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## **Barnsley SENDIASS – 2023 Audit of Minimum standards & SENDIASS Development Planning – 2025 - 2026**

### **Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services**

Information Advice and Support Services (IASS) provide free impartial, confidential and accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to special educational needs and disability. The provision of information, advice and support should help to promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents. Chapter 2 of the SEND Code of Practice sets out the role and activities of an IASS and should be read alongside these standards.

These minimum standards are based on the requirements relating to support that Information, Advice and Support Services must provide, as set out in the Children and Families Act (CFA) 2014, the SEND Code of Practice and on additional legal advice commissioned by the Information, Advice and Support Service Network.

### **SENDIASS Annual Review of Service**

The 2025 Annual Report should include an update on the action plan generated from that annual review of service process, and a fresh summary of performance against the national minimum standards identified.

### **Annual Review and Development Planning**

The service has conducted the Annual Review and report of the service for financial year 2024 - 2025. Following this the next task is to re-create the service develop plan based on the findings of the Annual Report 2025. The annual report sets out the areas of progress and areas for further development based on service level activity and service user feedback.

This development plan is created based on the following:

1. Annual reporting for 2024 -2025

2. Service user feedback
3. Review of the standards for an IASS and SENDIASS review outcomes
4. SMG reporting and feedback
5. Strategic partnership platforms where the service is open to check and challenge, including provided information to contribute to the Local Area SEND Data Dashboard

**The RAG rating is in line with the Local Area SEND Oversight Board Monitoring arrangements.**

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| Key to RAG | At risk: There is a risk that this priority is not progressing as expected and this requires escalation to strategic oversight. A mitigation plan may be required. |  | Vulnerable: The priority area is vulnerable due to lack of progress in some areas and may have implications for improvements. This may require escalation to strategic oversight. |  | On track: The priority area is on track for improvements and there are no issues raised. |  |
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| National Minimum Standards -<br>1. Commissioning, governance,<br>and management arrangements   | Desired Outcome  | Position update  | Evidence   | Rating |
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| 1.1 The IASS is jointly commissioned by education, health, and social care in accordance with the CFA 2014. A formal agreement is set out in writing which refers directly to these Minimum Standards, whilst also considering the need for continuity and stability of the service. | Joint commissioning has successfully been agreed and implemented with Health partners. | Commissioning are members of SMG.<br><br>Meeting with Director of Commissioning arranged.<br><br>Meeting took place.<br><br>Report prepared and reviewed. Requests made to enhance the report. | SLA is in place.<br><br>Joint Commissioning report prepared and developed with the Commissioning department and submitted to Director. |        |

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|  |   | Amendments made and resubmitted to Director for Commissioning.  |   |  |
| 1.2 The IASS is designed and commissioned with children, young people and parents, and has the capacity and resources to meet these Minimum Standards and local need. For smaller local authorities (LAs) this may involve commissioning across local areas. | Maintain this standard.                                     | <p>Service user feedback is collected throughout the year and assistant case officer collates this into a folder.</p> <p>Service is reviewed annually through survey.</p> <p>Service user feedback informs service development plan.</p> <p>SMG informs and shapes service practice.</p> <p>Data fed into IASSN Benchmarking.</p> | <p>Annual Report 2024 – 2025 and published on website.</p> <p>Minutes of Meetings from SMG and SEND Partnership Board.</p> <p>Survey results.</p> |  |
| 1.3 The IASS provides an all year-round flexible service which is open during normal office hours and includes a direct helpline with 24-hour answer machine, call back and signposting service, including linking to the national SEND helpline.            | Waiting times are low and response time is within 1-3 days. | <p>The service has operated a TRIAGE model since 2023, and this is working well for managing referrals or requests for support.</p> <p>Assistant case officer maps out weekly the likely response times and publicises this for families on service social media.</p>   | <p>Service user feedback.</p> <p>Social media posts.</p>  |  |
| 1.4 There is a dedicated and ring-fenced budget held and managed   | Maintain this standard.                                     | This is in place and funding has remained secured to meet staffing costs.   | <p>Budget spreadsheets.</p> <p>Finance support meetings.</p>  |  |

