

# Sya's story



## An example of an Additional Support Needs Tribunal case – where children are asked to share their views

The Children's Views service supports children to pass on their views in formal processes – the service is not instructed by the child but supports children to respond to questions set out to them by tribunal services or educational professionals.

### Sya's My Rights, My Say story

Sya is 12 years old and care experienced. She was removed from her birth family when she was three years old and spent time with a foster family before finding her forever home with her adoptive family at the age of five. Sya has Global Developmental Delay and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. She can find school life very difficult and does not like noisy environments or busy corridors.

She is very afraid of being away from her mum and always worries that she might be taken away if she misbehaves. As a result, Sya is very quiet in school and doesn't talk much. If she gets overwhelmed, she hides in the toilets and she sometimes takes off and tries to make it home to make sure her mum is still there. The school has had to contact the police a few times as they worried about her safety. Sya's parents have made a placing request for an ASN provision as they worry that Sya is not happy and safe in her current school. The ASN provision is very close to where Sya's mum works. The Tribunal contacts Children's Views and asks them to explore the following questions with Sya:

- How does Sya feel when she is in her current school?
- What are her favourite parts of the school day?
- What can she find difficult?
- Anything else she wants the Tribunal to know?

### How My Rights, My Say helped Sya:

- The Children's Views worker sent a letter to Sya with a social story explaining that they would like to come and meet with her. The letter had Sya's favourite Pokémon on it and this made Sya happy
- At the arranged time, the Children's Views worker came to visit Sya at home. They brought a laptop along as well as a soft toy that had a happy and a sad face
- Sya used the soft toy to indicate whether she liked/disliked different aspect of school life. Together with the Children's Views worker she made a digital mind map on the laptop where she answered the questions asked by the Tribunal. Sya was able to add a lot of information and told the Children's Views worker that she would like to be in a smaller school and would like to be able to speak to her mum on a video call if she got upset during the school day. She also shared that she wished staff would spend more time with her when she is sad and quiet.

### Sharing Sya's views:

- The Children's Views worker wrote a report with all the things Sya told them. They included Sya's mind map in the report
- After they finished the report, the Children's Views worker arranged another meeting with Sya where they went through the report together. Sya was happy with the report
- Sya decided that she would like to attend the Tribunal for a bit to speak to the panel. The Children's Views worker made arrangements for this and attended the online hearing for 30 minutes together with Sya. At the hearing Sya explained that she always found it difficult to be away from her mum and would feel better if she knew her mum was close to her.

### Outcomes

The Tribunal decided that Sya should be allowed to attend the ASN provision on a trial to see how she got on there. Sya was happy that she was going to be closer to her mum and relieved that she would be in a smaller school.