

Guidance for Professionals

- using the SENDIAS service



The [West Sussex SEND Information Advice and Support Service \(SENDIAS\)](#) works at arms-length from the Local Authority and provides impartial and confidential information, advice and support to the following people living in West Sussex:

- Children and young people up to the age of 25 with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Parent carers of these children and young people.

We also offer **general** information and advice to those working in West Sussex who support children and young people (CYP) with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND), and their parent carers.

General information and advice to professionals

- Many professionals have found our [resources on the SENDIAS website](#) useful to help with understanding the subject themselves, and to relay the information to the individual/family they are supporting. These include [translated versions of the most popular factsheets](#).
- We can identify any relevant SEND law and statutory guidance that will be helpful for you when supporting the individual's/family in their situation.
- We can talk through the different options an individual/family has within their situation, if the information is general (e.g. based on a statutory process), and there is no identifiable information discussed about them.

If you feel the individual needs to contact us directly...

- We prefer parent carers and young people to voluntarily contact us.
- If you feel for whatever reason they would be unable to contact us themselves, then we ask that you explain the service to them and get permission for us to contact them.
- We need evidence of their permission, so getting this by email and forwarding on to us or ringing us whilst with the individual so they can give verbal permission, are probably the easiest ways.

Helping us to manage expectations of parent carer / young person

- It may take up to 7 days for us to get back to the individual.
- Most parent carers are supported by Advisors through information and advice only. Occasionally, we may offer extra support if we feel the individual has additional needs, English is not their first language, or the complexity of the subject may overwhelm them. We may seek your advice as to whether this is needed. In these situations, a volunteer may be allocated to them.
- Advise parent carer / young person that if they provide us with the following information, we can allocate them to an Adviser quicker: **1)** Village or town the CYP lives in. **2)** Name and date of birth of CYP. **3)** A brief summary of the reason for contacting us.

Ways to contact us

Email address (including professionals working with the relevant group detailed below):

send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk (parents of children age 0-16).

cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk (CYP up to age 25 yrs, parents of CYP age 16-25).

E-form on website: [Click here for contact form](#).

Contactline: 0330 222 8555. Scan QR code to see our factsheets & access links:

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