An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Report on National Survey of Special Needs Assistants

6 February – 5 March 2024

SNA Workforce Development Unit
Department of Education
May 2024

Contents

Appendix 1 – Index of tables

Abbreviations

DE	Department of Education
ELC	Early Learning and Care
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SNAWDU	Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Unit
The Plan	Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Education Needs Coordinator

Acknowledgements

SNAWDU wishes to thank all those who assisted with the design and implementation of the first national survey of special needs assistants including external stakeholders and colleagues in Department of Education.

Thanks to school leaders and staff, school management bodies and Fórsa for publicising and disseminating the survey link and encouraging SNAs to complete the survey.

SNAWDU would also like to express our gratitude to the SNAs who tested and completed the survey. We are grateful that you contributed your valuable time, honest information, and shared insights into your role. Your contribution will enable the Department to have a better picture of the workforce and assist in decision making to deliver better outcomes for the SNA workforce and the students that you work with.

1. Executive Summary

SNAs make a valuable contribution to our school communities, through the provision of adult support to enable students with significant care needs attend school. There are currently approximately 21,000 SNAs working in our schools.

This report details the results of the DE's first national survey of SNAs. It presents analysis of key characteristics and trends of the SNAs workforce in recognised primary, post-primary and special schools in Ireland which will support evidence-based planning and policy making in this sector.

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of the survey is to collect and record baseline information about SNAs and their work. The data collected will help the DE to capture and develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the role of the SNA in the different educational settings and to explore and enhance the role that SNAs play in facilitating inclusion.

1.1.2 The data collected will be used by the DE to build an overall profile of the SNA workforce that will feed into important policy decisions in the sector.

1.1.3 The data sought includes information on employment and service details, professional development diversity in the sector, and other general questions around the SNA role in the school community.

1.2 Methodology and Design

1.2.1 The survey was created and administered by staff in the SNAWDU. In drafting the questions, the unit researched and consulted with all relevant internal stakeholders and other Departments. The unit also considered recent, similar surveys that have been conducted including the following:

- CSO Central Statistics Office Census
- UCD National Training Programme for SNAs – Evaluation Report
- Pobal - 22/23 Early Years Sector Profile Survey

- Studies carried out by St. Angela's College, Sligo
- The Public Appointments Service (PAS) Essential information on relevant staff who are being reassigned.
- Fórsa survey 2017

1.2.2 The survey was tested by a number of SNAs to ensure that questions were clearly set out, easily understood and that questions and categories flowed in a logical order.

1.2.3 The survey was conducted between 6 February and 5 March 2024, with the deadline extended to 5 March 2024 to allow additional time to SNAs to complete it. The data gathered through this survey was quantitative in nature.

1.2.4 The survey was uploaded online on Checkbox professional survey software and was open to all SNAs including those on leave of absence.

1.2.5 The Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion Josepha Madigan TD launched the survey on 6 February 2024. The Minister in a short video which was shared on www.gov.ie, the SNA Information Hub and on the social media platform 'X', formerly Twitter, encouraged SNAs to complete the survey. In her statement, the Minister said: "*This is about ensuring that the views of SNAs are fully considered in policy making. This is about listening. It is an important part of the Plan that experiences of the SNAs are recorded and considered in the decision-making process.*"

1.2.6 In order to encourage a good response rate all recognised primary, post primary and special schools were provided with the link to the survey by the DE on two occasions between 6th February to 5th March 2024. An accompanying email encouraged school principals to invite SNAs in their school to complete the survey. School management bodies were contacted by the DE and encouraged to contact their members to alert them to the survey and encourage their staff to complete it.

1.2.7 Fórsa, the recognised trade union representing SNAs, was informed when the survey was launched, and they shared the information with their members.

1.2.8 During the first two weeks after the survey was launched, approximately 4,000 SNAs completed the survey, representing 20% of the SNA workforce. On 28 February 2024, the DE extended the deadline for completion of the survey by one week to allow SNAs a further opportunity to engage with it. The survey closed on 05 March 2024.

1.2.9 The survey was available in English and Irish. Responses were anonymous to encourage participation and the provision of honest views and opinions.

1.2.10 The survey questions were based on six key themes:
- General Information
- Workplace
- Training
- SNA Information Hub
- SNA Role
- Workplace Environment

Findings are presented in percentage charts and tables. The following quantitative terms are used when interpreting the information set out in the tables:

Percentage	Language used
More than 90%	Almost all
75% - 90%	Most
51% - 74%	Majority/more than half
50%	Half
25% - 49%	Less than half/a significant minority
16% - 24%	A small number/less than a quarter
Less than 15%	A few

In a small number of cases, adjustments were made to 'round up' or 'round down' percentages in charts and tables to ensure that percentages add up to a total of 100% where applicable.

1.3 Limitations

1.3.1 The DE relied on stakeholders to distribute the survey link and to encourage SNAs to complete it. There is a risk that the survey did not reach all members of the workforce. However, every effort was made to promote the survey and maximise the response rate. The sizeable sample obtained is invaluable for research and analysis as part of a multi-method approach in addition to the other research methods carried out by the unit in relation to this sector.

1.4 Response Rates

1.4.1 It is estimated that a total of 21,000 staff were working in the sector across Ireland at the time of the survey. The survey received 13,465 responses (64% of the SNA workforce) in total. From this total 7,401 (55%) were complete and 6,056 (45%) were incomplete responses.

1.4.2 To ensure the accurate representation of the results, incomplete responses were carefully reviewed.[1] The responses reflected in the data displayed in this report reflect the views of those SNAs who completed the survey in full.

1.5 Profile of respondents

1.5.1 A total of 7,401 complete responses accounts for approximately 35% of the total SNA workforce in Ireland which is a strong response rate.[2]

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[1] Out of 6056 incomplete responses, 3259 were completely blank and excluded from analysis. The remaining 2,797 incomplete responses were analysed for partial completion in each section.
[2] Optimizing Your Survey Response Rate | Kantar

Which of the following describes your current role

3528 (48%)

1612 (22%)

1288 (17%)

755 (10%)

2 (0%)   104(1%) 112 (2%)

SNA - Mainstream primary school

SNA -Mainstream post-primary school

SNA - Special school

SNA - Special class

SNA - Youth Encounter Project

SNA - Early Intervention class (in Primary...

Other: (please specify)
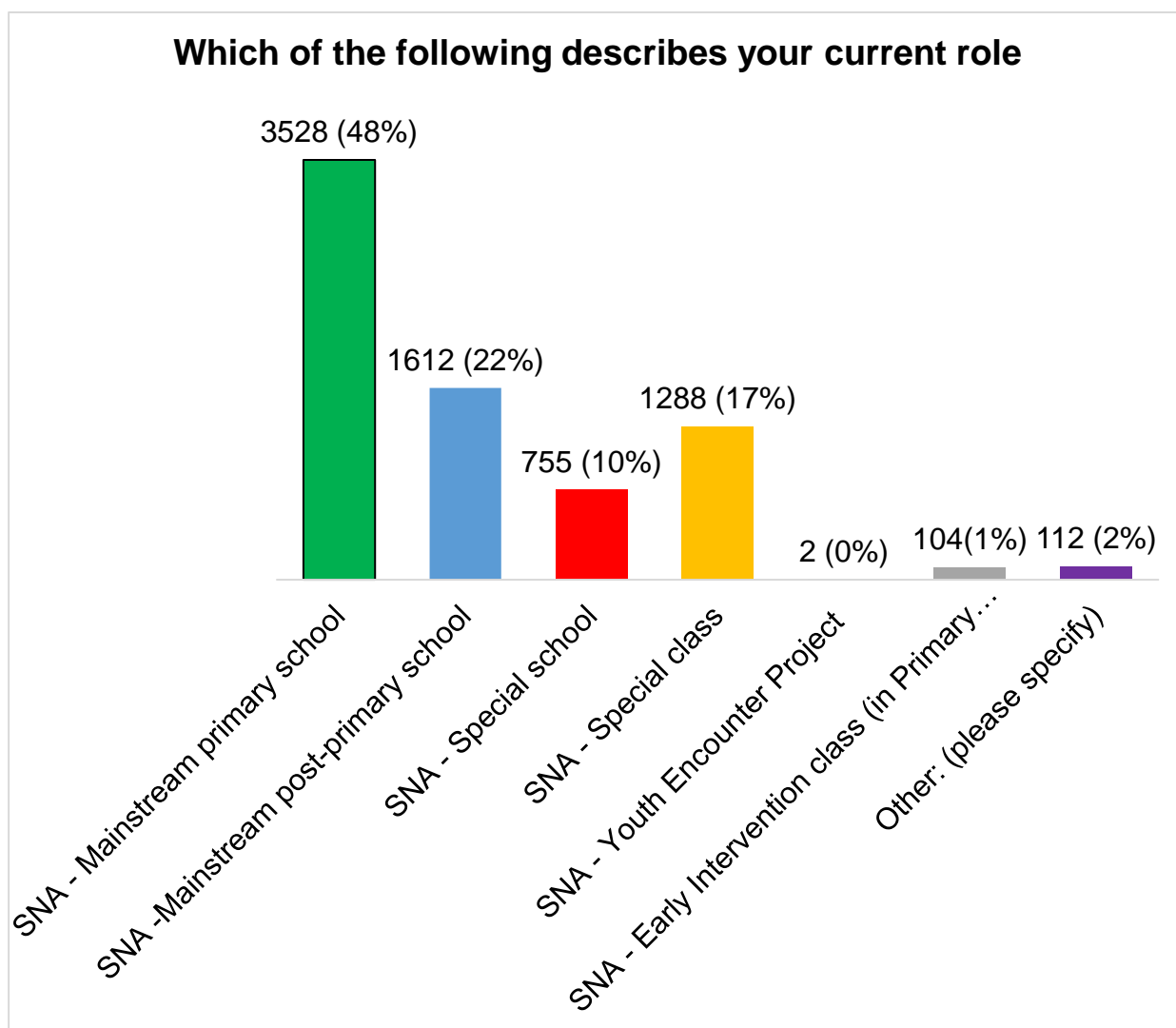
Table 1 Current role

1.5.2 The distribution of SNA responses across different types of schools appropriately reflects the variety of school settings in which SNAs work.

1.5.3 As reflected in Table 1, the highest number of responses received was from SNAs employed in mainstream primary schools, accounting for almost half of the total responses, followed by those in mainstream post-primary schools.

1.5.4 Additionally, a considerable portion of responding SNAs are deployed in special classes, comprising 17%. A total of 1288 responses from SNAs in special classes is a combined number from both primary and post-primary school sectors. 755 responses

were received from SNAs working in special schools, representing 10% of the total number of responding SNAs employed in this sector.

1.5.5 104 (1%) responses were received from SNAs in Early Intervention Classes in primary schools, followed by 2 (0%) SNAs in Youth Encounter Project.

Are you currently employed by ETB?

1831 (25%)

5570 (75%)

■ Yes ■ No
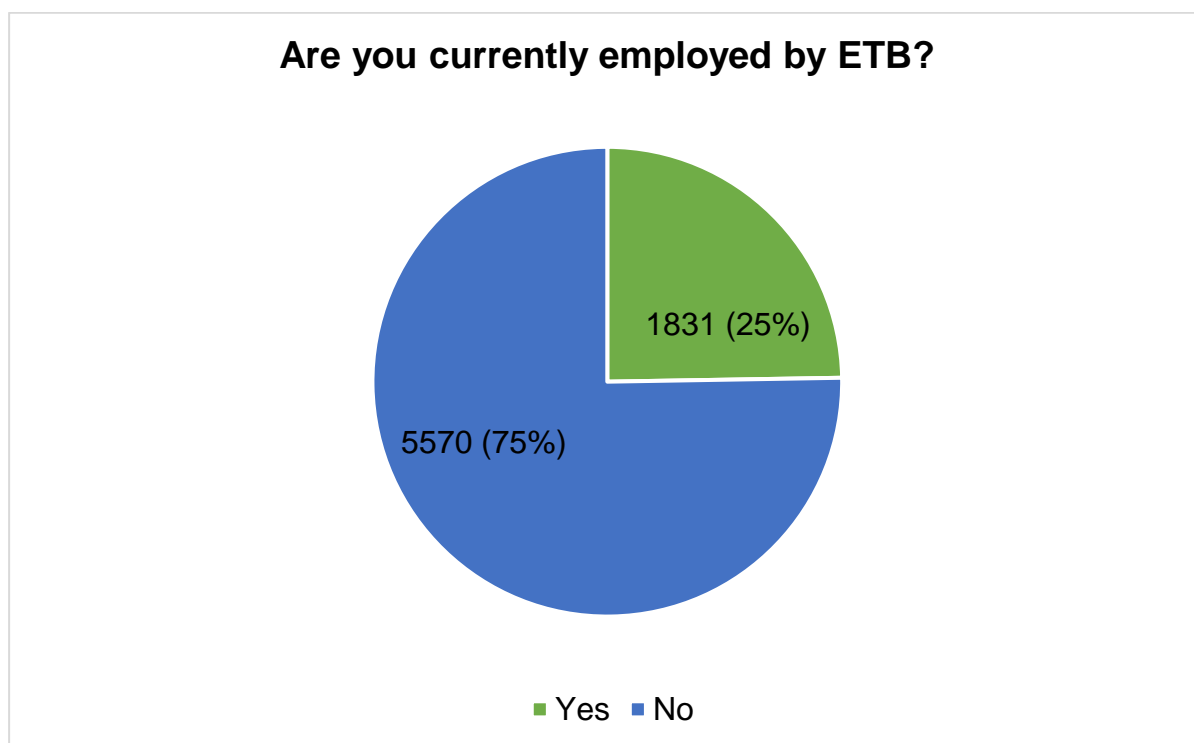
Table 2 ETB employment

1.5.6 As presented in Table 2, 25% of respondents were employed in schools under the patronage of Education and Training Boards.

2. Findings of the survey

2.1 General Information

Which of the following best describes you?

425 (6%)

6976 (94%)
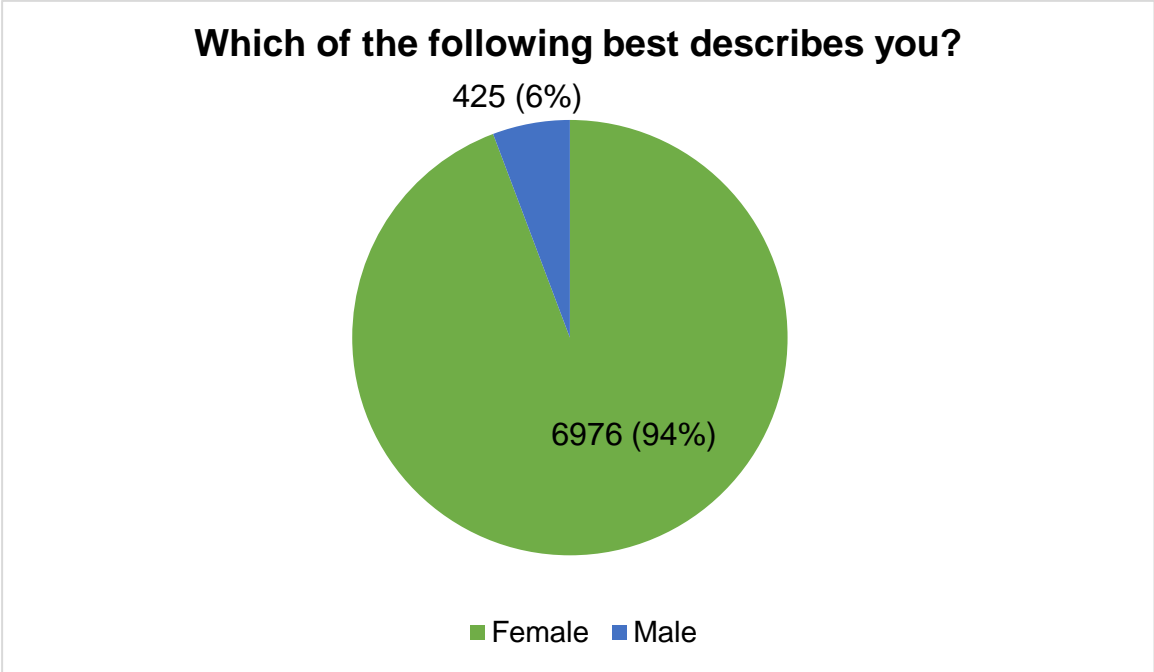
■ Female ■ Male

Table 3 Gender profile of respondents

2.1.1 As reflected in Table 3, the majority of SNAs surveyed identified as female, accounting for 94% of respondents, while males represented 6% of the sample. This is reflective of previous statistics on the sector which has historically comprised of mainly female workers.

What is your cultural or ethnic background?

7262 (98%)

139 (2%)

■ White　■ Other
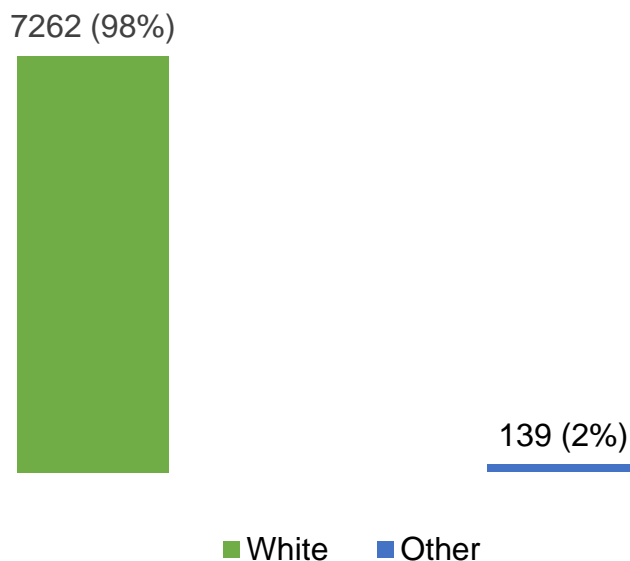
Table 4 Ethnic or cultural background

2.1.2 Almost all SNAs (98%) who responded identified their cultural background as White.[3] Minority cultural backgrounds, such as Black or Asian, were listed by a very small percentage of respondents (12 (0.2%) and 27 (0.4%) respectively).

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[3] 98% respondents were white of whom 6975 (96%) were Irish, 6 (0.1%) represented Irish Travellers community and 281 (4%) were any other white background.

What is your country of birth?

712 (10%)

6689 (90%)

■ Ireland ■ Other
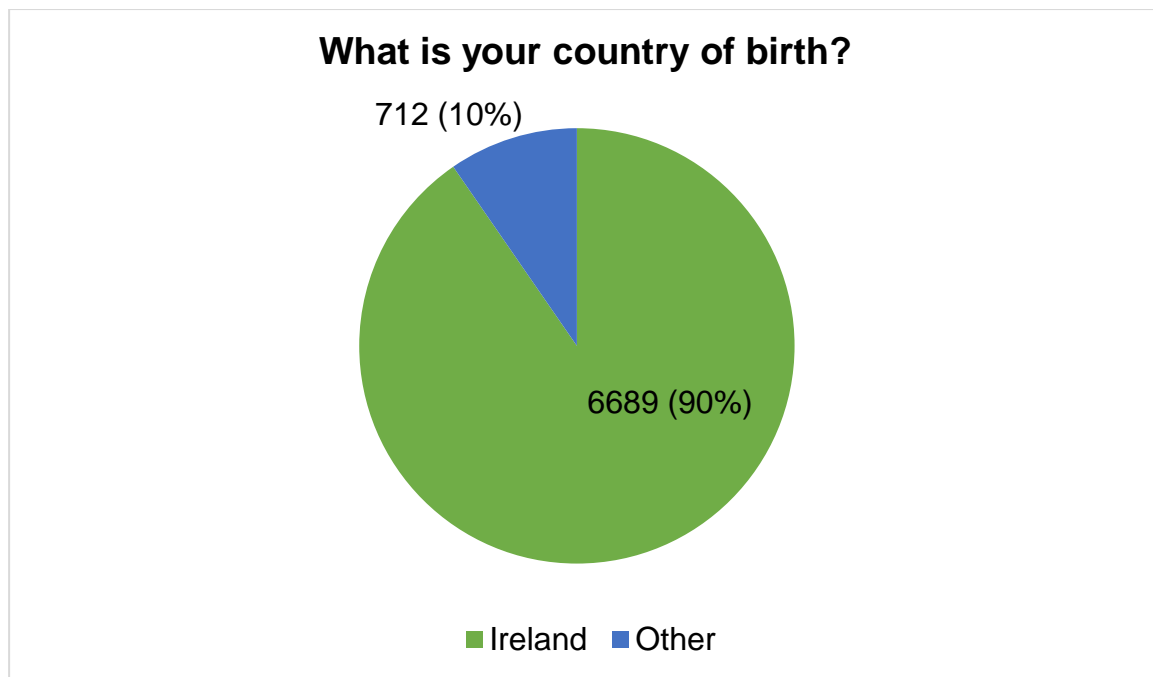
Table 5 Country of birth

2.1.3 90% of SNAs who participated in the survey are Irish and the remaining 10% were born outside Ireland in various locations.

Nationality of Respondents
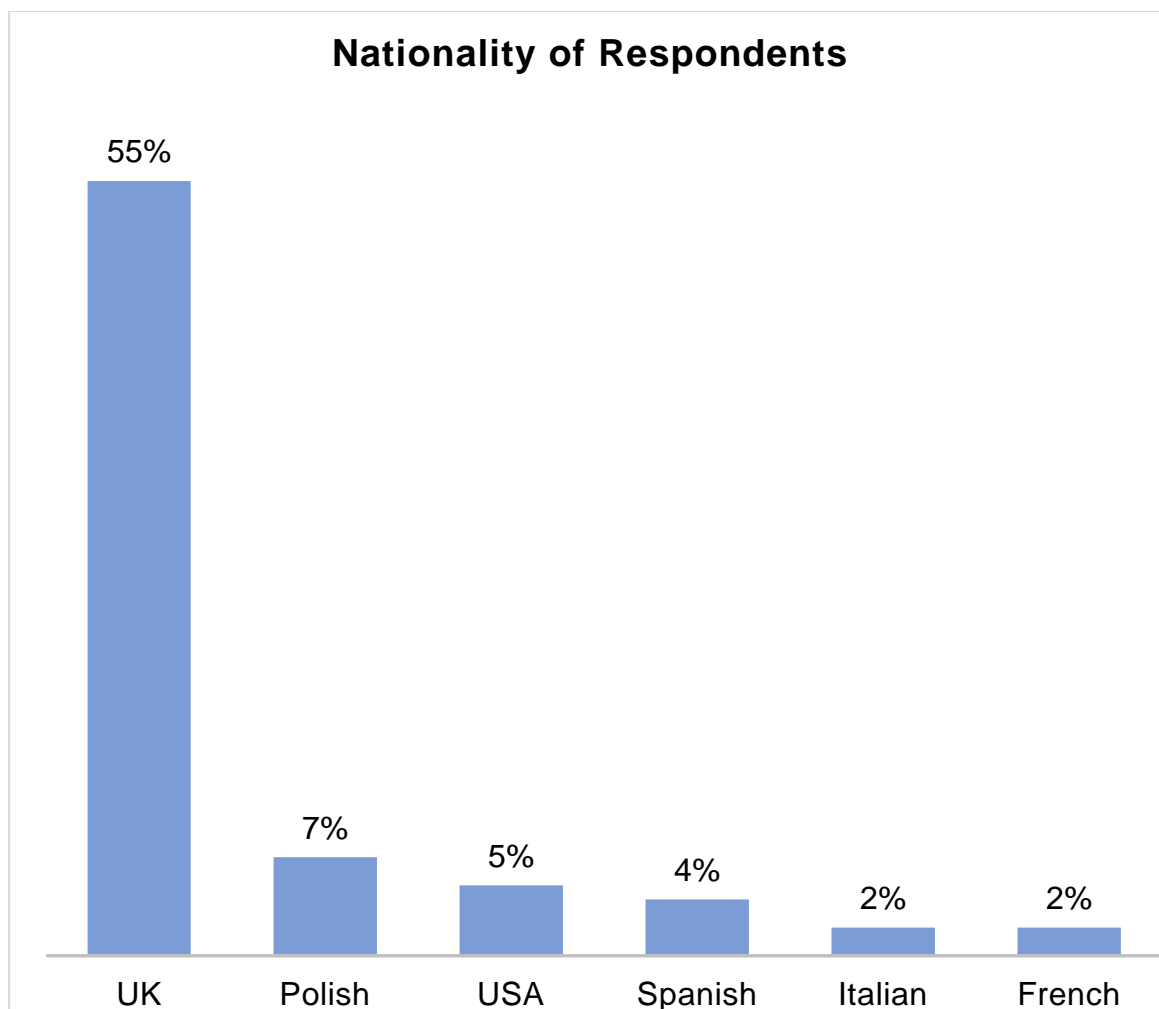
Table 6 Nationality of respondents

2.1.4 A total of 66[4] countries were represented by 712 SNAs. The highest number of 388 non-Irish nationals advised that they are from the UK (55%), while 53 are Polish (7%) and 38 are from the United States of America (5%). Followed by Spanish, Italian and French.

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[4] Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia (Czech Republic), Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Mauritius, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Zambia, Zimbabwe

If English is not your first language, can you please indicate your level of ability in speaking English?

1 (0%)

27 (11%)

230 (89%)

■ Fluently ■ Well ■ Not very well
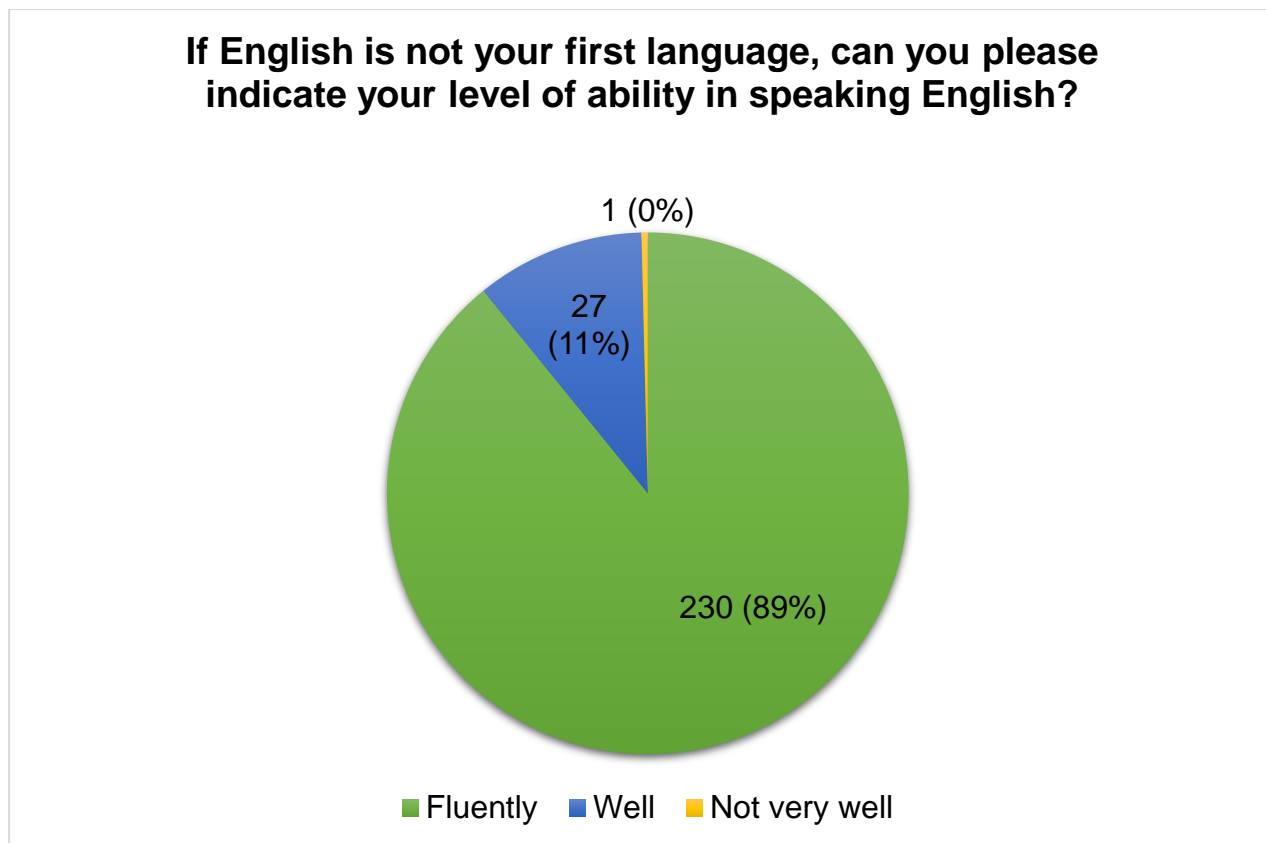
Table 7 Proficiency in English

2.1.5 Of those that indicated that English is not their first language, 230 (89%) advised that they were fluent in the English language.

