

LEARN SHEFFIELD EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES



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This analysis of questionnaire responses is one of the supporting documents for the Learn Sheffield Independent Evaluation 2015-2023.



<https://learnsheffield.co.uk/Projects/Learn-Sheffield-Evaluation>

Introduction

Learn Sheffield has carried out an evaluation of its work across the eight years since it was incorporated in the summer of 2015. This impact review has involved our team, board, members and stakeholders. We have also worked with a number of external colleagues to ensure that this work provides objective and informative learning for our city, our organisation and for place-based education partnerships across the country.

This document provides feedback on responses to the questionnaires that we shared with school leaders, those involved in governance and other stakeholders. It is one of the supporting documents for the [Learn Sheffield Independent Evaluation 2015-2023](#), which can be found on the Learn Sheffield website.

The three questionnaires were shared via an online form between November 2023 and January 2024. The analysis of the results has been carried out by the Learn Sheffield team and our short analysis comments seek to share our perspective, so that colleagues can understand how our conclusions are reflected in our future planning. This information has also been provided to external colleagues as part of the evidence base for the evaluation itself.



PART ONE

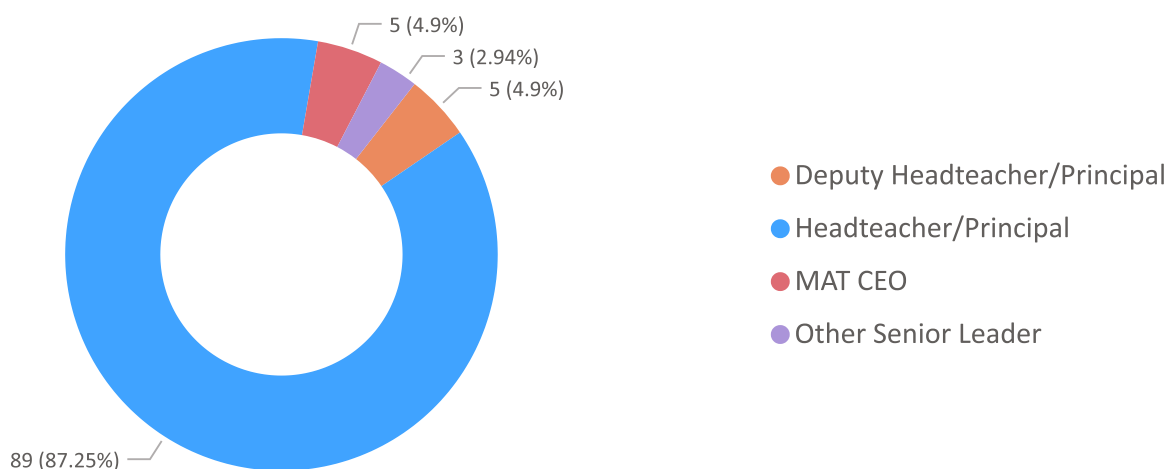
SCHOOL LEADER SURVEY

Who responded to the survey?

102 school leaders responded to the questionnaire. The majority of respondents were Headteachers or Principals and the phases they lead are broadly a reflection of the distribution of schools by sector in the city. The response data is below:

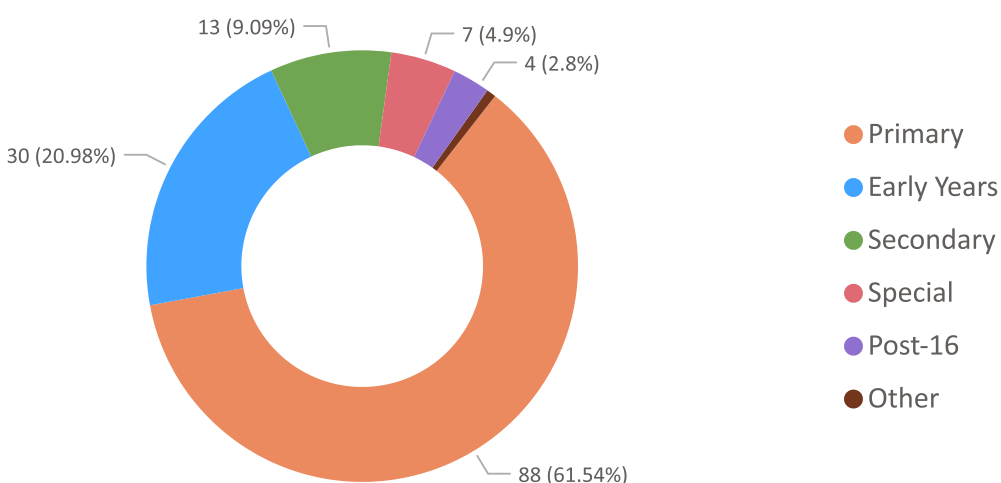
Which of the following best describes your role?

Respondents could only select one option. The 89 respondents who selected 'Headteacher/Principal' represents 87.3% of the cohort.



Which phases are part of your leadership role?

Respondents could select multiple options, for example, almost every respondent who selected 'Early Years' also selected 'Primary'.

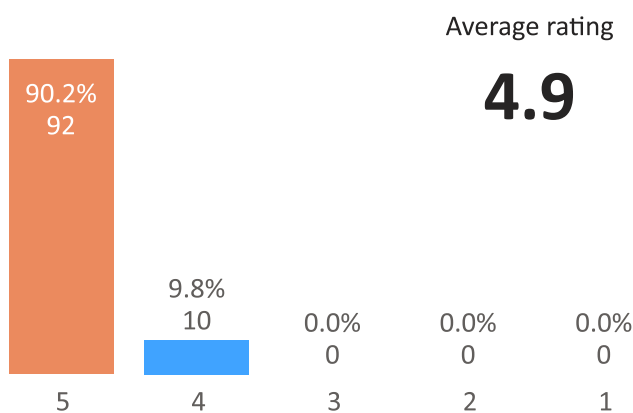


What are their overall perspectives on Learn Sheffield?

For each of the seven questions in this section of the questionnaire, the rating was a compulsory response but there was an option to add a comment. We have included a small number of typical comments to provide additional context.

To what extent do you feel that Learn Sheffield acts with integrity and reflects the values that you have for children and young people?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all).



The average response was 4.9 and 90% of respondents selected 5 (very much so).

Typical Comments

“

Every aspect of the work carried out by Learn Sheffield is child centred and recognises local context focusing strongly on advocating quality provision and support for the most vulnerable.

“

The whole team are great!

“

Invaluable support for how schools operate.

“

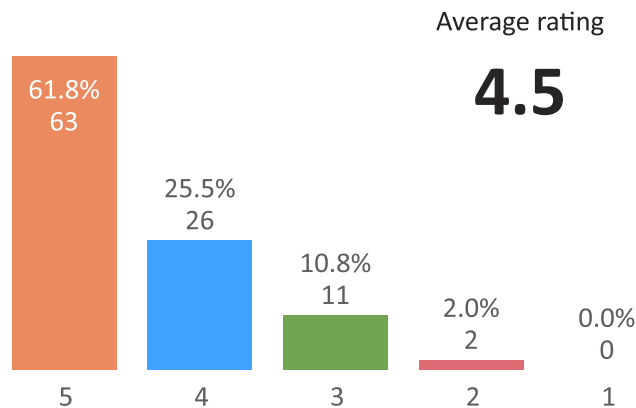
It has a clarity of purpose and value set which places the best interests of people at the fore (children and staff alike). It understands that support and challenge is necessary for the interrelated sectors of Education/Health and Care, the education sector, MATs, schools, leadership and staff alike to have maximum effect.

“

Learn Sheffield have always acted in a professional way and have consistently looked to improve support, services and opportunities for schools which, in turn, has benefitted young people in education throughout the city.

To what extent do you feel Learn Sheffield helps you keep connected and work collaboratively with colleagues in other organisations/settings?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.5 and 89 (of 102) respondents selected 5 (very much so) or 4. Amongst the 13 colleagues who selected a lower response, several noted that this function is now fulfilled more often by their multi academy trust.

Typical Comments

“

As I am part of a big MAT, my collaborative work is often with colleagues within the trust rather than with other Sheffield colleagues.

“

Really good at keeping me up to date with local and national initiatives / practice etc It can be isolating to be a maintained school so it helps to feel connected to what is going on.

“

Meetings are well organised and there is an effective system to disseminate to all schools via localities. Communication is a strength across the organisation. Training that if planned is effective and responsive to local context and need and also links us up with national initiatives.

“

I feel that this is very good for Heads of Special, but do think there could be further work on some of the very specialist, and challenging areas of SEND.

“

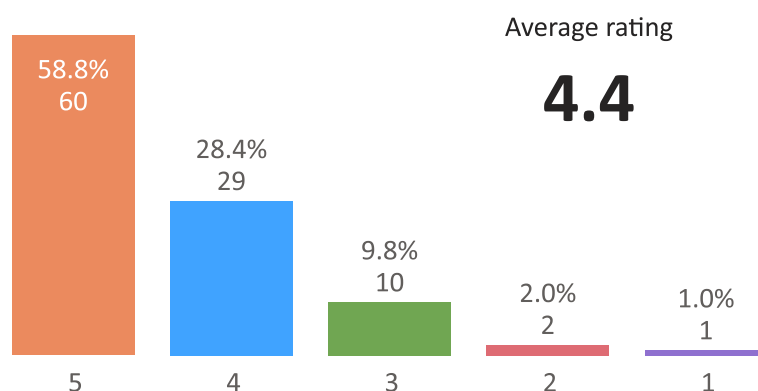
There are countless opportunities presented by LS to work collaboratively with other schools.

“

Regular opportunities for networking and purposeful training - with high quality professionals.

To what extent do you feel the support (information provided, in-school support, training etc) provided by Learn Sheffield has supported school leaders to improve the curriculum in your organisation/setting?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.4 and again 89 (of 102) respondents selected 5 (very much so) or 4. As with the previous question, the majority of colleagues who selected a lower response identified that curriculum development support had come from their MAT.

Typical Comments

“ We obviously did the work ourselves but the advice and training opportunities have been invaluable.

“ Training and direct coaching from LSIPs have helped develop our school curricula over several years through a focus on clear and coherently planned sequences of learning.

“ The work undertaken by our school has been underpinned by the knowledge of curriculum design by Learn Sheffield School Improvement Partners. They have taken the time to get to know the school, understand the core values of the leaders and produce a bespoke training and development programme to aid the school.

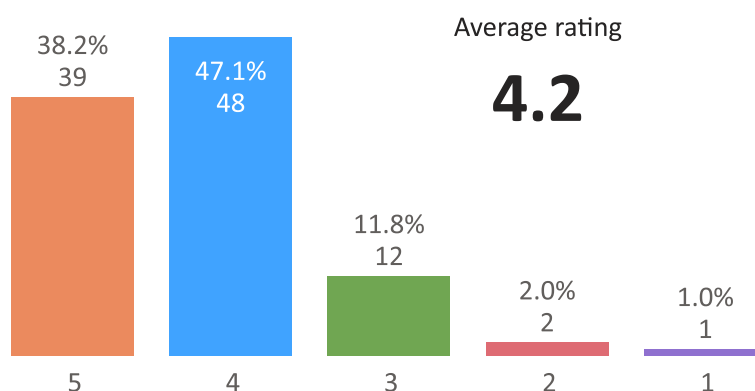
“ I feel very fortunate to work in a city where, through the work of Learn Sheffield, we have direct access to some of the leading practitioners in the country.

“ This comes mainly from our MAT but the leadership courses have been very helpful.

“ Year on Year, the CPD offer has become more focused on key priorities and areas. Review partners have helped provide external ‘eyes’, moving schools forward in key areas. The ‘review’ offer may benefit from quality assurance measures and consistency in approach between LS staff.

To what extent do you feel the support (information provided, in-school support, training etc) provided by Learn Sheffield has supported school leaders to raise standards in your organisation/setting?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



Although the average response remained strong at 4.2, the balance of responses included more respondents selecting 4 (47.1%) rather than 5 (38.2%). This perhaps reflects the trend in recent years for activity that focuses more on curriculum than standards.

Typical Comments

“

Absolutely essential for me, as the headteacher, to quality assure our approach to maintain our high standards. Our Learn Sheffield School Improvement Partner has been integral to this being effective.

“

Impact of work with the Learn Sheffield team has supported significant improvement and had impact on pupil progress. Training offered is wide ranging and support for Localities has led to increased momentum and rigour.

“

COVID has impacted greatly on 'Raising Standards' - the focus has been on recovering to pre-pandemic levels. It is hard to attribute any recovery to an organisation but being part of Learn Sheffield's CPD and audit processes will have contributed.

“

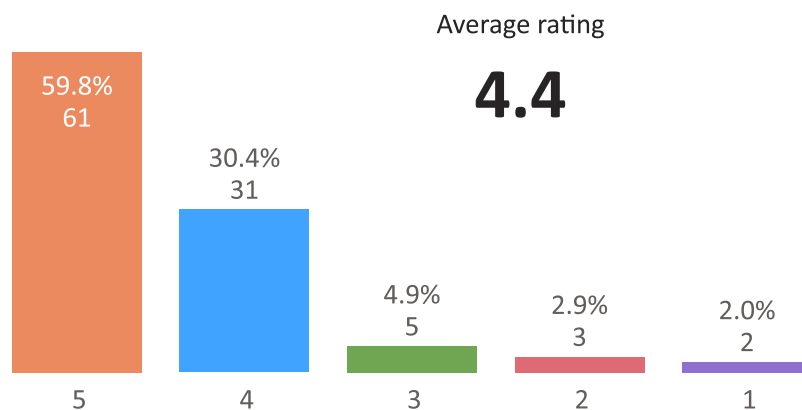
The organisation is focused on every leader improving and every school improving. Relationships are a strength, this organisation knows the city's schools and leaders well and encourages effective collaborations.

“

We have always had high standards and been successful from an academic and non-academic perspective. However, what I feel Learn Sheffield has done has consistently supported us with is bespoke in-school support where we can discuss specific areas we need to develop along with relevant training for curriculum leaders.

To what extent do you feel the support (information provided, in-school support, training etc) provided by Learn Sheffield has supported school leaders with any aspect of the Ofsted process in your organisation/setting?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.4 and the distribution of responses (90.2% selecting 5 or 4) was similar to the earlier question about curriculum. This perhaps reflects the close connection in recent years between curriculum development and Ofsted preparation.

Typical Comments

“

We attended several briefings in our window before inspection. Really helpful sessions. LS were also really pro-active in the weeks immediately prior to our inspection, checking our website etc and offering practical support. When the phone call finally came they were on the phone, supporting throughout the process. First class support.

“

The offer overall is so grounded in school improvement how could it not!

“

Direct involvement of LSIPs during inspection alongside clear training for school leaders and governors has ensured stakeholders are aware of expectations and supported during the process.

“

Learn Sheffield were extremely supportive on the build up to and throughout our Ofsted visit.

“

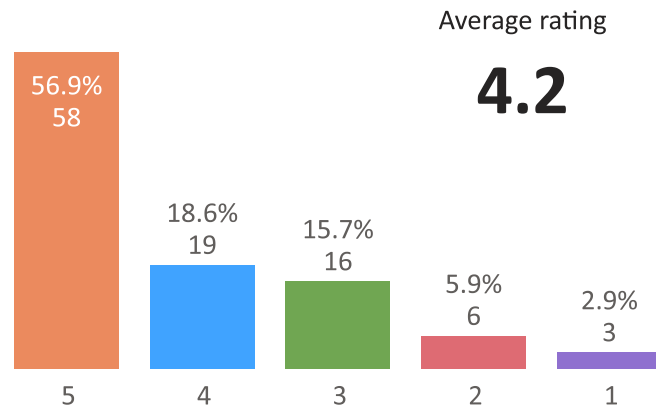
As I am part of a big MAT, information, support and training is provided for those in an Ofsted window.

“

The school improvement work we have focused on with our school improvement partners has aligned with areas we would want to develop in line with the Ofsted framework, notably Quality of Education and curriculum sequencing.

To what extent do you feel the support from Learn Sheffield has helped during more challenging circumstances for you or your organisation/setting?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.2 but the distribution of responses reflects the education landscape more directly than earlier questions. A majority (56.9%) selected 5 (very much so) but other responses were more evenly split between 4 and 3, with 9 respondents selecting 1 or 2.

Typical Comments

“

From personal experience and from feedback from others in the Trust, I know that the support and responsiveness of colleagues from Learn Sheffield has been invaluable.

“

Often, if not always this is the organisation a headteacher would contact when a difficulty arises. There is always a swift and informative response.

“

As part of a Trust, have not needed to lean on the support LS can provide.

“

I haven't had a major crisis (yet!) but I feel confident that I could pick up the phone and speak to Learn Sheffield, who would be supportive and knowledgeable. I know my SIP is always at the end of the phone or email if I need them too.

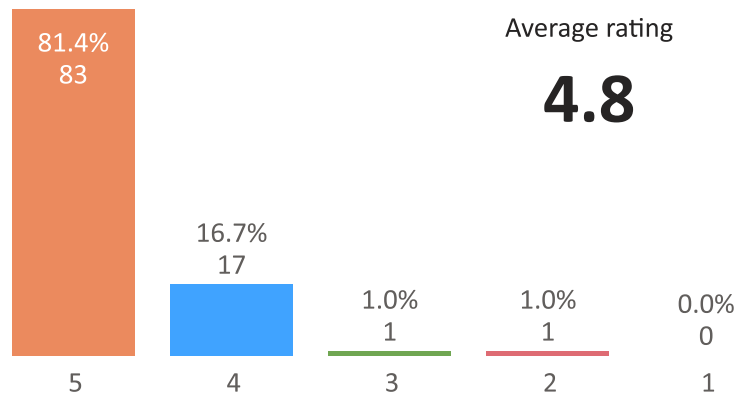
“

Individual and personal support has been excellent when challenged professionally. Past support in managing media was great and contribution to recent, significant incident in school high quality, coordinated and welcome.

“

I don't think we would have 'survived' the pandemic without Learn Sheffield! I wonder how other cities coped who didn't already have an organisation already in situ and best placed to coordinate many aspects, in partnership with the LA. CEO is also a good advisor during critical incidents, always available.

To what extent would you be likely to recommend Learn Sheffield to a colleague? (5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.8, with more than 4 of every 5 respondents selecting 5 (very much so) and 98.1% of respondents (100 of 102) selecting 5 (very much so) or 4.

Typical Comments

“

We are very happy with Learn Sheffield and their team and could recommend them without reservation.

“

Learn Sheffield is something Sheffield should be proud of.

“

Yes I would highly recommend. I don't require the same level of support and I don't access all the services due to being part of a MAT.

“

I feel LS has high expectations of itself and promotes excellence through collaboration with high quality partners and people.

“

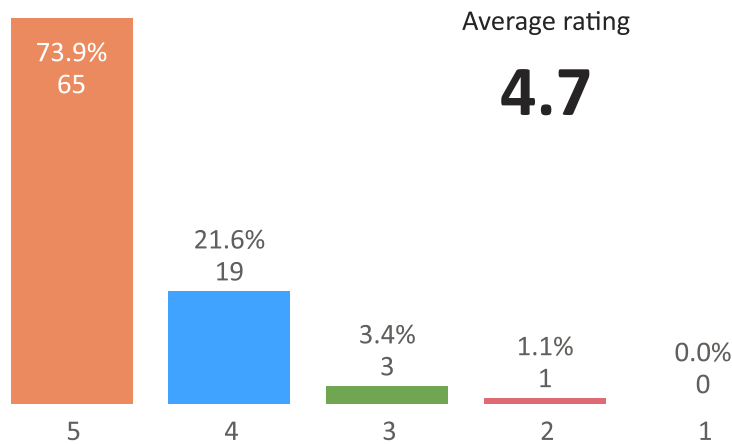
The leadership is innovative and exemplary. Learn Sheffield ensures that the right priorities have been selected for school improvement. The recruitment of talented colleagues enables schools in the partnership receive effective support.

“

Learn Sheffield is an absolutely key partner to us as a school. In an educational landscape where there are various groups of schools, i.e. academies, maintained etc, the organisation helps provide a unified support system.

How satisfied are you with communication from Learn Sheffield?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.7 with 95.5% of respondents selecting 5 (very much so) or 4. Comments reflected the personal preferences of colleagues in relation to communication, which we recognise are wide-ranging.

Typical Comments

“

Excellent communication, easy to read and informative.

“

You can't please everyone. Personally I prefer short emails with one topic. I hate newsletters - I never have time to read them through. Other people would rather have it all in one place.

“

Sometimes it can feel a bit overwhelming and repetitive- I prefer one succinct document to read every fortnight for example- that said it is personal choice and I can see that you need to give reminders.

