



WIGAN PARENT PARTNERSHIP SERVICE

What is the role of the Parent Partnership Service?

The service is available for any Wigan parents whose child/ren has or may be identified as having additional or special educational needs (SEN).

Wigan Parent Partnership Service aims to encourage and develop partnership between parents, schools, the local authority and all other partners who are involved in working to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of children.

The service offers impartial information, guidance and support to parents of children who have special/additional educational needs.

The service respects confidentiality at all times and discussions with other professionals involved with the child would only take place with parental permission.

The service is available for parents of children/young people with additional needs, including the very young.

The Aim is: to enable parents to become more effective partners in the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs and provision required in meeting those needs by offering any or all of the following:

- ♦ personal and confidential help (i.e. telephone help line, accompany parents to meetings, school or home visits as appropriate, assistance with letter writing).
- ♦ information and guidance for parents about the special needs process and statutory assessment procedures.
- ♦ other sources of information about SEN at local, regional or national levels, e.g., how Wigan Authority procedures and practices meet the special educational needs of children and young people.

The Range of Support:

The range and duration of support will vary dependent on the individual needs of the case. Parents are always welcome to seek further assistance from the service.

How to make a referral:

Primarily the service operates by a parent 'self referral' process. However, on occasion it may be considered appropriate for a professional to make contact with the service on behalf of the parent.

Contact may be made by any appropriate means, eg telephone, letter, fax or e-mail.

The service will act upon such requests only on the full understanding that parental consent has been given. The Service Manager will then offer support.

Work with Parents may include:

- ♦ Providing full access to information and individual support, offering a range of flexible services, ensuring parents are provided with accurate, neutral information, on their rights, roles and responsibilities within the SEN process and have awareness of the range of options available to them.

- ♦ Publicising the service for parents.
- ♦ Providing and developing information packages and leaflets, (these can be made available in alternative formats as and when required).
- ♦ Supporting parents to make their views known.
- ♦ Providing a telephone help line.
- ♦ Encouraging partnership and dialogue between parents, Local Authorities, schools, early years providers, voluntary organisations and other agencies.
- ♦ Encouraging and sustaining parent consultative and support groups offering opportunity for parents to influence SEN policy and practice.
- ♦ Ascertaining the child's wishes and views where appropriate, and in conjunction with their parents. However, it often will be more appropriate for the service to refer this request to other more relevant services.

Our work with Parents will be done in a way which promotes the following principles and values:

- ♦ **Equality** - The service operates an open access policy. It aims to ensure that all parents have the same ease of access and are not restricted for any reason. The intention being to remove any barriers (real or perceived) e.g. disability, cultural or language differences. The service listens to parents' views and values parents' contribution and feelings.
- ♦ **Impartiality** - The intention is to provide information to enable parents to make their own informed choices. It is not the role of the service to give direct advice concerning an individual child, but to remain impartial in respect of information and support it provides.
- ♦ **Confidentiality** - Client confidentiality is respected. Information will be shared only with the understanding and consent of the parents.
- ♦ **Independence** - The service can 'signpost' parents to alternative sources of support.

Point of Contact

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It may not always be possible to speak with the Service Manager during the times specified, due to outside office appointments etc. However, the Service does operate an answer machine service, so that messages may be left at any time. (Answer Machine facilities 24 hrs per day, 7 days per week.)

The service is normally available from: Monday - Friday: 8.45am -5.00pm (flexible working)