

WIRRAL SEND PARTNERSHIP

Information, Advice and Support Service



Spring News 2016

Education Health and Care Plans Overview - Wirral

Education Health and Care Plans have replaced Statements of Special Educational Needs and Learning Disability Assessments (S 139a). Eligibility has increased to include 0 - 25 year olds.

Eligibility criteria for an EHC Plan are the same as it was for a statement. The LA (Local Authority) must secure an EHC Needs Assessment for the child or young person if, after having regard to any view expressed and evidence submitted...the authority is of the opinion that:

- The child or young person has or may have SEN and
- It may be necessary for special education provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHC Plan.

Currently the LA has six EHC coordinators who either will draw up a new EHCP or transfer from a statement. This legal document should allow the family to have more control over decisions taken to support the child/young person as the focus is on outcomes. It will also allow for a personal budget if this is appropriate.

The child/young person are involved as well as the parent and the focus is on short and long term outcomes and what will be done by professionals from Education, Health and Social Care to help achieve these outcomes.

In early years settings, school or college the Senco (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) will support the child/young person and the parent/carer to fill in Section A (Aspirations) and Section E (Outcomes) to gain a better understanding of the pupil's strengths and interests and agree outcomes. For more information about how to request an EHC assessment and what the document should contain, please go to www.localofferwirral.org.

It is always helpful to contact your child's school/college if you have concerns about their progress in learning and/or any social/emotional difficulties. Speak to the Special Needs Coordinator (Senco). For further information advice and support you can contact Wirral SEND Partnership at Wired - www.wired.me.uk or telephone 0151 522 7990.

Post 16 Transition

If you are coming up to 16 and ending your school year, it is time to start looking towards moving into Further Education or Training. In Year 11 you will need to arrange an appointment with your school's Career Guidance Department to discuss your options once leaving school. You will need to begin to make applications to Further Education or Training. School will be able to advise and guide you through this process.

SEND - Statements and EHCP Transfers

If you have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and are looking to move into Further Education or Training, you may want to contact your school SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) to discuss the transition process. This will be done through a Transition Meeting between yourself and the school Senco.

Continued overleaf...

Post 16 Transition

There is also a Transition Support Team who have produced a Transition Planning Document which should help to plan your preparation for adulthood and post 16 education.

Transfer Review - Statement to EHCP

If you still have a statement by Year 11, the Annual Review will usually be a Transfer Review. The letter advising you of this should explain the process. You can find out more information about transfer reviews in our leaflet "Transferring from Statements to Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). For pupils transferring between phases of education the review must be completed by 31st March 2016, for pupils transferring to a post 16 institution in September 2016, and by 16th February for any other transfer between phases of education. Wirral's Transition support and transfer plan including timescales is on the Local Offer (www.localofferwirral.org)

SEN School Transport

Some children with special education needs or disabilities may require support in travelling to school, especially those who attend special schools which are outside of their local area. Local Authorities are under a duty to make suitable travel arrangements for eligible children. Suitable transport arrangements are those that allow the child to travel to school stress-free, in a reasonable degree of comfort and safety, ready for a day's education. The legislation setting out this duty comes under Section 508B of the Education Act 1996 and Schedule 35B. There is also statutory guidance called Home to School Travel and transport guidance issued in 2014 which local authorities must follow. Each Local Authority will also have its own Transport Policy, which may differ from authority to authority, but must nevertheless follow the law and statutory guidance. You will find Wirral's transport policy on the Local Offer website www.localofferwirral.org. A child is eligible for free transport if they are of compulsory school age (5 -16) and the nearest suitable school is:

Beyond 2 miles if the child is below 8 or beyond 3 miles if they are aged between 8 - 16 or they cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of health and safety issues related to their special educational needs or disability (SEND).

The nearest suitable school will usually be the nearest mainstream school unless the child attends a special school. Therefore, your child may attend a school that is not the nearest suitable school, according to your preference, but the duty to provide free transport will not usually be extended to accommodate your preferences. Wirral has reviewed its transport policy and as a result some children have been told they are no longer eligible for specialist transport. Transport should only be reviewed after your child has been reassessed for transport and you have had a chance to say what their transport needs are either on a form or during an annual review of their statement or EHCP. If you disagree with a decision about transport you can appeal setting out your reasons why your child cannot safely walk to school or use public transport. There are 2 levels of appeal. If your appeal is unsuccessful you can complain to the Local Authority Ombudsman if you feel the Local Authority have not met their duties. The web address for this is www.lgo.org.uk

You can also find some template letters about appealing about school transport on our website www.wired.me.uk or contact us for further advice.

WIRED

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