

Rotherham SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Annual Report April 2018/ March 2019



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."



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.

Minimum Standards

During this period, a set of Service Minimum Standards were published and endorsed by the DFE and Department for Health. These standards are to replace the Quality Standards. As such the service aims to become compliant with the new Minimum Standards and this document will be written under the headings of;

- ❖ Commissioning, Governance and Management Arrangements
- ❖ Strategic Functions
- ❖ Operational functions
- ❖ Professional development and training for staff.

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.

Some historic 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 Educational Psychology Service, and in turn is under the Joint Commissioner for Education and Health for 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, Fostering and Adoption Teams as well as Early Years.

Service Monitoring Group

The Young Peoples Service Monitoring Group has met during this period, however there has not been a full monitoring group called during this time. Terms of Reference are agreed and published on the website outlining tasks the Monitoring group can support with. This area of work will be a focus for the next financial year as part of the IAS Programme.

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 statutory offer of IAS for Children and Young People as well as build capacity for the parent offer for IAS.

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.

The Information Advice and Support Programme also started during this period and as such the service was allocated an additional £6,400 from CDC (Council for Disabled Children) to start the process of a 2 year forward thinking plan.

Resources:

| | 2018/19 budget Including £98,000 Growth Funding (Temporary) | CDC funding (Ring fenced) | Total |
|----------------------------|--|--|--------------|
| A: Staff | £178,305 | £10,624 | £188,929 |
| B: Other Expenditure | £6,191.82 | £1,482 | £7,674 |
| C: Total Expenditure (A+B) | £184,497 | £12,106 | £196,603 |
| D: Revenue Budget/Income | £191,539 | £19,142 carry forward from 2017/18 and £6,400 2018/19 Allocation | £217,081 |
| E: Net Expenditure (C-D) | -£7,042 | -£13,436 Which will be carried over to next financial year | -£20,478 |

Staffing for this period

Revenue funded:

Kerry Taylor - Service Lead (full time)

Donna Sanderson- Clerical Officer (0.6)

Sarah Lowe - SEND Advisor(0.8) in post from August 2018

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

Additional Growth Funding

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

Sally Thomas - Young Person's Information Officer (16-25) - (0.6)

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

CDC remaining funding:

Andrew Lound - Children's Disability Information Officer (0.3)

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

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

Strategic Functions

The Service's work is based around the four core activities of; Commissioning, Governance and Management Arrangements, Strategic Function, Operational functions and Professional Development and Training for Staff. 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

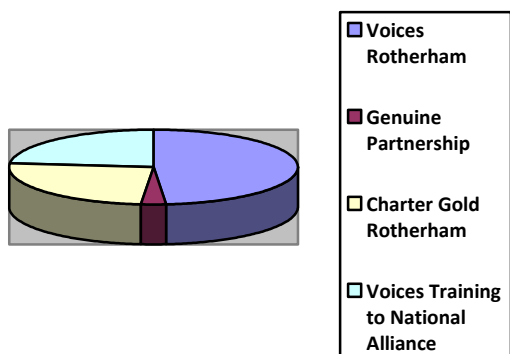
Service staff continues to be involved with Rotherham Genuine Partnerships. The Service has been involved in the Rotherham Voices Action Plan during this period and has a link with the Monitoring Group of children and young people and the Voices implementation team to start work around the Voices plan. SENDIASS involvement with this action plan will be funded via the external funding from CDC (bid 5)



This financial year the service has used 1.17% of service capacity to be involved with Genuine Partnerships including the work of Voices.

The following chart shows how the 1.17% has been utilised and on which areas of Genuine Partnerships and Voices.

Note - Genuine Partnerships also offers packages to other LA's as a traded model, however Rotherham SENDIASS have not been involved in this area during this financial year.



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, EHC Changes working group, Voices Planning and CYP Voices group, Different but Equal including their event, Exclusions and Admissions, developing careers and apprenticeships with the Job Centre Plus, Post 16 offer and CAMHS waiting list discussions, Local Offer peer review - York, South Yorkshire Foundation Inclusive Action Group and The Short Breaks discussions.

The service has also been involved in consultation activities with children and young people. This has included consultation on the SEND Sufficiency Strategy, how to make the library more SEND friendly, and children's views on the EHC paperwork.

Support to others

The service has also offered support to the following during this period;

Parents Forum Drop in sessions
CDC, The Children's Disability Family Support Team,
The Children's Disability Team.
Dinnington Resource Centre coffee morning
Hilltop coffee morning
High Greaves coffee morning
VAR drop in
International Mixed Ability Sports Group



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 took part in a national piece of work to develop the SENDIASS Minimum Standards which have now been agreed and endorsed by DFE and the Department of Health.

The Service was also visited by Laura Bond from the Department of Education. This visit was to see some of the positive work that takes place within SENDIASS and paid particular attention to the work we do with Children and Young People. Laura sent the Service a follow up letter stating;

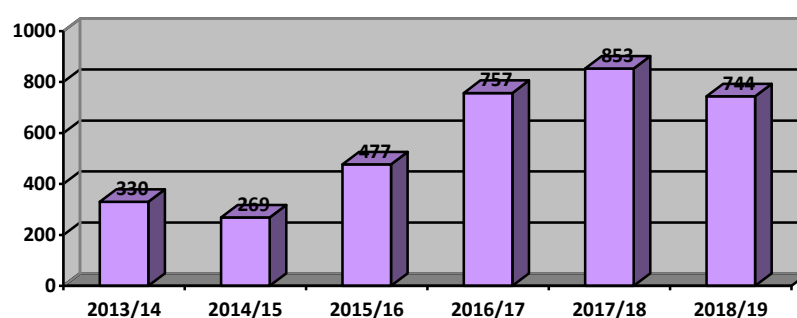
'I was particularly impressed to visit a service that is doing so well at fulfilling all of the statutory functions required in the Code of Practice and doing so in a way that enables parents, young people and children to have a meaningful say. I was also pleased to see the way that Rotherham MBC have supported you with an allocation of sufficient funding to enable you to be a proactive service and to offer good quality support to parents, young people and children.'

Operational Functions

Note - Rotherham has 7,513 SEND CYP (16.7% of CYP aged 0 - 19)

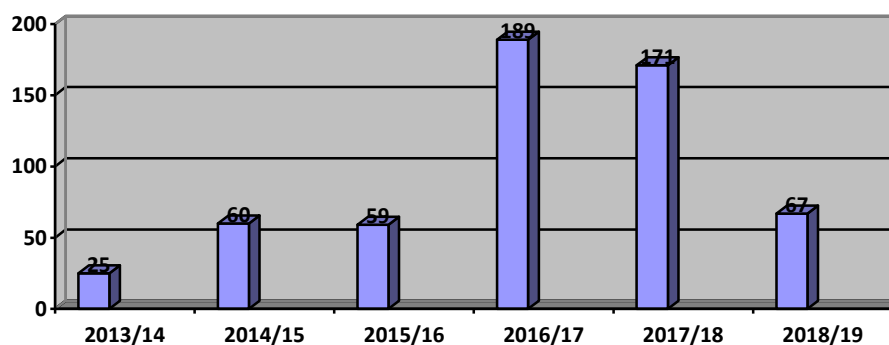
Rotherham has 2,008 children and young people aged 0-25 on an EHC plan as of October 2018

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

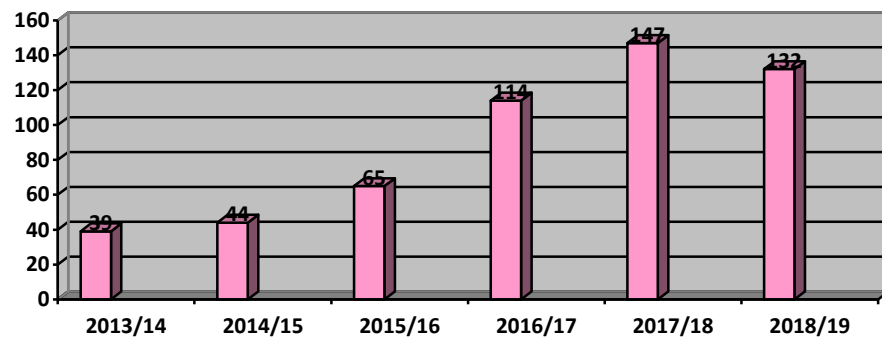


This indicates SENDIASS has offered IAS for 9.9% of CYP with SEND in Rotherham if each referral to the service reflects a new service user.

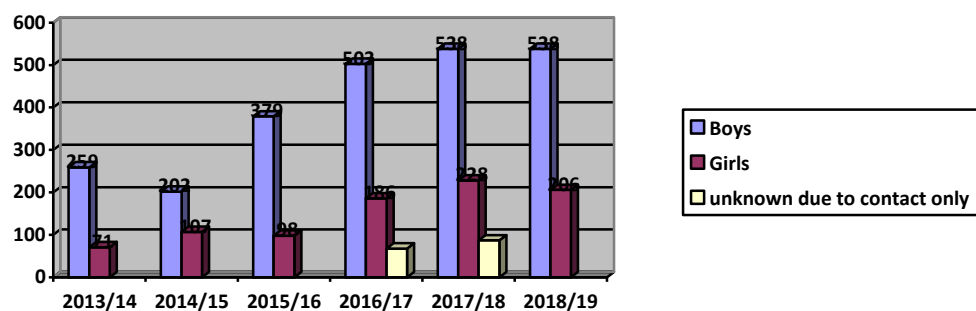
Number of calls to the service dealt with as a contact only (parents requesting generic information to which a factsheet can be post for example)



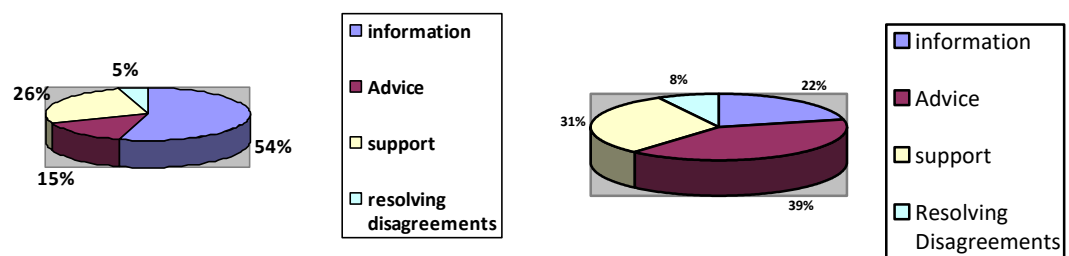
Number of referrals to the service with no special provision made and no SEN recorded



Number of referrals broken down into gender



Nature of new referral 2017/18 compared with Nature of new referral 2018/19



| | 2017/18 Financial period | 2018/19 Financial Period |
|--|---|---|
| Number of ongoing referrals from previous period | 200 | 228 |
| Statement | 4 | 0 |
| SEN Support | 264 | 322 |
| EHC Plan(as of Sept 14) | 351 | 290 |
| Level of commitment (on-going and new referrals) | 1:343 2:331 3:60 4:16 Remainder yet to report on as they are still open or were contacts only | 1:223 2:341 3:152 4:22 Remainder yet to report |
| Number of meetings supported | 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 | 876 42 mediation 23 exclusion 17 map 212 school or college based 24 LA and parent 5 Health only 527 Service user only i.e. to provide advice/ put views in writing/ prep for other processes ie. Mediation or tribunal, prep for meetings that can't be supported due to capacity/prior commitments or due to parent being happy to self-advocate etc. Tribunal related 21 Tribunal hearing support 3 days |
| Number of referrals who used the service only once per child this year | 351 parents 52 children 45 young people | 341 parents 20 children 21 young people |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | (Note - parents may access the service separately to the child and so this may account for the increase in numbers exceeding 853) | |
| Number of referrals who returned to the service more than once for the same child this year | 307 referrals which accounts for 127 children and young people | 350 referrals which accounts for 144 children and young people However this figure includes 42 situations where the parent used the service separately to their child/young person |

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 (3.1%).

84.6% of referrals to the service are from White English/British background. 2.82% are recorded from Pakistani background, 1.34% from a White/Black Caribbean background and only 0.4% from a Gypsy Roma background. This data suggests there is a decreased access to SENDIASS from the Black and Minority Ethnic population from last period. 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 72.3% of referrals to the service. This over representation of boys over girls has historically been seen nationally by Parent Partnership/SENDIASS services.



Looked After Children

Service staff work alongside colleagues from Social Care. In this period the Service has received 10 new referrals involving a 'looked after' child (1.34% of new referrals to the Service which is a slight increase from previous year of 1.1%

Referrals to Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal

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

During this period 19 service users contacted the service with the sole purpose of gaining information, advice and support around SEND Tribunal. This is almost half from last period. 27 service users also specifically contacted SENDIASS around Mediation a

large increase from last year (5), this may indicate that processes and the language used is becoming more common place and service users have more of a desire to work towards an agreement without the use of tribunals. As the service supported in 42 mediation meetings, this suggests that calls coming into the service around Tribunal are also happy to try mediation first following SENDIASS advice. 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 2 parents at a formal Tribunal Hearing. The service also supported one service user through an Equality Act Claim with an outcome agreed outside of the hearing.

Formal Mediation

During this period 57 mediation cases were entered into by the LA. SENDIASS supported 42 cases with mediation meetings although a few children and young people were also supported at these meetings too. This is an increase from previous period (34).

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 Sarah Lowe (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 31.6% 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 3.4% compared to last period (35%). However the level of commitment, the number of meetings supported and increase in mediations shows that case content has become more complex this year than previous years. There are also less cases this year being dealt with as a contact only.

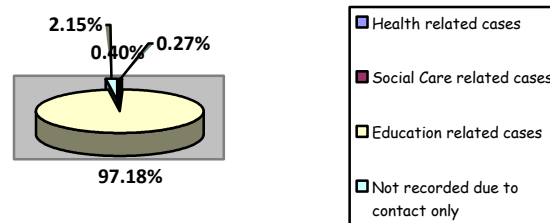
Exclusions:

Over the April 18 - March 19 period, the service has been contacted by 58 service users requesting information, advice or support around Exclusions from school. (Same as previous year)

Education, Health and Social Care:

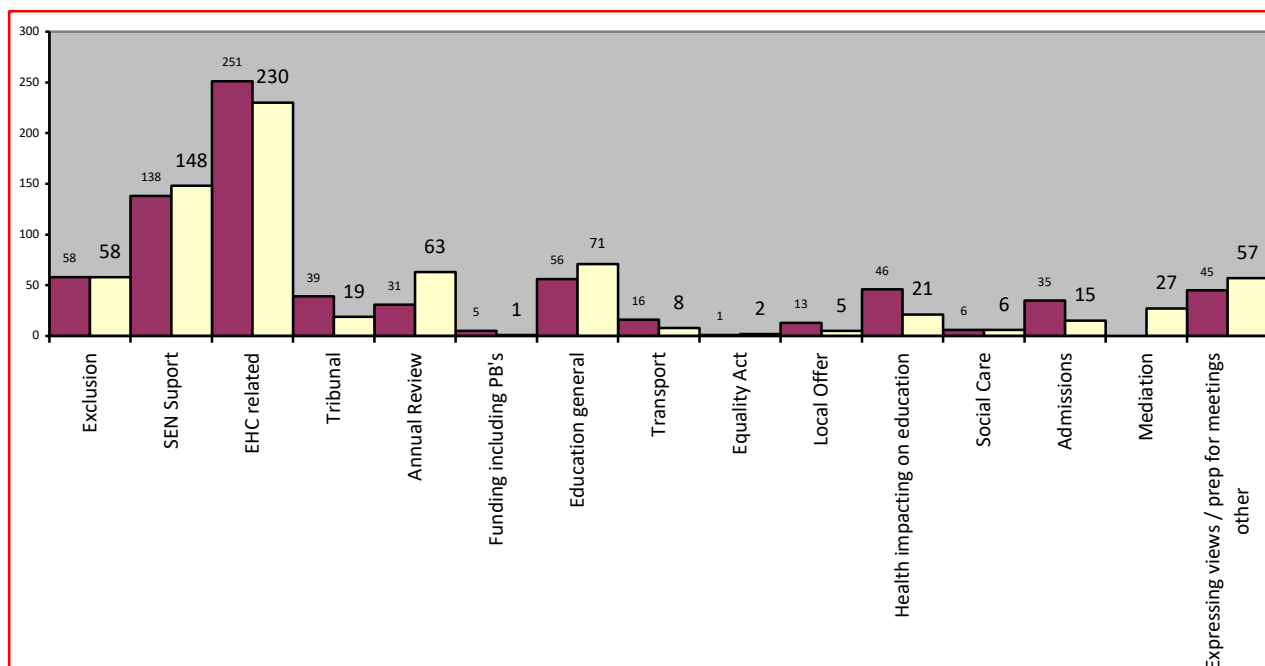
Since the SEND reforms, the Service has extended duties to provide IAS around Education, Health and Social Care. The following chart provides information relating to each area service users contacted the service for.

Breakdown of cases around Education, Health and Social Care



Breakdown of topics for education related cases

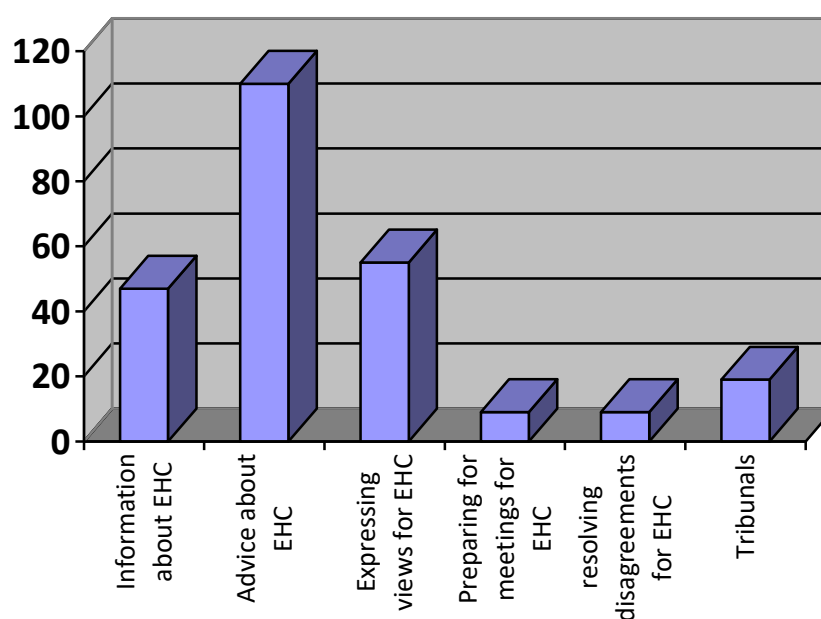
2017/18 purple 2018/19 White (note this doesn't include some cases which were dealt with as a contact or email and so didn't provide all information)



Note 2,008 children and young people have an EHC as of October 2018 in Rotherham. This indicates that SENDIASS supported with 11.45% of the cases who have an EHC.

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.



SENDIASS Workshops

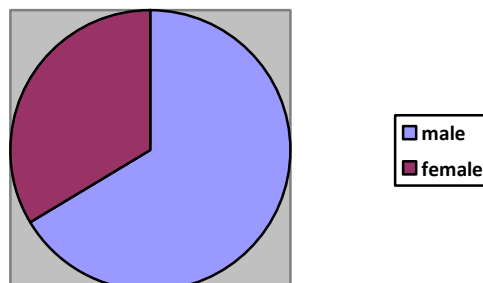
During this period 25 parents attended 3 different workshops on the topics of SEN Support and Annual Reviews. Feedback from these workshops was gathered and will be included in the feedback report.

Working with Children and Young People

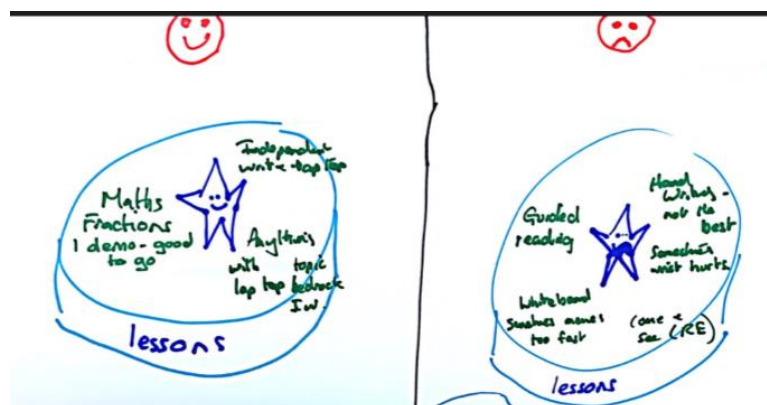
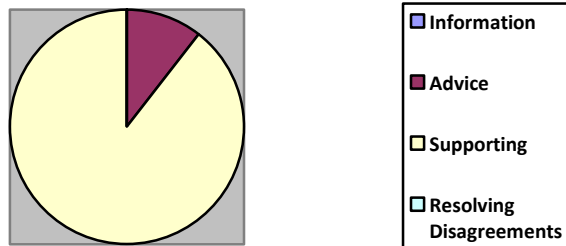


| | 2018/19 |
|--|---------|
| Number of new children (0-16) accessing IAS | 61 |
| Number of new Young people (16-25) accessing IAS | 34 |

Gender of Children /Young People Service Users



Nature of New Referral for children/young people



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. The Website is also placed on the Local Offer. Updates are added when appropriate.

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)

| | April - 2017 to March 2018 | Apr-2018 to Mar-2019 | Change |
|------------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Sessions | 4,420 | 6,358 | +43.85% |
| Users | 2,821 | 4,425 | +56.86% |
| Page views | 12,396 | 15,829 | +27.69% |

Top five pages:

| April 2017 to March 2018 | | Apr-2018 to Mar-2019 | | Change |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Page | Page views | Page | Page Views | |
| / | 2,582 | / | 3,434 | +33.00% |
| /contact us | 1,699 | /contact us | 2,183 | +28.49% |
| /parents | 966 | /parents | 981 | +1.55% |
| /children | 801 | /children | 978 | +22.10% |
| /support | 760 | /support | 757 | -0.39% |

Top referring sites

| April 2017 to March 2018 | | Apr-2018 to Mar-2019 | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| Source | users | Source | Users | |
| rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org | 180 | rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org | 118 | - 34.4 4% |
| rotherham.gov.uk | 79 | rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk | 104 | +10, 300. 00% |
| m.facebook.com | 35 | m.facebook.com | 57 | +62. 86% |

Professional Development and Training For Staff

Training Accessed (not all staff accessed all training listed)

Tribunal Training
 GDPR and Cyber awareness (e-learning)
 SEMH Conference
 IFCSA Training
 Ombudsman Training
 A Manager's role in recruitment and selection (e-learning)
 Keep them safe (e-learning)
 Equality and Diversity (e-learning)
 Training: Ipsea face to face level 2.
 Ipsea online level 2
 Signs of safety.
 All mandatory online training completed (includes safeguarding)
 Adolescent Mental Health - Witherslack Group
 Working with CYP with mental health issues
 Graphic facilitation
 Use of film to present CYP views
 Support to identify children with ASC
 Risk Assessments
 Nisai Learning - awareness and sharing of information
 Voices
 Safeguarding
 Online IPSEA level 3
 IPSEA Level 3 Face to Face
 Educational Visits Co-ordinator Training
 SENCO conference
 IASS Training days
 Roma communities and SEND conference
 Equality and Diversity training

Training delivered

Foundations for Communication x 2

Voices Alliance Training

Exclusions to Governors

SENCO Training

Parent workshops on SEN Support and Annual Reviews

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.
- Additional temporary funding from the LA is allocated on a year on year basis. This funding covers 3 posts within the service including the statutory functions for Children and Young People.
- Service reach has decreased slightly from previous year, the service is still only reaching a tenth of the SEND Children and Young People within Rotherham
- Service reach for some vulnerable groups needs further work.
- Service capacity remains stretched and case involvement is seeing an increase in complex issues which takes longer and more involvement to come to a close.
- There is a need to further support the voice for children and young people including informing policy and practice.

What's working well?

- The service has again experienced a significant increase in supporting service users at meetings. (18.5% increase from previous year).
- Service users are using the Website more than previous year.
- There has been an increase in the use of Mediation Services with SENDIASS Support.
- DFE has visited and feedback from this visit about what we offer was positive
- The Service is compliant with the majority of the minimum standards and its offer of IAS to all service users in all areas as specified in the SEND Code of Practice

What needs to happen?

- For the Service Lead to continue discussions with regards to joint 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.

Note - the above areas are identified in the IASP 2 year plan.