Norfolk Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Survey 2023

What professionals told us

Contents

Introduction

Professionals from education, health, social care and the voluntary sector were involved in the design of the questions which were reviewed, added to, and developed from our 2022 survey. This year questions were included about special educational needs (SEN) Support in places of learning.

The survey was promoted to professionals through a variety of methods including:

- Places of learning
- Newsletters
- Email
- Meetings
- Social media

NB In this report, percentages (%) have been rounded up if 0.5 or over and rounded down if 0.4 or under. It is important to note that it was possible to tick multiple options for some questions and therefore % will not always add up to 100%. Quotes have been amended to clarify terminology and ensure anonymity.

Participation

331 professionals responded in 2023, a decrease from 382 in 2022 – a drop of 13%. However, 59% completed the survey for the first time.

Sector of work

When asked where they work, professionals working in a place of learning (school, college, early years setting) were the largest group who completed the survey.
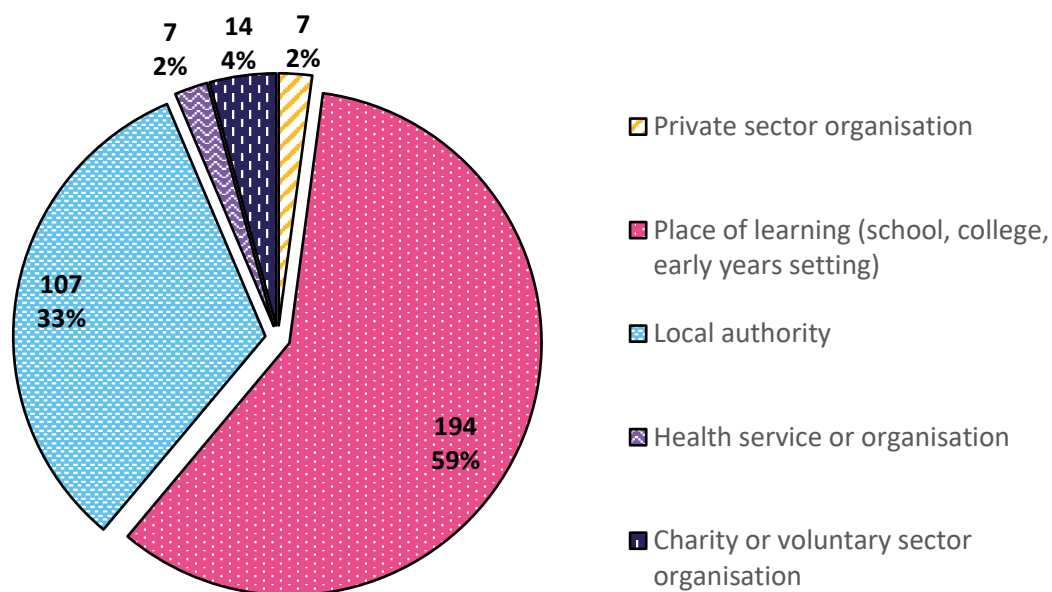

Figure 1. Q2) As a professional, which of the following do you work for?

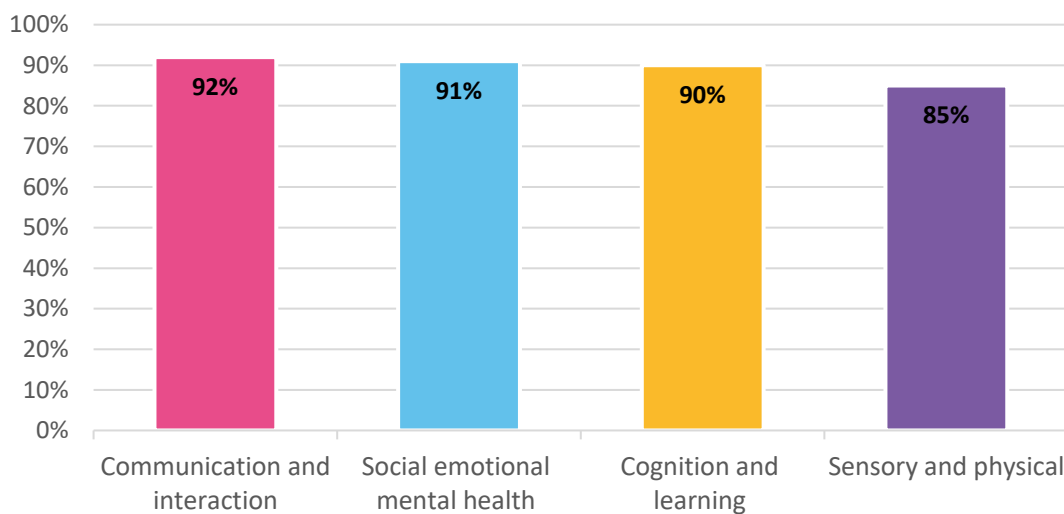**Location of professionals who completed the survey**

- NR1 – 50 respondents
- NR2 – 21 respondents
- PE30 – 19 respondents
- NR7 – 16 respondents
- NR31 – 14 respondents
- NR16 – 13 respondents
- NR17 – 13 respondents

89% of those who completed the survey **worked directly with children and young people (CYP)**

If they worked directly with CYP, they ticked all the age groups they worked with:

- 67% worked with 6–10 year olds
- 59% worked with 0–5 years olds
- 53% worked with 11–16 year olds
- 32% worked with 17–19 year olds
- 12% worked with 20–25 year olds

Most professionals said they worked with children and young people across all four broad areas of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

50% of the professionals who completed the survey **had made a request for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment**.

Of those who had requested an EHC needs assessment:

91% had actively considered how the child's needs could be met without an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

Various **reasons for making a request for an EHC needs assessment** were given, but the most common reason was **unable to meet need at SEN Support**.
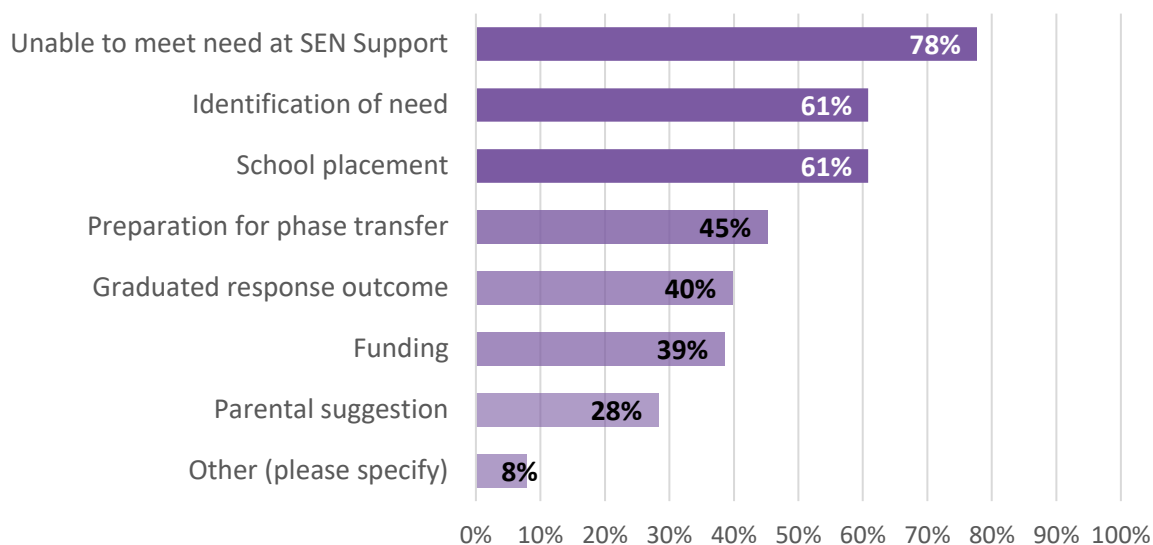

Figure 2. Q9) What is the main reason for making a request for an EHC needs assessment? (Tick all that apply)

Out of the 13 comments, 5 mentioned **getting support in place at school**.

