

The introduction of Education Health Care Plans

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) have now replaced statements of SEN and Learning Difficulties Assessments (as at 31st March, 2018.)

EHCPs extend the age range for potential eligibility for undergoing an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment and/or the issuing of a Plan to the age of 25 and must be co-produced with families within a shortened deadline.

See [guidance](#) for more information.

Personal Budgets:

Parents, or a young person who has the capacity, have the right to request a personal budget to meet some of the outcomes in their EHCP. A personal budget is an amount identified as available to secure particular provision set out in the EHC plan. A personal budget can take the form of a direct payment which a family can spend themselves as cash, a notional budget which can be held by the local authority or a combination of both approaches.

Services working together:

Under the Act, Local Authorities and other key agencies are required to link up to jointly plan and commission services for children and young people with SEND in their local area.

Local Offer:

The Local Authority is required to publish and maintain details of what is available to support children, young people with SEND and their families in all aspects of their lives. The local offer should be developed by local authorities and their health partners, together with children, their parents and young people. Feedback from the Local Offer should be used to identify gaps in local provision and to improve the quality and type of services available. See [Dudley's local Offer](#)

Co-production:

Local Authorities and partners must engage with children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers to discuss with them and involve them in decisions about SEND services, outcomes and EHCPs, using person-centred approaches, so that they can be involved in every aspect of their care and support.



Dispute Resolution:

Local Authorities must make clear how disagreements will be resolved and complaints dealt with. When local authorities make decisions about an assessment or a plan, they must inform parents and young people of their right to access mediation.

Mainstream Education

The Act places a duty on the local authority to ensure that a child or young person with an EHC plan is educated in a mainstream setting, unless that goes against the wishes of the young person or the child's parent, or would impact on the efficient education of others and there are no reasonable steps that could be taken to overcome this.

Local Area Inspections

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have introduced a new framework to inspect local areas' effectiveness in fulfilling their duties under the Act and its accompanying Regulations and Code of Practice. All local areas will be inspected on a 5 year cycle. The local area includes key agencies from across it and is wider than just the local authority.

