



An 'at a glance' and best practice guide to Education, Health and Care (EHC) Assessments and Plans for Social Workers

*further information, including the online portal for requesting a statutory assessment (RSA) can be found [here](#)

Weeks 0 - 6

Is a statutory EHC needs assessment required?

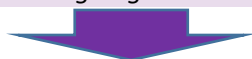
****Tip:** You should speak with the Virtual School, Designated Teacher and/or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in the child's school, prior to submitting a request for statutory assessment

- **What to consider;**

The Local Authority should consider whether there is evidence that despite the early years provider, school or post-16 institution having taken relevant and purposeful action **to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress**. With particular attention and supporting information which indicates;

- evidence of the child or young person's academic attainment (or developmental milestones in younger children) and rate of progress;
- information about the nature, extent and context of the child or young person's SEN;
- evidence of the action already taken by the school or other setting;
- evidence that where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided;
- evidence of the child or young person's physical, emotional and social development and health needs, drawing on relevant evidence from clinicians and other health professionals and what has been done to meet these by other agencies

****Tip:** Evidence of the above should be set out and evidenced in accordance with a young person's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and can be best supported via ongoing communications with the **Virtual School**.



- **What happens next?**

Following a request for statutory assessment you will receive notification from the EHC Team that your **request has been accepted and that this is being considered**

The request will be duly considered as part of the Special Needs Assessment Panel (SNAP), which consists of a number of professionals from across the Local Authority, and National Health Service (NHS), with reference to the criteria as set out in the [SEN Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#) (Sec. 9.11 – Pg. 144 on) and you **must** be notified of the outcome within 6 weeks





- **If assessment is not agreed;**

You **must** be written to by the EHC Officer setting out the reasons why assessment is not required at this time

In the letter to you, this will set out your right to mediation and appeal. However, please **do not** submit a formal request for mediation or appeal

****Tip:** Please contact the **Virtual School** and area **EHC Officer** to request a case discussion or supporting professionals meeting rather than lodging formal mediation

- **If assessment is agreed:**

An **EHC Caseworker is allocated** as a key point of contact during the assessment process

Supporting professionals are written to in order to request updated professional advices to be returned within 6 weeks

If assessment is requested by the child / young person's school or setting, **you will be written to in order to provide supporting professional advice**

****Tip:** Details regarding what information is required as part of this request for advice can be found at the end of this document

Weeks 6 – 12

Assessment and information gathering & decision regarding issuing an EHC Plan

****Tip:** It is vitally important that all supporting professional advices and guidance are submitted in a timely manner as failure to do so will mean a delay in the statutory process

- **What happens next?**

The EHC Team **must gather advice from relevant professionals about the child or young person's education, health and care needs, desired outcomes and special educational, health and care provision** that may be required to meet the identified needs and achieve desired outcomes

The **EHC Team will write to you** to either confirm that the advice submitted by you as part of the request, is still relevant and accurate, or for you to submit further supporting professional advice as set out at the end of this document

The **EHC Caseworker will contact you and/or the carer to obtain the child or young person's views** and confirm that you are satisfied that the information submitted is a fair and accurate reflection of their strengths, needs and aspirations

In seeking advice and information, the EHC Team should consider what advice they can request to ensure that that assessment **covers all relevant education, health and care needs of the child or young person**, such examples of this advice include;

- Educational advice from the current or previous school (*for example, when a child is not in school*)
- Educational Psychology (EP)
- Medical advice from health care professionals such as Community Paediatrician (CP), Speech and Language Therapist (SALT), Occupational Therapist (OT) or Physiotherapist (PT)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Virtual School (VS)
- Youth Offending Team (YOT)
- Specialist Support Service (SSS)
- Sensory Impairment Service (SIS)



****Tip:** It is particularly important that if you are submitting a request for statutory assessment as a Social Worker, that **all** supporting professionals are identified at the earliest opportunity

• What is considered?

Upon receipt of all professional supporting advices as set out above (at 12 weeks from the initial request), the EHC Caseworker will submit the case to SNAP again, for consideration in respect of the criteria as set out in [SEN Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#) (Sec. 9.53 – Pg. 157 on) and in making a decision to issue an EHC Plan or not

• If an EHC Plan is **not** agreed;

You will be contacted by the **EHC Caseworker** to offer a 'Way Forward' meeting, with the child / young person's school and supporting professionals

In the letter to you, this will set out your right to mediation and appeal. However, please **do not** submit a formal request for mediation or appeal

****Tip:** Please contact the **Virtual School** and **EHC Caseworker** for further advice or to request the 'Way Forward' meeting if you are not contacted directly beforehand

• If an EHC Plan is **agreed:**

An **EHC Caseworker** will write the EHC Plan and a **Draft EHC Plan** will be sent to you for your consideration and approval

You should start to consider what might be an appropriate school or college placement for the child or young person, with support and communication from the **Virtual School**

****Tip:** further details regarding both mainstream and special schools can be found in the [Northamptonshire Local Offer](#)

Weeks 12 – 20

The Draft EHC Plan, consultation with school or college placement and issuing the Final EHC Plan naming the education setting

• What happens next?

You will receive a copy of the **Draft EHC Plan** inviting you for your comments and feedback in respect of it's accuracy in describing the child or young person, and regarding any potential amendments or additions for consideration, that you feel are necessary and relevant. **It is of importance that the Draft EHC Plan is carefully considered as this will inform the suitability and outcome in respect of future school placements**

You will also be **invited to submit a preference for school placement for the child or young person**, and in considering this you are entitled to state a preference for either a mainstream or a special school

Your comments for consideration in respect of amendments to the EHC Plan and your preference for school placement **must be returned to the EHC Team within 15 calendar days of receipt**. Failure to do so can mean further delays in the process and/or obtaining an appropriate school placement at the earliest opportunity

****Important:** The **social worker as the responsible corporate parent must submit the preference for school or college placement for the child or young person** – this cannot be submitted by another professional on your behalf. This **must** also be duly considered and discussed with the child or young person directly, in order to obtain their views regarding their preference for school or college placement

****Tip:** The **Virtual School** can offer advice and guidance in respect of the appropriateness and suitability of particular school placements, based on the individual needs of the young person as set out in the EHC Plan



• What happens after you have submitted comments and preference for school or college?

Upon receipt of your draft comment form and preference for school or college placement, the **responsible EHC Officer will consider your preference and duly consult with the school setting** within 15 calendar days of receiving this, and in accordance with the [SEN Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#) (Sec. 9.79 – pg. 172 on)

The **EHC Team will also consult with any other school placement that is determined that may be suitable for the child or young person** in accordance with their identified special educational needs, as set out in the Draft EHC Plan

When consulting with **school or college placements, the setting are advised to respond to the consultation with 15 calendar days**. However, schools may take longer than this advised time frame due to a number of complicating factors. It is the responsibility of the EHC Team to request this information

• And then, once you have submitted your preference?

The responsible **area EHC Officer will seek to finalise and agree school or college placement in Part I of the EHC Plan**. The **EHC Caseworker** will remain the key point of contact throughout the assessment and naming process.

The **social worker should maintain regular and ongoing communication with the Virtual School and EHC Team in order to keep well informed regarding the progress and outcome of securing a school or college setting**. A list of key contacts can be found on the following page

You will receive a final EHC Plan naming the setting in Part I. You will once again be afforded a right to mediation or appeal if you are dissatisfied with the contents of the EHC Plan or school setting identified. However, **please do not** formally lodge this – instead request that a professionals meeting is held with the EHC Team, Virtual School and education setting or contact any team directly for guidance

*****Tip:** You may receive a Final EHC Plan naming a ‘type of setting’ – which does not identify a particular school or college. This is because the Local Authority are required to issue a Final EHC Plan no later than 20 weeks. However, the duty still remains in securing appropriate education provision for the child or young person at the very earliest opportunity*

Key Contacts / Team structure

[Virtual School website](#)

[EHC Team website](#)

[EHC Team Kettering and Corby](#)

[EHC Team Wellingborough and East Northants](#)

[EHC Team Northampton](#)

[EHC Team Daventry and South Northants](#)