



Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) child and family

Annual report to the Department for Education

April 2023 . March 2024

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Section 4. Core themes in the past year

4

The report also:

discusses work developed during the period covered by this report to improve support to ASYE co-ordinators who are new to role (section 2).

explores the learning from a broad range of sources (section 3) including:

Section 2. Supporting ASYE co-ordinators

The role of the co-ordinator in an

Section 3. Learning from different sources

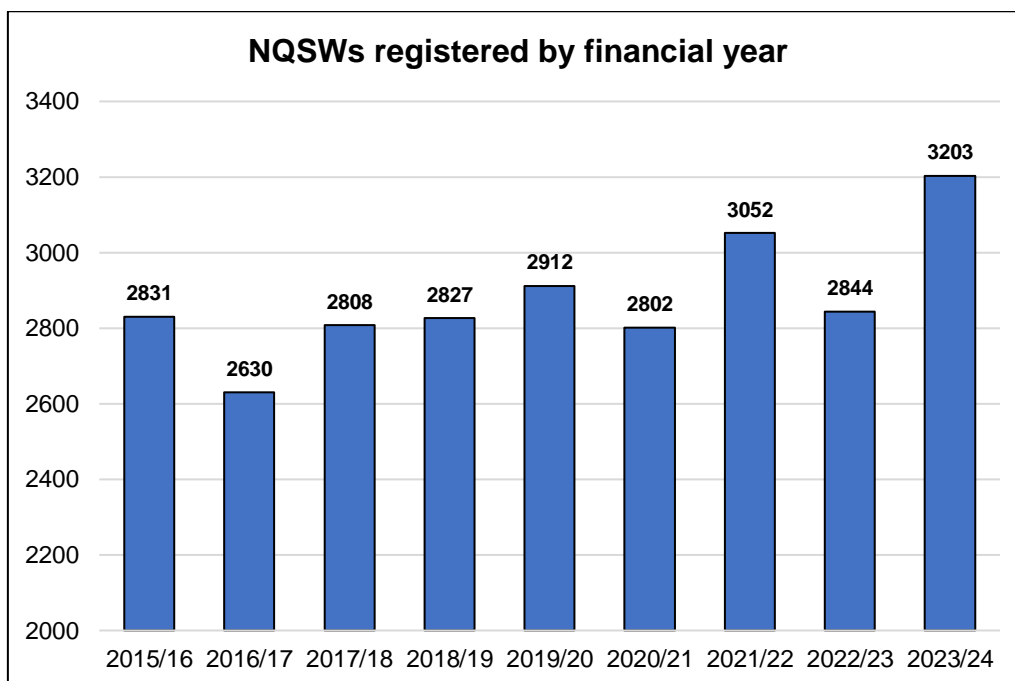
3.1 The child and family ASYE funding and registration platform

This section contains a summary of the data collected on the Skills for Care portal in respect of employer applications for grant funding. It shows that in the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024* a total of 191 different employer organisations registered 3203 newly qualified social workers onto the ASYE programme.

(*data correct as of 10 April 2024)

NQSW registrations, by year

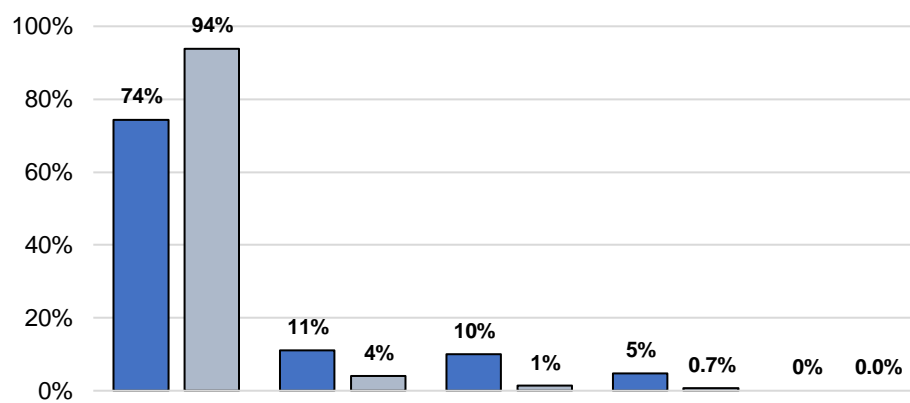
The total number of ASYE registrations for 2023-24 was 3203.



2023-24 registrations, by employer type

Registrations were made by a total of 191 employers.

	Number of employers	Number of NQSWs registered
Local authority	142	3005
Private, voluntary and independent (PVI)	21	131
Fostering	19	43
NHS	9	24
School	0	0
Total	191	3203



2023-24 registrations, by area

44%

3.2 Protected characteristics

Using the ASYE registration portal, Skills for Care has investigated the impact of protected characteristics of NQSWs (gender, age, ethnicity, and nationality) and other factors (region and deferral rate) on the ASYE outcome (successfully/unsuccessfully completed).

Employers claiming ASYE funding are required to record information on NQSWs, such as demographics, outcomes of six- and twelve-month placements on the Skills for Care portal.

Data for the three recent cohorts of child and family social workers is summarised below (see Table 1).

Data on the portal can change as records can be updated/filed later. The most recent cohort from 2022-23 was not included in the analysis as the data was not yet fully available as still in progress at the time of the analysis (summer 2023).

Cohort

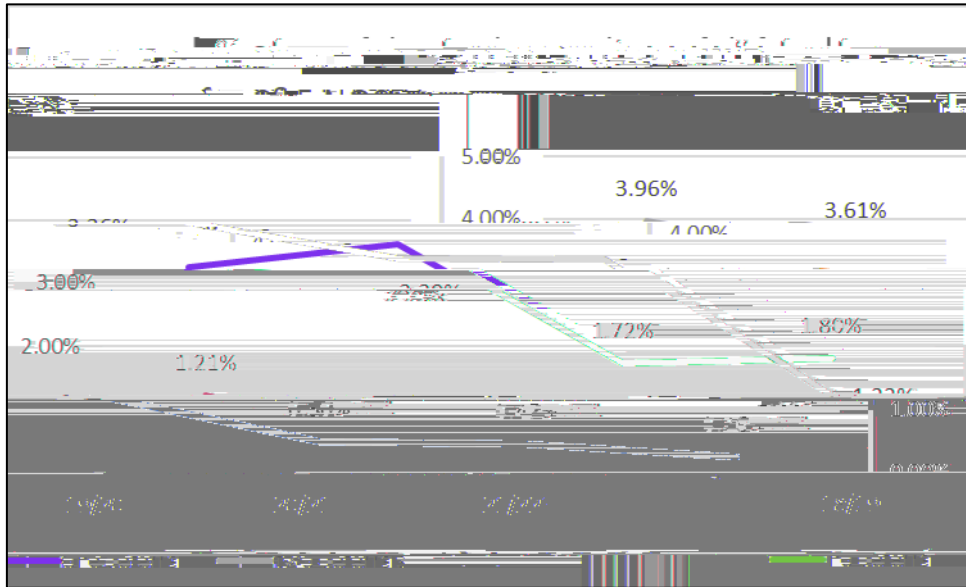
2019-20

Figure 1: Rates are decreasing for child and family NQSWs but gap between NQSWs from a minoritised community and their white counterparts remains stable.

The trend data for gender differences is showing positive signs. Figure 2 shows that the gap in rates of success between male and female NQSWs has been decreasing over a 4 year period.

Figure 2: The gap in unsuccessful completion rates between male and female

Figure 3: Impact of deferrals on unsuccessful completion rates is decreasing.



As we conduct the same analysis for adult NQSWs, we were able to look at trend data comparing ASYE programmes in both service areas. Figure 4 shows that rates of unsuccessful completion among child and family NQSWs have been consistently lower than among Adult NQSWs in the last three years of this reporting period.

Figure 4: Gap in unsuccessful completion rates between different services has been increasing.



Our analysis showed that gender, ethnicity, and deferral rates have the greatest impact on whether NQSWs successfully complete their ASYE. This could also explain the difference in failure rates between child and family and adult NQSWs. Further analysis revealed that deferral rates are comparable, but the child and family

Key messages

3.3.2 Group for Ethnic Minority Social Workers (GEMS) NQSW forum

This group is open to and exclusively attended by NQSWs who self-subscribe as

say about what the possibilities are for them, how they need to prepare themselves to deal with the challenges of racism and discrimination from both service users, colleagues and managers. This generated a lot of discussion and the group were given the opportunity to share their own experiences in small groups. Some of the feedback to this input included participants sharing their experience of the concept of style of speech, appearance, behaviour and expression of self in ways that would optimise the comfort of others in exchange for what they hoped would be fairer treatment. Some of the discussion acknowledged and recognised that there was often a negative impact on self. So the opportunity to hear from others supported them in being able to conceptualise ways forward for themselves.

Following their discussion and sharing of experiences in small groups, a few participants asked what could be done to raise this with qualifying programmes because of the negative impact it had had on them, particularly starting the ASYE programme having experienced this kind of trauma was felt to be very challenging.

The feedback received confirmed the need for an ongoing GEMS forum in which participants can affirm their own experiences, understand they are not alone and feedback to Skills for Care on issues which they feel need to be addressed to support a positive ASYE experience. It is also noted that we have been contacted by NQSWs who have said these sessions are needed post ASYE and/or they have raised the question of whether they can continue to attend for support after their ASYE programme has concluded. This indicates that there is still a gap between reality and the need for these NQSWs and social workers to be offered specific support that is geared to their needs in an environment in which they feel safe enough to express and explore their need for support which enables them to grow and develop as qualified social workers. Feedback from the March session included the following:

- to all those who shared their stories. It is interesting to hear about all the
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this in small groups and reflect on how they can integrate this into their practice. Attendance has increased providing evidence that the opportunity is well received. One recent forum focused on trauma -based supervision. An attendee stated that it was:

Workshops around developing knowledge about working with neurodivergent NQSWs have been provided and well received at both the NQSW and assessor forums.

3.4 In-depth employer quality assurance review meetings

As in previous years quality assurance (QA) meetings enable robust qualitative data to be collected directly from ASYE programmes, from the NQSWs supported by those programmes, and from the assessors/supervisors of the NQSWs. During 2023-24 we have had the opportunity to meet with the organisations listed in appendix 2. We have continued to experience some difficulty in engaging very small organisations and those with only 1 NQS

This approach provides a significant amount of information which contributes to the overall understanding of the state of the ASYE across England. The core themes

reference where it is believed that it supports a practice capability of the PCF and PQS (KSS).

In the progressive development section of a record of support and progressive assessment (RSPA), encouraging assessors to record practice examples to practice capability they have observed, or a colleague has reported observing.

Key messages

The panel is representative of the whole profession approach of the ASYE programme.

The panel is supporting the development of consistency across ASYE programmes through moderation. Annotated pieces of evidence and endorsement of good practice is currently under review.

3.6 360-degree organisational evaluation tool

The data submitted via the 360-degree tool to date indicates that the ASYE is functioning well for participants across most statement measures.

The evaluation criteria statements scoring the highest nationally were:

Every NQSW has a personal development plan (PDP) (Score = 4.4)

Background

A 360-degree tool has been provided to help employers gather feedback that will help them to review and quality assure their ASYE programmes. The tool enables employers to gain a balanced view of their progress because feedback is gathered from multiple stakeholders.

33 statements organised under four overarching themes:

- 1) The NQSW experience is central to the ASYE
- 2) The ASYE programme is delivered in accordance with the AYSE framework and employer standards
- 3) The ASYE programme ensures that PQS (previously KSS) and the PCF underpin NQSW professional practice
- 4) The ASYE programme is integrated within the wider organisational system.

Respondents rate how they feel about each statement using a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

Inviting their NQSWs, line managers and others to complete it. Feedback is provided anonymously.

Once complete, each employer receives a personalised report which shows their results as an average for their organisation as well as broken down by type of respondent. As more data is inputted into the tool Skills for Care will be able to provide employers with comparative results for their region or teaching partnership.

Evaluation criteria theme 1: The NQSW experience is central to the ASYE

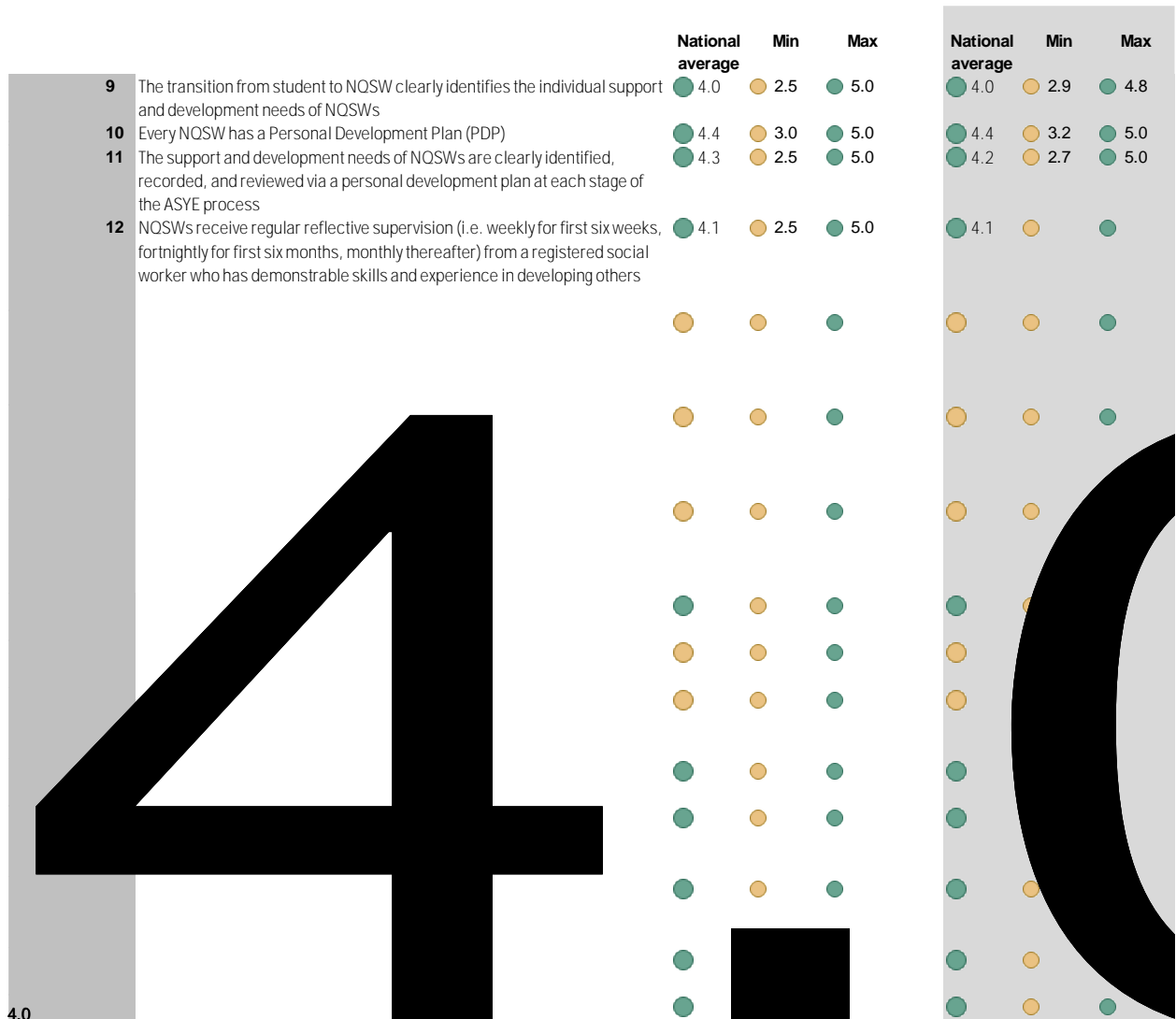
The results for the statements in this section were reasonably high (see below). Seven out of the eight statements scored an average, nationally, of at least 3.6 out of 5 (the 360-degree evaluation tool, which is a 5-point scale, with 3.5 being the midpoint). The results for the statements in this section were reasonably high (see below). Seven out of the eight statements scored an average, nationally, of at least 3.6 out of 5 (the 360-degree evaluation tool, which is a 5-point scale, with 3.5 being the midpoint). The results for the statements in this section were reasonably high (see below). Seven out of the eight statements scored an average, nationally, of at least 3.6 out of 5 (the 360-degree evaluation tool, which is a 5-point scale, with 3.5 being the midpoint).

