



**Information  
Advice and  
Support  
Kent**

A service for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities  
– helping you to make informed choices

# **Information, Advice and Support Kent**

## **Interim Service Report**

**30 September 2025**

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**‘I recommend to everyone and so many people come back saying that the service has helped their child too.’**  
(parent’s feedback September 2025)

## **Overview of IASK - Kerry Miles Service Coordinator**

Information, Advice and Support Kent have had a busy six months. The helpline responded to **3073** calls and emails to the service. **1,047** new referrals for casework support and **341** level 1 enquiries were recorded in the period with **36%** of these being returning service users. Compared to the same 6 months last year, information about the appeals process and support for appealing remains the biggest reason for contacting the service. Followed by Support Issues which relate to getting the right kind of support at their setting, school or college. There has been a **19%** increase in calls relating to Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.

The service is extremely pleased to have responded to **98%** of calls and emails within a 2 working day time-frame, which we are regularly complemented on by parents and professionals. Compared to the same period last year, referrals for casework have remained consistent with support being provided over a long time period, due to supporting with appeals to the SEND tribunal to take place. Waiting for a hearing for nearly a year, is increasing anxiety amongst parents who need to speak with their Family Involvement Worker more often for reassurance. However, the numbers of appeals that have been conceded have increased by **42%**, prior to the hearing.

In line with parental request, IASK have continued to promote the service across the County attending **22** in person events, which have included: four locality roadshows; **two** special school moving on events; drop-in coffee mornings; Early Years District Conference; SEN Multi Agency event; The Great Kent Sensory and Physical event; Neurodiversity Roadshow; Family hub summer events, School Inclusion fair; and an exploration day at Demelza House. We have also attended **2** virtual ASC drop-ins organised by NEFLT. We have engaged with **305** parents, **132** children and young people and **28** practitioners.

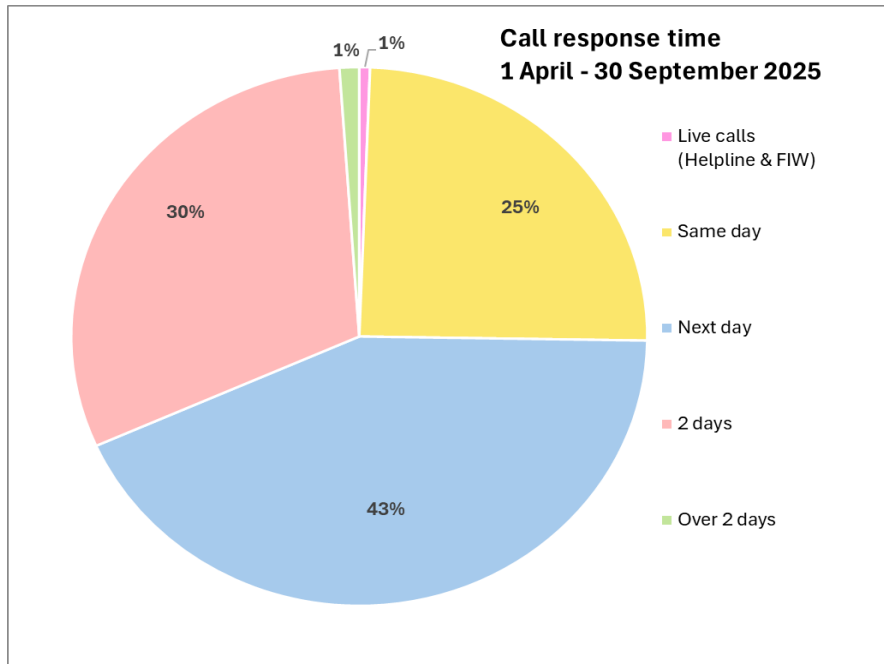
The service continues to work with Kent PACT (Kent’s parent carer forum) to give consistent messages to parents. IASK supported with the delivery of a webinar to **30** parents sharing information about the service and answering queries. Feedback was very positive.

The service has a three year Service Level Agreement with funding from Education, Health and Social Care. The service is meeting the National minimum quality standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services.

All staff have ensured that the service operates a ‘Tell it Once’ system. They are trained to record accurate and concise case notes so that clients are not asked to repeat information about previous involvement with the service.

## Challenges:

- Recruiting parents and young people to join the Steering Group has been difficult over the past year. Parents and young people who have been contacted for feedback are asked whether they would be interested in being a member of the Steering Group. The Coordinator follows up to provide further information and discuss their potential involvement.
- KCC Property advised us we needed to move from our offices in the Shepway Centre, Oxford Road, Maidstone, where the service (in previous name of Partnership with Parents) has been located for over 25 years. Preparing for the move and decluttering offices has been time consuming for all staff. We are delighted to report that this has not affected the level of service provided to the families that seek IASK support.
- Responding to live calls is not possible due to the volume of calls to the service. However, we respond to voice mail messages and emails within two working days in line with the service Key Performance Indicators. Parents and professionals tell us that this is good.



## Complaints:

We received an email from a parent expressing dissatisfaction because a member of our team was unable to attend a school meeting in person. The meeting location required an hour and a half round trip, which was not feasible due to capacity constraints. The Family Involvement Worker was scheduled to attend virtually, but the parent did not want this option.

The Family Involvement Worker was later asked to attend another meeting in person and provided her availability for both in-person and online support. Additional staff support was also offered. The parent felt that the Family Involvement Worker was overworked and lacked sufficient time to travel for in-person meetings. We contacted the parent to explain how the service operates.

**Impact over the six month period 1 April – 30 September 2025:** The service has conducted user feedback surveys for cases that closed from 1 April to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025. We sought feedback via telephone and email using google forms from **170** service users, who have given permission to be contacted for their feedback. This resulted in a **16%** response rate, which was higher than the same time last year.

**89%** of respondents were likely (3\*) or very likely to recommend the service to others

**96%** of respondents rated IASK as good (3\*) or very good at being neutral, fair, and unbiased

**85%** of respondents found it easy (3\*) or very easy to get in touch with us

**100%** of respondents felt IASK listened to their view

**93%** of respondents felt the information and advice provided met their needs

**59%** of respondents feel more confident

(For full details of feedback please see Appendix 2, page 18)

**Ad Hoc feedback from service users outside of the usual survey:** Email compliments direct to the service:

'Just wanted to say, I am sincerely grateful for all your support every time I ring I get really helpful and concise advice which has helped me to make informed decisions'.

'Thank you for all your support when the going was tough with this matter. You and your team have been outstanding in delivering an excellent service and an open-door policy. I can't thank you all enough'.

'Thank you for your fast response Angela I appreciate it so much you provide a wonderful service you and all of your colleagues deserve a hillside full of heavenly scented flowers sent to you everyday, thank you so much'.

'X was so helpful and didn't talk to me like an idiot. I just couldn't get my head around it all and she explained it so clearly.'

'The service is amazing I have had some amazing support from you in the past and today'.

## **Case Study:**

### **Background**

Family moved into Kent July 2024 with Jane age 6. An annual review of the EHC plan had been carried out by the previous school in April 2024 and changes were requested indicating that a specialist setting would be more suitable, but their LA had not updated the EHC plan before the move. KCC did not amend the plan to reflect the changes and issued a 'no amendments' letter in September naming a mainstream SRP. The named school reported they were unable to meet needs and refused to allow Jane to start due to staffing reasons. Jane started the named school in October.

### **Support**

Parents requested advice and support to lodge an appeal for a specialist placement and to make amendments to the EHC plan. A Family Involvement worker was assigned and as parents had English as a second language face to face meetings were offered to support their discussions about key dates and to plan next steps .

The hearing date was October 2025. In the meantime parents were supported to make their changes to the working document and submit this to the LA. At this time parents were also supported to complete a change of request form to request an earlier hearing. Unfortunately SEND

Tribunal advised they had no capacity for an earlier hearing. At the beginning of December 2024 the Family Involvement Worker supported parents in person at a school meeting to discuss their concerns about her needs being met. School stated they were unable to provide all the support outlined in the EHC plan and had put this in writing to the LA.

In January the LA responded to parent explaining that parent's preferred school was full and couldn't meet needs and that they still felt mainstream could best meet needs. Parents were supported to understand their options and explored other schools. They were empowered to complete paperwork to change the parental preference for another school.

At this time parents chose to withdraw Jane from the school due to safeguarding concerns and Jane's needs not being met. Parents were further supported at several meetings with the school and the LA to discuss their concerns and to explore tutoring because the school situation could not be resolved to parent's satisfaction.

Following a new report from an education psychologist the LA agreed to parental preference and a start date was arranged for September 2025. Parents required support from IASK to understand the next steps and decided to continue with the appeal in order to get their amendments to sections B and F in the plan before agreeing to concede the appeal.

The Kent tribunal officer changed and a meeting was arranged to complete the working document. Parents were supported to understand the discussions and all amendments were agreed. In May 2025 a consent order was sent to parent to end the appeal as all matters had been resolved, avoiding going to a hearing.

## **Impact**

Throughout the parents' 7 month journey the Family Involvement worker provided a high level of support by regularly kept in touch with both parents often separately. Aiding understanding of the process, and all email communications relating to the appeal were followed up with a telephone call.

This support helped both parents to get their views across and have their say throughout the stages of the appeal, and also with the current school and prospective placement.

Providing timely and accurate information meant that agreements between parents and the LA were reached 5 months before the hearing date.

The EHC plan now correctly reflects Jane's needs and the support required to meet those needs, naming the parents' preference.

Parent emailed to say that 'Jane is now very happy, which is thanks to your help, how grateful we are too (unbelievable for us — free from stress and anxiety as a daily feeling)'.

## Service Outputs:

- **3073** calls and emails came through the helpline. Of the **1816** emails received, **102** came through the website
- **2067** telephone calls and **6110** emails were recorded for all staff providing support to families
- **332** families have received support at meetings via video or telephone conference calls
- **506** booked telephone appointments – where we would usually have met face to face to go over paperwork
- **56** face to face meetings for families who would have struggled to have only virtual support
- **1047** New referrals \* for casework and **341** \*\*enquiries
- **29** virtual information sessions have been offered with one in person drop-in offered in the 4 areas of Kent, with a total of **77** attendees
- **105** young people over age 16 were accessing the service with support from their parents and **9** young people have received direct support from a caseworker with **100** contacts being made with young people
- **586** families have received information, advice and support relating to appeals to the SEND Tribunal, with **214** families being supported with paperwork and **83** tribunal appeals lodged and
- Staff have virtually attended **13** mediations, **13** telephone case management hearings and Judicial alternative dispute resolution hearings, **32** tribunal hearings, supporting families who would otherwise have found it difficult to attend on their own. With IASK support **67** appeals were resolved before the hearing date.
- **305** families contacted the service for information and advice about the Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment process, of these **22** had support with the draft EHC plan and or support with co-production meetings, and **25** had help with paperwork.
- **23** referrals were recorded as requesting information about social care
- **9** referrals were recorded as queries relating to short breaks and activities
- **62** contacts were related to the Disabled Children's Register/max card

\*Referrals are when a new case 'note' is recorded and the reason for that call. 1 referral and several referral reasons. They can have many contacts and discussions before the referral is closed. When a caller returns to the service with a different query or after their previous query had been closed, then a new referral is opened.

\*\*Enquiries are recorded as a level 1 intervention when a parent or young person is given general information.



## Intervention Levels

The intervention service levels for referrals are recorded following the IASSN (Information, Advice, and Support Services Network) national guidelines to monitor the demand for different types of support regionally and locally. There are 4 intervention levels.

Intervention Levels Totals 01/04/25-30/09/25	
<b>Level 1</b> Generic Information and advice, Signposting, presentations, support groups, workshops and event attendees where we do not take personal details.	851
<b>Level of Intervention 2 – Information &amp; Tailored Advice</b> , exchange of emails. More complex / high level information shared	1244
<b>Level of intervention 3 – Family Involvement Worker</b> allocated, liaison with other agencies, in-person or virtual meetings, support with forms, giving views, preparing appeals.	167
<b>Level of intervention 4 – Intensive Support</b> , any or all of Level 3, plus representation for parent, child or young person at meetings, appeals (including exclusions) and CETRs. Ongoing and intensive casework / advocacy that includes representation.	57

## Service Outcomes

Simple outcomes are set by the National SENDIASS: Intervention level 1 and 2 referrals helpline are closed with a simple outcome (this does not include information and discussion at events and support groups):

**Needs Met** 98%, **Signposted only** 2%, **Needs Unmet** zero.

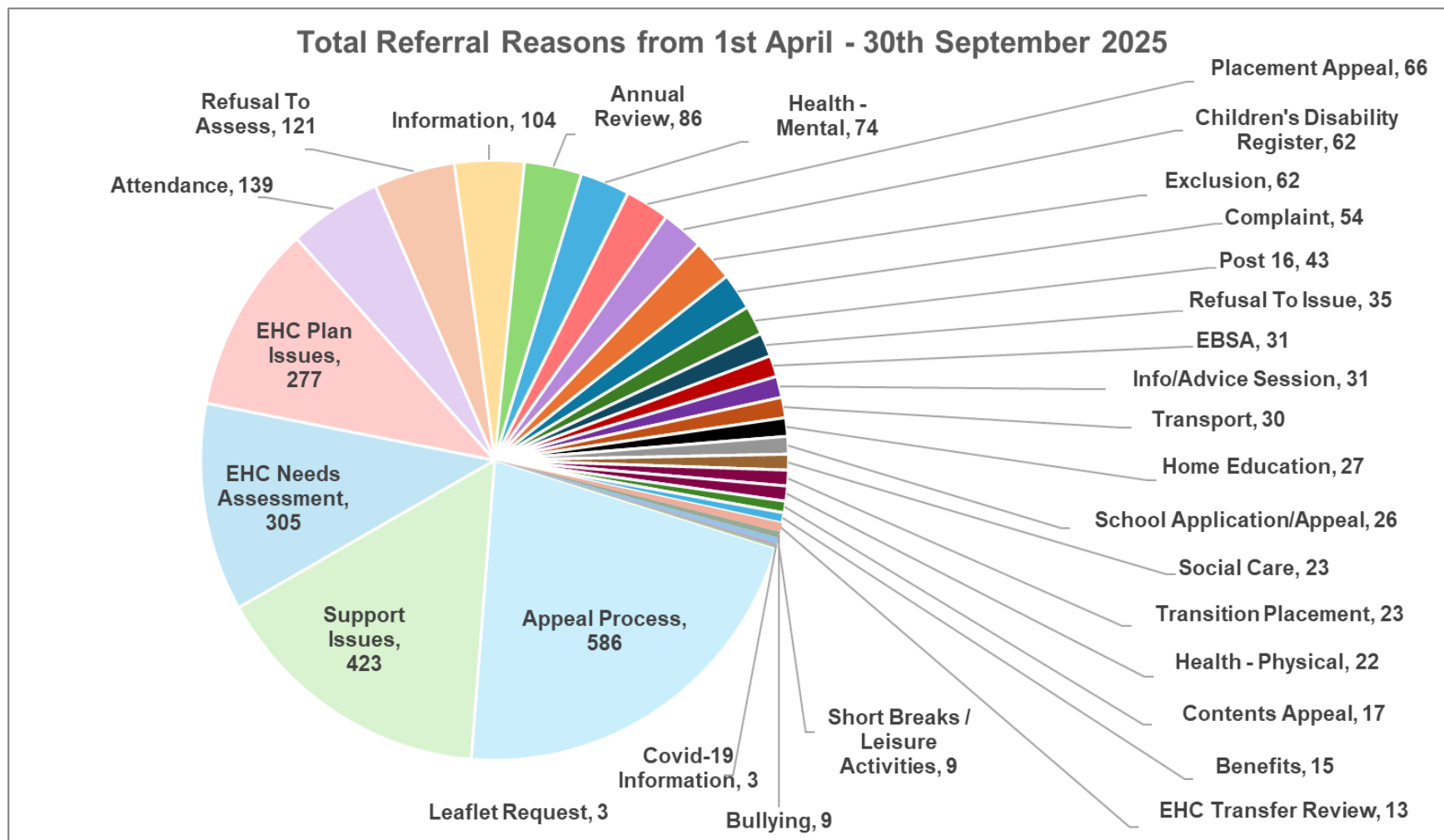
The service is introducing outcomes for casework closures which will be reported in the Annual Report in April 2026.

The graphs over the next 5 pages provide an understanding about the referrals received over the past 6 months:

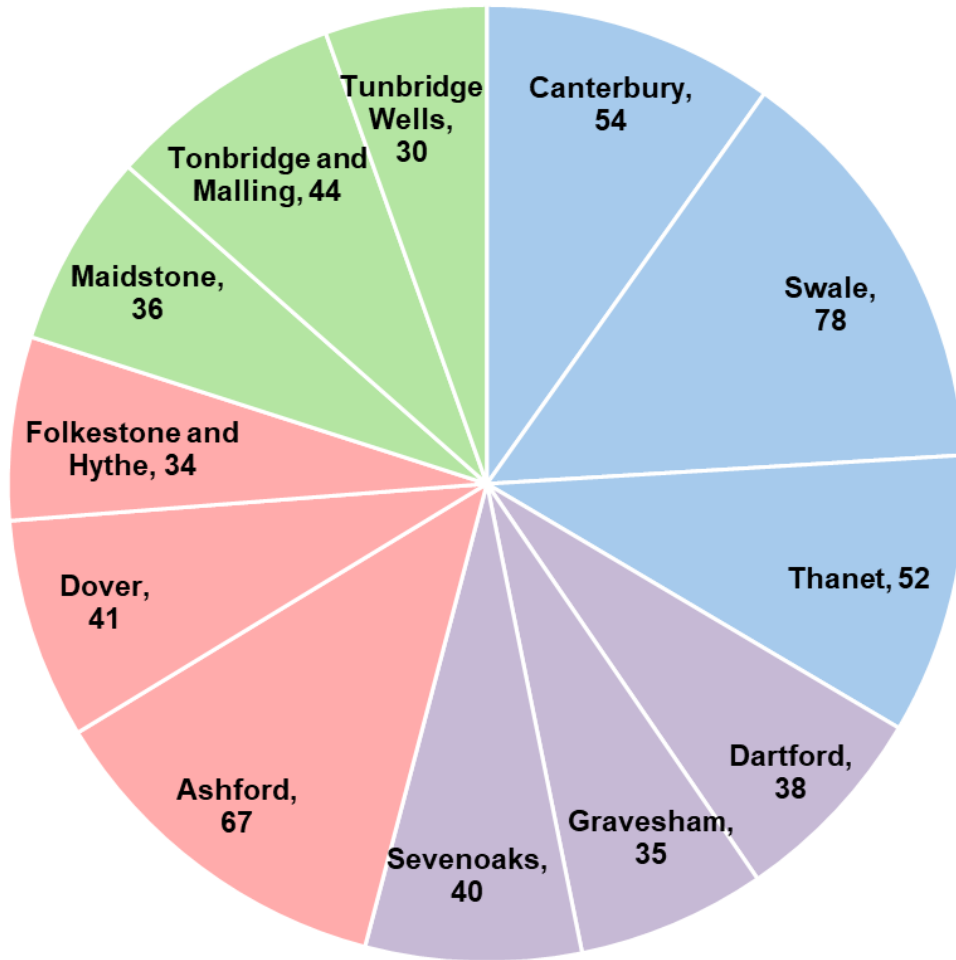
Breakdown Health Discussions relating to the the referrals reasons on the next page 01/04/25-30/09/25	
CAMHS	12
Dynamic Support Service	1
GP/Paediatrician	13
Health Care Plan (medical)	3
Kent School Health (school nurse)	1
Medical Needs	10
Mental Health Organisations	4
Non attendance	4
OT	2
Parents' Mental Health	3
Physio	1
Reduced timetable	2
Right to Choose	2
Rosewood health school	2
SALT	3
School Avoidance (EBSA)	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

We are looking at a key performance indicator for health discussions and referrals to be reported in the Annual Report April 2026.

