

Suffolk SENDIASS Advisory Body

Terms of Reference

Introduction

SENDIASS services provide impartial and confidential information, advice and support to disabled children and young people and those with SEN, and their parents/carers. Their remit also includes providing training to practitioners regarding SEND. They are expected to comply with the Minimum Standards for SEND Information Advice and Support Services.

Section 32 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) contains the duty

2.1 of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) gives further explanation

1.7 of the [Minimum Standards](#) sets out the requirement for a steering group/advisory body:

The Governance arrangements outline a clear management structure, encompassing a strategic manager within the IASS and a steering group or advisory body which includes representatives from service user groups and key stakeholders from education, social care and health.

Purpose of the Advisory Body

- To create a forum for key partners to monitor and support the development of Suffolk SENDIASS.
- To make sure the service helps children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers, to have the information, advice and support they need to participate fully in decisions about the outcomes they wish to achieve.

Aims of the Advisory Body

The advisory body will:

- monitor the impartiality of the service to ensure it remains at 'arm's length' to the Local Authority and the Integrated Care Boards.
- evaluate the level to which the service achieves the Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services and is compliant with the SEND Code of Practice 2015
- review the quality and effectiveness of the information, advice and support provided to families
- monitor the continued development of the service in a way that best meets the needs of children and young people with SEND in Suffolk and their parents/carers
- review the Suffolk SENDIASS development plan annually
- act as a 'critical friend' to Suffolk SENDIASS



Membership

Members of the advisory body will make an effective contribution on behalf of the stakeholder they represent and their willingness to be active in promoting the interests of Suffolk SENDIASS. The advisory body will include representatives from the following:

- Education, Health and Social care services
- Local forums and networks
- Young people with SEND
- Parents/carers of children who have SEND
- Primary, secondary and special schools
- PRU's and Alternative provision providers
- Early Years settings
- Post-16 providers
- Voluntary groups or organisations

Chair person

- The advisory body will appoint a Chair person.
- The chair will be independent of SENDIASS and appointed from within the membership of the body

Members will:

- promote Suffolk SENDIASS wherever possible
- give the perspective and findings of their own agency/constituency or group whilst recognising and appreciating the views of others
- promote a partnership approach by giving feedback to their own agency, group or constituency using the appropriate channels when requested
- be prepared to take part in/lead small working groups
- behave with sensitivity, respect and honesty
- declare any potential conflicts of interest

Meetings

Advisory body meetings will be held termly, 3 times a year

Members will:

- regularly attend meetings and contribute
- declare any conflict of interest if it arises
- notify the Chair if they are unable to attend
- delegate attendance and agree with the Chair in advance
- read relevant material before and after meetings
- respect confidentiality



Suffolk SENDIASS will:

- ensure advisory body members are provided with the information to understand the role of Suffolk SENDIASS
- listen and value contributions from members
- share the advisory body Terms of Reference with members
- prepare and share data via the annual report and at intervals throughout the year
- produce and publish an ongoing Service Development Plan which links to the Minimum Standards
- provide help to access meetings (venues, materials, formats)
- be available to members to discuss issues and problems

To be reviewed: November 2025