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.

These minimum standards are based on the Children and Families Act (CFA) 2014, the SEND Code of Practice and additional legal advice commissioned by the Information, Advice and Support Service Network. There is a glossary and further guidance on how these standards can be evidenced which will be available shortly.

1. **Commissioning, governance and management arrangements**
   1. The IASS is jointly commissioned by education, health and social care in accordance with the CFA 2014, set out in a formal written agreement relating directly to the minimum standards, considering the need for continuity and stability of the service.
   2. The IASS is designed and commissioned jointly with children, young people and parents and has the capacity and resource to meet the minimum standards and local need.
   3. The IASS provides an all year-round flexible service which is open during normal office hours and includes a direct helpline, 24-hour answer machine and call back service and signposting service, including linking to the national SEND helpline.
   4. There is a dedicated and ring-fenced budget held and managed by an IAS service manager located within the IASS.
   5. The IASS is, and is seen by service users to be an arm’s length and confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service, separate from the LA, CCG and/or host organisation.
   6. Head teachers, FE principals, SENCos, children’s and adult social care, health commissioners and providers are made aware of the IASS, understand who the service is for, its remit and signpost appropriately.

* 1. The Governance arrangements outline a clear management structure, encompassing a strategic manager within the IASS and a steering group or advisory body which includes all service user groups and key stakeholders from education, social care and health.
  2. The IASS has a development plan reviewed annually with specified improvement targets.

1. **Strategic functions**

2.1 There is a manager located within the IASS and without additional LA/CCG or host body responsibilities who is responsible for operational service management, strategic planning and service delivery.

2.2 The IASS engages with regional and national strategic planning and training and demonstrates working with other IASSs - this informs service development.

2.3 The IASS works with local partners to influence policy and practice in the local area.

1. **Information, Advice and Support** 
   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 –

(a) parents

(b) young people, and

(c) children

3.2 IASS branded information and promotional materials in a range of formats that are accessible to all potential service users.

3.3 A stand-alone service website and social media presence that is accessible to all service users. The website will have;

* + Contact details of the service
  + Opening hours
  + Response times
  + Information on a range of SEND topics
  + Signposting to other useful groups including parent groups and youth forums and national helplines
  + Signpost to the Local Offer
  + Complaints procedure

3.4 The IASS provides advocacy support for individual children, young people, and parents that helps them to express their views and wishes and helps them to understand and exercise their rights in matters relating to exclusion, complaints, SEN processes, and SEND appeals.

3.5 The IASS provides information, advice and support before, during and following Tribunal in a range of different ways, dependent on the needs of the parent or young person and the capacity of the service. This includes presenting some or all of the case during the hearing if the parent or YP is unable to do so.

1. **Professional development and training**

4.1 All advice and support providing staff and volunteers successfully complete all IPSEA legal training levels within 6 months of joining the service.

4.2 The service routinely requests feedback from service users and others and uses this to further develop the service and the staff within it.

4.3 The IASS offers training to local professionals, parents, young people and children to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation.