



# Cheshire and Chester West IASS : A strategic view of how service users are benefiting from IASP funded work

## The context

The minimum standards and funding from DfE has enabled a strategic focus on the work of the service. This has resulted in a new Advisory Group being put into place for the service with key stakeholders including parents contributing. Young people are able to feed in their views via their own group. The Advisory Group is the strategic body that monitors and challenges the work and the developments included in the 2 year action plan. The evidence, including quality statements, presented to the group and the activities carried out in the meetings has resulted in stakeholders having a better understanding of the work of the service. Working together has resulted in the LA and Health commissioners having a business case with the right evidence being submitted to the right strategic board in health to consider joint commissioning. This has included working with Cheshire East IAS Service.

## How IASP funding has improved the IASS offer to it service users

The funding has been used to progress developments to ensure the service meets minimum standards or above. A number of developments have resulted in better outcomes for families:

- There has been a review of the staffing structure in the service resulting in appointment of a dedicated service manager i.e. without any additional responsibility for other Local Authority (LA) functions, and temporary staff being made permanent. This should help future proof sufficient capacity to meet the demands of casework. The average response time for the service currently is within 3 days.
- The service has been able to deliver sessions for children in year 9/10 to enable them to take part in their annual reviews.
- The service is delivering differently by providing drop in sessions in partnership with other organisations and has also delivered some evening sessions for parents about the Special Educational Needs system.
- Volunteers have undertaken legal training.

## Ways in which improvements have positively enhanced the service user experience – provide evidence/examples

Some evidence of how service user experience has improved by delivering differently is:

- 100 % of young people who took part in the annual review sessions went on to take part in their annual review.
- A booklet has been co-produced with children/young people on considering how they can take part in decision-making. This is being distributed to children/young people at the annual review training and other sessions. Feedback will be gathered from children/young people on how the booklet has helped. Local Schools are already using it.
- The service has reached parents who had not previously engaged with the service because they weren't available during the day. More parents have been able to receive a face-to-face support session by using staffing time more effectively in partnership drop-ins.

- The volunteers completing the legal training has resulted in a more informed confident work force. This is evidenced by feedback from the volunteers.

## Lessons the service has learnt making service improvements

It became clear that members of the Advisory Group were not all aware of the full remit of the service. The Self Evaluation activity and 2 year operational plan has moved this forward.

Last year the service increased the numbers of children/young people making direct access for information, advice and support. By going out and speaking to the children/young people directly through the annual review pilot resulted in better engagement.

## The approach being taken to sustain the improvements achieved

The Advisory Group is now well established and will continue to monitor and challenge the service development and delivery. There will be a Service Level Agreement with both the LA and Health to ensure the service is meeting requirements both locally and nationally. There will be regular provider meetings with the commissioners. Data will be analysed via the Education Performance Report and SEND Dashboard and an IAS Service annual report will be published on the Local Offer. It is intended that a parent will chair the Advisory Group and they will attend the SEND Strategy Group alongside the service manager thus ensuring service user voices are heard in local area policy and practice.

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