



## Checking a draft EHC plan

An EHC Plan is a legal document and it should describe your child and their needs fully and clearly. It's important to check the draft EHC plan before it becomes final, or get help to check it. It's a key document about your child's support in the future.

You have 15 days to read the draft plan and give your comments. Or you can accept the plan as it is. The 15 days starts from the date that the draft was issued. This will be on the first page of your child's EHC Plan.

If you need more time to look at and comment on the plan, you can ask for more time. Contact your EHCP Coordinator to ask. Their name and email address. If you don't make any comments about the draft plan, the information in the draft plan will become the final as it is.

You can also get help with checking a Draft EHC Plan from our service by calling [0151 522 7990](tel:01515227990) (option 2) - this is a 24-hour answer machine service and all messages are retrieved throughout the day. If you do leave a voicemail, please make sure that you make it clear you need help to check a draft plan. Alternatively, you could email us a copy of the draft plan to [ias@wired.me.uk](mailto:ias@wired.me.uk)

### Why do I need to check the draft plan?

An EHC plan is one of the tools that's going to help your child make progress and achieve their best across all areas of their learning.

As they get older it's also going to help them become as independent as possible and prepare them for life as an adult. It's important that when the plan is first issued it is accurate and clear.

Think about whether what's in the plan accurately describes your child or young person as they are now. As it's a long term plan, the EHC plan may not need to be extremely detailed. There is detailed information in the reports and recommendations used to support the needs, outcomes and support in the plan, such as an Educational psychology report.

EHC plans should be supported by the plans made by schools and colleges, which set out how support works day to day. These school plans should also have short term targets for the support for your child.

Your role is to help your child stay at the heart of the EHC plan, so that their views and goals are central to it. You'll also play a part in making sure their needs are met, and they make progress in the areas that are important for them.

To do this you need to think long-term about what they're going to need in terms of skills, experiences and knowledge. As they get older, you'll need to work with them to do this.

The law is very clear that EHC plans should be forward-looking documents that support children and young people to aim high and achieve their ambitions.



## What am I checking?

The time you have to check the draft plan will go by quickly. Depending on how complex your child's needs are, you may need a few hours to check it and make comments. Many parents find it easiest to do this in more than one go – half an hour or an hour at a time. Below is some information about what every section **must** include, by law.

### Section A: All About Me and My Parent/Carers' Views:

This is the information that came from you and your child. If you added your child's views and yours to the EHC Hub, then this section should be exactly what you wrote. If you sent your views in on paper or before you started using the EHC Hub, check this section to make sure the information you gave is here. If your views, or your child's, have changed a lot since you started the assessment process, update them.

### Section B: Special Educational Needs; Section E: Outcomes; Section F: Special Educational Provision

This is the Education part of the EHC Plan, so will be grouped together and will be split into sections, based upon the four Broad areas of Need, or SEN.

- Communication & Interaction
- Cognition & Learning
- Sensory & Physical
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)

If you are not happy with the contents of these sections, you can request changes to be made.

### Sections C, E & G: Health Needs, Outcomes & Provisions

This is the part of the plan about health needs which affect your child's education. If your child doesn't have health needs this part will say so.

### Sections D, G, H1 & H2: Social Care Needs, Outcomes and Provision

This is the part of the plan about social care needs which affect your child's education. If your child doesn't have social care needs this part will say so.

### Section I: Education Setting

This is where your child's nursery, school, college or other education setting is listed on the final plan. On the draft plan this part must be blank. If it has the name of a setting here, it **is not** a Draft Plan.

### Section J: Personal Budget

If you asked for a personal budget for your child, this is where the information about it is written. If you didn't ask for a personal budget this part will say so.

### Section K: Information & Advice

This is the list of all the information and advice (reports and recommendations) from anyone who has contributed towards the EHC Needs Assessment or any updates since, including Parents and Professionals.



## Before you start - Important things you need to know

The draft plan isn't the final version yet.

You, or the young person who the plan is about (if they're over 16), get a copy of the draft plan to comment on. Your child's school or college, and any other school you're asking to be considered, should get a copy too. This is so that schools can see whether they can meet your child's needs.

Your EHCP Coordinator may re-word advice from specialists, for example to make it clearer, but their main role is to co-ordinate things. The EHCP Coordinator will only include the needs, outcomes and support recommended by the professionals involved in the EHC Needs Assessment, in Sections B and F .

### There are two main things for you to do:

1) Check the draft plan to see whether it's accurate about your child's needs, the support they will have and what the outcome of that support should be. If you don't think it's accurate, you can suggest changes, ask for missing information or more detail to be added.

2) Say which school, college or other educational setting you would like your child to go to. Once you have read and thought about the draft plan, you have two options:

- If you think the plan is good, you can accept it as it is, without making any changes; or
- You can ask for changes to be made before a final plan is issued. If you're not happy with the draft plan, you don't have to agree with it.

If you request changes, the Coordinator may have to go back to the advice-giver and ask them for more specific information, or to explain what they mean.

## You are the expert on your child

Take some time to think about and write down (if you need to):

- What really matters to and for your child
  - What stops them from achieving
  - What your hopes are for them in the future
  - What are the most important support they already get and the support you think they need?
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### Why do this?

- You know your child better than anyone. Making a list of what's most important for them will give you a good place to start when you're checking the plan. What's on your list should be in the plan somewhere.
- One of the main aims of your child's EHC plan is making sure that the support they're given will help them achieve the best possible results in their journey towards adulthood.
- The support in a plan should challenge your child to become as independent as possible. This means taking regular steps towards developing the skills they'll need for adult life.
- Remember that your child's EHCP is a long-term plan and it will be supported by a short-term school or college plan that will show the smaller steps on the journey towards growing independence.



