



Havering SENDIASS

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service.



Impartiality Policy

Reviewed August 2020

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) view impartiality as one of the essential requirements of the Service. It is also a requirement of the Department for Education (DfE) for all Local Authorities to ensure an Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) is available and that it is able to work in an impartial way.

SENDIASS provides an impartial service to **all** who use it. By impartial, SENDIASS understands the meaning to be:

- not favouring one side over another (neutral)
- to assist parents/carers* and young people* in having their views heard and valued by professionals
- to assist parents/carers* and young people* in gaining a better understanding of the views and decisions taken by professionals and schools
- fairness for all (seeing that a consistent approach is taken)
- treating all parties respectfully and not judgementally; and
- not having a vested interest in the outcome of any discussions (not benefiting in any way from what happens or follows afterwards).

All written communication and information leaflets produced by SENDIASS must also meet the requirement for neutrality i.e. giving a balanced view and have a non-corporate look. SENDIASS always ensures that parents/carers* and young people* vet and review all literature and policies, any amendments from this process are made accordingly. The principle of neutrality is also true when delivering training.

All Staff and Volunteers working on behalf of SENDIASS know they must be impartial, whether they are providing information, advice or acting in an advocacy role, therefore, such Staff or Volunteers would not openly make judgements on the views, behaviour or policy of any party.

SENDIASS supports parents/carers* and young people* taking part in negotiations and discussions with other parties such as education provisions, social care and health. It does this by helping parents/carers* and young people* convey their views and wishes. SENDIASS aims to make sure that all parties are aware of their own and each other's rights and responsibilities.

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In order for SENDIASS to be sure that it is able to meet the requirements of this policy and to ensure it remains an impartial facilitating service, it will engage with relevant networks and organisations and will always try to attend training, including legal training, being offered by independent providers such as IPSEA, IASSN, CDC etc.

SENDIASS understands the reasons for, and importance of, equal opportunities and does everything it can to make sure the Service or the information/training needed is available to as many parents/carers* and young people* as possible who need it, or are likely to need it either individually or in groups.

SENDIASS complies with the Minimum Standards for Information Advice and Support Services (IASS). You can find the Minimum Standards on the following link. <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/resources/minimum-standards-iass>

**Parent/carer is used to describe all adults involved with the care of a child but when somebody in their capacity as carer contacts SENDIASS for advice i.e. they are not the parents (eg grandparent, aunt etc), they can still be advised in the same way that a parent or legal guardian can as SENDIASS is only giving guidance, advice, information etc that is already in the public domain and not providing confidential information relating to the child. However, when providing advice regarding statutory procedures such as requesting a statutory assessment of a child's special educational needs, the carer must be advised that only a parent or legal guardian can make such a request. If they believe they are the guardian, when they contact SENDIASS they will be asked to provide evidence or proof of their status.*

**The term "Young people" is used to describe individuals aged 16 to 25 years old as described in "The Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years 2015".*

N.B The right of young people to make a decision is subject to their capacity to do so as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.