

Summary of survey results: Specific Learning Difficulties Survey for SEND families in Hertfordshire.

Hosted by HPCI (Herts Parent Carer Involvement) Feb 2020

This survey was open to parents and carers of children and young people aged 3 to 25 with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) covering dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, dyscalculia and dysgraphia, either identified or suspected. This survey sought to gather evidence to build a picture of the experiences of families with SpLD in Hertfordshire. There were 159 responses from across the county covering children from early years to age 16.

Key findings

- 88% of respondents had a formal identification of SpLD for their child or young person (CYP), either through assessment or screening.
- ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia were the three most common SpLD identified
- Over 85% of respondents reported other special educational needs (SEN) for their CYP, with anxiety, autism and emotional and mental health difficulties being the most common.
- 44% of respondents said their CYP had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in which their SpLD was identified.
- Of those with an EHCP, 66% said the EHCP clearly stated what needed to be in place to support the CYP's SpLD.
- 56% of respondents said their CYP did not have an EHCP.
- Of those without an EHCP, 43% said the CYP was not receiving any additional support for their education.
- 89% of respondents felt that increased awareness in education settings would have a positive effect on their CYP's education through "increasing knowledge and understanding".
- Respondents were asked if they had any further comments about support for children with SpLD. The responses were varied but the lack of meaningful support was a key theme. Respondents felt that there was a lack of consistency across schools with provision being driven by skills of individual teachers. In terms of support that could help: clear pathways and guidance for parents; best practice guidance for schools, more support for mental health; more

outreach workers and more access to specialist teachers, were all suggested.

What next?

This survey was carried out in February 2020, a few weeks before the seriousness of the pandemic became clear and the UK entered into lockdown, with education being very significantly affected. Whilst the results of this survey are potentially very useful, we recognise that the impact of the pandemic may have changed many things – including parents' understanding of SpLD issues, access to diagnoses and support in schools. We therefore plan to run a similar style survey again to update and extend our understanding to include the impact of the pandemic in this area.