

Does my Child Need a Statement of Special Educational Needs?

The Statutory Assessment Process Explained



What is a Statutory Assessment?

If your child has special educational needs (SEN), their teachers will plan their education to support them, and to do this they use the guidance given in a document known as the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, which advises them on how they should identify, assess and provide help for children with SEN.

Most children with SEN make progress with the support already available through their school. This can include learning support assistance and advice and help from various professionals such as Specialist Teachers, Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists.

In a very small number of cases, a child may need special help that the school will be unable to provide. If this is the case then Cardiff Council may decide to carry out a Statutory Assessment. This is a full and detailed investigation to find out what your child's special educational needs are and what special help your child needs.

The timescales for completing the assessment are shown on the back of this leaflet, and the whole process normally takes 26 weeks. During this time you will receive letters from the SEN Casework Team and will be asked to fill in and return some forms. If at any point you would like help or support with this, please contact the SEN Casework Team using the contact details in this leaflet.

Who can ask for a Statutory Assessment?

The parent/carer can ask for a Statutory Assessment and so can your child's school. The request needs to be in writing. If the school want to ask for an assessment they should always talk to you first. The Local Health Authority can also request an assessment if it is felt necessary, and again should speak to you before doing this.



If you would like to request a Statutory Assessment it would be a good idea to speak to your child's class teacher or the school's Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCO) first.

What happens after the request for Statutory Assessment?

- Once we receive the request Cardiff Council have six weeks to decide whether to carry out a Statutory Assessment or not.
- Our SEN Panel will make the decision by considering all the information provided, and will either proceed with a Statutory Assessment, ask for more detailed information, or decide that your child's needs can continue to be met through the support available at the school.
- We will tell you our decision in writing within seven working days, and offer you a date to meet with a member of the SEN Casework Team to discuss the reasons for any decisions we make.
- Where the decision has been made not to assess your child, we will talk to you about the way forward to ensure your child is getting the right support they need in school.

What happens during the Statutory Assessment?

As a parent/carer, your views are very important. Any views your child may have will also be important. If the assessment goes ahead, we will ask for advice from you, your child, the school, an Educational Psychologist, a doctor, social services (although they will only give advice if they know your child), and anyone else who may be able to give a clear picture of your child's needs.

You will be able to go with your child to any interview, medical appointment or other test carried out as part of the assessment. It is really important that all appointments are kept as failure to attend will delay the assessment.

What happens once the Statutory Assessment is completed?

We have ten weeks to gather all the information and decide whether to issue a Statement of Special Educational Needs or to issue a Note in Lieu of a Statement.

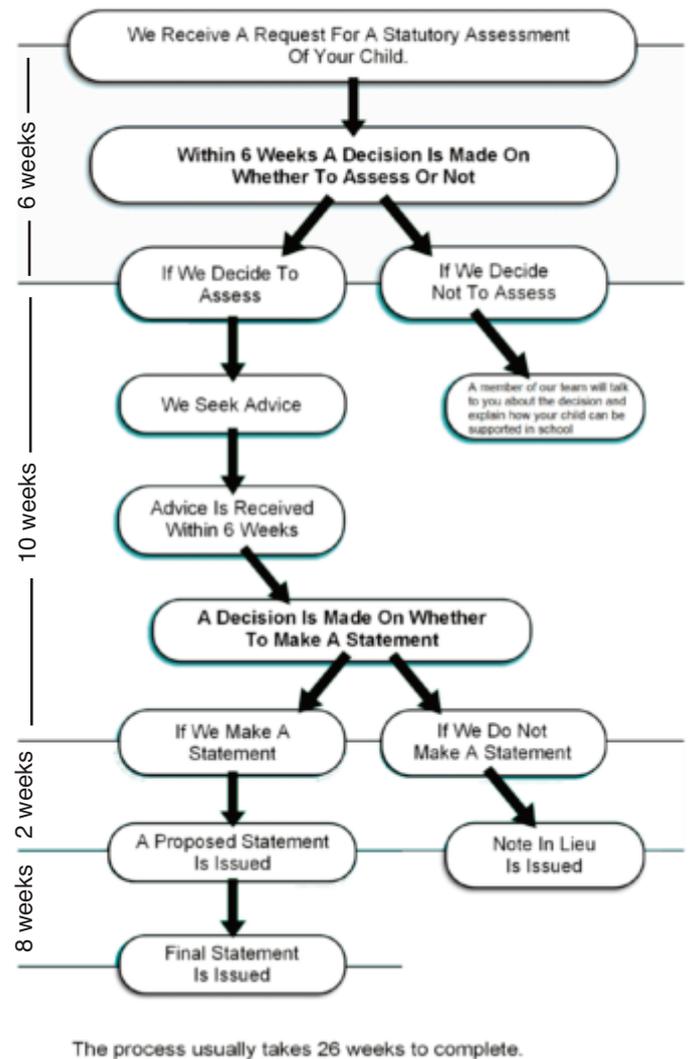
If we decide that a statement should be written, you will receive a copy of a proposed Statement of Special Educational Needs within two weeks of the decision being made. You will also receive a copy of the evidence gathered during the assessment and a leaflet to help you understand the proposed statement.

If we decide that a statement should not be written, then a Note in Lieu will be sent to you. This will explain the reasons why a Statement of Special Educational Needs hasn't been made and will tell you how your child's needs should be met in the school, with other services that the school can access if necessary. You will also receive a leaflet to help you to understand the Note in Lieu.

Who can I contact if I need further help or support?

- The Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCO) at your child's School/Setting. Please contact the school's office to find out who the ALNCO is at your child's school.
- Your Casework Officer based in the SEN Casework Team at County Hall Tel: 029 20872731
- SNAP Cymru who provide an Independent Parent Partnership Service. Tel: 0845 120 3730 or e-mail: helpline@snapcymru.org.

Timetable For Statutory Assessment



For further information about anything included in this leaflet, or to arrange a meeting with us, please contact:

SEN Casework Team

Tel: 029 20872731

Email: ALNHelpline@cardiff.gov.uk