What is your age group?
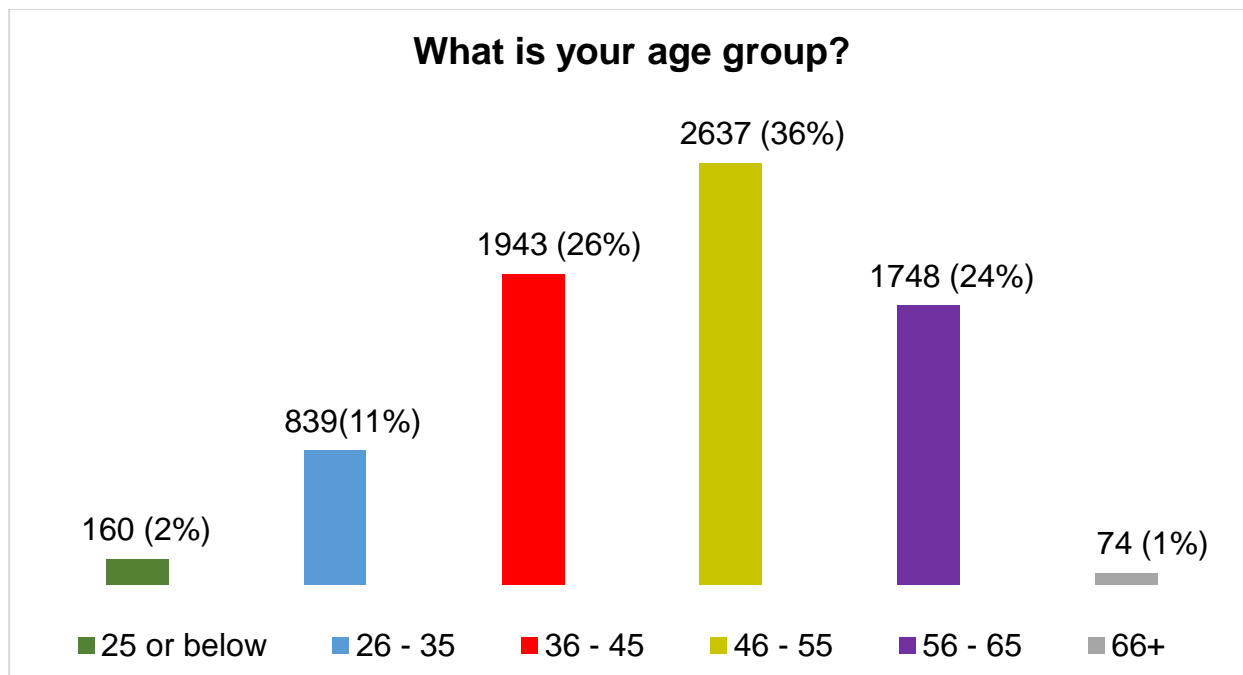
Table 8 Age profile of respondents

2.1.6 As presented above a significant majority comprising 2637 (36%) of respondents fell within the 46-55 age bracket. The 36-45 age group at 1943 (26%) followed. Additionally, 1748 (24%) were aged 56-65, while smaller percentages represented younger age groups, with 839 (11%) aged 26-35 and only 160 (2%) aged 25 or below. A negligible percentage (1%) of respondents were aged 66 or above.

Age groups by gender
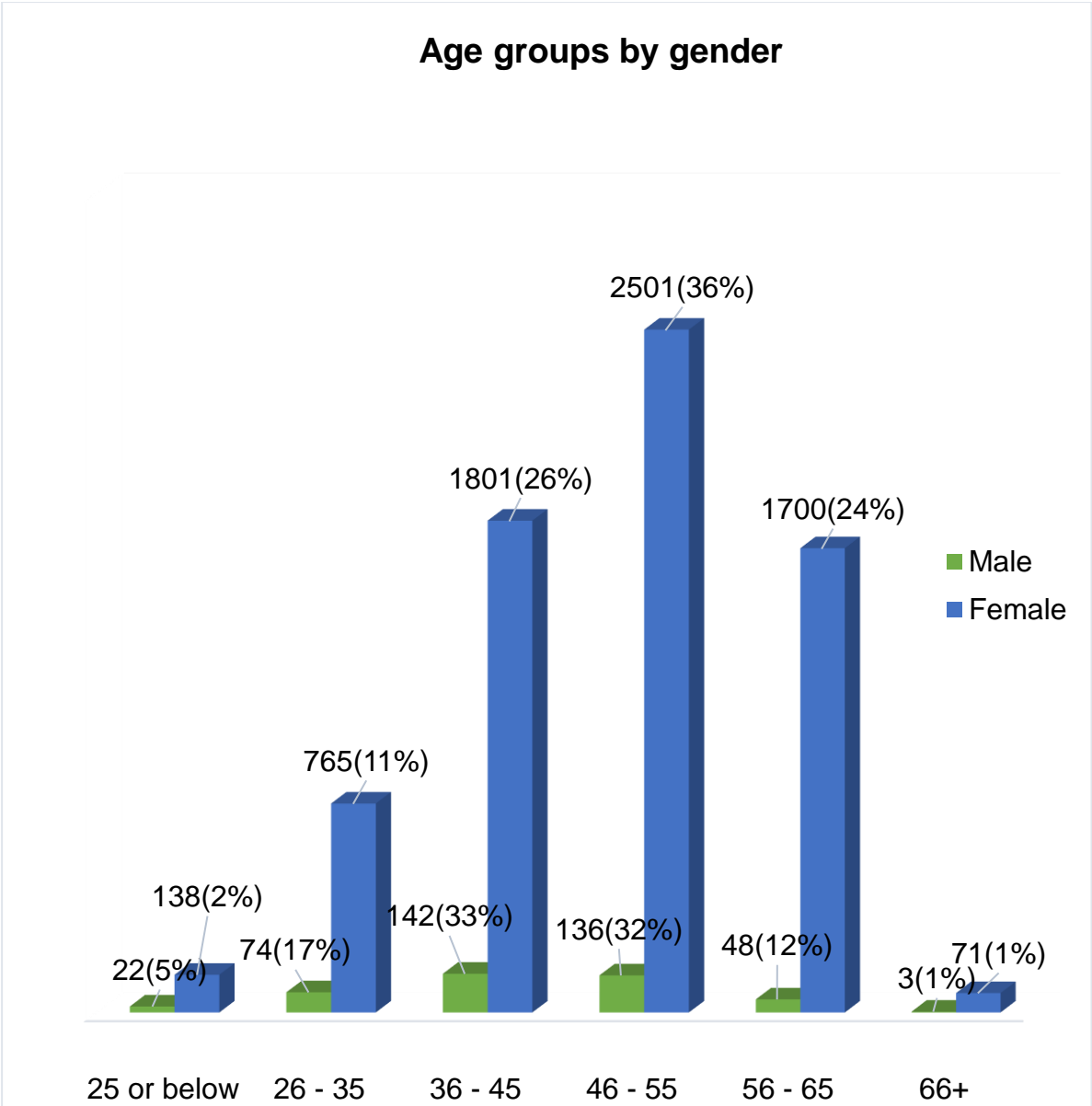
Table 9 Age groups by gender

2.1.7 Table 9 above sets out the range of age groups by gender.

What is your county of residence?
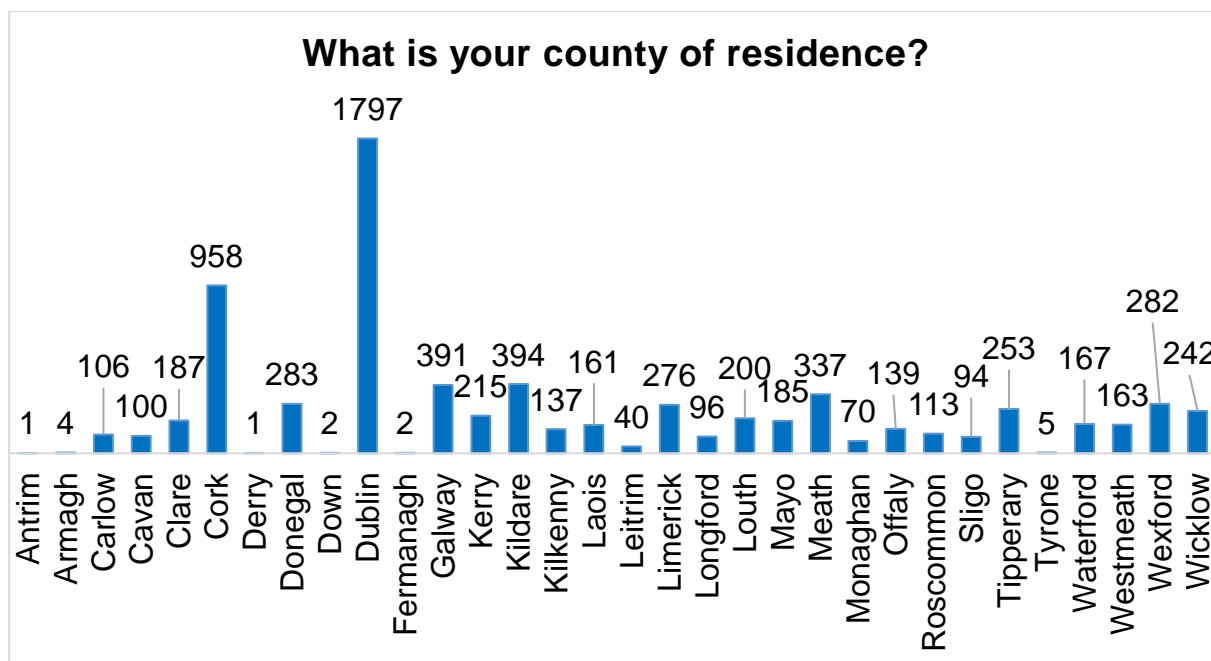
Table 10 County of residence of respondents

2.1.8 Geographically, of those SNAs who responded to the survey 1,798 (24%) indicated they reside in Dublin, while 958 (13%) live in Cork, 394 (5%) in Kildare, 391 (5%) in Galway and 337 (5%) in Meath. The smallest number (less than 1%) live in Antrim (1), Derry (1), Armagh (4), Down (2) Fermanagh (2) and Tyrone (5).

Can you please indicate your level of ability in speaking Irish?

849 (11%)   800 (11%)

1567 (21%)

4185 (57%)

■ Fluently   ■ Well   ■ Not very well   ■ Not at all
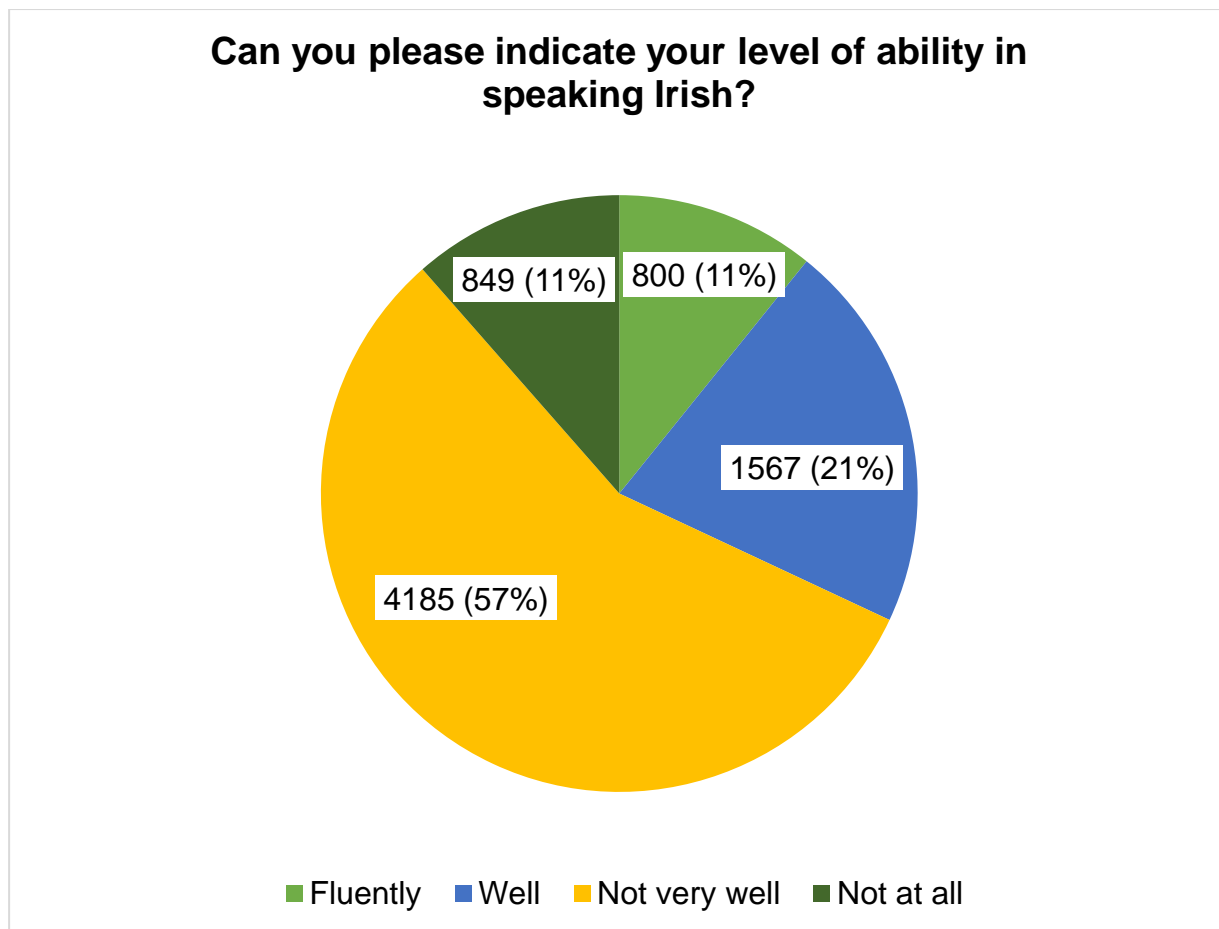
Table 11 Proficiency in Irish

2.1.9 Regarding proficiency in the Irish language, the majority of SNAs surveyed reported limited proficiency. Specifically, 57% stated they didn't speak Irish very well, while 11% reported not speaking Irish at all. Only 11% claimed fluency, with 21% advising that they spoke Irish well. A total of 16 (0.2%) SNAs completed the survey through Irish.

Do you have any of the following disabilities or difficulties?
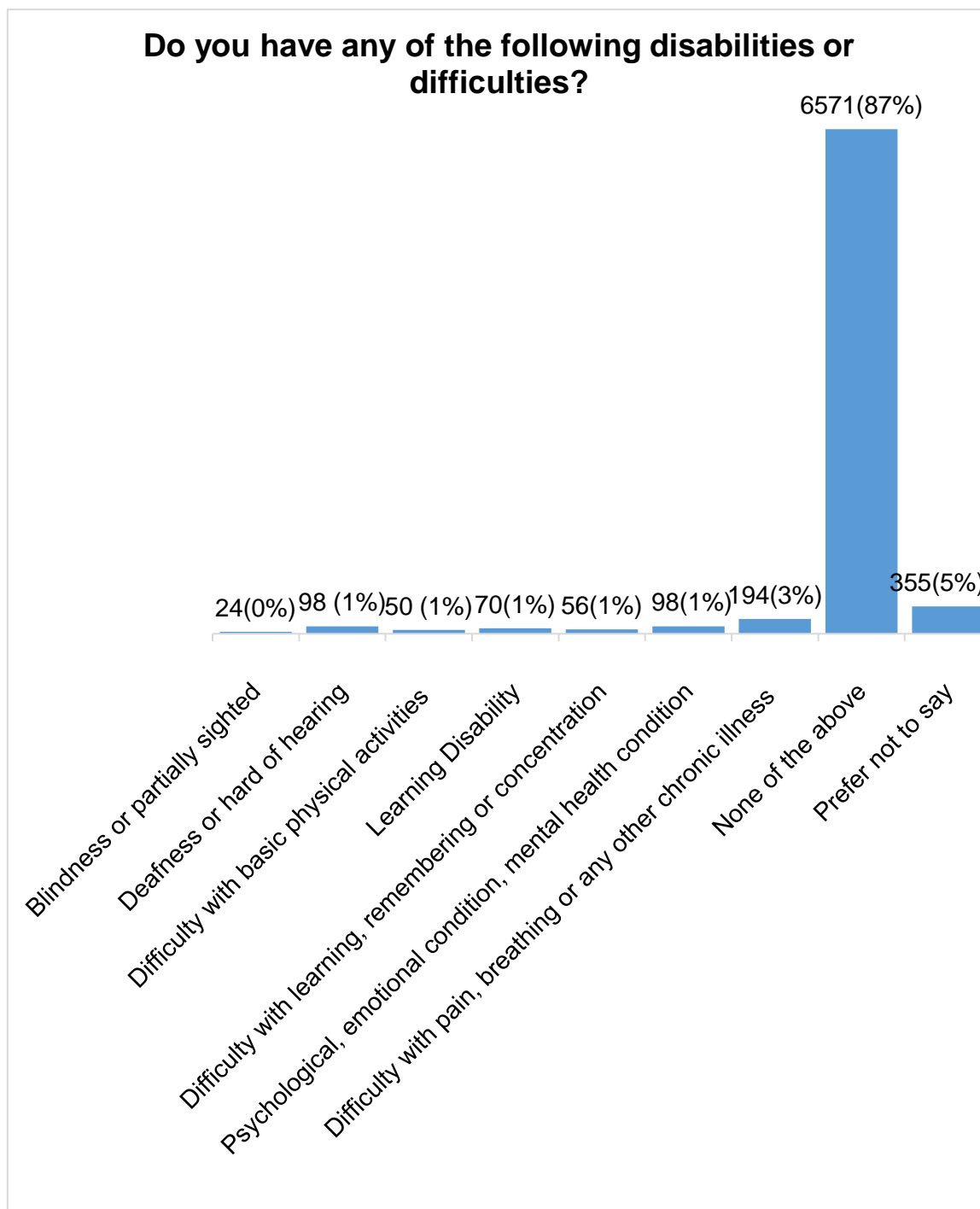
Table 12 Disability among respondents

2.1.10 Most of the responding SNAs reported not experiencing any disabilities or difficulties. About 3% of total respondents indicated having difficulty with pain, breathing or other chronic illness or condition. 1% SNAs suffered from psychological or emotional condition or a mental health condition, and another 1% indicated deafness or hard of hearing difficulties.

2.2 Workplace

How long have you been working as a Special Needs Assistant?

472 (6%)

958 (13%)

1095 (15%)

2004 (27%)

2872 (39%)

- This is my first year
- More than 1, but less than 3 years
- More than 3, but less than 10
- More than 10, but less than 20 years
- More than 20 years
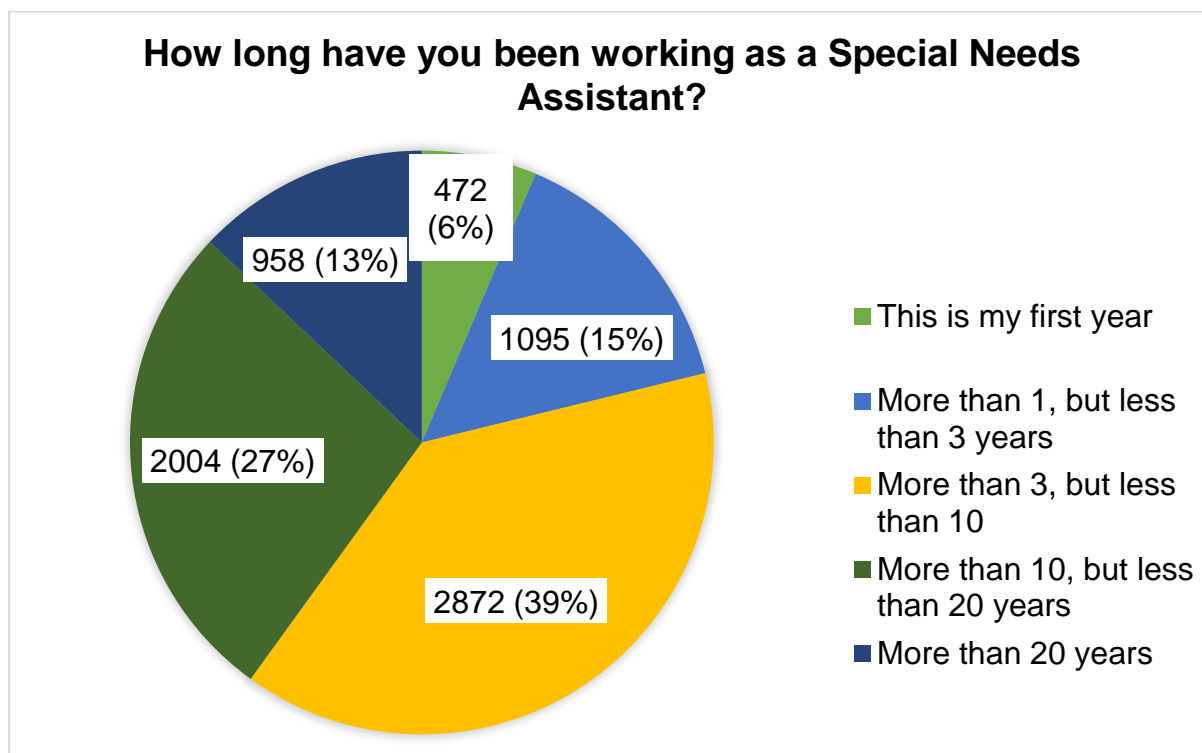
Table 13 Length of service as a SNA

2.2.1 Regarding the length of time respondents had been working as a SNA, the survey captured a diverse range of experiences.

2.2.2 As reflected in Table 13, while a small portion (6%) reported being in their first year as a SNA, the majority (79%) had been working in the profession for more than three years. Specifically, 39% had worked for more than three but less than 10 years, 27% for more than 10 but less than 20 years, and 13% for more than 20 years. Among all respondents, a few (6%) were new entrants. At the other end of the spectrum, 27% of respondents were in the sector for over ten years, but less than 20 years, and 13% of respondents having over twenty years of experience.

The length of time that you are with your current school

Category	Percentage	Count
This is my first year	12%	853
More than 1, but less than 3 years	18%	1297
More than 3, but less than 10	39%	2909
More than 10, but less than 20 years	22%	1661
More than 20 years	9%	664
I am not currently working	0%	17
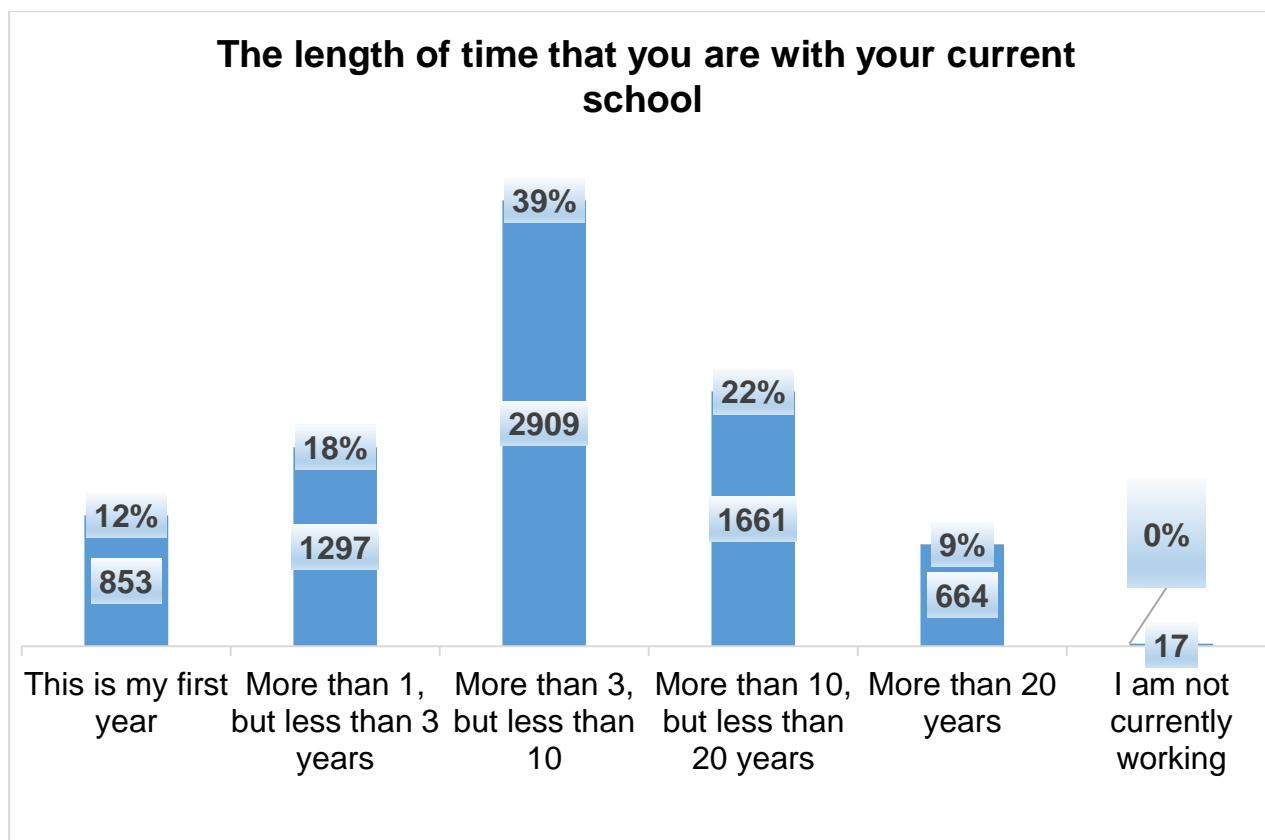
Table 14 Length of service in current school

2.2.3 When asked about their tenure in their current school, responses provided similar distribution patterns to those set out in Table 14.

2.2.4 While 12% reported being in their first year at their current school, the majority (88%) had been in their current school for more than one year. Specifically, 18% had been for more than 1 but less than 3, 39% had been in their current school for more than three but less than 10 years, 22% for more than 10 but less than 20 years, and 9% for more than 20 years.

Which of the following best describes your employment status?

- Full-time standard: 5319 (72%)
- Part-time standard: 705 (10%)
- Full-time temporary/fixed term: 396 (5%)
- Part-time temporary/fixed term: 267 (4%)
- 0.83 Contract: 522 (7%)
- Casual/Substitute: 192 (3%)
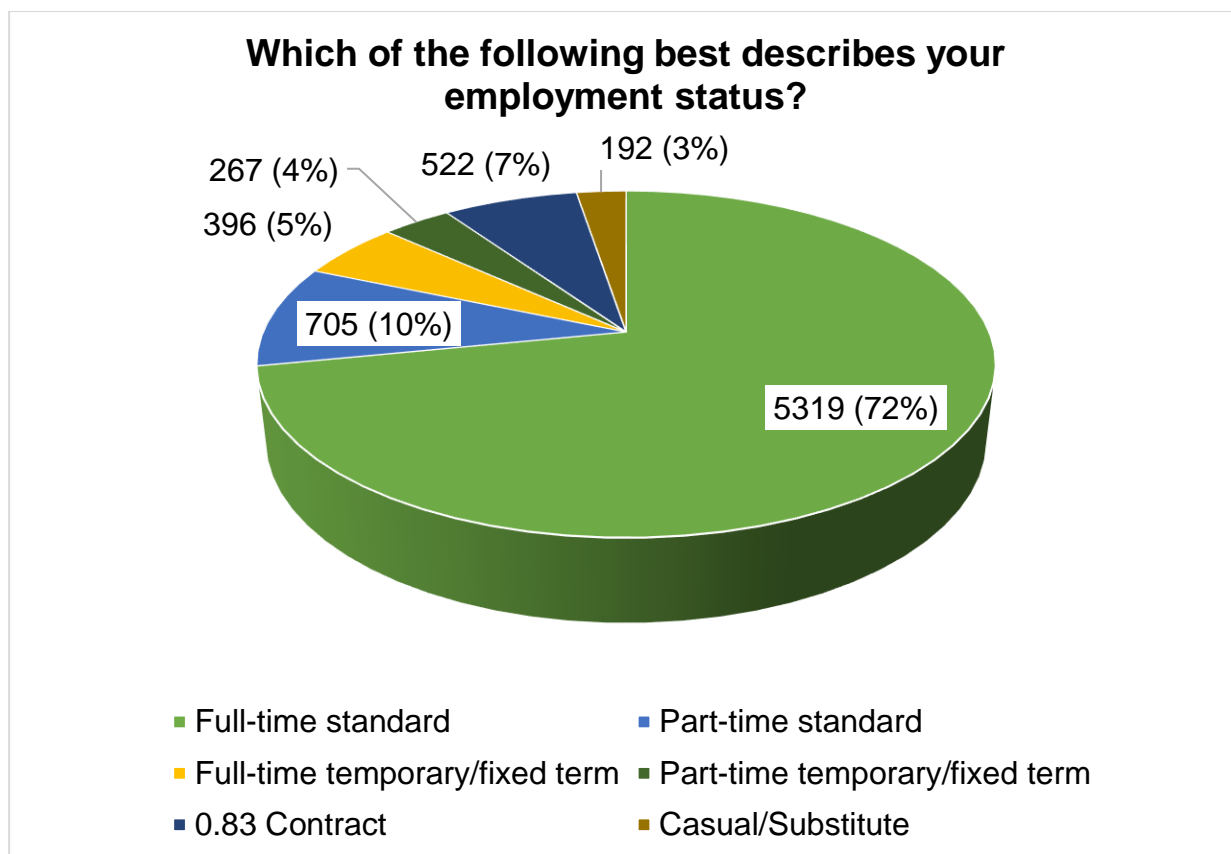
Table 15 Employment status

2.2.5 Many respondents (82%) reported being employed on a full-time basis, with 72% in full-time standard positions and 10% in full-time temporary positions. A smaller percentage (14%) reported part-time employment, with 10% in part-time standard roles and 4% in part-time temporary positions. Additionally, 7% of respondents reported being on a 0.83 contract, while 3% identified as casual workers.

