



# CEN's Parents Charter

## What parents can expect from the Communities Empowerment Network (CEN)

CEN provides a free advice, advocacy, and reintegration service on behalf of parents whose children are experiencing issues at school. We endeavour to deliver a [child centred](#), professional and supportive service, but we cannot promise specific outcomes from any cases that we take on. However, where possible we do try to accommodate all families seeking support and endeavour to treat everyone with courtesy, care, and respect.

***The [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) provides everyone under the age of 18 with 42 'rights'. <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> At Communities Empowerment Network (CEN), we strive to ensure that the children for whom we advocate have access to the following rights in relation to their education:***

1. CEN shall respect the responsibilities, rights, and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians, or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
2. CEN recognises the right of the child to an education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, CEN shall, in particular:
  - a. work to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of exclusion rates.
  - b. take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and as appropriate the school's current behaviour policy.
  - c. promote and encourage collaboration, and empowerment for parents in matters relating to their engagement with the education sector, in particular with the aim of successfully advocating on behalf of their child(ren).
3. CEN shall respect and ensure the rights of each child (and any parent/guardian) without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's, their parent's and any legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth, or other status.
4. CEN shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment based on the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.
5. In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be CEN's primary consideration.

CEN shall assure that the child who is capable of forming their own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose, the child shall be provided the opportunity to be heard in any proceedings affecting them, in a manner consistent with the law.



6. Recognising the special needs of a child, CEN will provide assistance to ensure that children using the service have effective access to education and are signposted to appropriate services according to need such as training, mentoring, health care, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to ensuring that the child achieves the fullest possible education.

### **CEN SPECIFIC ADVICE**

7. Regarding working with statutory education providers, CEN will seek to engage with and educate parents on how to successfully communicate and collaborate with these providers for the benefit of their child(ren).
8. Regarding working with parents, CEN Advocates will act for the child on behalf of the parents in relation to specific individual cases only. Should parents require further and/or additional support and advice, they will be referred to CEN's Parent Coordinator.
9. In submitting a request for advocacy support<sup>1</sup> to CEN, parents are agreeing to share all necessary information as appropriate to each case with our advocacy team. All rights are protected, and personal information will not be shared without expressed permission, in accordance with CENs [GDPR policy](#).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://cenlive.org/get-help>