

# Education, Health, and Care Plans

**The majority of children have their needs met within mainstream schools. Those with special educational needs (SEN) are often supported by a school through 'SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Support.' SEND Support is where a child has been identified as having additional learning needs, but these are met by the already available resources within a school environment. A small percentage of children with SEN will need specialist input outside that which is already available. These children will be supported by an Education, Health, and Care Plan.**

## What is an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)?

An EHCP is a legal document for a young person that has educational, health or social needs who may require additional support to meet those needs. The format of the document looks different depending on the local authority the young person lives in, however every EHCP contains certain key information.

## What information is contained in an EHCP?

An EHCP is broken down into sections. Each section must be included:

**Section A** – this includes the views, interests and aspirations of the child and their parents or the young person

**Section B** – the person's SEN

**Section C** – this will include any health care needs relating to the person's SEN

**Section D** – any social care needs relating to their SEN or to a disability will be documented here

**Section E** – this section outlines the outcomes the person is working towards. These should be aspirational, achievable, and measurable

**Section F** – what will the special educational provision need to be to meet the needs and outcomes identified

**Section G** – any health care provision needed to meet the person's needs

**Section H** – any social care provision required from social care services

**Section I** – this section will have the named provision the child or young person attends or will be attending

**Section J** – some children or young people will receive direct payments – if so, these will be detailed here

**Section K** – this section includes a copy of all the advice and information received to complete the EHCP assessment and plan

## What is it used for?

An EHCP is a legal document which lays out what provision needs to be delivered, by who, and who is funding this provision. Provision can include for example, access to Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or even a 1:1 key worker. The EHCP can be referred to, to ensure that the young person's needs are being met, that they are receiving what they are entitled to as described, and that they are progressing towards their outcomes.

## Who contributes to an EHCP?

The EHCP is intended to be a working document that is reviewed regularly with input from the young person, their family/carers, education, health, and care services. It is intended to be

a holistic document that ensures that all three sectors are working with the young person to provide them the necessary support to meet their outcomes. An EHCP is usually coordinated in a school or college by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo). Every school or college must include the name of this person on their website for parents to contact if needed. Local authorities will assign a lead person to manage the assessment and issuing of an EHCP. They are often called a SEN Officer, SEN Case Worker or EHCP Coordinator. Other people who are often involved and contribute might be specialist teachers, education or clinical psychologists, social workers, speech and language therapists or occupational therapists. The people who contribute will depend heavily on the types of special educational needs identified.

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### **How often is it reviewed?**

An EHCP is reviewed every year at an 'annual review,' this is held by the educational setting and all involved parties are invited to attend. Each local authority will have an annual review format which differs slightly but will give everyone the opportunity to review the EHCP and propose any changes to it. Primarily the annual review is likely to focus on progress towards the current outcomes and stating if they have been achieved, are ongoing or if they may no longer be suitable or changes are proposed to outcomes for any reason. If a young person is approaching a transition (e.g., primary to secondary school, secondary school to sixth form/college or college/ sixth form to post-19 then this will be a key focus of the annual review). This is also when a change of placement can be discussed or any other significant changes in need or provision may be discussed or proposed. If there has been a notable change of circumstances for the child or

young person, an emergency annual review can be requested by the young person, their family or school. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure the EHCP, and its outcomes are meeting the needs identified.

### **How long is an EHCP valid for?**

An EHCP can be in place until a young person is 25, however not every young person will have the plan in place for that full duration. If a young person has met their outcomes, and the plan is no longer needed, it will cease. Once a young person turns 19, the EHCP annual review determines each year whether it will remain in place or is proposed to cease and transition to social care. The local authority will communicate if they intend to cease an EHCP, if this is the case information will be provided about the right to appeal. If an EHCP is ending, a plan should be put in place for a transition from education to social care provision.

### **How does a child or young person get an EHCP?**

If you are concerned about your child's learning and progress, the first person to approach would be the SENCo at your child's nursery, school or college. They will be able to meet with you to listen to your concerns and explore what might be the best steps to take next.

If an EHCP is required, the school or parent can request for an EHCP assessment to take place by contacting the SEN department at their local authority. If your child does not attend school, then you can speak with your GP or Health Visitor. Once a request has been made, the local authority will decide if to assess or not.

**If an EHCP is required, the school or parent can request for an EHCP assessment to take place by contacting the SEN department at their local authority.**

If an assessment is to take place, the professionals involved often submit their views and reports, and the local authority will use these

to decide if a plan is to be created. Once the plan is written, the parents of the child will have an opportunity to comment on the contents and amendments be made before the final plan is issued. Where there are disagreements regarding the plan, there are opportunities to appeal. Your local authority should have clear information on the processes on their website. The process is also detailed in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014).

### Next steps

If you have any concerns about your child's learning or progress, contact their school or college. If they are not at school age, contact your GP or Health Visitor.

Every local authority has details regarding special educational needs on their website. They also have the 'local offer,' which details all the local services that support children, young people, and their families between the ages of 0-25 years.

Every school or college will have a 'SEN Information Report' on their website – this details information on the school or college's approach to SEN including key contact information.

There are organisations that can support families through the process. These include SENDIASS, SOS! SEN, and IPSEA. Each local authority will also have their own parent forum or network, which the SEN department should be able to direct you to.

### References

Dep. for Education & Dep. for Health and Social Care. (2020). SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Gov.uk. (2023). Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND): extra help. Available from <https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help>