



Northamptonshire EHC Team:

The Education and Health Care (EHC) Plan Assessment Process

The majority of children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) will have their needs met within local mainstream education settings. However, some children and young people might require an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment. This is where Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) decides whether it's necessary to make provision via an EHC Plan.

Who Can Ask for an Assessment?

The following people have a specific right to ask NCC to conduct an EHC Needs Assessment for a child or young person aged 0-25 years:

- A parent or carer (on behalf of their child)
- A young person aged 16-25 years (on their own behalf)
- A member of staff acting on behalf of an education setting (the parents or young person must know and agree, where possible)

Anyone can bring a child or young person who has (or may have) SEN to the attention of NCC if they think an EHC Needs Assessment might be necessary. This could include foster carers, health and social care professionals, early years practitioners, or staff in youth offending teams. Requests should be made with the knowledge and agreement of the parents or young person, where possible.

Evidence Required When Requesting an Assessment

The following evidence will be needed to make an informed decision as to whether an EHC Needs Assessment is required:

- The child or young person's needs
- Attainment and progress
- Interventions already in place and the impact of these

More information on the evidence required is available in the document: [Evidence to Accompany a Request for a Statutory Assessment](#) (PDF 436KB).

What Happens After an EHC Assessment Is Requested

Following a request for an EHC Needs Assessment, NCC must determine whether it is necessary. They must make and communicate their decision to the young person, parent/s, or carer/s within six weeks of receiving the request.



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If NCC have already undertaken an EHC Needs Assessment for the child or young person (in the last six months), they aren't required to carry out another one. However, they might choose to do so if it's deemed appropriate.

Following a request for an EHC Needs Assessment, NCC will notify the young person, parent/s, or carer/s that they are considering this request. NCC will ask for their views, wishes, and feelings before deciding on whether an assessment is required.

All requests for assessments are considered at a weekly multi-agency SEN panel.

The Decision to Assess

If NCC agree to an assessment, the complete process will take a maximum of 20 weeks. A named caseworker will be allocated, and they will arrange a meeting with the young person, parent/s, or carer/s if needed. They will also contact any professionals involved, such as:

- Teachers or staff at the child or young person's school
- An educational psychologist
- Any specialist teachers who have been involved
- A medical professional (usually a doctor, but might be a speech or physical therapist, etc.)
- Staff from social services (only if they know the child or young person)
- Anyone else who has been involved with the child or young person's development

NCC will gather information about the child or young person's needs, and how those needs could affect their ability to learn.

If a child is under the age of two years, NCC will decide which kind of assessment will be the most appropriate.

Involving the Family

Parent/s, carer/s, children, and young people should be at the centre of the assessment process. NCC will make sure they have time to prepare for meetings, and give them time to share their views. The caseworker will be the key contact throughout the assessment process.

Parent/s, carer/s, and young people are welcome to attend any examinations or assessments of needs.

The Decision Not to Assess

If NCC decide not to assess, they will write to the family and say why. They will also offer a telephone call or meeting to discuss their decision. The letter will include the information that NCC used to make their decision (such as feedback from professionals).

Families have a right to appeal the decision. Details of this will be included in the letter, along with the



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contact details of [IASS](#). Mediation (via [Global Mediation](#)) must be considered before appealing to the [SEND Tribunal](#).

What Happens After the Assessment?

In deciding whether to make SEN provision via an EHC Plan, NCC will consider:

- Whether information from the assessment confirms the information available on the nature and extent of the child or young person's special educational needs
- Whether the special educational provision made before the assessment was meeting the child's or young person's needs
- Whether the special educational provision required to meet the child's or young person's needs can (reasonably) be provided from the resources normally available to the education setting
- Whether it might be necessary to make special educational provision via an EHC Plan.

Where (in the light of an EHC Assessment) it's deemed necessary for special educational provision to be made via an EHC Plan, NCC must prepare an EHC Plan.

The Decision to Prepare an EHC Plan

If NCC decide to prepare an EHC Plan, they will send the family a draft of it.

For further information, please see NCC's [webpages about EHC Plans](#).

The Decision Not to Prepare an EHC Plan

NCC might decide that it's unnecessary to make special educational provision via an EHC Plan. If that happens, the caseworker will contact the family to make them aware of the decision. The family will receive a formal notification of the decision, and will be offered a 'Way Forward' meeting. This will be arranged and chaired by the caseworker. The meeting will include the parents, the child or young person (if considered appropriate), a member of staff from the education setting, and any other relevant professionals. The caseworker will explain the decision, and explore options with the family around support that can be offered through the school and other agencies.

Families have a right to appeal the decision. Details of this will be included in the letter, along with the contact details of [IASS](#). Mediation (via [Global Mediation](#)) must be considered before appealing to the [SEND Tribunal](#).



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