



SENDIASS in Suffolk - Confidentiality Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service. (SENDIASS)

Manager: Stacey Ford
Endeavour House,
Russell Road,
Ipswich,
IP1 2BX
Tel: 01473 264702
sendiass@suffolk.gov.uk

Introduction:

The role of Suffolk SENDIASS is to ensure children and young people with SEND, and their parents have access to impartial information, advice and support so that they can make informed decisions about matters relating to their special educational needs. This is achieved by working in partnership with parents, children and young people; providing information, services and training, working with relevant agencies and ensuring parents', children's and young people's views influence local policy and practice.

Statutory Framework:

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities to ensure that children, young people, and parents are provided with information and advice on matters relating to SEN and disability. The information provided should be **impartial** and provided at arm's length from the local authority and CCGs. The information advice and support offered should be free, accurate, **confidential** and in formats which are accessible and responsive to the needs of users.

The Data Protection Act 1998 makes provision for the regulation of the processing of information relating to individuals, including the obtaining, holding, use or disclosure of such information.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy **Confidential information** is any information about a family that is specifically communicated to SENDIASS orally or in writing, by the parent, child or young person or anyone else, or any information about an individual parent or child, their family life or personal relationships that happens to be observed or discovered by a member of the SENDIASS team.

Where the document refers to the **service user** this is any person using our service, including children, young people and their parents as well as any practitioner or other interested party using any of our services.

1. Confidentiality statement:

1.1 Safeguarding issues will take priority over any other consideration.

1.2 All information discussed will remain confidential within the SENDIASS team except where the service user has agreed otherwise or where there is believed to be a Safeguarding issue.

2. Respect for the parent's and child's right to privacy

2.1 Parents, children and young people are asked to refer themselves directly to our service if they require impartial information, advice or support. They can do this with support if needed.

2.2 Observations or information about the family are not recorded or communicated unless they are directly relevant to the issues under discussion.

2.3 Service users are not required to state the nature of their enquiry in front of other people.

2.4 Interviews are held in private where they cannot be overheard or observed

2.5 Telephone calls are held in private or are managed so that the identity of the caller cannot be recognised.

3. The right to contact SENDIASS in confidence anonymously

3.1 SENDIASS in Suffolk undertakes not to inform anyone else that a child, young person or parent has contacted the service unless they have given permission to share this information.

3.2 SENDIASS in Suffolk respects the right of anyone to contact the service anonymously.

3.3 SENDIASS in Suffolk responds to general enquiries without asking for detailed information about the child or the family.

3.4 When using Social Media, service users are reminded that posts to our page are public. Sensitive information can be shared with us via Direct Messaging within the channel.

4. SENDIASS in Suffolk's commitment to principles of confidentiality in its relationship with parents, children and young people

4.1 All information obtained from families is treated as confidential.

4.2 Information is not shared with anyone else except with the child's/young person's/parents' permission at the outset.

4.3 Information about families should not be passed from SENDIASS to the local authority, the school or to any other statutory or voluntary organisation or parent support group unless parents know and agree to this in advance. Service users should be asked for their permission to share information.

4.4 SENDIASS in Suffolk has ownership of the information provided to them by service users.

4.5 The Local Authority and other agencies have no access to information held by SENDIASS. Any information held by SENDIASS will only be shared with the child's/young person's/parent's express permission.

4.6 If service users do not want their details passed on to anyone else their wishes will be respected, unless there are safeguarding concerns.

5. Practical arrangements to ensure confidentiality

5.1 Office procedures protect the confidentiality of families.

5.2 Personal information sent by email is with the service user's permission and, where necessary, encrypted according to SCC policy

5.3 All letters related to individual families are marked as 'private and confidential'

5.4 Particular care is taken when scanning or photocopying sensitive information in an open office.

5.5 Coded information such as initials should be used in electronic and insecure communications and any handwritten notes.

5.6 Identities of families are protected in any information and statistics published by SENDIASS.

5.7 Records are kept securely and comply with the provision of the Data Protection Act

6. Information storage procedures

6.1 Service users should be informed about the information that is being stored and how it is being stored.

6.2 Parents and young people should have access to any information stored about them or their child on the database by way of a printed report on request.

6.3 Information is stored on an external web-based database, 'Crossdata' which is accessible only to staff within the SENDIASS team.

6.4 Access to the Data Base is password protected with 2 levels of security.

6.5 Computer screens are always locked when left unattended.

6.6 Any confidential written information should be kept securely as long as it is needed, transferred as soon as possible to the Crossdata database and then disposed of as confidential waste.

6.7 Any paper documentation (eg. EHC Plans, medical reports) should be scanned and stored in the database. The scanned copy should be deleted immediately from the server and the paper copy should be disposed of in confidential waste.

7. Information to parents, children and young people with regard to the SENDIASS confidentiality policy

7.1 Service users are informed of the SENDIASS confidentiality policy.

7.2 Service users are informed as to who has access to SENDIASS records.

7.3 Service users are informed of their rights to see any information held on them or their child.

7.4 Service users are informed that information is kept securely and will not be passed on to anyone else without their permission.

8. Monitoring:

8.1 All SENDIASS staff will be made aware of the Confidentiality Policy.

8.2 SENDIASS staff will be offered training and advice regarding information storage.

Date Agreed: June 2017

Review Date: June 2018