

Bracknell Forest Information, Advice & Support Service (IASS) **(formerly Parent Partnership)**



Providing impartial information, advice and support for parents, carers, children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) in Bracknell Forest.

Confidentiality Policy

Introduction

The role of Bracknell Forest Information, Advice & Support Service is to ensure parents, carers, children and young people have access to impartial information advice and support so that they can make informed decisions about their children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This is achieved by working in partnership with parents.

Any information shared with us is in confidence and therefore protected under Common Law and the Data Protection Act 1998.

Sharing Information

To provide confidential service we will:

- Inform parents, carers, children and young people that any information they give to IASS staff is confidential and will not be passed on to other organisations, including local authorities (LA's), education settings and other agencies unless they give consent or there are public interest concerns e.g. child protection.
- All parents contacting the service are encouraged to share any information about their child that will enable us to respond effectively to their needs.
- Only store the personal contact details of parents, carers, children and young people on a secure database in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 with their permission. Electronic information will be held on password protected computers / servers.
- Operate a self-referral service for parents, carers, children and young people to contact us direct.
- Inform parents, carers, children and young people that they have a right to see any information held on them.

- Not contact anyone involved with the family without asking the parent, carers, children and young people beforehand.
- Only keep information for as long as necessary in line with Data Protection Act 1998.

Ensuring Effectiveness of this Policy

To ensure our confidentiality policy is effective we will ensure:

- At the first point of contact parents, carers, children and young people are made aware of how and why we keep information about them and when we ask them for their personal details. Parents, carers, children and young people are told that they do not have to give those details.
- IASS staff record on parent, carers, children and young people's case notes that they have made parents, carers, children and young people aware of the policy.
- All IASS staff receive a copy of the policy and it is explained to them.
- The policy is shared with LA's, education settings and other agencies so that they are aware that it exists.
- The policy is reviewed annually by the service and the Management Steering Group and amendments agreed.

Administration

Date written: 1st October 2010

Reviewed on: 30th January 2012. See addition of Appendix A

Reviewed on: 31st January 2015

To be reviewed by January 2017

Signature: *M Salter*

Name: Mandy Salter

Position: Information, Advice & Support Service Co-ordinator

Signature: *Sandra Davies*

Name: Sandra Davies

Position: Head of Performance Management & Governance

Date: 26-03-2015

Appendix A:

Privacy policy for Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire standalone web site:

The Information, Advice & Support Services (IASS) offer a confidential service to parents, carers, children and young people and in doing so have responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. Any information about a parent, carer, child or young person including whether or not they have been in contact with IASS must not be shared outside the IASS unless:

- the parent carer, child or young person gives permission for the information to be shared, or
- there are strong public interest concerns, i.e. child protection
- there is a legal requirement to: for example prevention/detection of crime

The services comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000

IASS have no access to files held elsewhere. Information held by IASS is confidential; it is held separately and can only be accessed by IASS staff. Some services may have a shared computer area which only members of the team are allowed to access. The database containing caller records is password protected and only those members of staff with a need to access it are provided with the appropriate password. All paper records are kept in locked filing cabinets.

Parents, carers, children and young people are made aware of how, and why, we keep information when they contact us. When we ask them for their personal details, they are told that they do not have to give those details. These calls are then recorded as no name given (NNG).

Exceptions to Confidentiality

At times it might be helpful to pass on information about cases; however this will only be done with the parent, carers, children and young people's explicit consent and will only be done in order to help the parent carer, child or young person. When we receive consent to disclose information about a service user this will always be documented in the notes who the disclosure was to and the basis for the disclosure.

If we receive information which leads us to believe a child is at risk, we have a legal obligation to pass on concerns about keeping children safe to the relevant Social Care professionals. These concerns are always discussed internally with a member of the Senior Management Team before being discussed externally. The services comply with local Safeguarding procedures; this includes child and vulnerable adult protection procedures.

At times, for training purposes, cases may be informally discussed or used as case studies. Where this takes place, IASS will ensure that any identifying details will be removed to ensure that the right to privacy is protected.

