

All Things School Support

Parent Carer Guide
to Support Plans & EHCPs



Your Child has a Right to Education

Every child, regardless of their additional needs, has a right to education. This fundamental principle is promoted in both national and international law, recognising that education is not a privilege, but a basic human right.

Inclusive education aims to provide all children with the opportunity to learn and develop to their full potential within mainstream settings wherever possible, with reasonable adjustments and support tailored to their individual requirements.

This ensures that children with disabilities or additional needs are not excluded or marginalised, but rather empowered to participate fully in society, creating their own independence, self-esteem, and future prospects.



Picking a School for Your Child

Picking a school for a child is difficult enough, but once you add additional needs, varying pieces of equipment, and therapies into the mix, it can be even harder to figure out where to start.

So where can you start and what is available?

A child with additional needs can attend a mainstream school, a specialist school, or a mainstream school with extra support.

The best option depends on your child's needs and circumstances.

Mainstream school

- Most children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities attend a mainstream school
- Children in mainstream schools learn the national curriculum
- Some mainstream schools have special units for specific needs, such as autism or learning difficulties

Mainstream school with extra support

- Also known as "enhanced provision", this option may be for children who need a lot of help

Specialist school

- Specialist schools are designed to support pupils with additional needs
- They may have smaller classes, specially trained teachers, and a higher staff/pupil ratio
- Some specialist schools may take pupils with a particular diagnosis, such as autism
- Specialist provisions are allocated by the local authority and cannot be applied for



Other options

- Homeschooling may be an option
- Independent schools, are schools that are not funded by the government. There is also no legal duty for the local authority to consult with an independent school that is not section 41 (*section 41 - independent schools which have been approved by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Children and Families Act (CFA) 2014*) registered with the DFE.

What is a maintained and non-maintained special school?

A maintained special school is funded and controlled by the local education authority (LA) and follows the national curriculum, while a non-maintained special school is a charitable foundation or "not-for-profit" school, approved by the Secretary of State, that is not controlled by the local authority.

How to find a school

- Ask your local authority for a list of special schools in your area
- Check your Local Offer for information on education, health, and social care services
- Visit schools to see if they suit your child
- Talk to other parents of children with additional needs
- Get advice from your local Information, Advice and Support (IAS) Service

To get a place at a specialist school funded by your local authority, all of the following must apply:

- your child has an EHCP
- your local authority agrees that the specialist school can provide the support in the plan
- the school agrees that they can meet the needs of your child
- your local authority agrees to fund the place
- In some rare cases, a child might get a place at a specialist school after their needs assessment has started, but before their plan has been finalised. This is called an 'assessment placement'.



**For more information on school placements and options,
check out our transitions guide for:**

- **Early Years**
- **Year 6 to Year 7**
- **Post 16**

What is a SENDCo?



The role of a SENDCo can be very difficult to understand, especially when you have had no reason to have ever accessed one before. A Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) manages the support and education of students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

What is a SEND Caseworker?

A SEND caseworker, or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities caseworker, is a professional who supports children and young people with SEND. They are the main point of contact for families, schools, and other services, when planning or reviewing Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs).



What is a Higher-level Teaching Assistant (HLTA)?

A Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) is a teaching assistant who has additional training and responsibilities. HLTAs work under the guidance of a teacher.



Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes that organisations and people providing services must make if someone's physical or mental disability puts them at a disadvantage compared with others who aren't disabled.

It means schools have a legal obligation under the Equality Act to support pupils who are disabled with reasonable adjustments, making sure they can benefit from what the school offers in the same way as a pupil who isn't disabled.

A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability. For example, preventing a disabled pupil on crutches from going out at break time because it would take too long to get out and back would be considered discriminatory.

Schools should think about how all aspects of the school day could be adjusted to meet the needs of the disabled child, including attendance and behaviour, so that everyone is set high expectations and feels they belong in the school community.

For example; A reasonable adjustment at school for a child could be providing a quiet space for a student with sensory sensitivities to take breaks, or offering extended time for assignments or tests to accommodate a child with a learning difference.

You can learn more about reasonable adjustments here:



Graduated Approach

The Graduated Approach refers to the system of SEN support within mainstream settings. It is the system schools use to assess the needs of children and young people and then provide the appropriate support. The system should follow four stages, often referred to as a 'cycle': Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

Assess:

- This involves gathering information about a child's needs, strengths, and challenges through various methods like observations, discussions with the child and family, and formal assessments.

Plan:

- Based on the assessment, a plan is developed outlining specific interventions, support strategies, and expected outcomes, with the involvement of the child, family, and relevant professionals.

