

**PARENT'S RIGHTS**

- request the education authority to find out whether their child has additional support needs and whether or not their child needs a Co-ordinated Support Plan
- request a specific type of assessment and/or examination
- request the use of mediation services
- make a placing request to an independent special school if their child has additional support needs
- receive a copy of the Co-ordinated Support Plan or, if not eligible for a Plan, receive advice and information about their child's additional support needs
- have their views taken into account and noted in the Co-ordinated Support Plan
- appeal to new independent Tribunals on matters relating to Co-ordinated Support Plans
- make use of dispute resolution arrangements for matters about additional support needs that are not eligible for formal appeal
- have a supporter or representative with them at any meeting with the school or education authority and at Tribunal hearings.

**WHAT ARE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS?**

Some children face barriers to learning and need additional support to make progress. It will be the duty of education authorities to give some extra help in their schools to all children and young people with additional support needs. Children and young people may need this help to assist them with reading or writing; to improve their access to the school and its facilities; or to support their learning through difficult family or other circumstances. Additional support needs can be short or long term. For instance, additional support may be needed for a child or young person who:

- is being bullied
- has behavioural or learning difficulties
- is deaf or blind
- is particularly gifted
- is bereaved
- is not a regular attender.

These are just some examples.

**CO-ORDINATED SUPPORT PLAN**

Only for children with the most complex needs, the education authority will have to prepare a new Co-ordinated Support Plan. This will co-ordinate the support for those with additional support needs, arising from complex or multiple factors, who need a range of support from different services. The views of the child and the parents will be taken into account when a plan is prepared and their final comments will be noted in the plan.

What is in the Co-ordinated Support Plan?

The Co-ordinated Support Plan must contain:

- a description of why the child or young person has additional support needs
- educational objectives the child or young person will be supported to achieve
- the support required to help the child or young person achieve those objectives
- who will provide this support
- name of a contact person within the education authority to provide advice and information to parents
- the name of the person who will co-ordinate the support from the different services.

Importantly, the Co-ordinated Support Plan will set the aims for what the child should learn and will build on the child's strengths.