

Parent and Carer Voice Survey Data Analysis

Phase Two

October 2020

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Background

Phase One

- In 2018, Hello Future conducted a survey with parents and carers
- Engaging with parents and carers in an intervention outreach capacity has proved challenging during Phase 1 of Hello Future.
- Hello Future reframed its engagement to seek to understand their views about various aspects related to HE.
- This is called 'Parent and Carer Voice'.
- Hello Future used the findings to form the basis of future interventions with parents and carers and to shape Phase Two.

Phase Two

- Phase Two, carried out in 2020, allowed Hello Future to contact parents and carers across Cumbria. Additional and updated data analysis has assessed any trends and shifts in attitudes and behaviour towards higher education outreach as well as exploring further areas of interest.
- While not a direct comparison as the nature, wording and style of the survey is different, Phase Two has allowed Hello Future to form an updated understanding on the Parent and Carer Voice in 2020 and the challenges this year has presented.
- Additionally, this survey was carried out in the middle of a national lockdown across the UK due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and so touches on some of the effects this had on our respondents.

Research Aim

To effectively engage with evaluation at both a local level through the partnership and nationally. To provide timely, accurate and accessible findings and impacts that contribute to a stronger (local and national) evidence base on 'what works' and its value for money in higher education outreach.

To seek the opinions of learners and their influencers (parents and carers, teachers/advisors, community groups) consistently across Target intervention activities to strengthen local evaluation practice in widening participation.

- Evaluation Objectives (1 and 2) for 19/20.

Targeted Outreach Objective

To increase the number of opportunities for learners, teachers/advisors, parents and carers and community groups to access and understand the value of higher level qualifications and higher education.

- Objective 2 of our Targeted Outreach Objectives.

Phase Two

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- While not a direct comparison as the nature, wording and style of the survey is different, Phase Two has allowed Hello Future to form an updated understanding on the Parent and Carer Voice in 2020 and the challenges this year has presented.

Date of evaluation: June-October 2020

Format: Online questionnaire

Description of evaluation: Attitudes and experiences of parents and carers of young people.

Target group: Parents and carers across Cumbria

No. of participants: 84 matched parents and carers across Cumbria

Outcomes evaluated: Attitudes, confidence, support, guidance, educational background, concerns

Data collection: Questionnaire sent via social media channels;

Online questionnaire software, Excel extract.

Response rate: 84 matched respondents across Cumbria.

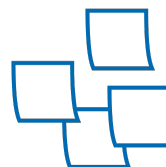
Timesframe for evaluation: Four weeks

Approach to data analysis: Topline descriptive, Bivariate analysis



Review of Phase One

Following the analysis of the Phase One results, Hello Future and ABS Insight held review sessions with key members of our team. This allowed us to reflect and consider the next stage.



Planning stage for Phase Two

Results from Phase One prompted further questions that we wanted to ask the parents and carers of Cumbria. Phase Two would not be a like-for-like comparison of previous results, and instead would focus on gaining additional insight into specific areas.



Design questionnaire

The Hello Future team designed a fresh questionnaire, aimed at gathering valuable insight to complement Phase One and shape future interventions and support.



Online survey

The survey was hosted online and was promoted via Hello Future's social media channels, using visualisations from Phase One.

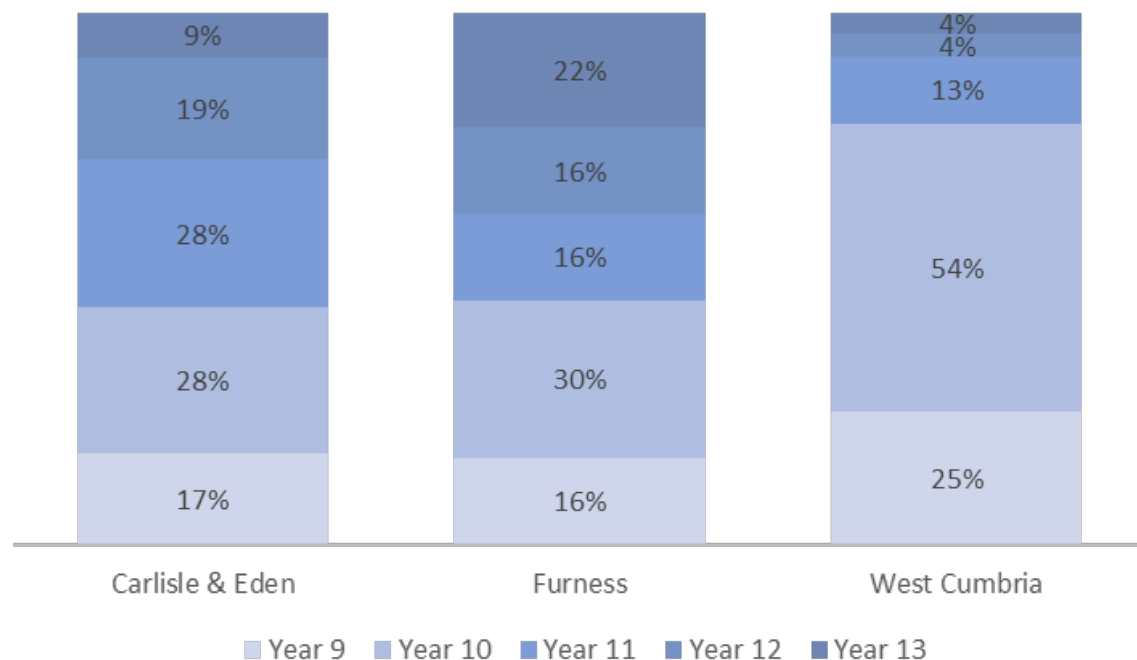


Analysis and report

Hello Future provided ABS Insight with raw, pseudonymised survey response data to analyse and split into key themes and produce this report.

Student demographics

The survey received 84 completions from parents and carers across **Furness**, **Carlisle and Eden** and **West Cumbria**, who are responsible for 106 children overall for the results in this study. The average household in this home to 1.26 children across years 9-13, with 75% of parents and carers surveyed caring for a child in years 9-11 and 25% to year 12-13.



How many children do you have years 9-13

Barrow-in-Furness	Carlisle	West Cumbria
1.26	1.14	1.42

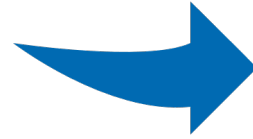
Educational Journey



What more have we learnt of the educational journey of parents and carers?

In Phase One, we discovered that 44% of parents and carers in Cumbria studied higher level qualifications after school.

Parents and carers in **Furness** (51%) and **West Cumbria** (50%) were more likely to have done so than parents and carers in **Carlisle** (25%).



Phase Two has allowed us to dig deeper and unearth more granular insight into the specific educational level of parents and carers across Cumbria.

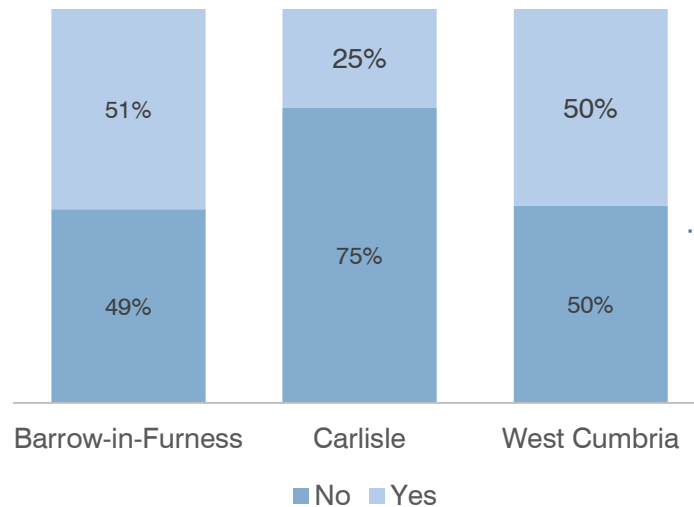
This method has revealed that while just 25% of parents and carers in **Carlisle and Eden** did not study at a higher level, we now know 42% did not study past GCSE level or equivalent – a higher proportion than **Furness** or **West Cumbria**, where it is almost the reverse story.

For example, more than 40% of parents and carers in both **Furness** (41%) and **West Cumbria** (43%) have an undergraduate degree.

It should not be assumed that all parents and carers in **Carlisle and Eden** are not educated beyond GCSE level however, as 11% have a Master's Degree.



Did you study higher level qualifications (Level 4 and above e.g. degree, HNC etc.) after school?



What is the highest qualification you left education with?

Qualification	Carlisle & Eden	Furness	West Cumbria
GCSE / CSC	42%	19%	19%
Bachelor's Degree	11%	41%	43%
NVQ Level 3	11%	22%	14%
A-Level / O-Level	14%	4%	5%
Master's Degree	11%	7%	5%
NVQ Level 2	8%	4%	10%
NVQ Level 7	0%	0%	5%
PGCE	0%	4%	0%
No Formal Qualifications	3%	0%	0%

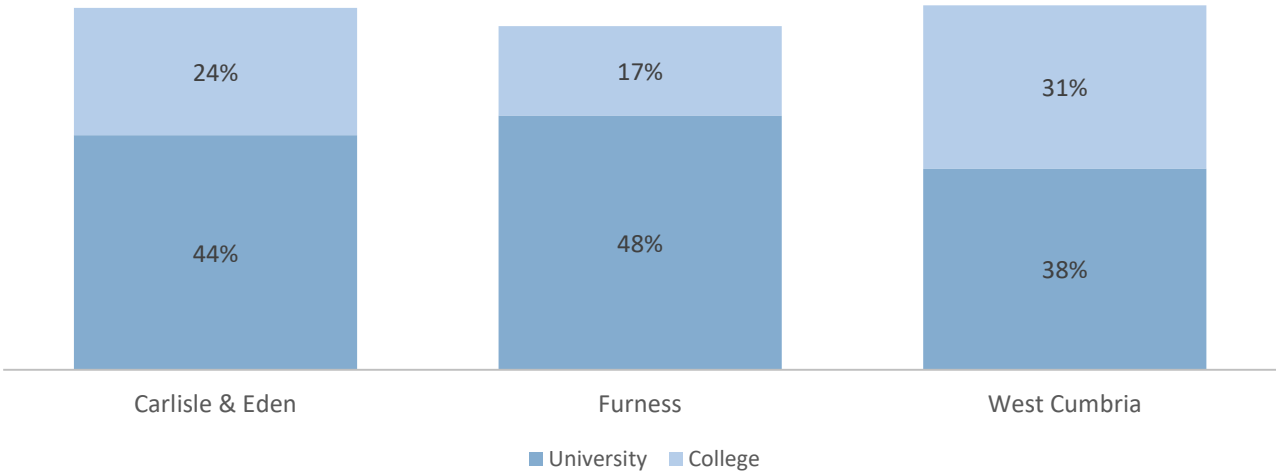
First in family

48% of students in **West Cumbria** have a family member that has previously been to university – 39% for **Carlisle and Eden**, 33% for **Furness**

Furness students most likely to be the first in family to go to university at 48%

On average, 68% of students across Cumbria will be the first in the family to either go to college or university.

94% of students in **Furness** however have a family member that has been to college at least – those in **West Cumbria** are the least likely to be able to draw on any college experience in the family with 21% being the first to go to college (16% for **Carlisle and Eden** and 6% for **Furness**)



Return to formal education later in life?

42%
Carlisle & Eden

62%
Furness

43%
West Cumbria

Confidence



What did we already know?

In Phase One we learnt that 78% of parents and carers feel confident in discussing the available opportunities with their child/children.

Parents and carers in **West Cumbria** felt the most aware of available opportunities after school and college, as well as confident in discussing them with their child/children in comparison to those in **Barrow-in-Furness** and **Carlisle**, with 50% comfortable in doing so.

Noticeably, a quarter (25%) of parents and carers in **Carlisle** felt confident in discussing future opportunities with their child/children.

Greater areas of uncertainty for all parents and carers included more vocational qualifications such as BTECs and apprenticeships, as well as university.

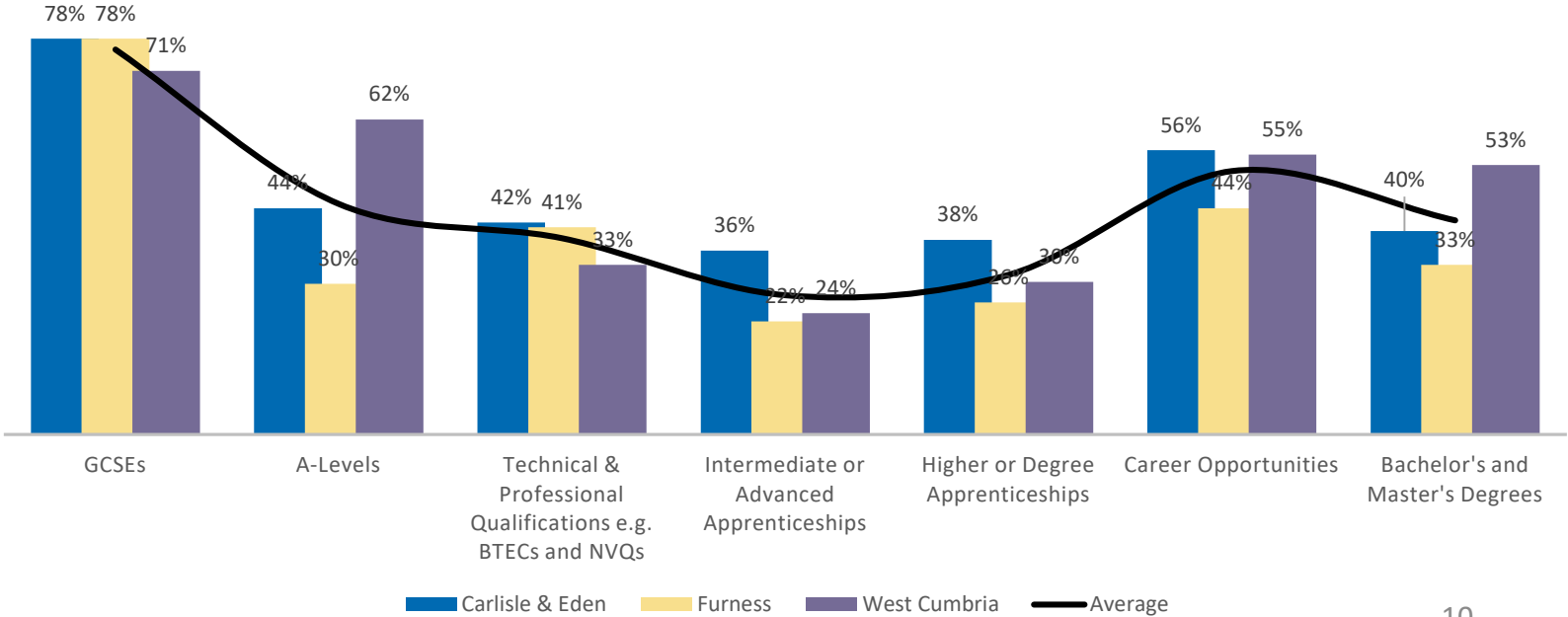


What has Phase Two taught us?

Parents and carers in **West Cumbria** again appear more confident advising their children of opportunities at university, such as bachelors and master's degrees (53%) compared those in **Carlisle and Eden** (40%) and **Furness** (33%). This theme is again consistent across A-Levels, while all parents and carers appear confident in discussing GCSEs with their children.

There continues to be limited understanding of higher or degree apprenticeships from parents and carers in Cumbria as well as apprenticeships. Parents and carers in **Carlisle and Eden** appear to be more confident in their knowledge of these areas – although less than 50% are confident in this knowledge.

Confidence in discussions



What did we already know?



Phase One taught us that parents and carers are more comfortable in discussing areas with their child/children where they can lean on their own past experiences.

