



The Statement of Special Educational Needs



A statement of Special Educational Needs is a legally binding document that sets out your child's needs and how they will be met.

Where a child or young person has severe or complex needs, the Local Authority may decide to issue a statement.

Once all the information gathered from the statutory assessment has been received, the Local Authority (LA) must decide whether to draw up a statement. The LA will make this decision when it considers that the help needed for your child cannot reasonably be met by the school.

If the LA decides that a statement of Special Educational Needs is necessary, they will send you a proposed statement along with copies of all the information gathered during the statutory assessment process.

A proposed Statement of SEN is set out in 6 parts.

PART 1 - gives your own and your child's name, address and other details.

PART 2 - gives details of your child's special educational needs - your child's strengths and weaknesses should be listed here. The assessment will have identified these. It should also give a description of your child's current level of functioning.

PART 3 - this sets out all the help that your child will receive to meet the needs identified in Part 2. It will be divided into three parts:-

1. It will set out the long term educational goals for your child - what they feel your child could achieve.
2. It may also tell you what the arrangements are for setting short term targets - so that you and your child can measure and celebrate progress.

3. It will tell you how your child's progress will be monitored. This usually happens regularly in school, and is then discussed annually through the Annual Review Process.

The SEN Code of Practice (COP) says that the provision listed should normally be specific, detailed and quantified - it should clearly tell you who will do what, when and how. You should be able to understand exactly what help your child will receive.

PART 4 - when the LA issues a Proposed (Draft) Statement, this part will be blank to give you the opportunity to state a preference for a maintained school, or make representations for an independent or non-maintained school. Part 4 of the final statement must set out the type of school which is considered appropriate (e.g. mainstream, special, residential, or other setting, etc) or 'educational arrangements otherwise' and should normally name a particular school.

You are given 15 days from the date you receive the proposed statement to say which school you would like for your child, make any comments about the statement and ask for a meeting with the LA. Make sure you have clearly listed any changes you would like to be considered and any questions you may have.

PART 5 - describes the non-educational needs your child has - some therapies, specialist medical support may be in this section, transport to and from school may also be included here.

PART 6 - explains how your child will get the help described in Part 5.

Local Authorities should make every effort to ensure that parents are happy with the proposed statement and that they understand the background to the proposals. SNAP Cymru or your LA can help with this by explaining the process, documents and by arranging meetings as necessary (these are known as 'making representations').

Once discussions have been held and agreement has been reached a Final Statement will be issued by the LA. However, occasionally agreement may not be reached. In these circumstances the LA will issue the Final Statement anyway along with an accompanying letter which will give written notice of parents right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales, (SENTW) time limits for lodging an appeal and the availability of parent partnership and disagreement resolution services.

You can appeal to SENTW against: the description of your child's difficulties in part 2, the special educational help set out in part 3, the school named in part 4. You can also appeal if no school is named on the final statement. You have two months from the date the final statement was sent to you to make your appeal. The Tribunal can order the LA to change part 2 or 3 of the statement or to name a particular school in part 4. A guide for parents on how to appeal is available from SENTW.

You may also see the following words, these are replacing the term Special Educational Needs

- **Additional Learning Needs**
- **Additional Educational Needs**
- **Additional Needs**

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.

Notes

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