

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?



As a parent you have a vital role to play in your child's education. There are many things you can do to help.

- Listen to your child; encourage and praise them to keep their self-esteem high
- You know your child better than anyone; share all the information you have about them with their school or pre-school and other professionals involved
- Keep in touch with school and discuss how you can work in partnership to support your child
- Always contact school if you have any concerns or questions about your child's education
- Find out as much as you can about special educational needs
- If you are unsure about the terms people are using, ask for an explanation
- Ask to see the school's policy on special educational needs
- Check with the school which other policies may be relevant to your child - ask for a copy
- Ask for support and advice from a parents' group or voluntary organisation
- Keep your own records of phone calls and meetings

When going to a meeting it is helpful if you:

- Make sure you know what the meeting is for
- Have all the information in advance e.g. copies of any reports
- Ask for any unfamiliar words to be explained
- Have made a note of things you wish to discuss or questions you might like to ask
- Ask for all the decisions to be repeated at the end of the meeting.

You can also take a friend or *Independent Parental Supporter* with you who can take notes if you wish. It is a good idea to let the school know if you are going to do this.

How you can help with any assessment of your child's special educational needs

Sometimes the school may ask for advice from other professionals about your child's special educational needs. In a few cases, someone from the Local Authority may talk with you about a statutory assessment of your child's special educational needs. This might result in a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school and the LEA should always keep you fully informed.

It is very important that all those working with your child have full information about their special needs. The Parent Partnership Service can give you more detailed guidance to help you contribute your views.

Further information and support

At any stage you can seek further information and support from the Parent Partnership Service. You can also choose to have an Independent Parental Supporter who may be able to help you present your views. If you would like to know more about Independent Parental Supporters contact the Parent Partnership Service at the address below.

**If you need further information, please contact Parent Partnerships at 11 Orchard Street, Newport
Isle of Wight, PO30 1JZ.
Tel/Fax: 01983 825548. E-mail: parentpartnership@iow.gov.uk**