London Borough of Redbridge

Education, Health and Care plans

Guidance for schools

1. **Process of EHC assessments and format of EHC plans**

The Children and Families Act 2014 will replace Statements of Educational Needs and Learning Difficulty Assessments with EHC Plans. These will bring in advice, assessments and services from health and social care as well as education services. The plans place a greater focus on outcomes for children and young people and must be completed in partnership with parents/carers and the child or young person as appropriate (these will be discussed in greater depth under the Outcomes section of this guidance).

The plans are divided into a number of sections with Parts A – D focusing on information about the child, gathered from the child or young person, their family and professionals that work with them. Part E looks at the outcomes for the child and parts F – I focus on the provision that needs to be provided and the child's placement. If a family have requested a Personal Budget then Part J can be completed, but if no request has been made then this section will be left blank.

Once a request has been received the local authority will decide whether to go ahead with an assessment and if agreed, a facilitator will be identified. This will be a professional who already knows the child and the family and they will complete Part A of the EHC plan with the family (including the child or young person). An SEN Case Officer (Co-ordinator) will also be identified in order to co-ordinate the assessment and gather information from all the professionals involved.

Once all of the reports have been received a joint meeting with professionals, parents and the child or young person (where appropriate) will be held to identify outcomes needed for the child and look at what provision may be required. The co-ordinator will then write the EHC plan and present it to the management resource group for agreement of provision (including named school). This plan will then be sent out to parents for approval and then be finalised.

The EHC process will take a maximum of 20 weeks. A flowchart setting out the assessment process and timescales is attached to this guidance.

**What happens if the local authority decides that an EHC plan is not necessary?**

If, following assessment, the local authority decides that an EHC plan is not necessary, it must inform the parents or young person, the early years provider, school or post 16 institution currently attended and the health service, and give the reasons for its decision. This must take place within 16 weeks of the initial request or of the child or young person having been brought to the authority’s attention. The local authority must also tell the parents or young person that they have the right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal against the decision and set out the time limits for appeal, and the availability of parent partnership and disagreement resolution services.

EHC guidance facilitators 28.8.14
In these circumstances it is likely that the information gathered during the assessment will have indicated ways in which the school, college or other provider can meet the child or young person's needs from within available resources through an early years, school or college based support plan.

2. **SEN support review and requesting an EHC assessment**

Before consideration of an EHC assessment, Children and young people would normally have been subject of SEN support, in line with the SEN Code of Practice. The expectations of schools in addressing pupil's needs through SEN support are detailed in chapter 6 (pages 80-99) of the Code of Practice. These expectations include:

- Assessing the progress of all pupils and identifying those making less than expected progress
- Providing high quality teaching targeted at areas of weakness
- Gathering information, incorporating high quality and accurate formative assessment and the views and wishes of pupils and parents
- Setting desired outcomes
- Delivering a graduated approach, incorporating an 'assess-plan-do-review' cycle
- Delivering appropriate support and interventions, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness
- Involving specialists where necessary
- Making reasonable adjustments where children and young people have a disability
- Regularly reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of support and intervention, using this information to analyse the pupils needs, and revising the support and outcomes where necessary
- Keeping records of additional or different provision made under SEN support

The decision to request an EHC assessment should be taken at one of the regular review meetings of SEN support. This review will normally involve:

- The SENCO,
- Key staff who teach or support the pupil,
- The pupils parent or carer
- Key agencies and professionals who support the pupil
- The child or young person

The person arranging and convening the SEN support review meeting would usually anticipate that a decision to request EHC assessment is a possible outcome of the meeting, and should ensure that key agencies and professionals are invited to the meeting. If they are unable to attend the meeting their views about EHC assessment referral should be sought.

At the SEN support review meeting, the discussion should include:

- What information is needed about the child/young person
What information is already known
If information is not already known, who would be best placed to provide it

This will enable advice providers to focus their assessment as efficiently as possible.

At the SEN support review meeting there should also be agreement on who should be the assessment facilitator.

**Thresholds for requesting an EHC assessment**

A school may take the decision to request an EHC assessment where, despite having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess, and meet a pupil’s SEN, they have not made expected progress.

The Local Authority, in deciding whether to agree to a request for an EHC assessment, will consider the following questions:

- Is there evidence that the pupil has significant needs and difficulties?
- Has the school provided appropriate support over time using their delegated SEN budget?
- Has the school delivered appropriate evidence based interventions over time?
- Has the school reviewed and evaluated support and interventions and adjusted where appropriate?
- Has the pupil failed to make expected progress despite the support and interventions?
- Where progress has been made, has it only been as a result of much additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided?
- Have appropriate specialists and agencies been involved?
- Is the pupil likely to need support which cannot be provided through the local offer, and which can only be provided through an EHC plan?
- Has the decision been taken at an SEN support review meeting, to which parents and appropriate specialists and agencies have contributed?

**Requesting EHC assessments**

Schools should use the form ‘Referral for statutory Education Health and Care plan (EHC) assessment’ which is available on the Redbridge Fronter website. This must be completed and returned electronically using secure e-mail (such as Egress). Supporting documents must be scanned and attached.

This form is self-explanatory, but attention is drawn to the following advice:

1. Referrers must attach a chronological list demonstrating history of SEN assessment, provision and review (page 3).
2. The decision to request an EHC assessment must have been discussed at an SEN support review, and the minutes or notes of this review must be attached (page 3).
3. Where specialists or agencies have been involved (such as educational psychologists, specialist teachers, or therapists) have been involved, any reports produced by them must be attached (page 3).
4. Where a pupil’s needs include social, emotional, behavioural, or mental health difficulties, logs of incidents, records of frequency of incidents, and checklists should be attached (page 3).

5. Referrals for EHC assessments should always have been discussed with an educational psychologist. In most cases the pupils will have been the subject of consultation and direct involvement with the EP, although there may be exceptions to this. The EP will give a view as to whether they consider a request for EHC assessment is justified; this view should be considered carefully in reaching a decision whether or not to go ahead with the referral (page 3). The referrer should record with whom the referral has been discussed (page 3).

6. The form asks for details of the pupil’s needs in various areas. If the assessment is agreed, the school will be asked for similar information as part of their advice. To avoid unnecessary work, the forms are designed so that the information from the referral form can be pasted onto the Advice form (page 4).

7. The referrer must obtain the views of the pupil (page 6). The way in which this is obtained will vary depending on the age and communication skills of the pupil.

8. The referral must include details of how the school has used resources delegated for pupils with SEN in supporting the pupil (page 6).

3. **Purpose of multiagency meeting and the Facilitators role.**

When children and young people are subject of an EHC assessment, a person–centred multi-agency meeting will be convened to agree their outcomes and provision. The meeting is held towards the end of the assessment process, after the Professional Advice Summary Forms are submitted.

For children and young people who attend school, the multi-agency meeting is usually held in the school. The meeting will be arranged and convened by the Coordinator from the SEN team; the Coordinator will contact the Facilitator, agree the date, and invite the attendees.

The person–centred multi-agency meeting is chaired by the facilitator; the EHC Coordinator will usually attend the meeting, record the decisions, and complete sections E-H of the EHC Plan. The meeting is also attended by the parent/carer, the child/young person (where appropriate) and the key professionals who are contributing to the Plan. The Professional Advice Summary Forms will usually be distributed at or before the multi-agency meeting (in practice this may not always be possible because of the deadlines involved).

The person–centred multi-agency meeting should start with a summary of the views and aspirations of the child and parents, followed by brief summaries from the school and professionals. The main part of the meeting entails agreeing the outcomes, strategies and provision, and the hence the wording to be included in sections E-H. It is essential in ensuring a clear plan that enough time is allotted to complete these tasks. It is not the function of the multi-agency meeting to look in detail at the child’s progress, current functioning and difficulties; nor is it the function to set termly targets suitable for an individual education plan.

4. **Outcomes**

EHC plans must specify the outcomes sought for the child or young person in Section E. EHC plans should be focused on education and training, health and care outcomes that will enable children and young people to progress in their learning and, as they get older, to be well prepared for adulthood. EHC plans can also include wider outcomes such as positive social relationships and health and care outcomes.
emotional resilience and stability. Outcomes should always enable children and young people to move towards the long-term aspirations of employment or higher education, independent living and community participation.

An outcome can be defined as the benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention. It should be personal and not expressed from a service perspective; it should be something that those involved have control and influence over, and while it does not always have to be formal or accredited, it should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART). When an outcome is focused on education or training, it will describe what the expected benefit will be to the individual as a result of the educational or training intervention provided. Outcomes are not a description of the service being provided – for example the provision of three hours of speech and language therapy is not an outcome. In this case, the outcome is what it is intended that the speech and language therapy will help the individual to do that they cannot do now and by when this will be achieved.

When agreeing outcomes, it is important to consider both what is important to the child or young person – what they themselves want to be able to achieve – and what is important for them as judged by others with the child or young person’s best interests at heart. In the case of speech and language needs, what is important to the child may be that they want to be able to talk to their friends and join in their games at playtime. What is important for them is that their behaviour improves because they no longer get frustrated at not being understood.

Part E of the Redbridge EHC format includes the following outcome headings:

**Long term aspirations and goals**

The time scale for these may vary but they will usually refer to aspirations that are a significant distance into the future, perhaps when the child/young person have left education and reached adulthood.

**Medium term outcomes**

These refer to what the child/young person needs to achieve before the next transition phase; for instance for a child of 8 years, by the end of key stage 2.

**Short term outcomes**

These refer to what the child/young person needs to achieve over the forthcoming year, before the next annual review.

It is essential that short term outcomes relate to the child/young person’s medium outcomes, and that these in turn relate to the long term goals and aspirations.

Outcomes underpin and inform the detail of EHC plans. Outcomes will usually set out what needs to be achieved by the end of a phase or stage of education in order to enable the child or young person to progress successfully to the next phase or stage. An outcome for a child of secondary school age might be, for example, to make sufficient progress or achieve a qualification to enable him or her to attend a specific course at college. Other outcomes in the EHC plan may then describe what needs to be achieved by the end of each intervening year to enable him or her to achieve the college place. From year 9 onwards, the nature of the outcomes will reflect the need to ensure young people are preparing for adulthood.