



## WANDSWORTH INFORMATION ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE (WIAS&S) ADVISORY GROUP

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE WIAS&S

##### INTRODUCTION

All Local Authorities (LA) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) in England have a statutory duty to provide an **\*arm's-length, confidential, and impartial** Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS), for children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their parents/carers in their area in line with the Children and Families Act 2014.

This is to ensure that children, young people and their parents/carers have access to information and advice about matters relating to their SEND, including matters relating to education/training, health, social care, and personal budgets.

\*A service is at arm's-length when it is able to deliver an impartial (objective) service with no influence or control from the LA/Council or CCG (Health Services) in which it is based.

**WIAS&S** has policies explaining in detail how it provides an arms length, confidential, and impartial service.

In Wandsworth, the service is referred to as **the Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service (WIAS&S)**, formally known as the Wandsworth Parent Partnership Service and is directly funded by Wandsworth Council.

The service works in partnership with children, young people, and their parents/carers, the LA, health services, educational settings (including colleges and training centres) and voluntary organisations working with children and young people(aged 0-25) with SEND and their parents/carers.

**WIAS&S** staff are independently trained on SEND law and practice. Areas covered by the service include educational (with regards to SEN) disability, health and social care law. The SEND legal training is validated by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority.



The Service operates a substantial case-work service at all stages of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

## **WIAS&S AIMS**

The aim of the service is to ensure that children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers have access to timely, accurate, impartial information, advice and support. This will hopefully enable children, young people and parents/carers to take an informed and active role in the decision making process.

The service works to limit misunderstanding and secure partnership working arrangements between children, young people, and their parents/carers with schools/colleges, the LA, health and other services, ensuring that the views of children, young people, and parents/carers are listened to.

## **Governance arrangements for IASS Services:**

All IASS Services should have an advisory or steering group with membership from service users (representatives from children and young people; parents/carers; LA and Health services) to promote feedback and participation from service users.

## **Further information about what WIAS&S should provide:**

The obligations and expectations of an IASS Service are set out in Chapter 2 of the SEND Code of Practice and in the IASS Network Quality Standards:

### **SEND Code of Practice, Chapter 2:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

### **Dfe IASS Network Quality Standards:**

<http://www.iassnetwork.org.uk/documents>



## DESCRIPTION OF THE WIAS&S ADVISORY GROUP

### WIAS&S ADVISORY GROUP AIMS:

The **WIAS&S Advisory Group** will use their knowledge, skills, and experience to contribute to the improvement and development of the service within the principles of co-production as a group.

**WIAS&S** will deliver a high quality arm's-length service that is responsive to local needs (through feedback from all service users), taking into account best practice, both locally and nationally, in line with the IASS Network Quality Standards.

The **WIAS&S Advisory Group** will meet \*termly (**3 times a year**) at venues to be decided. Members may be invited to join smaller working groups to carry out specific tasks.

### WIAS&S ADVISORY GROUP FUNCTIONS:

The primary functions of the **WIAS&S Advisory Group** are to:

- Support with agreeing and reviewing a service level agreement with the LA and CCG.
- Monitor the participation of children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers in the development of **WIAS&S**.
- Evaluate service performance against the National DfE Quality Standards 2015 and National Benchmarking of IASS Service.
- Review, monitor, and promote the impartiality, confidentiality and arm's-length policies of the service.
- Monitor and review children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers feedback on the service provided and the impact of improving outcomes for them.
- Support and contribute to meet with representatives of the LA and CCG to communicate areas of concern and inform local policy and practice.
- Raise awareness of and promote the activities of **WIAS&S** in the wider community and within your own services.
- Review service publications for children, young people, and their parents/carers.
- Review the **WIAS&S Advisory Group Terms of Reference** every two years.



## WIAS&S WILL:

- Endeavour to work with the **WIAS&S Advisory Group** to recruit and retain a Representative membership of the Group.
- Endeavour to ensure that the views of children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers, are represented to the **WIAS&S Advisory Group**.
- Make arrangements for the fair recruitment and selection process (every 1-2 years) for the appointment of the **WIAS&S Advisory Group Joint Parent/Carer Chair** with the **WIAS&S Manager**
- Provide relevant service updates at each meeting.
- Update on matters arising nationally from the National Information, Advice and Support (IAS) Network on issues concerning local and national policies.
- Present an annual Service Improvement Plan and Service Reports.
- Arrange a meeting venue at the Town Hall to include parking facilities and provide light refreshments.
- Agree an agenda with the **WIAS&S Co-Parent/Carer Chair** prior to each meeting.
- Circulate an Agenda and supporting papers to the **WIAS&S Advisory Group** members prior to meetings.
- Circulate Minutes of the Meetings to all members.



## MEMBERSHIP:

### Who:

In light of its extended remit the **WIAS&S Advisory Group** will comprise of representation from key stakeholders and will include:

- Parents/carers who have used the service before and are representative of
  - the local community (cultural/social/gender)
  - age and SEND of children and young people
  - mainstream or SEN settings
- Positive Parent Action (Local Parent Carer forum)
- **WIAS&S** Independent Parental Supporters (IPS)
- Participation People (Youth Forum)
- Education (Senco/College Representative)
- Health
- Social Care
- Special Needs Assessment section (under and post 16 Representatives)
- Contact or voluntary sector and other agencies working with parents/carers, children, and young people.



## WIAS&S ADVISORY GROUP SIZE:

A maximum number of **10** members, **5** of which should be parents/carers.

### Other:

**WIAS&S Advisory Group** cannot be used to discuss issues relating to any individual parents/carers, their children or young people, schools/settings or members of staff – these issues will need to be redirected to the appropriate service.

## MEMBERS:

Members can be selected to represent key stakeholders groups and are chosen on their ability to make an effective contribution and their willingness to be active in promoting the development of the **WIAS&S**.

In order to ensure wide representation within the **WIAS&S Advisory Group**, regular attendance of the members is vital. However, it is recognised that members will occasionally have conflicting priorities.

- There must be a parent/carer, children, and young people representative in order for meetings to go ahead.
- If a member misses 3 **WIAS&S Advisory Group** meetings in a row, the **WIAS&S** Manager will contact the member to ask if they need additional support to continue as a member.
- If the member cannot guarantee attendance at the **WIAS&S Advisory Group** on subsequent occasions, the **WIAS&S** Manager will explain to the member that in order to ensure the effectiveness of the **WIAS&S Advisory Group**, it would be appropriate for the member to step down or request that an alternative person represent the organisation or stakeholder group.
- Reasonable travel and child care costs can be paid to parent/carer/young people reps, by agreement with the **WIAS&S** Manager

Agreed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

To be reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)