



Children, Young People and Education

Children's Commissioning Team

SPECIALIST TEACHING AND LEARNING SERVICE IMPACT SURVEY – APRIL 2024

The current Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) has a 3-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place. The SLA commenced in September 2022 and is now approximately halfway through its full term. The STLS has been working towards Council priorities and is referenced in the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) which has been produced to address nine areas of weakness identified by Ofsted in relation to the overall system approach towards provision for children with SEND in Kent.

A previous survey provided valuable feedback into how the service is viewed by schools. Respondents to that survey indicated that the service had impact on children and young people. This survey has been developed to understand in more detail what that impact is. The survey commenced 15th March and ended 26th April 2024. All questions were provided to the STLS prior to publication for consideration and comment and amendments were made to reflect these.

Due to a technical issue, the survey had to be issued twice. A total of 485 people responded, with 138 education colleagues answering the first survey before it was closed, and 347 responding to the second version. The contents of both surveys were the same and most data from the first survey was recovered. The data from both versions of the survey was then amalgamated for each question. Where the data could not be amalgamated, the data from the second survey has been used in this report, due to the higher number of respondents. This is referenced through the report where relevant.

Respondents to the survey were asked to respond specifically in reference to their experience of support from the district STLS. However, some comments did reference the Sensory and Physical Disability STLS which was bought into the Council in January 2023. Where possible this has been noted in the report and relevant feedback shared with the Head of Service for that team.

Part one: Respondents

Question 1: Which STLS team is your school or early years setting covered by?

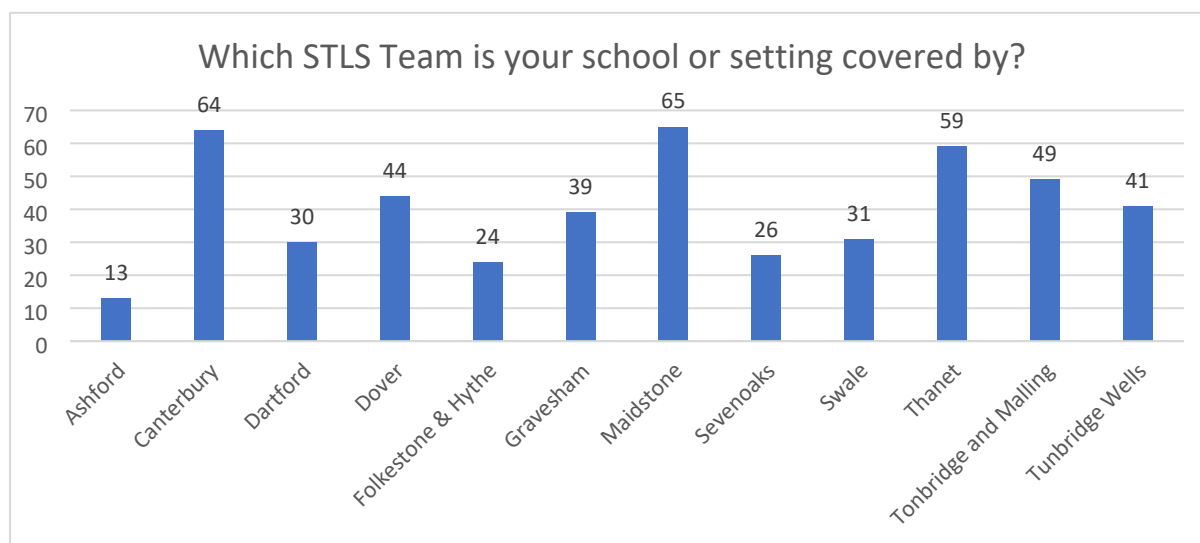


Figure 1: distribution of respondents

Maidstone, Canterbury and Thanet were the districts with the majority of respondents, and Ashford the least.

Question 2: School or setting

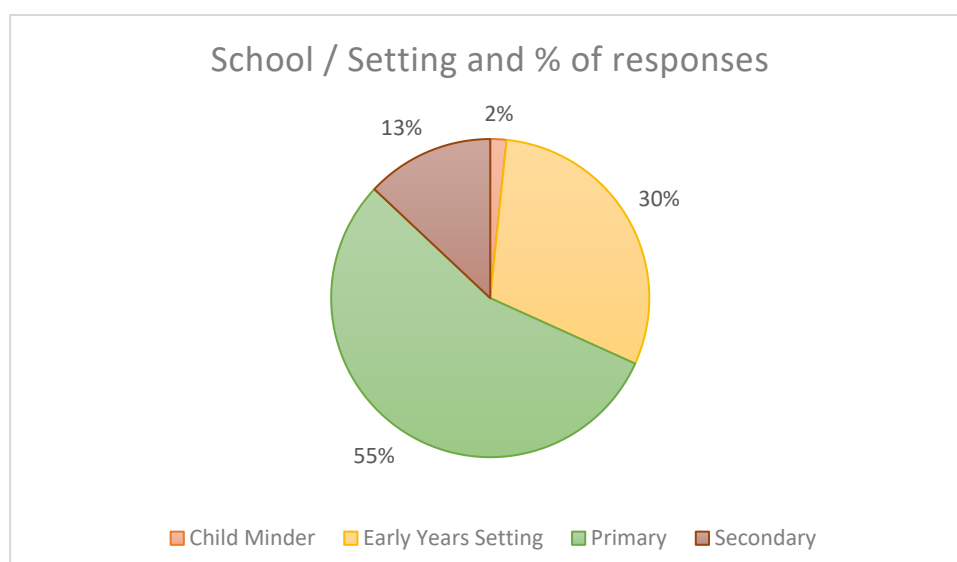


Figure 2: Distribution of responses by school or setting

Performance information from the Local Activity Report indicates that on average STLS engage with more primary schools than early years settings or secondary schools; engaging with approximately 80% of early years settings, 100% primary schools and 88% secondary schools on average each term.

This is reflected in the level of responses to the survey with more than half of the responses coming from primary schools, 30% of responses from early years settings and 13% from

secondary schools. This equates to 54% of all primary schools, 20% of early years settings and 36% secondary schools in Kent participating in the survey.

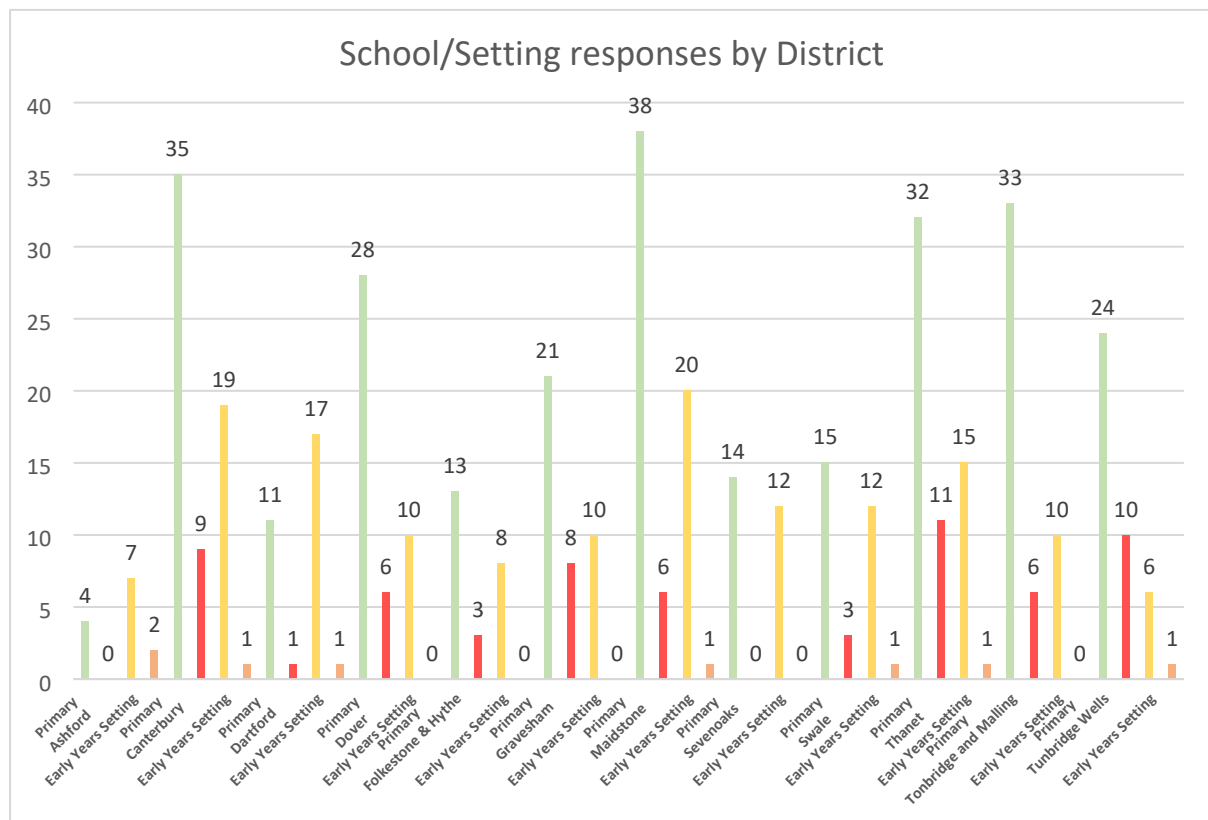


Figure 3: Distribution of responses by school or setting by district

In most districts the highest response rate was from primary schools, which is to be expected given the higher number of primary schools per district compared to secondary schools. Ashford and Dartford had more respondents from early years settings.

No secondary schools responded from Ashford or Sevenoaks.

Question 3: Role in school or setting

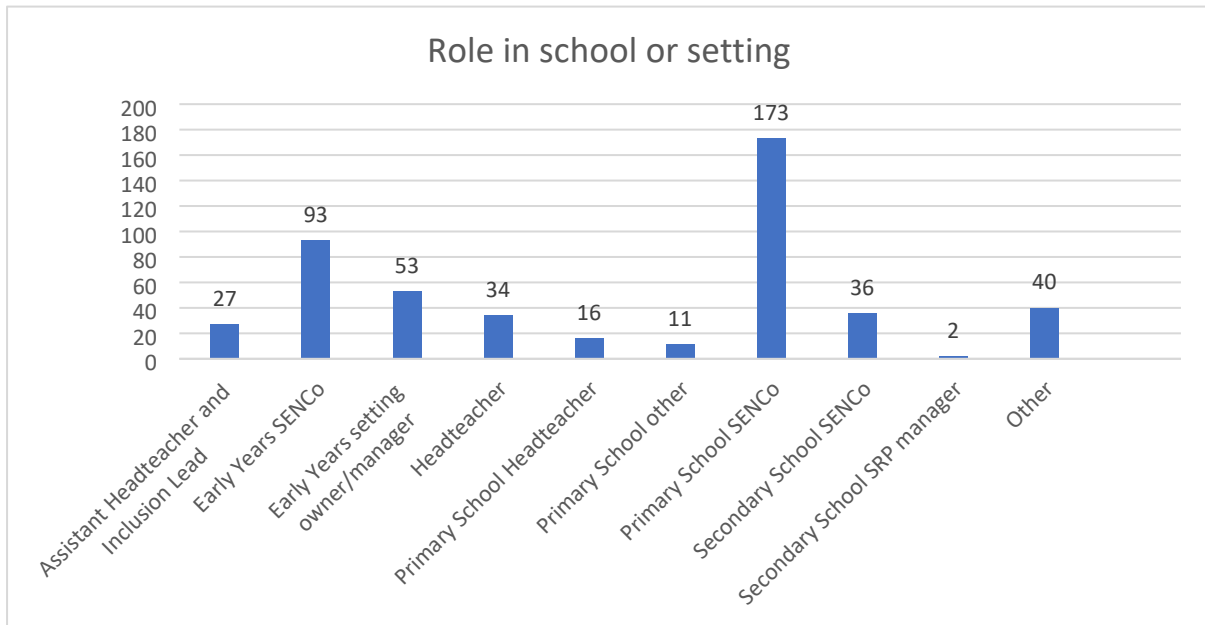


Figure 4: role in school or setting

36% of responses were from Primary School SENCos, followed by 19% from Early Years SENCos, reinforcing that SENCos are primary point of contact within schools for the service.

Question 4: Is your school or setting maintained, an academy or a Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) setting?

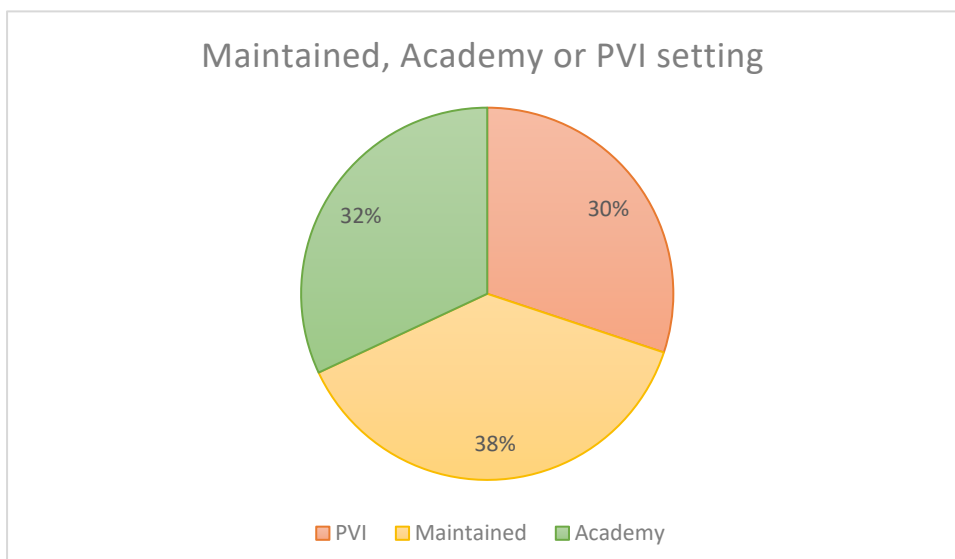


Figure 5: Maintained, Academy or PVI setting

There was an even spread of respondents from each sector, with a small majority coming from maintained schools and settings.

Question 5: Has your school or setting received support from STLS during the academic year 2023-24?

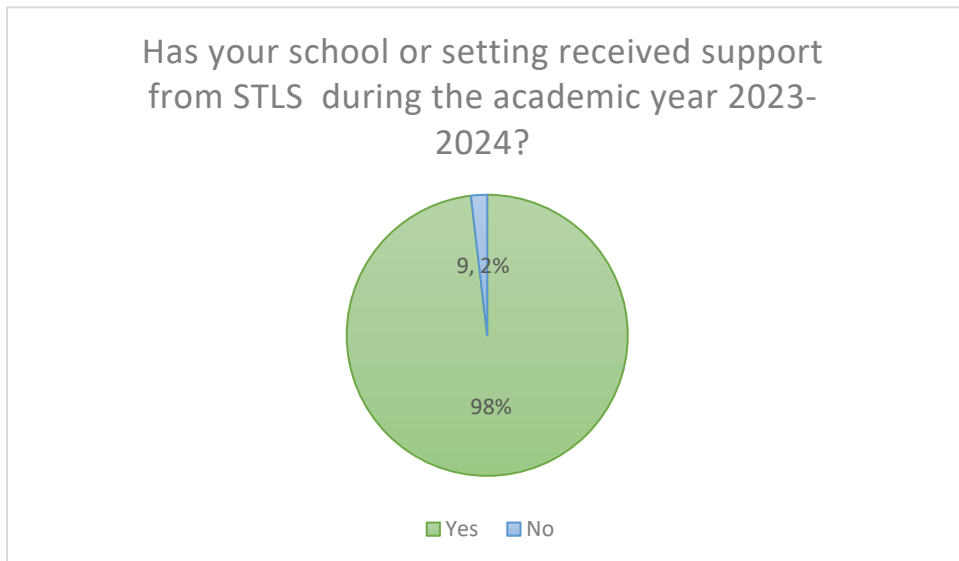


Figure 6: School or setting received support in academic year 2023-24.

98% of respondents had received support from STLS during 2023-24.

Part Two: Support

Question 6: Which services or support have you received?

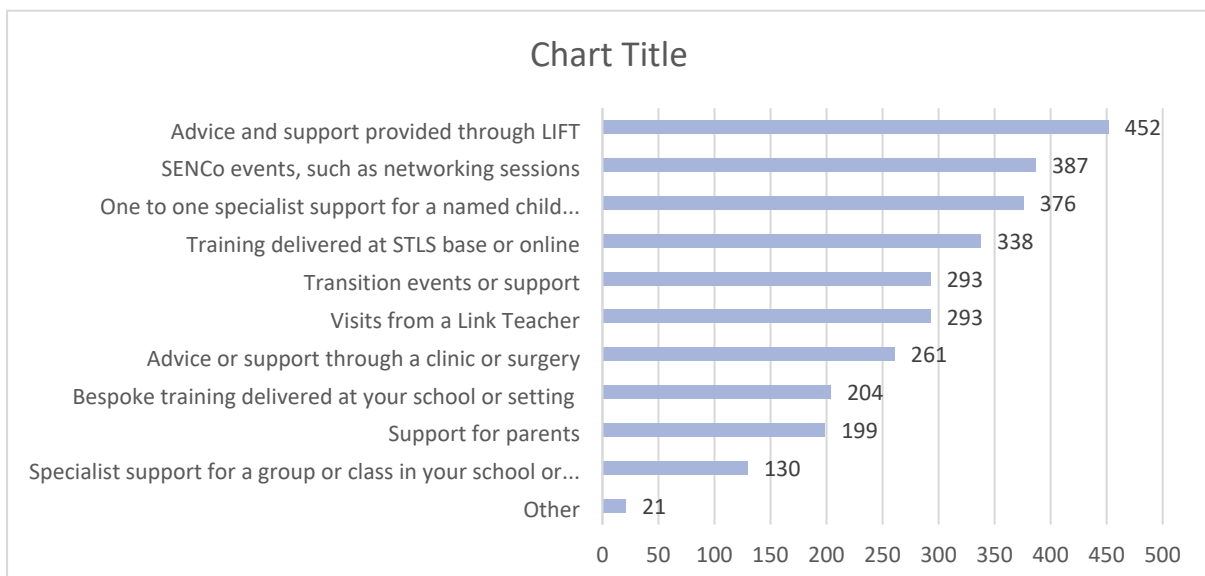


Figure 7: Which services or support have you received?

Respondents were asked to select from a list of services and support that STLS have told us that they provide.

The service most accessed was advice and support provided through Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT). LIFT offers advice and support to SENCOs and is the referral route for the allocation of a specialist teacher.

Currently, several processes to receive statutory support can only be accessed after referral to a specialist teacher or attendance at LIFT and it is possible that this drives some demand through the LIFT process. These include SENIF funding and SENIF Practitioner support in the Early Years, and access to High Needs Funding (HNF) and Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) for school age children. Although attendance at LIFT is not a specified requirement for HNF or EHCPs, the expectation that schools follow best endeavours in meeting a child's need is often associated with fully utilising the local offer which includes LIFT and STLS. Feedback from early years settings and schools indicates that this is a widely held perception and, for an unknown number, LIFT is seen as a tick box exercise. This is evidenced through comments submitted in the survey, including the following comment which was submitted in response to Question 21.

"Have not really had much involvement with STLS. Only go to LIFT to tick boxes for applying for EHCP or SENIF. We are in a collaboration and have our own support."

Some STLS District Leads have also reported that medical referrals such as to Paediatricians and speech and language support require the child to have been presented at LIFT.

The recommendations from the Early Years review (if implemented) and the proposed model for Localities Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion will remove most of these requirements and this may have an impact on the number of early years settings and schools attending LIFT.

The second highest area of support identified was networking events. These events often include an element of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The third highest element of support accessed by respondents was one-to-one support for a named child. This does not necessarily mean that the specialist teacher was working on a one-to-one basis with the child, but that the respondents received advice, guidance and support in relation to that named child. This support may have included an observation of the child in their mainstream setting, advice for the SENCO about techniques or strategies to support the child and setting of targets for the child to work towards. Initial visits would be flexibly followed up with a visit or phone call to establish progress or provide further advice.

Question 7: Did you implement the advice, training or strategies?



Figure 8: Implementation of advice, training or strategies

99% of respondents answered yes to this question. Quotes outlining the benefits and positive outcomes that the service delivers can be found in Part 3 of this report.

Canterbury had two respondents who replied 'no', and Dover, Maidstone, Thanet and Tonbridge and Malling each had one respondent who stated that they had not implemented the advice given. As with any service, it is important to understand the reasons that people may have for not accessing it or following through with the support provided. For this reason, respondents who identified that they had not implemented the training or strategies provided where asked to explain why. Responses to this question are outlined below.

Question 8: If you answered 'no' to question 7, please explain why not

Key Quotes:

"As an Alternative provision we take students from 8 schools in the surrounding area. Some of these students come to us having been to LIFT and some are open to STLS. When I have tried to get STLS support for those who are open, I have been told the strategies only work in mainstream school or that we are too far away from the home school for STLS support to visit. I have also tried to take a couple of students who have been with us for a long time to LIFT to engage STLS support, but again was told that it would not be appropriate for students at an AP. This is a real shame as many of our students would benefit from STLS support."

"As schools now have several children who need bespoke support, we are well-equipped to put in strategies ourselves (and we often have to as the wait time to get a visit from STLS is too long). The ideas that STLS are suggesting can be a little out-dated and not thinking of the teacher having to teach a class of 30. The ideas often require 1:1 facilitation, or at best small group work - this requires a full-time TA which schools cannot afford, so then HNF requests need to be made - it is a vicious circle. STLS just feel like a specialist teaching service more aimed at special settings and not mainstream."

We also had generic and bespoke training which was awful - just reading from a PowerPoint (that despite us paying considerably for the session they were reluctant to share the resource with us!). We didn't implement this as again, we had already been doing it and it taught us nothing new."

"The recommendations were things that we were already implementing within the setting. There were far too many and some unrealistic targets within the setting. Feel that the report could mislead parents into thinking that we were not supporting the child at all. We felt we needed to go through this report with the parent to explain."

Part three: Impact

To understand what is meant by 'impact' respondents were asked to rank the support that they had received on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree) in terms of the following measures. Due to the method used to undertake the survey it was not possible to specify what was meant by a score of "3", for example neither agree nor disagree. Therefore, a score of 3 has been taken as an "average" score and is considered a positive "agree" response.

The following statement preceded the impact questions and recognised that the STLS is one of a several support services available to schools. "STLS is a consistent service across the county. There is some inconsistency across the county with regard to the support services for children with SEN. This is particularly noticeable in the level of health services available. Services provided by the Council, for example: Kent Educational Psychologists, are more consistent. As such, the work of the service contributes to the achievement of these outcomes for children and young people in Kent rather than being responsible for them."

In relation to each question, the total number of respondents answering for each number (one to five) is shown as well as average score per district. The latter being to understand the degree of variation across the county.

STLS is part of a whole system of Inclusion support available to schools. Of the support you have received from STLS, how would you rate their impact in contributing to the following measures?

Question 9: Your school or setting is more able to provide support to a child or a group of children with SEN without the need for an EHCP.

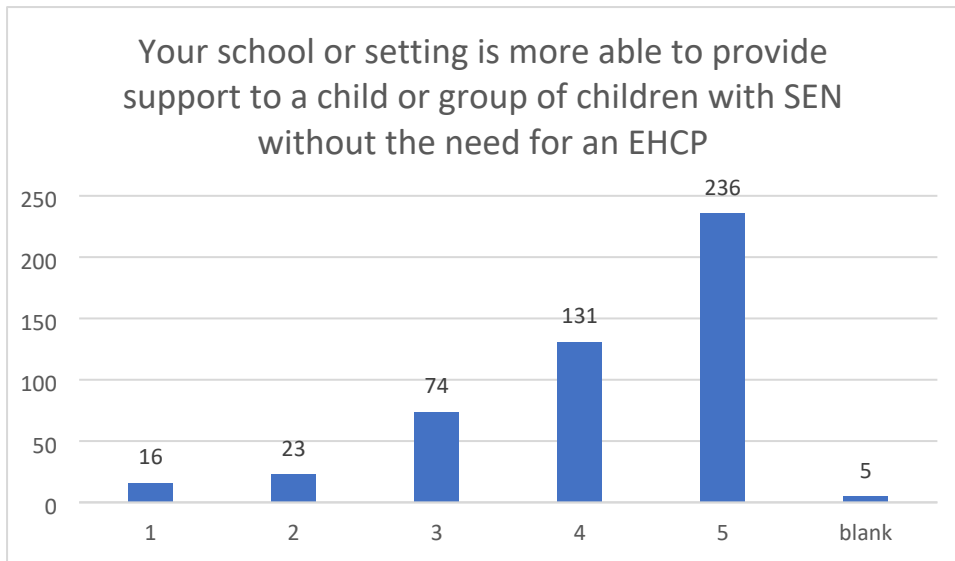


Figure 9: More able to support a child without the need for an EHCP

Most respondents across Kent schools and settings answered positively to this question with 76% of respondents scoring 4 or above.

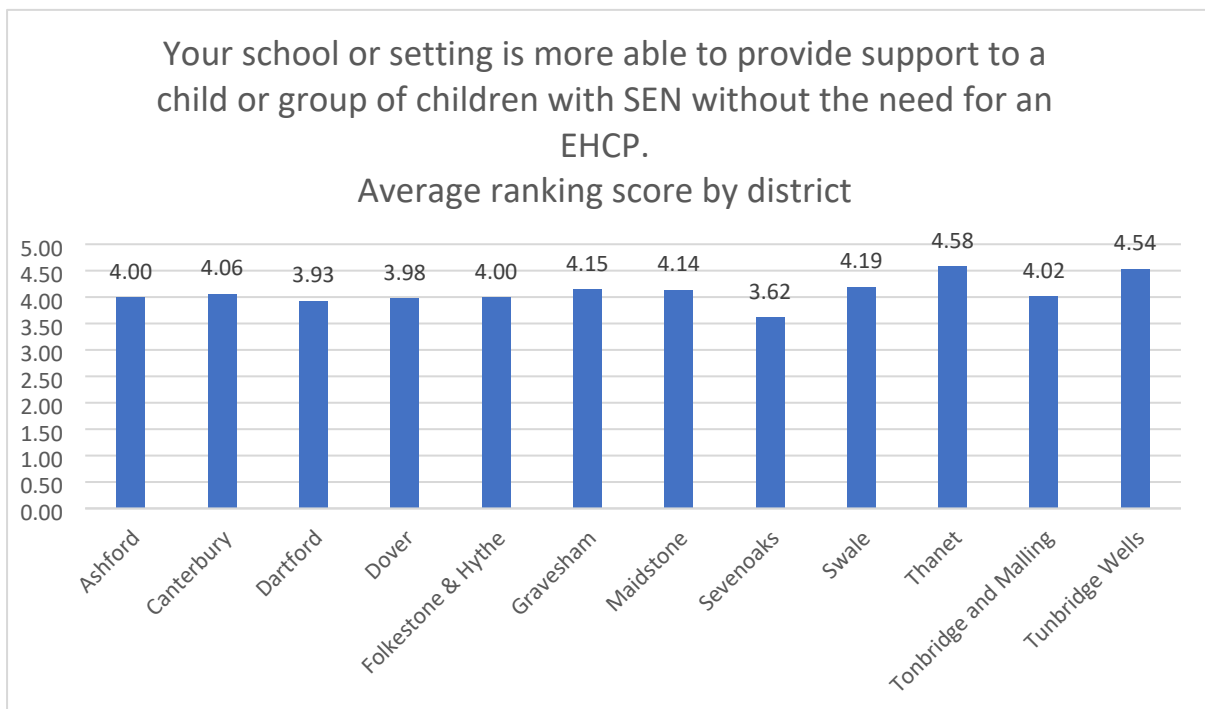


Figure 10: More able to support a child without the need for an EHCP – average ranking by district

Thanet had the highest score for this impact measure at an average of 4.58 out of a maximum of 5, closely followed by Tunbridge Wells at 4.54. The lowest score was for Sevenoaks, with a score of 3.62. The difference being 0.92.

Question 10: Your school or setting is more able to support children with an EHCP to progress towards targets.

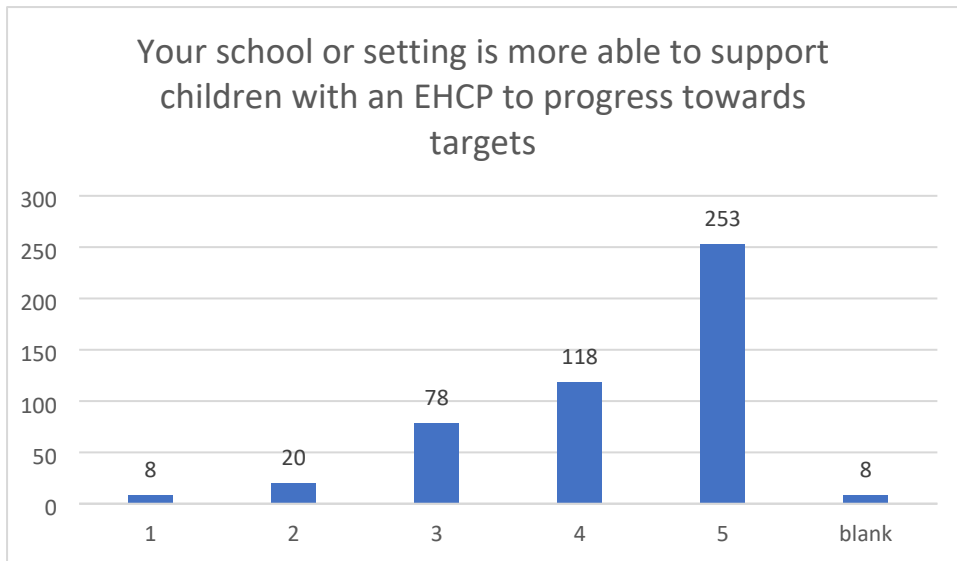


Figure 11: more able to support children with an EHCP to progress

Again, the general response to this question was positive, with 76% of respondents scoring 4 or above on this measure.

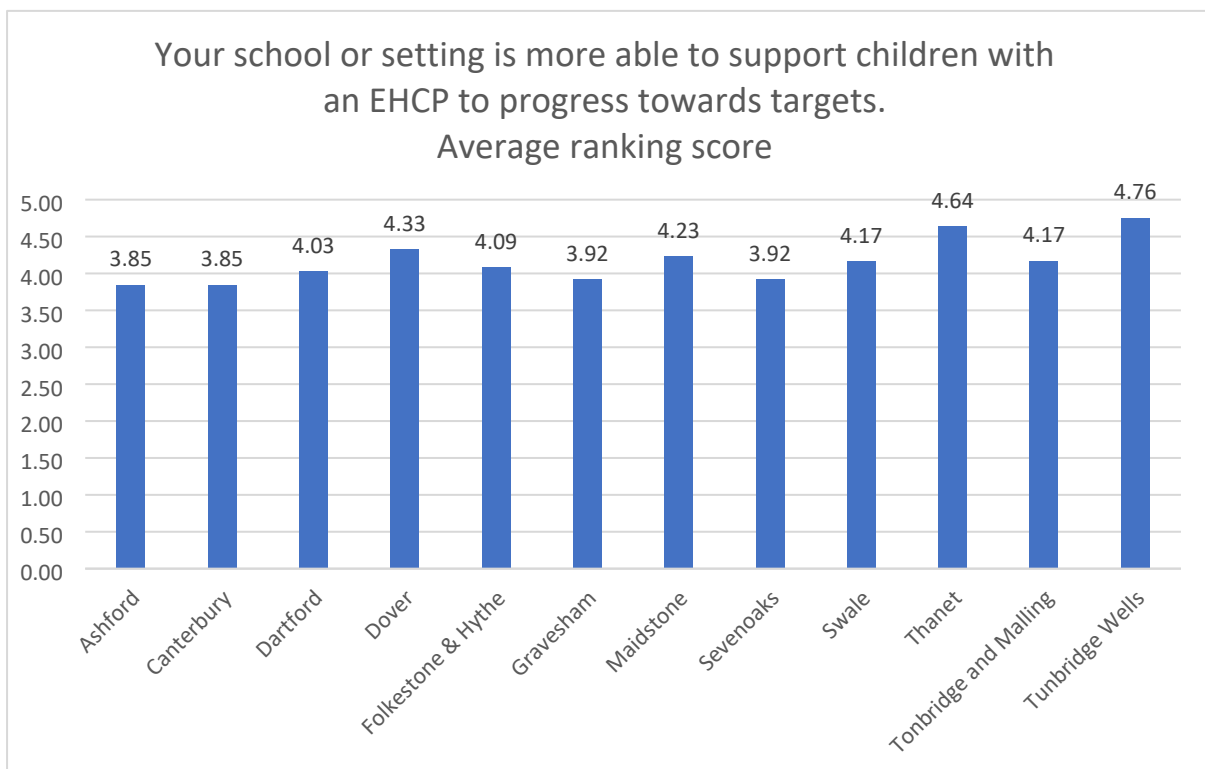


Figure 12: more able to support children with an EHCP to progress – average ranking by district

The highest scoring district for the response to this impact measure was Tunbridge Wells, with an average ranking of 4.76, followed by Thanet at 4.64. Ashford and Canterbury were the lowest ranking districts, with an average score of 3.85 each. The difference being 0.91.

