

Special Educational Needs Statutory Panels

There is often a 'mystery' that surrounds Local Authority SEND Panels and Somerset County Council hopes that this information leaflet will help to dispel this.

<p>What is the Panel?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Special Educational Needs & Disability Code of Practice 9.60 states that Local Authority may set up moderation groups to support transparency in decision making ➤ Transparency and equity are important to Somerset County Council and it has set up two Statutory Panels to support its decision making in respect of SEND ➤ The panels are multi-agency panels which meet weekly to make decisions in relation to SEND
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<p>Two Panels?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Both panels meet weekly ➤ It is not possible to give you an exact panel date as volumes of work vary; whilst adhering to statutory timeframes cases are scheduled for the next available panel ➤ SEND Statutory Panel which makes decisions in respect of EHCPs – whether to agree to assess a young person's needs and whether to issue a plan if assessment is agreed, including nature and type of provision and potential placement ➤ Placement & Travel Panel which makes decisions on placement, additional resources as part of the assessment process or following annual review recommendations
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Who are the Panel?



- The panel is made up of multi-agency professionals. The panel is always chaired by a Local Authority Senior Manager
- Panel Members:
 - SEND/Additional Learning Needs Strategic Managers
 - SEND Operational Managers
 - SEND Senior Assessment & Reviewing Officers
 - DMO (Designated Medical Officer) - Health
 - DCO (Designated Clinical Officer) – Health
 - Early Help Assessment Officer – Childrens Social Care
 - Team Manager – Childrens Social Care
 - Senior Educational Psychologist - Education
 - SEND Support Services Managers – Education
 - Specialist Commissioning Officer – Transport
 - Head of the Virtual School – Education/Childrens Social Care
 - Early Years SENCO – Education
 - Head Teacher - Schools
 - Special School Head Teacher – Schools
 - Finance Officer – Local Authority
 - Panel Administrator – Local Authority
- The Panel must have a minimum number of members in order to meet weekly and make decision. Not all members attend every Panel
- All decisions are recorded and signed off by the Chair of the Panel

What information do the Panel consider?



The panel considers a range of information that can be provided by a range of people including parents, schools and other professionals involved with the young person. This may include (list not exhaustive):

- Any information that the parent/young person wishes the panel to consider
- Evidence of graduated pathway at SEND support that demonstrates how the school/provision has supported the young person and what strategies they have implemented to support the young person

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Professional reports from anyone involved with the young person (reports should be recent, ie within the last 6-12 months) <p>This information is critical in helping the panel reach a decision in a transparent and equitable way. All decisions are evidence based.</p>
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<p>What happens after Panel?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Once the panel decisions have been signed off for accuracy by the relevant Panel Chair then the decisions are 'released' for distribution ➤ It can take up to 48 hours for decisions to be reviewed and signed off, therefore decisions are not available on the day of the panel meeting ➤ A member of the team will contact parents/young person to discuss the decision and the next steps ➤ You will also receive the decision in writing. This will provide you with a detailed explanation as to why the decision was made and outline the next steps for you
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<p>Who monitors the Panel?</p> 	<p>Panel is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that decision making is consistent, transparent, equitable and legal. The panel is subject to observation and audit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cabinet Member for Childrens Services ➤ Assistant Director, Inclusion ➤ SEND Strategic Manager <p>On a quarterly basis there is a formal quality assurance visit from Parent/Carer forums and a report is submitted to Senior Management following this</p> <p>OFSTED will also scrutinize the Local Authority's Panel processes as part of their SEND Inspection processes</p>
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