

## 1. Overview

There is a statutory duty for education, children’s social care and health to jointly commission an impartial Information, Advice and Support (IAS) service for children and parents with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This is set out in the Children and Families Act and SEND Code of Practice.

Information Advice and Support Services provide free impartial, confidential, and accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to special educational needs and disability. The remit of the service is described in the National IASS [Minimum Standards](#)

Devon County Council (DCC) and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) meet their statutory responsibilities through the commissioning of the Devon Information, Advice and Support (DIAS) service. DIAS is an “in house” service which means staff are local authority employees. We operate as an “arm’s length” confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service separate from the Local Authority and ICB.

DIAS is commissioned to support SEND improvement and transformation programmes. It provides strategic support and advice to improve services for children and young people with SEND and their families, including delivery of high-quality training. Any strategic messages to commissioners are managed under the clear need for DIAS to be impartial and confidential.

## 2. Service Delivery

DIAS delivers its commissioned service by providing information, advice, support and training as well as supporting participation. This is provided through a team of fifteen part-time staff, including two lead officers who manage the team, supported by a cohort of volunteers.

All DIAS staff have accredited legal training through the IASS national body.

### 2.1 Information

The DIAS information offer has been developed to provide empowering self-help materials. These enable families to understand SEND law, local SEND processes, and how they can have constructive conversations with professionals and a voice in decisions.

DIAS has a specific and stand-alone [website](#), printed and online resources and a [Facebook page](#). We have a designated member of staff skilled in information and communication delivery.

### 2.2 Advice

DIAS advice and support levels are based on the national [SENDIASS Intervention Levels Guidance](#) .

DIAS provides advice through an enquiry line which is staffed from 10am to 3pm, five days a week. In general, the enquiry line provides level 1 and level 2 advice.

## **2.3 Support**

Support is provided for more complex issues and/or where service users' needs or circumstances are a significant barrier. The support is up to, and including, higher level legal processes such as Ombudsman complaints, disability discrimination claims, SENDIST tribunal hearings, and judicial reviews.

Children and young people (CYP) access information, advice and support through the same routes as parent carers. DIAS can support CYP either alongside their parent carers, or independently.

DIAS has a group of skilled, trained volunteers who enhance the service offer by providing direct support for service users. This includes support at meetings, with filling in forms, preparing views and in some cases with mediation and appeals.

## **3. Training**

DIAS has a remit to offer training for service users and professionals to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local processes and participation. It provides a broad training offer tailored to the needs of its users which is developed based on feedback and types of enquiries to the service. The service also trains volunteers for the Ambassador Volunteer programme and for DIAS volunteers who enhance the service support offer.

The service delivers an online training offer for parents, to maximise reach and rationalise staffing capacity. We provide information sessions for professionals on the remit of the service and input to training for SENCOs.

## **4. Ambassador Volunteer (AV) Programme**

The [Ambassador Volunteer Programme](#) is a joint initiative with the Parent Carer Forum Devon (PCFD). It provides outreach and connection for parents around Devon.

The aim of the programme is to build a network of volunteer ambassadors for parents and carers of children with SEND, who act as points of contact in a school, group, or local area.

Local authority and health services information is shared. Feedback that is gathered is disseminated through strategic mechanisms.

A wide range of parents and professionals volunteer through the AV programme and are connected to a range of groups. The AV coordinator, who works across DIAS and PCFD, manages the programme, including the training and induction of new volunteers and ongoing support for volunteers.

## **5. Strategic activity**

The minimum standards require an IASS to engage with regional and national strategic planning and training to inform service development. The IASS must also work with local partners, including local parent and young people forums to inform and influence policy and practice in the local area.

DIAS is involved with a range of strategic workstreams, has connection with the Parent Carer Forum, and links with regional and national IASS networks. Across Devon, DIAS works with schools and other professionals to develop strategic relationships and support improved SEND practice. DIAS Lead Officers meet regularly with commissioners and SEND advisory services.

## 6. Reference Group

DIAS has a Reference group of parents and professionals who are key stakeholders from education, care and health. Children and young people do not currently attend, but their views and feedback are gathered and inform decisions. The purpose of the DIAS Reference Group is to monitor impartiality and enable the service to consult on development and delivery plans and outcomes.

The feedback and specific data in this annual report is provided for commissioners, to help them review their practice or communications with parents, carers and CYP.

## 7. Service Activity Overview for 2022-23

Headline data:

- 3296 enquiries where information, advice or support were provided
- 96% increase\* in enquiries relating to school exclusions
- 50% increase\* in enquiries relating to SEND Tribunal appeals
- 32 training sessions delivered to 344 attendees
- 193% increase\* in number of people viewing DIAS Facebook content
- 15% increase\* in website visits and the number of pages viewed increased by 215%
- 43% increase\* in Ambassador volunteers, providing more reach across Devon

\* from the previous reporting period

### 7.1 Enquiries

During 2022-23 we made significant changes to the way we provide information, advice and support and moved to a new helpline model. In September 2022, we implemented a new data recording system to reflect the new way of working. As a result it is not possible to make direct comparisons with data sets from the previous year. Some data comparisons have been made for specific periods of the year to reflect this. We have used percentages to enable comparisons.

Data sets and graphs can be found in Appendix 2

- Total number of enquiries for the reporting period was 3296. The busiest months were November and March, which may relate to an increase in enquiries relating to school admissions and phase transfers for CYP with EHC Plans.
- The number of enquiries per month increased incrementally from the start to end of the reporting year, with a peak of 518 in March.
- 60% of all enquiries were at Intervention level 2 (advice). Using solution focussed approaches we have encouraged a self-help model for giving families advice, reducing the need for escalation to a higher level of support.
- There were a higher proportion of enquiries relating to EHC processes, appeals to the SEND Tribunal, and school exclusions than for the previous reporting year.
- Enquiries relating to EHC needs assessments and plans accounted for 30% of all enquiries; an increase from 25% in 21-22.
- As a proportion of enquiries compared with the 21-22 report, enquiries relating to:
  - school exclusions increased by 96%
  - appeals to the SEND Tribunal increased by 50%
  - children missing education increased by 35%
- Updated Department for Education Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance came into effect in September 2023 . Related enquiries focused on suspensions, exclusions, the legal process, access to education, decision making and support.

- There was an increase in enquiries related to emotionally based school non-attendance and those struggling to attend school.
- The proportion of enquiries about SEN support decreased as the demand for statutory assessment rose.
- There were more enquiries about primary age children (45%) than secondary age children (40%). There was an increase in enquiries about young people in post-16 education.
- Early years enquiries increased as a proportion in comparison with 2021-22. Themes from this phase relate to EHC needs assessments where schools have advised a high level of support needed, advice for children with emerging needs in the areas of speech and language, fine and gross motor skills, and social interaction.

### **Children and Young People's direct support**

53 children and young people were provided with direct support. Most children and young people who were referred to or contacted DIAS received support at Level 3 or 4. In most cases, this involved several meetings to enable them to share their views. In many cases, direct support or advocacy was provided at school or college meetings.

We worked with children and young people to support with:

- Understanding and contributing to their EHC Needs Assessments
- Understanding and contributing to their EHCP Review
- Completing self-referrals for further support, including referrals to CSW and the Preparing for Adulthood team
- Understanding what help is available to them in school, and sharing with teachers and support staff what they think will be helpful
- Giving views as part of a tribunal

See Appendix 3 for a case study demonstrating the impact of CYP direct support.

### **7.2 Information**

Key developments for this reporting period include:

- Launch of a new DIAS website in May 2022. The site was extensively redesigned, with new navigation tools, content and a new children and young people's section. Parent carers, staff and volunteers were involved in the development.
- A new set of online information resources on SEN support in Schools, and new resources about choosing a school
- A major review and update of the DIAS guide to elective home education, developed by working with specialists and parent carers.
- Three newsletters published at the end of each term, each reaching over 1000 parent carers and professionals.
- A significant increase in followers, reach and visits to the DIAS Facebook page, indicating a widened reach and a growing number of users interacting with the service regularly.

The response to the new website has been positive. Visitors to the site are looking at more information, moving around the site and taking more time to read what is on it. New users of the website increased by 15%, and the number of pages viewed increased by 215%, from 64,000 to 140,000.

Our main social media channel is Facebook, and the audience and interaction with our page has changed over this year. The number of page visits increased by 268%, to 3887.

There has been a focus on promoting DIAS information about SEN support to parents as a good baseline about their child's support. There has been a 19% increase in views of the SEN support sections of our website from the previous reporting period.

DIAS resources have been recognised nationally, with positive feedback from other IAS services in England and at least five services now using our information and citing DIAS as the author.

### **7.3 Training**

In 2022-23 DIAS delivered 32 training and information sessions to 344 attendees. This was less than the 55 sessions in 2021-22, due to reduced capacity to deliver the sessions.

Termly online sessions about three main topics were delivered regularly throughout the year. These were designed for parent/carers but were also attended by some professionals. A total of 14 online sessions were delivered on the areas of SEND Support, EHCP reviews and Listening to your child's views.

During this reporting period, we also reintroduced face-to-face sessions to support parent carer groups. A number of these were also attended by school staff and other professionals. DIAS also delivered two sessions for SENCOs as part of the SENCO Award qualification, and contributed to training for foster carers with the Educational Psychology Service.

### **7.4 Ambassadors Programme**

2022-23 key data.

- A 42% increase in number of Ambassador Volunteers from 33 to 47.
- Approximately 9,000 families connected through the Ambassador Volunteer Network.
- Some Ambassador Volunteers have a wide reach with 6,000 individuals potentially reached through social media connections and followers of all the linked groups.
- 37 social media groups (many closed groups) are also connected.
- 14 parent carer support groups are directly linked, 2 of which are new groups.
- 18 Action for Children Link Ambassadors.
- 7 trained Parental Mind Link Ambassadors.

### **Impact**

The Ambassador Volunteers responded to an impact survey which demonstrated:

- Almost 100% of volunteers feel they are better connected and part of a wider network.
- 75% of volunteers feel they have learnt new skills or developed better understanding of SEND topics because of volunteering and the training and support offered.
- 40% feel they have connected with PCFD through the programme.
- 67% have shared themes and feedback via the Ambassador volunteer coordinator to PCFD.

### **Feedback from volunteers on the difference they have made**

“I support parent carers every day in my role and am always signposting into DIAS too. As a parent of children with different support needs it can be lonely. Empowering another parent through knowledge, confidence and support can make a difference.”

“I helped parents to apply for DLA, and to see how it helped them get the support and help they needed, it made me feel good that I’ve helped make their lives easier, I also felt worthwhile, and useful.”

Read more detail in the [Ambassador Volunteer Annual Report 22-23](#)

## 7.5 Strategic

Following the Local Area SEND OFSTED re-visit in May 2022 the strategic groups that DIAS had attended were suspended. These were an integral way that DIAS contributed to shaping policy and practice. DIAS continued to make strategic links with individual people or services. This included:

Council Members Childrens Scrutiny SEND Task Group requested DIAS input.

DIAS developed links with and arranged to meet regularly with senior leadership and the Inclusion Lead of a Devon Multi Academy Trust to provide feedback on their SEND provision and understand their SEND offer.

DIAS Leads provided feedback to the DCC Director of SEND and met with them and the Parent Carer Forum to discuss improvements to communication and engagement of families.

DIAS supported development work by the Educational Psychology Team on information about inclusive provision.

The DIAS Lead acted as chair for the National IASS Staff Association during this period and led on delivery of the IASS National Conference in July 2022.

## 8. Outcomes and impact

We are continually striving to reflect on and improve our offer to ensure that families get the support they want and need. We do this by capturing feedback in a variety of ways and making changes to reflect this.

### 8.1. National reporting

Our service reports nationally on its impartiality and effectiveness, gathered through an online survey of service users. This is how they responded.

Question	Percentage of users who gave a positive response (4 or 5 stars out of 5)
How easy was it to get in touch with us?	93%
How helpful was the information, advice and support we gave you?	86%
How neutral, fair, and unbiased do you think we were?	86%
What difference do you think our support made for you?	81%
Overall, how satisfied with the service were you?	81%
How likely is it that you would recommend us to others?	81%

## 8.2 Service User Feedback

“Thank you again for your support. Often all it takes is a little kindness and understanding to make someone feel better, and the compassion you showed me this morning has given me the strength to keep going. I can’t thank you enough.” (Parent carer)

“Your advice was incredibly informative and helpful, and reassuring that I am going along the right lines. I’ve followed up both lines of enquiry to great effect so thank you again.” (Parent carer)

“DIAS was so supportive and patient with me. It has made so much of a difference. It makes you feel ‘this is what to do’ and the confidence to do it. It helped me feel like I could take control. Your support finally makes me feel like we were getting somewhere. I wouldn’t say it if I didn’t mean it.” (Young person)

“Your parent’s resource for meetings is brilliant, we’ve used it for every meeting and emailed it out beforehand so everyone can see the parent’s contribution and views are shared. Absolutely fantastic.” (School professional)

“Thank you for sharing the information about your website improvements. Your site is absolutely great, one of the best we have seen.” (Professional)

“I am so happy I came to your (training) session; I feel like I know so much more about what to expect, how to approach meetings with the school and how to access support. I can’t thank you enough for putting it on.” (Parent carer)

## 9. Key messages from Parents and Carers

### Education

- Parent carers express the importance of flexibility in the approach to implementing behaviour policies for children with SEN. They tell us that inflexible approaches, and blanket policies, are resulting in sanctions and sometimes suspensions and exclusion for their children. This is when the behaviour is a direct result of their special educational needs behaviour or lack of appropriate support.
- Parent carers describe a wide range of experiences of SEN support in mainstream schools. In some cases, parent carers feel that their child’s school has gone ‘above and beyond’ to provide the right support for their child, and that inclusion and fostering a sense of belonging are prioritised by school staff. For others, they have experienced a negative response from schools and feel that the messaging from school staff is that their child ‘isn’t wanted’ because they have SEN or a disability.
- There appears to be lack of clarity in some schools and the messaging that parent carers receive from school staff about the role of ‘advisory teacher services’ and how schools can access their advice and support.
- Parents have shared that school staff feel frustrated about the lack of access to Educational Psychology advice and feel that this has created barriers in fully understanding some children’s needs and how to support them effectively.
- Many parents express frustration about communication with the SEN 0-25 team. Many report a lack of consistency in communications and tell us that they are unsure who their caseworker is, or that this changes frequently.

- We have supported a number of parent carers who tell us their young person's EHC plan was ceased when they reached 19 without a full review, when they still wish to remain in education.
- Parent carers report long waits for a hearing when they register an appeal with the SEND Tribunal. This appears to particularly impact children and young people awaiting placement decisions. We are aware from national data that the timescale for listing of hearings has increased significantly.
- We have supported a number of families from Ukraine and their host families this year. In many cases there appear to be challenges in sourcing translators and getting timely provision in place, particularly for children with very complex needs who are placed in mainstream schools.
- Parents report a range of experiences of provision through the Section 19/medical offer. They also share different experiences of school and GP understanding of the processes and information required, and of the Local Authority's expectations for medical evidence.

## Health

- Parents continue to report being given confusing or contradicting information about routes of referral for some health assessments, particularly ADHD. In many cases they share that schools and GPs are giving different information.
- Parents often tell us that they are unable to access mental health support for their child, when they feel it is desperately needed. Many tell us that they have been refused support from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) as their child has an ASC diagnosis. We have liaised with CAMHS practitioners who are clear that this is not the case, but we continue to hear this message from parents who contact our service.
- Parents often express concern at the length of waiting lists for children's ASC assessments, and many contact us for advice about routes for private assessment. Many feel that without a diagnosis, they will be unable to access social care or educational support.
- Families often describe a lack of 'joined-up' approach from education and health services to support children with mental health difficulties, particularly where this impacts school attendance.
- We often hear from families that they have been told by health professionals that they need to apply for an EHC needs assessment following a diagnosis of ASC or ADHD, or when they have been accepted for support by CAMHS.

## Social Care

- The feedback we have from parents and carers suggests a lack of consistency and transparency in the processes for social care assessment and support for children with disabilities, and a lack of understanding of what support might be available. Often school staff are unsure on how to advise and support families to request an assessment.
- Many families who contact us describe significant difficulties in the home relating to their child's SEND, and particularly mental health difficulties. We have received an increased number of calls reporting safeguarding concerns, including child on parent or sibling violence, self-harm and suicidal ideation.
- Families often say that they have 'Team around the Family' meetings, but that only school staff attend. Often families are unsure what is meant by 'Early Help'.
- Where the Family Intervention Team are involved with a family, this appears to enable a more cohesive approach from all agencies supporting the child, and often leads to better outcomes.



## 10. Key messages from Children and Young People (CYP)

### Education

- Most CYP want to be at school, are motivated to learn and want to do well in exams.
- Many CYP can identify positive adults in school, reporting that they felt they “got them.”
- Lots of CYP know what they want to do as their next step after school but are unsure about career or wider options. They often find it difficult to answer questions about their aspirations for adulthood. Many young people tell us they found it helpful to have support to apply for a post-16 placement.
- The CYP we support have found it empowering to contribute to their support plans, being able to identify what reasonable adjustments they find helpful. They tell us that it is important to them that all staff are consistent in putting support in place.
- Most children and young people can articulate clearly what the barriers are to learning or being able to socialise. Often they can identify solutions or support that would help them.
- Children and young people we support often emphasise the importance of actions being followed through by all staff in school. They express frustration when agreed plans don't happen or are changed without an explanation.
- Many of the children we support feel that they need to understand the reasons for a ‘rule’ or policy, and that will help them to empathise with and follow school behaviour policies. They often say that they need a chance to explain or discuss a situation if they are challenged or sanctioned.

### Health

- CYP have told us they have struggled to access mental health support; often because they are ‘too high need’ for some services (e.g. Young Devon, MHST), but do not meet threshold for CAMHS support.
- CYP want help and support in understanding their autism diagnosis and what it means for them.
- A number of young people we have supported have expressed that they think they might be neurodivergent and are interested in pursuing an assessment, but don't know how to do this. Generally, neurodivergence is frequently talked about among young people, and it's something that young people use social media to find out more about.

### Social Care

- Some CYP don't feel able to attend meetings, but others feel empowered to do so. CYP report that where they are supported to prepare for the meeting and to prepare their views beforehand, this is positive.
- Many of the CYP we support don't access any social opportunities in-person outside of school. Those CYP who access services such as Young Devon, Space\* or local sports clubs talk positively of them.
- CYP often know about meetings that are being held about them, e.g. TAF meetings, but don't understand what it means for them, whether they should attend or what to expect.

## 11. Conclusion and Recommendations

### Commissioning

Work was undertaken on a commissioning agreement with health, social care and education. However, the service is currently funded exclusively by the Local Authority. There have been ongoing positive discussions with our Health Commissioner regarding funding, and we anticipate that this will

be secured during the next reporting year, ensuring that the service is jointly commissioned and funded to make it fully compliant in line with IASS Minimum Standards and the SEND Code of Practice.

### **Strategic Development**

Links have been made with the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) but further development is needed to create clear lines of communication with social care teams, agree routes for strategic feedback and gain a clear understanding of processes and pathways for families to request support and understand thresholds.

We link regularly with the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) but links with individual health services within Children and Family Health Devon need to be developed. Again, we do not have a clear understanding of the formal routes for providing strategic feedback or seeking clarity around routes for referral and pathways for health services.

Having a DIAS Reference Group is a requirement for the service, to enable participation of families and other stakeholders in development of the service. Membership of the group has been reviewed, and a need for new representatives has been identified. This should be aligned to key stakeholder areas.

The DIAS role in providing support and challenge for SEND improvement has been disrupted following the SEND OFSTED re-visit in May 2022. This is due to lack of clarity on SEND workstreams and reporting routes.

### **Redesign of the service model**

Over the past two years, a significant increase in demand on the service led to challenges for the team, and to meeting our service offer, particularly in meeting our target response times. In response to this, we carried out an extensive review service delivery, and data collection and recording systems.

Following research and consultation with service users, staff and other IAS Services, we redesigned the way the service was delivered. We moved from a casework-based system to a helpline model. The aim was to give advice at point of contact using solution focussed approaches to empower service users to self-help using the advice.

All DIAS Officers were redirected to work on the enquiry line to give bespoke legally-based advice, with higher level support cases being identified for further ongoing support. A new post was created, Enquiry Line Triage Officer, to oversee the running of the helpline. In addition, we reviewed the amount of information we were recording and in line with GDPR reduced the information gathered significantly. Feedback from service users and staff has been very positive.

### **Staffing**

Temporary posts within the service have been made permanent.

The CYP posts, 0.8FTE advocacy, 0.2FTE information development were made permanent. This has enabled the service to retain skilled staff and sustained a longer-term view of the work.

The Ambassador Volunteer Coordinator role was made permanent. This was of benefit to the 40 ambassador volunteers and a recognition of the contribution this work has had in gathering feedback, connecting parents and disseminating information.

## **Training**

As an IAS service, we have a remit to offer training for families and professionals to increase knowledge of SEN law and guidance, and to promote participation. A reduction in capacity for delivery of training due to staffing changes has presented a challenge this year, and has led to a reduced number of sessions being delivered for parents and carers. Training for parents and carers has been popular and well received by families and professionals and positively impacts parental knowledge of SEND systems, and their engagement in SEND processes.

## **Recommendations:**

- Health funding for the service to be prioritised to make the area wide partnership statutorily compliant.
- Strategic work with health and social care partners to be further developed, building on collaborative work with the education sector.
- DIAS Reference group membership to be reviewed and broadened to ensure representation from all key stakeholders.
- DIAS data recording and reporting to be reviewed and revised to ensure it aligns fully with commissioning requirements.
- Mechanisms for DIAS to connect with key strategic SEND improvement areas to be identified.
- The DIAS training offer to be reviewed, and capacity for delivery identified.

## Appendix 1

### National IASS Minimum standards

The [national minimum standards](#) describe the requirements a SENDIASS should provide. For full description of the standards read the linked document.

The standards specify four areas.

#### **Standard 1. Commissioning, governance, and management arrangements**

DIAS is jointly commissioned; the service is led by two managers who make decisions about how the service is run. Staff are directly employed by Devon County Council and in order to protect impartiality it operates at 'arm's length'. DIAS has a Reference Group where stakeholders meet three times a year to advise on impartiality and service developments.

#### **Standard 2. Strategic functions**

DIAS works with local partners and has been invited by the Local Authority to provide input on a range of strategic groups to help shape SEND policy and practice. We are very careful to maintain our impartiality and remain 'arm's length', whilst sharing themes and trends we observe from our support work of families experience of accessing Devon services. We work closely with the Devon Parent Carer Forum to gather and strategically raise the views of families about SEND services. We link with the strategic children and young people's participation teams. DIAS has an active role both regionally and nationally with other IAS services to inform strategic planning and training.

#### **Standard 3. Operational Functions**

Information: The DIAS website describes what the service offers, to whom, and our staff team. It includes a range of online FAQs and self-help resources for children and young people and parents. Printed materials are also available.

Advice and support, with advocacy for children and young people either direct or with their parents.

Advice and support for parents through an enquiry line and individual higher-level support for those who need more.

Training: DIAS delivers an online training offer for parents, and input to training for professionals on working with parents.

Participation: A joint programme with the Parent Carer Forum, the Ambassador Volunteer Network, provides outreach and connection for parents around Devon.

#### **Standard 4. Professional development and training for staff**

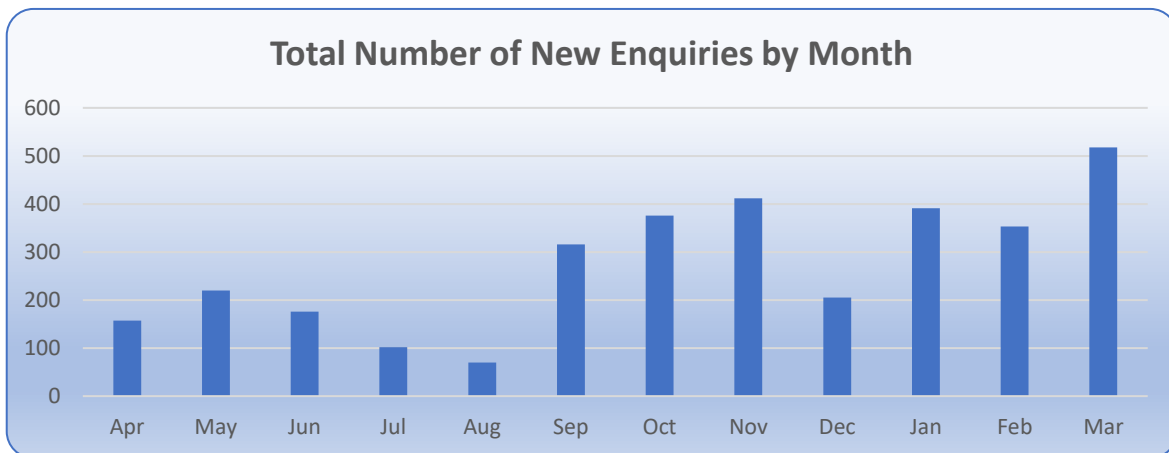
All staff undertake accredited IASS legal training. Ongoing training is delivered through DCC and external providers.

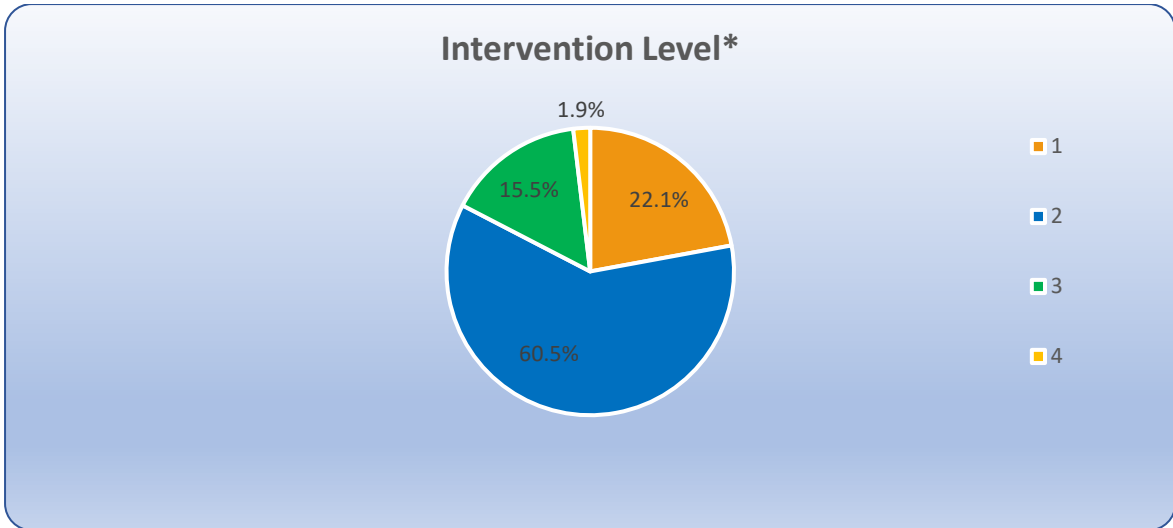
## Appendix 2

### Service Data

#### Total Number of New Enquiries Per Month 22-23

Month	Number of enquiries
Apr	157
May	220
Jun	176
Jul	102
Aug	70
Sep	316
Oct	376
Nov	412
Dec	205
Jan	391
Feb	353
Mar	518
Total	3296

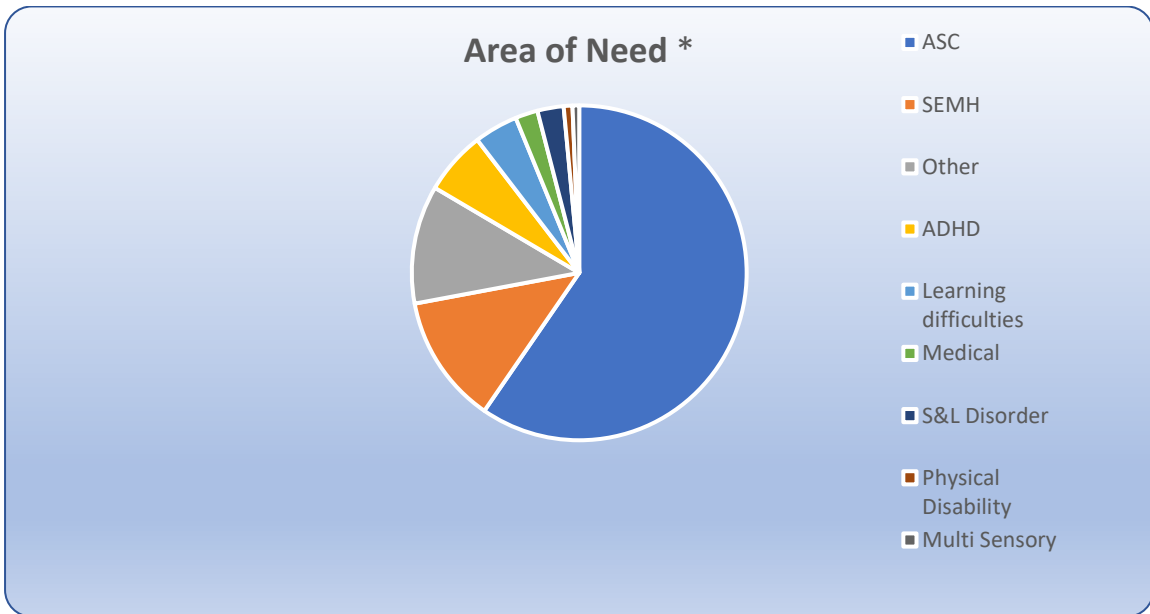




\*Intervention Level (% of total recorded) between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 202

