



Membership Survey 2013

Executive summary

We conducted our online and paper survey between February and April 2013 with our current membership. The purpose of the survey was to find out from our members what they think about our services, what tangible difference our services are making to families and whether our services are meeting their needs.

We gained a response rate of 28% (from a population of 117). Results show a very positive view of the quality of services run by Malvern Special Families, including how well we respond to children's and young people's needs in organising and running our clubs.

Families described the difference the clubs make to their family life, and also to the children and young people attending them, which shows that the charity is having a positive impact on families in the region.

In terms of identifying need, 38.7% of respondents said their child's need for a short break is completely met, whereas 29% of respondents said that the rest of the family's need for a short break is completely met. This shows that there is still some degree of unmet need for the remaining respondents for their children (61.3% of respondents) and for the rest of the family (71% of respondents). This is a finding that Malvern Special Families can respond to by considering what families suggested would meet their needs further. These suggestions relate to development of further Saturday club and holiday playscheme places, developing longer sessions, and considering transport and accessibility of the clubs.

The survey also identified two new potential volunteers from the membership.

Produced by the Manager,
Philippa Barton on 10th May 2013

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1. Methodology

1.1 The survey was developed by the Manager based on regular questions asked in our evaluations for clubs, with additional open ended and multiple choice questions to gather feedback from families and gauge satisfaction. The survey was broken down into six sections

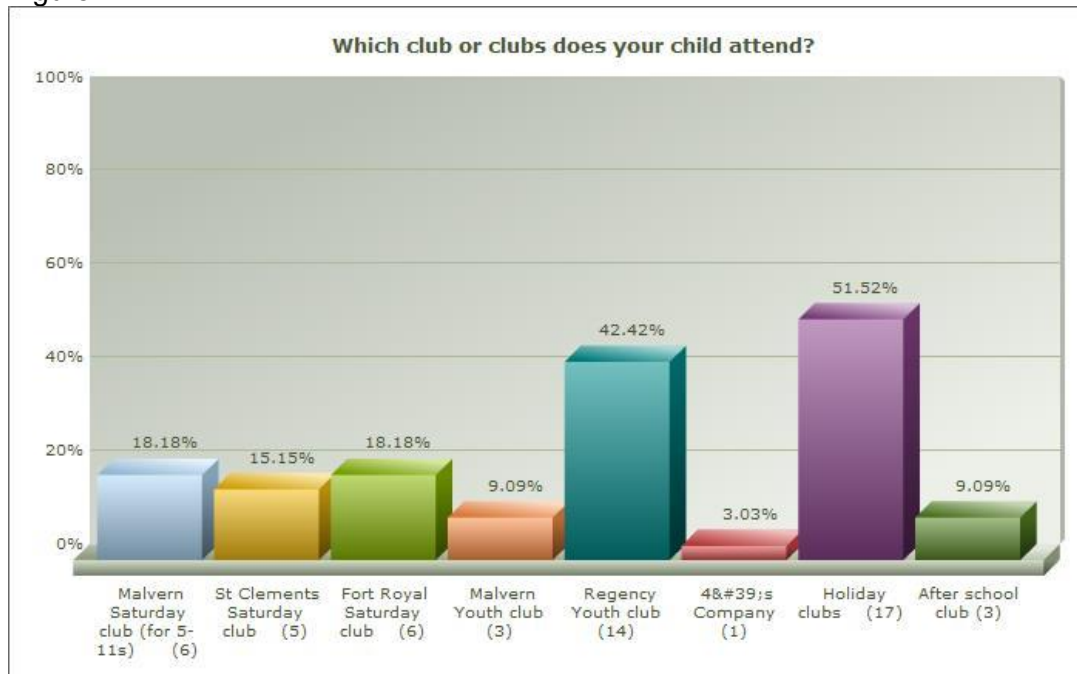
- Making a difference
- The quality of our clubs
- Fair access and choice
- Meeting needs of our members
- Your involvement
- General feedback

1.2 The survey was available online on Smartsurvey's website and we sent a link inviting our members with an email address (73) to complete the survey. 20 families responded in this way, and a further three completed the survey partially.

1.3 We also have a list of families who have requested information in hard copy format through the post, and so we sent printed copies with a self addressed envelope to a further 59 families (some of whom will have also received the email link), 13 of whom responded in this way (one of which had already completed the survey online).

