



Rotherham SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Annual Report April 2017/ March 2018



Introduction:

The SEND Code of Practice (0-25) January 2015 states:

"Local authorities must arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care.

Information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service. Local authorities have established Information, Advice and Support Services (formerly known as Parent Partnership services) to provide information, advice and support to parents in relation to SEN. In addition, many local authorities provide or commission information, advice and support services for young people. Local authorities should build on these existing services to provide the information, advice and support detailed in this chapter (2).

Information, Advice and Support Services should be impartial, confidential and accessible and should have the capacity to handle face-to-face, telephone and electronic enquiries."



Information, Advice & Support Services Network

National Quality Standards

The IASS Network, supported by the Department for Education, published Quality Standards for impartial Information, Advice and Support Services to coincide with the new legislation. The document states that the Quality Standards are designed to help

- Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Services providing information, advice and support
- Service users and potential service users
- Other services that provide support for parents and young people

The Quality Standards Assessment Framework was developed by the IASS Network and is designed to:

- enable providers of information, advice and support to evaluate their service against the national Quality Standards.
- give service commissioners a framework for assessing the effectiveness of the service provided.
- support the collection and analysis of information nationally on the extent to which the Quality Standards are achieved.

As such this document will utilise the QS framework for reporting covering the following five categories;

- ❖ Commissioning, Governance and Management Arrangements
- ❖ Strategic Functions
- ❖ Provision of Information and Advice
- ❖ Supporting Individuals
- ❖ Professional Development and Training

Commissioning Governance and Management Arrangements

Rotherham SENDIASS continues to be funded from the base revenue budget in recognition of the statutory responsibility on LAs to provide such a service. However the Code of Practice states;

The joint arrangements that local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) must have for commissioning education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities must include arrangements for considering and agreeing what information and advice about education, health and care provision is to be provided, by whom and how it is to be provided.



Discussions have taken place with the Head of Inclusion and one of the Commissioners with regards to joint commissioning. It was agreed this discussion would be revisited at a later date.

The Service sits under the Head of Inclusion, and in turn is part of Education and Skills within Children and Young People's Service (CYPS). The LA is committed to providing a service at 'arm's length' to ensure impartiality of the Service.

The Service is based in Riverside House, this is a different building to the SEND related services, however on the same wing and floor as Commissioning, and Fostering and adoption teams as well as Early Years.

Service Monitoring Group

The Service Monitoring Group has met during this period. The group is predominantly attended by parents who represent different groups ie Forum, National Autistic Society, Rotherham Organisation for Downs Syndrome, however also has representation from different SEND services including HealthWatch. Terms of Reference are agreed and published on the website outlining tasks the Monitoring group can support with. The group meet 3 times per year. Minutes are shared with the Head of Inclusion. During this period the main task of the monitoring group was to work on the Service Specification. This included a considerable piece of work with children and young people who had used the service or who may use the service in the future, so their views were also at the heart of how the service functions and supports its service users as they feel is important. The Service Specification has been agreed during this period with the Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Service, The Director and Leadership Team and the Commissioners and is now on the service website.

Funding

The Growth Funding bid which was agreed from 2016 was also continued during this period. This bid requested that funding be allocated to support the offer of IAS for Children and Young People as well as build capacity for the parent offer for IAS. As such the Service was allocated an additional £98,000.

The Service was also able to retain the external grant funding from the Council for Disabled Children to provide Independent Support (IS) for Rotherham Families undergoing the EHC process. As the Service had been unable to recruit to a post specifically using the Council for Disabled Children funding, no additional funding was requested for this period.

Resources:

	2017/18 budget Including Growth Funding (Temporary)	CDC funding (Ring fenced)	Total
A: Staff	£180,999	£11,116	£192,115
B: Other Expenditure	£5,259.	£903	£6,162



C: Total Expenditure (A+B)	£186,258	£12,019	£198,277
D: Income	£196,823	£0.00 However £31,161 carry forward from previous period	£227,984
E: Net Expenditure (C-D)	-£10,565	£19,142 Which will be carried over to next financial year	-£29,707
Note - Underspend is due to LA spend moratorium and the Young Person's information officer reducing hours.			

Staffing for this period

Revenue funded:

Kerry Taylor - Service Lead (full time)

Donna Sanderson- Clerical Officer (0.6)

Angela Rodgers (secondment - SEND Advisor 0.8)

Andrew Lound - Children's Disability Information Officer - None SENDIASS role (0.5)

John Gilling - Independent Parental Supporter (Volunteer)

Growth Funding

Louise Mulligan - Children's Information Officer (0-16) - (0.8)

Sally Thomas - Young Person's Information Officer (16-25) - (full time until Sept 17, 0.8 from sept 17)

Rachel White (Secondment) - Referral Officer (Full time)

CDC funded:

Vacant - Young Independent Support Volunteer Coordinator (0.8)

Andrew Lound - promotion of Independent Support (1.5)

Angela Rodgers - SEND Advisor (Secondment 0.1)

Joanne Pilgrim - Independent Supporter (volunteer) - (Provision of equipment, training and expenses)

Catherine Hancox - Independent Supporter (Volunteer) - (Provision of equipment, training and expenses)

Marie Simmons - Independent Supporter (Volunteer) - (Provision of equipment, training and expenses)

Strategic Function

The Service's work is based around the five core activities of; Commissioning, Governance and Management Arrangements, Strategic Function, Provision of Information and Advice, Support to Individuals and Professional Development and Training. SENDIASS activity in terms of outcomes and impact on parents,





children and young people is measured through case studies, training evaluations, accessibility and feedback from individuals. Impact on children and young people includes feeling listened to, being happier to attend their provision, understanding other's points of view and supporting others to understand what is important to them. For parents it includes school and other professionals being more sensitive to parental concerns and views, parents being more able to understand and engage with practitioners, accessing services from other organisations and groups, feeling confident to deal directly with the school/setting when issues arise; awareness of legislation regarding Equalities, Exclusions, SEND etc.

Genuine Partnerships

Service staff continue to be involved in the Rotherham Genuine Partnerships. The Service has been involved in the Rotherham Voices Event during this period and have since linked the Monitoring Group of children and young people with the Voices implementation team to look at what is important for future work and priorities from their perspective.



Strategic Planning and Working Parties

Service staff have been actively involved in; The SEND Strategic Board, Autism Stakeholder Meetings, Area Inspection Preparation Meetings including Sub Group around participation, Local Offer Steering Group including Sub Groups and working parties, Independent Support meetings including exit strategy work, Tribunal Changes working group, Inclusion Development Days, Performance Board around Education Health and Care plans, Voices Planning, SEND Conference Planning, SEND Strategy, SEND Hub Subgroup

Rotherham Disability Network group. Stakeholders meeting
 CYPs briefing, SEND conference, Voices preparation, Trafford voices planning, Charter planning for Mexborough, Voices implementation, Voices Focus group, Different but Equal.

The service has also been heavily involved in 16 consultation activities with children and young people. This has included consultation on the Local Offer, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Transformation, SEND Sufficiency Strategy, SEND Policy.





Support to Inclusion Service

The service has also offered support to interview the candidates for the Educational Psychology Service during this period. Service staff have also met with the Education Other than at School (EOTAS) staff to discuss the exclusion legislation and guidance. This meeting led to training being delivered which will be mentioned within the training section.

