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**Blackburn with Darwen**

**Special Educational Needs**

**Information Advice & Support Service**

**SENDIASS**

**Annual Report**

**April 2019 – March 2020**

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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, advice 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 and its partnering commissioning bodies, 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 family 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.

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 disabilities.

**Location**

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. The service is located in the town centre and easily accessible to the public with disabled access.

**Staffing**

The funding from the Local Authority, provides part time hours for the SENDIASS Lead Officer. 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 and other areas of special needs. This enable the service to continue at its current staffing level of two permanently employed members of staff – one full time (37 hours per week) SENDIASS Lead Officer and one part time (16 hours per week) SEND Officer. The additional funding has also enabled the service to employ a bank worker for 16 hours per week to implement the new client information system, Charity Log.

This funding has been reduced dramatically for 2020/21 and it is unlikely that the addition funding will continue after March 2021.

**Policies**

The Service has the following policies in place

* Confidentiality and impartiality
* Lone Work
* Safeguarding
* Complaints

**Quality standards for impartial information, advice and support services**

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS work to National Minimum Quality Standards, approved by the Department for Education (DfE)

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 independent from the Local Authority and has its own identity and logo.

A steering group has been implemented, with parent/carer, Local Authority and partner organisations involvement. The group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss current trends, funding, feedback and progress of service.

Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS also provide data to the Council for Disabled Children to meet funding requirements. The Service provides quarterly reports and attends quarterly meetings with the Commissioning Team and SEND Manager. The Service also produces an annual report.

**2. Strategic function**

Throughout 2019-20, SENDIASS has been involved with the following organisations, teams and attended events, training, meetings and conferences.

* Local Authority
* Education Department
* Early Years Team
* SEND improvement group
* New Directions
* Social care
* ELCAS
* Paediatrics
* School nurses
* ADHD North West
* Action for ASD
* Parents in Partnership
* Blackburn College - advocacy
* Carers Network
* Blackburn Carers
* Indigo
* Purple Patch
* Families Health & Wellbeing Forum
* Friends of the Local Offer
* Friends of Crosshill
* Private Fostering Panel
* Autism Board
* Autism Education Sub Group
* National Autistic Society (Blackburn)
* Council for Disabled Children

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 Conference took place in March 2020 and was attended by a representative from 22 SENDIAS Services throughout the North West. The Blackburn with Darwen Service is also jointly involved in the administration of the Consortium, i.e. group membership and subscriptions.

**3. Provision of information and advice**

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

* Parents/carers
* Children and young people
* Statutory and voluntary sector professionals

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

Leaflets available at local settings – schools, Paediatrics, SEND Team, Social Care Team, Care Network Hub and Children’s Centres. Leaflets are also provided to associated organisations – Parents in Partnership, Indigo.

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

The Service is also publicised on the Blackburn with Darwen Local Offer.

**4. Supporting individuals**

The Service provides support for children, young people and parents/carers to express their views and wishes. SENDIASS endeavours to support their understanding and exercise their rights in matters relating to exclusion, complaints, SEN processes and SEND appeals.

SENDIASS is compliant with data protection law and has a Confidentiality and Impartiality policy available on the Blackburn with Darwen Community CVS website

The Service provides an all year round, flexible service. Which is available during normal working hours, term time and holiday periods. This includes a direct line and a 24 hour answer machine service. Parents can also make contact by email and private message on Facebook.

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, but Survey Monkey has a greater return of feedback. The following are comments left on Survey Monkey, thank you cards & text messages:

* Thank you for all your help and support over the past 12 months.
* Your amazing! Thank you so much for all your support, guidance and reassurance this past week and for the understanding in our hour of need. I always appreciated your help.
* Just wanted to say thanks for all your help

**Professional development and training**

SENDIASS is committed to staff’s personal development through training. Staff have completed IPSEA legal training 1 as an obligatory requirement of all SENDIAS Services. The Service attends training provided by the Council for Disabled Children, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Contact and any other training appropriate for the progression of the Service.

The Service attends the North West Consortium meetings, to share best practice and engage in relevant training.

**Achievements**

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

Drop in sessions are arranged to be held jointly with Parents In Partnership (PIP) and Indigo. Sessions are held on the last Wednesday of the month at Care Network Hub. This has proved advantageous to all parties, enhancing collaborative working and promoted SENDIASS and the Local Offer.

Referrals are regularly made to Disability Links, Action for ASD, ADHD North West. The Service works closely with these services, offering advice to Action for ASD and ADHD North West, accepting referrals and attending meetings. The Service continues to develop good working relationships with InDiGo, Action for ASD, ADHD North West and ELCAS, resulting in referrals.

The SENDIASS Lead Officer is the deputy chair for the Friends of the Local Offer Group. The Service provides updates and amendments to the administrator of the Local Offer regarding organisations associated with SEND.

The Lead Officer is working in collaboration with the Local Authority to implement the Local Offer Champions initiative, which will utilise parent/carer volunteers to promote the local offer.

SENDIASS is a member of Private Fostering Group, Friends of the Local Offer, Friends of Crosshill, SEND improvement Group, SEND KIT group, internship group, Autism Board and Education and Social Care Autism Sub Group.

SENDIASS has met the CDC key objects for the 2019-20 funding, an invoice has been raised for payment.

The Facebook page has enabled the service to share information in regards to the Local Offer, events, training, information and advice i.e. ASD, ADHD, tourettes. This has proved successful with a membership of 285 parents/carers.

Charity Log (client information system) has been purchased and implemented. All case records are recorded on the system and data provides reports required for the LA quarterly reports. As the system is new to the Service, there may be some discrepancies during the initial recording and reporting.

The Service has attended post 16 EHCP reviews at Blackburn College, to support students. Feedback from Blackburn College has been positive.

SENDIASS received a positive mention from inspectors in the Blackburn with Darwen Ofsted inspection: ‘SENDIASS punching above its weight – parents value the service’

SENDIASS had been working on a Task Order document to develop the service and has successful secured funding for 2020/21. The outcomes (based on the minimum standards) required by March 2021 to achieve the funding requirements are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Overarching aim** | **Outcome March 2021** |
| Minimum standard 1.1 joint commissioning across education, health and social care. | Ensure there is agreement to jointly commission the service in line with the minimum standards and the commissioning process improves services locally |
| Minimum standard 1.5 Independent service from LA, CCG and/or organisation. | Parent/carer, public, CVFSE organisation are aware of the change of location of the service and the new promotional and marketing materials |
| 2.3 Stakeholder engagement to inform and influence policy and practice in the local area4.2 Feedback from Service users and stakeholders | Evaluation information and trends to be include on the Services SEND highlight report provided for the SEND strategic  |
| Produce a service continuity and sustainability plan for the period April 2021 onwards. | OUTCOME FOR 20 JANUARY 2021Copy of the service continuity and sustainability plan to be sent to IASP |

It is not envisaged that the CDC funding will be available after 2020/21.

Blackburn with Darwen CVS has secured a Service Level Agreement for 3 years with the Local Authority to fund the Service (£28K).

**Training 2019/20**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Reason** | **Venue** |
| 16/5/19 | Charitylog | CVS |
| 21/5/19 | Charitylog | CVS |
| 28/5/19 | Charitylog | CVS |
| 11/7/19 | Sensory Profiles | Carers Service, Kingsway |
| 15/7/19 | North West Consortium | Kendal |
| 24/9/19 | New Directions | Duke Street, Blackburn |
| 14/10/19 | Equality | Witton Park CLC |
| 20/01/20 | IASSN Legal Training Level 1 | Manchester |
| 22/01/20 | Discrimination Act/Exclusions | Liverpool |
| 25-26/02/20 | Outcome based accountability | Witton Park CLC |
| 27/02/20 | Supporting young people (16-25) with Autism | Manchester |
| 10-11/03/20 | NWSENDIASS consortium | Lancaster House |

**Information sharing events 2019/20**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Reason** | **Venue** |
| 8/4/19 | Action for ASD | Autism Resource Centre |
| 10/4/19 | Autism Partnership Board | Blackburn Enterprise Centre |
| 10/4/19 | Learning Disability Board | Blackburn Enterprise Centre |
| 24/4/19 | SENDIASS Drop in | Care Network Hub |
| 11/4/19 | SEND Friends | Kingsway |
| 17/4/19 | Autism Sub Group | Care Network Hub |
| 22/5/19 | Autism Sub Group | Care Network Hub |
| 22/5/19 | FOLO  | Witton CLC |
| 23/5/19 | BWD PIP | Witton CLC |
| 29/5/19 | SENDIASS Drop in | Care Network Hub |
| 3/6/19 | FOLO | Livesey Children’s Centre |
| 5/6/19 | SEND improvement  | Duke Street |
| 13/6/19 | BWD Pip | Kingsway |
| 13/6/19 | Autism Board | Blackburn Enterprise Centre |
| 13/6/19 | SEND friends Drop in | Care Network Hub |
| 24/6/19 | BWD PIP | CVS |
| 26/6/19 | SENDIASS Drop in | Care Network Hub |
| 28/6/19 | FOLO | Hancock St children’s centre |
| 3/7/19 | FOLO | Witton CLC |
| 11/7/19 | BWD PIP | Kingsway |
| 11/7/19 | SEND friends drop in | Kingsway |
| 15/7/19 | North West Consortium | Kendal |
| 21/8/19 | Autism sub group | Enterprise Centre |
| 12/9/19 | SEND friends drop in | Kingsway |
| 13/9/19 | FOLO | Livesey Childrens Centre |
| 16/9/19 | SENDIASS Steering group | CVS |
| 25/9/19 | SENDIASS drop in | Care Network Hub |
| 1/10/19 | Post 16 Advocacy | Blackburn College |
| 7/10/19 | FOLO | Livesey Children’s Centre |
| 10/10/19 | SEND Friends | Carers Service |
| 14/10/19 | Team Meeting | CVS, Boulevard Centre |
| 15/10/19 | Post 16 Advocacy | Blackburn College |
| 17/10/19 | Safeguarding | CVS, Boulevard Centre |
| 17/10/19 | Drop in session | Crosshill Post 16 provision |
| 30/10/19 | Drop in session | Care Network Hub |
| 31/10/19 | SENDIASS Review Meeting | Duke Street, Blackburn |
| 5/11/19 | Team Meeting | CVS, Boulevard Centre |
| 6/11/19 | Autism Sub Group | Care Network Hub |
| 8/11/19 | Spring North Conference | Burnley Football Ground |
| 13/11/19 | Drop in session | Crosshill Post 16 provision |
| 27/11/19 | Drop in session |  Care Network Hub |
| 29/11/19 | Parents forum | Blackburn College |
| 9/12/19 | Post 16 provision | Crosshill |
| 12/12/19 | Team meeting | CVS, Boulevard Centre |
| 16/12/19 | SENDIASS Steering Group | CVS, Boulevard Centre |
| 18/12/19 | Drop in session | Care Network hub |
| 9/1/20 | Drop in session | Carers Network |
| 20/1/20 | FOLO | CVS, Boulevard Centre |
| 23/1/20 | North West Consortium | Liverpool |
| 29/1/20 | Drop in session | Care Network hub |
| 7/2/20 | SEND review | Duke Street, Blackburn |
| 13/2/20 | Drop in session | Carers Network |
| 14/2/20 | FOLO | Livesey Children’s Centre |
| 26/2/20 | Drop in session | Care Network hub |
| 10/3/20 | North West Consortium | Lancaster |
| 11/3/20 | Autism Sub Group | Care Network Hub |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 12/3/20 | Drop in session | Carers Network |
| 16/3/20 | FOLO | CVS, Boulevard Centre |

**Data collected for 2019-2020**

Below details the number of referrals received, including, parents, school, LA and other partner organisations.However, North West Consortium best practice guidance encourages all referrals into SENDIAS Services be made by parent/carers and young people.

The Service does receive information from schools, education, health and partner organisation, but they are asked to encourage parents/carer to make contact with SENDIASS direct. In some case, when required/requested by parent/carer, details are shared by partner organisation and SENDIASS makes contact direct.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Number of new referrals** |
| April | 7 |
| May | 12 |
| June | 15 |
| July | 30 |
| August | 10 |
| September | 22 |
| October | 24 |
| November | 23 |
| December | 16 |
| January | 19 |
| February | 24 |
| March | 7 |
| **Total** | **209** |

**Number and source of enquiries received**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Number of enquiries** | **In Person** | **Telephone** | **Email** | **Facebook** | **Text** |
| **April** | 23 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 9 |  |
| **May** | 51 | 15 | 9 | 8 | 16 | 3 |
| **June**  | 48 | 11 | 10 | 17 | 18 | 2 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **July** | 135 | 22 | 28 | 42 | 39 | 4 |
| **August** | 30 |  | 6 | 13 | 11 |  |
| **September** | 134 | 10 | 30 | 40 | 53 | 1 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **October** | 118 | 30 | 15 | 47 | 24 | 2 |
| **November** | 134 | 42 | 38 | 26 | 25 | 3 |
| **December** | 82 | 35 | 7 | 23 | 11 | 6 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **January** | 106 | 44 | 12 | 31 | 19 | 1 |
| **February** | 138 | 37 | 17 | 58 | 26 |  |
| **March** | 107 | 34 | 11 | 49 | 12 |  |
| **Total** | **1116**  | **284** | **188** | **359** | **263** | **22** |

**Source of enquiry**

The below shows enquiries made to SENDIASS from parents/carers/young people, schools, Local Authority and professionals for SEND support. All types of contact are recorded, including new referrals and ongoing cases. The Service aims to respond to queries as soon as possible. If the SENDIASS Officer is unavailable, a message can be left with reception or on the answerphone.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Parents** | **School** | **Local Authority** | **Partner Organisations** | **Young People**  |
| **April** | 20 | 2 |  | 1 |  |
| **May** | 44 | 4 | 1 | 2 |  |
| **June** | 52 | 1 | 5 |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **July** | 122 | 1 | 5 | 7 |  |
| **August** | 23 | 2 | 2 | 3 |  |
| **September** | 114 | 11 | 4 | 5 |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **October** | 73 | 15 | 20 | 10 |  |
| **November** | 102 | 15 | 13 | 4 |  |
|  **December**  | 63 | 4 | 11 | 4 |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **January** | 86 | 13 | 4 | 3 |  |
| **February** | 35 | 19 | 19 | 5 |  |
| **March** | 79 | 15 | 12 | 1 |  |
| **Total** | **873** | **102** | **96** | **45** |  |

**Break down of disabilities recorded for new cases**

Below shows the child’s disabilities disclosed at the point of referral. It evidences that at the point of referral the majority of contacts are unsure or have no diagnosis. This highlights that families experiencing difficulties, whether or not diagnosed, have involvement with health professionals.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Disability** | **Number of new referrals** |
| ADHD | 29 |
| Anxiety | 4 |
| Aspergers | 3 |
| Autism | 4 |
| Cerebal palsy | 1 |
| Chromosome | 2 |
| Dyspraxia | 3 |
| Global development delay | 7 |
| Hearing impairment | 3 |
| Learning needs | 11 |
| Leukaemia | 2 |
| Mental health | 1 |
| Neurological | 1 |
| Speech | 1 |
| Stroke | 1 |
| Tics /tourettes | 2 |
| Unknown | 25 |
| Undiagnosed | 66 |
| Visual impairment  | 1 |

**Case interventional levels**

Throughout the year we use Intervention levels 1 - 4. 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 recorded nationally. The Service has not been involved in cases at tribunal level during 2019/20.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Levels** | **One** | **Two** | **Three** | **Four (tribunal)** |
| Quarter 1 / 2 | 36 | 47 | 13 | 0 |
| Quarter 3 / 4 | 18 | 41 | 54 | 0 |

**Conclusion**

SENDIASS continues to have a good professional working relationship with the Local Authority, social care, health and partner organisations.

SENDIASS has worked collaboratively with the Local Authority to implement the Local Offer Parent Champion. Information regarding managing and training volunteers has been shared; work is continuing to design volunteer packs and training sessions.

The Service has been working closely with Blackburn College to provide advocacy to students with SEND in their EHCP reviews in regards to their wishes and aspirations towards their education.

The Service has successfully implemented Charity Log. They system has the capacity to record information required by future funders.

Whilst SENDIASS has been working on the CDC funding bid for 2020/21 and reporting for the requirements for the 2019/20 funding. The additional workload has caused difficulties with “business as usual” duties. This has been reported to the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

The Community CVS has secured a Service Level Agreement for 2020/23 for SENDIASS. However, it is unlikely that government funding via the CDC will continue after 2020/21.

If future funding is not secured from health, the Service will not be able to continue providing its current level of support. The Service would revert to one part time member of staff, 25 hours per week.

SENDIASS has received positive feedback from parents and professionals and uses Facebook and SurveyMonkey to collect parents/carers/young people and professionals comments.