When requests for an EHC needs assessment are made is determined by a variety of factors:

- Identification of need 36%
- Completion of the graduated response 22%
- Workload 15%
- School placement/phase transfer 9%
- Parental suggestion 3%
- Funding 1%

Everyone who completed the survey was asked the following EHC Plan related questions.

70% of professionals who completed the survey had **given written advice and/or instructions for EHC needs assessments, EHC Plans or annual reviews.**

80% said they were **clear about what is required of them when giving advice and/or instructions**.

In response to the question **do you think EHC Plans enable children and young people to get the appropriate support in education and training**:

- 73% said sometimes
- 18% said yes
- 8% said no
- 1% were unsure

The answers to **do you think the provision described in EHC Plans helps children and young people to progress in education and training** were similar:

- 70% said sometimes
- 24% said yes
- 4% said no
- 2% did not know

SEN Support

78% said they have a clear understanding of when and how to use SEND services and support.

In response to the question **do you think that SEN Support enables children and young people to access the appropriate help in education and training**:

- 67% said sometimes
- 23% said yes
- 7% said no
- 3% were not sure

When asked **what do you think are the main challenges around SEN Support** the most frequently chosen options were funding 83% and time 65%.

Knowledge and understanding of how to meet individual needs and different views of professionals versus parents/carers were both selected by 50% of professionals.
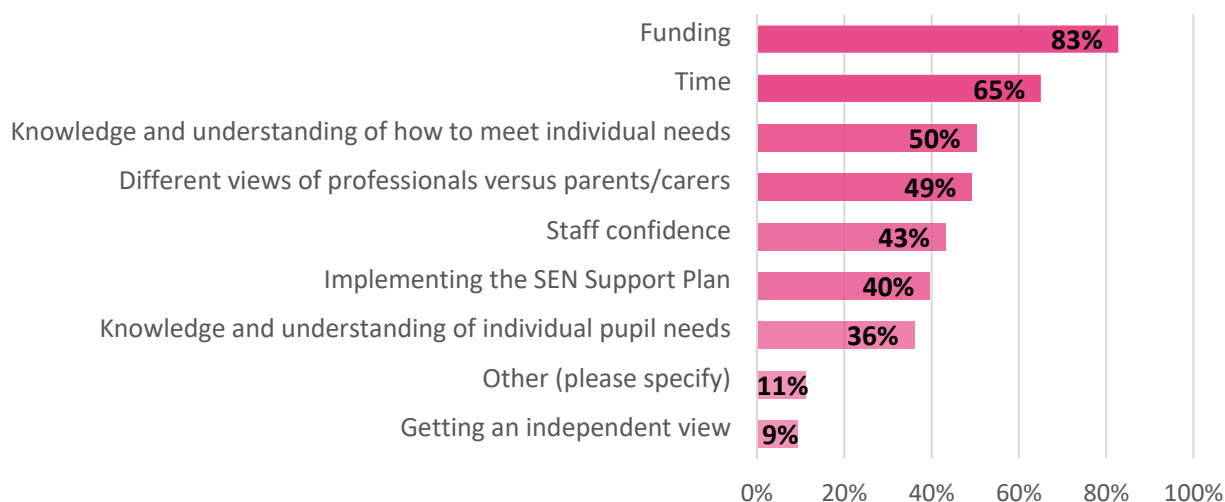

Figure 3. Q17) What do you think are the main challenges around SEN Support?

Comments given highlighted:

- Issues with funding, staffing, and facilities
- SEN Support being impacted by ethos and culture
- Unmet needs in relation to particular services or provision
- Difficulties recruiting staff with the appropriate knowledge and experience of SEND
- Lack of advice and support about how to meet needs

Information to support you in your role

The following resources were listed for professionals to tick the ones they know about and the ones they use.

