

Annual SEND Survey 2020 -Summary of Results

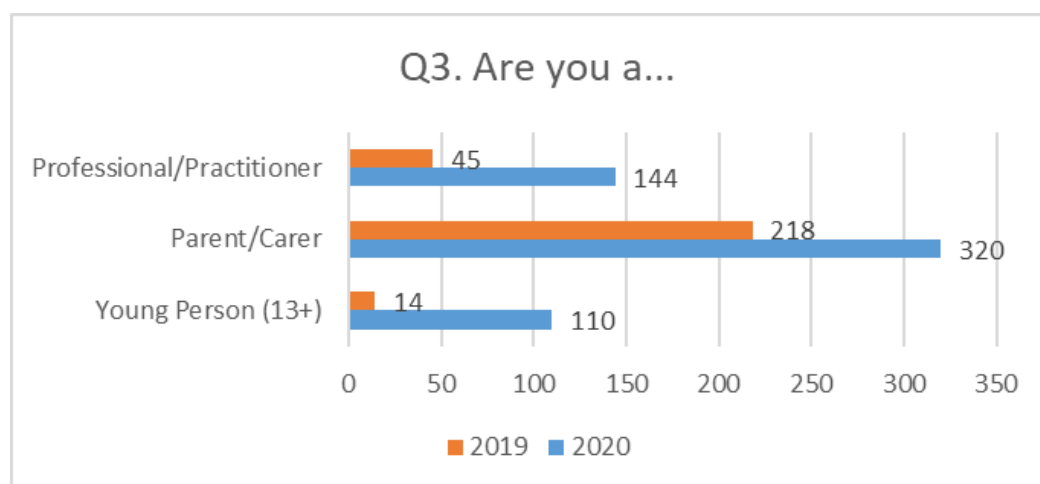
What was the purpose of the annual SEND survey?

The purpose of the annual Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) survey is to ensure that we have a way of regularly measuring satisfaction levels and the experiences of those delivering and receiving services supporting children and young people with SEND in Swindon. Understanding the experience of children, young people and their parents/carers and those who provide and shape services helps us to monitor, evaluate and update our improvement plan.

The second annual SEND Survey 2020 ran from October 2020 to December 2020 and results were compared to the baseline results of the first annual SEND survey in 2019. We will repeat the survey every year to provide us with information to support the continued improvement of services for children, young people and families. Within 2020 more sections of the survey was separated into specific questions and answers from young people, parents/carers and practitioners/professionals, allowing us to see how these different groups viewed the services offered.

Who responded to the survey?

Thank you to everyone who took part in the 2020 annual SEND survey. Particular thanks to Swindon SEND Families Voice and STEP for encouraging the completion of the survey with parents/carers and young people. The graph below shows the number of respondents to the annual survey each year broken down into their groups. 574 responses were received in 2020 which was over double the number of returns received in 2019 and there was a significant increase in responses within each respondent group.



What have we done with the information we collected?

We take the views of our children, young people, families and partners very seriously. Following a detailed analysis of the responses received from the 2020 annual survey we have:

- Noted all the positive comments and used these to help us build on and further strengthen what is working well.
- Continued working on some of the areas where we need to improve.
- Co-produced an updated improvement plan which is summarised in a separate 'You Said, We Did' report.

This report provides a written summary of some of the most pertinent information collected from the annual SEND survey 2020.

