

Preparing to talk to school

A simple meeting-preparation guide so the conversation ends with clear actions.

Your role

Keep school informed, report absence using the school's process, share relevant barriers early and work with the school on agreed actions. Legal rules differ across the UK, so use the official guidance for your nation.

Before the meeting

- Write down your top three concerns and your child's view.
- Take any useful dates, attendance patterns, medical information or previous plans.
- Decide what a good outcome from the meeting would look like.

Seven questions to ask

- What do you think is driving the difficulty?
- What has school already tried and what was the impact?
- Who will be our main contact?
- What can change tomorrow?
- Does SEND, health, bullying, safeguarding or another barrier need further assessment?
- How will my child's view shape the plan?
- When will we review the plan and what evidence will we use?

End with clarity

- Ask for a short written record of agreed actions.
- Make sure every action has an owner and a review date.
- If something is unclear, say so. Plain language is better than leaving with different assumptions.

Use this leaflet as a conversation starter. It is general information, not legal, medical or safeguarding advice. If you are worried about immediate safety, use the appropriate local emergency or safeguarding route.