



# Warrington Annual SEND Survey 2025

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January 2026



# Our Annual Warrington SEND Survey

## Executive Summary

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This report documents parent carer's views and experiences across Education, Health and Social Care of children (age 0-25) with SEND in Warrington

The survey was **live from 11<sup>th</sup> November – 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025 (6 weeks)** and has been distributed to Warrington Parents & Carers (WarrPac) members mailing list, shared across all SEND services in Warrington, multiple social media platforms along with education settings.

Parent Carer's anonymously shared their feedback on Education, Health and Social Care services answering both quantitative and qualitative questions to share their views on 'what's working well' and 'areas for improvement'. **The survey received 488 responses, a significant increase of 146%** from the previous year. Breakdown of survey audience can be found on slide 3.

The results mirrored many of the same key finding as last year;

- **Timeliness;** Waiting times remain long to access services and parent/carers share this is to the detriment of their child's development progress and well-being, however, parents highlighted once in a service/process this does improve slightly, except for the Neurodevelopmental (ND) pathway which continues to have extreme waiting times with some reporting up to 6 years!
- **Communication;** Parent/carers report inconsistencies of communication and the lack of awareness of progress updates regarding their child. Whilst some school's/services have improved this and parent/carers are happy, many report this is still a key issue. This year's survey also highlighted frustrations around a lack of awareness as to why their child does not qualify for support/services leaving them feeling alone and unsupported.
- **Consistency of service delivery/quality of output;** There are pockets of excellence across all services, however, survey results show lack of consistency with parent carers sharing very different experiences. Parent/carers also highlighted this year, that a young person 'masking' is having a huge impact on the ability to access services.

Please note that the majority of comments and views shared were heavily weighted on 'areas for improvement' nevertheless **excellent best practices were identified** for each service and **should be used to promote positive ways of working** moving forwards. These have been summarised across slide 4,5 and 6

**Read on for a breakdown of what parent's and Carer's told us in more detail....**

# Warrington SEND Survey 2025 Audience



## Survey Period

11<sup>th</sup> November - 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025

## Survey Responses



488

## Education



100%

## Health



96%

## Social Care



90%

(% completion per section)

## Diagnosed



64%

## With a EHCP



49%

Setting fully meets child's needs 52%

Last 12 months Accessed Health Services 66%

66%

Last 12 months Accessed Social Care 22%

22%

## Covering all Warrington post code area



WA1 11%

WA2 18%

WA3 7%

WA4 28%

WA5 28%

WA13 5%

Other 2%

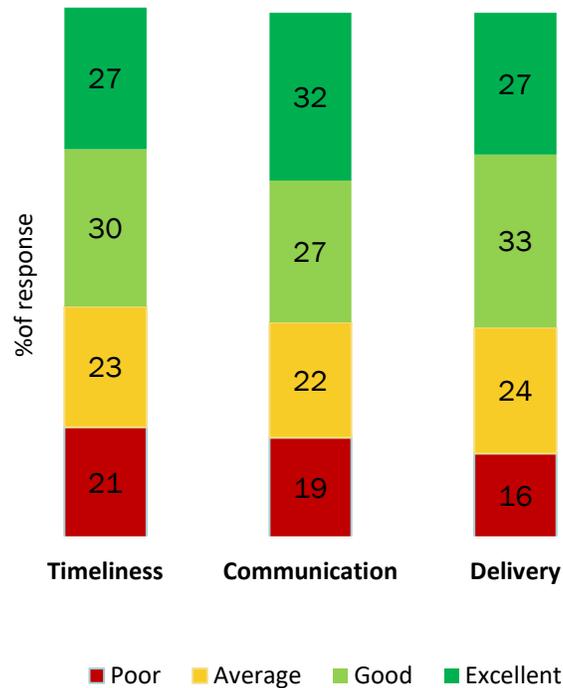
## Response breakdown by age and education setting



	0-4	5-10	11-15	16-19	20-25	Total
Mainstream	20	202	99	18	2	341
Mainstream DP	4	17	18	-	-	39
Specialist IN Borough	4	26	29	8	1	68
Specialist OUT of borough	-	3	6	8	1	18
Alternative provision	-	-	1	1	-	2
Home Educated	-	1	-	2	-	3
EOTAS	-	-	4	1	-	5
Adult/social care provision	-	-	-	1	2	3
NEET	1	1	2	1	4	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>488</b>

# Education 12-month overview

Thinking about your child/young person **education setting during the last 12 months**, how do you rate the following...



Based on 488 responses

## Identified best practice

### Timeliness: In recognising needs and providing/actioning support

- Intervention plans produced in consultation with parents/school as soon as needs are identified
- Parental concerns are listened to and responded to
- Teachers are proactive in identifying child/YP needs
- Engaged staff with SEN knowledge to understand child/YP behaviour

## Areas identified for improvement

- Proactive recognition of child/YP needs to reduce parents need to continually chase/ask school for support to be implemented
- Increase ALL staff awareness & knowledge of SEND. Recognise dysregulation & implement support at earliest opportunity (academic and behavioural)
- Support parents' referral requests for assessments

### Communication: Relationship between school/parents

- Meetings with teacher/SEND lead available on request but timetabled to occur once a term
- Emails acknowledged and responded to efficiently
- School listen and try to address issues, working together with family
- School always listen to and acknowledge concerns
- We receive regular updates on our child's progress

- Acknowledge emails/concerns raised by parents
- Proactive communication regarding support the child/YP is receiving/ or support that cannot be provided
- Visibility of IEP and regular feedback against targets
- Work together with parents on actions to improve child/YP experience within school

