



# One minute guide

## SEND IASS

No. 19, March 2021

### What is SEND IASS?

SEND IASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Service) fulfils the statutory duty of the local authority to provide information advice and support as set out in the [SEND Code of Practice 2014](#) and the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Code requires that confidential, impartial, free, high quality information, advice and support is offered to: children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN); parents of children with SEN; children and young people with disabilities; and parents of children with disabilities.

SEND IASS is, and is seen by service users to be, an arm's length, confidential, dedicated and an easily identifiable service, separate from the local authority, and health commissioners. The service offers support, individually and in groups with issues around special educational needs (law, policy and processes). The team handles face-to-face, telephone and electronic enquiries.

The service also offers training, information sessions and support to the local authority and to schools in relation to special educational needs. This includes advising all parties of their rights and responsibilities and, where appropriate, providing support when things go wrong through early disagreement resolution between schools, the local authority and parents, carers and young people.

SEND IASS has a multi-agency Steering Group, which provides governance to the service in relation to decision making, policy and procedure, school improvement, and recording and monitoring procedures. Due to the confidentiality and impartiality of SEND IASS, the service cannot sit within the Local Authority SEND service. Therefore, Leeds SEND IASS sits within Learning Systems in children's services.

### What can SEND IASS offer information and advice about?

SEND IASS offers information, advice and support on:

- Helping children, young people and parents to gather, understand and interpret information and apply it to their own situation;
- Education law on SEN and related law on disability, health and social care, through suitably independently trained staff;
- Personalisation and personal budgets;
- Local policy and practice;
- [The Local Offer](#); and
- Support when things go wrong through early disagreement resolution, mediation, routes of appeal and complaints procedures.

The service also provides advice through work with parent carer support groups, local SEN youth forums or local disability groups, or training events.

## What kind of support does the SEND IASS service provide?

The support provided by SEND IASS covers:

- **Early Help** – Looking at what support can be put in place if families feel their child has additional needs (often referred to as SEN support in schools);
- **Funding For Inclusion (FFI)** - Additional financial support for schools for children with a high level of additional need;
- **Education Health and Care Plans (EHC) Educational settings**, both in Leeds and out of authority;
- Accessing the [Local Offer](#); and
- **Disagreement resolution** and tribunals.

This support can be delivered in a number of ways, such as phone calls, emails, home visits, school meetings and visits, local authority meetings, and working with parent/ carer support groups, local SEN groups and youth provision, as well as local disability groups. Casework is agreed on an individual basis.

## How are parents involved with the service?

SEND IASS recognises the importance of parental participation in helping to develop better services. Evidence on participation indicates that the involvement of parents and carers in planning and developing services improves parental satisfaction and empowers parents and families in their relationships with the services working with them or with their child.

Parents of Children with SEND volunteer for the service. Parents and young people are invited to attend participation events to give their views on service development and delivery.

[EPIC](#) (Empowering Parents, Improving Choices) Leeds are the parent/carers participation forum in Leeds, which aims to empower parents and carers to work in partnership with services, organisations and professionals to improve choices and services for disabled children and young people with additional needs and their families. SEND IASS has a close partnership with EPIC Leeds, who chair the Steering Group.

## Where can I find further information?

You can contact SEND IASS on 0113 378 5020, or via email at [sendiass@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@leeds.gov.uk). There is also more information available on their [website](#).

You can contact EPIC Leeds on tel: 07889 728403 or via [epicleeds@gmail.com](mailto:epicleeds@gmail.com), and find out more about the forum from their [website](#).

For more information about the statutory requirements around Information Advice Support Services, please see <https://cyp.iassnetwork.org.uk/>

SEND IASS has a number of volunteering opportunities, to provide advocacy, advice and support to parents and carers around SEN. Full training and expenses are provided. If you are interested in volunteering with the service, please contact them on the number above.