- Just One Norfolk website
- SEND Local Offer website
- SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SEND IASS)
- SEND Forum
- National organisations eg National Autistic Society, Contact
- NHS Neurodevelopment Services for children and young people
- Schools and Learning Providers website
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) guide
- SEND Bulletin
- Training
- Norfolk Community Directory
- Inclusion and SEND Learning Network
- eCourier
- Provision Expected at SEN Support (PEaSS) guidance
- Help You Choose website
- Norfolk Area SEND Multi Agency (NASMA) Group
- SEND Local Offer Twitter
- NHS Core Provision to support the health needs of children in schools
- SEND Local Offer Facebook
- Norfolk Area SEND Strategy (NASS) Core Group or Priority Action meetings
- SEND Community of Practice
- SEND Communication Guide
- SEND Clinical Network

The **information resources that professionals know about and use when working with children and young people with SEND**.

- 66% know about Just One Norfolk and 59% use it
- 63% know about SEND Local Offer and 50% use it
- 40% know about the Norfolk Community Directory, a community resource, which is part of the SEND Local Offer and 30% use it.

The 6 other resources that were most known about <u>and</u> used were:

- SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
- SEND Forum
- National organisations
- NHS Neurodevelopment Services for children and young people information for schools and early years professionals
- SEND Bulletin
- Training

[Provision Expected at SEN Support (PEaSS) guidance](#), the [eCourier](#) and [training](#) were the resources that were known and used in equal measure by professionals.

Professionals had relatively low awareness of and use of local social media resources and specific resources such as the Clinical Network, the Norfolk Area SEND Strategy Core Group (now the known as the Norfolk Area SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy (NASAPS) Community of Practice) and the [SEND Communication Guide](#).

In the comments, over a third of all professionals mentioned a voluntary organisation that they went to for help when working with CYP with SEND. A quarter mentioned an educational psychology service. Various health services and local authority commissioned specialist SEND services were also frequently mentioned.

"I can't sing the praises of School 2 School Support Service enough!"

"Nansa/Sensational Families are wonderful"

"English as an Additional Language (EAL) Advisory Team - has helped massively with supporting EAL learners with potential SEND needs"

One respondent questioned why the [SEND Local Offer](#) did not have a comprehensive list of all services. "Why isn't there a clear A-Z list of all of these services on the local offer website that is EASY to find. It wouldn't be hard."

The job role, level of knowledge and expertise is likely to be an influencing factor in the resources that professionals use.

When asked whether they felt **better informed about SEND services and support than 12 months ago**:

- 43% said the same
- 41% said yes
- 12% said no
- 4% did not know

A few professionals shared their experiences about **information sharing about SEND services and support.** Training to improve professionals knowledge and understanding about SEND services and support was mentioned frequently.

"Staff recruitment training and retention is our biggest problem we simply do not have the staff to support the increasing need in the classroom"

"Being actively involved with meeting, training and other professionals"

Core consultations were mentioned frequently and are valued:

"Core consultations have been really valuable, along with targeted support from SEND & Inclusion team. Training sessions from SEND & Inclusion team have been useful & informative"

Professionals selected **the SEND topics that they need training in the most**.

The most needed training was in social emotional mental health needs and strategies to support 46%.
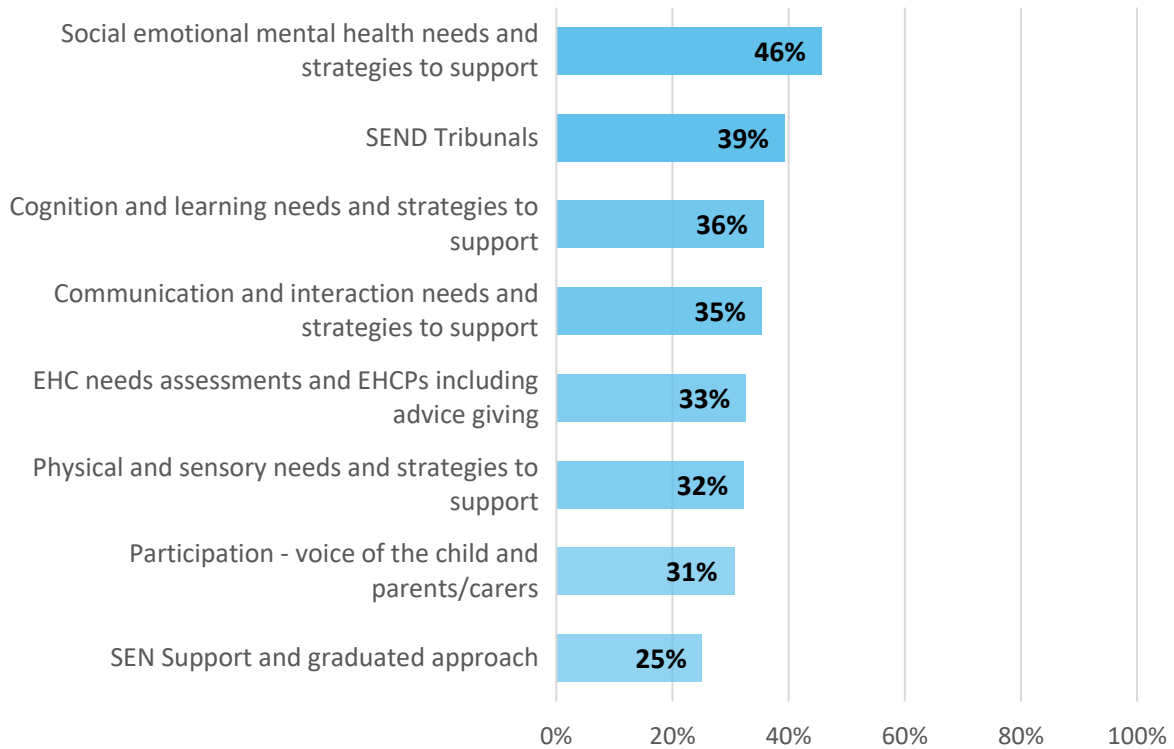

Figure 4. Q21) What are the SEND topics you need training in the most?

Professionals selected **the three areas of training within SEND that would have the greatest impact on their role**.
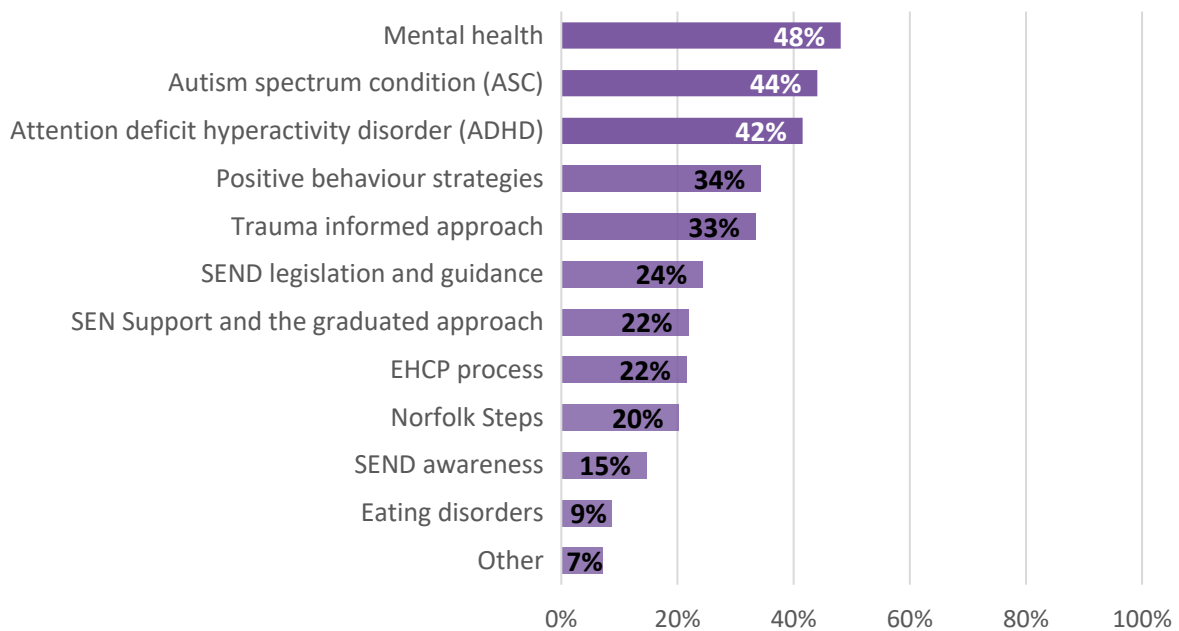

