



**Information, Advice
and Support Service**

**Herefordshire &
Worcestershire**



**Information, Advice
and Support Service**
Worcestershire

**Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information,
Advice & Support Service**

Team Report

2022

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A glossary has been provided at the end of this report for acronyms contained in this document

Actions and Outcomes 2022

It has been a year that has seen Herefordshire & Worcestershire SENDIASS make a number of improvements to ensure the service not only meets its minimum standards, but also maintains and improves the quality of information, advice and support provided to parent/carers, children, and young people across both counties. It has also proved to be a challenging year with a huge increase in demand for the service as well as the complexity of cases requiring support. We are continuing to see the impact of the pandemic on many children and young people.

Training and Development Officer

Herefordshire & Worcestershire SENDIASS welcomed our new training and development officer into the team this year. This is a new role within the service and was made possible through the information, advice, and support programme grant. The post is funded jointly between the 2 counties and is a currently temporary for 2 years (December 2023). In this 1st year the officer has developed several impartial workshops on a variety of subjects concerning the SEND journey. These are delivered on a regular basis across the 2 counties with daytime, evening and online workshops available, which families and professionals can book through the SENDIASS website. These workshops have proven very popular across both counties and we have received very positive comments from families as well as SENCOs and other professionals who have attended.

Young Person Advisor (YPA) Career guidance and support in Schools

Once again, this year has seen an increase in demand for support from our YPAs from providers to deliver careers advice and support. Our YPAs now support in Wyre Forest School, Pitcheroak School, Regency High School, Continu Plus academy, Arrowvale high school, Wasely Hills School and HOW College's Worcester and Redditch campuses. We have had enquires from a school within Herefordshire who would also like to enter an agreement with us to provide careers advice and annual review support for their young people with additional needs. This increase in demand has led to the service training an additional YPA. We anticipate this area of work will further increase next year and we are already in discussions with providers.

New Worcestershire Team Advisor

As stated above and demonstrated within our data, we have seen a significant rise in the number of families contacting the service requiring information, advice, and support. Coupled with the increasing complexity of our cases and the demand for our YPA support, the Worcestershire team needed to expand. I am delighted to report that since September 2022 we have employed a new full time Advisor, with an existing Advisor taking on the role of YPA part time whilst continuing their role as advisor to help meet this demand.

Herefordshire Database

As of January 2023, the Herefordshire team will start to use the same database as the Worcestershire team. This is a fantastic development as this will enable the team to report consistently on data between the 2 teams and compare trends across both counties.

Worcester Office

From September 2022 the Worcestershire team moved into a new office within Worcester city centre. The team works on a flexible basis but is initially based in the office for 2 days a week. The accommodation has given us the capacity to have an office for the team, a meeting room, and a training room. This gives us the opportunity to become a hub for families to drop into if they require information, advice, and support regarding all aspects of SEND. We are delivering all our training from here and have offered the space to other services so that families will recognise this office as a place of SEND support. We hope to develop this space over the coming months.

Herefordshire Team

This year has seen mixed fortunes within Herefordshire. The service has seen a significant increase in enquiries from families seeking Information, Advice and Support. Although it is difficult to pinpoint the reason behind this, contributing factors are the continuing promotion of the service across the county via our social media presence and website as well as attending events and meetings. The ongoing close working relationship with the Parent Carer Voice Herefordshire has also been a huge help in promoting the service as confidence and our reputation grows across their members with the service we provide. However, it also cannot be ignored that evidence across the country demonstrates that families are finding it increasingly more difficult to navigate the SEND System and to receive the support that may require. This is no different within Herefordshire and does have an impact on the number of families contacting support service such as SENDIASS for support.

The team was joined by a new member of staff in the early part of 2022 who has proven to be a great asset after a longstanding member of the team resigned in 2021.

However, it has also been a year of challenges. As has been discussed, we have seen a large increase in callers to our helpline, but the capacity of the team has remained the same. On top of this, the team experienced several long-term absences across the year, which due to limited capacity of the team and no flexibility within the structure, left us short staffed and the service struggling to cope. The county has also found themselves without a Young Person Advisor to support young people over the last 4 months of the year due to maternity leave, and then sickness with the cover staff. In the last month of the year, the service also received the resignation of an advisor which leaves us struggling with just one advisor for the whole county. As the this advisor works part time, the service can only operate 3 days a week until a replacement can be found. This will have an impact on the support the service can offer to families. This lack of capacity is something that needs to be addressed in future to ensure the service is able to continue to meet its statutory minimum standards if these likely issues happen again, to ensure families continue to receive the support they require.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire SENDIASS Team Structure

The core funding that SENDIASS receives via the respective local authority is used to employ the Advisors, Information Officer and Team manager. Currently funding of the Young Person Advisors roles and Training and Development officer is through the additional funding through the Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB and the IASSP.

Herefordshire

1.4 FTE Advisors
0.5 FTE Young Person Advisor

Worcestershire

2.35 FTE Advisors
1.35 FTE Young Person Advisor

Joint County Posts

0.95 FTE Team Manager
0.95 FTE Information Officer
0.95 Training and Development Officer
(Working across both counties)

Each team operates in their respective County

Statutory and Non-Statutory Responsibilities

Statutory Responsibilities

The SENDIAS Service fulfils the statutory duty of the Local Authority to make arrangements for a service to meet the minimum standards outlined in Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015 Chapter 2 'impartial information, advice and support.

*2.1 local education authority **must** arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care.*

2.4 information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service.

Non-Statutory Responsibilities

SENDIASS also takes responsibility for providing information/ support with regard to the LA Non-Curriculum Complaints Procedure.

SENDIASS offers information/advice on Non-Curriculum Issues.

Services offered by SENDIASS

The Service supports parents/carers of children and children and young people themselves between the ages of 0-25 in the following areas:

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Information and support on SEND for example explanation of the terminology used and step by step-by-step guidance to SEND approaches such as the EHCP assessment process

Non-Curriculum Issues Any school issue not related to the curriculum, such as bullying and complaints

Health we provide information, advice and support on health issues relating to SEND or disabilities

Social Care Information, advice and support on social care issues relating to SEND or disabilities

Working with Parents/carers, children, and young people

This is achieved through service users self-referring. Referrals are usually through telephone or emails and social media although new referrals can be generated through the SENDIASS outreach work where there is direct contact with parents/carers, children, and young people.

Telephone Support

SENDIASS offers telephone information, advice and support and has a 24hr answer machine. The service aims to respond to all enquiries within one working day.

Any calls received and actions for the advisor/family are recorded on the database.

Individual Support

This includes support for parents/carers at meetings which can include SEND, Annual Reviews and Non–Curriculum Issues including complaints.

The service endeavours to meet all requests for SENDIASS support at meetings. However, as an empowerment service, it is the duty of SENDIASS to provide the skills and tools for service users to attend meetings without support from ourselves. Nevertheless, we also appreciate that in some instances this can present a challenge, so in some circumstances, we will attempt to attend.

Staff Training

All SENDIASS staff undergo high quality, independent legal training accredited by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority. This training is regularly updated.

Casework

Examples of SENDIASS involvement

Low level – one or two involvements. Typically, parent/carer concerned about child struggling, information provided, discuss realistic expectations and how to pursue concerns.

Medium level – a few involvements over some months. As level one, but the relationship and communication may have broken down with the school so further support and intervention is required.

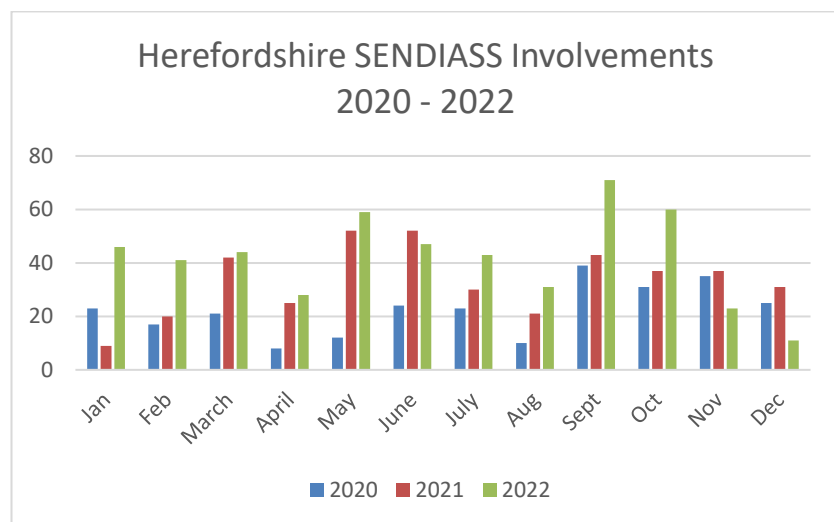
Request for an Integrated Needs Assessment, support through the assessment process, and what to do next if they are not happy with decisions.

High level – involvements over some months. In addition to medium level input, SENDIASS may support the family at a SEN Mediation meeting with a view to all parties reaching an agreement they are happy with. If an agreement is not reached, SENDIASS may be able to support the family in applying to the First Tier Tribunal Service so they can lodge an appeal. If capacity allows, we may be able to attend the Tribunal hearing with the family, but as a helper, not a witness.

Involvement Data

A new involvement is recorded when a caller first contacts the service for information, advice or support. In addition to these new involvements, the advisors will also be working on existing cases. We track the number of actions that an advisor undertakes with each case, but these additional actions are not recorded as a new involvement.

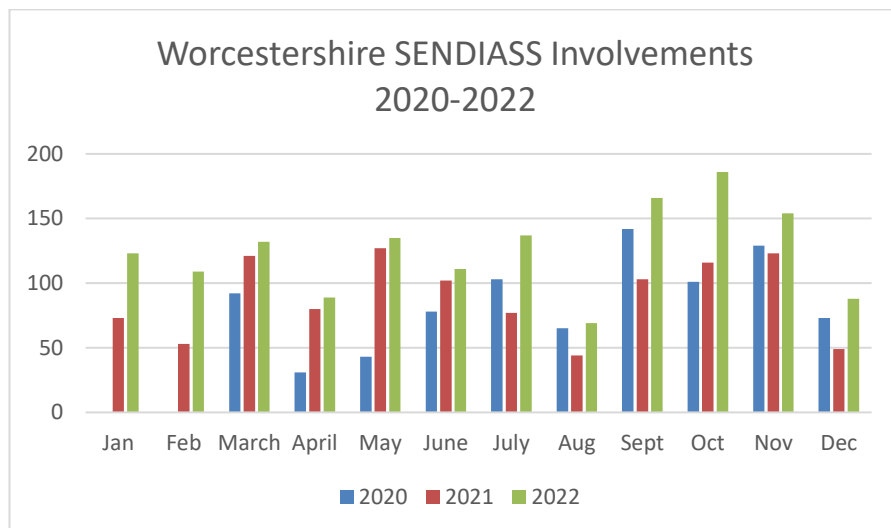
Herefordshire SENDIASS



	2020	2021	2022
Jan	23	9	46
Feb	17	20	41
March	21	42	44
April	8	25	28
May	12	52	59
June	24	52	47
July	23	30	43
Aug	10	21	31
Sept	39	43	71
Oct	31	37	60
Nov	35	37	23
Dec	25	31	11

As the data clearly demonstrates, the Herefordshire service has seen a continuing trend of more families contacting the service each month over the last 3 years. It has seen a particular increase in 2022 with a near doubling of calls in some months, although the impact of staff absences can be seen over the final 2 months. This increase in callers is very positive news as it indicates that more families are now aware of the service and can access us to ensure that young people with additional needs and their families are receiving the correct information, advice, and support.