Support to others

The service has also offered support to the following during this period;
 Parents Forum Drop in sessions
 PCF Post 14 event (SENDIASS Stand)
 Newman Parents evening (SENDIASS stand)
 Hilltop Info Evening (SENDIASS stand)

Regional and National links

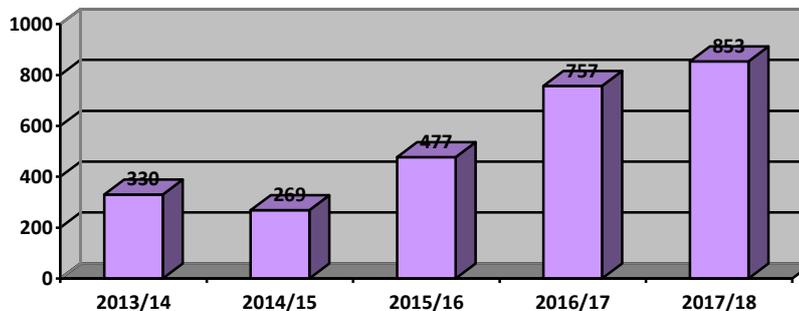
During this period the service has linked with Regional SENDIASS to share practice and training opportunities, access national information and feedback and discuss the remit of SENDIASS as a wider topic. The Service Lead met with the new SENDIASS Manager of Doncaster to look at practices around working with children and young people.

The Service Lead took part in a National Piece of work to review SENDIASS across the nation. The work was commissioned by The Independent Support Programme Board. The review took place in January and February 2018 and was carried out by 3 National Children's Bureau consultants and 3 Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) Managers. 45 IASS were invited to take part, representing a cross section of in-house and outsourced services of varying size. A report was issued and shared with IASS National Network, and the Independent Support Programme Board.

Provision of Information Advice, and Supporting Individuals.

Note - Rotherham has 7,081 SEND CYP (15.8% of CYP aged 0 - 19)

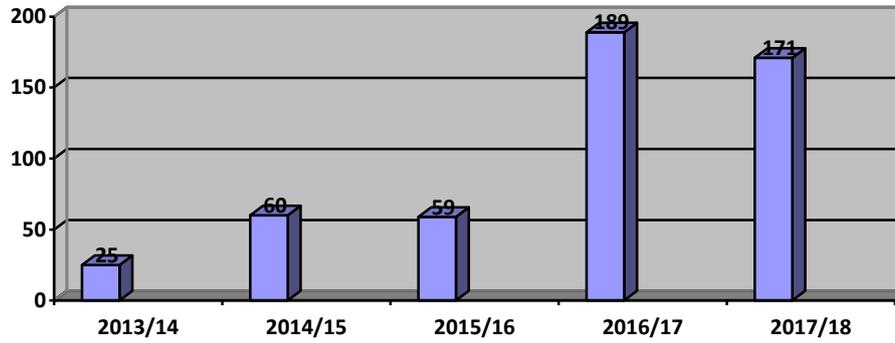
Number of New Referrals to the Service (including parents/carers, children and young people)



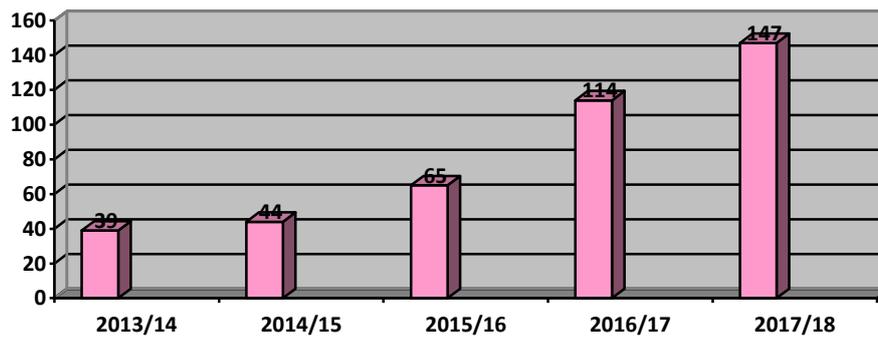
This indicates SENDIASS has offered IAS for only 12% of CYP with SEND in Rotherham if each referral to the service reflects a new service user.