Figure 5. Q22) Which three areas of training within SEND would have the greatest impact on your role?

The top three areas of training were:

- Mental health 48%.
- Autism spectrum condition (ASC) 44%
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)/attention deficit disorder (ADD) 42%

Professionals mentioned a wide range of training under other comments.

Working together

Professionals were asked **do you, your service or organisation work in co-production with parents/carers and/or children and young people**?

- 83% said yes
- 15% said sometimes
- 2% said no

It was a similar response to the question **do you offer parents/carers and/or children and young people the opportunity to give feedback on your service or organisation**?

- 78% said yes
- 17% said sometimes
- 5% said no

Professionals **give parents/carers and/or children and young people the opportunity to give feedback** in a range of ways:

- 65% said questionnaire
- 31% said evaluation form
- 18% said focus group
- 39% said other

Over 40% of professionals gather feedback from parents/carers informally, valuing the importance of regular communication. Over a third gather feedback during meetings, including review meetings and events were mentioned by a small number of professionals.

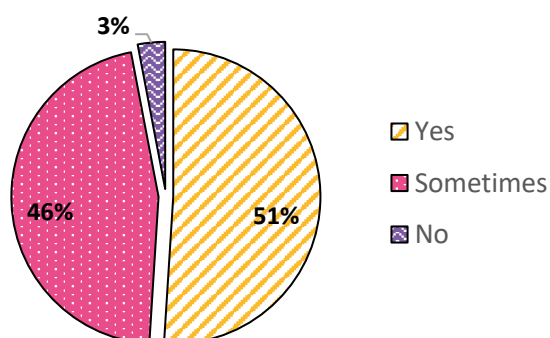Professionals shared whether they **use feedback to make changes within their service or organisation.**

Figure 6. Q26) Do you use feedback given to make any changes within your service or organisation?

Almost 50% have improved how they communicate with children and young people and parent/carers. Almost 25% had held more face-to-face sessions or adapted sessions to meet the needs of children and young people and parent/carers.

"One family fed back about inconsistencies in the medical needs support from our team. We held a meeting with all the staff surrounding their care, invited them and their parents along and we rigorously talked about their care plan so that everybody was singing from the same hymn sheet."

"We used to run a SEN group and parents feedback was they enjoyed the group but would like it to run for longer. We increased the session time in response. Families were also not confident that their children would cope with attending a nursery, so we added activities within the group to help support children and parents to build up their confidence to attend."

