



## CASE: ALTERNATIVE PROVISION SCHOOL UNABLE TO MEET NEEDS

A young child with complex needs (including emotional and behavioural problems), awaiting assessment for autistic syndrome disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), was having considerable issues at their school, including a five day exclusion. CEN advocate believed that the child's special educational needs (SEND) were not being met by the school. The child was awaiting an educational healthcare plan (EHCP).

This type of situation comes up regularly within CEN, the solution will be for the advocate helping the parent:

- understand the law relating to exclusions.
- understand the school's duties, powers and motives, and
- signposting the parent to additional SEND support, including through the local authority and the NHS. In this case the family had access to much of this and were waiting to get the relevant appointments (the waiting lists were months long).

In this case the school had sent the child offsite to an alternative provision (an AP, not a PRU – pupil referral unit), which was not fully explained to the child nor their family. The advocate explained that the school was operating within its powers in circumstances where they cannot meet a child's needs. However, from the family's view this was frightening prospect. In such circumstances, an advocate will encourage the family to engage with the head of the AP and will explain how AP's work – the child remains with their school however their progress at the AP is regularly assessed. An AP is not meant to be a permanent solution.

### THE OUTCOME:

Since, the child refused to return to the AP the advocate did some research about home help with schooling (NOT home schooling) and organisations which the AP or the school might access to provide off-site tuition for the child, whilst awaiting the EHCP. The advocate also advised the mother to research possible schools in the area with good pastoral care which might be an alternative to the child's current school and to seek the current school's support to transfer when possible.