

## Hull: IASS adjusting at the start of Covid-19 to embrace the digital world and new ways of working

### The context

As part of the operational plan IASS had identified a gap in its online and social media offer. A clear plan was quickly developed to address this aspect of the service. By mid-March the Government implemented lockdown measures. Hull IASS like many were thrust into a new way of working with little time and opportunity to prepare. This was felt clearly to lie in the area of social media.

### The story

When the Government implemented the lockdown measures there was an instantaneous impact on the service and its ability to offer support. Calls reduced very quickly and face-to-face meetings stopped overnight. This coupled with home working left the team concerned that it would not be able to support people through this difficult time and maintaining the team would be difficult. The organisation promptly responded by ensuring all staff were able to operate from home. This included providing new laptops, mobile phones and developing the infrastructure, including using Yammer, to access the shared data folders from home. This was all very successful. As part of the plan to develop the social media offer the service began by delivering live Q&A sessions on Facebook which included answering questions about the current Covid-19 changes. Drop-in sessions were delivered for small groups of parents and regular updates posted on the local context. The response was overwhelming, and the numbers reached exceeded expectations.

### The outcome

The impact was greater than initially anticipated. As a result Parents/carers and YP began to message and ask for additional content to meet their needs. The service very quickly became busy again and support and referrals were increasing. As the infrastructure for the organisation to operate remotely was in place, the service was able to process and support appropriately and meet demand.

The reach of the service has widened significantly. It has reached 200 followers and likes but the wider reach of the content is in the thousands. Parents and carers have commented on how the social media support has been a lifeline during this period. As a result of the pandemic and lock down the online and social media offer has been accelerated significantly. In reality it is several months ahead of projected time scales in this area. It has also shown how reach and support for larger numbers of people could be delivered with less resource and staffing requirements. It has been incredibly rewarding and as a service it is intended to build the online offer further. The evidence being gathered shows online resources and support are effective and are one of the key tools for supporting parents/carers and YP.

Feedback received include:

*Children are going to be back in school next week. Thank you so much for your help I didn't know what to do before you helped.*

*Thanks again for your support. Kids are amazing and so important to parents.*

*I don't know where we would be if you hadn't have helped.*

*Things are 10 times better since you supported. You do a great job.*

*Keep up the excellent work.*

*Thanks for all the information. I would never have found that myself.*

**Contact details**

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