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| by an IAS service manager located within an IASS.   |  | Regular meetings held with finance partners to monitor budget.  |  |  |
| 1.5 The IASS is, and is seen by service users to be, an arm's length, confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service, separate from the LA, ICB and/or host organisation.  | Parents, carers and young people continue to have confidence in the neutrality of the service. | Feedback from families is regularly collected and any challenges to this are reviewed internally.<br><br>Kept under review through SMG.<br><br>The service has a stand-alone Social Media page that is ran totally at the discretion of the service.                            | Survey responses.<br><br>Service user feedback.<br><br>SEND SMG Minutes.<br><br>SENDIASS Facebook page.  |  |
| 1.6 LA and IASS ensure that potential service users, Head teachers, FE principals, SENCos, SEND Teams, children's and adult social care, health commissioners and providers are made aware of the IASS, its remit and who the service is for. | SENDIASS is known in the local area.   | The service undertook a review of publicity materials and refreshed these during 2024. Leaflets are also in every Family Hub.<br><br>Website had a review in December 2024 and refreshed.<br><br>SENDIASS Manager attends SEND Partnership Board meetings amongst all partners. | Publicity materials available.<br><br>Webpages.<br><br>Data recording for case signposted to the service.<br><br>Attendance at SEND Partnership board. |  |
| 1.7 The Governance arrangements outline a clear management structure, encompassing a strategic manager within the IASS and a steering group or advisory body which includes representatives from service user groups and key                  | Maintaining the SMG to help drive forward the service.   | Three meetings of SMG held during the year. There is a clear management structure of the Service with a dedicated manager.  | SMG minutes – published on website pages.  |  |

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| stakeholders from education, social care and health.   |                         |  |   |  |
| 1.8 The IASS has a development plan reviewed annually with the steering group/advisory body, which includes specific actions and improvement targets | Maintain this standard. | Development plan is designed, reviewed, and developed with service users and partners.<br><br>SMG have oversight and scrutiny of service developments. | Survey results.<br><br>Annual report 2024 - 2025.<br><br>SMG minutes 2024/2025. |  |

| <b>National Minimum Standards - 2. Strategic functions</b>  | <b>Desired Outcome</b>  | <b>Position update</b>   | <b>Evidence</b>   | <b>Rating</b> |
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| 2.1 Each IASS has a manager based solely within the service, without additional LA/CCG or host body roles. They have responsibility for strategic planning, service management and delivery, and quality assurance. | Maintain this standard. | SENDIASS has always had a designated Manager solely based in the service. Service Manager continues to hold responsibility for delivering the service. | SEND Partnership board update reports.<br><br>Service user feedback informs QA.       |               |
| 2.2 The IASS engages with regional and national strategic planning and training and demonstrates effective working with other IASSs to inform service development.  | Maintain this standard. | SENDIASS Manager attends regional meetings, contributes to IASSN requirements and feedback processes.  | National benchmarking data.<br><br>Attendance at regional/national meetings/training. |               |
| 2.3 The IASS works with local partners, including local parent and young people forums to inform and  | Maintain this Standard. | SENDIASS attends SEND Partnership board and other local area boards.   | Minutes of meetings – SEND Partnership Board, Health and well being board.            |               |

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| influence policy and practice in the local area. |  | SENDIASS networks within the local area mechanisms where required. | Attendance at Family Hubs. |  |
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| <b>National Minimum Standards - 3. Operational Functions</b>   | <b>Desired Outcome</b>                                 | <b>Position Update</b>  | <b>Evidence</b>  | <b>Rating</b> |
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| <p>3.1 The IASS provides; Impartial information, advice and support (IAS) on the full range of education, health and social care as defined in the SEND Code of Practice to the following service users –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) children</li> <li>b) young people</li> <li>c) parents</li> </ul> <p>This support is offered in a range of ways which includes face to face, a telephone helpline, email, website and social media.</p> | Sustain this standard to a high standard for families. | <p>All cases are supported based on need when triaged into the service.</p> <p>All cases recorded on Cross Data CRM data recording system.</p>  | <p>Annual Report.<br/>Service user feedback.</p> <p>SEND (IAS) Data produced for local area SEND Dashboard - produced quarterly into this process.</p> |               |
| 3.2 The IASS provides branded information and promotional materials in a range of accessible formats.  | Maintain this standard.                                | <p>The service provides the information as required on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Interpreters booked to assist IAS processes with families.</p> <p>Some information produced by regional partners in alternative languages as agreed in regional meetings.</p> | Parents/carers receive information in first language as part of case work.   |               |

