

# WIAS&S



Wandsworth Information, Advice & Support Service

Providing an Impartial Service to Children and Young People (aged 0-25)  
with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and their Parents



## Annual Report 2022/2023

Information,  
Advice & Support  
Services Network  
for SEND









# Overview

## WASS is a statutory service

It provides free impartial, confidential, and accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), and their parents.

WASS is expected to run at arm's length from the LA and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The obligations and expectations for WASS (information, advice & support services) are set out in Chapter 2 of the

[SEND Code of Practice January 2015](#).

## Commissioning responsibilities for IASS

Section 26 of the Children and Families Act 2014, places duties on local authorities and their partner commissioning body (Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) to jointly commission and secure information and advice for children and young people with SEND and their parents.

## Accountability:

WASS continues to work towards the Department of Education, and Department of Health & Social Care, **National IASS Network Minimum Standards 2018** for SEND Information, Advice & Support Services 2018:

A yearly service improvement plan is written, which is linked to the national minimum standards and \*feedback received from children and young people, and parents.

Improvement priorities are set for the year and reviewed on a termly basis by the service.

## WASS' vision and aim:

WASS believes that children and young people will achieve their potential if everyone (parents, children & young people, education settings and professionals) work together, and the family is actively involved in and is at the centre of decision making.

## WASS' overall aim is to contribute to better outcomes for children and young people and their parents by:

- **Providing confidential, impartial, information, advice and support** to children and young people (aged 0-25) with SEND and their parents.

## Service users:

WASS provides a direct service to children and young people with or who may have SEND (aged 0-25) & their parents (with parental responsibility), who are Wandsworth residents.

## Referrals:

WASS has a self-referral policy. Parents, children and young people can contact the service directly or they can be signposted, with their permission by others, for example, family members, schools, colleges, and other professionals/services.

## Independent Training on Law and Guidance:

All staff who work directly with parents, children and young people must complete and pass the IPSEA delivered Legal Training (accredited by the Bar Council). Level 1-3.

**The remainder of the report summarises the service activities, challenges, developments, and successes for the year.**



# WASS Budget and Staffing from 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

## Service Budget

This year's budget **£222,000**, was funded three ways , LA (Education & social care) and Health(Clinical Commissioning Board)-each area contributed **33.3%**

## IASS Staffing

**From 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023:**

- WASS Manager- (Monday - Friday)
- Information, Advice & Support Officer (Parent lead) (Monday - Friday)
- Information, Advice & Support Officer (Children and Young People lead lead) (Monday - Friday)
- Helpline Officer (Monday - Friday) - **started at the end of May 2022**
- Business Support officer (Tuesday and Friday, term time only)

## Key Challenges and Successes

### Successes

- The Parent lead and Helpline officer, delivered a Parent Drop In for a term at the Yvonne Carr Centre within the Battersea locality (SW8).
- Completed all the prerequisite work for the services' new standalone microsite-including revising all the parent information sheets and writing new children and young peoples' information and service leaflets for the under 16s and post 16s.
- Completed the work for the services' new logo and branding.
- Introduced in September 2023, WASS' new triage approach to responding to parent enquires. This allowed the service to reduce it's response time to helpline calls and emails to one working day.

### Challenges:

- The significant amount of time taken to complete all the tasks for the service microsite.
- Providing the level of individual support to parents due to an increase in the number of referrals and complexity.



# Activities from 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

The service was delivered in the following way:

- **Telephone and Email service**
- **Casework Support** (follow up)
- **Face to Face meetings (including virtually) with children and young people and/or Parents**
- **Attendance at school, college and LA meetings**
- **Young Peoples' Drop In at South Thames College**
- **A Parent Drop In for a term**
- **Information on the WIASS webpage**



# Key Referral Data for the Year

Below is a breakdown of key data collected and analysed when parents or children and young people made their first contact or returned for further support:

## Number of Families Supported

- During this period **401** families were supported compared to **311** the previous year.
- Initial contact by parents continued to be made by phone or email.
- \*New referrals for this period were **377** which meant that the majority of families had come to the service the first time or returned after 6 months, a **28%** increase from 2021-2022.

### \*New referrals and ongoing cases:

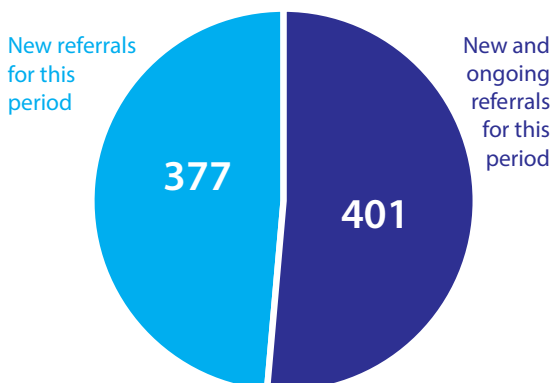
A new referral is when a family has contacted us for the first time or contacted the service after six months of their last contact. Cases are considered ongoing when case work support has been provided (i.e. follow up/attendance at a meeting, looking through paperwork) outside of the month of referral.

## How Families heard of WIASS:

The main ways parents, children and young people found out about WIASS was (starting with the highest):

- Used the service before (same as 2021-2022)
- Internet (same as 2021-2022)
- SNAS letter/staff (same as 2021-2022)
- The Early help team (LA)

Number of families supported 2022-2023



## Service Reach (Postcodes):

Most families who contacted the service lived in the following localities:

- \*Battersea (compared to Roehampton and Putney in 2021-2022)
- Roehampton/Putney
- Tooting (only slightly less than Roehampton/Putney)
- Wandsworth

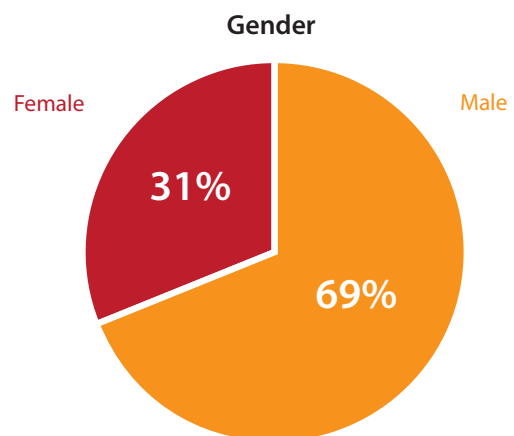
\*WIASS saw an increase in the number of families from SW8 due to the Parent Drop In at the Yvonne Carr centre, which over took SW12.

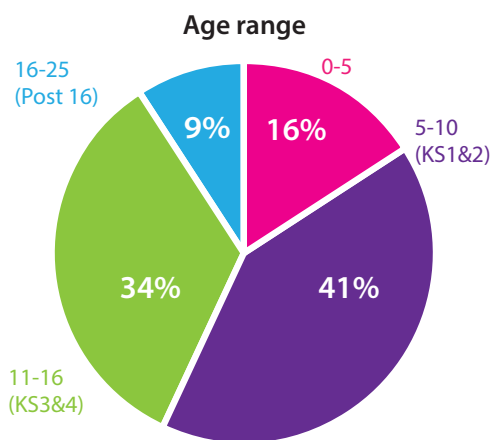
## Gender

**69%** of all referrals were for male children and young people.

**31%** of all referrals were for female children and young people (a slight increase compared to previous year).

**The above percentage are similar to 2021-2022**





## Age Range

Most referrals were for Primary and Secondary age pupils

- **41%** Primary age
- **34%** Secondary Age (a decrease from the previous year)
- **9%** Post 16 (a slight increase from the previous year)
- **16%** Under 5's (a decrease from the previous year)

## Education Settings

Most referrals were related to children and young people who were attending a mainstream education setting.

However, **\*7%(25 children were out of school and 7 young people were NEET)** of the families the service worked with, the children and young people were out of school (compulsory school age aged 5-16) because a school placement had not been found or NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

\*Similar to 2021 -22

**Reason's children were out of school of school or withdrawn were:**

- Emotional based school avoidance continued, link to the number of lockdowns during the pandemic.

- A lack of places in special schools or bases

**Reasons why young people were NEET were:**

- Young people not feeling comfortable attending college-linked to the impact of the pandemic
- \*Colleges informing Young people that they needed an EHC plan to be enrolled on a course because the college felt they could not provide the support they needed.

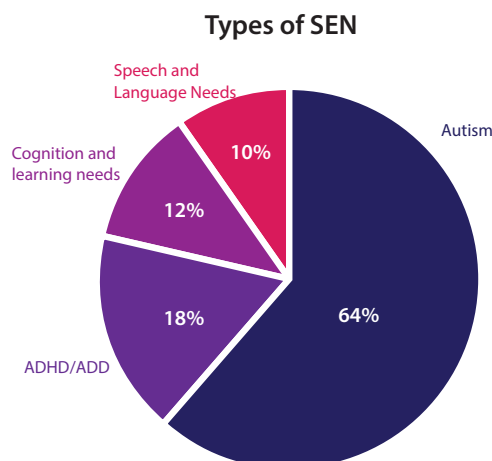
The services Children and Young peoples' lead supported young people to enroll and apply for EHC Needs Assessment where necessary.

