

Special Educational Needs (SEN), Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Additional Support Needs (ASN)



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Introduction

Special educational needs (SEN) in England and Northern Ireland, additional support needs (ASN) in Scotland, and additional learning needs (ALN) in Wales are high priorities for the NASUWT. The Union has commissioned independent research into the different interpretations of inclusion and SEN and into teachers' experiences of SEN.^{1,2} The NASUWT has also organised conferences and seminars for teachers and school leaders on SEN/ALN/ASN-related matters. Further, across the UK, the Union holds regular meetings with senior government officials and politicians to discuss matters relating to SEN/ALN/ASN policy and practice.

The NASUWT has received feedback from teachers and school leaders which highlight a range of issues and concerns about SEN/ALN/ASN arising from education reforms and cuts to public services. Teachers have also expressed concerns about management practices relating to SEN, including how SEN is prioritised within the school. This includes issues relating to pay and performance management. In the case of SEN teachers and teachers working in special schools, alternative provision (AP), pupil referral units (PRUs) and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) centres, many have raised concerns that abuse and violence is seen as 'part of the job'.

The survey sought evidence about teachers' and school leaders' experiences of these issues, including policies and practices.

Background information

The survey was conducted over a seven-week period in September and October 2017.

A total of 1,615 teachers and school leaders completed the survey. The majority of respondents (1,150) were from England, 232 were from Northern Ireland, 117 from Wales and 116 from Scotland.

Where respondents work

The survey was targeted at teachers and school leaders working in schools and in specialist provision. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents said that they worked in a secondary school, 37% worked in primary and 13% worked in a special school. Six percent (6%) of respondents worked in central services such as a local authority or, in the case of some respondents from England, a central services team within a multi-academy trust (MAT). Three percent (3%) of respondents worked in a PRU or alternative provision in England, or an EOTAS centre in Northern Ireland. Two percent (2%) of respondents said that they worked in an early years setting.

Work role(s)

Some respondents indicated that they had more than one role. The majority of respondents were class teachers (58%); 23% were special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) (England and Northern Ireland), Heads of Inclusion (England and Wales), additional learning needs co-ordinators (ALNCOs) (Wales), or ASN Co-ordinators or a Principal Teacher (Support for Learning (SfL)) (Scotland); 23% of respondents were subject leads or heads of department; 18% were SEN teachers; and 4% were either headteachers/principals, deputies or assistant headteachers. Five percent (5%) of respondents were supply teachers, with 3% working as short-term supply and 2% as long-term supply teachers. Twelve percent (12%) of respondents said that they held other roles within the school or educational setting.

1 Ellis, Simon; Tod, Janet; Graham-Matheson, Lynne (2008), *Special Educational Needs and Inclusion: Reflection and Renewal*. NASUWT, Rednal.

2 Ellis, Simon; Tod, Janet; Graham-Matheson, Lynne (2012), *Reflection, Renewal and Reality: Teachers' Experience of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion*. NASUWT, Rednal.

Identification of SEN/ALN/ASN and support

Summary of the key issues

Learners

- Almost two thirds of respondents said that support for learners has decreased in the last five years. They report that learners who do not have a Statement of SEN or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan struggle to access specialist support.
- Thresholds for learners to access external support have been raised, meaning that many more learners do not receive specialist support.
- In some schools, specialist support is allocated to some subjects or age groups, most notably English and maths and older year groups. Learners may not receive support outlined in statements or plans in other subjects.
- There is concern that some learners with SEN/ALN/ASN struggle to find a school place and that some schools are unwilling to accept learners who will adversely affect the school's performance.
- There are reported inconsistencies in the levels of support provided.
- Some external agencies are adopting strategies to control or limit the number of learners who are assessed and who receive support. 'Inclusion' is open to interpretation, meaning that there is often lack of clarity around thresholds for support.
- There is evidence that local authorities, particularly in England, are moving to traded services. Buying in support is becoming more costly as a result and some schools cannot pay for these services, meaning that learners do not get the support that they need.

Teachers and schools

- More than two thirds of teachers report that they never, rarely or only sometimes receive the support they need to teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively.
- In the last five years, specialist teaching and support-staffing posts have been cut. Working hours have also been cut.
- The demands on the roles of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators have increased, with many reporting that their general teaching responsibilities have also increased.
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) reforms in England have resulted in vastly increased workloads for staff in schools.
- Teachers try to do the best for the learners they teach. However, they are not always equipped with the knowledge, skills and expertise to meet the needs of learners with SEN/ALN/ASN. Increasing pressures and workloads, including those arising from other education reforms, have consequences for teacher morale, teacher wellbeing and teacher retention.

Securing improvement

- Governments across the UK must take responsibility for addressing these issues to ensure that all learners receive a high-quality education that meets their needs. Teacher workload, teacher wellbeing and teacher retention are integral to delivering this.

Introduction

Across the UK, there is an increasing focus on inclusion and a clear expectation that every teacher is a teacher of SEN/ALN/ASN. Feedback that the NASUWT has received from teachers and school leaders suggested that the demands being placed on teachers and schools are increasing – that increasing numbers of learners with more complex needs are being taught in mainstream classrooms; that special schools are admitting learners with more complex needs; and that cuts to specialist services are exacerbating the difficulties that teachers face. The survey sought evidence about the nature and extent of these issues. The first part of this section outlines the survey findings.

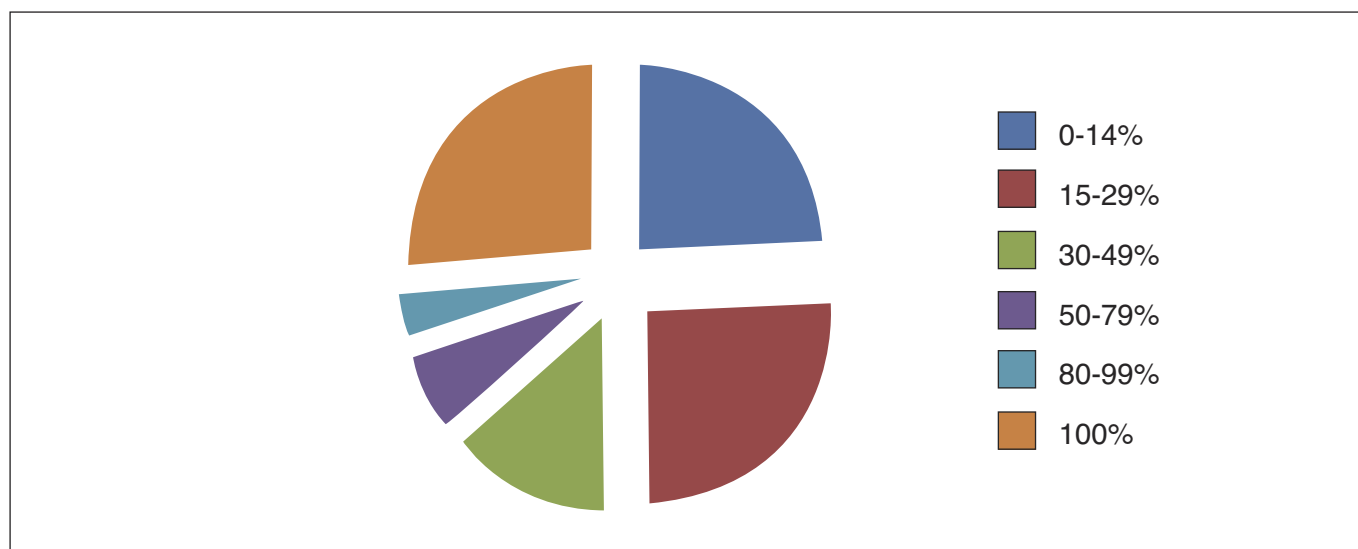
The NASUWT has received reports from teachers and school leaders to indicate that schools and teachers are encountering significant challenges as a result of austerity, including issues arising from cuts to local authority and other education and health services. The Union wanted to establish the nature and extent of the issues. SENCOs, ALNCOs, Heads of Inclusion, ASN Co-ordinators and school leaders were considered

best placed to provide information about what was happening in their school. They were asked about staffing in their school over the last five years, and about the issues affecting their school, including external support for SEN/ALN/ASN. The second part of this section reports on the responses to these questions.

Identification of learners as SEN/ALN/ASN

Ninety-four percent (94%) of respondents said that they taught learners with SEN/ALN or ASN. Just over a quarter of respondents (26%) said that 100% of the learners that they teach were identified as SEN/ALN/ASN. Twenty-six percent (26%) said that between 15% and 29% of the learners they teach had SEN, ALN or ASN, whilst 24% of respondents reported that less than 15% of the learners that they teach were identified as having SEN, ALN or ASN. Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents reported that 30-49% of the learners they teach were SEN/ALN/ASN. Six percent (6%) of respondents reported that between 50% and 79% of the learners they teach were SEN/ALN/ASN and 3% reported that between 80% and 99% of the learners that they taught had been identified as SEN/ALN/ASN.

Figure 1: Proportions of learners with SEN, ALN or ASN that teachers teach in their classes.

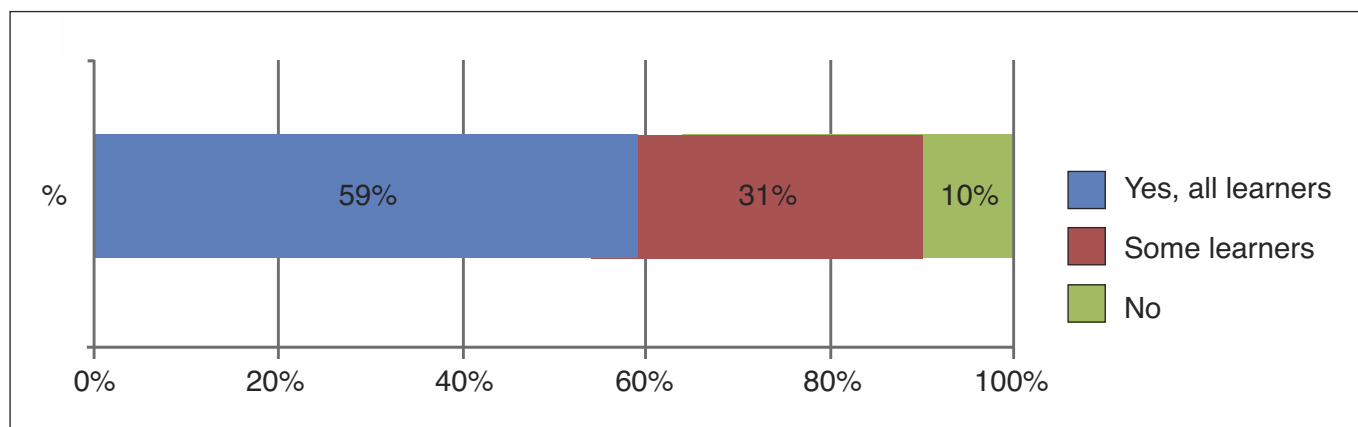


Responses to the question: In your classes, approximately what percentage of pupils/learners that you teach has SEN/ALN/ASN?

Support for learners with SEN/ALN/ASN

Teachers and school leaders were asked whether they were made aware of the special needs of learners with SEN/ALN/ASN. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents said that they are made aware of the specific needs of each learner with SEN/ALN/ASN that they teach. However, almost one third of teachers (31%) said that they were only made aware of the specific needs of some learners. Alarming, one in ten respondents said that they were not made aware of learners' specific needs.

Figure 2: Do learners with SEN/ALN/ASN receive the support to which they are entitled?



Responses to the question: Are you made aware of the specific support to which each of the pupils/learners with SEN/ALN/ASN that you teach is entitled?

An examination of comments about the identification of SEN/ALN/ASN reveals several problems. These

include problems associated with the general nature of the information provided. For example; *'often no more information is given other than "SEN". No information available as to the specific SEN or strategies'*.

Other respondents pointed to a lack of clarity as to how SEN/ALN/ASN is identified or suggested that policy reforms have led to fewer learners being identified. For example: *'there is no consensus on who should be on the SEN register and who should not'*.

This last point highlights issues about the relationship between the interpretation of 'SEN' and identification. Independent research commissioned by the NASUWT has shown that 'inclusion' and 'SEN' are open to interpretation and that the point at which external support might be needed depends on context and local approaches to managing and supporting SEN and inclusion.³

Teachers were asked whether they believed that the learners that they teach receive the support to which they are entitled. Just over one third of respondents (39%) said that learners mostly receive the support to which they are entitled and a further third (37%) said that they sometimes receive the support to which they are entitled. Just 7% of respondents said that learners always received the support to which they are entitled. Almost one fifth of respondents (18%) said that learners rarely or never received the support to which they are entitled.

Most of the comments about the identification and support provided to learners with SEN/ALN/ASN were about the difficulties that learners faced in obtaining appropriate support. Many of these comments related to recent reforms. For instance:

'the emphasis is now on teaching staff to provide the support needed...which has [meant that there is] a lack of specialist knowledge of the needs of these students'.

'Our local authority has cut services for the most vulnerable and the impact is significant. I am appalled by how many children who are entitled to an assessment for an EHC plan are denied this.'

'the new SEND [special educational needs and disabilities] requirements mean that a large number of pupils who would previously [have] received statements are now supported at SEN support and there is a vast difference in the amount of specialist teacher time they receive [compared to those who have a statement or EHC plan]'.

This last comment highlights the growing challenges that class teachers face.

In the case of those who co-ordinate SEN/ALN/ASN, respondents spoke about increasing difficulties in securing support. For example:

'very onerous. Months of evidence before intervention' and '[there are] difficulties getting support from health and social care'.

The responses indicate that greater demands are being placed on class teachers to meet learners' needs. For instance:

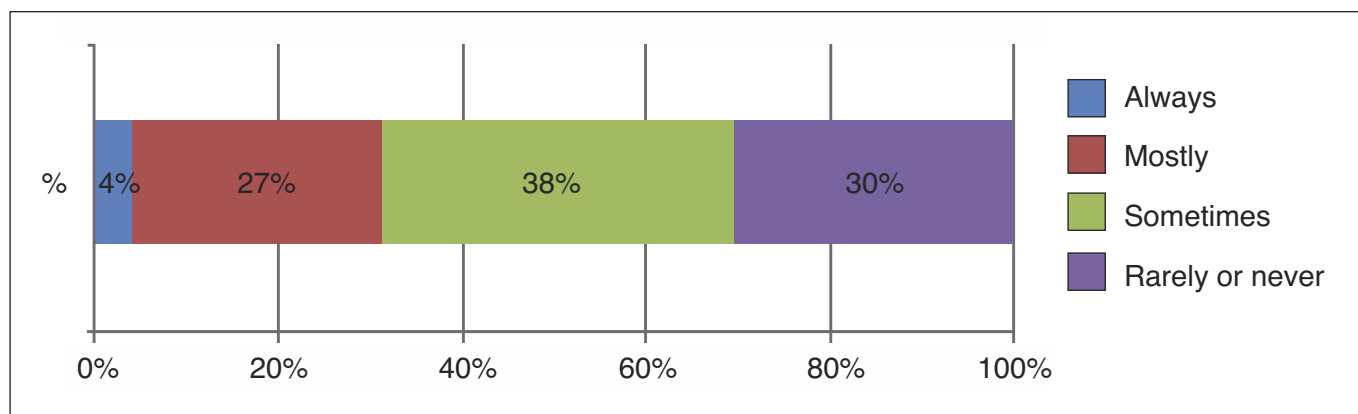
'I trained myself to deliver dyslexia tests, and taught students in my own time (four mornings a week from 8-8.45) in order to help them master phase 2 phonics, as it was impossible to meet the child's needs within the structure of the working day, due to the demands of the rest of the class.'

'The school firmly puts children at the heart of all decisions. Staff work longer hours, e.g. lunchtimes, to ensure that children have their needs met'.

Teachers were asked whether they were given the support that they needed so that they could teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively. Worryingly, almost one third of respondents (30%) said that they either rarely or never received the support that they needed. Just over one third of respondents (38%) reported that they sometimes received the support that they needed and just over a quarter (27%) reported that they mostly receive the support that they needed to teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively. Just 4% of respondents said that they always receive the support that they need to teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively.

3 Ellis, Simon; Tod, Janet; and Graham-Matheson, Lynne (2008), *Special Educational Needs and Inclusion: Reflection and Renewal*. NASUWT, Rednal.

Figure 3: Do teachers receive the support that they need to teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively?



Responses to the question: Do you receive the support that you need to teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively?

Many respondents commented that teachers were not receiving the support that they needed to teach learners with SEN/ALN/ASN effectively.

One SENCO said that, 'with the reduction of my hours and the term "quality first teaching", class teachers' workload with SEN pupils has doubled'.

Teachers in both mainstream schools and special school provision reported experiencing difficulties. For example, one respondent working in a special school said that reduced funding and restructuring had resulted in 'fewer staff, and class sizes are increasing. Pressures are increasing, and staff are exhausted.'

Many respondents commented on the pressures being placed on class teachers. For example:

'The combination of reduced TA [Teaching Assistant] support, larger class sizes and increased numbers of pupils with SEN makes teaching more difficult and stressful'.

They also made reference to the impact that lack of training has on their ability to support learners with SEN/ALN/ASN. For instance:

'Neither me nor my TA have received specialised training to support SEN children who each year have very different needs'.

Some respondents raised concerns about school practices that prioritise particular subjects. For example:

'Mostly English and maths get support'.

School practices may also have implications for the support that teachers can provide to learners, as one respondent explained:

'the school removed ALN pupils from my classes...they missed a third of my subject lessons through the year. This made it extremely difficult to maintain consistency in classes, continuity of work, and meet the targets set by the SLT [Senior Leadership Team] for levels and global targets.'

Several respondents highlighted inconsistencies in access to support. For instance:

'Pupils with very similar profiles have very different allocations'.

A number of respondents said that learners were more likely to get support if their parent made a fuss or if the parent understood how to challenge 'the system':

'In my setting, pupils are given more support if their parents make enough fuss.'

'In my experience, children with educated proactive parents who know how to fight for their children can get what they need'.

They also outlined some of the challenges that need to be considered when allocating resources:

'Shared-hour packages, at least at post-primary, are impossible to manage, especially at GCSE level when pupils choose very different paths'.

'The SENCO works part time and so is not always available when staff have queries and questions.'

The high-stakes nature of school accountability, including the priority given to judging learners' attainment and progress in a narrow range of academic subjects, can have implications for inclusion. Some respondents expressed concern about the practices that some schools were adopting to limit the numbers of learners with SEN/ALN/ASN:

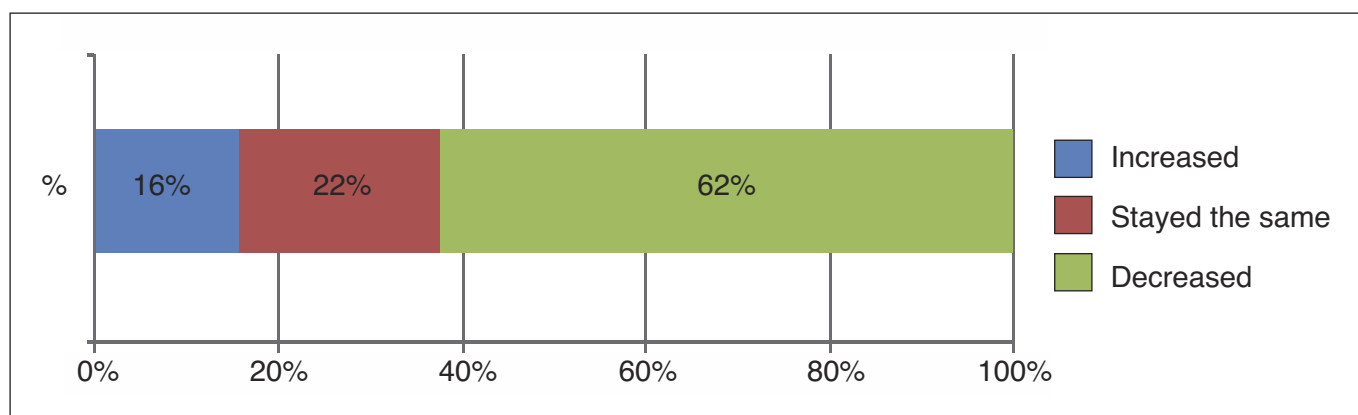
'Schools are much less willing to accept children who will affect their results/league table position and in particular this means that Year 6 pupils are very hard to place. Parents often end up home educat[ing].'

'Some academies have funding excuses for not providing appropriate equipment as reasonable adjustment.'

'I have seen a trend of schools permanently excluding the week before an EHC plan is agreed so that they cannot be named in the EHC plan.'

Finally, teachers were asked whether support for learners with SEN/ALN/ASN had increased, stayed the same or decreased over the last five years. Overwhelmingly, respondents reported a decrease in the support provided. Almost two thirds of respondents (62%) reported a decrease in the level of support provided. Only 22% said that the level of support had remained the same and just 16% said that it had increased.

Figure 4: In the last five years, has support for learners with SEN/ALN/ASN increased, stayed the same or decreased?



Responses to the question: In the last five years, has the level of support received by the learners/pupils that you teach with SEN/ALN/ASN increased, stayed the same, or decreased?

Staffing of SEN/ALN/ASN

There may be several factors that influence the levels and nature of support that learners receive, including levels of staffing within the school, levels of external support provided to learners and schools, and changing expectations of and demands on school staff.

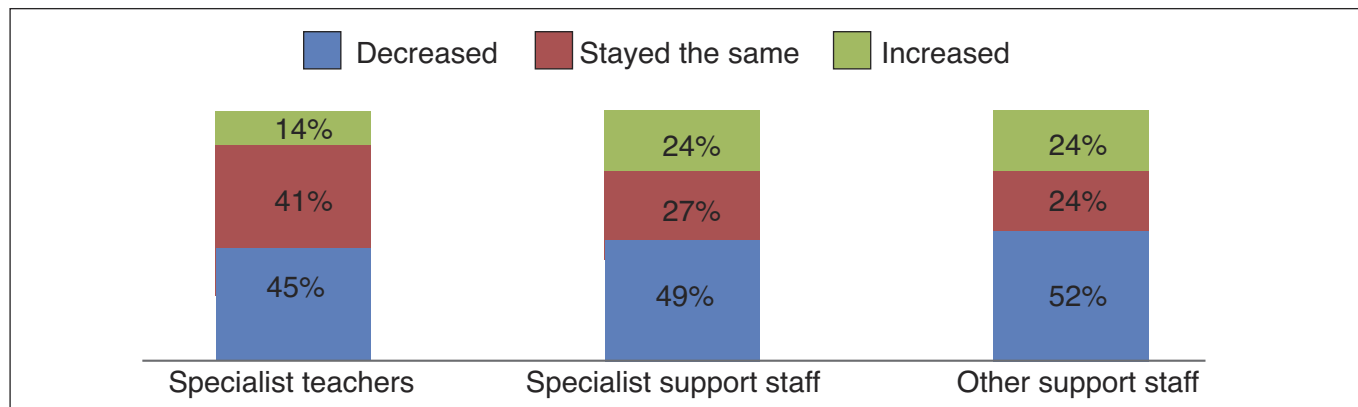
SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators and school leaders were asked whether specialist staffing and support within school had increased, stayed the same or decreased in the last five years. Specifically, they were asked about staffing trends for specialist teachers, specialist support staff and other support staff.

Focusing on specialist teachers, 45% of respondents reported a decrease in the number of specialist teachers over the last five years. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents said that levels had remained the same; and just 14% said that the number of specialist teachers in their school had increased.

In terms of specialist support staff, 49% of respondents reported that specialist support staffing levels had decreased in their schools in the last five years; just over a quarter of respondents (27%) said that levels had remained the same; and 24% said that levels had increased.

Over half of respondents (52%) said that there had been a decrease in the number of other support staff posts in their schools in the last five years; just under a quarter of respondents (24%) reported that support staffing levels had remained the same; and 24% reported that levels had increased.

Figure 5: Have staffing levels increased, stayed the same or decreased?



Responses to the question: Over the last five years, has the number of staff employed by the school to support learners with SEN/ALN/ASN increased, stayed the same or decreased: Specialist teachers? Specialist support staff? Other support staff?

Respondents provided examples of the cuts to staff posts in their school. For instance:

'I teach in an ASN base. I used to have six pupils and six PSAs [Pupil Support Assistants]. I now have ten pupils and two PSAs.'

'We have gone from an SEN team made up of 14 TAs to [one with] 3.5 TAs.'

Others explained that their school had cut staff working hours:

'There is less funding in school to support SEN children. Support staff have had [their] hours cut so less support is available.'

'When I started as a full-time teacher and SENCO, 2/5 days were allocated [to SENCO duties]. Now I work two days a week and only two mornings are allocated to SEN. It is nowhere near enough time.'

Many respondents spoke about the impact of cuts to staff posts or staff working hours on teachers and learners. For example:

'I have not been able to provide the support that I did when I was a full-time ALNCO without class teaching responsibilities.'

'All pupils have an EHC plan. However, due to reduced funding and restructuring there are fewer staff, and class sizes are increasing. Pressures are increasing and staff are exhausted and losing confidence in the system.'

'Finding that more pupils with MLD [moderate learning difficulties]...are being kept in mainstream where there is a lack of expertise'

'There is very limited time to communicate with the TA so I can show her targets and strategies for intervention groups. Also, [there is] very limited time for feedback to inform next plans.'

This last comment is significant because it shows how the cuts and time pressures on staff may undermine effective practice. It also raises issues about the role and effective use of support staff in classrooms. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published guidance for schools on making effective use of Teaching Assistants (TAs).⁴

Whilst there is a debate to be had about the role that TAs should play in supporting learners with SEN, there is evidence that young learners and low attaining learners benefit from smaller class sizes.⁵ This raises significant concerns about policies for inclusion which do not address the matter of resources, and public sectors cuts which result in schools facing growing financial constraints.

In England, respondents reported that recent SEND reforms in England had resulted in increased workloads of staff in schools. For example:

⁴ For example, Jonathan Sharples, Rob Webster and Peter Blatchford (2015), *Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants: Guidance Report*.

⁵ See <https://www.classsizeresearch.org.uk/cspar-results>. (Accessed 2 February 2018).

'The SEN reforms have vastly increased the admin workload of teachers in my school; they are regularly expected to contribute to EHC plans and IEPs [Individual Education Plans] with little specialist training or support'.

'Paperwork has more than quadrupled which has had a significant impact on workload'.

'Massive amounts of time go into organising CAFs [central assessment frameworks], TAFs [teacher assessment frameworks], SEND reviews, care plans...and co-ordinating with agencies who are understaffed.'

'EHC plans (initial assessments) are turned down as a matter of course by the LA. The second or third time they are submitted they contain a ridiculous amount of info/evidence. Goalposts are constantly moving.'

External support for SEN/ALN/ASN

SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators and school leaders were asked to indicate if they or other staff in their school had experienced difficulties associated with external SEN/ALN/ASN support.

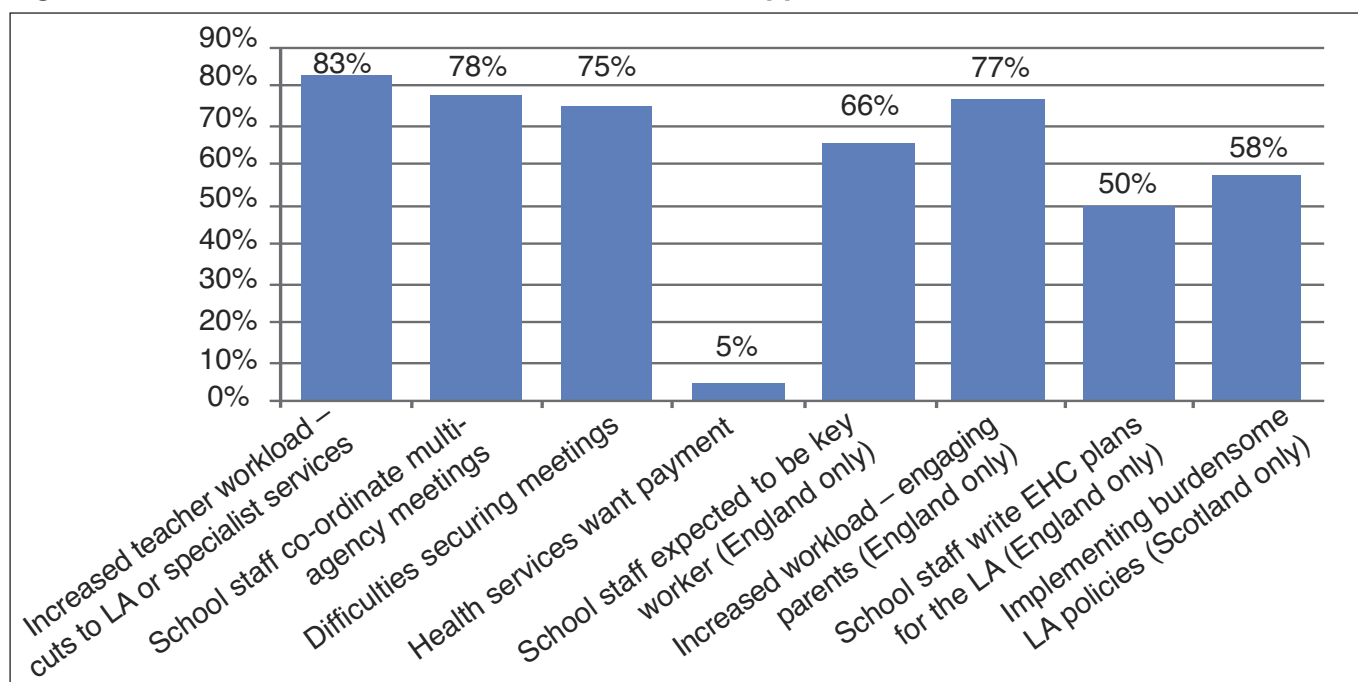
Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents said that the workload of teachers and school leaders had increased as a result of cuts to specialist services for SEN/ALN/ASN. Examining some of the reasons for this increased workload, three quarters of respondents (75%) said that there were often difficulties securing meetings with staff from other agencies.

Whilst the SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator has responsibility for co-ordinating provision for learners with SEN/ALN/ASN, there are concerns that they are then expected to co-ordinate multi-agency meetings, including the administrative aspects of identifying, arranging and hosting meetings. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents said that school staff are expected to co-ordinate multi-agency meetings.

In the case of respondents from England, more than three quarters (77%) of respondents said that their workload had increased as a result of the need to engage parents in decisions about SEN support. Also, two thirds of respondents from England (66%) said that school staff are expected to take on the role of key worker, a role that involves liaising closely with other agencies and co-ordinating multi-agency meetings. Further, whilst local authorities are responsible for writing EHC plans, 50% of respondents from England said that school staff write EHC plans for the local authority.

In Scotland, local authorities play a bigger role in the management of schools. However, 58% of respondents from Scotland said that the local authority required their school to implement burdensome policies and procedures.

Figure 6: Difficulties associated with SEN/ALN/ASN support*



Responses to the question: Do any of the following statements apply in your school? (Tick all that apply.)

* Where an administration is specified, the percentages relate to the proportion of respondents from that administration.

Respondents from England, Northern Ireland and Wales were asked who provides the school with external support for SEN/ALN. More than three quarters of respondents (84%) from England and Wales said that the local authority provided external support; 69% of respondents from Northern Ireland said that external support was provided by the Education Authority.

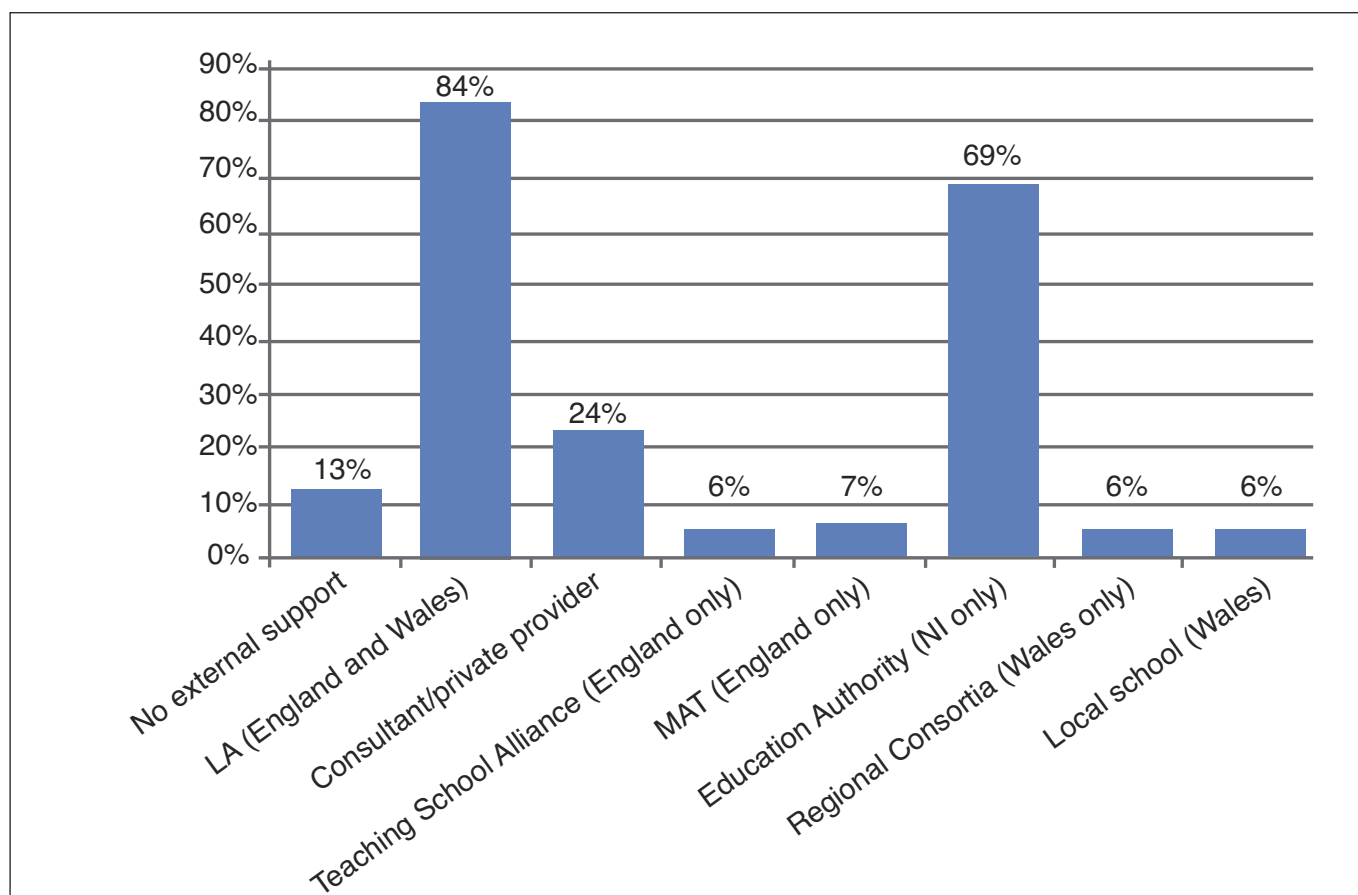
A quarter of respondents (24%) in England, Northern Ireland and Wales said that the school got external support from a consultant or private provider. Disturbingly, 13% of respondents said that their school received no external support.

In the case of England, only 7% of respondents said that they received external support from the multi-academy trust (MAT), although 27% of respondents who worked in an academy said that the school received support from an MAT SEN specialist. However, it is notable that academies were far more likely to receive external support for SEN from the local authority, with 81% of academy respondents reporting that their school received support from local authority specialist services.

Six percent (6%) of respondents said that they received external support from a Teaching School Alliance. One percent (1%) said that external support had been brokered by the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC).

Whilst only 6% of respondents said that the school had to pay in order for a member of health service staff to attend meetings, such as an initial assessment meeting, this was identified as an issue by some respondents in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. This may well be linked to the shift to a model of traded public services, but it has significant implications for schools and school budgets.

Figure 7: Sources of external support*



Responses to the question: Who provides your school with external support for SEN/ALN? (Tick all that apply.)

* Where an administration is specified, the percentages relate to the proportion of respondents from that administration.

Respondents reported that the workload of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators, school leaders and class teachers had increased as a result of cuts to external services. For example:

'ASENCO is expected to do work that was previously the responsibility of the LA. Teachers are being asked to do paperwork that they are unfamiliar with. The school is being asked to take the lead and responsibilities have been dumped on us'.

'We are expected to do more at school now as SEND support has reduced... [also, there have been] too many changes of staff [in the LA and new staff do not have] sufficient knowledge'.

They also referred to the difficulties that they were encountering in obtaining external support:

'Outside agencies are really difficult to get involved. The paperwork is ridiculous. Social workers are always cover and different each meeting'.

'SEN paperwork takes forever to come back; it took three years to get an EHC plan from a conversion from an annual statement.'

'External agencies expect more and more evidence before referrals are made. This increases both teacher and SENCO workload as there is a considerable amount of time in between'.

'[The] process is extremely slow even when pupils are referred. [We are] regularly waiting 12-18 months for pupils to access CAMHS [child and adolescent mental health services] after referral'.

'Extremely limited external support from all external agencies. Mental health support services and longer term specialist support for individual pupils extremely difficult to access, even when pupils [are] in total crisis'.

Further, respondents gave examples of stalling policies and strategies that some external agencies have adopted to control or limit the number of learners who receive support. For instance:

'Our LA will only support an EHC plan application where an LA Ed Psych has signed it off and we are only allowed enough EP [Educational Psychology] hours per term to work with two children. We currently have at least nine children awaiting an EHC plan, of which we will only be allowed to progress the application for six this academic year'.

'Funding decisions can take far too long and the threshold is being raised'.

'Only one child each year can receive support from [an] educational psychologist'.

'Securing funding from LEAs [Local Educational Authorities] is more difficult, with rejection in the first stages from LEAs being the norm'.

'We have a 68-page document to wade through before anyone will even consider coming out to begin the identification process. This provides a barrier to pupils receiving the support they need'.

A number of respondents noted the lack of clarity regarding 'inclusion' and the interpretation of 'SEN', meaning that the point at which external support is needed depends on context and local approaches to managing and supporting SEN and inclusion. For example:

'There is a lack of clarity around the thresholds for the identification of pupils with SEND'.

This lack of clarity presents challenges because it can make it difficult for both schools and learners and their parents to challenge decisions about the support that will be provided. It also links to a much wider debate about the identification of conditions.⁶ However, there was a widely held view that, *'the threshold is being raised'* and that *'it is harder to get support for those children that need it to stay in mainstream, which was the whole point of the inclusion practice'.*

There was also recognition that many external services had experienced massive cuts to their budgets. For example:

'The Ed Psych service has been pared to the core'.

'There are not enough external professionals to provide reports, wait times for services such as OT [Occupational Therapy] and CAMHS are shocking and the reports provided are often generic'.

⁶ For example, see Merten et. al. *Over-diagnosis of mental disorders in children and adolescents (in developed countries) in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health* (2017, 11:5).

'Lack of engagement by other services – through no fault of the individuals working in them, but due to lack of staff and resources – means we have to pick up the pieces more and more'.

'The LA professionals we work with are great, but cuts have meant that there [are fewer] of them covering large areas. So, of course, there are limits to what they can do.'

Respondents reported that the costs of accessing external support had increased and explained that this was a barrier to obtaining support. Particular reference was made to local authorities moving to traded services and to those services becoming more expensive as a result:

'Many services are now only available as traded services which are unaffordable, e.g. one consultation with an ed psych represents 150% of my total yearly budget.'

'External support services are dwindling and schools cannot afford the traded services'.

'Some specialist SEN support services are very expensive, e.g. the autism service is charging £600 for a morning's surgery per term with no contact with the children and no resources, even if they recommend them during the surgery. The surgery is limited to six children so each consultation will be about 30 minutes long. That works out at £300 per child over the year for 1.5 hours of work'.

If external services fail to provide support to schools, teachers still need to ensure that they meet the needs of all of the learners that they teach. Several respondents made reference to this point. For instance:

'Local authority cuts put unrealistic demands on school and myself as SENCO'.

This has consequences for the quality of provision:

'We are on the front lines, fighting fire with damp tissues.'

It also places SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators under great pressure. For instance, one respondent noted that:

'Parents hold the school responsible and school places the burden of dealing with unhappy parents on me, the SENCO. A huge amount of my time is spent apologising and mollifying'.

This has consequences for staff morale, staff wellbeing and ultimately staff retention:

'The effects on my emotional wellbeing...are challenging'.

'...when there is a lack of support in the classroom. The severity of [learners'] SEN needs means I feel inadequate and lack confidence'.

'Staff turnover is high; our teachers and support staff are under extreme pressure.'

Ultimately, this is a political issue that governments must address. The tension between the expectation of increased inclusion in mainstream schools and classrooms and the UK Government's policy of austerity and cuts to public services is summed up by the following response:

'Dealing with SEND requirements has [now] been placed on the [class] teacher. There is little or no support, no CPD [about how] to deal with certain SEND and reduced to no TA support within the classroom. If we are supposed to have inclusive classrooms, we need to be given the time, training and support to do so.'

Training and CPD

Summary of key issues

Access

- Many respondents report significant difficulties accessing high-quality, effective SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD. In particular, class teachers struggle to access SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD.
- Workload and time are major barriers to teachers undertaking SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD – many teachers report that they undertake training/CPD outside the working day.
- Some teachers studying for SENCO/ALNCO qualifications are forced to study at weekends and in school holidays. This has implications for future recruitment to SENCO posts, particularly in England, where newly appointed SENCOs are required to gain a recognised SENCO award.
- Teachers report that their school does not have enough money to fund training/CPD and that external training/CPD is often very expensive.
- A small but significant number of teachers report that they have to pay for their own training/CPD. There is a risk that further pressures on school budgets will lead to more teachers being expected to pay for their training/CPD.

Quality

- An international review of high-quality CPD identifies the key features to include: a strong focus on learner outcomes; extended learning (usually lasting at least two terms); follow-up and consolidation activities; opportunities to experiment in the classroom; opportunities for peer learning and peer support; and opportunities to analyse and reflect on what has been learned. High-quality CPD also takes account of individual teachers' starting points and their day-to-day experiences.
- There is enormous variation in the quality of training/CPD. Many teachers report that it has not helped them to do their job more effectively.
- Almost three quarters of respondents who received SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD in the last two years received just one day or less in total.
- There appear to be limited opportunities for teachers to undertake practical training/CPD or to engage in collaborative and co-operative approaches such as coaching and mentoring.
- Teachers do not have time to experiment and implement what they have learned in their classrooms.

CPD/training providers

- Most training/CPD is delivered by a member of school staff. Local authorities are still a major provider of CPD/training across the UK but, increasingly, schools are obtaining CPD/training from consultants and private providers. This is often expensive and there are concerns that programmes are 'glitzy' rather than focused on what teachers need.

