



Transport Strategy

This report details
feedback on the PCC
SEND Transport
Strategy

Family Voice Peterborough

Introduction

Over the years Family Voice Peterborough (FVP) have been listening to parental concerns over home-to-school transport for children with SEND. In order to seek to improve the services we have been sharing the concerns with the relevant service providers within the Peterborough City Council (PCC) and the issues have been picked up by the Team Manager from Passenger Transport Operations, Assistant Director – Education Capital and Place Planning, Education Directorate People & Communities and Assistant Director Resources for Children's Service. It was becoming more and more evident that the current services did not fully meet the needs of children with SEND and their families and in 2023 PCC presented a public report to the cabinet members to make some positive changes in the way the current system works.

FVP parent rep team members attended a series of meetings with strategic partners and hosted parent carer sessions to help inform and then gain feedback on the proposed strategy for PCC SEND School Transport. This report details the basic findings of a small questionnaire seeking feedback on the proposed draft strategy and transport experiences more generally.

The findings provide a basic snapshot of current lived experiences of 30 parent carers and are not intended to be used to make any assumptions about wider concerns/ issues/ needs of SEND households in relation to school transport. The finds do however provide information as to current lived experience from a cross section on local SEND households.

Respondents

30 parent carers responded to the survey, and they self-reported their CYP ages and needs as follows:

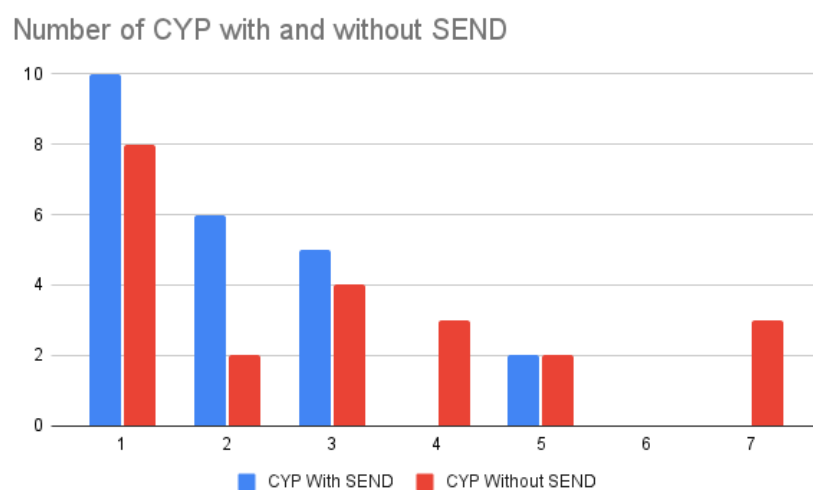


Fig.1 Number of CYP with and without needs of respondents

Type of the educational setting (mainstream or special nursery/ school/ college) that your child/ young person attends?