“

I'd be interested to know how the themes and priorities for 'festivals' etc. are determined and to have this communicated clearly.

“

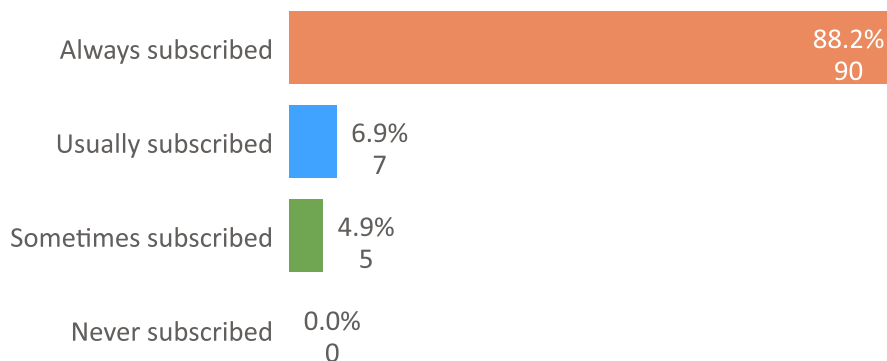
I think the communication has improved and the information shared is easy to read.

“

There is so much on offer it's hard to fit everything in. On the other side of this is that you don't want to feel you are missing out or missing anything.

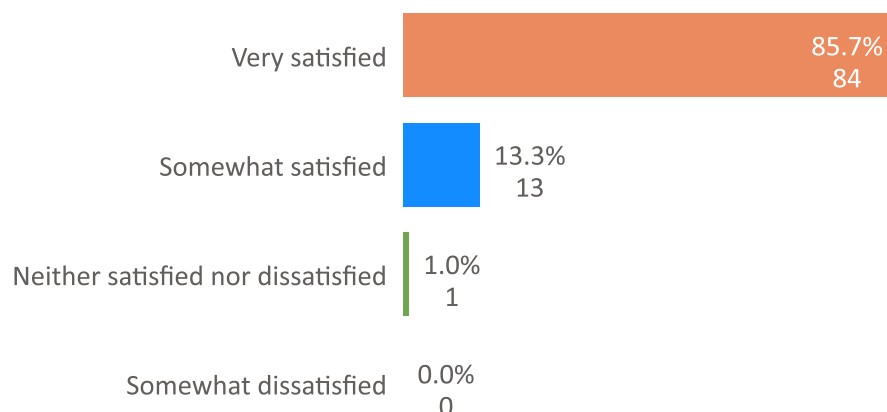
What do they tell us about their experience of the Learn Sheffield Subscription?

Which of the statements below best describes the way that your setting/ organisation has engaged with the Learn Sheffield subscription (2015-2023)?



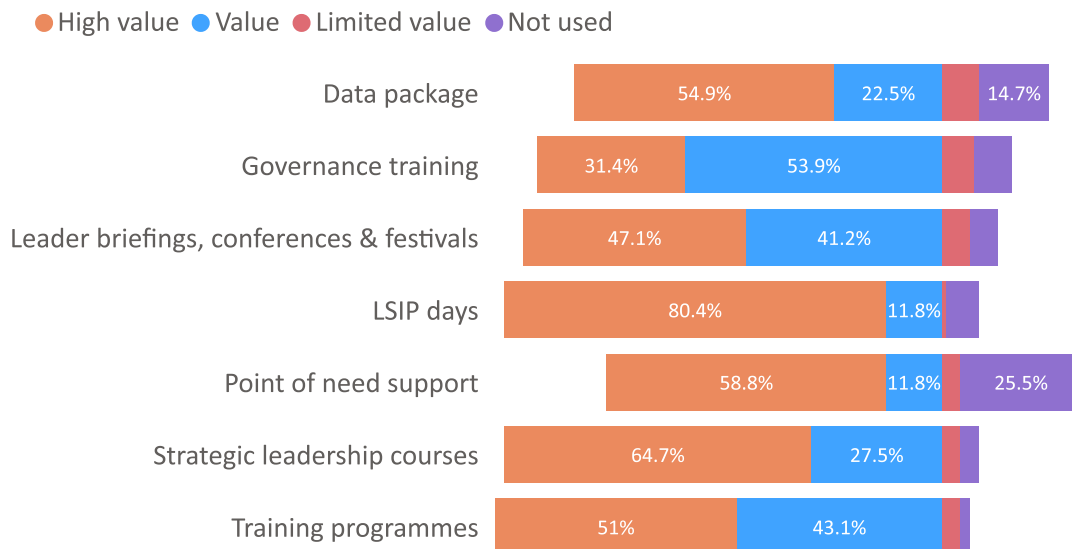
All respondents have subscribed to Learn Sheffield at some point, with 88.2% of respondents having always subscribed. The proportion of settings who have subscribed has ranged between 87.4% and 91.2% of eligible schools, academies and colleges.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Learn Sheffield subscription?



99% of respondents are satisfied with the Learn Sheffield subscription, with the vast majority of these (85.7% of all respondents) being very satisfied.

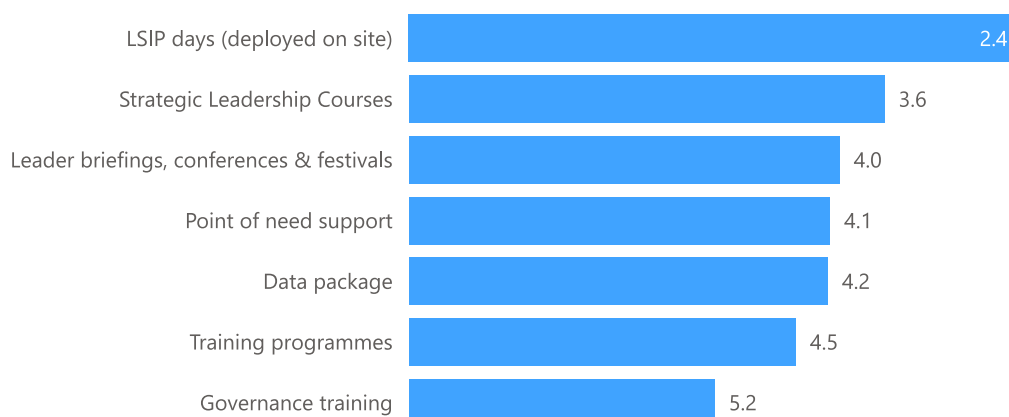
How much do you value the different components of the Learn Sheffield subscription below?



Respondents valued LSIP days (deployed on site) as the highest value aspect of the Learn Sheffield subscription and this correlates with other feedback. That said, many respondents commented that it was difficult to rank the different components of the subscription due to valuing all of the parts. It was also notable that, even when comparing the strongest to the weakest outcome below, a meaningful number of respondents ranked LSIP days in their bottom three (15 respondents), and governance training in their top three (18 respondents). From this, we note both the information about the different components but also that every aspect of the subscription is important for some colleagues.

Rank the components of the Learn Sheffield subscription to indicate which elements you value most:

Number on the chart shows average rank (1 to 7, where 1 = most valued)



Respondents were given the opportunity to add comments about the subscription, including any things that they would like to see included in the future. The feedback supported the conclusions on the previous page and also contained a range of suggestions for future Learn Sheffield activity. We have included a small sample of comments below but all suggestions have been incorporated into our future shape discussions, for the subscription and also other work.

Three areas dominated requests, both through this questionnaire and subsequent follow-up conversations: SEND, attendance and behaviour. Early years, which is an area that Learn Sheffield has started to include in its offer in 2023/24, was also often mentioned. It was also notable that some comments implied that colleagues would like to receive information about the offer as early as possible.

Are there any things that you would like to see included in the Learn Sheffield subscription?

Typical Comments

“

I think if Learn Sheffield was allowed/had the capacity to develop SEND in Sheffield, it would be welcomed by school leaders.

“

It is refreshing to see work developing with the LA, we really do need a joined-up approach.

“

I just want to say that ranking them was too hard. - many things I value equally. Governance training is valued but I don't feel we currently get the use out of it that we need to which is why it's lower, not because I value it the least.

“

Build on existing projects. Using Sensemaker process to support strategic change using voice as the driving mechanism. Also, access to report card development and the technology to support it.

“

I think there isn't always enough time to engage with the festivals. They seem to happen very suddenly sometimes. Because of this, I would have separated the festivals from the briefings and conferences in value to me.

“

More on SEND, behaviour and attendance.

“

More on SEND would be helpful.

“

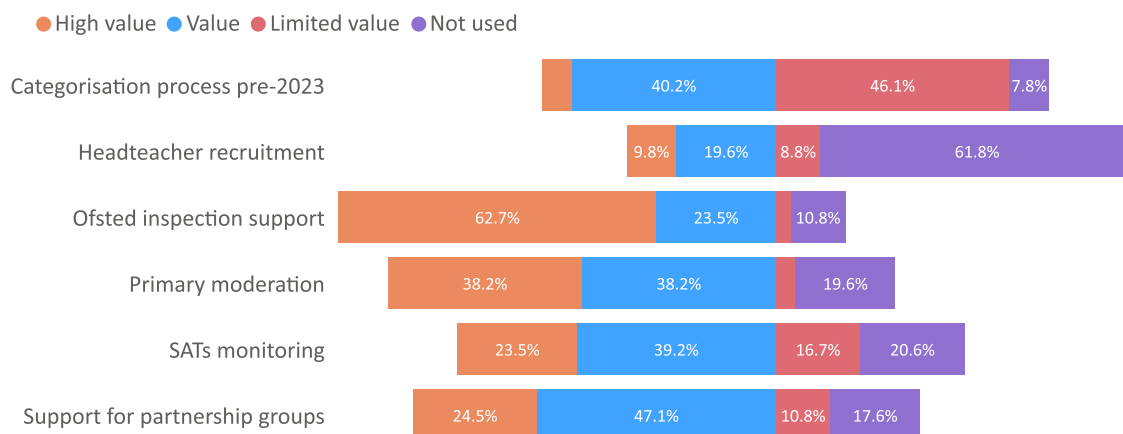
We have attended a number of the Research Twilights but found them too generic. Maybe a way of getting bespoke support/challenge from Huntington through Learn Sheffield?

“

Trust packages of support, including more on early years.

What do they tell us about the wider work of Learn Sheffield?

How much do you value these different (SCC) commissioned activities carried out by Learn Sheffield?



There was a contrast between the four areas of the current commission (Ofsted support, primary moderation, SATs monitoring and headteacher recruitment) and the perspective of respondents on the categorisation process (which was in place pre-2023). The majority of respondents who had experienced this work (i.e. discounting those who had not used them) valued or highly valued the activity. Ofsted inspection support was not surprisingly the most likely to be highly valued and least likely to not be valued.

Of the activities that are no longer part of the SCC School Improvement Commission, support for partnership groups was more valued than the categorisation process. 71.6% of respondents valued the support given to partnership groups (86.9% of those who had experienced it), although the majority of colleagues valued rather than highly valued the support. Only half of respondents valued the categorisation process, with only 5.9% of respondents valuing it highly.

Typical Comments

“

I feel, in the past, the only limitations to the wider work, for example, categorisation process, has been the capacity to sustain the work beyond identifying strengths and areas of required support. It has always been difficult to sustain the next step of school-to-school support.

“

A way of creating a self-seeding system of support/challenge across the sector by identifying and supporting high quality practice in schools or individuals to develop and share with others.

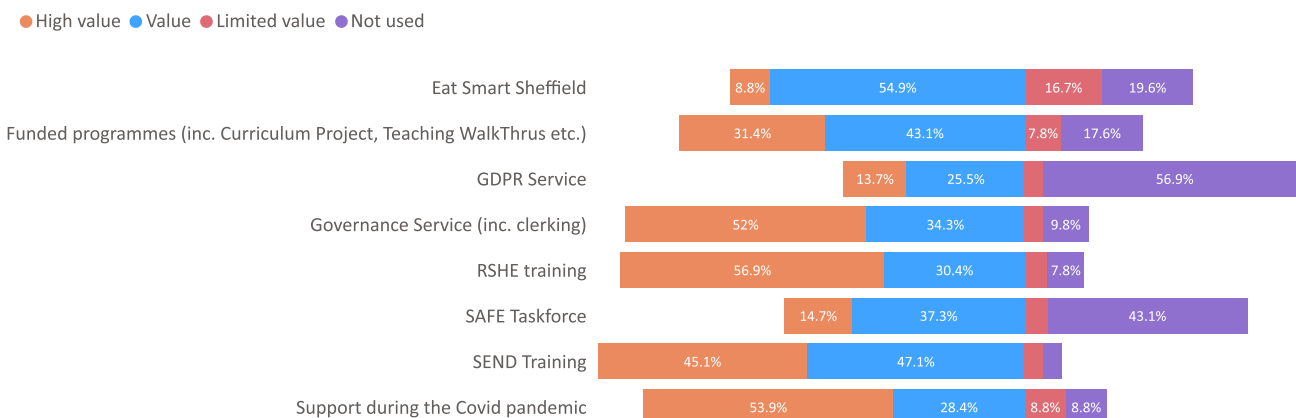
“

SEN - Links with Sheffield City Council would be beneficial.

“

Continue to develop support and wellbeing support for leaders and work overload.

How much do you value the different examples of Learn Sheffield's wider work?



Respondents valued all aspects of Learn Sheffield's wider work but there was variation in terms of the proportion of colleagues who selected value or highly value, in addition to the proportion who had not experienced or used the activity.

Projects and activities which relate to the most contentious or challenging topics (Covid, SEND and RSHE) were the most likely to have a higher proportion of respondents valuing the work highly. These proportions were similar to those for the Governance Service, which would be regarded as core business by most settings. Those services with smaller proportions of high value responses either had not been experienced by a significant proportion (GDPR and SAFE Taskforce) or were valued by the majority of those who had used the service (Eat Smart 79.2% and Funded Programmes 90.4%).

Are there other areas of work which you would like Learn Sheffield to be more involved with? Do you have any additional comments on Learn Sheffield's wider work?

Typical Comments

“

I generally like the work that encourages me to think strategically and that keeps me up to date with current initiatives/developments in education.

“

Wider work relating to inclusion and exclusion support.

“

The funded programmes were great and innovative, more of this would be great. Keeping Sheffield 1st class.

“

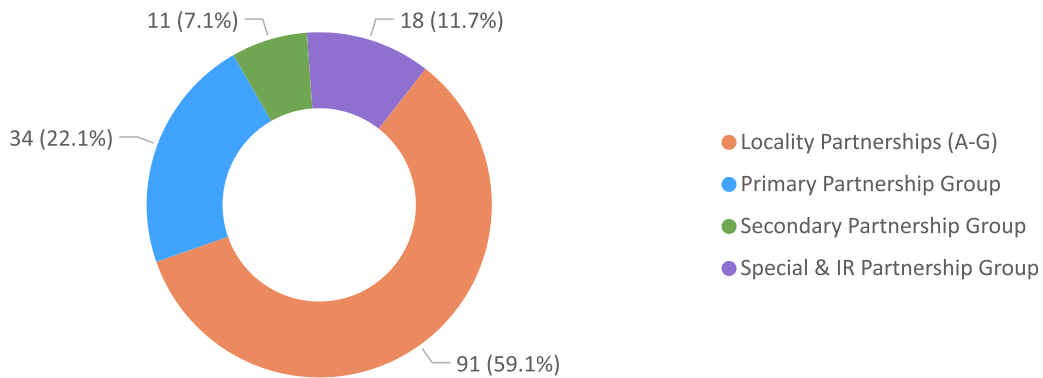
If possible more SEND support - access to other professionals would be great!

“

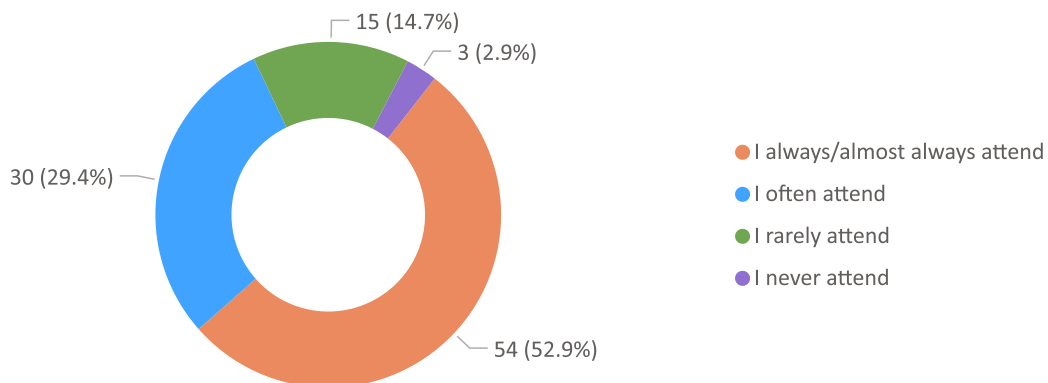
Sensemaker (voice), Report card, SEND resource allocation conversation (if Learn Sheffield is involved in this), interface with Inclusion Taskforce, work across the different sectors (health, care and education).

What do they tell us about partnership working in the city?

Which of the partnership meetings below are relevant to you?



Which of the options below best describes your attendance at partnership meetings which are relevant to you?



What influences your attendance at partnership meetings?

Typical Comments

“ Usually the vulnerability of school in my absence - I do try to prioritise the meetings where possible.

“ They are an effective way of keeping in touch with the wider landscape in Sheffield and building relationships and networks.

“ Important to attend - sudden issues in school sometimes prevent.

“ General demands of headship/conflicting priorities.

“ Sometimes find the value of time given to the meeting does not match value of outcome.

“ The link to leadership briefings is a great idea and will positively influence the rate of my attendance.

The sample of respondents for the Primary and Special & IR sectors represents a reasonable proportion of those sectors. The proportion of Secondary colleagues is smaller (11 respondents) although several of those respondents represent multiple settings.

Almost all respondents attend partnership meetings (only three never attend). 82.3% of respondents often or always attend. The comments, however, reflect the importance that is attached to the meetings but also the increased challenge of protecting the time to attend. This is consistent with verbal feedback and observed trends in each sector.

The responses below were predicated on a shared statement of Learn Sheffield's values: Learn Sheffield believes that an infrastructure of partnership meetings is essential. Respondents who left comments (just over half) tended to agree with the premise but also, often, recognised the challenges. The responses reinforced Learn Sheffield's belief that a partnership infrastructure is crucial but also suggest that the time is right to review our partnerships, their purpose and their connections to each other.

Typical Comments

“

Yes, partnership meetings are essential in terms of support and strategic actions which in turn lead to better outcomes for our children across the city.

“

Primary Partnership Group is a good step forward. Avoiding duplication of content between groups and considering the current structures available before forming new groups.

“

I believe the partnership work is essential and plays a crucial role in school improvement and headteacher wellbeing.

“

Clarity over what are LA roles and responsibilities, where Learn Sheffield fits in and (I know this is hard to answer) where MAT school improvement sits.

“

A diagram of the different groups and who makes up these groups/how frequently they meet would be helpful (especially for new/acting heads). Would help with all the acronyms too.

“

I absolutely agree that infrastructure and partnership is critical. It can be difficult to attend at times due to the increasing pressure on senior leaders in schools. That said, it should be prioritised. I'm not sure the offer could be any more effective, returning to face to face following the global pandemic is welcomed.

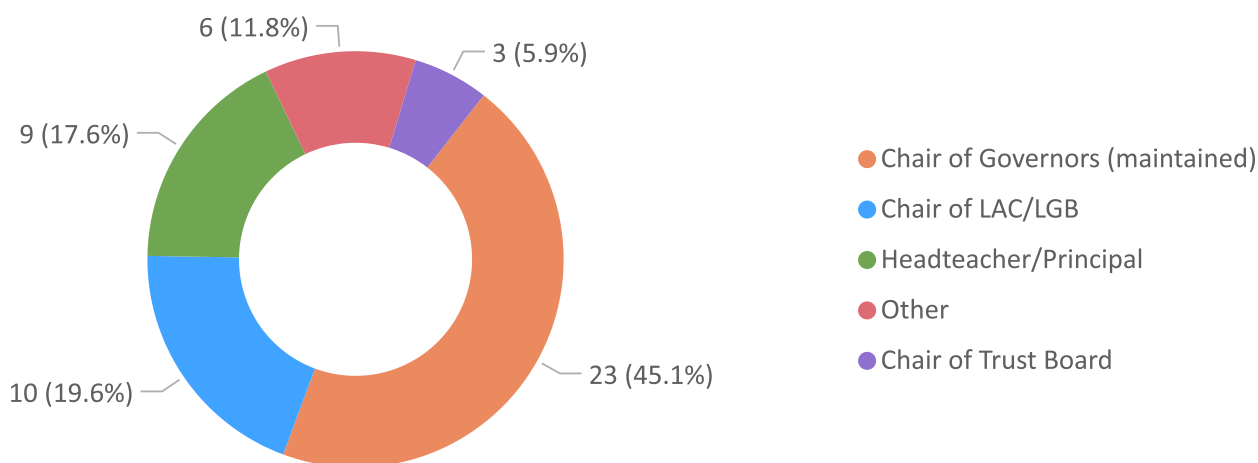
PART TWO

GOVERNANCE SURVEY

Who responded to the survey?

