

SEND and Inclusion Hubs – What are they?

To hear that your child is struggling in school can be upsetting to hear. And when the people involved start talking about 'graduated response' (what is a [graduated response?](#)), asking you about referral forms and to attend different meetings to discuss support for your child – it can cause even further worry and confusion.

If you're reading this, you've probably been asked by your school if they can refer your child to the local SEND and Inclusion hub (and want to know more!)

The following is a set of questions (and answers) to explain the Staffordshire hub process.

SEND and Inclusion Hubs - Frequently Asked Questions

My child's school has said they want to refer my child to the hub – What is the hub?

The hub is an early intervention, non-statutory meeting to discuss children and their needs (a referral to hub can be made any time!). It is run by Staffordshire Council and local schools and is made up of headteachers, Special needs teachers, teaching assistants and different support services from your local area. They all meet every half term (every 6 weeks) to talk about helping children who are struggling in school. At the meeting, different ways to help are discussed, agreed and then the school go away and try the strategies with the child. At the next meeting (6 weeks later), they review the actions and discuss if they have worked.

Sometimes the help strategies work, sometimes they don't. But the hub keeps discussing the child until things have improved. A hub in its simplest terms is a support forum for schools who want to help children when they're not sure what to do next.

For more information about hubs. Please visit the Staffordshire Local Offer – [SEND and Inclusion Hubs](#)

Will I be asked if I am happy for my child to be discussed at a hub?

Absolutely! – we cannot discuss your child at a hub without your say so. If you do not give us permission to talk about your child, then we won't. It is every parents / carers right to say no – and we respect that.

But please remember, you might want to think this through carefully. Hubs are there to help! and If you say no, it might mean that your child doesn't get access to certain methods of support and help. Help that could really make a difference to your child's education. This might include information, advice, support or a referral to a different support service.

Can the school still discuss my child at the hub if I do not give consent.

Yes. The school can do something called 'an anonymous referral'. But... This means that your child's needs might be discussed, but specific, identifiable details about your child and circumstances will not be. By 'identifiable' details, we mean, that as a result of the conversation, we will not be informed of your child's name, age, address, family details,

school / setting. If you choose to decline consent and you do not want your child being discussed at the hub – the disadvantages will be: that they are not be stored and monitored on our database, their outcomes wont be captured and the school they may not receive the information, interventions, advice and ongoing support of the hub that might help them.

OK. The school has said they want to refer my child to the hub – and I’m fine with it. What next?

The school will complete a referral form (insert link). They do this so that the people who attend the hub know more about your childs likes / dislikes and to give an overall picture of what life is like for you child. You will be asked to read the referral form and if you give consent (this can be written or verbal) – but you must agree to the referral before it is sent off. When everyone is happy, its sent to a local hub admin officer and then your child will be discussed at the next meeting.

Will the hub cost me anything?

No! – The hub is a free way that schools can gain advice, information and support to help children. It doesn’t cost a thing. Its organised by the council and run by local schools who want to help each other.

What happens after a hub meeting?

Once your child has been discussed at the hub, the school may leave with additional things to do to help support your child. Your school should inform you of what these things are. It might be a different / specific way of working or a referral to another service. If your school or educational setting does not keep you informed of the outcome, approach your Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) and ask what was discussed / agreed moving forward.

Please note – if you have refused consent and the school discuss your child anonymously – you will not receive an update and you will not be informed.

What do I do If once I have agreed for my child to be discussed at the hub – I change my mind – and I don’t want them to be discussed anymore?

You should inform your school immediately and they will withdraw the referral.

My child has been to the hub and things are better – what happens next?

Your child will be closed to the hub. Once things have improved, the school will discuss this with you and they wont be discussed at the hub anymore.

What happens when my child’s case is ‘closed’?

Don’t panic! - Although your child’s case is closed to the hub, your child’s school will continue with strategies and supporting your child.

Your child’s school can refer to the hub at any point. There is no criteria and they can refer as many times as they need to (we’re here to help!).

My child has been to the hub and things are not better?

If your child has been discussed at several hubs, the school may request that your child's case is escalated to the Locality Management Group – this is a strategic group that oversees the work of the hubs and they hold additional resources and funding that may be applied for that might help to make things better.

Please note – the hub is a supportive network that aims to help support local schools and settings. It isn't a 'quick fix' solution and might not change things immediately.

Will I be asked to provide feedback at the end of the process?

Maybe. The [Staffordshire Parent Carer Forum](#) (PCF) is an independent body that supports the SEND and Inclusion hub model and wants to ensure that parents and carers are well informed of the process and that their views are heard. Each month, they will pick a handful of parents / carers at random to contact and ask them about their experience of the hub. They might call or they might email. If they call, it won't take longer than a few minutes. If they email, it will be a short survey.

We appreciate and value your feedback – please take the time to help us to continually improve the process.

The Staffordshire PCF is the formal Staffordshire body for parents and carers of children with SEND and are always happy to hear your views/experiences about Staffordshire services that support you and your child. To provide any additional views, please contact: info@staffspcf.co.uk

I'm still struggling with my child's SEND needs and don't know where to go for support. I just don't understand it all – Is there anyone else I can contact?

Yes. SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service) is a free, confidential and impartial provider of support for Staffordshire parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities. You can contact them in many ways. The details are listed below:

Telephone: 01785 356921

Email: sfps@staffordshire.gov.uk

Website: [SEND IASS - Staffordshire Family Partnership](#)

Twitter name: @staffsIASS

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StaffsIASS/>