

Special Educational Needs Information for Families



Revised June 2014

This information leaflet is for families with a young person who currently has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (statement).

Throughout the document we use the term families for anyone who cares for a young person and the term young person for any child or young adult with a statement.

Why am I receiving this leaflet?

Changes have taken place in the law and it is important that you are aware of how this may affect you. Legislation was passed in March and changes begin to take effect from September 2014.

How will these changes affect the current statement?

Statements are being replaced by an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC).

From 1st September 2014 no new statements will be created and we will instead begin to issue EHC plans. Any existing statements will remain valid until an EHC plan has been developed for the young person or it is agreed that it is no longer necessary for them to have one.

It is very likely that those young people with a statement will have them transferred to an EHC plan but there is the possibility (just as there is now), that a review may result in the statement being discontinued rather than converted to an EHC plan.

When will change happen?

The new system begins in September 2014. We will then be gradually reviewing all existing statements to convert them to EHC plans.

What does an Education Health and Care plan look like?

An EHC plan is more than a statement. It brings together the health, education and care needs for young people aged 0 – 25 and sets out the provision that they need from education, health and care to meet these needs. EHC plans are legally binding and young people up to the age of 25 will have the legal protections currently given by a statement. The Government hasn't developed a standard form but has provided guidance on what must be in a plan.

Families will be involved in developing the plan. There is a new Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs that will govern the use of the plan and other support for young people.

What do I need to do?

Nothing at the moment as this leaflet is for information only. If a young person has a review coming up this will happen as usual and advice will be available about the conversion process. All young people will continue to receive the provision they are entitled to through their plan regardless of whether it is a statement, or an EHC plan.

Will all young people who currently have a statement have an EHC plan?

The Code of Practice provides more clarity but the Government are clear that if needs are such that a statement is needed then it is likely that a young person will need an EHC plan.

Will having an EHC plan rather than a statement changes the amount or type of support a young person receives?

The EHC plan should make it easier to have an overview of the support a young person needs across education, health and social care. The support will only change if needs have changed just as changes would currently be reflected in a statement as a consequence of an annual review. If needs remain the same then the levels of support will remain the same through an EHC plan as they were through the statement.

What if a young person doesn't qualify for an EHC plan?

The Code of Practice applies to all young people with special educational needs and governs the way those needs are met either through an EHC plan or through the provision that is ordinarily available through schools and other universal services.

Children with special educational needs who do not have an EHC plan will have their needs in school met through ordinarily available provision. The categories identified as school action or school action plus have disappeared under the new system.

At Rivelin, Communication Passports have replaced them.

Are the timescales for getting an EHC plan the same as the current statement?

No, under the new arrangements a plan will be complete in 20 weeks from the decision to assess being made rather than 26 weeks and

families will be informed of the decision within six weeks of receipt of a request to assess a young person.

Where do we get further information?

This document, links to other websites, sources of information and support. Sheffield Parent Carer Forum is an independent group of parents and carers of children and young people (0-25) with disabilities and special educational needs. The main aim is to ensure the needs of our children are met.

Website: <http://www.sheffieldparentcarerforum.org.uk/home>

The SEND code of practice is a statutory special educational needs and disability (SEND) system for children and young people aged 0 to 25 in England.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Sheffield City Council state the statutory assessment process is a detailed investigation, to find out what your child's special educational needs are.

Website: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/education/information-for-parentscarers/care-support/specialneeds.html>