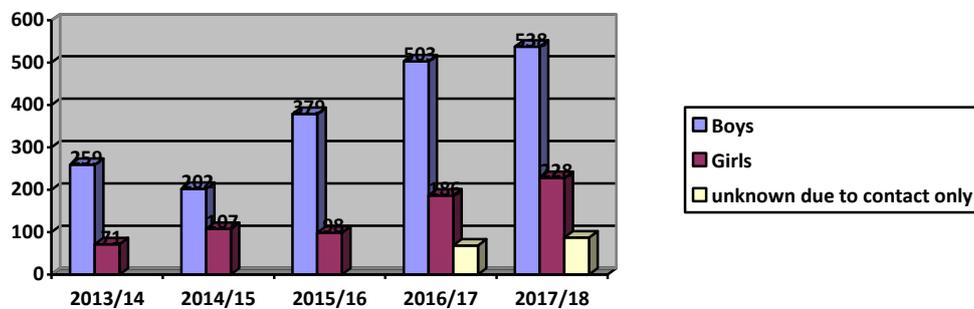
Number of calls to the service dealt with as a contact only



Number of referrals to the service with no special provision made and no SEN recorded

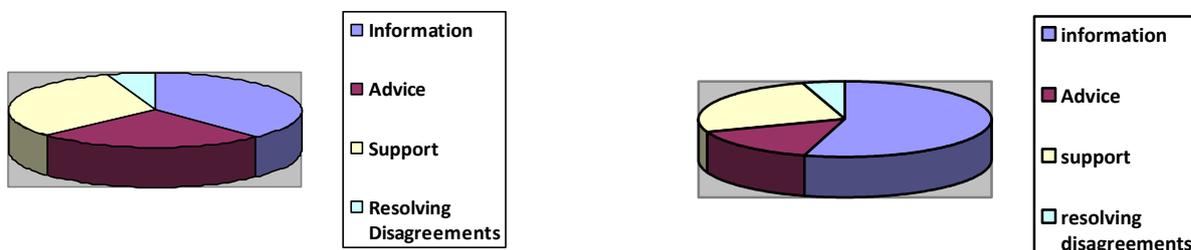


Number of referrals broken down into gender





Nature of new referral 2016/17 compared with Nature of new referral 2017/18



	2016/17 Financial Period	2017/18 Financial period
Number of ongoing referrals from previous period	134	200
Statement	63	4
SEN Support	297	264
EHC Plan(as of Sept 14)	215	351
Level of commitment (on-going and new referrals)	1:316 2:252 3:88 4:6 There are 133 cases yet to report on as they are still open.	1:343 2:331 3:60 4:16 Remainder yet to report on as they are still open or were contacts only
Number of meetings supported	298 6 mediation meetings 8 governor 1 Independent Review (exclusion) 23 with LA and parent 216 school/college based 44 service user only (ie to provide support for views in writing etc.)	739 18 mediation meetings 9 exclusion meetings 29 MAP meetings 261 school or college based LA and parent - 1 Health only - 1 420 service user only



	Being Impartial, Information, Advice and Support	
Number of referrals who used the service only once per child this year	352 (including contacts)	351 parents 52 children 45 young people <small>(Note - parents may access the service separately to the child and so this may account for the increase in numbers exceeding 853)</small>
Number of referrals who returned to the service more than once for the same child this year	405 referrals which accounts for 161 children	307 referrals which accounts for 127 children and young people

Ethnic Minority Monitoring

The 2011 census indicated 8.1% of Rotherham's population are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. The main ethnic group being Pakistani and Kashmiri. 76% of referrals to the service are from White English/British or other background. 7% are recorded from minority ethnic background with the majority being of Pakistani background, the remainder of cases were not specified. This data suggests there is an increased access to SENDIASS from the Black and Minority Ethnic population from last period, however it still suggests more work needs to be done to publicise the IAS offer around this group.

Gender

While boys count for 50.7% of Rotherham schools population, in this period boys accounted for 70.2% of referrals to the service. This over representation of boys over girls has historically been seen nationally by Parent Partnership/SENDIASS services. However, this is a slightly improved gap from previous year of 73% boys to the service.



Looked After Children

Service staff work alongside colleagues from Social Care. In this period the Service has received 9 new referrals involving a 'looked after' child (1.1% of new referrals to the Service which is a decrease from previous year of 1.8%



Referrals to Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal

9 referrals were made to SENDIST against Rotherham LA within this timescale.

During this period 39 service users contacted the service with the sole purpose of gaining information, advice and support around SEND Tribunal. This is almost double from last period. 5 service users also specifically contacted SENDIASS around Mediation. Advice given around Tribunals could include; the process and timescales, the need to consider mediation where necessary and how to action this process, the options available which may not result in a tribunal. This may include ways forward such as: looking in detail at the reasons why the LA has made the decision they have and how this could then be used to support processes in the future, utilising the timescales to appeal wisely to ensure additional evidence is available to support ongoing discussions with the LA via mediation or informal discussions, considering what the support currently looks like for the child or young person at SEN Support and offering advice and support around further discussions with the school or setting.

During this period SENDIASS supported one parent at a formal Tribunal Hearing. The outcome of which was in parents favour.

Formal Mediation

During this period 23 mediation cases were entered into. SENDIASS supported 16 cases with mediation meetings during this period although a few children and young people were also supported at these meetings too. (This is more than double from previous period - 6).

Support at mediation may include things such as; preparation beforehand ensuring the service user has a clear understanding of the process, possible outcomes, and clarity around their situation and points to share/questions to ask. It could also include encouraging self-advocacy and where appropriate asking questions of the service user to prompt their thought process based on prior knowledge and discussions. SENDIASS also acts as a point of reference to the legislation around the EHC, mediation and appeals process which may consist of reminders around the relevant legal tests which would need to be considered if a tribunal were to be lodged.



Case work development

Parents contacting the Service for the first time are able to have an in depth conversation with Angela Rodgers (SEND Advisor) about their concerns and receive detailed advice and information, this has been followed up in writing and posted to the parent. The majority of cases received a service within 5 working days.

Ongoing parental case work support is provided by Kerry Taylor and Rachel White. Sally Thomas and Louise Mulligan provide case work involvement for children and young people. A significant amount of casework involves actively engaging with parents/child/young person, schools and LA staff to prevent or resolve disagreements. The volume and complexity of case work has increased during this period. During this period 35% of



parent service users went on to require more in depth 1:1 support in the form of ongoing case work involvement, following the initial in depth conversation, advice and follow up written information being received. This is a decrease of 2.5% compared to last period (37.5%). However this remains an increase in cases as there has been a 12.7% increase of referrals to the service from previous year.

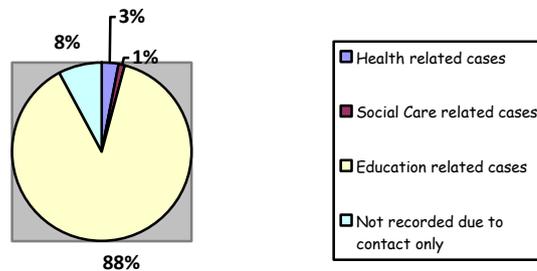
Exclusions:

Over the April 16 - March 17 period, the service has been contacted by 58 service uses requesting information, advice or support around Exclusions from school. (A slight increase from previous year)

Education, Health and Social Care:

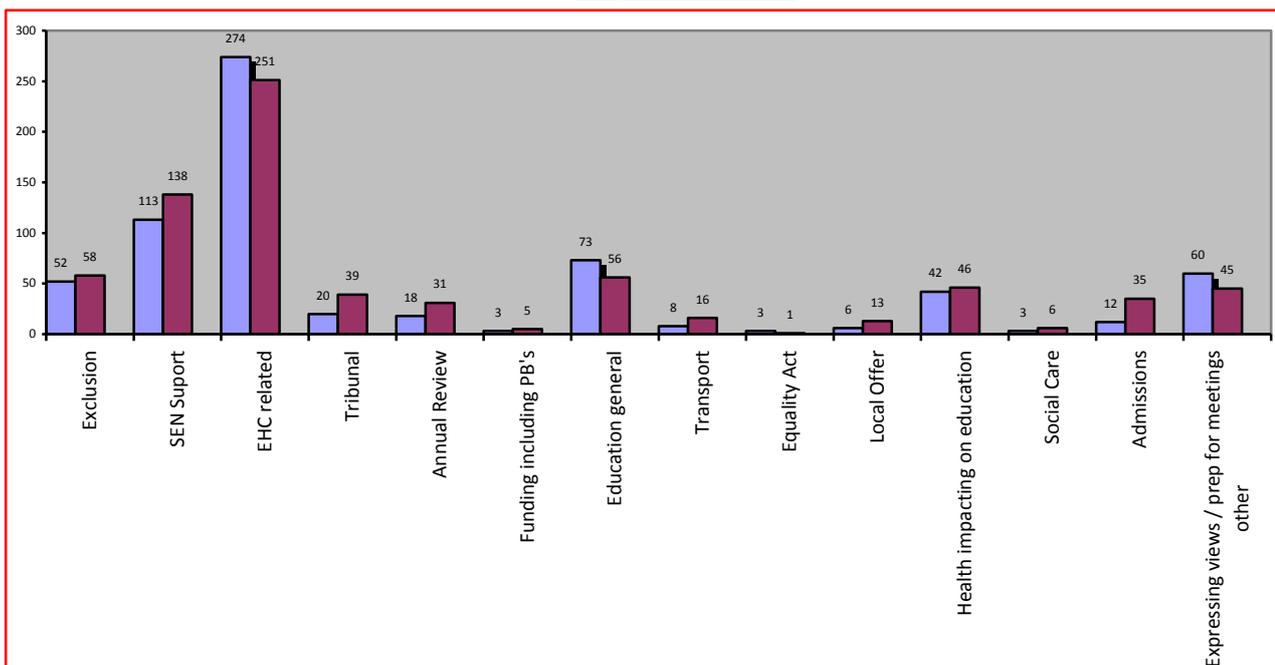
Since the SEND reforms, the Service has extended duties to provide IAS around Education, Health and Social Care. The following chart provides information relating to each area service users contacted the service for.

Breakdown of cases around Education, Health and Social Care



Breakdown of topics for education related cases

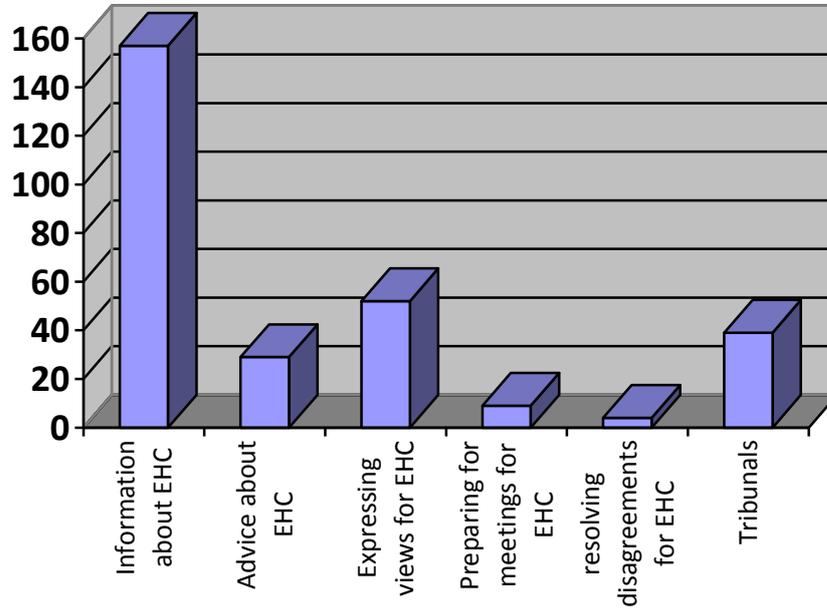
2016/17 blue and 2017/18 purple (note this doesn't include some cases which were dealt with as a contact or email and so didn't provide all information)





Breakdown of EHC related cases.

As the number of cases who are EHC based is significantly higher than other areas and topics it is useful to see how this is broken down further.



Working with Children and Young People

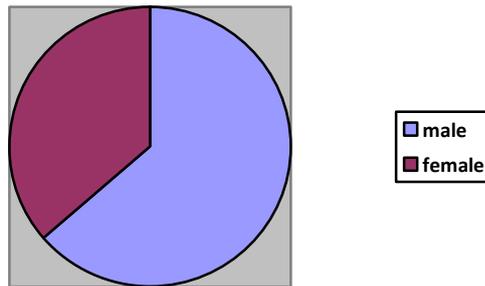


Child sorted pictures and speech bubbles to demonstrate how different activities made him feel

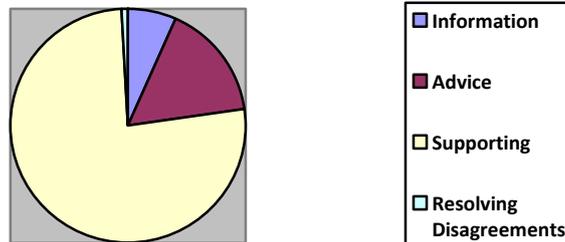
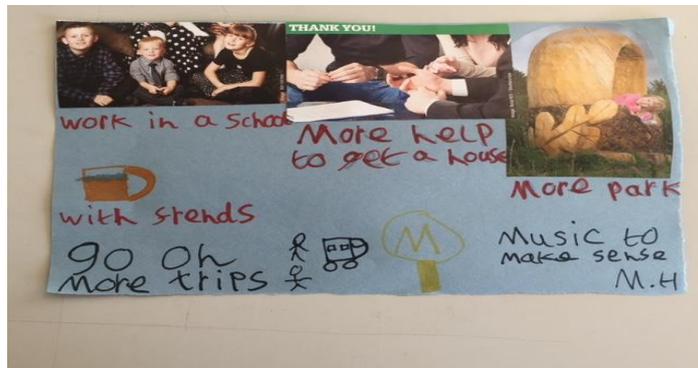


	2017/18
Number of children (0-16) accessing IAS	58
Number of Young people (16-25) accessing IAS (note this service was not fully active whilst recruitment process was underway)	47

Gender of Children /Young People Service Users



Nature of New Referral for children/young people





The Role of the Independent Supporter (IS)



During this period, Independent Support has continued to work within the Rotherham area. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Service, Core Assets, the EHC Assessment Service and the Parents Forum Ltd is fully operational. The Referral Protocol is deemed by all parties to be working well. Regular meetings and discussions take place between SENDIASS and Core Assets to continually assess the role, its development and consider other avenues for service promotion.

During this period 64 service users have specifically requested an Independent Supporter. Of these 9 were dealt with by the SENDIASS volunteers and 55 were referred to Core Assets as parents either didn't have a preference of which service they worked with or SENDIASS IS was at capacity. As yet we have not received a referral specifying Core Assets over SENDIASS. However service users may contact Core Assets directly if this is the case.

Information and Publicity



Schools have a duty to inform parents and carers of SENDIASS at the time when SEND is identified. All schools, settings and SEND related services have received copies of our SENDIASS postcard to share with parents, children and young people. Leaflets have also been distributed at SENCO events and relevant SEND locations for the 0-16 and

16 - 25 Information Officers. The service details are also placed on all LA letters with regards to the EHC process. There were no specific publicity projects using outside agencies during this period but staff continued to publicise the Service through Presentations to: ASC parent group, PEST early years group, Special Educational Needs Coordinator's (SENCO's), and Early years SENCO's.



