

Case Study: Empowering

Really good example of an IS clearly explaining things to mum and YP including the importance of having up to date advice and the significance of different sections of the EHCP. The IS patiently persisted supporting and informing mum and YP even though they kept ignoring what she was saying. Hopefully the transition to college will go well and the support will be provided as expected and trusted by mum.

Jenna's Story

Jenna has a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Social communication is her main difficulty along with understanding what is expected of her at school.

Independent Support (IS) was provided to both Jenna and mum together but mum took the lead in the process with Jenna's permission. Although Jenna can work at a high level in her area of interest – Art and Design – she cannot fully understand the EHCP process or communicate her needs to a person she is not familiar with. Jenna communicated her aspirations via school and made a minimal contribution at the IS meeting.

First IS meeting with mum and Jenna was late on in the transfer review process and mum had already received a proposed draft EHCP. IS helped mum to review the draft, noting that the Educational Psychology (EP) advice used was 4-5 years old. Questions were posed to mum about whether she felt Jenna's needs had changed in this time and whether she felt the report was still sufficient.

Mum felt Jenna's needs had certainly changed between year 8 and 6th form and that new advice would be important to inform strategies and support in the college environment. Jenna will transfer to college this coming September (2016).

It was explained to mum that she could request new EP advice to inform the EHCP. Mum asked her IS to make the request on her behalf to the LA as she didn't feel comfortable putting the request into writing and was under pressure supporting her sister at the time. IS made the request to the EHCP coordinator for new EP advice on behalf of Jenna and family.

Response from the EHCP co-ordinator was to ask the family to submit evidence that needs had changed in order to request a new EP assessment. IS offered mum another meeting to help her record the changes on paper to send to the EHCP co-ordinator. Jenna was present at this meeting and explained the factors that made maintaining focus in lessons difficult. As a result of the discussion at this second meeting, mum expressed that new EP advice may not be necessary if they could add to the plan the points discussed by all.

IS explained to mum that in order to have the points added into the sections of the plan that would legally secure the provision in college, she would need them in writing from the EP. Mum acknowledged this but felt sure that Jenna would be well supported at college.

IS wrote to the EHCP co-ordinator to express mum's views and included a summary of the strategies discussed. The EHCP co-ordinator added the concerns and suggested strategies in detail to section A of the plan and re-sent the draft.

IS made clear to mum what it meant to have the addition made just to section A and not included in section's B or E. Mum was happy with this and so the revised draft was signed and returned. Jenna's final EHCP was then issued.