



# Family Consultation Parents / Carer Events Research

For: **Devon County Council**  
Social Care Commissioning Involvement and Equalities Team

February 2014

# Research Objectives

- Devon County Council wished to:
  - Gain quantitative data around the needs of parents and carers of children with additional needs.
  - Areas of interest included:
    - You and your family (Classification)
    - Information and having your say
    - Childcare
    - Short Breaks & activities
    - Overnight respite
    - Special educational needs & disability
  - A separate survey was also completed with children and young people. The results of that survey are contained in a separate report.

# Methodology – Quantitative study

- Self completion questionnaires created by DCC were circulated at family events in February 2014.
- These were completed by parents and carers.
- A total of 154 parent / carers questionnaires were completed.
- Because of the nature of self completed questionnaires it should be noted that not all the questions were completed by the respondents. Where appropriate the frequency data recorded has been rebased to provide a more accurate picture of the views expressed.
- The sample size achieved was relatively small and had a margin of error of 7.7% at the 95% confidence level. The sample size relating to each question is shown at the bottom of each slide. In some cases the sample size will vary based on the frequencies reported.

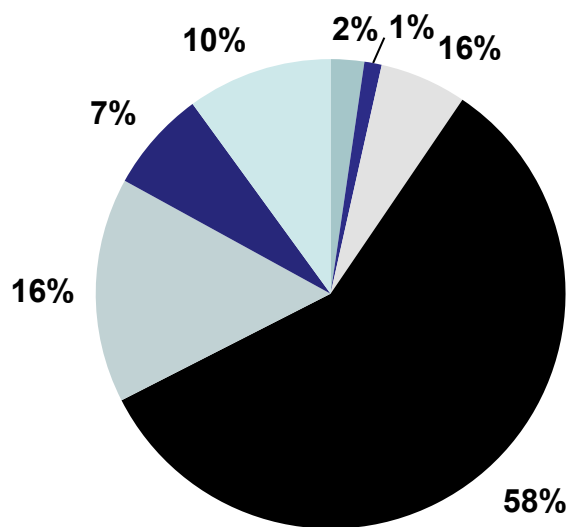


# You & your family

# Parent / Carer (1) – Relationship & Childs Age

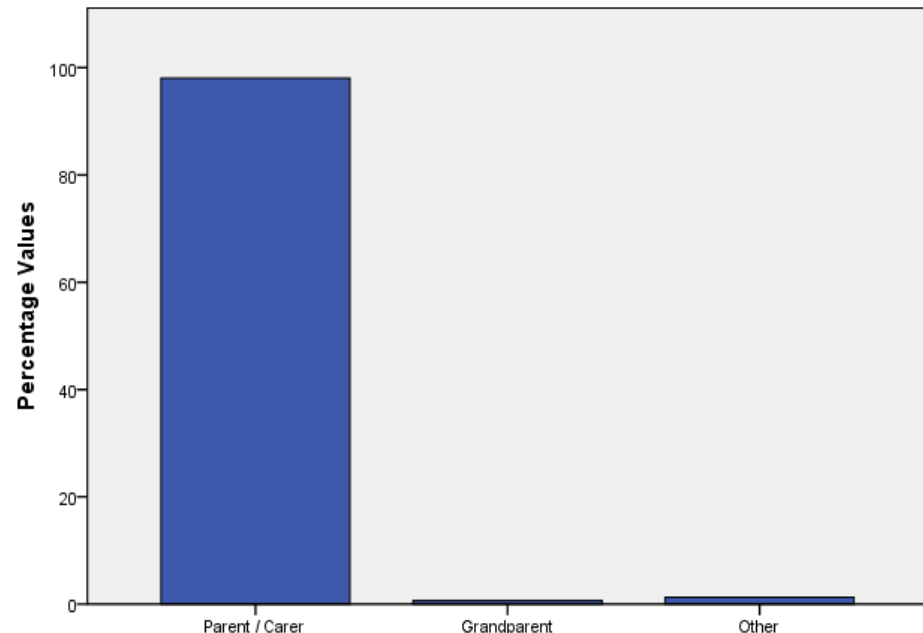
The majority of respondents (98%) who took part in the survey were parent/ carers. The children in the 5 – 11 years age group (58%) represented the largest single group. Only 1 grandparent took part in the survey.

**Child age group**



■ Under 2 ■ 2 ■ 3-4 ■ 5-11 ■ 12-14 ■ 14-16 ■ 16plus

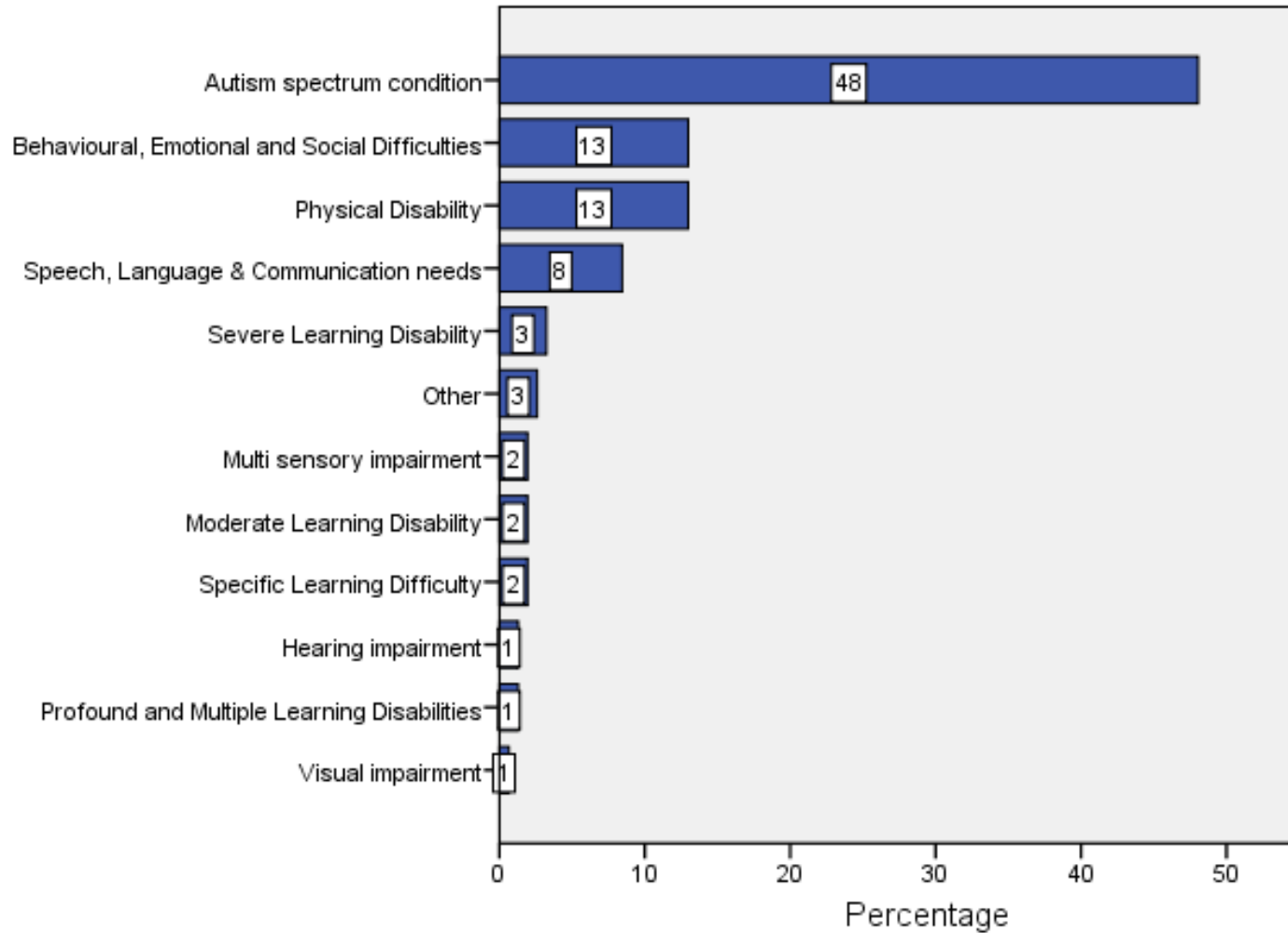
**Relationship with child**



What is your relationship to the children you have come here with today?

# Parent / Carer (2) - Primary need?

What is the primary need of your child/children with additional needs?



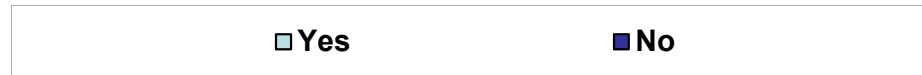
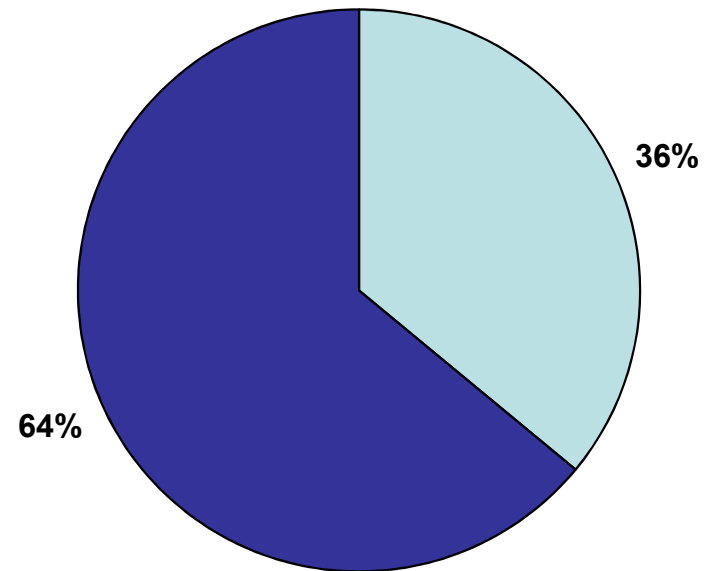


# Childcare

# Do you use childcare? (1)

Just over a third of respondents used childcare.

Defined as “Somewhere you can leave your child under the supervision of a qualified person, usually Ofsted registered or run by a school governing body, and is usually something that you pay for”



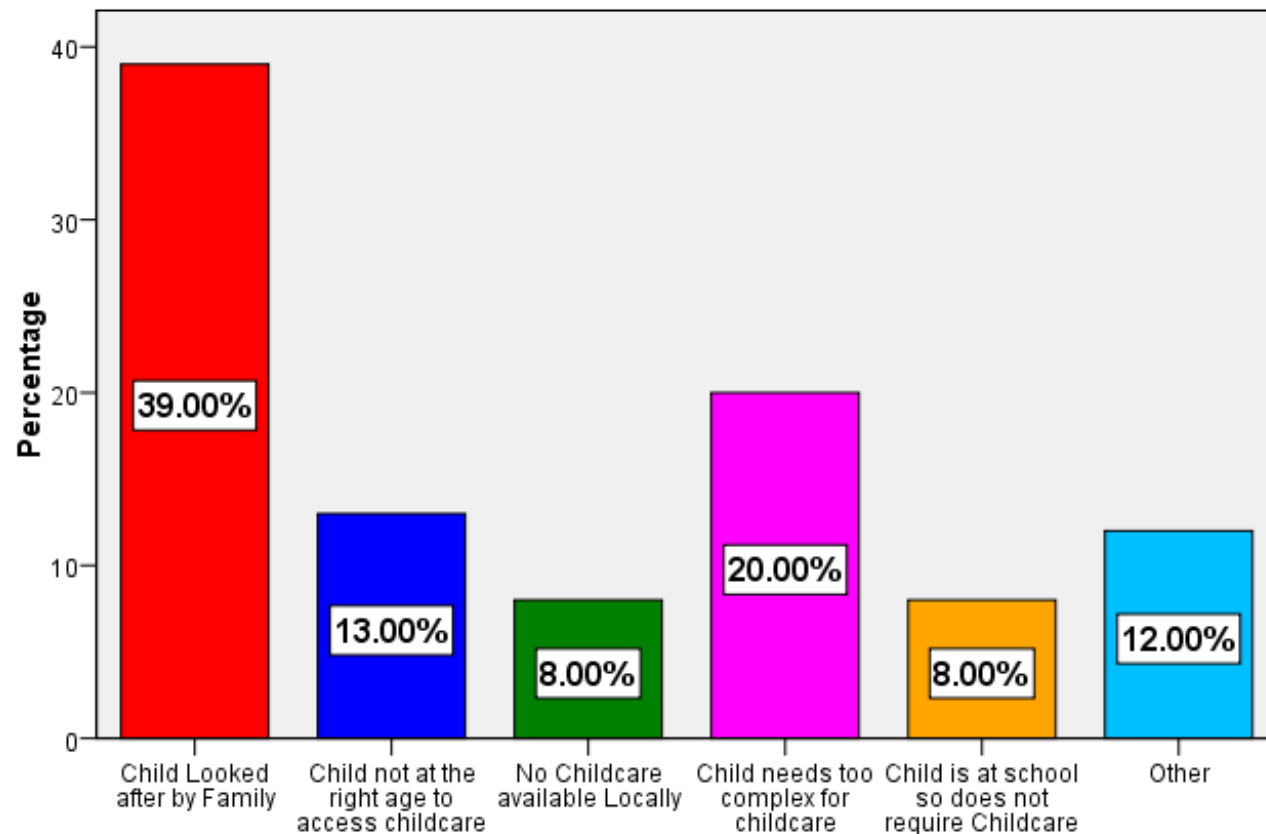


# Do you use childcare? (2)

## If No – what are the reasons you do not use childcare?

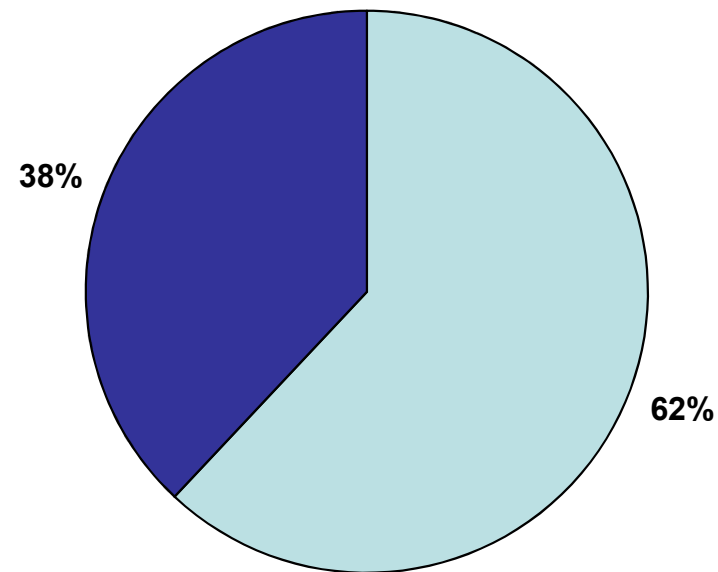
39% of respondents children were looked after by a family member.

The “Other” responses related to individual cases which could not be aggregated into the main classifications identified. Full details are contained in the accompanying Excel file.



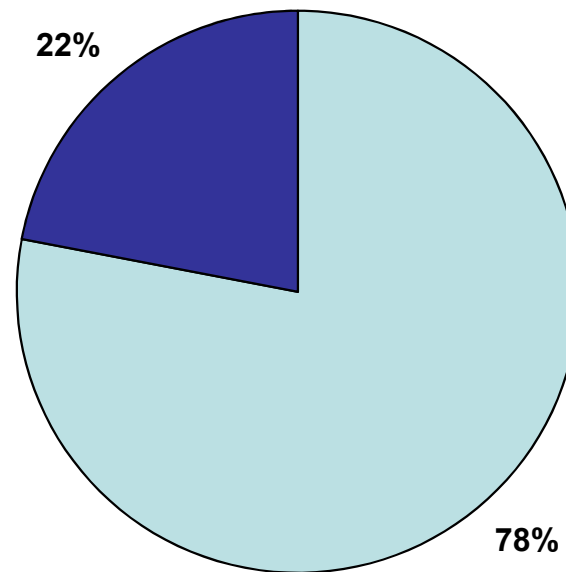
# All childcare provision is required to make reasonable adjustment to include children with special needs – Are you aware of this?

62% of parent / carers who responded to this question indicated they were aware that childcare provision is required to make reasonable adjustment to include children with special needs.



# Does the childcare you use operate flexibly enough to meet your needs? (1)

78% felt that the childcare they used was flexible enough to meet their needs.



