ANNUAL SURVEY 2026

Solihull Parent Carer Voice

Enabling the voice of parent carers across Solihull to make a difference.

Overview

CORE MESSAGE

Parent carers are telling us that confidence in the SEND system is declining, and their voices must be heard and used to drive change. They want better communication, genuine involvement in decisions, and clearer, more joined-up support. As SEND reforms progress, parent carers need to be treated as partners, with their experiences shaping how services improve.

Listening to parent carers is not the end point, using what they tell us to make meaningful change is.

Executive summary

222

Parent carers engaged.

Key message:

The 2026 findings call for stronger partnership with families, improved education experiences and clearer, more coordinated support.

Three messages

1. Education confidence is declining

Parent carer confidence in education's ability to meet children's academic and SEND needs has fallen significantly, alongside worsening ratings of communication.

2. Families want greater involvement and partnership

Parent carers report feeling less involved in SEN planning and reviews, highlighting the need for stronger communication, engagement and genuine partnership with families.

3. Clearer information and joined-up support are needed

Almost 8 in 10 parent carers do not fully understand the proposed SEND Reforms, reinforcing the need for clear information, coordinated services and more consistent support for families.

Key Themes

Point 1-

Confidence is falling: Overall confidence in education meeting children's academic needs fell from 63.8% to 48.6%, while "Poor" ratings for communication increased from 25.4% to 35.6%.
Parent carers feel less involved: Those feeling involved in SEN reviews and planning fell by 7.3 percentage points, while those feeling not involved increased by 8.4 percentage points.
Information and support need to improve: Almost 8 in 10 parent carers do not fully understand the proposed SEND Reforms, including 44% who do not understand them at all.

Point 2-

Families would like better more joined-up working across education, health and social care, with a clear named contact and feedback loop. Dedicated SEND communication resource, clear information, particularly on SEND Reforms, EHCP processed and available support.

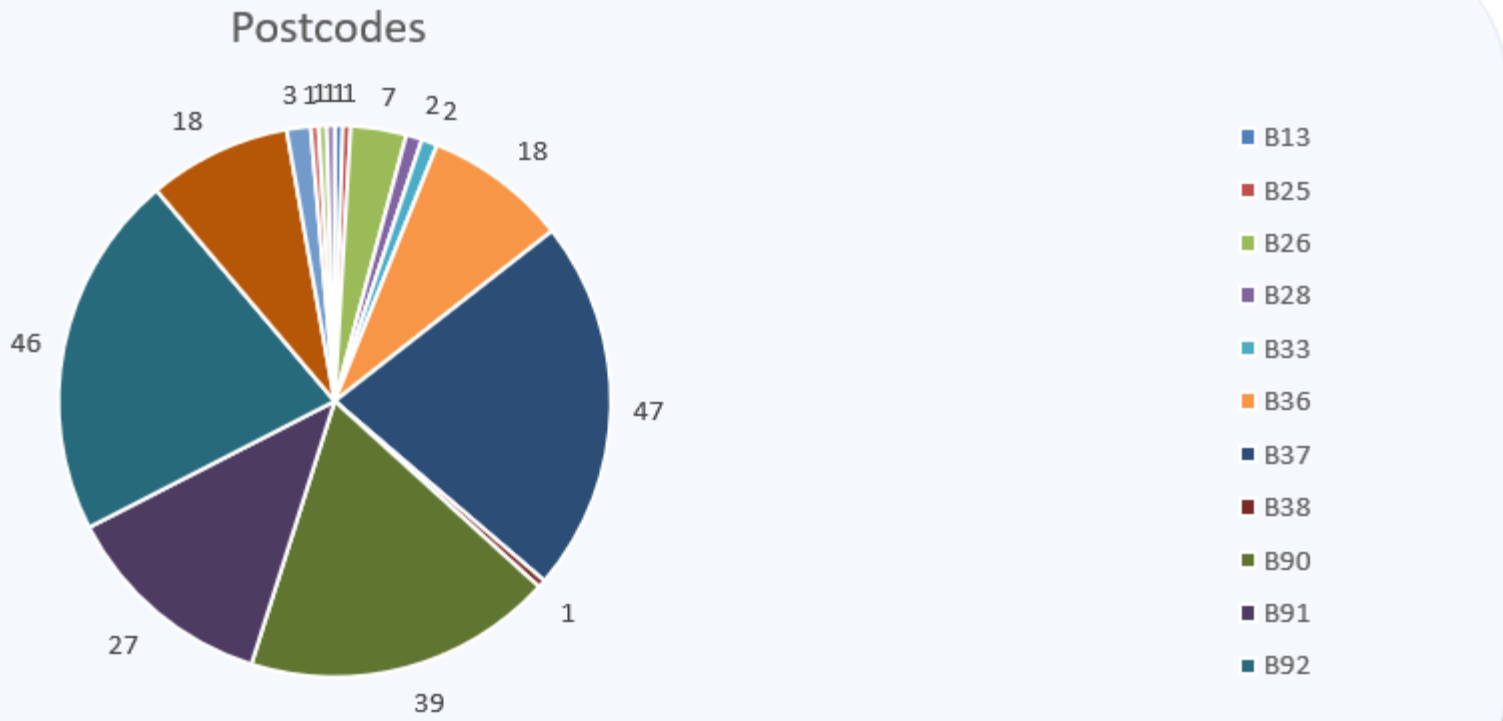
Point 3 -

Families would like the SEND System to review current SEND communication channels and identify gaps, duplication and unclear information.
Families would like the system to introduce minimum expectations that parent carer views are actively sought, recorded and reflected in SEN review outcomes.
Families would like a consistent SEND communication standard- plain English, clear next steps, named contacts and response times.

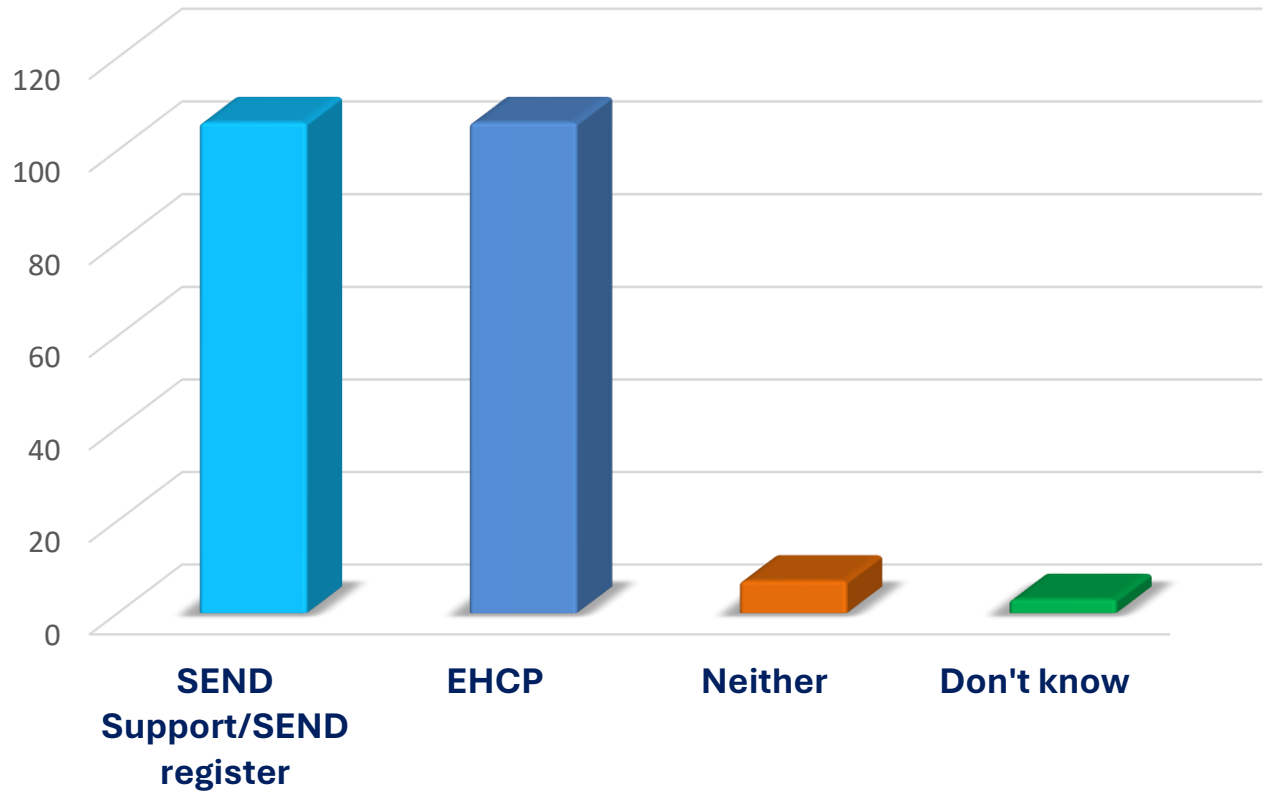
Who we heard from

222
Parent carers

Representation:
All wards of Solihull were represented in responses to our survey.



Do you have a child/young person accessing:

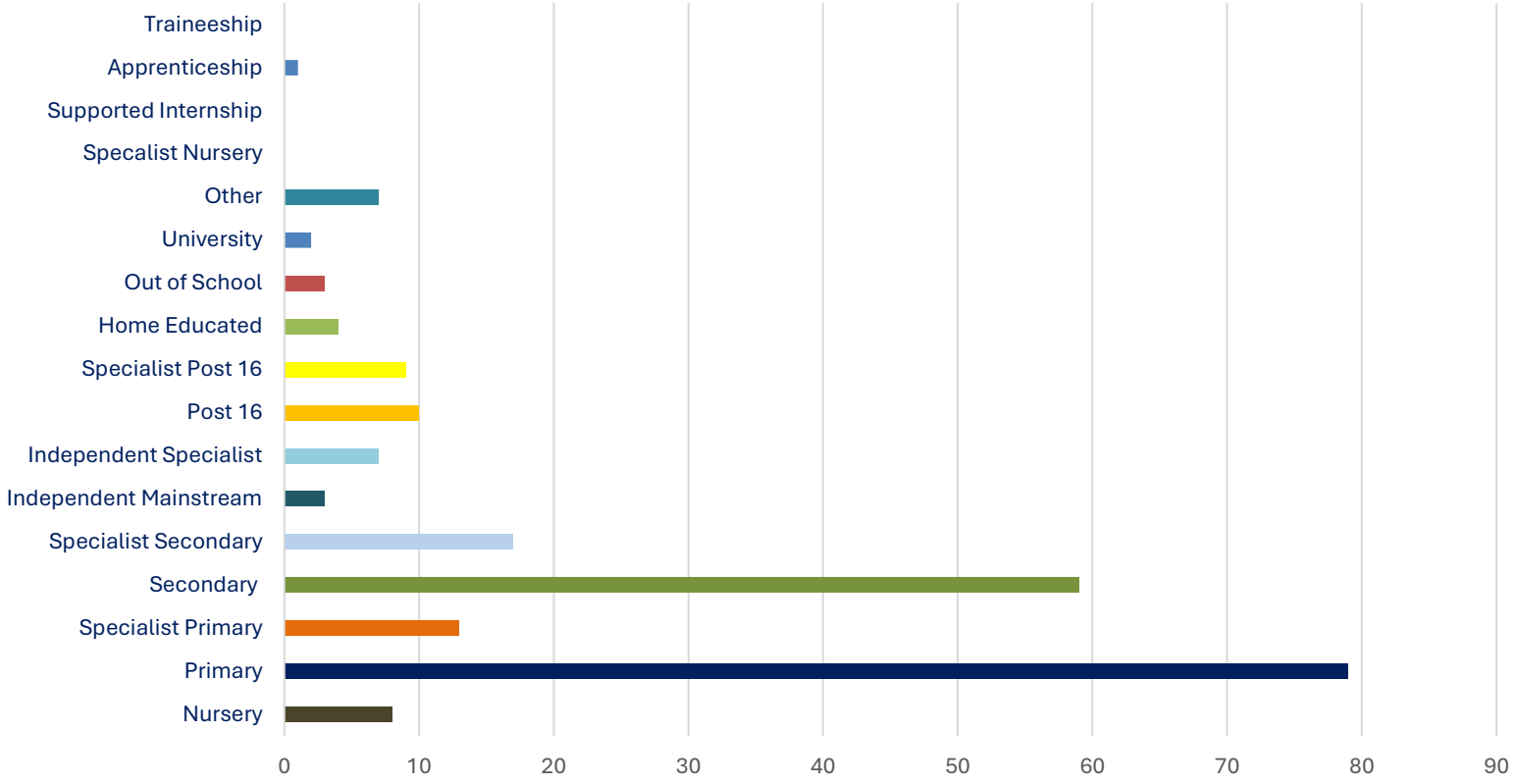


What changed from last year?

