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## Impartiality Policy

### Introduction

The role of SENDIASS is to ensure service users have access to confidential and impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions.

### Why SENDIASS acts impartially

The service will not take sides with anyone but will provide factual information and advice based on what the guidance and legislation says. The Special Education Needs Code of Practice 2015 0-25 years states that Information, Advice and Support Services MUST ensure that service users are provided with accurate neutral information on their rights, roles and responsibilities for education, social care and health.

Staff may have consent from service users to act as an intermediary by relaying their perspective to school, local authority professionals and to third party organisations. This does not indicate bias in the favour of the service user, nor does it represent the views of SENDIASS staff.

Our aim is to empower service users to speak for themselves and we will support them to do this.

Staff will make clear any limitations or boundaries to their professional knowledge or anything in the context in which they operate that may affect impartiality and will refer clients appropriately.

### Working with and supporting parents

The practical implications for service delivery are:

- Staff will state their role at the beginning of initial contact in order to clarify their position
- It will assist service users to express their views with confidence so that they have an 'equal' voice as well as helping them to understand the pros and cons of any decisions they may ultimately take
- Staff may put forward the wishes and views of service users with their consent either during meetings or telephone calls whilst, at the same time, ascertaining the views of professionals involved with the family



- We are able to meet service users on a one to one basis and can attend meetings with them depending on staff availability and capacity. If this is the case, we can in advance to discuss fully the issues they want to cover at the meeting. Our emphasis will be to enable the service user to take an active part in the meeting
- We produce publicity materials and factsheets that are impartial and unbiased
- Where service users have support from a legal professional, SENDIASS will step back from active involvement but will remain available for information. Should there be separate areas of information or advice that are required which are not covered by a legal representative we shall endeavour to ensure that these are available to you
- We will always respect service user decisions without making a judgement
- Staff will when necessary – signpost service users to other agencies for support to enable them to verify the impartiality of information and advice provided

Liaising with education professionals and third-party organisations

We do not undertake local authority functions or act on behalf of the local authority, educational settings or any other agency.

Our role is to work alongside the local authority, education settings and other agencies – this does not affect the information or support we provide to service users as the ultimate aim of the service is to establish the best outcome for children and young people who may have SEN and disabilities.

The policy is shared with the local authority and other agencies, so they are aware it exists, and they understand it fully.

You can Contact us at:

**Herefordshire & Worcestershire SENDIASS**

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Information, Advice  
and Support Service  
Herefordshire &  
Worcestershire

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The policy is reviewed annually. Date for review: April 2021