

# Dispute Avoidance & Resolution Service (DARS)

## What is the DARS?

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) came into effect on the 1 September 2005, as part of the implementation of the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO)**.

## Who may use the service?

A referral may be made if the child/young person at the centre of the disagreement is at one of the stages of the SEN Code of Practice.

## Why use the service?

Disagreements sometimes arise between a parent/guardian, and either a school or the Education Authority, in relation to the special educational provision being made for a child or young person. If initial attempts to resolve such disagreements have not been successful, it may be appropriate to make a referral to the DARS.

The purpose of the service is to provide - within an independent, confidential and informal forum - further opportunities through which disagreements may be more fully addressed.

## How does the service work?

Participation is voluntary and, when points of disagreement have been clearly identified, the challenge is to plot a way forward that all parties are prepared to accept.

Whilst members of the DARS team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements, they do not have the authority to impose outcomes. Ultimately, agreement can only be reached with the approval of all of the interested parties.

## Contact Details

The DARS central office is located in Armagh and those intending to engage with the service should do so, in the first instance, by telephone: **028 3751 2383**

Other telephone nos: **028 3831 4465**    **028 7186 3520**

Email: **[DARS@eani.org.uk](mailto:DARS@eani.org.uk)**