



Rotherham SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Evaluation of the Service
April 2016- March 2017





Introduction

Rotherham SENDIASS was launched in April 2015 and was built on the Rotherham Parent Partnership Service which had been established since 1994. The service evaluates its offer by asking service users to complete a service questionnaire.

Open and closed questions and value judgements have been used in all questionnaires. Not all questions have been answered by respondents, and some have responded to more than one point within the same question. The percentage figure has been calculated according to the number of respondents for that question.

Service Offer

For the majority of this period of evaluation, the service offered IAS to parents of children and young people with SEND (0-25), Children with SEND (0-16) and from February 2017 Young People with SEND (16-25). The Service has also offered Independent Support to parents and young people who are going through the EHC process although continued to work closely with the partner organisation Core Assets.

A questionnaire has been sent to parents two to three months after referral to the Service. Data gathered over a period of 12 months, referrals made from April 2016 to March 2017 has been used to inform the evaluation. The questionnaires are colour coded in order to monitor different time periods whilst maintaining anonymity. The initial part of the report is based on the duty to work with parents only.

During this period 477 questionnaires were sent out and 66 were returned, a return rate of 13.8%. This is a 0.2% decrease in returns from previous year.

Reasons why parents contact the Service

48% of respondents said they contacted the Service for advice, 14% for support in expressing their views, 26% for information and 12% for help in resolving disagreements.



Most parents contacted the Service after hearing about it via Schools (30%) or other parents (19%). 14% came from Voluntary Community Sector. 11% via Health Services which is a 3% increase from previous year, and 7% of contacts came from service publicity. 6% of contacts came from Social Care and 13% came from Educational Services.

Value Judgements

Parents were asked to indicate their response to particular statements using a range from 'yes very' to 'not at all'. Six of the questions asked are also in line with other IAS Services nationally and so can provide some comparison for this financial year which will be reported towards the end of the parent evaluation.

How the Service Operates

The majority of responses were positive and were in the 'yes very' and 'yes' categories. 99% of respondents felt the service was friendly and welcoming however only 90% felt it was easy to make contact. Service users have experienced a short wait for a return call this year which is a direct result of the increase in service use from the previous year (from 477 to 757 service users.) 97% of Service users who responded to the evaluation felt they were well listened to. 97% felt they had been treated fairly and with respect. 3% were unsure if this had been the case. 100% of respondents would feel happy to contact the service again and 96% said they would recommend the service to other parents. 100% of respondents were confident the service was confidential which is 2% increase from the previous year. However only 87% felt information, advice and support offered was impartial. With 11% unsure if this was the case. This is a dramatic fall from previous year's figures (96% feeling the service was impartial in 2015/16). The number of service users who felt the service was not impartial has remained static from previous year, however there is an increase in the number of service users who seem unsure if the service is impartial (from 2% in 2015/16 to 11% this year). None of the service users qualified this with any further comments and so it is not clear why they feel this is the case. 89% felt they had a clear idea of what the service does and how it operates however 9% felt unsure.



Measuring Impact

96% of respondents felt the information we gave to them was clear, easy to understand with 4% were unsure if this had been the case. 95% felt information we had given was helpful. 5% were unsure if this was the case. 97% also told us they felt more confident and knowledgeable about their situation and felt more able to share their views, wishes and feelings about future situations. This is a 4% increase from previous year. 95% felt any written information we gave them was useful. Written information tends to be either SEND related factsheets or letters containing details of the information they shared with the service on first contact and advice on the options available to them based on this conversation. 92% stated that they were satisfied with the service we gave them. This is a decrease of 1% from previous year and again could be as a result of the service feeling stretched. 5% stated they were unsure if they were satisfied although 100% stated they would be happy to contact the service again. 3% responded that they were not satisfied with the service we offered.

Website

Service users were asked if they had made use of the Service Website. 37% of respondents found the website to be either helpful or very helpful, 62% reported they hadn't used it and 1% reported that it had not helped in their situation.

Service Publicity

50% of respondents felt the service was adequately publicised, a increase of 8% from previous year. 24% felt the service was not adequately publicised and 27% were not sure. Some service users suggested we advertise in all schools or attend school 'drop ins' to help with publicising the service offer.



Making a difference

82% of respondents answered positively that our service involvement had made a difference to their situation. This is a 5% increase from the previous year. 8% were unsure if our involvement had helped. 10% told us that our involvement didn't make a difference.



We asked if following our involvement their relationship with schools/settings/services/LA changed. 50% stated their relationship had remained positive, 17% stated their relationship had remained challenging. However, 31% reported that their relationship had improved since our involvement.