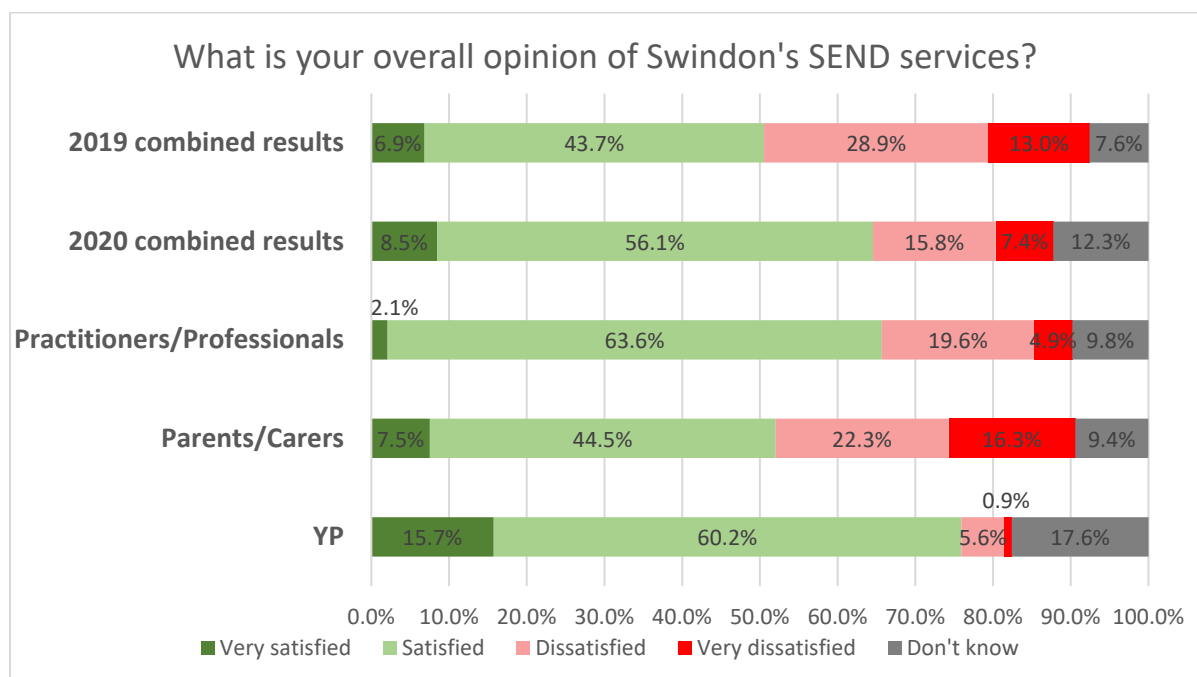
The presentation slides giving further detail of responses to the full range of questions and the 'You Said, We Did' improvement plan can be viewed here:

<https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/annualsendsurvey>

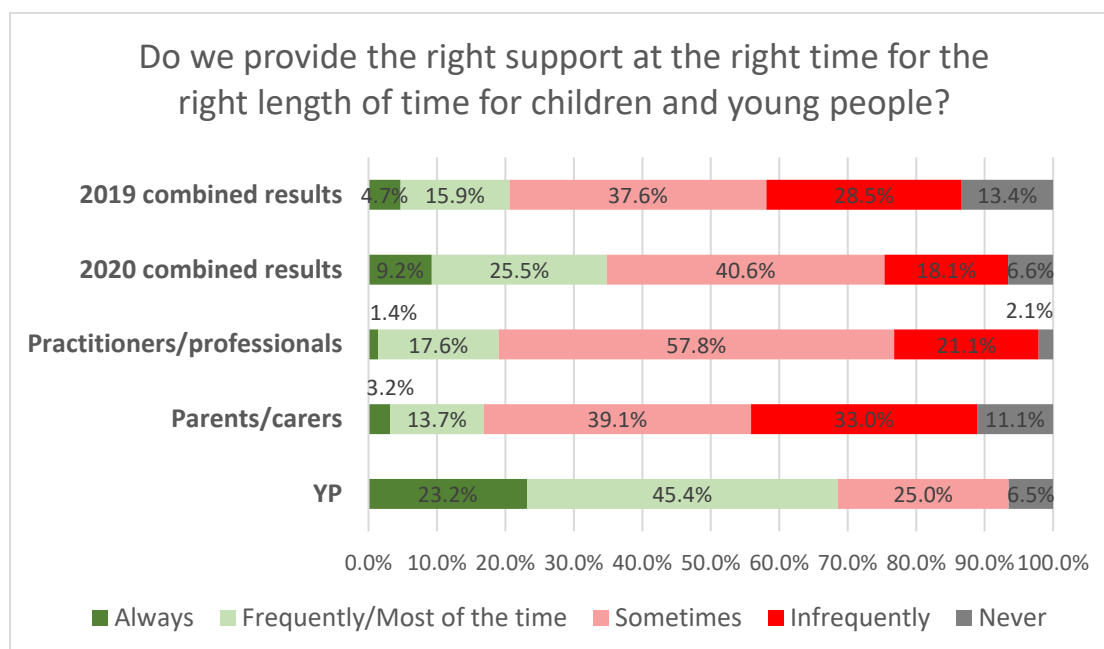
What positives do we have to celebrate?

Looking at all the respondent groups together, we found out that the overall opinion of Swindon's SEND services has improved when we compare the 2020 survey results with 2019 survey results. When we consider that more than double the number of people responded in 2020 compared to 2019, this is also a more representative result than previously.

For example, in answer to the question 'What is your overall opinion of Swindon's SEND Services?' -in 2020 65% of people who responded were satisfied with Swindon's SEND services, compared to 51% of people in 2019 (see graph below for breakdown of responses).



In answering the question ‘Do we provide the right support at the right time, for the right length of time for children and young people?’ –in 2020 35% of all respondents to the survey stated ‘always’ or ‘frequently’, compared to 20% in 2019. In addition, 25% of all respondents of the 2020 survey stated ‘infrequently’ or ‘never’, compared to 42% in 2019 (see graph below for breakdown of responses).



Responses from young people

When breaking down the information received from the second annual survey into the separate respondent groups, responses from young people were largely positive and/or indicated improvement. For example:

What do you think about Swindon's SEND services that support you?

In 2020, 76% of respondents were either ‘Very happy’ or ‘Happy’ with support from SEND services (26% increase since 2019).

I feel that the support that I get from people has improved in the last 12 months.

In 2020, 57% of respondents ‘Agreed’ or ‘Strongly agreed’ that their support had improved (14% increase from 2019).

Do you feel you are involved in decisions about your life and your future?

In 2020, 70% of young people responded either 'Always' or 'Most of the time'.

Do you feel that services that support you are interested in what you think about them and use your ideas to help them improve?

In 2020, 65% of young people responded 'Always' or 'Most of the time'.

Responses from the practitioner/professional group

In 2020 the responses from the practitioner/professional group were also largely positive in terms of actual ratings or perceptions regarding improvement, for example:

What is your overall opinion of Swindon SEND Services?

A significantly greater proportion of respondents were 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with SEND Services in 2020 (66%), compared to 2019 (44%).

How do you feel about the level of support available for children and young people with SEND in Swindon?

In 2020, a significantly greater proportion of practitioners/professionals felt 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' (43%) about the level of support for children with SEND than in 2019 (29%).

What has worked well over the last 12 months?

We found out that there are numerous workers and areas of work which are being highly appreciated. A total of 368 comments were made in response to the question 'What has worked well for you over the last 12 months?' across all respondent groups.

The main themes of these positive comments along with the number of respondents making comments within these themes (across all respondent groups) are summarised in the table below:

What has worked well over the last 12 months?	Number of responses
Support from school/college, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator(SENCo)/Teaching Assistant	145
Occupational therapy, medication, GP, hospital, paediatrician, health support, counsellor/mental health, talking about feelings, speech and language support, physiotherapy	48
SEND Service restructure, improvements by statutory services, adapted working arrangements in lockdown, co-operation with social worker, simpler templates, improved EHCP quality, bespoke support to meet needs	37
Joined up working/communication	20
Home schooling during lockdown, elective home education	15
SEND Information and Advice Services (SIAS)	12
Educational Psychology/transitions	7
STEP	7
Autism Resource Centre (ARC)	6
Parents/friends	6

Specific positive comments from respondents about what they think has been working well include the following:

“Annual review led by SENCo at current school, exploring the next phase with new potential schools.”

“EHCP process, autism diagnosis was quicker than expected.”

“Social Communication worker carried out a real in-depth assessment and was so reactive to child’s needs. Direct payments equipment purchases worked very well as respite alternatives.”

“SENDIASS was very helpful and knowledgeable.”

“My child started trail blazers and is helping them massively.”

“The extra group lessons to talk about emotions and the ELSA one to ones are brilliant for my child.”

“My child’s school have been fantastic especially during lockdown with daily phone calls and regular video chats. They were good at giving additional advice when required.”

“Swindon SEND Families Voice has been fantastic at coordinating and sharing vital information.”

“Co-operation between services in coming to a conclusion that supports us as a family has been much faster and more concise now than in the past.”

“Support from Advisory Teachers - Hearing Support Team, Physical Disability, Speech and Language, Educational Psychology.”

“The restructuring of the SENAT team looks like it will offer a more secure system of support for SENCOs in school. The changes have been made more challenging for new staff by COVID but I feel that it is easier for me to contact the appropriate SENAT team member for support and advice.”

“I can see that services are improving and there is more of a focus on co-production with families and multi-agency working.”

“On-line EHCP process looks promising.”

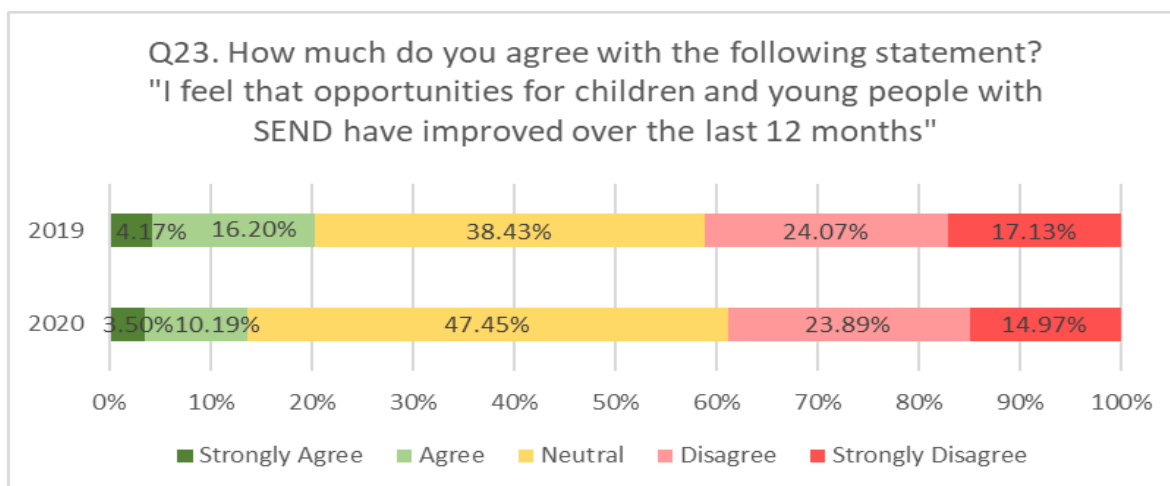
“7 minute briefings are helpful.”

What do we need to do differently?

As well as highlighting what we are doing well, the results of the annual survey also highlighted a number of areas in which we still need to improve.

Responses from parents

The 2020 survey results show that parents were generally less satisfied with Swindon’s SEND services than last year, and compared to young people and practitioners/professionals.



The graph above shows that fewer parents agree that ‘opportunities for children and young people with SEND have improved over the past 12 months’ in 2020 (10%), than they did in 2019 (16%).

How do you feel about the level of support available for children and young people with SEND in Swindon?

In 2020 there was a decrease of parents/carers who are ‘Satisfied’ or ‘Very satisfied’ with SEND support (30%) compared to 2019 (33%). However, there was no change in the proportion of parents/carers ‘Dissatisfied’ or ‘Very dissatisfied’, in comparison to 2019.

Do you feel parents, carers and young people are listened to?

In 2020, 12% of parents/carers felt ‘Consistently’ or ‘Frequently’ listened to, compared to 2019 figures (20%).

Areas needing Improvement

Areas of improvement identified throughout the survey can be generally summed up within the responses given within the comments boxes to the following two questions.

A) Do we provide the right support at the right time for the right length of time for children and young people?

220 respondents (across all respondent groups) provided examples of their experiences in response to this question and whilst there were some positive comments, there were also a number of comments highlighting where respondents felt things weren’t going well.

The themes drawn from those comments showing levels of dissatisfaction are summarised as follows:

Where things haven’t gone as well as they should have ...	No of responses
Lack of support in general, from school, SENCo, TAMHS, CAMHS, mental health support, long term support, specialist placements/provision, unmet needs, lack of quality first teaching, graduated response, core standards,	126

not inclusive, not using funding, support ends too soon, not at appropriate level	
Waiting lists too long, referral times too long, lengthy assessment processes, unnecessary referrals/complicated procedures clog system	99
Lack of information about SEND Support, Early Intervention and services, thresholds for EHCPs too high	20
SENAT/Statutory Services responses not good enough, services not taking responsibility for actions	16
Pressure on system – budget, understaffed, equipment, caseloads	8
Service delays due to COVID	5

