

# Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans

The majority of children and young people who have special educational needs and or a disability (SEND) will have their needs met within their local nursery, school, or college. However, some children and young people may require an Education Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment in order for the Local Authority (LA) to decide whether it is necessary to make provision for a child or young person in accordance with an EHC plan.

The LA must conduct an EHC assessment when it considers that it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for a child or young person (0-25) in accordance with an EHC plan. An EHC assessment will not normally be the first step in meeting the special educational needs of a child or young person. It will normally follow on from careful planning already undertaken with the child/young person, their parents and the educational provider.

## What is an EHC assessment?

An EHC assessment is a multi agency assessment of a child or young person who may need a more intensive level of support than can normally be provided within a school or college. The assessment will gather advice and information from a range of relevant education, health and social care professionals.

The process puts the child/young person and their parent at the very centre of the assessment and planning process. At the end of this process the LA will decide whether an EHC plan is required. The whole process takes 20 weeks from when a request is received.

## What is an EHC plan?

An EHC plan brings together a child's/young person's education, health and social care needs into a single legal document. It will describe the aspirations, special educational needs, desired outcomes and the SEN/health/social care provision that is required to meet these outcomes. An EHC plan can be in place from the age of 0-25 (if required) and will support a young person in preparing for their adulthood.

## Who can ask for an EHC assessment?

A request can be made by:

- ✓ a child's parent.
- ✓ a young person over the age of 16, but under the age of 25.
- ✓ A person acting on behalf of a school, a post 16 institution.

Other people can bring a child or young person with SEN to the attention of the LA where they think an EHC assessment may be necessary. This includes health and social care professionals, foster carers, early year's practitioners, youth offending teams etc.

Parents and young people can make a request at any time, although it is useful if you do speak to the school or college before you make a request. A request does need to be made in writing and should be sent to:

The SEN Team, 3 Knowsley Place, Duke Street, Bury BL9 0EJ

or by e-mail to the [senteam@bury.gov.uk](mailto:senteam@bury.gov.uk)

If a school or college makes a request for an assessment, they will need to complete the relevant application form.

### **What happens when a request for assessment is received?**

When a request is received the SEN team will write to parents, the young person (if they are over 16), the school or college, the health service and social care to request further information. Within 6 weeks of the request being received, a multi-agency panel will consider the request and decide if it meets the LA's thresholds for an assessment. If the assessment is not agreed, then the parent/young person will receive a letter explaining this decision and advising them of their right to appeal.

If the assessment is agreed, then there will be a coordinated assessment process where the information about the child's/young person's needs will be collected together. The information gathered will then be considered by the multi-agency panel who will consider if an EHC plan is required and if so what resources will be described in the plan.

If an EHC plan is to be drawn up then a planning meeting will take place, involving parents, the child/young person, the LA, school or college and any other relevant professionals. This meeting will develop the EHC plan.

The plan will then be issued to parents or young person as a draft EHC plan. Parents or the young person will be asked if any further changes to the plan are needed; whether a request is to be made for a personal budget; and the educational setting that they would like to be named on the plan.

### **Disagreeing with a decision**

Parents and a young person (over the age of 16 and below 25) can challenge the following decisions that are made by the LA:

- ✓ the decision not to carry out an EHC assessment.
- ✓ the decision not to issue an EHC plan.
- ✓ the description of the SEN and provision within an EHC plan.
- ✓ the name or type of school or other educational institution.

Where possible the LA will seek to resolve any disagreements as quickly as possible and at a local level. However, parents and young people will be advised on how they can appeal to the SEND Tribunal throughout the assessment process.

### **Personal Budgets**

During the EHC assessment process or when an EHC plan is reviewed, parents or a young person can request a Personal Budget to support some of the outcomes in an EHC plan. A Personal Budget is an amount of money that is identified to meet some of the needs and outcomes described in the plan.

Further information about Personal Budgets and how to request one will be available during the EHC assessment. There is also information available on the Bury Directory.

### **How will the EHC plan be reviewed?**

The EHC plan will remain in place whilst a child or young person continues to require the special educational provision that is detailed in the EHC plan. The EHC plan will be reviewed through a person-centred review at least annually. The review will focus on the child/young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan.