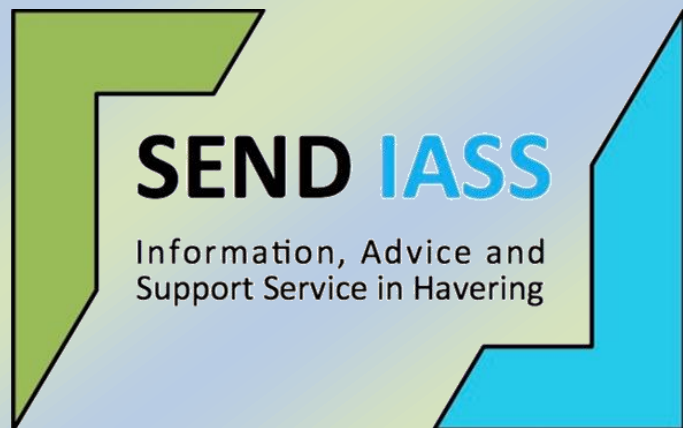


**SEND Information  
Advice &  
Support Service  
(SENDIASS)**



(Formerly known as Havering Parents in Partnership Information, Advice & Support Service - PIPIASS)

# **Annual Report**

**Annual Report 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)  
London Borough of Havering | Children's Services  
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## Introduction

Welcome to Havering's Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information, Advice & Support Service (Havering SENDIASS) Annual Report. This report summarises the activities and evaluation of the service for the academic year 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 -31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

New legislation and a new Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice came into force on 1st September 2014 which affected the processes and policies which support children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. Local authorities must now arrange for children and young people with SEND, as well as their parents or carers, to be provided with information, advice and support about matters relating to their special educational needs and disabilities. This also includes where health and social care provide support related to SEND. The information, advice and support should be made through a dedicated and easily identifiable service building on existing parent partnership services. This is SENDIASS.

Under the new legislation, the views and wishes of a young person will take precedent over their parents unless that young person is considered by professionals and parents to lack 'mental capacity' to make an informed decision.

## Overview of the Service

During the academic year 2022-2023, the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS) have continued to operate via telephone, email, website and have provided both in person and virtual meeting support. Cases continue to be triaged so that support is tailored to meet the individual needs of service users ensuring the correct information advice and support is provided. As the staffing in the SENDIASS Team has remained stable since the introduction of a new member of staff within the team at the start of 2023, more outreach and face to face attendance at meetings and events has become possible.

The SENDIASS Steering Group has continued to be well attended by our stakeholders and this has enabled the Service to raise awareness of what support it can provide with education, health and social care and what support available from other services (e.g. support groups).

SENDIASS have continued to network with neighbouring SENDIASS services and attended London Regional meetings with other SENDIASS services to ensure that good practice, skills and resources are shared in order to heighten the quality of information and advice provided to service users.

Havering SENDIASS is an in-house service that is run at "arm's length" from the London Borough of Havering Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). 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 (LA) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Our service covers two main areas of work:

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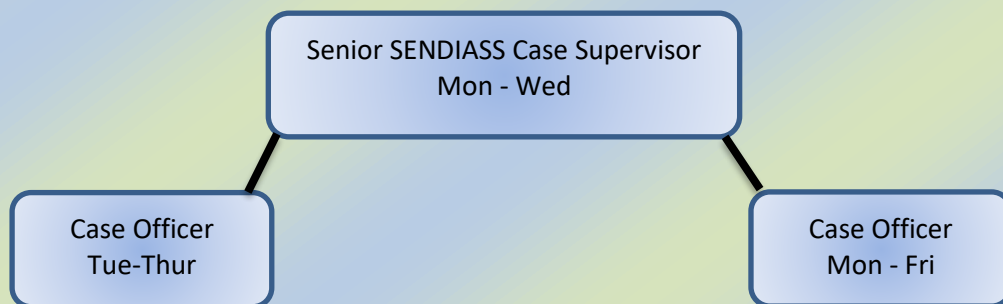
- Information, advice and support to children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and/or a disability.
- Information, advice and support to parents and carers who have a child or young person with special educational needs and/or a disability.

## Staffing

Havering SENDIASS currently has 3 paid members of staff who deliver the service, this consists of 1 part-time senior case supervisor, 1 full-time case officer and 1 part-time case officer.

All case officers within the service offer a range of information, advice and support tailored to the needs of the service users. Case officers are all Level 3 SEND Law accredited by IPSEA. Staff also undertake continued professional development and attend other training and courses relevant to their roles.

The service was understaffed for the first part of the year until a second recruitment drive proved successful and a new full time member of staff was recruited. The new member of staff started their position within the team in January 2023. Despite the reduction in staffing in the first school term, SENDIASS continued to meet the needs of service users and deal with all enquiries successfully, albeit with a slight delay in response time.



## What are the aims of Havering SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)?

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/or disabilities and their parents/carers.
- To enhance the participation of children and young people and their parents in decisions that will affect them.
- To improve outcomes for Havering's children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- To positively influence London Borough of Havering Children's Services SEND policy and practice.

## **Casework**

The total number of referrals worked on during this time period was **466**.

This includes carry over referrals - service users who have contacted SENDIASS in the previous academic year and whose support continues into the new year of data, **not** only new referrals.

The referrals are triaged when they come into the service so that service users are given the appropriate level of support. Level 1 support requires one contact with the service user in order to resolve their query/empower the service user to make a well informed decision. Level 2, 3 and 4 support require multiple contacts with a service user by a case officer, which often results in the need for prolonged support.

Using the National IASS Intervention Levels guidance, the service recorded the following:

### **Level 1 – 172 Referrals– SINGLE ENQUIRY**

This is described as: phone or email support – tailored to the particular circumstances of the service user. Information and advice was given about SEND matters. Typically less than 2 hours of service time as part of a single intervention.

### **Level 2 – 18 Referrals – INDEPENDENT SUPPORT**

This support includes helping to understand documents or complete documentation, support in communicating with the school, local authority or other services. Level 2 is also described as detailed and personalised guidance on SEND issues and/or exclusion procedures. Level 2 also indicates support from SENDIASS during the EHCP process and also conversion from Statements to EHCP.

### **Level 3 – 148 Referrals – CASEWORK**

This support includes detailed and continuous assistance and guidance with statutory processes:

- Complex, multi-agency needs
- Assistance in overcoming serious breakdown in communications with school/LA/other services

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- Requires intensive support due to personal circumstances (e.g. low literacy levels, learning or sensory difficulties, English as an additional language)
- Provision of support at/for a series of meetings over a period of months
- Assistance with preparation for an exclusion appeal and support at the appeal meeting
- IASS undertakes key working role with other agencies.

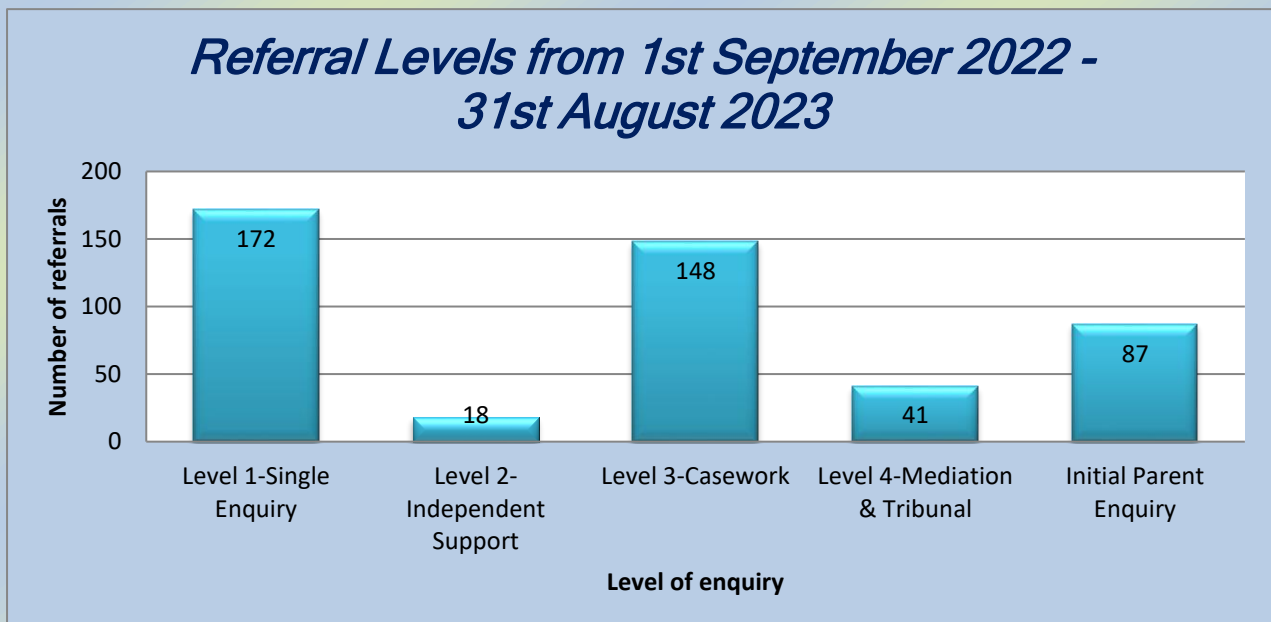
#### **Level 4 – 41 Referrals – MEDIATION & TRIBUNAL**

This support includes detailed and continuous assistance and guidance with preparation and support during First Tier Tribunal (SEND) including DDA complaints to Tribunal, Complaints to Ombudsman, Judicial Review.

#### **Initial Parent Enquiry – 87**

(A generic enquiry which requires no support after the first initial telephone call)

**New Referrals = 417** (out of the 466 referrals to the service this academic year, 417 were new referrals)



#### **Source of Referral**

Havering SENDIASS have taken a variety of referrals over the last academic year. From the chart overleaf you can see that our main source of referral is still “self-referrals”. This means a parent/carer or young person makes direct contact with the service requesting some support. The data from the other sources of referral show that there is a wide variety of professionals (health, social care, education, local authority, support organisations), that are signposting families to SENDIASS for information, advice and guidance. This indicates that the networking and raising awareness sessions carried out by SENDIASS are successful. There are a large number of referrals where the referrer was recorded as “unknown”. This is due to the absence of this information being provided by the service user.

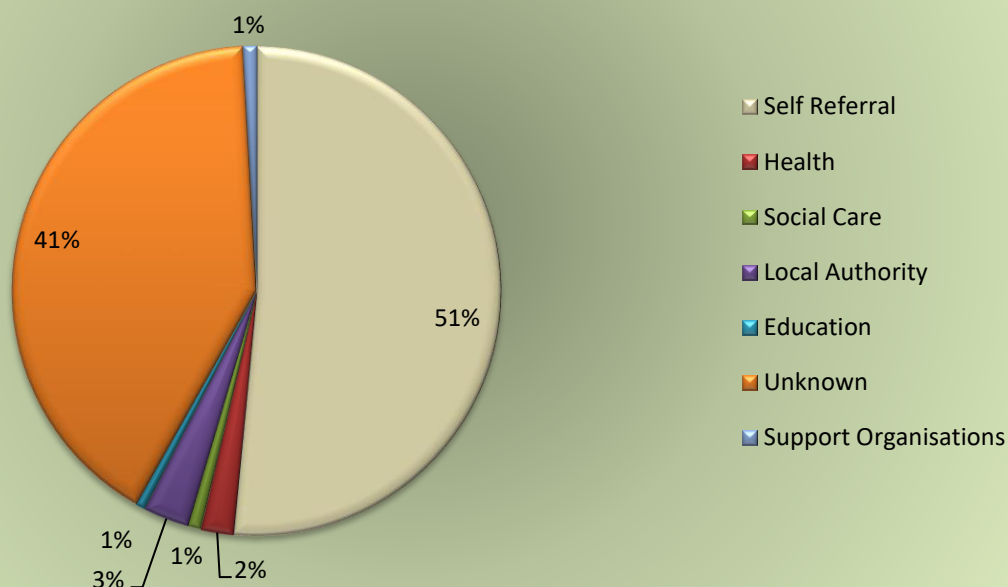
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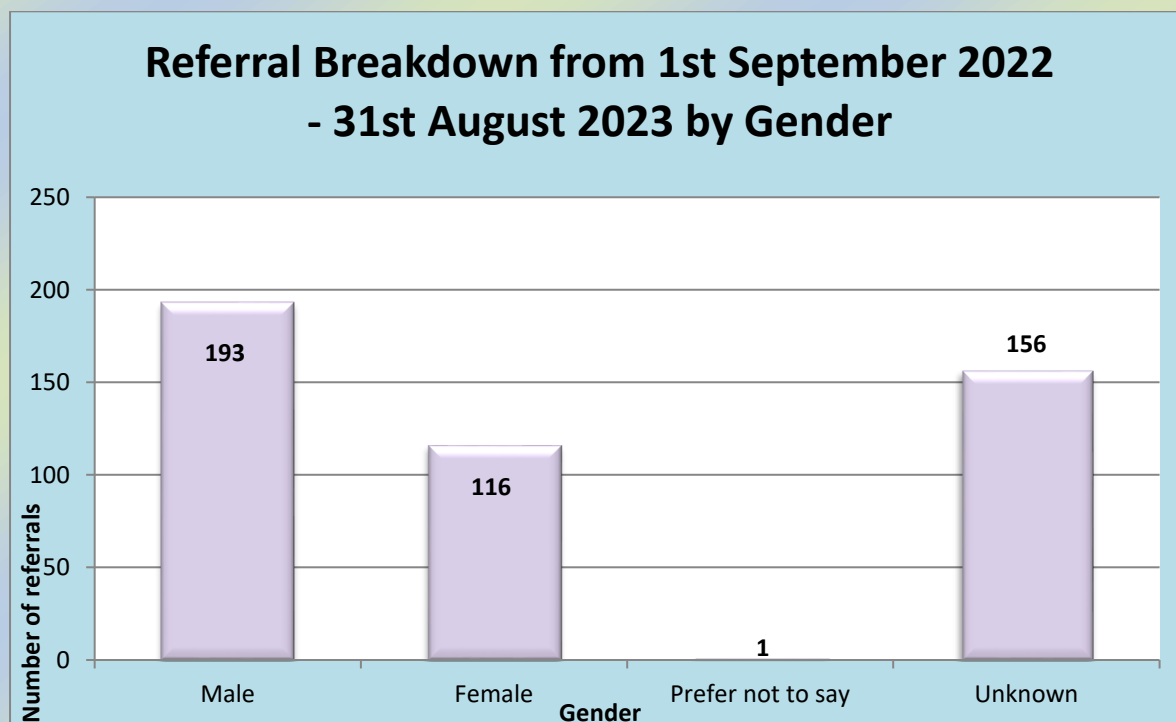
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### Source of referrals from 1st September 2022 - 31st August 2023



