

## **What can I do if I disagree with the decision the Council makes?**

If you are unhappy about the decision you can speak to the District Assessment and Placement Officer who first contacted you when the request was made. This officer can arrange to meet with you to talk about the decision. You can also use the Parent Partnership Service or a mediation service to help you resolve the situation. You have a statutory right to appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal if you are unhappy with the decision. All the agencies which work with parents and carers of children with special educational needs are committed to helping you reach agreement and ensure that suitable provision is made for your child.

### **Useful Phone Numbers**

District Assessment and Placement Officer, SEND Policy and Provision : 0115 97 74341

Schools and Families Specialist Services:

North, 01623 433 433

(Ashfield, Mansfield, Bassetlaw and Newark)

South, 0115 854 6000

(Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)

**The Parent Partnership Service** provides impartial information, advice and support for parents of children with special educational needs. The service has a team of trained Independent Parental Supporters who can provide individual assistance for parents. For further information please contact the Parent Partnership Service helpline or write to them at:

Clarendon Chambers  
32 Clarendon St  
Nottingham NG1 5LN

Helpline 0115 948 2888  
enquiries@ppsnotts.org.uk  
www.ppsnotts.org.uk

# **Nottinghamshire**

## **Special Educational Needs multi-agency statutory assessment panel**



## **Information for parents and carers**

This information is for parents and carers of children with special educational needs (SEN) who are being considered for a statutory assessment of their needs under the Education Act 1996

### **A Graduated Response.**

The SEN Code of Practice recommends a graduated response that encompasses a range of strategies and levels of support. In Nottinghamshire Schools most children with special educational needs will be resourced and supported by being at School Action and School Action Plus.

### **A panel system**

In Nottinghamshire a multi-agency panel considers information about individual children when a statutory assessment has been requested by their parent/carer, or by a school, or the child is referred by a Local Authority officer.

### **What does the panel do?**

The panel looks at the evidence and matches it against the criteria set out in the SEN Code of Practice (2001). In some cases the decision to carry out an assessment will be made without consideration by panel – this will be when there is clear criteria-matched evidence that an assessment is necessary.

### **How does it work?**

The panel system is managed by an experienced District Assessment and Placement Officer (DAPO) within SEND Policy and Provision Group (Education Standards and Inclusion Division).

Membership of the panel includes representatives from :

Health

Social Care

Parent Partnership Service

Educational Psychology Service

Schools and Families Specialist Services

SEND Policy and Provision

Decisions are made from written information presented at the panel. Members represent their agencies and are chosen for their knowledge and experience in special educational needs and related areas of work.

### **What are the benefits of a panel system?**

The panel system leads to more consistent decisions and the whole process is more open. A steering group for the panel meets at least twice a year. Reports from the panel and Council are presented to this group which evaluates, monitors and considers development and implementation of local and national policy, guidance and practice.

### **Is it confidential?**

Yes. Members of the panel treat all the information they see as confidential and panel copies of reports and information about children are disposed of securely.

### **Does having a panel mean slower decisions?**

No, the timescale is set within a statutory framework. The Panel meets weekly. Parents receive a decision from the Council six weeks after a request for an assessment has been made.

### **How will I be involved in the process?**

The Council will write to you to ask for your views on your child's special educational needs. Your views are forwarded to the panel.

### **Will anyone contact me?**

The DAPO will contact you to introduce themselves to you, explain the process and clarify any matters you may be concerned about.

### **Are my child's views important?**

Yes. The panel will take into consideration what a child wants for their education and their views on school and the support they receive. Parents, schools and support services will be asked to gain the views of the child wherever possible.