The 2026 survey results are broadly comparable with the 2025 findings. Of the CYP surveyed, 106 have an EHCP and 106 are on SEND Support/SEND Register, with 7 reporting neither and 3 unsure. In comparison, the 2025 survey reported 52% with an EHCP, 45% on SEND Support/SEND Register, 2% neither and 1% unsure. Overall, the results indicate a similar profile, with a slightly more even split between EHCP and SEND Support/SEND Register in 2026.

Survey Results

What kind of education is your child/young person accessing or where are they on roll?

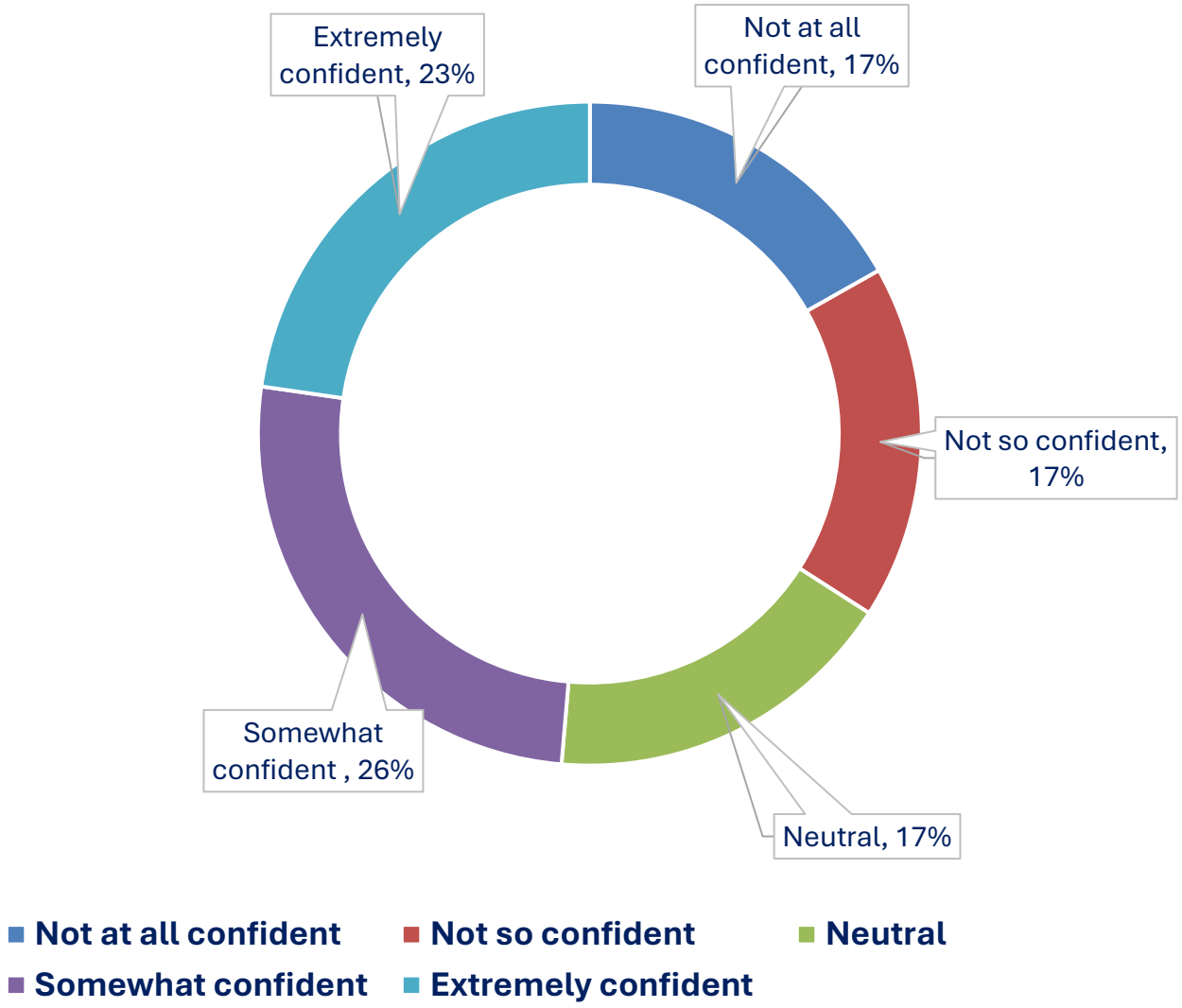


Key changes

Key shifts in responses between 2025 and 2026:

- Primary recorded the largest increase in responses.
- Out of School and Independent Specialist experienced the most significant decreases.

How confident are you in the education setting's ability to meet your child/young persons academic needs?

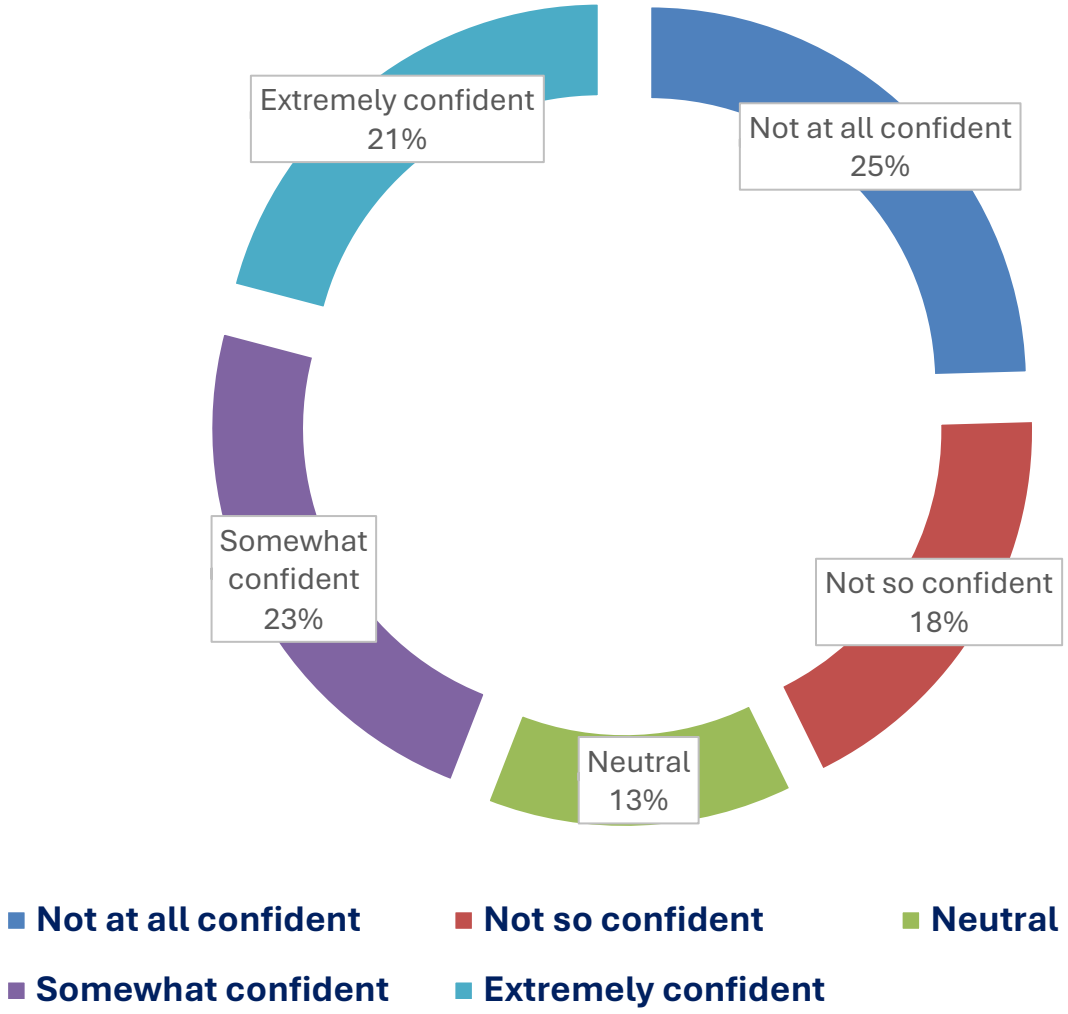


Key takeaways

The results show a clear shift away from confidence in 2026, with fewer respondents feeling confident and more reporting lower or neutral levels of confidence.

- Overall confidence decreased, from 63.8% to 48.6%.
- Somewhat confident saw the biggest drop, from 37.6% to 25.9%.
- Extremely confident also decreased, from 26.1% to 22.7%.
- Not so confident increased significantly, from 8.4% to 17.3%.
- Neutral responses increased from 11.5% to 17.3%.
- Not at all confident remained largely unchanged at around 17%.

How confident are you in the education setting's ability to meet your child/young persons emotional wellbeing?



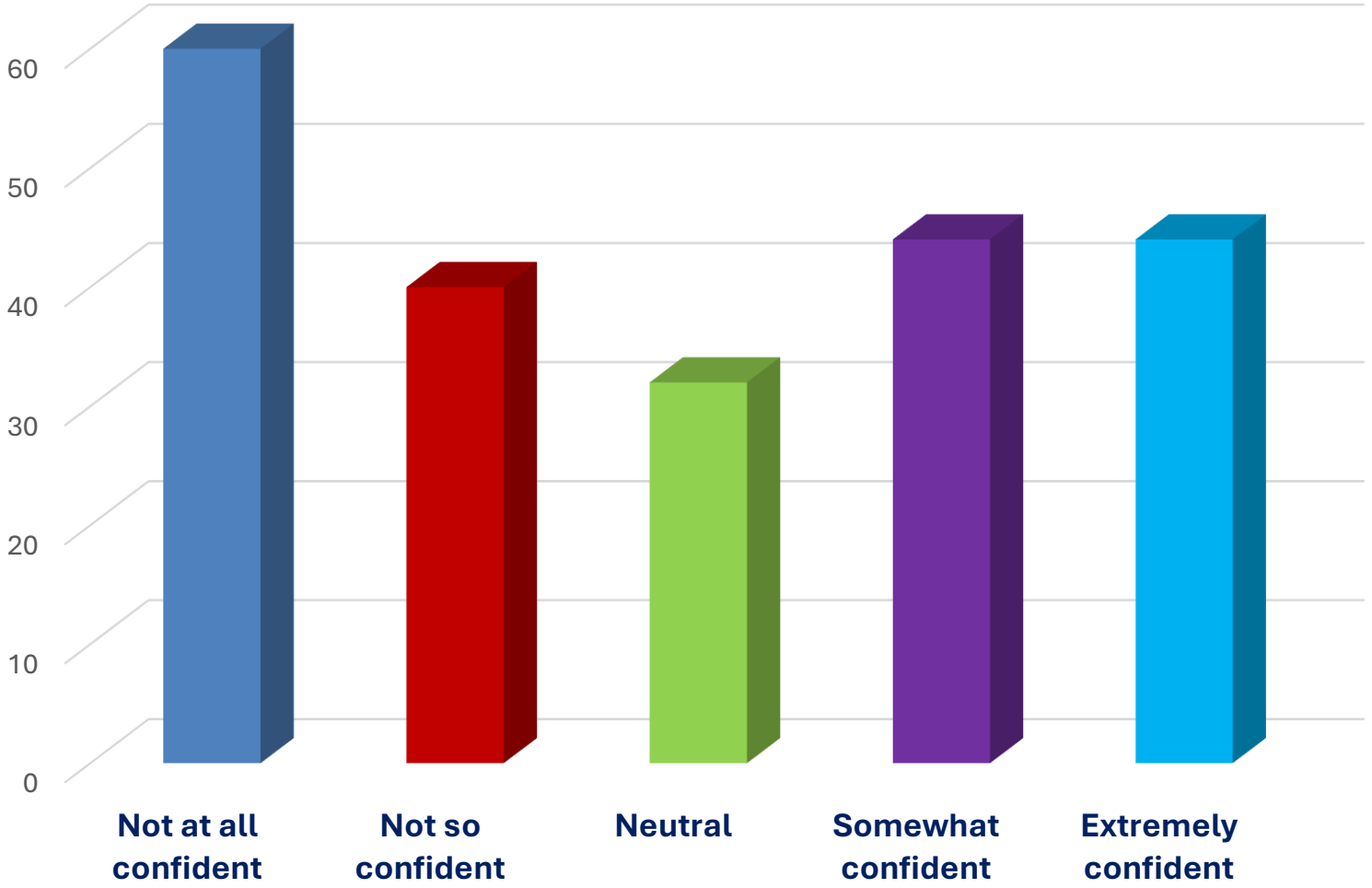
Key takeaways

The results suggest a more polarised picture of confidence in 2026, with more people reporting very high or lower confidence, while fewer selected somewhat confident or neutral.

