



Consultation and Engagement

Bristol's SEND top-up Consultation Report 2024



Produced by Social Finance and PPL

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1 Introduction

Bristol City Council is reviewing the way it and local partners use high needs funding for children and young people with special educational needs disabilities (SEND), in order to achieve long-term sustainability and improve outcomes.

Bristol receives a fixed budget each year, (the high needs budget or 'High Needs Block' or HNB) from the Department for Education (DfE) to support children and young people with SEND who require more support than what is ordinarily available in school. The total amount of HNB budget available in 2022/23 was £78.5m. Some of the HNB (also referred to as 'Element 3' funding) is used for top-up funding – this equated to £49.5m in 2022/23 or 63 percent of the HNB.

Top-up funding is one element of the support available for children and young people with SEND in Bristol. It provides a school with additional funds to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND over and above the funding the school receives in its core budget (Element 1 and Element 2 funding). Bristol City Council and school partners decide how this top-up funding is allocated through a process which involves education settings applying for funding for individual pupils by demonstrating the needs of a child or young person and the necessary spend to meet those needs.

Bristol City Council, education settings, and other local partners need to change the way this funding is used to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND and to ensure the SEND system is sustainable for the future.

In August 2023, the council commissioned a review of current approaches to using high needs funding to understand what the challenges are and to identify opportunities to improve it. The focus of the review, and this consultation, is top-up funding specifically. This includes children and young people who receive top-up funding both with and without an education, health, and care (EHC) plan, in mainstream and in special settings, for school age pupils and young people in post-16 education.

The scope has also included a high-level review into Bristol's banding systems, known as BUDs (Bristol Universal Descriptors) and a comparison into banding systems used across England.

2 Executive summary

2.1 Overview

This report summarises the findings from the consultation, including both the survey and Information and Engagement sessions.

For both school age and post-16 education settings, respondents (to the survey) and participants (in the Information and Engagement sessions) were asked to consider three different options:

1. **A1 for school age, B1 for post-16** retain the top-up funding process for children and young people without EHC plans but make improvements to make the system more streamlined and consistent.
2. **A2/B2** create a targeted early intervention fund for mainstream schools for children and young people that do not have an EHC plan
3. **A3/B3** phase out top-up funding for those without an ECH plan

For BUDs, respondents and participants were asked to respond to a number of statements and provide any thoughts they may have in order to inform a future review of the banding and BUDs system, rather than presented with options.

2.2 School age

A1 is the most popular option, receiving support from more than three quarters of survey respondents. A2 also receives support from a majority of respondents, though with a smaller proportion who 'strongly agree'. There is strong opposition to A3 – more than three quarters of respondents indicate that they do not support this option.

Survey respondents are generally supportive of the need for a faster, more streamlined process which reduces pressure on school staff. Option A1 is seen as providing the greatest support for those without an EHC plan and being the most inclusive option. However, there are concerns about whether savings could be realised or if this is a financially sustainable model.

Respondents and participants support the principle of early intervention and feel it could reduce pressure on school staff, as well as bring financial benefits by reducing long-term costs. However, there are some concerns around whether there would be sufficient funding available under A2, whether the funding would reach all the people who need it, and how the use of the funding could be monitored.

There is majority opposition to option A3 on the grounds that it would lead to more EHC needs assessments, longer wait times, increased workload for school and council staff and would negatively impact on children and young people with SEND, leading to an increase in unmet need. There is a recognition that A3 would bring financial benefits, but these are not seen to outweigh the wider disadvantages.

2.3 Post-16

Fewer survey respondents respond to both the quantitative and qualitative questions for post-16, with some saying that they do not work in this setting or do not feel qualified to comment. However, amongst those who do comment, sentiments broadly reflect those expressed in relation to the school age proposals.

B1 is the only option which receives support from the majority of respondents, although B2 receives support from more than 40 per cent. B3 is strongly opposed, with the majority of respondents stating that they disagree with this option. The number of respondents

selecting 'neither agree nor disagree' is much larger than in the school age section of the survey.

Less than a quarter of respondents provide qualitative feedback but those who do generally stress the need to support post-16 learners. B2 is seen as a potentially inclusive option, but there also concerns about how it might work for those who require individual support. B3 is strongly opposed once more, with concerns around whether learners would be sufficiently supported, as well as suggestions that EHCP applications would increase.

2.4 BUDs

There is general agreement that the BUDs require updating. The respective banding system is not seen to be representative of the costs of implementing support and survey respondents feel that the BUDs are applied inconsistently. Respondents and participants also say that not all children are well served by the descriptors (with specific concerns raised around those with multiple or complex needs) and say that they lead to children and young people being 'pigeonholed' into 'neat boxes'.

However, respondents are split on whether BUDs should be retained or replaced, and a small number say that they feel descriptors help to ensure consistency. Nonetheless, they feel the system should be simplified and aligned with Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP), annual review processes and other ongoing changes without Bristol's SEND system.

Suggestions include:

- multiple lower needs leading to a higher banding
- consistent and clear costs that reflect the real cost of provision
- person-centred rather than deficit-based or risk-based approach to assessing need
- consultation with practitioners and engagement with multi-academy trusts ahead of any changes
- provision mapping to identify groups with similar needs and ensure more cost effective provision.

3 Methodology

3.1 Survey

Prior to the design of the survey summarised in this report, we conducted extensive research and engagement to understand the situation and develop potential alternative options for using top-up funding. For example, we conducted 61 interviews across a wide range of stakeholders, including council officers, education professionals (such as Headteachers and SENCOs) from a range of different settings (e.g., primary, secondary and post-16) and health and social care professionals. We also researched good practice in other local authorities to establish alternative funding options, understand broader practice within the council SEND teams, and to ascertain which local authorities are strongest in the SEND provision. We conducted in-depth analysis into recent trends in needs and funding and analysed public and Bristol City Council data sets from the past four years.

Following on from this research, in this survey we presented options for using top-up funding differently, covering both the process for allocating funds and how they are used in schools. Options were presented separately for those of school age (primary and secondary school age) and post-16. In this survey we did not propose changes to how we fund education for children and young people who have an EHC plan. But we did propose changes to how we provide top up funding to schools and colleges for children who do have SEND, but do not have an EHC plan.

We sought feedback on the options, including their likely impact on children and young people and education settings, and their ability to help achieve sustainability over the long-term.

The SEND top-up consultation was available on the council's [Consultation and Engagement Hub](#) between 1 November and 13 December 2023.

From November 15th, Easy Read formats (a WCAG 2.1-compliant version and an interactive PDF version) were also available on the Consultation and Engagement Hub, and responses via Easy Read were accepted until 27 December 2023.

3.2 Information and Engagement sessions

A series of Information and Engagement sessions ran alongside the survey in order to hear the views of as many stakeholders as possible.

Separate sessions were run for different groups and there were 58 attendees across the 14 sessions below:

- 2 x council staff sessions
- 5 x school staff sessions
- 4 x parents / carer sessions
- 2 x governor sessions
- 1 x children and young people with SEN support session (facilitated by WECIL)

These sessions allowed us to widen the accessibility of our survey and to gather as much qualitative feedback as possible.

Participants in the sessions were also encouraged to complete the online survey.

3.3 Analysis

Closed questions

For all of the closed questions in the survey, data was aggregated and presented for respondents as a whole, but also by various stakeholder groups. See Section 4.3 for more on how stakeholder groups were categorised.

Open questions

For all of the open questions in the survey, data was collated and reviewed by analysts who applied a thematic coding framework. This framework was devised using an approach based in grounded theory (meaning it was driven by the data received) and was iterated throughout the analysis as required.

Information and Engagement sessions

The Information and Engagement session discussions were recorded, and the transcripts summarised. The notes generated through this process were then subject to the same analysis as the open questions from the survey using the same coding framework.

3.4 Reporting

This report is intended to provide a summary of the feedback provided by survey respondents and Information and Engagement session participants. There are a number of considerations which should be borne in mind when reading the report.

Reading the report

Responses have been summarised in the present tense. This is because, although the survey and Information and Engagement sessions were conducted in the past, it is assumed that the views expressed are the views held at the current time by those respondents or participants.

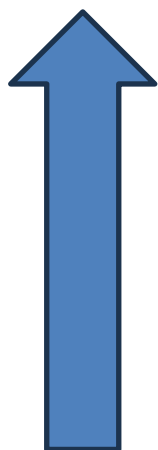
Limitations of the report

This consultation was open to anybody who chose to participate and is therefore a self-selecting sample. The findings cannot be held to be representative of the views held by a wider population and do not constitute a representative sample. However, attempts were made to ensure that the survey and Information and Engagement sessions were available and promoted to all relevant stakeholders within Bristol.

Use of percentages

Throughout the report, percentages given are of the whole relevant population unless otherwise stated. For example, in charts illustrating closed question responses, the percentages given are of all teachers and school staff who responded to the survey (including those who did not answer the question). This is because there was no 'don't know' or other similar option for the closed questions, so it is assumed that respondents who did not answer these questions did so knowingly and deliberately and must therefore be represented in the percentages stated.

Use of quantifiers



Vast majority

Most

A majority

Many

Several

Some

A few

A small number

For closed questions, numeric quantifiers are used – either a whole number or a percentage of respondents.

However, due to the nature of qualitative analysis and the subjectivity of the analysis process, the open text questions and Information and Engagement session discussions have been summarised using verbal quantifiers. These give an indication of the weight of sentiment without necessarily using number or percentages to do so. The spectrum of quantifiers used is shown here, ranging from ‘vast majority’ (the largest quantifier) to ‘a small number’ (the smallest).

Glossary

This report uses a number of acronyms which are summarised below.

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
EBSA	Emotionally-Based School Avoidance
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistants
EOTAS	Education Otherwise Than At School
EP	Educational Psychologist
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
OAP	Ordinarily Available Provision
SALT	Speech And Language Therapist
SENCO	Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator
VI	Visual Impairment

4 Survey response rate and respondent characteristics

4.1 Response rate to the survey

The SEND Top-up 2023/24 consultation survey received 196 responses, all of which were completed online.

The response rate and respondent details in sections 3.2 to 3.3 below are for respondents to the survey.

4.2 Geographic distribution of survey responses

Survey respondents were from the following postcodes:

Local Authority area	Responses
Bristol City	130 (66 per cent)
South Gloucestershire	5 (3 per cent)
North Somerset	4 (2 per cent)
Bath & North East Somerset	1 (0.5 per cent)
Unspecified locations within the four West of England authorities	5 (3 per cent)
Unidentifiable location	6 (3 per cent)
Did not provide postcode	45 (23 per cent)
Total	196

4.3 Stakeholder groups

Respondents were asked in the survey if they were interested in the top-up funding consultation because they were a:

- parent/carer of children or young person with SEND
- teachers, headteachers, SENDCO's and education professionals working with children or young people with SEND
- local authority staff working in SEND
- child or young person with SEND
- other:

The survey received responses as follows:

Respondent type	Responses
Parent/carer of children or young person with SEND	51

Teachers, Headteachers and Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) working with children or young people with SEND	69
Local Authority Staff Member working in SEND	25
Child or young person with SEND	1 ¹
All other responses	50
Total	196

However, although the question asked respondents to 'click all that apply', respondents reported that this was not possible, and this led some to describe their interest in the 'Other' open text response box. Others described variants on the existing categories in the 'Other' box rather than selecting the closest category. It was therefore decided to re-categorise these responses from 'Other' to a more appropriate category wherever possible.

For example, if someone in the 'Other' open text box had stated that they were a parent of a child with SEND or of an adult who previously had SEND needs at school then these responses were recategorized to 'Parent/carer of children or young person with SEND'.

School or college governors were categorised as 'Teachers, Headteachers and Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) working with children or young people with SEND' on the basis that they represent the perspective of their school or college.

Where respondents stated that they fitted into more than one category, the category mentioned first in their response has been taken to be their primary category to ensure consistency across all respondents.

Once this approach was applied, this led to the following response volumes:

Respondent type	Responses
Parent/carer of children or young person with SEND	57
Teachers, Headteachers and Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) working with children or young people with SEND	97
Local Authority Staff Member working in SEND	33
Child or young person with SEND	1 ²
All other responses	8
Total	196

¹ This single response was submitted as a collation of feedback collected from 8 children or young people with SEND.

² See previous comment

5 Survey results: School age

5.1 Overview

Three options were presented as part of the consultation for school age children. These options were:

Option A1 – Retain the top-up funding process for children and young people without EHC plans but make improvements to make the system more streamlined and consistent.

Option A2 – Re-purpose a proportion of the funding currently being spent on top-up funding for children and young people that do not have an EHC plan to create a targeted early intervention fund for mainstream schools.

Option A3 – Gradually phase out the use of top-up funding for children and young people who do not have an EHC plan.

For each of these options, survey respondents were asked:

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

This was a closed question with a five-point Likert scale of responses ranging from ‘Strongly agree’ to ‘Strongly disagree’.

Across both the survey and Information and Engagement sessions, Option A1 is the most popular option. In the survey it receives support (‘Strongly agree’ or ‘agree’) from more than three quarters of respondents. Option A2 also receives support from the majority of respondents. Option A3 is strongly opposed, with more than three quarters of respondents indicating that they do not support this option.

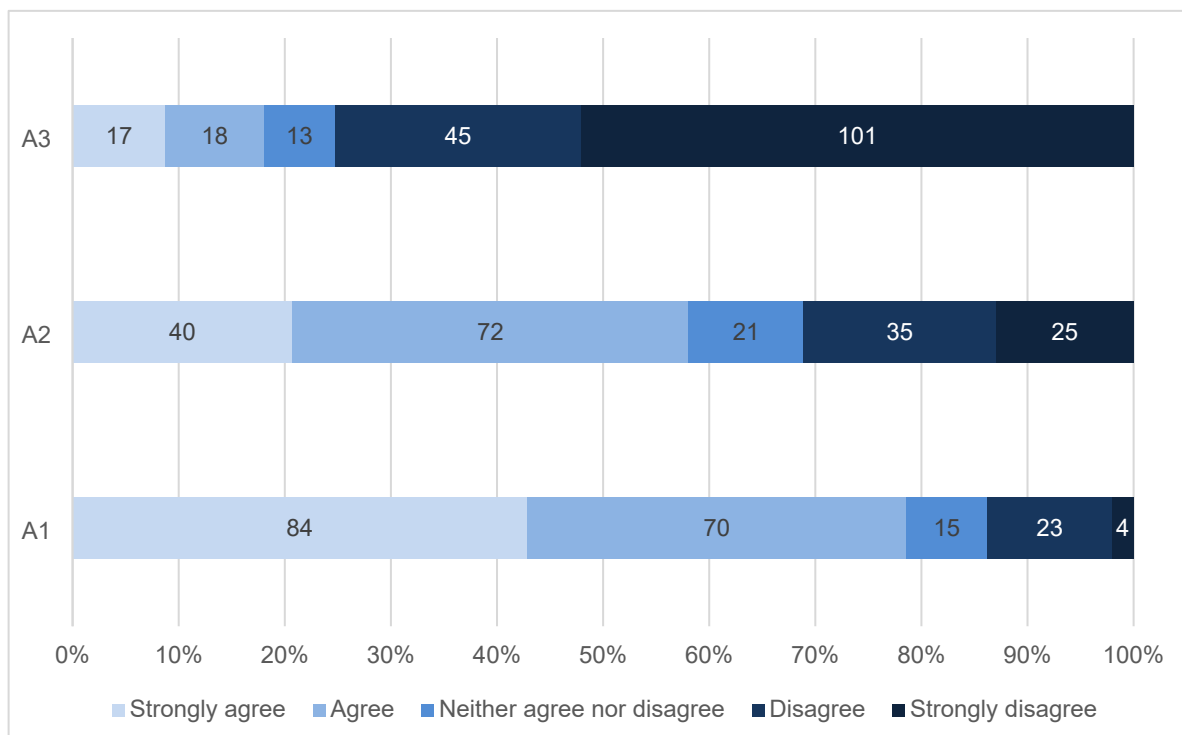


Figure 1: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for options A1, A2 and A3

This is broadly reflected across the different stakeholder groups – these details are broken down in the closed question summaries for each option.

When asked about the potential impact of the various proposals on staff capacity, Option A1 is once again the most widely supported, although both A1 and A2 are viewed slightly less positively than the overall sentiment in Figure 1.

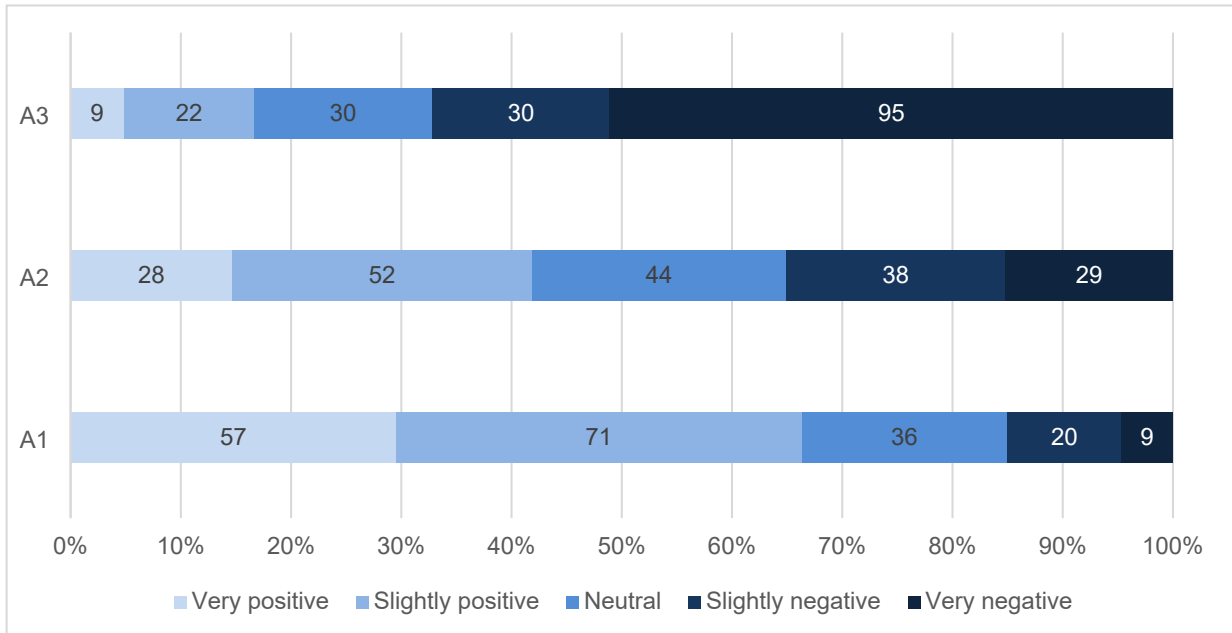


Figure 2: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following?' for options A1, A2 and A3

In terms of the possible impact on council finances, positive sentiment is spread more evenly across the three options. A2 attracts the greatest overall positive response, but A3 has a larger proportion of strong agreement.

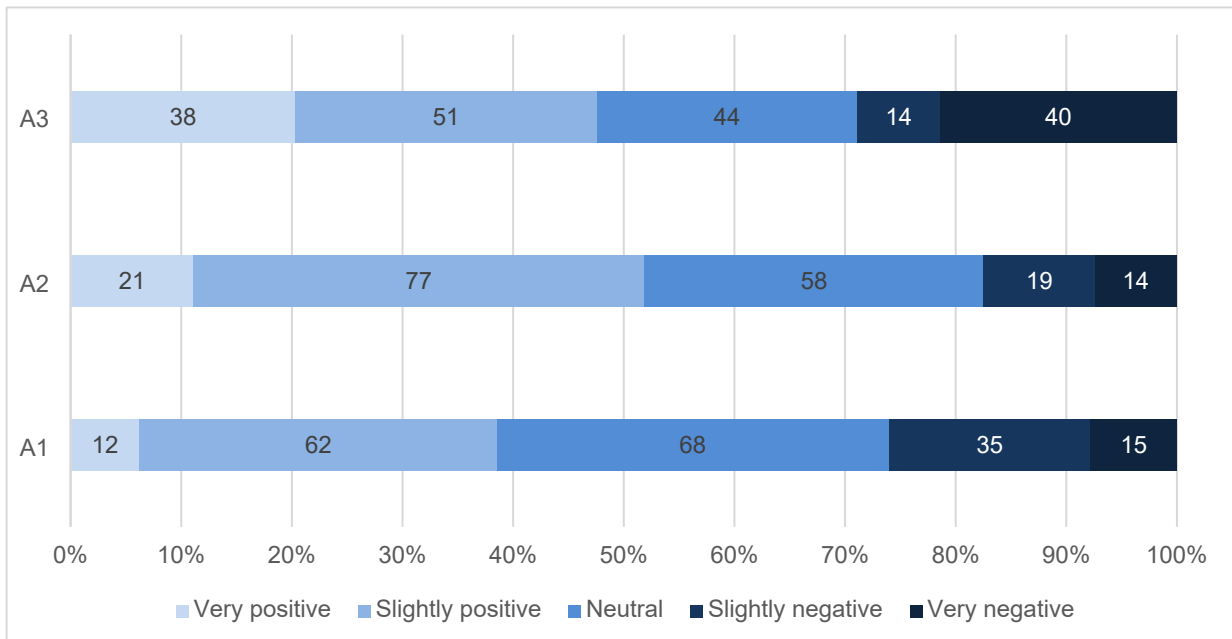


Figure 3: What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for options A1, A2 and A3

However, most respondents feel that A3 will have a negative impact on inclusion, with more than 65 per cent of respondents saying that they think it would have a 'very negative' effect and less than 10 per cent suggesting it would have a positive effect.

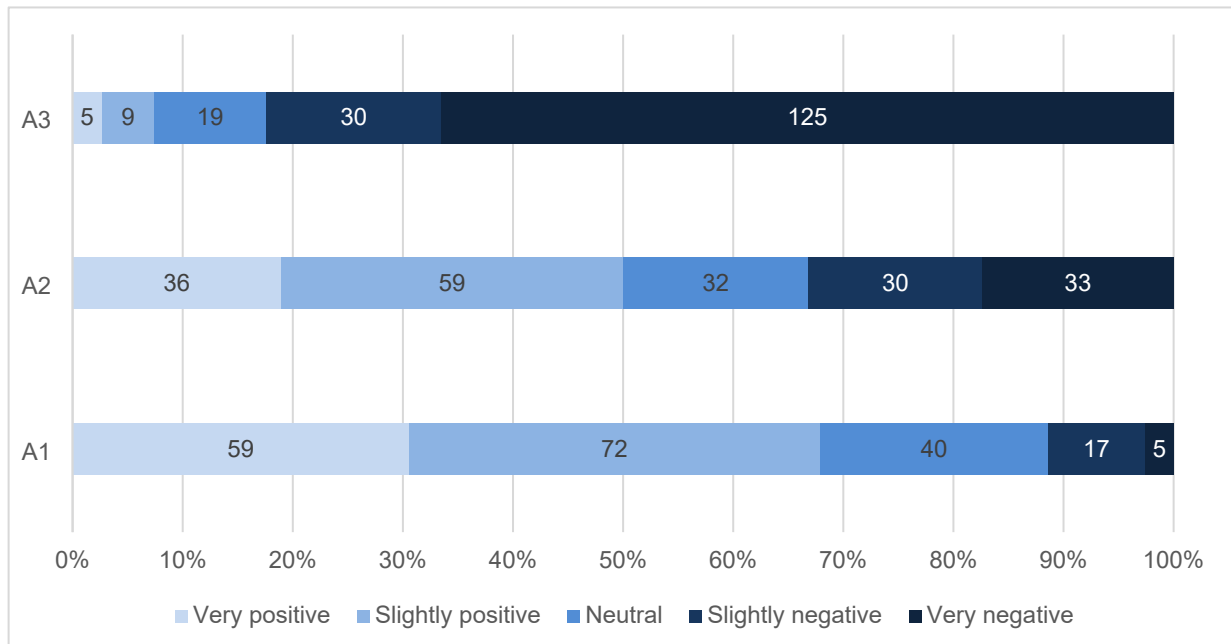


Figure 4: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for options A1, A2 and A3

Finally, responses in relation to the potential impact of the various options on quality and value for money broadly reflect those for inclusion, with a strongly negative response to A3.

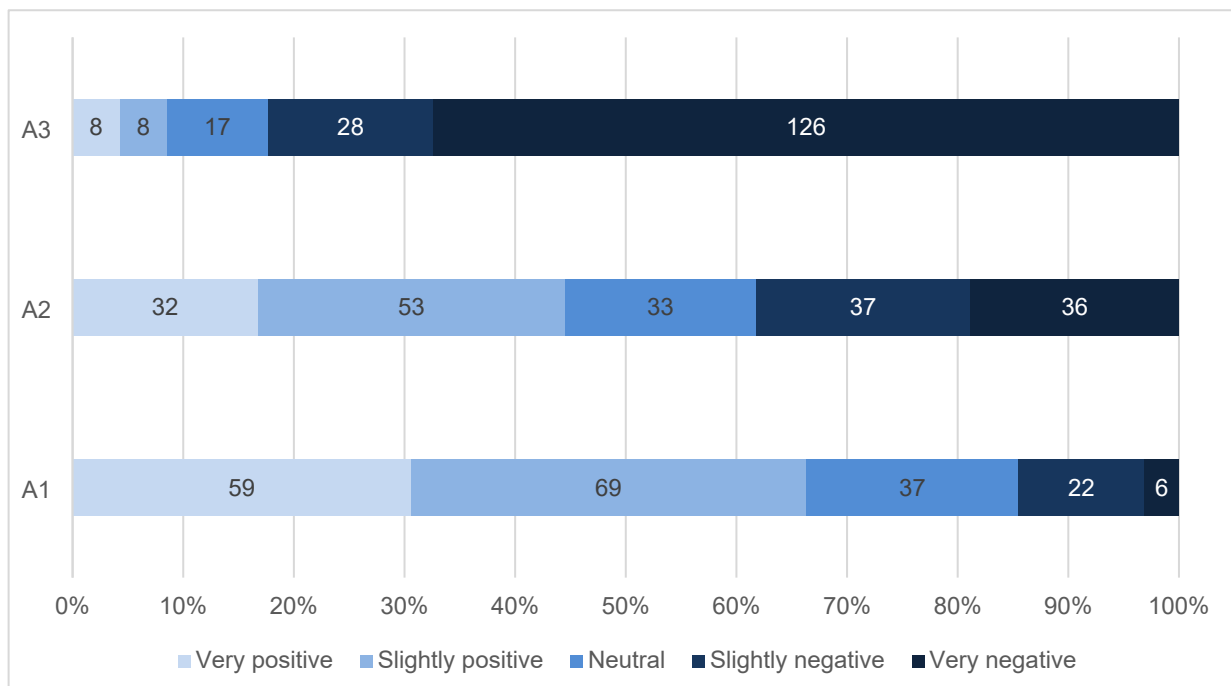


Figure 5: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for options A1, A2 and A3

Qualitative feedback also indicates a preference for option A1. Survey respondents are supportive of the need for a faster, more streamlined process which reduces pressure on school staff. Meanwhile, survey respondents and Information and Engagement session participants both feel that this option provides greater support for those without a formal EHC plan in place. Furthermore, respondents feel that A1 would be the most inclusive option and would enable schools to support SEND children in a mainstream education setting as much as possible. However, there is some concern that this option may not realise sufficient savings or be financially sustainable.

Views on A2 are more mixed, but both survey respondents and Information and Engagement session participants often support the principle of early intervention, with some

survey respondents suggesting that this option could reduce the burden on SENDCOs and other school staff or bring financial benefits by reducing long-term costs. However, concerns are raised about whether the funding available would be sufficient, whether it would reach all of the children and young people who need it and how the use of the fund could be monitored.

Survey respondents and Information and Engagement session participants are generally strongly opposed to option A3. They say it would lead to more EHC needs assessment applications, longer wait times, increased workload for school and council staff, and would negatively impact on children and young people with SEND, leading to an increase in unmet need. There is a recognition that A3 would bring financial benefits, but these are not seen to outweigh the wider disbenefits.

5.2 Option A1

5.2.1 Closed questions

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

Most respondents agree with the proposals for Option A1, with more than 75 per cent indicating that they agree or strongly agree with the change, compared to less than 15 per cent who disagree or strongly disagree.

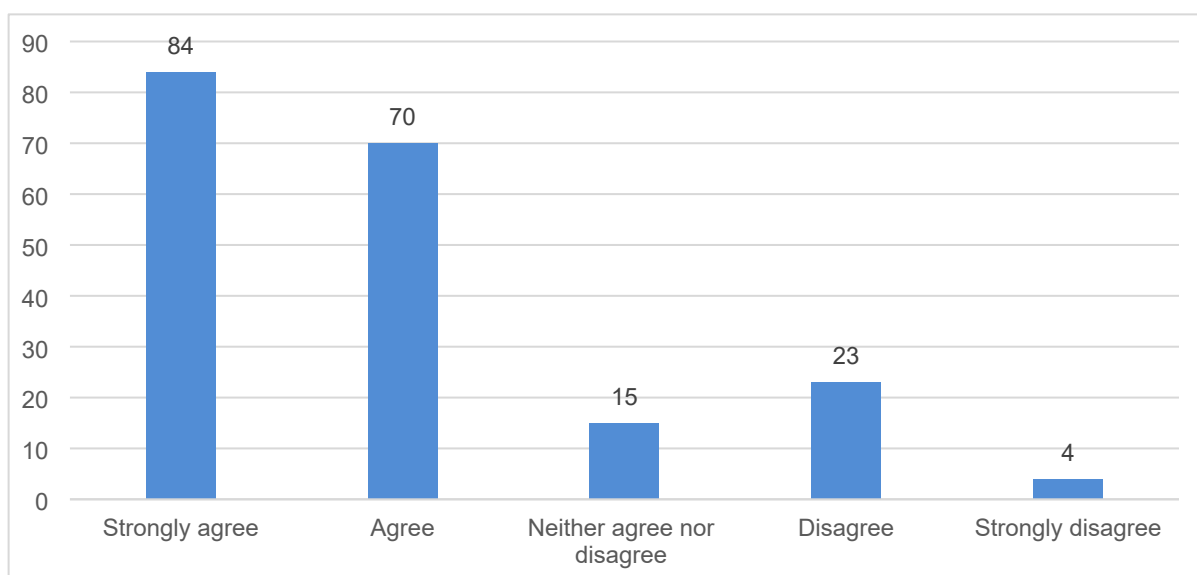


Figure 6: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for Option A1

This remains broadly true when responses are broken down by stakeholder category, although council staff are more likely to choose the more moderate option (e.g. 'agree' rather than 'strongly agree').

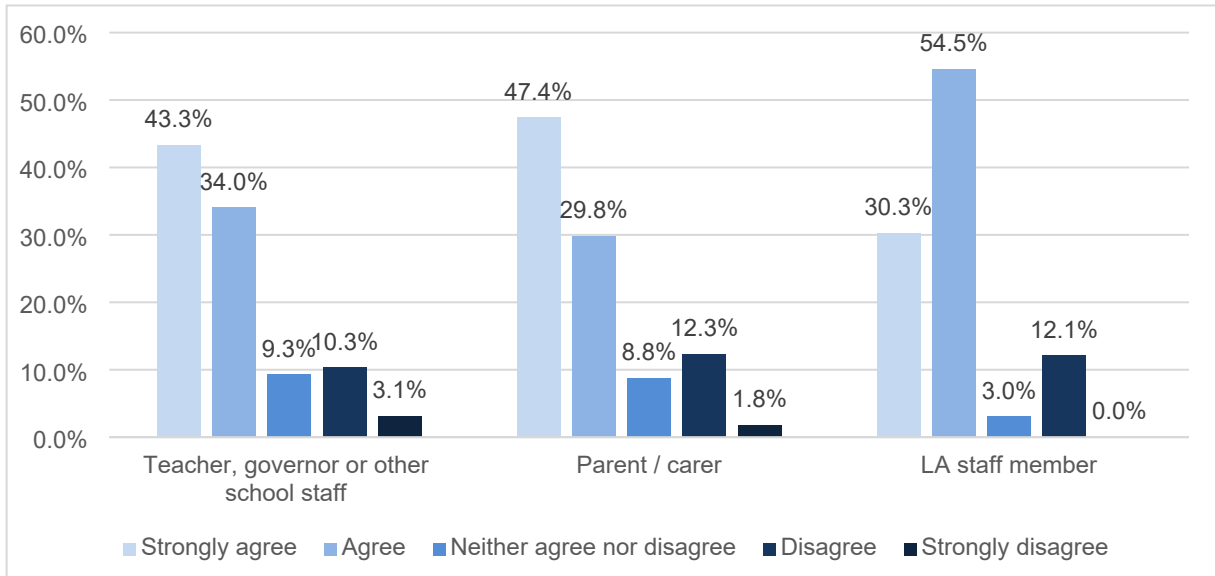


Figure 7: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option A1 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?

Responses around any potential impact on staff capacity are broadly aligned to the overall sentiment towards A1, with most respondents suggesting it would have a positive impact.

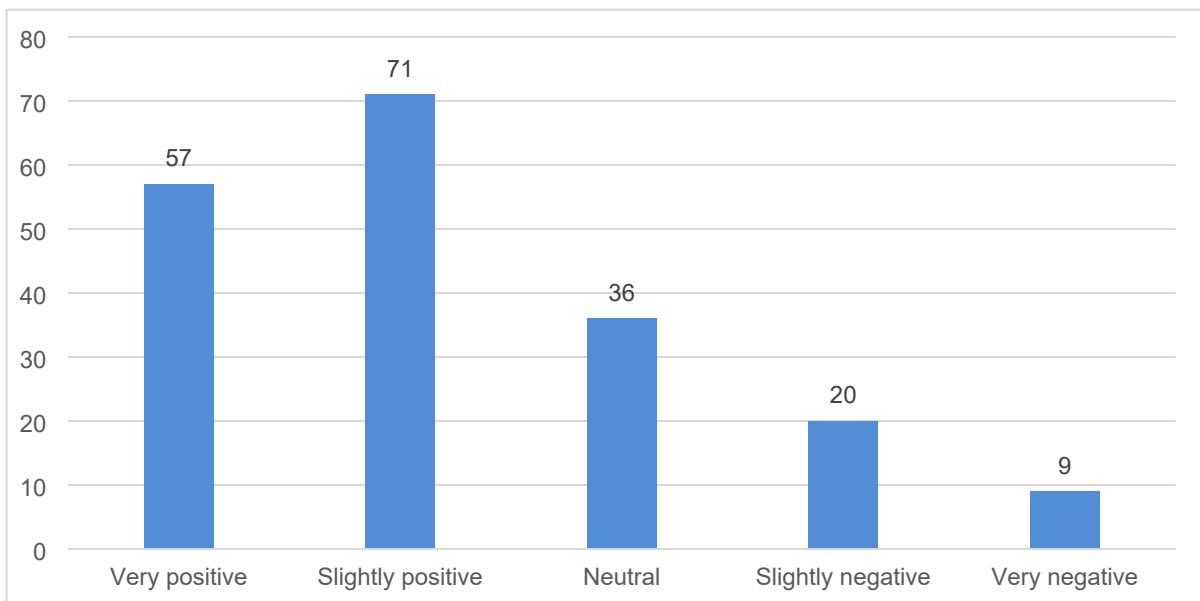


Figure 8: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option A1

When broken down by stakeholder group, parents and carers are less likely to feel the impact would be positive and more likely to say that it would have a neutral impact.

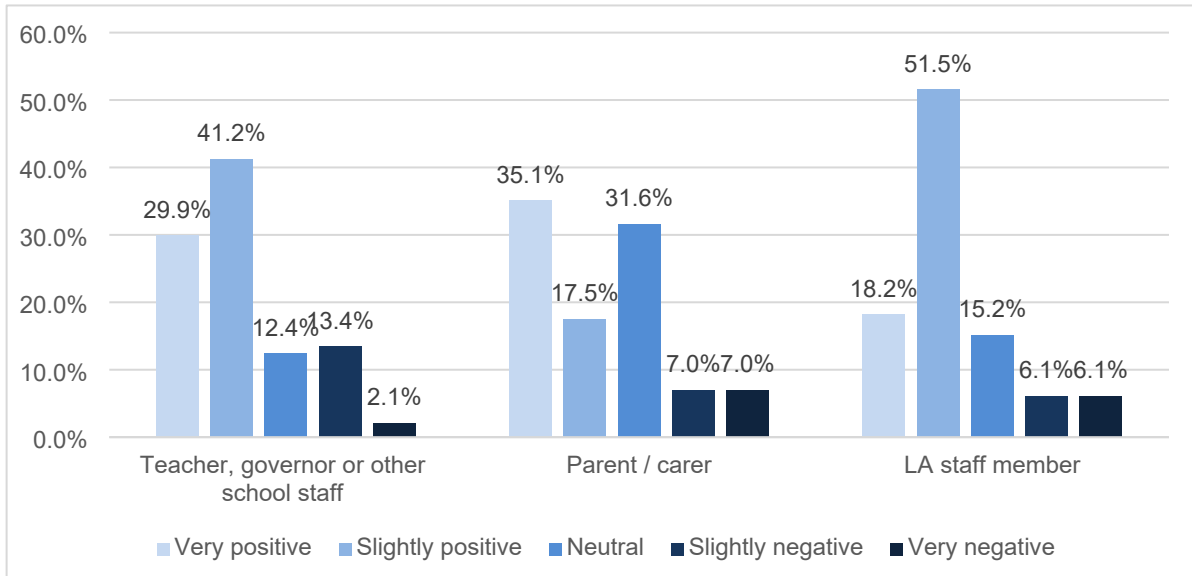


Figure 9: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option A1 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council’s SEND finances?