When asked **do you publish what you have been able to change based on feedback from parent/carers and/or CYP:**
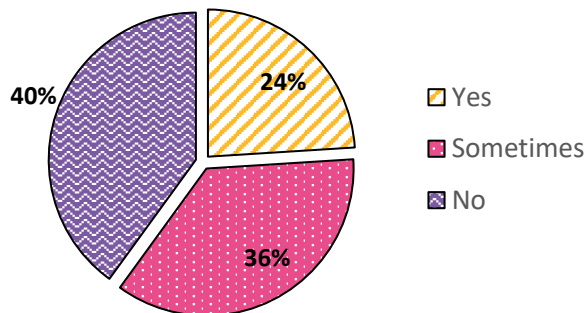
In response to the question **do you publish what you haven't been able to change based on feedback from parent/carers and/or CYP:**
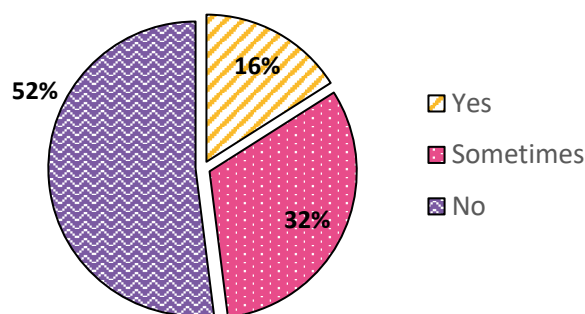
The most common way **professionals involved children and young people and/or parents/carers in the last 12 months** is through consultation. Professionals could select more than one option for this question.
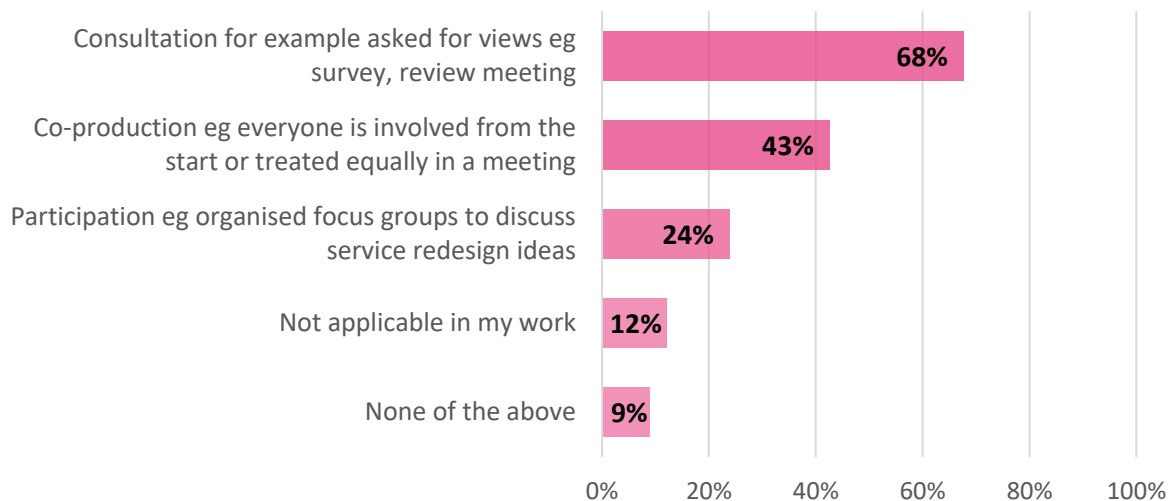
Figure 7. Q29) How have you involved CYP and/or parents/carers in the last 12 months?

65% of professionals said they would be interested in helping improve SEND services and support.

Summary

This year's survey was not as well responded to by professionals. The majority of those who responded to the survey worked in a place of learning and the local authority.

Most professionals worked across all areas of need and all age groups, with fewer working with the 17–25 age group.

The most common reason for an EHC needs assessment was needs not being met at SEN Support and to support the identification of need. Most professionals were clear about what was required of them when giving advice/instructions for an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Most professionals had a clear understanding of when and how to use SEND services and support. The main challenges were funding, time and knowledge and understanding of how to meet needs.

Information and resources were not as well known and used as might be expected by professionals. Most professionals felt as well or more informed than they did 12 months ago.

Training was frequently mentioned in comments through the survey, suggesting it is valued and needed. Training on social, emotional, and mental health was most wanted.

There was a sense that professionals seeking the view of children and young people and their parents/carers through consultation, but it is not commonplace for the outcomes of engagement activities to be published.