Question 11: There has been a reduction in part-time timetables (If you are replying as an early years setting, this applies to children accessing their full entitlement)

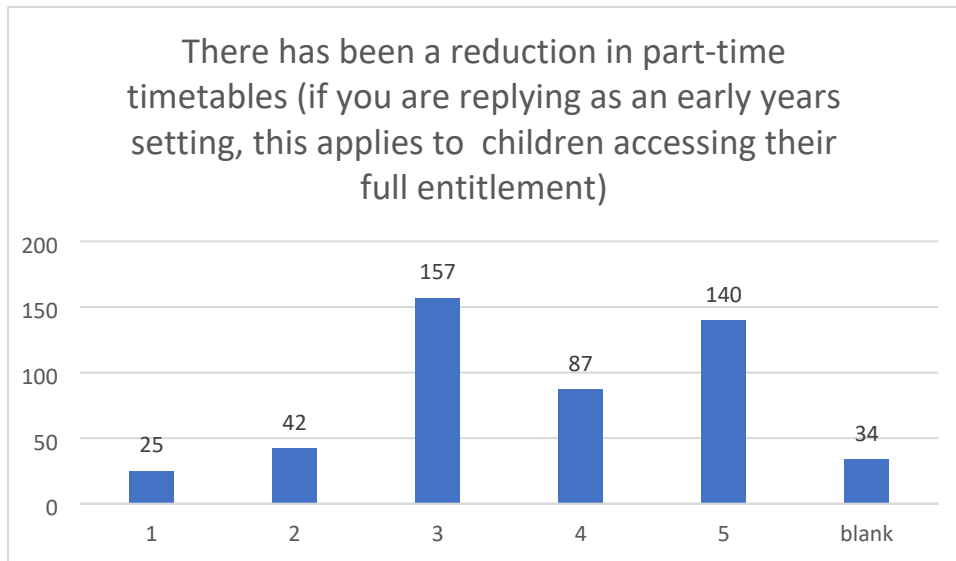


Figure 11: Reduction in part-time timetables

The response to this question was more varied and reflects the fact that there are several factors impacting on a child’s attendance in education. Some feedback provided has stated that a part-time timetable may indicate a positive step for a child who may not have previously been attending at all. This measure had the highest rate of “disagree” responses (14%) and the highest number of “average” responses (32%).

The positive impact against this measure is indicated in the quote below, submitted in response to Question 17, but specifically referencing the impact of the service on part-time timetables.

“The support from STLS has meant that from 10 reduced timetables, we went to 0 within a space of 1.5 years. Their reduced timetable package has supported us to refine our practise and structure children's reintegration. Their SEMH and C&I training and packages enabled the school to introduce the Zones of Regulation and Colourful Semantics, impacting then entire school and not just individual children. Our SEND offer has become more inclusive following the guidance and support of the specialist teachers from STLS.”

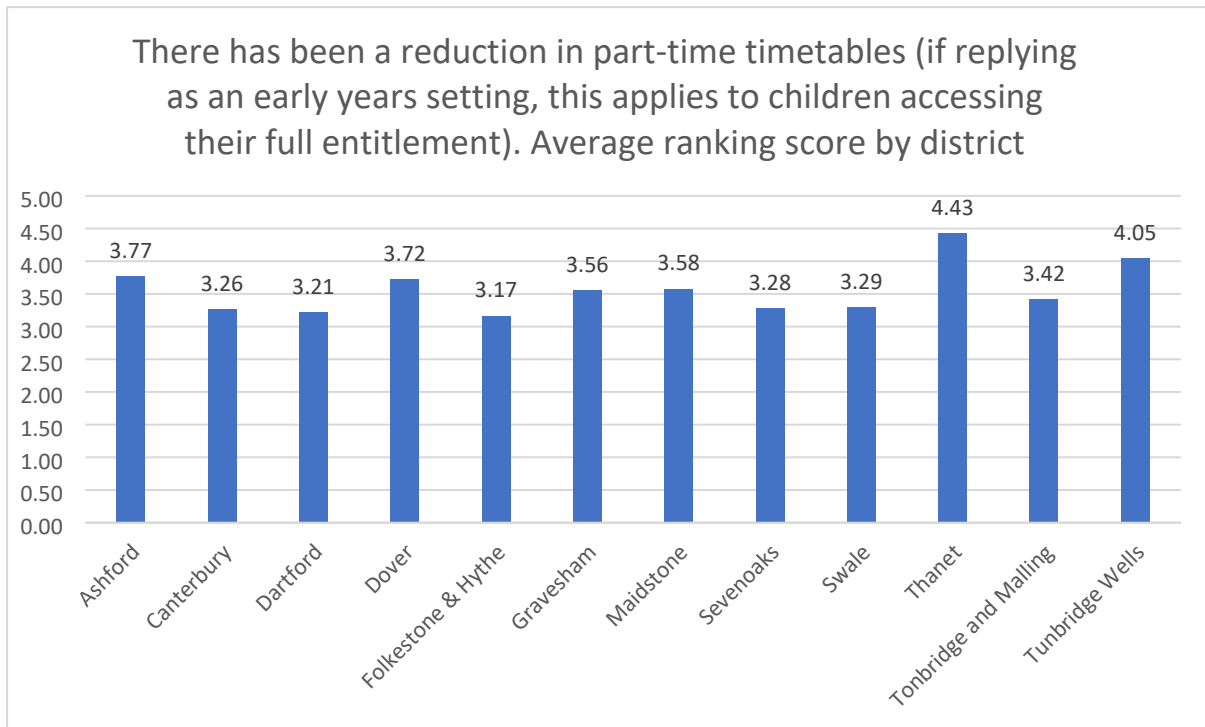


Figure 12: Reduction in part-time timetables – average ranking by district

The district averages on this measure reflect the more mixed countywide response. The distribution across the county is mixed, with the higher ranking of 4.43 out of 5 in Thanet, and the lower ranking of 3.17 in Folkstone and Hythe. The difference being 1.26.

Question 12: There is a clearer idea of destination for a child or a group of children (by destination we mean where the child or group of children go once they leave their current education provision)

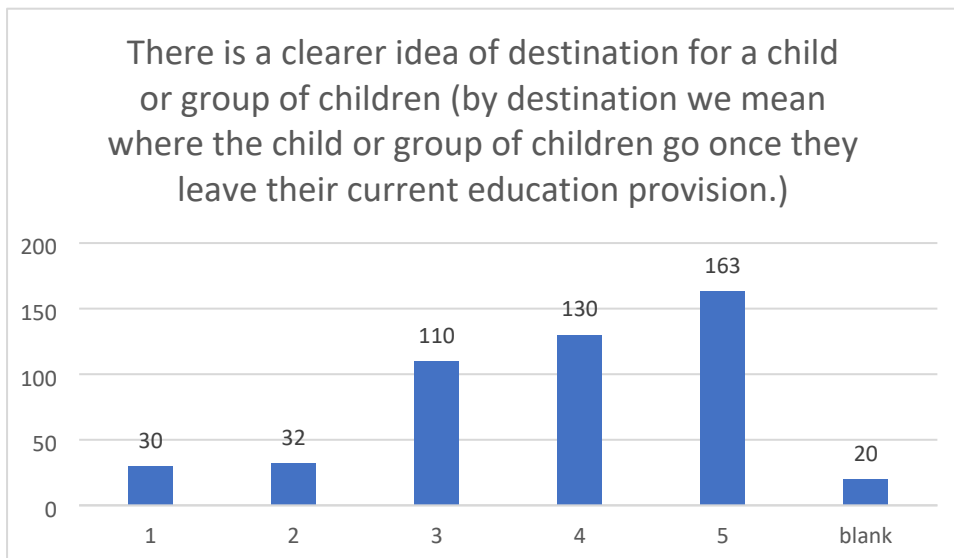


Figure 13: Idea of destination for a child or group of children

Although mostly positive, the responses to this question were more mixed, and there was some feedback that not all respondents understood the concept of 'destination' and this has influenced the distribution of responses.

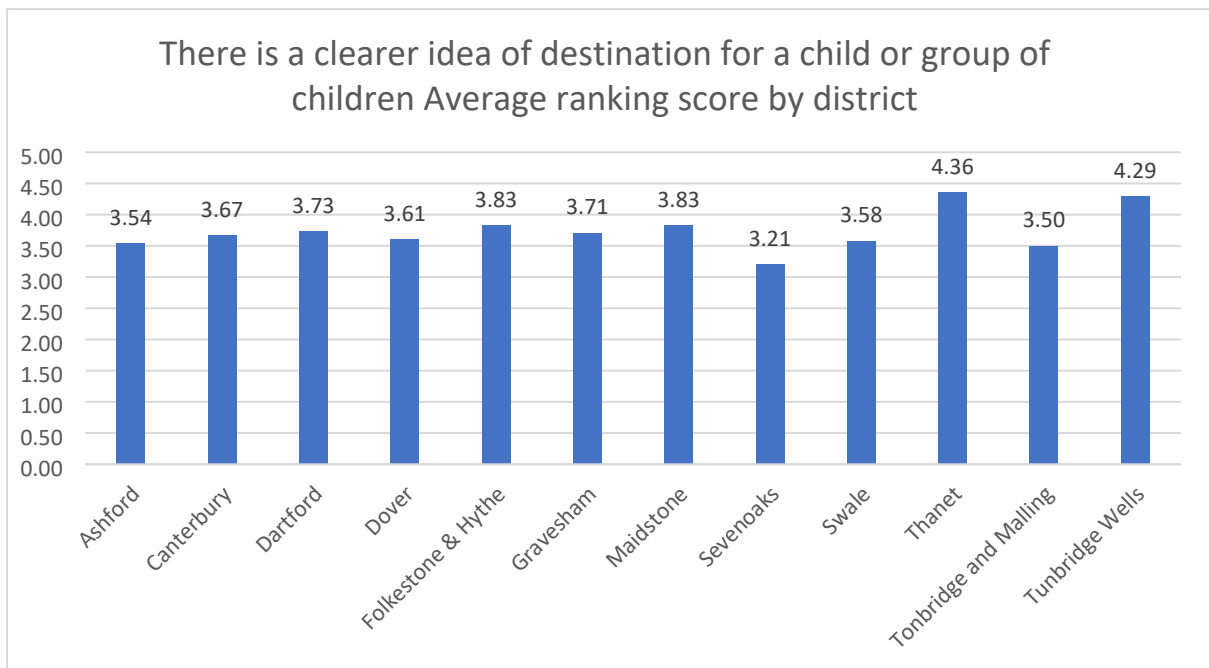


Figure 14: Idea of destination for a child or group of children – average ranking by district

Results for this impact measure are consistent across the county, with all scores above 3, and scores above 4 two districts. The difference between the highest and lowest average score being 1.15 which is the largest variation of average scores across the districts across all impact measures.

Question 13: There has been an improvement in learning outcomes/developmental progress and/or academic attainment in children with SEN.

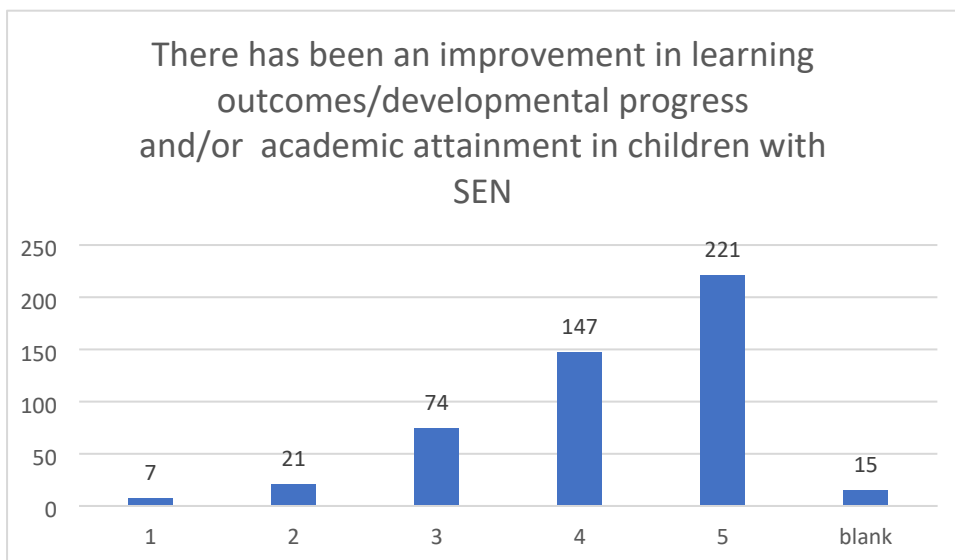


Figure 15: Improvement in learning outcomes/developmental progress and/or academic attainment in children with SEN

76% respondents submitted a score of 4 or above in relation to this outcome.

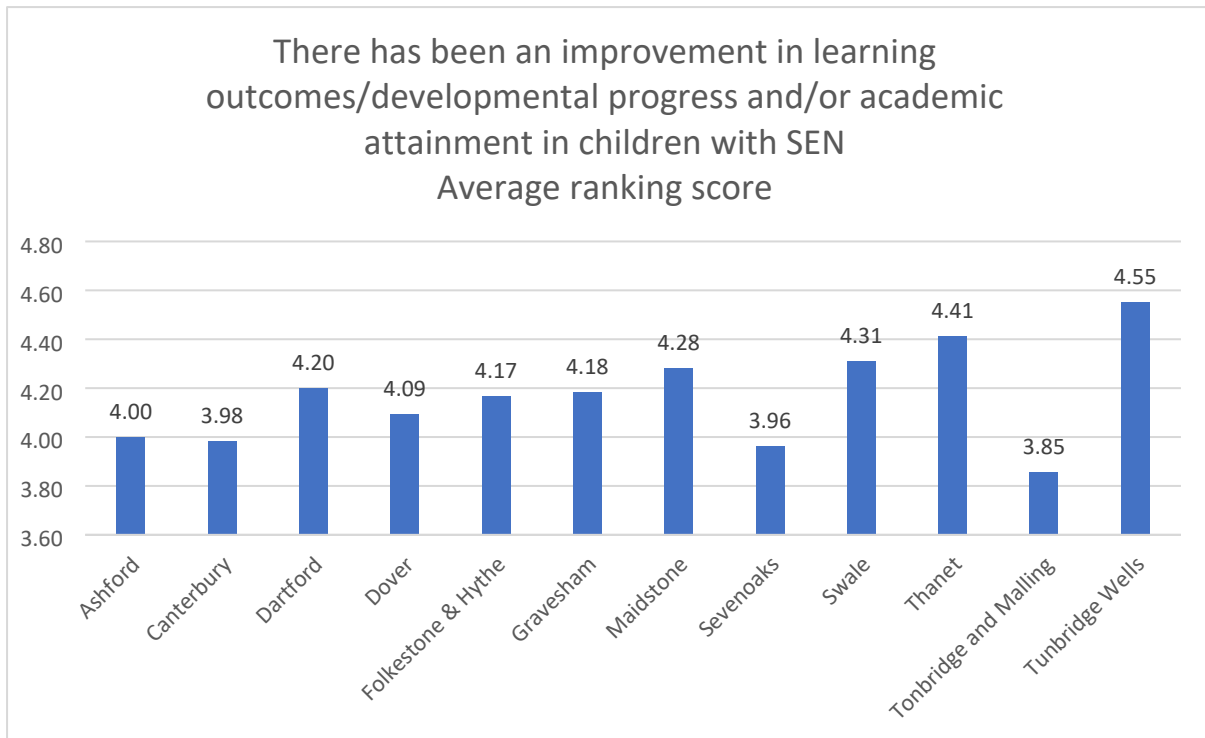


Figure 16: Improvement in learning outcomes/developmental progress and/or academic attainment in children with SEN – average ranking by district

Again, scores were overwhelmingly positive in relation to this measure with all districts receiving an average score of 3 (average) or above and 75% receiving an average score of 4 or above. The difference between the highest and lowest average score was 0.7.

Question 14: Children feel more able to be the best they can be in school or setting

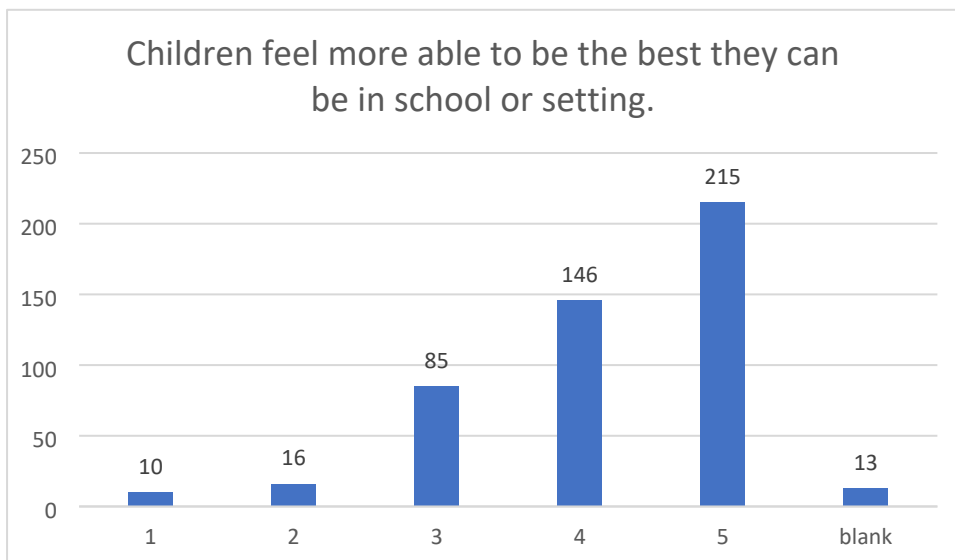


Figure 17: Children feel more able to be the best they can be in school or setting

74% responses to this impact measure were 4 or above, although there was some feedback that this is a subjective measure with many impacting factors.

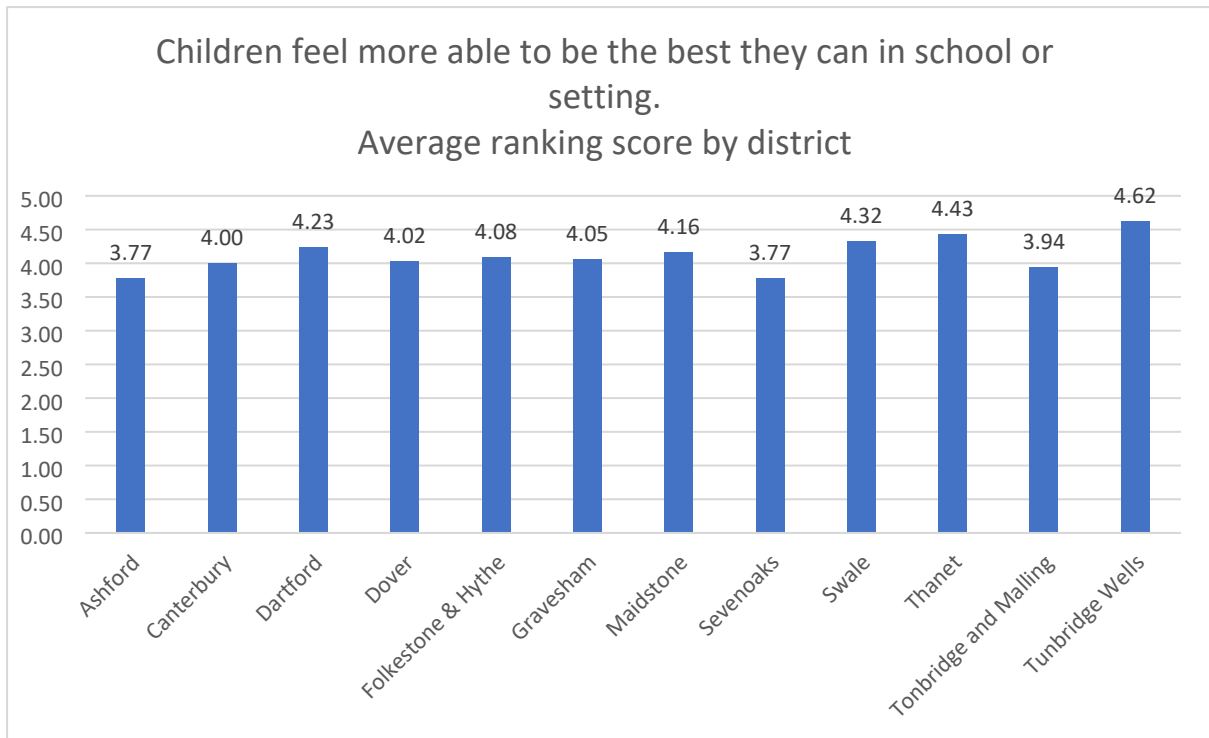


Figure 18: Children feel more able to be the best they can be in school or setting – average ranking by district

In terms of district averages, all districts scored 3.77 or above on this impact measure. The difference between the highest and lowest average being 0.85.

Question 15: Parents are more confident in your school / setting's ability to meet the needs of their child with SEN.

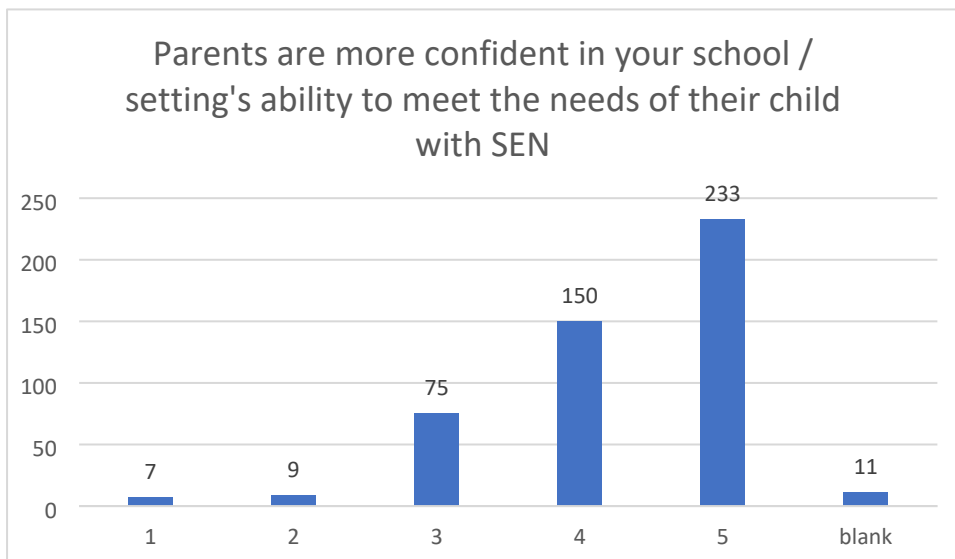


Figure 19: Parents are more confident in your school / setting's ability to meet the needs of their child with SEN

This survey was not aimed at parents, and so this response reflects the opinion of the school representative completing it.

Of the impact measures, this area of impact received the most above average scores with 79% respondents scoring four or above .

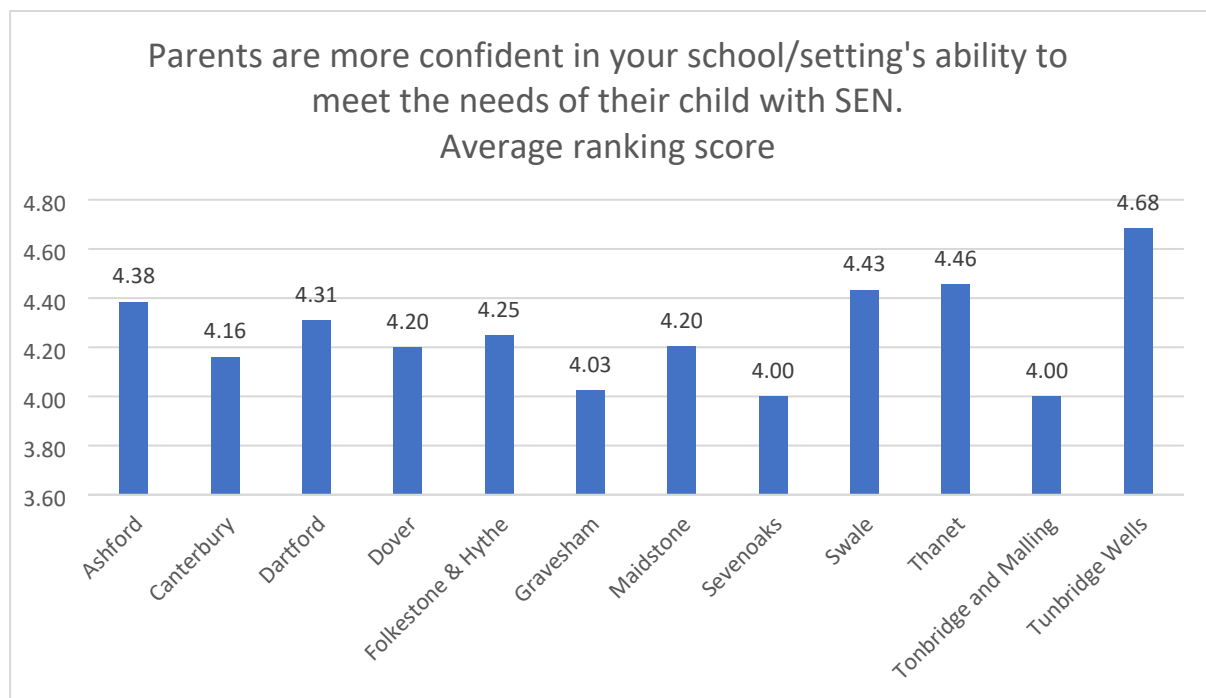


Figure 20: Parents are more confident in your school / setting's ability to meet the needs of their child with SEN – average ranking by district

Again, there was some variation across districts with all scoring 4 or above on average and a difference of 0.68 between the highest and lowest average score.

Respondents were asked further questions to clarify which support they most valued in terms of impact on inclusion. Where there were narrative questions, these have been themed and ranked.

Question 16: Of the support you received, please rank their benefit to inclusive practice in your school or setting by dragging and dropping the selection below – with the top item having the most benefit and the bottom the least.

Of the support you received, please rank their benefit to inclusive practice in your school or setting by dragging and dropping the selection below - with the top item having the most benefit and the bottom the least.

- 1 One to one specialist support for a named child provided in the school or setting
- 2 Advice and support provided through LIFT
- 3 Visits from a Link Teacher
- 4 Training delivered at STLS base or online
- 5 SENCo events, such as networking sessions
- 6 Advice or support through a clinic or surgery
- 7 Bespoke training delivered in your school or setting
- 8 Specialist support for a group or class in your school or setting
- 9 Transition events or support
- 10 Support for parents

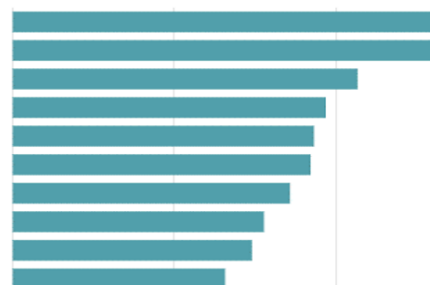


Figure 21: Support ranked in order of benefit to inclusive practice.

One to one specialist support for a named child in the school or setting and Advice and support provided through LIFT were reported to have the most benefit to inclusive practice in the school or setting. The third most popular item: Visits from a link teacher, has been interpreted differently as not all districts have link teachers. In those districts, the advice given to SENCOs from STLS who they had asked for clarification on this question were told by the service to interpret a 'link teacher' as a visit to the school by a specialist teacher.

Transition events or support was ranked as the 9th most impactful, just above support for parents. Not all districts offer support to parents which may have impacted on that measure; however all districts support with phase transition.

Question 17: Please explain why you chose the highest-ranking item in question 16.

A free text box provided in relation to this question received 435 comments. These were grouped into common themes as below:

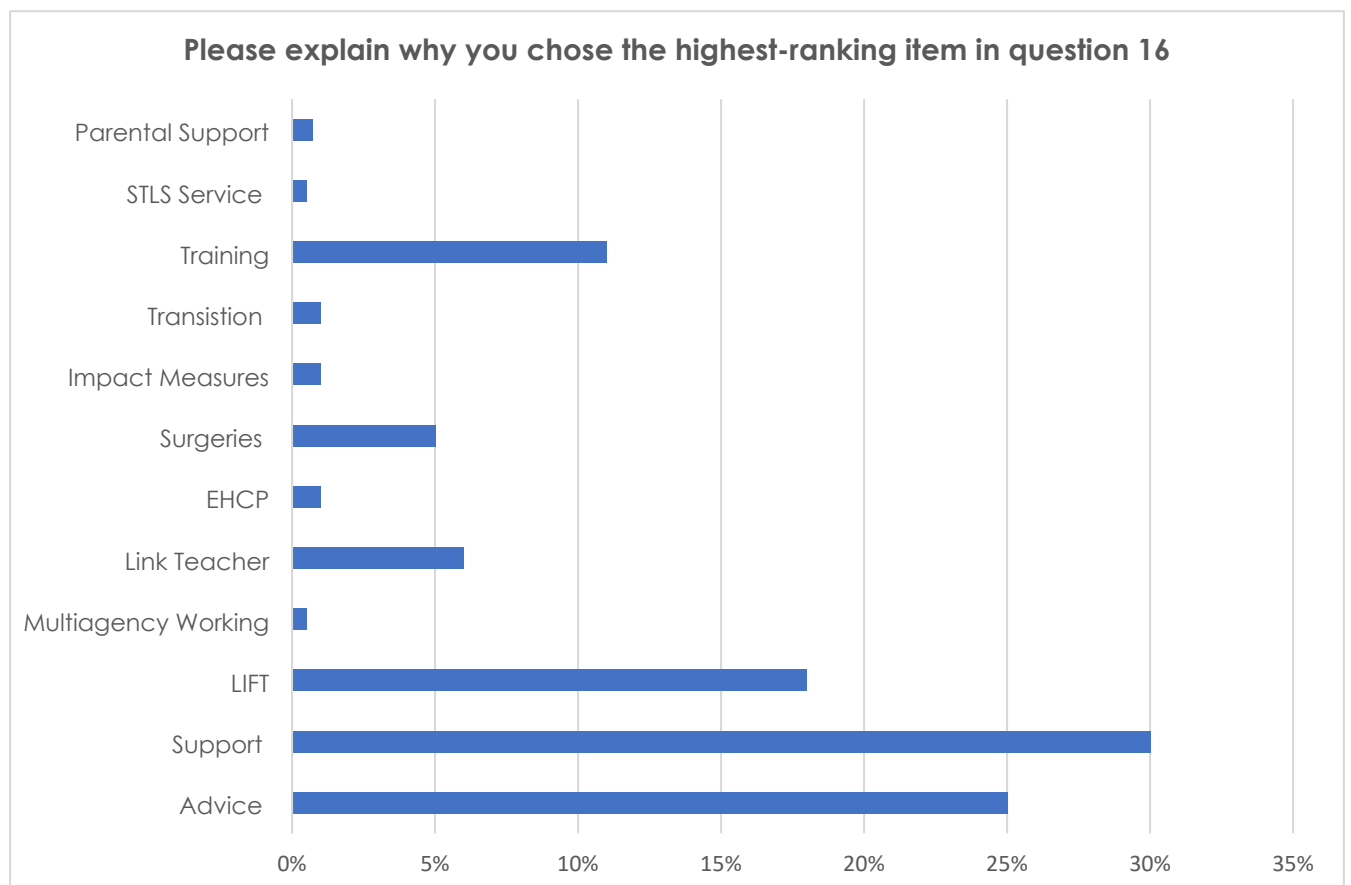


Figure 22: Reasons for choosing highest ranking item in question 16

The majority (30%) of respondents chose the area of support that they ranked highest in the previous question due to the support that it provided.

Key quotes taken from the free text section related to this question are below.

Key Quotes

“These are invaluable in them getting to know the child and seeing them in the setting, staff asking any questions or highlighting specific behaviour that they may need support in. Face to face conversations and help.”

“LIFT is invaluable. It is where I can go to access professionals and gain advice whether I have a child on the agenda or not. If I am discussing a referral, I leave with strategies whether allocated or not and I feel that the foundation is laid. If I do not have a case to discuss, I benefit from sharing advice with others.”

“We have utilised the STLS training offer this year and have undertaken whole school TEACCH training, it was really useful having someone so knowledgeable deliver training in school training. The session was just the right amount of time. We have seen a positive impact in the classroom with many teachers setting up work stations and adapting lessons accordingly. The training was also good value for money. The hourly awareness sessions which are free when a child is open to the service have also been extremely useful, just enough information is provided for staff to feel confident enough to get started with an intervention or strategy.”

“We have been easily able to access surgeries and they useful in providing some immediate strategies or providing reassurance to staff that we are doing all we can”.

“The support offered by STLS is exemplary and the training and advice offered over the years has upskilled staff and enabled increasing numbers of children with complex needs to be successfully educated and included in a mainstream environment. STLS remain the only front line service that actually provide on the ground support for schools, staff, children and parents, especially as health services have diminished or become harder to access.”

“Training, advice at LIFT, networking sessions are brilliant and so important to build up staff's knowledge and understanding of process (that constantly change) So that they can work with the children effectively, helping them to make progress using techniques and strategies, being able to share important information with parents and also to be able to point them in the direct for help and support away from the setting. We had a link worker come in to work directly with a child and that support was amazing and invaluable, they were able to give the key worker specific strategies and advice that they were able to share with the rest of the team. “

Question 18: Please explain why you chose the lowest ranking item in question 16.

A free text box provided in relation to this question received 426 comments. These were grouped into common themes.

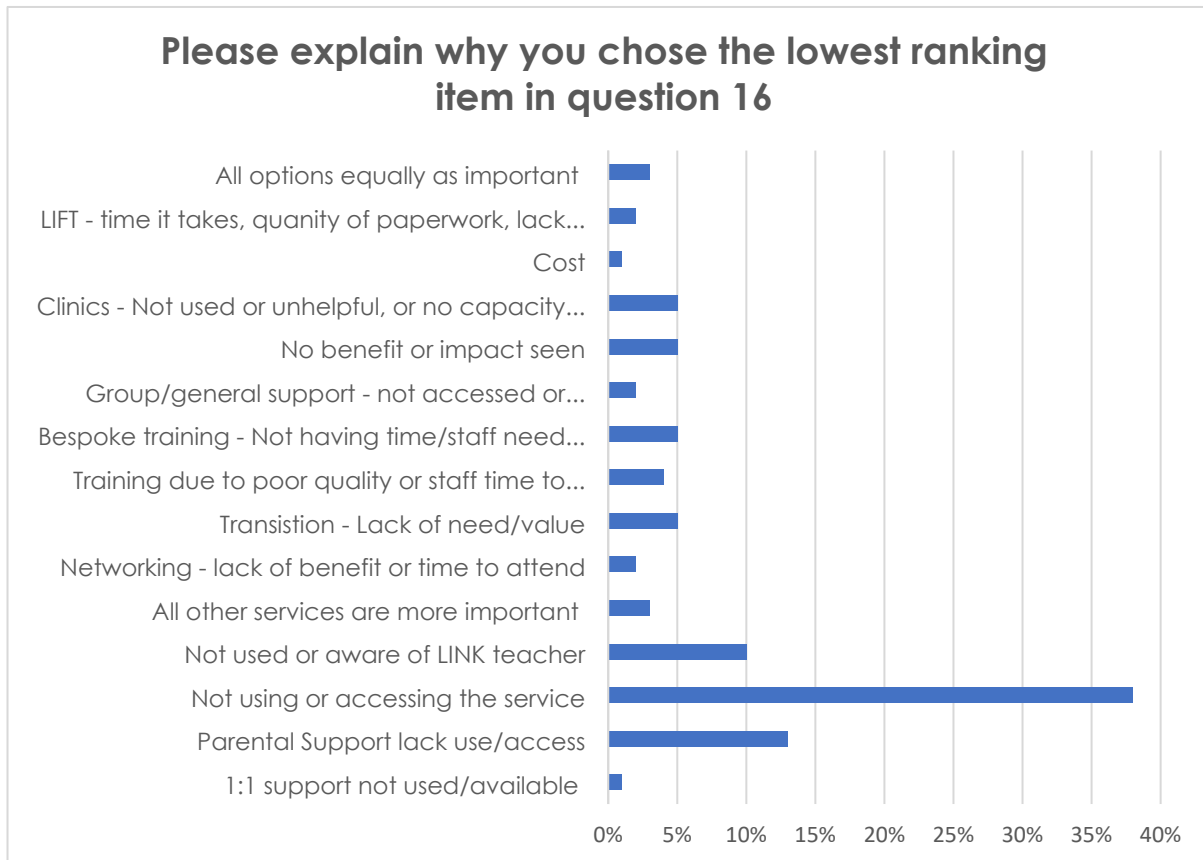


Figure 23: Reasons for lowest ranking item in question 16 – themed and ranked responses

In this, 38% explained that their lowest ranked area of support in question 16 was ranked lowest because they had not accessed it.

Key Quotes

“All the above are needed and probably all equally needed it is very hard to prioritise. There does need to be transition events / meetings between the setting and receiving school. But the last few years there has been no spare staff of schools being able to provide teachers with cover to be able to do this and there have been so many missed opportunities to pass on relevant information. A real sense of apathy.”

We did not access training delivered in school. However, I'm sure it would be excellent - they training we accessed at the STLS base was excellent (engagement model, sensory circuits, new SENCO training, Sensory Champions and Lego Therapy).”

“Parents can get support from other places or through us in school. I feel that STLS would be better places supporting the schools to support the parents. Most of our parents would not attend courses run at MIDAS”.

“LIFT meetings take a long time and are paperwork heavy. Sadly as settings it would be more helpful to just speak to professionals about the children in our own setting not have to wait 2 hours whilst we hear about other settings issues.”

“I do not feel that I have gained any advice or support through LIFT, updates that are given during these sessions are key and also information on what is available in Kent. However the basis of a meeting to discuss needs of a child and as to whether they meet threshold for support from a Specialist teacher could surely be completed through a referral and triage system instead. I can see the benefit for new SENCOs that have limited experience however with over 10 years experience in a highly inclusive borough in London these half days away from the children once a term seems a lot on an already time pressured role.”

“There isn't anything on the list that isn't welcomed support; I can see with now more limited funding that they can provide quicker support virtually at clinic whereas this advice would take longer if coming out to give face to face advice.”

Question 19: In any redesign which three STLS functions would you prioritise and why?

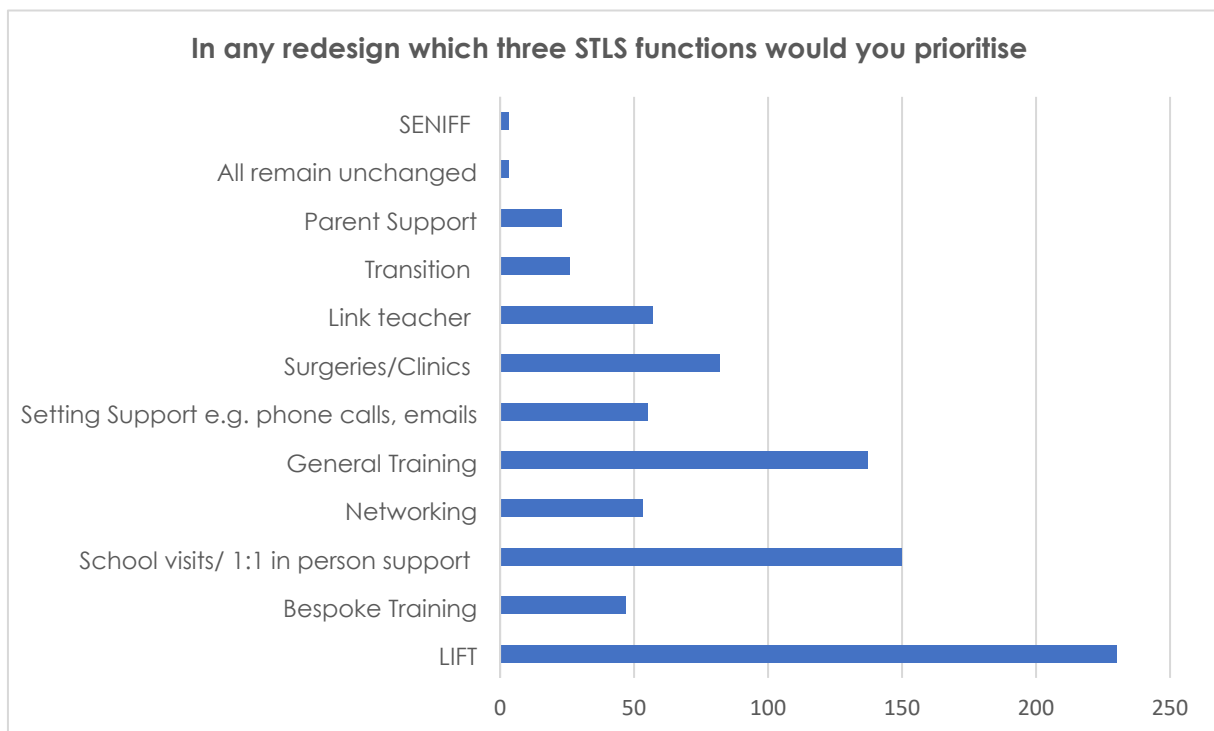


Figure 24: Which STLS functions would you prioritise in a redesign?

Most respondents would prioritise LIFT in any redesign, followed by school visits / 1:1 support. This feedback reflects that provided in question 16 (Figure 21) related to Support ranked in order of benefit to inclusive practice.

Question 20: Which training from STLS would you prioritise?

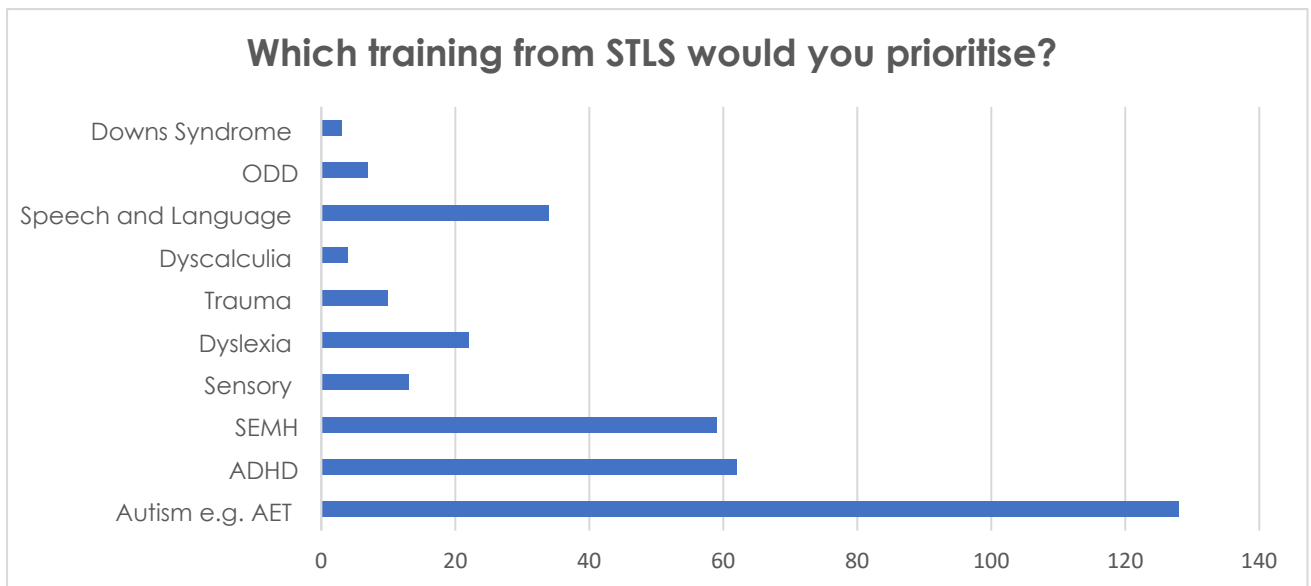


Figure 25: Which training from STLS would you prioritise?

Most responses to question 20 mentioned Autism as training they would prioritise, followed by ADHD and SEMH.

Question 21: Please provide any examples or comment on the impact of STLS in terms of inclusion in your school or setting.

A free text box provided in relation to this question received 451 comments. These were grouped into common themes as below:

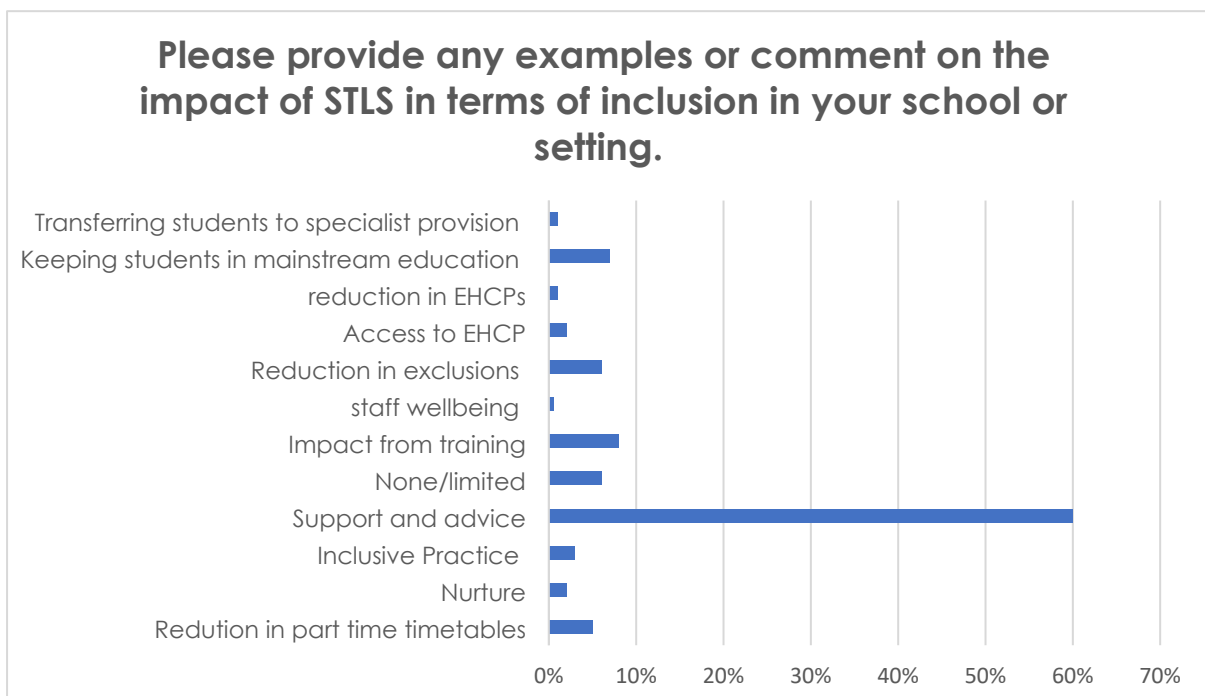


Figure 26: Examples of the impact of STLS in terms of inclusion in school or setting.

60% of comments identified support and advice as providing an impact on inclusion.

Key Quotes

“Extremely positive. We have had children who have been predominantly excluded from the mainstream classroom, reintegrate back into class”.

“We pride ourselves on our incredibly inclusive approach. STLS have been a huge part of this over the years with the specialist advice and support they have offered to our Inclusion lead, staff, children and parents. We cannot express enough how greatly they are valued and how much they bring to our school.”

“We have students with a very high level of needs of various types and working with the STLS specialists in each area as a team around the child has been vital to make inclusion a success for those children.”

“They are responsive to emails and offer further strategies. We have a child in Y3 out of cohort and they have gone out of their way to help me find the answers to parents questions around transfer.”

“The small steps progress on ROVs and recommendations put into place have impact on attainment. Parents feel that their child is making progress and they no longer need an EHCP”

“The impact of STLS has been limited for our setting. STLS often comment that we are inclusive and any suggestions they have are already in place. The quality of STLS support has noticeably decreased in recent years, possibly due to other changes taking place in the county. There are differences in the quality of support from the different dimensions. C&L has historically been strong in our district, with SEMH less strong. Although PD support from the countywide team is good on visits, I have received very few written reports from them, despite chasing”.

“STLS have limited impact. The idea of specialist teachers is a misnomer. This thinking encourages staff to believe that they are not 'experts' so they wait for the specialist teacher. In fact many specialist teachers are ineffective as they are so far removed from everyday experience in schools. All staff should be empowered to be inclusive. This will be achieved by improving teacher pedagogy and training. STLS is just a stepping stone to accessing further support. We have to evidence our engagement with external agencies and show that we have exhausted the local offer. Parents also now ask why we have not gone to LIFT. This is really frustrating for school settings. Experienced SENcos in inclusive schools should not be expected to attend further meetings with 'specialists' only to be told we are already doing everything possible. It is all a carousel of wasted time. STLS are an expensive resource. The money could be better spent elsewhere”.

“We have had incredible support with children with communication and interaction difficulties. Lots of ideas to try, signposted to useful resources and very effective ideas to support with transition and effective adult support. All of the STLS support has been impactful - I wouldn't be able to do my job as senco so successfully without the support from the STLS.”

“Staff are more confident when you have a specialist teacher tell you you are doing all you can for the child in question. It's also useful to have targets and strategies put in place by specialist teachers so we know we are doing something useful to help the child in question develop.”

“A member of STLS also conducted AET training for us recently - this helped raise awareness and understanding of neurodiversity and generated a whole school conversation about how to support such individuals in our setting.”

Question 22: Any other comments on the role of STLS in supporting Inclusion in your school or setting

A free text box provided in relation to this question received 267 comments. These were grouped into common themes as below:

- **47%** of additional comments were remarks on the valued support STLS have given.
- **27%** of additional comments were positive remarks regarding the STLS service, including notes of gratitude.
- **6%** of additional comments were remarks on how the STLS could be improved.
- **6%** of additional comments were regarding LIFT.
- **5%** of comments were regarding the importance of advice being given.
- **3%** of additional comments were regarding inclusion.
- **2%** of comments were remarks regarding Parental support and confidence.
- **1%** of comments were regarding transition.
- **1%** of comments were regarding the valuable training provided.
- **0.5%** of comments were regarding impact measures.
- **0.5%** of comments were regarding the impact on mainstream staff.

Question 23: Any other comments.

A free text box provided in relation to this question received 281 comments. These were grouped into common themes as below:

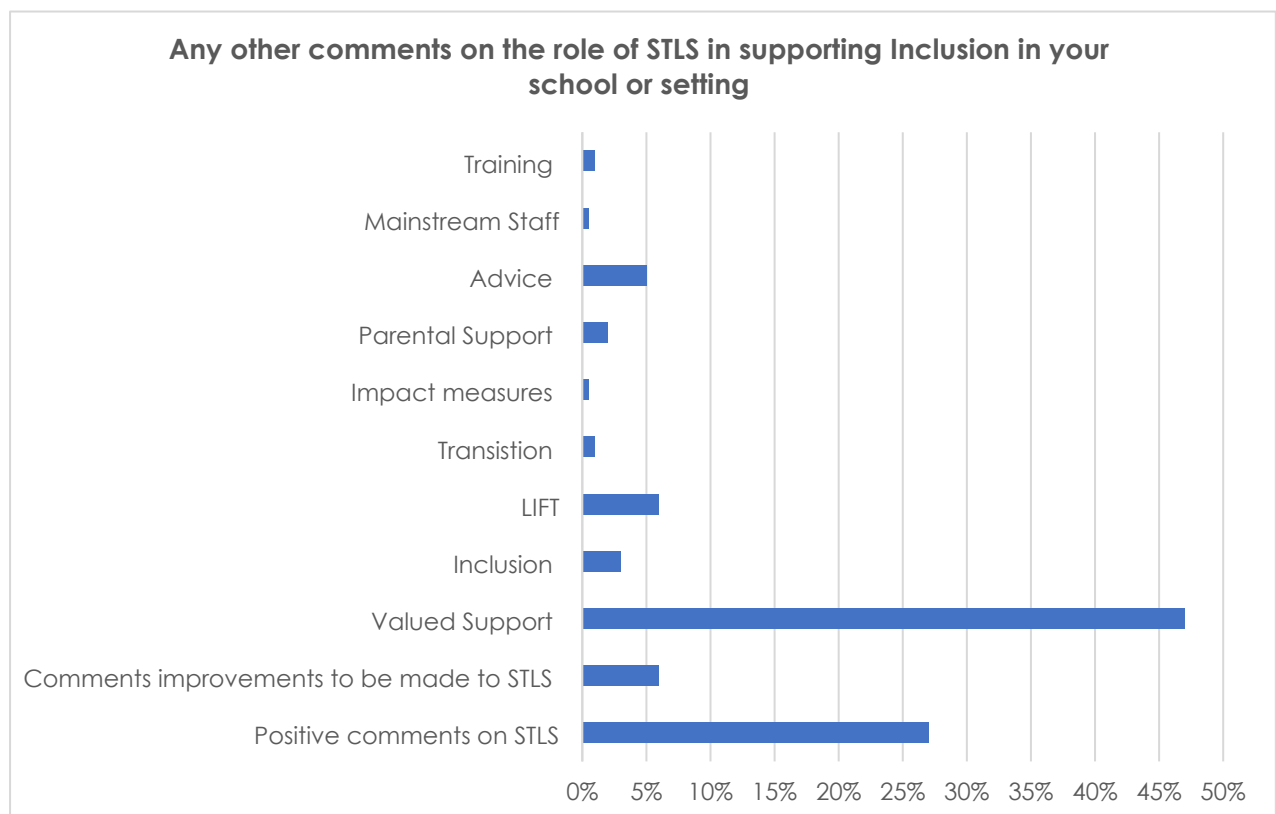


Figure 27: Any other comments

Most respondents mentioned 'support' in their responses and told us that they valued the support that STLS offers their school or setting. Comments were overwhelmingly positive, but some did reflect on the impact that budgetary restrictions and increasing demand is having on the service, and a small number did question the impact of the service.

Key Quotes

"The only problem with STLS is that they are underfunded and that being able to access support soon enough is a challenge to have the best impact - most investment in their capacity to support schools sooner and for longer will only have better outcomes for pupils in mainstream."

"I do not have high enough praise for the support we have received from STLS with respect to problem solving in our setting. They are professional and when not clear on next steps are happy to research and come back to us later. We have built good relationships built in a single goal of inclusion and trust. I hope this will be protected going forward".

"The STLS has always been a source of great wisdom and encouragement and the success of many SEND pupils who have been members of our school community over the last 16 years I have been class teacher/SENDCo and Deputy Headteacher, has been guided and strengthened by their expertise. I doubt I could do my job without them."

"There needs to be an acceptance that the current model is not working. Although lots of SENCOs speak positively about LIFT, I feel that this is largely as a social support network rather than as a professional network aiming to improve the quality of provision. I understand that it is familiar and has long been the established approach in Kent, but there is an opportunity to change the status quo and to lead to lasting change for inclusion in Kent. "

"Nearly always the same advice, copy paste reports, adds little value to provision"

"I really value the STLS, but accessing support this year has been increasingly challenging - it feels as though we are being told that our most complex children don't meet criteria because 'there is nothing more we can do' and our borderline children don't meet criteria because they are not severe enough. This puts schools in a really tricky position and means that at points, I have not attended LIFT as I do not have time to give over to these meetings when I know that my children will not meet criteria, especially compared to other settings where they have more children who meet need".

"We understand it is hard but that fact that there is only 2 specialist teachers in Dartford is putting so much pressure on them but also us. We are having to wait longer for Record of Visits, so longer to apply for SENIF. Children who are displaying obvious needs earlier are being made to wait because of the pressure on the STL base. We understand this is due to funding cuts but it is creating more pressure on settings. Dual placement has been an absolute godsend in support the children and ensuring that are more prepared for transitions".

"Reports and paperwork is time consuming an online joint system all professionals post to would keep everyone in the loop and up to date".

"I know that our SENCo really values the visits and advice from our link STLS teacher and the impact this then has in the delivery of specific interventions. Ideas such as Immersive Reader have also been picked up from LIFT and SENCo socials".

"PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE do not withdraw the STLS support from our district. If you want experienced SENCOs to remain in post, and do their utmost to promote and champion

inclusion in mainstream settings, then we NEED these individuals to support us, our teachers and our learners. Removing their support would have a detrimental impact on schools' abilities to support an increasing number of complex individuals - real inclusion would become impossible without them in my opinion".

"As a new SENCO, STLS input has been absolutely invaluable ranging from accessing the LIFT meeting process to accessing STLS training opportunities to in-school support, advice and guidance offered regarding individual pupils. "

"I do not have high enough praise for the support we have received from STLS with respect to problem solving in our setting. They are professional and when not clear on next steps are happy to research and come back to us later. We have built good relationships built in a single goal of inclusion and trust. I hope this will be protected going forward. "

Summary

This report details the feedback received from 485 early years settings and schools regarding their experience of support from STLS. The survey builds on feedback provided via a previous survey that demonstrated that the service is considered to have a positive impact on inclusion of children and young people in mainstream settings and school in Ken to understand in more detail what that impact is.

The survey was undertaken between 15th March and 26th April 2024. It received 485 responses. The largest single group of respondents (36%) were primary school SENCOs.

Respondents identified through the responses provided and additional comments submitted that advice and strategies are the most valued areas of support provided, especially in relation to LIFT.

In relation to the impact measures identified, the area of impact with the lowest scores was "There has been a reduction in part-time timetables." and the area of impact with the highest scores was "Parents are more confident in your school / setting's ability to meet the needs of their child with SEN".

However, the majority of respondents indicated that the service had a positive impact on the inclusion of children and young people with SEND in a mainstream school or setting with average scores against all impact measures consistently being 4 or above.

Comments submitted clearly indicate the value that the service has to the majority of early years and schools, and especially for SENCOs who are most often the point of contact with the service.

This report reflects the responses to the Impact Survey, and no decisions on the future of the service will be based on this document alone.

A previous draft of this report has been shared with representatives from STLS. This version has been updated to reflect comments provided as outlined in the letter embedded below.

