

TEACHERS

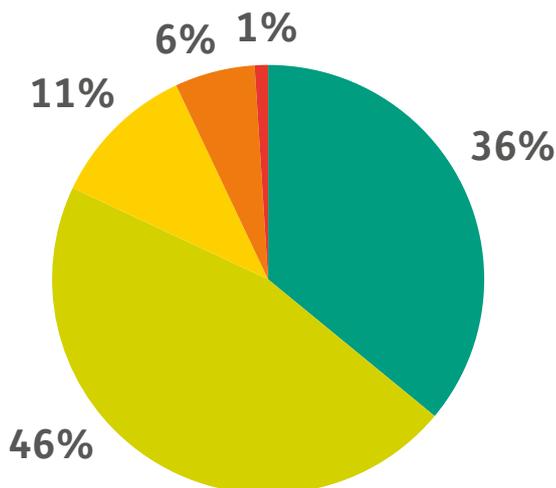
Teachers play a vital role in a child’s learning and development across the phases and their skills in supporting children and young people with SEND were brought under the spotlight following the SEND reforms (2014) and the recent Carter Review (2015). It was therefore felt necessary to analyse this group separately.

Teachers made up nearly one fifth (18%) of the respondents in this consultation and included both teachers and lecturers, working across a range of educational institutions, including maintained, Local Authority, and independent provision. It also included teachers working with children and young people across the entire age range.

Note: SENCOs were excluded from this data set as they have a specific role around supporting children with SEND. An analysis of SENCOs’ responses can be found later in this report.

One hundred percent of teachers recognised the importance of SLC skills for children and young people but only a third (35%) reported that they feel ‘very’ confident in their ability to support the development of these skills. Quite remarkably nearly one fifth (18%) of teachers reported a significant lack in confidence in being able to support these crucial skills which underpin children’s learning. This is disappointing given the central role teachers play in the learning and development of children and young people and impact teachers can have on their life chances.

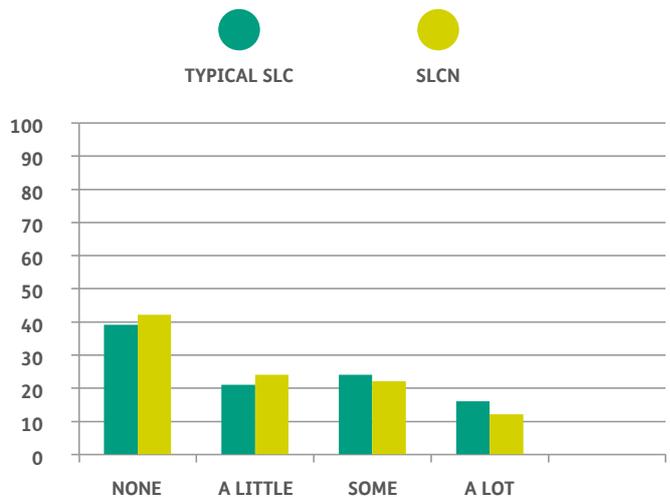
CONFIDENCE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN’S SLC DEVELOPMENT



Initial Training and CPD

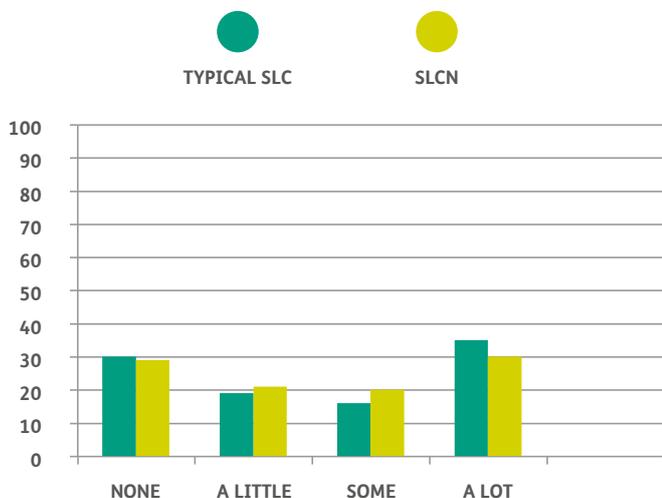
More than a third (39%) of teachers reported they received no learning at all around typical development of SLC in their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and disappointingly this figure rises to 42% when asked about learning around identifying and supporting children and young people with SLCN.

AMOUNT OF INITIAL TRAINING RECEIVED



Similar findings are reflected in teachers’ responses about CPD opportunities in their current role with a third (30%) reporting that they have received no learning whatsoever around typical SLC and 29% having received no training in identifying or supporting children with SLCN. This highlights a significant knowledge and skill gap in the teacher workforce, given what we know about the importance of SLC skills in underpinning learning and development.

AMOUNT OF CPD RECEIVED



Training Needs

A significant number (41%) of teachers felt there was a gap in their learning around supporting children and young people learning EAL with their SLC development, a third (37%) reported they would like more learning around supporting all children and young people's SLC development and a third would like training around talking to parents about their child's SLC and SLCN. Only 3% of teachers felt they had received sufficient CPD in their current role.

INSET and whole class approaches to training were suggested as potential opportunities for CPD in this area with a number of respondents highlighting ITT as a missed opportunity for introducing learning in this area.

Barriers

More than three quarters (78%) of teachers felt that lack of budget was the most significant barrier to accessing CPD opportunities; backing from senior management was not a significant challenge. Lack of time (61%), lack of relevant opportunities (62%) and lack of capacity (59%) were also cited as barriers preventing teachers from developing their knowledge and skills in SLC.

Motivation and Preferences

Face to face (63%) and formal, accredited training leading to a qualification (61%) were by far the most popular formats of CPD for teachers and the least favoured formats were online learning (15%), self-directed or with tutor support, and webinars (9%).

The biggest motivating factor for undertaking SLC development opportunities for teachers was to improve their practice (93%), with an encouraging 80% of the profession seeing it as essential to their role. Three quarters (77%) felt they needed a better understanding of SLC/SLCN despite only 30% of teachers reporting that they worked directly with a child or young people with SLCN. This raises concerns about teachers' awareness of the prevalence of SLCN.

The relevance of training content, learning needs of children and young people and cost were all strong considerations when making decisions about CPD opportunities.

“This should be introduced as a module in the PGCE. It would have impacted massively on my practice had I been more aware of it”

“Initial teacher training is totally inadequate regarding SEN, SLC & SLCN...”

“SLCN awareness in ITT is essential and needs to be prioritised”

