

SENDIASS Staffordshire Family Partnership

Impartiality Policy

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) states that   
the Local Authority must provide an Information Advice and Support Service   
(IASS) that provides parents, carers and children and young people with:   
“Accurate, impartial, information on their rights, roles and responsibilities on   
issues about education, health and social care which relate to their SEN or   
Disability.”

SENDIASS Staffordshire Family Partnership (SFPS) provides the Staffordshire   
Information, Advice and Support (IAS) Service, which is funded by   
Staffordshire County Council Local Authority (LA) and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). It is an “in house” service of the LA). It operates at “arms length” from the LA and ICB as an independent and confidential service for both parents and carers of children 0-25 years with special educational needs and or a disability, and children and young people 0-25 years with special educational needs and or a disability.

SFPS aims to enable both parents and carers to become effective partners in their child or young person’s education, and children and young people to   
become effective partners in their own education, by providing them with   
impartial information and support to allow them to make informed decisions and to feel more confident in expressing their views.

Location

SFPS occupies an office at the Families First site at Faraday Road, Stafford but is separate from any other service within the LA.

Image/Identity

SFPS does not have to comply with County Council guidelines in respect of corporate identity; letter heading, logo etc.

It has its own logo and strap lines for use on leaflets and other publications.

**Advisory Group**

The Advisory Group exists to steer and monitor the work of the SFPS and works to agreed Terms of Reference.

The Group has representation from parents and carers’ of children and young people with SEND via the Staffordshire Parent, Carer Forum and Voice for Change Parent, Carer Group, ICB Health leads, LA Head of Vulnerable Learner Services, Children’s Social Care and the Cabinet Member for Education and SEND. Commissioner for SENDIASS, and SENDIASS Family Partnership.

The Group is chaired by a parent or carer to ensure its impartiality and independence from the LA or on occasion the SENDIASS Manager.

Line Management

The SFPS Manager is line managed by the Head of Performance, Quality Assurance & Engagement for the Local Authority.

Regular meetings between the SFPS Manager and their line manager allow issues of concern to parents and carers to be raised. However, all   
information is kept strictly confidential and no names are disclosed unless   
parents have asked specifically for their named case to be raised.

Processes

SFPS has policies and procedures to ensure that impartiality underpins all its

activities and is covered during training and induction for all staff and volunteers.

Information and resources can be accessed via the SENDIASS Website:

[SENDIASS Contact Us (staffs-iass.org](https://www.staffs-iass.org/Contact-Us.aspx)

Information is accessible for parents and is also used in staff induction and volunteer training to make sure that the staff and volunteers are able to give impartial and neutral information.

External speakers are brought in, when appropriate, to input into team training   
events and training courses. Staff induction may include visits to partners   
(both internal and external to the Local Authority) including local support groups   
and others. National Law training is undertaken by all advice and support providing staff to ensure that accurate information can be given to all parents.

Staff and volunteers are aware of the importance of outlining to parents, carers, children and young people the range of options open to them at a particular stage of their child’s education.

A system of monthly line management and My Performance Conversations has been established to include observation of practice and a sampling review of casework with all staff to ensure that this principle is adhered to.

Conflict of Interest

A member of staff would not, unless unavoidable, work with a parent in

circumstances where there could be a potential conflict of interest. If this

situation is unavoidable (e.g. no other staff member being available), then the parent is made aware and given alternative options.

Date of review: November 2023

Date of next review: November 2024