#### Number of new enquiries by area of need

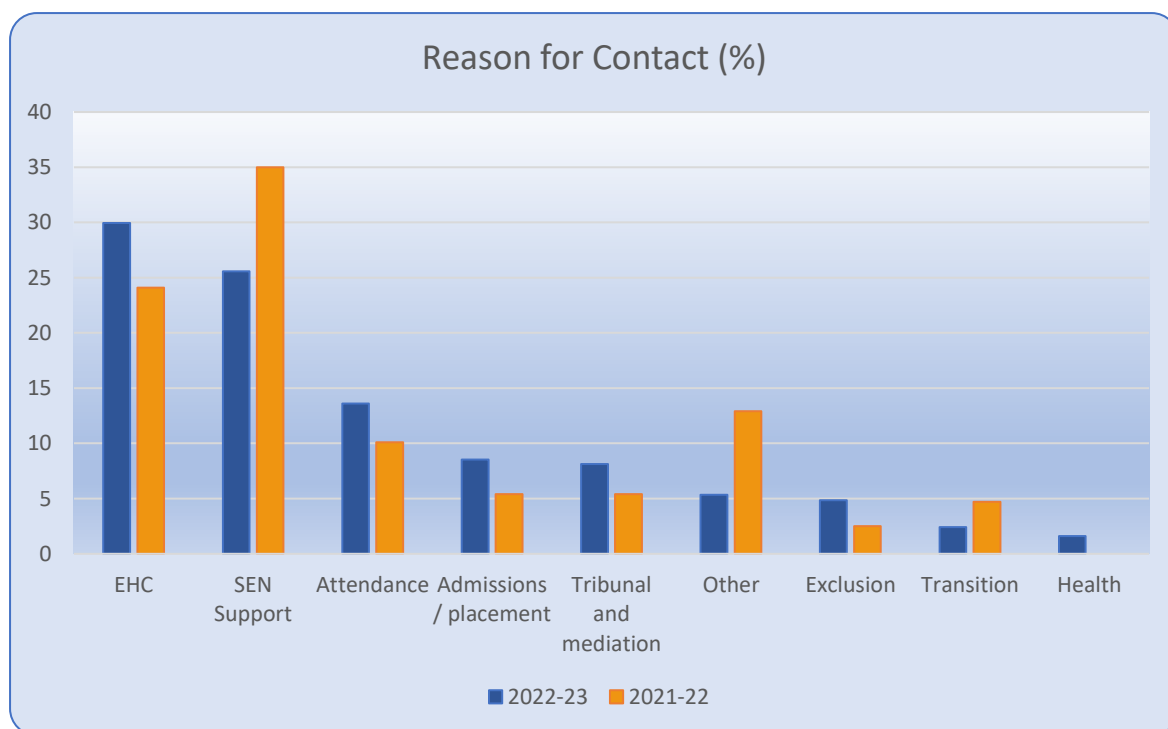
Area of Need	Percentage
ASC	59.6
SEMH	12.5
Other	11.4
ADHD	6.1
Learning difficulties	4.2
Medical	2.2
S&L Disorder	2.5
Physical Disability	0.8
Multi-sensory	0.6



\*Area of need as a percentage of total recorded 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022-31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

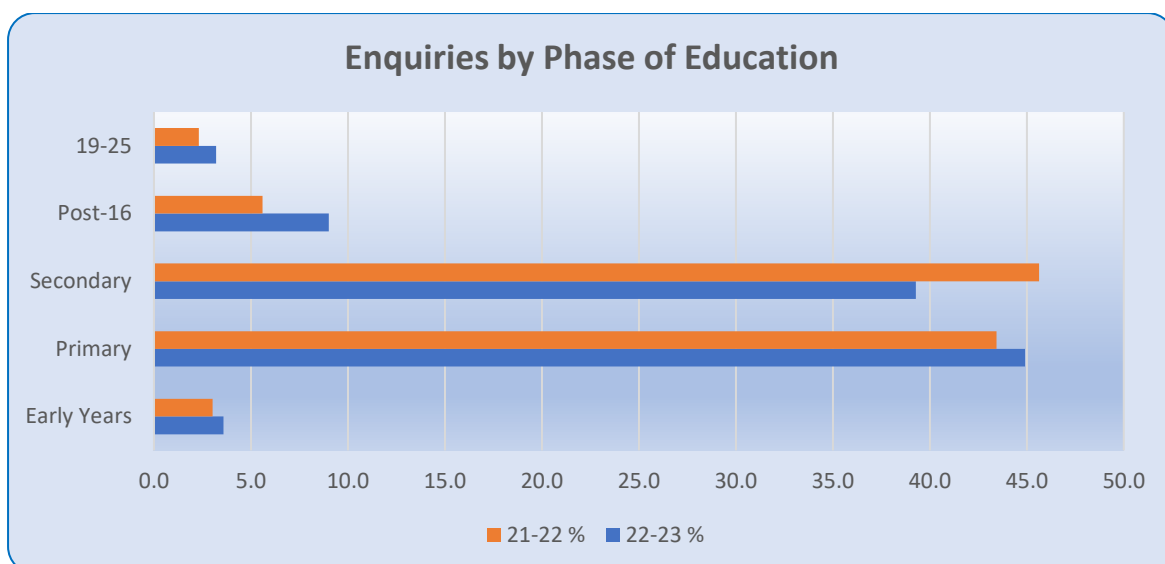
### Enquiries by Reason for Contact

Reason	Percentage of total recorded (22-23)	Percentage of total recorded (21-22)
EHC plan and assessment	30.0	24.1
School support	25.6	35
Missing education	13.6	10.1
Admissions / placement	8.5	5.4
Tribunal and mediation	8.1	5.4
Other	5.3	12.9
Exclusion	4.9	2.5
Transition	2.4	4.7
Health	1.6	



