



One minute guide

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

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What are Education, Health and Care Plans?

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document for an individual child or young person aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The EHCP sets out a description of their educational, health and social care needs and the provision that must be implemented in order to help them achieve key life outcomes. It also includes information about the child or young person's aspirations, and for those in Year 9 or above, information about preparation for adulthood.

EHCPs bring together advice and information from practitioners from different agencies to contribute to a single assessment and plan for the child or young person. In Leeds, the Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Provision ([SENSAP](#)) team is responsible for overseeing all EHCPs and assessments.

How are Education, Health and Care Plans initiated?

The majority of children and young people with SEND can have their needs met within their local mainstream school, early years setting, college or training provider through the setting's existing resources, without the need for an EHCP.

If a setting has taken every possible action available to identify, assess and meet the child or young person's needs but they are still not making expected progress, it may be appropriate to consider requesting an EHC assessment. Settings can do this through submitting an [online form](#) with details of the actions they have taken and support they have offered to the child or young person.

If parents would like to apply for an EHC assessment, SENSAP advise them to speak to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) at their child's setting first, who will be able to talk to parents about what the assessment involves, and offer support and guidance around decision making.

If a parent or young person wishes to request an EHC assessment themselves, they can complete an EHC2 form (parents) or an EHC3 form (young people). SENSAP would then contact the child's setting to request additional information.

What does an EHC assessment involve?

EHC assessments take 20 weeks in total, and in Leeds there are three stages to the assessment process:

The **first stage** leads up to a decision whether to proceed with an assessment or not, when SENSAP Casework Officers contact the family to discuss the assessment and their desired outcomes. There is a multi-agency panel in place to consider requests to assess, and this meets on a weekly basis. Within six weeks of the request being made, it will be considered by this panel. The panel looks at: whether the child has SEND; whether they may require special educational provision to be outlined in an EHCP; and the support offered by the setting to date. If the panel decision is not to proceed with an assessment, the panel provides advice about how the child can otherwise be supported in meeting their needs.

The **second stage** is the assessment, when SENSAP will gather information from practitioners involved with the child, young person and family, including an Educational Psychologist. These practitioners have six weeks to undertake any assessments and submit their advice to the local authority. SENSAP officers will then take the case back to the multi-agency panel to decide whether or not an EHCP is required. If the panel decide that an EHCP is required, SENSAP officers will draft a plan. If the panel decide that an EHCP is not required, the casework officer will contact the child's family or the young person to explain this decision.

The **third stage** is finalising the EHC Plan, which will take place by week 20. In most cases, the local authority is able to finalise the EHC plan and send it to the family and the professionals involved fairly quickly. Sometimes, when changes are needed, there may be a period of negotiation regarding the content. As soon as the EHCP is made final, it becomes a legal document and must be upheld.

Once an EHCP is in place, it is reviewed every twelve months - and at least six-monthly for children under statutory school age - by officers within SENSAP.

What support and further information is available?

Most parents and young people will receive the support they need from the SENCO at their school or setting. If additional support is required, they can contact [SENDIASS](#) who can support parents and young people at any stage of SEN support, EHC assessment and reviews, including making an appeal.

For further information about EHCPs and the EHC assessment process, please see the [Leeds City Council website pages](#) or contact SENSAP at sensap@leeds.gov.uk or on tel: 0113 37 60062.

The [Leeds Local Offer](#) is a SEND resource for children and families as well as practitioners, detailing what is available within the city.