



**Integrated
Care System**
Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin

Shropshire SEND Accelerated Progress Plan Parent Carer Survey Report

May 2025

About the survey

“We want all Shropshire children and young people with SEND to be healthy, happy and safe, and able to achieve their potential to lead a fulfilling life.

We want them to have, and to expect, the same opportunities in life as other children and young people.

We want them to thrive and live their best life.”

- In April 2025, the Shropshire SEND Area Partnership launched a survey to understand the experiences of Parent Carers who have neurodiverse children and young people (CYP), Parent Carers of children & young people with Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Parent Carers of children & young people with an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) or going through the Education Health Care (EHC) assessment process.
- The intention of the survey was to gather people’s experiences to measure the impact of the actions being taken as part of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Accelerated Progress Plan, against the baseline survey in October 2023
- There were 86 responses to the survey, which ran during April 2025. The survey asked about Parent Carers recent experiences.
- 68 responders were from Parent Carers of children & young people who required support related to neurodiversity, including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- 33 responders were from Parent Carers of children & young people who required support related to Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).
- 59 responders were from Parent Carers of children & young people with an EHCP or were undergoing an EHC needs assessment.
- As part of the survey Parent Carers were invited to add comments about their experience over the past 6 months. We received written responses to this question in all sections, with a wide variety of comments. All responses have been analysed and shared with relevant teams. They have been categorized into themes.



Section 1

Neurodiverse Children and Young People

Responses relating to Neurodiverse Children and Young People (CYP)

Of **86** responders we heard that a high number of Parent Carers and their children & young people had received support from:

- Education setting, school or nursery (54) 62.8%
- MPFT BeeU Service (31) 36%
- Early Help (21)
- Autism West Midlands (20) 23.3%

Fewer responders had received support from:

- SEND IASS (17)
- Educational Psychology (16)
- SCHAT – Health Visitors or School Nursing (16)
- PACC Parent Carer Forum (11)
- SCHAT – Child Development Centre (10)
- Short Breaks (7)
- Local Offer (6)
- SCHAT – Therapies (6)

Fewer responders were aware of that their children & young people had received support from:

- Social Care (5)
- Woodlands (5)
- Kooth (4)
- Empathy (3)
- Rising to the challenge (3)
- GP (3)
- Private services (2)
- Preparation for Adulthood Navigators (1)
- Early Bird Team (1)
- Neurodiversity Practitioners, (a new team which came into post in January 2024) (1)

Responses relating to Neurodiverse Children and Young People (CYP)



Strongly agree/Agree

I think that I have a good understanding of the support available for my child or young person

32.3%



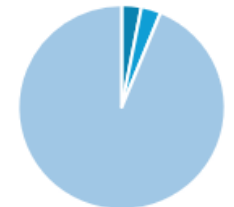
My child or young person has been able to access the support available to them

3.1%



My child or young person received the support that they needed

3.1%



Over the past 6 months, whilst my child or young person was waiting for a diagnostic appointment for ASD or ADHD, the support we received has helped

1.9%



Ensure clarity about the support available

You said

- Around half the respondents indicated that they did not have good understanding of the support available. Many Parent Carers commented about the current long waits for assessments and a lack of support while they waited, with some stating that they had not been told about the support organisations highlighted in the survey. Lack of support for mental health needs, and needs relating to neurodivergence and learning disabilities was also highlighted..

We did

- We regularly review all the information about support offers listed on the Healthier Together website and signposted from the Local Offers. All support in Shropshire is needs led, not diagnosis led. [Support for neurodivergent children and their families](#). We continue to promote this website through multiple avenues.
- A new page has been added to the Healthier Together website outlining the support available to families whilst they wait for their child's health appointment. The support offer is broken down into support areas i.e., development, communication, neurodivergence, behaviour, mental health. [Support available while waiting for your appointment](#). This page has been promoted widely to parent carers, PACC, schools and professionals. Additional pages on Healthier Together relating to neurodivergence are being enhanced and reviewed, e.g., Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and Tic's and Tourettes, to ensure up to date and neuroaffirming information is shared with our families.
- Position statements have been uploaded to the SEND page on the ICB website outlining the service offers in relation in Learning Disability diagnostic assessments and services offered to children with Sensory Processing Difficulties [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) - NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin](#)
- The letters sent from BeeU following a referral have been coproduced and now include a comprehensive list of support services that the children / young people and their families can access.
- The Shropshire Inclusive Practice Documents for Early Years, School Age and Post 16 are under development, and include the promotion of universal neuroinclusive practice within schools / settings.

Continued/

Ensure clarity about the support available

You said

- Around half the respondents indicated that they did not have good understanding of the support available. Many Parent Carers commented about the current long waits for assessments and a lack of support while they waited, with some stating that they had not been told about the support organisations highlighted in the survey. Lack of support for mental health needs, and needs relating to neurodivergence and learning disabilities was also highlighted.

