



**sendiass**  
**NORTH YORKSHIRE**

**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities  
Information, Advice and Support Service**

**Special Educational Needs and  
Disability Information Advice and  
Support Service (SENDIASS) North  
Yorkshire**

**Annual Report 1-04-2023 / 31-3-2024**

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## Overview of service delivery

SENDIASS North Yorkshire (Information Advice and Support Service) provides free confidential and impartial information, advice, and support (IAS) about education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents carers on matters relating to SEND (special educational needs and disabilities). This is achieved arm's length from the Local Authority and any other organisation. SENDIASS North Yorkshire offer a range of ways to contact which all come via the advice line except for when meeting face to face at events.

Email, telephone messages, website referral forms and social media all move to our advice line. Virtual Drop-in clinics, virtual and face-to-face information sessions are recorded as training rather than a referral as agreed nationally in 2022.

The service is for children and young people aged 0 – 25 years with SEND and their parent/carers who are resident in North Yorkshire or moving into or out of this county. It is a consent based service, professionals can support with consent to complete the professional referral form if parent, carer, or young person from 16 years prefers this to self-referral. It covers the full range of education, health and social care as defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. The service operates in line with the national [Minimum Standards for Information, Advice and Support Services](#).

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to let everyone have access to a report showing what SENDIASS North Yorkshire have done in 2023/ 24. What impact we had, what we developed or changed and our plans for 2024/25. This report presents the service-user data recorded by SENDIASS North Yorkshire to identify SEND themes across this county, while not making assumptions and continuing to remain impartial. The data within this report can be added to or compared with, data collected by other agencies when exploring these themes with the aim of further developing services. It ensures SENDIASS across North Yorkshire is better equipped respond to service user's needs and what resources are necessary to support their needs.

This report will reflect the statutory duties on this service, and the requirements of North Yorkshire Council and other commissioners to ensure that we continue to deliver this SENDIAS Service at the highest standard in-line with and regulated by, the IASS Minimum Standards (Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3 Information & Advice)

There will be a narrative explaining any changes within SENDIASS North Yorkshire as well as presenting feedback received about this service to allow for transparency and for monitoring purposes while celebrating the team and its service-user stories.

A glossary of frequently used acronyms has also been added to the appendices to ensure this report is more accessible as a public facing document and not only to SEND professionals, however we hope this report is transparent as a standalone document.

The progress of this and previous reports reflects the continued data collection, internal processes, strategic working, and the overall development of SENDIASS North Yorkshire. This is achieved through ongoing feedback and working in partnership with agencies such as the Local Authority, NHS ICB, statutory commissioned services: Parent Carer Forum North Yorkshire, Carer's Plus and Carer's Resource, Inspire 2gether young person's groups and SENDIASS North Yorkshire's Steering Group alongside other local support organisations within this county. Also input from regional SENDIASS and the National (IASNN) organisation too.

## **The SENDIASS North Yorkshire team**

The service staffing structure:

- SENDIASS Manager (full time)
  - SENDIASS Coordinator (4 with a blend of part/ full time roles)
  - Media and Training officer (20 hrs. p.w term time). This post currently ends in March 2025 unless additional funding is sought.
- 
- Based on a full-time manager and 4 full / part-time coordinators, SENDIASS North Yorkshire continue to work at 4.5 full-time equivalent staff across North Yorkshire with the addition of our media officer.

- Please see our website at [www.sendiassnorthyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.sendiassnorthyorkshire.co.uk) where you will find our profiles in Meet the Team.

2 volunteers completed their mandatory training which includes IPSEA level 1 in February 2023. Three began supporting parent carers to support requests for Education, Health, and Care assessments and to support at EHC plan annual reviews. By Winter 2023 one volunteer remained as circumstances changed for others, one moving to full time employment. 3 new volunteers will begin training in the Spring Team 2024 but there is potential for more, however this must be weighed with the capacity of time and priorities within such a small service. It is hoped that the volunteer is allocated a SENDIASS coordinator which results in working in a specified location, although almost all shall be doing their role remotely due to budget constraints.

Whilst we only attend a small number of events directly due to increased number of referrals being the priority, volunteers are encouraged to attend events alongside team member's, give out information about the statutory role to support this service. This also enables the team member to meet the volunteer in their locality, which is valuable but seldom managed and allows the team to build knowledge and relationships with local services. Alongside volunteer's attending local events, their aim is to increase the confidence and knowledge of parent carers to enable them to become empowered to understand the EHC process and manage this in later years, where appropriate by supporting the request to assess for an EHC plan and to attend annual reviews.

## Steering Group

We have continued to develop our Steering Group in line with the National Minimum Standards. We invite service users and representatives from the Local Authority (Inclusion service, SEND service, Disabled Children's team, Children & Young People's Social Care, young people's engagement service), Health, local parent carer groups and voluntary sectors to form the Steering Group to ensure that the service meets local needs, maintains being impartial and arm's length to the Local Authority and it can ensure service users feel they have participated fully in the process and have a sense of co-ownership. Meetings have taken place virtually since the National lockdown and this

seems likely to be the best way forward due to capacity on almost all attendees, with the additional demand of North Yorkshire being so vast to travel. The chair of the SENDIASS Steering group is a trustee of PCV (Parent Carer Voice) North Yorkshire. This results in a positive balance as this charity is separated from SENDIASS and has the statutory duties for bringing forward local parent carer views, identifying good provision and gaps within this county. We are looking for ways to ensure engagement comes from all statutory services that commission our service and are currently ensuring steering group dates are given until April 2025 to give plenty of notice in advance to ensure better attendance.

## Data for 2023-2024

### Brief background

When the manager first began SENDIASS North Yorkshire in 2015, the total number of referrals for 2015/16 was **586**. This increased year on year to over 300% with the total number of referrals in 2021/22 being **2081**. Since 2022 to the present day these referrals have increased to over 2,400. Whilst the Information, Advice and Support Service National (IASSN), our national SENDIASS have encouraged all SENDIASS to collate the number of referrals and training together as an overall figure, SENDIASS North Yorkshire have shown these separately and then as a total.

### Overall totals for 2023/24

**Total Number of referrals from Advice Line: 2485**

**Total Number of participants in information & training sessions**

**Parents carers: 423 Professionals: 150 = Total: 573**

**SENDIASS combined number of referrals to include training and information sessions: 3,058.**

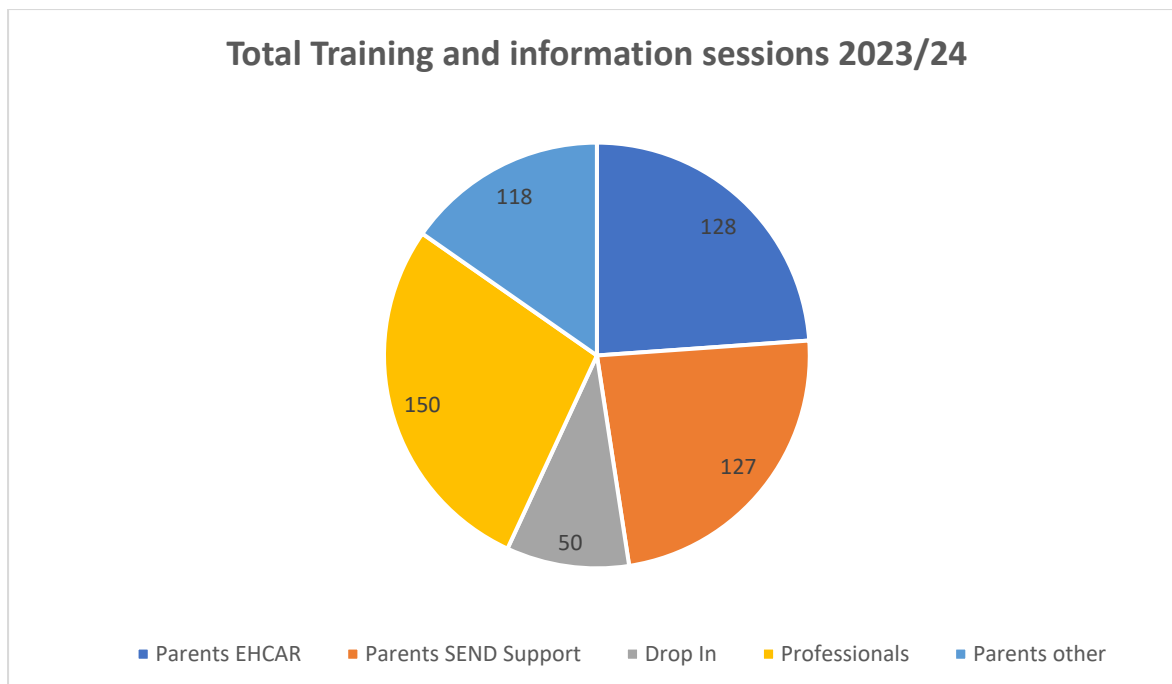
## Number of Referrals to the Advice Line 2023/24

Advice Line referrals					
2023/24	April- Jun Q1 2023	July-Sept Q2 2023	Oct- Dec Q3 2023	Jan-April Q4 2024	Total
<b>Number of referrals</b>	585	522	628	716	2451
<b>Comparison</b>					
2022/23	April- Jun Q1 2022	July-Sept Q2 2022	Oct-Dec Q3 2022	Jan-April Q4 2023	Total
<b>Number of referrals</b>	581	560	643	701	2485

The total number of attendees for information and training sessions for 2023/24 was **573** In comparison with **166** in 2022/23 when information sessions were set up

2023/24	Number of sessions	Total number of attendees	Total
<b>Type of training</b>			
<b>Drop in's (from September 2023)</b>	13	50	
<b>Parent carer information sessions</b>	26	373	<b>Total number of Parents, carers 423</b>
<b>Professional training</b>	15	150	<b>Total number of professionals 150</b>

### Total Training and information sessions 2023/24



Quarter 3 had always been recorded as our quietest months for numbers of referrals pre co-vid lock down. We had used this to work on our resource offers, check links and information was correct on our website, media sites and the Local Offer: Update, develop and add new resources.

With the increase of parents, carers challenging the local authority decisions within the EHC plan process, and the SEND tribunal now remaining open for expedited phase transfers over Q2, this remains the service priority and therefore noticeably impacted on SENDIASS North Yorkshire ability to develop resources in readiness for the new academic term.

### Developing the service offer to reflect referrers needs

In Spring team 2022 the Media and Training officer began offering a monthly virtual Information session called, '**Requesting an EHC Assessment**'. This was open to initially 10 parent's carers to trial for 6 months as this reason for referral was increasing on our advice line.

In July 2022 there was a daily surge of referrals on our Advice Line 10 days before the end of the summer term 2022, this resulted on an average 32 referrals being listed for 4 consecutive days which resulted in referrers having to wait for 8



working days for our response rather than the average wait of 84 hours (3.5 working days). Due to the surge of referrals and the information session being popular and needing a waiting list, an additional virtual information session called, '*SEN Support*' was rolled out for up to 10 parents' carers from September 2022. In response to several factors, mainly parents' carers stating they felt they had no alternative but to request an EHC assessment as they reported that SEN support did not appear effective, schools were encouraging requests or part time offers of education or suspensions were beginning to increase. The SEN support information session was offered to ensure parents carers received the depth of knowledge necessary to understand SEND law and the law protecting children and young people with SEND and often on the SEN support register within the school or college. The attendees could access information about the local and statutory process alongside having a Q&A session to enable participants to be empowered.

These information sessions average slightly over 10 (10.27%) parent's carers per session and was increased to 20 parent carers per session in Winter (Q3) 2023 and this offer has continued due to the number attending. With the allowance for cancellations due to unexpected family events, but also non-attenders, forgetting to cancel in advance. In Quarter 2 2023 SENDIASS North Yorkshire arranged 4 evening information sessions as parent's carers had requested this in Q1 and Q2 when the session times were posted on our media. We arranged different weeks, days and times starting from 6pm through to 7:30pm and one parent attended, however she stated she would have preferred a daytime session. To support parent carers that would benefit from hearing this session outside of the live sessions, our media and training officer recorded an EHCAR information session and has placed it on You Tube. These sessions dates and times are carefully considered and will continue to be scrutinised.

Due to the rise in referrals in Q3 (2022) and again in Q4 (2023) and the complexities within each case becoming noticeable in Q4 (2023), a virtual drop-in session was offered from July 2023 on a once-a-month trail basis. In October 2023 this offer increased to a media drop-in session. This meant a SENDIASS team member would be at hand to answer any questions or requests that came live through the media for a particular hour a month. For some parent carers this resulted in having to move to a private message due to them requesting to discuss a personal situation, but many were able to be posted so all followers could see information that might be useful to them too. Both sessions were

trialled for 4 months, and the media drop in was removed in March 2024 as it was only averaging 2 people responding, whereas other sessions were increasing in demand. SENDIASS North Yorkshire recently undertook a poll of parent carers in what sessions they would like offered by this service. All came back saying their top priorities would be to have SENDIASS coordinators meet face to face for drop in's, attend school meetings and attend reviews, however we do not have capacity to do this for all. We can only offer in exceptional circumstances if a team member is available. We shall be considering our statistics and availability and will develop an additional virtual drop in clinics from September 2024/25 but with a focus on draft EHC plans, no to assess or issue an EHCP and preparations for mediations or appeals.

Our young person's group began in September 2022 and whilst initially having an average of 11 young people aged 12-22 years this reduced significantly over Q3 2023 due to exams and other commitments. In September 2023 numbers further declined so SENDIASS North Yorkshire began to work in partnership with Harrogate Personalised learning college (PLC) and from January 2024 offered an Inspire 2gether session virtually to these young people too. The team are responsible for an individual case load and young people may choose to participate outside of the group itself but request the agenda and minutes and contribute via their coordinator or to the co-chairs. This has increased attendance and ensured a mix of young people with a wider range of SEND. Inspire 2gether's principal aim is to ensure SENDIASS North Yorkshire is working in participation with young people, and we are reflecting their views and wishes within our service. After a healthy debate between the young people within the group in Q2 and Q3 about which main topic SENDIASS North Yorkshire must develop, it was agreed in December 2023 that, 'young person's voice being heard' was their priority for Inspire 2gether. This is now the focus for SENDIASS North Yorkshire to develop and support in 2024/25. In Q4 ideas were planned and agreed in full collaboration between the SENDIASS team and the Inspire 2gether young people. These plans are now being worked on with continual discussions and checks that SENDIASS North Yorkshire are maintaining these young people's views and wishes going forward.

Additionally, the young people's newsletter which is sent out termly continued to develop alongside the young people's wishes and expectations over 2023. Inspire 2gether meets half termly due to capacity within the team itself and so this can delay decision making, however we have agreed to work in full

collaboration and therefore ensure we can ensure these ideas have been developed from beginning to end alongside the young people. The young person's newsletter is a good example of young people asking the media and training officer to introduce more cartoon like images and less words. They have chosen the colour, font and overall look of each newsletter and requested we ensure it offers voice over too, which was added for 2023 and shall continue. Inspire 2gether, alongside 2 SENDIASS team members also collaborated alongside Flying High young people's group to attend 2 full days with Local Authority professionals in 2022/23 to fully participate in the Preparation for Adulthood booklet due to several difficulties that became apparent when they tried to use it. Inspire 2gether alongside Flying High young person's group are currently waiting to see all the changes made within this extensive booklet as part of collaboration and with the view of this being accessible for all young people in 2024.

Due to an increase of professionals approaching our service in 2022/23, SENDIASS developed a session, held twice a term for any professional across North Yorkshire. We discuss our role, what they can expect from our service offer and what we expect from professionals. There is a Q&A time, and this is proving to be a valuable session as over the year it now has an average of 9 participants per session. Originally participants were from Early help and Early Years establishments, however as the year progressed it has developed and there is now a balance of health, social care and education professionals.

## SEND Type Data

Referrals have continued to come to the service from parent carers, a total of 2485 on the advice line. Parent carers have always been the main referrer to our service, which is the same nationally.

107 were referred from social care, although our data base cannot differentiate children and young people service, adult social care or disabled children's service or whether Early Help children's and families' worker. We do know most referrals that come from social care are from the Early Help service and the second highest number is children and family's social workers. We are also aware of parent carers telling us that they were signposted to us from their social worker or children and family's worker which indicates social care is

supporting some of these families when they refer in. In 2022/23 SENDIASS North Yorkshire actively encouraged joint working with the family if the family agreed, to support the parent carer and ensure the communication and agreed plans were clear. Post co-vid lockdown, SENDIASS North Yorkshire have seen a significant increase in parent carer's having their own additional needs and this has reflected in the complexities within case work in 2023. For example, three years ago, a parent asking for specific SEND information would be recorded on our database at Level 1 (part of the National agreement for SENDIASS levels 1-4) and sent one template email, this changed in 2023 to offering an average of 2 templates due to many concerns within one referral and more time taken to answer the questions raised within a call. Whilst this was recorded as one referral, more time was taken by the SENDIASS team when answering these referrals, which is not reflected in statistics. In September 2023 we saw more referrers from parent carers and education professionals report feeling overwhelmed or they reported symptoms of burn out and needed several different ways to offer resources to support them. Therefore in 2023/24 additional offers including video voice overs are being made ready for the website in 2024.

In Q2 and Q3 2023, parent carers recounted the top reason for referral was SEND issues within their child's placement. Within this referral there was often significant stress reported of a child, young person which resulted in being placed on a part time timetable, being suspended, or permanently excluded. SENDIASS experienced primary school children being suspended as a significant reason for concern in Autumn term 2023. Parent carers reported having concerns about school attendance or worrying about managing their job, as their child was unable to attend school, and they told us they know that special schools were full, but they believe their child is not managing in mainstream school. These were typical examples of the difference of referrals coming to the advice line from 2021/2022 to 2023/24

87 referrals were made by education professionals, often SENCo's however we are unable to record on our database as it does not record the type of professional, only as school and sometimes their contact details. Since 2023 there has been more parents reporting to SENDIASS North Yorkshire that they are referring to our service as they can see the needs of their child or young

person escalating (often described as spiralling or gaps increasing) and the school staff have suggested they contact SENDIASS.

23 referrals were made from SEND hub staff to support a parent carer to engage with the service.

137 health professionals have sent professional referral forms on behalf of a child and young person with consent from parent carers. We are not able to note down the role of the health professionals but only their contact details. We are aware that the primary SEND coming through our advice line is now neurodiversity, predominantly autism. Often with elements of social, emotional mental health, reported by referrers as being part of their unmet needs. Our database will only allow us to evidence communication & Interaction and health rather than specific types of conditions. It is not recorded as originating from health if a parent carer or other service refers in as it is marked as the person contacting. Almost all of the children and young people that have SEND have a health component to their needs.

5 young people directly referred into our service without support from anyone else and were all allocated a SENDIASS coordinator to ensure time was taken to clarify their needs, views and feelings to then give the appropriate information and advice. All requested support to start the EHCAR process.

The year group of children that are referred to SENDIASS North Yorkshire remains the same for the second year, year 6. In 2022/23 this was Year 6 and the next year group raising most concern was year 10.

In 2023/24 it was year 6 and then 9, although year 7 was extremely close in percentage.

The main reason for referring remained the same from 2022/23 to 2023/24, being communication & interaction although this still increased regardless of being the top reason of SEND.

It has moved in 2022/23 from 1193 children or young people (47.72%) to 2023/24 being 1354 (54.77%), with social, emotional mental health being second area of need in both years.

Reason remains the same across the last 4 years for placement and provision being always in the top two categories.

2023/24 Provision was 22.53% whereas it was 26.64% in 2022/23

There has been an increase in placement as the reason for referral as it was 18.97% in 2023/24 but 17.12% the previous year.

Where multiple *SEND* needs are present, a 'main' *SEND* need is recorded and this data is pulled for reporting. All other *SEND* needs are still recorded within the main body of the referral but cannot be pulled out for reporting, but for knowledge so if the SENDIASS coordinator begins support, they have a clearer understanding of needs. Diagnosed/undiagnosed conditions cannot be distinguished but we record on what the referrer has identified as their understanding of primary need.

## Reflections on the Year

### Specific challenges

The main challenges for this service were managing the momentum as demand was continuous throughout the year and ensuring that the service offer continued to meet the requirements of the IASS minimum standards. If looking at referrals alone, from 2021/22 to 2022/23 we had 34 less cases in the year. The trend from the previous year continued in the number of referrals increasing at a particular time of year (the quarters), and although we were aware from 2021/22 that the Christmas period has a surge of referrals before the school holidays but reduced a week before the break in 2022/23 this was not the case. Referrals continued to come into the advice line until Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December and parent carers continued sending more referrals, albeit 6 across the week of Christmas to New year. This was the first year as a team we were less confident we would be able to answer all referrals before the Christmas closure on the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2023.

Whilst we attended 16 tribunals and independent panel review appeals across 2023/ 24; this is the most in any recorded year to date. We have been working

on more preparation for tribunals and appeals that were conceded across this year. Level 4 cases are immediately allocated to a coordinator as they are appeals (from permanent exclusions or SEND tribunals). Level 4 allocations rose from 57 cases in 2022/23 to 97 in 2023/24.

### *Good news highlights, proudest moments:*

Service activities have included the development of a Inspire 2gether newsletter that is completed in full collaboration with young people. Preparing a training session for SENCo's in schools across North Yorkshire in full participation with Inspire 2gether and working in partnership with the Inclusion service to present this training with the aim of the summer term 2024. Social media information sessions remains' popular and is giving parent carers time to ask questions. There are often comments about feeling less isolated when being with other parents' carer's and hearing the questions being asked. Our Facebook page had an average reach of 49,000 with 4.8K followers. Our website has over 11,000 people drop into it.

The service has provided support for families that some have described as a 'lifeline' and has made a real difference for the families we have worked with, as reflected in our service evaluation feedback covered later in this report.

Our collaborative work with other services, working within our confidential, impartial and arm's length remit, has led to positive outcomes for children and young people and their families with more children and families' workers or school staff working alongside parents or carers with the SENDIASS staff.

SENDIASS is continuing to engage directly with service-users and the Parent Carer Forum continues to support SENDIASS by offering a chairperson. For 2023/24 SENDIASS discussed young people from Inspire 2gether attending the steering group and the co-chair, a young person was nominated by the group to attend. This proved a positive time to hear the reason why Inspire 2gether wanted to focus on, young person's views as their main theme for 2023/24. The members of the steering group have encouraged the young people to return as active members to the steering group since this first time.

It has empowered the young people to have their voice heard in this safe setting, so that they are aware of developments being made and can have their say to help guide these developments.

## Professionals – Information & Advice

SEND IAS Services across the UK are statutory services that provide information, advice and support to families of children and young people with SEND around their rights, SEND Law, local policy and guidance through different processes associated with these. SEND IAS Services also provide impartial information and advice to professionals working with these families as the remit of these services is based on existing law, legislation local policies and processes.

This is an area that SENDIASS North Yorkshire have been developing through its ongoing communications strategy to emphasise the importance of collaborative multi-agency working between services in the local area. This is to ensure information about SEND law and processes is shared among professionals to support families even further. SEND IAS Services can share knowledge and feedback directly from parents, carers and from the Inspire 2gether young person's group with professionals so that they can empower families with this knowledge as well. The overall aim of this being to work strategically with colleagues in other services who can confidently provide some level of IAS at the point of contact, for example supporting a SENCO at a school advising on the EHC Needs Assessment process with the knowledge that they can seek advice from their local SENDIASS should they be unsure or need to clarify something around this topic.

Professionals can ask for advice from SENDIASS North Yorkshire on a specific situation the families they are supporting are in (if they have consent to share information), but also on various scenarios which can lead to the potential for those professionals to advise multiple families they are working with themselves. The new professional sessions offered after school times have encouraged professionals to ask questions and, in some cases, request a member of SENDIASS attend their team to discuss the SENDIASS role and discuss law, policies or procedures.

Notably, the percentage of 'active casework' for YP continues to slowly increase throughout 2023/24 – when supporting YP directly, SENDIASS North Yorkshire apply an additional layer of support to empower YP to make informed decision for themselves. This often entails guiding YP through the process, in the communication best for them, at their pace, scheduling their meetings with professionals/educators where appropriate to ensure they are fully



participating, completing their own paperwork (with support) if necessary and imparting knowledge of these processes in preparation for adulthood. This often leads to slightly longer engagements with SENDIASS coordinators support to with the aim to increase confidence in their own decision making and understanding of SEND processes.

## HEALTH TRENDS

### Advice Line Themes

This reflects where the initial information requested was around a health-related issue. However, the actual number of discussions which involve SENDIASS around health (especially Autism/ADHD and sensory issues) is far greater as this will often become apparent during an Advice Line conversation.

As for the previous year, most health-related calls were around Autism/ADHD issues and, of these, the majority were enquiries whilst on or after the pathway for an Autism/ADHD referral for assessment. A lot of the parents' carers were describing CYP's sensory issues, speech and language concerns and barriers to attending school or college as being part of their concern in 2023/24. Often SENDIASS coordinators were sharing the SEND hub website information and the go-to mental health services resource to consider whether the inclusion service, speech and language or the occupational health services or mental health services may be necessary to refer to.

A difference from the previous year is that, although there is still the same volume of calls around the ASC/ADHD pathways, whereas previously ASC was predominantly the focus of these calls, this balance has altered to both, although we can only report this anecdotally as our data system reports communication and interaction only. This feedback is directly from local parents/carers. Mental health did come as the second area of SEND in SENDIASS database and many parents carers reported their CYP's being unable to access services due to them feeling unable to leave the safety of their homes.

### General Themes:

- CYPs who are on the CAMHS waiting list due to self-harm, suicidal ideation and/or suicide attempts with a diagnosis of autism are reported not to be offered support as this is the wrong service to access? Referrer's uncertain where support can be obtained?

- CYPs who do not meet the threshold or are unable to attend face to face for CAMHS intervention – what support is available given the waiting lists of other services such as Compass Phoenix, however they often state the CYP is needing more than they can offer?
- There are reports from parent carers that if CYP are unable to attend health appointments like dentists, they are unable to be offered a service.
- Anxiety-based school, college avoidance (barriers to school, college attendance)– it appears it does not meet CAMHS threshold; no therapeutic IAS available unless the CYP can leave their homes? – where can parent carers access IAS? Needs reported appear to be increasingly acute, i.e., not getting out of bed, interacting with family and friends, etc., as well as being unable to attend school, barriers to school attendance. SEMH needs are complex for school to address (and, in many cases, the CYP cannot attend school) but is not severe enough for CAMHS to intervene.
- Parents reporting, they are being passed ‘from pillar to post’ when they try to access support for mental health/suspected LD/suspected Autism/ADHD

There has been an increasing number of enquiries from parents, carers and professionals regarding the above, principally what support might be available to families around barriers to school/ college attendance.

## **SOCIAL CARE TRENDS**

As with health trends, the initial information requested was around a social care-related issue. However, the actual number of discussions which involve SENDIASS around social care is greater as a social care query/ issue will often become apparent later in the conversation.

### **General themes:**

Requests:

- Regarding the criteria of the Children's Disability Team
- Asking when short breaks would be available and not being clear on the process of eligibility.
- Not understanding the children and family's workers role as this seems to be time bound now? For CYP that are neurodiverse they may need additional time to build up relationship trust and if time bound, then this is a barrier to accessing the service.
- For requests for section 17 (Child in need assessments) these are still being reported by parent carers as social workers that don't fully understand SEND and appear to be focused more on safeguarding and parenting. For older CYP there appears to be a lack of knowledge of preparation for adulthood. Who is responsible for training, learning and education under the four headings of preparation for adulthood.
- Regarding requesting a referral for a care assessment, this is completed only once the YP is 18 unless they have an EHC plan. If this was completed in advance of 18 this would potentially identify support required to enable these young people to be as independent as possible and transition sooner.
- For information about direct payments/ personal budgets

#### **Sources of Social Care Queries:**

- Parents and carers

### **SEND EDUCATION TRENDS**

These continue to be trends from mainly parents, carers but this year from schools too requesting SENDIASS North Yorkshire give IAS on the following:

- It is unclear who the SEND caseworker is allocated to the CYP, asking SENDIASS to find out who this is.
- Reporting confusion due to several changes of SEND case worker.
- Want better (responsive) communication with the SEND caseworker.
- Parent carers want to understand processes like choosing a school but according to parent carers, being signposted to SENDIASS as SEND caseworkers are stating they cannot discuss as they are impartial.
- State there appeared many delays from LA panels that there prevent the EHC plan moving within statutory time frames.

- Not enough placements within specialist settings, especially in certain areas across North Yorkshire County.
- More referrers are asking about EOTAS, alternative provision and direct payments.

## FEEDBACK & EVALUATIONS

### Service-User Feedback

#### Evaluation Data

On the closing of casework referrals all service-users are emailed a link to an evaluation form (or posted an evaluation form if preferred).

Responses are in relation to the difference SENDIASS North Yorkshire made for service-users and present the percentage of service-users that answered yes to each question:

Evaluation Feedback								
Question	Jan-Mar Q4 2024		Apr-Jun Q1 2023		Jul-Sept Q2 2023		Oct-Dec Q3 2023	
	Avg	Range	Avg	Range	Avg	Range	Avg	Range
How easy was it to get in touch with us?	9.8	9-10	9.8	9-10	9.8	9-10	10	10
How quickly did we respond?	8.0	8	8.1	8-10	8.5	8-10	8.1	8-10
How well do you think we understood your questions or concerns?	9.8	9-10	9.8	9-10	8.4	8-10	8.9	8-10
How helpful was the information, advice and support we gave you?	9.5	6-10	9.5	9-10	9.6	8-10	10	10
How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we were?	9.6	8-10	9.6	9-10	10	10	10	10
What difference do you think our information, advice or support has made for you?	9.4	7-10	9.4	7-10	9.3	6-10	9	9-10
Overall, how satisfied are you with the service we gave?	9.5	6-10	9.5	9-10	9.1	9-10	10	10
How likely is it that you would recommend the service to others?	9.9	9-10	9.9	9-10	10	10	10	10

## SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

### Overview

Whilst the referral rate has not increased, the reason for referrals have been more complex and many referrers need immediate response due to reporting their CYP's mental health needs, impact on the family or CYP not being able to attend school or college. More parents are wanting to discuss EOTAS or alternative provision. Additionally, the drop-in sessions gave access to 50 parent carers across 2023/24, and the information sessions catered for 373 parent carers in 26 sessions which means that these parents carers booked directly into Eventbrite rather than come through our advice line, which would have significantly increased the numbers of referrals in.

SENDIASS have been aware and regularly discussed the current website not being as accessible as hoped. Currently over 11,000 people go to this website. Most go to the section on who SENDIASS North Yorkshire is and our contact form.

SENDIASS North Yorkshire continue to aim for setting up the new website in 2024 but appreciate due to the advice line demand and case work, it is taking much longer than anticipated due to the large project it is. It is believed it would offer clearer information to referrers, offer a greater breadth of information and in different formats, and allow the SENDIASS team to be able to signpost referrers to various parts of this site in order to allow some referrers to be able to move forward in an empowered way, whilst allowing the SENDIASS team to focus on referrers that had additional needs or needed more support for a variety of reasons. This website is due to be launched in the Autumn term of 2024 now, as it keeps being postponed due to capacity issues within the team, but it is hoped the new website would reduce some of the stress on the team and support them better too. If the current website has over 11,000 hits, it is hoped the new website will increase in numbers.

It is anticipated that as these referral rates increase, along with the complexities, SENDIASS North Yorkshire will not be able to continue their average response of less than 4 days. It is also becoming noticeable that referrers are returning to the advice line asking for support to understand the template letters sent out to answer their queries. Whilst years ago, SENDIASS North Yorkshire would answer telephone calls on the advice line, this is now a messaging service where calls are answered later to ensure response is achieved in date order. SENDIASS North Yorkshire used to offer school and college-based visits, participate in reviews, mediations and SEN support meetings. The current offer is to attend a

preparation meeting and on very specific occasions, SENDIASS may attend a review or mediation but most often virtually. It is anticipated SENDIASS North Yorkshire evaluations might lower in referrer's satisfaction scores as two main themes that referrers often state is not being responsive enough on the phone. The other question is whether the information, advice and support was helpful and this has recently decreased. From talking to parents and carers as a manager following up on a percentage of evaluations, the referrer's are happy with 1-1 follow up meetings but unhappy with the template emails reporting they give lots of information and can understand they are helpful to some parents, carers but they feel too overwhelmed, tired or stressed to read through and understand them. The template emails always invite referrers to return if not understanding or if unable to apply the information to their situation and when the referrer does return, they seem positive about the support received then.

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 – Glossary of Frequently Used SEND Acronyms
- Appendix 2 – Partnership newsletter for young people which includes SENDIASS.
- Partnership newsletter with SEND services attached.

### **Appendix 1 – Glossary of Frequently Used SEND Acronyms**

**ASC-** Autism spectrum condition (SENDIASS prefers to use autism, autistic)

**ADHD** – Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

**AP** – Alternative Provision

**AR** – Annual Review

**CAFA** – Children & Families Act (2014)

**CAMHS** – Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service

**CDC** – Council for Disabled Children

**CDT** – Children’s Disability Team

**CYPS** – Children & Young Peoples Service

**DLA** – Disability Living Allowance

**EA** – Education Act (1996)

**EHC** – Education, Health & Care

**EHCAR** – Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment

**EHCP** – Education, Health & Care Plan

**EYFS** – Early Years Foundation Stage

**FE** – Further Education

**HT** – Headteacher

**IAS** – Information & Advice Service

**IASS** – Information, Advice & Support Service

**IASSN** – Information, Advice & Support Service Network

**IEP** – Individual Education Plan

**LA** – Local Authority

**LD** – Learning Difficulty/Disability

**PDA** – Pathological Demand Avoidance

**PFA** – Preparation for Adulthood

**PR** – Parental Responsibility

**SEMH** – Social Emotional Mental Health

**SEND** – Special Educational Needs & Disability

**SENCo** – Special Educational Needs & Disability Coordinator

**SALT** – Speech & Language Therapist

**SW** – Social Worker

