



Somerset SENDIAS

Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice & Support

A free impartial service for children and young people with SEND (aged 0-25), and their parent carers

Definitions of Advocacy

IASS use this definition of Advocacy

Advocacy means getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes and help you understand and exercise your rights. IASS do not fulfil the role of statutory advocates - more info here -

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/advocacy/legal-rights-to-advocacy/#> nor do they provide legal advocacy as provided by a lawyer.

More information on what we mean by advocacy can be found on the MIND website and in the extract below:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/advocacy/#.WyJ4mKdKiM9>

An advocate can:

- listen to your views and concerns
- help you explore your options and rights (without pressuring you)
- provide information to help you make informed decisions
- help you contact relevant people, or contact them on your behalf
- accompany you and support you in meetings or appointments.

An advocate will not:

- give you their personal opinion
- solve problems and make decisions for you
- make judgements about you.

The support of an advocate is often particularly useful in meetings when you might not feel confident in expressing yourself. They can:

- support you to ask all the questions you want to ask
- make sure all the points you want covered are included in the meeting
- explain your options to you without giving their opinion
- help keep you safe during the meeting – for example, if you find the meeting upsetting, your advocate can ask for a break until you feel able to continue.

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