enough support not taking seriously parents concerns not offering quick solutions not exploring how could support</i>
<i>n/a as only just started</i>
<i>Still trying to do the application</i>
<i>Takes a long time</i>
<i>It sure</i>
<i>Its hard work, parent has to keep at it and constant reminders for the support required - some of it when in place is just a case of doing because it's a legal document, however current SEN support is fantastic- it's taken many years of chasing as a parent to get it where it is now.</i>
<i>I had it turned down when I applied when my daughter was in primary school. However, my child's current school doesn't need a bit of paper to support her (their words) and do so anyway.</i>
<i>No explanations given properly</i>
<i>Would be great if everyone read what is said in the ehcp. It's literally a document stating where my daughter needs help. If noone is going to read or even acknowledge it, how is she being given the same 'equal and fair ' opportunities which are supposed to be available for every child?</i>
<i>Horrible always delayed and never get help.</i>
<i>Took long time and still needed a special school could not meet needs in mainstream but had to wait her ehcp is completed but waited long time over a year to find school placement</i>
<i>Very slow my 13 year old has been on early help for over 2 years now, not enough support given, ehcp in progress still at school</i>
<i>None, you have to research it all yourself.</i>

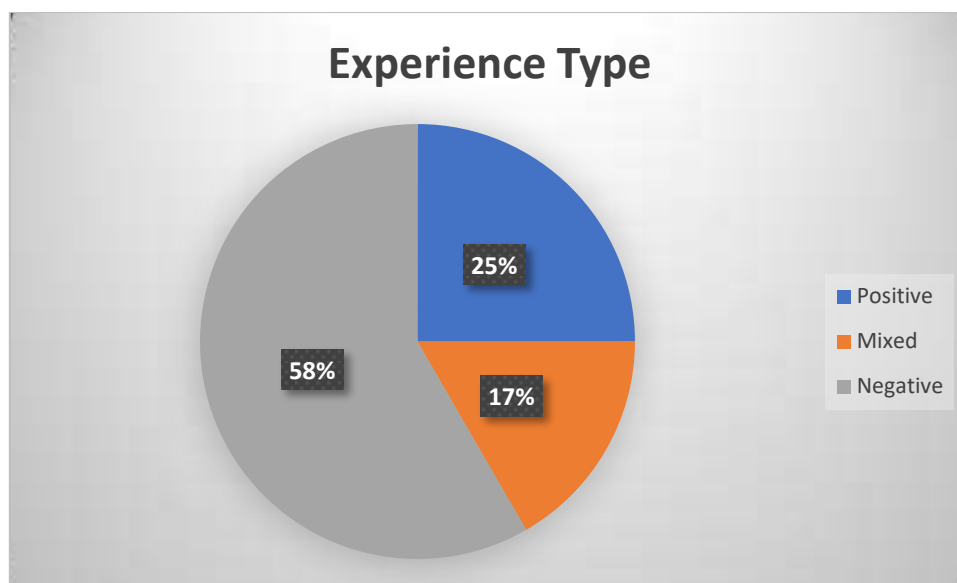


Figure 8 shows the percentage of Positive, Mixed and Neutral experience on SEN/EHCP support process.

As you can see from F.8 58% of parent carers said that their experience with SEN/EHCP support process was negative, 17% had mixed experiences and 25% had a positive experience.

Recommendations:

Where we were able to identify some themes specific to settings, this will be followed up with discussions with the Local Authority to inform discussions as to how we could take this forward and how we can support the schools and parent carers to reach the best possible outcomes for their children and young people.

It is also vital to learn from both, positive and negative experiences that parent carers have told us about. The following statement, when we asked 'What are your thoughts on the EHCP/ SEN support process and implementation if applicable?', is very powerful. The respondent told us that *'I had it turned down when I applied when my daughter was in primary school. However, my child's current school doesn't need a bit of paper to support her (their words) and do so anyway.'* Although we do understand that in some cases EHCp is required to get extra help and support for some children, we also believe that most of the children should be able to receive appropriate support in a timely manner so that they are able to access the National Curriculum with an Ordinarily Available Provision.

This report is a reflection of the respondents and we have made no judgements and formed no conclusions; however it is vital to understand the lived experience of our parent carers. We also understand the current financial pressures that the schools are facing which can hinder the way that children with SEND access the services.