



Inclusion Partnership Agreement (IPA)

A guide for parents and carers

What is an Inclusion Partnership Agreement?

Most children with SEN have their needs met within their mainstream school, following the SEN Code of Practice. For a very small percentage of children, who have more significant special educational needs a statement of SEN may be considered. The statutory assessment process can be lengthy and may add little value to either understanding a child's special educational needs or to making arrangements to meet those needs. Indeed, it's one of the things that parents and carers have become increasingly concerned about.

Sometimes you might be worried about the progress that your child is making or how they are going to settle in their new school. A statutory assessment is not always necessary to provide the reassurance that you want.

The IPA aims to provide an alternative to some statutory assessments. Its purpose is to be **as** effective as some statements because it will:

- avoid unnecessary assessment and paperwork
- record quality information about your child's strengths and needs
- record what arrangements are already in place to help meet those needs and what new arrangements might be required
- safeguard your child's interests through documentation that is agreed by all those involved.

How will children benefit?

Sometimes, especially for older children, having a statement of SEN can be seen as a stigma and the IPA will avoid this. The process will be less intimidating for your child. Professionals will not need to see your child unnecessarily as part of the process. Your child will be involved in the process, as is appropriate for their age. Some arrangements for your child could be made more quickly, with obvious benefits for him or her. In other cases, it will confirm the arrangements that are being made and how they can best be reviewed.

How will parents/carers benefit?

The process will be shorter and simpler than the statutory assessment process. It will still, however, be specific to your child's needs. The IPA can be implemented much more quickly than a statement and, in some cases where new arrangements are being proposed, can begin to meet your child's needs within a shorter timescale. You will be involved throughout the process and you can still request a statutory assessment if you think that is necessary.

How will schools benefit?

The IPA will allow your child’s needs to be recorded alongside the arrangements that are being made, without excessive paperwork. The IPA will usually be based on a meeting to discuss your child and the outcome is a document tailored to your child’s needs to be agreed by you, school staff, and any other person involved. It can easily be transferred between schools, including schools outside Hampshire.

How will the Local Authority benefit?

The IPA will be a less bureaucratic process for those who work in the Children’s Services Department SEN Service. It will draw on information from those already concerned with your child rather than waiting for information from someone who might not know your child at all. It has more flexibility than the statutory process and will offer a more rapid response for your child and to your concerns.

For more information

If you would like more information, then please contact either the SEN Service or the Parent Partnership Service.

SEN Service

Hampshire County Council
Children’s Services Department
Elizabeth II Court East
The Castle
Winchester SO23 8UG
Tel: 01962 847658
Email: enquiries.sen@hants.gov.uk
Website: www.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/specialneeds/sen-home

Parent Partnership Service

Hampshire County Council
Children’s Services Department
Elizabeth II Court East
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Winchester SO23 8UG
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Email: enquiries.pps@hants.gov.uk
Website: www.hants.gov.uk/parentpartnership

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