- Extremely confident increased, from 15.7% to 20.9% (+5.2 percentage points).
- Somewhat confident decreased, from 30.7% to 23.2% (−7.5 percentage points).
- Lower confidence increased, with more respondents selecting the two lower-confidence options.
- Neutral responses decreased, from 16.7% to 13.2%.

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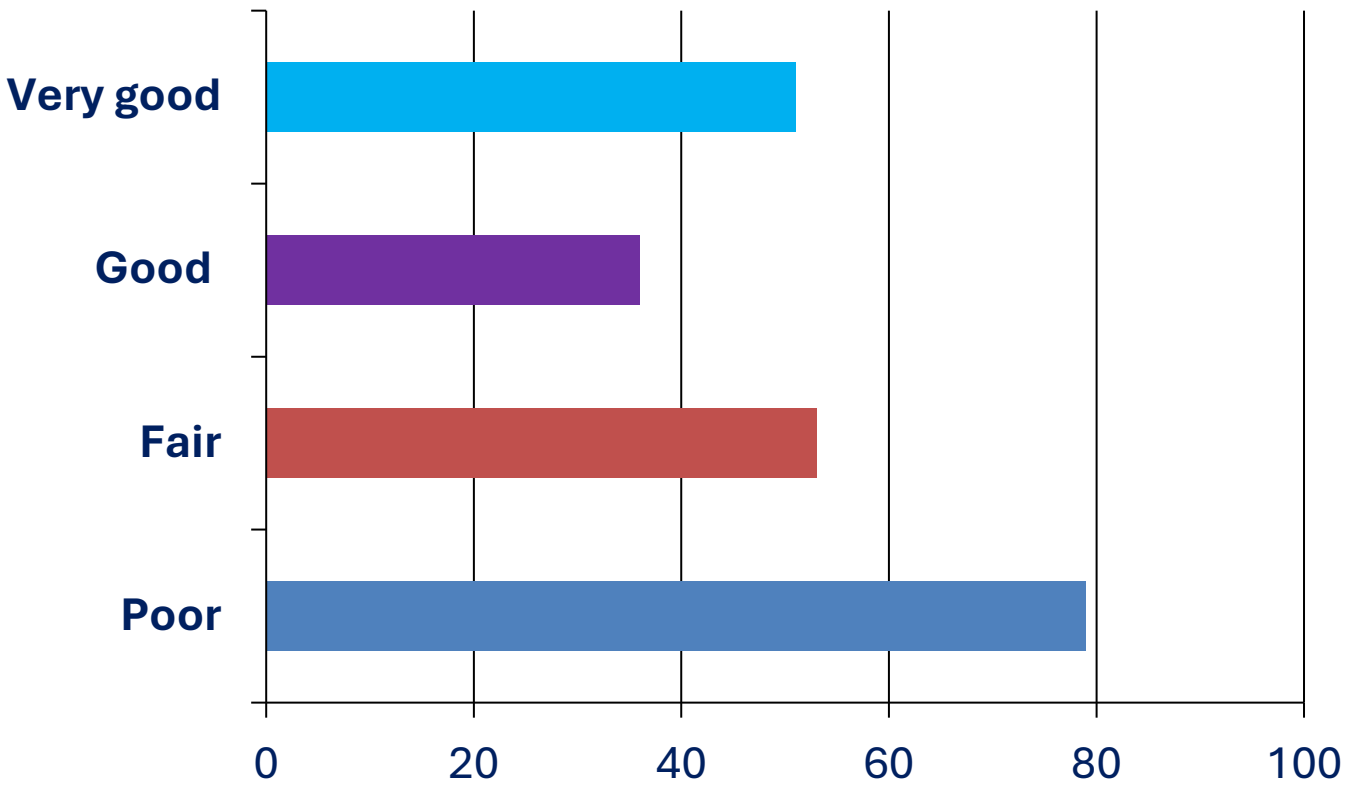
How confident are you in the education setting's ability to meet your child/young persons SEND needs?



Key Takeaway

Confidence measures were lower in 2026 than in 2025 across all five categories.
The largest change was in “Somewhat confident”, which fell from 72% in 2025 to 44% in 2026- a decrease of 28 percentage points.

How would you rate communication with the education setting?

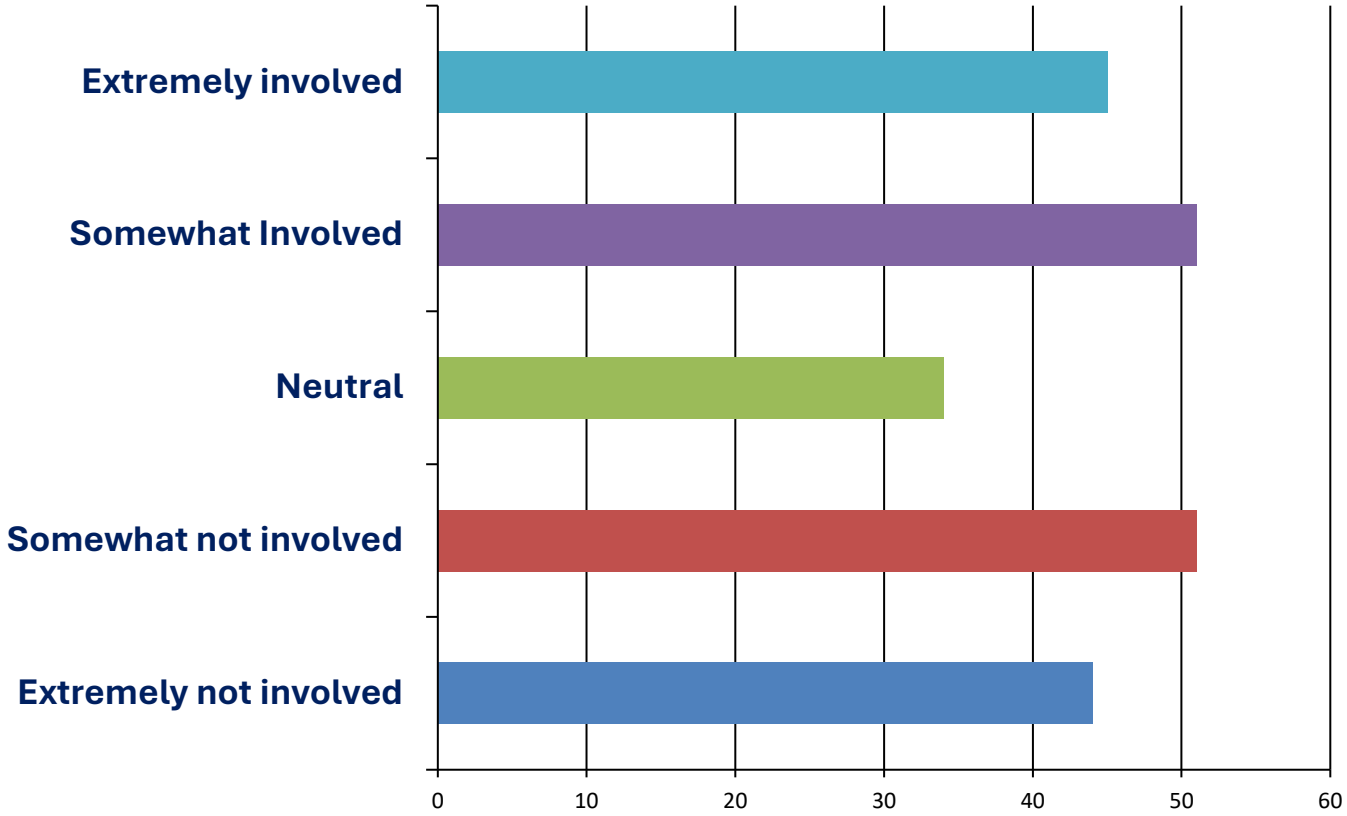


Key Takeaway

Overall, the 2026 results show a noticeable shift in responses. The proportion rating the service “Poor” increased significantly, rising from 25.4% in 2025 to 35.6% in 2026- an increase of 10.2 percentage points. The proportion selecting “Good” saw the largest decrease, falling from 29.2% to 16.2% a reduction of 12.9 percentage points.

There was a smaller increase in “Fair” from 22.7% to 23.9% while “Very Good” improved from 19.7% to 23%

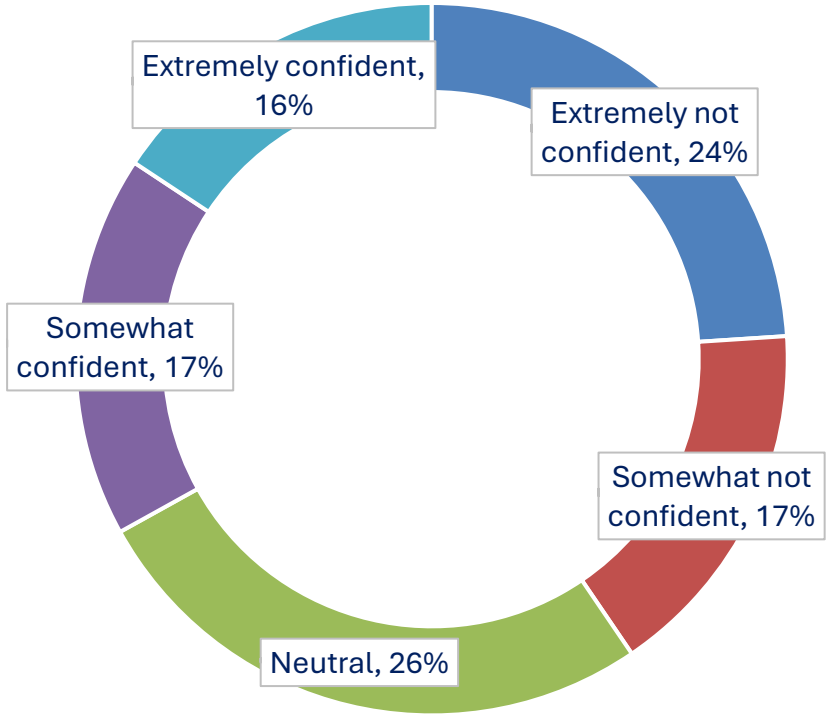
How involved do you feel with your child/young person's SEN reviews, plans and provision- both SEN Support and EHCP's? For instance, do you meet regularly with the nursery/school/college to discuss your child/young person's needs? Do you feel your thoughts and suggestions are taken into account when looking at plans and reviews?



