

Information and advice from:



**Early Development and
Inclusion Team**
Supporting Inclusion at the
Early Years Foundation Stage

Making an EHC Needs Assessment Request in the Early Years

In EDIT we appreciate how confusing making an Education Health Care Needs Assessment request can be. This information sheet is our attempt to answer some frequently asked questions. For West Berkshire's EHC Needs Assessment process flow chart, visit the Local Offer using this link:
https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/westberks/enterprise/files/13_ehc_assessment_process_flowchart.pdf

Who is an Education Health Care Needs Assessment request for?

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires the Local Authority to secure an EHC Needs Assessment if it is of the view that:

- A child has or may have special educational needs.
- It may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for that child in accordance with an EHC Plan. (The child's difficulty must require special educational provision to be made in line with an EHC Plan; the threshold is not simply that the child has a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision.)

Considering an Education Health Care Needs Assessment request for a child?

- **Early Years Practitioners** - if you believe that a child in your setting requires or will need an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment, discuss your reasons for this with the child's parent(s)/ carer(s) and the child's EDIT if they have one.
- **Parents** - if you want to know more about this, discuss with the SENDco of your child's early years setting or their key worker, and your designated EDIT if you have one.

The First Step:

The expectation is that a child's educational placement will have followed the Graduated Approach Plan as set out in Local Offer. Obtaining Educational Psychology advice is part of this process.

A request for the involvement of an Educational Psychologist can be made by an educational setting using the form that the service provides. Your EDIT can send you a copy, or you can phone the Administrator for the EP Service to request it, on: 01635 519026

Next:

The early years practitioners who know the child best will usually complete the EHC Needs Assessment request, gathering advice from SAPPs, observations, and any health or education reports. The assessment request form can be found by visiting this page of the Local Offer:
<https://directory.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/directory/advice.page?id=WcZN914jIMAI>

When written, it can be sent by email to the West Berkshire Council SEN team along with:

- A form filled out by parent(s) called *We Want to Tell You* form:
<https://directory.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/directory/advice.page?id=WcZN914jIMAI>
- An Educational Psychologist's report (*If applicable*)

- An EDIT report (if an advisory teacher from EDIT is involved) – this may be a Practitioner’s Report or an EDIT Record of Visit Report
- The most recent health reports from a Paediatrician or other service (eg CAMHs/private assessment service) that provides a diagnosis of SEND.
- A report from a Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or from any other health or therapy service involved in the child’s care.
- *This list is not exhaustive and there may be other supporting evidence to include.*

Send to: SenAssessmentTeam@westberks.gov.uk

The request will be taken to the next available panel. This is usually within a few weeks.

Once an EHCP Request is sent to the SEN Team, what can parents expect?

A brief summary is as follows:

- If the SEN panel agree that there is sufficient evidence for an assessment, the process will begin. It will take up to 20 weeks (the legal limit) from start to finish.
- If assessment is agreed, you will be allocated an EHCP Coordinator who will be available to facilitate the process and answer your queries. They will talk to you about what your school preference for your child is at this stage.
- The SEN Case Officer assigned to your child will request updated information from those who have provided evidence and arrange a date for a co-productive planning meeting to which all involved will be invited.
- The updated evidence will be taken to a second panel when, if the assessment is agreed, the EHCP indicative budget will be decided upon.
- At the co-productive planning meeting, the draft EHC Plan will be written by the EHCP Coordinator in collaboration with you and the other attendees (as many as possible of those who have provided evidence for the assessment request.)

What if I want to request a special school place for my child?

- If you have a preference for a special school place for your child, you need to state this on your ‘pink form.’ You are sent this form once the EHC Needs Assessment Request has been agreed by panel and the co-productive planning meeting has taken place.
- If you request a special school place the school will either be consulted or your child will be considered at the next special school admissions panel.
- Should a placement be offered this would need to be agreed by the SEN panel.
- There may or may not be a place that can be allocated for the September when your child is due to start school.

Some important advice:

Because of the process that has to be followed, **we always advise parents to apply for a mainstream school place under the normal admissions system** – applications must be made by January of the year in which your child will turn five. To ensure that your child is allocated a local school place we would advise you to consider selecting your catchment school as one of your three choices.

This probably all sounds very daunting, but the staff at your child’s early years setting and your child’s EDIT are here to help☺

Further information can be obtained from SENDIASS or the SEND Code of Practice