

AN 'AT A GLANCE' GUIDE TO THE EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

The whole assessment and planning process from the time the assessment is requested until the final education, health and care (EHC) plan is issued lasts up to 20 weeks.

Pre request and referral

- The education setting¹, parent(s) or an educational, health or care professional working with the child or young person (YP) can make a request for an EHC needs assessment to the Local Authority (LA)
- A request form is completed and all referral information is collated and submitted to the LA for consideration. A copy of the request form and guidance for an EHC needs assessment can be requested from the SEN Assessment and Review Service – email senassessment.reviewservice@harrow.gov.uk or telephone 020 8966 6483.
- The date the LA receives the completed request for an EHC needs assessment triggers the start of the **20 week** assessment process.
- The request will be considered by the LA to identify whether an assessment leading to an EHC plan is necessary or if an early years, school or college based support plan remains appropriate.
- Parent(s) will have been involved in discussions with their child's education setting. Normally, they will have been involved in the development of the early years, school or college based support plan and had discussions about the request for an EHC needs assessment and contributed to the process by completing the form 'All About Me'².
- Professionals need to be sure that the request is in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and Harrow's eligibility guidance for an EHC needs assessment.

¹ An education setting is an early years setting, school, college or training provider.

² The 'All About Me' form is part of the request for an EHC needs assessment and helps to gather the views of the parent(s) and CYP.

Is an EHC needs assessment necessary?

Making this decision is the first step in the process.

- Within a week of receiving the request the casework officer ³ makes contact with the parent(s) and or YP to introduce themselves as the key point of contact, to explain the process and to answer any immediate queries.
- The casework officer will identify any additional reports or assessments that may be required by the multi-agency panel when making a decision on whether an EHC needs assessment is necessary. The casework officer will make contact with health and social care services and other specialists as required.
- The request is discussed at the multi-agency panel. The parent(s) and/or YP are advised of the outcome of the panel decision on whether or not an EHC needs assessment is necessary.
- If an EHC needs assessment is considered to be appropriate, the parent(s) and/or YP will be advised by the casework officer on next steps.
- The parent(s) and or YP will be in receipt of all paper work collated through the statutory assessment process.
- If the LA decides not to proceed with an EHC needs assessment the reasons will be set out clearly in a letter to the parent(s) and/or YP.

³ A casework officer facilitates the smooth running of the EHC needs assessment and planning process.

Weeks 6-12

The planning stage

- The casework officer will write to the parent(s) and or YP to confirm that an EHC needs assessment is going ahead and at the same time write to professionals to inform them of the assessment and ask them to gather further information or carry out an assessment if required or agreed.
- Professionals and providers should respond to requests to support the assessment process. If advice or assessments are required they should clarify what the CYP's needs/outcomes are in their area of expertise and what the best strategies would be to meet needs.
- Professionals should make the initial contact with the parent(s) and or YP if they wish to see the CYP for an assessment.
- The casework officer will give the parent(s) and or YP information about personal budgets⁴ and talk about how they could be used.

⁴ Personal budgets are an allocation of funding identified by the Local Authority to deliver some of the provision set out in an EHC Plan.

Producing the EHC plan and providing feedback stage

- The casework officer uses all collated information that the parent(s) and or CYP and professionals have provided to **draft** an initial EHC plan.
- The casework officer will set a date for a meeting prior to the request being considered by the multi-agency panel.
- The casework officer will share this plan with the parent(s) and or YP to discuss and agree content and any outstanding issues that the multi-agency panel will need to decide upon.
- Following the multi-agency panel the parent(s) and or YP are advised of the outcome of the panel decision on whether or not an EHC plan is appropriate.
- If it is agreed an EHC plan is appropriate the parent(s) and or YP and all involved professionals will be advised.
- The resources identified as needed to deliver the plan will be agreed and allocated.
- Personal budgets are identified where appropriate.
- A copy of the draft EHC plan is sent to parent(s) and or YP for them to make any final comment on the EHC plan and to express a preference for an education provider. The parent(s) and/or YP have 15 days to do this.
- If the outcome of the EHC needs assessment is that an EHC plan is not appropriate, the reasons will be set out clearly in a letter to the parent and referrer.
- The casework officer will also explain the parents/young person's right of appeal against this decision and where they can go for more advice.

Finalising the EHC stage

- The casework officer will work with the parent(s) and/or YP to finalise the plan and identify the educational placement.
- Educational settings will be consulted on whether or not they can meet needs as specified in the EHC plan.
- Personal budgets are identified where appropriate.
- The final plan will be issued with a review date. An identified casework officer will continue to monitor the plan through the annual review process.
- The LA will arrange for the SEN provision as identified in the plan to be put into place.
- The Clinical Commissioning Group must ensure that specified health provision is made.

Once the plan has been finalised

At this stage, if the parent(s) and or YP remain concerned about provision, as set out in the EHC plan they may talk to their casework officer or other support agencies (e.g. SENDIAS /voluntary agencies).

Parent(s) and/or YP can formally raise their concerns and may:

- Raise their concerns through a complaints process
- Seek mediation/independent advice and/ or
- Take up their right to appeal to tribunal.