MINUTES OF NORFOLK SENDIASS

STEERING GROUP MEETING

26th February 2025

10.00 – 12:15

Via TEAMS meeting

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| **Steering Group** | | | **Title & Organization** | **Attended** | | |
| Jo Todd (JT) | | | FGC & Family Networking Advisory Service Team Manager | √ | | |
| Mark Gower (Chair) (MG) | | | Designated Clinical Officer (SEND)Norfolk & Waveney CCG | √ | | |
| Harriet Tunnicliff (HT) | | | Adviser, Previously Looked After Children Learning and Inclusion | √ | | |
| Leanne Cryan (LC) | | | SENCo, Necton Primary School | Apologies | | |
| Rebekah Muttitt (RM) | | | Consultant Nurse & Independent Prescriber MH & NDD Pathway Norfolk CAMHS, NSFT | √ | | |
| Rebecca Chamberlain (RCh) | | | Clinical Lead, Children’s Occupational Therapy, NCH&C | √ | | |
| Theresa Biddlecombe (TB) | | | Operational Service Lead - Trust Admin and CYP Medically Led Services, NCH&C | √ until 10.50 | | |
| Andrea Bell (AB) | | | VCSE Optimisation Lead (ICB), Children & Young People’s Mental Health Team, NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB | X | | |
| Rob Cole (RC) | | | Head of Communities & Partnerships | Apologies | | |
| Pip Yaxley (PY) | | | Team Manager Schools & Community Team, Commissioning, Partnerships and Resources | √ until 11.00 | | |
| Ruth Toop (RT) | | | Adviser EYFS/SEND, Learning and Inclusion | √ | | |
| Simon Paylor (SP) | | | Strategic Commissioner Health & Disability, Commissioning, Partnerships and Resources | √ | | |
| Claire Jones (CJ) | | | Local Offer Development Manager (SEN) | √ | | |
| Annette Maconochie (AM) | | | Head of Sheringham Woodfields | Apologies | | |
| Kirsty Gannon (KG) | | | Family Voice Norfolk Representative | √ | | |
| David Craythorne (DC) | | | Family Voice Norfolk Representative | Apologies | | |
| Lee Gibbons (LG) | | | ASD Helping Hands | X | | |
| Carol Manning (CM) | | | Head of Family Support - CWD | √ - from 10.15 | | |
| Amy Hanton (AH) | | | Designated Social Care Officer | Apologies | | |
| Suzanne Allen (SA) | | | SEN Advisor, Inclusion & Opportunity | √ | | |
| Jayne Buckingham (JB) | | | Children’s Service Acting Manager, The Hamlet | X | | |
| Nick O’Brien (NO) | | | SENCO, Dereham Neatherd High School | √ from 10.20 | | |
| Gemma Burton (GB) | | | Head of Inclusive Learning and MINT, City College Norwich | √ from 11.43 | | |
| Roger Allen (RA) | | | PFAL and Employment Service Manager | √ | | |
| Jade Cubitt (JC) | | | Children and Young Peoples Involvement Officer, Commissioning, Partnerships and Resources | X | | |
| Helen Cartwright (HC) | | | Parent Representative | √ | | |
| Niamh Keane (NK) | | | SENDIASS Manager | √ | | |
| Leah Sloman (LS) | | | Senior SENDIAS Advisor SENDIASS | √ | | |
| Kelly Drew (KD) | | | Business & Comms Coordinator SENDIASS | √ | | |
| Belinda Coxall (BC) | | | Business Support Officer SENDIASS | √ | | |
| **1.**  **2.**  **3.**  **4.**  **5.**  **6.**  **7.**  **8.**  **9.**  **10.**  **11.** | **Item**  **Apologies and Introductions**  **Minutes of Last Meeting**  **Action Log**  **Service Update**  **SENDIASS Finance**  **Chair/Vice Chair discussion**  **SENDIASS Policies**  **Advice Clinic Review**  **SENDIASS Quarterly Statistics**  **AOB/Updates from around the Rooms**  **Date of Next**  **Meetings** | Apologies received from AH, RC, DC, AM and LC. Jade Cubitt (JC) has left the Steering Group due to change of role.  Any changes/comments in respect of September’s minutes email to BC. Minutes approved.  **Action Log**   * NK awaiting video links from CEG. CEG not at meeting - rolled forward to next meeting. * Financial information – agenda item. * Online booking system – to be discussed in meeting as part of Projekt Rising item. * KD to compare data on district statistics – to be discussed later in meeting. * SENDIASS policies sent out with the February paperwork – agenda item.   **Staffing Update**   * Hannah, SENDIAS Advisor left the service just before Christmas. * Due to a recruitment freeze the advert only went out at the beginning of February, shortlisting will take place on the 27th February with interviews the following week. * Niamh and Leah taken over Hannah’s old cases as no other capacity in the service. * One SENDIAS Advisor currently on long term sick - return date unknown. * David has agreed to take on an additional day as overtime so working two days overtime a week to try and support the service. * Imogen, new Helpline Advisor started in January and has hit the ground running, she started taking calls with support in the February half term, * Imogen has already offered some overtime dates from April onwards to do additional helpline calls. * Niamh taken over the line management of the Helpline Advisors to reduce workload pressure on Senior Advisor.   **Current Wait Times**   * As of the 25th February the next available appointment was 7th April which makes the call back time 34 working days. This is the longest wait time SENDIASS has seen. * Between September 2024 – December 2025, there were 342 incoming calls - an average of 85 calls a month or 21 a week. * Between November and February there were 1461 page visits on our ‘book an appointment tab’ - average of 487 a month or 121 a week. NK said that due to the wait time for appointments parent/carers choose not to book a callback. There has also been an increase in telephone calls and emails due to the wait time. * We offer 35 appointments a week currently and would need to offer another 86 appointments to meet demand based on the above website statistics which is equivalent to a further 2.4 FTE Helpline Advisors.   Questions raised:-   * Has the Inclusion line impacted on increased helpline volumes and are parents/carers were using this line instead? NK said this could be the case but subjects such as tribunals would be signposted back to us. * Whether there were themes that could be shared with SENDIASS and the inclusion line. NK said there were specific remits of what the inclusion line can give advice on. * Discussed types of calls and cancellations on the waitlist. KD to look at how to record this using the Timely booking system and Crossdata.   NK to see if Inclusion Line Team Managers happy for CJ and Kristina Fox to join the half-termly meetings between NK, Kim Tully and Heidi Reeve to gain information for the local offer website.”  RM asked if the Assessment Support Advice (ASA) redirected calls to SENDIASS or if their data would be of help to see how many EHCP requests? MG and RM agreed to speak to Sue Jones about this.  **Casework/One Off Casework**   * Both lists are currently closed, we are not offering anyone else casework currently. * At capacity, height (January 2025) there were 26 on the casework wait list and 16 on the one-off wait list and on 25th February there are currently 8 on the one-off waitlist and 23 on the casework wait list. * The Engagement and Advice Team are working to support with the ‘one-off’ waitlist and reduce this. * When a SENDIAS Advisor has capacity, they will take a case from the ‘casework’ wait list to try and reduce this. * Parents/carers are signposted to the library drop-ins while the lists are closed.   **Projekt Rising Update**   * Approved by IMT as cost is so little * £1000 is the set-up fee and then a £10 a month subscription fee * No exit fee if it doesn’t work for us * Could create a form that signposts to resources before booking a call * 4 week testing period * SENDIASS Manager has signed the contract   **Feedback**  The feedback from parents was positive even though there was a long wait time for the support.  **Finance Report**  NK presented the Norfolk SENDIASS finance report as requested at previous meetings.  Health Contributions  A Service Level Agreement was signed with Health in 2020   * Their contribution in 2023/2024 was £28,000 * Their projected contribution for this financial year is £40,514 following a business case where we asked for an uplift. This uplift means one G grade role in the service with on costs.   LA Contributions - (Children’s Social Care and Education)  Prior to uplift £186,000 - 2023/2024  Now NCC contribute £386,250 - 2024/2025  Projected Spend for 24/25  As of February 2025, we are projected to be underspent by £12,000.  This is primarily related to staffing and gaps where we didn’t pay for salaries. If we were to have a consistent year with staffing, we would be 1.5% overspent.  Where Does Most of SENDIASS Spend Go   1. Salaries - £379,000 2. Car allowance (business mileage) - £8,000 3. ICT (Crossdata/Big Fork) – £7,000 4. Insurance (Liability) - £2,000 5. Other hired and contracted services (subscriptions) - £1,500 6. Marketing (promotional materials, booklets etc.) - £1,000   NK confirmed a finance report would be completed each year and presented at the February meeting.  **Role of Chair and Vice-Chair**  NK discussed the position of Chair and Vice-Chair. MG’s three-year term as Chair exceeded three-year term and the post of Vice-Chair is still vacant.  Discussed the way forward if the positions not filled and it was agreed: -   * MG would continue as Chair for another 12 months * RM to be vice-chair if the position was not filled   NK will email to all members about the role of Chair and Vice-Chair. Any members interested in these positions to contact NK. MG would be happy to discuss the role of the Chair to any interested parties  NK agreed to contact Sam, Mandy and Amy to ask for a representative to join the Steering Group.  **SENDIASS Policies**  The SENDIASS policies were emailed before the meeting for comments and discussion at the meeting.  **Complaints Policy** – approved  **Confidentiality Policy** – approved  **Impartiality Policy**– approved  **What You Can Expect from Us** – it was suggested to add a caveat about capacity and the wait list. KD will the remove the reference to Advice Clinics and replace with library drop ins. NK to make changes and email amended policy.  **Booking Policy** – it was suggested to make changes with the booking form to confirm completion of consultation form. NK confirmed that with Projekt Rising the booking procedure will change and there will be no form to complete. NK to email updated policy when available.  **Advice Clinic Review**  The purpose of an Advice Clinic is a booked hour face to face appointment with a SENDIASS Advisor to discuss or review paperwork related to special educational needs in education. For example - EHC Needs Assessment paperwork, SENDIST (First Tier Tribunal) paperwork and draft Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)  **Historical Picture**   * Each month the advice clinics were fully booked but, on the day, up to half of those booked didn’t turn up and a portion of those that did didn’t have paperwork to go through. * For example, at the AC in Gorleston out of 12 people booked on only 5 attended throughout the day.   This is not an effective use of the Advisors time or effective use of SENDIASS budget  **Advice Clinic Proposal**   * As we now offer one off support, those with paperwork will be supported via this offer. Engagement and Advice workers doing drop-ins at libraries and working with Family Hubs and Schools and Communities. * Our resource catalogue will increase including short videos on how to look through a draft EHCP, what case directions look like/mean etc. * We will review this proposal in 6 months to see if there has been a negative impact in other areas of the service   It was agreed to continue with the current state of play and not to reinstate Advice Clinics.  **Statistical Report - 1st September 2024 – 31st December 2024**  KD presented the statistical report from 1st September 2024 – 31st December 2024. A copy of the report to be sent out with the minutes.  In future KD to email a copy of the report in advance before the meeting.  KD said the request to provide statistics on districts needs to be investigated further as the local authority use different criteria i.e. localities. To be reviewed.  KD to undertake a review of the classification codes as there were too many and these need to be reduced.  KD reported on the low returns of Helpline evaluations, but the process will be changing with the introduction of Projekt Rising.  **Any Other Business**  There was no other business  **Dates of Next Meeting**  June 18th 2025  September 24th 2025 | | | **Action**  **KD**  **NK**  **MG**  **MR**  **NK**  **NK**  **KD**  **NK**  **NK**  **KD**  **KD** |