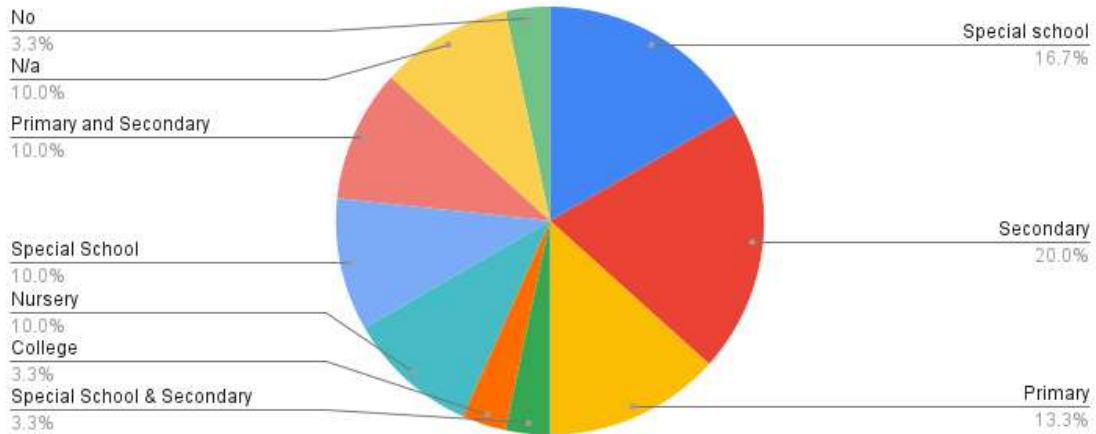
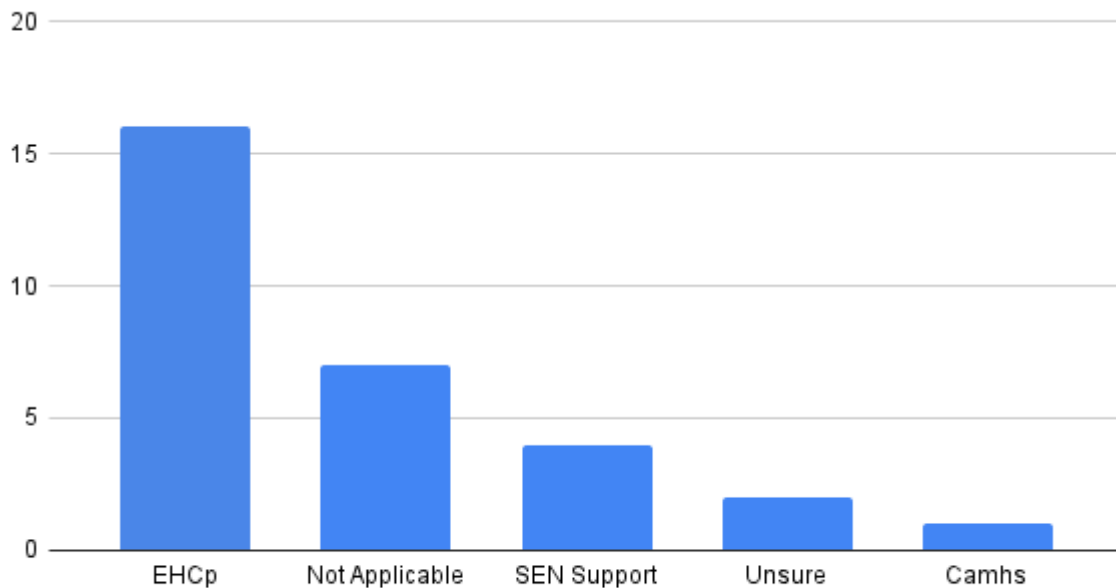


Fig.2 Educational attendance of CYP of respondents

The majority of respondents CYP were reported as male between the ages of 5 and 16, with the predominant need being ASD. A small number of respondents reported having CYP with other needs such as a physical disability or learning disability.



Does your child/ young person have any of the following?

Fig.3 Educational support of CYP of respondents

Household needs/ demographics were reported as:

African origin. Both mum and dad work Family receives universal credit
Married white British cardiac patients
Single
White British, married
White english
White British lone parent family
Single parent household
Married
English civil partnership
Asian
White British, married, 1 parent employed, 1 carer. No health needs
Disability needs
Disability needs
Married
Married
married, pakistani
British living with partner
pakistani, married parents, 5 kids

The majority of respondents were from households self-described as 'White British' and with two parents. There were not many details regarding the income levels of households, but some did have an adult with needs.

Main Findings

The main questions in the survey focussed on views of the strategy itself, with one looking more broadly at how Children and Young People (CYP) of those who responded currently access their settings; be that home to school transport, walking, being driven to school or using public transport.