# Does the childcare you use operate flexibly enough to meet your needs? (2)

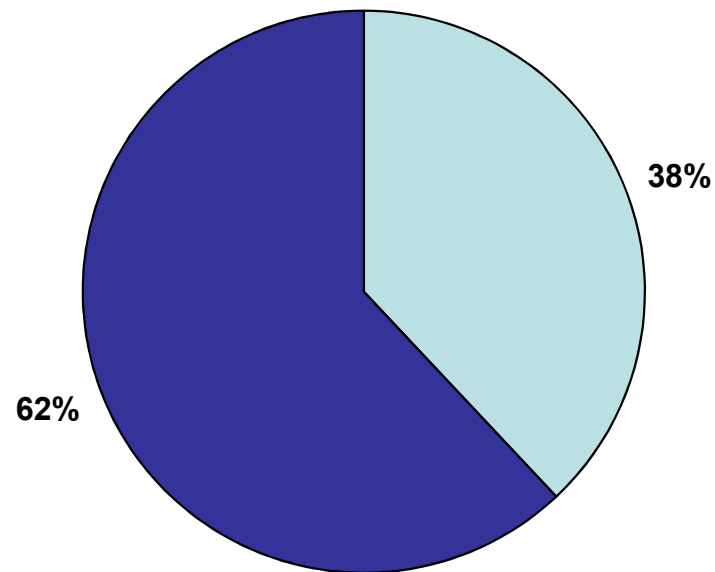
## If no – why not?

There were 16 responses to this question – all of which centred around the specific needs of the child and the problems the various providers had in meeting those needs.

- Child needs are very specific and more needs to be done to accommodate his needs
- Generally - its the wrap around care and after school that is difficult - always need to be available for cover changeover/handover times which can make it difficult
- Its a preschool - now they are saying they want to put measures in place before she goes to school in September
- Its only available every other Saturday and is a 40 minute drive each way
- Maybe this doesn't count as childcare: I am thinking enabling type services which I use
- Met some needs - However - parent has to work from 7:30 - 2:30p.m - So child has to wait with a friend for taxi for one hour in the mornings
- No - Recently had to access a holiday club for child but was told they couldn't attend. Only success is when there are settings based for special needs children
- No after school clubs. The holiday activities do not fit daughters needs and staff are not helpful
- Not always - can only do certain days in holiday due to child needing 1:1 - meaning more staff needed
- Not sure
- Only have school no babysitters available
- Rely upon good will which does not have sufficient structure, when family/friends go away this is a problem
- Separate pricing structure for children with additional needs
- Specialist service
- Would like more than one week but they don't have enough 1:1's

# Do you think there is enough childcare available for your child?(1)

The majority of parents and carers who responded to the question felt that there was not enough childcare available.



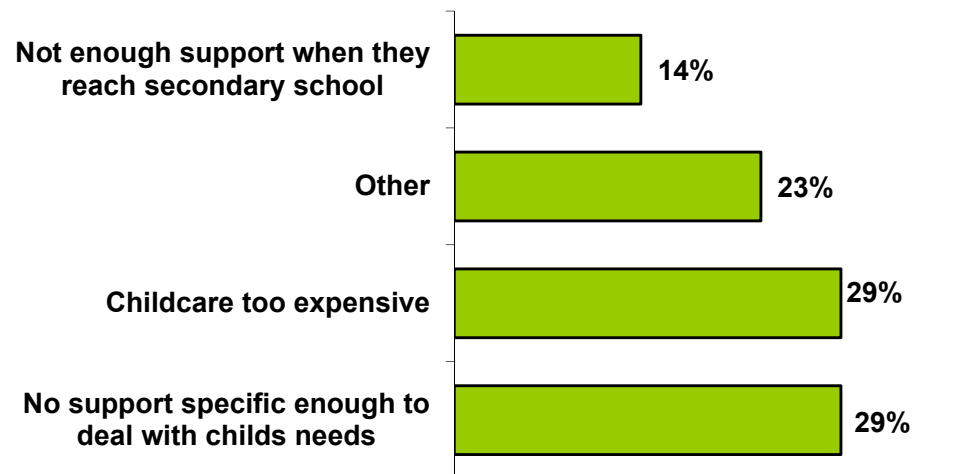
# Do you think there is enough childcare available for your child?(2)

## If no – why do you think there is not enough provision?

The majority of responses given addressed the lack of support, childcare expense and support not being specific enough for the child's needs – rather than directly answering the question. Typical “Other” responses included:

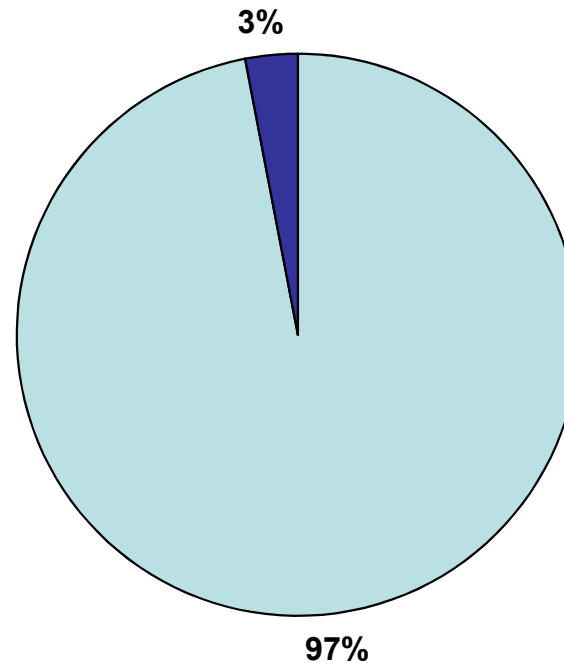
*“They are not able to accommodate a child with special needs as their behaviour affects other children being cared for”*

*“There are not enough disability aware/trained providers” and “Medication/epilepsy terrifies respite/care providers”*



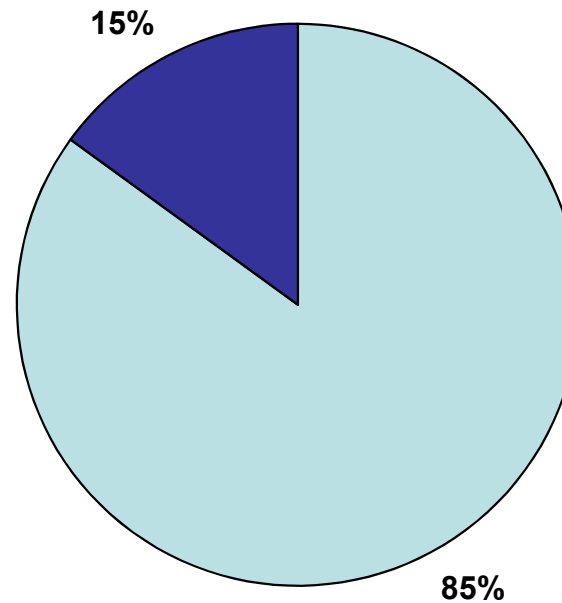
# Is the childcare premises accessible to your child?

The majority of parents and carers (97%) felt that the child care premises were accessible to their child.



# Is the location of the childcare easily accessible?

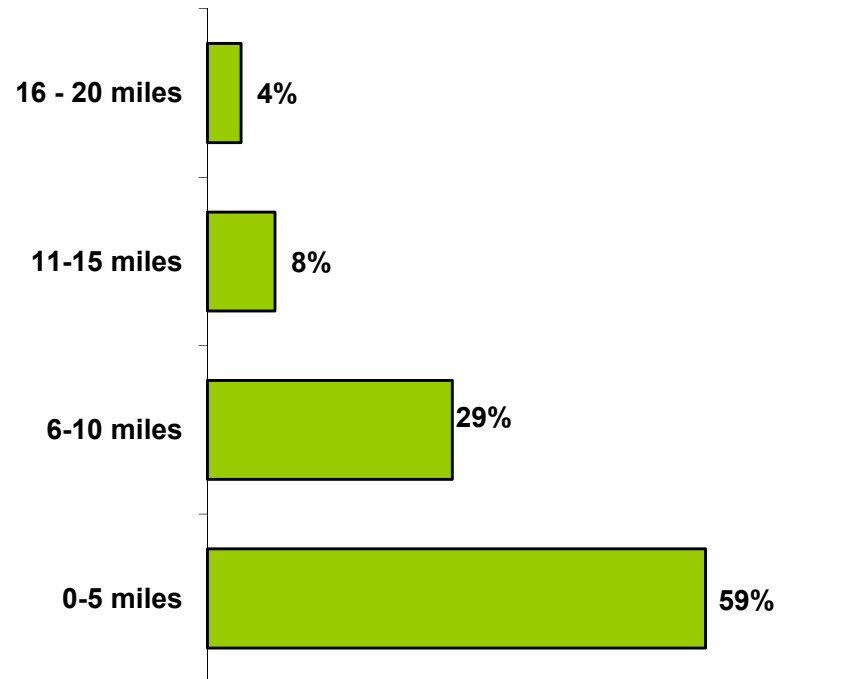
The majority of parents and carers felt that the child care location was easily accessible.





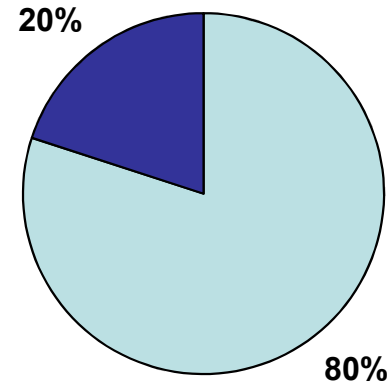
# How far do you travel to access childcare?

The majority of parents (59%) travel between 0-5 miles to access childcare.



# Do you think the childcare you use is of good quality? (1)

Again the majority of parents and carers felt that the child care they use was of good quality.



□ Yes      ■ No

Typical comments relate to the professional care provided – often 1 to 1, matching their child's needs and being in a safe & familiar environment. Examples included:

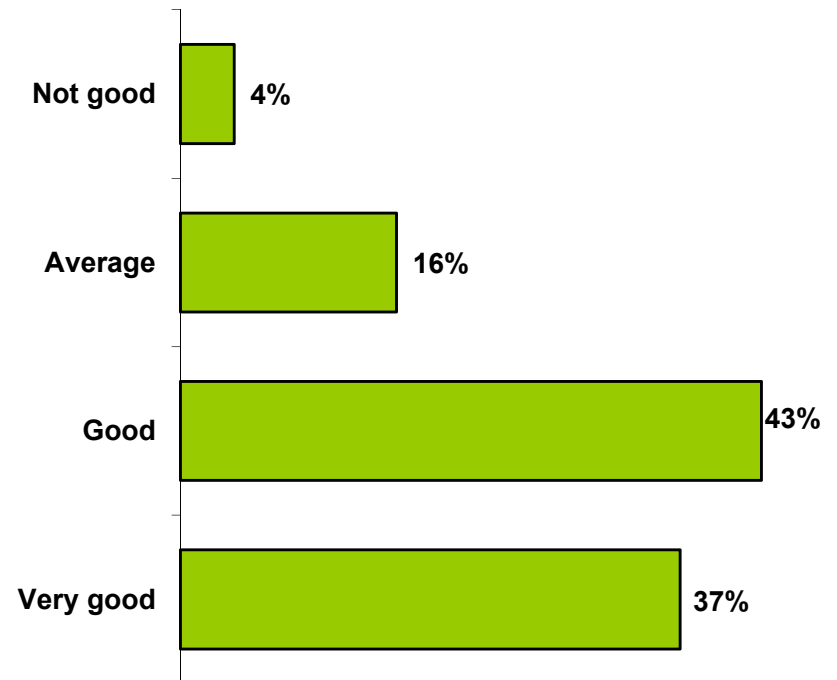
**“Because the child knows his carers and feels safe with him  
- and they know him and his needs”**

**“Child is well supervised by qualified staff in safe environment”**

**“Child has 1:1 respite with qualified teaching assistant”**

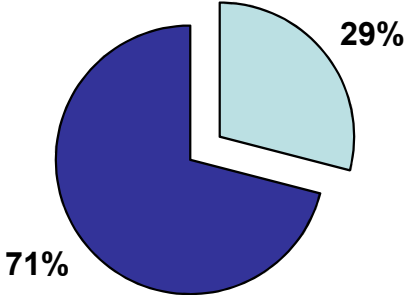
# Do you think the childcare you use is of good quality? (2)

Over 80% of parents and carers felt that the child care they use was either of good or very good quality. (Caution small sample size)



# Are you asked to provide additional funding – due to the additional needs of your child?

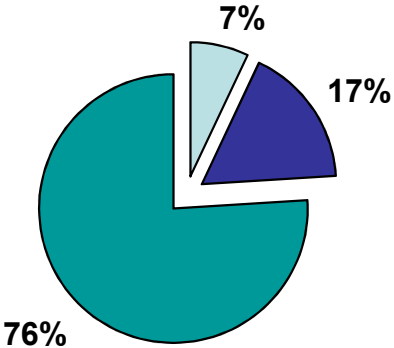
The majority of parents and carers (71%) did not provide additional funding to cover the needs of their child.



■ Yes ■ No

# If you have been able to access the childcare element of working tax credit, have you been able to claim against the full cost of the childcare place?

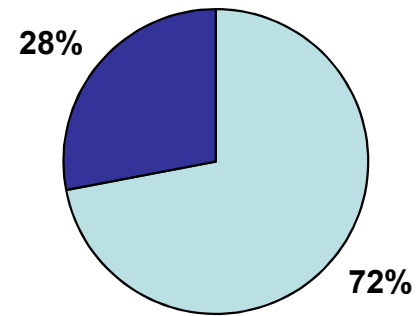
The majority of parents and carers (76%) did not access working tax credits.



■ Yes ■ No ■ N/a

## Do you consider staff to have sufficient skills and knowledge to provide inclusive childcare?

72% of parents and carers considered the staff had the skills and knowledge to provide inclusive care.



■ Yes    ■ No

Of those who said “yes” - typical positive comments included:

“Absolutely - staff are medically trained and have a high level of understanding of the children's needs”

“Staff qualified to care for disabled children including intimate care and giving medication”

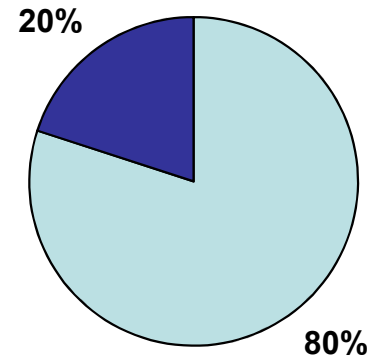
Negative comments included:

“The Level of knowledge of brain injury or brain development is patchy at best. Little or no understanding of syntheses or sensory integration dysfunction. Certainly no one who understands a child with Alzheimer’s symptoms”

“Not enough autism training”

## Do you consider childcare providers have effective policies & resources?

The majority of parents and carers considered that providers had effective policies and resources.



Of those who said “No” - typical comments included:

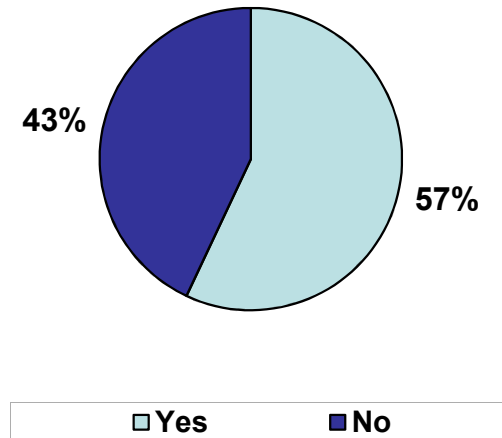
“Not enough staff to effectively implement policies for child's needs”

“Our son has angry outbursts and can be very anxious. Only a number of staff can really cope with this. Due to this we had to reduce his hours so pickup is earlier”

“There is a general lack of awareness about special needs”

## Have you encountered any other barriers when trying to access childcare?

Parents and carers views on accessibility to childcare were more evenly split with 57% indicating they had encountered “Other barriers”



Of those who said “Yes” - typical comments related to the cost and support not being specific enough (i.e. 1 to 1) or local enough to meet the child's needs. There were also comments which suggested the parent / carer felt that the childcare provider would not be able to cope with the child, particularly if medicines were to be administered.

### Comments include:

“Child can be very disruptive at times and childcare providers in the past were not able to provide the extra care needed”

“Cost of specialist care”

“Location of specialist provision and cost of sessions”

“I don't feel I could leave my child in an after school club”

# Do your friends or relatives look after your child in order for you to work or access training?

A larger number of parents and carers responded to this question with just over half indicating that friends and relatives do look after their child in order for them to work or access training.

