



# **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

## **Needs Assessment**

For further details contact:

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**Bolton**  
**Council**

# Objectives

- To understand the needs of children with disabilities and their families to support funding decisions and help to ensure resources are allocated in the best way possible.

# Fieldwork

- A paper self-completion questionnaire was sent to parents of children with disabilities aged under 5 via the Primary Care Trust.

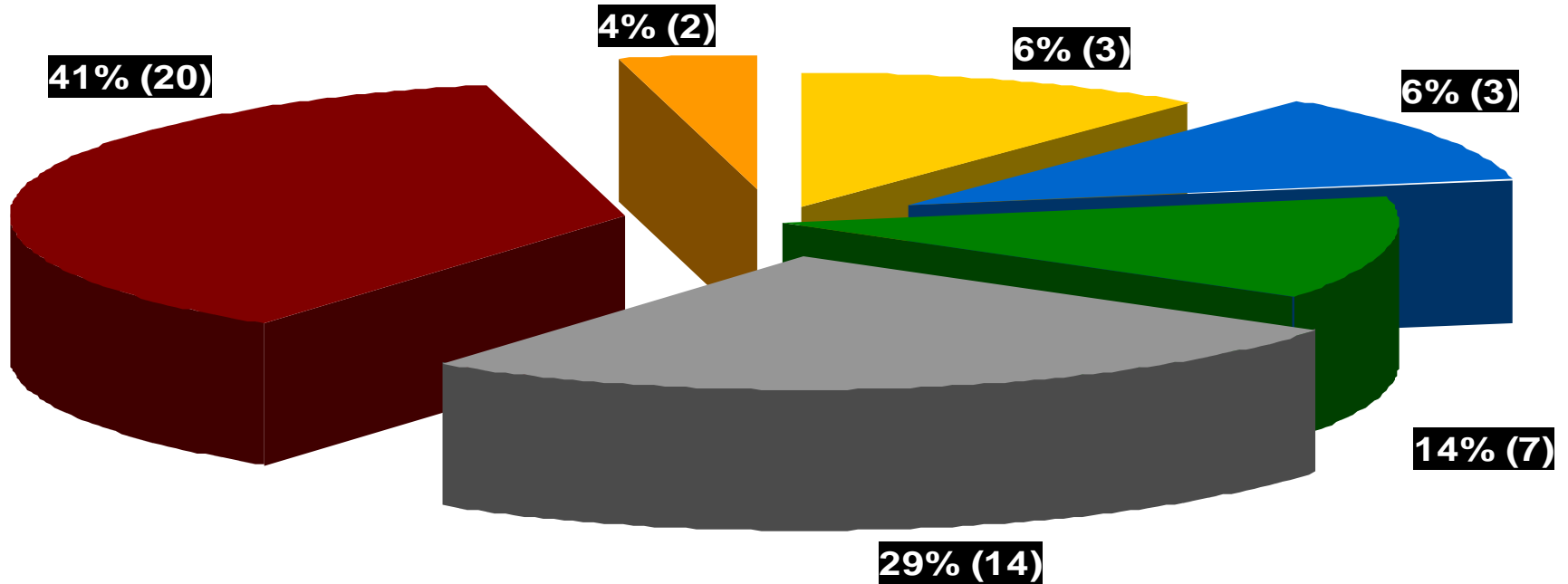
DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRES			
Period	Sent Out	Total number returned	% response rate (overall)
March 2010	150	50	33%

# Interpreting the data

PLEASE EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN USING THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY DUE TO THE LOW NUMBER OF RESPONSES

# Child's current age?

Under 1   1 yr   2 yrs   3 yrs   4 yrs   5 yrs

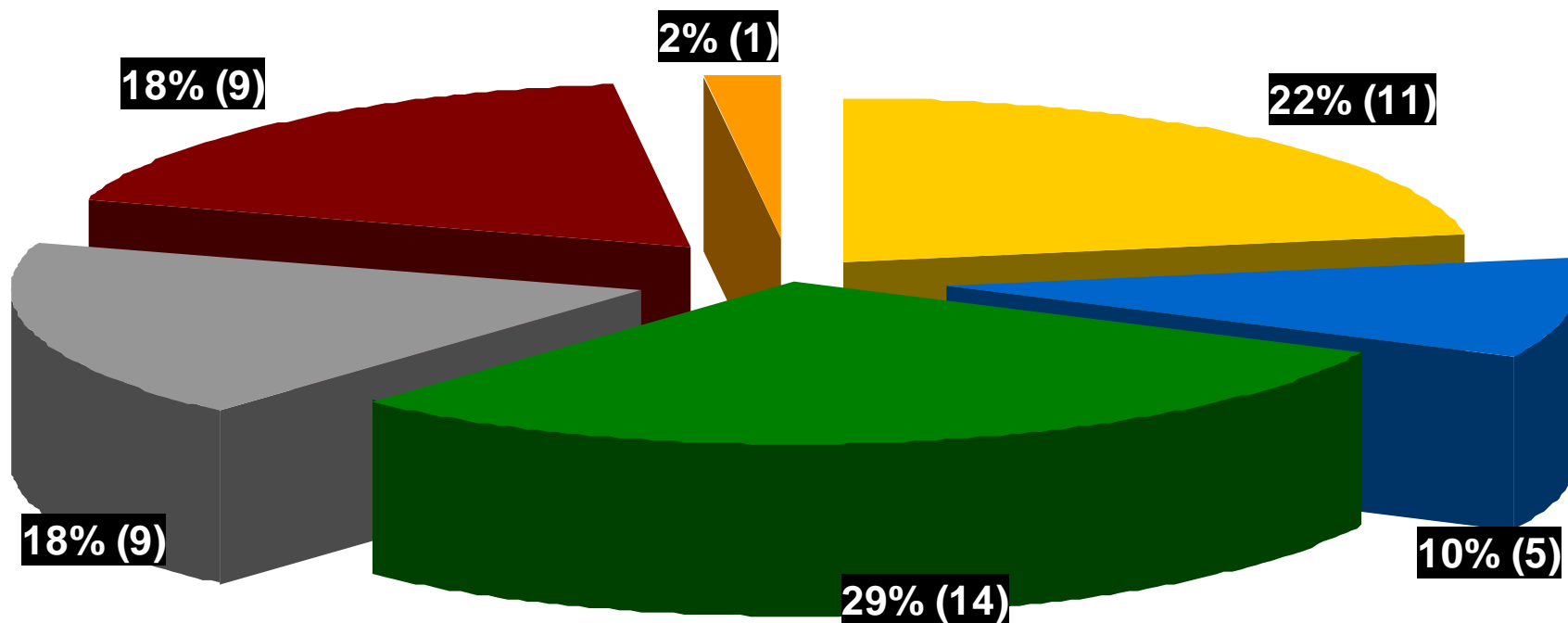


Base = 49 respondents

Actual number of respondents shown in brackets

# At what age was your child given a diagnosis/identified as having a disability?

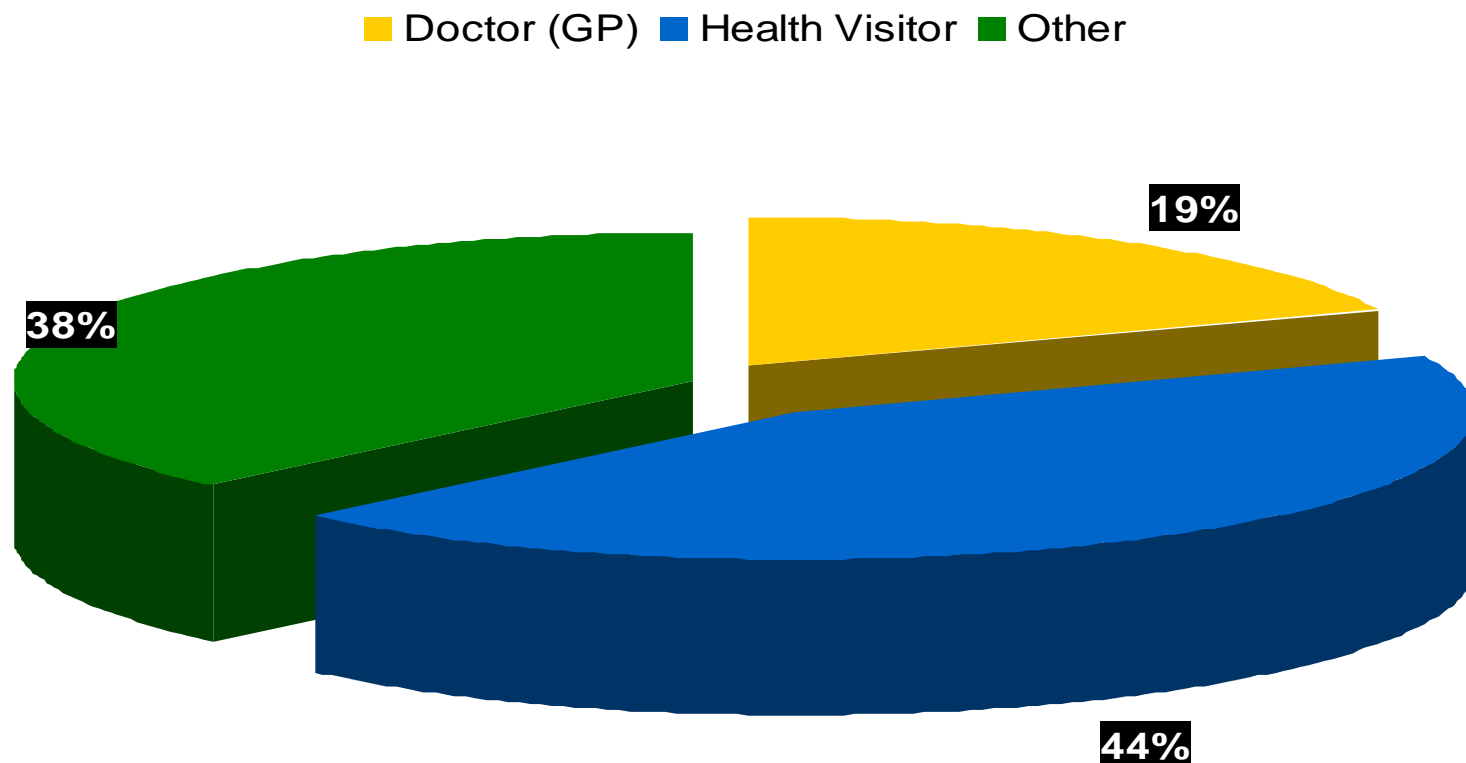
■ At birth ■ Under 1yr ■ 1 yrs ■ 2 yrs ■ 3 yrs ■ 4 yrs



Base = 49 respondents

Actual number of respondents shown in brackets

# When you first had concerns that your child may have additional needs, from which organisation did you first seek help?



Base = 48 respondents

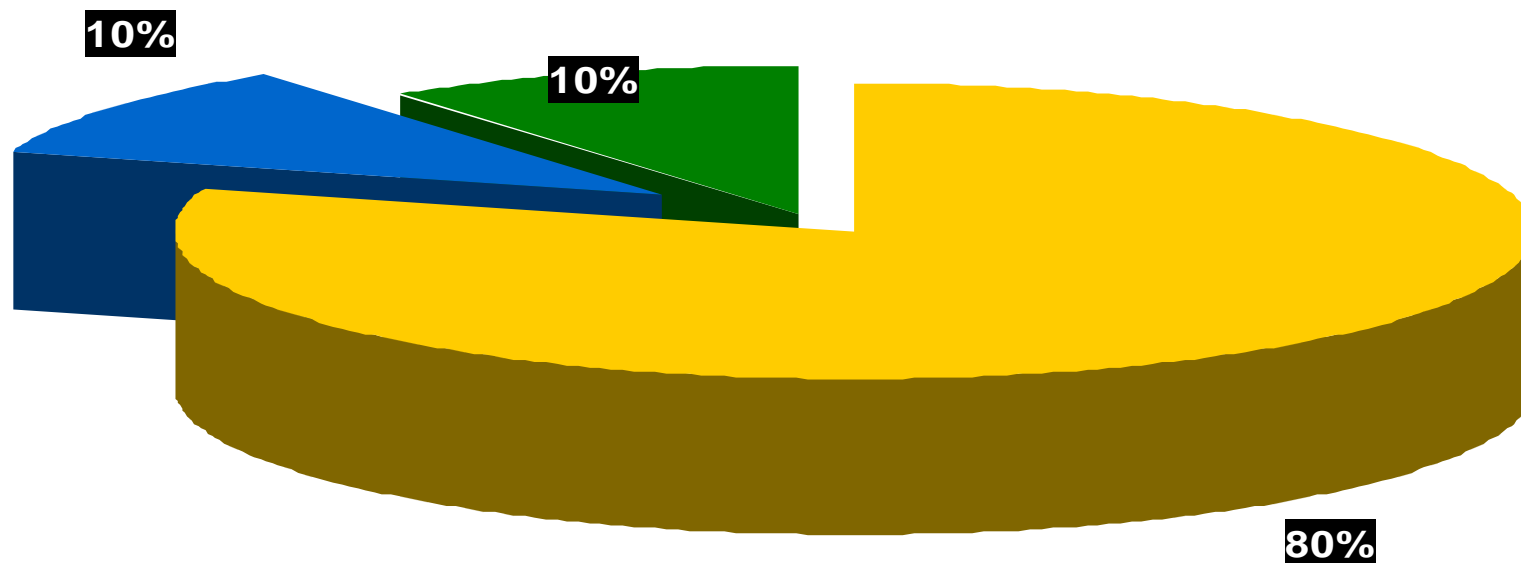
## Other organisations from which respondents first sought help?

Comment	Number of respondents
Hospital	5
Diagnosed at birth	4
Paediatrician	3
Neo-natal unit	2
Nursery school	2
Physiotherapist	1
Social worker	1

