



Emmie's Story

An example how WIASS successfully helped a young person with a cease to maintain EHCP appeal

Emmie has a diagnosis of Aspergers however prefers to use Autism when describing herself. Emmie struggles to communicate with new people and has selective mutism.

Emmie's grandparents contacted WIASS to request support following their granddaughter's EHCP annual review as they did not feel her needs and wishes were being heard. They informed WIASS that following the annual review the local authority had made the decision to cease the plan and for her to start an adult education course.

When WIASS contacted Emmie, she shared that it had taken her several years to build up a relationship with the staff at her current college and she had started to make small steps of progress towards her goals. Because of this Emmie did not feel it was the right time for her to be moving to another education setting. As a young person WIASS supported Emmie directly and she requested that all communication be with herself and the college.

Emmie wanted to continue at her specialist college, to move she felt would be detrimental to her education, particularly as she had started to make steps towards her goals. She also wanted to communicate to her social worker that she wanted to move into her own home with the right support in place.

WIASS initially met with Emmie and her support worker to explain the EHCP appeal process. We communicated with the head Teacher at the college and her support worker the college. We explained mediation process and Emmie decided to go ahead with a mediation meeting although she did not want to be on camera, so she provided a statement for the meeting.

WIASS supported Emmie at the mediation meeting, but the Local Authority upheld its decision. Following the mediation meeting WIASS met with Emmie face to face at her college so that she felt comfortable to discuss the next steps of the appeal process.

A subsequent meeting was arranged to go through the SEND 35 appeal form with Emmie and support her to complete the appeal application. WIASS was keen to ensure

Emmie's views and wishes were at the for front and Emmie had time to get her point across to make sure these were captured in the appeal form.

WASS supported Emmie throughout the process with the working document, each time giving advice and allowing Emmie time to share her views. With Emmie's permission WASS contacted the college head teacher, student support worker and Emmie's social worker so that the information for the EHCP reflected her needs and what support she required. WASS ensured Emmie's views and wishes were communicated to the SEND officer and she understood each step of the process. If we could not meet face to face, we would meet over teams. As a result, the local authority agreed to maintain the EHCP outside of the Tribunal. However, they did not name Emmie's current specialist college in the EHCP which was her preferred placement.

This led to a Section I placement appeal and WASS supported Emmie with a further disagreement resolution meeting with the SEND officer to discuss placement. Emmie's preferred specialist college setting was named in the EHCP.

With WASS advice and support Emmie's EHCP was reinstated, and she was able to continue with her education in her current specialist provision. As a result, Emmie was able to achieve her qualifications and have the right support from people she trusted to help her move forward with her independent living.

Emmie shared that WASS helped the Local Authority listen to her. Emmie shared that her WASS caseworker:

"... was kind, came to meet me, made sure people weren't speaking for me, respected my wishes and made herself available for ongoing support and advice throughout my time. She understood my circumstances didn't fit into a conventional box and she adapted the way I could access the help and support I need with stuff like this."

"...helped me stay at my college She's patient and understanding and came to see me at my school with my support where I felt most comfortable. She made it a bit less scary to talk to new people and make the LA listen to what I wanted. She understood my home situation and always asked me before she spoke to other people. Her support made a big difference. I don't think I'd be here if it wasn't for her help. And now I feel ready to leave knowing how to advocate for myself..."