1.4 Total responses were 33 out of our current membership of 116 families (28%) and these are the clubs that they use and are basing their judgements on. We asked which clubs that the respondents used to get an idea of any difference in the experience of the children and their families in using the different clubs.

Figure 1.



2. Making a difference

2.1 We asked an open ended question 'what difference does the club your child attends make to him or her?' with the anticipation that the responses would be very varied.

The responses (31 comments) have been categorised and the frequency of references to these aspects counted. Many comments included references to several categories.

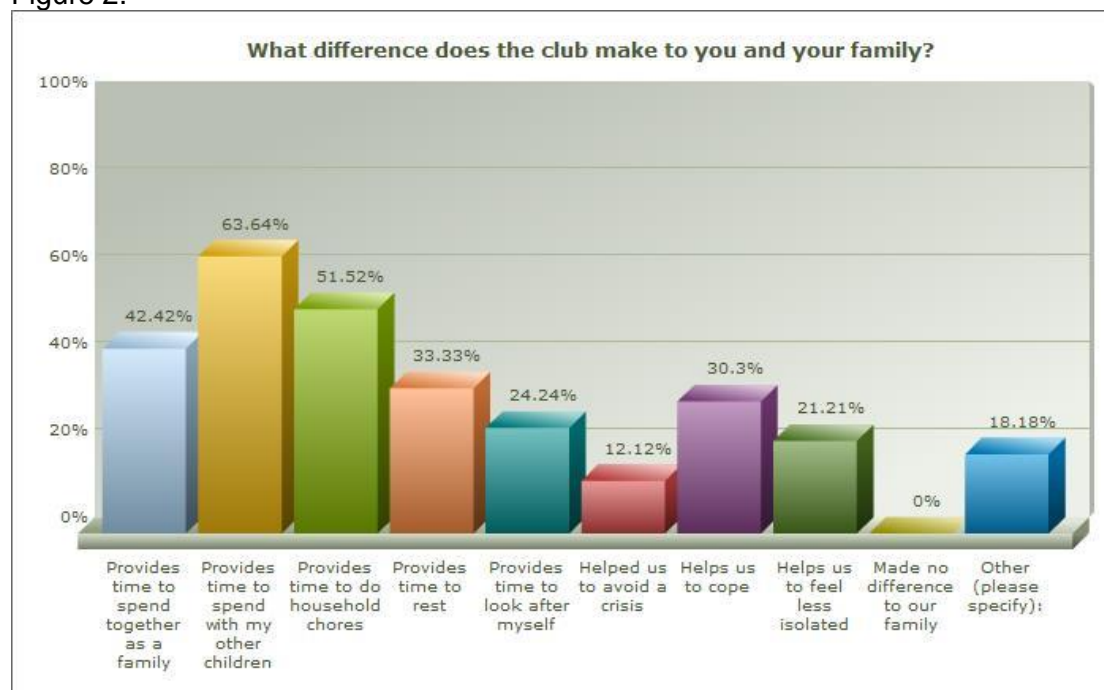
Table 1.

Comment	Frequency of comment
social aspect	14
activities/stimulation	9
Enjoyment	7
safe	6
break from parents	3
independence	2
new experiences	2
play rather than school	2
time out of the house	2
helps voice to be heard	1
likes routine	1
development	1

2.2 Respondents commented on the positive impact that the social aspect of the clubs has on their children 14 times and this was the most commonly cited aspect. Also frequently mentioned as making a difference were the opportunity to do activities or try new things, and the enjoyment that the children get out of the clubs. Importantly, the safe environment created was cited as enabling the child to enjoy the club by six respondents.

2.3 We then asked ‘what difference does the club make to you and your family?’ Respondents were asked to tick as many options as apply.

Figure 2.



2.4 The ‘other’ category received the following comments:

- A lifesaver! The only support network we have.
- Our aim as a family is always to have our daughter happy

- Provides an outlet for my son
- He goes to youth club for him, not us
- Also makes a difference that he enjoys it so much. If he didn't I would feel guilty sending him and most likely would not send him.

2.5 The next question invited respondents to expand on their answers in the previous question with the aim of gaining more qualitative data. We asked the question 'Do you feel that the club has helped you?' leading people to then say how they have been helped. 100% of respondents said 'yes' and it is encouraging that 25 respondents were forthcoming with the following descriptions.

