

**CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup>**

# *Independent Mediation*

**The Additional Support  
for Learning Act**

Large Print Version



Giving Scotland's vulnerable and  
disadvantaged children a brighter future

## **The Additional Support for Learning Act**

requires the Highland Council to provide an Independent Mediation Service for families and young people. The council has asked CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup> to deliver this service.

If a parent or a young person is concerned about the additional support being provided by the school it is usually quickest and most effective to talk to the Head Teacher or the Area Education Manager. Talking through issues as early as possible often makes them easier to resolve. Sometimes however it's not possible to reach agreement and it can be helpful to involve someone from outside the situation.

## **SO WHAT IS MEDIATION?**

It's a way of resolving disputes using an independent, trained mediator to help people talk to each other, understand each other's point of view and reach agreement on a mutually acceptable way forward. It's voluntary and it's confidential. The mediator is there to help you work out a realistic and fair agreement but the decisions are yours. Mediation can result in a better understanding and an improved relationship between those in dispute. Using mediation doesn't affect your legal rights or the right to appeal at a later date.

## **WHO CAN USE THE MEDIATION SERVICE?**

Parents, carers, and young people can ask for the mediation service.

## **WHAT WILL HAPPEN?**

Once a referral is made a mediator from CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup> will contact you to talk things through. They'll help you to identify the important issues you want to discuss. The mediator will then contact all the other parties involved and do the same. They will then arrange a joint meeting for you to talk openly about the situation, explore the options available and hopefully reach a workable agreement.

## **WILL IT WORK?**

There are obviously no guarantees but mediation makes sure all parties have a chance to talk about things from their own point of view. An open and respectful discussion where options are explored can lead to a better understanding and a shared solution. You have time and space to focus on the issues and there is a trained mediator to guide the whole process. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

## **WHAT DO I DO NEXT?**

If you would like further information about mediation, please contact CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup>. If you would like to use the mediation service, please contact the Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinator. Our details follow overleaf.

Our services reach out to children across Scotland. As well as specialised local services, we provide national services that include:

**ParentLine Scotland** - 0808 800 2222 - our free, confidential helpline that helps children by helping their parents.

To help other people play their part in keeping children safe, our training services include:

**Child Protection:** if you work or are involved with children, know how to play your part

**StoryWorks:** connect inspire change through therapeutic storytelling

**Family Group Conferencing:** working with the extended family in finding solutions for children at risk.

You can get further information about Mediation from:

Mediation in Education  
CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup>  
Killen Family Resource Centre  
Avoch, Ross-shire  
IV9 8RQ  
Tel: 01381 620757  
Fax: 01381 621335  
e-mail: [killen@children1st.org.uk](mailto:killen@children1st.org.uk)

If you would like to use the Mediation Service please contact

Barrie Forbes  
Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinator  
Terrapin Building  
Raigmore Hospital  
Inverness  
IV2 3UJ  
Tel: 01463 701326  
Fax: 01463 701320  
E-mail: [barrie.forbes@highland.gov.uk](mailto:barrie.forbes@highland.gov.uk)

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. Join us in helping children and young people who need us.

CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup>  
Head Office  
83 Whitehouse Loan  
Edinburgh  
EH9 1AT

Tel: 0131 446 2300  
Fax: 0131 446 2339

[www.children1st.org.uk](http://www.children1st.org.uk)

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