



**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Information, Advice and Support Service**

IMPARTIALITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service) North Yorkshire provides information, advice and support on matters relating to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (**SEND**). The service is offered to Parents and carers of children and young people up to the age of 25.

SENDIASS North Yorkshire provides free, confidential, impartial advice and helps parents/Carers play an active and informed role in their child / young person's education.

The Quality Standards for services providing information advice and support, state that **SENDIASS** should ensure; 'Parents, children and young people are provided with high quality, impartial and accessible information, advice and support that are appropriate to their needs, extends their knowledge and maximises their involvement in decision making'.

To ensure parents, children and young people have confidence in **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire it is important that staff and volunteers are able to operate impartially.

AIM:

SENDIASS North Yorkshire aims to engender service user confidence by the provision of neutral, factual information and advice based on current special educational needs (**SEN**) legislation and empowering and informing them of the options available to them.

SENDIASS North Yorkshire will also act strategically to create vehicles that enable the full range of parents and young people's views to be heard and to influence service developments. Service staff will aim to operate impartially when fulfilling these roles.

SUPPORTING PARENTS, CARERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

The role of SENDIASS Gloucestershire is to empower parents, children and young people by providing them with relevant information, advice and guidance that includes national legislation and its application through local policies and practices. It seeks to help them to understand the pros and cons of any decisions they ultimately take.

SENDIASS North Yorkshire Staff Will:

- Provide parents, children and young people with a balanced and comprehensive range of information setting out all options available, enabling them to make informed decisions dependent upon the individual circumstances of the referral.
- With consent, put forward the views and wishes of parents, children and young people either during meetings or telephone calls whilst, at the same time, ascertaining the views of professionals involved with the family.
- Inform the Service Manager of any conflict of interest in relation to individual families e.g. governor at the same school. These cases will be referred to other team members.
- Signpost parents, children and young people to other agencies that enable them to verify the impartiality of the information and advice provided e.g. **IPSEA, ACE Education**.
- Where possible and circumstances permitting, state their role at the beginning of meetings they attend in order to clarify the position taken.

- Maintain a professional relationship with parents, children and young people they support.

LIASING WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS AND ORGANISATIONS:

SENDIASS North Yorkshire:

- May have parental/young person's consent to act as an intermediary by relaying their perspective to school or Local Authority professionals. This does not indicate bias in favour of the parent/young person, nor does it represent the views of **SENDIASS** staff.
- Should make it clear that they have no vested interest in the outcome of any decision making process in relation to an individual child/young person or family, and do not work to a **SENDIASS** agenda.
- Will maintain an impartial stance whilst collaborating and engaging with relevant organisations and networks.

PUBLICATIONS:

- **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire has its own identity including service logo, leaflet, Advice line number and email address. The Service has its own social media pages. Staff do not wear an NYCC lanyard.
- **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire has responsibility for the content and maintenance of its own web site. This website includes relevant links and downloadable documents.
- **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire writes its own materials and information and publicity is monitored for its impartiality.

TRAINING:

- **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire will ensure that all staff and volunteers access high quality, independent training in current and relevant education law, policy and practice in relation to **SEND**.
- Information sessions and training provided by **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire will include a range of providers and organisations to ensure impartial delivery.

STEERING GROUP:

- **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire's Steering Group has representation from a number of agencies and professionals and includes parents who have been involved with the service and who are well placed to provide a parental perspective on the effectiveness of service delivery.
- Meetings are currently chaired by an independent person.
- The Steering Group has Terms of Reference which include monitoring the effectiveness and impartiality of all service activities.

POLICY EFFECTIVENESS:

- All **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire literature states the impartial nature of the service.
- A copy of **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire's Impartiality Policy is available on the website.
- Copies of the Impartiality Policy will be made available to parents, children or young people who request it.
- Existing and new staff and volunteers will be introduced to the policy via induction and training.
- It is expected that all staff will adhere to the principles of the Impartiality Policy.

MONITORING:

- Feedback from service users via the **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire feedback from on the website will act as a reflection of service satisfaction.
- Parents and Members of **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire's Steering Group will periodically be asked to monitor the impartiality of the information developed and provided by **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire.
- The Impartiality Policy will be reviewed annually by **SENDIASS** North Yorkshire's Steering Group. Any amendments to the Policy should be agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.