Please note: More than one referral reason can be recorded against both an enquiry and a referral for casework, which means the overall referral reasons is larger than the number of service users recorded.

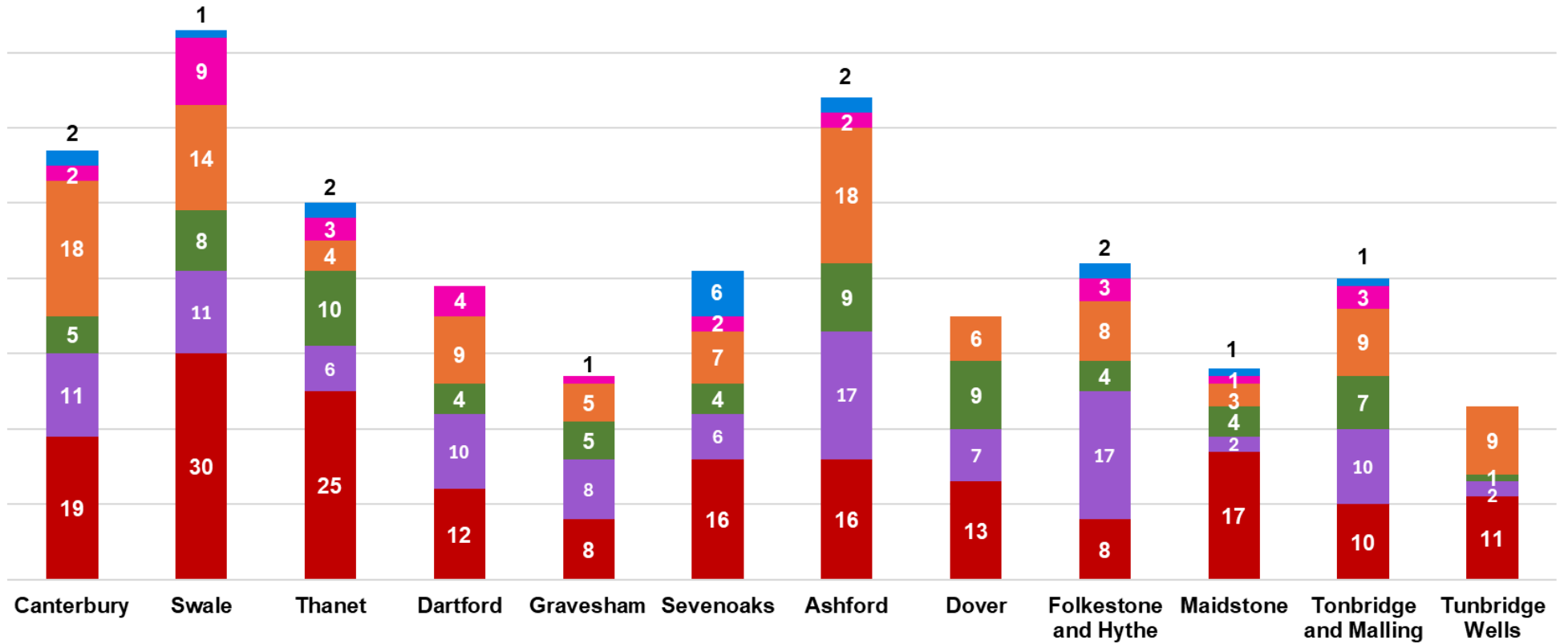


**Number of Referrals by District of Kent  
from 1st April - 30th September 2025**

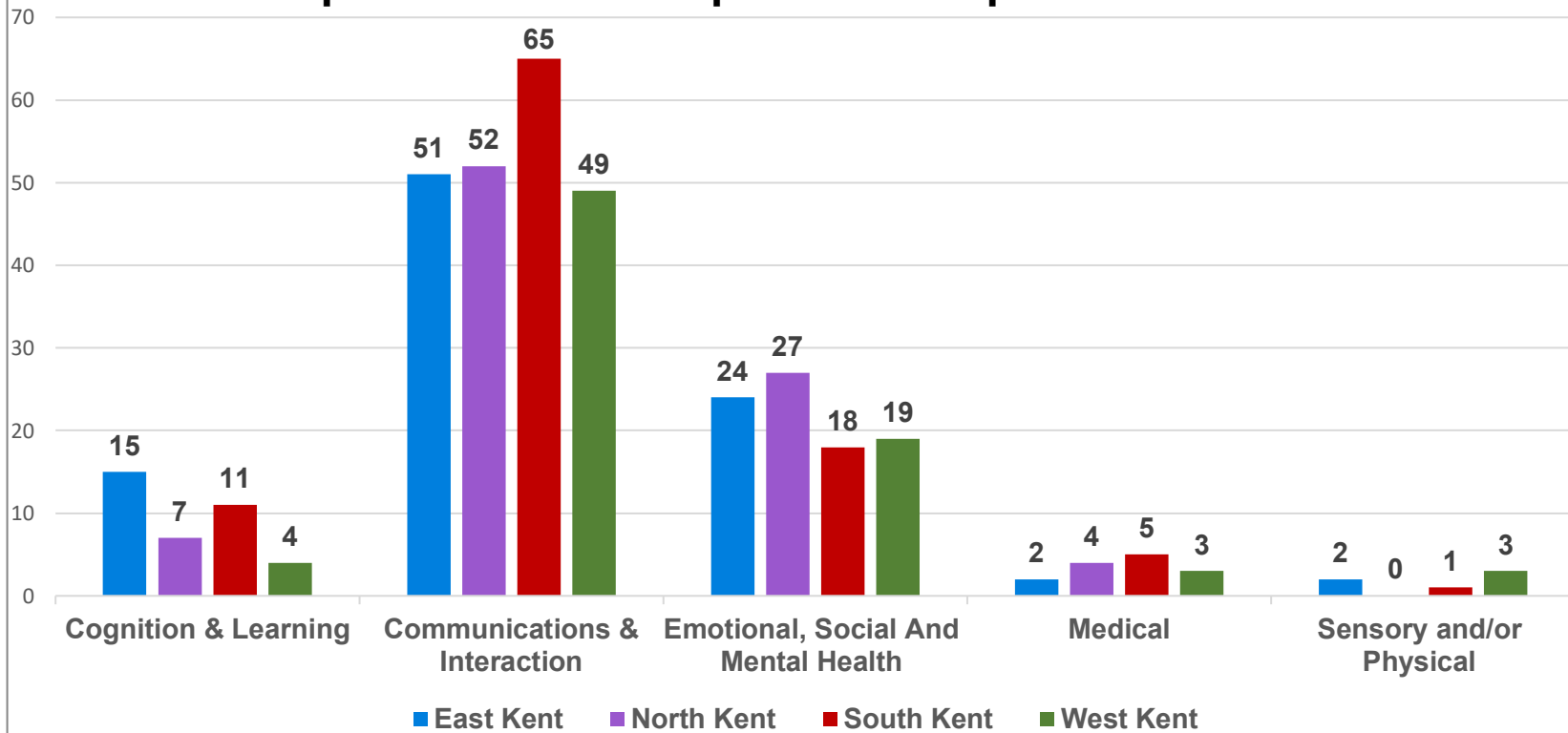


## Top six referral reasons by district from 1st April - 30th September 2025

■ Appeal Process   
 ■ Support Issues   
 ■ EHC Needs Assessment   
 ■ EHC Plan Issues   
 ■ Attendance   
 ■ Refusal To Assess



## Referrals across the four areas of Kent, by the main disability, as identified by parents/carers or young person from 1st April - 30th September 2025



## Key Performance Indicators

IASK has mechanisms in place to monitor performance and these are reviewed monthly at team meetings.

**From 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024:**

**99%** of calls and emails were responded to within two working days **exceeding** the target of **97%** this is due to high volumes of calls to the service

**85%** of service users found it easy (3\*) or very easy to get in touch with us, *(Q1 user survey)* **not meeting** the target of 90%

**93%** of service users found the service helpful (3\*) or very helpful to them, *(Q2 user survey)* **exceeding** the target of 90%

**95%** of Parents had access to either virtual or face to face support at meetings when requested **exceeding** the target of 90%

## Website Usage

Website use has continued to attract a lot of interest, with a total of **5038** new users to the site and **20,351** page views. The top six viewed pages, excluding the home page, were: Information for parents and Carers, Appeals to the SEND Tribunal, SEN Support and EHC plans, Information Sessions and Drop-Ins for Parents, Inclusion and Equality and Helpline.

## **IASK Mission Statement**

**Information, Advice and Support Kent (IASK)** believes children and young people thrive and achieve their potential when all partners (parents, children, young people, and professionals) work together to plan appropriate interventions and educational, health and social care provision.

Our purpose is to provide legally based information, advice, and support to empower parents their children and young people to make informed decisions.

IASK promotes working together based on mutual respect of the views, wishes and feelings of children, young people, and their parents. We are committed to providing a flexible and supportive service responsive to individual needs and to enable parents, children, and young people to be involved in decisions about education, health, and social care as it relates to them.

## **Service Overview**

The Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3, Section 32 states (1) *'A local authority in England must arrange for children and young people for whom it is responsible, and the parents of children for whom it is responsible, to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to the special educational needs of the children or young people concerned'*. (2) *'A local authority in England must arrange for children and young people in its area with a disability, and the parents of children in its area with a disability, to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to the disabilities of the children or young people concerned.'*

Information, Advice and Support Kent (IASK) provide the information, advice, and support service for Kent County Council residents. IASK provides confidential and impartial information advice and support and operates at arm's-length from the local authority to ensure parents/children and young people have confidence in the impartiality of the support and information provided by the Service.