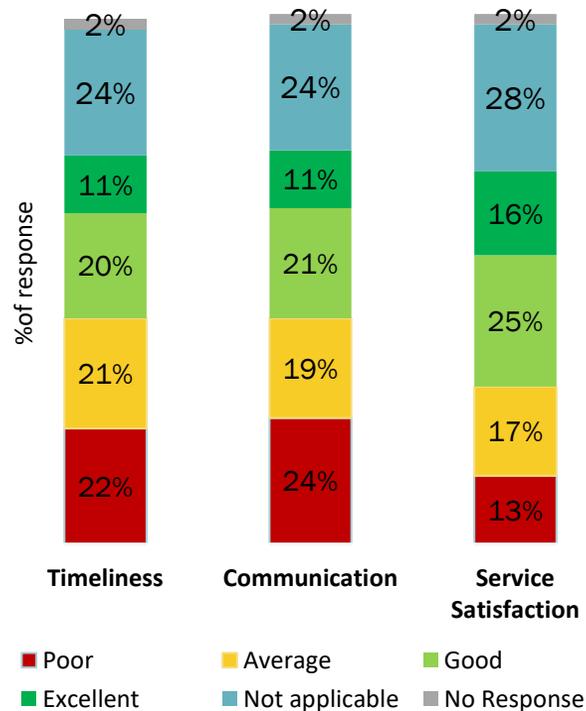
### Delivery of support: Child enabled to access learning appropriately

- Interventions timetabled during the week with additional support staff that does not impact on learning in class.
- Proactive in identifying the start of dysregulation and implementing actions to minimise impact
- Fantastic support staff

- Understand child's best learning type and adapt to support engagement e.g. visual learner
- Better awareness of reasonable adjustments to support SEND students learn effectively
- Implement actions outlined in EHCP
- More support staff to enable children to access all aspects of school life

# Health 12-month overview

Thinking about your child/young person dealing with **Health Services in the last 12 months**, how do you rate the following...



Based on 363 who access health in the last 12 months (Includes those who are waiting an appointment)

## Identified best practice

### Timeliness: Seen/reviewed in expected time in relation to the communication about your appointment/service waiting time

- Quick to respond to queries (ADHD Nurses)

## Areas identified for improvement

- Improve assessment wait times– some on the list for 5 years
- More timely feedback, written or verbal following appointments – Parent feel they have to chase for reports

### Communication: Being kept informed of progress and next steps or outcome

- The text system is effective
- Regular updates on child's progress (SALT Therapy)

- Communicate process/expectations at the start
- Respond to email/answer messages
- Better sharing of information between health, school and parents when delivered in school setting about outcome/next steps
- Clear information as to why child is being discharged from service/clear signposting to other support services

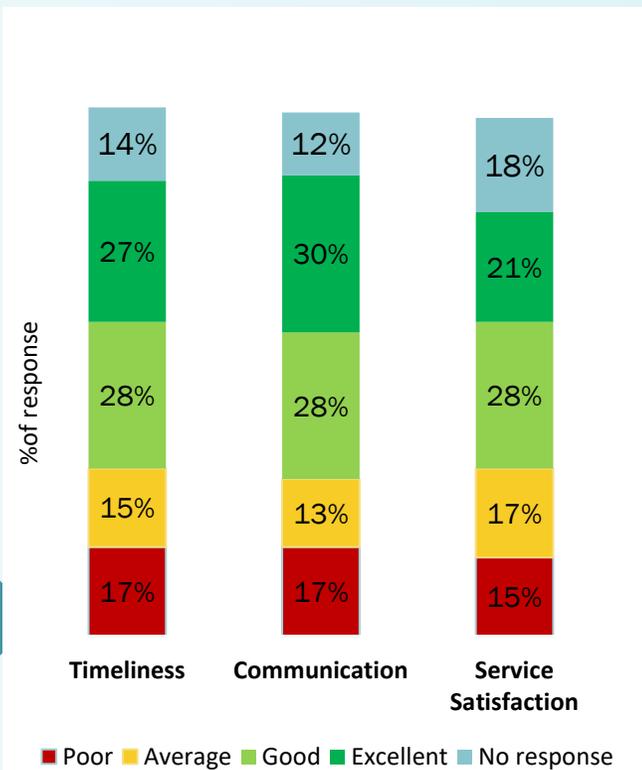
### Satisfaction of service: received during appointments

- Appointments ran on time.
- Professionals taking the time to listen and explain things clearly
- Useful information received during appointments focussing on child's specific need

- More consistency required across services, very different experience depending on the service accessed
- Professionals to read basic development history prior to appointments
- Option to speak with professionals without child

# Social Care 12-month overview

Thinking about your child/young person and **social care support in the last 12 months**, how do you rate the following....



Based on 109 who access social care in the last 12 months (includes those who referrals have been accepted or in progress)

## Identified best practice

## Areas identified for improvement

### Timeliness: Support was provided quickly after concerns were raised

- Family Support Worker was easy to work with, and assessment was very detailed

- Reduce assessment waiting time and outcome to avoid child reaching crisis stage
- Ensure parents views have been captured on referral forms to ensure referral reflects family correctly
- Parent friendly guide to social care services to help parents navigate and understand the support offer

### Communication: We were listened to and considered; I felt respected and valued as a parent/carer in decision-making

- FSW (Family support worker) listened to concerns and communicated well throughout

- Actively listen to parent's concerns with compassion and understanding
- Review the process of submitting referrals to ensure parents/child's view are captured
- Review social care criteria – parents feel it is left open to social workers opinion/interpretation

### Delivery of support: The support was tailored to our specific needs; services worked well together to support my child

- Early hep TAF (Team around the family) meeting enable parents and school to connect and work together

- Staff awareness and knowledge of SEND & the impact this has on the young person and family.
- Staff training on SEND support offering of other services to enable accurate and effective signposting
- Ensure TAF meetings involve all relevant professionals, booked in a timely manner, minutes taken and actions followed up



# RESULTS

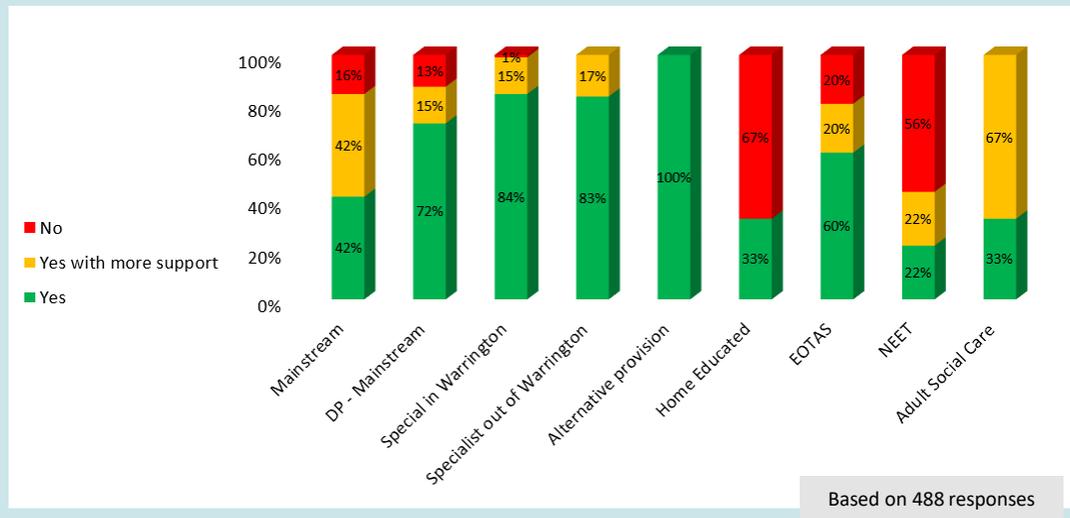
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**Warrington Annual SEND Survey  
2025**

# Education Setting

Across all education settings, 52% parent carers felt their current education setting met their child's needs

Do you feel your young person's **current education setting/learning environment is suitable and meets their needs**



- **58%** parent carers of children in **mainstream alone**, do not feel the setting is suitable and meets their child's needs
- Home educated and NEET also emphasise this is not best suitable for their child's learning needs

## Identified area of improvement

- More TA support required for cognitive, learning and early identification of dysregulation within the classroom
- The school environment; class sizes & sensory support access
- Staff awareness of SEND and the understanding and impact of masking
- Ability to meet a child's SEMH needs

Do you feel the **staff in your child's education setting** have a good **understanding of their needs** and that support is in place?



- **69%** of parent carers feel the education setting have **ALL** or **some support** in place
- The results identify that when the young person **progresses through their education** the **understanding** of their **needs decreases**, this coincides with the young person becoming more **independent, aware of their own needs** and **parent/carers** having **less interaction** with the **education setting**.
- Where parent carers and education have good communication the greater the understanding of the child/YP needs are

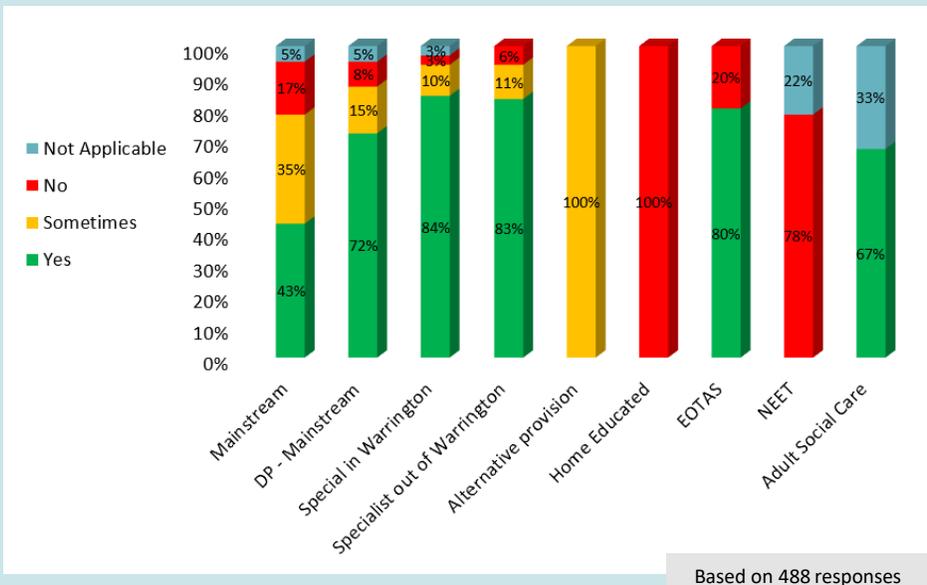
## Identified areas for improvement

- Staff awareness & knowledge of SEND and the impact of this on the child's learning and development
- Staff awareness of masking and the impact this has on the child and family
- More SEMH support available in schools
- Services/education to work together – one approach and share information
- Acknowledge parents concerns when referrals are requested

# Reasonable adjustments in Education

52% of parent/carers feel reasonable adjustments are made to allow their young person to learn effectively

Are **reasonable adjustments** made for your young person in their education setting to **allow them to learn effectively and to join in at unstructured times?**



## Identified best practice

There are some excellent examples of how schools are supporting our young peoples learning through reasonable adjustments

- Small group sessions
- Brain breaks
- 121 walk and talk breaks
- Sensory equipment
- Uniform flexibility
- Toilet/hall pass
- Communication cards
- Soft landings
- Reduced homework
- Safe space to access
- Quiet lunches
- Reduced timetable
- Allow child to listen to music in class whilst they work

## Area for Improvements

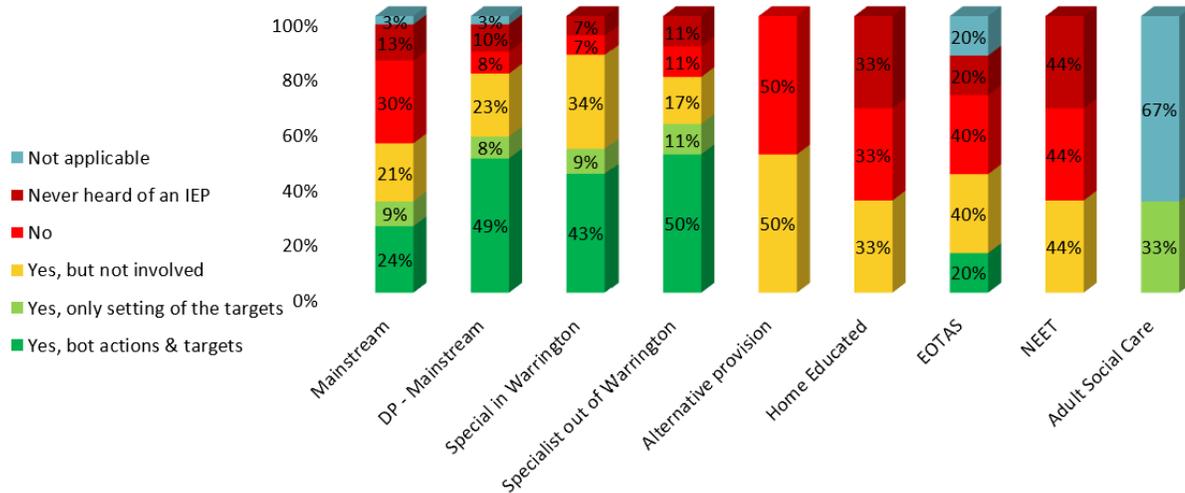
Not all young people are having the same experience of reasonable adjustments across Warrington, it very much depends on the education setting, the class teacher, TA, or number of available staff

- Staff awareness of the impact of sensory on young peoples behaviour and the benefit of introducing reasonable adjustments
- Access to the reasonable adjustments listed above for all
- Reasonable adjustments for anxiety driven behaviour
- Additional support in the classroom to support academic tasks
- Support during lunch and breaks
- Consistency of reasonable adjustments being applied across **all** school staff

# Individual Education Plans (IEP's)

57% of parent/carers acknowledge their young person has an IEP, only 8% were involved in both setting the actions and targets

Does your child/young person have a **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** or learning plan to help **support their SEND in school**? These may also be referred to as termly targets, graduated response, plan do review, learning plans etc.



Based on 488 responses

- 43% of parent carers of young people in mainstream education do not have or have never heard of an IEP - they represent 81% of the total that lack awareness of IEP's
- 86% of parent carers of a child/young person in a specialist provisions in Warrington have an IEP in place

## Identified best practice

- I receive the IEP each term with updated comments as to whether the target was met/not met. Along with the new term's IEP, so I understand what targets are being worked on in the next up and coming school term (Specialist provision in Warrington)
- My IEP's are taken from my child's EHCP and broken into smaller termly targets (Specialist Provision In Warrington)
- Parent/carers receive a copy of their child's IEP termly to sign and acknowledge (primary, Mainstream)

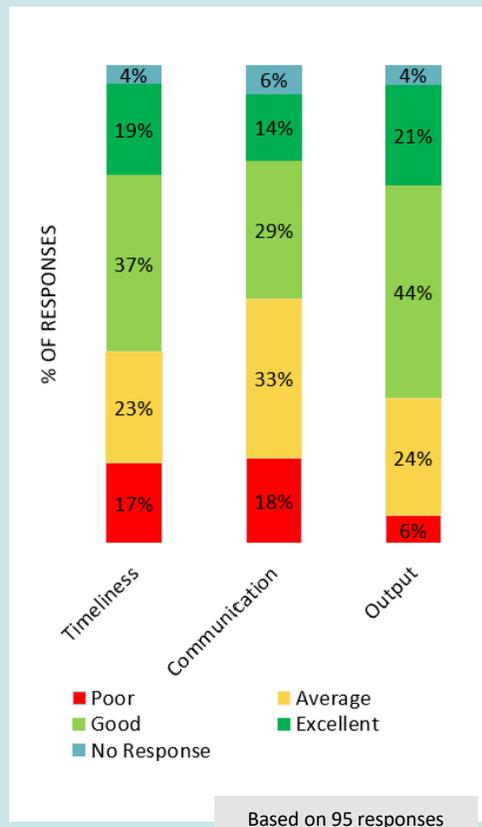
## Area for Improvement

- Awareness that it is best practice that every child with SEND has an IEP/learning plan in place irrelevant of whether they have an EHCP
- IEP's should be created jointly with parent/carers and young people to enable the child to reach their full potential
- All IEP should include actions and targets and be communicated to parent/carers termly on progress

# EHCP Process

19% of survey responses were issued an EHC Plan in the last 12 months, with 63% rating the application process easy to moderate

Thinking about your child/young person EHC assessment process, how would you rate the following...



\*Please note, scores do not reflect the comments left\*

## Timeliness: were the statutory time frames met

- Limited comments left by those who rated good/excellent
- 26% of the responses received advised, EHC assessment was completed within 20-week timeframe
- Many highlighted the timeframes were not met and Parent carers were having to chase up for updates

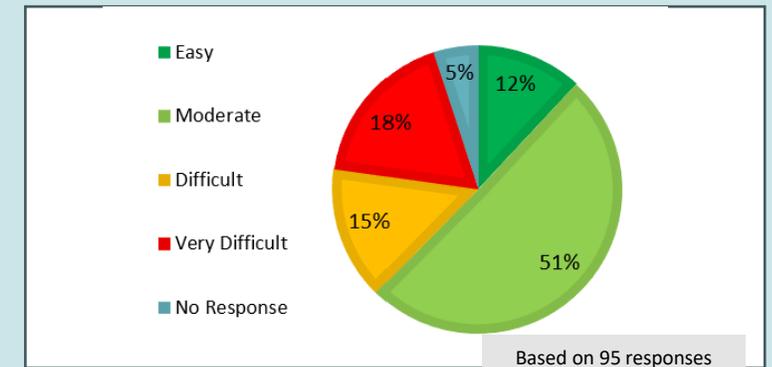
## Communication: Outline of the process and communication at each step

- Limited comments left by those who rated good/excellent
- Not kept up to date at each step
- Difficult to contact via phone and email
- Process overwhelming

## Output: Did the final EHC plan address your child/young person needs?

- Some EHC case workers identified as caring and accountable which helped achieve the desired outcome of a detailed plan
- Plan only reflects the young person due to other external interventions or tribunal.
- Some parent carers felt the EHC Plan was vague, missing details and lack of SMART targets

Overall, how did you find the process from applying for your child's/young person's EHC needs assessment to receiving the final EHC plan?



- SENDIASS support was crucial throughout the process for support & understanding
- Overwhelming, stressful and emotional
- Parent carers not feeling heard throughout the process
- Parent carers feel as though it is a lengthy process without consistent communication throughout and no emails or callbacks received

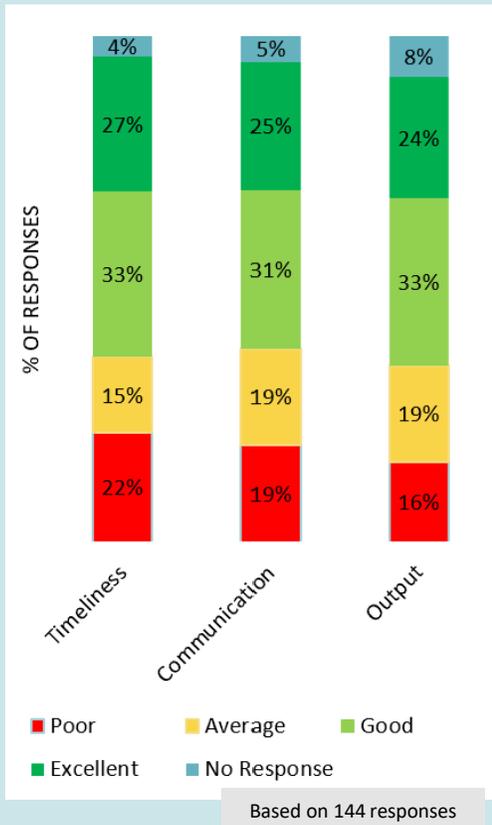
## Parent Carers suggestions of improvements

- Parent carer friendly documented process with timeframes, expectations and ownership

# EHCP Annual Review

30% of survey responses were for young people who have had a EHCP 1 year +

Thinking about your child's/young person's **EHCP Annual Review**, how would you rate the following...



## Timeliness: were the statutory time frames met

- Annual review scheduled within 12 months in some cases
- Some parent carers report paperwork was received 2 weeks prior to the review, however majority did not
- Majority state that there is a significant delay in receiving the final / amended EHC plan after the annual review has taken place

## Communication: Outline of the process and communication at each step

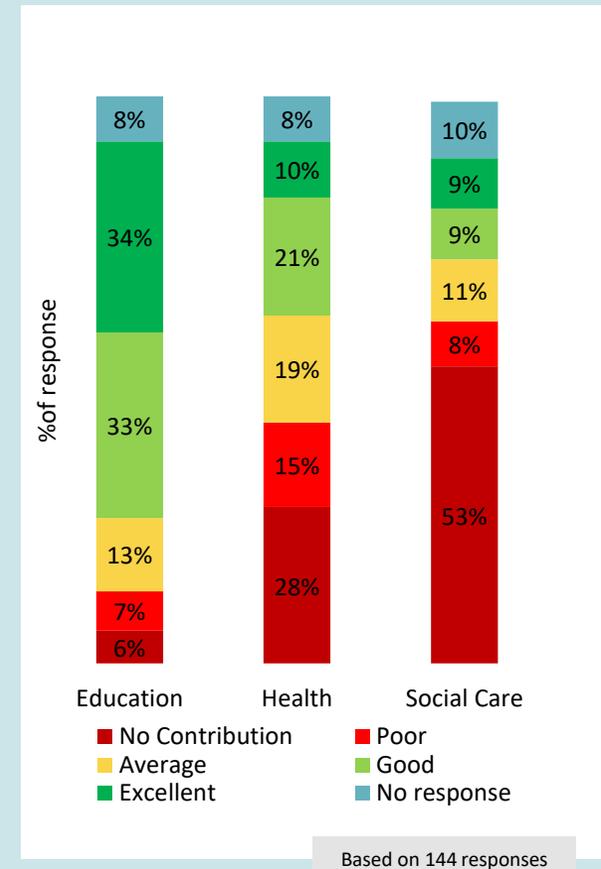
- Some parent carers state communication from school was good on the lead up to the annual review
- Case workers not contactable via phone / email
- Process not clear of what to expect, timeframes, who should be involved and why

## Output: Did the final EHC plan address your child/young person needs?

- Majority of parent carers could not comment on this question due to not yet receiving their plan from the annual review.

Please note, scores do not reflect the comments left\*

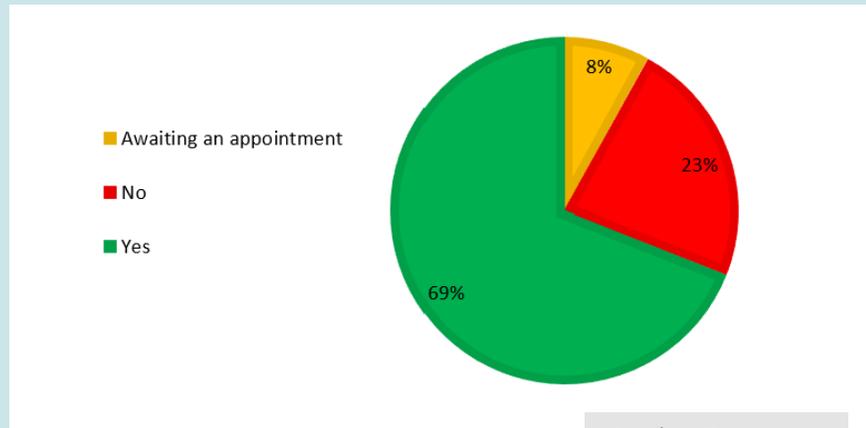
Describe **the contribution** from the following **services in** your child's/young person's **EHC plan** to reflect their current needs



# Health

66% of respondents shared their child/young person has accessed health in the last 12 months

Has your child/young person accessed/used Warrington's health services in the last 12 months



Based on 471 responses

## What is working well

- Comments identify that once your child/YP accesses clinic appointments / assessments, majority of families have a good experience of health services
- Comments also show that there are some excellent professionals within health who go above and beyond for our families, taking the time to listen to parent/carer concerns and offer practical advice, support and guidance to our families

## Areas of improvement

- Parent carers stress the lengthy waiting times to access assessments, diagnosis or support from services is detrimental to their child's wellbeing
- Lack of proactive communication against progress on waiting lists or progress within therapy sessions is a great concern, leaving families feeling un-supported and frustrated
- Comments identify that each health service is inconsistent, in terms of approach and support, it is dependant on the professional you are allocated. All areas of Health services have very much mixed reviews on the experience families have received.

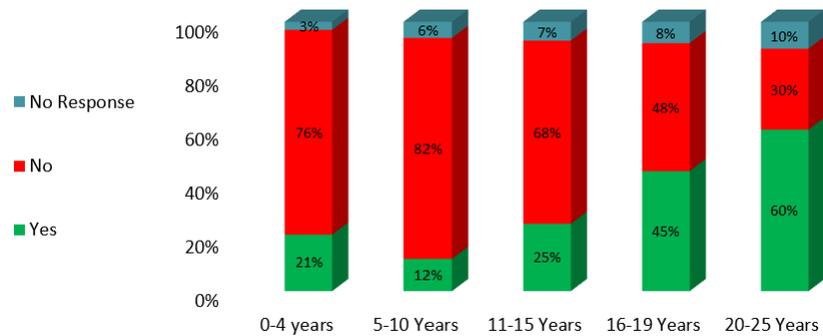
## Services Accessed

- Community Paediatrician
- ADHD Nursing Team
- Autism Nurses
- Speech & Language
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Audiology
- Ophthalmology
- Epilepsy service
- Bladder & Bowel clinic
- Endocrinology
- CAMH's
- Mental Health Team
- Complex care nursing
- A&E
- GP's

# Learning Disability

20% of our response base had a child with a diagnosed learning disability, with less than half being 14+ and eligible for an annual health check

Does your child/young person have a **Learning Disability (LD) diagnosis?**

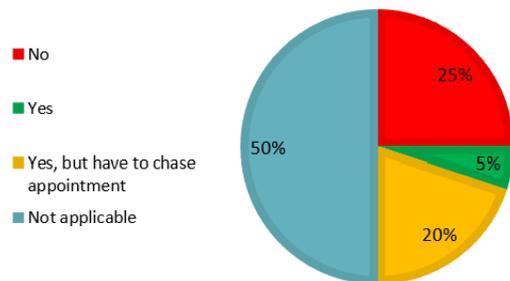


Based on 488 responses

## What Parent Carers said

- Learning disability nurses, Specialist nursing team & complex community nursing team are a fantastic support for families and have been quoted as 'Our lifeline'
- Families feel there is a gap in further education, training and working opportunities for Children / YP with a Learning Disability
- Comments identify that there is a great need for education, knowledge and awareness for Parent Carers, of what is a learning disability vs Learning Difficulty, and how best to support and manage the child / YP needs

If your child/young person has a **Learning Disability** and is **aged 14+** are they receiving an **annual health check** from your GP?



\*Based on 100 young people who were identified as having a learning disability\*

## Annual Health Check Feedback

- 50% of those aged 14+ and eligible for an annual health check have not been contacted / seen by health professional

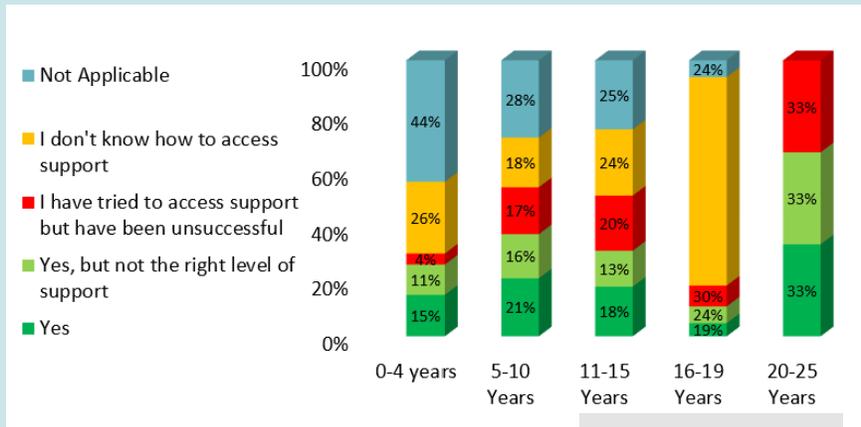
### Feedback from a parent

- Annual health check was fantastic! Very thorough, lots of reasonable adjustments put into place, staff was incredible with my child

# Mental Health

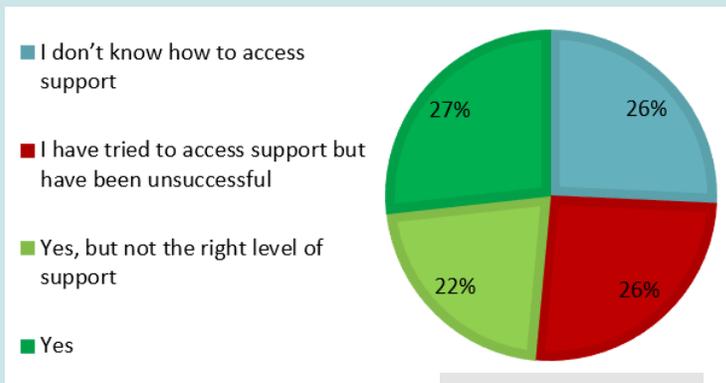
## 73% of Parent Carers shared that their child need's support with their mental health and wellbeing

Have you been able to access the right level of support for your child/young persons mental health and wellbeing?



Based on 444 responses

325 respondents shared that their child/young person needs support with their mental health and wellbeing ....



