Minimum Standards…

Development of the Standards

- Key component of the IAS Programme. Supersede the 'IASS Quality Standards'

- Set up a working group (IASS, NNPCF, LA, Health, DfE) – met in June 2018

- July - development of first draft

- Consultations.
  - IASS – July-Aug. 61 responses
  - Others – July-Sep. 51 responses

- Key issues in consultation – Tribunals & 'Advocacy', staff training, IASS Management

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1. Commissioning, governance and management arrangements

1.1 The IASS is jointly commissioned by education, health and social care in accordance with the CFA 2014. A formal agreement is set out in writing which refers directly to these Minimum Standards, whilst also considering the need for continuity and stability of the service.

1.2 The IASS is designed and commissioned with children, young people and parents, and has the capacity and resources to meet these Minimum Standards and local need. For smaller local authorities this may involve commissioning across local areas.

1.3 The IASS provides an all year-round flexible service which is open during normal office hours and includes a direct helpline with 24-hour answer machine, call back and signposting service, including linking to the national SEND helpline.

1.4 There is a dedicated and ring-fenced budget held and managed by an IAS service manager located within an IASS.

1.5 The IASS is, and is seen by service users to be, an arm's length, confidential, dedicated and easily identifiable service, separate from the LA, CCG and/or host organisation.

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1.6 LA and IASS ensure that Head teachers, FE principals, SENCos, SEND Teams, children's and adult social care, health commissioners and providers are made aware of the IASS, its remit and who the service is for.

1.7 The Governance arrangements outline a clear management structure, encompassing a strategic manager within the IASS and a steering group or advisory body which includes representatives from service user groups and key stakeholders from education, social care and health.

1.8 The IASS has a development plan reviewed annually with the steering group/advisory body, which includes specific actions and improvement targets.

2. Strategic Functions

2.1 Each IASS has a manager based solely within the service, without additional LA/CCG or host body responsibilities or roles. They have responsibility for strategic planning, service management and delivery, and quality assurance.

2.2 The IASS engages with regional and national strategic planning and training and demonstrates effective working with other IASSs to inform service development.

2.3 The IASS works with local partners, including local parent and young people forums to inform and influence policy and practice in the local area.

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3. Operational Functions

3.1   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

(c) children

This support is offered in a range of ways which includes face to face, a telephone helpline, email, website and social media.

3. Operational Functions (cont.)

3.2 The IASS provides branded information and promotional materials in a range of accessible formats.

3.3 The IASS has a stand-alone service website that is accessible to all service users. The website includes;

- 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
- Signposting to the Local Offer
- Key policies including a complaints procedure

3. Operational Functions (cont.)

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

3.5 The IASS provides information, advice and support before, during and following a SEND Tribunal appeal in a range of different ways, dependent on the needs of the parent or young person. This should include representation during the hearing if the parent or YP is unable to do so.

3.6 The IASS offers training to local education, health and social care professionals, parents, young people and children to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation.

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Advocacy and IASS

- Advocacy means getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes and help you understand and exercise your rights.

- IASS do not fulfil the role of statutory advocates nor do they provide legal advocacy as provided by a lawyer.

- More information on what we mean by advocacy can be found on the MIND website and in the extract below:

  https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/advocacy/#.WyJ4mKdKiM9

Advocacy and IASS

An advocate can:

- listen to your views and concerns
- help you explore your options and rights (without pressuring you)
- provide information to help you make informed decisions
- help you contact relevant people, or contact them on your behalf
- accompany you and support you in meetings or appointments.

Advocacy and IASS

An advocate will not:

- give you their personal opinion

- solve problems and make decisions for you

- make judgements about you.

4. Professional development and training for staff

4.1 All advice and support providing staff successfully complete all online IPSEA legal training levels within 12 months of joining the service. Volunteers who provide advice should complete IPSEAs Level 1 online training within 12 months.

4.2 The service routinely requests feedback from service users and others, and uses this to further develop the work and practices of the service.

4.3 All IASS staff and volunteers have ongoing supervision and CPD.

Next steps

- Additional guidance on MS developed

- Will be formally launched. Easy read version developed.

- IASS to assess compliance/priorities

- Support provided through IASP to meet standards:
  - Training
  - Resources
  - 1 to 1 support (visits, phone calls)
  - RAG rating system developed

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For further queries/discussion on the IASS Minimum Standards:

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