		National average	Min	Max	National average	Min	Max
1	Feedback is proactively sought by employers through mechanisms such as the 360-degree evaluation tool to ensure NQSWs are active participants rather than passive recipients in their ASYE	3.6	2.0	4.8	3.5	2.0	4.3
2	NQSWs - along with other stakeholders (i.e. ASYE supervisors/assessors, and people who need care and support and their carers, this includes children and young people) are able to make a meaningful contribution to ASYE quality assurance and continuous imp	3.6	2.5	5.0	3.6	2.3	4.6
3	NQSW wellbeing is prioritised from the beginning of the ASYE and NQSWs are made aware of the support structures available to them within the organisation from the outset of their ASYE and how to access this support, such as buddying and peer support netwo	3.9	2.4	5.0	3.9	2.4	4.7
4	Equality, diversity and inclusion is central to the ASYE programme, ensuring that all NQSWs are offered an ASYE experience which is tailored to their individual needs, including cultural and learning needs	3.8	3.0	5.0	3.9	3.0	5.0
5							

Evaluation criteria theme 2: The ASYE programme is delivered in accordance with the AYSE framework and employer standards

The results for the statements in this section were reasonably high (see below). Ten of the fifteen statements scored an average, nationally, of at least 4 out of 5

(National average range: 3.7 - 3.9) and were identical to those from last year.

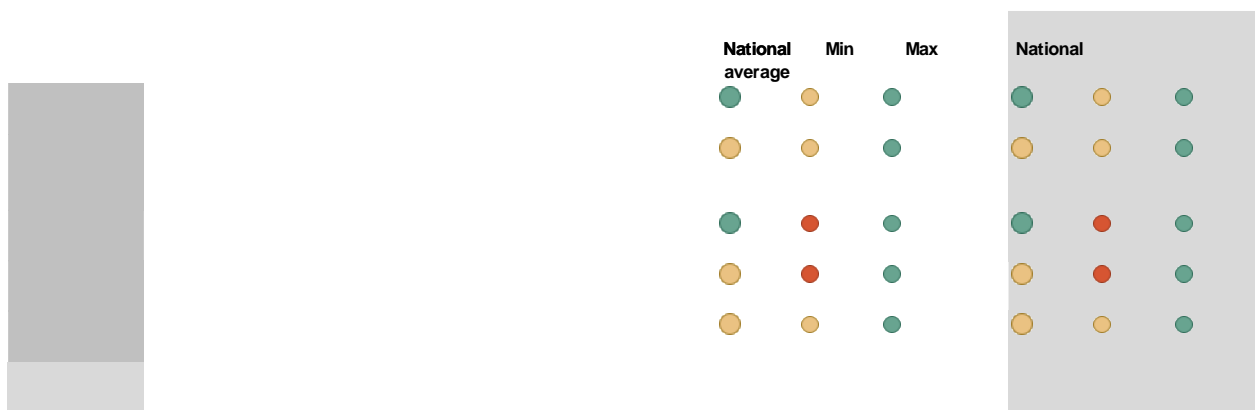


Evaluation criteria theme 3: The ASYE programme ensures that PQS (previously KSS) and the PCF underpin NQSW professional practice

The results for the statements in this section were reasonably high (see below). One statement scored, on average, 4.2 (50%), 100% of statements scoring, on average, nationally, 3.7 - 3.9 (50%). Results are almost identical to those from last year.

Evaluation criteria theme 4: The ASYE programme is integrated within the wider organisational system

The results for the statements in this section were reasonably high (see below). Two statements scored, on average, 4.0 - 4.1 (50%), 100% of statements scoring, on average, nationally, 3.7 - 3.9 (50%). Results are identical to those from last year.



3.7 Action learning sets for supervisors, co-ordinator

Survey methodology

The survey links were emailed to ASYE leads, assessors and NQSWs registered on the ASYE portal on 7 February 2024. Reminder emails were issued on 21 February and 6 March and the surveys were closed on 15 March 2024. The table below shows the number of survey links successfully delivered, the number of responses received and the response rates.

	Survey link successfully delivered to	Responses received ²	Additional responses received ³	Response rate
ASYE leads	242	48	26	31%
ASYE assessors	1159	97	19	10%
NQSWs	2069	286	10	14%

A full analysis of the survey data collected is still being undertaken at the time of writing this report. However, some highlights from the three surveys are included in the sub-sections below.

Please note: We have yet to apply tests of statistical significance on this data which are required to ensure that observed differences are not caused by random chance. Therefore, when comparing the results across the three versions of the survey, it is important to remember that differences noted are not necessarily significant and should be treated with caution at this stage.

The ASYE leads survey was largely based on questions asked in previous surveys across child and family and adult services, including some newer questions that were added in 2022-23. The survey content was reviewed and pared back as far as possible in order to reduce the burden on respondents⁴.

The ASYE assessors and NQSW surveys were based on the ASYE leads surveys but were considerably shorter⁵.

ASYE leads survey

96% of ASYE leads in previous surveys. The first relates to understanding of the assessment arrangements for the ASYE. 96% of ASYE leads said that they understood the arrangements very or fairly well.

² People working in child and family services only

³ People working across both child and family and adult services

⁴ The estimated completion time was 10-15 minutes

⁵ The estimated completion time for the ASYE assessor and NQSW surveys was <10 minutes

The second relates to the perceived impact of the ASYE. Again, the results are overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of ASYE leads agreeing that the ASYE has had a positive impact on the practice confidence of NQSWs and 89% agreeing that it has a positive impact on outcomes for people who receive care and support, on performance management and on the recruitment of NQSWs. (see chart below).

In addition, the survey results showed that the majority of ASYE leads were confident in the capability of the ASYE supervisors and assessors within their organisation (see chart below).

The survey also includes a number of questions relating to equality, diversity and ethnic background, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following

- organisation is clear about policy and practice in relation to anti racism, the LGBTQ+

ASYE assessors

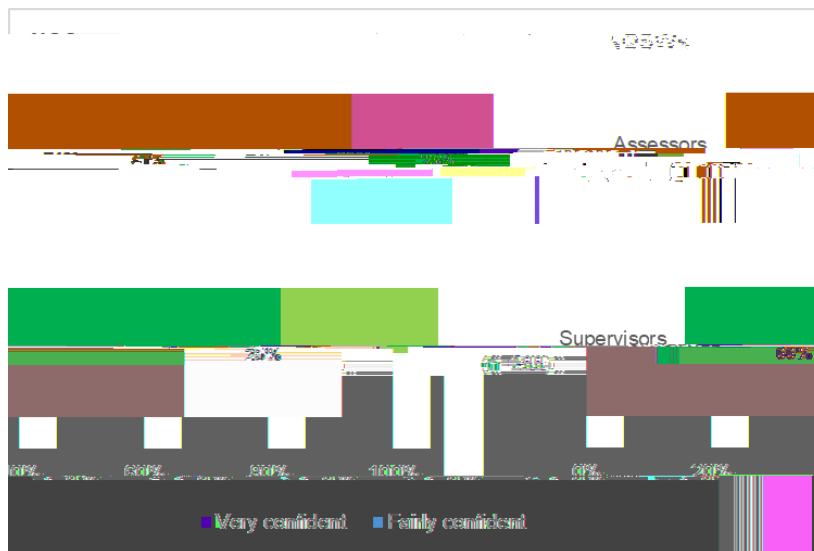
ASYE assessors were also asked about their understanding of the assessment arrangements for the ASYE. 100% said that they understood the arrangements very or fairly well.

In addition, the survey results showed that ASYE assessors were confident in their own capabilities in relation to ASYE supervision and assessment (see chart below).