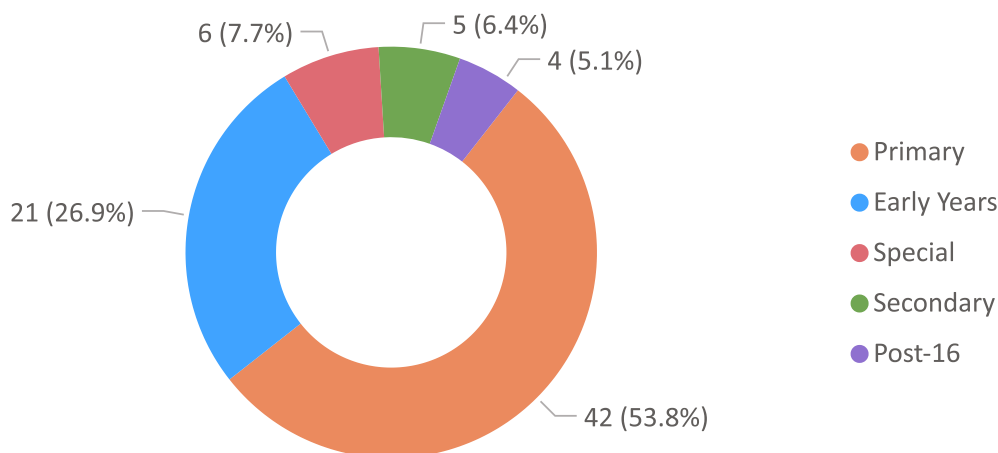
There were 47 responses to the questionnaire. Just over 70% were chairs, of either a maintained school, Local Governing Board, Local Academy Committee or a MAT Board. School leaders made up 9 of the other 15 respondents.

Who completed this questionnaire?



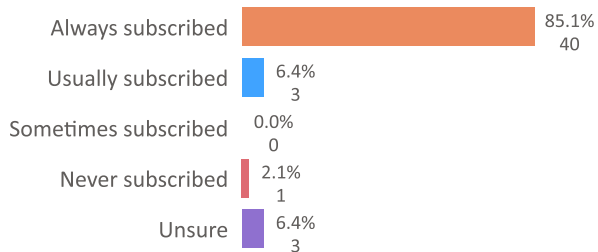
Respondents could select multiple responses. MAT board chairs, for example, often selected the majority of the options and most respondents who selected Early Years also selected Primary.

Which of the phases below are part of your governance role(s)?

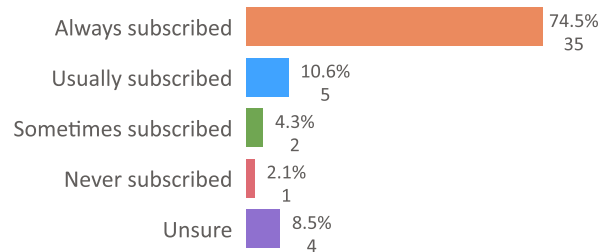


How has the setting(s)/organisation(s) where you are involved in governance engaged with Learn Sheffield (2015-2023)?

Learn Sheffield School Improvement Subscription



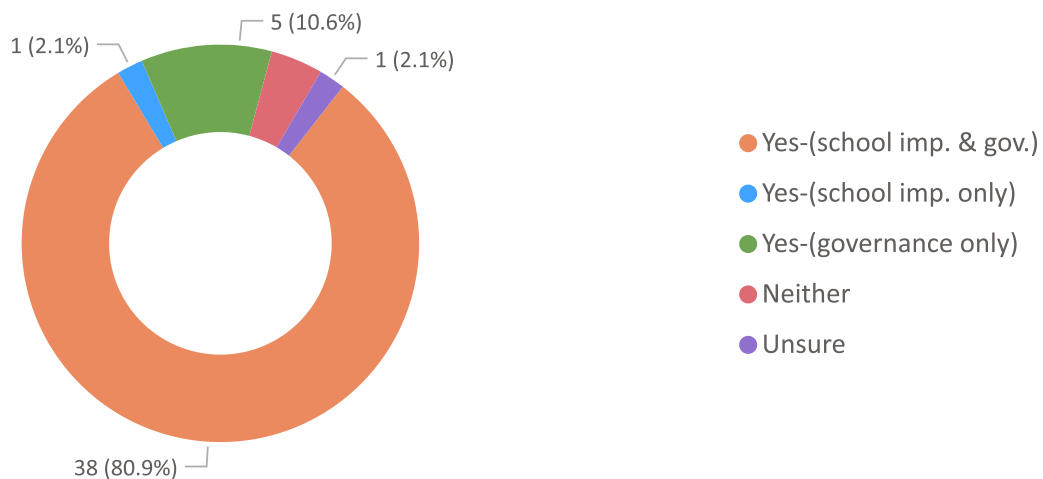
Learn Sheffield Governance Improvement Service



The majority of respondents are involved in an organisation that currently subscribes to Learn Sheffield, often to both the school improvement and governance offers. The majority of these organisations have always subscribed to Learn Sheffield, although some colleagues were unsure about this.

The respondents did include a small group (almost 15%) who were not currently subscribed to both offers, including 5 respondents who are involved in governance of an organisation which currently only subscribed to the governance offer.

Are you involved in governance at a setting/organisation that currently subscribes to a Learn Sheffield package?

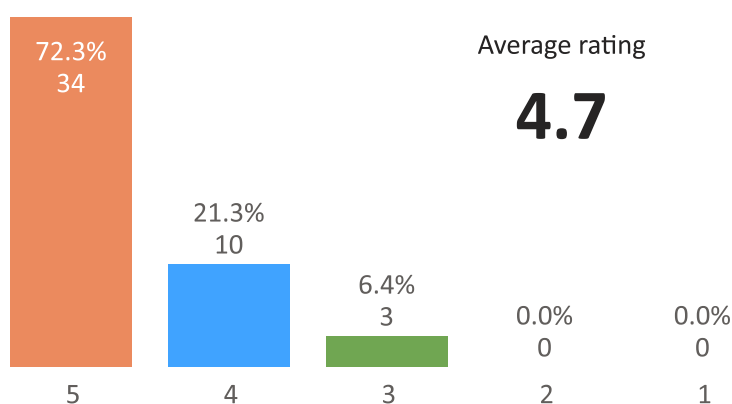


What are their overall perspectives on Learn Sheffield?

For each of the following four questions, the rating was a compulsory response but there was an option to add a comment. We have included a small number of typical comments to provide additional context.

To what extent do you feel that Learn Sheffield acts with integrity and reflects the values that you have for children and young people?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.7 and 93.6% of respondents selected 5 (very much so) or 4.

Typical Comments

“

Absolutely, has the best interests of the children in Sheffield.

“

Always found LS services well aligned with our values.

“

Sheffield is really lucky to have Learn Sheffield - it keeps us together as a city.

“

I think that some of the issues arise because both the LA and Learn Sheffield are identifying themselves with the same role but don't speak with the same voice.

“

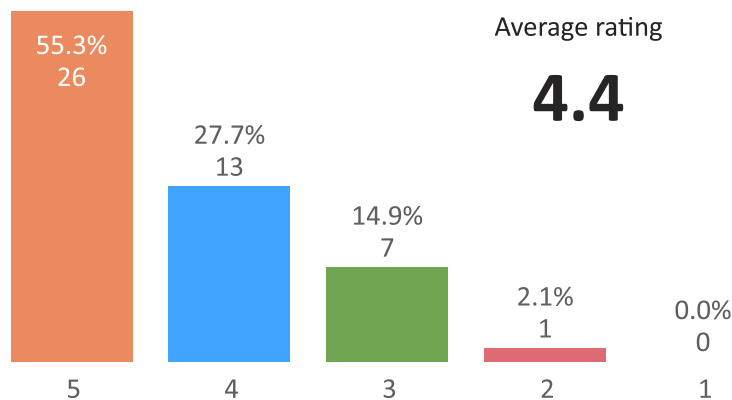
Learn Sheffield is our organisation and we feel closely connected to it.

“

I would always trust the Learn Sheffield governance team and know that I can go to them with any issue.

To what extent do you feel that Learn Sheffield has made a significant positive difference in your setting?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The response to this question was slightly more distributed but the average response was still 4.4 and 83% of respondents selected 5 (very much so) or 4. Some of the respondents who selected lower ratings indicated that their MAT was more central to their improvement

Typical Comments

“

There are some positive things (e.g. briefings, Governor Hub, training). It's easy to talk about these things positively. It's harder to know whether they have made a difference.

“

Learn Sheffield has supported governors and senior leaders during a challenging period.

“

The feedback I get from the head (and previous head) is that the review work that LS provides is very focused and useful. The consultants who come are very much experts.

“

Learn Sheffield is the first place we go with any problem.

“

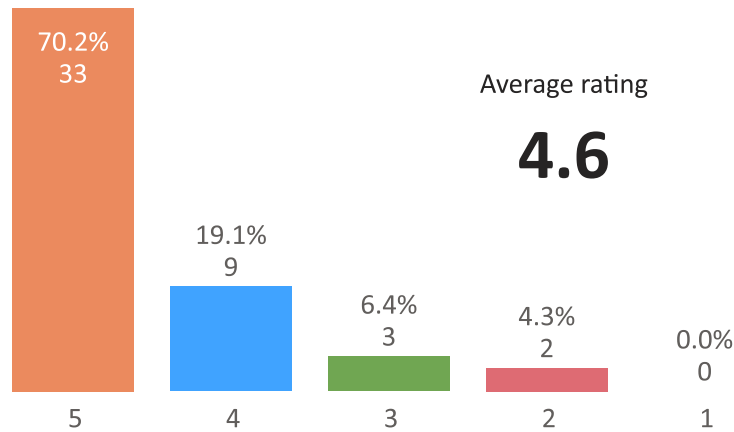
Both the LSIP team and the governance team have made a difference to our school.