Worcestershire SENDIASS



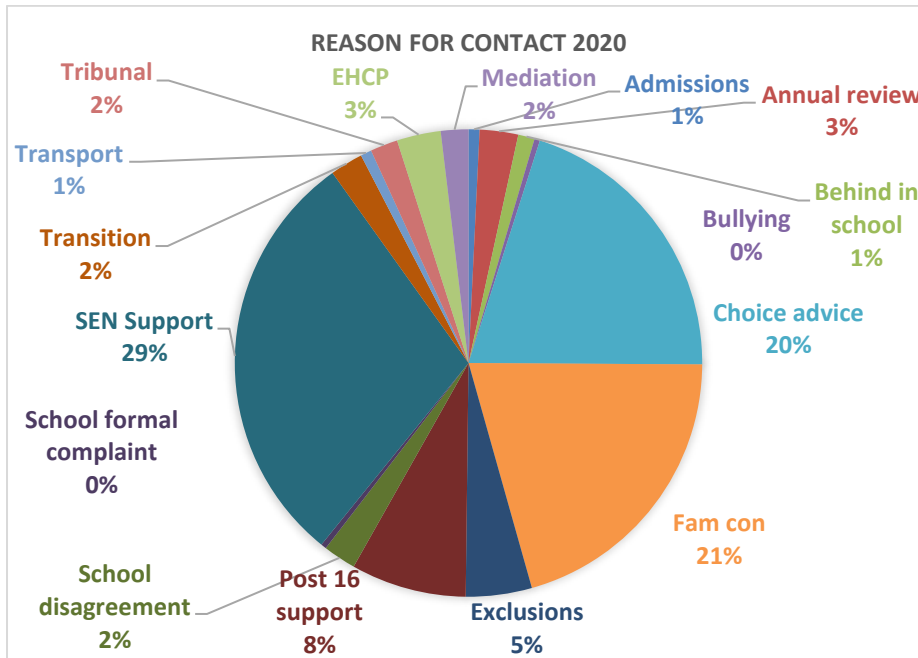
	2020	2021	2022
Jan	0	73	123
Feb	0	53	109
March	92	121	132
April	31	80	89
May	43	127	135
June	78	102	111
July	103	77	137
Aug	65	44	69
Sept	142	103	166
Oct	101	116	186
Nov	129	123	154
Dec	73	49	88

As the data shows, in Worcestershire there has also been a huge increase in callers to the helpline in 2022. Most months we are seeing over 100 families contacting the service. As already explained, this is on top of the casework each advisor undertakes. This increase in callers does influence the capacity of the team and we are currently advising families that we aim to return calls within 2 working days rather than the usual 1.

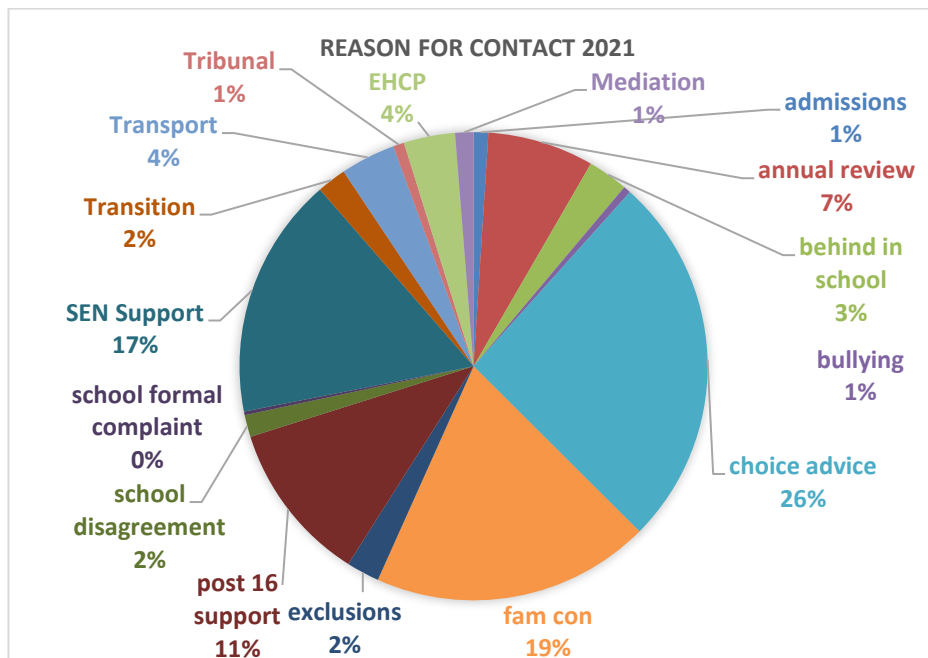
Reason for Contact

As both services use a different database, the reasons for contacting the service do differ slightly. It is also difficult to compare the two counties as Worcestershire's database allows up to 5 reasons for contact whereas Herefordshire's only allows one.

Herefordshire SENDIASS

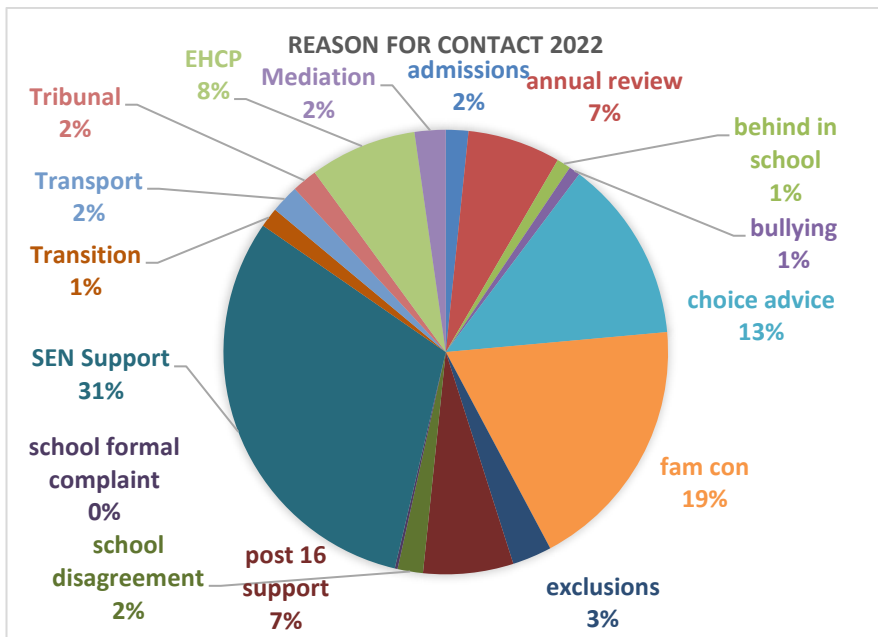


Admissions	1%
Annual Review	3%
Behind in School	1%
Bullying	0%
Choice advice	20%
Family Conversation	21%
Exclusions	5%
Post 16 Support	8%
School disagreement	2%
School formal complaint	0%
SEN Support	29%
Transition	2%
Transport	1%
Tribunal	2%
EHCP	3%
Mediation	2%



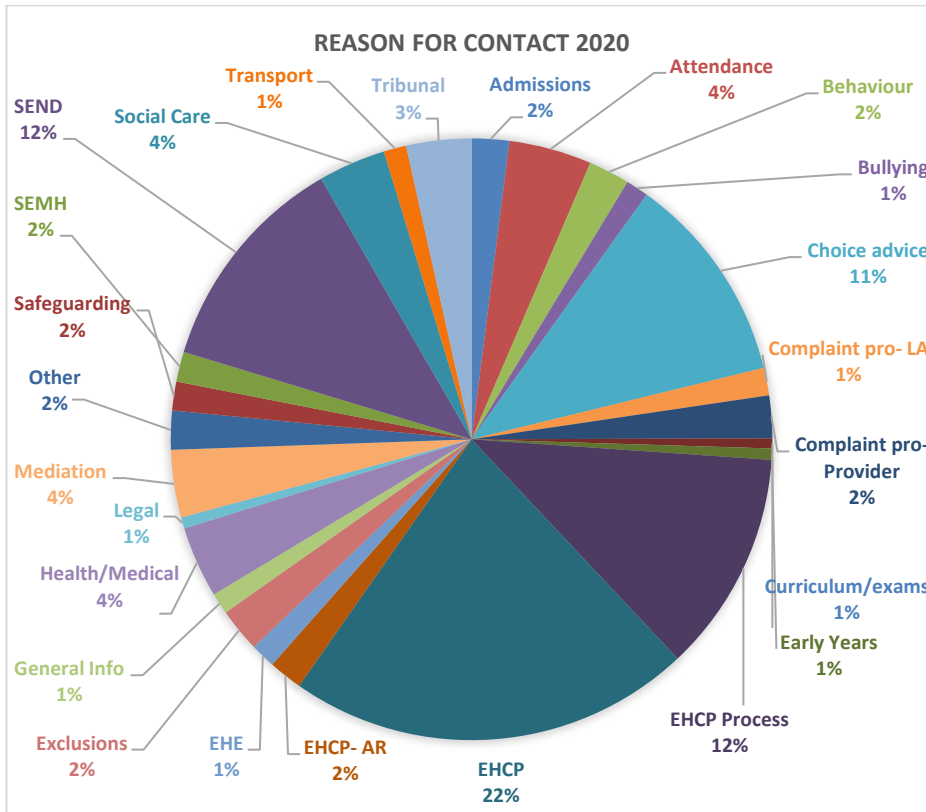
Admissions	1%
Annual Review	7%
Behind in School	3%
Bullying	1%
Choice advice	26%
Family Conversation	19%
Exclusions	2%
Post 16 Support	11%
School disagreement	2%
School formal complaint	0%
SEN Support	17%
Transition	2%
Transport	4%
Tribunal	1%
EHCP	4%
Mediation	1%

Admissions	2%
Annual Review	7%
Behind in School	1%
Bullying	1%
Choice advice	13%
Family Conversation	19%
Exclusions	3%
Post 16 Support	7%
School disagreement	2%
School formal complaint	0%
SEN Support	31%
Transition	1%
Transport	2%
Tribunal	2%
EHCP	8%
Mediation	2%

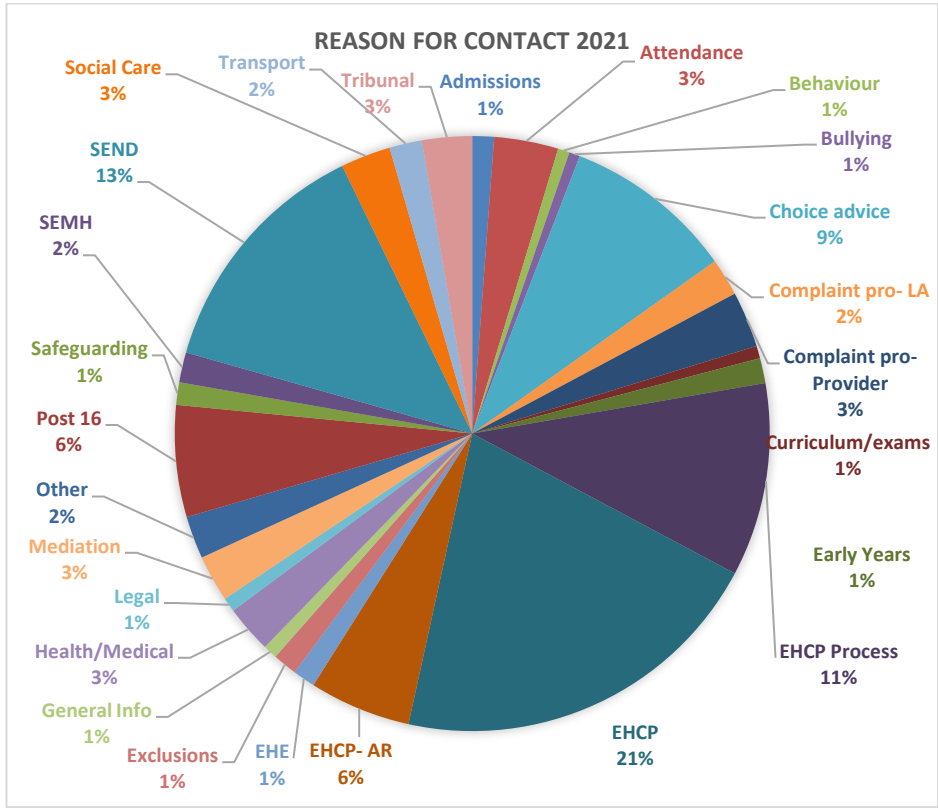


The data from the past 3 years shows that although there are fluctuations within each year, generally the reasons that people contact the service has been consistent. These are SEN Support, Family Conversation/EHCP, Choice Advice and Post 16 advice.

