Reading IASS for SEND

Information for Prospective Volunteers

February 2022



Reading Information Advice and Support Service for SEND

About Reading IASS for SEND

- A statutory service offering information, advice and support to children, young people, parents and carers of children aged 0-25 with special educational needs or disability (SEND).
- Helps people to express their views
- Operates at arm's length from Brighter Futures for Children
- Provides support and advice that is free, impartial and confidential.



How we help

Education should be a partnership between parents and professionals, but sometimes the relationship can become less effective if

• a parent or carer is unhappy with the SEND provision their child is receiving

or

 does not understand the education system, legal framework or terminology surrounding SEND



How you might help

- Reading IASS supports parents and carers in understanding and navigating the SEND system
- Volunteers have an important role to play in delivering aspects of this support.
- Volunteers may:
 - Support a parent in meetings
 - Help them express their views
 - Take time to talk to them



Recruitment

- Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer will complete an application form and be interviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Two references will be requested, and an enhanced DBS check will be made.



Training for the role

Reading IASS will provide free training to give volunteers the grounding, knowledge and skills needed to be effective.

Training will be flexible in terms of its delivery and will include:

- The role of the volunteer
- Information about the SEND Code of Practice
- Effective Communication
- Policies and procedures, including, for example, impartiality and confidentiality

Volunteer Supporters will also have the opportunity to undertake further online training in SEND law should they wish.



Support during training

- There will be opportunities throughout the training period for the coordinator and the volunteer to consider whether volunteering with Reading IASS for SEND is an appropriate role for the trainee.
- The Volunteer Coordinator will provide personal support and advice for volunteers, and if appropriate, individual tutorial sessions will be available.
- If appropriate, after training, the volunteer will have an opportunity to shadow a member of Reading IASS staff, or an experienced volunteer.



Time commitment

Reading IASS responds to the needs of parents/carers as they arise.

Volunteers will be asked to take on support work on an ad hoc basis.

Typically, we would ask for a time commitment of a few hours a month, but this would vary according to individuals.



Support and supervision

- The Volunteer Coordinator will offer ongoing support and supervision to volunteers.
- Regular check-ins will be offered to all volunteers where there will be opportunity to discuss any problems or issues that may arise.



Contact

For an informal chat, please contact:

Call: 0118 937 3421 – ask for Sarah Bamford Email: <u>iass@brighterfuturesforchildren.org</u>

