

**RUTLAND
PARENT PARTNERSHIP
SERVICE**



**Statutory
Assessment
A Parent's Guide**

WHAT IS STATUTORY ASSESSMENT?

With this booklet you will have received an official letter from Rutland County Council saying that the statutory assessment process has started.

What does this mean?

It means that Rutland County Council is going to ask for information about your son or daughter's Special Educational Needs from yourselves, the Health Authority, the Educational Psychology Service, school and anyone else who has been involved with their education (by law, social workers will be contacted to see if they have any information about your son or daughter on their records that is relevant to their education. This does not mean that a social worker will become involved with your family unless they are already).

Why are they doing this?

Rutland County Council, by law, has a duty to have a clear understanding of your son or daughter's Special Educational Needs and how best to meet them.

Who can I talk to?

The letter from Rutland County Council gives the name of the Officer who is responsible for gathering all the information. This person can help you by answering queries that you may have. You may also wish to contact Rutland Parent Partnership Service (based at the Citizens Advice Bureau), which works closely with families whose children are undergoing statutory assessment and is independent of Rutland County Council.

Who requested an assessment?

The statutory assessment is a very detailed examination of your child's Special Educational Needs (SEN) made by the Local Authority (LA).

The request for statutory assessment has been made either by:

- A Head Teacher: making a referral to the LA following the last review meeting of your child's Special Educational Needs (**School Action Plus**)

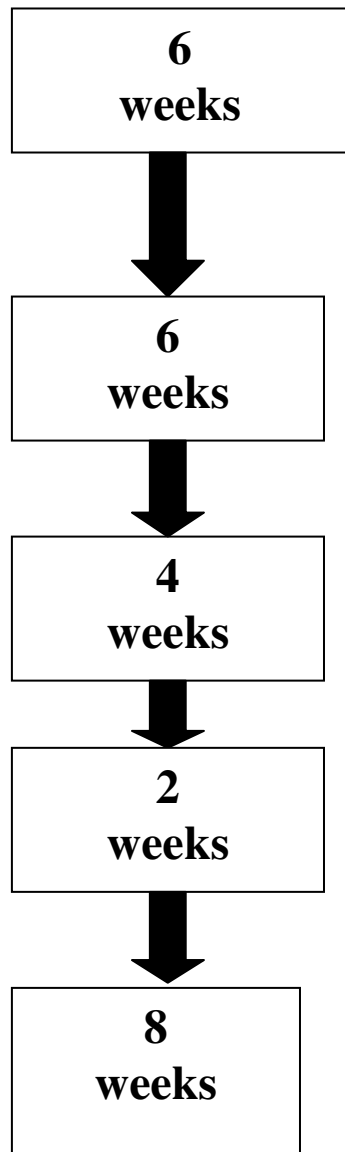
Or

- Another professional involved with your child. For example, for children under 5 who are not yet attending school, this is usually the Educational Psychologist.

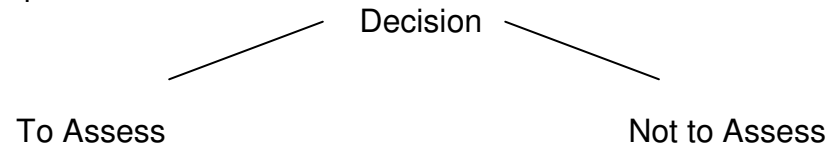
Or

- The parent referring their child for statutory assessment by writing to the LA with any relevant information.

How long will assessment take?



LA receives a request for an Assessment.



LA seek advice from Parents, School, Educational Psychologist, the Health Authority, Social Worker and others where necessary

Reports sent to the Team leader (SEN) to make initial decision as to whether a Statement is required and if necessary prepare a proposed Statement

The LA makes a final decision whether or not to issue a statement. The LA then either:

- (a) Issues a proposed Statement
- (b) Writes to parents with reasons why a Statement is not issued (Note in Lieu)

Parents comment on the proposed statement and inform the LA of their preferred choice of school (you have 15 days to do this).

LA then consults Head Teacher and Governing Body (and other LA when necessary) of school to be named (15 days to respond).

Final Statement is issued

As you can see, a statutory assessment will be completed within six months except in exceptional circumstances. At any stage, your views are always welcome and there are people on hand to provide help or advice as necessary. It is important that you feel part of this assessment process and you should include any information you feel is relevant to your child. You will receive copies of all reports about your child that will form part of the statutory assessment process and the LA will be writing to you regularly to keep you informed.

Who makes the decision?

When all the reports have been received they are first sent to Team Leader (SEN) will then make an initial decision whether or not a Statement is needed and either prepare a proposed Statement or a Note in Lieu. The proposed Statement is shared with the Medical Adviser to the LA to ensure that the wording for non-educational needs & provision is appropriate.

The proposed Statement is then issued to all those who have contributed to the statutory assessment including, of course, you as parents.

What is a Statement?

A Statement is in six parts.

Part 1 - gives your and your child's name and address etc.

Part 2 - describes your child's special educational needs

Part 3 - is split into three:

- a) Objectives, which are targets the LA want your child to achieve while they need a Statement.
- b) Provision, the special arrangements and help your child needs.
- c) Monitoring, the arrangements to oversee, review and measure your child's progress regularly.

Part 4 - the name and type of school where your child will be educated.

Part 5 - describes difficulties your child might have with any non-educational needs.

Part 6 - non-educational provision, gives details of how the non-educational needs will be provided and by whom.

The Statement will be issued in two versions. The first of these is the Proposed Statement and the second is the Final Statement.

When you receive the proposed Statement you will also receive a form where you can say whether or not you agree with this. You can also record any comments you wish to make. At this point, Part 4 will be blank and you should inform the Team leader (SEN) of your preferred choice of school on the form.

How do I choose which school?

You will be sent a list of schools with the Proposed Statement. You can select your preferred choice of school from this list. The Proposed Statement will not suggest a school for your child.

Selecting the right school for your child is very important. All Rutland and other LA schools publish information including their Special Educational Needs policies. You are encouraged to visit a number of schools. You are entitled to state a preference for a school which the LA must agree with as long as:

- The school you select can give your child the teaching and support he or she needs
- This will not interfere with the teaching of other children already at the school
- Resources are used efficiently

The LA will consider your wishes with regard to your preferred school, but has no legal duty to place your child at a non-maintained or independent school if there is a suitable state school available locally. LAs are under a duty to include children with Special Educational Needs within mainstream schools wherever possible. It is only in exceptional circumstances where a special school or unit is the recommended provision.

If you have concerns regarding the Proposed Statement and you wish to meet with the Team leader (SEN) to discuss your child's Proposed Statement this can be easily arranged. Before a school can be named in Part 4 of the Statement, the Governing Body and Head Teacher must be consulted by the LA.

What if I disagree?

You may disagree with the LA about your child's Final Statement. Where you cannot reach an agreement and you are still not satisfied with the decision, you can appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal. This is an independent body in London especially set up for this purpose. Information about the Tribunal will be sent to you when the Final Statement is issued.

It is also possible to use mediation services. If you are unable to resolve your concerns after discussion with the LA and the Parent Partnership Service, please ask the LA Officer to provide you with details of the SEN Mediation Service. This does not affect your right to appeal to a tribunal.

What if a Statement is not made after an assessment?

Sometimes the LA may decide that your child's needs can be met in school without the need for a Statement. A Note in Lieu may be issued along with copies of the assessment reports. A Note in Lieu will set out your child's difficulties and the necessary arrangements that the school should put in place.

What happens in the future?

Once a Final Statement is issued, the additional help which the Statement makes will be allocated to the school. It would be expected that the school draw up a new Individual Education Plan for your child, incorporating the recommendations and guidance set out in the Statement Appendices.

Within 12 months of the Final Statement being issued, an Annual Review will be called. All those involved with your child's education will be asked to prepare updated reports on his/her Special Educational Needs. The reports will be discussed with you at the Annual Review meeting, the Statement will be looked at again to make sure it remains accurate and continues to be needed. The Annual Review will set new targets for the next 12 months and, if necessary, put forward to the LA recommendations for the Statement to be amended.

How long will a Statement Last?

For some children, owing to the complexity and severity of their Special Educational Needs, they will need a Statement for as long as they attend school. For many children, a Statement gives them the additional help needed until it is no longer required and their needs can be met through the usual school intervention and support. The LA expects that a Statement will help a child to make sufficient progress so that a Statement is no longer required and can be discontinued.

Where your child is attending a secondary school whose age range is for 11 to 16 year olds, the statement will be discontinued when your child reaches statutory school leaving age.

What happens if there's a change of school?

The Annual Review process makes sure that when a child moves from, say Primary to Secondary school, that the transfer is well planned. Provided a Statement continues to be needed, it will be amended by the LA to name the new school in Part 4. If a house move leads to a change of school, you must arrange a meeting with the new Head Teacher or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) as soon as possible, as well as making sure that the current school and the LA know you are going to move. This way the LA can ensure that the new school is suitable for your child's needs and that they continue to receive the extra help their Statement outlines.

What if I Move out of Rutland?

If you inform the Team leader (SEN), your new LA will be contacted and sent details of your child's Statement and special needs. This will allow them to make the necessary arrangements for your child in time for your move.

Transition Planning and Post-16 Opportunities

All young people have the right to a choice of opportunities after the age of 16. Annual review meetings of your child's Statement after their fourteenth birthday are particularly important, involving a wider range of professionals, including the Connexions Service. The aim of this meeting will be to make plans for the time your child reaches school leaving age. The meeting will prepare a Transition Plan with clear indications of actions and responsibilities.

A Transition Plan must be prepared for all young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs following the annual Statement review in year 9. The aim of the plan is to help the young person prepare for a successful transition to adult life.

The views of the young person must be sought at this stage.

The Head must invite certain key people to the review meeting as follows:

- the young person's parents/carers
- the young person's school SENCO
- a representative from the Local Authority
- Connexions personal advisor
- A representative from a Social Worker and Health Authority if appropriate
- Any other appropriate agencies

Further education is available for all young people over the age of 16. Everyone involved in transition planning will consider the possibilities for further education. As well as further education post 16 opportunities can include courses within mainstream schools, special schools, training and employment.

If you have any questions about the choices open to your child after 16 the Connexions Service and the school can give you and your child advice. Connexions can be contacted on **01572 756655**

The 1996 Disabled Persons Act

The 1986 Disabled Persons Act requires the LA to refer statemented pupils to the Children and Young People's Service at the first annual review after their fourteenth birthday. The Children and Young People's Service has to determine whether the young person is likely to need continued support or provision after the end of full time education. Such support and service is provided to make adult life easier and smoother, for example day care facilities, residential accommodation, respite care or special equipment at home.

When the LA receives the first transition plan for your child their Statement will be amended in Parts 5 and 6 to include routine referral to a social worker under the terms and conditions of the 1986 Disabled Persons Act. Information will be gathered by the social worker and the Director of Children and Young People's Service will then decide whether a young person will or will not need continued help and support when they leave school.

You as parents will obviously be informed of this decision. The LA, working in partnership with yourselves, school and the Connexions Service will continue to prepare your son or daughter for leaving school.

For further information regarding this process and the variety of services on offer contact the Children and Young People's Service on **01572 722577**.

For further information about Statutory Assessment you can contact:

**Children and Young People's Service
Rutland County Council
Catmose
Oakham
Rutland LE15 6HP**

Tel: 01572 758496

Fax: 01572 758479

Email: enquiries@rutland.gov.uk

Web Page: www.rutland.gov.uk/education

**Sheila Fletcher
Parent Partnership Service
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56 High St
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Rutland LE15 6AL**

Tel: 01572 757420

Fax: 01572 722568

Email: sf@rutlandcab.org.uk

Web Page: www.rutlandcab.org.uk