Comments have been categorized

# Did they tell you about any specialist help that was available?

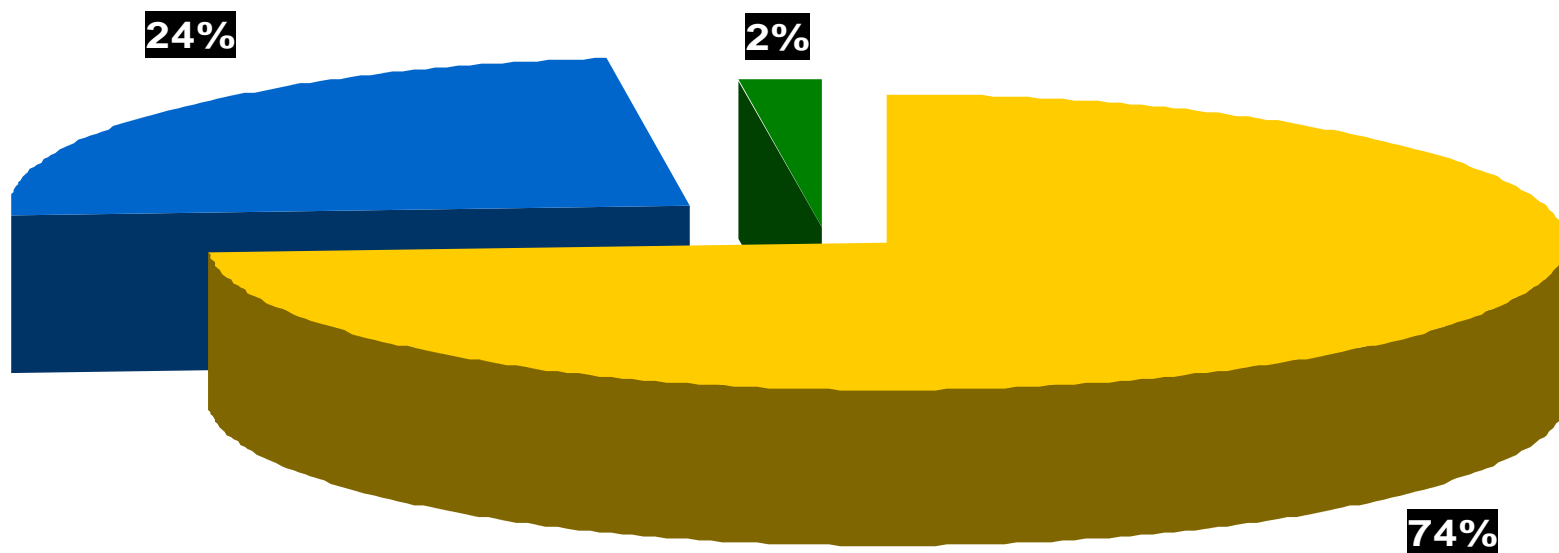
Yes No Can't remember



Base = 48 respondents

# Do you receive Disability Living Allowance for your child?

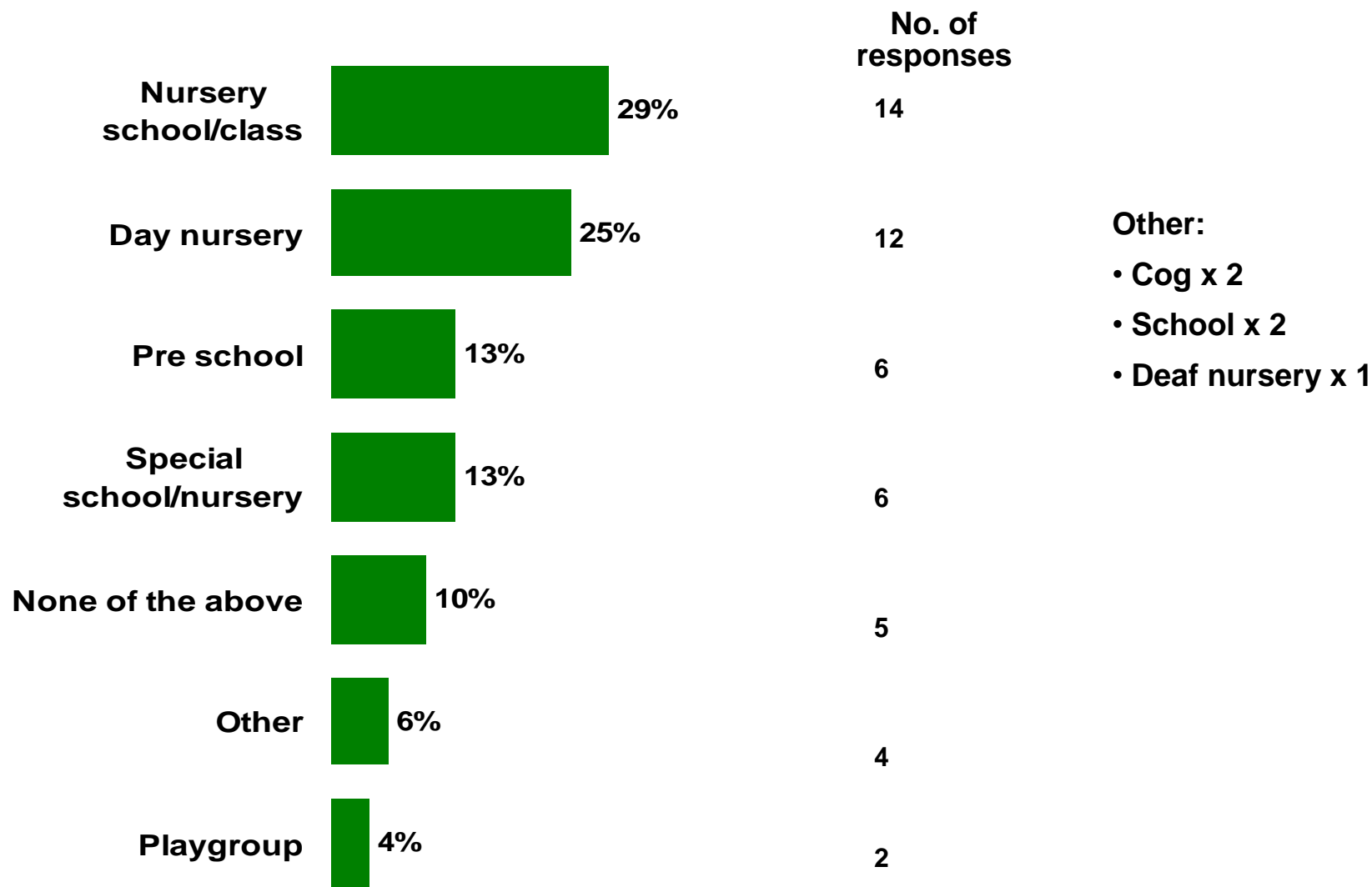
Yes No Not sure



Base = 50 respondents



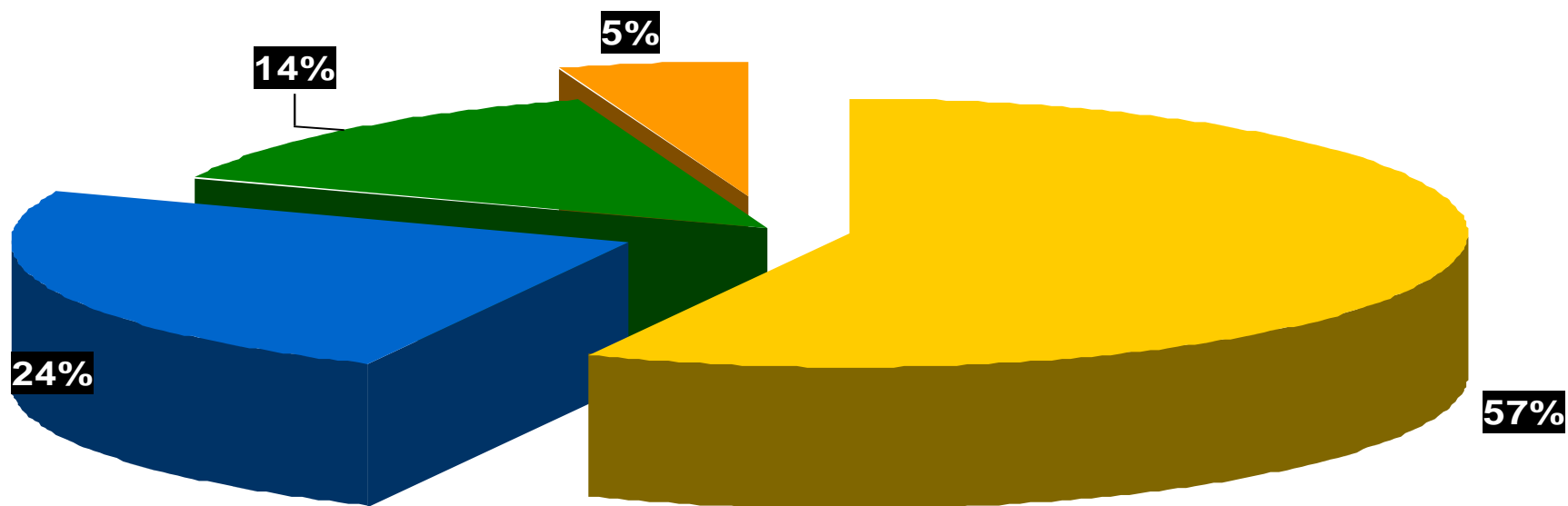
# Which of the following does your child currently attend?



Base = 49 respondents

# Is this nursery/pre school/playgroup:

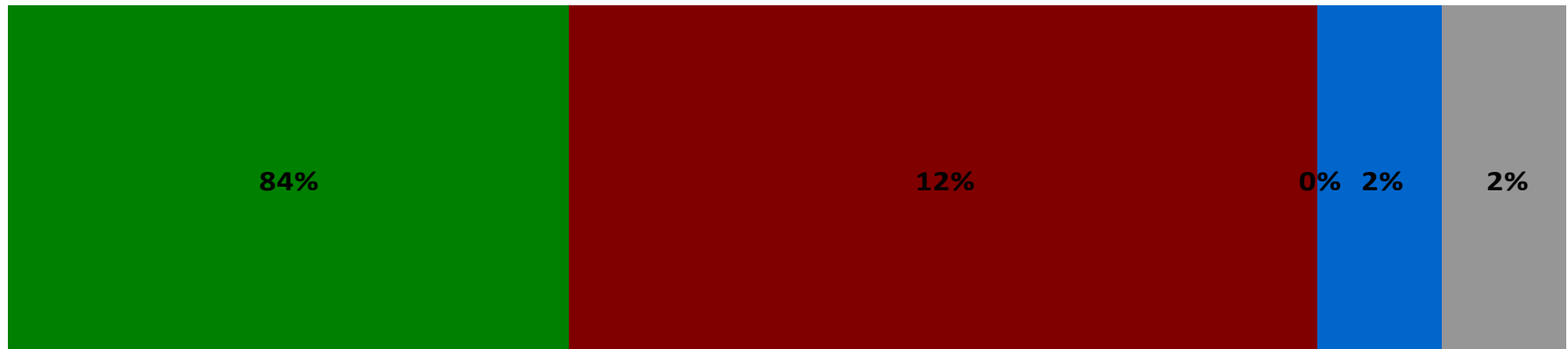
■ Council ■ Private ■ Voluntary/charity ■ Don't know



Base = 42 respondents

# To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the nursery/pre school/playgroup they attend?

■ Very satisfied   ■ Fairly satisfied   ■ Fairly dissatisfied   ■ Very dissatisfied   ■ Don't know



Base = 43 respondents

# Reasons for satisfaction/dissatisfaction



Only 2 negative comments were made. These related to a lack of understanding and funding and to staff.

# Comments about staff

Know my child extremely well. Know his strengths and weaknesses and plan activities to challenge him and develop him further along with working closely with his speech and language programme.

I'm very satisfied with my child's nursery because they always supported me when I needed it and they always inform me on my child's progress.

**Staff**

The staff are very friendly and give good advice on things to try at home, with the things they have tried with him in class.

The environment is very comfortable and the staff are aware of my daughters needs and do activities suitable for her. Other health professionals also visit the nursery e.g. occ therapist, physio, pre-school, deaf teacher. The staff are very friendly and the parents room is comfortable to chat with other parents.

# Parents whose children do not currently attend nursery/pre school/play group

Only 7 respondents had children who did not currently attend nursery/pre school/playgroup. 5 respondents said their children were not yet old enough, and 2 parents preferred to care for their children at home.

Of those who expressed a preference for the type of childcare setting they would like them to attend, 3 said special school/nursery, 2 said day nursery and 1 preferred nursery school/class.

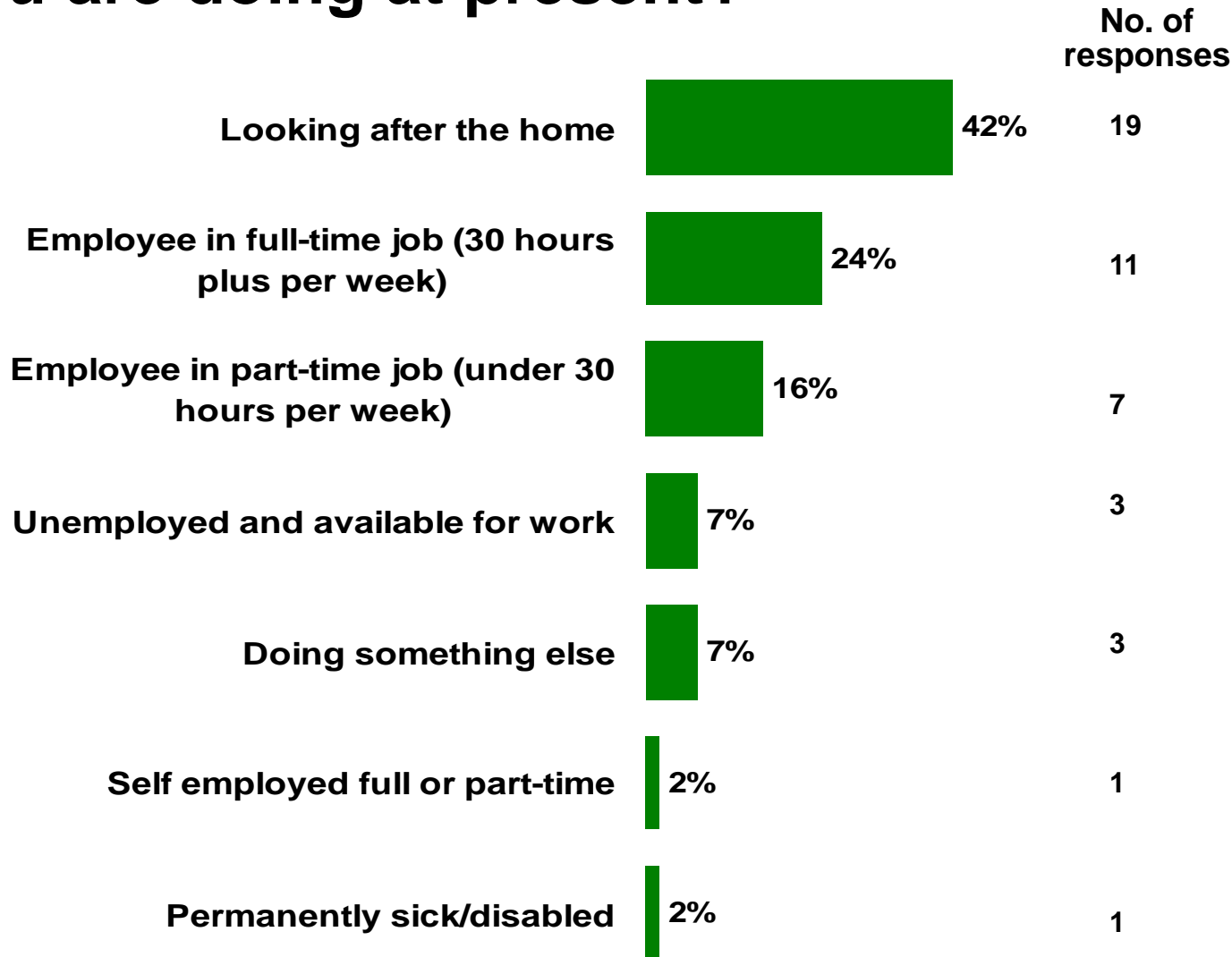
Because of his severe speech delay he needs to be seen by speech therapist and psychologist more often.

To enable (name) to develop at her own pace in an environment suited to her needs.

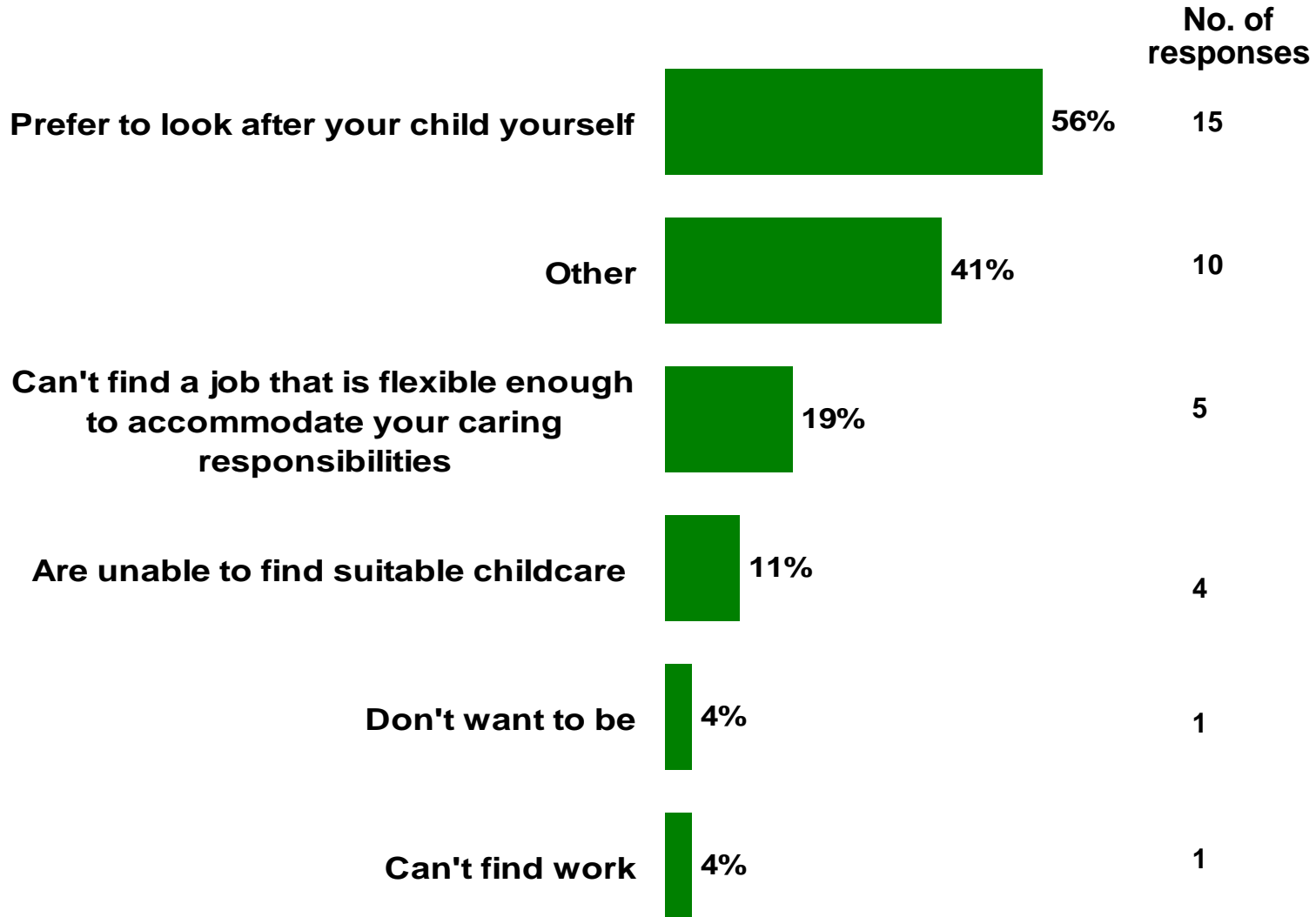
I would like (name) to go to day nursery because it will be half a day either morning or afternoon.

To help him with his education

# Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?



# If you are not currently in work, training or education is this because..



Base = 27 (respondents could choose more than one option)

'Other' reasons included that their children were too young (4), they were fulltime carers (4), they themselves were disabled (1), they were a foster carer (1)



# Which, if any, of the following services do you currently use or have you used in the past?

■ Currently use 
 ■ Used in past 
 ■ Never used 
 ■ Didn't know it existed



# Reasons for not using services for children with additional needs

**Parents who had not used any of the listed services were asked to give their reasons. These were as follows:**

**Didn't know they existed = 5**

**Can't get there/no transport = 2**

**Don't need the services = 4**

**Other = 5**

Never heard of some of the above services with having an older disabled child we have found we have to look for what help we need, the information is not volunteered to us. We have only just discovered the disabled children's services- family support team. My son is 8 and we didn't know this service existed. We personally feel those on full benefits such as income support get more help and info than those who work.

Halliwell nursery is out of my area, I am currently a mum of 2 and find it hard to get to children's centres.

Not used either because didn't know they existed and therefore unaware of what service they offer or never felt the need to use the others I did know about.



# If you have used any of the services listed, to what extent were you satisfied or dissatisfied?

■ Very satisfied 
 ■ Satisfied 
 ■ Dissatisfied 
 ■ Very dissatisfied



**Only 7 respondents in total expressed dissatisfaction with the services listed**


# Reasons for satisfaction/dissatisfaction


If parents were very satisfied or dissatisfied, they were asked to give their reasons. There were 56 comments in total. Only 5 of these were negative.



