

Thomas Wolsey School Outreach Service

A guide to Statutory Assessment and Statements for Parents / Carers

Thomas Wolsey Outreach Service
Defoe Road
Ipswich
IP1 6SG

01473 467607
office@thomaswalseyoutreach.co.uk
www.thomaswalseyoutreach.co.uk

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What is a statement?

A statement of special educational needs is a legal document that identifies your child's needs and all the special help they require and how the Local Authority (LA) will meet these needs. The Local Authority will issue a statement if your child's needs cannot be reasonably provided for by the school. The Local Authority may then carry out a statutory assessment.

What is statutory assessment?

This is a detailed assessment to identify your child's special educational needs and any special help they may require. It will include reports from a variety of people, for example:

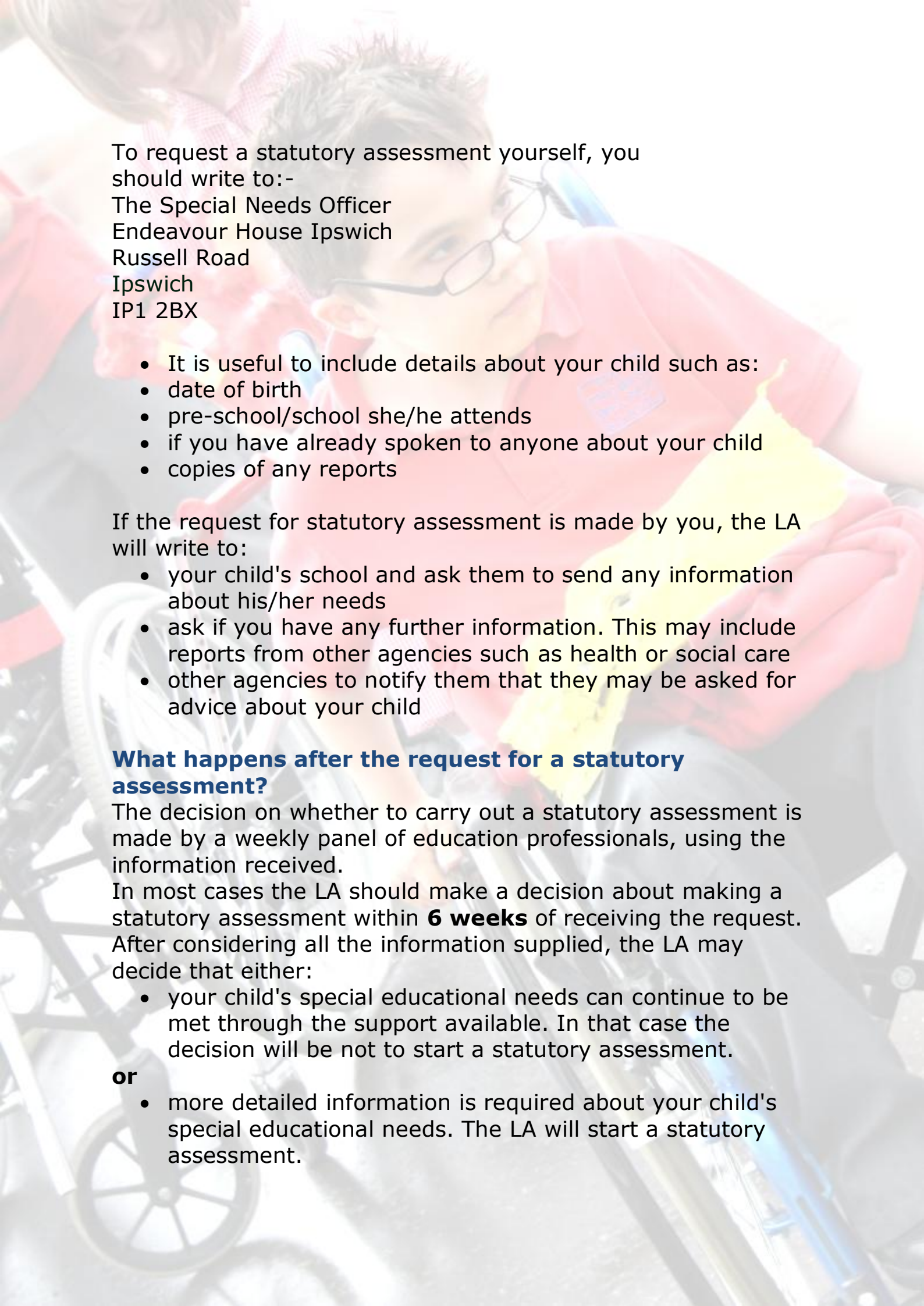
- you
- your child's school or pre-school
- an educational psychologist
- a doctor
- your child's therapist e.g. physiotherapist
- social care (who will only give advice if they know your child)
- others who work with or support your child

Who can request a statutory assessment?

- your child's pre-school/school
- you
- other agencies e.g. health or social care can bring the child's needs to the attention of the LA

Thomas Wolsey school will be very happy to request a statutory assessment on your request. If the school or pre-school request statutory assessment, the LA will write and ask whether you agree. They will also ask whether you would like to send in any supporting information. You will be given at least **29 days** to provide this information.

As a parent you can request statutory assessment if you feel that your child's needs are not being met, it is a good idea to discuss this with your child's school first. You may also wish to talk it through with the Parent support worker at Thomas Wolsey School on 01473 467607



To request a statutory assessment yourself, you should write to:-

The Special Needs Officer
Endeavour House Ipswich
Russell Road
Ipswich
IP1 2BX

- It is useful to include details about your child such as:
- date of birth
- pre-school/school she/he attends
- if you have already spoken to anyone about your child
- copies of any reports

If the request for statutory assessment is made by you, the LA will write to:

- your child's school and ask them to send any information about his/her needs
- ask if you have any further information. This may include reports from other agencies such as health or social care
- other agencies to notify them that they may be asked for advice about your child

What happens after the request for a statutory assessment?

The decision on whether to carry out a statutory assessment is made by a weekly panel of education professionals, using the information received.

In most cases the LA should make a decision about making a statutory assessment within **6 weeks** of receiving the request. After considering all the information supplied, the LA may decide that either:

- your child's special educational needs can continue to be met through the support available. In that case the decision will be not to start a statutory assessment.

or

- more detailed information is required about your child's special educational needs. The LA will start a statutory assessment.



If you do not agree with the LA's decision, you can discuss this with the LA.

If you still cannot agree, you have the right to use the disagreement resolution service. This will involve the help of an independent mediator. A mediator can help two parties to try and reach an agreement. You can ring Parent Partnership on 01473 467607 for more information.

You can also appeal to the SEN Tribunal:

SENDIST
SEN Appeals
Mowden Hall
Staindrop Road
Darlington
OL3 9BG
SEN Helpline: 0870 241 2555
Email: sendistqueries@tribunals.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.sendist.gov.uk

If you have been refused a statutory assessment, you can make another request after six months.

What happens during a statutory assessment?

If the LA decide to go ahead with a statutory assessment, you will be given the name of an LA caseworker. He or she will be able to help you with any part of the process.

During the assessment, information is collected from:

- you
- your child
- your child's school
- an educational psychologist
- health professionals such as a doctor,
- occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, physiotherapist or health visitor
- social care
- other agencies who are involved with your child

Parents' contribution to statutory assessment

It is very important that the LA has full information about your child's special educational needs. If you are being supported by an Independent Parental Supporter, he or she should be able to help you with this.

Here is a guide to the sort of information you might want to include:

- what do you remember about the early years that might help?
- were you happy about progress at the time?
- when did you first feel things were not right?
- what happened?
- what advice or help did you receive?
- what has happened since then?

What is your child like now?

General Health

Eating and sleeping habits, general fitness, absences from school, frequent minor ailments, coughs and colds. More serious illnesses/accidents or periods in hospital. If your child has a disability or medical condition, how do these affect him/her? Any medicine or special diet? General alertness, tiredness, signs of use of drugs.

Activities Outside

Belonging to clubs, sporting activities, happy to go out alone? Does your child have any extra help/provision to enable him/her to fully take part?

Relationships at home

With parents, brothers and sisters, with friends and other relations both inside and outside of the home. Does your child make friends easily?

Behaviour at home

Does your child co-operate, share, listen to, and carry out requests, help in the house, offer help, fit in with family routine and rules. Moods: good and bad, sulking, temper tantrums, affectionate?

Relationships and behaviour at school

Are there things that have worked well at home or at school? Relationships with other children and teachers, progress with reading, writing, numbers, other subjects and activities at school. How the school has helped your child. Have you been asked to help with school work, such as hearing your child read? What does he or she find easy or difficult?

Your general views

What do you think your child needs support with at school? How do you think this can best be given? How do you compare your child with others of the same age? What is your child good at or what does he or she enjoy doing? What does your child worry about? Is he or she aware of difficulties? What are your worries and concerns?

Your Child's Views

How does your child feel about school? Your child may wish to give their own views.

Is there any other information you can give:

- about your family, that you think may affect your child? Is there any family history of special needs?
- major events that might have affected your child
- include any reports from other people.

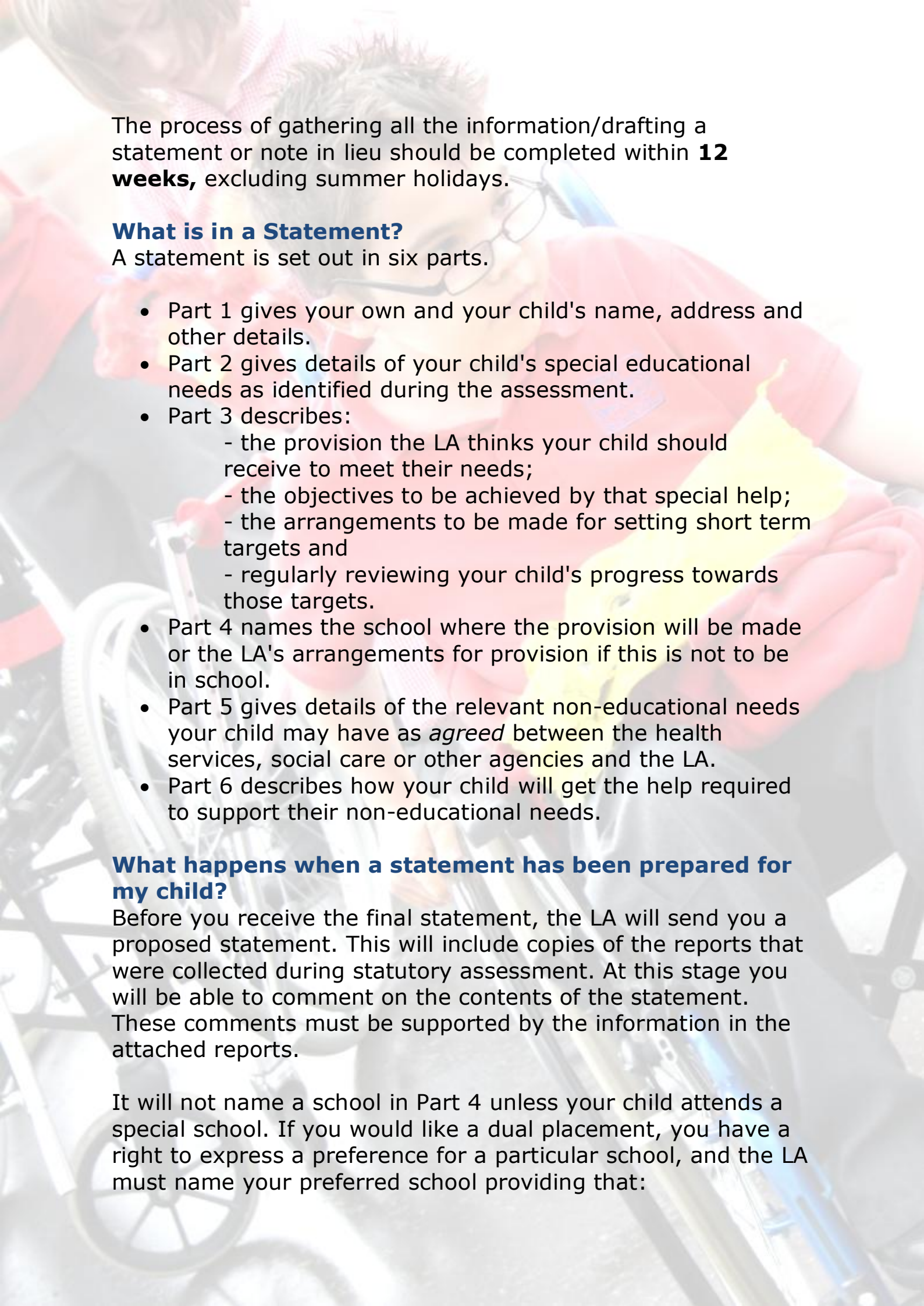
With whom would you like more contact? How do you think your child's needs affect the needs of the family?

Please remember to sign and date your report and state clearly that this is your advice/report for the Statutory Assessment.

What happens when all the information has been collected?

When all the information has been received/ considered by the LA, they will either:

- issue a proposed statement; or
- write to you explaining their reasons for not issuing a statement of special educational needs and issue a note in lieu.

A young boy with glasses is sitting in a wheelchair, looking at a document. He is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and a yellow vest. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

The process of gathering all the information/drafting a statement or note in lieu should be completed within **12 weeks**, excluding summer holidays.

What is in a Statement?

A statement is set out in six parts.

- Part 1 gives your own and your child's name, address and other details.
- Part 2 gives details of your child's special educational needs as identified during the assessment.
- Part 3 describes:
 - the provision the LA thinks your child should receive to meet their needs;
 - the objectives to be achieved by that special help;
 - the arrangements to be made for setting short term targets and
 - regularly reviewing your child's progress towards those targets.
- Part 4 names the school where the provision will be made or the LA's arrangements for provision if this is not to be in school.
- Part 5 gives details of the relevant non-educational needs your child may have as *agreed* between the health services, social care or other agencies and the LA.
- Part 6 describes how your child will get the help required to support their non-educational needs.

What happens when a statement has been prepared for my child?

Before you receive the final statement, the LA will send you a proposed statement. This will include copies of the reports that were collected during statutory assessment. At this stage you will be able to comment on the contents of the statement. These comments must be supported by the information in the attached reports.

It will not name a school in Part 4 unless your child attends a special school. If you would like a dual placement, you have a right to express a preference for a particular school, and the LA must name your preferred school providing that:

- the school is suitable for your child's age, ability and aptitude and the special educational needs identified in Part 2 of the statement
- your child's attendance is compatible with the education of other pupils in the school
- the placement is an efficient use of the LA's resources.

A dual placement is where your child attends their local school and a special school on different days of the week. The amount of days in each school will be agreed by you and the school.

You will be asked to name your choice of school and approve the proposed statement within 15 days.

Additional time can be requested if needed.

When will I get my child's final statement?

The LA must normally issue the final statement within 8 weeks of the issue of the proposed statement.

If you have not been able to reach an agreement, the LA will finalise the statement.

You will be able to appeal to the SEN Tribunal if you do not agree with parts 2, 3 or 4. Details of your right to appeal and arrangements for disagreement resolution services will be sent to you with the final statement. There are time limits for appeals.

What is a note in lieu?

A note in lieu will be produced if the LA decides that your child's special educational needs can be met from resources at the school. It should set out the reasons for this decision and give supporting information collected during the statutory assessment. This information can then be used to help plan how best to meet your child's needs in school.

If you do not agree with the LA's decision, you can discuss this with your LA caseworker.

If you still cannot agree, you have the right to use the disagreement resolution service. You also have a right to appeal to the SEN Tribunal. You will receive information about the time limits in making an appeal, (see page 4).

Timetable for a statutory assessment

6 weeks	The LA consider the request to carry out a statutory assessment and decide whether to make a statutory assessment.
10 weeks	The LA carry out an assessment and decide whether to: Issue a statement or Not issue a statement
2 weeks	The LA: Issue the proposed statement or Explain their decision not to make a statement
8 weeks	If the LA has decided to issue a statement, it will: Send out the final statement
TOTAL	26 WEEKS

Sometimes there may be exceptions to the time allowed. These will always be outlined in letters from the LA or contact with your caseworker.

If you would like this booklet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us at the Outreach Service and we will do our best to help you.