



**STOKE-ON-TRENT
PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

Statutory Assessment

This leaflet explains the process of statutory assessment, who will be involved and how parents can request a statutory assessment for their child.

What is a statutory assessment?

A statutory assessment is a very detailed assessment of a child under The Education Act (1996). It uses detailed reports to determine a child's special educational needs and the provision that is necessary to meet these needs. A statutory assessment may lead to statement of special educational needs.

It is important to remember that a statutory assessment does not guarantee a statement of special educational needs.

What is a statement of special educational needs?

A statement of special educational needs is a legal document which describes your child's special needs and the educational provision and any other arrangements needed to meet those needs.

A statement has 6 parts:

- Part 1:** An introduction with the name of your child, your address, and other relevant details
- Part 2:** A list of special educational needs, which describes all of your child's difficulties
- Part 3:** The special education support that will meet the needs as set out in part 2. The long-term objectives to meet your child's needs and the arrangements for meeting targets and for reviewing your child's progress.
- Part 4:** The type of placement, school or alternative provision.
- Part 5:** The non-educational needs of the child: those needs agreed with health services, social services or other agencies
- Part 6:** The non-educational support to meet any non-educational needs

Which children need a statutory assessment?

The majority of children with SEN will not require a statutory assessment. This is because the school will be able to provide the extra help that they will require. This help would be given through Early Years Action or School Action or Early Years Action Plus/School Action Plus (also known as the 'graduated response').

Some children, however, will have more severe or complex needs. Children who have received help through the 'Early Years Action Plus/School Action Plus but still haven't made adequate progress may require even more support. It is at this point that a statutory assessment will be considered.

In some exceptional circumstances a statutory assessment may be necessary for a child who has not received additional help through the 'graduated response'. In these cases the child's needs will have changed dramatically (eg for health or social reasons)

Who can request a statutory assessment?

The manager or head teacher of your child's nursery or school can request a statutory assessment for your child. The school should consult with you before making this request. This may be discussed at your child's individual education plan (IEP) review.

Parents can also request a statutory assessment of their child's special educational needs under section 329 of The Education Act (1996) - see [Page 4](#) for more information.

The process of statutory assessment is slightly different for children under two years of age - please see our leaflet 'SEN in the Early Years' for more information. It can be downloaded from our website:

www.parent-partnership-stoke.co.uk/publications

How do I request a statutory assessment for my child?

If you feel that your child requires a statutory assessment you should write to the Local Authority, giving your reasons why you feel the assessment is necessary. It is advisable to keep a copy of any letters that you send. Please see Page 5 for an example model letter.

You need to send this letter to:

The SEN Monitoring and Assessment Team
Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Floor 2
Civic Centre
Glebe Street
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 1RN

A model letter requesting a statutory assessment is available to download on our website:

<http://www.parent-partnership-stoke.co.uk/publications/model-letters>

What will happen next?

The Local Authority will begin by collecting information from yourself and your child's school. This will help them to decide whether they will carry out a statutory assessment of your child's needs. The process of statutory assessment is shown in the flow chart on Page 6.

Model letter for requesting a statutory assessment

Your address

Date

Re: Child's name

Dear [head teacher's name],

As the parent of [child's name] I wish to request a statutory assessment of [his/her] special educational needs, under Section 328 of the Education Act 1996.

[Child's name] is [??] years old and attends [???] school.

I understand that [child's name]'s special educational needs are as follows [include any learning/behaviour/social/emotional/communication/physical/medical needs that you think that your child has as well as how long your child has been experiencing these difficulties].

The school has already tried to address [child's name]'s problems in the following ways:

[insert all of the things that you know school have done to help your child. E.g. seeing an educational psychologist, referral to CAMHS, IEPs (include some of the targets and strategies listed on the IEP or even a copy of the IEP), 1-to1 support from a teaching assistant etc].

I believe that [insert the level or type of help/support] is needed to ensure that [child's name] makes adequate progress in [his/her] education and reaches [his/her] full potential.

I look forward to hearing from you to establish whether a statutory assessment of [child's name] special educational needs will go ahead.

Yours Sincerely,

[Your name]

How long does a statutory assessment take?

The Education Act (1996) states that a statutory assessment should take 26 weeks in total. This can be broken down into smaller stages, as shown below .

The Local Authority receives a request for a statutory assessment



6 weeks

The Local Authority will gather evidence so that they can decide whether they will complete a statutory assessment. If school have requested the assessment, **you will have 29 days to tell the LA whether you want your child to be assessed.**



10 weeks

If the statutory assessment is agreed, the Local Authority will gather reports from yourself as well as different professionals involved with your child (see page 6 for more information on who is involved). **You will have 6 weeks to complete the 'Parental Advice' form.** The Local Authority will review these reports and a moderation panel will decide whether to issue a statement of special needs for your child.



2 weeks

If the Local Authority decide to issue a statement they will first issue a draft copy that you can give feedback on. This document is called a 'proposed statement' (see our leaflet ['Proposed Statements'](#) for more information on how to check through a proposed statement) **You will have 15 days to give your feedback.**



8 weeks

The time between issuing a proposed statement and the issue of a final statement should be around 8 weeks.

Who will be involved in my child's statutory assessment?

As part of the assessment the Local Authority must ask for advice from the following people:

- Yourself as parent/carer
- Your child's school
- An Educational Psychologist
- A school doctor
- Other professionals involved with your child (speech therapist, physiotherapist, hearing impaired teacher etc)

The Social Services department will also be told that an assessment is taking place for your child. They will only provide information if they are already involved with your family.

They will give their information in written reports. Some of them will need to work with your child - you should be told when and where this will happen. You will be invited to attend along with your child.

You should try wherever possible to ensure that your child attends any appointments relating to his/her statutory assessment. Missed appointments may result in the statutory assessment taking longer to complete.

How can I be involved in my child's statutory assessment?

Right at the beginning of the process, when the Local Authority receive a request for a statutory assessment for your child, they will write to you to ask you whether you agree for the assessment to proceed. You will have **29 days** to give you opinion.

If the Local Authority decide to go ahead with the assessment, they will send you some forms to complete. This form will ask for information about your child, starting from when they were a baby. You will have **6 weeks** to complete these forms and send them back to the Local Authority. You can download an electronic copy of these forms from the following webpage: <http://www.sgfl.org.uk/subsites/view/file.aspx?file=4745>

You should include as much information in this form as you can, so that the Local Authority have enough information to decide whether to issue a statement of special educational needs for your child.

Also, any delay in sending back your forms may delay the statutory assessment process, meaning that the assessment will take longer to complete.

If the Local Authority decides to issue a statement of special educational needs they will first send you a proposed statement. You can find more information on proposed statements in our 'Proposed Statements' leaflet. This can be downloaded from our website: www.parent-partnership-stoke.co.uk/publications

How will I be kept informed about my child's statutory assessment?

The Local Authority will write to you at key decision points during the statutory assessment process. They will inform you whether the assessment will be going ahead and, if the assessment is carried out, whether they will be issuing a statement for your child. They will give reasons for each decision and also inform you of your rights to appeal the decisions with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal, as well as the contact details for the Parent Partnership Service.

If you have additional needs and require the information regarding your child's statutory assessment to be sent to you in an alternative form (large print, Braille, or by telephone call) you should make the Local Authority aware of this.

Similarly, if you require an interpreter, or for letters to be translated, you should inform the Local Authority of this.

Who can help me with my child's statutory assessment?

Your Local Authority Named Officer will be able to answer questions regarding your child's statutory assessment. You can also contact the Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service's telephone helpline on **01782 234701** for information and advice. The Parent Partnership Service may be able to provide support in completing the statutory assessment forms. You will also be able to find more information from the web links on Page 10.

What if the Local Authority decide that my child doesn't need a statutory assessment or refuse to issue a statement for my child?

If the Local Authority decide that your child doesn't require a statutory assessment you have the right to appeal the decision with the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

You can also appeal to the tribunal if the Local Authority have completed a statutory assessment but have decide not to issue a statement of special educational needs. You can find more information about this in our 'Resolving Disagreements' leaflet, which can be downloaded from our website: www.parent-partnership-stoke.co.uk/publications. You can also visit the Tribunal Service's website for more information: www.sendist.gov.uk/

Useful weblinks

The Government's information website – SEN: assessments

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SpecialEducationalNeeds/DG_4000835

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/dfes%200581%202001

Early Support Programme's information booklet on Statutory Assessment for children under 2 and those over 2

This is also available to download in a variety of languages including Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, French, Polish, Punjabi, Somali, Tamil, Urdu. You can also order audio versions.

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/ES26

Special Educational Needs (SEN): A guide for parents and carers booklet, produced by the government

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00639-2008

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) – 'Getting extra help' leaflet

www.ace-ed.org.uk/advice-about-education-for-parents/advice-booklets-and-briefings/getting-extra-help

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) – 'Asking for a Statutory Assessment' leaflet

www.ace-ed.org.uk/advice-about-education-for-parents/advice-booklets-and-briefings/asking-for-a-statutory-assessment

Stoke-on-Trent SEN Monitoring & Assessment website – downloadable statutory assessment forms and information

www.sgfl.org.uk/subsites/view/default.asp?doc=1522

People Involved with my Child's Statutory Assessment

Person	Name	Contact Number
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator		
Local Authority Named Officer		
Educational Psychologist		
Paediatrician		
Speech and Language Therapist		
Physiotherapist		
Occupational Therapist		
Hearing/Visually Impaired Teacher		
Social Worker		
Parent Partnership Officer		
Other		
Other		
Other		
Other		

The Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service

**Mount Education Support Centre
Mount Avenue
Penkhull
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 7JU**

Tel: (01782) 234701

Fax: (01782) 236858

E-mail: parent.partnership@stoke.gov.uk

Website: www.parent-partnership-stoke.co.uk

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