

- How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the school's partnerships with families?
- How do you work with families to support effective transition for young people?
- How does the school and its staff ensure that they understand their role in local SEND processes?
- How do you adapt the curriculum whilst ensuring high expectations for all?
- How do you develop ongoing positive relationships with families and ensure effective communication?
- How do you ensure that you have a well-developed understanding of the family and any challenges that they may face?
- How can you reassure me that you will keep my child healthy and safe?

We hope that these example questions are a useful starting point for discussion, but should you be in need of any further support then the following organisations may be useful:

- Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA) [ipsea.org.uk](http://ipsea.org.uk)
- Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS) [tinyurl.com/jbevezs](http://tinyurl.com/jbevezs)
- Contact [contact.org.uk](http://contact.org.uk)

National or local charities specialising in supporting the needs of children with particular conditions may also be able to offer advice.

Please also consider contacting your local Parent Carer Forum [nnpcf.org.uk](http://nnpcf.org.uk) in order to develop links with other parents. Sharing your experiences has the potential to help all families of children with SEND.



## A guide to making conversations with schools count for all families

in partnership with:



Funded by



Department  
for Education

This leaflet, funded by the Department for Education and developed by families, is intended to help build a mutually respectful partnership between families and the school, college or other education settings. On occasion, relationships between families and schools are not as successful as they need to be. By building trust this can change and a new way of working together can be developed.

This can be better for everyone, especially the children and young people. Effective partnerships can help to reduce misunderstandings, disagreements and complaints. In this leaflet, as part of NHS England's Ask Listen Do project and in partnership with the Whole School SEND consortium, we have identified a range of questions that families may want to ask those who support their children at school.

This is intended to enable families to ask effective questions in order to find out more about what the school is doing, how it is evaluated and what impact it has on their child's learning and wellbeing. By supporting families and schools to work together, the aim is to reduce conflict and improve outcomes for children. One way of achieving this is by communicating honestly, openly and often.

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The questions below and overleaf are examples of the types of questions you may wish to ask to support that process.

- How do you ensure that you understand the individual strengths and needs of my child?
- What resources and/or information are being used to help support my child and how does this support my child's happiness and learning?
- How do you evaluate the impact of any interventions?
- How do you record and celebrate success?
- Can you describe how you get the best out of my child and how you know this works well?
- How will my child be enabled to participate fully in school life, including trips and activities?
- How do you demonstrate a commitment to working in equal partnership with families to secure the best outcomes for my child?
- How do you ensure that you hear and respond to the views of each individual child?
- How do you create an inclusive learning environment that has considered the individual needs of my child?

- How do you adapt the implementation of school policies in order to make any reasonable adjustments necessary to support individual children?
- How do you analyse incidents of challenging behaviour and understand why they happen?
- How do you know whether any reward or sanction systems are meaningful for my child?
- How do you support the bringing together of families to strengthen the parental community?
- What training opportunities related to SEND does the school provide its staff with?
- How do you work in partnership with other services in order to improve outcomes for children with SEND?
- How do you support families to find other sources of information or help?
- How do you celebrate difference within the school and the wider community, and how do you challenge negative attitudes towards SEND?
- Do you ask my child how they feel about school and what is done with that information?