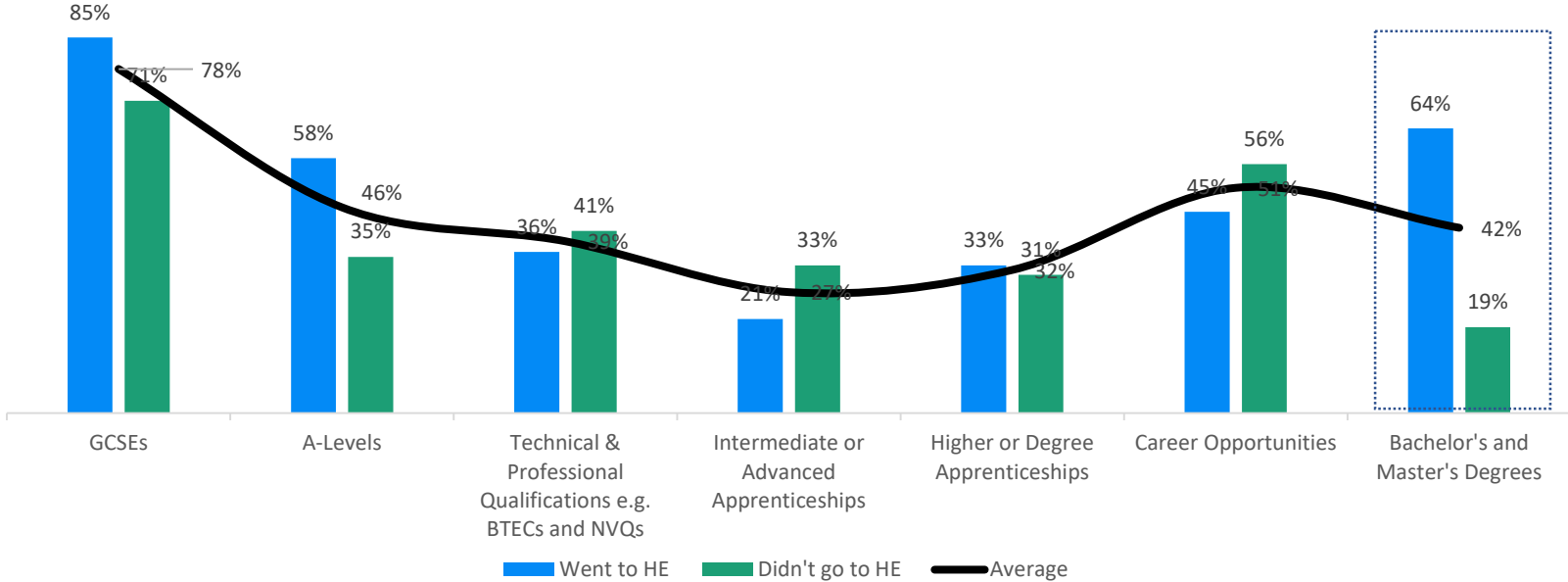
For example, parents and carers who went straight into employment from school are more likely to feel confident discussing this than those who continued into education. In fact, they are more comfortable discussing employment than any FE/HE options.

What has Phase Two taught us?

Confidence in discussing BTECs and technical and professional qualifications remains low, regardless of parent and carer educational background.

There is also a continued gap in confidence in discussing university options depending on educational background.

64% of parents and carers who went to HE feel confident in discussing in university options compared to just 19% of parents and carers who did not attend HE, suggesting educational background is a significant factor in higher education being discussed in households.



Conversations

Have you had a conversation with your child/children about their plans when they finish school/college?



What did you discuss?



Themes



University or apprenticeship?

Students are unsure on whether they should follow the path to university, or begin an apprenticeship and struggle to differentiate.



Possible career options

Parents and carers believe their children need additional help examining career options and actions they can take to support this.



Requirements for desired career

Students that have decided on the career they wish to pursue are looking for guidance on the path they should take and the qualifications that can support their choice.



Which subjects support their career choices

In addition to the required qualifications, students are keen to understand specific subject and subject groupings that can help their chosen career choice.



Where and how we can find out more

Parents and carers are keen to know where and how they can find additional information to support their children.

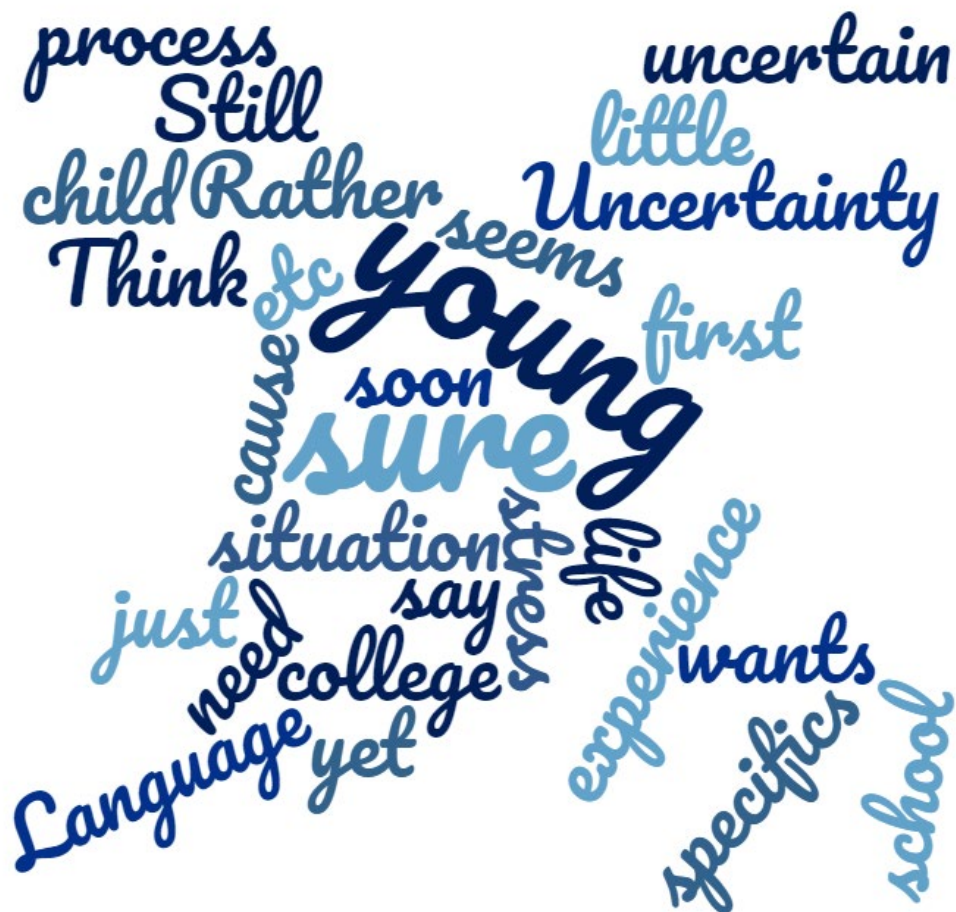


Where to visit

If university is an option, where to go and how to visit

What are the barriers to having a conversation?

Themes



Uncertainty around the situation causes stress

Some parents and carers are reluctant to raise the subject as it can cause stress and anxiety.



Not sure what to do next

Parents and carers do not always feel they are in a position to provide adequate advice due to not feeling confident in their own knowledge.



Too young to have that conversation

Some feel their child is too young to start thinking about career and higher education options.



Difficult to understand the process

Not all parents and carers feel they have a strong enough understanding of HE processes and future options to offer helpful advice to their children.



We don't understand the transition between school and HE

Parents and carers also find the transition process from school to HE daunting when understanding it with their children.



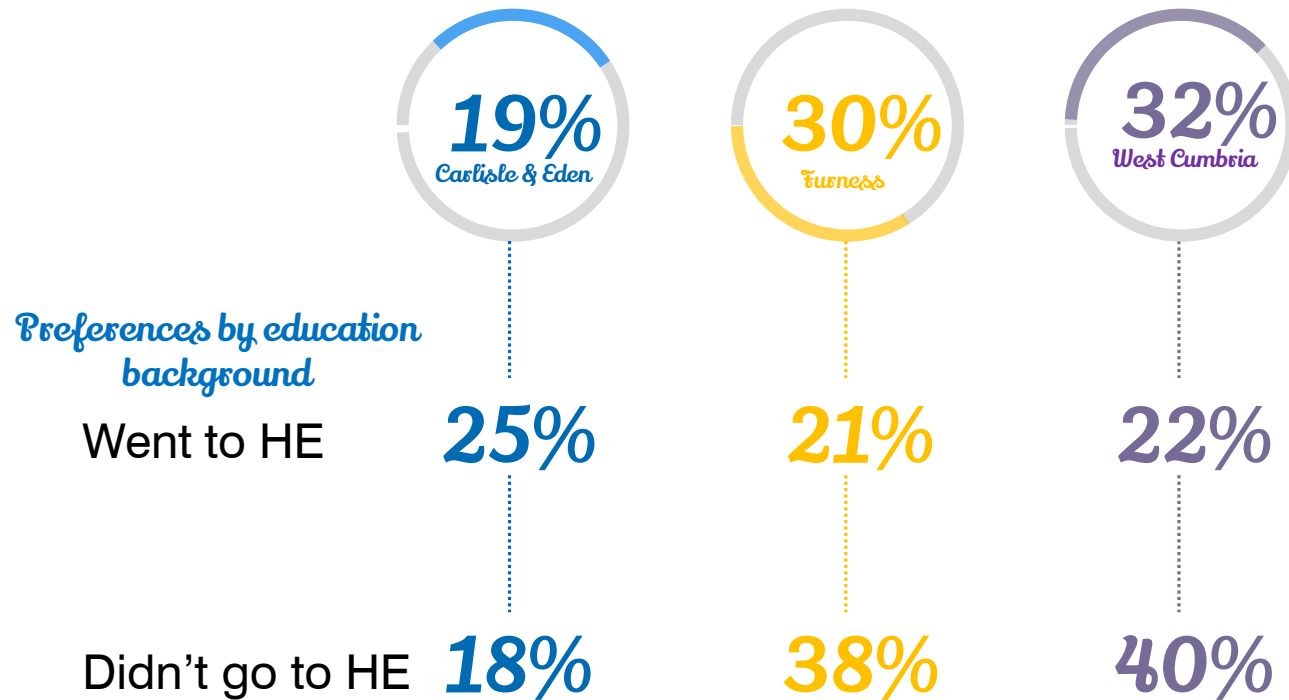
Not enough detailed information or specifics

Parents and carers are keen to receive additional and detailed information.

Parent support & guidance

Parent and carer preferences on study location

Do you have a preference on where your child/children studies and lives?



Preference on location of study differs across Cumbria
On average, more than 1 in 4 parents and carers (26%) across Cumbria do have a preference on where their child studies or lives.

This finding is more prevalent in **Furness (30%)** and **West Cumbria (32%)** than it is **Carlisle and Eden (19%)**.

Parent/carer educational background is a factor

71% of Parents and carers that **did not** attend HE prefer their child to study within the country.

Parents and carers who **did not** attend HE are also more likely to prefer that their child seeks employment at 18 within the country – compared to just 14% of parents who did go to HE selecting this option.

Parents and carers that **did** go to HE are more balanced when they have a preference of where their child studies or lives with a preference for within or outside the country both polling at 43%.

What did we already know?

Phase One did not provide us with one, definitive source where parents and carers gain their information.

Sources of information tended to differ drastically across each area.

For example, parents and carers in Furness were more likely to draw on personal experiences, while those in West Cumbria drew predominantly on experiences of friends and family as well as from their child's college, with some online resources.

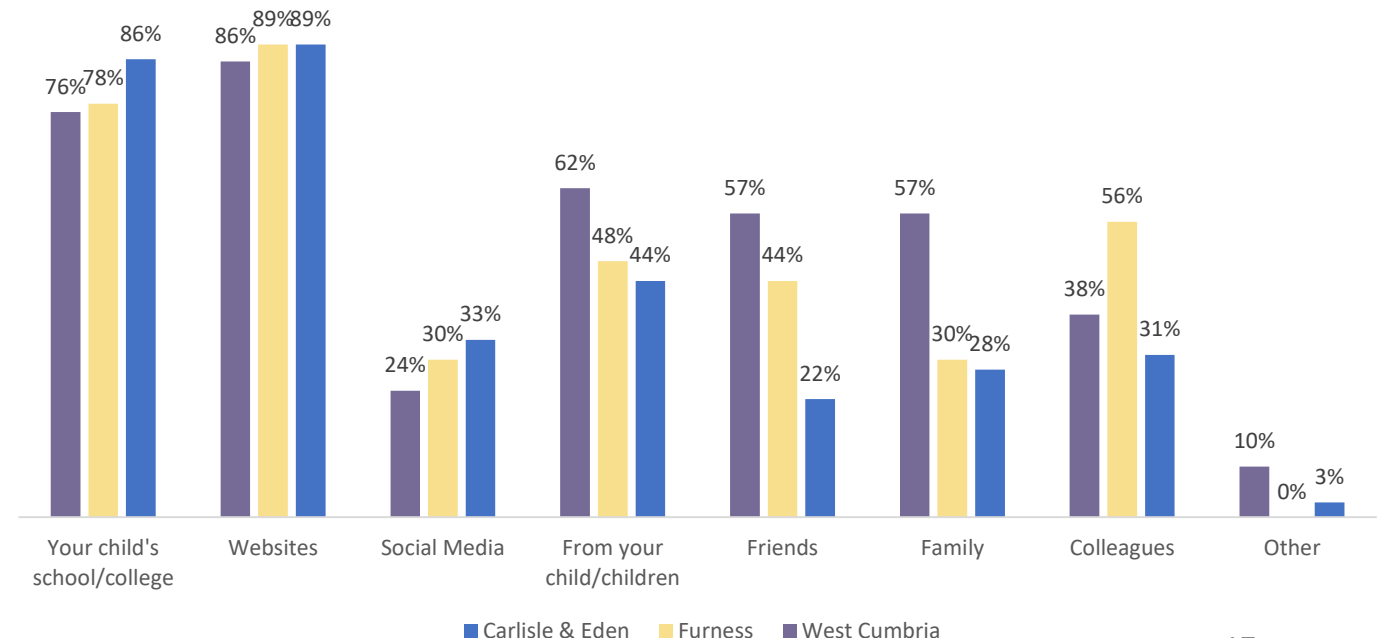
Parents and carers in Carlisle and Eden chose to draw a variety of sources.



What has Phase Two taught us?

Since Phase One, online resources appear to have become a prominent source of information when it comes to secondary and higher education, as well as career and employment advice, while advice from friends and family plays a decreasing role.

Parents and carers in **West Cumbria** appear to favour a more balanced approach and are more likely to draw on additional sources, compared to those in **Furness** and **Carlisle and Eden**.



Have parents and carers experienced any barriers when trying to support their children?

Knowledge

I don't feel I have enough knowledge to support my son

Not knowing enough about certain topics, such as the new GCSE's and NVQ's



Lack of opportunities due to geographical remoteness

Careers awareness

I feel that children should not assume being employed by Sellafield is the only option available



Confidence



My child lacks confidence but would do well volunteering but can only be accepted at age 14. She is 13

I feel support is lacking for those kids who stay in sixth form but not sure if university right for them/don't know what they want to do

Transition support

Little help available when preparing for entry to grammar school



Barriers to conversation

On average, 91% of parents and carers across Cumbria have had a conversation with their child/children about Higher Education and future opportunities.

However, even parents and carers that are confident in having these discussions with their child/children experience barriers.

Some of the biggest barriers to conversations or further discussions in households include a worry from parents and carers that they do not possess the required knowledge needed to adequately advise their child/children.

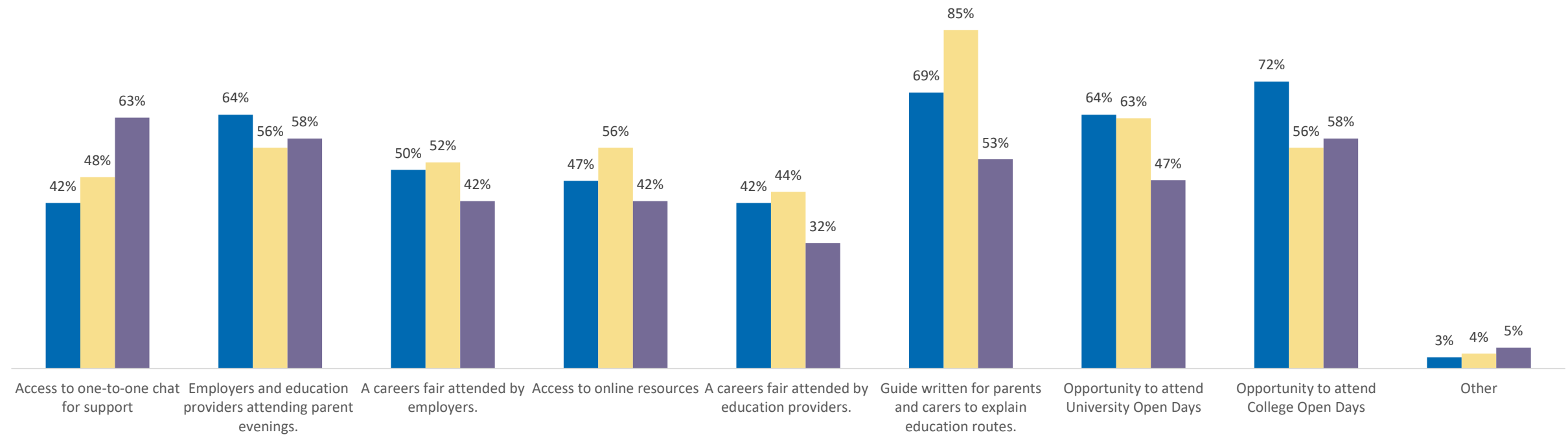
Parents and carers also have concerns around their child/children lacking confidence and feel this could be improved with additional opportunities for all ages.

There is also a desire to improve general parent and carer awareness around careers, pathways and the transition between school, college and careers or apprenticeships and Higher Education.

Which do you think could help you better support your child/children?

Phase One indicated that parents and carers across Cumbria favoured a guide to explain career and education routes and this theme has continued. However, in Phase One, parents and carers in **Carlisle & Eden** were the least keen (54%) but appear to have an increased interest in this proposition (69%) in Phase Two.

Once again, a tailored approach dependent on each area could be the most beneficial approach to parents and carers across Cumbria. For example, access to one-to-one support appears to more popular in **West Cumbria** (63%) than in **Carlisle and Eden** (42%) and **Furness** (48%). In contrast, parents and carers in **Carlisle and Eden** are more likely to prefer the opportunity to attend college (72%) and university (64%) open days. Parents and carers in Furness have a slightly more balanced approach with a guide (85%), online resources (56%) and university open days (63%) the most popular options.



■ Carlisle & Eden ■ Furness ■ West Cumbria

Covid-19 Impact

While not an initial or principle aim of this study, the impact of Covid-19 can not and should not be underestimated. The pandemic has inevitably had wide-stretching effects on parents and carers and the young people of Cumbria. Mental health of young people appears to be the primary concern of parents and carers in this region. Parents and carers are worried about the long-term effects of any anxiety and stress the pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures may have had, as well as any perceived or real impact on educational attainment, experience or opportunity.



Mental health + Covid-19 impact

Covid [is a] huge barrier. And having a special needs sibling. It has been horrific

Mental health in teens is a massive problem and hasn't helped the fact it's becoming harder to help my child with the anxiety for the future

As a low income family, things like uniform and revision material have been hard. Lockdown especially hard as can only provide the basic access to online learning



We have struggled hugely through the current home-schooling situation and my child has real concerns about her results next year as they have missed so much

When my child was having issues with anxiety it was a complete nightmare to liaise with the school

Helping children recover emotionally from Covid...should be the priority.

Unable to fulfil work experience due to Covid which I think us a great loss



What happens about his GCSE due to Covid-19

What are other studies telling us?

Young Minds carried out a survey of 2,036 young people with a history of mental health needs in June-July 2020, a period in which the Government announced measures to ease restrictions, including the target for schools to reopen to all students in the Autumn term.

80% of respondents agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse.

87% of respondents agreed that they had felt lonely or isolated during the lockdown period,

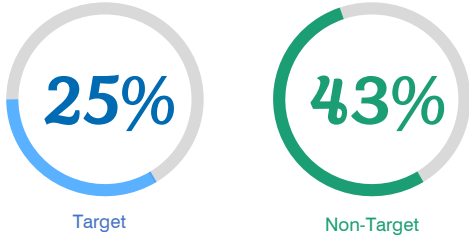
40% said that they had not looked for support but were struggling with their mental health.

Summaries

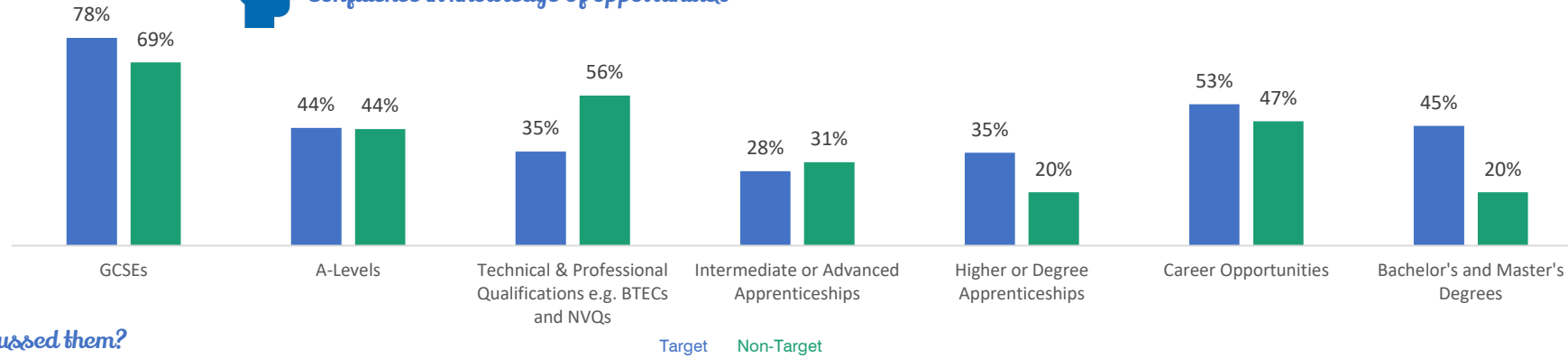


Target vs. non-target parent and carer overview

Attended HE

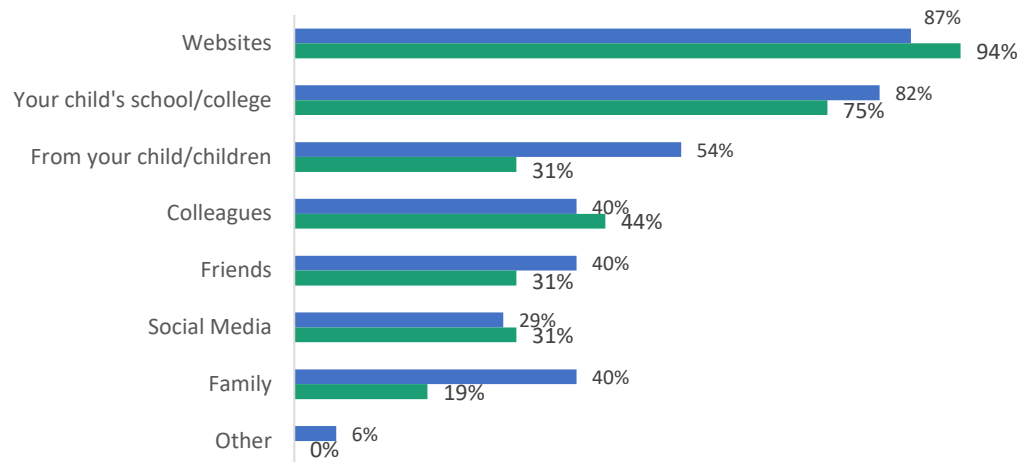
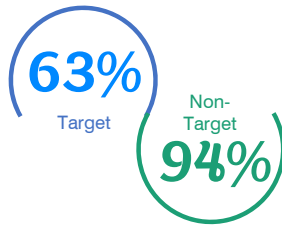
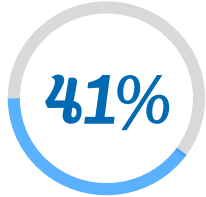


