

## **Quality standards for services providing impartial information, advice and support**

- **to parents of children with SEN and/or disabilities**
- **to children with SEN and/or disabilities**
- **to young people with SEN and/or disabilities**

**Supported by**



**Department  
for Education**

## Foreword

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years<sup>1</sup> sets an expectation that children, parents and young people should be involved in the identification, assessment and decision making about the provision to meet special educational needs or disabilities. The Code requires that quality information, advice and support is offered to:

- children and young people with SEN
- parents of children with SEN
- children and young people with disabilities
- parents of children with disabilities

Access to free, accurate and impartial information and support promotes effective partnership working and recognises the importance of the active involvement of parents and young people in decisions about special educational provision.

The Children and Families Act 2014 and the revised SEND Code of Practice 0-25 are intended to strengthen the participation of parents, children and young people. These Quality Standards provide a national quality framework to support the provision of impartial information, advice and support as set out in the legislation and associated guidance.

Parent Partnership Services have been long been responsible for providing impartial information, advice and support to parents of children and young people with SEN and, in 2007, developed national exemplifications of Good and Best Practice in delivering the full range of services under the previous legislation. The experience that Parent Partnership Services have gained has informed the development of these new quality standards, which were initially devised by a small working group<sup>2</sup> that included representatives of Parent Partnership Services from each of the 9 regions in England.

Definitions of key terms used throughout these standards are included in the Appendices.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Education (2014) *Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0-25*

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix C

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# Introduction

## Who are these quality standards for?

These standards (or expected levels of quality or attainment) are designed to help:

### Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups

to jointly commission high quality impartial Information, Advice and Support Services for children, young people and parents covering SEN, disability, health and social care.

to monitor the effectiveness of the provision made against a set of national standards.

### Services providing information, advice and support

to assist managers and advisory or management groups to plan, implement and evaluate their services

to support paid staff and volunteers to work to nationally recognised standards.

### Service users and potential service users

to be aware of the standards of service that should be provided  
to evaluate the quality of the service they have received.

### Other services that provide support for parents and young people

to understand the particular contribution of services that provide information, advice and support under the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years.

to contribute to the further development of high quality services for parents and young people.

## How should these quality standards be used?

**Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups** should use these standards as an integral part of any service level agreement with the local provider(s) of impartial information, advice and support for parents, children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The standards should inform the commissioning process in order to secure the delivery of high quality services and assist with the regular monitoring of the efficacy and effectiveness of the service provided. It is recommended that the commissioners of services providing information, advice and support under the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years require service providers

to publish an annual report based on these quality standards.

**Services that provide impartial information, advice and support** should use the standards to drive service improvement, secure the delivery of high quality impartial information, advice and support that meets the needs of parents, children and young people in the local area, and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the service provided. The standards include recommendations on the types of evidence that services should routinely collect and analyse and are linked to a range of national outcome measures.

**Service users and other stakeholders** may use these standards to clarify the quality of service that they can expect, to evaluate the service against national benchmarks and to contribute to further service improvement.

At a local level **services that provide impartial information, advice and support** should work closely with **parent carer forums and other parent groups** to promote the involvement and participation of parents. These standards may also inform discussion about partnership working to contribute to and influence policy and practice at both a strategic and individual level.

At a national level these standards will be used to drive service improvement and promote equity of access for parents, children and young people across the country. The standards will underpin the process of identifying priorities for development, training and support for individual services. In addition the evidence collected by individual services may be collated to present a national picture of the provision of information, advice and support and to support the further development of all services. Data on national outcome measures will be collated annually to enable services to benchmark with each other.

## **How are the quality standards set out?**

The 5 sections of these quality standards cover:

- 1. Commissioning, governance and management arrangements**
- 2. Strategic functions**
- 3. Provision of information and advice**
- 4. Supporting individuals**
- 5. Professional development and training**

Each section sets out:

- a **description** of each standard. A standard is an expected

level of quality or attainment.