The Service focus is on education and health and social care as it relates to the child/young person's special educational needs and disabilities. For health-related queries the service signposts to Local Healthwatch, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and to SEAP for advocacy for health.

IASK has a steering management group which meets three times a year to monitor service operations. The Service Coordinator formally thanks the Steering Group for their time and commitment to attending meetings and supporting the management of the service.



## Information, Advice and Support Kent Steering Group

Amy Chivers Parent from West Kent – Chair

Sharon King Representative of Kent PACT (Parent Carer Forum)

Becky Clark, Parent Representative of 21 Together

Natalie Hanchett - Parent

Zoe Delderfield, Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board

Kayleigh Leonard Young Person representative and Looked after Children

Steve Lusk, Senior Commissioner for KCC Strengthening Independence Service

Fiona Pender, Representative of Space 2 Be Me Telephone: 01622 764566 Email: [info@space2beme.org.uk](mailto:info@space2beme.org.uk)  
Website: [www.space2beme.org.uk/](http://www.space2beme.org.uk/)

Siobhan Price, Kent County Council Mainstream Inclusion

Katie Wicks, Representative of SNAAP Telephone: 01227 367555 Email: [info@snaap.org.uk](mailto:info@snaap.org.uk) Website: [www.snaap.org.uk/](http://www.snaap.org.uk/)

Kerry Miles, Service Co-ordinator for Information, Advice and Support Kent Email: [iask@kent.gov.uk](mailto:iask@kent.gov.uk) Website [www.kent.gov.uk/iask](http://www.kent.gov.uk/iask)



## Information, Advice and Support Kent User Survey 1 April – 30 September 2025

For cases closed between the period of 1 April to 30 September 2024 a total of **253** parents and young people were contacted. We sought feedback from families who received more than 2 hours support during this period who are identified as receiving an intervention level 3 or 4.

**27** responses were received resulting in a **16%** return rate

**85%** of respondents found it easy (3\*) or very easy to get in touch with us

**93%** of respondents felt that we understood their questions concerns well (3\*) or very well

**93%** found the service helpful (3\*) or very helpful to them

**100%** of respondents felt IASK listened to their view

**93%** felt the information and advice provided met their needs

**96%** of respondents rated IASK as good (3\*) or very good at being neutral, fair and unbiased

**85%** of respondents felt that the information advice and support provided has made a difference (3\*) or great deal of difference

**Examples of the difference made** (respondents can choose more than one from 9 questions):

**59%** I feel that my child's needs are better understood than they were

**56%** have a greater understanding of the SEND Code of Practice and the arrangements that should be made for children/young people with SEN

**59%** I feel more involved in decision about my child's education

**63%** I am happier/less worried about my child's future

**67%** of respondents felt their child has benefitted as a result of the service being involved

89% of responses recorded satisfied (3\*) or very satisfied with the service

89% of respondents were likely (3\*) or very likely to recommend the service to others

(Please also see charts on page 20 and 21)

### Comments about the service:

'Although our position remained unchanged after contacting IASK, I genuinely believe their support gave me the confidence to attend meetings with the school, where I had previously felt unsupported. IASK listened to my concerns and made me feel heard and reassured throughout the process.'

'X was brilliant, helpful, warm, friendly and professional!'

'I was fully supported with the EHCP that I was trying to get out in place, I was having trouble navigating the process until IASK helped myself so much.'

'It would be nice when you assigned to someone helping you that you can email /contact them directly. It's a bit of a wait to hear *back*'

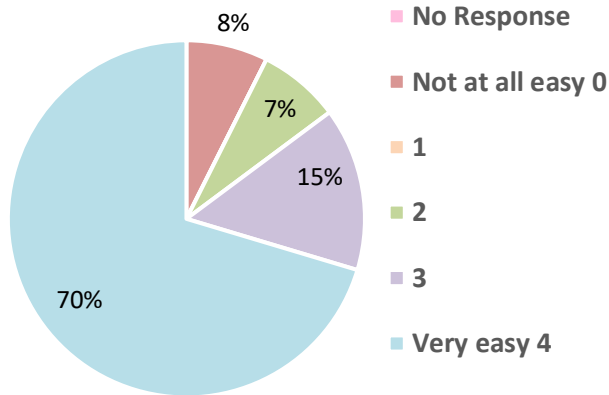
'Without the support of IASK I would not have challenged the LA decision and felt confident to appeal to the court. I truly valued your support throughout. Always a prompt and detailed reply. I would not have done it without you. We are now awaiting the Ed Psych visit at school and hoping this will lead to the support my child needs.'

'Being able to send my queries to you and you explaining it in basic terms and concise to the point helped me a lot. I was very nervous and anxious about the mediation appointment, the paperwork and Court correspondence. However, you were not and calmly explained what I needed to so. I felt very supported'.

