

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011



Consultation with Children and Young People

Summer 2010

Part 2 - Consultation with Children and
Young People at Special Schools in Devon

Acknowledgements

Devon County Council would like to thank the following organisations and people for their assistance with the consultation work with children and young people at special schools:

- Staff of Devon's Special Schools
- Parents
- Children and Young People
- Parents Carers' Voice
- Abby Buckley and Lucy Knight, Children and Young People's Services

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Introduction

Background

Under the duties in the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have a duty to support the development of childcare provision in their local area. This needs to be flexible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the local community. In order to ensure this happens local authorities have a duty to undertake a detailed assessment of the supply of, and demand for, childcare in their area. This includes consulting with parents, employers, providers of childcare and children.

Aim

To consult with children in special schools to find out their views on childcare. Areas to look at are:

- What children do now for fun
- What children like and dislike
- What children would like to do for fun
- What are the barriers

Methodology

In October and November 2009, a consultation was carried out with pupils of Devon's special schools as part of the upcoming Childcare Sufficiency Assessment of 2011. At the first assessment, completed in 2008, this group of children and young people at Special Schools were not included in the consultation.

To ensure an effective consultation this time, it was decided to ask the special schools in Devon if they would get involved and help us to reach the pupils in the most appropriate way. This consultation would take place in parallel with the consultation with parents on their views on their child's needs in relation to activities and childcare. Staff visited as many schools as possible and established good links with teachers and pastoral support staff. The schools were for the most part very pleased to be consulted, and happy to help.

It was proposed that the consultation with the children would be carried out using appropriate discussion events and/or games, with assistance and extensive input from the children's teachers and other specialist staff.

After discussion with school staff, it was decided to send a basic paper questionnaire (see appendix 1) to be completed by the children and young people via the schools. The worksheet questionnaire for pupils was created. Some schools chose to send them home with the parents' form and others working through them in class time or at annual reviews.

The five schools that were able to take part were

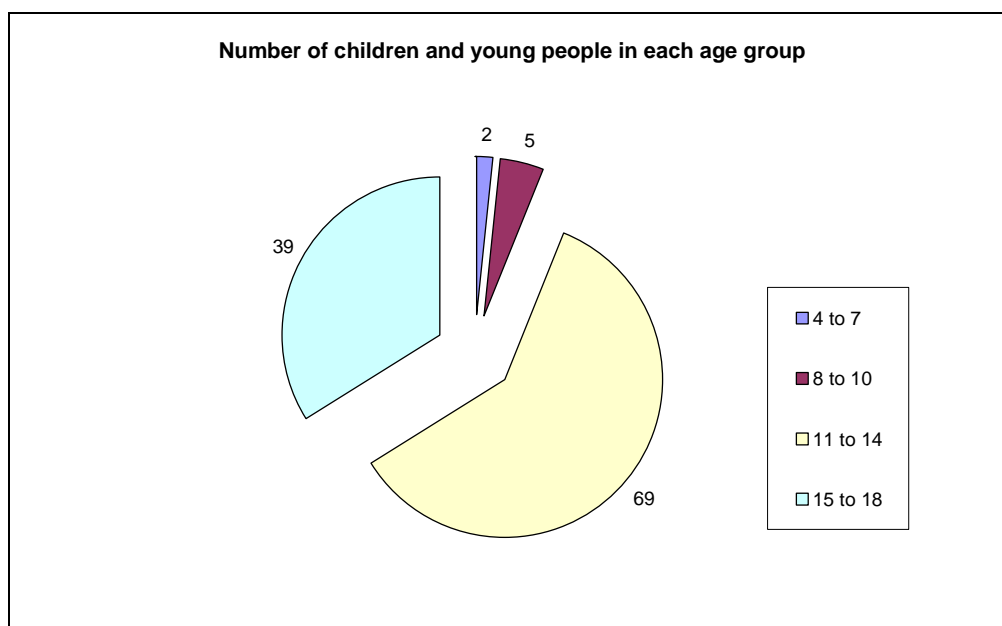
- Southbrook College, Exeter
- Bidwell Brook School, Totnes
- Millwater School, Honiton
- Oaklands Park School, Dawlish
- Ellen Tinkham School, Exeter

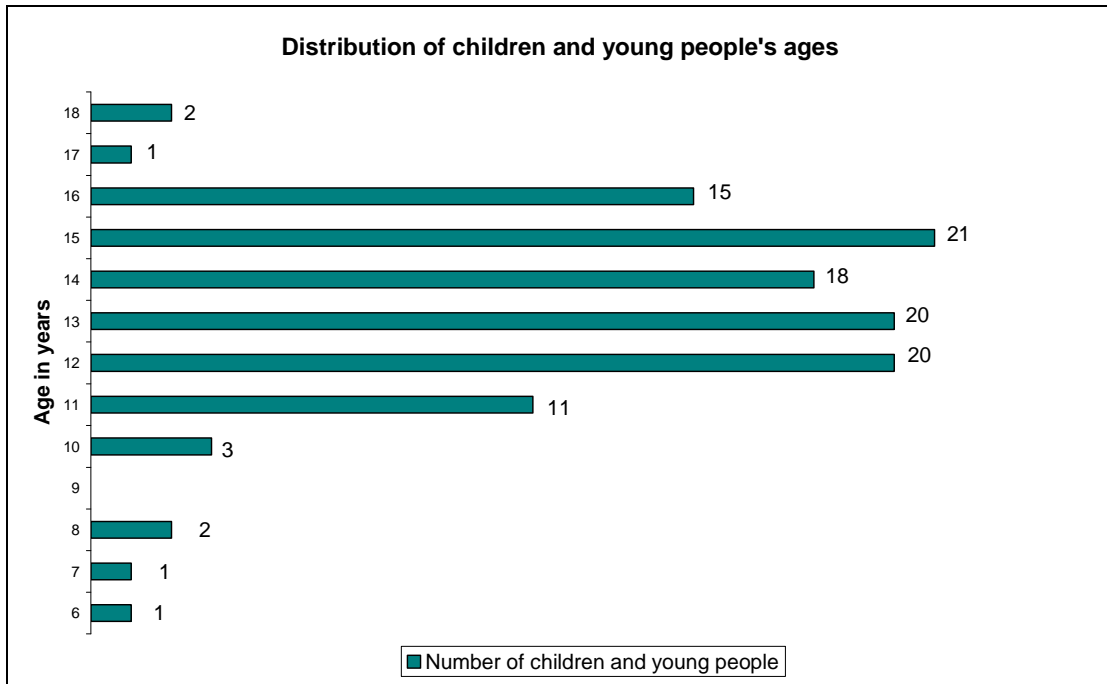
Profile of Respondents

Responses to the survey were variable. At Southbrook College nearly 95% of the pupils took part in the survey, whilst response rates for the other four schools ranged between 2% and 7%. The overall response rate was 25% of the pupils on roll in the summer term 2009. The combined results from the survey were heavily influenced by the responses from Southbrook. However when a further examination was made of the responses from the smaller number of young people from the other schools, this showed very little difference between pupils' preferences. The differences that were apparent related to needing extra carers and help to enable the young people to do what they want to do. Otherwise the general results apply to all pupils.

School	Number of responses	Number of pupils on roll (Summer term 2009)	% response rate
Southbrook College	98	104	94.23%
Bidwell Brook School	6	87	6.90%
Millwater School	4	94	4.26%
Oaklands Park School	1	48	2.08%
Ellen Tinkham School	7	120	5.83%
Total	116	453	25.61%

The largest proportion of children was in the 11 to 14 years age group, at just under 60%, with 15 to 18 year olds making up the next largest proportion at 34%. The highest individual child's age was 15 years followed by 12 and 13 years as the second highest. Within the schools, the highest numbers for Southbrook College was in the 11 to 14 age group, for Ellen Tinkham, Oaklands Park School and Bidwell Brook, the 15 to 18 age group, and for Millwater half of the children were aged 4 to 7 years.





Over 80% of the children and young people were assisted by an adult to complete the questionnaire, for 9 out of 10 of those assisted, the young people were helped by a member of staff at their school, their teacher, teaching assistant or tutor. The remaining children and young people were helped by a parent or carer.

The questionnaire was in two parts. The first part asked the young people about the 'things I do now for fun'. They were asked what they did, what they liked about what they did. Were there things that they were 'not bothered' about and if there were things that they didn't like about what they did. The children had three opportunities to talk about what they now do for fun.

What children do now for fun

Things I do for fun!

What I do ...

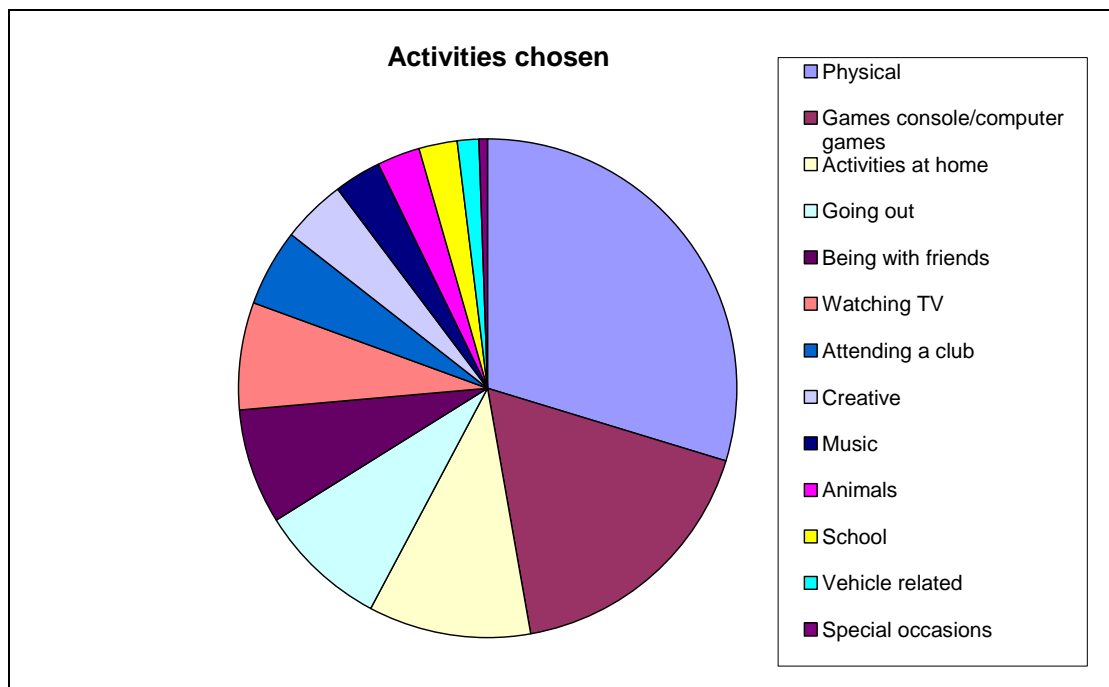
Nearly all of the children (95%) gave their views on what they like to do for fun. Their choice of activity was wide and varied. These have been divided up into broad categories which give a reflection of the children and young people's interests.

The most popular broad category of activity was physical activity, this accounted for nearly 30% of the activities selected. From these physical activity (42%) team sports scored highest, mainly football but also cricket, basketball and playing rounders. The second most popular physical activity was riding a bike (20%), which included BMX and mountain bikes. This was followed by swimming (10%). These accounted for nearly three quarters of the physical activities chosen. The remaining quarter of physical activities included horse riding, trampolining, bowling, dancing, roller skating, playing badminton and walking.

Broad category of activity	Number	% of selected activities
Physical	93	29.7%
Games consoles including computer games	55	17.6%
Activities at home	33	10.5%
Going out	26	8.3%
Being with friends	23	7.3%
Watching TV	22	7.0%
Attending a club	16	5.1%
Creative	13	4.2%
Music	9	2.9%
Animals	9	2.9%
School	8	2.6%
Vehicle related	4	1.3%
Special occasions	2	0.6%

The second most popular broad range of activity, although a much smaller proportion (17.6%) was related to playing on games consoles or games played on the computer. For one in ten children, they enjoyed being at home and doing activities such as reading, playing with toys, cooking, helping out with household chores and being with the family. A further 7% enjoyed watching television.

Chart of range of activities I do for fun



Being with friends, going out and attending a club accounted in total for over one in five children and young people's things they like to do for fun!

Other activities included creative activities, such as art and craft, music mainly listening, being with animals, pets, horses and school related activities were all mentioned. Some young people like to spend time with vehicles such as banger racing and go-karting.

What Children Like and Dislike

I like ..., not bothered .. and don't like ...

The children and young people were asked what they liked, what they were not bothered about and what they didn't like about the activities they had chosen and response here were as varied as the things they like to do.

These three descriptors will be taken together to get a flavour about a particular broad type of activity.

Physical activity – team sports, bikes, swimming etc.

Looking at the most popular activities, for example playing a team sport, the children and young people liked being in a team, playing other teams, tackling, being passed the ball, getting muddy and quite importantly scoring goals. The types of things they weren't bothered about were losing a game, being in a particular position, playing in bad weather, getting wet and muddy and which team they were in. Examples of what they didn't like included arguing with other players, fighting in a match, when people don't pass to them, people bullying or being angry, being in particular position e.g. in goal, losing matches and 'messing up a shot'.

The enjoyment of riding bikes included being able to get around independently, going on cycling trips, racing, for BMX particularly 'doing jumps and doing the red run' was mentioned and for one young person just 'riding in the rain'. They weren't bothered about getting muddy or going out in the rain or for one young person 'having a new bike'. Examples of what they didn't like include 'falling off', 'being called for dinner', cleaning their bike and 'hills!!!' One young person just enjoyed sanding down the bike frames in their garden, spraying and putting the bike together again except for getting covered with paint!

Swimming was mainly just enjoyed for itself, no further explanation needed, but the few comments included 'floating on my pink float' and 'diving in', not bothered about getting changed or 'being in the lanes' but not liking being splashed or being cold in the water.

Games consoles and computer games

For the young people who like playing electronic games either on a games console or computer, they mainly liked playing specific games, completing them and playing with their friends and particularly for some, winning. Some also liked taking to all their mates on the computer. For a number of others they weren't bothered about winning or losing or dying on game or even what type of games they had. But for others, they didn't like losing or being beaten, 'people taking over and having to have limited time', 'getting told to stop' and 'turning it off and going to bed'.

Activities at home

Children and young people enjoyed being at home and like playing with their siblings, reading a variety of books, watching specific TV programmes, eating what they make. Examples of what they don't like include clearing up, putting games away, 'people pestering when I'm reading' and specific TV programmes.

Being with friends, going out and attending a club

Being with friends is enjoyable because young people like to do things together, such as shopping, going to the cinema, going into town, going to school and just playing together. Falling out with friends, getting told off and being naughty were examples of what they didn't like. Specific outings or day trips were mentioned by a number of children who like going out, such as Crealey Park, MacDonald's, Paignton Zoo, going to the park or the seaside, school trips and playing crazy golf. More examples of what they like included going on rides, seeing specific animals such as reptiles. They weren't bothered about when they go, travelling or where they might see animals. What they don't like included 'going home' or 'not going'. For those children and young people who enjoyed going to the park with friends, they didn't like 'when people mess up the swings', playing with kids they don't know and going when it is cold.

The clubs mentioned that young people like to attend include youth club, drama groups, sea and army cadets, Saturday club, Karate and majorettes. At the club they mainly liked to do specific activities like pool, snooker or games but also staff and other children were important for one young person. They weren't bothered about doing other specific activities but they didn't like for example 'arguing with people I don't like', losing against friends and 'going home'.

The above examples demonstrate the range of reasons why children enjoy what they do and these range from the very specific activity to a wider enjoyment of being with friends, doing things together, seeing other places, being independent and increasing skills and expertise or just because they know they enjoy what they do. For some they are not bothered whether they win or lose or if they get muddy but for others losing was important and they didn't like this happening. Falling out with friends, people arguing or fighting were all reasons given for not enjoying an activity which demonstrate the importance of relationships at this young age.

What Children would like to do for fun

Things I would like to do for fun!

The second part of the questionnaire asked the children and young people about the things that they would like to do for fun, what they were, why they would like to do them and if there was anything stopping them from doing that activity. Slightly less children and young people (88%) completed this section.

The range of activities that children and young people would like to do has some similarity to the things that they currently do now. However, a number of young people are looking to have that special experience, they are thinking about their adult life, their future career options and new skills that they would like to develop. Their choices focus much more on activities outside of the home and although playing games on games consoles, activities at home including watching TV are still present, they are a much lower priority.

Broad category	Total	%
Physical activity	69	24.2%
Going out	36	12.6%
Games consoles including computer games	27	9.5%
Special experience	25	8.8%
Driving	14	4.9%
New skills	13	4.6%
Creative	11	3.9%
Future career	11	3.9%
Other	11	3.9%
Relaxation	9	3.2%
Outdoor pursuits	8	2.8%
Animals	6	2.1%
Aspirational	6	2.1%
Being with friends	6	2.1%
Independence	5	1.8%
Performing arts	5	1.8%
Vehicles	5	1.8%
Activities at home	4	1.4%
Being with the family	4	1.4%
Equipment/toys	3	1.1%
Attending a club	2	0.7%
Messy play	2	0.7%
TV	2	0.7%
School	1	0.4%

The children and young people were asked what they would like to do for fun, why they would like to do it and what stops them from doing it. These three will be taken together to get a flavour about a particular type of activity.

Physical activity – team sports, bikes, swimming etc.

Physical activity is still the most popular choice for the children and young people but at a slightly lower level. Team sport is again the most highly scored amongst the physical activity with playing football in a team most mentioned but the opportunity to play rugby or cricket is now in evidence.

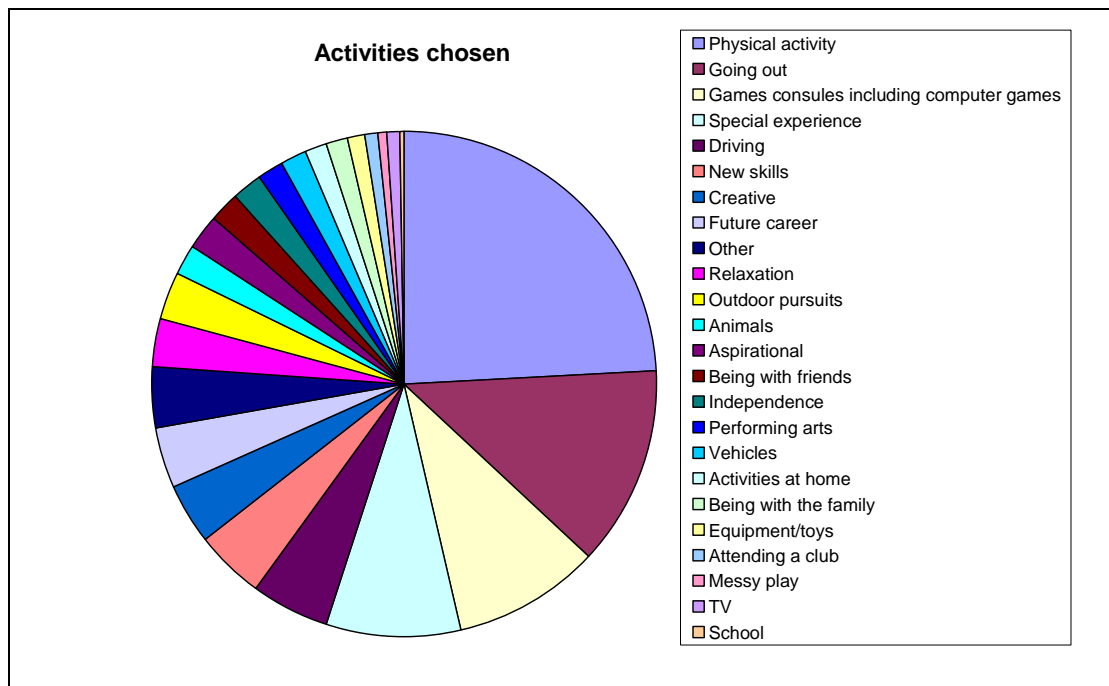
The reasons that they would like more team sport activity include wanting to be part of a team, because they would enjoy it, learn new skills, meet friends and become 'better at it'. As one young person commented 'I can wear off my energy and it gives me exercise and fresh air'.

When asked about what stops them taking up this team sport, a number of children and young people felt they did not have the opportunity and couldn't get started. Others felt that they didn't have the physical strength or skill needed. Bullying was also given as a reason but for one young person, their own behaviour stopped them from taking this up. Time was also quoted as a reason, as was going to school.

In this section, there are now a wide range of other sports that individuals would like to try. These include boxing, canoeing, golf, athletics and cross-country running, tennis, darts, skate boarding and snow boarding. The reasons they would like to try these activities include because they feel they would enjoy it and it would be fun. What stops them from doing it includes cost, other people, school doesn't do it and not feeling well. Nine of the young people said they would like to go ice skating because it is fun but stopping them is cost, being too far way from home and the confidence that they won't fall over.

Slightly less young people include bikes in what they would like to do but this is still a popular activity because it is good fun, it's great exercise and 'you get to see good views'. There are a number of children and young people who would like the opportunity to go swimming because it is fun or they want to improve their skills. What stops them? Weather, time and going to school were all reasons given.

Chart of range of activities I would like to do for fun



Being with friends, going out and attending a club

Being with friends is still important to what children and young people would like to do but attending a specific club occurs less, going out more widely is something they would like to do more of. In what they do now only one person spoke about going on holiday, but this now features quite strongly in what they would like to do, along with day trips, shopping, going clubbing, going to the park, the fairground and the cinema. Holiday destinations included Florida, Cyprus and France. For day trips, Crealey Park, Woodlands and Alton Towers were specific places to visit. They would like to go out because it is good fun, for holidays abroad – nice weather! They are meeting new people, going new places and for some because they have not done this before. Reasons for not being able to go on holiday or on day trips are too expensive, needing someone to go with them and not being able to get there because it's too far away. For one child having a disabled parent made it difficult to go out and have friends around. Being away with one of the parents also was a difficulty.

Special experiences, aspirations, gaining new skills and independence

Special experiences, aspirations, gaining new skills and independence are all new broad categories describing what young people would like to have the opportunity to do. Their dreams, hopes, future careers, more practical new skills they would like to gain and an increasing desire for independence are aspects now included in what they would like to do.

There are special experiences that they dream of having which may include meeting a hero of theirs. For quite a number this involved being able to go to

a match or hold a season ticket for a premier football club and meeting a professional football player. Reasons for wanting to do this are related to a passion for football. Other experiences included doing a bungee jump, going into space, going in a limousine, going to a music festival, finding ghosts, seeing the HMS Titanic, holding a snake, riding in a fire engine, seeing the queen and swimming with dolphins. Reasons for not being able to do these things relate to being too young, the cost, parents not allowing, fear and too far to travel.

Aspirations included exploring the world, becoming a professional football player, piloting a helicopter and winning a world championship.

Learning to play a musical instrument ranks high among the new skills and interests, young people would like to take up – the harp, guitar, ukulele and drums are all listed. Other creative activities included designing clothes for fun, making my own album cover, inventing things, making robots and for one young person making their own BMX bike. Caving, rock climbing, abseiling and waterskiing along with karate, gymnastics and snooker are all more active skills that some young people would like to learn. Why they might not be able to take up these new skills relate to cost, equipment, confidence, being too difficult, having the resources, being too far away and needing to have lessons.

They are beginning to think about future careers and teaching, being a police dog handler, electrician, airline pilot and working in the travel industry are all careers mentioned. Reasons for wanting to do this include being interested and wanting to work in this area. Age is a barrier currently but also cost was perceived as a future barrier.

For some young people they would like more independence which may just involve being allowed to go out on their own or come home on their own. Age, parents letting them and costs are all seen as barriers to more independence. But for others looking towards the future, driving is high on their agenda. The driving category not only includes cars, but other vehicles including motor bikes, lorries and even a tank. There was a general interest in vehicles including farm machinery as well as lorries and cars. Their reasons for wanting to drive are to give independence, enjoyment of speed and a general interest in cars and other vehicles. A realistic response from nearly all for what stops them from doing it is either 'too young' or parents not allowing them.

Barriers for Children accessing chosen activities

What stops me

There are many other individual activities and things that the children and young people would like to do but the above section gives a flavour of their main choices. This section looks at all of the activities to see if there are any common themes to the barriers which stop the young people from taking up what they would like to do. The table and chart below identify what the most common issues are. The four most common barriers that stop children and young people doing what they want to do were cost, age, parents or carers and access or distance to the activity. At least one of these barriers was mentioned by 72 of the children and young people.

The barrier that was identified most often by the children and young people to the activity they would like to do was the cost of the activity. Comments from the children and young people include the following 'it costs too much money', 'I did not have enough money', 'Mum and Dad don't have enough money' and 'the price is too high I can't afford it' amongst many others.

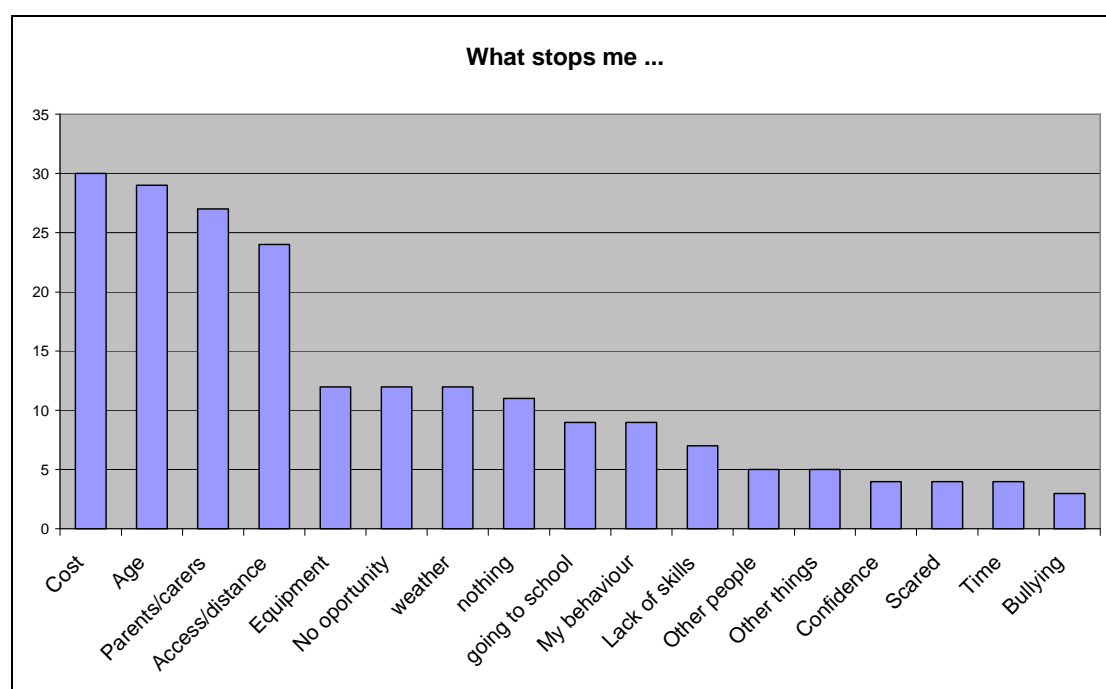
What stops me ...	Number of activities
Cost	30
Age	29
Parents/carers	27
Access/distance	24
Equipment	12
No opportunity	12
weather	12
nothing	11
going to school	9
My behaviour	9
Lack of skills	7
Other people	5
Other things	5
Confidence	4
Scared	4
Time	4
Bullying	3
Going out	2
Imagination	2
Lack of information	2
Physical strength	2
Sharing	2
Too tired	2

The children and young people are also realistic, in that some of things they would like to do, they are just not old enough for and this was the second

largest barrier to what they would like to do. These include the following comments 'I am too young', 'I don't think I am old enough' 'not old enough yet', 'age stops me' and 'I haven't got one and I am too young'.

Parents and carers are also seen as a barrier to some activities. These include times when parents say no, but also when parents won't let them go or won't take them. Sometimes, it is to do with having to come for a meal, doing homework or going to bed. These are some of the comments about parents 'Mum is too busy and there are no activities available for this', 'need my mum to take me', 'My mum and step dad won't take me', 'my mum wont let me go' and 'when daddy says no'.

The fourth of the most common barriers was the lack of access or distance to the activity. This could be because it was too far away or they can't get there. Comments for this barrier include 'It's too far away', 'too far to travel', 'I would have a long way to travel', 'some activities are too far away and mum doesn't drive' and 'mum can't drive and I need more than one adult', 'I can't get there' and 'I need someone to take me'.



Less common, but still a barrier for a number of children is a lack of equipment to take up the activity they would like to do. 'I don't have one' in relation to musical instruments, 'no paints or crayons', 'I don't have any skates', 'I have not got a bike', 'I do not have a mountain bike' and 'I don't have a trampoline' are just some of the comments made.

For some they haven't got the opportunity to take up an activity. This could be because there are no spaces available or just that the activity is not available at all. 'No room for me', 'the school does not do it', 'there is nowhere I could

go', 'there is no football activity club available for his special needs' and 'no lessons where I live' are comments made.

Weather appears to be a barrier to some and this is generally related to bad weather. For quite a number of children after they said what they would like to do and thinking about what stops them, they had to admit that there was nothing stopping them doing it. Having to go to school was a barrier to some for not being able to do what they wanted to do. Some young people admitted that their own behaviour stopped them from taking up an activity. This included 'arguing with my brothers and sister', 'watching too much TV', 'silly behaviour', 'when I am angry', 'being grounded' and for one child who like cooking 'licking the mixture and getting into trouble'.

There were a wide range of other reasons, some related to lack of skills and needing to have lessons, other people not joining in or stopping them, wanting to do other things, but also not having the confidence, being scared or fear of being bullied. Some children didn't have the time and some admitted that their own timekeeping was a problem.

Out of the individual reasons mentioned was 'I can't go on my own', 'it takes two carers to accompany me, not always enough people to do this', 'mum being ill'. One child mentioned that he would like to see more of his brother but his social worker prevented this happening. For one child it was 'I am at my dad's at the weekend' that stopped the activity being taken up.

Summary

The responses to the consultation with parents of children with additional needs were received from children and young people attending five of Devon's Special Schools. The highest response rate was from pupils at Southbrook College where nearly 95% of the children and young people took part. The largest proportion of children was in the 11 to 14 years age group, followed by 15 to 18 year olds.

Children and young people were asked about activities their children currently attend, the things they do now for fun and what they liked about the activity, what didn't bother them and what they didn't like. Their choice of activity was wide and varied. These were divided up into broad categories which give a reflection of the children and young people's interests.

The most popular broad category of activity was physical activity, this accounted for nearly 30% of the activities selected. The second most popular broad range of activity, although a much smaller proportion (17.6%) was related to playing on games consoles or games played on the computer. Being with friends, going out and attending a club accounted in total for over one in five children and young people's things they like to do for fun! Other activities included creative activities, such as art and craft, music, being with animals and school related activities were all mentioned. Some young people like to spend time with vehicles such as banger racing and go-karting.

The range of reasons why children enjoy what they do can relate to the very specific activity but also to a wider enjoyment of being with friends, doing things together, seeing other places, being independent and increasing skills and expertise or just because they know they enjoy what they do. For some they are not bothered whether they win or lose or if they get muddy but for others losing was important and they didn't like this happening. Falling out with friends, people arguing or fighting were all reasons given for not enjoying an activity which demonstrate the importance of relationships at this young age.

The second part of the questionnaire asked the children and young people about the things that they would like to do for fun, what they were, why they would like to do them and if there was anything stopping them from doing that activity. Slightly less children and young people (88%) completed this section.

The range of activities that children and young people would like to do has some similarity to the things that they currently do now. However, a number of young people are looking to have that special experience, they are thinking about their adult life, their future career options and new skills that they would like to develop. Their choices focus much more on activities outside of the home and although playing games on games consoles, activities at home including watching TV are still present, they are a much lower priority.

The young people were asked to think about what stopped them from doing what they would like to do. There were common themes to the barriers which young people recorded as stopping them from taking up what they would like to do. The four most common barriers that stop children and young people doing what they want to do were cost, age, parents or carers and access or distance to the activity. At least one of these barriers was mentioned by 72 of the children and young people.

From the young people's perspective who took part in the consultation with Special Schools, the main issues in terms of stopping them taking something up were cost, age, parents or carers and access or distance to the activity. The areas that need to be considered to help address some of these issues and provide them with more support to take up more of their chosen activities include:

- Review of costs and support available to parents and young people;
- Review of information sources and increasing parents' and young people's awareness of what is available;
- Ensuring that suitable facilities and opportunities are available, including preparation for the future, independence and career opportunities;
- Review of transport and access arrangements;
- Ensuring those who need additional support are given the same opportunities to take part in as wide a range of activities as fellow pupils.

APPENDIX 1

Early Years and Childcare Service – Consultation with special schools

<p>My name is _____</p> <p>I'm _____ years old.</p> <p>I go to _____ School</p> <p>I was helped by _____ , who is my _____.</p>

Things I do now for fun.

What I do	☺ I like ...	☹ Not bothered ...	☹ I don't like ...

What I do	☺ I like ...	☹ Not bothered ...	☹ I don't like ...

What I do	☺ I like ...	☹ Not bothered ...	☹ I don't like ...

Early Years and Childcare Service – Consultation with special schools



My name is _____



I'm _____ years old.


I go to _____ School

I was helped by _____, who is my _____.

Things I would like to do for fun.

Things I like...	I like this because... 	What stops me ... 

Things I like...	I like this because... 	What stops me ... 

Things I like...	I like this because... 	What stops me ... 