1	Most definitely. I have time for myself aswell as my other children. I can relax knowing she's in safe hands and having fun.
2	enables us to spend quality time with our other child
3	It provides a much needed break to do the above
4	Its been our main support system- It gives him a break from us & vice versa
5	He is kept purposefully occupied and he is always happy and looks forward to going.If he is happy I am happy
6	Its helps her to have time with other children which helps her to be a better person as she grows up. Mixing is very important to a child with special needs.
7	Provides a break from the caring role.
8	gives him time with others
9	It has helped us enormously for many years, but especially over the last 18 months, as we are coping with the demands of poorly parents as well.
10	It gives us a well needed break from the caring role and takes the strain (and guilt) away of always finding a setting that is appropriate for our child to interact with others of their age.
11	Knowing that my son is well cared for and being stimulated.
12	It has helped my son, and therefore it has impacted on me, he isnt so isolated.
13	Gives us time to recharge our batteries.
14	Gives me time with my other child. To go to places that we are unable to attend because of our Disabled child.
15	Gives us time to ourselves
16	It gives me time to spend with my little girl
17	Gives a chance to regroup briefly
18	Entertainment she enjoys - so not having to always find things to do
19	Gives him something to do and to be with other children
20	As above. Time to do other things whilst safe in the knowledge she is safe.
21	Makes a difference to my relationship with my husband. My husband benefits hugely from time to rest
22	It's an out of school group where I'm happy to send him and I know he is accepted and look after
23	Spending time with his sister
24	Gives a valuable day off from being a carer
25	So difficult to find something that he can do and who will accept him. He's a child that needs to be kept busy and he is very active. The club is so fantastically run that every time we drop off our son we know that not only is he going to a safe and caring place but he is going somewhere that he is going to thoroughly enjoy the day and get so much out of that day and this is more important to us than anything.

Table 2.

2.6 We then asked about the difference the clubs have made to the children focussing on two aspects, social skills and confidence. In response, 64% of families said yes, the club had made a difference to their child's social skills, and 36% said that they were not sure of any difference the club made in this area. No-one stated that the club made no difference to their child's social skills. Interestingly, if we just look at respondents whose children attend the older age-group Youth clubs (Malvern and Regency Youth Groups, After school club and 4's Company) there is a much lower proportion of parents and carers who are unsure of the impact the clubs have on their children, with 82% saying the clubs do make a difference to social skills and 18% saying they are not sure.

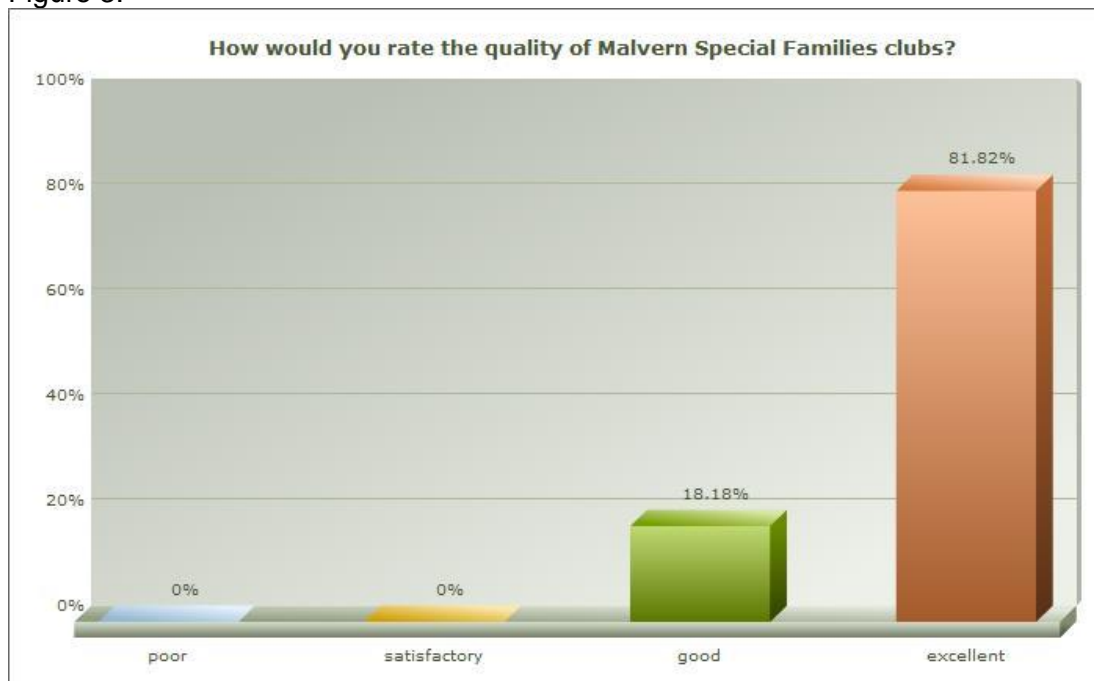
2.7 A greater proportion (70%) of respondents identified that their child's confidence has improved as a result of coming to the clubs, and one respondent stated that there was no difference in their child's confidence. A smaller proportion (27%) were

