



**Cheshire East
Information, Advice
& Support**

**Information leaflet
for parents & carers**

**Providing confidential, impartial support and advice for parents, carers,
children and young people in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disability**

What is the Cheshire East Information, Advice & Support Service?

The aim of Cheshire East Information, Advice and Support (CEIAS) is to help you work with your child's school or with local authority staff, to make decisions about your child's education. We carry this out by offering:

- Information on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. The local authority (LA). All schools including academies, sixth forms and further education colleges must have regard to this guidance
- Information about the professional staff who may work with your child/young person
- An explanation of the formal process the local authority follows to see whether your child may need a Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)
- One-to-one support for parents, either from one of our staff or a trained volunteer, perhaps going with you to meetings
- Help in going through paperwork, explaining the jargon and helping you to fill in official documents, especially papers you will have as part of a formal assessment
- Advice on what to do if you do not agree with the local authority or the school
- Contact details of other support groups
- Events for parents and carers, giving you more information and the chance to meet other parents.

*If the **text is in bold** this shows that a definition of the word(s) are explained in the Glossary that can be downloaded from www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ceias.*

Is the service confidential?

YES! We will not share your information with anyone unless you tell us we can. The only exception to this would be because we have a specific concern about a child's safety. We will often work with parents and children or young people together. Sometimes we will work with them separately. When we do this the same confidentiality rules apply.

What do we mean when we say we are impartial?

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

The information, advice and support should be impartial and provided at arm's length from the local authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups (2.8)

This means that the information, advice and support that we offer is firmly based in the law and the SEND Code of Practice. We provide unbiased information and advice about the local authority's policies and procedures and about the policy and practice in local schools and other settings. We do not give priority to any particular impairment, disability or special educational need, nor do we campaign for any particular approach to education. By being impartial we aim to help parents, children and young people have clear, accurate and relevant information that will help them take part in decisions about their lives.

We are funded by Cheshire East Council but operate independently as a confidential service for parents and carers or children and young people.

At Cheshire East Information, Advice and Support we follow a national set of Quality Standards for services providing impartial information, advice and support developed by the Network of Information, Advice and Support Services. This helps us to monitor the effectiveness of our service we provide and ensure that it is “at arm’s length” from the local authority. By this we mean that we act, and are seen to act, separately and impartially.

[What does the SEND Code of Practice say?](#)

The Children and Families Act 2014 says local authorities **must** provide information advice and support about special educational needs (SEN), disability, health and social care for children, young people and parents.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

Local authorities must arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This must include information, advice and support on the take-up and management of Personal Budgets. In addition, in carrying out their duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities must have regard to the importance of providing children and their parents and young people with the information and support necessary to participate in decisions. (2.1)

The service is free, easy to access and confidential and can help children, parents and young people take part in decisions that affect their lives.

[What is the Local Offer?](#)

The Local Offer must include information about the sources of information, advice and support for parents, children and young people and how this is resourced.

The Local Offer includes details of Cheshire East Council’s arrangements for providing information, advice and support. It can be viewed online at ice.cheshireeast.gov.uk.

[Where can I find out more?](#)

You can read more about impartial information, advice and support in the SEND Code of Practice Chapter 2 which can be downloaded from www.gov.uk.

Look at the Cheshire East Information, Advice and Support website for information about our services and copies of our publications. You can view the latest newsletter on our website or ask your child’s school for a copy.

Please contact us by e-mail or phone, we will do our best to help.

Leaflet updated: September 2015

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ceias



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