

**Some situations where
mediation or dispute resolution
could be used:**

- Disagreements between school;
parent/carers, young people about
the support they offer
- Refusal to assess child's needs for
extra help at school
- How the extra help is being
delivered
- School/Post 16 placement
- Bullying
- Exclusions

Further Information

If you have any queries, or would like
to have further information about the
mediation/dispute resolution service,
please telephone and speak to the
SEND Co-ordinator who will be happy
to discuss any points you want to
raise.



Contact Details

Send Co-ordinator
Cambridge Family Mediation Service
3rd Floor, Essex House
71 Regent Street
Cambridge
CB2 1AB

Tel: 01223 576308

Fax: 01223 576309

Email: families@cambridgefms.co.uk



**Cambridge
Family Mediation Service
(CFMS)**

**Mediation and Dispute Resolution
Service**

**about
Special Educational Needs and
Disabilities**

**for
Parents and Young People
in Norfolk**

Free, independent, impartial



**Information for Parents
and Young People**

Cambridge Family Mediation Service and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Cambridge Family Mediation Service (CFMS) provides a specialist mediation and Dispute Resolution service about Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This is independent of the local authority (LA) or any other agency working with children or young people.

Our job is to help parents/carers, young people, the LA, the child's school and sometimes other professionals involved with the child to reach agreement about the support they receive.

You may find it useful to contact our service to see if we can help you find a way forward when you cannot find an agreed solution about support for your child or you as a young person.

- Discussions cannot be referred to in Tribunal as they are confidential in all cases, unless there are child protection issues.
- You will be able to discuss you or your child's needs and ensure that your views are fully understood. You will also have the chance to understand other points of view.
- If disagreements cannot be settled and you are thinking of appealing to the Tribunal you will need a certificate, whether or not you decide to actually take up the offer of mediation. We will discuss this further with you.

What do we do?

Mediation and Dispute Resolution involves helping people who disagree to find a solution. We help everyone present to:

- define the key issues for the child.
- understand what you agree or disagree about.
- hear each other's point of view.
- suggest possible solutions.
- discuss how practical they are.
- reach a solution that all can accept.
- work out how to check whether the solution is working.

Who are we?

We are trained mediators, employed by CFMS, who have received special training in the law and practice about SEND.

What happens if there is no agreement?

You only reach an agreement if you want to and you can withdraw from the process at any time. You will not lose any right you have to appeal to the SEND Tribunal by trying mediation.

Will I have to travel to Cambridge?

No, the mediation can be arranged to take place in your area.

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- **How do I contact CFMS?**
- Call or send an email to the SEND co-ordinator at CFMS, as detailed overleaf.
- CFMS will send you a referral form to complete. Norfolk SEND Partnership can help you with this.
- We will then meet with you to hear about your concerns about your child's support and to explain how mediation works.
- **If you do not wish to proceed**, no further steps will be taken.
- **If you do wish to proceed**, we will then inform the LA or school or other relevant agency involved with you and your child or young person, that you wish to use mediation or dispute resolution to try to resolve the disagreements.
- The mediator will then discuss the situation with the person dealing with your case at your child's school/the LA/other relevant agency.
- The mediator will arrange a joint meeting for you to meet with the school/local authority officer/ other relevant professional in the presence of the mediator. There will be a full discussion about all the issues and the mediator will work to find a realistic solution between you.
- If agreement is reached, the mediator will draft an agreement that you and the school/local authority/other relevant agency agree to follow.