

**independent
support**



Independent Support
A quick parents guide



Department
for Education

Where did Independent Support come from?

- The Children and Families Act 2014 will change the way that children with special educational needs and disabilities receive support.
- From 1 September 2014 Statements of Special Educational Need will change to Education, Health and Care plans (EHC).
- An EHC plan brings a child or young person's education, health and social care needs into a single, legal document.



To support this, Edward Timpson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, announced additional funding for **independent supporters** to help parents and young people navigate through the new EHC planning process.



So what are Independent Supporters?

They are...

- individuals that are recruited and deployed by your local Independent Support agency or via the Information, Advice and Support Services;
- there to provide advice and support for parents of children with SEN, and young people with SEN, through the EHC processes;
- there to work alongside parents by offering a range of time-limited support such as liaison across different agencies and advice on personal budgets;
- there to offer support that can be tailored to the particular needs of individual parents and young people;
- to act on behalf of the parent and young person and independent from the local authority.



But will organisations really work together?

Yes and they are...

In each local authority, services are working together to make sure parents receive good support.

The local offer sets out what services are available in your local area so there is no confusion on how to access support.

Services that should be working together to make it easier for parents are:

- Independent Support agency
- Information, Advice and Support Service
- Parent Carer Forum
- Local authority

Find out more by contacting your local Independent Support agency



So how can Independent Supporter help me?

An Independent Supporter can support you by:

- acting as a named contact;
- helping you to understand how to access services;
- helping you with an assessment to moving from a Statement of SEN to an EHC plan;
- helping you put together a one page profile;
- working with lots of different services to help you collect all the information needed for your EHC plan;
- giving you information to help you understand personal budgets;
- telling you how to get more information if you need it, or when your Independent Supporter is unable to help you.



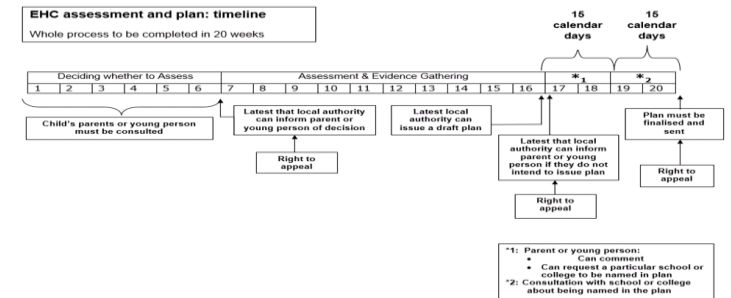
How will the process work?

Many **Independent Supporters** will follow a locally agreed process when offering support to a young person.

Support may be designed around a 20 week period and achieved with time limited sessions with the young person.

Young people should first refer to their local referral protocols to understand what their local offer and level of support expected to be provided.

If the young person has an existing SEN statement they will have a transfer review which must be achieved within 14 weeks.



How do I get in touch with my local IS service?

There are a number of different ways in which parents can find out more about your local independent support service, for example -

Visit the Council for Disabled Children's website by using the following link to find out who your local Independent Support provider is and how you can get in touch with them.

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/news/january-june-2015/getting-in-touch-with-your-local-independent-supporter>

Visit your local authority website and search for the 'Local Offer' where information on the services available to you can be found.

Phone your local 'Information, Advice and Support Service' (IASS).

If you experience difficulties in finding your local service please do not hesitate to get in touch with the IS team at: independentsupport@ncb.org.uk

