



Somerset Sendias

Special Educational Needs and Disability
Information, Advice and Support (0-25)

**A free impartial service for children and young people with SEND
(aged 0 – 25), and their parent carers**

Role of the Service Policy

Introduction

1. Somerset SENDIAS is an impartial and confidential service for all children and young people with SEND (aged 0 to 25), and their parent carers. It has a separate identity to the local authority. Any information shared with the service is treated in confidence and is regulated in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2020).
2. The role of the service is to ensure that children, young people and their parent carers have access to confidential, impartial, information, advice and support based on law, regulations and statutory guidance to enable them to participate in decisions.
3. Somerset SENDIAS works in partnership with children, young people, parent carers, local authorities, and Somerset Integrated Care Boards (ICB) and other relevant partners.
4. Information, advice and support provided by Somerset SENDIAS should help to promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and their parent/carers.
5. The service works with the Somerset Parent Carer Forum and other representative user groups (such as Youth Forums) to ensure that the views and experiences of children, young people and their parent carers inform policy and practice.
6. The service aims to meet the National Minimum Standards issued by the National Information, Advice and Support Services Network (IASSN).

Section 1 – Statutory duties

7. Local authorities **must** arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This **must** include information, advice and support on the take-up and management of Personal Budgets.’ **Source Chapter 2: SEND Code of Practice 2015.**

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The Hollies Children’s Centre, South Street, Taunton, TA1 3AG
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8. All local authorities in England have a statutory duty to ensure that an Information, Advice and Support service is provided and make sure this service is known to children, young people and their parent carers in their area.

Section 2 – Supporting service users

9. In recognising the different needs of young people and parent/carers it provides for, Somerset SENDIAS provides information, advice and support that young people can access separately from their parent carers.

10. Somerset SENDIAS staff are trained to support, and work in partnership with parent/carers and young people. This includes working sensitively to help parent carers understand their role related to the transfer of some rights and responsibilities to young people to participate in decision-making at the end of compulsory school age (the end of the academic year in which they turn 16). This is subject to the young person's capacity to do so, as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

11. Staff are trained to support young people and work in partnership with them to enable them to participate fully in decisions about the outcomes they wish to achieve

12. The service can sign post young people to specialist support to help them prepare for employment, independent housing and participation in society.

Section 3 – Service provision

13. Somerset SENDIAS provides information, advice and support on matters relating to SEND for children, young people and their parent carers that includes:

- a. local policy and practice;
- b. the Local Offer;
- c. Personal Budgets and direct payments;
- d. SEND law, health and social care law, through suitably, independently trained staff;
- e. advice on gathering, understanding and interpreting information;
- f. information on the local authority's processes for resolving disagreements, complaints procedures and means of redress.

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14. The service can provide information about health services, ICBs and local organisations, for example local Healthwatch.
15. The following forms of support are also offered through Somerset SENDIAS:
 - a. signposting children, young people and their parent carers to alternative and additional sources of advice, information and support that may be available locally or nationally;
 - b. individual casework and representation for those who need it, which should include:
 - support in attending meetings, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) assessments and reviews and participating in decisions about outcomes for the child or young person
 - signposting to additional support services where needed, including services provided by the voluntary sector.
 - c. information on the local authority's services for disagreement resolution and mediation, routes of appeal and complaints processes, related to SEND;
 - d. help when things go wrong, including support in arranging or attending early disagreement resolution and mediation meetings;
 - e. support in managing mediation, appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), exclusions and complaints related to SEND; .
 - f. information about parent carer support groups, local SEN youth forums or disability groups, or training events.
16. Somerset SENDIAS provides Information, Advice and Support to help children, young people and their parent carers through an EHC Needs Assessment or process for an EHC Plan.

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Section 4 – Contact details

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Section 5 – Administration

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To request this Policy in Easy Read, Braille, Large print or Translated into other languages, please contact Somerset SENDIAS on 01823 355578 or email somersetsendias@somerset.gov.uk

Section 6 – References

GDPR (2020)

Children and Families Act 2014

SEND Code of Practice 2015

END.

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