



Department  
for Education



National Network of Parent Carer Forums

'Our Strength Is Our Shared Experience'

**contact** a family  
for families with disabled children

**Strengthening Parent Carer Participation**

# **Special Educational Needs and Disability - Readiness for Reform Survey Two**

## **Parent Carer Forums Survey Responses**

**May/June 2014**

# Parent Carer Forums Readiness Survey Responses

## Report on the Survey Responses

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## **Special Educational Needs and Disability Reforms Readiness Survey 2 - Report**

### **Introduction**

On behalf of the Department for Education, Contact a Family and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums ran a second 'Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) readiness survey' in May 2014 in order to gather parent carer forums' views on their local area's readiness for implementation of the reforms. The responses from forums are summarised in this report and compared to results of the first readiness survey which was run in February.

The Department for Education have requested this information to consider parent carer forum views alongside the opinions gathered from Local Authorities. The results will provide some insight into progress made in terms of readiness since February and guide the Department's plans in assessing what support might be needed where, to further help local areas as they prepare for and implement the reforms from September 2014.

The questions put to the forums in the second survey differed slightly to the first and were more closely aligned to those put to the local authorities for better comparison. The questions were agreed upon between the Department for Education, Contact a Family and the National Network for Parent Carer Forums. As with the first survey, the Chairs and leads for each forum were invited to make a single response on behalf of their forum and were asked to consult their membership for input where possible.

### **Response to the survey**

93 parent carer forums (62%) made a response to the survey out of the 151 areas which are able to apply for the Department for Education parent carer participation grant across England. This is a lower response rate than the first survey but given that the forums had just two weeks to respond which clashed with deadlines for their grant applications, and only a week's extension available over half-term, the level of engagement and response is still positive.

<b>Response rate by Region</b>		
<b>Region</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
<b>East Midlands</b>	78%	89%
<b>East of England</b>	100%	64%
<b>London</b>	78%	50%
<b>North East</b>	67%	42%
<b>North West</b>	83%	57%
<b>South East</b>	84%	63%

<b>South West</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Yorkshire &amp; Humber</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>62%</b>

### **Non respondent forums**

There were 58 forums who did not respond to the SEND Reforms, compared with just 28 in the first survey. As before, City of London was not invited to make a response as they have never had an established parent carer forum due to their population and size. Some other areas are also experiencing difficulties in their structure and capacity which meant they were not able to take up the opportunity to participate in the survey at this time.

### **Headline findings**

- Joint commissioning structures have progressed very little with 59 forums (63%) indicating readiness is only in the 'early stages'
- 45% of forums indicate their local areas are 'not at all' ready to provide 'a pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangement' and ¾ say they have not been engaged at all in the process to establish this provision.
- There has been a 13% increase in the percentage of forums 'fully' engaged in 'developing a coordinated EHC process'
- 1 in 3 forums have still not been engaged at all in developing joint commissioning structures, a transparent process for personal budgets, an information and advice service for children, young people and parents or in trialling the reforms before full implementation.
- 41% of forums say that senior leaders within Local Authorities have a good understanding of the new legal requirements and associated regulations.
- 40% of forums say no transition plan has been finalised towards setting out how children and young people with SEN statements/LDAs will transfer to EHC plans.
- 47% of forums indicated no plans have been developed with parents, children and young people, to measure if their experience of SEND services locally improves.
- There has been increased direct engagement of young people by Local Authorities – 'strong engagement' was at 10% in February and increased to 25% in May.
- There has been little change in forums opinions on their local areas' readiness to implement the reforms from September 2014 with 16% of forums in both the first and second survey saying their local area will not be ready.

### **Readiness to implement**

In the first readiness survey we asked forums 'Do you think your local area will be ready to implement the reforms from September 2014?' (Survey 1, Q8, Feb 2014). 18% of the parent carer forums which responded thought their local area would be ready, while 16% thought

they would not. The majority thought that their local area would be ready 'in part' and 7% said they didn't know.

In the second survey we asked forums how ready their local area is to provide specific deliverables under the reforms, such as follows (Survey 2, Q4):

- a) A coordinated 0-25 education, health and care assessment and planning process that is outcome focused and has children, families and young people at the centre
- b) Joint commissioning structures across education, care and health, including processes for resolving disputes between partners
- c) A helpful and informative 0-25 local offer with parent carers and young people
- d) A transparent and challengeable process for personal budgets
- e) A 0-25 pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangement
- f) Trial the reforms before full implementation
- g) An information, advice and support services for children young people and parents, covering educational needs, disability, health and social care

A good proportion of local areas are thought to be 'fully ready' to provide a number of these key requirements. However, none of the forums thought that their area was 'fully ready' to provide joint commissioning structures; most indicated their area was only in the 'early stages' of readiness on this. Only 3 forums indicated their local area is ready to provide 'a co-ordinated 0-25 education, health and care (EHC) assessment and planning process'. More worryingly, more than 20 forums indicated that their local area was 'not at all' ready to provide 'a process for personal budgets', 'pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangements', to 'trial of the reforms before implementation', nor provide 'information, advice and support services for children young people and parents'.

In summary, the deliverables with the least progress made are joint commissioning structures, with 63% of forums indicating readiness is only in the 'early stages' and 44% of forums suggesting their local areas are 'not at all' ready to provide 'a pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangement'. One forum suggested that mediation arrangements have not been seen as a priority because there is hope there will be less need for tribunal and awareness that mediation is no longer a compulsory element of the Code of Practice.

Some free text comments from forums giving some further information on their responses:

The recent changes to the Code of Practice have led to the complete reworking of what was considered a final Education, Health and Care Plan to include the new sections. – East Midlands

Most of the work on the EHC, Local Offer so far has been done by Education. Health have capacity issues, and Social Care seems unable to recruit and retain Social Workers. There was some initial good partnership work around Short Breaks, but financial cutbacks across the board make it a very difficult to deliver the outcomes promised in 'Support & Aspiration'. - West Midlands

The forum has been frustrated that they have not really been involved in the template and design of the EHC plan process. - West Midlands

Early conversations have been undertaken in respect of delivering a local mediation arrangement and this will be in place in readiness for September launch of the reforms. Our local PPS as an arms length provider are looking at the Information, Advice and Support Service delivery although no firm plans have yet been agreed. – North West

We are really concerned that lots of areas are still in early stages or only just being started. The trials that took place were all on a very small scale (e.g. 13 families for personal budgets – there are over 5000 statemented children to put this into context) and we do not feel there are sufficient plans (working with parents and young people to inform the delivery) in place to roll out this work. - South East

We feel health are currently holding up the joint commissioning process, this has only this week been addressed following comments from professionals and parents and a joint commissioning unit has now been set up between health and social care. - South West

We are aware that seven families have been involved in piloting the EHC process but have not had any involvement in this pilot. Work to co-produce a Local Offer is making steady progress. Discussions have begun around an information, advice and support service and whether current provision could be extended to implement this. – East of England

Steering Group members felt that in a lot of these areas we did not know what progress the LA has made towards implementing the reforms. There is no don't know box so we had to say "not at all" for these – South West

There was some initial movement with the [joint commissioning] group but the last 3 consecutive meetings have been cancelled. As a forum we feel lots of the areas mentioned are in the very early stages. There has been no trial of the reforms before implementation, but early implementation cases are due to commence with new statutory assessment cases and transfer from statement to plan cases. We have had no involvement around personal budgets and have no idea how this is progressing. We are not clear where the information for children young people and parents will be and sit within the LA – West Midlands

Due to the timescales, the local authority is having to prioritise the setting up of the joint process for the EHCP planning process, as well as the Local Offer and good progress is being made on these fronts - London

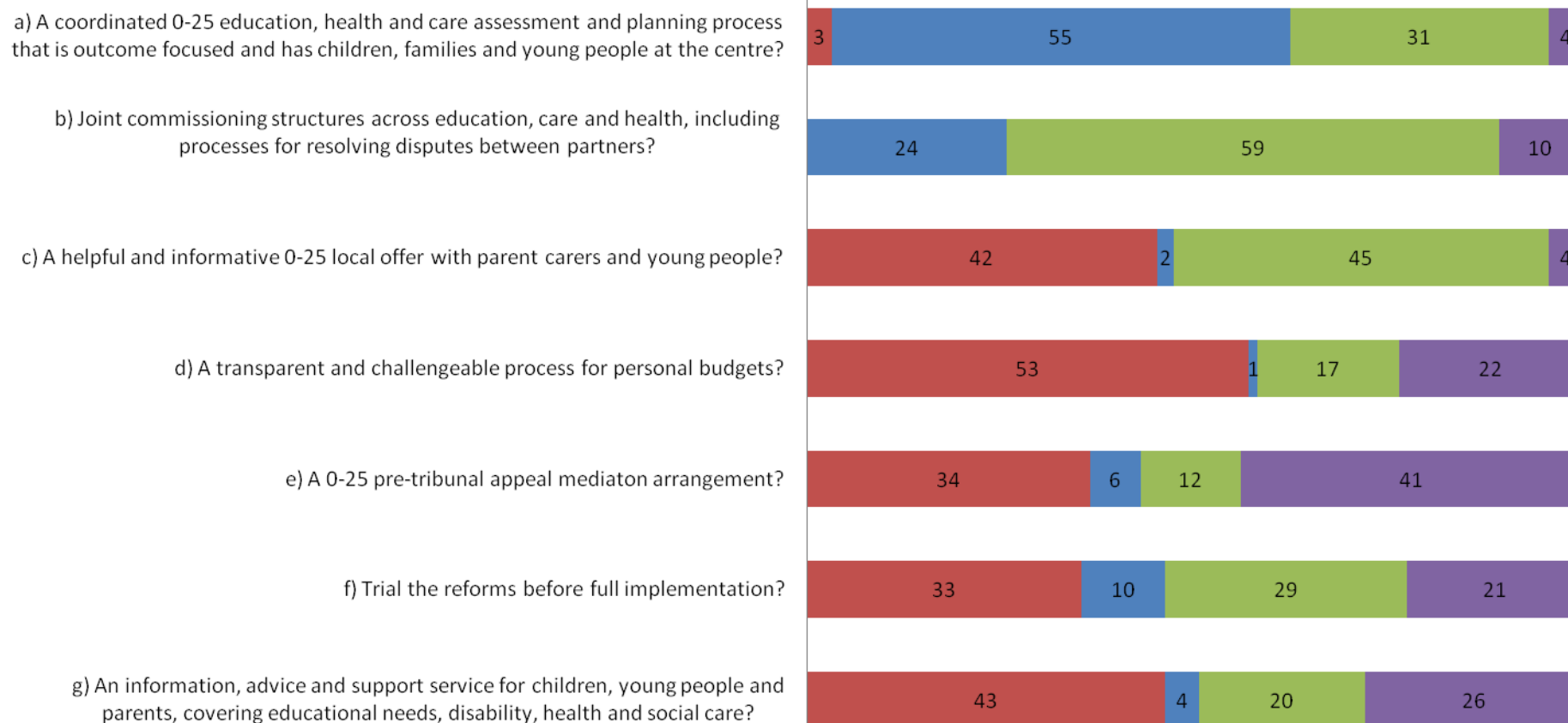
LA and Health making steady progress towards implementation. Like many areas concern across all services that September is fast approaching, however from information shared at regional meetings this is a common issue across the region, if not the country. – Yorkshire & Humber

Since the last survey a dedicated person has been appointed to take forward the SEND reforms at a strategic level and this has had a very positive impact getting the right professionals around the table with parents and carers. - North East

Question 4: England wide results				
In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide:	Fully ready	Good progress	Early stages	Not at all
a) A coordinated 0-25 education, health and care assessment and planning process that is outcome focused and has children, families and young people at the centre?	3.23%	59.14%	33.33%	4.30%
b) Joint commissioning structures across education, care and health, including processes for resolving disputes between partners?	0.00%	25.81%	63.44%	10.75%
c) A helpful and informative 0-25 local offer with parent carers and young people?	45.16%	2.15%	48.39%	4.30%
d) A transparent and challengeable process for personal budgets?	56.99%	1.08%	18.28%	23.66%
e) A 0-25 pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangement?	36.56%	6.45%	12.90%	44.09%
f) Trial the reforms before full implementation?	35.48%	10.75%	31.18%	22.58%
g) An information, advice and support service for children, young people and parents, covering educational needs, disability, health and social care?	46.24%	4.30%	21.51%	27.96%

