

Birmingham SENDIASS Action Plan: as at April 2023

2.2 A	To establish reliable and sufficiently detailed data recording so it can be analysed effectively to inform strategic planning		
Action ref.	Actions to take	Action owner	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	To have a purpose built SENDIASS database to accommodate the detail needed to support all aspects of service development and delivery which fully supports national benchmarking. This database will provide clear distinction between service users and level of service provided. It will be separate from Local Authority databases and used for SENDIASS work only. Service is working with the BCC web team and corporate communications on a new website and design.	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS – In Progress	30/05/2023
2	To use the database to record appropriate personal details and key information relating the casework. Issues to be recorded in line with GDPR requirements only recording information pertinent to the individual and in line with the level of support required (1-4). We have service user details recorded in Access and a Folder containing all CYP documents and case/tribunal information in readiness to transfer to the New Database – Actions currently sit with BCC IT&D.	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS – In Progress	30/05/2023
3	Service to adopt, apply and accurately record the nationally agreed 4 levels of intervention.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
4	To ensure staff ask, record and date parental permission to speak to others stating exactly who e.g. school staff, Educational Psychology, SEN case worker etc. and also to note anyone they refuse to give permission for (this may form part of a discussion). This needs to be routinely checked and updated. It is not to be assumed as an open-ended agreement.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023

5	Data should be routinely “pulled off”, ideally monthly but a maximum of termly, for analysis. All key data should be presented for a range of audiences including e.g. steering group, etc and be included in regular public reports e.g. termly or annual reports made available e.g. on website. See 2.2 B9 below Data Analysis done but not yet taken from the database as this is not in place yet.	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023 Ongoing
6	Database is exclusively accessed by SENDIASS employees and volunteers only. Ensure all staff within SENDIASS understand the recording requirements and establish system for database to be routinely and efficiently updated i.e. without unnecessary delay preferably by dedicated member of staff i.e. administrator post to reduce or avoid mishaps.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	30/06/2023 (once database in situ)

2.2 B	All operational processes and procedures are formalised and policies are sufficiently detailed to be clear and watertight		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	To update confidentiality and impartiality policies to ensure they are watertight and improve transparency. To add dates re: created, amended and next review and make them widely available. Make sure all SENDIASS staff, including temporary or volunteers, are fully briefed and understand how they are applied operationally. Make sure all stakeholders have a clear understanding of them.	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
2	To adopt an empowerment model of service delivery supported by improved information being available. See 2.2 B7 below Develop plain English step-by-step truly impartial resources to support parents/YP in understanding of what their rights are outlining all their options to implement them, promoting an engagement model and not a confrontational approach from the outset. Make available on website and everywhere else that is relevant. Can also be mailed out. (See 2.2 D3 below) If appeal made to tribunal ensure it takes a “supporting” role and can explain any exceptional circumstances that requires it to “represent” i.e. representation will be the exception not the norm. Routinely provide training sessions for parents/YP on common themes such as SEN Support and reviews, Draft EHCPs, Annual Reviews, including how to get the most out of meetings. (NB encourage parents to	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023

	identify who their natural supporter is i.e. within their family, friendship circle or community and invite them to training sessions with them.) offer via face to face or virtual and at different times to improve reach.		
3	For all staff to clearly understand and stick to the boundaries of their role and the SENDIASS remit which will be scaffolded through additional individual and group training and supervision. This includes when supporting parents in escalating a concern, it is done with respect, at the appropriate level, promotes and encourages partnership working. Only suitably trained and experienced staff should be dealing with level 4 interventions. Lesser inexperienced staff could joint work and shadow at meetings (with all party agreement) e.g. mediation to continue their professional development.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
4	Staff handbook to include step-by-step processes Retraining of all staff in IPSEA Legal training (levels 1-3) should be considered alongside the need to consolidate learning and application before taking next level. All casework should be underpinned by Section 19 Principles.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/05/2023
5	The nationally agreed evaluations to be sent out at the end of each case. These should be sent out in the spirit that is intended, that is anonymously and kept separately i.e. not attached to case file. These should be fully recorded, analysed e.g. service practice might need to adjusted, and included in the Annual Report in full i.e. all questions. Numbers sent out and percentage return should also be recorded and included. Evaluation forms should also be adopted for capturing professional feedback e.g. those attending a meeting with SENDIASS and parents.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023
6	To consistently follow and apply at all times the impartiality policy. This includes being clear with all stakeholders that the service only accepts direct referrals from parents or CYP and only in exceptional circumstances will it deviate away from this principle. The service will not store or have access to reports without the consent of the parent/YP.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
7	Service development plan to address all areas of non-compliance. Consider involving permanent members of staff as each taking an area of responsibility e.g. website, resources, training, CYP, etc. to foster a collective ownership and pride in the service.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/01/2023
8	Introduce a formalised triage system (when to ensure cases are consistently prioritised according to set criteria. Service deficit recording to be introduced and reported See 2.2 B 2 above. NB this can only be piloted when range of step by step resources are available	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/01/2023

9	To have its own complaints procedure	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
10	<p>To produce an annual report based on termly/quarterly reports. These should be available publicly e.g. website, Local Offer, mailshot etc. It will include as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Self-assessment e.g. RAG rating of Minimum Standards with examples of evidence if green and explanations or actions if amber or red II. Full stats broken down re casework, referral pathways etc and analysis including comparison to previous reporting period(s) III. Reporting on evaluations/feedback received and any changes this has brought about to service practice IV. Relevant national and local issues or changes impacting on families in relation to their reason for contacting SENDIASS V. Pressures on service e.g. increase in referrals, staff sickness, office relocation, funding e.g. cut, new source, etc VI. Overview of service activity including breakdown of training sessions provided, themes, audience (parents, YP professionals – stating who e.g. SENCo, SEN governors, YOT. VII. Updates to policies or website VIII. New initiatives e.g. a volunteer programme, monthly drop-ins, weekly evening help-line IX. Training attended by staff X. Steering Group – how many times it met, changes or vacancies 	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/07/2023

2.2 C	Establish stringent quality assurance processes across all aspects of service, with an external element (initially at least)		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	Agree key principles of quality assurance e.g. accuracy, plain English, accessibility, relevant to the intended audience (especially those new to the “system”), truthful and in context. It should also include	Interim Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023

	references/links to original source e.g. SEN Code of Practice, C&FA 2014, LA policy so they can be cross referenced by the reader if they wish to ensure transparency. They should also reflect PCP principles as the C&FA 2014 was built on these too.		
2	Establish quality assurance reviewing group (suitable for remote working). Members need to be selected for appropriateness for different aspects according to nature of materials. Ideally at least one member will not have any professional connection with SEN or education etc. for some of not all parent/YP targeted resources because if it makes sense to them it will likely make sense to others. For example training materials for professionals may need different input for sessions required for parents or CYP even if same topic e.g. Annual Reviews so the QA reviewing membership will need to be adjusted accordingly.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/05/2023
3	All resources for parents and CYP will enable empowerment by clearly reflecting the law and associated rights and responsibilities, local (lawful) practice in context i.e. you have a right to appeal to tribunal but also clearly outline all the options to be taken to promote engagement and encourage a culture of trust between parents/CYP and the professionals they will be required to engage with, before it gets to the point of making an appeal. Resources will be step by step, to enable those unfamiliar with SEN terminology and processes, to be able to understand, be fully informed and follow them with minimal support but will also highlighting how SENDIASS might be able to assist at each step. - Team providing impartial advice, sharing SEN Jargon Buster as well as signposting to IPSEA information and advice. Still developing further resources.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023 Ongoing
4	Back to basics training programme, including person centred planning, to be created for ALL SENDIASS staff. This programme must be developed externally of any existing, or past staff or associates of Birmingham SENDIASS and could be commissioned externally. - All retained staff re-doing their IPSEA Levels 1-3. As well as ad hoc training sessions	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023 Ongoing

2.2 D	To improve visibility of service including standalone website to include resources to support empowerment		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	In the interim and asap, upload all CDC animations to SENDIASS page on LA website and/or LO. Add links to external sources of support e.g. IPSEA, ACE Education Advice and Training, SOSSEN, Coram Children's Legal Centre	Interim Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	15/03/2023

2	Carry out an immediate review of all wording on SENDIASS information currently available with relevant others i.e. those external to SENDIASS e.g. PCF, NCB etc. Covert to plain English, make all required corrections and update asap.	Interim Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/03/2023 Ongoing
3	Develop a range of new step-by-step guides for parents for a range of common themes e.g. getting the most out of a meeting, requesting a statutory assessment, annual reviews etc. These should be added to SENDIASS page on LA website as soon as they become available until the new website is ready. See 2.2 B2 above	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	30/06/2023
4	To develop standalone website (see MS 3.3) with ideally a dedicated section for CYP. As above	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/05/2023
5	Clear and distinct identifiable logo on all resources (MS 3.2), training e.g. Powerpoint slides. Materials and resources should also acknowledge original source where data is included from other sources. Logo ideas sent to PCF for review and parent feedback	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/05/2023
6	To implement social media e.g. facebook especially to promote events or changes and is easy for parents to share and disseminate information.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/05/2023
2.2 E	Effective staffing structure including an admin post, all appropriately trained		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	In accordance with BCC policies and IASS minimum standards, put in place a staffing structure that is appropriate to the service.		28/06/2023
2	Clear staffing structure included on website with photos e.g. "meet the team" Job titles for all SENDIASS staff should say the service and title in the first line to avoid confusion with other services e.g. SENDIASS Manager, SENDIASS support worker, SENDIASS caseworker depending on what titles are decided upon. SENDIASS Manager and staff do not have additional LA roles or responsibilities outside of SENDIASS to avoid conflict with confidentiality etc. All SENDIASS staff to conduct themselves according to their role and JD in SENDIASS and not to their previous, or future in case of students on placement, jobs i.e. they are not employed as social workers or teachers.		31/09/2023

3	To ensure all staff act professionally at all times including in all forms of communications and their engagement with others e.g. by understanding and respecting the boundaries of other services or individual professionals.		28/02/2023
4	Compulsory “back to basics” training to be developed for ALL staff, existing and new to reflect all new ways of working, including the role of carrying out casework, Person Centred Planning/Approaches and how this applies to all EHCP processes. Solution Focus training might also be useful. - All Staff are redoing IPSEA Training		31/03/2023
5	All staff to be provided with their own copy of the SEN Code of Practice and if possible extra copies to be available for volunteers or students to be able to have access to and how to access it electronically.		31/01/2023
6	Ensure Volunteer SENDIASS Officers are IPSEA Level 1 trained and also receive guidance on collecting data for assessment, in particular gaining the child/young person’s views.		31/07/2023
7	Quarterly staff appraisals and supervision (careful consideration to be given regarding who should conduct these, initially at least). Objectives should reflect the changes of working practice within SENDIASS and be linked to service Development Plan.		31/03/2023 Ongoing

2.2 F	Have an effective management structure in place		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	Line management for Service Manager to be clear and at an appropriate level within directorate	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	13/03/2023
2	New proposed Steering group to consist of new terms of reference and a Quorum – Proposed representation from 2 parents, 2 Young people, Parent Carer Forum, EP, CCG/DCO, SENDIAS Co-ordinator, Head Teacher, SENDCO, Social/Family Worker.		30/05/2023

	Its role will be to oversee service direction etc.– TOR, membership, minutes, routine agenda items e.g. going through service report including data, review development plan. SG meetings need to ordinarily be maximum of quarterly or minimum of termly.		
--	--	--	--

2.2 G	Compliance with remaining Minimum Standards not addressed in 2.2A to 2.2F above		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a complete action)
1	Joint Commissioning in accordance with MS 1.1 against a tight SLA pegged against the MS. including reviewing, monitoring and reporting arrangements.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
2	Development plan (MS 1.8) to address all areas of minimum standards to either address non-compliance or ensure continued compliance. Improvement targets should be informed by data and there should be a “thread” to link why everything is happening.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	28/02/2023
3	Constructive strategic involvement (MS 2.3) once the majority of the above (2.2 A – 2.2F) are underway or achieved based on evidence and data.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	30/04/2023
4	Establish partnership working and agreement with PCF (MS 2.3) In progress. We are working collaboratively on SENDIASS infrastructure.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/05/2023
5	Develop a training programme (MS 3.6) to include stakeholders, parents and CYP once the majority of the above (2.2 A – 2.2F) are underway or achieved based on evidence and data.	Interim Head of Service and Deputy Head of Service for SENDIASS	31/06/2023

2.2	Actions required by LA from issues arising during this review outside of SENDIASS		
Action ref.	Actions to take	By who	Completion date (green indicates a

			complete action)
1	Front Door – uncouple from SENDIASS with immediate effect so that family support is delivered by Birmingham Children’s Trust.	Director - Strategy, Commissioning and Transformation	02/05/2023
2	Rename Parent Link e.g. SENAR Gateway and reconsider description as it is misleading as sounds like SENDIASS. Ensure when parents contact “Parent Link” they know who exactly they are speaking to and what their role is.	Director – SEND and Inclusion	01/09/2023
3	Improve communication options in SENAR letters – add contact name and details e.g. email and phone number so parents can directly and easily contact to try and resolve issues.	Completed by SENAR	
4	Improve content of EHCP letters – explain in letters that are sent with draft EHCP that Section “I” must be left blank so parents can request the school they want named, reassure them they can stay at their existing placement (it is known to worry parents when it is blank that their current placement might be under threat) be honest and explain current situation e.g. pressure on school places particularly special school and reassure LA is willing to work with parents to come up with an acceptable solution e.g. an interim arrangement if appropriate.	Director of SEND and Inclusion	01/09/2023
5	Update parents/PCF/SENDIASS – share good news as things are being introduced or changing e.g. all SENAR staff training, recruitment etc.	All (through existing newsletter and comms)	ongoing