



# STATE OF SEND REPORT

May 2022

## [Abstract](#)

Parent Carers across the Shropshire Local Authority Area have shared their experience of services, systems, and support for their family and their child / young person with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

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## 1.0 Introduction

In 2019 PACC created two surveys to help us understand how families in Shropshire experience SEND services. In November 2019 [If The SEND Inspection Was Today..... \(paccshropshire.org.uk\)](https://paccshropshire.org.uk) was launched, this fed directly into our SEND Local Area Inspection feedback in January 2020. [The State of SEND – Shropshire Report 2020 \(paccshropshire.org.uk\)](https://paccshropshire.org.uk) was published to raise awareness of families experiences and highlight PACCs position in readiness for the inspection. The report also draws on some themes we explored with families during the development of the Shropshire SEND Strategy [Draft Shropshire SEND Strategy - What do you think? \(paccshropshire.org.uk\)](https://paccshropshire.org.uk).

There has been substantial progress in many areas across the SEND agenda since 2020's Local Area SEND Inspection outcome, which required a Written Statement of Action. Our response to the initial report [PACC Response to Shropshire SEND Inspection Report \(paccshropshire.org.uk\)](https://paccshropshire.org.uk) explains how we felt families views were heard and understood throughout the process. Our journey as Parent Carer representatives within this process has been recorded on our SEND Inspection pages [The Shropshire SEND Inspection \(paccshropshire.org.uk\)](https://paccshropshire.org.uk).

While progress has been made, there is still a clear gap between the internal strategic and operational developments and genuine impact for families on the ground in their everyday lives. To help us understand the landscape today, we sought feedback from families again. While our ongoing conversations and relationships in the community provide invaluable insight, a survey provides richer information about more specific topics and themes. Our SEND Survey was tailored to provide us the intelligence needed to reflect the impact of the WSOA development and any progress to date.

We asked the following questions:

1. Do you feel that EHCP's in Shropshire are effective in delivering good outcomes for children and young people?
2. Please share your views on the current quality of EHCP's in Shropshire.
3. If applicable, have you had a positive experience of Autism/ ADHD assessment and support during the last 2 years in Shropshire?
4. Please share your view on the current quality of Autism / ADHD assessment and support in Shropshire
5. If applicable, have you had a positive experience of speech and language support and assessment in the last 2 years in Shropshire?
6. Please share your current views on the quality of speech and language support in Shropshire
7. Do you feel that school-based support for SEND children and the approach to inclusion is good in Shropshire?
8. Please share your views on the quality of school-based support and inclusion in Shropshire schools
9. Do you feel that preparation for adulthood for young people with SEND is good in Shropshire?
10. Please share your views on preparation for adulthood in Shropshire.

## 1.1 Executive Summary

While there are some pockets of good practice and some very positive responses regarding good quality communication, service delivery, and care received by some families, there are some alarming comments made about specific provision offers and pathways of support throughout the survey responses. Positive experiences appear to be inconsistent.

From the survey we can see that considerable concerns remain regarding the quality-of-service delivery, assessments, support, and care delivered to families. Some families feel they are waiting for assessments and support for unreasonable time, their child's needs go unmet or poorly addressed due to lack of provision or suitable delivery of identified support, and they experience poor communication throughout the system.

We are disheartened to see so many concerning comments about the effect on both the child's and the parent carers mental health and wellbeing due to a reported lack of suitable support. This is unacceptable, and while steps are being taken to address this strategically, on the ground families report they are left unsupported until they feel they are at crisis point. Parent Carers own needs are not addressed in their own right, with feedback stating health needs are increasing due to a lack of support for their family in relation to their own needs as well as limited support to address the needs of their child.

Annual Reviews and Education, Health, Care Plans are cited as "*Poor and poorly delivered*" and "*They aren't fit for purpose*". We can see families reflect the lack of holistic perspective and the focus on academic outcomes contributing to this, as well as the lack of meaningful advice or assessment from some key support providers (such as social care and health practitioners). Education support is also identified by some as a poor experience.

Communication appears to be a common concern raised relating to schools and service support, particularly reflected in feedback about EHCPs and the Neurodevelopmental Pathway. It is concerning that many of the issues raised by Parent Carers in their responses could be mitigated by improved communication and information. There is also a clear lack of cohesive communications across the system, with families receiving different messages and information from different sources adding to their confusion. An example of this is families being told they can only be referred to a service via their school, but the service website has multiple referral methods including GPs and other SEND sector practitioners.

You will see from the evidence gathered there is still significant improvement required across the SEND sector. Whilst improvements have been made and some families report positive experiences, these are overshadowed by the continued challenges and barriers other families face.

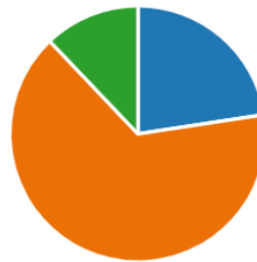
## 2.0 Education Health Care Plans

Parent Carers were asked to comment on the current quality of EHCP's in Shropshire. It is clear from feedback that there are several areas which require improvement. Key themes that emerged from feedback include the length of time it takes to obtain an EHCP; reviews of existing EHCP's; issues with the process to obtain an EHCP; input from services; support and accuracy of EHCP's.

Do you feel that EHCP's in Shropshire are effective in delivering good outcomes for children and young people?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	28
● No	81
● Not Applicable	15



### 2.1 Timescales

Parent Carers feel that the current length of time to obtain EHCP's in Shropshire to be too long. The feedback received around the time it is taking for a final draft EHCP to be obtained suggests it too often goes beyond the 20-week legal deadline of receiving a final draft. Parent Carers also feel that the timescale for reviews and receiving updated EHCP's is too long, this has particular implications for PFA and planning next steps:

*Very poor and the process takes too long*

*They are good but taking far too long to get done*

*Take too long*

*It's there, took almost a year to get the final copy just in time for review*

*All takes too long exhausting deal with different people every time the time*

*Too slow, inaccurate and staff don't listen when preparing plan*

*Process takes so long to progress that needs have often changed (my daughter's needs had worsened) by the time the plan was ready to be finalised*

*So I've had 2 of my children assessed and both diagnosed with Autism but I am still waiting to see an educational psychologist to get an ehcp for my son who is non verbal, still in nappies, drinks from a bottle and is ment to be starting mainstream in September which is just going to be a nightmare*

*We are currently awaiting a draft EHCP at present, with the 20-week date having passed 3 weeks ago with no formal notification that this could not be met or*

*reasons why, other than second hand word of mouth through our case worker. This, like all our other experiences, has not been an easy process to navigate and without the support of IASS we would not have had a clue what to do*

*Out of date before they eventually get sent out*

*Report from annual reviews take ridiculously long periods of time to be sent to families*

*They seem to take a long, long time to complete following Review and as a parent I have to ask several times for my copy*

*Take far to long to amend on annual review and no case worker sticks to a job and we have a school out of catchment and although we do annual review it's never updated on system*

*Too vague and out of date before they are received*

*School aren't very supportive of this option*

*Poor support*

*Not enough support*

## 2.2 Support

Parent Carers feel that there is not enough support given, this includes being supported through the process of applying for an EHCP and the resulting support provided by school and other services:

*My own son had one, and unfortunately it was totally and continuously ignored by his school, leading to a severe deterioration in his mental health as well as his and the families quality of life. They should be effective helpful tools but the reality is not the same unfortunately. I guess he needs to learn to stop being autistic as has been suggested more than once by the school*

*I think it's vital that SEN children have the help and support of an Ehcp. As a parent of an Autistic child one of the main problems I found was that I had to fight to get him an Ehcp. He now has a level 6 ehcp and cannot attend school due to severe anxiety due to up coming gcse's. Without an ehcp and the avid support and hard work of his Ta and sen team he would not of got as far into school*

*My granddaughter has an autism diagnosis and an EHCP in Shropshire and so far has had very disappointing and ineffective support at every turn. After the relief felt with the diagnosis and then the awarding of the EHCP we, as a family, felt that at last she would begin to receive the professional help she so badly needs. However we felt let down by ineffective, token interventions, none of which have helped and most of which have felt unprofessional*

*Our daughter was issued an EHCP last Autumn. I feel that having a private assessment and therefore her having a diagnosis meant that this happened for us*

*more smoothly than for other families still unable to secure an assessment. We were pleased with the draft and only asked for a very few amendments which were all granted*

## 2.3 Barriers

Parent Carers feel that there are a number of barriers- that the criteria is unclear and Parent Carers feel the process is difficult to navigate.

*Impossible to get one as they don't seem to want to accept emotional and social are severe issues for children with autism*

*Very, very, very hard to get assessment let alone plan. No Ed Psychs*

*It is impossible to get any help at all if your child's ability is above base level for their age*

*Ridiculous difficult process with illegal practices being used*

*Seems impossible to get one as social, emotional needs are ignored*

*If you can get one they are supportive for the child, however getting one is as easy as milking a unicorn*

*Getting an EHCP is impossible. They do not provide 1-1 support within mainstream education*

*Cannot get an EHCP for my child*

*After completing all paperwork, including paperwork that should have been completed by early help (because they were too busy to engage) and left me to complete this alone, we sent an application off in February, which when I chased up was informed they had not received it!!!! We now have to wait another 6 weeks for this to even be looked at! This is the last thing we need so close to an important transition period! Absolutely disgusting process. They fail to realise that these applications are vital for our children!*

*Too lengthy and not informative in early stages*

*Excessively complicated, very formal looking, instead of having something that is easy to interpret by all, which is a Barrier to their effectiveness*

*Hard work to get one and to understand the content. We paid a private speech therapist to explain the details. Almost everyone we know has had to fight and push back. Takes a long time for the EHCP to be processed, 20 weeks"*

*Terrible criteria to follow*

*We have been put off time and time and time again to apply for EHCP so we are currently applying for a graduated support even with this the amount of fighting*

*we have had to do is horrendous, out mental health has suffered and as a family feel broken*

*I think the ehcp's are very poor and extremely hard to get. I had to send my daughters first draft back twice as they didn't use the recommendations of the EP on two separate occasions*

*I have had differing experiences. My elder son has one, but my younger one does not and was turned down for one. Last year we went through the annual review with his school and everything was done correctly*

*It's a terrible process. We were given false information to put us off making a referral, the schools involved delayed and when one of our children was eventually assessed, they refused to issue. We then applied for tribunal and suddenly they agreed to issue.*

*Has been difficult to get it moving forward*

*Difficult to understand. Unsure how much of the EHCP is adhered to by the school. extremely difficult process that an average parent, already struggling with their child's needs, should not have to fight to receive*

*We have a GSP in place not EHCP. Our school SENCO has to re-apply every 6 months and there is always a problem, and the SENCO finds communication from the LA extremely difficult, evasive. We (parents) then have to contact Sam Edwards at the LA for anything to be sorted*

*My daughter's EHCP has been appropriate for providing her with correct support although the application process (5years ago) was incredibly stressful."*

*The process of getting an EHCP in the first place is over complicated, too much irrelevant paperwork*

## 2.4 Review and Updates

Parent Carers feel that the process to update EHCP's and the timescale to implement these updates on paper is not acceptable. It is also clear that EHCP's are too often not being updated regularly, after reviews have taken place.

*EHCP in Shropshire is inadequate reviews take place, yet it is not updated*

*Not updated regularly, often poor quality, too often refuse to assess until at crisis level*

*Shropshire LA did not update his EHCP. It is too late now, as it was discovered at the review for this year. It is very easy to blame the pandemic - but this is serious stuff*



*The outcomes aren't updated as soon as they have been completed to then add a new outcome. I do feel the EHCP doesn't really mean anything legally"*

*My son has never received his EHCP on time. After one annual review of his EHCP, it took nearly a year for us, and his school to receive his EHCP. We only received it through constant chasing*

*We are still waiting for the copy of our amended EHCP since the review on February 9<sup>th</sup>*

*Seems to be another box ticking exercise. The child's needs are not accounted for, they are not taken seriously and are not updated in time*

*Recently due to staffing shortages within the council SEN team things have deteriorated. We are still waiting for a revised EHCP from our meeting in June 2021. This clearly breaches SEND law which states that the EHCP must be issued within 12 weeks of the meeting. Actions that were agreed within that meeting have not been implemented because the council/LEA staff member has left!*

*They should be run as a live document at all times, not only updated when a child changes setting, for example. Otherwise they are confusing and misleading.*

*The review meeting seems to go well but then it takes months to agree the write up. Amendments dont get done.*

*Sadly, the effectiveness of an EHCP depends on the teacher (specialist setting) or the SENCO (mainstream). As a parent I have found that I have had to push & push to get my child's EHCP amended. Most of the information in it is out of date and not current*

## 2.5 Quality of EHCP's

Parent carers have varied views on the quality of existing EHCP's and how these are implemented.

*Not worth the paper they are written on*

*Useless they all seem to be copy and paste*

*Currently the EHCP are put together but nobody seems to take any notice of them. They are just a formality that is dug out every 12 month with nothing achieved*

*They aren't fit for purpose & then the school written on them doesn't take any notice*

*Poor and poorly delivered , many out of date and unrealistic targets*

*They are not fit for purpose. They are not specified and quantified and things are missed out of section B and F if they are not something the school or LA deliver*

*It's just a paper exercise, nothing I've ever asked for has been considered. I have no faith in it at all*

*EHCP's are too vague, outdated and targets are not SMART*

*Not enough offered for complex needs children.*

*professionals reports not used effectively to inform EHCP document*

Parent Carers feel that after the stressful and lengthy process of obtaining an EHCP, that the actual document is not reflective of their young person and is often not specific enough to the individuals' needs. Whilst being specific to the individual needs is important, an EHCP is also needed to describe how to deliver outcomes in the varying environments in the young persons life. The EHCP should be used as a tool to support staff to deliver against these outcomes, and describe how this can be achieved.

*EHCP-Quality -Not sure how Quality is defined - quality of experience and /or quality of content ? Do we as parents know this ?*

*Often EHCPs are very education focused and the quality of other inputs either totally absent or very limited due to lack of knowledge by those chairing review.*

*It depends on the school and teacher and parent relationships. If there is good dialogue you get a good ehcp*

*They are not specific enough. They don't specify hours of support which is left for schools to figure out. 'Bandings' aren't good enough, when awarded they should state their value*

*My son's teacher actively works towards achieving targets on his EHCP*

*Severndale have improved the quality of their annual reviews and implementation of EHCP targets. I don't know if this is an internal drive or influence from LA SEN team*

*EHCPs work well in school but as soon as young people leave school for college, they don't work as well, and when they turn 18/19, they are worthless. SENCo wanting to say that outcomes have been achieved when they haven't just because the EHCP will be ended due to age*

*Quality of content is very varied and often depends on quality of Senco of school or college and then quality of LA case officer and SEN admin team . Over the years we have some very good and very poor. The fact there is no staff consistency at LA is difficult*

*Not worth the paper they are written on*

*Useless they all seem to be copy and paste*

*Currently the EHCP are put together but nobody seems to take any notice of them. They are just a formality that is dug out every 12 month with nothing achieved*

*They aren't fit for purpose & then the school written on them doesn't take any notice*

*Poor and poorly delivered , many out of date and unrealistic targets*

*They are not fit for purpose. They are not specified and quantified and things are missed out of section B and F if they are not something the school or LA deliver*

*It's just a paper exercise, nothing I've ever asked for has been considered. I have no faith in it at all*

*EHCP's are too vague, outdated and targets are not SMART*

*Not enough offered for complex needs children.*

*professionals reports not used effectively to inform EHCP document*

Parent Carers particularly feel that the EHCP's are too focused on certain academic outcomes and do not consider long-term needs and the future of their young person:

*They are not providing what disabled children needs*

*Education has worked my son until he left mainstream college but the health and care element has been non-existent*

*EHCPs are excellent for academic progress but do little to promote social progress (health), they are a ticket to some club sessions which are of a very high standard. However young people with SEN require constant and consistent support socially which is difficult to access in a rural county in small family units. EHCPs are excellent at highlighting issues but these are left to be addressed by educational establishments whose main focus is not on providing social health part of young people's needs. Social skills are more important than academic skills for the successful integration into society of SEN young people when they reach adulthood and want to take their place in society. There is also no defined education for mainstream children over being more accepting and including of a group of young people who pose no threat to their own futures but who may be future colleagues/neighbours/employees*

*They focus too much on education and academic achievement only - our young people need a much more holistic approach because they don't either get the opportunity to or naturally learn the wider social or independence skills. The process doesn't acknowledge the importance of these skills and how not having them negatively impacts our children. Annual reviews seem to be just about reporting and listing what has happened rather than planning what needs to happen*

*I would like more opportunities for development of reading and writing skills and opportunities for set homework in holidays if the child has capability within early years*

*The SEND team has consistently framed my son's post-16 EHCP in terms of the 'courses' he was doing, not in terms of preparing him for adulthood. He ended up with a bespoke course because there were so few post-16 options he could actually access due to entry, eligibility or financial criteria. His college did a good job, but had a constant struggle to get funding, so there were long periods when he had no educational provision. And there have been many instances when the SEND team has failed to follow statutory processes properly*

*In our experience the EHCP has very little relevance to the child's experience. The most recent EHCP also completely blamed my child for all the difficulties they were facing*

## 2.6 Objectives and Outcomes

Parent Carers feel that the objectives in EHCP's are too focused on academic outcomes and should instead support all aspects of a young person life and not just their education journey, this should include things such as universal health outcomes; social and community engagement skills; being able to live safely in the most appropriate way for them. Feedback has also highlighted that there is no next steps planned when an EHCP ends- when an EHCP has ceased the Health and Care elements (outcomes provision etc) should be transferable into a continuation of care plan.

*They do not reflect the child they are written about. They do not cover all aspects of the child and how best to support them. They are also not followed, so they are not really worth the large amount of time, emotion and stress that it takes to complete them!*

*EHCP's are not fit for purpose, I've not read one in school that reflects the child's issues, let alone my own child*

*Objective setting is not good and does not reflect a journey towards. Outcomes are rubbish .3 out 5 times doing anything is not a sensible target. Lots of stuff about wider community and work .But unrealistic. No support for work experience. No voluntary opportunities offered*

*Our daughter doesn't get most of what is written in her EHCP and she's entitled to much more, it's poorly written*

*Currently not up to date and does not reflect son's situation*

*The final version was not worth all the hard work as it didn't show my child's needs at all.*

*The outcomes are not forward thinking for planning for the future. The outcomes are too educational based*

*The health and social care elements are often missing. Teachers are not knowledgeable enough about the process*

*There has been a real quality problem with setting objectives and changing objectives that are meaningful to the young person. Sometimes it is forgotten that this is a Plan and the objectives should set the destination - outcomes should be a key measure of success and measure of quality. Never clear but not sure the EHCP measures the right things!*

*Outcomes too focused on education qualifications or work. Nothing about social , community ,voluntary work offered or valued as an outcome .Nobody offers support on these bit .Process takes a long time and very stressful. Talk to different people each year . Seems like an annual report rather than a plan of action .Nobody else turns up except school SENCo. Don t know about other peoples but don't know anyone that has a good one!*

*Shropshire council need to be more communicative and informative of the application ,process and possible outcomes*

*Objectives are too woolly and there isn't the services/resources available to help support positive outcomes for the young person and their family.*

*Lots of outcomes my sons not met nor the services offered to obtain these outcomes and he's now 18*

*I feel the EHCP we send in is not taken account of and the team change outcomes etc, we therefore as parents have to fight for our final EHCP*

*Only education reps turn up. Very focused on education outcomes. Difficult to agree objectives that are long term. Not given much advice on other opportunities for young person. Case officers at LA different each year. Way the end of an EHCP is finished is not good. No discussion just a standard letter. No after care support offered young people left with nothing in place letter*

### 3.0 Autism and ADHD assessment and Support

If applicable, have you had a positive experience of Autism/ ADHD assessment and support during the last 2 years in Shropshire?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	15
● No	69
● Not Applicable	41



### 3.1 Timescale

Parent Carers have shared their experience of the length of time they have waited for their young person to be assessed. Although no specific time frame is given to families at point of referral, or described through information provision such as The Local Offer. Guidelines from BeeU state that services are working towards assessments being completed within 18 months- it is clear from feedback that there is a long way to go for this to be achievable.

*Far too slow (4 years!) and then nothing*

*Waiting times to long*

*Far too slow*

*Assessment is far too slow, years!*

*Ridiculously long waiting time's*

*Waiting lists are far too long*

*Awful. Waiting list is huge*

*Waiting to have one done*

*waiting times are beyond ridiculous*

*Too slow!*

*Waiting list ridiculous*

*Unacceptably long waiting time. Difficulties getting to see the right professionals to be considered for assessment in the first place*

*My youngest has been waiting four years to see someone from BeeU for an assessment!*

*Waiting list is too long and it should be being referred to the neurodivergent team not cahms*

*My son received an ADHD diagnosis last year during a telephone call after waiting for 4 years*

*Waited 18 months for diagnosis, as my daughter had waited so long she would not engage with them, now having to wait all over again, whilst her issues increase*

*My son was assessed by the CDC when he was 2.5 years. Diagnosed with SLD and possibly ASD. We requested an ASD referral through school in 2019, this was finally actioned in Feb 2021 and we are still waiting for an ASD Assessment/diagnosis and he's just turned 9 years*

*Diagnosis of Autism traits and to treat child like has ASD when working with him, but still awaiting full ASD diagnosis after 6 years. ADHD diagnosis encouraged to take education only but first not like taking. No alternative offered, except break work down in smaller manageable chunks and give regular movement breaks*

*After waiting 4 years we have recently completed assessment with those undertaking the assessment simply stating that she was too anxious to complete the ADOS but the whole picture was so clear that a diagnosis was granted*

*Still wait adhd assessment after 2 years.*

It has also been highlighted that during the long waiting periods, that service providers are not communicating with Parent Carers. This is of concern, as Nice guidelines, which BeeU state they adhere to, outline "Autism teams should give you clear information and listen carefully to your views and concerns". Feedback from Parent Carers clearly demonstrates there is a lack of communication with families.

*Waiting times are terrible! Finally diagnosed after 2 years but 4 years of trying to get anyone to listen to parents' concerns*

*6 years and still waiting. TERRIBLE communication from BeeU, never seem to be enough staff, nobody to turn to for support*

*Been waiting 4 years now. BeeU can never update or give any clear information.*

*Waiting time is way beyond guidelines, terrible communication*

*Been on waiting list for 18months still heard nothing. Don't know if we are in the first 10, last 10 on waiting list. Don't know how long we will have to wait. Our son has challenges now*

*My child has been struggling ever since he was a toddler and as a family we severely lacked understanding and no help was offered until he started school. Even though school got the ball rolling, it had taken 3 years and still he still hasn't been assessed. Other children with less severe but similar behaviours have also been seen before my own. It is awful for children and their families,*

*that children have to wait so long for a diagnosis compared to other counties. You have to fight so hard to be heard*

A Parent carer stated that they had to seek a private assessment for their child as waiting times were so long:

*After fighting and going around in a big circle for more than a year, we arranged for a private assessment. Had we not done this, we strongly believe our daughter would still not have had an assessment on the NHS. Without the diagnosis, we do not believe we would have secured her EHCP*

### 3.2 Impact on Mental Health

The outcome of delays in assessment and a lack of support can be of detrimental impact to young peoples mental health.

*He can not attend school due to severe anxiety and his mental health is so bad he threatens suicide daily. The only help we have had is from school. We have found that every step of my sons Autism journey has been a fight.*

*My son was diagnosed with Autism when he turned 11. Only because I pushed for 8 years for a diagnosis. Once he was diagnosed he has been completely left by the child and mental health team. He is now in year 11 and due to take his gcse's.*

*The reason that she was so anxious was that camhs forced her to wait 4 years for assessment and withheld any appropriate support from her until that was complete. Therefore she is now irreparably anxious, unable to attend school or interact with any therapists thanks to this lack of care provided. If it was not for us removing her from school and going to extreme lengths to keep her safe at home, who knows, we may not even have a daughter any more due to your horrendous, unlawful and inhumane "processes".*

*At our last appointment when I raised that my son was self harming as a result of his anxiety around school we were told that some young people just can't cope with mainstream school.*

### 3.3 Support

Parent Carers expressed that they felt the support provided during the assessment process was lacking. Again nice guidelines state the young person will be referred "for assessment and support to a local specialist autism team". Feedback shows the support element of this service requires improvement.



*There is NO support in Shropshire- you are just given a sheet of useful websites and left.*

*Support is virtually none existent*

*Support for ASD young man has not existed since primary school*

*No support is given to families trying to have a camhs referral is non existent*

*Terrible support. All geared up for high functioning autism, nobody can help my child who has complex needs, non verbal, learning disabled and autism.*

*no support provided for yp or family- just given a sheet of websites*

*Monthly telephone call from adhd consultant regarding medication. No further support from beeU*

*No real support for autism if considers to be high functioning*

*There is 0 support of any description, you just get a piece of paper with some "support groups" on there.*

*I feel for my sons age (8) there is little support for adhd and autism*

*No support*

*Non existent! Was signposted to West Midlands Autism for support, a charity, that gave me and my family my best support.*

*Support is none existence. We're on our own.*

*Took 4 referrals for ADHD assessment before beeU accepted the referral, then it was diagnosis and discharge. No support given*

Parent Carers also expressed that support was not available post diagnosis, and that signposting and access for support was unclear.

*Once you have a diagnosis, you are discharged from the BeeU service with no support*

*There is no support in Shropshire once you are diagnosed with Autism the discharge you with no further support.*

*absolutely awful – gate kepted access to diagnosis and no post diagnosis support whatsoever for bright girls with significant autism*

*There is no support. Paediatrician constantly tells me to ring charity based people if I want help declaring there are no services.*

*No support once a diagnosis is given*

*discharged with no support and still fighting for support*

*Appropriate help and support at an earlier stage could have made a real difference and prevented the debilitating anxiety at present being suffered.*

*The current assessments are out of date for a autism assessment as in your child gives good eye contact so can't have Autism. Needs real change. And after having a diagnosis and discharged without a follow up or support.*

*Much better for Autism than ADHD actually. More recognition and support for autism but not equal to ADHD.*

*There was no attempt to explore if the support was right or could be improved. When i asked if we should look at moving him to a specialist setting as soon as possible the consultant stated 'he was glad that was a decision that we had to make and not him'. There seems to be a total lack of understanding of how to build positive relationships with parent carers.*

*Ours was more than 2 years ago. It was ok but their should be more counselling support my wife had a mental breakdown following the diagnosis*

### 3.4 Communication

As shared above communication during assessment was identified as a concern. Parent Carers feel frustrated that they are not being given any information on where their child is in the assessment process, and instead are just being left to wait with no clear information being provided.

*There are no updates of where your child is in the backlog waiting for assessment either. The whole process of the assessment and the support during this needs vast improvement and restructuring*

*Awful, terrible, shameful, appalling and heartbreaking. We are still waiting for a diagnosis or a timeframe. Communications about what is happening are dreadful and only occur when I or the SENCO chase. I dread to think what happens to the children whose parents don't know how to, or can't, chase BeeU about their children's assessments. If I'd known how awful this process was going to be - I would have paid someone else to do it two years ago. Whoever is in charge should be ashamed of themselves.*

*There is no assessment process in Shropshire .You apply for an assessment fill out lots of forms ask other people to fill out lots of forms and then you wait ,wait and wait .You keep phoning and phoning and no one can tell you anything .How much longer do you have to wait no one knows .Useless .*

*BeeU were fantastic and very helpful in assisting my friend in getting an ADHD diagnosis for her son, given my own experience in the past I have no doubt it would have been harder without them.*

*Poor communication with parents about assessment progress. Actual assessment wasn't too bad and communication at this point improved.*

### 3.5 Assessment process

Parent Carers shared their experiences of the assessment process in Shropshire, feedback suggests these experiences can be improved. It is felt that the requirements for assessment are unclear and made difficult to access. This includes where families feel they are providing adequate information but it is not being communicated to families where this may not be the case.

*My daughter was refer to BEEU 4years ago for autism assessment. She has just received her autism diagnosis. Every encounter I have had with BeeU over the last 4 years has left me feeling unheard, like I have been making up all of my daughter's difficulties. I didn't feel anyone at BeeU knew what was going on with my daughter's journey. I didn't feel anyone even looked at my daughter's referral paperwork until the week of her diagnosis. It's been a truly awful experience as a parent and I'm so pleased I don't have to speak to anyone at BeeU again regarding her ASD.*

*It took four years to receive the correct diagnosis for our son. At every stage employee's and healthcare professionals seemed reluctant to want to listen or show any sign of empathy. It all seemed very cold. Following his assessment in January I asked if they could offer support his huge anxiety as the play therapist he was seeing privately had recommended he needed additional input along the lines of CBT. We were simply told to go back to the GP.*

*Service not fit for purpose with staff not having any experience or compassion. Obvious staff do not care about the children they are supposed to be supporting.*

*Our experience was horrendous, where we ended up having to go privately through Caudwell Children, all of my friends and clients have a horrendous time with autism assessments and it is so frustrating.*

*Terrible. In 2018 our sons mainstream school were "strongly advised" by outreach services to refer him to CAMHS for ASD pathway as well as a referral to OT. The school did neither. His ability to cope continued to go downhill until 2020 when he had a breakdown. He couldn't attend school and when we asked for an ASD referral, they refused as he hadn't been in school for 3 months. We had no choice but to (eventually) have him privately assessed. Our other son is now 14 and we have been trying to get an accurate assessment since he was 4 (since he was 7 in Shropshire) and even though he's in a specialist setting, we still don't have a diagnosis and have been accused (in both cases of label chasing even though he was very easily/clearly diagnosed by a private professional).*

*Every part of this is made difficult for families.*

*Very poor, the process being slow, drowning in unnecessary red-tape, and the end result being so disappointing.*

*Poor*

*The assessment process is a disgrace*

*It sounds like a complete disaster*

*From my point you can't get one unless you pay private*

*Disjointed - not sure who to turn to*

*Too many refused, too high a criteria to be seen, too easy to dismiss parents concerns without even seeing the child*

*Refused assessment although have supporting reports and siblings with asd*

*Our son has ADHD. We tried for three years to get him assessed by local bodies, but were rejected each time we managed to get a referral to CAMHS. His level of need was such that we decided to pay for a private psychiatric assessment at considerable cost to ourselves. He now has the diagnosis, yet we are still required to pay for his medication and ongoing consultations and reviews with the psychiatrist.*

*Despite support from GP and more than one professional involved in school with my daughter, we have been refused referral for diagnosis twice in the past 2 years. Referred instead to Beam whose services are just not Autism friendly - could not see same person at same time each week- drop ins just don't suit an Autistic child's needs.*

*Will not assess, as they feel he can make relationship so the rules it out*

**Parent Carers also shared their views on the difficulties they face obtaining medication for their young person:**

*Medication was prescribed and that has helped but there are a range of issues that my son is dealing with and there has been a lack of willingness by the service to engage in these. We have had no face to face appointments and we are now having to monitor his height, weight and blood pressure our selves, having been asked to purchase a blood pressure monitor by the service at our last appointment. We are lucky enough to be in a position to be able to do this but what about those families who aren't?*

*Medication is difficult to get in an emergency. Assessment is impossible.*

**Other comments relating to parent carer concerns of the assessment process:**

*Don't understand girls and how they show traits. Rushed job based on insufficient and poor evidence collecting and assessment*

*Unhelpful support service who just fob you off and don't filter you through into a different system that is suitable. To much bureaucracy.*

*There are too many hoops to jump through. Assessments should be more holistic rather than having to choose a specific pathway. Waiting times are too long and all too often young people are left without diagnosis and as a result are not adequately supported. This is also my experience within my job role. To get an assessment feels like yet another (unnecessary) battle.*

*Getting an Autism assessments Is an extremely long process. I don't believe they are carried out correctly as my daughter didn't even get assessed within school they just went with what school had said which I believe is totally unfair.*

*The assessment process is ridiculous, locum staff who are paid a fortune- when the money could be spent on developing an assessment process that works and employing full time staff, no updates, you are just left, for YEARS with nothing!!!*

*Unacceptable that access to a NHS service is being gatekeepered by education because of Bee U referral criteria. Wouldn't be the case for a physical difference. For children who mask...and schools not needing to do cycles of plan do review...there is no access for the child to an NHS service*

## 4.0 Speech and Language Support

Parent Carers were asked to provide their views and experiences of Speech and Language support and assessment in Shropshire.

If applicable, have you had a positive experience of speech and language support and assessment in the last 2 years in Shropshire?

[More Details](#)

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Yes	18
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> No	41
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Not Applicable	66



### 4.1 Discharging

Parent Carers shared their concerns about their young people being discharged from the services:

*They initial assessed my son during lockdown, then forgot about him. Quickly tried to rectify the situation, even though there are still issues he was taken off their books*

*Discharged from SALT without our knowledge. They couldn't care less when your child is non verbal. Lack of PECS training and intensive interaction.*

*We were seen once and discharged despite not having a tongue tie cut until 6 years old, having auditory processing disorders and having 2 sets of grommets. An assessment should have been put through by school 2 years ago and it wasn't done so now we are still waiting*

*Children discharged from service too quickly*

### 4.2 Support

From feedback there have been mixed reviews of the support Parent Carers feel their young person is receiving:

Some Parent Carers felt the support provided has been acceptable:

*Effective and appropriate support offered by SALT - very happy.*

*When we've accessed speech and language They've been incredibly helpful welcoming professional and friendly*

However, there have also been some negative experiences of the support provided.

*The support is virtually non-existent. Our son attends Severndale. The Severndale website (as at 28 April 2022) in the principal's welcome inform parents that "all children benefit from regular input from the speech and language therapist". It is simply not true. Our son has a 'file open' with the speech and language therapist. Her input consists of her seeing our son once a year to assess him, then provide some worksheets to the teacher/TAs in the class to deliver. The SLT says she doesn't have capacity to deliver face to face speech and language therapy and that her team follow a 'consultative' model where they issue instructions to teaching staff. This is wholly inadequate as the teaching staff are NOT trained therapists and are unable to provide the immediate feedback required to correct errors or help with formulation of sounds. We elected to engage a private speech and language therapist to address the gap however she has recently prepared a report to support a proposed change to our son's EHCP. This has not yet been submitted to the LA. We are aware of a number of other parents who have also become frustrated with the lack of input at school and sought private speech and language therapy. There needs to be a fundamental change in the way SLT is funded in special schools. Communication is key to adulthood and the future prospects of our children with SEND.*

*Inadequate and lacking. Feel like we're on the 'back burner' and nothing constructive is ever done in school by the NHS speech and language therapist. The school pays for a private one who sees a certain number of children and provides constructive advice about strategies and activities to try. We are careering towards a crisis in Shropshire in this area.*

*Sparse and lacking in anything beyond basic*

*Support is not there my daughter has received no physio or SALT input how can that be positive when she is non verbal with mobility issues*

*No support*

*My son has had constant input and support from speech and language and we are very pleased in particular with the support and dedication of Dylis Kilby.*

*Good materials support and advice really helped*

*My son is speech delayed and he's been seen twice he's six*

*We have received no SALT support. We have been waiting for over a year*

*My child's keyworker at school has been trained to give her SALT support which works well. I feel that this support should be reviewed to assess if it needs updating, which it isn't. When my child goes to college this year there will be no SALT follow up with the new staff so that they can deliver accurate support.*

*Much like everything else, slow and too little support given. Overstretched*

### 4.3 Process

Feedback suggests that Parent Carers feel that the support provided is not always meeting their young persons needs. There was also feedback provided about the waiting times of the assessment process.

*Unsure what speech therapy my son is receiving in school compared to his previous school in Cheshire who used to update me*

*Not enough of it and takes far too long to access*

*Not enough salt specialists - EHCP states regular and my son my been seen yearly.*

*I have continued to contact SALT services as my school don't really help with this even though my child's main difficulty is social communication.*

*Still awaiting a referral to them.*

*Far too little and takes far too long to get*

*Not proactive - again not sure who I need to deal with/speak to*

*Again, we had to go privately for this assessment.*

*Our daughter has had a number of S&L assessments, which have resulted in a personalised plan for her development in that area,*

*My child has been seen once in last year regarding speech therapy after i asked if she could be reassessed. Speech is something I really want to try progress rather than just makaton or picture exchange. However I feel there is not enough opportunity for 1:1 to encourage speech within the school and would like there to be more in-house speech therapy available on site.*

*Under funded*

*Refused access, very little available, huge waiting lists*

*The SSLIC team are invaluable as are the under 5's speech and language team*

*The current advice is that children with down syndrome should be seen face to face every four weeks. My child has been seen once every term and a plan passed to his teachers. He had nothing for over 12 months during covid and we get no speech and language support at home*

*Our son had a virtual assessment during the first lockdown. We found the online workshop that was recommended was not suitable for his needs*

*There just isn't enough resource/staffing in Speech therapy to provide intensive speech therapy for profound speech disorders. We only secured direct weekly therapy after involving an independent speech therapist who referred us to the Nuffield Speech and Language Clinic at UCLH. Before starting school parents are actively involved in speech therapy sessions with the community paediatric*



*speech therapy team. Once children start school parents are not involved and there is minimal contact from the therapists other than a written report periodically written in speech therapy jargon. This is most likely due to time constraints and pressure on the service but does not help to provide a holistic approach where parents can continue to support therapy at home. The specialist service SLICC is only commissioned to provide a service up to end of key stage one. It is not clear what happens after this. I recently attended an online training provided by the community speech therapy team for parents/support workers - more of these sessions would benefit parents but it was pitched at a very generic level more for children with mild speech delays as opposed to my child who has a complex disorder*

### **Other comments:**

Parent Carers also shared feedback around resources and staff.

