



Parental Request for an EHC Needs Assessment

RANi Need to Know Guides | Pre EHCP Advisory sheet 2

Updated: April 2025

A step-by-step guide for parents and carers applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan for their child or young person with SEND

What is an EHC Needs Assessment?

An **Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment** is the first step towards securing an **EHC Plan (EHCP)**—a legal document that outlines a child or young person's **special educational needs (SEN)** and the **support** required to meet those needs.

This assessment is a **formal process carried out by your Local Authority (LA)** to decide whether an EHCP is necessary to ensure the child receives appropriate support.

You **do not need a diagnosis** or a specific condition to apply. The key question is whether your child **may** have SEN that **requires provision through an EHCP**.

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.

Who Can Request an EHC Needs Assessment?

Under **Section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014**, the following people can request an assessment:

- A **parent** of a child aged 0–16
- A **young person** aged 16–25 (if they have mental capacity)
- A **school or college** (nursery, primary, secondary, further education)
- An **advocate** acting on behalf of the young person
- A person working with the child (e.g. health visitor, GP, social worker)

You do not need the school's permission to make a parental request.

Step-by-Step: How to Make a Parental Request

1. Write a Formal Request Letter or Email

Send your request to the **Local Authority's SEN team**. You can find their contact details on the LA website. Address it to the **Director of Children's Services** or the **SEND Casework Team**.

Include the following in your request:

- Your **name, relationship** to the child, and **contact details**
- Your **child's full name, date of birth**, and **home address**
- The name of their **nursery, school or college**
- A clear statement that you are requesting an **Education, Health and Care needs assessment** under Section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014
- A brief description of your child's difficulties and how they are not coping

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.

- A summary of what **support has already been tried** and why it's not enough
- Attach any **relevant reports, letters, or evidence** (see below)

Keep a copy of your request. If sending by post, use recorded delivery or email with a read receipt.

Supporting Evidence You Can Submit

While not required, strong supporting evidence helps the LA understand your child's needs. This could include:

- **Your own written account** of your child's difficulties at home and school
- **School reports** (SEN support plans, behaviour logs, progress data)
- Letters or assessments from:
 - Educational psychologists
 - Speech and language therapists (SALT)
 - Occupational therapists (OT)
 - Paediatricians or CAMHS
- Evidence of **exclusions, suspensions, or part-time timetables**
- Written concerns from **teachers, SENCO, or other professionals**
- A **One Page Profile** or **pupil passport**
- Any **private assessments** (if available)

You don't need to have all of these, but include what you can.

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.

What Happens Next?

Within 6 Weeks of Your Request:

The LA must decide **whether to carry out** the assessment and notify you in writing.

They must consider:

1. Whether your child **may have SEN**
2. Whether they **may need** special educational provision via an EHCP

If **both answers could be yes**, they must assess.

If the LA Agrees to Assess

They will gather **advice and information** from:

- You (parent or carer)
- The child's current setting (school or college)
- An **educational psychologist**
- **Health professionals** involved
- **Social care** (even if not involved)
- Any other professionals deemed necessary

You can **submit additional information** at this stage too.

The LA then decides **whether to issue an EHCP** based on the evidence collected.

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.

If the LA Refuses to Assess

If the LA refuses, they must provide written reasons.

You can:

- Request **mediation** (optional but usually required before appeal)
- Appeal to the **First-tier SEND Tribunal**

You have **2 months from the date of the decision** or **1 month from receiving a mediation certificate** (whichever is later) to lodge an appeal.

Template Letter for Parents (Summary Version)

Dear [LA Name] SEN Team,

I am writing as the parent of [Child's Full Name], born [DOB], who currently attends [School Name]. I am requesting, under Section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014, that the Local Authority carry out an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment for my child.

[Insert brief paragraph outlining concerns, current support, and why it is not sufficient.]

I believe that my child may have special educational needs which may require provision through an EHCP. I have enclosed supporting evidence and would like to be involved in the process.

I look forward to your response within the statutory 6-week timescale.

Yours sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Contact Information]

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.

Timeline Summary

Step	Deadline
LA decision to assess	Within 6 weeks
Assessment reports gathered	Within 6 weeks of decision
Draft EHCP (if agreed)	By week 16
Final EHCP issued	By week 20

Support and Resources

You can get further support from:

- **RANi** – Help with advice, support and impartial information
- **Local Offer** - Help with advice, support and impartial information
- **SENDIASS** – Local impartial information and advice service for parents and young people www.iasmanchester.org
- **IPSEA** – Independent Provider of Special Education Advice: www.ipsea.org.uk
- **Contact** – A national charity supporting families with disabled children: www.contact.org.uk

If you'd like help preparing your request or understanding your appeal options, RANi can provide guidance and templates.

Remember:

Always keep a copy of all correspondence you send, along with proof of postage or delivery. If you send documents by post, we recommend using a **signed-for** service. If sending by email, request a **read receipt** if possible.

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.

Get in Touch

If you need more information or have a question, we're here to help.

Email us: info@rani.org.uk

Please include:

- Your name
- Your child's name
- Your child's date of birth
- Your query

Or, if you prefer, you can fill out our online **contact form** and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

Disclaimer: This resource is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal advice. While RANi strives to ensure the content is accurate and current at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or inconvenience that may result from using or relying on the information provided.