## Step 1 - Familiarise yourself with the Draft Plan

Read the draft plan all the way through once. If you can, do this on a big screen on a personal computer. Or download a PDF copy to read on screen or print.

Think about what you would expect to see in the plan and look for the things that matter most. Are they there?

This helps you to get a general feel about whether the plan includes all your child's needs and gives a clear picture of the day to day support they need in class.

## Step 2 - Professional Advice (Also known as 'Section K Advices')

### What to do

Read all the professional advice that has been used to inform the Assessment. as part of the assessment. You should have received these in the email that contained the Draft Plan.

Sometimes the requests for advice from professionals haven't been responded to or they're no longer involved. If you don't think this information is right you can ask your EHCP Coordinator to follow this up.

You might find it helpful to download the PDFs of the professional reports. Rename the PDFs so that they make sense to you and save them on your computer or tablet.

### Why you're doing this

Reading all the reports and advice helps to show you what should be in the draft plan. Even if you've read them before this will help to get them fresh in your mind.

You should be able to see clearly if anything major, such as advice from a specific professional, is missing.

Some parents find it helpful to print the reports and advice to refer to when checking the detail in the plan.

Downloading the reports as PDFs will make it easier for you to see both the report and the plan on screen at the same time. Renaming the PDFs of the reports makes it easier for you to find what you need quickly.

## Step 3 - Work out what should be in the EHC Plan

### What to do

Go through each of the professional reports and separate out the needs, outcomes and support (provision) that they have recommended. The needs and support are usually easy to find, but sometimes professionals don't include outcomes in their reports.

If you've printed the reports, you could use different colour highlighter pens to separately colour code these.

If you're reading the reports on screen, write down each of the needs, outcomes and support as you're going along.



## Why you're doing this

The information in the draft EHC plan is made up almost entirely of what is written in the reports from professionals. So, the main things from those reports should be in the draft plan.

An EHC plan contains information about your child's needs and the support (provision) they should get to meet those needs. It should also include an outcome for each need – which is like a target that says what difference the support will make.

Checking the plan this way helps you to be sure that each of your child's needs is included in the plan, alongside the relevant support and outcomes.

## Step 4 - Find out if anything is missing

### What to do

Crosscheck what is in the draft plan with what is in each professional report. So, look at the needs, outcomes and support you have found in the professional reports and check that it is included in the plan. You're looking to see if anything is missing.

You can use an electronic copy of the Draft EHC Plan to highlight -

- Things that you think should be added to Sections B or F that are in the advices from professionals in **bold type**

Your EHCP Coordinator will not be able to agree to make changes to the wording of what professionals have said, unless you are asking for them to be worded in a way that is specific, quantified and measurable.

Sometimes your caseworker will reorder or reorganise advice from professional's reports so that it doesn't repeat itself across the categories. It's worth looking to see if the advice in the report is somewhere else in the EHC plan instead.

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## Why you're doing this

This is the part of checking the plan that is likely to take you longest, so give yourself plenty of time.

It can be easy to get lost among all the paperwork and to lose the thread of what you're aiming to do, so be as orderly as you can be. If you're not the most organised person, ask someone to help you with this bit or contact SEND IASS.

By ticking off everything that's made it into the plan you can see whether anything is missing. If you do find things that are missing.

## Step 5 - Check the detail and how specific it is

### What to do

Now that you've worked out what should be in the plan, you also need to check that there's enough detail in it. What's written in the plan should be clear and straightforward. It should be specific.

You can highlight in **bold type** anything in the plan that is unclear or anything you don't understand. You may find it useful to use the 'comments' tool

Click on the tab 'Review' > highlight the area of the plan you are commenting on > click on 'New Comment'. A speech bubble will appear at the side of the document and you can put your comments there.



When you're reading the plan, ask yourself, what does this actually mean? Is it clear what my child is going to get, and if it's not, then it's not specific enough!

how often, for how long, who with etc. Check that these have either been filled out for each type of support, or that this detail is somewhere in the main part of the plan.

A need only needs to go in once. So, for example, several professionals might list a need such as anxiety. But it only needs to appear once in the plan, alongside the support recommended by each of the different professionals.

Check to make sure that the key support and the wording used to describe it is correctly written in the plan. So, for example, the level of support given in class, the ratio of staff to children, any group size for learning and the level of supervision needed to keep your child safe.

### Why you're doing this

The SEND Code of Practice says that "EHC plans should be clear, concise, understandable and accessible to parents, children, young people, providers and practitioners."

You should know from the plan exactly

what support your child will get and how often

who is going to do give the support and

what skills qualifications or training they staff should have

The plan should also be clear about how often the support should be reviewed to see what progress is being made.

It's important to get the details right, to make sure the support is given in the right way at school or college. However, try not to get too bogged down in the smallest detail and making sure absolutely everything is in it. It's often important to find the right balance between making sure the plan is clear about key support, while giving some flexibility to staff and your child day to day.

## Step 6 - Name the Education Setting

### What to do

Section I of the draft EHC plan should be blank when you get it. This is where you say which school or college you would like your child to go to.

You can choose the school or college that your child already goes to, or somewhere different. You can find out more about that on the [IPSEA website](#). If you're in this situation, it's a good idea to get specific advice about it. You can contact us to speak to one of our team.

### Why you're doing this

You have the right to ask for a particular school for your child, including any mainstream or special school. You can also ask for an independent school or an independent special school. You can find a full list of a Local Authority's Schools on their Local Offer website. The Wirral Local Offer is SENDLO - [click here](#)

The local authority will usually consult a mainstream school as part of the process, even if you think it's not suitable.

The SEN 0-25 team will consider your choice, but the local authority makes the final decision (you can challenge the decision). If you don't ask for a specific school the local authority will choose for you.