**Readiness: England-wide results**  
**Q4. In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide:**

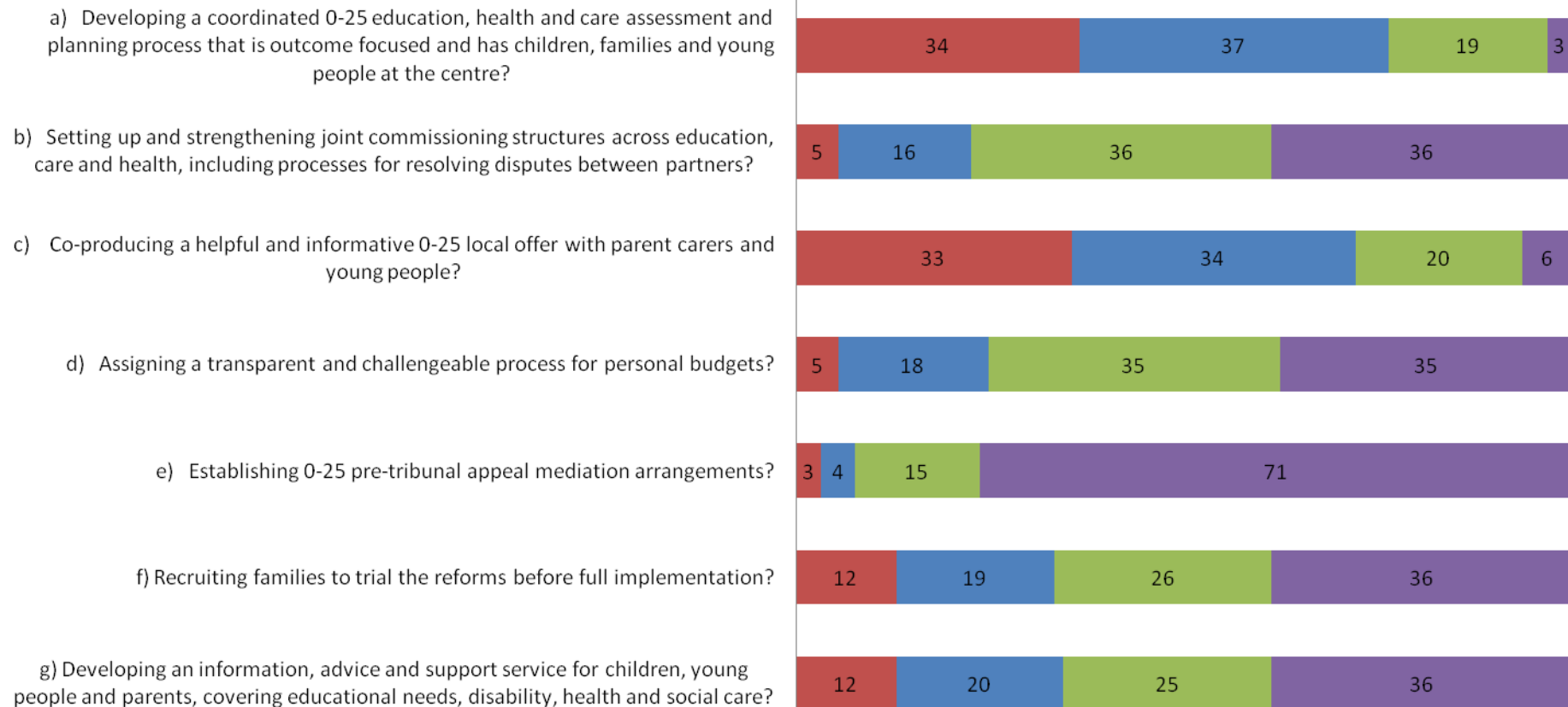
■ Fully ready   
 ■ Good progress   
 ■ Early stages   
 ■ Not at all





**Engagement: England-wide results**  
**Q5: To what extent has your Parent Carer Forum been engaged in:**

■ Fully ■ Quite alot ■ A little ■ Not at all



## Engagement of Parent Carer Forums

In question 5 of the second SEND Reforms survey we asked forums 'to what extent has your parent carer forum been engaged in' preparing for the statutory requirements (the same 7 deliverables as we asked about in question 4 on readiness). The results show a lower rate of forum engagement than the rating they gave for local area readiness, suggesting progress is being made but perhaps not always with parent care forums being engaged in the process.

Forums indicated that they have been most engaged in a) 'developing a coordinated EHC assessment and planning process' and c) 'co-producing the 0-25 local offer'. More than 1 in 3 forums indicated they had not been engaged at all across four of the other deliverables, with more than ¾ of forums (76%) indicating they had also not been engaged at all in 'establishing 0-25 pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangements' (see Q5 England-wide results table)

Comparing the results between the first survey run in February 2014 and the second survey run in May 2014, we can see slight increases in parent carer forum engagement across the board and a lower percentage of forums say they have not been engaged at all. The biggest positive jumps have been in 'a) developing a coordinated EHC process'. However, the results show a drop in forum engagement in terms of 'f) recruiting families to trial the reforms before full implementation'.

<b>England-wide results</b> Q5: To what extent has your Parent Carer Forum been engaged in:	Survey 1 or 2	Fully	Quite a lot	A little	Not at all
a) Developing a coordinated 0-25 education, health and care assessment and planning process that is out-come focused and has children, families and young people at the centre?	1	24.4%	42.3%	20.3%	13.0%
	2	37%	40%	20%	3%
b) Setting up joint commissioning structures across education, care and health, including processes for resolving disputes between partners?	1	1.6%	15.6%	32.0%	50.8%
	2	5%	17%	39%	39%
c) Co-producing a helpful and informative 0-25 local offer with parent carers and young people?	1	32.8%	33.6%	24.6%	9.0%
	2	35%	37%	22%	6%
d) Assigning a transparent and challengeable process for personal budgets?	1	7.4%	19.7%	30.3%	42.6%
	2	5%	19%	38%	38%

e) Establishing 0-25 mediation arrangements and extending first-tier Tribunal processes to cover post-16 provision?	1	0.8%	0.8%	14.9%	83.5%
	2	3%	4%	16%	77%
f) Recruiting families to trial the reforms before full implementation?	1	13%	20%	28%	39%
	2	7.2%	16.3%	22.8%	53.7%
g) Developing an information, advice and support service for children, young people and parents, covering educational needs, disability, health and social care?	*2 only	13%	21%	27%	39%

In question 6 we asked parent carer forums overall, to what extent their Local Authority had engaged them in preparing for and implementing the reforms. 54% of forums felt they had been engaged by their Local Authority 'quite a lot', with 21% feeling they had been engaged 'fully' and 21% only 'a little'. This looks to be fairly evenly spread across the regions, with only one forum in the West Midlands responding that they feel they have not been engaged by their Local Authority at all.

Free text comments from forums to elaborate on their responses to Question 5:

Our LA appear to be starting to choose their own parent-carer reps who have no roles or responsibilities of working with other families so no means of obtaining input, or knowing who to feedback outcomes. [...] We are engaged but it is a constant battle of keep reminding them we should be there after they forget to include us. - London

Staff and structure changes (both at Forum and in the local authority) and the speed of the reforms have meant that we have not had full and direct involvement in every aspect of preparing for the reforms. - Yorkshire & Humber

The LA have proactively supported the parent carer forum this includes attendance at meetings, workshops, presentations, briefing, sharing of information and promotion of opportunities for parents carers to get involved - East Midlands

We feel very pleased with the amount of engagement we have. We are always welcomed and our opinions listened to. - London

We are in the position to engage and the LA has equipped the forum however there is not much to engage in and lots is being done in the back room, co-production is still tokenistic on certain strands. - North West

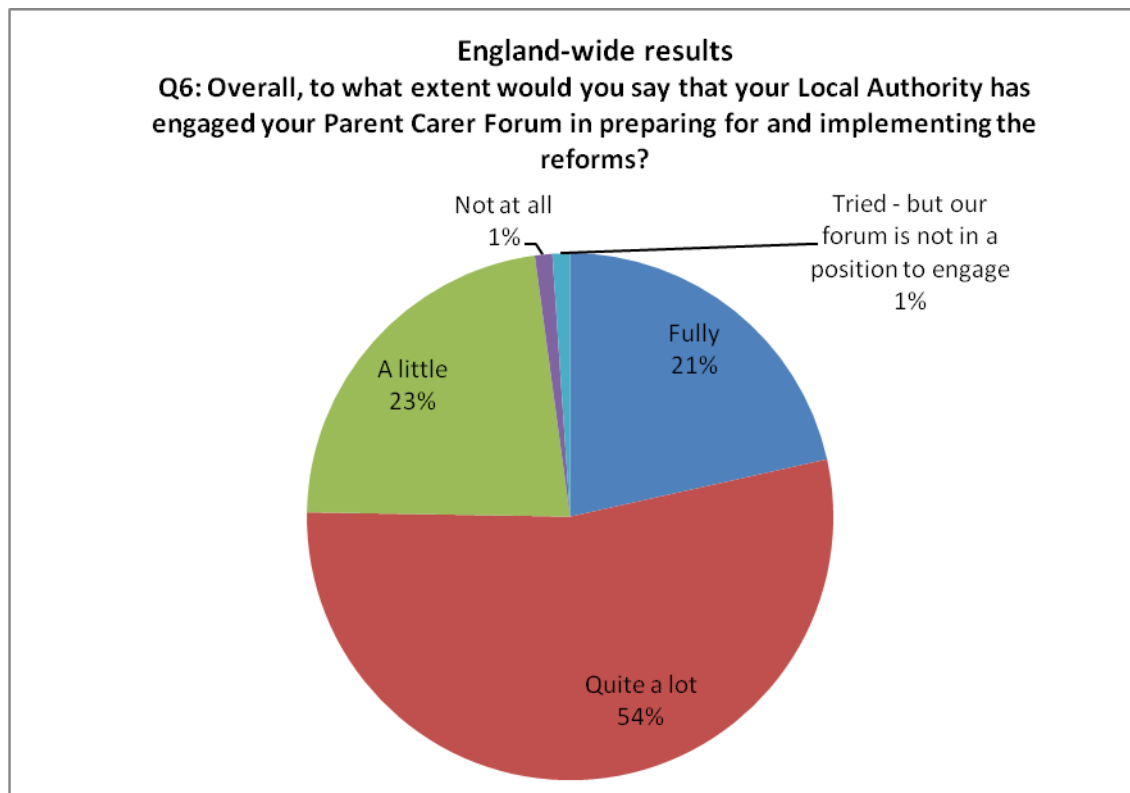
Over the last 2 months things have suddenly started to happen, we have had very little co-production and still very much consultation. If we comment on documents we are listened to but so far not a lot of changes have happened that we have suggested. - South East

It's coming along and the LA are really trying hard but its co-ordination that's the issue and personal budgets are at a very early stage a bit like Joint Commissioning which is only really just starting too we are not engaged at every level – East of England

There is good work going on with the development of the EHC Plan and pace is picking up on the development of the Local Offer and Information on the Council web site. Personal Budgets - will be amazed if get this working as still have not got a Direct Payments working and number of local organisations delivering services seem to be declining. Sadly the Council has chosen to channel all Parent Carer applications for support through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and is adopting a 'rigorous gate keeping approach' to the allocation of Short Breaks. - West Midlands

b) starting next week c) starting next phase next week. We have been involved but not enough to say quite a lot. We helped with the engagement sessions to collect parent views re L Offer and we are meeting next to discuss further. - South West

Parents are fully engaged in co - producing the local offer along with young people. There is a parent on each of the five work streams that have been to develop the local offer including health, education, social care, preparing for adulthood, information advice and support services. Parents are also involved in developing the IT platform that will host the local offer and consulting with parents on how this should look and be made available. We have co produced a parent information event on 19th June to inform parents and carers about the changes ahead. Parents always attend events hosted by delivery partners along with local authority representation from Health/CCG, Education, PPS and SEN manager. - West Midlands



## Local Authorities' skills, understanding, plans and systems

Question 7 asked parent carer forums for their opinions about their Local Authority's senior leaders' and staff's skills and understanding, and their plans and systems, in readiness to implement the reforms as below:

- a) Do senior leaders within your Local Authority, including Elected Members, have a good understanding of the new legal requirements in the Children and Families Act, associated regulations and 0-25 SEND Code of Practice?
- b) Do staff within your Local Authority have the necessary skills to promote personalised approaches, so they understand and meet the needs of families and young people?
- c) Has a transition plan been finalised, working together with families and professionals, setting out when and how children and young people with existing SEN statements and LDAs will transfer to EHC plans?
- d) Have the processes and systems to deliver the reforms been established (including accountability, quality assurance, and IT and support systems)?
- e) Have plans been developed with parents, children and young people, to measure whether the experience of SEND services locally for parents, children and young people has improved?

The most positive response among forums was 41% saying 'yes', that senior leaders within Local Authorities have a good understanding of the new legal requirements in the Children and Families Act and the associated regulations in the Code of Practice (see table below). Less positively, n.37 / 40% of forums said 'no', a transition plan had not been finalised towards setting out how children and young people with SEN statements/LDAs will transfer to EHC plans (Q7.c). An even higher number, 45% of forums, indicated that no plans have been developed with parents, children and young people, to measure whether the experience of SEND services locally for parents, children and young people has improved, particularly in the East Midlands, South West and West Midlands (Q7.e). It would be hoped that plans for monitoring and evaluation which includes consultation with these stakeholders will be developed ahead of implementation and built into roll out of the deliverables associated with the Code of Practice, rather than trying to add evaluation processes in at a later stage to avoid the potential for it to become tokenistic.

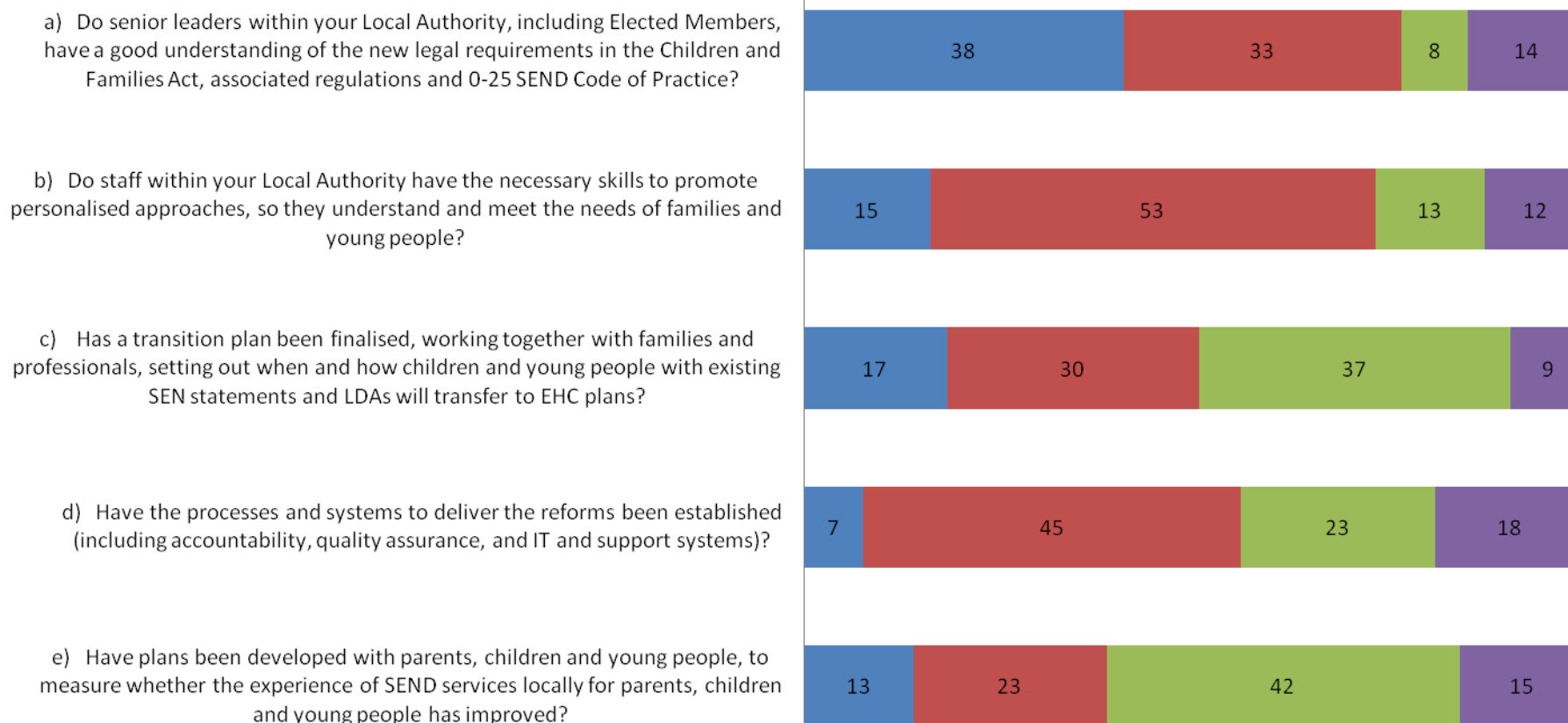
Overall, the results for question 7 are similar to the results on forum engagement (see Q6). It suggests there is a correlation between how forums rate their Local Authorities' skills, understanding and processes and the extent to which Local Authorities have engaged the representative parent carer forum in their local area.

A concern from this set of results might lie with the 14% of forums who felt that they did not know enough about their Local Authority's skills and plans to comment.

## Local Authorities' skills, understanding, plans & systems: England-wide results

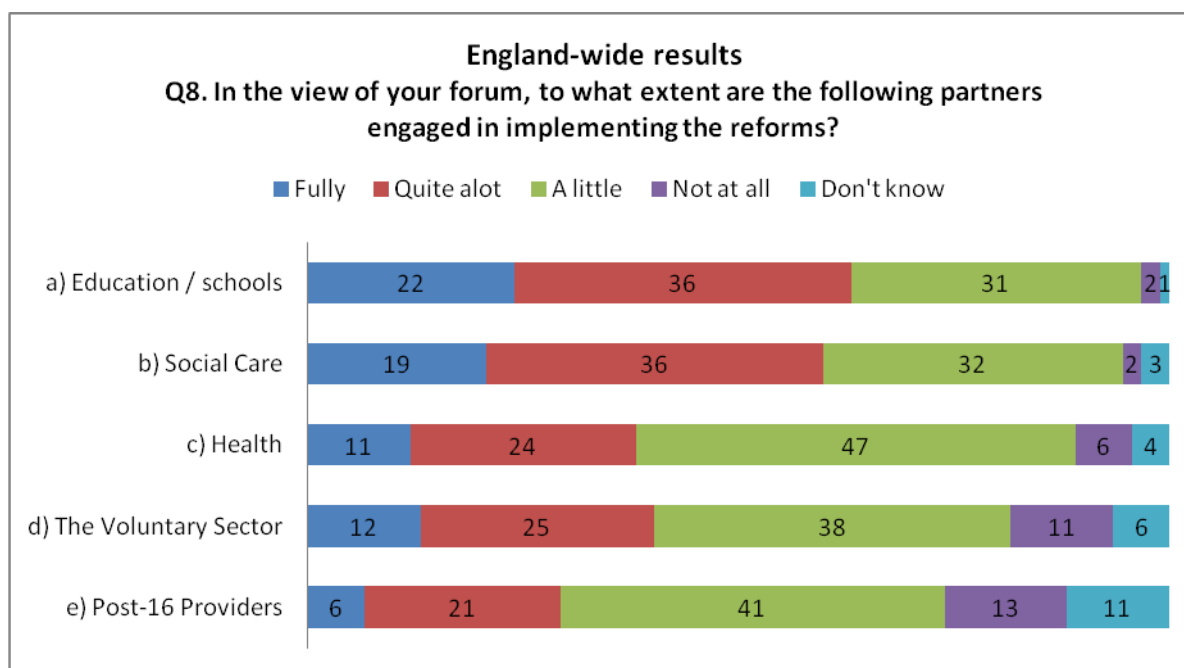
### Q7. In the opinion of your forum:

■ Yes ■ In part ■ No ■ Don't know



## Engagement of partners

The results to question 8, which asked forums about the engagement of a range of key partners in implementing the reforms, suggests that Health, the Voluntary Sector and Post-16 Providers are less engaged than Education/schools and Social care.



Not so sure schools are but LEA staff are involved heavily. I think it would be fair to say that the majority of the voluntary sector in [our local area] do not feel they have been engaged, however this has been recently addressed and hopefully will change - North West

There has been good communication between the partners and we feel things are moving in the right direction. It does seem to be the same people at the meetings and there is a worry that the information is not filtering down to those working at ground level. Sessions have been set up for parents and professionals to attend to help rectify this - Yorkshire & Humber

SEN team in borough is fully engaged. Schools and their general interest in SEN reform remains a concern. Schools should have been at the forefront of informing parents of the proposed changes. They have ended up asking our parents instead - London

They see this as about EHC and local offer and we want them to see the cultural change needed otherwise there will be no improvement to the lives of children, young people and families. – South East

Due to changes in Health structures they have been the most difficult group to engage. More recently Health have joined the SEND Partnership board locally and some engagement is starting to occur. As a forum we have made links with CAMHS to aid their imminent strategic review and have secure membership of this group which again will start to embed the messages and reform priorities in a valuable area of SEN health provision. Schools and Colleges vary both in their existing knowledge and willingness to engage in the reforms process. Work is being undertaken by the SEND Partnership Board and this has led to recent access to the newly established schools SEN Hub, which will again be instrumental in engaging key school personnel at senior level - North West

Each of the above are part of work streams that have been established to assist with the implementation of the SEND reforms including the local offer. Parents have been involved in COP consultations including a visit to the DfE. The parent forum was also part of a task and finish group to embed person centred planning across services and schools. Families in our area also have excellent experiences of team Around the Child and Key working approaches. - West Midlands

In the Voluntary sector, apart from the Forum, there is little or no knowledge or understanding on what is happening. - South West

School engagement is varied some expressing the view that it won't affect them as there is no enforcement by Ofsted. A few feel they work this way anyway. Health has only recently (last 6 months) been aware that they have obligations. - East of England

We are progressing but with personal budgets and joint commissioning only just being developed and Health dragging their feet this knocks the confidence levels - East of England

The SEND project lead is completely committed to fully engaging with parents and understands the meaning of co-production, however, as yet, Education and Health still seem to appear to be working to the old model, where they know best, and are developing policy/processes for parents to provide feedback on. - London

Due to changes in Health structures they have been the most difficult group to engage. [...] Schools and Colleges vary both in their existing knowledge and willingness to engage in the reforms process. Work is being undertaken by the SEND Partnership Board and this has led to recent access to the newly established schools SEN Hub, which will again be instrumental in engaging key school personnel at senior level. - North West

We are particularly concerned about post16 provision and engagement with providers. It seems as though this area is still in infancy and that young people are going to struggle when these reforms are implemented. - South East.

Health partners have been thin on the ground and are only just starting to engage. - Yorkshire & Humber

Health has had little engagement in the reforms, fortunately, the Forum met the CCGs lead within Children's and it was made aware that they may need some support themselves to reach their full engagement. - Yorkshire & Humber

All areas [partners] have representatives fully engaged, implementation at ground level is a workforce development programme, currently being planned and prepared - Yorkshire & Humber

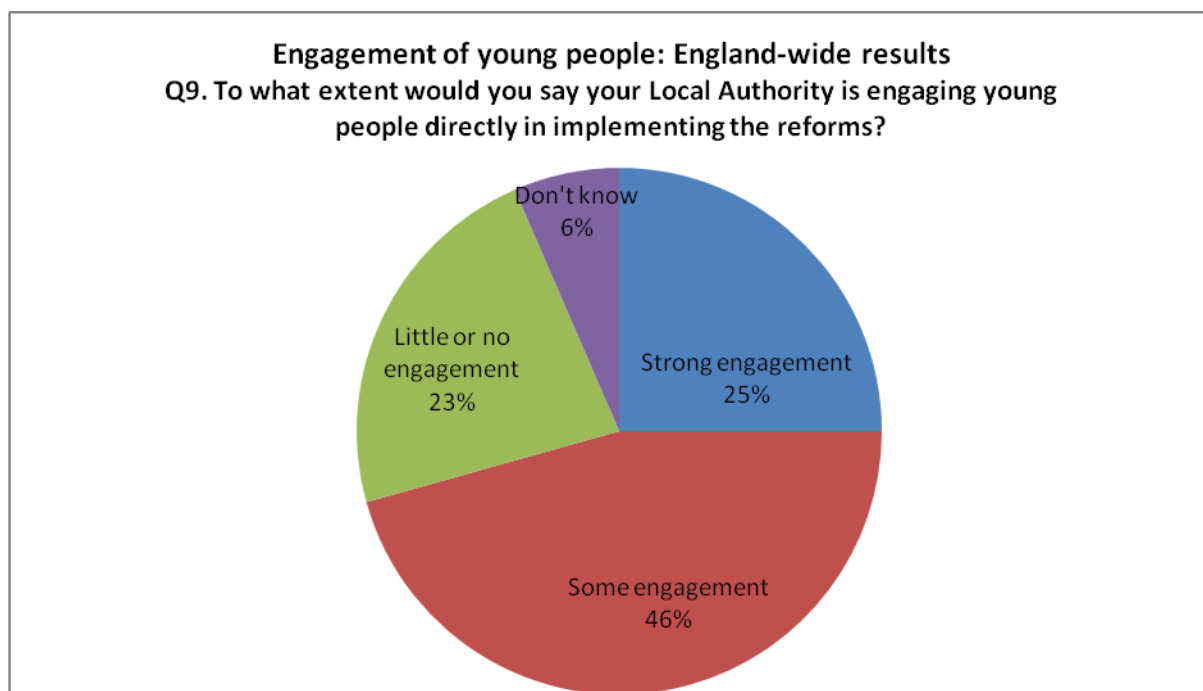
We still have concerns about the accountability of local authorities e.g. in delivering the local offer, and the lack of national standards/potential for post code lotteries e.g. on eligibility for EHC Plans. Also that the reforms will discourage schools from referring children for statutory assessment, and discourage inclusive education. - Yorkshire & Humber

## **Engagement of young people**

In response to question 9 on the extent to which Local Authorities are engaging young people directly in implementing the reforms, overall, 25% of forums said there was 'strong engagement',



46% said there was 'some engagement', 23% said there had been 'little or no engagement' and 6% said they 'don't know'.



The regions with the highest number of forums to indicate 'strong engagement' of young people was the South West (5 forums) followed by Yorkshire and Humber (4 forums). The region which indicated the highest response of 'little or no engagement' was the North West (6 forums).