Introduction

The NASUWT has longstanding concerns about both the availability and the quality of SEN/ALN/ASN-related training and CPD for teachers. The Union commissioned independent research into teachers' experiences of SEN and inclusion which revealed that many teachers experience difficulties accessing appropriate CPD.⁷ Further, studies of newly and recently qualified teachers highlight concerns about the limited coverage of SEN/ALN/ASN in initial teacher education.⁸

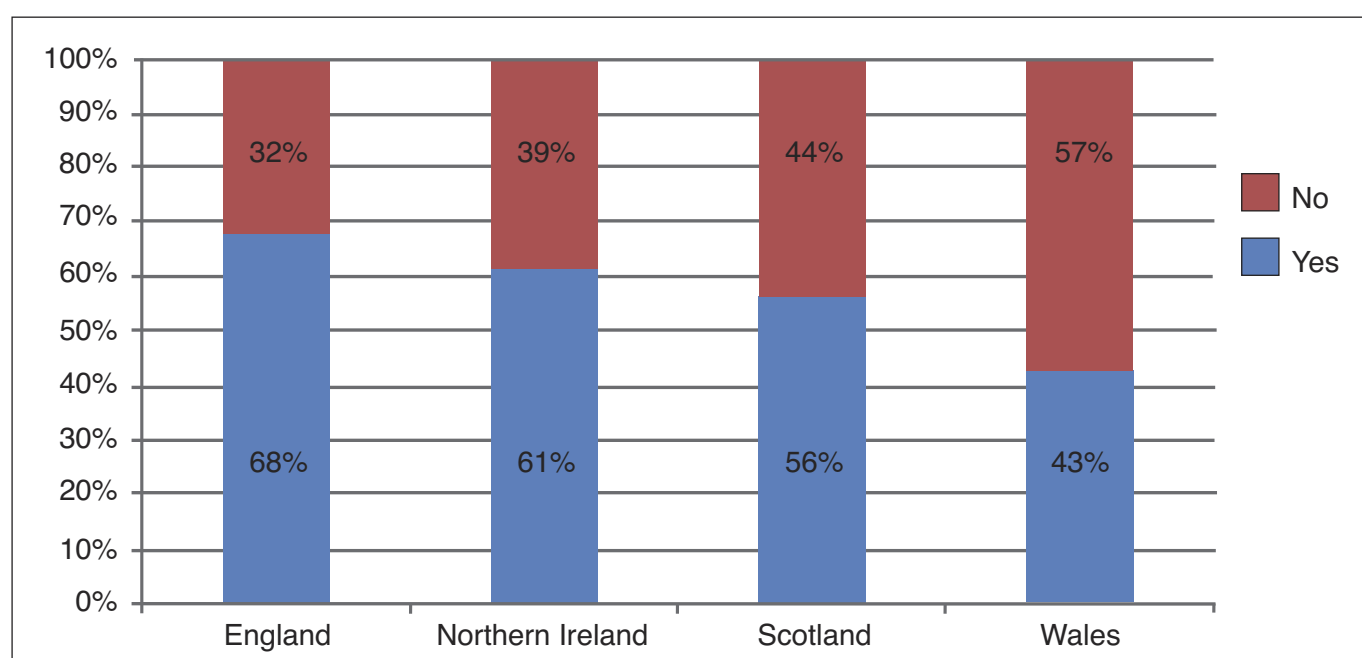
7 Ellis, Simon; Tod, Janet; and Graham-Matheson, Lynne (2012) *Reflection, Renewal and Reality: Teachers' Experience of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion*. NASUWT, Rednal.

8 PRCI Ltd (2009) *Sink or Swim? Learning Lessons from Newly Qualified and Recently Qualified Teachers*. Rednal, NASUWT. And evidence about the quality of ITT to equip trainees to teach pupils with SEN in annual surveys of NQTs published by the NCTL.

Teachers' participation in SEN/ALN/ASN-related training and CPD

Teachers and school leaders were asked whether they had received SEN/ALN/ASN-specific training or CPD within the last two years. Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents said that they had received training or CPD within the last two years. However, there were some differences in responses across administrations, with only 43% of respondents in Wales and 56% of respondents from Scotland stating that they had received training or CPD within the last two years, compared to 68% of respondents from England and 61% of respondents from Northern Ireland. While recent SEND reforms might in part explain why more teachers and school leaders from England have received SEN-related training or CPD within the last two years, it is important to note that almost one third of respondents from England (32%) said that they had not received such training or CPD. Given the policies of inclusion that operate across all four administrations and the expectation that every teacher is a teacher of SEN/ALN/ASN, the high number of teachers reporting that they have not received CPD or training within the last two years is worrying. Also, given that the participation in the survey was voluntary, it is likely that those with responsibilities for or an interest in SEN/ALN/ASN issues were more likely to complete the survey. Therefore, it is possible that the proportion of teachers who have not received any SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD in the last two years is much higher than this.

Figure 8: Have teachers received SEN/ALN or ASN-specific training or CPD within the last two years?



Responses to the question: *Have you received SEN/ALN/ASN-specific training or CPD in the last two years?*

Some respondents indicated that their school's management did not prioritise SEN/ALN/ASN, or that only some staff had access. For instance:

'Training days often taken with changes to curriculum, health and safety, etc. rather than specific to SEN'.

'Training for SEN issues seems to be way down the list in most schools.'

'All applications for training refused'. 'Non-existent except for SENCOs'.

'Received training as SENCO, but not seen by SLT as a priority for all staff.'

'As a part-time teacher, I rarely get CPD training.'

Several respondents stressed the importance of all staff receiving SEN/ALN/ASN-related training/CPD:

'They are preaching to the converted (we who are ALN specialists). Truth is much of the training needs to be universal'.

'There is a lack of consistency... in meeting the needs of students because staff don't have sufficient training or opportunity to embed strategies and initiatives.'

However, the overriding message was that workload, reported pressures on school budgets, and lack of staff cover were major barriers to teachers accessing SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD:

'I have enrolled but haven't started the SENCO qualification. I am very concerned about the impact that it will have on my work-life balance as I have a class responsibility'.

'[It is] becoming increasingly hard to access because so many staff have been cut'.

'I would like the management of my school to recognise that all staff need to have regular, relevant, up-to-date SEN training, but all they say is "there is no money for it".'

'Schools are often reluctant to release SENCOs with large teaching commitments'.

'Often, we have staff who are interested in attending [SEN training/CPD] but their requests are turned down due to finance and cover/staff costs.'

'Budget cuts and a reduction in staff at [the Education Authority] mean little or no training available for staff [in school].'

'Budget constraints have meant we cannot access training as the school does not have the resources to allow staff out.'

'Not available locally. Little budget to access this further afield'.

Several respondents made specific reference to the need to improve the quality of SEN/ALN/ASN-related training in initial teacher education. For instance:

'need more specialised SPMLD [severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties] teacher training during ITT courses to prepare the next cohort of staff'.

The comments reflect the findings of NASUWT-commissioned research⁹ and annual surveys of newly qualified teachers (NQTs).¹⁰

One teacher spoke about the benefit of mainstream teachers gaining work experience in a special school or specialist provision:

'I completed my NQT year in an SEN school which provided a lot of in-house on-the-job mentoring and practical advice'.

Focus of SEN/ALN/ASN-related training/CPD

Teachers and school leaders who said that they had received training or CPD within the last two years were asked about the training or CPD that they had received, including the focus of the training/CPD and its effectiveness.

The most common training or CPD received covered specific needs and/or conditions such as dyslexia, ADHD or autism. Eighty-five percent (85%) of respondents said that they had received training or CPD that covered specific needs and/or conditions. Just over two thirds of respondents (68%) said that they had received training or CPD that covered social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), and 68% said that they had received training or CPD that covered teaching strategies to include learners with SEN/ALN/ASN. Similarly, almost two thirds of respondents (64%) had undertaken training or CPD that covered SEN/ALN/ASN-related behaviour management.

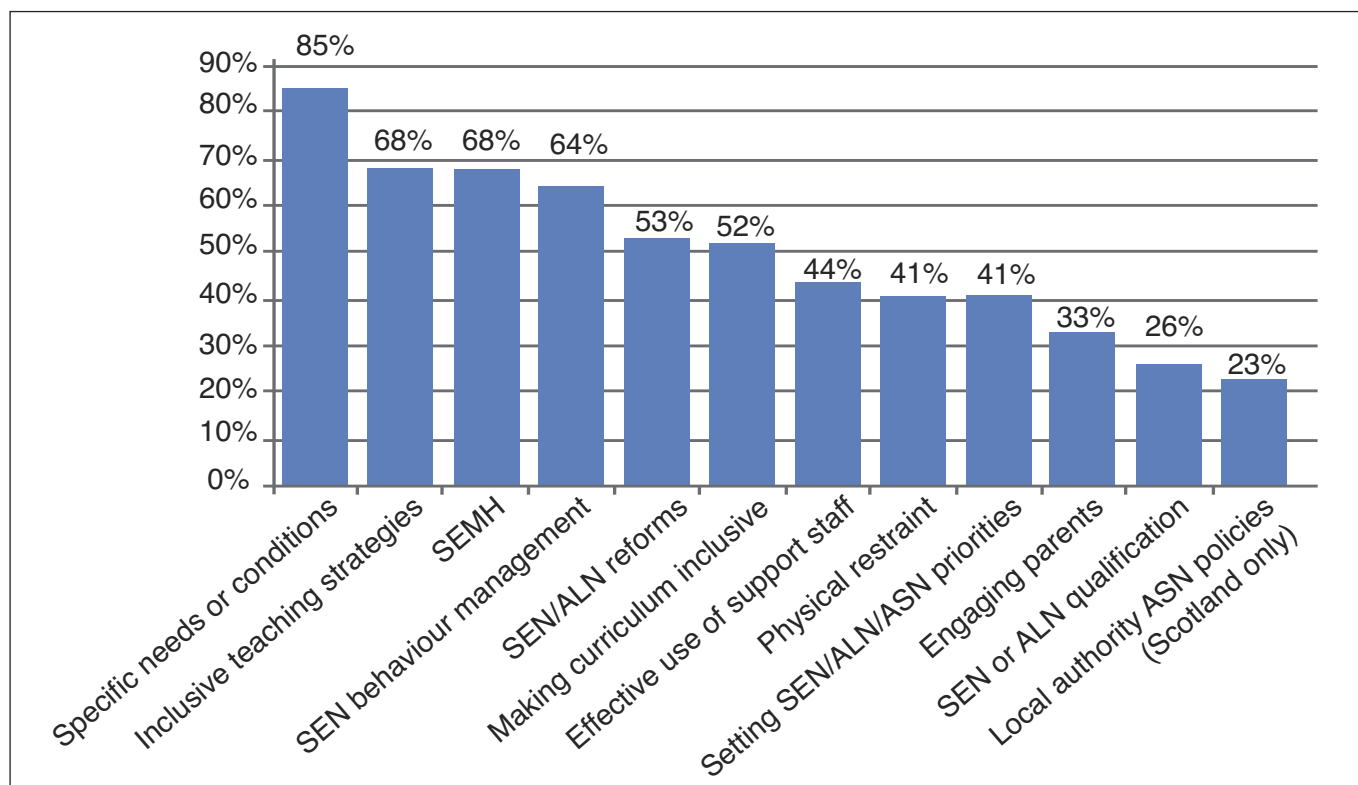
Just over half of respondents (53%) had received training or CPD that covered SEN reforms in England or Northern Ireland or ALN reforms in Wales. Similarly, 52% of respondents said that they had undertaken training or CPD that covered making the curriculum inclusive. Just under half of respondents who indicated that they had received SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD within the last two years said that they had received training or CPD that covered the effective use of support staff (44%), physical restraint (41%) or setting SEN/ALN/ASN priorities (41%).

One third of respondents (33%) said that they had received training or CPD that focused on engaging parents. Just over a quarter of respondents (26%) said that they had undertaken training for the SENCO award in England or a related SEN qualification in Northern Ireland or Wales. Just under a quarter of respondents from Scotland (23%) said that they had received training from the local authority that covered ASN-related policies and practice.

9 PRCI (2009), op. cit.

10 Pye, Julia; Stobart, Rowena; and Lindley, Lucy (August 2016), *Newly Qualified Teachers: Annual Survey 2016 – Research Report*. DfE RR621.

Figure 9: What training or CPD did respondents receive?*



Responses to the first part of the question asked of respondents who said that they had received SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD within the last two years: What training/CPD did you receive and how effective has the training/CPD been?

* Where an administration is specified, the percentages relate to the proportion of respondents from that administration.

Several respondents said that they needed support to enable them to teach pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). For instance:

'Not sufficient training given on social emotional and behaviour issues for children with ASN.'

'Mental health, emotional behaviour is a major issue at the moment and I'm not sure that sufficient training has been provided'.

Others expressed concern about the lack of specific training or CPD. For example:

'[There is a] lack of training for SEBD.'

Or gave details of the training/CPD they would like. For example:

'I would like more ASD, ADHD and SEBD training.'

'Specifically on inclusion within a class of 27+ and examples [of] "how to..."'

Effectiveness of training/CPD

Respondents were asked about the effectiveness of the training or CPD they had received. The findings suggest that the quality of training and CPD varies considerably. However, the overriding picture is that relatively few teachers consider the training/CPD to be effective.

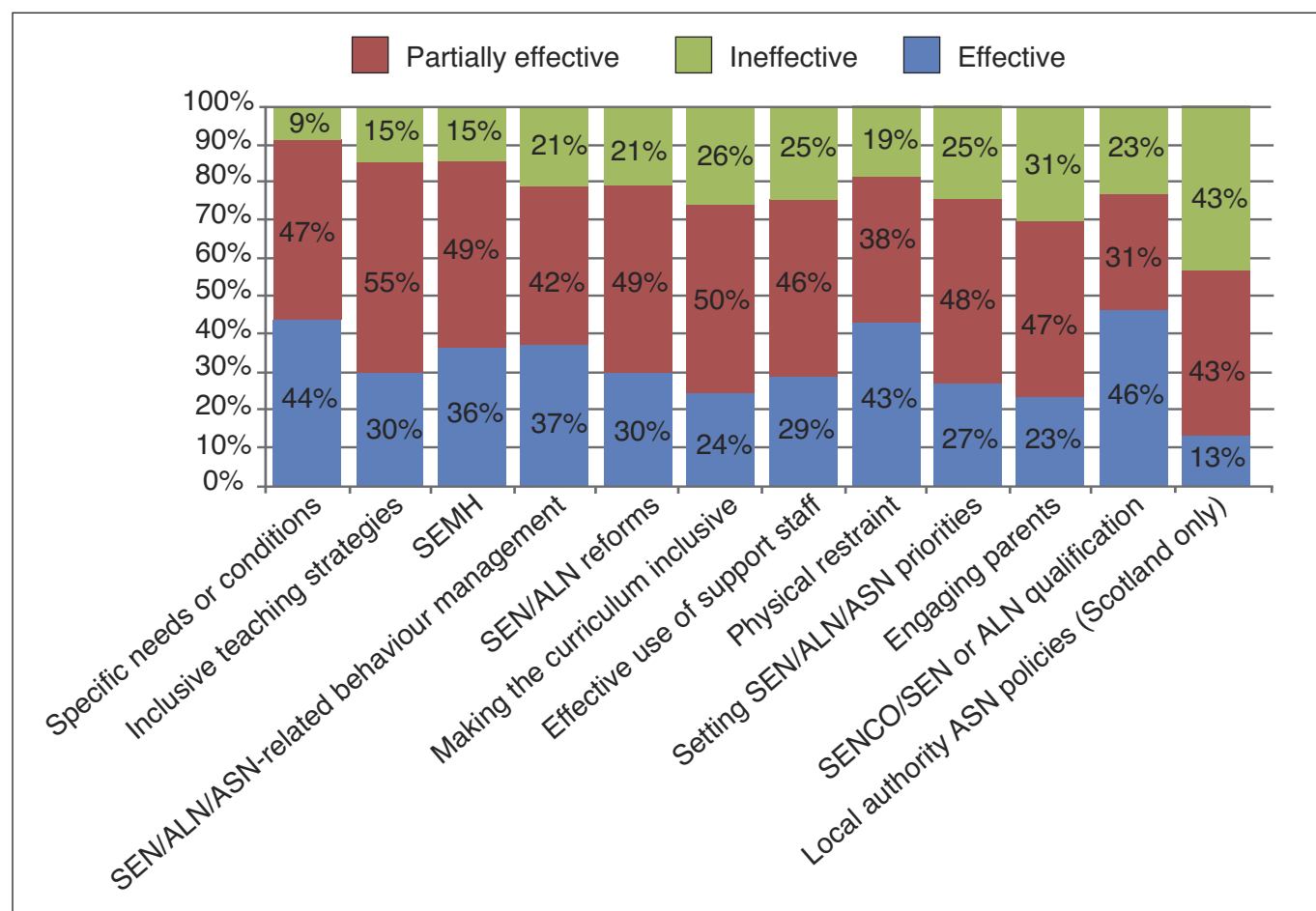
Just under half of respondents (46%) who said that they had undertaken the SENCO award or training for an SEN/ALN qualification said that the training was effective. Forty-four percent (44%) of those who had received training/CPD covering specific conditions or needs identified the training/CPD as effective.

However, it should be noted that more respondents (47%) reported that training/CPD they had received on specific conditions or needs was partially effective.

Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents said that the training/CPD they received on physical restraint was effective, whilst 38% identified it as partially effective. In the case of most other training/CPD, around half of respondents identified the training/CPD as only partially effective.

In general, between one fifth and one quarter of respondents identified the training/CPD they had undertaken to be ineffective. However, 43% of teachers in Scotland identified training/CPD on local authority ASN policies to be ineffective and just under one third of respondents (31%) reported that training/CPD on engaging parents was ineffective. Slightly less than one in ten respondents reported that the training/CPD on specific needs or conditions was ineffective. Perhaps surprisingly, almost one quarter of respondents identified training that related to the SENCO award or an SEN/ALN qualification as ineffective.

Figure 10: How effective was the training or CPD that teachers received?*



Responses to the second part of the question asked of respondents who said that they had received SEN/ALN/ASN related training or CPD within the last 2 years: What training/CPD did you receive and how effective has the training/CPD been?

* Where an administration is specified, the percentages relate to the proportion of respondents from that administration.

An international review of CPD¹¹ identifies the key features of high-quality, effective CPD. The study finds that it:

- is carefully designed with a strong focus on learner outcomes and it has a significant impact on learner achievement;
- is extended, lasting at least two terms and often a year or more;
- takes account of teachers' individual starting points and is relevant to teachers' day-to-day experiences and aspirations for learners;
- includes follow-up, consolidation and support activities that enable teachers to refine their practices;
- provides opportunities for teachers to experiment in the classroom so that they can successfully implement what they have learned;
- provides opportunities for peer learning and peer support;
- provides opportunities for teachers to analyse and reflect on the underpinning rationale, evidence and relevant assessment data.

11 Teacher Development Trust (2015) *Developing Great Teaching: Lessons from the international reviews into effective professional development*.

The international review identifies four building blocks that underpin effective CPD: subject knowledge; subject-specific pedagogy; clarity around learner progression, including learners' starting points and next steps; and content and activities dedicated to helping teachers understand how learners learn.

Most of the comments about training/CPD were about the effectiveness of the training/CPD that teachers had received and reinforced the survey findings that: *'Quality and usefulness [are] very variable'*.

However, respondents' comments indicate that most of the SEN/ALN/ASN training/CPD provided falls a long way short of the quality criteria identified by the international review.

Some respondents raised issues about how the training/CPD was delivered:

'Not specific enough and lacked info about how to deal with students in lessons'.

'Not practical enough; lots of theory, but not many ideas [about] how to work in the real world, especially the NASENCO course.'

'It is great to have the awareness, but I need practical help and tips for children with specific difficulties such as autism and how to best help them'.

Several respondents spoke about the need for training/CPD to focus on practical solutions and questioned whether the training they received would enable them to do their job better:

'Usually the training consists of highlighting the problems rather than the solutions.'

'The SENCO award makes for interesting study, but I don't feel it has equipped me to do my job better'.

In many instances, respondents said that the training/CPD could never be truly effective because of underlying issues and challenges that both schools and teachers face. They expressed concern about the lack of time and resources to implement what they have learned:

'...we do not have the time, money or resources to implement the latest idea effectively'.

'Fantastic ideas [but] very little time to implement them'.

'students are unique... [and sometimes] their needs cannot be met by someone telling you what to do with SEN students. [It] takes time to know and differentiate for each student'.

The increasing demands being placed on teachers and schools was identified as a barrier to implementing training/CPD effectively and some respondents identified tensions between the expectations being placed on teachers and wider education policy. For instance:

'Training is getting "smarter" but still ducks the issue that often what is actually needed is an extra adult to mediate'.

'[Training/CPD doesn't] address the gap between [the] academic-focused state educational system and real-life needs of SEN pupils when they are unable to properly access...the curriculum'.

There was also concern that some school managers see training/CPD as a tick-box exercise or a means for shifting accountability, rather than focusing on learners' needs:

'Felt this was a tick-box exercise. [It was] not practical for a classroom setting...feel responsibility now rests with teachers'.

Who provided the training or CPD?

Respondents were asked who provided the training or CPD that they received. It is notable that almost two thirds of respondents (62%) said that the training or CPD had been provided by a member of staff from within their school. There was an exception in Wales, where only 36% of the CPD/training was provided internally. In the case of Wales, the largest proportion of training (64%) was delivered by the local authority. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents in England and 49% of respondents in Scotland said that they had received CPD or training delivered by the local authority.