The 5 negative comments related to Children's Centres (3), COG (1) and Social workers (1)

## What parents said about.. Children's Centres

- 
- Staff do a good job
  - Centres are well equipped and safe
  - Good places for children to interact with others

- 
- accessibility issues
  - don't allow prams
  - parking not suitable for children with disabilities

**There were 4 positive and 2 negative comments about children's centres**

# What parents said about.. Halliwell Children's Centre

Staff are:

- professional
- kind
- considerate
- helpful
- polite
- Centres are user friendly/child friendly



- Parent groups single out young parents
- Centre is disorganised



**There were 10 positive and 1 negative comment about Halliwell children's centre**

# What parents said about.. COG



Staff are:

- well trained
- approachable
- friendly
- lovely
- informative
- skilled
- knowledgeable
- caring
- supportive
- encouraging

• Children receive one to one attention



- accessibility issues

**There were 10 positive and 1 negative comment about COG**

# What parents said about.. Pre-school Support

Staff are:

- supportive
- helpful
- knowledgeable
- professional
- approachable
- informative



None!



**There were 16 comments about pre-school support – all positive**



# Comments

## A selection of comments from satisfied parents...

Halliwell children's centre- very useful friendly/ child friendly building good quality service from reception area staff to professionals who I was meeting. Communication excellent and made to feel not just a number or name and given sample time to discuss issues and plan future.

Children's centres have provided a place where my son feels safe to explore and interact with other kids

Bolton (F.I.S)- information gained quickly and calls returned promptly if staff went away to seek further or more detailed information to pass on. Staff very pleasant and polite/ courteous on the telephone.

COG provides an excellent, stimulating environment for my child and with skilled and knowledgeable staff.

PORTAGE - great, very helpful and knowledgeable.

Toy library Bolton - very handy, easy to use.

# Other services parents would use if they were available

- Support Group (Di-George Syndrome)
- Services for babies with special needs
- Summer activities for under 5's
- Activities for parents and children to do together
- Sports/swimming for children with disabilities
- A support worker
- Transport
- Help with filling in forms

**13 comments were made in total**

# Further information and support needed

## Information

- More information regarding things to do with disabled children
- Poor information on schooling (particularly home schooling)
- More information about support groups
- More information about the medical condition (still no diagnosis)
- More information from the very beginning about what to expect

## Support

- Support needed sooner
- Improve Social Services
- Help and advice caring for sick children
- More support at the beginning
- Support worker/ someone to act on behalf of the parent

**14 comments were made in total**

# What else, if anything, would've helped you and your family?

## Information

- More information about the services available and make this information easily accessible
- Information about accessible leisure facilities
- More online information

## Services/facilities

- Out of school help for under 5's
- Better access at children's centres and other buildings.
- More help to improve speech and hearing
- Family activities

## Support

- Coordinator for the first year
- Counselling
- Quicker support
- Help when children are discharged from hospital
- Support groups
- Earlier diagnosis
- Help for children with eating problems
- Quicker decisions about statementing and school places

**23 comments were made in total**

# What else, if anything, would've helped you and your family?

## A selection of comments are below...

A chair was recommended for our child in October 2009. We chose one with the occupational therapist in November 2009 and in January 2010 was informed the order had been rejected due to budgets. We had our chair delivered last week March 10 which is second hand base and all new cushioning. This chair is vital due to her development delay.

Better online access to information and more of it.

More support and help when my daughter was discharged from hospital. No advice or care package was organised for us.

Better access to buildings. Relaxing rules on taking pram into children's centres because my daughter can't walk and has not got a wheelchair. (Not always strong enough to carry baby, car seat, bag and four year old!)

A full mapping document/ illustration of all the service (NHS, local authority, pre-school, Bolton charities, etc) that we would encounter from birth to 7 years old.

I can't think of anything - except having a definite diagnosis earlier and having hearing tests on regular basis so that his hearing and speech could have come on sooner..

We need to be able to function as a family unit and have so many appointments and medical focus - it's too much. Too many people already involved.

# Summary...

- The health visitor was the first person from whom 4 out of 10 parents sought help
- 8 out of 10 parents were told about any specialist information that was available
- Three quarters received disability living allowance for their child
- Over half (57%) attended a council nursery/pre school/playgroup
- 96% are at least 'fairly satisfied' with the childcare setting they currently attend
- Parents were mainly satisfied due to the quality of staff at the childcare setting
- 4 out of 10 respondents were 'looking after the home'
- Over half (56%) of the respondents preferred to look after their child themselves and this was the main reason given for not being in work, training or education.
- The 5 most used services were:
  - Pre school support team (94%)
  - Halliwell Children's Centre (91%)
  - Children's Centres (65%)
  - COG (54%)
  - Family Support Team (43%)



# Summary...

- Parents were generally extremely satisfied with the services they had used. Only 2 of the services listed had less than 90% satisfaction, these were Parent Support Groups (86%) and Social Workers (75%)
- A small number of parents suggested other services they would use if they were available. These are detailed in the report.
- Some information and support gaps were identified and these are detailed in the report.
- Parents are mainly satisfied with the help and support they have received.