

City of London Schools’ Conference 2019-20: Evaluation Report (Brief)

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1. Introduction:

On Monday 4th November 2019 the annual City of London Schools Conference for London schools was held. A total of 129 people attended, consisting of school leadership, teachers and governors. This year’s conference was structured around the theme of “Wellbeing” and this was addressed through three sub-themes: Teacher Wellbeing, Pupil Wellbeing, and Working with Parents.

Delegates were invited to self-select from a range of available interactive workshops around different wellbeing topics. The expert workshop hosts shared their work and learning to date and practical suggestions and challenges.

2. Overall results

The conference was very well received by the attendees. Most attendees agreed that the workshops were delivered effectively and they felt that they would be able to apply the lessons learnt in their own education practice (91% of delegates agreed with this). All speakers’ workshops were highly rated with an average rating overall of 92% approval. The highest rated workshop host overall was Kathy Weston’s second workshop on ‘*How to engage with parents to benefit pupils*’, followed closely by Shelly Masters’ session on ‘*Pupil wellbeing: Resilience strategies for your students*’ and Kathy Weston’s first workshop on ‘*Building pupil and staff resilience*’. In terms of some general data, 94% of respondents felt that the duration of the event was “about right”. The overall event experience was highly rated, in particular for the event staff (100% of respondents rated the event staff as being excellent and very good), food and beverages (90% excellent and very good), and registration procedures (80% excellent and very good). As a reflection of the general make-up of the schools, the attendees were mainly from secondary schools (47%) and primary schools (24.5%).

3. General comments that emerged from participants included:

The following quotes are indicative of many similar positive comments made about the value of the conference:

“Such a great conference, a great chance to network and take away instructive ideas and resources.”

“Thank you so much - a really refreshing feel to this afternoon - human and reflective.”

“An enjoyable and useful afternoon.”

“Most beneficial.”

“Thanks for organising- great event.”

“Great venue. Thanks for all the hard work for organising and inviting us.”

“It was a really interesting afternoon, with great speakers. Beautifully organised. I wasn't wild about the laughter yoga, but I think I was in the minority! A good use of my time- I learned a lot.”

The following suggestions were also made:

“Sessions could be more structured.”

“More time for networking would be good.”

4. Suggestions for next conference

Conference participants were asked to suggest any improvements, and they highlighted the following:

- More discussion with other members of staff about what they do in their schools
- More effective strategies that can be implemented to support the positive information shared
- A warmer venue would be better
- More time should be allocated for lunch
- The format was good but perhaps the workshops were a little too short for in-depth discussion
- The laughter session could have been a lot shorter to allow for more time for the workshops
- Less noise in room would be appreciated as it was sometimes hard to hear in sessions due to other sessions running nearby
- More focus on the application of practical ideas
- There could be an area to showcase good practice from local schools
- The conference could be structured as a full day
- It would be good to be able to speak to the workshop speakers and attendees after the event, perhaps as a post-event forum
- The attendee contact list could be shared for networking and the sharing of practices¹

5. What was the most valuable part of the conference?

The following quotes highlight the most valuable part of the conference:

“Learning about the importance of wellbeing and learning new skills.”

“Listening to Mike Sheridan's Ofsted view on wellbeing and Sara Valdebenito's research project on exclusion.”

“Carol Shepherd's BAME leadership session was most useful and thought provoking, thinking about diversity in leadership.”

“Being part of a movement for change.”

“Sharing ideas and having discussions with like-minded professionals.”

“Kathy Weston's session was brilliant.”

¹ Note: The details of presenters and copies of their presentation have now been shared.

“The BrainCanDo neuroscience workshop.”

“Practical tips, strategies and new resources to use in schools.”

“Hearing from experts in their field.”

“Networking and finding out about agencies, charities and people to utilise information.”

“The opportunity to stop, think and reflect on wellbeing in a very different setting and context.”

6. What topic areas could be covered in future conferences?

Inclusion:

- Behaviour, including measuring the effectiveness of rewards
- Mental health and SEN in ethnic minorities
- Inclusion of SEN pupils in meaningful ways
- Community engagement: How to reach out to involve the wider community in schools and support parents

Collaboration:

- Team building within schools
- Collaboration with the CoL Family of Schools: Shared practices and building secondary and primary teams with the Family
- Collaborative models of improvement

Wellbeing:

- Self-image and social media use in a more digital world
- Work/life balance for staff
- Wellbeing: examples of what is working in schools
- Mindfulness and yoga
- Loving expertise: building respect for experts and nurturing workshops

Curriculum:

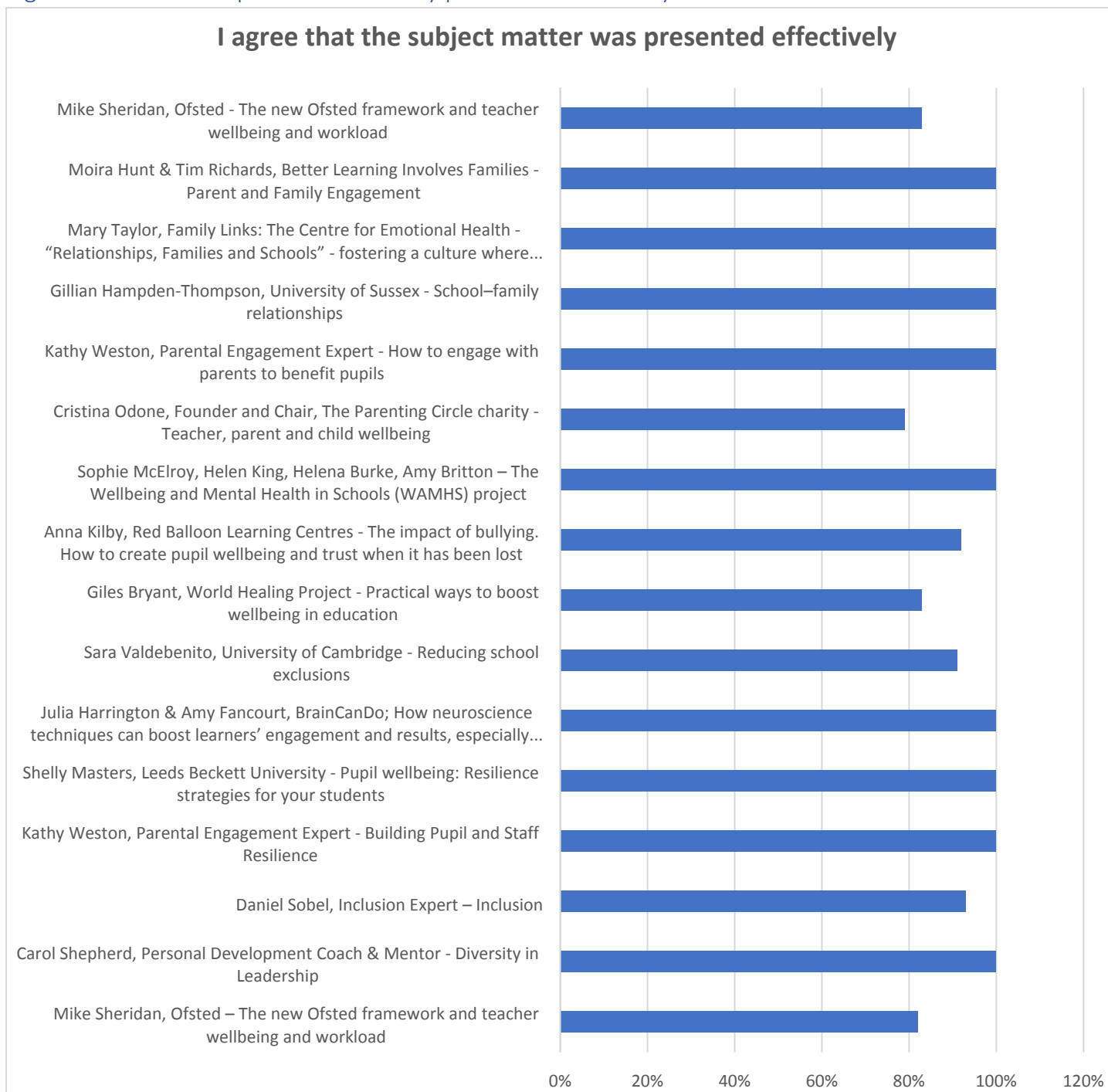
- Creative Arts: Bringing creativity within the curriculum
- Oracy throughout the curriculum
- Curriculum design: intent, implementation, impact
- Science, computing and engineering
- Delivering a balanced curriculum
- Stretch/enhancement for A Level students: Academic development outside of the curriculum

School improvement:

- Effective use of data and assessment under the new Ofsted framework
- Thinking: how we learn to think and reflect
- Science-based studies
- Models of leadership
- Raising the status of EYFS
- Support staff: The role and support that is needed

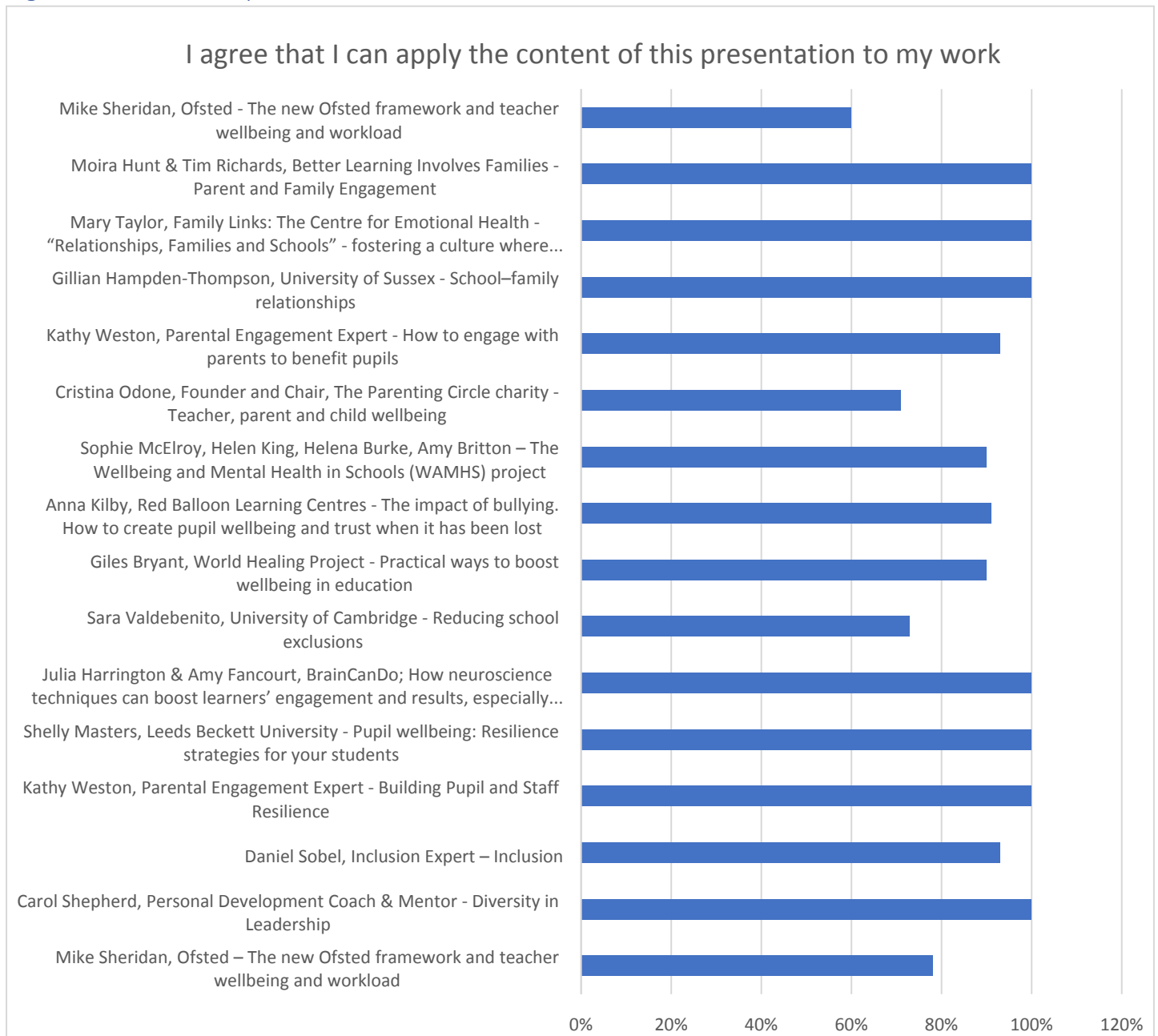
7. Appendix: Qualitative Evaluation Data

