



Giving parents of children with special educational needs access to confidential and impartial information, advice and support

Impartiality Policy

Introduction

The role of Walsall Parent Partnership Service (PPS) is to ensure parents have access to confidential and impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their child's special educational needs (SEN). This is achieved by working in partnership with parents, providing information, services and training, working with relevant agencies and ensuring parents' views influence local policy and practice.

Why it's important to act impartially

Walsall PPS is funded by Walsall Council and is an 'in-house' service. It is run at 'arms-length' from Walsall Children's Services – Serco to avoid conflict of interests arising and offers understanding of the needs of parents. In layman's terms staff employed by Walsall PPS inform parents of that which is statutorily required and that which is local policy and practice.

In the context of this policy, impartiality means:

- The PPS does not stand to gain or lose whatever the outcomes of any discussions may be.
- Not favouring any person or taking sides with anyone.
- Providing factual information and advice based on what the guidance and legislation says.
- Providing parents with enough information so they can make their own informed decisions; not telling them what to do.

Working with Parents

When working with parents we will ensure impartiality by:

- Informing parents of the impartial nature of the PPS and presenting this policy to them when they first approach the service.
- Being clear with parents that the role of the PPS is to help them participate in their child's education and advise them on their rights, not to advocate on their behalf or take sides with the local authority.
- Empowering parents to speak for themselves and make their own decisions, rather than pushing them towards a particular course of action.
- Always respecting parents' decisions without making a judgement irrespective of our own views.
- Providing factual information and advice based on what the guidance and legislation says without offering our own opinions or bias on local authority policy.

Working with Local Authorities, Education Settings and other Agencies

When working with local authorities (LAs), education settings and other agencies we will ensure impartiality by:

- Making it clear that the best educational outcomes for children with SEN and disabilities are the ultimate aims of the PPS, and our role is to support parents to achieve this.
- Informing LAs, education settings and other agencies of the impartial nature of the PPS and making them aware of this policy.
- Not allowing relationships with LAs, education settings and other agencies to affect the information, advice or support we provide to parents.
- Being clear that we do not undertake LA functions, or act on behalf of LAs, education settings or any other agency.
- Being clear that we do not take sides with LAs, education settings or any other agency.

Ensuring Effectiveness of this Policy

We will maintain the effectiveness of our impartiality policy by ensuring:

- Parents are consulted upon its content.
- All PPS staff and Independent Parental Supporters (IPs) receive a copy of it and it is explained to them.
- The policy is shared with LAs, education settings and other agencies so they are aware it exists.
- All documentation and information leaflets are written and produced in accordance with this policy.
- The policy is reviewed annually and amendments agreed.

Administration

This impartiality policy was written and published in consultation with the PPS Management Group.

- Date written: 25th May 2010
- Review date: May 2011

Signature:



Name: Ken Upton

Position: Parent Partnership Service
Coordinator

Date: 25th May 2010



Andy Stewart

Head of Prevention, Workforce &
Partnerships

25th May 2010