As word of mouth is an important factor in parents using the Service parents were asked for quotes that could be used on service literature, these included:-

"As a parent of a child with additional needs, life can be overwhelming with the amount of services we have to deal with. Being able to talk to sendiass has been invaluable for me"

"really good advice and support offered, the situation I needed help with was daunting and the support made it easier to deal with"

"I used SENDIASS to assist in getting an EHCP for my son. The lady was lovely. Explained what I needed to know, advised on the best way forward and was always happy to answer my many questions"

"Impartial, clear advice given. Although the service did not advocate in meetings their presence at meetings resulted in school following SEN procedures when had not happened previously."

"I am not one to ask for help as I just get on with whatever needs doing but having met Rachel I knew I could trust her and she always does what she says she will do. Thank you"



"This is an exceptional service. Friendly accepting and knowledgeable. Explanations clear and objective whilst maintaining empathy and understanding why there might be strong emotions. A small intervention with significant outcomes. Thank you"

Other quotes included;

"Very helpful and informative with helping the issues my son had at school"

"It's amazing and so supportive"

"I was lost and confused and needed support and advice- SENDIASS did put my worries and concerns into clear advice."

"Get in touch, very helpful and helped me to understand things better"

"Very helpful and able to help out with my enquiry. Nothing was too much trouble."

"I would recommend these services they are very helpful, helped me a lot. I would definitely say to parents use this service."

"I felt overwhelmed and out of my depth dealing with the issues at my sons school. The ladies on the other end of the phone have helped me to feel confident and pushed forward with what was right for my child"

"I would say to other parents, please get in touch as you're great for support and information"

"extremely helpful, always there to give advice and very positive attitude also listen to views"

"friendly, informative, respond very quickly"

"use the service, everything helps"

I thought I would be pressured to send my children to a different school until SENDIASS told me that it was mine and my child's choice and the school of our choice would have to abide by that. I found them very helpful"

"very helpful. I could not have made progress I made without them"



We also asked parents for suggestions to improve the service. Parents gave the following responses;

- To make parents aware of the service
- To be contacted more easily
- Have an advert on the back of all prospectuses in Rotherham Locality
- Your service is good but need more detail, you should provide practical support for parents especially those who don't speak English or have English as their second language. Also parents want to know their rights as parents
- You should publicise your service on every school noticeboard or reception office and teachers should tell parents. I think you should provide service for parents who don't speak English.
- If you refer someone to core assets please explain that this is not SENDIASS. I only discovered this at a meeting.

National Comparison

The Quality Standards for Information, Advice and Support Services emphasise the importance of assessing the outcomes of the work done by Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS). One of the key sources of evidence highlighted in the Quality Standards is feedback from service users. Historically IASS (formerly Parent Partnership Services) have always used a variety of methods to seek feedback from service users. This has included the use of post intervention questionnaires, telephone interview, focus groups, suggestion boxes, and analysis of complaints. Some of these methods are inevitably idiosyncratic and it would be difficult to attempt to collate the results at a national level. However some kinds of outcome assessment are relatively straightforward to standardise. Following a period of consultation the IASS Network developed a set of 6 core questions that all IASS were then asked to incorporate into their service user feedback questionnaires.

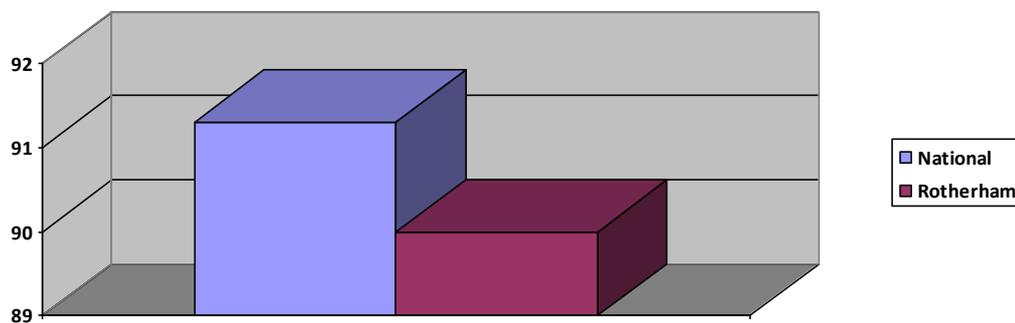


Nationally a role out programme to gather service user feedback based on the 6 core questions has now started. Rotherham weren't included in this programme until phase 3 and so will not be truly reflected until next years' service evaluation. However it is still possible to look at the data collected against the full year's evaluations for Rotherham.

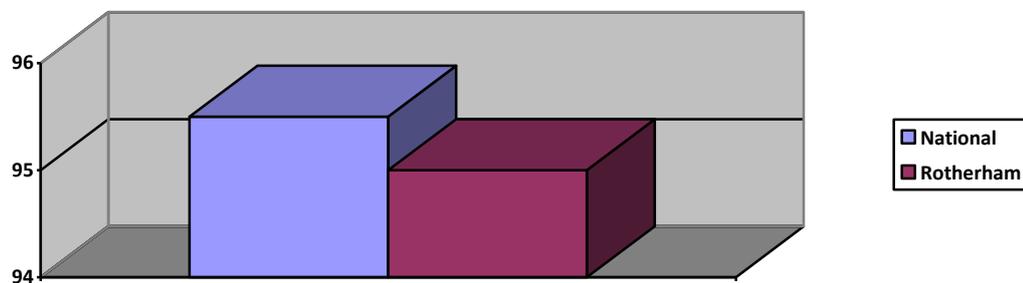
Nationally SENDIASS services include a range of relatively small IASS serving unitary authorities through to IASS covering large shire counties and more than one authority. They also include in-house and out-sourced IASS.

Comparison of phase 1 services to Rotherham SENDIASS on the six specified questions

Percentage of parents who felt it was easy to get in touch

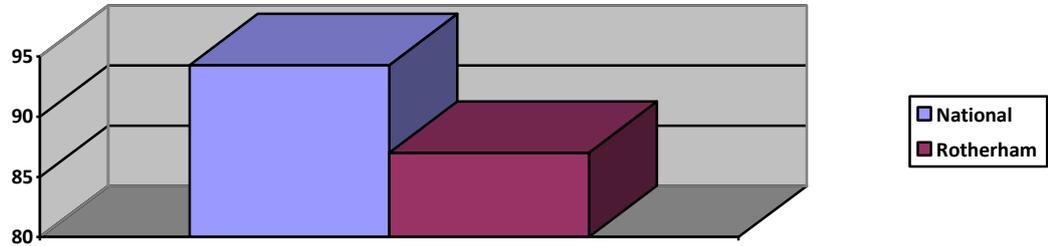


Percentage of parents who felt the information given was helpful

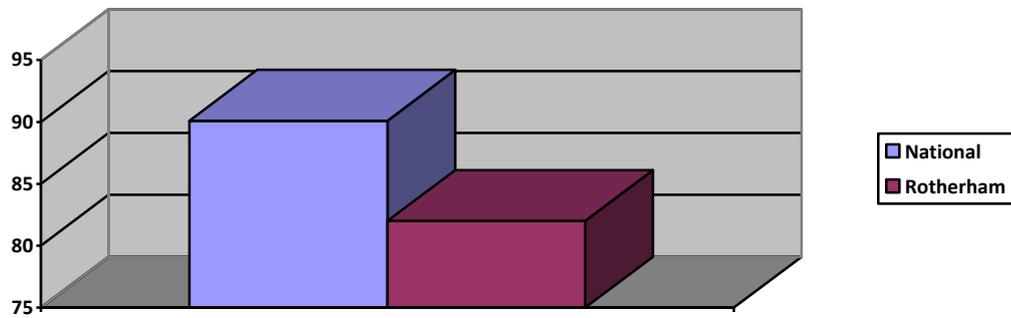




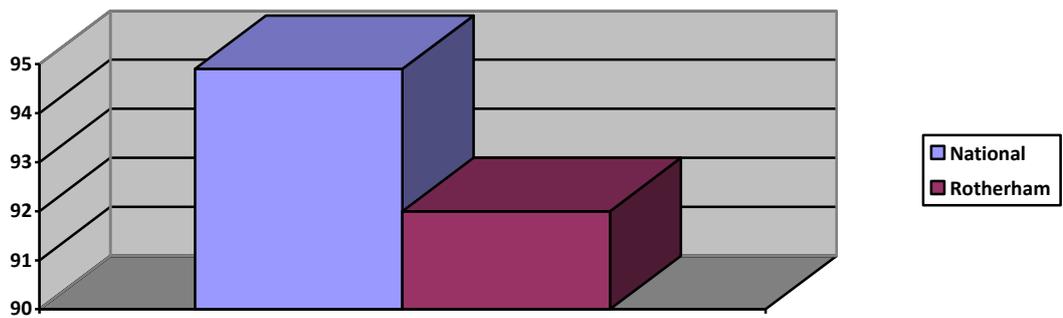
Percentage of parents who felt confident the service was impartial



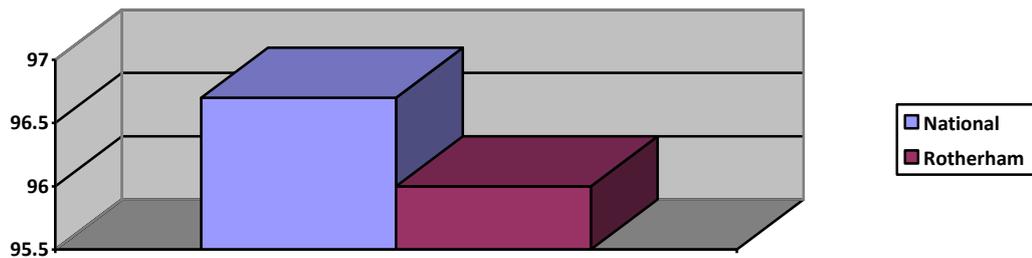
Percentage who felt the Service made a difference to their situation



Percentage who felt satisfied with the service offered



Percentage who would recommend the service to others





Service Evaluation for IAS offered to Children and Young People (0-25)



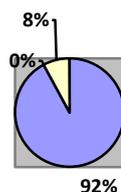
During this period the majority of work has taken place with children (0-16) as the post which works directly with young people was vacant until February 2017.

61 service evaluations were sent out for this period with 11 returned. A return rate of 18%. The evaluations focused on 5 core questions and offered an opportunity for comments. Service users of this age were asked the following questions and given the opportunity to comment; yes, no, or not sure

1. Have I listened to you?
2. Is school easier now?
3. Are you happy to share private information with me?
4. Have I helped you to understand other people's point of view?
5. Have I helped people to understand what's important to you?

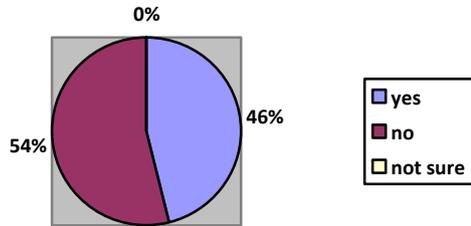
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Have I listened to you?

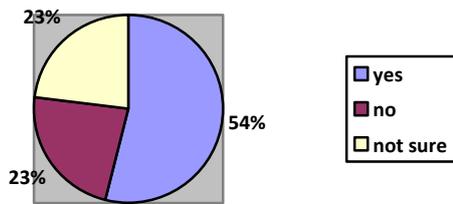




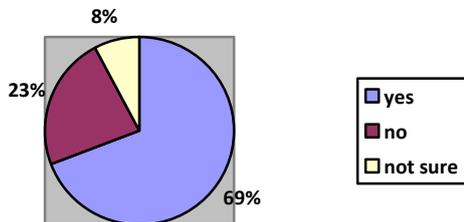
Is school easier now?



Are you happy to share private information with me?

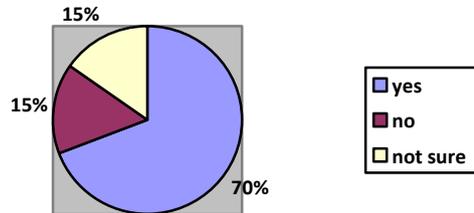


Have I helped you to understand other people's point of view?





Have I helped people to understand what's important to you?



Additional Comments Made by parents of children/ young people who were supported.

"My advice would be to get in touch asap. Louise was very helpful and understanding. She also got down to my little boys level of understanding."

"Having help from SENDIASS helped me to get CAMHS on board with our situation, also the support to my child was good. He trusts our SENDIASS worker and confides in her."

Independent Support (IS) Evaluation

Rotherham SENDIASS is currently under contract to provide Independent Support to parents and young people within Rotherham who are going through the EHC process. This service is also delivered by Core Assets from the Voluntary and Community Sector. The Two services have a memorandum of understanding in place which offers freedom of choice for service users. This way of working is proving successful within Rotherham. Within SENDIASS, IS is offered by volunteers to the service. The following information is based on service users who have accessed SENDIASS Independent Support only.

Service users were asked a series of questions following IS involvement and given the option of answering "yes very" "yes" "no" and "not at all". Both returns of service users answered positively to all questions. During this period 9 evaluations were sent out and only 2 were returned.



The questions asked are as follows:

1. Did you find it easy to ask for an IS?
2. Was your first contact with your allocated IS worker friendly and welcoming?
3. Were you treated with respect?
4. Did the IS worker explain how they could help?
5. Was it easy to make contact with your worker when you needed to?
6. Did your allocated IS worker listen to you?
7. Did your IS worker help you to understand the process of EHC Assessment?
8. Did your IS worker help you to feel included in the EHC process?
9. Did your IS worker ensure your views wishes and feelings were fully included in the EHC process?
10. Did your IS worker help you understand the draft plan (if issued)?
11. At the end of the process was your IS worker clear that their involvement would end?

Future improvements of the Service Evaluation Report:

The SENDIASS Service Annual Report has been shared with Director Leadership Team prior to being published on the website. There have been some suggestions made on improving the layout and quality of the report for the 2017/18 period. The photo's used in this report are of SENDIASS service users who have given us their permission to use their images. As part of our continuous improvement, we look to make future reports more representative of our user base and will utilise the Signs of Safety methods in its headings when reporting. These will be incorporated in to future reports.