

Effective Partnership With Parents

Introduction

The Code of Practice imposes a duty on Local Education Authorities to provide information and advice on SEN matters to parents.

The Parent Partnership Service provides services that will empower parents to play an active and informed role in their child's education. These services include providing information, training and support to parents and carers. It is important to note that partnership with parents is expected to inform and influence local SEN policy and practice.

Although the Parent Partnership Service is part of the SEN Division in Birmingham, it operates independently from the assessment and decision making professionals. In this way, the Parent Partnership Service aims to maintain the confidence of parents that a credible, neutral service is being offered to them.

Information is available to parents and carers by means of newsletters, information packs, web pages and leaflets, as well as by regular meetings where SEN issues are discussed and the views of parents listened to.

Advice is made available on SEN policies and procedures, in the form of accurate, neutral information that can allow parents and carers to make informed decisions. This includes advice on educational provision, assessment and statements. Information about provision for resolving disagreements and challenging decisions, including the right of appeal to a SEN Tribunal, is also available.

The Parent Partnership Service has made arrangements for the recruitment and training of Independent Parental Supporters who can offer more individual support to parents and carers at meetings, reviews, appeals and with the understanding of IEPs, Statements and LEA correspondence. In meetings with schools, the Independent Parental Supporters will act as advocates for the parents.

The Parent Partnership Service promotes partnership between parents and schools by means of supporting school staff in their awareness of parents' needs, encouraging staff to respect parents' views and the development of parent friendly policies and practices. Liaison with governors improves approaches to working in partnership with parents.

Plans for development:

- Continuation of training and support programme
- Collation of good practice guide encompassing effective strategies of effective parent partnership from schools and education providers
- Consolidation of SEN Partnership forum
- Information and guidance to be made available on:
 - Dispute Resolution Service
 - Role of School Governors
 - Early Years identification and assessment of special educational needs
 - School-based identification, assessment and provision
 - Choosing a school
 - Role of Independent Parental Supporters
 - Exclusions from school
 - Children and Young People in public care
- Access to a range of external publications and resources available