

5) Case Study: Parents needing additional support

This case study illustrates how without the practical support provided by the IS throughout the EHCP process, the mum would have not been able to make any kind of contribution to her son's EHCP. It also demonstrates the importance of finding a mechanism to flag up families who will need support, regardless of how well everything is going, and ensuring where the support will come from in the future once the IS role is finished

Ny and Maggie's (his mum) Story

The local college referred the family to the IS service. Ny was a student at college who enjoyed college and wanted our support to complete his "My Support Plan". His mum, Maggie, asked for our support as she is unable to read or write and this would be a significant barrier to her being able to express her wishes and aspirations for her son.

The process of working with this family began with a phone call during which we explained the role of IS and how we could work with Ny and Maggie to ensure they had a voice in the EHCP process.

We completed a home visit in which we supported Maggie and her husband to complete the My Support Plan. They also both wanted to attend the meeting but due to having no form of transport would have been unable to attend the meeting. We were able to arrange to meet them prior to the meeting and take them to the meeting.

At the meeting we were able to support Maggie and her husband by explaining things that were being discussed, and also regularly checking that they were happy and understood, throughout the meeting.

Following the meeting we were able to support Maggie and Ny to look over the draft. Specific circumstances meant that Maggie's husband was unable to support with reviewing the draft, due to not being allowed in the family home. We were able to meet with Maggie and Ny at home and read through the draft EHCP with them and explain what the terms meant. This allowed Maggie and Ny to make an informed decision about the draft EHCP and whether to agree to it.

As you can see there were multiple barriers to Maggie's ability to contribute to EHCP and put forward the wishes of the family. By working with the IS she was able to access the process and be given an understanding of the changes and what this means for her son. Without IS assistance, there is a strong possibility that there would have been minimal family input to Ny's EHCP.

The challenges of working with this family were about quickly building supportive relationships. In which the family felt comfortable to express their thoughts and feelings. We had to also consider at each step that Maggie's own literacy difficulties did not disadvantage her from being able to respond or contribute. It was essential that we worked in a person centred and supportive way in order to do this. Another

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barrier was transport, which would have prevented the family from being able to attend the EHCP meeting. This was easily overcome by the IS being able to drive them.

The other challenge with this case was that when the draft came out there was a significant change in family circumstances which resulted in Maggie's husband, who is the usual source of support, no longer being allowed in the family home.

The impact of the work of IS in this case was to support the family by working through multiple barriers to enable full participation for the family. This included practical barriers such as transport and literacy. Had there not been support from IS in this case then the family would have been excluded from inputting in to their child's education. This was evident that when speaking to Maggie during the EHCP draft review, she mentioned how difficult it was for her to contribute to these especially without the support of her partner. On a final note, by being aware of Maggie's need for support with literacy and her change of circumstances at home, she agreed to her contact details being passed on to the local IASS so they could provide on-going support now that the EHC process has finished.