



KIDS London SEN Mediation Service- Three Month Follow up
Questionnaire Review: December 2010

Mediation participants are sent a questionnaire three months after mediation, to explore the impact of the agreement reached at the mediation. This questionnaire is sent to parties to the agreement who are mainly parents, local authority representatives and school representatives.

Participants are asked whether issues brought to mediation have been resolved and whether anything else has happened since the mediation.

Participants are also asked to comment more specifically on the written agreement, in terms of whether it was clearly written and easy to understand, which point was most important to them, and whether the agreement has been sustained since the mediation.

Parents completing the form are additionally asked to comment on whether the agreement has been beneficial for their child, and there is also the opportunity to inform KIDS London SEN Mediation Service of the child's views on the situation.

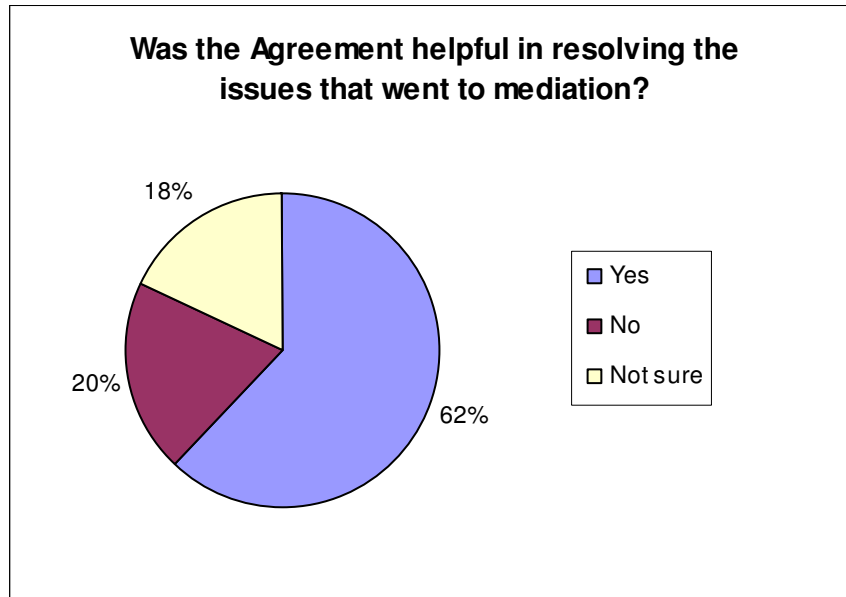
All participants are also asked to comment on how useful overall they have found the mediation process.

The statistics from the questionnaires are overwhelmingly positive, with almost two thirds of participants saying that the agreement reached at the mediation had been helpful in resolving the issues. The fact that some participants said that the agreement was not helpful is likely to have been down to factors such as the willingness of participants to adhere to the agreement or a party changing their mind on what had been agreed at a later stage.

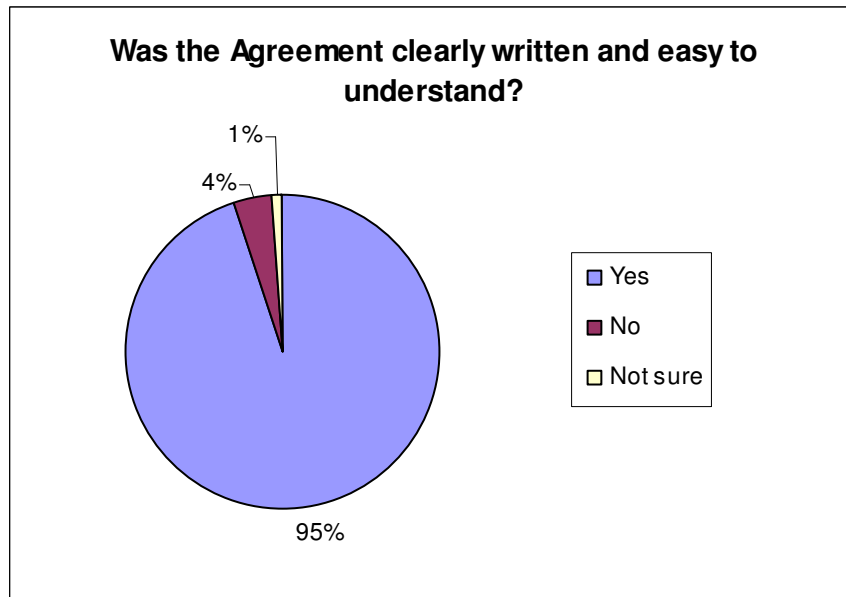
Almost all participants stated that the agreement had been clearly written and was easy to understand. Comments below also testify to the clarity of the agreement, and the usefulness of having specific points written down, avoiding any ambiguity.

A high number (82%) of participants reported that the agreement had been either completely or partly sustained following the mediation. Perhaps the most significant statistic is that 75% of parents said that the mediation outcome was beneficial to their child. Many of the comments below from parents support this finding.

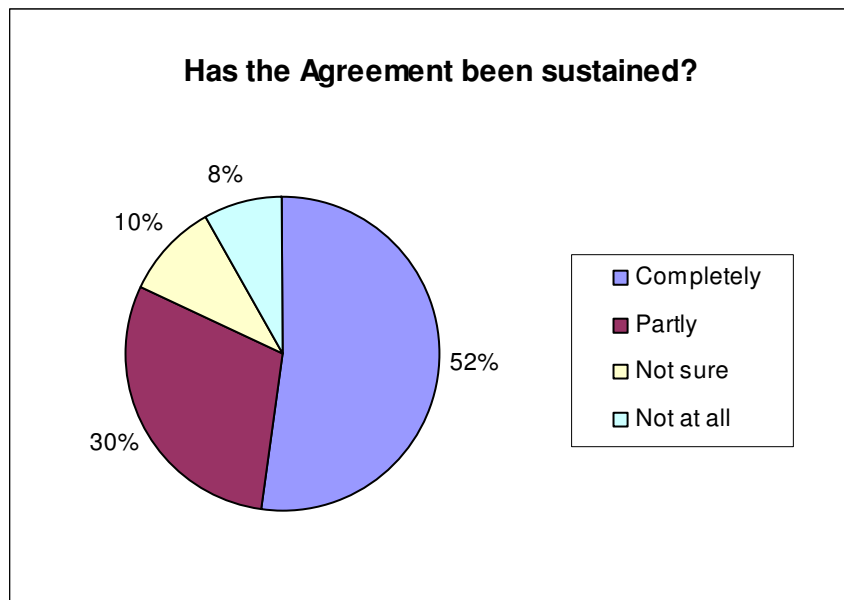
Was the agreement helpful in resolving the issues that went to mediation?



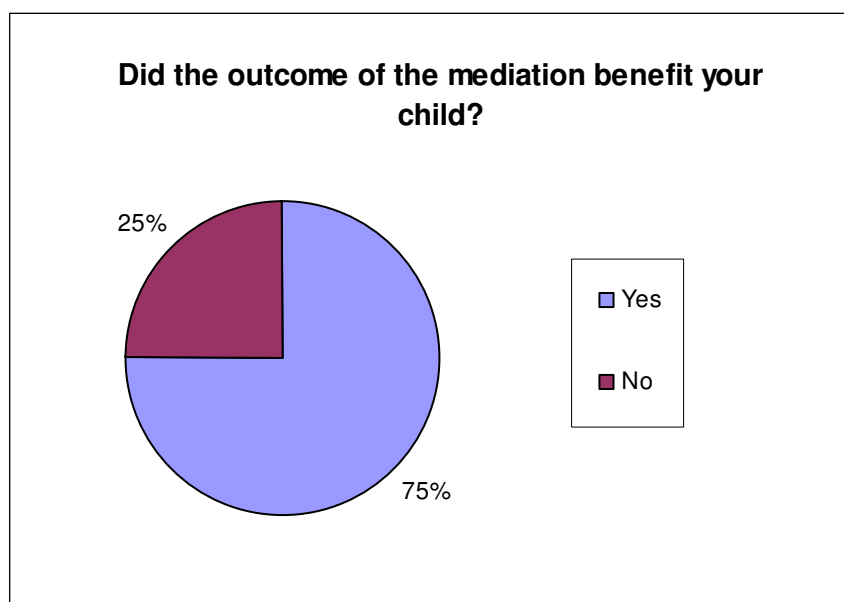
Did you think the agreement was clearly written and easy to understand?



Overall, do you feel that the agreement has been sustained?



Do you think the outcome of the mediation benefited your child?



Below is a selection of comments to questions asked on the feedback form

The comments are overwhelmingly positive. Parents as well as local authority representatives and school representatives talk about positive outcomes from mediation such as securing a statement or a particular placement for a child. Other positive outcomes include parents withdrawing their Tribunal application, saving all parties the time and effort of going to Tribunal. Many also mention other constructive outcomes, such as improved communications between parties following mediation and the process helping to, as one participant said, clear the air and enable parties to move forward.

What has happened as a direct result of the mediation?

[Child] has increased support during school day when he transfers to secondary school.

Parent.

[Child] now has full time support in secondary school.

School representative

Relationship and understanding of family have improved.

Local Authority Representative

A further meeting was arranged by all 3 parties and agreed to fund my daughter's residential school placement.

Parent

[Mediation] probably helped keep lines of communication open.

Local Authority Representative

Relationship between school and parent seems to have improved. I attended the annual review recently and it was a very positive meeting.

Local Authority Representative

Parents withdrew their tribunal appeal.

Local Authority Representative

[Child] has been happier at school.

Parent

As parents we felt we better understood the EA approach towards assessing the needs of pupils with SEN after mediation.

Parent

The Local Authority has agreed to fund the placement we wanted for our son.

Parent

Following the mediation a decision was made that benefited the child in question.

School Representative

Received a proposed statement.

Parent

Agreement reached between LA/parents- as a result parents were able to withdraw their appeal to Tribunal.

Local Authority Representative

The LEA have settled a dispute regarding transport.

Local Authority Representative

The LEA have agreed to assess our child.

Parent

[Child] is at school. Parent happier.

Local Authority Representative

An appointment with [the Local Authority] Admissions team was made.
Parent

[Child] has a Statement of SEN.
School Representative

We have had agreement about a way forward.
Local Authority Representative

Pupil is in provision as agreed.
Local Authority Representative

[Young person] has 2 nights residential at school each week. She is very happy and clearly benefiting from the arrangement. She was quickly able to access residential; tribunal would not have taken place yet.
Parent

Pupil placed in provision/ school.
Local Authority Representative

The LA has agreed to offer her a statutory assessment.
Parent

Statement amended, judicial review avoided.
Local Authority Representative

Statement issued and followed through. School of our choice named on statement.
Parent

Things have calmed down.
Local Authority Representative

Relations are less strained.
Parent

Statement has been issued, including items agreed in mediation meeting.
Parent

Parents were happier with the content of the statement and were reassured by the agreements made. They withdrew from SENDIST.
Local Authority Representative

My son has started his new school. The transition has been very successful, he has support and he is happy and settled.
Parent

Appeal withdrawn from SENDIST.
Local Authority Representative

Regarding the pupil's SEN issues, life has been a little calmer as all parties are keeping to the agreement.

School representative

If the agreement was helpful in resolving the disagreement, what was helpful? What made it work? If not, why not?

I found the whole process really useful, how the meeting was planned etc.

Parent

It was helpful to have it to refer back to. Parents were not fully satisfied with the result at first, but the agreement meant we had something to refer to, which helped me in liaising further with the school.

Local Authority Representative

It set what was agreed out clearly, so that it was easy to follow up. It also set out rough timescales.

Local Authority Representative

It was helpful to set out exactly what everyone had agreed to do.

Local Authority Representative

The whole tone of the agreement and the school's willingness to develop a working relationship with parents.

Local Authority Representative

The agreement was very specific - there was no fudging of issues and it was signed by everyone. It was clear and precise.

Parent

It allowed us to move the process forward. The LEA were able to 'save face' by requesting minor amounts of further information [re statutory assessment].

School representative

It helped parents feel confident they were listened to.

Local Authority Representative

That both parties could talk without being talked over.

Parent

All very clear and to the point. Very well done. The mediation helped pin point areas of poor communication and clarify [child's] needs more clearly.

School representative

In this case it was very helpful to have a neutral person present to steer the discussion towards agreement.

Local Authority Representative

Yes, every party had a chance to speak and give their view. It was very emotional for all involved.

Parent

Enabled discussion and sharing of information. LA was unaware of thorough paperwork.

Local Authority Representative

The session and the agreement were both helpful and the parent was able to see progress.

Local Authority Representative

Structured, dates appointed and responsibilities allocated.

Parent

The mediator ensured both sides were heard and all points were fairly covered and included.

School representative

The parent had initially adopted a very aggressive and adversarial stance. Working together with him helped develop a positive relationship and trust.

Local Authority Representative

Being able to discuss my son's difficulties in depth, being listened to, and also obtaining a statement that was very detailed.

Parent

How useful was the mediation process overall?

Very useful- helped to avoid a judicial review.

Local Authority Representative

It achieved the objective, so very useful.

Parent

They [KIDS London SEN Mediation Service] helped us greatly and we would recommend them to everyone. A very useful process.

Parent

Very useful. An excellent service.

Local Authority Representative

Very useful to meet parties concerned I felt that I was able to produce an overall picture. I feel that without the mediation meeting it would have taken longer to resolve. The mediation proved to be very beneficial.

Parent

I felt the mediation was very useful for bringing all parties together.

Local Authority Representative

Extremely useful. The LEA made the decision based on new evidence that I was able to provide [at the mediation] before it went to tribunal.

Parent

Very useful to all parties.

School representative

Extremely. The opportunity of a face to face meeting enabled us to clarify our position/ concerns that we had been unable to do via telephone calls. With the support from the mediator- key issue.

Parent

Very useful, the mediator was excellent, well informed and very facilitative.

Local Authority Representative

It was very important. For the first time, we as parents could meet to discuss, with otherwise faceless bureaucrats, the issues regarding our son's education. It moved the process along and I wish we had engaged with the mediation service sooner.

Parent

It was useful to have an independent person running [the] meeting to help move things forward.

School representative

I think that things started moving since we met with the mediator.

Parent

Allowed [the] Council to hear our views better in person than in writing which we had done many times but they had ignored.

Parent

It gave all parties a chance to explain their reasons for their individual judgements regarding placement.

School representative

Myself and my husband are very happy with the approach taken by the mediator.

Parent

Useful in securing funding and in improving dialogue with LA.

Parent

Very helpful- experienced facilitator was essential in assisting resolution.

School representative

Very useful. I feel more at ease with the decisions which I have to make.

Parent

I feel that a talking/listening forum can bring neutral options to weighted issues.

Local Authority Representative

Helpful to meet with parents in a constructive setting.

Local Authority Representative

Very helpful- able to engage parents in facilitated discussion.

Local Authority Representative

It was very useful. We felt we were properly listened to by the LEA- not judged on paper information.

Parent

Very useful thanks to the person who chaired the mediation.

Parent

As usual it was 100% useful and completed in a professional way.

Local Authority Representative

Very useful- for future discussions where the LA is in conflict. I was very happy with this session.

Local Authority Representative

It was useful to clear the air.

Parent

Very- avoided going to tribunal.

Parent

Very useful. An impeccable service- Thank you!

School representative

As school representative (Inclusion leader) I found it very reassuring. I particularly liked the way the mediator 'chaired' the proceedings. There were no raised voices, no unpleasantness and a sensible timeframe to the discussion. I liked the fact that we all met together for introductions and some clear boundaries and instruction on the process but that later mediator set up other meetings with various members.

School representative

Very useful. The parents were also in opposition with each other and the process helped to develop good working relationships all round.

Local Authority Representative

I was very satisfied with the mediation service. Everything was dealt with very sensitively.

Parent

The main benefit for me as SENCo is the one half termly meeting to review the pupil's progress and provision.

School representative