

IAS Service: Person centred planning to empower

This case study demonstrates how basic research and preparation carried out in advance can be productive. Here it meant being able to utilise the YP's creative skills to record information and made building a rapport easier.

Kieran is 15 he has Dyslexia and specific language impairment.

Kieran's Story

Kieran's mum received a letter explaining that Kieran would be transferring from a statement to an EHCP. She had previously felt overwhelmed dealing with the LA and believed her son could be reluctant to open up at meetings and so she sought the assistance of the IAS Service.

I visited Kieran's parents in the first instance whilst he was at school. This was to give them more information about the EHCP process and explain it in more details so they could ask me questions in preparation for their meeting. As I didn't have all the answers, it gave me the chance to check the Code of Practice and research information on individual colleges and placements before the meeting itself.

Visiting the parents first meant that they could give me a strong picture of Kieran. We decided it was a good idea for me to speak to Kieran without his parents there, as they believe he sometimes says what they want to hear, or feels unable to speak openly, when they are around.

Following this I went to the school to chat to him. From everything Kieran's parents had said, I felt the best way to get Kieran engaged was to bring a big A2 sheet of paper and colour pens to let him free flow a brainstorm of his thoughts. By the end of the hour, it looked amazing. Kieran and I had found a common love of "Breaking Bad" which really helped build rapport. He voiced that he was nervous for college, I told him that even I got nervous meeting him and that it was natural; he seemed to like that we had similarities.

Kieran also told me his aspirations; he wanted to go into media and one day move out (but not too far). Giving him the choice to spiral his ideas out with arrows and spider diagrams also meant that I didn't have to delve too deep with questions; he did it on his own.

Kieran's parents mentioned that he gets quite shy in meetings. However, at the transfer review meeting Kieran felt comfortable going through his A2 sheet of paper he'd created. His parents told me afterwards that they learnt a lot from it. They said they didn't feel he would have shared as much had they asked him those questions, or if he'd been expected to answer them unprepared during the transfer meeting. The plan coordinator was also happy to take the A2 sheet away to use for writing up Section A.

When the draft plan came back, I went through the plan with Kieran's parents, however, they were happy with it and only suggested small amendments. They said that this was down to the fact I was with them through the process, acting as a bridge between them and the LA. Mum also said how "it can often feel overwhelming and emotional. LA processes can be over complicated and

full of jargon. It was really helpful to have a proactive and the IAS Service Manager to help wade through the mire.”

For me, meeting with Kieran was when I felt the person centred aspect of the whole process truly came into play. It was vital for Kieran to be in a comfortable situation where he was able to openly talk about his dreams and fears with someone who had no expectation of how he should answer. His parents said that this was captured in his EHCP and that the outcomes reflected his dreams to go into Media and build on his confidence. I came away after working with that family feeling that not only did Kieran’s plan capture him as a person but by working with him reflectively, helped explore that person and allowed him to jump out from his mind and onto the paper.