Key Takeaway

Compared with 2025, 2026 shows a noticeable reduction in involvement. The proportion of respondents who felt involved fell by 7.3 percentage points, while those who felt not involved increased by 8.4 percentage points.

If your child/young person has an EHCP, how confident are you that the provision follows Section F in the EHCP?

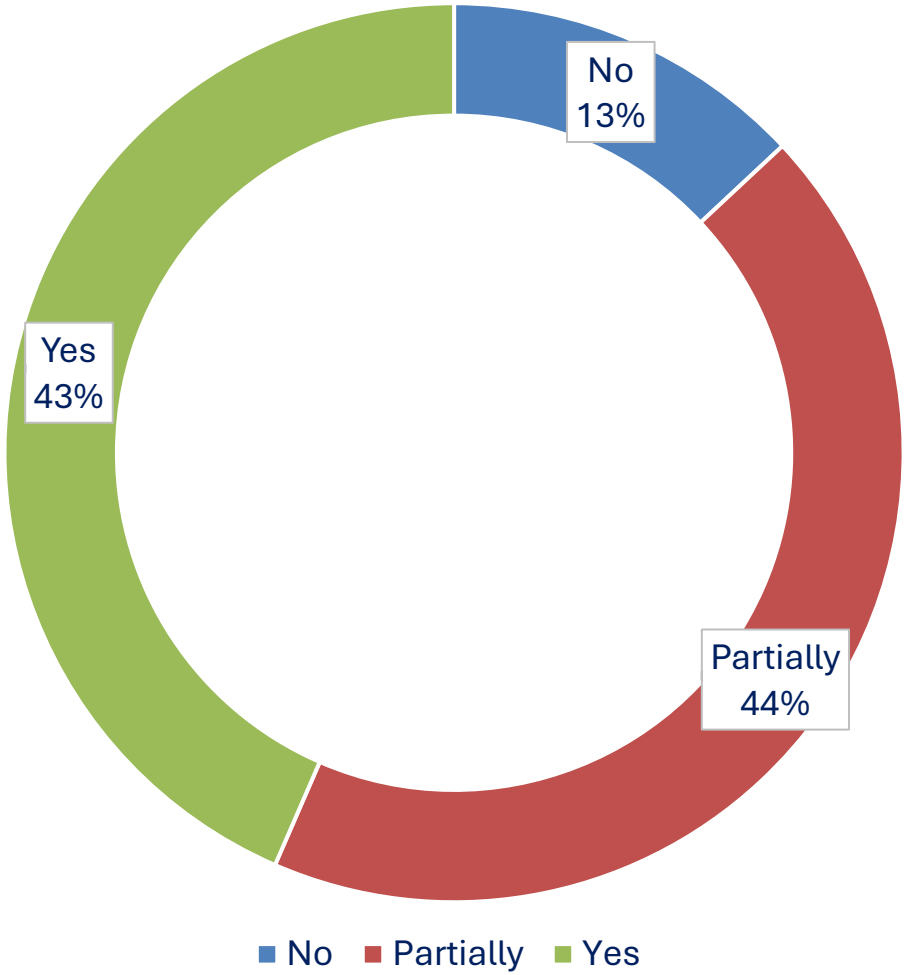


- Extremely not confident
- Somewhat not confident
- Neutral
- Somewhat confident
- Extremely confident

Key Takeaway

Confidence levels in 2026 have become more neutral. Overall confidence decreased slightly by 2 percentage points, while neutral responses increased by 6.3 percentage points. This suggests a shift away from “somewhat confident” responses, with respondents becoming more likely to have a neutral or negative response.

If your child/young person has an EHCP, do you think it accurately reflects your child/young person?

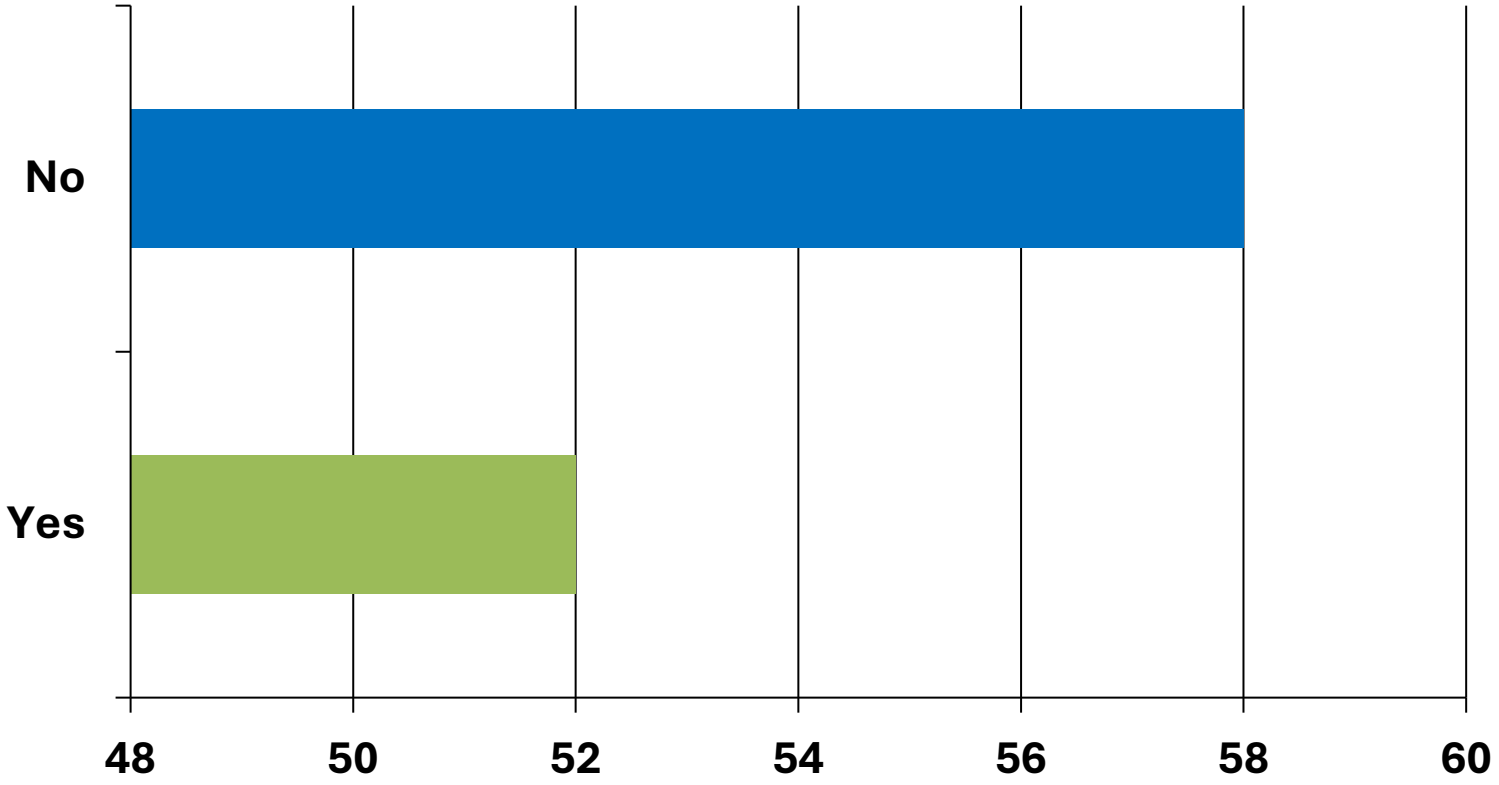


Key Takeaway

The results suggest that in 2026, fewer respondents gave a clear "Yes" while more respondents selected "Partially".

This could indicate that there has been some progress, however we believe health and social care input to EHCP's should be better.

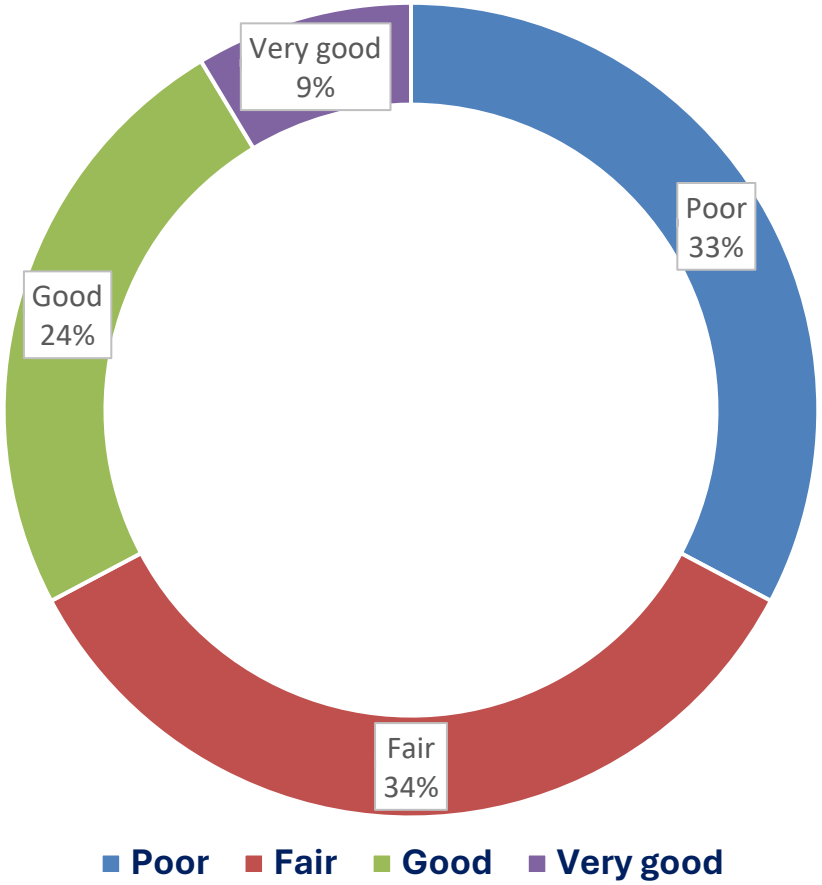
If your child/young person has an EHCP, do they attend their annual review meeting?



Key Takeaway

2026 shows a slight decline in positive responses for a child/young person attending their annual review meeting.

