

6. Applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan



What is an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document that describes the extra support a child or young person requires if they have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It is created by the council when a child needs more help than an early year provider, school or college can provide through SEND support.

For more information see our parent guide: **What is an Education, Health and Care Plan?**

Things to consider before submitting a request for an EHCP

EHCPs are designed for children and young people who have long-term and complex needs that cannot be met through everyday SEND support. EHCPs are not intended to be used solely as a means to access to special school or to receive extra funding. They are intended to make sure children and young people get the right help at the right time to support their learning, development and transition to adulthood.

Using the Graduated Approach

Before you apply for a EHCP we would advise to you check that your child's setting has followed the step-by-step support process known as the Graduated Approach. You can read more about this in the [Doncaster SEND Parent Handbook](#).

Checklist:

SEND Support Plan

- ✓ Has your child has been on the SEN Register for at least two school terms?
- ✓ Does your child have a clear and up-to-date SEND Support Plan?
- ✓ Has your child has had at least two reviews of their SEND Support Plan?
- ✓ Is your child is still struggling to make progress, despite the SEND Support Plan?

Support Already in Place

- ✓ Has your child's setting used the support available for all children, including [reasonable adjustments](#) and [high-quality teaching](#)?
- ✓ Has your child's setting tried different strategies to help your child before applying for more support?



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Web: doncasterSENDIAS.co.uk
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Understanding Your Child's Needs

- ✓ Does your child have specific learning needs?
- ✓ Have your child's needs been clearly identified, understood and documented on their SEND Support Plan?
- ✓ Have professionals used the [Doncaster Needs Descriptors](#) to describe your child's needs accurately?
- ✓ Are your child's needs considered to be at a specialist level, when using the Doncaster Needs Descriptors?

Professional Involvement

- ✓ Have other professionals, such as speech therapists, educational psychologists, autism support service, etc supported your child?

Long-Term Needs

- ✓ Are your child's needs ongoing and not just short-term?

Funding and Resources

- ✓ Is additional High Needs Funding being used to support your child?
- ✓ Do you and your child's educational setting think your child needs further support?

If you have not been able to say yes to all the points above (and **evidence** these), it may mean that your child's needs have not been fully identified or supported through the [graduated approach](#). This could mean more needs to be done to support your child before an EHCP is applied for.

Speak with your child's educational setting or setting's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) – they can help review what parts of the support above have been tried so far and explore what else might be needed from the checklist above to help evidence your application for an EHCP.

You can also contact [Doncaster SENDIAS](#) for further information and advice.

Who Can Request an EHCP?

- You (as a parent or carer)
- Your child, if they're aged 16–25 and still in education
- Your child's educational setting nursery, school or college
- Health or social care professionals.

Requesting an EHCP in Doncaster

If you think your child may need extra support with their education, you can ask Doncaster Council to carry out an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment by following these 3 simple steps:



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Step 1: Requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment

You can ask for an assessment in one of the following ways:

- Online via the [Doncaster EHC Hub](#)
- Email: sen@doncaster.gov.uk
- Post: SEN Service, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

If you choose to email or write to the council here is a [sample letter](#) you may find useful.

Once your request is received, the council will gather information from you, your child's educational setting, and any health or care professionals involved.

Within 6 weeks, the council will decide if they are going to carry out a statutory EHC needs assessment, as described in Step 2.

If they believe your child may need special educational provision, they'll continue with the process.

Step 2: The Statutory EHC Needs Assessment (Week 6 Stage)

This is an opportunity for the council to take a closer look at your child's needs and support required. They will:

- Ask an Educational Psychologist to assess your child.
- Collect more detailed information from your child's educational setting and other professionals.

Step 3: EHC Plan Issuing (Week 16-20)

If the assessment showed your child needs an EHCP, the council will send you a **draft EHCP** at week 16. You'll have a chance to suggest changes and put forward your preferred school placement before it becomes final.

By week 20, the EHCP should be completed and final.

Final EHCPs will be reviewed at least once every 12 months. This must be done with the parent (and the child or the young person, if appropriate), and must take account of your views, wishes and feelings. For more information see our parent guide:

Reviewing a Draft EHCP.

What if I Am Unhappy with the Local Authority Decision?

If the local authority decides:

- Not to assess for an EHC needs assessment (week 6) or
- Not to issue an EHC plan (week 16), you have the [right to appeal](#) (you can also find out more on our **Mediation guide**).



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How Will I be Involved Within the EHCP Process?

You are very important to this process. Legally, the council must seek your views as you know your child best. You can:

- Give more information to help support the EHCP request, such as medical records or assessments
- Provide more information about your child's needs
- Ask the local authority to seek advice from specific professionals, if the request is reasonable
- Be involved in reviews
- Help with checking draft and final EHCPs.

Funding For the EHCP

The local authority is responsible for providing the funding for the support detailed in the EHCP, however, you also have the right to apply for a Personal Budget if the support detailed in the EHCP cannot be provided directly by the educational setting or the NHS.

Need More Support?

If you would like further information on the EHCP process, please contact Doncaster [SENDIAS Service](#) by calling [01302 736920](tel:01302736920) or email: sendias@doncaster.gov.uk



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