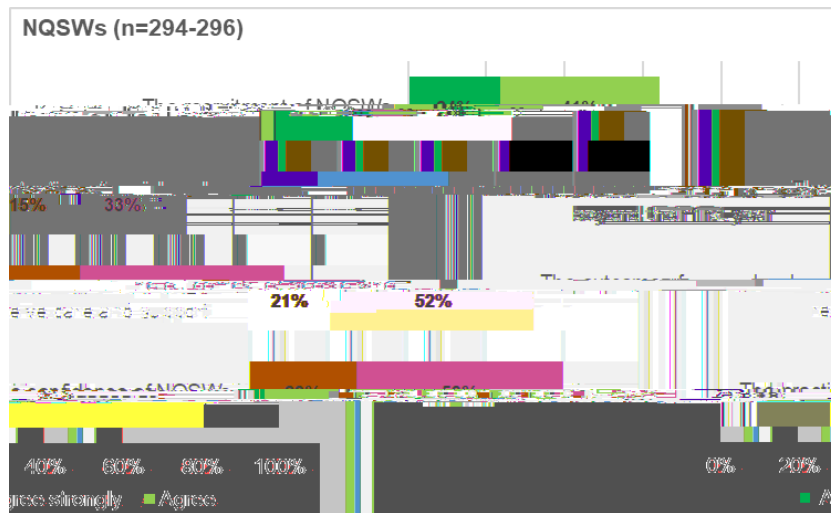


NQSWs

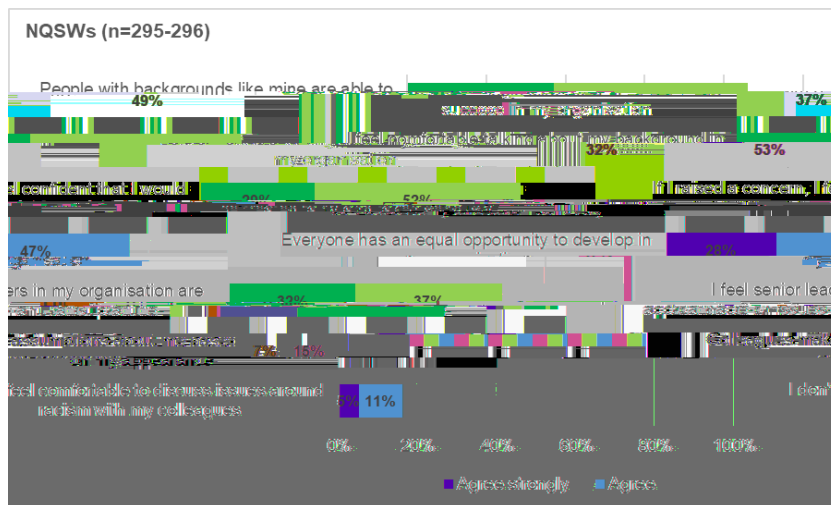
The survey results showed that NQSWs were confident in the capabilities of their ASYE supervisor and assessor (see chart below).

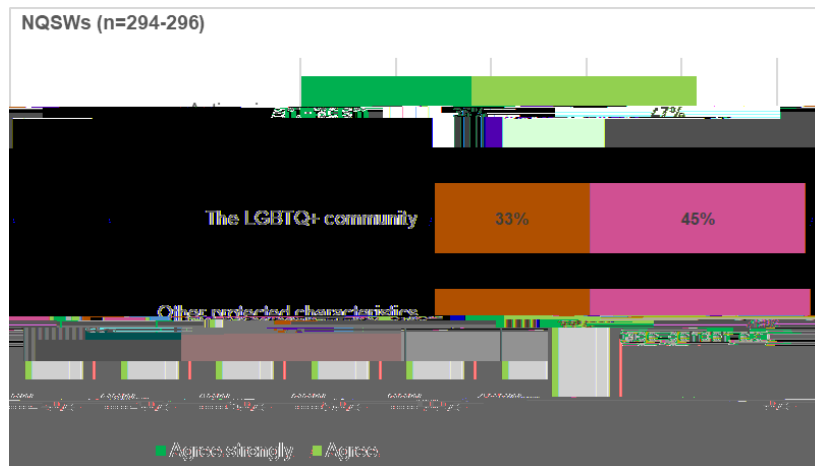


NQSWs were also asked their views on the perceived impact of the ASYE. They were less positive than the ASYE leads and ASYE assessors (see chart below). Further exploration of the data is required to unpick why this might be.



