

MAKING SENSE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

School-Based SEN Support (Mainstream School Local Offer **)

This replaces the categories of SEN Support School Action and School Action Plus which were provided by schools under the previous legislation covering Special Educational Needs (Education Act 1996).

Under the Children and Families Act (2014), School-Based SEN support was redefined and re-framed.

There are four areas of SEN; your child may fall into several or all of these categories depending on their particular needs:

- **Communication and Interaction**
- **Cognition and Learning**
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health**
- **Physical and Sensory**



The SEN Code of Practice 2015 contains guidance about how schools should proceed when identifying and providing support for children with SEN. The new system is set up to follow a specific way of working:

Assess: Assess the child's needs and barriers to learning

Plan: Create a Targeted Plan to address the child's specific needs

Do: Implement your plans for a period of time

Review: Reflect upon the success of the interventions. Has the child made progress? Do they need more, fewer, or different kinds of interventions?

Schools should keep parents informed about their child's progress and should arrange to meet with parents of children on school-based SEN support at least three times a year. These meetings should focus on desired outcomes.

Contingency Funding **

In cases where a child/young person requires a very high level of support/specialist interventions and does not yet have an EHC Plan or may not need an EHC Plan, schools and early years settings can apply to the local authority for contingency funding. This funding can enable the school/early years setting to put in place necessary interventions to meet a child's needs while focusing on the achievement of specific time-bound outcomes. Requests for contingency funding are considered at a weekly SEN Panel.

****For more information, you can view the Mainstream School Local Offer on the RBKC Local Offer**

****The Short-Term Contingency Funding Request Form is also available to see on the RBKC Local Offer**

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE (EHC) PLANS

What is an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan?

EHC Plans replaced Statements of Special Educational Needs when the Children and Families Act came into force in 2014. Some children still have Statements of SEN; Local Authorities have until April 2018 to convert all existing Statements into EHC Plans. An EHC Plan is a document outlining a child or young person's special needs and specifying the special educational provision they need in order to reach specific outcomes. EHC Plans also contain health and social care needs (where relevant) and provision that is linked to educational outcomes. The special educational provision detailed in an EHC Plan must be provided by the local authority. Children and young people need an EHC Plan or Statement in order to attend a special school. EHC Plans will also be necessary for children or young people in mainstream settings if they are likely to require a very high level of support over a long period of time.

How can my child/young person get an EHC Plan?

Before a child/young person can be issued with an EHC Plan, an EHC Needs Assessment (sometimes referred to as a statutory assessment) must be completed. This is something that only the Local Authority can do, and must be applied for with evidence of the child's needs. If the Local Authority agree to carry out an EHC Needs Assessment, they will wait for the assessment to be completed and then the SEN Panel will decide if an EHC Plan is necessary to meet the child's needs or whether the support required can be provided by that child/young person's educational setting without a plan.

EHC Needs Assessment Request

When a child has obvious complex needs, or when school-based interventions including use of contingency funding have been tried and have not been successful, it may be time to consider an EHC Needs Assessment Request.

Local Authorities have a legal duty to do an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment where children/young people may have special educational needs and may need special educational provision to be made for them via an Education, Health and Care Plan.

A request for an EHC Needs Assessment can be submitted by a parent/carer or by the child/young person's educational setting. Forms relating to EHC assessment requests are available online via the RBKC Local Offer. Parents submitting a request do not have to fill in a form, they can choose to submit their request in a letter instead. However, supporting evidence explaining your child's needs will be very important in helping the SEN Panel understand the nature of the educational provision they will need. If you are wondering if your child or young person may need an EHC Plan, you should speak with your child's nursery, school or college before submitting your request. If a school is planning to submit a request for EHC Needs Assessment, they should inform the child's parents first and discuss this with them.

Once the request is submitted, the EHC Needs Assessment Process should take 20 weeks from start to finish.

If the Local Authority refuse to do an EHC Needs Assessment, or refuse to issue an EHC Plan following a needs assessment, parents have the right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal. There is also a mediation service available for dispute resolution.



For more information please contact Full of Life's Information, Advice, and Support Service at Full of Life on 0208 960 9064 or email sen@fulloflifekc.com