



Case Study

June 2025





BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Issues and challenges before SENDIASS involvement.

Russell is an 18-year-old care leaver who was previously a Looked After Child (LAC). In September 2024, at the same time, he transitioned out of care and enrolled in a Level 1 Construction course at Westminster Kingsway College.

At the time of referral, there were concerns about the college's reluctance to understand Russell's Special Educational Needs (SEN) and provide reasonable adjustments. SENDIASS initially supported Russell in advocating for these adjustments, but they were inconsistently applied by the college.

Issues Leading to the Revocation of Russell's Place

Russell's place on the course was revoked by the college without following proper processes. SENDIASS identified that his SEN needs had not been communicated to his tutors despite being documented in his student profile. His profile noted that he was a LAC and had a diagnosis of ADHD, but this critical information appeared to have been overlooked.

Key concerns included:

- 1. Inconsistent SEN Support:**
Russell's requests for accommodations—such as noise-cancelling headphones to manage sensory overload and regular movement breaks to address his difficulties with focus—were not consistently met.
- 2. Lack of SEN Oversight:**
There was no evidence of meaningful involvement from the college's SENDCO or equivalent staff in identifying Russell's needs or ensuring these were communicated to his tutors.
- 3. Improper Revocation of Place:**
The college failed to follow formal procedures for removing Russell from the course. He was notified of his removal via a Microsoft Teams message from his tutor, with no written warning or formal explanation provided, which breached the college's policies.

Russell's Perspective

SENDIASS met Russell at his care home to capture his wishes and feelings. He expressed frustration and disappointment with the college's lack of understanding and support for his SEN needs.

Russell described his challenges as follows:

- **Sensory Overload:**
The crowded corridors and noisy classrooms triggered significant sensory overload, leaving him feeling distressed and, at times, angry.
- **Denied Accommodations:**
Despite requesting noise-cancelling headphones to help him cope with sensory challenges, his request was initially denied. Additionally, the absence of movement breaks made it harder for him to stay focused and engaged in lessons.
- **Relationship Difficulties:**
Russell felt disrespected by both peers and adults at college, which heightened his sense of isolation and made it difficult for him to build positive relationships.
- **Impact of Past Experiences:**
Russell reflected on how frequent moves between homes and schools had affected his worldview and emotional responses, Russell had 17 previous exclusions throughout education. Despite these challenges, he was determined to pursue his career goals in construction, having already achieved his CSCS card at Euston Skills Centre.

Russell felt that the lack of proper SEN support played a significant role in the challenges he faced at college and ultimately contributed to his exclusion.

 **SENDIASS
INVOLVEMENT:**

SENDIASS provided ongoing support to Russell, ensuring his voice was heard and challenging the college's actions, often becoming the lead professional.

- **Challenging the Decision to Revoke His Place:**
SENDIASS highlighted the procedural failings and the lack of SEN support that led to Russell's exclusion. This advocacy prompted the college to reconsider its decision.
- **Supporting Re-Enrolment:**
SENDIASS helped Russell re-enrol at another site of the college and attended his induction to ensure he felt supported on his first day.
- **Submitting an EHC Request:**
SENDIASS supported Russell in applying for an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan. He is now awaiting the outcome of this request.
- **Supporting Russell with his EP Assessment:**
Russell had requested that the only professional he would like to attend his EP assessment was his SENDIASS worker

- **Collaborating with Relevant Services:**

SENDIASS maintained consistent communication with the LAC service, the Virtual School, the Care Experienced Team, EP service and the SEND team, to ensure Russell's needs were understood and addressed.



OUTCOMES:

Improvements, significant changes, achievements.

- Russell is now back in college at another site, and the necessary SEN provisions are being implemented
- SENDIASS has built a trusting relationship with Russell, which is a significant achievement given his previous challenges in working with professionals. Russell has expressed that he feels listened to and supported.
- To ensure his continued success, SENDIASS is conducting regular check-ins with Russell the college and his PA, monitoring his progress, and addressing any concerns that arise.

Update from the Curriculum Manager

So far, Russell seems to have settled in ok and chats with other members of the group, I would even say that he has formed a bit of a bond with one or two of the other learners in so much as I can see. His attendance has been good as is his punctuality and he has shown a good attitude to learning in theory, where he regularly contributes to class discussions on the lesson subject. In practical he has shown some ability with plastering and some painting, and I am waiting to hear from his previous college as to what units he has already taken. He has passed his paper-based exam 'Introduction to the Construction industry' and his plastering assessment, and he will be doing tiling next week. His behaviour has been good so far although he does occasionally make comments that are slightly inappropriate but not in any way meant with any malice or bad intent, more I think because he thinks its humorous, so a will keep an eye on that, and he has shown a propensity to lose concentration in practical and chat a bit but overall, he is doing ok.

Further Update

Russell was issued an EHCP and continues to do well at college.