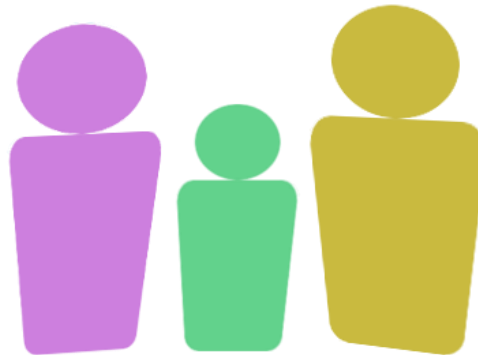




# Barnsley SENDIASS

Special Educational | Information, Advice &  
Needs & Disabilities | Support Service



## Barnsley SENDIASS Annual Report - April 2020

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*Please note reference to parents or carers in this report includes any person who is either a parent of the child and has parental responsibility, or who cares for them. Young Person refers to an individual aged 16-18.*

## Foreward

I hope you will find this, the annual report of Barnsley SENDIASS, interesting and helpful. The service is an impartial and confidential *Information, Advice and Support Service* (IASS) and is a statutory function of the Local Authority as outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0 – 25 (2015), where it 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 and disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This **must** include information, advice and support to take-up and management of personal budgets. In addition, carrying out their duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, local authority **must** have regard to the importance of providing children and their parents and young people with the information and support necessary to participate in decisions.*

[SEND Code of Practice 2015 - 2.1](#)

SENDIASS in Barnsley is an *in-house* funded IASS and situated within the People Directorate, Business Unit 3 - Children's Social Care & Safeguarding.

Barnsley Council is able to fulfil its statutory duty to provide information, advice and support via Barnsley SENDIASS, a separate and identifiable entity with the Local Authority:

*Information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service. Local authorities have established 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.*

[SEND Code of Practice 2015 - 2.4](#)

And that:

*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.*

[IASSN Minimum Standards 2015 - 2.5](#)

## Quality Standards Framework for an IAS Service

The Quality Standards Framework sets out the national expectations of good practice in the provision of impartial information, advice and support services (SENDIASS) to increase parental confidence in them. SENDIASS participate in the national benchmarking of these and submitted (September 2018) a service self-assessment.

The IASSN National Benchmarking exercise reports on SENDIASS in England. As a participating service we receive the report and this enables us to benchmark against our statistical neighbors. Barnsley SENDIASS is number 39 in the data report charts. Additional copies of the Benchmarking summary are available on the IASSN website, the link can be found at in the Appendixes section of this report.

## Background

What was previously The Parent Partnership Service (PPS), now known as Barnsley SENDIASS has been in existence in Barnsley since 1994. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (CoP) (2002) made Parent Partnership Services a statutory requirement for Local Authorities (LAs). A Local Authority was expected to provide a PPS 'in-house' or 'buy in' from an outside organisation. Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) has always provided information, advice and support in-house through its previous PPS and current SENDIASS.

The service has always been small in terms of capacity, although has had some additional temporary capacity through successful application for external grant funding. We have also secured an additional case worker permanently due to successful business planning.

## Service Structure

SENDIASS is line-managed by Head of Service for Safeguarding & Quality Assurance.

SENDIASS is located at Gateway Plaza (Level 6). This is in a separate location from other SEN children's services but close to Adult Mental Health.

Head of Service for Safeguarding & Quality Assurance	Diane Drury
SENDIASS Service Manager	Sarah Wike
SENDIASS Case Advisor	<i>In recruitment Q2 2020</i>
SENDIASS Case Advisor	Ria Jones
SENDIASS Assistant Case Advisor & Information Officer	James Stephenson
Business Support Officer 0.5	Karen Wilkinson

SENDIASS engages with service users to help shape the IASS offer in the local area. It has an active newly formed Steering Group who offer guidance and support to progress IASS in the local area based on needs of families. An annual survey of IASS takes place and the data is used to evaluate the service and inform the development plan for the coming year.

## Budget

The budget is centrally funded to provide 3 full-time posts and one part-time post and the associated on-costs for those staff. SENDIASS has support from a finance officer and IT systems within BMBC central resources.

In addition to the staffing budget SENDIASS has had the additional funding grant of £45,900 between April 2019 - March 31st 2020. This funding was used to purchase an IASS-specific CRM data recording system, fund 2 part-time Case Officers and Business Support. SENDIASS has successfully applied for a further £28,000 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31 March 2021. This enables the service to increase staffing of a part time officer and some additional business support.

Between April 2019 to March 31st, 2020 temporary 37 hours term time business support has been in place to help manage the telephone helpline and email/Facebook enquires. This was funded from grant underspend and is no longer sustainable long term.

## The Role of Barnsley SENDIASS

Barnsley SENDIASS is in place to ensure the LA can fulfil its statutory duty:

*The local authority must ensure children, young people and parents are provided with information and advice on matters relating to SEN and disability.*

This should include:

- Local policy and practice.
- The Local Offer.
- Personalisation and Personal Budgets
- Law on SEN and disability, health and social care, through suitably independently trained staff.
- Advice for children, young people and parents on gathering, understanding and interpreting information and applying it to their own situation.
- Information on the local authority's processes for resolving disagreements, its complaints procedures and means of redress.
- SENDIASS reports data of service activity to the LA commissioning, the national network of SEND IASS and the CDC grant funders.
- SENDIASS collects service user feedback to inform the National Benchmarking data collection of a SENDIASS and its local offer as an in-house service.

[SEND Code of Practice 2015 – 2.17](#)

## Working with Children, Young People and Parents Carers

To meet local needs, local authorities should consider providing the following forms of support through their information, advice and support services.

- Signposting children, young people and parents to alternative and additional sources of advice, information and support that may be available locally or nationally
- Individual casework and representation for those who need it, which should include:

*Support in attending meetings, contributing to assessments and reviews and participating in decisions about outcomes for the child or young person*

*Directing children, young people, parents and those who support and work with them to additional support services where needed, including services provided by the voluntary sector. These services should include support relating to preparing for adulthood, including housing support, careers advice and employment support*

- Help when things go wrong, which should include:

*Supporting children, young people and parents in arranging or attending early disagreement resolution meetings*

*Supporting children, young people and parents in managing mediation, appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), exclusions and complaints on matters related to SEN and disability*

*Making children, young people and parents aware of the local authority's services for resolving disagreements and for mediation, and on the routes of appeal and complaint on matters related to SEN and disability*

*Provision of advice through individual casework and through work with parent carer support groups, local SEN youth forums or disability groups, or training events*

[SEND Code of Practice 2015 - 2.19](#)

To meet the above requirements Barnsley SENDIASS offers:

- Direct telephone access providing confidential impartial advice, available five days a week
- Face to face contact, including video-calling.
- E-mail/Facebook communication
- Advice sheets and booklets to help parents and young people develop their knowledge and understanding to support them in their discussions with the LA, schools/settings and other statutory agencies
- Information about other agencies, e.g. voluntary agencies and health services which can offer information and advice about their child's particular SEN and Disabilities
- IASS in preparation for and/or attendance at meetings where necessary and/or appropriate
- Support and advice to settings, colleagues and organisations/services
- Support and advice to parents carers, children and young people either individually or in groups

## Referrals and Requests for Independent Information, Advice and Support

All referrals made to the service should be with the consent of parents and young people and where possible made directly by them. This financial year SENDIASS maintained the 50% growth in requests for IASS since 2015 and saw an additional growth of 7% in total cases supported.

September 2014 to August 2015 - IASS was provided to **309** service users

September 2015 to August 2016 - IASS was provided to **289** service users

September 2016 to August 2017 - IASS was provided to **578** service users

April 2018 to March 2019 - IASS was provided to **622** service users

April 2019 to March 2020 - IASS was provided to **582** service users

*Please note that between January 16th to 31st March 2020 there was a full-time case officer vacancy to a member of staff leaving so there was reduced capacity to provide case work by 50%.*

The current reporting period of Quarter 4 shows of the 389 cases covered by, 208 were ongoing cases and carried over from previous quarters and 181 were new cases to the service. This means 50% of the cases the service supports remain open at any one time. This trend is continuous in previous quarters reported and the impression of case-work as reported by Case Advisors.

Please note, the service has now implemented a CRM data recording system, and the figures for the service will be perceived to increase, as case-work will be recorded by Intervention Levels. As one case/intervention closes, if that case/intervention re-opens this will be recorded as a new case/intervention. This will allow a more accurate representation of the work of the service.

The Intervention Levels are guidance created by the Information, Advice and Support Services Network (IASSN). The new CRM system allows the service to record and report based upon these levels. Each 'piece of work' the service provides can be categorised under one of these levels, typically determined by the amount of time each 'piece of work' entails.

For example, IAS provided at Intervention Level One might entail the service providing information or signposting a service user to an external service. Intervention Level One might mean up to 2 hours of work provided. IAS provided at Intervention Level One is typically catered-for by the Information Officers who manage the telephone helpline and social media functions of the service.

A case at Intervention Level Two, is over a couple of hours and under '2 days in any six month period'. A case at Intervention Level Three would entail more detailed and complex work provided by a Case Worker, which might mean up to '2 days in any six month period' work provided. Finally, at Intervention Level Four 'more than 3 days in any 6 month' is typical amount of resources provided.

## Examples of Requests for Support – Case Studies

Below are a selection of Case Studies, explaining the work and outcomes of the service.

### IASS Intervention Level 4

Young person aged 20 rang the service herself after receiving a letter informing her that the EHCP needs assessment she applied for had been refused. She asked us to support her in a mediation meeting with the LA. She was attending college and was struggling with the academic work, she felt she needed more SEN support than college were able to provide, and therefore she applied for an EHCP needs assessment.

Representing herself with our support in a mediation meeting the LA maintained their position not to assess for need. This young person asked for our support to apply to the tribunal to appeal the refusal to assess decision, the LA then reviewed their initial decision and agreed to assess.

### IASS Intervention Level 3

A year 11 pupil at mainstream secondary school and transitioning to year 12 at a local college. The Young Person's parent asked us to support him independent of them in a meeting at college to help plan for their needs. We put two workers on the case, one to support parent and one to support the Young Person in their meeting.

The Young Person was able to explain their needs alongside their parent and college developed a support plan in readiness for their start of college in the September.

### IASS Intervention Level 4

A year 13 student, diagnosed ASD and Epilepsy, educated out of the local area in specialist college asked for help in preparing for and then attending with him for his Annual review of the EHC Plan. This involved meeting him in the evening to prepare his views for the review meeting and then supporting him in the review meeting to express his views about his provision and describing his aspirations for his future. This young person was successful in gaining further funding to sustain his current placement for the following year.

### IASS Intervention Level 4

A Year 8 student struggling to access education asked for our help. They knew what they wanted and sought our support in meetings between themselves and school. This young person is aware of their feelings but doesn't feel valued for those feelings or that their views are appreciated. Working together we have jointly presented these views.

### IASS Intervention Level 4

A year 13 student, diagnosed ASD, asked for direct support to complete DSA paperwork in preparation for university, this involved meeting with him working through the paperwork and completing it with him. This required several meetings to go through it and make sure it was an accurate reflection of him and his needs and then to compile it so that it was presented well, and he was successful in his application.

Year 13 student, diagnosed Epilepsy, chronic fatigue and mental health challenges asked for support getting the right help in place at university as she was struggling to explain these to her tutors. We met with her and scoped out her challenges and then attended meetings with her to help her articulate her views and help create a better working plan.

### IASS Intervention Level 2

Year 6 student, diagnosed ASD/ADHD is struggling at school. She feels that the teachers don't listen to her and that they don't really understand her needs. We have worked with her and her parents to gather her views and use these to advocate for her in Early Help meetings.

Year 6 student, diagnosed ASD regularly asks to meet with his IAS officer. In these meetings at home we talk using art to discuss his worries. We then share these with his parents to help prepare for meetings at school.



## Information and Publicity

SENDIASS has been able to increase its publicity and the provision of a more efficient information service through:

- Social Media – Facebook and Twitter
- Networking locally
- The Local Authority Local Offer
- A SENDIASS web page on BMBC website
- National Network of IASS website

## Training

Through the National IASS Network we are provided with training specifically tailored to the role of IASS. Within our service we share the training opportunities so that all staff have opportunity to access these.

- All staff have achieved levels 1, 2 and 3 of the new legal training expected of a SENDIASS.
- 2 members of staff have completed the leadership program to gain level 5 and level 7 qualifications
- 1 member of staff has attended IASP managers training
- 2 members of staff have completed safeguarding training
- All staff have completed mandatory staff training via POD

## Networking and Collaboration

SENDIASS continues to work across all agencies including voluntary organisations to ensure effective communication and partnership links are maintained. This includes local parent carer groups.

SENDIASS Staff have attended all regional network meetings. We have also provided peer support to our Yorkshire and Humber IASS colleagues.

As part of the IASSN Minimum Standards, the IAS service is expected to have;

*‘a steering-group or advisory body which includes which includes representatives from service user groups and key stakeholders from education, social care and health.’*

IASSN Minimum Standards 1.7

The service has re-established the Steering Group, taking time to initially grow the group, working with parents and carers, using a ‘Facebook Group’ as a hub for coordinating and communicating with stakeholders who are a part of the group. The online group supplemented physical meetings and proved particularly useful during the pandemic lockdown. The group supported the service in recruitment and selection, virtually using video calling interviews which many members participated in. The group also directed the service about providing a virtual IAS, especially pertinent during the pandemic lockdown and this is evidence with posts and engagement on the Facebook page. The service will continue to develop the Steering Group, which currently has around 40 members, although not all are active – the service will create a Terms of Reference, so the participation is meaningful, and members know what their involvement entails. The service will invite stakeholders from education, health and social care.

The service will use the same model for developing two further groups; A Peer Mentor/Volunteer project and SYPS – the SENDIASS Young Persons Service, a function to engage and communicate with service users who are Young People (16 to 25).

## Informing Local Policy and Practice

SENDIASS informs and influences the development of local SEND practice by providing information to the Local Authority about the needs and wishes of parents, children and young people. This is undertaken through quarterly data reporting and attendance at strategy development meetings. However, attending strategy meetings has not always been of high priority due to the demand for case work and in particular when the IASS manager has had to cover higher level of case work when staff capacity was reduced due to vacancy within the service.

## Monitoring of Service

SENDIASS Barnsley participates in a national evaluation of IASS's. This involves conducting a survey using nationally determined questions with local service users after a case is closed. The feedback is compiled and used as a national measure of IASS.

Internal monitoring is undertaken through:

- Annual public survey of service user views
- Review of case work activity and feedback given via a direct survey of 30 service users
- Review of the Equality Standards Framework for an IASS
- Formal supervisions procedures and annual performance and professional development reviews

## Barnsley SENDIASS – The Data Story

Data is collected through service user feedback, this can be at time of case closure and through a face to face interaction, telephone conversation, or using social media to conduct an online survey. We engage in the LA complaints and compliments processes and report/respond to feedback accordingly. We record cases by child/young person and collect data around their information (key stage, SEN status, additional need etc.). We use both service user feedback and data around case presentation to report IASS activity and themes.

## Direct Feedback Survey

During May, the service contacted 30 parents/carers who the service has supported in the past year. Of these 30, 50% responded and provided feedback. The service asked 6 questions;

- 1) How did the service contact the family?
- 2) Did they find us helpful?
- 3) Did they feel we had the right knowledge around SEND related issues?
- 4) Did we take time to meet their child/children as part of our case work role?
- 5) Did they get an outcome?
- 6) Would they recommend SENDIASS to others?

### 1) How did the service contact the family?

Parent has known <Case Worker> a very long time	Such a long time ago thinks it was through CAMHs when it was known as Parent Partnership	Approx. 13 yrs. ago with older sibling via a friend who used Parent Partnership		Asked for re-assessment and was provided with SENDIASS contact details	Telephone signposted by FSW
Phone call	Telephone	Via FSW referral	Rang us	Emailed us when recommended by a friend	Phone
Telephone helpline	Mentioned by another source and mum searched online to telephone us	Phoned you as recommended by FSW	Telephone – sister informed me about SENDIASS	Via child's school	Telephone provided by CAMHS

### 2) Did they find us helpful?

Always helpful. Very much appreciative of our service	Yes helped us with loads of school issues, EHCP and transport.	Very, we wouldn't have got here without you	Yes and still do. Felt like a weight lifted just having the support of <Case Worker> and got more results from two meetings than we did from child starting at that school. Good to have someone with the right information.		
Yes	Yes definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes very	Yes very
At first it was difficult as the main issue was Mental health. Parent tried again and SENDIASS were able to offer support with child's education needs. A grey area to start with and often mental health leads onto Special Educational needs.		Very helpful. <Case Worker> is an absolute hero. Helped to get EHCP for children	Yes overall but did have some issues. Parent does not want her comments to reflect negatively on SENDIASS at all but: initially it was very difficult to get an appointment with <Case Worker> due to workload. On one occasion a meeting was arranged and caseworker was off sick but no one was informed and the meeting had to be re-scheduled on that day.		
Yes very. I don't know what we would have got through it without you <Case Worker>. It felt like a massive thing to have someone believe and understand you. Someone like you as an advocate for your child as it always felt like school didn't think I was genuine.			Office staff did try to resolve but too late. Sometimes felt like SENDIASS were there to mediate between LA, Schools etc rather than undertake key work. At one point went to an independent advocate for which we had to pay but when <Case Worker> left we were assigned <Case Worker>.		
			Many times when caseworker did not have availability to attend meetings and so <Case Worker> intervened. Overall some hiccups but wouldn't want to complain about the service. Working with <Case Worker> has been brilliant.		
Exceptionally		Yes very much so		Absolutely	

### 3) Did they feel we had the right knowledge around SEND related issues?

Yes	Yes 100%	Yes, definitely	Yes, definitely	Yes	Yes definitely
Yes always got answers to questions asked	Always worked closely with <Case Worker> and she has exceptional knowledge of SEND issues		Absolutely yes	Yes <Case Worker> is amazing and made me feel like I wasn't alone.	Yes when met <Case Worker> and <Case Worker>
When working with <Case Worker> they would always be unsure and have to research before coming back with an answer. Another example was caseworker took a look at the EHCP and gave little comment on its contents but when another caseworker looked at it there were loads of comments and improvement recommendations.			Yes definitely. Such a more positive experience to have <Case Worker> there understands everything and explains what the next stage is. Wouldn't have got the specialist provision without you.		
Yes, to be honest you have helped us out loads of SEND things that we didn't know and <Case Worker> given us direction, sent lots of useful links with all the up to date information to point us in the right direction.			Yes very helpful. <Case Worker> knowledge and help goes above and beyond. I/we would be lost without her support.		Absolutely

### 4) Did we take time to meet their child/children as part of our case work role?

<Case Worker> did meet child but since <Case Worker> took case it has all been meetings		Yes. Met all 5 children	Yes	Not needed as was mostly school meetings
Yes, my child really likes <Case Worker>	Yes and the case worker really understands the child and their needs which is exceptional	Always took time to work closely, parent very happy with the timely and efficiency of the service and manner in which it was done.		Yes very much so. <Case Worker> has been absolutely amazing and has a good relationship with child too. Done home visits as well as support in meetings
Yes <Case Worker> has visited home and met child	Yes. <Case Worker> even encouraged 'child' to attend the LA meeting and she actually said something in the meeting.	Not initially as wanted to get things sorted behind the scenes but case advisor has met with child x2 now.		Not initially as meetings were mostly about EHCP but new caseworker has met child and we think it's a good idea.
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes. Met with <Case Worker> and was encouraged by the support and understanding	Yes. 'Child' always got involved in meetings both at school and when visiting your office.

### 5) Did they get an outcome?

Current issue is still ongoing and an outcome yet to be concluded but in the past years issues have been resolved with satisfactory outcome. The current particular issue has been ongoing for approximately 2 years,		Yes always managed to get the outcome needed with <Case Worker> help	Yes. Applied and got EHCP to then get specialist provision at Highfields so some of the anxiety of school was lifted. Now focusing on the ASD screening and sensory issues. <Case Worker> recommended another Ed Psy assessment which helps massively. In turn this has helped with ‘childs’ chronic fatigue as I believe that the ASD massively impacted on this. So still lots of ongoing assessments but still come a long way and now in the right direction with your help.	
Ongoing	Ongoing process currently in appeal going to Tribunal		Got EHCP but still a working progress and SENDIASS case advisor supporting.	Yes all done
Yes in relation to previous school. New school still ongoing			Still ongoing. Long slow process	Yes regarding both school placement and yes to the LA complaint
Still ongoing issues		Not yet concluded	Still ongoing. Annual Review cancelled due to lockdown	Yes
Yes got an EHCP and now at College with support and understanding to help him		Yes. Got the EHCP, sorted out the issues with school and finally a transfer to another placement. There are still some ongoing things that you are helping us with though.		Ongoing and may need to go to tribunal

## 6) Would they recommend SENDIASS to others?

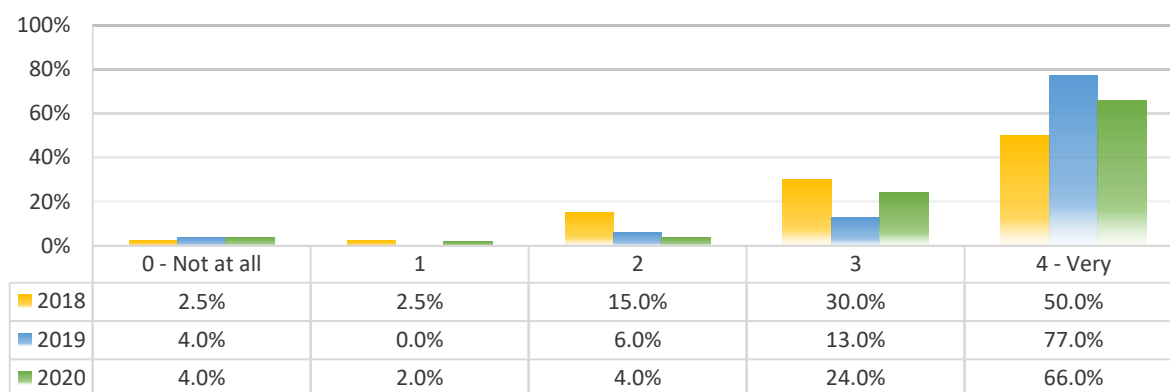
Yes - always	Absolutely - yes	Yes. Absolutely	Absolutely 110%	Absolutely	Absolutely
Yes I do	Definitely	Yes definitely	Yes and I already have done	Of course, definitely	
Yes, already done so		Definitely	Yes, definitely. I would be happy to do a write up compliment if you want and if it would help in any way with funding and things.		
Yes. Already have done.		Yes most definitely	Yes definitely		

## Public Survey Feedback

During May 2020 SENDIASS conducted a public User Feedback Survey which was promoted on Facebook.

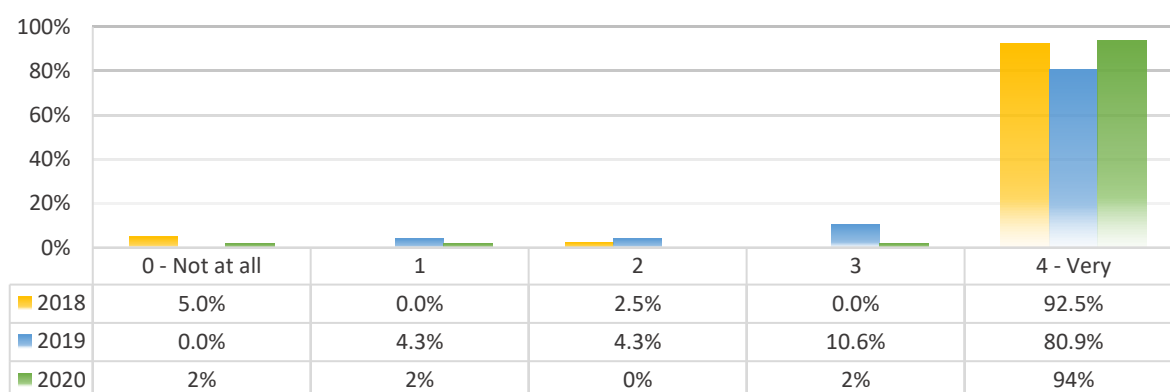
In 2018 the public survey received 40 responses, in 2019 there were 47 responses and in 2020 there were 50 responses.

Q1 - How easy was it to get in touch with SENDIASS?



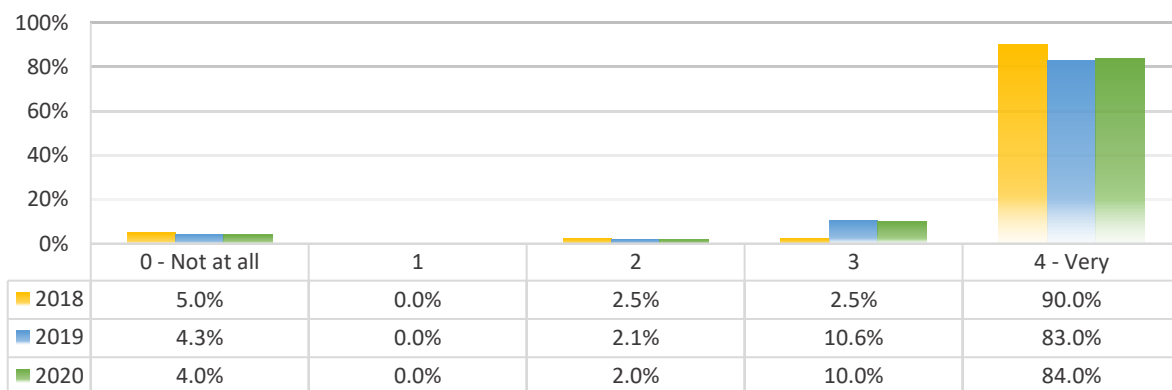
Service users expressed similar views to previous year on how easy it was to contact the service.

Q2 - How helpful was the information, advice and support SENDIASS gave you?



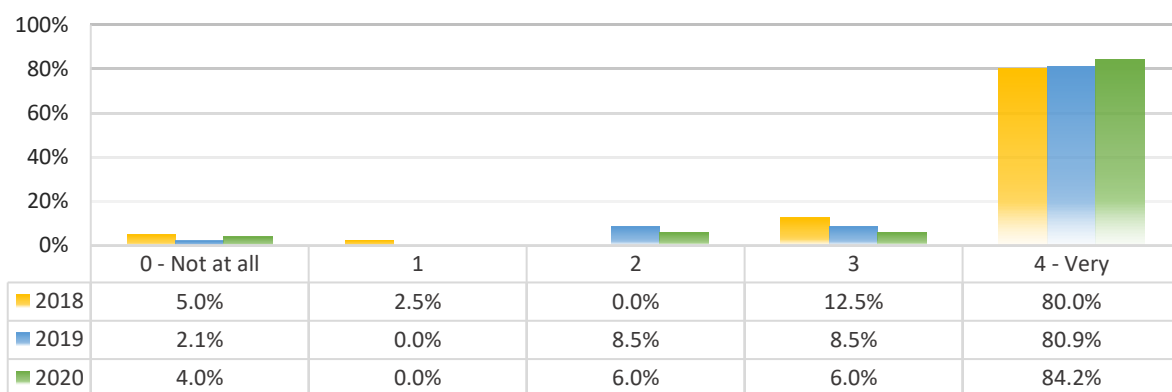
Service users reported the service continues to offer high-quality, helpful IAS.

Q3 - How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think SENDIASS were?



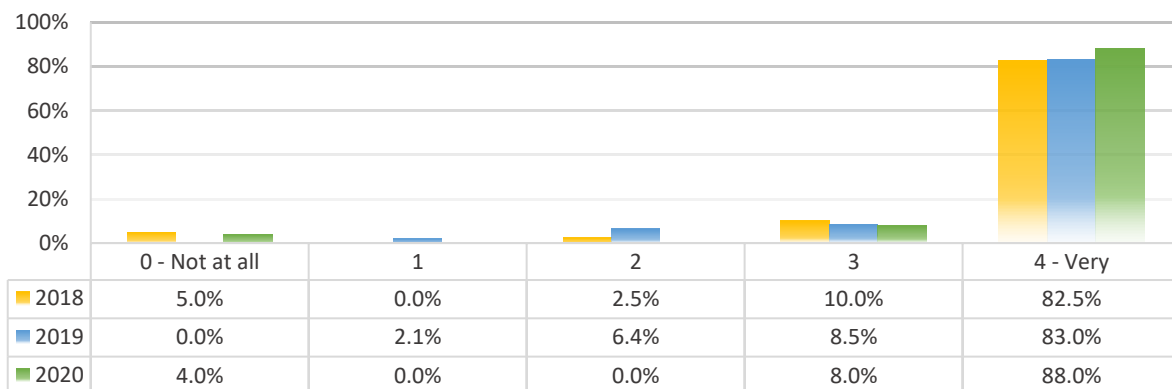
Service users reported similar views regarding the service's impartiality.

Q4 - What difference do you think our information, advice or support has made for you?



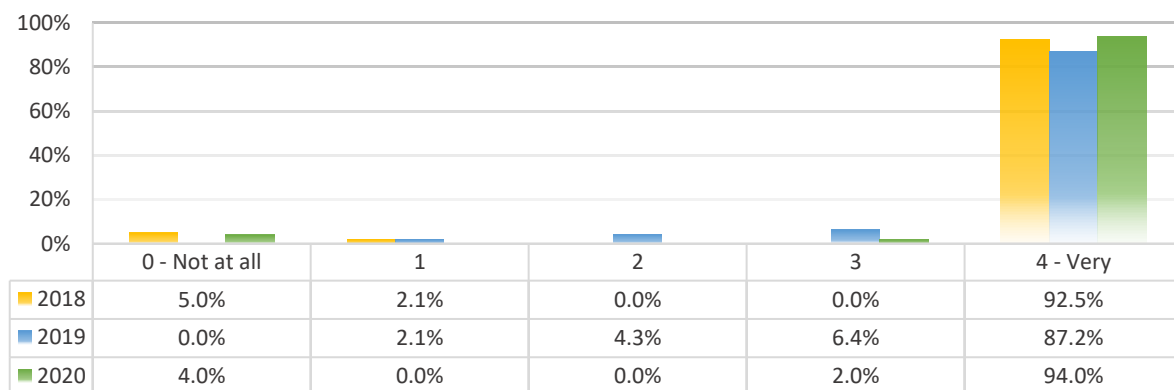
Service users report consistency in the difference made to their lives.

Q5 - Overall how satisfied are you with the service SENDIASS gave?



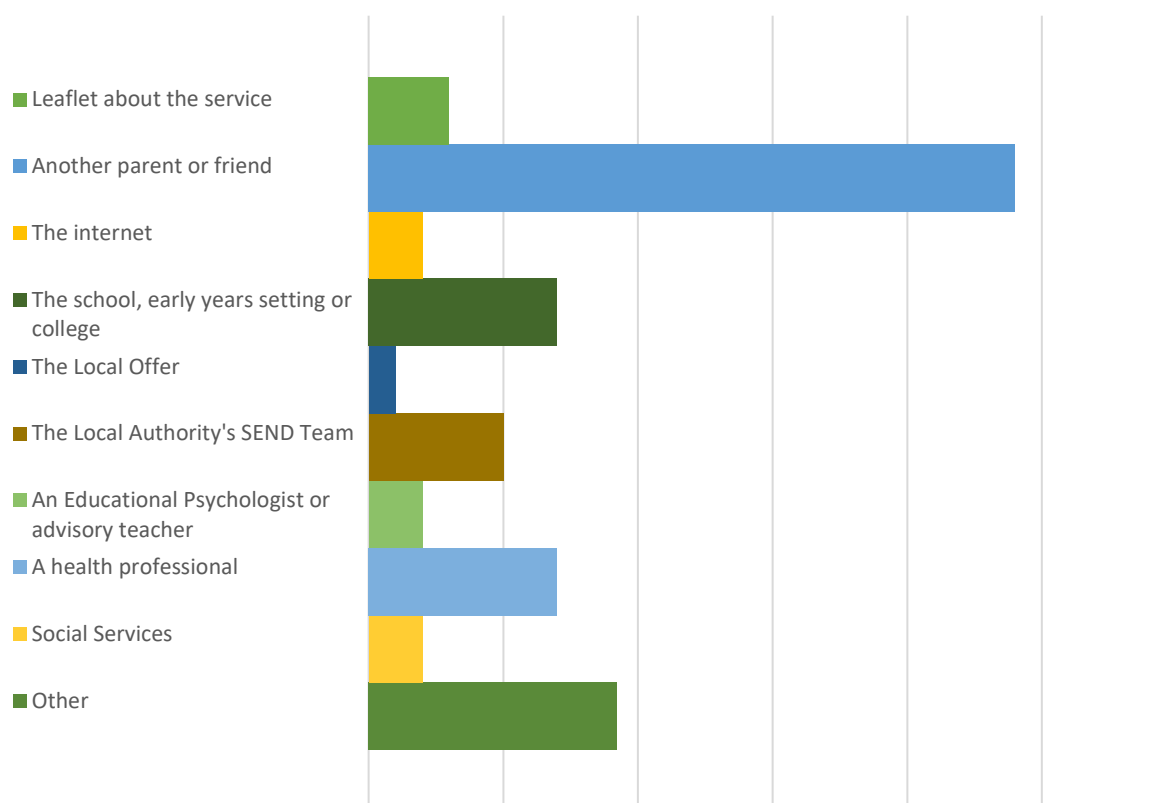
Service users continue to be very satisfied with the service offered and provided.

Q6 - How likely is it that you would recommend the SENDIASS service to others?



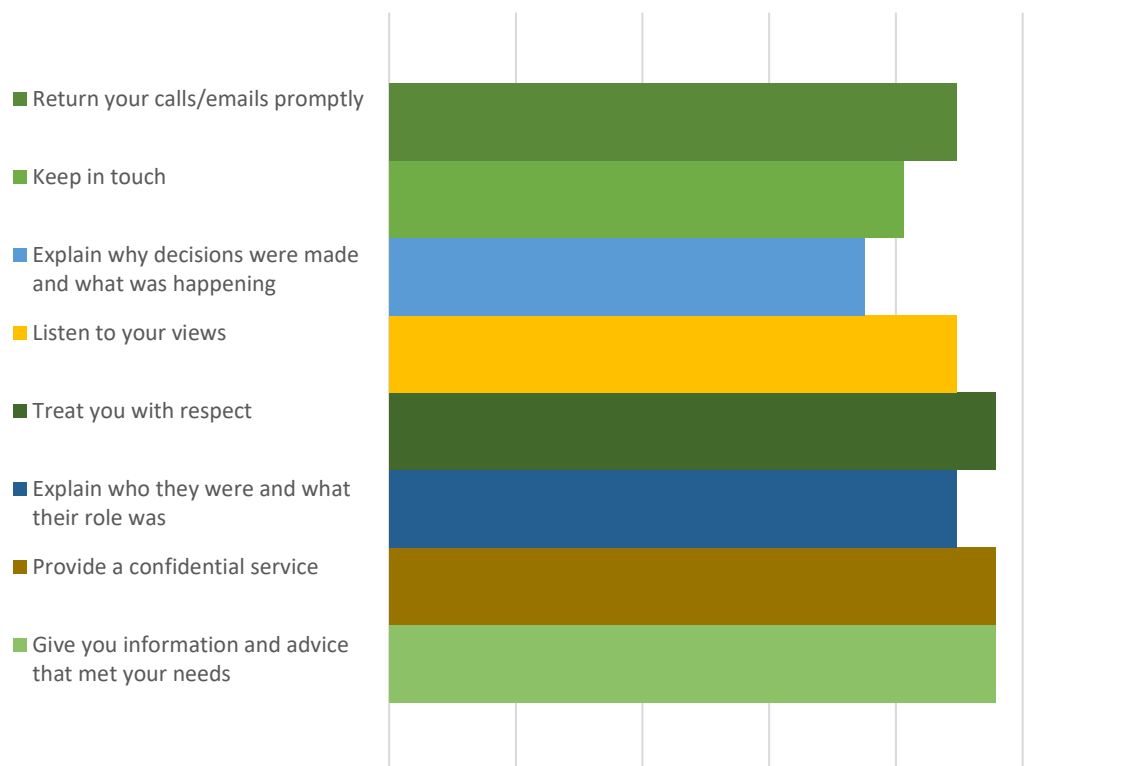
As noted with source of referrals, service-users are very likely to recommend the service to others.

Q7 - How did you hear about SENDIASS?



Word of mouth continues to be a significant source of referrals for the service, with health and education professionals also a notable source.

Q8 - Did SENDIASS?



Respondents in the majority reported we supported them in all the questions above.

Q9 - Please add any further comments about your overall experience with Barnsley SENDIASS below:

All comments are included verbatim except where they identify specific Case Workers.

I trust sendiass. I feel fully supported practically and emotionally in every way. My young persons views are always considered.	An absolute Godsend. Had no help at all until I found out about Sendiass. Like angels from heaven	Very well satisfied and I wouldn't be where we are now without there fantastic support.	<Case Worker> has been amazing 😊 it's like she lifts a weigh off my shoulders x
Thank you once again for all the ways you have helped and supported us as a family over this last year. We have had school meetings, la meetings and a tribunal to deal with. We couldnt have got through it without your support. You have all gone above and beyond to help us. <Case Worker> in particular has been a true anchor through our storms. You have helped me through some particularly dark times and no doubt will help us through many more	Fantastic service I've been getting help from them for 4 years now they have helped a huge amount it's a very needed service as lots of parents can feel backed into a corner by schools and they advise what your options are :) .... They are not the easiest to get in touch with some times but it's a very busy service and is understandable I believe they should have more staff though to make it easier to get the help needed I have reccomended <SENDIASS> gang many many times and will continue to do so which probably doesn't help when trying to get help myself :) Very valuable service and much respect to the workers :)		
They seem to spend all their time with specific click of parents if you not in the click you don't get anything shocking really one group who bully parents and SENDIASS are all-over that page with their pals how is that neutral? Makes me sick that	Sendiass have been amazing help for us throughout a difficult process with ehcp and applying for school etc. Really reliable service and feel we can put our trust in the service offered	Amazing service <SENDIASS> team are fantastic. The provide an amazing service	I have had more from sendiass in the last 6 month than I've had in the last 8years.



## Working in Partnership to Achieve Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families

<i>&lt;Case Worker&gt; and the team have fully supported our family through some really difficult times. Nothing is ever too much trouble. Without their support and advice we would have struggled. A greatly valued service.</i>		<i>Sendiass as really helped give me the confidence to follow my heart with my child's education when things are not right and fight for her rights. &lt;Case Worker&gt; especially as been a huge help in me and my daughters journey and I can't thank her enough for what she does for us both. She goes well above and beyond to help us. Thanks for all you do. Everyone else also friendly and helpful and &lt;Case Worker&gt; a good asset knowing her school background. Thanks guys x</i>	
<i>Think they forget what the I is for I found it better to deal with the LA direct as it were explained better by them not interested that &lt;Case Worker&gt; unless it's autism</i>		<i>Sendiass have been a part of our lives for the last 12 year. I trust their advice and have always valued their service. They have always been there for us in our greatest times of need to offer a calm helping hand and put things into perspective.</i>	
<i>SENDIASS and previously parent partnership service have been a part of my families life for many years and i honestly do not know where we would be without them. &lt;Case Worker&gt; is the worker we have worked most closely with and I have always known that on tough times her only goal was to secure the best outcome for my kids. That has meant the world to me. SENDIASS means I have never felt alone and this is the only service I trust in BMBC</i>		<i>Absolutely amazing service. Helped my family loads</i>	
<i>Brilliant service I've had the same person every yr for my child's annual review</i>		<i>We couldn't have coped without the help of SENIASS over the last 11 years</i>	
<i>Very grateful for help and support</i>		<i>Lost without the service</i>	
<i>Outstanding service in every way possible</i>		<i>the helped to finally get an updated ECHP after 4 years</i>	
<i>Sendiass are an amazing service</i>		<i>Sendiass is an extremely valued service within our town. They all Listen and emphasize. They treat you as an equal and try to reduce parent's anxieties about certain situations. I will always recommend Sendiass, as I feel the advice they give and how they explain procedures and law, is understandable. Having support guidance and knowledge of where I stand as a parent and how I can get the best outcomes for my son has been very crucial - I can't fault SENDIASS in any way - I have recommended the service to lots and will continue to do so as children come first &lt;Case Worker&gt; has been very knowledgeable with regards to my sons case as is ADHD and Type 1 diabetic (both don't work great together ) but we have come a long way to securing his education and now on with transition</i>	
<i>I feel secure n that I'm able to stand up for my son in difficult meetings as &lt;Case Worker&gt; is there to support me n guide me in the best way. Totally outstanding service, Thank you x</i>		<i>Ever so reliable. A service that every other should shadow. Well done, you are all amazing, caring, professional people.</i>	
<i>An amazing service from the beginning and still an amazing service now</i>		<i>&lt;Case Worker&gt; is amazing I wish all staff were as knowledgeable as her</i>	<i>This service has been invaluable! Friendly, informative, helpful staff who have done all they could to help us</i>
<i>I feel sendiass is not advertised to parents enough not a lot of parents know who they are or what they do so are often unsupported in difficult times</i>		<i>I don't know where we would be without SENDIASS and the truly amazing service they provide.</i>	
<i>Sendiass is an extremely valued service within our town. They all Listen and emphasize. They treat you as an equal and try to reduce parent's anxieties about certain situations. I will always recommend Sendiass, as I feel the advice they give and how they explain procedures and law, is understandable.</i>		<i>SENDIASS has been a life line for our family and can't thank them enough, particularly &lt;Case Worker&gt;, who is truly amazing, very professional, respond to calls and emails promptly and are extremely knowledgeable about all things SEND and the tribunal court process. Absolutely fantastic service and would definitely recommend.</i>	

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Update

Although this annual report is a looking back report to illustrate the past financial years monitoring of service activity for scrutiny, we felt it important to make comments about the services response during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Well before 31st March we were seeing parents carers show signs of concern and the cancellation of meetings at schools and colleges for fear of contracting the virus.

Through the service's virtual offer, we have provided activities, social media connectivity, emotional health check-ins, and worked more flexibly to support needs of families. We feel we have been successful in staying connected with our families and because of this we feel our reputation as a LA service within the local area has been strengthened with our service users.

We have seen a sharp increase in enquires to us due to other services not being accessible. We have seen mixed responses by children and young people about being in school, returning to school and doing schoolwork at home. Whilst some have preferred to be at home, others have stressed about catching the virus and others have not coped with the complete disruption to their daily routine. SENDIASS has remained busy throughout the pandemic and lockdown and we anticipate this will not ease-off going forward.

We would advise, to give you a snapshot of how we have delivered IASS in our local area, that you look at SENDIASS Facebook page, within this you will also see the snapshots of parent carer views over the duration of formal lockdown. We are aware from our data that many LA officers follow our page and so these have been viewed during the entire lockdown.

## Data Analysis and Summary

The data referenced below has been collected from IAS cases supported in the last financial year, both from IAS offered via the 'virtual service' and case-work data collected via IAS Case Workers. In 2018 data reported in the annual report was collated by the academic year, for this year's annual report data was collated by the financial year, from April 2018 to March 2019.

Case Worker flux – we have had an interesting year, long term staff absence, new staff starting January 2019 and so the need to go through the process of induction due to doubling-up/shadowing of case work.

Additionally, external pressures have continued to have an affect on the services ability to perform its functions. Between April and October 2019, The EHC Team went through a considerable restructure and recruitment process. The knock-on effect of this meant the service was often – and continues to – respond to initially where service users are unable to receive answers elsewhere.

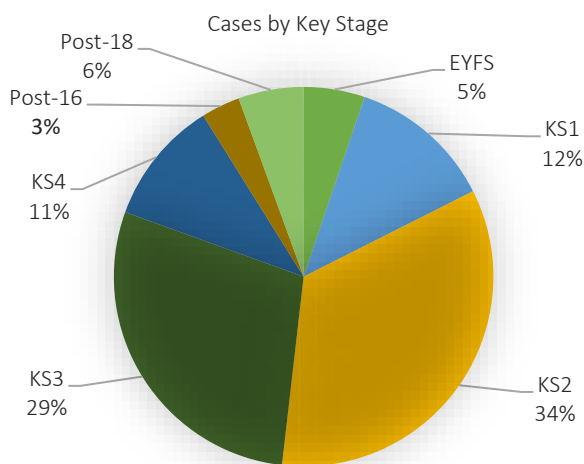
In 2018 the service reported in detail, the specific SEND type. In 2019 the service restricted those types to simplify and ensure confidentiality (Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Learning Difficulty, Undiagnosed, Epilepsy, Down's Syndrome, and Complex Medical). In 2020 the service has begun to use the SEND Categories as used by The DfE in the National School Census. For example; ASD, SEMH (which includes ADHD), and SPLD (Specific Learning Difficulty – which includes Dyslexia).

Although not reporting data we can clearly state that the use of social media via Facebook has increased by almost 100% - last year we hovered around the 500 followers mark, we are now nearing a 1000. Currently – and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic - the Facebook page is received highly and positively and this is evidenced in the public comments we receive. The service used social media as a method to connect with it's current, and potential service users at a time when a 'physical presence' was not possible. In the final quarter of the year, the page saw an increase from 176 'connections' to 262 – or an average of 2.9 per day, to 4.3 per day. The page has enabled the service to stay in-touch with its current service users and keep its presence within the SEND community consistent.

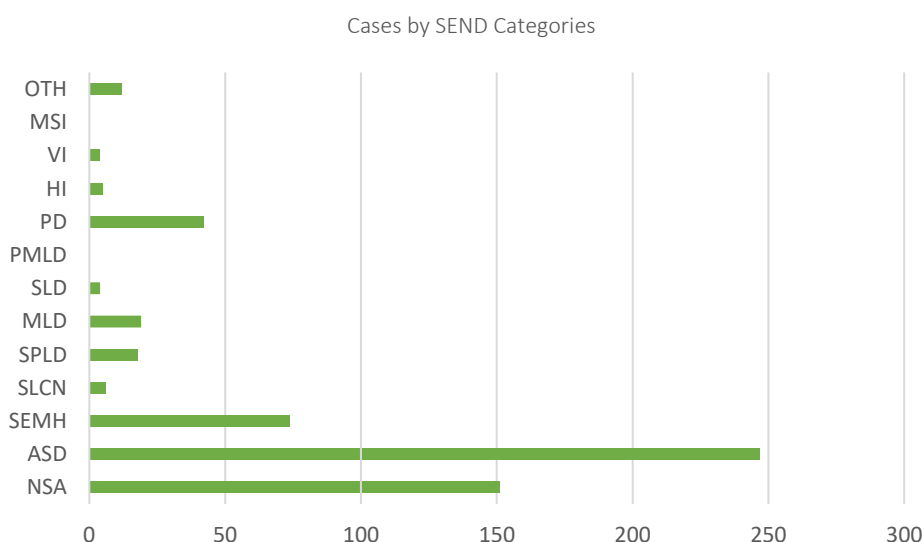
As expected, our data in terms of reporting send status includes approximately 40% as 'undiagnosed' - which includes not only those awaiting assessment, but those not-awaiting assessment, SEMH or 'behavioural difficulties' etc. Much work has been needed at initial referral to 'unpick' these case histories, once done so it becomes clear there is significant SEND issues, however this is not clear on first contact with IASS. The difficulty for IASS is careful work needed to ensure IAS operates within the remit of an IASS as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

The service received the highest demand for IAS with for supporting families with children who have a diagnosis of ASD or have SEMH needs. The service supports many cases where there is involvement from Family Support Workers/Early Help processes and where support external services (such as Early Help and Social Care) interject and 'close-down'. It would appear that support is often needed when Early Help closes down and settings are unable to or are unwilling to provide a replacement for this support. There also seems to very little evidence of help 'scaling-up and down' the Tiers of Support – Early Help doesn't often move to Child in Need and subsequently doesn't 'scale-down' to Early Help once a Child in Need ceases. SENDIASS seem to be the service that fills this gap. The service still receives 'inappropriate referrals' for issues that are not SEND specific, such as school admission appeals, and issues where schools feel it necessary to signpost families who are in-conflict with the setting, typically because of a possibly unidentified (and subsequently

unprovided for) condition. This year we have also had an increase in demand for IAS with SEND Tribunal appeals, Independent Review appeals for permanent exclusions, Disability Discrimination appeals, and SEND related complaints. These cases are labour intensive and take-up larger amounts of IAS officer time.



The service continues to see most of its casework at Key Stages 2 & 3. The service continues to see an increase in Post 16 and Post 18 case work.



This year, the service began to report 'SEND Types' as defined by the National School Census 'SEND Categories'. The majority of cases are of those who are the Autism Spectrum. A significant number of cases are those who are either unidentified or awaiting assessment, recorded as 'No Specialist Assessment'. Included within the SEMH category is conditions such as ADHD. Many conditions are categorised under Physical Disability (PD), such as Epilepsy and Cerebral Palsy.

It is difficult for the service to categorise differences between Learning Difficulties. It is not common, nor often possible, for medical professionals and assessments to accurately define whether a child/Young Person falls with the category of Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) or Significant Learning Difficulty (SLD). Where a diagnosis of Dyslexia is given for example, this would be recorded as Specific Learning Difficulty (SPLD). The service will continue to use the categories as it begins to record cases on the new CRM system.

Data findings for the reporting period of April 2019– March 2020 highlights:

- Increased demand for IASS across the three areas of health, education and social care
- Increased demand for IAS with mediations, appeals and complaints work
- Children and young people at secondary phase of education struggling to manage within the school behaviour policy and suffering continual fixed term exclusion processes
- Children and young people at primary and secondary phase of education struggling with difficulties around specific learning difficulties and not getting the right type of support they require as there is no route to assessment unless their parents pay privately for this
- Children and young people at secondary phase of education struggling with school attendance due to mental health issues
- Referrals for ASD assessments refused and children and young people expected to wait until their parents have had a family support worker and gone through early health assessment processes
- Children and young people at key transition cases in their education not knowing timely where there next education placement will be
- Children and young people unhappy on school transport routes
- Lack of participation of parents carers through a designated parent carer forum continues to place greater pressure on SENDIASS. Parents carers reporting concerns about local services, policy and practice to SENDIASS as there is nowhere else to go
- Young people feeling the EHCP is not put in place age college and regularly fail the Maths and English resit exams
- Increased demand for IAS to be participants EHCP development
- Increased demand for IAS to source special school provision
- Increased demand for IAS with permanent exclusions for children who have EHCP's
- Increased demand for IAS with appeals under the Equality Act 2010

Thematic Findings from analysis of the data highlights:

- Parents carers and young people continue to access support in crisis
- Transition arrangements are not consistently in place
- Lack of timely interventions, assessments impacts on meeting the needs of children and young people as they arise - across health, education and social care
- Parental experiences of the system is inconsistent
- Increased demand for IAS around social care assessments
- Increase in demand for IAS where children and young people have fragile emotional health
- Increase in demand for IAS with school exclusion processes
- Increase in demand for IAS with the lack of co-production with EHCP development

Findings from Analysis if the data shows recurrence of specific types of cases are:

- Emotional, Social Behavioral Difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties
- Complex health care needs including mental health
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions
- Epilepsy

## Actions Following Analysis of Data Collected

SENDIASS can only manage increased demand if it identifies ways of working smarter, going forward this will include:

- Better data collection - investment in a CRM system
- Screening referrals – questioning if child/YP meets the criteria for having SEND
- Training parents carers and young people in groups
- Developing volunteers
- Develop virtual IASS

The following actions have been identified and will be used to support working smarter:

- Manage the existing case work and the increasing number of referrals/requests for IASS
- Develop the information side of independent support and advice service for young people so that they know how to contact and engage with SENDIASS
- Sustain and develop further partner relationships with all local parent and young people groups
- Inform and influence local policy and practice by providing information to the LA about the needs and wishes of parents, children and young people
- Keep under review SENDIASS policies and update annually
- Develop workshops and advice sessions to empower parents carers to be more resilient and resourceful to manage their individual situation
- Manage increase in referrals to service to ensure current good reputation of service is maintained
- Arrange IAS operational developments, meetings for the coming year and AGM
- Manage expectations for a SENDIASS by colleagues referring/signposting cases
- Arrange information advice surgeries
- Develop 5 volunteers and peer support for 4 IASS staff

The main conclusions from the analysis are:

- Of the core functions for a SENDIASS the largest percentage of employed staff time is taken up with direct work with parents carers, children and young people
- There are wide variations between services nationally in the distribution of paid staff in terms of how the core functions for a SENDIASS is delivered
- There are wide variations between SENDIASS nationally in funding to ensure sufficient resources are available to meet need
- There is no comparative data to prove whether an in-house SENDIASS or outsourced one is more effective than the other
- Barnsley IASS is well thought of by service users.

## Future Plans for the Service development

The following actions have been identified as targets areas for the service 2018 – 2019 and will be set out in the service development plan:

- Service Development Plan to be reviewed revised and finalised against local IASS offer
- Review the Quality Standards Framework for an IASS
- Keep under review SENDIASS policies (confidentiality and Impartiality) to maintain parental and young person confidence in the service
- Report to DMT the Annual Report and findings
- Complete funding paperwork to satisfy IASP grant providers for 2020 - 2021
- Develop IS for young people
- Continue to inform and influence local policy and practice
- Continue to provide an effective telephone helpline system
- Participate in performance management and identify training needs for staff and volunteers (through support group interactions) to undertake the core functions of SENDIASS effectively
- Ensure professional development is maintained through attendance on relevant training courses
- Strengthen the role of the steering group and extend membership to include colleagues across health, education and social care and voluntary/private sector
- Develop volunteers, peer mentors and information and advice through an independent website.

Barnsley SENDIASS as an Impartial Information, Advice and Support Service will aim to develop further through incorporating the 5 sections identified in the quality standards:

1. Commissioning, governance and management arrangements
2. Strategic functions
3. Provision of information and advice
4. Supporting individuals
5. Professional development and training.

Commitment to achieving outcomes for children and young people will remain the highest priority.

This report has been written by the SENDIASS Manager Sarah Wike with partners support from SENDIASS Case Officer James Stephenson.

If any of the contents in this report need further explanation, please contact me.

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## Appendices

### SEND Code of Practice

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

### IASSN Minimum Standards

- <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/resources/minimum-standards-iass>

### IASSN Benchmarking

- <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/about/evaluating-impact>

### IASSN Intervention Levels

- <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/iass-members-area/strategic-resources/intervention-levels-casework>