unsure of any difference. Again, looking at the difference that the clubs make to the children's confidence, respondents answering for the older age groups show a greater level of certainty, with 88% answering yes there is a difference, 6% answering no there is no difference, and only 6% answering that they are unsure if there is a difference.

3. The quality of our clubs

3.1 In the next section of the questionnaire we asked about how satisfied families and carers are with the quality of the service we provide and value for money. Families responded very positively in this part of the survey, with 100% of respondents rating the quality of MSF clubs as good or excellent.

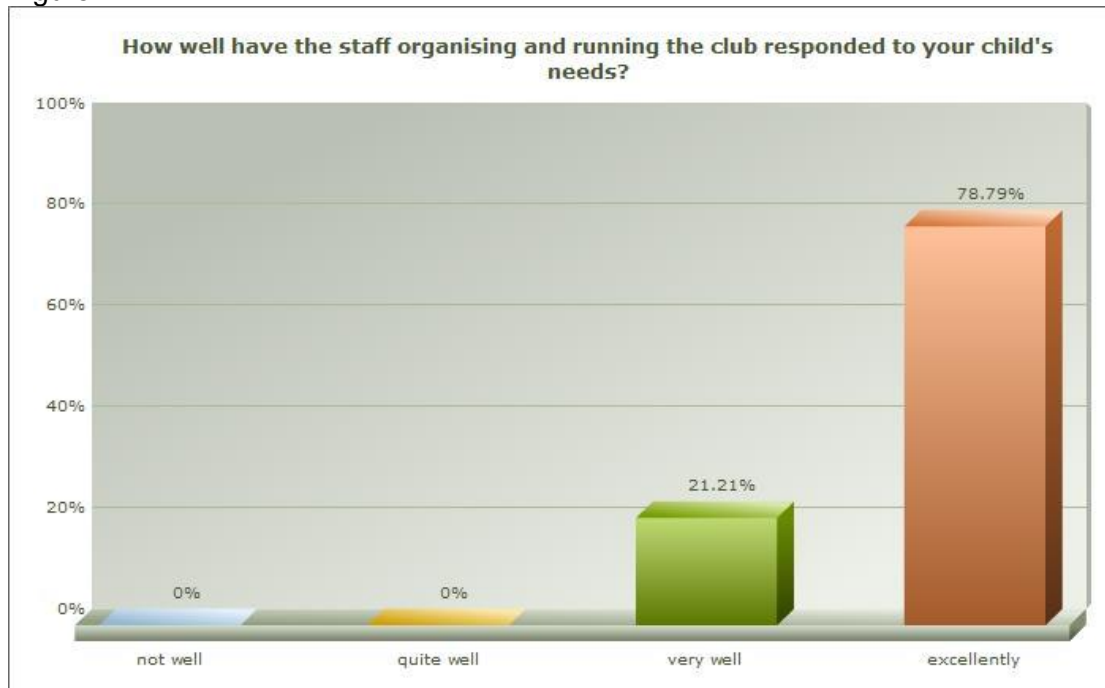
Figure 3.



3.2 We asked here the fundamental question 'Do you feel your child is safe at MSF clubs?' with an option for 'yes' and an option for 'no'. All respondents answered 'yes'.

