

# Minutes of the Advisory Board Meeting for Cumbria SENDIAS Service

**Venue: Boardroom, Voreda House, Penrith**

**Time and date: 10.30 am 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees: Harry Harrison CCG, Tracey O’Roarty SENDIASS Manager, Angela O’Connell Carlisle College, Gill Ireland Parent, Di Routledge CCC Send Team, Hayley Stewart Chair, Hannah Graham SENCO Kingmoor Junior School, Shirley Murphy PCF, Adrienne Gill Autism Group, Helen Leader LA link for SENDIASS, , Fay Kabbara Senior Adviser (Carlisle & Eden) Learning Improvement Service Charlotte Wight Parent, Polly Shields SENDIASS Co-ordinator, Emma Stephenson SENDIASS Co-ordinator.

2. Apologies: Fay McEwan People First, Tom Graham Trainee People First, Kerry Dunbobbin Dep head James Rennie, Rebecca Millar RRMA.

3. Minutes of last meeting – everyone happy with contents.

4. Chair – Hayley Stewart –

My background is as a scientist, I worked as a physicist for the British Standards Institute for 20 years both as a research scientist and as the UK’s nominated expert to the European and International Standards Organisation decision committees and working groups. Now though I’m pretty much a full time carer for my youngest daughter who is autistic and has complex special needs. I’m mum to 3 girls who are 8, 11 and 14. My eldest also has a connective tissue disorder and as such has some physical needs.

Although I have lots of experience of chairing meetings I’ve never chaired a board like this before so would like to be guided by and have input from the members as to how to conduct meetings to get the best results for our children. It’s a lovely group as everyone involved has the same aim of improving the lives of disabled children and their families, which hopefully means we can work together to make a real difference.

5. Role of Vice chair – it was agreed we would have two vice chairs in place, those being Shirley Murphy -PCF, and Hannah Graham SENCO Kingmoor Junior School, thank you so much for agreeing to take on this role.

6. Cumbria SENDIASS Development plan – this has been created in response to the Minimum standards formulated by the IASS Network (National agency) to guide how we work towards meeting the minimum standards, and were reviewed item by item.

### Increase capacity of SENDIASS team to cope with rising demand and new tasks

Polly has been employed on a temporary basis for 2 years, we will keep a look out for further funding, ideally we would like to keep Polly on for an extra year which would enable us to meet the rising demand. In comparison to this time last year we have had an increase in 41 extra new referrals (April 2019 – end of Sept 2019)

It was questioned whether SENDIASS would be able to expand further, SENDIASS will keep this under review, however due to the current economic climate, budgets don't allow. Instead we are always looking for smarter ways of working whilst retaining our well regarded reputation, which can be a tricky balance.

### To make arrangements for SENDIASS to be jointly commissioned with a formal agreement

This has been flagged up to Sharron Simpson, in the hope to either gain some extra funding, expertise or training. Harry advised the group to also flag this up with the joint commissioning group.

Action Arising: Helen Leader and Hayley Stewart to do this.

### IASS is designed and commissioned with children, young people and parents

SENDIASS engage with young people and parents via the CPCF and other stakeholders, during their day to day work and events held around the county.

Our two co-ordinators Polly and Susan attended the Young Peoples all of us event, during this our website was discussed and young people provided us with lots of ideas which Polly and Susan are working through in order to make the website more user friendly for young people.

SENDIASS are also working jointly with the Learning Improvement Service, and the SEND Team in order to deliver free training for parents around the county, this training was requested by parents, and intends to be co-produced. SENDIASS to look at the dates for these, with the intention to deliver in all 6 areas dependent on take up, discussion was had around where this would be delivered, the special schools being one suggestion.

SENDIASS intend to deliver this training to the reference group first before rolling it out to parents (a check and challenge group for health and social care), Harry Harrison requested date for this asap.

**Please find attached** information on the reference group, and how you can get involved. For anyone interested you can either print off the form or ring Kieran Barr on 01228 226 329.

### SENDIASS provides an all year round flexible service

The majority of SENDIASS staff are employed part time (18.5 hours per week), and try their very best to get back to parents and professionals as quickly as physically possible.

If SENDIASS staff predict they will be away from the office for more than 3 working days they will provide an alternative co-ordinators contact details.

The charity Contacts helpline details have been added to co-ordinators email signatures and also the website.

IASS remains at arm's length and confidential dedicated and easily identifiable service separate from host organisation.

Cumbria SENDIAS Services host organisation is Cumbria County Council, for comparison, around the country 2/3 are in house, and rest are commissioned out to the voluntary sector.

Cumbria SENDIAS Service work very hard to reassure parents, and have an impartiality policy.

We are currently looking at setting up more of an independent website, we have provision approval, and alternative corporate colour pallets are being worked on with young people.

Discussion was had whether we require a different coloured lanyard.

Improve publicity materials

This will be looked at once a decision on the colour pallet has been finalised, in order to streamline the website with publicity materials.

Improve awareness of service for all parents and carers including hard to reach families

We are currently working our way through the 350+ schools, providing them with a description of us to include within their SEN Information report.

To promote the SENDIAS Service better with SENCOS, and to train SENCOS around role of schools in SEN Support for children

SENDIAS Service to attend up and coming SENCO cluster meetings.

Action Arising: Angela O'Connell to share with colleges.

Strengthening governance arrangements and arranging and managing reporting and having an advisory board

Thank you to everyone who is currently involved with our advisory board, we still require an early years representative, suggestions put forward were Katie Clark and Anne Breeze.

SENDIASS development plan will be reviewed annually with the advisory group to include actions and targets.

In future think about inviting Daisy Russell (NCB).

Ensure all fact sheets and information is up to date and accessible

Bring these to the next meeting, in order to identify gaps, and areas where we can improve.

Cumbria SENDIAS Service is accessible to all potential service users

SENDIAS Service are currently considering starting up drop in sessions.

### IAS provides IAS before & following SEND Tribunal in a range of different ways

SENDIAS Service staff support parents before and following a Tribunal, accompanying parents if they request this, Tribunals are a huge time commitment, given the fact the majority of co-ordinators are part time we have to decide on a case by case basis which parents do or do not require support during the Tribunal itself.

A board member queried what emotional support co-ordinators receive, and whether a formal policy needed putting in place.

SENDIAS Service staff brought to the attention of the board that co-ordinators receive regular monthly supervision, and also attend regular team meetings where peer supervision takes place.

It is however worth noting support from Occupational health is available for all staff through CCC.

### IAS offers training to LA, Health and Social Care professionals

SENDIAS Service have been to certain Universities to talk to trainee SENCOS.

Tracey also went to see the staff at Springboard Development Centre in Carlisle on one of their staff training days, SENDIASS To approach Alex N to ask how we can feed into other areas.

### Service offers training to parents, young people to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation

Cumbria SENDIASS will be offering training to parents in the New Year.

### All support staff to have successfully completed online IPSEA training within 12 months

4 out of 6 co-ordinators are trained to level 3, 5<sup>th</sup> co-ordinator will be by the beginning of the New Year, and the 6<sup>th</sup> co-ordinator is new to the role, therefore currently working her way through Level 1.

All staff attend other local courses.

### Set up a mutual support framework for parents

This intends to bring parents together, SENDIAS Service staff are currently working on the logistics of how this will work.

### Service provides direct support for individual young people, enabling YP to have a voice and have that voice heard

Cumbria SENDIAS Service are involved with the all of us programme, we have YP on this board.

SENDIAS Service intends to improve the ways they work with local colleges.

### Reaching out to vulnerable groups

SENDIAS Service staff work alongside the adoption support service, and closely with social care staff.

## Addressing cultural barriers to service engagement

Co-ordinator Susan Eastwood is currently working on a mapping exercise regarding post 16 FE packages.

How do we support refugees coming into Cumbria?

Cumbria CVS – Claire Edwards – project manager, different voluntary organisations.

### 7. Cumbria SEND IASS Policy Review – impartiality

One Parental comment received – queried section 5.1 regarding SENDIASS co-ordinators supporting parents where there is a personal connection, everyone agreed this will be judged on a case by case basis and a discussion between staff and the parent, and also keep it under review during the period of the “intervention”.

Possible edit: Where a parent and staff are known to each other there will be a discussion, each case will be discussed on a case by case basis, and at regular intervals it will be reviewed.

Another area of concern, which has come up over the years is the fact SENDIASS co-ordinators wear their host organisations (CCC) lanyards, which can be perceived as being non impartial. There was a discussion around SENDIASS co-ordinators role to inform parents of LA policy but also the law in order to provide impartial and balanced Information, and advice. It is important to highlight when asking customers if they perceive SENDIASS to be impartial on our questionnaires we score highly, with a high percentage of customers agreeing that we are.

Potential item for next agenda.

8. Terms of reference - Amendments made since last meeting, everyone agreed and signed current version.

9. Any other Business - none

10. Date and Venue of next meeting -11am 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Kendal, venue TBC

Emma Stephenson 17.10.19