



Parent carer feedback on the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment process and the Annual Review process for an existing Education, Health and Care Plan

In the twelve months from November 2022 to October 2023 feedback was gathered from 91 parent carers, following either the issuing of a new Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or following the annual review of an existing one.

Of the 91 parent carers, 78 (85%) were randomly selected and contacted by phone for their feedback and 13 (15%) responded independently via a QR link which was sent to them.

The surveys are undertaken as part of Worcestershire Children First’s Quality Assurance programme, for us to learn what is working well and where we need to improve things in the future. The questionnaires are designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

This report is specifically about the qualitative data which could be found in responses to the questionnaires. We have analysed the comments made by all the parent carers and then grouped them together under themes. As a result we have implemented changes to processes to further enhance the experience of families.

This ongoing improvement work is reported below in a ‘You Said, We Did’ format, and we will update the report bi-annually, so families can see the difference their feedback is making.

What are Parent Carers Telling us and What are we Doing About it?

Overall the experience families reported was a positive one, with high levels of satisfaction following both a new EHCP and following an annual review. Two thirds of families said the process of both the annual reviews and the assessment process had gone okay or well.

| You Said | We Did |
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| Some parent carers reported that it could be difficult to speak to their SEND Casework Officer (CWO) and emails weren’t responded to in a timely manner. | We have added information to the SEND Local Offer which details what a SEND Casework Officer (CWO) does and how to contact them, SEND Services SEND Local Offer . We have also introduced phone surgery appointments, so when a CWO is unable to take a call from a parent carer, an appointment can be made for a time when they can expect a call back. CWO’s aim to |

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| | provide a case update in response to emails within five working days. |
| Some parent carers said that they didn't know who their CWO was, or how to contact them. | We have added information to the SEND Local Offer which details what a SEND Casework Officer (CWO) does and how to contact them, SEND Services SEND Local Offer . The document on the SEND Local Offer which details the SEND Team members is updated monthly. Parent carers who are registered on the Worcestershire Children First (WCF) portal can access their CWO details on there. You can find out more about registering on the WCF portal here: EHCP – Education, Health and Care plans SEND Local Offer |
| Some families said they didn't feel listened to or involved during the either the Annual Review (AR) or Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) processes. | We are trialling joint assessment meetings for some of our SEND families where they are involved in a multi-agency meeting with the professionals at the point of assessment. Parent carers have the opportunity to feedback to their SEND Casework Officer if they don't feel their views have been reflected in the amendment notice produced as part of the annual review process. |
| Some people said that the draft or final copy of the Education, Health and Care Plan contained errors or mistakes. | We recognise that sometimes mistakes can happen, but all new plans are checked by senior members of the SEND teams before they are shared to keep these to a minimum. If a parent carer has any concerns about the accuracy of the draft plan they can contact their SEND Casework Officer. |
| Some people said the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) wasn't specific or that some of the reports were 'woolly'. | We have started a multi-agency auditing process to help improve the quality of reports and advices that professionals provide and are then used to write the EHCP or at annual review. Individual services within Worcestershire Children First quality assure their advices in line with national professional guidelines where they exist. |
| Some people said the plan was fine but school weren't doing what they had agree to do in the Education, Health and Care Plan. | Worcestershire Children First have refreshed the SENCO forum and are working hard with schools within the local authority to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the responsibility of settings to deliver the contents of the plan and how they can be |

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| | supported to do this. We have also included information on the SEND Local Offer for parent carers about what to do if they're not happy with their educational setting. I'm not happy with an educational establishment SEND Local Offer |
| Some parents found the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) itself lengthy and difficult to understand. | We have improved the information on our SEND Local Offer to explain more clearly about what to expect in an EHCP. EHCP – Education, Health and Care plans SEND Local Offer |
| Some parents weren't happy with the provision named in the Education, Health and Care Plan. | We have a statutory duty to use our resources efficiently, therefore we can only name suitable provision, which can meet identified need. We try hard to work with parent carers to reach agreement, but where parent carers are unhappy with the provision named, they have recourse through the Tribunal system. I'm not happy with my child's EHCP SEND Local Offer |
| Some people said that it took too long to name the provision in the plan. | We recognise that sometimes there can be a delay in the naming of provision in a plan. Wherever possible we make every effort to name provision in a timely manner, but sometimes, identifying suitable settings can prevent this. We are working hard to build effective, appropriate provision in Worcestershire. Details of education and provision planning can be found here: Education sufficiency, school organisation and provision planning |
| Some people said that timelines weren't adhered to, and deadlines were missed (both annual reviews and Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment) | We are working hard to ensure deadlines are met and any backlog is addressed as a priority. |
| Some parents said they felt the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process was too lengthy or complicated | We have to adhere to statutory guidelines and timescales and it's important that all the appropriate advices are gathered to inform decisions and unfortunately this can take time. As part of the assessment process we will ask for reports from other professionals such as Educational Psychologists, and colleagues from health services, where appropriate. We publish EHCNA timescales on the SEND Local Offer: EHCP – Education, Health and Care plans SEND Local Offer |
| Some parents said that sometimes they had to instigate the annual review (AR) themselves because the school/setting had failed to do so. | In Worcestershire the AR process is devolved to schools. Through the refreshed SENCO forum, Worcestershire Children First (WCF) |

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| | <p>are working hard with schools within the local authority to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the AR process and the role of WCF in supporting this. We have included information on the SEND Local Offer for parent carers about annual reviews. EHCP Annual Reviews SEND Local Offer</p> |
| <p>One family said they didn't get the annual review (AR) paperwork until the review meeting itself.</p> | <p>Unfortunately there can sometimes be delays to the issuing of paperwork and through the refreshed SENCO forum, Worcestershire Children First (WCF) are working together with schools within the local authority to try to minimise these. We work together to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the AR process and the role of WCF in supporting this. We have included information on the SEND Local Offer for parent carers about annual reviews. EHCP Annual Reviews SEND Local Offer</p> |
| <p>A few parents didn't feel the right people attended or contributed to the annual review.</p> | <p>There are statutory guidelines with timings which schools have to follow. This can mean it conflicts with agencies own timeframes and notice for meetings. In these situations the relevant agencies should provide a report which is appropriate for the AR and less than one year old. EHCP Annual Reviews SEND Local Offer</p> |
| <p>Some parents said the communication between them, and the school or setting could be difficult.</p> | <p>We would recommend parent carers to discuss any issues with the school direct in the first instance. We also encourage parent carers to seek advice and support from SENDIASS.</p> |
| <p>Some parents said that communication between the different agencies involved could be improved.</p> | <p>We are constantly aiming to improve communication between agencies. Initial feedback from the trial of the joint assessment meetings is showing the positive effect this way of working can have. Worcestershire Children First (WCF) are working closely with the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to improve links with health services and within WCF different services are linking together. WCF work with education settings SENCO's through the new refreshed SENCO forum to improve communication links.</p> |