

2. Info & evidence for EHCNA Request

Parental EHCNA Request Series



Writing a letter to the LA can sometimes feel daunting. If you have read the first factsheet in the series and still want to make a parental request for an EHCNA, this guide, and the next will help you to think about what to include. Number three in the series gives more examples. By the end, you should be able to take the lists you have created through this guide and copy and paste into the letter template (number four in the series).

General Tips

1. Make your letter as clear and concise as possible. The people on the Multi Professional panel who look at the request, have to make the decision quickly. They do not know your child, or your circumstances and therefore can only make judgements on what information and evidence is presented to them, so how it is presented is important.
2. Use bullet points for each issue, (rather than one general statement). Include how this issue affects your child (and what helps if known) For example:
 - Has dyslexia.
 - a. Reading Age is 5yrs 2 months compared to Chronological Age 7yrs 0 months
 - b. Screening performed by school in yr 1. Scored highly.
 - c. Requires a purple overlay to use with reading, otherwise he cannot see the words.
3. When providing evidence try to include who it is from, the date and page number. Make it **BOLD** so that it easily seen. For example:
 - Diagnosis of Autism (**CAMHS dated xx/xx/xx**)
 - Struggles to sit still and concentrate (**LBAT dated xx/xx/xx, page 4**)
4. Use factual information where possible. It can often be hard to write as you will be trying to capture your child's worst situations, which is the opposite to what you would normally want people to read. It is important to capture their struggles (and yours) and be open about what this looks like on a regular basis.
5. You may also feel disappointed if past support has not worked or been lacking. Again, try and keep the information factual, without blame, where possible.
6. If your child is over 16, check that they are happy with you requesting an EHCNA for them. They may be asked to confirm this, if appropriate.
7. Lastly, keep a copy of your letter safe in case you need it again, and remember to attach **all** the evidence listed in your letter, to your email.

The EHCNA Request should be in two sections, and we will deal with each separately.

Section 1-the child or young person has or *may have* special educational needs

Before completing or writing an EHCNA request, take a step back and think about your child's story. What do you already know about them: their strengths, what they struggle with and how they learn best. **Remember:** when we talk about 'educational needs' we mean 'difficulties in learning or accessing learning'.

Write a list of all the things you know about their needs (this may need to be done in stages), as well as what is in professional or school reports or letters. This will be **LIST 1** (for the template letter).

It doesn't have to be in order at this stage, (although it is helpful to put any diagnoses first). Just write it all down using bullet points and short sentences. Thinking about the answers to the following questions may help:

- *What has led to asking for an EHC plan?*
- *Does your child have any diagnosis? Why, when, who with, what did the report say they struggle with?*
- *Were there any issues at birth or in their early years? Did they meet their milestones?*
- *Any family history of SEND that may be relevant and similar, if so what and the relationship to your child?*
- *When did I first feel things were not right? Has it always been like that or have things improved / got worse?*
- *What are the difficulties your child has that make attending or learning in school hard for them?*
- *What is the impact of these difficulties? i.e. what does it look like for your child / How do they react?*
- *What stops them doing what they want to or need to? (if you know)*
- *What have professionals said about my child/young person's needs in the past and up till now?*
- *What impact is there on family and the home environment?*

Also include anything that you are concerned about that may not have been picked up by school or other professionals. For example:

- *They might be acting sad, or angry or anxious.*
- *They are being given exclusions or detentions for not being on time, not doing homework, being fidgety or distracted or forgetting equipment AND you know they are not just being 'naughty'.*
- *Not able to meet outcomes on ILP*
- *Struggling to go to school*

You might have a list that starts to look like this:

- Born premature but has met most of their milestones
- Cannot sit at a table without fidgeting for more than 5 minutes at a time
- Getting into trouble ALL the time. Constantly having to pick up from school.
- Hates any clothing around the neck, including buttons or a tie
- Was diagnosed with Autism when at age xx.

Next

Once you have made your list (**LIST 1**), try and put them into each of the 4 categories of SEN, as well as having a background or context information category. Include any professionals that have been involved. Also include any triggers or impact there might be e.g. what behaviours occur and when etc.

Please note, it is not compulsory to do this but will help the panel clearly see the areas of need. Some categories may have less or even nothing in – that is ok.

We have included some guidance under each category along with a couple of examples for each. More examples can be found in number 5 of the series.

Background / Context

Write about why you are asking for an EHC needs assessment now. Mention any concerns at birth or in their early years. Include here: any family history of SEND that may be relevant and similar, along with what this is and their relation to your child.

Example:

- XX was born prematurely and has been behind his/her milestones all their life.
- XX struggled to speak until he/she was xx and is still not able to be fully understood. Was diagnosed with Autism at the age of xx and are on the waiting list with CAMHs for an ADHD diagnosis (school referred in 202x). I am extremely worried about XX's mental Health as he/she is a totally different child to a year ago especially since starting secondary school.

Communication / Interaction:

Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Include here: Any difficulty in communicating with others – related to speech, listening, reciprocal conversations, interpreting instructions, social rules of communication and so on. More information is provided at 6.28-6.29 of the [SEND Code of Practice](#)

Examples:

- Was diagnosed with delayed speech in 2019 by NHS SALT (**NHS SALT report 31 Dec 22 p3**)
- Plays alongside other children but never with. Gets upset if others try to play and throws toys.