- a **reference** (where applicable) to the relevant law, regulations or statutory guidance (including the SEND Code of Practice).
- examples of the **evidence** a service can provide to show that it has reached the standard. Such evidence may be included in the annual report of a service, should inform service development and might be required as part of an inspection or accreditation process. The list is intended to guide services in collecting key evidence of effective practice and is not exhaustive. There will be other forms of evidence that will also be useful.
- recommended types of **outcome assessment**. Outcome assessment is intended to show how much impact the service has on those that the service provides for – in other words what difference the service actually makes. Four key types of outcome assessment are listed because different types of outcome assessment will be needed for different purposes. Further information about outcome assessment is shown on page 14.

## **Why make a distinction between evidence and outcome assessment?**

Evidence can take many forms and in the context of these Quality Standards may include policy documents, service plans, numbers of staff completing training, examples of publications etc. These are important ways of evidencing that Quality Standards are met. However this type of evidence does not usually demonstrate what difference the service has actually made.

Outcome assessments are a particular kind of evidence that show what impact a service has.

For example Quality Standard 3.2 states that:

*Services providing information, advice and support in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice are accessible to all potential service users.*

The evidence for this Quality Standard may include the service's equal opportunity and accessibility policies, data on the use made of different contact arrangements, the accessibility of information materials, the use made of translation services etc. However this information alone would not provide evidence of the extent to which such policies and practice have an impact on the accessibility of the

service to potential users.

In addition to the kind of evidence listed above, outcome assessment of Quality Standard 3.2 might include a number of measures of 'service reach' – such as the number of services users as a percentage of the SEND population, the percentage of service users from minority/hard to reach groups, feedback from users of adapted or translated information materials etc.

The combination of information on the extent to which the Quality Standards are achieved and the impact of the service on service users will provide a powerful range of evidence to support the delivery and further development of high quality information, advice and support.

## Impartial information, advice and support in the SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 years

These Quality Standards support the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years. They should always be read in conjunction with it. The standards include links to the relevant part of the law, regulations or guidance.

A key principle of the Code is that children, parents and young people should be involved in the identification, assessment and decision making about the provision to meet special educational needs or disabilities. The importance of participation and its implications are set out in sections 1.1 to 1.13 of the Code. In addition, parents and young people have specific rights to be involved in the statutory decision making processes that are set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

Essential to the involvement of parents, children and young people is access to impartial information, advice and support. The provision of information, advice and support is a specific duty on local authorities described in Parts 19 and 32 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Furthermore, sources of information, advice and support must also be described in the Local Offer<sup>3</sup>. The Code states:

*2.1 Local authorities **must** arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to special educational needs or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This **must** include information, advice and support on the take-up and management of Personal Budgets. In addition, in carrying out their duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities **must** have regard to the importance of providing children and their parents and young people with the information and support necessary to participate in decisions.*

*2.2 Local authorities **must** take steps to make these services known to children, their parents, and young people in their area; head teachers, proprietors and principals of schools or post 16 institutions in their area; and others where appropriate.*

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<sup>3</sup> The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014



*2.3 They **must** ensure that their Local Offer include details of how information, advice and support related to SEN can be accessed and how it is resourced.*

The Code also sets out the principles that should underpin the provision of the information, advice and support that **must** be available to children with SEN or disabilities and their parents, and to young people with SEN or disabilities.

*2.8 When designing information, advice and support services, local authorities should take into account the following principles:*

- The information, advice and support should be impartial and provided at arm's-length from the local authority and CCGs*
- The information, advice and support offered should be free, accurate, confidential, and in formats which are accessible and responsive to the needs of users*
- Local authorities should review and publish information annually about the effectiveness of the information, advice and support they provide, including customer satisfaction*
- Staff providing information, advice and support should work in partnership with children, young people, parents, local authorities, CCGs and other relevant partners*
- The provision of information, advice and support should help to promote independence and self advocacy for children, young people and parents*
- Staff providing information, advice and support should work closely with their local Parent Carer Forum and other representative user groups (such as Youth Forums) to ensure that the views and experiences of children, young people and parents inform policy and practice.*

Gaining access to quality information, advice and support can be a challenge for parents, children and young people who may not be familiar with the law or the statutory guidance. The Code provides guidance on how such information, advice and support services should be made available, including:

*2.4 Information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service. Local authorities have established Parent Partnership Services to provide information, advice and support to parents in relation to SEN. In addition, many local authorities provide or commission information,*

*support services for young people. Local authorities should build on these existing services to provide the information, advice and support detailed in this chapter.*

*2.5 Information, advice and support services should be impartial, confidential and accessible and should have the capacity to handle face-to-face, telephone and electronic enquiries.*

The Code also describes the scope of the information, advice and support that should be offered.

*2.17 The scope of this information, advice and support should cover initial concerns or identification of potential SEN or disabilities, through to ongoing support and provision, which may include an EHC plan. The local authority **must** ensure children, young people and parents are provided with information and advice on matters relating to SEN and disability. This should include:*

- local policy and practice*
- the Local Offer*
- personalisation and Personal Budgets*
- law on SEN and disability, health and social care, through suitably independently trained staff*
- advice for children, young people and parents on gathering, understanding and interpreting information and applying it to their own situation*
- information on the local authority's processes for resolving disagreements, its complaints procedures and means of redress.*

*2.18 Local Healthwatch offers advice to patients and their families in relation to health services, and CCGs and local authorities should ensure that the information is clearly accessible to families, including through the Local Offer.*

*2.19 To meet local needs, local authorities should consider the following forms of support through their information, advice and support service(s):*

- Signposting children, young people and parents to alternative and additional sources of advice, information and support that may be available locally or nationally.*
- Individual casework and representation for those who need it, which should include:
  - support in attending meetings, contributing to assessments and reviews, and participating in decisions about outcomes for the child or young person;**

- *directing children, young people, parents, and those who support and work with them, to additional support services where needed, including services provided by the voluntary sector. These services should include support relating to preparing for adulthood, including housing support, careers advice and employment support; and*
- *Help when things go wrong, which should include:*
  - *supporting children, young people and parents in arranging or attending early disagreement resolution meetings*
  - *supporting children, young people and parents in managing mediation, appeals to the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), exclusions and complaints on matters related to SEN and disability*
  - *making children, young people and parents aware of the local authority's services for resolving disagreements and for mediation, and on the routes of appeal and complaint on matters related to SEN and disability*
- *Provision of advice through individual casework and through work with parent carer support groups, local SEN youth forums or disability groups, or training events.*

While Chapter 2 of the Code sets out much of the detail of what the law requires with regard to information, advice and support, other significant references to the importance of working in partnership with parents and involving children and young people are included elsewhere, including Chapter 5 (*Early years providers*), Chapter 6 (*Schools*), Chapter 7 (*Further education*), Chapter 8 (*Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years*) and Chapter 9 (*Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans*).

## The values on which these quality standards are based

These standards are intended to support the provision of high quality, impartial information, advice and support for parents of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those children and young people themselves.

The key values on which they are based are:

- Parents, children and young people are entitled to high quality, impartial and accessible information, advice and support that are appropriate to their needs, extends their knowledge and maximises their involvement in decision making.
- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- Parents, children and young people must be treated with respect and should be at the heart of decision making processes that affect their lives.
- Work with parents, children and young people must be non-judgemental and anti-discriminatory; differences must be respected and there should be equality of access regardless of ethnic origin, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or social background.
- Confidentiality and impartiality are key to providing services that parents and young people will trust.
- Parents should be encouraged and supported in making an active contribution to their child's education, health and care from the earliest opportunity. This should include an entitlement to share in and have an awareness of their child's progress, opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process relating to their child's education health, and care and involvement in joint meetings and reviews.
- Children and young people should be encouraged and supported in making an active contribution to the planning of their own education and support, with opportunities to take part in the decision-making processes, joint meetings and reviews that are appropriate to their needs and which maximises their participation.
- Support for parents, children and young people should be achieved by working in partnership with schools, the Local Authority, voluntary and statutory agencies.
- Parents and young people should have access to a range of support, including access to impartial advice and support.

This should be available from initial concerns or identification of possible special educational needs or disabilities, through assessment, decision making and review processes. This will include additional or different provision made by mainstream providers as well as statutory processes and Education, Health and Care Plans.

