



At the Collective Get Together 2025, the white paper session reaffirmed the importance of centring young people's voices in shaping policy and practice. It was beneficial to see that the ideas and priorities previously shared by young people with SEND remain relevant and will continue to guide development work. One key priority highlighted was the need for improved training for education staff to better understand and support young people's diverse needs.

297 young people with SEND took part in a consultation where they identified their top priorities for change in the SEND System; Better SEND training for teachers and SENDCO's was in the top 3!

In response, Kids has taken proactive steps to ensure that the insights and time generously shared by young people are not only acknowledged but actively used to underpin meaningful change. Recognising the value of both qualitative and quantitative data, a survey was developed to gather robust statistical evidence around young people's experiences of support and understanding within educational settings. This complements the rich anecdotal data already collected and strengthens the case for targeted improvements.

Kids remain committed to being responsive to the voices of young people with SEND, ensuring their contributions are respected, valued, and central to influencing policy and practice.

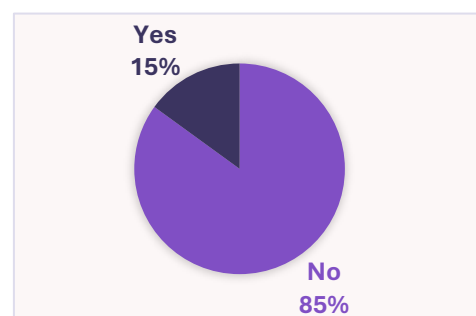
Questions and results are as follows; with 75 young people taking part.

How old are you? 8-25 years, mean age 17.64 years

Where were you educated¹

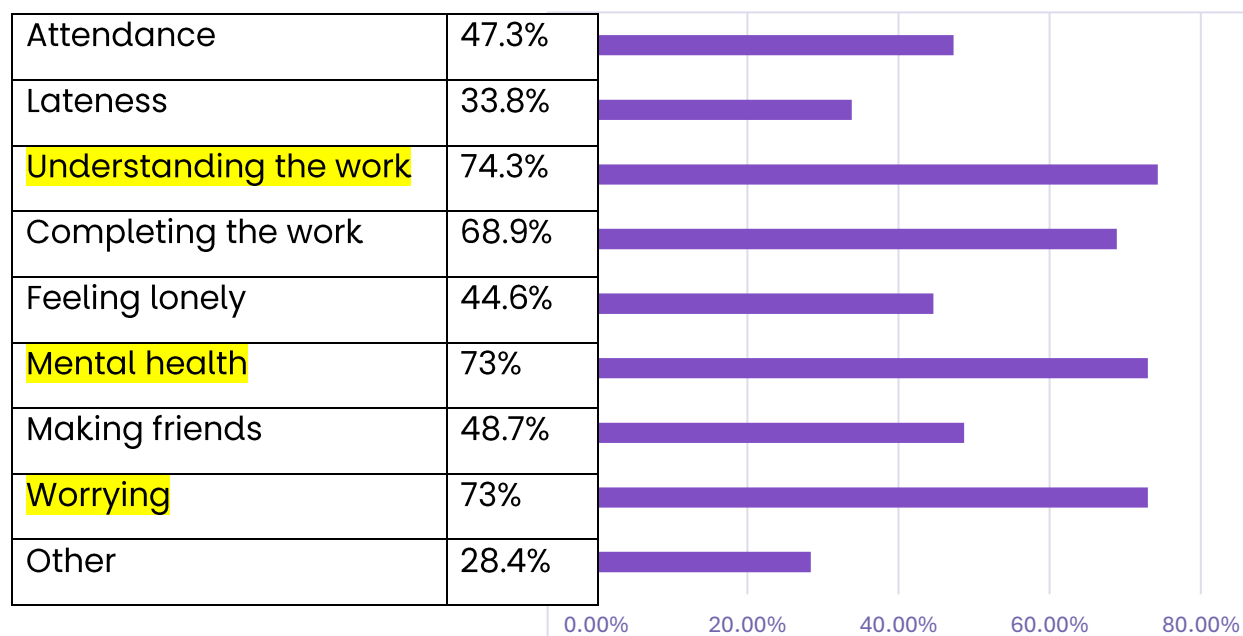
Mainstream	76%
Special	17.3%
Resource unit at mainstream	4%
Home	1.3%
Other	1.3%

Do you think staff in education (nursery/ primary/ secondary schools and colleges/ further education) had enough training on special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to help them choose the best ways to speak to you and help you learn?

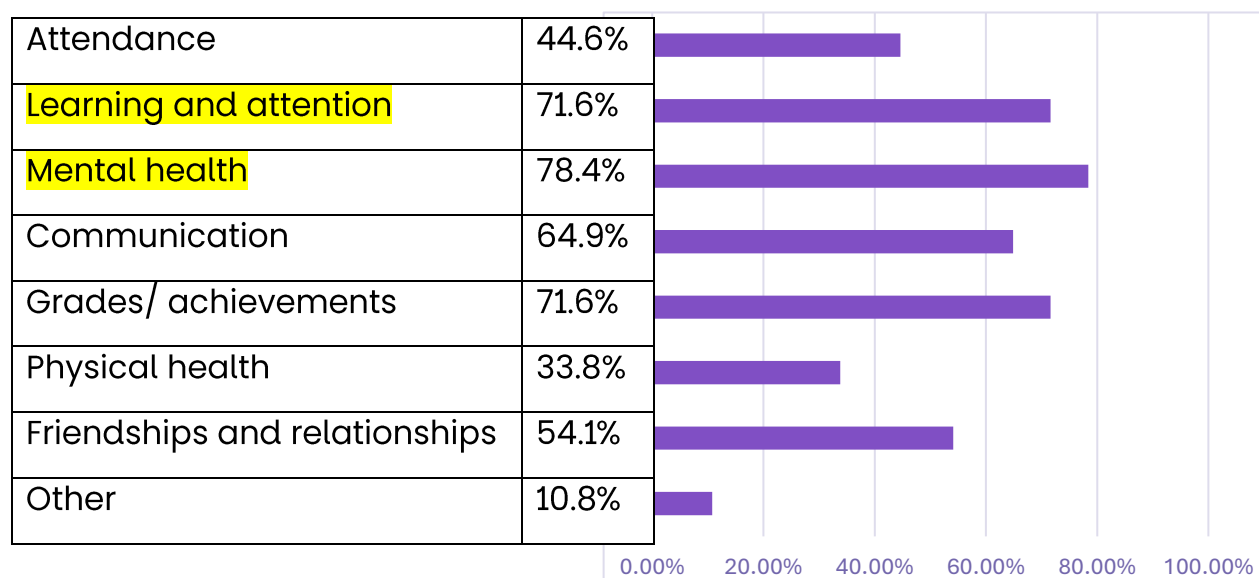


¹ Young people were asked that if they attended mainstream at any point, to choose that option and think about their time in mainstream.

Did staff member's lack of understanding / training in SEND impact you in any of the following areas: (choose all that apply)



If you had support earlier, do you think it would have improved your: (choose all that apply)



A further note was added around keeping safe and talking to a trusted adult if any of the questions had made YP feel upset or worried. It is vital that this is included to ensure we are safeguarding the wellbeing of young people who may have education related trauma.



The Power Hour session was held on 15th September and was attended by 9 young people, representing 6 regions from across England.

During the session young people reviewed a preliminary set of data, saying that they were unsurprised by the results. The trends from the preliminary data used directly reflected the trends from the final data.

“There’s a clear lack of support and understanding from school staff, making it harder for young people to reach their full potential”

“Earlier support could have made a real difference”

We then thought about the impact better training and understanding from staff in education could have;

See less of	See more of
Barriers	Being there for students
Postcode lottery	Respectful (and accountability fir that)
Nothing happening	Inclusive
Judging people by disability	Feeling like I fit
Needing reports and official diagnosis	Funding and infrastructure
Authority	Co-produced by people with lived experience
Anxiety	Genuine caring
Disregarding YP or families’ views	Trying to help
Patronizing	Achieving potential
Unemployment	Feeling successful and proud
Early deaths	Finding who you are
Mental health difficulties	Finding how you work best
School exclusions	New understanding of goals and success
All about grades	People there to learn and improve
Being all about UCAS	Meeting your needs
Getting told off	Aware of diversity and culture

Young people would like to have opportunity to feed into the White Paper, and would like the opportunity to be part of co-producing improved training on SEND for all staff in education settings.