

REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR INDEPENDENT SUPPORT IN ESSEX

iSEssex is a partnership between local voluntary organisations:

- InterAct Chelmsford Limited (lead partner commissioned by Department for Education),
- Families InFocus (Essex)
- ecdp (Essex Coalition of Disabled People) and
- FACE Parent Carer Forum for Essex

The aim/s of the partnership is: To provide a local Independent Support service that results in an Independent Support workforce that provides advice and support directly to parents/carers and young people during the statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment and planning process, which is statutory from September 2014.

iSEssex will provide support and information relating to the stages of the processes in a manner that is impartial and professional. It will be at a pace and level individual to each parent/carer and/or young person, increasing and improving the participation, choice and options for families and young people so that aspirations and independence can be achieved.

iSEssex will work with and complement pre-existing local services. This includes the local authority SEN arrangements that exist and the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service in their key role in providing impartial Information, Advice and Support **Essex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service**, IASS (formerly known as Parent Partnership Service) is a statutory service offering confidential, impartial and free information, advice and support for parents, carers, children and young people (aged up to 25 years) in relation to special educational needs and disabilities. The SEND IAS Service aims to enable parents/carers and young people to be at the heart of the process where plans are made and outcomes are discussed.

The Independent Support service has been commissioned to:

- Provide parents/carers and young people with additional time limited help to support the parent /carer or young person during the EHC needs assessment and planning process. ensuring their views, needs and wishes are included in the assessment and that they are able to contribute their views and make choices or give preferences at key points in the process increasing and improving the participation, choice and options for families and young people so that aspirations and independence can be achieved
- Provide information for parents/carers and young people on Personal Budgets;
- Signpost parents/carers and young people to other local information especially the Local Offer and other specialist services, if appropriate. E.g. When the issue is outside the remit of the Independent Supporter signpost to the Independent Information, Advice and Support Service provided by partner organisation, Families InFocus (Essex) or Essex SEND IASS

Independent Support

The time limited support will be offered for children and young people, parents and carers who meet Local Authority eligibility and going through a statutory Education Health and Care needs assessment and those who are transitioning over to the new Education, Health and Care assessment and planning process (NB This may or may not result in an Education Health, Care (EHC) plan being produced)

- The Independent Support service is available for parents/carers of children and young people with SEND aged 0 – 25 and young people aged 16-25 who would like direct support themselves. (Based on the principle that a young person is of an age, competence, and mental capacity to understand and can give their consent)
- Contact details of the Independent Support service will be available to all agencies /stakeholders involved in implementing the SEND reforms and leading on EHC plans e.g. Essex EHC Coordinators, and to parents/carers and young people
- The service will be promoted through the iEssex partnership, ECC local offer website, SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (IASS) and FACE-parent/carer forum for Essex, and through other stakeholders and information sources throughout education, health and care.
- Parent/carers and young people will be informed of the role of the Independent Supporter service

Referrals

- Referrals should be directed to iEssex - We will seek to respond **within 2 working days of initial contact**
- Referrals can be via:
 - Self-Referral – Parent/Carer or young person – consent will be sought to liaise with relevant professionals
 - Any professional working with a child or young person's EHC Plan
 - A relevant body, for example, SEND IASS


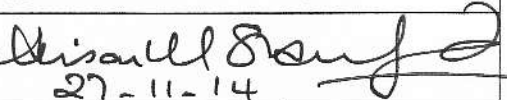
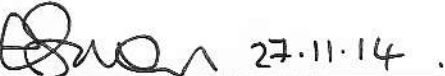

Contact / Support

- Phone, email, text, written correspondence
- Initial Contact
 - Will be with a qualified Independent Supporter. At this stage the Independent Supporter will:
 - Record relevant personal details
 - Explain the Independent Supporter service
 - Provide awareness of the *i*SEssex service leaflet/other relevant documentation
 - Gain consent to:
 - Independent support
 - Data storage
 - Surveys

- The most appropriate support will be offered/provided. This will be based on the initial enquiry details, aligned with the role of the Independent Supporter and the eligibility/process detailed within the Essex Transition Plan to have Statements converted into (EHC) Plans.
- **Next Steps/Support** The aim is to support families and young people to be able to fully and confidently engage in and drive the process. As a family goes through the 20 week assessment process the involvement of the Independent Supporter will vary in accordance with the level of support requested by the family or/and young person. The Independent Supporter will remain as the named contact throughout the 20 weeks, or 14 weeks, where it is a transfer.
- Where appropriate an Independent Supporter will make contact with the young person or parent/carer **within 5 working days of initial contact** to agree the next steps/arrange a meeting, at an agreed venue - this can be at school, home or other agreed location where the person feels confident and safe.
 - The Independent Supporter will meet the young person and/or parent/carer and will discuss and agree the level of support needed
 - The Independent Supporter will liaise with the family and with the lead professional for the EHC plan to ensure a coordinated approach to achieving a plan which reflects the child or young person's needs and wishes
 - Levels of support include:
 - Online information/social media
 - Telephone, email and/or written material
 - 1:1/Face to face meetings with a parent/carer and/or young person
 - Group workshops/drop in`s/ events/ talks/sessions at schools/further education/colleges
- Ongoing recording will be completed in line with relevant policies and procedures
- If the issues are outside of the Independent Supporters remit the Independent Support will signpost to Families InFocus (Essex) or Essex SEND IASS or other relevant services, as appropriate
- Sign off of plans will be agreed by the parent/carer and/ or young person and the EHC Coordinator

Acceptance

We the undersigned, as authorised signatories of the Parties to the Referral Protocol, have read and accepted the terms of the Referral Protocol between the identified Provider(s) and the Public Sector Partners and accept these.

Organisation	Name	Signatory/Date
SEND IASS ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL	CLARE WOODCOCK	 27/11/14
ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL	ALISON STANFORD	 27-11-14
FACE Parent Carer Forum	TRACEY SCRIVEN	 27.11.14
INTERACT (lead partner ISKEX)	ANITA GOLDSMITH	 27/11/14