



# Guidance on Mediation

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Mediation is an informal, voluntary process which involves an independent facilitator (Our mediator) helping parties to reach agreements that are acceptable to all parties.

Our mediator is impartial, does not take sides, nor put forward suggestions or possible solutions to the disagreement. Our mediator is there to help facilitate discussions and to make sure everyone is treated fairly.

Our mediator is in control of the process but not the outcome of the Mediation. It is the parties themselves that find solutions and decide the outcome through participating in the Mediation process.

Mediation is a flexible process, designed to be as straightforward and comfortable as possible, but it often follows a set pattern. Many people find knowing these individual steps, helps them to feel more relaxed about the Mediation meeting and this guide aims to give you as much information as possible in advance of the meeting.

*Please note: Using Mediation does not affect your right of appeal to the SEND Tribunal.*

## **Step 1 – Arranging a Mediation Meeting**

Once you have contacted us and decided together with our mediator, that your particular issues are suitable for Mediation and that you wish to go ahead with the Mediation, our mediator will contact the other parties involved.

## **Step 2 – Individual meetings and the Joint Meeting.**

We work to a 'one day' model of Mediation. This means that the Mediation begins with a joint meeting. Our mediator will start by explaining how the meeting will work, setting the agenda for the Mediation and giving everyone uninterrupted time to give a short opening statement to explain their position. (This is your opportunity to talk directly to the other side without interruption)

You will be asked to re-sign an Agreement to Mediate.

Then there will be individual meetings, giving everyone uninterrupted time to put forward the key issues.

Our mediator treats everyone in exactly the same way and will not divulge details of these meetings unless they have permission to. These meetings will help you to think about what you want, what other people might want and how things could be resolved.

## **Step 3 – Concluding the Mediation Process**

During the meetings, our mediator may take notes to help them remember facts. These notes will be destroyed at the end of the session. Our mediators will help the parties to draw up a simple statement outlining the key agreed areas. All parties need to sign and date the agreement, which will also be signed by our mediator. You can keep a copy for your record