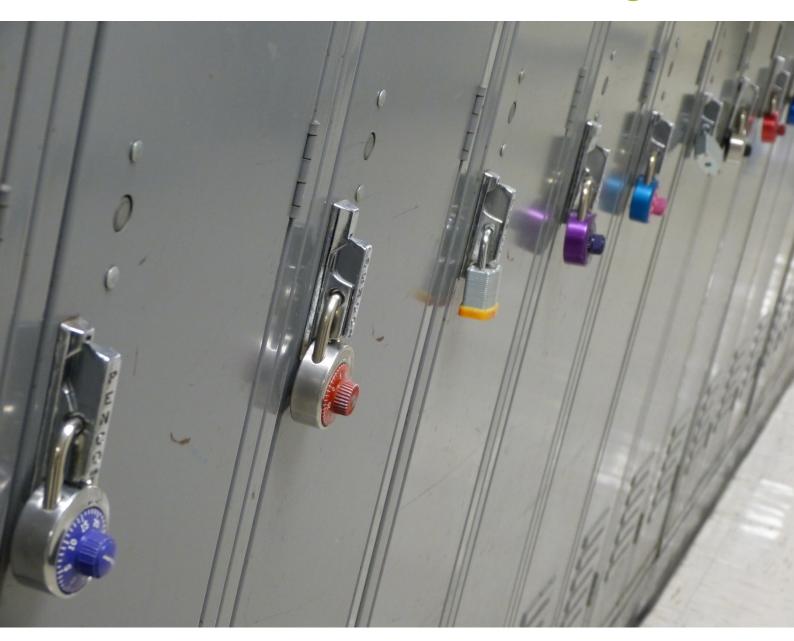
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN UK SCHOOLS SURVEY 2019





National Leaders in Social, Emotional and Mental Health



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SUMMARY

The 2019 Survey was conducted across schools across the UK. Key points from the survey results were:

- About 40% of schools do not have a named lead for Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- Of those that do, the head is the named lead in nearly a fifth of schools.
- Special Educational Needs Coordinators have been named in a further 18% of responses.
- Only a quarter of schools have a Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, and only a third have a Policy.
- 4 in 10 schools feel staff are unable to identify the underlying causes of behaviour difficulties.
- 56.9% of schools do not feel confident in meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of their pupils.
- 7 in 10 schools identify they are unable to fully meet the needs of pupils with identified social, emotional and mental health needs. This includes 50% of Alternative Provision and Specialist settings in the survey.
- 65.9% of schools do not feel confident in meeting the mental health needs of their staff team.
- 70% of schools reported that both financial and time constraints were hindering their ability to improve their mental health provision.
- 40% reported staffing issues affected their ability and 33% identified a training need for their staff.
- Over 10% of leaders identified their own need for training was holding their school back.



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the inaugural report of the Mental Health and Wellbeing in UK Schools.

The 21st Century brings a unique set of challenges to leaders in our education system. Years of funding reforms, austerity and an increasing complexity of needs have combined to cause a minefield of barriers for them to overcome in order to create a mental health friendly ethos for their pupils.

In addition, staff have more of an expectation that their own mental health needs will be met in the workplace. This causes an additional level of stress for a school leader already under pressure to perform and meet the needs of their pupils.

In all of this, it is easy to forget the mental health needs of the school leader. Often overlooked in the drive for results, one is left with a feeling of isolation at times.

With this report, we aim to monitor the countrywide situation on an annual basis. In this first report we look at the needs of the staff and the pupils, exploring what school leaders identify as the barriers to effective mental health provision in their school.

Richard Curtis Author

April 2019



LEADERSHIP

Over 4 in 10 schools do not have a named Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead. Only 56% of primaries and 59% of secondary schools responding to the survey identify they have an identified individual. Most of these roles are filled by people undertaking the function in addition to their existing role – these are shown in Table 1.

"No, but it's probably me!" - Headteacher's response

Table 1 Roles fulfilling the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead

Role	%
Head/Principal/CEO	18.6%
Named role or middle leader	18.6%
SENDCO/Pastoral Lead/Inclusion Manager/Nurture Manager	17.9%
Deputy/Head of School/Senior Leader	15.7%
PSHE Lead	3.6%
Support staff	5.0%
Clinical staff member	2.1%
Not stated	18.6%

The role being fulfilled by the strategic lead of the school (Head or similar) varied from 14.1% in England, to 25% in Northern Ireland, 31.8% in Scotland and 15.8% in Wales. Whilst this may be linked to low staff numbers in small schools, the lack of independence of this role could potentially cause a conflict of interest between meeting the mental health needs of an individual and the whole-school operational needs.

"We are only a small school of 87 pupils and as the Head teacher and SENCO in school I lead on this aspect." Scotland returned the lowest percentage for having this as a dedicated role (9.1%), with Wales the highest at 34.2%. There is evidence that the named individual is doing so as a figurehead:

"Nominally Deputy Headteacher but all the SLT are involved."

Only 32.5% of all schools in the UK have a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and almost three-quarters of schools (73.2%) do not have an Action Plan for addressing deficits in the management of Mental Health and Wellbeing. This varies from 37.4% of responding schools in England, down to 16.3% in Scotland.

Table 2 Schools with a Social, Emotional, Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

	Yes (%)	No (%)	In development (%)
Total	26.8%	45.5%	27.6%
England	31.8%	44.9%	23.4%
Northern Ireland	19.5%	46.3%	34.1%
Scotland	27.9%	46.5%	25.6%
Wales	21.8%	45.5%	32.7%





STAFF CONFIDENCE

Critical to the support for mental health is the confidence of staff to see beyond the behaviours they observe, to the underlying emotional experience or difficulty.

"Every behaviour is a means of communicating something."

When asked what percentage of staff would see behaviour problems as a symptom of an underlying need, almost 40% of those completing the survey, reported that less than 80% of their staff would understand these needs. This ranged from 33% in Wales to 44% in Scotland.

Many respondents recognised there could be a number of reasons for this:

"Staff have little time to deal with these issues so they don't think about the reasons behind the behaviour."

"Many would be sympathetic but with hard core behaviour problems a small amount of staff still take issues personally."

"We do lots of CPD but inexperienced staff may not be confident."

"The newer staff to the profession are a lot better at this."

"Very limited number of behaviour incidents."



#TOOt

Figure 1 The percentage of staff would see behaviour difficulties as an expression of social, emotional or mental health problems

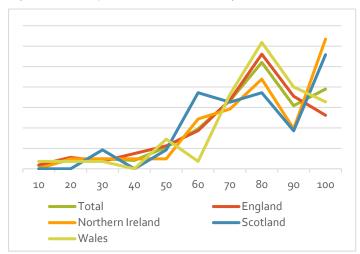


Figure 2 Overall concerns about staff confidence

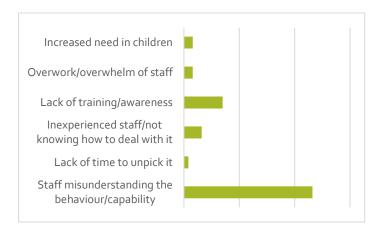


Table 3 Barriers to helping staff to understand pupil's needs

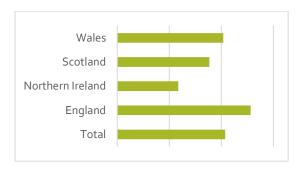
	Total	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Total % of concerns	18.7%	19.6%	17.1%	20.9%	16.4%
Staff misunderstanding the behaviour/capability	11.6%	11.2%	7.3%	15.1%	12.7%
Lack of training/awareness	3.5%	4.7%	4.9%	1.2%	1.8%
Inexperienced staff/not knowing how to deal with it	1.6%	1.9%	2.4%	2.3%	0.0%
Overwork/overwhelm of staff	0.8%	0.9%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Increased need in children	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	1.8%
Lack of time to unpick it	0.4%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Almost 57% of the schools responding do not feel confident meeting the needs of their pupils, they scored their ability to meet the social, emotional and mental health needs of their pupils as less than 8 out of 10.

English schools reported feeling the most confident, with Northern Irish schools scoring the lowest average.

Figure 3 Average score of confidence in meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils.



When asked specifically about pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, these figures varied significantly, with over 70% of schools in the UK identifying they felt unable to meet the needs of this cohort of pupils. 50% of both Alternative Provisions and Special Schools responding felt unable to fully meet the needs of their pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

"We have not been trained for this at all.
At best we are given strategies to
implement which is unmanageable, since
staff cannot implement individual
programmes of work."

