

Bracknell Forest Information, Advice & Support service (IASS) Impartiality Policy



Background

Chapter 2 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015 states that local authorities must arrange for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND), for whom they are responsible, to be provided with impartial information and advice about matters relating to their SEND, including matters relating to health and social care.

Bracknell Forest IASS is provided and funded by Bracknell Forest Council. It operates at arm's length from the Local Authority as a confidential service providing impartial information, advice and support to Bracknell Forest children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. Bracknell Forest IASS aims to empower service users to become fully involved in making decisions about their or their child's education by providing impartial information, advice and support.

Impartiality means that:

- Service users are informed of factual information and advice based on guidance and legislation.
- IASS will help service users to understand what options are available to them.
- IASS supports service users to express their views and wishes whilst not offering personal opinion.
- IASS staff encourage negotiation and disagreement resolution. They do not take sides, they have no vested interest and do not play a part in any decision-making processes.
- IASS staff will always respect parents' decisions without making judgments.

To ensure impartiality IASS will:

- Ensure that the IASS logo is visible on all service leaflets.
- Be line managed separately to the SEN team and based in a location away from these teams.

- Never discuss cases with other teams or services without the express permission of the service user.
- Continue to maintain relationships with local voluntary groups, Early Help and the Family Information Service to ensure that information held is accurate and relevant.
- Where appropriate refer service users to national organisations including, Contact, IPSEA, Advisory Centre of Education (ACE), Equality and Human Rights Commission and other national and local organisations that specialise in matters relating to SEND.
- Ensure that IASS staff access independent legal training and ensure that their knowledge and skills are up to date.
- Continue to inform Local Authorities (LA's), education settings or any other agency of the impartial nature of IASS and make them aware of this policy.

Ensuring Effectiveness of this Policy

To ensure our impartiality policy is effective we will ensure:

- At the first point of contact service users are made aware that IASS is an impartial service and informed of this policy. IASS staff record on parent's case notes that they have done this.
- All IASS staff receive a copy of the policy and it is explained to them.
- The policy is shared with LA's, education settings and other agencies so that they are aware that it exists.
- The policy is reviewed annually by the service and management and amendments agreed.
- The policy is included on our website.

Administration

Date written: 1st November 2010

Reviewed: January 2012 – no amendments

Reviewed: January 2015 – amendments made

Reviewed: January 2017 - amendments made

Reviewed: January 2018 – no amendments

Reviewed: January 2019 – amendments made

Reviewed: January 2020 – amendments made

Reviewed: January 2021 – amendments made

Reviewed: January 2022 – amendments made.

Reviewed: January 2023 – amendments made

Reviewed: January 2024 – no amendments.

Reviewed: January 2025 – no amendments

Reviewed: January 2026 – changed Local Offer to Family Information Service.