

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

This information is about Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. It also includes information about Statements of Special Educational Needs.

Northumberland Information, Advice and Support Service offers:

- information, advice and support to explain the process and to help you take part in an EHC plan needs assessment
- advice and support about EHC plans
- information, advice and support to help you take part in reviews of EHC plans
- support to help you find out more about the funding and provision for SEND made for your child
- information, advice and support about Personal Budgets if your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan
- information about other organisations, support groups and information services that may be of help
- information, advice and support about your rights to make a complaint, seek independent **disagreement resolution** or **mediation** and appeal to the **SEND Tribunal**.

The service can be contacted by phone: **01670 623555** or **01670 620350**
or email: iass@northumberland.gov.uk

What is an Education, Health and Care plan?

An Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) describes your child's special educational needs (SEN) and the help they will get to meet them. An EHC plan also includes any health and care provision that is needed. It is a legal document written by the local authority and is used for children and young people with high support needs.

EHC plans replace Statements of Special Educational Needs and Section 139 Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDA). They are for children and young people who need a high level of support. The plans can start from a child's birth and continue into further education and training.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

(Paragraph 9.2)

Who needs an EHC plan?

EHC plans are for children and young people who have a special educational need or disability that cannot be met by the support that is usually available at their school or college.

Most children and young people with special educational needs will have help given to them without the need for an EHC Plan. This is called SEN support. The purpose of **SEN support** is to help children achieve the **outcomes** or learning objectives that have been set for them.

Some children and young people may not make the progress expected of them even with this help. When this happens the Local Authority should carry out an **EHC needs assessment**. A few children and young people have such significant difficulties that an EHC needs assessment should not be delayed.

You or your child's school can ask the local authority to make an EHC needs assessment. When this assessment is finished the local authority must decide whether to issue an EHC plan.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

In considering whether an EHC needs assessment is necessary, 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.

(Paragraph 9.14)

You can find more information about EHC needs assessments and how to ask for one on the **Northumberland Local Offer** at <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Northumberland-Local-Offer-SEND-0-to-25-years.aspx>. The Local Offer includes information about how information, advice and support related to SEN and disabilities can be accessed and how it is resourced.

Children and young people who have a **Statement of Special Educational Need** will transfer to an EHC plan between September 2014 and April 2018.

The SEND Code of Practice says that EHC plans should:

- be based on decisions made openly, and with parents, children and young people
- describe what the child or young person can do
- be clear, concise, understandable and accessible
- consider how best to achieve the outcomes for the child or young person. They **must** take into account the evidence from the EHC needs assessment
- specify clear outcomes
- consider alternative ways of providing support if a parent or young person wishes it. This could include having a **Personal Budget**
- show how education, health and care provision will be co-ordinated
- be forward looking – for example, anticipating, planning and commissioning for important transition points in a child or young person's life
- describe how informal support as well as formal support from statutory agencies can help in achieving agreed outcomes
- have a review date.

What must an EHC plan include?

Every EHC plan **must** include at least 12 sections, but each local authority can decide how to set these out.

The sections are:

- A:** The views, interests and aspirations of you and your child or the young person.
- B:** Your child's or young person's special educational needs
- C:** Health needs related to their SEN or to a disability.
- D:** Social care needs related to their SEN or to a disability.
- E:** Planned outcomes for your child or the young person.
- F:** Special educational provision. Provision must be specified for each and every need shown in section B.
- G:** Any health provision required that is related to their SEN or to a disability.
- H1:** Any social care provision that must be made for your child or young person under 18.
- H2:** Any other social care provision required that is related to their SEN or to a disability.
- I:** The name and type of the school, maintained nursery school, post-16 institution or other institution to be attended.
- J:** Details of how any personal budget will support particular outcomes and the provision it will be used for.
- K:** The advice and information gathered during the EHC needs assessment

Where the child or young person is in or beyond year 9, the EHC plan must also include the provision required by your child or young person to help prepare for adulthood and independent living.

You can read the full list of what must be included in each section in the **SEND Code of Practice (paragraphs 9.62 and 9.63)**. You can find a detailed checklist covering each of these sections on the IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice) website at: <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=afd8d11f-5f75-44e0-8f90-e2e7385e55f0>

How will I be involved?

The SEND Code of Practice says:

Local authorities must consult the child and the child's parent or the young person throughout the process of assessment and production of an EHC plan.

(Paragraph 9.21)

Reviews must be undertaken in partnership with the child and their parent or the young person, and must take account of their views, wishes and feelings, including their right to request a Personal Budget.

(Paragraph 9.168)

Will there be a review of the EHC plan?

The local authority **must** review the EHC plan at least once every 12 months. This **must** be done in partnership with you and your child or the young person, and must take account of your views, wishes and feelings.

The local authority **must** decide whether to keep the plan as it is, make changes, or cease to maintain it within four weeks of the review meeting. You have a right of appeal if the local authority proposes to cease the EHC plan.

For some young people an EHC plan will continue until they are 25. However the plan will stop if the young person:

- goes to university
- gets a job
- tells their local authority they no longer want their EHC plan, or
- no longer needs special help and the local authority decides that the EHC plan should cease.

Where does SEN funding come from?

The local authority is responsible for ensuring that all the needs set out in the EHC plan are met and that the provision is made. Funding for EHC plans usually comes from a number of sources.

For children in mainstream school some of the funding comes from the school. The local authority may 'top up' this funding from their 'High Needs Block'. You can find out more in our leaflet '**Funding for SEN support in mainstream schools in Northumberland**' and in the Northumberland Local Offer.

Special schools have a standard amount of funding for each pupil. This can also be 'topped up' with Element 3 funding when necessary.

For young people in 6th forms or attending college some of the funding will come from the college budget. This may be 'topped up' by the local authority if the amount of funding needed is more than the 'nationally prescribed threshold'. This is an amount of money that is decided on each year.

All young people with an EHC plan and all parents of children with an EHC plan can ask for a **Personal Budget**.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

A Personal Budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority to deliver provision set out in an EHC plan where the parent or young person is involved in securing that provision.

(Paragraph 9.95)

Paragraphs 9.110 to 9.118 of the **SEND Code of Practice** tell you more about what can be included in a Personal Budget.

You can find more information on Personal Budgets, including Direct Payments in our leaflet 'Personal Budgets' and on the Northumberland Local Offer website.

Will Statements change into EHC plans?

Children and young people who have a Statement will gradually transfer to the new system. Local authorities must complete this process by 1 April 2018.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

...it is expected that all those who have a statement and who would have continued to have one under the current system, will be transferred to an EHC plan – no-one should lose their statement and not have it replaced with an EHC plan simply because the system is changing.

(Introduction, xi)

Every local authority should publish a **local transition plan**, showing when and how statements will be transferred to the new SEND system. It also includes information for young people in further education and training who receive support through a **Learning Difficulty Assessment**.

Young people who already have an LDA may transfer to an EHC plan. You can find out more about the Northumberland transition plan on the Northumberland Local Offer.

What can I do if I am not happy about the EHC plan?

The first step is to contact the school, college or local authority to discuss your concerns.

Northumberland Information, Advice and Support Service can give you impartial advice and support and explain your options. This may include independent disagreement resolution, mediation or going to appeal. You can also find out more in our leaflet 'What if I do not agree with decisions about SEND provision for my child?'

What happens if I move to another local authority area?

If you plan to move to another local authority area you should contact the 'old' and the 'new' local authorities so the support specified in the EHC plan will be in place. The 'new' authority will amend the plan and name the new school or college.

The 'old' local authority must transfer the EHC plan on the day of the move, as long as it has had 15 working days' notice.

Where can I get more information, advice or support?

You can read about Education, Health and Care plans in Chapter 9 of the **SEND Code of Practice**.

The Northumberland Local Offer tells you about the local arrangements for special educational provision, including EHC plans.

Useful contacts:

Northumberland Information, Advice and Support Service

01670 623555 or **01670 620350**
or iass@northumberland.gov.uk

Contact – information and national advice line

0808 808 3555 or www.contact.org.uk

Coram Children's Legal Centre

0808 802 0008 or www.childrenslegalcentre.com

IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice)

0800 018 4016 or www.ipsea.org.uk

Please email us at iass@northumberland.gov.uk if you require this document in another format