



Social Media Policy

Purpose:

This policy has been created to establish clear guidance on the use of social media accounts within the SENDIASS service.

Article 3.1 of the Minimum Standards states that: The IASS provides impartial information, advice and support in a range of ways including social media.

SENDIASS recognise that social media can be an important tool in communicating with our service users and other stakeholders. The use of social media provides opportunities to improve the way we communicate and interact with people and enables us to increase our service reach. The use of such technologies are accompanied by dangers and negative consequences, and potential damage to our reputation if not used carefully.

This policy is intended to help SENDIASS employees and volunteers to make appropriate decisions about the use of social media. It outlines the standards they must observe when using SENDIASS social media.

Profile picture:

The SENDIASS Logo (as shown above) will be used to represent the service.

Profile text:

Impartial and confidential information advice and support service for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their parent carers.

Disclaimer:

Add the following to our profile and so it is people will see when they go onto the Facebook page:

This account is not continuously monitored. Although we are a confidential information, advice and support service, nothing you say on this page is confidential as it is a social media platform. If you would like to talk to someone in confidence, please contact the service directly by calling 0118 9088233 or email Sendiass@wokingham.gov.uk

Impartiality:

Article 3.1 of the Minimum Standards states that:

*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 –
children b) young people c) parents*

It is important to ensure that social media users view the service as impartial. The SENDIASS Social Media accounts must present as impartial in order to ensure there is no display of bias towards or influence by any particular organisation, party, point of view or policy, including local authorities, CCGs, schools or campaigns.

We must ensure that we are providing factual information and advice based on what guidance and legislation says, not offering our own opinions or reflecting local policy.

Safeguarding

- Children under the minimum age requirement (currently 13) will not be targeted by our content.
- Do not accept friend requests under the minimum age for the platform.
- If you have any concerns regarding a child or young person's safety, then our standard safeguarding policies and procedures should be followed.

Posting Guidelines

- Where possible and appropriate we will aim to post on Facebook and Twitter 2-3 times per week.

Content

- Posts increasing awareness of our service: what we provide, who we can help, directing to information on our website, advertising our own events.
- Posts about relevant events, messages in response to news, or events and topics that have a current media presence.
- Posts giving advice about how to access generic services.
- Signposting on to other organisations
- Pro-active retweeting/sharing, including actively seeking opportunities to repost content that helps position SENDIASS as a filter for intelligence in the sector and supportive of key stakeholders and partnerships. Examples include government policy announcements and activity, research findings and reports.

- Be mindful that information disclosed on social media sites is public and difficult to remove once live. Staff and volunteers must ensure that participation in social media does not undermine the integrity and objectives of the service.
- Do not comment on individual cases publicly but instead direct them to more appropriate ways of seeking advice (eg by phone or email) See section below on personal information.
- Staff and volunteers should never post personal views on SENDIASS social media accounts.
- Try to generate interaction with followers by posting content that invites comment. Examples include
 - Asking followers what resources they would like to see.
 - Posting surveys on social media and asking them to respond.

Personal information posted on Facebook and requests for support via social media

If an individual posts asking for specific case advice that the public can see please delete the post immediately and send them a direct/private message with the following:

As our service is a confidential service we cannot offer advice over social media. Please email us at sendiass@wokingham.gov.uk or call our helpline on 0118 9088233 and we will be happy to support you in the best way we can. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Do not discuss individual cases via direct message as it may not be secure but send the above message.

Response to negative comments

- Sendiass reserves the right to remove, edit, or otherwise alter content deemed inappropriate for any reason, without notification. Where possible, administrators will discuss concerns or required actions with all appropriate parties/individuals.
- Take care to differentiate between an unhappy customer and a troll.
 - A social media troll is someone who purposely creates conflict on social media channels by posting messages that are particularly controversial or inflammatory with the sole intent of provoking an emotional response from other users. Typically, they will: use foul or derogatory language, not listen to reason, not have a personal picture on their profile and quickly post or reply to messages, suggesting they use their free time to pick fights on the internet.
 - An unhappy customer is someone who has used or attempted to use your service and feels they haven't received what they expected from it.
 - If there's no risk to reputation and the comment is unfounded and you know the person who made the comment is not going to change their opinion, then there is no reason to take time to respond.
 - If the comments are about a legitimate grievance or if they could appear to be interpreted both as fair and as unanswered by other content on your social media accounts, it is suggested that you publish a tweet/ post (not a reply) which addresses the issue. It may not solve it, but it acknowledges it.
 - The aim is not to change the mind of the troll or the person with a grievance against your service, whether legitimate or not. It's primarily to protect your

services reputation and give other Facebook users a more balanced account of who you are.

- You should aim to respond only once in this way on each grievance, rather than being drawn into a long and potentially endless discussion.
- All such messages should be calm, measured and factual. The tone should always be positive and polite - no matter how tempting a sarcastic response is!

Following other accounts on Facebook

The following is a list of the types of accounts that are appropriate to follow:

- SEND Charities and organisations.
- Mental health charities and organisations
- NHS
- Ofsted
- Government departments
- Local MPs
- Local Schools and colleges
- Parent carers of children and young people with SEND
- Young people with SEND
- Professionals in the field

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