

LEWISHAM PARENT PARTNERSHIP SERVICE

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

The SEN code of practice says:

“The relationship between parents of children with special educational needs and their child’s school has a crucial bearing on the child’s educational progress and the effectiveness of any school-based action.”

As a parent, you can play an important role in your child’s achievement at school. You know your child better than anyone else. If you share this unique knowledge and information with teachers and other school staff, you will be helping them to help your child to reach his or her potential.

Partnership is a two- way process. Teachers, too, have important knowledge and expertise which they can share with you. They see your child in a different environment from home, and under different kinds of pressures. Being open and honest with one another will create a positive and supportive experience from which your child will benefit.

How can we do this?

As parents, you can:

- Share information about your child’s interests and experiences.
- Inform school of any changes in home circumstances which may affect your child.
- Encourage your child to do their best and to praise all their achievements.
- Be realistic in your expectations for your child.
- Focus on your child’s strengths as well as on situations where they might need additional support.
- Attend meetings (such as annual reviews) when necessary.
- Encourage your children, to help build good social relationships and build self-confidence.
- Support your child by going to parents’ evenings, school concerts etc.
- Offer to help! Be part of the school community. Most schools are only too happy to have parents helping in school.

Professionals should:

- Educate and inform parents as well as children. Parents need to know about their child's education.
- Explain how the school is helping to meet your child's needs.
- Familiarise parents with processes and procedures.
- Respond to parental enquiries and concerns (a home-school diary or something similar might help with this)
- Value parents' comments and opinions and take into account their views.
- Treat parents as equal partners in the education of their child.
- Inform parents about school policies.

At meetings:

- Make sure you know the purpose of the meeting and take a supporter with you if you wish.
- Write down all of your points before you go to the meeting so you do not forget them.
- Express your views and become involved in decisions made about your child.
- Be assertive. Make sure the professionals take into account what you say and recognise that your views are important.
- Ask, if you are not sure what people are talking about. After all, it is YOUR child they are discussing.

Further information

Special Education Needs Code of Practice 2001

To obtain a copy telephone: 0845 60 222 60 Ref: DfES 581/2001

Parent Partnership Service: Independent information, advice and support for parents of children with Special Educational Needs. Contact details below