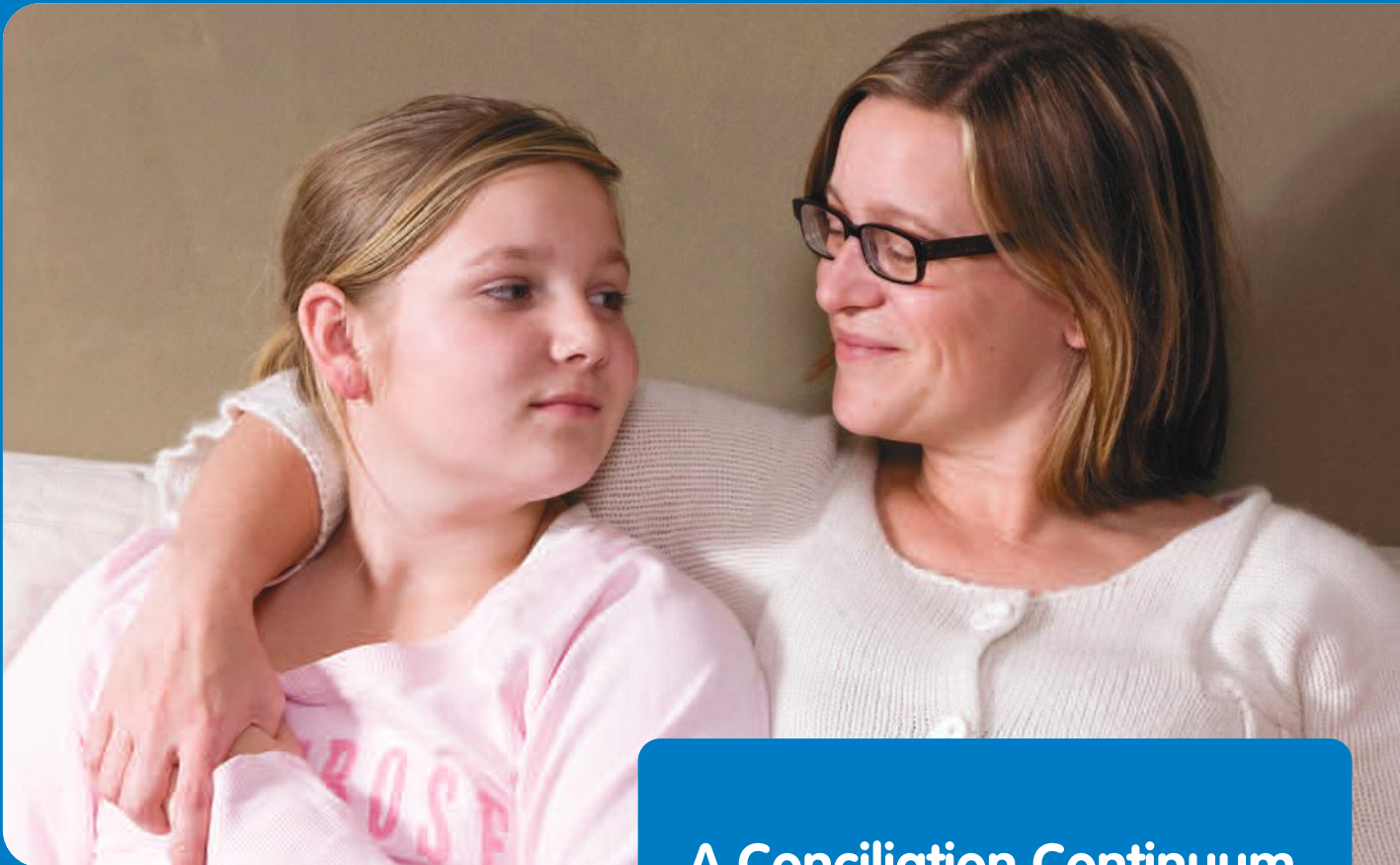




Disagreement Resolution



A Conciliation Continuum

SNAP Cymru's Disagreement Resolution Service aims to promote partnership between children, young people, families and professionals, helping them to seek agreement on the provision of support for children and young people. By encouraging open dialogue and negotiation real conflict is avoided.