- Parents, children and young people should be supported to understand their rights, roles and responsibilities within the legislative frameworks that apply to special educational needs, disability and exclusion, and the wide range of options that are available for their education.
- Parents, children and young people should receive information and support in a timely manner and in a format suitable for them to access.
- Reflective practice (i.e. critically evaluating practice and learning through and from experience) should be an inherent part of providing information, advice and support for parents and young people. As part of this, services should seek the views of service users to inform, develop and improve their service delivery, and actively participate in networking with other services at a regional and national level.
- When working with other networks and organisations for the parents of children and young people with SEN and/or disability, there should be:
  - Shared belief in raising the quality of life, improving outcomes and opportunities for all disabled children and those with SEN and their families
  - Clarity over each other's respective roles and responsibilities
  - Commitment to working together to support, train and empower parents and young people to be their own voice, at both individual and strategic levels. Close collaboration between services providing information, advice and support, parent carer forums and other parent groups, and services supporting the participation of children and young people should be a high priority
  - Acknowledgement of the development of each other's practice
  - Communication that is open and honest and solution focussed
  - Publicly supporting and championing each other.

These values are informed by a number of sources, which include:

Children's Workforce Development Council (2009) *The Way Forward: A functional map for Parent Partnership Services in England*

Coventry Parent Partnership (2012) *Service Standards*

Department for Education (2014) *SEND Code of Practice*

Local Government Association (2012) *Establishing Local Healthwatch*

National Association of Family Information Services (2013) *Families First Standards* (2103)

National Parent Partnership Network and Contact a Family (2013) *Together is Better* (in particular the *Six principles of good joint working for parent carer forums and parent partnership services*).

# Outcome assessment

## What is outcome assessment for?

While standards set a quality framework to promote and support the delivery of good practice they do not necessarily show what the impact of information, advice and support is on those that use these services.

Outcome assessment is an additional form of evidence that is intended to show what sort of impact the service has on those that the service provides for – in other words **what difference the service actually makes**. It follows that the assessment of outcomes should be closely related to the aims and objectives of the service. Collecting and analysing information on outcomes is critical to the effective planning, monitoring and evaluation of service delivery. This information is therefore important for those responsible for commissioning, for managers, for staff and for service users.

Outcome data is also potentially useful for benchmarking with other services, to identify particular service strengths and areas for improvement. However this requires that the data being collected is in a similar format and enables comparison to be made.

## What outcome assessments are relevant for Information, Advice and Support Services?

There are potentially many ways of assessing outcomes, but all will involve the collection of outcome evidence.

**Hard evidence** can usually be quantified and in its raw form is less dependent on interpretation e.g. actual numbers, percentages, ratios.

**Soft evidence** will usually be qualitative and maybe more dependent on interpretation, e.g. opinion, case study.

Both forms of evidence are valid. Used in combination they can provide a rounded picture of the impact that the service has.

Outcome evidence needs to be collected systematically, but the frequency and intensity with which this is done needs to be fit for purpose. Some forms of outcome evidence may be sampled rather than collected each and every time a service is delivered. Some forms of outcome evidence may be collected annually, others much more frequently.

Four key types of outcome assessments are shown in these quality standards for Information, Advice and Support Services.

### **Feedback from service users**

Feedback from service users is most simply gained by the use of a questionnaire that asks service users to rate on a scale various aspects of the service that they have received. This is likely to include feedback on promptness, impartiality, relevance, impact on service users' knowledge, skills and confidence, and overall satisfaction.

In addition service users may give feedback through telephone interview, focus groups, suggestion boxes, complaints procedures, etc.

### **Impact on policy or practice**

Ratings collected by feedback from service users and other stakeholders on the extent to which the information, advice and support provided by the service results in changes to policy and practice.

Examples of changes in policy or practice that result from the involvement of the staff providing information, advice and support.

Examples of changes in policy or practice as a result of participation or involvement of service users, where this is linked to the advice and support offered by the service.

Number of service users nominated by the service to represent parents or young people on strategic/management groups

### **Involvement of service users in decision making**

Ratings collected by feedback from service users and other stakeholders on the extent to which service users have been involved in planning and decision making as a consequence of the information, advice and support provided by the service.

Case study examples of service users' involvement in planning and decision making.

### **Service reach**

Number of service users as a percentage of the SEND population and those with an EHC Plan.

Percentage of service users from minority/hard to reach groups.

Examples of increased engagement of particular groups of service users as a result of targeted initiatives.



