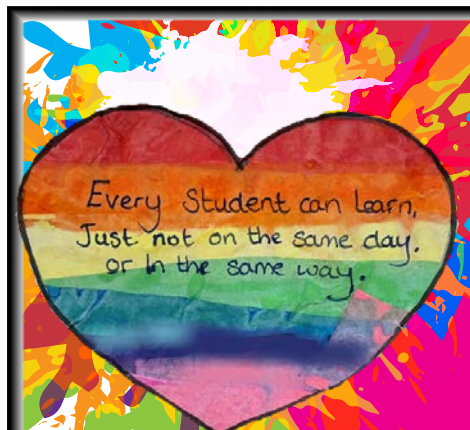


All Different, All Equal: Education Health and Care Needs Assessment

Information for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0 to 25 with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEN/D) people about



Designed by a student from The Brier School

What is an Education Health and Care needs assessment

An Education Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment is undertaken by the local authority (LA) to determine whether it is necessary to issue an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

An EHCP will be necessary where the assessment identifies that a child or young person has significant and/or complex special educational needs that requires them to have regular access to specialist support, provision or services so that they can make educational progress and develop their knowledge and skills in preparation for their life as an adult.

Dudley Council's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team are responsible for co-ordinating the EHC needs assessment for all children and young people residing within the borough regardless of where they go to school.

The assessment should be completed within 20 weeks of the date that the initial request is received by the SEN Team.

An EHC needs assessment:

- Is an assessment of the education, health care and social care needs of the child or young person.
- Can only be undertaken if the child or young person has, or may have, special educational needs – it does not apply where there are only health and/or care needs, no matter how severe.
- Is not a process for referring a child or young person to a specialist service to be assessed where the child or young person is not already known to the service.

The council will seek advice and information from all key professionals involved with the child or young person as part of the assessment process.

How will I be involved

The SEN Team aim to ensure that you as a parent, parent carer, child or young person are involved in the assessment process as far as possible and that a person centred approach is used throughout the assessment period.

You will be allocated a named Case Officer who will work with you during the assessment period. Your case officer will keep you informed of progress and will let you know if the EHC needs assessment process is delayed for any reason.

The process will start with your case officer asking you to share information about yourself if you are a young person aged over 16 or about your child and family if you are the parent of a child with SEN. They will ask you who is involved in supporting you/your child and will also ask about you/your child's hopes and aspirations for the future and what outcomes you would like to achieve.

You can contact your case officer if you would like to discuss any aspect of the process or if you would like an update on progress. Your case officer will share the outcome of the assessment with you once a decision has been reached. They will set up a meeting either to discuss next steps if it is decided that an EHCP is not necessary or to discuss the draft plan if an EHCP is to be issued.

At the end of the process you will be asked for your feedback with regard to your experience of the assessment. Your feedback will enable us to improve our services so that we deliver positive experiences for children and young people with SEND across the borough.

Weeks 1 to 6

The 20 week timescales starts at the point that the request is received by the SEN Team. The information included within the request will be considered by a panel of practitioners from across education, health and care and a decision made about whether it is necessary to undertake an EHC needs assessment.

The council will inform you of the outcome of the panel by week 6. This may be by letter or email or a telephone call. If you have a preferred method of contact please advise us and we will endeavour to accommodate this.

If an assessment is agreed you will be allocated a Case Officer who will contact you to arrange a 'yes to assess' meeting (this may be face to face or virtual). Your Case Officer will talk to you about what to expect from the process, will ask some questions that help explore your child's needs and difficulties, and will discuss with you which agencies are currently involved with your child and the family as they will be asked to contribute to the assessment.

If your child has complex health needs and is seen by a specialist it is important that you share these details at this meeting. Your Case Officer will review the information that you and the education setting have already provided to ensure that we contact the right services.

Your Case Officer will also discuss your child's longer term aspirations and what outcomes will be important for them to achieve as it is crucial that both your and your child's voice is clearly evident.

If an assessment is not agreed, it will be because Dudley Council is of the view that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that your child has SEN that may require provision to be made through an EHC plan. The council will send you formal confirmation of this via a letter which will also detail the reasons for not undertaking the statutory assessment. The letter will also provide you with information about how you can appeal this decision. You can find further information about this on the Dudley SEND Local Offer website

Weeks 6 to 14

The council will seek advice from all agencies identified as being involved with your child. This will include medical advice from health care professionals; educational advice; psychological advice from an educational psychologist (EP); advice and information in relation to social care and Early Help services; advice and information from any other agency that the council thinks is appropriate and any agency that you as a young person or as the parent/carers of a child reasonably request that the council seeks advice from. These agencies have up to 6 weeks to submit their advice.

Weeks 14 to 16

The council will consider all the advice received as part of the assessment and will decide about whether or not to write an EHCP. This decision is made via a multi-agency panel with representation across education, health, and care partners. Your Case Officer will formally write to you to inform you of the decision by Week 16 or will contact you to notify you of any delay.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to prepare an EHCP, your Case Officer will offer to speak with you to explain the decision and discuss next steps. You will be provided with a summary of the assessment and the advice that contributed to the assessment.

You will receive formal confirmation of this decision in a letter which will provide you with information about how can appeal this decision. You can find further information about this on the Dudley SEND Local Offer website.

Weeks 16 to 19

Where the council have decided an EHC plan is required the proposed EHCP will be issued to you and shared with all professionals who have contributed to the assessment. The Case Officer will contact you to discuss the content of the EHCP as well as your preference with regard to the education setting to be named in Section I of the final EHCP.

You will have an opportunity to suggest any changes that you would like to be considered to be made to the EHCP before the final plan is issued.

The council will consult with suitable education setting/s, these settings have 15 days to consider the request for placement and determine whether they are able to put in place the provision that has been identified in Section F of the EHC plan.

If a specialist setting is requested and this is deemed by the council to be appropriate to meet the child/young person's special educational needs then the council will consult with suitable settings as well as the preferred setting identified by the parent. The Case Officer will also refer the case to a placement and funding panel for a final decision.

Weeks 19 to 20

The final EHCP will be issued naming a suitable educational placement in Section I of the EHC plan.

What is a family conversation

The Family conversation forms part of the 'yes to assess' meeting held during the first 6 weeks of the statutory assessment process. It is a conversation between parents/carers or young person and the Case Officer and it focuses on the impact of the child/young person's special educational needs on their daily life. It explores what support the family and child/young person already have in place and can signpost them to additional support that may be available locally. It is an opportunity for the Case Officer to gain a better understanding of what is going well for the family and what is going not so well. It also explores any barriers that are preventing the child/young person from accessing opportunities normally available within the community.

More about outcomes

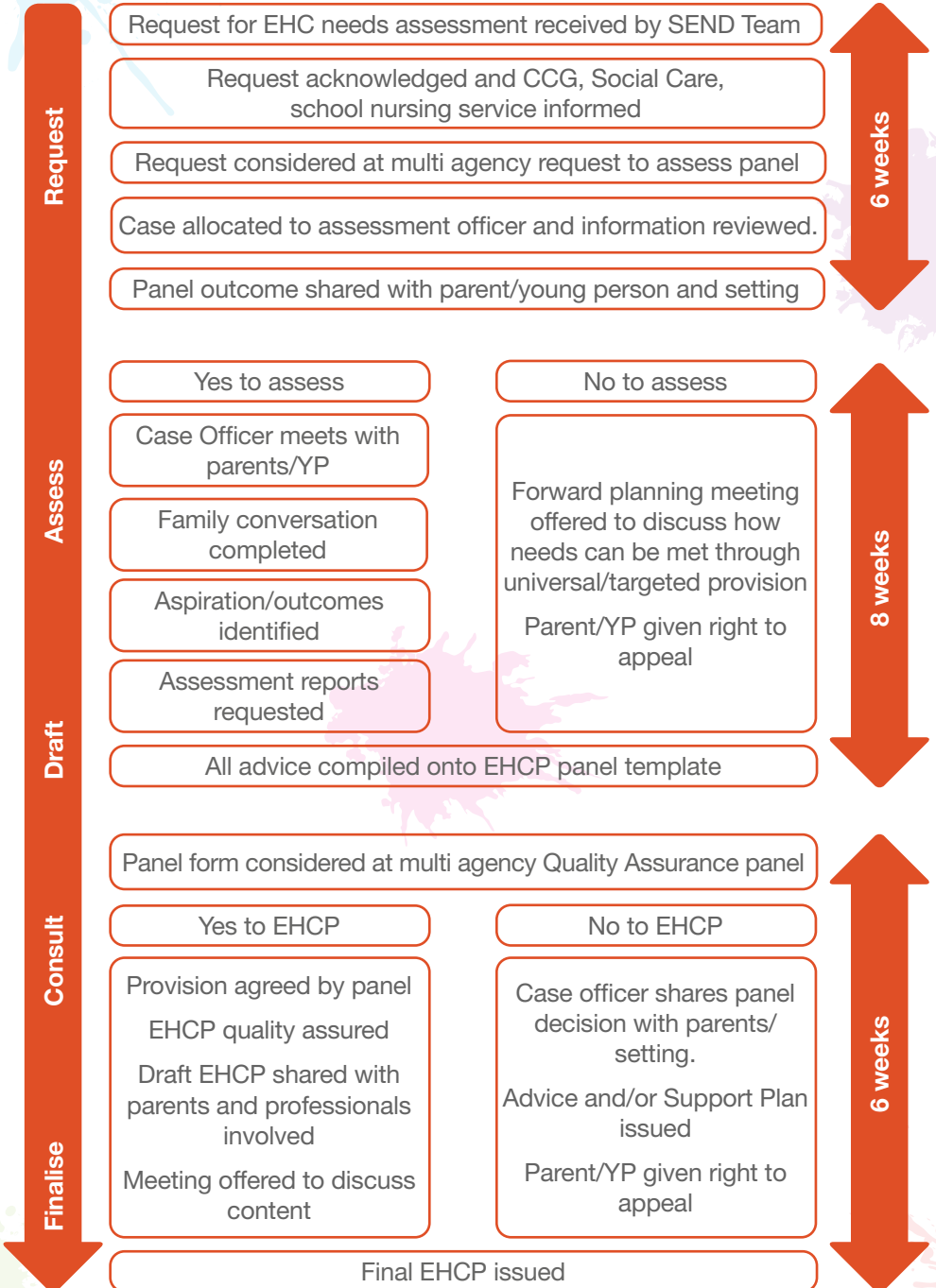
Where a child/young person is identified to have SEN then the school will develop outcomes to be achieved by the child/young person following targeted intervention. Where an EHC plan is agreed by the council it will incorporate long term outcomes into the EHC plan (Section E). These outcomes will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time specific (SMART). A long-term outcome will usually span a period of 2 –3 years or a specific key stage. Outcomes are reviewed annually at the EHC plan annual review meeting and progress towards achieving these outcomes is monitored and recorded. It is important that, no matter the age of the child/young person, outcomes focus on the special educational needs identified and work towards preparing the child/young person for adulthood.

An EHC plan will usually have up to 5 long-term outcomes however this may vary depending upon the needs of the child/young person.

Feedback

The council endeavours to work with parents/carers/young people to create a plan that is right for your child/you. Feedback from you is essential in order for us to further build on what we are doing well and also improve on areas where a need is identified. When we issue the final EHC plan we will ask you to complete a short questionnaire/survey. This can be completed online or in its paper format. Your responses will be used to inform and develop future SEND services in Dudley.

20 week flow chart



What happens next

Your child's EHCP is finalised and shared with the setting named in Section I of the EHCP as well as those agencies that have provided advice during the assessment process.

Your child's EHCP will be reviewed by the council at least every 12 months. These annual review meetings will normally be organised and chaired by staff at your child's school and invites will be sent to all practitioners involved with your child. The purpose of the review is to ensure that your child's EHCP remains up to date and provides an accurate reflection of your child's special educational needs. If there are concerns about the level of provision, or if your child's needs have changed significantly, then an early review meeting can be requested and you or the school can request that the SEND Case Officer attends the review meeting.

At the annual review meeting you will be able to discuss your child's progress towards meeting their outcomes. The meeting will consider whether to maintain, amend or cease the EHCP.

The EHCP is not amended each year and the most recent Annual Review document should be read alongside the EHCP.

From Year 9 onwards the Annual Review must also focus on transition to adult life.

You can find out more about the Annual Review process on the Local Offer . You may also find it helpful to speak to the SENCo teacher, class teacher or form tutor at your child's school's to find out more about the annual review process, including how you and your child will contribute to the review so that your voices are included.

Where can I get further advice support and information

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Services (SENDIASS) offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).Contact details are:

dudley.sendiass@dudley.gov.uk

Office Mobiles 07900 161363, 07824 543233, 07929 777744

Sendiass web address **xxxx**

Dudley SEND Team:

senteam@dudley.gov.uk

Telephone 01384 814360