The equality, diversity and inclusion questions were also asked of NQSWs (see charts below). Their views in relation to the first question appear to be more closely aligned with the ASYE assessors than the ASYE leads, but this requires further, more detailed analysis to unpick why this might be. In respect of the second question, the views of all three groups are more closely aligned.





Key messages

ASYE leads responding to the survey agree unanimously that the ASYE has had a positive impact on the practice confidence of NQSWS.

The survey results showed that ASYE assessors were confident in their own capabilities in relation to ASYE supervision and assessment.

Section 4. Core themes in the past year

This section will discuss the core themes that have emerged over the past year, through QA visit discussions, debate and feedback through forums and drop-in sessions, action learning and national events.

As has been reflected in other parts of this report, employers remain strongly committed to providing a programme which supports and develops the newly qualified social workers joining their organisations. The ASYE continues to be a feature of a broader set of strategic activities designed to enhance the recruitment and retention of social workers. From our ASYE related discussions it is clear that recruitment and retention challenge remain despite the small improvements in some of the national workforce numbers reported recently. Indicative of this is that numbers of NQSWS continue to rise across the profession as a whole, with registrations for ASYE funding in child and family services exceeding 3,000 this year.

In this context we continue to hear of inconsistencies in the experience of NQSWS as they join the workforce and undertake their ASYE programme. There is a built in tension to the ASYE programme between the nationally agreed framework and standards, and the delivery of employer led programmes which will inevitably differ from one organisation to the next. However, NQSWS continue to be impacted not only in comparison to what another employer might offer that is different to their own,

but also by differences of application and interpretation within organisations. For example, an NQSW needing access to work equipment appears just as likely to have a totally different experience of the length of time taken to assess and provide for their situation within an organisation and not just be comparing with another organisation where they knew someone had been helped quickly. It is also the case that despite the commitment to anti-racist practice that we continue to hear of continued instances of micro-aggressions as well as

While the majority of organisations take the matter of support and supervision seriously, the impact of individual and organisational change is still a challenge within ASYE programmes.

Key messages

It is apparent that EEDI is at the forefront of the minds of many organisations and is being strongly promoted and monitored by employers.

Employers should work jointly with NQSWs as equals to produce this framework and place the voice of the NQSW at the centre.

NQSWs feel a loyalty to their team and are willing to take on a higher caseload, despite the general ASYE framework providing for protected development time and a reduction in workload.

Employers continue to report significant levels of self-disclosure and requests for access to work assessments in this area, and there are examples of good practice in supporting the employment of staff who are neurodivergent.

The majority of organisations take the matter of support and supervision seriously. However the impact of individual and organisational change is still a challenge within ASYE programmes.

Section 5. Appendices

Appendix 1

Following discussions about terminology, and in particular the GEMS acronym, participants were asked the following questions and their responses are as below:

Questions and response to GEMS poll, March 24:

1: As an NQSW have you been supported by your ASYE programme to attend the annual four GEMS sessions?

Responses: 85% were supported to attend and 15% not supported to attend

having been informed of the GEMS sessions but also by other work pressures being balanced alongside availability to attend. One NQSW commented in the feedback:

“The information was passed on very late. I am having massive problems on the ASYE programme, and the information was not passed on until it was too late. I am having massive problems on the ASYE programme, and the information was not passed on until it was too late. I am having massive problems on the ASYE programme, and the information was not passed on until it was too late.”

Bracknell Forest Council
Westminster CC
Five Rivers Child Care Services Ltd
Shropshire Council
Kirklees Council
Integrated Fostering Service Ltd
Olive Branch Fostering
Darlington Borough Council
Nottingham City Council
Cafcass
Hull Churches Housing Association Ltd
HALTON Borough Council
South Tyneside Council
Luton Borough Council
East Sussex County Council
Trafford Council (carried over from 2023)
Derbyshire (C&F)
Thurrock Council
Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust