



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

South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC)

Working Together Improves Outcomes

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

SGPC aims to give a voice to Parent Carers living in South Gloucestershire who have a child (aged 0-25) with SEND. We do this by:

Listening – to the lived experiences of local Parent Carers and gather their views

Working – collaboratively with professionals to shape the services available to local families

Connecting – Parent Carers with those on a similar journey enabling them to support one another, and reduce feelings of isolation

Signposting – local families to information and support activities run by us - and shine a light on what else is available to our community.

Feedback from parents who have connected with us...

“It’s really good to talk to someone who understands. My friends are really nice and they try, but really they just feel sorry for me.”

Parent of two SEND children

“I really needed this today, my family just don’t understand my son’s needs and I don’t know what to do about his behaviour. I have been feeling very alone.”

Parent of a Reception child with Autism

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Run by Parent Carers...

South Glos Parents Carers was started in 2009, by a group of mums who wanted to make a difference for local children with SEND, and has evolved into a knowledgeable, well-respected, not-for-profit business (you can read more about our journey [here](#)). In 2021/22 we represented the views of over 1100 local Parent Carers, provided support to over 550 parents, attended over 250 meetings (across a range of SEND topics).

...for Parent Carers

We represent an amazing community of Parent Carers, and we are all here for each other. Being Parent Carers ourselves, we understand the challenges we can all face as well as the joys our children bring. We have developed an environment of support for our community, a space where parents feel safe, where they are not judged and where the word “sorry” is unnecessary.

We offer a range of services to parents, including coffee & chat support sessions, informative webinars and training events, early years stay & play group, a supportive, private Facebook community.

Our goal is to make sure that the voices of all our Parent Carers are heard, so we can fully represent the collective voice of our community.

We work co-productively with professionals and stakeholders and provide lots of ways you can give us your views to share:

- Completing online surveys or Polls
- Attending Engagement & Empowerment events
- Online via Facebook and email
- Through our support sessions
- Becoming a volunteer supporter and representing our collective voice at meetings

We truly value your comments, feedback, and support and the best place to start is by [joining with us](#) – it’s free!

...for Professionals

We’re on a mission to represent the collective voice of our community, working together with service providers to shape great services and achieve positive change. We achieve this by collating and analysing feedback from our Parent Carer community both locally and nationally – via the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF). Working with the NNPCF provides opportunities for our community to influence national policy.

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SGPC offer a range of services to our professional community, including – sharing information with our community, designing surveys, collating, interpreting, and presenting data, producing professional reports. You can commission us to work with you on specific projects too.

In choosing to work with SGPC you have the benefit of working with a highly skilled and knowledgeable team. Our breadth and depth of business skills and SEND knowledge is an asset to any project.

“It has been a real privilege to have worked alongside [the] Parent Carer Forum and I have appreciated their support, challenge, energy and commitment in getting the best outcomes for children, young people, parents and carers who are part of the SEND community. In all my experience in this field they have been the best I have worked with and I know that as we update the Co-production Charter and the Inclusion & SEND Strategy in 2023 their voice, influence and leadership will be strong in every area...”

Hugh Disley, Strategic Lead Inclusion & SEND, South Gloucestershire council

To get valuable survey findings mailed straight to your inbox, as soon as they become available, click to join our community, and select professional membership – it’s free!

Join With Us

Sign up for FREE and receive relevant and interesting communications, including:

- **Invitations to our informal Virtual Support group - Coffee & Chat**
- **Important news updates**
- **Details of guest speakers**
- **Newsletters**
- **Information to help support you and your family**
- **Priority bookings for our events and workshops**
- **Opportunities to have your say, and be heard**

We have two different types of membership.

1) **Parent and Carer Membership** - for *Parent Carers of a child who has a disability or additional needs, and lives in South Gloucestershire, or has a child who attends a South Glos school.*

2) **Professional Membership** - especially for professionals and practitioners working with Parent Carers or their children, including those working in the fields of

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education, health or social care, voluntary groups, service providers, or those who work for local authority.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), SEND And You

SEND And You (SAY) provides the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) in South Gloucestershire, Bristol and North Somerset since 1989. We were previously known as a parent partnership service called Supportive Parents. We changed to a SENDIASS from 2014 with the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014 and have since rebranded and now also include children, young people and professionals into our service delivery and offer.

Who are we?

SAY 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) and professionals, that is

- Free
- Confidential and
- 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 2015 chapter 2, paragraph 2.8.)

Legal Requirements from Local Authorities in SENDIAS Service 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 2015 chapter 2, paragraph 2.1.)

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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 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 2015 chapter 2, paragraph 2.2.)

Our goals at SEND And You (SAY) are to:

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

What is important to SEND And You (SAY)

SAY offers **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.

SEND And You (SAY) **work closely with Parent Carer Forums, other parent groups, local area services and voluntary sector services and organisations** in each local authority.

Delivering 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, is part of our service delivery.

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

Our Vision

Delivering a high quality, accessible, impartial and confidential SENDIAS service, means that children, young people and their parents are:-

- Empowered,
- Play an active and informed role in their child's education and in their preparation for adult life.

What We Cover

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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.

Who Can Use The SENDIAS Service?

1. **Children and young people with SEND**, diagnosed or undiagnosed, 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 SEND And You 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.

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**
2. **Email** – Get in touch electronically by using our email address – support@sendandyou.org.uk
3. **Website contact** – Use our [contact form on our website](#) to ask us questions
4. **Social media contacts** – Stay in touch and follow us on [Facebook](#), [twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).
5. **SEND Resources and Leaflets** – [Resources, leaflets and toolkits](#) covering a range of topics are free and available on our website
6. **Paperwork** – We can help with planning paperwork, letters, contributions, reports, statutory assessments, reviews, appeals and more
7. **Meetings** – We can help to plan and prepare for meetings
8. **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

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9. **Support Groups** – See our website for details about our [online day session and evening support group meetings](#)
10. **SAY Young People 0-25** – We have [web-based resources specifically for young people with SEND](#)
11. **Professionals** – Use our [resources developed and available for professionals](#) working with children, young people with SEND and their families
12. **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.