### **Other measures**

Services may wish to use other types of outcome assessment related to specific aims and objectives in their Service Development Plan. For example a service may wish to assess the impact of the use of a new policy or a change to record keeping procedures. However these sort of outcome measures are likely to be unique to a particular service.

### **National outcome assessment**

All Local Authorities have a duty to provide information, advice and support in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the associated statutory guidance. These standards are designed to provide a national quality framework that supports these duties. It follows that a range of national outcome measures will assist Local Authorities and services that provide information, advice and support in accordance with the Code to monitor the effectiveness of the services provided, identify and share best practice and strive for continuous improvement.

A set of national outcome measures based on the four key types listed above will be developed during 2014 and made available to support the implementation of these standards.

# Quality Standards for providing impartial information, advice and support

Section 1	Commissioning, governance and management arrangements			
Standard	Description	Link to SEND Framework	Examples of evidence	Recommended types of outcome assessment <sup>4*</sup>
1.1	<p>The Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) is commissioned in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, through the joint arrangements LAs and CCGs must have to consider and agree the information and advice to be provided. The commission should secure the provision of impartial, confidential and relevant information, advice and support to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parents of children and young people between 0 and 25 years who have, or may have, SEN or a disability</li> <li>children and young people who have, or may have, SEN or a disability.</li> </ul>	<p>C&amp;F Act Clause 26 SEND Regs 9 SEND Regs Schedule 2 Clause 15 CoP 2.6 CoP 2.7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed commissioning process based on an assessment of need, specifying what information, advice and support are to be provided, by whom and how it is to be provided</li> <li>A service level agreement with the Local Authority/CCG based on national quality standards setting out the expectations of both the service and its commissioners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service reach</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> See page 14

1.2	The IASS has its own identity and branding and is a dedicated and easily identifiable service. It is, and is seen to be, separate from other LA services and functions.	CoP 2.4 CoP 2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IASS is located in premises separately from the LA SEN teams, and ideally not in the main LA or CCG premises</li> <li>• The IASS having a distinct service identity, logo, and style</li> <li>• The IASS has a delegated and ring fenced budget</li> <li>• The IASS has a separate phone line from any other LA service/function</li> <li>• Service impartiality policy</li> <li>• Service confidentiality policy</li> <li>• A steering or management group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> </ul>
1.3	The governance arrangements for the IASS are based on clear lines of accountability and promote service user involvement.	CoP 2.6 CoP 2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of a clear management structure, including, where appropriate, advisory or steering group membership with service user involvement</li> <li>• Annual report</li> <li>• Examples of service user involvement in planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Participation of service users in decision making</li> </ul>

			and review of the services provided	
1.4	The IASS is planned, monitored, reviewed and evaluated, and prompt actions are taken to improve services and meet service users' needs.	SEND Regs 9 CoP 2.7 CoP 2.8 CoP 2.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service level agreement for the IASS, based on an assessment of need</li> <li>• Description of how such services provide access and ensure continuity of support from 0-25 through a "dedicated and easily identifiable service"</li> <li>• Terms of reference agreed by stakeholders (including commissioners, service users, and other providers).</li> <li>• Service Development Plan (reviewed annually) with specified improvement targets</li> <li>• Analysis of service users' needs and priorities</li> <li>• Analysis of staff needs and continuing professional development provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Participation of service users in decision making</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>
1.5	Service managers provide training, supervision and support for staff offering information, advice and	CoP 2.9 CoP 2.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Development Plan</li> <li>• Supervision policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Participation of</li> </ul>

	support, including (where relevant) independent supporters and volunteers.	CoP 2.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Continuing Professional Development Plan</li> </ul>	service users in decision making
1.6	The IASS complies with current safeguarding children legislation and guidance. All staff, independent supporters and volunteers who may have contact with children and young people are trained in, and have accurate and up to date knowledge of, safeguarding children.	Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service safeguarding children policy and procedures</li> <li>• All staff, independent supporters and volunteers who have contact with children and young people are trained in local and national safeguarding procedures</li> <li>• All relevant staff have DBS checks.</li> </ul>	

