

Polling results report: 16 September 2020

This report

This report covers the period between the 02 September and 14 September 2020. Participants were asked their view on WWCS's recent scale up of the Social workers in schools (SWIS) pilot that ran last year and showed some signs of promise. They were also asked what benefits and pitfalls they thought there might be with the project. Please read [here](#) for further details of pilot summary. Participants were also asked whether they felt referrals to social care would increase now that schools have returned to business as usual.

Social workers in schools (SWIS), a good idea?

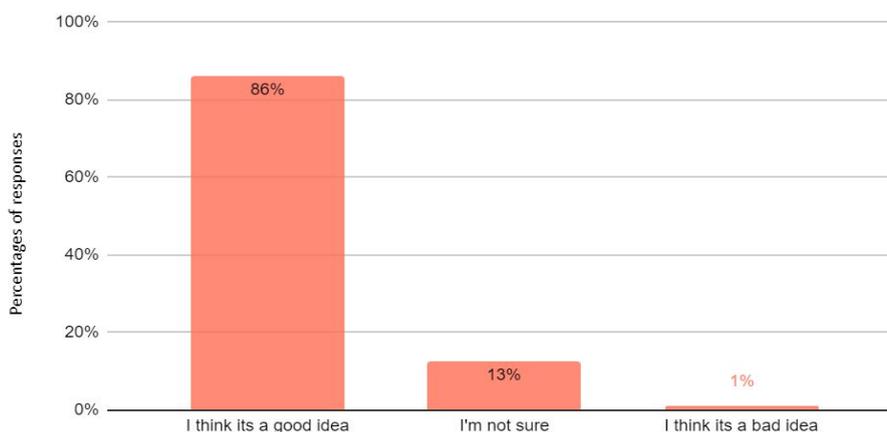
Participants were asked whether they thought placing social workers in schools was a good idea.

Please see results in below:

Fig 1

POLL RESULTS:

What is your view of the idea of placing social workers in schools?



[Findings](#) in the original pilot indicated that SWIS may have a positive impact on reducing referrals for children thought to be in need and in need of protection from schools to Children's Social Care. Alongside this, this way of working has received a broadly positive response from those involved, including school staff, social care staff and children and families.

Potential benefits/pitfalls of social workers in schools.

Participants were then asked to choose from a list of benefits and potential pitfalls of placing social workers in schools and the results can be seen in fig.2 below.

Polling results reflect the promising results of the pilot highlighted in the previous section.

19% felt that relationships would improve between staff and social social workers which was

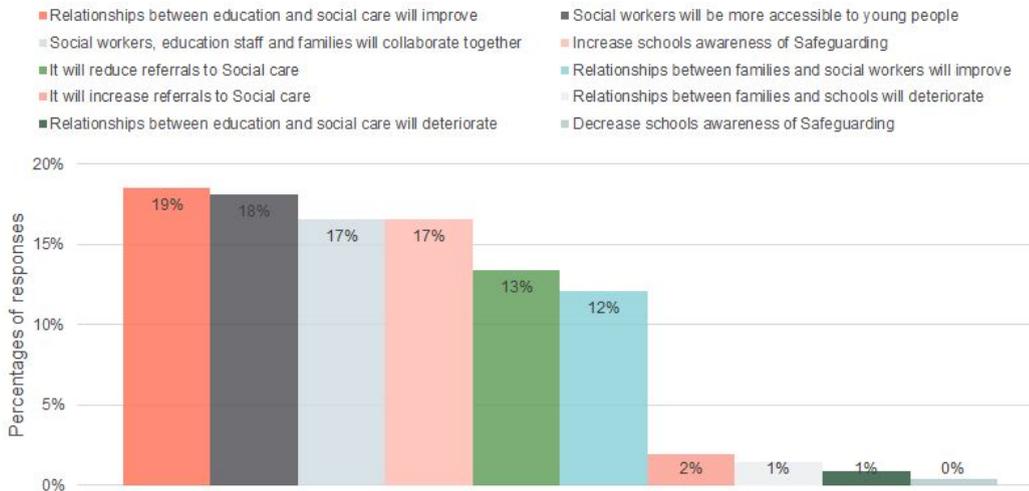


generally the case although it was dependent on the school set up and management structure. 18% felt that social workers would be more accessible to students which was also found to be one of the benefits. None of the possible negative outcomes rated very highly and there was a positive view to the idea.

Fig 2

POLL RESULTS:

Which potential benefits/pitfalls of placing social workers in school do you agree with?



One participant commented that;

'It could be a great idea, depends on the school, the LA, the wider services (i.e. Early Help offer). Is it making up for shortfalls in other services then not a great idea, but if it is a way to have a more embedded, responsive social work support that better meets the needs of vulnerable children in the school then it is a great idea'.

Others too have had reservations about the implications of social workers in schools and also highlighted the impact on the role of Early help alongside this project. Tina Russell, Director of Safeguarding and Social Care at Worcestershire Children First raises it in this [article](#).

Increase in referrals as children return to school.

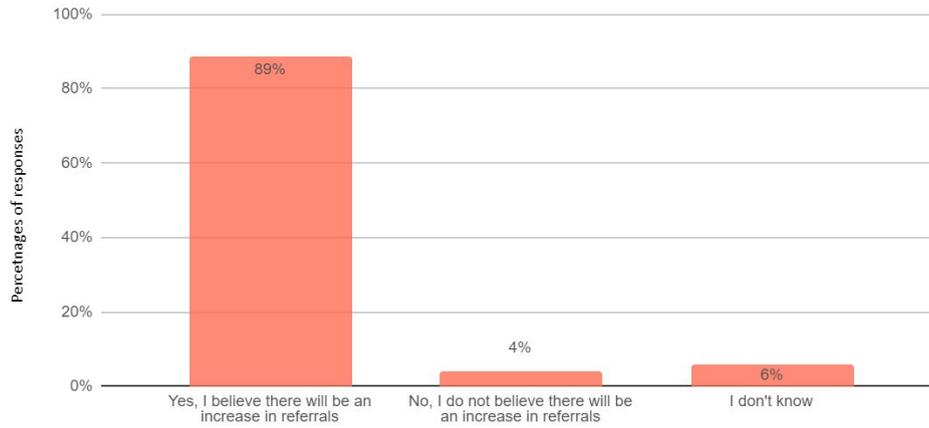
Most participants were concerned that referrals would increase as children returned to school with 89% voting yes as can be seen in Fig 3 below. Historically referrals tend to increase at this time of year when children return after the summer holidays, so the response is as expected. What will be interesting to see is if the referral numbers do increase from what would normally be expected at this time of year.



Fig.3

POLL RESULTS:

As children return to school this week are you concerned that there will be an increase in referrals?



About WW-CSC Polling

What Works for Children’s Social Care runs regular polls with social workers who have registered with us. Social workers are currently employed in a range of organisations and we canvas their opinions about our current and future research agenda as well as topics impacting on social work practice. There are 826 social workers currently registered to participate. 98 Social Workers responded to this poll, with 3 participants providing qualitative data.