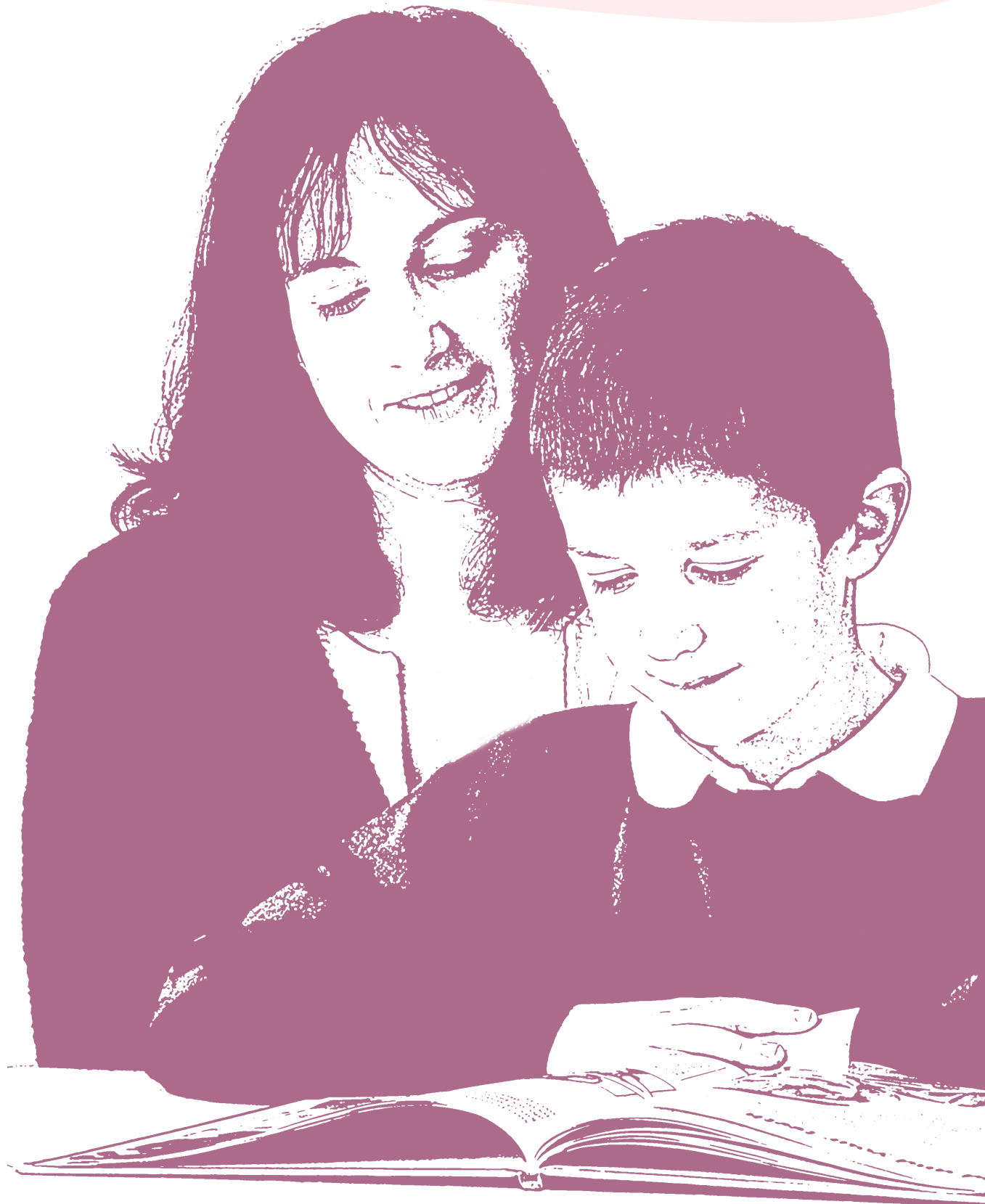


Statutory assessment procedures

Guidelines for writing a parental contribution: advice on my child



Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)



Hampshire
County Council

www.hants.gov.uk

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Introduction

Your views are very important and we would like you to make a contribution to your child's assessment.

It is really useful for us to know what you think about:

- your child's strengths
- what your child enjoys doing
- what your child finds difficult
- your child's needs
- what help your child might require
- how your child thinks and feels about him/herself.

Why should I respond?

In carrying out this assessment of your child's needs we are asking for reports from those who work with, or have met with, your child - such as his/her teacher, the school doctor and the educational psychologist. Although they will have thought carefully about your child when writing their reports, no one knows your child as well as you do. **This is why your views are so very important and why we will take careful notice of what you tell us about your child.**

We realise that sometimes writing about your child can be difficult. For some parents or carers it can stir up painful thoughts. For others, it can feel irritating because you have already talked to lots of people about your child. A number of parents/carers aren't sure why we are asking for their views and whether they will make any difference. A number of parents/carers may have difficulty putting their views down on paper. However, your views are **essential**.

How should I respond?

You may prefer to:

- use the guidelines in this booklet which make suggestions about what to write
- write about your child in a letter or a report and send that to us
- discuss your views with someone from the Parent Partnership Service, a voluntary agency or someone else such as a relative or friend, and for that person to write down your comments on your behalf.

Talking to someone about your views

If you would like to discuss your views with someone who would be able to offer advice and help about making your contribution to the statutory assessment, please contact:

Parent Partnership Service
Children's Services Department
Elizabeth II Court East
The Castle
Winchester SO23 8UG
Tel: 01962 845870
Email: enquiries.pps@hants.gov.uk

The following services are offered by the Parent Partnership Service, and this is a helpful starting point if you are looking for assistance in getting your thoughts down onto paper:

- advice and information on special educational needs
- access to independent parental support (IPS)
- information on support groups (local/national) and other sources of help
- home visits arranged by appointment.

Some tips for completing the parent/carer contribution

- this is an **important** document. It is **your assessment** of your child and his/her needs
- think carefully about what you are going to say about your child
- please don't
 - complete it in a rush
 - leave it until the last minute
 - forget to do it!
- make a note in your diary/kitchen calendar of the date when you aim to complete it by
- use the guidelines supplied
- when thoughts come to mind at any time, make a written note, if possible

- talk to your partner, friends, relatives – anyone who knows your child
- it may help to write your views out in draft to begin with
- you do not have to use the form supplied but, if you do not, it would be helpful to us if you kept to the headings
- have it typed/word processed, if possible
- be as detailed, but as concise as possible. Summarise key points
- in your general views about your child, state:
 - what you feel are your child's key needs
 - how you feel those needs should be met.

If in doubt, please contact the Parent Partnership Service. They are there to help you.

Guidelines for writing a contribution (Appendix A)

These guidelines are to help you make your contribution to your child's assessment. It would be useful if you use the headings we have suggested, as doing so will help us to identify the things that most concern you about your child. Your written contribution may be as short or as long as you wish.

A response form (Appendix A) is enclosed as a loose-leaf insert in this booklet for your use, which you might find helpful. It provides a framework based on the headings we have suggested. The form can be downloaded at: www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications.htm

As indicated earlier, you may wish to ask someone to help you with your contribution.

Copies of your contribution will be made available to all those involved in the assessment. This will save you repeating your views to those who are involved in meeting your child's needs.

N.B. In section B:

- the paragraphs listed in the margin as 'All' applies to all age groups
- the paragraphs listed in the margin as '0-7' refer only to children in early education settings and children in Years R, 1 and 2 (0-7 years of age)
- the paragraphs listed in the margin as '8-16' refer only to children in Years 3-11 (8-16 years of age).

Under the following sections/headings are some suggestions of the kind of information you might want to include. If there is other information you want us to have, please feel free to include it also.

A Early years

- 1 Any issues during pregnancy and/or at birth
- 2 Describe what your child was like as a baby
- 3 What did you think about his/her progress at the time
- 4 What happened to raise your concerns about his/her development
- 5 What help and advice did you receive
- 6 Describe any significant events or changes which affected your child in these early years.

B What is your child like now?

I General Health

Age

- All Eating and sleeping habits; general fitness; absences from school; minor ailments - coughs and colds; serious illnesses/accidents - periods in hospital; any medicine or special diet?
- 8-16 General alertness - tiredness, signs of use of drugs - smoking, drinking, glue-sniffing.

2 Physical Skill

- All Walking, running, writing, fine motor skills (e.g. Sewing).
- 0-7 Rolling, crawling, catching, using building bricks, scribbling, drawing, climbing stairs.
- 8-16 Climbing, riding a bike, team games, drawing pictures, using construction kits, household gadgets, tools.

