

Kids Disabled children
say we can

Basingstoke Inclusive nursery Navigator model



Kids Basingstoke inclusive nursery

Our Kids Basingstoke nursery is a vibrant and inclusive environment for children aged between 3 months and 5 years old where we bring disabled and non-disabled children together, encouraging them to explore, interact, and grow alongside one another.

The nursery has space for 90 children with 22 of these spaces being funded by the local authority for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Many more children with SEND attend the nursery with at least 60% of the total number of children at our setting having some form of SEND.

Those children with SEND who are not within the 22 'SEN Hub' funded cohort do not receive SEND funding from the local authority in the same way.

In order to cover costs and support needed for these children to be able to fully participate and thrive at the nursery, staff must apply for SEN Inclusion Funding (SENIF)

and/or the Disability Access Fund (DAF) funding, as well as fundraising a significant amount of it themselves.



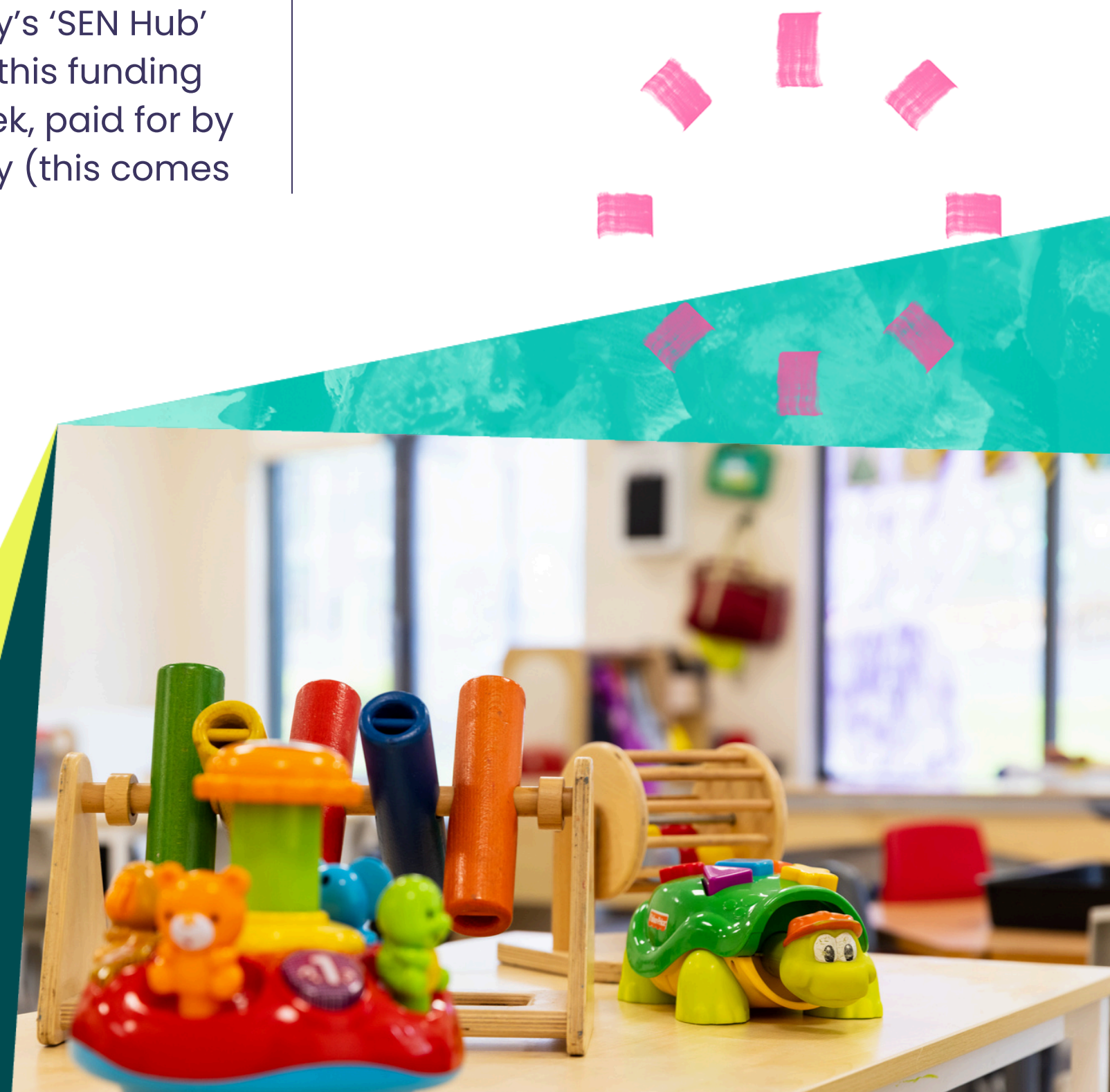
Obtaining the SENIF and DAF funding streams is frequently difficult, complex and lengthy.

Going through the time-consuming process of applying does not necessarily guarantee funding at the end of it, meaning that the nursery may end up in a financially unstable position.

The 22 children funded through the local authority's 'SEN Hub' currently receive this funding for 15 hours a week, paid for by the local authority (this comes

from the Family Hub budget and is counted as providing the 'SEN Hub').

With the national childcare entitlement rising to 30 hours for working parents in September 2025, it is uncertain where the extra funding to meet this obligation for children with SEND will come from.



SEND Navigator Model

At Basingstoke, the Early Years SEND Navigator is part of a continuum of support and expertise within a well-trained nursery team.

We currently have three members of staff fulfilling the Navigator role at the nursery – all three hold a senior or management post.

They identify and support children and families to navigate processes and systems and help them to achieve and strive for the correct and appropriate support and provision.

Working directly with the children and staff in the setting they provide coordinated and responsive support to families of children with disabilities or complex health needs.

As the three staff members who perform the Navigator role are existing members of staff, they know the children and families well and are well placed to decide whether a

child/family will need extra support from them in their capacity as 'navigator'.

Their existing knowledge and experience of the child and family are key to putting navigator support in place early.



The Kids Navigators are crucial to babies and toddlers with SEND receiving early interventions and support that enable them to gain the best start in life.

Kids Navigators provide holistic family support in a variety of ways but one of the most important things they do is identify potential signs of SEND early on and make referrals to specialist teams for assessment of SEN or disabilities.

They work alongside the parent/family to explain why they are making the referral and what they feel the child's needs or disability may entail.

Navigators are also key members of multi-agency 'district teams' in the local area. They attend district team meetings alongside the local authority education team, care and health professionals and work collaboratively to identify any potential needs or SEND as early as possible, and decide on the most appropriate placements for children.

They have built strong relationships with other local agencies and professionals, and are trusted and respected members of multi-agency local practitioner networks. The district meetings identify children as having potential SEND.

This information is fed into the SEN Hub and a number of those identified children are then allocated a place at the nursery as part of the commissioned SEN Hub local authority contract.



Navigators also:

- Work with the child providing regular support and care in the nursery environment as well as providing the family with information and advice on routines, behaviour, sleep, eating, emotional wellbeing, and play in the home, including sensory activities.
- Draw up detailed child-centred support plans including Behaviour Support Plans.
- Support and guide parents to apply for financial or health and care support such as Disability Living Allowance, diagnostic assessments, and medical appointments.
- Arrange appointments and therapies for children and families from other professionals such as Early Support and Inclusion Service, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language, health specialists, children's services, and hospital staff.
- They support parents to actively participate in meetings with professionals including Child protection/services, Team around the Family, and social worker appointments.
- Support parents to apply for and navigate the EHCP process and increasingly are attending EHCP annual review and Tribunal meetings with families.
- Use their expertise and knowledge of the child to aid decisions around which setting is most appropriate for each child to transition to when they leave the nursery. Work with mainstream and special schools to ensure a seamless transition to the next setting.
- Attend all hospital/health appointments for assessment with the family (most referrals for assessments are currently for autism, global developmental delay, and medical conditions.)



Kids Navigators – expertise, training and costs

Our Kids Navigators are all highly experienced Early Years practitioners at Level 3 or above with a minimum of over 10 years experience in early years.

Each Navigator holds a specialism – one holds a degree in speech and language, another has SEND Practice training, and the third has a focus on education in early years.

Their expertise and training is key to their success, as is their ability to work in a family-centred way, seeking advice and input from other professionals across health, community and education when appropriate.

They are also willing and able to take on training and guidance from medical professionals to ensure that those children with medical needs receive the care they need whenever they attend the nursery.

This ‘can do’ attitude ensures that children with more

complex or medical needs are not turned away and are enabled to attend nursery in the same way as other children.

The current salary band for each SEND Navigator is £29,500-£32,500. On top of salary costs there are training and CPD costs as Navigators receive continuous mentoring from an educational psychologist.

The training costs for the three nursery Navigators is around £6,000 pa plus maintenance costs.

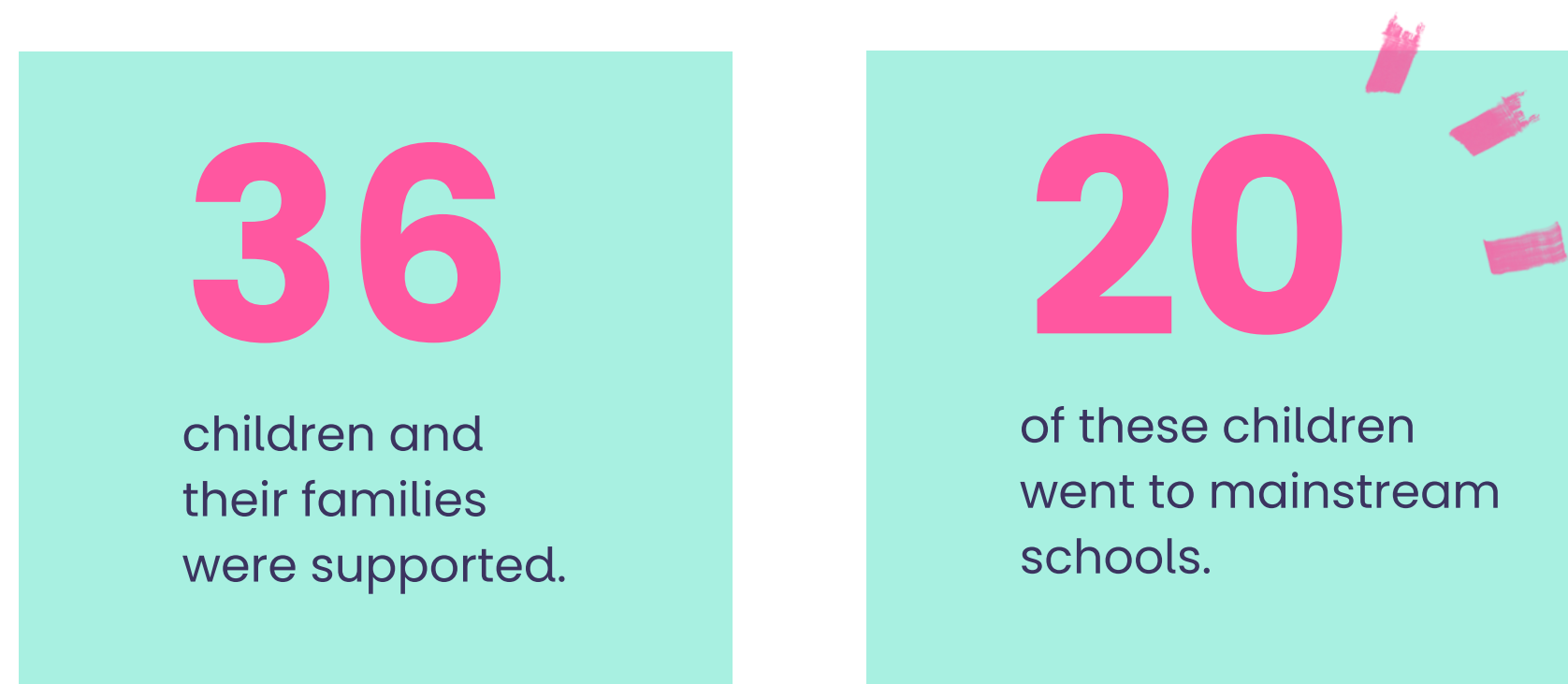
Whilst the three Navigators are funded to offer family support above and beyond what the nursery is ordinarily able to give – the reality is that staff often give extra support to many more families not officially assigned a Navigator (for example, last month, they provided extra support to 67 of the 96 families using the nursery).

The following table summarises the key qualifications and training required of Navigators.

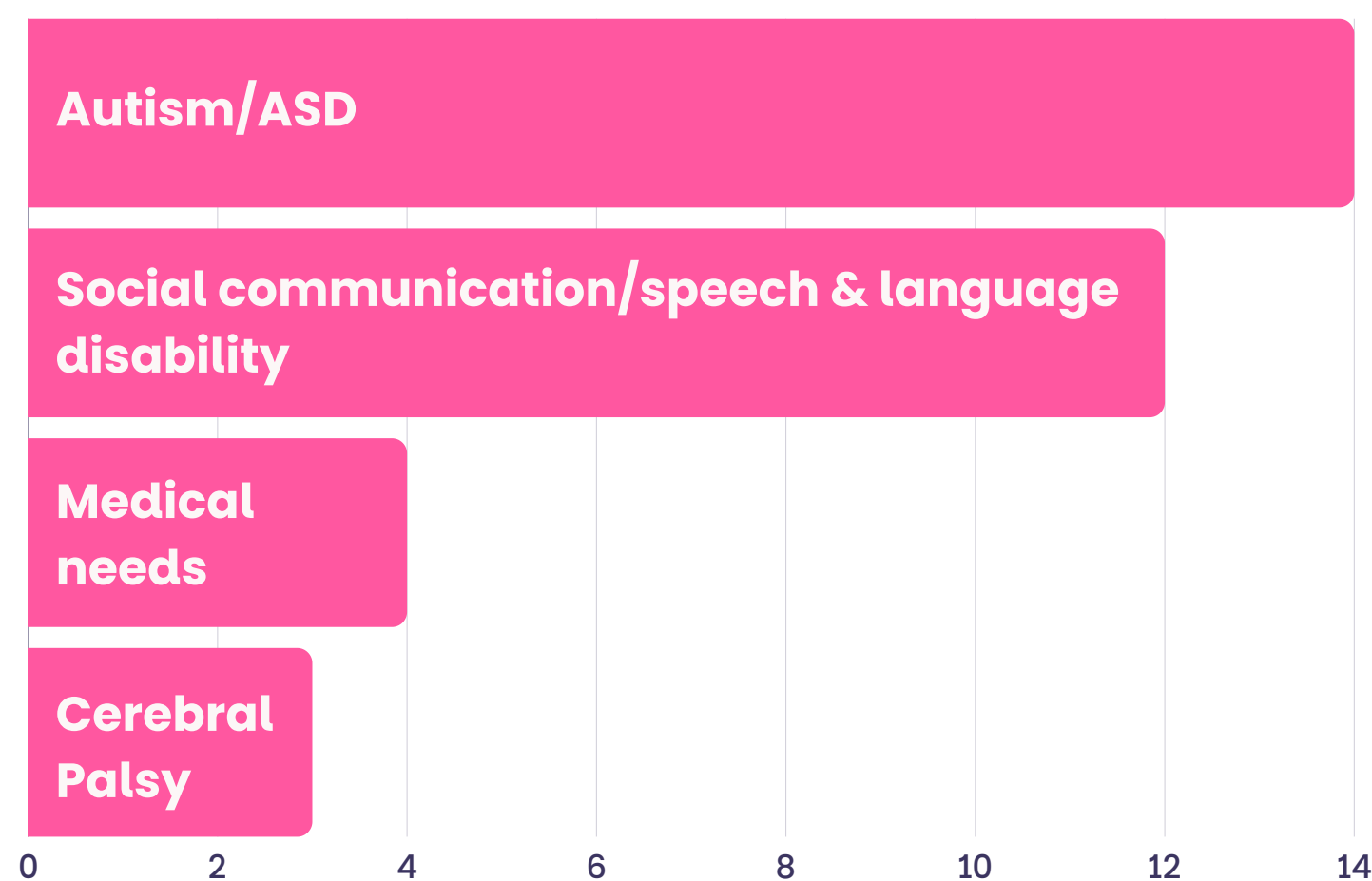
Essentials for the role	Content	Examples
Experience	Early years level 3-5 = 10 years plus	Early Years specific
Specialism	In a focus area	SALT/ SEND/ SEND Practice/ Education
Training - extensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELSA (Emotional literacy support assistants) • Portage • Thomas training (understanding of social communication/autism spectrum conditions) • Behaviour Training and SEND • Community Nurse training – NG Tubes • Children services – Child Protection, Child in Need, Family Hub • Staff training for level 3 • Staff training for level 5 	
Mentoring on the job	<p>By Education and Health professionals</p> <p>£90 per hour per professional x4 a year</p>	Education Psychologist/ Occupational Therapist/ SALT/Physio/ community Nurse
Linked to the local multi agency team	Health, education, social care, hospital consultants, local authority	

Navigator interventions and impact

The below figures demonstrate the outcomes and impact of the work of the Navigators across the first year of funding. These outcomes reflect the Navigators' work from September 2022 to September 2023.

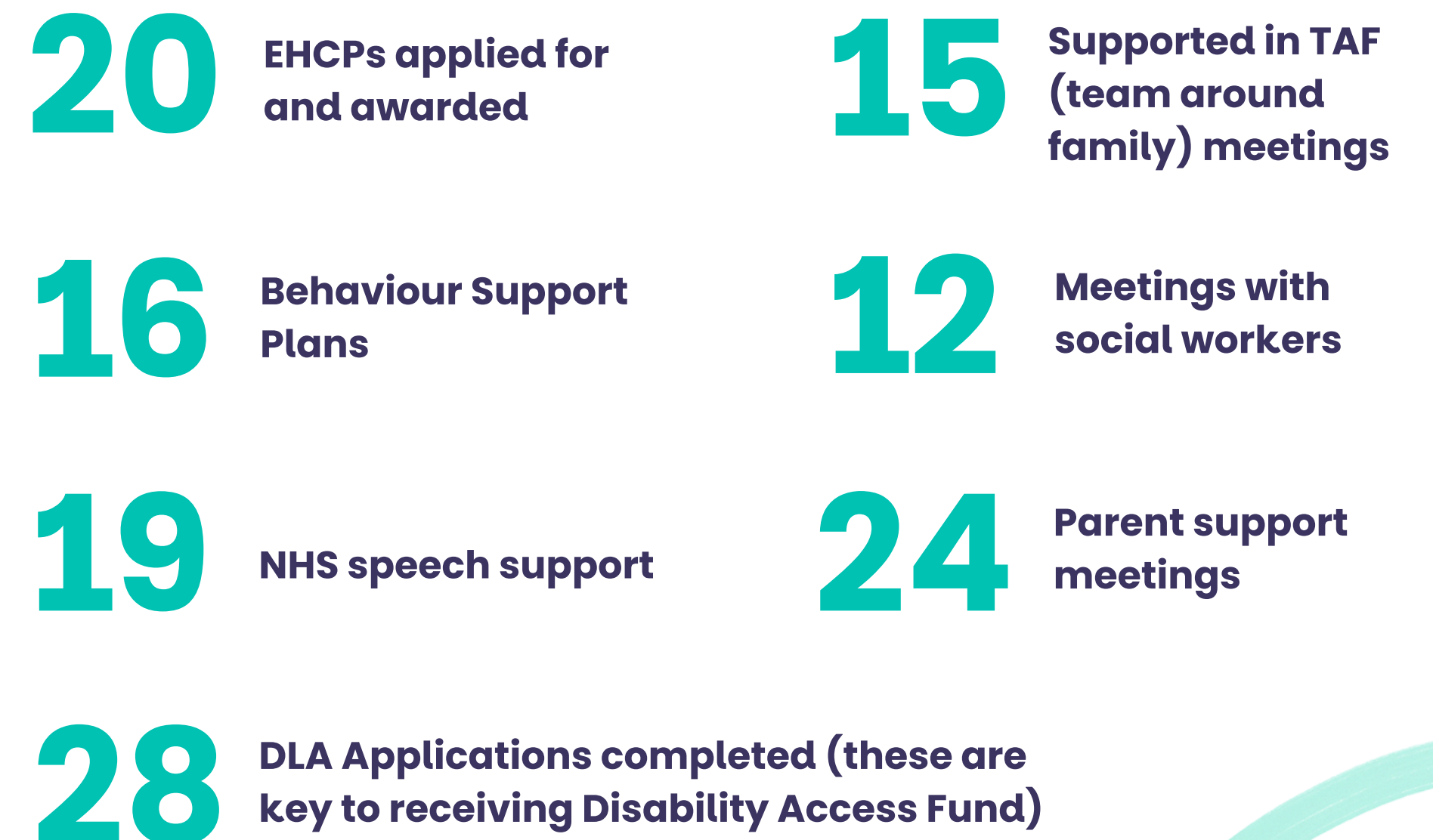


Of the 36 supported, the following was the primary diagnosis:



Outcomes from Navigator support

The following outcomes were achieved from the Navigators:




These figures demonstrate the high level of multi-agency working, the support secured for families across health, education and care spanning from the nursery setting to home and the holistic approach taken by the Navigators.

Children are given the appropriate support across all areas of their life to enable them to learn, play and thrive and to move on to settings most appropriate for them.

Together, we can break down barriers.

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