

# Understanding SEND Support in Schools

## Information for Parents & Carers



**T A M E S I D E**  
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

### Introduction

Every child is unique, and some may need additional support to thrive in education. This leaflet explains how children and young people with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** are supported in school, and when an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** might be appropriate.

### SEND Support Without an EHCP

You do **not** need an EHCP for your child to receive support in school.

Schools are required to:

- Identify and respond to SEND early.
- Provide **SEN Support**, which may include targeted teaching, interventions, and access to specialist services.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to review progress and adjust support as needed.

### Legal Rights and Protections

Under the **Equality Act 2010**, schools must:

- Make **reasonable adjustments** to ensure children with disabilities are not disadvantaged.
- Promote **inclusion** and **accessibility** in all aspects of school life.

Your child has the right to:

- Learn alongside their peers.
- Access the curriculum with appropriate support.
- Be treated fairly and with respect.

### The Graduated Approach

The graduated approach is a cycle of support used by schools to meet the needs of children with SEND. It ensures that support is **personalised, monitored, and reviewed regularly**.

It consists of four stages:

#### 1. Assess

The school gathers information about your child's needs through observations, assessments, and discussions with you and your child.

#### 2. Plan

A support plan is created, outlining specific strategies, interventions, and expected outcomes. You will be involved in agreeing the plan.

#### 3. Do

The school puts the plan into action. This may include:

- Differentiated teaching
- Small group or 1:1 interventions
- Support from external specialists

#### 4. Review

The school evaluates the impact of the support. If progress is limited, the plan is adjusted, and further support may be considered.

This cycle is repeated as needed, and forms the foundation of SEND support in schools.



## When is an EHCP Needed?

An EHCP may be considered if:

- Your child's needs are **complex and long-term**.
- SEN Support is **not sufficient** to meet their needs.
- A **multi-agency approach** is required to coordinate education, health, and social care.

The EHCP process takes up to **20 weeks** and involves a detailed assessment of your child's needs.

# EHCP Application Process

An **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** is a legal document that outlines the support a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) requires to achieve the best possible outcomes in education, health, and social care.

## What is an EHCP?

- It describes your child's strengths, needs, and the provision required to meet those needs.
- It ensures that schools, health services, and other professionals work together to support your child effectively.

## Why is it important?

- The EHCP provides a joined-up approach to supporting your child across different services.
- It gives access to tailored support, resources, and specialist interventions.

## How long does the process take?

- The EHCP application process should be completed within 20 weeks from the date the request is made.

## Next Steps

If you think your child may need an EHCP:

- Speak to your child's SENCO or class teacher.
- Contact your local authority's SEND team for advice and support.

## Need Support?

There are many people and organisations available to support you throughout the EHCP process. You don't have to navigate it alone. Here are some key contacts:

### ✦ OKE – Our Kids Eyes

A parent-led charity offering support, activities, and guidance to families of children with SEND in Tameside.

☎ Telephone: 0161 342 5550

📍 Address: OKE, Jubilee Gardens, Gardenfold Way, Droylsden, Manchester M43 7XU

🌐 Website: [www.ourkidseyes.org](http://www.ourkidseyes.org)

### ✦ Tameside Umbrella Parent Carer Forum

The Local Authority's strategic Parent Carer Forum, representing the voices of families of children and young people with SEND. Umbrella works in partnership with services to improve outcomes and experiences.

✉ Email: [enquiries.tamesidepcf@gmail.com](mailto:enquiries.tamesidepcf@gmail.com)

### ✦ Tameside SENDIASS

(Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service)

Provides confidential and impartial advice to parents, carers, children and young people aged 0–25.

☎ Telephone: 0161 359 8005

✉ Email: [tamesidesendiass@togethertrust.org.uk](mailto:tamesidesendiass@togethertrust.org.uk)

📮 Post: SENDIASS Service, Newbridge Centre, Cromer Street, Stockport, Cheshire, SK1 2NY

# What to do if you are worried about your child's education

## Step 1: Speak to Your Child's Class Teacher

If you have concerns about your child's progress or wellbeing, start by speaking to their class teacher.

They can:

- Discuss your concerns and share their observations
- Make small changes to support your child in the classroom
- Review your child's SEND Support Plan, which should already be in place
- Ensure that regular review meetings are happening to monitor progress

Make sure to raise all your concerns clearly. This gives the school time to respond and allows the SENCO to implement appropriate strategies and seek further advice if needed.

## Step 2: Speak to the School's SENCO

If you still have concerns after speaking with your child's teacher, contact the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Every school has one.

The SENCO should already be supporting your child's teacher and be familiar with your child's needs.

They can:

- Review and strengthen the support already in place
- Implement additional strategies through the graduated approach
- Refer to external professionals (e.g. speech and language therapists, educational psychologists) for further advice and assessment

This ensures a coordinated response to your child's needs and helps build a clearer picture of the support required.

## Step 3: Considering an EHCP

If your child continues to experience significant difficulties despite ongoing support, you may wish to consider applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

An EHCP is designed for children and young people with complex and long-term needs that cannot be met through SEN Support alone.

- The school can apply on your behalf, or you can make a parental request directly to the local authority.
- There are no fixed requirements for what evidence must be submitted. However, the local authority will need enough information to make an informed decision about whether an EHCP is appropriate.

Useful examples of evidence may include:

- Details of how the school has implemented the graduated approach, including what support has been tried, what progress has been made, and what has or hasn't worked
- Your child's SEND Support Plan or Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Reports from professionals (e.g. speech and language therapists, paediatricians)
- Information about your child's academic attainment and wider development

It's important to note that struggling in the classroom does not necessarily mean your child has SEND. There may be other factors affecting their learning, and schools will explore these as part of their wider support systems.

For more information, visit: [Tameside EHCP Guidance](#)

# EHCP Timeline

## EHCP Referral Received

Once your child's **EHCP referral** is received by the **Local Authority**, it should be considered by **Panel 1 within 6 weeks**.

## Panel 1 – Initial Decision

A group of professionals from the Local Authority will review the referral and decide whether to proceed with a full assessment. They will consider:

- The evidence submitted
- Your child's needs
- Support already in place

You, your child, and the school will be informed of the decision and the reasons behind it.

## If Panel 1 Says NO

The EHCP application will not proceed.

However, the Local Authority may provide recommendations to the school on how best to support your child through **SEN Support**

## If Panel 1 Says YES

The Local Authority will begin a **detailed assessment** of your child's needs. This will include:

- Input from an **Educational Psychologist**
- Discussions and assessments from **health and social care** professionals
- Further evidence from school and home

This multi-agency approach helps build a full picture of your child's strengths, needs, and the support required.

## Panel 2 – Final Decision

Within 6 weeks of Panel 1, professionals from the Local Authority will meet again to review all the information gathered during the assessment. They will consider:

- Evidence from school and home
- Reports from health, education, and social care professionals
- Your views and those of your child

You and the school will be informed of the decision and the reasons behind it.

## If Panel 2 Says NO

The Local Authority has decided that your child does **not require an EHCP** at this time.

However, they will provide **recommendations** to help the school continue supporting your child through **SEN Support**.

## If Panel 2 Says YES

An EHCP will be written, setting out:

- Your child's **individual needs**
- The **provision required** to meet those needs
- How support will be delivered in school
- The chosen school for your child to attend to receive the provision in their EHCP.

The EHCP is a **legal document** and must be **reviewed annually** to ensure it remains up to date and continues to reflect your child's evolving needs.