



**Hartlepool  
SEND**  
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



## **Independent Disagreement Resolution and Mediation Services**

**For**

**Education, Health and Care Assessments and Reviews**

### **What should I do if I am unhappy about a decision?**

If you are not happy about a decision that has been made in relation to the transfer of an existing Statement of Educational Need, Learning Disability Assessment or the decision made on the new Single Coordinated Assessment (in Hartlepool the 'One Plan'), then you would need to get in touch with Hartlepool's Information, Advice and Support Service, a service that is impartial and independent to the SEND Team and decision makers. The contact details: Tel No: 01429 284876 or by email to:

[HARTLEPOOLIASS@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:HARTLEPOOLIASS@hartlepool.gov.uk) who can provide a list of organisations who will provide you with independent advice separate from the local authority on mediation and disagreement resolution services and any further advice and information.

### **Disagreement Resolution Services**

Disagreement resolution services are for all parents of children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and young people with SEN. Using this service is voluntary and covers SEN provision as well as disagreements about health and social care.

This applies specifically to parents and young people who are considering appealing the tribunal about Education, Health and Care needs assessment and the special educational element of the EHC Plan (One Plan in Hartlepool)

### **Mediation**

Mediation is also a voluntary process for parents and young people, which you can use if you cannot reach an agreement with your local authority or Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in matters relating to Education, Health and Care Plans (in Hartlepool a One Plan). It only covers disagreements you may have in the following circumstances when your local authority decides:

- Not to carry out an EHC needs assessment or re-assessment of your child
- Not to draw up an EHC plan for your child, once they have done a re-assessment
- Not to amend your child's EHC plan after the annual review or re-assessment
- To cease to maintain your child's EHC Plan

Where the local authority has drawn up an EHC Plan for your child, mediation must be available if you disagree with:

- The parts of the plan which describe a child's special educational needs
- The special educational provision set out in the plan

## **What are the SEN and Disability Tribunal?**

The Tribunal forms the first part of the First-tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care Chamber). Tribunals are overseen by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service.

Before you can appeal to the SEND Tribunal, you must have contacted a mediation advisor (unless your appeal is only about the school or local authority has named in your child's plan or if they have not named a school in it). You will need a certificate from the mediation advisor to register an appeal. You have one month from receiving the certificate or two months from the original discussion (whichever is the later date) to register an appeal with the Tribunal.

The Tribunal hears appeals against decisions made by the local authorities in England in relation to children and young people's EHC assessments and plans. It also hears disability discrimination claims against schools and against the local authorities when the local authority is the responsible body for a school.

The Tribunal seeks to ensure that the process of appealing is as user-friendly as possible, and to avoid hearings that are overly legalistic or technical. It is the Tribunal's aim to ensure that a parent or young person should not need to engage legal representation when appealing a decision. Parents and young people may find it helpful to have support from a voluntary organisation or friend.

## **What can I appeal about and how can I appeal?**

Parents and young people can appeal to the Tribunal about:

- A decision by the local authority not to carry out an EHC needs assessment or re-assessment
- A decision by the local authority that it is not necessary to issue an EHC plan following an assessment
- The description of a child or young person's SEN specified in an EHC plan, the special educational provision specified, the school or other institution or type of school other than an institution specified in the plan or that no school or other institution is specified
- Amendment to these elements of the EHC plan
- A decision by a local authority not to amend an EHC plan following a review or re-assessment
- A decision by a local authority to cease to maintain an EHC plan

The Tribunal does not hear appeals about Personal Budgets, but will hear appeals about the special educational provision to which a Personal Budget may apply.

Parents and young people who are unhappy with decisions about the health and social care elements of an EHC plan can go to mediation. They can also complain through the health and social care complaints procedures.

**Dated Completed December 2014**

**Review Date December 2015**

**Approved List of Providers of Independent Disagreement Resolution and  
Mediation**  
**For Education, Health and Care Assessments and Reviews**

1. Andrew Brook Solicitors  
Springboard Business Centre  
24 Ellerbeck Way  
Stokesley  
Middlesbrough  
TS9 5JZ

Contact No: 01642 715324

Email Address: [andrew@andrewbrooksolicitors.com](mailto:andrew@andrewbrooksolicitors.com)

2. NE Law  
Moor Chambers  
26 Front Street  
Framwellgate Moor  
Durham  
DH1 5EJ

Contact No: 0191 3744048

Email Address: [michelle.coulson@nelawllp.com](mailto:michelle.coulson@nelawllp.com) or [janet.potts@nelawllp.com](mailto:janet.potts@nelawllp.com)

Website: [www.nelawllp.com](http://www.nelawllp.com)

3. Unite

Suite 4, Cargo Fleet Business Centre,  
Middlesbrough Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS6 6XH

Contact No: 01642 311633

Email Address: [jaynegray@unite-mediation.org](mailto:jaynegray@unite-mediation.org)

Website link: <http://www.unite-mediation.org/unite/services-we-offer-/specialeducational-needs-mediation/9>

4. Chapel Mediation Service

Sue Hall  
St Clare's Chapel  
Victoria Road  
Barnard Castle  
Co. Durham  
DL12 8HR

Contact No: 07792227526

Email Address: [Suehall11@sky.com](mailto:Suehall11@sky.com)

5. KIDS

249 Birmingham Road  
Sutton Coldfield  
West Midlands  
B72 1EA

Contact No: 03330 062 835 (This is a non- geographic number specific for  
SEN Mediation)

Email Address: [senmediation@kids.org.uk](mailto:senmediation@kids.org.uk)