Accessing Transport

Current home/ school transport arrangements

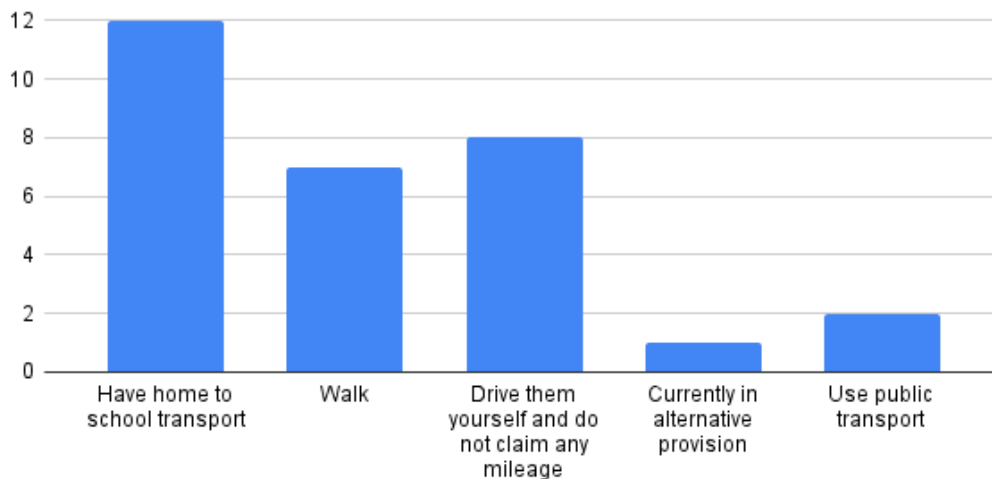


Fig.4 How CYP gets to school

From Fig.4 it can be seen the majority of respondents have CYP who currently use Home to School Transport. Following from this Fig.5 shows the majority of those who have Home to School Transport are in a special school.

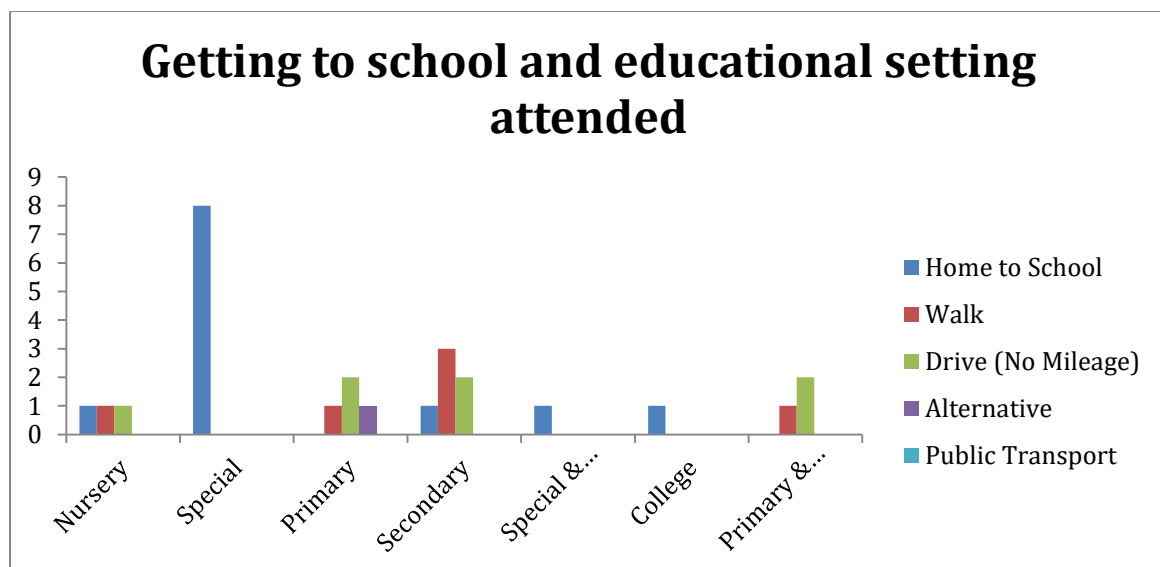


Fig.5 How CYP gets to school and setting attended.

Strategy Feedback

Looking at the strategy and proposed changes, do you think this would make an improvement to the current service?

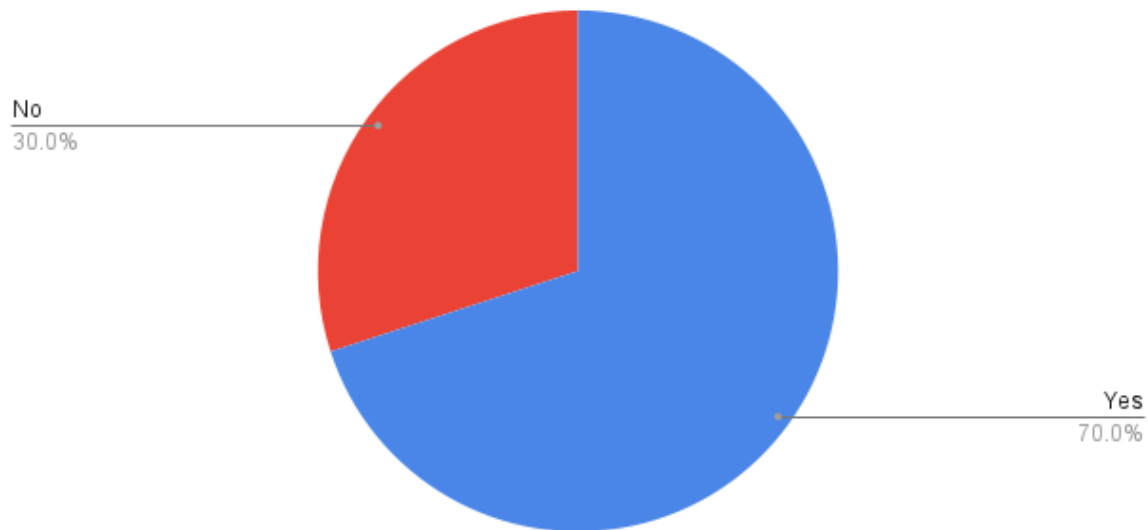


Fig.6 will the changes mentioned in the strategy make a difference?

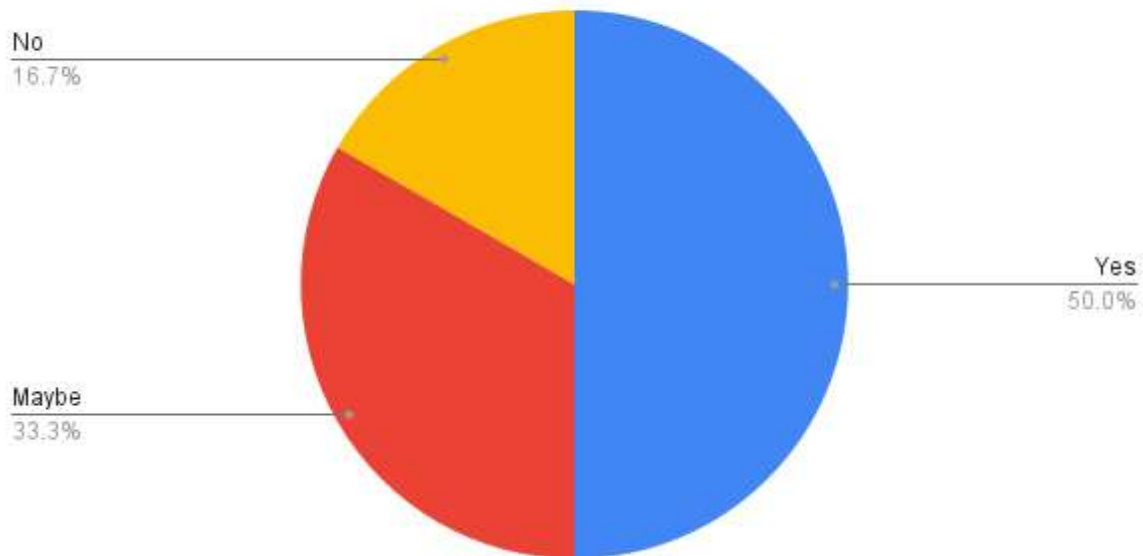
Comments relating to question 'Looking at strategy and proposed changes, do you think this would make an improvement to the current service?'
Because still be using the same taxis, they will still have the same drivers who are getting away with speaking with SEN children like dirty. The transport team will still treat complaints as something they can brush over or not even return calls back to worried parents
Unfortunately I can't get funding to help take my daughter to school
Easier to make own choices
As long as they stick to the time plan and keep the parents informed, would be nice if they send a letter to everyone with the information and the timetable of when things will be put in place
At present our transport is perfect. Same driver daily and always punctual
Only if cbr checked reliable save on money
There appears to be an increase in flexibility - though I'm somewhat dubious about this.
I think it will give flexibility to parents who have other children & cannot wait for transport Or need a babysitter for other child. But for myself I prefer it the way it is
Good for people who have more than one kid going different school
I think things will get worse, as there are more children with sen that need extra help with transport getting to school.

