Guidance Document

For the

Annual Review of Education Health and Care Plans
Annual Review of an Education Health and Care Plan

Guidance for: Maintained schools
Maintained nursery schools
Academy schools
Non-maintained special schools
Independent education institutions approved under Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014
Early Years settings

This guidance outlines how the annual reviews process will be managed for County Durham children and young people.

Education Health and Care (EHC) plans should be used to actively monitor children and young people’s progress towards their outcomes and longer term aspirations. They must be reviewed by the Local Authority (LA) as a minimum every 12 months. The first review must be held within 12 months of the date of the issue of the EHC Plan. Reviews led by the educational institution will engender the greatest confidence amongst the child, young person and their family. The responsibility for organising and facilitating the review meeting should be undertaken by the school or setting.

1. Purpose of the Review

The annual review should:

- Focus on and monitor progress towards outcomes and longer term aspirations
- Consider if outcomes and supporting steps remain appropriate
- Gather information about strengths and needs across education, health and care (as relevant)
- Assess effectiveness of provision
- Consider the continuing appropriateness of the EHC plan in the light of the child/young person’s progress or changed circumstances.
- Focus on the four Preparing for Adulthood Pathways for children and young people from year 9 onwards. These are:
  - Employment
  - Good Health
  - Independent living & Housing
  - Friends, Relationships & Community
2. Reviews for children and young people transferring between phases

An EHC plan must be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to a child or young person moving between key phases of education to allow for planning and, where necessary, commissioning of support and provision at the new institution. The review and any amendments must be completed by 15th February in the calendar year of the transfer at the latest for transfers into or between schools. The key transfers are:

- early years provider to school
- infant school to junior school
- primary school to secondary school

For young people moving from secondary school to a post-16 institution or apprenticeship, the review and any amendments to the EHC Plan – including specifying the post-16 provision and naming the institution - must be completed by the 31st March in the calendar year of the transfer.

3. Review Process

The responsibility for organising and facilitating the meeting should be undertaken by the school or setting which the child or young person attends. Schools and education settings are requested to notify the LA of all planned review dates for the academic year as early as possible. Please e-mail to sencasework@durham.gov.uk

Before the meeting the school or setting must:

- 4 weeks before the meeting seek advice and information from everyone who will be invited to the review meeting about the child/young person’s progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC Plan and any other matters relating to the child/young person’s progress.
- Convene the EHC Plan review with relevant school/setting staff and invite the following to attend with at least two weeks’ notice of the date of the meeting:
  - the child or young person
  - the child’s or young person’s parents/carers
  - involved education, health and care professionals
  - SEND Caseworker (as outlined in 4)
  - All documents such as the current EHC Plan and all relevant advice/reports should be circulated to everyone invited to the review meeting at least two weeks before the meeting.
- Support the child or young person to prepare their views (i.e. good things that have happened since the last review, what is working well and what is not working well, what’s important now and what is important in the future).
- Ensure that a copy of the current EHC Plan is available
N.B. Annual reviews for Looked after Children should be planned to coincide with the review of the child's Personal Education Plan element of the Care Plan.

4. Local Authority attendance at reviews (please discuss attendance at a review with the Local Authority at least 4 weeks before the planned review date)

The local authority will endeavour to attend the annual review for children and young people where the setting has indicated prior to the review that:

- There is likely to be a recommendation that the LA cease the EHC Plan.
- There is likely to be a change to parental preference.
- The review is likely to suggest that the LA should undertake a re-assessment.

In all cases a SEND Caseworker (Preparing for Adulthood) will attend annual review meetings for young people in year 9, year 11 and in the year when the young person is leaving school.

The contact telephone numbers to discuss attendance at the annual review meetings are:

- Children in early years and up to and including year 8 03000265878
- Children/young people from year 9+ 01325 375 985
- Children/young people looked after by Durham 0300267800

5. The Annual Review meeting

Person Centred Planning practice recommends that the voice of the child/young person should be considered first in the meeting. Other aspects of the meeting can then be discussed within the context of the child/young person’s wishes (Refer to the guidance document “How to hold a person centred review” Confident School Confident Parents which is available on the Local Offer website).


The current EHC Plan must be made available at the meeting as the basis for the review and changes to be discussed.

6. Recording the outcomes from the meeting

- The “Proforma of an EHC Plan Review meeting” should be used to record the outcome of the meeting.
- The review and progress of the outcomes in sections E F G, and H of the current plan should be recorded in Section 2.
- Complete the recommendations from the review section of the Proforma as follows:
Option 1) - should be selected when the outcome of the review is that the child/young person has made significant progress/achieved the outcomes in the current EHC Plan. Any further support can be made available with a SEN Support Plan.

Option 2) – should be selected where the review concludes that the child/young person’s needs have changed significantly. However this would usually only be in exceptional circumstances and will result in a re-assessment.

Option 3) - should be selected where the outcome of the review determines that a change of placement is anticipated. The reasons for a change of placement/provision must be evidenced in the supporting paperwork. Supporting evidence must include a recent Educational Psychologist report.

Option 4 – should be selected where some amendments to the current plan have been agreed and they will be recorded using ‘tracked changes’

7. After the review meeting

- Complete the outstanding items on the record of the review meeting, (the form). Amend the current electronic copy of the EHC Plan, using Microsoft tracked changes, to reflect updated information and proposed changes. E.g. proposed new outcomes.
- No change should be made to the plan unless there is evidence to support the change. Please include with the tracked change the evidence source. e.g. increase to the number of hours 1-1 support for literacy. Evidence source – school report.

N.B. Changes to the electronic copy of the current EHC Plan must only be made using Microsoft tracked changes. Under no circumstances should amendments to the electronic copy of the current plan be made without recording them in ‘track changes’ Separate guidance on how to use ‘tracked changes’ is attached in Annex 1.

- Save the tracked changes version of the EHC Plan as child/young person’s initials tracked changes EHCP  review date  e.g. FBtrackedchangesEHCP020415
- Once the EHCP has been updated with the tracked changes and the Proforma is completed then all documents must be e-mailed to sencasework@durham.gov.uk in two files as follows:
  1. EHC Plan Tracked Change Word Document
  2. The Proforma plus all supporting Advice/Reports from the review meeting as one scanned document.

The Documents should be e-mailed within 2 weeks of the review meeting.

8. Local Authority responsibility

All changes to the EHC Plan submitted to the local authority are recommendations. All proposed amendments to the plan will be considered by a SEND Caseworker. The updated plan with the agreed amendments will be sent to the parents or young person and everyone else involved. Parents or young person will be given 15 calendar days to
comment or make representations on the proposed changes. Final amended plans will be issued as soon as possible but no later than 8 weeks from the date of the review meeting.
Annex 1

Tracking changes in Microsoft Word 2010

Word can keep track of changes made to a document marking the text that is added known as insertions, or the text that is removed known as deletions. Sometimes this is helpful if you are working alone but it is especially helpful when someone else is editing your document. You can see what changes are made and you have the option to accept or reject those changes.

Here's how it works.

Here is a document ‘Treasure Island’. Suppose you want to change the words of the song… ‘Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!’ to ‘a bottle of milk’.

"Fifteen men on the dead man’s chest-- Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

in the high, old tottering voice that seemed to have been tuned and broken at the capstan bars. Then he rapped on the door with a bit of stick like a handspike that he carried, and when my father appeared, called roughly for a glass of rum. This, when it was brought to him, he drank slowly, like a connoisseur, lingering on the taste and still looking about him at the cliffs and up at our signboard.

1. The first thing to do if you want to track changes is to go to the ‘Review’ tab and turn on ‘Track changes’. This option will be highlighted if you are tracking the changes.

2. If you select the word ‘rum’ and type in ‘milk’, the word ‘rum’ will be deleted and the word ‘milk’ is added. You can see the change in the document.

3. If you find it difficult to work in that view go to the ‘Review’ panel and select ‘Final’ from the drop down list. This will only show the changes that you have made. ‘Final: Show Markup’ option shows the change (crossed out) and the edit (underlined). You can also see the bar on the left hand side of the screen to show changes (which is very helpful
Annex 2

Person Centred Review Process for EHC Plans in County Durham County Council

At least 4 weeks before the date of the review meeting

The educational setting must seek advice and information about the child/young person from all professionals involved and discuss. Where necessary discuss, with the Local Authority, their attendance at the review.

It is good practice to discuss a preferred date with the family as soon as possible before setting a date.

At least 2 weeks before the date of the review meeting

The child’s parents or the young person, a representative of the educational setting, a Local Authority SEND Case Worker and any relevant professional must be sent an invitation to attend the meeting, with copies of all relevant information and advice gathered.

All reports gathered from professionals and the education report must be included with the invitation to parents/carers or young person and professionals.

The Review Meeting

The review meeting must focus on the child/young person’s progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC Plan. The review should consider any changes that might be made to the support which is currently provided to help achieve those outcomes, or whether changes are needed to the outcomes themselves. Children, parents and young people should be supported to engage fully in the review meeting.

Within 2 weeks of the review meeting

The educational setting must complete the review proforma and the ‘tracked changes’ version of the EHC Plan and forward to the Local Authority.

Within 4 weeks of the review meeting

The Local Authority will decide whether it proposes to keep the EHC Plan as it is, amend the plan, or cease to maintain the plan, and notify the child’s parents/carers or the young person and the school or other institution attended.

If the plan needs to be amended, the Local Authority will review the information and decide what changes to make before issuing an amended EHC Plan.

If the Local Authority decides not to amend the plan or decides to cease to maintain it, they will notify, the child’s parents/carers or the young person of their right to appeal that decision and the time limits for doing so, of the requirements for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal, and the availability of information, advice and support and disagreement resolution services.