Annual Report

1st September 2017 – 31st August 2018
Introduction
Welcome to the Poole Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service’s (Poole SENDIASS) Annual Report 2017-18.

Whilst this report summarises the activities and evaluation of the service for the academic year 2017 – 2018, information will be provided regarding future plans for development. Throughout this report, unless otherwise specified, when we refer to “parents” we include all parents, step parents, adoptive parents, foster carers or adult carers who have legal responsibility for a child or young person with special educational needs or a disability and lives in Poole. A ‘young person’ is someone who has reached school leaving age and up to age 25. A young person has reached school leaving age on the last Thursday in June in the academic year in which the individual turns 16.

With regards to young people, within legislation, their views and wishes will take precedence over their parents/carers, unless that young person is considered by professionals and parents to lack ‘mental capacity’ to make an informed decision.

The Borough of Poole, continues to provide an arms length SENDIAS service in order to fulfil the legal duty to provide children, young people and parent/carers with confidential, impartial information, advice and support about matters relating to their special educational needs and disabilities, including where health and social care provide support related to SEND. This means that the service is able to act, and is seen to act independently and impartially with no undue influence or control from the local authority or CCG.

Overview of the service
Our service covers four main areas or work:

- Information, advice and support to children and young people with special educational needs or a disability
- Information, advice and support to parents and carers who have a child or young person with special educational needs or disability
- Independent support to children young people and parents undergoing the statutory processes towards an Education Health and Care Plan or during the Annual Review process.
- Support for parents and carers of children who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from school

Poole SENDIASS has maintained staffing levels over the last year, as follows:

1 full-time SENDIASS Manager: Victoria H…. (case worker)
1 part-time (0.7 FTE) SENDIASS Officer: Claire M…. (case worker)
1 part-time (0.6 FTE) SENDIASS Young Person’s Development Officer: Colin P (case worker)

The young person’s development post continues to be funded through the roll-over of Independent Support grant funding, so is temporary until end of July 2019. The responsibility of the role continues to be focused on supporting children and young people to share their views, in decisions
that are being made about them and to ensure young people’s participation in SENDIASS and wider service developments.

Currently all members of staff act as case officers offering a range of information, advice and support tailored to the needs of the people using the service.

**What are the aims of Poole SEND Information, Advice and Support Service?**

Our aims are:
- to provide in an accessible and timely way free, impartial, accurate and confidential information advice and support to children and young people with special educational needs and their parents
- to support the participation of children and young people and their parents in decisions that affect them
- to support children, young people and parents to express their views, wishes and feelings to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes
- to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people with SEND
- to influence positively the Borough of Poole’s Children’s Services SEND policy and practice

**1. COMMISSIONING, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

**How is Poole SENDIASS monitored?**

A fundamental way of driving improvements and monitoring the delivery of the Poole SENDIAS service is through seeking feedback from those who have asked for information, advice and support. Poole SENDIASS carried out the regular annual survey with parents, during January and February 2018 and has also introduced ‘quick feedback’ at the end of involvement or at change of intervention level, usually gathered on a half termly basis. Parent/carers are asked to indicate their satisfaction with the service they received based on standard questions developed by the national Information, Advice and Support Network and their views on the outcome for themselves and their child, the results of which are appended to this report.

Due to the changes to data protection and the advent of General Data Protection Requirements at the end of May 2018, we now ask parent/carers and young people at point of initial contact with Poole SENDIASS, whether they would be willing in the future to provide feedback and by what means. This is then recorded directly onto the Poole SENDIASS database for future reference.

The Steering Group meets on a six monthly basis usually in November and May. It is now chaired by the Parent Carer Forum and has a broad membership, including the Designated Clinical Officer and the voice of young people. Meetings provide an opportunity for reporting on SENDIASS activity to ensure the requirements within the Children and Families Act 2014 are met. It is also the forum whereby the Poole SENDIASS Development Plan is presented and service developments are monitored and reviewed, including the delivery of any external contractual requirements, such as the Independent Support programme.

During the summer term 2018, the Borough of Poole and Bournemouth Borough Council
SENDIASS services collaborated in writing a bid for funding from the new Information, Advice and Support Programme (IASP) delivered by the Council for Disabled Children, on behalf of the DfE. The bid was successful and funding of £64000, has been agreed, subject to contract tasks being completed. Both councils are committed to the IASP and ensuring that SENDIASS, within the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (following LGR) will continue to deliver high standard, accurate and accessible information, advice and support in line with new IASP baseline minimum standards (appended to this report).

Under the contract there are key tasks that must be completed, with a schedule that covers the two year period from 2018 - 2020. This will ensure the new council fulfils the statutory duties around the delivery of SENDIASS locally.

There is a clear CPD and training plan in place, for each member of staff within Poole SENDIASS and all staff are enabled to attend local and national training events and workshops, including access to legal training. This allows ongoing opportunities to build skills and knowledge, thereby ensuring the delivery of accurate information and advice and offers the opportunity to share and develop local practices.

2. STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS

Contributing to local policy and practice:

Throughout the year 2017 - 2018, Poole SENDIASS has been involved in the following groups, projects and processes:

- Facilitating and further developing the young person’s SENDIASS participation group, in partnership with young people aged 16-24 years.
- Participation in the SEND Strategy Partnership Group and supporting young people’s participation and feedback to the group.
- Delivering Equality Act workshop to Early Years SENCo training and SENCo briefing, in partnership with the Educational Psychology service and secondary SENCos.
- SEND Law workshop to a group of parents, supported by Poole Parent Carer Forum.
- Feedback and providing information regarding new LA Annual Review paperwork.
- Working with the local authority leads within the SEND service, to deliver a series of LA led consultation and participation events for parent/carers.
- Information and advice, during Portage stay and play sessions.
- Feedback to LA on general themes regarding SEND, identified by parents’ and carers’ enquiries and casework. This is collective information where individuals identified broad areas of concern within schools or the LA. Individual people are not identified in this process.
- Attendance at the Schools’ Admissions Forum.
- Attendance and input at the Anti-Bullying Strategy Steering Group and Anti-bullying forum.
- Local Government Reorganisation meetings.
- Setting up a parent/carer working group to map child/young person's journey and establishing what constitutes the right information, at key points.
Contribution to regional and national policy and practice:

The Poole SENDIASS team continue to be members of the National Information, Advice and Support Network, which provides peer support on issues affecting the delivery of the Information, Advice and Support Services throughout England. Poole SENDIASS also belongs to the regional south west IAS group.

Representatives from Poole SENDIASS have attended termly regional group meetings and national training events, as follows:

- SEND Law conference
- Early Years - SEND policy and practice
- Participation of young people
- Preparing for adulthood
- South West IASS regional Manager’s strategic review
- South West IASS planning CPD event for SENDIASS staff regionally
- Termly liaison with Rose Road colleagues, also delivering Independent Support.
- SW Regional IASS Network meetings and Manager Workshops.

3. PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE

What services does Poole SENDIASS provide?

Poole SENDIASS continues to provide a range of flexible support and case work to children, young people, and parents; we aim to offer support that meets individual needs and may include, but is not limited to, any combination of the following:

- Telephone/email support and helpline
- Face-to-face support
- Support throughout the statutory processes in relation to Education, Health and Care Plans including help to contribute views, feelings and wishes to the statutory assessment process or annual review
- Help to prepare for meetings, or support at meetings if requested
- Support to prepare for an appeal e.g. an exclusion, tribunal, admission or transport appeal
- Help to write letters to request support or assessment
- Help to understand professionals’ reports
- Representing parent/carers, children or young people’s views within meetings or appeal hearings, if they are unable to do so
- Exploring with individuals the range of options open to them and supporting them in their decision
Poole SENDIASS also provides signposting to other services and sources of information and provides and/or facilitates training to groups of parents/carers and professionals.

Poole SENDIASS officers do not attend a meeting about a child or young person unless either the young person or the parent has given us permission to attend and is present at the meeting. Where children, young people or parents find it difficult to express themselves confidently at a meeting, we will raise their concerns or speak for them if they requested us to do so.

We do not share information about a specific case with anyone outside of Poole SENDIASS unless a child, young person or their parents give us their explicit permission to do so. The only exception to this situation is when there are clear safeguarding issues and it would be negligent and unlawful for us not to share the information we hold pertaining to a specific child or vulnerable adult. In light of GDPR, Poole SENDIASS has a new Privacy Notice, which is appended to this report.

Developing the Service

The development work for children and young people has had continued focus on two aspects:

- Gaining the views of children and young people and supporting meetings
- Involving children and young people with recognising and understanding the service

Gaining the views of children and young people and supporting meetings

During this academic year, a total of 52 referrals have been received regarding young people aged 16 to 25 years. Comparing academic year 2016-2017, there has been an 86% increase in referrals specifically regarding young people.

Out of the 52 referrals, 20 young people have taken up the offer of or have requested, support independently of their parent/carer which Poole SENDIASS has been able to provide (in 2016-2017 the number was 3 young people). This has enabled each of these young people to share their views and feelings, contributing to decisions that are being made about their lives.

Involving children and young people with recognising and understanding the service

During 2017/2018 the young person’s participation group has gone from strength to strength, with five young men regularly attending meetings on a half termly basis. The young people have been involved in the following activities:

- developing SENDIASS resources for children and young people
- sharing views with wider LA services including reviewing activities for ADD-On news and participating in the SEND strategic partnership group
- learning and understanding about the importance of their voice in matters that concern them and learning about giving consent
- learning about the structure of meetings including how to chair a meeting
- using FLARE topics to discuss their views on different issues affecting young people with SEND

There are future plans for the group to be involved in a project with the Arts University Bournemouth, with a focus on Preparation for Adulthood posters, showing young people involved
in work experience and training. It is hoped these posters will inspire ongoing conversations about adulthood, with children from the earliest age, and their future aspirations.

A Case study reflecting examples of support can be seen in the appendices to this Annual Report.

4. SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS

Independent Support

The funding for Independent Support ceased at the end of May 2018, following a short extension beyond 31st March 2018. In total over the 4 years, that the programme was in place, 448 parent carers and/or young people in Poole were supported. Nationally more than 160,000 parent/carers and/or young people were supported.

To meet the requirements at the end of the Independent Support contract, a business plan was submitted indicating the Borough of Poole’s commitment to continuing the provision of support through the EHCP process, within Poole SENDIASS core offer beyond July 2018. Throughout August 2018, a further 10 parent/carers and young people have received independent support. Poole SENDIASS, continues to offer seamless movement between independent support and the delivery of tailored SEND information, advice and support without the need to refer to other services.

All SENDIASS Case work (including Independent Support)

Since 1st September 2017, we have received 500 referrals for support. Sometimes children and young people will have two support projects running in tandem, such as Independent Support and Exclusion, so this doesn’t mean we have worked with 500 families. However, this number of referrals represents a significant increase in requests for support, compared with academic year 2016-2017. With reference to the table below, the year on year increase 2014 to 2018,
demonstrates a 167% increase in requests for support, since the implementation of the SEND reforms in September 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Number of new referrals</th>
<th>% increase or decrease (yr on yr)</th>
<th>Total number of referrals open during time period</th>
<th>% increase or decrease (yr on yr)</th>
<th>Number of contacts</th>
<th>% increase or decrease (yr on yr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>187</td>
<td></td>
<td>257</td>
<td></td>
<td>2505</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>34.2% ↑</td>
<td>Anomaly figure</td>
<td></td>
<td>2207</td>
<td>11% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>41.4% ↑</td>
<td>431</td>
<td></td>
<td>2344</td>
<td>6.2% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>41% ↑</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>43% ↑</td>
<td>3689</td>
<td>57% ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 1

The chart below shows comparative data, for incoming contacts, month by month for the last 4 academic years since the implementation of the SEND reforms in September 2014.

Fig 2

The chart demonstrates that this academic year has followed similar trends month on month, for incoming contacts as 2016-2017, however generally there have been significantly more incoming contacts over time, compared with all previous academic years since 2014, as per the data within Fig 1.
Involvement in casework continues to be more complex, requiring multiple interventions and prolonged involvement when concerns have been difficult to resolve. This is demonstrated by the increase in the number of cases remaining open, during the academic year. Those using the service often have multiple issues, not just those related to SEND. They include housing and social issues, adopted children, children in need, financial and housing difficulties. We are having to signpost an increasing number of parents to a range of other support services.

The charts below demonstrate a comparison between academic year 2016-2017 and this last academic year. There has been an increase of level 2 and level 4 support and a decrease in level 3.

**Academic year 2016/2017**

![Pie chart for Academic year 2016/2017](image)

**Academic year 2017/2018**

![Pie chart for Academic year 2017/2018](image)
The comparative data in the chart below, demonstrates our reach to families from ethnic minority groups and those who have English as an Additional Language. The data comparison reveals and significant increase in SENDIASS reach.

Table 4
Fig 5 below, shows similar rates of referral for early years and 16–18 year olds, although this academic year there has been an increase on 0-4 year olds and a decrease in 16-18 year olds. We have had a sharp increase in request for support across the primary age range and a moderate increase across secondary. There has been a significant increase in SENDIASS reach to 19-25 year olds, when compared with last academic year.

![Bar chart showing referral rates for different age groups in 2016/17 and 2017/18](chart.png)

**Fig 5**

In terms of parental reporting of Special Educational Needs during 2017/2018, social, emotional and mental health needs remains the highest reported primary and secondary need, with 34% primary need and 18% secondary need (total 52%). This represents a slight drop when compared 2016/2017 and 2015/2016 where similar trends were noted between academic years (around 40% and 20%).

Table 6 below accounts for the other areas of SEN, with communication and interaction demonstrating the next highest reported need.

![Pie chart showing distribution of SEN categories](chart.png)

**Fig 6**

Autumn Term 2018
The high reporting of needs associated with social, emotional and mental health and communication and interaction, reflects that ASD remains as the primary reported disability, with 35% of SENDIASS referrals during this academic year relating to a child or young person, with this diagnosis.

Why do individuals contact the service?

We continue to record referrals against four projects:

- General SEND information and advice
- Independent Support
- Exclusions
- Appeal and Tribunal

General SEND Information and Advice

The highest proportion of contacts has remained as concerns related to the child or young person’s progress in their educational or training setting. The proportion of contacts has remained at 36% of the total contacts for general information, advice and support.

There has been a 50% decrease in requests for support around complaint, with 3% of related contacts this academic year, compared with 6% in 2016/2017.

Most significant is the overall increase in the number of contacts for General IAS. During this academic year SENDIASS received 1912 contacts, accounting for 718 hours of support, this compares with 726 contacts in 2016/2017 or 223 hours. This represents a 163% increase in contacts.

This figure contributes significantly to the overall increase in service demand, 57% comparing this and last academic year.

Independent Support

The majority of Independent Support, has remained as advice and support regarding the draft or final EHCPs, with the percentage of total contacts remaining relatively static (48% 2016/2017, 44% 2017/2018). Number of contacts related to the preparation of parent views has dropped slightly to 7%. However, we have seen an increase in support to young people with just over 1% of contacts relating to supporting young people to prepare their views either for EHC needs assessments or Annual Review, this compares with only 0.1% contacts in support of young people last academic year.

Overall there has been a 197% increase in contacts either requesting or providing support around the EHCP process or Annual Review. With respect to Annual Review specifically, 14% of contacts have related to this area of Independent Support, compared to only 3% last year.

With the embedding of the role of the Young Person's Officer, we have been able to support an increasing number of young people. During 2016/2017 only 28 referrals related to young people aged 16-25 years, this academic year this has risen to 68. SENDIASS has been able to offer
children and young people Independent Support in their own right and separate to their parent/carer, this academic year reaching a total of 31 children and young people

**Exclusions**

Incidence of requests for support around exclusion, have remained static at 24 referrals. However, requests for support regarding permanent exclusion have dropped and incidence of parent's reporting concerns about informal exclusions and internal exclusion, have increased.

**Appeal and Tribunal**

Support for making appeal through SEND Tribunal, has also increased this academic year. During academic year 2015/2016, there were 4 referrals for support with SEND Tribunal. However, 2016/2017 has seen a 500% increase, with 24 referrals for support. The primary reason for appeal has been ‘refusal to assess’, however we have supported parent/carers and young people to appeal content of the EHCP and placement.

To date around 83% of appeals, SENDIASS have been supporting, have been concluded before reaching the need for a final hearing, either through formal mediation or through ongoing discussions with the Local Authority.

**5. MEETING THE KEY PRIORITIES FROM 2017 -18 POOLE SENDIASS ACTION PLAN:**

The development priorities identified for focus during this academic year were based on Poole SENDIASS current National Quality Standards assessment.

Key priorities were as follows:

**Section 2 Strategic functions**

**Standard 2.1**

The IASS informs policy and practice at the LA and CCG level by working with parents, children and young people, the Parent Carer Forum and local voluntary groups and organisations.

- Outcome indicator - Developments focus on re-establishing links with the re-launched Poole Parent Carer Forum and their new administrator, Sharon Moore. It is envisaged that development of the young person's participation group, will enable young people's voice to influence service developments within Poole SENDIASS and within the wider LA/CCG services. Links and collaboration are to be further developed with Poole Forum and other local groups and organisations, supporting parent/carers, children and young people with SEND.

  **Progress towards:**
  - Links have been developed and strengthened with Poole Parent Care forum, with Sharon Moore chairing Poole SENDIASS Steering Group and SENDIASS Manager meeting with PPCF on at least a termly basis to discuss themes and developments. Poole SENDIASS has provided a SEND law workshop to PPCF members and have promoted events that they have had. An Equality Act workshop is also proposed.
  - The young person’s participation group has been active, during this academic year. Meeting half termly (see page 6/7 of this report for their activities).
● SENDIASS is linked with a new parent/carer support group, Doors Open, providing ‘clinic’ type sessions and support via themed workshop input.
● SENDIASS is working with a small group of parent/carers regarding developing a pathway for getting the right information, at the right time.

Section 3 Provision of information and advice

Standard 3.1
Potential service users are aware of the IASS and what it can offer them.

Standard 3.2
IASS is accessible to all potential service users.

Standard 3.3
The IASS provides impartial, accurate and up to date information and high quality advice relevant to the service users’ needs.

● Outcome indicator - Emphasis will be on developing information and resources for and with children and young people, that is accessible and meaningful to them. Similarly developing our core information, in the most common first languages within Poole. A key development will be Poole’s SENDIASS social media presence.

Progress towards:
● The young person’s participation group have worked on developing resources. However further development of resources and information has been put on hold due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
● Poole SENDIASS twitter page, was launched this academic year. Any further social media and webpage developments have been put on hold due to (LGR).

Section 5 Professional development and training

Standard 5.5
The IASS offers training to parents on:

working with professionals,

involvement in decision making,

the law relating to SEN and disability, as it applies to education, health and social care

in collaboration with parent carer forums, contributing to strategic developments

● Outcome indicator - It is planned that by Easter 2018, a plan for delivering parent/carer workshops during Summer Term 2018 will be in place. It is envisaged that this will be developed in conjunction with Poole Parent Carer Forum, Rose Road and other partners and will be based on parent/carer feedback about themes that are helpful for them.

Progress towards:
● SEND law and Equality Act workshops have been developed and delivered during the Spring and Summer term 2018, to both parent carers and professionals.
● A project to relaunch parent/carer support has been agreed between SENDIASS, the short breaks team and Poole Parent Carer, including providing workshops based on parent/carers area of interest and need.
6. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Future developments for Poole SENDIASS are based around Local Government Reorganisation and the contract under the Information, Advice and Support Programme.

The contract task order has been issued and task one, a joint Bournemouth and Poole SENDIASS self review has been developed and submitted, alongside a case study evidencing the breadth of information, advice and support provided by SENDIASS locally.

Bournemouth and Poole SENDIASS, will be jointly working on a 2 year forward looking plan to be submitted to IASP on the 3rd December 2018, which will be based on the new IASP minimum service standards (appended to this report). The plan will be agreed in collaboration with commissioners within Poole and Bournemouth, and the CCG.

Report written by:
Victoria Hunt, Poole SENDIASS Manager
October 2018

APPENDIX 1

Glossary of terms and acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arm’s length</td>
<td>The service is able to act, and is seen to act by professionals and service users, independently and impartially with no undue influence or control from the local authority or clinical commissioning group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoP</td>
<td>Borough of Poole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCG</td>
<td>Clinical Commissioning Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Council for Disabled Children (a national charity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Code of Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EHCP</td>
<td>Education, Health and Care Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAG</td>
<td>Information, Advice and Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IASS</td>
<td>Information, Advice and Support Service (generic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impartial</td>
<td>Not biased towards or influenced by any particular party, point of view or policy. Not giving priority to any particular impairment, disability or SEN over another; information advice and support given reflects the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPSEA</td>
<td>Independent Parental Special Education Advice (a national charity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Independent Supporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IASP</td>
<td>Information, Advice and Support Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPCF</td>
<td>Poole Parent Carer Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Road Association</td>
<td>An organisation commissioned to deliver Independent Support to children, young people and parents (also offered by Poole SENDIASS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENCo</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs Coordinator (in schools and educational settings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEND</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENDIASS</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENDIST</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal</td>
</tr>
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Appendix 2

Annual survey 2016/2017

In December 2017, 50 evaluation questionnaires were sent out, to randomly selected parents and carers who had used the service within the past 6 months. We received 15 responses (30% return rate).

The responses received regarding ‘how did you hear about us’, revealed the three most common methods were via our SENDIASS leaflet (7 responses), word of mouth (6 responses) and being signposted by child or young person’s setting (3 responses).

The optimum score of 4 was received for ‘How likely is it that you would recommended the service?’ and ‘How quickly did we respond?’

Parent’s indicated through their responses that ‘greater understanding of rights for children with SEND’ and ‘my child’s needs are better understood’, were the highest rated outcomes, from their perspective.

Parent/carer’s were invited to make additional comments, examples of which are below:

Poole SENDIASS were such a help to my daughter. It was wonderful to know X’s rights and ours as parents. I can't thank SENDIASS enough.

Just to say a huge thank you. I couldn't have done it (fought for my child to stay at his school) without you. I have recommended you!

Very happy with the service provided. Great communication throughout. Excellent.

One parent made the comment of:

‘Maybe to follow up if the parent or child still needs support’

This comment was difficult to follow up on, as all the responses were anonymised. However, to improve practice we have now introduced half termly, short survey’s regarding service experience. Respondents are selected based on intervention ending, so we can now pick up whether continued support is required or if new issues have emerged, through seeking feedback.