



5.6 The Parent Carer Forum South Gloucestershire and Special Educational Needs and Disability Service Information Advice and Support (SENDIASS), Supportive Parents

SGPC

South Glos Parents and Carers (SGPC) is the local parent carer forum in South Gloucestershire as recognised by the Department for Education.

Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other services providers to ensure that the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families.

– SEND Code of Practice, 1.13

“The school always make me feel welcome and always listen. Sometimes though I feel frustrated that things don’t change quickly enough. It really helps that the SENCo now records who is going to do what before the next meeting and emails me a copy.”

- South Glos Parent/Carer

South Glos Parents and Carers strongly believe, along with other forums across England that in order to have effective partnership working for the best outcomes you need the following:

- good information
- honest consultation
- effective participation

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- true co-production.

They strive to work at a co-production stage to ensure they have parents' views represented at strategic level whilst designing or reviewing services. They work in a solution focused way with service providers towards achieving the best possible outcomes for the SEND community.

SGPC work to reach as many families as they can and in as many ways as possible to capture their views so the forum can represent the wider views of the families in South Gloucestershire. With now membership of over 1500 Parent and Carers and a greater reach through social media.

SGPC are also members of the south west regional network and the national network of parent carer forums and therefore provide feedback of the collective views of families regionally and nationally to influence policy across education, health and social care.

South Glos Parents and Carers have also evolved over the years and offer more than the forum's participation work. By listening to families, they have created other sources of support to help families.

They provide peer to peer support and information for families through social media, our weekly drop in at our community base, monthly coffee morning, preschool children with SEND and their parent carers can attend the stay and play sessions at Little Treasures.

They also provide training workshops on various subjects based on feedback from parents and are further developing webinars and online virtual support.

Further details on how South Glos Parents and Carers run the [Parents Carer Forum](#) and offer support is available on their [support section](#) on their website.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Service (SENDIASS), Supportive Parents

Supportive Parents provides the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) in South Gloucestershire, Bristol and North Somerset.

Who are we?

Supportive Parents SENDIAS service provides information, advice and support (IAS) to parents and carers, children and young people with any type of special educational need and/or disability (SEND) that is

- Free
- Confidential

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- Impartial

This is in line with the expectation of the principles for SENDIAS services set within the SEND Code of Practice guidance (SEND Code of Practice 2.8.)

Our goals at **Supportive Parents** are to

- Provide information, support and training
- Work together
- Promote participation
- Enable Decision-making

How Do We Reach Our Goals?

We offer support to children, and young people aged 0 – 25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in line with the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014.

We work closely with Parent Carer Forums, other parent groups, local area services and voluntary sector services and organisations in each authority. Close partnership working ensures that the local area SEND needs for children and young people are identified, planned for and met through the local SEND strategy.

We deliver an accessible service with information electronically available on our website and facebook page for all service users, including professionals working with children and young people with SEND, parents and carers and other stakeholders.

We promote working together, participation and decision-making through communication of information, advice and support.

What We Cover

Our service covers all aspects of special educational needs and disabilities, including social care and health concerns, appeals, complaints and exclusions where SEND is identified.

Examples of the range of information we cover are:

- concerns from the earliest stages of getting early help,
- SEN Support in schools
- Statutory assessment, which may lead to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and beyond.

How We Help

- 1. Telephone Support** – Speak to our Information, Advice and Support line advisors between 9:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday, all year round on **0117 9897725**

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2. **Email** – Get in touch electronically by using our email address – support@supportiveparents.org.uk
3. **Website contact** – Use our contact form on our website at <https://www.supportiveparents.org.uk/contact-us/>
4. **SEND Resources and Leaflets** – Resources, leaflets and toolkits covering a range of topics are free and available on our [website](#)
5. **Paperwork** – We can help with planning paperwork, letters, contributions, reports, statutory assessments, reviews, appeals and more.
6. **Meetings** – We can help to plan and prepare for meetings.
7. **Face to Face Support** – We offer appointments for meetings at our office and may be able to offer other face to face visits dependent on the South Glos IAS team availability.
8. **Support Groups** – See our website for details about [day and evening support groups](#) meetings.
9. **SP-16-25** – We have [web-based resources](#) specifically for young people 16 to 25 years of age with SEND.
10. **Visits at Settings** – Professionals can get in touch and arrange visits with us for staff, parents and carers and children and young people with SEND on the function of SENDIASS, and/or specific topics relating to SEND. We are able to visit at the setting at a time convenient for professionals and this is dependent on our availability and must be arranged in advance.

Who Can Use The SENDIAS Service?

1. **Children and young people** with SEND can use our service independently to ensure their views are shared, they understand educational processes and can contribute in decisions about their future.
2. **Parents and carers** with parental responsibility can use Supportive Parents' service to understand their and their children and young people with SEND's rights, processes and policies, and voice their views.
3. **Professionals** are able to use the information advice and support on offer to build their own knowledge and understanding as well as enabling parents and carers to access the SENDIAS service.

Legal Requirements from Local Authorities in SENDIAS Delivery

All local authorities **must** provide an information, advice and support (IAS) service to children, young people and parents with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) in the area who they are responsible for. This enables and promotes participation in informed decision making. The IAS relates to education, health and social care. (SEND Code of Practice – 2.1.)

Furthermore, the SEND Code of Practice reflects the law in stating that local authorities **must** take steps to make information, advice and support (IAS) services

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known to all relevant people. This includes children, young people, their parents, head teachers, proprietors and principals of schools and post-16 institutions in the local area, as well as appropriate others (SEND Code of Practice 2.2.)