

# CHECKING YOUR DRAFT EHC PLAN

The information in this document will help you check your child's draft or amended EHCP step by step.

Your final EHCP is a legally binding document and the provision in section F MUST be provided. Your Draft EHCP should not have a school placement named in Section I. Section I will be finalised when the school consultation period has been completed, once the draft EHCP is agreed.

## BEFORE YOU START

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE A COPY OF THE DRAFT EHCP AND ALL OF THE ATTACHED REPORTS FROM PROFESSIONALS.**

You may wish to set aside a couple of hours to go through the reports and EHCP.

Coloured highlighters may help you to differentiate between **Special Educational Needs**, **desired outcomes** and **Special Educational Provision**.

There should be a clear and direct link between the **special educational needs**, **desired outcomes** and **special educational provision** in the EHCP. This is sometimes referred to as the Golden Thread and can be thought of as linking recommendations in professional reports to your child's aspirations, **desired outcomes**, **special education needs** and **special educational provision**.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Following an EHCP assessment: When issuing the draft EHCP following an EHC assessment, the local authority must consider the evidence received as part of the EHC needs assessment.

Following an annual review: When amendments to an EHCP have been made following an Annual Review, any additional advice and information which contributed to the decision to amend the plan must also be considered and must be sent to the parents or young person along with

a copy of the previous plan, clearly showing where changes have been made.

Please be aware you have a right to request a reassessment of need at any point. This will likely be if a child is making little to no progress or you feel your child's needs have changed drastically from the most recent professional reports. Professional reports are classed as outdated when a report is over 2 years old and people involved agree the information requires updating.

## STEPS

Go through all of the professional reports used during the assessment and highlight each of your child's **Special Educational Needs** in a specific colour.

- Check that the reports cover ALL of the child or young person's **special education needs**, including all health and social care needs. You may find it useful to list these needs onto a separate sheet of paper under each of the four broad areas of needs: Communication and interaction, Cognition and learning, Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, or Sensory and/or physical needs.

Now go through the reports again with a different coloured highlighter for **desired outcomes**. The **desired outcomes** should be directly correlated to your child's aspirations and will be a goal to achieve as a result of the **Special Educational Provision** that is put in place. Remember **outcomes** should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound).

EXAMPLE: Child to gradually increase attendance in the classroom with peers from 2 hours a day with 4 movement breaks to 3 and half a hours a day with 3-4 movement breaks across 6 weeks, ideally attempting a 30 minute increase per week. This should be built up across the year until child is able to cope in the classroom full time with a maximum of 5 required movement breaks.

For the last time, repeat the same process but highlight all of the **Special Educational Provision**. EHCP's must specify the **Special Educational Provision** to meet each of the child or young person's **Special Educational Needs** and **desired outcomes**. Therefore, every **need** and **outcome** should have corresponding **provision**.

## PROVISION

To be clear about what your child or young person's help will amount to on a typical school day, ask yourself the following:

- What type of help will my child get? E.g. equipment, learning support, teaching programme, speech therapy.
- Who will give that help and do they need particular qualifications or experience?
- How many hours of extra help will they need?
- How often will the help happen?
- What teaching strategies will staff use?
- Will teaching be 1:1 or in small groups and if so how big will the group be?
- Will the child or young person get help for self-care if needed?

Make a note of any gaps in provision in your child's plan; anything that is unclear or anything you do not agree with or understand. Check back through the reports to see if there are any recommendations you can use as evidence to support your concerns.

Beware of 'weasel' words like 'access to...', 'where necessary...', 'opportunities for...' or 'help as required'. The plan should say how much help your child will get and how often (this should be specific and definitive). 'weasel' words leave it up to someone else to decide so your child or young person may not get the help they need.

The only exclusion to 'weasel' words is where FLEXIBILITY is a necessity. In this case it may be best if the flexible amount is given in terms of a suitable number expected per day/week to the highest frequency required per day/week with a brief description of what the circumstances entail. For example: Child to receive 2-4 10 minute movement breaks per day dependant on lesson, and child's ability to cope in a group setting, without becoming dysregulated.

If there is no specification or quantification you can contact the report author and ask for them to include this. Remember the provision should cover: Who, What, Where, When and How Often. If you do this by email you can copy in your SEND practitioner. If you phone it is a good idea to let your SEND practitioner know via email.

## THE DRAFT PLAN

Once you have a table or list with **outcomes**, **needs** and **provisions**, check that all of these have been included in the draft plan.

**Special educational needs** must be documented in **Section B of the EHCP**. **Outcomes** should be written in **Section E** and **Special Educational Provision** in **Section F**. This will ensure that the Draft EHCP follows the Golden Thread.

Health and social care needs/provisions have their own categories; Health Needs should be documented in Section C with Health Provision in Section G and Social Care Needs in Section D with Social Care Provision in Section H.

Make a note of any gaps in provision in your child's plan; anything that is unclear or anything you do not agree with or understand. Check back through the reports to see if there are any recommendations you can use as evidence to support your concerns. You may then contact your SEND practitioner by email and inform them of your desired changes or questions.

## NEXT STEPS

If you and the SEND practitioner cannot agree on changes, you can request a meeting with a senior officer.

If you cannot agree on a final draft with the local authority, you should ensure you put in writing that you disagree with the plan however are aware that to challenge the LA the final plan will need to be issued anyway. Only then will your rights be activated to seek disagreement resolution via mediation, or you can appeal to the SEND first tier tribunal over sections B, F and I.

Your final plan is a legally binding document and the provision on it must be provided.

## EXAMPLE (this may be information that is given in an Educational Psychologist report)

### Child/Young Person's need/s:

#### Communication and Interaction –

- C/YP's verbal ability score on the BAS3 fell in the low range.
- In conversation, C/YP appears to need additional time to process verbal information.
- In friendships, C/YP is showing increasing signs of social communication difficulties.

### Child/Young Person's desired outcome:

By the end of key stage 3, C/YP will communicate effectively with others in his learning environment, individually and in small groups including when distressed.

### Child/Young Person's Provision:

- 'Chunking' of verbal information into shorter sentences.
- Provision of adequate time to allow C/YP to process information and formulate responses
- Paired and group work to develop speaking and listening skills.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

For more information on the sections and content of an EHCP, you may find this link to IPSEA's EHCP checklist useful: [EHC PLAN CHECKLIST](#)