Please indicate the number of hours you work per week on average?
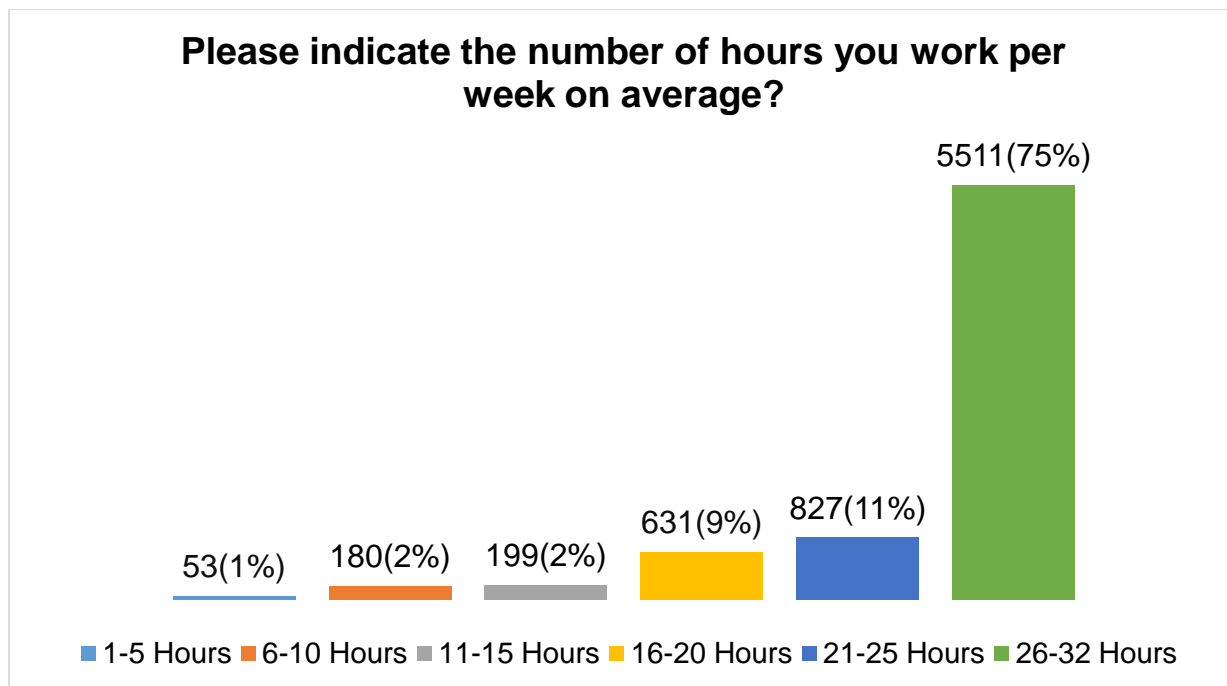
Table 16 Hours worked per week

2.2.6 Respondents reported varying average weekly working hours. A significant majority (75%) worked between 26 to 32 hours per week. Smaller percentages reported working fewer hours, with only 1% working 1-5 hours, 2% working 6-10 hours, 2% working 11-15 hours, 9% working 16-20 hours, and 11% working 21-25 hours per week.

Residence vs School Location

Chart showing School Location (green) and Residence (blue) by county.

Data labels (Residence, blue): Antrim 1, Armagh 4, Carlow 106, Cavan 100, Clare 188, Cork 959, Derry 1, Donegal 283, Down 2, Dublin 1798, Fermanagh 2, Galway 391, Kerry 215, Kildare 395, Kilkenny 137, Laois 161, Leitrim 40, Limerick 276, Longford 96, Louth 200, Mayo 185, Meath 337, Monaghan 70, Offaly 139, Roscommon 113, Sligo 94, Tipperary 253, Tyrone 5, Waterford 167, Westmeath 163, Wexford 282, Wicklow 242.

Data labels (School Location, green): Carlow 103, Cavan 90, Clare 168, Cork 980, Donegal 286, Down 2, Dublin 1957, Fermanagh 2, Galway 390, Kerry 206, Kildare 349, Kilkenny 129, Laois 163, Leitrim 34, Limerick 298, Longford 103, Louth 210, Mayo 183, Meath 281, Monaghan 57, Offaly 141, Roscommon 110, Sligo 99, Tipperary 247, Waterford 163, Westmeath 159, Wexford 273, Wicklow 222.

Legend: ──●── School Location   ──●── Residence

Table 17 County of residence vs county where school is located

2.2.7 In terms of county of residence relative to the county where they are employed findings in this area showed that 9 of the SNA respondents travelled to work from Northern Ireland. As can be seen from Table 17 the vast majority of respondents live and work in the same county. This differs for Dublin where 159 of respondents who work there do not live in the county, while 46 SNAs live in Kildare and travel to work in another county. 44 SNAs live in Meath and travel to work in another county.

What distance is your journey from home to work?
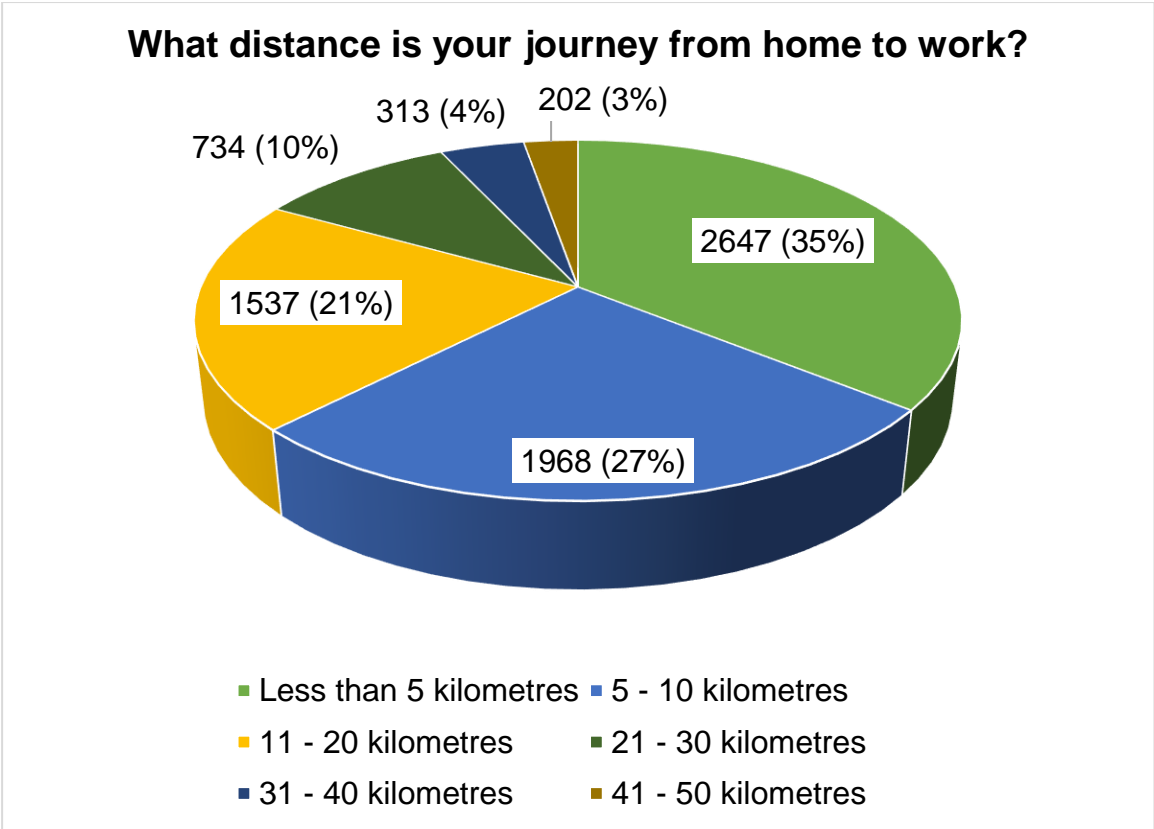
Table 18 Distance to work

2.2.8 As presented in Table 18 above, SNAs commuting distances from home varied, with the largest proportion (35%) traveling less than 5 kilometres to work. Another significant portion (27%) commuted 5-10 kilometres, followed by 21% traveling 11-20 kilometres. Smaller percentages of respondents reported longer commuting distances, with 10% traveling 21-30 kilometres, 4% traveling 31-40 kilometres, and 3% traveling 41-50 kilometres.

2.3 Educational Attainments and Training

What is the highest level of education you have completed to date?

3040 (41%)

1638 (22%)

1182 (16%)

680 (9%)

37 (1%)   329 (4%)   177 (2%)   317 (4%)   1 (0%)

| Primary Certificate | Junior Certificate or equivalent | NFQ Level 4 Leaving Certificate | NFQ Level 5 Leaving Certificate | NFQ Level 6 Advanced Certificate or Higher Certificate | NFQ Level 7 Ordinary Bachelor Degree | NFQ Level 8 Hons Bachelor Degree or Higher Diploma | NFQ Level 9 Masters Degree or Post Graduate Diploma | NFQ Level 10 Doctoral Degree or Higher Doctorate |

Table 19 Level of education

2.3.1 Results, as presented in Table 19 above, show a diverse range of education levels. The majority (70%) of all SNAs surveyed had obtained a qualification at the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)[5] Level 6 or above. Specifically, 41% reported having a NFQ Level 6 qualification, 9% NFQ Level 7, while 16% reported holding a NFQ Level 8 qualification and 4% a NFQ Level 9. Less than a quarter (22%) had a NFQ Level 5 qualification while one hundred SNAs (1%) were in the process for obtaining same. Only (5%) of respondents had the minimum qualification of a Junior Certificate.

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[5] The Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is a 10-level system used to describe qualifications in the Irish education and training system.

Please provide title of course and qualification obtained.

Table 20 Course and qualifications obtained. Word cloud

2.3.2 Table 20 reflects the qualification and title of courses the SNAs undertook. Responses as presented included: Diplomas in areas such as Special Needs, Childcare, Family Studies, Montessori Teaching, and Social Care Studies. As well as Nursery studies, Community and Youth studies and ACCA Accounting.

Please advise if you are currently in the process of qualifying for:

NFQ Level 4: 11 (0%)
NFQ Level 5: 100 (1%)
NFQ Level 6: 568 (8%)
NFQ Level 7: 207 (3%)
NFQ Level 8: 114 (2%)
NFQ Level 9/10: 62 (1%)
I am not currently studying: 6339 (85%)
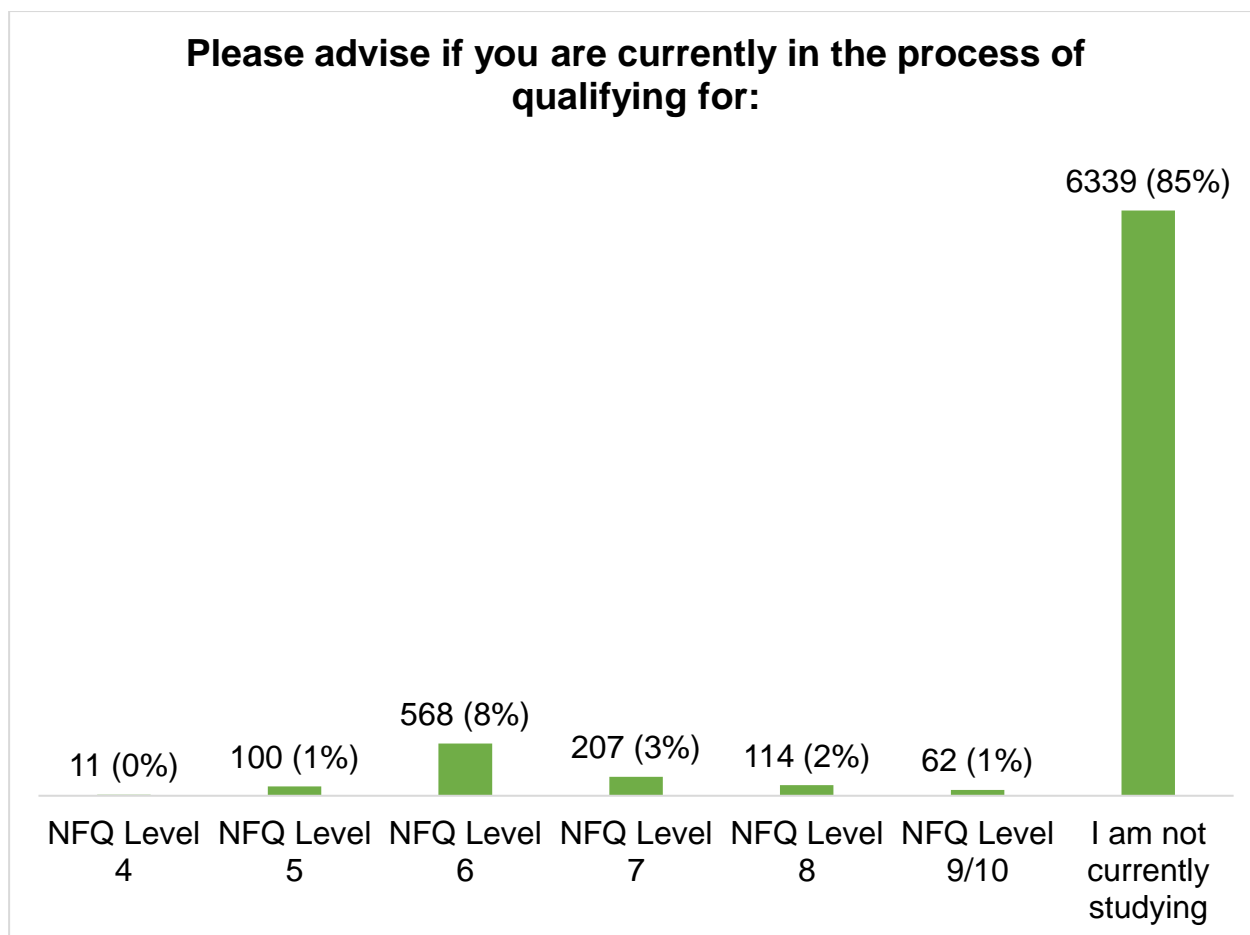
Table 21 Current studies

2.3.3 SNAs were also asked to indicate if they were in the process of attaining a NFQ qualification. Most SNAs were not doing so (85%). A small number of SNAs currently studying (14%) planned to obtain an award at NFQ Level 6 or higher.

Do you think that the Minimum Entry Qualification requirement "A level 3 qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications OR a minimum of three grade D's in the Junior Certificate, OR equivalent" for SNAs should be raised?

1519 (20%)

5882 (80%)

■ Yes ■ No
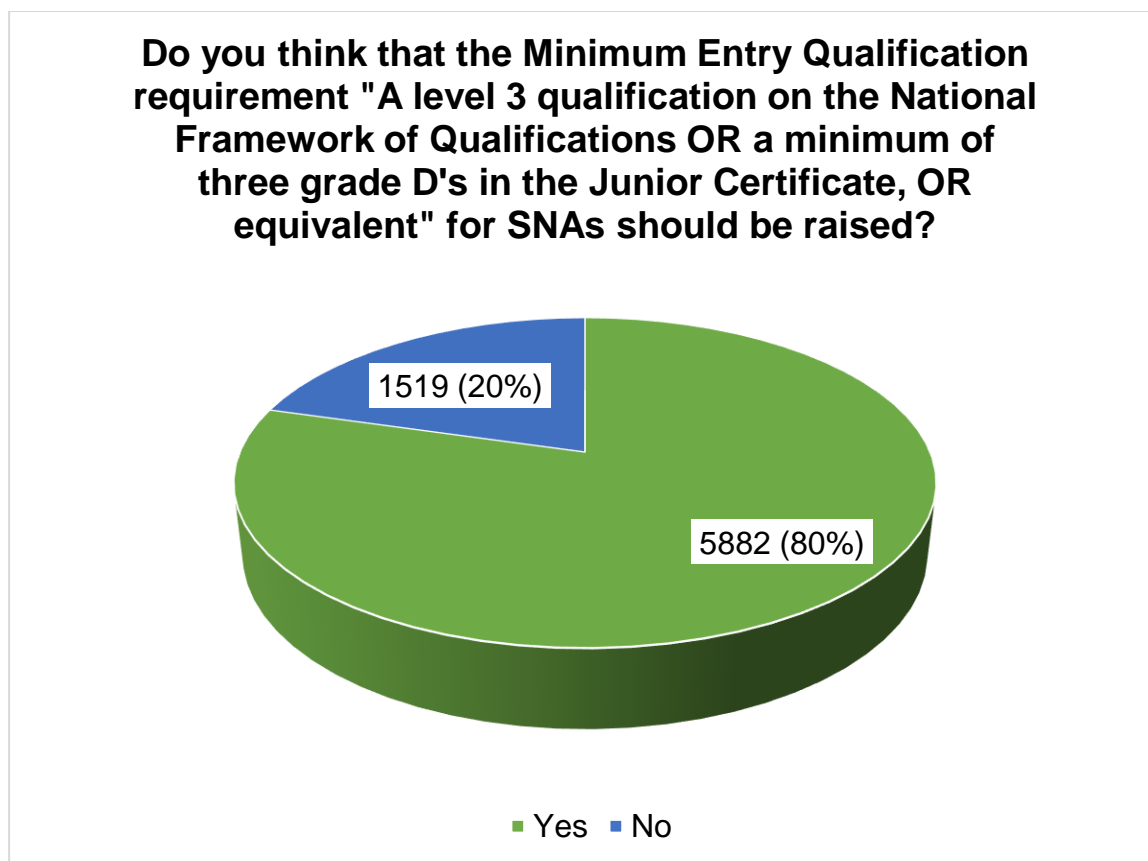
Table 22 Minimum entry qualification

2.3.4 The current minimum entry qualification requirement to become a SNA is set at level 3 NFQ or a minimum of 3 grade D's in the Junior Certificate or equivalent. The majority of respondents (see Table 22 above), at 80%, indicated they are in favour in raising this minimum requirement to become a SNA.

Do you hold a teaching qualification?

339 (5%)

7062 (95%)

Yes No
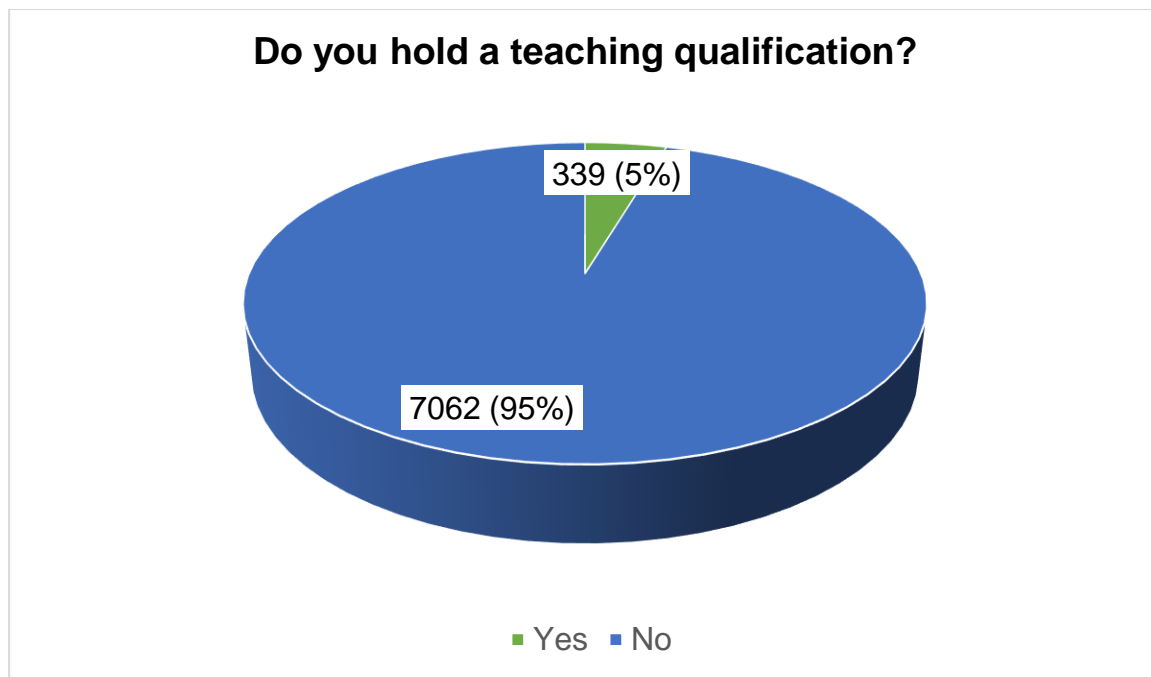
Table 23 Additional qualification in teaching

2.3.5 Respondents were asked to report if they held any relevant qualifications in other fields. As per Table 23, the vast majority of SNAs (95%) reported they do not hold a teaching qualification. 339 (5%) reported holding a teaching qualification. A follow up question was posted to determine the origin of their qualification.

If you answered "Yes" please select appropriate.

84 (25%)

255 (75%)

■ Yes, from Ireland   ■ Yes, from overseas
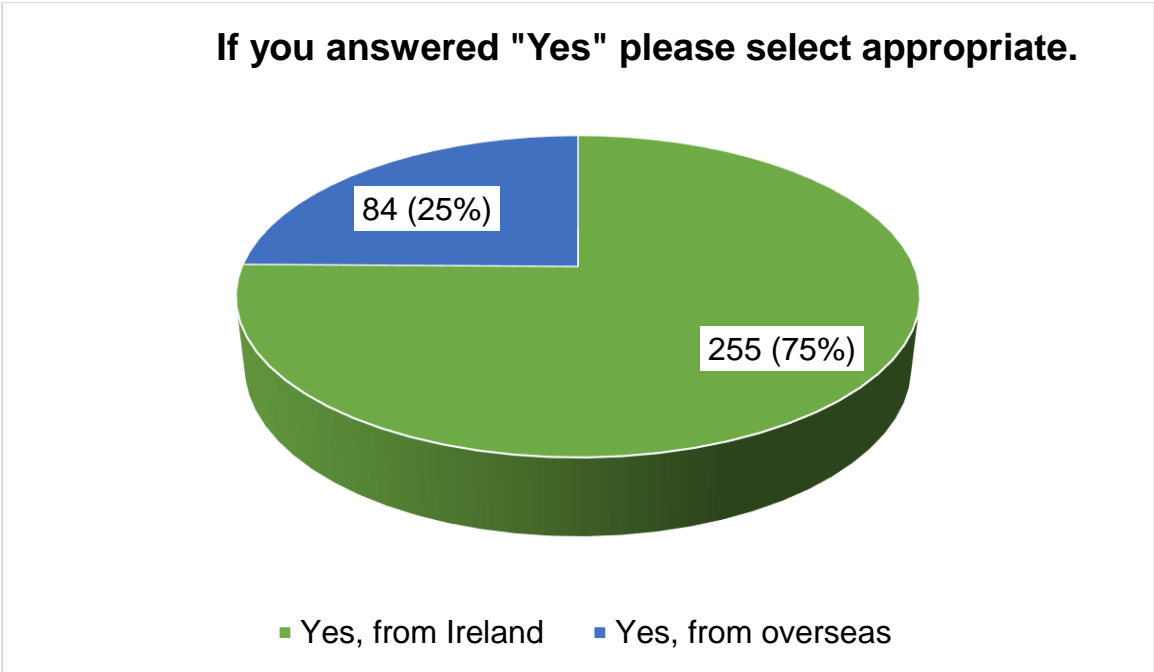
Table 24 Additional qualification in teaching

2.3.6 For the SNAs who do hold a teaching qualification, a significant majority (75%) obtained this qualification in Ireland (see Table 24).

Do you hold a qualification in Early Learning and Care?

2820 (38%)

4581 (62%)

■ Yes ■ No
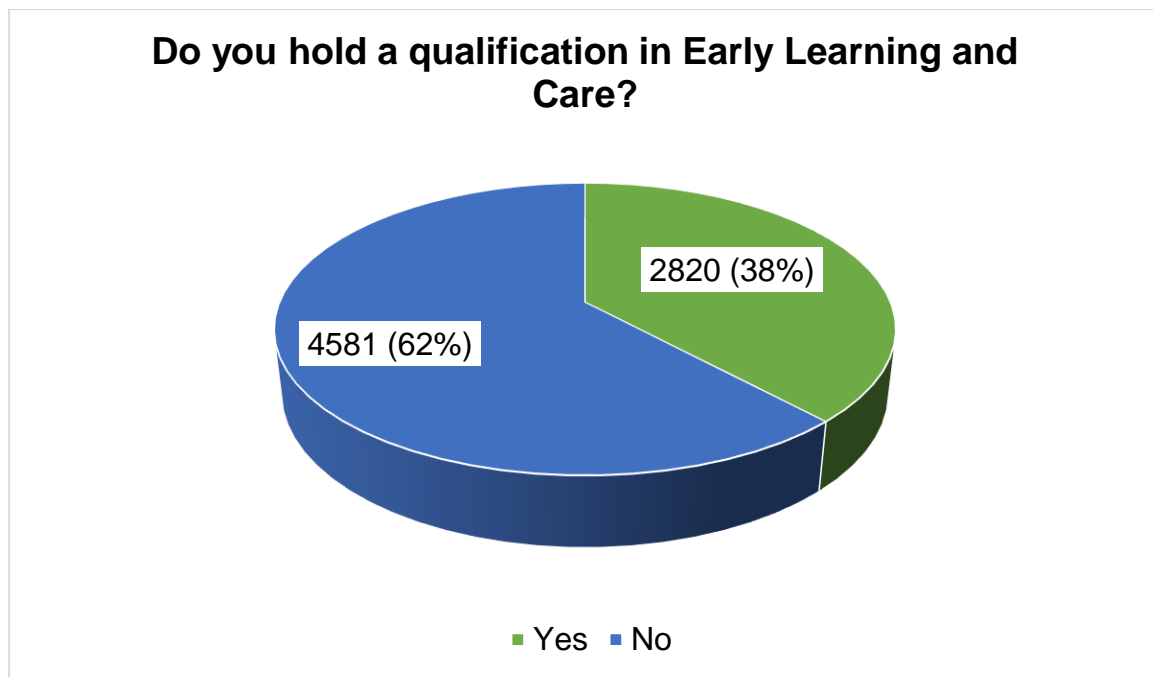
Table 25 Additional qualification in Early Learning and Care

2.3.7 A significant portion of respondents 4581 (62%) reported not having a qualification in Early Learning and Care (ELC) (see Table 25).

Did you work in Early Learning and Care prior to becoming a SNA?

2001 (27%)

5400 (73%)

■ Yes ■ No
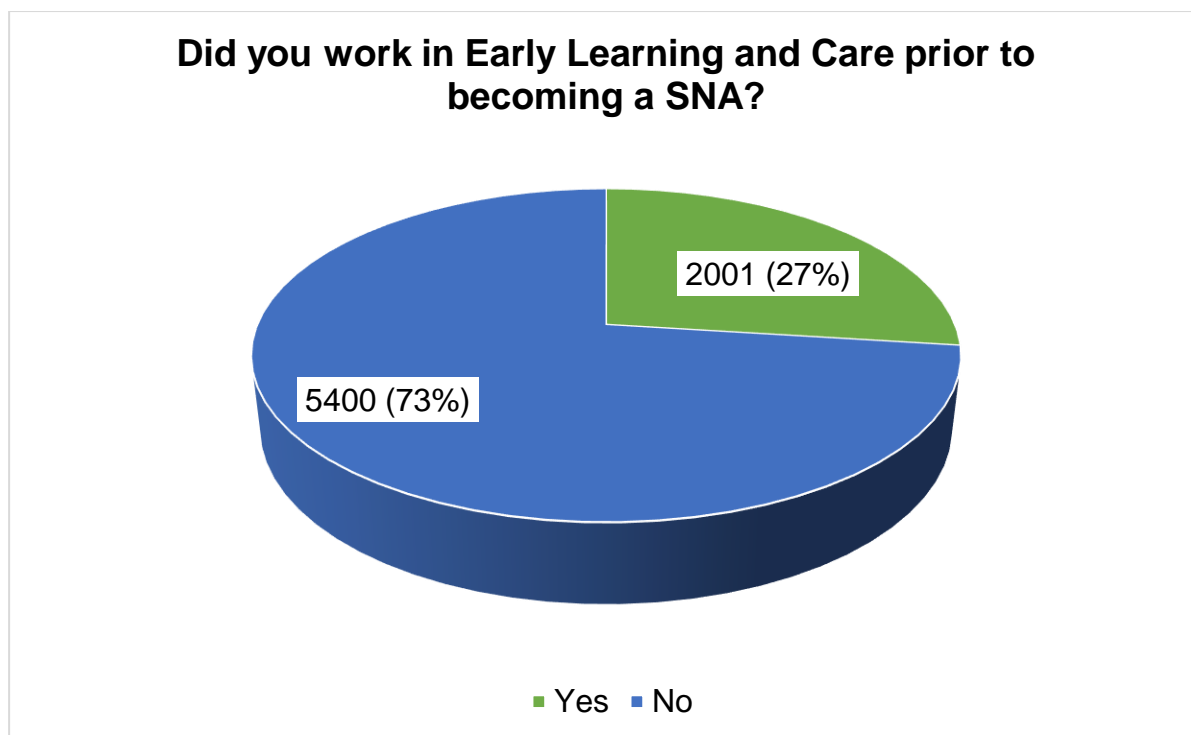
Table 26 Previous work experience in Early Learning and Care

2.3.8 The majority of SNAs, entered their roles without prior experience in the ELC sector. However, as presented in Table 26, 2001 (27%) of respondents had worked in ELC ahead of becoming a SNA.

2.3.9 The survey data indicates that 1691 (60%) of SNAs who reported having a qualification in ELC were part of the group with prior work experience in ELC, while 310 (7%) of those without ELC qualifications also fell into this category.

Previous employment in ELC settings

12 (1%)

269 (13%)

762 (38%)

586 (29%)

372 (19%)

- Full Day Care
- Part-time service
- ECCE Sessional Service
- SAAC only
- Childminder
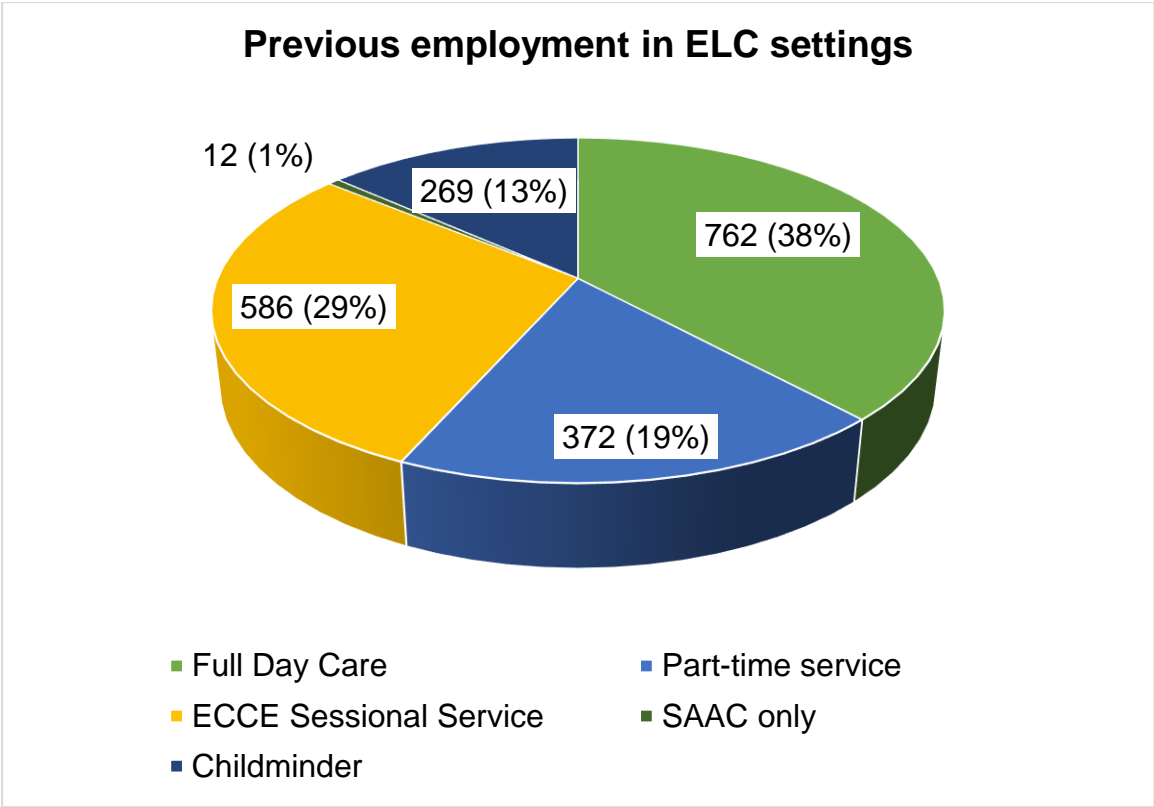
Table 27 Previous employment in Early Learning and Care settings

2.3.10 The survey further investigated the types of ELC settings that respondents were previously employed in. A significant majority (38%) were employed in a Full Day Care (see Table 27).

Reasons for leaving ELC
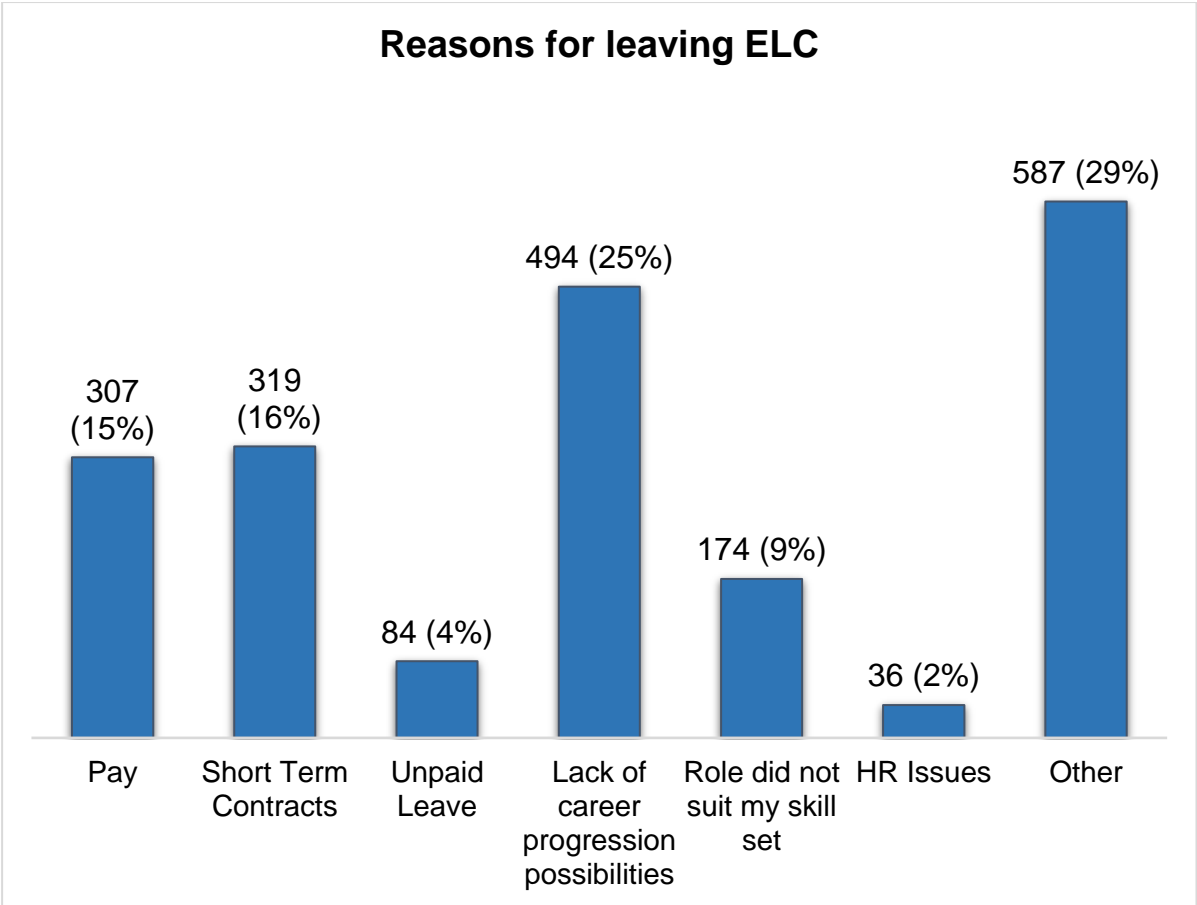
Table 28 Reasons for leaving Early Learning and Care sector

2.3.11 When asked about the reason for leaving positions in the ELC sector, a lack of career progression (25%) was one of the highest answers chosen, followed by short term contracts (16%) and rate of pay (15%) (see Table 28).

Do you regularly attend training/courses related to your role?

1993 (27%)

5408 (73%)

■ YES ■ NO
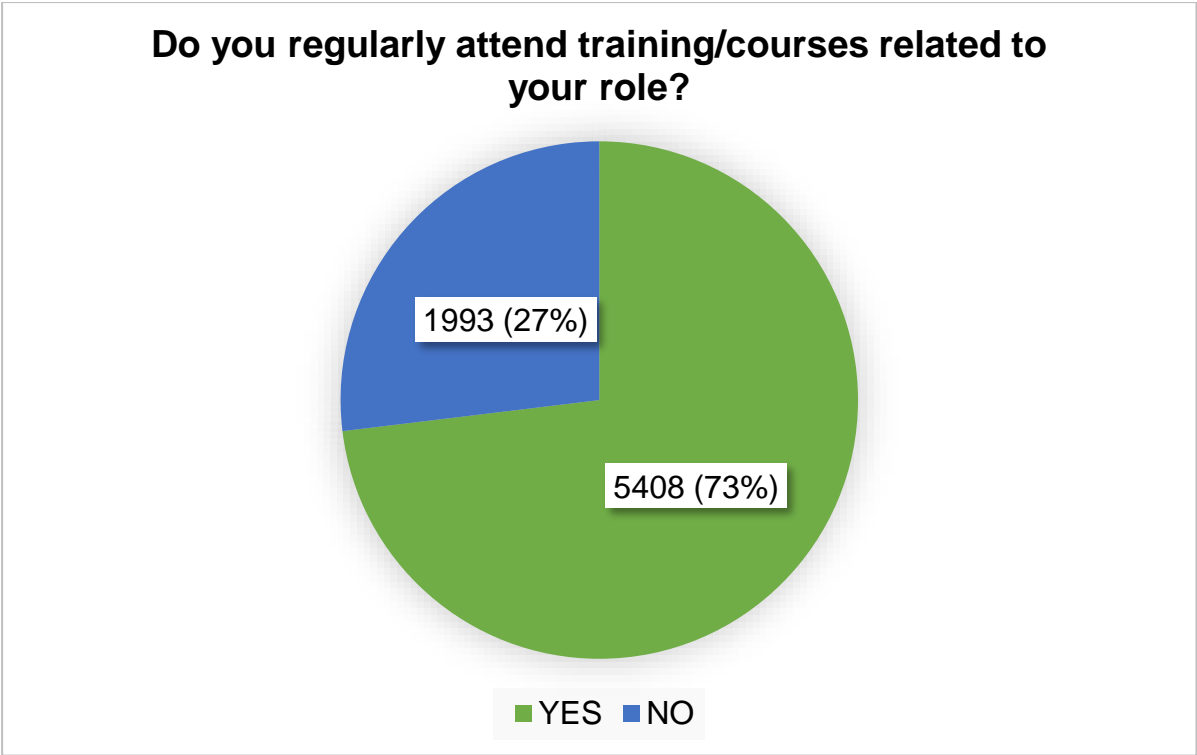
Table 29 Training and development

2.3.12 As reflected in Table 29, the majority of the workforce (73%) reported regularly attending training or courses related to their role, while 27% did not participate in such training.

If YES, please specify where funding was sourced for these courses?

Legend:
- ■ I pay for it myself
- ■ I pay for it myself and always get refund from the school
- ■ I pay for it myself and sometimes get refund from the school
- ■ The school I work in always pays
- ■ There was no cost associated with the course

Pie chart values:
- 1834 (34%)
- 1336 (25%)
- 1314 (24%)
- 702 (13%)
- 222 (4%)
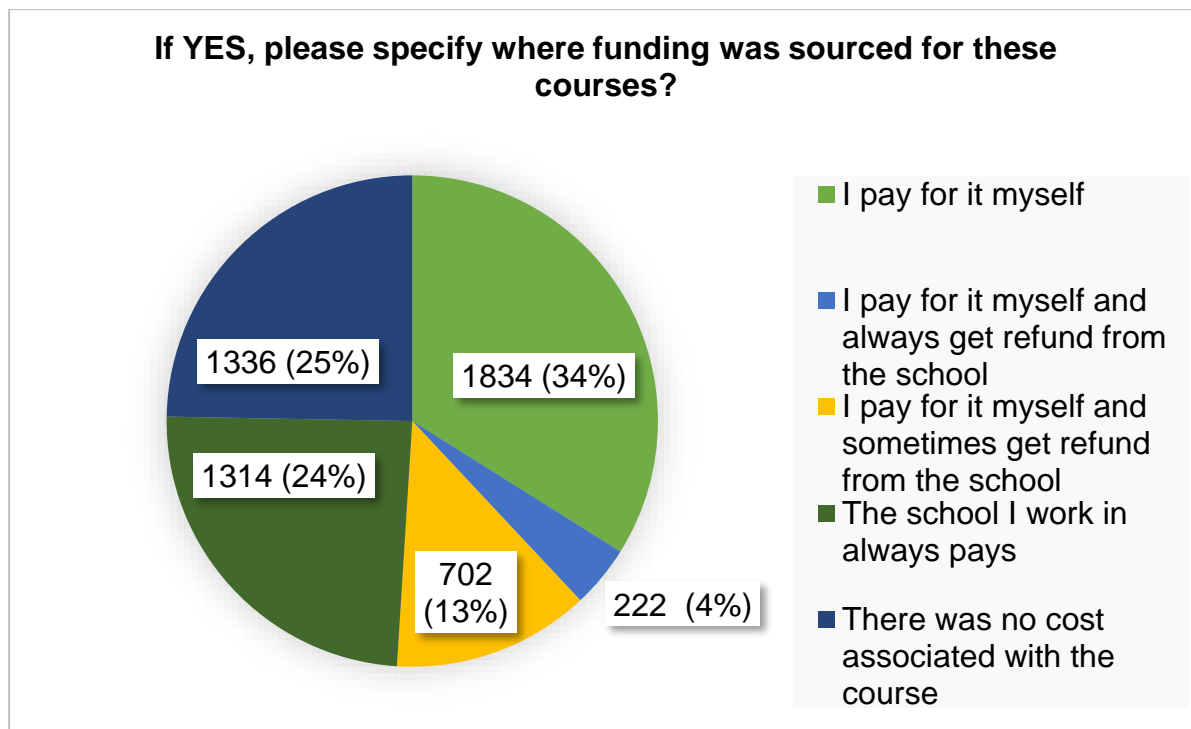
Table 30 Funding for training

2.3.13 As presented, in Table 30, funding sources for training and courses varied among respondents. The largest proportion (34%) reported paying for courses themselves, while 24% stated that the school they work in always covers the costs. Additionally, 25% reported no cost associated with the course, while smaller percentages indicated partial reimbursement from the school.

IF YOU ANSWERED NO: WHAT IS THE REASON?

Reason	Count	%
NO PERSONAL INTEREST	89	2%
FAMILY COMMITMENTS	444	11%
PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES	168	4%
LACK OF ACCESS TO INTERNET	20	1%
LACK OF COMPUTER SKILLS	68	2%
LACK OF INFORMATION ON WHAT IS AVAILABLE	654	17%
DISTANCE FROM COURSE VENUE	181	5%
FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS	335	9%
NO APPROPRIATE TRAINING AVAILABLE	473	12%
I CAN'T GET TIME OFF WORK OR TIME IN LIEU	667	17%
COURSES NOT SUITABLE	214	5%
TOO EXPENSIVE/SCHOOL WON'T FUND	631	16%

Table 31 Reasons for not participating in training

2.3.14 As previously stated in table 29 27% of SNAs don't regularly attend training. Table 31 indicates that the lack of time off/time in lieu, lack of information around what is available, and the cost associated as the top three reasons reported by these SNAs for not participating in any professional development courses.

To what extent are you satisfied with the availability of training opportunities to support your role as a SNA?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
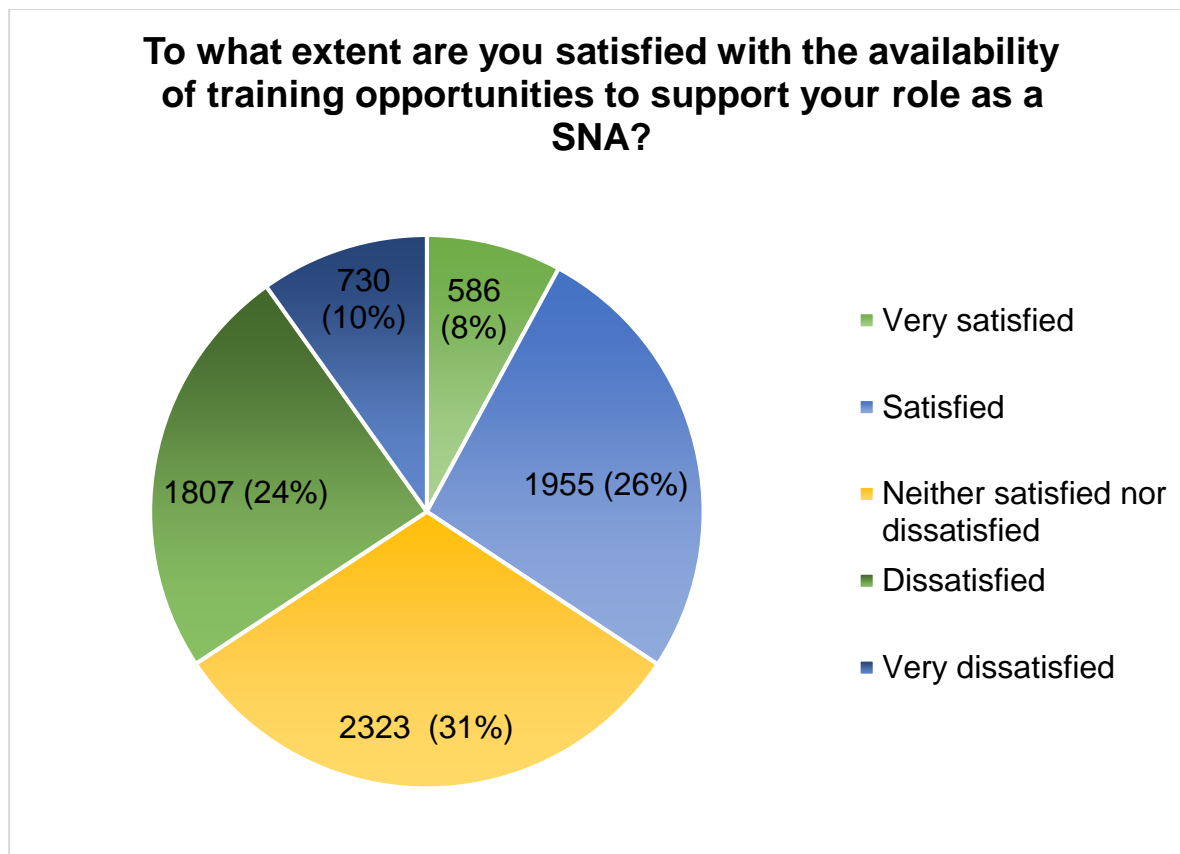
Table 32 Satisfaction levels with the availability of training

2.3.15 The SNAs were asked about their satisfaction levels with the availability and quality of training opportunities to support their role.

2.3.16 As reflected, in Table 32 above, responses varied. While 34% expressed satisfaction with the availability of training (26% satisfied, 8% very satisfied), a significant portion (34%) expressed dissatisfaction (24% dissatisfied, 10% very dissatisfied). 31% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

To what extent are you satisfied with the quality/standard of any training that you may have received to date for your role as SNA?

327 (5%)	
899 (12%)	
1026 (14%)	
1879 (25%)	
3270 (44%)	

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
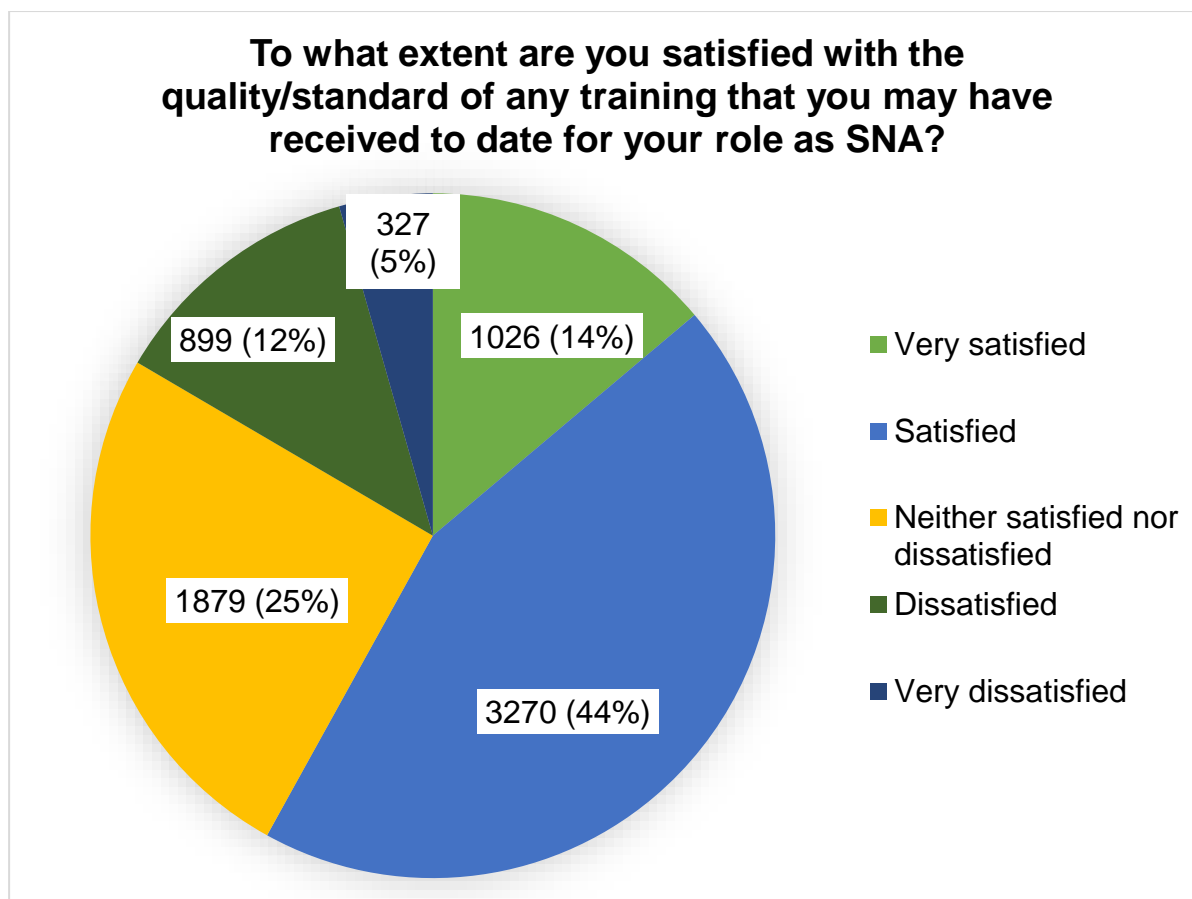
Table 33 Satisfaction levels with the quality/standard of training received

2.3.17 The majority of respondents (58%) expressed satisfaction with the quality of training received for their role (44% satisfied, 14% very satisfied), while 17% expressed dissatisfaction (12% dissatisfied, 5% very dissatisfied), and 25% remained neutral (see Table 33).

Have you undertaken any formal job specific training in your role as a SNA (other than SNA Diploma training course) e.g. MAPA, PECS, administering medicine etc?

3670 (50%)   3731 (50%)

■ YES ■ NO
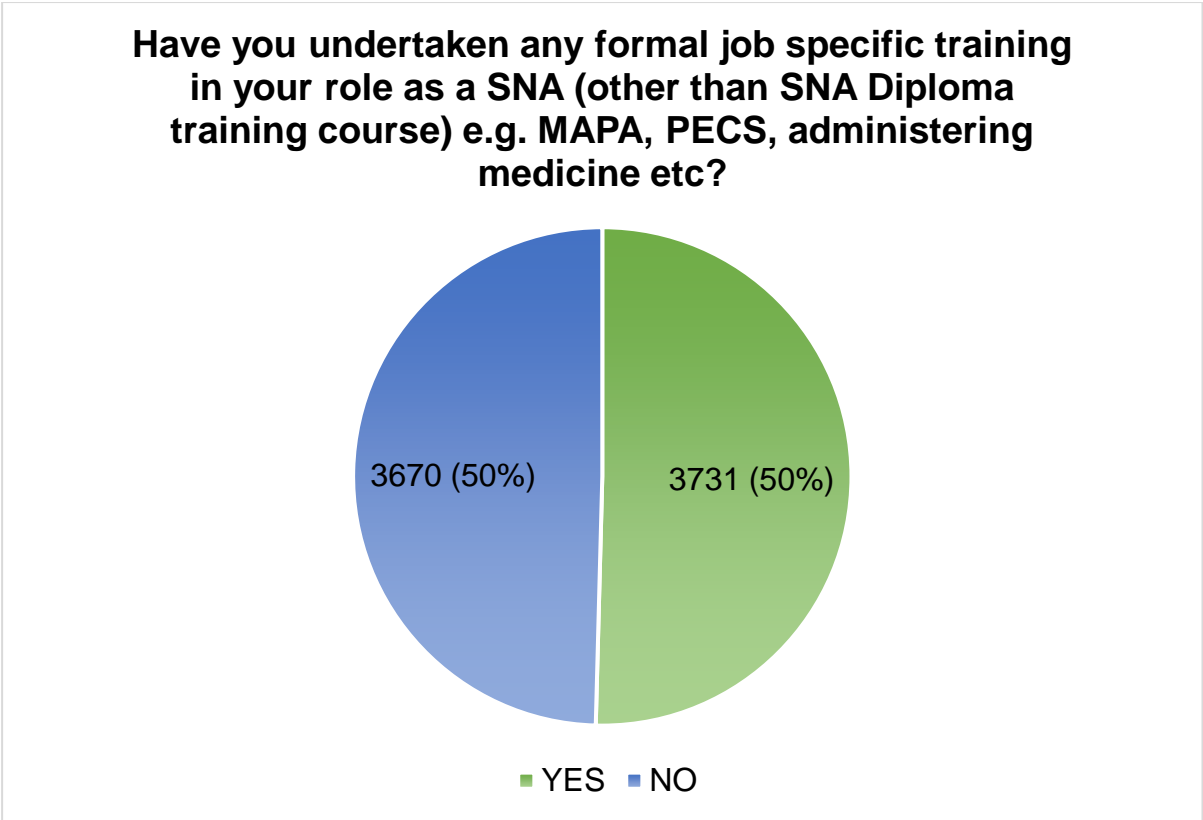
Table 34 Formal job specific training completed by SNAs

2.3.18 Beyond initial qualifications, participants outlined their involvement in role-specific training. Approximately almost half of respondents reported undertaking formal job specific training.

List of trainings undertaken specific to the SNA role

First Aid: 884
PECS: 758
LÁMH: 755
Epilepsy: 580
MAPA: 515
Diabetes: 508
Autism: 406
Manual Handling: 355
Challenging Behaviour: 340
Adminstering Medicine: 276
Sign Language: 106
Peg Feeding: 95
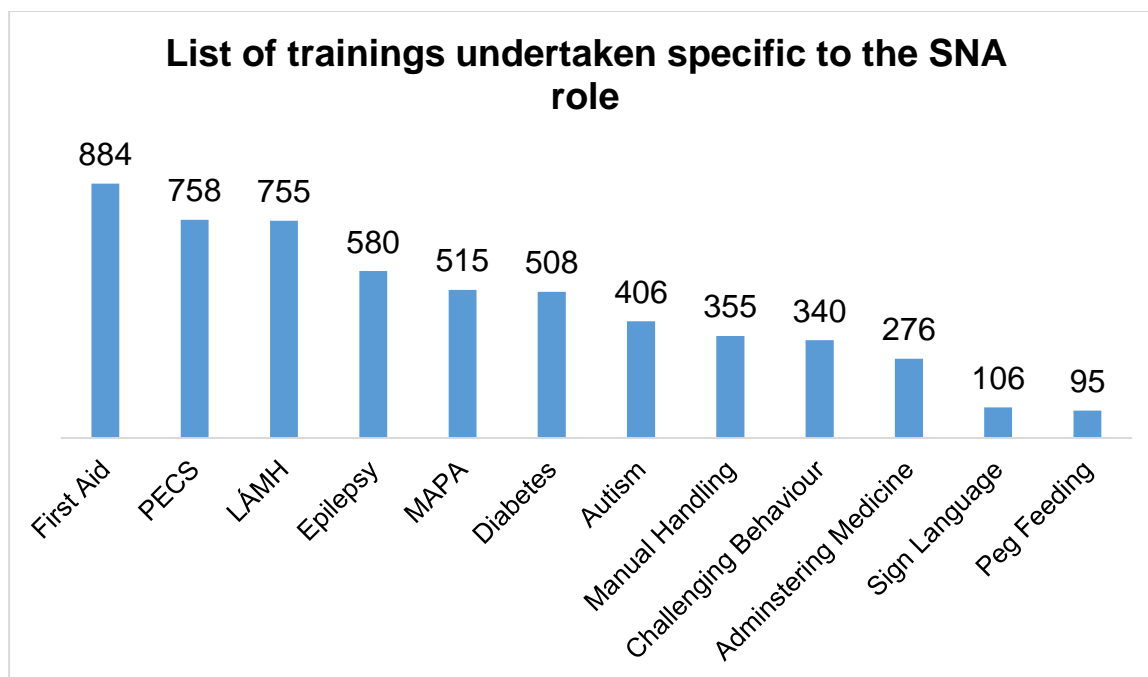
Table 35 List of job specific trainings undertaken by SNAs

2.3.19 Table 35 shows detailed list of training specific to the SNA role that respondents participated in.[6]

Table 36 Word cloud of training specific to the SNA role

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[6] Other trainings undertaken in descending order: CPI, EpiPen, Brain Calm, Catheterisation, ADHD, Sensory Needs, CPR, Assistive Technology, Studio 3, Defibrillator Training, Dyslexia, Numicon, Crisis Management, Down Syndrome, MAPS, TEACCH, Play Therapy, PCM(A), Nurture Training, Tracheostomy, ABA, Child Protection, Six bricks, Anxiety, CALMS, Braille, Speech and Language, Visual Impairment, Low Arousal, Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Hanen, Motor Skills, Intimate Care, EFR, Resuscitation, More than words, Auto Injector Training, PETMA, Self-Harm

2.4 National Training Programme for SNAs

2.4.1 The 2018 Review of the Special Needs Assistant Scheme published by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) includes a recommendation for the provision of a national online training programme for existing SNAs who do not have the requisite level of relevant training. Arising from this recommendation the Department tendered for providers and a four-year contract was awarded to University College Dublin (UCD) School of Education to design and deliver a new national online training programme (National Training Programme) for SNAs employed in schools. The National Training Programme is fully funded by the Department and delivered at no cost to the SNA. To date approximately 2,200 SNAs have completed the National Training Programme and feedback overall to the NCSE/UCD has been positive.

Have you completed the National Training Programme for SNAs currently delivered online by UCD?

