



What if I do not agree with decisions about the help my child is getting?

This information is about what you can do if your child has special educational needs, or a disability (SEND) and you are unhappy about the help they are getting.

Reading IASS for SEND can:

- listen to your concerns
- help you sort out the issues
- tell you about other people who can support you
- help you decide what to do next
- explain the law and your rights.

First steps

If you are not happy about the help that your child has at school the first step is to talk to their teacher, or to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or the headteacher.

If you think the school is doing all it can but your child needs even more help, you can ask the local authority for an EHC needs assessment.

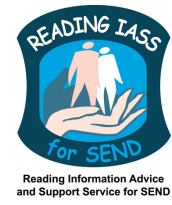
If your child has an Education, Health and Care plan you can also contact Brighter Futures for Children SEND Team.

Reading IASS for SEND can help you go to a meeting. If you are still worried, we can help you decide what to do next.

What next?

If you still have a problem, you might be able to:

- have help to talk about your concerns
- make a complaint



- ask for help to talk to the people you are unhappy with to see if something can be changed or agreed that everyone is happy with
- appeal against a decision.

Reading IASS for SEND can tell you more about each of these so that you can decide.

It can help if a friend or relative goes to a meeting with you. It is a good idea to keep notes of what the school has done and has told you.

Reading IASS for SEND can give you information and advice about possible next steps. We do not take sides. We could offer you support and can tell you about other people that may be able to help.

Making a complaint

If you think that the school, college or Brighter Futures for Children could do more, you can complain. Most places will have rules about how to do this, called a Complaints Procedure. Reading IASS for SEND can help you to understand and follow these rules and give you information about what to do if you are not happy with how the complaint has been decided.

Disagreement resolution

Many things you might be unhappy about can be sorted out by talking with the school, college, Brighter Futures for Children, or health services. If it is not sorted out, you have other choices.

KIDS is an independent service which has trained people to help you to talk to people you disagree with. They will try to get everyone to agree things that everyone is happy with. The service is free, information is kept private, and you don't have to use it. This is called disagreement resolution and covers all children and young people with SEND - whether they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) or not.

Reading IASS for SEND or KIDS can help you decide if disagreement resolution is the right way forward.

Mediation

Mediation is used for disagreements that can be appealed to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. The service is free and private.

In most cases, before you can register an appeal you first have to think about mediation and get a certificate saying you have thought about it or have taken part in it..



If you choose mediation the meeting will be arranged within 30 days. A trained independent mediator runs the meeting and people may come to an agreement. If not, you can still appeal.

Reading IASS for SEND or KIDS can help you decide if mediation is the right way forward.

Do I have to choose between making a complaint, using disagreement resolution, appealing to the Tribunal and mediation?

Usually you can do more than one thing. For example, you can still make a complaint if you have already tried disagreement resolution. Reading IASS for SEND can help you to think about what you want to do.

Appeals

Some of the things that parents, and young people can appeal to the Tribunal about are:

- a decision not to carry out an EHC needs assessment
- a refusal to issue an EHC Plan
- some of the things written in an EHC Plan
- a school or college named on an EHC Plan

There are other things too and Reading IASS can help you to understand all of this.

Where can I get more information, advice or support?

Reading IASS for SEND can give you:

- information about how to find complaints procedures, disagreement resolution and mediation
- advice about what to do if you are unhappy with the support the school or college is providing
- details of other organisations, support groups and information services that might help
- information and advice about your rights to appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (SEN and Disability)
- impartial advice and support through the process of making a complaint, disagreement resolution, mediation or appeal.