<b>Section 2</b>		<b>Strategic functions</b>		
<b>Standard</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Link to SEND Framework</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>	<b>Recommended types of outcome measure*</b>
2.1	The IASS informs policy and practice at the LA and CCG level by working with parents, children and young people, the Parent Carer Forum and local voluntary groups and organisations.	Cop 1.11 Cop 1.12 CoP 2.6 CoP 2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual report</li> <li>• Examples of service user views and participation in contributing to LA and CCG policy and practice</li> <li>• Examples of partnership working with parent carer forums and other groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Participation of service users in decision making</li> <li>• Examples of the service and service users working in partnership with other services (e.g. parent carer forums) to influence policy and practice</li> </ul>
2.2	The IASS contributes to policy and practice at the regional and national level by working with other providers and relevant stakeholders to share, promote and develop best practice.	CoP 2.4 CoP 2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual report</li> <li>• Examples of service participation in regional and national groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> </ul>

<b>Section 3</b>		<b>Provision of information and advice</b>		
<b>Standard</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Link to SEND Framework</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>	<b>Recommended types of outcome measure*</b>
3.1	Potential service users are aware of the IASS and what it can offer them.	C&F Act Clause 30 C&F Act Clause 32 SEND Regs 9 and Sch 2, Clause 15 CoP 2.1 CoP 2.2 CoP 2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity and promotional materials</li> <li>• Website, range of leaflets, social media presence</li> <li>• Presence in range of settings (including schools and colleges, children's centres, libraries, health centres, etc)</li> <li>• Local Offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>
3.2	The IASS is accessible to all potential service users.	CoP 2.4 CoP 2.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal opportunity and accessibility policies</li> <li>• Analysis of service use</li> <li>• Range of access options (including working hours, location, contact arrangements, response times, information formats)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>

3.3	The IASS provides impartial, accurate and up to date information and high quality advice relevant to the service users' needs	CoP 2.5 CoP 2.8 CoP 2.9 CoP 2.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity and promotional materials</li> <li>• Analysis of service users' needs and priorities and service use</li> <li>• Analysis of service users' perceptions of relevance and impartiality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Participation of service users in decision making</li> </ul>
3.4	Service users have the information and advice they need to make informed decisions about provision made by education, health and social care.	SEND Regs 9 and Sch 2, Clause 15 Cop 1.9 CoP 2.8 CoP 2.10 CoP 2.11 CoP 2.12 CoP 2.13 CoP 2.14 Cop 2.15 CoP 2.16 CoP 2.17 CoP 2.18 CoP 2.19 CoP 3.39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website, range of leaflets and other information</li> <li>• Individual case studies</li> <li>• Feedback on Local Offer</li> <li>• Analysis of comments, compliments and complaints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Increased involvement of service users in decision making</li> </ul>



<b>Section 4</b>		<b>Supporting individuals</b>		
<b>Standard</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Link to SEND Framework</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>	<b>Recommended types of outcome measure*</b>
4.1	The IASS offers confidential support to service users.	CoP 2.5 CoP 2.8 CoP 2.13 CoP 2.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with data protection law</li> <li>• Service confidentiality policy</li> <li>• Provision of confidential phone line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> </ul>
4.2	The IASS offers impartial support tailored to the individual (up to and including SEND Tribunal), which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• casework support</li> <li>• representation</li> <li>• an independent supporter</li> <li>• key working</li> </ul>	CoP 2.19 CoP 2.20 CoP 2.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service impartiality policy</li> <li>• Availability of independent supporters and volunteers</li> <li>• Individual case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>
4.3	The IASS builds upon service users' skills, knowledge and confidence to promote independence and self-advocacy.	CoP 2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users and other stakeholders</li> <li>• Individual case studies</li> <li>• Training evaluations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Participation of service users in decision making</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>

<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Professional development and training</b>			
<b>Standard</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Link to SEND Framework</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>	<b>Recommended types of outcome measure*</b>
5.1	<p>Staff, independent supporters, and volunteers are trained (including independent training) and have accurate and up to date knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• education, social care and health law related to SEN and disability</li> <li>• national and local policy and practice in meeting SEN and disability</li> </ul>	<p>CoP 2.11 CoP 2.15 CoP 2.20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and volunteer basic training programme and Continuing Professional Development Plan (differentiated according to role)</li> <li>• Numbers of staff, independent supporters and volunteers completing relevant national legal training</li> <li>• Attendance at national, regional and local training events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>
5.2	<p>All staff, independent supporters, and volunteers are trained and competent in providing impartial information and advice for all service users.</p>	<p>CoP 2.8 CoP 2.14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and volunteer basic training programme and Continuing Professional Development Plan (differentiated according to role)</li> <li>• Numbers of staff, independent supporters and volunteers completing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Participation of service users in decision making</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>

			<p>relevant independent national legal training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at national, regional and local training events</li> </ul>	
5.3	<p>Some staff, independent supporters, and volunteers have completed accredited legal training and are competent in supporting all potential service users in meetings, through statutory processes and at SEND Tribunal.</p>	<p>CoP 2.19 CoP 2.20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and volunteer basic training programme and Continuing Professional Development Plan (differentiated according to role)</li> <li>• Numbers of staff, independent supporters and volunteers that have completed accredited legal training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from service users</li> <li>• Involvement of service users in decision making</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>
5.4	<p>The IASS offers to early years settings, schools, colleges, statutory and voluntary agencies training on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working with parents, children and young people</li> <li>• the law relating to SEN and disability, as it applies to education, health and social care</li> </ul>	<p>CoP 2.8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range and number of people trained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from those attending training</li> <li>• Impact on policy or practice</li> </ul>
5.5	<p>The IASS offers training to parents on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working with professionals</li> </ul>	<p>CoP 2.8 CoP 2.16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of parents trained</li> <li>• Range of training offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from those attending training</li> <li>• Involvement of</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involvement in decision making</li> <li>• the law relating to SEN and disability, as it applies to education, health and social care</li> <li>• in collaboration with parent carer forums, contributing to strategic developments</li> </ul>			<p>service users in decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of partnership (e.g. with parent carer forums)</li> <li>• Service reach</li> </ul>
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## Appendix A – Definitions

**Please note that these definitions are intended to explain their particular use in the Quality Standards set out in this document.**

### ***Advice***

Activities that help parents and young people to gather, understand and interpret information and apply to their own situation. The provision of advice will often be a first step in casework, and may be offered face to face, by telephone, through work with groups or in training.

### ***Arm's length***

A service is at arm's length when it is able to act, and is seen to act, independently and impartially, with no undue influence or control from the local authority or CCG in which it is based. Whether a service is, and acts effectively at, arm's length is not judged by whether it is out sourced or in-house, but whether it is seen as being impartial by those parents, children, young people and professionals who use it.

### ***Casework***

The process of supporting a parent or young person through direct contact between the service offering information, advice and support and the service user to provide a service tailored to the individual's specific needs. This may be a single intervention (such as a home visit, support at a meeting or assistance in writing a letter, etc) or a series of interventions (such as helping a parent access local support and provision, preparing for an appeal, etc) – which may include key working. Responding to an **enquiry** (a request for general information, signposting to another service, asking how the IASS may be able to help) is not in itself casework.

Casework may involve the allocation of a volunteer or an independent supporter, and may include key working.

### ***Confidentiality***

Not shared with any other parties without consent of the information giver. Information, Advice and Support Services offer a confidential service to parents, children and young people and in doing so have responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. Any information about a parent, child or young person, including whether or not they have been in contact with the IASS must not be shared with anyone outside of the IASS unless the parent has given permission for information to be shared or there are strong public interest concerns, i.e. child protection.

The disclosure of personal information is regulated by the Data Protection Act 1998. Information can be disclosed only if it is in compliance with the eight data protection principles in the Act, especially the first which says that information shall be processed (including disclosed) fairly and lawfully and provided that one of a schedule of conditions of processing is met (or, in the case of sensitive data, which SEN data would definitely be, one from each of two schedules of conditions). If they give an undertaking of confidentiality to the individuals involved then it is unlikely that disclosure of the information they hold would be appropriate, even to the LA, unless there is a legal

requirement for them to disclose to the LA.

**Evidence**

Information and resources that exemplify how the service operates.

**Impartial**

Not biased towards or influenced by any particular party, point of view or policy, including local authorities, schools, education ideologies, and campaigns. Not giving priority to any particular impairment, disability or SEN over another; accurately reflects the law.

**Independent**

Provides information, advice and support that is not determined by local authority or clinical commissioning group policy or practice.

**Independent Supporter**

A trained, independent individual from the private, voluntary, and community sector, who can provide advice and support for parents of children with SEN, and young people with SEN, through the statutory assessment and EHCP processes.

**Information**

Accurate, up to date and impartial resources and information about the law on SEND (covering education, health and social care), national and local policy, the Local Offer, rights and choices, opportunities to participate, where to find help and advice and how to access this.

The provision of information will often be a first response to an enquiry, but may also serve to raise awareness and to prompt enquiries.

**Involvement**

Full and active participation in discussion, planning and decision making.

**Key working**

A key working approach provides children, young people and parents with a single point of contact to help ensure the holistic provision and coordination of services and support. This may include:

- emotional and practical support;
  - enabling and empowering;
  - support and facilitation;
  - coordination;
  - advocacy.
- (for further detail see 2014 SEND CoP 2.21)

**Neutral**

Not supporting either side in a disagreement.

**Outcomes**

The benefits or changes that result from the service provided - in other words what difference the service actually makes. Outcomes are usually planned and should be set out in an organisation's objectives. They should be observable in the short to medium term. A service may have wider **impacts** – both intended as well as unintended effects, and negative as well as positive.

**Parents**

All those who have parental responsibility as defined in the Education Act 1996.

**Representation**

Support for the parent or young person to express their views and communicate choices.

**Service users**

Services that provide information, advice and support in accordance with the 2014 SEND CoP are intended to provide a range of services for:

- children and young people with SEN
- parents of children with SEN
- children and young people with disabilities
- parents of children with disabilities

The term 'service user' is used in these Quality Standards to avoid repetition.

**Signposting**

Signposting takes place when an enquirer is given information about other service providers, including contact details, based on the enquirer's needs. There is no attempt to determine the outcome of the signposting.

**Support**

Support involves direct work with parents, children or young people, its purpose having been agreed in advance and the support being tailored to their individual needs. Support will usually involve casework, and may include representation, key working, or the provision of an Independent Supporter or volunteer.

## Appendix B – Additional resources

These Quality Standards are intended to support the delivery of information, advice and support for parents, children and young people who may have special educational needs or disabilities in accordance with the 2014 SEND CoP.

Some services may also wish:

- to seek external accreditation of the provision that they make
- to implement continuing professional development schemes for their staff that offer access to nationally recognised qualifications
- to reach local agreements on effective partnership working with other relevant services, such as the Parent Carer Forum.

Amongst the additional resources that services may wish to consider are:

Information, Advice and Guidance Standards

<http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/iag/>

Matrix Standard

<http://matrixstandard.com>

National Association of Family Information Services (2013) *Families First Standards*

<http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk/pages/families-first.html>

National Occupational Standards – Work with parents

<http://nos.ukces.org.uk/Pages/index.aspx>

<http://www.parentinguk.org/your-work/what-is-work-with-parents/national-occupational-standards-for-work-with-parents/>

National Parent Partnership Network and Contact A Family (2013) *Together is Better* (in particular the *Six principles of good joint working for parent carer forums and parent partnership services*).

<http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk/media/16483/together-is-better-report.pdf>

National Vocational Qualification – Advice and Guidance

<http://www.open.ac.uk/choose/vocational-qualifications/qualifications/advice-and-guidance>



## Appendix C - Acknowledgements

These standards were compiled by a small working group that included representatives of Parent Partnership Services from each of the 11 regions in England.

### Working Group Membership

	<b>Parent Partnership Service</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Bola Aworinde	Markfield for Haringey	Outsourced services
Sue Brealey	Devon	National Association of Parent Partnership Staff
Elaine Chandler	Durham	North East Region
Edwina Cosgrove	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands
Jackie Fielder	Bath and North East Somerset	South West
Stacey Ford	Suffolk	Eastern
Nick Knapman		Working Group Facilitator
Chris Lee	Liverpool	North West
Heather McIntosh	West Sussex	South East
Scilla Morgan	Hackney	London
Irene Pitham	Coventry	West Midlands
Howard Purves	North Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and Humberside
Chris Rees	National Parent Partnership Network	Council for Disabled Children
Daisy Russell	National Parent Partnership Network	Council for Disabled Children

Contact a Family and The National Network of Parent Carer Councils were also invited to comment on the early drafts of these standards.