

“The different practitioners made me feel listened to and acknowledged my feelings.
I moved forward and got through some really difficult situations with your support” (20-2-23)



SENDIASS North Yorkshire Annual Service Report 2022/23

CONTENTS

A statutory service for parent’s carers of children 0-16 years old and young people 16-25 years with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. To implement the IASS National Minimum Standards with the aim for referrers to be empowered to make informed choices by providing arm’s length, impartial information, advice and support.

[Contents Overview of SENDIASS North Yorkshire – Melanie Leighton, Manager](#)

This report gives an overview from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 for SENDIASS North Yorkshire and covers statistics relating to outputs during this period. Due to the impact of an increased rate of referrals, the service offer has been offered at different levels of intervention now. We appreciate this has been a hard year for many services and organisations for several reasons and it has been a harder year for parents, carers of children and young people with SEND. Children and young people being the most impacted as our Advice Line alerts us to what is happening in the wider communities and corresponds with our National IASS feedback.

We continue to offer most of our meetings virtually: Mediations, consultations, strategic and educational setting meetings.

Post pandemic lockdown allowed us to gain time to further our offer of the increased number of referrals year on year into our service which we could somewhat absorb; this is no longer the case. We had already incorporated this time into our work routine and our referral rate increased again, giving us little ability to manoeuvre.

For parents carers or young people who found it difficult to access technology or did not have the technology to hand, due to our capacity we looked at ways of offering an extended telephone calls or if possible, the parent carer to accept another family member or friend supporting them in accessing the technology or with the support of schools or other providers where appropriate to support virtually. If this is not available, we continue providing face-to-face support, but acknowledge this will impact of the service overall.

[Attending support groups and events across North Yorkshire](#)

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We welcome all parent carer support groups and other local services inviting us to attend or support training to their events. In 2022 this was lessened in priority within our statutory duties; however, we were able to accept 60% of virtual invitations.

Parent Carer Voice North Yorkshire employed 8 Parent participation officers in December 2022, and this led to 18 Brunch events being planned across North Yorkshire, but many more events planned later in the year. SENDIASS were invited to 13 of these events.

We were invited to each of the brunch events from PCV and invited to other Parent carer support groups too, but reluctantly we were unable to attend almost all invitations. This was due to the capacity and impact on the SENDIASS service if travelling and time taken opposed to the need to prioritise the Advice Line and casework and order virtual meetings instead to offer a wider geographical reach.

1st February – 31st March 2023

SENDIASS received 17 requests to attend events for parents’ carers in Craven, Coast & Ryedale, Hambleton & Richmondshire and Harrogate, Knaresborough & Ripon.

SENDIASS attended 6 events at the Coast and Hambleton & Richmondshire locations (Whitby Whish drop in/ NYC Northallerton Autism event/ 2 PVC events, Craven online, Richmondshire online).

11 were logged as unable to attend due to capacity.

One event on 23rd February 2023 arranged by North Yorkshire Council (then NYCC) resulted in a continuous queue of parent, carers waiting to speak to two SENDIASS team members and resulted in taking 14 cases forward. This impacted on additional time to add to the database on return to work and arranging contact with these referrers. The length of combined time taken from the service that day was 10.5 hours, however it moved to approximately 18 hours in total with the additional cases being recorded and responded to. The response from meeting parents’ carers was phenomenal however and it was clear to hear some of their confusion, misunderstanding of the SEND system and clear need for information and advice. One father approached apologising in advance that he went to a special school himself and now knew he had autism, dyslexia and possibly dyspraxia. Being able to draw structures and the EHCP timeline for him and allowing him time to check and ask questions, allowed him access clearer understanding and it was obviously from the way he left this event that he was more confident and hopeful.

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Overview of training and event attendance 2022/23

For offering training, drop ins or talk about the SENDIASS role we were able to offer 2 virtually, and four locations face to face (Hambleton & Richmondshire. Coast and Ryedale). We offered sessions from Eventbrite and through Facebook.

Parents, carers attendance

Information sessions (virtual): SEN support 70 / EHCAR 90 / professionals 56

Other virtual sessions 72

Face to Face: 117

Young People with SEND

Face to face- 5

Virtual (Inspire 2gether)- 27

Total: 437

Advice Line response; exceptions to statutory duty

14th July- 19th July 2022 had an average 36 referrals per working day, mainly directed from schools.

19th July – 27th July 2022 SENDIASS: Message changed of Advice line and media platforms that response will be within 10 working days. (Response was 8 working days).

27th March- 29th March 2023 Averaged 41 referrals per day. Message changed of Advice line and media platforms that response will be within 10 working days. Infact the response to referrers was 5 working days and referrals reduced significantly over the Easter holidays which resulted in the response rate being one working day.

The referrals are steadily increasing since returning from the holidays and SENDIASS has kept the 10 working days message on but will reconsider this by the 28th of April to look to return it back to 5.

Joint commissioning arrangements

This year North Yorkshire ICB was initially unable to commit to joint commissioning due to the changeover from CCGs in the Summer 2022. ML asked to return later in the year to request consideration due to the statutory duties. Vale of York offered an increased funding amount from £3,000 to £5,000 for 2022/23

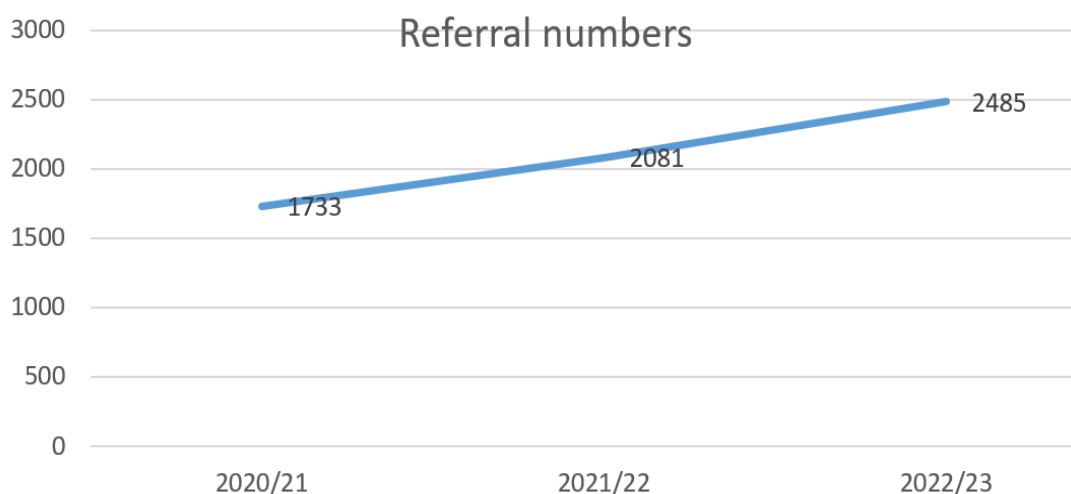
It would be best to ensure there is a formal funding arrangement agreed so that funding is easily accessible within the financial year. 2022/23 funding is not received; however, Vale of York ICB have funded £5,000 for 2023/24 and North

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Yorkshire ICB may have funded NYC £5,000 for Information and advice but currently this is not traceable.

Statistics and trends

An 19.4% increase in the number of referrals from 2021/22 to 2022/23. This may sound a manageable difference but is in fact, 404 additional families that have been offered information, advice and support that approached the advice line with potentially more complex enquiries due to capacity or communication issues.



Over the past year, the service has had its largest increase in requests for information, advice, and support. Quarter 4 resulting in 570 referrals although we have had over 700 referrals in one quarter in recent years and felt the additional pressure that term. This Q.4 was due to a rise in phase transfers being challenged and concerns for establishing a placement in September.

Themes and trends from the advice line and any placements causing concern are presented by the SENDIASS coordinator to their locality SEN hub manager every 4-6 weekly. All 4 Coordinators were able to achieve this by December 2022 across their localities. This allows any significant changes of information coming through the advice line specific to their location, to be flagged. For example, whilst the highest number of referrals overall was Hambleton & Richmondshire, it is noticeable that Harrogate, Knaresborough, and Ripon referrals increased suddenly towards the latter part of 2022/ 23 with an increase of 114 more referrals in the last quarter. These statistics can help identify issues quickly when they show similar or different stats from the LA. This gives opportunity to identify shifts or changes and implement planning that is specific to the identified needs.

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Reason for referrals have remained the same four top reasons to the previous year.

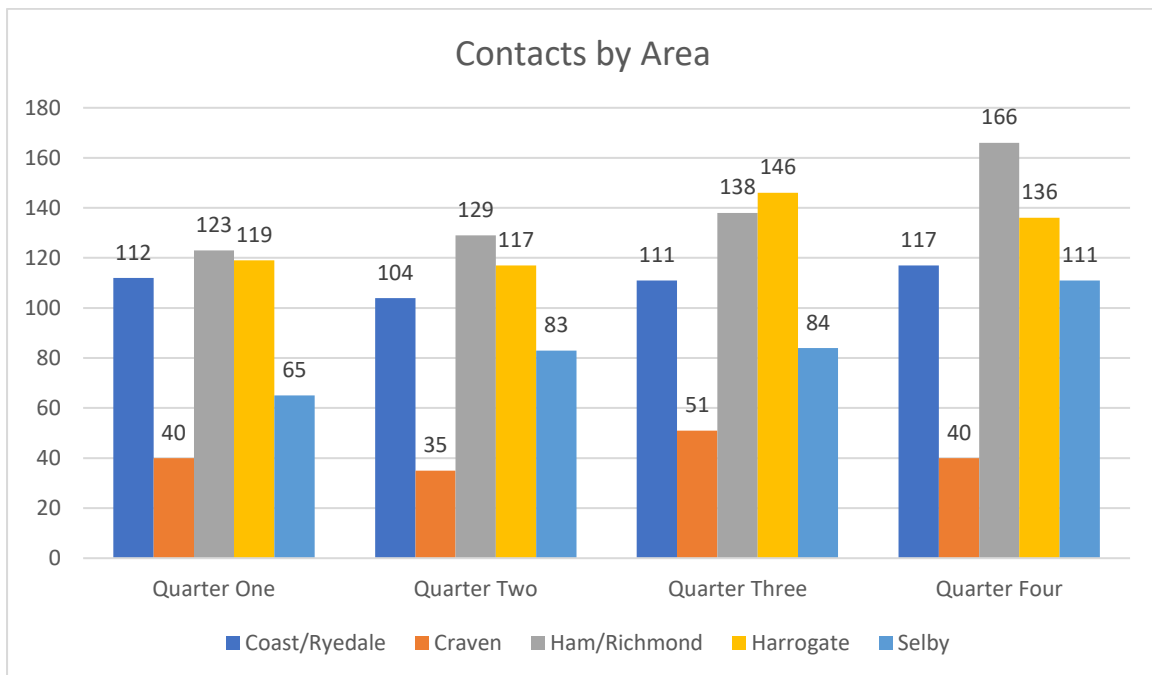
Reason for referral	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
2021/22	Provision	Placement	Ref to issue	Appeal
2022/23	Provision	Placement	ECHAR	Appeal
Referred by	%		SEN type	%
Parent, carer	88		Communication /Interaction	48
Social Care	5.1		SEMH	17
Health	1.7		Cognition/learn	7
Schools	3.4		Physical, med	4
SEND Hub	0.6		Other	24

88% of referrals came directly from parent, carers which is usual for all SENDIASS in England. Parents will on occasions explain in a further meeting that a health professional recommended contacting us. This has to date been 100% for CAMHS meeting with parents’ carers after an Autism Assessment. When 48% of the SEN type within these yearly statistics identifies autism, this is a health component that is often relevant for the reason for referral. Often at the point of referral the parent carer will report the primary reason for approaching SENDIASS as a placement, provision issue or SEN support concern. Children’s Social Care do refer in more directly from Early Help but those Children and Families Worker’s that are supporting parent, carers will be recorded as parent carer unless a professional contact form is completed.

SENDIASS coordinators are confidently supporting to appeal level, being involved with case review meetings with the Judge prior to the hearing date. Some hearings were conceded in 2022, but due to the timing meant the level of support remained high.

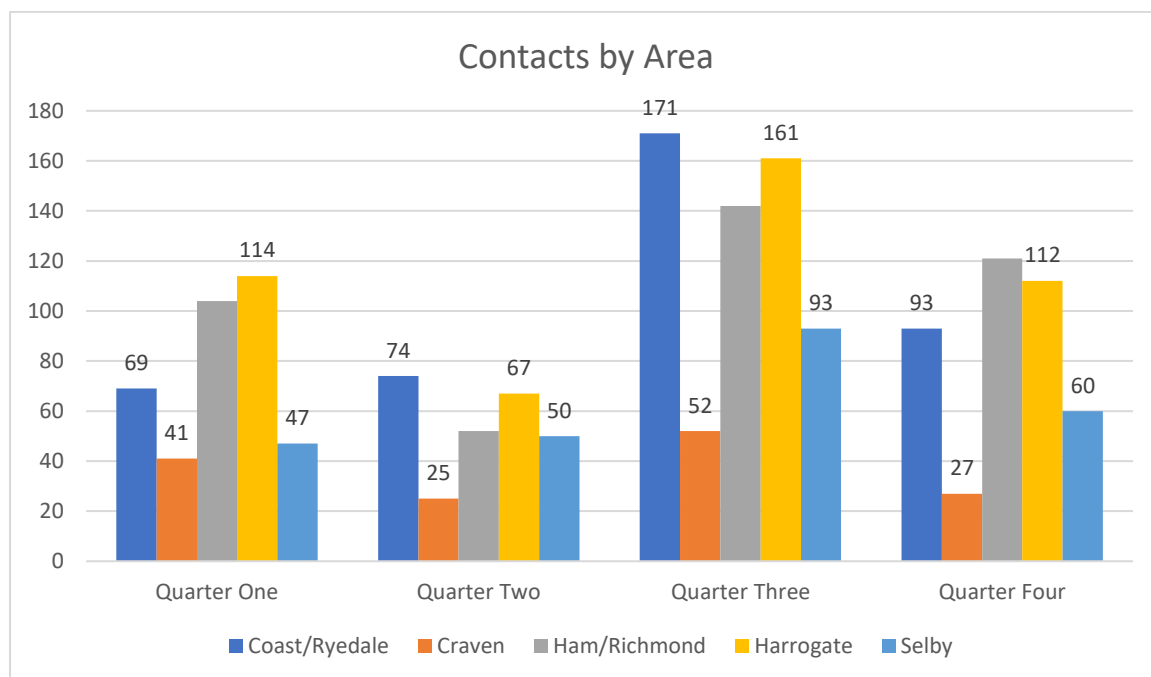
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2022/23



2021/22

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Referral location comparison numbers (2021/22 to 2022/23)

Quarters	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Not known	Total	
2021/22	271	216	477	292	329	2081	19.4% increase
2022/23	459	468	530	570	458	2485	
Highest referral No. Location						Coast & Ryedale	Ham & Rich
Year total						2021/22	2022/23
HKR						404	518
Coast & R						454	444
Selby						250	343
H&R						419	556
Craven						145	166

Website Usage for 2022/2023

Website use and new users have increased in the past 12 months (Alice to present and attach)

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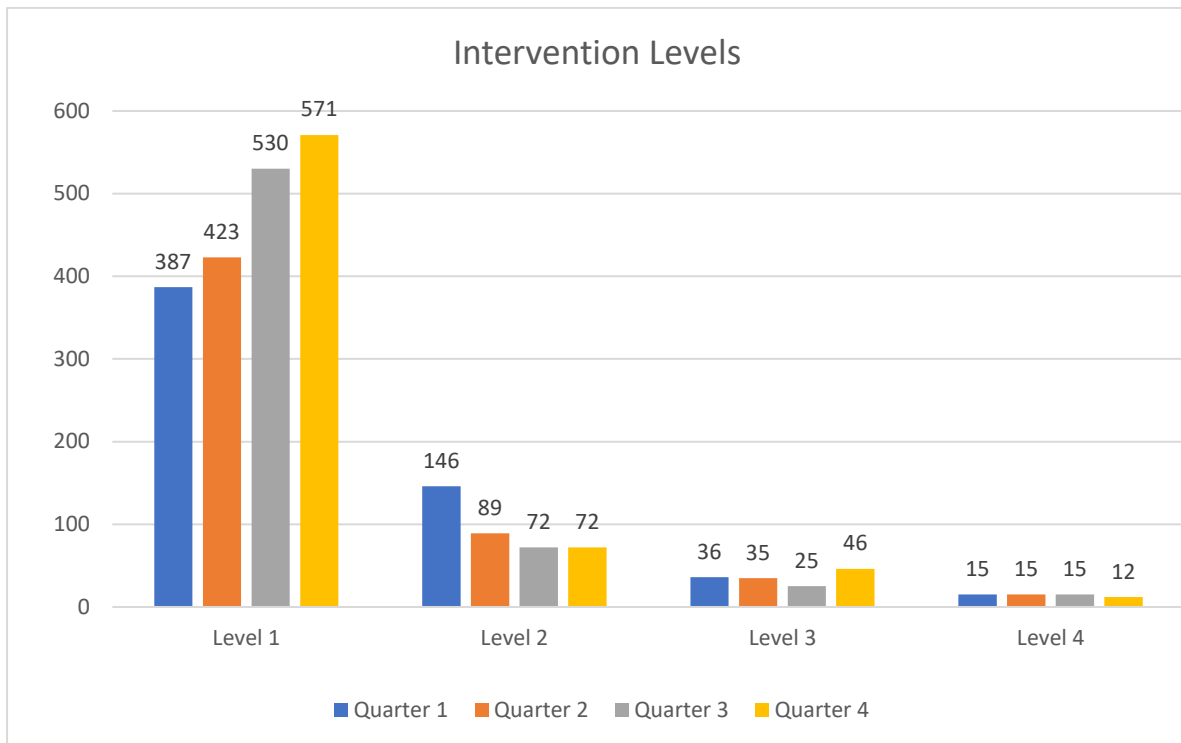
National SENDIASS Intervention levels

Within the 4 intervention SENDIASS National levels, Level 1 is up to 2 hours regarding information and advice only. Level 2 is offering information and bespoke advice. Level 3 is for any young people self-referring or for complex cases where there are several services involved. Or when the parent carer identifies additional needs. Mediations and suspensions fall within this category too. Level 4 are identified as appeals, permanent exclusions, tribunals and Children, young people or parents' carers with conditions that have significantly limit to their life but wish for education, training, or learning. The highest percentage has always been level 1. The top two reasons for requesting information were provision and secondly, placements which corresponded with children and young people transitioning to schools and colleges and although 2022/23 does not reach the height of Hambleton & Richmondshire in 2021/22 it evidences a higher demand across all locations rather than one. This corresponds with all areas now stating there is lack of appropriate placements, whereas it used to be areas such as Selby. The highest level 2 information and advice was 129 in 2021/22 in quarter 3 for the same reasons but these referrers needed either bespoke advice due to children being previously elected to be removed from roll of their school or due to disagreement about placements or provision within an EHC plan. This increased in 2022/23 to 146 for Coast and Ryedale. 57 referrals were allocated to coordinators for support compared to 48 in 2021/22 due to exclusions, advice and support needed for appeals and tribunals.

SENDIASS tries to build referrers knowledge by offering different methods of information and support. This begins with template emails with links and directions to webinars and videos to further this offer, virtual training sessions if appropriate. It is anticipated that most referrers begin at Level 1 unless they are in an immediate timeline for appeal or tribunal. SENDIASS aim to allow referrers' time to go through the email resources (unless stated this is not accessible to them, in which case it will be an offer of a telephone conversation to ascertain the best offer of information and advice) and if the referrer returns, it is likely to progress to Level 2. All cases must be shut at 6 months across all SENDIAS services and reopened to evaluate and consider next steps. However, SEND tribunals are taking over 50 weeks by December 2022 and so often the Level remains the same for much longer now.

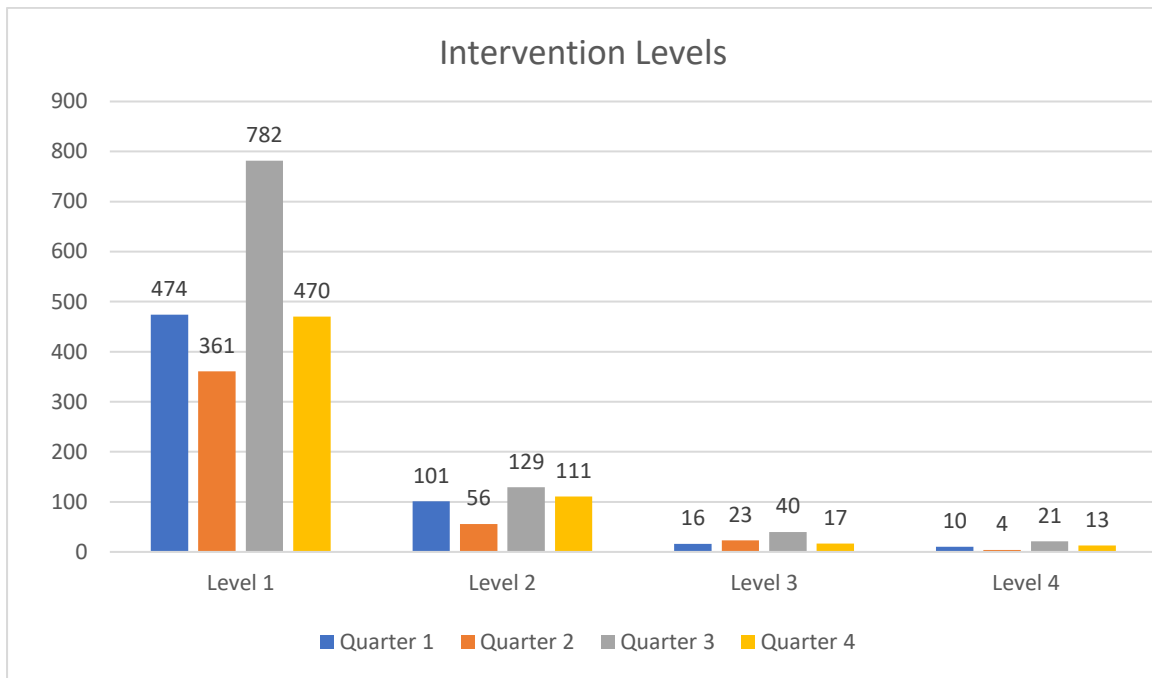
2022/23

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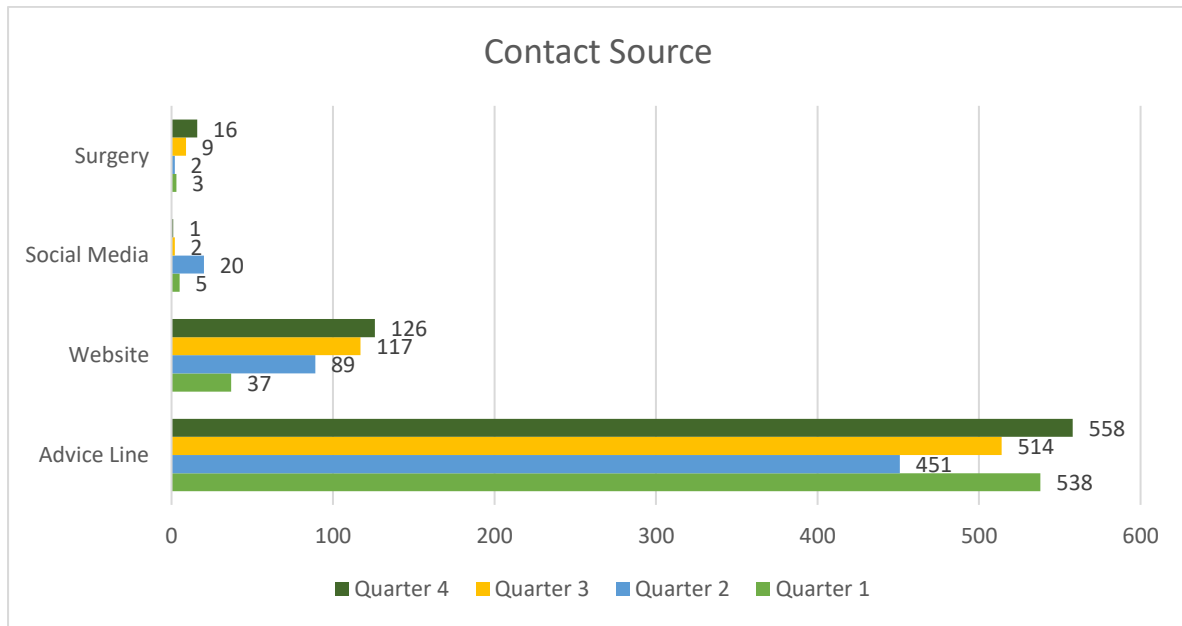
2021/22

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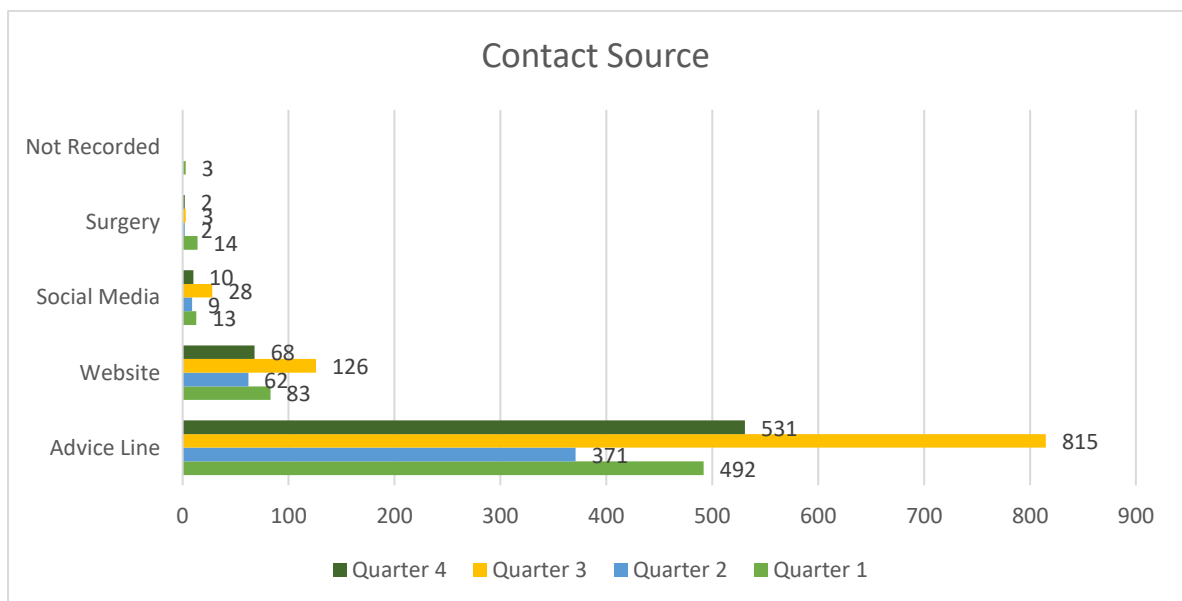


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2022/23



2021/22



Referral routes

Referrals for 2022-2023 have predominantly come via the Advice line for all quarters of this year. That said, this in fact means a breakdown of emails, telephoning the advice line and leaving a message. The second highest referral medium was completing the form for parent’s carers or professionals from SENDIASS North Yorkshire website. 3 were not recorded for how they referred into this service and 21 came via training within virtual surgeries which were then taken back by SENDIASS coordinators and added to the Advice Line. Reflecting on the statistics for this year, it was decided no referrals (unless there was no alternative way) would be accepted by SENDIASS coordinators on these virtual training sessions but instead, parent carers or professionals would be signposted

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directly to the forms on the website due to capacity issues. The aim of SENDIASS North Yorkshire is to have the contact or referral forms situated on the SENDIASS website used as much as possible. This is due to seeing the need to make further contact with referrer’s that had sent in emails or voice messages and even more so for social media post requests for advice. Over 50% needed following up to understand something about the referral reason or contact details, whereas the forms reduced delay significantly. 99% of the evaluation and referral forms gave brief but clear information. Media posts were a concern, and it was agreed in 2022 to discourage these if possible due to concerns about the delay to respond, an expectation a response would be fast no matter the time or day and often the information was given.

We now have young person’s referral form too that was completed on two occasions in 2022/23.

Evaluation feedback 2022/23:

This year we have continued to provide a service and been given good feedback overall from referrers and local support groups. One theme brought forward that has been continued across locations from feedback from Parent Carer Voice brunches in February to March 2023 was SENDIASS is delivering a good, supportive service but the need for more staff. Some additional feedback from parent’s carers was SENDIASS cannot respond early enough as they do not answer the phone immediately. Our statutory requirement is we must answer referrals within 5 working days’, and this was achieved in all except two periods this year. **The average response time was three working days across this year.** According to feedback parents and carers they would like a telephone line available throughout.

Feedback from Feedback Friday (media platform) and via email response from the Advice Line or from the additional comment from the evaluation forms

Sendiass North Yorkshire had to take forward 50 evaluations to the Council for Disabled Children to compare to other services. 46 evaluations sent out were for parents, carers and 4 for young people that had worked alongside a coordinator. 16 responded and whilst it is known that there are low rates of response to the formal evaluation form. When first establishing SENDIASS in 2014/15 and in 2015/16 the manager had the ability to contact and follow up by telephone any closed cases with referrers permission to explain the value of having referrers voice through anonymous evaluations. In 2015/16 there were 586 referrals for SENDIASS North Yorkshire whereas in 2022/23 there were 2485 resulting in there being no capacity to manage this level of follow up due to labour intensity and day to day service demands.

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6 national questions were asked on the evaluation forms and the rate for contact remains very good to exceptional.


Question 1 was our lowest score, 68% on how easy it was to get hold of SENDIASS.

It should be noted that this survey took place September 2022 and towards the end of 2022 some evaluations are marking us as a 2 or 3 in how easy it is to get in touch with SENDIASS.

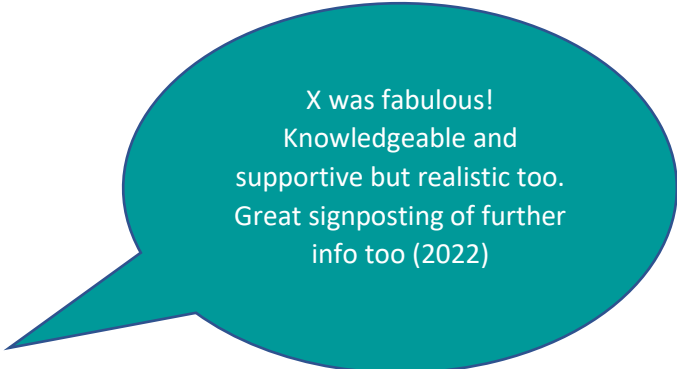
Question 3 asks how fair, unbiased, and neutral SENDIASS North Yorkshire are considered to be, and this was scored 100% agreed. Question 6 also scored 100% for recommending this service (attachment will be provided)

Comments about our service as SENDIASS North Yorkshire leaves an additional space for comments on order to gain a specific understanding of referrers voice.


Direct quotes to the service from evaluation forms and media posts:




X was amazing, sent so much information and helped me research the information.
Lots of useful documents to go armed with and more knowledgeable following advice discussed (Parent with additional needs, 2022)



X was fabulous!
Knowledgeable and supportive but realistic too.
Great signposting of further info too (2022)



“This service is extremely vital! I was totally lost and drowning, with the support and guidance offered from yourselves things changed for my daughter” 2022



‘Thank you for all the support and advice, it’s been life changing for our family’. 2023

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Impact on the team throughout 2022/23

This team continued working together to a high standard and supported each other and the Advice line remains their primary source of concern and stress. Many referrers left distressed or frustrated referrals requesting urgent response. There was little respite, except for Easter holidays 2023. School holidays in 2022 remained unusually busy and casework continued due to the appeal number increasing and tribunal service remaining open during the summer months. The consensus of the team was that enquiries became more complex, most probably due to services being impacted both financially and with constraints for service provision within many organisations. This resulted in referrers stating the lack of communication was their biggest issue for 2022/23 with the second issue being the length of waiting lists and the need for a diagnosis for educational providers to respond accordingly.

In summary, due to SENDIASS working with education, health, and social care and with organisations interwoven across these bodies, it felt continuous pressure from all routes.

1. The nature of the referrals had changed since the pandemic. It was noticeable that many referrers presented increased levels of frustration or unmanageable expectations (for example, expecting team members to read reports in the evenings, weekends and response to their referral if stating it was urgent). Approximately 20% of referrals approached SENDIASS but in fact wanted support in communicating with the SEND team.
2. SENDIASS began developing dual work alongside various professionals from teaching staff to Children and Families Workers from Early Help service are invited to work alongside SENDIASS and the family if they have a positive relationship and family agrees. This style of work began in 2022 but towards the end of this year, SENDIASS are experiencing CFW's closing these cases as they are expected to close as SENDIASS are supporting. Support offered by SENDIASS is very different and these families are just beginning to speak of concerns regarding accepting our service but possibly having the dilemma of having to lose their CFW.
3. The Advice Line often underpins a health component to referrals. Neurodiverse conditions were the most frequently discussed as part of the referral information. Queries regarding mental health services or waiting lists for potential diagnosis were also familiar. Parents carers reported significant impact on their own mental health and wellbeing too. Much of these referrals were recorded as provision or placement being the primary reason for referral. E.g. Parent explains she had received a final plan naming a local mainstream school, but her daughter has been unable to attend for over 5 months. She was band 8 and requesting consults to special schools who said they could not meet her needs. She was recently

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diagnosed with autism. This referral would have been recorded as placement.

4. Many parent’s carers during this year spoke of not understanding the professionals and services nor their choices and the process and needing more IAS to ensure clarity. There was an increase of parent’s carers stating they have additional needs too. The request for additional time to support these requirements led to SENDIASS North Yorkshire having the focus of further developing and extending the website resources and media platforms in 2023/24 to offer variations of resources.

5. Inspire 2gether Young person’s group. This was planned and developed in 2022 for the launch being September 2022. This group is joint chaired; a SENDIASS coordinator and a young person with SEND and supported by a Flying High staff member. Young people with additional needs who are passionate about improving services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The group offers an opportunity for young people to take ownership of what is discussed and aims to enable your voice to be heard.

The SENDIASS North Yorkshire team structure

4.5 total complement of staff if established, full time equivalent.

1 fixed term Media and training officer. This is structured with 4 established coordinators (of which 2 are part time). One full time manager and one media & training offer working 20 hours per week fixed term.

Additional funding brought over from 2021/22 from Council for Disabled Children allowed: 1 Media and Training Officer (20 hours fixed term one year) offering training and arranging monthly information sessions. Finding and illustrating posts, gathering stats. Supporting the team.

One full time manager, manages a case load of 20+

One full time coordinator covering Hambleton, Ripon & Knaresborough, Craven area plus advice line up to 8 sessions per month, with a focus on the Young person’s group, Inspire 2gether as joint chair

One coordinator (0.8) for Hambleton & Richmondshire. This coordinator transferred to Hambleton & Richmondshire when the previous coordinator retired in February 2022. Advice line session to 6- 7 per month and a focus on website build and supports with template resources for referrers

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One coordinator for the Coast & Ryedale who is 0.8 but has an additional 0.2 to focus on developing training and information offers for parents/ carers/ professionals. Advice line up to 8 sessions a month.

One coordinator for Selby District and surrounding area began this post in September 2022. Completed all IPSEA legal training to Level 3. Established working 25.5 hours per week. 5-6 advice line sessions per month.

Tasks for SENDIASS coordinators (excluding advice line and casework)

All coordinators have monthly plus ad hoc meetings with the SEND case manager within their identified locality hub. To discuss stats coming to the attention of SENDIASS surrounding schools or themes of cases. No cases to be discussed unless requested by parents, carers or young person. Statistics from SENDIASS North Yorkshire are shared for that specific location. This is beginning to develop and built a robust relationship, in keeping with the SENDIASS statutory duties.

The SENDIASS Manager attends the Informal dispute resolution weekly. A multi-disciplinary team weekly to focus on specific cases of concern that have escalated complaints or to appeals where parents, carers would like the case concerns brought focus to be resolution. This is a new project that began in late 2022. The SENDIASS manager is an associate member of PCV North Yorkshire, attends several strategic meetings with the local authority and is beginning to be offered strategic health meetings too. The Designated medical officer is available to meet once a month to raise cases of concern (where permission is given by the referrer).

Steering group

Meets quarterly and chaired by PCV North Yorkshire. Various parent carer support groups are invited to join from all locations within North Yorkshire. LA's young person's engagement and voice officers (2). SENDIASS managers from Lancashire, to compare best practice and offer information and advice to support. Local Authority officers for Early Help, Children's social care. Commissioners for Health CCG for Vale of York and Lancashire. Designated Clinical Officer. Inclusion Lead manager and Head of SEND. Head of Disabled Children's services.

Minutes attached.

Plans for April 2023/ March 2024

From feedback four main focus topics were identified with service users and although two main topics were requested, they were split 50/50 between an post 16 offer or an Early years focus. In the last steering group, it was agreed to seek consultations with parent carer groups to explain the demand on this SENDIAS service and find out what they identify as most needed.

Update- currently virtually meeting parent carer support groups across the county to discuss local need and SENDIASS availability. To consider how best to offer advice and support with the knowledge of local groups.

1. To extend the resources on the website and training

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Potential impact – ensure service users can access independently of the team and have their own autonomy, therefore increasing empowerment. To reduce impact of increased referrals coming to the advice line as coordinators can encourage referrers to explore these resources first. Change the section style within this website site identified by Inspire 2gether and a different style for parents’ carers. To make the website accessible and user friendly by consulting to young people and some parents carers with additional needs to make this to accessible offer of live sessions. From offering the monthly EHCAR and SEN support sessions, then now needs to be a further monthly offer of a drop-in virtual session. A launch of this new website is timed for the new academic year September 2023.

2. Media platforms to be focused upon. To increase all 4 platforms to offer different ways of accessing our IAS. To make sure there are different ways to fit different needs within age, locations and needs of potential service users and to ensure current service users will be responsive for SENDIASS to have immediate communication responses.
3. Inspire 2gether want to focus on antibullying, direct discrimination regarding disabilities and they want to take this information possibly in poster form to schools for September. This will be in partnership with Flying High.