We did (continued)

- BeeU recruited Assistant Psychologists who have now started in their posts. Part of their roles will be to offer support to families whilst a child / young person is waiting for Neurodevelopmental assessment.
- Support is available via the Community and Family Hubs with all age autism advice sessions being piloted. SEND Early Help drop-ins have also taken place.
- Child Development Centre (CDC) – we have opened the CDC advice line for parents while they are going through the assessment process.
- CDC have provided more accessible information about the pathways (communication and interaction assessment pathway and update the acknowledgement letters when a referral is accepted to share the links with relevant organisations and partners who can support families without a diagnosis) which are due to be published in June.
- CDC has strengthened links with the neonatal unit at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, which has meant that children's discharge from hospital is smoother to children's therapy services and paediatrics.
- The CDC triage panel is piloting a system to identify families who may need more help whilst they are waiting for assessment which is followed up with a call from a specialist nursery nurse to offer support.
- The CDC team are represented on the early years inclusion panel to support settings with intervention recommendations when they seek additional funding

Next steps

- Continue to advertise the support offer available on the Healthier Together website to ensure Parent Carers are aware of this resource. The additional pages on Healthier Together relating to neurodivergence will continue to be enhanced, reviewed and shared.
- Work has been completed on the mapping of the universal offer for SEND (inclusive practice), the next step is to upload it to a host website.

Ensure good quality support for early years and educational settings

You said

- Feedback indicates that the support offer from school is variable. Some Parent Carers commenting on teachers and teaching assistants lacking knowledge and schools not providing support whilst others praised the support provided by their child's school.
- Only one of the Parent Carers who completed this survey were aware of the work of the Neurodiversity Practitioner team employed by Shropshire Local Authority.

We did

- The Neurodiversity Practitioners (NDPs) have spoken at multiple SEND and Inclusion meetings, worked collaboratively with different professional teams and services to promote understanding of their roles, and have attended Early Help drop ins to meet parents. The Team are now permanent within the Educational Psychology Service and this update, along with their brochure, has been shared widely with schools and settings. As well as being available to work directly with schools, the NDPs will be part of the team delivering the Shropshire Outreach Project in the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Shropshire continues to be a Local Authority that is part of the PINS Project, which is now going into year two, where a further 15 schools will be supported to enhance their neuroinclusive practice, adding to the 20 schools that were supported in the first year.
- We have developed a Shropshire Neuroinclusive Training Offer which is available to schools / settings supporting children and young people (0-25). This offer includes the Autism Education Trust (AET) training which promotes neuroinclusive practice, as well as broader training from multiple local services and teams. This Training Offer is being promoted in various ways to schools / settings and includes support across the age range as well as across the broad constellation of neurodivergence.
- Updates from the Neurodiversity Workstream are sent to schools, children and young people, and Parent Carers after every meeting.
- The Shropshire Inclusive Practice document (SIP) was designed to support Education settings in determining the SEND of children and young people and support available and to clearly define what schools might be expected to provide for children and young people with SEND. The Education Quality Advisers for SEND and AP have been working to widen the scope of this document and have produced three new drafts (EY, School and post-16) and are consulting with stakeholders over the summer and Autumn term 2025 with a view to launching to new and improved documents in January 2026.

Ensure good quality support for early years and educational settings

We did (continued)

- OT and SLT have increased the number of training videos which are accessible to schools and parents, increased the number of bespoke links to view at a time that is convenient to them.
- The SCHAT OT website has enhanced resources for schools and parents.
- The Education Quality Advisers (EQAs) have started to undertake SEND Reviews with schools and Early Years settings, to support them to quality assure (QA) their own SEND provision and identify next steps for SEND school improvement.
- The EQA team is developing further professional development opportunities for schools and settings. This year training has been delivered for new SENCOs (Early Years and schools age); adaptive teaching; SEND Governors; QA processes for Alternative Provision; Supporting writing of Pupil Centred Plans in the Early Years.
- SENCO networks and SEND newsletters for practitioners have been re-established by the EQA team.
- The redevelopment of EYIF and GSP panels has allowed SENCOs the opportunity to seek advice and guidance from a range of peers and professionals in addition to requesting funding.
- Schools who were part of the NDP Pilot who showed exceptional growth and practice have been invited to showcase their journeys and the impact of NDP support within good practice videos. These videos will be available to view by other schools / settings to enable learning and change in other settings.
- The NDPs are facilitating a Pupil Voice Project, which is aimed at developing a sustainable process that enables pupil voice to meaningfully contribute to the actions and next steps within the ND Workstream. This is currently being run with a core group of schools before the opportunity becomes available to all schools / settings across Shropshire (and Telford and Wrekin).
- The Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project has engaged 35 schools over Shropshire during the 24/25 academic year and ongoing. The PINS project offers further support and expertise to selected schools to enable them to enhance their ability to meet the needs of CYP with neurodiversity.

Ensure good quality support for early years and educational settings

Next steps

- A Neuro-affirmative Language Reference Guide for those working with children and young people is under the final stages of development by the Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Educational Psychology Services. This Guide will support the understanding, development and implementation of neuro-affirmative language and its importance in empowering our neurodiverse children and young people.
- The Neuroinclusive Training Offer will continue to grow and develop in order to meet the needs of our children and young people and those who support them. Feedback and ideas from children and young people will also be ascertained through the Pupil Voice project to inform future training.
- Multidisciplinary Task and Finish Groups are being facilitated to explore the support offers available for Tics Tourette's and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) and what our next steps for support should / could be.
- Improve the communication between Parent Carers and schools, to ensure Parent Carers are aware of support being provided in school.
- Continue to use all avenues to promote the work undertaken by Community Therapy Services.
- EQAs will analyse key themes and trends from SEND Reviews and use this data to inform the Local Inclusion Support Offer.
- EY SEND Solution Circles have been piloted by the EY EQA specialist and will be rolled out to schools in 25/26.

You said

- Respondents indicated that popular sources of support were Autism West Midlands and PACC. A smaller number mentioned Empathy and Oswestry SEN Group as good sources of support.

We did

- An integral part of PINS years 1 and 2 is support from Parent Carers, by Parent Carers, at the heart of the programme. Shropshire PACC is working with the pilot schools to set up a Parent Carer forum in each school.
- The Neurodiversity Practitioners (NDP) are continuing to work with families, both within individual support for children and within school priorities, to enhance Parent Carer voice.
- Kids offer a broad range of needs-led support, including training opportunities and social groups and activities.
- Health visitors and school nurses are receiving additional specialist training funded by the SEND Change Programme to increase their skills in supporting families with autistic children and those with genetic conditions.
- [KIDS](#) provide universal support for CYP with Autism and their families. No diagnosis is required to access this support. The service is aimed at families of autistic young people aged 0-19 and provides early intervention & prevention of person centred, needs led support, contributing to improving the understanding of autism, provision of support strategies & information to improve quality of life, no diagnosis is necessary to access this support.
- BeeU provide care plans to all accepted referrals.

You said

- Respondents indicated that popular sources of support were Autism West Midlands and PACC. A smaller number mentioned Empathy and Oswestry SEN Group as good sources of support.

Next steps

- Standard signposting and referral letters are being developed to ensure Parent Carers receive full and correct support information. Care plans are provided to all accepted referrals.
- Further promotion of the Local Offer from all professionals.
- Parent Carer training and information presentations are being developed jointly by the EPS, NDPs, Assistant Psychologists, PACC and PODS to ensure that consistent information on support are shared across services. This training will be available through different routes, e.g., depending upon the involvement of the educational settings with PINS / NDPs and if the child / young person is on the neurodevelopmental pathway.

Ensure referrers know how to make good referrals

You said

- Most respondents commented about the long waiting times, with a few commenting on difficulties being accepted.

We did

- BeeU offer the 'getting more help' section of the [BeeU website](#)
- The Child Development Centre website has been redesigned to provide clear information about the service they do and do not offer.
- The CDC team are close to completing requested flow diagrams for each of the ASD and Complex Medical and Developmental Needs pathways. These will be published before the end of the year and include links to the Healthier Together maps for ND and SLCN and the Local Offers.
- CDC have subcontracted two validated local ASD providers to reduce the number of children waiting and the length of the time they are waiting.
- The CDC Team have provided over 30% more assessments in 2024/25.
- BeeU had a coproduction event which included representation from the Parent Carer Forum (PACC) and multiagency partners to further explore future developments to their referral process

Next steps

- BeeU's referral quality review to take place to feedback to system and identify areas for improvements or training needs in the wider system (October 2025)

Avoid children & young people going into crisis whilst waiting for diagnosis by implementing robust approaches to manage risk

You said

- There were many comments about a lack of support for children and young people with ND who have mental health needs and for those with Learning Disabilities alongside their neurodivergence.

We did

- Within school-based support, including Neurodiversity Practitioner (NDP) work and Partnerships for inclusion of neurodiversity in schools programme (PINS), schools are being supported to understand and build empathy of how neurodiverse children can experience the world and emotions and what appropriate, needs-led support could look like.
- PINS has been extended into 2025/26 and is enabling more Shropshire primary schools and their pupils to benefit. PINS supports a broad definition of neurodiversity (ND), including the broad constellation of neurodivergence.
- Neurodivergence is included within the Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) training provided by the Shropshire Education Psychology Service.
- Supporting emotional resilience for neurodiverse children has also been included within the November Future in Mind training delivered to Shropshire schools. This training is also available to broader schools / provisions.
- The increase in mental health issues among children and young people is a significant concern, while the way children and young people access mental health services has continued to evolve. BeeU's successful Mental Health Support Teams (MHST), co-operates with Mental Health Leads in schools to provide targeted support to vulnerable pupils, with the goal of addressing issues at an earlier stage and preventing them from becoming more serious.
- BeeU are piloting and evaluating roll out of the National Autism Trainer Programme, this is a collaborative initiative aimed at training staff in mental health services to better support autistic individuals.
- School Nurses continue to offer services to school aged children between the ages of 5 to 19 years old and children 5-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who attend local state schools and some special schools.

Continued/

Avoid children & young people going into crisis whilst waiting for diagnosis by implementing robust approaches to manage risk

You said

- There were many comments about a lack of support for children and young people with ND who have mental health needs and for those with Learning Disabilities alongside their neurodivergence.

We did (continued)

- Social Prescribing is offered to those aged between 11 (school year 7) and above. Practitioners usually see children and young people in school, via video call or telephone. Support is for children and young people who may feel isolated, feel low, anxious or who need support with their wellbeing or education for example.
- We have published information regarding Reasonable adjustments and Hospital Passports to further support and inform children, young people and parent carers.
- We have further updated the information available for children or young people with Learning Disabilities and/ or Autism who may require Dynamic Support.

Next steps

- Communicate the wider support offer from school nursing, social prescribing and BeeU's Autism and Learning Disability offer to Parent Carers, professionals and schools.
- Specific information on emotional well-being and neurodivergence is already being shared within Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training and supervision sessions, and this will be enhanced over the next academic year.

Ensure capacity of the diagnostic service meets the demands of the population

You said

- Waiting times for assessment are too long with children and young people needing to be at crisis to get any help. Some Parent Carers reported having to pursue a private diagnosis with subsequent problems accessing support after diagnosis and obtaining medication for ADHD

We did

- In April 2024 additional funding was given to ASD and ADHD diagnostic services. ND diagnostic assessments have been impacted by recruitment delays and a high referrals. This picture is being seen nationally as well as locally.
- BeeU advise that when referrals have been accepted, if there is a change and concerns are raised while waiting, to contact the BeeU Duty Team and request to speak to BeeU ND Team, if concerns relate to neurodevelopmental difficulties.
- BeeU have subcontracted a number of ASD assessments to Healios for children and young people already waiting to be seen.
- The 0-5's Community Team have recruited to the workforce additional Speech and Language Therapist, Specialist Nursery Nurses and ASD Allied Health Practitioner Lead and are moving to recruitment for a small amount of clinical psychology time. The underspend from 2024/25 and current 2025/26 to subcontract assessments, which will result in 18% more of current wait list of children being offered assessments.
- The additional capacity will not reduce the numbers of children currently waiting for an ASD assessment but does seek to balance the current need and capacity. This means that waiting times and numbers for the 0-5 age group should stabilise.
- BeeU have worked to address Neurodevelopmental pathway queries and themes raised, they have developed a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document which includes this detail. Alongside this BeeU have signposted to their referral document. It is hoped this will help Young people, parent carers, and professionals access the correct information at the time they need it
- A new page has been added to the Healthier Together website outlining the support available to families whilst they wait for their child's health appointment. The support offer is broken down into support areas ie. development, communication, neurodivergence, behaviour, mental health. [Support available while waiting for your appointment](#). This page has been promoted widely to parent carers, PACC, schools and professionals.

Next steps

- Community 0-5's Team to continue to procure additional ASD assessments until the end of September.
- Continue to promote the services available to children, young people, parent carers while waiting for assessments.

Section 2

Children and young people
with Speech, Language
and Communication Needs

Responses relating to children & young people with Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Of **39** responders we heard that a higher number of Parent Carers and their children & young people had received support from

- Educational Setting, school or Nursery (**23**)

Significantly fewer responders were aware of the following support for speech, language & communication needs;

- Early Help
- Education Psychology
- Elklan Training
- SENDIASS
- PACC
- Support from health visitor or school nurse
- Shropshire Community NHS Trust Speech and Language Therapy Advice Line
- Speech & Language Therapy training
- Speech Language UK Parent Carer Guide
- Stoke Speaks Out
- Talk Boost

None of the responders indicated they were aware of the following support

- Early Talk
- ELSEC
- Healthier together website
- Local Offer
- PINS
- Shropshire's School Readiness Leaflet
- ShropComm NHS Trust Speech & Language Therapy
- SCHAT Speech & Language Therapy Facebook page
- Specific Speech and Language Impaired Children's Team (SSLIC) Team
- Talk Boost Parent Hub