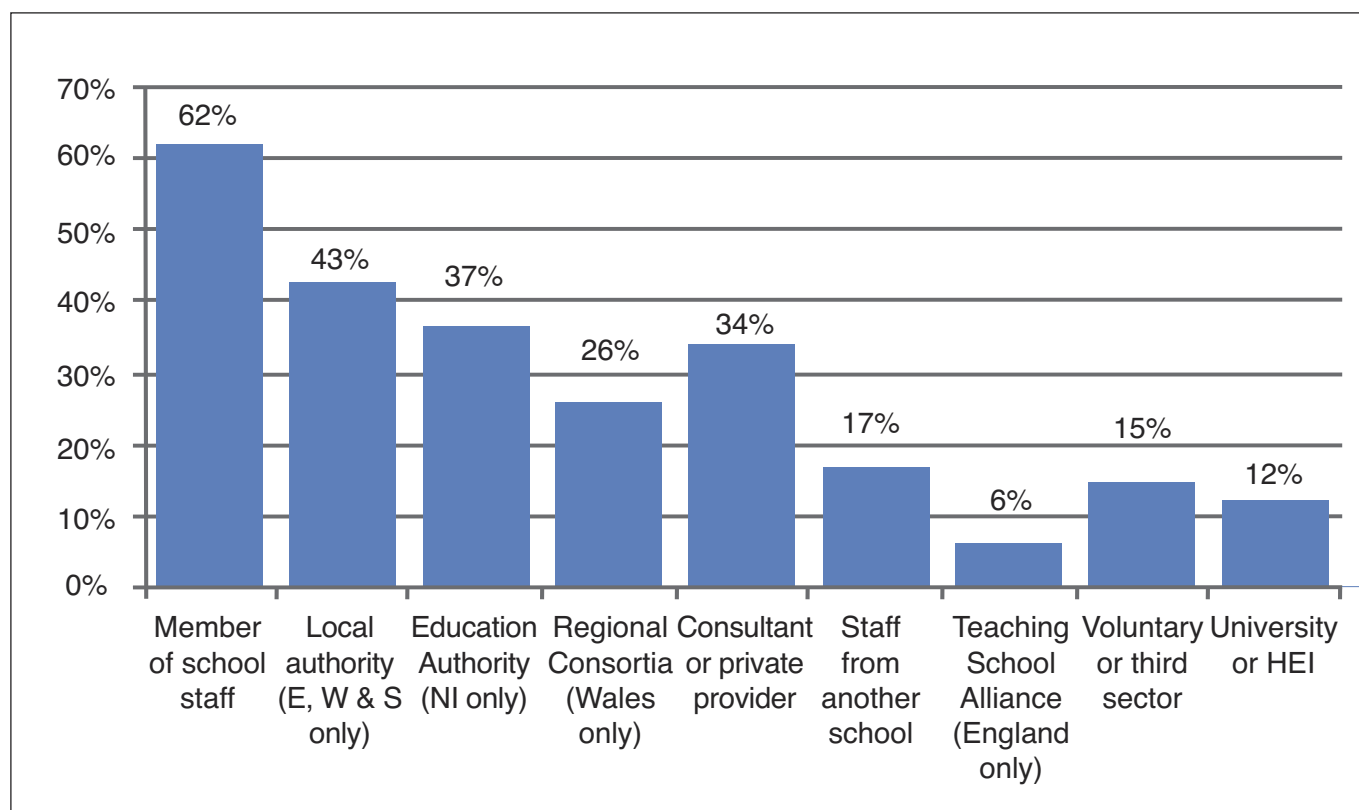
It is also significant to note that more than one third of respondents (34%) said that a consultant or private provider had delivered training or CPD. The proportion of training or CPD delivered by a consultant or private provider was similar across all four administrations.

In the case of Northern Ireland, 37% of respondents said that they had received training or CPD from

the Education Authority. Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents in Wales had received training or CPD from Regional Consortia. Only 17% of respondents said that the training or CPD that they received had been delivered by a member of staff from another school, suggesting that there is limited collaboration between schools. Significantly, only 6% of respondents from England said that training or CPD had been provided by a Teaching School Alliance.

The other main providers of training or CPD were the voluntary sector (15%), and universities or higher education institution (HEI) providers (12%).

Figure 11: Who provided the training/CPD received?*



Responses to the question: Who provided the training or CPD? Respondents were invited to tick all that applied. Percentages for specific administrations are based on the proportion of respondents from those administrations only.

* Where an administration is specified, the percentages relate to the proportion of respondents from that administration.

The effectiveness of training/CPD may be closely linked to who delivers the training/CPD and several respondents expressed concerns about who provided the training/CPD that they received. For instance:

'High-quality training is rarely available – magic answers or glitzy programmes or self-promoting "experts" have often been brought in instead'.

'It is best delivered by those practising in SEN teaching'.

'Training is delivered by SLT who actually spend very little time with the pupils we teach'.

Again, these comments are in stark contrast to the key features of high-quality, effective CPD set out in the international review.¹² The first comment also illustrates the risks associated with using external consultants and private providers.

It is important to recognise that, irrespective of the quality of training and CPD that is available to schools, SENCOs/ALNCOs are often expected to provide support to colleagues in their school. Some SENCOs/ALNCOs explained that they organised or cascaded training to other staff in their school. For example:

'As SENCO, I cascade all appropriate training back to teaching and support staff'.

12 Teacher Development Trust (2015) op. cit.

But workload demands of SENCOs/ALNCOs mean that it may be extremely difficult for them to fulfil this role:

'...much of the responsibility is on SENCOs to establish needs and organise training on top of their already demanding duties'.

Therefore, it is vital to acknowledge the limitations of SEN/ALN-related training or CPD 'solutions' that focus on the SENCO/ALNCO providing that training or CPD.

Who paid for the training or CPD?

Respondents were asked who had paid for the training or CPD that they had received. The majority reported either that the training or CPD was free (58%) or that their school had paid for it (62%). However, 6% of respondents said that they had paid for the training or CPD themselves and 1% said that they had received a bursary or grant. Six percent (6%) of respondents indicated that another organisation had paid for the training or CPD – most respondents reported that the other organisation was their local authority. While the number of respondents reporting that they paid for their own training/CPD is small, it is significant. Several respondents expressed concern that they had to pay if they wanted to access CPD. For example:

'I paid for training and arranged to get training for ASD [Autism Spectrum Disorder] myself, but still need a lot more training and this is not provided by the school'.

Others raised concerns about tightening budgets leading to less or no training/CPD and the impact of this for both teachers and learners. For example:

'I am concerned that the budget for training is about to dry up as the service's funding is reviewed in light of savings needed. Teachers of the deaf need to train regularly, so as to keep abreast with paediatric audiology changes (very fast these days as technology changes). When staff are not attending training, they are using out-of-date techniques and [becoming] demoralised'.

'Training is expensive with no sub-cover provided, so it is not possible to attend most courses.'

There is a risk that increasing pressures on school budgets will result in more teachers being expected to pay for their own training/CPD and/or undertake that training/CPD in their own time.

How was the training or CPD delivered?

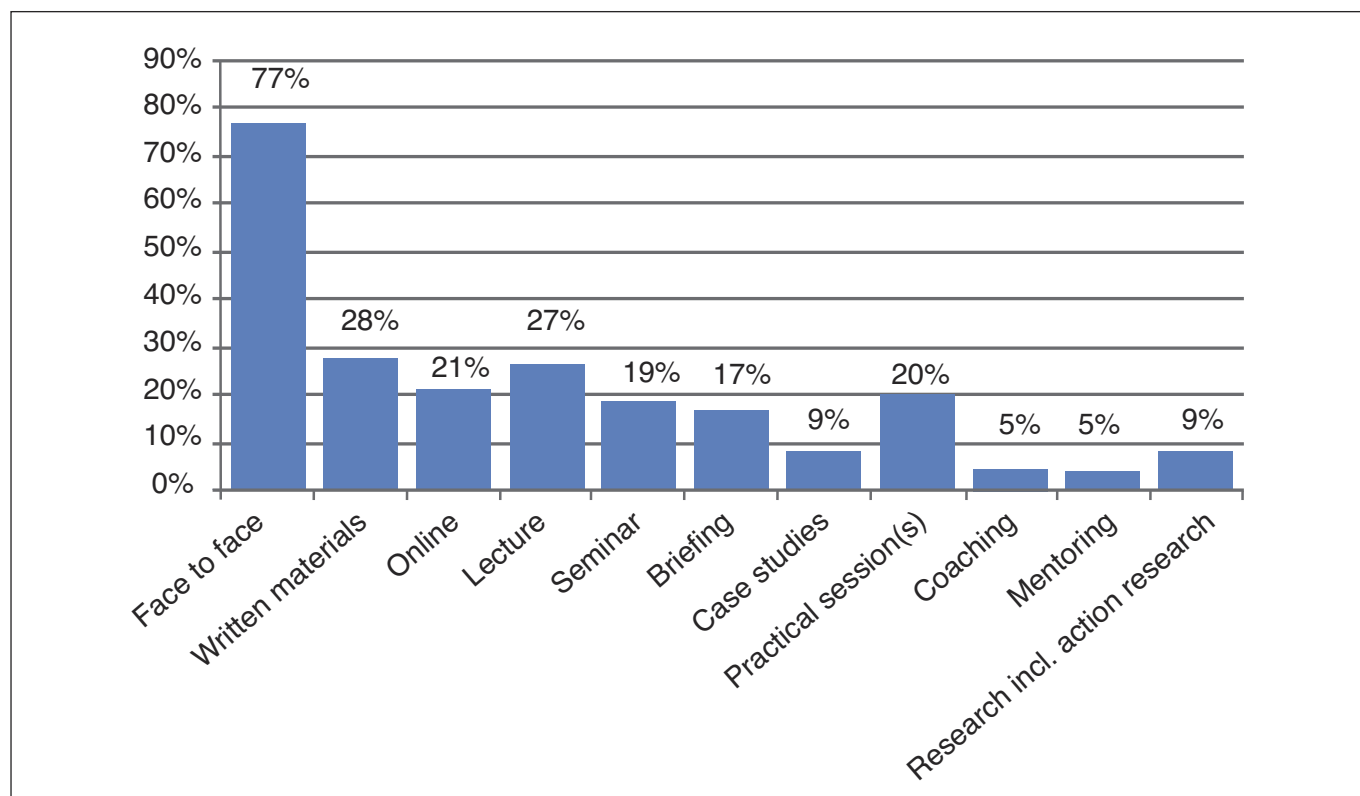
The most common method of delivering training or CPD was face to face – 77% of respondents said that training or CPD had been delivered in this way. Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents said that it had included the use of lectures; just under a fifth (19%) said that it had taken the form of a seminar; and 17% said that they had received briefings on SEN/ALN/ASN issues. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents said that written materials had been provided as part of training or CPD.

One fifth of respondents (20%) indicated that their training or CPD had included practical sessions and 21% had undertaken CPD or training online. Around one in ten respondents (9%) said that training or CPD had included research. This included action research. Nine percent (9%) of respondents indicated that training or CPD had included the use of case studies.

While mentoring and coaching can help to empower teachers,¹³ just 5% of respondents said that their training or CPD had included mentoring and only 5% said that it had included coaching.

13 NCTL (2013), *Empowering Others: Coaching and Mentoring – Thinkpiece*. www.nationalcollege.org.uk/cm-mc-mccor-tp.pdf (accessed 13 February 2018)

Figure 12: What methods were used to deliver training/CPD received?



Responses to the question asked of all respondents who said that they had received SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD within the last two years: How was the training/CPD delivered? Respondents were invited to tick all methods that applied.

Several respondents commented on the methods used to deliver training/CPD. They emphasised the importance of high-quality training/CPD, of practical help, and of sharing or working collaboratively. Their comments reflect the findings of the international review about the key features of high-quality, effective CPD:

'There should be specialist training...rather than in-house and ad hoc sessions'.

'[I have a] wealth of ideas – difficulties having time to implement and share ideas'.

'[There is] a lack of specific advice on how to plan and offer effective provision in all aspects of SEN categories'.

'I feel that all SEN teachers could really benefit from networking and sharing CPD and related training'.

'Need to have more case studies and someone from CAMHS to help staff understand their involvement with students and parents/carers'.

However, many respondents stressed that they did not have the time to put what they had learned into practice:

'Training is all well and good in an ideal world, but we do not have time to implement it. Producing appropriate resources takes time...'

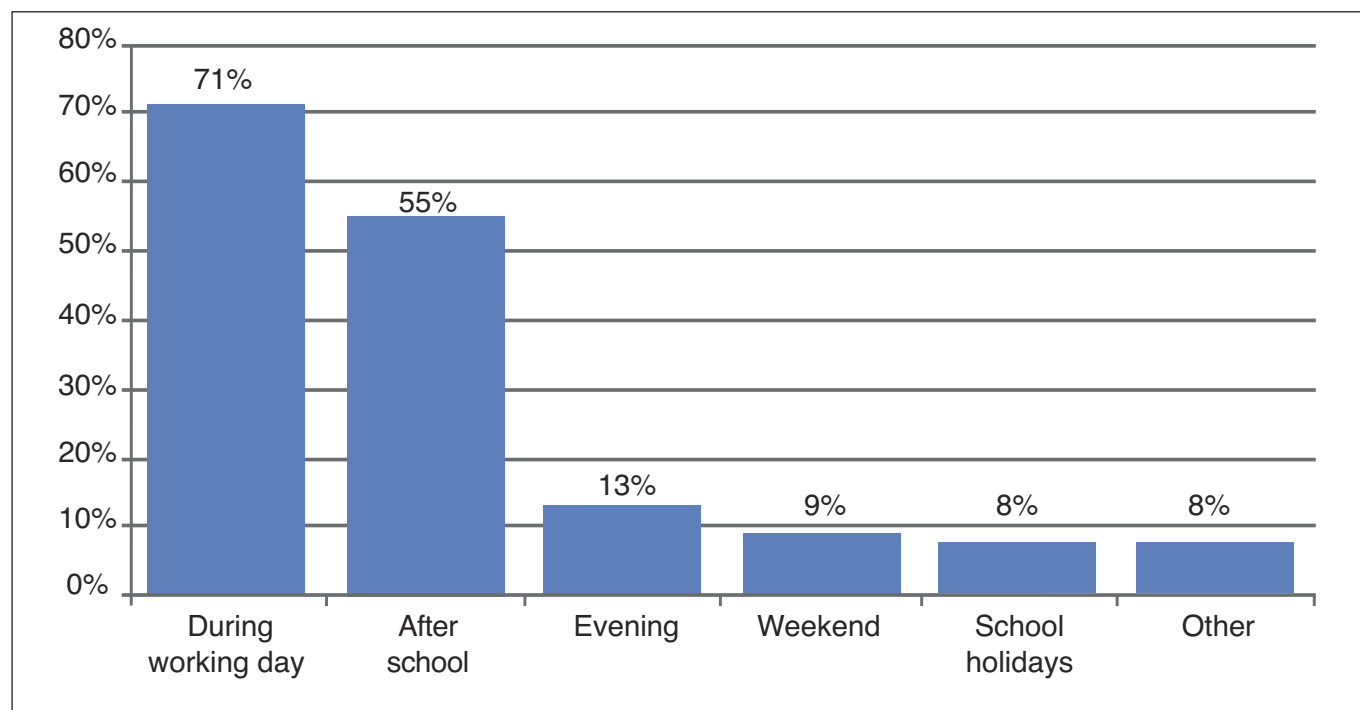
'Some of the training was excellent but, as the class teacher, it is difficult to [cascade training to support] staff whilst trying to teach the class... We made a wish list of resources [to enable] us to do some of the activities we were shown [in the training] but were told there was not enough money in the budget to buy things... There are so many personal learning plans to write and resources [to prepare]...and lots of Team Around the Child meetings which take me out of class'.

When did the training or CPD take place?

Respondents were asked when the training/CPD they received took place. Given that respondents might have attended several training/CPD events, they were asked to tick all that applied. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents indicated that training/CPD had taken place during the working day; 55% said that training/CPD had taken place after school; 13% said that their training/CPD had

taken place in the evening; 9% said that it had taken place at the weekend; 8% said that it took place in the school holidays; and 8% said that it had taken place at another time, most commonly as part of a staff training day. However, some respondents indicated that their training/CPD had taken place before school or at lunch time. Several respondents indicated that their training had formed part of initial teacher training and a couple of respondents said that they did training/CPD for personal interest in their own time.

Figure 13: When did the training/CPD take place?



Responses to the question asked of all respondents who said that they had undertaken SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD within the last two years: When did the training/CPD take place? (Tick all that apply.)

The comments about when training/CPD took place reinforce the message that most teachers struggle to find time to undertake training/CPD:

'ASN training availability is few and far between. Those [that] are available are during contact time and we do not have sufficient staff to provide cover'.

'A lot of CPD now takes place on Saturdays, therefore work/home balance is affected'.

'It always happens at the end of a busy, tiring week and while we try to learn. The timing is not good'.

'No time given during working hours to complete CPD'.

'More and more training is held after the working day or on weekends, which is not ideal due to other commitments'.

This also raises concerns about the quality of the CPD/training that is provided. Further, it demonstrates that a strategy for developing high-quality CPD/training for teachers is likely to have limited success if the wider issues of teacher workload and time are not addressed.

Several respondents who said that they were undertaking specialist qualifications commented on the challenges of undertaking such qualifications and the requirement that they undertake the work in their own time, even when their study would have clear benefits for the school:

'Specialist training (e.g. QTVI [Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment] training) does take a significant amount of time and it is a challenge to balance workload and study. I have been forced to study at weekends and during holidays'.

'SENDCO qualification required a lot of reading and writing, and time for this was not [given] by my school. It took up many weekends and most holidays'.

'I am in my third year of a Masters in autism paid for by my school. However, I am doing it in my own time, including my work-based project for [my] dissertation, which I hope will change the way the school

uses collaborative work in the classroom for children with autism... I am still a full-time class teacher trying to juggle working with 12 diagnosed children with autism across the school.'

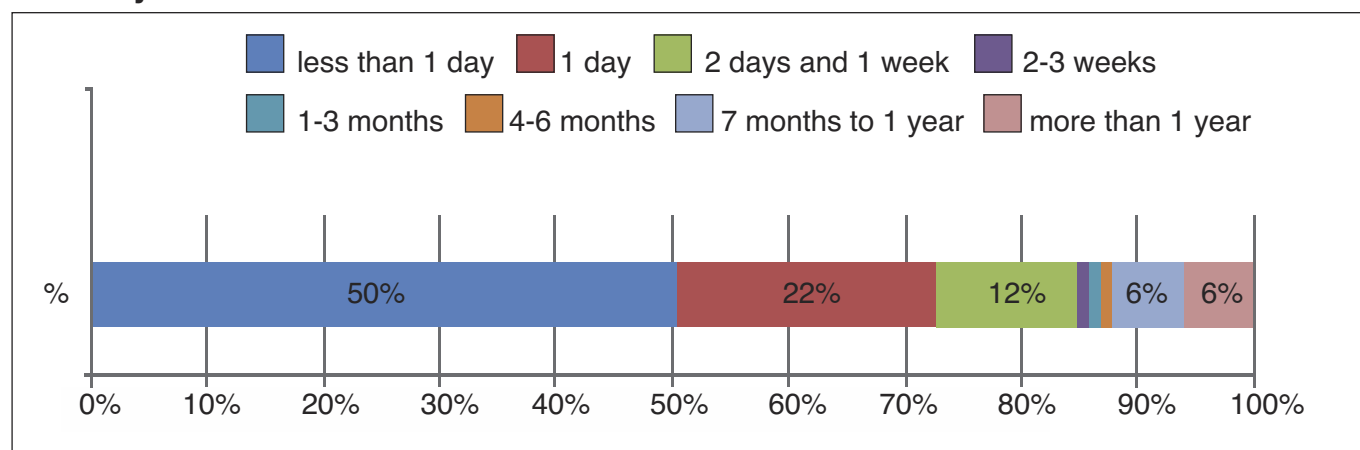
This has implications for SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator recruitment and retention. The demands that are placed on SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators will serve as a barrier to some teachers considering such roles. This has particular significance in England, where newly appointed SENCOs are required to gain a recognised SENCO award within three years of taking on the role. Teachers are likely to be reluctant to take on the role if they need to pay for the training and undertake study in their own time. The fact that they may not receive financial recognition of their role and responsibilities (see the section on SENCO/ALNCO experiences) is likely to serve as a further deterrent.

The demands being placed on SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators also mean that teachers in those roles risk burn-out. Ultimately, there is a significant risk that they will leave the role and the teaching profession.

How long did the training or CPD last?

Respondents were asked to indicate the combined length of all the SEN/ALN/ASN-related training or CPD that they had undertaken in the last two years. Almost three quarters of respondents (72%) said that the total SEN/ALN/ASN-related training/CPD that they had received in the last two years amounted to one day or less. Half of the respondents (50%) said that it had lasted less than one day and 22% said that the training or CPD had lasted one day. A further 12% of respondents said that their training/CPD had lasted between two days and one week. Just 6% of respondents said that their training/CPD had lasted between seven months and one year, and only 6% said that their training/CPD had lasted more than one year.

Figure 14: Showing the total length of SEN/ALN/ASN-related training and CPD received in the last two years.



Responses to the question: How long did the training/CPD last? Respondents were asked to combine all SEN/ALN/ASN-related training/CPD undertaken in the last two years.

The findings provide stark evidence that teachers have very limited SEN/ALN/ASN-related training/CPD. The findings also raise profound questions about the quality of the training/CPD provided – the international review of CPD indicates that high-quality, effective CPD usually lasts at least two terms, often more. Just 12% of respondents said that they had undertaken training or CPD that lasted seven months or more.

An examination of the data for England about who undertook extended training/CPD lasting seven months or more reveals that two thirds of respondents (67%) were SENCOs or heads of inclusion and a further 10% were SEN teachers. Most of the remaining 23% of respondents were headteachers, assistant headteachers or heads of department.

Thirty-five percent (35%) of SENCOs or Heads of Inclusion who said that their SEN-related training had lasted seven months or more said that they were working towards a recognised SENCO qualification, whilst 61% said that they already had a recognised SENCO qualification. It is possible that the SENCO award accounts for most of this training/CPD.

SEN and performance management

Summary of key issues

Inclusion of SEN/ALN/ASN in performance management

- Only half of respondents reported that SEN/ALN/ASN was discussed in performance management, Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD) or Career-long Professional Learning (CLPL) meetings.

SEN/ALN as a performance objective

- Where SEN/ALN was included in performance management, well over half of respondents report that performance management is used to set SEN/ALN performance objectives.
- Almost half of respondents from England who said that they had been set performance objectives for SEN report that their pay progression is dependent on them achieving those objectives.
- Many respondents, especially from England, report that they have been set inappropriate and unrealistic targets. The overriding message is that performance management is high stakes and punitive.
- The high-stakes nature of performance management diverts attention away from meeting learners' needs.

Teachers' development needs

- Where SEN/ALN/ASN was included, less than one third of respondents said that performance management or PRSD is used to discuss their training and support needs. Whilst the responses from Scotland are more positive, less than half of Scottish respondents said that their CLPL includes discussion about their ASN support needs.
- Just one third of respondents report that their performance management/PRSD or CLPL includes discussion of the school's strategic priorities for SEN/ALN/ASN and just a quarter report that it is used to set strategic priorities – many respondents are concerned that SEN/ALN/ASN is a 'bolt on'.
- Whilst the national policy framework in Scotland sets out a commitment to professional learning and development, practice in schools falls short of this ambition. Teacher workload is a significant barrier to teachers participating in professional learning. However, national policy priorities and reforms also divert attention away from ASN.

Introduction

Teachers and school leaders in England and Wales were asked if SEN or ALN had ever been included in their performance management. Teachers and school leaders in Northern Ireland were asked if SEN had ever been included in their PRSD and teachers and school leaders in Scotland were asked if ASN had ever been included in their CLPL plan. Fifty-two percent (52%) of respondents said that it had been included in their performance management, Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD) or Career-long Professional Learning (CLPL). Slightly more teachers and school leaders in England (55%) reported that SEN had been included in their performance management. In Wales, 42% of teachers or school leaders said that ALN had been included in their performance management; 43% of respondents from Northern Ireland said that SEN had been included in the PRSD; and 48% of respondents from Scotland said that ASN had been included in their CLPL.

How was SEN/ALN/ASN covered in performance management?

Respondents were asked how SEN/ALN/ASN was covered in performance management, PRSD and CLPL. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the largest number of respondents said that it was used to set SEN or ALN objectives. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents from England, Wales and Northern Ireland said that they had been set SEN or ALN objectives. In Scotland, CLPL is developmental and focused on professional learning, so respondents in Scotland were not offered this option.

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents said that their performance management, PRSD or CLPL had included discussion about meeting the needs of learners with SEN/ALN/ASN. This was the most common

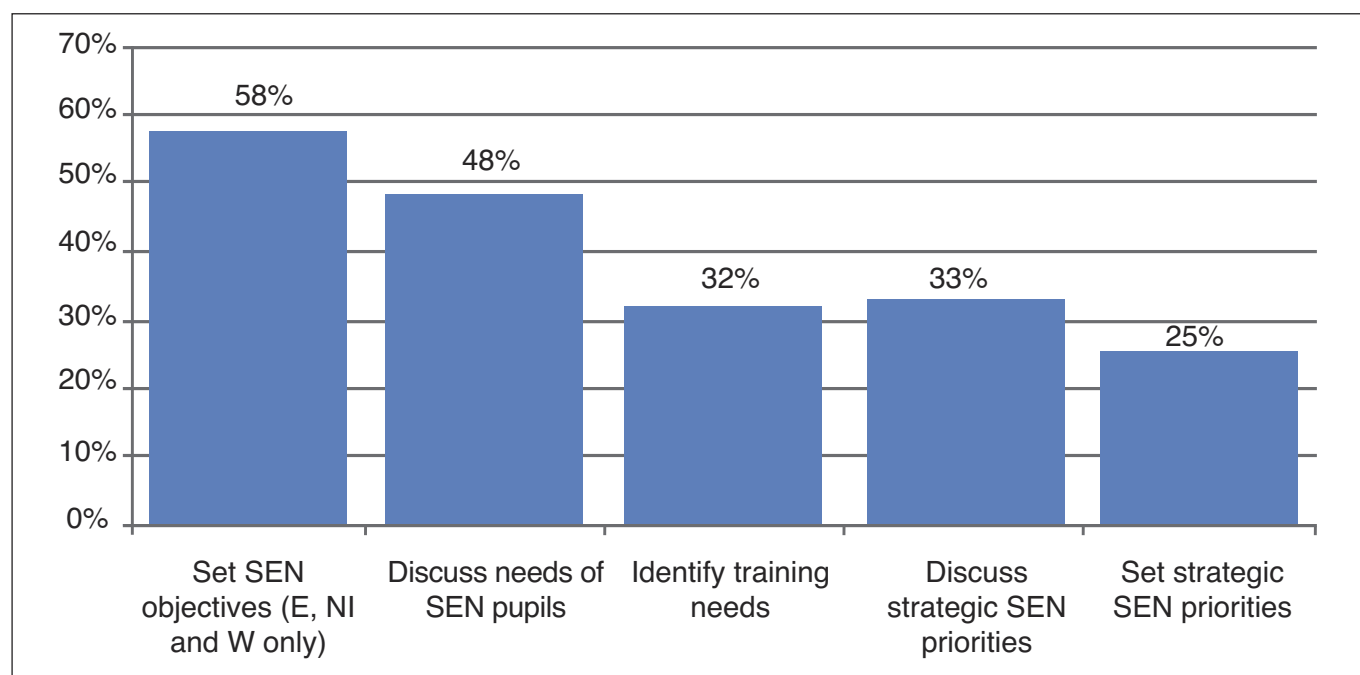
way in which ASN was covered in the CLPL in, Scotland, with 60% of Scottish respondents reporting that their CLPL had included discussion of learners ASN needs. In contrast, only 24% of respondents from Northern Ireland reported that their PRSD had included discussion of meeting learners' SEN needs.

Only one third (32%) of teachers and school leaders said that there had been discussion about their SEN/ALN/ASN-related training needs during performance management, PRSD or CLPL meetings. Again, respondents from Scotland were more likely to report that the CLPL meeting was used to discuss their ASN-related training needs – 47% of respondents from Scotland said that their CLPL had included discussion about their ASN-related training needs. In contrast, only 23% of respondents from Northern Ireland reported that their SEN-related training needs had been discussed as part of their PRSD.

One third of respondents (33%) said that performance management, PRSD or CLPL had included discussion about the school's priorities for SEN/ALN/ASN. Respondents from England (36%) and Scotland (33%) were more likely to say that their performance management or CLPL had included such discussion.

Only a quarter of respondents (25%) said that their performance management, PRSD or CLPL had been used to set SEN/ALN/ASN strategic priorities for the school. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents from England said that their performance management had included discussion relating to setting the school's strategic priorities for SEN. In contrast, just 9% of respondents from Wales said that this had formed part of their performance management discussions.

Figure 15: How SEN/ALN/ASN are addressed in performance management, PRSD or CLPL.*



Responses to the question: How was SEN/ALN/ASN covered in your performance management/PRSD/CLPL? (Responses to the SEN/ALN objectives set are for England, Northern Ireland and Wales only.)

* The percentage for 'set SEN objectives' relates to the proportion of respondents from England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

A number of teachers commented on the use of performance management to discuss the needs of learners with SEN/ALN. They expressed concerns that the high-stakes nature of performance management meant that learners' needs are not given appropriate consideration:

'Targets are set...which puts pressure on students (and staff)'.

'Whilst senior managers use all the correct speak in public – "every child is an individual" – when it comes to data, they want all children to fit on to one tracking system'.

'We are told that SEN children should "catch up" but often the additional support required is not available. Teachers have to fight to get the help that SEN children are entitled to'.

'As an ALN teacher and manager of an STF [Specialist teaching facility], I am under continual pressure from senior management to compromise the support for my designated pupils and teach in mainstream. More and more, the pupils' statutory needs are not being met'.

However, one teacher expressed concern that including learners with SEN in performance management could divert attention away from meeting the needs of other learners:

'I would be reluctant to have SEN children included in my performance management as I feel it would not benefit the largest group of pupils'.

This raises questions about resources and the support provided to teachers. It also raises questions about whether a high-stakes accountability system is an appropriate way of ensuring that the needs of all learners are met. Further, it raises concerns about the nature of performance management and the extent to which it is used to support and develop teachers.

Less than one third of teachers reported that performance management (PM) was used to discuss their training and development needs. Some respondents explained that they had taken the initiative to get SEN/ALN/ASN included in their performance management. One teacher said:

'I have asked for my performance management/SEN to be focused on improving the teaching of SEN'.

Another said:

'I have added it to my own performance management. However, no support/training will be offered due to finance issues and [limited awareness of] others'.

Several respondents said that performance management was: *'never about personal development'.*

Some teachers commented on the importance of making SEN/ALN/ASN a school priority and one respondent said that it is:

'Crucial for this to be included in PM if anybody is going to take it seriously'

However, the survey findings suggest that, in many schools, there is very limited discussion of SEN/ALN/ASN within performance management, the PRSD or the CLPL:

'It has been "add-on" rather than a focus'.

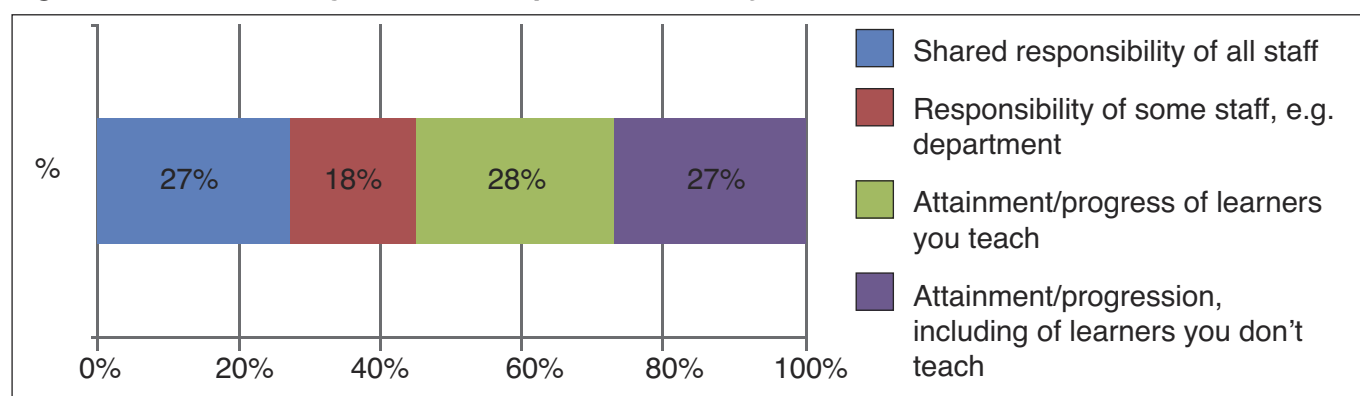
'SEN [pupils are] regarded as a group of lesser importance in performance management [with the school] preferring to focus on pupil premium and ethnic groups'.

'ASN is rarely on the school improvement plan [SIP] or authority priorities...my headteacher encourages staff to have CLPL targets linked to [the] SIP'.

SEN/ALN objectives

Those respondents that said that SEN or ALN objectives had been set as part of their performance management or PRSD were asked about the nature of the objectives set. More than a quarter of respondents (28%) said that they had been set objectives that specified the attainment and/or progression of learners that they taught. Twenty-seven percent (27%) said that the objectives specified the attainment and/or progress of pupils that they did not teach; for example, a target for all learners with SEN or ALN in the schools. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents said that the objective set was the shared responsibility of all staff; 18% said that the objective was the shared responsibility of some staff, such as a department or year group.

Figure 16: Accountability for SEN/ALN performance objectives



Responses to the question: Were the SEN/ALN objectives: the shared responsibility of all staff? The shared responsibility of some staff (e.g. department, team, year or key stage)? Performance objectives that specify the attainment and/or progression of those learners with SEN/ALN that you teach? Performance objectives that specify the attainment and/or progression of learners with SEN/ALN, including those you do not teach (e.g. a target for all learners with SEN/ALN within the school)?

Many teachers raised concern that the objectives or targets that they had been set were unrealistic:

'SLT [senior leadership team] need to understand the difference between high expectations and realistic high expectations. At present, there is no allowance – my pupils with significant needs are expected to achieve the same [as other pupils].'

'The fact that SEN pupils do not make the expected progress of non-SEN pupils is not taken into consideration. [I have] to argue with people who do not know the pupils [or] that 1 grade of progress is sensational for some pupils. [However], this becomes the reason for failing to achieve pay progression.'

'After little or no support with dealing with the challenging behaviours of the children in my class, I was told in my performance management meeting that I had "done nothing for those children this year" and that, therefore, I had not met my target for all groups of children to have made progress.'

'I say no because I don't have responsibility for a class. While I do my best to keep with children's needs and plans, I don't see how I can be held responsible if I only teach them once or twice a week and don't have an input into their timetable the rest of the time.'

This last comment raises fundamental questions about performance management and the assumption that there is a causal link between an individual class teacher's teaching and learners' attainment and progress in tests. An independent review of literature on the equality impact on changes to teachers' pay arrangements commissioned by the NASUWT found that there was little evidence that performance-related pay (PRP) based on pupil attainment leads to improved pupil outcomes.¹⁴ However, the review did find evidence that PRP is open to discrimination and unfair practice,¹⁵ and that that such practices have a detrimental impact on teachers, schools and the teaching profession.¹⁶

Some respondents explained the objectives or targets that they had been set. The examples illustrate the unrealistic and even absurd nature of some of those targets. For instance:

'The targets for students are unrealistically high. Also, some students are poor attenders or are frequently on fixed-term exclusions so are not attending classes.'

'Last year my "pops" score for the child in my class with SLD [severe learning difficulties] was predicted as 22. Twenty-two is "mastery" in my year group. The child came to me with scores of 4 and 6... The child was expected to make 2 ½ years' progress in my care. He made one point progress in one subject... This year, one appraisal target says "all children have to get six points in reading, writing and maths".'

'Children with SEN are expected to make at least seven steps, i.e. accelerated progress in one year.'

SEN/ALN objectives and pay progression

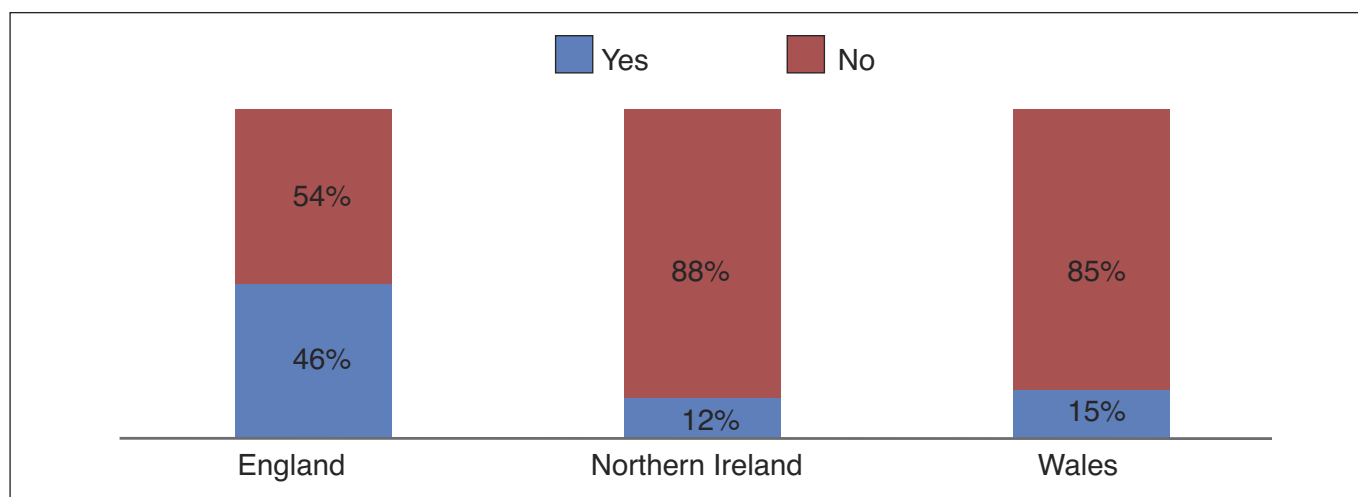
Those respondents who said that their performance management or PRSD included setting SEN/ALN-related objectives were asked whether their pay progression was dependent on achieving specific SEN/ALN objectives. There was a stark difference between the responses from teachers and school leaders in England and those from teachers and school leaders in Northern Ireland and Wales. Almost half of respondents from England (46%) said that their pay progression was dependent on them achieving SEN-specific objectives, compared to 12% from Northern Ireland and 15% from Wales.

14 Barnes, Sally-Ann; Lyonette, Clare; Atfield, Gaby; and Owen, David, Warwick Institute of Employment Research, University of Warwick (March 2016), *Teachers' Pay and Equality: Literature Review*. Rednal, NASUWT.

15 Ibid, page 12.

16 Ibid, page 25.

Figure 17: Has pay progression been dependent on meeting SEN/ALN objectives?

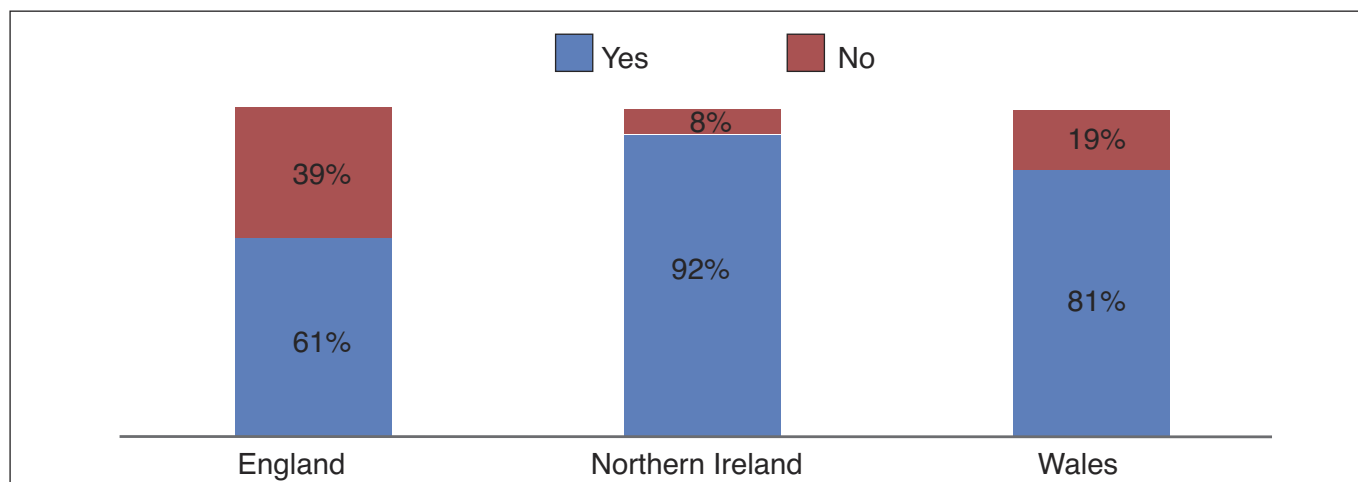


Responses to the question: *Has your pay progression been dependent on you achieving specific SEN/ALN objectives?*

Appropriateness of SEN/ALN objectives

Respondents who said that they had been set SEN/ALN-specific objectives as part of their performance management or PRSD were asked whether they considered the objectives to be appropriate. There was a notable difference between the responses from teachers and school leaders in England and those from Northern Ireland and Wales. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents from England said that they did not consider their performance management objectives for learners with SEN to be appropriate. This is significantly higher than those for Wales (19%) and Northern Ireland (8%).

Figure 18: Were the SEN/ALN objectives set appropriate?



Responses to the question: *Do you consider the performance management/PRSD objectives you were set for learners with SEN/ALN to be appropriate?*

Many respondents commented on the inappropriateness of targets that they had been set, including the high-stakes nature of the targets set:

'I did put in writing that I felt that I could not be measured against the reduction of exclusions for SEND as I had not influenced exclusion-making decisions. The wording was tweaked to "working towards a whole school objective," [which is] in writing – but my manager continues to verbalise it [as] my responsibility.'

'SEN children are expected to make at least three points progress per year, otherwise teachers will fail PM.'

'It is quite difficult to have a pupil progress target when you don't actually teach the pupils. I'm in charge of a group of children with ASD and was given a progress target for them, even though I don't actually teach them.'

This last point highlights a point raised earlier about the relationship between the teaching of individual teachers and learner outcomes and, in particular, the assumption that this can be translated into high-stakes targets. As mentioned above, the literature review of the equality impact of changes to teachers' pay arrangements found little evidence of a link. However, it did find that such practices have a detrimental impact on teachers, schools and the teaching profession.¹⁷

Some responses reveal the profound challenges that teachers face and their school's failure to provide them with appropriate support, including through performance management:

'A child who was working three years below his age when he started in my class was expected to be on track by the end of it. How could he make four years' progress in one year when he was only working at Y2 level by the end of Y4? There was no additional support [provided].'

'My previous class had the highest percentage of SEN students (45% of students) [in the school] with abilities ranging from "greater depth" Year 5 to the cognitive ability of a two year old with no speech. I didn't have any [additional] support at all, and none of this was taken into account in performance management.'

Some respondents gave details of how they were challenging inappropriate practices. For instance, one respondent said that: *'I will not sign my appraisal this year as I will be set totally unachievable objectives for my SEN children.'*

Another respondent explained how they had used information from attending an NASUWT training event on performance management to challenge both the setting of inappropriate targets and negative lesson observation judgements:

'The PM targets were 'aspirational' and unrealistic and totally out of reach of the SEN students I taught...I attended an SEN seminar on performance targets in the summer holiday two years ago...With this newly acquired knowledge and confidence, I refused any more date-related targets in my PM. The outcomes of my lesson observations varied between "inadequate" and "requires improvement". Eventually, I requested a different observer and I was graded "outstanding".'

However, for many respondents, performance management and target setting remain extremely stressful processes that are high-stakes and punitive.

17 Ibid, page 25.

SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator experiences

Summary of key issues

SENCO qualification in England

- The SENCO award in England places significant demands on SENCOs' time and work-life balance, with some SENCOs being forced to study at weekends and in school holidays. Some SENCOs also fund their own training.

Time for SEN/ALN/ASN duties

- Most SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators have significant timetabled teaching commitments, particularly those working in primary schools.
- Almost one third of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators report that less than one fifth of their timetabled time is allocated to SEN/ALN/ASN duties and three quarters report that less than 60% of their timetabled time is allocated to SEN/ALN/ASN duties. Lack of time for SEN/ALN/ASN duties is a particular issue in primary schools, with half of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators reporting that they have less than 40% of their time allocated for these duties.
- 81% of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators report that they have insufficient time to fulfil their SEN/ALN/ASN responsibilities.

Leadership of SEN/ALN/ASN

- More than two thirds of primary SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators report that they are members of their school's leadership team, compared to less than one third of those working in secondary school.
- More than two thirds of primary and a quarter of secondary SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators who were not part of the school leadership team reported that no school leader in their school had nominated responsibility for SEN/ALN/ASN. This suggests that some schools, particularly primary schools, do not prioritise or have strategic oversight of SEN/ALN/ASN.

SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator pay

- Almost half of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators, particularly those working in primary schools, may not be remunerated appropriately for the work that they do. This is an area that requires further investigation.

Workload, stress and wellbeing

- SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are struggling to cope with the increasing demands and expectations being placed on schools by external agencies.
- SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are under huge pressure as a result of cuts to external services, leading to increasing demands being placed on schools. There are significant concerns about burnout and teacher wellbeing.
- The findings raise major concerns about the retention and future recruitment of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators.

Introduction

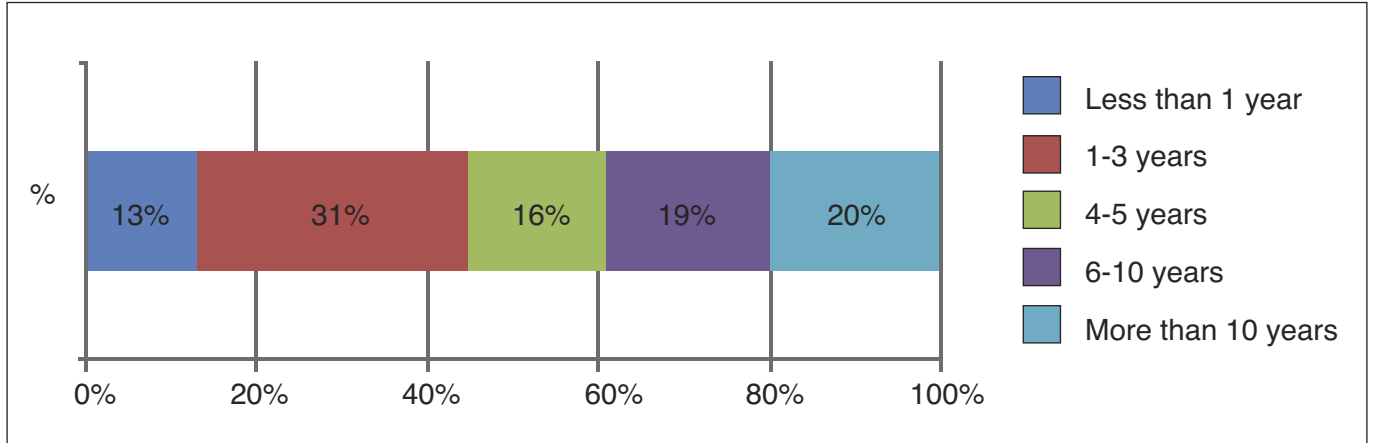
The NASUWT has longstanding concerns about the terms and working conditions of teachers with SEN/ALN/ASN responsibilities. Feedback has suggested that SENCOs, ALNCOs and ASN Co-ordinators carry substantial workloads, have limited influence over strategic decisions about SEN/ALN/ASN, and are not appropriately remunerated for the work that they do. The survey sought to examine the nature and extent of these issues.

Twenty-three percent (23%) of survey respondents said that they were a SENCO, ALNCO, ASN Co-ordinator, Head of Inclusion or Principal Teacher (SFL). Two thirds of these (66%) said that they worked in a primary school; just under a third (31%) worked in a secondary school; and the remaining 3% either worked in a special school, central services or another setting.

Experience as a SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator

There was a fairly even spread in terms of experience, with 31% of respondents saying that they had between one and three years' experience as a SENCO, ALNCO, ASN Co-ordinator, Head of Inclusion, or Principal Teacher (SfL); 20% of respondents said that they had more than ten years' experience; 19% said that they had between six and ten years' experience; 16% said that they had 4-5 years' experience; and 13% said that they had less than one year's experience in such a role.

Figure 19: Length of time working as a SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator/Principal Teacher (SfL)

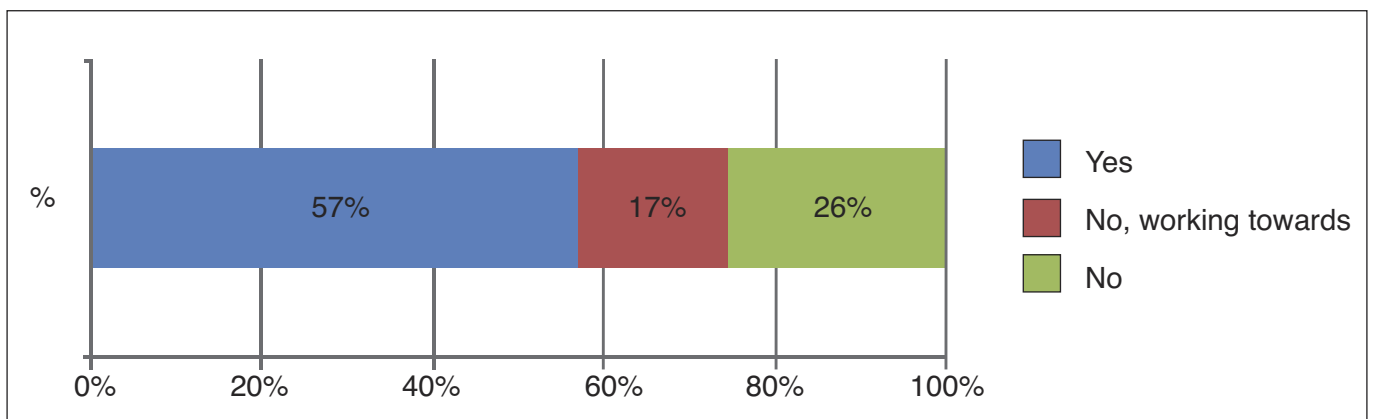


Responses to the question: How long have you worked as a SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator or Principal Teacher (SfL)?

SENCO award/qualification requirements in England

In England, a newly appointed SENCO who has not previously been a SENCO at a relevant school for a period of more than 12 months must achieve a National Award in SEN Co-ordination within three years of appointment. Respondents from England were asked if they had a recognised SENCO qualification or if they were working towards such a qualification. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents said that they had a recognised SENCO award/qualification; 17% said that they were working towards a recognised SENCO award; and 26% said that they did not have a recognised award/qualification and that they were not working towards such an award/qualification.

Figure 20: Percentages of SENCOs/Heads of inclusion in England who have a recognised SENCO award/qualification or are working towards the award/qualification.



Responses to the question: Do you have a recognised SENCO award/qualification?

SENCOs in England commented on the personal demands being placed on them as a result of studying for a SENCO qualification. In particular, SENCOs report that they 'have been forced to study' in their own time, including 'many weekends and most holidays'.

Several respondents indicated that the demands of undertaking study for the SENCO qualification in addition to their already massive workload had resulted in them delaying starting the qualification as:

'I am very concerned about the impact it will have on my work/life balance.'

And that it had led some teachers to quit teaching:

'No time and mental energy left to gain SENCO qualification, so I have left secondary school teaching.'

These points raise some very significant concerns relating to the recruitment and retention of SENCOs. When the SENCO award requirements were first introduced in September 2009, the Government provided funds to enable newly appointed SENCOs to undertake the training. Central funding for the training ceased in 2014, meaning that schools or individual teachers now need to finance the training. As schools report pressures on budgets and cut access to training and CPD, there is a significant risk that aspiring and newly appointed SENCOs will be expected to fund their own training. This is likely to deter some teachers from applying to become a SENCO. The workload pressures of juggling work and study serve as a further deterrent to becoming a SENCO. It also means that schools may struggle to retain SENCOs.

The survey examined issues relating to the role and responsibilities of SENCOs, as well as ALNCOs and ASN Co-ordinators, including those relating to workload.

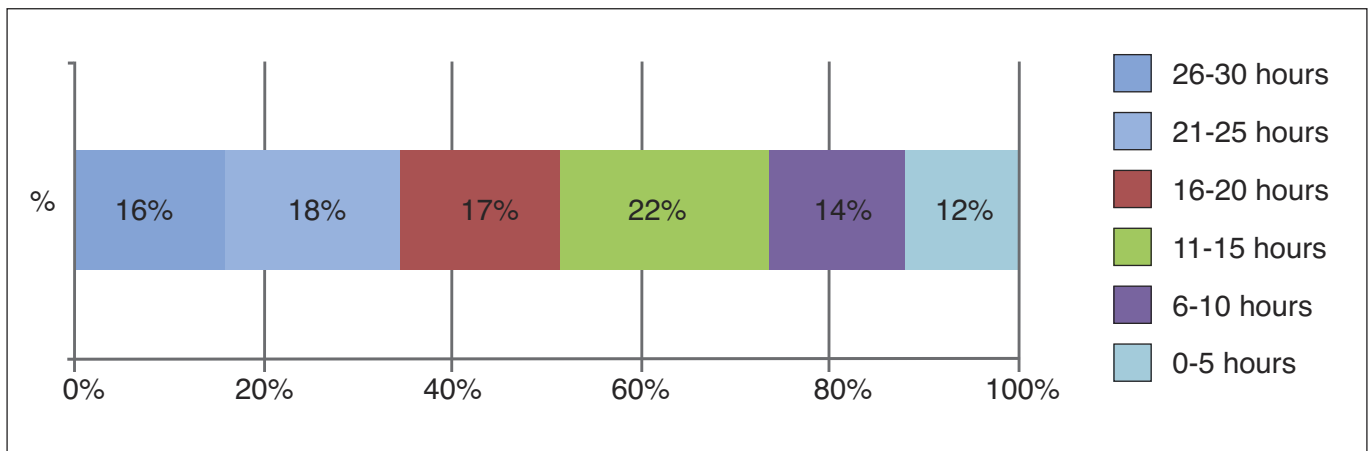
Timetabled teaching commitment

Respondents were asked whether they had a timetabled teaching commitment. Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents said that they had a timetabled teaching commitment.

Those respondents who indicated that they had a timetabled teaching commitment were asked how many hours they taught per week. More than one third of respondents said that they had a timetabled teaching commitment of between 21 and 30 hours per week (16% said that their teaching commitment was between 26 and 30 hours per week, and 18% said that their teaching commitment was between 21-25 hours). A further 17% said that their teaching commitment was 16-20 hours per week, meaning that over half of respondents (51%) had a teaching commitment of 16 hours or more per week.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of respondents said that they had a teaching commitment of between 11 and 15 hours a week; 14% taught for 6-10 hours a week; and 12% had a timetabled teaching commitment of between 0 and 5 hours a week.

Figure 21: What is your timetabled teaching commitment?



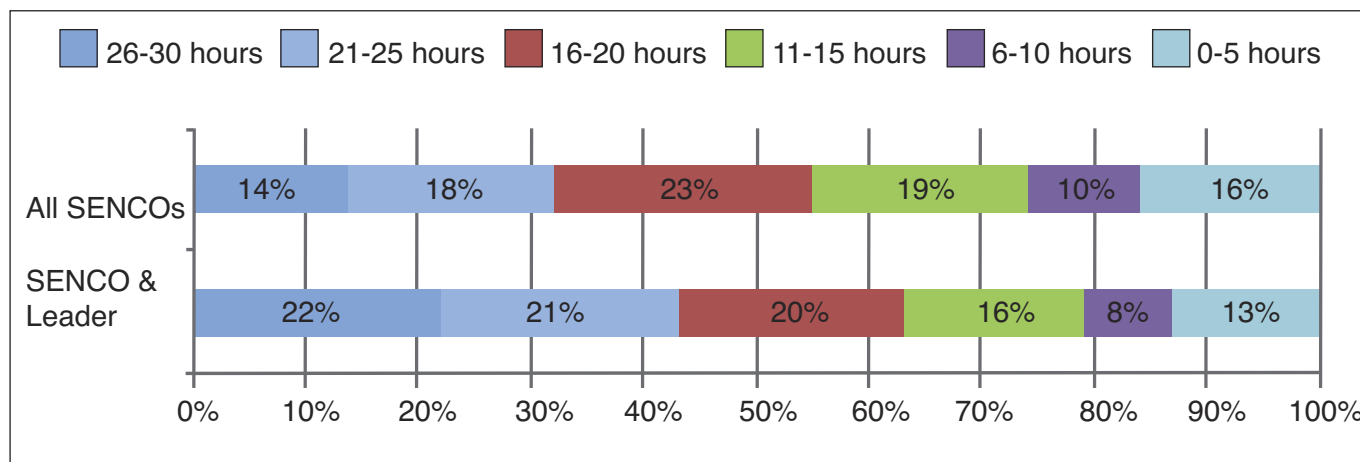
Responses to the question: How many hours is your teaching commitment?

Respondents from Northern Ireland were most likely to report that they had a large teaching commitment, with well over half of respondents (59%) stating that they had a teaching commitment of between 21 and 30 hours per week. Teachers in Northern Ireland working in primary schools were more likely to report that they had a teaching commitment of 26-30 hours per week (47%) or 21-25 hours (16%). Those working in post-primary schools were more likely to report that they worked between 21 and 25 hours per week (40%) or 16-20 hours per week (40%).

In England, SENCOs/heads of inclusion working in primary schools were more likely to report a bigger timetabled teaching commitment than their colleagues working in secondary schools. One fifth (22%) of SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in primary schools reported that they had a timetabled teaching commitment of 26-30 hours per week, 21% said that their teaching commitment was between 21 and 25 hours per week, and a further 20% said that they had a teaching commitment of between 16 and 20 hours per week. Sixteen percent (16%) of primary SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion in England said that they had a timetabled teaching commitment of between 11 and 15 hours; 13% reported that their commitment was between 0 and 5 hours per week; and 8% said that their teaching commitment was between 6 and 10 hours per week.

Those primary SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion who said that they were a member of the school leadership team (SLT) were slightly more likely to report a smaller teaching commitment – 16% said that they had a teaching commitment of between zero and five hours, 10% said that their teaching commitment was between six and ten hours, and 19% said that they had a teaching commitment of 11 to 15 hours per week.

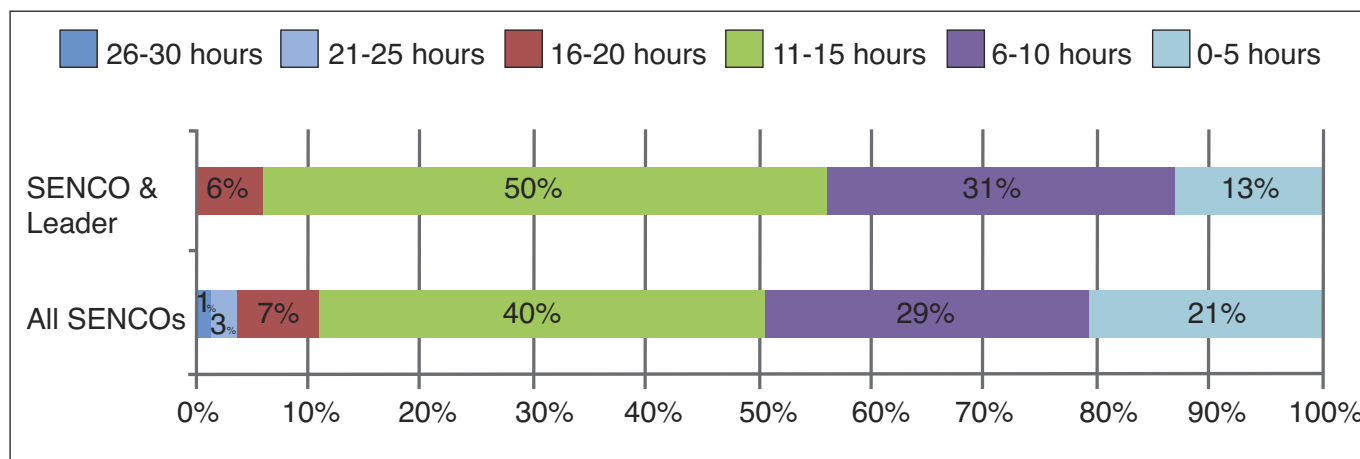
Figure 22: Comparison between the timetabled teaching commitment of SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in primary schools in England and those SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion who are also members of the leadership team.



Secondary SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion in England reported a smaller timetabled teaching commitment than their primary colleagues, with 39% reporting that their teaching commitment was between 11 and 15 hours per week and 28% reporting that they had a teaching commitment of between six and ten hours per week. One fifth (21%) of secondary SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion said that they had a timetabled teaching commitment of zero to five hours per week. However, 4% reported that they had a teaching commitment of between 21 and 30 hours per week; 7% reported that their teaching commitment was 16 to 20 hours per week.

An examination of the responses of SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in secondary schools in England reveals some significant differences to the picture found in primary schools. SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion are more likely to report that they have a smaller timetabled teaching commitment. Whilst no SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in secondary schools who were also members of the SLT said that they had a teaching commitment of 21-30 hours per week, two thirds (66%) reported that they had a teaching commitment of more than ten hours a week. In contrast, only half (51%) of all SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in secondary schools reported that they had a teaching commitment of more than 19 hours per week. However, the number of respondents who said that they were leaders was small so the findings need to be treated with some caution.

Figure 23: Comparison between the timetabled teaching commitment of SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in secondary schools in England and those SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion who are also members of the leadership team.

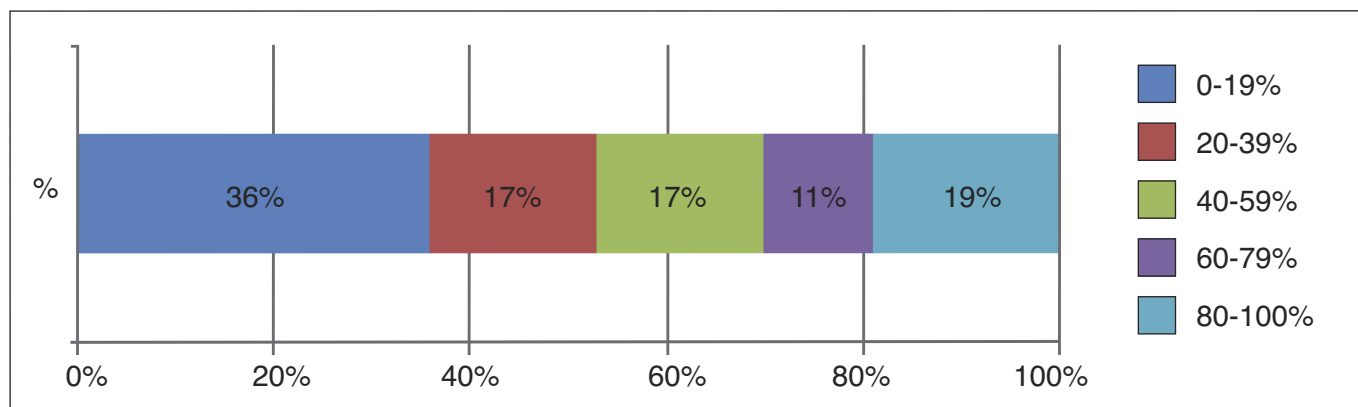


The number of respondents from Wales and Scotland who said that they worked as ALNCOs/Heads of Inclusion, or as ASN Co-ordinators or Principal Teachers (SfL) was small. However, it is worth noting that ALNCOs reported similar timetabled teaching commitments to those of SENCOs in England.

Time for SEN/ALN/ASN duties

Respondents were asked about the proportion of their time that was allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN duties. More than one third of respondents (36%) said that between 0% and 19% of their time was allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN duties and almost three quarters of respondents (70%) had less than 60% of their time allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN duties: 17% said that 20-39% was allocated to SEN/ALN/ASN duties; 17% said that 40-59% of their time was allocated for such duties; 11% said that 60-79% of their time was allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN duties; and 19% said that between 80 and 100% of their time was allocated for these duties.