Figure 1 The workshops were effectively presented effectively



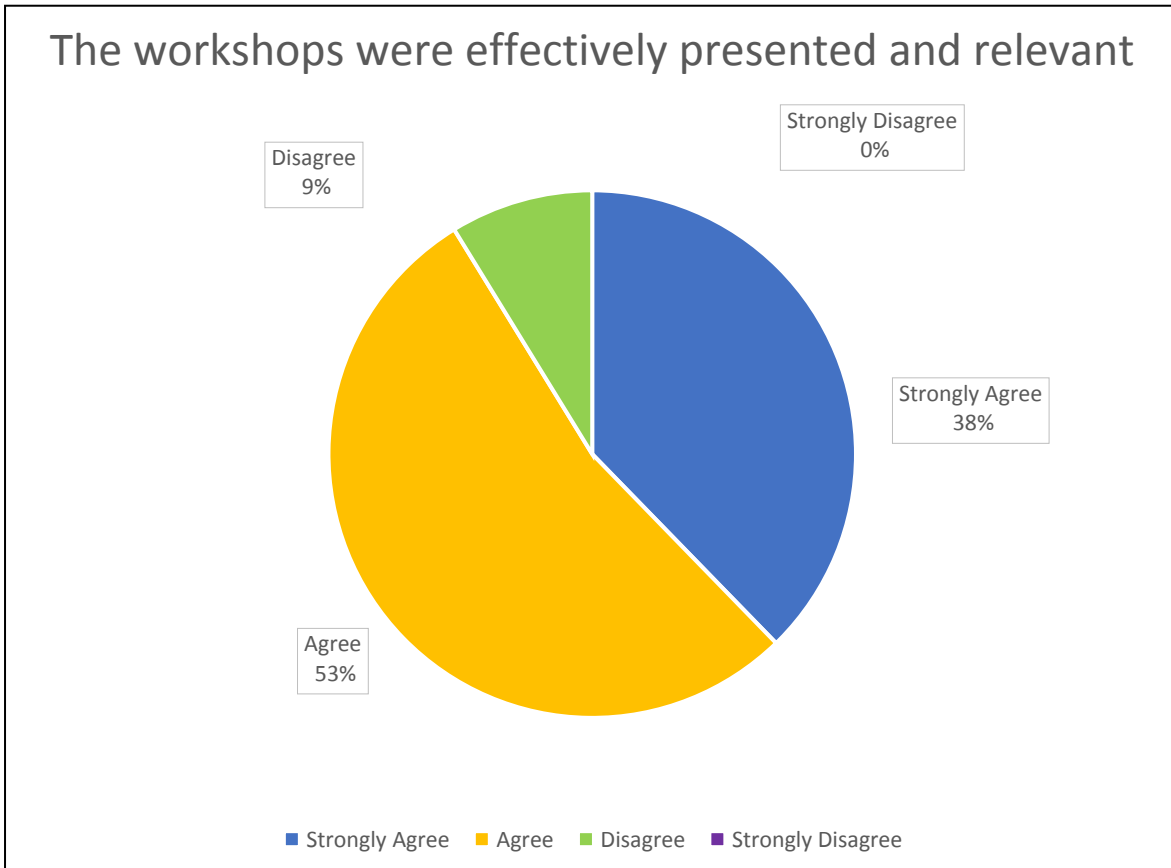
Attendees indicated that all of the workshops were well presented, with all presentations scoring about 70% approval. Nine out of the 16 workshops were rated 100% for their subject matter presentation.

Figure 2 The workshops were relevant



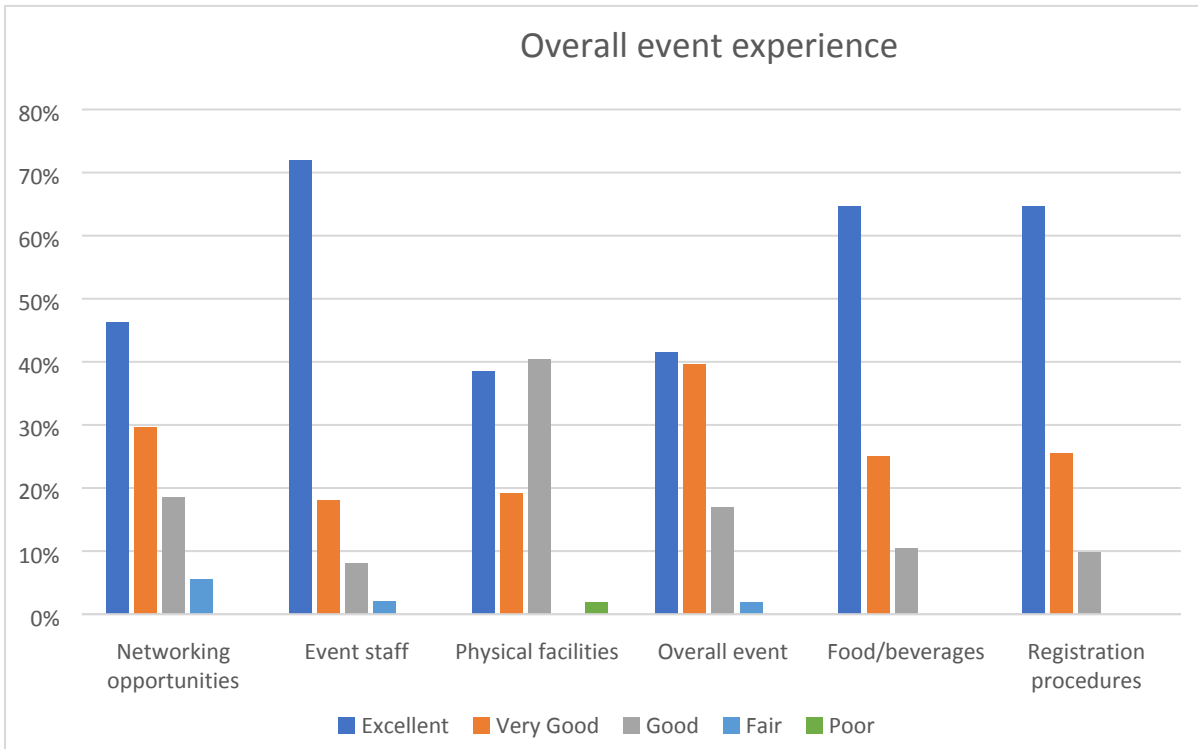
All the delegates agreed that seven out of the 16 workshops delivered insights which were practically applicable to their workplaces. Only Mike Sheridan's second Ofsted workshop (60%) failed to score a high approval rating of 70% or more for delivering practical content.

Figure 3 The workshops were effectively presented and relevant overall summary



The effective presentation of content and practicality of content scores for each workshop were combined to give an overall rating for the workshops. Please note that 91% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops were effectively presented and relevant and only 9% of respondents disagreed with this. No respondents strongly disagreed.

Figure 3 Overall Event Experience



The overall event experience was highly rated, in particular for the event staff (72% rated excellent and 18% rated very good), food and beverages (65% rated excellent and 25% rated very good), and registration procedures (65% rated excellent and 25% very good).

Figure 4 Length of the Event

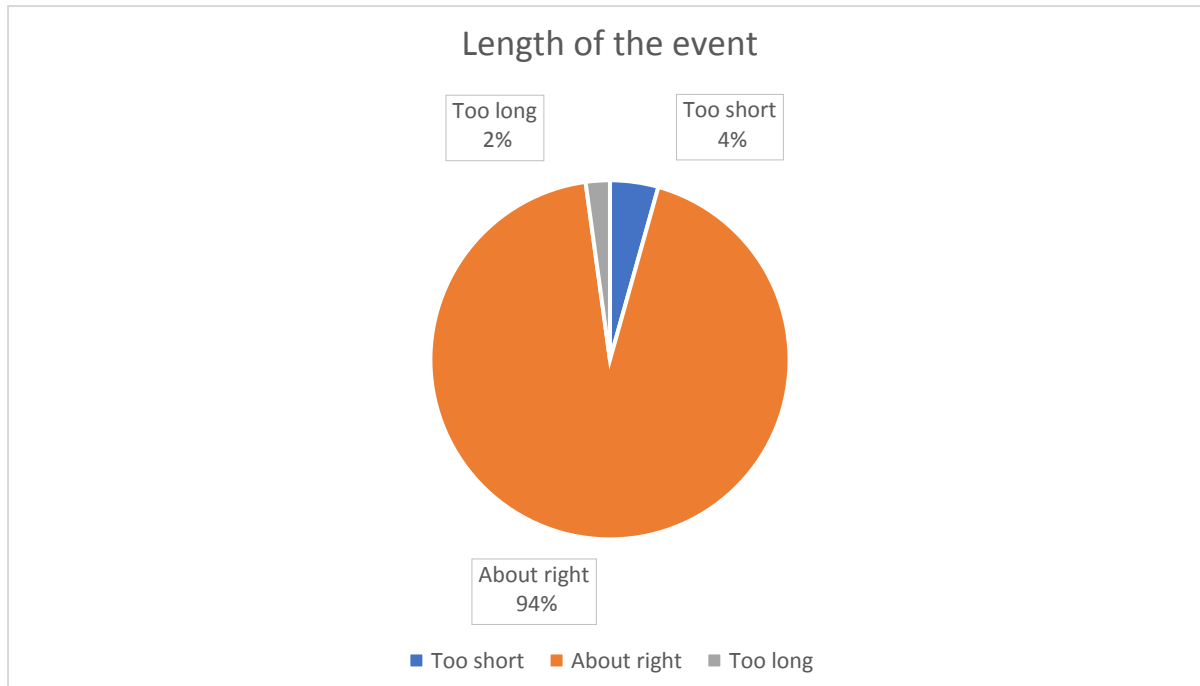
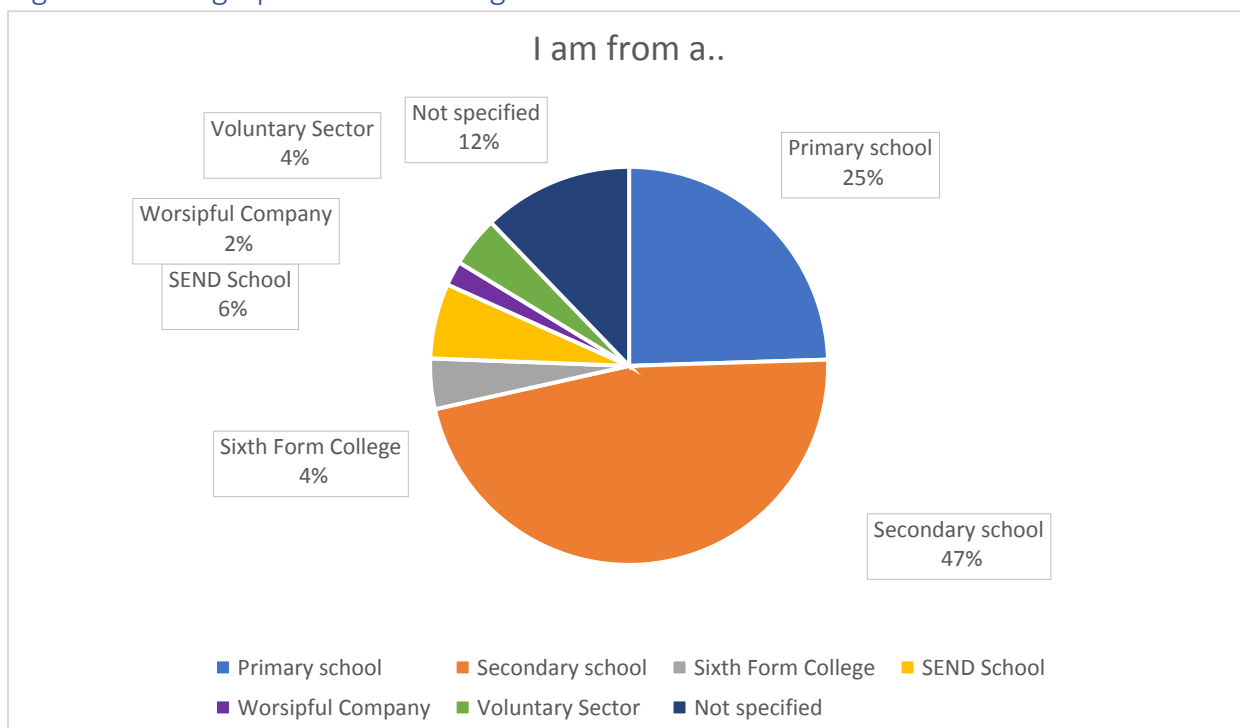


Figure 5 Demographics of the Delegates



There were almost twice as many attendees from Secondary Schools (47%) as there were attendees from Primary Schools (25%). The majority of attendees who were not from mainstream education settings were from SEND schools (6%).