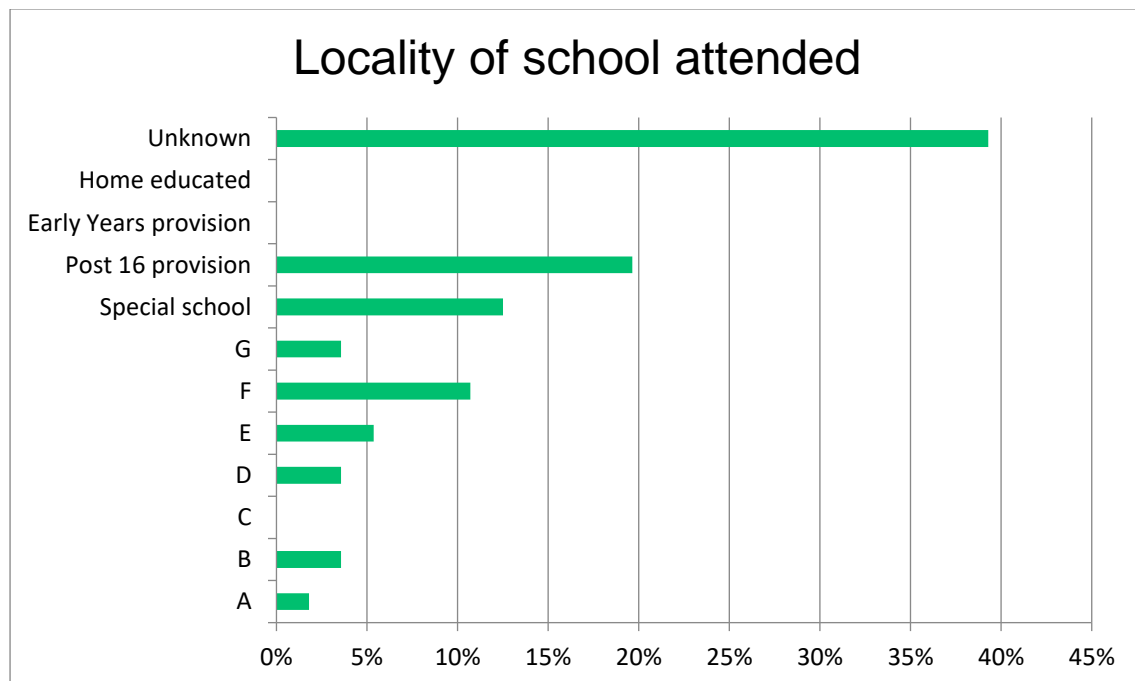
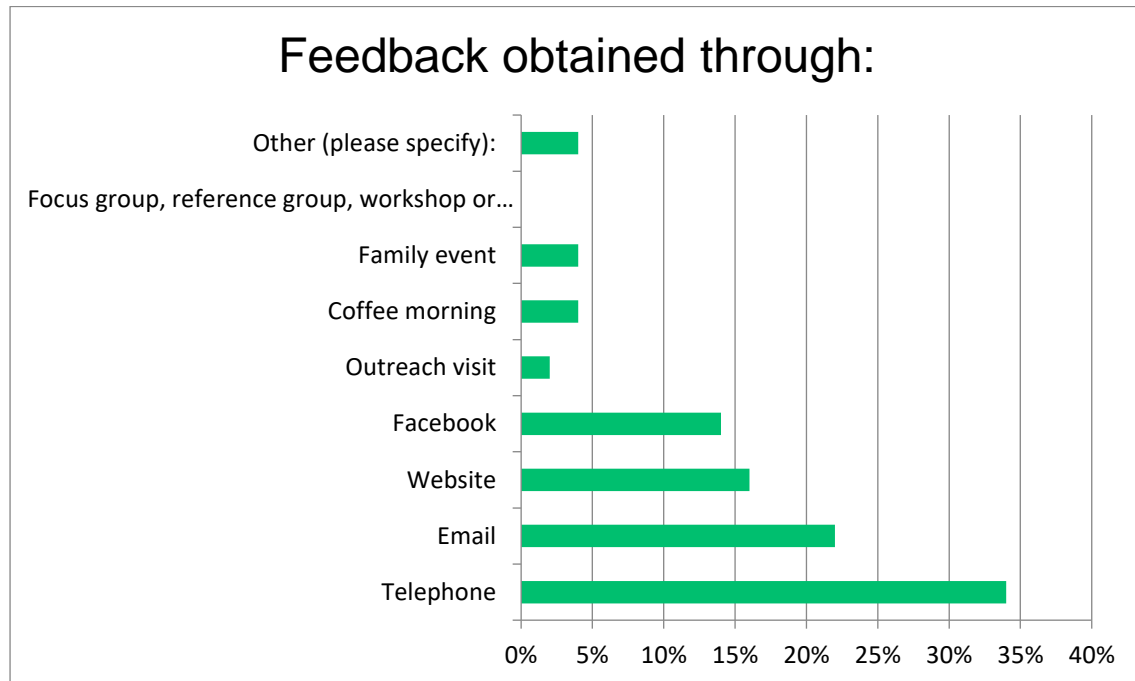


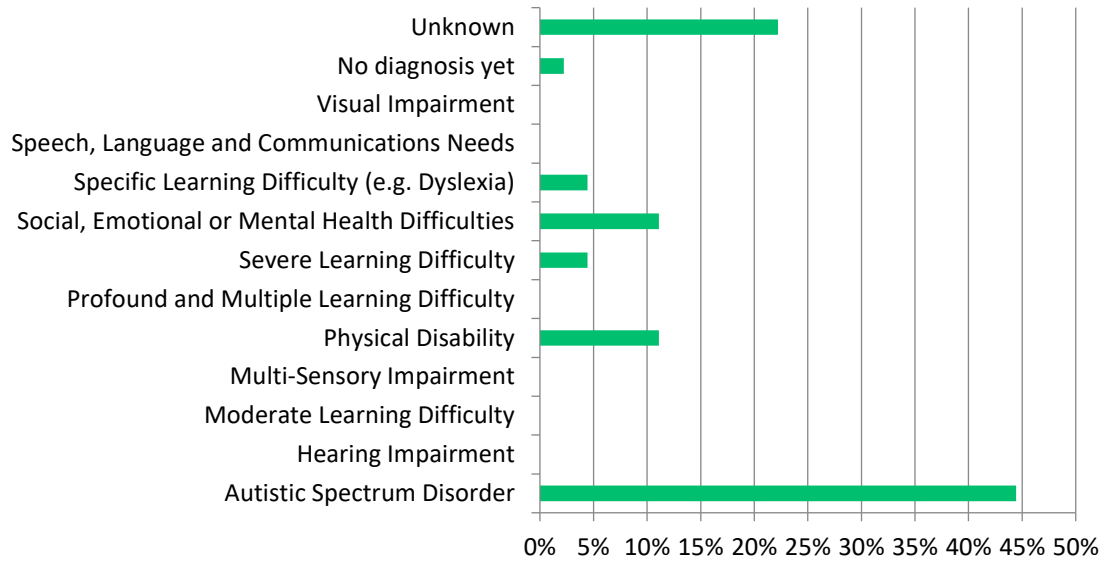
Feedback from parent carers in Sheffield

May - October 2017

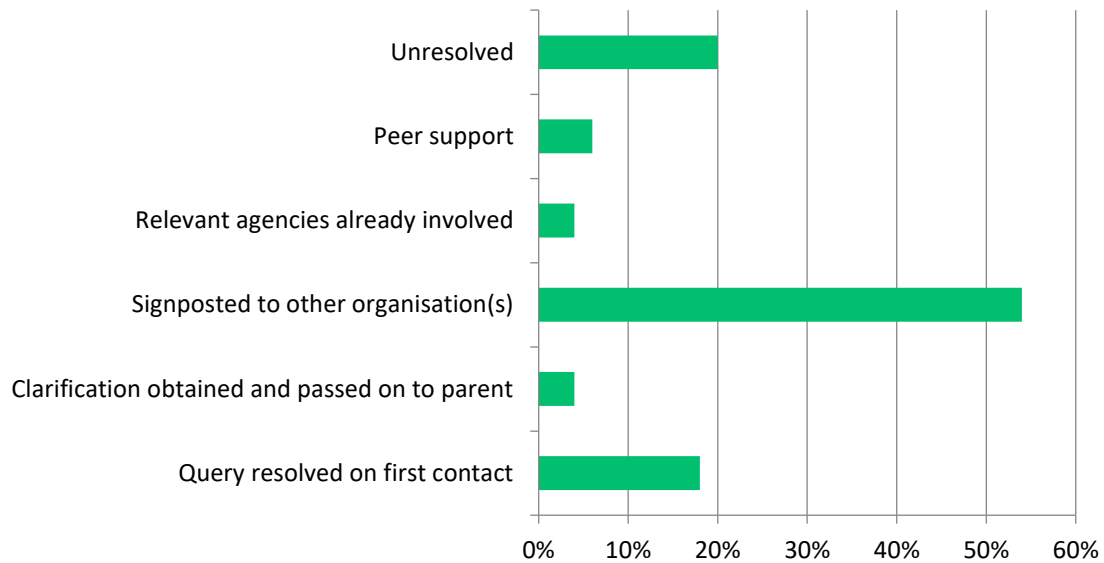
Based on feedback received from 87 parent carers.

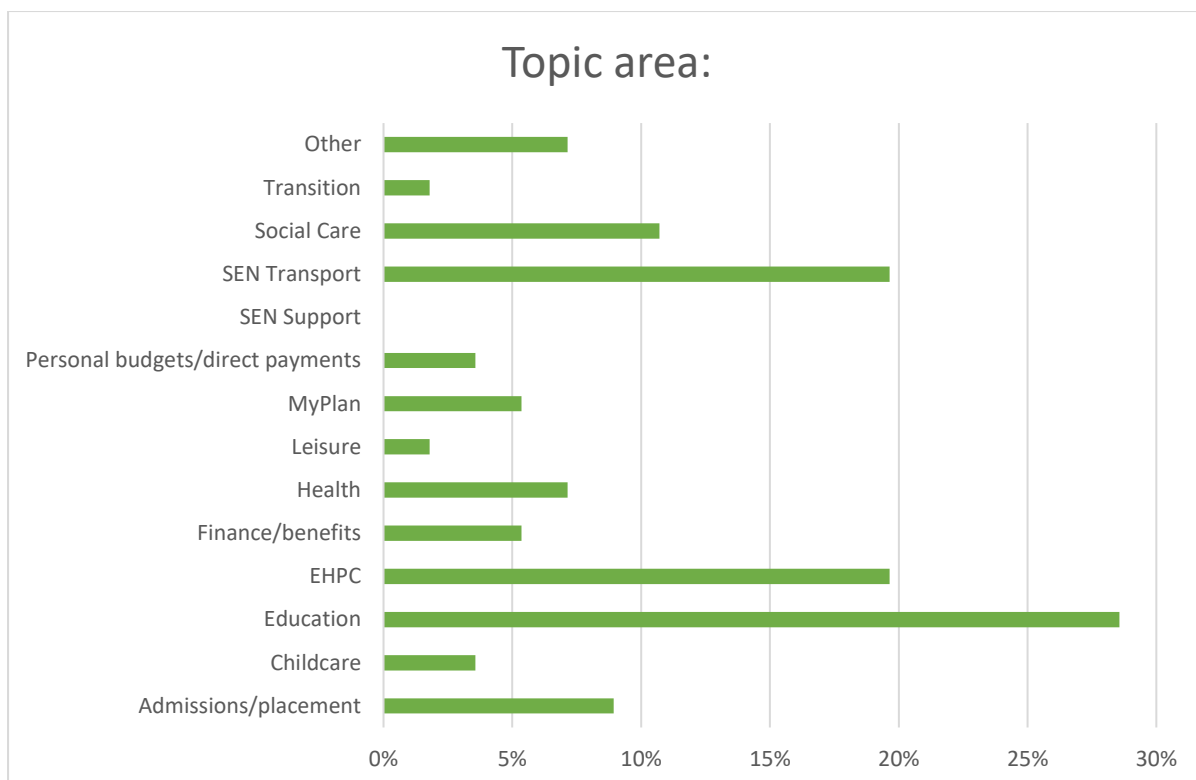


Child's main impairment:



Type of activity:





Summary of feedback

Topic	Key issues
Admissions	Lack of suitable provision for academically able children with ASD who can't cope with a mainstream school or IR
	Parents report that some mainstream schools are trying to put them off applying for a place for their child with SEND
Education	Lack of staff training, e.g. around ASD and mental health issues, PDA, ADHD
	School funding issues: parents report that they have been told by their child's school that their child's needs cannot be met fully because there are too many demands on the school's SEN budget. This is often because the school has become a "magnet" for SEND.
	Some parents report that their child's EHCP is only being partially implemented due to a lack of funding. The LA argues that the school has been given sufficient funding, the school disputes this.
	Lack of understanding / heavy-handedness when child's attendance is poor due to their disability
	Working parents struggle with reduced college days, e.g. 10.30am start on Fridays.
	Exclusions: parents report unlawful exclusions (e.g. child sent home without this being recorded) and poor communication with parents of children at risk of fixed-term and permanent exclusion
EHCPs	Communication between the SEN Team and parents needs to improve. Case workers need to acknowledge and respond to emails and phone calls, respond to complaints, inform parents when their child has been discussed with school. Respect parents' expertise and listen to them. Work together, don't leave parents as piggy in the middle. Inform parents proactively about the EHCP process. Ensure

	that SEN managers make clear what is local policy and what is national legislation when communicating with school staff and parents.
	Quality of EHC plans continues to be an issue, particularly specification and quantification of educational provision. Concerns that EHCPs are being written to fit what schools can provide from their SEN budgets, rather than what the child needs.
	Continuing concerns about EHCP timescales
	Annual reviews are not always completed within statutory timescales, and some are long overdue. Some parents have been told that their child's EHCP has "lapsed" due to not having been reviewed.
	Some parents feel that the LA are turning down EHC assessment requests as a matter of course and are using mediation as a test of parents' resolve.
	Transfer reviews: some parents report poor communication and misinformation, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parents given a date for transfer review meeting and told that it will go ahead, whether they can attend it or not - reports tabled at the meeting instead of being circulated at least two weeks beforehand - parents told by EP that "only children going to special schools can have an EHCP"
Health	Sheffield don't diagnose PDA anymore and this is stopping some children/young people being able to access services
	Very long waiting times to see psychologist at Ryegate
MyPlan	Some parents have expressed doubts about its effectiveness, e.g. schools not implementing recommendations from professionals because "it's not statutory". Some settings are very slow (6 months+) to respond to parental requests for a MyPlan. Some parents feel that the MyPlan is used as a barrier to put off EHC needs assessments.
SEN Transport	Independent Travel Training: some parents feel that their young person is being pushed into ITT too early, or "signed off" as an independent traveller when they are only independent on one particular route.
	SEN travel charge: many parents feel that the £540 charge is unfair, compared to what a non-disabled student would pay
	Parents report that SEN transport has been refused for some students whose situation is not straightforward, e.g. those requiring transport from college to respite, to two different education providers, to alternative provider etc. This is not covered in the SEN Transport policy.
Social Care	Concerns about panel decisions - no notes, anonymous, no appeals process.
	Insufficient short breaks provision for under 5s, over 19s, secondary age children
	Short Break Grant scheme should open for applications earlier in the year
	Parents have raised concerns about delays in the process, e.g. between having respite agreed and SCC paying for it

Information requests

Admissions	Need information about in-year transfers, deferring entry into Reception, deferring transition to secondary How are decisions made by placement panels communicated to parents? Can parents request to see panel notes relating to their child's case?
Education	Do pupils need a formal diagnosis to get access arrangements for GCSEs?
Finance/benefits	Has universal credit replaced ESA in Sheffield? Where can parents get benefits advice tailored to their situation?
Health	Lack of clarity about referrals to Ryegate and CAMHS – who can refer, what are the criteria, what are the pathways? Advice on becoming a Deputy for health and welfare What should parents do if their child gets worse while waiting for an appointment?
Direct Payments	Lack of information about application process, what they can be used for, whether you can have DPs and SNIPS Who can help parents recruit a PA?
SEN Transport	Questions related to the SEN travel charge: application process and eligibility criteria for hardship fund, 16-19 bursary, conditions for waiving travel charge Lack of information about entitlement to SEN transport in specific cases, e.g. transport to respite, alternative providers, dual placements
Social Care	How to apply for Short Breaks Grant? Who can help with paperwork? Lack of information about befriending services Lack of clarity about eligibility criteria for short breaks Who can provide advocacy for parents who cannot advocate for their children? Are there different "levels" of SNIPS provision? What are they?