Nearly a quarter of responding schools expressed a concern in meeting the needs of their pupils. The largest need related to financial or human resources. These are summarised in Table 6.

"However only because I earn £39k as an advisor and pump this into send. Without this we'd have no money available."

Table 4 Ability to meet the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Partially (%)
Total	28.5%	2.8%	68.7%
England	37.4%	0.0%	62.6%
Northern Ireland	22.0%	7.3%	70.7%
Scotland	16.3%	4.7%	79.1%
Wales	25.5%	3.6%	70.9%

Table 5 Ability to meet the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs according to education stage

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Partially (%)
Early Years	80.0%	0%	20.0%
Primary	26.6%	2.9%	70.5%
Secondary	12.8%	5.1%	82.1%
Further or Higher Education	66.7%	0%	33.3%
Alternative Provision	50.0%	o%	50.0%
Special School	50.0%	0%	50.0%

Table 6 Concerns about meeting the needs of your pupils

	Total	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Total number of concerns	24.0%	22.4%	24.4%	23.3%	27.3%
Budget/ staffing level	6.5%	7.0%	4.9%	5.8%	7.3%
Access or reduction in services/increased threshold	5.7%	4.7%	4.9%	7.0%	7.3%
Increased needs	5.1%	2.3%	6.1%	9.3%	6.4%
Training	1.8%	0.9%	3.7%	1.2%	2.7%
Lack of understanding	1.6%	2.8%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Time	1.6%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
Home life	1.2%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
Support for staff	0.4%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%

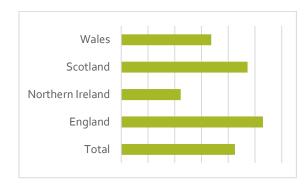


MEETING STAFF'S NEEDS

Schools reported less confidence in being able to meet the social, emotional and mental health needs of their staff. 66% of schools scored their confidence level at meeting the needs of their staff as lower than 8 out of 10. On average schools scored this as 6.7 out of 10, with Northern Ireland scoring the lowest at 6.2.

"People in society have more and more issues which need meeting."

Figure 4 Average confidence in meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of staff



Some schools were very clear on how the current climate was contributing to these difficulties:

"We are very aware of the SEMH needs of our staff, however due to financial constraints, have had to reduce counselling service and non-contact time which impacts on staff well-being significantly."

"They face difficult issues every day and with shrinking budgets and more pressure it feels impossible to meet all of their needs."

As well as the role of the leader:

"Would really appreciate further training and guidance in this regard. I am very aware of staff having health issues, family difficulties, worries, concerns, depression and anxiety and feel we need more support in meeting my staff's needs."

"More support needed for leaders in supporting staff members - which itself is stressful."



Table 7 Barriers to meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of staff

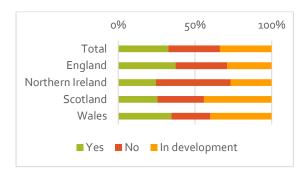
	Total	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Total concerns	17.9%	18.7%	19.5%	11.6%	20.0%
Academic pressures/ workload	6.3%	7.5%	1.2%	5.8%	8.2%
Budget/staffing level	3.0%	2.8%	4.9%	2.3%	2.7%
Increased needs of staff	1.6%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
Increased needs of children	1.4%	0.0%	2.4%	1.2%	3.6%
Not knowing/lack of external services	1.2%	0.9%	2.4%	0.0%	1.8%
Lack of understanding	1.2%	1.9%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Lack of training in supporting staff	1.2%	0.0%	2.4%	2.3%	1.8%
Reluctance to open up	0.8%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Industrial action	0.6%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%



WHOLE-SCHOOL NEEDS

Approximately a third of responding schools have a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy to address their whole-school needs (32.5%), with an equal divide of the reminder, to those without a policy and those developing one.

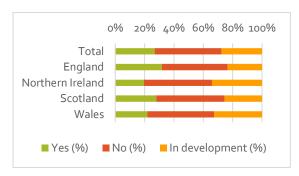
Figure 5 Schools with a policy



Due to the ever-changing needs of the pupil and staff population, it is advisable to have a working action plan to review and address key areas. This is particularly important during the early stages of establishing the environment required by staff and pupils.

However, the figures reported in this survey show that there is a 5.7% drop between the number of schools with a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and those with an Action Plan, with a considerable 45.5% not having one at all.

Figure 6 Schools with an action plan



When it comes to developing a mental health friendly school, respondents reported a number of barriers to implementing good practice, with 70% identifying budget and time as the chief barriers.

11.4% of leaders identified that their own knowledge was a barrier to implementation.

Table 8 Concerns with implementing good practice

	Total	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Budget	71.1%	66.4%	78.0%	67.4%	78.2%
Time	69.9%	68.2%	65.9%	76.7%	70.9%
Staff Turnover/Staffing	40.7%	37.4%	36.6%	65.1%	30.9%
Staff knowledge & skills/training	32.9%	33.6%	36.6%	34.9%	27.3%
Own knowledge	11.4%	8.4%	22.0%	4.7%	14.5%
External agencies/local authority	2.8%	2.8%	2.4%	0.0%	5.5%
Industrial action	0.8%	0.0%	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Parent expectations	0.8%	0.9%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%



Table 9 Concerns by education phase

	Early Years (%)	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Further or Higher (%)	Alternative Provision (%)	Special (%)
Budget	100	69.9	74.4	66.7	100	66.7
Time	40.0	69.4	79.5	100	100	58.3
Staff Turnover/ Staffing	20.0	39.9	51.3	0.0	0.0	41.7
Staff knowledge & skills/training	40.0	30.6	35.9	33.3	0.0	45.8
Own knowledge	0.0	12.7	15.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
External agencies/local authority	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Industrial action	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parent expectations	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0



CONFIDENCE AREAS OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Respondents were asked to rate their confidence in the eight strategic areas of mental health leadership in schools.

This self-rating scored very highly in comparison to earlier questions as the respondent was asked to score their own confidence.

Three areas stand out as needing investment, where the most common answers were not the most confident level:

- Student Voice,
- Staff Development,
- Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact.

Figure 7 Leadership

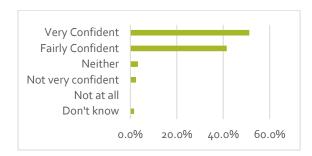


Figure 8 Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

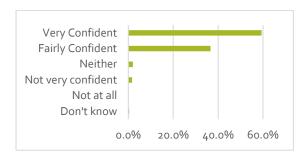


Figure 9 Student Voice

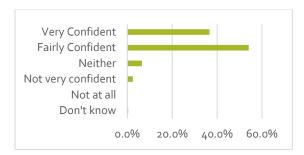


Figure 10 Staff Development

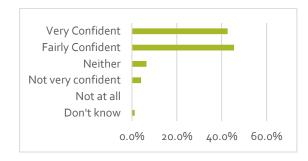


Figure 11 Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact

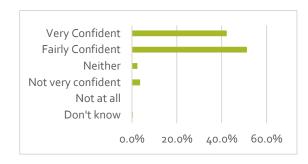


Figure 12 Working with Parents/Carers

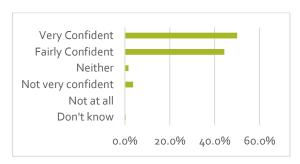


Figure 13 Use of external professionals/other agencies

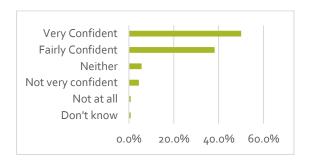
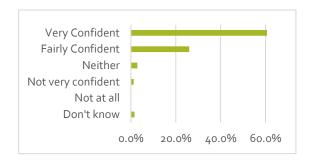


Figure 14 Ethos and environment





ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

For a school leader in the current climate are facing a unique set of challenges: austerity and cuts, combined with increasing complex mental health needs of both their pupils and staff. Whilst there is training available on mental health awareness, courses for supporting children, or staff, in crisis, nothing exists for developing the skills of the leader.

The National Leaders in Social, Emotional and Mental Health Programme was developed to plug this gap. Aimed, not at those delivering mental health and wellbeing interventions, but those at strategic leadership. Those responsible for ensuring the mechanisms are in place to ensure effective mental health and wellbeing provision is in place.

