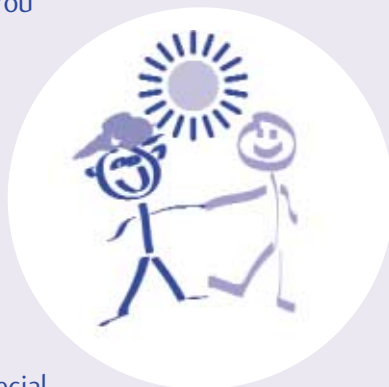


☺ Who can I talk things through with at school?

If you have any worries, it is important that you talk things through at the earliest opportunity. You should let your child's teacher know your views so that together you can try to solve any problems as soon as possible. You can talk to:

- Your child's teacher, form tutor or head of year
- The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)
- The headteacher
- The governor with responsibility for special educational needs



☺ What other support is available for parents?

- The Plymouth Parent Partnership Service, including Parent Partner volunteers
- City Council Support Services, such as Educational Psychologists, Behaviour Support Team, Learning Support Service, Sensory Team, Early Years Team, Pre-school Advisory team, Education Welfare Officers.
- Parent support groups
- Local and national voluntary organisations

If you would like some support at a meeting, you can ask for a friend, relative or someone from a voluntary group to go with you. You can also ask for the help of an Independent Parental Supporter (Parent Partner)

A Parent Partner is a volunteer who has been trained by Parent Partnership to offer help and support to parents of children with special educational needs. Find out more in the leaflet called 'Independent Parental Supporters' or contact Parent Partnership for more information.



😊 Disability Discrimination

You can make a claim about disability discrimination if:

- your child is treated less favourably than someone without a disability
- the treatment is for a reason related to the disability ● it is not justified.

Your claim will be against the 'responsible body'. This may be the governing body of your child's school, the City Council or the owner (if your child attends an independent school). The SEN and Disability Tribunal hears most claims for disability discrimination, though some claims are heard by other appeals panels.

If the tribunal find that discrimination has taken place they can order the responsible body to do anything reasonable to put right the discrimination, short of paying financial compensation.

A booklet explaining how make a claim of disability discrimination is available from the Parent Partnership Service, the City Council or directly from SENDIST.

😊 Where can I find out more about the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal?

The two main publications for parents are:

- **Special Educational Needs: How to Appeal**
- **Disability Discrimination in Schools: How to Make a Claim**

You can get a free copy of each booklet from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal's:

SEN Helpline: 01325 392 555 Discrimination Helpline: 020 7925 5750

Email: tribunalqueries@SENDIST.gsi.gov.uk Website: www.sendist.gov.uk

If you would like more information on any of these materials, or support from a Parent Partner (Independent Parental Supporter), please contact:

Plymouth Parent Partnership Service

Martins Gate, Bretonside, Plymouth PL4 0AT

Telephone: 01752 258933 Email: parent.partnership@plymouth.gov.uk

www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk





What if we cannot agree?



- Impartial
- Confidential
- Free



What if we cannot agree?

Sometimes parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) are worried or unhappy with their child's progress or the way in which their child's needs are being met. There are a number of things you can do to help:

- Share all the information you have about your child with the professionals involved in his or her education
- Always speak with your child's teacher as soon as you have any worries or concerns
- Try to attend meetings about your child – you can take someone with you if it helps
- Be well prepared for meetings. For example, make a list of the questions you want to ask and take along as much information as you can about your child's special educational need
- Keep your own records of meetings, telephone calls, letters and reports in a folder
- Ask to see the school's policy on SEN
- Keep in contact with your Named Officer at the City Council (LEA) if they are carrying out a statutory assessment of your child's needs or your child has a Statement.

The Parent Partnership Service can help you with any of the above, and can also put you in contact with local parents' groups or voluntary organisations.



😊 What is Disagreement Resolution?

Sometimes it is difficult to reach agreement. The process of disagreement resolution may help parents, schools and City Council when there is a dispute about SEN provision. It may also help when there is a disagreement about a disability discrimination matter.

A mediator will meet with parents and schools or City Council staff. The mediator does not take sides, but will listen and find out what has been happening. Mediators are skilled in helping to sort out disagreements and have knowledge of SEN and disability issues.

The Parent Partnership Service can give you more information and tell you how to contact the Disagreement Resolution Service for special educational needs or the mediation service for disability discrimination.

The following may help when considering disagreement resolution:

- It is free
- It is independent of both schools and the City Council
- Asking for the help of a mediator is voluntary – nobody will force you to take part
- It is confidential – nothing you say will be passed on
- Everyone involved must want to find a way to reach an agreement

Disagreement resolution can provide an opportunity for parents and school, or City Council staff, to meet with a third person who is not involved in the disagreement. The aim of disagreement resolution is to find a workable solution that everyone can agree with and that will last. For more information contact the Plymouth Parent Partnership Service

😊 What is the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal?

You may have a right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). The tribunal is independent and will consider parents' appeals when they disagree with the City Council about SEN matters. SENDIST will also hear claims about disability discrimination.

Appeals on SEN matters

You can appeal to the tribunal on SEN matters if the City Council:

- Refuses to carry out a statutory assessment of your child's special educational needs, unless an assessment has been made within the previous 6 months.
- Refuses to issue a statement after making a statutory assessment

You must appeal within 8 weeks of the date that you receive the decision from the Plymouth City Council. If the City Council has made a statement of your child's special educational needs, or have changed a previous statement, you can appeal against:

- The description in part 2 of the statement of your child's special educational needs;
- The description in part 3 of the statement of the special educational help that the City Council thinks your child should get;
- The school named in part 4 of the statement; or
- The City Council not naming a school in part 4 of the statement

You can also appeal if the City Council:

- Refuses to change the school named in Part 4, if the statement is at least a year old;
- Refuses to reassess your child if the City Council have not made a new assessment for at least 6 months;
 - Decides not to maintain your child's statement;
 - Decides not to change the statement after reassessing your child.

😊 When you cannot make an appeal

.....
You cannot appeal to SENDIST for:

- The way the City Council have carried out the assessment, or the length of time it took
- The way the City Council are making arrangements for the help set out in your child's Statement
- The way the school is meeting your child's needs
- The description in the Statement of your child's non-educational needs or how they will be met

Please remember that if you do disagree with a City Council decision, you should let the Department of Lifelong Learning know. Your concerns will be listened to and every attempt will be made to reach an agreement. If you are still unhappy, you can appeal to SENDIST.

A booklet explaining how to appeal is available from the Parent Partnership office, the City Council or directly from SENDIST (see the back of this leaflet).

