

Case Study: Empowering

This case study demonstrates how the IS skilfully moved this parent from worried and uninformed to relieved and enabled by clearly explaining the broader remit of the EHCP compared to that of a statement and how the IS reassured, encouraged and empowered him to share his concerns. The IS also stressed the importance of making all professionals involved aware of the impact Kemal's needs were having on their family.

Kemal's Story

Kemal is 9 years old and attends a special needs primary school. He has a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Kemal's dad came to visit the Independent Supporter's (IS) office initially to get some information about EHCPs and a quick chat as he was unsure exactly how the IS service would be able to help him and his family.

The IS explained the process and principles behind the EHCPs and explained how their service could provide support throughout. Dad was surprised to learn that EHCPs incorporated health and social care as well as education. He had thought it would be similar to a statement and focus only on education and "school targets" such as reading and writing. The IS also explained about the impending EHCP meeting and how they're person centred compared to the old-style annual review of a statement. Dad also said he'd got a form to fill in from the LA but wasn't sure what to write. The IS explained that this form was really important in gathering his views, as a parent. The IS offered to complete the form with him but dad said he was happy to do it at home on the computer but would like some guidance on it.

The IS began to go through the form and encouraged dad to talk about how Kemal's condition impacts at home and on life in general outside of school. The IS gave some examples of what was meant by "home life" such as sleeping, eating, behaviour. At this point dad started to open up to the IS about Kemal's very poor sleep pattern and subsequently his disruptive night-time behaviour. He explained what a huge impact this was having on both himself and Kemal's mum and although they were both trying their best to manage, their on-going exhaustion was impacting on their jobs and general health and wellbeing. The IS said it sounded like Kemal's sleep was a very important issue that needed to be addressed, therefore, it was important to include it in Kemal's EHCP assessment. Dad seemed very pleased about this. He went on to say that he wished that "someone could take Kemal out, so that he doesn't miss out". He added that he would be willing to pay for this to happen. The IS then showed dad the range of services available in the Local Offer. The IS suggested that, for example, the short breaks services could be what he was looking for and they were available free of charge. The IS provided dad with a copy of the "Short Breaks Matrix" from the LA. Dad was delighted with this. The IS stressed to dad the importance of sharing all of his worries and issues, including Kemal's sleep related concerns, when completing the parental input form, as well as mentioning it at the actual EHCP meeting. Dad reiterated how happy he was that the EHCP didn't just cover education as he had initially believed. He told the IS as he was leaving, "you don't know how much you have helped me today, I'm so glad I came in".

The IS followed this up a few days later by offering Kemal the chance to register for local short breaks services within their organisation. Dad and Kemal were very happy to go forward with this. Dad updated the IS to confirm the EHCP meeting had gone very well and that he would like the IS to come and review the draft plan once he had received it.