

For further information

If your child has special educational needs and you would like information, advice or support, please contact the Northumberland Information Advice & Support Service. This is a free, confidential and impartial service for parents and carers of children with special educational needs.

Northumberland Information Advice & Support Service

Telephone: 01670 623555/ 620350

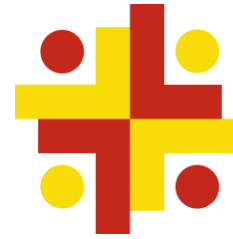
Email: iass@northumberland.gov.uk

Website: www.northumberlandiass.org.uk/

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Email: iass@northumberland.gov.uk or Telephone: 01670 623555



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Information
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Service**

Preparing for meetings



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Meetings can be a bit worrying; all those professionals, all that paperwork!

Try not to be put off. Meetings can be the best way to make things happen for your child and discuss their progress. It is important that you try to attend these meetings as it is your chance to have your say.

Here are a few ways to make meetings work for you and your child..

Before the meeting

Think about the following:

- What is the meeting for? If this isn't clear, don't be afraid to ask.
- Who will be at the meeting? Where and when will the meeting be held? If this isn't convenient for you, ask if the meeting can be rearranged.
- Make sure you have a copy of all the necessary paperwork. Carefully read through it. Is there anything that needs explaining?
- Consider asking a friend or relative to come along to give you informal support at the meeting. Always tell the person organising the meeting if you are going to bring someone with you.
- Talk to your child so that you can share their views at the meeting and ask any questions on their behalf.
- Make a list of things you want to talk about and any questions you want to ask.
- Decide what you want to come out of the meeting. What is important to you and your child? Try to focus on the future, not on the past.

At the meeting

- If there are no introductions at the start of the meeting, ask who each person is and how they are supporting your child.
- When you are giving your views start with areas of agreement and things that are going well. This sets a positive tone.
- Write things down if you need to, including any questions you have. Ask people to repeat or explain anything you do not understand. Ask for any jargon to be explained.
- If you disagree with professionals about their views, don't be afraid to say so. You know your child in a way that they do not.
- Try to keep calm even if you are feeling angry or upset. Try to make your points in a calm and polite way. Ask for a break to collect your thoughts if you need to.

At the end of the meeting

- Think about what has been discussed. Have you said all you wanted to say? Make sure all the points you wanted to discuss have been covered.
- Ask the person chairing the meeting to summarise what will happen and who will do what. How will this be reviewed? Will there be a further meeting?
- If there will be a written report or minutes of the meeting make sure a copy will be sent to you.

After the meeting

- Check through any notes or paperwork you have and any action points with dates. Talk to your child about what is going to happen and how it will help them. Even if there are only small changes it is important for them to be involved.