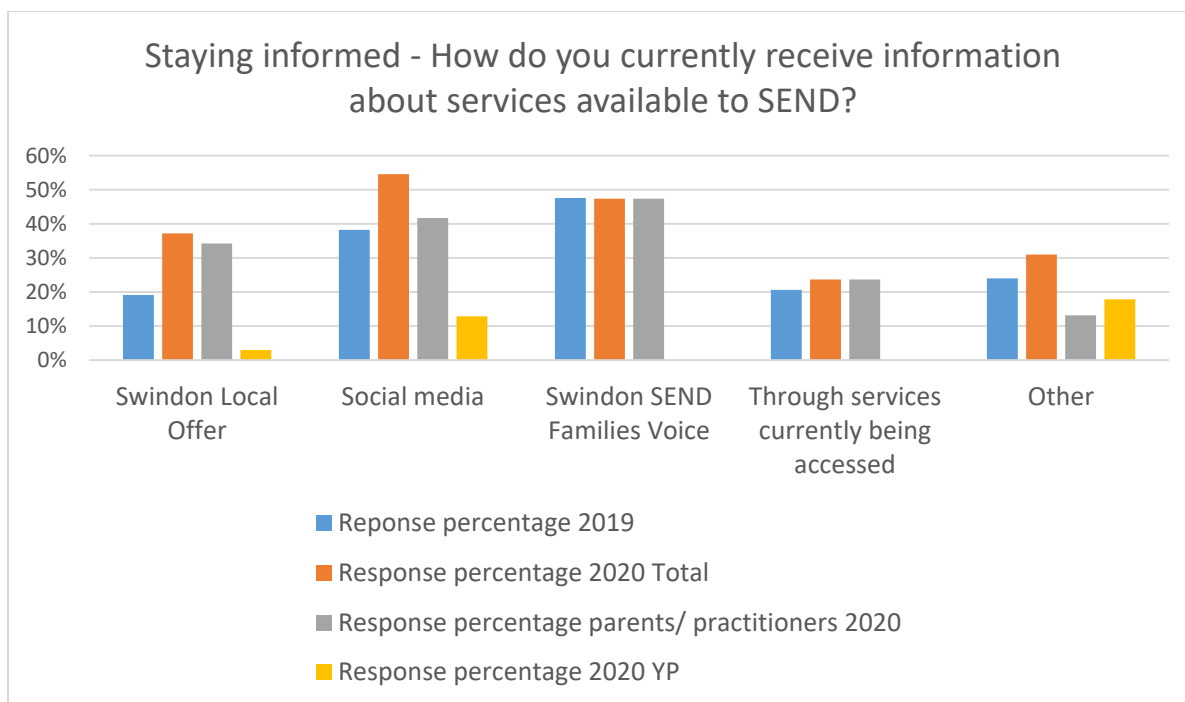
B) How could services be better for you in the future?

A total of 360 comments were noted in response to this question across all respondent groups. The main themes of these improvement suggestions are similar to the themes already identified above:

How could services be better for you in the future?	No of responses
Communication, work together more, ask more questions, better communication with parents, improve information sharing, listen to young people more, listen to parents, listen to young people's needs, listen to professionals, better communication/co-ordination between professionals, improve communication/joint working between services	105
Fast, simple, transparent procedures, better trained SEND and school staff, improve SENAT, out of date EHCPs, paperwork not processed, quicker responses, more consistent staff in SENAT, improve processes/referral routes/reduce duplication/paperwork, improve social services support, improve consistency of practice	74
More support in school, more support for parents/carers, explain things better, more information about services available, be more supportive	52
More activities/social clubs/sports, wider curriculum/more interesting, improve opportunities in mainstream settings – alternative curriculums/more inclusive, more staff/funding for services and schools, increased specialist provision, early interventions	48
Shorter waiting lists, reduce waiting times	41
Careers guidance/planning for future, more independence, more accessible services	34
More support during lockdown	7

Staying Informed/Communication Section

The following table shows how respondents indicated they currently receive information about services available for SEND, broken down by whether they are a young person or an adult.



The table above shows there has been a significant increase (proportionally) in respondents using the Swindon Local Offer website in 2020 when compared with 2019, and that most of these respondents were parents/carers and practitioners/professionals. Only 3% of young people responded that they currently access information about SEND services through the Local Offer.

