



Welcome to September's edition of the SENDIASS Spotlight!

## SENDIASS UPDATE

Welcome back to the new term, we hope you've had a wonderful summer holiday!

Over the summer we spent a lot of time reducing our wait times on the Helpline and where possible we have been adding additional calls to ensure a timely response to your queries. Our wait times have reduced significantly from where they were before summer but are still higher than our aim of 10 days. This is something we continue to work on, and whilst we are, please take time to look at our website which has a wide variety of booklets and resources that may help answer your questions or help you fill in forms such as appeal forms:

**Visit our Information zone**

We still have a wait for casework support, but we are starting to investigate ways to reduce the wait times and offer support in a timelier manner.

Over the summer we had a new member of the team start Amy-Lou, she is already over halfway through her IPSEA training and has really hit the ground running!

Also, over the summer we said goodbye to Laura a member of our Engagement and Advice Team who we wish all the best for the future and welcomed Sally whose moved from the role of Helpline Advisor into one of the Engagement and Advice Worker roles! Sally has already been busy getting out and about across Norfolk and supporting members of our SEND Youth Forum with the interview panels we have for the other Engagement and Advice Worker role.

Talking about interviews for the other Engagement and Advice Worker role, we have now shortlisted and will be interviewing this week so over the coming months keep an eye out for the new member of the team!



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## Library Drop-in's

We will be here to answer any questions you may have, advice and signposting to further support.

All sessions are subject to change, and any changes will be advertised on our Facebook page. Please be aware these sessions do not offer a private room to talk, we will be based in main areas of the library. As we are not taking bookings, we will do our best to speak to you on a first come, first served basis.

**Find out where you can find us**



# Join Us for Drop-In Sessions

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## Find out more



Dereham Library 1<sup>st</sup> Oct  
10:00–12:00



Caister Library 7<sup>th</sup> Oct  
14:00–16:00



Kings Lynn Library 9<sup>th</sup> Oct  
11:00–13.30



Mile Cross Library 15<sup>th</sup> Oct  
10:00–13.00



Wroxham Library 17<sup>th</sup> Oct  
13:00–15.00



Great Yarmouth Library 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct  
10:30–12:30



Cromer Library 27<sup>th</sup> Oct  
11:00–13.00



Mile Cross Library 31<sup>st</sup> Oct  
10:30–12.00



Earlham Library 4<sup>th</sup> Nov  
13:00–16:00



Gorleston Library 11<sup>th</sup> Nov  
13:00–15.00



Wymondham Library 14<sup>th</sup> Nov  
13:00–15.00



Downham Market Library 27<sup>th</sup> Nov  
11:30–13:30



Thetford Library 10<sup>th</sup> Dec  
10:00–12:00

We can give you advice, information and support about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in relation to education.

We work with children, young people (0–25 years) and their parent/carers. We can give you information about SEN Support, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP's), mediation, appeals, exclusions and suspensions, and other SEND processes.



## SENDIASS Team Spotlight



Hello, my name is Amy-Lou Mulligan and in August this year, I joined Norfolk SENDIASS as the new helpline advisor. Within this exciting role I will be supporting families and young people with confidential and impartial advice and information on many areas of SEND.

My background is within SEND and educational administration, giving me a good understanding of some of the issues parents and young people may be facing. I have worked 1 to 1 with students with SEND and have seen how they thrived with right placement and provision.

I grew up in a neurodiverse household and I appreciate whole heartedly the difference that support and advocacy can make. I hope to replicate this in role and am excited to make a positive impact on the families I will be supporting.



## Norfolk SEND Youth Forum update

We held our latest Youth Forum meeting on Wednesday 17th September, and it was a fantastic opportunity to reconnect after the summer break. We had a great time catching up, sharing stories, and hearing about all the exciting things everyone got up to over the holidays.

We're excited to be interviewing for a new Engagement and Advice Worker next week, and thrilled that our Youth Forum will be actively involved in the process! Four of our brilliant Youth Forum members will part of the interview panel, each preparing a meaningful question to ask the candidates. Their involvement ensures that youth voice plays a central role in our recruitment.

We're incredibly proud to share that the Youth Forum was nominated for a Flourish Award. We were thrilled that Charlotte, one of our members, was invited to be part of the judging panel, helping to select this year's winners. Another Youth Forum member, Lily, along with Charlotte, attended the awards ceremony to represent the group and celebrate the achievements of all those involved. The evening was a joyful celebration, filled with great company, delicious food, and everyone looked fantastic! The event highlighted the importance of youth voice and the brilliant contributions our members continue to make.

**Sally Bailey, Engagement and Advice worker**

[CLICK TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

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## Engagement and Outreach Update





### New Engagement and Advice Worker:

Hi, my name is Sally. I've been part of the SENDIASS team for the past year and a half, and in September I transitioned into the role of Engagement and Advice Worker. I'm really looking forward to continuing to support families and young people, and to developing new ways to connect with our community.