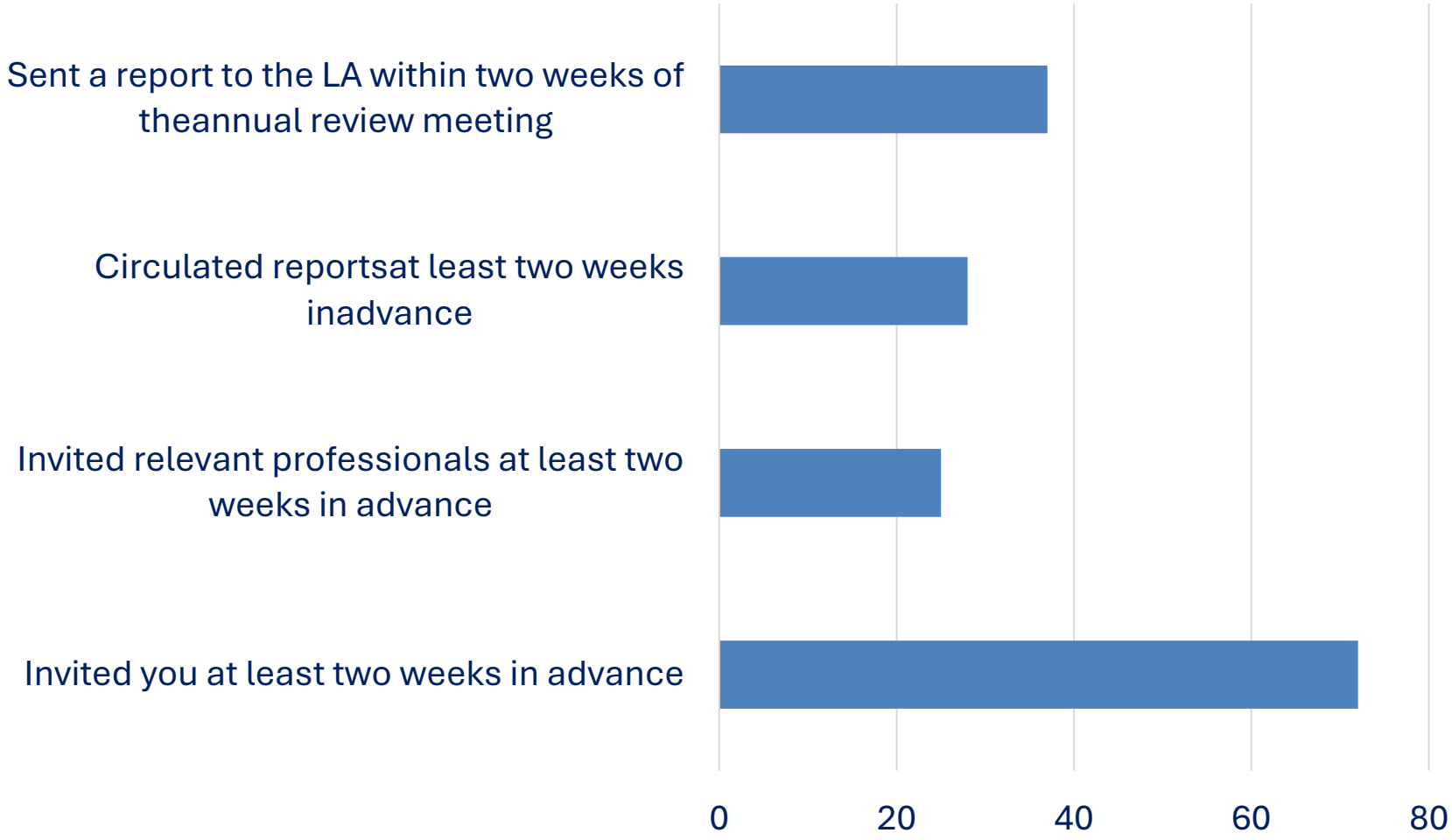
How would you rate communication with the EHCP team?



Key Takeaway

The results suggest some improvement at the lower end of the scale, but there is still the opportunity to improve communication between the team and parent carers, and move more responses from Fair towards Good and Very Good.

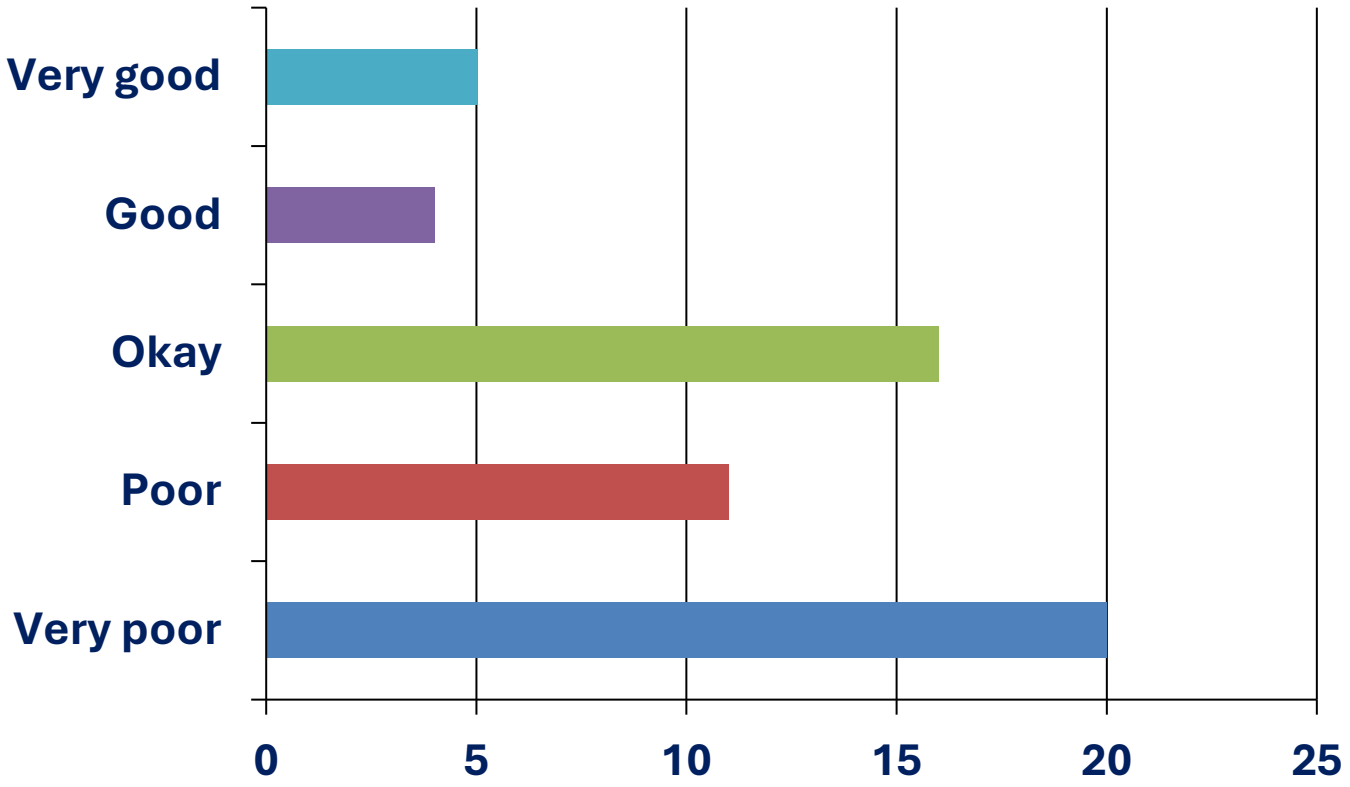
Thinking of your child/young person's last EHCP annual review, please tick if the school did the following:



Key Takeaways

2026 shows an improvement in advance invitations, but there has been a slight decline in the timely circulation and submission of reports.

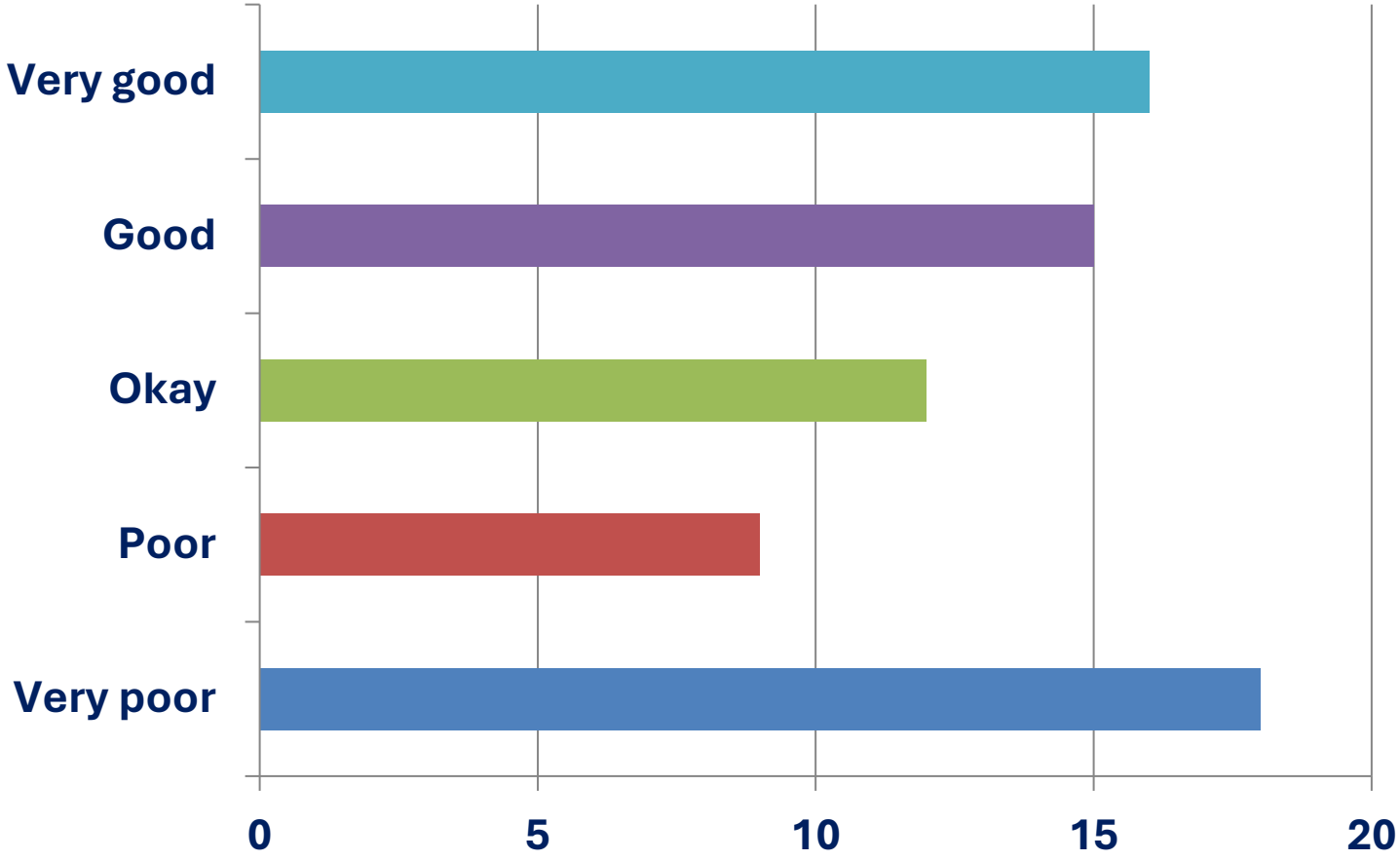
If you have had involvement with the disability social care team in the last 12 months, how would you rate your experience?



Key Takeaway

In 2026, we saw a significant reduction in “Poor” responses, falling from 11.5% in 2025 to 5.0%. However, “Very Poor” responses increased slightly from 7.8% to 9.0%. There was also a small increase in “Very Good” responses from 1.7% to 2.3%

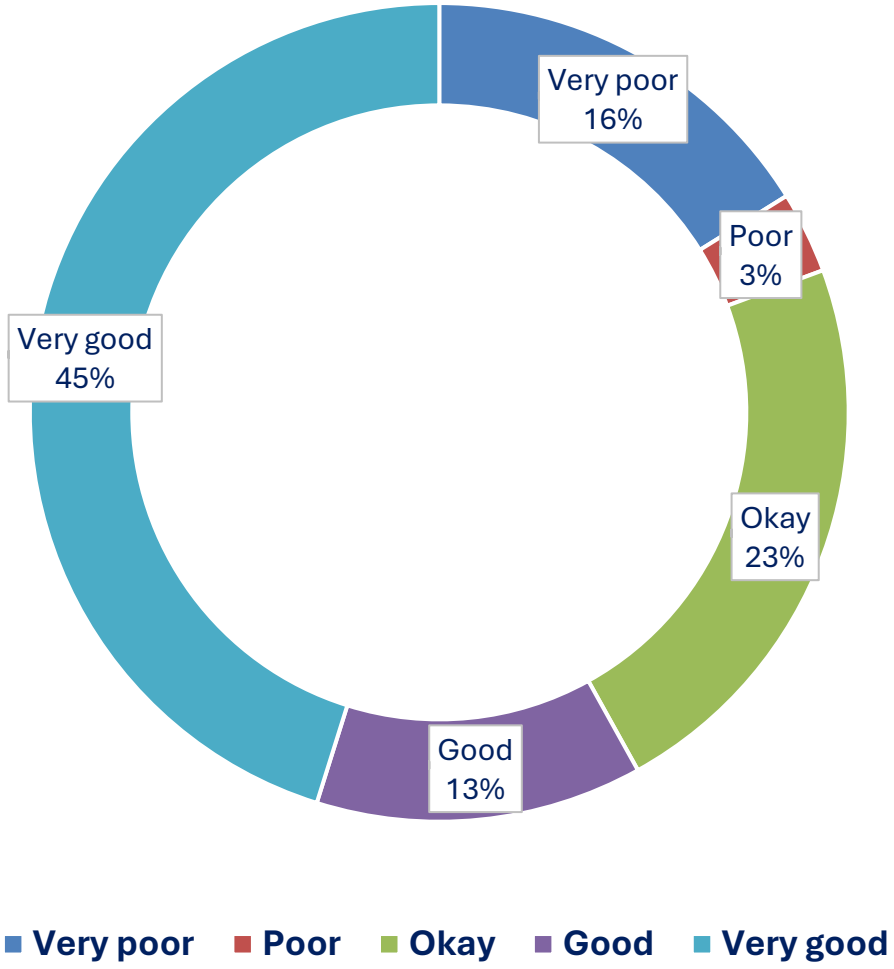
If you have had involvement with children's social care- early help/family support worker/social worker) in the last 12 months, how would you rate your experience?