Our local authority have struggled to adapt e.g. questionnaires to suit learning difficulties, find it hard to engage as it is a new way of working - North West

We offered the LA that we could help them by setting up a children's and young people's forum simply because we are in contact with over 2,000 parents in our forum and they all have at least 1 child with SEND. The LA ignored us. - East Midlands

Had a focus group on the Local Offer but to date we are not aware of anything else – East of England

They have said time is tight we have encouraged and asked them to do it and there are yp groups available.- London

Headliners video done and senior LA staff have visited schools and youth provisions in the city. We know they plan to do more. – North East

A local partner has been commissioned to deliver workshops in special schools, mainstream and short breaks groups across the borough. - North West

There is a group of young people set up with in the area, who have responded well.-South East

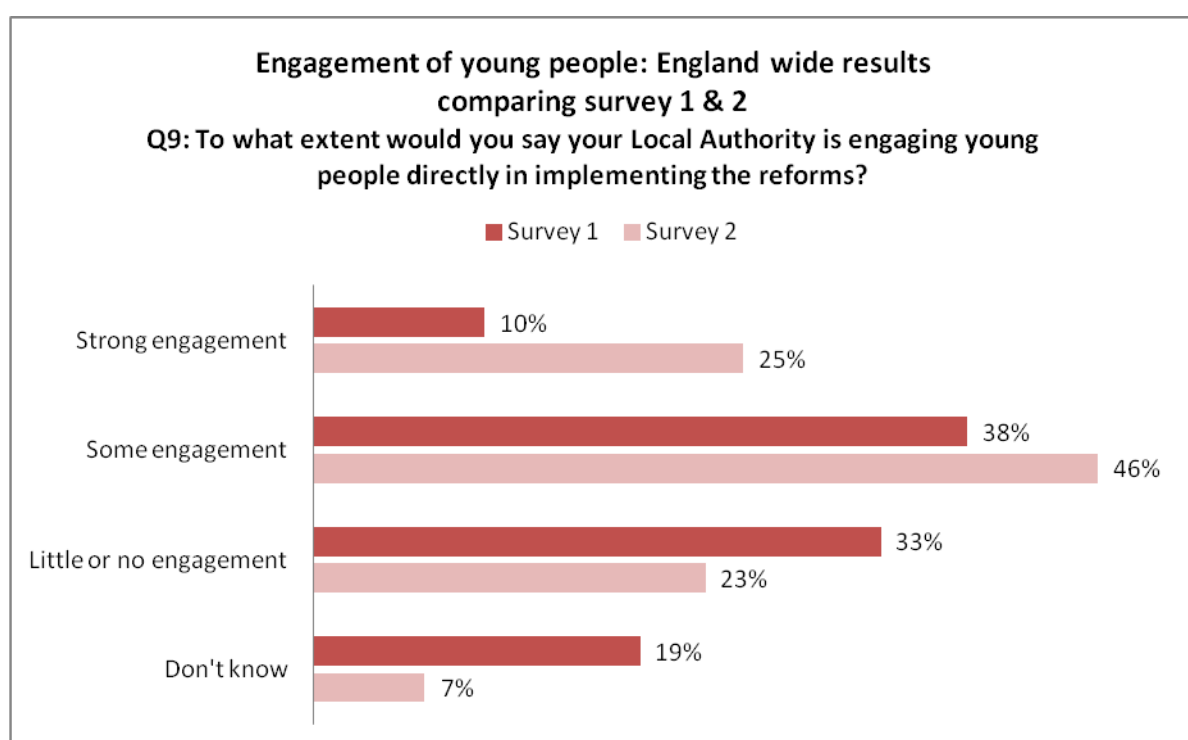
The local authority has engaged with voluntary support organisations working with young people to gain their views and thoughts, this has included making a film with comments from young people who are trialling personal budgets. One organisation has been granted funding to help the process of

working with young people and to help with engagement of the young people to ensure their voices and views are heard.- South West

Strong engagement with special school children and young people but more work needed to engage with young people from mainstream schools,- Yorkshire & Humber

Have consulted some children young people around Local Offer Web page- West Midlands

Comparing the forum responses between the survey run in February and the one in May, on the extent to which their Local Authority is engaging young people, there does seem to have been an improvement, however this needs to be considered in the context of the smaller level of respondents. In May, 25% of forums said their Local Authority had provided 'strong engagement' compared with just 10% in February. There has been a 10% drop in the percentage of forums responding that there has been 'little or no engagement' and a 12% drop in the percentage of forums saying that they 'did not know'.



### Confidence in Local Area's Readiness

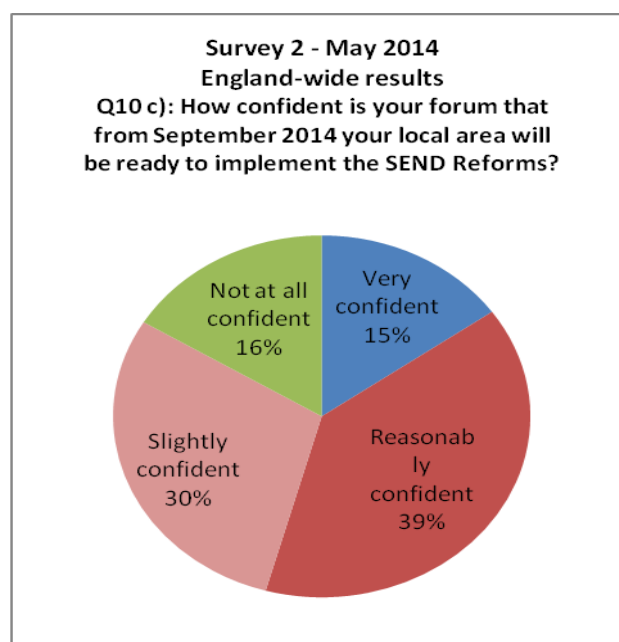
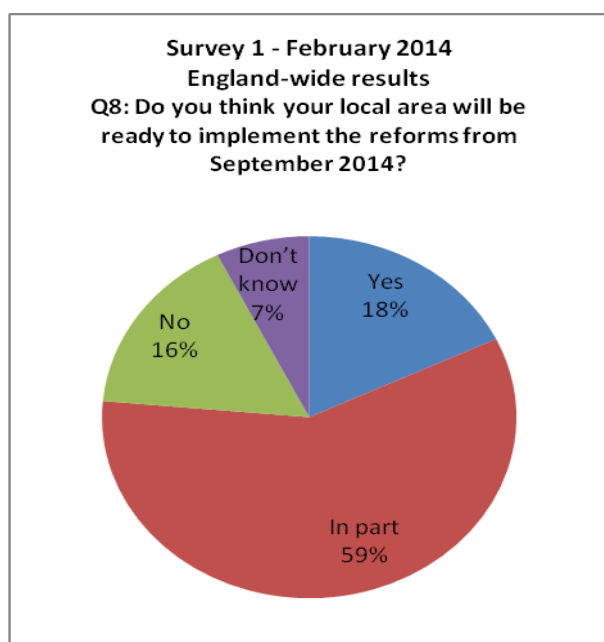
Linked to question 4, which asked forums about how ready they think their local area is to provide the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice, question 10 asked forums how confident they are that their local area *will* be able to provide these requirements from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. Overall, the forum responses are quite evenly split down the middle with 15% feeling 'very confident' and 38% 'reasonably confident' that their local area will be able to deliver from September, whilst 31% feel only 'slightly confident' and 16% that they feel 'not at all confident'.

<b>Q10. How confident is your forum that from 1 September 2014: -</b>				
<b>England-wide results</b>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Reasonably confident</b>	<b>Slightly confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
a) Your area will have a co-produced local offer in place and that new referrals for statutory assessments will be offered an integrated EHC assessment, the option of a personal budget and recourse to mediation?	14	31	32	15
b) Children and young people reaching a key transition point in 2014-15 (eg. early years to primary; primary to secondary; secondary to further education) will have their existing SEN statements transferred to EHC plans?	13	37	28	14
c) Your local area will be ready to implement the SEND Reforms?	14	36	27	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Total %</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>16%</b>

Comparing results from the question 'Do you think your local area will be ready to implement the reforms from September 2014?' (Q8) in the survey run in February with question 10 c) in the second survey run in May, there does not seem to be great progress or increase in confidence from forums.

In February, 18% of forums said 'yes' they thought their local area would be ready to implement, 16% said 'no', 59% said 'in part' and 9% said they 'did not know'.

In May, 15% of forums said they feel 'very confident' that their local area would be ready for implementation, 16% said they were 'not at all confident', and a combined percentage of 69% said they felt 'slightly'/'reasonably confident'.



## What forums want to tell the Department for Education

Question 11 asked forums if there is anything else they would want the Department for Education to be aware of, and provided an open-response text box. Here are a sample of the responses which can be found in the full response spreadsheet to accompany this report:

Since our last SEN survey, by asking our opinion, it has enabled us to get the local authority to listen and engage with us, and it has worked - by our positive responses - London

There is now a sense of rushing to get certain things in place but we are not bringing and embedding the necessary culture change with us. Many schools and other services are not family or child centred and do not even know what that means. - London

Quality control and being family centred remain huge concerns going forward. This was supposed to change lives and reduce fighting for services. There's a focus mainly on headline issues and not culture change. Where's accountability in all this? We know it's a huge agenda but the family and child centred part is key and on the face of the legislation. - London

Being a non-pathfinder area there is a feeling that there has not been enough time to really embed the principles of co-production and to gauge shared understanding between the stakeholders within each implementation task group, of what Person Centred approaches are, what outcomes look like and to gather a real understanding of WHY these changes have come about. - South East

Assessment and review services locally are not delivering an effective service at present. Parents and carers are extremely concerned that the school funding reforms have seen a worrying trend towards reducing support for children in mainstream education because of local banding systems that have no legal status nationally. We have a lot of tribunals and this is set to increase in future. This damages the relationship and parental confidence in the agencies working with children, young people and families. - Yorkshire & Humber

The thinking locally is that there will be something in place by 1st September but it will still require considerable work to fully realise the aspirations of parent Carers. - East of England

The LA haven't yet started the engaging parent and carers task group wanting to delay it until the other task groups were established. Many parents feel that this will cause difficulties for any further consultation we are very close to the schools holidays which leaves limited time to consider and respond. - North West

The speed of implementing the reforms has made it very difficult for parents to really get to grips with the changes. This has also been true for Local Authorities, CCGs and other stakeholders.[...] Local Authorities will no doubt be able to implement the reforms in part but it may well take a considerable time to get it right. - South West

We still have concerns about the accountability of local authorities e.g., in delivering the local offer, and the lack of national standards/potential for post code lotteries e.g. on eligibility for EHC Plans. Also that the reforms will discourage schools from referring children for statutory assessment and discourage inclusive education. - Yorkshire & Humber

[Our LA] Partnership manager has significantly supported the forum to engage with key partners along this process. The Chair of the forum, Partnership manager and two LA officers have formed a working group to develop an engagement strategy to ensure a more cohesive plan around engagement going forward. - West Midlands

State of chaos at the moment and relationships between the LA and partners with the parent forum are breaking down. -Yorkshire, Yorkshire & Humber

A lot more resources will be required to fully implement the reforms. Some of the preparation for the new reforms has not been fully finalised due to the delay in issuing the Code of Practice. We are working very hard with the LA in [our area] to break down barriers and work together for positive outcomes however Parent Carers feel that some solicitors are working in an adversarial manner to market their services and have been scaremongering amongst parents and service providers implying that the only way forward will be to battle through the courts using the legal system, private educational psychologists and therapists - South West

More work should have been done to engage teachers and LSAs and to address communication issues between school and home. Many parents do not feel confident about schools' ability to listen to their concerns, especially if they don't speak English well and/or don't understand the SEN system - London

We are very concerned re lack of young people's engagement in [our local area ...] Due to the delays in CoP/regulations/transition arrangements there has been very little engagement with education providers and there are briefings in June/July which we think are too late. [...] We are particularly concerned about the lack of knowledge in the wider workforce eg therapists, portage, preschools etc and the mis-information we are hearing from parents who are now becoming confused and anxious about the reforms. [...] The closer we get to implementation the less involved we feel with the exception of the local offer. Meetings are often cancelled or there are large gaps between. We had virtually no engagement at all re EHCP/assessment and planning from Jan-May this year. [...] We do not feel that the processes are joined up and integrated in our area and it feels as though very little will change for families – indeed it may well get worse in the first few years post implementation - South East

Over the last 2 months things have suddenly started to happen, we have had very little co-production and still very much consultation. We spent a lot of time looking at parent's journeys, how they get information and advice etc but none of this has been used in developing the local Offer so far and a lot of families were really disappointed when they saw what our authority had created. [...] We have become a tick box exercise in some areas of social care in particular, but the lack of involvement from adult services, CCG's and schools direct really worries us. We feel we are at the very early stages of beginning discussions around true co-production and due to the speed of developments we feel this will not happen if at all until after implementation - South East

The late engagement of health colleagues and the last minute changes to the draft guidance have made an already difficult implementation timescale much harder to achieve adding more pressure to an already overworked body of staff, particularly in the Council. In our view it would make more sense to move the deadline back. - Yorkshire & Humber