1333 (18%)

6068 (82%)

■ YES ■ NO
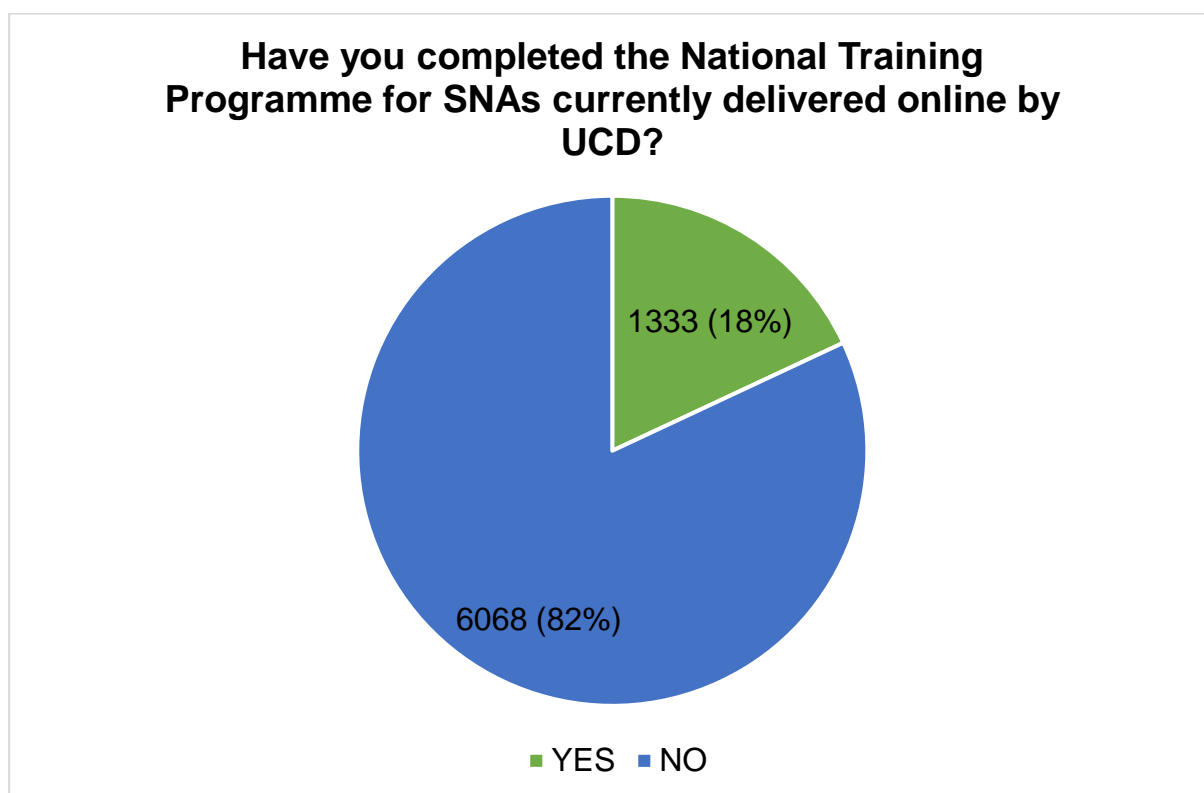
Table 37 UCD National Training Programme for SNAs

2.4.2 The survey asked respondents to advise if they had completed the National Training Programme for SNAs delivered online by UCD. 18% (1333) of respondents advised that they had completed it, and 82% had not.

If 'No' which of the following option best describe your reason for not participating in the course?

Reason	Percentage	Count
Other Please specify	15%	916
No personal interest	7%	423
I do not have facilities to complete online training	2%	95
I have already achieved level 6 qualifications or above	39%	2340
I feel that it is beyond my ability	1%	78
I haven't heard of this course	16%	966
Time constraints	21%	1250

Table 38 Reasons for not participating in the course

2.4.3 As presented, in Table 38, those who answered 'No', reported that they already obtained a NFQ Level 6 qualification. The other main reasons chosen for not participating in the National Training Programme related to time constraints (21%) and the lack of awareness of the course.

TABLE 39 Reasons for not applying for SNA National Training Programme

"No Progression in the job after completing it"
"You gain knowledge but no prospects or pay increase"
"I feel I have gained the experience I need through the SNA course I've done & through the practical & refresher courses"
"A huge amount of work for no recognition"

"SNA 15 years and feel my experience outweighs this course"
"I am working in this job almost 17 yrs- feel that I know what it's about"
"After 18-years in the role, no point as I am looking to retire on or before 60"
"Almost 20 yrs working as a sna and feel my level of expertise outlays the qualification for this course"
"After so many years experience I don't know if this course would benefit me."
"Have level 8 degrees and have completed SNA course years ago"
"In the role for over 20 years and feel I have enough knowledge to do what I am allowed to do within the school."

"I already have a level 9"
"SNAs receive no days/hrs in lieu of training outside of school similar to teachers EPV days."
"I feel SNAs are not valued and until it is acknowledged as a profession I have no intention of giving up my time"
"I would like to do it if there was a job promotion or pay rise"

"Started course but found I did not have the time to complete assignments as I am working full-time and have a family."
"I was caring for a family member. Many who have completed it felt it went on too long and was a big commitment"
"A lot of time to invest for very little return"

"I've been sent on many training courses and there is no benefit for me"
"I'm at the highest pay rate for over 4 years now and am not doing any more."
"We are not paid very well for the responsibility & workload that we undertake"
"SNAs need more monetary & professional recognition."
"A lot of work to this course and no reward for me."
"It is of no benefit as the pay does not increase and it isn't recognised enough by the Dept."

"If I could go onto a level 8 in my job I would complete the UCD course beforehand."
"I would love if there were progression courses for SNAS that would give us more opportunities to advance in our careers"
"Given the workload , it deserves more than level 6 accreditation"
"If I was going to do a course with that workload I would do something else that would give a better qualification or give me more options"

Table 39 Reasons for not applying for SNA National Training Programme

2.4.4 There were a variety of reasons provided as to why respondents did not apply for the National Training Programme. These have been summarised under different themes in Table 39. The main reasons given were lack of time/no incentive or career progression/already have attained at or above this level.

Title of course and institution

- ■ Progressive College Special Needs Assistant
- ■ Portobello Institute Special Needs Assistant
- ■ St Angelas Certificate in Special Educational Needs for Special Needs Assistants
- ■ Chevron Training Childcare Online
- ■ College of Management and IT Special Needs Assistant
- ■ Chevron Training Assisting Children with Special Needs
- ■ Mallow College of Further Education Special Needs Assistant

Table 40 Training completed by SNAs

2.4.5 More than half (54%) of respondents also indicated they completed courses other than the National Training Programme for SNAs[7]. Table 40 displays some of the main courses and institutions in which they obtained qualifications.
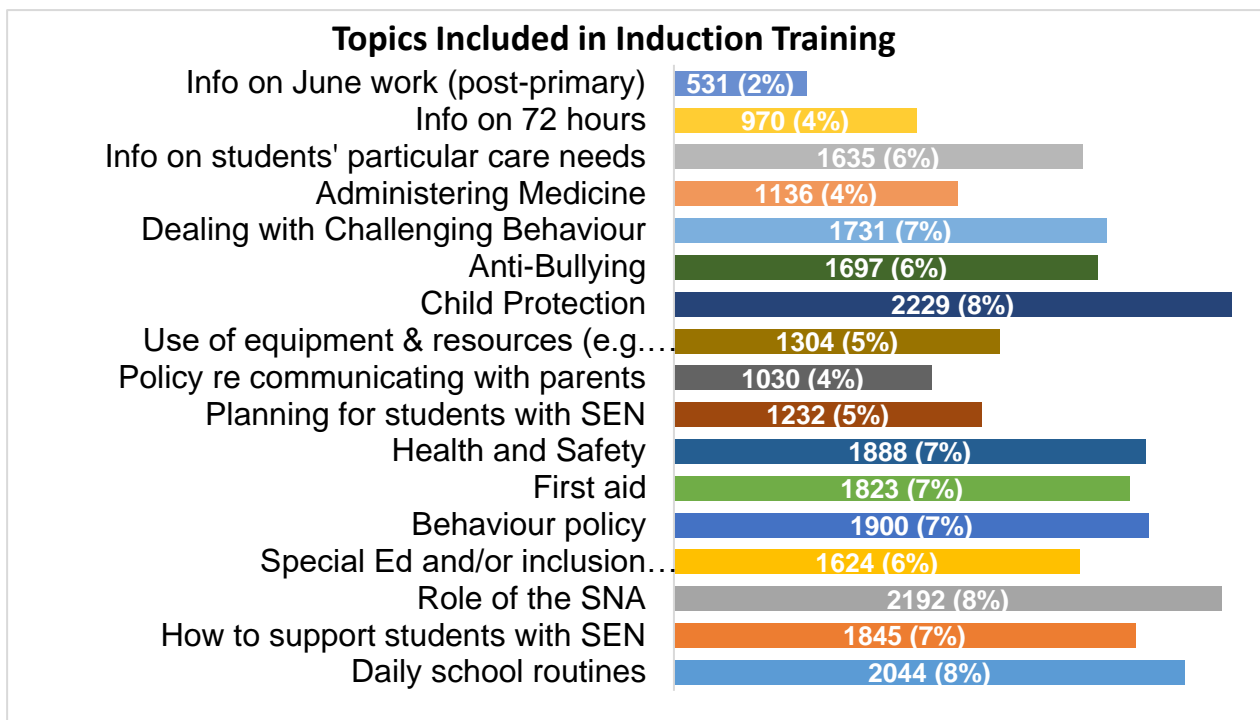
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[7] The list of institutions where SNAs obtained their qualifications: ADHD Ireland, Atlantic Technological University, Ballyfermot College of further education Dublin, Barrow Training, Blackrock College of further education, Cabinteely Community College, Carlow IT, Chevron College, Church of Ireland College, CMIT, Colaiste Dhulaigh, College of Progressive Education, Community Health services, Cork College, Cork College of commerce, Dorset College, Dundrum College of Further Education, Dungarvan Technical College, Education Support Centres Ireland, Frobel College, Galway Community College, Galway Institute of Technology, Greenhills College, Hibernia College, ICEP Europe Dyslexia, Kerry College of Further Education, Kylemore College Ballyfermot, Leeds Beckett University, Liberties College Dublin, Mallow College for Further Education, Mary Immaculate College Limerick, Maynooth University, Midlands School of childcare, Ó Fiaich Institute of Further Education Dundalk, The Open College, Portobello school Dublin, Progressive College Dublin, Queens University Belfast, Rossan College Letterkenny, St. Angela Sligo, Trinity College, Waterford Institute of Technology

2.5 Induction Training

Have you received induction training as a SNA?

2647 (36%) — YES

4754 (64%) — NO
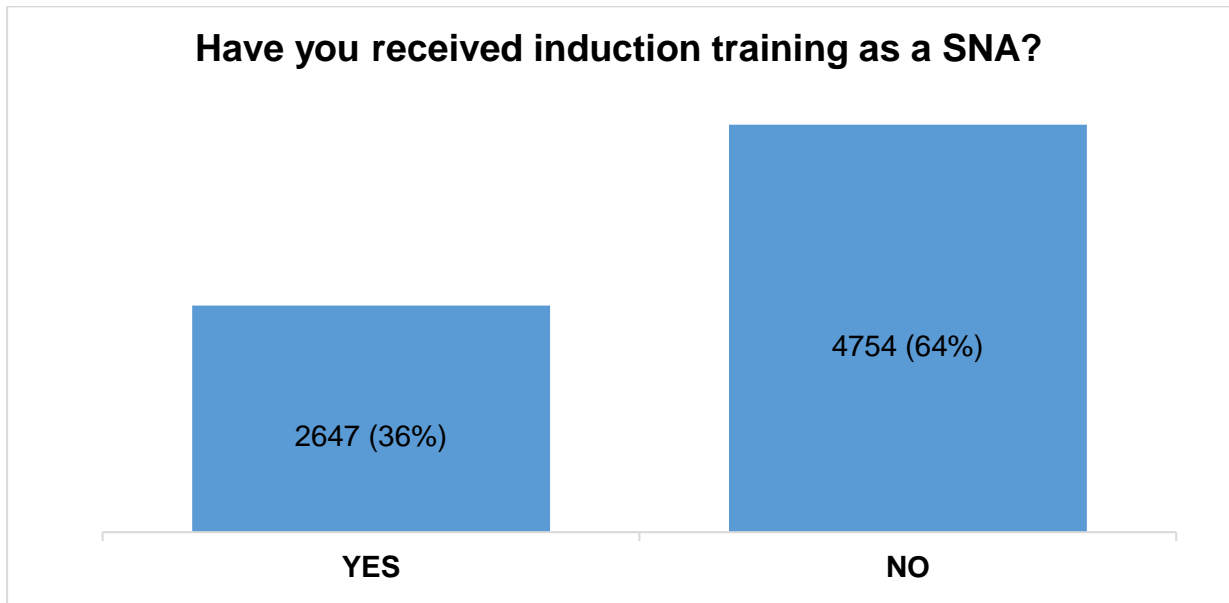
Table 41 Induction training

2.5.1 36% of SNAs surveyed reported receiving induction training during their employment, while the majority (64%) did not receive any induction training.

Topics Included in Induction Training

Topic	Value
Info on June work (post-primary)	531 (2%)
Info on 72 hours	970 (4%)
Info on students' particular care needs	1635 (6%)
Administering Medicine	1136 (4%)
Dealing with Challenging Behaviour	1731 (7%)
Anti-Bullying	1697 (6%)
Child Protection	2229 (8%)
Use of equipment & resources (e.g.…	1304 (5%)
Policy re communicating with parents	1030 (4%)
Planning for students with SEN	1232 (5%)
Health and Safety	1888 (7%)
First aid	1823 (7%)
Behaviour policy	1900 (7%)
Special Ed and/or inclusion…	1624 (6%)
Role of the SNA	2192 (8%)
How to support students with SEN	1845 (7%)
Daily school routines	2044 (8%)

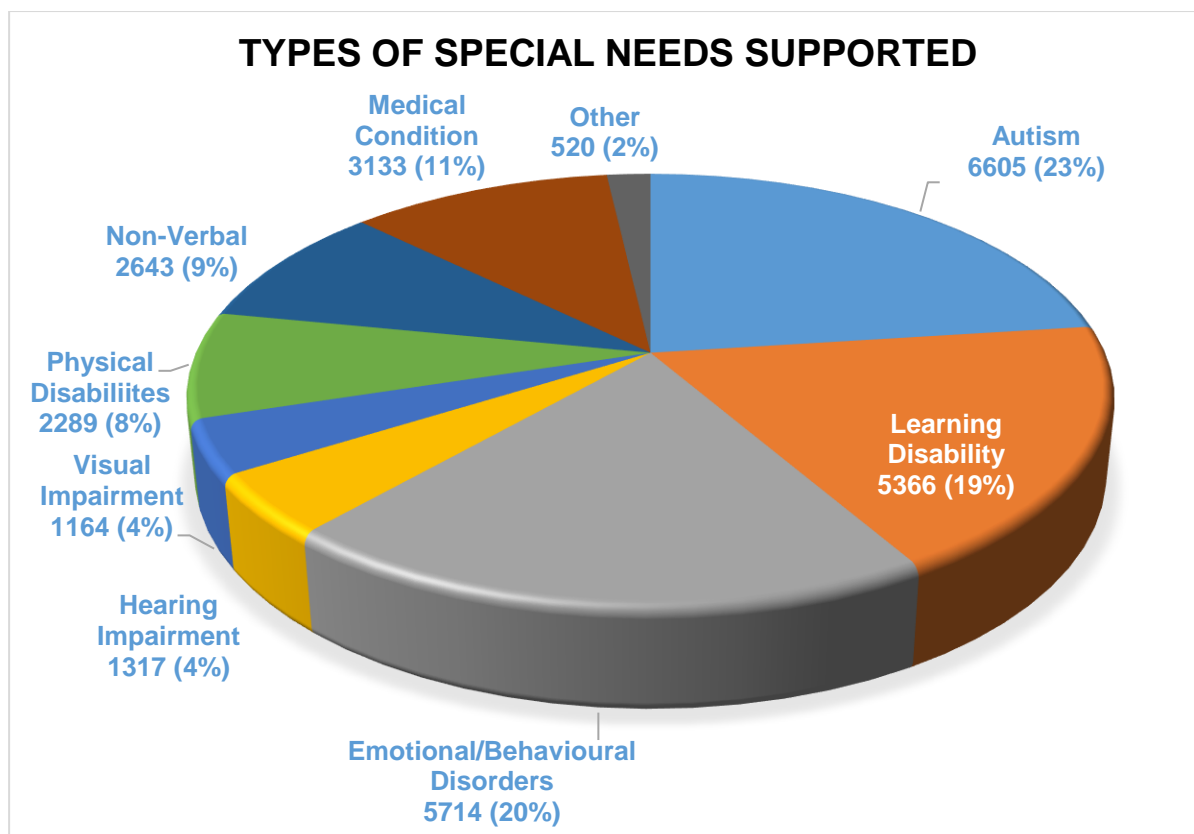*Table 42 Topics included in the induction training*

2.5.2 Those SNAs who received induction training stated that the following topics were covered: Child protection training and training on the role of the SNA scored the highest, followed by daily school routines, behaviour policy, health and safety and how to support students with SEN.

## How many students are you currently assigned to support?

4175 (56%)

2675 (36%)

551 (7%)

■ 1 student   ■ 2 - 5 students   ■ 6-10 students
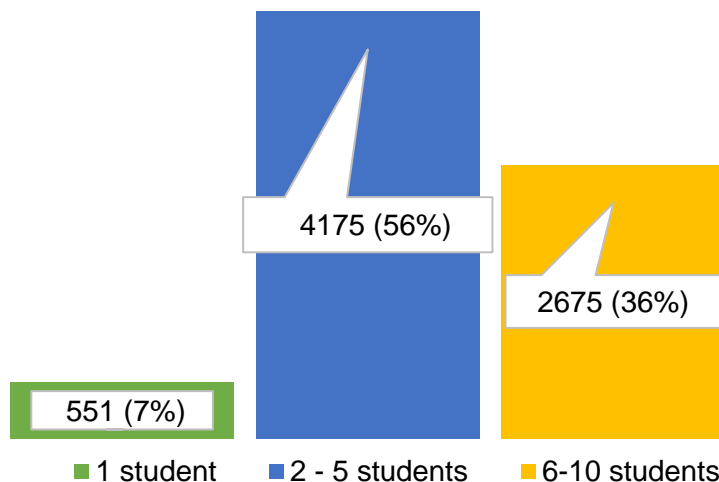
Table 43 Number of students assigned

2.5.3 Regarding the number of students SNAs were assigned to support, the majority reported (see Table 43) supporting 2-5 students (56%), followed by 6-10 students (36%), and a smaller percentage supporting only one student (7%).

TYPES OF SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORTED

Medical Condition 3133 (11%)

Other 520 (2%)

Autism 6605 (23%)

Non-Verbal 2643 (9%)

Physical Disabiliites 2289 (8%)

Learning Disability 5366 (19%)

Visual Impairment 1164 (4%)

Hearing Impairment 1317 (4%)

Emotional/Behavioural Disorders 5714 (20%)

Table 44 Types of special education needs supported

2.5.4 The findings illustrated in Table 44 indicate that SNAs support students with a variety of special needs. The majority of SNAs were supporting students with Autism (23%). The next highest scored categories were Emotional/Behavioural disorders (20%) and Learning Disabilities (19%).
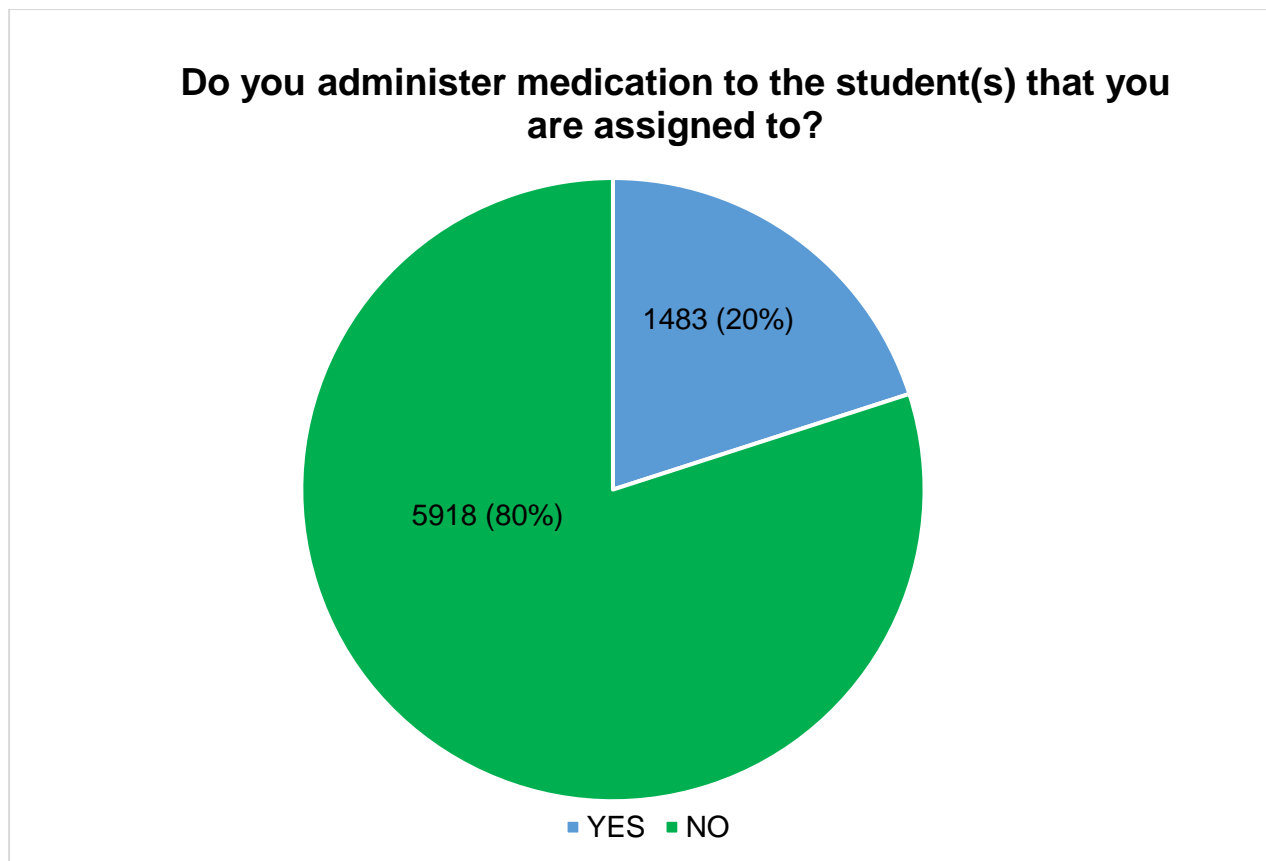
Table 45 Administration of medication

2.5.5 When asked about administering medication to the students they support, 20% of SNAs reported administering medication in their current role, while the majority (80%) stated they do not administer medication (see Table 45).
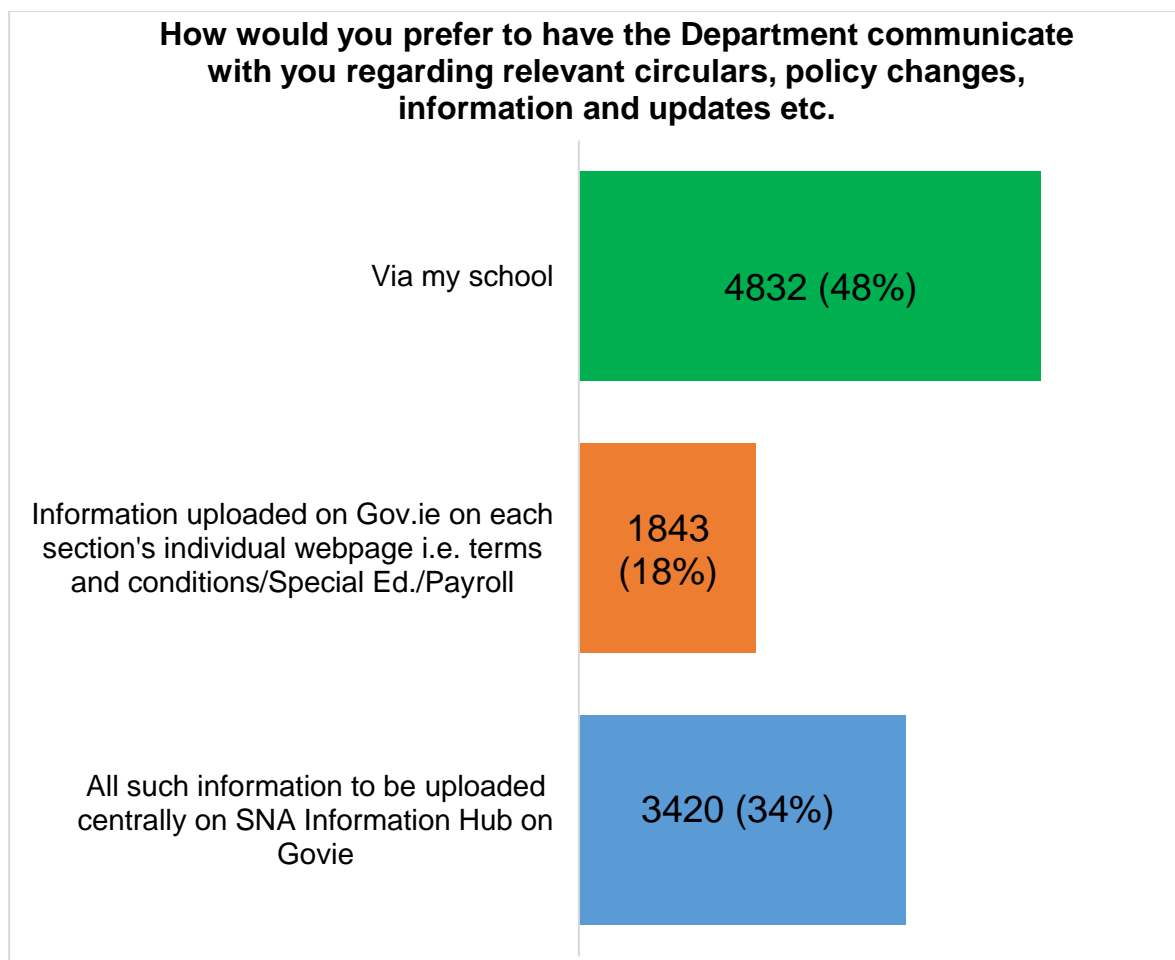
2.6 SNA Information Hub

2.6.1 In September 2023 the SNA Information Hub was set up by the SNAWDU on foot of direct feedback from the SNAs in the focus groups convened in May 2023. This resource enables SNAs to quickly and easily find important information around their role, policy information, relevant up to date circulars and links to training resources. Upon its launch, the Department issued an email to principals of all recognised schools seeking their assistance to share the message with wider school communities.

Are you aware of the SNA Information Hub on Gov.ie?

4587 (62%)   2814 (38%)

■ YES   ■ NO
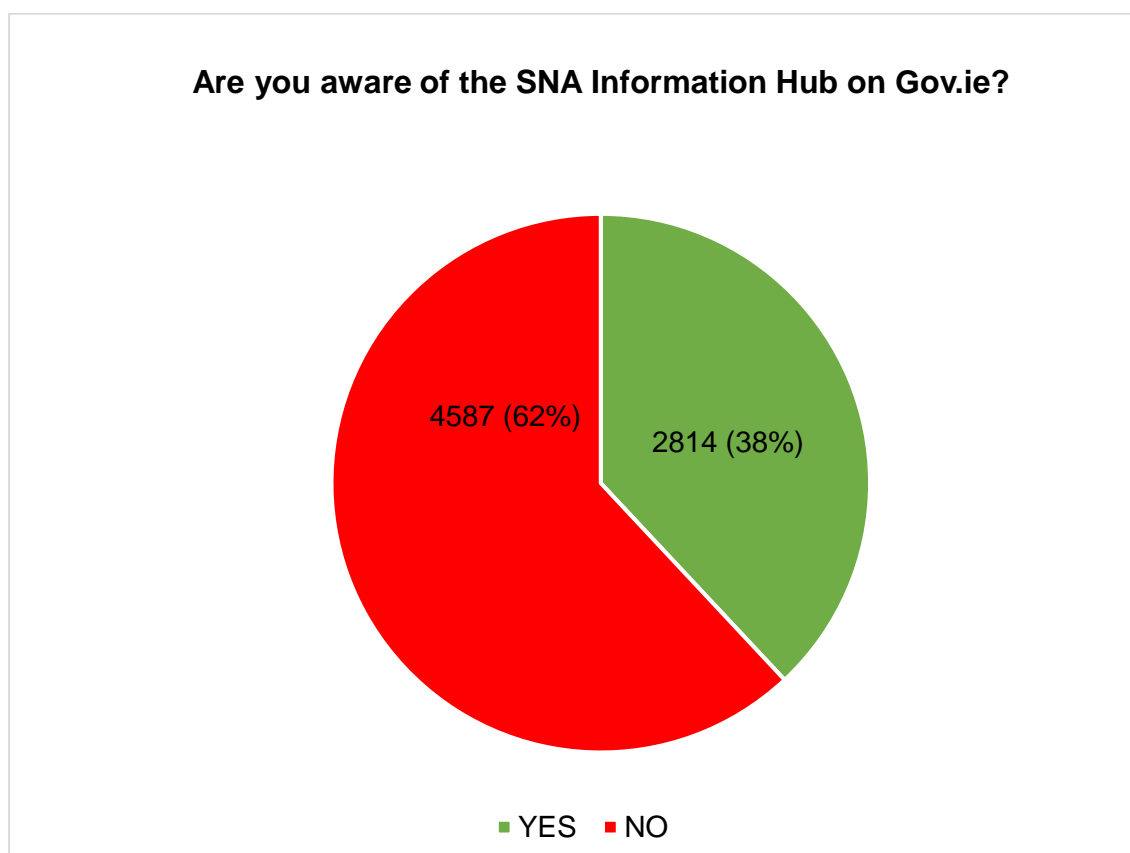
Table 46 Information Hub

2.6.2 When asked if SNAs were aware of the SNA Information Hub on Gov.ie, as illustrated in Table 46, more than a half (62%) reported 'No'.
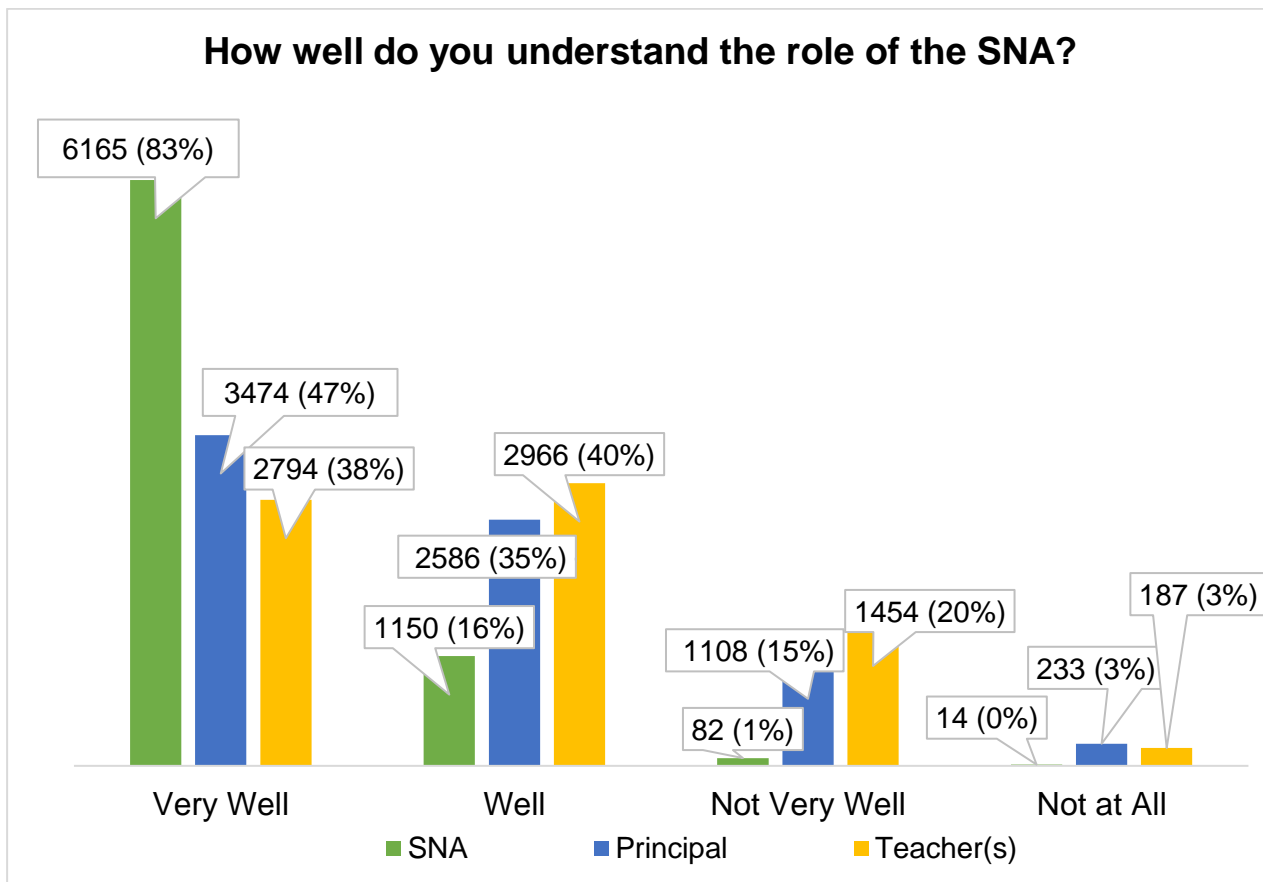
How would you prefer to have the Department communicate with you regarding relevant circulars, policy changes, information and updates etc.

| Category	Value
Via my school	4832 (48%)
Information uploaded on Gov.ie on each section's individual webpage i.e. terms and conditions/Special Ed./Payroll	1843 (18%)
All such information to be uploaded centrally on SNA Information Hub on Govie	3420 (34%)

Table 47 Communication channels

2.6.3 The SNAs were also asked about the ways they would prefer the Department to communicate with them regarding relevant circulars, policy changes, information, and updates. Table 47 illustrates the findings.
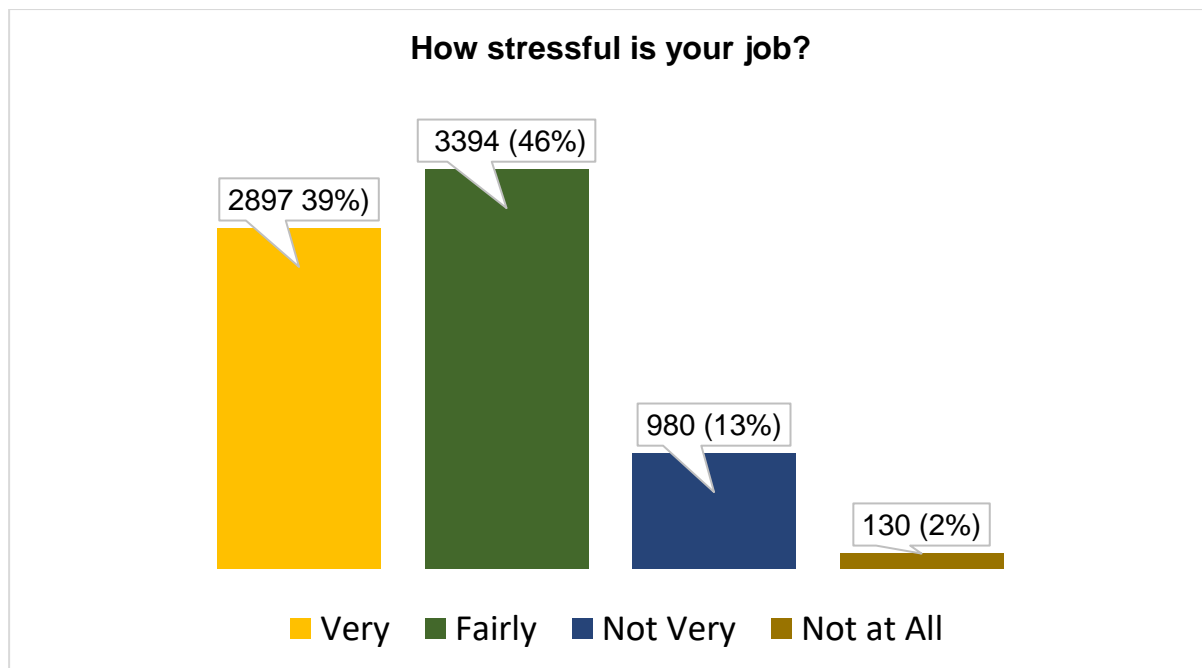
2.7 SNA Role

How well do you understand the role of the SNA?

- Very Well: SNA 6165 (83%), Principal 3474 (47%), Teacher(s) 2794 (38%)
- Well: SNA 1150 (16%), Principal 2586 (35%), Teacher(s) 2966 (40%)
- Not Very Well: SNA 82 (1%), Principal 1108 (15%), Teacher(s) 1454 (20%)
- Not at All: SNA 14 (0%), Principal 233 (3%), Teacher(s) 187 (3%)

Legend: ■ SNA ■ Principal ■ Teacher(s)

Table 48 Understanding the role of SNA

2.7.1 SNAs were asked to indicate an understanding of the role from their own perspective. The findings in Table 48 above indicate that almost all SNAs (99%) felt they had a good understanding of their role. The SNAs were also given opportunity to express their views regarding the extent they felt the principal and teacher(s) understood their role. Most (82%) felt the principal and (78%) the teacher understood the SNA role in the school community very well or well. Conversely only 18% of respondents felt that the principal didn't understand the role of SNA very well or at all. 23% had similar views regarding the teacher(s)' understanding of the SNA role.

How satisfying is your job?
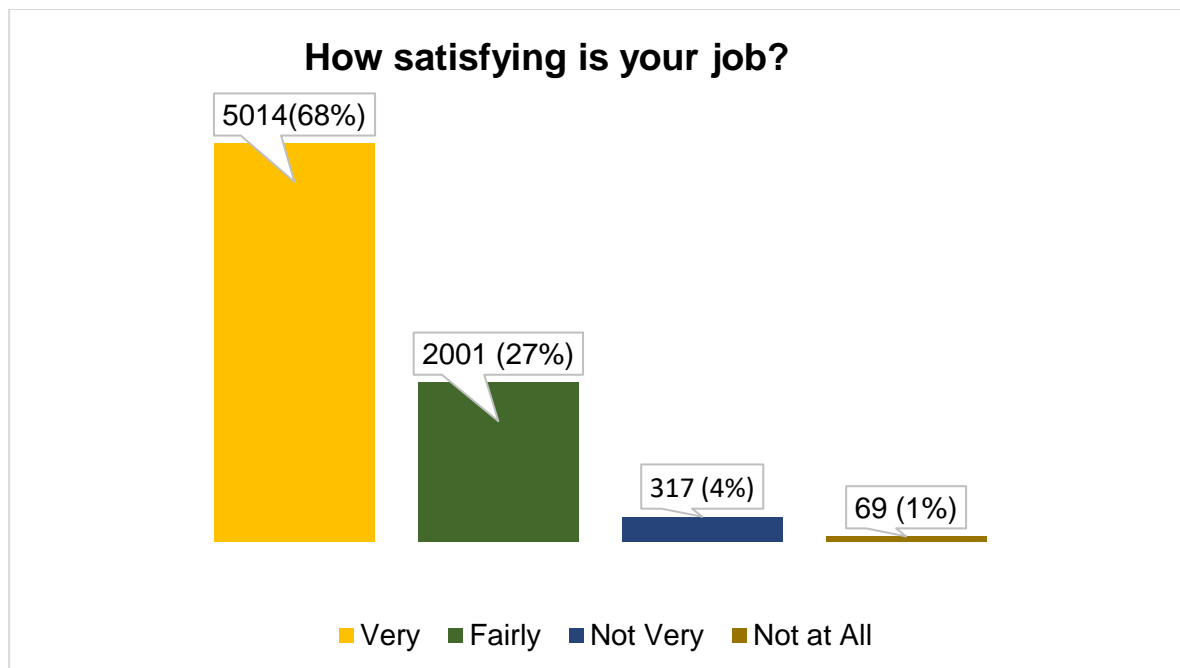
Table 49 Job satisfaction levels

2.7.2 Respondents were asked to rate their level of job satisfaction on a scale from "Very" to "Not at all". Most respondents (68%) reported being very satisfied with their job. A significant portion (27%) reported feeling fairly satisfied, while smaller percentages reported lower levels of satisfaction, with 4% indicating their job satisfaction as not very satisfying and 1% as not at all satisfying.
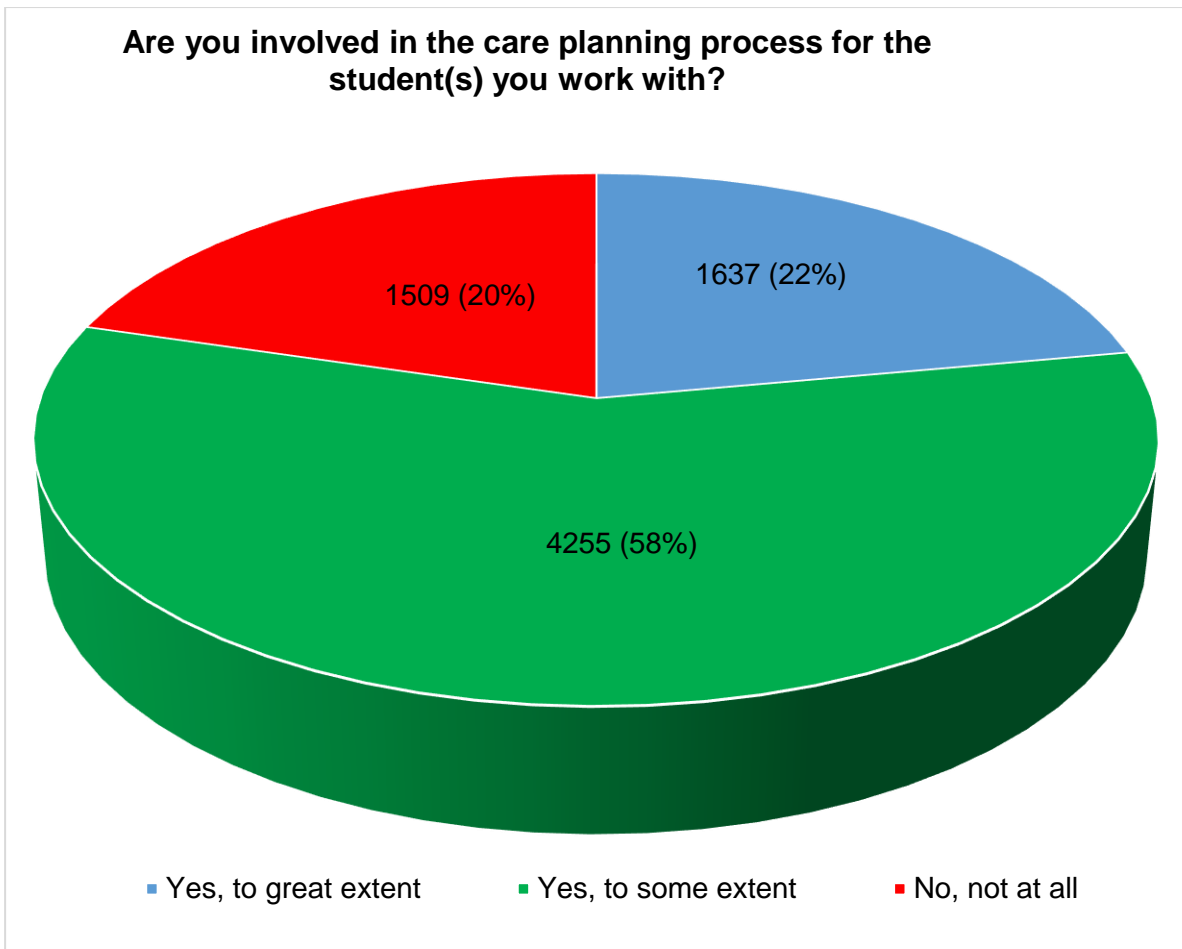
How stressful is your job?

2897 39%)

3394 (46%)

980 (13%)

130 (2%)

■ Very ■ Fairly ■ Not Very ■ Not at All

Table 50 Stress levels

2.7.3 Regarding job stress, respondents provided similar ratings on a scale from "Very" to "Not at all." While a significant portion (39%) reported experiencing very high levels of stress in their job, a slightly higher percentage (46%) indicated feeling fairly stressed. A minority of respondents (13%) reported lower levels of stress, with 2% stating they experience no stress at all.

How supported do you feel in your job?
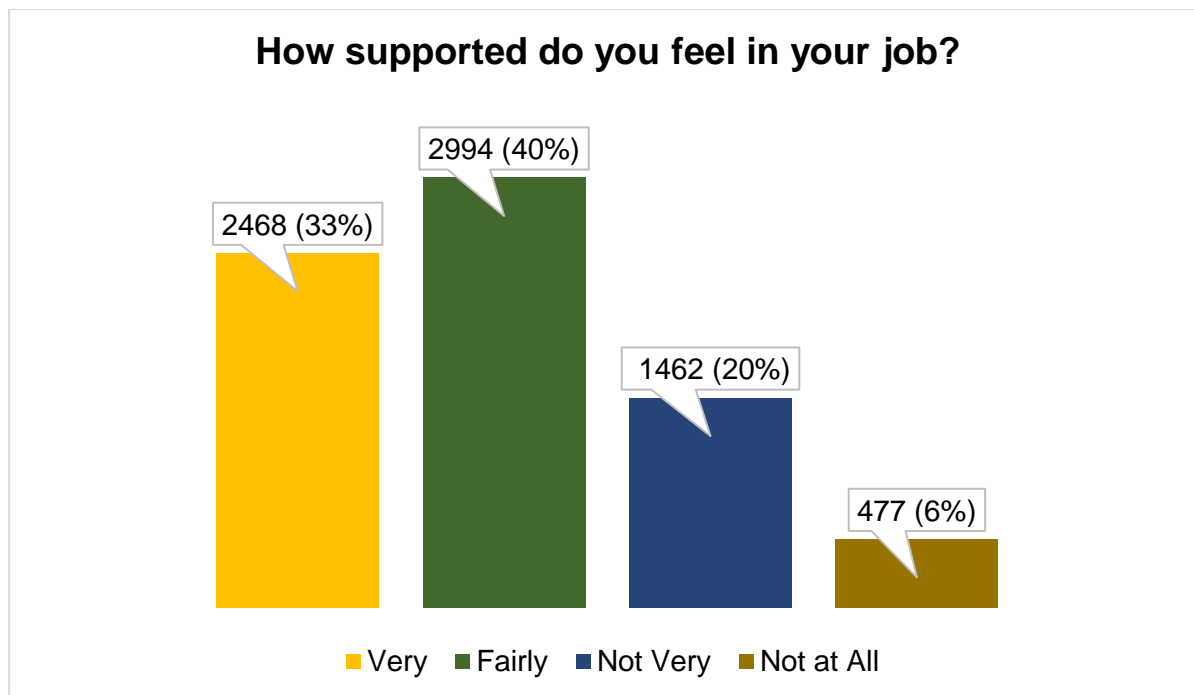
Table 51 Support levels

2.7.4 While a third of respondents (33%) reported feeling very supported in their job, a larger portion (40%) indicated feeling fairly supported. However, a significant minority (26%) expressed feeling less supported, with 20% stating they feel not very supported and 6% stating they feel not supported at all.

Are you involved in the care planning process for the student(s) you work with?

1637 (22%)

1509 (20%)

4255 (58%)

■ Yes, to great extent   ■ Yes, to some extent   ■ No, not at all

Table 52 SNA involvement in the care planning process

2.7.5 Table 52 shows findings in relation to the participants involvement in the care planning process for the student(s) they care for. As reported 80% of the workforce participated in the planning process. A fifth of the respondents advised that they were not at all involved in the care planning process.
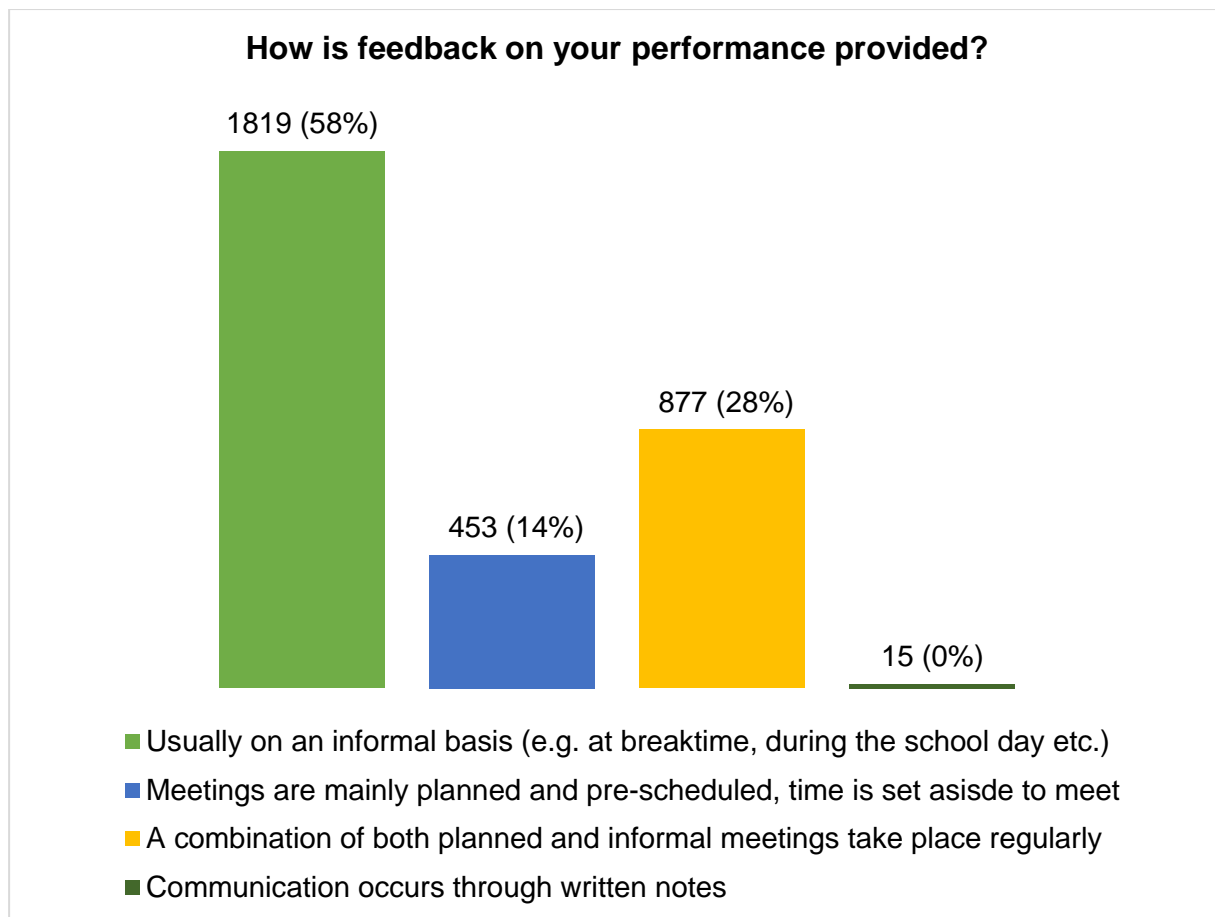
**Do you receive feedback on your performance?
(select all that are appropriate)**
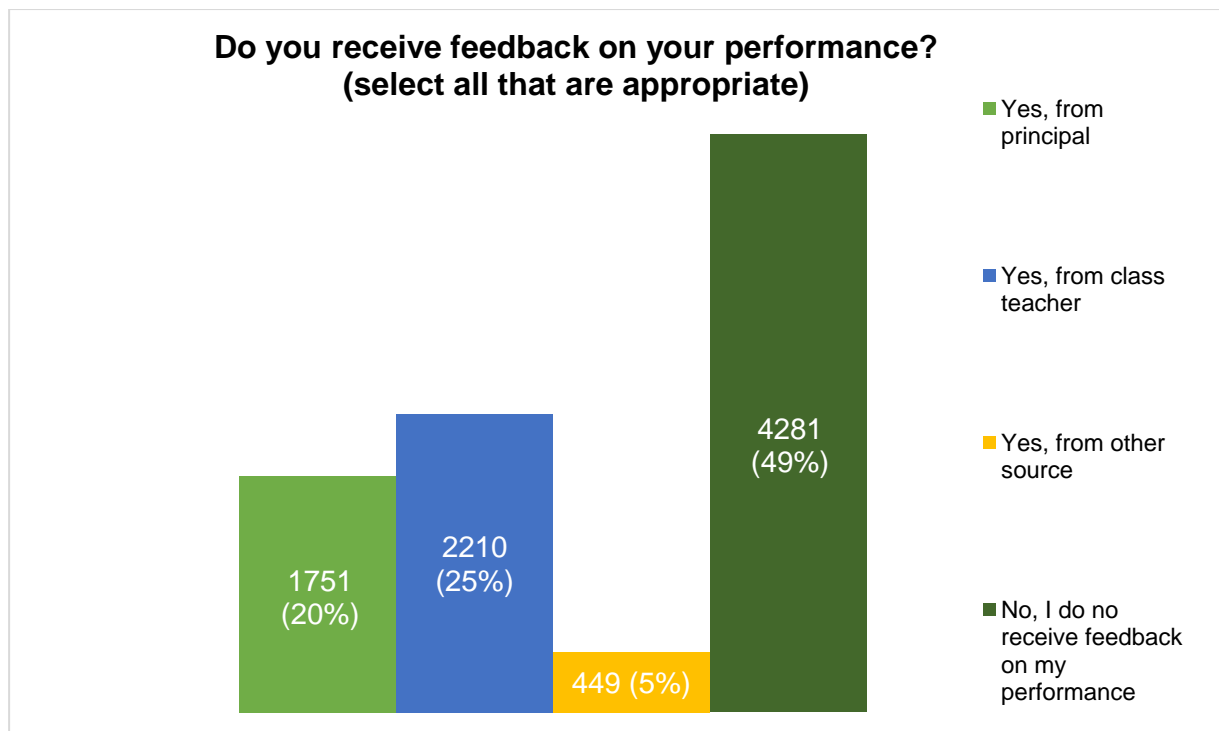
Table 53 Performance feedback

2.7.6 As outlined in Table 53, almost half (49%) of SNAs didn't receive any feedback on their performance. The other half of the sample indicated that they had feedback through meetings with the principal, class teacher or others.
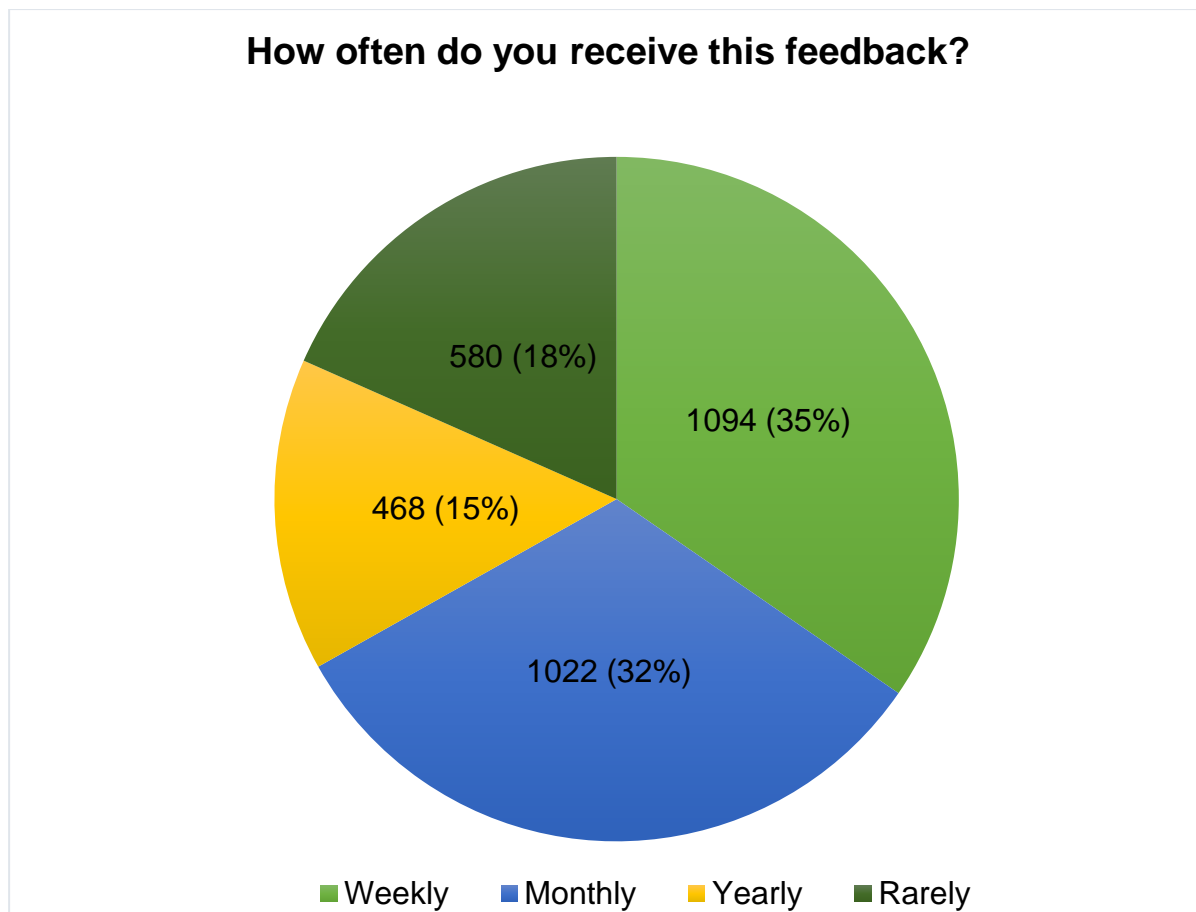
Table 54 Other sources of feedback. Word Cloud

2.7.7 Many other sources of feedback were cited with the most popular set out in Table 54 above including SEN teacher, class teacher, parents, and the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

How is feedback on your performance provided?

Table 55 Performance feedback methods

2.7.8 As presented in Table 55, feedback mainly occurs on an informal basis, or through a regular combination of both planned and informal meetings. 14% of respondents stated that the performance meetings were scheduled and planned in advance.

How often do you receive this feedback?

1094 (35%)

1022 (32%)

468 (15%)

580 (18%)

■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ Yearly ■ Rarely

Table 56 Frequency of performance feedback

2.7.9 Table 56 shows findings in relation to the frequency of the performance feedback meetings. Over 60% of those meetings occurred on a regular weekly or monthly basis. 18% of SNAs reported rarely receiving feedback.

If formal/scheduled meetings take place, when do they usually occur?
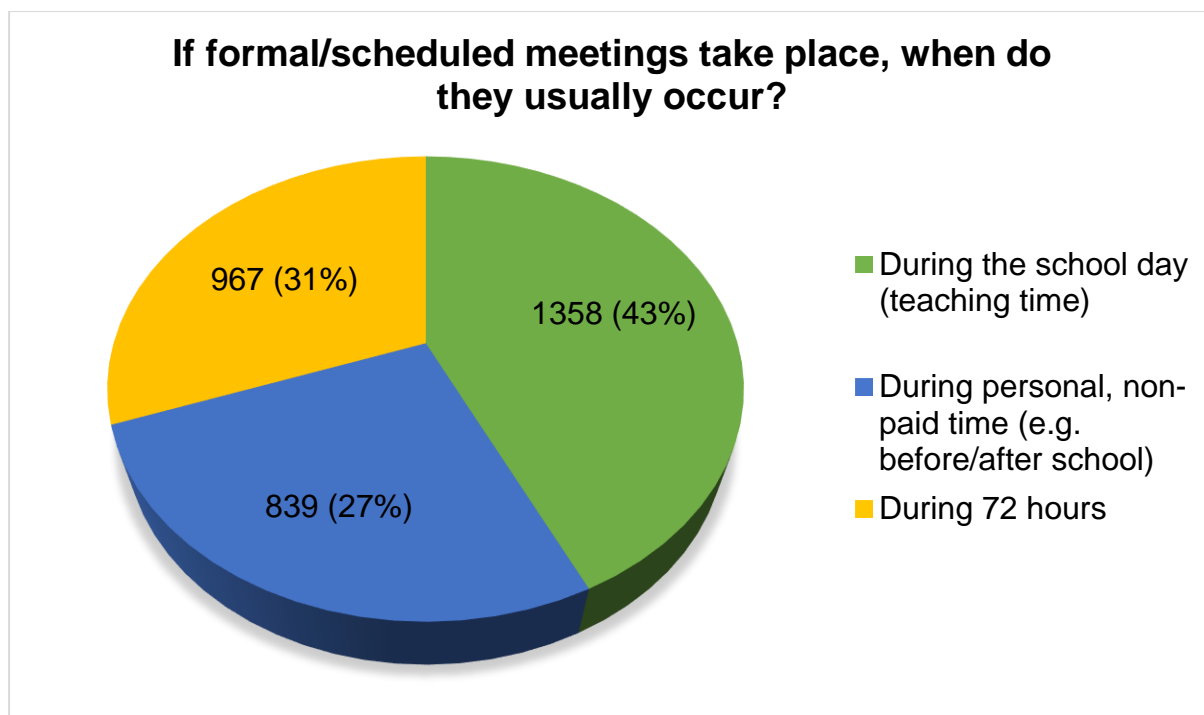
Table 57 Scheduling of formal meetings

2.7.10 Table 57 shows the timing of formal meetings, with less than a half (43%) of formal meetings occurring during SNAs school day, and 31% as part of 72 hours. Less than a quarter of formal meetings happened during SNAs' personal, non-paid time.

2.8 School Transport - Bus Escorts

2.8.1 The school transport scheme supports the transport to and from school of children with special educational needs that arise from a diagnosed disability.
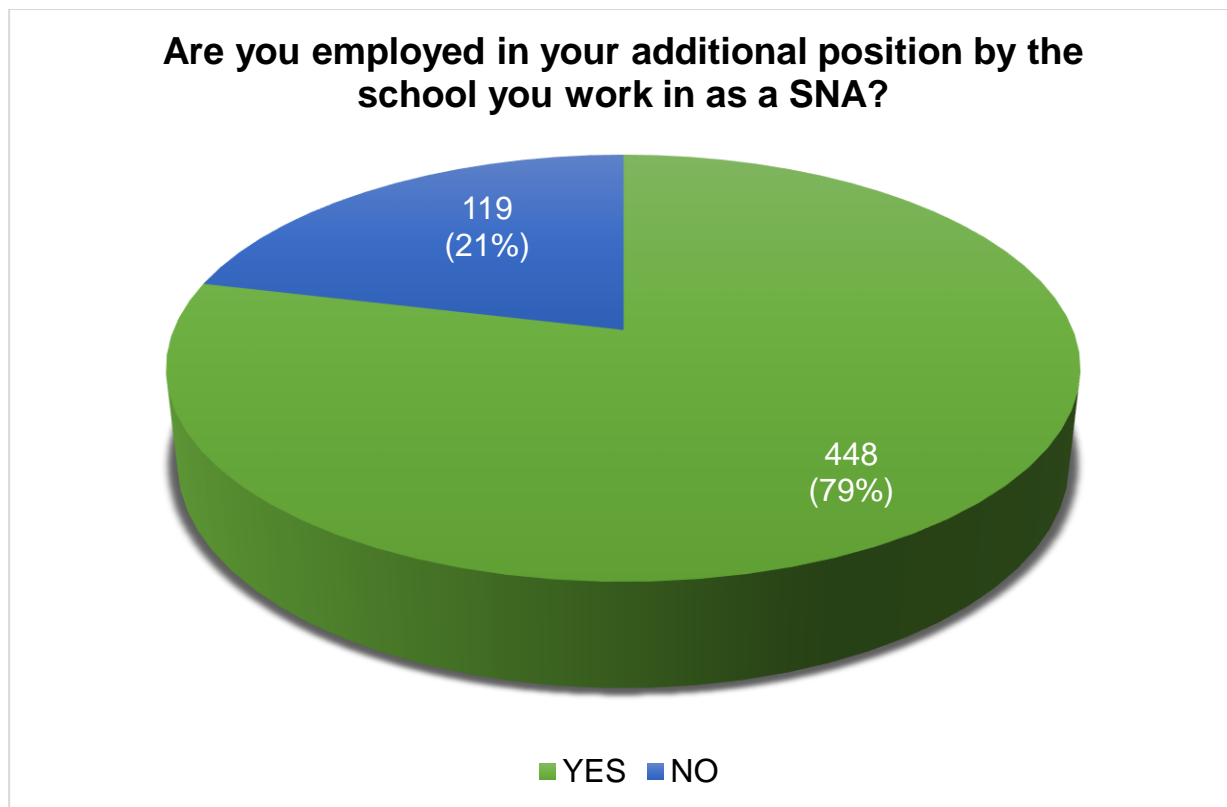
Do you hold any positions in addition to your role as a SNA?

567 (8%)

6834 (92%)

■ Yes ■ No
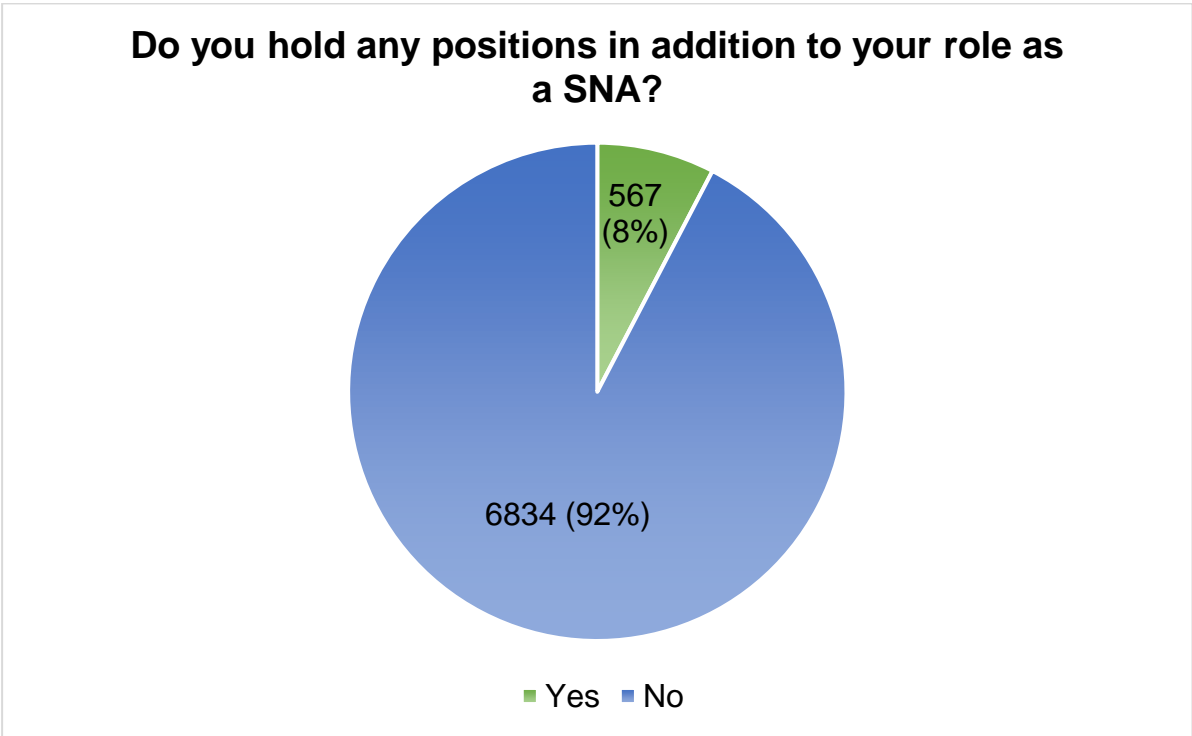
Table 58 Positions held in addition to the SNA role

2.8.2 As illustrated, in Table 58, 567 (8%)[8] of respondents carried out extra duties in addition to their role as a SNA. Approximately 6% (446) of the respondents hold the position of a bus escort in addition to their role as a Special Needs Assistant (SNA).

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[8] Around 57 (1%) of the respondents work as school secretaries. A small percentage (0.4%) of individuals (32) hold the position of a teacher alongside their SNA role. Similarly, 32 (0.4%) of respondents are also SEN teachers.
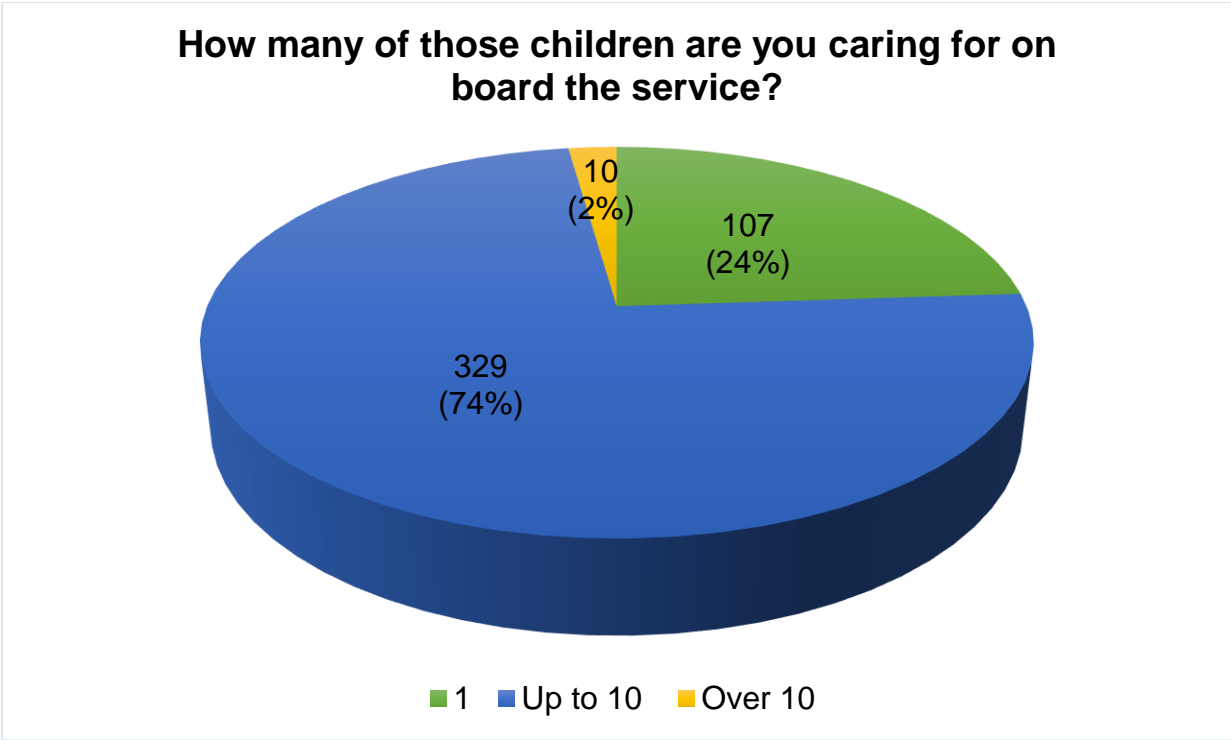
Are you employed in your additional position by the school you work in as a SNA?

119
(21%)

448
(79%)

■ YES ■ NO

Table 59 SNAs whose additional position is with current school.

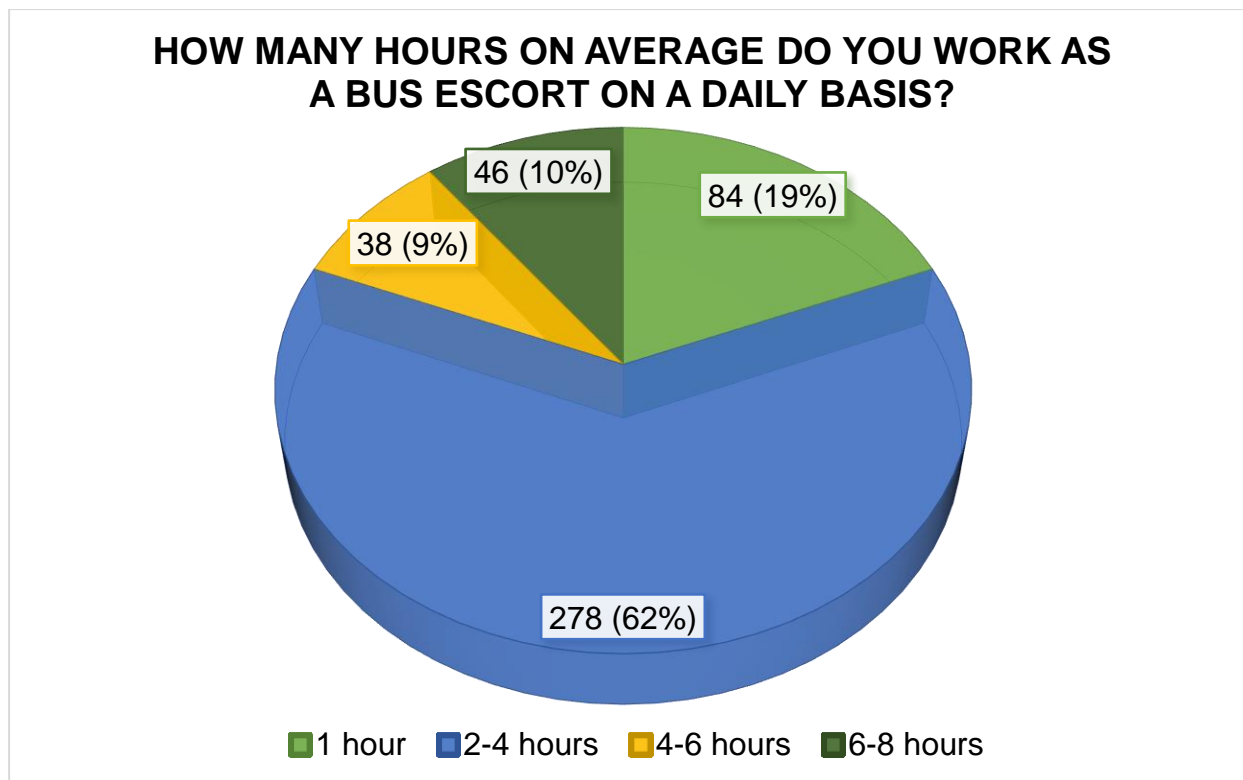**2.8.3** The majority of respondents were employed by the same school they worked as a SNA (see Table 59).

How many children are on the School Transport Service that you work on?
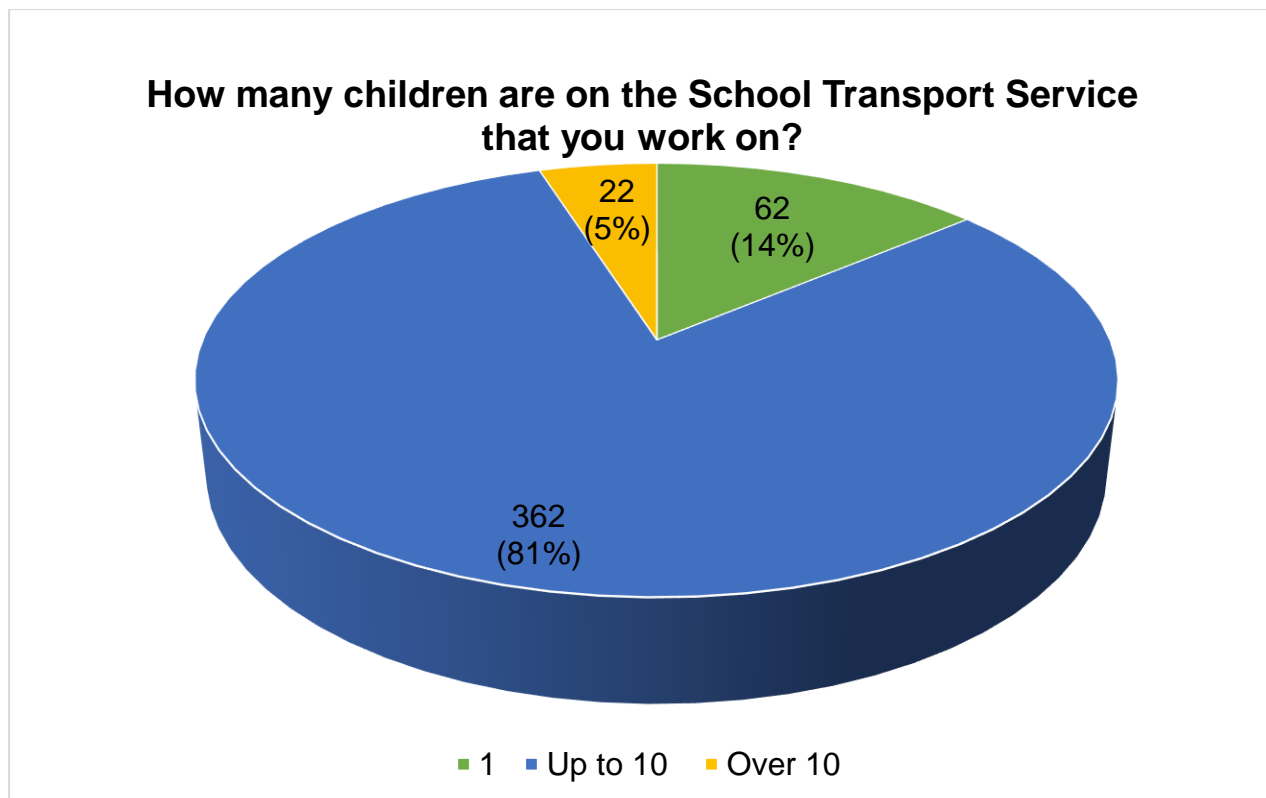
Table 60 Number of children on the school transport service

2.8.4 Table 60 shows findings in relation to the number of children on the School Transport Service. Most of participants (81%) recorded that up to 10 children were on the transport they travel on, while 14% have 1 child on board, and 5% indicated there are over 10 children on board.

How many of those children are you caring for on board the service?

10
(2%)

107
(24%)

329
(74%)

■ 1 ■ Up to 10 ■ Over 10

Table 61 Number of children cared for by SNA on the school transport service

2.8.5 A majority or 74% of SNAs employed as a Bus Escort are responsible for 2 to 10 children on board, while only 24% recorded that they cared for only one student on board. 2% indicated they are responsible for over ten children in their role as bus escort.
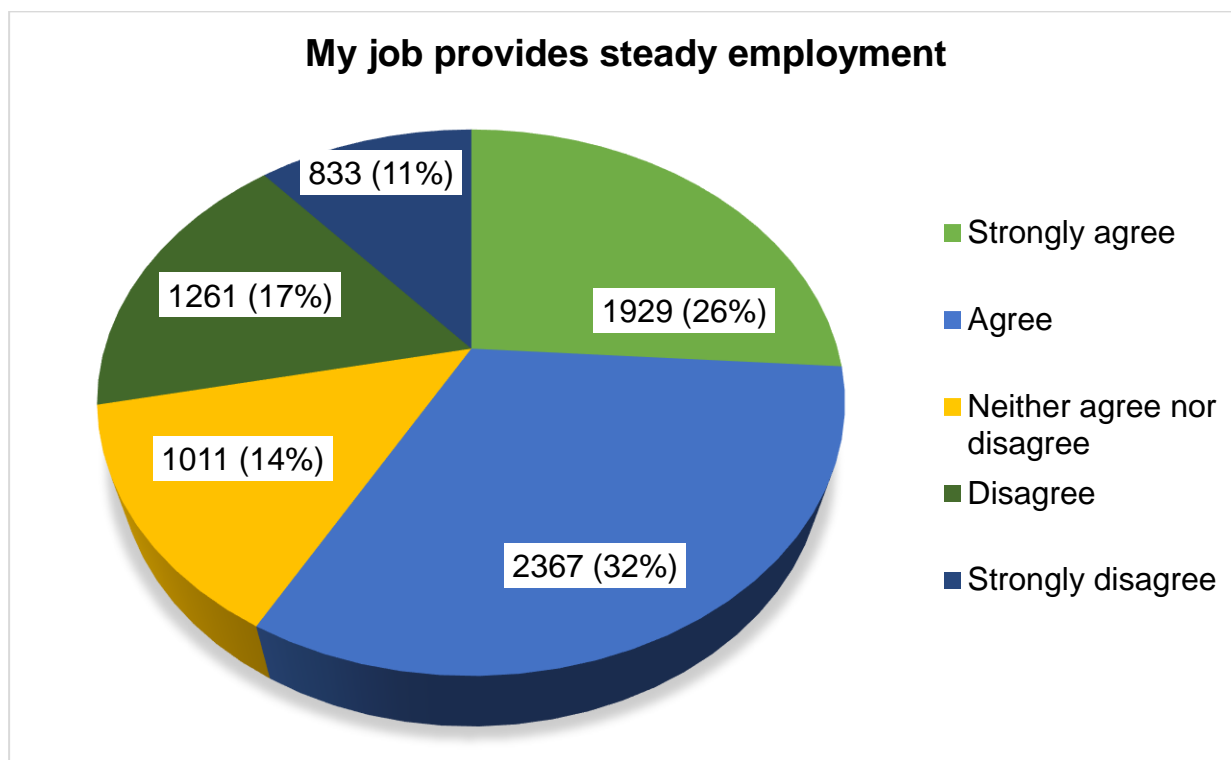
HOW MANY HOURS ON AVERAGE DO YOU WORK AS A BUS ESCORT ON A DAILY BASIS?

46 (10%)

38 (9%)

84 (19%)

278 (62%)

■1 hour ■2-4 hours ■4-6 hours ■6-8 hours

Table 62 Average time spent working as a Bus Escort

2.8.6 The average time spent on the bus transport services varied across participants. Over half indicated that they spent 2 – 4 hours on daily basis working as a bus escort, while the proportion of those working up to one hour and over 4 up to 8 hours equalled to 19% each.

2.9 Workforce Environment

My job provides steady employment

- 833 (11%)
- 1261 (17%)
- 1011 (14%)
- 1929 (26%)
- 2367 (32%)

Legend:
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

*Table 63 Employment stability*

2.9.1 Analysis of the data collected, as presented in Tables 63 - 68, reflect SNA perceptions of employment stability, workplace inclusivity, and school environment.

2.9.2 As presented in Table 63 above, combined, a significant majority (58%) either strongly agree or agree that their job provides steady employment. A notable proportion (14%) neither agree nor disagree, indicating some uncertainty or mixed feelings about job stability. Dissatisfaction with job stability is reported, with 28% (disagree + strongly disagree) expressing varying degrees of disagreement with the statement.
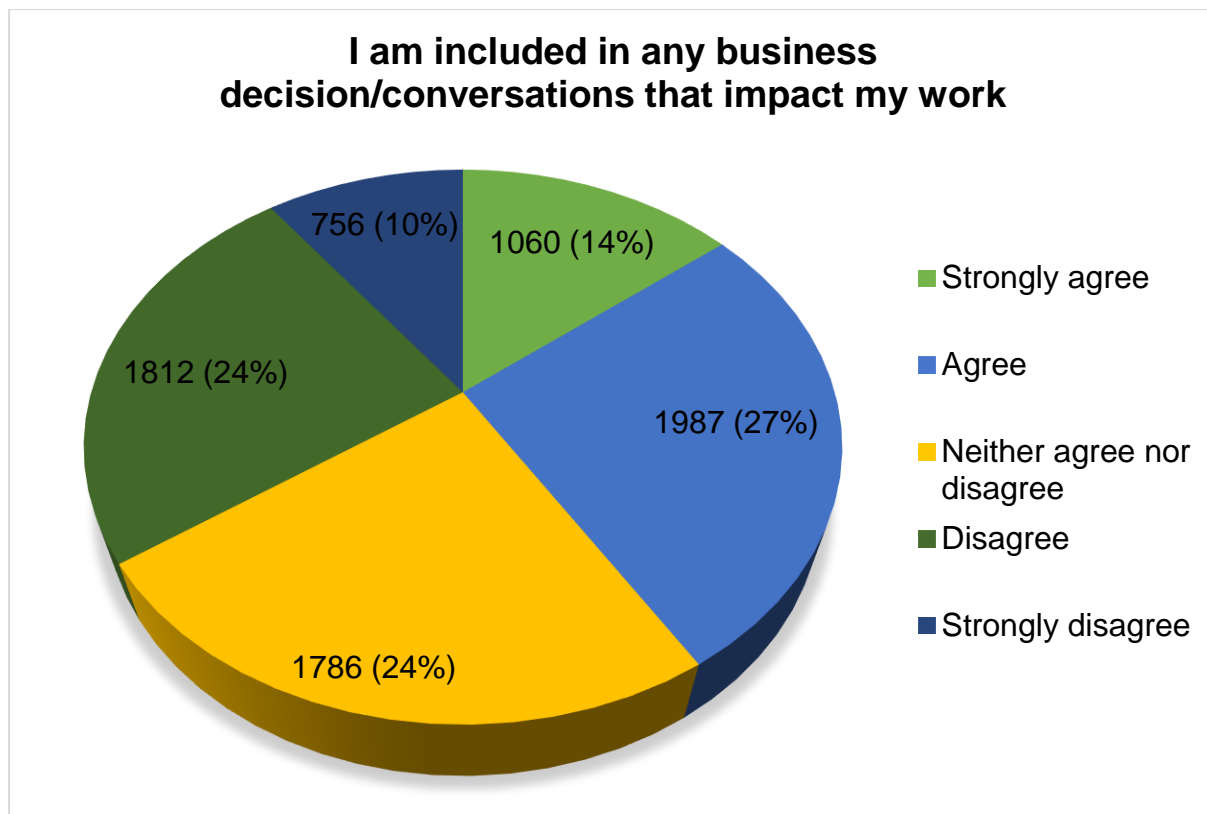
People of all cultures and backgrounds are valued and respected
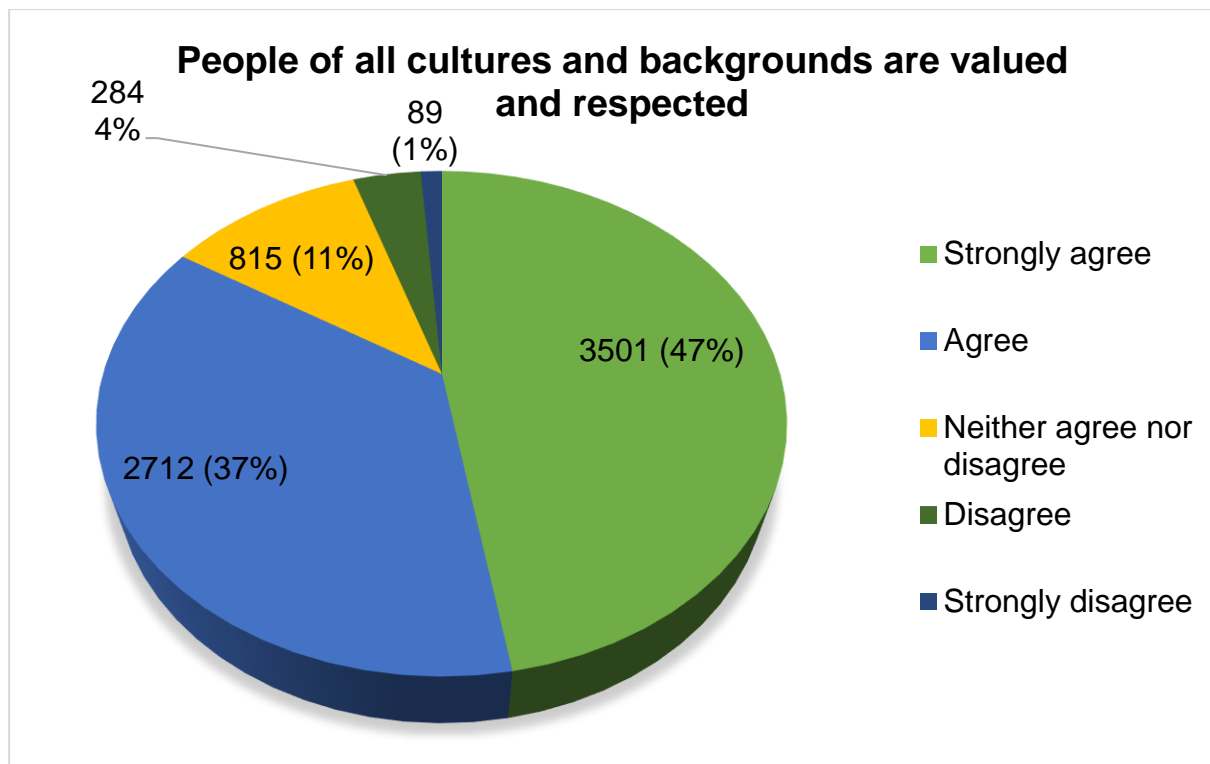
Table 64 Inclusion levels

2.9.3 The majority of respondents (84%) agreed that people of diverse backgrounds are valued and respected in their workplace. However, a small percentage (4%) disagreed with this statement.
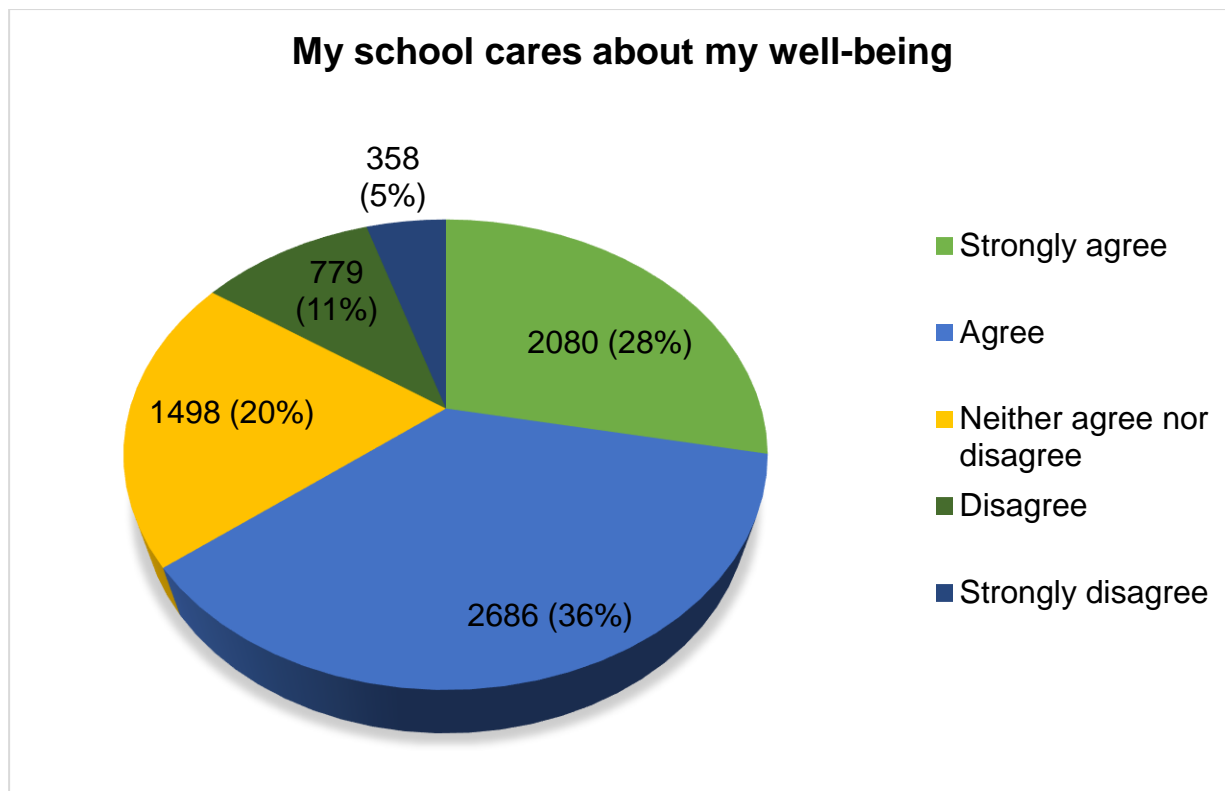
All employees are treated with fairness
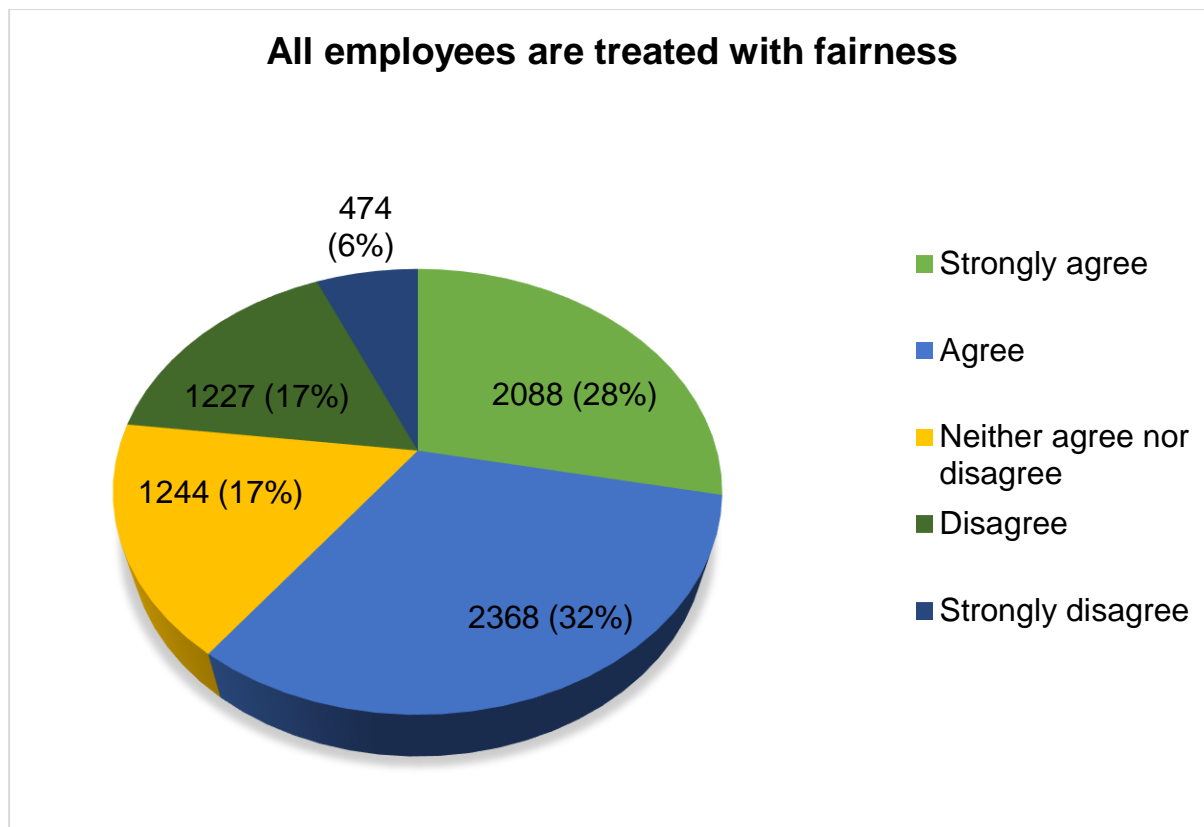
Table 65 Fairness levels

2.9.4 Like the previous statement, most respondents (60%) agreed that all employees were treated with fairness. Nonetheless, a notable percentage, 23%, expressed disagreement with this statement.

I am included in any business decision/conversations that impact my work

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

756 (10%)   1060 (14%)   1987 (27%)   1812 (24%)   1786 (24%)

Table 66 Inclusion levels

2.9.5 "I am included in any business decision/conversation that impact my work" - this statement received mixed responses, with only 41% of respondents indicating agreement that they were included in relevant business decisions. A significant proportion (34%) disagreed with this assertion.

My school cares about my well-being

■	Strongly agree
■	Agree
■	Neither agree nor disagree
■	Disagree
■	Strongly disagree

358 (5%)
779 (11%)
1498 (20%)
2080 (28%)
2686 (36%)

Table 67 Level of care for well-being

2.9.6 A considerable number of respondents (64%) agreed that their school cares about their well-being. However, a noteworthy percentage (16%) expressed disagreement with this statement.

My school values diverse opinions and ideas
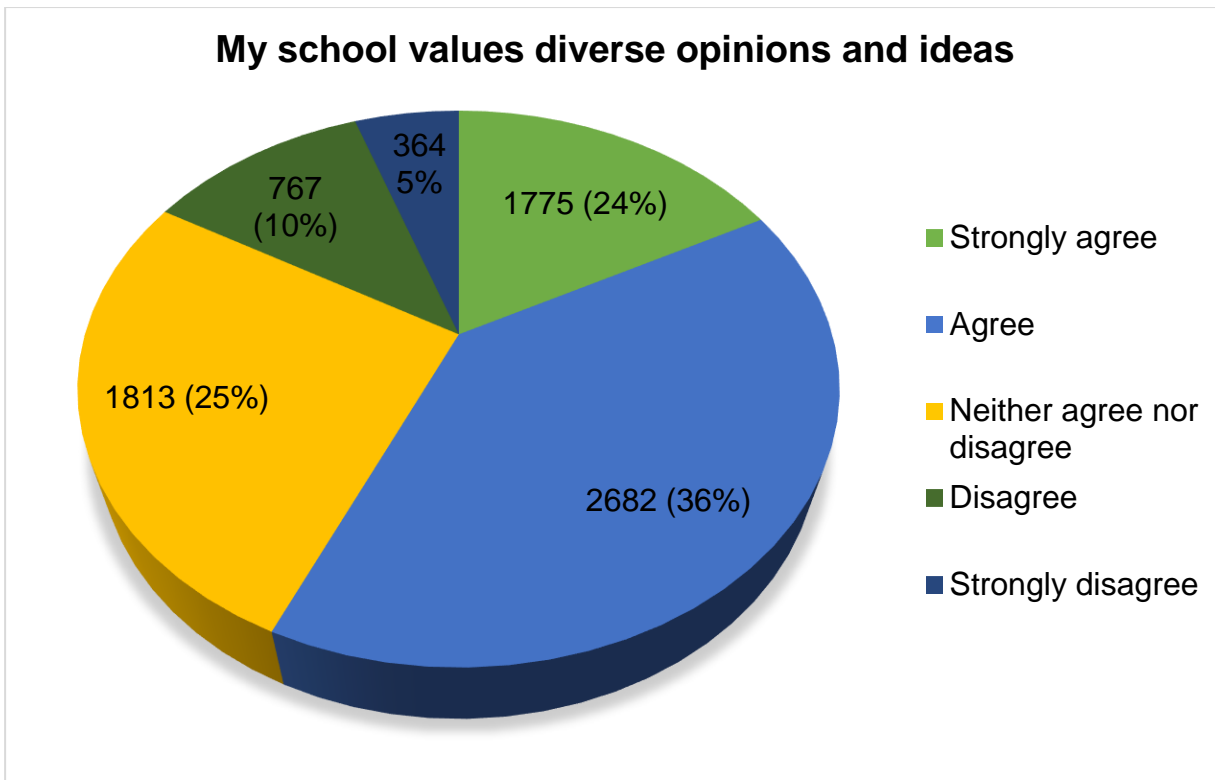
Table 68 Diverse opinions and ideas

2.9.7 While a significant number of respondents (60%) agreed that their school values diverse opinions and ideas, a notable minority (15%) disagreed with this assertion.

2.10 Relationships in the School Community

2.10.1 Tables 69 – 71 display data regarding SNAs perceptions of their relationships with school staff, particularly the principal, class teachers and other SNAs in the school.
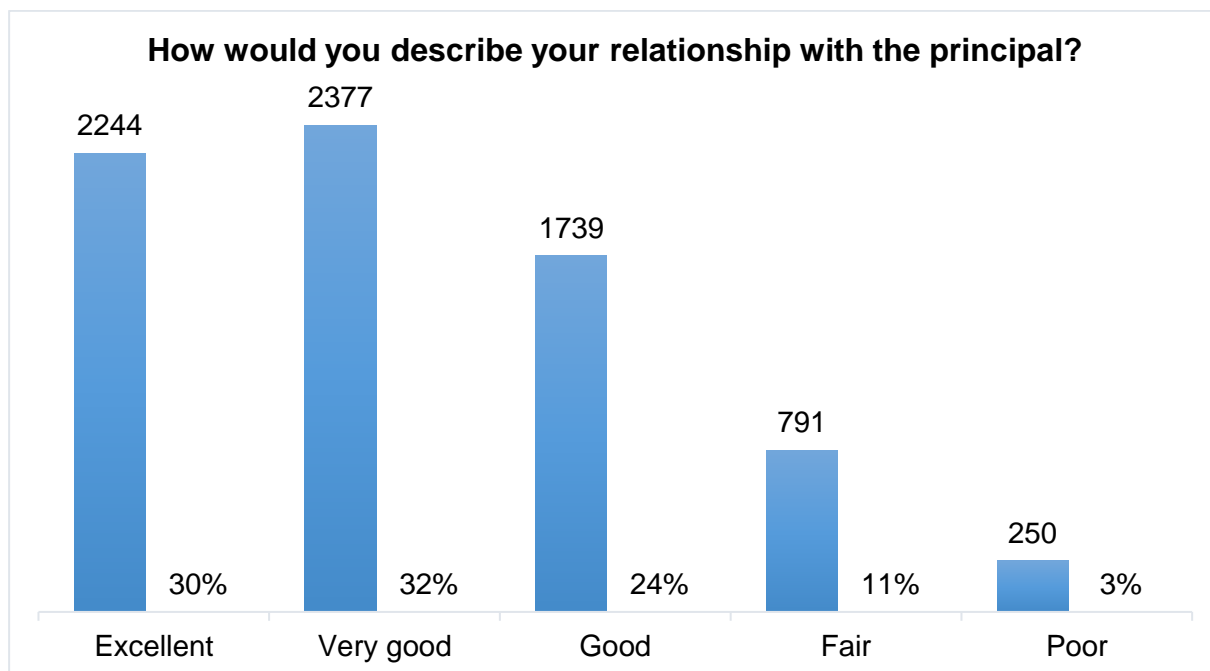
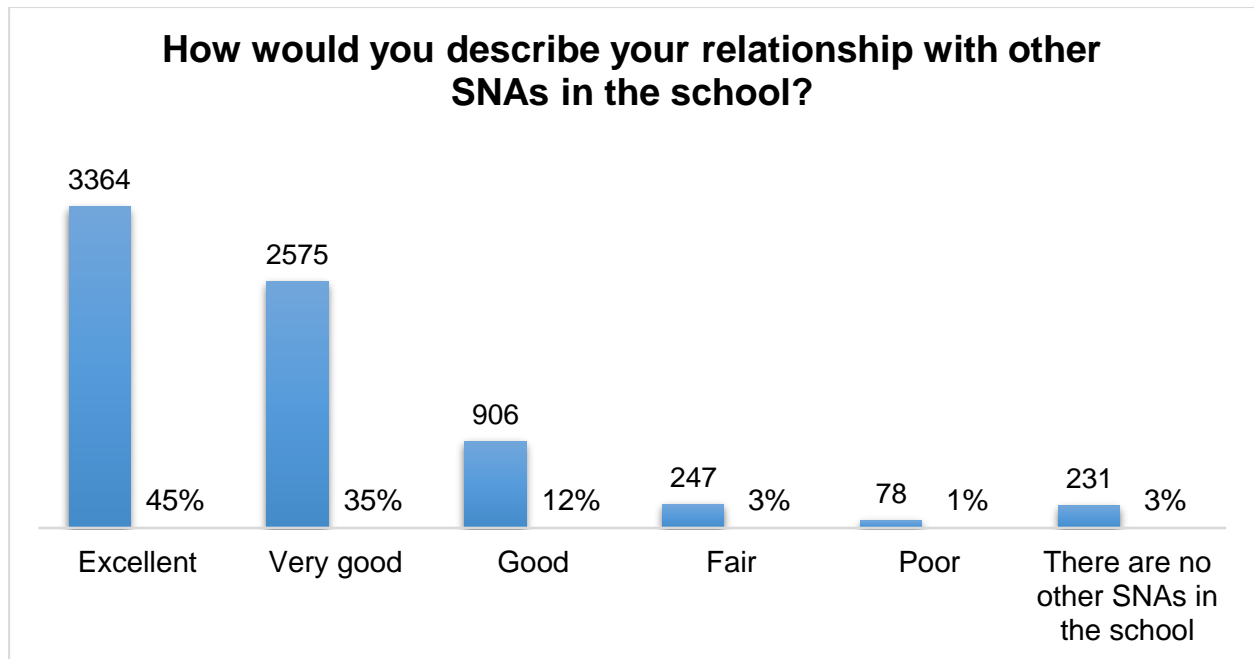*Table 69 Relationship with the principal*

2.10.2 Respondents were asked to describe their relationship with the principal of the school. Most respondents (86%) reported positive relationships, with 62% rating their relationship as excellent or very good. However, 14% of respondents indicated fair to poor relations with the principal.

How would you describe your relationship with the class teacher(s)?
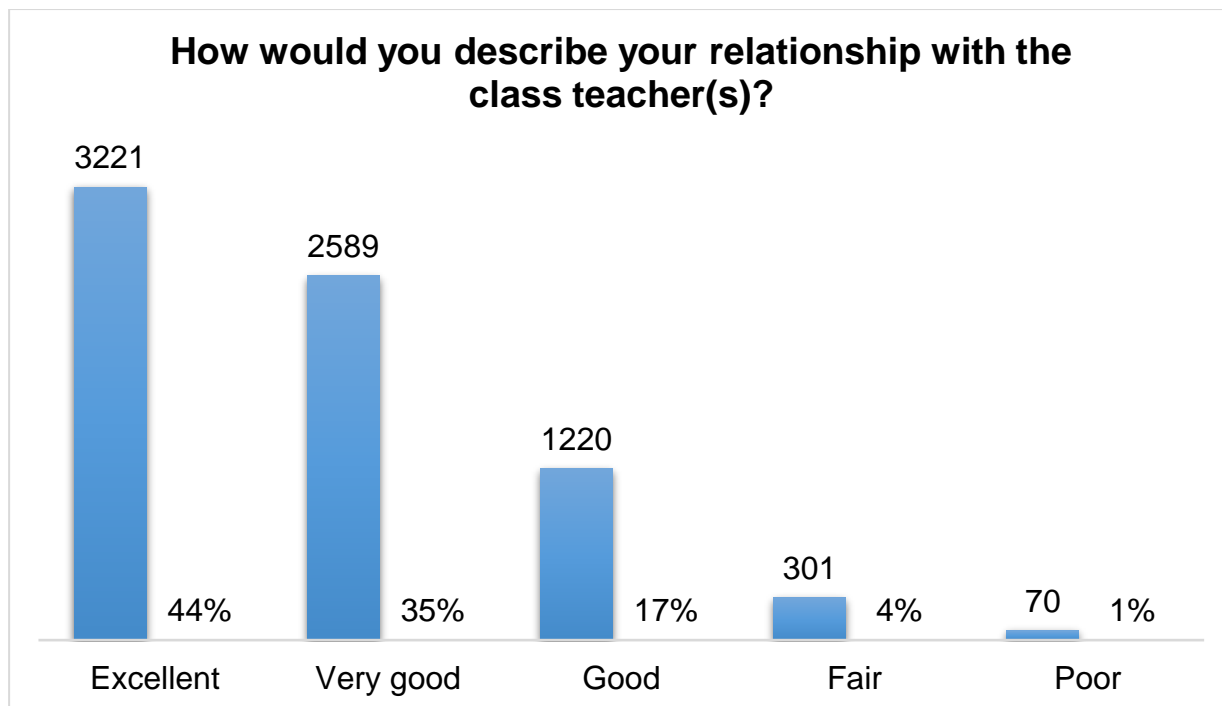
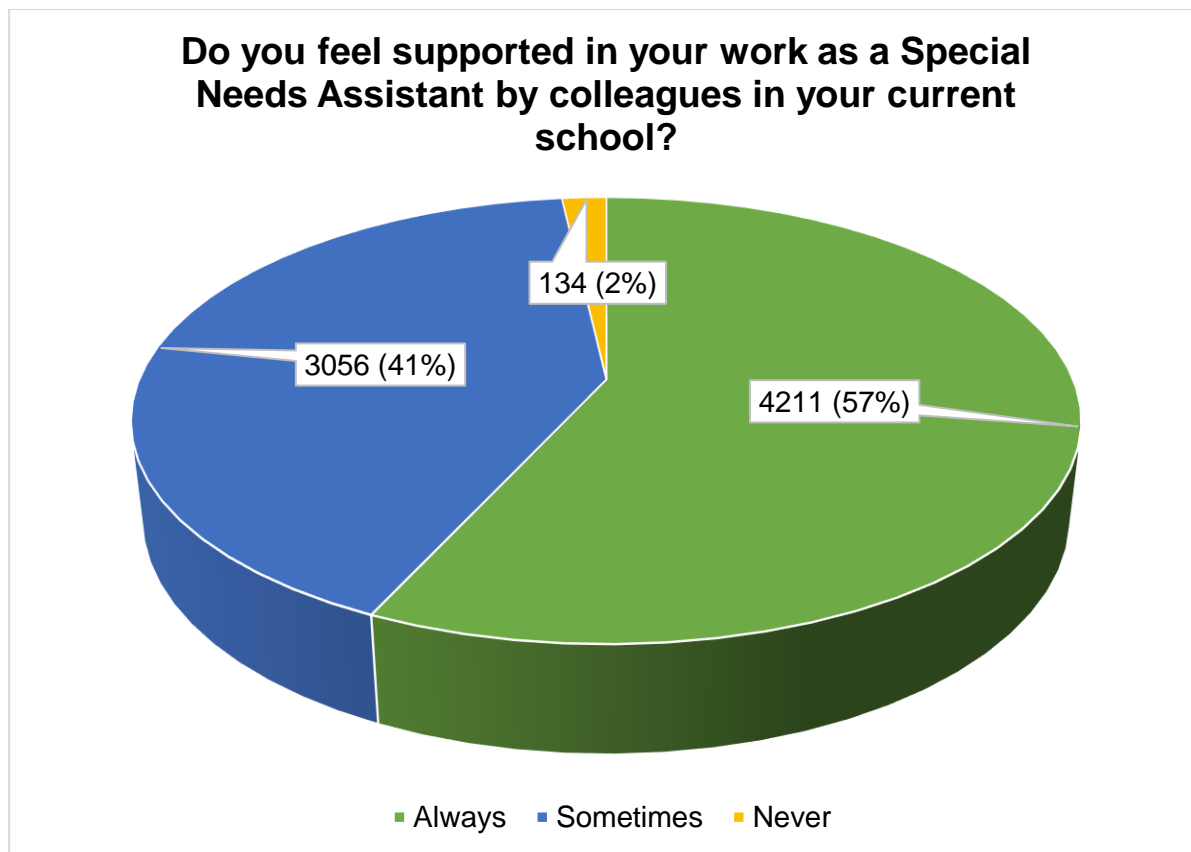*Table 70 Relationship with the class teacher(s)*

2.10.3 Regarding relationships with class teachers, a higher percentage of respondents reported positive experiences. Over three-quarters of respondents (79%) rated their relationships with class teachers as excellent or very good. However, a small percentage (5%) expressed fair to poor relations with class teachers.

How would you describe your relationship with other SNAs in the school?

3364	2575	906	247	78	231
45%	35%	12%	3%	1%	3%
Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	There are no other SNAs in the school

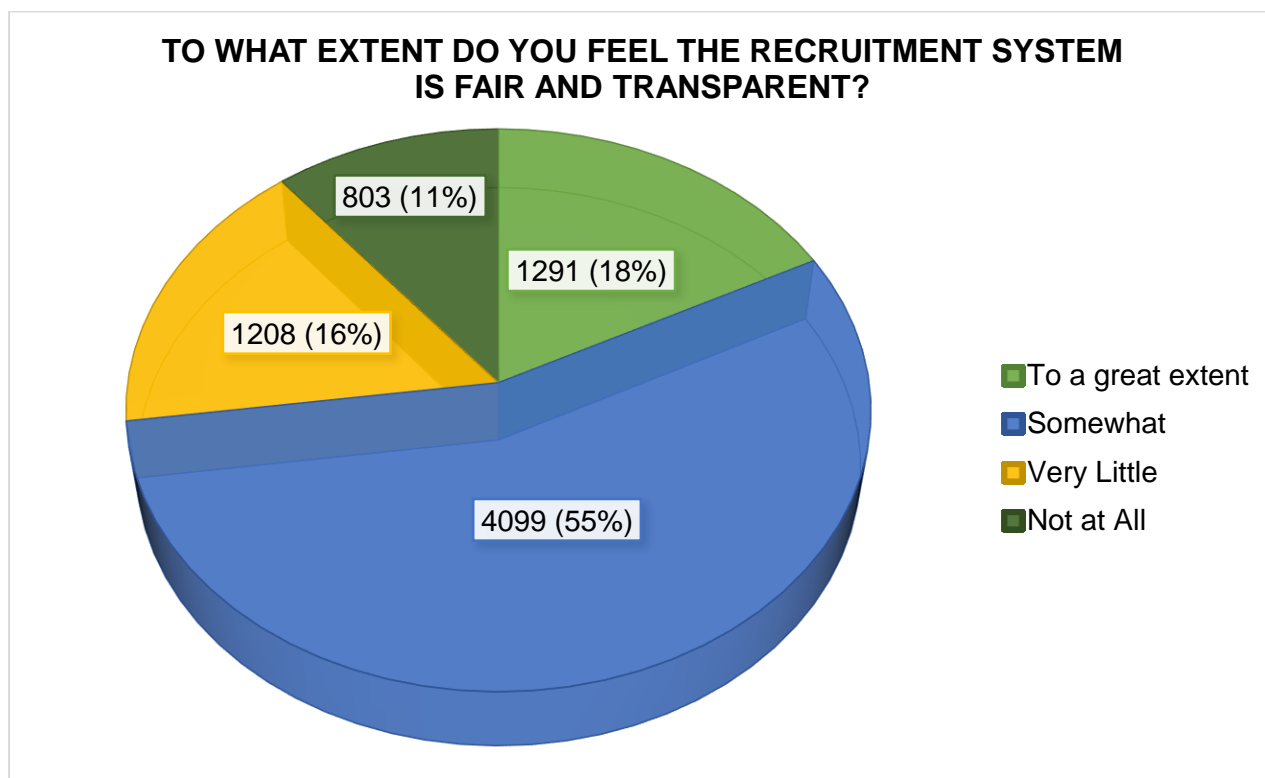*Table 71 Relationship with other SNAs in the school*

2.10.4 A significant majority of respondents (92%) reported positive experiences with other SNAs in the school. Most respondents (80%) rated their relationships with other SNAs as excellent or very good. However, a small percentage (4%) expressed fair to poor relations with other SNAs, and 3% stated that there were no other SNAs in the school.

Do you feel supported in your work as a Special Needs Assistant by colleagues in your current school?

134 (2%)

3056 (41%)

4211 (57%)

■ Always   ■ Sometimes   ■ Never

Table 72 Level of support from colleagues

2.10.5 Respondents were asked to assess how supported they feel in their job. While over half of respondents (57%) reported feeling always supported by colleagues in their job (41%) indicated they sometimes feel supported. 2% stated they never feel supported.

2.11 Recruitment

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FEEL THE RECRUITMENT SYSTEM IS FAIR AND TRANSPARENT?

- 803 (11%)
- 1291 (18%)
- 1208 (16%)
- 4099 (55%)

Legend:
- To a great extent
- Somewhat
- Very Little
- Not at All

Table 73 Recruitment process

2.11.1 As presented in Table 73, perceptions of the fairness and transparency of the SNA recruitment process reflect mixed views. While a majority (73%) indicated some level of confidence in the fairness and transparency of the process, a significant minority (27%) expressed doubts. Notably, 16% of respondents believed the process is somewhat fair, while 11% believed it to be not fair at all.

3.Conclusions

3.1 The survey results provide valuable insights into the education levels, qualifications, and training experiences of SNAs. It is evident that SNAs hold a wide variety of qualifications in a variety of different fields. It also indicates that SNAs are more highly qualified than the minimum educational requirements for the role i.e., a FETAC level 3 major qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications or a minimum of three grade Ds in the Junior Cert or Equivalent. Respondents on the whole support a review of the minimum educational requirements.

3.2 The findings of this research suggest that there are significant disparities in the SNA workforce in terms of gender balance and diversity. This is an area that will be considered by the Working Group on SNA Recruitment, Retention and Diversity established to provide input to the SNA Workforce Development Plan.

3.3 While a significant portion of SNAs participate in training courses related to their role and express satisfaction with the quality of training, there are concerns about the availability of training opportunities and funding sources. The Working Group on SNA Learning and Development established to provide input to the SNA Workforce Development Plan will consider opportunities for all SNAs to access training for their professional development.

3.4 While many SNAs indicated they have received induction training, the majority have not. The Working Group on SNA Recruitment, Retention & Diversity established to provide input to the SNA Workforce Development Plan will consider how this important part of the recruitment process can be addressed to ensure SNAs are ready to deliver the best standard of care when they enter the classroom for the first time.

3.5 The findings highlighted the diverse range of special needs supported by SNAs and their varied caseloads. Understanding these aspects can inform strategies to better support SNAs in their roles and ensure the effective provision of care and assistance to students with special needs in educational settings.

3.6 The survey results indicate generally positive relationships between respondents and school staff, including principals, class teachers, and other SNAs.

3.7 There are some concerns among respondents about the fairness and transparency of the SNA recruitment process, with a significant minority of respondents expressing doubts. Addressing these concerns and demonstrating consistency and transparency in the recruitment process will contribute to a more supportive and cohesive school environment.

3.8 The survey results revealed a mixture of positive and negative perceptions among respondents regarding their job satisfaction and school environment. While a majority expressed satisfaction with aspects such as workplace diversity and fairness, there are areas for improvement, particularly concerning inclusivity in decision-making processes and perceptions of support in educational settings. These findings highlight the importance of ongoing efforts to foster inclusive and supportive environments both in the workplace and in educational institutions.

3.9 The findings highlight the overall high level of job satisfaction among respondents, with a majority reporting being very satisfied with their job. However, a substantial portion of respondents also reported experiencing high levels of job stress, which may have implications for their overall well-being and productivity. Additionally, while many respondents feel supported in their job, there is still room for improvement, as a notable percentage are feeling unsupported.

3.10 Further analysis of the roles and challenges faced by SNAs in each school sector will be carried out over the course of the SNA Workforce Development Plan with a view to providing appropriate support, and training and development opportunities. This work will be completed with the objective of optimising educational outcomes for students in the care of SNAs.