3 Self Help

- 0-7 Level of personal independence; toileting; putting on shoes and socks; dressing and undressing; feeding him/herself; doing up buttons and zips; awareness of safety and danger.
- 8-16 Level of personal independence - dressing etc; making bed; washing clothes; keeping room tidy; coping with day to day routine; budgeting pocket money; general independence - getting out and about on his/her own; awareness of safety and/or danger.

4 Communication

- 0-7 Points; makes gestures; makes eye contact; copies sounds; uses single words, phrases, sentences; understands and responds to others; starts conversations; chats; describes events.
- 8-16 Level of speech; explains; describes event, people; conveys information (for example, messages to and from school); joins in conversations; uses the telephone (voice calls, text messages); uses email.

5 Playing and learning in the home

- All Watching television; concentration; playing alone
- 0-7 Favourite toys and activities; sharing games, toys etc; finding out about things, people.

6 Relationships

- All With parents, brothers and sisters, with friends, with other adults (friends and relations); at home and outside. Is your child a “loner”?

7 Behaviour at home

- All Co-operates; shares; listens to and carries out requests; helps in the house; offers help; fits in with family routine and “rules”. Moods - good, bad, sulking, temper tantrums, shows affection.

8 Activities outside the home

- 0-7 Attendance at early education settings etc; coping with separation for short/long periods.
- 8-16 Belonging to clubs, sporting activities. Is he/she happy to be alone? Does he/she interact and socialise with others?

9 At school/early education setting

- All Relationships with other children and teachers; reading; writing; numbers; other subjects and activities. How the placement/school has helped/not helped with your child. Have you been asked to help with your child’s learning and playing/schoolwork in any way, e.g. hearing child read - with what result? How is your child progressing with talking/playing/learning? Does your child enjoy school/early education setting? What does your child find easy or difficult? Has your child missed a lot of school because of his/her difficulties and/or disabilities?

10 Learning

- 8-16 Interest in finding out about things; reading for information; willingness in sharing reading and knowledge with others; level and length of concentration on an activity; reading for pleasure and information; hobbies; sharing.

C Your general views

- 1 Is your child aware of his/her difficulties? Is there anything that your child worries about?
- 2 Is there any other information you would like to give, such as advice or reports from other people? If so, please send them to us with your own contribution.
- 3 What do you think your child's special educational needs are?
- 4 How, where and with what support do you think these can be best provided for?
- 5 What do you think are the family's needs and your needs?
- 6 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your child?

Providing a letter or report

You may prefer to send us a letter or report which more directly reflects your views about your child's special educational needs. We will be happy to receive your comments. Please send your letter or report to the Principal Special Needs Officer at the address given in the covering letter. If you also wish to include a photograph of your child please feel free to do so.

It is most useful for us to know what you think about:

- your child's strengths
- what your child enjoys doing
- what your child finds it difficult to do
- your child's needs
- what help your child might require
- how your child thinks and feels about themselves.

Additional information/reports

Please attach any reports from other professionals that you would like us to consider. If you would like Hampshire Children's Services Department to write to any professionals for advice please provide their names and addresses.

Please be aware that you may be required to pay for reports from some professionals/agencies.

Your child's views (Appendix F)

Where possible children should be given the opportunity and be encouraged to contribute their own views and feelings to the assessment of their needs. If your child is of school age we may have already received some information which was completed with your child by the school. This may be the Appendix F or in some other format. You will have seen this at the time you signed the school's form asking us to start the statutory assessment.

Guidelines and the Appendix F is enclosed as a loose-leaf insert in this booklet. The form can also be downloaded at:
www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications.htm

The educational psychologist involved in the assessment will also seek to reflect your child's views in his/her report.

Clearly the degree to which your child's views can be taken into account will vary with his/her age and ability but, shared discussions about his/her needs and feelings about the future can be very valuable. If your child has not had the opportunity to give his or her views, please contact the school or the Parent Partnership Service.

Some children find it difficult to express their thoughts and feelings because of their age or because of their speech and language needs. If your child has such difficulties, it is still helpful to us if you can describe what your child might tell us, if they could. For example, you could describe the things he/she enjoys doing, people they like being with and what kind of help they prefer.



You can download this publication at:
www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications.htm
or request a hard copy by contacting:
childrens.services@hants.gov.uk or 0845 603 5620

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or format (e.g. large print or in an audio format)
please contact: 0845 603 5620,
childrens.services@hants.gov.uk
or Minicom: 0845 603 5625**