

KIDS-London SEN Mediation Service

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Resolving School Based Disputes

- Is your Local Authority increasingly delegating SEN funding to schools?
- Are disagreements arising between schools and parents regarding SEN provision?
- Are you aware that these disagreements can be mediated by our service?

KIDS London SEN Mediation Service can provide a Mediation Awareness workshop for schools in your Local Authority. Contact us for more details on 020 7837 2900 or email audrey.dorival@kids.org.uk

An increasing number of cases referred to us are school based disputes regarding SEN provision for children on School Action or School Action Plus.

Whilst we are aware of the arguments for and against delegated SEN funding, this is currently the climate in which we are all working. There is much debate about parental anxiety and lack of parental confidence in the SEN process. Schools and parents need to be supported.

In our experience, the underlying issue for many of these cases is a breakdown of communication, trust and confidence between schools and parents.

Benefits of Mediation

If these cases are referred to us at an early stage, SEN mediation can help to:

- Establish and clarify the real issues in dispute
- Give parents and schools a neutral and supportive forum (professionally facilitated) in which to express their views and **achieve resolution**
- Rebuild trust and positive communication between parents and schools
- Open up a dialogue for the future which benefits the child.



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If disputes are not addressed effectively early on, schools and parents can become more entrenched in positions and far less willing or able to resolve matters.

DCSF commissioned research into SEN Mediation

The recent National Evaluation on Disagreement Resolution Services commissioned by the Department for Children Schools and Families recommended that mediation should be “brought into the process of decision-making earlier rather than later in the continuum of DRS [disagreement resolution service] offered”. (ISBN: 978 1 84775 243 7). It also recommended that schools needed to be made more aware of SEN Mediation so that parents and schools could participate in mediation at an earlier stage.

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