

Survey on School Priorities for SEND Services and Support - *'Right Spaces, Right Places'*

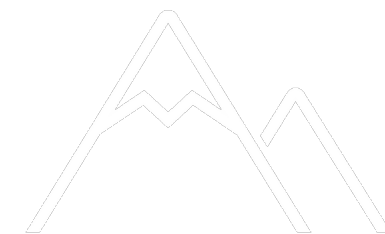
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Summary Analysis



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- Wokingham Council recently ran a survey for schools between 30 June 2023 - 28 July 2023
- It gathered school's views on their priorities for improvement of the local Special Educational Needs and Disability ('SEND') system and Wokingham's new SEND Strategy that is currently being developed
- It also gathered feedback on school's experience of accessing local specialist outreach services
- The survey was responded to by a total of 17 schools – 25% of all local schools – made up of 14 primary (82% of total) two secondaries (12%) and one special school (6%).
- 16 of the 17 respondents confirmed they were headteachers.



- All respondents confirmed that the Strategy Priorities from 2021 remain relevant – although 19% suggested that Co-production was not a key school priority

Issues and Challenges identified in 2021 Strategy	Remains a significant issue for schools	Not a key priority for schools	Response Total
Growing demand, particularly acute in early years	100% 17	0% 0	17
Insufficient specialist provision	100% 17	0% 0	17
Joint working and joined up delivery needs to be strengthened	100% 17	0% 0	17
Management information needs to improve	94% 16	6% 1	17
Strengthen inclusion in mainstream	94% 16	6% 1	17
EHCP timeliness and quality	94% 15	6% 1	16
Co-production at the strategic level is lacking	81% 13	19% 3	16

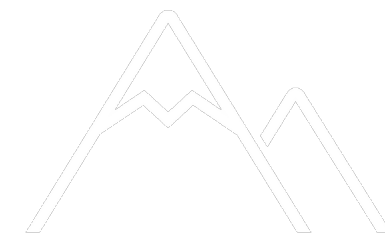
- A number of additional critical challenges were highlighted by schools
- These are either new issues or remain acutely significant for schools
- These are set out on the next slide

- **Complexity of need is increasing** and stretches school's resources and knowledge – particularly in the complexity of mental health difficulties being faced by pupils (and families as a whole), which has been acute in the wake of the pandemic
- These sit below the thresholds for CAMHS but are often too complex for preventative services including the Emotional Well-Being Hub
- There are significant numbers of pupils who have struggled to return to school since the Covid-19 lockdowns – '**Emotionally Based School Avoidance**' is a priority issue for many schools.
- **Limited access to special school places** means that mainstream schools are sometimes supporting very complex cases with increased risk of exclusion
- **Importance of consistency and equality between what schools offer** – every schools need to play an equal part in meeting local needs
- **Limited access to specialist support** – from Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, CAMHS and specialists in Autism and Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties – remains limited
- **Particular challenges in the early years** and in identifying and supporting needs in the PVI sector at pre-school
- **Recruitment and Retention of SEND staff is a key challenge** - and to accessing training for new staff given the high turnover.

- Schools were presented with a range of current and proposed spending priorities
- Schools were asked whether there were the right priorities, whether there were any gaps and asked to rate these in terms of priority levels
- i.e. if there were insufficient resources to do everything which things would schools prioritise, reduce or remove altogether from the list?
- 81% of schools supported the identified priorities for investment
- 36% said there were gaps on the list, which included developing a strategy for recruitment and retention, and ensuring timeliness and accuracy of school's funding; these items will be factored into the SEND Strategy development process
- The Priority list opposite has been colour coded to identify the high, medium and low tiers of school support.
- It should be stressed that the items on the low tier of support may have lower impact on schools; this does not mean they will have a negligible budgetary impact nor a knock-on implication for the SEND system as a whole, but it DOES show where schools themselves want to focus their efforts.

PRIORITY	Prioritise %	Reduce %	Remove %
Increased specialist outreach support	100		
Increased range of specialist provision	94	6	
Implement Early Years Strategy	94	6	
SEND Team capacity	94	6	
Improving Joint Commissioning with health	81	19	
New High Needs Financial Banding system	67	20	13
New SEND support service	62	38	
Commissioning capacity re: Alternative Provision	53	40	7
Data systems	44	44	12
Commissioning capacity re: INMSS	21	64	14
Commissioning capacity re: EOTAS	20	67	13
Improved Local Offer	19	44	38

- There are two clear issues identified in the School Survey that are not addressed through the current programme of improvements:
 - i. Understanding and addressing the identified gap between MHST / Well Being Hub support at the lower tier of mental health support and CAMHS services ... CAMHS is under review locally and we need to ensure the education / SEND system is actively involved in this process
 - ii. Recruitment and Retention of SEND staff were identified as key challenges for schools – we need to explore whether there is more the system-as-a-whole could do to address this challenge in a joined-up way?
- Other issues that were raised are already within scope of the programme as it stands (this will be clearly set out in the SEND Strategy)



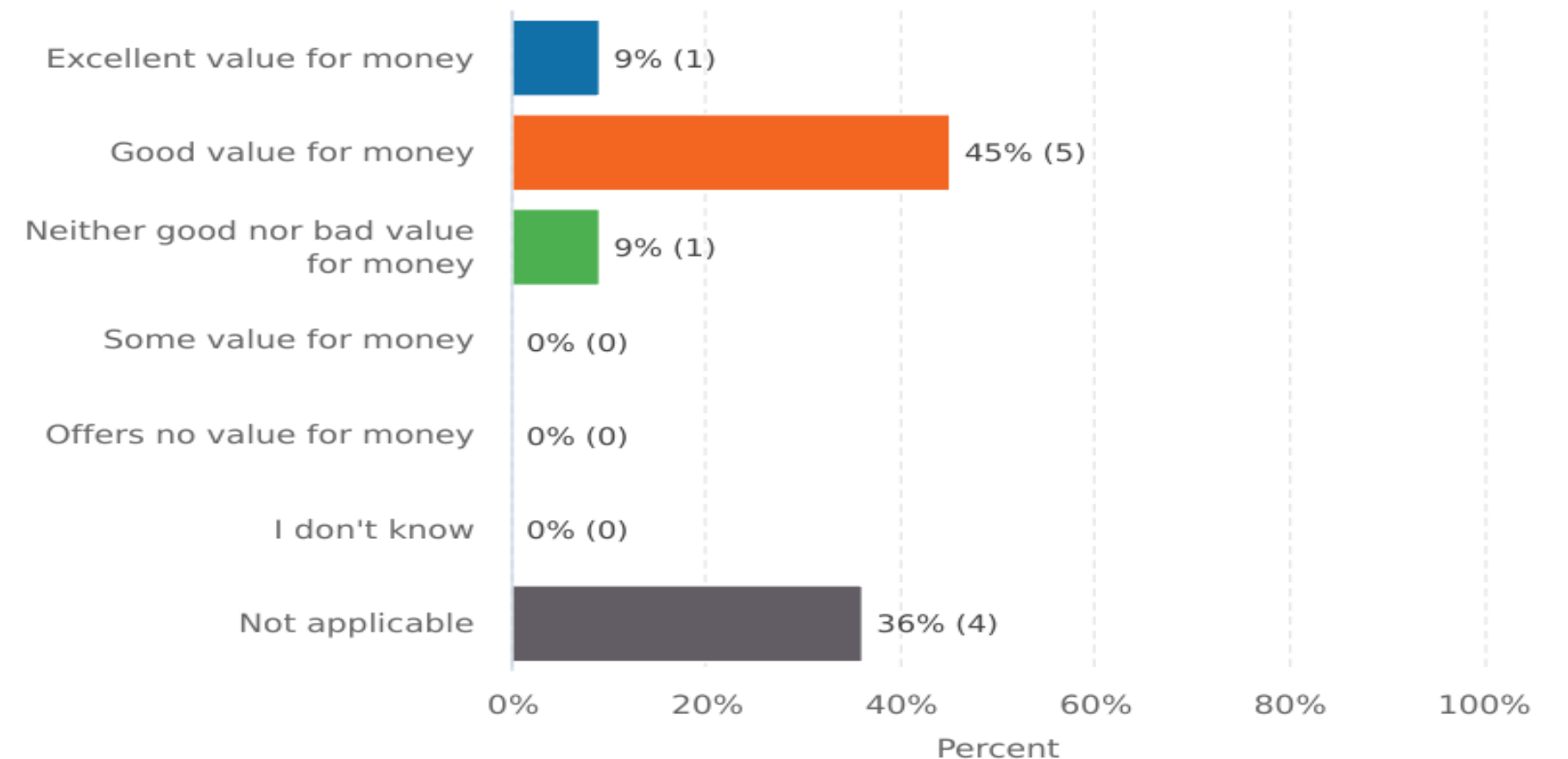
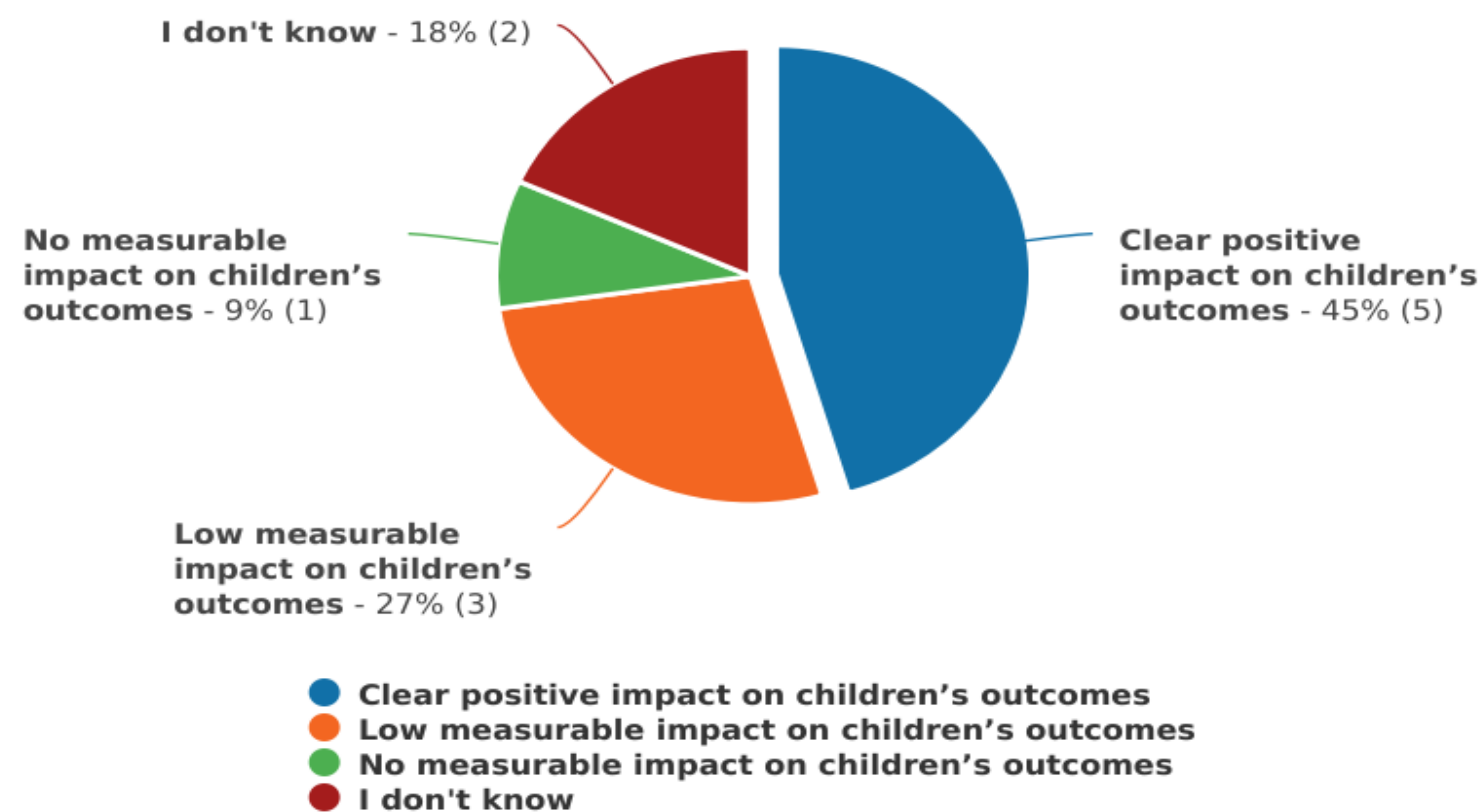
Survey Feedback on Existing High-Needs-Block-funded Specialist Outreach Services



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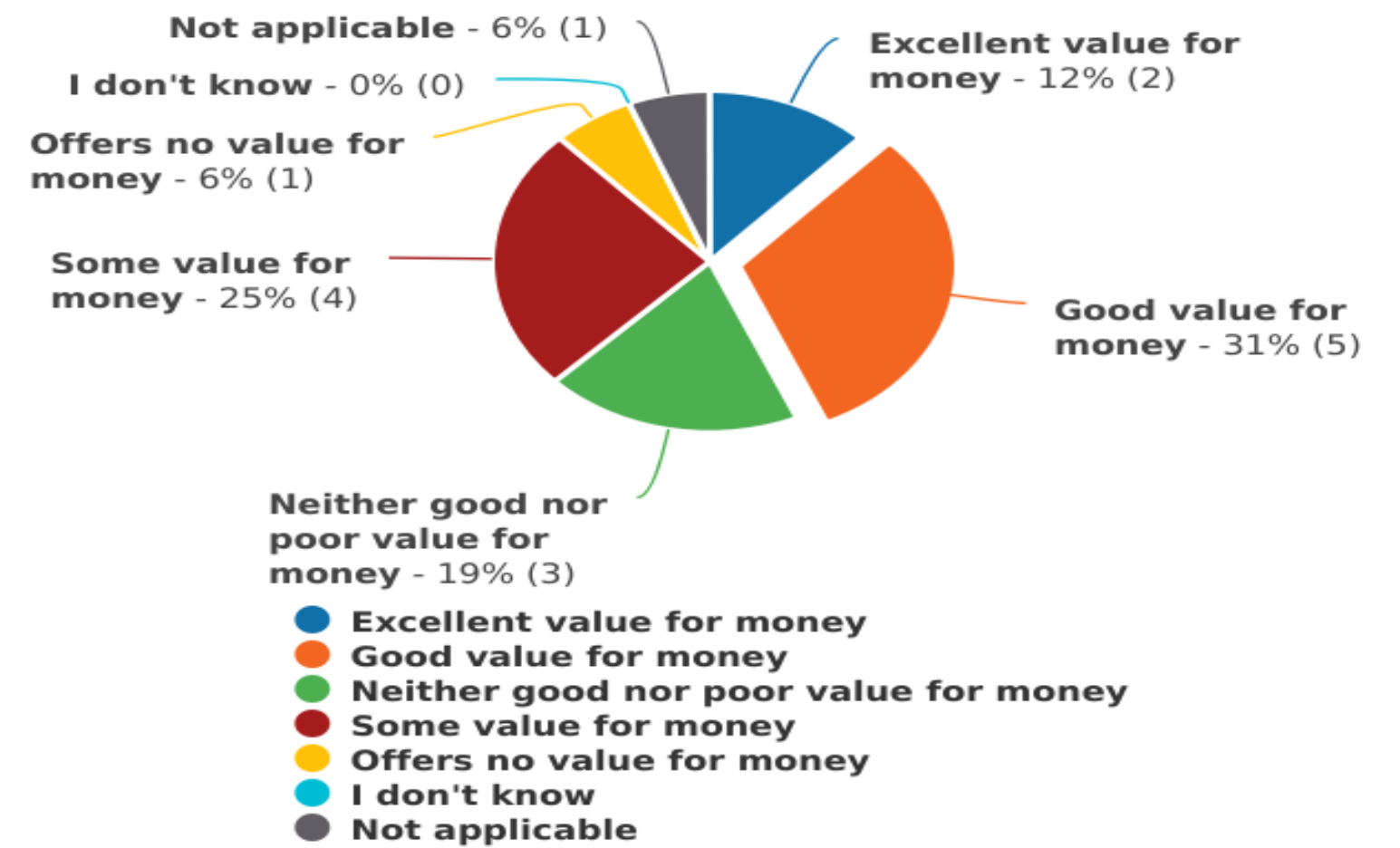
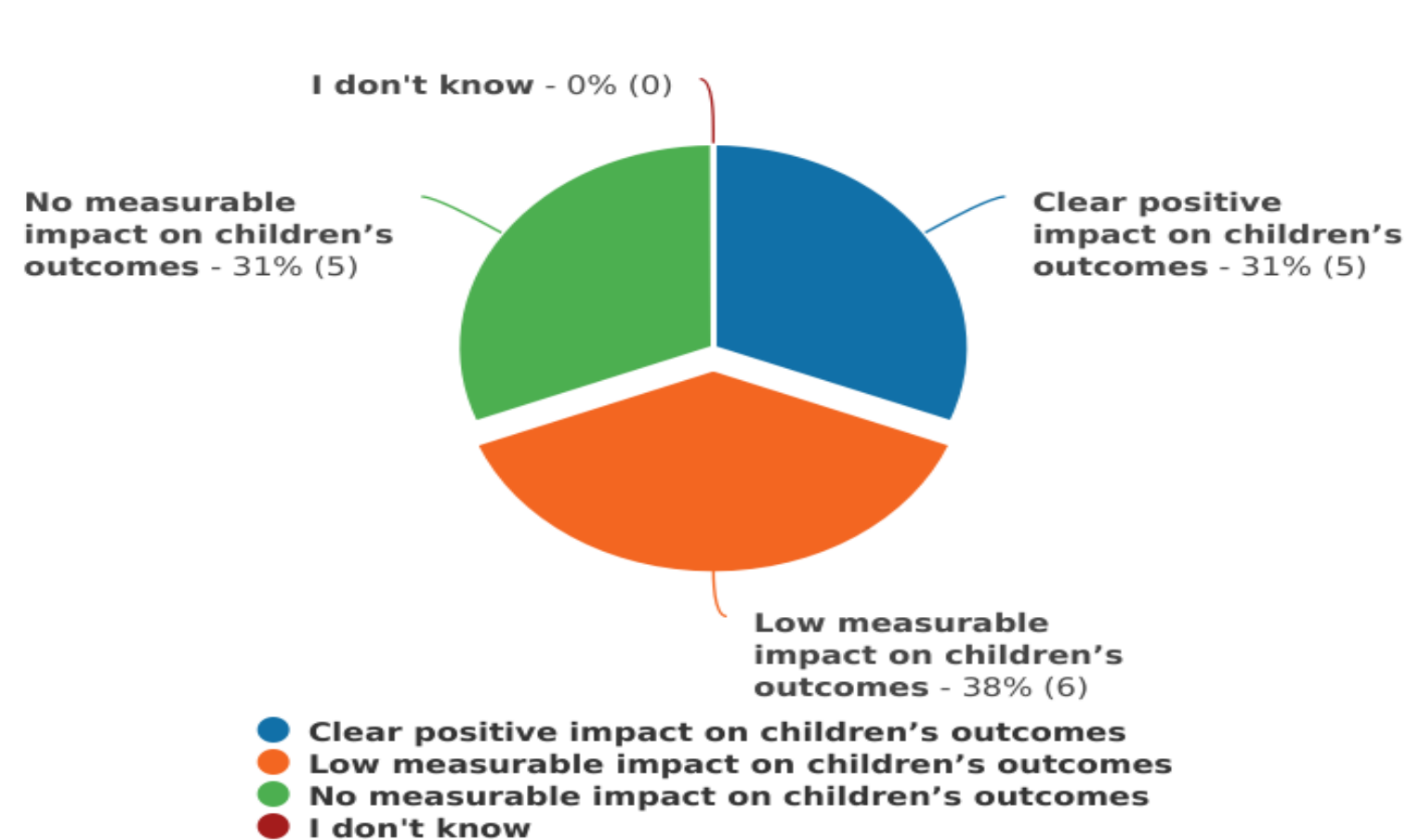
- 94% of responding schools were aware of AOIS
- 67% of responding schools had accessed AOIS
- 54% of responding schools felt AOIS provided good or excellent value for money – no respondents gave a negative response (36% said ‘not applicable’)
- 100% of responding schools who had accessed AOIS said they would do so again
- There were many compliments regarding the service
- There were also a number of specific suggestions, requests or recommendations that have been passed on to the Service

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- 100% of responding schools were aware of FCOS
- 94% of responding schools had accessed FCOS
- 43% of responding schools felt FCOS provided good or excellent value for money – one respondents said FCOS offered no value
- 94% of responding schools who had accessed FCOS said they would do so again
- There were a range of comments about the difficulties in supporting pupils with very challenging or violent behaviour in mainstream school and questioning whether this was the right environment. Others were very complementary of the support provided by the Foundry

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- 82% of responding schools were aware of BSCS
- 93% of responding schools had accessed BSCS
- 18% of responding schools felt BSCS provided good value for money BUT 36% said this was not applicable as the service does not charge (centrally funded for most aspects)
- The service is funded to meet individual pupil's needs as does not provide staff training or development
- 100% of responding schools who had accessed BSCS said they would do so again

