

What to Expect from Portsmouth SENDIASS

Information Summary Sheet

This factsheet is to help you get the most from SENDIASS. It will help you understand what SENDIASS is, what we do and don't offer, and how we can best support you. Please click the links to additional information where relevant ([shown in blue](#)).

Aim of SENDIASS

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service) aims to empower parents, carers, children, and young people to play an active and informed role in making decisions about their education, health, and social care.

Our role as an information, advice, and support service (IASS) is to help parents, carers, children, and young people build their knowledge, understanding, and confidence in SEND procedures, policies, practices, and law, and enable them to communicate their own needs, wishes, aims, and rights.

SENDIASS is:

Free	Impartial	Confidential	Arms-length	Fully Trained
There are no fees to pay no matter how much, or how often, you receive support	<p>We do not favour one party (e.g. family, educational setting, or local authority) over another</p> <p>We treat all parties respectfully</p> <p>We do not have a vested interest in the outcome of any discussions</p>	We keep your details on a secure and independent database and will not share your details or discuss your case with anyone else without your permission.	<p>SENDIASS is separate from educational settings, the Local Authority, and Health Services</p> <p>SENDIASS is a statutory service (required by law under the Children's and Families Act 2014) and is run by Barnardo's</p>	Our staff and volunteers have extensive training in SEND law, safeguarding, data protection, and are all DBS checked.

Is SENDIASS for you?

To receive support from us you must meet the following criteria:

Be a parent or carer of a child or young person who:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lives in Portsmouth (check if you live in Portsmouth here)• Is 0-25 years old• Has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). A diagnosis is not needed to receive support• Has a query or issue related to SEND
Be a child or young person who:	
Be a professional supporting a child or young person who:	
All four of these criteria must be met to receive support from us. There is no need for a formal referral to access our service.	

How can SENDIASS support you?

SENDIASS can offer information and support in the following areas:

- SEN (Special Educational Needs) Support in early years, school, or college
- Improving communication with educational settings, local authority, health, and social care
- Choosing a nursery, school, college, or alternative provision
- Transition between educational settings or between Children's and Adult's services
- Transport to educational placement
- Annual Reviews of Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- EHCP Application and Needs Assessment
- Appeals to Tribunal for refusal to assess for an EHCP, refusal to issue an EHCP, contents of an EHCP, ceasing to maintain an EHCP, and placement
- Exclusions and part-time timetables
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)
- Disability Discrimination
- Making a complaint
- Health and social care queries related to the child or young person's disability

SENDIASS do	SENDIASS do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain jargon• Assist you to understand policies and procedures• Empower you to feel confident to express your views and wishes• Help you to understand and exercise your rights• Advise you of your options so you can make an informed decision• Provide templates and examples for letters, emails, and paperwork• Provide resources in various formats to support your query (e.g., webinars and factsheets)• Help you to prepare for meetings or tribunals• Accompany you to meetings and tribunals if you are unable to advocate for yourself• Review documents and forms (e.g., EHC Needs Assessment requests, draft and final EHCPs, appeal forms).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make decisions for you - you know your child's, or your own, wishes and needs best• Attend all meetings*• Arrange meetings or take minutes*• Write letters or emails for you*• Complete paperwork on your behalf*• Print or photocopy documents for you*• SENDIASS does not hold power over local authority or school policies or procedures and practices• Review benefits forms e.g., DLA or PIP <p>*Unless you have additional support needs that mean you cannot undertake these actions independently. Ask your Advisor what we can and cannot support you with.</p>

Four levels of SENDIASS support

Online Resources

Factsheets, webinars, and information pages are available on our website at: [Portsmouth SENDIASS](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/portsmouthsendiass)

These may answer your question without the need to contact our team.

Information Support

When you contact our team, a Duty Advisor will take your details and discuss your enquiry. They may be able to help you straight away or may pass your information on to another advisor for a longer conversation if your situation is complex or you have any additional support needs. It is important that you tell us how you like to be contacted and about any additional support needs you have so we offer you the right support.

The advisor will speak to you on the telephone and may send you written information which will often answer your questions. However, if you need further help to understand the information or you still have questions you can contact us again. To get the most out of your conversations with us, it can help to write a list of questions or concerns you have before you speak to us.

Duty Advisor (Helpline) support

A Duty Advisor is available every day to provide a wide range of information, advice, and support on all areas of SEND. We will respond to all calls and enquiries within 5 working days. The Duty Advisor will:

- listen to you and help you to gather, understand, and interpret information and apply it to your own situation.
- provide more in-depth information and resources to help you navigate processes, complete documents, understand policies and local practices, and understand your options and legal rights
- signpost you to relevant support from other organisations, agencies, or local authority departments
- escalate your case to a SENDIASS Adviser if required

You can come back to the Duty Advisor as often as you need by completing a [SENDIASS Request Form](#) ,calling our helpline number, or emailing us at portsmouthSENDIASS@barnardos.org.uk.

Adviser support

Advisers provide one-to-one support for:

- complex situations that require more in-depth support
- young people (0-25) accessing our service independently
- anyone who has their own additional support needs which mean they are unable to advocate for their child or themselves

You will be allocated a specific Adviser for your case; however, this may not be the same adviser if you come back to us with a different query in the future.

Support from SENDIASS will end when one or more of the following is met:

- The outcomes of your enquiry have been achieved
- You have reached a stage where you feel you can proceed without support
- The support you need to achieve further outcomes is outside of the SENDIASS remit or your issue has been progressed as far as SENDIASS is able. In this case you will be signposted to relevant services.

We hope that our support will give you the skills and resources to use if future issues occur. However, you can contact us again if you do need support.

Please note:

- Most of our team work part-time. If you have an allocated Advisor, please check their working days and times, detailed on staff email signatures, and be respectful of these when awaiting responses.
- If your enquiry is urgent and the person you have been speaking with is not working or is on leave, please contact 023 9323 3656 or portsmouthSENDIASS@barnardos.org.uk
- Check the resources available on our website: [Portsmouth SENDIASS | Barnardo's \(barnardosendiass.org.uk\)](#)