

Response to Draft Report for Parents and Disabled Children

I contributed to this report, by highlighting to the committee the problems I have had accessing a statement of special educational needs for my son diagnosed with Autism (high functioning Asperger's Syndrome) who was subsequently permanently excluded from a Southwark Academy school.

I would like to update the panel on my progress so far. My son started school on Monday 12 March 2012. After a 6 month absence from formal school education, (I wish to point out that my son was being educated provisionally by an organization called the 'complete works' for the interim). It was always my intention for my son to be placed in a school, as he is a very bright boy.

I found myself with another fight on my hands ensuring that not only that his statement of special educational needs was sufficient, but also requesting that the education authority pay the educational fees for his school which is an independent school, placed outside the borough in Lewisham.

Needless to say I have concerns that had my son not been placed in the correct learning environment none of this would have happened. I am trying very hard not to be too bitter, but I am still upset that my child missed over 6 months of formal schooling, and missed out on all the social aspects that school life maintains.

I was very impressed with the draft report and the only recommendation I can make is that Southwark should make provision for parents of disabled children to find meaningful employment, whilst also fulfilling their caring responsibilities. Such a model is being implemented trialed within the London Borough of Wandsworth. Their family and information service has been running a small pilot to help parents of children and young people with additional needs go back to work.

For further information please see website:

wandsworth.childremservicedirectory.org.uk/sports-events-news.htm