Based on 325 responses

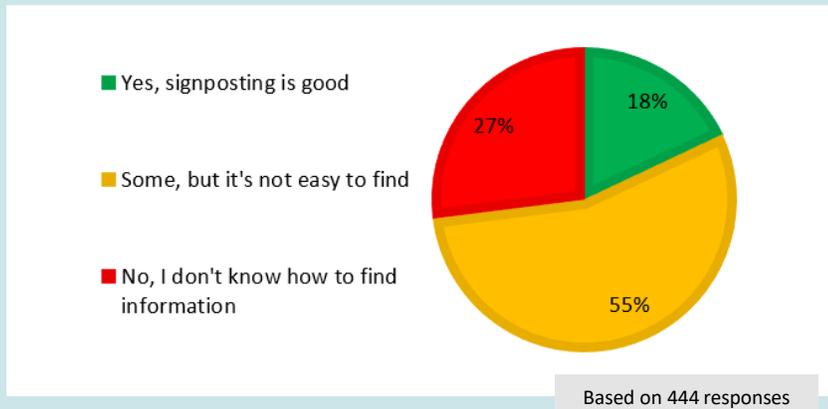
### What Parent Carers said

- **52% of parent/carers are unable or do not know how to access mental health and wellbeing support** for their child, illustrating the urgent need to create visibility around the different level of support offerings and how to access.
- Some positive experiences with CAMHS, however, the **majority of parent carers** comment that **CAMHS is very difficult to get a referral accepted**, there are **long wait times** and **being a neurodivergent child is an additional obstacle** to gain access. The rare few parent carers who did get accepted for an assessment were discharged despite the parent carer still feeling the risk was still present. This demonstrates **the need for effective communication and signposting when discharging** from the service.
- Some parent carers report children are receiving **good support** from the **MHST** (Mental Health Service Team) in schools who provided 6 sessions, which can be adapted if required
- Parents report **long waiting time** for child/young person to **access ELSA** in schools – some over 12 months
- Parent Carers report lack of accountability across different mental health services who the child/young person should sit with leaving families feeling alone, hopeless and frustrated
- Many parents are struggling paying for private therapies but have reached a point of desperation where they feel that is the only option available to support their child
- Need more preventative support as support only available once child/young person reaches crisis point
- Mental health support does not exist for severe and complex LD children

# Accessing Health and Health Resources

## Parent carers would benefit from more awareness on health resources

Are you aware how to **access/find health support** in Warrington for your child/young person



### How our parent carers find health support

Comments from parent carers show;

- 53% Other services inc; WarrPac, Advanced Solution, Early Help and Schools
- 51% - Word of mouth from SEND parents and SEN social media groups
- 40% - Google
- 1% - The NHS & Bridgewater website

% of the 73 responses who noted where they access information  
\*note some respondents noted multiple sources

Please share any **feedback on the Health Services** your child/young person accesses. What is working well? And what improvements are required?

### What Parent Carers said

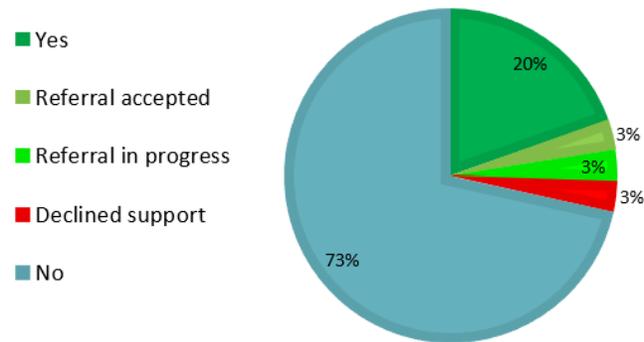
There are clear **pockets of excellence across services in health**, however, the majority of comments focussed on areas for improvement rather than what is working well.

- Vast number of concerns around **waiting times**, and the **method of prioritization** that results in some children being left years without a diagnosis, no option for medication, limited support, lack of access to specialist schools (e.g. ASD) and the impact this has on children's education long term.
- **Good support for those children who are medicated**, however, lack of support following diagnosis if no medication is required or medication has been declined by parent carer / YP
- **Assessments** not accessible / inclusive for those who **need sensory input** whilst in clinic reviews, child / YP becomes extremely dysregulated (Sensory equipment readily available)
- **Short term (6 week) health interventions**, including Mental Health are not long enough for neurodiverse children who need to build trust first
- Parents feel health services are **too quick to discharge** children/young people
- **Lack of proactive communication** against progress on waiting lists or progress within therapy sessions is a great concern, leaving families feeling un-supported and frustrated

# Social Care

18% of respondents shared their child/young person has accessed social care in the last 12 months

Has your child/young person and family **requested/accessed support from Social Care or Early Help** in the last 12 months?



Based on 439 responses

## Services Accessed

- Early Help
- Short breaks – Direct payment/PA's
- Social Worker
- Family support worker

## What's working well

- Pockets of excellence among Social care/early help where parent carers felt they received great support from their allocated worker
- TAF (Team around the family) meetings support building relationships between parent carers and the education setting, along with ensuring reasonable adjustments are implemented within school.

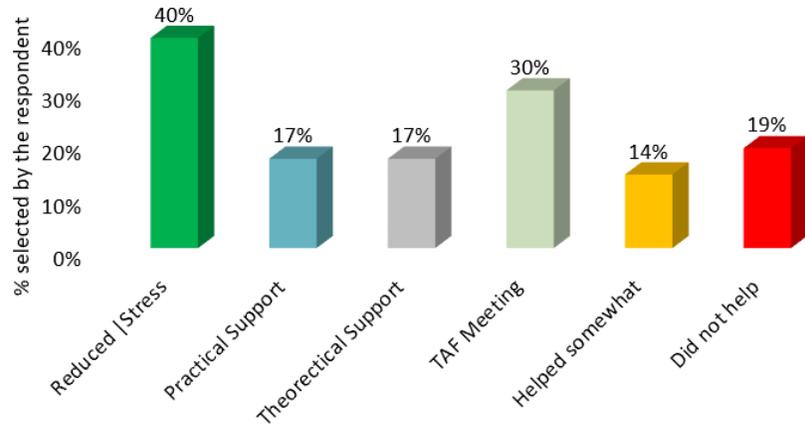
## Areas for improvement

- Enhance visibility of **criteria to access social care support**
  - Many parent carers report being declined for unknown reasons which are not clearly explained
  - Additionally, parent carers state that they were turned down because they were proactive parents, however, this has led to families feeling physically and mentally drained from not receiving support
- **Greater knowledge of SEND required** for ALL social care professionals to be able to provide effective support for the child / YP and their families
- Reduce **waiting times** to access social/family support workers

# Early Help

## 40% of Parent carers who have accessed Early help support, said it reduced stress on their family

What difference has the support from Early Help/Social Care made to your child/young person and family? Please select ALL that apply

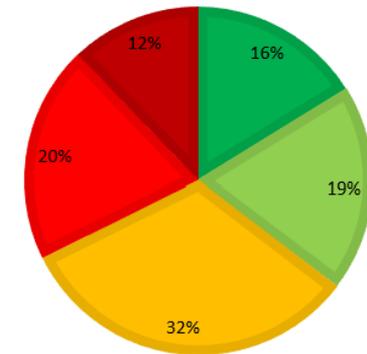


% of the 86 responses who noted the benefits of Social care support in the last 12 months  
Please note some respondent selected multiple differences support made

- **40% of families state Early help/social care reduced stress** for their family, with the majority of parent carers reporting that the main **contributing factor was having TAF meetings**, which helped build parent carer and school relationships, which positively improvement homelife
- Several comments stated that some of our families received a poor experience, feeling unheard, belittled and unsupported when accessing Early Help

Do you feel the professionals supporting you within Early Help/Social Care have enough **knowledge and understanding** of children and young people with **SEND**

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all



Based on 207 responses

There are strong comments to suggest those working in Early help/social care **would benefit from further SEND knowledge**, understanding and awareness, especially for those children with complex needs. Families feel some of the approaches and advise given is rather generic and does not suit the need of the child / YP

**In what areas do you feel Early Help professionals need further training, knowledge and awareness?**

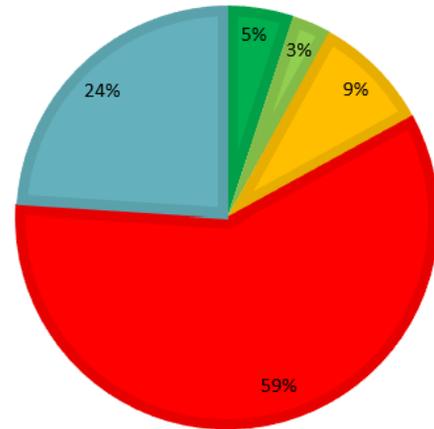
- Autism
- Mental health and neurodiverse young people
- Knowledge on SEND Services to signpost correctly
- Impact of sensory on our children's behaviour
- Impact on family dynamics having a SEND sibling

# Short Breaks

59% of parent carers are unaware of Warrington's short breaks offer

Are you aware of the **Short Breaks offer** in Warrington?

- We receive funding from short breaks and access support
- We receive funding but unable to find a support
- I am aware of the different options of short breaks
- I have never heard of short breaks
- Not applicable



Based on 429 responses

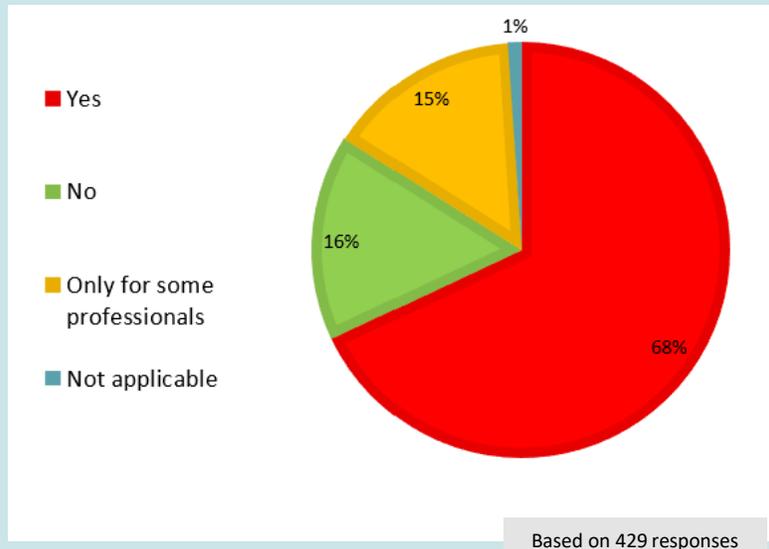
## What Parent Carers said

- Wider **range of respite** is required, that are easier to access
- **PA shortages** are a great challenge
- Short Breaks **assessment is overwhelming**
- Parent carers would like to **understand the short break offer**

# Tell it once

55% of parent carers report having to tell their story more than once

Do you feel you have to **continually tell your story** more than once to various professionals?



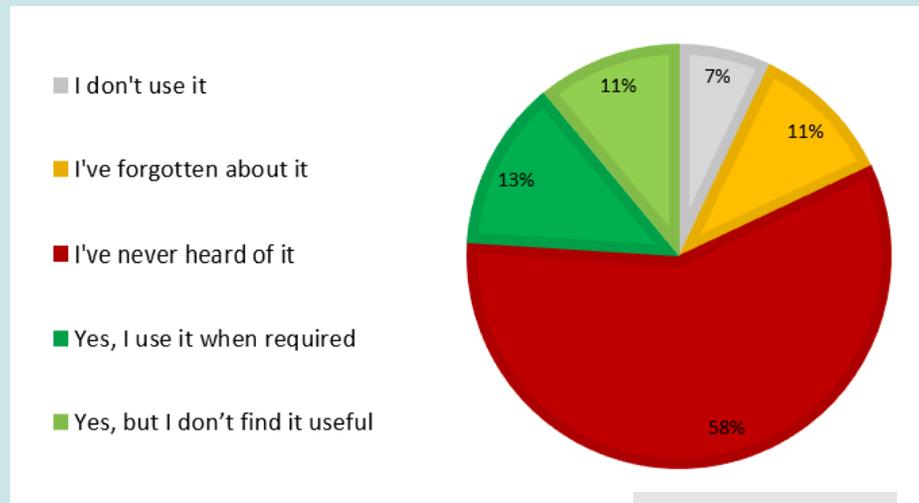
## What Parent Carers said

- Majority of parent carers find they are having to **continually repeat** themselves across ALL services, including Early Help
- Professionals across ALL services, including Early Help are increasingly saying "I have read your notes, but I would like to hear it from yourself"
- Having to dedicate time in reviews, assessments and appointments to repeat the child's / YP history parents, carers feel frustrated and uncomfortable discussing such sensitive information Infront of their child / YP (Self Esteem)

# Local Offer

**58% of parent carers report to have never heard of Warrington's 'Local Offer' identifying the need for more awareness of this resource**

Have you heard of **Warrington's 'Local Offer'**? (Previously known as 'Ask ollie'")



Based on 429 responses

## What Parent Carers said

- Quick reference for information, however, can be outdated
- Tricky website to navigate
- Majority of parent carers have not heard of the local offer
- Too many long documents, not user friendly

### Takeaway Learning

More awareness and learning on how to navigate the local offer is required for all parent and carers.

# Thank You

WARRINGTON  
Borough Council



**NHS**