“

The Learn Sheffield team, including the LSIPs and the governance team, are always available to provide guidance and support.

To what extent would you be likely to recommend Learn Sheffield?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response remained strong at 4.6, with 89.3% of respondents selecting 5 (very much so) or 4, but the responses included 5 respondents who selected 3 or 2. This perhaps reflects the proportion of colleagues who have tended not to subscribe to Learn Sheffield offers.

Typical Comments

“

Some schools seem to be using a great deal of online training for their governors and that has significant advantages in terms of flexibility but also says something about the standard of some of the F2F or virtual input from governance section. Governors also miss out on the talking with and hearing from other governors.

“

I would recommend Learn Sheffield highly to anyone - they are amazing.

“

Availability of staff is an issue with service reduction, but support, when received has been very good.

“

Learn Sheffield strikes the right balance between expert challenge and strong support.

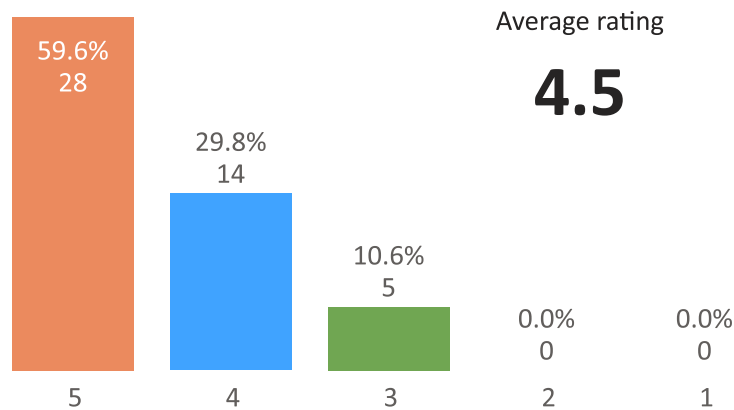
“

I would recommend Learn Sheffield for both school improvement and clerking support.

“

Recommend to all schools.

How satisfied are you with governance communication from Learn Sheffield? (5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



The average response was 4.5 and 89.4% of respondents selected 5 (very much so) or 4. The response again included five respondents who selected 3. The comments linked to this question made clear the importance of personal preference in relation to communication.

Typical Comments

“The communication is very helpful and I find the reminders and repeat messages helpful.”

“The level seems about right to me.”

“Majority of sessions are still on Zoom. It would be good to hold some face-to-face sessions to enable cross Governing Body interaction and networking.”

“Would welcome more chair-specific communication.”

“I’d probably prefer less frequent mailings and also receiving a calendar of events by mail. I find the correspondence sometimes gets a bit lost amongst the many emails I receive. I also think the timings of online update events are not great.”

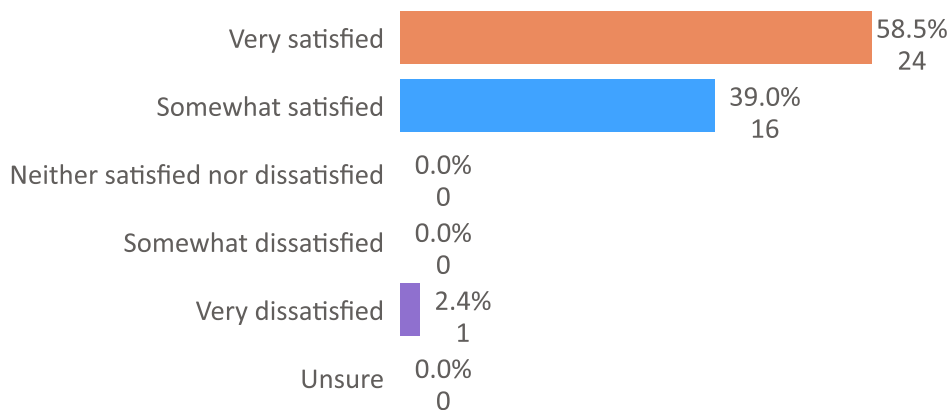
“There could be more gearing towards asking governors what courses they would like to see on offer.”

“All content is of great quality, I feel bad for not being able to take advantage of it all.”

What do they tell us about governance training?

41 respondents (87%) had experience of the Learn Sheffield governance training offer, with a respondent unsure and 5 respondents answering no. Those who answered no did not complete the following questions, hence the cohort reducing to 42 respondents.

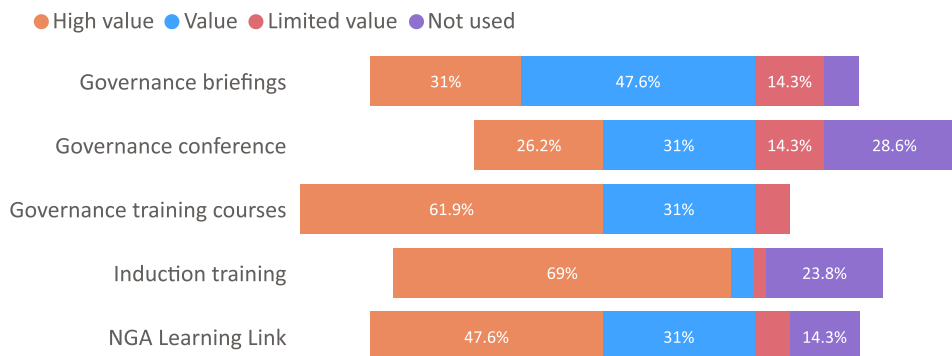
Overall, how satisfied are you with Learn Sheffield governance training?



Almost all respondents who expressed a view (40 of 41 = 97.6%) were very or somewhat satisfied with the governance training offer. Six in ten of these respondents selected very satisfied and four in ten selected somewhat satisfied. One respondent selected very dissatisfied.



How much do you value the different components of the Learn Sheffield governance training?



Respondents valued Induction training as the highest valued aspect of the governance training offer, with circa 91% of those who had experienced it valuing it highly. Governance training courses were valued by 93% of respondents, two-thirds of whom valued it highly. Although governance briefings and the governance conference were valued by the majority of those who had experienced them, 14.3% of respondents found them to be of limited value whilst the majority of those who did value them did not select high value.

Typical Comments

“Newer governors have praised the induction training to me but, I think, they would welcome ongoing sessions which are not particularly themed but give an opportunity to share questions/thoughts with peers and LS experts.

“SEND is a difficult issue for schools due to lack of funding for complex needs. Governor training and induction on Governor responsibilities in this area would be welcomed.

“Perhaps a buddying/ mentor offer?”

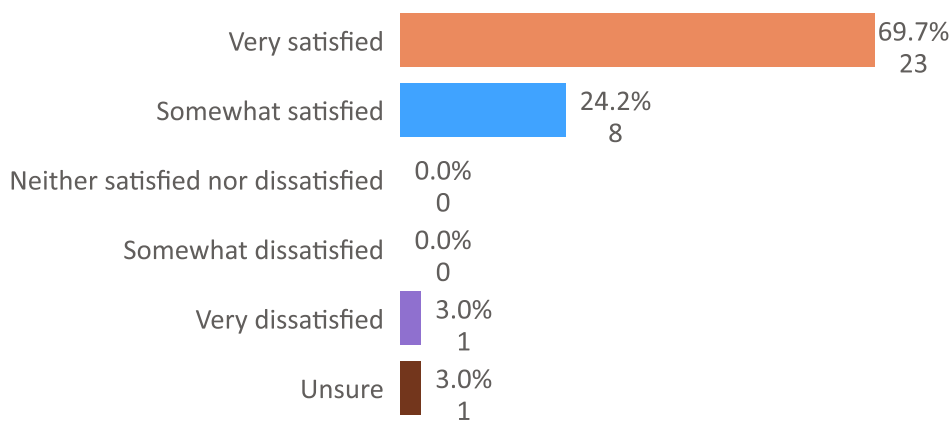
“I would like to have more communication/reminders about training opportunities, and more notice of dates.

“I think that with the changing landscape of governance, there needs to be a range of training available at different times of the academic year, for example HT performance/appraisal usually takes place late November/early December so having some training on offer in the lead up, on different platforms (face-to-face and online).

What do they tell us about governance support and advice?

41 respondents (87%) had experience of the Learn Sheffield governance training offer, with 1 respondent unsure and 5 respondents answering no. Those who answered no did not complete the following questions, hence the cohort reducing to 42 respondents.

Overall, how satisfied are you with Learn Sheffield governance support and advice service?

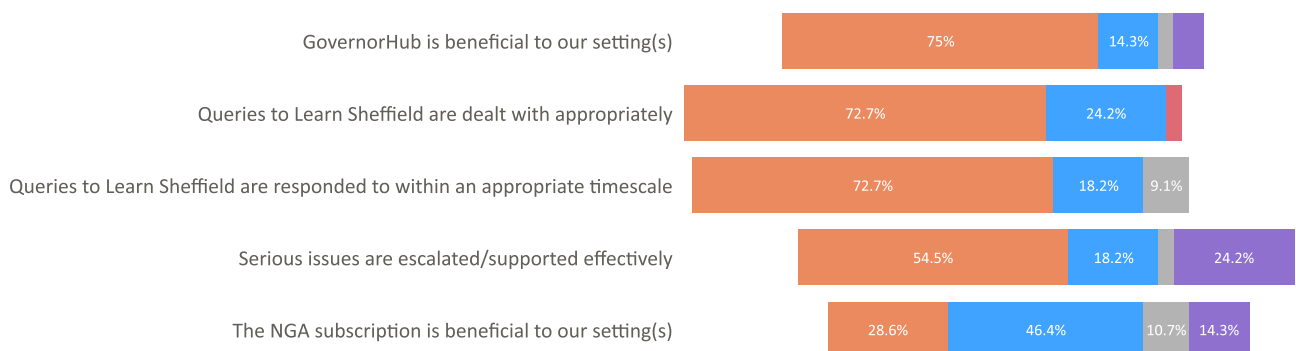


Almost all respondents who expressed a view (31 of 32 = 96.9%) were very or somewhat satisfied with the governance training offer. Three in four of these respondents selected very satisfied. One respondent selected very dissatisfied.

Almost all respondents agreed with the statements below, with only one example of disagreement and no strong disagreement. The majority of agreement involved strong agreement, with only the NGA subscription element of the offer more likely to receive more agreement than strong agreement.

To what extent do you agree with the below statements about the support and advice service?

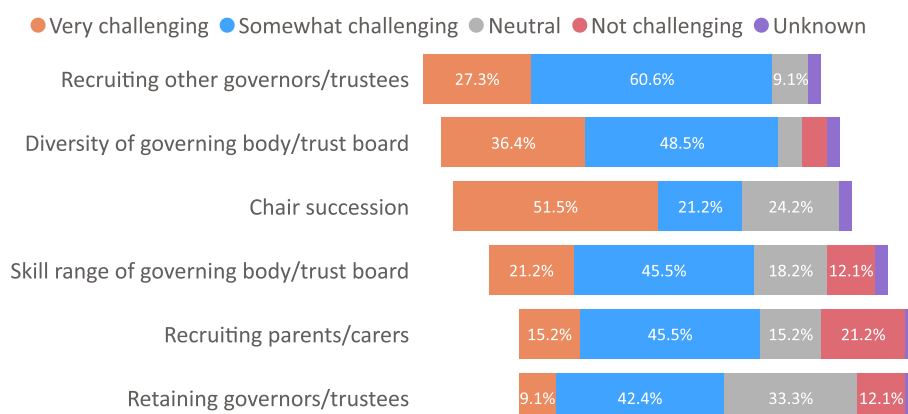
● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree ● Not used



We also asked respondents about their experience of the challenges of recruitment and retention of governors and trustees. A majority of respondents agreed that each aspect was challenging. The difficulty of retaining governors and trustees was the least likely to be considered very challenging and most likely to be neutral. The difficulty of chair succession was considered to be an issue by 72.7% and five in seven respondents selected very challenging.

We recognise that governance recruitment and retention is becoming more challenging in the city.

Please tell us about the level of challenge in relation to the following issues in your setting(s):



Typical Comments

“

I think the team are great! Always helpful and quick to respond.

“

Have valued Learn Sheffield support in a number of difficult situations.

“

The governance team are very professional and helpful.

“

I have always found the team really helpful with routine governance questions around procedure, recruitment, etc. etc. The only reason I've not given full marks is that I am less sure about the ability of the team to support with very school-specific issues, for example HR issues. This may be a little unfair as it may be argued it is not their role.

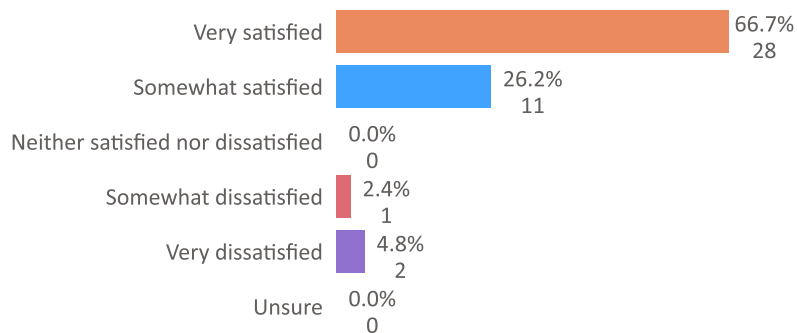
“

Perhaps consider mentor scheme for potential chairs now that national leaders of governance no longer provides that locally.

What do they tell us about governance clerking?

42 of the 47 respondents (89.4%) had experience of the Learn Sheffield clerking offer. Those who answered no did not complete the following questions, hence the cohort reducing to 42 respondents in this section.

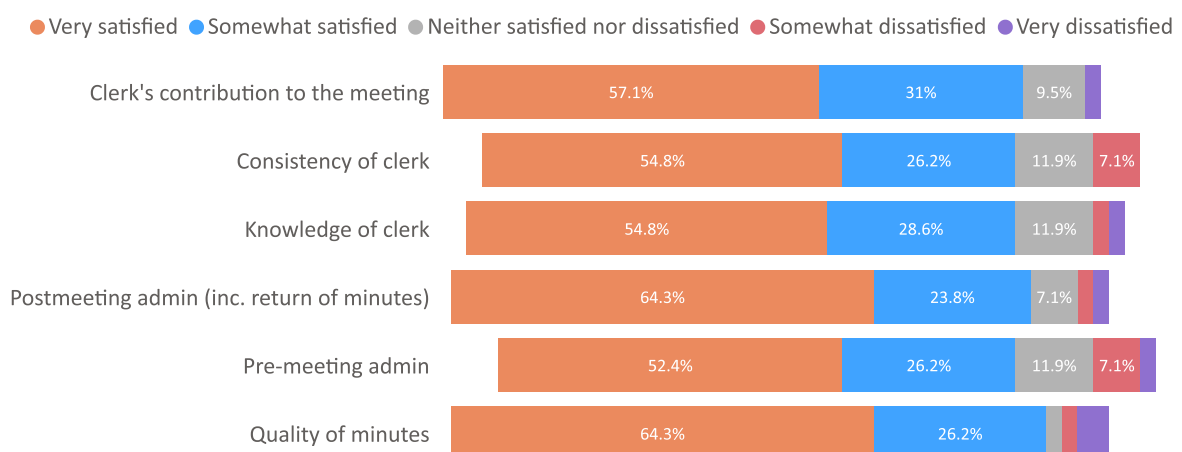
Overall, how satisfied are you with the Learn Sheffield governance clerking service?



92.9% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the governance clerking offer. Just over seven in ten of these respondents selected very satisfied. Three respondents selected somewhat or very dissatisfied. Comments in relation to clerking reflected specific issues. Some of these issues have been more recently addressed but others will inform future planning.

These responses were very similar when expressing satisfaction with the different aspects of the clerking offer. Satisfaction levels ranged between 90.5% and 78.6% with a majority of respondents very satisfied with each aspect. The consistency of clerking and the quality of minutes were the aspects with almost 20% of respondents being either neutral or somewhat dissatisfied.

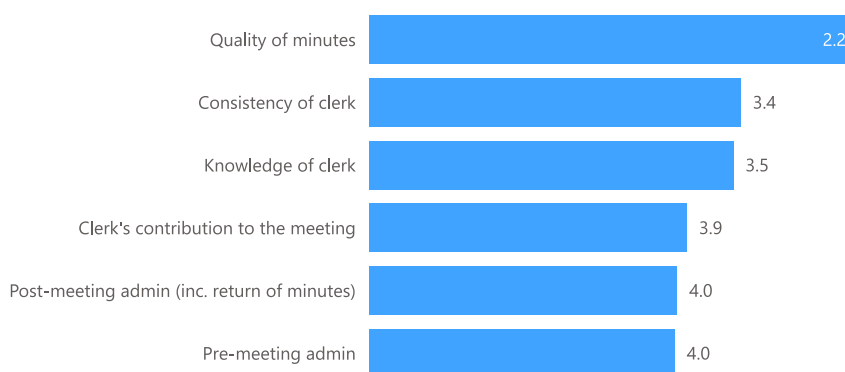
Overall, how satisfied are you with the aspects of the Learn Sheffield governance clerking service below?



When respondents were asked to rank the aspects of the service, the quality of minutes was the most valued item. Other aspects received a distributed response and several comments reflected that colleagues had found it very difficult to rank aspects that they felt were broadly equal in value.

Rank the aspects of the clerking service in order of importance to you:

(Number on the chart shows average rank (1 to 7, where 1 = most valued)



Typical Comments

“

Whilst I've been chair of governors, we've had some distinctly average clerking (basically just minute-taking and those needed chasing) and some absolutely brilliant. I'm happy to say recent and current clerking is in the latter category.

“

Every clerk we have had has been great and although they have changed this has not affected the quality.

“

As a Catholic school within a MAT, we value the Learn Sheffield offer but some of the template information (e.g. agendas) are not necessarily suitable for what our own MAT requires.

“

Our clerk is excellent and makes it much easier to be chair!

“

The governance team are very flexible and supportive to make sure we always have a clerk.

“

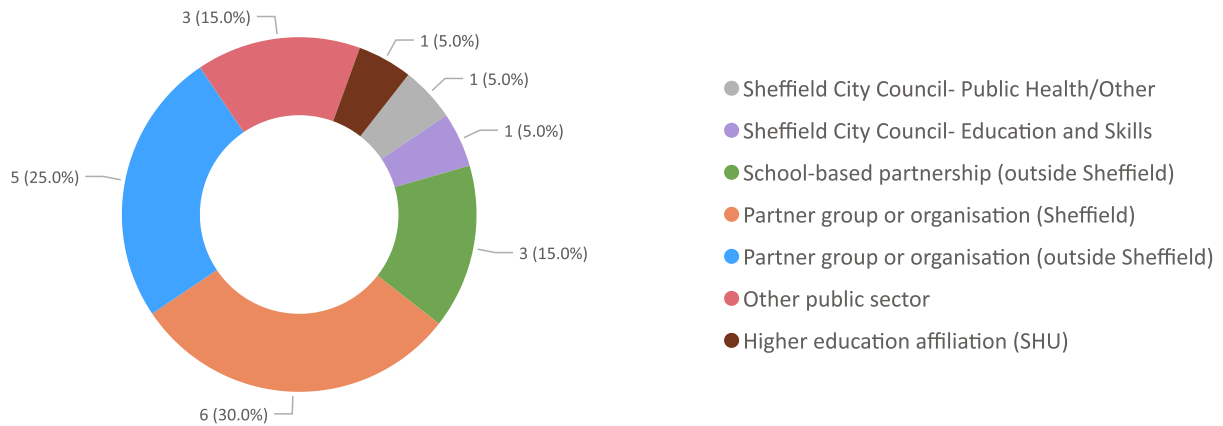
The clerks I've experienced have all been good if not excellent. Good to build a relationship with a linked clerk.

PART THREE

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

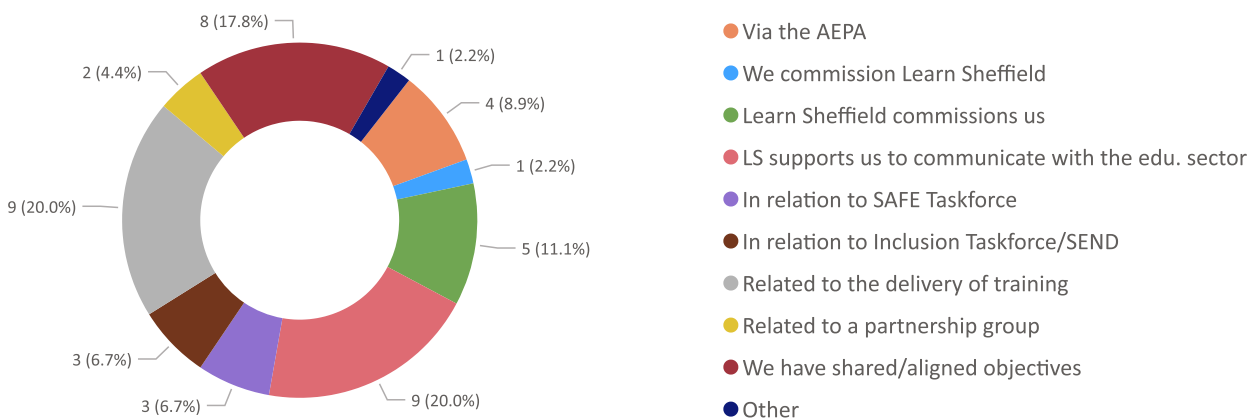
Who responded to the survey and how do they interact with Learn Sheffield?

Who responded to the survey and how do they interact with Learn Sheffield?



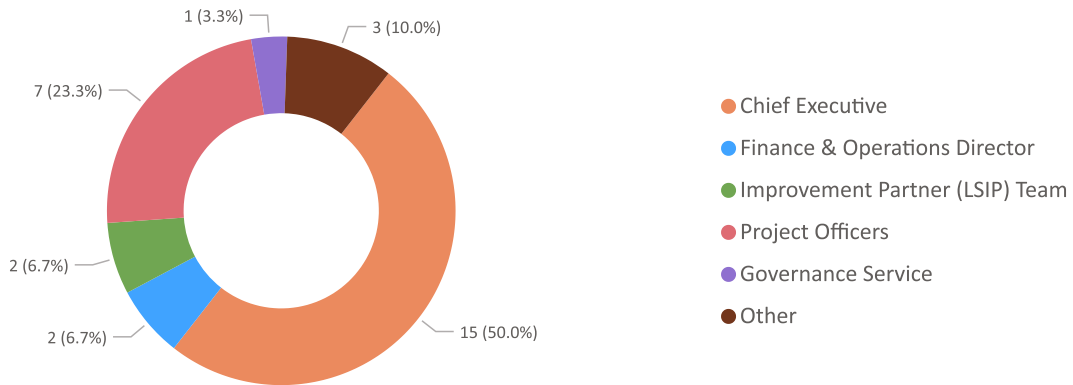
20 colleagues responded to the stakeholder survey and these respondents came from a wide range of partners. 12 respondents came from organisations within Sheffield and 8 from organisations outside the city.

How do they interact with Learn Sheffield?



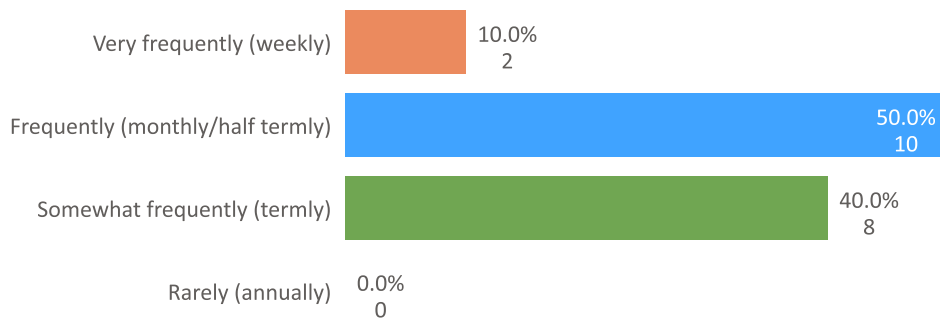
The interactions with Learn Sheffield amongst the stakeholder group are diverse, with respondents able to select any options that apply to their organisation. Most typically, colleagues noted that their organisation had aligned values with Learn Sheffield and worked with them to support training and communicated with the education community. A small number are commissioned by Learn Sheffield (generally relating to the SAFE Taskforce) or work with Learn Sheffield through a third party, such as the AEPA (Association of Education Partnerships).

Who do they interact with?



Almost half of the respondents interact with multiple colleagues at Learn Sheffield, although the Chief Executive was identified as a contact by 15 of the 20 organisations who responded. It is also notable how unusual it is for external partners such as these to interact with the LSIPs or the governance team, which reflects the way that Learn Sheffield is structured.

How often do you interact with Learn Sheffield?

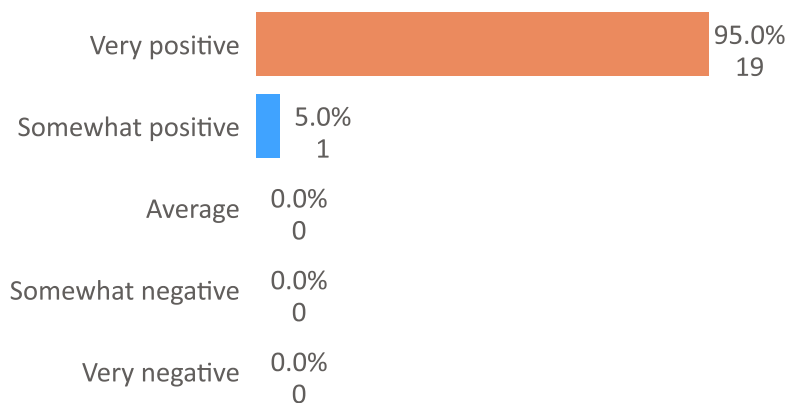


Almost all stakeholder respondents interact with Learn Sheffield on monthly, half termly or termly basis. This reflects the nature of partnership working captured by those responding.

What are their perspectives on Learn Sheffield?

All stakeholder respondents have a positive perspective on Learn Sheffield, with 95% selecting very positive and the remaining 5% selecting somewhat positive.

What are their overall perspectives on Learn Sheffield?



Respondents were asked, if their organisation works in Sheffield and elsewhere, to comment on whether Learn Sheffield makes a difference to the experience of working here.

Typical Comments

“

I regularly meet with leads of similar services to ours based outside of Sheffield and they do not have access to this single point of contact for all schools in their area and the inside knowledge which comes with that which makes their role a lot harder as they struggle to engage and best understand school's needs.

“

Learn Sheffield offer a city-wide network that you don't find in other cities that are significantly more fragmented.

“

Their knowledge of Sheffield schools gives us expertise where we need it.

“

Yes - it has helped us to make a difference within Sheffield schools and Learn Sheffield has been a significant source of support and guidance in how to liaise with schools as part of the SAFE Taskforce.

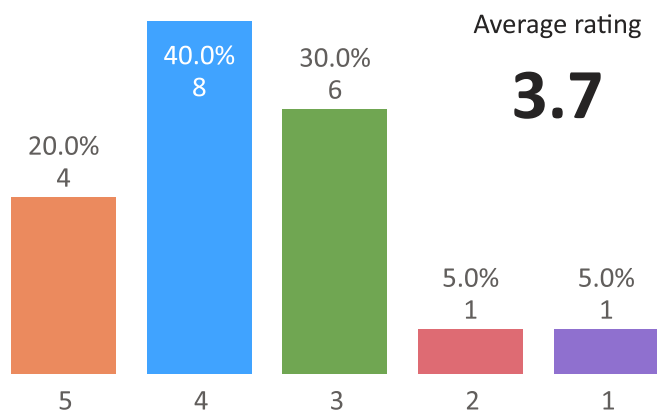
“

Yes - it is much more connected, tighter and collaborative.

The extent to which Learn Sheffield contributes to the organisational priorities and work of other organisations produced a distributed response. The average rating (3.7 out of 5 where 5 is very much so) reflects that most stakeholders selected 4 or 3, which would suggest some contribution but not a formative one. Two respondents selected 1 (not at all) or 2. This response closely correlated with the nature of the partnership working.

To what extent has Learn Sheffield contributed to their organisational priorities and work?

(5 = very much so, 1 = not at all)



Respondents were asked, if Learn Sheffield disappeared, whether it would make a difference to their organisation.

Typical Comments

“

We need partnerships like Learn Sheffield in the system. The whole landscape is stronger for it.

“

Yes, we wouldn't have the reach and contact with all Sheffield schools. the number of participants and impacts of our work would be severely limited.

“

Yes. I would miss a real advocate for education partnerships who support AEPA and make the rest of us bolder and more confident.

“

Yes, it would be much more difficult to connect with schools/organisations/ stakeholders and to work strategically across the city.

“

Yes, it has been brilliant working in collaboration with Learn Sheffield and they have given us the opportunity to deliver our service into schools that didn't know us.

“

Definitely. It would mean numerous fractured conversations.

“

The system would be less rich without such a key player helping to shape the agenda for partnerships.

Finally, stakeholder respondents were asked for their perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of Learn Sheffield from their experience.

Typical Comments

“

School and outcomes focussed in service to schools. Innovative and professionally generous.

“

Learn Sheffield are very supportive and responsive and in Sheffield Children's Speech and Language Therapy service we really appreciate what you have done/do to help us communicate and share our training and resources with the education sector.

“

Well organised, proactive, always available for support.

“

Learn Sheffield has many strengths in being the glue that holds Sheffield schools together and to their most effective practice. It appears to also be the bridge between DfE funding and projects coming to life which has been invaluable with regards to the SAFE Taskforce.

“

We need partnerships like Learn Sheffield in the system. The whole landscape is stronger for it.

“

Learn Sheffield provides the opportunity to join up practice for Sheffield schools, we must not underestimate how important and unique this is. It greatly facilitates school improvement, enabled sharing of practice, joined up working which provides the network we need for Sheffield children and young people.

“

Very well led, comprehensive and thoughtful offer. Willingness to collaborate and share and support other partnerships.

“

Learn Sheffield is one of the strongest education partnerships in the country.

“

Strengths: Great overview of the city / fantastic connector (glue) for Sheffield / have significant influence. Improvement areas: Could be further resourced staff wise to enable them to do even more good work.

“

Learn Sheffield provide a valuable route for us to communicate with school leaders across the city. They are helping us meet our organisational aims of raising awareness and improving systems to better identify, support and improve outcomes for young carers across the city.

“

A highly professional organisation built on deep moral purpose. The clarity of the offer has been really impressive, and we have taken a lot from that. The team are very impressive and give a lot of credibility. The organisation has also clearly shown ambition, dynamism and self-confidence in moving beyond dependence on the Council contract.

LEARN SHEFFIELD EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

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