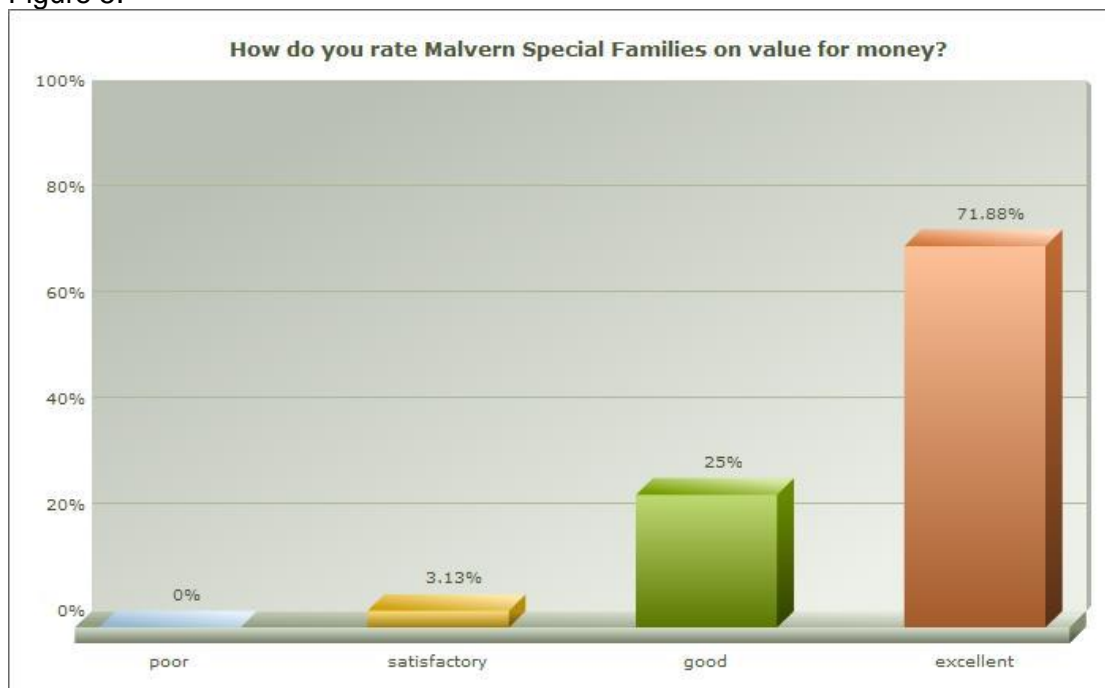
3.3 Again, when we asked how well parents and carers felt that the staff organising and running the clubs responded to their child's needs, they responded very positively, with 100% of respondents rating this as either 'very well', or 'excellently'.

Figure 4.



3.4 When it came to the question of value for money, again there was a very positive response, with 97% saying this is 'good' or 'excellent'. 32 respondents gave an answer to this question.

Figure 5.

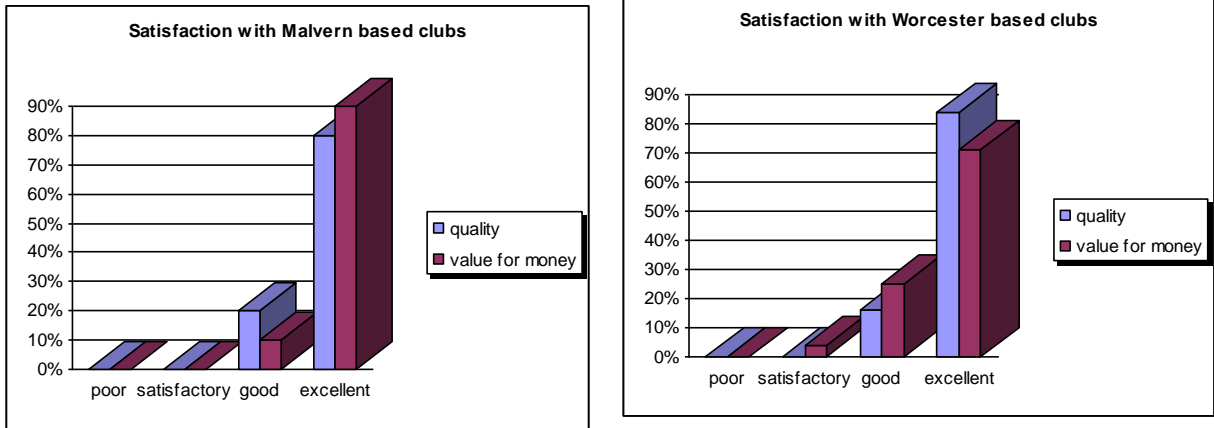


3.5 We can analyse this result further to find out what might have influenced this judgement. At the time the survey was distributed, our Saturday clubs cost £7.50 for a 4.5 hour session, and holiday clubs cost £20 for a 5 hour session. Therefore we would have expected that this would cause users of these different clubs to rate value for money differently. However, satisfaction with value for money is not significantly different between these two groups and this probably reflects that many

of our Saturday club users also use holiday clubs, and would have been basing their judgement on both types of club.

3.6 Whether families use clubs in Malvern or in Worcester appears to have a more significant impact on satisfaction with value for money. 90% of respondents using Malvern clubs said value for money is 'excellent', and only 71% of respondents using Worcester clubs rated value for money as 'excellent'.

Figures 6 and 7



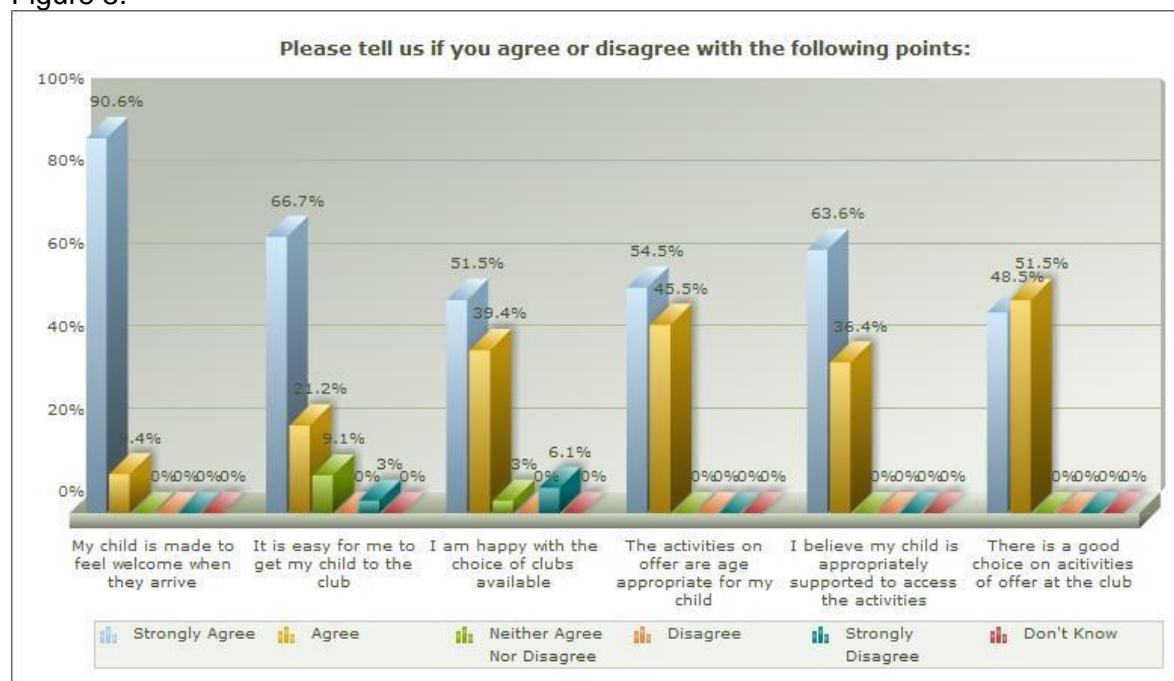
3.7 These figures exclude responses that ticked only 'holiday clubs' attended by their child as it cannot be determined whether they attended Malvern or Worcester based holiday clubs.

3.8 When we look at these two groups' responses to the other quality questions we see that this does not reflect a poorer quality of club in Worcester, indeed, satisfaction with quality is actually higher at 84% as shown in the figures below. Further research with these families as to what their judgement on value for money is based on could be useful, for example, are they comparing MSF clubs with other activities available in Worcester that are not available in Malvern?

4. Fair access and choice

4.1 We then asked respondents to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a series of questions relating access to the clubs for them and their children, and their children's experience of the clubs.

Figure 8.



4.2 MSF scored very highly on questions relating to the child’s experience of the club. All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their child is made to feel welcome, that the activities on offer are age appropriate, that their child is appropriately supported to access the activities and that there is a good choice of activities.

4.3 Responses were more mixed for the statements about choice of clubs available and ease of access for the parents. Though the vast majority of families are satisfied with these aspects (87.9% satisfaction for ease of getting to the clubs and 90.9% satisfaction with the choice of clubs available) there is a minority of families whose experiences of access and choice could be better.

4.4 In a later question asking what MSF could do to meet families’ needs, two comments mentioned a need for transport to be provided to improve access to the club.

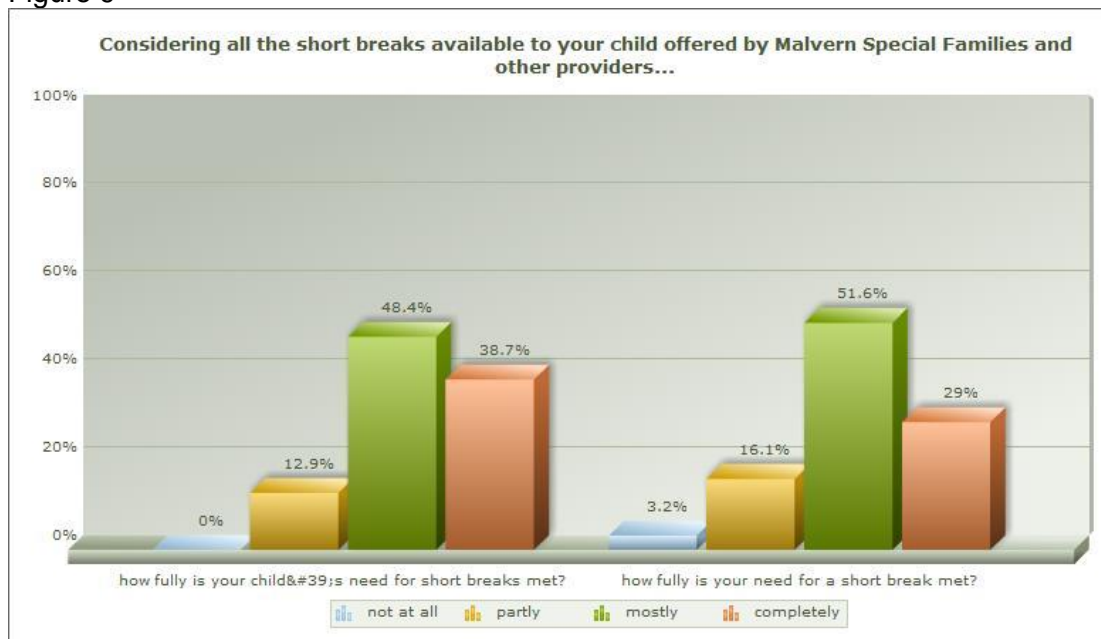
4.5 In addition, although only 6.1% of respondents strongly disagreed with statement ‘I am happy with the choice of clubs available’, further comments were made by three respondents relating to the need for more clubs.

5. Meeting needs of our members

5.1 Having asked what our members think about the quality of what we provide, we wanted to find out whether our members feel we are providing the right service and whether they feel their needs are met, and we asked this question in three stages. Firstly asking whether their child’s need for a short break is met, secondly whether their own need for a short break is met, and thirdly asking what else we could do to meet families and their children’s needs.

5.2 The responses to the questions about how fully families’ needs are met are shown below.

Figure 9



5.3 Encouragingly the most common responses to these two questions were that our members' needs are either mostly met or completely met. It should be noted however that 12.9% of the children's needs are only partly met, and 16.1% of the families said their needs are only partly met, with 3.2% (one respondent) saying they are not met at all.

5.4 The last question in this section we would hope gives us a steer as to what would make these families feel like their needs are being met more fully, and these are for the organisation to consider and respond to. Of the comments below, four ask for more club sessions, five relate to longer sessions, five relate to activities and how we advertise these, and two relate to the need for transport to and from clubs.

Table 3

To be allowed to go to Fort Royal Club!
More holiday playscheme sessions rather than 2 days per wk for the older children
a babysitting service? More saturday clubs?
Visit and trips away from the youth club venue would add variety to what is on offer for the youngsters. Perhaps evening activities for the older ones
The only thing would be for more weekend clubs. She is not to bad now but when she was under 10 years she was hard work and the saturday club kept her happy...if she is happy we are happy.....
Longer sessions during the school holidays, perhaps until 4pm.
The hours at the clubs could be longer (9am to 4pm) and more days offered during holidays.
The Saturday club could start earlier and finish half an later. This would be an advantage to spent a longer time with my other child. To have swimming sessions on a Saturday or more trips out.
holidays. transport to sessions, some mean that I am unable to return to home when i drop him off, which often feels like wasted time, though its good for him.
We have found the holiday clubs restrictive and we have had to source other holiday clubs that do not specialise in children with disabilities. As full time working parents we need a holiday club that covers the working day 8.30am - 5.30pm

