



Cumbria SEND Information, Advice and Support Service

Offering impartial information, advice and support to children and young people with special educational needs and or disabilities and their parents & carers.

Cumbria SENDIASS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING - 10 am to 12pm 20th October 2020

by Microsoft Teams

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees: Hayley Stewart (Chair/Parent)

Tracey O’Roarty (SEND IAS Service Manager)

Charlotte Wight (Parent)

Shirley Murphy (Parent/Carer)

Angela Connell (Carlisle College)

Helen Leader (CCC Business Improvement Officer)

Hannah Graham (SENCO Kingmoor Junior School)

Faye McEwan-Barry (Education Manager People First)

Adrienne Gill (Parent)

Kris Williams (James Rennie School Head)

2. Apologies

Gill Ireland (parent)

Kirsty Reid (parent)

Ann Breeze (CCC)

John Branchflower (CCC)

Di Routledge (CCC)

Alex Nancollis (Health)

3. Minute of last meeting
Agreed and signed off.

2 points arising raised by the chair.

Support for parents going through a tribunal. Kirsty, a parent had offered to support parents that SENDIASS were working with who were going through the tribunal. Helen reported that Kirsty attended a SENDIASS team meeting in September and outlined the support she could offer to parents. All co-ordinators were able to ask her questions and took her contact details. Several Co-ordinators are supporting parents through tribunal and this will be useful support. Shirley Murphy also volunteered to take on this role as she had been through the process as well.

Code of conduct - this was updated following the last meeting as agreed by the group in July. A copy of the new version will be circulated with the minutes. Review of Terms of Reference for Chair and Board Members

We went through the document for TOR for the Chair and reviewed the contents. Everyone agreed that the contents were fine and no changes were needed.

We discussed the TOR for the board and looked at what the board's role is and everyone agreed that the contents were good.

Both documents were signed off by the board.

4. Future Chair of Advisory Board

Hayley Stewart has a new job and is working as an Engagement and Communications Officer with LA, working on the SEND Improvement Project. She will stand down as Chair of SENDIASS, but she will stay on the Board with her new hat on.

Charlotte Wight has expressed an interest to become the new Chair of SENDIASS and would be ably supported by 2 great vice chairs in Shirley and Hannah.

Her role was agreed by all the Board members present. Charlotte was pleased to accept and will have a handover meeting with Hayley and with Tracey.

5. Cumbria SENDIASS update

Tracey updated the group on SENDIASS activities. Lots happening through the Covid pandemic – team is very busy working with families with children returning to settings in September. All co-ordinators report a rise in the demand. Tracey will be comparing figures to last year to see how much of an increase we are experiencing. Cases are more complex, and many have a health component to them. Schools struggling to get health input up to the level it was previously and this is preventing

some children going back to school. Preparation work for several tribunals has been started.

Lucy Harris has now joined the team to replace Laura who has gone onto a full time post. Lucy is in the East of the county, replacing Emma who is on maternity leave. Lucy is a Senco at a primary school as well and has worked with lots of children with SEND in the area. Tracey will bring her along to introduce her in future meetings. We were down a co-ordinator for a while but back up to full strength.

Working from home has become the new normal but a couple of the team have had meetings in schools with risk assessments – doing this on a case by case basis. Tracey will be doing second National report to our funders in November. We are busy but keeping up.

Issues caused by the virus are raising cases for the team. Some schools struggling in difficult circumstances – some of the provision is health related and getting this back is proving a problem in some very complex cases.

Not many parents coming forward regarding the lack of day care services for over 18's SENDIASS can only get involved in this type of situation by signposting to Adult Social Care, SENDIASS can support more if there is an educational or health element or the social care 'educates or trains' and is described in a EHCP.

6. Cumbria SEND IASS Development Plan 20/21 and IASP Funding

Tracey shared the latest update on the development plan. Taking into account the limitations of Covid, she has rag rated all points as green.

Cultural barriers – the team have facilitated 2 returning to school Q & A sessions with parents – first time they have done live sessions. It all went well. Charlotte attended one meeting – one parent didn't know what SENDIASS was – this was concerning that parents were attending a meeting, so it took a while to explain. Good to know how to go about getting the right things in place for your child. Relaxed and informal – information was great and high quality. Good feedback.

One co-ordinator delivered a session with a at the virtual Preparation for Adulthood Fair recently to inform parents/carers on what SENDIASS can offer.

One of our Co-ordinators (Polly) also facilitated a Transition workshop with a colleague (Karen Dickie) from the North Cumbria Autism Project. Loads of useful information around preparation for adulthood. Hayley attended this workshop and she learned lots she did not know. Met lots of parents. Makes you feel less alone. Good partnership working with this agency. We do a lot of work with them in the North and

West. Need to develop this in the South. These type of sessions raise the awareness of the SENDIASS Service.

Charlotte raised the point that parents often do not know about lots of things/organisations in SEND arena.

Tracey has been working with professionals from People First. Keen to work together in partnership – very useful and helpful meeting. Want to link up the advocacy service with SENDIASS. Very positive meeting.

Supporting families who home educate – several queries from families who are home schooling and want to know the legal implications of doing this. Demand in this area is rising but not sure if this is temporary due to Covid, or longer lasting. Many parents want to do this permanently. Parents reporting home education to be a positive experience and levels of anxiety in children have gone down, maybe not for the parents.

Discussion regarding potential offices parents/SENDIASS can use for virtual meetings when parents/carers do not have the necessary technology at home. People first have offices in Barrow but not in Kendal. Oaklea Trust have facilities in Kendal and could be used. Enterprise House in Kendal could be a good venue. Children's Centres are available round the county now to use as places to meet parents.

Working with disadvantaged groups – still doing this through Covid – supporting parents with Teams meetings – put together information leaflet on how to join Teams meetings and looking at venues for parents to have access to equipment so they can join if they don't have it at home.

Working with Katie Clark from CCC– reaching families who are seldom heard or hard to reach. Tracey will meet Katie to develop this around the children's centres.

Tracey wants to work with other agencies in partnership.

Working increasingly with young people directly. Usually more complex cases which take time to unpick and unravel.

Still waiting for our website to be finalised. Waiting list due to Covid. Need to progress this. Parents will write to Kieran from the Comms Team.

Updated all the tribunal information leaflets with embedded video links for parents to watch how to complete tribunal forms etc. Need to provide feedback form for Facebook users. Get lots of hits on the Facebook site and we promote a lot of activities to parents and other agencies. Great way to get information out.

Tribunal – online training during lockdown as a refresher. Tribunals are increasing. Some complex disability discrimination cases. Tracey gets updates from colleagues who attend the tribunal user network meeting. Tribunals are now all virtual so makes this more accessible. This will continue in the future. Becoming more familiar with tribunals and share this with the team. All co-ordinators trained to level 3 and Lucy working on level 1.

SENDIASS holds regular team meetings and team catch ups and also 121 supervisions for each individual member of staff.

Tracey has had several meetings with the North Consortium of SENDIASS services. Good support for each other. Will attend other areas advisory board meetings.

7. Joint Commissioning Update

Several meetings held in last few months with the 2 CCGs. We have also met the DCO. Health have said they have no funding to spend with SENDIASS at the moment but will support in kind. Doing all we can under current circumstances, so rag rated as green.

8. Any other business

Angela – glossary of acronyms would be useful. Tracey will send out with the minutes.

Angela wants some further information on the autism project, Tracey will send this to Angela.

Shirley would like Tracey to work with her third sector group in the west. Becoming a disability hate crime hub. Receiving training on this. Safe haven for young people suffering from hate crime as is Carlisle College. They use a sunflower lanyard to help support young people. Can fit 20/25 into their centre with social distancing.

SENDIASS is happy to join any event organized by other agencies that are relevant to SEND.

Thanks were given to Hayley for all her hard work as Chair. Her work and her efforts are very much appreciated by everyone on the Board.

9. Date and Venue of next meeting

Early March 2021 was suggested as the next meeting. Tracey will organise a meeting and let members know.