Cognition / Learning:

Learning difficulties - including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). This also includes specific learning difficulties (SpLD), which affects one or more specific areas of learning. Include here: learning at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Anything related to struggles in school, class with how they learn, what they cannot access, what that looks like to them, what is needed / been put in place to support them already? Progress with reading, writing, numbers, other subjects and activities at school - any age-related information on testing ie: Reception = early learning goals, Yr 1 = Phonics Testing, Yrs 2/6 SAT Testing, any secondary school testing. More information is provided at 6.30-6.31 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Examples:

- Needs to sit at the front of the class to avoid distractions as much as possible (**see ILP Autumn Term 24**)
- Requires a TA to go through all new instructions at the beginning of a task, otherwise is not able to complete their work and just sits there

Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)

SEMH needs may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying anxieties or challenging behaviour such as meltdowns or shutdowns. Any social difficulties i.e. not understanding social cues, not making or keeping friendships, difficulties relating to family members. Any unawareness of danger. More information is provided at 6.32-6.33 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Examples:

- Is unable to self-regulate emotions when faced with uncertain situations (**ASC report 18 Apr 25 p7**)
- Gets into trouble all the time and I am being called to pick up from school at least once a week.

Sensory / Physical:

Any disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. This includes hearing impairment (HI), vision impairment (VI), a multi-sensory impairment (MSI), and/or a physical disability (PD). This section also includes sensory processing difficulties such as noise and textures (clothing and food). More information is provided at 6.34-6.35 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Examples:

- Cannot tolerate any clothing around the neck, including buttons or a tie. This makes wearing school uniform difficult.
- Wears a cochlear implant, requires a less noise-driven environment to be able to hear people correctly (Audiology report 11 Mar 23 p2)

Uncategorised:

Write here anything that doesn't fit into the above, or you are not sure where to put it. You might feel that your child is struggling but you are not sure why, you just know that they are. It might be their behaviour; their self-esteem may be low or they might be getting sick or having meltdowns.

Examples:

- Does not want to attend school – tells me it is just too hard
- Has been on a reduced timetable for 3 months, but school tell me he is not ready for it to be increased

Further examples of other SEND needs can be found in number 5 of the series.

Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) - (Year 9 and onwards)

If your child is approaching or already in year 9 or above, then if applicable, also include anything relevant to:

- Employment:
- Independent living:
- Community Inclusion
- Being healthy
- Learning and Development (post 16, 18 or 19)

Next, think about whether there is any supporting evidence against any of the list, such as:

- Professional assessments, diagnostic reports or referrals
- School reports, ILP / IEPs, costed provision maps
- Early Learning Goals
- Phonics Testing and school assessment results,
- Medical reports or referrals, any GP communication, and relevant emails that show the reasons for the request
- Feedback or emails from teachers or others, stating child/young person is experiencing difficulties or their behaviour is getting worse
- Detention or exclusion letters

If a pre-school child, use nursery or child minder evidence, early years professional evidence, parental concerns etc.

If Home Educated, or not attended school for a year plus – use info and evidence up to 2-3 years old. What progress is/is not being made. Any feedback from groups they attend?

Examples:

- Is unable to self-regulate emotions when faced with uncertain situations (**ASC report 18 Apr 25 p7**)
- Is not able to follow more than 2 instructions (**Childminder report 26 July p3**)
- Is getting more detentions and exclusions, especially for forgetting things (**school letters xx/xx/xx and xx/xx/xx**)

Section 2-They may need special educational provision to be made through an EHC plan.

The 2nd section of the template letter is to explain why you feel an EHC plan is needed to support your child or young person in education or training. This will be **List 2**.

Remember: Provision = Support, Needs = Difficulties.

Examples:

- already spending 50% of her time out of the classroom because she is too overwhelmed in the large class, but she is not being taught. – See ILP and emails (dated xx/xx/xx). Therefore, an EHCP is required for her to attend a suitable setting with small classes, to provide regulation, so she is able to learn amongst her peers.
- only allowed to be in school for 2 hours per day as the school cannot look after him properly as he keeps running away. They have tried lots of support such as
 - 1:1 at break times
 - xx
- School has sought advice from LBAT – (see report dated xx/xx/xx), and from APC – see report dated xx/xx/xx. Despite trying all the recommendations and having a 1:1 when school can provide one, he is still trying to run away. An EHCP is needed to provide more intensive support, or an environment that he feels safe in.

It may be more than one of these, it may be different to these. But it is helpful to know why you think school are not able to meet their needs, but an EHCP can.

Further examples can be found in number 5 of the series.

Next

- List and evidence the areas that XXXX is behind in (and why this is, if known). Include rates of progress / attainment (evidence with reports, ILPs etc)
- List and evidence what provision / support has been tried and by whom (provision, interventions, specialist support etc)
- If known, list what other provision or support is needed and why the school cannot provide/ arrange this from their own resources (such as specialist knowledge/ teaching etc, therapies from external specialists, specialist equipment, individual support beyond what school can provide, an assessment from CAMHS / CDC, very small classes, calm atmosphere, secure premises etc).

Examples:

Since year 5, school had consulted with the specialist ASC Team and an EP. They created an ISP for XXXX and reviewed this termly with us both. **(ISPs for Year 5)**

They provided some small group work in both maths and literacy for XXXX, but XXXX really struggled to grasp any new concepts and is now 3yrs behind their peers in their attainment **(School Assessment data Mar 25)**

List all the evidence at the end of your letter:

As well as the evidence mentioned in your letter, you will also need to list them at the end of the letter and attach them to your email. Evidence might be professional reports, school reports, relevant email evidence, ILP / ISP's, testing scores etc

Write the name of the evidence, who from if relevant, and date. For Example:

- School Assessment Mar 25
- ASC report 18 Apr 25

Please send copies only (keep the originals yourself)

Further Information:

- Other Factsheets in the '[Parental EHCNA Requests](#)' Guidance Series
- Webinars, Guides and Downloadable leaflets from our website SEN Support, EHC Needs Assessment & EHC Plans <https://westsussexsendias.org/sendias-resources/>

Service Statement

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