



DIAS gives free, confidential and impartial information, advice and support to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and to their parents and carers

Spring 2018 Newsletter

Expanding the right to appeal to include the health and social care sections of Educational Health and Care (EHC) plans

Following a pilot in 17 local authorities, the government has announced a national trial which will expand the powers of the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

At the moment, parents or young people can appeal what's set out in the sections of an EHC plan that are about special educational needs and the support that's given in nursery, school or college. But, the support that is set out in the health and social care parts of the plan can't be appealed.

From April 2018, a national trial will allow the First-tier Tribunal to make non-binding recommendations on the health and social care parts of EHC plans alongside the educational parts. The trial will run for two years before a decision is made about whether to carry on with the expanded right of appeal.

Out with the old, in with the new!

As from 1st April 2018, statements of special educational needs and Learning Difficulty Assessments will become a thing of the past.

Since September 2014 changes have been taking place to transfer children with statements across to Education Health and Care plans within the legal framework of the Children and Families Act 2014. Devon is on course to complete all transfers across to EHC plans on time.

New young people's resources

Five new factsheets designed especially for young people with SEN are now available.

The number of young people receiving support directly from DIAS is increasing and these factsheets are an important part of what we can offer young people.

Two of the factsheets are Easy Read, which means the information is presented with clear text and plain language and is supported with pictures. The two factsheets are: Information, Advice and Support for young people and What does confidentiality mean?

The other factsheets are short with clear English. The EHC plan factsheets can be used by young people or by anyone who would rather have something short and sweet!

- Information, Advice and Support for young people
- Education, Health and Care plans explained
- Education, Health and Care needs assessments explained.

All of the factsheets are available on our website or by calling our enquiry line.

Free DIAS information events and training for parents and carers

Over the spring 2018 term DIAS is running interactive training sessions and information events for parents and carers.

Better outcomes from meetings is an interactive training session for parents and carers. Using film clips based on real school meetings and discussion, attendees learn about ways to make school meetings better for everyone, such as how to

- get ready for meetings and prepare well
- manage when something unexpected happens or there's disagreement
- understand other people's views and why they behave the way they do
- end a meeting with agreement and a plan

Next Better Outcomes training dates are:

- Tuesday 20th March 10am - 12pm at Exeter Parent Carer Café
- Friday 23rd March 12.45 – 2.45 at St Leonard's Primary School, Exeter.

DIAS has a similar training session available for professionals, called making Meetings Work. If you would like to find out more about booking a session for either parents or professionals at your school or group please contact Jane at jane.ring@devon.gov.uk

Parent Information Events have been running at various locations across Devon for the last two terms. The events have been organised with the SEND Local Offer in collaboration with leads for Early Help. Parents and carers can find out more about how Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support works in Devon, talk to other parents and ask questions. We've been covering:

- What support is there for children with SEND
- What the 'assess, plan, do, and review' cycle is
- What all the recent changes mean
- What the SEND Local Offer is

If you'd like to find out more about hosting an event at your school go to:

<http://devon.cc/sendevents2017>

Looking to volunteer and make a difference?

Every year we run several free, two-day training courses for potential volunteers. Our volunteers make a real difference by supporting parents, carers and young people to navigate the world of special educational needs and disability. Many of our volunteers support parents at school and college meetings, help parents with paperwork and work with them to get their views and those of their child across. Volunteers also help out in our office too, so there are lots of different roles to choose from

If you are looking for a new challenge, want to widen your experience and are interested in developing your skills, contact Amy Carey-Jones on 01392 383080 to find out more.

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Look on our website for new and updated information and resources

- 'How to' Guide to Elective Home Education
- New support section of the DIAS website
- How to Guide to checking a draft EHC plan
- SEND Funding Questions and Answers factsheet