



What to expect from Plymouth Information Advice and Support for SEND Service (PIASS)

This factsheet is to help you get the most from PIASS. We hope it will help you to understand what PIASS is, what we can and can't offer, and how we can best support you.

What is PIASS

PIASS is the SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service) for **Plymouth**. We aim to empower parents/carers, children and young people to play an active and informed role in making decisions about their education, health and social care.

Our role as an Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) is to help parents/carers, children and young people build their knowledge, understanding and confidence in SEND procedures, policies, practices and law; and to enable them to communicate their own needs, wishes, aims and rights.

We are...

Free – There is no charge to use our service.

Impartial – We provide parents/carers and young people with information about the options available to them. We won't recommend or promote one option over another. We will treat all people we support with respect. You can view our impartiality policy on our website.

Confidential – We will keep your details safe and will not share or discuss your case with anyone else without your permission, unless we have a safeguarding concern. You can view our confidentiality policy on our website.

Arm's length – PIASS is part of Plymouth City Council, but we operate as a separate and distinct service from other SEND services and teams.

Fully Trained – Our team have extensive training in SEND law, safeguarding and data protection. We are all DBS checked.

Is PIASS for you?

Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person who has special educational needs? (A diagnosis is not needed to receive support.)

OR

a child or young person who has special educational needs? (A diagnosis is not needed to receive support.)

AND

have a query or issue relating to SEND?

AND

live in **Plymouth**

We are the service for you!



How can PIASS support you

We can offer information, advice and support in the following areas:

- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) support in early years, school or college.
- Improving communication with educational settings, Local Authority, health and social care.
- Choosing a nursery, school, college or alternative provision.
- Transitions between educational settings, or between Children's and Adult's services.
- Transport to educational placement.
- Annual reviews of Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).
- EHCP Requests and Needs Assessment.
- Appeals for Tribunal for refusal to assess for EHCP, ceasing to maintain an EHCP and placement.
- Exclusions and part time timetables.
- Emotionally based school avoidance.
- Disability discrimination.
- Making a complaint.
- Health & Social Care queries related to the child or young person's SEND
- Please contact us if you have a question on an area not listed.

Examples of what we can and cannot do

PIASS can:

- Empower you to feel confident to express your views.
- Explain jargon.
- Help you understand policies, procedures and law.
- Help you to understand and exercise your rights.
- Advise you of your options so you can make an informed decision.
- Provide templates and examples for letters, emails and paperwork.
- Provide resources such as fact sheets and webinars and supply details of workshops to support your query.
- Help you to prepare for meetings and tribunals.
- Help you to review documents and forms such as draft and final EHCPs and appeal forms.

PIASS can't:

- Make decisions for you.
- Arrange or chair meetings or take minutes.
- Review benefit forms e.g. DLA or PIP.
- Hold power over the Local Authority or school policies or procedures and practices.
- Attend all meetings. *
- Write letters or emails for you. *
- Complete paperwork on your behalf. *
- Print or photocopy documents for you. *

***If you have additional support needs that mean you need support with these, then please discuss with the team**



*Additional support needs

The aim of SENDIASS is always to enable parents/carers and young people to make confident, independent and informed decisions. We will therefore assess every situation to understand the level of support required.

This includes those where the parent/carer has additional support needs. This ensures that we only provide support that builds confidence rather than support that promotes reliance on SENDIASS.

Please tell us if you need any additional support at your first contact with us. This could be by using our contact form, telephone, or email. The sooner we know, the better we can help you.

Meeting support

PIASS often get requests to attend meetings. Due to the number of parents/carers, children and young people we support, we are not able to accept all meeting requests we receive. Meeting requests will always be considered and a decision will be made based on the guidelines below:

- PIASS will only attend meetings if we have a valuable contribution to make or if you are unable to advocate for your child or yourself. *
- Requests for meeting attendance must be received at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.
- Meeting attendance from PIASS is subject to our availability and may be reduced in busy periods.
- Meetings in person (sometimes called face-to-face meetings) are subject to availability, necessity* and location.
- PIASS may offer to attend a meeting virtually, using Microsoft Teams.
- If we are not able to attend a meeting or are not given enough notice, we can provide support before the meeting and signpost you to relevant resources. We can also offer support following the meeting for any follow up questions or concerns.

We support you by:

Providing information

The PIASS website has a range of information, factsheets and links to other organisations. You may find the information you need here without having to contact the team: [Plymouth Information Advice and Support for SEND](#) We also have a Facebook page which posts regular updates and information: [Facebook](#) You can also sign up to our regular [Newsletters](#).

Providing information and tailored advice

The PIASS case officers are able to provide more detailed information and advice specific to your enquiry. This could be through a telephone call or booked appointment.



Providing support

The PIASS case officers also provide one to one support around SEND for:

- Young people (0-25) accessing our services independently.
- Complex situations that require more in-depth support.
- Anyone who has their own additional support needs which mean they need support to advocate for their child. Please let the team know any information that will help us best support you.

How to contact us

You can contact the team via an online enquiry form [Contact Us - Plymouth Information Advice and Support for SEND. \(plymouthias.org.uk\)](https://plymouthias.org.uk) or call us on 01752 258933.

The team will respond within 2 working days. This may be by email, telephone call or text message.

- The case officers will listen to you in order to gather information concerning your enquiry.
- They will provide more in-depth information and resources to navigate processes and complete documents, understand local policy and practices and understand your options and legal rights.
- They will signpost you to relevant support from other agencies, organisations and other Local Authority teams.
- If the team have been able to answer your enquiry, they will send a link to a satisfaction survey.
- If it is felt you need further ongoing support, we will allocate you a named PIASS case officer.

Remember PIASS is a free service and you can come back to us at any time for further information, advice and support.

Support from PIASS will come to an end when...

- The outcomes of your enquiry have been achieved.
- You have reached the stage where you feel you can proceed without support.
- The support you need to achieve further outcomes is outside the role of PIASS, or your issue has been progressed as far as PIASS is able. We work with you to identify who would be the appropriate service/organisation to help.
- If we do not hear from you in eight weeks.

We hope that the support you receive from PIASS will give you the skills and resources to use if further issues arise. However, we are always here to offer further information, advice and support and you can come back to us again at any time.



Feedback

At the end of each piece of work we will ask for feedback on the service you have received from the team.

If at any time you are not happy with the service you are receiving from the team then please contact the Team Manager, Helen Huntley, on 01752 305189 or email

helen.huntley@plymouth.gov.uk

Find out more information here:

Visit our website for further information leaflets and resources at:

<https://www.plymouthias.org.uk/>

We offer:

Information: Through leaflets on our website, Facebook page and workshops.

Advice: We provide impartial information and advice about what the law says, the Local Authority's policies and procedures.

Support: We can help you by listening to your views and concerns and work with you to explore your options.