

Case study: SENDIASS direct work with young people

This case study demonstrates how an IAS service supported a very vulnerable young person aged 19 with Asperger's so she could navigate the college complaints procedures and seek alternative provision at her own request.

Charlotte* is 19 has Asperger's and mental health problems that have resulted in numerous suicide attempts and severe anxiety attacks. She had been attending a mainstream college with the support of an EHCP for the past 3 years. Charlotte approached the IASS as she had become increasingly frustrated with her course and wished to make a complaint. IASS had previously supported Charlotte and her mum at the Annual Review of her EHCP. The course Charlotte had been attending was sub-contracted to another training provider and Charlotte felt that the staff had used "inappropriate language" and had "discriminated" against her by not allowing her to take part in activities available to others.

The IASS YP Advisor (YPA) first met with mum and Charlotte on the 22nd May 2018 and built up a good rapport. The YPA met again with the family at the EHCP Annual Review on the 14th June 2018. Following the issues Charlotte had with her course the YPA met with her and gained an understanding of her circumstances by carefully and respectfully listening to her issues. Together they were able to detail the incidents that had occurred and the issues Charlotte wished to raise with the college that she felt she needed a response to. By accessing the college's complaints procedure online, they looked through the information provided and knew what steps they needed to take next. They all agreed this would be a good opportunity for Charlotte to take forward her concerns without mum, given Charlotte's anxiety this was a huge step for her. A meeting was arranged for 20th June 2018.

Charlotte met with the head of the department and admin assistant supported by the YPA and put forward the points she had an issue with. Charlotte explained that it had been agreed she would have an individual daily timetable but this had not been provided. The head of department agreed this should have been done and apologised on behalf of the college. Charlotte explained the behaviour of staff had not been appropriate and that there was unclear decision making, the college responded by explaining that they had consequently decided not to renew the contract with the training provider. They added that there were issues with insurance in terms of Charlotte not being able to access the same activities as others and Charlotte acknowledged these issues were subsequently resolved. The college would also be giving formal feedback to the training provider following this meeting. During the meeting Charlotte highlighted the positives in terms of the onsite support from the college and felt that she had been listened to and taken seriously, she felt that the action taken by the college was good and she was satisfied that she had made a positive change for other students with additional needs.

Supporting a YP through this experience allowed the IASS YPA to increase their knowledge re an educational setting's complaints procedure and how to successfully empower a YP with SEN to raise their voice.

The experience of arranging and attending the meeting gave Charlotte's confidence a boost. This was the first meeting that Charlotte had attended without her mum present and she had effectively communicated independently via phone and email to the IASS service directly. In the weeks following the meeting Charlotte successfully completed her course and the YPA signposted her to an organisation that would be able to support her in finding an apprenticeship. Charlotte contacted the organisation by herself and set up a meeting that she attended without support from IASS or mum and is now enjoying her first few weeks on an apprenticeship scheme which started in August 2018.

Charlotte said;

"I really value the support I received from the SENDIASS service, I feel a lot more confident now and am looking forward to my future."

This case influenced the way in which the IASS service helps and supports YP directly. The information and support was adapted to suit the needs of a young individual with SEN and the feedback from the YP has ensured that the service is developing in the way in which they communicate and support YP in the future.

*Name has been changed.