

**Hartlepool SEND Information Advice and
Support Service
(SENDIASS)**



**Annual Report
September 2018**

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Introduction

As part of the SEND reforms, Parent Partnership Services evolved into Information Advice and Support Services to widen the remit to support parents/carers and also children, young people on matters relating to SEN and disability aged 0 – 25 years across education, health and care.

This annual report provides an overview of the work completed across the academic year 2017/2018, together with developments for the 2018/2019 academic year.

Remit of SENDIASS

- A service which supports parents/carers with children who have or may have special educational needs and disability
- A service which supports young people / children who have or may have special educational needs and disability
- To provide access to independent advice through volunteers and other independent organisations who can offer information and support on a one-to-one basis
- A service which recognises the importance of parents, carers and young people's views
- A service which helps the Local Authority and parent/carers and schools work together to meet the needs of individual children
- A service which helps support parents/carers, children and young people through Education, Health and Care Plan assessments and Reviews

Core Functions

The Information Advice and Support Service provides:

- Impartial advice and information to parents/carers, young people, schools and other professionals
- Signposting to voluntary groups, charities and other organisations
- Clear explanation of educational procedures
- Help for parents/carers/young people to complete forms
- Someone to attend meetings - schools, LA, multi-agency
- Someone to talk to in confidence

- Support to parents/carers in their preparation for and attendance at Governing Body appeals for exclusions
- Support to parents/carers in their preparation for and attendance at Independent Appeals Panel for exclusions
- Support to parents/carers/ young people in their preparation for and attendance at SENDIST appeals/ Tribunals
- IASS representation at regional meetings
- Lobbying for change and to influence policies and procedures
- Supporting parents/carers/children and young people with SEN Support and Statutory Assessment

Report on Activities September 2017 – July 2018

The table below provides data relating to the number of referrals enquires and levels of intervention across the academic year.

Reason	Numbers
Total number of referrals received	88
Number of cases closed	40
Number of cases still open to the service	48
Number of females	22
Number of males	66
Statutory Assessment Advice Required	19
Advice on SEN Support	56
Parental Views Support Given	19
Young Persons views supported	19
Home Visit	10
School Visit/ TAC Meetings	190
Number of secondary schools visited	6
Number of primary schools visited	18
Number of post 16 providers visited	2
General Support/Advice - Telephone	88
Exclusions - fixed term exclusion and Reintegration	15
Admission Appeals	1
Mediation / Disagreement Resolution	4 (sign posted)
EHC Plan - Support/ Reviews	19
Personal Budgets	1
Local Offer	88 (all families were informed on the local offer and provided with a leaflet when contact was made)

	with the service)
Support at Tribunal	0
Support - managed moves/school transfer	5
Bullying	6

A total of 333 hours of support was provided by SENDIASS to parents/carers/young people at meetings and home visits.

In addition to this The SENDIAS Service has accessed 8.5 days of training, 3 regional development days, National Conference and 4 regional meetings.

***The above does not include preparation time for meetings, research or recording of meetings.**

Casework

The total number of cases during the time period has been 88.

Using the National IASS Intervention Levels guidance, the service recorded the following:

Level 1 – 29 Single Enquiry

This is described as; phone or email support, tailored to the particular circumstances of the service user. Information and advice was given about SEND matters, typically less than 2 hours of service time as part of a single intervention

Level 2 – 43 Independent Support

This support includes helping to understand documents or complete documentation, support in communicating with the school, local authority or other services. Level 2 is also described as detailed and personalised guidance on SEND issues and/ or exclusion procedures. Level 2 also indicates support from SENDIASS during the EHCP process and also conversion from Statements to EHCP

Level 3 – 16 Casework

This support includes detailed and continuous assistance and guidance with statutory processes:

- Complex, multi-agency needs
- Assistance in overcoming serious breakdown in communications with school/LA/other services
- Requires intensive support due to personal circumstances (eg low literacy levels, learning or sensory difficulties. English as an additional language)

- Provision of support at/for a series of meetings over a period of months
- Assistance with preparation for an exclusion appeals and support at the appeal meeting
- Support with EHCP's and EHCP Reviews
- IASS undertakes key working roles with other agencies

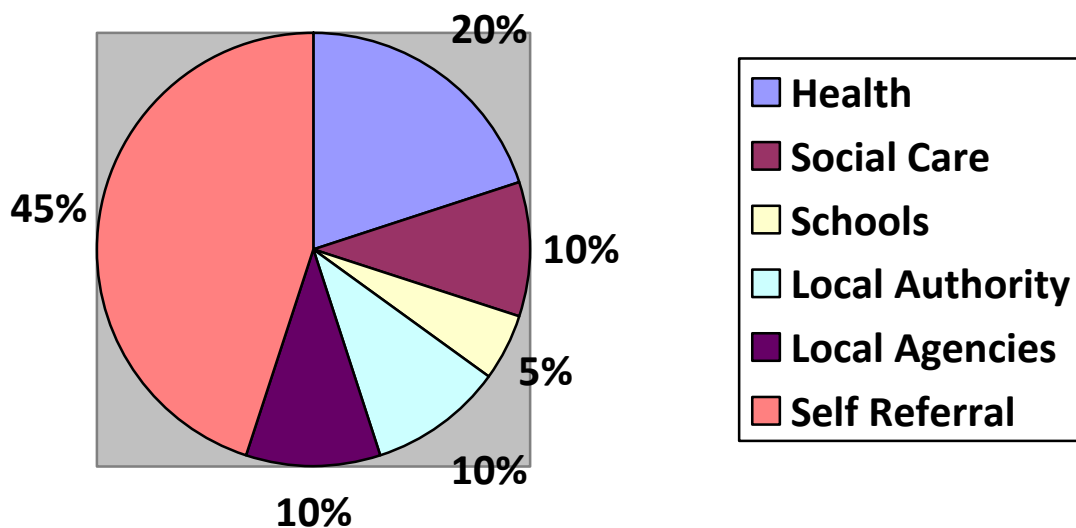
Level 4 – zero Mediation and Tribunal

This support includes detailed and continuous assistance and guidance with preparation and support during First Tier Tribunal (SEND) including DDA complaints to Tribunal, Complaints to Tribunal, Complaints to Ombudsman, Judicial Review.

Referral Type

Hartlepool SENDIASS have taken a variety of referrals over the last academic year. From the chart below, our main source of referral are “Self-referrals”. This means a parent/carer or young person makes direct contact with the service after some support. The other type of referral is when a parent/carer or young person gets told to contact us either by someone in the Local Authority, Health, Social Care, school or local agency.

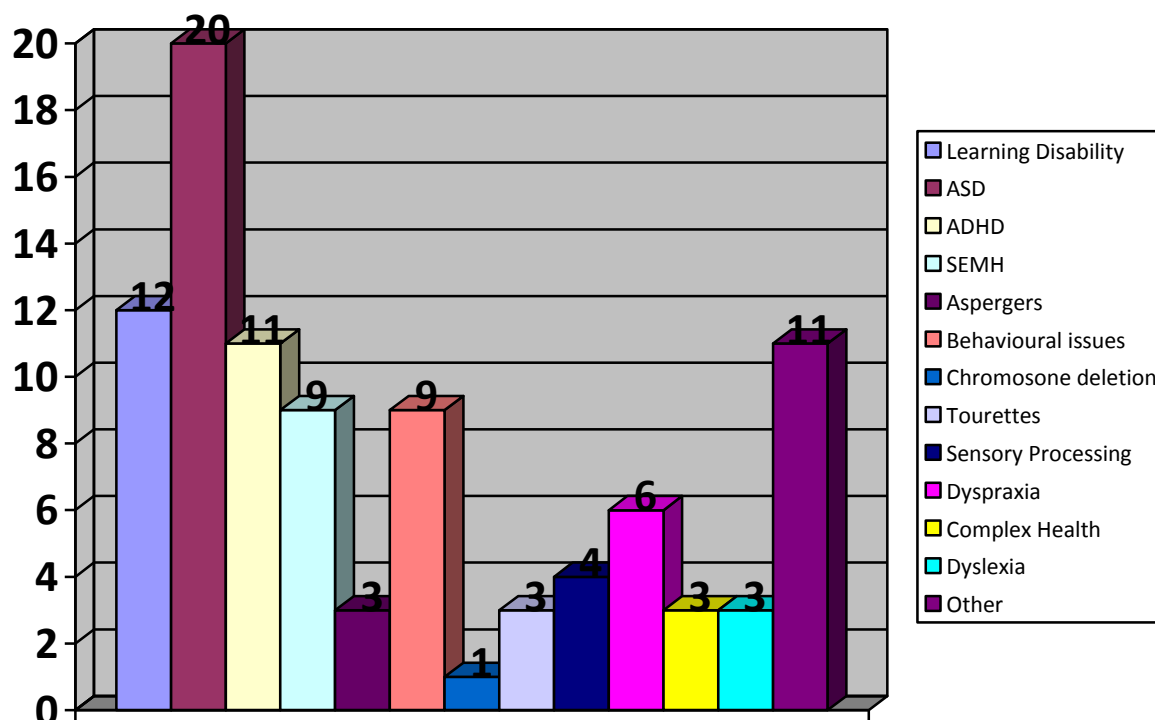
Referral Breakdown from 1st September 2017 to 31st August 2018



Condition/Disability

Children and young people that are supported by the service may have a number of conditions or a disability that are listed below which may impact on their learning without the right level of support.

Over the last academic year the parents/ carers of children and young people accessing the service for support have presented with a variety of conditions and disability.



Evaluation of IASS and Responses

Parents/carers and young people who have accessed the service during the last academic year are asked to complete an evaluation form, either on line or paper questionnaire. They can also choose to remain anonymous if they wish. In 2017 /2018, 88 forms were distributed to families that had used the service. In total 25 service users responded to the evaluation. This is what people told us:

Comment	Numbers
Easy to get in touch with the service	69%
Service responded very quickly to their query	69%
We understood questions and concerns extremely well	61%

We understood questions and concerns very well	31%
Heard about service via another parent or from the Parent Carer Forum	23%
Heard about service from CAMHS or Social Care	15%
Heard about service from Local offer, leaflets and adverts about the service	15%
Felt that information, advice and support was extremely helpful	75%
Feel the service was neutral, fair and unbiased all the time	83%
Feel the service was usually neutral, fair and unbiased	17%

This is what people told about what difference the service made for them. Respondents could tick against more than one that applied to their situation

Comment	Numbers
I feel my child's needs are better understood than they were	50%
I now have a better relationship with the local authority's SEND team	25%
I feel more confident	50%
I have a greater understanding of the SEND COP and arrangements that should be made for my child	25%
I feel I am more involved in decisions about my child's education	33%
I am happier or less worried about my child's future	17%
I feel my child has benefitted as a result of the service being involved	58%

These are comments from respondents who told us of any other differences that their contact with the service made:

"Thank you for taking the time to talk to me this morning, it was a breath of fresh air to speak to somebody who understood my concerns and was able to impart information!"

"I hope to become involved with many of the services available to children with additional needs and also for parents. I'm sure our paths will cross again in the near future"

"Thank you for everything you've been absolutely brilliant" (School Admissions Appeal)

"Many thanks again for all your advice and assistance"

“Just having the SENDIAS Service in the background during the times when you may not actually need them at meetings is useful if anything crops up that falls outside of our knowledge, because the service is familiar with the Code, it brings a whole new way of presenting challenges to the school.”

“I feel that having the IASS present at my child’s meeting that I was listened to rather than just talked at by the SENCO. It was also interesting to get my child into the meeting as his thoughts and feelings on the issues were listened to in the meeting. Thank you.”

Disagreement Resolution and Mediation Service

The Local Authority has an approved list of Providers who can offer Independent Disagreement Resolution and Mediation Services. There are a total of 2 providers who can provide this service for parents, carer, children and young people.

During the period September 2017 to July 2018, IASS has sign- posted 4 families to the provider list. However, all parents will receive a copy of the Independent Disagreement and Mediation Leaflet to inform them about the service and they can then make the choice of which provider they would prefer to use. To our knowledge no one has taken up the service. The providers of this service for families in Hartlepool are:

- Andrew Brookes Solicitors, Stokesley
- Chapel Mediation Services, Barnard Castle

The provider list is reviewed annually and was last reviewed in September 2017. During this academic year, no one has used the disagreement, resolution & mediation service.

The Government extended the powers of the First-tier Tribunal (SEND), sometimes referred to as the ‘SEND Tribunal’, to make non-binding recommendations about the health and social care aspects of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans as part of a two-year trial. The trial will apply to decisions made on EHC plans issued/amended from 3 April 2018.

To date, you have only been able to appeal the educational aspects of EHC plans. The trial gives you new rights to request recommendations about the health and social care needs and provision specified in EHC plans, in addition to the educational aspects, when making a SEND appeal. This gives you the opportunity to raise all your concerns about an EHC plan in one place.

It is only possible for the Tribunal to consider the health and/or social care aspects of the EHC plan where you are already making an appeal in relation to the education

aspects of the EHC plan and the education aspect must remain live throughout the appeal.

What does this mean for parents and young people?

If you are unhappy with a decision not to issue an EHC plan, or with the special educational content or placement in the plan, you can make an appeal to the SEND Tribunal. This trial now gives you the opportunity to also request recommendations about the health and social care content of the plan at the same time. This will mean the Tribunal will take a more holistic, person-centred view of the needs of the child or young person.

IASS LA SEND Training – September 2017 to July 2018

Across the last academic year to complement and enhance the knowledge and skills of the Information, Advice and Support Service Officer the table below shows the training accessed and completed.

Training	Delivered by
Person Centred Planning	Local Authority
Enhanced Level 3 Legal Training on line	IPSEA
Enhanced Level 3 Legal Training - Face to Face	IPSEA
The Role of Social Worker in relation to EHCP	CDC
Managing Subject Access Requests	Local Authority
Children Missing out on Education	CDC
Tribunal Training - Single route of redress	CDC
GDPR Training	Local Authority
Working with Children with Mental Health Issues	CDC
Early Years SEND Access & Inclusive Training	CDC

Independent Supporters

As part of the SEND reforms all Local Authorities need to work with organisations that are providing Independent Supporters to ensure there are arrangements agreed locally to offer help from trained Independent Supporters to as many families as possible who request it. This is in relation to transfer of current Statements of Special Educational Needs and LDA's to the new EHC Plan, requests for an EHC Plan and the review of plans.

Funding from the DFE was made available for Information Advice and Support Services to apply for funding to develop capacity and support the Independent Support Programme. We used this funding to work with Hartlepool Carers who were successful in bidding for a contract to deliver Independent Support to fund a worker for 25 hours per week and to recruit volunteers to support the delivery of information and support. The funding was extended to May 2018.

Between April 2017 and May 2018, 84 families/young people have received support from this service ranging from:

- supporting transfers from Statements to EHCP's
- supporting the process of an EHC Plan
- Supporting during the review of an EHCP
- Providing information on personal budgets, the local offer and disagreement, resolution and mediation services.
- During this year a further 3 people have successfully completed 2 days of on line training and 2 days of face to face training on legal aspects of the reform and the role of an Independent Supporter. This increased the total number of Independent Supporter to 6.

In addition to this the DFE also commissioned the National Children's Bureau to recruit nationally and independent of Local Authorities, organisations to also deliver Independent Support. Hartlepool was partnered with Aspire Childrens Services and they received funding to continue its operation until 31st July 2018. As part of this agreement, Aspire have worked in partnership with the IAS Service through a signed Memorandum of Understanding. This gave families the choice of which provider they preferred to access. To increase further awareness of the service, we have been present at a series of promotional events and attendance at a number of Parent Carer Forum, Cake & Coffee mornings and SENCO Forums. In addition, the service was also promoted widely using the local Hartbeat magazine on a quarterly basis

that is distributed to every household in Hartlepool and via leaflets to a variety of locations across the town.

As part of the contractual arrangements an Exit Plan was produced to identify how Independent Support would be delivered once the funding ceased in May 2018. The delivery of Independent Support since July 2018 has come back under the remit of the IAS Service.

Parent / Carer Forum

The IASS works very closely with the parent carer forum 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future and raises awareness amongst parents and carers of the services that can be provided. The SENDIAS Service attends regular meetings of the group and is also co opted onto the Forum's Steering Group. Whenever possible, the service also attends regular information days organised by the forum and information shared via the PCF Face Book page

Local Offer

Hartlepool's Local Offer of Services continues to evolve and informs parents, carers, children and young people, including schools and professionals about what is on offer. All families that come into contact with the IASS receive a leaflet informing them about the service, which also includes a direct web link to the local offer page. The Local offer is also promoted through the IASS webpage, including a direct link.

Quality Standards

Following the implementation of the SEND Reforms in 2014, a set of Quality Standards were produced for local SENDIAS Services to self evaluate themselves against. The initial SEF was carried out in 2016.

With the new IASP funding new minimum quality standards have been developed. A further SEF will be carried out to review our position to determine where the service needs to focus to enable a full service offer to be delivered. The new minimum standards will also be evaluated by key stakeholders as part of the IAS Programme.

Future Development of IASS

The report highlights the need for continued support for our families and young people. To ensure that the service continues to meet the needs and demands of families, the following is a proposal for future development in the coming academic year 2018/2019:

- Continue to develop the dedicated webpage for IASS to ensure that information is accurate, up to date and easy to access

- To review policies and procedures in relation to IASS, including the implementation of GDPR
- To review the recording of Information on people accessing the service and how this may inform future priorities
- To promote the service to increase awareness and importance that the service can provide
- To comply with the requirements set out in the IASP funding agreement towards delivering a full service offer by April 2020
- Self Evaluate service compliance in line with the new minimum Quality Standards
- Build capacity to include dedicated work with Young people
- Work with Strategic Managers across Education, Health and Social Care towards agreed goals around joint commissioning of the service going forward
- Work collaboratively with our partners across the Tees Valley around co production
- Identify and deliver on training requirements in partnership with the Parent Carer Forum and the Regional SENDIAS Services

Tracy Liveras

Short Break & Parent Participation Officer

Information, Advice and Support Services

(September 2018)