Do:

- The planned interventions are put into practice, providing the child with the necessary support.

Review:

- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions and make adjustments as needed, ensuring the child's needs are being met and progress is being made.



You can learn more about the graduated approach here:



Support Plan

A support plan is a document that outlines the special education needs and services a student needs to succeed in school and or higher education.

What does a support plan include?

- Goals: Short-term targets and timeframes for the child to achieve
- Support strategies: Additional support the child needs, such as accommodations or services
- Learning difficulties: The nature of the child's learning or developmental difficulties
- Assessment information: Information about the child's likes, dislikes, and worries
- Who will help: Who will provide the support and services

Who creates a support plan?

- A team that typically includes:
 - Parents or caregivers
 - Teachers
 - Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo)
 - Other relevant professionals

Who might be eligible for a support plan?

All children on the SEND register should have a support plan.

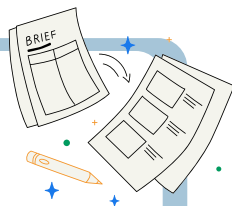
What is the difference between a EHCP & a Support plan?

An Support Plan, is a plan created by a school for a child with additional needs, while an Educational, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legally binding document that outlines a child's special educational needs.



Support Plan

- Created by the school
- Not legally binding
- Focuses on a child's educational needs within a specific school
- Includes objectives, targets, and strategies
- May include assessment information, likes, dislikes, and worries
- May include details of any additional support needed



EHCP

- Legally binding document
- The Local Authority is legally obligated to implement the EHCP in the named provision
- Outlines a child's special educational needs in detail
- Can stay in place until a young person reaches the age of 25
- The main idea is to help children achieve their full potential

Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs)

You might need an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) if your child has significant and long-term special educational needs or disabilities that cannot be well supported by the standard provision available at their school or educational setting, meaning they require additional support beyond what is typically offered to most children with special needs; this could include specific educational, health, and social care provisions outlined in the plan to help them reach their full potential.

To learn more on
EHCPs, check here:



To learn more on Support
Plans, check here:



It covers:

- your child's needs
- the benefit or difference the support should make to your child (outcomes)
- the support that your local authority must provide (provision)

This could be because your child needs support with:

- reading, writing and numbers
- talking and listening
- social skills and emotions
- physical skills

Special educational provision:

- 'educates or trains' your child
- and is additional to or different from the educational offer to others of the same age

For example:

- speech and language therapy
- physiotherapy
- occupational therapy
- cognitive behavioural therapy
- support from a trained emotional learning support assistant to do group play
- a laptop with voice control software and training

Requesting an EHC assessment

You can ask your local authority to carry out an assessment if you think your child needs an EHC plan. You can also request an assessment for your child. A young person can request an assessment themselves if they're aged 16 to 25.

Creating an EHC plan

1

Your local authority will create a draft EHC plan and send you a copy.

2

You have at least 15 days to comment, including your views where you would like your child to be educated.

3

Your local authority has 20 weeks from the date they receive the request for the assessment to give you the final EHC plan.

Disagreeing with a decision

You can challenge your local authority about:

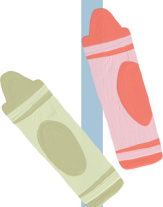
- their decision to not carry out an assessment
- their decision to not create an EHC plan
- the special educational support in the EHC plan
- the school named in the EHC plan

If a local authority refuses to issue an EHC plan (Education, Health and Care Plan), you can usually access mediation as a next step, this involves contacting a mediation service to discuss your concerns with the local authority in an attempt to reach an agreement. You will need a mediation certificate to proceed with an appeal if mediation is not successful.

To appeal a **Section B (needs)** of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, you must first attend mediation, then complete the SEND35 appeal form, and submit it to the SEND Tribunal within the required timeframe, providing evidence and reasons for your appeal.

To appeal a **Section F (provision)** of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, you must first attend mediation, and if that fails, you can appeal to the SEND Tribunal using the SEND35 form, providing reasons and supporting evidence for your disagreement with the Local Authority's decision.

To appeal a **Section I (placement)** of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, you don't need to consider mediation, but you still have the right to mediate if you wish, and you must submit your appeal to the SEND Tribunal within two months of the date on the Local Authority's decision letter



**Sunderland
SENDIASS**

0191 537 5764



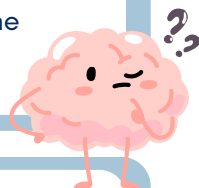
IPSEA advice line

0800 018 4016



What happens next if you receive an EHCP for your child?

After receiving an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for your child, the plan will be implemented and reviewed annually. The plan is a legal document that outlines the support and provision your child is entitled to.

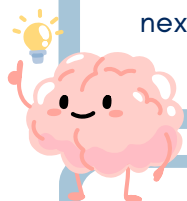


What is a EHCP Review?

An Education, Health and Care (EHC) review is a formal meeting that takes place at least once a year to assess a child's progress and update their EHC plan. The review is a legal requirement that must be carried out by the local authority. The review can be attended by the pupil, parent carers, education setting, practitioners involved in the individual's care, and the local authority.

Making changes to your EHCP

In some situations, you can ask the school (or placement) and local authority for an early annual review. This can help you get significant changes to your child's plan without waiting for the next annual review. A significant change might be getting another diagnosis.



Asking for an Informal Review

You can ask your child's school for an informal review at any time. You do not have to wait until the annual review to talk about:

- how the school is carrying out the EHC plan
- any concerns about your child's progress

Depending on the school, the SENCo may set up reviews each term to check your child's progress.



Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)

If the local authority (LA) agrees it would be inappropriate for any required special educational provision to be delivered in a school, it can agree to arrange for it to be delivered somewhere else, for example at home.

The LA must arrange and pay for that provision.

EOTAS is different to elective home education. With an EOTAS package the LA is responsible for arranging and paying for the provision.

However, to access the EOTAS option, your child must have an EHCP.

If **you choose** to home educate your child, the LA is not responsible for meeting any of the costs or providing any support.

Elective Home Education

If you would like, you could choose to home educate your child. This is sometimes called 'home schooling', but is more accurately known as 'elective home education' or 'EHE'.

If this is what is right for you and your child then this can be a positive step.

The Department for Education's "All you need to know about home-schooling and elective home education" summarises key information you should be aware of if you are thinking about home schooling. Which you can find here:



Elective home educating children or young people with EHC plans

The LA **should not stop** an EHC plan because the child or young person is being home educated. The LA must also still review the plan annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that the child's special educational needs (SEN) continue to be met (paragraph 10.32 of the Code). The LA must use the same legal process to review the EHC plan, even if the child or young person is being home educated.

If you wish to home educate your child you do not need school's permission, but should write to:

- the school and explain that they intend to educate their child at home, and
- the LA and ask it to amend Section I of the EHC plan by removing the name of the school. Parents of children at special schools will also need to ask the LA to agree to their name being taken off from the school roll if the LA arranged for them to go there.
- If your child's current educational placement is not working and you do not want to home educate them, it may be better to change the EHC plan to set out different special educational provision and/or name a different school/placement rather than attempting to take on home education without support.

For more information on EHE
with an EHCP plan, please
follow this QR:



School Myths & Truths

There is a lot of misinformation or incorrect information when it comes to discussing EHCPs.

We thought that taking this space to clear them up would help a lot of individuals.
Please check our socials for more!

Myth:

Your child must have a diagnosis to get a EHCP

Truth:

There is no need for a diagnosis, just evidence that your child is in need of extra support or on a pathway to diagnosis.

Myth:

A child has a diagnosis, so they need an EHC plan

Truth:

An EHC plan is not dependent on diagnosis. Children with a range of diagnosis can have their needs met through SEN support

Myth:

You must prove your child has needs to be assessed

Truth:

An assessment should be considered if
A the child **has** or **may have** special educational needs and B if they **may** need a special education provision

Myth:

EHC needs assessments are funded by schools.

Truth:

They're funded by the Local Authority, so no cost to the school at all.

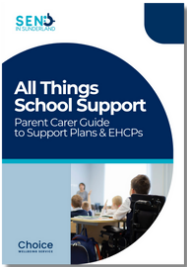
Myth:

A child cannot get any support without an EHC Plan

Truth:

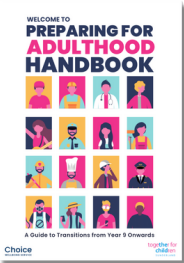
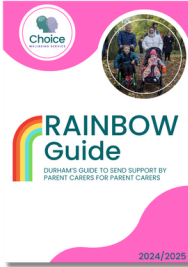
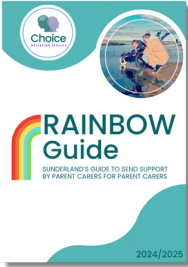
All schools have a notional budget of £6000 to help support all children in the school with SEN needs, they can also apply for more funding to help.

Here are just a few more guides we have available!



Guides on specific subjects

Rainbow Guides



Transitions Guides

Your Child, Your Choice

Because one size doesn't fit all

Find our
website here:

