

14) Case Study: Empowering

This case study written by a parent helps illustrate from a parents perspective how sample documents and time from the IS made all the difference to her family.

Vince's Story

Our eldest daughter has a diagnosis of autism and attends a mainstream school as does our son Vince, currently in Year 5. We have had some concerns about Vince at both school and home with his inability to read, write and keep up with his peers.

I had been trying to teach Vince at home with support provided from our family. However, I really had run out of ideas and I think school felt the same. It was school that initiated the EHCP assessment. I am also very worried about the future for Vince and how he will cope with secondary school.

I have worked with IASS before because of the difficulties my daughter has experienced but I had not heard of IS. When I contacted IASS, I was referred to IS for help with Section A. The school had prepared a profile but I always feel they refuse to fully recognise and appreciate the difficulties Vince experiences.

I was really worried about the whole process as I had not heard of an EHCP before and I had no idea what we should write. I didn't feel the school were helpful. From the first phone call from IS my mind was eased. All my fears and anxieties were listened to and they arranged to come to our home talk us through the process and help with the form.

At the first visit we were given lots of encouragement to take our time and just talk about the different sections of the form and what we wanted for Vince. She brought some templates and examples so we could see how Section A could work for us. We were asked lots of questions about Vince and she really got us thinking. She left us with the templates and told us to take some time to fill them in. At this point we arranged a further follow up meeting to help us put everything together and complete the form. It was such a relief to have that time to ourselves to just think about the form and what we wanted to put.

Our IS helped us so much; the knowledge she had around the reforms and the new process, and the different tools and templates she used to help us just think about Vince. We thought of all different ways in which things could be improved at home and school. I had never heard of the Local Offer either, so being shown that and the wealth of information that was available about different resources in our area was really helpful. I hadn't heard of some of the support groups despite already having a daughter with special needs. Our IS gave us confidence and helped us understand more about what the school could and should be doing to help Vince.

I feel we have a positive plan now with some real aspirations for Vince. We are now feeling more positive about school and home life for Vince and cannot thank the IS enough for this.