



# Buckinghamshire SEND IAS Service

## End of year report to Steering Group

March 2021

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## **Our role:**

All local authorities, by law, have to provide children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), and their parents/carers, with information, advice and support. Buckinghamshire SENDIAS Service is the information, advice and support service here. Our service is free, confidential, impartial and at arm's length from Buckinghamshire Council (BC). We have exclusive use of accommodation separate from County Hall. No referral is needed to access our service.

We offer accurate and up to date information, advice and support around all matters relating to SEND. We do this face to face, by telephone and email support, as well as by attending meetings and delivering training. Our aim is to empower our service users to understand the complexities of the law and local processes and to self-advocate as far as possible.

We deal with cases ranging in complexity, and operate a case management system to ensure the most effective use of our resources, triaging into levels of involvement: level 1 is the least complex, level 4 is the most: One is signposting, Two is straightforward work including attendance at annual review and other meetings, Three is for more complex work e.g. permanent exclusions, Four is direct involvement in tribunals.

We play a key role in influencing improvements to local strategy and processes provided for our service users by BC, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), educational settings, and other organisations.

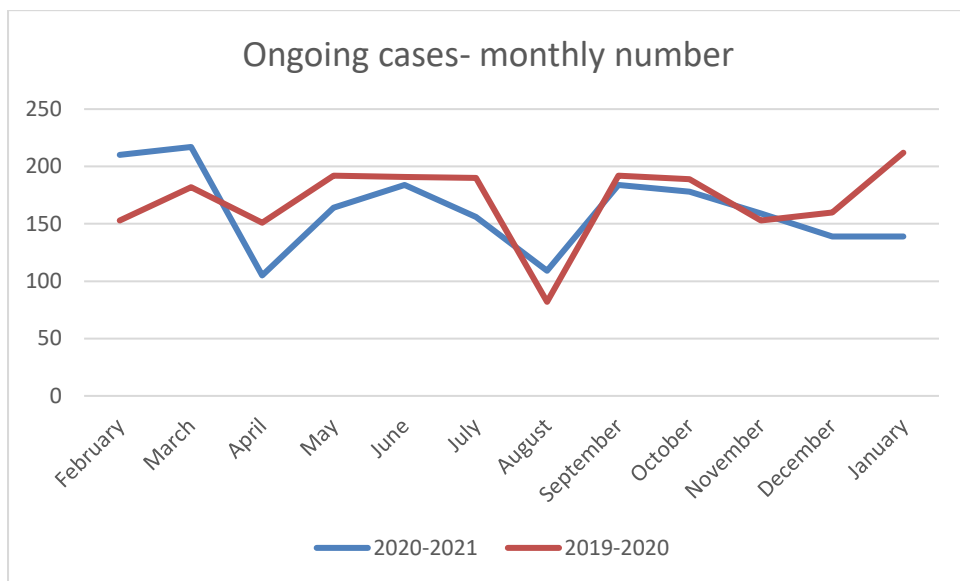
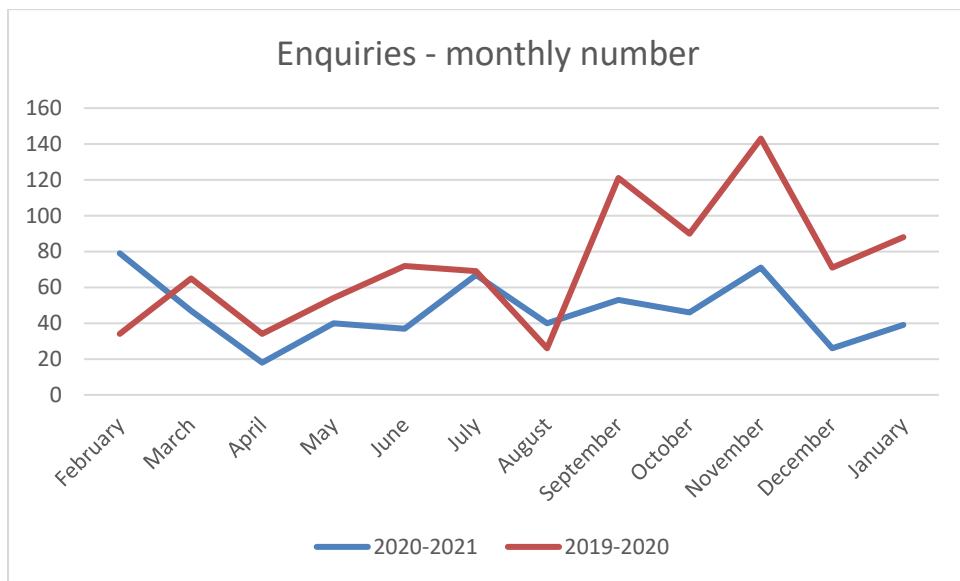
We work to national [Minimum Standards](#) agreed by Council for Disabled Children, Department for Education, and Department for Health and Social Care.

The SENDIAS Service team leader is line managed by Maxine Moore, Education Project Manager (SEND Resolutions Team), based in Children's Services, Buckinghamshire Council.

We have an informal commissioning arrangement with the BC Integrated Commissioning team. We report to a Steering Group led by the chair of the parent carer forum FACT Bucks.

# Our performance 2020-2021

## Headline figures 24.2.2020-23.2.2021



<b>New referrals:</b>  <b>405</b> (590)	<b>New enquiries:</b>  <b>566</b> (845)	<b>Ongoing cases:</b>  <b>860</b> (1011)
<i>New referrals relate to a specific child or young person's record begun that month once we have the relevant consent.</i>	<i>New enquiries relate to a referrer's record begun that month. Often this will be parent/carer, but it can also be a professional. No consent is necessary to be added as an enquiry as only generic responses are given.</i>	<i>Ongoing cases include new referrals and referrals which were set up during a previous month, but are still requiring active involvement from the team that month.</i>
<i>Headline figures for 24.2.2020 – 23.2.2021, previous year's figures in red</i>		

## Summary of year's performance

At the time of the last annual report (March 2020) we had experienced continual unprecedented high demand for our service over the previous year. This year has looked very different as it coincides almost exactly with the period of national lockdowns relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially demand for our service dropped significantly. The type of work we were focusing on also changed as service users required advice about the Coronavirus Act and government guidance and the availability of local services for SEND. We adapted by making proactive well-being calls and sending out updated information on a weekly basis. The team leader met with strategic leads including the Head of the integrated SEND team and the Chair of FACT Bucks on a weekly basis for a few weeks, which helped greatly in keeping up to speed with developments to share with the team and service users and in influencing the BC response to families with children with SEND. Perhaps of most influence were the two surveys coproduced with FACT Bucks assessing the impact of COVID-19 on local SEND families – the first in May received an unprecedented 1114 responses.

During this time we were benefitting from a full time business support officer, a project management facilitator (0.4FTE) and a total of 2.83 FTE team leader/adviser time. We also benefitted from 213 hours of overtime paid for via external funding between April and October 2020. Unfortunately, government funding via the Information, Advice and Support Programme (IASP) was reduced significantly from April 2020 and our business case to BC to retain this level of resource was not successful, resulting in a reduced team from September 2020 with 0.5FTE business support and from November 2020 with no project management facilitator and 0.5FTE less adviser time – 4 team members were lost during this period, effectively halving our resource – now almost entirely term-time only. In addition, overtime could no longer be funded. In the same period, our 3 long-standing volunteers decided to stand down, as they had found working remotely very difficult. All of this presented a number of challenges from September onwards as demand for our service picked up, especially in November when demand for our service rose above the level of November 2019, which was itself a peak in that year.

With support from our advisory steering group, the team successfully rose to the challenge with 7 important developments:

1. We launched an online form, progressed before her departure by the project management facilitator, which saves our business support approximately 30 minutes of time per new referral.
2. Published response times were extended from 5 working days to 7 – 10 working days.
3. 2 new volunteers were recruited and trained in the first half of the autumn term, providing up to 0.3FTE volunteer capacity, taking on their first cases from November 2020.
4. Acknowledging the pressures on our team, an additional 0.3FTE business support was provided for us by BC from November 2020 at no charge to our budget.
5. To mitigate the lack of capacity during school holidays, in the week prior to the holidays using templates we send relevant information to everyone waiting for a call with a covering note to manage expectations, triaging so we guarantee a call after the holidays to the more complex cases and invite the others to contact us again if necessary.
6. Adapting adviser role- The online form enabled a switch to unscheduled calls from advisers – previously, all calls were scheduled by business support. Now advisers manage their own diaries. – Advisers add all their own emails/paperwork etc for ongoing cases, previously there was scope for business support to assist with this.

Advisers focus only on supporting families, no longer any involvement with external strategic meetings and much reduced involvement with service user training and outreach.

Advisers were asked to consider working in holidays, but currently not possible because of childcare issues.

7. Adapting team leader role-
  - a. recruiting and training volunteers and supporting the team through this period of change.
  - b. taking on more level 3 and level 4 cases to support the advisers.
  - c. developing and coordinating new less time-consuming approach for SENDIAS escalations via SEND Resolutions to resolve stuck and urgent cases.
  - d. greatly reducing strategic involvement and outreach – meeting with key individuals instead of attending a wide range of meetings; agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure we have support from stakeholders in sharing information about their services and passing on information we provide/ train the trainer approach/ influencing.
  - e. continuing the delivery of government-funded technological improvements via our IASP task order including:
    - (i) upgrades to our online form and webpages
    - (ii) monitoring and promotion of webchat
    - (iii) leading on coproduction with service users and stakeholders of podcasts, short films, online training videos
    - (iv) content for Mailchimp news updates
    - (v) Arranging Kwiksurvey upgrade funded by FACT Bucks and overseeing surveys and other forms of feedback.

The Christmas holidays and new national lockdown once again provoked an initial reduction in referrals, allowing a brief opportunity for a focus on technological improvements. From mid January onwards, new enquiries started to rise again.

The increased pressure on the remaining team is evident from the ‘ongoing cases – monthly numbers’ table above, which shows that ongoing cases have matched levels for the previous year when we had more staff.

	Ongoing cases	FTE advisers	Cases per FTE adviser
2020-2021	860	2.3	374
2019-2020	1070	3	346

## Strategic involvement:

2020-2021 has been unprecedented, completely framed by the national COVID-19 pandemic, and also locally with the transition to the unitary Buckinghamshire Council. Local reorganisation of SEND-related teams such as the integrated SEND Team, the 0-25 social care team and the Family Support service begun the previous year has been embedded during these changed circumstances. During the pandemic especially between March and September 2020 delivery of services for children and young people with SEND was greatly affected by rules on social distancing. Some services were inevitably reduced, such as short breaks only available for the most vulnerable, many others were provided differently, such as education and therapies provided online. In recent years, SENDIAS has played an important role, in line with national [Minimum Standards](#), in influencing local strategy, policy and processes so that these are developed in line with the law and reflect the views of local families. We are in a strong position to do this because:

- on a daily basis a large number of families tell us about the issues they are facing
- we have unmatched experience, breadth and depth of knowledge on SEND law and local provision across education, health and social care and across age ranges 0-25

Our strategic role this year has looked very different. During the first lockdown, many of the strategic meetings we attended were cancelled. We sought new, more dynamic ways of influencing and gaining information about local policy and provision via the weekly mini catch up with senior SEND leaders described in the case study below. From the autumn onwards following staff reductions our availability for reinstated strategic groups was much more limited. We have had to withdraw from most strategic groups and seek different ways of influencing them, for example by meeting separately with key stakeholders. The Integrated Services Board was reconfigured during this period and SENDIAS is no longer a member. However, SENDIAS continues to have indirect influence because our advisory steering group chair is also the chair of FACT Bucks and continues as a prominent member of the ISB. During the autumn, the frequency of the mini catch ups with senior leaders was much reduced to one every two months or so, because of demands on their time – towards the end of the reporting year fortnightly meetings were reinstated as all parties recognised how useful they are.

Whilst our input has been missed, expressed especially by the EHCP QA group, our participation was less crucial than it was in previous years, when we very often had to challenge local policies and strategic decisions, as there is now a better understanding locally at a strategic level of SEND law requirements. We have obtained information in other ways, such as via the new newsletters circulated by the area hubs of the

integrated SEND team, and via individual meetings with key people, such as with the new Designated Social Care Officer. We have continued to influence e.g. by sharing feedback from service users with other teams.

Examples of how our input has made a difference at a strategic level:

We said:	This contributed to:
Short break support for children during first national lockdown and information about availability was inadequate	Clearer information about short breaks during the pandemic. Joint FACT Bucks/ SENDIAS COVID survey results used as impetus by commissioner to agree reinstatement of residential short breaks
Vulnerable children not being offered school places during pandemic	Systems to link schools with local authority to moderate school risk assessments and challenge school decisions – this led to places for at least 10 children during first lockdown and at least 4 during the spring 2021 lockdown.
Voice of child/young person and parent/carer must be heard in local policy arrangements during the pandemic	SENDIAS coproduced LA policies with FACT Bucks and integrated SEND team such as <a href="#">Temporary Changes to Section 42</a> .  SENDIAS provided comments and content for LA/CCG policies relating to a new SEND Strategy and to phase transfer, annual reviews, personal budgets, quality assurance, children and young people’s therapies.
An equivalent to the Designated Clinical Officer should be appointed for social care	Designated Social Care Officer started role January 2021

## Operational functions:

Uniquely in the local area, we provide impartial information, advice and support directly to individual children and young people. This role is vital to ensure that their wishes and aspirations are understood and they become equipped to make their own decisions. Typically, this work takes considerably more time per service user than our work with adults. Unfortunately, the combination of the pandemic making face to face interaction more difficult, and our reduction in staffing, has meant we have not been able to capitalise on the previous year’s small steps of progress, which had included an emphasis on building the team’s confidence in supporting young people directly.

We work hard to try to help service users to resolve their concerns as quickly and easily as possible. We continue to find that families feel that they have no option but to take steps towards mediation and tribunal appeal once an appealable decision has been made which they disagree with – as they don’t succeed in obtaining a response to their requests to the local authority for discussion and negotiation.

We have continued to be very successful in assisting service users to resolve their appealable decision by making best use of the mediation and tribunal process and less formal options, without a tribunal hearing being necessary. E.g. we sent out tribunal information (which we only usually do once someone has an appealable decision and comes to us for advice) 160 times in 2020-2021 compared to 153 times during 2019-

Mediations attended 21
Tribunal preparation 17
Tribunals required 3

20. We provided significant help to 53 families during the course of the year around tribunals compared to 63 the previous year. We attended 21 mediations with service users compared to 13 in the previous year. We provided impartial advice with tribunal paperwork and preparation for 17 compared to 18 the previous year. However, as in 2019-2020, only 3 of these led to a tribunal hearing as far as we are aware, the others were resolved to the service user's satisfaction with our help beforehand.

It has continued to be very hard to resolve complex cases without having to support families to escalate their concerns to senior managers in education, health and social care. Increasingly, since September 2020, this has been by asking for intervention from the SEND Resolutions team.

Complexity relates to:

- lack of or inconsistent communication with families by professionals
- lack of legal training and understanding by professionals leading to mistakes
- continued poor quality of many EHC plans especially their failure to properly represent the aspirations and needs of the child or young person, especially social care needs.
- delays and incomplete processing of annual reviews
- shortages of alternative provision and specialist placements and failure to challenge responses to consultations
- several cases of refusal by the school named on the EHC plan to admit the child.

Our escalation process with the integrated SEND team area managers which started in December 2019 continued until September 2020, but was very time-consuming and redress often still very slow. We then initiated a new escalation process for complex cases with the SEND Resolution team, which manages all complaints, mediations and tribunals relating to SEND. This new process has been more successful, although still slow at times because of shortages of staff in other teams, such as the Aylesbury area hub of the integrated SEND team.

SENDIAS Complex Case Escalations to SEND Resolutions team 24.2.2020-23.2.2021		
Reason for escalation	Number of escalations	Number resolved
Delay- no response	6	3
Delay - response but no action	17	12
Mistake by BC re law/ local policy	2	1



Mistake by other e.g. school re law/local policy	2	1
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Our high level of demand and staff reductions have naturally required us to focus on casework with little time left for development work, outreach or training. We have prioritised training for children and young people directly and using a train the trainer approach, rather than training for parents/carers. This is because we strongly feel that until children and young people themselves are made aware of the value of their EHC plans as a tool to reach their ambitions, adults around them will continue to treat the EHC plan as a paper exercise around obtaining funding. Our training course ***'There's no I in EHCP, there should be, it should be me'*** consists of a 'train the trainer' session and a session for children and young people which can be adapted for different levels of understanding. This year our Children and Young People's Lead Worker has added to this so that it covers annual reviews. She is also developing a year long programme for special schools to ensure young people can participate as fully as possible in their annual review process.

<b>Training for LSAs at BCG: November 2020</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Day of Week</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
16/11/2020	Monday	Zoom session	15

<b>Annual Review Syllabus - Term 1 pilot at Heritage House</b>				
<b>What you choose matters – it's your future!</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Day of Week</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Booked Places</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
30/07/2020	Thursday	Microsoft Teams session	n/a	2
13/08/2020	Thursday	Microsoft Teams session	n/a	2

<b>Annual Review Syllabus - Term 1 at Heritage House</b>				
<b>What you choose matters – it's your future!</b>				
<b>&amp; 14 Dec)</b>				
<b>Clover class - 2 sessions (7 &amp; 14 Dec)</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Day of Week</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	
07/12/2020 & 14/12/20	Mon	Microsoft Teams session	3	
07/12/2020 & 14/12/20	Mon	Microsoft Teams session	4	

## Accessibility:

A strong feature of our service is our accessibility. We provide an individualised service, triaged using case management levels, which can include face to face support, help with paperwork, use of interpreters, liaison with relevant professionals (with service user consent). This November we started a twice weekly webchat session during term time. We launched our online contact form, which is proving very popular. We have paid for an enhanced version of Mailchimp which allows us to provide clearly-formatted news updates as frequently as required. A recent news update was sent to 1347 service users and opened by 405 service users. We are working on improving our webpages. We have improved our service user film, including adding subtitles. We have recorded the content for our first podcast and employability animations -now waiting for production and launch.

## Feedback

We routinely invite service users to agree to receive our surveys. Currently over 1000 have consented to do so. As part of our contractual obligations to Council for Disabled Children we issue an annual survey in early spring each year using their set questions.

<b>Impartiality rated at least 7/10</b>  <b>65%</b> (61%)	<b>Difference we made rated at least 7/10</b>  <b>49%</b> (52%)	<b>Satisfaction rated at least 7/10</b>  <b>57%</b> (51%)
<b>62%</b> (66%) would recommend our service to others	<b>Number of complaints received:</b>  <b>0</b>	
<i>Figures for March 2020 – mid February 2021, previous year's figures in red</i>  <i>39 respondents - see appendix E for full survey results</i>		

It is of great credit to the advisers (including our volunteers) and business support colleagues that in the context of reduced staffing capacity and continued high demand for the service, feedback from our service users remains very positive. Many service users take the time thank the team, frequently during a call and often via email. There are also many positive comments in our annual service user survey completed in February 2021. Our annual surveys capture the experiences of service users who have used our service in the previous year.

Some examples of feedback:

*Email to Sarah Tibble, adviser (October 2020): I just want to say a massive heart-felt thankyou to you & your SENDIAS team for your support at my sons Global mediation session last Friday.*

*Your support, prior & during the meeting were second to none and I so felt your genuine care & concern in ensuring my rights were known both to myself & to the panel at the mediation. I genuinely felt that you were doing beyond your job, you were truly present and very well prepared. I really appreciated the fact that you were unafraid to highlight errors and potential discrepancies with information both prior & during the meeting, and because of this we were able to move forward in bounds and with time because of your input.*

*I was so overwhelmed after the meeting and you called to check up on me and still lend your support I cannot THANK YOU enough.*

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*Email to Jen Ogle, adviser (November 2020): SENDIASS does an amazing job and is such a crucial and important service.*

*We the [name deleted] family thanks you from the bottom of our hearts for listening, encouragement, guidance and reassurance. May God reward you for all your hard work that you and the team does for parents like us.*

*THANK YOU SO MUCH!!*

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*Email to Tracy Campkin (2 March 2021):*

*County have finally agreed, last night, that X needs a SEN school placement. Thank you so very much for your support and involvement in this process . . . Again, I would like to thank you all for your support and involvement over this past year and a half. Without your involvement this would never have happened.*

*End of year survey comments re Tracy Campkin, adviser (February 2021):*

*Tracy Campkin has been great. Really helpful and knowledgeable :)*

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*End of year survey comments re Ian Peart, volunteer adviser (February 2021):*

*Thanks to Ian for trying to contact me several times.*

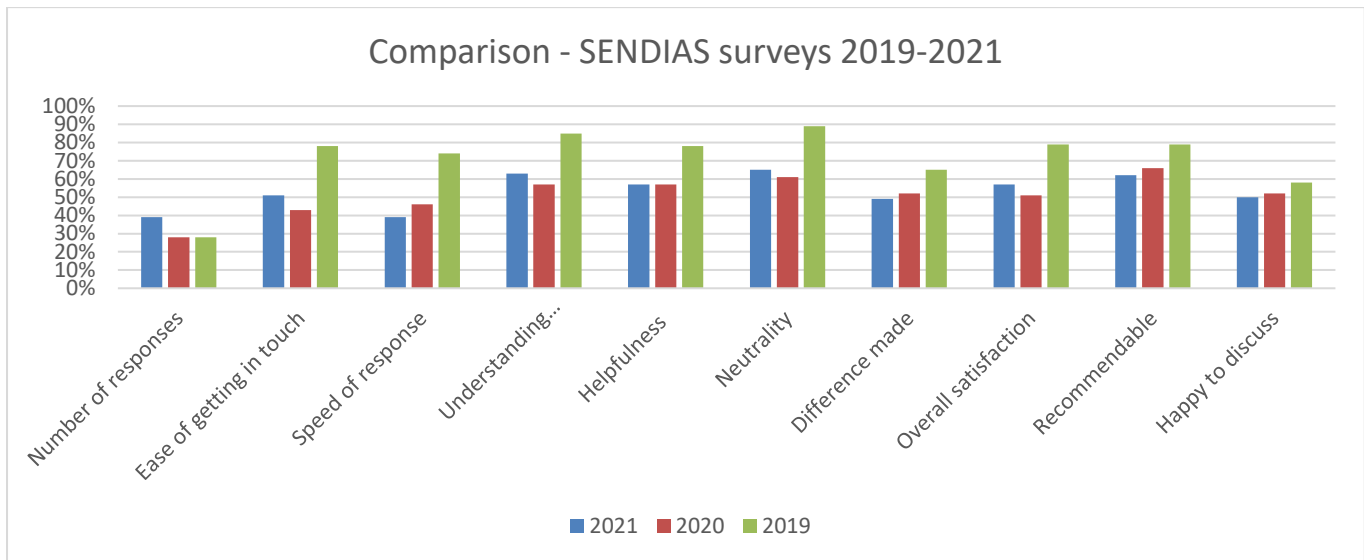
*My son had been excluded from college and the team were present for any online meetings we had. Their support and input helped me and my son hugely and as a result his exclusion was overturned and he is now back in education (online lessons). The support we received was second to none and I believe it made a huge difference to my sons mental health he's much happier and relaxed than he was.*

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*Email from parent re Abbie Bishop, volunteer adviser (February 2021):*

*Abigail has always gone above and beyond to help and support my daughter . . . without her help I wouldn't of known what was applicable to my daughter throughout this pandemic and she has made this process somewhat transition smoothly . . . Abigail always listened carefully to what my daughters needs were . . . Thanks Abigail for your time, patience and understanding sendias have a great team member on board, keep up the good work.*

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Comparison with the February 2019 and February 2020 annual surveys is interesting. Response numbers have been very similar for all 3 surveys ranging from 28 in 2019 and 2020 to 39 this year. Feedback from the 2019 survey was strikingly better than for the 2020 and 2021 surveys – for the 2019 survey we had full staff capacity and a lower level of demand. For the 2020 survey we had full staffing and a very high level of demand. For the 2021 survey we had reduced although still high demand and significantly reduced staffing capacity from September onwards. In these circumstances it is testament to the determination and expertise of the team, and their adaptability that feedback scores this year have remained very consistent with those of 2020 – as our steering group chairman describes: *the balance of feedback is always strongly on the positive side of the scale*. Whilst the scores are reassuring, the overall tone of the comments in the survey this year was much more critical than in previous years. This was especially in terms of what difference we make e.g.: *It has made no difference. He still has no education plan or specific help. He still does not attend regularly and suffers anxiety and depression*.

This may relate to the difficulty we continue to have in enabling families to receive responses and redress from other teams. It could also relate to the lack of SEND provision available during the COVID-19 pandemic. Comments also reflected frustration with our timeliness of response e.g. *Speed of response - as we (as parents) were also under Local Authority related time pressure to make decisions. (Nb: Appreciate the current times have led to staff shortages, however this is a valuable service and should be funded/supported appropriately)*.

This time last year we expected to be further ahead by now with technological improvements which could play a role in allowing more service users to self-serve – the reduction in staff capacity has meant these are taking longer to implement. Web chat has been less popular than expected, possibly partly because we are now limited to two sessions per week instead of three as planned, and reduced flexibility of timing. Website and online form upgrade and delivery of short films have been delayed because of diversion to COVID-19 work by the Comms team as well as because of our own staff reductions.

## Minimum Standards

Unfortunately, reduction in staffing has compromised our compliance with the national [Minimum Standards](#), especially the following:

### Reduced compliance with minimum standards

- **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.*
- **1.3** *The IASS provides an all year-round flexible service . . .*
- **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.*
- **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*

1.2: Despite our best efforts, this year's satisfaction levels of 57% show that service users responding to our survey are less satisfied with the service than they were in 2017-18 (75%) and 2018-19 (79%) indicating that local need is not being met. However, we are proud that satisfaction levels did improve 2020-21 ((57%) compared to 2019-2020 (51%) implying that we adapted effectively to COVID-19 restrictions and reduced staffing capacity.

1.3: We are no longer able to provide a year-round service, reverting to part-time as almost all of the core-funded team are contracted to work term-time only. In previous years, holiday cover was provided by externally funded staff. February half term holiday 2021 when the office was closed saw a particularly high rate of queries; about tribunal appeals – 9 received - it coincided with the school phase transfer deadline.

2.3: The team leader has less time available for strategic work.

3.6 The team has less time available for training and outreach.

Compliance has improved in 2 ways:

## Improved compliance with minimum standards

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

1.1: we now have a formal agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding agreed with stakeholders. See Appendix H

3.2: We are taking positive steps coproducing with service users improvements to our accessibility, such as the ongoing work to relaunch our webpages.

A full review of our compliance with the [Minimum Standards](#) is included in Appendix A. Since the end of the reporting period, the Director for Education at BC has initiated an internal review of our service to investigate further our level of resource and compliance with the Minimum Standards.

## Overview from our chairman Andrew Howard

*The year ending March 2021 has been like no other. It has required a substantial adaptation in working practices by our staff team which mirror the substantial upheaval in the lives of the families and young people with SEND we seek to support. We are grateful to our staff (paid and voluntary) and to our clients for their willingness to persevere. At the same time, the overview of the year is also very consistent with preceding years in terms of the ongoing work of the Bucks SEND IAS Service to highlight wherever possible the need among all relevant education, health and care professionals for improved:*

- **Communication**
- **Person-centred approach/co-production**
- **Understanding of and adherence to SEND law**

*These principles are based on feedback from our service users. The bulk of our case work involves helping our service users to address difficulties caused when these principles are not in place. If these issues were addressed effectively, it is likely that our caseload would reduce substantially. Whilst SENDIAS is now listened to at a strategic level and comprehensive action is being taken by strategic leaders to improve the experience of families of children and young people with SEND, so far the benefit for families is patchy at best with many unfortunately still worn down by never-ending and unnecessary obstacles, snags and mistakes.*

*These problems have had a very adverse impact on many families causing at the least additional stress and in too many cases leading to mental health difficulties for children and parents/carers, relationship breakdown, reduced opportunities loss of income, requiring resort to social care and early help services. The pandemic, lockdown and loss of provision has tipped families who were previously just coping over the edge, causing a surge in referrals for this type of support.*

*Throughout our work, we continue to champion the importance of training for children and young people so that they understand their rights and can participate effectively - the momentum from children and young people themselves is essential for the SEND reforms to be a success. We have initiated a number of projects designed in partnership with others to increase training for parent and also for young people, so that their voice may be heard and acted upon. Too often Education, Health and Care Plans are made without the young person having real input into the process and almost universally without their 'voice' being captured and reflected in the Plans prepared in their name. At the same time, there are substantial numbers of the children and young people struggling in settings with unsupported or inadequately assessed SEND who are in need of support in ensuring that they receive the Ordinarily Available Provision they deserve.*

*The survey of satisfaction highlights that our service continues to be held in high regard and that those who have benefited from our services have found their position to be better as a result. Unfortunately, we had to accept a substantial reduction in funding in this year due to further reductions in DfE grants to support the enhanced SEND IAS service anticipated in the Children and Families Act. Nevertheless, demand remains high for all the reasons noted above. The immediate consequence for our users has been a lengthening of wait times (reflected slightly in the survey) but we have only been able to continue to deliver Adviser time at these levels by withdrawing substantially from strategic work and by ending non term time provision. Both of these are areas of concern and they show in the report in our reduced compliance with the Minimum Standards for SEND IAS. Whilst*

*we are seeking new partnerships to develop areas like training, core funding for adviser time needs to be increased if the service is to be able to fulfil the Minimum Standards.*

*And a thank you:*

*To all our staff, inhouse and volunteers, for they have never failed to give their utmost, working with great professionalism, commitment and empathy. The achievement of the reduced team in maintaining levels of ongoing work consistent with the previous year in spite of higher individual caseloads is especially impressive.*

*Andrew Howard – Chairman Bucks SENDIAS Service and FACT Bucks*



## Appendix A: compliance with Minimum Standards

Minimum Standard	Met/working towards/unmet		
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>I. Commissioning, governance and management</b>	<b>4/8 met</b>	<b>6/8 met</b>	<b>6/8 met</b>

**I.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.

**I.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.

**I.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.

**I.4** There is a dedicated and ring-fenced budget held and managed by an IAS service manager located within an IASS.

**I.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.

**I.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.

**I.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.

**I.8** The IASS has a development plan reviewed annually with the steering group/advisory body, which includes specific actions and improvement targets.

**Progress:** Since our annual report in 2020 we have successfully met via our Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix H):

- **1.1: a formal agreement** set out in writing which refers directly to the Minimum Standards, whilst also considering the need for continuity and stability of the service.

**Challenges: 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: All year-round flexible service**

We have made good progress this year towards designing and commissioning our service with our service users, involving them in all our new initiatives. However, our staffing reductions mean we no longer have the capacity and resources to meet these Minimum Standards and local need – service users since November have experienced delays of 2-3 weeks in receiving a response, we are having to refuse more meeting requests, service user feedback comments are more critical and holiday cover is almost non-existent – consequently, the team experiences overload especially during times of peak demand.

Minimum Standard	Met/working towards/unmet		
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>2. Strategic functions</b>	<b>3/3 met</b>	<b>3/3 met</b>	<b>3/3 met</b>

**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.

<b>Minimum Standard</b>	<b>Met/working towards/unmet</b>		
<b>3. Operational functions</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
	<b>2/6 met</b>	<b>2/6 met</b>	<b>2/6 met</b>

**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.**

**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

**3.5** 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.

We are working towards:

- 3.1: 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 **a) children** and **b) young people**.
- 3.4: **support for individual children and young people**.

We have not yet fully met these standards because of the low numbers of individual children and young people we currently reach - relating to lack of promotion of this role, parental resistance, lack of capacity/extra time advisers require to work directly with children and young people. Raising these numbers was a key feature in our business plan for 2020-2021, but has been delayed because of the restrictions relating to COVID-19 and because of our staff reductions.

- 3.2: branded information and promotional materials in **a range of accessible formats**

We have made good progress towards this standard by publishing updated versions of materials with consistent branding written with a lower reading age in mind. We are developing podcasts which may be useful for visually impaired service users and we have added subtitles to our service user film. There is still a good deal of work to do.

Not yet in scope:

- 3.3: The IASS does not have a **stand-alone service website** that is accessible to all service users.

We have not yet met this standard because we do not currently have the resources to develop a stand-alone website and feedback from our steering group and service users does not indicate it should be a priority. We are working on improving the content and accessibility of our webpages and links with the new Local Offer website. Comment:

- **3.4** *The IASS provides advocacy support for individual children, young people, and parents*

We do not promote our service as providing 'advocacy support'. We provide support to help service users express their views and wishes and help them understand and exercise their rights – our service and steering group do not accept this approach as a definition of advocacy, although this is how it is defined by the National IASS Network: [IASS - Definition of Advocacy \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

Minimum Standard	Met/working towards/unmet		
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>4. Professional development and training for staff</b>	2/3 met	3/3 met	3/3 met
<p><b>4.1</b> 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.</p> <p><b>4.2</b> The service routinely requests feedback from service users and others, and uses this to further develop the work and practices of the service.</p> <p><b>4.3</b> All IASS staff and volunteers have ongoing supervision and continuous professional development.</p>			

## Appendix B: Workforce

In-house staff team:

Role	FTE	Funding source	Experience with SENDIAS
Team Leader	0.85	BC	15 years
Adviser	0.63	BC	15 months
Adviser	0.42	BC	2 years
Adviser	0.23	BC	2 years
CYP Adviser	0.20	BC	6 years
Business Support	0.5	BC	6 months
Business Support	0.3	BC	3 months
Totals	3.13		<b>22 years 2 months ( 5 years less than 2019-2020)</b>

Volunteer SEND IAS Adviser (VSA) team:

Role	Number	Average hours/wk/ term time/ volunteer	Experience
Volunteer Advisers	2	8	3 months

## Appendix C: Buckinghamshire SEND IAS Service local context

In the 2011 census there were 153,465 children and young people under the age of 25 in Buckinghamshire.

In January 2019, 94,532 of these were registered at a school.

In 2019 8,910 of these were receiving SEN Support and a further 3,101 had an EHC Plan. (SEN 2019 LA tables). In Buckinghamshire in January 2019, 3.3% pupils had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) compared to 3.1% in England and 3.3% in the South East and 9.4% were on SEN Support compared to 11.6% nationally. (LAIT 2019).

By March 2020, 4705 EHCPs were being maintained by Buckinghamshire, covering children and young people aged up to 25 in early year's settings, schools, colleges and otherwise than at school. In 2020 there were 934 requests for an EHC needs assessment, 1% lower than in 2019 and 5% higher than in 2018. Nationally for 2019 the % of requests agreed stood at 77%, and for the south-eastern region 73%. This is higher than the Bucks 2020 figure of 63%. However, November and December have seen an increase to 74% and 76% respectively.

By the end of March 2019, only 8% of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments progressing to an Education, Health and Care Plan were meeting the statutory timescale of 20 weeks. This had improved to 97% by December 2020. However, EHC Plans continued to be issued without all requested appendices. In 2020 589 EHC plans were issued by BC compared to 673 in 2019. (*Data from Education, Health and Care Plans – Monthly Analysis December 2020 report to SEND Ops*)

There continue to be very lengthy delays for the SEND team to process annual reviews.

There is a continuing issue around a shortage of specialist placements.

During 2020, the Integrated SEND Team participated in 100 mediation meetings, mostly around refusal to agree to an EHC needs assessment. This is a significant rise on the previous year where only 55 meetings were attended. Approx. 32% of the cases that went to Mediation during 2020 later progressed to an appeal, with the remainder seemingly coming to some form of resolution with no further escalation.

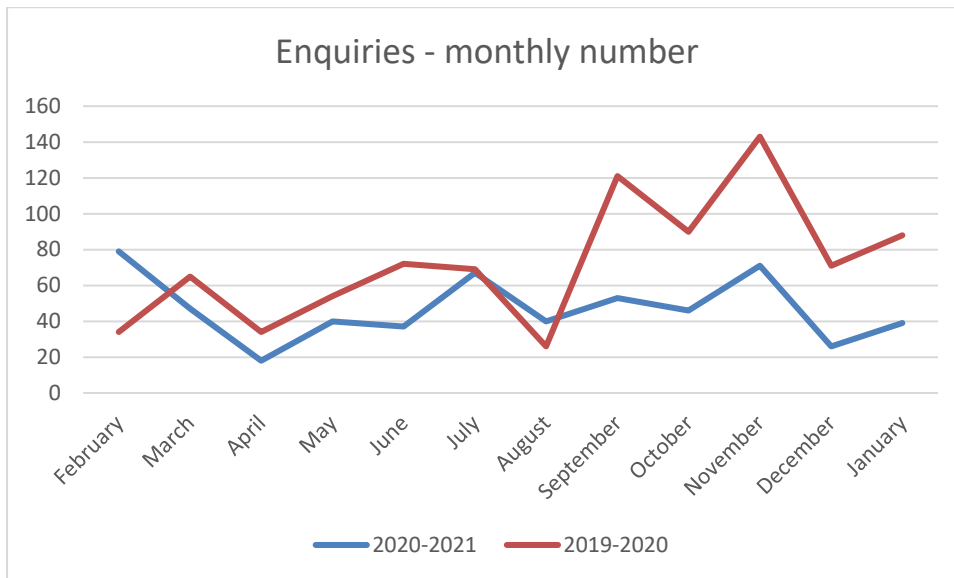
There were 169 tribunal appeals received during 2020, with approximately 61% challenging the named placement (Section I). (*Data from SEND Resolutions report February 2021*)

## Appendix D: Statistics from our database

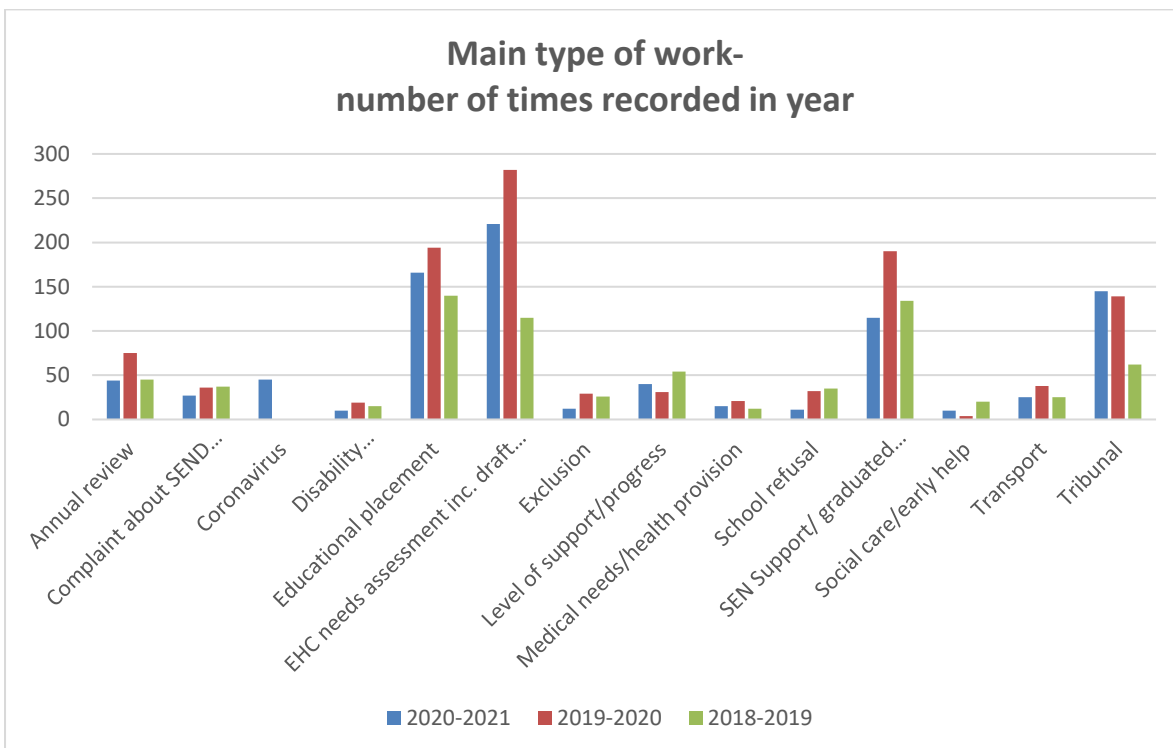
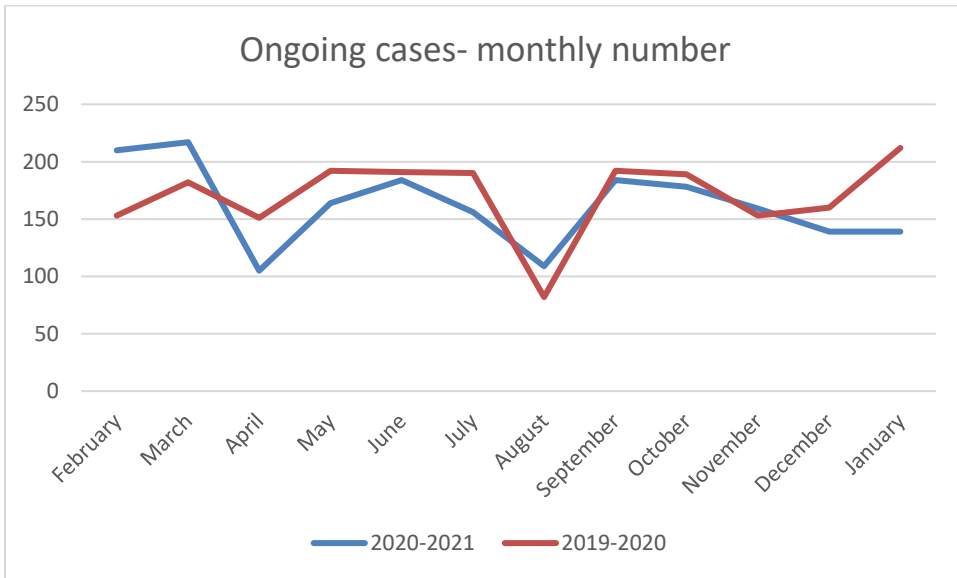
Usually we include a full set of tables of data extracted from our database e.g. gender, age range, ethnicity, main disability, level of involvement, geographical reach. We have kept this to the minimum this year because of the shortage of time available to ensure data is complete and to analyse it.

In the period September 2014 – 23 February 2021 3008 new referrals to SENDIAS were recorded on our database.

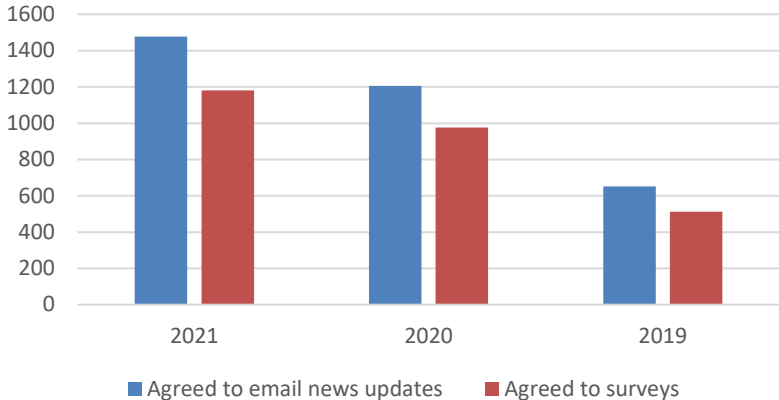
In 2020-21, we dealt with 860 ongoing cases including 405 new referrals to our SEND IAS and SEND IAS CYP projects. 11 of the new referrals involved us working directly with individual children and young people. We continued to work with an additional 9 children and young people who had contacted us in the previous year. We dealt with 1011 ongoing cases including 590 new referrals in 2019-2020, 746 ongoing cases and 442 new referrals in 2018-19, 720 ongoing cases and 430 new referrals in 2017-18 and 636 ongoing cases and 391 new referrals in 2016-17. The number of new enquiries was 566 to compared to 845 in 2019-2020, 467 in 2018-19.







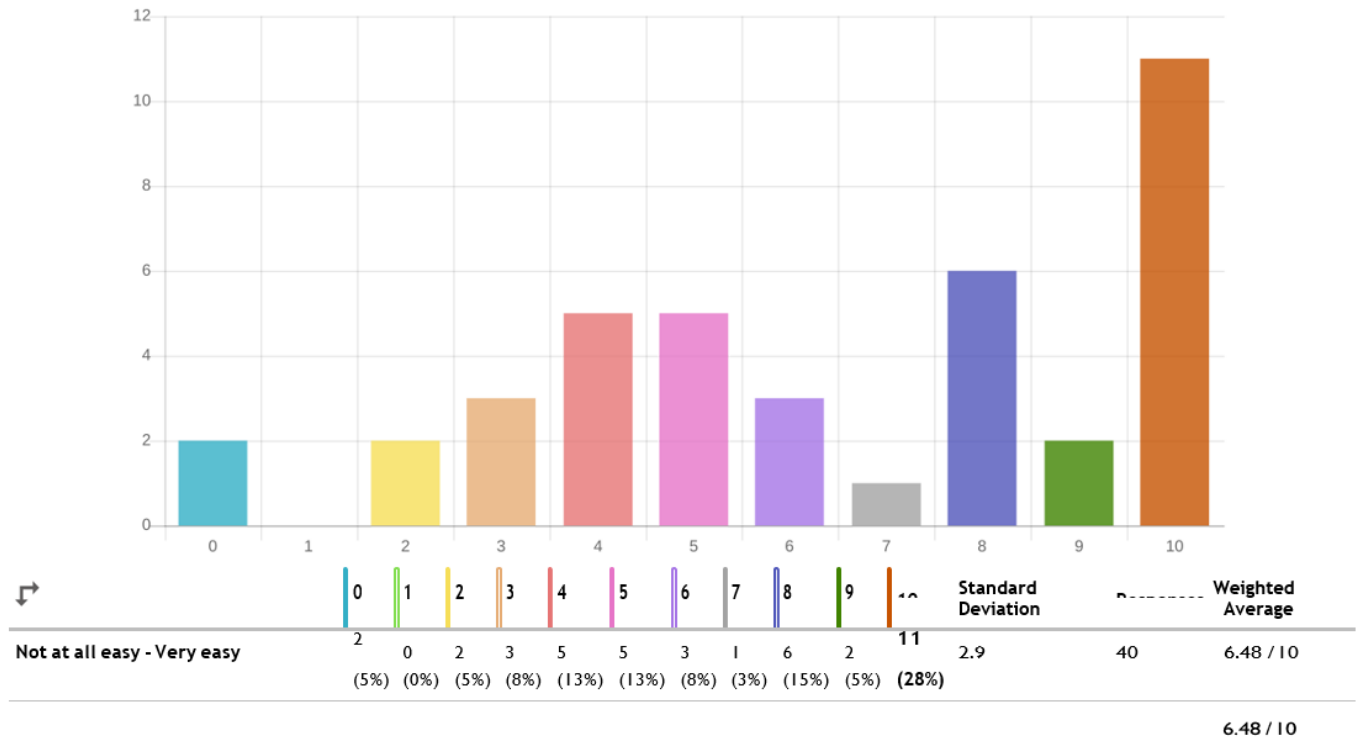
### GDPR consents



## Appendix E: Our survey results – February 2021

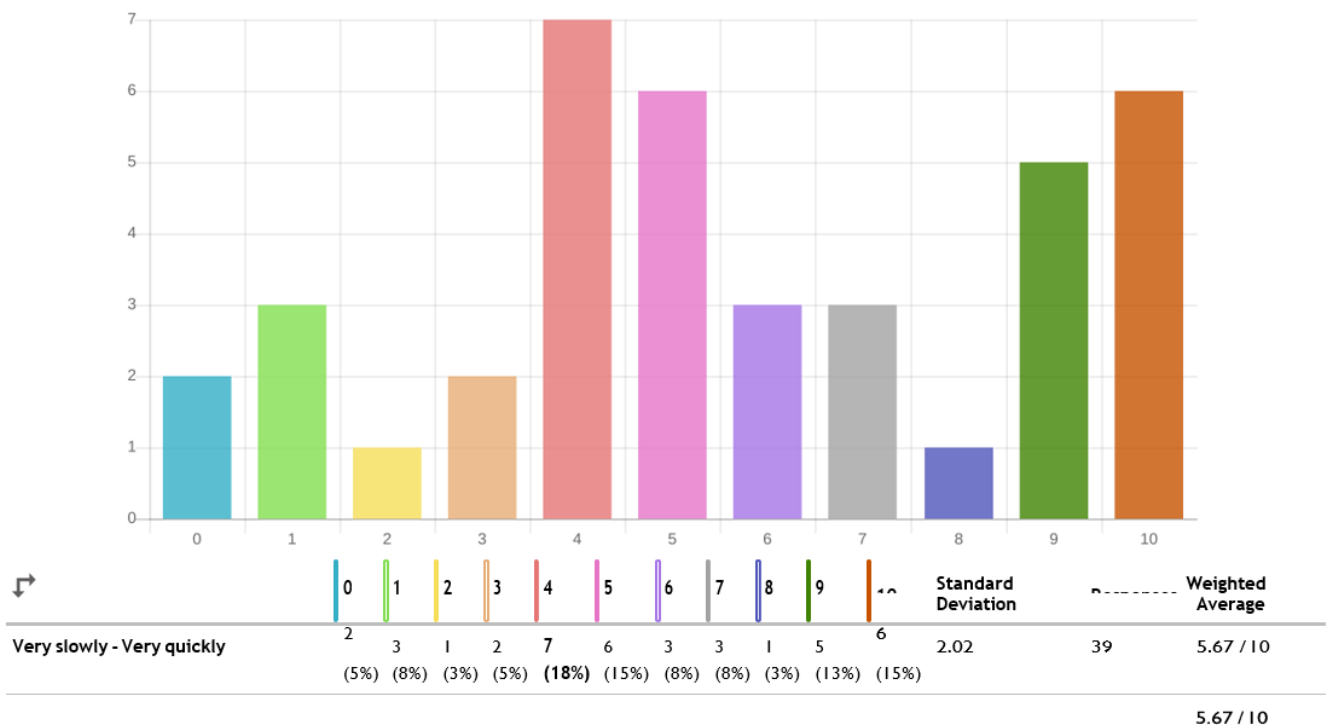
<b>Neutrality rated at least 7/10</b> <b>65%</b> (61%)	<b>Difference we made rated at least 7/10</b> <b>49%</b> (52%)	<b>Satisfaction rated at least 7/10</b> <b>57%</b> (51%)
<b>62%</b> (66%) would recommend our service to others	<b>Number of complaints received:</b> <b>0</b>	
<i>Figures for March 2020 – mid February 2021, previous year's figures in red</i> 39 respondents 2021; 29 respondents 2020		

# 1 How easy was it to get in touch with us?



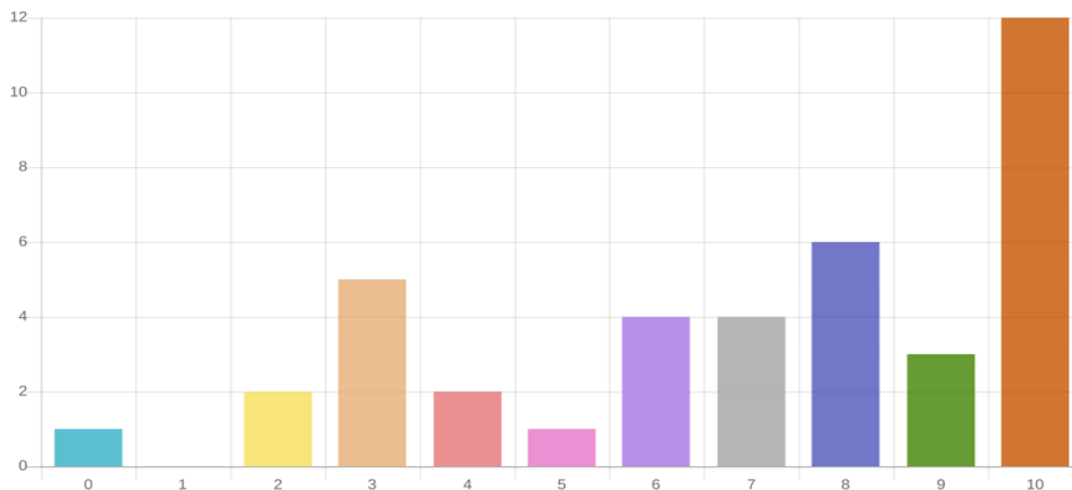
6.48 / 10

# 2 How quickly did we respond?



5.67 / 10

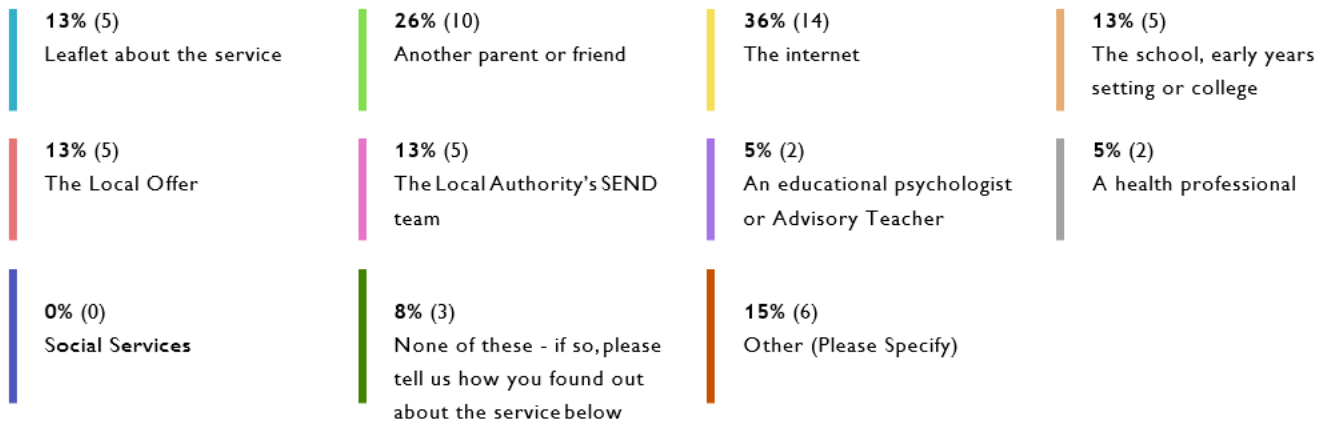
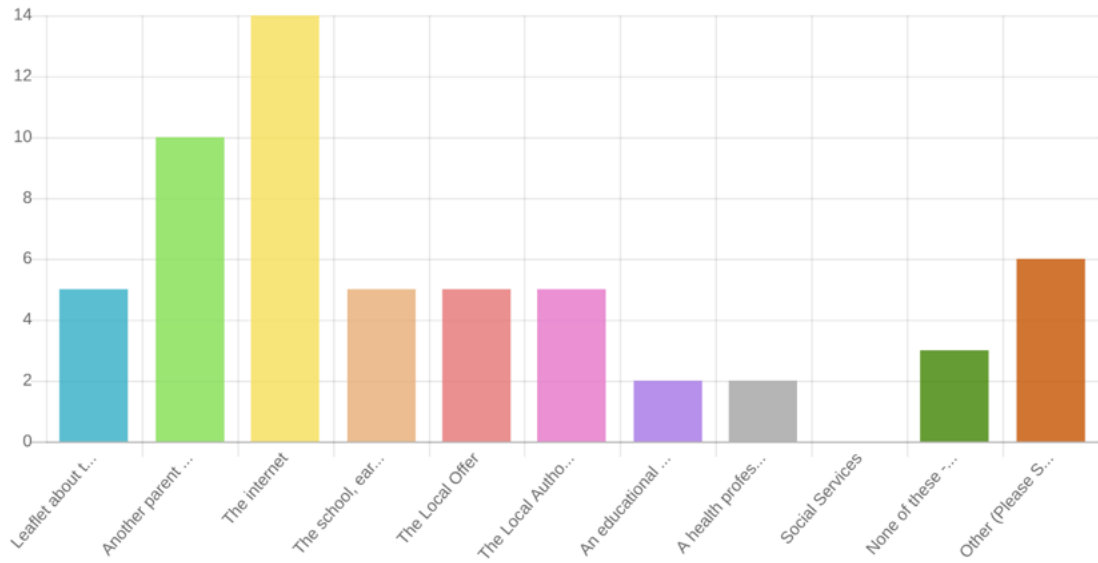
### 3 How well do you think we understood your questions or concerns?



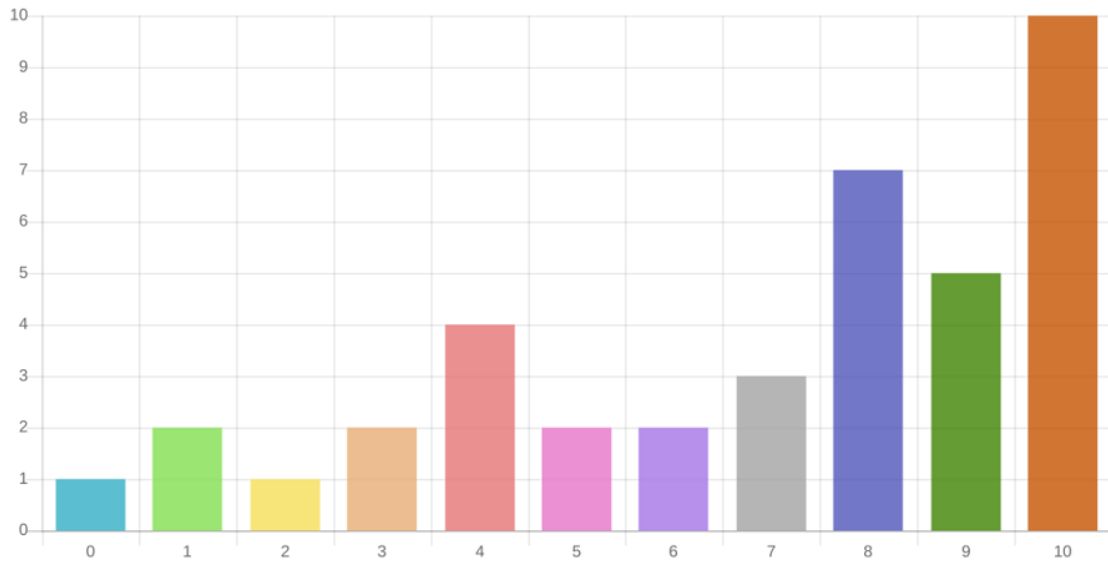
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Standard Deviation	Weighted Average
Not at all well - Very well	1	0	2	5	2	1	4	4	6	3	12	3.17	40
	(3%)	(0%)	(5%)	(13%)	(5%)	(3%)	(10%)	(10%)	(15%)	(8%)	(30%)		6.98 / 10

6.98 / 10

#### 4 How did you hear about us? (Please indicate all that apply)



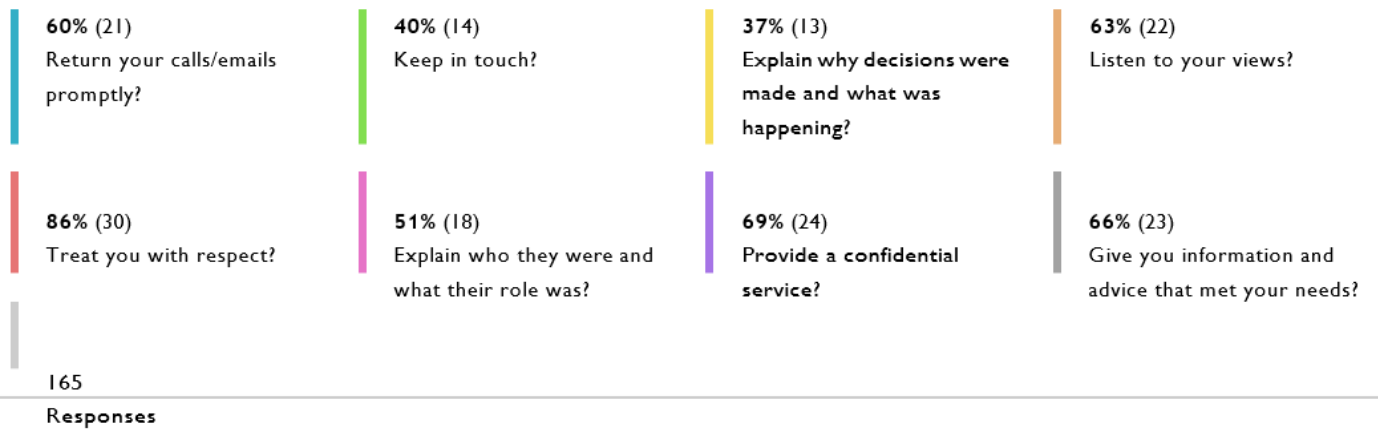
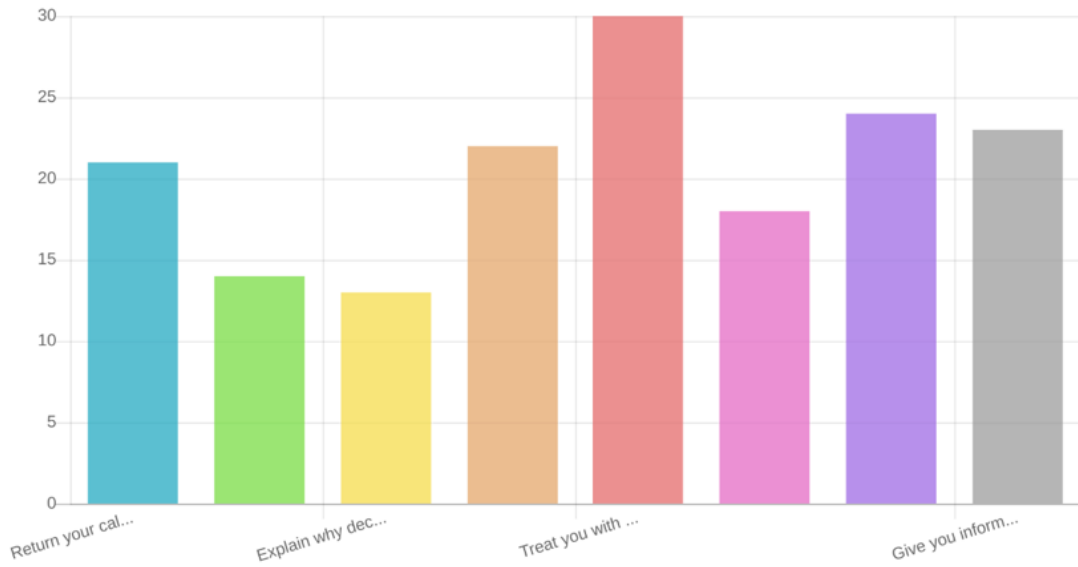
## 5 How helpful was the information, advice and support we gave you?



	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Standard Deviation	n	Weighted Average
Not at all helpful - Very helpful	1	2	1	2	4	2	2	3	7	5	10	2.68	39	6.92 / 10
	(3%)	(5%)	(3%)	(5%)	(10%)	(5%)	(5%)	(8%)	(18%)	(13%)	(26%)			

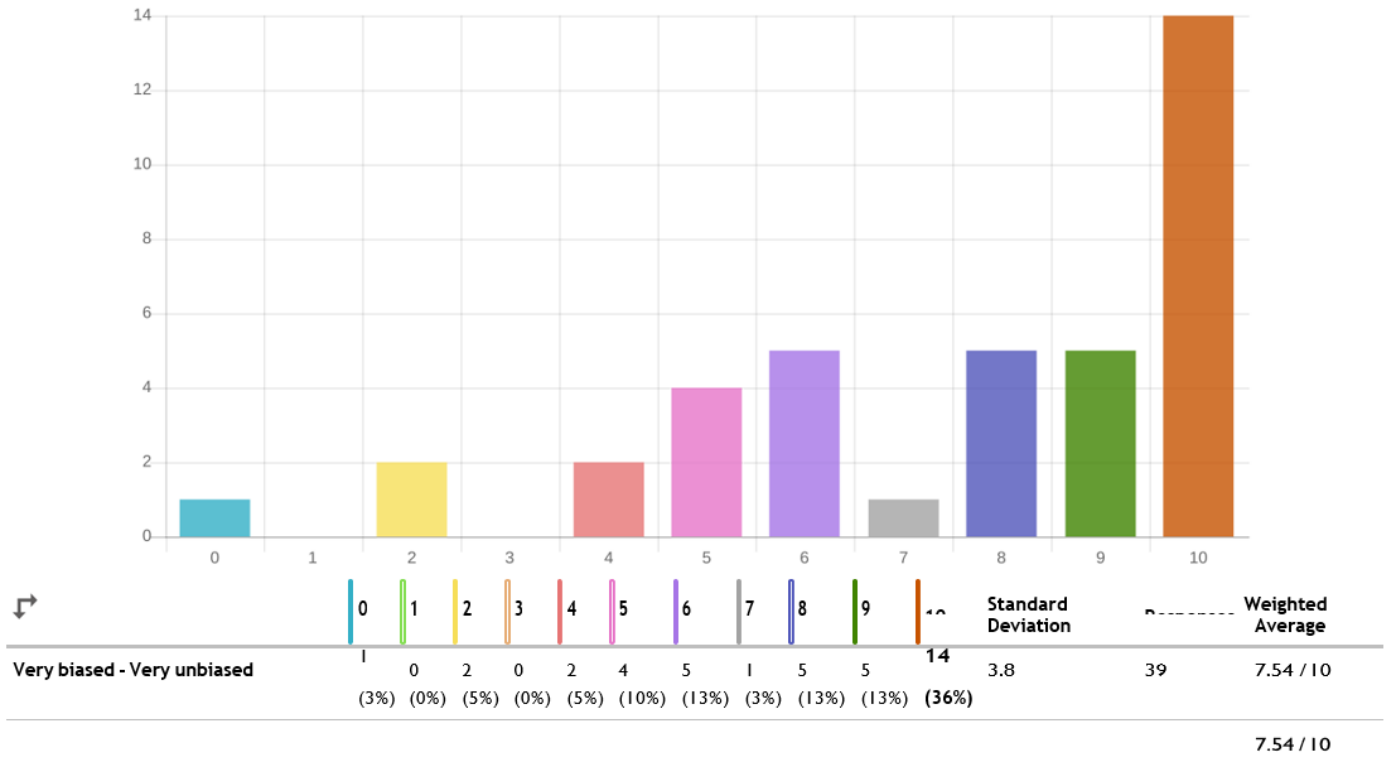
6.92 / 10

## 6 Did Bucks SEND IAS Service help you in these ways? (Please indicate all that apply)

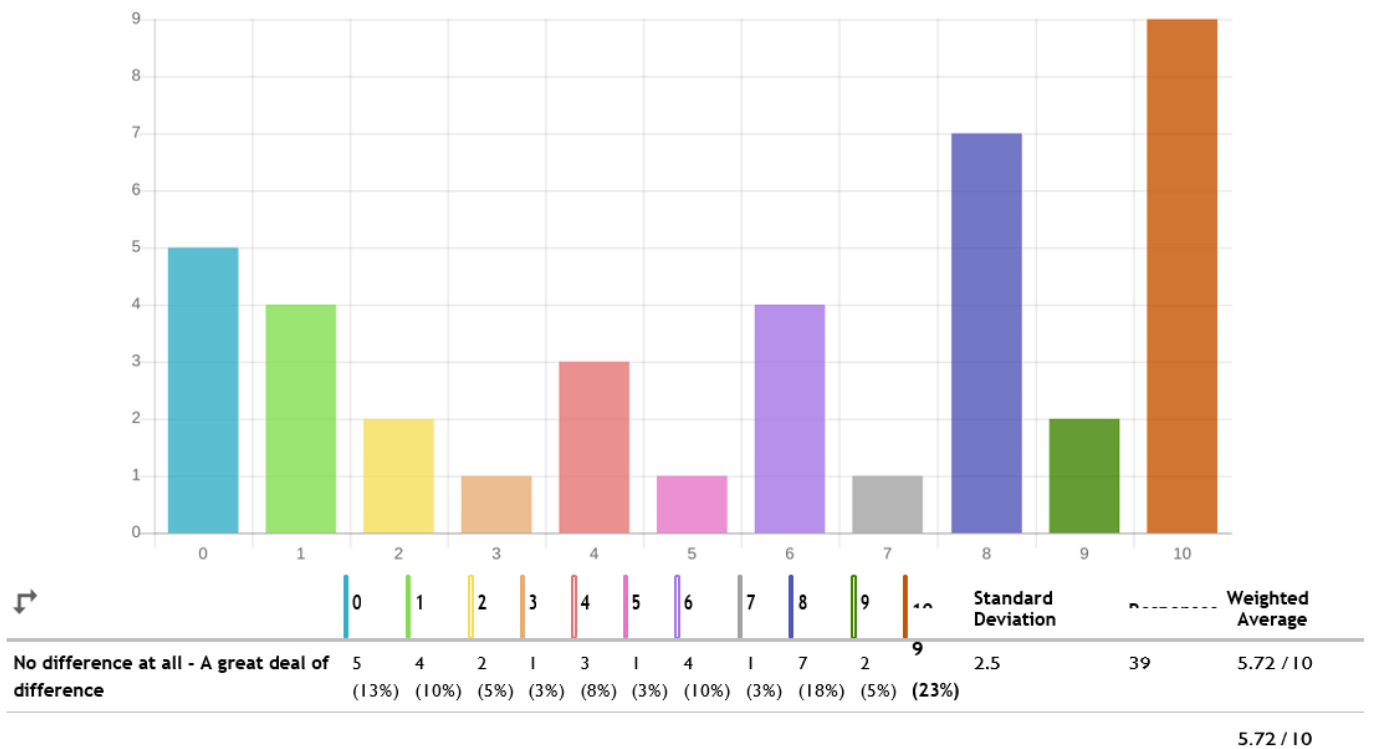




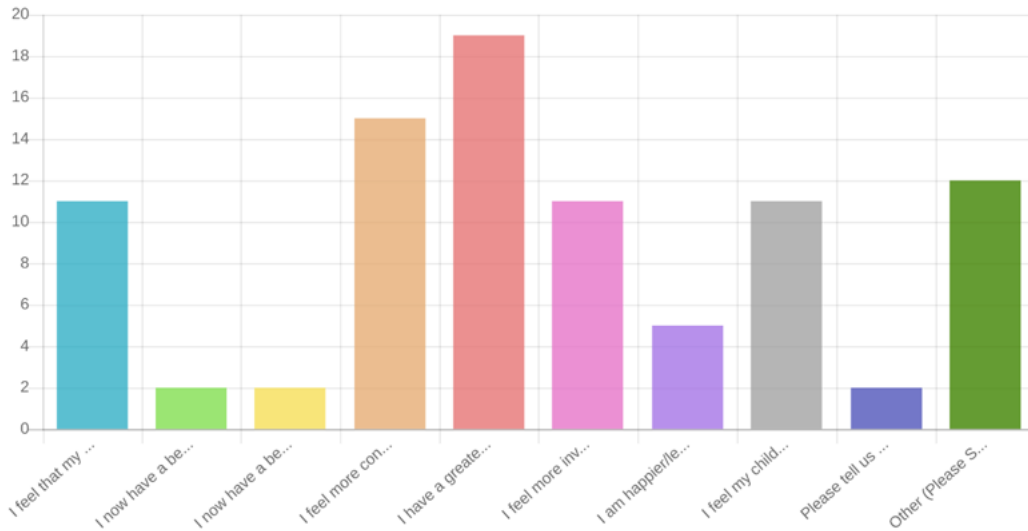
## 7 How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we were?



