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**Blackburn with Darwen**

**Special Educational Needs**

**Information Advice & Support Service**

**Annual Report**

**April 2017 – April 2018**

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**Introduction**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years sets an expectation that children, parents and young people should be involved in the identification, assessment and decision making about the provision to meet special educational needs or disabilities.(SEND) The Code requires that quality information, advice and support is offered to: children and young people with SEN, parents of children with SEN, children and young people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities.

Access to free, accurate and impartial information and support is intended to promote effective partnership working and facilitate the active involvement of parents and young people in decisions about special educational provision. The Children and Families Act 2014 (CAFA) and the revised SEND Code of Practice 0-25 aimed to strengthen the participation of parents, children and young people. IASSN (Information, Advice and Support Services Network) has produced, with the support of the DfE, a national quality standards framework to support the provision of impartial information, advice and support as set out in the legislation and associated guidance.

Statutory Framework:

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities to ensure that children, young people, and parents are provided with information and advice on matters relating to SEN and disability. The information provided should be impartial and provided at arm’s length from the local authority and CCGs. The information advice and support offered should be free, accurate, confidential and in formats which are accessible and responsive to the needs of users.

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS works within the bounds of the legislation, guidance and quality standards to provide impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers of children with SEND, and children and young people themselves through the newly formed CHYPSS (Children and Young People’s Partnership Service) element of SENDIASS. It promotes partnership between parent and carers, Children, Education and Families Services, schools and other agencies. The aim of the service is to empower, enable and encourage parents to take an informed and active part in their child’s education, and young people to be involved in decisions about their own education and futures.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) is required to provide free, accurate and impartial information and support to children and young people between the ages of 0-25 and their parents to enable them to make informed decisions about special educational needs provision. The service should provide

:

* Personal and confidential help
* One to one impartial advice and support
* Independent information about special educational needs and disabilities
* Helping to make sense of how the educational process affects parents/carers and their children/young people
* Advice about working with those involved in the child’s education
* Information about parent groups
* Access to independent parental support
* Promote the local offer
* Signpost to other services that provide information, advice and support under the SEND Code of Practice 0-25
* Information, advice and support on the take-up and management of personal budgets

The Service will provide:-

* Independent information, advice and guidance to children, young people and their families on the law in relation to Special Educational Needs and disabilities, health and social care through suitably independently trained staff.
* Information, advice and support from supporting with initial concerns or identification of potential SEN or disabilities, through to ongoing support and provision, which may include an Education, Health and Care Plan.
* Support and advice for children, young people and parents in gathering, understanding and interpreting information and applying it to their own situation.
* Individual casework and representation for those who need it, which should include support in attending meetings, contributing to assessments and reviews and participating in decisions about outcomes for the child or young person
* Information on the local authority’s processes for resolving disagreements, its complaints procedures and means of redress.
* Supporting children, young people and parents in arranging or attending early disagreement resolution meetings
* Supporting children, young people and parents in managing mediation, appeals to the First Tier Tribunal, exclusions and complaints on matters relating to SEN and disability.

**Location of the Service**

In line with national Quality Standards, Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS is an outsourced service, based at the Community CVS, 45 Railway Road, Blackburn, in who have a Service Level Agreement in place with the Local Authority,

**Staffing**

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS has one paid member of staff – part time to deliver the service:

As part of the SEND Reforms the Government made additional funding available through the Council for Disabled Children. The funding has been awarded to IAS services and to independent charitable organisations to provide Independent Support for families going through the Education Health Care assessment process. The funding was also used to develop and maintain local partnership arrangements and a referral procedure.

An Independent Supporter was appointed on a part time basis of 16 hours per week. The IS funding has helped the IAS Service in many ways. Due to extra staffing it has allowed an expansion of the services offered to parents, carers, children, young people and professionals. The funding was due to cease in March 2018 but has been extended until 31st July, at which time the IAS Service will be informed if funding is to continue.

**Policies in place**

* The Service has the following policies in place
* Confidentiality & Impartiality
* Lone Work
* Safeguarding
* Complaints

**Quality Standards for Impartial Information, Advice & Suppot Services**

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS work to National Quality Standards, approved by the Department for Education (DfE. In February Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS attended a meeting which was involved in a review of Information, Advice and Support Services nationally. Discussions centred round an update of the Quality Standards.

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

A Service Level Agreement is in place between the Local Authority and Community & Voluntary Service/SENDIASS setting out the expectations of the Commissioners.

An Integrated Review and Monitoring Report is presented to the Local Authority on a quarterly basis looking at:

* Aims of the Service
* Outcome of the Service
* Indicators
* Action Plan
* Data Evidence

SENDIASS is arms-length from the Local Authority and has its own identity and logo.

There is no Steering Group in place, but is closely monitored also by the Community & Voluntary Service, having regular supervision, which discusses training, supervision and advice for staff

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS also provide termly data to the Council for Disabled Children, which is acting as agent on behalf of the government to monitoring the Independent Support Programme. The Service also has quarterly meetings with the Commissioning Team and SEND Manager.

**2. STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS**

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

* ELCAS
* Health professionals
* Local Authority
* Parents in Partnership
* Barnardos
* Education Department
* Blackburn College
* ADHD North West
* National Autistic Society
* Your Support Your Choice
* NW Action for ASD
* Your Support Your Choice
* BwD Parents in Partnership
* Indigo
* National Autistic Society
* MIND
* Learning in Partnership
* Carers Service
* Families Health & Wellbeing Forum
* New Directions
* Friends of the Local Offer
* Care Network Hub
* Friends of Crosshill
* Disabilities Facilities Grant Panel
* Private Fostering Panel
* Autism Board
* Communication and Local Offer Group
* Disability Resource Access Panel
* Autism Education Sub Group

The Service works closely with the Council for Disabled Children within requirements of the Information Advice Support Programme. The Service is a member of the SENDIASS North West Consortium, attending regular meetings, networking, information and good practice sharing with fellow members. Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS organises the annual North West Consortium Conference including the booking of the venue, inviting guest speakers and training sessions. The Service is also involved in the administration of the group ie group membership and subscriptions.

**3. PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE**

**SENDIASS** provides impartial information, advice and support on the full range of health and social care as defined in the SEND Code of Practice to the following service users:

* Parents/carers
* Young people
* Children

The Service has branded information and promotional materials – different formats can be made available upon request

Leaflets available at local settings – schools, SEND Team, Social Care Team, Care Network Hub & Children’s Centres

Website and social media (Facebook) presence is accessible to all service users.

The Service is also advertised on the Local Offer

**4. SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS**

The Service provides support for individual children, young people and parents that helps them to express their views and wishes and helps them to understand and exercise their rights in matters relating to exclusion, complaints, SEN processes and SEND appeals.

SENDIASS is compliant with data protection law and has Confidentiality and Impartiality policies are in place and parents/carers/children/young people & professionals are made aware when they contact the Service.

The Service provides an all year round flexible service which is open during normal working hours and includes a direct line & a 24 hour answer machine service.

Evaluation from Service users and professionals is sought and is included in the quarterly returns to the Local Authority, along with case studies. This is analysed and directs the service in its development. Evaluation forms are provided to service users, more recently Survey/Monkey has recently been implemented. The following are comments left on Survey/Monkey:

* Jane is amazing and really helped our family
* Maybe have more than 2 members of staff so can make selves more available to all different needs
* I hadn't heard of this service until my family had reached crisis point due to son refusing to attend school due to being bullied/ feeling different, and the school not being supportive when an EHCP was suggested. Brilliant service and got to know of other organisations available to our recently diagnosed son. The service doesn't seem to be mentioned in schools but I expect that that may be due to them having to pull their finger out and put things in motion. Our SENDIASS couldn't have been more helpful or understanding. Thankyou.
* Service is fantastic and staff are very efficient and helpful.
* Jane Partington is what SENDIASS. is all about. She is instinctive and committed to children and their families. She gets things done not just talk about it.

**5 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING**

**Achievements throughout 2018**

The SENDIASS Officer continues to utilise contacts with relevant agencies, organisations and Local Authority and constantly developing new contacts and developed networks.

Drop in sessions are arranged to joint work with PIP and Indigo – last Wednesday of the month at YSYC. This is proving to enhance joint work and promote SENDIASS and the Local Offer.

Referrals are regularly made to Barnardo’s, Disability Links, Action for ASD. Information provided regularly to the Local Offer and other relevant organisations and agencies.

Notifications to the FOLO group of relevant organisations to be included on the Local Offer and amendments.

The Officer is a member of Private Fostering Group, Friends of the Local Offer, Friends of Crosshill, DFG operational group, LO and communication group, Autism Board and Education and Social Care Autism Sub Group and member of DRAP.

Facebook page has enabled the service to share information in regards to the LO, events, training, information and advice i.e. ASD, ADHD, ODD. This has proved successful with a membership of 92 parents.

Developed good working relationships with InDiGo and ELCAS, resulting in referrals.

SENDIASS has encouraged parents with children with chromosome disorders to start their own Facebook page, Blackburn with Darwen: Chromosone Community. This is a closed page and parents/professionals have to request access. The membership is growing in numbers and they are looking at organising coffee mornings etc to support each other. SENDIASS has provided information on available local funding that they could apply for to fund venues etc.

Funding for SENDIASS post extended to March 2019.

**Training & information sharing undertaken throughout 2018**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Reason** |
| 26/04/2017 | BwD Review meeting (Julie Jackson) |
| 26/04/17 | PIP drop in session |
| 02/05/2017 | CAF Benefits training |
| 15/05/2017 | Communication and Local Offer meeting |
| 16/05/2017 | IPSEA legal training |
| 17/05/2017 | Friends of Crosshill meeting |
| 18/05/2017 | Network – Indigo |
| 22/05/2017 | SENDIASS Consortium meeting |
| 23/05/2017 | FHWB Prevent Seminar |
| 06/06/2017 | PIP working group |
| 08/06/2017 | Barnardos review |
| 19/06/2017 | IASS early years SEND Training |
| 21/06/2017 | FHW Forum Meeting  |
| 21/06/2017 | St Francis Parents Evening Forum |
| 30/06/2017 | Crosshill Leavers assembly |
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| --- | --- |
| 03/07/17 | Contact a Family, Confidence training / networking |
| 04/07/17 | Action for ASD – information sharing |
| 02/05/2017 | CAF Benefits training |
| 10/07/17 | FOLO meeting |
| 18/07/17 | CDC – IS manager meeting |
| 21/07/17 | DFG operational meeting |
| 26/07/17 | First Aid training |
| 10/08/17 | Barnardo’s – case updates |
| 14/08/17 | PIP summer event |
| 15/08/17 | FOLO meeting |
| 16/08/17 | Information governance training |
| 05/09/17 | PIP working group |
| 07/09/17 | NW SENDIASS consortium meeting |
| 08/09/17 | Austerity Awareness training |
| 21/09/17 | St Francis parents meeting |
| 21/09/17 | DFG operational meeting |
| 22/09/17 | ELCAS parents meeting |
| 25/09/17 | FOLO meeting |
| 27/09/17 | SENDIASS / PIP drop in |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 02/10/2017 | Communication and Local Offer Group |
| 03/10/2017 | PIP working group |
| 13/10/2017 | SENCO Induction day |
| 06/11/2017 | FOLO Meeting |
| 08/12/2017 | DFG meeting |
| 06/12/2017 | FHWB AGM |
| 20/12/2017 | PIP drop in / SEND questionnaire. |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 17/01/2018 | DRAP Panel | Duke Street |
| 17/01/2018 | Q3 report meeting | Duke Street |
| 19/01/2018 | Private fostering meeting | Duke Street |
| 29/01/2018 | FOLO group | Newfield |
| 29/01/2018 | Panel meeting | Witton Park |
| 31/01/2018 | Autism Board Sub group | The Hub |
| 31/01/2018 | Drop in | The Hub |
| 08/02/2018 | Parent champions | CVS |
| 21/02/2018 | AGM | Youthzone |
| 23/02/2018 | FOLO group | Newfield |
| 28/02/2018 | SENDIASS Dropin | The Hub |
| 06/03/2018 | NW Consortium | Lancaster |
| 07/03/2018 | NW Consortium | Lancaster |
| 15/03/2018 | Disability Info Day | Blackburn Rovers |
| 19/03/2018 | FOLO group | Livesey Centre |
| 21/03/2018 | Carers open day | Kings House |
| 27/03/2018 | Info sharing meeting ELCAS | CVS |

BwD SENDIASS is linked to the North West IASS Consortium. The service received regular updated information from Information Advice and Support Service Network (IASS) and the Department of Education. BwD SENDIASS shares good practice with the Local Authority and other relevant organisations, as well as seeking information and support from other SENDIAS services in the North West region.

**Data collected for 2017-2018**

**Number of referrals received from parents, school, LA and other partner organisations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Number of new referrals** |
| April | 7 |
| May | 5 |
| June | 13 |
| July | 8 |
| August | 3 |
| September | 9 |
| October | 16 |
| November | 8 |
| December | 10 |
| January | 12 |
| February | 10 |
| March | 13 |
| **Total** | **114** |

**Number and source of enquiries received i.e. face to face, telephone or email. Number of referrals from parents, school, LA and other partner organisations.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Number of enquiries** | **In person** | **Telephone** | **Email** | **Facebook** | **Text** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| April | 39 |  | 28 | 11 |  |  |
| May | 70 |  | 36 | 34 |  |  |
| June | 109 | 2 | 56 | 51 |  |  |
| July | 68 | 3 | 42 | 23 |  |  |
| August | 38 | 1 | 17 | 20 |  |  |
| September | 95 | 2 | 26 | 67 |  |  |
| October | 101 | 6 | 35 | 58 |  | 1 |
| November | 85 | 3 | 29 | 54 |  |  |
| December | 65 | 1 | 24 | 38 | 2 |  |
| January | 113 | 2 | 26 | 70 | 13 |  |
| February | 130 |  | 23 | 99 | 6 | 2 |
| March | 109 | 4 | 34 | 66 | 5 | 2 |
| **Total** | **1022** | **24** | **376** | **591** | **26** | **5** |

**Source of enquiry**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Parents** | **School** | **Local Authority** | **Partner organisations** |
| April  | 19 | 5 | 11 | 4 |
| May | 28 | 17 | 22 | 3 |
| June | 50 | 19 | 30 | 10 |
| July | 40 | 13 | 13 | 2 |
| August | 26 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| September | 47 | 17 | 20 | 11 |
| October | 50 | 24 |  | 9 |
| November | 46 | 11 | 17 | 15 |
| December | 30 | 15 | 14 | 6 |
| January | 57 | 9 | 22 | 25 |
| February | 43 | 29 | 38 | 19 |
| March | 45 | 15 | 27 | 23 |
| **Total** | **481** | **176** | **233** | **132** |

The above shows calls to SENDIASS from parents/carers/young people, Local Authority and professionals for SEND support. The initial telephone enquiry may lead to Red, Amber or Green support (see below).

Calls are logged and queries are usually dealt with immediately the phone call is taken or if the SENDIASS Officer is unavailable and a message is left with reception or answerphone, the Officer will return their call as soon as possible. The SENDIASS Officer does not have access to a work mobile phone.

SENDIASS used a casework management system, which categorised referrals as low, medium or high level, relating to support and intervention required. During the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters cases were categorised as requiring RED – AMBER-GREEN support during the second quarter:

In the final quarter of the year we began using Intervention levels. The reason for this is to help IASS differentiate between the levels of information, advice and support that service users may receive. The IASS Network provided the guidance in order to promote greater consistency, so that the range and extent of the work done by IASS across England can be collated and started nationally. Training on the Intervention Levels was given by the Council for Disabled Children to the members of the North West SENDIASS Consortium in March at their Conference

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|  | **Red** | **Amber** | **Green** |  |
| Quarter 1 | 4 | 21 |  |  |
| Quarter 2 | 5 | 15 |  |  |
| Quarter 3 | 10 | 17 | 7 |  |
| **Total** | 19 | 53 | 7 |  |
| **Levels** | **One** | **Two** | **Three** | **Four** |
| Quarter 4 | 6 | 11 | 18 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Service Development Plan for 2017-2018**What key actions do you plan to take over the 12 month monitoring period to achieve the outcomes identified? |
| **Action** | **Record progress on how this will be achieved ie detail of meetings attended/ contacts / discussions/workshops etc.** | **By when** | **By whom** | **Achieved** |
| Drop in sessions to help parents to use technology to access local offer  | Monthly drop in sessions are taking place throughout 2018-2019 at Care Network Hub, Town Hall Street, Blackburn. These are now taking place alongside with PIP and InDiGo drop in sessions | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Support parents in resolving the need for mediation and tribunal  | Throughout the year parents will be supported in trying to avoid the need for mediation & tribunal | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Resolving disputes before they escalate to medication  | SENDIASS is available to support parents/carers. Children & young people in resolving disputes that may take place both with the school and/or the Local Authority. | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Ensuring parents understand new process  | SENDIASS provides information, advice and support to parents/carers, children and young people in helping them understand the new process. This can be through telephone calls, face to face meetings and parent groups.  | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Record progress on how this will be achieved ie detail of meetings attended/ contacts / discussions/workshops etc.** | **By when** | **By whom** | **Achieved** |
| SENDIASS to continue to feedback to working groups supporting parents, children & young people  | Record of attendance at meetings/working groupsFeedback to which Working groups | Ongoing | Jane Partington  |  |
| SENDIASS involved with Parents in Partnership (PIP)Helping to inform policy and practice within the Local Authority | Regular attendance at PIP meetings and training days | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| SENDIASS involved with Local Offer Group (Folo) | Attendance at FOLO meetings Officer member of working group | Ongoing | Jane Partington  |  |
| Consultation and partnership working with Children and Young People – offering impartial information advice & support | Involvement with LA groups and PIP groups  | Ongoing | Jane Partington/ Philomena Strickland |  |
| Use of the IASS Intervention Levels | Use guidance from IASS to help differentiate between levels Attend training | Ongoing | Jane Partington/ Philomena Strickland |  |
| Regular Update of Quality Standards | Staff to regularly update file – ongoing | Ongoing | Jane Partington/ Philomena Strickland |  |
| Preparation for Ofsted inspection  | Joint working with user groups | Ongoing | Jane Partington/ Philomena Strickland |  |

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| **Quarter 1****Actions** | **What will need to be done to change or improve performance** | **BY WHEN** | **BY WHOM** | **Achieved** |
| Promote service | Update promotional literature including leaflets and drop in sessions, banner stand. Gained agreement to have printed  | August 2017 | Jane | Ongoing |
| Personal development | Attend First Aid Training | July 2017 | Jane | Ongoing |
| Promote Local Offer | Purchase electronic device to promote service and Local Offer to parents | August 2017 | Jane | Ongoing |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quarter 2****ACTION** | **What will need to be done to change or improve performance** | **BY WHEN** | **BY WHOM** | **Achieved** |
| Training | Research additional appropriate training | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Promotion of service | Attend parent groups and professionals meetings | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Promotion of Local Offer | Attend FOLO and LO and communication meetings; promote to families with aid of electronic device and new printed material | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Finalise promotional literature | Gain quotes for banner stand and leaflets and order | Ongoing | Jane | Completed |
| Attend SEND events | Attend PIP forums | Ongoing | Jane | Completed |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quarter 3****ACTION** | **What will need to be done to change or improve performance** | **BY WHEN** | **BY WHOM** | **Achieved** |
| Promote service | Continue distribution of promotional literature and Face Book page | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Personal development | Attend PIP/Contact trainingAttend NW SENDIASS consortium events | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Promote Local Offer | Promote by new promotional literature and use of electronic device. Face Book posts. | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |

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| **Quarter 4****ACTION** | **What will need to be done to change or improve performance** | **BY WHEN** | **BY WHOM** | **R.A.G.** |
| Training | Research additional appropriate training | Ongoing | Jane | Completed |
| Promotion of service | Attend parent groups and professionals meetings | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Promotion of Local Offer | Attend FOLO meetings. Promote to families with aid of electronic device and new printed material.Attend Local Offer & Communication Group. | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |
| Attend SEND events | Attend PiP training events / forums | Ongoing | Jane | Completed |
| Encourage parents to complete EHCP survey | Promote survey on Face Book page to parent members | Ongoing | Jane | Ongoing |

**Conclusion**

The Service continues to grow and the number of service users contacting the Service in 2017 - 2018 has 1022, which is an increase of 56% on the previous year.

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS is committed to providing a flexible, accurate and supportive service, giving parents/carers, children/young people 0-25 years, school and professionals the opportunity of working together to meet the special educational need s & disabilities of the individual pupil. The service also provides information, advice and support for special educational needs & disabilities pertaining to education & health care plans, tribunal hearings and independent impartial advice.

It is hoped that extra funding will be made available throughout 2018-2019 so the Service can continue to grow and meet the needs of the parents/carers, children & young people in the Blackburn with Darwen area, as well as meeting the requirements of the Quality Standards.

It is hoped that in 2018 – 2019 the Service will aim to -

* Set up a steering group
* Purchase a client information system (Charity Log) to record and report information in line with the Council for Disabled Children

*SENDIASS is being asked to collect date eg category of need, Intervention Levels, ethnicity etc. The Charity Log system is geared to support IASS and is widely used by other IAS services nationally. If funding is made available for Information Advice & Support Services.*

* Develop a volunteer support service
* Additional hours for staff to develop Service

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| **Service Development Plan for 2018-2019**What key actions do you plan to take over the 12 month monitoring period to achieve the outcomes identified? |
| **Action** | **Record progress on how this will be achieved ie detail of meetings attended/ contacts / discussions/workshops etc.** | **By when** | **By whom** | **Achieved** |
| Drop in sessions to help parents to use technology to access local offer  | Monthly drop in sessions are taking place throughout 2018-2019 at Care Network Hub, Town Hall Street, Blackburn. These are now taking place alongside with PIP and InDiGo drop in sessions | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Support parents in resolving the need for mediation and tribunal  | Throughout the year parents will be supported in trying to avoid the need for mediation & tribunal | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Resolving disputes before they escalate to medication  | SENDIASS is available to support parents/carers. Children & young people in resolving disputes that may take place both with the school and/or the Local Authority. | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Ensuring parents understand the Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) process  | SENDIASS provides information, advice and support to parents/carers, children and young people in helping them understand the new process. This can be through telephone calls, face to face meetings and parent groups.  | Ongoing | Jane Partington |  |
| Set up a BwD SENDIASS Steering Group  | In line with SENDIASS Minimum Standards | Ongoing | Jane Partington  |  |
| Develop a Volunteer Support Group | Looking at implementing a Volunteer Group – initially administration duties  | Ongoing  | Jane Partington  |  |
| General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) | Working towards implementation May 2018 | Ongoing | Jane Partington  |  |