Responses relating to Children and young people with Speech, Language and Communication Needs



Strongly agree/Agree

I think that I have a good understanding of the support available for my child or young person

37.5%



My child or young person has been able to access the support available to them

21.9%



My child or young person received the support that they needed

15.6%



Over the past 6 months, whilst my child or young person was waiting to see a speech and language therapist, the support we received has helped

12.5%



Ensure clarity about the support available

You said

- Many Parent Carers did not know about all the support available such as the Speech & Language Therapy advice line which doesn't require a referral. However, those who had accessed the advice line praised its helpfulness.
- Many Parent Carers commented that they felt unsupported and had not received information about support offers. There was some positive feedback about individual therapist including "Therapist has done amazingly well with supporting my child couldn't ask for anything better".
- For children with complex needs or who are nonverbal, Parent Carers expressed concern about limited support available.

We did

- We regularly review all the information about the full SLCN support offer that is listed on the Healthier Together website and is signposted from the Local Offers [Support for Speech, Language and Communication Needs \(SLCN\)](#). We continue to promote this website through multiple avenues.
- A new page has been added to the Healthier Together website outlining the support available to families whilst they wait for their child's health appointment. The support offer is broken down into support areas including communication, development and neurodivergence. [Support available while waiting for your appointment](#). This page has been promoted widely to parent carers, schools and professionals.
- The service provides waiting time information in letters to Parent Carers and maintains a [current waiting time tool](#) on their website. Information is available on the Advice Line offer and signposting to the Speech and Language Therapy service's website and Facebook page.
- The ELSEC (Early Language Support for Every Child) project is working with Parent Carers in the targeted schools to share how they can be involved with supporting their child.

Next steps

- Communication of the support offer available on the Healthier Together website and Local Offer to Parent Carers, professionals and schools.
- Combine additional therapy appointments for children open to Speech and Language and the CDC ASD assessment pathways for children with complex communication and interaction needs.
- BeeU will publish information regarding frequent questions and answers, including referral, assessment, support and transition queries.

You said

- Some Parent Carers commented that they were not included in the conversations between Speech and Language Therapy and school and too often plans were passed to teaching assistants who are not specialists. One Parent Carer commented that they were discharged from the service because school did not cooperate. Another commented that their child attended a Hub which was not supported by Speech and Language Therapy. However, one Parent Carer with a child with selective mutism commented that both the Speech and Language Therapy and school “have been amazing at supporting my daughter”.

We did

- The ELSEC (Early Language Support for Every Child) project started in September 2024, providing support to targeted schools to meet the needs of children with speech, language and communication difficulties. ELSEC provides support for early years settings and schools to deliver TalkBoost and has supported roughly 30 schools and settings in the 24/25 academic year and onwards.
- Education Quality Advisers have undertaken training and are now able to deliver Talkboost CPD to all our settings. Early Years, KS1 and KS2 Talkboost have been delivered in 2024/2025 and will be offered annually each academic year to all schools not involved in ELSEC. EQAs have delivered Training and provided resources for some of our secondary schools to deliver the Talk for Work programme.
- Continue to advertise the [Early developmental assessment and Mult Disciplinary Assessments](#) offered through the 0-5's service Health Visitors have accessed Speech and Language UK training. The speech and language therapy team have recorded all their training videos so that these are now available for education practitioners, as well as Parent Carers and to join at times most convenient to them, and to re-watch as needed. A further training video about supporting resilience for children with SLCN has been developed.
- The Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Advice Line continues to be offered and has been accessed by Parent Carers and education practitioners.
- The stammering team has procured some visuals to support their work with children who [stammer](#). There is also a short video 'All about stammering', spoken from the voice of the child.
- Continue to promote the [Selective Mutism](#) work undertaken by the Speech and Language Therapy Team, and the short video [Supporting Children with Selective Mutism](#)

Next steps

- Education and Health survey our SEND Hubs to identify any SLCN training and support needs for children accessing these provisions.
- Talk for Work training to be delivered to remaining secondary schools and ongoing support for implementation.

Ensure the capacity of the Speech & Language Therapy service meets the needs of the population

You said

- Over half of the feedback comments mentioned the long waits for the service with many stating they had been offered no support while waiting, poor communication and a feeling of being forgotten about. Some comments mentioned barriers to access and having to chase appointments.

