

Factsheet 3.4

Preparing for a School Meeting

Whether it is regular parent consultations, 'Getting it Right for Every Child' meetings (each authority has a slightly different name for these) or impromptu 'Can I have a quick word...' meetings, it is a good idea to make sure you have the right support in place. Being prepared can reduce stress and increase the likelihood of a more successful outcome.

Preparing for a meeting when you have been given notice:

- Check the relevant people have been invited. For example, Inclusion Teacher, Class Teacher, Social Worker, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Headteacher or Depute Teacher etc.
- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting and how the meeting will support your child. You can ask for the agenda beforehand, so you know what will be discussed.
- Ask for the most recent copy of your child's learning plan or targets so that you can read over this ahead of the meeting.
- Complete the additional help sheet 'Supports and Strategies for School.' This ensures that you have all the necessary information relating to your child's needs clearly outlined for easy reference during the meeting.
- It is a good idea to take along someone to support you e.g. a family member, social worker or AUK advocate. This can help to reduce any tension and ensure you have someone who can take notes for you.

At the meeting:

- Ask everyone to introduce themselves and clarify their role at the meeting.
- Find out if someone is taking notes and ask for a copy of these to be sent to you. If notes are not being taken by the school, ask someone to agree the notes your supporter has taken are accurate.
- If you are unclear of anything that is said, ask for it to be clarified.
- Keep the focus on your child's learning.
- Remember that both you, as parent, and the professionals have expertise to share and are aiming to support your child.
- Establish what the action points are and who is responsible.

Impromptu 'Can I have a word...' meeting:

- Meetings in front of other parents after an incident are not appropriate. Make clear to staff how you would like to receive communication and that you would appreciate warning of any meetings. In your child's plan establish a process for dealing with incidents. These could be logged in an ABC Chart and shared at GIRFEC Meetings.

- Where there is injury to a member of staff, schools will have procedures to follow set by the Local Authority. Empathy will help to move towards a positive outcome for all. A focus on restorative conversations can help to repair relationships too.
- Should you be approached and asked to a meeting on the spot, it is a good idea to have a scripted response ready. Here are some examples:
 - “I can see you’d like to meet with me. I am not available this afternoon. Please contact me by email...”
 - “There is a procedure in place for communication. Please refer to my child’s plan and follow the process outlined there.” “I must attend to my child. He needs my help first. I will contact you when I can.”
 - “You have dealt with the incident in school. We can talk further at our next planning meeting.”
 - “I have been advised to have someone with me when I have a school meeting. We will have to do this another time.”

Other Fact Sheets in this Series

- 3.0 Adopted Children and Education
- 3.1 Recommended books and Websites
- 3.2 Top Tips for Teachers
- 3.3 Funding Support for Adopted Children in School
- 3.4.1 Education Help-sheet Supports and Strategies for my Child
- 3.4.2 Education Help-sheet ABC Chart

Resources

<https://enquire.org.uk/parents/meeting-with-school/>

Visit the Adoption UK websites www.adoptionuk.org.uk/Scotland and <https://adoption.scot/> or call our helpline on 0300 666 0006.



AdoptionUK - Scotland



Scotland@adoptionuk.org.uk



@AUKScot

Adoption UK is a charity and depends on membership, grants and donations to operate our support services. If you have found our information and support helpful and would like to make a donation please visit www.adoptionuk.org or telephone 0131 202 3670.