

SEND & EHCP Toolkit for Social workers

January 2026

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

“A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.”

Children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Where a child or young person is covered by SEN and disability legislation, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be considered as part of SEN planning and review.

“Every school is a school for pupils with SEND; and every teacher is a teacher of SEND pupils... mainstream schools and colleges –with the right support and training –should also be able to offer strong support for many more children and young people with EHC plans, as well as high quality SEN Support for those without plans.”

Education Secretary of State Damian Hinds - ADCS conference speech – 5 July 2018

SEND identification in schools

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo or SENDCo) is responsible in school for helping to make sure that the needs of the children or young people with SEND are met.

Local Offer and the Graduated Response

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to *remove barriers to learning* and put *effective special educational provision in place*.

A local offer gives children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families information to help them find the right help and support in their area. This is what should be **Ordinarily Available** to all pupils in Worcestershire. Every local authority is required to have their own local offer which is available on their website.

The Worcestershire Graduated Response

[Graduated Response \(SEND support in education provision\) | Worcestershire County Council](#)

SEN support (notional funding, Section K)

At this point the pupil may be put on the schools **SEN Registry** so they can receive additional support. This attracts additional funding for the school (**SEN Notional Funding of around £6,000 per student**). Schools will state that they do not receive £6,000 per student however it is expected that a school should provide up to this amount before considering an EHCP.

If a child or young person is on the SEN registry then the school must review the SEN support on a termly basis through an individual plan for the duration of them being on the SEN registry. The social worker must receive a copy of this from the school.

Every school must publish their SEND policy on the school website.

Next steps

At some point you may agree that your child/young person has made sufficient progress, and no further action is required.

Or

Following at least 2 cycles of plan, do, review utilising all the SEN Notional Funding (£6,000) despite the school taking relevant and purposeful action to meet the SEN, the Child or Young Person has still not made expected progress, then you can consider requesting an EHCP assessment (EHCNA – Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment).

Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) request

This is in essence the request for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The evidence is submitted by school to the Local Authority to ask for an assessment of the student to determine if their needs can be met by what is ordinarily available (as detailed in the Local Offer, in the Graduated Response document) or whether the provision they need is over and above this offer and requires additional provision and funding.

Schools/colleges or education setting will submit the evidence that they have collected from at least two rounds of the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle to support this request.

The EHCP assessment is a 20-week process from the day on which the application is made.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

What is an EHCP?

- An **Education, Health and Care Plan** (EHCP) is a legal document which is an education plan for children and young people aged up to 25 years who need more support than is ordinarily available through the special educational needs support their school/college is providing.
- Although the plan can include health or social care needs, the child will not get an EHCP if they only have health or social care needs that do not affect their education.
- An EHCP describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs, and the educational provision required to meet those needs, to secure the

best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepares them for adulthood.

- An EHCP will be issued when the special educational provision required to meet the child or young person's needs cannot reasonably be provided from within the resources normally available to mainstream early years providers, schools and post-16 institutions, or where it may be necessary for the local authority to make specialist educational provision available.
- An EHCP is required for SEND services to consider a placement at a Special School or Independent School. **The decision whether to agree a Special School or Independent School placement is at the discretion of SEND.**

Who can apply for an EHCP?

- An EHCP would normally be requested by a young person's educational provision.
- Application should take place following at least 2 reviews of the graduated response if needs are believed to be above what is Ordinarily Available.
- A young person can request an assessment themselves if they're aged 16 to 25.
- A request can also be made by anyone else who thinks an assessment may be necessary, including social workers, doctors, health visitors, teachers, parents and family friends.

The Process = 20 weeks

This is a legal process laid down in the Code of Practice 2015 and timelines must be adhered to.

