

Reading Early Years and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Consultation Report 2017

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Summary

Background

In September 2017 the government is introducing the 30 hours free childcare for working parents. The Children’s and Family Act 2014, The Equality Act 2010 and the SEND reforms with the Code of Practice 2015 state that all children are entitled to an education that enables them to make the best possible and educational outcomes, as well as become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their views ready to make the transition into compulsory education.

It is therefore important that we consider the impact that increasing the entitlement to 30 hours will have on children with SEND. Research both nationally and locally have evidenced that children with SEND are not taking up their free education entitlement, and there are concerns that a high number of children with SEND will not take up their 30 hour entitlement.

The January 2015 early years census, showed only 43% of children with SEND nationally are receiving between 13 and 15 hours of funded early education compared to 60% for all other children in this age group (Childcare Free Entitlement - Delivery Model Government Consultation; April 2016).

In 2014, ‘Contact a family’ carried out research to show that 25% of parents with a disabled child are not taking up any of their free entitlement. There were several reasons given including that they thought the staff were inadequately trained, the provision was not safe or inclusive or their child had been refused because of their additional needs.

The Childcare Free Entitlement Government Consultation 2016 highlighted areas for SEND including additional funding for providers on a case by case basis, taking a strategic role in increasing parental confidence, providing specialist training and services and supporting parents and settings at key transition points.

The Hemsell Reading Sufficiency completed in 2016, statistics show that over half (58%) of parents/carers of a child with SEND were using or had used childcare, however it is important to note this may have been for their child with additional needs or for the child’s siblings. However this information still suggests that there is a lack of provision or lower levels of childcare being used for children with SEND.

The sufficiency assessment also showed that 48% of parents/carers of a child with SEND using childcare did not feel that childcare in their local area met the needs of their children.

In order to improve SEN provision for children within Reading Early Years Providers, it is important to know which needs parents feel are not being met. This would enable the Local Authority to focus on training needs for settings in order to improve provision, staff knowledge and skills to increase uptake of places for SEND pupils, and increase parent confidence in childcare settings. It is also important to know which areas practitioners do not feel confident in supporting, to enable training to be directed

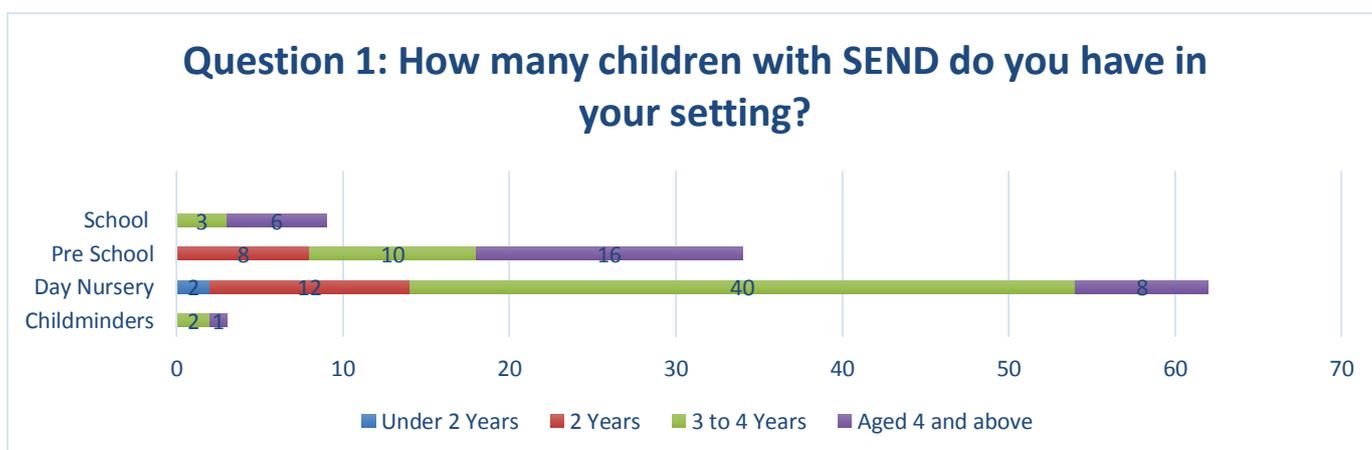
towards this and therefore improve practice and increase capacity of places for children with SEND and having their needs met.

Dingley’s Promise (A SEND specialist Childcare setting serving Berkshire) carried out some research in April 2017 with the settings across Berkshire (a total of 38 nurseries responded) and they found that 74% of settings felt that funding would help them to provide more support for children with SEND, and that settings felt the paperwork to access the funding was complicated. Furthermore they found that 68% of settings felt they required more tailored support and advice, as well as 63% of settings felt that training (generic and specialist) would be vital for their staff to ensure they can give the right support for children with SEND particularly to ensure children are fully included within the setting. It is important to note that this was a consultation across Berkshire and not specific to Reading, therefore a further consultation with Reading Providers has been completed.

Consultation with Reading Early Years Providers

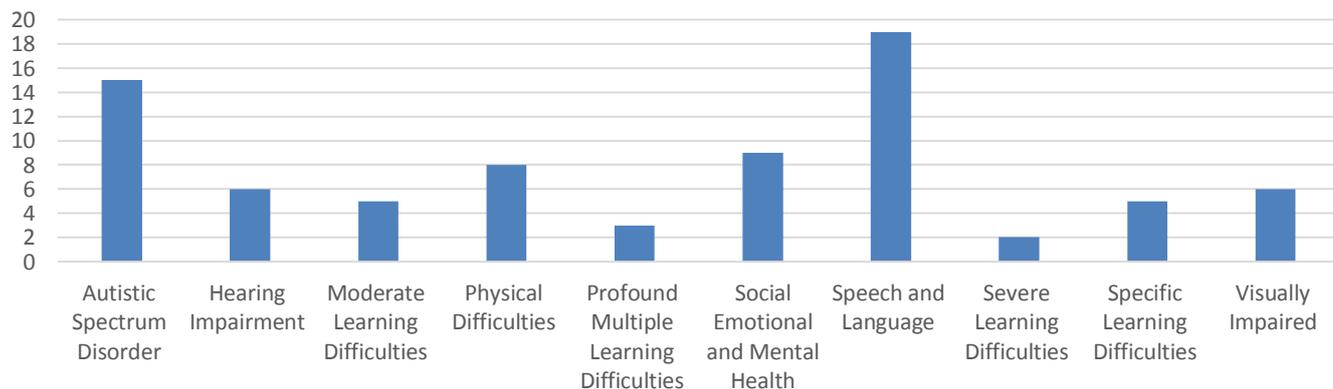
In May and June 2017 a Survey was conducted with Early Years Providers to include Childminders and Schools with Nursery and Reception Classes to understand more about SEND children aged 0-5 accessing education.

From an initial 29 survey responses from Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Early Years Settings including childminders and Early Years Foundation Stage Leaders within Reading maintained schools there was a total number of at least 108 registered children with SEND needs within Reading Borough Council. It is important to note that this is only a small number of the children registered with SEND needs, and this number is expected to increase when further investigation and data is captured. This is a significant increase from a data run in October 2016 from the Early Years team (the data showed a total of 39 SEN children registered at this time), and as the SEND audits begin we will be able to see a clearer picture about the children with SEND within Reading Borough Council early years Education.



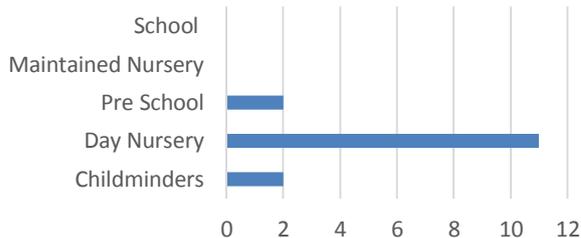
By breaking down this data into the type of Special Educational Needs that the children have that are currently attending these settings, Speech and Language and Autistic Spectrum Disorder are the two highest SEN that Reading Borough Council early years settings are supporting.

Question 2. What are the needs of the pupils with SEND attending your setting?

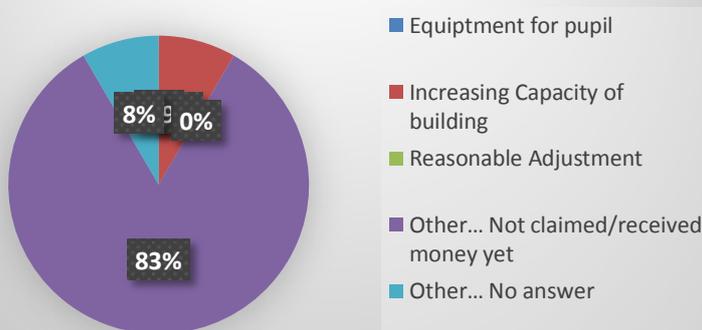


Out of the 108 children, only 15 children are currently recorded as eligible for Disability Access Funding and 83% of settings have not yet claimed or received the funding to determine how this funding is being spent. 8% have used the funding to increase the capacity of the building for the child.

Question 5. How many children within your setting are eligible for Disability Access Fund

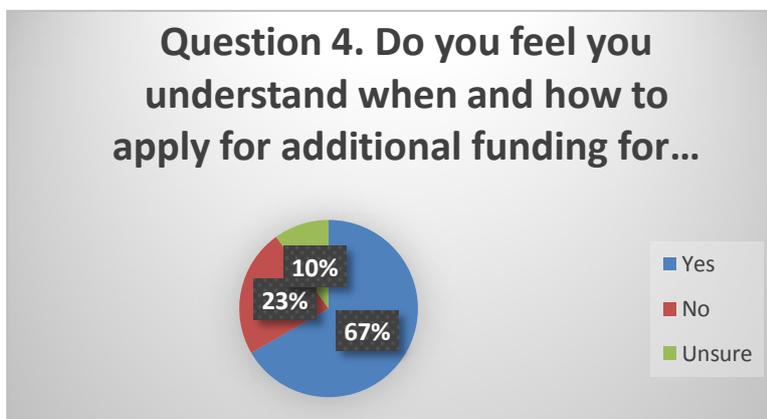


Question 5a. What have you used DAF for?

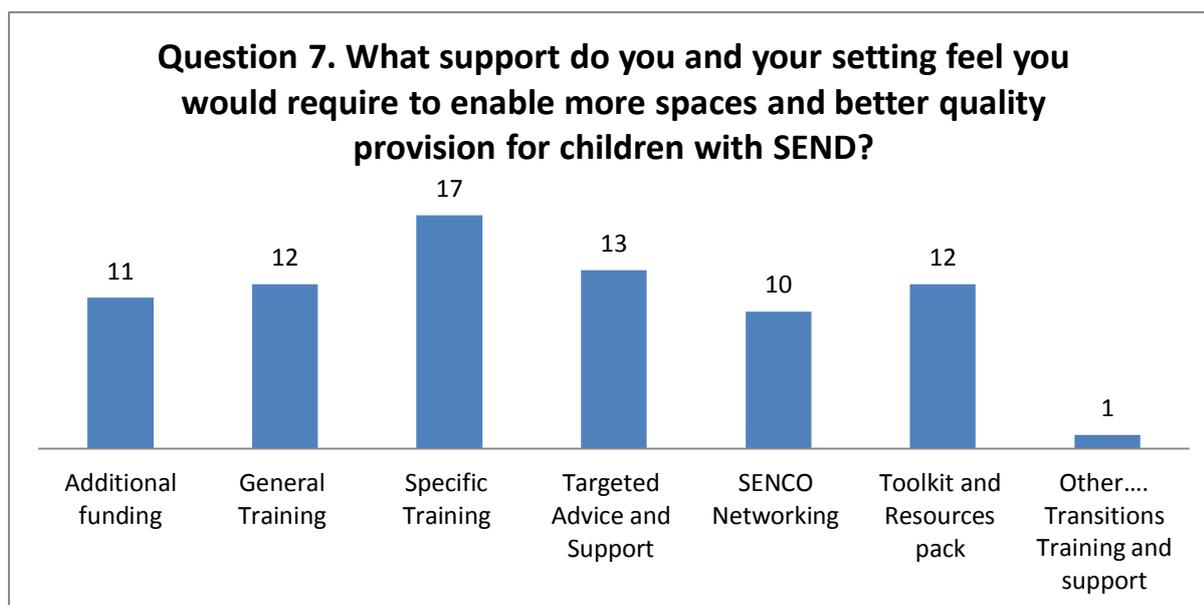


Furthermore only 9 of the 108 children are receiving short term funding. 61% of this funding is being used for 1:1 additional support.

When settings were asked about their understanding on when and how to apply for additional funding to support children with SEND, 67% stated they felt they understood when and how to apply for additional funding, however 33% did not understand, or they were unsure how to apply for funding. This is an area that we would seek to work with to increase professionals understanding and skills in applying for additional funding.

