

School Attendance Issues No 2 : NEXT STEPS

If your CYP is struggling to attend school full time or at all, then it is important to keep the school informed and work together to find a suitable arrangement.

1. The first thing to do is talk to the school and share your concerns and the difficulties your CYP is experiencing (see our other fact sheet(s) for responsibilities).
2. If all discussion has been exhausted and you are still concerned that your child is not getting the support required to help them reintegrate back into school then you may have to consider a formal complaint. (see our 'Effective Communication' factsheet series).

If you feel the school are not fulfilling their duties (best endeavours), then you may need to consider making a complaint through the school's own complaint policy. This may mean escalating it to the Governors if you are not happy with the initial response(s).

Please note: 'child' = 'child or young person'

Alternative Provision

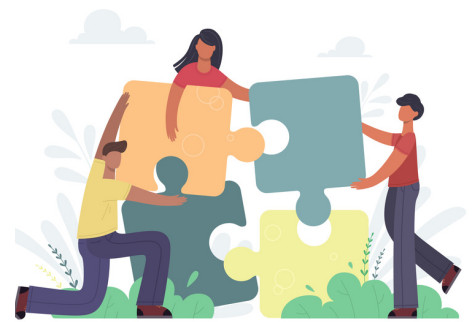
Where a child or young person is not able to attend school because of their health needs (mental or physical) it is the local authority (LA) which has the duty to arrange alternative education, not the school. In reality, the LA request the school to arrange and fund it – but the responsibility lies with the LA. It is the school's responsibility however, to liaise with the LA for this to be organised and in a timely way.

If you and the school have tried all you can to access learning within school, and this is still not working then the school (or yourself as parent/carer) can request the LA arrange alternative education.

Education must be provided as soon as it is clear that your child will be away from school for 15 days or more (whether these days have occurred one after the other, or at separate points over the school year).

If you are not sure whether your child or young person should be learning in person or remotely, you should discuss this as soon as possible with the medical professionals involved and the setting.

IPSEA have a very helpful letter template that you can use to do this. Click on this [link](#) and then click on model letter 22b.



If you feel that the LA are not fulfilling their duty to provide a 'suitable education' then we would encourage you to contact the relevant person to discuss your concerns and seek resolution for your child's education.

If you have not been successful with this then you may wish to consider [making a complaint to the LA](#). If you are unable to access the internet or need help to do so call 01243 777100. You can also call this number if you are supporting someone that will require an interpreter (ask to use the Telephone Interpreting Service).

If you are still not satisfied with the LA's response, then you may want to consider submitting a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO): <https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint>. If you are unable to access the internet then call 0300 061 0614 to talk to a complaints advisor.

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)...

If your child has an EHCP and is struggling to access learning at school then talk to the school about arranging an Emergency Annual Review. It may be that not all the provision is being made, or their needs have changed and therefore a re-assessment may be required.



Requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment if no EHC Plan in place...

If your CYP is struggling to access learning at school, it may be that their needs have not been fully identified or understood. If the school are not able to change or increase their provision then you may need to consider making a request for an Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment to determine if an EHCP is required. Ideally school can make this request, however you do have the parental right to make this request yourself if wanted.

To find out more about SEN Support, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) and how to request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment, please see our [SENDAS factsheets](#).



[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
[Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

[Mental Health & behaviour in Schools](#)

PLEASE NOTE: It is important that you try and keep your child on roll at school (even if school is indicating potential fines and prosecution). If you take your child off roll then you are effectively agreeing to home educate and meet your child's needs yourself.

Service Statement

The role of the SENDIAS service is to ensure that all parents, children and young people have access to impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions related to their situation. Any information that is shared with the service is in confidence unless permission has been obtained to share this with other individuals, services and agencies that may be able to help the family with their circumstances. All our policies and privacy notice, are on our website.

How To Contact Us

Contact-line: 0330 222 8555

Email address: send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk
(parent carers and professionals)
cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk
(children and young people up to 25 years)

Website: www.westsussexsendias.org

SEND: Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

To view all SENDIAS factsheets online: <https://bit.ly/3apJBmu>

or scan QR code:

