

In a few cases, mediation might be appropriate. Mediation is one of a number of different ways of resolving a disagreement and tends to be used when the people involved are finding it difficult to communicate about an Issue. Mediation involves an impartial third party who won't take sides.

- Mediators are interested in helping people who disagree to find solutions that they can all agree to.
- Mediators will help both parties to identify the issues that need to be sorted out and what can be done to resolve them.
- This approach can bring out helpful ideas that no-one had considered before and can lead to acceptable solutions for both parties.
- The process of mediation can only be started if both parties are willing to join in.
- It is a confidential process and either party can withdraw at any time.

**Taking part in mediation may not resolve all the issues but it will not affect any legal rights you have, such as your right of appeal to the SEN and Disability tribunal.**

Finally every school and the Local Education Authority (LEA) have formal complaints procedures which can be followed if you feel your concerns have not been sorted out. Written information about this should be available from your child's schools or the LEA.

Details of the mediation service on the Isle of Wight are available from the Parent Partnership Service, the LEA or your child's school.

For further advice and information please contact the Parent Partnership Service.



**Parent**  
PARTNERSHIPS

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**Telephone or Fax 01983 825548**

(24 hour answerphone when we are closed)

**Post:** Parent Partnership service

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**Parent**  
PARTNERSHIPS

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*Worried about your child with special educational needs?*

*What can you do?*

**If you have a son or daughter who has special educational needs (SEN) and are concerned about the steps that are being taken to support them, you may find this leaflet useful. It contains guidance on ways you can express your concerns, and hopefully, resolve them to everyone's satisfaction.**

Have you thought about:

- Contacting your Parent Partnership Service for information, advice and support?
- Speaking to the class teacher or the School's SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO)?
- Contacting the Headteacher and/or Governors?
- Speaking to the Local Education Authority (LEA)?
- Asking for a meeting with any of the above?

You should always discuss concerns with your child's class teacher where possible, through reviews or parent's evenings. If you would prefer not to wait until a parents' evening to do this, contact the school and ask for an appointment, explaining why you are asking for the meeting.

**Please remember it may be difficult for the teacher to see you during school hours**

If you wish to discuss your concerns in more detail, you could contact the schools SEN Co-Ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO has an advisory role in the school and is responsible for the day to day working of the school's SEN policy. In a few schools the Headteacher is also the SENCO.

*You can ask to see a copy of the SEN policy which should explain how the school provides education for all children with SEN.*

Other people you can talk to in school about your concerns are:

- The Headteacher
- The Chair of the Governing body
- The Governer with responsibility for SEN

*All of these people can be contacted through the school office.*

The Parent Partnership Service can support you with information or by providing you with access to someone who may be able to go with you to a meeting (e.g. an Independent Parental Supporter).

Meetings are often used as a way to resolve differences. These can be between people who are in disagreement (the parties to a dispute) or they might involve a third party, perhaps someone from the Local Education Authority, or from the Parent Partnership Service.

If you have concerns with the LEA about the statutory assessment process, perhaps over the content of your child's Statement of SEN or a refusal to undertake an assessment, you should be offered the opportunity to meet with people involved in making decisions for the LEA. The Parent partnership service can advise you about this. You should also have been given the name of a contact person at the LEA (the Named Officer).

If you want to, you can take a friend or supporter with you to any such meeting.