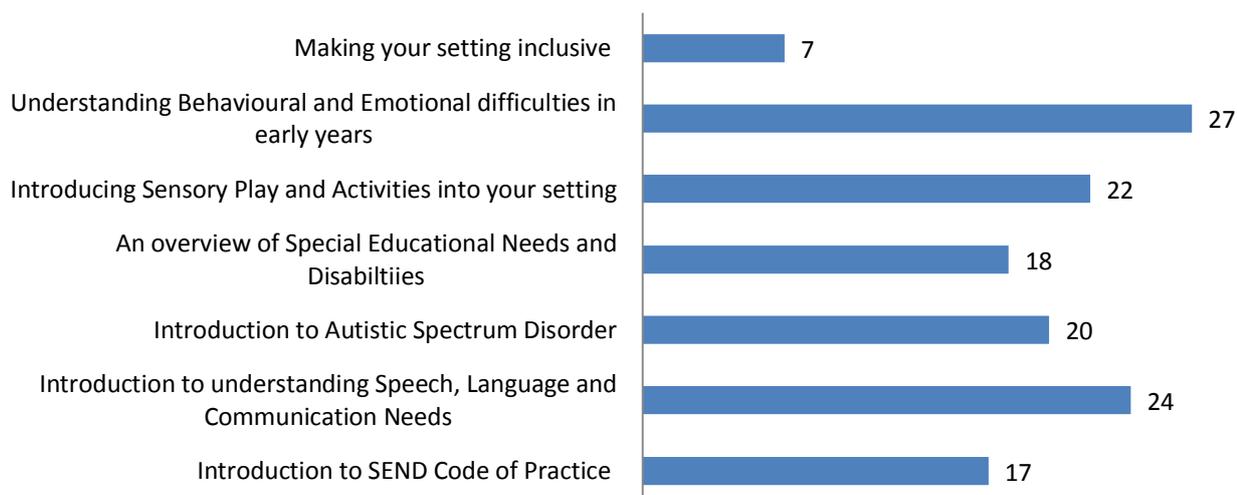


Practitioners were asked to provide information about what additional support they felt they required to enable SEND children to be more supported and inclusive. The responses indicate several areas that the Local Authority can address and provide support to improve access to childcare for SEND children. This includes providing additional training including how to apply for additional funding when it is appropriate, as well as providing targeted advice and support.

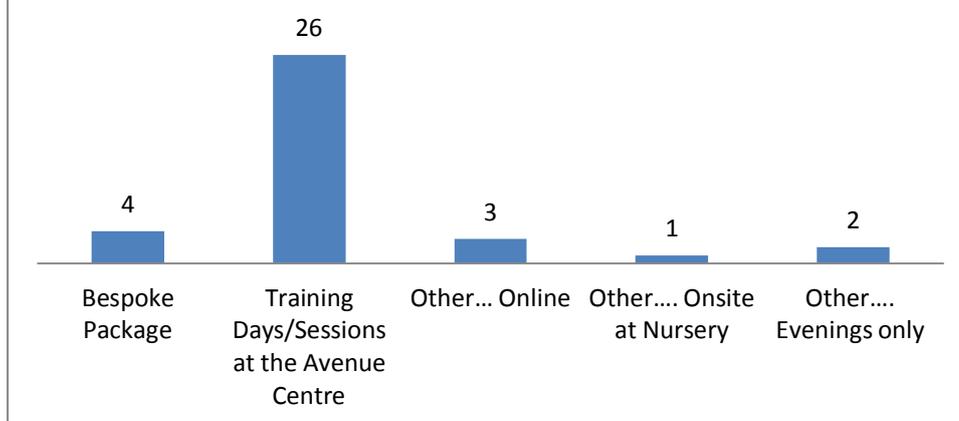


In addition to the SEND Audits that are being completed in the Autumn term, the Survey also requested professionals to state what training they felt they needed, in order to enable SEND children to access high quality and inclusive Early Years Education.

What training would you feel you and your staff would attend?



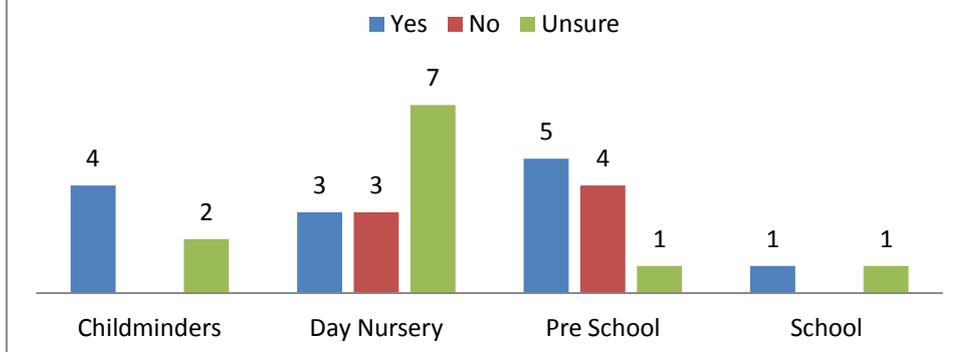
Question 8b. How would you expect to access possible training?



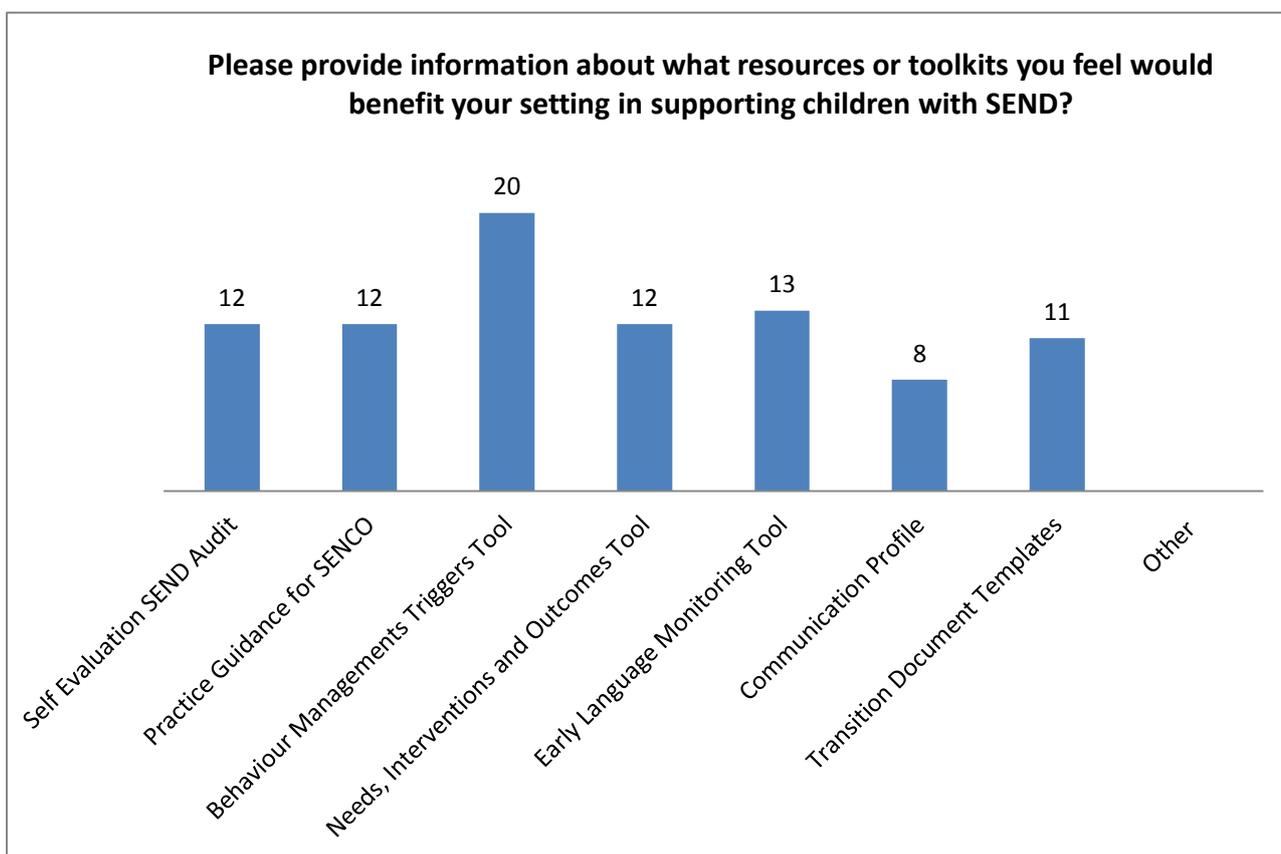
Two courses of “Introduction to SEND Code of Practice in Early Years” have been held and had positive feedback. Furthermore there is training packages that settings can now book onto via the SLA bespoke packages which include Behaviour Management in Early Years; Supporting Speech, Language and Development Delays; Introducing Sensory Areas into your setting. And there are further training courses being developed including a workshop on the paperwork and creating high quality effective IEPs. There will be further training sessions held at the Avenue Centre.

Results from the staff survey also indicate that professionals are unsure where to access or find resources and have requested an increase in the resources that are available to them. These resources are either accessible nationally or being developed locally. The Early Years Advisory Teacher aims to improve access to these resources, and provide signposting information by developing the SLA pages that professionals have access to and creating a SENCO guidance Document for Early Years Practitioners.

Do you feel you are able to easily find and access resources and toolkits to support children with SEND?



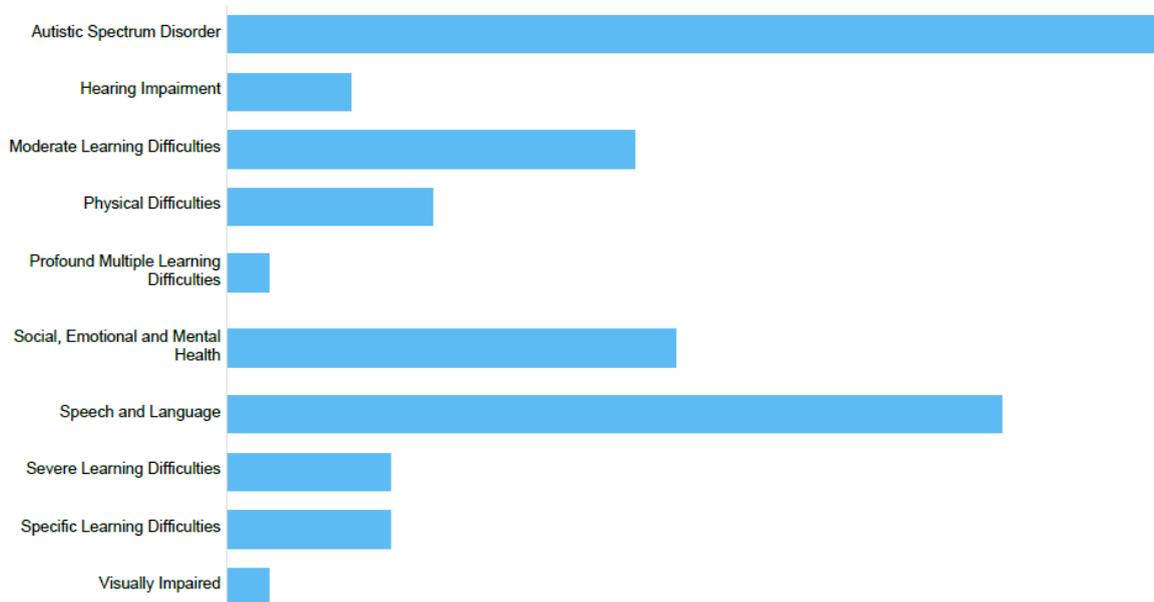
Please provide information about what resources or toolkits you feel would benefit your setting in supporting children with SEND?



Results from Parent/Carer Survey July 2017

In addition to consulting with the providers, the Local Authority consulted with parent/carers of children with SEND who may be currently entitled to Early Education or have previously been entitled to Early Education. A total of 33 parent/carers responded to this consultation survey released in July 2017 alongside the Sufficiency Survey.

In finding out more about what the needs are of the children from parent/carers, the top two needs were Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Speech and Language which correlates with the needs that providers were also stating they were supporting.



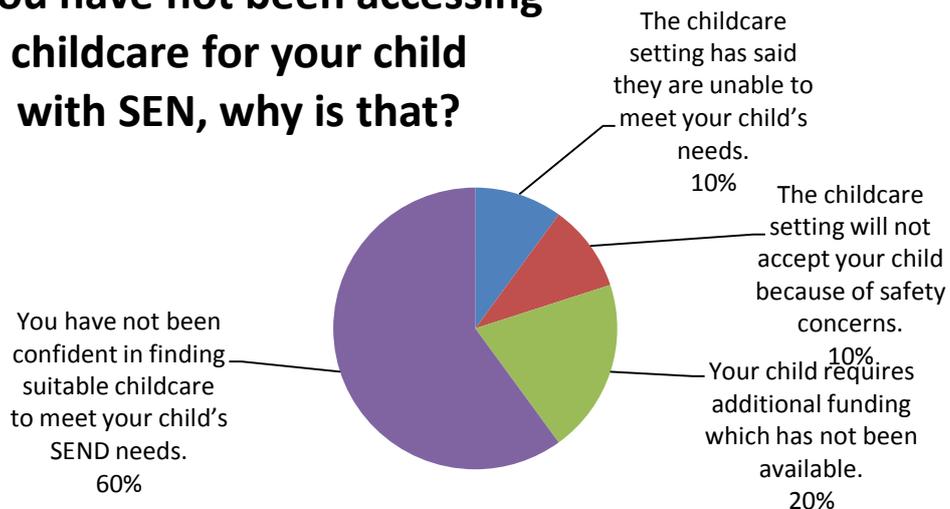
However, of those that have been accessing Early Years Education for children with SEND, around 25% were not accessing their full time entitlement, only attending for less than 15 hours a week.

When asked about viewing settings for their child, 88% of parent/carers felt welcomed and were ensuring that the child would feel included in their setting.

When asked about the quality of the Early Education that their children were accessing, 12% were very satisfied and 18% were satisfied, along with 9% dissatisfied and 6% very dissatisfied (49% were unable to answer as their child is not accessing Early Education providers).

This survey confirms concerns that have been highlighted nationally regarding children with SEND accessing their entitlement to Early Education. 48% of respondents had not/were not accessing Early Education and Childcare for their children with SEND. The survey investigated this further asking why children were not accessing childcare. The following answers were provided:

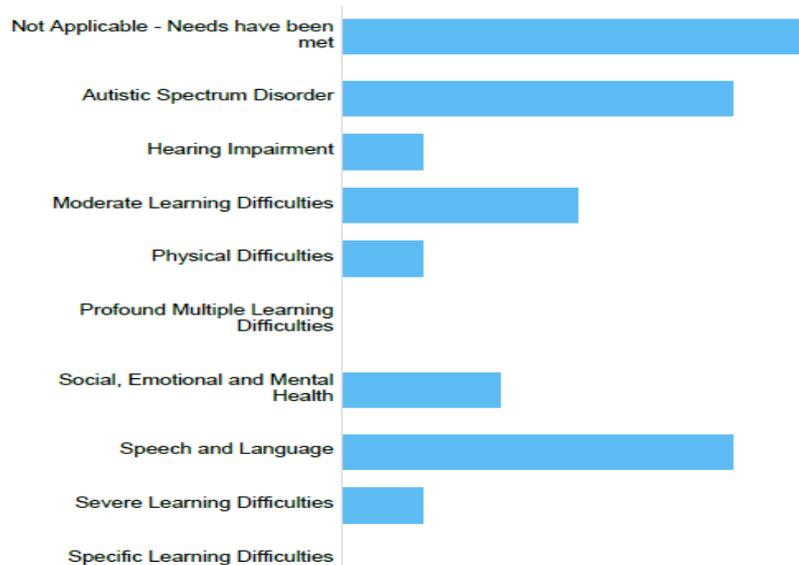
If you have not been accessing childcare for your child with SEN, why is that?



Finally when parent/carers were asked about how well they were informed about their child with SEN progress, 76% felt they were informed about their child's progress however there were some additional comments provided:

- I have to be proactive to make sure the best provision is provided.
- Initially we had no information, but the portage visitor told us what support we can get.
- I don't know what support is being put in place.
- We have termly meetings to talk about goals.
- I have meetings with the keyworker and Senco
- We have a daily school diary
- I have to be proactive and talk to the staff and teachers to find out what he has done.
- We get updates from portage, however we felt his nursery did not do anything special to support him.
- Online learning journeys

When parent/carers were asked which needs they felt providers were unable to meet; the following responses were provided.



This correlates with the higher needs prevalence of Speech and Language and Autistic Spectrum Disorder and shows a clear need for further training and support for providers to feel more confident and able to meet these needs, which may increase parental/carer confidence in the providers too.

When parent/carers were asked what they felt would support their child to be able to access Early Education and have their child's needs met, 30% felt there needed to be additional funding to support children, 18% felt there needed to be more specialist provision, and 21% felt there needed to be more General and Specific Training for staff members supporting the children.

Next steps and Action Plan.

We asked	You said	We did / intend to do	Review date
How many children with SEND were attending your settings and what are their needs were?	You identified that there were currently 108 children with SEND needs and the two highest categories of SEND needs included Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Speech and Language Communication Needs.	We will be carrying out a SEND Audit with Early Years Settings to identify and capture a more precise figure for the number of children registered with SEND needs (including those who are receiving SEN Support without an EHCP assessment). This will enable us to have a better understanding of the number of children within the borough who have SEN and therefore support the planning of support for Early Years Settings.	October 2017.
Whether you had made applications for DAF funding or additional needs funding, and how confident are you in accessing this funding?	33% of respondents felt unsure how to apply for additional funding.	We intend to audit the Early Years Settings to find out from every setting if they are able to confidently apply for additional funding to support their children with SEN. We are working with the Nursery School Head teachers who currently chair the additional funding panels to analysis the quality of applications and measure the impact of the additional funding on how children are making progress and their outcomes so that in future we can ensure that additional funding is being applied for and used appropriately to help meet the child's needs. We will be chairing an Early Years SENCO Network meeting to discuss and offer support before the Autumn 2017 Additional Funding Request Meetings and offer training on producing high quality paperwork and applications.	October 2017.
What support do you settings feel you require ensuring inclusion and better quality provision for SEN children?	You asked for more training, networking sessions, additional funding, targeted advice and toolkits to be included within this support.	We arranged an Early Years SENCO Network Meeting for October 2017, with several training sessions booked for Autumn Term 2017 to include Makaton, Supporting Speech and Language Delays and Sensory Processing Support specific for Early Year Practitioners. A Toolkit for Early Years SENCOs is in the process of being created and a copy will be available for each SENCO as well as available online for parent/carers to access. A Referral form is available, with parent permission to request the Early Years Advisory Teacher to come and observe children in the setting, and offer targeted advice and recommendation's to support the child.	December 2017 December 2017 Ongoing.
What training do you feel you need to access and how would you want to access this training?	The top 3 sessions requested were for Behaviour Support, Speech and Language Support and Sensory Processing and Play. You requested that these are sessions that are held at The Avenue Centre.	We have these sessions booked for each of these training sessions at the Avenue Centre in October, November and January. There are bespoke packages that are available to request for additional training, or whole setting training and these training packages can be included in these bespoke packages. Following completing of the SEND Audits, further training will be planned depending on the outcomes of the Audits.	January 2017 Ongoing October 2017.
What toolkits would you require to provide additional support for SEN children?	Several resources have been requested including Behaviour Triggers Tool, SENCO guidance Documents, Environment Audit Tool and Transitions Toolkit.	A Early Years Specific SENCO Guidance Document with an Appendixes of additional documents is currently being created and each SENCO will receive a copy, and this will be available online for parent/carers to access.	December 2017.

<p>Parent/Carer</p> <p>Are your children with SEND accessing their Early Entitlement and attending for their full entitlement and reasons why this is?</p>	<p>48% were not accessing their Early Entitlement and 25% were not able to access their full time entitlement.</p> <p>10% were unable to access as the setting said they were unable to meet your child's needs.</p> <p>60% of you were not confident in the settings meeting your child's needs.</p> <p>10% will not accept your child due to safety needs.</p> <p>20% were unable to access your entitlement as additional funding was not available.</p>	<p>We intend to provide additional support, training and advice to support our Early Years Settings so that we are able to support children with SEND to be able to access their Early Year Entitlement for full time in preparation for starting school.</p> <p>The Early Years Advisory Service are completing Myth Busting Sessions to remind Early Years Providers of their Legal Requirements to support children with SEN, and advise them of what support is available.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2017.</p>
<p>Parent/Carer</p> <p>What support do you feel is needed for your children in Early Years Settings.</p>	<p>More General and specific training for staff</p> <p>Additional Funding</p> <p>More Specialist Early Years Provision</p>	<p>We have sessions booked for more training sessions at the Avenue Centre in October, November and January.</p> <p>There are bespoke packages that are available to request for additional training, or whole setting training and these training packages can be included in these bespoke packages.</p> <p>Following completing of the SEND Audits, further training will be planned depending on the outcomes of the Audits.</p> <p>Training is being provided to all settings about the additional funding that is available to apply for to support children via the inclusion funding that the Government released in April 2017 to increase access and inclusion for children with additional needs in Early Years Settings.</p> <p>The SEND Strategy is also looking at the provision available for all children with additional needs from aged 0 to 25 and what is available in Reading, with specialist Nursery Settings sitting on the SEND Strategy.</p>	<p>January 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2017.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>