We did

- A waiting list initiative took place which gave appointments to 271 children, initially helping to reduce the number waiting. It had a significant impact for children waiting the longest, but due to the number of new referrals, the numbers waiting have risen again.
- All referrers, families and carers receive an acknowledgement of the referral being accepted and at 25 weeks to confirm we know they are still waiting. This includes links to website resources and Advice line for support whilst they are waiting.
- The website has a predicted waiting time function from referral, a [current waiting time tool](#)
- All schools and early years settings are developing and publishing their locally available provision (now inclusive mainstream practice) for children with SLCN to provide early identification of need and evidence based early support. All education settings can access the video training on the Speech and Language Therapy website and via a call to the Advice Line. All the training is developed by the team with local settings in mind.
- Speech and Language therapy continue to recruit , including the development of an apprenticeship SLT Role.
- [Severe Speech and Language Impaired Children's Team \(SSLIC\)](#) continues to be offered within Shropshire. This is a partnership approach between health and the local authority.
- Early Language Support for Every Child, we continue to improve earlier identification and interaction within schools.

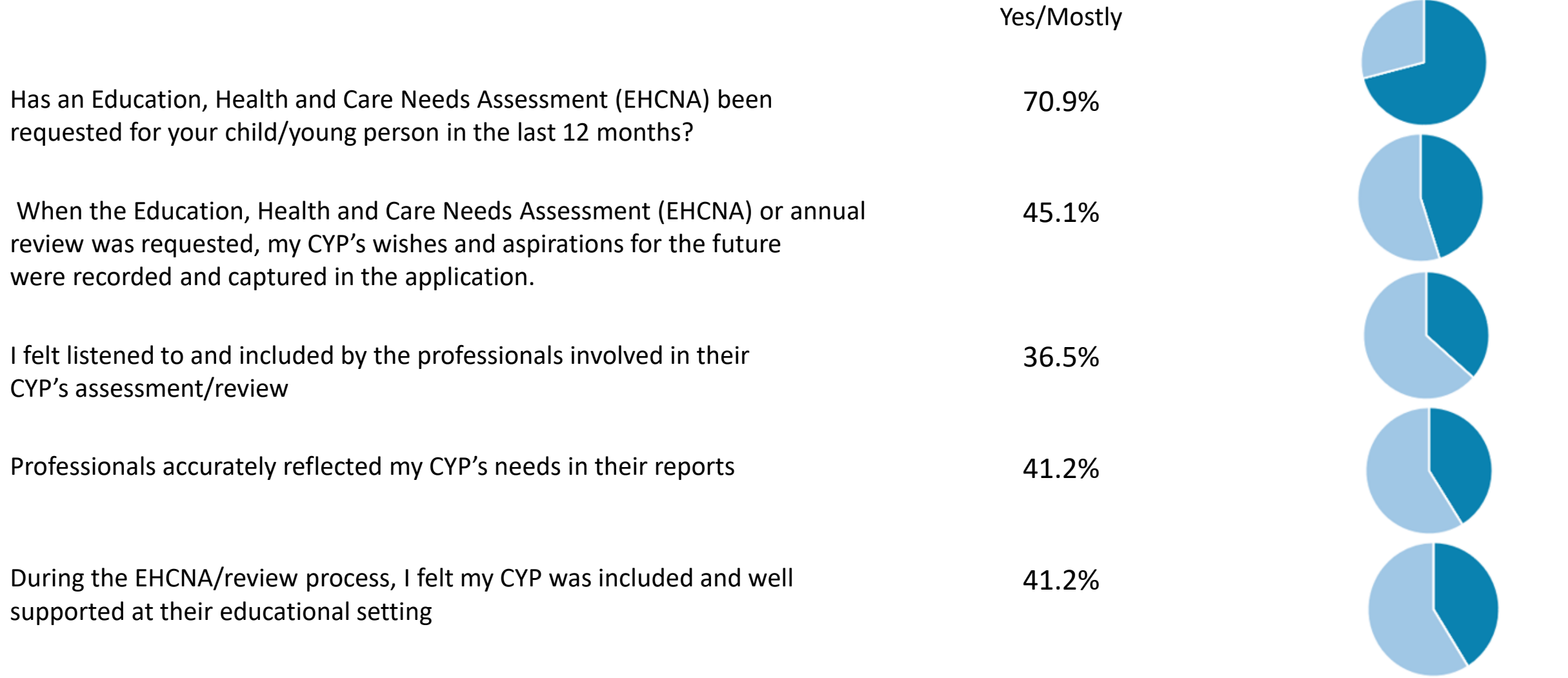
Next steps

- The local authority will be recruiting additional teaching capacity to further support the work of the Severe Speech and Language Impaired Children's (SSLIC) Team .
- Changes to procedures have been put forward to improve communication including increased use of Therapist out of office function to alert the admin team immediately of the possible wait for them to respond to Parent Carers. Admin Team will alert any queries where parents request speaking to a member of the team.
- Speech and Language Therapy continue to work with PACC to improve their parent carer offer.
- Consultation and engagement activities with parent carers and schools to make best use for the learning from ELSEC in further reducing waiting times.

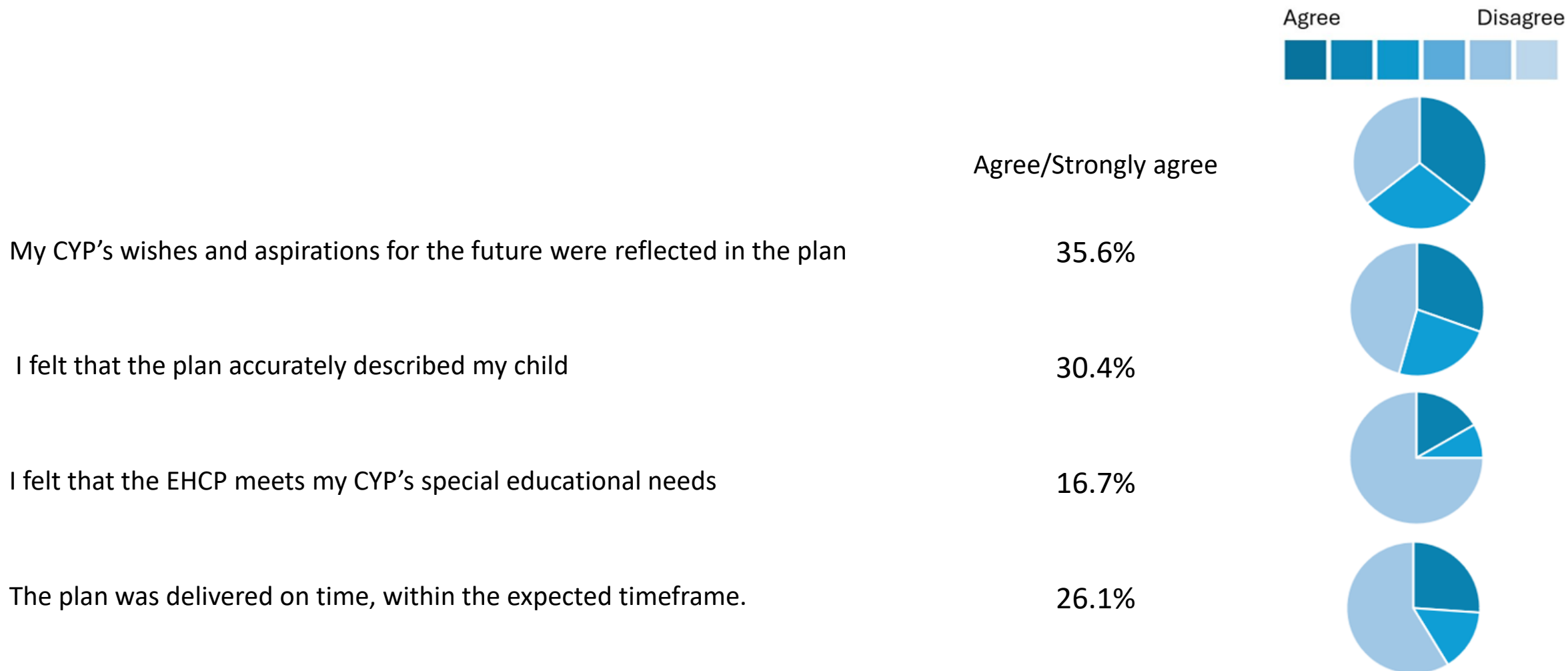
Section 3

Children and young
people with an EHCP
or going through
the EHCP process

Responses relating to Children and young people with an EHCP or going through the EHCP process



Responses relating to Children and young people with an EHCP or going through the EHCP process



Ensure that the SEN Team communicates with Parent Carers at every stage in the process

You said

- Ten responders felt that there was a lack of communication from the SEN Team. This meant they did not feel informed about the progress of their application. This was especially a concern when timescales were not going to be met.

We did

- The EHCP Team at the LA have introduced a communication policy called 'Touchpoint' where Parent Carers will be contacted at each stage of the process to keep them informed of progress and any delays. After an initial soft launch summer term 2025, we will be rolling it out to everyone from September 2025.
- We continue to expand the use of an online portal for schools to streamline the communication between schools and the LA. All schools, except nurseries and independent schools, are now using the portal. Plans are in place to introduce nurseries by the end of 2025.
- We no longer rely on agency staff and have successfully recruited a new team of permanent staff.
- We have recruited additional case officers with a specific role to support the annual review process.

Next steps

- Complete the implementation of the 'Touchpoint' communication policy and constantly review our processes.
- Complete the implementation of the settings portal.
- Continue to look at the range of online systems available and procure where necessary.

Ensure that everything possible is done to keep to statutory timescales

You said

- Timeliness continues to be an issue for both new and amended EHCPs. 12 Parent Carers raised this as an issue.