We are disappointed that as a Pathfinder borough that our Local Authority has not completed all the work streams they set out to do. Particularly personal budgets, transition (preparing for adulthood) and the Local Offer. – London

We are very concerned that the final version of the new code of practice will not be published until June giving very little time for local authorities and parent carer forums to prepare for full implementation in September 2014. - North East

We would like to express how much we valued the meeting with the department when they came to visit [our local area] last month. The visit has made a significant difference and has very much highlighted the need to move forward much more quickly, the gaps and what the priorities are. Things are moving much more quickly now and we very much welcome the next visit from the DfE and we are positive that this intervention will support [our local area] to be ready for implementation. - North West

[Our local] County Council appears to be struggling with the concept of Parent Carer co-production in terms of SEND Reforms. [...] The LA has been pre-occupied with cuts to staff, attempting to reduce budgets in the People Group (including CIN Social Care, SEN Transport and the Statementing Service). - West Midlands

There will be a functional system for EHCP and a 1st phase of the local offer. The LA are thinking about transition plans, personal budgets and mediation but whether these are finalised by sept 1st is unclear. The thinking locally is that there will be something in place by 1st September but it will still require considerable work to fully realise the aspirations of parent Carers. - East of England

We have been very involved in the reforms, but as we get closer to implementation, and processes are being developed, we find we are bit being kept up to date as much as we feel necessary, e.g. the Local Offer website is being developed but we have yet to see how this is progressing and how it looks. - South East

Why didn't the Dept for Education enforce that LA's and Health and social care must work with Parents forums & involved them in participation so at the beginning of the process and not just at the end? It won't happen if not made statutory - in our experience these organisations keep just inviting parents at the end of their process in a tick box exercise of consultation. - North West

As a pathfinder authority, [our LA] have been developing and testing the new systems and processes associated with the SEND Reforms and as a forum we believe that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to deliver the best possible outcomes when the reforms become effective in September. We are really pleased with the level of enthusiasm and engagement that has been shown in [our local area] across all key stakeholders, and we are delighted with the co-productive approach that has been developed ensuring that the Parent Carer Forum are at the heart of the strategic decision making and are now seen and treated as important stakeholders with an equal decision making role for the future of SEND delivery in [the area]. -North West

Since the last survey a dedicated person has been appointed to take forward the SEND reforms at a strategic level and this has had a very positive impact getting the right professionals around the table with parents and carers. - North East

Lots of involvement from lots of people from partners including PCF. Now needs to be turned into Outcomes and tangible products. - East of England

Far too much change has been thrown at everyone in a very short space of time. At the same time the Government has executed wide ranging and extensive cuts to County Council budgets. This is creating a 'perfect storm' where the cuts to budgets and the resulting reductions in staffing are making implementation of this huge package of changes extremely difficult to deliver. Additionally

the changes in law and procedures are very complex for Council staff and families to understand. We feel we are all going to struggle. - South East

Losing key colleagues in the LA and Health due to budgets has had a major impact on the work over the last 2 years. Forum do this voluntarily and creating a co-productive equal partnership takes time for both parties as well as services learning to work together. Funding to implement the reforms is vital. - Yorkshire & Humber

The late engagement of health colleagues and the last minute changes to the draft guidance have made an already difficult implementation timescale much harder to achieve adding more pressure to an already overworked body of staff, particularly in the Council. In our view it would make more sense to move the deadline back. - Yorkshire & Humber

As a pathfinder authority, we have been developing and testing the new systems and processes associated with the SEND Reforms and as a forum we believe that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to deliver the best possible outcomes when the reforms become effective in September. - North West

## **Final Summary**

### **Response rate and survey delivery**

The lower level of response perhaps reflects the real challenges faced by forums in terms of activity and demands. The capacity of parent carer forums have been stretched as parent carers grapple with the changes that the reforms will bring - how they will affect their own families and families in their local area - and as they strive to work in partnership with Local Authorities and other stakeholders to prepare for implementation. The additional grant monies available to forums from the Department for Education in 2014/15 may assist in supporting forums as they try to meet the additional activity that they are undertaking.

Considering the demands on parent carer forums at the time the survey was run, as they were also working to meet deadlines on their grant monitoring 2013-14 and complete their grant monitoring applications for 2014-15, the response rate is still encouraging and perhaps indicative of how important many forums feel it is that the Department for Education hear their perspectives.

Forums have clearly stated that it would have been helpful to have had more notice of the timelines in order to plan for consultation with their members, to have had more time to respond (particularly in view of parent carers personal circumstances) and for the timing of surveys for parent carers not to clash with half term. This would no doubt enable more forums to participate, with better opportunity to consult their members, and place less pressure on their time and capacity.

### **Sharing survey responses with Local Authorities**

A number of forums have reported that the survey has prompted them to initiate dialogue and share their views on readiness with their Local Authority, to find out how Local Authorities have been progressing on key deliverables and suggest how forums can support them. Forums have reported mixed reactions from Local Authorities, with some being very much on board with discussing readiness and some not finding time to do so:

## Summary of findings

A significant number of forums are concerned that their areas will not be ready for implementation, with little change in forums opinions on this from the first survey in February 2014 to the second one run in May 2014. In particular, there appears to have been little progress made in developing joint commissioning structures. Also, 40% of forums say no transition plan has been finalised towards setting out how children and young people with SEN statements/LDAs will transfer to EHC plans.

Concerns raised by forums suggest that although activity towards readiness has increased in local areas, this is not always working in a participatory or co-productive way with forums. While there has been some increase in the amount of engagement forums have had in developing a coordinated EHC process, 1 in 3 forums have still not been engaged at all in developing other key deliverables required under the Children and Families Act and Code of Practice (eg. joint commissioning structures, a transparent process for personal budgets, an information and advice service or in trialling the reforms before full implementation).

Nearly half of the forums indicated that no plans were being developed with parents, children and young people, to embed processes to measure their experiences of local SEND services. This does raise some questions about how quality assurance and accountability will be managed.

Overall the comments suggest there is a real sense of the aspects of the reforms being rushed through, that the speed of implementing the reforms has made it difficult for parent carers and local authorities to really get to grips with the changes and the increased activity over the last few months has sometimes meant that consultation has been tokenistic, and co-production is not widely taking place. Forums commented that changes to the Code of Practice have in some cases led to the complete reworking of the development of deliverables such as Education, Health and Care Plans to ensure that they meet the requirements now set out in the revised Code of Practice.

Staff and structure changes within Local Authorities and other key stakeholders continue to have knock-on effects on progression and information about the changes may not be shared and disseminated as well as forums would like. There is some concern about schools' knowledge and willingness to engage with the reforms which is varied. There is also a strong sense that Health have been late to engage with the reforms and the planning, and in some cases are still not engaged and in some areas, that senior managers within Health are not involved and that this reluctance to engage may even be slowing up the process.

The key issue coming through from forums in their free text to the Department for Education is that they want Local Authorities, Education, Health and Social Care to embed the culture change that is needed in order to bring improvements to the lives of children, young people and parents. Forums want service providers to understand what it means to be family and child centred and to engage in meaningful co-production with them in order to put this principles of the legislation into practice.



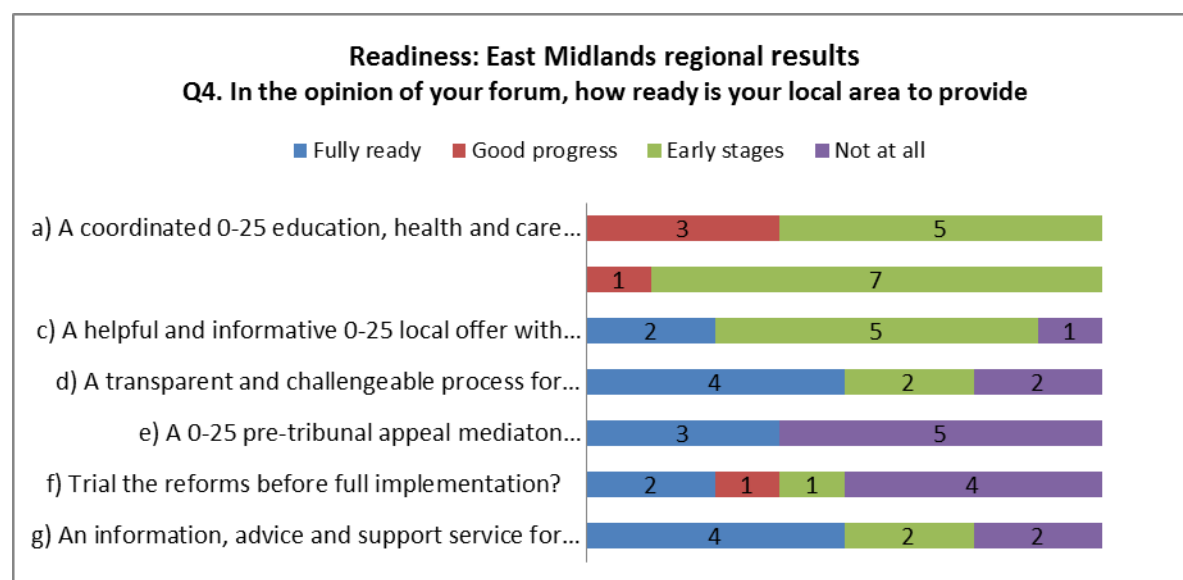
## Appendix 1 to SEND Readiness Survey 2 Report: Regional Reports

### East Midlands

8 out of the 9 forums in the East Midlands made a response to the survey (89%) – the highest regional response rate to the survey across England and the only region to have an increase in the number of forums taking part.

In the East Midlands, the majority of forums said that readiness on the requirements of the Code of Practice were in the early stages. In terms of engagement the forums indicated low engagement on setting up pre-tribunal mediation arrangements – with 5 forums saying they had not been engaged at all.

In response to question 7 the region responded fairly positively about the skills, understanding of the Local Authority staff and their plans. However a high number said that no plans have been developed with parents, children and young people, to measure whether the experience of SEND services locally for parents, children and young people has improved.



Some free text responses within the survey from forums in the East Midlands:

The recent changes to the CoP have led to the complete reworking of what was considered a final EHC Plan to include the new sections. Regular workstreams all of which involve the PCF are meeting to redevelop the plan and process and other all other aspects of the above are also under reconsideration.

For the joint commissioning working group, there was some initial movement with this group but the last 3 consecutive meetings were all cancelled. [...] Health is still not engaging on this group and they are very much needed.

For health, there is no-one of strategic importance at the board meetings. Our forum has raised this time and time again.

At the moment, Young People have had next to no involvement at all.

The LA have proactively supported the parent carer forum this includes attendance at meetings, workshops, presentations, briefing, sharing of information and promotion of opportunities for parents carers to get involved via the Participation Hub.

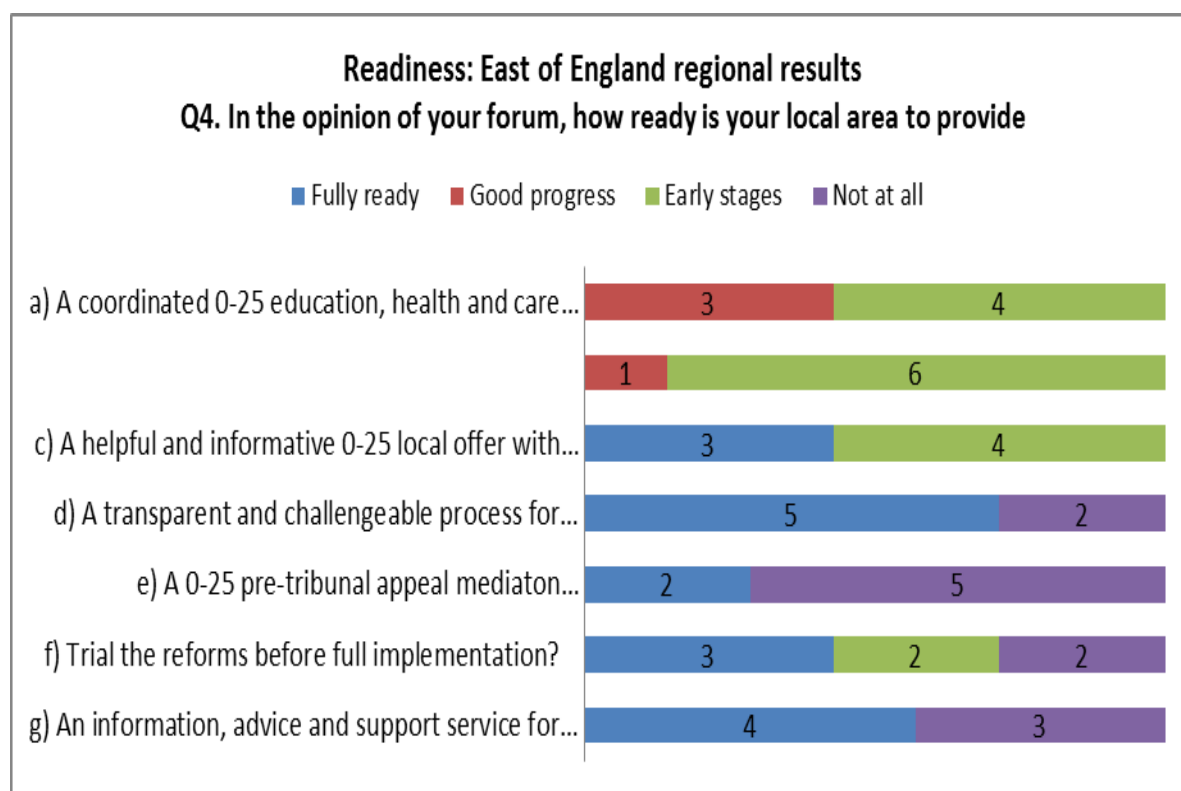
## East of England

The second survey got a slightly lower response rate of 64% from the East of England than the first which got a 100% return.

