



Buckinghamshire  
SEND IAS Service

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**TEL: 01296 383754**

**EMAIL: [sendias@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@buckscc.gov.uk)**

## **IMPARTIALITY POLICY**

### **Impartiality means:**

- The Bucks SEND IAS Service does not stand to gain or lose whatever the outcomes of any discussions may be;
- Not taking sides with anyone;
- Providing factual information and advice based on what the guidance and legislation says;
- Providing parents/carers, children and young people with enough information so they can be empowered to make their own decisions; not telling them what to do.

### **Definition of role:**

*Information, advice and support services should be impartial, confidential and accessible and should have the capacity to handle face-to-face, telephone and electronic enquiries.” - SEND Code of Practice: 0 - 25 years (paragraphs 2:4, 2:5)*

### **Why it is so important that Bucks SEND IAS Service acts impartially?**

It is vitally important that service users have confidence in the impartiality and confidentiality of the advice and support the Bucks SEND IAS Service gives. The Bucks SEND IAS Service is impartial of everyone, local authorities, schools, education ideologies and campaigns. We don't prioritise any impairment, disability or SEN over another.

### **How the Bucks SEND IAS Service will maintain its impartiality when dealing with service users:**

We will ensure impartiality by:

- Informing them of the impartial nature of the Bucks SEND IAS Service and presenting this policy to them when they first approach the service;
- Being clear that the role of Bucks SEND IAS Service is to provide information, advice and support, not to advocate on service users' behalf or take sides either with the Local Authority or with service users;
- Empowering service users to speak for themselves and make their own decisions;
- Always respecting service users' decisions without making a judgement;
- Providing factual information and advice based on what the guidance and legislation says, not offering an opinion or reflecting local policy



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**How the Bucks SEND IAS Service will maintain its impartiality when dealing with Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), education settings or any other agency:**

We will ensure our impartiality by:

- Making it clear that the best educational outcomes for children with SEN and disabilities are the ultimate aims of Bucks SEND IAS Service and our role is to support service users to achieve this.
- Informing other agencies of the impartial nature of Bucks SEND IAS Service and making them aware of this policy;
- Not allowing relationships with other agencies to affect the information or support Bucks SEND IAS Service provide to service users;
- Being clear that Bucks SEND IAS Service do not undertake Local Authority or CCG functions, or act on behalf of other agencies;
- Being clear that Bucks SEND IAS Service do not take sides with other agencies.

**How the Local Authority will support the impartiality of the Bucks SEND IAS Service:**

The local authority will ensure our impartiality by keeping us at 'arm's length', providing:

- line management for the Bucks SEND IAS Service team, offering performance monitoring, supportive strategies and professional management, but not the management of the service or service development;
- training (including legal training) that is not exclusively provided by the Local Authority;
- a budget that is managed by the Bucks SEND IAS Service Coordinator;
- offices away from the main county offices;
- a steering/advisory group for the management of the service and service development;
- a separate postal address;
- a direct phone line, rather than going through the Local Authority switchboard;
- our own logo;
- a 'house style' for all printed materials, using a different format from the Local Authority's corporate style.



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### **Ensuring the effectiveness of the policy:**

Bucks SEND IAS Service will make sure that:

- All Bucks SEND IAS Service staff and Volunteer SEND IAS Advisers (VSAs) receive a copy of the Impartiality Policy and it is explained to them.
- The policy is shared with the Local Authority and other agencies so they are aware it exists and they understand it fully.
- The policy is reviewed annually by the Bucks SEND IAS Service Steering Group, chaired by a parent/carer, and amendments agreed.
- All staff and VSAs receive up to date legal training.
- The quality of the service is regularly reviewed and improved, with reference to feedback from service users and our national Minimum Standards approved by the Department for Education.

Revised July 2014 Review date September 2015

Revised July 2016 Review date July 2017

Revised July 2019 Review date July 2020