Disagreement Resolution is a formal process where by an independent facilitator will help parents, schools and Local Authorities find solutions and to reach agreement through discussions.

Participation is voluntary and does not replace a right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal.

The Welsh Government requires LA's to provide access to independent disagreement resolution services. SNAP Cymru provides Disagreement Resolution throughout Wales.

Conciliatory services are delivered through local projects who work to ensure a partnership in planning and decision making at the earliest possible stage. Our work supports schools and agencies to foster positive relationships with families.



However, occasionally informal disagreement resolution may not always result in agreement. If this happens, access to SNAP Cymru's formal disagreement resolution service can be arranged.

Independent of the local Parent Partnership Service, the disagreement resolution service calls on the special skills of a pool of trained facilitators who have specialist knowledge of additional learning needs (ALN), including Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disability.

Local Authorities, schools and other agencies may commission SNAP Cymru's disagreement resolution service when required.

When is formal disagreement resolution appropriate?

- When an appeal has been lodged with the Special Educational Needs Tribunal Wales (SENTW), or
- When a disagreement has occurred that may lead to an appeal, or
- When a disagreement has occurred between parents, the LA or Schools, and both parties agree to try and seek a resolution

How is the service accessed?

- The Local Authority and SNAP Cymru will offer the service. Parents and schools may contact their LA, school and SNAP Cymru to request disagreement resolution. Both parents and the Local Authority can request access to the service. However parties need to agree to participate fully in an attempt to reach an agreement. The Local Authority will contact SNAP Cymru with the parents' agreement
- Parents may contact SNAP Cymru for further information and advice
- SNAP Cymru will set up the disagreement resolution process as quickly as possible usually by arranging discussions and meetings at the earliest opportunity and without delay so as not to prejudice further action pending
- Disagreement resolution will seek to reach solutions to issues without the need for a tribunal. Disagreement resolution can also be used for school based issues where there are conflicting opinions and other methods of conciliation have been tried
- Should the meeting not succeed in reaching an agreement on all the issues in dispute and an appeal still goes ahead, parents and the Local Authority will be able to demonstrate that they have attempted to resolve the issues and report to the Tribunal any areas that have been agreed

How does it work?

- SNAP Cymru will provide access to a trained and experienced facilitator who arranges and chairs formal disagreement resolution discussions and meetings

- The facilitator will gather as much information about the disagreement as possible prior to arranging a formal disagreement resolution meeting
- During meetings, whilst remaining impartial, the facilitator will redress any imbalance of power between authority and parents by explaining processes, allowing parents the first opportunity to speak and requesting clarification of issues in jargon free language
- The opportunity for both parties to speak, and air their views is of paramount importance. It is here that the facilitator will identify agreed areas and work with both parties to build on common ground and understanding, identifying possible options for agreement
- During the meeting the facilitator will summarise the main issues of the disagreement from the point of view of all parties
- The facilitator will be responsible for taking notes at the meeting and drafting any agreement reached. They are responsible for recording in writing the outcome of the disagreement resolution meeting
- It is important that both parties contribute to the writing and the wording of the agreement in order to take ownership. The facilitator will write the voluntary agreement and explain its voluntary status. No one should feel pressurised into an agreement and if necessary, further meetings can be arranged
- A copy of the written document will be given to both parties to sign

What outcomes should we expect?

- A negotiated voluntary agreement which satisfies both parties and negates the need for further action
- Both parties feeling that all avenues have been fully explored to conclusion
- That further action has not been unjustifiably delayed or altered
- That a better understanding between parties has been achieved

About SNAP Cymru

SNAP Cymru delivers Parent Partnership Services in Wales and offers accurate information, impartial advice, support and key-workers for families of children and young people who have, or may have, Special Educational Needs and or a Disability. The SNAP Cymru service is free, confidential and impartial. SNAP Cymru also provides a formal disagreement resolution service and independent issue based advocacy for children and young people.



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