



Annual Review of an Education Health and Care Plan

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Summary

This factsheet has been created to help parents, carers and young people understand the process around annual reviews of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

This relates to annual reviews (ARs) at schools, nurseries, colleges, pupil referral units (PRUs) and post 16 training providers. For children who are not in school, it is the duty of the local authority to arrange and chair AR meetings.

What is an annual review?

The **SEND Code of Practice** states that:



*“EHC plans should be used to actively monitor children and young people’s progress towards their outcomes and longer term aspirations. They must be reviewed by the local authority as a minimum every 12 months. Reviews must focus on the child or young person’s progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan. The review must also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate.”
(Section 9 Paragraph 9.166)*

If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the local authority must review it at least once a year (or every six months for under-fives) so that it can change as your child changes.

The annual review is a review of the EHC plan, rather than a general meeting to talk about your child’s progress.

The purpose of the review is to:

- Bring together yours and your child’s views as well as the views of everyone else who helps your child
- Review how well the outcomes set in the plan, are being achieved
- Consider whether the provision and support detailed in the Education Health and Care Plan is still effective and relevant and to discuss whether it is working or needs to change.
- Set new targets for the next 12 months.

The annual review is the whole process of reviewing the EHC plan. The review meeting is just one part of an annual review.

When must an annual review be held?

Within 12 months of when the EHCP was first issued, and after that, within 12 months of the last review. It is the local authority’s responsibility to ensure this happens.

For children in the 12-month period before a change of phase, reviews must be concluded and an amended EHCP be issued by 15th February in most cases, or 31st March for a move to a post 16 placement.

Changes of phase include the following:

- Early years education to school;
- Infant to junior school;
- Primary to middle school;
- Primary to secondary school;
- Middle school to secondary school;
- Secondary school to a post 16 institution.



For transitions to post 16 settings, the amended EHCPs must be in place at least 5 months before the new placement is due to start. If, however the young person changes their mind about their course/provision after 31st March or five-month deadline then the local authority should review the EHCP as soon as possible.

Can a review happen more often than once a year?

An interim or emergency review can be called at any time for example, if

- Your child isn't making the progress that was expected
- Their situation is deteriorating
- There is a threat of exclusion
- Your child's needs have changed a lot since the plan was last agreed
- The school feels it is unable to meet the child's needs.

The five parts of the annual review:

An annual review consists of five parts:

1. Information is collected
2. Invitations are sent to the relevant people
3. The annual review meeting is held
4. The head teacher or SENCO writes a report of the review meeting and sends it to you and the local authority
5. The local authority reviews the child's plan.

The review is not completed until all five stages have been done.

1. Information is collected

Before the annual review meeting happens, there is time for everyone involved to think about your child's progress over the last year and what needs to happen in the future.

The person arranging the annual review, usually the head teacher or SENCO at your child's school, must gather advice and information from everyone invited to attend the review meeting.

They will ask for written reports from:

- You and your child or young person
- your child's teachers
- other professionals invited to the meeting



All written reports gathered by the organiser, must be sent to everyone invited to the review meeting. This must happen at least two weeks before the meeting date, to give everyone time to prepare.

Your child's views, wishes and feelings about the EHC plan are also important and should be heard at the meeting. They can do this by attending all or part of the meeting with you or you can help them to give their views in another way. There are some resources on our website to help you to do this.

What do I put in my report?

You can record this in any way you like, the school may ask you to complete a parent's views sheet. Some things to think about are:

- How you and your child or young person feel things have gone over the last year
- If you think your child is receiving the right support and, if not, what needs to change
- What you want your child to achieve over the next year and in the future and how you would like to see that happen
- Has anything changed over the last year for example, has your child been diagnosed with a new condition?

If you want to write a more detailed report, it is a good idea to go through the EHC plan section by section and make notes.

Look at the following sections of the plan:

Outcomes: Section E The main focus of an EHC plan should be on the outcomes for your child. The outcomes should show the difference the support will make to your child's progress. Look at the outcomes and see whether these have been met or not.

Your child's needs: Sections B, C and D Does the plan describe what your child's education, health and social care needs are now or does this need updating?

Support: Sections F, G and H Is the information about the support your child is receiving specific enough? Is the support enough? Is the support still relevant or does it need to change?

Placement: Section I Will your child be moving up to a new school in the next two years? Think about where they will learn best, as well as practical things like how they will get there.

Long Term: What does your child want for their future and what do they need to help them achieve this?



Include copies of any reports you have from any professionals who have seen your child since the last review.

What is an outcome?