Figure 24: What proportion of your time is allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN duties?



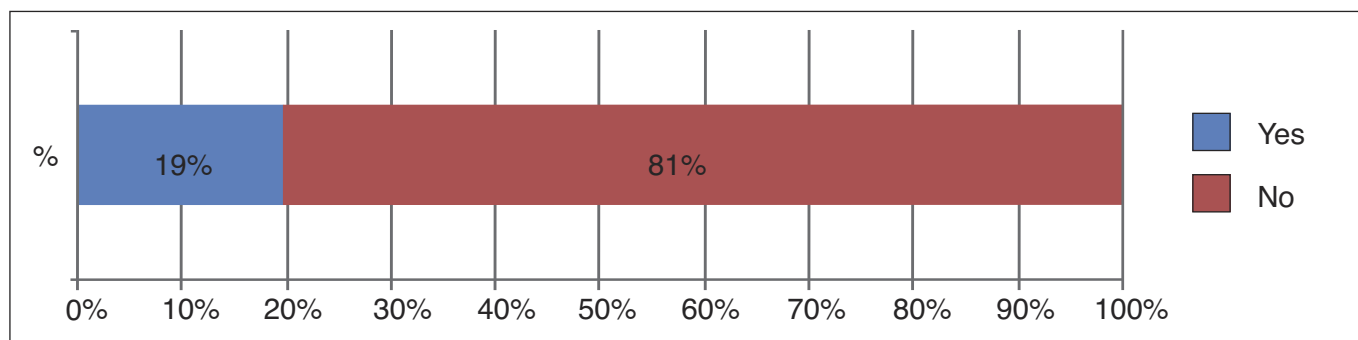
Responses to the question: What proportion of your timetabled time is allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN-specific duties?

It is significant to note that more than one third (35%) of SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in primary schools in England said that less than 20% of their timetabled time was allocated to SEN-specific duties and a further 18% reported that between 20 and 39% of their time was allocated to such duties. Sixteen percent (16%) of primary SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion had between 40 and 59% of their time allocated to SEN duties; 10% had between 60 and 79%; and 17% had between 80 and 100% of their time allocated for SEN duties.

There was more variation in the responses from SENCOs/Heads of Inclusion working in secondary schools in England. A quarter of respondents (25%) said that between 40% and 59% of their timetabled time was allocated for SEN duties; just under a quarter reported that they had between 60 and 79% of timetabled time for SEN; 17% reported that they had between 60 and 100% of timetabled time for SEN duties. However, more than a third (35%) reported that less than 40% of their timetabled time was for SEN duties, with 17% reporting that they had less than 20% of their time allocated for SEN duties.

Respondents were asked whether they had sufficient time to fulfil their SEN/ALN/ASN duties. An overwhelming 81% of respondents said that they did not have sufficient time to fulfil their SEN/ALN/ASN duties.

Figure 25: Is this sufficient time for you to fulfil SEN/ALN/ASN duties?



Responses to the question: Is this sufficient time to enable you to fulfil your SEN/ALN/ASN-related duties?

The findings raise very significant concerns about the workload and pressures on SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators. The examination of responses to questions about timetabled teaching commitments and time allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN-specific duties above reveals that many SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are juggling their SEN/ALN/ASN responsibilities alongside significant teaching commitments – over half have a teaching commitment of more than 15 hours per week and well over a third have less than 20% of their time allocated for SEN/ALN/ASN duties. Some of the respondents commented about the ever-increasing demands and workload pressures that SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are under:

'Been doing this for a long time now across different settings and I can honestly say that it's never been tougher'.

'When I started as a full-time teacher and SENCO, 2/5 days were allocated [to SEN duties]. Now...only two mornings are allocated to SEN.'

Some also explained that they are forced to undertake their SEN/ALN/ASN-related work outside the working day. For example:

'I am expected to conduct meetings after school hours, as substitute cover is not available to cover me in the working day. I also have to make and receive phone calls after the working day'.

Respondents gave examples of school-based pressures and expectations. For instance:

'My responsibility has grown and extended since I became SENCO – the job is more pressured and stressful with no admin support factored in at all, despite requests.'

'Class teachers are often under the misguided impression that SENCOs do all the SEN paperwork and just hand it over. This is probably because class teachers themselves are overburdened'.

'...the SLT do not support me in putting strategies into place.'

Other respondents spoke about the pressures that have arisen as a result of external agencies placing increasing demands on SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators and schools:

'Too much work [is] placed on the SENCO for getting funding, applying for EHCP, transferring statements, assessments that used to be done by external agency, etc. etc.'

'[The] SENCO is expected to do work that was previously the responsibility of [the] LA...The school is being asked to take the lead, and responsibilities have been dumped on us'.

'External agencies expect more paperwork before referrals are made.'

This raises significant concerns about the SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator wellbeing as well as highlighting factors that prevent them from being effective. For example:

'[The] workload of being a full-time teacher with other curriculum responsibilities does not allow me to meet the demands of being a SENCO'.

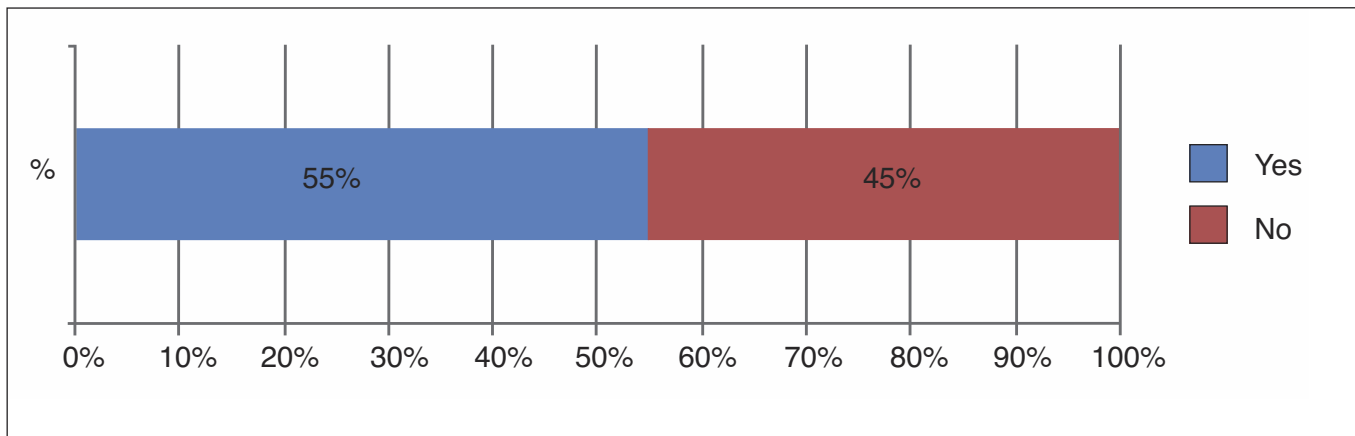
Leadership of SEN/ALN/ASN

There is an expectation that the role of SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator should be strategic.¹⁸ The evidence and issues outlined above suggest that many SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator posts are not strategic positions. SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators/Principal Teachers (SfL) were asked if they were a member of the school's leadership team. Fifty-five percent (55%) of respondents said that they were members of their leadership team and 45% said that they were not.

SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators/Principal Teachers (SfL) working in primary schools were much more likely to report that they were members of the leadership team (70%) than those working in secondary/post-primary schools (30%).

18 See for example, *SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years*, paragraph 6.91.

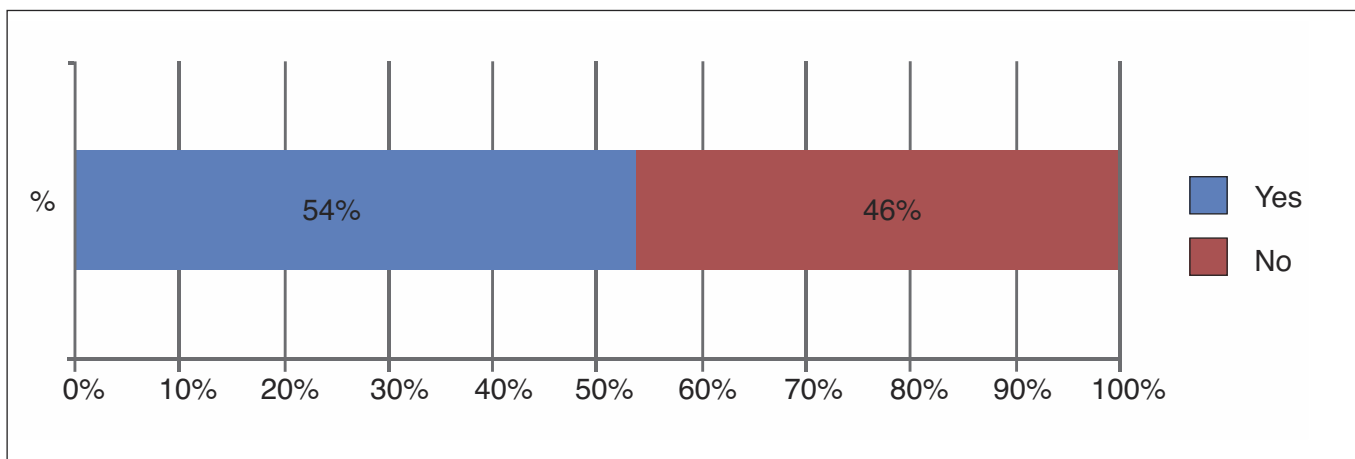
Figure 26: Are you a member of the school leadership team?



Responses to the question: Are you a member of the school leadership team?

Those teachers that said that they were not members of the leadership team were asked if a member of the leadership team had specific responsibility for SEN/ALN/ASN – 46% of respondents said that there was no member of the school leadership team with specific SEN/ALN/ASN responsibilities. Respondents working in primary schools (70%) were much more likely to report that no member of the leadership team had responsibility for SEN/ALN/ASN than secondary respondents (25%).

Figure 27: Does a member of leadership have responsibility for SEN/ALN/ASN?



Responses to the question: Does a member of the school leadership team have nominated responsibility for SEN/ALN/ASN?

The findings suggest that a significant proportion of schools, especially primary schools, do not consider SEN/ALN/ASN issues as part of strategic decision-making. They also suggest that a significant proportion of schools, especially primary schools, do not consider the specific needs of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators when making decisions about staffing and school priorities. These are issues that warrant further investigation.

SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator pay

The lack of strategic leadership for SEN/ALN/ASN in many schools is further evidence of the pressures that SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are under. It also raises questions about SENCO/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator pay. SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators were asked how their role as SENCO/Head of Inclusion/ALNCO/ASN Co-ordinator/Principal Teacher (SfL) was reflected in their pay. The options available reflected the pay ranges/scales of the particular administration.

In the case of respondents from England and Wales, the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) sets an expectation that teachers who undertake a sustained additional responsibility are awarded a teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) in recognition of that responsibility.¹⁹ Responsibility

¹⁹ DfE (September 2017), *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2017 and guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions*.

for SEN/ALN clearly falls into this category, although SENCOs/ALNCOs might also be paid on the leadership scale. Further, in England, the SEND Code of Practice²⁰ sets a clear expectation that the SENCO role should be strategic and that the SENCO should be a member of the SLT.²¹

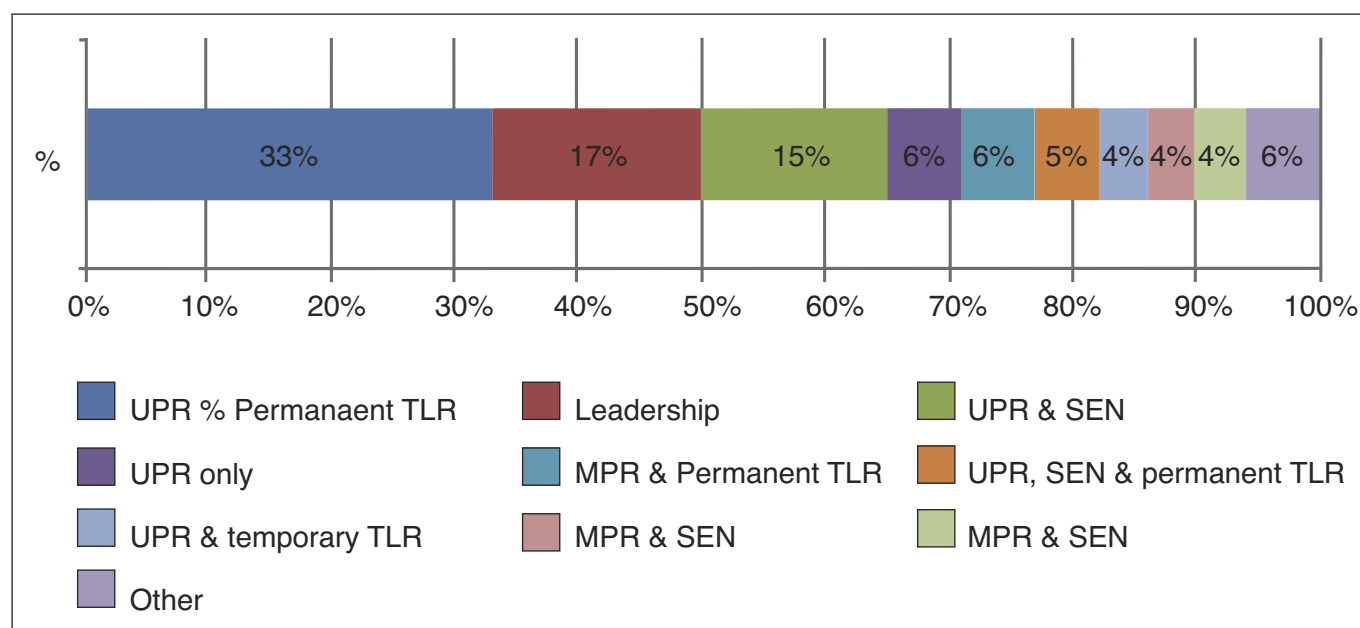
Thirty-three percent (33%) of respondents from England and Wales said that they were paid on the Upper Pay Range with a permanent TLR; 17% said that they were paid on the leadership range; and 5% were paid on the Upper Pay Range with an SEN Allowance and a permanent TLR. Six percent (6%) of respondents said that they were paid on the Main Pay Range with a permanent TLR, and just under 1% were on the Main Pay Range with an SEN Allowance and permanent TLR.

A small number of respondents indicated that they were paid a temporary TLR: 4% said that they were on the Upper Pay Range with a temporary TLR; just under 1% were on the Main Pay Range with a temporary TLR; and just under 1% were on the Upper Pay Range with an SEN Allowance and temporary TLR. It is unclear whether these respondents were in temporary posts or whether they held permanent responsibilities but their TLR was subject to review.

Worryingly, 15% of respondents said that they were paid on the Upper Pay Range and only received an SEN allowance; 6% said that they were just paid on the Upper Pay Range; 4% said that they were on the Main Pay Range and only paid an SEN Allowance; and 4% said that they were paid on the Main Pay Range only – they received no TLR or SEN Allowance.

The remaining 5% of respondents said that they were on other pay arrangements.

Figure 28: How SEN/ALN is reflected in pay arrangements for teachers from England and Wales



Responses to the question: How is your role as SENCO/ALNCO/Head of Inclusion reflected in your pay?

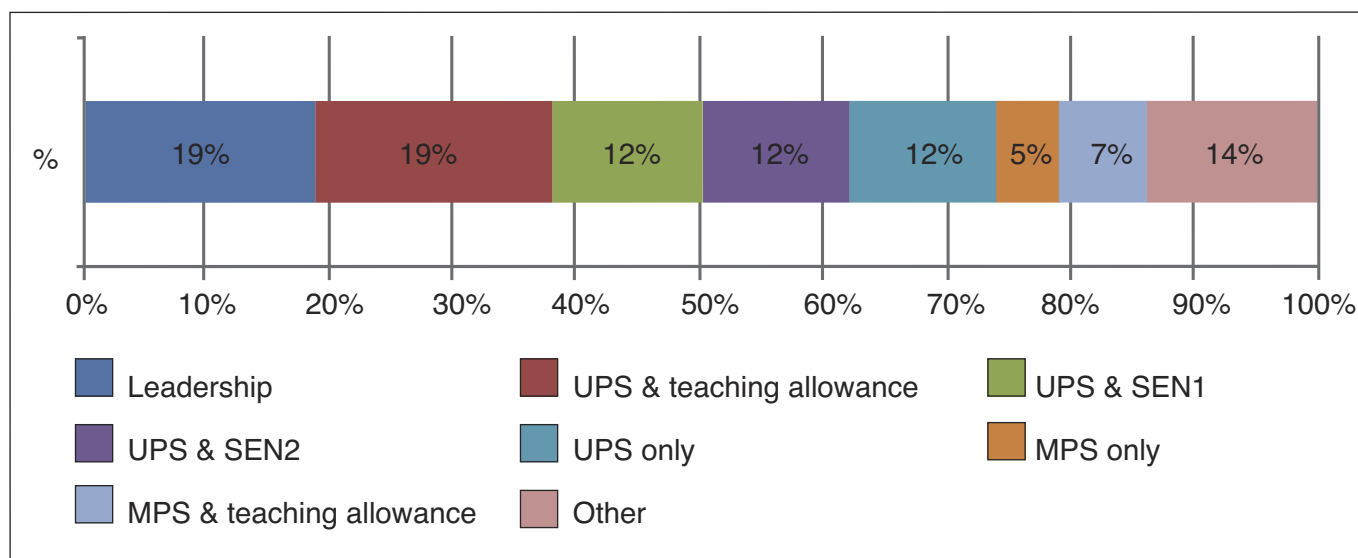
In the case of Northern Ireland, 19% of respondents said that they were paid on the leadership scale and just under 19% of respondents said that they were paid on the Upper Pay Scale and received a teaching allowance.

Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents from Northern Ireland said that they were paid on the Upper Pay Scales with an SEN allowance (equal numbers said that they received an SEN1 Allowance or an SEN2 Allowance), whilst just under 12% said that they were paid on the Upper Pay Scale and received no additional allowance. Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents said that they were paid on the Main Pay Scale and just under 5% reported that they received no additional allowance. The remaining respondents reported other pay arrangements.

20 DfE and DoH (January 2015), *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years*, pages 108-9.

21 SEND Code of Practice, paragraph 6.91.

Figure 29: How SEN is reflected in pay arrangements for teachers from Northern Ireland



Responses to the question: How is your role as SENCO reflected in your pay?

The number of respondents to this question from Scotland was very small. Teachers reported in equal numbers that they were paid as a Principal Teacher, that they were not paid to undertake the role as ASN Co-ordinator, or that they had another arrangement (an SEN pay point or paid at the top of the grade).

The findings are disturbing as they indicate that many SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are not remunerated appropriately for the work that they do. They suggest that some schools, particularly primary schools, do not prioritise or have strategic oversight of SEN/ALN/ASN. Further, the findings indicate that many SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators are struggling to cope with the increasing demands and expectations being placed on schools by external agencies. The findings raise major questions about the retention and recruitment of SENCOs/ALNCOs/ASN Co-ordinators.

Experiences of SEN teachers and teachers working in special schools, PRUs and alternative provision

Summary of key issues

Experiences of inappropriate learner behaviour and the management

- Well over half of SEN teachers have experienced physical assault. Almost all SEN teachers report that they experience low-level disruption and three quarters report experiencing verbal abuse.
- In some schools, teachers are told that physical assault and other abuse is 'part of the job'.

Managing behaviour and protecting staff

- One in 11 SEN teachers said that their school does not protect them from physical abuse.
- More than a quarter of SEN teachers report either that their school does not encourage staff to report incidents or that they are encouraged to report some incidents only.
- Just over half of schools record all incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Schools are least likely to have arrangements in place for recording attacks via social media (39%) or unwanted material online (38%).
- Schools that manage behaviour effectively appear to: have clear systems in place that are applied consistently; anticipate issues and identify risks; have clear leadership of behaviour and a strong sense of working as a team.
- Many SEN teachers report that the behaviour management policy is not applied consistently. In the worst instances, managers do not take responsibility for behaviour management. They are failing in their duty of care towards staff.
- Some SEN teachers report that staff are hit, spat on and verbally abused on a daily basis.
- One teacher said 'I receive more abuse as a teacher than friends of mine who are in the police force and prison service'.

SEN teachers' pay

- Around 15% of SEN teachers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are not remunerated appropriately for their SEN/ALN responsibilities.
- Administrations in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales do not collect and publish comprehensive and accurate data on the school workforce, including data relating to SEN allowances.

Introduction

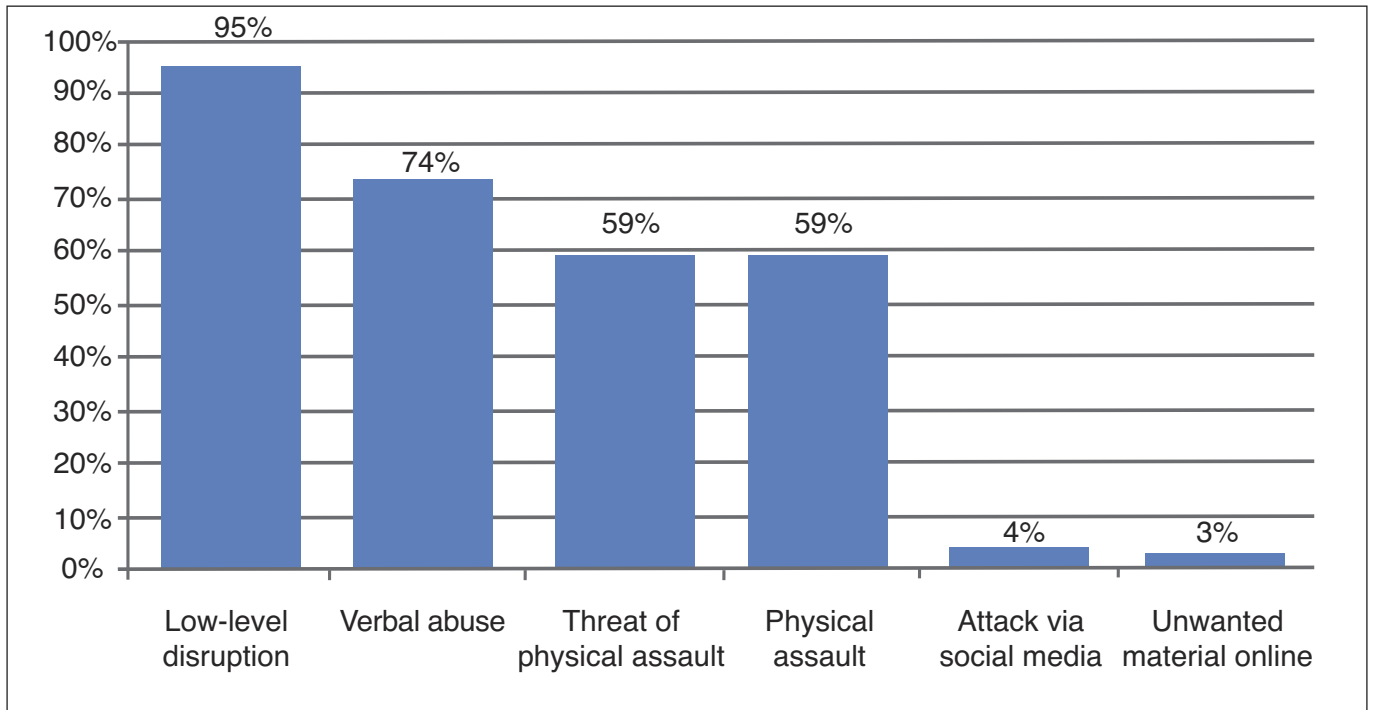
The NASUWT has received feedback from some teachers working as special needs teachers or in special schools, pupil referral units (PRUs) and other alternative provision that they are not appropriately supported to meet the needs of some of the learners they teach. In particular, some teachers have reported that their school fails to protect them from violence and abuse. Indeed, some report that they are told that it goes with the job. The survey sought feedback from teachers working in special schools and AP about their experiences, the support they receive, including the appropriateness of the support provided.

Three hundred and eighty-six respondents said that they were an SEN teacher and/or they worked as a teacher in a special school, PRU, or AP. The majority of respondents (266) worked in England, 65 worked in Northern Ireland, 28 in Wales and 27 in Scotland.

Teachers' experiences of inappropriate learner behaviour

Teachers were asked if they had personal experience in the last year of a range of inappropriate learner behaviours. Responses from across the UK were very similar. Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents said that they experienced low-level disruption in their classrooms and almost three quarters of respondents (74%) said that they experienced verbal abuse. Alarming, well over half (59%) said that they had experienced physical assault and 59% said that they had been subjected to threats of physical assault. Four percent (4%) of respondents said that social media had been used to attack them and 3% said that unwanted material or information about them had been posted online.

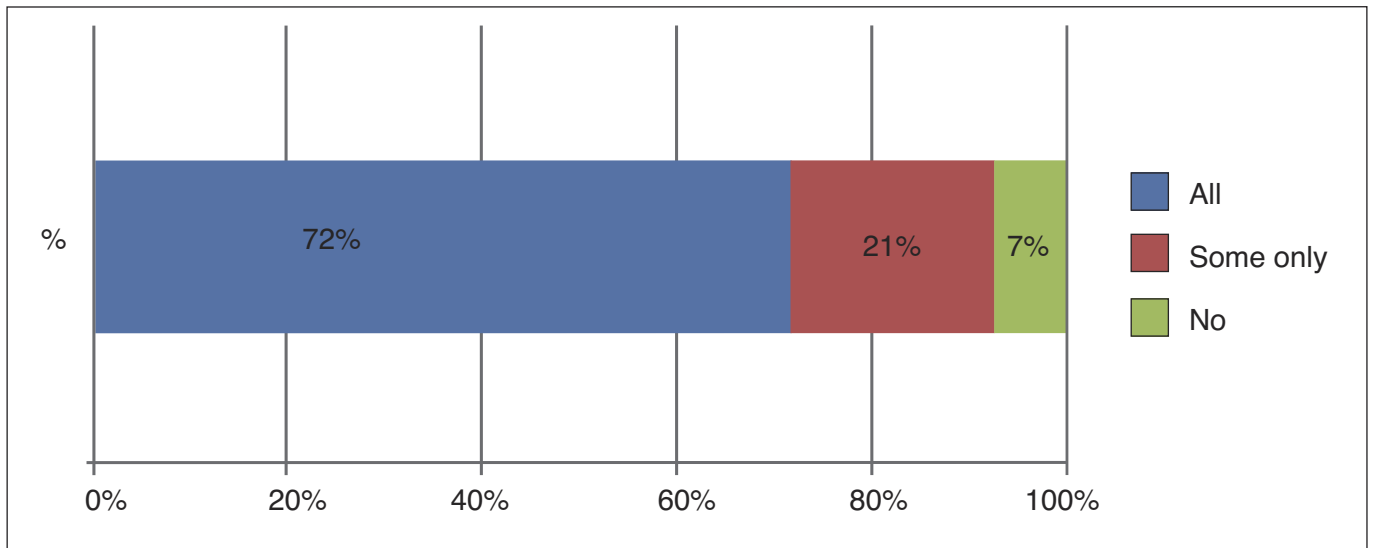
Figure 30: Teachers' experiences of inappropriate learner behaviours



Responses to the question: *In the last year, have you had personal experience of the following incidents of pupil/learner indiscipline?*

Teachers were asked about the steps that their school took to deal with incidents and to protect them. Respondents were asked if they were encouraged to report incidents to the school. Seventy-two percent (72%) said that they were encouraged to report all incidents of pupil indiscipline to their school. However, more than one fifth (21%) reported that they were only encouraged to report some incidents and, alarmingly, 7% said that they were not encouraged to report incidents to the school.

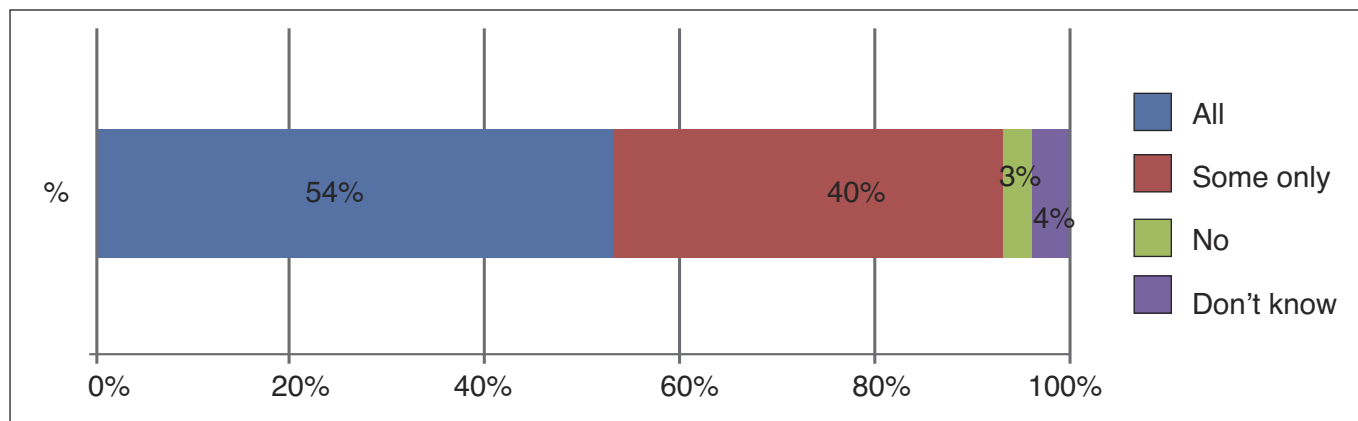
Figure 31: Does the school encourage teachers to report incidents of inappropriate learner behaviour?



Responses to the question: *Does the school encourage you to report incidents of pupil/learner indiscipline?*

Teachers were asked if their school recorded incidents of learner indiscipline. Just over half of respondents (54%) said that the school recorded all incidents of learner indiscipline. The majority of other teachers (40%) said that the school only recorded some incidents. However, worryingly, 3% of teachers said that their school did not record incidents of learner indiscipline and 4% said that they did not know whether or not their school recorded incidents.

Figure 32: Does the school record incidents of inappropriate behaviour?

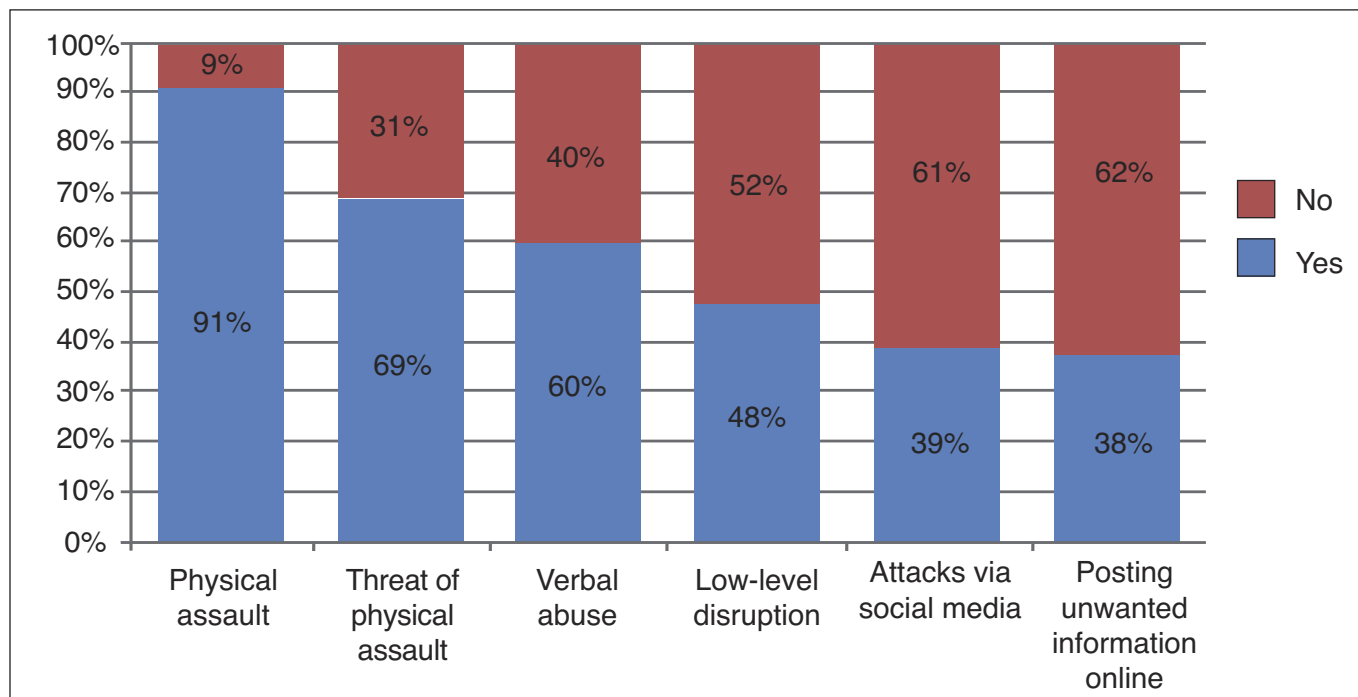


Responses to question: Does your school record incidents of pupil indiscipline?

Teachers were asked if they believed that their school took appropriate action to protect them from different forms of inappropriate learner behaviour. An overwhelming majority of teachers (91%) said that their school protected them from physical assault. However, the fact that 9% of respondents reported that their school did not protect them appropriately is extremely worrying.

The proportions of teachers not indicating that their school took appropriate action to deal with other forms of behaviour were much higher. For example, only 69% of respondents said that their school protected them appropriately against threats of physical assault; less than two thirds (60%) said that their school protected them appropriately against verbal abuse; less than half said their school protected them appropriately against low-level disruption; and just over a third said that their school took appropriate action to protect them from attacks via social media (39%) or posting unwanted or unauthorised information or material online (38%). Other NASUWT surveys²² reveal bullying and harassment online or via social media to be a significant and growing issue for all teachers.

Figure 33: Do schools take appropriate action to protect teachers?



Responses to the question: Does the school take appropriate action to protect you from...?

While most teachers reported that their school did protect them from actual physical violence and abuse, a significant number indicated that they were not protected from threats of violence or other forms of abuse. Some SEN teachers were told that they should accept violence and abuse as ‘part of the job’. For instance:

22 For example, the NASUWT’s annual *Big Question* survey.

'It is believed that because we work in a special school, the abuse, physical and verbal assaults come with the job, so it has to be a serious assault with injuries and medical attention [and] sick leave to be taken as serious'.

'Physical violence against staff is commonplace...staff are frequently injured – bites, bruising, back injuries and so on. We don't see any changes in response to reporting these incidents. It seems to be accepted as "part of the job".'

'Part of the job in a special unit...[there is] little that can be done to protect staff from high-risk children.'

Some respondents indicated that teachers in their school experienced frequent violence and abuse:

'We are being verbally abused, sometimes on an hourly basis'.

'These are everyday offences'.

Staff being hit, spat on, verbally abused on a daily basis.

And one respondent said:

'I receive more abuse as a teacher than friends of mine who are in the police force and prison service.'

Many SEN teachers commented on how school management dealt with incidents and protected staff. Where teachers identified management as effective, they indicated that the school had clear systems in place that were consistently applied. Steps were taken to anticipate issues and identify risks, there was clear leadership, and a strong sense of working as a team. For instance:

'We have a multi-disciplinary staff. All have alarms and pupils are assessed for mood prior to coming into education. Aggressive behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils may be sent home or the police called'.

'Our school has a very good discipline policy and we all feel supported by management'.

'Behaviour is well managed in my place of work. There are behaviour plans and procedures to follow where the risk is identified'.

'We have meetings every morning and evening to discuss each pupil individually. If an issue has [arisen] in class, it is discussed. If serious incidents occur such as physical intervention or threats, it is raised at the time of the incidents and appropriate actions are taken.'

'...it's not about protecting staff from all violence and abuse. It's more about risk assessment, identification of needs and strategies to tackle complex mental health needs.'

One teacher provided an example of the impact that moving to a systematic and structured school approach to managing behaviour had on them:

'Behaviour was out of control...I along with six other staff went on long-term stress. Measure[s] have been put in place and in September I returned to a completely different school with structures in place.'

Some respondents reported that managers had the right intentions, but that there were issues in practice. For example:

'The headteacher and deputy heads are supportive and have an open-door policy which allows us to bring concerns to them. They observe particular challenges and offer support where they can. However, this is not always possible.'

'If other staff are around, they have a script to help you, if you need help. [But] there's not always help at hand and it's not easy to summon help.'

However, most of the comments were about problems with management and the lack of a consistent approach. For instance:

'Pupil behaviour for the most part is very good...However, the lack of a rigorous behaviour management policy does mean that when we have more challenging pupils, staff aren't empowered to deal with them.'

They included examples of managers failing to acknowledge that there was an issue or that it was management's responsibility to deal with the problem:

'...I recently got head-butted, but LMT [Leadership management team] couldn't care less. I requested a risk assessment before returning to class...I was told to write it myself.'

'There is no discipline policy; events are responded to on an ad hoc basis'.

'Management do not see behaviour as a genuine whole school issue and prefer to blame individual departments or teaching teams.'

'The school wants all incidents reported but only acts on some incidents. The staff hierarchy is obvious to staff and pupils and pupils know that there will only be serious consequences for very specific behaviours or if they misbehave for management.'

A few respondents said that managers were concerned about staff wellbeing, for example:

'Our school is a nurturing school for both pupils and teachers, and staff wellbeing is an absolute priority for the principal.'

However, most comments were about the lack of concern for teacher and staff wellbeing. Some respondents also indicated that concerns about the school's performance and standing took precedence over the wellbeing of staff:

'[The] school states that sanctions and consequences will result from verbal/physical abuse. However, in reality, school is reluctant to act in case it is shown in a bad light [or] affects [the school's] results or academic standing.'

'Staff left damaged and hurt are not supported.'

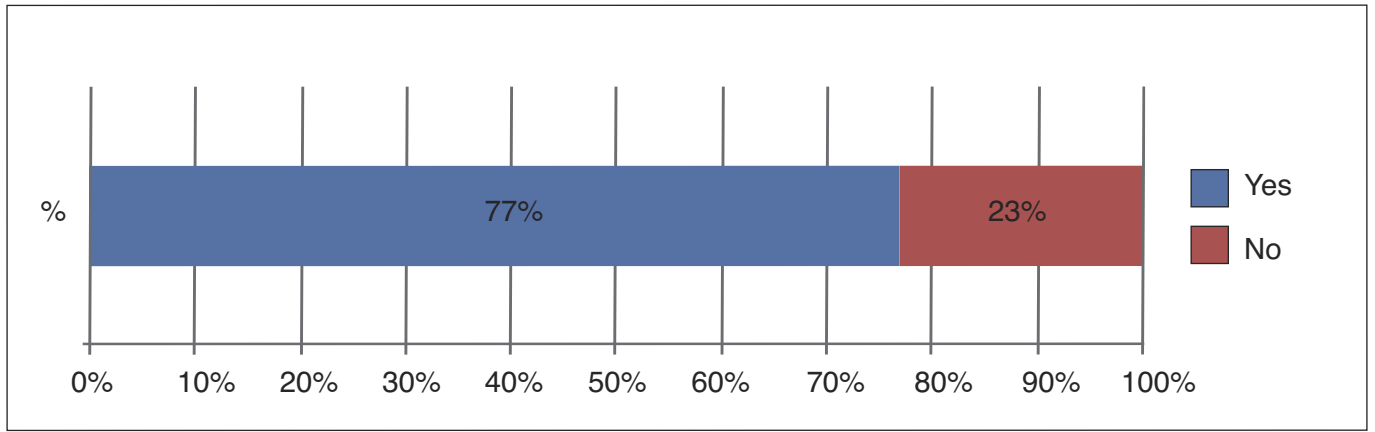
SEN allowances

Finally, teachers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland were asked if they received an SEN allowance to reflect their role and responsibilities as an SEN teacher. Just over three quarters of respondents (77%) said that they did receive an SEN allowance. However, almost a quarter (23%) said that they did not receive an allowance, with similar responses in all three administrations.

Teachers will not receive an SEN allowance if they are paid on the leadership scale under the STPCD. The survey did not include a specific question for SEN teachers about their pay arrangements. An examination of SEN teacher responses indicates that 9% of respondents said that they were a school leader (Head/Principal, Deputy Head/Vice-Principal or Assistant Head). This identifies those who are most likely to be paid on the leadership scale. Also, 16% of SEN teachers reported that they were SENCOs or Heads of Inclusion and an examination of the pay arrangements for those SEN teachers reveals that 8% are paid on the leadership scale. Using these proxies, around 15% of SEN teacher respondents do not receive an SEN allowance and are not on the leadership scale. In other words, a significant proportion of teachers working in special schools and specialist and AP provision do not receive appropriate remuneration for the work that they do.

It should be noted that in England, in 2016, the DfE stopped reporting the specific data on SEN allowances in the School Workforce Census (SWC). Further, the other UK administrations do not collect and publish such data. This raises significant issues about the accuracy and completeness of school workforce data.

Figure 34: Remuneration for SEN/ALN responsibilities



Responses to the question: Are you paid an SEN allowance?

Acronym Glossary

ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
ALN	Additional learning needs
ALNCO	Additional learning needs co-ordinator
AP	Alternative provision
ASD	Autism spectrum disorder
ASN	Additional support needs
CAF	Central assessment frameworks
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CLPL	Career-long Professional Learning
CPD	Continuing professional development
DfE	Department for Education
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EHC	Education, Health and Care
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EOTAS	Education Other Than At School
EP	Educational Psychology
HEI	Higher education institute
IEP	Individual Education Plans
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LA	Local authority
LMT	Leadership management team
MAT	Multi-academy trust
MLD	Moderate learning difficulties
MPR	Main Pay Range
MPS	Main Pay Scale
NASENCO	National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination
NQT	Newly qualified teacher
OT	Occupational Therapy
PM	Performance management
PRP	Performance-related pay
PRSD	Performance Review and Staff Development
PRU	Pupil referral unit
PRU	Pupil referral unit
PSA	Pupil Support Assistant
QTVI	Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment
RSC	Regional Schools Commissioner
SEBD	Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health
SEN	Special educational needs
SENCO	Special educational needs co-ordinator
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
SfL	Support for Learning
SIP	School improvement plan
SLD	Severe learning difficulties
SLT	Senior leadership team
SPMLD	Severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties
STF	Specialist teaching facility
STPCD	School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document
SWC	School Workforce Census
TA	Teaching assistant
TAF	Teacher assessment frameworks
TLR	Teaching and learning responsibilities
UPR	Upper Pay Range
UPS	Upper Pay Scale



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Tel: 03330 145550
E-mail: advice@mail.naswt.org.uk
Website: www.naswt.org.uk