## Type of SEN

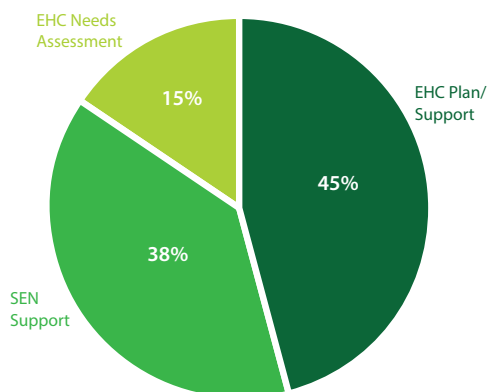
Of the families supported this year:

- **64%** children and young people, had a diagnosis of Autism.
- **\*18%** children and young people, had a diagnosis of ADHD/ADD
- **12%** children and young people, Cognition and Learning Needs
- **10%** children and young people, Speech and Language Needs

\*Significant increase in the number of children and young people with ADHD/ADD compared to 2021-2022. There was an increase in anxiety and emotional based school avoidance for children with Autism & ADHD linked to the pandemic.



### Stage of SEN Support



## Stage of SEN Support (type of SEN support children and young people were receiving at the initial referral)

Out of all the families supported this year:

- **45%** of children and young people had an EHC plan (an increase from last year).
- **38%** of children and young people were on SEN Support
- **15%** were children and young people undergoing an EHC Needs Assessment

## Reasons for Referrals:

The main reasons the service was contacted at the referral stage were for the following, starting with the highest:

### 0-16 age group

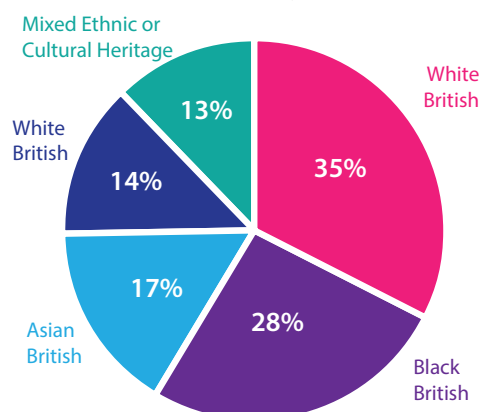
- EHC Needs Assessments (requests/process/timescales/looking through a draft EHC plan)
- SEN Support - children and young people whose needs not being met at school
- EHC plan - needs not being met/issues with delivering Section F provision
- Anxiety and Emotional based school avoidance.
- Reduced timetables

## Ethnicity:

Of the **353** families who consented to provide this information, they were from the following groups:

- **35%** White (English/Welsh/Scottish) British families.
- **28%** Black (Somali, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Caribbean & families) British families
- **17%** Asian (Pakastani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Filipino) British families
- **14%** White other(Western/Eastern European or other)
- **13%** were from mixed ethnic or cultural heritage (**44%** if this group were of white British and Black Caribbean heritage).

### Ethnicity



## Provision of Information, Advice and Support

All IASSs' are expected to work towards providing information, advice, and support to individual children, young people and their parents which:

"Empowers them to express their views and wishes and helps them to understand and exercise their rights in matters including exclusion, complaints, SEND processes and SEND appeal" - IASS Network -Minimum standard 3.4.

Below is a breakdown of the data gathered to demonstrate how the service met the above minimum standard.



# Breakdown of Case Work Data:

## Complexity of cases

The service continued to use the National \*IASS Network Intervention levels for IASS' to identify and monitor the complexity of case work support provided by the team - monthly and annually.

The IASS network intervention levels document (see link below) provides a descriptor for each level (1-4) with Level 3 and 4 being the most complex: [National IASS Network Intervention Levels 2016](#)

## Case work Intervention Levels

**Table 1: Intervention Levels breakdown 2022-2023**

2022-2023	
Number of cases	Percentage
Level 1	37%
Level 2	48%
Level 3	15%
Level 4	0%

The level of complexity of cases remained high throughout the year however the level of input the service could put in, was impacted by significant number of referrals for this year.

## Meetings

The service attended **214** meetings with parents and or children and young people.

Below is a breakdown of the most popular reasons,

**22%** of these meetings were 1:1 meetings with parents (virtually or in person)

The main reasons for meeting with parents were

- Support with looking through an EHC plan
- Supporting parents to give their views for an EHC Needs Assessment

**8%** of meetings were 1:1 meetings with children and young people (**similar to last year**)

**70%** of other meetings, were school, college or LA meetings, that WIASS staff attended with parents, children and young people.