## 8 What difference do you think our information, advice or support has made for you?



**10** Please choose any of the following that are true for you:



**31% (11)**  
I feel that my child's needs are better understood than they were

**6% (2)**  
I now have a better relationship with my child's school or setting

**6% (2)**  
I now have a better relationship with the Local Authority

**43% (15)**  
I feel more confident

**54% (19)**  
I have a greater understanding of law and guidance relating to SEND

**31% (11)**  
I feel more involved in decisions about my child's education

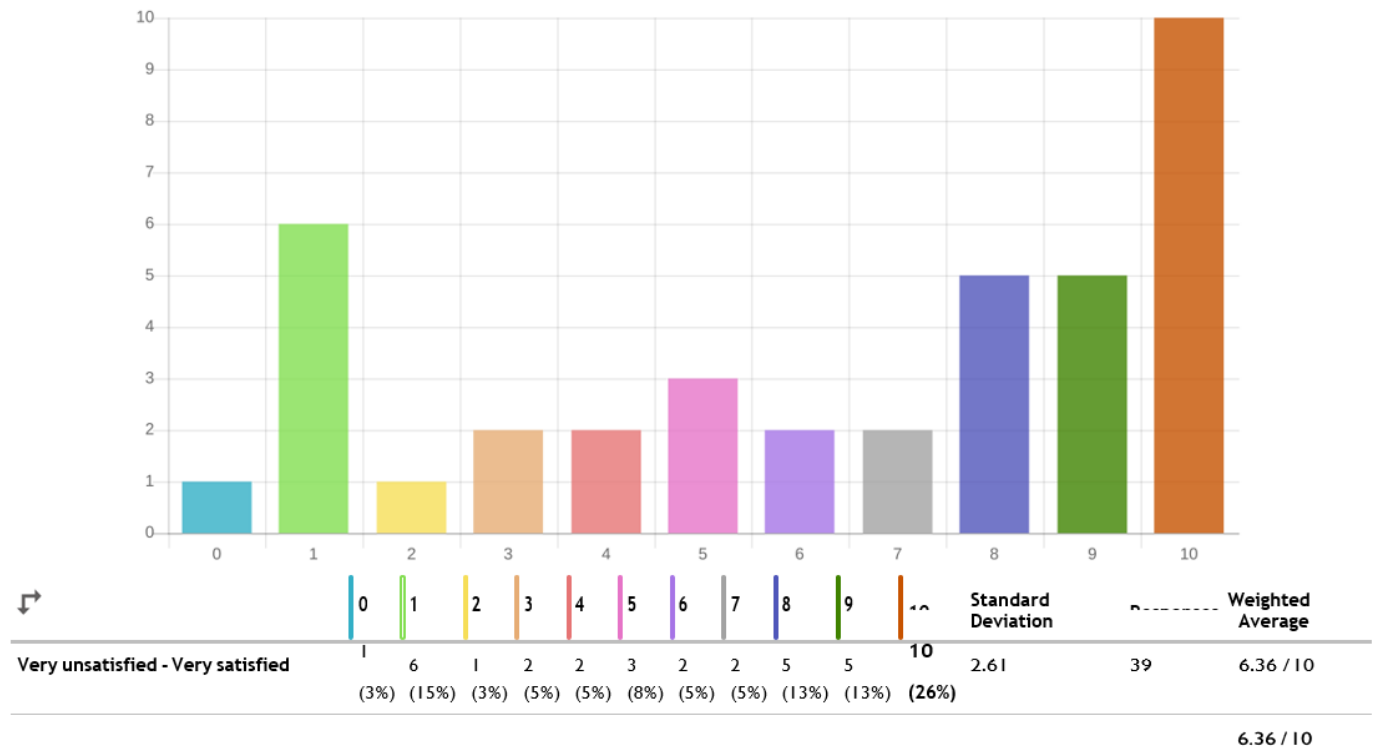
**14% (5)**  
I am happier/less worried about my child's future

**31% (11)**  
I feel my child has benefitted as a result of the SEND IAS being involved

**6% (2)**  
Please tell us of any other differences that SEND IAS has made:

**34% (12)**  
Other (Please Specify)

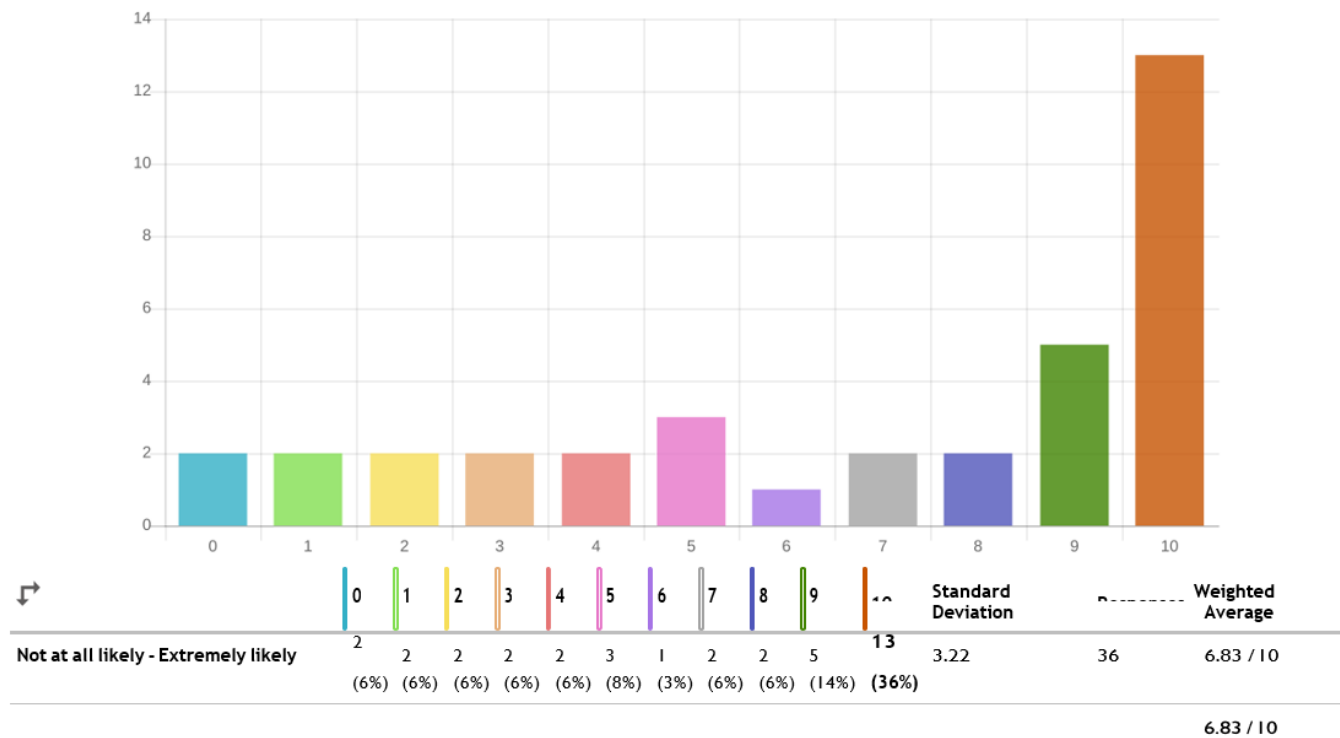
## 11 Overall how satisfied are you with the service we gave?



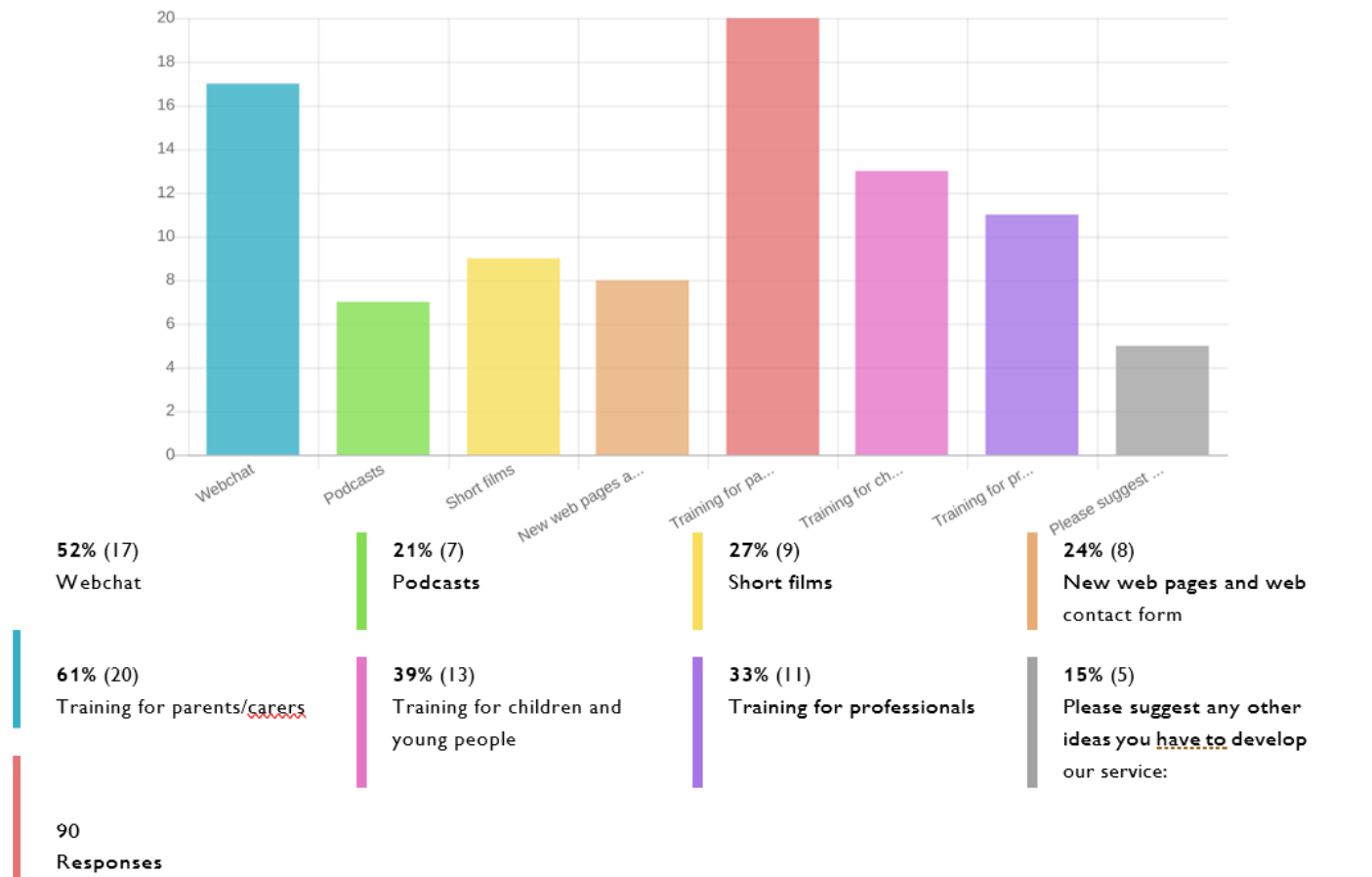
## 12 Was there anything we could have done better?

(Section 12 includes a large number of free text comments available on request, some of which are cited in the main report).

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



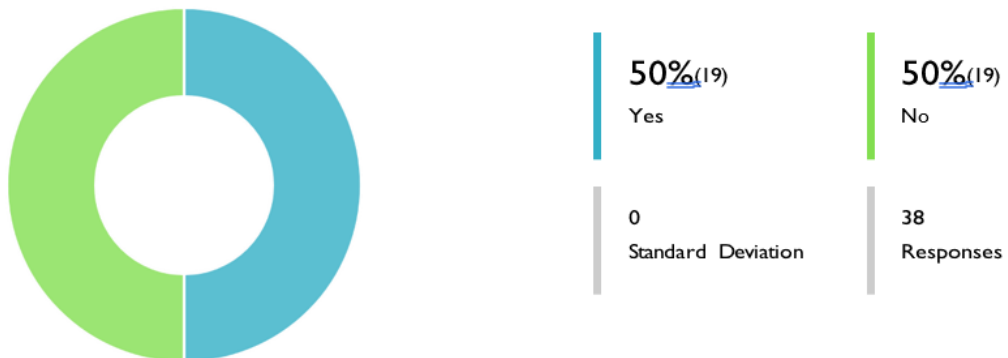
**14** We are developing new ways to work with you and/or your child. Which of the following do you think you will use?



**15** Do you have any other comments about our service?

(Section 15 includes a large number of free text comments available on request, some of which are cited in the main report).

**16** Thank you for your help. If you are happy to discuss your comments about our service may we contact you?



## Appendix F: Our feedback summary

<b><u>Type of feedback gathered and from whom</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency of feedback gathering</u></b>	<b><u>Themes from latest feedback</u></b>	<b><u>Action taken following feedback</u></b>
Service user survey – parent/carers and young people	To date annually but moving to ongoing feedback from April 2021	Latest survey January 2021, generally rated less favourably than 2020.	Comparison with previous years' surveys. Will be shared with advisory steering group, senior leaders, National IASS Network and published on our webpages.  Team meeting discussion and lessons learned followed up.
Training session evaluations – parents/carers/ young people/ professionals	Following each training		Usually leads to refining of training
Joint FACT Bucks/ SENDIAS state of SEND survey – parents/carers	Approx. annually, next one due February 2021	Last survey in 2018 showed parents' frustration with lack of coproduction, poor communication and delays relating to local area support for children and young people with SEND.	Results shared widely. Published on FACT website and promoted via our email news update. Informs SENDIAS team. Leads to more referrals to SENDIAS.
Joint FACT Bucks/SENDIAS	Twice so far	Very high response rate. Showed very patchy response by services and schools	Used to tailor SENDIAS support for families during pandemic. Shared

COVID 19 survey – parents/carers		to support for families with children and young people with SEND.	with senior leaders. Published on FACT website and promoted via our email news update.
Coproduction of service improvements focus groups– with parent/carers and young people	As required e.g. to consider website, online training, employability animations.	Accessibility, content, format	Very useful to ensure detail of improvements is tailored to service users' needs.
Webchat feedback	After each chat	Few chats so far, favourable feedback	Reviewing timing/ promotion of webchat sessions

## **Appendix G: Case Study:**

### **Adjustments to our ways of working during lockdown**

#### **The context**

Bucks SENDIAS Service is an in-house service funded by Buckinghamshire Council and CDC. Prior to lockdown, our part-time team of 8 worked from our office in central Aylesbury, travelling out across Buckinghamshire to meetings (usually at educational settings), to deliver outreach and other commitments as required. On average the team were at their desks on the phone or sending emails for 65% of their working week. The work was well-established, mainly stemming from the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equalities Act 2010.

#### **The story**

Since lockdown, so much has changed including:

1. Our team all now work from home.
2. Many children and young people have not been attending school, even if a place has been made available for them. Some schools remained completely closed for several months.
3. There has been updated law and guidance on an almost daily basis, creating a great challenge for the team - both in making sense of the information and in sharing it with our service users and local area SEND colleagues.
4. Buckinghamshire became a unitary authority on 1 April 2020.

#### **The outcome**

1. The team adapted quickly as we had planned ahead – all had the technology in place for home working. Like many others, we have had to learn to host and contribute on virtual meeting platforms. We are currently investigating options to run online training sessions for service users. Many of the team have caring responsibilities at home so have flexed their working hours to cope.
2. We have been particularly concerned about the welfare of children and young people with SEND in lockdown in homes with parent/carers needing respite. We raised this issue at weekly meetings, which began at the start of lockdown, with the Head of SEND, the Head of Early Help, the Head of Transformation, and the Chair of the parent carer forum. We pushed for schools to be challenged to reopen and for children and young people with EHC plans to be offered school places – by reminding the LA of their responsibilities, and the likely consequences for vulnerable children if they are denied a school place, asking about overall progress e.g. numbers of schools open, number of risk assessments submitted to the LA by schools. Initially the SENDIAS team contacted some of our most vulnerable families proactively, to make sure they had the help they need. Following the very high response rate (1070) to our wellbeing survey, coproduced with our parent carer forum, we contacted almost 90 respondents who asked for a follow up, to ensure they understand their rights and know what is available to support them. When we hear of vulnerable children and young people whose schools are refusing to offer a place, we escalate these to the area managers in the integrated SEND team – invariably, a place has then been offered. This proactive approach benefitted at least 10 children. We have also found that several children who were out of school prior to lockdown and had been promised a school place imminently, were not being given any education – we have escalated these too, to try to ensure that children are receiving either online home tuition as Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) or are inducted into their new setting at least virtually. Feedback from a parent (2.6.2020) includes: 'X started his placement at Y School yesterday. He came out with a big smile on his face.'



3. To provide the team with a collated, summarised document of all the updates we need to know, local and national, one of the team devised the Coronavirus Compilation. The team leader updates this often on a weekly basis, marking new developments in red, and shares it with the team so that they have to hand a very brief prompt for all the relevant links, and can use the Microsoft Word 'Find' facility to navigate to the heading they need when talking to service users. We have also been sending out often more than once a week a Mailchimp news update for the 1000+ service users who have consented to receive them, also forwarding it to local area colleagues, some of whom forward it on themselves e.g Head of SEND forwarded it as 'a useful summary' to the incoming director of education, principal EP etc.
4. Although the move to shared systems in a unitary authority is going smoothly it has been an added complication during coronavirus, with disruptive adjustments to websites, email addresses and processes. This means that the continued capability of an expert, consistent team at SENDIAS to communicate with large numbers of service users during the crisis has been highly valued, hence the weekly meetings with strategic leaders, as we have been able to provide rapid, reliable intelligence on how families are coping, which has helped them with their planning e.g. ensuring a robust challenge to school risk assessments; highlighting the disparity between schools in terms of what they are offering to their pupils with SEND. This close working has also benefitted our service users as we hear of changes as they happen, are closely involved in planning and even coproducing policy documents e.g FACT Bucks the parent carer forum and Bucks SENDIAS were given a blank sheet to coproduce the [Buckinghamshire Section 42 policy](#) which arose from COVID-19-related temporary changes in the law.

## Appendix H: Memorandum of Understanding



## Buckinghamshire SENDIAS Service



01296 383754



[sendias@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)



[www.buckscc.gov.uk/education/bucks-send-ias/](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/education/bucks-send-ias/)

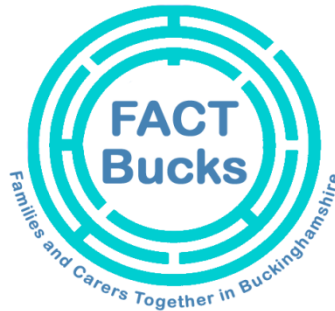


[shorturl.at/jzBQ4](https://shorturl.at/jzBQ4)

### **Buckinghamshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service**

Memorandum of Understanding with our partners

2020-2021



## I **What is an Information, Advice and Support service?**

It is a statutory service: our legal purpose is set out in section 32 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) and in Chapter 2 of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#):

*Section 32, Children and Families Act 2014*

### *Advice and information*

*(1)A local authority in England must arrange for children and young people for whom it is responsible, and the parents of children for whom it is responsible, to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to the special educational needs of the children or young people concerned.*

*(2)A local authority in England must arrange for children and young people in its area with a disability, and the parents of children in its area with a disability, to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to the disabilities of the children or young people concerned.*

*(3)The authority must take such steps as it thinks appropriate for making the services provided under subsections (1) and (2) known to—*

*(a)the parents of children in its area;*

*(b)children in its area;*

*(c)young people in its area;*

*(d)the head teachers, proprietors and principals of schools and post-16 institutions in its area.*

*(4)The authority may also take such steps as it thinks appropriate for making the services provided under subsections (1) and (2) known to such other persons as it thinks appropriate.*

[Section 26 of the Children and Families Act](#) says that this advice and information must be jointly commissioned by the local authority and partner commissioning bodies. In Buckinghamshire this is [Buckinghamshire Council](#) and the [Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group](#).

Chapter 2 of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) says that SENDIAS services should help to promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents and have the following distinctive features:

- Free of charge
- Impartial
- Confidential

- Accessible
- Dedicated and easily-identifiable
- At arm's length from the local authority
- Jointly commissioned
- Dedicated and ring-fenced budget

SENDIAS services are expected to have the capacity and resources to meet local need and the national [Minimum Standards](#) approved by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

The SENDIAS service has real power to impact decisions made regarding young people's education, providing advocacy support for children, young people and parents. The service should be seen by users to be independent of the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group and be identified as an arm's length, confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service.

When supporting individual users and families must be confident that the SENDIAS service is not influenced by any local strategies or decisions which may impact the outcome of their complaint/appeal or process challenge. The governance of the service must have a clearly defined management structure which includes a IASS manager based solely within the service and a steering group or advisory body who oversees the development of the service plan to ensure the principles of independence.

## **2 The aim of this Memorandum of Understanding**

2.1 The overarching aim of this MoU is to formulate an agreement between all subscribers on how Bucks SENDIAS Service will work with them in the interests of Buckinghamshire children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers.

### **3. Expectations of subscribers:**

There are specific expectations of the parties of this Memorandum of understanding.

#### **3.1 Expectations of Commissioners and CCG:**

- Promote Bucks SENDIAS to 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.
- Commit to the [Minimum Standards approved by the Department for Education.](#)

- Ensure the integrity of the service through defined reporting and structured governance to ensure the integrity of the service: confidential, impartial, arm's length, free to service users
- Provide funds to enable the Service to meet the [Minimum Standards](#) and local need.

### **3.2 Expectations of Bucks SENDIAS Service:**

Bucks SENDIAS Service will:

- Produce an annual Business Plan to deliver the service requirements set out in section I which ensures the Minimum Standards are met.
- Produce an Annual Report on our work
- Facilitate termly meetings of our Advisory Group for representatives of our service users – this Group will support the SENDIAS team leader to deliver the service
- Facilitate annual meetings of our Stakeholders Group for all who subscribe to this Memorandum of Understanding in order to share intelligence and influence.
- Engage regionally and nationally.
- Seek out and listen to feedback from service users and families
- Offer training to local education, health care professionals, children and young people and parents to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance and local policy issues.

## **4. Partnership objectives**

This MoU includes a description in Appendix A of how we contribute to local area priorities and explains what we need from others to maximise the impact of our work in the interest of children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND and their parents/carers in Buckinghamshire.

Each year there will be specific partnership objectives which will be agreed in the business plan.

### **4 Monitoring**

The stakeholder group will monitor this MoU on an annual basis.

### **5 Impact evaluation**

The impact of this MoU will be evaluated via our annual report.

**6 MoU governance and oversight**

This MoU will be reviewed annually by the Stakeholder Group. Reference will be made to the MoU in the SENDIAS annual report. The SENDIAS Service will report annually to the Buckinghamshire Integrated Service Board (ISB).

**7 Financial contributions**

The Local Authority and CCG will provide the necessary level of funding to deliver the statutory service, meet local demand and be compliant with the [Minimum Standards. This funding is a dedicated and ring fenced budget held and managed by the IASS service manager.](#)

**8 Disclaimer**

8.1 It should be noted that by signing this document or by participating in the [name of partnership], the partners are not committing to legally binding obligations. It is intended that the partners remain independent of each other and that their collaboration and use of the term ‘subscriber’ does not constitute the creation of a legal entity, nor authorise the entry into a commitment for or on behalf of each other.

Signed on behalf of [Subscriber A]

.....

Date .....  
[NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of [Subscriber B]

..... Date  
..... [NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of [Subscriber C]

..... Date  
 ..... [NAME, POSITION]

**Appendix A**

<b>SEND Strategy aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>What SENDIAS offers</b>	<b>How partners help</b>
<i>I am able to keep myself safe and healthy</i>	Health information, advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	Training for children and young people and parents/carers and professionals on navigating the health service	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
		IAS to service users to facilitate access to health services for children and young people	Promoting our service verbally and in publications
		Promotion of health services via our email news updates	Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible
		Involvement on health stakeholder groups	Referring families to our service with relevant consent
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to health to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures	Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements; liason re Ready, Steady Go
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	Coproduction of training



			<p>Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual</p> <p>Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.</p>
<b>SEND Strategy aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>What SENDIAS offers</b>	<b>How partners help</b>
<i>I can participate in wider society</i>	Social care and early help information, advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	IAS to service users to facilitate participation in wider society for children and young people including independent living and accommodation, transport, community activities.	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
		<p>IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to social care to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures.</p> <p>De-escalation and dispute resolution</p>	Promoting our service verbally and in publications
			<p>Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible</p> <p>Referring families to our service with relevant consent</p> <p>Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual</p>

			Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements
			Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.
<b>SEND Strategy aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>What SENDIAS offers</b>	<b>How partners help</b>
<i>I can achieve my ambitions in education, work or other meaningful activity</i>	SEN Support information, advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	SEN Support and PfA IAS for individual service users on demand provided by IPSEA trained advisers including volunteers face to face and virtually, by telephone, email and via webchat.	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
			Promoting our service verbally and in publications
	Preparing for adulthood information, advice and support provided for children and young people with SEND, with a particular focus on years 9-13, and their parents/carers		Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible
			Referring families to our service with relevant consent
			Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual
		SEN support and PfA information in a range of formats coproduced with service users and partners	Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements

			Expertise on formats, e.g. EAL, BSL, Braille,
			Commitment to coproduction
			Promotion of information
		Training for groups of children and young people, parents/carers and professionals coproduced with service users and partners provided face to face and via e.g. webinars, videos, podcasts	Promotion of training to families and professionals
		Anonymised data and intelligence available to partners to inform planning.	Commitment to coproduction
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	Sharing of training opportunities relevant to SENDIAS team or our service users
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to education and training to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures.	Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.
			Named link person and agreed response times
<b>SEND Strategy aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>What SENDIAS offers</b>	<b>How partners help</b>
<i>I can live independently</i>	Independent living advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	Providing service users with information, advice and support re accommodation options for young adults	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
			Promoting our service verbally and in publications
		Providing service users with information, advice and support	Encouraging individuals to self-serve via

		re independent travel training and transport options	webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to independent living to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures.	Referring families to our service with relevant consent
		Anonymised data and intelligence available to partners to inform planning.	Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual
			Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.