



BRENT

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT (SEND IAS) SERVICE

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Introduction

Brent Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SEND IASS) is a statutory service that offers free, impartial information, advice and support on matters around Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) to parents, carers and young people up to the age of 25. Serving the residents of Brent, it operates at arm's length from other Local Authority teams.

Note: Brent SENDIASS complies with all Brent Council Policies and in addition also follows the service specification policy.

Aim

The aim of the service is to ensure parent carers, young people and children have access to high quality, accurate, impartial information, advice, and support based on current legislation, to enable them to extend their knowledge and to take an informed and active role in decisions. The service works to limit misunderstandings and secure true partnership working arrangements between parent carers, young people, schools, the Local Authority (LA), and other services. Brent SENDIASS also acts strategically to enable children's, parent carers and young people's views to be heard and to influence service developments.

Confidentiality Statement

Brent SENDIASS is committed to providing a confidential service to its users and recognises that all children, young people, and their parent carers should be able to access the service in confidence. Brent SENDIASS respects the right of anyone to contact the service anonymously and will not try to elicit detailed information if the caller wishes to preserve their anonymity.

Brent SENDIASS is committed to the principle that children; young people and their parent carers have a right to expect that the information they share with us will:

- be respected and not passed on to anyone else without their express permission (unless we have a statutory obligation to do so)
- that we will manage any such information in ways that conform with the GDPR/Data Protection Act requirements, **unless** there are strong public interest concerns (please see our privacy notice for details)

Principle working arrangements

Brent SENDIASS is an opt-in service and operates a self-referral system whereby children, young people and their families contact the service directly.

In exceptional circumstances a child/young person/parent who requires SENDIASS support may feel unable to make contact independently. In such instances a third party (i.e. someone working with the child/young person such as a social worker) can make a referral on their behalf, ideally whilst the parent carer is present. , However the referral will only be accepted

once SENDIASS has received confirmation from the young person/parent that they have given permission for this to happen.

Brent SENDIASS staff will always obtain permission from parents/young people prior to speaking to or discussing the situation with others and this consent will be recorded in the case file.

Brent SENDIASS will always obtain permission from parents/young people to access any records from others; these are often required to provide appropriate support.

Brent SENDIASS staff will not tell any other person or agency that a parent/young person has approached the service without prior agreement.

Observations or information about the family are not recorded or communicated unless they are directly relevant to the issue under discussion.

Brent SENDIASS will only provide in-depth casework support directly to children and young people or to those parents / carers who hold parental responsibility.

Children/young people and their parent carers may occasionally contact the service independently of each other, in which case staff will treat both parties as separate enquiries.

Extended family members who contact the service will not be offered information pertaining to an individual without permission from the parent carers/young people prior.

Brent SENDIASS would usually consider it acceptable to contact parents/young people via home / mobile telephones but should check with parents/young people whether it is acceptable to call them at work or to leave messages on answer phones or with others.

Practical arrangements

Brent SENDIASS telephone number / line is solely for the use of Brent SENDIASS. The answer phone service attached to the telephone is protected by a secure pin.

Brent SENDIASS is based in the Civic Centre, Wembley, and has access to private office space to allow for parent carers to meet SENDIASS staff in a private room without interruption, if needed.

Brent SENDIASS uses a cloud-based client relationship management system (CRM), whereby all data is housed in a secure data centre. Day to day filing systems are only accessible to members of the SENDIASS team. Brent SENDIASS case notes are held electronically. All computers used are password protected on encrypted laptops managed by Brent Council IT.

Occasionally to effectively support parent carers, a limited number of paper files containing factual case information and personal details are taken out of the office by SENDIASS staff; it is the staff members responsibility to ensure these files are kept safe and secure. All paper files and case work notes are destroyed in secure waste on completion of the case.

Parent/young person consent will be sought prior to their contact details being included on any Brent SENDIASS mailing list. When sending information care will be taken to establish correct mailing details.

Provision of information

This Confidentiality Policy should be read alongside our Privacy Notice which gives details of how data is processed and controlled. Should there be a Subject Access Request for Personal Information from a parent, child or young person, whose information is held by Brent SENDIASS, the request will be dealt with in line with the principles in the Data Protection Act 2018.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Brent Council's Corporate Privacy Notice. For more information about how the County Council uses your data, including your privacy rights and the complaints process, please visit: [Privacy Policy | Brent Council](#)

Email: dpo@brent.gov.uk

Phone: [020 8937 1402](tel:02089371402)

Address:

Brent Council
Brent Civic Centre
Engineers Way
Wembley HA9 0FJ

Policy Effectiveness

The confidentiality policy will be stated on the Brent SENDIASS web pages. A copy of the confidentiality policy will be shared with young people or parent carers upon request. The confidentiality statement may also be verbally shared with parents either over the phone or face to face.

All Brent SENDIASS literature states the confidential nature of the service.

Existing and new staff will be introduced to the confidentiality policy via induction and training. It is expected that all Brent SENDIASS staff will adhere to the Confidentiality policy. All Brent SENDIASS staff will receive training around data protection as part of their on-going staff training.

The service complies with Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult procedures. All staff have a legal obligation to report concerns – this includes reporting any incidents of threatening/abusive behaviour from service users towards staff members.

Monitoring

Monitoring effectiveness of the policy and privacy notice will be undertaken by the service manager through quality assurance procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Brent SENDIASS Steering Group; any amendments should be agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Created: October 2021

The Confidentiality Policy has been approved by the Brent SENDIASS Steering Group.

Approved: (Reviewed) 29th September

Date of next review: September 2026