Views on the potential impact of A1 on the council’s finances are mixed, with most responses falling in the ‘slight positive’ to ‘slightly range’. Only a relatively small number feel that the proposals would have either a ‘strongly positive’ or ‘strongly negative’ effect.

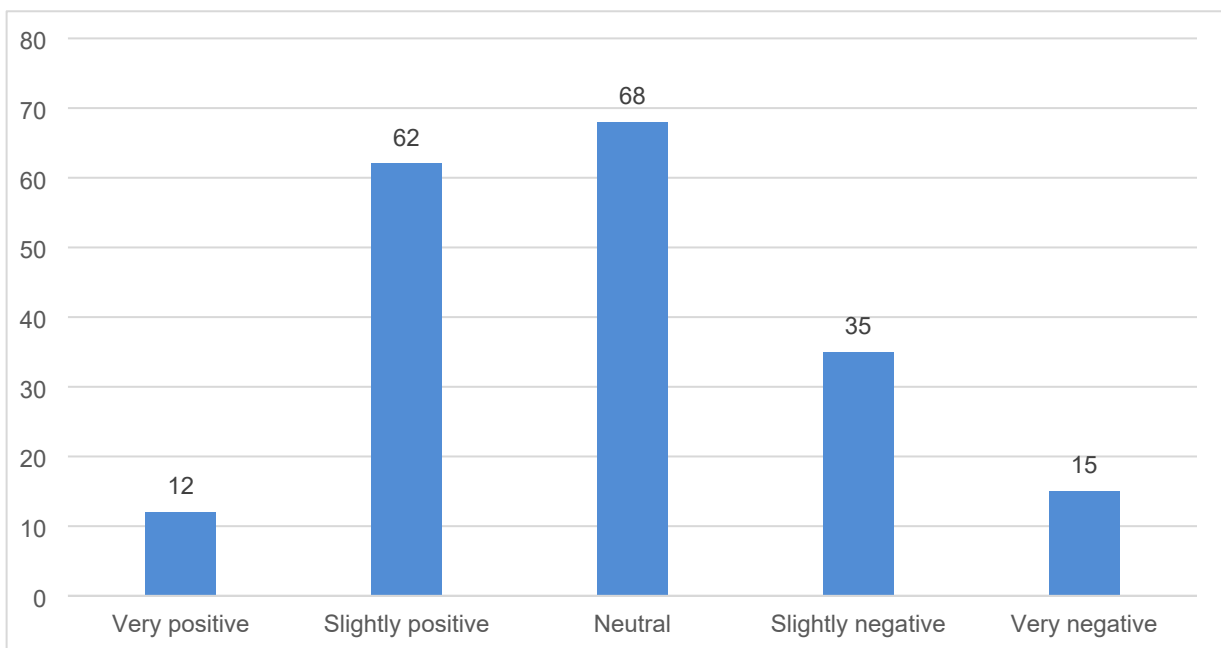


Figure 10: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option A1

Council staff are more likely to have a positive view of the potential impact of A1 on council finances, whilst parents and carers are more likely to feel it would be neutral.

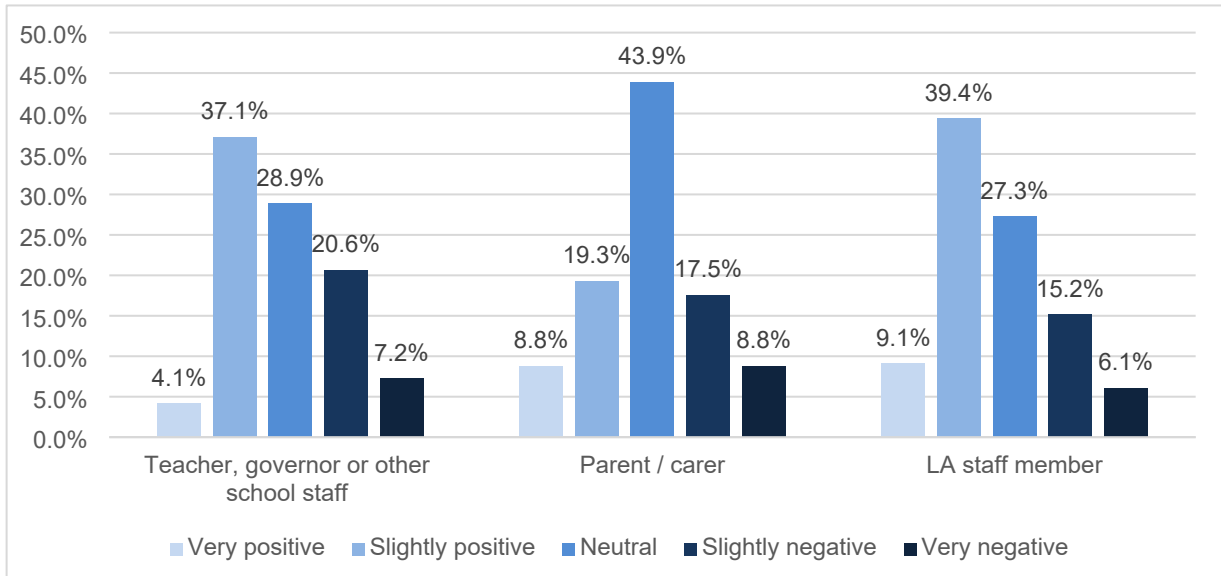


Figure 11: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?'

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?

The majority of responses on the potential impact of A1 on inclusion are positive, largely in line with overall sentiments toward A1.

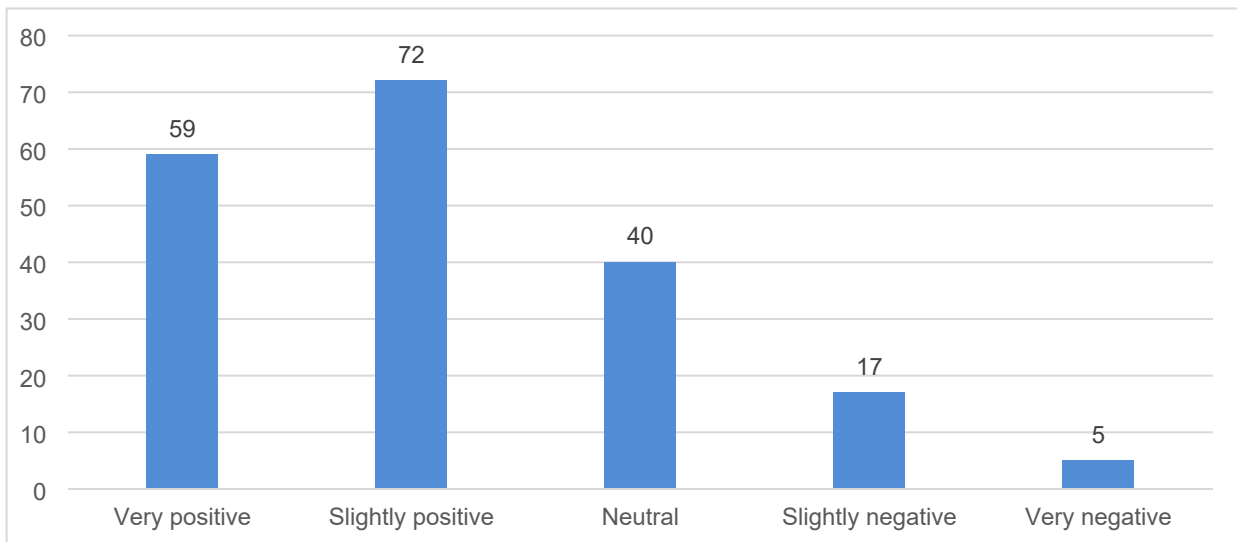


Figure 12: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option A1

Respondents from the local authority were more likely to say that A1 would not have a negative impact on inclusion.

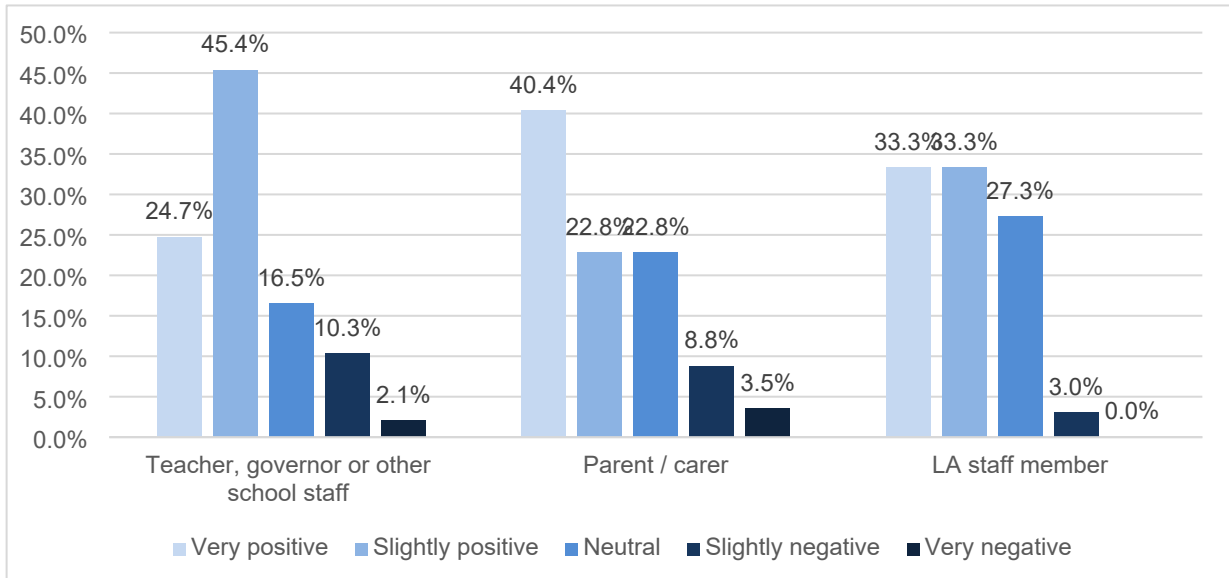


Figure 13: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option A1 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?

The majority of responses on the potential impact of A1 on quality and value for money are positive, largely in line with overall sentiments toward A1.

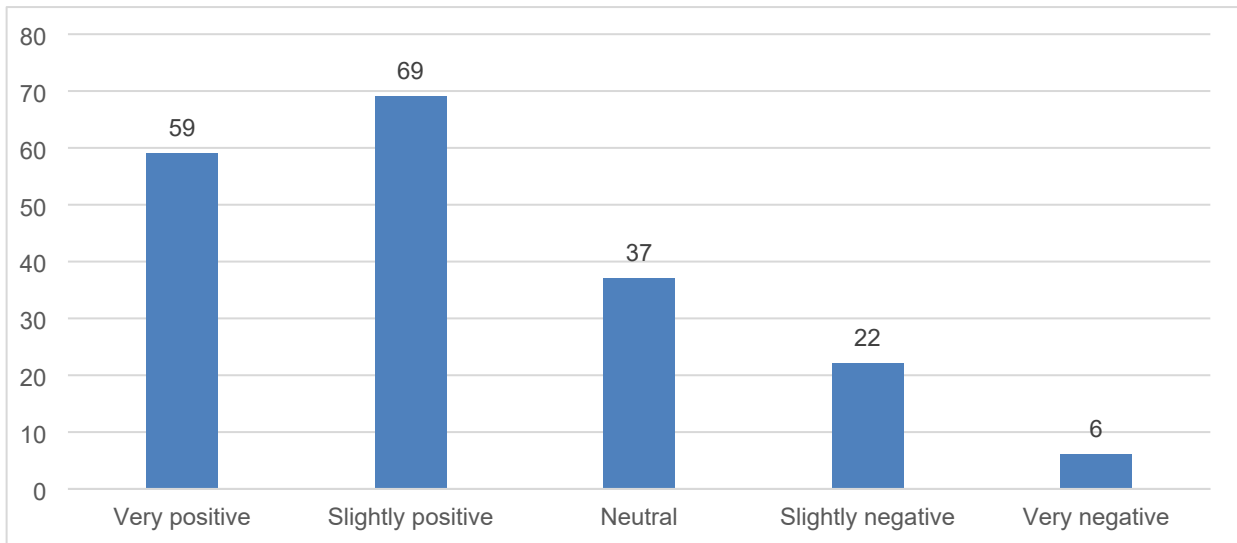


Figure 14: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option A1

This is broadly reflected in the stakeholder group breakdowns, although teachers, governors and other school staff were less likely to feel A1 could have a 'very positive' impact.

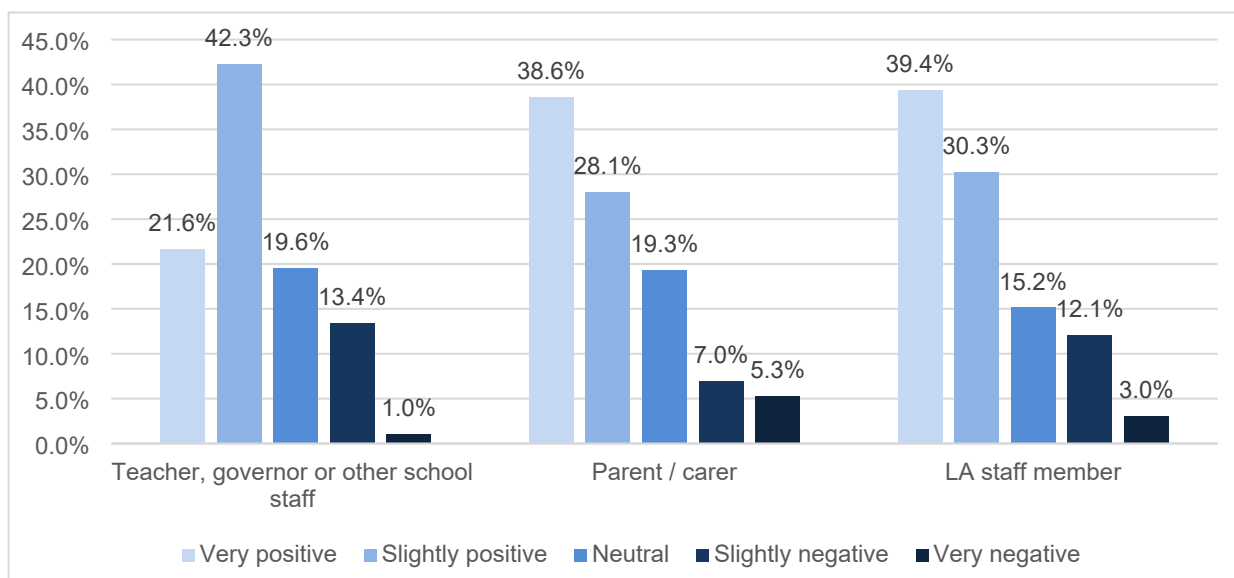


Figure 15: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option A1 by stakeholder group

5.2.2 Open questions

In line with the overall quantitative feedback, the majority of survey respondents' views on option A1 are positive.

Many respondents, particularly teachers and other school staff, discuss the need for a faster, more streamlined process. They often talk about the need to reduce duplication, whilst several talk about the burden which the current application process places on SENDCOs and other school staff and argue that this needs to be addressed. Some of these responses say that SENDCO and teacher time could be better spent supporting the children in question, whilst a few raise the importance of funding and additional resources to schools supporting SEND pupils.

Several respondents describe the importance of supporting children who do not have an EHC plan, either because they have a lower level of needs or because they are in the process of going through the application process. Indeed, several respondents mention the need to address application times, often arguing that they are too long at present and that there is a need to speed up the process. However, some respondents argue that this shows the importance of top-up funding, as it can act as a bridge for children whose applications are pending, ensuring that they receive the support they need in the meantime. A few also argue that top-up funding provides a mechanism by which children with a lower level of needs can be supported and suggest that otherwise their needs may not be met.

Meanwhile, several respondents feel that option A1 would be the best option from an inclusion perspective. They say that it allows schools to support SEND children in a mainstream education setting as much as possible. A few of these respondents specifically reference children in care (who may live outside of Bristol) as it helps to ensure that these children can access funding and have the support to remain in school. More widely, some respondents say that a lack of funding and support can lead to children being excluded from mainstream education settings.

Of the specific improvements suggested in the survey information, the online portal attracted the most positive feedback. Several respondents said that this could make applications easier and reduce the staff time requirement, as well as help to create a standardised process. When it comes to additional training for SENDCOs and other teachers, some respondents feel that this could help to improve the consistency of the panel decision-making process.

Other positive feedback on option A1 includes:

- some respondents who feel this option would be the best in terms of outcomes for SEND children
- a few respondents who express a general support for this option
- a few respondents who argue that this option would save money, either because it would be more efficient or because it would ensure needs are met quickly and do not escalate
- a few respondents who say this option would result in the fewest EHCP applications
- a small number who say this option would be the safest – where they specify why this is, they say it would ensure sufficient funding to meet children’s needs

However, some respondents voice concerns about some aspects of option A1.

For example, some suggest that this option would be unlikely to realise sufficient savings or argue that it would be financially unsustainable for the council. Meanwhile, some say that the amount of funding being made available is insufficient to meet demand, although no respondents from the local authority express this view.

A few respondents describe challenges with the current system, including parents or carers who outline difficulties they faced accessing funding or ensuring it is used appropriately for their child.

A small number of respondents raise other concerns, which include:

- whether SENDCOs would have capacity to attend training and whether this training would eliminate address subjectivity of top-up panel decisions
- streamlined application processes leading to an increase in EHCP applications and a corresponding increase in workload for the local authority
- whether it is relatively more difficult for secondary settings to receive funding than primary settings

Some respondents also make a range of suggestions about how SEND provision could be improved. These include conducting strengths-based assessments rather than having a deficit focus, prioritising strengthening ordinarily available provision (OAP) in order to benefit more children in the long term and allowing year-round applications with an end to thrice-yearly panels.

One respondent suggests that schools should be able to use element 2 funding across the whole school to support effective OAP rather than evidencing spend on an individual. However, other respondents argue schools should be required to evidence that they have utilised their funding to support the needs outlined in the application, with audits carried out as required.

Other suggestions include:

- clear guidance for SENDCOs
- employing more assessors and administrators
- employing therapists in-house at the council to support education settings
- requiring council staff to complete half day per term of work experience in a school
- automatically funding EHCPs
- separating EHC funding from non-statutory top-up funding
- integrating the Digital SEND Support System into the A1 proposals
- creating an option which combines elements of options A1 and A2
- providing a means of supporting children with short-term health needs

5.2.3 Information and Engagement sessions

Information and Engagement session participants are generally supportive of option A1.

They say that this option would ensure the greatest level of funding for schools and would provide support through top-up to children who might otherwise not receive it, either because they have relatively low levels of need or because their needs assessment for an EHC plan is pending. They argue that these children have needs which need to be met, and therefore that top-up funding is necessary. Similarly, participants also argue that A1 is the best option for inclusivity as children may not have fixed needs so an EHCP may not be the best means of supporting them. Nonetheless, they are supportive of attempts of streamline processes and make them more consistent.

However, participants do raise some concerns about A1. They typically express scepticism that benefits would be realised, suggesting application times may not come down or that A1 would not lead to financial savings. Meanwhile, a participant in the Information and Engagement session for governors says there is a risk that A1 could lead to SENCOs spending less time on applications but more time on evidencing spending.

5.3 Option A2

5.3.1 Closed questions

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

A majority of respondents agree with the proposals for A2, though not as many as agree with A1, and with a smaller proportion who ‘strongly agree’. See the ‘Overview’ section for a comparison between options.

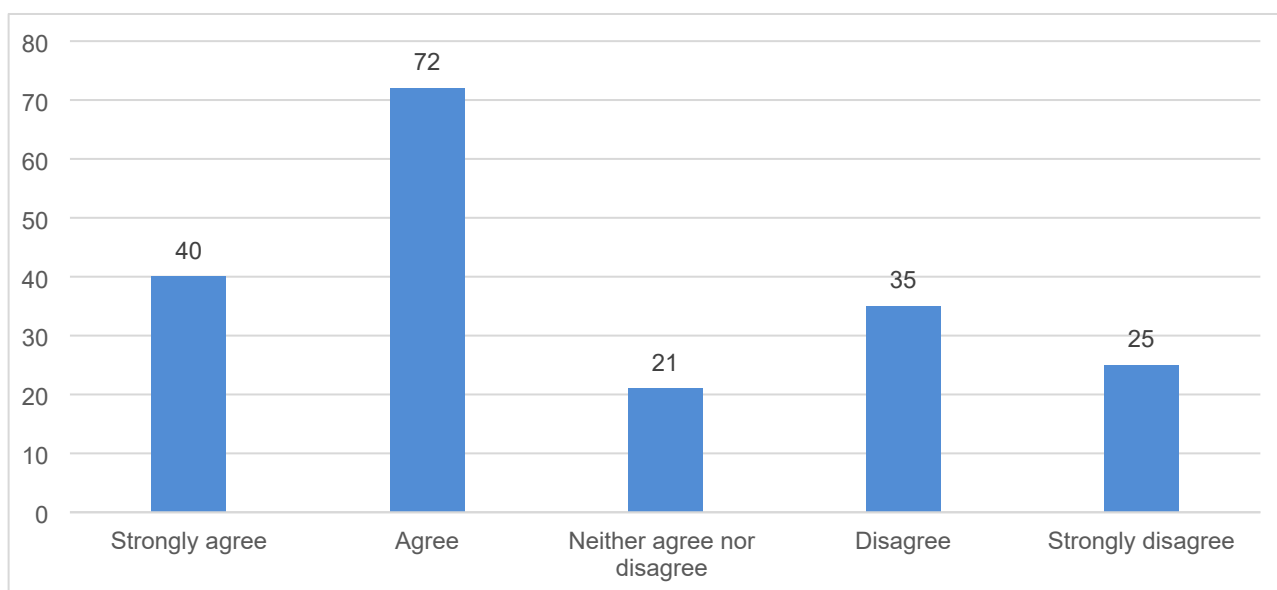


Figure 16: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option A2

When responses are broken down by stakeholder category, the parent / carer group is more likely to disagree with the A2 proposals (with a higher proportion of those who ‘strongly disagree’) as well as being less likely to agree.

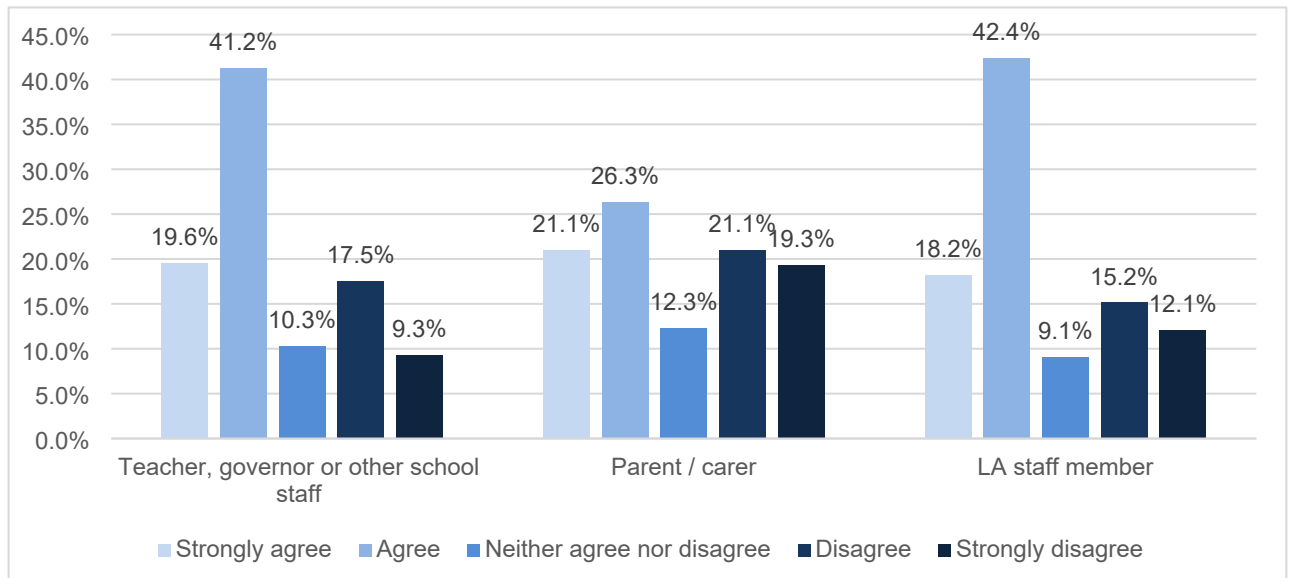


Figure 17: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option A2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?

Responses around any potential impact on staff capacity are broadly aligned to the overall sentiments towards A2, although respondents were slightly less likely to feel they would have a positive impact (instead indicating a 'neutral' sentiment).

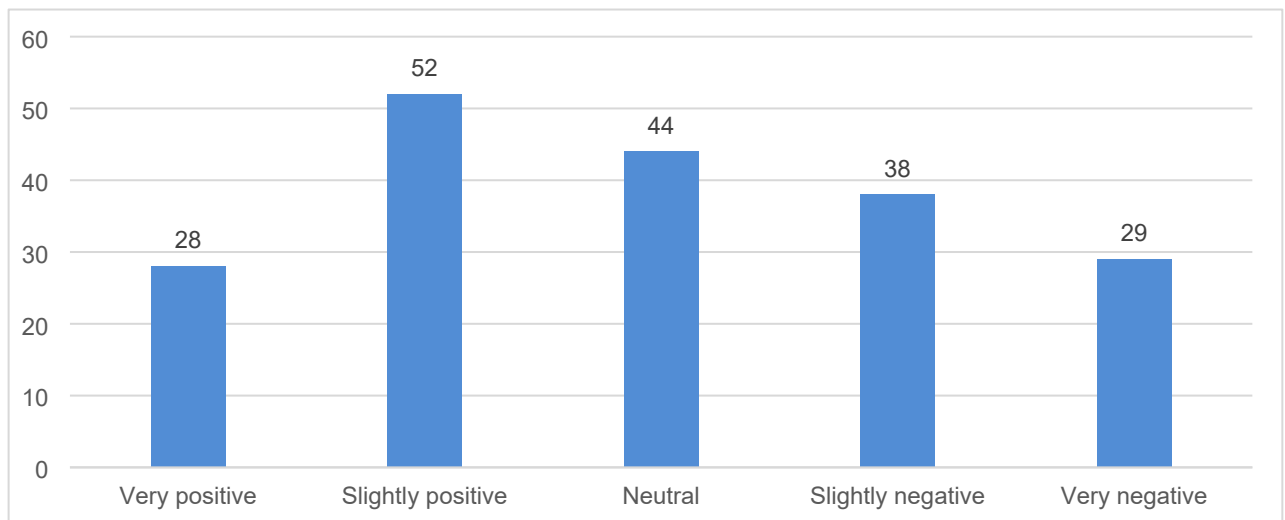


Figure 18: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option A2

When broken down by stakeholder group, parents and carers are more likely to say that it would have a neutral impact.

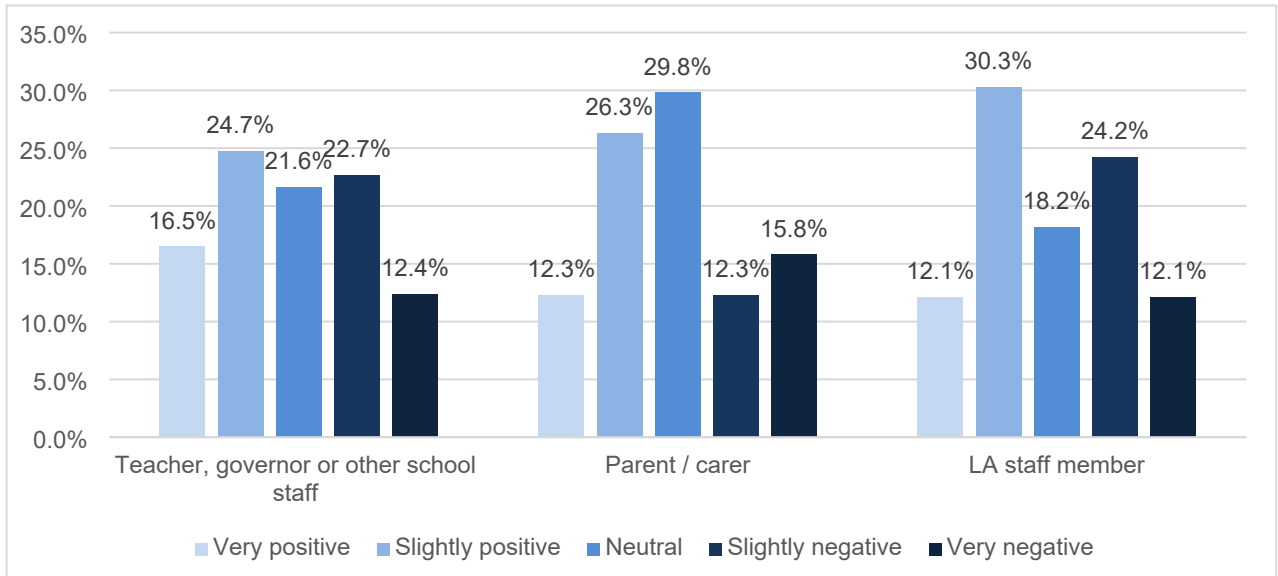


Figure 19: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity' for option A2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council’s SEND finances?

Most respondents feel that A2 would have a slightly positive or neutral impact on the council’s SEND finances.

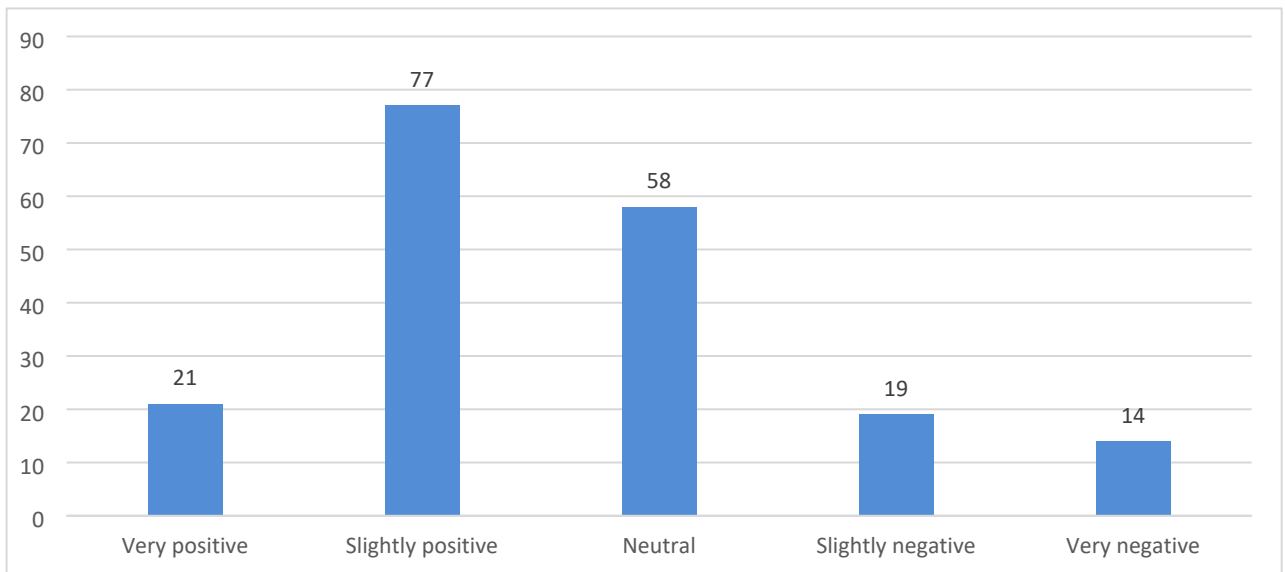


Figure 20: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option A2

School staff were most likely to feel that A2 would have a positive effect on the council’s SEND finances (although generally only ‘slightly positive’) whilst council staff were more likely to say that this proposal would have a negative impact.

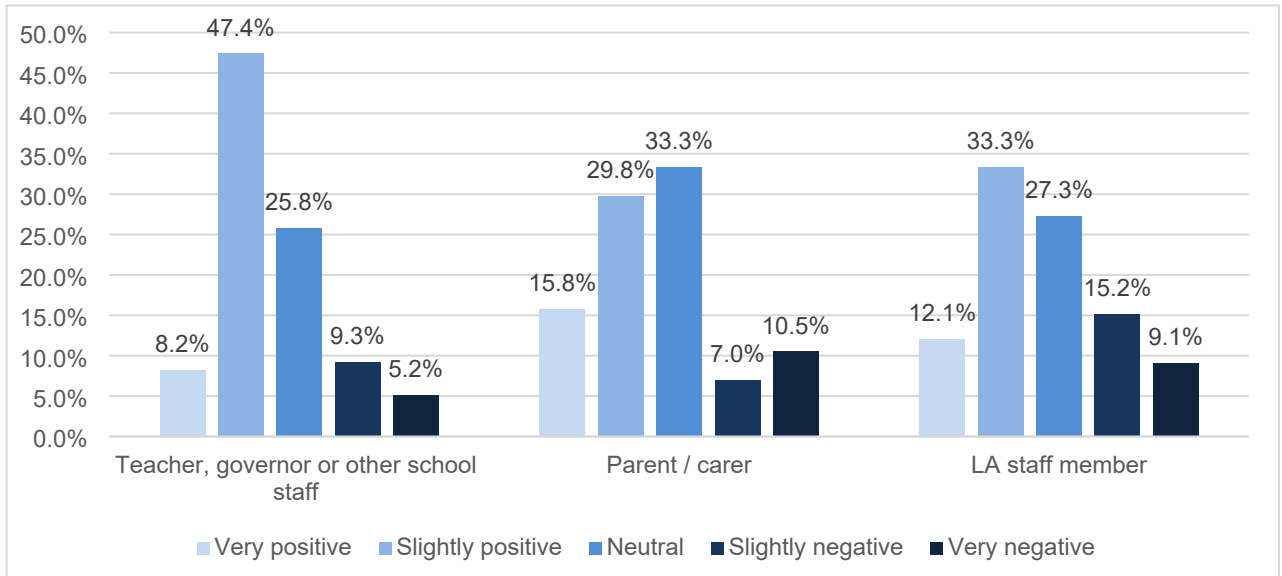


Figure 21: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for A2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?

Views on the impact of option A2 on inclusion are varied, with 'slightly positive' the modal response, and around half of respondents viewing the proposal positively.

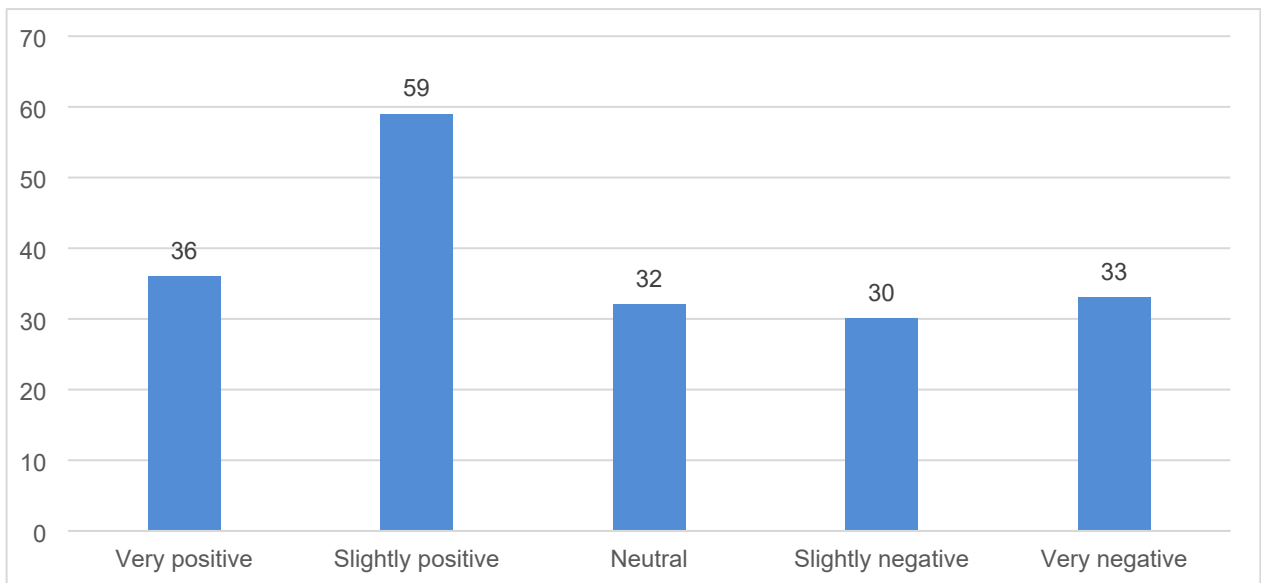


Figure 22: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option A2

Similarly, responses when broken down by stakeholder type are mixed.

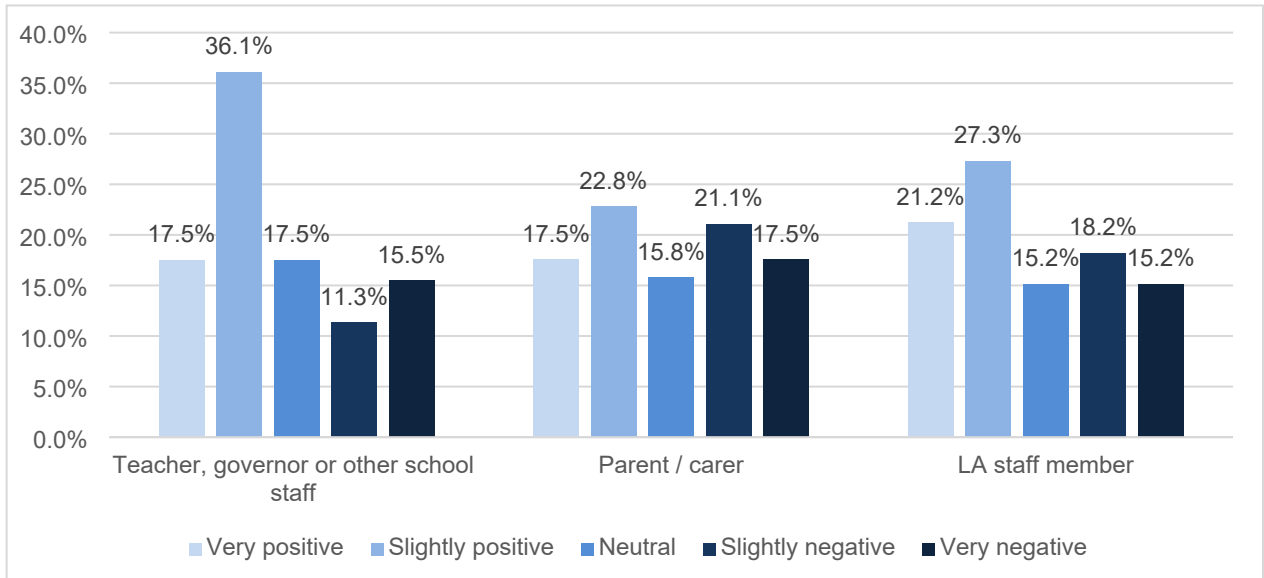


Figure 23: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option A2 by stakeholder type

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?

As with responses for inclusion, views on the impact of option A2 on quality and value for money are varied, with 'slightly positive' the modal response.

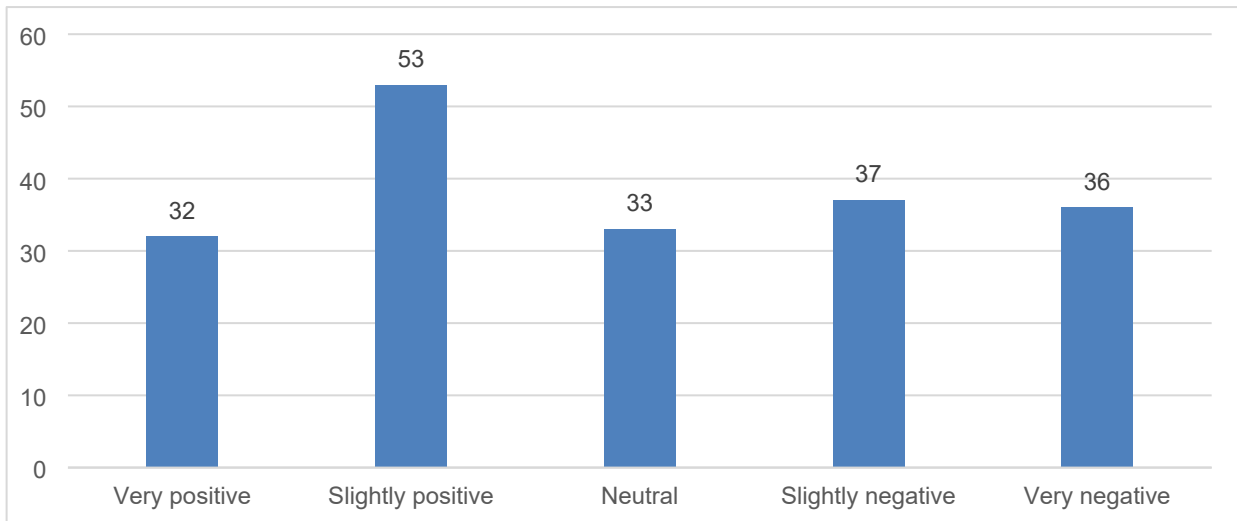


Figure 24: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option A2

When broken down by stakeholder type, parents and carers were most likely to view the proposal negatively in terms of quality and value for money, whilst school staff were most likely view A2 positively.

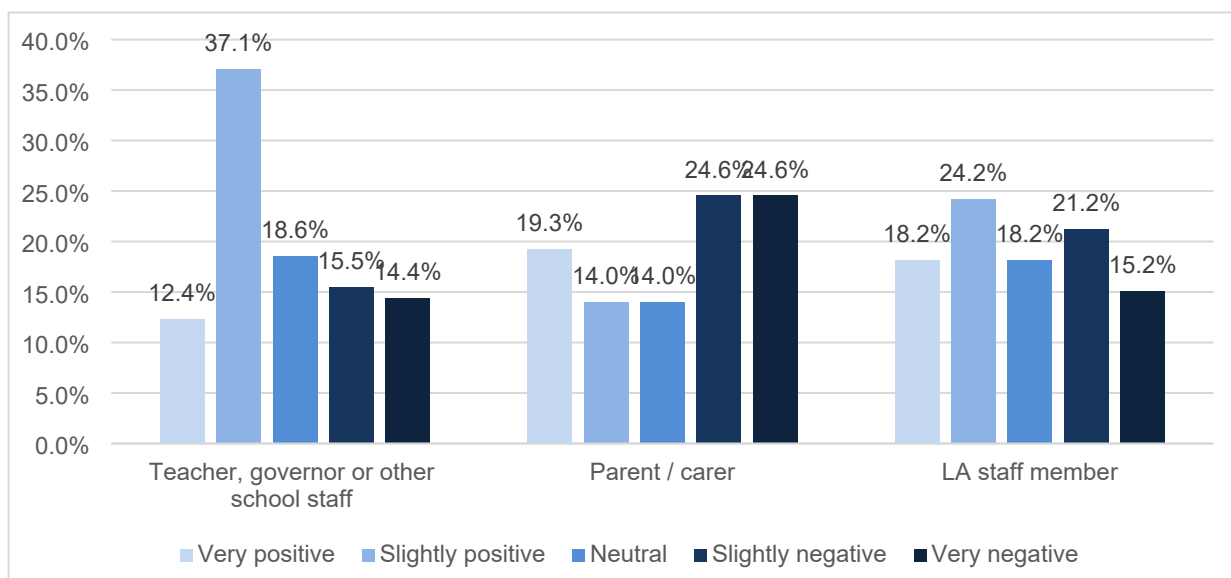


Figure 25: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option A2 by stakeholder type

5.3.2 Open questions

Respondents' views on option A2 expressed in their answers to the open question are mixed.

Several respondents support the principle of early intervention, arguing that it could help to support children who have no diagnosis or who do not yet have funding and ensure that their needs are met, reducing the need for intervention and demand for EHCPs and one-to-one support in the long term. A few of these respondents say that this approach could help children to fulfil their full potential and improve outcomes, whilst a small number suggest specific targeted interventions which could be implemented, including interventions to support with social and emotional wellbeing and speech and language. A small number also name specific groups who they feel could benefit from this proposal, such as children with ADHD or visual impairment (VI).

Meanwhile, some argue that this could reduce the administrative burden on SENDCOs and free up capacity to better support children. A small number go on to suggest that this could enable schools to address specific issues, such as emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA).

Some respondents say that an early intervention approach may also bring financial benefits, either by addressing needs at an earlier stage and therefore reducing long term support costs, or by allowing schools to access funds to support multiple children, perhaps using group work and pooled support.

However, several respondents raise concerns about the equitability of option A2 and question whether funding will be going to the schools and the children who most needs it. In terms of schools, they say that funding would likely be focused on KS1 pupils and primary schools, with multi-academy trusts also being able to pool their funding, whilst other secondary schools would miss out. For children, they express concern that some groups would be disproportionately impacted by any reduction in top-up funding. These groups include:

- Children in care
- Black and ethnic minority children
- Children who move schools in-year without transferrable provision
- Children with autism spectrum disorder (whose needs may be identified later)
- Children with an EOTAS package, who are home schooled or who attend an ALP

- Children with social, emotional, and mental health needs

A small number express concerns that early intervention approaches could lead to a greater number of exclusions.

Several respondents argue that funding should be spent on a specific child to address a specific need. They argue that some children require dedicated support, personalised provision or a bespoke package which would need to be provided through top-up funding and they express concern that option A2 may affect this provision.

Furthermore, several respondents believe that A2 would reduce schools' ability to access funding or question what would happen if the finite 'pot' was not sufficient to meet demand. They say that schools cannot afford to put individualised support in place without top up funding. Others say that the funding would need to be ringfenced to ensure that schools use it for its intended purpose.

Some respondents express concern about the impact of the proposal on schools, suggesting that monitoring and accounting for spend could place additional burden on SENCOs. One respondent feels it could lead to school leadership teams competing for funds which they believe could damage morale or collaboration.

A small number of respondents feel that if this option does not reduce the number of EHCP applications then it could lead to increased system costs, and indeed a few respondents argue that this proposal could lead to more EHCP requests.

A few respondents request more detail or say that this option is unclear in its present form.

Meanwhile, several respondents make suggestions for how A2 could be designed. A few of these respondents argue that the best solution would be a combination of options A1 and A2, whilst others say that funds should be used to hire shared staff such as Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) or Speech and Language Therapists (SALTs).

Other suggestions include:

- automatic funding of EHCPs
- information sharing across schools in the city
- integration of the Digital SEND Support System
- creation of approved suppliers with a standard charge
- providing early intervention before primary school age
- support in place for a minimum of a year
- funds targeted at specific year groups to support transition
- small group classes to support those with ASC or social anxiety
- consideration given to how monitoring could work
- further consultation to inform design of this option

5.3.3 Information and Engagement sessions

In the Information and Engagement sessions, views on option A2 are mixed.

Some participants express support for early intervention, arguing it could provide wide ranging benefits for children and schools. They say it has been proven to work in other local authorities, could empower schoolteachers to hold each other to account, and could fund specialist teams to support both children and teachers.

However, concerns are raised about how school's use of this funding would be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is being used effectively. They also question whether the money would be sufficient to meet demand, how the funding would be targeted, and how schools could allocate funding if needs changed across or within years. Others suggest that this could result in additional work for SENDCOs. Furthermore, some argue that because early intervention funding would go to younger age groups, those with needs which emerge

later could miss out, while others say that early intervention would not necessarily reduce future needs.

Participants in the Information and Engagement sessions for council and school staff suggest combining options A1 and A2. Other suggestions include an enablement fund to support larger groups and clear guidance around what the early intervention fund could address.

5.4 Option A3

5.4.1 Closed questions

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

Most respondents disagree with option A3, with the majority saying that they ‘strongly disagree’ with this change.

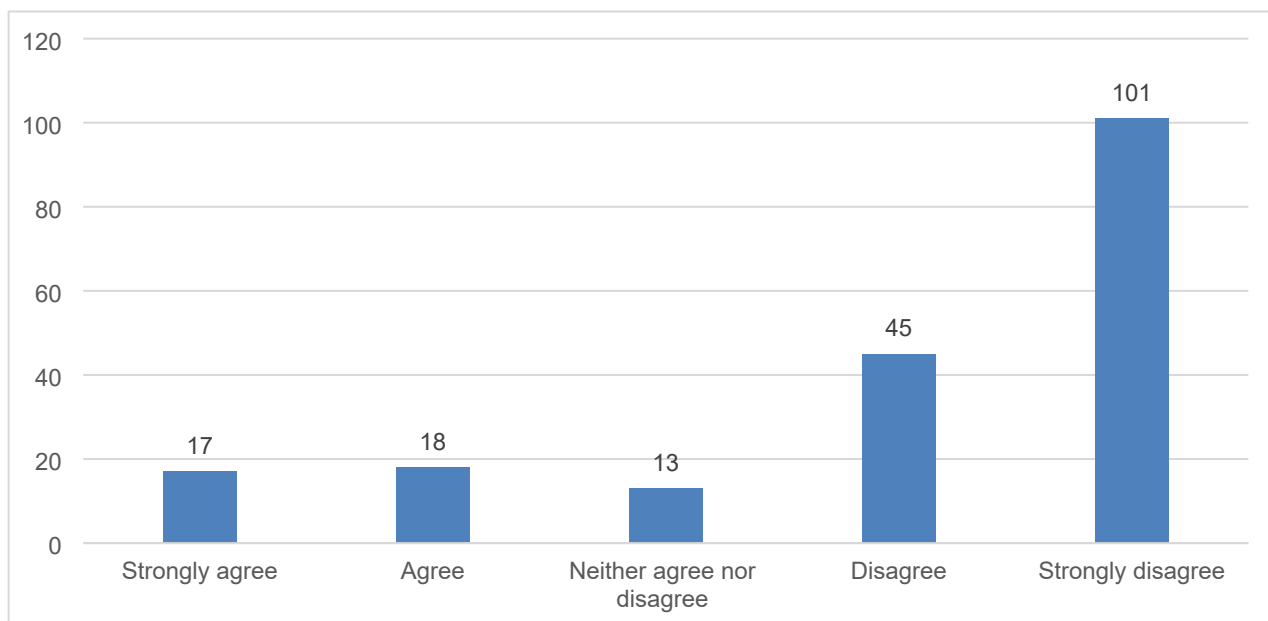


Figure 26: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option A3

This is broadly reflected across all of the different stakeholder types.

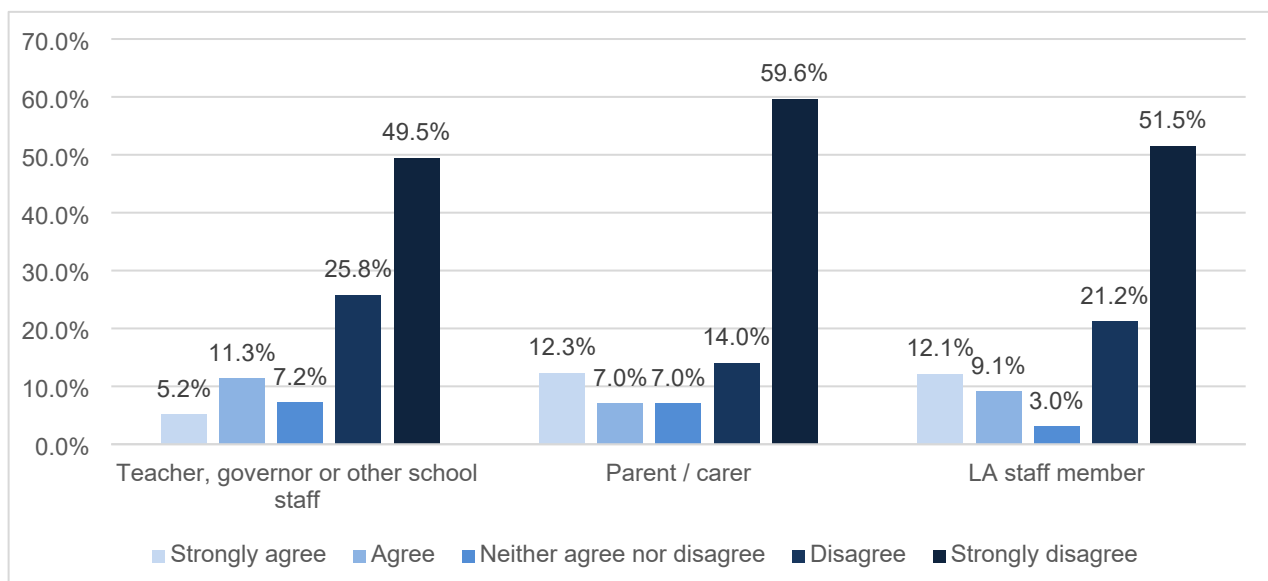


Figure 27: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option A3 by stakeholder type

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?

Similarly, most respondents feel that A3 would negatively affect staff capacity, with the majority indicating they believe it could have a ‘very negative’ effect.

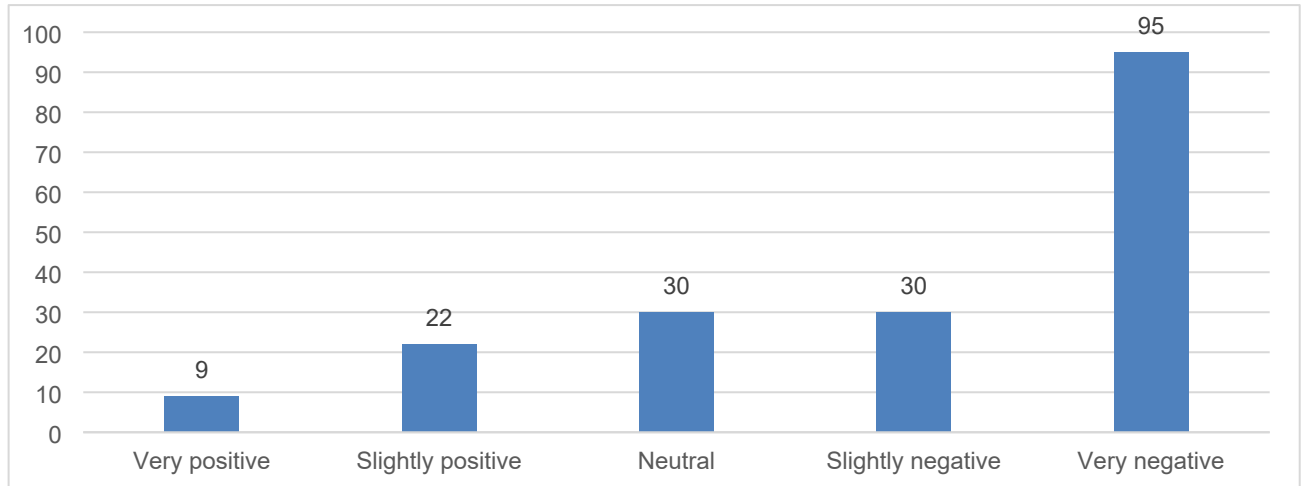


Figure 28: ‘What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?’ for option A3

Parents and carers were more like to feel that A3 could have a positive effect on staff capacity and less likely to feel it could have a negative effect. They were also more likely to feel that it could be a neutral option.

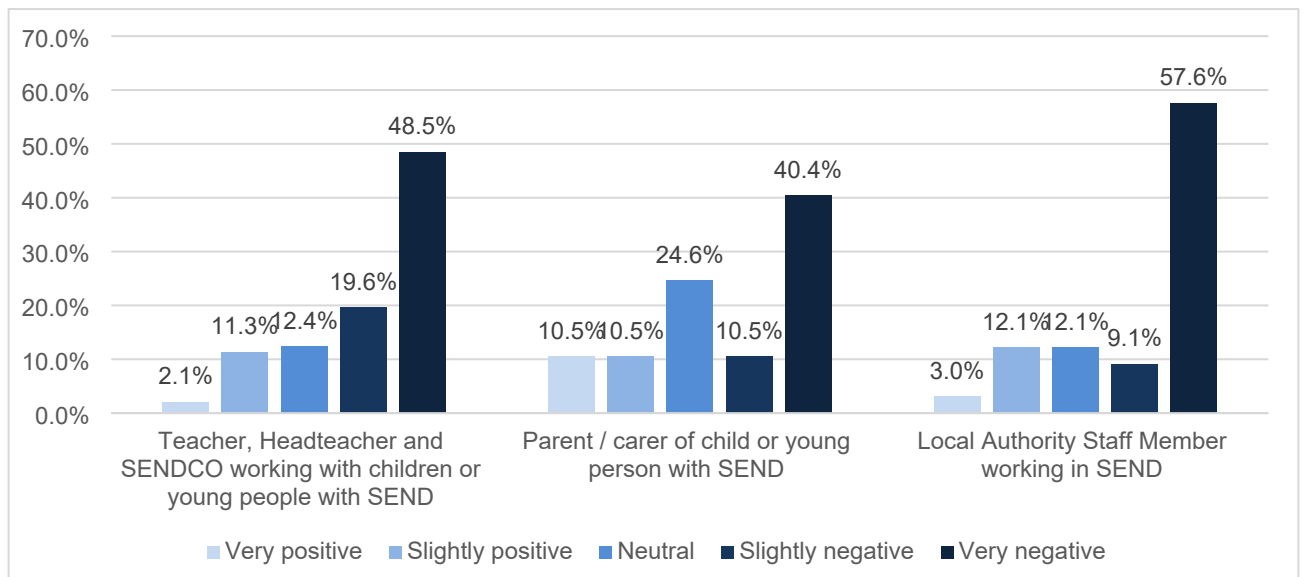


Figure 29: ‘What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?’ for option A3 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council’s SEND finances?

Despite more than half of respondents strongly disagreeing with A3 overall, many respondents feel that it could have a positive, or at least neutral, impact on the council’s finances.

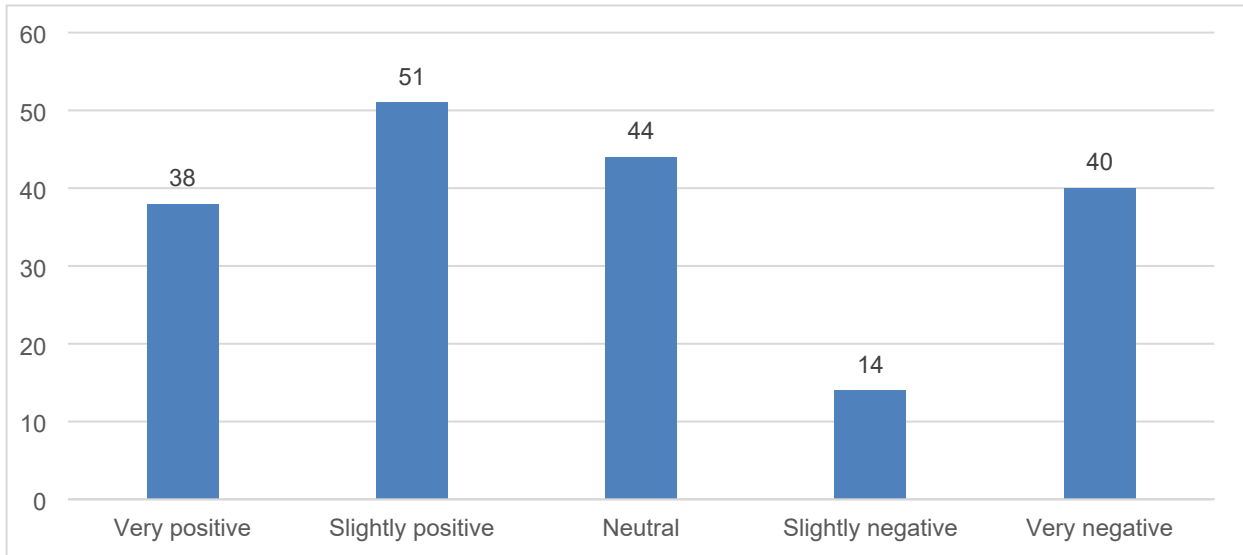


Figure 30: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option A3

However, responses on this issue were highly varied when broken down by stakeholder type. School staff were more likely to believe that A3 would have a positive effect, parents and carers were more likely to feel it would be neutral, and council staff were more likely to say it would have a negative impact.

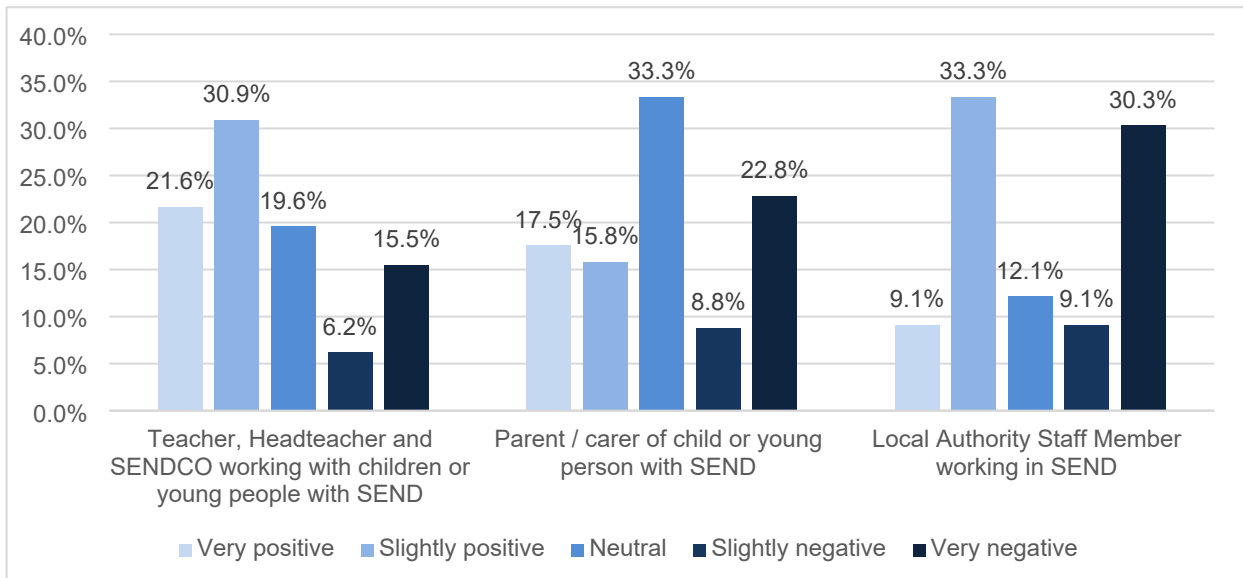


Figure 31: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option A3 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?

Most respondents say that A3 would have a 'strongly negative' effect on inclusion.

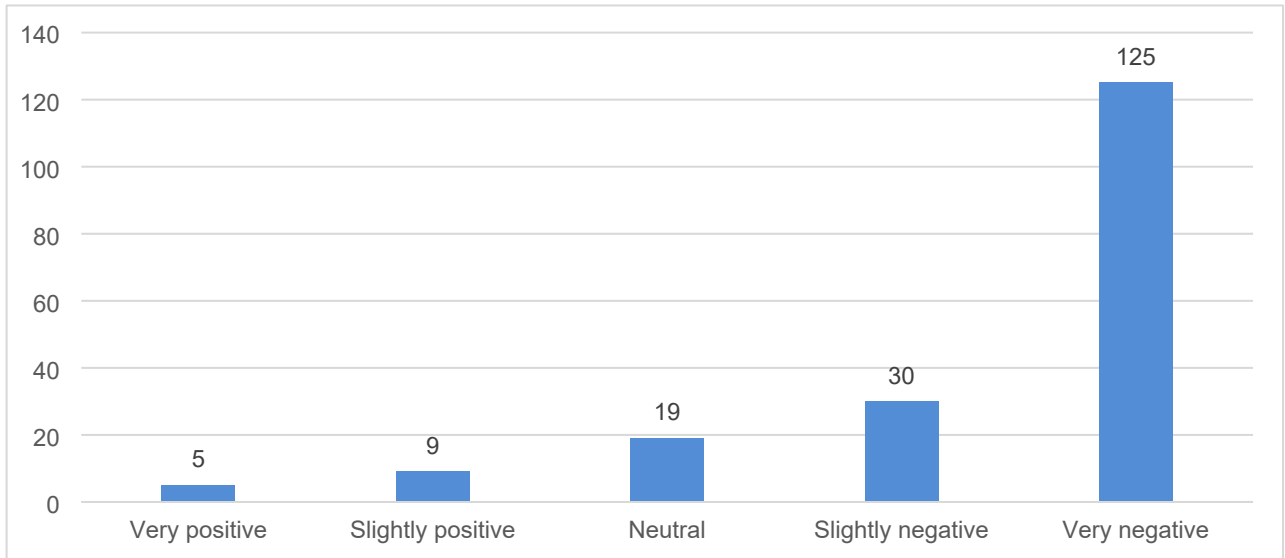


Figure 32: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option A3

Council staff are most likely to feel A3 would have a 'strongly negative' impact on inclusion, but this is the majority view across all stakeholder groups.

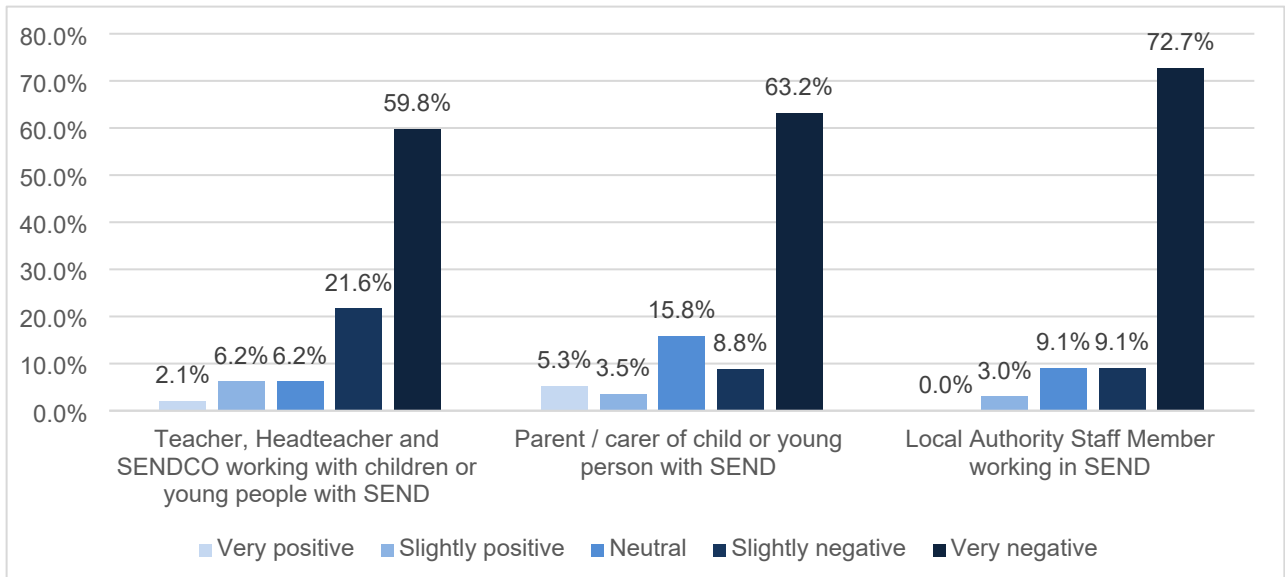


Figure 33: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option A3 by stakeholder type

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?

As with responses for inclusion, most respondents say that A3 would have a 'strongly negative' effect on quality and value for money.

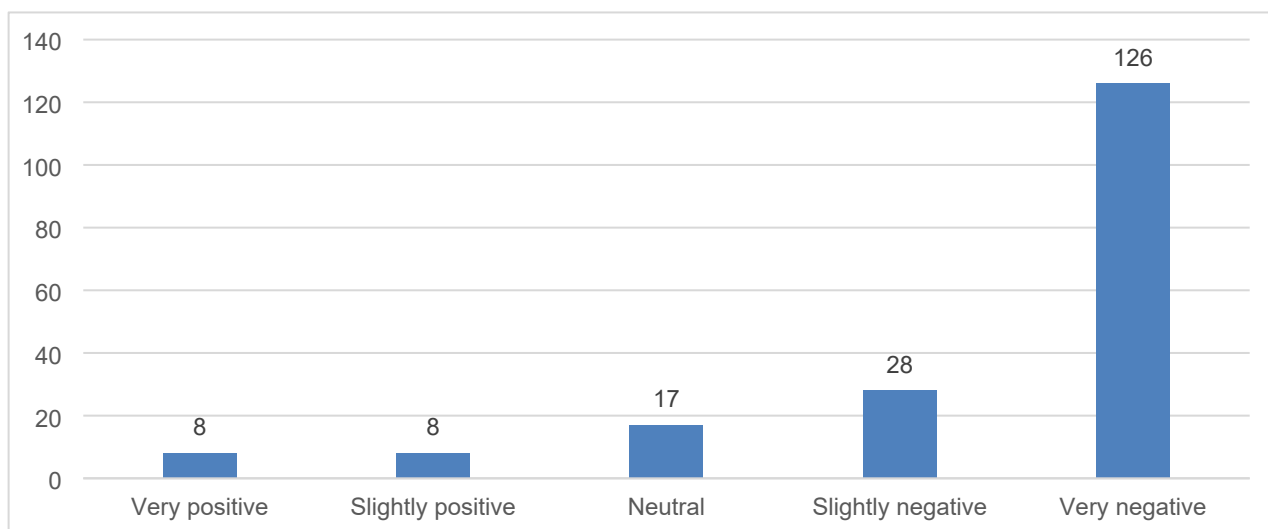


Figure 34: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option A3 by stakeholder type

The response data broken down by stakeholder type largely reflects the overall sentiments outlined above.

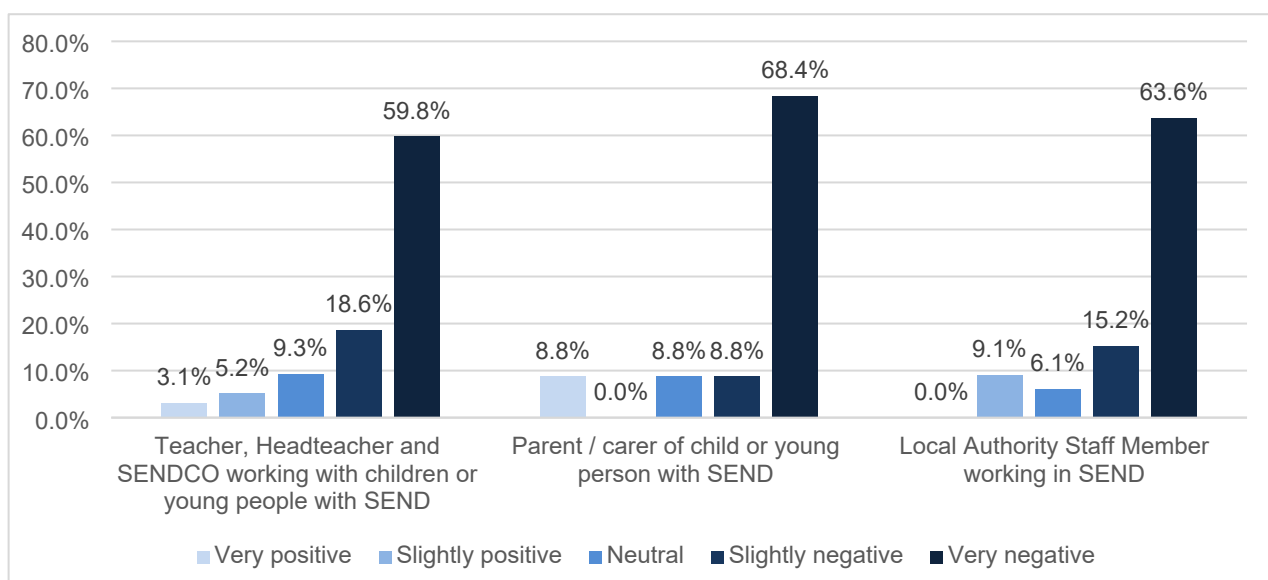


Figure 35: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option A3 by stakeholder type

5.4.2 Open questions

The vast majority of the open text comments on option A3 express concern about the proposal.

Many respondents say that adoption of A3 would lead to an increase in EHC needs assessments application volumes. Some use terms such as 'massive' or 'exponential' to describe any increase. This is because children who do not currently have a plan in place would need to be approved for one in order to continue to receive any funding. They suggest there could be a number of consequences which result from this increase.

For example, several respondents say that there are currently long waits for applications to be considered and approved, with some suggesting that this situation would be exacerbated by an increase in applications. They argue that existing wait times would need to be significantly reduced for this option to be adopted. If this is not the case, then they say this may lead to children who have applied for but not been given an EHCP receiving insufficient support. A few respondents say that this means schools would have to manage these cases without having the funding to do so.

Several respondents also say that an increase in ECH needs assessments, as well as any associated increase in annual reviews, would lead directly to an increase in workload for school staff (particularly SENDCOs) and for council staff (particularly SEND teams and Education Psychologists (EPs)). They feel that these teams are already working at full capacity. A few suggest that more staff, including SALTs and EPs, are needed. A few also say that A3 would negatively impact on the families of children with SEND.

Meanwhile, many respondents say that they feel this option would negatively impact on children and young people with SEND. They suggest that this would lead to an increase in unmet need, particularly for children who have a sudden increase in need and may lead to disengagement with or exclusion from mainstream education. Indeed, a small number of responses suggest that it might no longer be safe for some children to remain in mainstream education without funded plans. There is also a concern that a reliance on formal diagnosis and EHCPs could affect inclusion and might disproportionately disadvantage a number of different groups, including:

- children with relatively low level of need
- minority groups
- children in care
- children with SEMH needs (including undiagnosed needs)
- children with SLCN
- children with English as a second language
- children of parents with English as a second language
- children of parents with a learning disability
- children of parents with a health condition which limits their ability to support an EHC needs assessment
- Some respondents believe that this option would lead to increased costs for the council. This would be as a result of increased applications, a lack of early support leading to greater needs in the long term, and increased need for specialist provisions. A small number say A3 could shift costs to other areas such as Social Care.

Only a few respondents raise points in favour of option A3. They say that:

- only statutory activities should be funded
- an EHCP is the best and most appropriate way of meeting the needs of a child or young person with SEND
- this proposal may deliver financial benefits
- timescales for EHCP applications may improve
- it would be fairer and more consistent if everyone has to apply for an EHCP
- this would be in line with other local authorities

Relatively few respondents make suggestions in relation to A3. Where they do, they propose:

- EHC plans being funded automatically, and funds released immediately
- emergency funded for key stages, such as transition, or for crisis situations
- a phased transition to any new approach
- senior council staff visiting affected schools before implementing proposals
- avoiding tying schools to 1-to-1 provision through EHCPs

5.4.3 Information and Engagement sessions

In line with the survey feedback, the vast majority of the response to option A3 in the Information and Engagement sessions is negative. Several participants express opposition to this proposal in strong terms.

There is widespread agreement that this option would lead to a significant increase in children and young people being put forward for EHC needs assessments. Participants suggest that this, as well as a consequent increase in annual reviews, could lead to further delays and increased workload for school and council staff. Participants in the Information and Engagement sessions for school staff outline the extent of existing delays and say that top-up is currently being used as a means of getting funding which should come with an EHC plan.

Some participants, particularly participants in the sessions for parents and carers, argue that A3 could also result in children with lower levels of need or who may not be eligible for an EHC plan who would be unable to access support.

There is also a view expressed in a session for council staff that A3 may ultimately lead to an increase in costs.

However, one participant in a session for school staff says that they had seen A3-type models work elsewhere, whilst participants in the parent and carer sessions recognise the importance of addressing any funding gap to help protect council taxpayers.

6 Survey results: Post-16

6.1 Overview

The same three options were presented for post-16 learners as for school age children. These options were:

Option A1 – Retain the top-up funding process for children and young people without EHC plans but make improvements to make the system more streamlined and consistent

Option A2 – Re-purpose a proportion of the funding currently being spent on top-up funding for children and young people that do not have an EHC plan to create a targeted early intervention fund for mainstream schools

Option A3 – Gradually phase out the use of top-up funding for children and young people who do not have an EHC plan

For each of these options, survey respondents were asked:

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

This was a closed question with a five-point Likert scale of responses ranging from ‘Strongly agree’ to ‘Strongly disagree’.

Across both the survey and Information and Engagement sessions, B1 is the most popular option. In the survey it receives support (‘Strongly agree’ or ‘agree’) from the majority of respondents. B2 receives support from more than 40 per cent, whilst B3 is strongly opposed, with more than half of respondents indicating that they do not support this option. The number of respondents selecting ‘neither agree nor disagree’ is much larger than in the responses for the school age section of the survey. The qualitative feedback shows that this is because several respondents did not feel they knew enough about post-16 education to be able to comment.

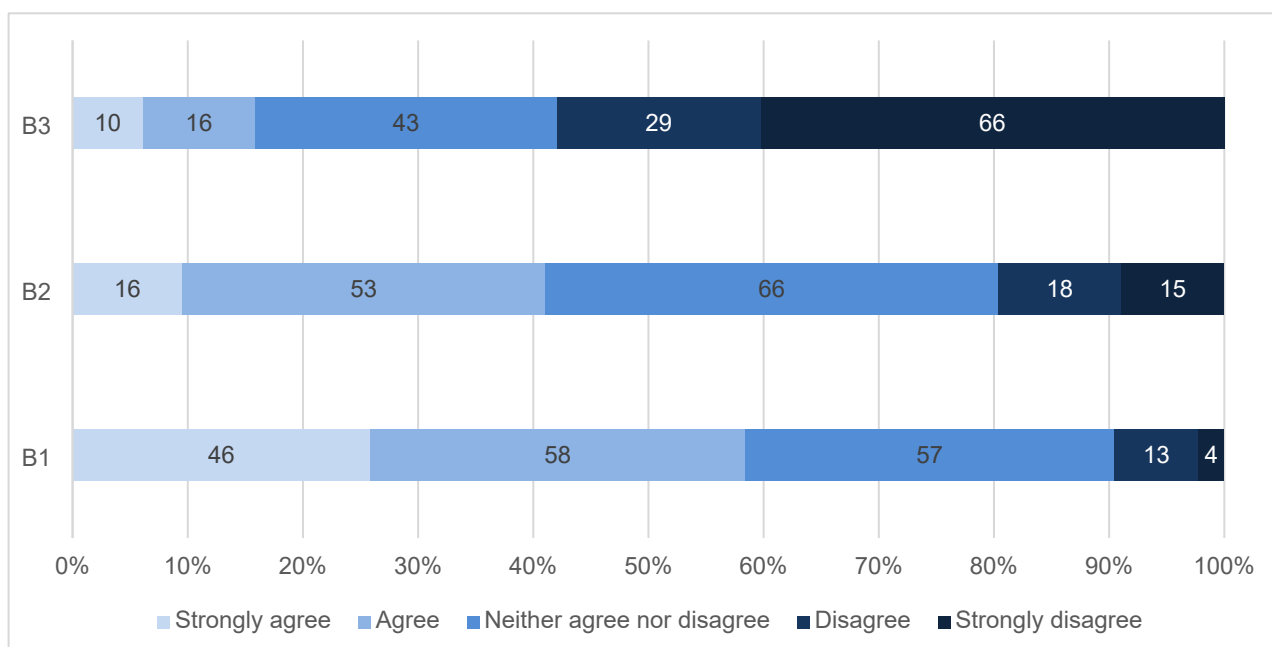


Figure 36: ‘Do you agree or disagree with this change?’ for options B1, B2 and B3

This is broadly reflected across the different stakeholder groups – these details are broken down in the closed question summaries for each option. In addition to those who responded, ‘neither agree nor disagree’, 16.5 per cent of teachers who responded to the survey chose not to answer this question.

When asked about the impact of the various proposals on staff capacity, there is again a high level of ‘neutral’ responses. B1 is the most likely to be viewed positively, whilst more than 25 per cent respondents say B3 would have a ‘very negative’ effect.

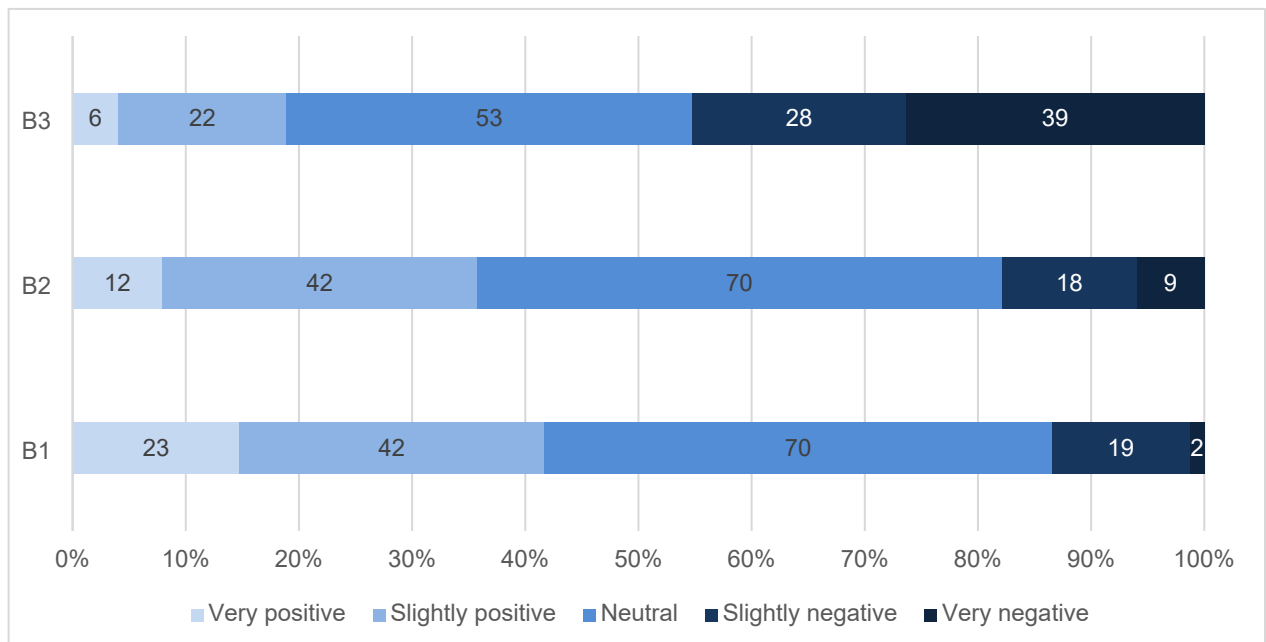


Figure 37: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for options B1, B2 and B3

In terms of the possible impact on council finances, B3 is viewed the most positively, but also the most negatively. There is once again a high level of ‘neutral’ responses, though these are slightly lower for B3 than for B1 or B2.

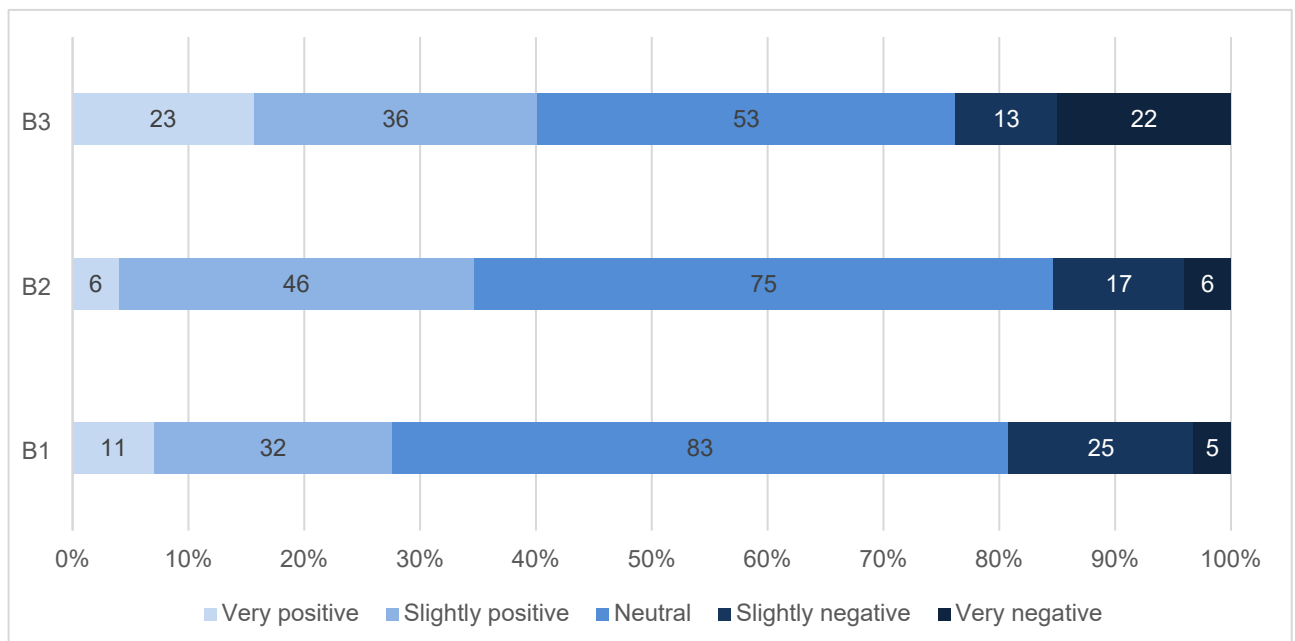


Figure 38: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for options B1, B2 and B3

However, most respondents feel that B3 will have a negative impact on inclusion, with almost half saying that they think it would have a ‘very negative’ effect and less than 10 per cent suggesting it would have a positive effect. Meanwhile, more than half of respondents say that B1 would have a positive impact.

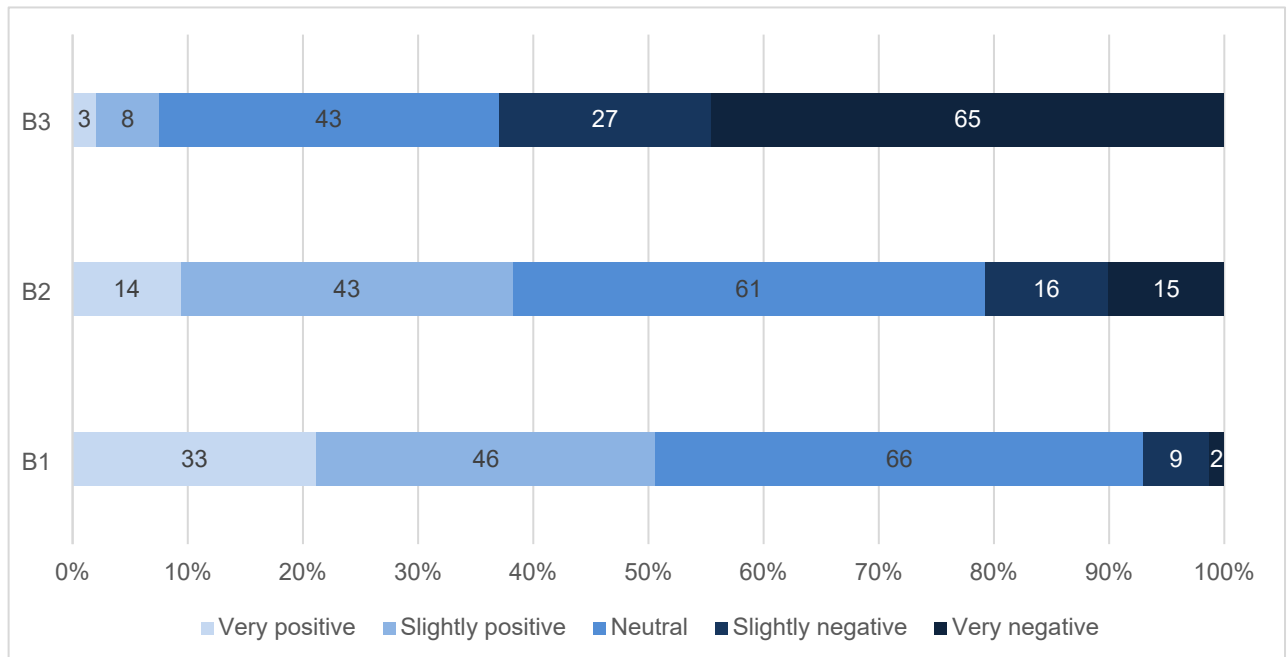


Figure 39: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for options A1, A2 and A3

Finally, responses in relation to the potential impact of the various options on quality and value for money broadly reflect those for inclusion, with a strongly negative response to B3 and a majority positive response to B1.

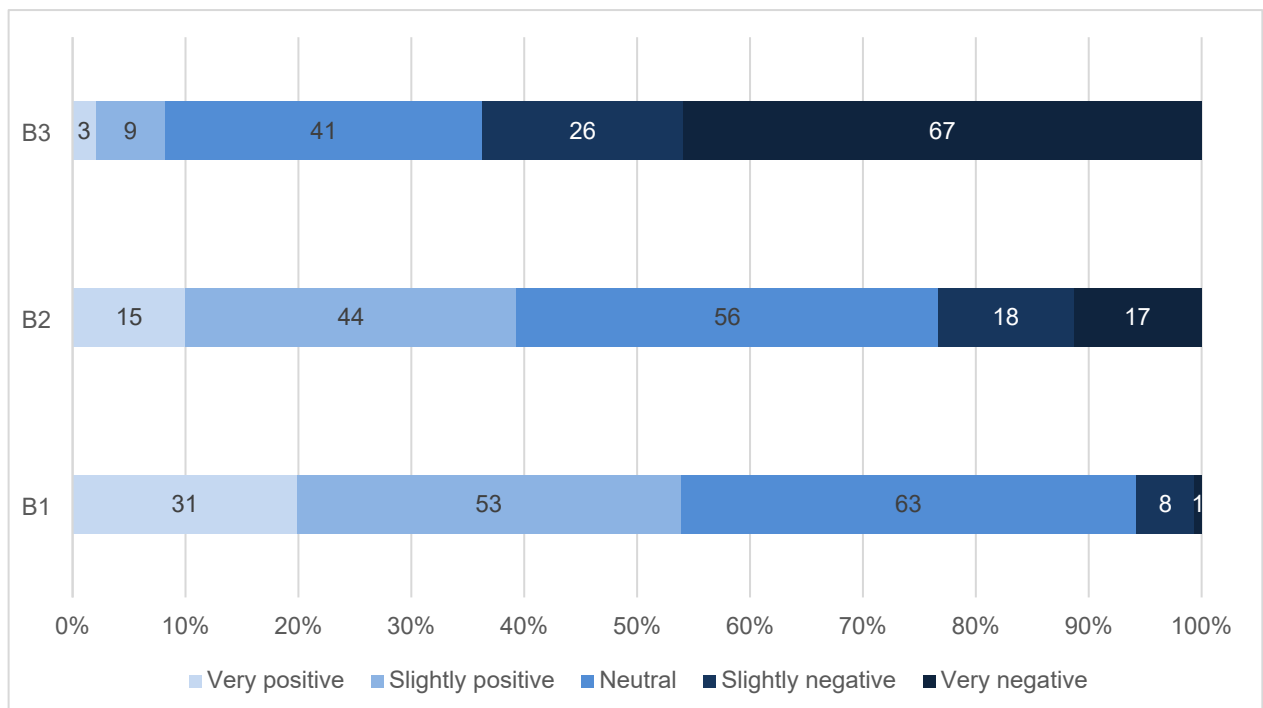


Figure 40: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for options B1, B2 and B3

Far fewer survey respondents provide qualitative feedback for the post-16 options compared to the school age options, but the sentiments they express are broadly similar. B1 is viewed largely positively, with respondents stressing the need to support post-16 learners, whilst views on B2 are mixed, with respondents saying this could be an inclusive option which helps address the needs of post-16 learners, but also expressing concerns about those who require individual support. B3 receives a strongly negative response, with respondents expressing concern that some post-16 learners may not receive sufficient support or arguing that EHCP applications would increase. Information and Engagement

session participants broadly reflected the sentiments of survey respondents, but provided some specific suggestions around implementation.

6.2 Option B1

6.2.1 Closed questions

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

Almost a third of respondents who have answered this question neither agree nor disagree with option B1. Nonetheless, more than six times more people agree with this option than disagree with it.

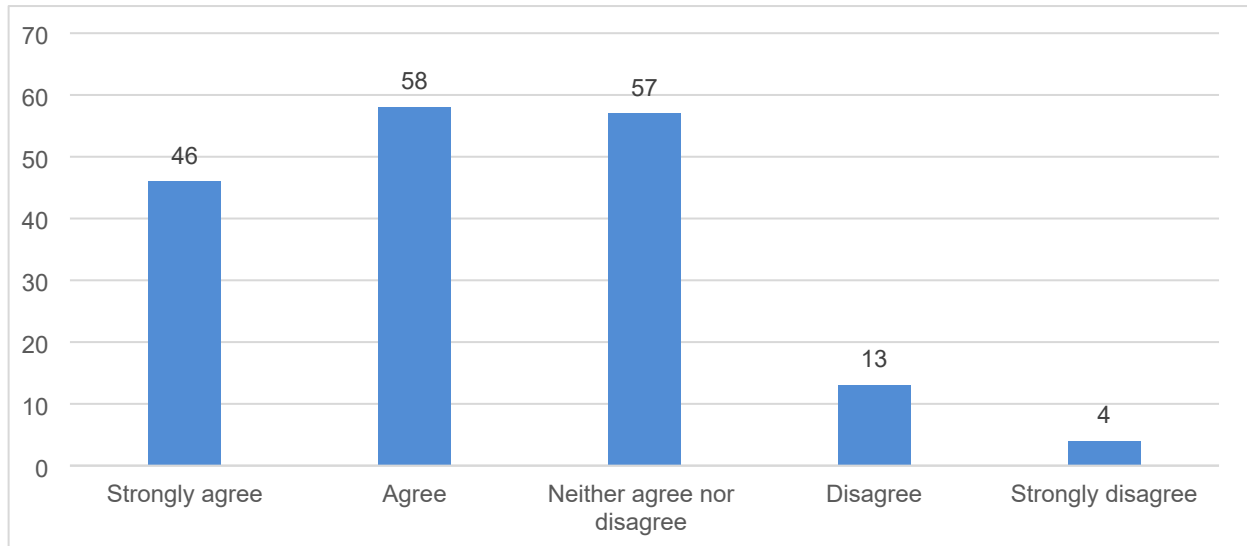


Figure 41: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option B1

Local authority staff are less likely to select 'neither agree nor disagree' and more likely to agree with option B1.

16.5 per cent of school staff and 3 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

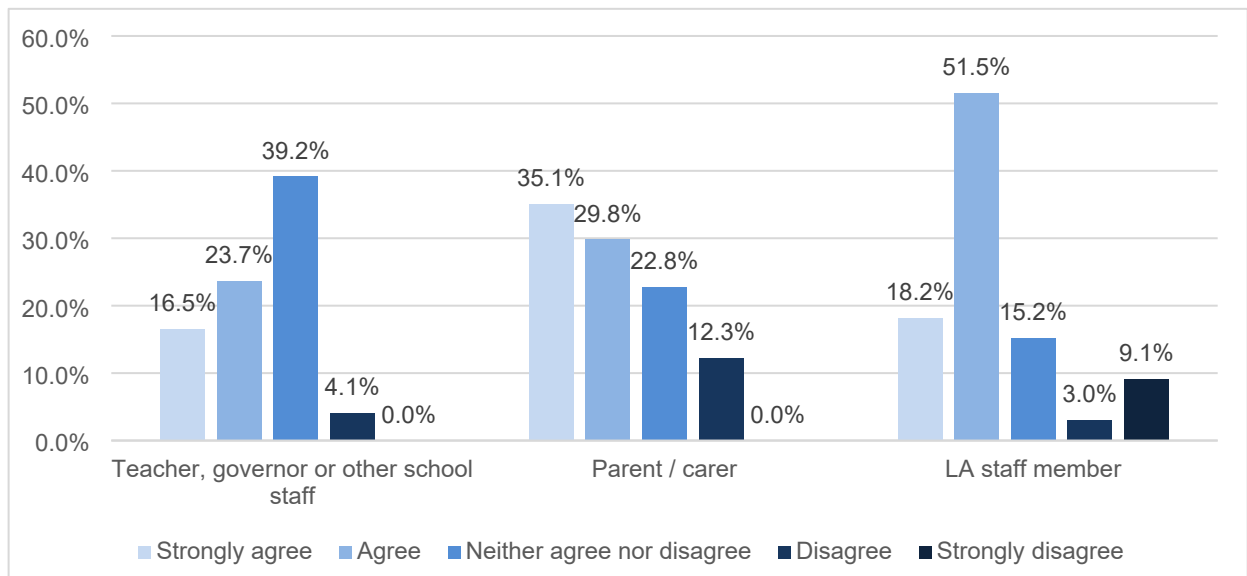


Figure 42: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option B1 by stakeholder type

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?

Almost half of respondents who have answered the question suggest B1 would have a neutral effect on staff capacity. Three times more respondents say the impact would be positive than negative.

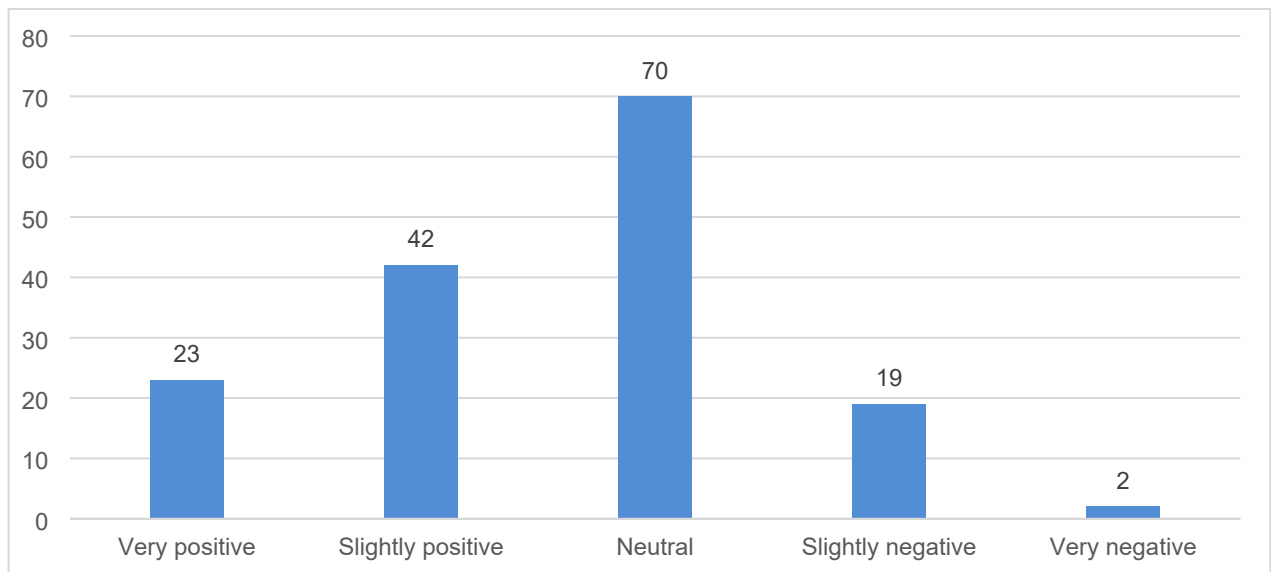


Figure 43: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option B1

Local authority staff members were most likely to feel that B1 would negatively affect staff capacity.

28.9 per cent of school staff, 5.3 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

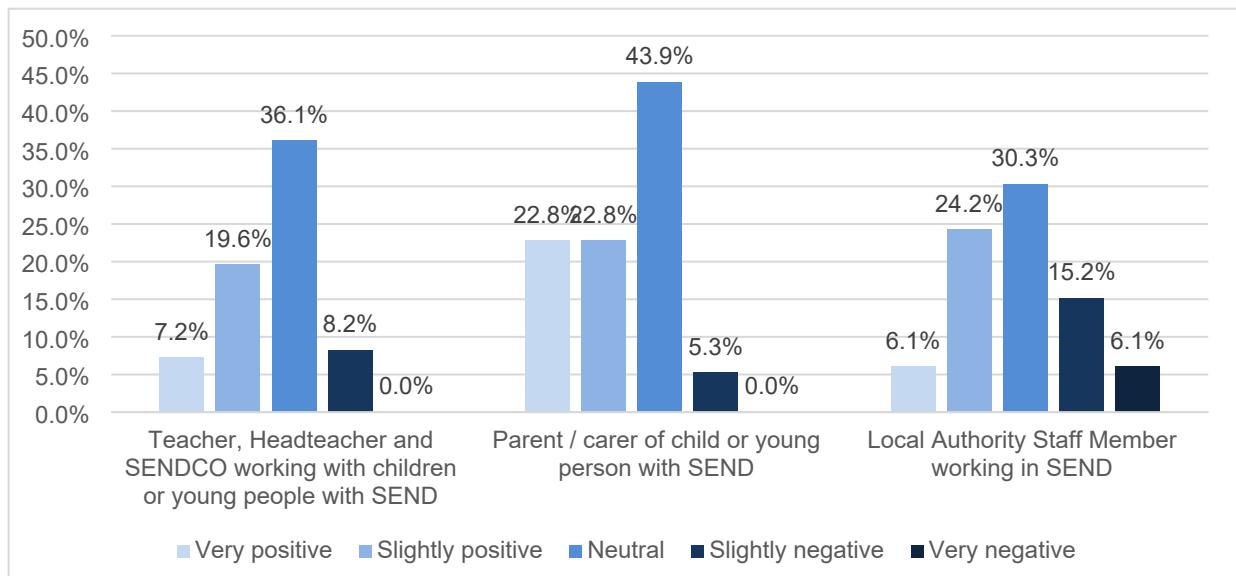


Figure 44: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option B1

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?

Most respondents feel that B1 would have a neutral impact on council finances.

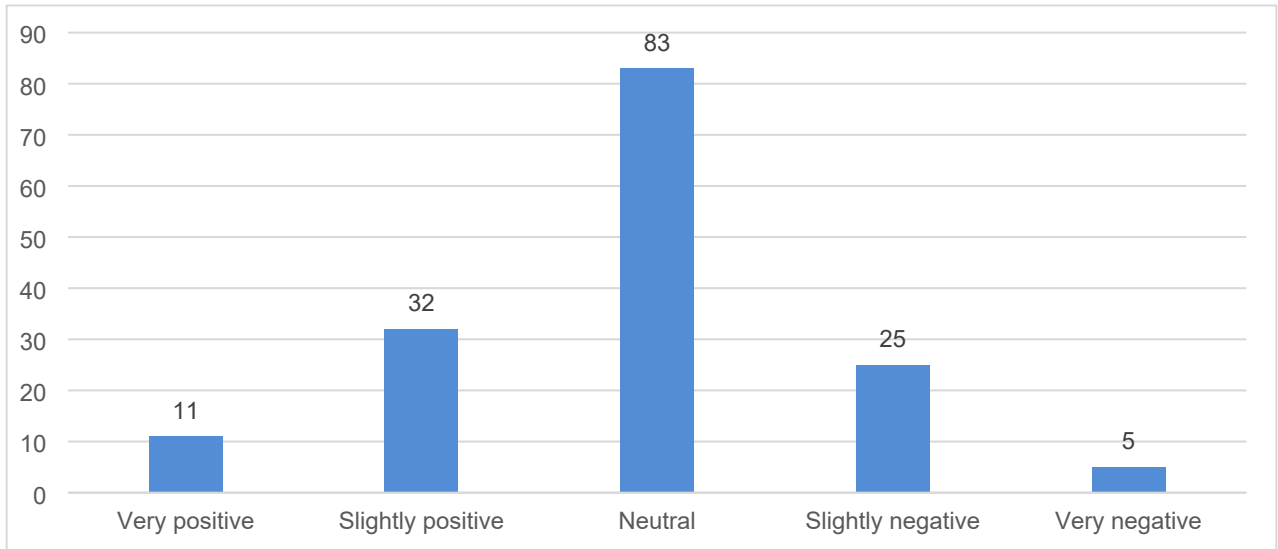


Figure 45: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option B1

School staff were least likely to feel that B1 would positively impact the council's finances.

29.9 per cent of school staff, 5.3 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

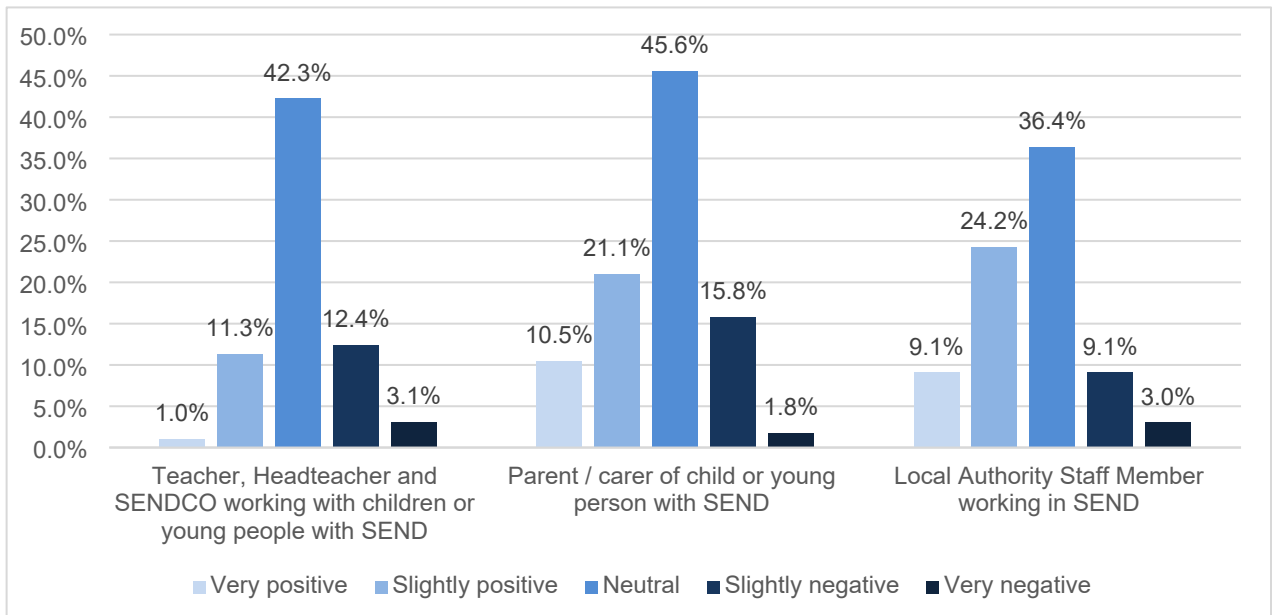


Figure 46: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option B1 by stakeholder type

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?

Though 'neutral' remains the most popular option, more than seven times more respondents believe it would have a positive impact than negative.

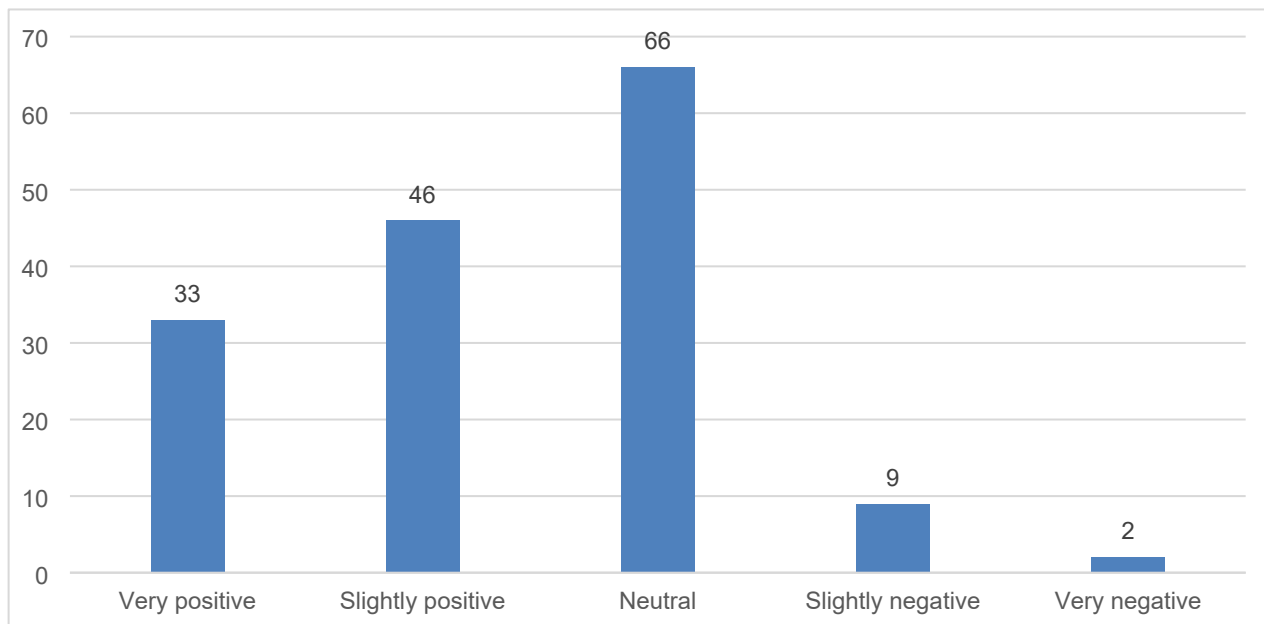


Figure 47: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option B1

Parents and carers were most likely to believe B1 would have a 'very positive' impact on inclusion.

29.9 per cent of school staff, 5.3 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

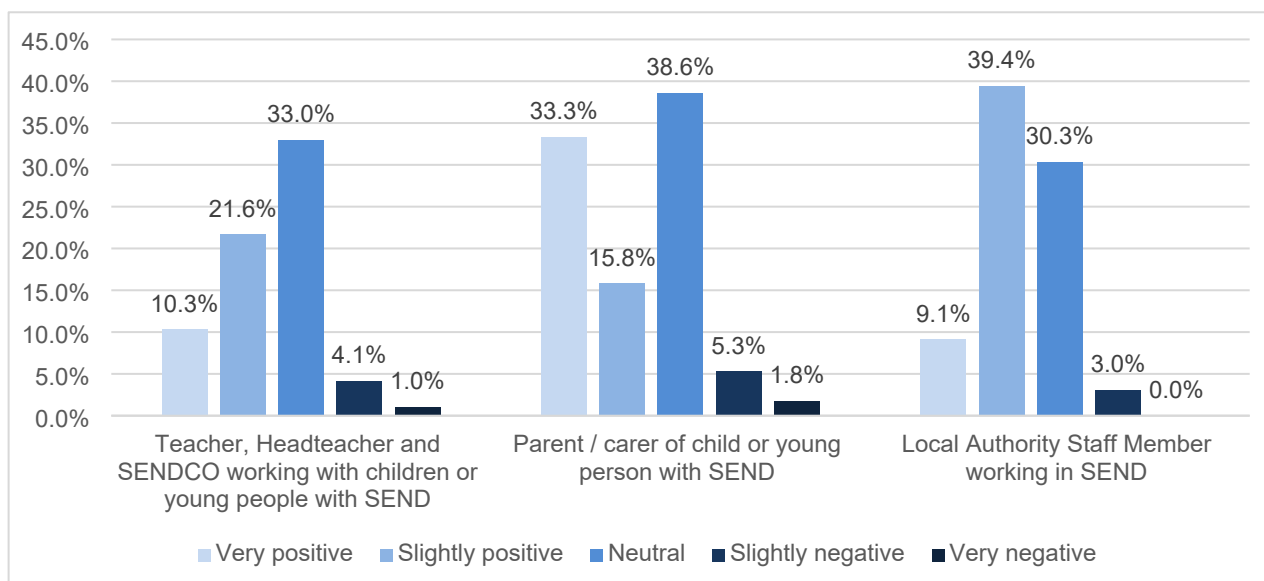


Figure 48: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option B1 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?

Similarly to responses for inclusion, 'neutral' remains the most popular option, but more than nine times more respondents believe it would have a positive impact than negative.

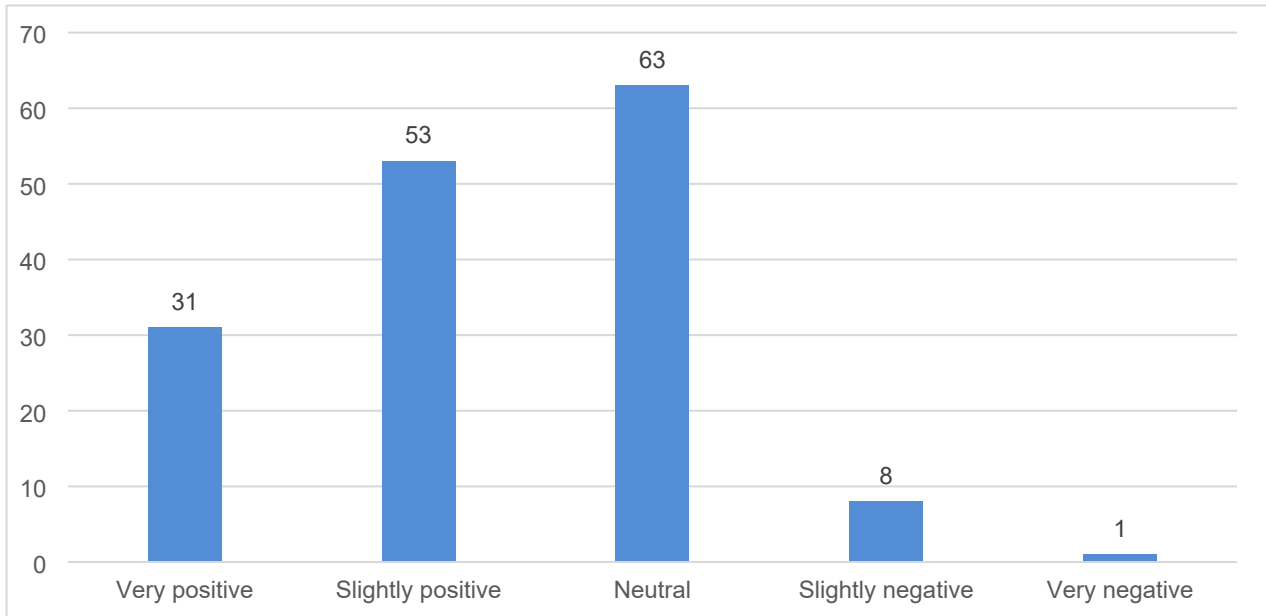


Figure 49: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option B1 by stakeholder type

Parents and carers were most likely to feel there would be a 'very positive' impact on quality and value for money.

29.9 per cent of school staff, 5.3 per cent of parents / carers and 15.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

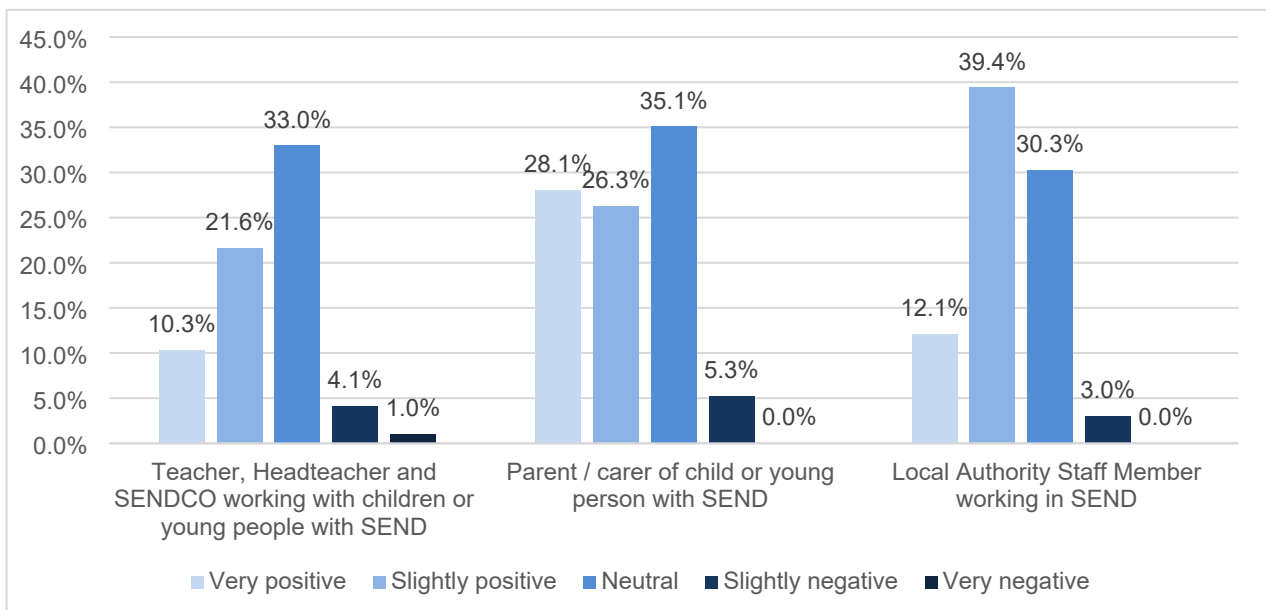


Figure 50: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option B1 by stakeholder type

6.2.2 Open questions

This section of the survey received a much smaller response than the equivalent section for school age children. Less than a quarter of respondents to the survey provided a response to the open text question. Of those who did, around a third, most of whom are teachers or other school staff, say that they do not work in post-16 education or do not feel they know enough about it to comment.

Of the remainder, the majority express positive views. Some do so in general terms, suggesting that it is important that provision is made and that post-16 learners are supported so that there is less risk of them being not in education, employment or training

(NEET), particularly children in care. A few respondents say that for some children their needs do not develop until later so funding would be important for ensuring inclusion of these individuals.

A few respondents say they would welcome a streamlined application process.

However, a few respondents raise concerns about whether the available funding would be sufficient or say that the proposal could leave some post-16 learners with insufficient support. A small number believe B1 could negatively impact school staff or would not be financially beneficial.

Suggestions include:

- checks and scrutiny to ensure funding is used effectively and appropriately
- supporting post-16 learners to complete education and gain qualifications which could help with employment
- an incremental approach to improvement based on existing strengths

6.2.3 Information and Engagement sessions

Most of the comments on option B1 come from the Information and Engagement sessions for local authority staff.

One participant says that colleges need solutions which align with what they are already doing, including digital solutions which align with their existing systems. Another says that colleges are well placed to provide specialist support, but some post-16 learners will need additional support as well. Finally, one participant says B1 gives the best continuity.

6.3 Option B2

6.3.1 Closed questions

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

‘Neither agree or disagree’ is the most popular response, but more than twice as many people agree than disagree.

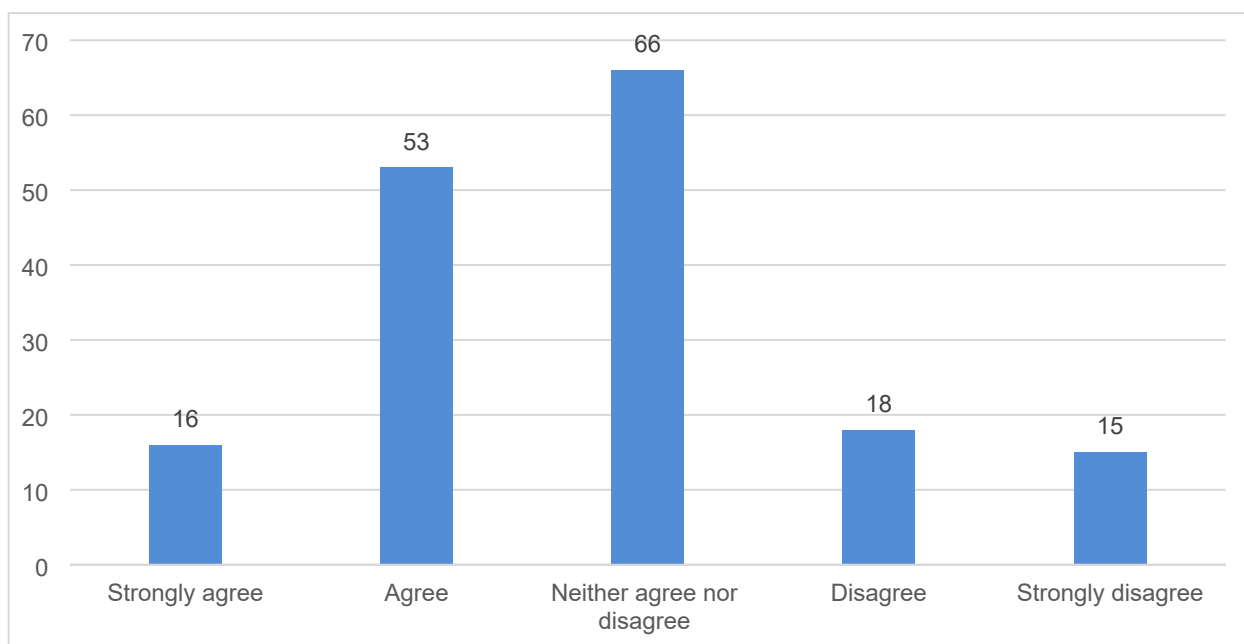


Figure 51: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option B2

Teachers and school staff are less likely to disagree with this option and more likely to select 'neither agree nor disagree'.

21.6 per cent of school staff, 3.5 per cent of parents / carers and 9.1 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

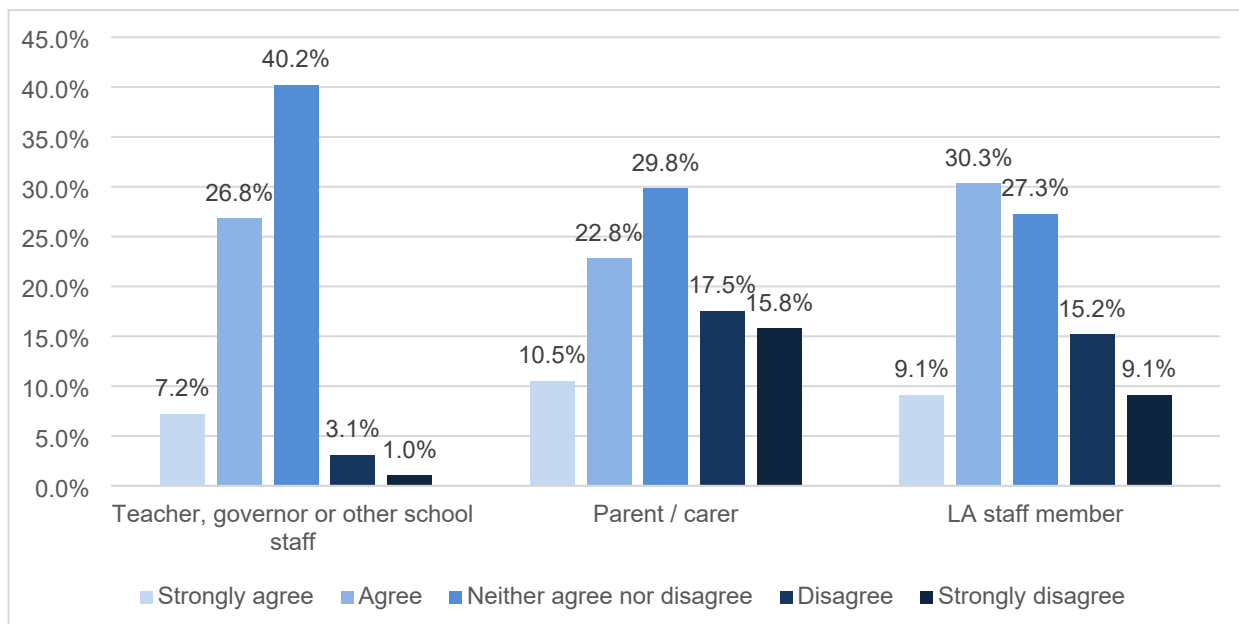


Figure 52: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option B2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?

'Neutral' is the most popular response, but twice as many respondents feel B2 would have a positive impact on staff capacity as feel it would be negative.

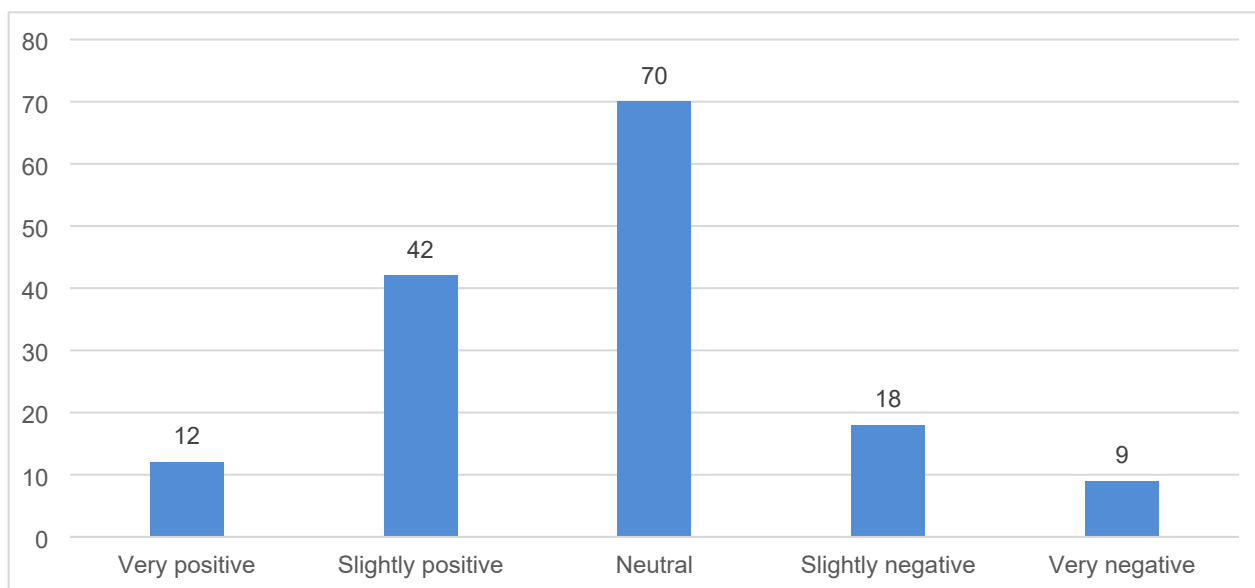


Figure 53: What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option B2

Almost half of all the parents and carers who responded to the survey, and more than half of those who answered this question, say that B2 would have a neutral effect on staff capacity. Local authority staff were less likely to feel it would have a neutral effect and more likely to believe it would have a negative one.

32.0 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

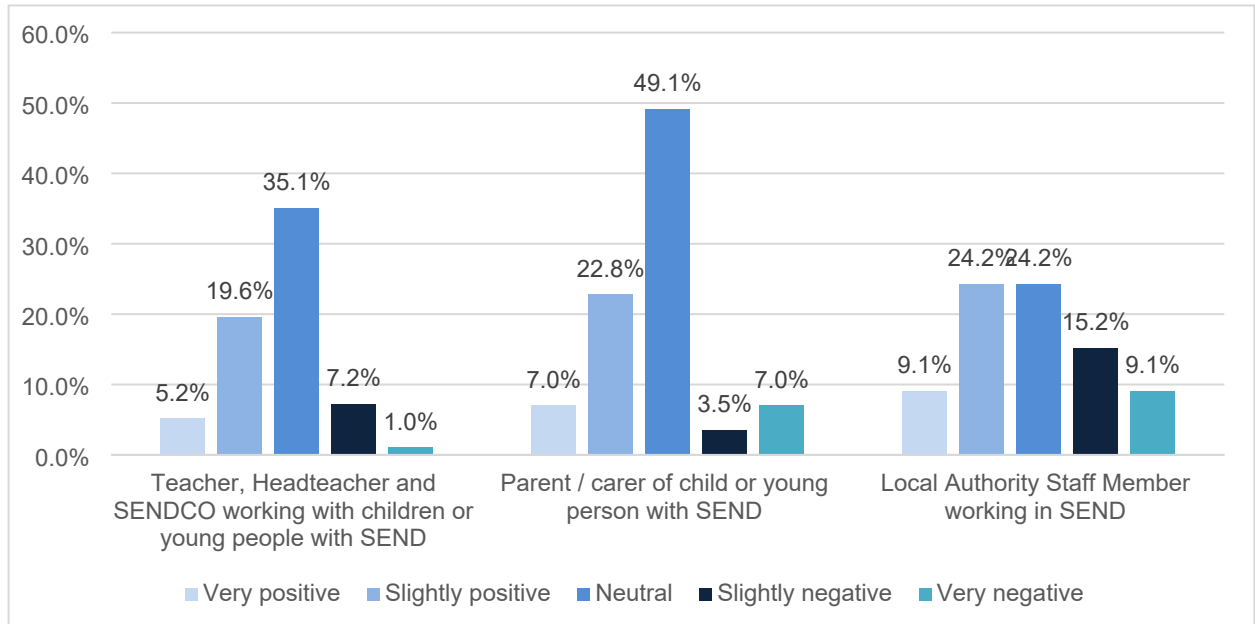


Figure 54: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option B2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council’s SEND finances?

Half of those who answered this question say that B2 would have a neutral impact on council finances, with more than twice as many respondents feeling it positive effect than a negative one.

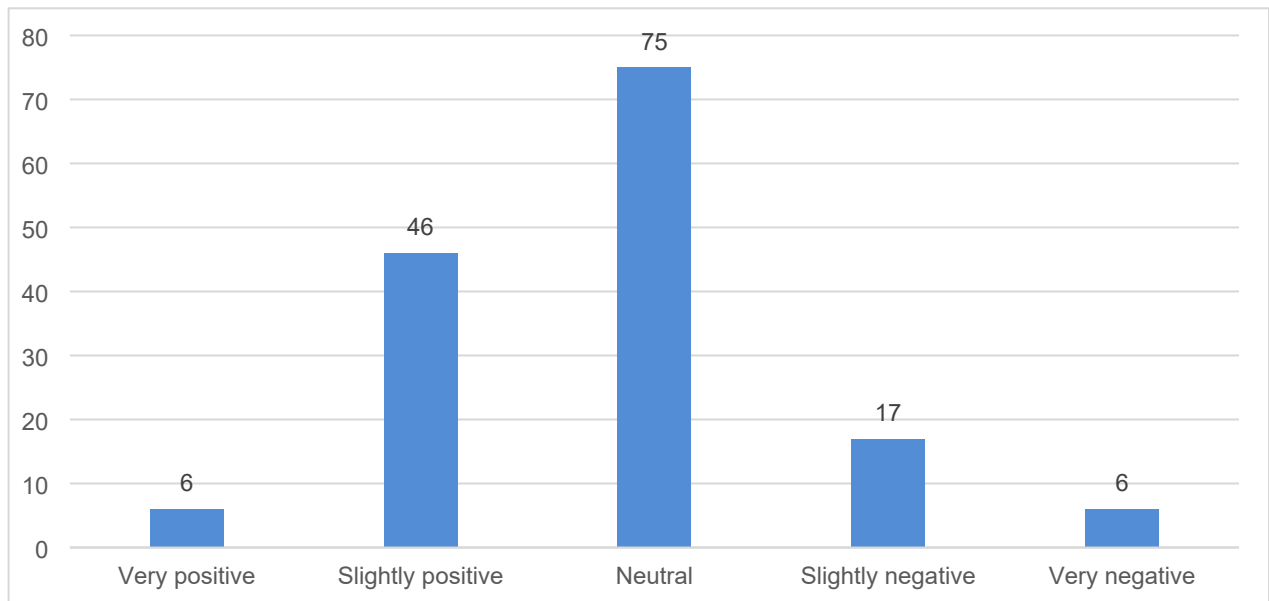


Figure 55: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option B2

Local authority staff are less likely to say the impact of B2 on the council’s finances would be neutral, and more likely to say it would be negative.

33.0 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

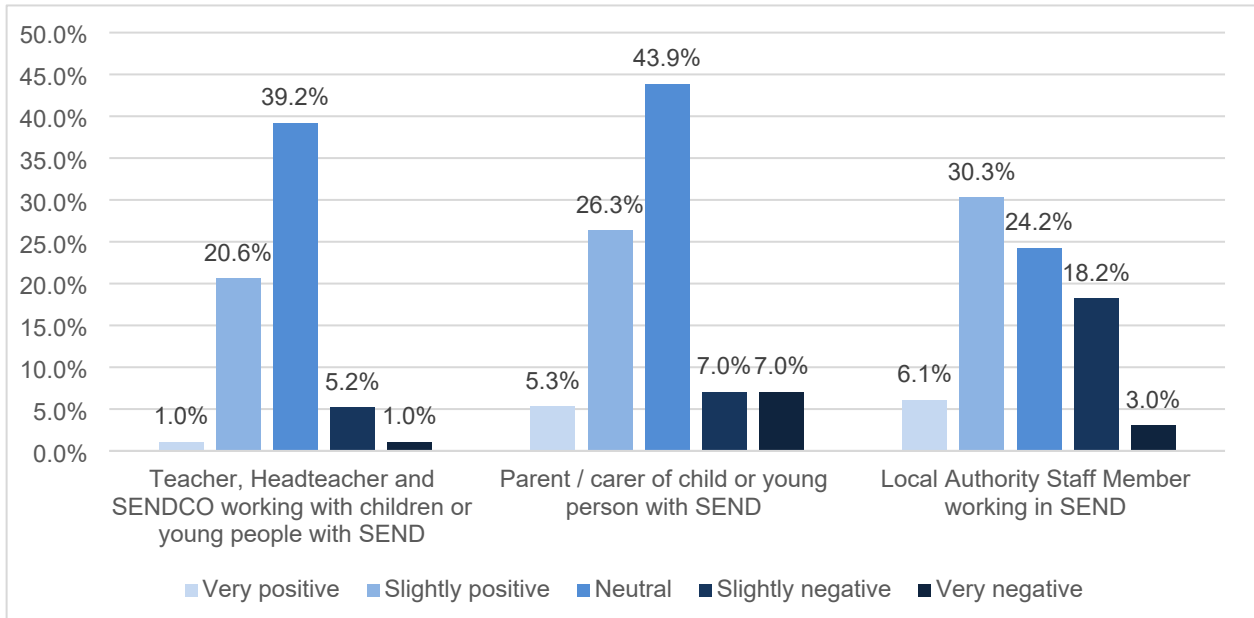


Figure 56: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option B2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?

In terms of the impact of B2 on inclusion, 'Neutral' is the most popular response but almost twice as many respondents say it would have a positive impact than a negative one.

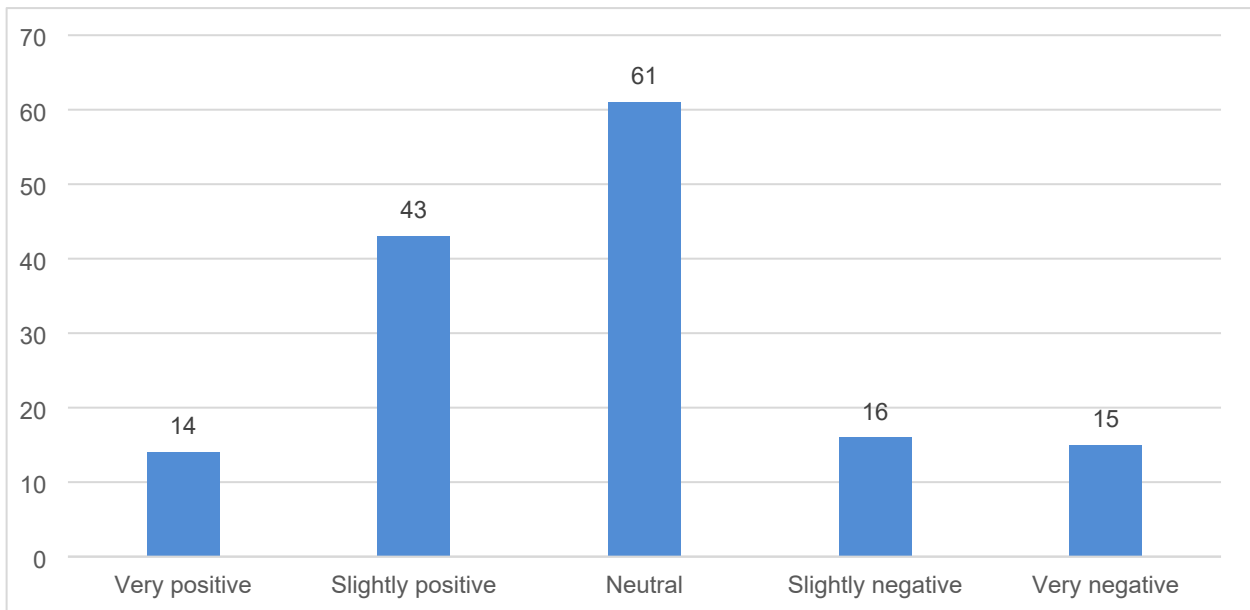


Figure 57: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option B2

Local authority staff were more likely to feel that this proposal would have a negative impact on inclusion.

34.0 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

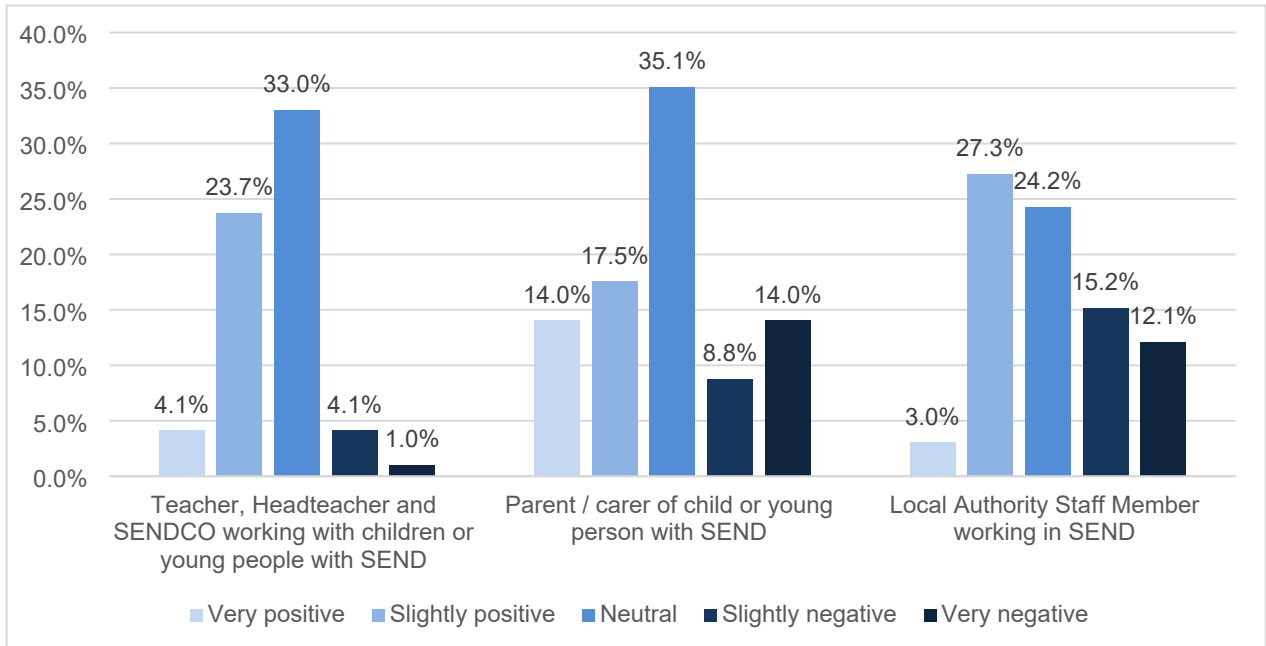


Figure 58: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option B2 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?

'Neutral' is once again the most popular response when it comes to the potential impact of B2 on quality and value for money, and almost twice as many respondents say it would have a positive impact than a negative one.

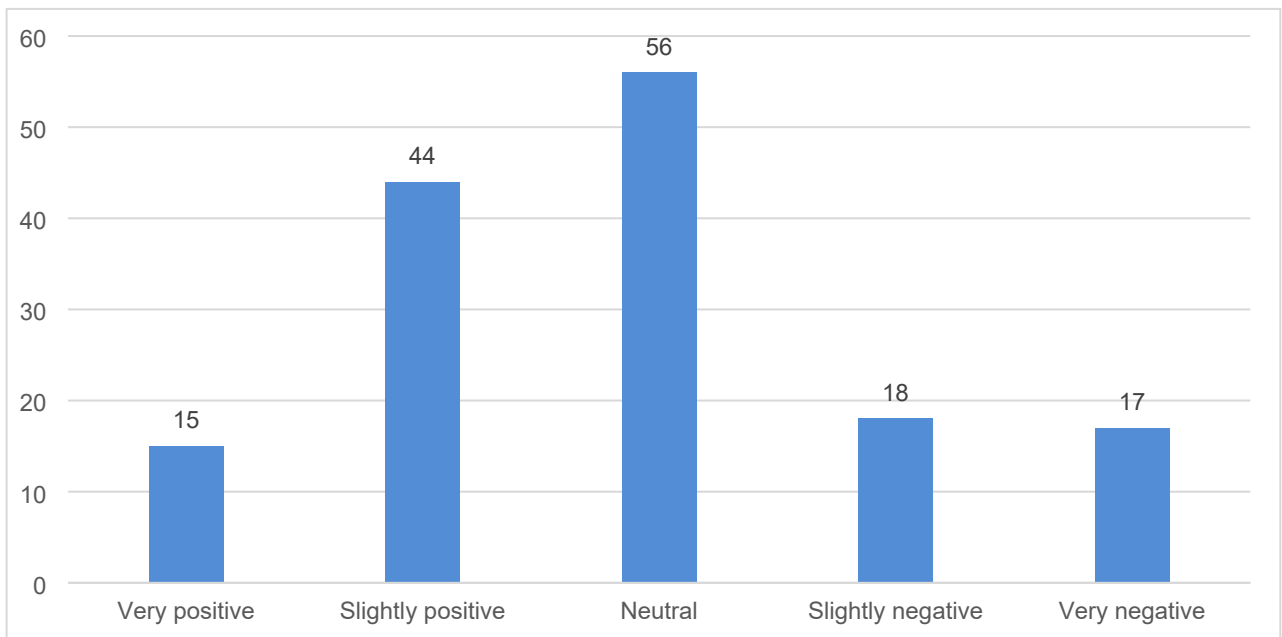


Figure 59: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option B2 by stakeholder group

Local authority staff are the least likely to suggest that B2 would have a neutral impact on quality and value for money.

33.0 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

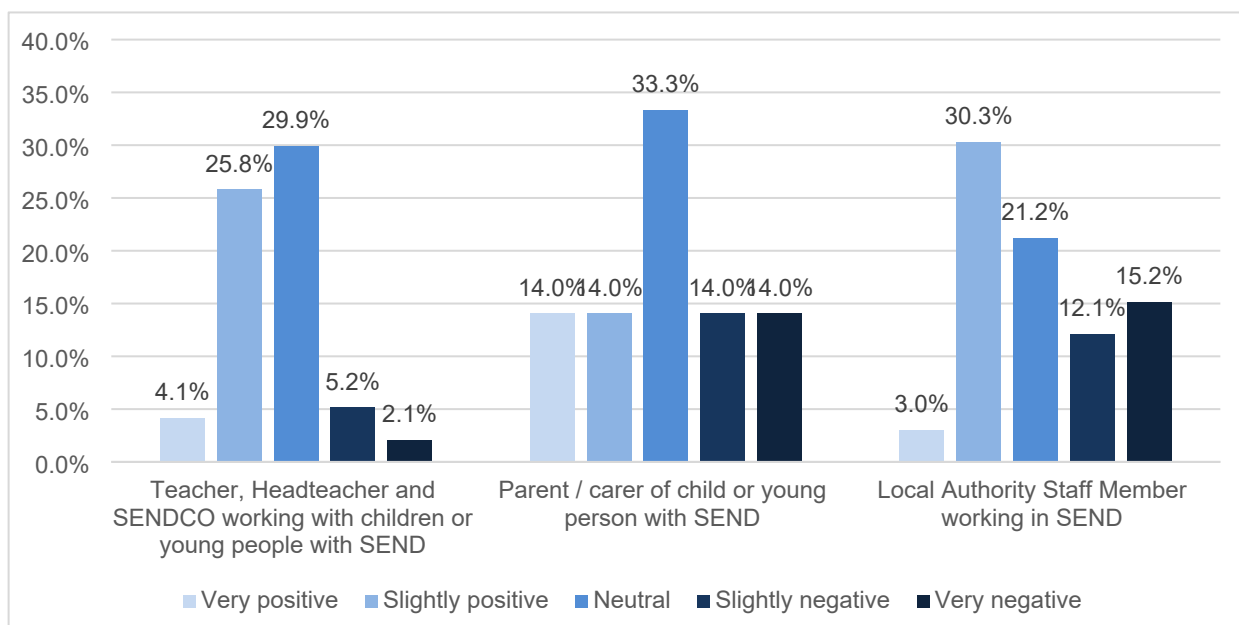


Figure 60: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option B2 by stakeholder group?

6.3.2 Open questions

This section of the survey received a much smaller response than the equivalent section for school age children. Less than a quarter of respondents to the survey provided a response to the open text question. Of those who did, a third, most of whom are teachers or other school staff, say that they do not work in post-16 education or do not feel they know enough about it to comment.

Views amongst the remaining respondents are mixed.

A few respondents raise concerns about the potential impact of the proposals on post-16 learners, suggesting that they may need individual support to ensure their needs are met. A few say they believe the funds may be reappropriated by schools for other purposes and that a significant level of monitoring would be needed.

However, a few respondents feel that this proposal could benefit post-16 learners and ensure their needs are met in a more timely and effective manner. One respondent suggests it could make colleges more inclusive as they will have more autonomy and will have to plan to support whole groups.

Suggestions include assessing expected outcomes for young people so that any investment can be evaluated or developing other means of ensuring accountability.

6.3.3 Information and Engagement sessions

Some participants from the sessions for parents and carers and council staff express concerns about any shift away from individual support. One describes a need to avoid 'broad brush solutions'.

School staff suggest that needs should largely have been identified prior to reaching post-16 education but that funding could help with transitions.

6.4 Option B3

6.4.1 Closed questions

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

The majority of those who responded to this question say that they disagree with option B3.

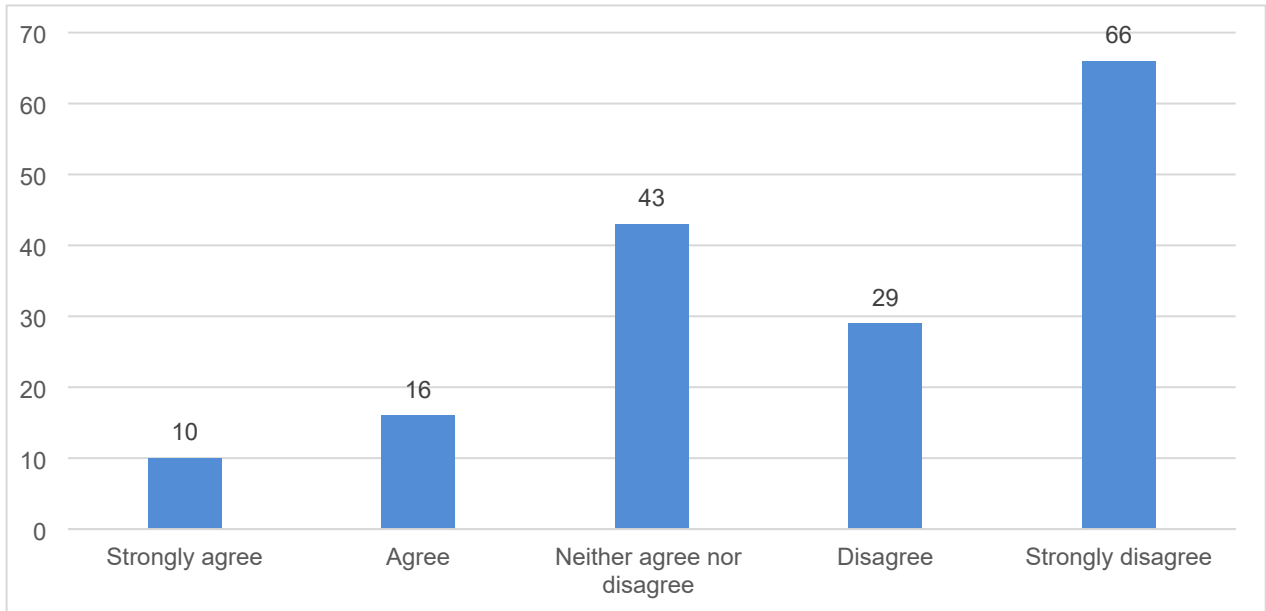


Figure 61: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option B3

Almost half of all parents or carers who responded to the survey, and the majority of those who answered this question, say that they strongly disagree with option B3.

22.7 per cent of school staff, 7.0 per cent of parents / carers and 12.1 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

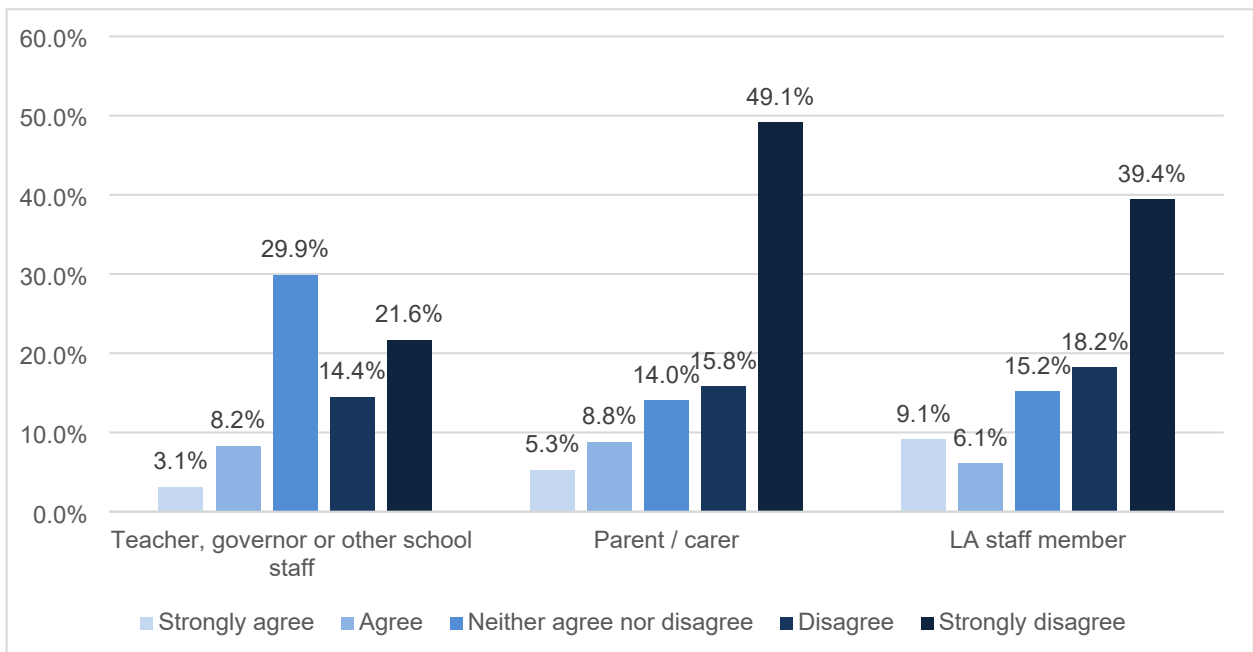


Figure 62: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?' for option B3 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?

In terms of the potential impact of B3 on staff capacity, 'Neutral' is the most popular response, with more than twice as many respondents say it would have a negative impact than a positive one.

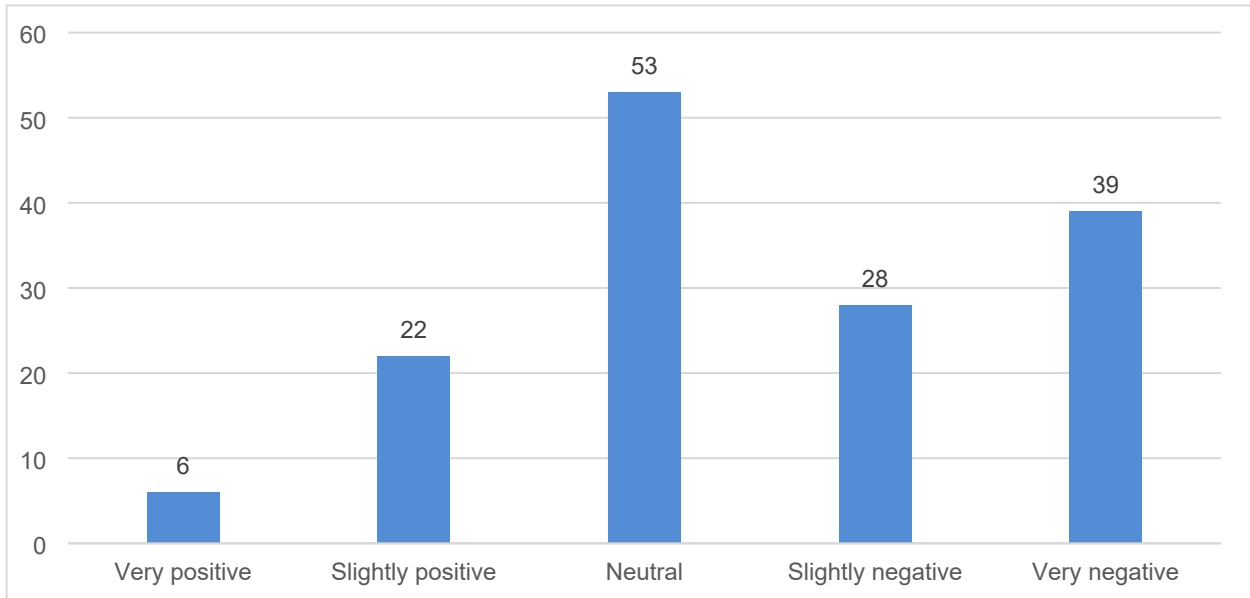


Figure 63: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option B3

Local authority staff are more likely to feel that B3 would have a negative impact on staff capacity and less likely to feel it would be neutral.

35.1 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

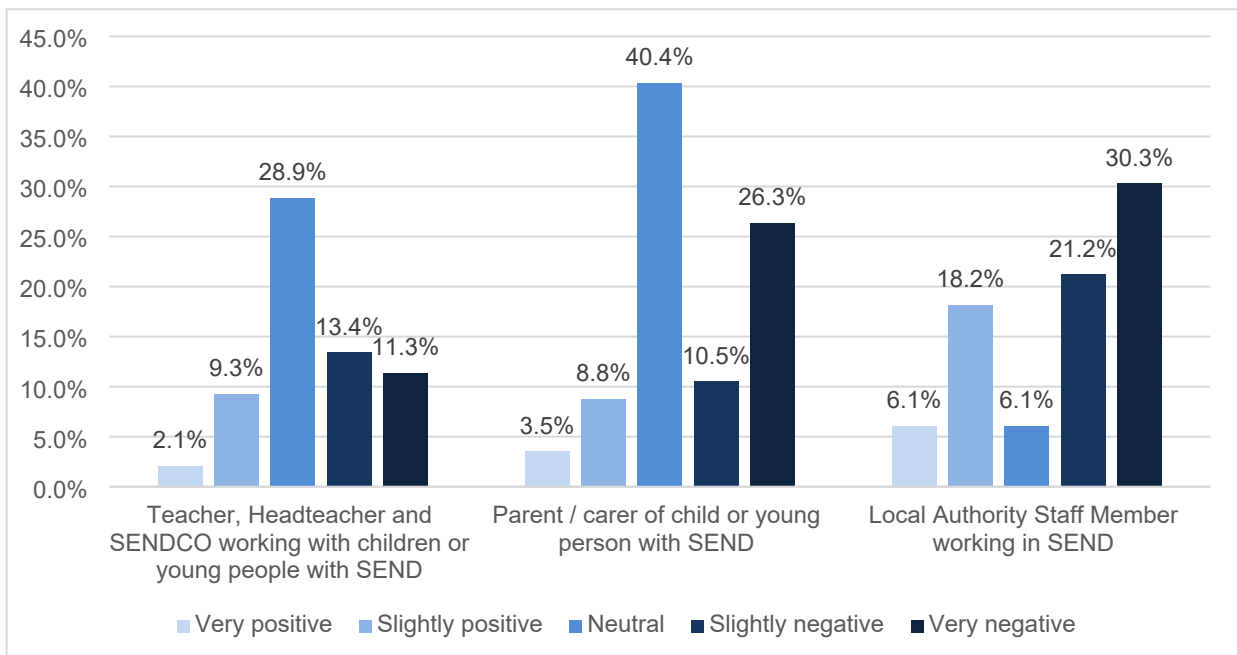


Figure 64: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?' for option B3 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?

In relation to finances, more than twice as many people see B3 as a positive option rather than a negative one. This is in contrast to overall views on B3.

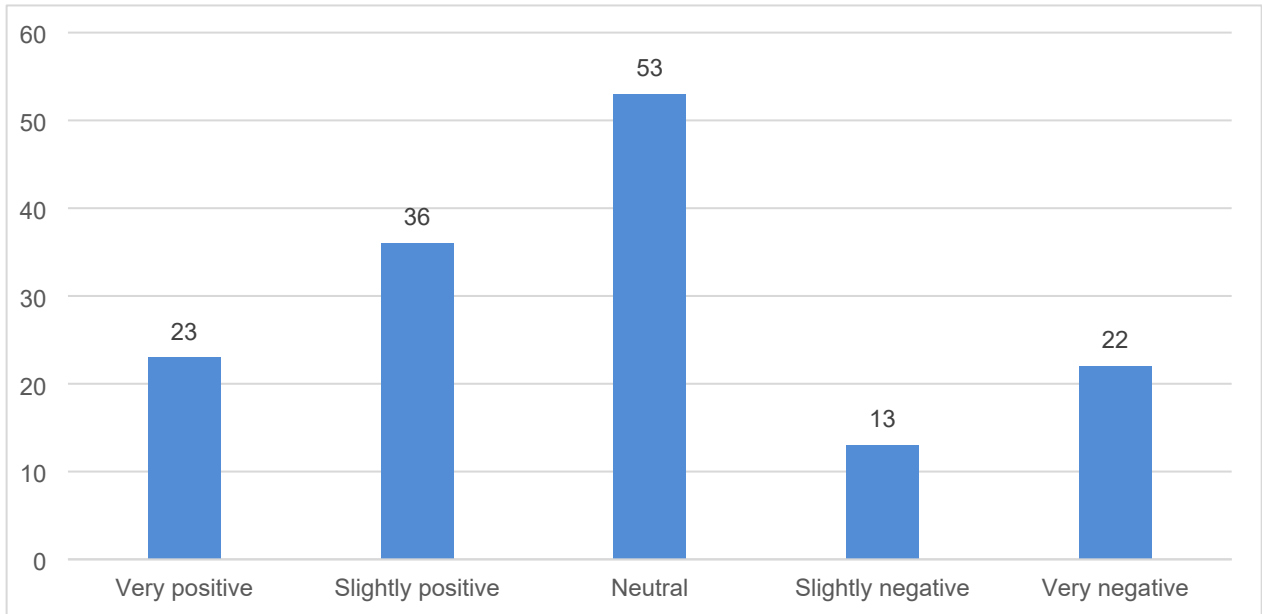


Figure 65: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option B3

Local authority staff are more likely to feel that the impact of B3 on council finances would be negative, and less likely to suggest it would be neutral.

36.1 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

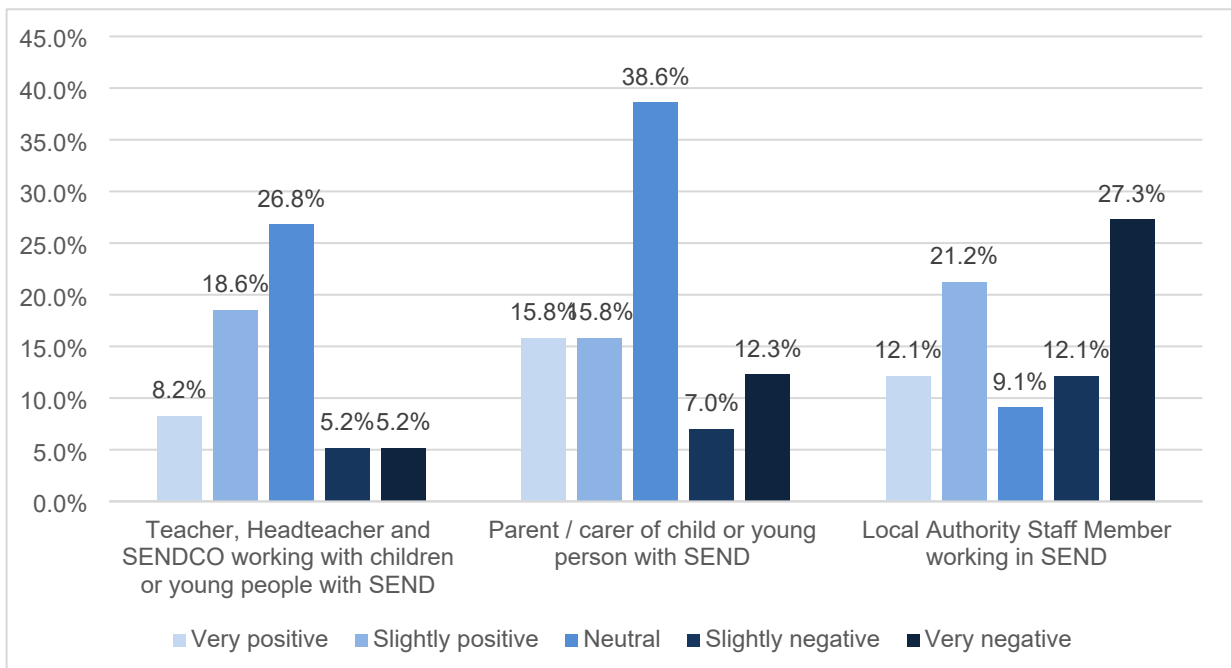


Figure 66: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?' for option B3 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?

Most respondents who answered this question say that they believe B3 would have a negative effect on inclusion.

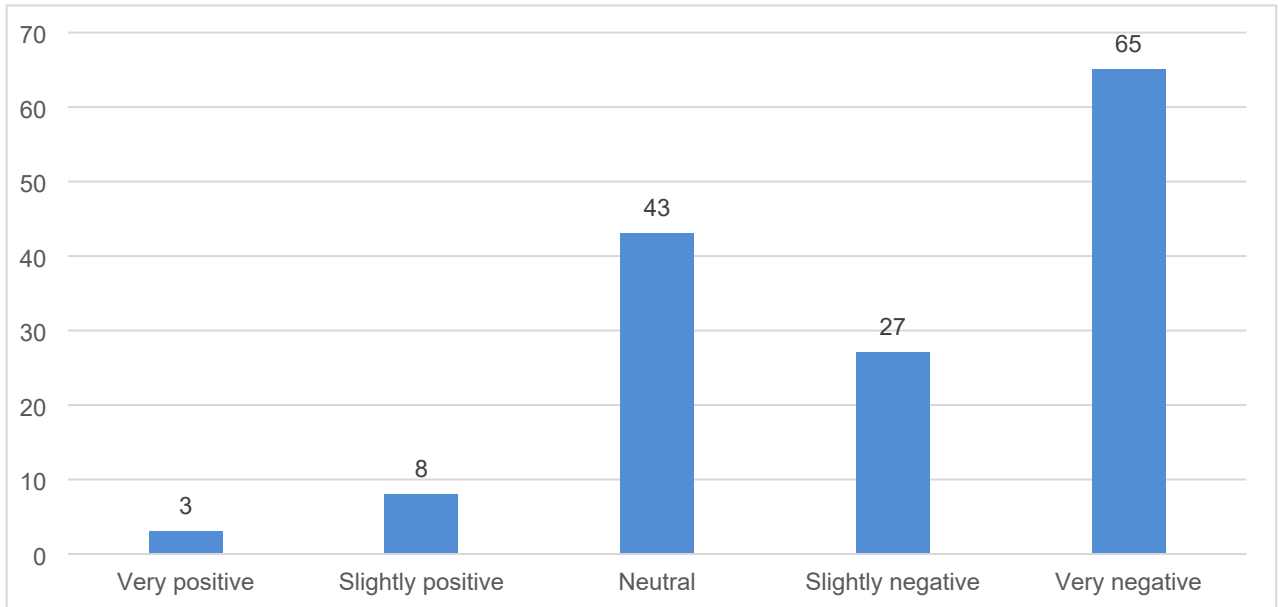


Figure 67: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option B3

Almost half of parents or carers, and the majority of those who answered this question, feel that B3 would have a very negative impact on inclusion.

36.1 per cent of school staff, 10.5 per cent of parents / carers and 21.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

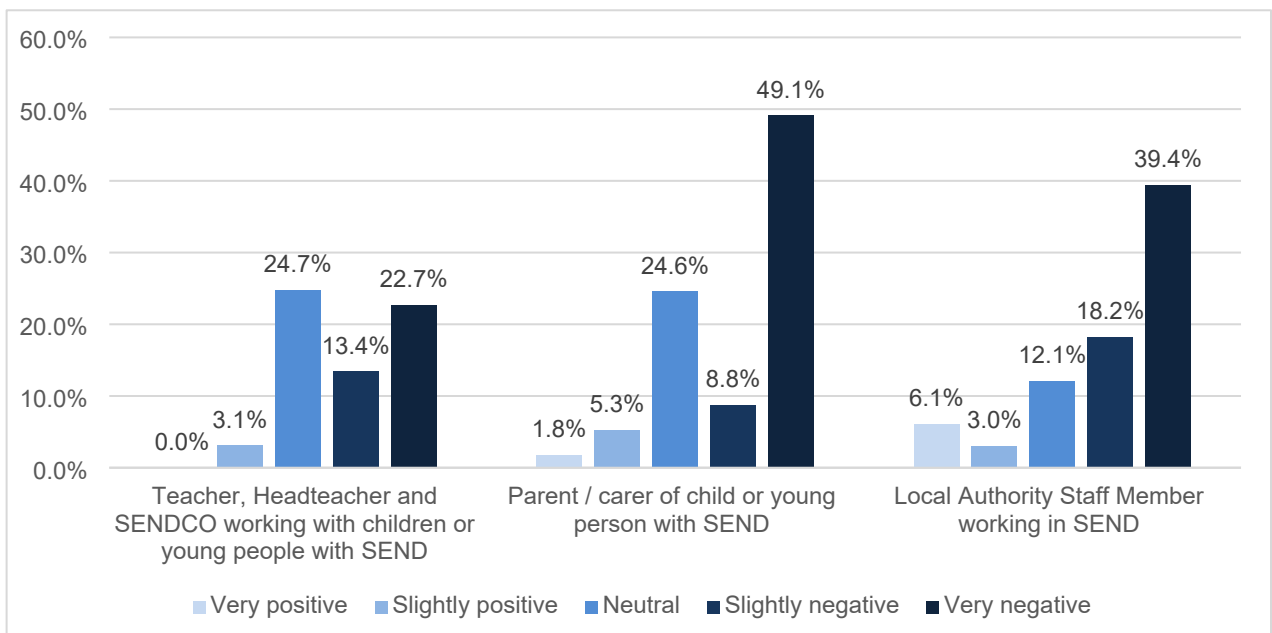


Figure 68: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?' for option B3 by stakeholder group

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?

As with responses for inclusion, most respondents say that A3 would have a 'very negative' effect on quality and value for money.

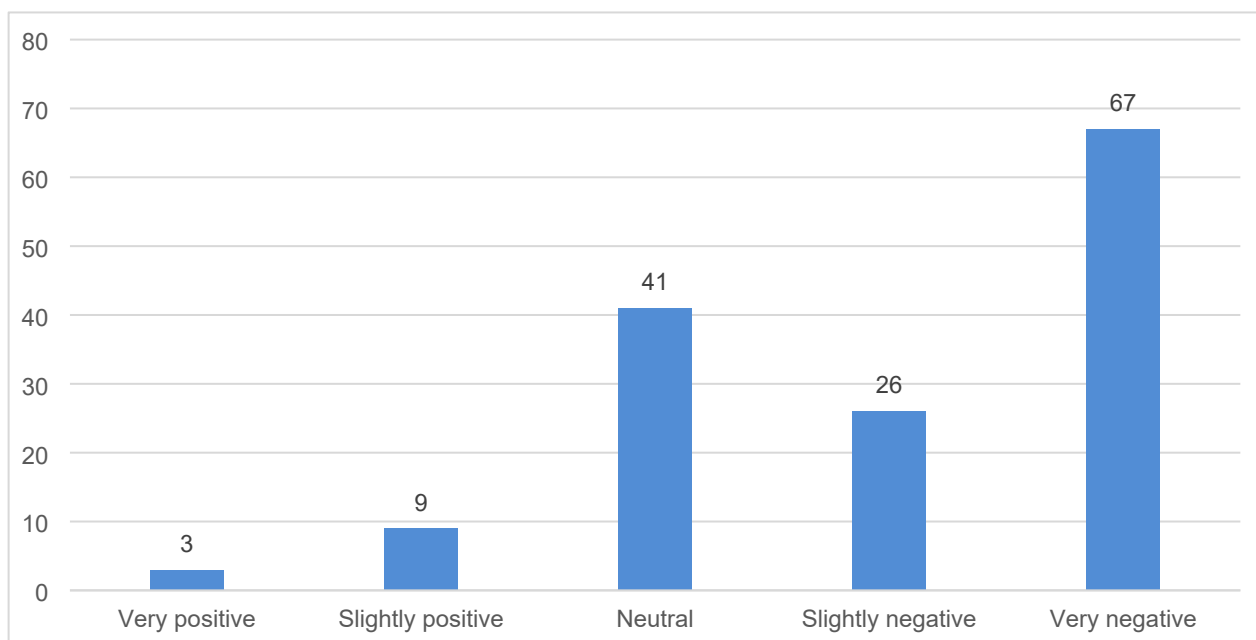


Figure 69: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option B3

The majority of parents or carers and council staff who responded to this question say that B3 would have a very negative effect on quality and value for money.

36.1 per cent of school staff, 12.3 per cent of parents / carers and 18.2 per cent of local authority staff who responded to the survey opted not to answer this question.

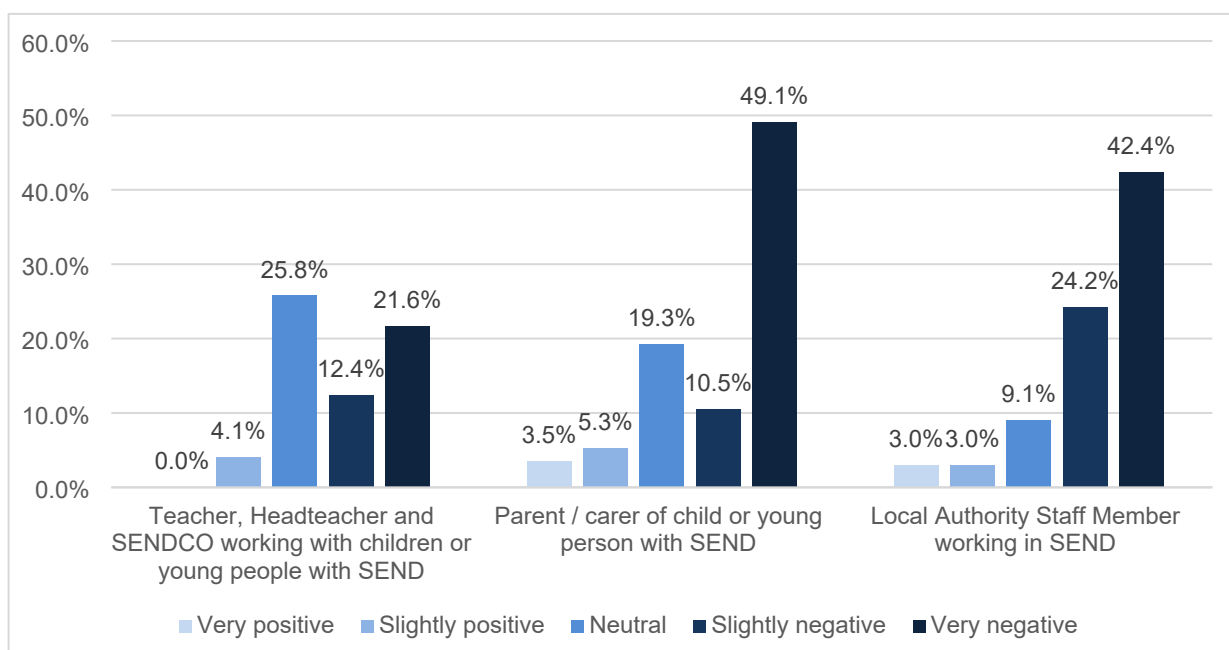


Figure 70: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?' for option B3 by stakeholder group

6.4.2 Open questions

This section of the survey received a much smaller response than the equivalent section for school age children. Fewer than a quarter of respondents to the survey provided a response to the open text question. Of those who did, a quarter, most of whom are teachers or other school staff, say that they do not work in post-16 education or do not feel they know enough about it to comment.

Views amongst the remaining respondents are largely negative.

Some express concern that there will be post-16 learners who may not have received support in the past or who have received support funded through other learners' EHCPs who would need some form of support in a post-16 setting. A small number suggest that students with additional needs, children in care, black and minority ethnic learners, or those with later presenting needs (e.g. girls with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)) may be disadvantaged. A few also argue that this option could lead to an increase in learners who are NEET who to a greater number of children with SEND needs being excluded from further education.

Some respondents suggest that B3 could lead to an increase in ECH needs assessments, which could place additional pressure on school staff. A small number argue that there could be increased waiting times, impacting negatively on applicants whilst they wait for their application to be assessed.

Only a small number of respondents comment positively on option B3, saying that there could be financial benefits, or that it could be consistent with the approach in other local authority areas.

Suggestions include a separate intervention or registration process for post-16 learners, a simplified and streamlined application process, assessments to verify when support is needed or not needed, or any approach which leverages the maximum possible level of funding from central government.

6.4.3 Information and Engagement sessions

The response to option B3 from Information and Engagement session participants is strongly negative.

They argue that there would be a significant increase in EHCP applications and plans in place, which could overwhelm the local authority and slow down the process. One participant suggests this could lead to a raising of the threshold of need for an EHCP to be granted. Others say that it would leave learners unsupported and would not be inclusive, particularly for learners from communities which may associate stigma with diagnosed SEND children.

7 Survey results: BUDs

7.1 Overview

Figure 71 below shows respondents' level of agreement with various statements related to BUDs.

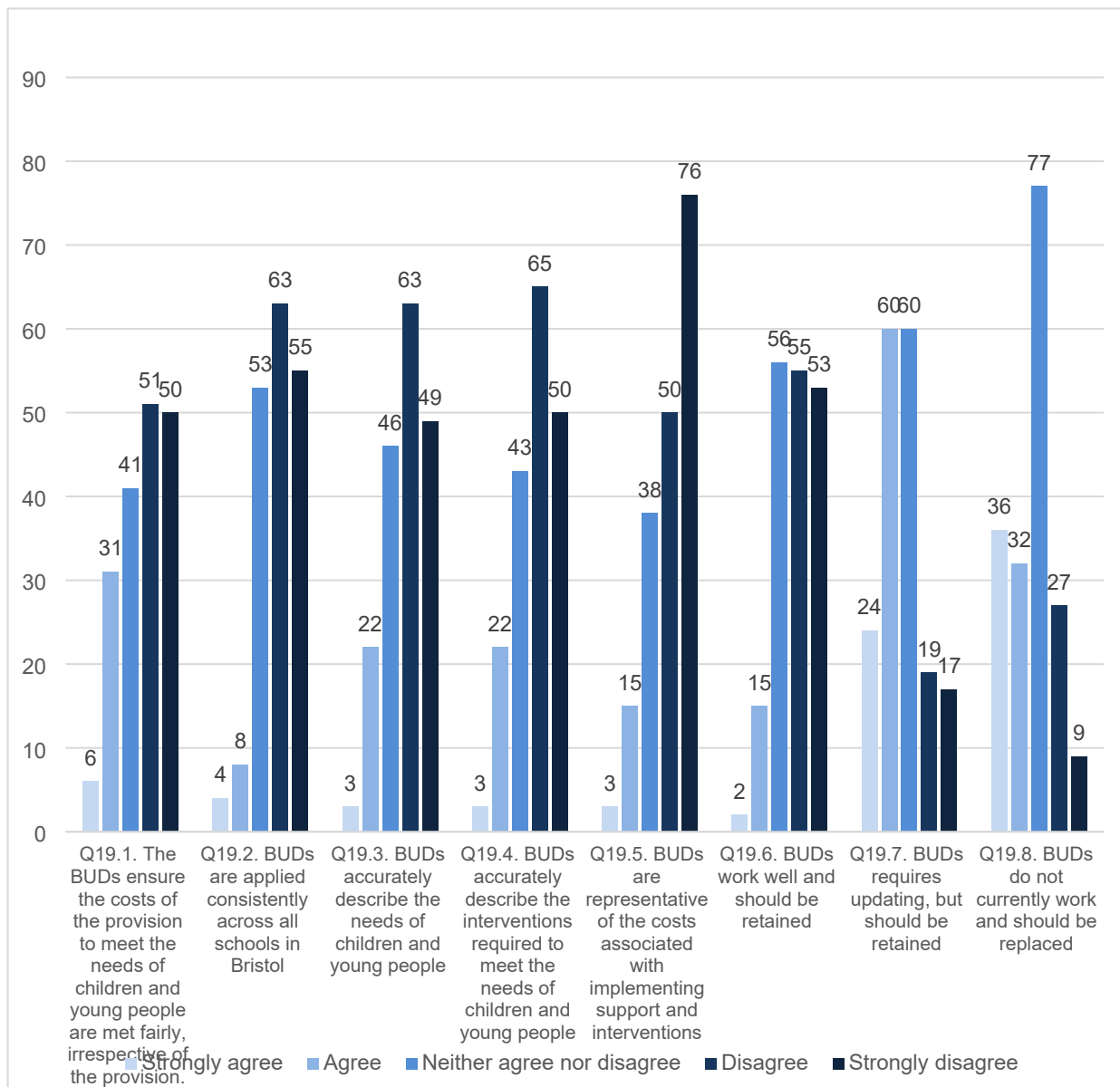


Figure 71: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?'

The highest level of agreement ('agree' or 'strongly agree') is with the statement 'BUDs require updating but should be retained' and the lowest level of agreement is with the statement 'BUDs are applied consistently across all schools in Bristol'.

The highest level of disagreement ('disagree' or 'strongly disagree') is with the statement 'BUDs are representative of the costs associated with implementing support and interventions' whilst the lowest level of disagreement is with the statements 'BUDs require updating but should be retained' and 'BUDs do not currently work and should be replaced' equally (although more people strongly disagree with the former).

This reflects qualitative feedback which suggests that the statements are outdated, applied inconsistently, and lead to children and young people being 'pigeonholed'.

7.1.1 Closed question responses

‘The BUDs ensure the costs of the provision to meet the needs of children and young people are met fairly, irrespective of the provision’

School staff are most likely to disagree with this statement, whilst local authority staff are more likely to agree with it.

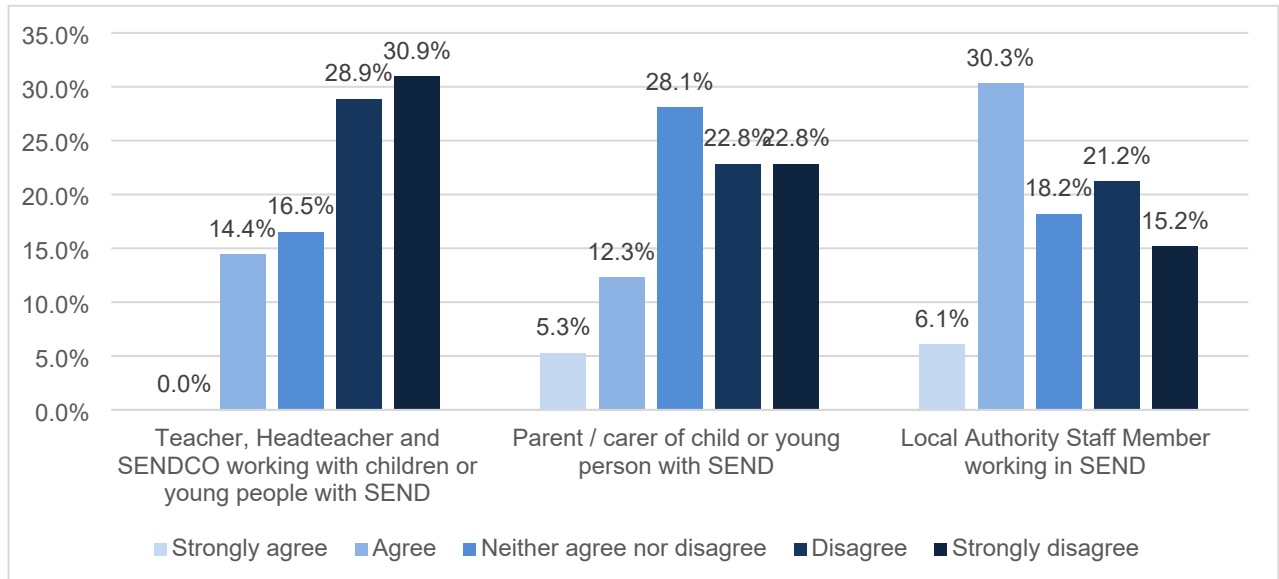


Figure 72: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The BUDs ensure the costs of the provision to meet the needs of children and young people are met fairly, irrespective of the provision' by stakeholder type

‘BUDs are applied consistently across all the schools in Bristol’

School staff are most likely to disagree with this statement, whilst parents and carers are most likely to neither agree nor disagree.

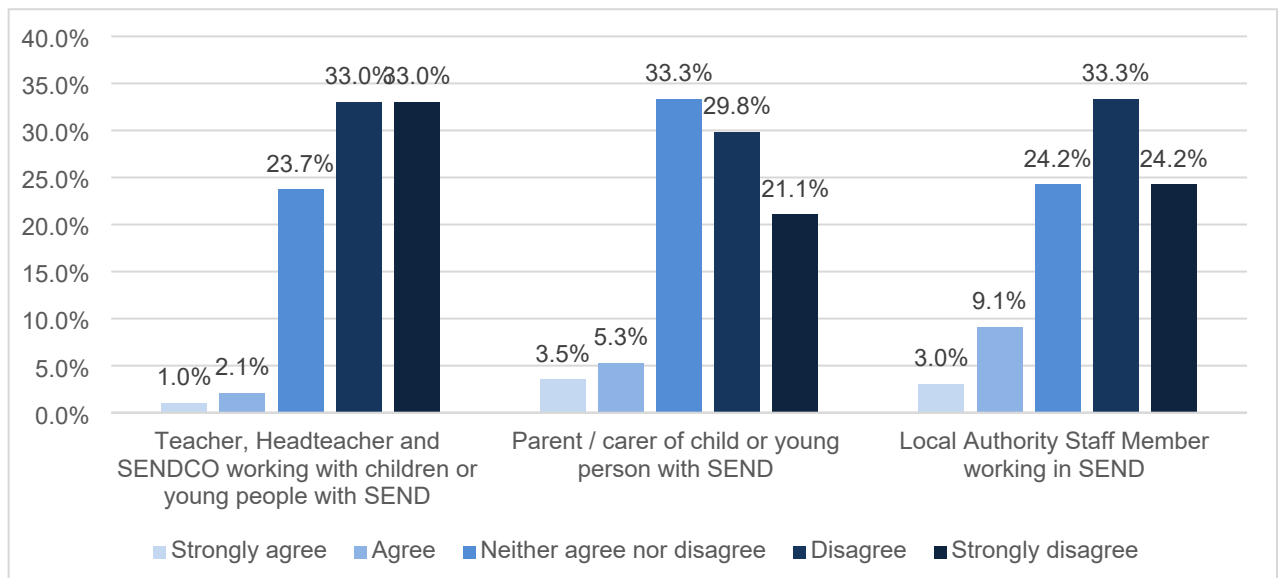


Figure 73: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs are applied consistently across all the schools in Bristol' by stakeholder type

‘BUDs accurately describe the needs of children and young people’

Local authority staff were most likely to neither agree nor disagree with the statement, and the least likely to disagree with it.

