



# Evaluation findings

## Early Years Professional Development Programme 2

# Introduction (1)

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Building on Success, was the second phase of the Early Years Professional Development Programme (EYPDP). The programme, funded by the Department of Education and delivered by Education Development Trust with our key subject specialist partners, was aimed at improving practitioners' understanding and skills in supporting the development of the most disadvantaged children between the ages of 2 and 4 years old in England.

The original programme was delivered in 50 of the most disadvantaged Local Authority (LA) areas in England (based on free school meal eligibility and EYFSP outcomes data), using a cascade model of delivery. Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) underwent the training first and were provided with additional training to become Champions, who would in turn train peers in their LA area. The first phase commenced in June 2019 but in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, a new phase of the programme was commissioned to start in September 2021. As lead contractor, Education Development Trust worked with expert contributors to provide a broad curriculum - Elklan Training Ltd for the speech, language and communication content as well as the cohort of Programme Trainers; the Anna Freud Centre for the PSED content and early years Maths experts Dr Cath Gripton and Dr Sue Gifford for the Early Maths content.

# Introduction (2)

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Phase two of the programme utilised a direct delivery model; a mix of self-guided eLearning and webinars hosted by professional tutors. 51 new Local Authority areas took part in the programme with EYPs completing the programme between January and July 2022. During their time on the programme EYPs were asked to contribute to the programme evaluation and this report highlights the methodology used and the highlights of the findings – it clearly demonstrates the outcomes and impact that was created during what was a relatively short intervention.

***This evaluation was commissioned by Education Development Trust as part of our commitment to evidencing the Impact of our programmes on our beneficiaries. However, both EYPDP Phase 1 and 3 will be subject to an external analysis commissioned by the Department for Education.***

We thank you for taking the time to read this highlight report, should you have any questions please do contact the Early Years team at [earlyyearsdpdp@edt.org](mailto:earlyyearsdpdp@edt.org)

# Methodology of the evaluation

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- ▶ A baseline survey to determine how practitioners perceived their knowledge and understanding of Speech, Language and Communication (SLC), Early Mathematics (EM) and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) at the start of the programme
- ▶ A short survey at the end of SLC to determine confidence and knowledge gained
- ▶ A short survey at the end of EM to determine confidence and knowledge gained
- ▶ A short survey at the end of PSED to determine confidence and knowledge gained
- ▶ An endline survey to determine overall perceived impact.

All surveys were completed by a total of 1,308 participants who completed the course in full. This report brings together the analysis from these five surveys from all participants who completed the programme.

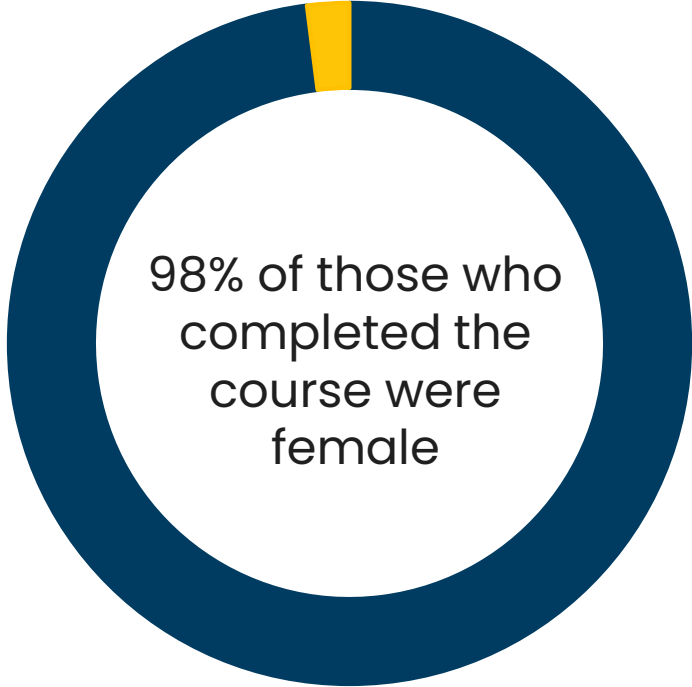
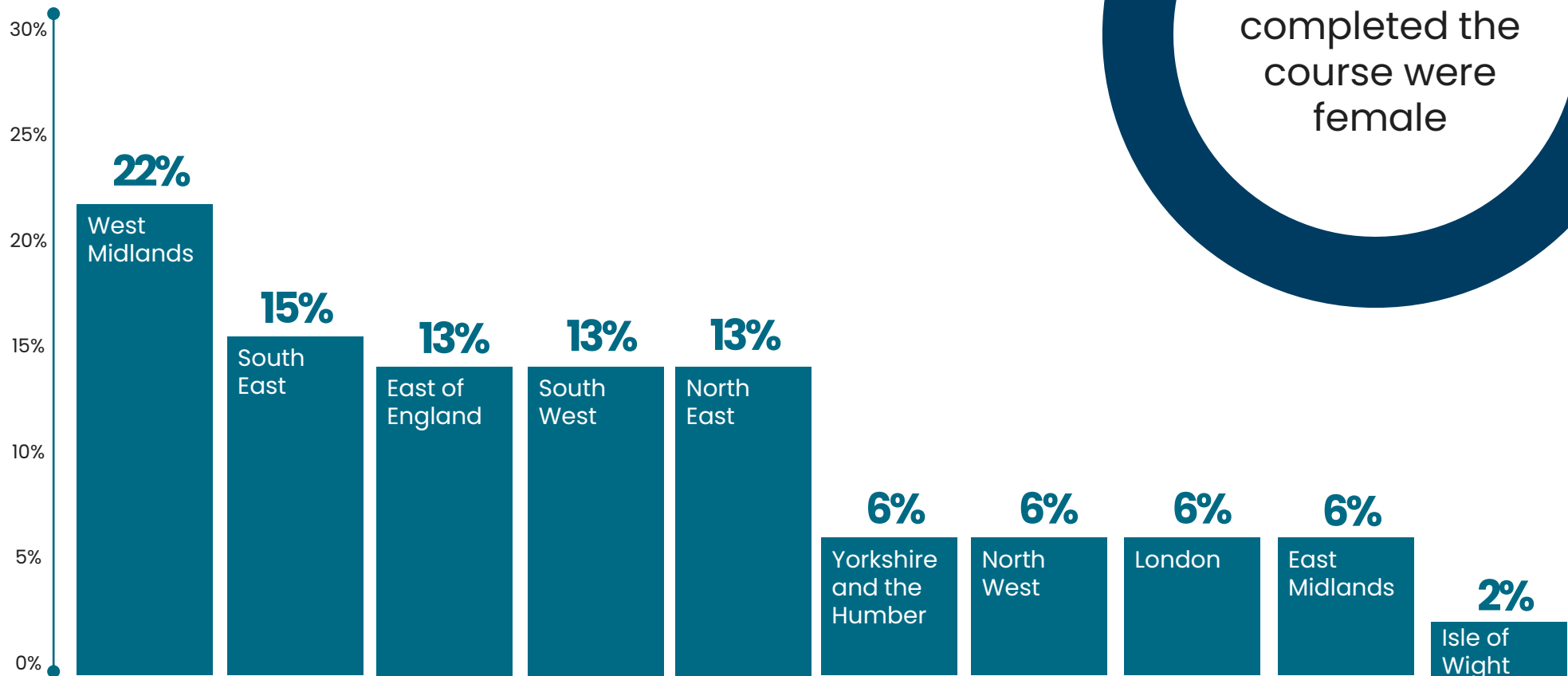
The survey findings were reviewed at each stage. If practitioners provided feedback that either themselves, or a colleague in their setting, was struggling, the programme team were alerted for appropriate support to be provided to the practitioner.





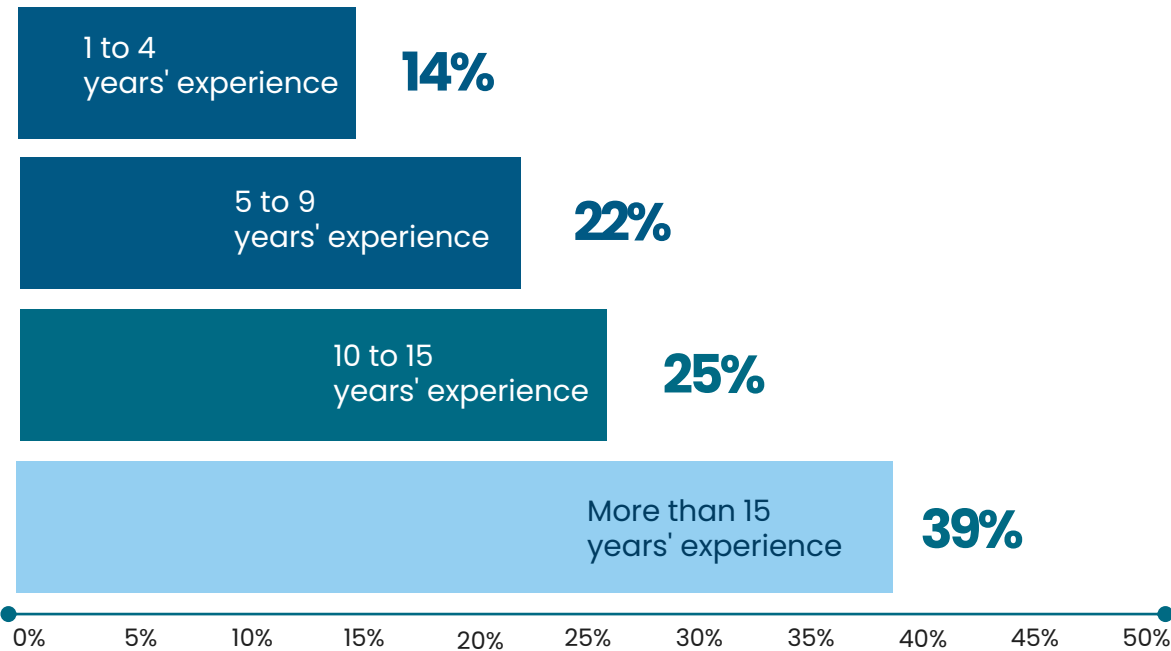
# About the cohort

# The cohort was geographically spread across England and the Isle of Wight, and most participants were female



# The majority of practitioners were qualified to Level 3 and had at least ten years' experience as an Early Years Practitioner

## Years' experience (N=1302)



## Qualification levels of cohort (N=1307)

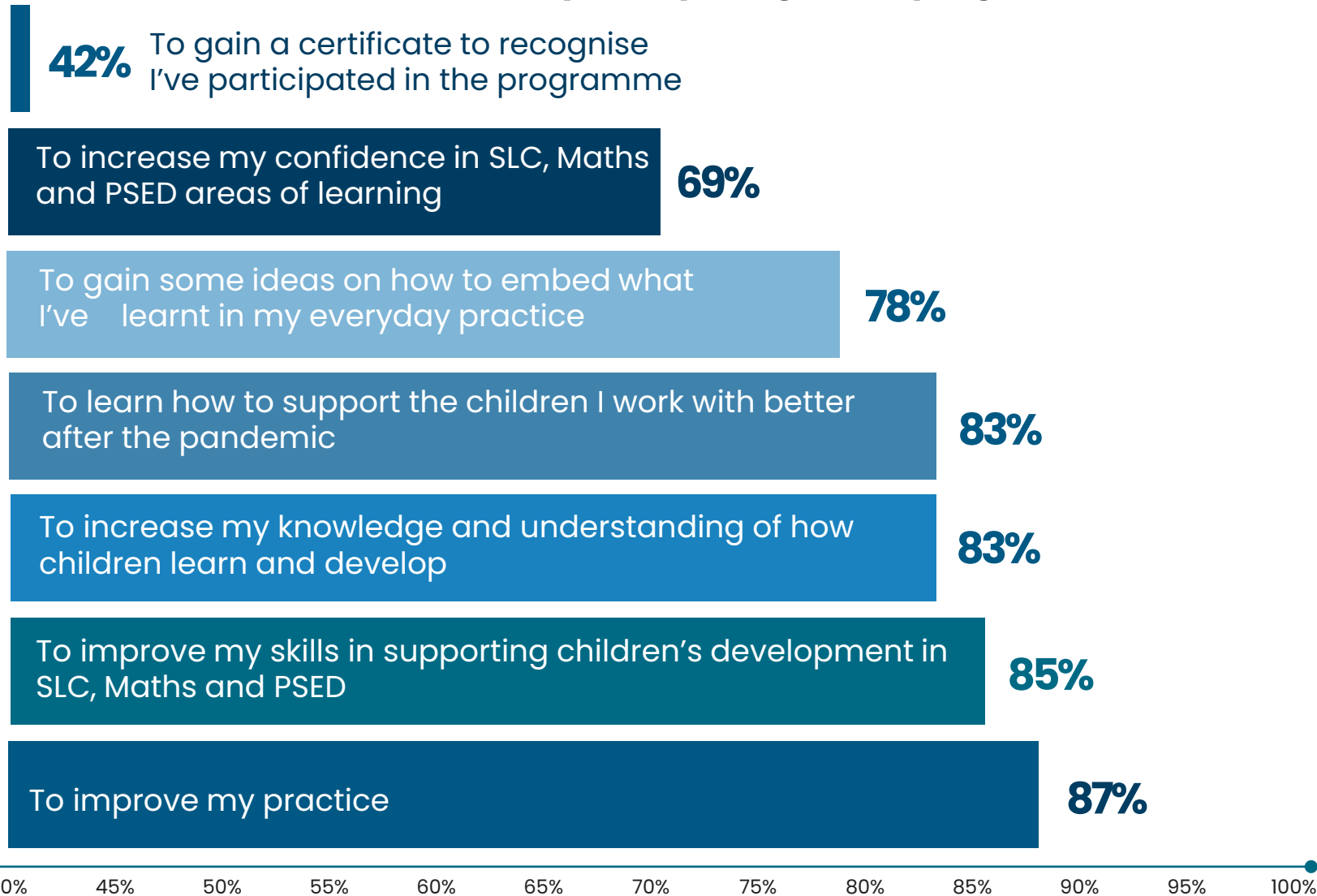


# Practitioner reasons for participating in the programme



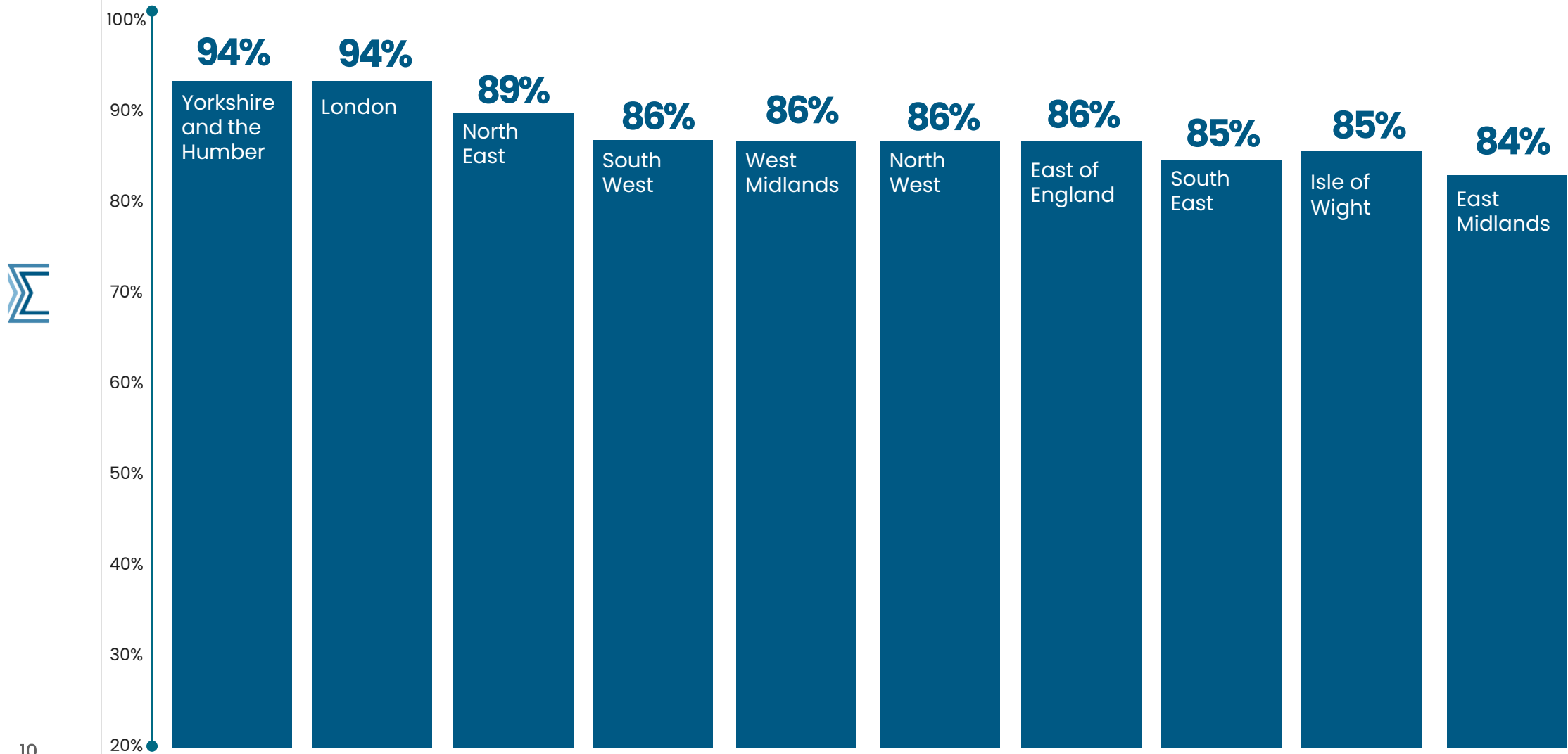
# The majority of practitioners signed up to improve their practice, with less than half participating to gain a certificate

Reasons for participating in the programme (N=1308)



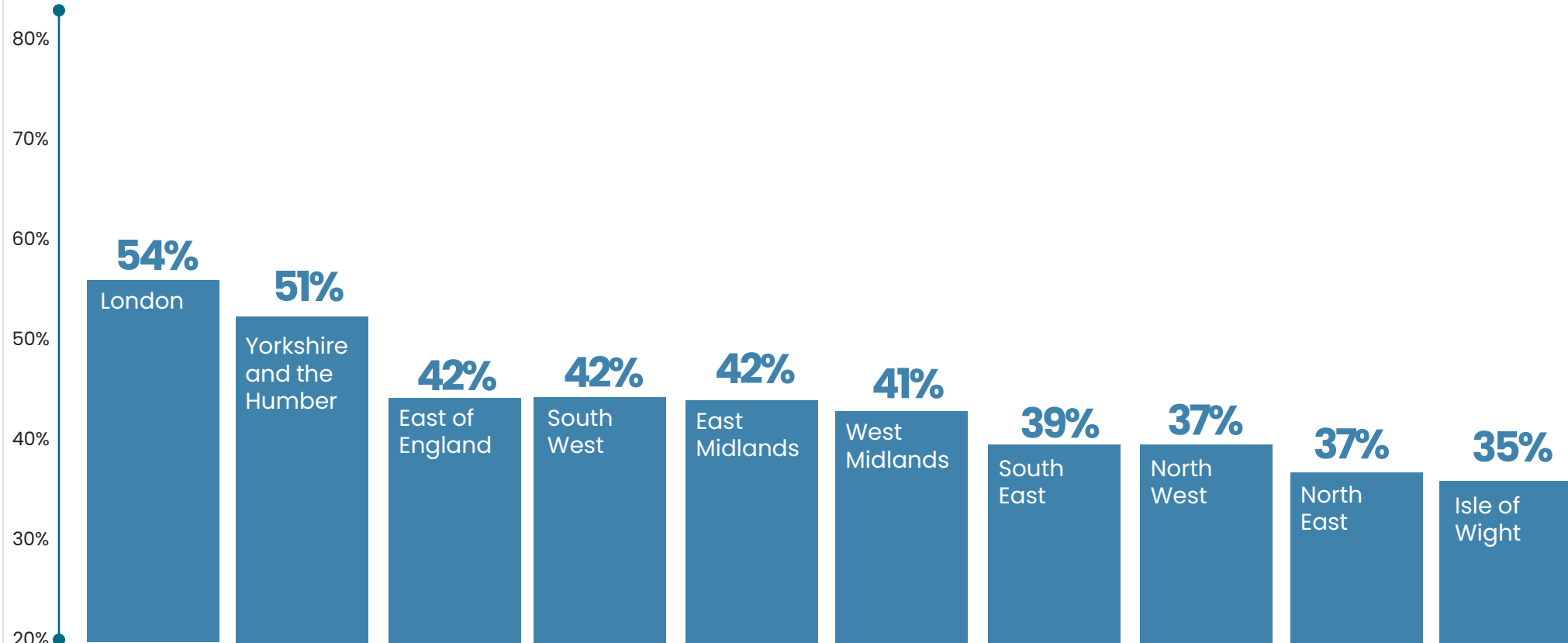
# The majority of participants across all regions reported signing up to the programme to improve their practice

Participation in the programme "to improve my practice" by region (N=1308)



**Practitioners in London and Yorkshire and the Humber were slightly more likely to report signing up to gain a certificate compared to other regions, though it was the least popular motivation for participating in the programme across all regions**

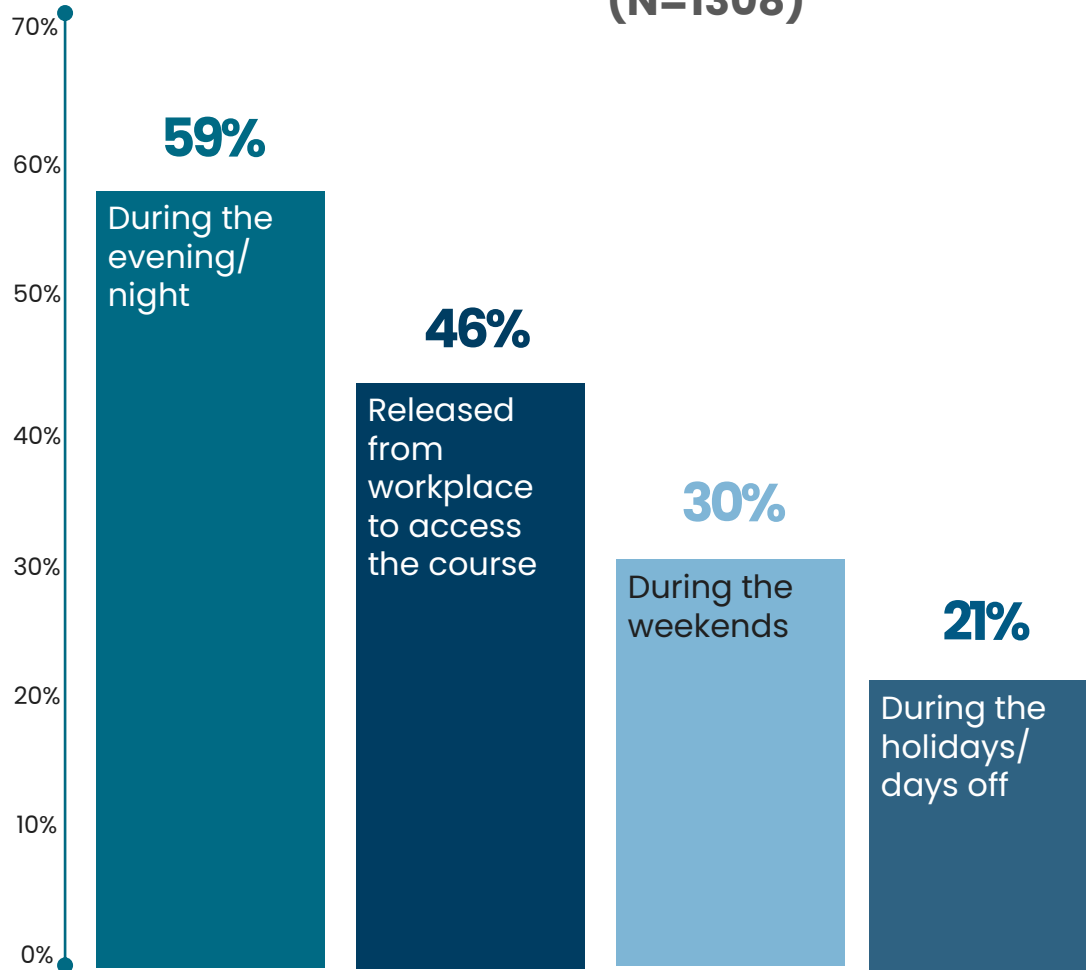
**Participation in the programme “to gain a certificate” by region (N=1308)**



# Practitioner experiences of the programme

# Practitioners typically accessed the course materials via laptops/computers, and the majority accessed content during the evening

When practitioners reported accessing content (N=1308)



## Type of device used to access training (N=1308)



**82%**  
accessed materials through a laptop or computer



**19%**  
accessed materials through an iPad/tablet

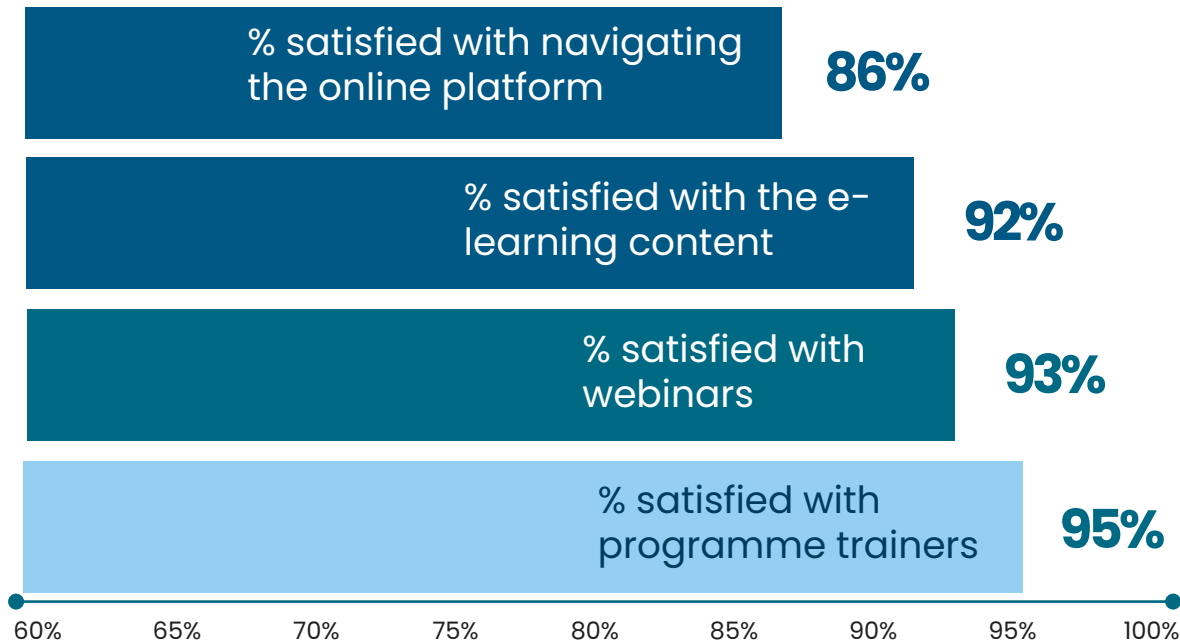


**22%**  
accessed materials through a Smart Phone



# Practitioners were overall satisfied with all aspects of the programme, with the highest levels of satisfaction shown for the programme trainers

## Satisfaction with aspects of the programme (N=1308)



"I absolutely enjoyed doing the eLearning online, the information was so useful and interesting."

*Level 7, 3 years' experience*

"Our Tutor was amazing, and she kept us well focused and well challenged."

*Level 3, More than 5 years' experience*

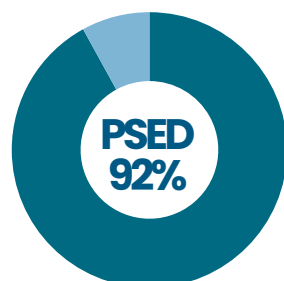
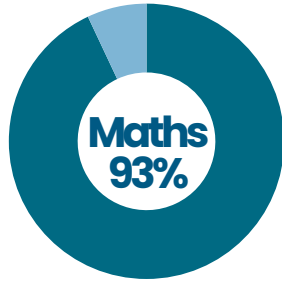
"Really enjoyed the webinars and had a great trainer. The sessions were engaging and gave us plenty of opportunities to explore ideas and develop our understanding."

*Level 4, 8 years' experience*

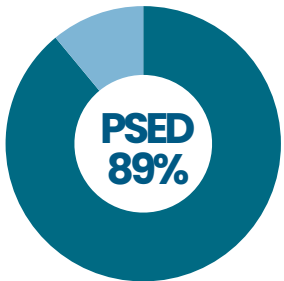
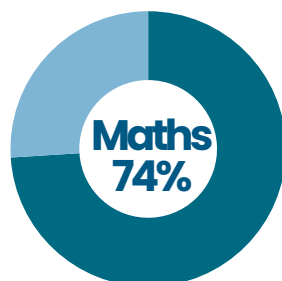
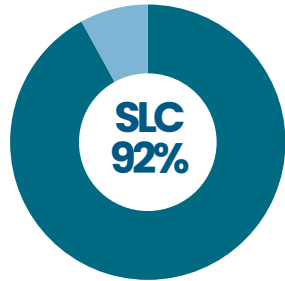
# Practitioner perceptions of the clarity and accessibility of learning materials was highest for Maths and PSED, and lowest for SLC, though SLC scored highest for interactive and engaging learning

% of practitioners rating aspects of the programme 'high' (4 or 5 out of 5) (N=1308)

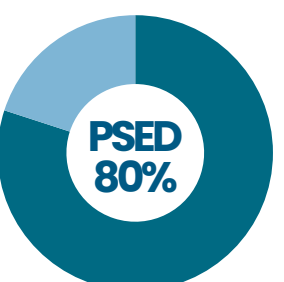
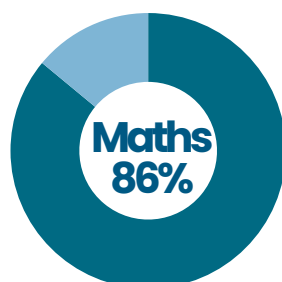
Clarity and accessibility of the learning materials



Interactive and engaging learning



Course structure/sequence



## Positive feedback about each subject area

**SLC:** Practitioners enjoyed the checklist and tools, and working together

*"The checklist and tools to help us improve and reflect on our practice."*

**Maths:** Practitioners enjoyed the videos and felt it brought the content together nicely

*"I enjoyed the videos. I think they complemented the online work well and provided additional knowledge."*

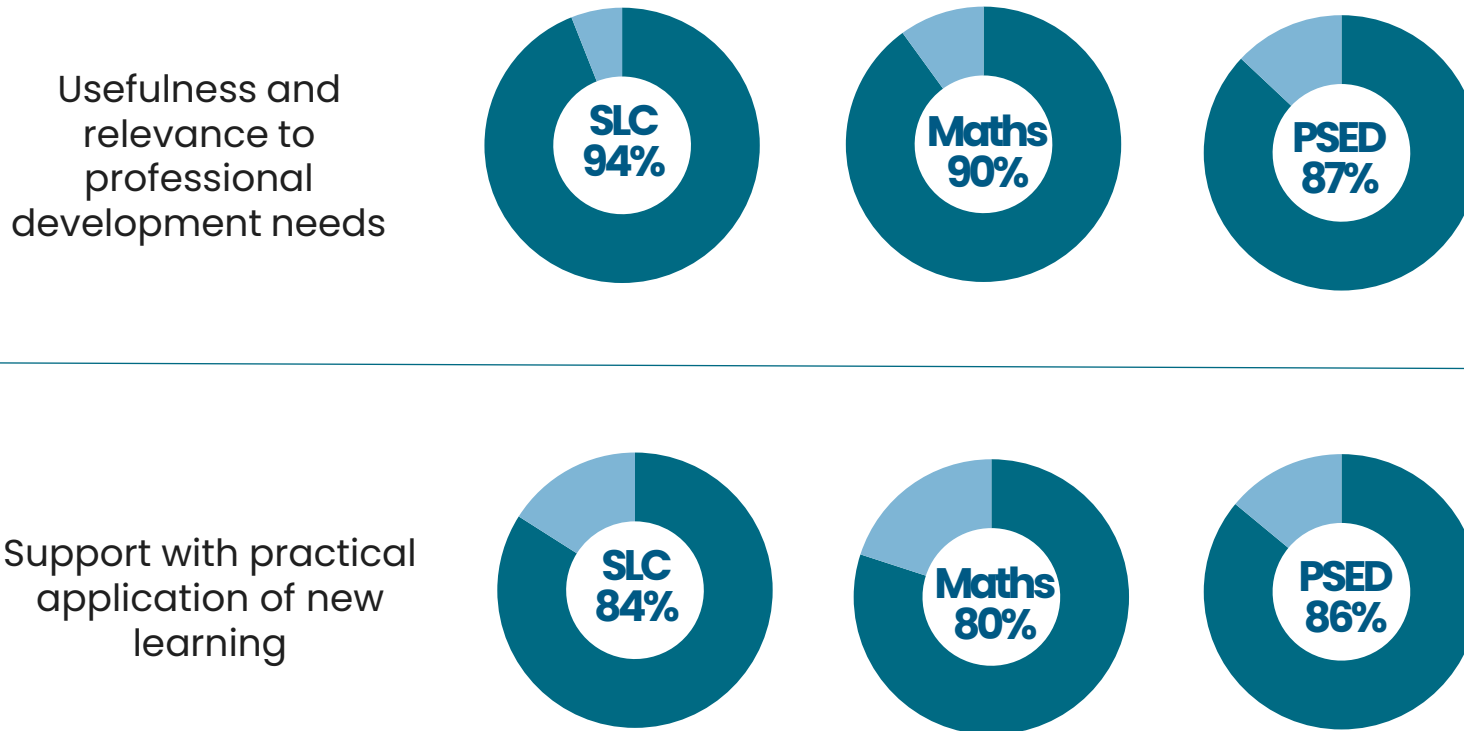
**PSED:** Practitioners enjoyed working together in webinars

*"Webinars were really good as we worked together in groups and covered new material whilst putting our learning into practice."*



# Practitioners found SLC most useful for their practice, but typically scored all areas highly

% of practitioners rating aspects of the programme 'high' (4 or 5 out of 5) (N=1308)



## Typical reasons given for lower scores

**SLC:** Practitioners would have liked printed materials. They reported “getting used to the platform”, however, by the time practitioners reached Maths and PSED, they reported being comfortable using the platform, suggesting growth in digital skills.

**Maths:** Practitioners would have liked more interactive elements such as webinars “The videos were not as interesting as having the webinars and live discussions.”

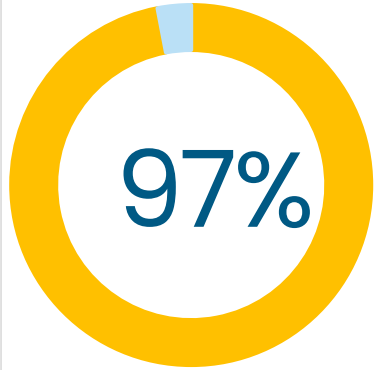
**PSED:** Practitioners would have liked to be able to print materials “Not allowing us to download all e-learning materials”



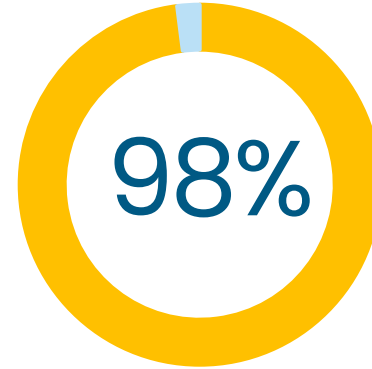


# Programme impact on practitioners

# After completing the programme...



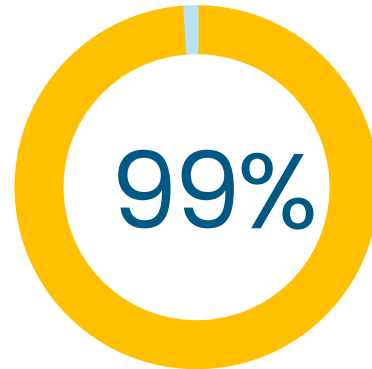
of practitioners agree that the programme has/will have a **positive impact on the personal, social and emotional development** of the children in their setting



of practitioners agree that the programme has/will have a **positive impact on mathematics outcomes** for the children in their setting



of practitioners agree that the programme has/will have a **positive impact on speech, language and communication outcomes** for the children in their setting



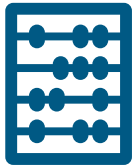
of practitioners agree that they are able to **apply the new learning to improve their everyday practice**



# Even the practitioners who felt they had no more room for improvement at the start of the programme indicated they had made progress by the end



**5%** of practitioners at baseline rated themselves at the highest level of knowledge and understanding in SLC. Of those practitioners, **50% stated they made significant progress** in SLC by the end of the intervention, and with **further 30% rating their progress 4 out of 5** (with 5 being significant progress).



**Only 10** practitioners at baseline rated themselves at the highest level of knowledge and understanding in Maths. Of those 10 practitioners, **7 stated they made significant progress** in Maths by the end of the intervention.

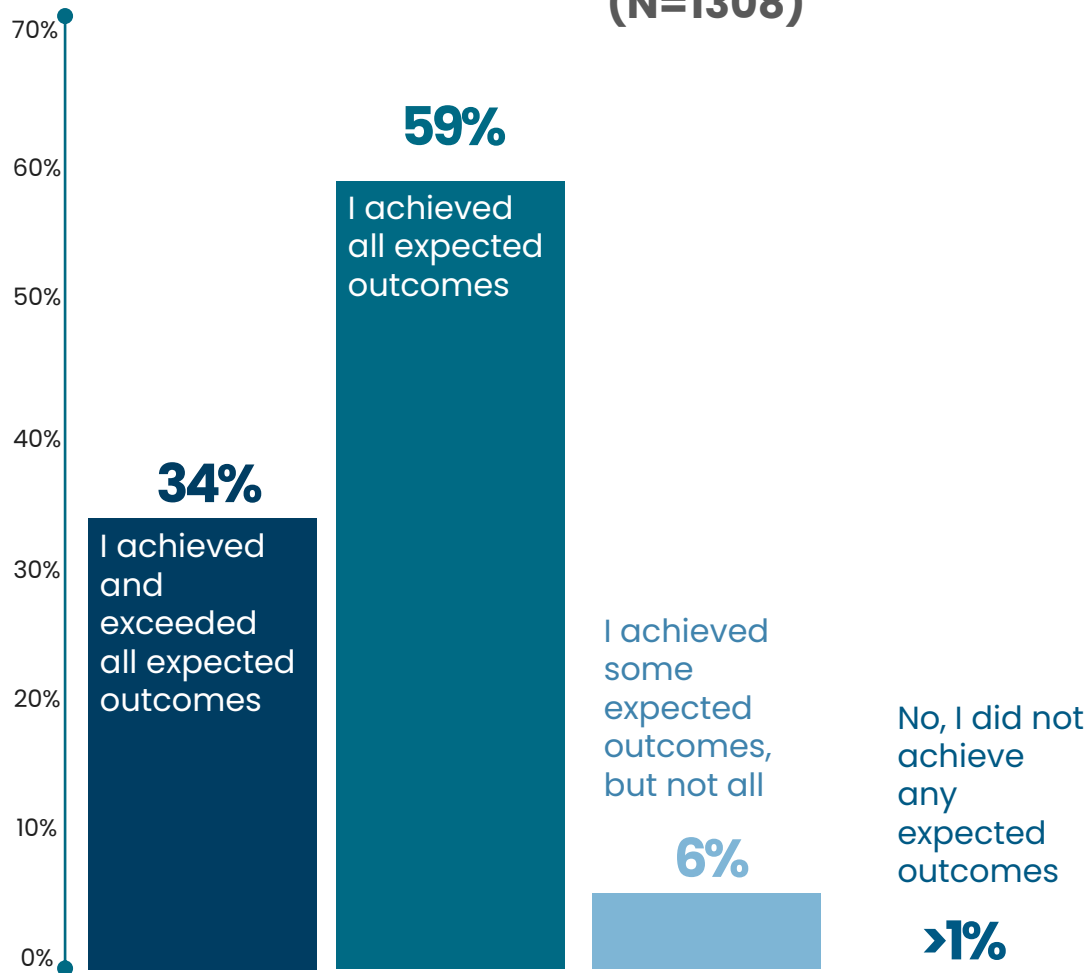


**No practitioners rated themselves at the highest level of understanding in PSED at baseline.**



# 93% of practitioners achieved or exceeded expected outcomes across SLC, Maths and PSED

Practitioner progress against expected outcomes (N=1308)



"The speech and language unit was extremely informative, and I learnt so much from it. The information I could download has been so useful and it has supported training with my staff. I feel that this area has made me reflect on my practice the most and has inspired me to use the ideas (vocab flowers). My favourite unit was PSED, it felt so current in our present climate and its encouraged me to sign up for more training within this area next term."

*Level 3, More than 15 years' experience*

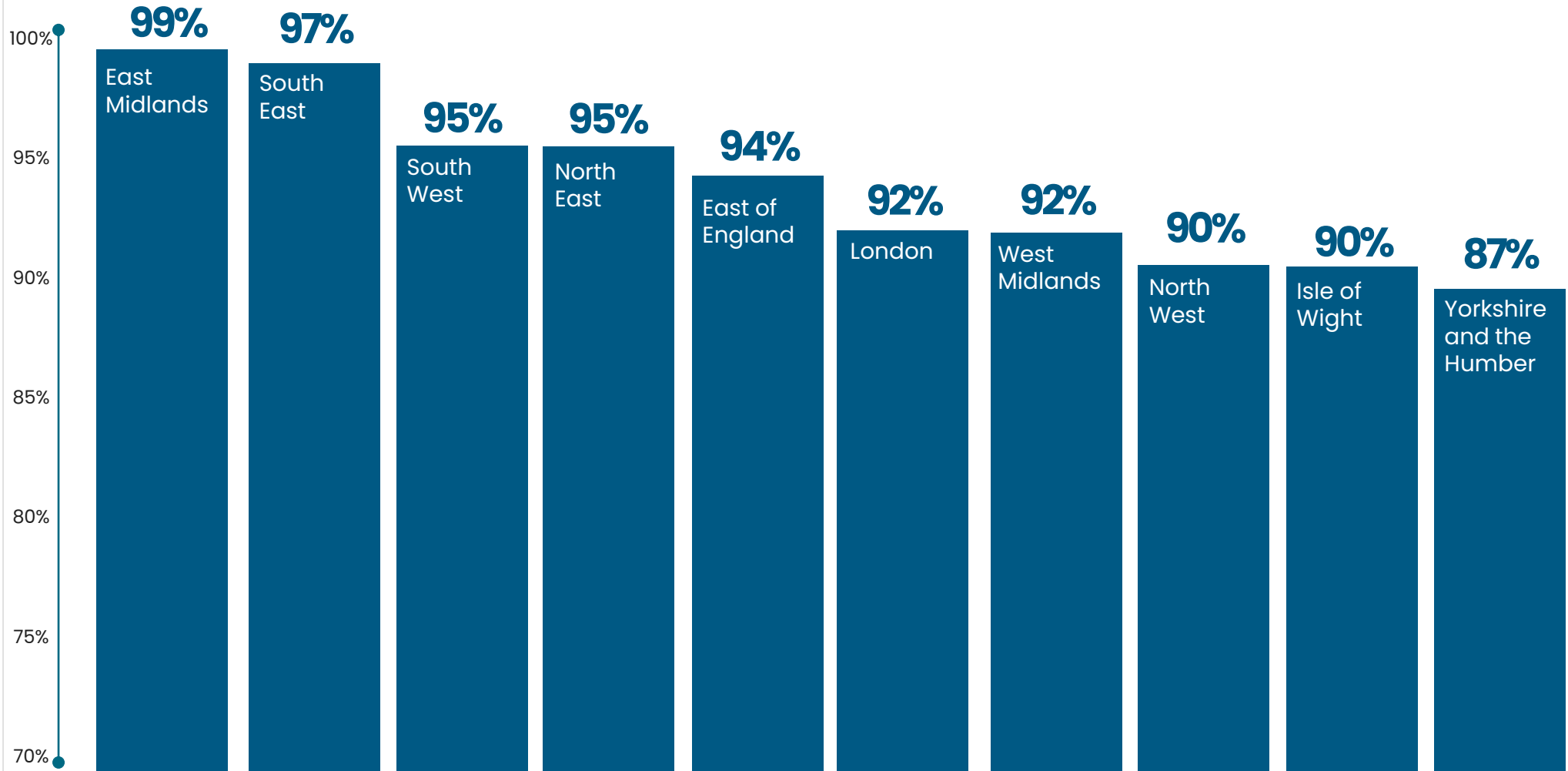
"I feel a new love for Maths in the early years and can certainly see more how it can be used in all areas."

*Level 3, More than 15 years' experience*

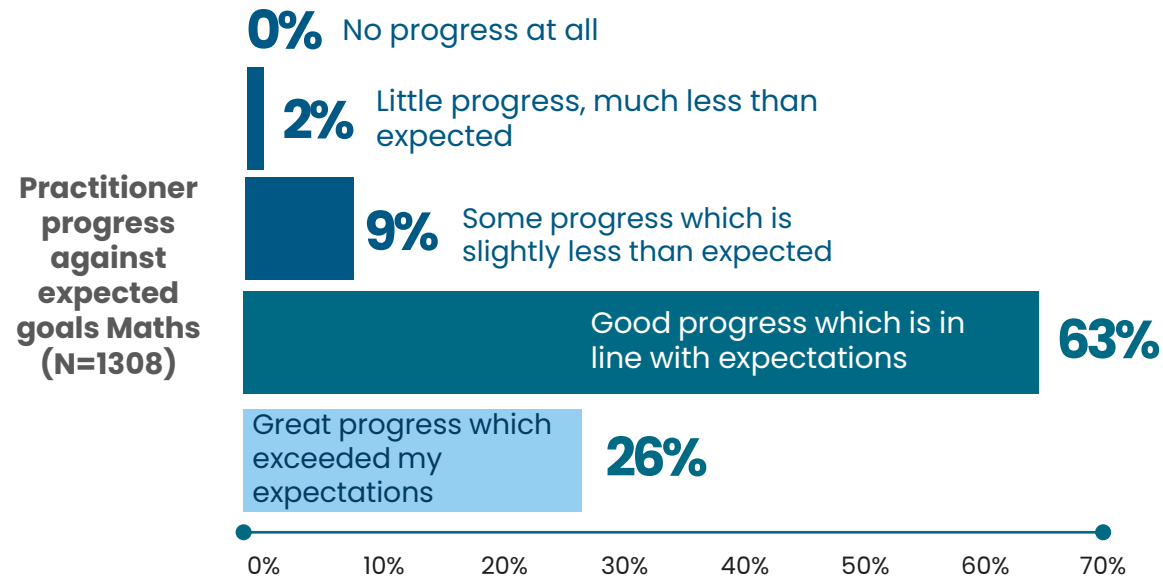
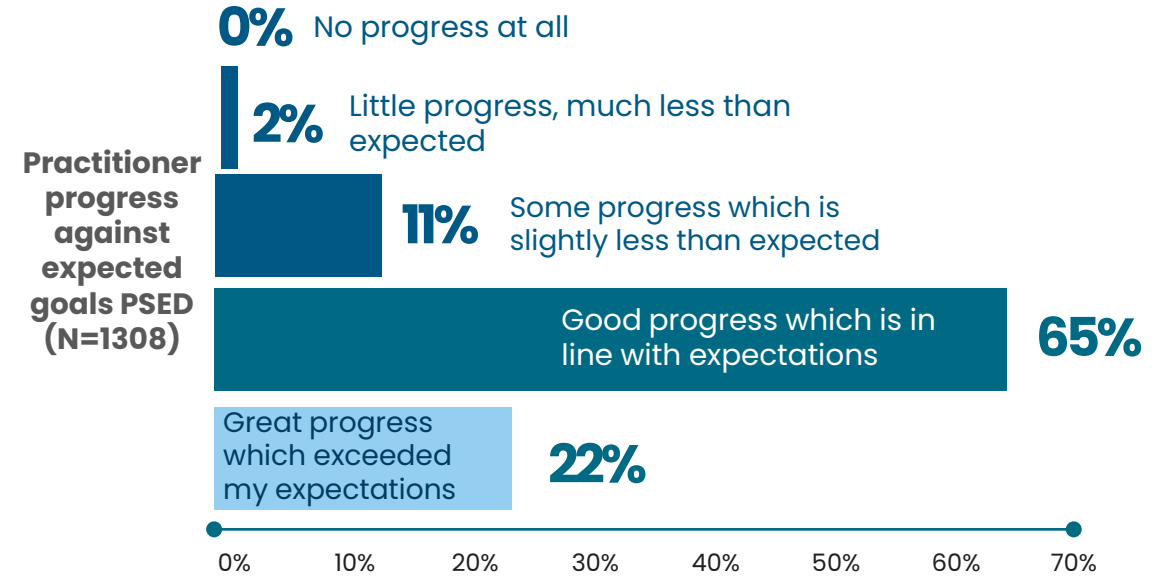


# The majority of practitioners across all regions reported meeting or exceeding their anticipated outcomes

Participants who reported achieving or exceeding all expected outcomes by region (N=1308)

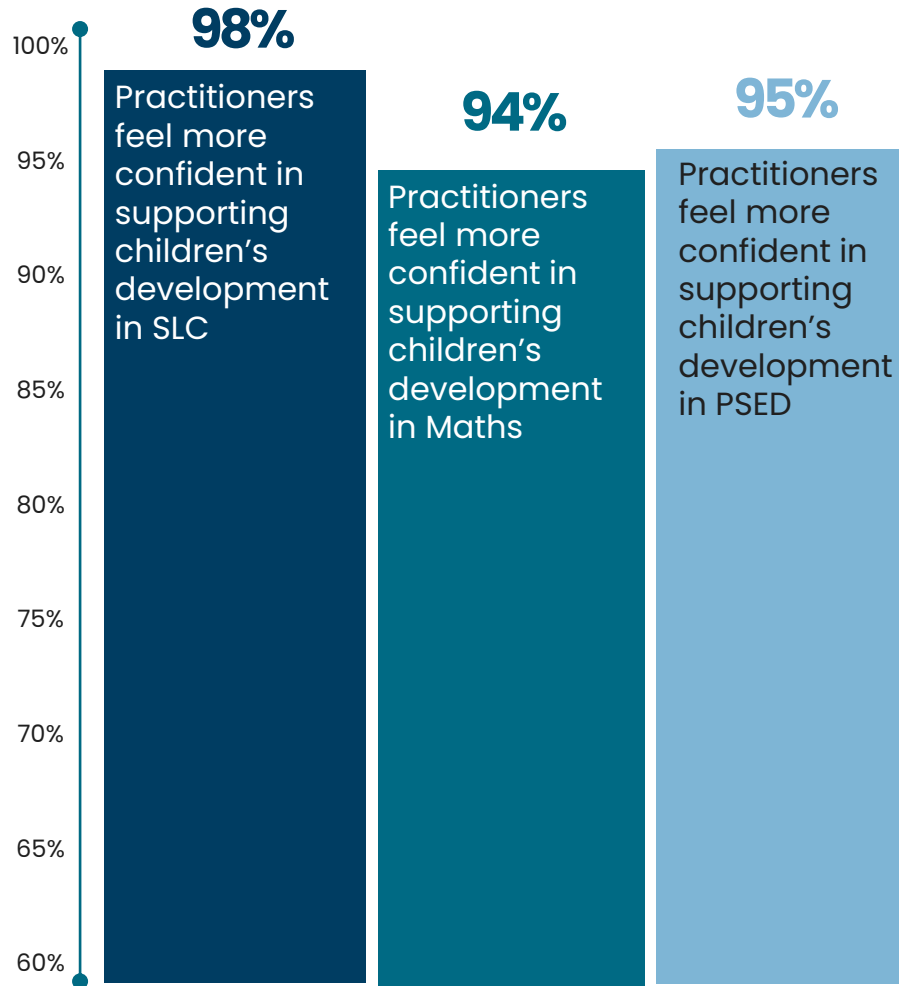


# 92% of practitioners achieved or exceeded expectations against their learning goals in SLC, 89% in Maths and 87% in PSED

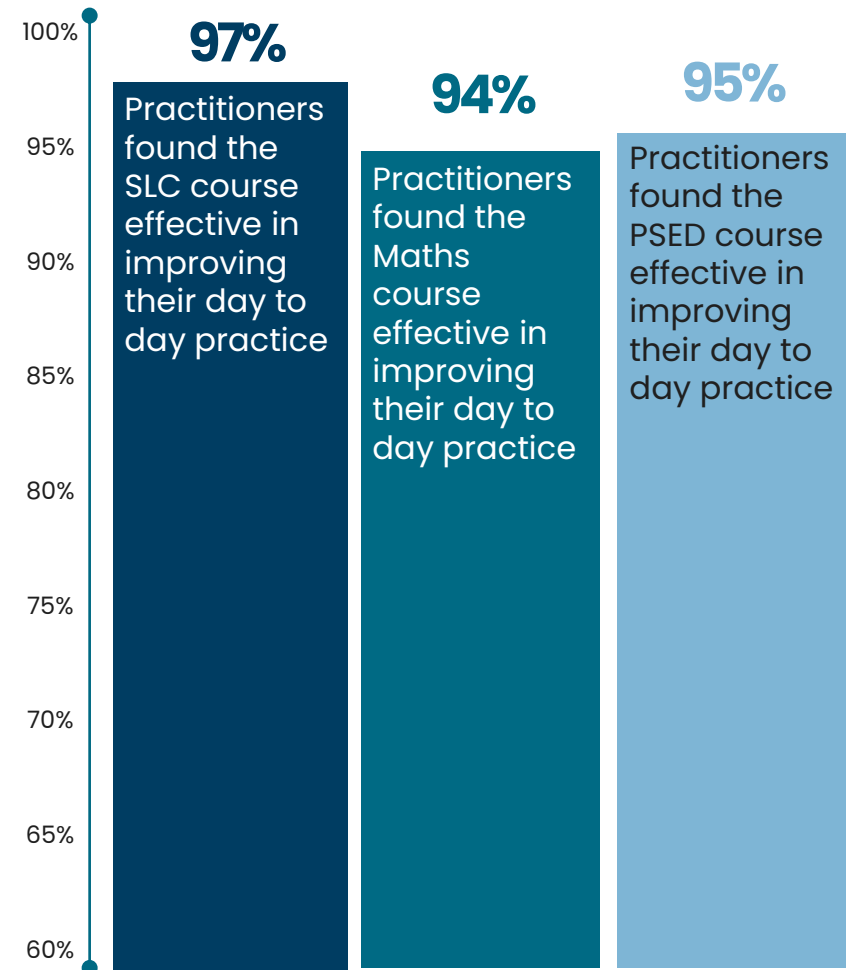


# The majority of practitioners reported an increase in confidence across all three content areas, and found the course to be effective in improving their day to day practice

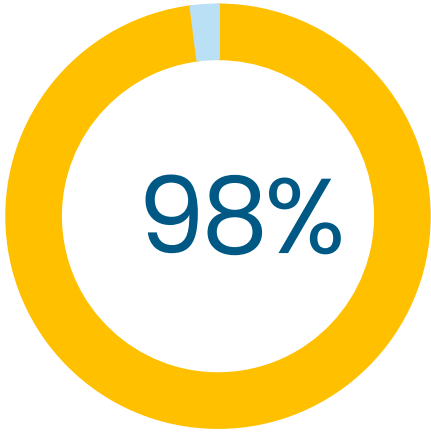
## Practitioner confidence in support children's development (N=1308)



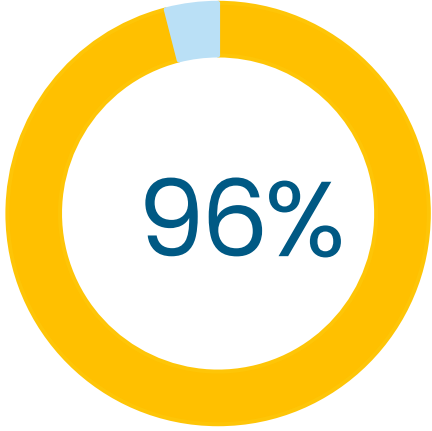
## Effectiveness of course in improving day to day practice (N=1308)



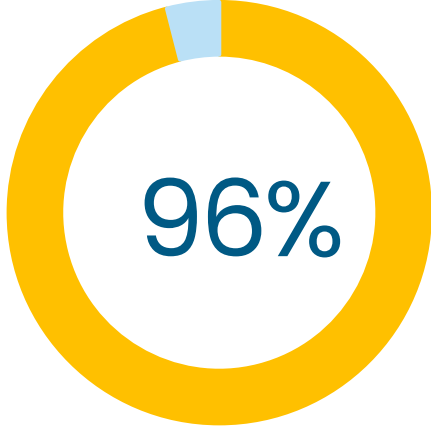
# After completing the programme...



of practitioners agree they have **improved their knowledge and skills in early language** after completing this course



of practitioners agree they have **improved their knowledge and skills in early mathematics** after completing this course



of practitioners agree they have **improved their knowledge and skills in personal, social and emotional development** after completing this course





# How practitioners plan on applying their learning in SLC

"I will use what I have learnt in my future practice to have a better understanding of children's speech, language and communication needs. I can refer back to my notes and the observations made to help the children improve their speech, language and communication skills. I will also implement strategies such as visual timetables more often."

*Level 6, 1 years' experience, Shropshire*

"Using communication assessment tools to track progress and monitor specific children."

*Level 6, 12 years' experience, Torbay*

"I will now plan specifically for speech which is something I have never really done. Ensuring I promote and introduce learning of new words in greater context."

*Level 3, 14 years' experience, Swindon*

"It has made the language I use with the children more considered and I now review the impact it has on their language development."

*Level 3, More than 15 years' experience, Reading*



# How practitioners plan on applying their learning in Maths



“Within our setting we have CLIC sessions everyday, but these CPD sessions have given me a few more ideas on how to get the best out of the children and also how to deliver the CLIC sessions with more understanding.”

*Level 3, 3 years' experience,  
Shropshire*

“The training has been really supportive in ensuring that our senior early years educators deliver our curriculum with more understanding of the way to sequence learning, particularly in the area of Maths. It's improved teaching.”

*Warwickshire*

“Recognising that Maths is in every area and activity and being able to confidently explain this to staff.”

*Level 6, 9 years' experience,  
Bournemouth*

“The practical examples have really helped to further enhance the environment with mathematics opportunities. The training has been really helpful to explain a deeper knowledge of mathematics to be cascaded to all practitioners.”

*Level 7, 15 years' experience, Cheshire*

# How practitioners plan on applying their learning in PSED



“We are going to use the knowledge we have learnt to change our planning; we are now able to observe the different attachments and support the children with their emotional development, listening supporting and giving them time to sometimes find a solution for themselves when they have a dispute. I think this will make the children confident and help them to build good relationships for the future. Also, if we give them a safe and secure environment in which to learn, hopefully they will have good learning outcomes.”

*Level 3, more than 15 years' experience, Shropshire*

“Talking to parents was useful, having the stock phrases. Being more mindful of staff wellbeing.”

*Level 6, more than 15 years' experience, Portsmouth*

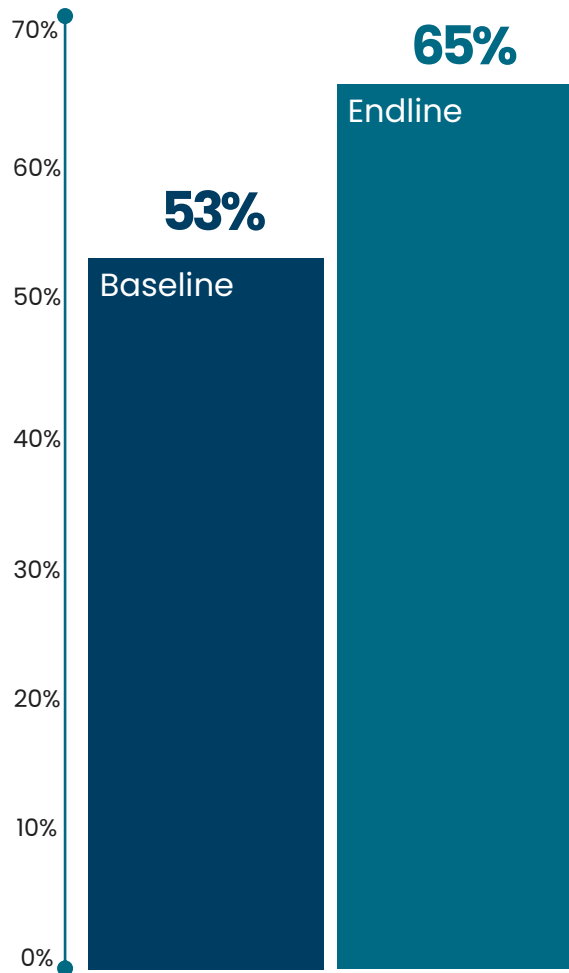
“Sharing information and tools with staff will help to ensure all staff are aware of needs and behaviours of both children and staff and can then help to deal with situations in the best way possible. Having a safe, secure environment in which children can be themselves will provide positive and improved outcomes.”

*Level 4, More than 15 years' experience, Knowsley*

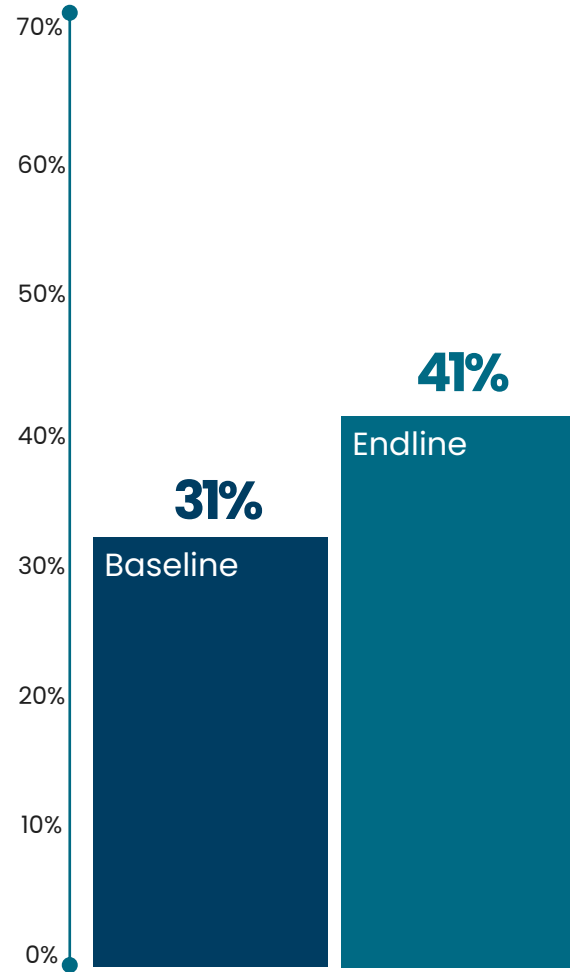
# Practitioner perceptions of their work

# Practitioners were more positive about their work after completing the programme compared to the start

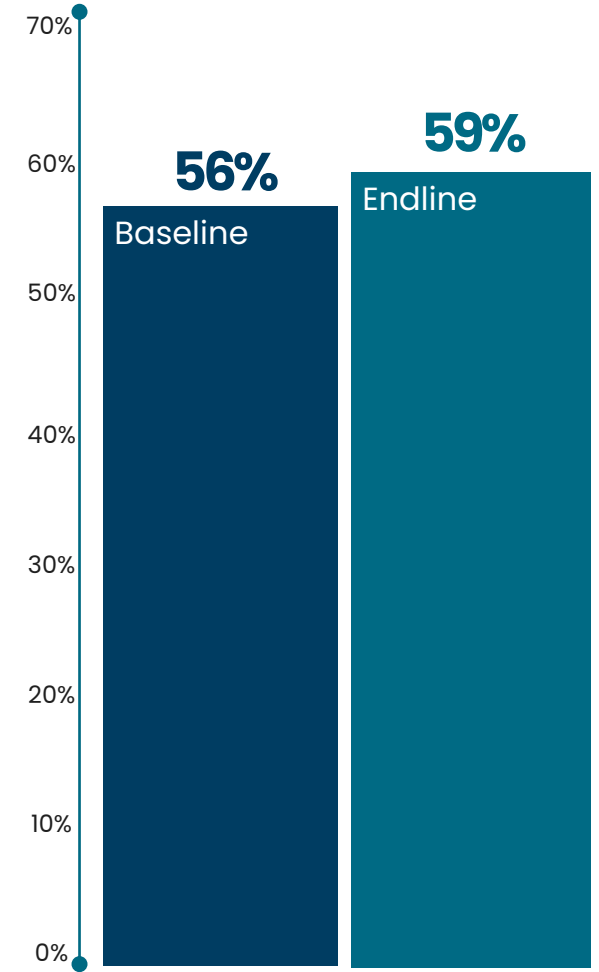
I enjoy my work 'very much' (N=1308)



I feel able to cope with the challenges of my job 'very much' (N=1308)



I am motivated to continue working as an EYP 'very much' (N=1308)



# Programme recommendations

# Recommendations from practitioners to improve the programme include...

- ▶ Action plans after each module rather than at the end of the course
- ▶ Having more available in a printable format, or at least participants own notes in printable format
- ▶ Ability to access the materials over a longer period
- ▶ Inclusion of webinars in Early Mathematics
- ▶ Better distribution of workload, as some practitioners felt like a lot of the workload was included in the SLC module
- ▶ Allow more time to sign up for webinars, as some practitioners struggled with scheduling around other practitioners in their settings
- ▶ Providing participants with clearer idea of what the course will entail (e.g., how different course elements will work) and what is expected from participants, including time expectations

