

When does the EHC needs assessment end?

Once the local authority has all the information and advice it must decide whether your child needs an **Education, Health and Care plan**.

An EHC plan is a legal document written by the local authority. It describes the special educational needs that a child or young person has and the help that they will be given to meet them. It also includes the health and care provision that is needed.

If the local authority decides an EHC plan is necessary it must first write a draft plan. It will send you the draft EHC plan and copies of the reports so that you can read it all. You should check that everything you think is important has been included and that you agree with the outcomes and the proposed provision. The local authority will also ask you which school you prefer your child to go to.

You have 15 days to make comments, to ask for a meeting or accept the draft plan.

Note that if you do not reply within 15 days the local authority may assume that you agree with the draft plan.

The last stage is for the local authority to send you the final EHC plan. If you are still unhappy with the plan or cannot agree with the local authority on a school, you have a right to go to mediation and/or to appeal. If you need help at any stage you can contact **St. Helens IASS** on **01744 673428**.

Who to contact

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Please contact us to request translation of Council information into Braille, audio tape or a foreign language.

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Supporting families of SEND

A valuable source of advice and information offering support to parents/carers/young people by listening to their concerns around SEND.



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Information Advice and Support Service

EHC Needs Assessment



St.Helens Council

What is an EHC needs assessment?

An EHC needs assessment is a detailed look at the special educational needs (SEN) of a child or young person and the support he or she may need in order to learn. Local authorities are responsible for carrying out EHC needs assessments under the **Children and Families Act 2014**.

The school or early years setting can often give your child help through **SEN support**. This means that the school makes additional or different provision from that provided to most other pupils to meet their needs. Sometimes other professionals will give advice or support to help your child learn.

The school or early years setting can often give your child help through **SEN support**. This means that the school makes additional or different provision from that provided to most other pupils to meet their needs. Sometimes other professionals will give advice or support to help your child learn. Some children need more help than the school can provide. If your child does not make progress despite everything the school has tried, an EHC needs assessment might be the next step.

The local authority will look at your child's attainments and rate of progress, their special educational need, what has already been done, the difference that support has made, your child's physical, emotional and social development and health needs.

The law states that if your child has or may have special needs and may need provision to be made via an EHC plan, the local authority must conduct an EHC needs assessment.

Who can ask for EHC needs assessment?

- parents – by writing to the local authority
- a young person over the age of 16 but under the age of 25
- the early years setting or school, but only after talking to you first.

It is always a good idea to talk to the school or early years setting before asking for an EHC needs assessment.

What happens if the local authority decides that EHC needs assessment is not necessary?

The local authority **must** tell you why it thinks that an EHC needs assessment is not needed. It **must** also tell you about your right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal and the time limit for appealing, independent disagreement resolution and mediation, how to get further information, advice or support. If you disagree with the decision **St. Helens IASS** can explain your options to you and help you appeal.

How long will it take?

The local authority receives a request for an EHC needs assessment. The authority must tell parents about this request	This is the start date
The local authority decides whether an EHC needs assessment is needed. The authority must tell parents about its decision	Within six weeks of the start date
The EHC needs assessment takes place	This starts as soon as the decision is made
<i>EITHER</i>	
The local authority tells the parents of the decision not to issue an EHC plan	Within 16 weeks of the start date
<i>OR</i>	
The local authority sends a draft EHC plan to parents	
Parents must respond to the draft EHC plan. They can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree that the draft is adequate ask for changes ask for a meeting. Parents have the right at this point to state a preference for a school or early years setting	Within 15 days of receiving the draft EHC plan
The local authority consults with the school or early years setting	Within 15 days of parents' response to the draft EHC plan
The local authority issues the final EHC plan	Within 20 weeks of the start date

What happens if the EHC needs assessment goes ahead?

The local authority will write to you to tell you what will happen and ask for your views. Your views and your child's views are really important. St. Helens IASS can give you Information, advice and support to help you with this.

The local authority will ask a number of other people for information about your child. This is called 'advice' and it should include information about your child's education, health and care needs, the care provision that might be required to meet their needs and achieve the desired outcomes.

The local authority **must** ask for advice and information from parents (or the young person, your child's early years setting or school, an educational psychologist, health professionals who work with your child. This might include a paediatrician, speech and language therapist, physiotherapist or occupational therapist, social care staff, anyone else you ask them to contact who may be able to give relevant advice.

If your child has a vision or hearing impairment the local authority must also seek information and advice from a suitably qualified teacher. The local authority should also try to find out your child's views. You, the school and other professionals may be able to help with this. If you think your child needs someone to help them give their views you can ask **St. Helens IASS** for more information about this.

You will have the chance to discuss your child with everyone involved in the needs assessment and you will receive a copy of all the reports when the needs assessment is finished. If you want support during the EHC needs assessment contact St. Helens IASS.

You can find out more about advice and information for EHC needs assessments in the **SEND Code of Practice** sections 9.45 – 9.52.