We did

- An Annual Review Recovery Programme has been implemented
- There are sustained high levels of needs and complexity within the population. We have seen a consistent increase in the number of requests for assessment, from 271 in 2021 to 792 in 2024 and the number of requests continues to be high. Our focus is ensuring the quality of plans is not compromised. Our team are working incredibly hard to ensure high standards are maintained.
- Internal processes are being examined and automated processes introduced where appropriate.
- Staffing has been reviewed and changes made to numbers and team structure, to support new processes and ensure quality during these changes.
- All very late plans are reviewed by the senior team weekly to understand where delays have occurred and to troubleshoot.
- All case officers have weekly targets.

Next steps

- Digitisation of the EHCP processes to improve automation and communication for processes, allowing staff to concentrate on completing quality EHCPs on time.
- An ongoing review of annual review processes continues to impact on timeliness of amended plans.

Ensure that EHCPs meet our child's needs

You said

- A number of Parent Carers reported inadequate support, with complaints about the lack of specialist provision, insufficient training for school staff, and the need for more tailored support for children with complex needs

We did

- All EHCPs now go through a rigorous QA process. As a result, there has been a marked improvement in the % of initial and amended plans that are rated good or better.
- There has been a rollout of a considerable training package across education, health and social care with multiagency oversight to ensure that the advice feeding into EHCPs is of sufficiently high quality. Advice is now sought from education separately from the application process. This has already improved the quality of education advice.
- Social care and medical questionnaires are now routinely in use to ensure consistent input to EHCPs.
- Learning from multiagency quality assurance sessions is routinely fed back to all staff and partners to continuously improve what we do.

Next steps

- Multiagency workforce training will continue to be embedded as 'business as usual'.
- Continued application of the Quality Assurance Framework will maintain the quality of new and amended EHCPs

EHCPs rated good or better	Feb 24	May 24	Aug 24	Feb 25	May 25	Aug 25
% Draft EHCPs	59%	86%	94%	83%	100%	79%
% Amended EHCPs	77%	98%	91%	100%	100%	100%

Ensure that settings meet the needs of children and young people as specified on their EHCP

You said

- Eight Parent Carers indicated that educational settings were not meeting the needs of their child or young person following their EHCP.

We did

- The Education Quality Advisers (EQAs) have started to undertake SEND Reviews with schools and Early Years settings, to support them to QA their own SEND provision and identify next steps for SEND school improvement.
- The EQA team is developing further CPD opportunities for schools and settings. This year training has been delivered for new SENCOs (Early Years and schools age); adaptive teaching; SEND Governors; QA processes for Alternative Provision; Supporting writing of Pupil Centred Plans in the Early Years.
- SENCo networks and SEND newsletters for practitioners have been re-established by the EQA team.
- The redevelopment of EYIF and GSP panels has allowed SENCOs the opportunity to seek advice and guidance from a range of peers and professionals in addition to requesting funding.

Next steps

- We continue to encourage all schools and settings to strengthen their graduated response to children and young people with SEND including support for mental health and emotional well-being. This will include evaluating the strength and consistency of provision currently available in mainstream education settings.
- EQAs will analyse key themes and trends from SEND Reviews and use this data to inform the Local Inclusion Support Offer.
- EY SEND Solution Circles have been piloted by the EY EQA specialist and will be rolled out to schools in 25/26.

Ensure that annual reviews happen when they should and that EHCPs remain up to date

You said

- A number of Parent Carers reported that annual reviews were not being processed by the EHCP Team when they should and that amendments were late. A few also commented that outcomes on their child or young person's EHCP were not updated and were out of date.

We did

- Our duty, as the EHCP Team in Shropshire Council, is to review every plan at least every 12 months (6 months for early years). We acknowledge that there has been slippage in meeting this duty. We are looking to address this through implementation of an Annual Review Recovery Plan.
- Seven new staff have been recruited. The EHCP Team are currently carrying out a review of annual review processes to ensure they are as efficient as possible and are appropriately prioritised to be completed within the statutory 12 months. We are working to improve our recording and monitoring systems. We are also creating a suite of co-produced new annual review guidance for key phase transition and preparation for adulthood.
- We have implemented a robust data monitoring system to ensure that annual review performance is clearly visible at Partnership Board level, to ensure that challenge and support is in place.
- We have improved our communication to keep Parent Carers and children and young people aware of the challenges facing the team and the steps that are being taken to address issues around timeliness of annual reviews and amendment of EHCPs

Next steps

- We recognise that the recovery plan is in its early stages and hope to keep everyone informed of our progress.

Further information

Further information about steps taken to address Shropshire's SEND Accelerated Progress Plan can be found here:
[Feedback from parent carers | Shropshire Council](#)