### Gender

From the **466** referrals to Havering SENDIASS received this academic year, the referrals consisted of **193 Males** and **116 females**. **1** referral has been recorded as “**Prefer not to say**”, and there were **156** referrals that were recorded as “**Unknown**” This is due to Level 1 service users not disclosing this information at time of contact.



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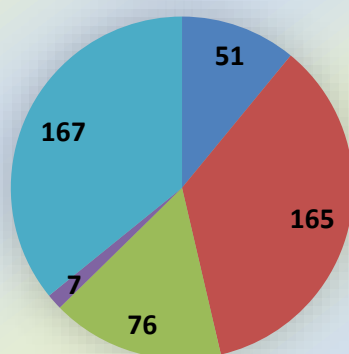
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## Age Range

The predominant cohort SENDIASS have supported this academic year is primary aged children, with **165** out of **466** cases in this age range. Referrals from young people with SEND aged 16 to 25 years are still much lower than all of the other age cohorts. In light of this, SENDIASS have continued to network with local youth organisations and colleges to increase engagement with this cohort and will continue to build on these relationships moving forward. The 16 to 25 years cohort will also be an ongoing area of continued focus for Havering SENDIASS in the new academic year as we strive to increase engagement from this age group. We will also work with our stakeholders and Steering group to heighten awareness of SENDIASS amongst young people with SEND and look to identify opportunities where we can provide outreach to increase service take up from this age group.

### Referral Breakdown by Age. 1st September 2022 - 31st August 2023



■ Aged 0-4 ■ Aged 5-10 ■ Aged 11-16 ■ Aged 17+ ■ Unknown

## Benchmarking Data against the previous academic year

There were **414** referrals to SENDIASS in the previous data period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 and this has increased slightly by 52 referrals to **466** for the current academic year 1st September 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. The slight increase in referrals could be as a result of more face to face outreach that has begun again and an increased SENDIASS presence at events.

The referral levels graph overleaf highlights that from 2021/22 to 2022/23 there was a significant rise of 45% in single enquiry referrals, a 9% rise in Level 3 enquiries and relatively insignificant changes in Level 2 and Level 4 referrals. Initial enquiries have declined significantly, but this can be explained by the removal of the initial enquiry category part way through 2022/23.

Analysis of the data sets suggests that the majority of referrals in 2022/23 have been resolved at the first point of contact where lots of useful information and sufficient

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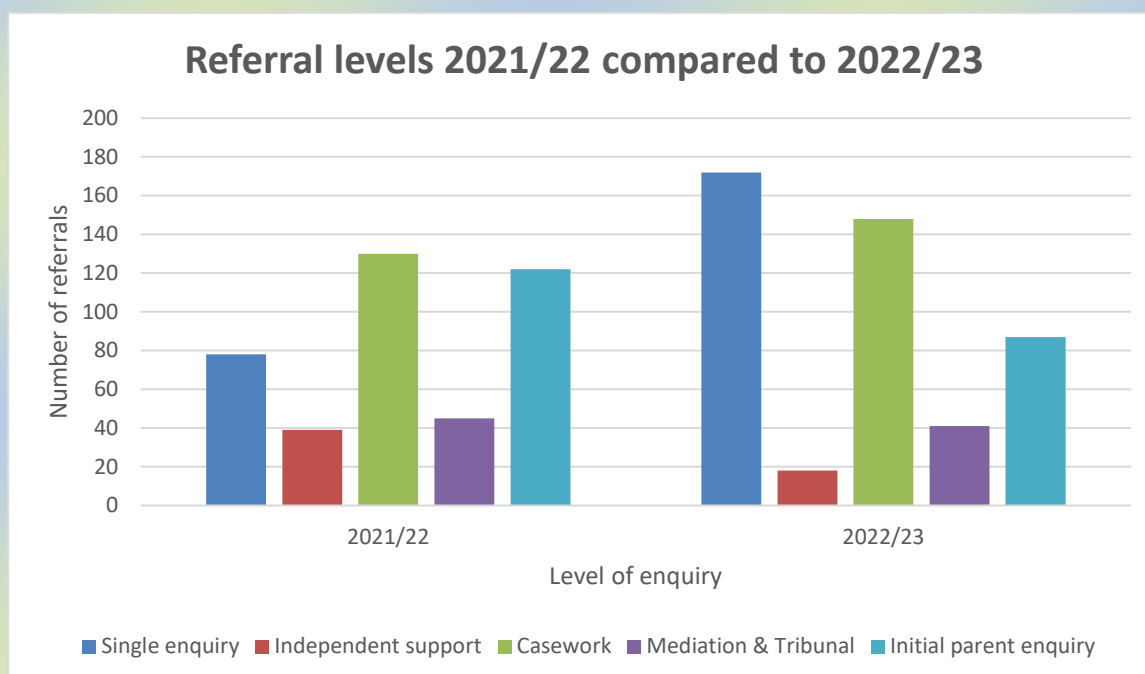
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advice was provided to service users without the need for escalating the query to a higher level of support. The data also identifies that there remains a high level of referrals at Level 3 thus indicating that on-going casework with intensive advice and support was needed. These referrals tend to be complex with a multitude of issues that the case officers help to resolve.



## Training

Staff members within the service attend ongoing continuous professional development (CPD) to expand their knowledge to help support children, young people and parent / carers and schools. Training and ongoing professional development have included the following:

- IPSEA SEND Training Level 1,2 &3
- IPSEA Refresher Training
- Tribunal Training
- Suspensions and exclusions
- Autism awareness
- Making Participation Work
- Human Rights Training
- IASSN National Induction
- Understanding and Handling meeting behaviour
- Resilience Training, difficult conversations and engaging challenging users
- Allyship Skills Booster

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- Safeguarding children
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults
- Safeguarding Level 3
- LADO Awareness
- MASH, Early Help and Youth Services
- Suicide and self-harm
- Coercive and controlling behaviour
- Modern Slavery
- Equality and Diversity
- Inclusion Essentials
- All Mandatory Training such as Cyber Security and GDPR
- Equality and Diversity-Inclusion essentials
- Regular attendance at the London Region Meetings for Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS)
- Regular attendance at the Early Help Community Advisory Group Forum Meetings

## **Accomplishments**

### **Steering Group**

The SENDIASS Steering Group has successfully met with its members termly throughout the year. The meetings, which have all been virtual, have been well attended with members from backgrounds such as social care, education, health, voluntary groups, local authority and the Career's Service. SENDIASS have used this opportunity to raise awareness of the service, extend our service reach and to further educate and train our stakeholders on SEND related topics via key speaker sessions at each meeting. The Steering Group also provides an opportunity for stakeholders to update us on any changes within their service. We want to thank our Steering Group stakeholders for their continued support. Key speakers at the meetings have presented on topics such as school attendance and support.

### **Networking**

Havering SENDIASS has engaged with more services within the borough that support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

These include the following services:

- Positive Parents (Havering's Parent/Carer Forum)
- Romford Autistic Group Support (Autism Support)
- Sycamore Trust (Autism Support)
- First Step – (Early Years Support)
- Add-Up (ADHD Support)
- Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG for NELFT)
- Children's Social Care

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- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Advocacy 4 All – Young People’s SEND Forum
- Prospects Career Services
- Havering Adult College
- Local Colleges
- Various departments from the Local Authority

The Service has also engaged with neighbouring IAS Services to share good practice, provide and receive peer to peer support and share resources.

### **Training/ raising awareness of SENDIASS**

**Phased Transfer Information Session-** SENDIASS were invited to a coffee morning for parents of children with SEND at a local primary school to discuss phased transfer to secondary school. SENDIASS advised the parent/carers who attended of the support that SENDIASS can provide, provided useful hints and tips to help prepare their children for the transition and answered questions related to this topic. During the training session other queries were raised relating to SEND topics allowing SENDIASS to impart the information on the day and also follow up post meeting with an email containing further legislation and useful links to the parent/carers. The training was well received and parents/carers were keen to invite SENDIASS to a future meeting.

**Virtual Transition Week presentation-**SENDIASS again provided information about the service to be displayed on the Local Offer as part of the Local Authority Virtual Transition Week. The Team were also available on the allotted SEND day to answer any questions received online from families with children with SEND.

**Meeting with Havering Emotional Support Team (HEST)-** SENDIASS case officers met with officers from the Havering Emotional Support Team (HEST) provided them with information on how SENDIASS support parents/carers of children with SEND and young people with SEND. Feedback was positive and officers advised they now know when and how to signpost families to SENDIASS who may need support.

**Meeting with Social Workers-**SENDIASS case officers also met with several social workers to explain what SENDIASS is, who we support and how support can be accessed. The training was well received.

**Parental Engagement SENCO session-**SENDIASS presented at the Parental Engagement SENCO training session and provided SENCos with some useful tips on how to have successful interactions with parents/carers and increasing positive parental engagement. The training session also enabled SENDIASS to raise awareness of the Service amongst SENCos.

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### **SENDIASS Website Update**

SENDIASS regularly meets with FocusGov the company that designed and host the SENDIASS website. These meetings help inform the Service how the website is performing, what information people are searching for and if there are webpages that need improvement. Following these meetings, we have been advised that the Havering SENDIASS Website is continuing to be well used and receiving consistent hits each month. Website data also

shows that many service users are also preferring to contact SENDIASS online via the contact form rather than telephoning or emailing their enquiry.

There has also been a change to the data functionality on the website and SENDIASS are now able to view live data on website performance themselves rather than waiting for data reports from the website company.

As we endeavour to always have a website that is current and accurate, we would welcome any feedback on the website. You can provide this feedback to us via email at: [sendiass@havering.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@havering.gov.uk) or telephone us on: 01708 433885. Alternatively, you can complete a feedback form on the website.

### **Policies**

Havering SENDIASS have reviewed and updated their policies. These include the service Safeguarding Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Impartiality Policy and Complaints Policy. These updated policies are now available on the SENDIASS website.

### **Commissioning, Governance & Management Arrangements**

#### **How is Havering SENDIASS monitored?**

We work to National IASS Minimum Quality Standards, approved by the Department for Education (DfE). Our work is monitored by a Steering Group with members representing parents, voluntary groups, schools, early years settings and officers from the Local Authority. We also have representatives from Health and Social Care Services.

The Steering Group meets on a termly basis to monitor Havering SENDIASS policies and practice; review service performance against National Quality Standards and oversees service development outlined in the annual action plan.

Additionally we provide data to the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) & National Children's Bureau (NCB).

### **Service Plan**

SENDIASS create a new service plan annually, which includes details of new and on-going projects and direction of the Service for the year.

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The service plan is based on the IASS Minimum Quality Standards and the objectives within the plan ensure that the service remains compliant to the standards. This ensures our service users receive a high quality SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.

A copy of the service plan is shared and agreed by Steering Group members each year.

### **Service User Feedback**

“You are an absolute font on knowledge and I came away from our discussion feeling so much better. SEND and EHCP is such a minefield and I really didn't know in which direction to turn. I am so very appreciative for your help and support - you were fantastic! I'm so very grateful.”

“Thank you so much for your help. You have been fantastic...it is great to know where we are with everything”

“Thank you for joining the meeting and I would just like to say thank you for all the support you have given.”

“Thank you (Case Officer) so much for everything you have done and all the help, I really do appreciate it”

“Thank you so much for your advice and information, this is all really helpful.”

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