In the East of England the opinions on readiness on question 4 were quite polarised between full readiness or not ready not at all. In terms of engagement the forums indicated low engagement on setting up pre-tribunal mediation arrangements – with 6 forums saying they had not been engaged at all.

All 7 forums which responded to the survey indicated that there was quite good engagement from Social Care in implementing the reforms, which was the most positive response for this key partner across the country.

Responses to question 10, show East of England to be one of the least confident regions that their local area will be ready to implement the reforms from September. 50% indicated they were 'not confident at all' with a further 25% only 'slightly confident' in their area's readiness. This was the only region where no forums indicated they were 'very confident'.



East of England Q10. How confident is your forum that from 1 September 2014: -	Very confident	Reasonably confident	Slightly confident	Not at all confident
a) Your area will have a co-produced local offer in place and that new referrals for statutory assessments will be offered an integrated EHC assessment, the option of a personal budget and recourse to mediation?	0	3	4	7
b) Children and young people reaching a key transition point in 2014-15 (eg. early years to primary; primary to secondary; secondary to further education) will have their existing SEN statements transferred to EHC plans?	0	4	3	7
c) Your local area will be ready to implement the SEND Reforms?	0	4	3	7
Total	0	11	10	21

A range of comments from forums in the East of England from the free text sections of the survey:

School engagement is varied some expressing the view that it won't affect them as there is no enforcement by Ofsted. A few feel they work this way anyway. Health has only recently (last 6 months) been aware that they have obligations.

Lots of involvement from lots of people from partners including PCF. Now needs to be turned into Outcomes and tangible products.

We are progressing but with personal budgets and joint commissioning only just being developed and Health dragging their feet this knocks the confident levels.

## London

The response rate to the second survey was a lot lower from London than the first, with just a 50% return – one of the lowest regional response rates across England. City of London was not invited to make a response as they have never had an established parent carer forum due to their population and size.

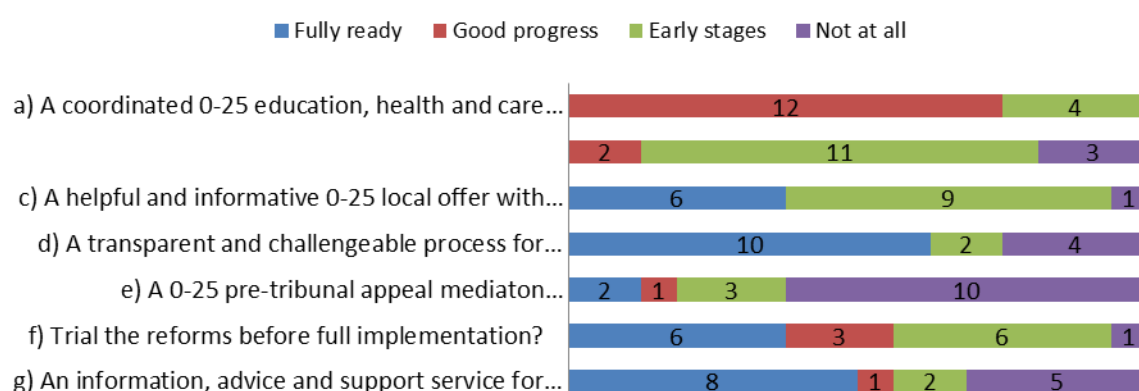
12 out of the 16 responding forums in London indicated 'good progress' had been made towards provision of a co-ordinated EHC assessment process and 10 out of 16 indicated their area is 'fully ready' to deliver a transparent process for personal budgets.

In terms of engagement the forums indicated low engagement on setting up pre-tribunal mediation arrangements – with 13 out of 16 forums saying they had not been engaged at all.

London had among the highest percentages of forums responding positively that their Local Authority is engaging young people directly in the reforms to some extent (63% said 'some engagement')

## Readiness: London regional results

### Q4. In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide



A range of comments from forums in London from the free text sections of the survey:

There is now a sense of rushing to get certain things in place but we are not bringing and embedding the necessary culture change with us. Many schools and other services are not family or child centred and do not even know what that means.

Our LA appear to be starting to choose their own parent-carer reps who have no roles or responsibilities of working with other families so no means of obtaining input, or knowing who to feedback outcomes.

The SEND project lead is completely committed to fully engaging with parents and understands the meaning of co-production, however, as yet, Education and Health still seem to appear to be working to the old model, where they know best, and are developing policy/processes for parents to provide feedback on.

We are leading on the support service alone with no enthusiasm from the Borough. We are helping the pilot programme but they decided that schools and SEN would hand select the pilot families. We feel a little excluded from the pilot at the moment.

We feel very pleased with the amount of engagement we have in our area. We are always welcomed and our opinions listened to.

Quality control and being family centred remain huge concerns going forward. This was supposed to change lives and reduce fighting for services. There's a focus mainly on headline issues and not culture change. Where's accountability in all this? We know it's a huge agenda but the family and child centred part is key and on the face of the legislation.

The lack of planning by the LA means that too much is being done too late. Strangely parents and the parent forum have been planning events / attending information events and submitting returns for local and national consultations well in advance so we are mystified as to why so many LA's did not make provision for this work coming online.

Parents are extremely anxious about thresholds and holding schools and LA to account. There is concern that Academy schools will push families away with excuse of not being able to meet child's

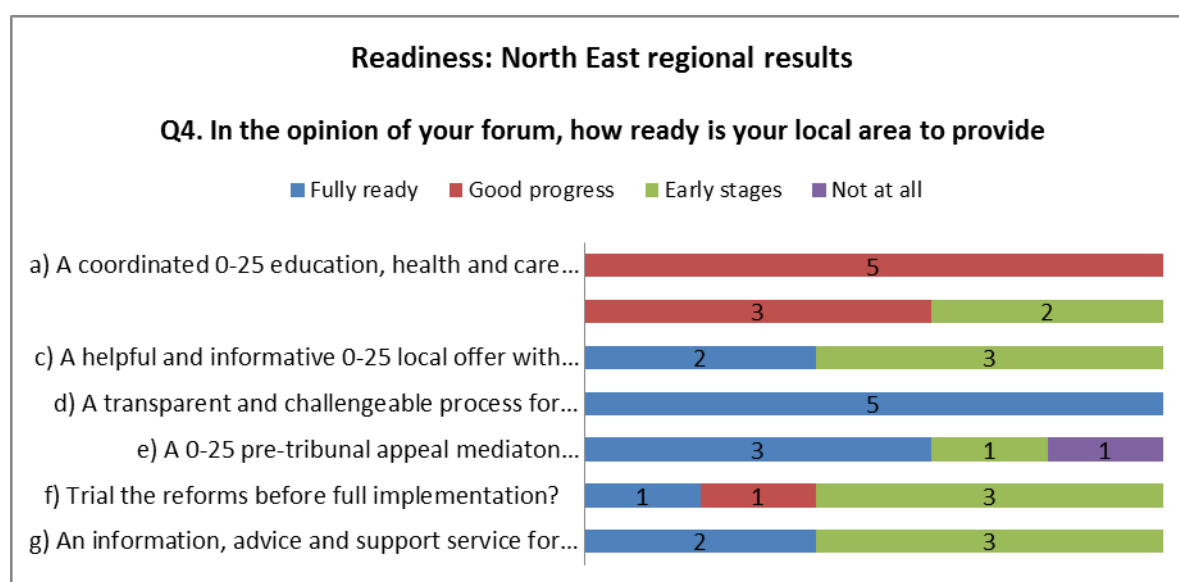
needs, LA have little/no power to prevent this. There are still a number of parents unaware of changes and their implications. Generally poor communication especially between schools & families.

## North East

The North East had the lowest regional response rate across England in both the first and second surveys. There was a drop in responses from 67% to 42% from the first survey in February to the next in May in which just 5 out of 12 forums responded.

The North East responded quite positively on readiness across the key deliverables of the Code with only one forum indicating a lack of readiness on provision of a pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangements. All 5 (100%) of the forums which responded said their area is 'fully ready' to provide a transparent personal budgets process.

Forums in the North East indicated that there had been engagement across a number of the requirements that will need to be delivered under the Code, particularly in developing an EHC assessment process.



Some free text comments from forums in the North East throughout the survey:

Since the last survey a dedicated person has been appointed to take forward the SEND reforms at a strategic level and this has had a very positive impact getting the right professionals around the table with parents and carers.

We are very concerned that the final version of the new code of practice will not be published until June giving very little time for local authorities and parent carer forums to prepare for full implementation in September 2014.

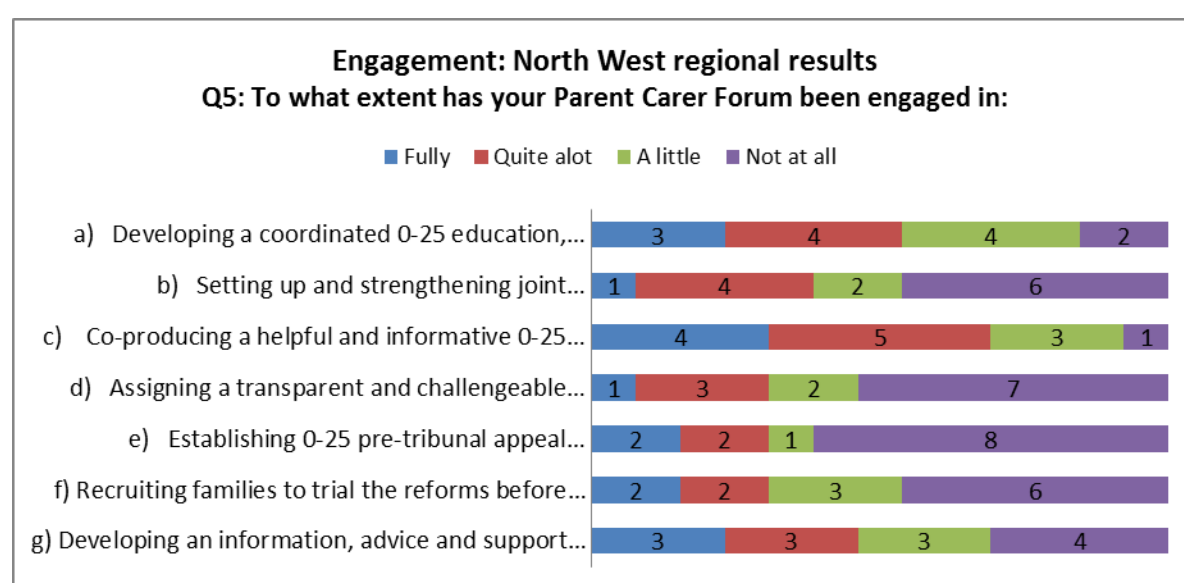
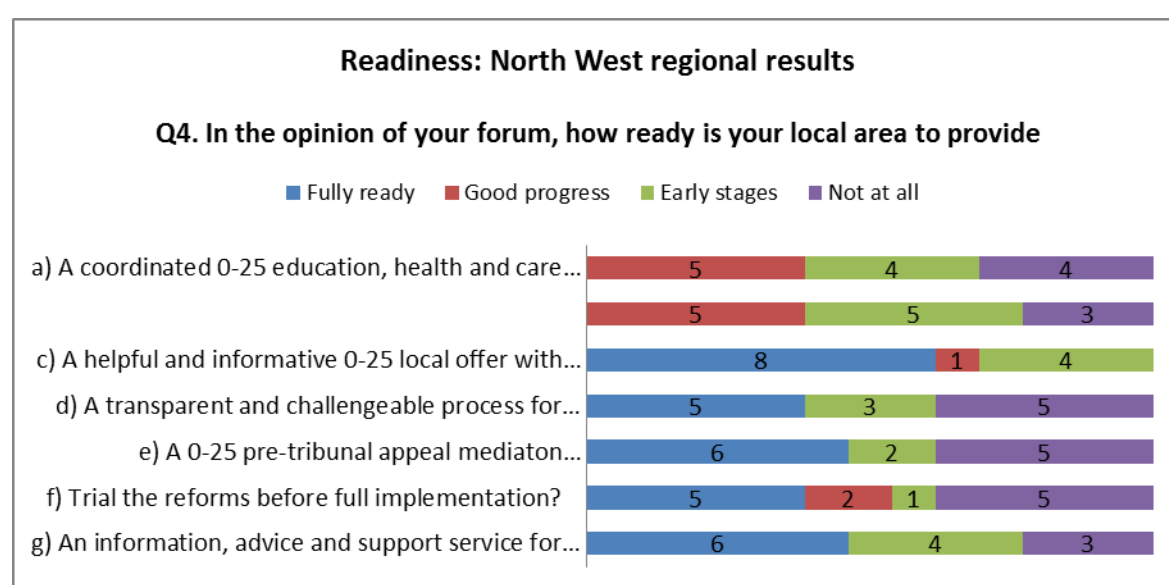
## North West

The North West had had quite a strong response rate to the survey in February (83%) but had only 57% return to the survey in May.

In the North West, the only deliverable that all forums said has been progressed in some way, whether in early stages or fully ready, is the local offer. Across all the other deliverables between 3-5 forums indicated that nothing had been developed at all.

The North West showed quite mixed responses in terms of engagement of forums towards preparation of implementation of the reforms, but with a high percentage showing no engagement at all.

The North West had the highest actual number of forums (n.6) indicating that they were not at all confident that their area would be ready to implement the reforms from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014.



We are in the position to engage and the LA has equipped the forum however there is not much to engage in and lots is being done in the back room, co-production is still tokenistic on certain strands.

Due to changes in Health structures they have been the most difficult group to engage. [...] Schools and Colleges vary both in their existing knowledge and willingness to engage in the reforms process. Work is being undertaken by the SEND Partnership Board and this has led to recent access to the newly established schools SEN Hub, which will again be instrumental in engaging key school personnel at senior level.

It is quite clear after frank discussions with lead professionals from the Local Authority, that our opinions of forum engagement are poles apart. Initial involvement with the Task and Finish groups was down to a select few parents and with no formal procedure to feedback to the wider SEN parent community meant that the only people to benefit was the Local Authority. In our opinion, a 'tick box' exercise. The term 'Co-production' is not fully understood by members of the Local Authority and CCG. It would appear that there is a definite dilution in the meaning and understanding the benefits of co-production from the front line staff upwards. What is also apparent is the lack of confidence in the role of the forum and the clear fact that we are not here to criticise, we want to work in partnership to ensure the job is done properly and effectively. Health, in particular, do not seem to have a clear view of the full extent of their 'new' duties and responsibilities and despite numerous requests to meet with them, this has not happened. Significantly, Health does not have a clear perspective of the role of the parents forum, and the positive benefits working in partnership would bring.

As a pathfinder authority, we have been developing and testing the new systems and processes associated with the SEND Reforms and as a forum we believe that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to deliver the best possible outcomes when the reforms become effective in September.

### **South East**

12 out of 16 forums responded to the second SEND Survey in the South East – a 63% response rate which was average across England.

The South East responses to question 4 on readiness across a number of deliverables are fairly positive. There is some split in local areas with a number forums indicating full readiness whilst others indicate only early stages of readiness for implementation.

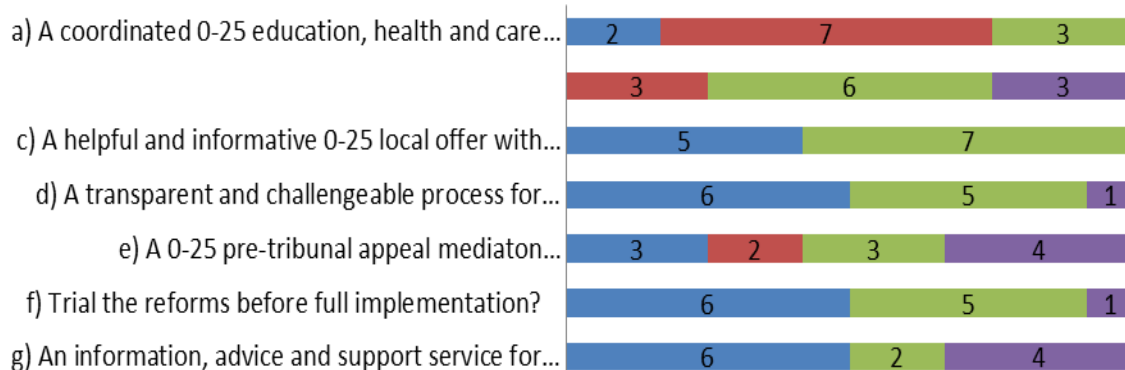
In terms of forum engagement a high percentage of forums show a total lack of engagement across four of the key requirements of the forthcoming reforms.

The South East had the highest percentages of forums saying that their Local Authority is engaging young people directly in the reforms to some extent (67% said 'some engagement' and 23% 'strong engagement')

### Readiness: South East regional results

#### Q4. In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide

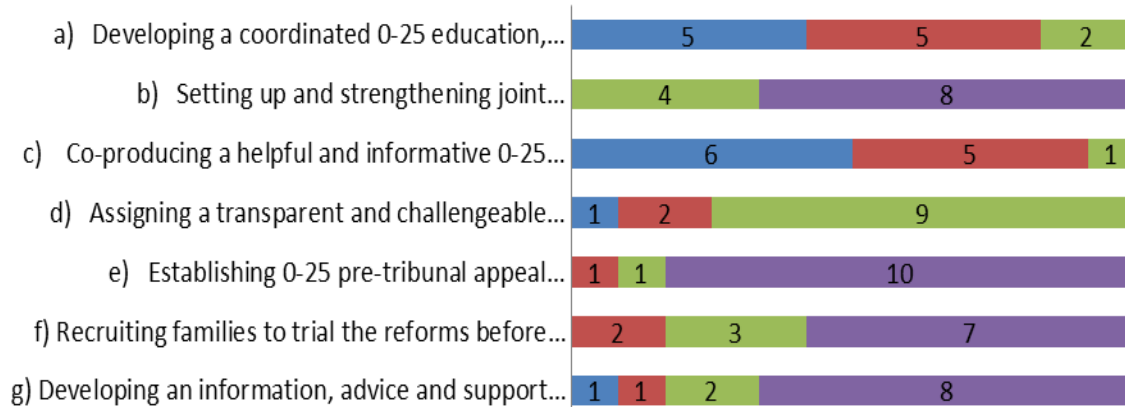
■ Fully ready ■ Good progress ■ Early stages ■ Not at all



### Engagement: South East regional results

#### Q5: To what extent has your Parent Carer Forum been engaged in:

■ Fully ■ Quite alot ■ A little ■ Not at all



Senior management are aware of the changes taking place, but we have concerns how this is filtering down in time for September 2014.

In our area, the LA have implemented the EHC Plan since January 2013. This has been very successful with parents and professionals, however with the new directive received from the government recently it is currently being amended as well as standardised to provide consistency for all assessment co-ordinators and professionals.

We have been part of testing this and although in comparison to no pathfinder areas we appear to be further the more in-depth you go the more you can see that needs to be done.



We are particularly concerned about post16 provision and engagement with providers. It seems as though this area is still in infancy and that young people are going to struggle when these reforms are implemented.

Far too much change has been thrown at everyone in a very short space of time. At the same time the Government has executed wide ranging and extensive cuts to County Council budgets. This is creating a 'perfect storm' where the cuts to budgets and the resulting reductions in staffing are making implementation of this huge package of changes extremely difficult to deliver. Additionally the changes in law and procedures are very complex for Council staff and families to understand. We feel we are all going to struggle.

Being a non-pathfinder area there is a feeling that there has not been enough time to really embed the principles of co-production and to gauge shared understanding between the stakeholders within each implementation task group, of what Person Centred approaches are, what outcomes look like and to gather a real understanding of WHY these changes have come about.

Over the last 2 month things have suddenly started to happen, we have had very little co-production and still very much consultation. If we comment on documents we are listened too but so far not a lot of changes have happened that we have suggested.

Our parent forum and parent reps has been fully involved in a recent peer challenge and visit from DfE. Parents present were in agreement with the outcome/summary of those visits and the targets set as a result. There has been significant progress following the appointment of new staff in the SEN team.

### **South West**

There was a strong response rate from the south West region with 12 out of 16 forums responding to the survey (75%).

In the South West, the responses show a good level of readiness across preparation for EHC assessments and a transparent process for personal budgets.

The highest percentage of no engagement of the forums in developing provisions to be implemented under the reforms were on establishing tribunal processes, though this is not surprising as this is generally the poorest area of readiness and engagement England-wide.

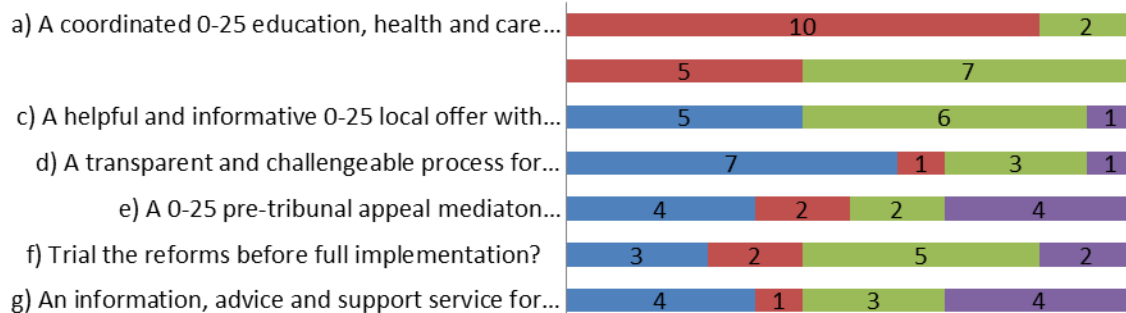
The South West had the highest percentage and highest actual number of forums stating that their Local Authority is strongly engaging young people directly in implementing the reforms (42% / a total of 5 forums).

50% of the forums in both the South West and the South East responded that they were 'reasonably confident' that children and young people reaching a key transition point in 2014-15 will have their existing SEN statements transferred to EHC plans.

### Readiness: South West regional results

#### Q4. In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide

■ Fully ready ■ Good progress ■ Early stages ■ Not at all



We feel health are currently holding up the joint commissioning process in Cornwall, this has only this week been addressed following comments from professionals and parents and a joint commissioning unit has now been set up between health and social care. .

I believe that our County are just about fully ready for education, but certainly not with health and Social Care .

Our area was late starting the reforms /Act. There seems to be a lot meetings with many NHS and LA staff struggling with the changes. Our area would benefit from re-structural changes.

We are fully ready in the areas of Education and Social Care and making progress in Health. The Local Offer is still in development, the education element is the part most near completion; all work has been completed with full parent carer engagement and participation. .

We are on the cusp of implementing workforce involvement with the reforms. Daily and weekly meetings now happening.

### West Midlands

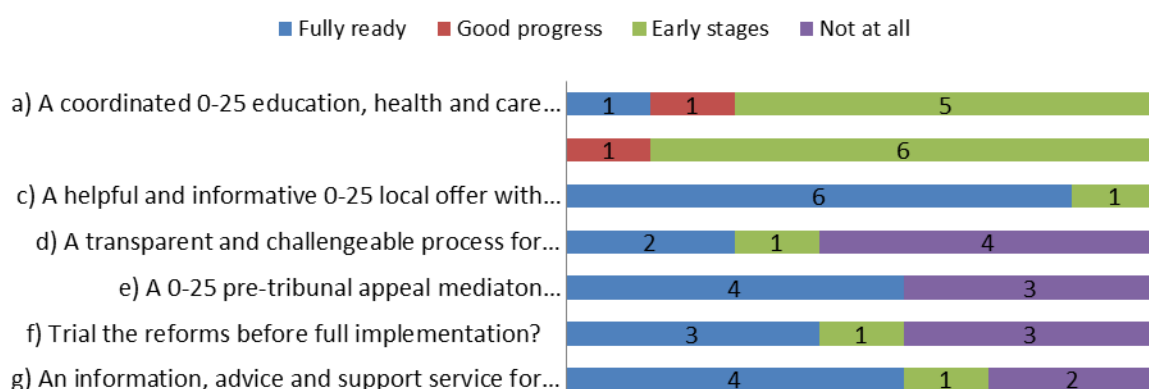
Just 50% of the forums (n.7) made a response to the survey from the West Midlands.

There is a fairly good show of readiness from the forums across the region, with a higher percentage of full readiness on the local offer, provision of a pre-tribunal mediation arrangements and an information and advice service compared to other regions across the country.

Engagement of forums in the West Midlands region is not as positive as other regions across England with a high percentage of responding forums showing no engagement or only a little engagement across a number of deliverables. Of particular concern is the lack of engagement of forums on developing a transparent personal budget process.

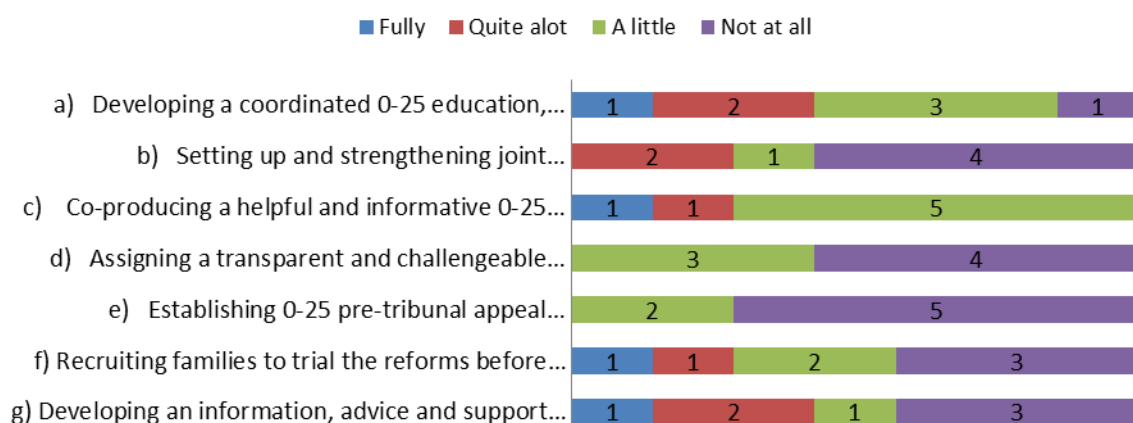
### Readiness: West Midlands regional results

#### Q4. In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide



### Engagement: West Midlands regional results

#### Q5: To what extent has your Parent Carer Forum been engaged in:



Most of the work on the EHC, Local Offer so far has been done by Education. Health have capacity issues, and Social Care seems unable to recruit and retain Social Workers. There was some initial good partnership work around Short Breaks, but financial cutbacks across the board make it a very difficult to deliver the outcomes promised in 'Support & Aspiration'. .

There has not been a pilot of the EHC plans in our area, however the LA are in the process of setting up early implementation cases. The forum has been frustrated that they have not really been involved in the template and design of the EHC plan process. As a forum we felt we should have had more involvement, regardless of whether our authority has been working alongside Pathfinders. As a forum we felt our Families should have a voice around local service provision. We have had no involvement at present around personal budgets. .

The County Council appears to be struggling with the concept of Parent Carer co-production in terms of SEND Reforms. .

We have been creating a conversion plan of current SSEN and LDAs in order of priority in line with the 2/3 year conversion period. .

The pace of implementing these reforms is too quick and no one can keep up with them. This may lead to errors and omissions with negative consequences for the young people involved. .

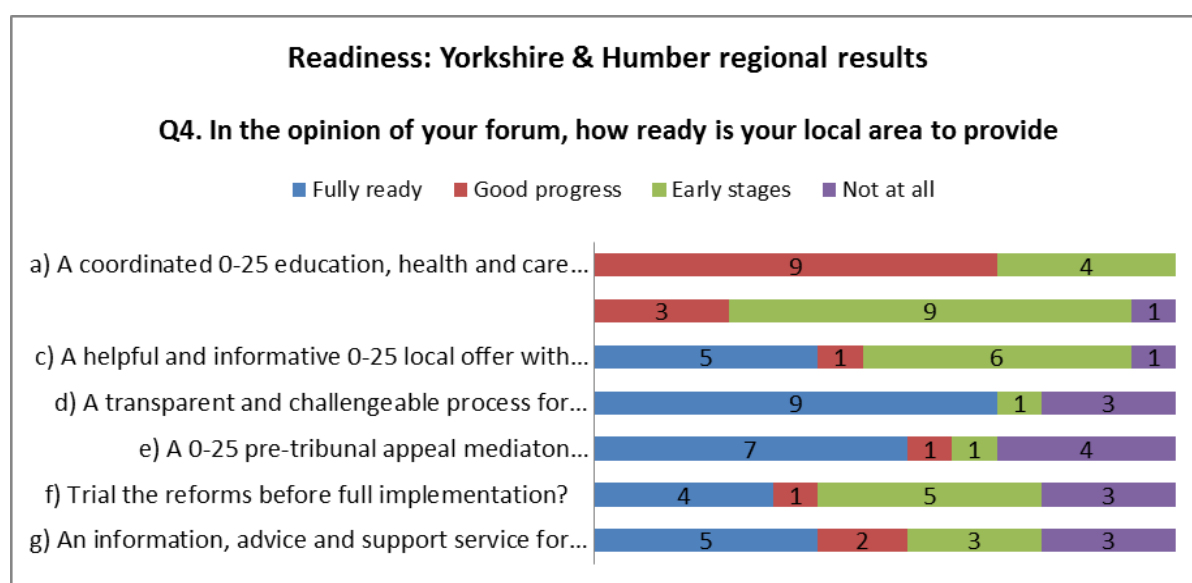
## Yorkshire & Humber

There was a high response rate from Yorkshire and Humber with 82% of forums in the region taking part.

There is fairly good readiness across a number of the requirements of the forthcoming reforms outlined in question 4, but a high number of forums indicate their area is only in the 'early stages' of readiness on developing joint commissioning structures.

In terms of forum engagement in preparing for implementation of the reforms there was a fairly mixed response from the forums across the Yorkshire and Humber region (see question 5). The region did have the highest percentage of forums stating that they had had no engagement at all in developing pre-tribunal mediation arrangements.

In response to question 10, Yorkshire and Humber appear to be the most 'reasonably confident' that their local area will be ready for the reforms (54% 'reasonably confident', see question 10). The forums in this region were equally confident that their local area's will have a co-produced local offer in place, that new referrals for statutory assessments will be offered, an integrated EHC assessment, the option of a personal budget and recourse to mediation and that children and young people reaching transition will have existing SEN statements transferred to EHC plans.



Yorkshire & Humber Q10. How confident is your forum that from 1 September 2014: -	Very confident	Reasonably confident	Slightly confident	Not at all confident
a) Your area will have a co-produced local offer in place and that new referrals for statutory assessments will be offered an integrated EHC assessment, the option of a personal budget and recourse to mediation?	2	7	2	2

b) Children and young people reaching a key transition point in 2014-15 (eg. early years to primary; primary to secondary; secondary to further education) will have their existing SEN statements transferred to EHC plans?	3	7	2	1
c) Your local area will be ready to implement the SEND Reforms?	2	7	2	2
Grand Total	7	21	6	5

Health partners have been thin on the ground and are only just starting to engage. .

Health as had little engagement in the reforms, fortunately, the Forum met the CCGs lead within Children's and it was made aware that they may need some support themselves to reach their full engagement.

All areas [partners] have representatives fully engaged, implementation at ground level is a workforce development programme, currently being planned and prepared .

Losing key colleagues in the LA and Health due to budgets has had a major impact on the work over the last 2 years. Forum do this voluntarily and creating a co-productive equal partnership takes time for both parties as well as services learning to work together. Funding to implement the reforms is vital. .

There have been up to two information events locally specifically for education, health and care plans. However the lack of professionals from education who are not in attendance suggests that this part of the plan will not be fully realised, thus not fully implemented.

The late engagement of health colleagues and the last minute changes to the draft guidance have made an already difficult implementation timescale much harder to achieve adding more pressure to an already overworked body of staff, particularly in the Council. In our view it would make more sense to move the deadline back. .

We still have concerns about the accountability of local authorities e.g. in delivering the local offer, and the lack of national standards/potential for post code lotteries e.g. on eligibility for EHC Plans. Also that the reforms will discourage schools from referring children for statutory assessment, and discourage inclusive education. .

There is such a lot of work for the Local authority and health to undertake, with very limited resources and under such tight timescales, implementation by September 2014 will be a challenge. The desire for this to work is strong but from a practical basis challenging. The delay in the final code of practice guidance has not helped schools, colleges and the local authority .

State of chaos at the moment and relationships between the LA and partners with parent forum breaking down.

The forum was a strategic partner in the Pathfinder Project and now as an SEN Reform Champion area. Even so, staff and structure changes (both in the forum and in the local authority) and the speed of the reforms have meant that we have not had full and direct involvement in every aspect of preparing for the reforms. .

There has been good communication between the partners and we feel things are moving in the right direction. It does seem to be the same people at the meetings and there is a worry that the information is not filtering down to those working at ground level. Sessions have been set up for parents and professionals to attend to help rectify this. .

I think that local authorities are so busy trying to organise themselves for the changes they are forgetting parent participation. The parent carer forums are willing and well equipped to work on the reforms.

We have been actively involved in partnership with the City Council throughout. We have helped create, trial, learn and revise the plans. We are confident our area will be fully ready but cannot mark Q4a) so, until all other issues are complete and communicated.

## Appendix 2: Parent Carer Forums Survey – Readiness for the SEND Reforms

Welcome to the second 'Readiness the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Reforms Survey' for Parent Carer Forums.

The information you have been invited to provide has been requested by the Department for Education as it supports local areas to prepare for and implement the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms.

Local Authorities have been requested by the Department for Education to complete a similar survey. You may wish to consider working together to complete the two surveys.

Please note that only **one response per forum** should be submitted.

Wherever possible, please consult your forum members on the questions below for their input before completing.

The deadline for response is **midnight on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2014**.

You can access and complete the survey at the following link: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SEND\\_Survey2](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SEND_Survey2)

If you wish to complete the survey in this Word document rather than online, please email the soft copy to

[leela.shanti@cafamilly.org.uk](mailto:leela.shanti@cafamilly.org.uk)

If you would prefer to complete this survey over the phone, please contact Leela Shanti by email or on 020 7608 8784 to arrange.

Your details	
1. Your local authority area:	

2. Your name and role in the forum:	
Your name:	
Your role in the forum:	
Your email address:	

3. Number of forum members involved in considering the response to this survey?									
1 >		2 to 3 >		4 to 6 >		7 to 12 >		More than 12 >	



Readiness				
4. In the opinion of your forum, how ready is your local area to provide:	Fully ready	Good progress made	Early stages	Not started
a) A coordinated 0-25 education, health and care assessment and planning process that is outcome focused and has children, families and young people at the centre?				
b) Joint commissioning structures across education, care and health, including processes for resolving disputes between partners?				
c) A helpful and informative 0-25 local offer with parent carers and young people?				
d) A transparent and challengeable process for personal budgets?				
e) A 0-25 pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangement?				
f) Opportunities to trial the reforms before full implementation?				
g) An information, advice and support service for children, young people and parents, covering educational needs, disability, health and social care?				
Any other comments:				
Engagement of Parent Carer Forums				
5. To what extent has your Parent Carer Forum been engaged in:	Fully	Quite a lot	A little	Not at all
a) Developing a coordinated 0-25 education, health and care assessment and				

planning process that is outcome focused and has children, families and young people at the centre?				
b) Setting up and strengthening joint commissioning structures across education, care and health, including processes for resolving disputes between partners?				
c) Co-producing a helpful and informative 0-25 local offer with parent carers and young people?				
d) Assigning a transparent and challengeable process for personal budgets?				
e) Establishing 0-25 pre-tribunal appeal mediation arrangements?				
f) Recruiting families to trial the reforms before full implementation?				
g) Developing an information, advice and support service for children, young people and parents, covering educational needs, disability, health and social care?				
If you would like to explain any of your responses more fully, please use the space below:				

6. Overall, to what extent would you say that your Local Authority has engaged your Parent Carer Forum in preparing for and implementing the reforms?									
Fully >		Quite a lot >		A little >		Not at all >		Tried but our forum is not in a position to engage >	

Skills, understanding and readiness of your Local Authority				
7. In the opinion of your forum....	Yes	In part	No	Don't Know
a) Do senior leaders within your Local Authority, including Elected Members, have a good understanding of the new legal requirements in the Children and Families				

Act, associated regulations and 0-25 SEND Code of Practice?				
b) Do staff within your Local Authority have the necessary skills to promote personalised approaches, so they understand and meet the needs of families and young people?				
c) Has a transition plan been finalised, working together with families and professionals, setting out when and how children and young people with existing SEN statements and LDAs will transfer to EHC plans?				
d) Have the processes and systems to deliver the reforms been established (including accountability, quality assurance, and IT and support systems)?				
e) Have plans been developed with parents, children and young people, to measure whether the experience of SEND services locally for parents, children and young people has improved?				

Engaging Partners & Stakeholders				
8. In the view of your forum, to what extent are the following partners engaged in implementing the reforms?	Fully	Quite a lot	A little	Not at all
a) Education / schools				
b) Social Care				
c) Health				
d) The Voluntary Sector				
e) Post-16 Providers				
Any further comments:				

9. Overall, to what extent would you say that your Local Authority has engaged your young people directly in preparing for and implementing the reforms?							
Strong Engagement >		Some Engagement >		Little or no engagement >		Don't know >	
Unless you've answered 'Don't know', could you briefly describe what the engagement involves?							

Readiness for the Reforms				
10. How confident is your forum, that from 1 September 2014...	Very confident	Reasonably confident	Slightly confident	Not at all confident
a) Your area will have a co-produced local offer in place and that new referrals for statutory assessments will be offered an integrated EHC assessment, the option of a personal budget and recourse to mediation?				
b) Children and young people reaching a key transition point in 2014-15 (eg. early years to primary; primary to secondary; secondary to further education) will have their existing SEN statements transferred to EHC plans?				
c) Your local area will be ready to implement the SEND Reforms?				

11. Is there anything else you would want the Department for Education to be aware of?

Thank you for completing this survey. The information you have provided will be used to assist the Department for Education as it supports local areas to prepare for and implement the SEND reforms.