

What to expect from Richmond & Kingston SENDIASS

1. Aim of the service

We aim to empower parent carers and young people to play an active and informed role in their child's, or their own education. We do this by providing the right amount of information, advice and support at the right time.

2. Eligibility for SENDIAS Services

The Richmond & Kingston SENDIAS Service is for parents, carers, children or young people who meet all of the following criteria:

- Child/young person lives in the Richmond & Kingston borough,
- Child/young person has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and,
- Child/young person is under the age of 25.

3. Levels of service from SENDIAS

Richmond & Kingston SENDIASS offers three levels of service:

1. Information	On our website and social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube), as well online clinics and workshops.	This is available to everyone.
2. Advice	Via the telephone helpline: 0808 164 5527 and email service: info@rksendiass.co.uk	This is available to everyone.
3. Support	Through a bookable appointment	<p>Bookable appointments help parents/carers to complete one-off pieces of work like application forms, reviewing draft plans or contributing to working documents.</p> <p>There are a limited number of bookable appointments, parents and carers with additional needs are prioritised.</p>
	<p>One-to-one support from an assigned support worker or volunteer. This can be on the phone, email, online meeting or face-to-face.</p> <p>Customers access one-to-one support by contacting the telephone helpline: 0808 164 5527 or email service: info@rksendiass.co.uk</p>	<p>One-to-one support is only available to people who meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are a child or young person under the age of 25 with special educational needs or a disability or, • You are a parent/carer of a child or young person with SEND and you're unable to advocate for your child without extra help because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ you have literacy or communication needs, you require translation/interpretation services, you have a medical condition affecting your ability to advocate or, ○ you are experiencing multiple, <i>unusually</i> complex issues that overwhelm your ability to advocate e.g. appeals for multiple children at the same time.

4. What do we mean by 'Advice'?

Customers can call the telephone helpline or email the service for advice with any aspects of education, health or social care. Legally trained advisors will respond to their enquiry by providing: factual advice based on SEND legislation, signposting, suggestions, information documents or template letters.

Customers can call the helpline repeatedly. It is common for customers to return for further advice as they work through their issue/s.

The service does not keep records about the enquiry or the customer. This reflects the nature of the service and helps to streamline operations, enabling us to respond quickly to all customers.

5. What do we mean by 'Support'?

Most customers who need SENDIASS support are experiencing complex circumstances. To make sure you get the right help, your support worker will listen and ask questions about your situation. They will discuss with you the **main outcomes** you want to achieve. These will be the things that will make the most difference to the child/young person. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer open-ended, global support. The outcomes will be recorded in a 'Support Work Outcomes' document. The support worker will then help you work toward these via phone, email, video call and if necessary, face-to-face.

The support worker will talk to you about what you can do yourself and what you need their help with. They will always try to help you develop the knowledge and skills to advocate yourself.

The support worker will be impartial, this means they're not on anyone's 'side'. They will give you factual, unbiased information and explain the options so that you can make decisions. They will not tell you what to do.

The support worker will be assigned based on their expertise and capacity. Sometimes a volunteer will be assigned instead of a support worker. All staff and volunteers are all DBS checked and trained in SEND law.

Support work will end when the outcomes have been achieved, when you have reached a stage where you feel able to proceed without help, or when the support you need to achieve the outcomes is outside of the SENDIASS remit (in this case we will signpost to other services).

Support work is different for everyone however these are examples of the things support workers do and don't do:



Support workers do

- Listen to, guide, and advise the customer
- Explain options, jargon and processes
- Provide templates and examples for letters, emails and paperwork
- Help to prepare for meetings or tribunals
- Accompany customers to meetings or tribunals
- Review documents



*Support workers don't

- Write letters or emails for the customer
- Arrange meetings or take minutes
- Complete paperwork on behalf of the customer
- Print or photocopy documents for the customer

**Unless the customer has specific accessibility requirements*

6. Consent

Richmond & Kingston SENDIASS is an “opt in” service; we provide advice and support to parents, carers and young people at their request. We do not offer a service solely on the basis of a referral from another agency and encourage professionals to help parents, carer or young person make contact with us themselves. We make exceptions to this if the professional has the parent carers or young person’s permission to speak to us and provides a professional referral form signed by the parent, carer or young person.

If we receive an invitation to attend a meeting organised by another agency e.g. a Team Around the Family, Child in need or an Annual Review meeting, we will not participate unless the parent, carer or young person is receiving our support service *and* is unable to advocate in the meeting.

In some cases, we may decide that another service can better help the individual because they offer greater expertise than Richmond & Kingston SENDIASS. In this case we will refer or signpost. We may do this instead of, or in addition to, offering advice or support ourselves. We will explain this and ask for permission.

We ask all young people (16+) to provide consent for us to give their parents *specific* advice and support. Consent can be given in a form that reflects the young person’s communication preferences: verbal, text, written, email etc and is recorded on our database. Without consent, parents can still have general advice, but we will not do things like review documents relating to the young person or provide support to take action on the young person’s behalf e.g. lodging appeals. If parents do not think the young person has capacity to provide consent, they can discuss this with the service.

7. Timescales

Richmond & Kingston SENDIASS uses date order to give fair access to services. We aim to answer all incoming helpline calls between 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday and 9am-4pm on Friday. Outside of office hours and when our helpline team are already on calls we use an answerphone service.

We aim to respond to answerphone messages and emails to our service inbox (info@rksendiass.co.uk) within 2 working days and in date/time order.

If support is provided by an assigned support worker, the worker will aim to make their initial contact and respond to ongoing communications within 5 working days unless other timescales are agreed with the person.