



KIDS Impartiality Policy for Information and Advice Services (SENDIASS)

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Purpose and Context

This policy is in place to support the delivery of support, information and advice through KIDS SENDIAS services. KIDS understands that access to impartial information empowers parents, carers, children and young people to make decisions about their lives.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff working within a SENDIAS service in KIDS and to families, young people and children accessing support through the service.

Responsibility for this policy

Senior Management Team

Accessible Information

This policy can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print and may be available in alternative languages upon request. Please email enquiries@kids.org.uk

Impact Assessment

In the design or review of this policy, consideration has been given to any negative impact upon practice relating to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Equality or Safeguarding. This policy has not been found to cause a negative impact in these areas. A copy of the impact assessment is retained for this review cycle.

Definitions

Staff: The term includes employees, sessional workers, volunteers, students and trustees of KIDS. This is also extended to independent contractors who are undertaking direct work with children or young people on behalf of the charity.

SENDIASS: Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Services

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References

This policy reflects and/or references the following legislation, guidance and requirements:

- Minimum Standards for SENDIASS
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice January 2015

Other KIDS documents

- KIDS Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures
- KIDS Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- KIDS Confidentiality Policy and Procedures for Information and Advice Services
- KIDS Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy and Procedures
- KIDS Accessible Information and Communication Policy and Procedures
- KIDS Diversity, Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Policy

Appendices

There are no appendices associated with this policy

General Impartiality Policy

SENDIASS aim to provide parents, carers, children and young people with impartial information advice and support that are appropriate to their needs.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 that states 'The information, advice and support should be impartial and provided at arm's length from the local authority and CCGs (clinical commissioning groups).

By impartial we mean information and advice is given based on the law, relevant code of practice and local procedures that adhere to these. The service does not promote the local authority, school or families' case but will assist the parent, children and young people to get their view heard or to understand an alternative position.

Parents, carers, children and young people who contact our service will be provided with the range of options available to them, in a format and way that is accessible and easy for them to understand, so they can make decisions from a position of knowledge in line with current legislation, guidance, policy and practice.

Duties and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the co-ordinator of the service to understand the practical applications of the term 'impartiality' and to monitor the quality of the service provided by staff in this respect. Staff should be clear on the boundaries of their advice and adhere to this policy.

Training on this policy and procedure will be given during induction and updated through line manager briefings.

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action which could include summary dismissal or as grounds to terminate your contract with KIDS.

Procedure

Staff working within the SENDIASS will:

- Show equal respect to all individuals, organisations and their representatives
- Ensure promotional literature and information (e.g. the Local Offer entry) clarify the universal nature of SENDIASS and the availability of support tailored to need
- Ensure SENDIASS is accessible to all potential user groups within the local authority area
- Endeavour to enable parents, carers, children and young people to be at the heart of all decision making processes that affect their lives
- Support individuals using the service to express their views and clarify points if either party has not understood
- Have clear protocols and procedures for assuring objectivity where there is disagreement between parents / carers and children or where they have elected to be supported separately
- Provide information and advice in adapted formats (upon request) where an information or communication need is identified
- If the service user prefers to have their views expressed by the service, the service will regularly check with the individual that they are accurately conveying their views
- Provide information and advice in an appropriate setting
- Take informal notes for the parent, carer or young person when required
- Support parents, carers and young people taking part in negotiations and discussions with schools, Local Authority, voluntary and statutory agencies
- Empower parents, carers and young people to ensure they have the knowledge to make informed choices
- Despite the best efforts of the service to resolve any disagreements through negotiation, SENDIASS at times can be called upon to support and represent parents in appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)
- Maintain high standards of personal conduct through an honest, open and non-judgemental approach

- Endeavour to explain the possible outcomes for the options available without bias
- Signpost to local or national agencies and organisations which may provide further information, advice or support without bias
- Ensure there are clear procedures and protocols for referring people to other organisations or agencies where information sharing is necessary
- Ensure information and signposting resources are managed, kept up to date and quality assured
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained and supported to provide impartial information and advice
- Facilitate participation of parents, carers, young people and children in the design of services including input into policies and practices

Staff working within the SENDIASS will not:

- Take sides by supporting or endorsing the views and opinions of any one individual over another
- Represent an individual's viewpoint except to clarify the information provided or where expressly asked to do so
- Offer a personal opinion on the suitability, or lack of suitability of any service, facility or publication
- Offer a personal viewpoint on any of the issues being discussed

Review Cycle

This policy will first be reviewed after one year and then every two years and amended in accordance with changes in relevant legislation or guidance and internal or external feedback. Material changes in relevant legislation and guidance will lead to an earlier review and update. Changes in legislation and guidance, and internal or external feedback are captured and considered during a review.

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KIDS is happy for other organisations to copy all or part of our policies, provided there is an acknowledgement on the other organisation's policy that this has been done, together with the KIDS web address so the reader can locate the original policy.

For further information on the issues raised in this document, email enquiries@kids.org.uk

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