

Children with SEND and the 30 Hours Entitlement Provider Research Briefing – August 2018

From July-August 2018, Dingley's Promise surveyed early years providers across Berkshire about the 30 hours entitlement, and accessibility of their services to children with SEND. 61 settings serving over 2500 children from Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire responded. 80% of them are delivering the 30 hours, and of the 717 children accessing those hours, 43 (6%) have SEND. The key findings were as follows:

Delivery of the 30 Hours

87% of settings felt that the funding for the 30 hours isn't sufficient – with 61% saying it is much less than what is needed.

'The funding is not sufficient to cover the costs - settings are being forced to close because of this issue.'

'It is killing preschools, is underfunded and unfair.'

Issues when delivering support to children with SEND

An overwhelming 92% of settings felt that the cost of 1:1 support was an issue.

'The funding to support these children is totally at odds with good practice and too complex'

'The funding amount isn't enough to cover the cost of employing someone as a 1:1 - that's without any equipment and environment adaptation costs'

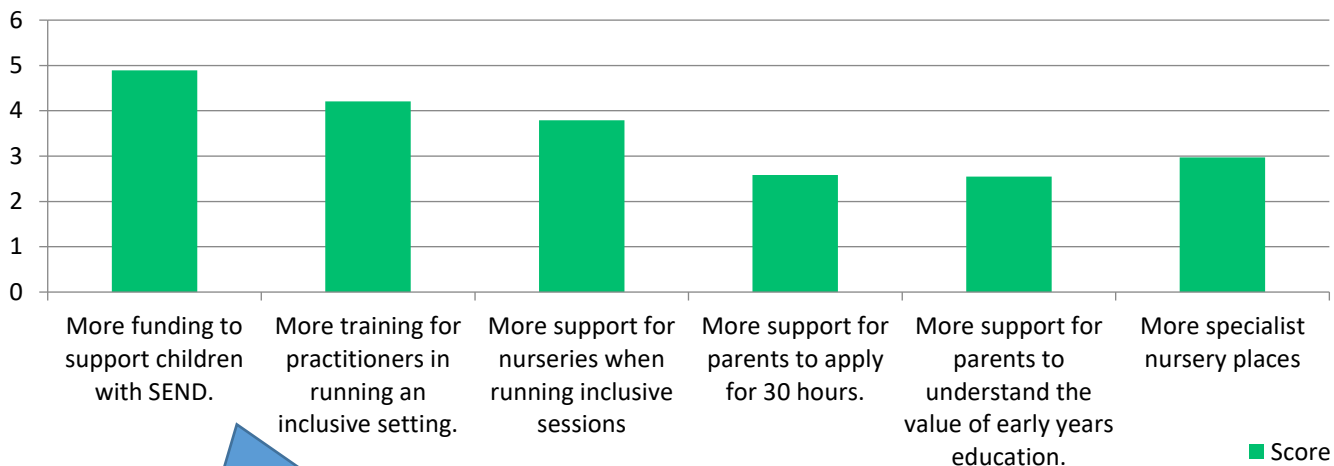
80% felt that difficulties in finding staff skilled in SEND was an issue.

60% of respondents felt that they had not had much demand from families with children with SEND.

A number of settings suggested that a higher rate should be paid to the setting for each child with SEND so that settings with more children with SEND receive more funding.

What do settings think would help the current situation?

Settings were asked what they think needs to happen to ensure children with SEND can access provision alongside their peers. The top ranked answers to this question were 'more funding' with 55% saying this was the most important single thing that would change the situation, and 'more training' with 26%. The chart below shows overall scoring for the options given, with 6 being the most important and 0 being the least important.



'Settings need more staff trained in the delivery of care and learning for SEND students. This needs to be offered alongside funding to support the training of staff in SEN'

Linked to this, the need to 'catch parents early' and link with health visitors and wider systems to 'make the importance of Early Years education clear and the options available' to parents.

There was a further emphasis from settings on the need for the right early identification to ensure every child with SEND gets the support that they need at the right time.

'We probably have more undiagnosed SEND children in settings which is also concerning as these children are also missing out on tailored support and intervention.'

Key points and recommendations to ensure equal access for children with SEND

92% of settings feel the cost of 1:1 support is a key issue when delivering to children with SEND.

Recommendation

- Provide training and support on working inclusively to shift the emphasis away from adult 1:1 support wherever possible, reducing costs and improving life outcomes.
- Pay early years providers per child at different hourly rates according to the needs of the child.

80% of settings feel that the lack of skilled staff is a key issue when delivering to children with SEND.

Recommendation

- Promote and subsidise training to give all early years practitioners better knowledge and confidence to work with children with SEND – not just the SENCO.
- Develop more content specifically around working inclusively to be included in the Level 3 qualification to ensure all newly qualified practitioners have a good base understanding.

Further Key Recommendation

In order to better understand the gaps that exist, it is vital that sufficiency figures for the early years are not just calculated as an overall figure, but also specifically for SEND places. Currently the overall figures are reported, as are the number of settings that say they can take children with SEND. However, not every place at these settings can be for children with SEND, so to know the true sufficiency in any local authority area, there must be honest discussion with providers about how many places they actually have for children with SEND. Without this, local authorities cannot know whether they have sufficient provision to ensure all children with SEND can access their 30 hours, and there can be no real tracking of how sufficiency increases as a result of the better funding, training and support that is being suggested.

This is a vital piece of work, and will give all stakeholders a clear understanding of the sufficiency of services for children with SEND in the early years, without which it is almost impossible to plan effectively to ensure children with SEND will be able to access their entitlements equally.

For more information, please contact:

Catherine McLeod MBE

Chief Executive, Dingley's Promise

catherine.mcleod@dingley.org.uk

Many thanks to the 61 settings that responded to this survey. We are committed to raising their concerns with local authorities and central government, to find solutions to current issues.