*An outcome should describe the difference the support will make to your child. An outcome **is not** a description of the support or service that your child is receiving. For example, two hours fine motor skills support per week is not an outcome. The outcome should be the impact this support will have. So, the outcome could be that your child will be able to do up the buttons on their cardigan by the end of the summer term.*

Outcomes should be SMART, (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed) so that everyone can easily see if they have been achieved.

2. Invites are sent

Local authorities usually write to schools each term listing the pupils whose annual reviews are due, so that the school can arrange them.

The headteacher or SENCO should invite the following:

- Parents and/or young people
- A local authority officer
- A health care professional identified by the CCG to provide advice about health care in relation to your child or young person
- An officer from Social Services if appropriate
- Any other professionals involved in your child's support such as specialist teachers or education psychologists

If anyone is unable to attend, they should ensure that they have sent a report.

3. The annual review meeting

The **SEND Code of Practice** states that:

“The meeting must focus on the child or young person’s progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan, and on what changes might need to be made to the support that is provided to help them achieve those outcomes, or whether changes are needed to the outcomes themselves.” (section 9 Paragraph 9.176)



Meetings are usually held at your child's school and last around an hour, although this will depend on how much there is to discuss and how many people are at the meeting.

At the start of the meeting everyone should introduce themselves, and the person running the meeting should confirm what reports have been circulated and read.

The reports will guide the discussion about how your child has progressed towards meeting the targets and/or outcomes set out in their EHC plan.

If you or other people attending the meeting have not received any paperwork prior to the meeting, you can insist that you are all given time to read any reports you have not seen at the beginning of the meeting.

If you (or your child) feel that changes should be made to their EHC plan this is the time to raise them.
After hearing everyone's views and looking at the progress your child has made over the last year, new outcomes will be agreed for the next twelve months.

Annual reviews from Year 9 onwards, must include a focus on Preparing for Adulthood and options for the next stage of education. Therefore, Preparing for Adulthood outcomes and plans for transition should be included in the EHCP. It is very important to include the child/young person's views on their future pathways.

4. The head teacher or SENCO writes a report of the review meeting and sends it to you and the local authority

Within 2 weeks of the meeting, the head teacher or SENCO will send a report to the local authority about the review and their recommendations for any changes to the EHC plan. You will also be sent a copy. If conflicting opinions were expressed at the meeting, and no agreement was reached about changes to the EHC plan, the school should record the different views so that the local authority is aware of them.

5. The local authority reviews the child's plan.

The local authority must then consider the report and decide whether to:

- Maintain the EHCP in its current form;
- Amend it;



- Cease to maintain it.

They must notify you and the school of their decision within **four weeks** of the date of the annual review meeting. If they decide to amend the plan they will write and tell you what will change and why. They must also send details of the right to appeal and mediation.

You then have **15 calendar days** to think about these changes and tell the local authority whether you accept the plan for the next year, or not.

If you agree with the changes, the local authority will send out the updated EHC plan.

If you disagree with the changes, the first step is to contact the local authority and suggest the changes you would like to be made. If you can't reach an agreement, you then have the right to appeal through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

If in the annual review meeting you expressed your wishes to make changes to the plan, and the local authority decided not to make these changes, you also have a right of appeal through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. For further information see our factsheets: 'What if I do not agree with decisions?'

If the local authority decides to cease to maintain the EHC plan you also have a right to mediation and a right of appeal through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. The local authority must continue to maintain the EHCP until the appeal rights have expired or been concluded.

*If the young person is under 18 and is excluded or decides to leave education/training, the local authority **must not** cease the EHCP, unless it is no longer necessary. The local authority should focus on re-engaging the young person in education or training as soon as possible.*

Where can I get more information, advice or support?

You can read about Annual Reviews in the [SEND Code of Practice](#) Chapter 9.

The [Herefordshire Local Offer](#) and the [Worcestershire Local Offer](#) includes more information on annual reviews.

[Herefordshire and Worcestershire SEND Information, Advice & Support Service \(SENDIASS\)](#) can help you with:

Worcestershire:
Tel: 01905 768153
Email: sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk

www.hwsendiass.co.uk

Herefordshire:
Tel: 01432 260955
Email: sendias@herefordshire.gov.uk



Information, Advice
and Support Service
Herefordshire &
Worcestershire

- Preparing for the annual review meeting
- Deciding whether to ask for changes to an EHC plan
- Possible support at the annual review meeting
- Information on transition from primary to secondary school or post 16 settings
- Information, advice and support about your rights to make a complaint, seek independent **disagreement resolution** or **mediation**.
- Advice and support during the process of appeal

You can also read our:

- [Helpful Hints Guide on preparing for meetings](#)
- [What if I do not agree with decisions?](#) Factsheet

More information can also be found on our website:

WWW.hwsendiass.co.uk