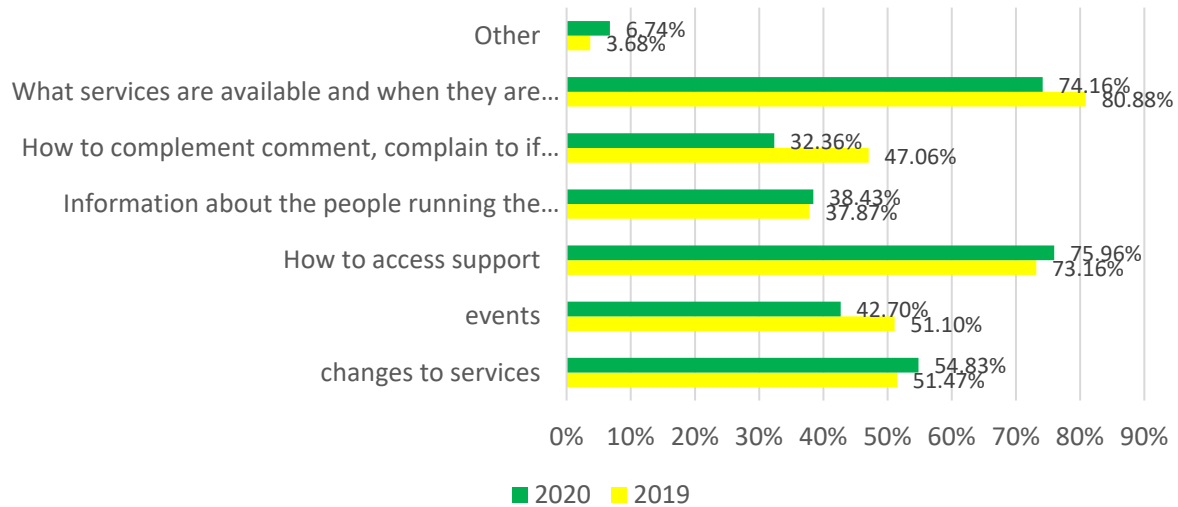
There is also a significant increase (proportionally) in the use of social media to receive information, and again the majority of respondents were parents/carers and practitioners/professionals. Only 13% of the total respondents who indicated that they use social media to keep updated were young people.

The most responses received from young people (57%) indicated that they currently use online or internet searches to find information they need about SEND Services. However, it is recognised that when young people use online searches or the internet to find information, some of the information they find may well be on the Local offer or on other social media sites.

This analysis shows the importance of continuing to ensure communications about SEND services are shared through all channels presented in the graph above.

The final question in the survey about communication was in relation to what respondents would like to find out more about in terms of services available for children and young people with SEND. Results are shown in the following chart. In this case the data could not be broken down to show young people’s responses and parent/carer and practitioner/professional responses separately.

Staying informed - What would you like to find out more about in terms of services available for CYP with SEND?



This data shows that both in 2019 and 2020 the top 2 choices with regards to what respondents would like to find out more about in terms of SEND Services were: *‘What services are available...’* and *‘How to access support’*. These areas, as well as all the others reported within the chart are already covered within the Swindon Local Offer website, and this reiterates the importance of continuing to keep the Swindon Local Offer information accessible and updated.

Conclusion

The second annual SEND survey 2020 indicates generally improved and positive responses from both the young people and the professional/practitioner respondent groups about SEND services, as well as evidencing a much higher returns rate than the previous year. This shows that we are moving forward and making progress in the way SEND services are delivered, how effectively they work together and how they communicate and work co-productively with children, young people and their families.

On the other hand we know that parents’ perceptions of SEND Services are still not as positive as we would like them to be. We are fully aware that the past year has been extremely difficult for families during the pandemic and especially in many cases for parents of children with SEND, having to cope with the challenges of multiple lockdowns including school closures and temporary changes to the SEND legislation. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that whilst the pandemic is a complicating factor, parents have shared with us their genuine concerns and we know we still have improvements to make.

What is our plan to improve?

As a result of the feedback from the annual survey summarised above, an improvement plan has been co-produced within a 'You Said, We Did' format which can be viewed here: <https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/annualsendsurvey>

This plan shows how we are using the constructive feedback from the annual survey to get better at the things we need to improve and to make sure we get things right for children and young people with SEND and their families.

We will also be producing an easy-read version of this 'You Said We Did' improvement plan to share with young people and with any parents who would benefit from a more accessible and concise version.

What is happening about the next annual survey?

We are about to start planning the next annual survey to be rolled out in October 2021. We know that we need to carry on finding out from parents and young people what is most important to them, and use that information wisely and well, to enable us to do things differently or better. We will continue to gather this feedback because we want to know if the changes and improvements we are making are giving us the outcomes that are needed.

We will be working hard to continue to hear from even more people within our October 2021 survey, so we will be asking again for the survey to be completed at staff training days, parent events, young people's groups and events like the Local Offer Big Day as well as it being available online. We will also be looking to continue to encourage responses from more parents and carers of children and young people on SEND Support (those who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan) as this group continues to be under-represented within survey responses.