Confidence in knowledge of opportunities

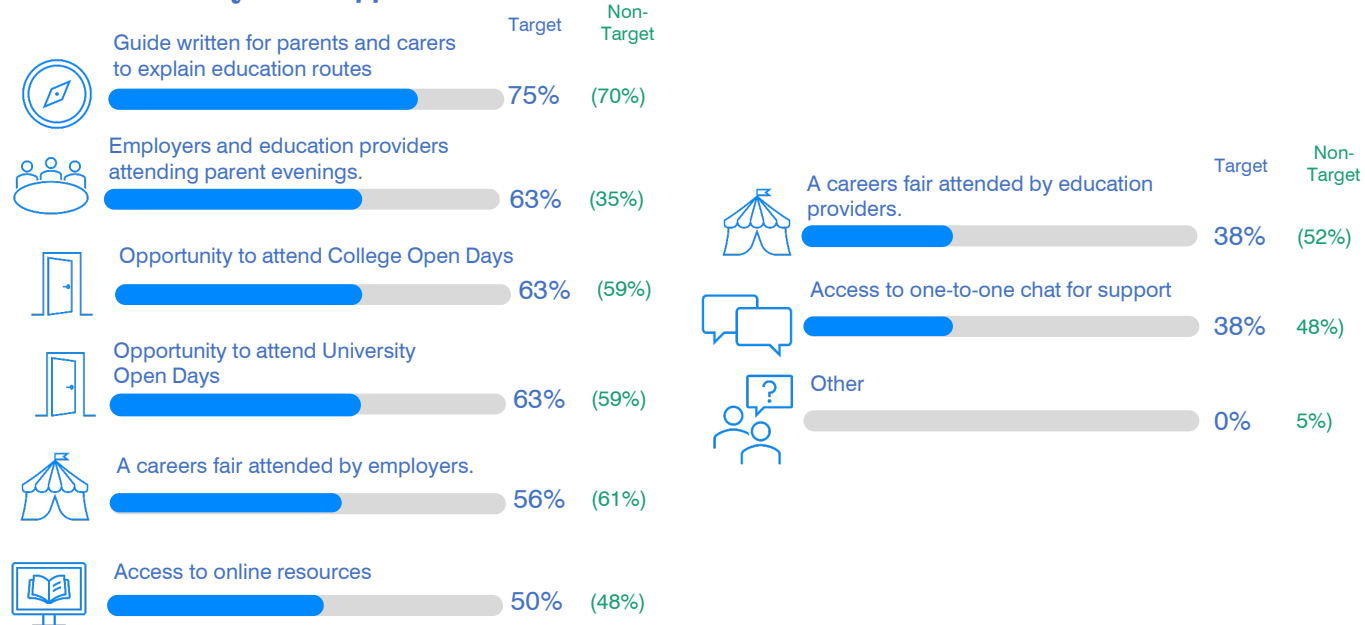


Confidence in discussing opportunities with Target children

... and have you discussed them?



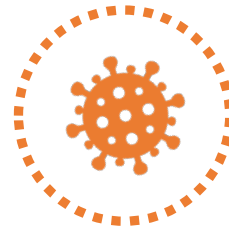
Preferred support





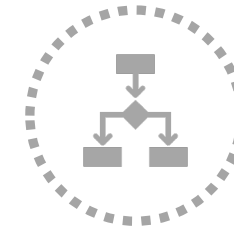
Parent/carer journey is key

Parents and carer educational background heavily dictates their level of confidence in wanting to discuss these paths with their children. For example, parents and carers who attended HE themselves are more likely to feel confident in doing so compared to those who did not. Those who did not attend HE however are confident in discussing in career opportunities.



Covid-19 and mental health are factors

In an unprecedented year, parents and carers are increasingly concerned for their children's mental health as well as the short and long-term effects of not having access to traditional educational environments in 2020.



Understanding options

Since Phase One, parents and carers appear to have developed more of an appetite for understanding the benefits of how academic choices can effect or shape further education and careers.



Tailored approach

There is no such thing as 'one size fits all' when it comes to understanding the parent and carer voice. Tailored approaches across each area in Cumbria should be considered.



Target learner differences

Just 25% of parents and carers in target wards attended HE, and, as a result are more likely to prefer that employers and education providers attend open/parent evenings (63% vs. 35%).



Online resources

Parents and carers across Cumbria appear to be increasingly turning to online and digital resources in addition to school/college – could this be an effect of Covid-19 and lockdown and has it provided an insight into future learning?

Recommendations

1. Educational background

Parent and carer educational background matters. Just 11% of parents and carers in Carlisle and Eden went to university, compared to 41% and 43% for Furness and West Cumbria respectively. This limited experience of HE has a wider impact on family discussions and a desire to attend open days, indicating that a bespoke approach could suit this group.

2. Mental health

Parents and carers are understandably concerned about the short-term and long-term impact on their children's mental health as well as the educational impact. Worries surrounding access to revision material and resources could provide opportunities to support these groups with targeted interventions.

3. Pathways

There is an increased desire to understand how subject choice and further education decisions impact career paths. This is an area that could continue to be targeted via preferred interventions, including guides, parent evenings with education providers and employers and college and university open days.

4. Online resources

Perhaps due to the Covid-19 lockdown across the UK, parents and carers are turning to online resources for advice. Digital workshops and online solutions could further support areas such as revision, choices and decision making.

5. Tailored approaches

Parents and carers in target wards could also be considered for tailored approaches. Employers and education providers attending parent evenings is a particularly favoured option in target wards compared to non-target wards. Parents and carers in target wards appear to value the opportunity for additional one-to-one support over more open events such as career fairs.