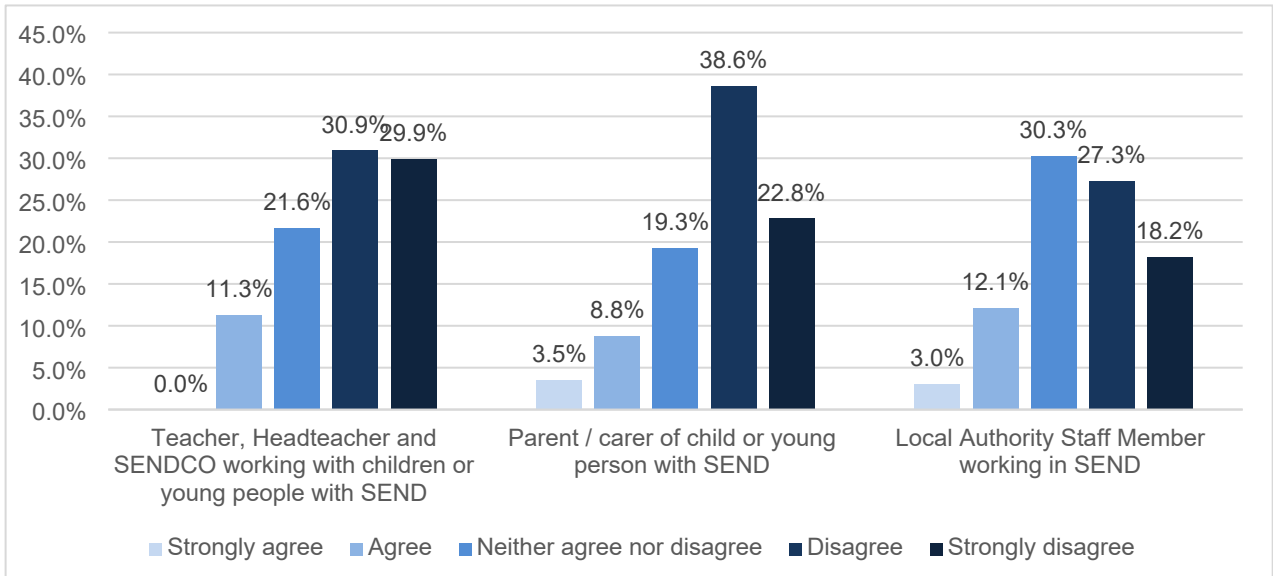


Figure 74: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs accurately describe the needs of children and young people' by stakeholder type

'BUDs accurately describe the interventions required to meet the needs of children and young people'

Responses to this statement are broadly similar across the different stakeholder types.

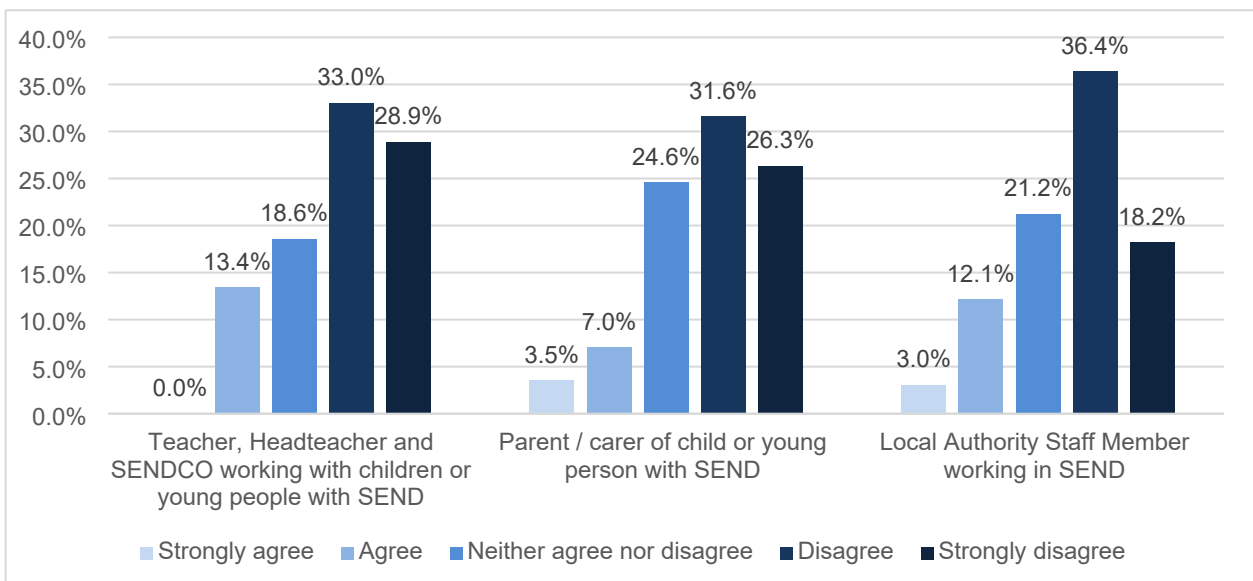


Figure 75: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs accurately describe the interventions required to meet the needs of children and young people' by stakeholder type

'BUDs are representative of the costs associated with implementing support and interventions'

School staff are more likely to strongly disagree with this statement.

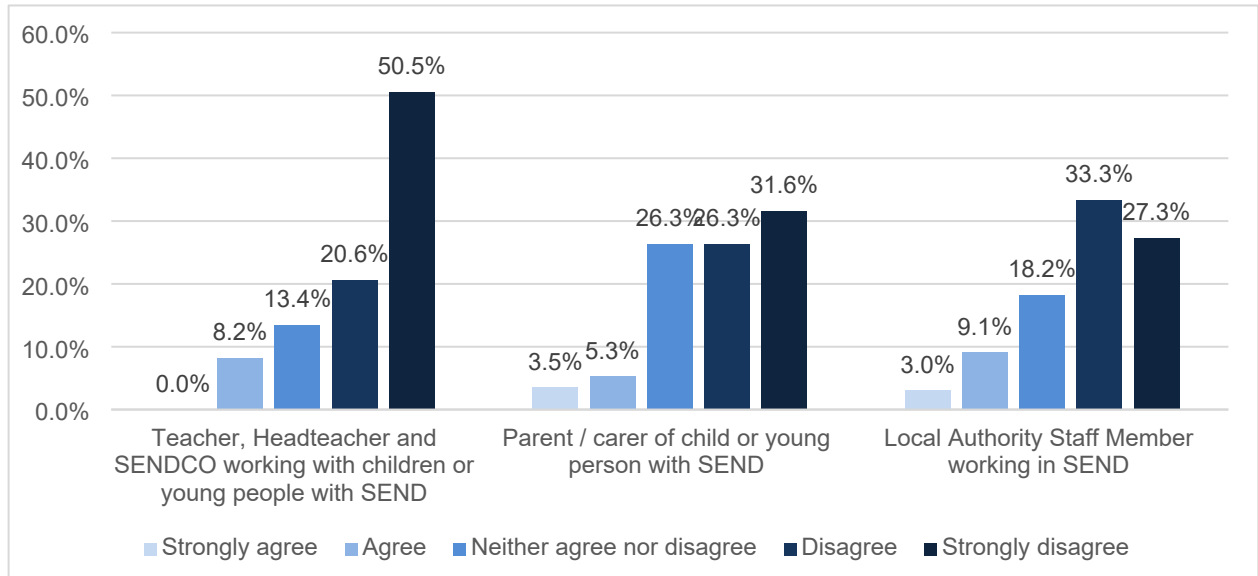


Figure 76: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs are representative of the costs associated with implementing support and interventions' by stakeholder type

'BUDs work well and should be retained'

School staff are more likely to disagree with this statement.

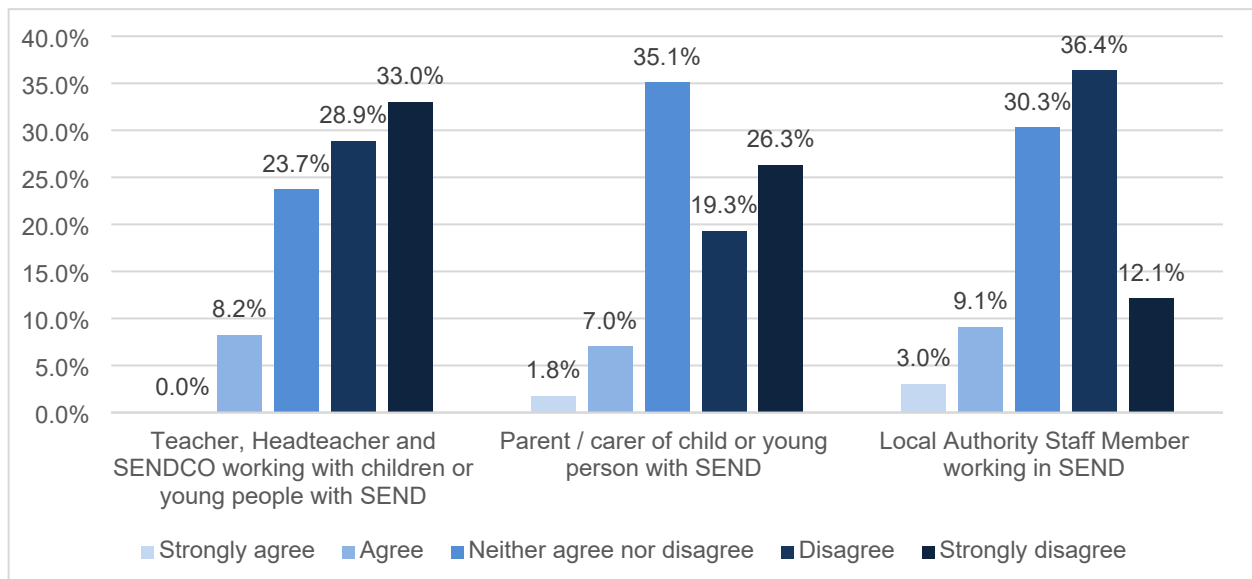


Figure 77: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs work well and should be retained' by stakeholder type

'BUDs require updating, but should be retained'

Parents and carers are more likely to neither agree nor disagree with this statement, whilst local authority staff are more likely to strongly agree with it.

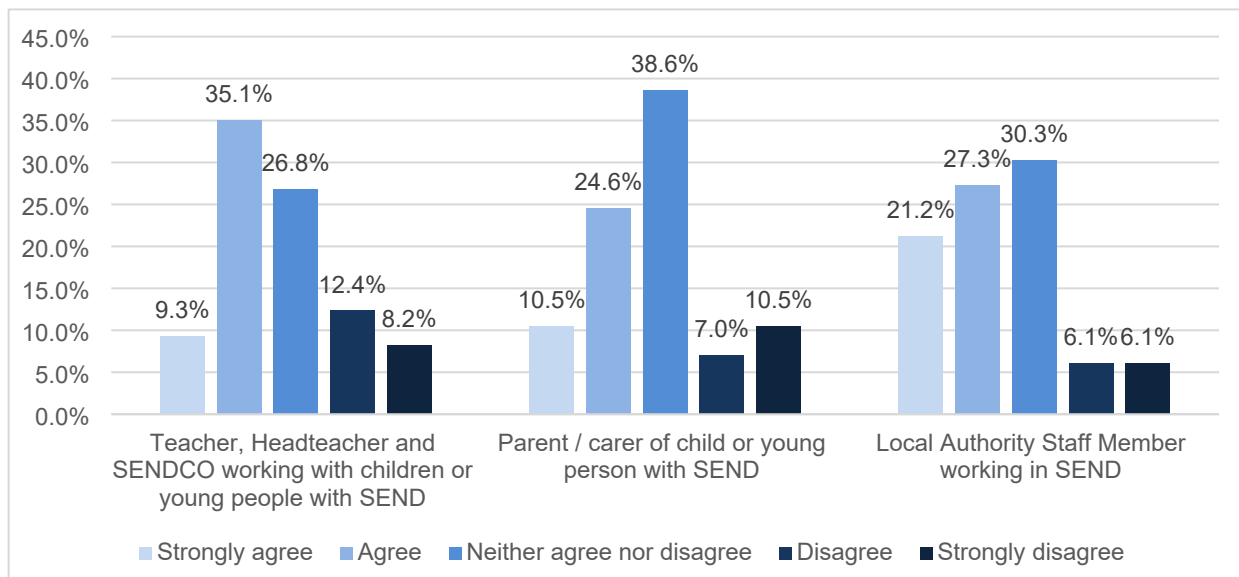


Figure 78: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs require updating but should be retained' by stakeholder group

'BUDs do not currently work and should be replaced'

Local authority staff are less likely to agree and more likely to disagree with this statement.

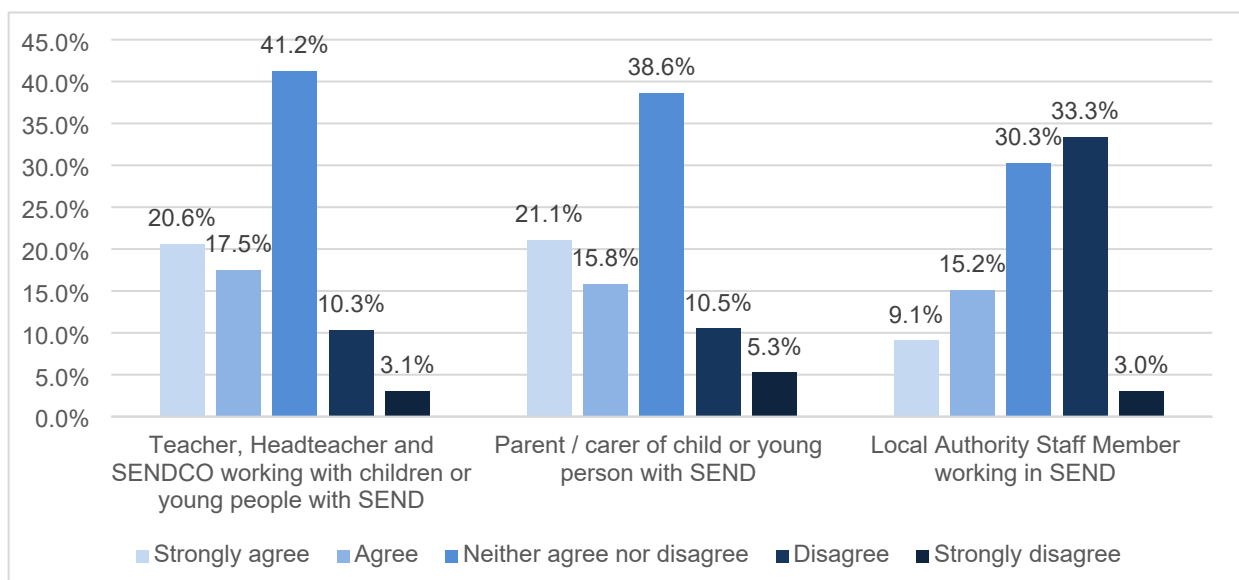


Figure 79: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? BUDs do not currently work and should be replaced' by stakeholder group

7.1.2 Open question responses

Most survey comments on the BUDs are critical of the current arrangements.

Several respondents say that the BUDs are outdated and that they lead to insufficient funding being granted, often because actual costs do not match those in the bandings. Some add that, at present, there are inconsistencies in how the bands are applied. Furthermore, several respondents say that the BUDs lead to children and young people being 'pigeon holed' and matched to a 'best fit' which may not necessarily align to their individual needs or be the most appropriate means of supporting them. They believe that BUDs in their current form are not illustrative of the needs of children and young people with SEND in Bristol at this time.

A few respondents say that the BUDs are too complicated, confusing or unclear, whilst a small number give specific groups they feel that BUDs are not working for, including

children and young people with an EHCP, those with complex or linked needs, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, and females with suspected ASD.

However, a small number of respondents comment positively on BUDs, by expressing general support or arguing that they enable consistency.

Suggestions for BUDs include:

- a simplified system
- a consistent and clear outline of costs and provision
- alignment to OAP
- a system which allows for aggregated lower level needs leading to a higher banding
- consultation with practitioners ahead of any update
- alignment with changes to the current SEND COP
- a person-centred rather than deficit-based or risk-based approach to assessing need

Other suggestions made in response to the question on BUDs include:

- training led by high-performing settings
- records of how funding is used

7.1.3 Information and Engagement sessions

As with the survey responses, participants in the Information and Engagement sessions are largely critical of BUDs as they are at present.

Many of the participants believe that the BUDs are outdated and require updating. A few say it has been almost a decade since they were created.

School staff and local authority staff say that there is a mismatch between the costs associated with the descriptions and the actual level of funding required, as well as between the descriptors and the threshold for needs assessment. They add that some children and young people with multiple areas of need may not be adequately served by the descriptors or otherwise that some individuals and their needs may not fall into 'neat boxes'. One school staff member says they have struggled to recruit staff based on the current bands.

Meanwhile, parents and carers say that BUDs are opaque and that they struggle to understand them.

Suggestions include:

- ensuring the buy-in of multi-academy trusts for any new BUDs
- a simplified document which is not overwhelming
- alignment with the annual review documents for EHCPs
- provision mapping across classes and schools or groups of children and young people with similar needs to enable more cost-effective provision
- making available a metric of needs versus bands
- monitoring of how money has been spent

8 How will this report be used?

This report has been published to allow members of the public and stakeholders to view the evidence gathered through the consultation process.

Final recommendations will be developed and put forward based on all consultation and engagement conducted on this topic to date, including the views expressed by respondents and participants which have been summarised in this report, as well as other relevant information generated through the research conducted alongside the consultation. This will likely have taken place before this report has been published.

These recommendations will be shared and tested with council colleagues and iterated as required before they are submitted in Cabinet Papers for consideration. Elected members must approve the adoption of any new approach.

Whatever approach is taken forward, it is likely that there will be a phased implementation process to allow a period of adjustment and to give scope for amendments or iteration of the approach wherever this is required. Detailed documentation and guidance for implementation will be co-designed and the council will work closely with schools, education settings and health care professionals to ensure that the new approach is effective.

A.1 Appendix 1: Survey text

You may answer as many or as few questions as you feel comfortable.

Option A1: retain the top-up funding process for children and young people without EHC plans, but make improvements to make the system more streamlined and consistent.

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following:

	Very negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Very positive
Staff capacity					
The council's SEND finances					
Inclusion within mainstream schools					
Quality and value for money of support available to children and young people					

Please share any other thoughts on this option, for example:

- If this option is implemented, is there any other impact you might expect to see e.g., on a particular group of children or on a protected characteristic etc.
- If this option is implemented, what could the design of this change look like?
- If you have any further comments on this option, please provide them below.

[Free text box]

Option A2: re-purpose a proportion of the funding currently being spent on top-up funding for children and young people that do not have an EHC plan to create a targeted early intervention fund for mainstream schools.

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following:

	Very negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Very positive
Staff capacity					
The council's SEND finances					
Inclusion within mainstream schools					
Quality and value for money of support available to children and young people					

Please share any other thoughts on this option, for example:

- If this option is implemented, is there any other impact you might expect to see e.g., on a particular group of children or on a protected characteristic etc.
- If this option is implemented, what could the design of this change look like?
- If you have any further comments on this option, please provide them below.

[Free text box]

Option A3: gradually phase out the use of top-up funding for children and young people who do not have an EHC plan.

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following:

	Very negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Very positive

Staff capacity					
The council's SEND finances					
Inclusion within mainstream schools					
Quality and value for money of support available to children and young people					

Please share any other thoughts on this option, for example:

- If this option is implemented, is there any other impact you might expect to see e.g., on a particular group of children or on a protected characteristic etc.
- If this option is implemented, what could the design of this change look like?
- If you have any further comments on this option, please provide them below.

[Free text box]

Option B1 – retain the top-up funding process for post-16 learners who did not previously receive funding pre-16, but make improvements to make the system more streamlined and consistent.

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following:

	Very negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Very positive
Staff capacity					
The council's SEND finances					
Inclusion within mainstream schools					
Quality and value for money of support available to children and young people					

Please share any other thoughts on this option, for example:

- If this option is implemented, is there any other impact you might expect to see e.g., on a particular group of children or on a protected characteristic etc.
- If this option is implemented, what could the design of this change look like?
- If you have any further comments on this option, please provide them below.

[Free text box]

Option B2: re-purpose a proportion of the funding currently being spent on top-up funding for post-16 learners that were not previously in receipt of funding to create a targeted fund for post-16 education settings.

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following:

	Very negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Very positive
Staff capacity					
The council's SEND finances					
Inclusion within mainstream schools					
Quality and value for money of support available to children and young people					

Please share any other thoughts on this option, for example:

- If this option is implemented, is there any other impact you might expect to see e.g. on a particular group of children or on a protected characteristic etc.
- If this option is implemented, what could the design of this change look like?
- If you have any further comments on this option, please provide them below.

[Free text box]

Option B3: gradually phase out the use of top-up funding for post-16 learners who have not previously received funding pre-16 plan.

Do you agree or disagree with this change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the following:

	Very negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Very positive
Staff capacity					
The council's SEND finances					
Inclusion within mainstream schools					
Quality and value for money of support available to children and young people					

Please share any other thoughts on this option, for example:

- If this option is implemented, is there any other impact you might expect to see e.g., on a particular group of children or on a protected characteristic etc.
- If this option is implemented, what could the design of this change look like?
- If you have any further comments on this option, please provide them below.

[Free text box]

Banding Questions

We are seeking feedback on the [Bristol Universal Descriptors \(BUDs\)](#) currently used to determine the level of top-up funding schools should be awarded.

Our initial engagement with schools and council staff has suggested that the BUDs are currently out of date and unfit for purpose in determining the level of funding schools should be awarded, and ensuring children and young people can access an appropriate amount of funding based on their needs.

To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The BUDs ensure the costs of the provision to meet the needs of children and young people are met fairly, irrespective of the provision.					
BUDs are applied consistently across all schools in Bristol					
BUDs accurately describe the needs of children and young people					
BUDs accurately describe the interventions required to meet the needs of children and young people					
BUDs are representative of the costs associated with implementing support and interventions					
BUDs work well and should be retained					
BUDs requires updating, but should be retained					
BUDs do not currently work and should be replaced					

Please share any other thoughts on banding systems and BUDs:

[Free text box]

A.2 Appendix 2: Closed question data tables

A.2.1 School age questions

	A1	A2	A3
Strongly agree	84	40	17
Agree	70	72	18
Neither agree nor disagree	15	21	13
Disagree	23	35	45
Strongly disagree	4	25	101
-	0	3	2
Total	196	196	196

Table 1: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?'

	A1	A2	A3
Very positive	57	28	9
Slightly positive	71	52	22
Neutral	36	44	30
Slightly negative	20	38	30
Very negative	9	29	95
-	3	5	10
Total	196	196	196

Table 2: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?'

	A1	A2	A3
Very positive	12	21	38
Slightly positive	62	77	51
Neutral	68	58	44
Slightly negative	35	19	14
Very negative	15	14	40
-	4	7	9
Total	196	196	196

Table 3: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?'

	A1	A2	A3
Very positive	59	36	5
Slightly positive	72	59	9
Neutral	40	32	19
Slightly negative	17	30	30
Very negative	5	33	125
-	3	6	8
Total	196	196	196

Table 4: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?'

	A1	A2	A3
Very positive	59	32	8
Slightly positive	69	53	8
Neutral	37	33	17
Slightly negative	22	37	28
Very negative	6	36	126
-	3	5	9
Total	196	196	196

Table 5: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?'

A.2.2 Post-16 questions

	B1	B2	B3
Strongly agree	46	16	10
Agree	58	53	16
Neither agree nor disagree	57	66	43
Disagree	13	18	29
Strongly disagree	4	15	66
-	18	28	32
Total	196	196	196

Table 6: 'Do you agree or disagree with this change?'

	B1	B2	B3
Very positive	23	12	6
Slightly positive	42	42	22
Neutral	70	70	53
Slightly negative	19	18	28
Very negative	2	9	39
-	40	45	48
Total	196	196	196

Table 7: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on staff capacity?'

	B1	B2	B3
Very positive	11	6	23
Slightly positive	32	46	36
Neutral	83	75	53
Slightly negative	25	17	13
Very negative	5	6	22
-	40	46	49
Total	196	196	196

Table 8: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on the council's SEND finances?'

	B1	B2	B3
Very positive	33	14	3
Slightly positive	46	43	8
Neutral	66	61	43
Slightly negative	9	16	27
Very negative	2	15	65
-	40	47	50
Total	196	196	196

Table 9: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on inclusion within mainstream schools?'

	B1	B2	B3
Very positive	31	15	3
Slightly positive	53	44	9
Neutral	63	56	41
Slightly negative	8	18	26
Very negative	1	17	67
-	40	46	50
Total	196	196	196

Table 10: 'What do you anticipate to be the impact of this proposal on quality and value for money of support available to children and young people?'

A.2.3 BUDs

	The BUDs ensure the costs of the provision to meet the needs of children and young people are met fairly, irrespective of the provision.	BUDs are applied consistently across all schools in Bristol	BUDs accurately describe the needs of children and young people	BUDs accurately describe the interventions required to meet the needs of children and young people	BUDs are representative of the costs associated with implementing support and interventions	BUDs work well and should be retained	BUDs requires updating, but should be retained	BUDs do not currently work and should be replaced
Strongly agree	6	4	3	3	3	2	24	36
Agree	31	8	22	22	15	15	60	32
Neither agree nor disagree	41	53	46	43	38	56	60	77
Disagree	51	63	63	65	50	55	19	27
Strongly disagree	50	55	49	50	76	53	17	9
-	17	13	13	13	14	15	16	15
Total	196	196	196	196	196	196	196	196

Table 11: 'To inform our review of the Banding and BUDs system, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?'

A.3 Appendix 3: Equalities monitoring

A.3.1 Age

What is your age?

- 0-10
- 11-15
- 16-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 +
- Prefer not to say

Some categories did not receive any responses.

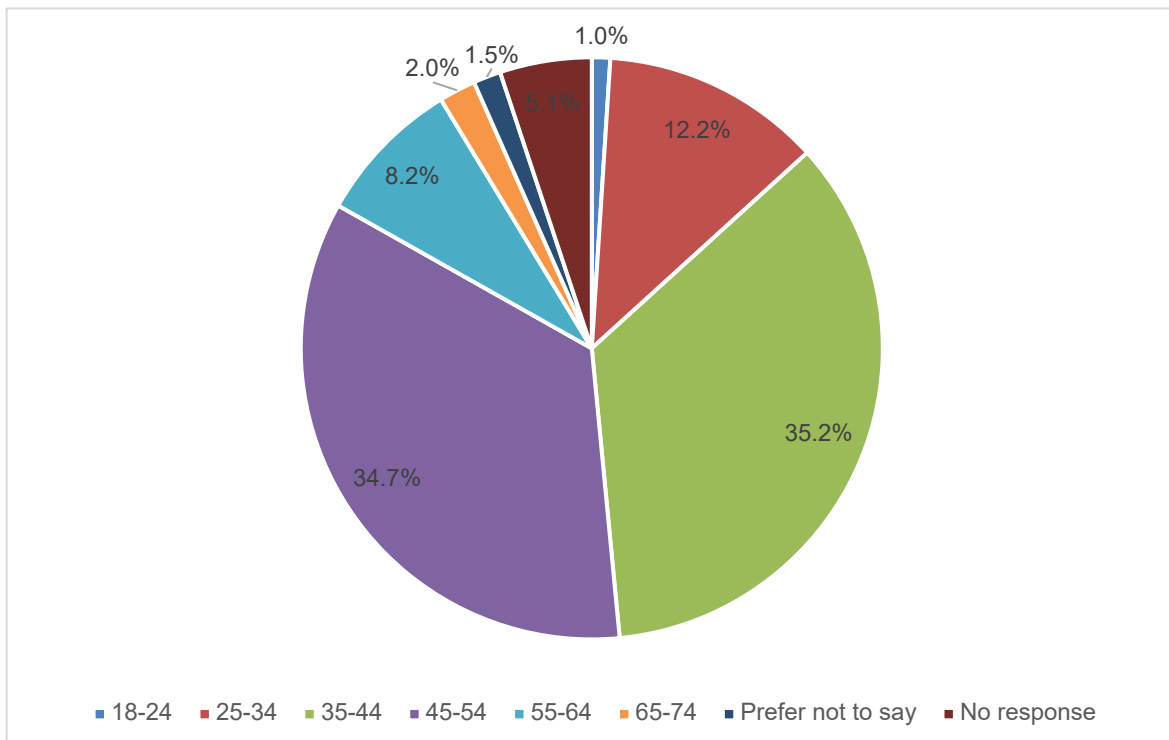


Figure 80: What is your age?

Response data is as follows:

Q22. What is your age?		
18-24	2	1.0 per cent
25-34	24	12.2 per cent
35-44	69	35.2 per cent
45-54	68	34.7 per cent
55-64	16	8.2 per cent
65-74	4	2.0 per cent

Prefer not to say	3	1.5 per cent
No response	10	5.1 per cent
Total	196	100.0 per cent

Table 12: What is your age?

A.3.2 Disability

Do you consider yourself to be a Disabled person?

(Bristol City Council uses the ‘Social Model of Disability’ which recognises the right to self-identify as a Disabled person and that people are Disabled by barriers in society such as lack of physical access and lack of accessible communication, not by their impairment (including mental, physical, sensory, health conditions, learning difficulties etc.)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

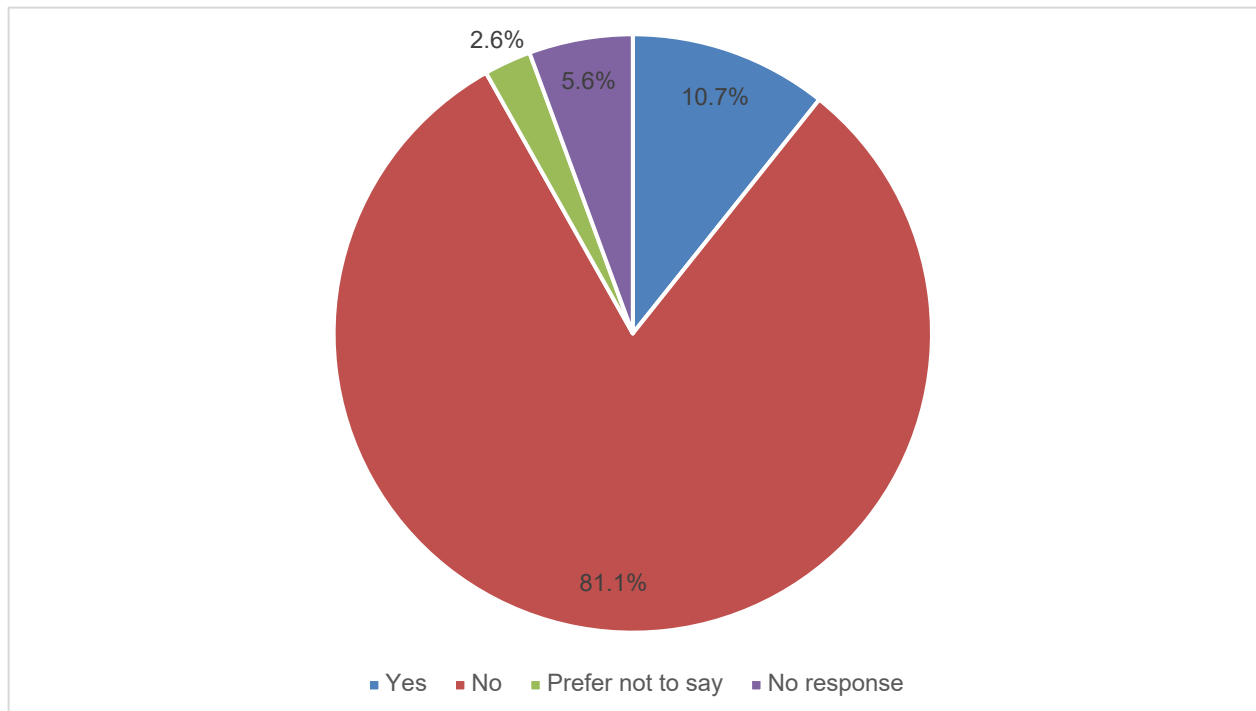


Figure 81: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Response data is as follows:

Q23. Do you consider yourself to be a Disabled person?		
Yes	21	10.7 per cent
No	159	81.1 per cent
Prefer not to say	5	2.6 per cent
No response	11	5.6 per cent

Total	196	100.0 per cent
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Table 13: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

A.3.3 Ethnicity

What is your ethnic group?

- Asian or Asian British
- Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- White British
- Other White Background
- Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller
- Prefer not to say
- Other ethnic background (please specify)

Some categories did not receive any responses.

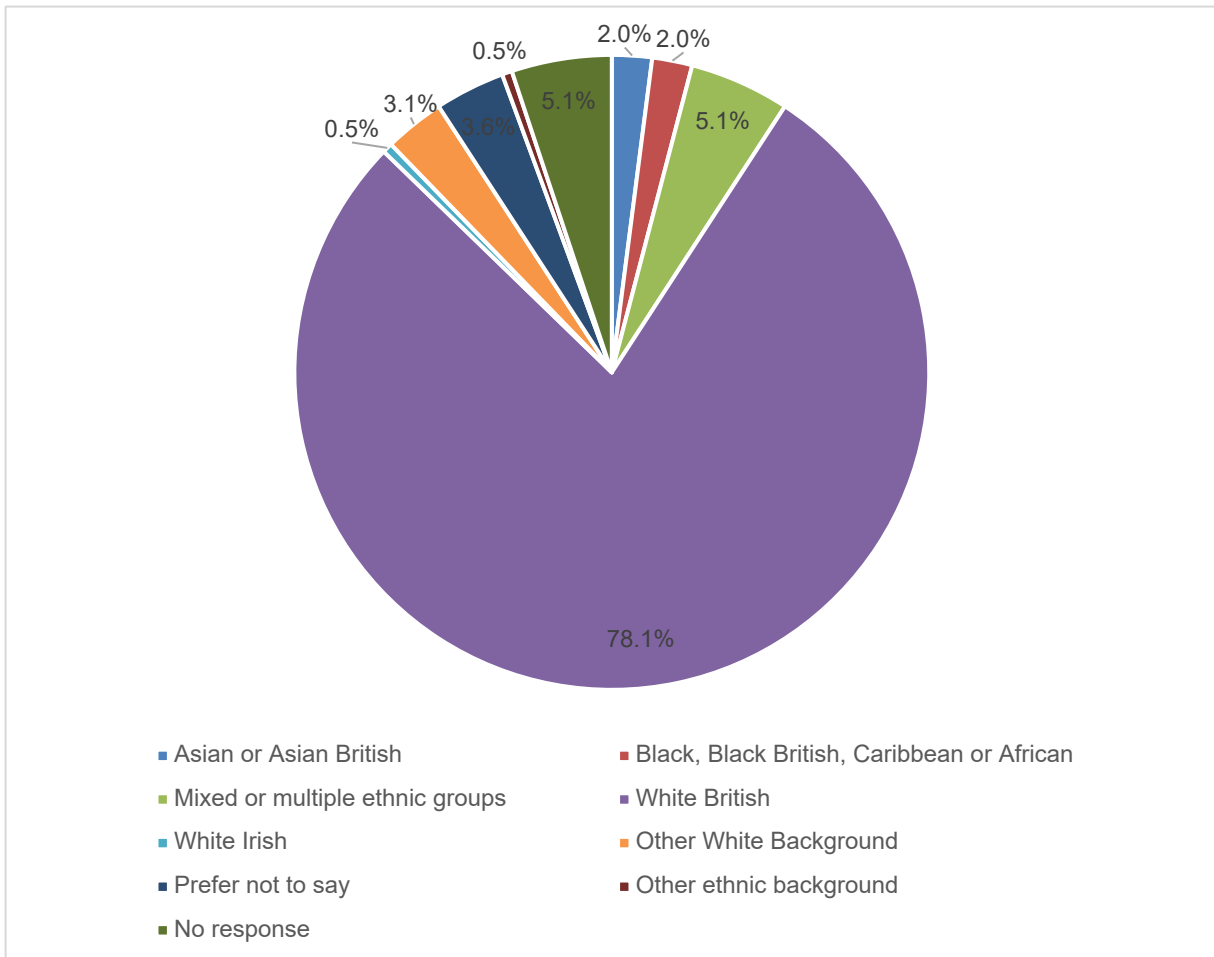


Figure 82: What is your ethnic group?

Response data is as follows:

Q24. What is your ethnic group? (please tick one box only)		
Asian or Asian British	4	2.0%
Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African	4	2.0%

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	10	5.1%
White British	153	78.1%
White Irish	1	0.5%
Other White Background	6	3.1%
Prefer not to say	7	3.6%
Other ethnic background	1	0.5%
No response	10	5.1%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 14: What is your ethnic group?

A.3.4 Religion

What is your religion/faith?

- No religion
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Pagan
- Sikh
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify): _____

Some categories did not receive any responses.