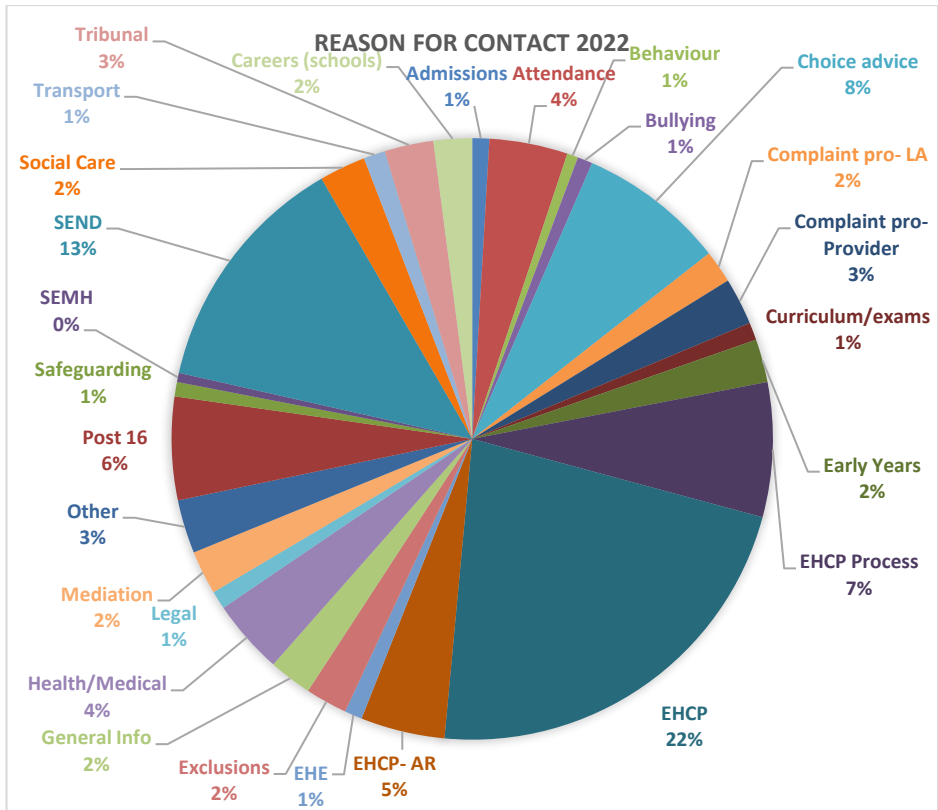
Worcestershire SENDIASS



Admissions	2%
Attendance	4%
Behaviour	2%
Bullying	1%
Choice advice	11%
Complaint Pro - LA	1%
Complaint Pro – Provider	2%
Curriculum/exams	1%
Early Years	1%
EHCP Process	12%
EHCP	22%
EHCP - AR	2%
EHE	1%
Exclusions	2%
General Info	1%
Health/Medical	4%
Legal	1%
Mediation	4%
Other	2%
Safeguarding	2%
SEMHH	2%
SEND	12%
Social Care	4%
Transport	1%
Tribunal	3%



Admissions	1%
Attendance	3%
Behaviour	1%
Bullying	1%
Choice advice	9%
Complaint Pro - LA	2%
Complaint Pro - Provider	3%
Curriculum/exams	1%
Early Years	1%
EHC Process	11%
EHC	21%
EHC - AR	6%
EHE	1%
Exclusions	1%
General Info	1%
Health/Medical	3%
Legal	1%
Mediation	3%
Other	2%
Safeguarding	1%
SEMH	2%
SEND	13%
Social Care	3%
Transport	2%
Tribunal	3%



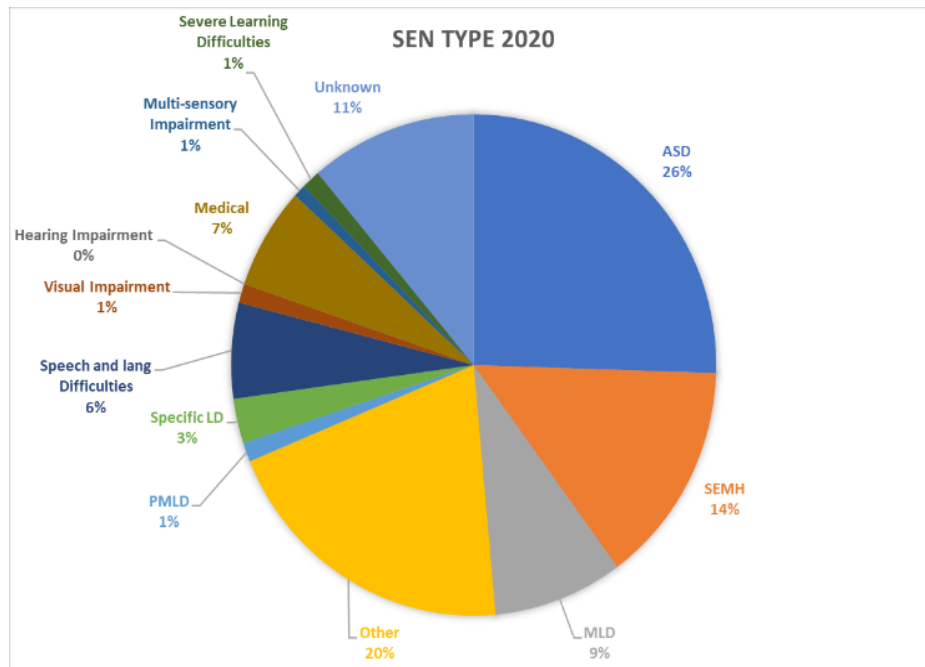
Admissions	1%
Attendance	4%
Behaviour	1%
Bullying	1%
Choice advice	8%
Complaint Pro - LA	2%
Complaint Pro - Provider	3%
Curriculum/exams	1%
Early Years	2%
EHC Process	7%
EHC	22%
EHC - AR	5%
EHE	1%
Exclusions	2%
General Info	2%
Health/Medical	4%
Legal	1%
Mediation	2%
Other	3%
Safeguarding	1%
SEMH	0%
SEND	13%
Social Care	2%
Transport	1%
Tribunal	3%
Careers (Schools)	2%

A quick scan of the data indicates a consistent spread across all reasons for contact with the highest reasons being as expected EHCP, SEND and Choice Advice. Two new categories have been added over the last 2 years, Post 16, and Careers (schools). This is to ensure we can monitor the percentage of careers advice we are providing through the schools compared to other Post 16 support provided via the helpline. We can still see that a larger than average amount of information, advice and support is sought for annual reviews which has been consistent for the last 2 years.

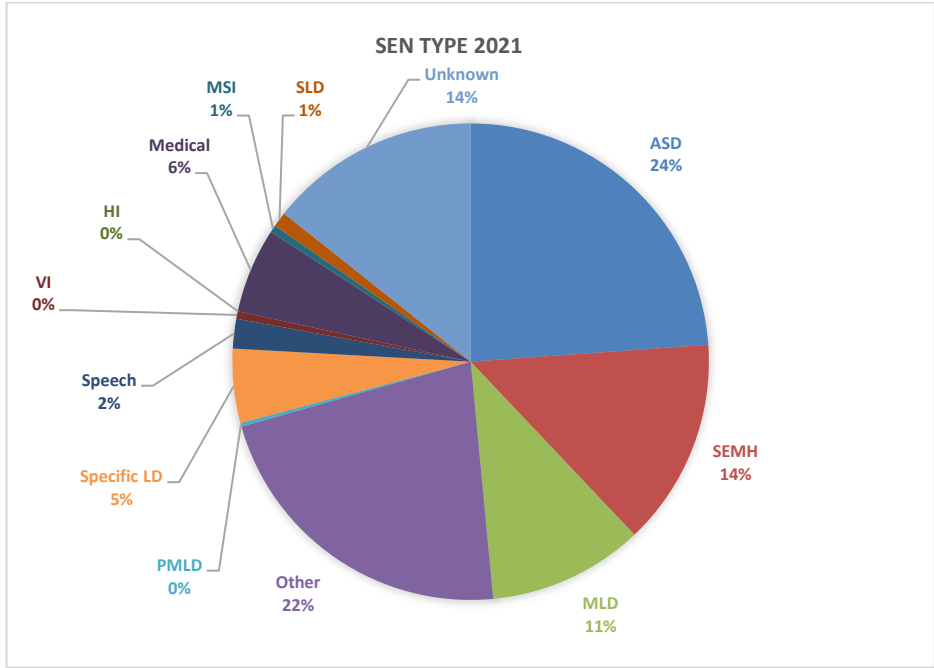
SEN Type

Herefordshire SENDIASS

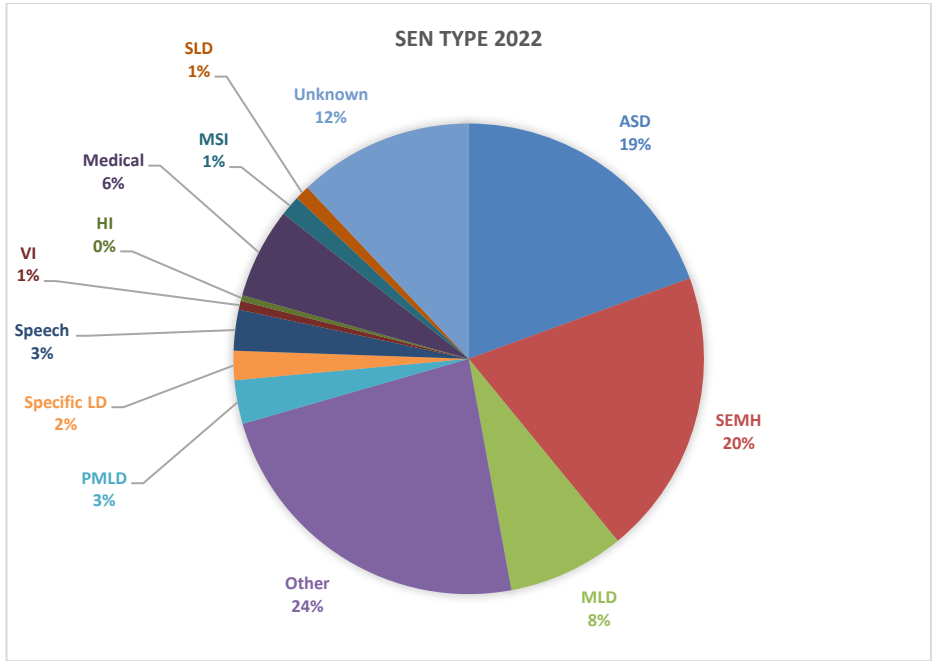
The current Herefordshire SENDIASS team database records different SEN types compared to Worcestershire, so it is difficult to compare data. However, we can see that within Herefordshire the most referrals we receive are from children and young people with ASD. It is worth noting that there has been a significant rise in children and young people who contact the service with Social Emotional Mental Health.



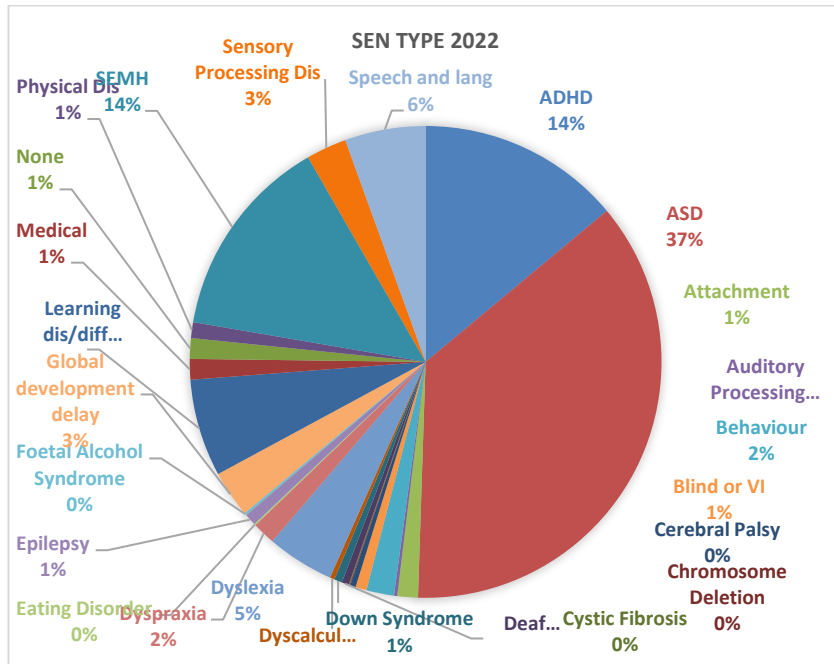
ASD	26%
SEMH	14%
MLD	9%
Other	20%
PMLD	1%
Specific LD	3%
Speech & Lang	6%
VI	1%
HI	0%
Medical	7%
MSI	1%
SLD	1%
Unknown	11%



ASD	24%
SEMH	14%
MLD	11%
Other	20%
PMLD	0%
Specific LD	5%
Speech & Lang	2%
VI	0%
HI	0%
Medical	6%
MSI	1%
SLD	1%
Unknown	14%



ASD	19%
SEMH	20%
MLD	8%
Other	24%
PMLD	3%
Specific LD	2%
Speech & Lang	3%
VI	1%
HI	0%
Medical	6%
MSI	1%
SLD	1%
Unknown	12%



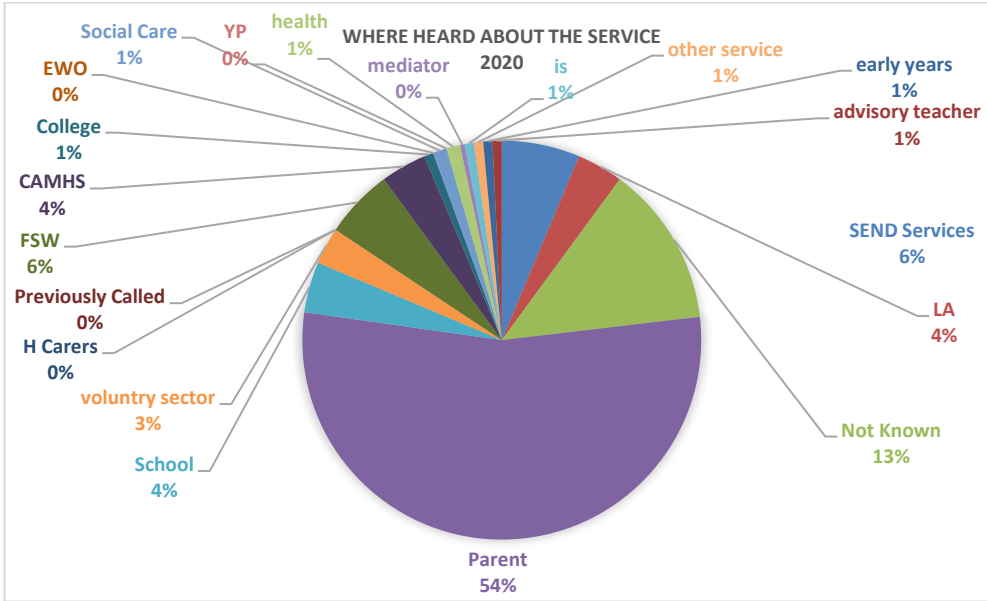
ADHD	14%
ASD	37%
Attachment	1%
Auditory Processing Disorder	0%
Behaviour	2%
Blind or VI	1%
Cerebral Palsy	0%
Chromosome Deletion	0%
Cystic Fibrosis	0%
Deaf or HI	0%
Down Syndrome	1%
Dyscalculia	0%
Dyslexia	5%
Dyspraxia	2%
Eating Disorder	0%
Epilepsy	1%
Foetal Alcohol Syndrome	0%
Learning dis/diff	7%
Medical	1%
None	1%
Physical Disabilities	1%
SEM	14%
Sensory Processing Disorder	3%
Speech & Lang	6%

The data clearly demonstrates that over the last 3 years the highest SEND type referral rate for children and young people has been Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) followed by Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEM) and Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

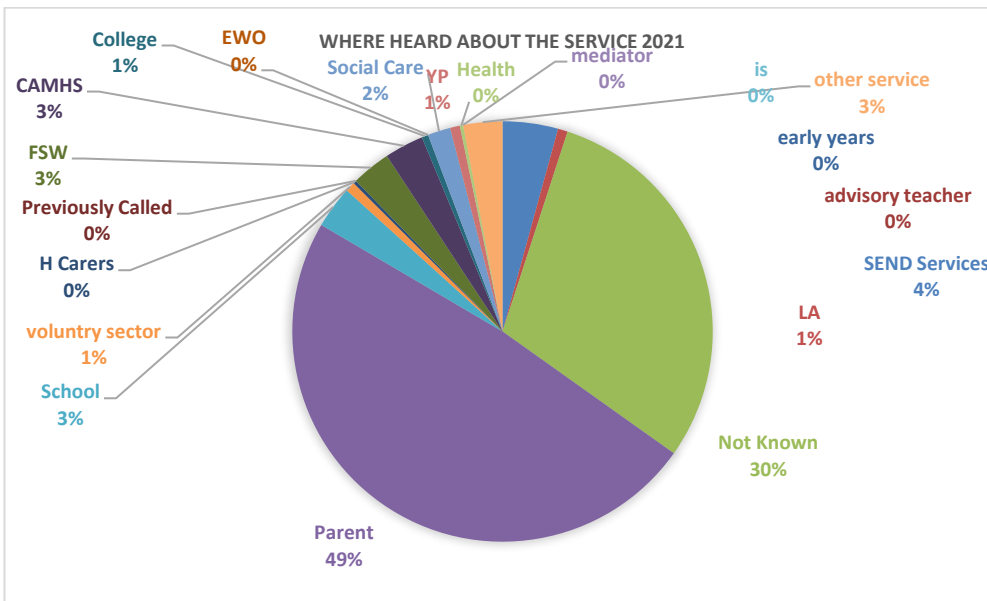
Where users heard about the service

As with previous data capture, the databases in the two counties gather different information and so it is difficult to compare them directly.

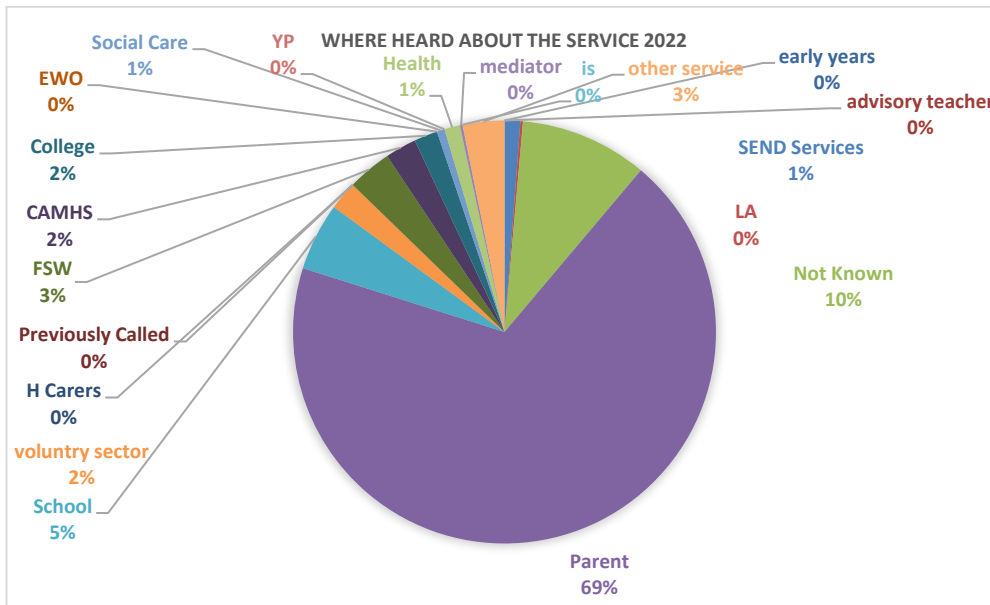
Herefordshire SENDIASS



SEND Services	6%
LA	4%
Not Known	13%
Parent	54%
School	4%
Voluntary Sector	3%
H Carers	0%
Previously Called	0%
FSW	6%
CAMHS	4%
College	1%
EWO	0%
Social Care	1%
YP	0%
Health	1%
Mediator	0%
IS	1%
Other Service	1%
Early Years	1%
Advisory Teacher	1%



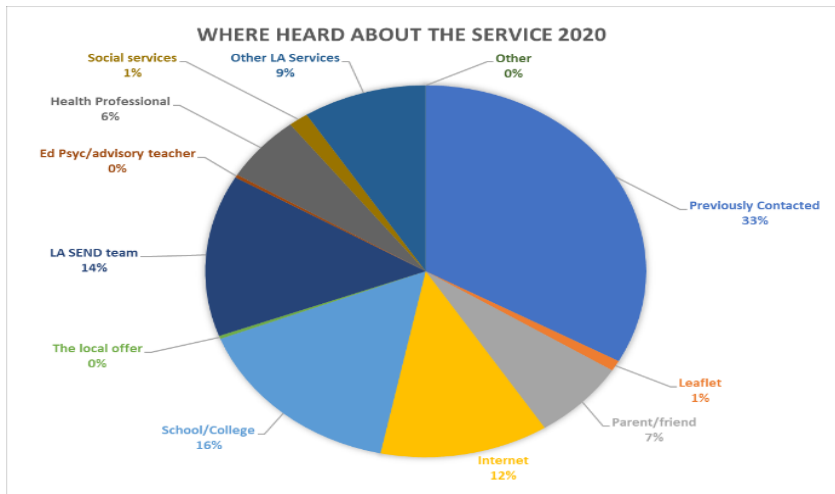
SEND Services	4%
LA	1%
Not Known	30%
Parent	49%
School	3%
Voluntary Sector	1%
H Carers	0%
Previously Called	0%
FSW	3%
CAMHS	3%
College	1%
EWO	0%
Social Care	2%
YP	1%
Health	0%
Mediator	0%
IS	0%
Other Service	3%
Early Years	0%
Advisory Teacher	0%



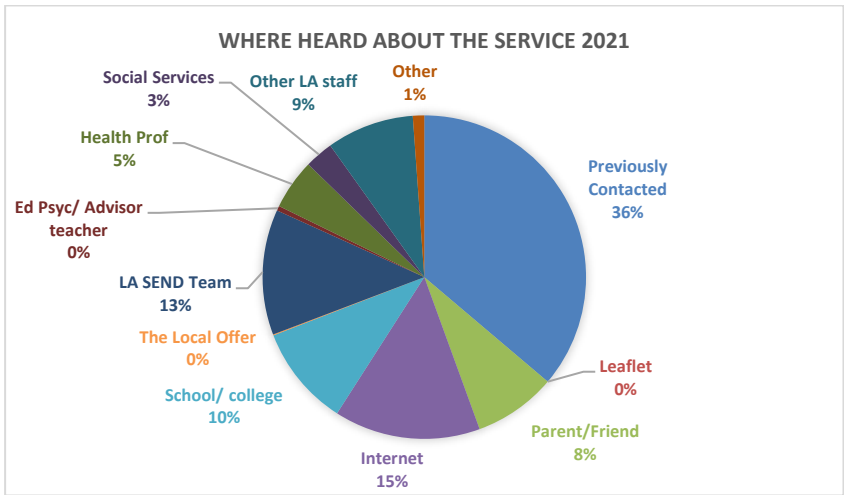
SEND Services	1%
LA	0%
Not Known	10%
Parent	69%
School	5%
Voluntary Sector	2%
H Carers	0%
Previously Called	0%
FSW	3%
CAMHS	2%
College	2%
EWO	0%
Social Care	1%
YP	0%
Health	1%
Mediator	0%
IS	0%
Other Service	3%
Early Years	0%
Advisory Teacher	0%

Once again, we can see little has changed over the last 3 years as to where families are hearing about the service. With the introduction of the new database, we will be able to change the categories more easily to be able to get a much better idea on where we need to focus our attention to ensure families are aware of the support SENDIASS can offer as well as comparing this with Worcestershire.

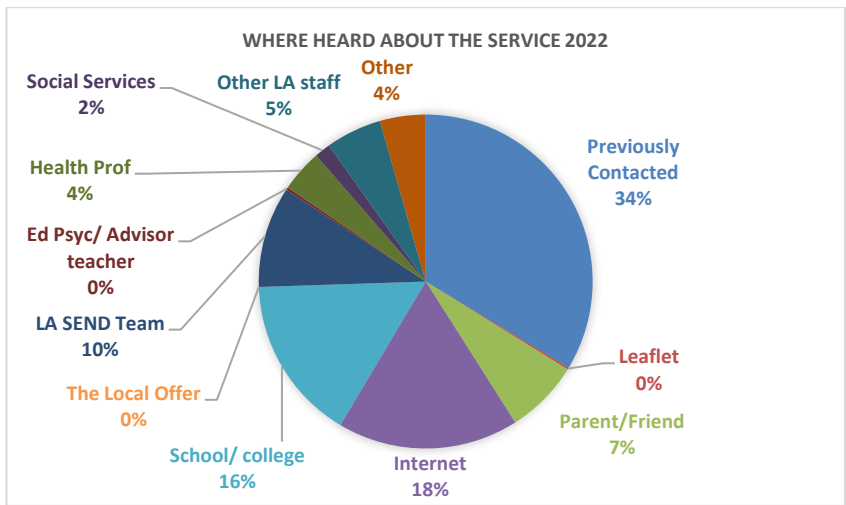
Worcestershire SENDIASS



Previously Contacted	33%
Leaflet	1%
Parent/Friend	7%
Internet	12%
School/College	16%
The Local Offer	0%
LA SEND Team	14%
Ed Psyc / Advisor Teacher	0%
Health Prof	6%
Social Services	1%
Other LA Staff	9%
Other	0%



Previously Contacted	36%
Leaflet	0%
Parent/Friend	8%
Internet	15%
School/College	10%
The Local Offer	0%
LA SEND Team	13%
Ed Psyc / Advisor Teacher	0%
Health Prof	5%
Social Services	3%
Other LA Staff	9%
Other	1%



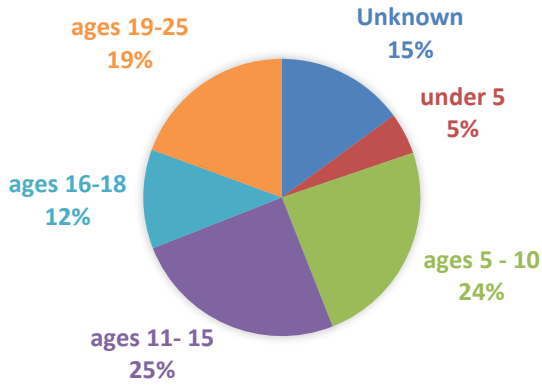
Previously Contacted	34%
Leaflet	0%
Parent/Friend	7%
Internet	18%
School/College	16%
The Local Offer	0%
LA SEND Team	10%
Ed Psyc / Advisor Teacher	0%
Health Prof	4%
Social Services	2%
Other LA Staff	5%
Other	4%

Again, there is very little difference over the last 3 years in how families are being made aware of the service with previously contacting the service consistently the highest percentage. It is however of note that families finding the service through the internet continues to increase each year, yet families are not reporting that they have found SENDIASS through the Local Offer.

Age ranges of children and young people supported

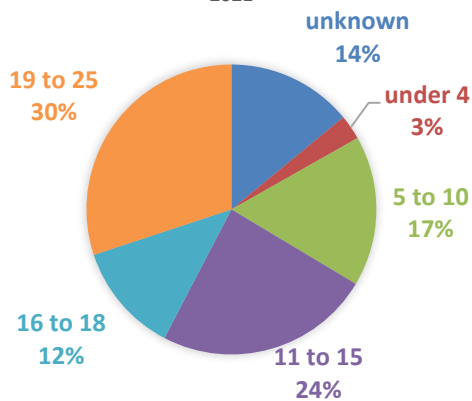
Herefordshire SENDIASS

AGE RANGES OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SENDIASS SUPPORT 2020



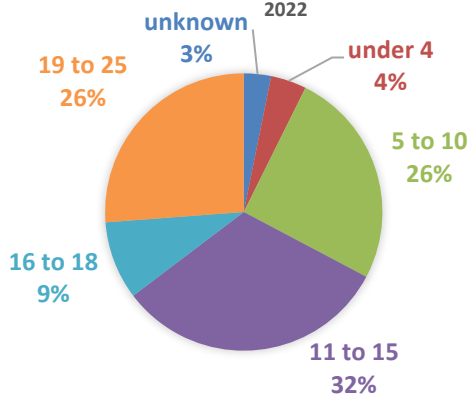
Unknown	15%
Under 5	5%
Ages 5 - 10	24%
Ages 11 - 15	25%
Ages 16 - 18	12%
Ages 19 - 25	19%

AGE RANGES OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SENDIASS SUPPORT 2021



Unknown	14%
Under 5	3%
Ages 5 - 10	17%
Ages 11 - 15	24%
Ages 16 - 18	12%
Ages 19 - 25	30%

AGE RANGES OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SENDIASS SUPPORT 2022



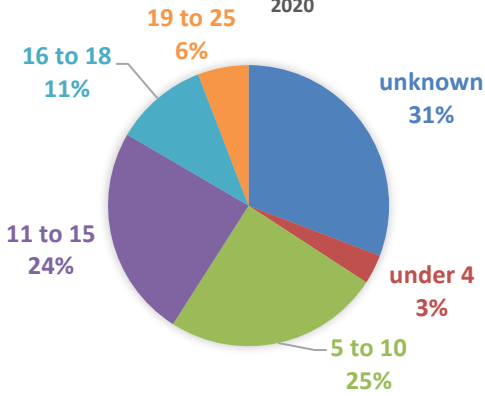
Unknown	3%
Under 5	4%
Ages 5 - 10	26%
Ages 11 - 15	32%
Ages 16 - 18	9%
Ages 19 - 25	26%

The data shows a consistent spread across all age ranges that we support. Although we can see that the unknown figure has reduced.

Worcestershire SENDIASS

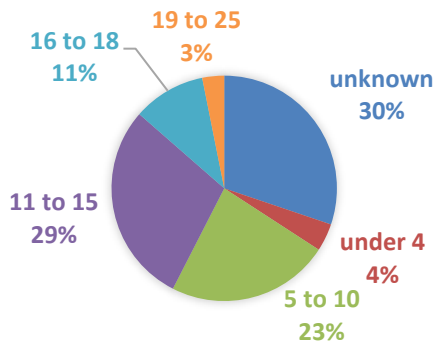
Unknown	31%
Under 4	3%

AGE RANGES OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SENDIASS SUPPORT 2020



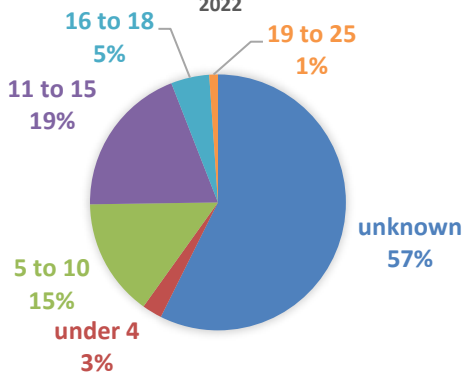
Ages 5 - 10	25%
Ages 11 - 15	24%
Ages 16 - 18	11%
Ages 19 - 25	6%

AGE RANGES OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SENDIASS SUPPORT 2021



Unknown	30%
Under 4	4%
Ages 5 - 10	23%
Ages 11 - 15	29%
Ages 16 - 18	11%
Ages 19 - 25	3%

AGE RANGES OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SENDIASS SUPPORT 2022



Unknown	57%
Under 4	3%
Ages 5 - 10	15%
Ages 11 - 15	19%
Ages 16 - 18	5%
Ages 19 - 25	1%

The data demonstrates a higher than average 'unknowns' for 2022. Since September 2022 and the introduction of the new IASSN intervention levels (see below) we are limiting the data collected from families that are supported within intervention level 1 (information only). However, we can see a consistent spread of age ranges from those families at intervention level 2,3 and 4.

The following data have only been collated by Worcestershire SENDIASS. This is due to the differing databases of each team. The Worcestershire database has given the service the ability and flexibility to gather this additional data.

Intervention Levels

Each case that the Worcestershire team supports, the advisor will give an intervention level descriptor to indicate the type of support the family received. This is given once a case has closed, as it is impossible to gauge the intervention level from our first interactions with the family and the type of support may change during our involvement with the family. The intervention levels range from 1-4. In brief these are defined as:

Intervention Level 1 (Information)

Service user may require information and generic advice to make an informed decision/ better understanding of the system. This can be achieved via our website to gain the information required or speaking to an advisor. The advisor may provide information via the helpline, factsheets, website, signposts to other organisations, workshops etc. The intervention may take up to 1 hour including research and the case is closed when the parent/carer/young person is empowered to independently manage their situation and make informed decisions.

Intervention Level 2 (Information & Advice)

Service user requires information and specific tailored advice about their individual needs concerning education, health and/or social care that is above that provided at intervention level 1. The Advisor will work with service user providing the specific advice required and providing more complex/ high level information. This may take a few interactions via the phone or e-mail exchanges and could take up to 2 hours in total including research. The case is closed when parent/carer/young person is empowered to independently manage their situation and make informed decisions and the service has provided tailored advice and support.

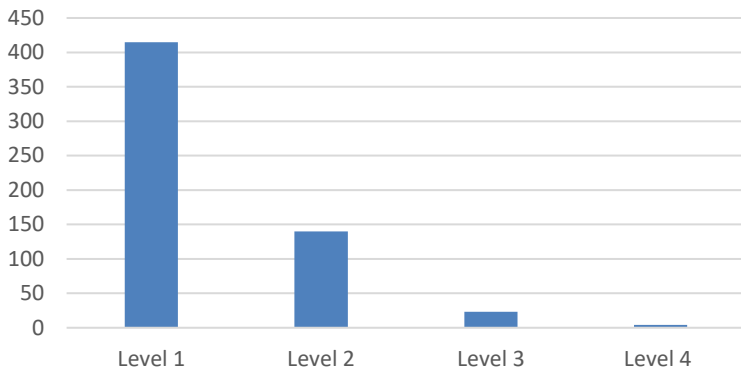
Intervention Level 3 (Information, Advice & Support)

Complexity of service users' circumstances significantly impacts their ability to independently navigate the system, or a child or young person requires information, advice and support separate from their parent carers. The support could include advocacy in line with minimum standards, liaising with other services on behalf of service user, virtual or face-to-face meetings, support writing letters, preparing for appeals. This support may take up to several weeks depending on the complexity of need. The case is closed when the agreed support has been delivered and the parent/carer, child or young person feel they have been supported to navigate the system and are able to make informed decisions, exercise their rights and express their views.

Intervention Level 4 (Intensive Support)

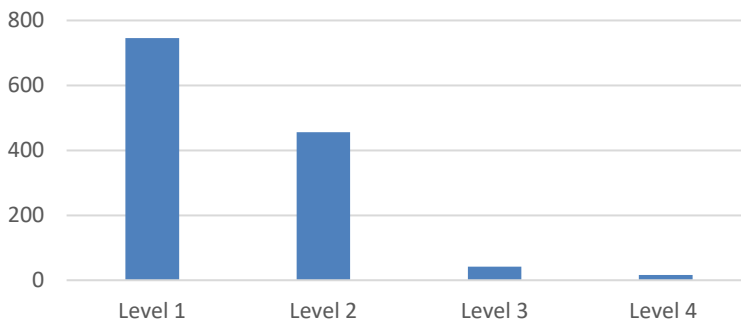
Complexity of the service users' circumstances or those of their child or young person means they are not able to navigate the system and/or access justice. A child or young person needs advocacy/representation separate from their parent/carer. This support can include that at level 3, but may also include representation at meetings, appeals, mediations, CETRs and there is ongoing intensive casework/advocacy. This intensive support may take up to several weeks depending on complexity of needs. The case is closed once the agreed support has been delivered and the parent/carer, child or young person feels they have been supported to navigate the system and can make informed decisions, exercise their rights, and express their views.

Intervention Levels
2020



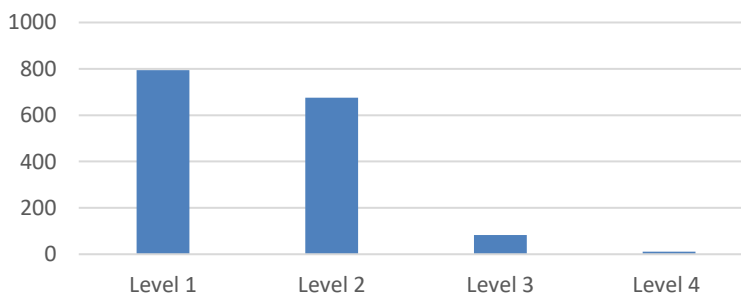
Level 1	415
Level 2	140
Level 3	23
Level 4	4

Intervention Levels
2021



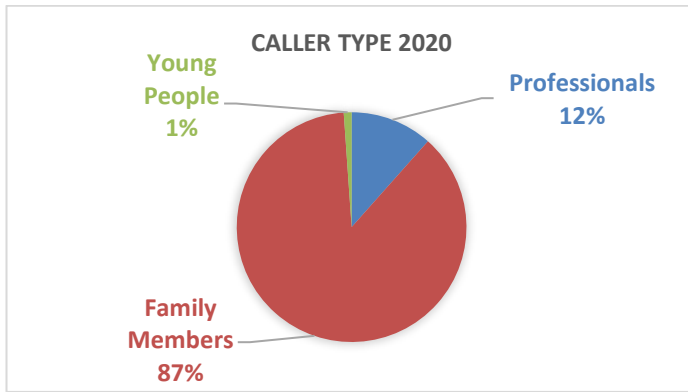
Level 1	746
Level 2	456
Level 3	42
Level 4	16

Intervention Levels
2022

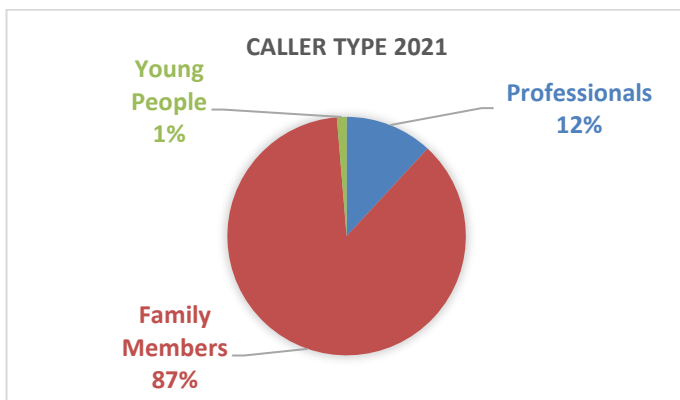


Level 1	794
Level 2	675
Level 3	83
Level 4	11

Caller Type



Professionals	12%
Family Member	87%
Young People	1%



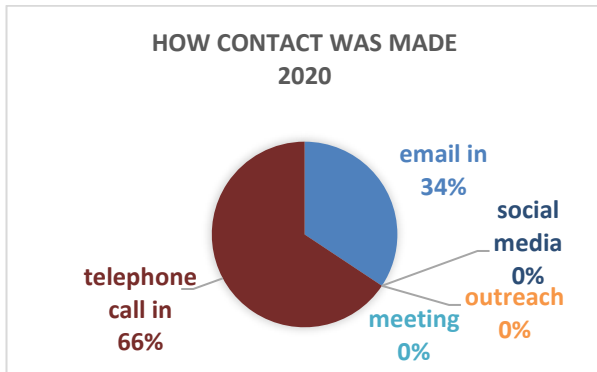
Professionals	12%
Family Member	87%
Young People	1%



Professionals	11%
Family Member	83%
Young People	6%

This data is collected so that we can track the type of callers contacting the service. Obviously by far the largest percentage is family members who contact us for Information, Advice, and Support. However, as demonstrated, a significant proportion of callers are professionals. This demonstrates how vital the work of the service is in ensuring everyone is aware of national and local policies and procedures to ensure families are supported. It is also worth noting the increase in young people contacting the service.

How contact was made



Email in	34%
Meeting	0%
Outreach	0%
Social Media	0%
Telephone Call in	66%

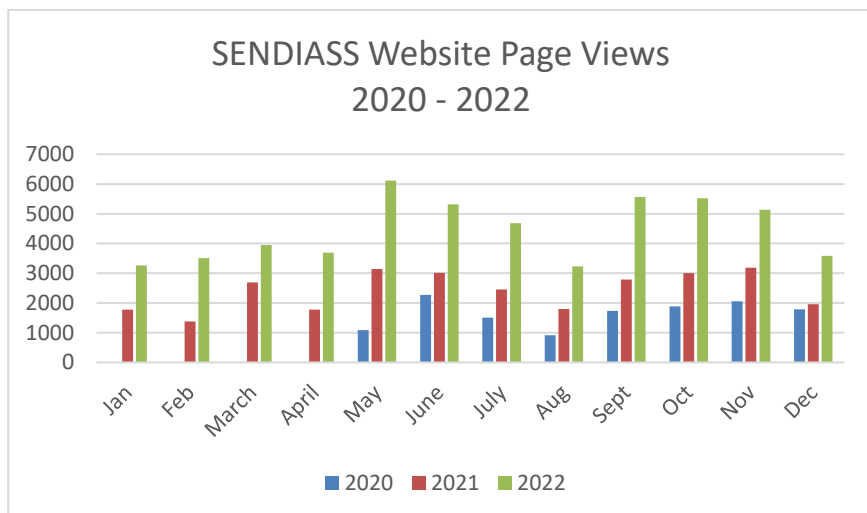


Letter in	0%
Drop in	0%
Email in	27%
Meeting	0%
Outreach	0%
Social Media	1%
Telephone Call in	72%



Letter in	0%
Drop in	0%
Email in	23%
Meeting	6%
Outreach	0%
Social Media	0%
Telephone Call in	69%
Unknown	2%

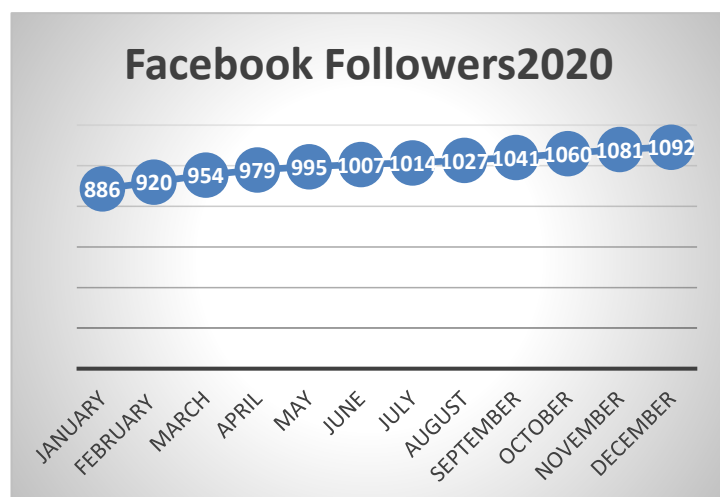
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Website Data



	2020	2021	2022
Jan	0	1771	3258
Feb	0	1376	3507
March	0	2693	3949
April	0	1778	3694
May	1084	3141	6111
June	2268	3019	5322
July	1503	2457	4687
Aug	919	1801	3233
Sept	1736	2783	5566
Oct	1882	3007	5519
Nov	2056	3187	5135
Dec	1784	1956	3588

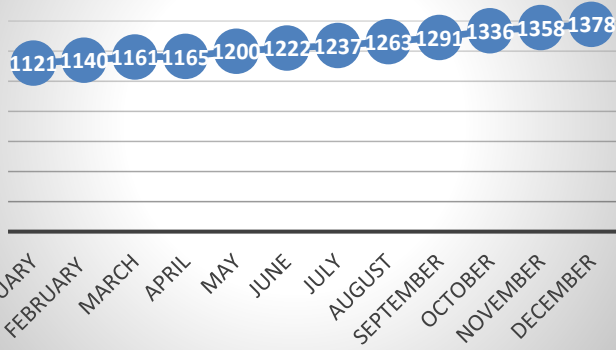
As the data clearly shows we have seen an increase of service users accessing our website for information month on month, year on year. We are constantly reviewing the website to ensure it continues to be relevant and accessible for our service users. This data demonstrates that this approach has had an impact with families who are either returning or first-time users of the website trust the information contained as well as its accessibility.

Social media Data



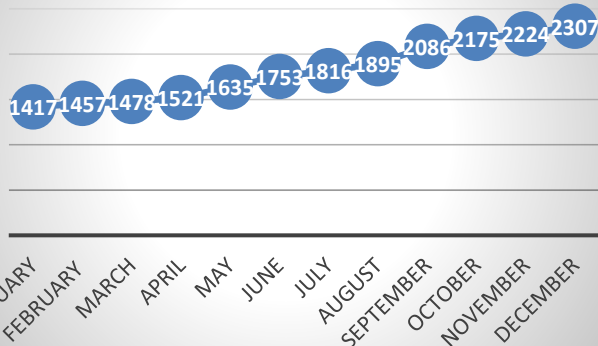
January	886
February	920
March	954
April	979
May	995
June	1007
July	1014
August	1027
September	1041
October	1060
November	1081
December	1092

Facebook Followers 2021



January	1121
February	1140
March	1161
April	1165
May	1200
June	1222
July	1237
August	1263
September	1291
October	1336
November	1358
December	1378

Facebook Followers 2022



January	1417
February	1457
March	1478
April	1521
May	1635
June	1753
July	1816
August	1895
September	2086
October	2175
November	2224
December	2307

This data again demonstrates a gradual increase in the number of families that are following us on Facebook. This platform allows us to instantly inform families of any updates and developments as well as any events that may be taking place across both counties. Data from Facebook shows that our posts during 2022 have had reached 69,210 people.

You Tube Animation Views

Over the last year H&W SENDIASS have created several short animations on a variety of SEND subjects, such as the graduated response, post 16 options as well as films about the SENDIASS offer. These have been created to give service users quick accessible information around these differing areas. As we developed more of these animations, we needed to create our own YouTube channel to capture the number of views these were getting to ensure they were relevant for our service users.

Animation	Date published	Total Views on YouTube Jan 2022	Total views on YouTube Jan 2023
SEN Support in Mainstream Settings- The Graduated Response	01/10/20	1,446	2,706
Understanding the Graduated response webinar	20/10/20	826	1,727
HW SENDIASS Meet the Team	23/07/21	106	177
The Family Conversation	23/09/21	203	303
Young Person Advisors	05/11/21	49	153
SENDIASS Training & Development Introduction	18/02/22		39
Post 16 Options	14/03/22		271
SENDIASS Training & Development Introduction Version 2	30/08/22		18

H & W
Mailing

SENDIASS
List

In 2022 the service has offered service users the opportunity to sign up to our mailing list. This gives us the means to contact families directly to inform them of any national or local developments with SEND and SENDIASS, surveys, opportunities for co-production with the service, our quarterly newsletter etc. Parents are asked if they would like to join via our evaluation phone calls, by an advisor or by registering on our website. Users can opt out at any time. The latest figures shows that we have 458 registered.

SENDIASS Training and Development

As detailed earlier, as of January 2022, we employed our first training and development officer. This is a new role for the service that enables us to meet our minimum standard to deliver training

to families and professionals across both counties. We started to deliver these workshops in May 2022 to families, and September to professionals. We currently have 3 workshops that are delivered on a fortnightly basis across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The subjects that we cover are 'what makes a good EHCP', 'the graduated response' and 'general information sessions on SENDIASS'. We plan to create more workshops throughout 2023 to cover a wider range of SEND subjects. The sessions are held at the Herefordshire Town Hall and the Worcester team office, both day and evening workshops, as well as evening virtual sessions. The officer has also delivered these courses at various schools and support groups at the request of the setting for their families. All the sessions have been created in co-production with parent/carers and are frequently updated to ensure their continued relevance for participants.

Herefordshire Training Attendance

What makes a good EHCP – Booked	What makes a good EHCP – Attended	Graduated Response – Booked	Graduated Response – Attended
30	16	6	1

Worcestershire Training Attendance

What makes a good EHCP – Booked	What makes a good EHCP – Attended	Graduated Response – Booked	Graduated Response – Attended
120	69	51	28

Virtual Information Sessions

Information Session – Booked	Information Session – Attended
37	22

Professionals Training Sessions

What makes a good EHCP – Booked	What makes a good EHCP – Attended	Graduated Response – Booked	Graduated Response – Attended
17	10	6	4

Professional Virtual Information Sessions

Information Session – Booked	Information Session – Attended
12	6

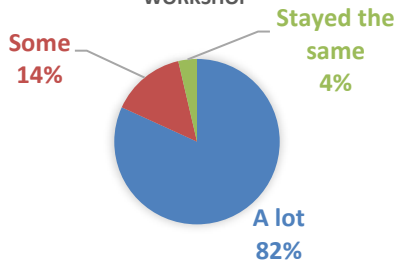
Outreach Sessions (Schools & support groups)

What makes a good EHCP – Attended	Information Session – Attended
53	43

Training Evaluations

We ask attendees to complete an evaluation at the end of any training session. This is to ensure the training is useful as well as gain information on any improvements we could make to the sessions.

TO WHAT EXTENT HAS YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING INCREASED DUE TO THE WORKSHOP



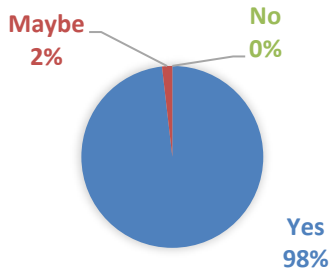
A lot	Some	Stayed the same
82%	14%	4%

OVERALL HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE WORKSHOP



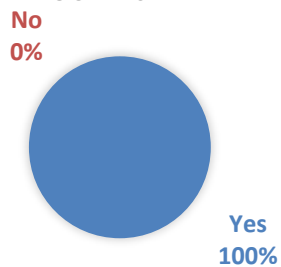
Excellent	Good	Poor
84%	14%	2%

WOULD YOU ATTEND ANOTHER SESSION IN THE FUTURE



Yes	No	Maybe
98%	0%	2%

DID YOU FIND THE INFORMATION PROVIDED EASY TO UNDERSTAND



Yes	No
100%	0%

Example of Free Text Responses

What made a difference for you

- I had very little knowledge as to what was actually included in the different sections of an EHCP and what parts were legally binding before this session. I now feel much better equipped to know what I am looking at when I receive my sons.
- I no longer feel intimidated about receiving the draft EHCP for my son.

- I feel confident and informed as to what I need to be looking for and what I need to do to make sure everything is correct.
- I felt comfortable and safe to ask any questions I needed to because XXX and XXX were so welcoming and knowledgeable. I also now feel I know where I can go if I need extra help in the future. It has eased the anxiety and pressure I feel about the whole situation.
- Hearing other peoples experiences and what to look out for whilst in Draft form. Consistency seems an issue to look out for. Also being a voice for our Young Person and making it a positive document highlighting all the great things required to fill their full potential.
- Having the opportunity to ask questions and understanding more about the process. Only wish I had known about this when my daughter started primary school.
- Meeting others, some in the same position and some further on. I had very little knowledge before the workshop, I now feel I know a lot more and picked up some really useful tips.
- Being in a room with other parent/carers going through the same process.
- Having the sections of the plan broken down and hearing from other parents.
- Having plenty of knowledge I didn't have beforehand and knowing who to speak to

Comments

- Fabulous workshop and so pleased you were able to provide an evening slot. As full time working parents so much that is on offer is out of reach for us due to the times sessions are put on. Thank you!
- Starting the process of an EHCP is a daunting task. This workshop was very informative and helpful. I found it empowering to be able to discuss the process with other parents/carers. I also found it very comforting to learn that the Training & Development Officer was able to deliver this workshop from a personal experience as well as a professional experience. Thank you again.
- XXX was very helpful and knowledgeable
- It was a really informative session and XXX was so patient and knowledgeable. It is clear to see how SENDIASS are so important for helping parents through this complicated process. Really grateful to have had the opportunity - thank you!!
- XXX was fabulous, it was so helpful having her personal insight into an EHCP and the process. I also found the post 16 information valuable as we have a new Sixth Form on site. Talking about provisions and specific examples. Thank you.
- XXX is fantastic
- Informative and friendly. Very useful to ask questions
- I thought it was a good balance between "official" information, anecdotal information and discussion between course members.
- Thank you so much for the great advice, information and signposting to support
- The workshop provider was very helpful and was willing to answer any questions parent/carers had.

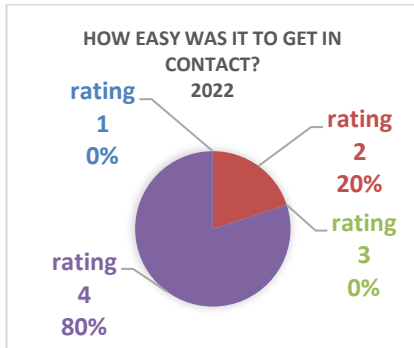
SENDIASS Evaluations

Both Herefordshire and Worcestershire request an evaluation form from our service users once our involvement has ceased. This is collected by our information officer who contacts the family via the telephone and asking them 6 core questions that we are asked to report on by the IASSN. These 6 questions are then rated by the family from **1** (poor) to **4** (excellent) The information officer explains to the family that they have no knowledge of the case and is purely finding out the families experience of the service and to help us to improve. We also ask for any comments that the family

would like to make about the service which again can help us improve our offer to families seeking information, advice, and support.

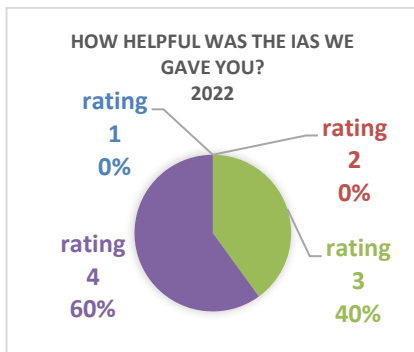
Herefordshire

Q1 How easy was it to get in contact?



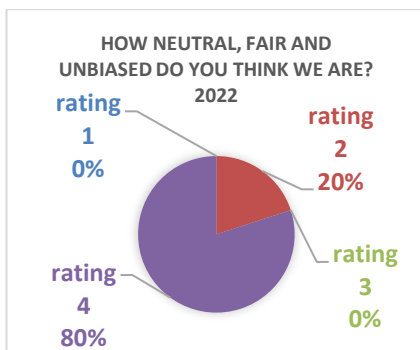
Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	20%
Rating 3	0%
Rating 4	80%

Q2 How helpful was the IAS we gave you?



Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	40%
Rating 4	60%

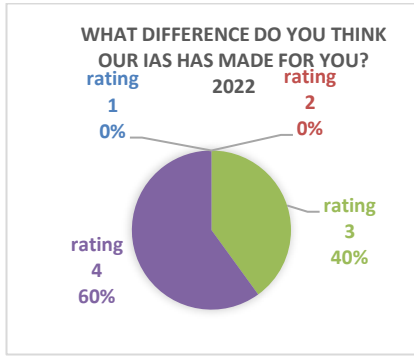
Q3 How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we are?



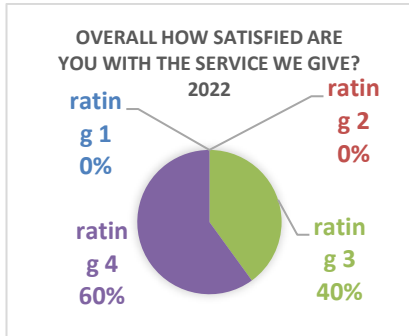
Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	20%
Rating 3	0%
Rating 4	80%

Q4 What difference do you think our IAS has made for you?

Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	40%
Rating 4	60%

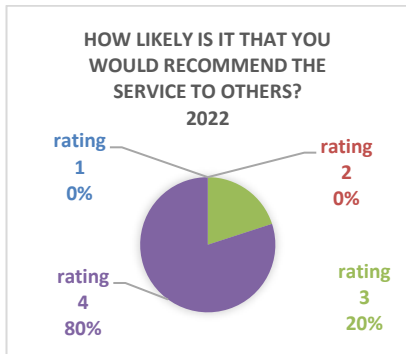


Q5 Overall, how satisfied are you with the service we give?



Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	40%
Rating 4	60%

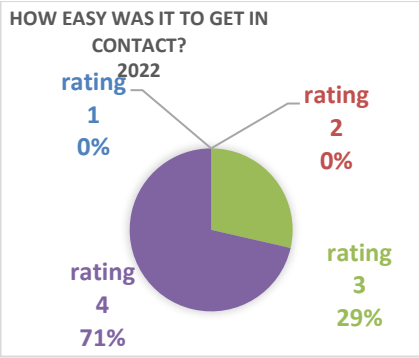
Q6 How likely is it that you would recommend the service to others?



Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	20%
Rating 4	80%

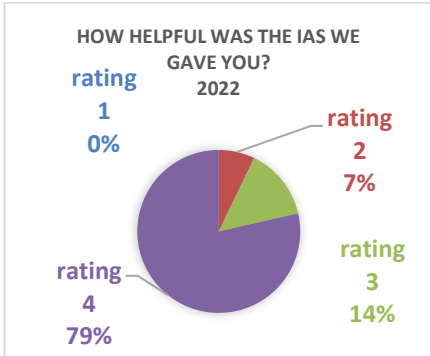
Worcestershire

Q1 How easy was it to get in contact?



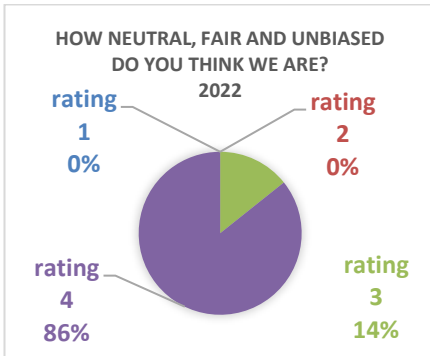
Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	29%
Rating 4	71%

Q2 How helpful was the IAS we gave you?



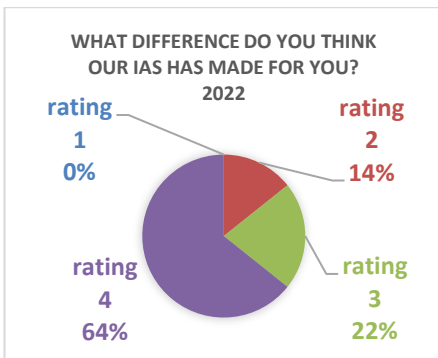
Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	7%
Rating 3	14%
Rating 4	79%

Q3 How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we are?



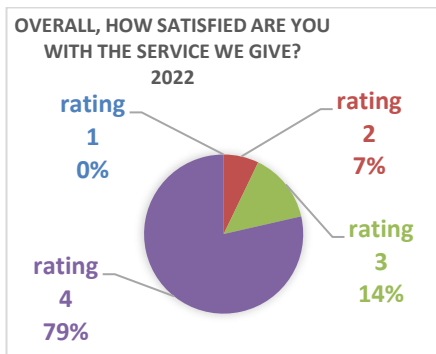
Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	14%
Rating 4	86%

Q4 What difference do you think our IAS has made for you?



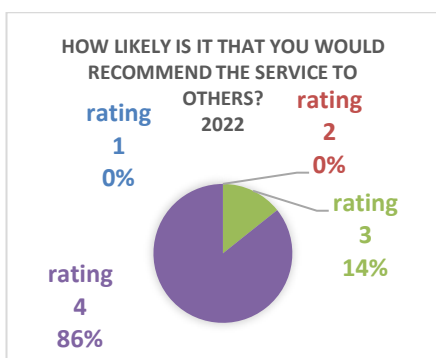
Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	14%
Rating 3	22%
Rating 4	64%

Q5 Overall, how satisfied are you with the service we give?



Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	7%
Rating 3	14%
Rating 4	79%

Q6 How likely is it that you would recommend the service to others?



Rating 1	0%
Rating 2	0%
Rating 3	14%
Rating 4	86%

Comments

- It was amazing. XXX was fantastic and I couldn't have got through what we did without her. She always got back to me quickly and the support was brilliant.
- I rang for advice and I got great advice, I couldn't ask for more. I will definitely call back in the future if I need further advice.
- I have been dealing with XXX, she has been brilliant, she has been available to attend virtual meetings with the school which has been really helpful. She is flexible and fair and she always follows up to see how things are going which is really nice. She is a real ally which parents really need.
- It was very easy to contact the service, I found your number easily, I left a message and got a call back very quickly. The service we received has been fantastic and made such a difference to us. We have recently moved into the area and we had no local knowledge SENDIASS have been a lifeline. The two ladies I have dealt with were fantastic, they are so knowledgeable and brilliant at their job!
- The information I received has helped me to understand the system and has empowered me to support my child. I am a health professional as well and I am aware that the need for the SENDIASS service has risen exponentially over the last few years. I have always found your service the easiest to get hold of, out of any of the SEND related services that I have needed to contact, but I feel that more staff are needed to support the demand as it isn't always easy to get through. However, you do always call back unlike other services.
- Very, very helpful, it's very difficult to get information and support in regards to SEND but the lady I spoke to was great, she was so knowledgeable and she gave me contact details for other services that can support me.
- Both times we used the service it has been very useful. The information has empowered us to support our son, thank you.

Non-Curriculum Issues

SENDIASS offers information, advice and support (IAS) not only on educational issues but are also there to help support service users with non-curriculum issues (NCI). These include complaints, bullying, exclusions, admissions, attendance, school policy/staff and elective home education. Although NCI is not a statutory duty of SENDIASS, it has always been accepted that the service take responsibility for offering impartial and neutral information/advice to parents/schools. NCI is therefore considered part of the service's core business. However, it is important to point out that SENDIASS is **not** an advocacy service.

The role of SENDIASS is to empower parent/carers in resolving any issues or concerns they may have, and this is achieved by offering impartial information, advice and support and when necessary signposting them to relevant agencies/professionals. The aim being that issues are resolved quickly, and before they become too entrenched

Some NCI issues can be resolved quickly by talking to parents and helping them to see the options available, which enables them to take the necessary action to help resolve their issue. If, however, the situation is not resolved it could result in the parent/carer making a complaint

There are clear procedures in place about Non-Curriculum Complaints, and SENDIASS continues to take responsibility for ensuring that parents know the procedures. If parent/carers wish to make a complaint the service can guide parents through these procedures, and when appropriate signpost them to relevant services.

The outcomes of SENDIASS involvement are:

- Parents feel as though they are being listened to
- Parents are able to make more informed decisions
- Parents are aware of options that are available
- Parents have a clearer understanding of procedures
- Schools and professionals have point of contact for advice
- Issues can be resolved more quickly

Future Developments

Training and Development Officer

The SENDIASS minimum standards state:

3.6 The IASS offers training to local education, health and social care professionals, children, young people and parents to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation.

As already stated, the service has been lucky enough to be given a grant via the Information, Advice and Support Programme to employ a Training and Development officer to meet this minimum standard. We have seen how vital this post has been in Herefordshire and Worcestershire for families and professionals alike since the post was filled at the beginning of 2022. The take-up of the training that has been offered so far has been far beyond what we expected and has demonstrated the huge gap there was locally for this provision. We plan to improve our offer throughout the year as more courses are developed on a variety of SEND subjects. However, the grant money that we received for both Herefordshire and Worcestershire from the programme will only provide funding for 2 years. This means that currently, at the end of 2023 this post will cease. As the training has proven to be so popular, I am concerned that not only will the 2 counties not be meeting their statutory duty through the minimum standards for SENDIASS to provide training, but also families and professionals not have any access to impartial training, placing them at a disadvantage compared to other authorities. Discussions with the commissioners over the coming year will be required, in order to source further funding to continue to provide this vital service.

Link Keyworker

From January 2023, a new keyworker service will be introduced across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This service is being managed by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB and will be supporting children and young people with autism and/or a learning difficulty to navigate the education, health, and social care systems at times of crisis. An agreement has been reached that H&W SENDIASS will be used as a step-down service for these children and young people. Funding has been provided by the ICB to enable the service to recruit a 'link' keyworker. This post will provide Information, Advice, and Support like that of our advisors, but offer a more timely, focused, and intensive support with these families. This is initially a 1-year pilot project, and we will frequently review the offer to ensure it meets the needs of families. This is an exciting development for SENDIASS as it increases our reach to provide impartial IAS to more families within the two counties.

Herefordshire Team

As already stated, although in many areas it has been a successful year for the Herefordshire team it has proven to have been a difficult time with the capacity of the team. As the service has increased its profile within the county and demonstrated its reliable IAS to families which has in turn increased confidence among service users, we have seen an increase in families accessing our support. This has been through our advisors, young person advisor and our training and development officer. However, as our involvements increase with families then the limited capacity of the team is highlighted. We have had several sickness absences and other special leave this year which has exacerbated the situation as we do not currently have any capacity to cover these periods as well as support families. The service funds two part time advisors which has meant that for 3 days per week there has only been 1 member of staff on the helpline. If we are called to attend a meeting or that staff member is away for any reason, then the helpline is left unanswered, and families are without IAS. This leaves us unable to provide a full service and meet our statutory duty. As well as being a detriment to the families who require our support, this is of particular concern as we approach the likely local area inspection this year. Our YPA is on a temporary contract for 20 hours a week and is funded via any reserves left in the SENDIASS budget. Demand has demonstrated how vital this work is for children and young people across the county. We are increasingly contacted by schools and other services to work directly with the children and young people. If the current arrangement continues, we will quickly be unable to meet the growing demand for vital YPA support and once the SENDIASS reserves are depleted we will have to

make this post redundant altogether. This situation needs to be addressed and sustainable and need-driven solutions sought. This will be a key focus over the coming year to discuss with commissioners and look at current/future funding to allow ongoing support and compliance with statutory duty.

Working within schools

As reported, there has been a significant rise in schools and colleges, both mainstream and special, requesting the support of our Young Person Advisors to provide careers guidance to students with additional needs. This has ensured that not only the schools and colleges meet their duty to provide impartial careers guidance, but that we can offer early intervention to ensure smooth transitions. We are also able to support children and young people during annual reviews to ensure their voice is heard at these meetings. This is an area of expansion, and we are looking for further opportunities to work with schools and colleges across the 2 counties to provide that early support and prevent issues from escalating.

Governance

Until the COVID pandemic hit, there was an effective governance group in place in Worcestershire. The group was hit by the demands of lockdown and dissolved. An immediate priority for the coming year is to establish a cross-border Herefordshire and Worcestershire multi-disciplinary steering group to ensure co-production and scrutiny of our service.

Glossary

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AR	Annual Review
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CETR	Care, Education and Treatment Review
EHCP	Education, Health, and Care Plan
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
FSW	Family Support Worker
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HI	Hearing Impairment
IS	Independent Support
IAS	Information, Advice and Support
IASSN	Information, Advice and Support Services Network
IASSP	Information, Advice and Support Services Programme
ICB	Integrated Care Boards
LA	Local Authority
LD	Learning Disability
MLD	Mild Learning Disability
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
NCI	Non-Curriculum Issues
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs/Disabilities
SENDIASS	Special Educational Needs/Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
VI	Visual Impairment
YP	Young Person
YPA	Young Person Advisor



Department
for Education



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services

Information Advice and Support Services (IASS) provide free impartial, confidential and accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to special educational needs and disability. The provision of

information, advice and support should help to promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents. Chapter 2 of the SEND Code of Practice sets out the role and activities of an IASS, and should be read alongside these standards.

These minimum standards are based on the requirements relating to support that Information, Advice and Support Services must provide, as set out in the Children and Families Act (CFA) 2014, the SEND Code of Practice and on additional legal advice commissioned by the Information, Advice and Support Service Network. A glossary and further guidance, including links to law and guidance will be available shortly.

Commissioning, governance and management arrangements

1.1 The IASS is jointly commissioned by education, health and social care in accordance with the CFA 2014. A formal agreement is set out in writing which refers directly to these Minimum Standards, whilst also considering the need for continuity and stability of the service.

1.2 The IASS is designed and commissioned with children, young people and parents, and has the capacity and resources to meet these Minimum Standards and local need. For smaller local authorities (LAs) this may involve commissioning across local areas.

1.3 The IASS provides an all year-round flexible service which is open during normal office hours and includes a direct helpline with 24-hour answer machine, call back and signposting service, including linking to the national SEND helpline.

1.4 There is a dedicated and ring-fenced budget held and managed by an IAS service manager located within an IASS.

1.5 The IASS is, and is seen by service users to be, an arm's length, confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service, separate from the LA, Clinical Commissioning Group and/or host organisation.



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1.6 LA and IASS ensure that potential service users, Head teachers, FE principals, SENCOs, SEND Teams, children's and adult social care, health commissioners and providers are made aware of the IASS, its remit and who the service is for.

1.7 The Governance arrangements outline a clear management structure, encompassing a strategic manager within the IASS and a steering group or advisory body which includes representatives from service user groups and key stakeholders from education, social care and health.

1.8 The IASS has a development plan reviewed annually with the steering group/advisory body, which includes specific actions and improvement targets.

Strategic functions

2.1 Each IASS has a manager based solely within the service, without additional LA/CCG or host body roles. They have responsibility for strategic planning, service management and delivery, and quality assurance.

2.2 The IASS engages with regional and national strategic planning and training and demonstrates effective working with other IASSs to inform service development.

2.3 The IASS works with local partners, including local parent and young people forums to inform and influence policy and practice in the local area.

Operational Functions

3.1 The IASS provides;

Impartial information, advice and support (IAS) on the full range of education, health and social care as defined in the SEND Code of Practice to the following service users –

a) children

b) young people

c) parents

This support is offered in a range of ways which includes face to face, a telephone helpline, email, website and social media.

3.2 The IASS provides branded information and promotional materials in a range of accessible formats.



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3.3 The IASS has a stand-alone service website that is accessible to all service users. The website includes;

- Contact details of the service
- Opening hours
- Response times
- Information on a range of SEND topics

- Signposting to other useful groups including parent groups and youth forums and national helplines
- Signposting to the Local Offer
- Key policies including a complaints procedure

3.4 The IASS provides advocacy support for individual children, young people, and parents that empowers them to express their views and wishes and helps them to understand and exercise their rights in matters including exclusion, complaints, SEND processes, and SEND appeals.

3.5 The IASS provides information, advice and support before, during and following a SEND Tribunal appeal in a range of different ways, dependent on the needs of the parent or young person. This will include representation during the hearing if the parent or young person is unable to do so.

3.6 The IASS offers training to local education, health and social care professionals, children, young people and parents to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation.

Professional development and training for staff

4.1 All advice and support providing staff successfully complete all online IPSEA legal training levels within 12 months of joining the service. Volunteers who provide advice and support should complete IPSEAs Level 1 online training within 12 months.

4.2 The service routinely requests feedback from service users and others, and uses this to further develop the work and practices of the service.

4.3 All IASS staff and volunteers have ongoing supervision and continuous professional development.

If you have any comments or questions about these standards or about IASS please email iassn@ncb.org.uk



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