# **Preparing for a Meeting About Your Child**

Meetings about your child’s education and support can feel daunting, but good preparation can help you feel more confident and ensure your child’s needs are at the centre of discussions.

## **Before the Meeting**

* **Know the purpose of the meeting** – Ask for an agenda so you understand why the meeting has been called and what will be discussed.
* **Gather information** – Organise reports, letters, and assessments in date order, with the most recent on top.
* **Prepare two lists**:
  + **What you want to share** – Key points, examples of challenges, letters from professionals, or observations from home.
  + **Questions you want answered** – What do you need to know? What decisions are being made?
* **Bring support** – A friend, family member, or advocate can take notes and provide reassurance.
* **Consider your child’s involvement** – Can they attend part of the meeting? If not, could they share their thoughts in writing or a drawing?

## **During the Meeting**

* **Stay focused on your child’s needs** – Keep the discussion about support and solutions.
* **Listen actively** – If something isn’t clear, ask for an explanation:
  + “So, what you’re saying is…”
* **Take your time** – If you feel overwhelmed, ask for a break before making decisions.
* **Check your notes** – Have all your key points been discussed?
* **Agree on next steps** – Ensure actions are recorded, with clear responsibilities and timelines.
* **Request a copy of the meeting notes** – This ensures you have a record of what was agreed.

## **After the Meeting**

* **Talk to your child** – If they attended, ask how they felt about it.
* **Review the meeting notes** – If something is incorrect, raise it as soon as possible.
* **Follow up on actions** – Keep track of agreed steps and check progress.
* **Keep all paperwork in a safe place** – Having a clear record can help for future meetings.

## **10 Tips for a Successful Meeting**

1. **Be prepared** – Know the purpose of the meeting and bring relevant documents.
2. **Have the right people there** – Ensure key professionals are invited.
3. **Request an agenda** – Knowing the structure helps you stay focused.
4. **Ask questions** – If something isn’t clear, ask for it to be explained.
5. **Stay respectful** – Even if you disagree, staying calm helps discussions remain productive.
6. **Read any reports carefully** – Ask for time if needed.
7. **Meetings can be stressful** – Bring someone with you to help listen and take notes.
8. **Agree on actions** – Clarify who is responsible for what and by when.
9. **Be confident** – You know your child best.
10. **Seek support if needed** – Shropshire SENDIASS can help you prepare. Call **01743 280019** for support.