From Fig.6 it can be seen that there was an overall positive response to the strategy with 70% feeling that the proposed changes would make a positive difference to transport services.

Respondents who expanded their answers felt that flexibility would be a good thing, if it actually happened. There was a bit of scepticism amongst those who responded, and the issue of having the same drivers and escorts which would make no difference.

Personal Budget Questions

Having had a look at the Personal Transport Budgets, would you welcome these changes?



Comments relating to question 'Having had a look at the personal transport budgets, would you welcome these changes?'
Hadn't thought about it . I use a disable bus pass to get around so to use the car less
Wasn't aware of the transport budgets
Any extra money is an improvement
Easier to make own choice
I would say these would help especially with people who are in post 16as it will encourage with travel training for those that are able to, my only concern is of parents abusing the system i.e. spending the travel money and not being ble to get the kids to school
Good for parents whose children can not access funded transport
If they speak english know they r save and not on there own trained in some areas in autism medical conditions
It's unclear if the PTB is guaranteed to cover the costs of school transport, or if it's a set about no matter the route/distance/cost.
It wouldn't really help me, I prefer home school transport. The only thing I would like is a reasonably set time due to going to work
I think it might help families that need extra money to help with transport costs

Whereas there was a clear majority positive view of the changes proposed in the strategy, for personal budgets the majority view was not as clear. There is support for the use of personal budgets, but the reasoning is mixed.

The final survey asked for improvements to home to school transport from the perspective of SEND households and the following answers were elicited.

What improvements do you feel could be made to make things easier when using home to school transport? (only answer this question if applicable) For example: estimated arrival time text, shorter route length?
If drivers are changing to let young person or parent carers know in advance so they can prepare their child properly. Communication between companies used for transport and parents/young person are normally very poor for example when taxi isn't coming no communication is received or sometimes times are changed without letting you know
Shorter routes more communication from driver. An allowance to supply your own transport rather than a taxi. Taxi to drop off at locations other than home as & when needed
Pay mileage when asked to
Not used for so unable to say . My son used a taxi to his special school and it was always on time and the staff were nice
ETA would be great !
Arrival text message
It would be nice if someone rang you in the summer holidays asking if you would like school transport to be continued for those who have been on the system a long time instead of dealing with thousands of applications and just have the ones who are changing schools to apply I.e. those changing from primary to secondary and from secondary to post 16
Only the communication at the beginning of the school year could be improved
Better communication
Communication autism training medical training consisant staff
everything is amazing
Estimated arrival time pick & drop off & shorter route length
Having a suitable escort someone who understands the needs of the young person with special needs and also the physical ability to handle children with complex needs
Having an escort who understands the needs of the child with special needs and also have the physical ability to handle the child with complex needs
could have tracking information so parents can track how far the car is

The main improvement was around communication, with some mentioning driver training and also estimated time of arrival, even saying that "*in this day and age you can know when your pizza is being delivered, so why can't we know when our children are due to be picked up/dropped off*".

Final Comments

Overall, the strategy was viewed positively with respondents showing that the proposed changes would make a difference to their families. There are still some concerns reflected in the wider comments, which would match with the other data gathered in previous surveys. These relate to communication, responding to concerns/complains appropriately and transport provider training, especially in relation to neurodiversity. The underlying issues need to be resolved so that the children with SEND as well as their families can have a more positive experience.

There is some scepticism amongst the respondents whether the proposed changes will be carried through, which is concerning. This may be because either parent carers have had a previous bad experience with the service or due to wider issues with SEND services overall.

Conclusion

The proposed changes have been received positively by those who responded to the survey. We hope that once the changes have been implemented parent carer community will be able to benefit it and their overall experience will improve.

FVP will be following this up with the parent carers to see whether the implemented changes made the difference to their day-to-day lives and relieved some of the pressure they are experiencing.