

# RIASS

Redbridge Information, Advice & Support Service  
for Special Educational Needs & Disability





# Why are we here?

**The Children and Families Act 2014 says local authorities must provide information advice and support about special educational needs (SEN), disability, health and social care for children, young people and parents.**

The SEND Code of Practice says:

*Local authorities must arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible for including their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are (the parents) responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN 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. (2.1)*

**This means that every local authority should provide a service that is free, easy to access and confidential and that can help children and young people, parents and carers of young people, take part in decisions that affect their lives.**



# Who are we?

**Redbridge Information, Advice and Support Service (RIASS) is an impartial information, advice and support service to children and young people with SEN and/or disabilities (SEND) and their parents/carers.**

- ▶ We offer information, advice and support around education, health and social care issues.
- ▶ We can work with families from birth and up until their child is 25 years old.
- ▶ **We sit on a variety of groups and panels in order to influence policy and ensure that children and young people with SEND are kept at the heart of decision making.**
- ▶ We can offer information and advice on a wide range of issues.
- ▶ We can meet with CYP and their parents/carers
- ▶ We can attend meetings with CYP and parent/carers to help them to get their views across.
- ▶ We can work with young people in their own right.

# Information, Advice and/or Support!

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## What do we mean by Advice?

IASS's are not support services.

Support is only part of the service

Advice is basically more than information, less than support.

Information	Everything children, young people, parent/carers can access without contacting the service	Website and social media Local Offer
Advice	Help children, young people, parent/carers apply information to their own situation so that they can make an informed decision and act themselves	Triage Website Tribunal Packs Information and training sessions Advice from an advisor via email or phone call
Support	Helping customers to act	Advisor appointment or attendance



# Section 19 Principles

The Children's & Families Act 2014 says that the LA, when supporting disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN), must have regard to:

- ▶ the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents.
- ▶ the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in all decisions, and being provided with the information and support needed to be able to fully participate in those decisions.
- ▶ the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to help the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.



# We are impartial.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

*The information, advice and support should be impartial and provided at arm's length from the local authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups (2.8)*

- ▶ This means that the information, advice and support that we offer are firmly based in the law and the SEND Code of Practice.
- ▶ We provide unbiased information and advice about the local authority's policies and procedures and about the policy and practice in local schools and other settings.
- ▶ We are over seen by a steering group
- ▶ We are line managed by the lead officer in early years - keeping the service arms length
- ▶ We do not give priority to any impairment, disability or special educational need, nor do we campaign for any approach to education.

**By being impartial we aim to help parents, children and young people have clear, accurate and relevant information that will help them take part in decisions about their lives.**

# Our training!

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We are IPSEA trained to level 3 - which is a different training from which is available to others.

DfE has designed our training to be different!

Parent/Carers and other organisations are able to complete their IPSEA but this is not at the level of IASS's.

This is designed training so that only IASS's can provide Information, Advice and Support.

- ▶ Accredited for the Bar Council
- ▶ Specialised in the statutory duties set out in the Code of Practice
- ▶ Allows us to provide legal intervention and case work
- ▶ On going legal training
- ▶ Tribunal training
- ▶ Peer Support

# What do we do?

- ▶ Offer telephone and email information
- ▶ We can offer face to face meetings with parents (currently on Zoom/Teams)
- ▶ We can listen to the views of the young person and parent/carers and help them express them
- ▶ We can provide information, advice and support with requesting a Needs Assessment, EHC plans, EHCP reviews
- ▶ We can advise on SEN support within schools
- ▶ We can help to enable to prepare for meetings
- ▶ Support to prepare for Tribunal and in some cases, attend tribunal - and we may represent at these in certain cases
- ▶ Advise and support to Mediation and Conciliation meetings
- ▶ Advice and give information for exclusion
- ▶ Provide Local Offer information
- ▶ Information on Personal Budgets
- ▶ Advice and support on accessing health care and social care provisions
- ▶ Information and support on making formal complaints and complaints to the LGSCO

**It does not matter if there is an EHCP in place or a diagnoses**

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# What we don't do

- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Benefits including DLA and PIP forms
- ▶ Referrals to health or social care (unless safe guarding concerns)
- ▶ Immigration

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# What do we do?

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## Tribunal and Mediation Attendance

RIASS are not legally qualified so we cannot act as legal representative in hearings, but we can assist to prepare for your hearing and support you to put forward your views and wishes during the hearing.

This means that we can assist you with the presentation of your case to make sure your views are being heard and you understand the hearing. We would not be able to legally challenge witnesses or the local authority during the tribunal.

It is expected that CYP and parent/carers can represent themselves at tribunal with the information, advice and support provided by RIASS.

RIASS will represent if it is felt that the CYP or their parent/carer are unable to do this themselves. This decision will be with of the advisor who is working with the CYP or their parent/carer with agreement from the manager of the service.

**RIASS staff will be required to log circumstances relating to such situation and should be prepared to justify their decision to the steering Group**



# Face to face support

## We will only offer face-to-face support to:

- ▶ Parents/cares with additional needs of their own
- ▶ Parents/carers requiring support to write their contribution to the EHCP assessment process
- ▶ Young people direct as this seems to work best for them



# Meetings

**We only attend Review meetings or other meetings where:**

- ▶ The placement is at risk, including exclusions
- ▶ Early Annual Reviews
- ▶ It is a phased transfer and there is uncertainty regarding the next placement
- ▶ The child has multiple or complex needs and parents are struggling to engage support or necessary services
- ▶ It is a complex situation at risk of going to SENDisT
- ▶ Following SENDisT decision there are on-going issues re implementation or delivering of the ruling

**Other situations as determined by and at the discretion of RIASS as warranting face to face support**



# Home visits

## Home visits will only be carried out if:

- ▶ The parent/carer is unable to leave the home or travel either due to:
  - a. their own needs
  - b. caring responsibilities for another
  - c. the child they are contacting you about is unable to leave the house and it would be unsafe for them to be left
- ▶ There is no other suitable alternative or accessible place to meet e.g. school, LBR building, coffee shop etc.

**The purpose of this is not to be obstructive or make life more difficult for parent/carers but to improve efficiency of RIASS time and reduce the potential risks associated with lone-working**

**We do find a lot of CYP we work directly with do prefer a home meeting - so we will accommodate this**



# Empowerment Model

**Our role is to empower the CYP and parent/carers through an Empowerment Module**

**We do this by making sure that:**

- ▶ All parents/carers and CYP are made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the Children's and families act.
- ▶ We provide information leaflets
- ▶ We have our own website
- ▶ Deliver Information and training sessions

**As many CYP and parents/carers as possible will be provided with telephone/email advice and guidance enabling them to access the information they need in order to represent themselves.**

**Positive trusting relationships will be promoted between parents/carers and CYP and the professionals they are involved with.**



# Information/Training Sessions

## For CYP & Parent/Carer

Annual Reviews

Getting the most out of Meetings

What is an EHCP

Choosing a School

What is an IASS

Visiting Schools

Transition

Applying for an EHC Plan

Preparing for Adulthood

Accessing short breaks

## For professionals

What is IASS

Contribution to EHCP



# Working with Professionals

- ▶ Positive trusting relationships will be promoted between parents/carers and CYP and the professionals they are involved with.
- ▶ RIASS not used as a threat by CYP or Parents/Carers
- ▶ Breaking down barriers with CYP, Parent/Carers and Professionals
- ▶ Resolving conflicts
- ▶ Requesting information “informed”
- ▶ Can only access information that the CYP or parent/carer provides to RIASS
- ▶ Conducting of the meetings
- ▶ Not making professionals feel uncomfortable

# RIASS & Professionals

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- ▶ We provide information to professionals as well as parent/carers and young people.
- ▶ We advise of the services website
- ▶ We do not support professionals but are happy to answer questions and give information
- ▶ We are happy to deliver information sessions
- ▶ We can attend coffee mornings and staff meetings

# Trends

**We identify SEN trends within Redbridge.  
This could be schools, social, health care or LBR.**

## **Being mindful domino's effect**

**We identify these trends through the contact to the service by CYP's and parent/carers**

**We also have LBR come to the service with current issues they have found and asked for us to support parents effected by these.**

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# Referral

- ▶ Self referral only
- ▶ If professionals contact the service to refer we refuse and ask for the parent/carer or young person to contact direct
- ▶ Phone, email , social media or website



# Contact the service

## Opening hours

- ▶ Phone line opened 10am-2pm Mon-Fri **020 8708 8922**
- ▶ 24 hours telephone message service
- ▶ Generic email [RIAS@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:RIAS@redbridge.gov.uk)
- ▶ Website [www.redbridgeiass.org.uk](http://www.redbridgeiass.org.uk)
- ▶ Facebook

**We aim to return all calls and emails within 48 working hours and information and advice will follow as soon afterwards depending on urgency of case.**

**But we have up to 10 days to respond**