- a) **Week 1** - The 20-week process starts the day on which the application is received by SEND.
- b) **Week 6** - Decision to assess made within 6 weeks.
 - a. If assessment is agreed, SEND will gain information from education, health and social care professionals to develop a broader picture of the needs of the student.
- c) **Week 16** - Decision made at 16 weeks as to whether SEND will issue an EHCP or whether the student's needs can be met within the current school without the requirement of having a plan. If the decision is made to issue, a proposed EHCP is issued to those with PR and to the current school.

All parties have 15 calendar days in which to request any amendments to the proposed EHCP and for those with PR to request preference of school.

SEND will consult with current school as a matter of course, often on issue of the proposed plan. No school will be named at this point in section I of the EHCP.

Consulting schools: asking a setting if they can meet the needs of the child or young person as laid out in the draft EHCP– SEND will consult with the parental preference of school but the decision regarding school placement resides with SEND. If this is a special school, then in Worcestershire, the SEND co-ordinator will take to request a

multi-agency placement panel for consideration. Consult responses must be returned within 15 calendar days.

- d) **Week 20** - If an EHCP is issued, then it will be finalised within 4 weeks of issue naming an education setting.

There is the opportunity to appeal if those with PR are unhappy with the EHCP. Details will be included in a covering letter issued by SEND.

Funding

The EHCP may come with Higher Level Needs Funding (HLNF – Element 3 funding) to allow the educational setting to put in place the provision outlined in the EHCP (section F). School will be informed of this when consultations are issued

After the EHCP is finalised

Reviews

There are 2 forms of Reviews: **Annual Reviews** (AR) and **Interim Annual Reviews** (IAR). All parties involved should be invited and given 2 weeks' notice. They should be asked for written advice along with an invitation to the meeting.

- The AR is statutory and is held within 12 months of the EHCP issue or previous review. This provides a complete overview of how a student with an EHCP is progressing within school and gives all parties the opportunity to request updates to be added to the EHCP.
- It is good practice to hold an IAR if a young person has a change of educational setting. This should happen around the end of the first term.
- IARs are within the 12-month cycle and are called to look at a specific area which requires review, i.e. request for change of school placement, funding increase request
- An AR/ IAR must take place for changes of educational setting within a Local Authority as this triggers the SEND process.
- Reviews of EHC plans for children aged 0 to 5 - Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under five at least every three to six months to ensure that the provision continues to be appropriate. These may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child.

Phase transfer change of placement

Transfer from one phase of education to another will require fresh consultations to be sent out, i.e. first to middle, middle to high, primary to secondary, secondary to post 16. Parental preference will be sought for the new school and SEND will consult. Those with PR should ensure that they respond to the request for preference from SEND and that, when the preference is completed via admissions, the placement for a pupil who has an EHCP is decided by SEND *not* admissions.

Suspensions and Exclusions

There is no difference in terms of the legislation for suspensions and permanent exclusions if a young person has an EHCP. They must however inform the Local Authority if they permanently exclude a young person.

Appendix

Useful websites for Worcestershire

SEND Local Offer

[SEND Local Offer | Worcestershire County Council](#)

The Worcestershire Graduated Response

[Graduated Response \(SEND support in education provision\) | Worcestershire County Council](#)

SENDIASS – support and information for parents and carers

[SENDIASS Worcestershire and Herefordshire \(hwsendiass.co.uk\)](#)

SEND Code of Practice January 2015

[SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

SEND Area contact details

Assessment Team:

sendassessment@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 845726

Pre 14 Redditch and Wychavon (If your child is in year 8 or below)

SENDPre14RedditchWychavon@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 843007

Pre 14 Worcester City and Malvern (If your child is in year 8 or below)

SENDPre14WorcesterMalvern@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 843009

Pre 14 Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove (If your child is in year 8 or below)

SENDPre14WyreForestBromsgrove@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 843010

Post 14 North (If your child is in year 9 or above and you live in either Bromsgrove, Redditch or Wyre Forest district.)

SENDPost14north@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 843013

Post 14 South (If your child is in year 9 or above and you live in either Malvern Hills, Worcester City or Wychavon district)

SENDPost14south@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 843011