It would be great if you had your own building because you could offer more facilities. It might mean that you could extend the amount of hours offered to the children, because you didn't need to allocate time to set things up and put things away
To be able to have Hydro at the Regency Saturday Clubs.
Transport picking up and dropping would help people who can't drive or haven't got a car. More on weekend activities during school days would help.
Meet all our needs
It would be good if possible to know what activities are organised when booking
Because he is now getting a bit older, and his needs (sensory) are changing it would be good to try a bit more challenging activities. That said- he loves all his sessions at MSF. More sport activities i.e. football, basket ball, swim, dance, gymnastics. Clubs that children their age would be able to access but they are not able to due to their disability.

6. Your involvement

6.1 We asked respondents to say whether they would like to get involved with Malvern Special Families, offering the following options

- becoming a trustee
- reviewing our services and policies
- organising or helping with events
- doing a sponsored activity for you
- volunteering my time in another way
- Other (please specify)

6.2 Two respondents answered this question and the Manager will contact these people to follow this up.

7. General feedback

7.1 At the end of the survey we asked respondents if there was anything they wanted to feed back to MSF relating to the survey content and eight respondents used this opportunity. Two comments related to individual situations – one relating to access to a particular club has been resolved, and the other involved a request for a young person who has attended the club until 2013 to become a volunteer at that club. The other six comments are shown below and have been edited so that individuals are not named.

Table 4.

Special needs children affected there siblings more than the parents. I think. So the siblings need time to have the home and parents to themselves as having a brother or sister with special needs effects the way they can enjoy growing up.
love the way that the Play Leader has responded to my son's love of climbing and has organised this. Ideally there would be a choice of activities each time for those who dont like to climb and on other days those who arent interested in dance or 'other peoples choices' but understand that there has to be constraints.
MSF is a wonderful service that offers valuable respite to families in a safe environment
My son enjoys the holiday clubs, he feels very safe and enjoys the activities
Again, a huge thank you to all MSF staff. Our daughter is always made so very welcome and I leave knowing she is in safe hands and cared for. It's a fantastic environment for her to be active and have fun.
I would be happy to discuss in more detail. Thank you.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The feedback from families shows that Malvern Special Families clubs are making a significant difference to the children we support and their families. The social aspect of the clubs is a key impact on the children that attend. The impact for families has been varied – most commonly meaning that parents and carers have been able to spend time with their other children (64%), get household chores done (52%), and spend time together as a family (42%). For some families however, Malvern Special Families has been a life-saver, and has helped them to cope (30%), for others it has helped them to feel less isolated (21%).
- 8.2 Satisfaction with the quality of the clubs is high, with 100% of families rating the quality of the clubs as either 'good' (18.18%) or 'excellent' (82.82%). Satisfaction with how the staff respond to the needs of children is high at 100% of families describing this as 'very well' (21.21%) or 'excellently' (78.79%). Similarly satisfaction with value for money is also high at 96.88% of families rating this as 'good or 'excellent'.
- 8.3 Families are overwhelmingly positive about how well their children are welcomed at the clubs and how well we enable them to access the activities on offer, the choice and age-appropriateness of the activities available. However, a small minority of families find it difficult to get to our clubs (3%) and 6.1% feel strongly that they are unhappy with the choice of clubs available.
- 8.4 In terms of meeting children and their families' needs for short breaks we are doing well, but there are some families who identify further needs. 12.9% of families feel their child's need for short breaks is only partly met, and 19.3% of families feel that their own need for short breaks are either only partly met, or not at all. Families have given their feedback as to what would meet their needs further, and these most commonly relate to the need for more club sessions, longer sessions and activities.
- 8.5 Overall the feedback is extremely positive and this news will be disseminated to the staff teams in recognition for the work they do in organising and running the clubs. Where respondents identify needs the organisation must consider how to respond to these weighing up the capacity of the organisation and practicality of any changes we need to make.
- 8.6 The summary of the survey findings will be posted on the Malvern Special Families website and a brief report included in the newsletter. The trustees will consider the findings at their meeting on 20th May and publish their response to families in the newsletter.
- 8.7 At the staff meeting on 4th May the survey findings were shared and the idea of running more Saturday clubs, and running longer sessions were discussed by the staff team and a summary of this discussion will be shared with the trustees.