



**Northumberland
Information
Advice &
Support
Service**

Northumberland IASS Steering Group

Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

All local authorities and clinical commissioning groups in England have a statutory duty to provide an arm's length, free, confidential and impartial IASS (Information, Advice and Support) Service, for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their parents, in their area. The service must provide information, advice and support about matters relating to SEN and disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This must also include information, advice and support on the take up and management of personal budgets. The Northumberland IASS is an in-house service funded by the Local Authority.

AIMS

To take an active role in promoting the service, building the confidence of parents/carers, children and young people in the service and ensuring that it is accessible to all sections of the community.

To provide a forum for discussion which will help to

- Identify and promote good practice
- Raise issues and concerns
- Identify gaps in service
- Help to define what the priorities are for the service

To monitor the continued development of the service in a way that best meets the needs of children, young people with SEND in Northumberland and their parents and carers by:

- agreeing and reviewing the Service Operational Plan annually
- reviewing service user feedback

To demonstrate the impartiality of the service and ensure it remains at 'arm's length' to the Local Authority and the Clinical Commissioning Group.

To ensure that the service impartiality and confidentiality policies are reviewed and monitored and that they are implemented consistently and effectively.

To evaluate the level to which the service achieves the Minimum Standards for services providing impartial, information, advice and support, as supported by the Department for Education, and is compliant with the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

To monitor the impact of the service on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers, using service user feedback.

To act as a 'critical friend' and consultative body.

To monitor that the service is engaging effectively with all relevant partners, locally, regionally and nationally.

To ensure that the service informs policy and practice at LA and CCG level through feedback from service users and stakeholders.

MEMBERSHIP

The Steering Group membership will include the following representatives. Individual members may represent more than one stakeholder group, providing there is no conflict of interest.

- Northumberland Parent Carer Forum
- Young People
- SEN Team
- Education
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Social Care
- Voluntary Agencies – working with families of children with SEN or disabilities
- Northumberland Schools - Special educational needs coordinators (SENCo) (mainstream and special schools)
- Early Years

The Chair of the steering group should be independent of the IASS and appointed from within the membership of the group. They will liaise with the Information, Advice and Support Service Manager to set the agenda prior to each Steering Group meeting.

The Information, Advice and Support Service Manager will:

- Endeavour to recruit and retain a representative membership on the Steering Group.
- Endeavour to ensure that the voices of children and young people with SEND are represented on the Steering Group.
- Produce a report to update the Steering Group at each meeting
- Facilitate all meetings of the Steering group, including
 - arranging venue
 - discussing and setting the agenda with the Chair prior to meetings

- providing agenda and supporting papers to Steering Group members prior to meetings
- providing minutes of meetings to all members

The Steering Group will:

- Meet 3 times a year (once per school term); 2 hours per meeting
- Review the report from the Information, Advice and Support Service Manager at each meeting
- Monitor the implementation of decisions taken at previous meetings
- Review the service impartiality and confidentiality policies annually
- Monitor the quality and impact of the Information, Advice and Support Service
- Agree the Service Operational Plan annually, and monitor its implementation at each meeting

The Steering Group will **not** address issues relating to individual parents, carers, their children or young people, schools or members of staff – these will be redirected to the appropriate service

Prepared by:

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To be reviewed: July 2021

NORTHUMBERLAND IASS - Steering group
Annual Agenda Cycle

