

The POET Survey

Essex County Council

Data Report: July 2019

Practitioners working with children who have additional special educational support needs

Introduction

This report presents data collected using the Personal Outcome Evaluation Tool (POET) from practitioners who work with children who have additional support and may have Education Health and Care Plans (EHC plan) in Essex. It also compares the numerical responses of practitioners in Essex with the responses we have from practitioners in other parts of England working with children who receive additional support.

Not all respondents answered all the questions and some of the questions allowed for more than one answer, so the total number of responses will not necessarily add up to the same total numbers. Where provided, percentages are of those people who responded to that question. The target population for the survey was practitioners working with children with special educational needs who may have had experience of EHC Plans.

Who took part in the survey?

Nationally, 812 practitioners completed the survey from 8 local authority areas including 232 from Essex. A range of practitioners took part from education, social care and health. Around a half of the practitioners who responded to the national survey were involved mainly in providing direct support to children. Others were either involved mainly in the assessment and development of plans or management.

The POET survey asked practitioners a number of questions about their working role and the children they work with, including the type of school they work in, the reason the children they work with need additional support, the age group they work with and the main focus of their work.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the largest single group responding from Essex were practitioners that worked mainly within education (72%), a slightly lower proportion than practitioners from other parts of England (75%).

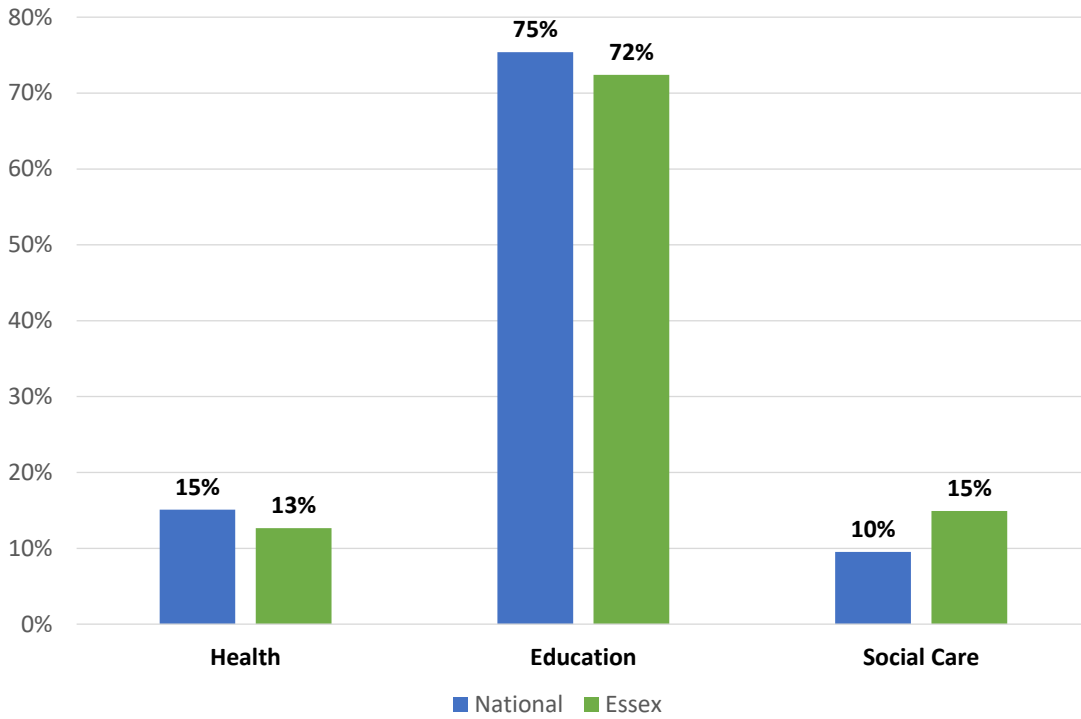


Figure 1. Which area do you mainly work?

Practitioners were asked whether they worked in schools and if so, which type of school they worked in. Practitioners responding from Essex were more likely to work within schools (65%) than respondents from other parts of England (64%). Practitioners from Essex were more likely to work in a main stream education setting (53%) than practitioners from other parts of England (45%).

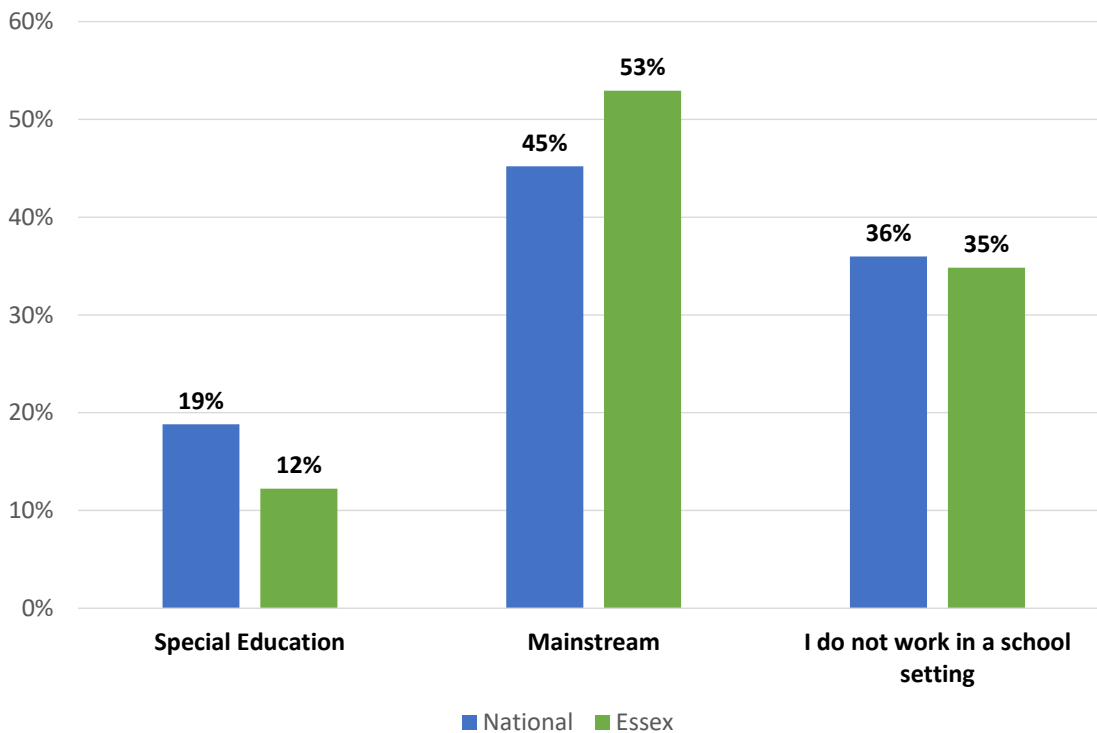


Figure 2. Where practitioners worked

The POET survey asked practitioners to say what tasks their job required of them. Practitioners in Essex were as likely to say they were involved in direct support (48%) and slightly less likely to be involved in assessment (37%) when compared to responses from other parts of England, where direct support was 47% and assessment 39% respectively.

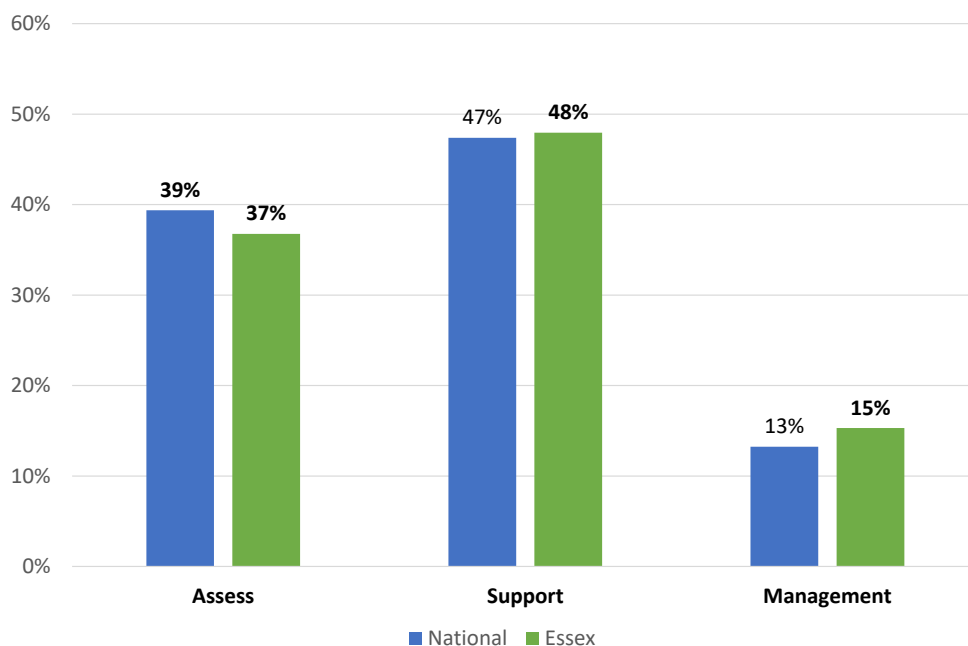


Figure 3. The task practitioners were mainly involved in

The POET survey asked practitioners to say what age group they mainly worked with. The proportion of practitioners working within secondary and post 16 groups was lower in Essex than in other parts of England, with Essex practitioners being more likely to work in primary schools.

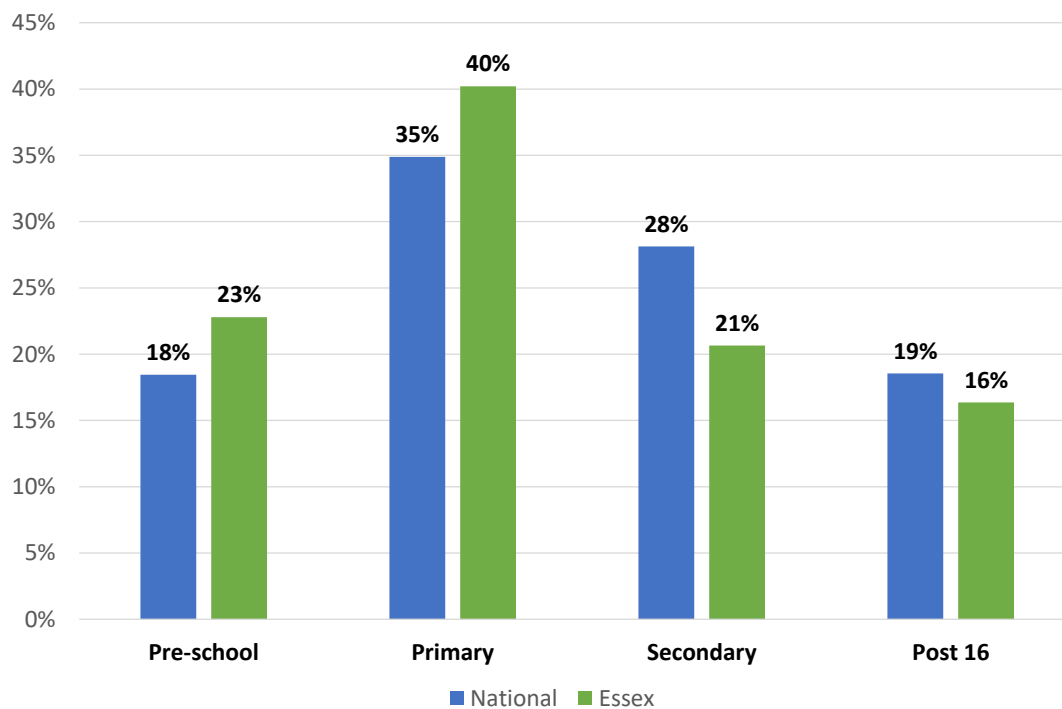


Figure 4. What age group did practitioners work with?

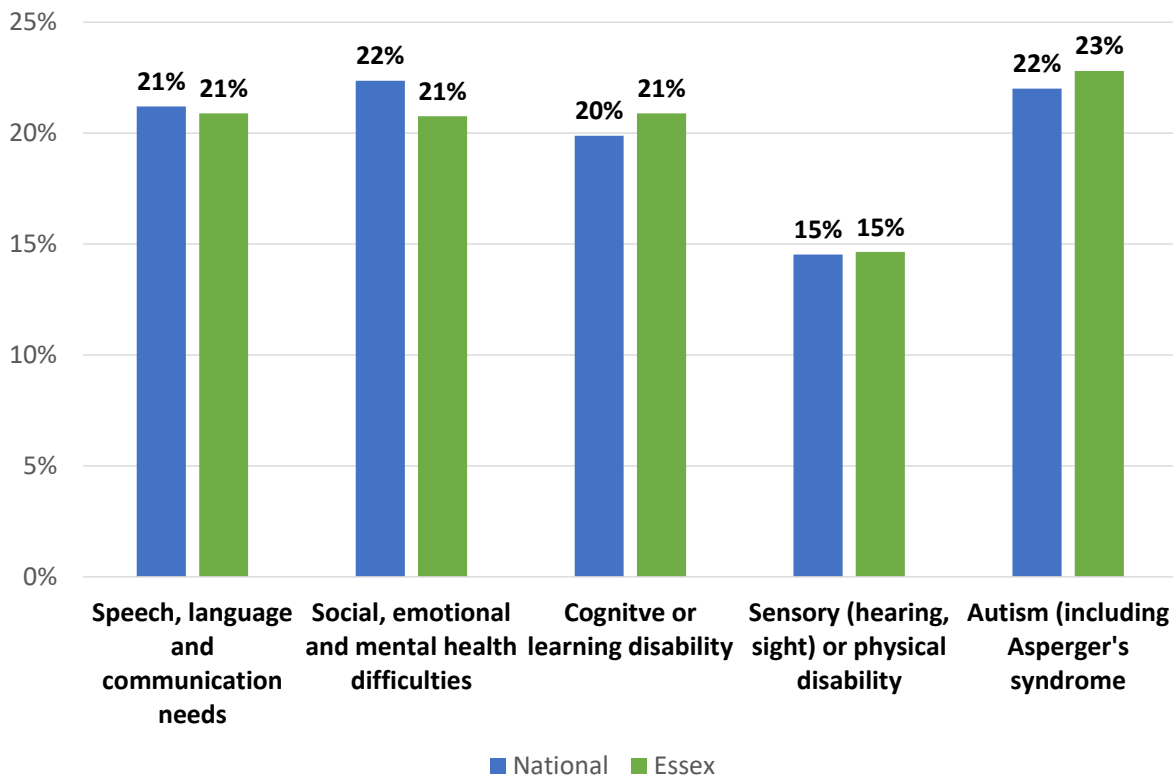


Figure 5. Main reasons why children need support

As figure 5 shows practitioners were asked the main reasons children that they worked with needed support. Responses from practitioners from Essex were broadly similar to practitioners reporting from other parts of the country.

What do practitioners feel about the support children receive, its planning and its impact.

The POET survey asked practitioners to answer several questions about their experience of the additional support that children and young people receive and what impact it has on the children, these included:

- Having choice and control over their support
- The right help and support to meet their needs
- Practitioners involved in their support work well together
- The quality of their support
- Flexibility to change support if needed
- Take part in school and learning
- Enjoy a good quality of life
- Think about and prepare for the future
- Be as fit and healthy as they can be
- Be part of their local community
- Enjoy relationships with family
- Have a positive transition

As Figure 6 shows, more than a half of practitioners said that the help and support children received was good in helping them take part in school and learning (56%), lower than respondents from other parts of England (63%). A half or more of practitioners from Essex said that the support children received was good in five further areas that we asked about; quality of support (69%), practitioners work well with colleagues from other professions (56%), enjoying time with friends and family (56%), quality of life (55%) and having a good transition (51%).

Around a quarter or more of practitioners from Essex said that the support children received was poor in two of the twelve areas that we asked about; choice and control of support (40%) and the right support to meet their needs (24%).

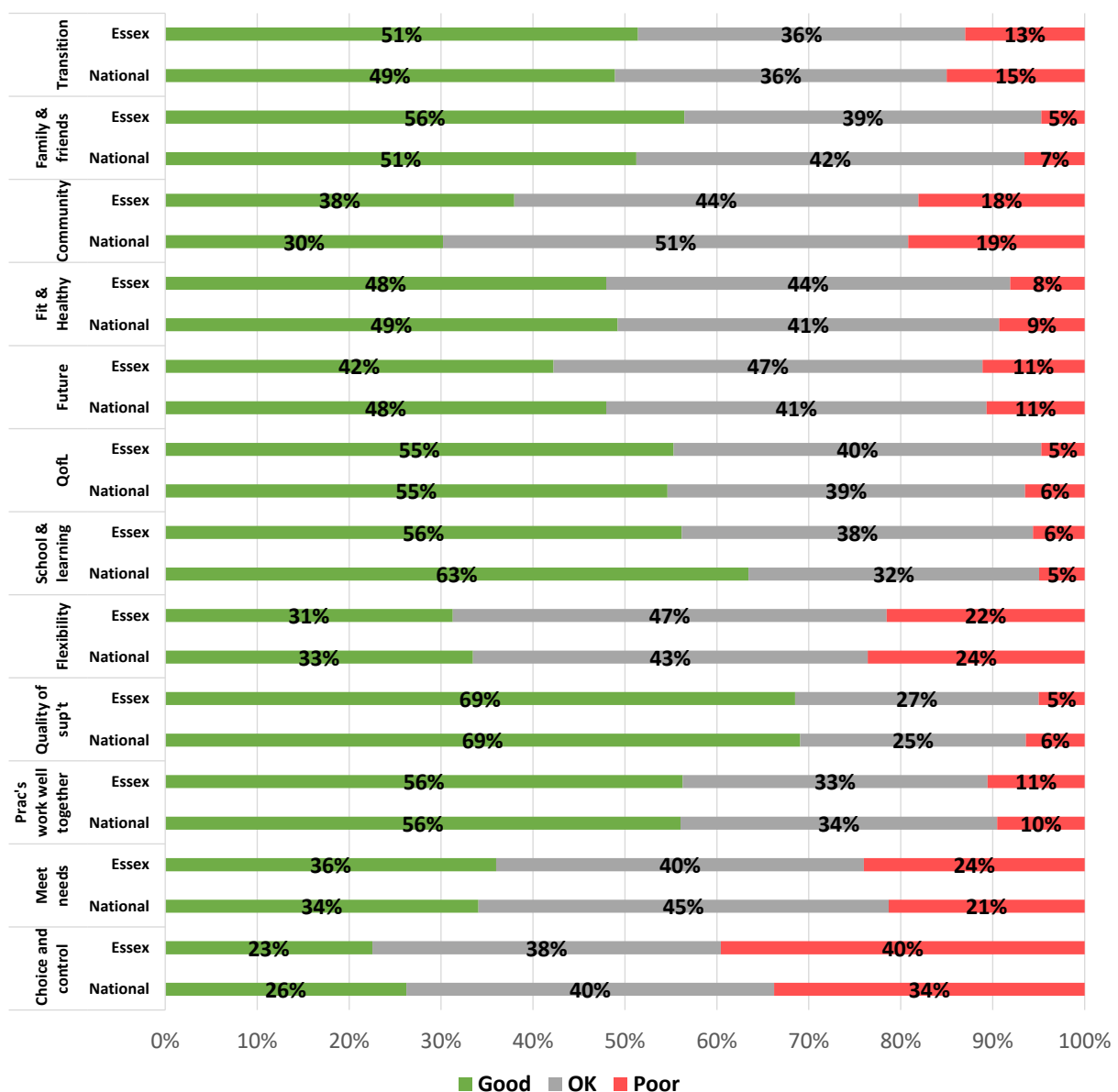


Figure 6. How practitioners feel about how the help and support children receive and the impact it has

Figures 7 and 8 show that just over a half of practitioners from Essex (52%) said they felt the views of children had been fully included when their support was planned, a slightly higher proportion to practitioners from other parts of England (49%). Well over three quarters of practitioners from Essex (85%) reported that they felt the views of parents had been included when their children’s support was planned, more than parents from other parts of England (79%).

