



Buckinghamshire SENDIAS Service

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Buckinghamshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service

Memorandum of Understanding with our partners

2022-23



I **What is an Information, Advice and Support service?**

It is a statutory service: our legal purpose is set out in section 32 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) and in Chapter 2 of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#):

Section 32, Children and Families Act 2014

Advice and information

(1) A local authority in England must arrange for children and young people for whom it is responsible, and the parents of children for whom it is responsible, to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to the special educational needs of the children or young people concerned.

(2) A local authority in England must arrange for children and young people in its area with a disability, and the parents of children in its area with a disability, to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to the disabilities of the children or young people concerned.

(3) The authority must take such steps as it thinks appropriate for making the services provided under subsections (1) and (2) known to—

(a) the parents of children in its area;

(b) children in its area;

(c) young people in its area;

(d) the head teachers, proprietors and principals of schools and post-16 institutions in its area.

(4) The authority may also take such steps as it thinks appropriate for making the services provided under subsections (1) and (2) known to such other persons as it thinks appropriate.

[Section 26 of the Children and Families Act](#) says that this advice and information must be jointly commissioned by the local authority and partner commissioning bodies. In Buckinghamshire this is [Buckinghamshire Council](#) and the [Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group](#).

Chapter 2 of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) says that SENDIAS services should help to promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents and have the following distinctive features:

- Free of charge
- Impartial
- Confidential
- Accessible
- Dedicated and easily-identifiable

- At arm's length from the local authority
- Jointly commissioned
- Dedicated and ring-fenced budget

SENDIAS services are expected to have the capacity and resources to meet local need and the national [Minimum Standards](#) approved by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

The SENDIAS service has real power to impact decisions made regarding young people's education, providing advocacy support for children, young people and parents. The service should be seen by users to be independent of the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group and be identified as an arm's length, confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service.

When supporting individual users and families must be confident that the SENDIAS service is not influenced by any local strategies or decisions which may impact the outcome of their complaint/appeal or process challenge. The governance of the service must have a clearly defined management structure which includes a IASS manager based solely within the service and a steering group or advisory body who oversees the development of the service plan to ensure the principles of independence.

2 The aim of this Memorandum of Understanding

2.1 The overarching aim of this MoU is to formulate an agreement between all subscribers on how Bucks SENDIAS Service will work with them in the interests of Buckinghamshire children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers.

3. Expectations of subscribers:

There are specific expectations of the parties of this Memorandum of understanding.

3.1 Expectations of Commissioners and CCG:

- Promote Bucks SENDIAS to potential service users, Head teachers, FE principals, SENCos, SEND Teams, children's and adult social care, health commissioners and providers are made aware of the IASS, its remit and who the service is for.
- Commit to the [Minimum Standards approved by the Department for Education](#).
- Ensure the integrity of the service through defined reporting and structured governance to ensure the integrity of the service: confidential, impartial, arm's length, free to service users
- Provide funds to enable the Service to meet the [Minimum Standards](#) and local need.

3.2 Expectations of Bucks SENDIAS Service:

Bucks SENDIAS Service will:

- Produce an annual Business Plan to deliver the service requirements set out in section 1 which ensures the Minimum Standards are met.
- Produce an Annual Report on our work
- Facilitate termly meetings of our Advisory Group for representatives of our service users – this Group will support the SENDIAS team leader to deliver the service
- Facilitate annual meetings of our Stakeholders Group for all who subscribe to this Memorandum of Understanding in order to share intelligence and influence.
- Engage regionally and nationally.
- Seek out and listen to feedback from service users and families
- Offer training to local education, health care professionals, children and young people and parents to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance and local policy issues.

4. Partnership objectives

This MoU includes a description in Appendix A of how we contribute to local area priorities and explains what we need from others to maximise the impact of our work in the interest of children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND and their parents/carers in Buckinghamshire.

Each year there will be specific partnership objectives which will be agreed in the business plan.

4 Monitoring

The stakeholder group will monitor this MoU on an annual basis.

5 Impact evaluation

The impact of this MoU will be evaluated via our annual report.

6 MoU governance and oversight

This MoU will be reviewed annually by the Stakeholder Group. Reference will be made to the MoU in the SENDIAS annual report. The SENDIAS Service will report annually to the Buckinghamshire Integrated Service Board (ISB).

7 Financial contributions

The Local Authority and CCG will provide the necessary level of funding to deliver the statutory service, meet local demand and be compliant with the [Minimum Standards. This funding is a dedicated and ring fenced budget held and managed by the IASS service manager.](#)

8 Disclaimer

8.1 It should be noted that by signing this document or by participating in the [name of partnership], the partners are not committing to legally binding obligations. It is intended that the partners remain independent of each other and that their collaboration and use of the term 'subscriber' does not constitute the creation of a legal entity, nor authorise the entry into a commitment for or on behalf of each other.

Signed on behalf of [Subscriber A]

..... Date
.....
[NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of [Subscriber B]

..... Date
..... [NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of [Subscriber C]

..... Date
..... [NAME, POSITION]

Appendix A

SEND Strategy aim	Objective	What SENDIAS offers	How partners help
<i>I am able to keep myself safe and healthy</i>	Health information, advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	Training for children and young people and parents/carers and professionals on navigating the health service	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
		IAS to service users to facilitate access to health services for children and young people	Promoting our service verbally and in publications
		Promotion of health services via our email news updates	Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible
		Involvement on health stakeholder groups	Referring families to our service with relevant consent
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to health to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures	Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements; liaison re Ready, Steady Go
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	Coproduction of training
			Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual
			Anonymised data and intelligence available

			to SENDIAS to inform planning.
SEND Strategy aim	Objective	What SENDIAS offers	How partners help
<i>I can participate in wider society</i>	Social care and early help information, advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	IAS to service users to facilitate participation in wider society for children and young people including independent living and accommodation, transport, community activities.	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to social care to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures.	Promoting our service verbally and in publications
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	
			Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible
			Referring families to our service with relevant consent
			Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual
			Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements

			Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.
SEND Strategy aim	Objective	What SENDIAS offers	How partners help
<i>I can achieve my ambitions in education, work or other meaningful activity</i>	SEN Support information, advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	SEN Support and PfA IAS for individual service users on demand provided by IPSEA trained advisers including volunteers face to face and virtually, by telephone, email and via webchat.	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
			Promoting our service verbally and in publications
	Preparing for adulthood information, advice and support provided for children and young people with SEND, with a particular focus on years 9-13, and their parents/carers		Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/ Local Offer as far as possible
			Referring families to our service with relevant consent
			Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual
			SEN support and PfA information in a range of formats coproduced with service users and partners
			Expertise on formats, e.g. EAL, BSL, Braille,
			Commitment to coproduction

			Promotion of information
		Training for groups of children and young people, parents/carers and professionals coproduced with service users and partners provided face to face and via e.g. webinars, videos, podcasts	Promotion of training to families and professionals
		Anonymised data and intelligence available to partners to inform planning.	Commitment to coproduction
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	Sharing of training opportunities relevant to SENDIAS team or our service users
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to education and training to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures.	Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.
			Named link person and agreed response times
SEND Strategy aim	Objective	What SENDIAS offers	How partners help
<i>I can live independently</i>	Independent living advice and support is provided across the local area to children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers, and professionals.	Providing service users with information, advice and support re accommodation options for young adults	Providing access to senior leadership support and influence
			Promoting our service verbally and in publications
		Providing service users with information, advice and	Encouraging individuals to self-serve via webpages/

		support re independent travel training and transport options	Local Offer as far as possible
		De-escalation and dispute resolution	Sharing up to date relevant information e.g. new referral arrangements
		IAS to contribute knowledge on legal duties relating to independent living to support development of compliant local strategies, policies and procedures.	Referring families to our service with relevant consent
		Anonymised data and intelligence available to partners to inform planning.	Liaising with our service on behalf of an individual
			Anonymised data and intelligence available to SENDIAS to inform planning.