

You have the right to request a meeting with any of the professional involved with your child. There are a variety of reasons that you might want to initiate a meeting and these may include:

- Concerns about your child's progress
- Concerns about how any Special Educational Needs your child may have, are being met
- Concerns about your child being bullied
- Concerns about your child's behaviour, how it is being managed and the impact on their education

Be clear as to why you want to have a meeting. We can always discuss this with you over the telephone.

### **Who do I need to meet with?**

If the issues are school related you may want to meet with you child's class teacher and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). There may be other professionals involved with your child from outside of the school, Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist etc who you would also like to attend.

If the issues are relating to a statutory assessment or a statement you may want to meet with someone from the Special Educational Needs Team at the Local Authority. If your child has a statement, they should have a named caseworker.

### **How do I organise a meeting**

- You can request a meeting by calling the relevant people and arranging a convenient time and a date.
- You can request a meeting by writing a short letter that includes, who you want to meet with, the issues you would like to discuss and times and dates you will be available.

If you would like support from someone from Parent Partnership at the meeting, try to get two possible dates and let us know as soon as possible.

### **Getting ready for a meeting**

- Write a list of things you want to say and questions you want to ask and take it to the meeting.
- Are there specific things that you want to happen as a result of the meeting?
- What do you want to achieve out of the meeting? What are you willing to compromise on? List the things you want to happen in order of importance. Be realistic about you are going to be asking for, you may

need to negotiate and be flexible to different options or alternatives offered.

- Take a diary with you to make sure you can arrange a review meeting.

### **Your child's views**

Where appropriate, ask your child for their opinion. What do they enjoy? Do they have any worries? Is there anything they would like to ask their teacher? Is there anything they think would help them?

### **At the meeting**

- Be on time! If you are going to be late, phone ahead to let them know. Allow enough time for the meeting so you do not have to cut the meeting short.
- It is important you know who everyone at the meeting is and their relationship to your child. Introductions should be made at the beginning of the meeting, but if they are do not be afraid to ask.
- Jargon! Professionals should explain complicated terms and not use abbreviations, but if they do, ask them to explain, it is vital you understand what people are talking about.
- If reports are produced at the beginning of a meeting ask for time to read them thoroughly before the meeting starts, or ask for the author of the report to read and discuss it in the meeting.
- Try to be positive with the professionals and acknowledge the support they have already offered.
- Tick each item from your list, as it is discussed in the meeting. Make sure you have discussed everything before the meeting ends. If you are told that the meeting has got to finish and you still have outstanding issues, ask for another date.
- Remember you are a professional – you know your child best.
- Sometimes meetings can be emotional. It is alright to express your feelings, to cry or explain you are angry. However, if this is the case, it may be best to ask to have a break so you can gather your thoughts. Try to discuss your feelings/ points in a composed and polite manner. Remember, everyone at the meeting is there to support your child and wants to find the best way to do this. People are more likely to listen to what you have to say if you are calm.
- Meetings can be difficult and intimidating. It is often helpful to take a friend or a relative with you for support, that way, if you are having

trouble expressing yourself, they can refer to your list and ensure all your points are discussed.

- If you do not agree with what professionals are saying or do not think what they are saying will work, discuss it with them. Ask them why they think what they have proposed will work and if you have any suggestions, discuss it with them.
- Before the end of the meeting it is important to confirm an action plan. Who is going to do what? By when? How will you be kept informed of when actions have been achieved – via email, phone etc? Ensure the 'action plan' is recorded, refer to our 'Meeting Form.'
- Ensure a review date is set.
- Ask for a copy of the meeting notes, if you do not agree that they are a true reflection of the meeting, make sure you contact the author and ask for them to be changed. If you do not do this, it will be assumed that you agree with the notes.
- If no meeting notes are taken you may want to write a letter, thanking the person for the meeting and outlining the actions agreed. This way it ensures there is a written record of the meeting and something to refer to at the following review meeting.

# Preparing for School Meetings

Meeting Held at:

Pupils Name:

Date:

Meeting Attendees:

| Action: | Who will action this?: | Action Timeframe/How will I know when it will be done?: | When will it be reviewed?: |
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