

Herefordshire's and Worcestershire's All Age Autism Strategy

Priority 2

- Improving children and young people's access to education (early years to post 16) and supporting positive transitions into adulthood

Priority 1. Understanding and acceptance within society

Priority 2. Improving access to education and positive transitions

Priority 3. Supporting into employment

Priority 4. Tackling Health and Care Inequalities

Priority 5. Building the right support in the community

Priority 6. Support in criminal and youth justice systems

Priority 7. Keeping safe



Timeline this stage

Action Planning : August/September

Draft Strategy: October

Commence approvals: November

We need your help!

- Have a look at national messages (a few slides)
- Have a look at the headlines from the work already happening (a few slides)

In break out room:

- Have a look at the information from the survey
- Have a good discussion sharing your experience and thoughts
- As a group- agree 3-6 top priorities for the high level action plan

Improving children and young people's access to education and supporting positive transitions into adulthood- national strategy

• **CYP with autism to access the right support**

- Within school
- Outside of school
- Sufficient specialist education provision
- School staff confident about supporting CYP with autism
- Anti- bullying links policies, links with Mental Health Support Teams, staff training and Designated SMH leads

- Inclusive support enables CYP to reach their potential
- Fewer permanently excluded or suspended due to behaviour- preventing escalation
- More YP live well in their communities
- More YP find jobs /FE & HE & other opportunities
- Prevent crisis and MH inpatient admissions

What does “good” look like?

- Everyone who supports me remembers that every child or young person (CYP) with autism is unique, and their educational needs can vary widely.
- Fostering a culture of acceptance and understanding within the school or college community is vital for the overall success and well-being of children with autism.

So I need.....

- **Trained and Supportive Educators:** specialised training provided to teaching and support staff to effectively work with children on the autism spectrum. This includes understanding autism, recognizing individual communication and sensory needs, and implementing evidence-based teaching strategies
- **Communication and Social Skills Development:** a strong emphasis on enhancing communication and social skills. Speech therapy, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems, and social skills training that can help children with autism better connect with peers and navigate social situations.
- This means there is regular communication and collaboration between educators, parents, and therapists because it is essential to adapt and refine strategies as each CYP progresses.

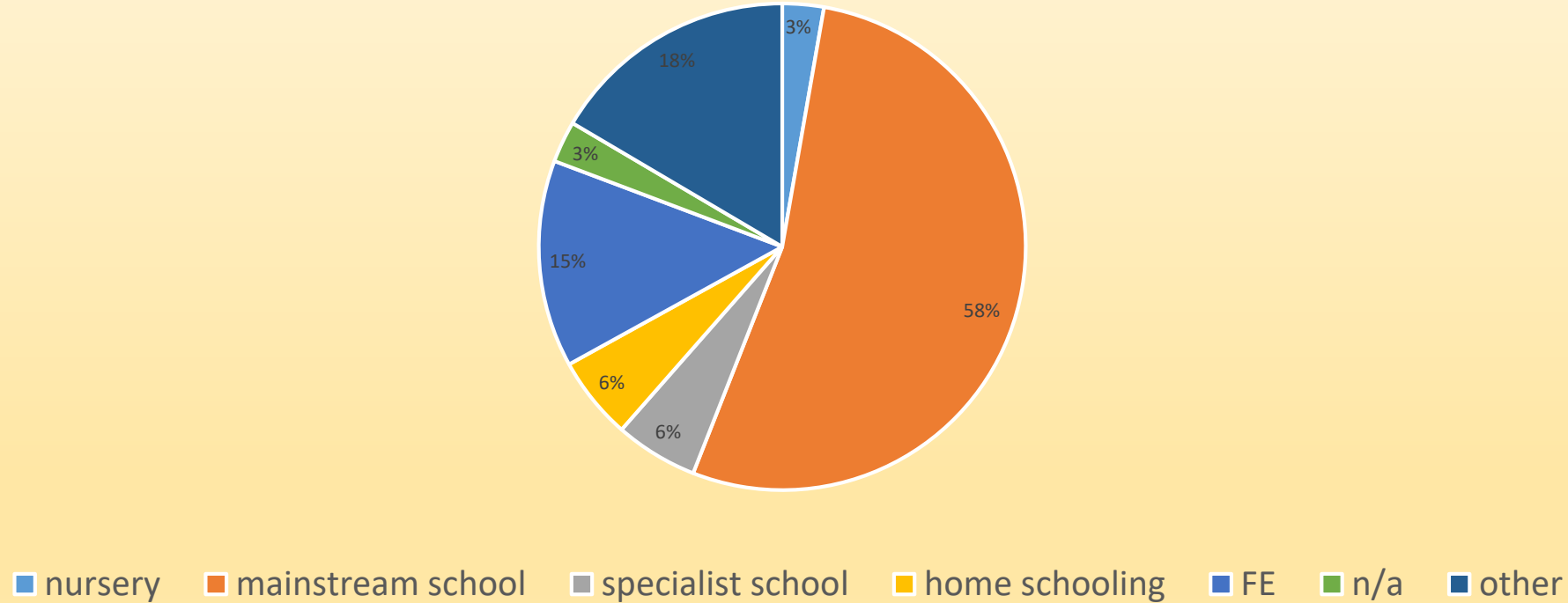
Priority support group headlines

- 4 new autism bases opened 9/23 (32 places)
- Early Years improvement work is a good practice model-
- Effective early identification and joined up working with settings and health
- links with paediatricians has improved referrals, links with range of teams has improved referral next steps
- Playplans and setting adjustments across sector
- Pilot post diagnostic group offer in Ross to be extended
- 50% schools took up AET training (below target- mixed reviews)
- Good training and development in college needs extending whole sector
- Early Help inclusive offer e.g. Fearless parenting not well enough communicated
- Low confidence in data capturing autism as main need
- Schools into community link project being scoped
- Work to improve employer confidence and employment opportunities is urgent

Survey- who responded?

- 67 specific responses to Priority 2 comments indicate includes some YP with autism diagnosis

Education setting for self/child Priority 2 survey responses (n=67)



Priority 2- Survey Results

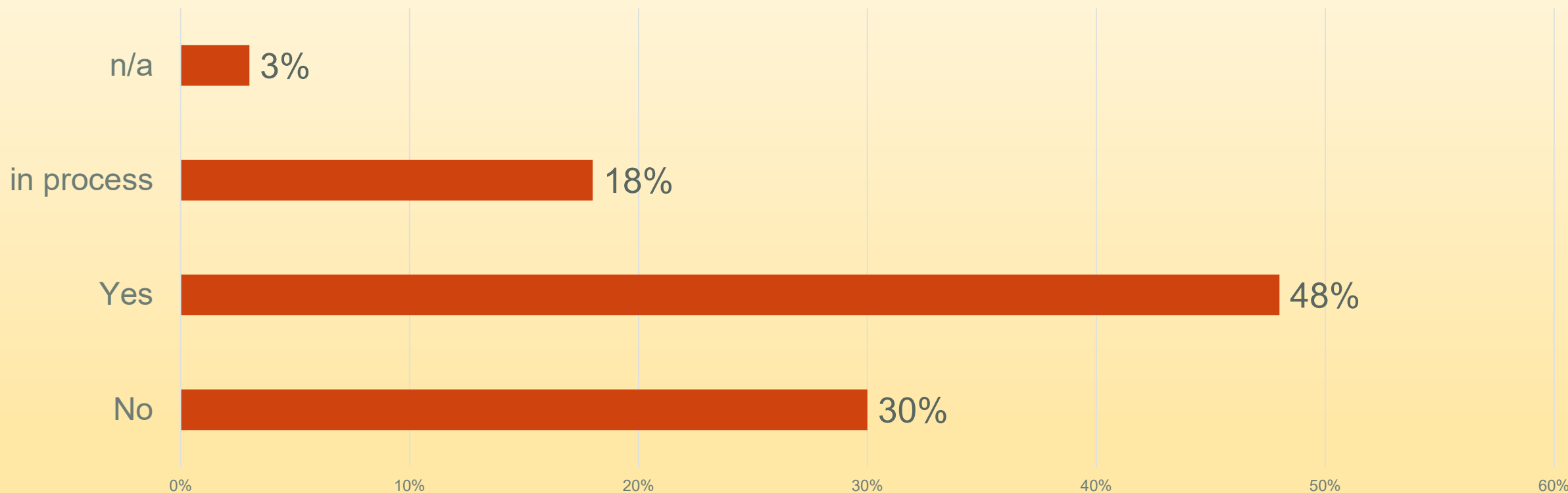
- Who responded
- Education and Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Participation in the community
- Access to vocational education
- Social Care assessment and support for transition

Timing	Agenda Item
10 mins	Welcome and introduction to the Autism Strategy, national messages and Priority 2
Parallel break out rooms 25 minutes	Education and EHCPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from questionnaire and task group • Top 3 key actions Social care assessment and support for transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from questionnaire and task group • Top 3 key actions
15 minutes	Facilitator feedback and comfort break
Parallel break out rooms 25 minutes	Participation in the Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from questionnaire • Top 3 key actions Access to Vocational Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from questionnaire • Top 3 key actions
10 minutes	Feedback and Next Steps
	Open session Ends

Education and EHCPs

Survey- EHCP section

Have you/your child an EHCP (n=35)





EHCP experience

- **66% reported barriers/challenges to EHCP process**
 - Delays and refusals
 - Lack of support and communication
 - Legal action route
 - Educational Settings and Support
 - Masked Autism and Misunderstanding
 - Parental Advocacy and Capacity



63% with EHCP reported got right support:

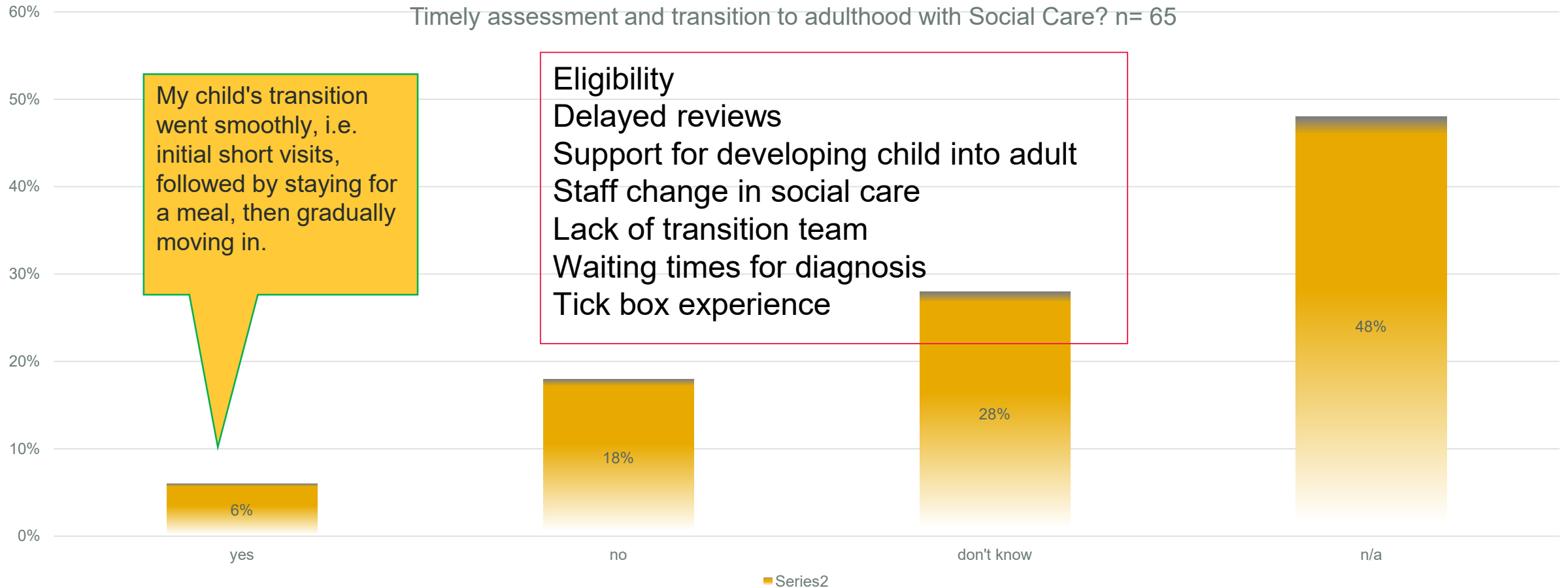
- TA support
- Tailored support (EHCP)
- Supportive school personnel
- External professional support
- Parents advocating/proactive
- Good transitions
- School environment and leadership
- Impact of legal and advocacy challenges
- Positive learning environments

31% reported barriers

- Comments from N=2 -variable experience- dependent on who is involved at time/ minimal access to education due to anxiety & additional funding not used flexibly

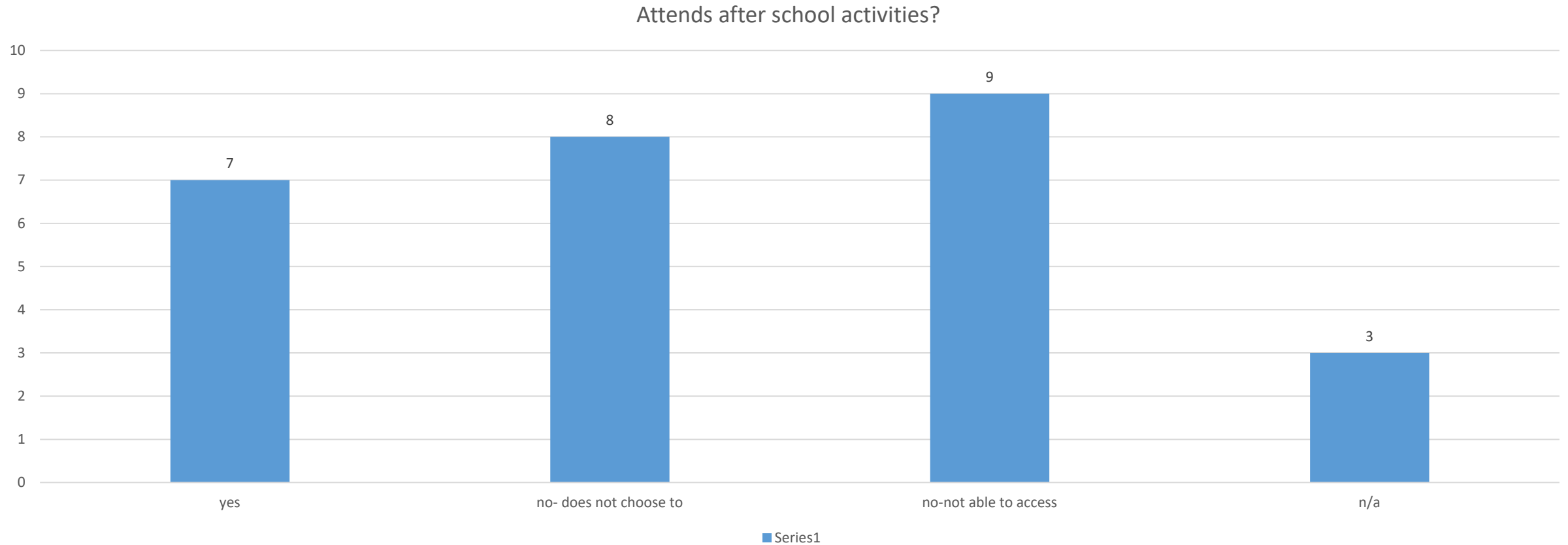
Social Care and Support for Transition

Timely social care assessment and transition into adulthood?



Participation in the Community

66% are not accessing after school activities n=27



Working Well

- My child attends karate and after discussing his needs with lead they've supporting his needs to make him comfortable to attend
- Being able to listen to music whilst doing art + sitting in a quieter room
- St John ambulance service he is a cadet and loves it there as everyone treats him kindly
- My child has had the same TA since year 7-9 and is planned to keep same TA till end of secondary school this consistency has really been beneficial
- he s allowed to join in with after school football, but has been excluded from teams.
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Barriers

- Not in area/nothing on offer
- The school can't run that many to begin with. He was able to do a taster science club but not football- I was told he was a safety risk, there wasn't enough staff so I'd have to come with him, which I couldn't do because I work full-time
- Overwhelmed and emotionally exhausted at end of school day
- Anxiety and cost
- No TA support available to after school clubs which means he cannot attend
- Timings. Lack of inclusion for older young people with higher functioning Autism who live with a hidden disability and therefore present as neurologically typical until triggered
- Being excluded from clubs, clubs are not set up to meet his needs and so all the clubs we have tried have ended unsuccessfully



Improvements to help better participation in the community (1) (n=20)

- Suggestions highlight the importance inclusivity, better understanding and awareness, tailored support/accommodation and opportunities. More choice and adaptable opportunities to take part was a theme throughout.
- **Diverse Access and Understanding:**
 - Recognizing that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach and accommodating various needs.
 - Adapting the environment to support individuals with autism rather than expecting them to fit into the existing framework.
- **Community Focus:**
 - Addressing the current emphasis on tourism and the elderly population, and seeking to expand services for other demographics.
 - Need for more amenities, play features, and activities catering to young people.
- **Support Services:**
 - Availability of support staff to help children with special educational needs (SEN) participate in clubs and activities.
 - Challenges of finding suitable childcare options during school holidays.



Improvements to help better participation in the community? (2) (n=20)

- **School Environment:**
 - Acknowledging the fatigue experienced by children with autism after a demanding school day.
 - Creating low-demand environments for recovery.
- **Information and Awareness:**
 - Providing better information about available resources and support.
 - Increasing awareness and knowledge about autism within the general public.
- **Transportation:**
 - Need for autism-friendly public transport options.
- **Neurodiverse Activities:**
 - Increasing the availability of activities designed to accommodate neurodiversity, especially closer to home.
- **Social Inclusion:**
 - Promoting inclusion, understanding, and support- one size does not fit all
 - Designating "Autism Champions" who can advocate for understanding and accommodations.
- **Support Groups:**
 - Enhancing assistance within support groups like the Geek Retreat.
 - Recognizing the value of sibling support and providing appropriate resources.
- **Educational Settings:**
 - Establishing a comprehensive understanding of autism within schools and how to support students effectively.
- **Society-wide Awareness:**
 - Encouraging wider societal acceptance and welcome for individuals with autism.
- **Financial Considerations:**
 - Making training and support more affordable.
 - Ensuring that SEN funding is used appropriately for activities and support.
- **Inclusive Clubs and Activities:**
 - Providing SEN training for club providers to facilitate acceptance of autistic children.
 - Creating clubs and activities specifically designed for children with SEN.
- **Daily Routines and Toileting:**
 - Lack of support for establishing helpful routines and addressing toileting needs.

Access to vocational education