### Enquiries by Phase of Education

Phase of Education	Percentage
Early Years	3.6
Primary	44.9
Secondary	39.3
Post-16	9
19-25	3.2
Total	100



### Enquiries by Sector

Sector	Percentage 2021-22	Percentage 2022-23
Education	55%	63%
Health	26%	20%
Social Care	12%	8%
No category	7%	9%

## Appendix 3

### Child and Young Person Direct Support

#### Case Study

A young person felt unsupported at secondary school but was unable to identify things that might help them. The young person met with a DIAS CYP worker to start to share their views around how they felt at school. The young person felt unable to attend a SEN Support meeting (as part of the graduated response) at school, but wanted their views shared. The outcome of this meeting was the Head of Learning Support met with the young person to develop their 'pupil passport' and start to get to know them. The young person now has a communication book that they can write in and talk through with a key adult they identified. The young person had feedback from the meeting about the plan made, and when it was going to be reviewed.

Further to this, the young person shared their views with our DIAS CYP worker ahead of the second SEN Support meeting and felt able to attend (with support) to share their views. The plan was reviewed, and the young person is now able to identify what support is being provided in school and have key adults they are building a relationship with. The young person was assessed for their exam access arrangements, and the outcomes have been shared with the student.



The young person reports that they feel more supported in school, know where to get support, have key adults they identified that support them, and have clarity around their exam access arrangements ahead of their upcoming mock exams.

## Appendix 4

### Information Report

#### Main points

- **The launch of a new DIAS website in May 2022.** The site was extensively redesigned, with new navigation tools, content and a new 'children and young people's' section. Parent carers, staff and volunteers were involved in the development.
- **A new set of online information resources about SEN support in schools** – including information about what support is available, reasonable adjustments, schools' plans and the 'graduated response' and getting more specialist help. Two new graphics about the 'assess plan, do and review' cycle and levels of SEND support were designed to support the written text.
- **Four new information resources about choosing a school**, including top tips, a schools comparison chart and questions to ask when visiting schools.
- **A major review and update of the DIAS guide to elective home education**, developed by working with specialists and parent carers.
- **Three newsletters** published at the end of each term, with a reach of over 1000 parent carers and professionals.
- **A growing audience through Facebook.**

#### Impact

##### Website

The response to the new site has been positive. Visitors to the site are looking at more information, moving around the site and taking more time to read what's on it. Changes to the site navigation and improved content are likely to be responsible for this.

- The number of pages viewed on the site over the year has more than doubled compared to the previous year.
- Each visitor to the site is looking at twice as many pages.
- The bounce rate has decreased significantly, which suggests that more people are coming to the site more purposefully, actively seeking information or support.
- Each news story gets on average between 300 and 600 views.

##### Social media

Our main social media channel is Facebook and the audience and interaction with our page has changed over this year. There has been a significant increase in followers, reach and visits to the page. This indicates a widened reach, compared to previous years, and a growing number of parents using and interacting with the service regularly.

##### Information resources

- The enquiry line staff used to regularly be asked to help parents check a draft EHC plan. It was a time-consuming process. Over this year these requests have significantly reduced and now there are very few. In contrast the page on the website about checking a draft EHC plan was viewed 1300 times.
- The parent carer information section of the website is the most visited part of the site, with 30% of all page views.
- There has been a focus on promoting DIAS information about SEN support to parents as a good baseline about their child’s support. At the beginning of the year 47% of pages viewed in the information section were about EHC plans and assessments and 4% were about SEN support in schools. By the end of the year, that had changed to 35% for EHC plans and 23% for SEN support.
- Feedback from other IAS services in England has been positive and at least five are using our information and citing DIAS as the author.

### Web statistics

	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Users</b>	21k	24k
<b>Page views</b>	64k	140k
<b>Pages viewed each session</b>	1.94	3.69
<b>New vs. return users</b>	83% and 17% respectively	81% and 19%
<b>Bounce rate (single page sessions with no interaction)</b>	58%	7%
<b>Top 5 most visited pages</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Home page</li> <li>2. Contact us</li> <li>3. Factsheets and resources</li> <li>4. Sharing your child’s views</li> <li>5. About us</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Home page</li> <li>2. Contact us</li> <li>3. Resources</li> <li>4. Information</li> <li>5. Child’s views</li> </ol>
<b>Top three information pages</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing your child’s views</li> <li>2. Guide to elective home education</li> <li>3. Applying for an EHC needs assessment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing your child’s views</li> <li>2. Checking a draft plan</li> <li>3. Reviewing an EHC plan</li> </ol>

### Facebook statistics

- Number of posts published - 399
- Reach (i.e. number of accounts that saw any content from or about the DIAS page) was 40,520 (which was an increase of 193% on previous period)
- Number of page visits - 3887 (increase of just over 268% on previous period)
- Number of new likes / follows – 171 (increase of 106%)

Devon Information Advice and Support

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Email: [devonias@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devonias@devon.gov.uk)

Telephone enquiry line: 01392 38 30 80 Mon-Fri 10am-3pm