The meetings attended were for the following reasons, starting with the highest,

- Annual Reviews of an EHC plan
- Independent Mediation
- School meetings: SEN Support (getting school-based support for children without an EHC plan)
- School meetings: to discuss delivering the support outlined in Section F of the EHC plan
- Team Around the Child



# Direct work CYP

The SEND Code of Practice 2015, Chapter 2 and IASS Network Minimum Standards, clearly states that all IASSs must provide Information, Advice & Support directly to children and young people with SEND with or without their parents.

The direct work continues to be provided by the Children and Young peoples' lead Information, Advice and Support officer.

This year the number of CYP provided with IAS directly was **51**, an increase compared to 2021-22 however lower than the years prior to the pandemic.

Children and young people were supported directly independently and/or jointly with their parents this year.

The Children and Young People's and Parent lead consulted students at Ark Putney school, on how they would like information, advice and support presented to them on a leaflet format. The feedback provided by the students was used to develop the services' children and young peoples' information sheets.



Children & Young Peoples Support Officer: Louisa Jaouadi



# Service Evaluation - Parents:

## Parent Feedback

Parents are asked for formal feedback using a survey.

The survey includes the six questions the DfE expects all IASS' to ask when obtaining feedback for parents, children and young people:

The majority of completed surveys were done over the phone by the services' Business Support officer.

**Table 2: 117 Parents reported the following.**

It was easy to contact us	63%
We were very impartial	62%
The information, advice and support were very helpful	59%
Were very satisfied with the service provided	62%
Were likely to recommend our service to others?	68%

**Please note:** The variation in percentages, reflects that not every parent answered each question on the survey.

## Parents reported on the impact of the information, advice or support made for their child and them. Starting with the highest.

- I have a greater understanding of my child and my rights, the law and the support that should be made for children and young people with Special Educational Needs or a Disability
- I feel more involved in decisions about my child's education.
- I feel that my child's needs are better understood than they were before.
- I feel more confident about giving my views to the Local Authority/School/College other services.
- I feel less confused or overwhelmed.

## Improvements suggested by parents.

- Offer workshops for parents to give awareness of children's educational rights and about EHCP
- Reach out to those who have difficulties accessing outreach services







**Quotes from parents:**

I was extremely impressed with the services that I received from WIASS, the information gathered was very insightful, informative and has certainly helped me make future decisions about my child's educational needs.

I could not navigate the system without you.

Advisors were knowledgeable and respectful. They listened patiently and were supportive and empathetic. I felt more confident about my and my child's rights.

Keep doing what you're doing! You're amazing and you make us feel empowered! I have already recommended you to another parent

# WASS Website Data 2022-2023

The service has a webpage on the council's website.

A total of **4427** visits were made to the webpage.

**Table 3: A summary of the most popular pages visited**

MOST POPULAR PAGES		
Pages Visited	Number	%
WASS information and resources on SEND - Wandsworth Borough Council	1662	38%
Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service (WASS) - Wandsworth Borough Council	1267	29%
Contact WASS - Wandsworth Borough Council	695	16%
SEND home to school travel assistance - Wandsworth Borough Council	395	9%
About WASS - Wandsworth Borough Council	255	6%
Wandsworth Borough Council	65	1%
Cost of Living Support - Get Government support to help with the cost of living	37	1%
Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Revisit - Wandsworth Borough Council	35	1%

**Table 4: A summary of the most popular pages visited: Termly breakdown.**

Pages Visited	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Total
Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service (WAISS) - Wandsworth Borough Council	657	595	410	<b>1662</b>
WAISS information and resources on SEND - Wandsworth Borough Council	516	386	365	<b>1267</b>
Contact WAISS - Wandsworth Borough Council	261	268	166	<b>695</b>
SEND home to school travel assistance - Wandsworth Borough	78	163	154	<b>395</b>
About WAISS - Wandsworth Borough Council	102	106	47	<b>255</b>
Wandsworth Borough Council	6	11	48	<b>65</b>
Cost of Living Support - Get Government support to help with the cost of living	22	7	8	<b>37</b>

## Improvements for 2023-2024

- To develop and implement an outreach information, advice, and support service in the three Wandsworth localities.
- To resume with delivering training to parents on SEN processes.
- Complete the work for the new service standalone microsite (website).
- Work with the Baked Beans theatre company to create rights-based videos for children and young people with SEND.
- Strengthen working relationship with the borough's newly formed SEND Parent Carer forum.







## How to contact us:



**Call back service: 020 8871 8065**  
(24 hour answer machine)



**Email: [wiass@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:wiass@wandsworth.gov.uk)**



**Web: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/wiass](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/wiass)**