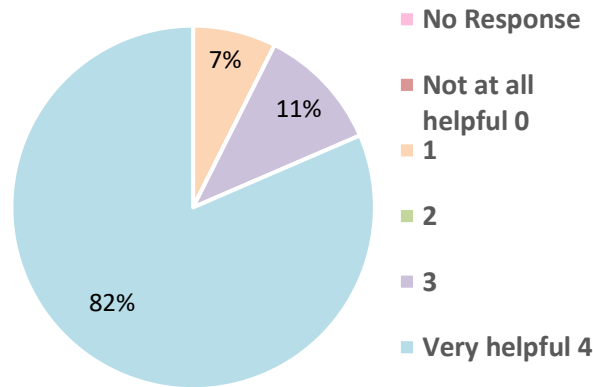
'X supported us in securing an appropriate secondary SRP placement. Their expertise, advocacy, and ongoing guidance have been essential in ensuring my son receives the right educational support.'

'It would be helpful if IASK were able to compel the Education Authority (KCC) to deliver what they are statutorily required to deliver'.

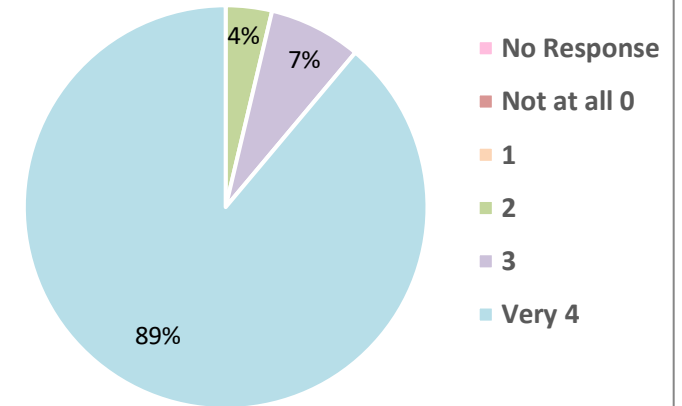
**Q1 How easy was it to get in touch with us?**



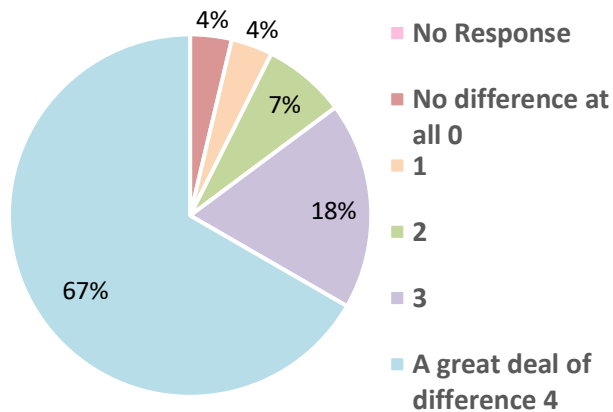
**Q2 How helpful was the information, advice and support we gave you?**



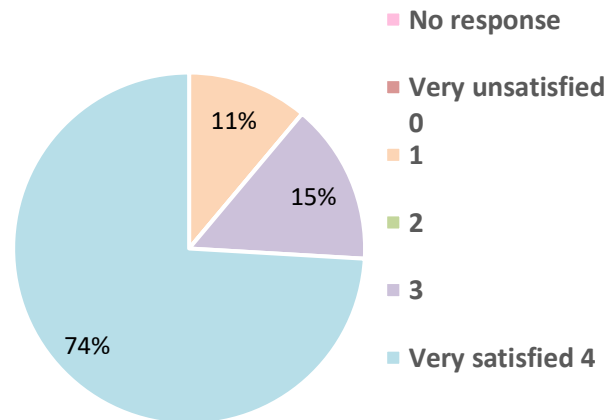
**Q3 How neutral, fair and unbiased do you think we were?**



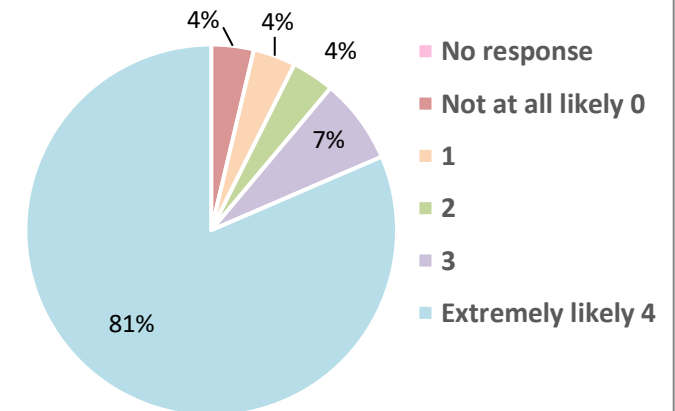
**Q4 What difference do you think our information, advice or support has made for you?**



**Q5 Overall how satisfied are you with the service we gave?**



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



**Q4b Can you tell us more about the difference(s) we made for you? (Please tick any that apply)**

