

horizontal line

**Preparing for a School Meeting**

**Factsheet Number 23 August 2025**

horizontal line

**Disclaimer**: This is a guide and should not be treated as legal advice. Although SENDIASS Manchester makes all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information contained in this factsheet is accurate and up to date at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for outcomes suffered because of reliance placed upon it.

All hyperlinks in this factsheet were correct as at August 2025.

If you have any concerns about your child's education, you have the right to request a meeting with any professional involved with your child. There are a variety of reasons that you might want to ask for a meeting which may include:

* Concerns about your child’s progress
* Concerns about how any Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) your child may have, are being met.
* Concerns about your child being bullied.
* Concerns about your child’s behaviour, how it is being managed and the effect on their education.

Be clear why you want to have a meeting. SENDIASS Manchester (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service) can discuss this with you over the telephone through our helpline on 0161 209 8356.

You may also wish to discuss issues relating to the statutory assessment process also known as the Education, health and care needs assessment.

## **Who do I need to meet with?**

If the issues are school related you may want to meet with your child’s class teacher and/or the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). There may be other professionals involved with your child from outside of the school, such as a speech and language therapist, educational psychologist etc. Who would you also like to attend?

## **How do I organise a meeting?**

* You can request a meeting by talking to the school and arranging a convenient date and time for the meeting, which is best to have in person but may be via ZOOM/Teams.
* You can also request a meeting by writing a short letter that includes, who you want to meet with, the issues you would like to discuss and times and dates you will be available.
* SENDIASS are often asked to attend school meetings, but this is not always possible due to other commitments and staffing numbers. However, we will always take time to help you prepare for it by advising on questions you may wish to ask. We may also be able to put you in touch with a parent support group or a parent champion to offer peer support.

## **Getting ready for a meeting**

Write a list of things you want to say and questions you want to ask and take it to the meeting.

* Are there specific things that you want to happen because of the meeting?
* What do you want to achieve from the meeting? What is important to you and your child? List the things you want to happen in order of importance. Be realistic about what you are going to be asking for, you may need to negotiate and be flexible to different options or alternatives offered.
* Take a diary with you to make sure you can arrange a review meeting, if necessary, whilst everyone is present.

## Your child’s views.

* Always ask your child for their opinion. What do they enjoy? Do they have any worries? Is there anything they would like to ask their teacher? Is there anything they think would help them?

## At the meeting

* Be on time. If you are going to be late, phone ahead to let them know. Allow enough time for the meeting so you do not have to cut the meeting short.
* It is important you know who everyone at the meeting is and their relationship to your child. Introductions should be made at the beginning of the meeting, but if they are not then do not be afraid to ask.
* Jargon: Professionals should explain complicated terms and not use abbreviations, but if they do, ask them to explain, it is important you understand what people are talking about.
* If reports are produced at the beginning of a meeting, ask for time to read them thoroughly before the meeting starts or ask for the writer of the report to read and discuss it in the meeting.
* Try to be positive with the professionals and acknowledge the support they have already offered.
* Tick each item from your list, as it is discussed in the meeting. Make sure you have discussed everything before the meeting ends. If you are told that the meeting has got to finish and you still have outstanding issues, ask for another date.
* Try to discuss your feelings/points in a composed and polite manner. Remember, everyone at the meeting is there to support your child and wants to find the best way to do this. People are more likely to listen to what you have to say when you are calm.
* It may be helpful to take a friend or a relative with you for support, so if you are having trouble expressing yourself, they can refer to your list and ensure all your points are discussed.
* If you do not agree with what professionals are saying or do not think what they are saying will work, discuss it with them. Ask them why they think what they have proposed will work and if you have any suggestions, discuss it with them.
* Before the end of the meeting, it is important to confirm an action plan. Who is going to do what? By when? How will you be kept informed of when actions have been achieved – via email, phone etc. Ensure the ‘action plan’ is recorded; refer to our ‘Meeting Form.’
* Ask for a copy of the meeting notes, if you do not agree that they are a true reflection of the meeting, make sure you contact the writer and ask for them to be changed. If you do not do this, it will be assumed that you agree with the notes.
* If no meeting notes are taken you may want to write a letter or send an email, thanking the person for the meeting and outlining the actions agreed. This way it ensures there is a written record of the meeting and something to refer to at the following review meeting.

## **Preparing for School Meetings**

## A template below shows how you may want to take meeting notes:

* Where the meeting is held
* Date of the meeting
* Pupils Name
* Actions agreed to
* Who will be responsible for each action?
* Is there a time limit for each action?
* How you will know when each action is done?
* Date of when the action will be reviewed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Meeting Held at: | Date: | Pupil’s Name: | Meeting Attendees: |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Action: | Who will action this? | Action timeframe/How will I know when it will be done? | When will it be reviewed? |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**The information on this fact sheet is available on the new podcast series by SENDIASS Manchester, SEND Talk**  [https://podfollow.com/sendtalk](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpodfollow.com%2Fsendtalk&data=05%7C01%7Claura.nardella%40manchester.gov.uk%7Cf0cfe99c4f0540536d3508dafee973d3%7Cb0ce7d5e81cd47fb94f7276c626b7b09%7C0%7C0%7C638102575860395067%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=WzvtdWcDle8DOfJAFi2nP31AXH4ZMQVakhC4mAejfag%3D&reserved=0)

**Listen to Episode 2 –** Preparing for School Meetings and Episode 3 – Attending Meetings and follow up.

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact Details for SENDIASS Manchester**  Helpline Telephone number: 0161 209 8356. Please clearly leave your name, contact number and a brief message on the answerphone and a member of the team will contact you within 24 hours or the next working day.  **Or**  Email your query to us: [**sendiass@manchester.gov.uk**](mailto:sendiass@manchester.gov.uk) leaving your name, child’s name and their date of birth.  You can complete our website contact form: [**Contact Us (iasmanchester.org)**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/contact)  Visit Manchester SENDIASS website [**About SENDIASS Manchester (iasmanchester.org)**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/)  Manchester SENDIASS Podcasts [**Listen to our SEND Talk podcasts**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/podcasts)  Manchester SENDIASS YouTube channel [**https://www.youtube.com/@SENDIASSManchester**](https://www.youtube.com/@SENDIASSManchester)    **QR code for the website QR code for Facebook page** |