



# Collective Get T★gether

## P★wer Hour – The Schools and SEND White Paper

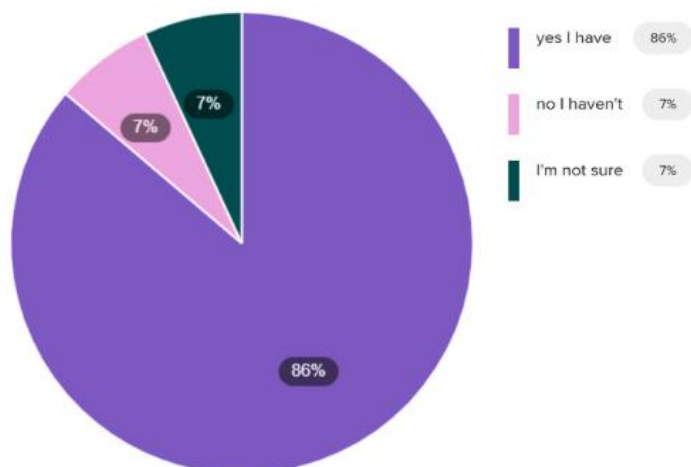
Session was held on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August as part of the Collective Get Together

Attended by approximately 52 young people, representing all 9 regions from across England.

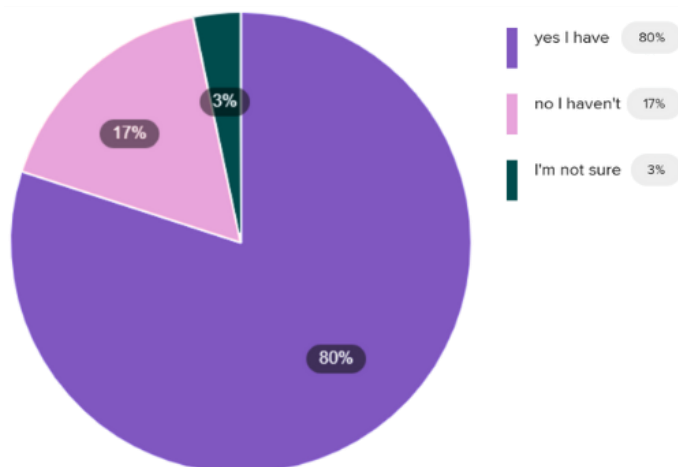
The Schools and SEND White Paper was a key topic throughout this years' Collective Get Together, having been the focus of multiple 'rumours' and causing concern for young people. The aim of this session was to inform and update the young people, as well as gathering information.

A vast majority of young people agreed that there is a problem with the SEND system and school support.

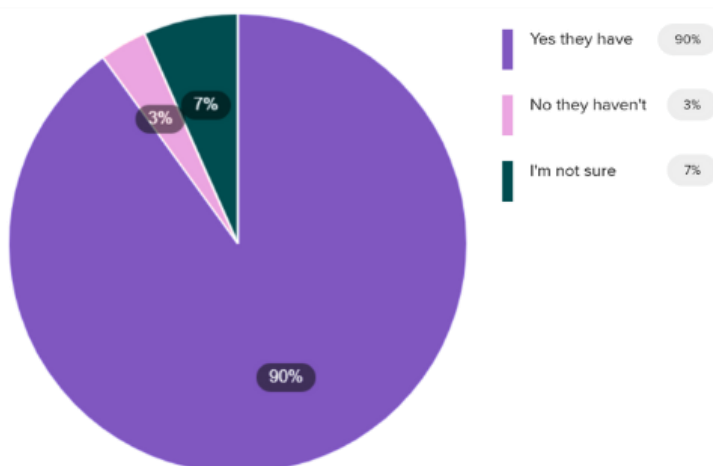
*Those who have experienced long waits and delays for assessments, access to services or support to be put in place*



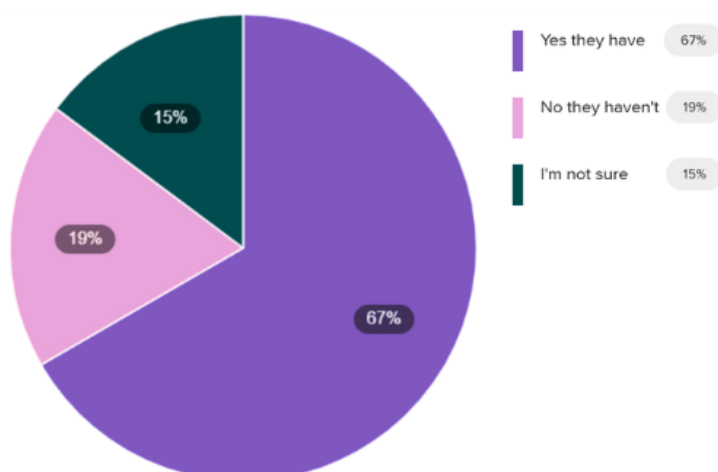
*Stress due to things not happening at the right time, not getting the help when needed.*



*Parent carer and family Stress due to thing not happening at the right time, not getting the help when needed.*



*Education placements struggled to support young people properly due to funding*



Young people shared that these problems make them, and their family feel the things identified in this word cloud.



