



1.11 The Role of the Education Health and Care Plan Co-ordination Team

This team has a statutory role within the Local Authority. Its purpose is to co-ordinate statutory processes under The Children & Families Act 2014 and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015, and other associated legislative frameworks.

This includes:

- Making decisions whether to conduct EHC needs assessments (EHCna)
- Working with parents, children, settings/schools and contributing professionals to carry out the statutory process.
- Making decisions about placement and provision
- Issuing EHC plans
- Ensuring annual reviews take place so that monitoring and planning focuses on the child or young person's needs and progress.

How do we do this?

- Case Workers

Each setting/school will have a named allocated Case worker and they are your first point of contact when you need to talk about Education Health and Care plans for children in your setting/school. They are responsible for initial coordination of the EHC needs assessment over the 20 weeks cycle. If there is an agreement to issue a draft plan at panel, the case worker will organise the draft plan meetings with families, settings/schools and professionals. Each case worker has day to day responsibility for the maintenance of the EHCP, including attending complex annual reviews in an information gathering capacity. They will process requests such as changes in funding, placement and significant changes in wording to the EHC Plan if required.

Decision making

The Local Authority process is evidence driven, all decision are made robustly by a panel made up of education, health and care professionals. The descriptions below outline the different types of panel.

How do we make decisions?

Panels are evidence based and decisions are made using the reports and data submitted to the Local Authority. Applications for needs assessments should be

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produced collaboratively by the parent and setting/school. Evidence should be collected through the graduated approach conducted by the setting/school, implemented in light of relevant professional advice e.g. educational psychology, speech therapy, etc. The application of the 'assess, plan, do, review' approach is vital in ensuring the best possible decision making. The use of Support Plans will support this process. At key points in the process a panel of LA, Education, Health, Social Care and Setting/School representative consider the evidence submitted.

Currently South Gloucestershire conducts 2 panels:

The Resource Panel

The Resource panel is a multi-agency panel, consisting of representatives of education, health and social care.

- Chair EHCP team manager
- Mainstream Head Teacher
- Special School Head teacher
- Social Work Assistant
- Educational Psychologist
- DCO – Health

What the Resource Panel does?

This panel requests for changes to funding/provision and placement as a result of annual reviews and considers the information at the end of a needs assessment deciding:

- Whether to issue an EHCP at the end of a needs assessment
- Whether a mainstream or specialist is suitable
- Makes an evaluation of the quality of plan
- Agrees a Multi- agency sign off of the plan
- Makes decisions on resourcing and funding

We are always seeking head teachers to contribute to the panel and observation by heads and SENCOs is always welcome. If you are able to contribute please contact Amanda Evans, then Panel Administrator and she will be in contact to make arrangements.

The New Assessment Panel

This panel is a multi-agency panel, consisting of representatives of education, health and social care.

Its function is to make decisions as to whether to conduct an Education, Health and Care Needs assessment.

The panel consists of:

- Chair EHCP Senior Case Worker

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- Cluster lead SENCO
- Social Work Assistant
- Educational Psychologist
- Early Years Team for early years requests
- DCO – Health.

Observation by heads and SENCOs is always welcome.

Multi Agency resourcing and placement panel (MARP) – this panel will consider requests for independent high cost provisions. Decisions are made on a multi-agency basis where often there is a requirement for split funding between agencies e.g. health / social care and education combined. The panel will also consider requests for additional years at these independent placements.

How do we communicate with schools and parents?

Following panel, the allocated case worker will be in touch with the parents and setting/schools, usually by telephone and / or email, followed up by letter, informing them of any decisions made. The letters detail contact information should parents wish to access guidance and support from external agencies. There is also a duty line for general enquiries.

How you can communicate with us?

Duty Line: 01454 865137

Email: this is normally in the format of: firstname.surname@southglos.gov.uk

Invitations to reviews

The Local Authority has delegated responsibility for arranging and holding reviews to the schools. Should parents or settings/schools wish for a case worker to attend, it is necessary to contact their link case worker and outline the reasons why LA attendance is beneficial and necessary. Please note that any LA officer e.g. an Educational Psychologist, Inclusion support Co-ordinator or Early Intervention Officer are representatives of the LA at reviews.

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Resolving disputes

Following any panel decision, parents will be offered the opportunity to discuss the decisions with their link case co-ordinator. This may include a meeting, usually held at the council offices. Parents will also be notified of their rights to access mediation and tribunal services.

Making decision about provision

Please see information about panel processes above.

Working with children, parents and families

The Local Authority strive to work in partnership with parents, their voice and the voices of children and young people is at the centre of our decision making.

SEND Surgeries

School SENCo surgeries are arranged by the team's panel administrator. These have been set up to provide advice and guidance for any matters relating to EHC Plans.