

CHILDREN with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (England)

Suggestions template for letter to relevant organisation/s

Dear _____,

I am writing to you about my son/daughter _____.

S/he has/experiences [medical diagnosis, e.g. autism, ADHD, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, acquired brain injury etc.].

As a result of this, s/he has/experiences [communication disability diagnosis and level of severity, e.g. mild/moderate/severe/profound developmental language disorder, social-pragmatic disorder, verbal dyspraxia, stammering, selective mutism, dyslexia etc.]

[If you do not have a confirmed diagnosis yet, change the wording accordingly, e.g. My son _____ will be/is currently being assessed for _____]

This presents as: [list all characteristics of the communication problem e.g. understanding at a one-word level, inability to understand social cues, incomplete grammar, articulation problems and word avoidance etc.] As such, my daughter/son is unable to communicate effectively consistently compared to a child without such Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

[You can have more than one medical and communication diagnosis of course. If you have medical and other reports from professionals, use their terminology].

I am concerned that [detail the problem/s e.g. my son/daughter is expected to use a variety of third-person pronouns for classmates that do not match their sex, toilet signs and posters use confusing 'gender neutral' language and symbols]

As you are aware, the [SEND Code of Practice \(2015\)](#) provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) and associated regulations. As a:

[delete as necessary]:

- local authority (education, social care and relevant housing and employment and other services)
- governing body of schools, including non-maintained special schools
- governing body of further education colleges and sixth form colleges
- proprietors of academies (including free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools)
- management committee of pupil referral units
- an independent school and independent specialist provider approved under Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- an early years provider in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors that are funded by the local authority

- *a National Health Service Commissioning Board*
 - *a clinical commissioning group (CCGs)*
 - *an NHS Trust*
 - *an NHS Foundation Trust*
 - *a Local Health Boards*
 - *a Youth Offending Team and relevant youth custodial establishment*
 - *a First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)]*
- you must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice.

Further, I would like to draw your attention to the Code of Practice's section on **Disabled children and young people xviii. to xxiii.** and **Related legislation and guidance xxiv. to xxv.** (pp16-18) in particular xix. which states:

"The [Equality Act 2010](#) sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and nondisabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable. The general duty also applies to bodies that are not public bodies but that carry out public functions. Such bodies include providers of relevant early years education, non-maintained special schools, independent specialist providers and others making provision that is funded from the public purse." (pp16-17)

[Add any further legislation or guidance that you know to be relevant or links to evidence, relevant journalist publications or blogs etc. here]

By expecting/demanding my daughter/son to [restate the problem], you are failing to meet your legal obligations. In so doing, you are also failing my son/daughter.

[State you preferred next action e.g. *remove posters or signs, cease demands to use preferred pronouns etc.*]

I look forward to hearing from you by [*date*].

Yours sincerely,

[If your child requires an EHCP, ask for relevant additions to be made so that s/he is not expected to take part in communications and activities that require unreasonable language demands. Whilst not related to language per se, Sophie had this success (see tweet from February 2023 below) and it's worth asking for something similar relevant to your child].



Stopfordian Woman Sophie x 
@StopfordianR

...

My daughter's EHCP has finally been granted 🌟🌟.

The statement, 'safeguarding from gender identity ideology (her non-conformity should be celebrated and her interests normalised)' MADE THE CUT!

Woohoo!