

Somerset SENDIAS Annual Report

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022



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Introduction

Information Advice and Support Services (IASS) provide free impartial, confidential and accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to special educational needs and disability (0-25). The provision of information, advice and support should help to promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents. Chapter 2 of the SEND Code of Practice sets out the role and activities of an IASS service.

Somerset SENDIAS is jointly commissioned to provide the Information, Advice and Support Service which is a statutory requirement for Somerset County Council (LA) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) as described in Chapter Two of the **SEND Code of Practice 2014**.

Meet the Somerset SENDIAS Team

SENDIAS Officers

SENDIAS Officers provide information, advice and support on all matters relating to Special Educational Needs and Special Education law for children, young people and parents/carers. They are trained to Ipsea Level 3 this includes SENDIST Tribunal training. They also undertake additional training through Ipsea, Council for Disabled Children and the Information, Advice, Support Service Network (IASSN).

SENDIAS Officers provide information, advice and support through the Education, Health and Care plan, Annual Review, school exclusions and the SENDIST Tribunal process, including attendance at Tribunal hearings.

SENDIAS Officers provide induction and training support for new staff and volunteers.

SENDIAS Officers provide Information, Advice and Support at IASN Level 3 and Level 4.

SENDIAS SEN Support Worker

SENDIAS SEN Support workers enable and empower parents to have their voices heard and play an active part in the education for their children. SENDIAS SEN Support workers provide information, advice and support regarding SEN Support in school that relates to the Send Code of Practice and education law. SENDIAS SEN Support workers are trained to Ipsea Level 3 and update their training through Ipsea, Council for Disabled Children and Information, Advice, Support Service Network (IASSN)

SENDIAS SEN Support workers work with schools and families to ensure that schools understand their responsibilities and offer the right support for children receiving SEN Support and implementing the Graduated Response.

The SENDIAS SEN support worker will refer the family to IAS support from a SENDIAS Officer if an EHC request to assess is made from the Statutory SEND team.

The SENDIAS SEN Support Workers provide Information, Advice and Support at IASN Level 2.

Development Officer

The SENDIAS Development Officer works directly with children, young people and parent carers to offer information, advice and support with the meetings at school, Education, Health and Care plan process, Mediation, SENDIST tribunal and exclusions. The SENDIAS Development Officer is trained to IPSEA Level 3. They also undertake additional training through Ipsea, Council for Disabled Children and the Information. Advice, Support Service Network (IASSN).

The SENDIAS Development Officer is responsible for supporting the SENDIAS Service Manager with matters relating to service development, inductions, policies and procedures, website improvements, attendance at Regional IASS meetings etc.

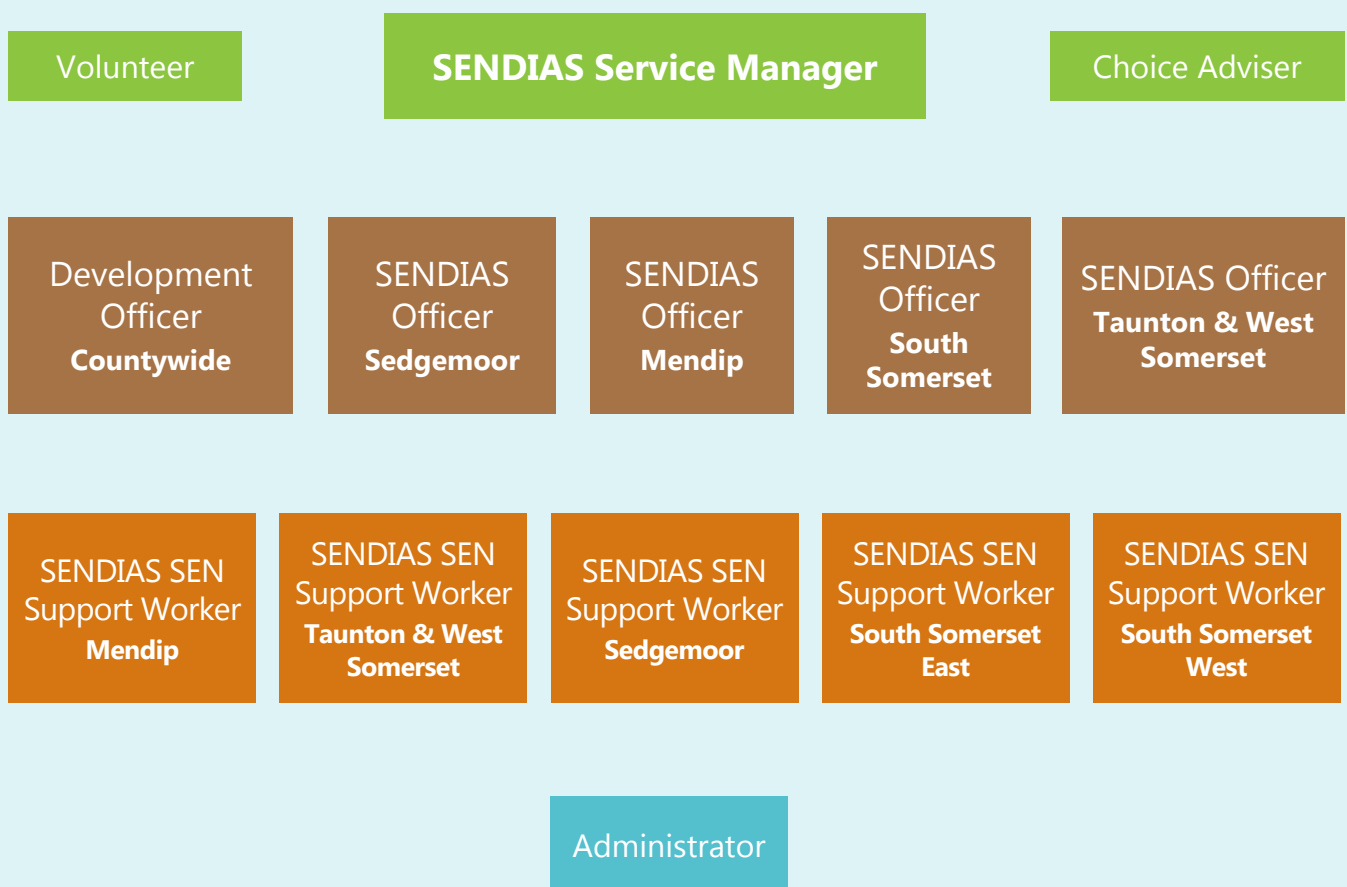
The SENDIAS Development Officer provides Information, Advice and Support at IASN Level 3 and Level 4.

SENDIAS Administrator

The SENDIAS Administrator is responsible for the Helpline and email support, general administrative duties, collating data, signposting parents/carers and professionals.

The SENDIAS Administrator is trained to IPSEA Level 3 and provides information, advice and support at IASN Level 1.

SENDIAS Team Structure



The National Minimum Standards for IAS Services



The **Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services** are based on the requirements relating to support that Information, Advice and Support Services must provide, as set out in the Children and Families Act (C&FA) 2014, the SEND Code of Practice and on additional legal advice commissioned by the Information, Advice and Support Service Network.

The IASS Minimum Standards have the following four areas:

1. Commissioning, governance and management arrangements
2. Strategic functions
3. Operational Functions
4. Professional development and training for staff

This report reflects how the SENDIAS service in Somerset meets these standards and the information, advice and support the service has provided to children, young people and parent/carers in this period.



Commissioning, governance and management arrangement:

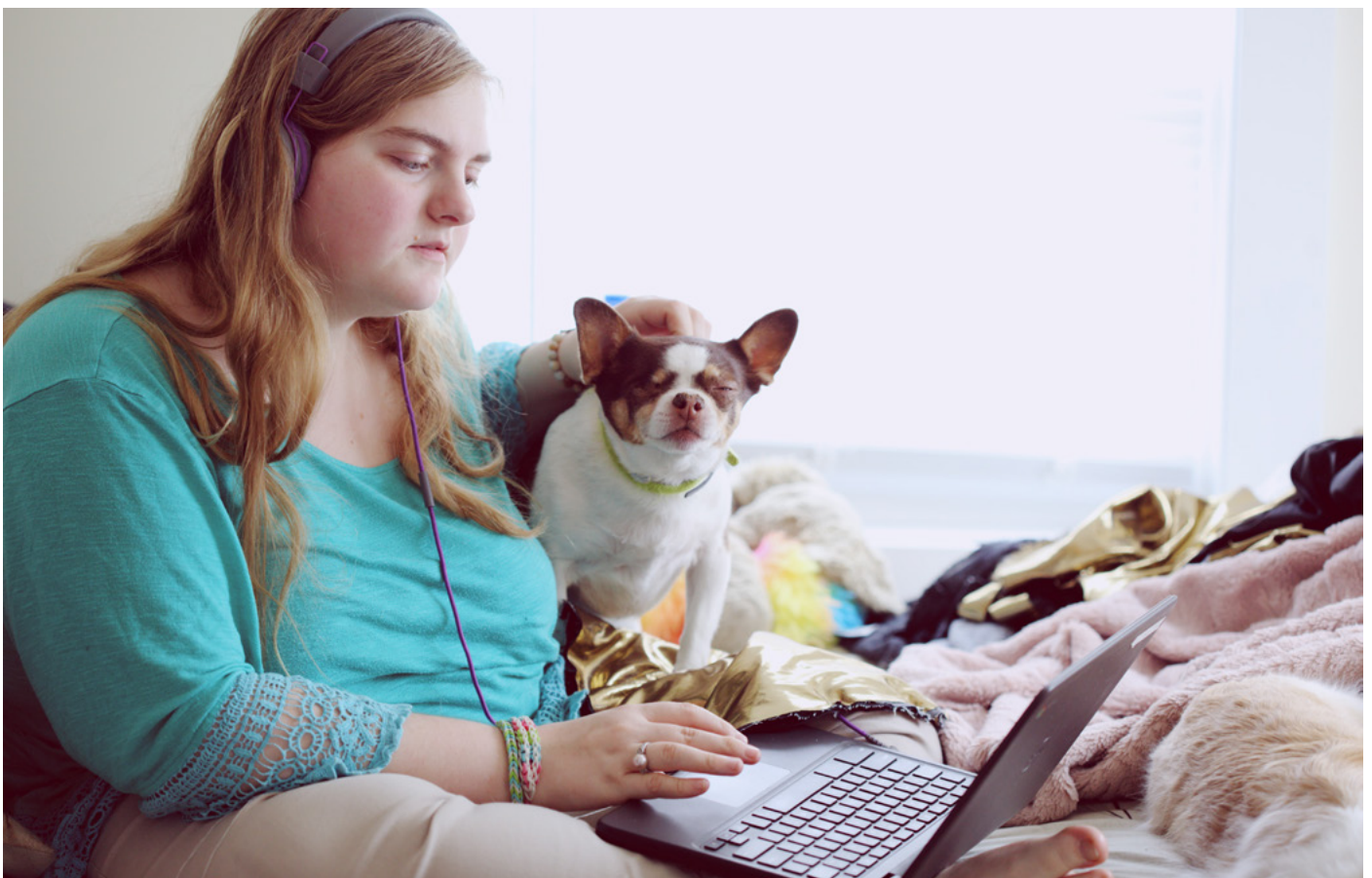


- SENDIAS secured permanent funding from the Local Authority to maintain current SENDIAS staffing levels which is managed by the SENDIAS service manager.
- A Service Level Agreement between Somerset County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group for 2022/2023 was agreed and signed in March 2021.
- SENDIAS Information sessions were developed and presented to the following teams: Department of Work and Pensions, the Kinship team, School Senco's, SPOT team, Somerset Parent Carer Forum and other parent groups.
- An Advisory Body was formed which includes parent/carers, representatives from Somerset Parent Carer Forum, Special schools, Primary mainstream school, Adult Mental Health provider, School Governor, Early Years Opportunity Group. The Advisory Body meets three times a year.
- An Advisory Body sub-group was formed to look at Post 16 provision and reported back to the main Advisory Body.

Strategic functions:



- The SENDIAS Service Manager attended national workshops regarding SEND Review, What makes good SEN Support and Ways to Streamline the EHCP process.
- Somerset SENDIAS Service Manager was invited to chair the Regional South West Information, Advice, Support Network meetings.
- The SENDIAS Manager attended the Regional South West Information, Advice and Support Programme meeting in Bristol.
- The Information, Advice, Support Programme final report was written and submitted to evidence completion of the tasks set in the contract. As a result SENDIAS was successful in securing the funding attached to the IAS Programme. There will not be any further funding opportunities for IAS services to bid for via the IAS Programme.
- The SENDIAS service manager attended a meeting with the Department of Education with other national IAS managers and commissioners.
- Somerset SENDIAS submitted its response to the SEND Review 2022.
- The SENDIAS Service manager has regular meetings with an LA officer to discuss mediations and SENDIST tribunals with a view to finding ways to reduce the high number of Mediations and Tribunals in Somerset.
- The SENDIAS Manager and the SENDIAS Development Officer attended the Collaborative Supportive Employment Forum meetings throughout the year. Post 16 and what happens next has been a focus for SENDIAS this year.



Operational Functions

The three main reasons someone comes to SENDIAS for information, advice and support are:

- SEN Support in School
- EHC process
- Mediation/Tribunal

Between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022 the SENDIAS Service has:

Helpline Enquires	6,310	Mediation:	
New Cases – Level Two	279	Parents/carers received support	31
New Cases – Level Three	204	Tribunals:	
New Cases – Level Four	115	Parents/carers received support	102
Total Cases	598	Information Sessions:	
		Professionals and parent/carers	150+

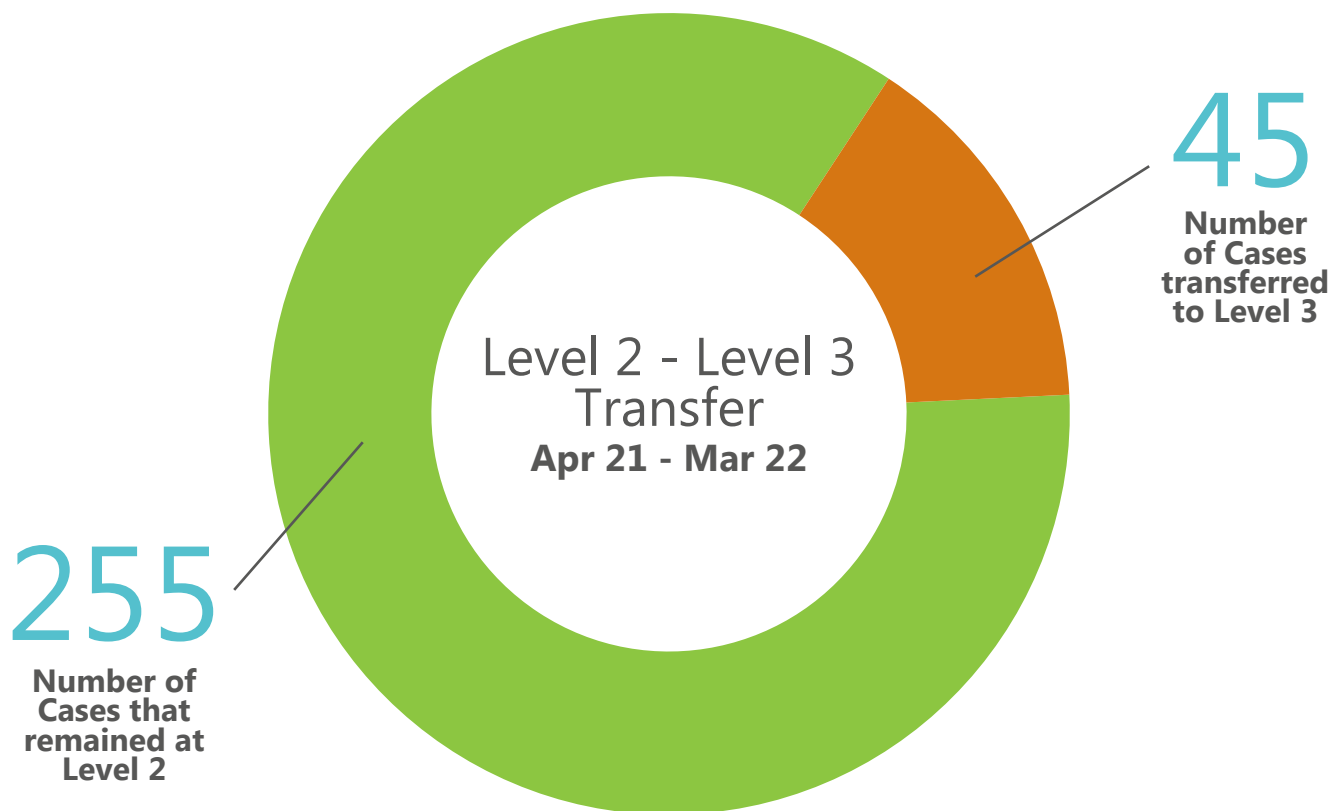
Information sessions held for parents and carers:

- Somerset Parent Carer Forum Local Offer events
- Information sessions for parents/carers at support groups
- SENDIAS webinar presented on the topic of Mediation/SENDIST tribunal for parent/carers held in March, recorded and uploaded to SENDIAS website
- Online webinars for Somerset Parent Carer Forum included Mediation/Tribunal Process, Post 16 and Sen Support



SENDIAS SEN Support

SENDIAS SEN Support was introduced to provide parents and carers information, support and advice for their children with non-identified and identified SEND in early years settings and school. This is to support parents/carers and educational settings to work in partnership to ensure that SEN Support and the Graduated Response is in place to support the child's SEND needs. The aim is to enable children with or without identified SEND, to remain in their early years setting or school with the right support, at the right time without the need to apply for an Education, Health and Care plan, this is demonstrated in the chart below.



SENDIAS Website

The website is continually being upgraded and developed to make it more accessible and easier to use. New information pages have been added using a variety of media such as video's and animations.

www.somersetsend.org.uk

Professional development and training for staff



- Several members of the team left the service during this period and new staff have been successfully recruited and completed the induction process.
- All staff undertake legally based training provided by IPSEA up to Level 3.
- All staff undertake Mental Health First Aid training.
- Staff have attended training webinars on:
 - Discrimination in Education and Exclusions training provided by Equality and Human Rights Commission

Council for Disabled Children - Annual Review

This year the SENDIAS volunteer has supported the service by being a part of the Advisory Body and supporting the recruitment process.



What difference has SENDIAS made?



Case Studies



A Young Person and their College Challenge



SEN School Support Case study

Feedback comment from parents

Really nice to know there is someone at the end of the phone that will know the answers to your questions

Survived the awful process intact purely because of the support from SENDIAS

Website information was great – give it a 4*

It might be helpful to have some videos or links to videos to explain the process

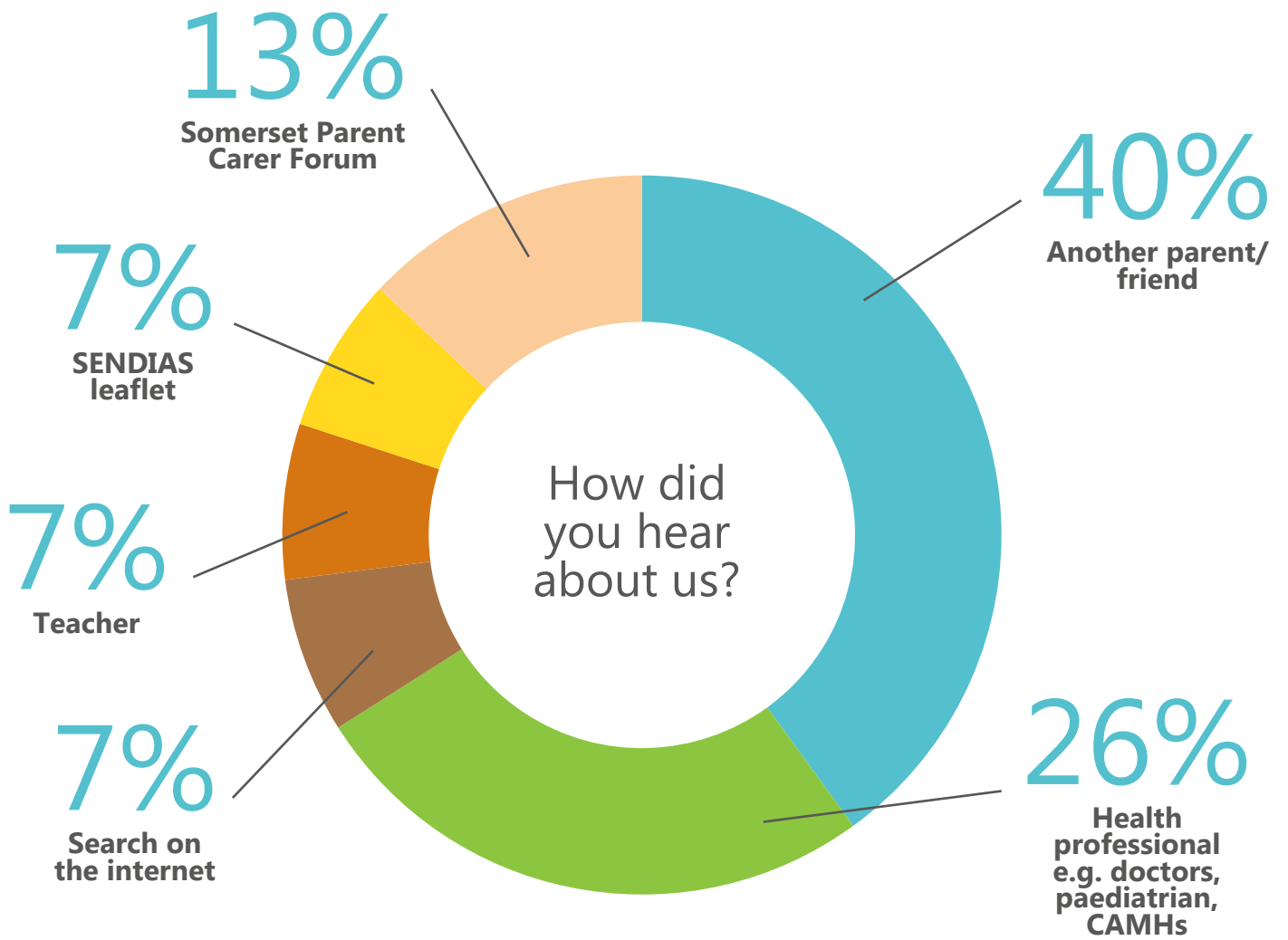
Advised and helped us from beginning to the end. Thank you

Supportive, informed and clearly up to date on legislation and procedures

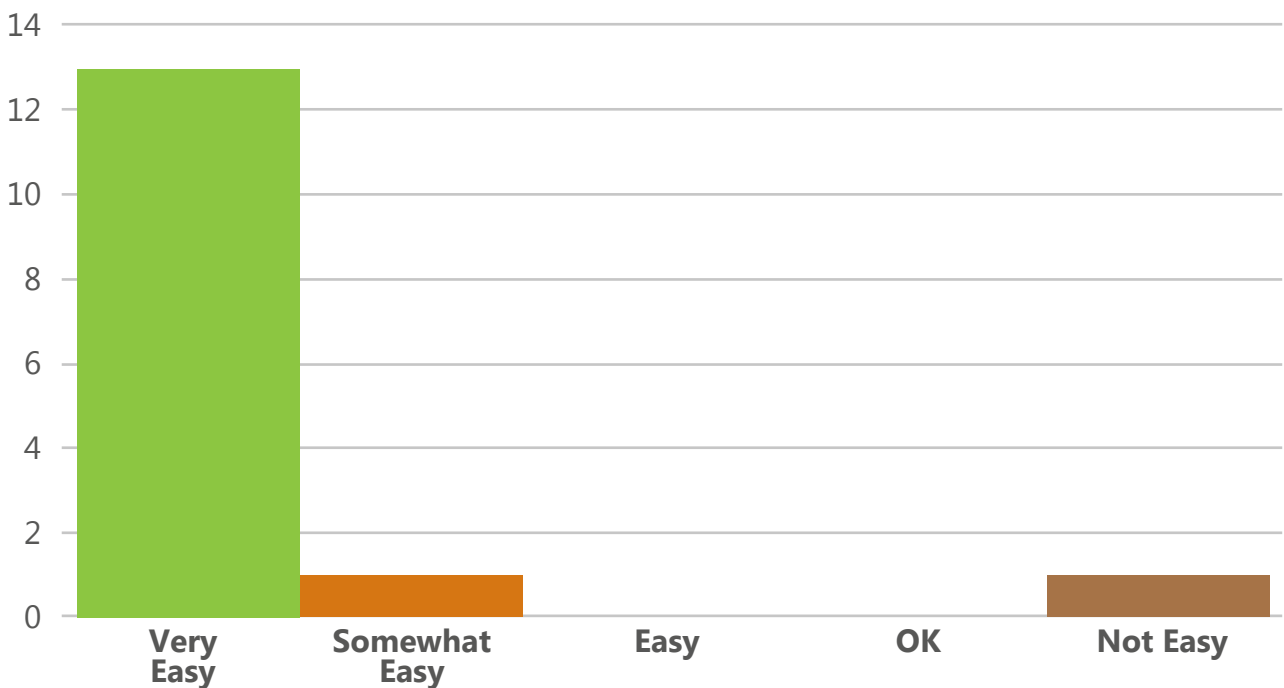
Excellent service which has made a huge difference for my son, would definitely recommend

We didn't feel like just another case, always felt listened to.

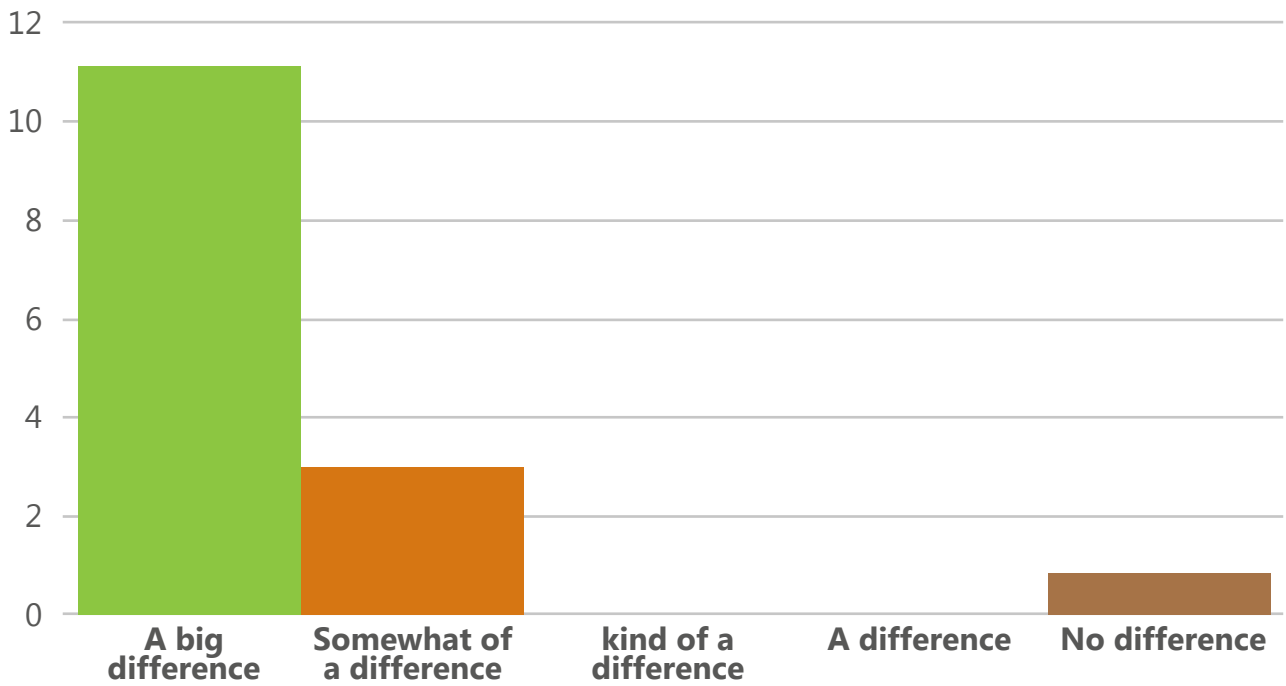
The one professional we could always rely on to give accurate and helpful information.



How easy is it to get in touch with us?



What difference did we make?



Information, Advice, Support Service Network (IASSN) Intervention Levels



Somerset SENDIAS
Information, Advice and Support Service
National IASSN Intervention Levels

SENDIAS Help-line Co-ordinator

Level	Service user need	Support
Level 1	<p>Information and advice about SEND matters, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal framework • Local SEN processes and procedures • Support groups • Particular special educational needs or disabilities • Funding arrangements • Local services • Web based resources • National organisations 	<p>Phone or email support - tailored to the particular circumstances of the service user.</p> <p>(Note that the provision of general information about the service - e.g. as part of training, distribution of service leaflets, visits to IASS website - are <u>not</u> included)</p>

SENDIAS SEN Support Worker

Level	Service user need	Support
Level 2	<p>Any or all of Level 1 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to understand or complete documentation • Support in communicating with school, the LA, other services, etc. • Detailed and personalised guidance on following SEND or exclusion procedures • Assistance in accessing services 	<p>Any or all Level 1 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone or email support over a period of time • Research and provision of specialised advice and information • Home visit by IASS or office visit by service user • Provision of support at/for meeting • liaison with other agencies

SENDIAS Officer

Level	Service user need	Support
Level 3	<p>Any or all of Level 1 and 2 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed and continuing assistance and guidance with statutory processes Complex, multi-agency needs Assistance in overcoming serious breakdown in communications with school/LA/other services Requires intensive support due to personal circumstances (e.g. low literacy levels, learning or sensory difficulties, English as a second language) 	<p>Any or all Level 1 and 2 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of support at/for a series of meetings over a period of months Ongoing support and guidance through statutory processes (EHC needs assessment, disagreement resolution, mediation etc.) Assistance with preparation for an exclusion appeal and support at the appeal meeting IASS undertakes key working role with other agencies

And

Level	Service user need	Support
Level 4	<p>Any or all of Level 1, 2 and 3 plus:</p> <p>Detailed and continuing assistance and guidance with preparation and support during:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Tier Tribunal (SEND), including DDA complaints to Tribunal Complaints to Ombudsman Judicial Review Disputes about Child Protection 	<p>Any or all Level 1, 2 and 3 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of intensive support for the service user(s) during the legal processes. This may include assistance with preparation for the legal process and support at, for example, a Tribunal hearing



Somerset SENDIAS

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County Council



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Clinical Commissioning Group