The programme is delivered to headteachers, senior leaders and local authority staff across the course of a year, either in-person or online. It is delivered by The Root Of It, a team of inclusion experts devoted to helping people get to the root of the difficulty or selected partners on a Train the Trainer approach.



TABLES OF RESULTS

80% has been taken as acceptable confidence level throughout this report.

Table 10 How confident are you about your school meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of your pupils?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Total	0.4%	0.8%	3.3%	3.7%	8.1%	13.4%	27.2%	27.2%	11.0%	4.9%
England	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	2.8%	9.3%	13.1%	28.0%	26.2%	13.1%	6.5%
Northern Ireland	0.0%	4.9%	2.4%	7.3%	4.9%	17.1%	26.8%	31.7%	4.9%	0.0%
Scotland	2.3%	0.0%	7.0%	2.3%	4.7%	9.3%	34.9%	27.9%	7.0%	4.7%
Wales	0.0%	0.0%	5.5%	3.6%	10.9%	14.5%	20.0%	25.5%	14.5%	5.5%

Table 11 How confident are you about your school meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of your staff?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Total	0.4%	1.6%	5.3%	4.9%	11.0%	17.1%	25.6%	19.9%	12.2%	2.0%
England	0.0%	0.9%	2.8%	5.6%	8.4%	15.9%	31.8%	19.6%	13.1%	1.9%
Northern Ireland	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%	4.9%	19.5%	19.5%	22.0%	14.6%	7.3%	2.4%
Scotland	2.3%	0.0%	2.3%	4.7%	11.6%	16.3%	25.6%	23.3%	14.0%	0.0%
Wales	0.0%	5.5%	9.1%	3.6%	9.1%	18.2%	16.4%	21.8%	12.7%	3.6%

Table 12 What percentage of staff would see behaviour difficulties as an expression of social, emotional or mental health problems?

	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Total	0.8%	2.0%	2.4%	2.0%	5.3%	9.8%	16.7%	26.0%	15.4%	19.5%
England	0.9%	2.8%	1.9%	3.7%	5.6%	9.3%	16.8%	28.0%	17.8%	13.1%
Northern Ireland	0.0%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	12.2%	14.6%	22.0%	9.8%	31.7%
Scotland	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	0.0%	4.7%	18.6%	16.3%	18.6%	9.3%	27.9%
Wales	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	0.0%	7.3%	1.8%	18.2%	30.9%	20.0%	16.4%



Table 13 UK-wide responses to confidence in priority areas

Priority area	Don't know	Not at all	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly Confident	Very Confident
Leadership and Management	1.6%	0.0%	2.4%	3.3%	41.5%	51.2%
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	0.4%	0.0%	1.6%	2.0%	36.6%	59.3%
Student Voice	0.4%	0.0%	2.4%	6.5%	54.1%	36.6%
Staff Development	1.2%	0.0%	4.1%	6.5%	45.5%	42.7%
Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact	0.4%	0.0%	3.7%	2.4%	51.2%	42.3%
Working with Parents/Carers	0.4%	0.0%	3.7%	1.6%	44.3%	50.0%
Use of external professionals/other agencies	0.8%	0.8%	4.5%	5.7%	38.2%	50.0%
Ethos and environment	1.6%	0.0%	1.2%	2.8%	26.0%	68.3%

Table 14 England responses to confidence in priority areas

Priority area	Don't know	Not at all	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly Confident	Very Confident
Leadership and Management	2.8%	0.0%	3.7%	5.6%	32.7%	55.1%
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	40.2%	56.1%
Student Voice	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	6.5%	58.9%	33.6%
Staff Development	0.9%	0.0%	4.7%	6.5%	43.9%	43.9%
Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.9%	54.2%	42.1%
Working with Parents/Carers	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.9%	44.9%	51.4%
Use of external professionals/other agencies	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	3.7%	37.4%	55.1%
Ethos and environment	0.9%	0.0%	1.9%	0.9%	32.7%	63.6%



Table 15 Northern Ireland responses to confidence in priority areas

Priority area	Don't know	Not at all	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly Confident	Very Confident
Leadership and Management	0.0%	2.4%	2.4%	41.5%	51.2%	0.0%
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	24.4%	70.7%	0.0%
Student Voice	0.0%	4.9%	7.3%	58.5%	26.8%	0.0%
Staff Development	0.0%	4.9%	7.3%	39.0%	46.3%	0.0%
Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact	0.0%	4.9%	7.3%	43.9%	41.5%	0.0%
Working with Parents/Carers	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	36.6%	58.5%	0.0%
Use of external professionals/other agencies	0.0%	2.4%	7.3%	41.5%	46.3%	0.0%
Ethos and environment	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	4.9%	85.4%	0.0%

Table 16 Scotland responses to confidence in priority areas

Priority area	Don't know	Not at all	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly Confident	Very Confident
Leadership and Management	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	65.1%	34.9%
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	53.5%	44.2%
Student Voice	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	11.6%	55.8%	30.2%
Staff Development	2.3%	0.0%	4.7%	9.3%	60.5%	23.3%
Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	55.8%	37.2%
Working with Parents/Carers	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	41.9%	51.2%
Use of external professionals/other agencies	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%	4.7%	44.2%	41.9%
Ethos and environment	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	32.6%	62.8%



Table 17 Wales responses to confidence in priority areas

Priority area	Don't know	Not at all	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly Confident	Very Confident
Leadership and Management	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	1.8%	40.0%	56.4%
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	3.6%	25.5%	69.1%
Student Voice	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	1.8%	40.0%	54.5%
Staff Development	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	3.6%	41.8%	52.7%
Identifying Needs and Monitoring Impact	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	3.6%	47.3%	47.3%
Working with Parents/Carers	0.0%	0.0%	5.5%	3.6%	50.9%	40.0%
Use of external professionals/other agencies	1.8%	3.6%	3.6%	9.1%	32.7%	49.1%
Ethos and environment	3.6%	0.0%	1.8%	1.8%	23.6%	69.1%



DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Table 18 Percentage of respondents

Country	Total	Respondents	%
UK	32,113	246	0.8%
England	24,281	107	0.4%
Northern Ireland	1,170	41	3.5%
Scotland	5,045	43	0.9%
Wales	1,617	55	3.4%

Table 19 Position of respondent

Level	Total	%
Senior (Head/CEO/Deputy)	185	75.2%
Middle (SENDCO/Pastoral Leader/Subject Lead/Year or Phase Leader)	52	21.1%
Pupil-based (Classroom staff)	7	2.8%
Other	2	0.8%

Table 20 Stage of education

Stage	UK number	Respondents	%
Early Years	u/k	5	
Further or Higher	u/k	3	
Primary	20925	173	0.8%
Secondary	4168	39	0.9%
Alternative Provision	351	2	0.6%
Special	1256	24	1.9%

Table 21 English regions

Region	%
East	9.3%
East Midlands	8.4%
London	11.2%
North East	10.3%
North West	3.7%



South East	11.2%
South West	3.7%
West Midlands	6.5%
Yorkshire and the Humber	9.3%
Not stated	26.2%

Table 22 Northern Ireland regions

County	%
Antrim	43.9%
Derry/Londonderry	17.1%
Down	24.4%
Fermanagh	7.3%
Tyrone	7.3%

Table 23 Scottish regions

Region	%
Aberdeen City	7.0%
Aberdeenshire	11.6%
Argyll & Bute	4.7%
Dumfries & Galloway	9.3%
Dundee City	2.3%
East Lothian	4.7%
Edinburgh	9.3%
Eilean Siar	4.7%
Fife	4.7%
Glasgow	7.0%
Highland	11.6%
Midlothian	7.0%
North Lanarkshire	9.3%
Orkney Islands	2.3%
Shetland Islands	2.3%
West Lothian	2.3%

Table 24 Welsh regions

County	%
Anglesey	1.8%



Caerphilly	3.6%
Cardiff	5.5%
Carmarthenshire	3.6%
Ceredigion	3.6%
Conwy	1.8%
Denbighshire	3.6%
Flintshire	7.3%
Gwynedd	3.6%
Monmouthshire	1.8%
Neath Port Talbot	1.8%
Newport	1.8%
Pembrokeshire	3.6%
Powys	10.9%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	10.9%
Swansea	7.3%
Vale of Glamorgan	3.6%
Wrexham	3.6%
Not stated	20.0%



CONTACT

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