

Working with your Local Authority

You may need to speak to the Local Authority about issues around special educational needs such as:

- requesting a statutory assessment
- discussing a proposed Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- asking for changes (amendments) to your child's EHCP
- changing or choosing a school for a child with an EHCP
- if your child's EHCP is to be ended
- if you feel the school is not carrying out provision in the EHCP (try to speak to the school first)

Letters from the Local Authority will have a contact name and telephone number on them. Before you telephone, make sure you are clear about what questions you want to ask. You will be asked for your child's name and date of birth when you call.

If you call the Local Authority, you will probably be put through to a Case Clerk who will have access to your child's file. You can also ask to speak to an Education Officer, although you may not be able to do this straight away. It is often useful to have an informal discussion or meeting with an officer first, if you disagree with a decision.

If you prefer to write to the Local Authority, make sure you include your name, full address and telephone number. Also include your child's full name, their date of birth and the school they attend.

You may need to meet with an Officer from the Local Authority to discuss the contents of your child's EHCP, or your choice of school. These meetings may be arranged locally, or at a Local Authority building.

Keeping track

You are likely to collect a large amount of paperwork relating to your child. It is helpful if you can keep this in one place, and if possible, in date order. A loose leaf folder is useful for this.

Keep a note of the names, roles and contact details of professionals who are involved.

If you have a telephone conversation, make notes immediately afterwards to remind you of what was said. If you attend a meeting, take brief notes to remind you of what was discussed. If it is difficult to do this, ask if someone you know can take notes of the meeting for you.

If you disagree with education provision for your child

Even when everyone is trying to work together, there may be times when an agreement cannot be reached. Keep talking and try to keep your discussion polite and calm.

Make clear notes, with dates, about anything that happens or conversations that you have, and keep any documents together and in date order.

You may feel comfortable and confident about managing any disagreement yourself but do contact the Information, Advice and Support Service if you would like information, advice or support.

Mediation

If, at any time, you feel that after having discussed your concerns with a school or the Local Authority that you have been unable to reach an agreement – then you can ask for your Local Authority for information about going to a disagreement resolution or Mediation Service.

Where can I get further information, advice or support?

Contact the IASS team on:

Phone: 01743 280019 (Open 10am-4pm Monday—Friday)

Web: www.cabshropshire.org.uk

www.facebook.com/IASSShropshire

Email: iass@cabshropshire.org.uk

Address: Fletcher House, 15 College Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LY