

EHCP Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

What is an EHCP?

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document for children and young people aged 0–25 who need more support than is usually available in school, nursery, or college. It describes your child's needs and the support they should receive.

Does my child need a diagnosis to get an EHCP?

No. A diagnosis is **not required**. An EHCP is based on your child's **needs and how they affect everyday life and learning**, not on labels or diagnoses.

When should I consider applying for an EHCP?

You might consider applying if:

- Your child is not making expected progress despite extra support
- Their needs significantly affect learning, behaviour, communication, or emotional wellbeing
- The support they need cannot be provided through normal SEN Support

Who can apply for an EHCP?

- Parents or carers can apply directly

- Schools, nurseries, or colleges can also apply (with your knowledge) You do not need the school's permission to apply.

How do I apply for an EHCP?

You apply by sending a written request to your local authority asking for an **EHCP needs assessment**. This can be done by letter or using your local authority's form. Support sessions can help you complete this.

What evidence do I need?

Helpful evidence may include:

- School or nursery reports and SEN support plans
- Reports from professionals (if available)
- Medical or therapy letters (if relevant)
- Your views as a parent and your child's views You do not need all of these to apply.

What happens after I submit the request?

The local authority has **6 weeks** to decide whether to carry out an assessment. They will contact you to let you know their decision.

What if the local authority says no to an assessment?

You have the right to:

- Ask for mediation
- Appeal to the SEND Tribunal Support and advice services can help you understand your options.

How long does the whole EHCP process take?

If the assessment goes ahead, the full process should take **up to 20 weeks** from the date the request was received.

Who will be involved in the assessment?

This may include:

- School or early years staff
- An educational psychologist
- Health professionals (such as speech and language or occupational therapy)
- You and your child

Can I share my views during the process?

Yes. Your views are very important. You will be asked for your opinions, and you can send in written information at any stage.

What happens if an EHCP is agreed?

You will receive a **draft EHCP**. You can:

- Read it carefully

- Ask for changes
- Request a specific school or setting

What if an EHCP is not agreed at the end of the assessment?

You have the right to:

- Mediation
- Appeal to the SEND Tribunal You will continue to receive SEN Support from the school.

Can an EHCP be changed later?

Yes. EHCPs are reviewed at least **once a year** and can be updated if your child's needs change.