

SEND PARTNERSHIP SERVICE

Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)
Impartial Information, Advice and Support
Service for Bath & North East Somerset



Advice Line: 01225 394382
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Text phone: 07530 263401

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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY IMPARTIAL INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT?

This information is about the impartial information, advice and support required by the **SEND Code of Practice**.

What does the SEND Code of Practice say?

The **Children and Families Act 2014** says local authorities **must** provide information advice and support about special educational needs (SEN), disability, health and social care for children, young people and parents.

The [SEND Code of Practice](#) says:

Local authorities must arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This must include information, advice and support on the take-up and management of Personal Budgets. In addition, in carrying out their duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities must have regard to the importance of providing children and their parents and young people with the information and support necessary to participate in decisions. (2.1)

This means that every local authority should provide a service that is free, easy to access and confidential and that can help children, parents and young people take part in decisions that affect their lives.

The **Local Offer** must include information about the sources of information, advice and support for parents, children and young people and how this is resourced.

In Bath and North East Somerset this service is provided by the SEND Partnership Service.

What do we mean when we say we are impartial?

The [SEND Code of Practice](#) says:

The information, advice and support should be impartial and provided at arm's length from the local authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups (2.8)

This means that the information, advice and support that we offer are firmly based in the law and the [SEND Code of Practice](#).

We provide unbiased information and advice about the local authority's policies and procedures and about the policy and practice in local schools and other settings.

We do not give priority to any particular impairment, disability or special educational need, nor do we campaign for any particular approach to education.

By being impartial we aim to help parents, children and young people have clear, accurate and relevant information that will help them take part in decisions about their lives.

You can find our [Impartiality Policy](#) on our website.

How do we know that we are impartial?

It is very easy to be biased. Everyone has opinions about most things! Sometimes people can be biased without even realising it.

That is why we really value your opinion about the information, advice and support we offer. We want you to tell us if you think we are not impartial. To help us check that we are impartial we routinely ask those who use our service to say whether they think we have been biased one way or another.

At SEND Partnership Service we follow a national set of [Minimum Standards](#) developed by the [Network of Information, Advice and Support Services](#). This helps us to monitor the effectiveness of our service we provide and ensure that it is 'at arm's length' from the local authority. By this we mean that we act, and are seen to act, separately and impartially, with no undue influence or control from either the local authority or the Clinical Commissioning Group in our area.

We also publish an [Annual Report](#) that includes information on what people tell us about our service.

What information, advice and support do we offer?

We offer accurate, up to date and impartial resources and information about the law on special educational needs and disability. This covers:

- education, health and social care
- national and local policy
- the Local Offer
- your rights and choices

- your opportunities to participate
- where you can find help and advice
- exclusions guidance for all Children and Young People
- how you can access this support.

We provide information in many ways, including our [website](#), publications, training events and conferences.

Sometimes information alone is not enough. You may want help to gather information, make sense of it and apply it to your own situation. We call this advice and we offer this service by email, on the telephone, face to face and through work with groups or in training.

We can also offer more intensive support if you need it. This can include helping with letters, attending meetings with you or supporting you in discussions with the local authority, school or other setting. We may be able to find you a volunteer who can support you.

When we are not able to help we will do our best to tell you about, or put you in touch with, other groups or organisations that can help. We call this **signposting**.

Is the service confidential?

YES

We will not share your information with anyone unless you tell us we can. The only exception to this would be because we have a specific concern about a child's safety.

You can find our [Confidentiality Policy](#) on our website.

We will often work with parents and children or young people together. Sometimes we will work with them separately. When we do this the same confidentiality rules apply.

Where can I find out more?

You can read about impartial information, advice and support in the [SEND Code of Practice](#) Chapter 2.

The Local Offer tells you what support the local authority expects to be available for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. It must include information about education, health and care provision. It should also tell you about training, employment and independent living for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The [Rainbow Resource](#) is the Local Offer in Bath and North East Somerset and includes details of arrangements for providing information, advice and support.

Look at the [SEND Partnership Service](#) website for information about our services, copies of our publications and contact details.

Useful Webpages

Information, Advice and Support Services Network

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network>

Minimum Standards

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/resources/minimum-standards-iass>

Rainbow Resource

www.rainbowresource.org.uk/

SEND Code of Practice

www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Glossary

Children and Families Act 2014

This law came into force on 1st September 2014. Part 3 of the Act sets out the new law on special educational needs and disability. The Act is supported by the SEND Regulations 2014 and the **SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years**. You can download a copy of the Act [here](#).

Local Offer

The Local Offer, published by every local authority, tells you what support is available for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and their families. It includes information about education, health and care provision. It also gives information about training, employment and independent living for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Must

The **SEND Code of Practice** says in Section i of the Introduction:

*...where the text uses the word '**must**' it refers to a statutory requirement under primary legislation, regulations or case law.*

This means that wherever the term 'must' is used all the organisations listed in Section iv of the Introduction to the Code have a legal duty to do what the Code says.

SEND Code of Practice

This is the statutory guidance that supports Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

It tells local authorities, early years settings, schools, colleges, health and social care providers and others what they must and should do to identify, assess and provide for children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

You can download a full copy of the Code [here](#).

You can download a shorter version for parents [here](#).

Signposting

Sometimes a service that provides information, advice and support may be asked for help that it is not able to give directly.

When this happens the person seeking information, advice or support may signposted to other service providers. This means that they will be given information, including contact details, about other sources of help.

We have made all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information contained in this leaflet is accurate and up to date at the time of publication. It does not constitute legal advice and the SEND Partnership Service cannot accept any responsibility for any loss or damage suffered as a consequence of any reliance placed upon it.

This document can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats.