

Section 2



Meeting the needs of children and young people (CYP) with SEND

2.11 Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments

The majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within local mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges at SEN Support. Some children and young people may require an EHC needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan.

- SEND Code of Practice 9.1

In considering whether an EHC needs assessment is necessary, the local authority will consider whether there is enough evidence to show that despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made the expected progress. The 2015 SEN Code of Practice emphasises the need for a graduated approach to meet the needs of children with SEN through early intervention and prevention strategies implemented at key developmental periods.

In the majority of cases, the local authority will expect schools to have implemented the actions set out in their school offer and to have evaluated and monitored the impact of these over time before requesting an EHC needs assessment. An EHC needs assessment and plan is **ONLY** required for the learners with the most complex and severe SEN and disability. The vast majority of learners will have their needs met by the school without the need for an EHC plan or additional funding.

As a general guideline it is expected that no child or young person should be referred for an EHC needs assessment unless he/she has received at least six months of support and is still making less than expected progress given his/her age and individual circumstances, as described by the 2015 SEN Code of Practice (para 6.17). It is expected that any advice from specialists has been implemented and given time to support the learner and show progress. The length of time spent in school or setting-based support will not in itself be sufficient to justify a request for an EHC needs assessment.

It is anticipated that the learner will have a reasonable level of attendance and support has been provided if the absence level is not at an acceptable level. It is expected that a SAFeh will have been implemented in many but not all cases.

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The local authority has delegated the majority of funding to support young people with additional learning needs directly to schools to ensure that individual schools can offer targeted support and early interventions in a timely manner. When an EHC needs assessment is issued it is expected that the first £6,000 of expenditure on support will come from these delegated funds.

In order to meet the threshold for starting an EHC needs assessment the young person must have special educational needs or a disability that significantly impacts on his/her ability to access education. Guidance on applying for an EHC needs assessment can be found [here](#).

A young person who is over the statutory school age and chooses not to engage in further education or training is not eligible for an EHC plan.

The local authority will consider initiating an EHC needs assessment when the following thresholds have been met:

- The child's needs are significant and long term and
- Despite evidenced based interventions already provided by the educational setting the child is not making progress.

The 2015 SEN Code of Practice states that 'the legal test of when a child or young person requires an EHC plan remains the same as that for a statement under the Education Act 1996'.

It is suggested that the SENCO is familiar with the following documents that outline the process for applying for an EHC needs assessment. They can be found on South Gloucestershire's website on the pages for the Local Offer.

- Educational, Health and Care plan guidance
- Threshold Guidance
- Process Chart for EHC needs assessment
- Self-Assessment
- FAQ for Parents
- FAQ for Staff
- Operational Guidance of Needs Indicators and Summary
- 0-25 Transition Plan

The following checklist is important to use when preparing an application for an EHC needs assessment as it is more likely to be successful if the school provide the required documentation and evidence that a panel can consider. This is not an exhaustive list and you are free to add any additional valid information.

When an EHC needs assessment request is received by the 0-25 Service, via the Action and Response Team, it will be discussed at the weekly SEND panel and if a decision to start the needs assessment is approved, a Case Worker will be allocated.

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A Case Worker is a named person who will be appointed from within the team and will lead on the assessment process and where it is deemed that an EHC plan is necessary, will draft and finalise it. The local authority must make a decision whether to go ahead with an EHC needs assessment and complete the whole process within 20 weeks of receiving a request unless specific exceptions apply.