



## Enfield IASS – laying the foundations for a positive, secure and thriving service for the future

### The context

Enfield is an outer London Borough with a population of approximately 330,000, 115,631 of who fall in the 0-25 bracket and a whole school population of almost 60,000. A recent surge in demand for EHCP's means that there are almost 2,800 EHCP's in place in Enfield alone. Enfield SENDIASS has been an outsourced service since the inception of the Parent Partnership Services. It operates within the charity Every Parent & Child ('EPC'). Enfield is the 12<sup>th</sup> most deprived London borough according to 2015 statistics.

In 2017 the Local Authority (LA) substantially reduced the funding for the SEND IAS service. The service in 2017/8 was operating in survival mode with no opportunity to review or work towards building or improving the IAS service offer for its service users.

The timing and the requirements of the IAS programme, including the self-review, came at a pivotal time for the service. The IASP funding has allowed the manager to conduct a 'root and branch' review of the service and allowed a two year operational strategic plan to be developed enabling strong foundation to be built for a secure and thriving SEND IAS service.

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

IASP funding has had a substantial and significant impact on the quality/reach of the service that we are able to offer to our local SEN community and beyond. The funding has allowed us to put together a rolling and ongoing programme of improvements. It is hard to encapsulate the immense impact the funding has had, not only on the provision of the service that we are able to provide but also the great 'psychological lift' that has been provided to staff morale to know that the importance of the SEND IAS service is finally being recognised, acknowledged and invested into. Overall the funding has had an immediate positive impact but the ripple effect of the increased funding will hopefully last for many years to come.

A summary of the improvements that have been implemented are as follows:

- The SEND IASS manager has had increased capacity to develop a **two year operational plan**
- Time allotted for capacity building – the external profile of Enfield SEND IASS has been improved by making a successful application for Advice Quality Standard (**AQS**) accreditation. A detailed desk top audit was successfully completed in October 2018 and in January 2019 the service successfully passed the AQS office audit. This provided the service with a nationally recognised accreditation of the telephone helpline and advice and information function of the Enfield SEND IAS service. This provides external validation as to the outstanding high quality of the service that we provide to our users.
- Development of a **Volunteer Training Programme** – A three day volunteer training programme runs over three consecutive weeks. A certificate provided upon completion. The topics covered during the training programme are SEND IASS protocols and procedures, Communication and Education, Health and Care plans process and procedure.
- Creation of two new part time posts – from September 2018 to March 2019 the post of SENDIASS **Volunteer Trainer (VT)** was created. The VT is responsible for mentoring all new volunteers. In addition,

the post of **SEND IASS administrator** responsible for exploring, creating and improving data collection methods.

- **Since April 2019** – We have been able to increase the hours for some of our caseworkers as well as being able to compensate them with wage rises in line with London's higher living costs. Staff wages had not been reviewed for 8 years. This had an immediate impact of staff morale and staff retention.
- We were able to develop a new young person's post and recruit a **Young Peoples Development Worker ('YPDW')**. This was in response to the lack of information, knowledge and support for post 14/16 provision. The YPDW – was employed to undertake the following: inform and empower young people with SEND as to their options, provide 1:1 support, increase participation in society for young people with SEND via Young Peoples Steering Group, increasing/developing a network of support organisations for young people with SEND and/or vulnerable/excluded young people at risk of being involved in grooming and knife crime.

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

**SEND IASS Administrator** – we have now a constant and dedicated worker on the telephone helpline. This means that all calls are answered and returned with 48 hours. This means that all our service users now are able to have their queries dealt with effectively, efficiently and in a timely fashion. This has also worked well as a 'gatekeeper' service, allowing caseworkers to concentrate on casework and meetings. Overall, a more efficient and effective case work service has been developed to the benefit of caseworkers and service users.

**SEND IASS Volunteer Trainer** – we have trained 8 volunteers through our Volunteer Training Programme. This increase in capacity allows our service to be fully manned at all times. This increased capacity has allowed caseworkers to avoid administrative tasks, have added support at meetings and place less strain on the help line. Volunteers have also been pivotal in improving our service evaluations, allowing us to continually review and improve our services.

**SEND IASS Outreach Clinics** – Following the review of our service we were able to establish the need to provide outreach advice clinics in the community. We have now established strong links with six schools and the Alternate Resource Provision's (ARP) at which we have agreed to run advice sessions. The schools are a mixture of mainstream schools, specialist schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). Through this framework we will increase our reach into the communities that have previously found us hard to reach and/or those young people that are at risk of exclusion and/or have been excluded from school and may be vulnerable to being groomed/involved in knife crime.

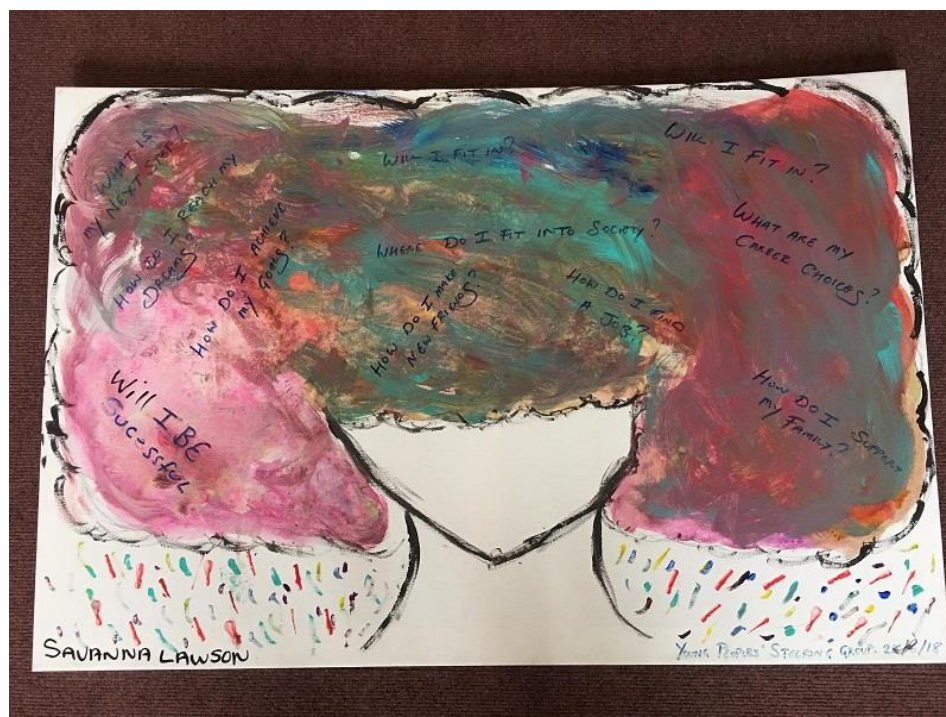
**Increased emphasis – on Young People with SEND** - Our work with young people has been completely revolutionised by the recruitment of Young People's Development Worker ('YPDW').

The YPDW has already undertaken the following:

- Established links with 6 post 16+ colleges and institutions
- Established links with Local Careers Service
- Established links with PFA initiatives within the local offer
- Provided 1-1 support for Young people – Creating 'All about me' profiles
- Increased our YPSG – by recruiting 6 new members to our monthly group.

**In October 2019** – we were able to secure a place for our YPDW to be part of an international youth leadership programme. This entailed our YPDW going to Georgia for a 9 day training programme in youth leadership. Our YPDW was a leader for 8 young people from differing backgrounds for 8 days. This youth leadership programme has already secured some ERAMUS funding which means in the future we will have the capacity to support our young people with SEND to partake in international youth programmes across the globe. This will allow our young people with SEN to have an experience that would be otherwise beyond their reach.

**Increased emphasis on Young People with SEND** – Provision of 1:1 dedicated support. An example of this was documented in the experience of YP-S. As a member of our Young Peoples Steering Group (YPSG), YP-S aged 18 found herself a NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) and was at risk of being groomed. Through our support we were able to secure careers advice and through the links provided were able to assist her in applying for apprenticeships. YP-S with our assistance was able to successfully attend interviews and be offered an opportunity to undertake a local apprenticeship at a legal firm. She chose not to undertake the offer but her confidence was increased tenfold. Whilst applying for further interviews, we got YP-S to undertake some art work around SEN. YP-S produced a painted canvas that symbolised her personal struggle with SEN. Her art work was later shortlisted for a national prize and was included as a show piece at a national gallery. Please see a photograph of the painting produced below:



Through this experience, she felt empowered and grew so much in confidence and self-esteem. With our continued 1:1 support we assisted her in applying for a supported internship. We are pleased to state that she was successful in her application and she commenced her internship in September 2019. She is now flourishing.

Through our continued work with young people, we have managed to help **two** other young people with SEN to join the supported internship programme.

Through our added capacity to work with young people we were able to run an additional workshop on increasing participation of young people in governance and trusteeships within corporations and charities. This session was run and lead by our YPDW and through this training we were able to empower young people on the routes open to them to make a real difference within the governance of organisations. We at Every Parent & Child (EPC) were able to secure a young person with SEN to serve on our Board of Trustees. This session was run with extra funding that was successfully applied and received via London Youth. This added emphasis on young people with SEN is now starting to open new doors for additional funding. This is something that we at Enfield SEND IASS are very eager to build upon and hope that many other 'funding' routes can be explored, allowing us to provide a platform and expand upon our current service to young people.

## **Initiatives built and consolidated upon as a result of the IASP Funding**

**Introduction of coffee mornings** – facilitating a network of peer support for our families with SEN. This is an initiative that was introduced based on parental requests and feedback. The coffee mornings are now

regularly attended by 4-8 parents a month. We hope that with continued networking and promotion this number will increase in time.

**Partnership working with the Parents Steering Group** – empowering parents and acting as a ‘critical friend’ for our service. This is an information/sharing good practice session that is held every 8 weeks. We currently have 6-8 parents that attend this steering group. We hope that with continued networking and promotion this number will increase in time.

**Training courses/information sessions for parents-** we now have the capacity to hold additional training sessions for parents on a regular basis. Our last session in October 2019 was on autism. This was attended by over 60 parents. Our average attendance at past events has been 10-15 parents. The fact that 60 parents attended our last session is evidence that we are extending the reach of our service and increasing our overall profile within our local community and beyond. We have established that there is a demand for autism/ADHD training and hope that in the future we can tailor further sessions for parents at regular intervals across the year.

Through the use of the **Minimum Standards**, we have established closer links with jointly commissioned working groups. We now attend the **SEND Partnership Board, Early Intervention Working Group and are soon to become members of the EHCP cross working group**. Being part of these groups has increased our profile with our respective partner organisations.

We have, for the first time, established links with the **Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Social Care**. We have started the process of creating a Joint Commissioning Agreement with both the CCG and Social Care. We aim to have the agreement finalised by the end of 2019. Our increased profile within the CCG and Social Care will have a dramatic impact upon our service offer to users and be better informed about partnership working opportunities.

**Fundraising strategy** – this continues to be a work in progress but we hope that this will lead us to establishing different income streams that can be invested back into the service and for us to continually improve our service for our users/stakeholders.

## Lessons the service has learnt making service improvements

**Increasing the SEND IASS profile is paramount** - raising awareness of our service to service users, partners and related stakeholders.

**Joint commissioning**, networking with LA, CCG and Social Care is pivotal to securing a sustainable and longterm future. The new Minimum Standards provide us with a great foundation for engagement with Commissioners at the highest level.

**Strategic development** must be truly reflective of the needs of the community. Regular reviews and consultations with service users are critical to remaining relevant to the community that we serve.

**Staffing** - importance of having staff to meet demand and the impact on staff well-being. Without a full complement of staff, a sustainable and viable service cannot be offered. By increasing the hours offered to our caseworkers, as well as a salary review, we now have a good working environment that allows both the staff and the service to thrive.

**There is a real need to establish a base/hub for young people with SEN in Enfield** – a dedicated team/network needs to be developed around young people with SEN in the local area. This has been uncovered by our YPDO who is only able to touch the surface of the needs of young people in the area. With increased capacity and further funding and the creation of this hub we will be able to offer higher levels of 1:1 or group support as and when required.

## The approach being taken to sustain the improvements achieved

**Business planning/operational plans** – we have established a template for operational planning for the future. This will ensure that we are able to plan how to optimise our service offer for our users.

**Strategic overview** - we now have dedicated time set aside to ensure that we are able to review and plan for the challenges ahead. Having an emphasis on strategic planning has enabled us to move away from a survival mind set to a planning for a sustainable and secure future.

**Joint commissioning** - this will allow us to work closely with the CCG and Social Care. We will soon have a written agreement to ensure that our service offer is strengthened across the areas of Health and Social Care. This will be in stark contrast to previous years where we as a service have been wholly reliant on the Local Authority and education department.

**Website** – we are now in the process of updating our website so that it is more accessible and relevant to our service users. The new website and rebranding will allow us to be a forward facing organisation that is both accessible and user friendly. This will ensure that we continue to build on our local and national profile.

**Use of volunteers** - we now have a cycle of training and continuous support for our volunteers. This allows us to continually build on our bank of volunteers and to ensure that our caseworkers are supported and that our service is fully manned. We have trained 8 new volunteers in the last year.

**Fundraising strategy** – EPC has a funding strategy in place and are looking to approach large corporations via their corporate social responsibility policies to see if we can generate additional resources or income that can be invested back into our service and fund future projects.

### In conclusion:

IASP funding has had a substantial and significant impact on the quality and reach of the service that we are able to offer to our local SEN community and beyond. Overall, the funding has had an immediate positive impact but the ripple effect of the increased funding will only last for a limited period without further and sustained investment. The SEN landscape has been immeasurably changed and we believe that the foundations have been laid for us to both grow and thrive. This exercise has proved to us that we still need to battle for funding but we believe that with continued investment and support we have established a platform from which our service is finally recognised and rewarded for being an integral and pivotal service for all children, young people and families with SEN.

### Contact details

Lina Parmar

Service Manager

Enfield IASS

[lina.parmar@epandc.org.uk](mailto:lina.parmar@epandc.org.uk)