

SEND mediation and disagreement resolution service



Our service is designed to **help settle disagreements** about decisions around support for children or young people aged 0 to 25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We are **Responsive** **Supportive**
Approachable **Impartial**

We're a member of the Civil Mediation Council (CMC) and are registered with the SEND mediation standards.

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"Completely impartial and so very comfortable to work with. The parents, on this occasion, got a decision to assess their son's needs and as such are **happy with the outcome**. I try to always steer parents towards the Together Trust if I can."

SEND IASS advisor



What is mediation?

Mediation can take place following decisions by a local authority relating to a young person's education, health and care plan (EHC plan).

Parents, carers or young people must consider mediation before submitting an appeal to the first tier tribunal.

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"I'd just like to say it was a breath of fresh air speaking to you after all the negativity we have faced from other organisations. It was the first time I actually felt listened to, your lovely manner put me at ease and for the first time I felt that someone cared."

Carer

Who should consider mediation?

If you want to appeal a decision made by the local authority you must show that you have considered using mediation to resolve the dispute.

After receiving a decision letter from the local authority, you must seek advice from a mediation service within two months.

You may wish to consider mediation if you are not satisfied with any of the following:

- The contents of a final EHC plan or amended plan
- A decision by the local authority not to carry out an education, health and care needs assessment
- A decision by the local authority not to issue an EHC plan
- A decision by the local authority not to amend an EHC plan
- A decision by the local authority to stop maintaining an EHC plan

What happens at mediation?

The local authority must attend a mediation meeting.

The meeting is led by an independent mediator whose role is to aid discussions and to ensure everyone is treated fairly.

The mediator will encourage those present to problem solve together, to enable a way forward to resolve the situation.



Mediation certificates and appeals

Before lodging an appeal with the first tier tribunal, you need to obtain a certificate from the mediation service to confirm that you have considered mediation.

The decision not to proceed with mediation will not affect tribunal proceedings. You don't need a mediation certificate if your appeal relates to placement (section I of the EHC plan).

Who should consider disagreement resolution?

Disagreement resolution can be used at any time. You may wish to consider disagreement resolution if you are unhappy with any of the following:

The level of SEND support being provided

Any aspect of your/your child's special educational needs provision

Health and social care disagreements

What is disagreement resolution?

Disagreement resolution (DR) applies to any aspect of special educational needs and disability (SEND) provision, regardless of whether or not the child or young person is being assessed for or has an EHC plan. Disagreement Resolution meetings are voluntary for all parties, including the Local Authority.

What we offer

Our staff will give you impartial information and answer any questions you may have.

During the initial enquiry we will provide you with factual and unbiased information about mediation and disagreement resolution so you can make an informed decision about which service is right for you.

We will do our best to answer any questions you have about the process,

“The Together Trust mediators and co-ordinators are providing a high quality of support for SEND mediation and disagreement resolution.”

Local authority commissioner

and you then have the option to choose whether or not to proceed with using the service.

If you choose to proceed with mediation or disagreement resolution, a meeting will be arranged that will be attended by all relevant parties, including the local authority.



**TOGETHER
TRUST**

Contact us

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