The White Paper aims to look at the problems within the system (many of which contribute to making young people and families feel the above) and bring about ways to make change for the better.

Ideas previously shared by young people include:

- early help
- getting the right people in the right jobs
- using money more wisely more support in (mainstream) schools
- better training for teachers and assistants
- making it fair
- listening to young people and families

When asked if they had any more ideas for things that needed to change to make things better, the suggestions were able to be grouped into the following clear categories:

- SEND hubs and alternative provisions
- Person centred education
- Knowing and listening to young people
- Communication with young people and families
- Support needs identified and support put in place
- Wider disability understanding (staff and students)
- Exams
- Accessibility – physical, sensory (uniforms)

Full answers can  
be found in  
appendix 1

## Moving forwards

Young people have made it clear: they want information to be shared promptly, in multiple formats, and in various locations. This ensures they can access what they need, when they need it, in the way that works best for them.

Some examples include:

- Concise themed sections
- Information Videos
- Easy Read documents

Full answers can be found in appendix 2

To keep young people engaged, information must be shared widely and made easily accessible. There must be multiple, flexible opportunities for involvement, so individuals can choose how they engage in ways that suit them best

Young people suggested mechanisms they would like to engage in:

- Online and in person
- Themed activities
- Creative and arts-based sessions

Full answers can be found in appendix 3

Young people shared clear views around the behaviours and values that they expected from those engaging with them, and that youth voice should be included and respected!

**Don't beat round the bush and  
be honest**

**Take accountability and  
take action**



## Appendix 1.

### **SEND hubs**

- Having more schools for autism or ADHD because some people might have middle learning disability and struggle more with ADHD or autism. Or struggle really bad with autism or ADHD but struggle in mainstream but not bad enough to go to special school
- More SEND Hubs in mainstream provision
- Alter the EHCP and who it is eligible for

### **Alternative provisions**

- The system must recognise that education happens in many settings, mainstream schools, special schools, home education etc- and support should be consistent across all of them.
- Communication with those unable to attend mainstream or special schools.
- Focus on providing an education, rather than needing to be in in-person school, if that doesn't work for the young person.
- Better social groups for people studying remotely

### **Person centred education**

- There is growing pressure to conform to traditional classroom settings, sit exams & cope within a rigid system that is not built for them. This is having a serious effect on young people's physical & mental health. Children and young people deserve a system that recognises their individuality, supports their wellbeing and empowers them to thrive- not one that leaves them behind
- Focus on people rather than statistics and getting the highest grades
- Adopt Finnish style pedagogy and education practices
- Consistent safe person
- EDI is taken to account and characteristics like religion are taken to account when developing health plans

### **Disability awareness**

#### Training staff

- staff who are trained to understand diverse needs.
- Make teachers take mandatory training to understand young people with SEND so they will at least be more understanding
- More information for teachers and teaching assistants with young people with disabilities

#### Training other young people

- More education about SEND for pupils

### **Knowing the YP and listening to them**

- Need more help in class listening and understanding me they don't know me very well
- Have support staff listen to what we need not decide what we need
- That ministers and civil servants (like the ones sat talking to themselves in the back of the room) actually speak to CYP so we feel valued.
- Actually listen to our opinions

- Young people should have a voice, and ministers should ask young people what they think instead of making their own decisions
- Consistent safe person
- Paid youth advocate positions

### **Communication**

Teachers need to be clearer with families of students with SEND (about what is going on regarding their needs being met in school e.g. the progression of acquisition of exam arrangements)

### **Support in place**

- Keeping EHCPs
- Help not being reliant on having a diagnosis, help being available for what you're struggling with, without having to wait until you've got a diagnosis of a condition to access appropriate support.
- Young people deserve to have their needs met
- Families shouldn't have to fight for help, there must be accountability for when a child is failed by the system.
- Same rules for everyone ND diagnosis not just Autism, ADHD etc everything at once to save time and get the right support at the right time
- Making sure help is in place to help people with SEND like coloured glasses and ear defenders
- Consistent safe person

### **Exams**

- Could be better access arrangements exam for example such as more extra time and accessible equipment.
- Teachers need to be clearer with families of students with SEND about what is going on regarding their needs being met in school e.g. the progression of acquisition of exam arrangements

### **Accessibility**

#### Physical

- More wheelchair support in schools
- Teachers could do pe sessions at a slower pace in smaller groups for people with mobility issues so they can take part more.

#### Sensory

- less restricted uniforms

#### Accessibility of the curriculum

- Make subjects take into account SEND needs especially stem subjects

## Appendix 2.

### **Easy read/ accessible information**

- Easy access
  - Could make it more accessible like could easy read version
  - no long words
  - keep it short and easy to understand
  - no jargon
  - simplified language
  - Easy read guide
  - broken down into an easy read format
  - Make it easy read! Widgets
  - accessible formatting for people with different needs to access it.
- highlighted and underlined important information.

### **Use images**

- Simply how it impacts them and use infographics using comms strategies
- survey with pictures and simple words
- colour coded with icons and images relating to what the text is about

### **Sections**

- Break it down into smaller sections to make it more accessible
- Main text, side by side, (with bullet points)
- in bitesize paragraphs
- QR codes with a small amount of text is important
- different sections

### **Bullet points**

- bullet points of main points
- I think it would be good to have the full text with a summary of the information next to each of the paragraphs
- short bitesize info

### **Social media**

- Social media across different platforms
- share on social media channels such as X Twitter, Facebook much more.
- using social media to get young people's views across

### **Regular media**

Have a news conference that is broadcast everywhere to talk about the changes being made

## **Variety of formats**

- Mix up the format,.
- Make it Creative and fun
- Make it SEND friendly
- Having multiple formats  
Feeding back what has been said
- Physical advertising
- digital advertising
- Have it on the SEND Local Offer  
SEND Young Voices group
- A short, clear piece of paper explaining the information.
- Have both a detailed versions for those that want them and simpler breakdowns to make it easier for some people
- slides
- Text to speech
- Audio

## **Video**

- Short videos explaining each topic broken down to make it easier to understand.
- Videos that break it down into smaller chunks and explained in more detail rather than just repeating the white paper verbatim
- Videos explaining questions which can explain questions
- Short summary video with visuals
- A video instead of a worded document because young people are most likely to watch a video and understand better then reading a thoroughly worded document

## **In person**

- Get to the point quicker Don't focus on the negatives only. Add some positive points and ideas on what's improving
- By having young people at the table of decisions going to youth voice groups and schools but also young people friendly language doing focus groups and consultations for young people to get there views across and create a safe place for them in that making it inclusive and getting them involved in blogs on their lived experiences or provide quotes as well and making sure young people are at the heart of it .

## **Timely**

Sharing as early as possible, before it's finalised and published share with stakeholders, need to coproduce from the beginning but also evaluate at the end. As many ways as possible format wise, videos photos social media podcasts posters school presentations.

### **Co-produced**

Consult with us before you finish writing the white paper so you can get an accurate representation of children and young people's views. Take us seriously and speak to a variety of children and young people. We are the experts of our lives and know what the problems are. You have to hear and listen to us

Get feedback from young people, run it as a pilot on what can be improved

By having young people at the table of decisions going to youth voice groups and schools



### Appendix 3.

#### **Information sharing before, during and after the process**

- Make sure that it is well publicised so that young people, their families and the general public know what's going on rather than just people in circles such as KIDS
- Making information easy accessible format for young people
- Since the future is likely to be almost fully online, most information will also be online.

#### **Who should be engaged in this work**

- Make sure they are asking a diverse group of people with SEND not just individual groups
- Sharing with groups that already exist to support young people and let them know that their views are important.
- Link up with SEND (Young Voice) groups
- By doing focus groups and conclusions
- going in schools
- doing online meetings with young people
- coming to conferences surrounding the work of young people with SEND.
- Meet with student councils
- Get as wide range of people as possible, hearing as many voices as possible, representing key underrepresented areas, identify barriers to engagement (caring responsibilities, time, cost, health) and actively work to overcome these
- include everyone in whatever way possible make it better for people with different interpretations
- Speak to them themselves and their families

#### **Ways of engaging people**

- Creative media, get young people making art , music, dance etc, and keep it open and fresh
- Be mindful of what people interpret and think about the content
- Teachers should ask young people with SEND what they struggle with and ask them if there's a better way to help them.
- Visual
- Surveys
- Focus groups
- social media,
- In person, face to face events

- create more social activities.
- Questionnaire with no logging in or passwords
- Alternative Methods of Communication non-verbal,
- Teams and video
- lots of different really easy ways to get involved and get their voices heard.

### **Behaviours and values around youth voice**

- Young people and children MUST have a say in decisions and policies that affect our lives. We want to be consulted on legalisation that affects us. We know what works, we are competent, we know the stakes and the impact on our lives. We deserve a seat at the table. When you don't consult with children, you don't get an accurate representation of the issues and our reality. If we aren't in the room, ask yourself why not. Trust me, a child can tell you what works and what doesn't more than someone who hasn't stepped in a classroom as a student for 20 years.
- From today, right now get us involved hear us, let us actually look at the white paper and give honest feedback. Give feedback loops and close them. Get as wide range of people as possible, hearing as many voices as possible, representing key underrepresented areas, identify barriers to engagement (caring responsibilities, time, cost, health) and actively work to overcome these.
- Young people should be involved in every step of the process.
- Funding
- Listen to their voices make them included!!!!
- Honesty and clarity regarding possibly harmful points.
- Don't beat round the bush and be honest.
- Take accountability and take action.
- Include everyone in whatever way possible make it better for people with different interpretations.

