

What happens? - Fountain Mediation

The first meeting is called a "MIAM". "Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting" - or first appointment. This first meeting will almost always take place with each of you alone. It may well be that your first separate appointments take place on different days. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss with you in more detail what the mediation process involves. It is also to consider something of your present circumstances so that we can decide whether mediation is something which will be helpful to you.

One of the important principles of mediation is that it is voluntary. This means that there is no obligation to continue. If, after the first meeting, you decide that you do not want to continue then there is no obligation to carry on.

However, if you are both willing to engage with mediation then we will arrange your first joint session. At this meeting you will be asked to sign an Agreement to Mediate (see the "Useful Information" page) which sets out your commitment to work openly and honestly with each other and the mediator. It also underlines the confidential nature of the mediation process. We will discuss ground rules for how the conversations will take place: asking you to be respectful towards each other and to listen to each other's point of view. We will then consider together what issues you want to resolve and start discussions of how to move forwards.

Experience suggests that, where the process is working, it will usually require 2 to 3 sessions to resolve disputes about children. Mediation involving finances may take more, approximately 4 or 5. These are not guarantees. Some mediations take longer. Some resolve more quickly. These are a guide only. The important thing is that the progress is entirely in your hands - the mediator will not be directing the pace.

Often we hold sessions where two mediators are present. This is called a co-mediation. We do not charge extra for this approach we simply think that it is the best way of achieving good results.

If after reading this, or attending a MIAM appointment, you decide that mediation is not suitable for you then we may be able to assist with other alternatives. Please have a look at the "Other Alternatives" page for ideas.