



Wolverhampton Information, Advice and Support Service

**Service Feedback
April 20 – June 21**



The Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) has a statutory duty to provide information, advice and support to children and young people with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) and their parents and carers. This report contributes to an overview of feedback from parents, carers, children, and young people who have used the WIASS. It is designed to be part of creating a local picture of how the service is performing as well as contributing to national measures. A survey using ‘SurveyMonkey’ is used to gather experiences.

Wolverhampton’s Information, Advice and Support Service (WIASS)

WIASS offers information, advice, and support about:

- Education, health and social care matters and relevant law
- Support available in schools, early years, and post 16 settings
- Funding arrangements
- How needs are identified and met
- Disagreements and moving forward

It also offers individual support which may include:

- Preparation for, and support at meetings
- Help to understand and complete processes and procedures
- Help to participate in discussions and decision making
- Liaising with services and organisations
- Looking at positive outcomes

Participating in the survey Participation in the survey is voluntary although all parents, carers and young people who have used the service are encouraged to complete it. A link to the survey is sent by IASS staff or discussed over the phone or face to face. There is also a feedback section on the web site where a link to the survey can be found. The feedback helps to present a picture of the impact the service is having and the outcomes for families. It is also important when exploring challenges and successes and when working in co-production with families and other stakeholders to develop and improve the service that is offered.

Responses

A total of 120 responses have been received during the period 1st April 2020 and 25th June 2021. This is an increase on previous survey results. However, it is recognised that still low in comparison to the number of people receiving information, advice, or support during that period.

Questions 1 – 6 are reported nationally to the IASS Network team.

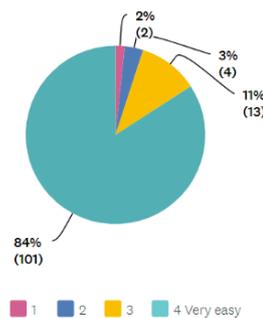
Survey Question	Average
1. How easy was it to get in touch with us?	3.77
2. How helpful was the information, advice and support received?	3.77
3. How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we were?	3.72
4. Has using IASS made a difference?	3.76

5. How satisfied are people with IASS?	3.85
6. How likely is it that you would recommend the service to others?	3.83

Overall WIASS scores are extremely positive and above the national average in all areas. The highest average score is to question 5, indicating that people are very satisfied with the Information, Advice and Support Service.

I was very stressed with communicating my daughter's needs with her school, they were refusing to engage with me as she did not have a diagnosis (she was on the ASD pathway). I didn't know which was to turn and had given up hope of getting any support! With Lisa and the team's support I now have a much better relationship with school and her needs are being met.

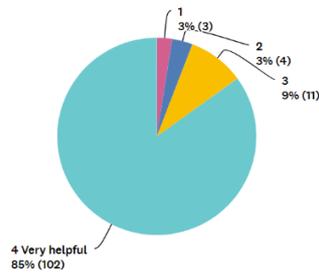
Question 1 How easy was it to get in touch with us?



114 out of 120 respondents (95%) found it very easy or east to get in touch with WIASS. It is particularly pleasing that people have found it easy to access the service as these responses were collated during the Covid-19 pandemic. The service has a voice message service from the dedicated phone line. Parents carers and young people can also contact via email, Facebook messenger and Twitter. The service has recently recruited an Information Officer and will be exploring further ways to enhance the reach of the service.

I phoned IASS at the end of my tether. I was expecting to be told to phone back weeks or months later, instead I got a friendly lady who LISTENED to me. I spent over an hour on the phone that day. Elaine accompanied me to meetings at school and their attitude completely changed with her in the room. My daughter now has an EHCP in place and is happy and doing well at school.

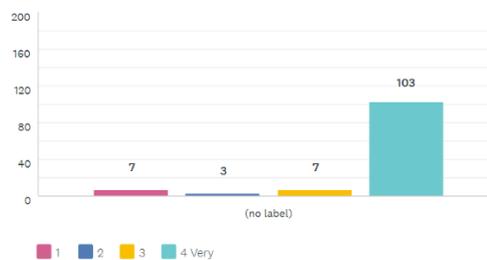
Q2. How helpful was the information, advice and support received?



94% of respondents found the information and advice given to them was helpful. On a closer look at the respondents who did not find it helpful some noted that they had only used the service a few times and said they feel positive about the future.

I felt that the help we got really helped my family as for times we didn't understand what was happening and an e-mail to you explained so I could understand what I needed to do next. I felt your service was so helpful and made a confusing process much easier to understand. thank you.

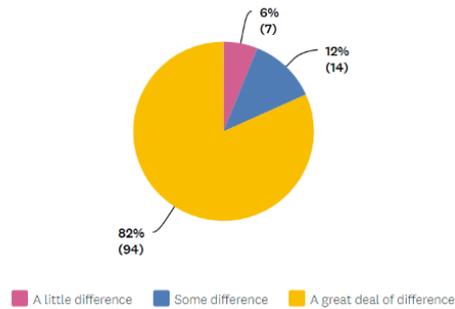
Q3. How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we were?



As an impartial service we want to ensure that everyone accessing WIASS receives neutral, fair and unbiased information and advice. 113 out of 120 respondents think we are neutral, fair and unbiased. This demonstrates that we are seen at arm's length from the Local Authority and CCG. Disappointingly, there were 7 respondents who said that we had not achieved this. However, they went on to note that "there is a better understanding of my child's needs", "better support is in place", they "feel more knowledgeable", and they "feel more involved in discussions and decisions".

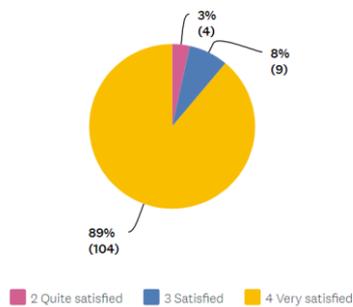
I felt listened to. Having come from a different Authority, where things were done differently, your service explained how Wolverhampton did things. That was very helpful. Kath was a very lovely lady to talk to, and it was a relief to speak to a professional who listened to me and treated me like I was the expert in my child.

Q4. What difference do you think our information, advice or support has made for you?



The survey results indicate WIASS has made a great deal of difference to 82% of those who have accessed the service. Whilst 6% felt there had been little difference. We have explored this in more detail and determined that these respondents noted that the survey was completed shortly after accessing WIASS and that they needed time to see impact.

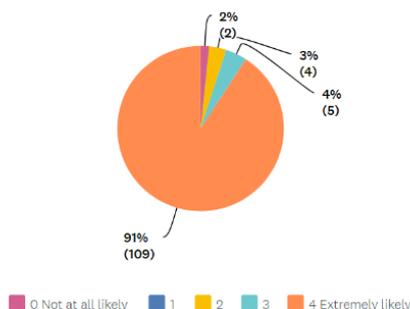
Q5. How satisfied are people with IASS?



All respondents were satisfied to some extent with the service. 104 out of 120 respondents were very satisfied. Pleasing no one reported that they were dissatisfied with the service.

They gave me advice when I was doing a reassessment for my child and also attended every meeting with me. This really helped me a lot as I felt like I was not on my own. They also explain everything that I could not understand and also asked useful questions on my behalf. Their support helped me a lot.

Q6. How likely is it that you would recommend the service to others?

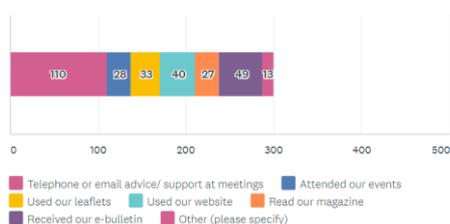


This question provides a very good indication that the service is meeting the expectations of those who receive impartial information, advice and support. Further reassurance to support this is evidenced from respondents providing additional comments when completing the survey.

When Elaine came in board I hadn't a clue about where we were going with my daughter but she put it all in perspective explained all I needed to know with the ebulletin and knowing she was on the phone. Also, the follow-up from Elaine has been brilliant knowing that even at the moment we don't require immediate help that they are always there. Can't recommend enough.

Questions 7-9 are not reported nationally but tell us locally 'how' the service has been accessed and what difference it has made.

Q7 How people have used IASS



Responses indicate there is a far greater preference by parents, carers and young people to have direct contact and support from staff who provide case work support as opposed to accessing the information in paper or electronic formats.

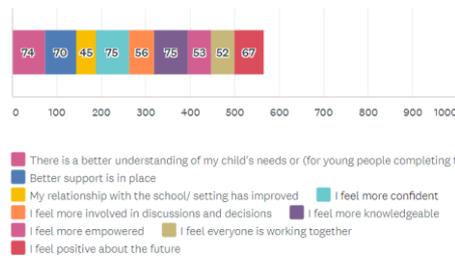
Anyone contacting the service is invited to register to receive a monthly ebulletin. However, of the 120 only 49 report to have received the e-bulletin. Steps have been taken to ensure that the ebulletin is more widely promoted so that families can keep in touch with what is on offer from the IASS. This includes being published on Wolverhampton's Local Offer web pages.

IASS has recently recruited an Information Officer to ensure publicity materials are accessible for all and continue the work that is underway to develop how to keep in touch effectively with young people.

This service had meant both of my children have EHCPs that are clear and meet needs. They have supported us as a family through many issues with schooling and support meaning when both of my children's needs were consistently not met, they helped both sides to understand. Both children are now in settings meeting their needs which would not have happened without the support.

Q8 Please tick all of the following statements that apply.

Since working with the Information, Advice and Support Service...



Responses demonstrate that there are positive outcomes for individuals accessing the service and the impact on the child or young person.

Lisa's support for me and my daughter has been invaluable, my relationship with school was very fractured and I could see no way forward. With Lisa's support and guidance, I have been able to build my relationship with school and communicate my daughter's needs. Lisa suggested lots of interventions that could be put in place in school to help meet my child's needs. My daughter is now happy at school and is now learning to communicate her needs whilst she is there. Before I spoke with Lisa, I felt things were very hopeless now my daughter's future is bright and we couldn't have got there without your service.

Q9 Please select each statement that applies to you



There are more parents and carers accessing the service compared to young people. This remains an area of development for the IASS moving forward.

Not all are aware of Wolverhampton's Local Offer and those that are less than third appear to be using it as a resource for information. This needs further work by City of Wolverhampton Council and other partners to promote the Local Offer.

My child now has an EHCP and diagnosis for autism spectrum disorder! After years of her struggling in mainstream school with very haphazard support my child has structure and support. I have support and encouragement which I can contact easily and without judgement. I was very much lost and alone when I found IASS and was very scared of the direction my child's education/behaviour was going, after contacting IASS I felt like someone had taken some of the weight off my shoulders. I was given advice on other places to try to seek help and the legality of some of the problems I was having at the school. Without their help I know that my child would not be where she is now and with the prospects she now has ahead of her. I have recommended IASS to several people already and am happy to do so.

This is again highly encouraging feedback about the IASS during an extremely uncertain time for many families and services. It demonstrates that the service continues to meet statutory duties but, more importantly, is making a difference for local families. This information will inform the service development plans and local strategic work.

June 2021