

## Arms Length and Impartiality

The will remain at arms length and impartial at all times. Arms length means:

- The service has it's own delegated budget
- The service works strategically to influence policy
- Files are stored confidentially and not shared by Education Leeds or any other stakeholder.
- Confidentiality for parents and carers
- Confidential data base
- A service development plan reviewed and agreed with Education Leeds/Local Authority
- The service has an effective advisory group
- Impartiality

To be impartial the team will take great care to listen and think before they speak or act so as not to express an opinion and make comments such as 'they can't do that', 'that's illegal', or 'I think you should do'. These sort of phrases cause the parents more anxiety. The team will speak factually, 'the guidance says.....', 'the legislation says.....'.

Impartial means that the team do not take sides with parents, carers, the local authority or any other stakeholders. The team will not advocate for a parent at a meeting, impartiality means empowering the parent or carer to speak for themselves and make their own decisions. The team will only act on information given to them by the parent or carer unless they have been given consent to speak to other professionals. The team will not allow other colleagues to influence the information available to parents.

If a point of law or legislation is in question the team will seek advice from an independent body such as the Independent Panel for Special Educational Needs (IPSEA), Network 81, Rathbone, or the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE), the local Government Ombudsman also has a helpline for professionals as well as parents.