

## Special Educational Needs (SEN) Panel

### How we make decisions which affect your child and your family



#### How does the council make important decisions that affect my child?

All important decisions such as agreeing to carry out a statutory assessment of your child's special educational needs or issuing a statement of special educational needs are discussed by the council's SEN Panel.

#### What is the SEN Panel?

The SEN Panel is a group of professionals who meet every Tuesday afternoon in term time to discuss and advise on the best way to support children with SEN.

#### Who attends the SEN Panel?

The SEN Panel is chaired by the Inclusion Manager for SEN. SEN team members attend and present the information we hold on your child. The SEN Panel is also attended by a Senior Educational Psychologist, the SEN Inspector and senior representatives from mainstream schools and special schools. This means there is a range of experience and expertise available to discuss your child's needs.

#### Can I attend the SEN Panel?

Parents are not able to attend the Panel as the purpose of the meeting is to consider every case as fairly and objectively as possible, making decisions based on the written evidence. However, any written information you provide will be made available to the Panel and a representative that knows your child from their school may attend to provide up-to-date information and answer any questions. Other professionals such as your Social Worker or your child's Connexions Personal Adviser may also attend.

**What happens after the SEN Panel meeting?**

Your SEN caseworker will take whatever action is recommended and tell you about this. For example, if a decision is taken to issue a statement of special educational needs they will inform you of this and provide you with a copy of the proposed statement so you can let us know your views.

**What if I or my child's school are not happy with any decision?**

There are many opportunities throughout the statutory process for you and your child's school to discuss any concerns or issues. This follows the national SEN Code of Practice. If new information or evidence becomes available we can ask the SEN Panel to review a decision.

**Can I meet with someone to talk about my child and what has been decided?**

Yes. As soon as we receive a request for statutory assessment from you or your child's school we will write to you to explain the procedure we must follow and you will be allocated a 'Named Officer' from the SEN Team. We will ask your views about your child and about any actions we take throughout the process. We welcome contact from parents because we know that your views are important in helping us all to reach the right decision. You can contact us in writing or by telephone at any time. We can meet with you and anyone supporting you if you would find this helpful.

**Is there anyone else who can help me?**

Your child's school can help you. You can also ask for support from the Southampton Parent Partnership Service (see leaflet for further details).

*For further information, please contact Amanda Smith:*

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