

Case Study One

“How can I make sure we get it right?”

Reasons for contacting the service

Michael's Mum is familiar to the service and contacted us to support her at a review meeting at the school. The review meeting was counted as the annual review meeting for Michael's Education, Health and Care Plan. The school had not sought any advice prior to the meeting and only allowed a 30-minute appointment for the meeting to take place. Michael's Mum felt that it had been a rushed process and at no point had enabled her to contribute. There were discussions brought up in the meeting, and outcomes suggested for the plan, that centered around Michael's sexuality which neither Mum or Michael wanted to be included in the plan. Michael's Mum wanted our support to help her have a voice and to ensure that Michael has an EHCP which was a true reflection of his needs and had outcomes which were relevant to his progression towards adulthood and his final year of school.

What we did

When Michael's Mum contacted the service, we spoke at length about how she felt about the way in which the process had been implemented and what she wanted moving forward. Michael's Mum was very clear that she wanted to make sure her views were included in the process and advice from health professionals that detailed the change of needs. I got permission from Michael's Mum to contact the local authority and school and to find a way forward.

I called the SEN team in the local authority. The purpose of this was to alert them to the school not following the statutory guidance for the annual review process; and to alert them to this particular case. I informed the local authority that this parent wanted her views to be included and the plan needed significant amendments as a lot of the information was out of date. The local authority was happy for Michael's Mum to submit her views and amendments or to do it as part of another meeting if she preferred. They were also going to contact the school regarding the process and school's obligations.

I spoke to the assistant head at the school who had held the meeting. She was new to the role of organizing and holding the Annual review meetings. I explained the processes to her and the obligations that are defined in the code of practice. I explained Mum's feelings and as a way forward we agreed that I would arrange an appointment for Michael's Mum to come and see me where we could go through all of the paperwork and write down any amendments and additions that she wanted to make. The assistant head agreed that following that appointment she would schedule another meeting and we would hold a second annual review meeting. At

this point we clarified other professionals that should be asked for advice in preparation for the meeting.

Michael's Mum came in to our office and spent a lot of time going through the EHCP paperwork and recording her views. By the end of the appointment she felt that she had given a clear update and that the meeting would be productive and meaningful.

The meeting was very focused and structured going through the plan and discussing the updates and child's progress. I helped Michael's Mum to voice her thoughts and feelings by referring to the notes we had made together and giving her the opportunity to expand on them. At the end of the meeting Michael's Mum felt like it had been really productive and was really positive about having an EHCP that was meaningful.

Parent Feedback

Michael's Mum was very grateful for our support. She explained that she felt she would have been stuck with a worthless plan and not having a voice if she had not had our support. She appreciated the time we gave her to go through all of the paperwork and to help her to feel like she had contributed and was being listened to. She was happy that Michael would have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that was a true reflection of his needs and had meaningful outcomes.