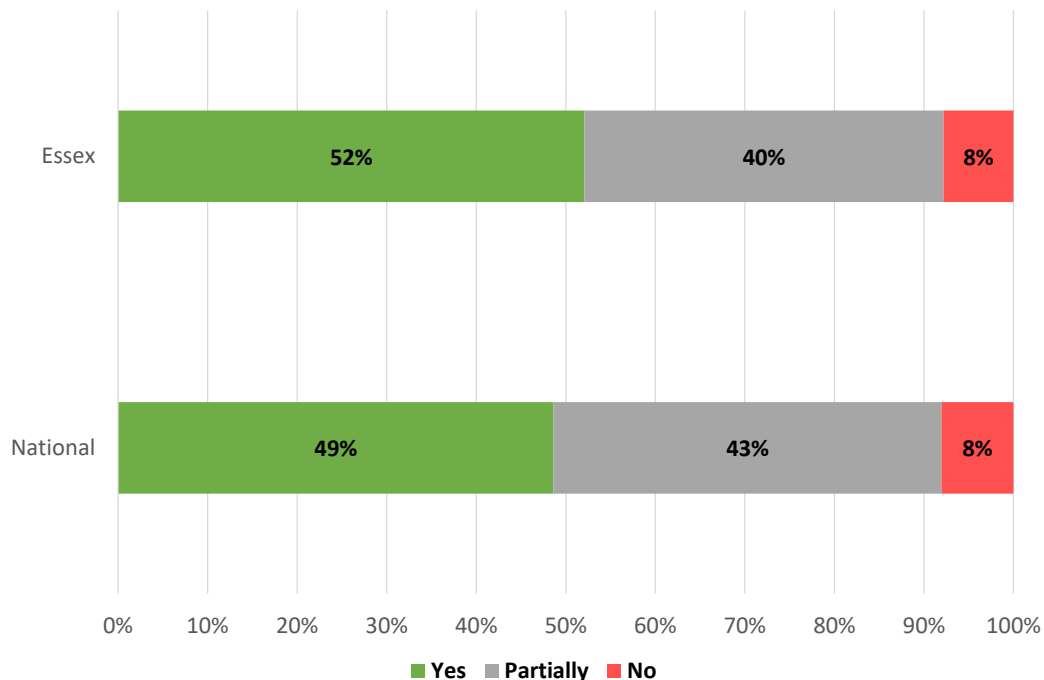


Figure 7. Were child’s views reflected

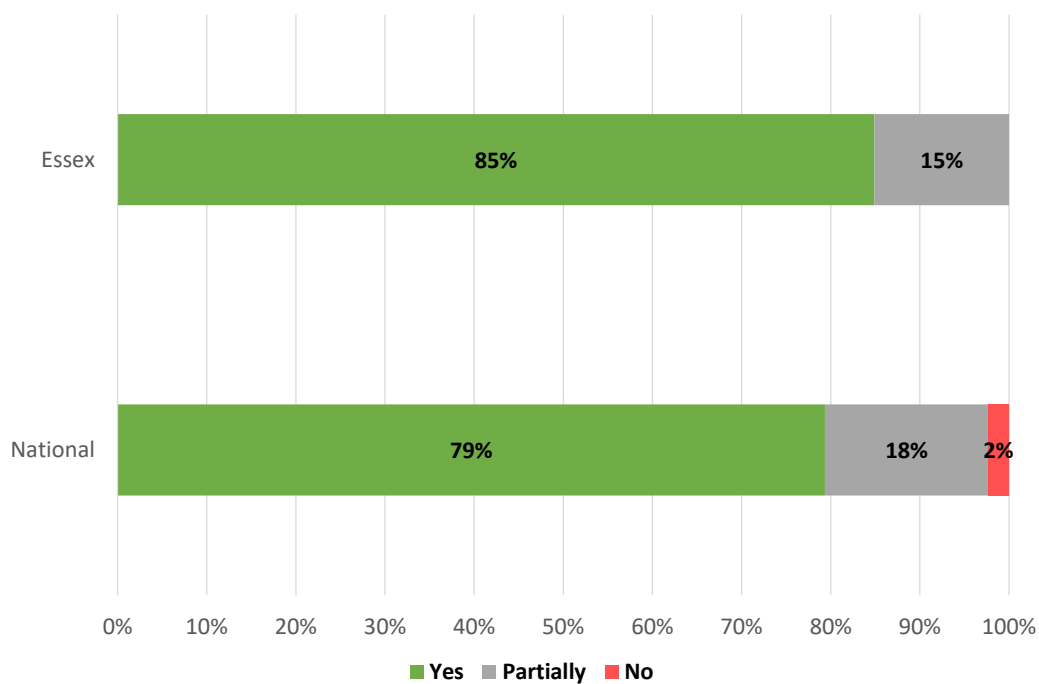


Figure 8. Were parent’s views reflected

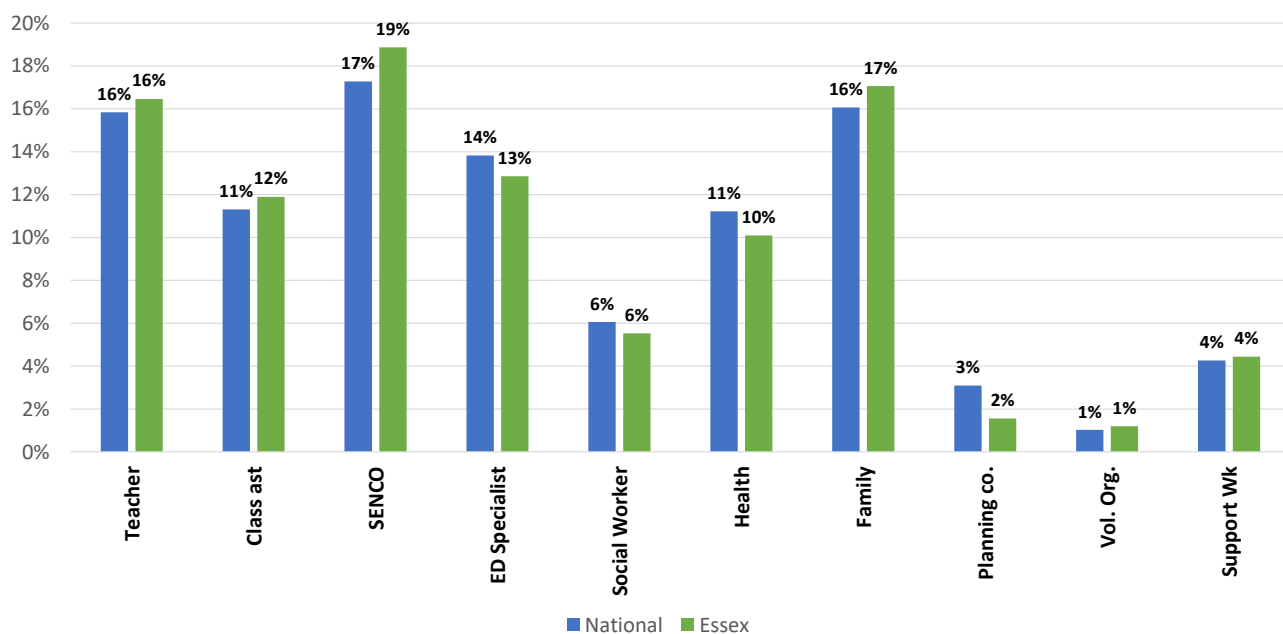


Figure 9. Who was involved in planning with children?

A wide range of people were actively involved in planning for the children and young people's additional support needs. Figure 9 shows that the range of people involved was broadly similar across the country.

What do practitioners feel about the outcomes achieved by children?

The POET survey asked practitioners several questions about the outcomes planned for children, we asked;

- Parents know what outcomes are in the support plan
- The outcomes reflect children's views
- Satisfied that children have made progress towards their outcomes
- Practitioners know what outcomes are in the support plan
- Plan reflects children's needs

Figure 10 shows that over a half of practitioners from Essex (55%) felt that children's support plans reflected their needs, compared to just under a half of practitioners from other parts of the country (47%). Just under three quarters of practitioners said that parents knew what outcomes were in their child's support plan (73%) whilst over a half of practitioners knew what outcomes was in the children's support plan (58%) a lower proportion compared to practitioners reporting from other area of the country; parents know outcomes (62%), practitioners know outcomes (46%).