### Making sense of SEND:

We recently attended the *Making Sense of SEND* event at Charles Burrell Centre, where we had the opportunity to speak with many parents and carers. It was a fantastic chance to share information about our service, listen to families' experiences, give information and advice, and build connections within the community – all over a lovely cup of tea, of course.

### Parent Support:

This month, we've supported parents at a range of local events, including Parent Pop-Up Marketplace sessions and Parent Cafés. It's been wonderful to meet so many families, offer advice and next steps, and help guide them through various SEND processes.

If your education setting or service hosts coffee mornings, parent cafes or other parent-focused sessions and you'd like us to attend, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch at: [nsendiassengagement@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nsendiassengagement@norfolk.gov.uk).

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## Important Mediation update



Important Update on Mediation and Disagreement Resolution (MDR) Services in Norfolk.

The provider of MDR services has changed. The new provider is Anglia Care Trust (ACT) Mediation Service, which will continue offering high-quality, impartial support to families.

### What you need to know

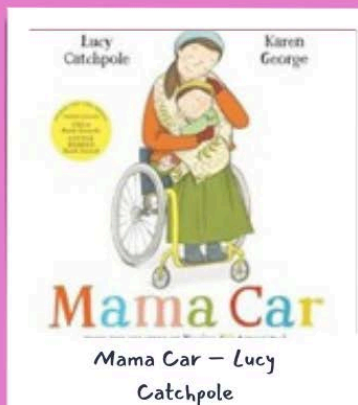
- If you already have an open case with the previous provider KIDS, it will continue to be handled by them until your case is resolved. There will be no disruption.
- From 1 September 2025, all new MDR cases will be supported by ACT.
- The process and level of support will stay the same. Whether your case is with KIDS or ACT, you'll receive the same trusted, impartial help to navigate disagreements and find a way forward.

This change is about continuing to provide the best possible support for families. The service remains voluntary, free, and focused on your needs.

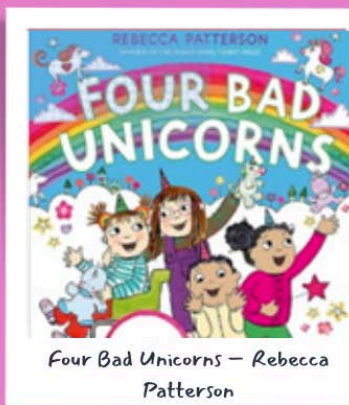
The provider of the service has changed because Norfolk County Council has recommissioned the contract. It's normal for councils to review and update service contracts regularly.

For more information on mediation you can visit our [website](#).

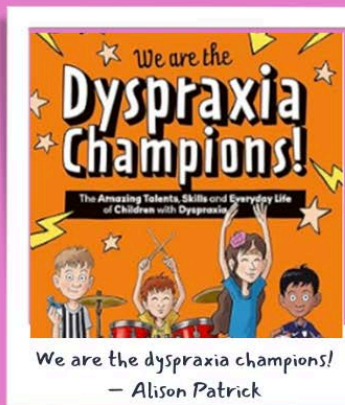
## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS



The Mama Car has big wheels, a soft cushion, and even a little bridge. It can whisk you away on adventures—outside, anywhere—and always brings you safely back home. It's filled with wonderful things, but the very best part? Mummy is there.



Rebecca Patterson brings heaps of heart and humour to the world of childhood play and disability, inspired by growing up with her own disabled sister. Frankie and her sister are totally unicorn bonkers! Ada, their super bossy friend, takes over their game... she takes over the wheelchair too! A story about navigating friendship.

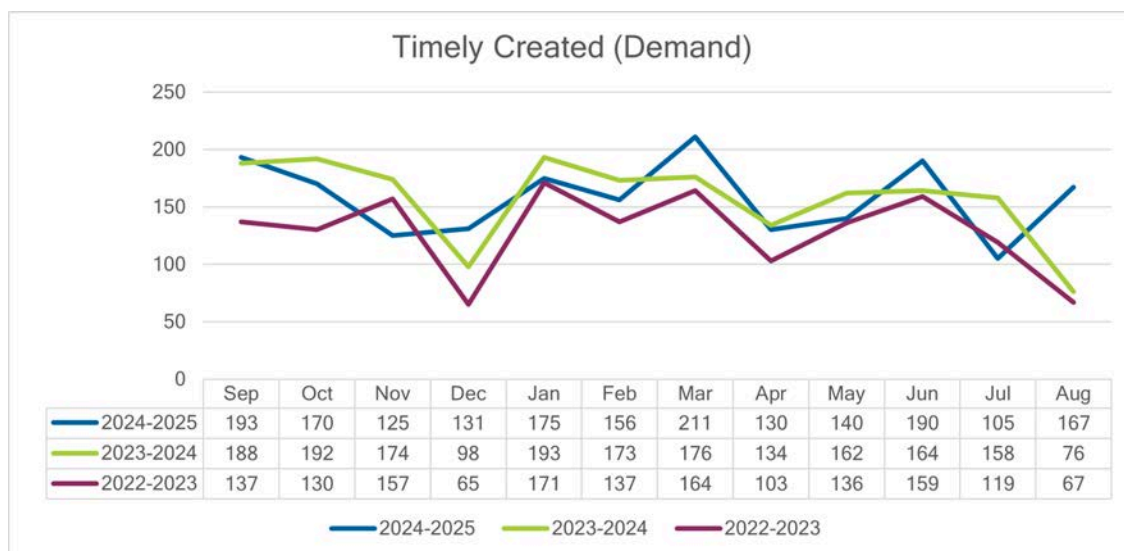


An illustrated book that helps children see their dyspraxia in a positive light. Each character explores a different aspect—like movement challenges, reading and writing difficulties, and social anxiety—making it easier for kids to understand and relate.

## Headlines from our Annual report

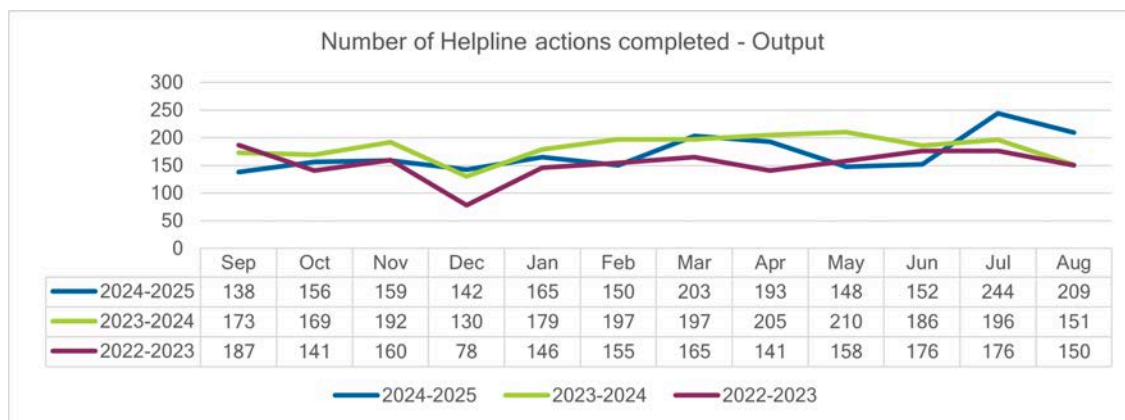
We have now published our 2024/2025 Annual report, the whole report can be found on our website along with previous years.

But here are some highlights from this years report:

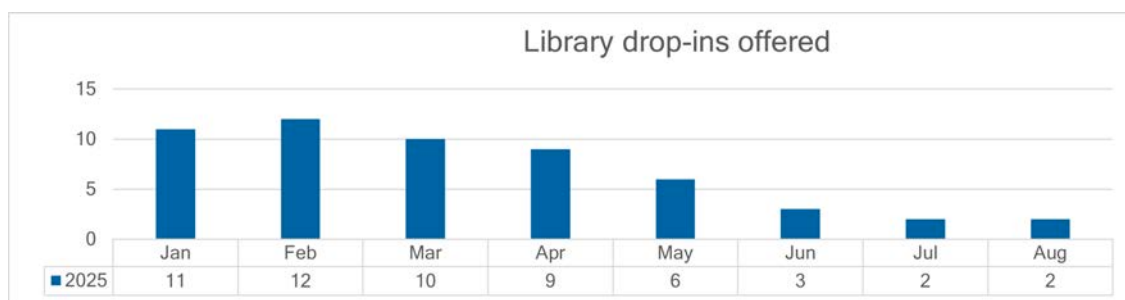




*1893 people booked appointments during this period, this is a 0.2% increase.*



*Over the course of this academic year we spoken to 2059 parent/carers via our telephone helpline which is a 5.7% decrease from the previous year as we have been unable to offer as many appointments due to staff leaving and staff absence.*



*We have offered a total of 55 library drop-ins across the County since January 2025, speaking to around 10-12 parents during each session. We have had very positive feedback from parent/carers that have attended.*





Contact provide 1-1 telephone appointments with a family support adviser for parent/carers looking for a listening ear, reassurance and practical and emotional support. Appointments are 45 minutes long and it's important that you book a time and date that you know you will be free to talk, are somewhere that you feel safe and is quiet so that you can get the most out of the time you have.

If you would like to use Contact's listening ear service, please follow the link below to book an appointment.

[Listening Ear | Contact](#)



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