



# West Sussex Information, Advice and Support Service

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

“The role of the SENDIAS is to ensure that all parents, children and young people have access to impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions. Any information that is shared with the SENDIAS is in confidence and will only be shared with other individuals, services and agencies that may be able to help the individual/family with their circumstances where it is fair and lawful to do so”

The West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) is committed to providing a confidential service to parents, children and young people who contact the service and we take your privacy seriously. Information about a parent, child or young person will never be shared unless that individual gives permission for this to happen.

### **Relationship with the Local Authority**

West Sussex SENDIAS is funded by West Sussex County Council but maintains an arms-length position from the Local Authority, as envisaged in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and in the national standards for an IAS service. The SENDIAS therefore does not share information unless it is fair and lawful to do so. The SENDIAS service is based in confidential surroundings and has a dedicated telephone line for parents.

The Manager of the Service will be ultimately responsible for authorising the release of confidential information in line with the West Sussex County Council policy. The WSCC data protection policy can be found on the Local Authority website: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/data-protection/data-protection-policies/>

### **Records**

The SENDIAS maintains records of contacts with parents, children and young people on a computer database. Information is kept so as to make sure that if a parent contacts the SEND IAS again and speaks to another Adviser they do not have to repeat the information already given. The database gives us the ability to export and print out your record if you want to see what data we are holding about you and we also have a function to lock the record or delete or remove your data.

Paper records are also maintained for more detailed or more complex cases. All records containing confidential information are kept in a safe and secure place, and can only be accessed by SENDIAS staff and are retained in accordance with the SENDIAS Privacy Notice found on the SENDIAS Information pages ('what do we mean by arms-length?') on the Local Offer: [www.local-offer.org](http://www.local-offer.org)  
Evaluations are also sent out to the person to seek their views on using the SEND IAS service, using the contact details held on file. Children and Young People will also be asked to complete an evaluation, but this will usually be done within a meeting with them, as opposed to sending the form out.

### **Relationship with Other Professionals**

We sometimes receive calls from schools and/or other professionals, asking us to support parents or young people. In this case, we would ask the professional to encourage the individual to call us. If the professional feels that the individual would not engage with us unless we call them, we would first ask the professional to obtain prior permission from the individual to speak with us.

If the Adviser feels that it would help the parent, child or young person (CYP) if they shared information on their behalf with other professionals, they will first of all seek the parent or CYP's permission to do this. If

this permission is obtained, the Adviser will adopt the 'need to know' principle and will only share information that is directly relevant to enable actions to be taken to support the individual.

### **Data Collection**

On initial contact with the service, parents and CYPs are made aware of how and why information is kept. Parents and CYP who wish to remain anonymous will be recorded as 'anon'.

The SEND IAS produces annual statistics on types of service users, issues discussed, response times to enquiries and other data that is intended to give a picture of the service and highlight any important policy issues. Information collected is anonymous.

From time to time the SENDIAS may use case studies to illustrate examples of the work for training purposes, for SENDIAS publications and to raise awareness of issues or good practice. Verbal or written quotes from a user of the service may also be used to illustrate the impact of the support given. In this situation, the SENDIAS will ensure that any personal information that could identify the individual is anonymised to ensure individuals cannot be identified, unless express permission is given otherwise.

### **Data Protection**

The SENDIAS service complies with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations and complies with all West Sussex County Council policies on storage of confidential information and with the Freedom of Information Act. The SENDIAS Privacy Notice can be found on the SENDIAS information pages of the Local Offer: [www.local-offer.org](http://www.local-offer.org)

If requested, we can also send out a termly newsletter and other information that we think may be of interest. We will send an online form to obtain consent to add the individual to the distribution list.

**All SENDIAS staff and volunteers have a copy of this policy.**

This procedure will be reviewed annually and updated as needed

Date of issue: 1 Aug 2008    Last reviewed: 12 June 2019    Next review: 12 June 2020