

What kind of things should I talk about?

The following general topics may be useful for you as a parent to consider when sharing your views about your child/young person (C/YP):

- Their strengths, skills, and talents.
- History so far—did they meet their developmental milestones?
- Any diagnosis/ health issues that could affect your child's learning and their ability to be in school. If your child does not have a clear diagnosis, think about the types of behaviour you see, and how that affects them at home and school.
- Self-care and independence - what your child/young person can do for themselves?
- What family life is like.
- How they cope with day-to-day routine, holidays, or changes.
- Whether they have friends and if so, what are these relationships like.
- What helps you as a family and what support you get or need.
- What your child/young person does in the wider community—e.g. hobbies, groups, sports, leisure or social activities, volunteering.
- The main things that your child/young person is worried about.
- The main things that you are worried about.

You could give examples of how the child's/young person's difficulties e.g. sensitivity to noise, is shown at home and what you do at home to help manage this.

What about my views on my child's SEN?

When giving your views about your child's SEN and the additional provision they are getting to meet their needs, it may be helpful to think about some of the following questions:

Cognition and Learning

How does your child manage with reading, writing, literacy and numeracy? Do they have any difficulties with memory, planning, organisation or learning new skills?

Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Well-being

Is your child withdrawn, isolated or show challenging or disruptive behaviours? What about their confidence and self-esteem?

Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Does your child find it difficult to communicate with others e.g. not being able to say what they want to or have difficulty understanding what is being said to them?

Sensory

Does your child have any difficulties with hearing, eyesight or multi-sensory impairments? What about sensory triggers?

Physical Needs

Does your child have any physical disabilities or problems with fine (e.g. picking things up between thumb and fingers) or gross motor skills e.g. running and jumping?

Whatever you say, be ambitious for your child. Share your own hopes, dreams and aspirations that you have for them. Think about what is possible and not just what might be available.

Seeking the views of the parent who has a child/young person with special educational needs



Why are my views important?

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.ccea.org.uk

www.childrenslawcentre.org

www.eani.org.uk

www.niccy.org.uk

Why is it important to seek my views?

As a parent, carer, or guardian of a child with special educational needs (SEN), your views are important to help other people and professionals understand your child's strengths, difficulties, hopes and needs.

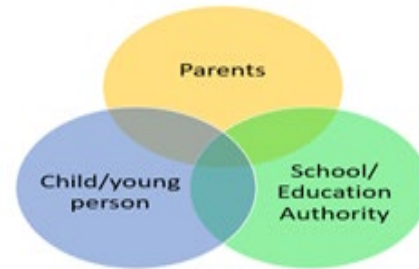
You can provide additional information about your child such as their relationships within your family as well as their social life. This will allow others to see a "bigger picture" of who your child is and learn more about what motivates or discourages them.

Why does the EA and schools have to seek my views about my child who has SEN?

Parents have a duty to ensure their child receives a full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, which is suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude and to any SEN they may have. By understanding your views about the type of provision you believe is most appropriate to meeting your child's needs, the school can make plans to provide the right support at the right time. A good partnership-working between parents, schools and where necessary, the EA, is vital to your child's educational progress and the effectiveness of any programme of support that is put in place.

NB — If your child is 16 years of age and remains in post-compulsory education, the decision-making rights about their education and support will pass to them. You can continue to support, speak for and guide them especially when they cannot make decisions on their own.

When might my views be sought?



The law states that your views about your child and involvement in making decisions about the support they need are important throughout your child's education. Alongside your child/young person and professionals, your views are equally important and should especially be sought in the following situations:

- Creation of and monitoring targets for your child's personal learning plan.
- Specialist assessments, e.g. by an educational psychologist.
- Transitions e.g. pre-school to nursery, primary to post primary, 14+ years of age (if your child has a statement of SEN).
- Provision of interventions from EA or health and social care trusts.
- Statutory Assessment/ annual review (if your child has a statement of SEN).

How much information should I share?

The amount of information that you need to share will depend on what you are being asked to give your views for, if you are sharing your views about your child for the first time or if the focus is on what has changed since the last meeting.

How could I prepare to give my views?

It is important to share your views about your child in a way that works best for you.

Sometimes, you might want to write a few bullet points or lines about the things that you want to share with professionals and on other occasions, you may also simply want to talk to someone about your views.

When writing a lot of information, it can be helpful to include a summary of the main points so that the person reading the information can quickly get a sense of your child.

If English is not your first language or you find it difficult to communicate your thoughts either verbally or in writing, you may want to consider asking someone else to support you by recording your views on:

- what you think is going well;
- what are your concerns (if any);
- what you think may need to be changed about the provision being made; and
- any other questions/ideas that you have.