Website

Rotherham SENDIASS has its own dedicated website which went live on the 1st May 2015

Summary of terms used:

Sessions: Included on multiple reports, sessions track how often the site was visited, and what actions were taken during each visit. A session defines a period of consecutive activity by the same user, and persists until a user stops interacting with the site for a period of 30 minutes.

Page views: measures how often a specific page is visited. (Example If a visitor visits Page A, goes to the homepage, and then comes back to Page A, it's counted as two page views)

Referring sites: Where the traffic is coming from (ie google, direct, corporate site)

Sessions: 4420 (a reduction of 419 from previous year)

Users: 2821 (2746 of them 'new' users) (a reduction of 215 from previous year)

Page views: 12'396

Top five pages:

Homepage - 2582

Contact us 1699

parents 966

children 801

support 760

team 424

Top five referring sites:

Rotherham send local offer: 49.45%

Rotherham.gov.uk: 21.70%

Yahoo: 4.40%

Assyst (clicked by us when a job has been logged): 2.75%

Ashwoodprimary.org: 1.65%

Although there seems to have been a small decrease in the number of sessions to the website from previous year, the number of new users is a very positive step. However there has been an increase in service users searching the 'contact us' page suggesting they intend to make specific contact either via email or via the phone perhaps to gain more specific advice to their situation.

More service users have come through to the SENDIASS site from the Local Offer Website than previously suggesting the Local Offer Site is receiving more 'traffic'.



Professional Development and Training

Training Accessed

Early Years presentation - re 30hr funding
Education and Skills transformation briefing
Foundations for Communication
Education and Skills development day
Inclusion Development day
Signs of safety
Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA) level 1 on line and face to face
Equality and diversity online
Data protection refresher online
Data handling online
GDPR and Cyber Awareness online
Early years training at York
IPSEA L2 online
CAMHS Expert
IPSEA L2 Face to Face
Voices Day
Attachment Disorder training day by fostering services
Autism sensory training day
IPSEA Preparation for Adulthood workshop
Inclusion dept training day at Winterhill- included FGM
Early Help Assessments workshop

IASSEN workshop on Personal Budgets in EHCPs

Training Delivered

SEND Conference
Autism Basics day 2 presentation x2
Exclusion Training to EOTAS
Foundations for Communication (supported with delivery)
Parents SEN Support & Funding workshop
Sensory Workshop
First Steps Training (2 days)

Summary

What are we worried about?

- The Service continues to be solely funded by the LA. The SEND Code of Practice specifies that SENDIASS should be jointly commissioned.



- Growth Funding ends March 19. This funding covers 3 posts within the service including the statutory functions for Children and Young People.
- Although service reach has improved, the service is still only reaching upto 12% of the SEND Children and Young People within Rotherham
- Service reach for some vulnerable groups needs further work.
- There is a need to further support the voice for children and young people including informing policy and practice.

What's working well?

- Continued increase in service use. (The service has a 217% increase since 2014/15 when the SEND Reforms came into effect)
- The service continues to have an increase in referrals where no SEND has been previously identified. This initial contact with the service provides information about SEN Support from the outset with a view to speaking with the School SENCO's and Class Teachers.
- The service has experienced a huge increase in supporting service users at meetings. (147% increase from previous year).
- The number of young people accessing IAS in their own right has significantly increased since a specific post around this role was filled.

What needs to happen?

- For the Service Lead to continue discussions with regards to commissioning of IAS for children, young people and parents.
- For the Service Lead to continue with discussions pending the additional growth funding money coming to an end.
- For the service to look at hard to reach and vulnerable groups and ensure they are fully aware of the service offer and how to make contact.
- For the service to consider alternative ways in which IAS can be accessible and to implement more creative ways in which service reach can be increased being mindful of service capacity.