Key Takeaways

In 2026, responses have shifted away from the middle categories, with a notable increase in ‘Very Good’ responses. However, the reduction in ‘Good’ responses and slight increase in ‘Poor’ responses indicate a mixed overall picture.

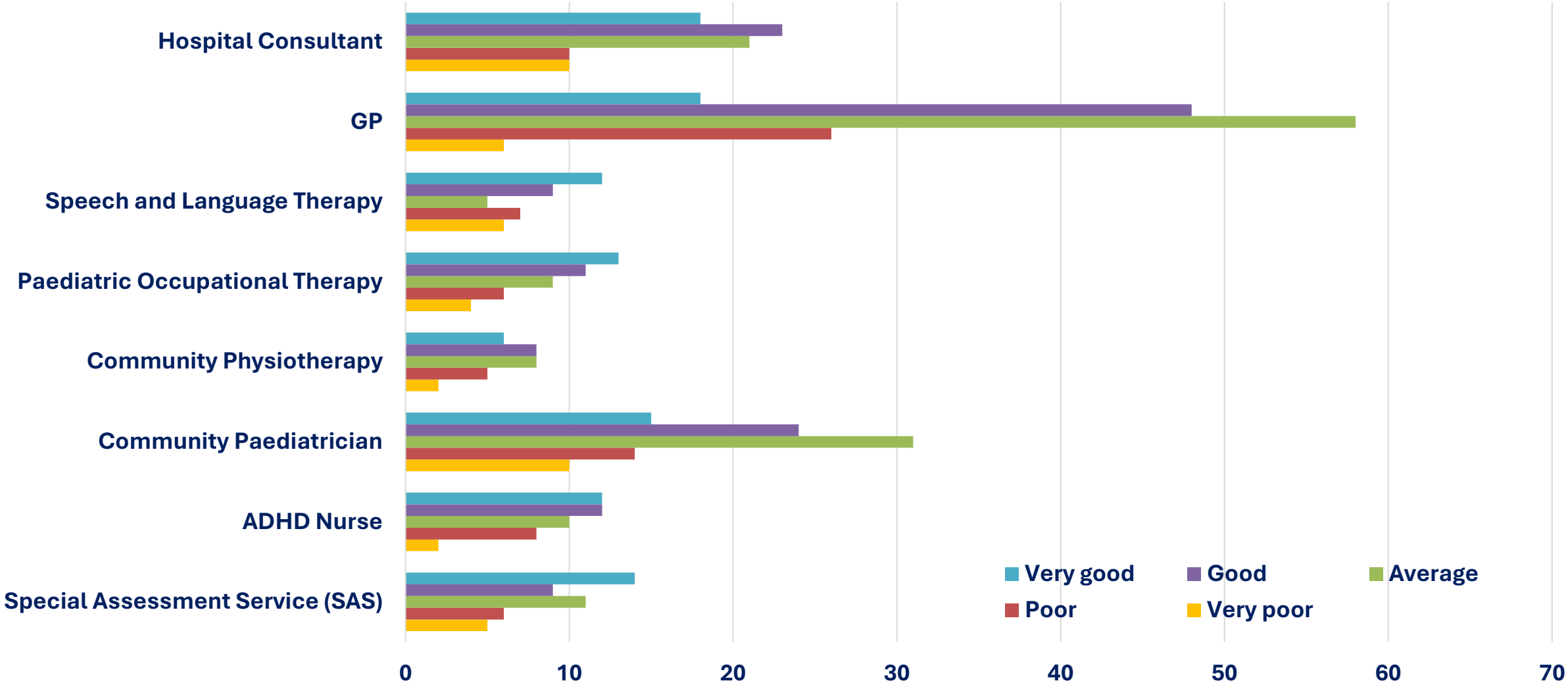
If your young person (18-25) has had contact with adult social care in the last 12 months, how would you rate the experience?



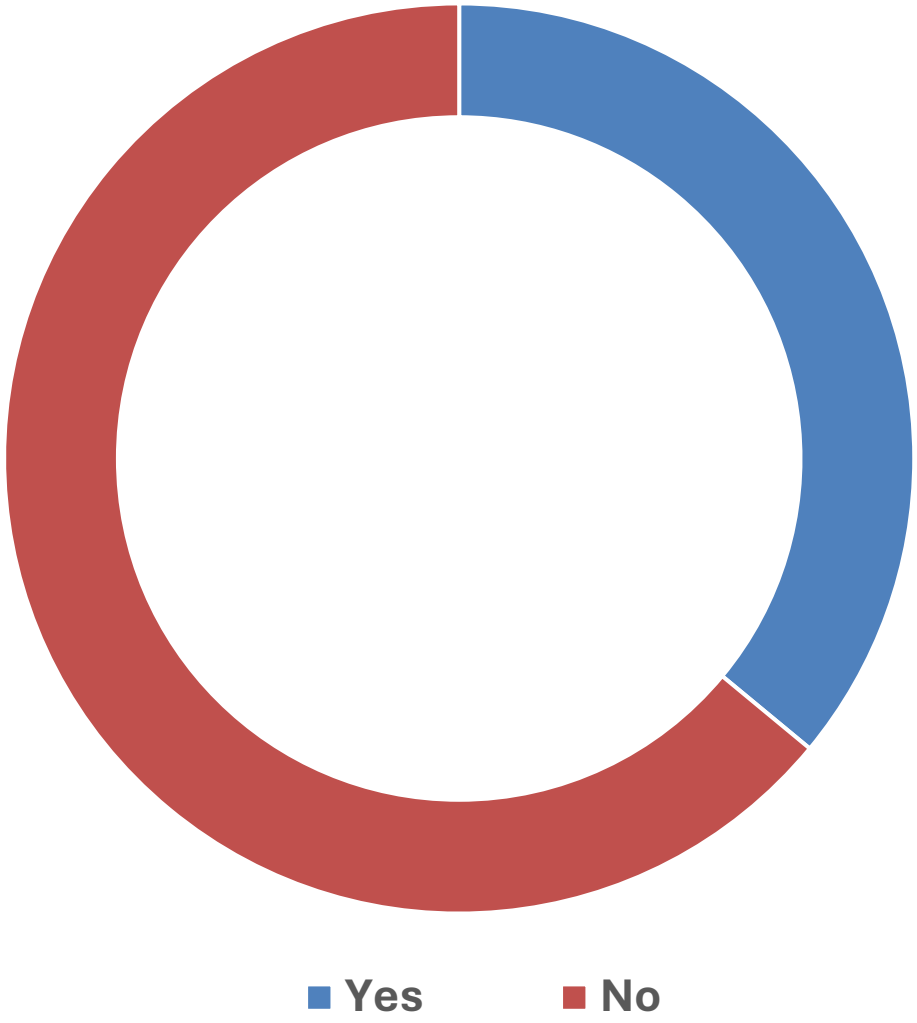
Key Takeaway

Overall, 2026 shows some encouraging. The most encouraging finding is the rise in “Very Good” responses from 33.3% to 45% and the sharp reduction in “Poor” responses from 21.2% to 3%

In the last 12 months, if you have accessed any of the below services please can you rate your experience



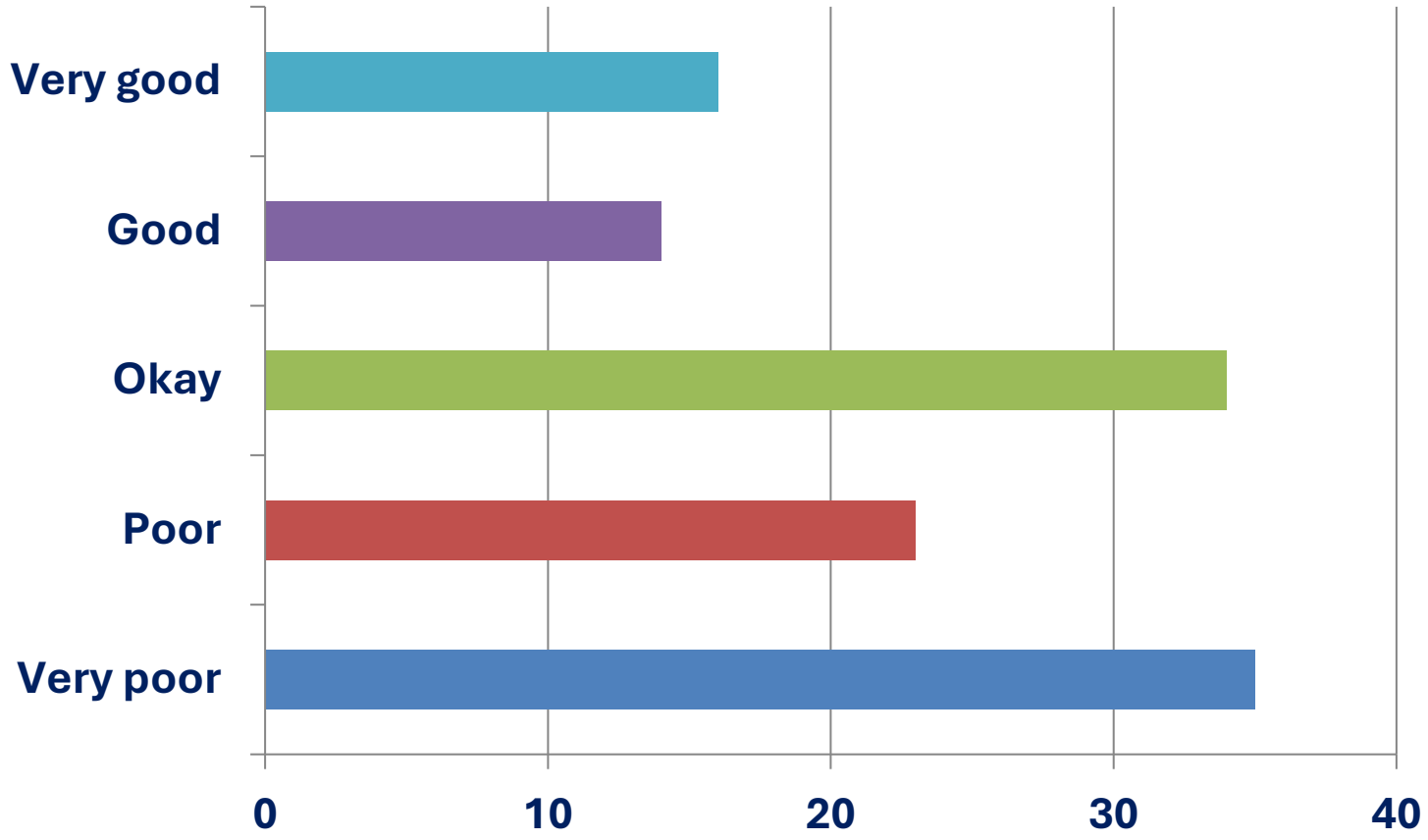
Has your young person accessed Solar in the last 12 months?



Key Takeaway

2026 received fewer responses overall, and those responses were more likely to be a “No” thank in 2025

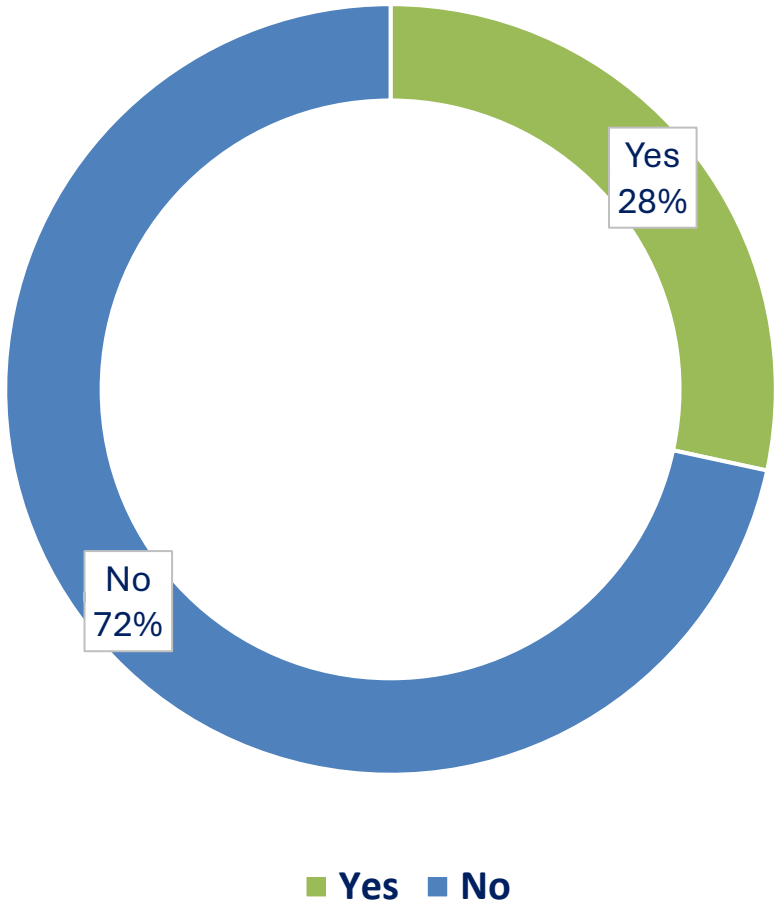
How would you rate the support your child young person has received?



Key Takeway

The 2026 results show a slight shift away from the extremes of “Very Poor” and “Good” with more respondents selecting “Okay” and “Very Good”. The most notable positive change is the 2.1 percentage-point increase in “Very Good” responses, whilst the largest reduction is in “Good” which fell by 3.5 percentage points.

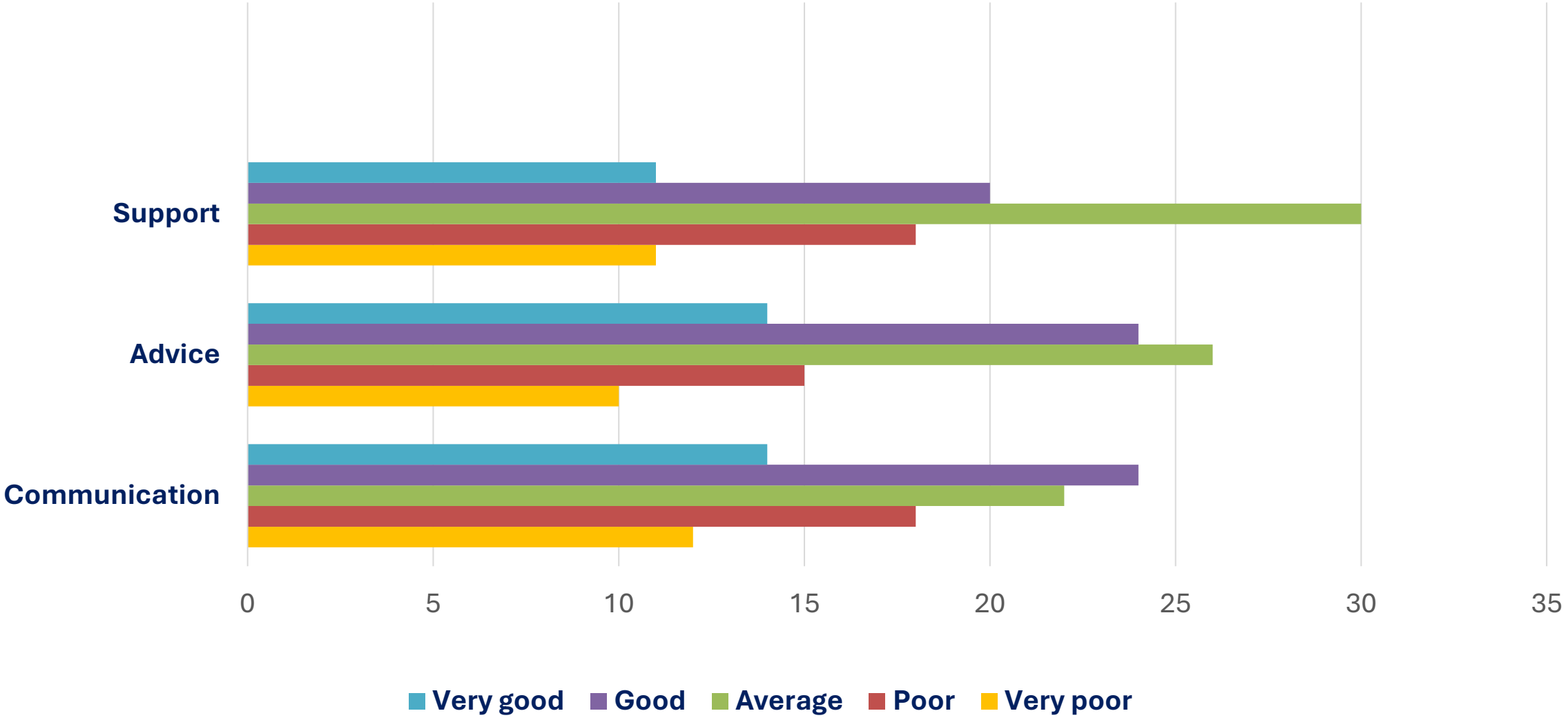
Have you contacted SENDIAS in the last 12 months?



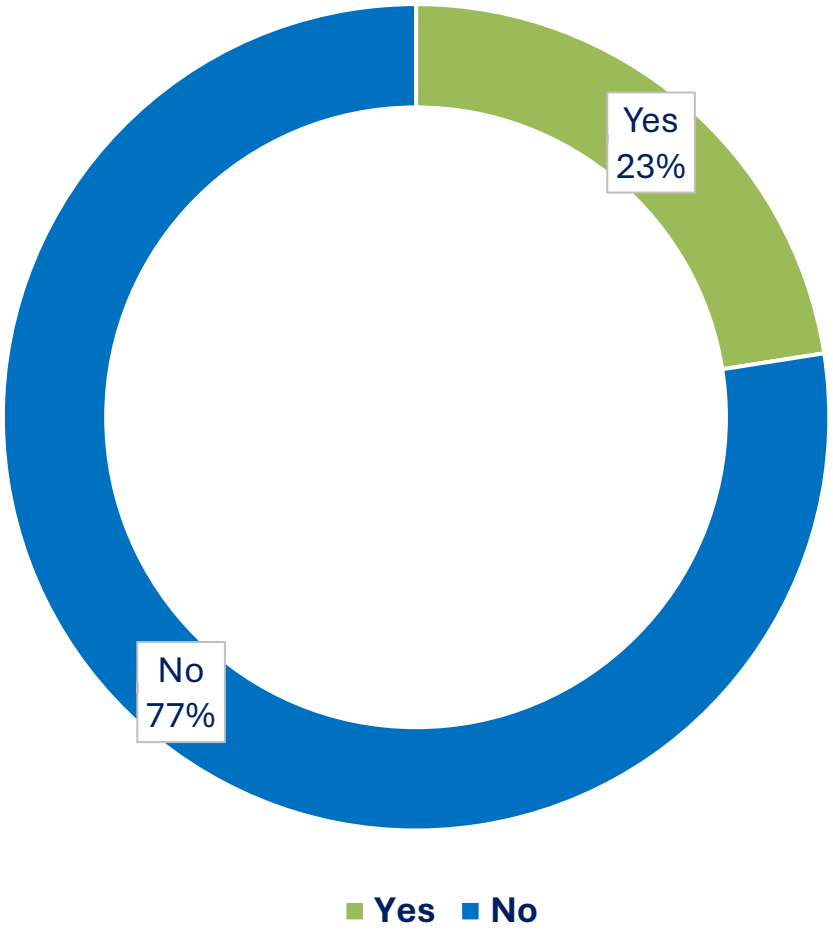
Key Takeaways

The 2026 results show a significant increase in “No” responses. In 2025, around 4 in 10 respondents answered “Yes”. In 2026, this has fallen to just under 3 in 10.

If you have contacted SENDIAS in the last year, how would you rate the:



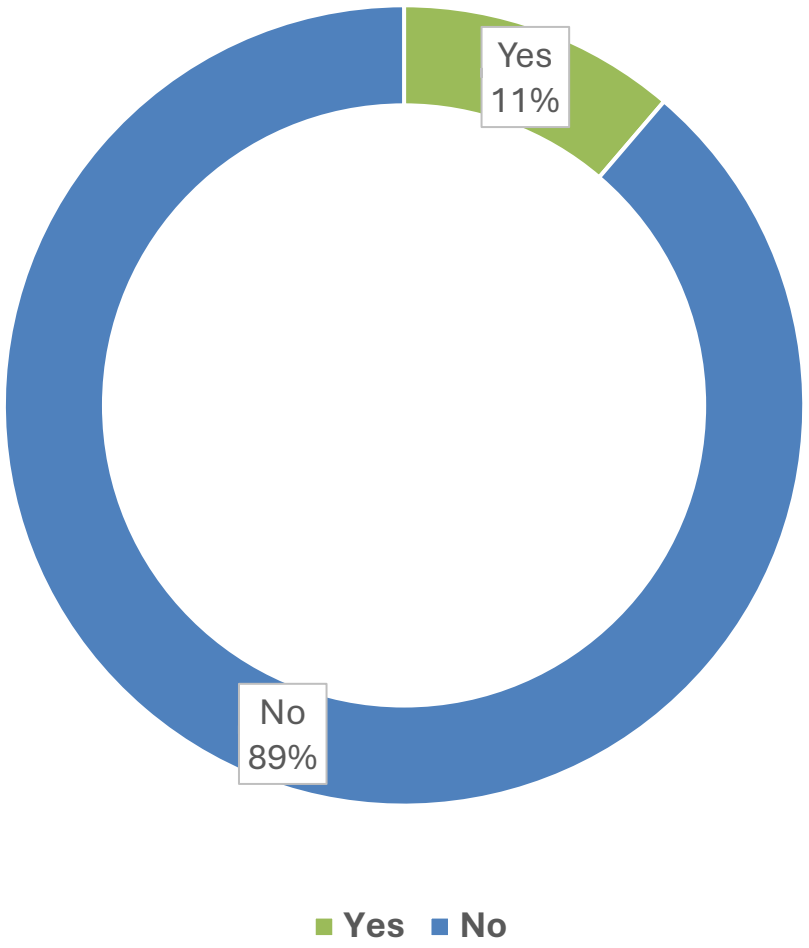
As a parent carer/family member, have you accessed any support for yourself?



Key Takeaways

Despite receiving fewer responses in 2026, a greater proportion of respondents answered “Yes”.

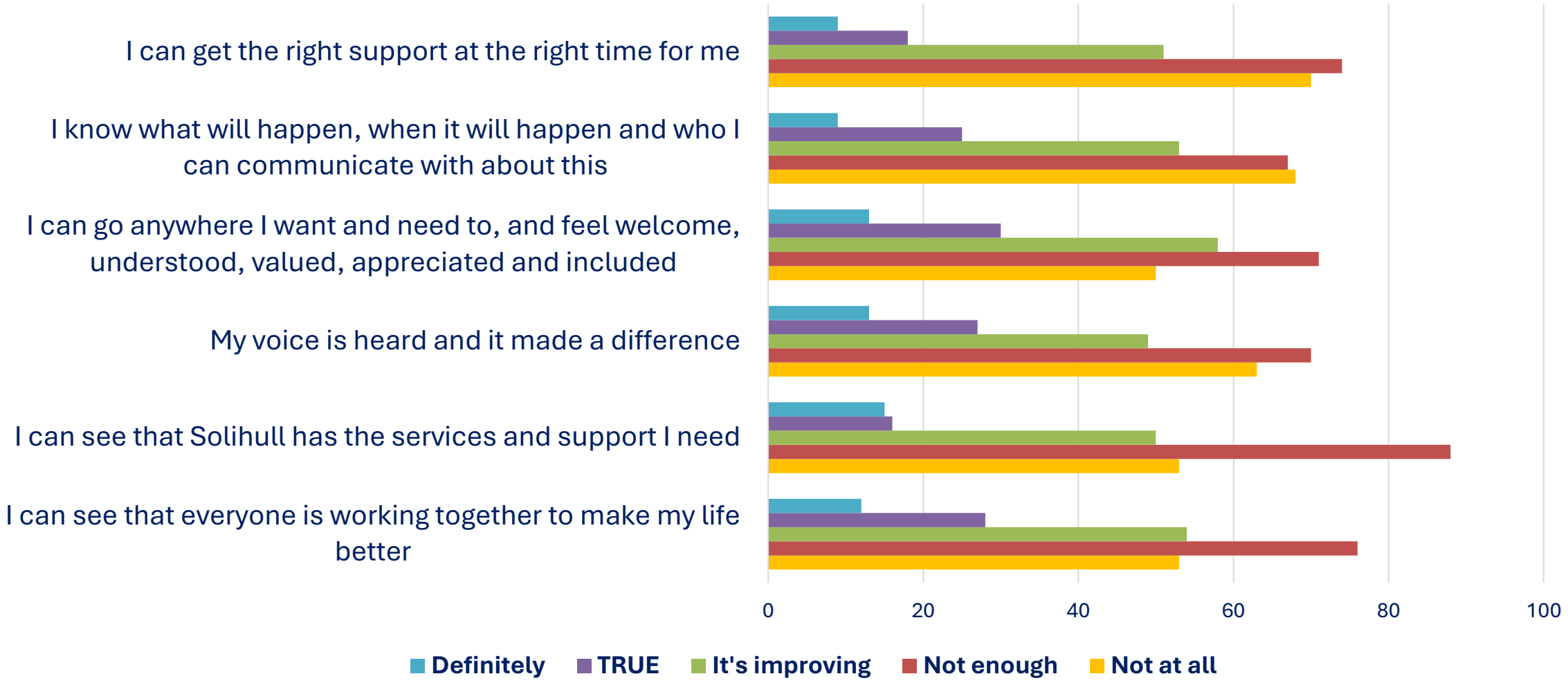
Have you used a mediation service in the last 12 months?



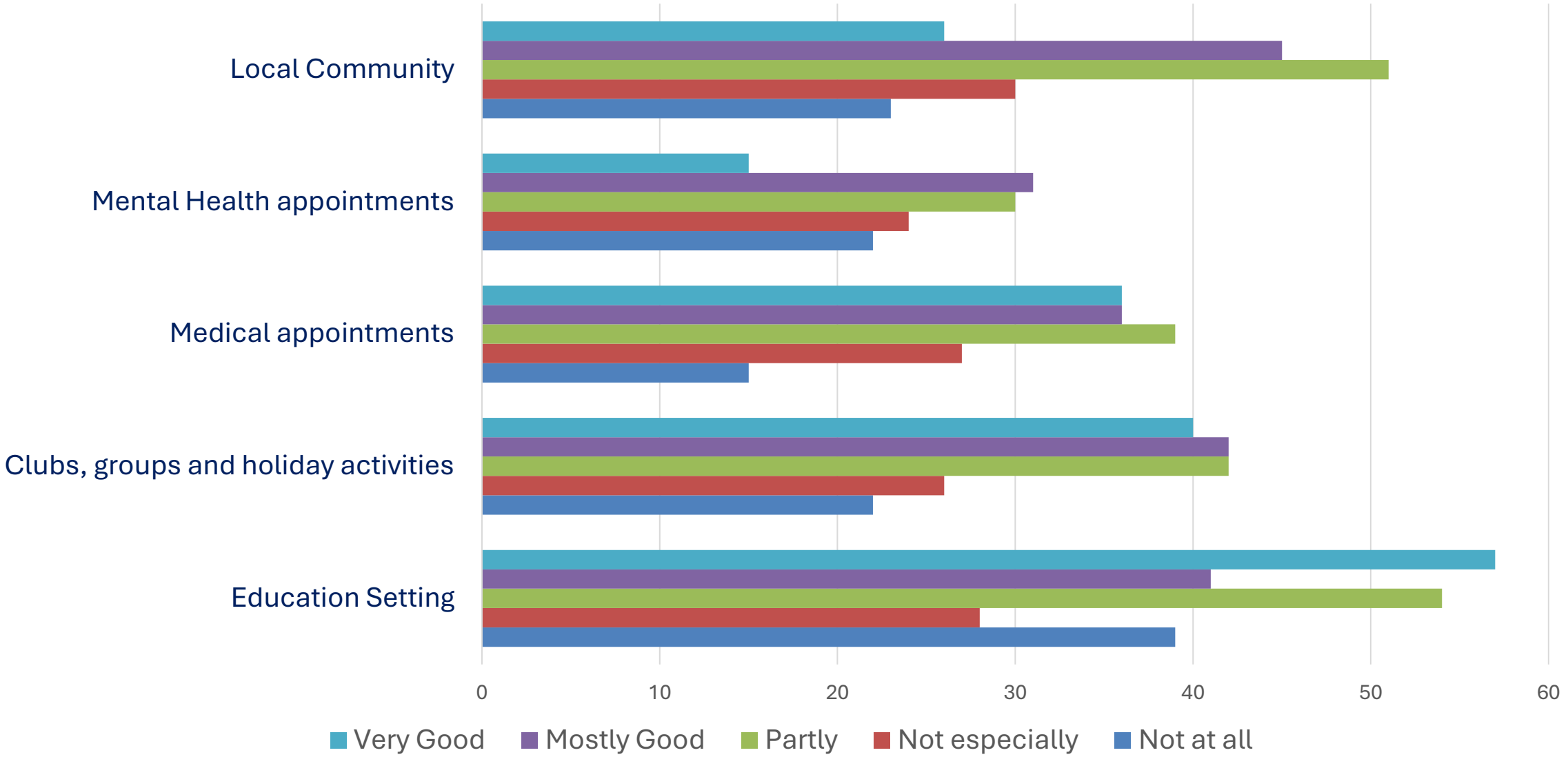
Key Takeaway

Of the 22 respondents who had used mediation, KIDS was the most frequently identified service, accounting for approximately 59% of responses. A small number of respondents identified other named providers, including Charles Horn Mediation and Prime Resolution. Some responses referred to medical or wider support services rather than a specific mediation provider.

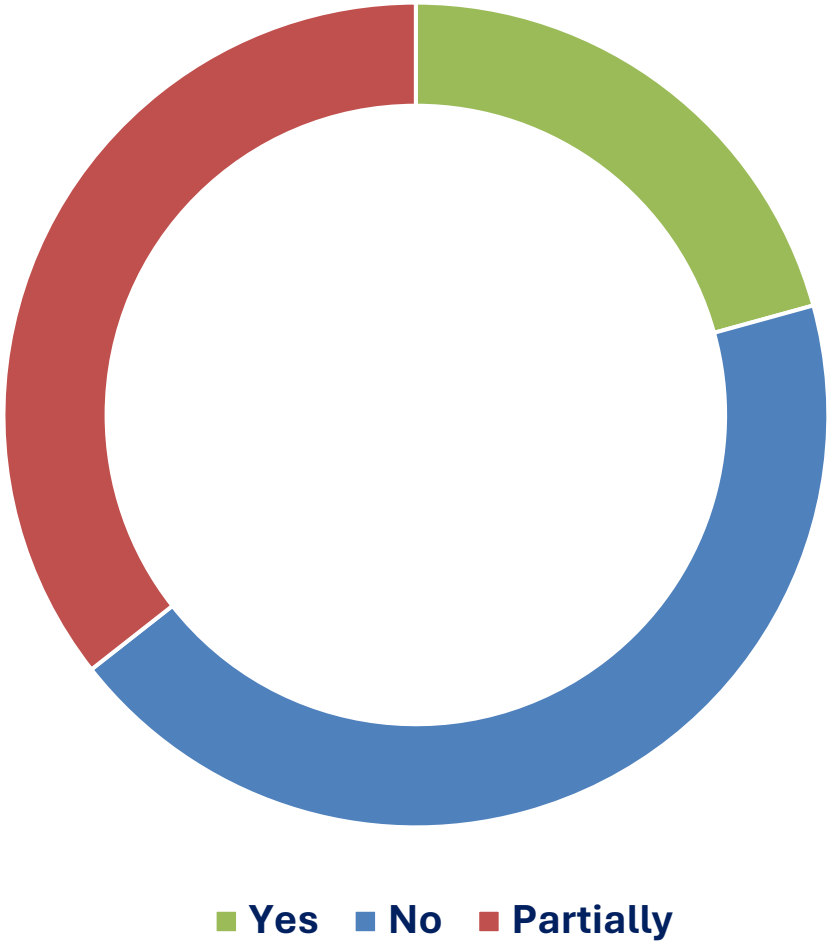
Please let us know how you feel about the below for your child/young person



Does your child/young person feel they belong and are welcomed in:



Do you feel that you understand the proposed changes in the SEND Reforms?



Key Takeaways

The findings highlight a significant information and communication gap around the proposed SEND Reforms. Almost 8 in 10 respondents do not feel they fully understand the changes, with 44% saying they do not understand them at all. This suggests a clear need for accessible, clear and consistent information to help families understand what the reforms could mean for them and their children.

Recommendations

Confidence is falling: Overall confidence in education meeting children's academic needs fell from 63.8% to 48.6%, while "Poor" ratings for communication increased from 25.4% to 35.6%.
Parent carers feel less involved: Those feeling involved in SEN reviews and planning fell by 7.3 percentage points, while those feeling not involved increased by 8.4 percentage points.
Information and support need to improve: Almost 8 in 10 parent carers do not fully understand the proposed SEND Reforms, including 44% who do not understand them at all.

Family support and coordination resource – better joined-up working across education, health and social care, with a clear named contact and feedback loop.
Dedicated SEND communication resource – clear information, particularly on SEND reforms, EHCP processes and available support.

Review current SEND communication channels and identify gaps, duplication and unclear information.
Introduce a minimum expectation that parent/carer views are actively sought, recorded and reflected in SEN review outcomes.
Develop a consistent SEND communication standard: plain English, clear next steps, named contacts and response times.

Closing message

Moving Forward: From Feedback to Action

Feedback from **222 parent carers - Our priorities should be to:**

Listen & involve
Strengthen parent carer voice and ensure families are genuinely involved in decisions about their children.

Communicate clearly
Provide accessible, timely and consistent information, particularly around SEND reforms, education and available support.

Build confidence
Work with families to improve trust and confidence in education's ability to meet children's needs.

Join up support
Improve collaboration across education, health and other services so families experience one coordinated system, rather than having to navigate multiple services alone.

Thank you

Solihull Parent Carer Voice

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