Special Educational Needs (SEN) Panel:
How we make decisions which affect your child and your family

How does the Council make important decisions that affect my child?
All important decisions such as agreeing to carry out an education, health & care (EHC) needs assessment of your child’s education, health and care needs or issuing an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or changing their school placement or provision are discussed by the Council’s SEN Panel.

What is the SEN Panel?
The SEN Panel is a group of professionals who meet every Wednesday morning in term time to discuss and advise on the best way to support children with SEN.

Who attends the SEN Panel?
The SEN Panel is chaired by the Senior Casework Officer for SEN. Casework Officers from the SEN Assessment & Review Team attend and present the information we hold on your child. The SEN Panel is also attended by the Principal Educational Psychologist, the Manager of SEN Services and senior representatives from mainstream schools, special schools and the Isle of Wight College. From September 2015, a speech & language therapist will also be present. This means there is a range of experience and expertise available to discuss your child’s needs.

Can I attend the SEN Panel?
Parents are not able to attend the SEN Panel as the purpose of the meeting is to consider every case as fairly and objectively as possible, making decisions based on the written evidence. However, any written information you provide will be made available to the SEN Panel and a representative who knows your child from their school may attend to provide up-to-date information and answer any questions. Other professionals such as your Social Worker may also attend.

What happens after the SEN Panel meeting?
Your Casework Officer will take whatever action is recommended and tell you about this. For example, if a decision is taken to issue an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), they will inform you of this and provide you with a copy of the proposed plan so you can let us know your views.

What if I or my child’s school are not happy with any decision?
There are many opportunities throughout the statutory process for you and your child’s school to discuss any concerns or issues. This follows the national SEN Code of Practice (2015). If new information or evidence becomes available, we can ask the SEN Panel to review a decision.

Can I meet with someone to talk about my child and what has been decided?
Yes. As soon as we receive a request for an education, health & care (EHC) needs assessment from you, your child’s school or someone else, we will write to you to explain the procedure we must follow and you will be allocated a named Casework Officer from within the SEN Assessment & Review Team. We will ask you for your views about your child and about any actions we take throughout the process. We welcome contact from parents because we know that your views are important in
helping us to reach the right decision. You can contact us in writing at: SEN Assessment & Review Team, Sandy Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NA, by telephone on (01983) 823470 or via email at: sen@iow.gov.uk. We can meet with you and anyone supporting you if you would find this helpful.

Is there anyone else who can help me?
Your child’s school can help you. You can also ask for support from the Special Educational Needs & Disability Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) (formerly Parent Partnership). They can be contacted by phone on (01983) 825548 or email: sendiass@iow.gov.uk or via the website at: www.iwpp.co.uk