



Parent's Guide to making an EHC Needs Assessment Request

Advice Guide

If you are unhappy with the current provision in place for your child's education, and feel that not all of their needs are being met, you may wish to request an EHC needs assessment. You may have tried to get additional help and various interventions to meet your child's needs, in order to access their education, however this has proved unsuccessful. Stated below is the legal test for obtaining an EHC needs assessment, and this advice guide takes you through filling out the request form specifically for [Southampton City Council](#), step by step. (Found in the Downloads section [here](#))

What is an EHC needs assessment?

An EHC needs assessment is a detailed exploration to find out what your child's **special educational needs** are and what provision should be put into place to meet them. It is the step before an Education, Health and Care Plan (often known simply as a 'plan'), but doesn't always lead to a plan being written.

When can I request an EHC needs assessment?

It is important to remember the legal test the LA must apply is Section (S.) 36(8) of the **Children & Families Act 2014 (CAFA 2014)**:

“The local authority must secure an EHC needs assessment for the child or young person if, after having regard to any views expressed and evidence submitted under subsection (7), the authority is of the opinion that—

- 1) the child or young person has or may have special educational needs, and
- 2) it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHC plan.”

The test is simply whether the child or young person **may** have SEN and that it **may** be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHC Plan. You will see that this is a very low threshold. You will need to ensure your request covers these points clearly.

If an EHC needs assessment has already been carried out in the last 6 months and you want to request a re-assessment, the LA do not have to consider it. Otherwise, you can apply again whenever you like.

How do I make the request?

You should make a written request and keep a copy of your letter. Your letter should set out why you believe your child has or may have special educational needs, and why you believe they may need special educational provision to be made through an EHC Plan. Send this to the Local Authority's SEN Team. There is no legal prescribed format, although Southampton City Council as a Local Authority expect you to fill in their form for making a EHC needs assessment request.

What is the Local Authority looking for?

Evidence that despite action taken to identify, assess and meet the Special Educational Needs of your child, they have not made expected progress.

SEN - The nature, extent, and context of your child's SEN

OTHER NEEDS - Physical, emotional, social development and health needs, including relevant evidence from professionals

LEARNING PROGRESS - Academic attainment or developmental milestones and the rate of progress. How this has been reviewed over time. Ensure you have highlighted that there is a highly significant barrier to learning in comparison to others their own age

PAST/CURRENT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT – Action already taken by school to meet your child's SEN, and whether they have sought/responded to any advice from external professionals. Areas where progress has been made, but only as result of much additional intervention and support, over and above what is usually provided

OUTCOMES WANTED – What you want to achieve through access to special education provision. i.e. achieving educational outcomes, preparation for adulthood, independent and social skills etc.

Where do I start?

From the next page, we guide you through filling out the Southampton City Council form for making a request and how to answer the questions. All our notes are typed in **purple** font. You don't have to fit your answers into the boxes, you can attach separate sheets to expand your answers and provide evidence. Please note this form is only for children/young people living within the Council's area. (Postcode area SO14 – SO19). If the child in question does not live at one of these postcodes, then you will have to apply for an EHC needs assessment through their Local Authority, which may require different forms/processes.

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Parent Request for Education Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment.

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS FURTHER GUIDANCE ABOUT MAKING A REQUEST FOR AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT AVAILABLE ON THE SEND LOCAL OFFER. Please go to - sid.southampton.gov.uk

If an EHC Needs Assessment is initiated this form will constitute all or part of the parental advice and will be shared with other agencies as appropriate.

Please complete as much of the form as you feel is relevant. Please note when this request is received we will also seek information from your child/young person's setting to help us in reaching a decision. It is important, therefore, that you discuss this request with the setting prior to submitting it (if at all possible).

If your child is educated at home please also complete the Setting Referral Form (also available on the SEND Local Offer- sid.southampton.gov.uk.)

Where the young person for whom assessment is being requested is over 16 years old they must also sign this form and be as involved as possible in completing this request.

If you require assistance in completing this form the Southampton Information Support and Advice Service can be contacted on 023 8055 7607

DETAILS OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON FOR WHOM ASSESSMENT IS BEING REQUESTED:

(This section should be pretty self-explanatory)

First Name:	Child's first name
Surname:	Child's last name
Previous names (if applicable):	For example, if last name has changed due to parents separating/marrying
Gender:	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> (please circle) If "Other" then add a note here
Date of birth:	Child's date of birth
Address (including postcode):	The address that the child/young person lives at
Name of all parent/carers with parental responsibility:	Remember to write details of <u>all</u> those persons with parental responsibility. This includes: married parents, birth mother, father listed on birth certificate, person with a parental responsibility agreement with mother/order from court
Parent/carer address and contact details (if different from above). <i>Please ensure a contact number and if possible an email address for parent/carer is included.</i>	Enter these details only if Parent/carer does not live with the child/young person in question
Is child/young person currently looked after? If yes please include which authority.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> ("In the care of a Local Authority". This includes living with foster parents, a residential children's home, or in residential settings like schools or secure units.) Local authority (where applicable):

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Ethnic origin:	Child's ethnicity
Child's first language:	Child's native language
Parent's first language:	Parent's native language
Details of any special requirements which may be necessary to support communication with parent/carer (i.e. interpretation/signing).	Add here whether you need help with communication and how. The form examples interpretation/signing but this could also include requirements such as receiving communication in large print, in braille, as audio, via email, opportunities for lip reading, 'easy read' format, advocacy etc.

School details:

School child/young person is currently attending:	Child's current pre-school/school/college/education setting
Previous setting (where transfer has occurred in the last year):	Child's last education setting, if transferred in the last year
School year group:	Child's current year group

Personalised approach:

*Southampton City Council have designed the **'One and Only' Pack** to help make your life easier, so that you don't have to keep repeating yourself. The [One and Only Guidance Notes](#) gives you lots of details about filling in the pack and what it is for. Feel free to use this and attach any parts that you use to this section of your EHC needs assessment request. Here are the included forms: [One and Only Form](#), [I Am Unique](#), [My Unique Family](#), [My Circle of Support](#), [My Hospital Passport](#)

What are the views, wishes and feelings of the child/young person:

You could include what your child thinks/feels about their education setting, relationships with others, how they feel generally, what they find difficult in life, their hopes for the future – use direct quotes and/or interpret their behaviour objectively. What do they want?

What are the views, wishes and feeling of the child/young person's parent:

What do you want? How do you feel about the situation? Short-term and long-term? Are things affecting your life/work? Note areas of concern/worry, (there is more on this in the One and Only pack)

Why are you requesting consideration of an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment now?

The question of "why now?" is a nod to what's called the "assess, plan, do, review" cycle. They want to see evidence that the 'graduated approach' has been taken at least two times by school, and despite this, limited progress has been made. To find out more on what this is, see IPSEA's webpage [here](#). Make a summary of needs and current issues. Prove in your answer that your child meets the criteria. (Remember the legal criteria: has or may have SEN that may require provision in accordance with an EHC Plan). – Refer to One and Only pack if included

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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND STRENGTHS:

In which areas is your child experiencing significant need and what strengths would you like to tell us about? You do not need to complete each section only those that are relevant:

	Summary of difficulties	Summary of strengths
Communication/Interaction		
Cognition/Learning		
Social, Emotional and Mental Health		
Sensory/Physical		

The Local Authority want you to categorise your child’s needs and describe the difficulties and strengths within them by filling out the table (shown above).

- Summary of difficulties column = Detail what the needs in each category are
- Summary of strengths column = Include progress that has been made as result of additional intervention

Remember that it asks for summaries, so keep these answers concise and on point.

We have included an example point in each section and listed some example characteristics that *might* apply to you in each box, however these are not exhaustive:

	Summary of difficulties	Summary of strengths
Communication/Interaction	<p><i>E.g. ‘A’ has slow processing and therefore finds it difficult to keep up with verbal instructions and the rest of the class, and so falls behind quickly. Please see page ‘X’ of school report...</i></p> <p>(Needs must present as significant barrier to learning and understanding, severely detrimental to their social interaction/emotional well-being) Speech/language needs, difficult relating to others –repetitive, processing, non-verbal, eye contact, gestures, lack of interest in peers, incomplete sentences, incorrect grammar, reading, writing, lack of non-verbal skills, unable to follow instructions, finds open ended questions difficult, perseveration, hearing/visual/speech impairment...</p>	<p><i>E.g. ‘A’ works well with a combination of personalised visual supports and frequent 1:1 adult modelling in order to follow instructions successfully. Please see ‘X’ email with teacher...</i></p> <p>Speech and language therapy, educational psychology, SAOS, visual supports, adapted environments, targeted intervention, regular assess/evaluation/monitoring, individualised resources, provision mapping, IEPs, small group work, flexible trained staffing, broken down instructions, personalised work station as necessary, working individually with an adult, adapted distraction reduced environments, high levels of adult modelling, support to be included in peer group...</p>

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	Summary of difficulties	Summary of strengths
Cognition/Learning	<p><i>E.g. 'A' has intense difficulty maintaining attention and concentration, therefore often day-dreaming or getting up to wonder about and disrupt others. Please see page 'X' of school behaviour report...</i></p> <p>Slower pace, support in all areas of curriculum needed, specific learning difficulties i.e. dyslexia/ dyspraxia/ dyscalculia, general level of development and attainment significantly below peers, needs present as significant barrier to access majority of curriculum, difficulty concentrating, personal organisation, motor-coordination, working memory</p>	<p><i>E.g. 'A' is able to focus better when working individually with an adult. Please see page 'X' of home/school diary...</i></p> <p>Speech and language therapy, educational psychology, SAOS, modifications, evidence based on interventions, visual supports, adapted environments, targeted intervention, regular assess/evaluation/monitoring, individualised resources, provision mapping, IEPs, small group work, flexible trained staffing, broken down instructions, personalised work station as necessary, working individually with an adult, adapted distraction reduced environments, high levels of adult modelling, support to be included in peer group</p>
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	<p><i>E.g. 'A' has very intense anxieties about going to school due to struggles with keeping up to access the curriculum (etc.) This presents at home and is masked at school. This very often leads to school refusal. Please see attendance record, CAMHS referral, and page 'Y' of email with teacher...</i></p> <p>May include withdrawn, isolated, challenging, disruptive behaviour, significant life events, environmental factors, mental health diagnoses, anxiety, depression, self-harm, drug misuse, eating disorders, attention deficit, clear understanding of factors influencing child's SEMH, difficulties following adult direction, managing relationships with others, ADHD, attachment disorder, anti-social behaviour, difficulties with change/transitions, lack of personal boundaries, poor awareness of personal space, absconding, disproportionate reactions to situations</p>	<p><i>E.g. 'A' only has their own individual calming safe space at home that they confidently access when they feel anxious/over-stimulated, in order to calm down. Please see page 'X' of home diary...</i></p> <p>Early Help, CAMHS, Compass, ELSA, Others, enhanced pastoral support, individualised reward systems, visual supports etc, all the rest, behaviour plans, identified what trying to communicate through behaviour, sustained involvement from agencies, support for unstructured times</p>
Sensory/Physical	<p><i>E.g. 'A' is diagnosed with epilepsy, which greatly impacts their independence and can cause them injuries/to become very ill and miss out at school. Please see epilepsy diagnosis report for full details...</i></p> <p>Visual, hearing impairment, medical needs impacting development, require specialist equipment to access learning, impacts independence, affect social and communication, disease, injury, auditory, tactile, proprioception, vestibular, auditory sensitivities, oral sensitivities, health, eating etc.</p>	<p><i>E.g. 'A' is only capable of alerting family members when they are about to have a seizure, signalling this by way of putting someone's hand on 'A's' head. Please see seizure diary...</i></p> <p>Occupational Therapy, Physio, health services, sign language, braille, assistive devices, mobility, appropriate staff training, personal care plans, health care plans</p>

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DETAILS OF OTHER PROFESSIONALS WHO SUPPORT MY CHILD/YOUNG PERSON AND/OR FAMILY

Please provide any details of any professionals supporting your child/young person and/or family (including contact details if you have them).

Include the contact details of professionals supporting you/your child, their job role, what their views/reports have concluded about your child's SEN & provision needed. Ask professionals to make their reports/statements quantifiable and specific, as this is what will inform the assessment/EHCP later on, so it is good practice to ensure that the reports are clear-cut and leave no room for doubt. Use direct quotes.

OTHER THINGS YOU WOULD LIKE US TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD/YOUNG PERSON AND FAMILY.

Please provide details of any other information you would like us know.

For example any history, diagnosis, medication, self-help skills, likes/dislikes, strengths/difficulties, aspirations, main areas of worry (if not covered above).

Other examples include: family situation, the bigger picture... Include any information here that is relevant to your child's needs that has not already been covered.

A Note on Attaching Evidence

You will need to provide evidence to support your argument that you/your child needs an EHC needs assessment. As much as possible, you should try to get together any supporting evidence to submit with your request. **You should refer to this evidence to support your answers** on the form (for example, if you are saying that you/your child has not made progress despite the support they currently receive, refer to school reports and/or other records which show this). Don't worry if you don't have everything ready to send straight away; you can state the evidence you are waiting for or assessments needed and/or send further evidence up until 6 weeks after the date of your request. A list of example sources of evidence can be found on the next page.

Useful Sources of Evidence

***Please note this is not an exhaustive list, it is here to give you ideas**

- Written statements from teachers: ask them to be precise and to quantify exactly what is needed for your child. Evidence this with copies of current and previous pupil passports/ IEPs etc.
- Information from the school/college record. Including results of both internal and national tests and assessments, communication with school (home-school diaries, emails, texts, letters), meeting minutes, current and previous pupil passports/ IEPs, pupil progress reports, incident reports, after school clubs, school trip risk assessments, educational psychologist report. If behaviour is a difficulty, the disciplinary record (exclusion letters, part time timetable risk assessments, attendance records) may help you show whether this is getting worse, whether for instance the school and your child needs more help to manage it and whether there is a pattern. **You have a legal right to a copy of this information.** Put your request in writing to the chair of the governing body at the school or the equivalent for a college (IPSEA have a template letter on p16 here):
<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=b006465c-2b25-4e28-839b-6417bfbb2da0>
- Written statements from others involved with you/your child e.g. social workers, youth workers, carers etc.
- Video/ audio evidence (this should be short and to the point. Video evidence more than 10 minutes is unlikely to be watched). Attach with it a statement of the facts the evidence seeks to establish.
- Information from voluntary groups relating to the learning difficulty/disability concerned.
- References to relevant research and findings and extracts from books, magazines etc. Beware of relying on this too much as the best evidence is going to be primary evidence about the child/ young person.
- Your own evidence: for example, has a younger brother or sister overtaken your child? Is he or she anxious about going to school? Do you get bed-wetting, particularly in term time?
- Evidence from you/your child, written via a third party when necessary.
- Your/your child's school/college work if this demonstrates a point you want to make, such as the limited progress they have made, or a particular difficulty which is in dispute. Examples of the child/ young person's work overtime. If there has been little progress over a period of time, it sometimes makes it clearer if you can show this visually by a chart or graph. You may also be able to show uneven achievement between one particular subject or skill and another.

Professional reports

Key evidence about the child or young person's SEN and the provisions required to meet that SEN will usually be found in reports from professionals. Useful sources of expert opinion include:

- **The Health Service** e.g. speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, clinical psychologist, CAMHS, paediatrician, GPs, medical professionals, physiotherapists, psychiatrists etc. may write a report. Get your GP to refer you.
- Privately obtained reports from **independent professionals**. Reports from educational psychologists can be extremely important to your case. These can be very expensive so you may wish to consider:
 - If you qualify for legal aid: <https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid>
 - Voluntary organisations that specialise in a particular disability may be able to provide an assessment at a modest cost.

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Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Parent/Young Person Declaration for Request for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.

Privacy Notice:

Southampton City Council is collecting this information in order to perform this service or function, and if further information is needed in order to do so, you may be contacted using the details provided. In performing this service, the Council may be required to share your information with other organisations or departments, but it will only do so when it is necessary in order for the service to be provided.

The Council may also share personal information for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection, or prosecution of criminal offences, but will not share personal information, or use it for this, or any other purpose, unless provided for by law. The information provided will be held on file and may also be stored electronically and will be used for the purpose of its involvement in giving support and advice in relation to the child/young person as specified above.

More detailed information about the Council's handling of your personal data can be found in its privacy policy, available online (<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/privacy>), or on request.

Privacy Declaration:

Please Tick

- I understand that by completing this form, I am requesting that Southampton City Council consider undertaking an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment for my child/young person.
- I understand that in performing this service Southampton City Council will see any relevant information from other professionals to help them in deciding whether it is necessary to carry out an Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment.
- If an Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment is approved, I understand that Southampton City Council will seek further professional advice and/or assessment to help them decide whether it is necessary to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan.

All above boxes must be ticked for the application to proceed.

Parent/Carer/ Guardian Signature: Sign Here

Date: Date of Signature

Young person signature (where young person is over 16): Young person Sign Here

Please send this form and all associated paperwork to:

SEN Team
0-25 SEND Service
Ground Floor
North Block
Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY.

Make copies of your completed "Request" paperwork and keep the originals. Send a copy of everything to one of these addresses and... You are done!

Via Email: 0-25service@southampton.gov.uk

*This method will give you better proof of submission. Make sure you get an 'acknowledgment of receipt' email from the LA to confirm that it has gone through.

The Local Authority now has up to 6 weeks to respond to you. Write that date in your diary and await their answer.

Disclaimer : The information contained in this resource is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Southampton SENDIASS and while we endeavour to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability or availability with respect to the resource or the information, products, services, or related graphics contained on the resource for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. We have no control over the nature, content and availability of links to other websites. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.