*Had to use private SALT reports as the ones from Shropshire have been non existent*

*Despite communication challenges she has never been referred for salt*

*Very good materials provided and advice*

*Poor in schools*

*Excellent service but under resourced*

*Not fit for purpose. Staff are lazy and unprofessional.*

*Too sketchy, needs far more funding and resources.*

*Excellent advice however like everything not enough professionals so can be limited*

## 5.0 School-based Support and Inclusion

Parent Carers shared feedback on their experiences of support for SEND children and inclusion in Shropshire.

Do you feel that school-based support for SEND children and the approach to inclusion is good in Shropshire?

[More Details](#)

 Insights

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Yes	32
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> No	87



### 5.1 Support

Feedback provided on support focused on three main areas: negative support experiences; positive support experiences and support from external agencies.

#### 5.1.2 Negative Support Experiences

*No support at all during 12 months out of school*

*Support is not used to support the child effectively and training is poor*

*She's never been properly supported despite having a full diagnosis aged 6*

*Unfortunately no support for children with or without diagnosis. Even with detailed reports from occupational therapy of how to support my son, his son has failed to follow them.*

*The school do the bare minimum to keep my child in school. They are not accessing their education and attempting to get the support needed in school has been a constant battle*

*Having my own experiences, as well as many friends with children diagnosed with ASD or ADHD I have yet to hear of a positive report regarding the way main stream schools deal with the children*

*It is crap .Without EHCP not getting right support .Been sent home and told we have to improve his behaviour. Don't know what else to do .*

*Children are isolated from peers, no awareness promoted in schools.*

*Our experience has been that school would rather parent blame than fully explore the needs of the child/children, when a need has eventually been recognised,. school have used that as an excuse to not act and not support*

*We have two children with SEND and we feel that they are accessing the support they need because we, as parents, have pushed continuously for it. They are both primary school aged, and the school seemed to have little experience of supporting children with additional needs.*

*There are very few schools that support send children. I feel some schools consider our children troublesome.*

*Autism/ Aspergers support for secondary schools seems very weak support is needed for my son but not given. GSP funding wasn't transferred to new school. Paperwork not transferred. Teachers unsupportive. Info not passed on to teaching staff.*

*My child is in a specialist school but sadly has not progressed since he joined 4 years ago. I do feel as though he would have been better supported in mainstream. Sadly I thought a specialist provision was the best place but now I am having second thoughts*

*My granddaughter was badly let down by both her primary school and high school in terms of support when she desperately needed it. The severity of her autism now, including severe and debilitating anxiety, would certainly have been lessened by a more understanding and appropriate approach by her schools at an earlier stage. Years have passed with symptoms getting worse, and ineffective and often unprofessional support has been the only help available at the end.*

*When in mainstream the only idea for support was to keep my son in segregation*

*Schools offer the bare minimum and do what fits them rather than the child, I am a TA supporting and a parent*

*Shocking in this day and age!*

*Inconsistent, more concerned about staff than needs of student*

### **5.1.2 Positive Support Experience**

*Very supportive*

*At my child's school there has been good holistic support from all members of staff. The ECGP has been used affectively. My child has felt fully included in all activities and work has generally well differentiated.*

*My son does have ongoing additional support at school, either one to one or one to (up to) four children. He sees a learning mentor for one hour a week. However, he still struggles every day with his worries, fears, and anxiety.*

*I am fortunate that my children's schools both provide fantastic support for both of my children. One is in a mainstream placement which goes over and above and*

*really understands my daughter's needs. She has consistency of support and staff are well trained and supported to deliver this. I am concerned that as she gets older, the support that she needs to access mainstream will single her out more amongst her peers and will be prohibitive to developing the independence she needs for adulthood. Specialist provision in KS3/4 is more appropriate but I know we will have yet another battle to get this in place for her. My son attends an SEN Hub, he was well supported in mainstream but they couldn't effectively manage his needs. He has grown so much in confidence and independence and no longer sticks out like a sore thumb as he's with others who have SEN. Both schools are trauma informed and have moved away from the traditional rewards and sanctions with my children as they recognise that this isn't effective for children who have experienced trauma. Being supported by both schools makes a HUGE difference.*

*Some schools seem to have quality support systems and knowledgeable staff, like my daughter's school who have bent over backwards to help.*

*My son is in a specialist school and support is good*

*Excellent support in current placement at Kettlemere centre. Son has had fantastic support and EHCP has very beneficial. The EHCP is used as a live document and my son's needs are evaluated and altered depending on his needs.*

*Some schools seem to be better than others. We were lucky and had a good secondary school that were excellent at helping young people with SEN*

*Daughter attends specialist setting. Her needs are being met by school.*

*We have an amazing SENCo who has been a great help*

*The special school my son attends is a good school working hard to help him*

*At my child's school there has been good holistic support from all members of staff. The EHCP has been used affectively. My child has felt fully included in all activities and work has generally well differentiated.*

*We have a great working relationship with the school team. We are regularly updated etc. our child has a brilliant teaching assistant providing 1:1 support and is very well supported in school. The school runs many groups and activities to promote inclusion and build confidence in the children. All school plays include songs with makaton signing.*

*All schools my daughter has been to have made her feel included and part of the big family. Especially the village mainstream primary*

### 5.1.3 Support from External Agencies

Parent Carers shared that they felt some of their negative experiences were due to the school being unable to access the support from external agencies that were needed to support their young person:

*When my son was at school (prior to 2014) the main problem for schools was getting appropriate support from outside agencies.*

*Schools do not have enough support given to them*

*In mainstream schools get little support and fund a lot themselves . There is no local provision especially for rural areas.*

*School based support is very good academically, it follows progressive and positive patterns. School based support on social skills is more half hearted, it is intended but not followed through due to time, budget, not directly relevant to curriculum, not well understood that this group requires additional support (eg TAs to access school trips/after school clubs/playground social support).*

*Depends on SENCO very mixed not included in extra curricular activities .*

*Struggling to get help from school for my child. Outside services are not interested*

*Insufficient funding and children in mainstream miss out on physio, OT etc*

*Complex needs and severe autism does not have enough access in school to therapies as there is not enough staff to manage risk.*

*Attitude from some schools/professionals seems to be, "ah yes, that person is not useful, they've always been like it, nothing we can do'.*

*School did not get the support they needed to support my daughter*

#### Mixed feelings:

Some Parent Carers shared mixed experiences around support in mainstream schools:

*Its very mixed, increasingly schools are starting to understand that they have responsibility to ensure that their approach and support works for CYP with SEND rather than CYP with SEND just having to conform. My younger son has been well supported at primary school on the whole - but that is mainly because I have been very involved and lead that. I know not all parent carers at the school have had the same experience.*

*In theory, it's good. However, due to school staffing issues, my son currently does not have an allocated 1:1 teaching assistant to support him. His provision is being*

*covered by the remaining staff (since Easter) but this is far from ideal and hopefully only a short-term measure.*

### 5.1.4 Case Studies

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*“We have had a terrible experience regarding my son's school based support. He attended X and after returning to school after the first lockdown he really struggled. He was put in full time mainstream school for academic lessons, I said he would struggle but this was ignored ( my son is ASD also has type 1 diabetes). His behaviour deteriorated and we felt the placement was breaking down and no longer suitable. School denied this and blamed our parenting instead, they expected us to remove his special interest at home as punishment for aggressive behaviour at school. We also raised concerns with LA and had an emergency meeting at start of this school year as we felt he shouldn't return. School said they felt they could still meet need ( we didn't!) also LA wanted us to keep trying so we reluctantly sent him in. A couple of weeks after this he was restrained by police in the X and has been hugely traumatised by the experience. We removed him from school then and instructed LA to find another placement. That was September, it is now April and he has only just started another specialist placement. We were offered no alternative provision while he was out of school, the choice we were given was we could have work sent from X or we could deregister him and home school him, neither of which were appropriate. The whole experience has been damaging for the whole family, which has nearly broken down with no support offered. The only support we have had we found ourselves, that has been IASS and Autism West Midlands, who have been great. After such a damaging experience, I don't feel very positive about my son having a successful experience of education”*

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*“The approach to spending years "trying" inappropriate steps before specialist help is sought has resulted in significant trauma for my daughter. And when specialist help was sought, because schools must second guess what approach is needed to apply for the specific panel, to then be refused and back to square one, means that further time is loss in children's precious years. Why there cannot be a clear menu of options and specialists available to advise and support schools, and then a further menu of next steps with clear guidance, rather than relying on Senco's prior experience. Equally why can there not be a single referral when a child's needs are to be escalated, with a panel to review all options, rather than a separate panel for every option that schools must navigate in turn. No other services would ever be run like this, so unprofessional, inefficient and again, inhumane for the impact this then has in delaying support to the child while parents and schools fight to get what a child needs. Schools just don't have the expertise and in our experience, no-one in Shropshire Council does either.*

*Additionally our Senco took on an additional deputy head role and is trying to do both jobs, sending emails to us at 1am and 3am in the night to keep us with the work. This should not be allowed and is so unprofessional. Your approaches in Shropshire Council are causing this harm to both children and teachers”*

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## 5.2 Training

Feedback also expressed that Parent Carers felt they did not feel that staff had been provided with the sufficient training to support their young people:

*Lack of training for staff*

*More training, listening to parents and understanding needed*

*I have seen (whilst working as a TA) pupils sat at the back of the class, no planning for their needs by teacher, and quick to refer to TMBSS rather than invest in training for staff in-house to meet needs.*

*Schools don't have funding and are told to provide things by LA but are then not reimbursed. Training of staff in SEND is appalling.*

*Under funded not enough training sadly in Shropshire (due to shrewsbury maternity scandal,) we have lots of children with birth injuries do this problem will not go away anytime soon*

*Think mainstream schools need more training and need checks to make sure the money they get for the kids is going where it should be and they are also getting the 1to1 help and support*

*Support is too stretched and often by unqualified staff. Those well trained staff are overused so child misses out*

*Poor training, lack of awareness.*

## 5.3 Knowledge and Understanding

Parent Carers also shared that they feel there is a lack of understanding of their young people, and that the level of understanding was in some cases dependent on the school.

*There is a huge lack of understanding, I am absolutely appalled with how the schools are forced to do all of the work when there should be a programme independently put into each school to handle the service for these children so much better, instead of focussing on statistics and numbers. Our children are so underfunded and pushed away it's a disgrace. Everyone pushes it under the carpet and the parents have to find every bit of help as no one just offers it to you, it's exhausting, draining and totally unfair.*

*One size does not fit all, inclusion should not be at the cost of the child's mental health*

*We are lucky and currently have a good relationship with our daughters mainstream school but know from listening to others that this is the exception rather than the rule. Despite this, there are still improvements that could be made and not enough understanding of autistic girls*

*Very mixed depends on school Senco and staff .*

*Huge lack of knowledge and understanding. Appropriate training isn't provided. Not enough inclusive schools to meet the needs of an ever increasing sen children. .*

*There doesn't appear to be enough experienced and trained staff to provide this support, particularly in mainstream secondary schools, which leaves children distressed and labelled as naughty or unpleasant, it is failing to enable those children to fulfil their potentials and develop into decent and happy adults*

*Every school I know send pupils home to calm down etc rather than putting right what is wrong in the setting*

*My son has had to go to another school out of our catchment area, 8 miles out of Shrewsbury. This is due to the school he first started having a complete lack of knowledge and understanding of Autism. Shrewsbury academy are completely living in the ice age. I have a son with Autism who only lasted two weeks there and a son with dyslexia who went there until year 11. From the first day they were told he may have dyslexia but not once did they help him or get him tested for dyslexia. As a result he failed his gcse's and is now having to re sit them at college. My Autistic son has been at Corbet school since year 8. I can not fault their support, hard work and I really think they are amazing for doing everything they have for my son.*

*Very inconsistent between schools many have low understanding and are seemingly reluctant to listen or support ,often just dealt with as poor behaviour not understanding this is because of unmet needs*

*My child with severe adhd is made to isolate and face a wall with no work if his behaviour is deemed unacceptable.*

## 5.4 Communication

Parent Carers also feel that communication between educational setting and Parent Carers is lacking:

*Parents concerns still not listened to and acted upon, still too much emphasis on behavior control and attendance instead of looking at the underlying issues causes the difficulties, still very inconsistent and difficult to access*

*Certain schools have an extremely good SEND team and the inclusion is great but other schools are different from my experience not all teachers were made aware my child had SEND as the ehcp wasn't shared, my child felt excluded and vulnerable. Inclusion for SEND children is difficult I totally understand that but a child needs to be listened to and things put in place to help support the child's strengths rather than weaknesses*

*Poor communication with parents has been an ongoing issue.*



## 6.0 Preparation for Adulthood

Parent Carers shared their views on the quality of Preparation for Adulthood in Shropshire. Key themes that emerged from feedback include: Overview (feedback on the existing available framework); Opportunities; Focus; Services and Support.

. Do you feel that preparation for adulthood for young people with SEND is good in Shropshire?

[More Details](#)

 Insights

	Yes	4
	No	68
	Not Applicable	52



### 6.1 Overview

Parent Carers shared their views on what is currently in place in Shropshire, feedback shows that they feel young people are often not receiving anything to prepare them for this part of their journey:

*Encouraging*

*Good*

*Pathetic*

*It just isn't there!*

*It is not proactive so any families miss out*

*Doesn't start early enough*

*Very much a token and ineffective approach*

*I dont think there is enough talk about this during a childs journey*

*Having just Joined this part for my 18 year old it's made no difference*

*Needs to be more interactive events for younger people teenagers and above*

*We had to battle to get Pfa outcomes in my son's EHCP, and SEND team consistently framed EHCP in terms of the courses he was doing, rather than how well he was prepared for adulthood*

*I don't like to think to far ahead but from recent experience then I doubt anything will change once my child is ready for secondary school never mind adult life*

*The whole system doesn't work because unless your child fits into the same box they don't think there is an issue so many children are being failed by the system*

*Not enough done in school in teaching independence and life skills*

*Abject failure to recognise autism in primary school ,lack of information and education. Lack of understanding of a branch of society leading to lack of inclusivity. The charities are providing training for parents : This makes a big difference*

*Nothing is being done to help my child prepare for adulthood*

## 6.2 What is available

Some Parent Carers also shared that they weren't aware of what was currently being offered to prepare their young people for adulthood and that the existing pathway was not clear:

*I'm seriously concerned about what happens next*

*Couldn't answer above question as I don't really know what Shropshire do in terms of PfA even though this is applicable to my child*

*What is it My son is 14 what should I be doing ?*

*What preparation for adulthood - was just a bolt on that didn't really educate or help*

*As soon as my ASD son turned 18 all services discharged us leaving us alone*

*Keep talking about it but have not really been offered anything for our daughter .Just words .Find things out from other parents .Not given any specific help outside of EHCP review on this are we meant to get some?*

*Lack of preparation and any feedback still at age 17 despite calling SCC several times querying why we've not been contacted yet*

*My Autistic son is 16 and doing his gcse's. He so far has had absolutely no help or guidance as to where he will be going post gcse's. I dread him leaving education as I'm unsure what the future holds for him*

*My daughter is nearly 15 and only just going through the ehcp process now after repeatedly being told that she "is not bad enough" to be granted one, so we are not yet aware of this*

*Again from a school point of view I dont think there is much, they couldn't even prepare my son for his teenage years, let alone beyond. The prep for adulthood sits solely with the parents in my opinion*

*The pathway is unclear, information is difficult to find and professionals have varying knowledge*

*Again, I'm really not sure. I do worry that my son is growing up in a 'bubble' at specialist school but he's safe and not judged at his school and that's the most important thing*

*very confused about PFA and how this fits into /adds to quality of EHCP- quality of ending of EHCP is poor and no transition plan from education to next stage in adult life. Letter sent impersonal. Not discussed at review. Decided by LA case officer later. No signposting to next steps, activity planning or little support. Parents and young people just left to get on with it*

*I am unsure of the whole process but am at present slowly working through it. I do like how from year 9 the EHCP focuses on transition into adulthood*

### 6.3 Opportunities

Parent Carers shared feedback that they feel there are not enough opportunities for their young people in Shropshire- that there are limited activities and resources and limited opportunities once their young person leaves education:

*Too little opportunities or options, very narrow field of options , very few supported beyond 20 ,very few get funded agreed for a 2nd course , not enough support to enable success ,too many left with nothing*

*Very little opportunities or variety, no transparency and huge reluctance to fund post 19 and very poor transition work.*

*My child isn't prepared for his childhood never mind adulthood. There are no activities to let him develop his child skills, ride a bike , learn to swim ect. We feel utterly let down.*

*What is there? We also have a 16 year old with ASD and selective mutism, he struggles hugely with communication, social interaction, and anxiety.*

*Insufficient choices leaving school. Schools need to do more skills development.*

*There is very little choice in terms of options and accessing appropriate services in Shropshire.*

### 6.4 Focus

Parent Carers feel that the focus of PFA is too education based, and should instead have more focus on life skills and transferable skills that will benefit their young person:

*Everything is focused on curriculum when for SEND children it should be life skills and being the best they can*

*The push to keep SEN children in mainstream isn't always helpful at all. My daughter needs a high level of emotional support due to the effects of childhood trauma. She needs to be able to attend a specialist placement when she transitions to secondary but I know this will be a battle. There's too much focus on today's budget rather than thinking about the longterm outcome for the child.*

*I am so concerned about her not being able to develop the skills for independence. In mainstream she needs a high level of support in order to cope. From experience I know that within a specialist environment she will be able to develop more independence and become better prepared for adulthood. She wouldn't cope with the demands of having to access all parts of a mainstream curriculum.*

*Focus tends to be on education instead of learning skills, providing new experiences and activity plans including social inclusion.*

*The process isn't forward looking enough and just too focused on academic progress. There is a lack of information about options post 16, social care don't get involved soon enough even for young people with complex needs. It is a very scary time for families.*

*I feel that they push independence far too quickly, more as a way to save money than whether it's right for the child.*

*Focus tends to be on education instead of learning skills, providing new experiences and activity plans including social inclusion.*

*Outcomes too focused on education progression .Other outcomes are not recognised or valued eg measures of lifeskills ,social interactions, participation , voluntary work or take up of activities in community are not accepted or included*

## 6.5 Services

Feedback overall suggests that Parent Carers feel that there are issues with their young people accessing services, that the information is not clear and that they are not being listened to on this journey:

*Transition to adulthood has been the worst part of all the services for my son. I have been often told he cannot access services as he does not have severe learning difficulties. ASD but mainstream education seems to be a huge gap. little input from social services*

*Whilst PACC are doing their best to support us, it's a minefield! We've been given conflicting views on what post 16 & 18 options are available. We are forward thinking (our son is 14), but how do other parents cope.*

*Where is the funding, the people to help these students through? I spend so long helping people with autism to understand processes, procedures, everything is so difficult.*

*From going from mainstream no I feel like us parents even more at the minute are having to really fight and push for people to listen and to try and find the help and information we need for our kids*

*Having a child who is on the brink of adulthood we are completely in the dark with regards to preparation for adulthood and the move from childrens services to adult services. It feels very much like we have to find out all the necessary information by ourselves and without knowing where to start or the applicable jargon we are totally lost.*

*There are not enough Consultants and Psychiatrists for ADHD and Autism and very few Supported Living places in Whitchurch. Young people can't get care until they get accommodation and then the wait for care can be months resulting in setting young people up to fail and sometimes get into crisis situations.*

*Besides lots of college preps and further education no a lot has been done to help support adulthood. These children need to learn to manage finances, how to clean and cook for themselves...basic skills to help them survive adulthood.*

*Very confusing .Not a lot of info available .Not sure what to do next. Still waiting 6months to get social care assessment .What is my young person supposed to do all day when he leaves college ?*

*The pathway is unclear, information is difficult to find and professionals have varying knowledge*

*The Enable service is good, and Supported Internship works well, but SENCo didn't know what benefits out yp would be entitled to, or what would happen if the SI didn't lead to paid employment*

*If able to access local authority information easily, PAAC information, have an active social worker for child, have good SENCO who communicates well then preparation for adulthood is a smoother path. Basically there is good provision but accessing it may be difficult for some*

*Services are not clear, options are not set, completely confused at if there is actually a service here? Enable were useless, offered 1 placement that wasn't suitable so I had to find and arrange placement myself. Its like they tick the box that they've helped you, but don't actually do anything!*

## **6.6 Support**

Parent Carers feel that there is no support provided for their young people on their PFA journey:

*My son has just moved up to this and no support whatsoever and now wants to leave college SEN don't even reply*

*Not enough support*

*No support*

*No support given to my teenager to prepare for adulthood*

*As there is no support for a bright girl there will be no support other than by her parents and family for adulthood.*

*We just want to get our son the right support at the right time to help him and us to manage every day .*

*Preparation for adulthood seems an afterthought. Little support around careers support and no support was given for transition to post 16.*

*There isn't anywhere near enough support for preparation into adulthood on Shropshire.  
Advertisements of services should be placed more accessibly.*

*Very little support with life skills generally in education; very little structural support for post 18 education. Cannot see any employment opportunities at all in Shropshire that would suit or support our young person.*

*PACC would like to say thank you to all the parent carers who took the time to share their experiences with us.*