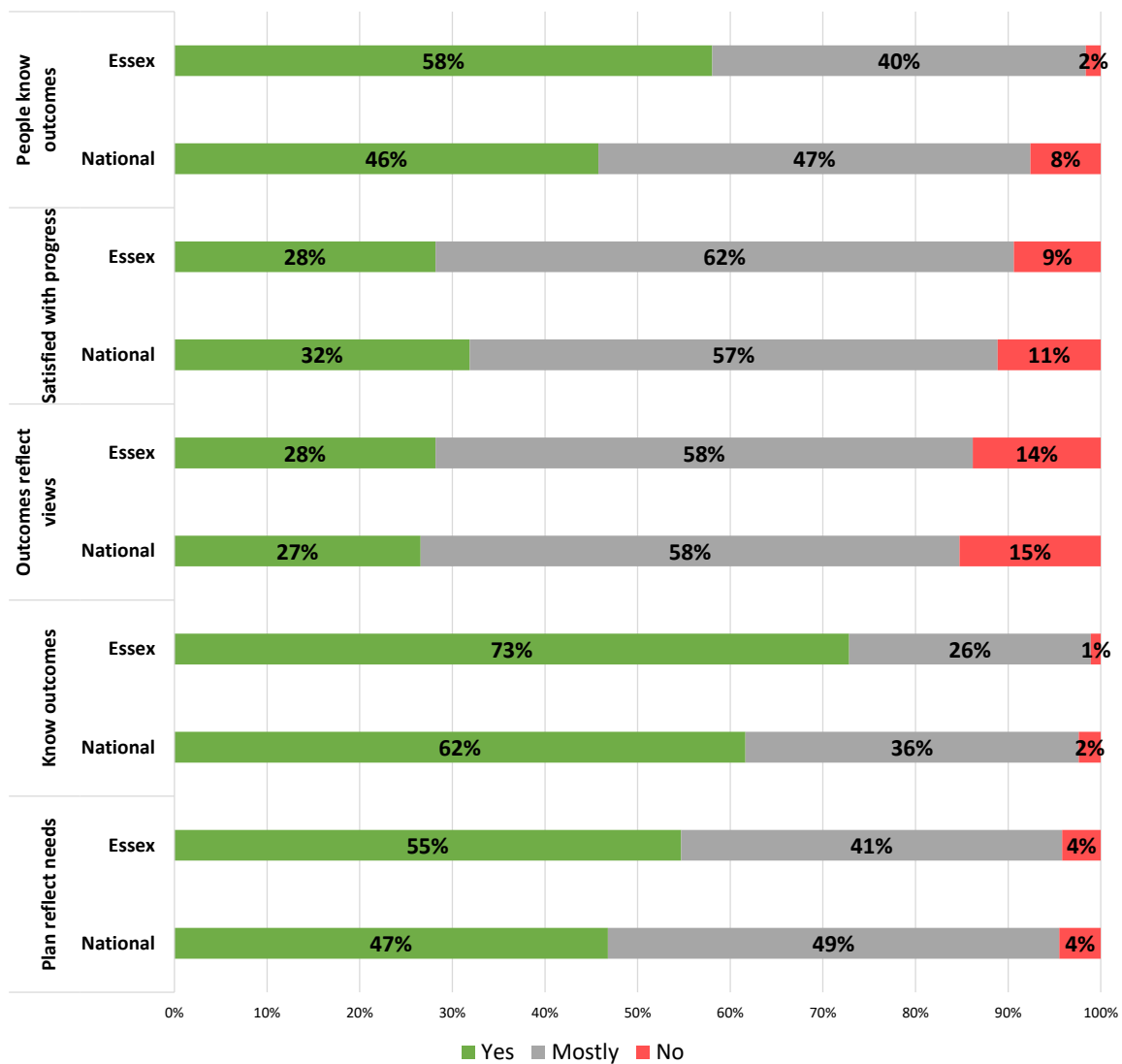


Figure 10. About children’s outcomes

Conclusion

Throughout this report local findings have been benchmarked against national data. This is intended to provide an indicative relative position. Care should be taken however when making precise direct comparisons. This is because responses varied greatly across local authorities, levels of satisfaction being spread across a wide range. The national figures here are averages of these ranges. It is not necessarily the case that where scores indicate a less or more positive impact than in other parts of England that this is due to the performance of the council.

Over recent years, In Control has published a number of surveys that found and reported a number of key process conditions that coincided with better or worse outcomes. Where local performance appears to be low, these process factors may be at play and provide a steer where local authorities are seeking to improve in an outcome domain.