



Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)

Information, Advice
and Support Service
for children, young people and parents

Information, Advice and Support Service for Windsor and Maidenhead

Service Remit

The IAS Service provides free, impartial and confidential information, advice and support for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to special educational needs and disability (SEND), including health and social care matters.

This document is intended to provide some guidance about the IAS Service and how it works.

What can you expect from the IAS Service?

- Our IAS Advisers are trained in the law relating to the SEND framework, including the Children and Families Act, SEND Code of Practice and other key legislation and guidance. We can provide information, advice and support on a wide range of issues, including education, health and social care where it relates to SEND.
- We will listen to you and provide you with tailored, legally-based information relevant to your circumstances and set out available options for your consideration.
- Our support may include:
 - explaining your options, rights and responsibilities
 - help with forms, letters and reports
 - help in preparing for meetings and/or attending meetings with you
 - answering your questions about SEN support and Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments and EHC Plans (EHCP)
 - help to express your views
 - support to resolve disagreements, including help with complaints, mediation and Tribunal appeals
- We can help your child or young person to express their views in writing or by supporting them to participate in meetings.

Accessing our support

- We can be contacted via our telephone helpline 01628 683182 or the IAS Service email ias@rbwm.gov.uk. You can download a copy of our registration form from our website here: <https://www.ias-rbwm.info/contact-us>

- We are not always in the office, so please leave us a message on our confidential voicemail and we will get back to you, or email ias@rbwm.gov.uk .
- At first contact, will ask you to fill in and return our registration form to us. Once we have received this information, it will be passed to an adviser who will get in touch. Our aim is to contact you within three working days of receiving your registration form, but in busy periods this can rise to five days. Please be assured it will always be at the soonest possible opportunity.
- There is large demand on the service so we may not always be available immediately or be able to attend all meetings. If we cannot attend a meeting with you, we are often able to talk to you beforehand to help you to prepare and talk to you afterwards to discuss any outstanding issues.
- We are impartial, so cannot tell you what to do, but we can provide information, advice and support to enable you to make an informed decision. We aim to empower you, rather than take over your case or act on your behalf.
- We are not an advocacy service, but we will support you to express your views and will represent you in some circumstances if you are unable to do so yourself.
- As we are a self-referral service, we will usually wait for you to contact us if you need anything. If we don't hear from you, we will close our case, but you can come back to us at any point in the future.
- Please note that, if you are receiving SEND advice from a paid consultant or solicitor, our help will be limited to signposting to avoid duplication and confusion.
- We ask that you complete our feedback form at the end of our work together. Your feedback helps us improve the service we provide.

Free, Impartial and Confidential

- We are employed by the Local Authority but operate at “arm’s length” from the Local Authority and ICS (Health), which means that we work entirely separately from the services who make decisions concerning your child or young person.
- We are impartial, which means we do not take sides. For more information, please see our impartiality policy on our website.
- We are a confidential service and will not share any information you share with us (unless there is a safeguarding concern). For more information, please see our confidentiality policy on our website.
- If you agree to be added to our confidential database, this will enable us to help maintain continuity and efficiency in our communication with you. We treat your data with the utmost care and take appropriate steps to protect it. For more information, please see the Privacy Notice on our website.
- Our service is free and available to RBWM residents.

We aim to provide a high-quality service and are always happy to receive your feedback and suggestions. If you have any concerns about the service you have received, please contact the IAS Service Manager in the first instance.