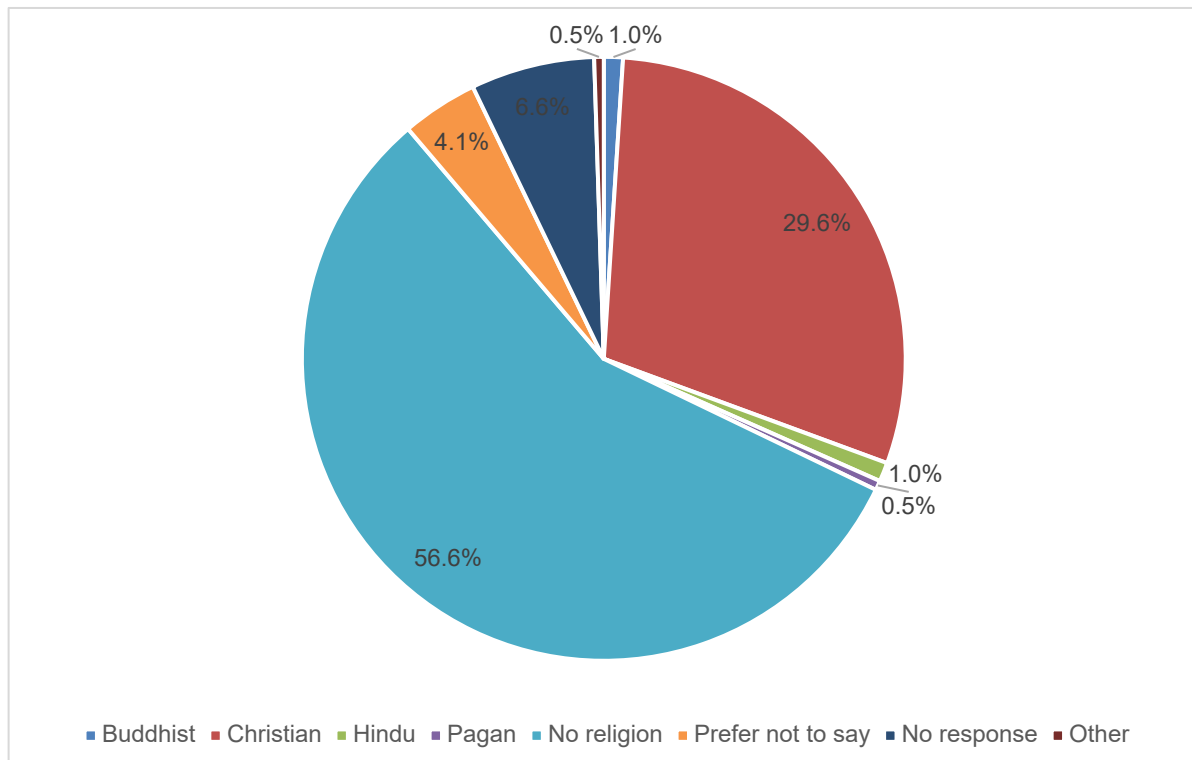


Figure 83: What is your religion/faith?

Response data is as follows:

Q25. What is your religion/faith?

Buddhist	2	1.0%
Christian	58	29.6%
Hindu	2	1.0%
Pagan	1	0.5%
No religion	111	56.6%
Prefer not to say	8	4.1%
No response	13	6.6%
Other	1	0.5%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 15: What is your religion/faith?

A.3.5 Sex

What is your sex?

(If unsure you can use the sex recorded in your official documents.)

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

Some categories did not receive any responses.

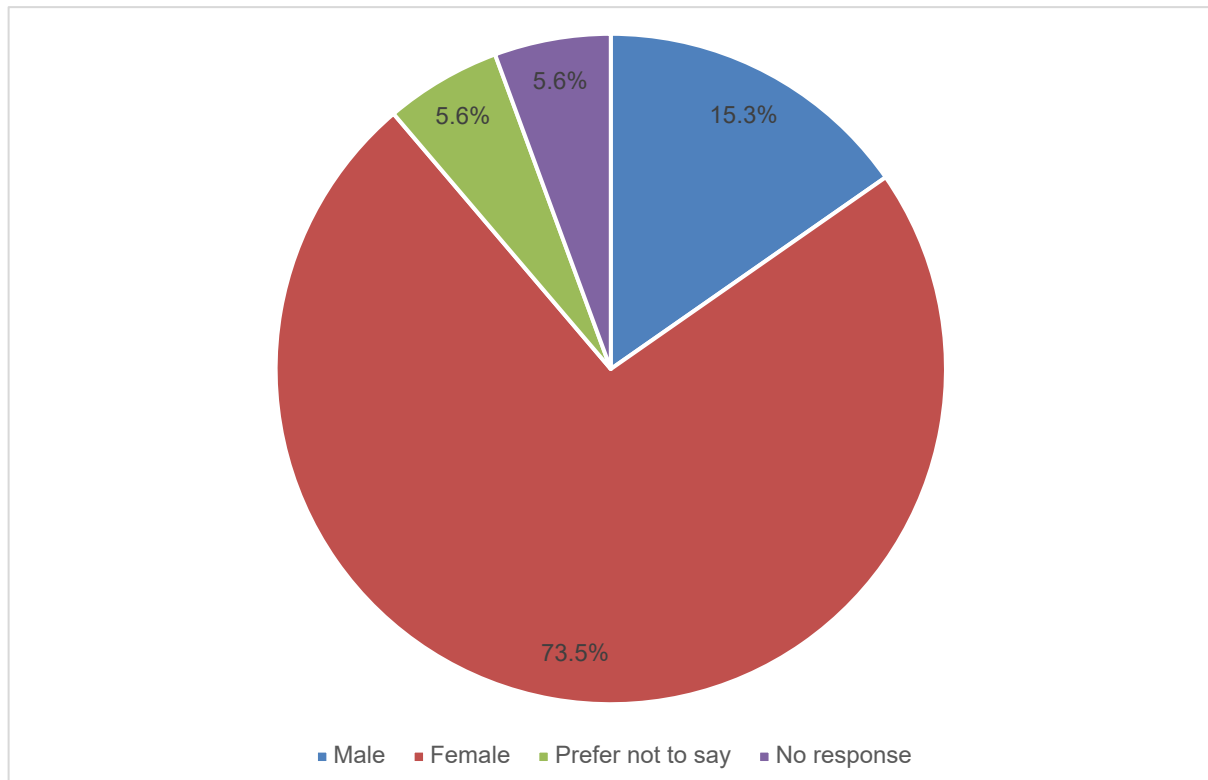


Figure 84: What is your sex?

Response data is as follows:

Q26. What is your sex?		
Male	30	15.3%

Female	144	73.5%
Prefer not to say	11	5.6%
No response	11	5.6%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 16: What is your sex?

A.3.6 Gender identity

Do you consider yourself to have a gender identity different from your sex recorded at birth?

- Yes (e.g., trans, or non-binary)
- No
- Prefer not to say

If 'Yes', please enter the term you use to describe your gender _____

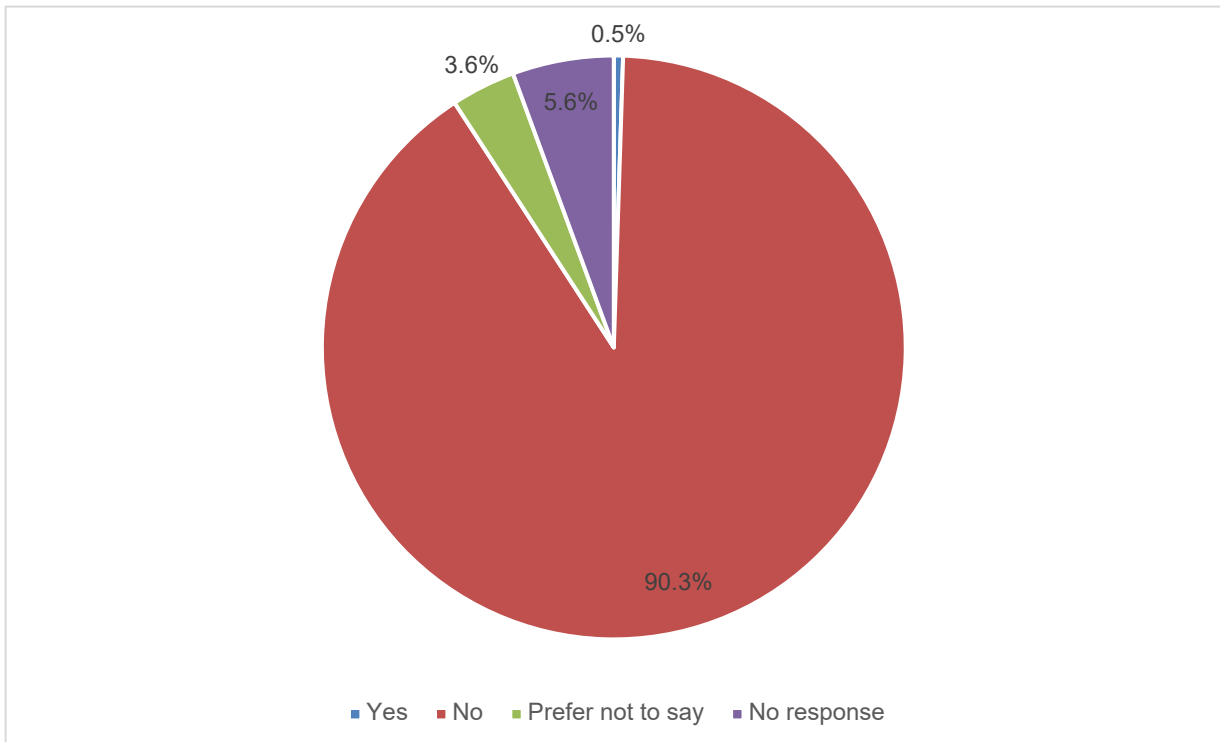


Figure 85: Do you consider yourself to have a gender identity different from your sex recorded at birth?

Response data is as follows:

Q27. Do you consider yourself to have a gender identity different from your sex recorded at birth?		
Yes	1	0.5%
No	177	90.3%
Prefer not to say	7	3.6%
No response	11	5.6%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 17: Do you consider yourself to have a gender identity different from your sex recorded at birth?

A.3.7 Sexual orientation

What is your sexual orientation?

(‘Bi’ is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may use other terms e.g., bisexual, pan or pansexual.)

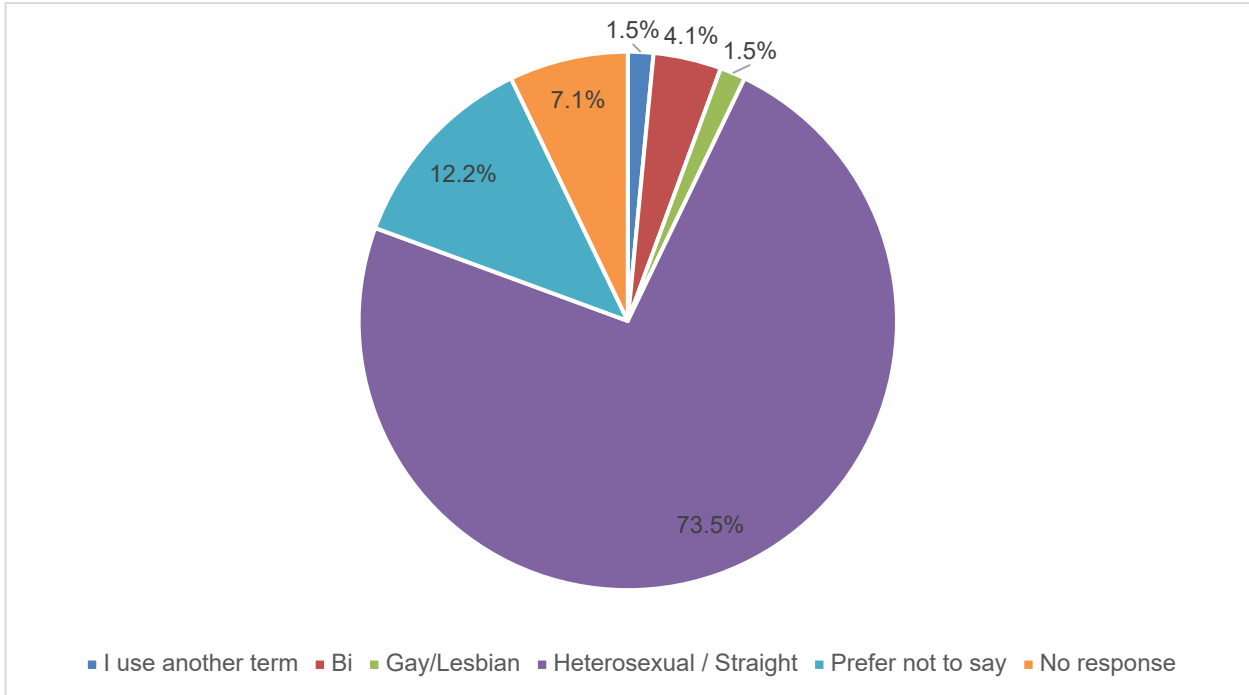


Figure 86: What is your sexual orientation?

Response data is as follows:

Q28. What is your sexual orientation?		
I use another term	3	1.5%
Bi	8	4.1%
Gay/Lesbian	3	1.5%
Heterosexual / Straight	144	73.5%
Prefer not to say	24	12.2%
No response	14	7.1%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 18: What is your sexual orientation?

A.3.8 Maternity

Are you pregnant or have you given birth in the last 26 weeks?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

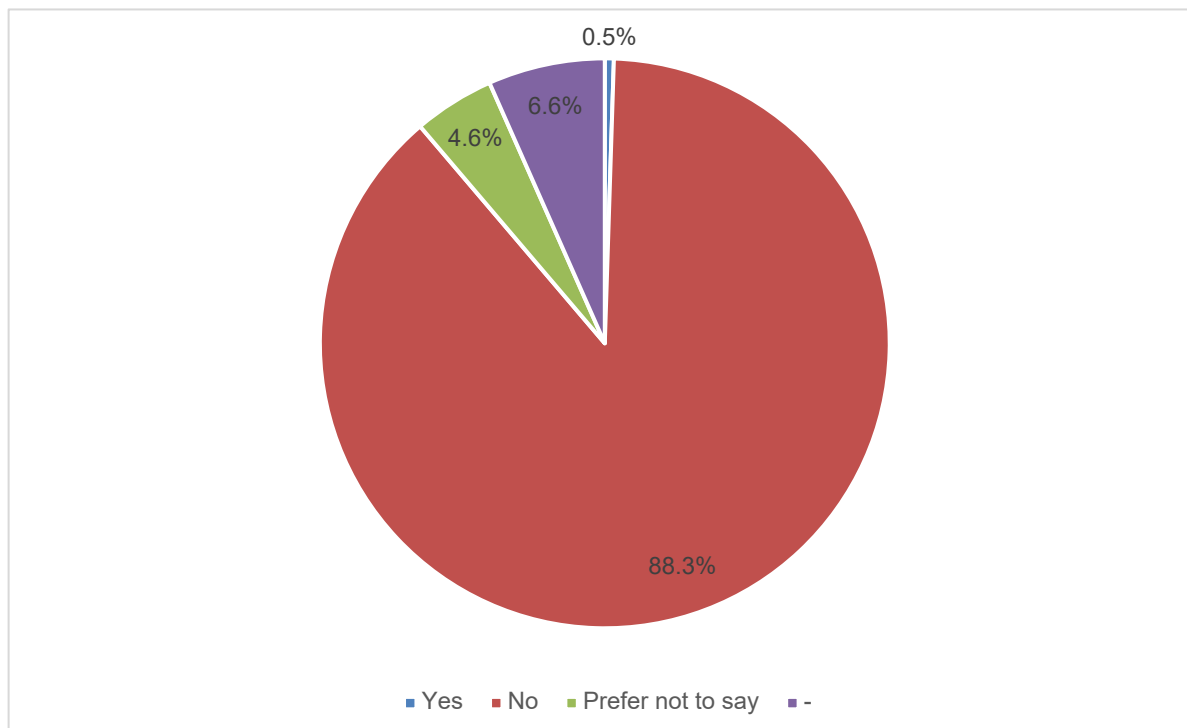


Figure 87: Are you pregnant or have you given birth in the last 26 weeks?

Response data is as follows:

Q29. Are you pregnant or have you given birth in the last 26 weeks?		
Yes	1	0.5%
No	173	88.3%
Prefer not to say	9	4.6%
-	13	6.6%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 19: Are you pregnant or have you given birth in the last 26 weeks?

A.3.9 Carers

Are you a carer?

(A carer is anyone who provides unpaid support for a family member or friend etc. who needs help with their day-to-day life because of illness, disability, or other needs. A young carer might also provide support for other children/siblings.)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

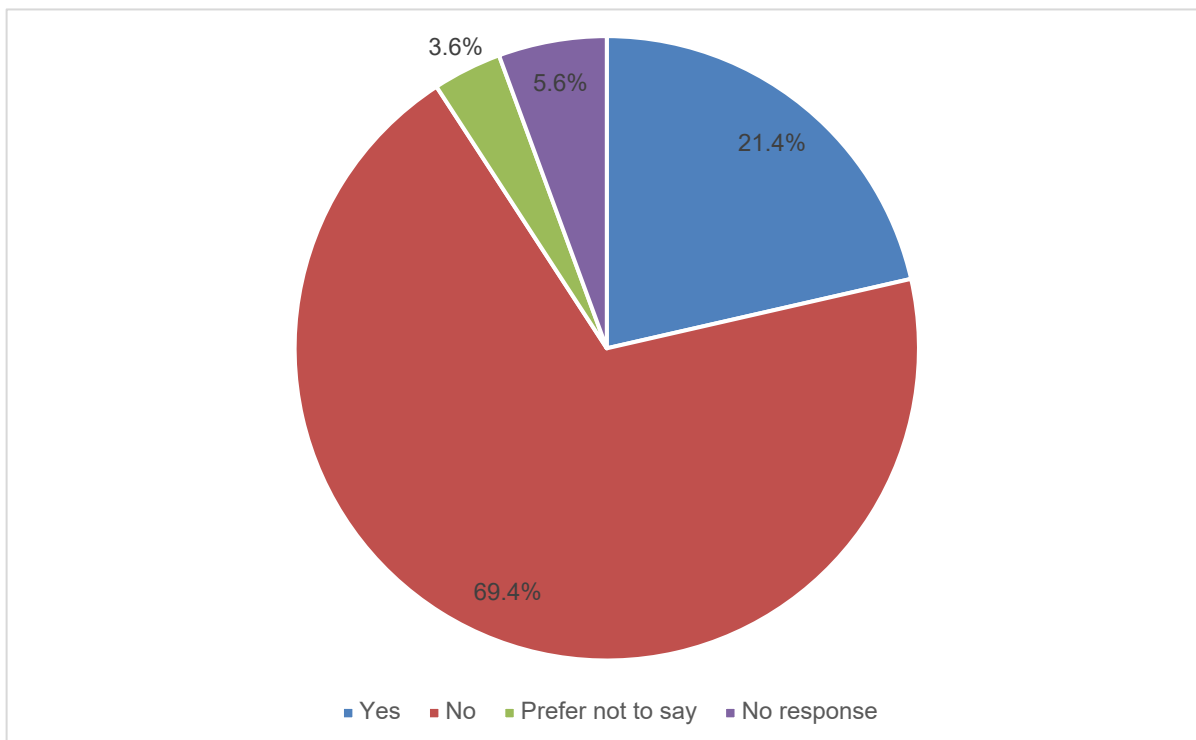


Figure 88: Are you a carer?

Response data is as follows:

Q30. Are you a carer?		
Yes	42	21.4%
No	136	69.4%
Prefer not to say	7	3.6%
No response	11	5.6%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 20: Are you a carer?

A.3.10 Refugees and asylum seekers

Are you a refugee or asylum seeker?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Some categories did not receive any responses.

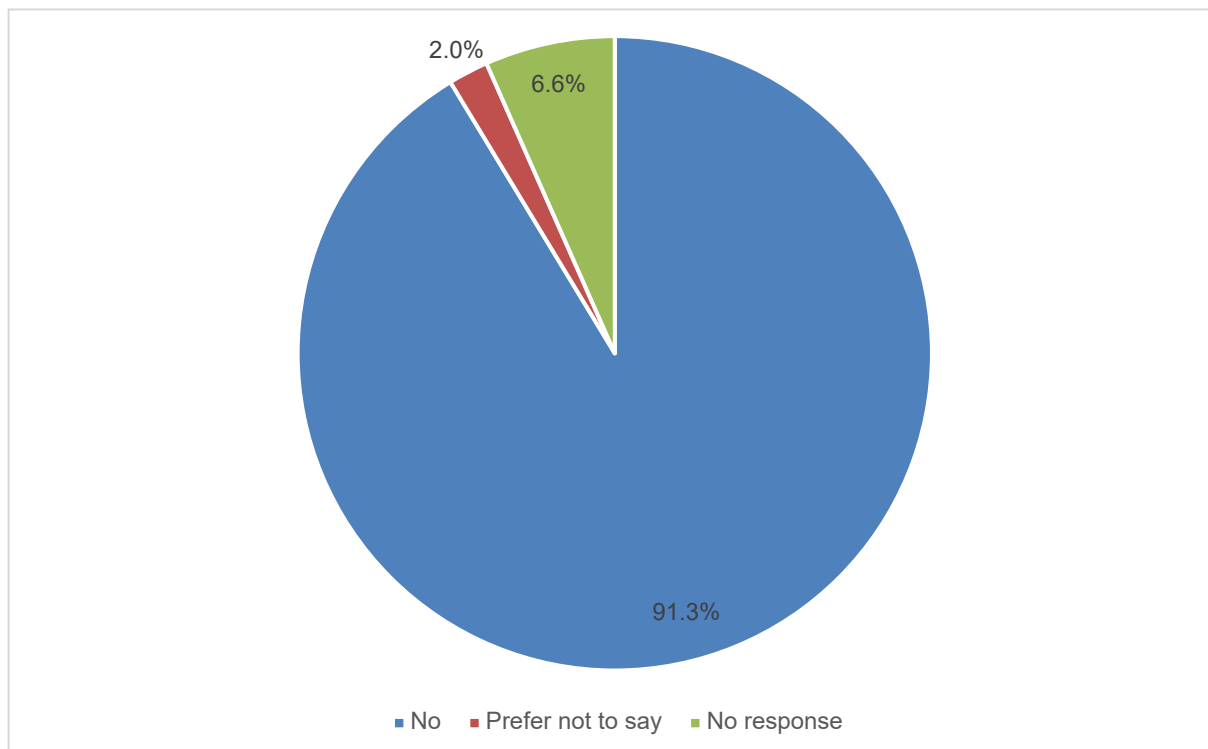


Figure 89: Are you a refugee or asylum seeker?

Response data is as follows:

Q31. Are you a refugee or asylum seeker?		
No	179	91.3%
Prefer not to say	4	2.0%
No response	13	6.6%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 21: Are you a refugee or asylum seeker?

A.3.11 Effect of proposals on protected characteristics

Do you think any of the proposals would have any impact on you or others with a protected characteristic?

The protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The answer options were:

- Very negative effect
- Slightly negative effect
- No effect
- Slightly positive effect

- Very positive effect

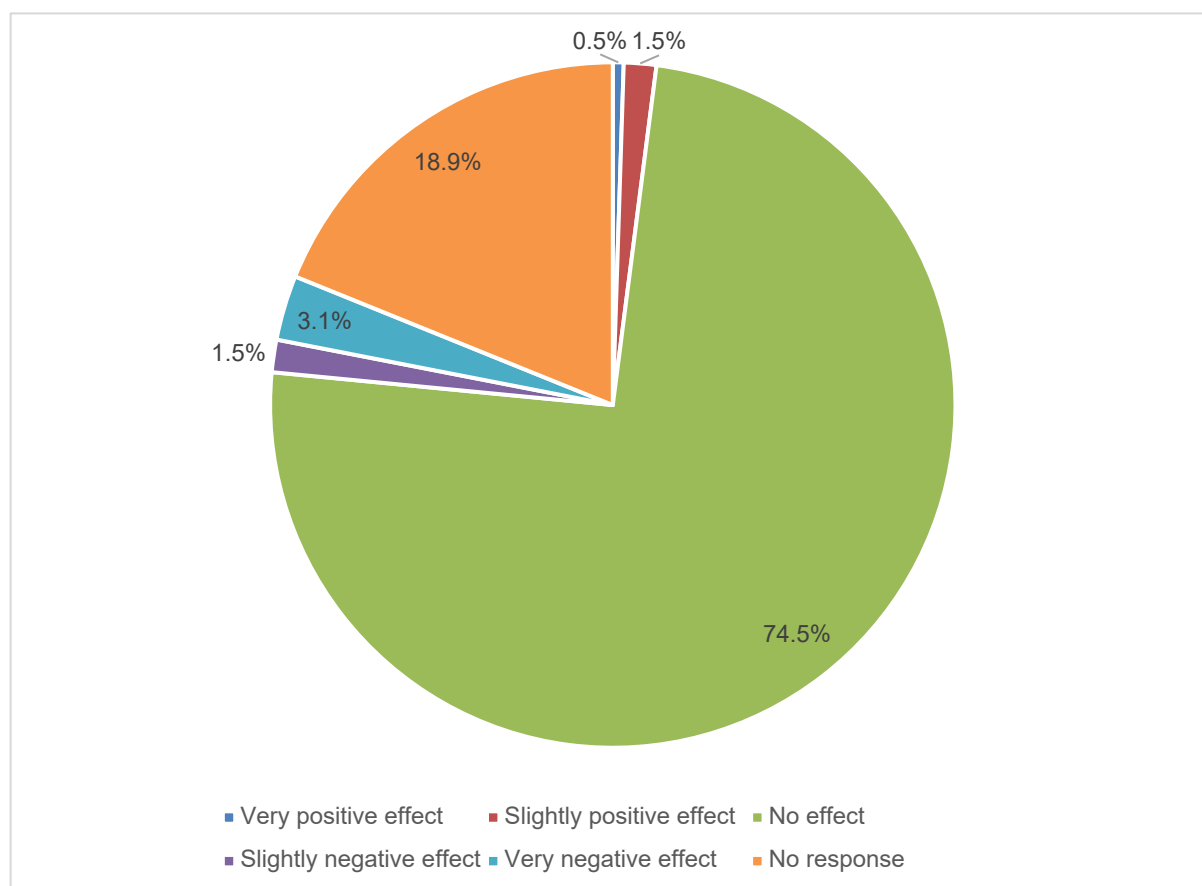


Figure 90: Do you think any of the proposals would have any impact on you or others with a protected characteristic?

Response data is as follows:

Q32. Please tell us what effect, if any, the proposals would have on you because of your protected characteristics.		
Very positive effect	1	0.5%
Slightly positive effect	3	1.5%
No effect	146	74.5%
Slightly negative effect	3	1.5%
Very negative effect	6	3.1%
No response	37	18.9%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 22: Do you think any of the proposals would have any impact on you or others with a protected characteristic?

If you think the proposals would affect you or others because of your protected characteristics, please say how:

7 respondents provided comments. Of these, a small number say the effect would depend on the option which is taken forward and a similar number say the proposals may impact their child. One respondent expresses concerns about the potential impact of any changes on disabled, minority ethnic or LGBT+ children and young people with SEND, whilst one says BUDs need to take into account cultural and gender considerations.

A.4 Consultation process

Respondents were asked to comment on the consultation process by stating the extent to which they agree with a set of statement and their views are set out below.

A.4.1 Information

The survey meets my accessibility needs.

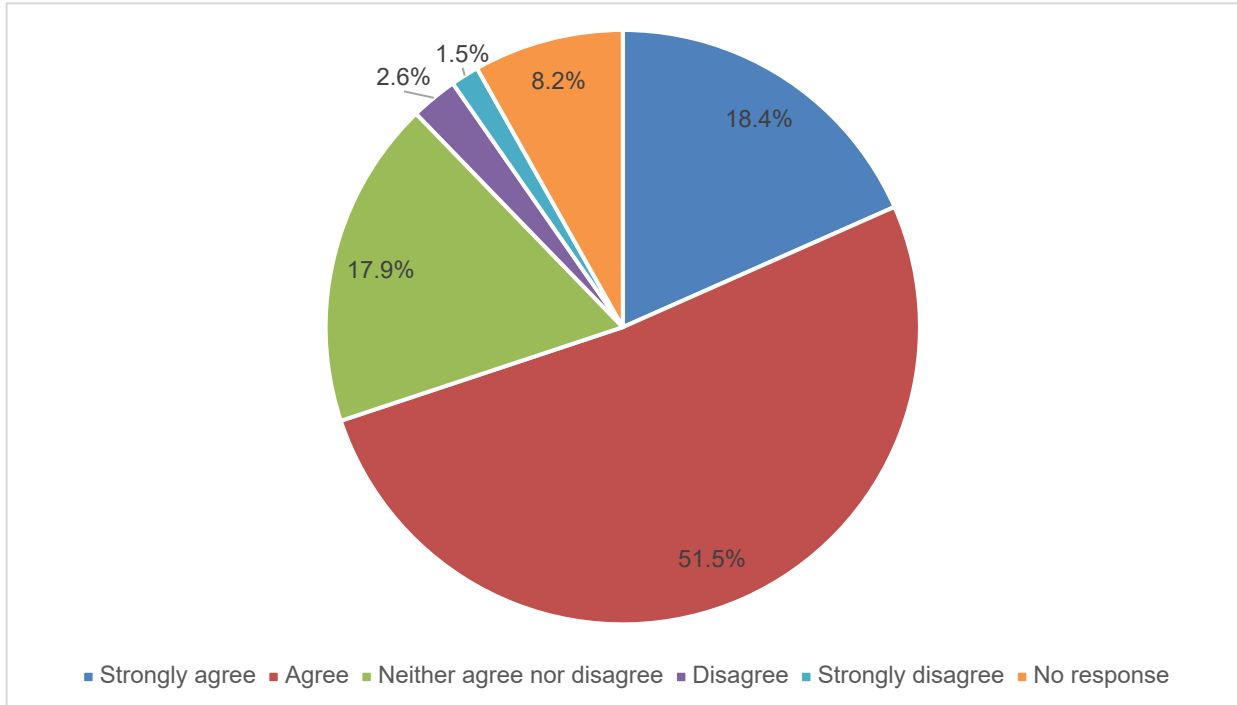


Figure 91: The survey meets my accessibility needs

Response data is as follows:

Q33.3. The survey meets my accessibility needs		
Strongly agree	36	18.4%
Agree	101	51.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	35	17.9%
Disagree	5	2.6%
Strongly disagree	3	1.5%
No response	16	8.2%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 23: The survey meets my accessibility needs

A.4.2 Questions

The questions make it easy for me to give my views.

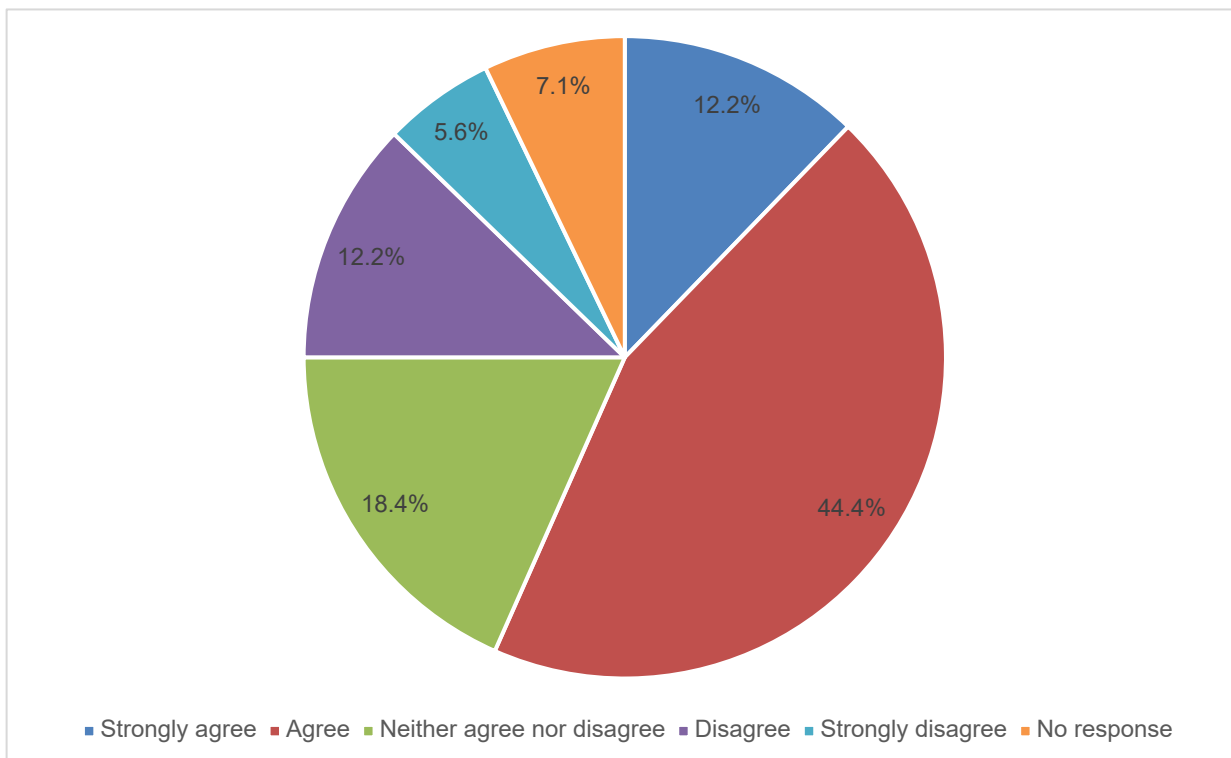


Figure 92: The questions make it easy for me to give my views

Response data is as follows:

Q33.2. The questions make it easy for me to give my views		
Strongly agree	24	12.2%
Agree	87	44.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	36	18.4%
Disagree	24	12.2%
Strongly disagree	11	5.6%
No response	14	7.1%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 24: The questions make it easy for me to give my views

A.4.3 Accessibility

The survey meets my accessibility needs.

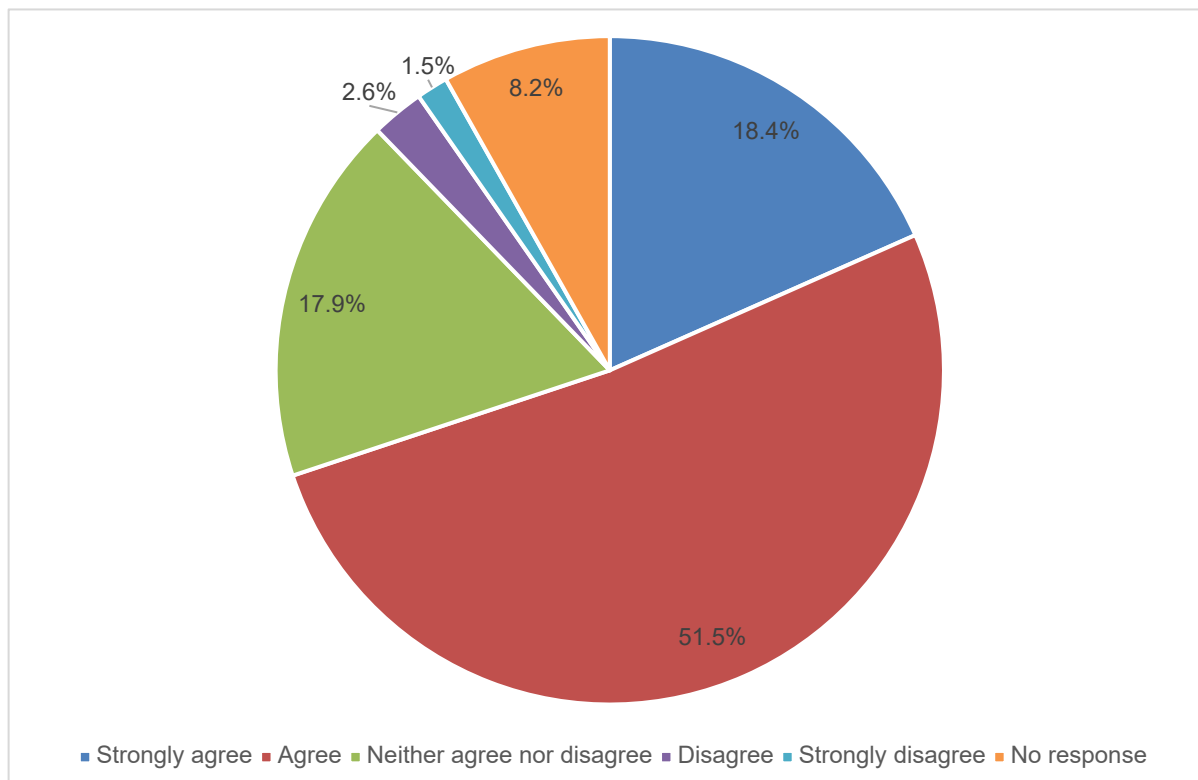


Figure 93: The survey meets my accessibility needs

Response data is as follows:

Q33.3. The survey meets my accessibility needs		
Strongly agree	36	18.4%
Agree	101	51.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	35	17.9%
Disagree	5	2.6%
Strongly disagree	3	1.5%
No response	16	8.2%
Total	196	100.0%

Table 25: The survey meets my accessibility needs

A.4.4 Open text feedback

If you disagree or strongly disagree with any of these statements, please tell us why.

32 respondents provided comments.

Of these, several say that they found it difficult to navigate between the explanation of the options and the questions, as these were in different parts of the form.

Some also say that the questions were difficult to understand without prior knowledge or understanding of the key issues, and some feel the documents were too complicated or 'wordy.'

Some respondents say that the information was insufficient, not specific enough or vague. Areas where these respondents want to see more information include:

- BUDs
- evidence of impact of the changes.
- current provision.

- costs associated with each option.

Meanwhile, some respondents feel that not all areas of the questionnaire were relevant for all respondents, while a small number believe that closed questions are too restrictive, or that key issues were not addressed (e.g., children with EHCP or why top-up applications are rising).

One respondent found one of the information sessions on Teams to be helpful for their understanding of the issues.

Suggestions include:

- presenting information in different formats (e.g., videos).
- giving an option to download the form to complete it offline.
- easy Read options (which were made available).