

Our confidentiality policy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Services (SENDIASS) are statutory services offering free impartial advice and information for children, young people and their parents, about special educational needs (SEND) procedures as set out in SEN legislation and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

SENDIASS are expected to meet certain National Minimum Standards as prescribed by the government and to ensure that services are delivered with confidentiality and impartiality, which are key to providing services that parents/carers and young people will trust.

SENDIASS North Yorkshire is committed to providing a confidential service to its users and recognises that all children, young people and their parents/carers should be able to access this service in confidence. SENDIASS North Yorkshire respects the right of anyone to contact the service anonymously and will not try to elicit detailed information if the caller wishes to preserve their anonymity. The service is committed to the principle that children, young people and their parents/carers have a right to expect that the information they share with us will:

- **be respected and not passed on to anyone else without their express permission (unless we have a statutory obligation to do so)**
- **that we will handle any such information in ways that conform with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act requirements**

Note: All references to ‘parents’ throughout this policy includes ‘parents and carers’.

This policy covers:

- Practical arrangements
- Use of data
- Provision of information
- Policy effectiveness
- Monitoring the Policy

Practical arrangements

SENDIASS North Yorkshire operates a self-referral system where children, young people and their parents contact the service directly through the dedicated website (contact form), email, telephone lines or face-to-face. With the permission of the parent or young person referrals can be made by practitioners, educational settings staff and other services including health and social care services.

We will only provide in depth casework support directly to children and young people or to those parents who hold parental responsibility, guardianship or are formal carer's, such as foster carers. Children and young people and their parents may occasionally contact the service independently of each other in which case staff will treat both as separate enquires. Extended

family members who contact the service will only be offered general information not pertaining to an individual unless prior consent is obtained.

Our staff will not tell any other person or agency that a parent or young person has approached the service without the parent or young person's agreement.

Our staff will always obtain permission from parents and young people prior to speaking to or discussing the situation with other professionals and this consent will be recorded.

We will always obtain permission from parents and young people to access any records from other professionals; these are often required to build a background of the case and to provide appropriate support.

We will encourage service users to share relevant information with school staff, other services or individuals where it is in the best interests of the child or parent to do so.

With the parent or child's consent SENDIASS North Yorkshire staff will work closely with other practitioners and organisations supporting children with special educational needs in compliance with the children and young people's engagement and participation charter.

We continue to work predominantly from home but on the occasions, we work from a base, SENDIASS North Yorkshire office space is separate from all SEND services and other local authority staff that may have a conflict of interest.

The service has a confidential email address and telephone line. When sending information care will be taken to establish the correct mailing details.

We would usually consider it acceptable to contact parents and young people via home telephone and mobile telephones but should check with parents and young people whether it is acceptable to call them at work. If we leave messages on answerphones or with family members no identifiable information is given, expect to say SENDIASS North Yorkshire has called.

Case work records are held within the SENDIASS North Yorkshire database and will be treated confidentially. Information held by SENDIASS North Yorkshire is not accessible by other services within the Local Authority.

Use of data

SENDIASS North Yorkshire is bound by statutory and legal requirements, including:

- Data Protection Act
- Freedom of Information Act
- Children's and Families Act
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Prevention of Terrorism Act

As part of the arrangements under the GDPR which came into effect on 25 May 2018, SENDIASS North Yorkshire has provided a full privacy notice on its website. The notice outlines the reasons for collecting information and data from service users.

The service complies with safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults procedures.

The only exception to confidentiality is about information which leads us to believe a person is at serious risk of harm or others are at serious risk of harm. We have a legal duty to pass on concerns regarding child or adult protection and are required to comply with North Yorkshire Council's policy about safeguarding. All staff have a legal duty of care to report concerns. Where appropriate and if time is available, we will try to let you know that we are following this policy beforehand. Concerns regarding a risk of harm should be discussed with the Service Manager as first point.

Provision of information

Should there be a Subject Access Request for Personal Information from a parent, child or young person, whose information is held by SENDIASS North Yorkshire, the request will be dealt with in line with the principles in the Data Protection Act.

Policy effectiveness

A copy of the confidentiality policy will be displayed on the SENDIASS North Yorkshire website.

On initial contact the confidentiality statement will be brought to the attention of the coordinator so that the service user can ask more questions or read this policy from the website.

SENDASS North Yorkshire resources states the confidential nature of the service.

Existing and new staff and volunteers will be introduced to this policy via induction and training, and it is expected that all SENDIASS North Yorkshire staff and volunteers will adhere to this policy.

Volunteers with the service will be expected to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Monitoring the Policy

Day to day monitoring of the policy will be undertaken by the Service Manager.

The service seeks feedback from service users of how confidential they felt the service to be.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENDIASS North Yorkshire manager and brought before the Steering Group if actions are needed by adding to the agenda. Any Amendments should be agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Changes And Modification

No changes, modifications or alterations may be made to materials from this site without written consent from SENDIASS North Yorkshire. If information from this site is used for educational purposes, then an acknowledgement of SENDIASS North Yorkshire as the owner must accompany the material. Materials from this site cannot be re published or distributed in any format without written permission from SENDIASS North Yorkshire.

Disclaimer

SENDIASS North Yorkshire makes every effort to ensure that the information on this website is accurate and up to date. However, we accept no liability for any loss or inconvenience caused by reliance on inaccurate material contained in this site but will endeavour to ensure it is as up to date as possible. Please alert us to any links or information that you think are not working or inaccurate to support us in keeping this website as accurate as we can.

External Web Links

This website contains links to other web sites. SENDIASS North Yorkshire is not responsible for the privacy practices of those other web sites nor is it responsible for the content of those sites.

Privacy Statement

This privacy statement discloses the privacy practices for sendiassnorthyorkshire.co.uk – the SENDIASS North Yorkshire website. It applies solely to this website.

SENDIASS North Yorkshire is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected. Should we ask you to provide certain information by which you can be identified when using this website, then you can be assured that it will only be used in accordance with this privacy statement.

Cookies: Information Collection And Use

A cookie is a small file which asks permission to be placed on your computer's hard drive. Once you agree, the file is added, and the cookie helps analyse web traffic or lets you know when you visit a particular site. Cookies allow web applications to respond to you as an individual. The web application can tailor its operations to your needs, likes and dislikes by gathering and remembering information about your preferences. Overall, cookies help us provide you with a better website by enabling us to monitor which pages you find useful and which you do not. A cookie in no way gives us access to your computer or any information about you, other than the data you choose to share with us.

You can choose to accept or decline cookies. Most web browsers automatically accept cookies, but you can usually modify your browser setting to decline cookies if you prefer. This may prevent you from taking full advantage of the website. For more information

about how to this, and more information about Cookies i general, please see <https://www.aboutcookies.org/>

- SENDIASS North Yorkshire, as the data collector, may collect some information from visitors to this site. This information is used only to respond to enquiries and to monitor site usage. We will not pass on these details to third parties or use them for any other purposes unless instructed by you to do so.
- We use traffic log cookies to identify which pages are being used. This helps us analyse data about webpage traffic and improve our website to tailor it to customer needs. We only use this information for statistical analysis purposes and then the data is removed from the system.
- You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail because of using an electronic form unless we have explicitly requested and received your permission.
- Where personal data is requested through forms, such data is only used for the purpose stated on the form and will not be given or sold to any third parties.
- If any changes are made to our privacy policy, these changes will be posted on our homepage.
- SENDIASS North Yorkshire complies with the requirements of GDPR

SENDIASS North Yorkshire may change this policy from time to time by updating this page. You should check this page from time to time to ensure that you are happy with any changes. This policy is effective from October 2023.