



An 'at-a-glance' guide to the Education, Health & Care Assessment and Plans.

The assessment process will continue to evolve over the next few months. Visit www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/sendehc for the latest updates and additional information.

Stage 1 (week 0-6)

Is an Education, Health & Care (EHC) assessment needed?

- The education providers¹, parents or professionals working with the child/young person or the young person themselves (over 16 years), make a request for an EHC assessment to the EHC Team.
- SEN Officer will review the request to decide if it meets criteria for an EHC Assessment.
- If assessment agreed A ²case worker is allocated who contacts the parents to explain the process and offer to arrange for a ³parent supporter.

What happens in Stage 1 for parents?

- Parents will have already had discussions with their child's education provider and the professionals working with their child to prepare for making the request for an EHC assessment. Parents may have made the request themselves.
- If an assessment is not appropriate parents will be offered a meeting with the SEN Officer to consider other options for support.
- If an assessment is agreed the case worker will contact the family to:
 - explain the process,
 - offer a parent supporter,
 - arrange a meeting
 - agree what information can be shared.
- Parents have a right of appeal if the decision is made not to assess but must first consider formal mediation.

What happens in Stage 1 for professionals?

- Professionals and education providers must ensure that they have discussed with the parents any emerging issues, the child/young person's needs and resources or strategies in place for helping the child or young person.
- Relevant information and a one-page-profile sent to EHC Team.
- This ensures that all relevant information is available in the assessment and helps make sure that parents, children and young people only have to 'tell it once'.
- The child or young person's education provider will be told whether an EHC assessment will be carried out. The Clinical Commissioning Group for the child or young person's GP will also be informed.

¹ An education provider is an Early Years Setting, school college or training provider.

² A case worker ensures the smooth running of the EHC assessment and planning process

³ A parent supporter helps families participate in the process

Stage 2 (weeks 1-12)

Information gathering



- The case worker makes arrangements for any assessments that need to take place in order for everyone to understand the needs of the child or young person.
- Relevant agency carries out required assessments and holds assessment meetings with the parents and child/young person⁴.
- Assessment meetings will take a **person centred planning approach**⁵ and will focus on **outcomes**⁶.
- The case worker will bring together all the information to be reviewed by an SEN Officer.



What happens in Stage 2 for parents?

- The case worker and/or a parental supporter meet with the family to gather information. This discussion will include:
 - What works and what is not working
 - What needs to change
 - Desired outcomes
- The case worker will explore the aspirations and outcomes that the family would like, both from the child/young persons views, the parents' perspective and from other professional assessments.
- The case worker will explain personal budgets.
- Parents will meet other professionals to co-produce the assessment information.

What happens in Stage 2 for professionals?

- Professionals must undertake relevant assessments and provide:
 - information required to identify the needs of the child/young person and
 - identify resources which are supporting the child/young person already.
 - Identify the outcomes the school, college or professionals are working towards with the child/young person and views about their future will be needed.
- The information provided by professionals for the assessment should be co-produced with the parents, child/ young person.
- Wherever possible assessment within and across agencies should be co-ordinated to avoid too much disruption for the family.

⁴ Guidance on writing parental, medical or educational advice for assessment is available.

⁵ A person centred planning approach is one where the child/young person is at the heart of discussions and decision making

⁶ Outcomes can be short, medium or long term but must describe what the end result is hoped for the child/young person

Stage 3 (weeks 8-16)

Analyse and agree



- SEN Officer reviews all the information and decides whether an EHC Plan is needed. The case worker informs the family of the decision.
- If the decision is not to draw up an EHC plan the case worker writes a Summary of Assessment⁷(SOA) which is sent to the family. The SEN Officer can meet with the family to discuss the SOA and the support available.
- Parents have a right of appeal if the decision is to not issue an EHC Plan, after considering formal mediation.
- If an EHC Plan is agreed the case worker writes the **draft** plan which is sent to the family for consideration and whether they wish to request a **personal budget**⁸. The draft is also sent to all professionals who have been involved in the assessment.
- A multi-agency meeting with the parents and professionals to discuss the draft document may be arranged and facilitated by the case worker if required



What happens in Stage 3 for parents?

- **If an EHC Plan is not needed**, the work undertaken to assess the child or young person's needs and the **outcomes** identified are used to support the child/young person through an SOA.
- A meeting with the SEN Officer to discuss this can be arranged. Parents and young people have a right of appeal to tribunal against this decision after considering formal mediation.
- **If the decision is that an EHC Plan is required** the case worker draws up a draft plan which is sent to the parents and involved professionals.
- Parents can meet the case worker or an SEN Officer to discuss the content of the plan or request a multi-agency meeting.

What happens in Stage 3 for professionals?

- If an EHC Plan is not needed, professionals may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss how everyone involved will work together to achieve the outcomes identified for the child/young person.
- If an EHC Plan is needed professionals may be invited to a multi-agency meeting to discuss and finalise the draft Plan.

⁷ A Summary of Assessment (SOA) details the child/young persons needs and the identified outcomes through the assessment and gives details of the support available to meet these needs from the Local Offer.

⁸ A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority to deliver all or some of the provision set out in an EHC Plan.

Stage 4 (weeks 12-20)

Finalise Plan



- After receipt of the draft plan parents or the young person can:
 - Meet with the caseworker to discuss minor amendments
 - Meet with the SEN Officer to discuss draft plan
 - Request a multi agency meeting if further discussion with all professionals required to finalise the plan. This meeting would be facilitated by the case worker.
- Indicative personal budget allocation can be discussed.
- The draft EHC Plan, with any amendments agreed is reissued to parents and they are invited to identify their preferred school placement.
- Parents return the draft to the SEN Officer to consult the requested education placement.
- If a personal budget has been requested the Case worker will work with all agencies to complete the resource allocation system and provide an indicative budget.
- The final plan is sent for moderation and formal agency sign-off.



What happens in Stage 4 for parents?

- Parents/young person agrees the draft plan or requests changes.
- Parents should notify the case worker if they wish to request a personal budget. A parent supporter can help with this decision process.
- Following agreement of the draft plan parents will be asked to name a preferred school or education setting. Parents will also be asked to confirm whether they would like to take up a personal budget.

What happens in Stage 4 for professionals?

- Case worker, SEN Officer and/or professionals involved in the assessment support parents/young person to finalise the Plan.

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Stage 5 (weeks 18-20)

Monitor & Review



- Final EHC Plan issued to parents, education establishment and Clinical Commissioning Group.
- The case worker will stipulate when the plan must be reviewed.
- The education provider meets with parents and child/young person to agree short term targets to fulfil the outcomes and provision agreed in the plan.
- Parents have a right of appeal if they disagree with needs or provision or education placement identified in the final plan.



What happens in Stage 5 for parents?

- Parents will receive a copy of the final EHC Plan.
- At this stage, if the parent/carer or young person remains concerned they may:
 - Formally raise their concerns through agency complaints processes;
 - Seek mediation; and/or
 - Take up their right to appeal to SEN tribunal.
- If parents have taken up a personal budget a key worker can be identified to support them.

What happens in Stage 5 for professionals?

- The final EHC Plan sent to the governing body, proprietor or principal of the education provision named in the plan.
- A copy of the plan will also be sent to the Clinical Commissioning Group for the GP of the child/young person
- A copy of the plan sent to all professionals who provided written reports and advice.
- The education provision the child/young person is attending should meet the parent/carers to agree short term targets to meet the outcomes and requirements of the plan.