



SEND PARTNERSHIP SERVICE (SPS) SERVICE DESCRIPTION and 'ARM'S LENGTH' STATUS

Local authorities **must** provide all children and young people and their parents (and carers), with clear and accurate information, advice and support in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), including the statutory assessment processes and Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP)

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to provide information, advice and support that covers social care and health, as they relate to SEND, which is free for children and young people aged 0 – 25 and their parents.

Information, advice and support **must** be impartial and provided at 'arm's length' from the local authority and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This means that SPS must demonstrate that it operates independently and impartially and that all support which is provided is underpinned by the appropriate legislation. The delivery also needs to be confidential, accurate and accessible.

SPS has been contracted to deliver this statutory duty for Bath and North East Somerset and the Clinical Commissioning Group.

SPS comprises strategic and operational management, information and advice officers, a volunteer coordinator and an administrator who undertake to provide a service of excellence. SPS is supported by a number of volunteers some who are trained to provide support to children, young people and their parents and some to promote the offer of impartial information, advice and support as Parent Champions

SPS will ensure that children and young people with special educational needs and disability and their families can access impartial and accurate information, advice and support via the telephone advice line, by email, face to face meetings, information leaflets, website, contact with support groups (both local and national)

SPS endeavours to be fully compliant with the Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) Minimum Standards (2018) as defined by the Council for Disabled Children and supported by the Department for Education. SPS demonstrates impartiality and arm's length delivery in the information, advice and support it provides.

SPS will act as a channel through which consultation with children, young people and their families takes place, in collaboration with other agencies, enabling them to consider issues, developments and concerns with respect to national and local policy and for such views to be recorded and for them to inform local practice and procedures.

The SPS Advisory Group strives to ensure that impartiality and at 'arm's length' delivery is met by SPS and seen to be credible by service users



SPS presents an Annual Service Report to the independent Advisory Group that evidences implementation of these aims in an accountable and monitored way.

Service Delivery Model

SPS delivery needs to be compliant with the Minimum Standards for SENDIASS services <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/resources/minimum-standards-iass> Additionally the SPS Implementation Plan 2019 - 2021 specifies how the Minimum Standards and the statute will be achieved in relation to service delivery.

The Advisory Group

Aims and purpose: The Advisory Group ensures that SPS delivers an impartial and 'arm's length' service that is responsive to local needs, taking into account best practice both locally and nationally. The Advisory Group comprises representation from statutory services, health, social care, education, the voluntary sector and children, young people with SEND and their families. For more detail please see the Advisory Group Terms of Reference

SPS Advisory Group is charged with:

- Monitoring the performance of SPS against the Minimum Standards
- Monitoring the impartiality of SPS
- Receiving reports from the Strategic Manager and Operational Lead
- Where necessary, meeting representatives of the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning group to communicate areas of concern and influence local policy and practice.
- Promoting the interests and concerns of SPS
- Identifying ways to support and develop the work of SPS

Confidentiality and Privacy

This is addressed under the separate Confidentiality and Privacy Policy

Impartiality

This is addressed under the separate Impartiality Policy

Complaints

These are addressed under the separate Complaints Policy