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| <p>3.3 The IASS has a stand-alone service website that is accessible to all service users. The website includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact details of the service</li> <li>• Opening hours</li> <li>• Response times</li> <li>• Information on a range of SEND topics</li> <li>• Signposting to other useful groups including parent groups and youth forums and national helplines</li> <li>• Signposting to the Local Offer</li> <li>• Key policies including a complaints procedure</li> </ul> | <p>Sustain the platforms we have as they do work.</p> | <p>SENDIASS has website area on the local Authority Website. The service social media (FaceBook) are stand alone and provide the stand-alone platform for engagement.</p> <p>The webpages are visited and well received as the information is easy to locate and access.</p> <p>The service controls and has autonomy over what is published and when on webpages.</p> | <p>Engagement with virtual platforms such as Facebook numbers and also number of referrals that come via the website.</p> |  |  |
| <p>3.4 The IASS provides advocacy support for individual children, young people, and parents that empowers them to express their views and wishes and helps them to understand and exercise their rights in matters including exclusion, complaints, SEND processes, and SEND appeals.</p>   | <p>Maintain this standard.</p>                        | <p>The service continues to do this through case work and group network sessions face to face and virtually.</p>   | <p>Service feedback.</p> <p>Data collected for annual report and quarterly for the Local Area SEND Data Dashboard.</p>    |  |  |
| <p>3.5 The IASS provides information, advice and support before, during and following a SEND Tribunal appeal in a range of different ways, dependent on the needs of the parent or young person. This will include representation during</p>   | <p>Maintain this standard.</p>                        | <p>The service continues to provide this level 4 intensive case work intervention.</p>   | <p>Service user feedback.</p> <p>Data collected through the Cross-data CRM recording system.</p>                          |  |  |

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| the hearing if the parent or young person is unable to do so.  |  |  |   |  |
| 3.6 The IASS offers training to local education, health and social care professionals, children, young people and parents to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation. | Sustain this offer – often not able to prioritise dependant on case work demand. | Training workshops are provided and delivered. These are also recorded and posted on social media. | Attendance at various platforms where invited to present. |  |

| <b>National Minimum Standards - 4. Professional development and training for staff</b>  | <b>Desired Outcome</b>  | <b>Position Update</b>   | <b>Evidence</b>   | <b>Rating</b> |
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| 4.1 All advice and support providing staff successfully complete all online IPSEA legal training levels within 12 months of joining the service. Volunteers who provide advice and support should complete IPSEAs Level 1 online training within 12 months. | Maintain this standard. | Existing staff hold L2 and L3 IPSEA legal training.<br><br>New staff member recruited to cover additional hours of existing staff member.                | Staff qualifications. Case worker confidence to lead on more complex cases.   |               |
| 4.2 The service routinely requests feedback from service users and others and uses this to further develop the work and practices of the service.   | Maintain this standard. | Feedback is collected through individual case work, Facebook, Customer complaints/compliments processes.<br><br>Surveys have been created and published. | Annual Survey 2024 – 2025.<br><br>Case work feedback collected throughout case work activity.<br><br>Refreshed practice Standards produced in response to issues arising. |               |



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| 4.3 All IASS staff and volunteers have ongoing supervision and continuous professional development. |  | Regular supervisions and PDR processes are in place; these are scheduled in calendars. Records are made and kept for staff.<br><br>Volunteers are to SMG, and this needs further development. | Volunteers invited periodically to have a 1-1. Where members request a 1-1 it is instantly provided. |  |  |
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## Summary of Annual Report 2024 – 2025

### Overview

The report, prepared by **Sarah Wike**, SENDIASS Manager, outlines the service’s performance, achievements, challenges, and future plans for the period **2024–2025**. It reflects Barnsley SENDIASS’s commitment to supporting children and young people with SEND and their families through **free, impartial, and confidential information, advice, and support**.

### Key Achievements

- **20% increase in new service users** through expanded outreach.
- **Improved digital access** via website updates and online resources.
- **Training delivered** to parents, carers, and professionals.
- **Co-production** of guidance materials with families.
- **Positive feedback** highlighting empathy and professionalism.
- Continued alignment with the **Quality Standards Framework (QSF)** and recognition from **Ofsted/CQC**.

### Service Structure & Funding

- Fully staffed team since **June 2023**.

- Centrally funded for **4.5 roles**, with additional capacity added due to underspend.
- Operates from **Westgate Plaza, Family Hubs**, and remotely.
- Staff benefit from **training, IT support**, and **budget monitoring**.

### Service Data Highlights

- **2,588 interventions** across **1,700 cases** – financial year 2024-2025
- High demand for **EHCP (247)** and **SEN Support (158)** – Q4 capture.
- Most interventions in **KS3 (250 cases)** - Q4 Capture.
- Common issues: **placement (134)**, **triage (166)**, **ASD (217)**, and **general SEN (231)** - Q4 capture.
- **Referral routes are highest with repeat referrals**, indicating trust and ongoing need.
- **Tribunal and mediation** cases mostly related to placement.
- Staff workload: Case Officers (178), Assistant Case Officers (172), Manager (135) Q4 capture.
- Identified **data gaps** in education phase and referral sources.

### Annual Survey Findings

- **98% satisfaction, 100% likely to recommend**.
- Families praised the service's **supportiveness, clarity**, and **staff dedication**.
- Word cloud highlights terms like “amazing,” “helpful,” and staff names.

### Thematic Findings

- Rising **parental pressure** and **emotional strain**.
- High demand for **specialist placements**.
- Challenges in **transitions**, **school attendance**, and **accessing provision**.
- Increased **financial hardship** and **tribunal appeals**.
- Barriers in **communication**, **digital access**, and **diagnostic pathways**.

### **Recommendations**

- Increase training/resources for EHCP and SEN support.
- Develop KS3 transition programs.
- Improve placement planning and early intervention.
- Enhance diagnostic pathways and professional training.
- Review staff workload and managerial support.
- Improve data capture protocols.

### **Monitoring & Strategic Role**

- Active participation in **SEND Partnership Board**, **SMG**, and **National Benchmarking**.
- Contributions to **local policy**, **strategic planning**, and **data dashboards**.

## SENDIASS Development Plan 2024 - 2025

**Purpose:** To present development priorities that enhance service quality, staff capacity, and stakeholder engagement, aligned with the SENDIASS Action Plan.

| <b>1. Workforce Development</b><br><br><b>Goal:</b> Strengthen staff skills, resilience, and capacity                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Key Priorities:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Structured CPD programme aligned with service needs.</li><li>○ Training on trauma-informed practice, mediation, and digital inclusion.</li><li>○ Peer mentoring system within the team.</li></ul></li></ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Success Measures:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 100% staff participation in CPD.</li><li>○ Improved staff confidence.</li></ul></li></ul>   |
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| <b>2. Digital and Communication Improvements</b><br><br><b>Goal:</b> Enhance accessibility and communication with families. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Key Priorities:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Keep under review website for updated accessible Information and advice.</li><li>○ Expand use of social media and digital newsletters.</li></ul></li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Success Measures:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 25% increase in website traffic.</li><li>○ Positive feedback on digital tools in user surveys.</li></ul></li></ul>                    |
| <b>3. Co-Production and Engagement</b><br><br><b>Goal:</b> Deepen collaboration with families and young people.             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Key Priorities:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Establish further SENDIASS Parent/Carer feedback mechanisms.</li><li>○ Co-produce new resources and training content.</li><li>○ Host quarterly feedback sessions virtually or through family hubs.</li></ul></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Success Measures:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ At least 3 co-produced SENDIASS resources published.</li><li>○ Increased representation in engagement activities.</li></ul></li></ul> |

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| <b>4. Service Innovation and Pilots</b><br><br><b>Goal:</b> Test and scale new approaches to meet emerging needs.    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key Priorities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Trial SEN IAS clinics in Family Hubs.</li> <li>○ Explore AI tools for triage and information delivery.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Success Measures:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evaluation reports from pilots.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                  |
| <b>5. Strategic Influence and Partnership</b><br><br><b>Goal:</b> Strengthen SENDIASS's role in local SEND strategy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key Priorities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Contribute to multi-agency planning and data dashboards.</li> <li>○ Share thematic insights with the SEND Partnership Board.</li> <li>○ Support development of local area SEND priorities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Success Measures:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SENDIASS input reflected in strategic documents.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

**Monitoring and Review:** Progress will be reviewed annually and sooner when required by the SENDIASS Manager and reported to the Head of Service, SMG and SEND Partnership Board.

**Lead:** Sarah Wike, SENDIASS Manager

### **Terminology**

SEND IASS - Special Educational Needs Disability Information Advice Support Service

IA - Information Advice

IAS - Information Advice Support

IASS - Information Advice Support Service

LA - Local Authority

SEND OB – SEND Oversight Board

CRM - Computer Records Management

SMG - Strategic Management Group

SENDCO - Special Educational Needs Disability Coordinator

DMO - Designated Medical Officer

EHCP - Education Health Care Plan

ICB – Independent Commissioning Board

SYPS - SENDIASS Young People Group

CDC - Council for Disabled Children

DfE - Department for Education

SLA - Service Level Agreement

BMBC - Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

### **Resources**

2024 - 2025 Service Annual Report

2018 - IASS Standards

2015 - SEND Code of Practice

2024/2025 SMG Minutes

SMG Terms of Reference