



A checklist to help with the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment Application in Bexley

The majority of children and young people with special educational needs and/or a disability (**SEND**) will have their needs met through the resources and quality first teaching available within their educational setting.

Children and young people who are receiving support in school/college for their special educational needs but who don't have an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**, may be being supported at '**SEN Support**' level. This includes a **Graduated Approach** using an 'Assess, Do Plan and Review' method.

Please follow this link to understand a little more about [**SEN SUPPORT**](#).

Some children and young people with SEND may need extra support. These children may require an **EHC Needs Assessment** in order for the Local Authority to decide what support, provision and funding is required to meet their education, health and care needs. An EHC Needs Assessment is the first step toward an EHC Plan. It is a legal process carried out by the local authority. It isn't to be confused with other assessments that teachers, GPs or other professionals may arrange for a child/young person.

An EHC Needs Assessment will not always lead to an EHC Plan. The information gathered during the assessment may indicate ways in which the educational setting can meet the child/young person's needs without an EHC Plan.

Before an EHC Needs Assessment application is made

Before making an EHC Needs Assessment application, it is important to speak to the education setting and ensure every intervention, reasonable adjustment and quality teaching first has been put in place for your child/young person at SEN Support level. If you have any questions, you can contact the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) at your child/young person's educational setting. The SENCO will know them and will be able to give advice about their learning, the progress they are making, their strengths, their needs and the support they require.

EHC Needs Assessment applications may be rejected if the education setting cannot evidence the work they have been doing with your child/young person at SEN Support Level.

Who can apply for an EHC Needs Assessment?

The following people can make a formal request for an EHC Needs Assessment:

- A child/young person's parent/carer (the person who has parental responsibility)
- The young person if over the age of 16 (or somebody on their behalf)
- A person acting on behalf of an early years setting, school or post 16 institutions (this should be with the knowledge and agreement of the parent/carer or young person)

What the Law says:

If a local authority (LA) is requested to carry out an EHC Needs Assessment by a parent, young person, school or college, they must consider:

- whether the child or young person **has or may have** special educational needs (**SEN**); and
- whether they **may** need special educational provision to be made through an EHC plan.

If the answer to both of these questions is yes, they **must** carry out an EHC Needs Assessment.

This test is set out in the law (**section 36(8) of the Children and Families Act 2014**). This means these are the only questions the LA should be asking when considering whether or not to carry out an EHC Needs Assessment. The [SEN and Disability Code of Practice](#), which is statutory guidance issued by the government, contains further detail on what LA's should consider.

Please follow this link to view a helpful video explaining about [EHC Needs Assessments](#).

Applying for the EHC Needs Assessment in Bexley

As a parent/carer you are an expert on your child/young person, their SEN needs and how best to support them. Your application should set out why you believe they have or may have special educational needs, and why you believe they may need special educational provision to be made through an EHC Plan.

If you are requesting an EHC Needs Assessment, or providing further information as part of the assessment itself, it is important to give clear information about your child/young person's needs.

The Bexley application form can be accessed, downloaded and printed from here:

[Bexley Local Offer | EHC Needs Assessment Applications in Bexley](#)

This form can seem daunting so speak to the school SENCO, Teacher or Form Tutor, Health/Medical Professionals and anyone else who knows your child/young person to seek their views and assist you in ensuring you have captured all the relevant information you need on the EHC Needs Assessment Application form.

Part of the application form contains a 'Section A'. You do not need to complete this as part of the application stage, however it can provide important information about you and your child/young person's views, wishes and aspirations and is required as part of the full assessment stage process.

The image shows a screenshot of the 'Requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment for a child or young person aged 0 - 25' form. The form is titled 'Section A: Child/Young person's details'. It contains several sections for providing personal and contact information:

- Child/Young person's details:** Includes fields for first name, surname, date of birth, gender, home address, postcode, and telephone number.
- Parent/Carer responsibility:** Includes fields for mother's name, father's name, and address if different to above. It also asks for immigration status, first language, and if a translation of written documents is required.
- Names of other people with parental responsibility:** Includes fields for name, relationship to child/young person, and telephone number if different to home contact.
- Educational setting:** Includes fields for school name, year group, and Unique Pupil Number (UPN).
- Medical Practitioner and address:** Includes fields for name, contact email, and NHS number.

At the bottom of the form, there is a footer that reads 'Leading Borough of Bexley: Education Assessment Service'.

Writing about your child/young person

To help you complete the application form, gather as much evidence as you can about your child/young person. This can include **reports from professionals** who have assessed or supported them.

For example:

Educational Psychologists, Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Community Paediatrics, Hearing Impairment Service, Visual Impairment Service, BEAS Service, Autism Advisory Service, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Early Years Team, Health Visitor, Portage, Social Care, Family Wellbeing Service, Education Welfare, Youth Offending Service and the Early Intervention Team.

It can also be useful to gather school/college reports if appropriate including attendance and attainment information.

Each report can be attached to the application form. Write a list of these reports, allocate them a number and include the list. This is known as an '**Appendix**'. Keep a copy of all the documents you send to the Local Authority.

If you are unable to answer the questions on the form regarding evidence of the Graduated Approach, you can ask for the information from your child/young person's educational setting.

If you do not understand any of the questions, you can contact the Bexley SEN Admin team on 0203 045 3311 for advice.

Things to think about:

Your child/young person's early years

- When did you first noticed any problems – big or small?
- Did you tell anyone? (GP, School, other professional)
- What help or advice did you get? (do you have any reports or documents you can refer to)

Your child/young person now

- Health: eating, sleeping, illnesses, tiredness, depression, panic attacks.
- Physical skills: walking, climbing, handwriting, using scissors.
- Communication: hearing, gestures, eye contact, speech: describing things, talking to people, using the telephone, taking messages.
- Personal skills: dressing, washing, dealing with pocket money, time-keeping, remembering to pack sports kit/or pencil case.
- Behaviour: showing anxiety or frustration, problems with concentration.
- Your child/young person at home
 - Watching TV, reading and hobbies.
 - Outside activities: clubs, sports and social groups.
 - Relationships: parents, brothers and sisters, other adults, friendships.
 - Behaviour at home: sharing, listening, fighting with siblings, moods, tantrums.
- Your child/young person at school or college.
 - Homework: difficulty remembering what to do, or finishing in the set time.
 - What lessons or activities does your child enjoy?
 - Friendships, relationships with teachers.
 - Problem areas: lessons, playtime, new teacher, change in routine.
 - Extra help which has worked or not worked for your child.

- Are your child's difficulties getting worse? Does any particular incident or piece of work illustrate your child's difficulties?
- What help do you think your child needs?

Your child/young person's views

- Do they enjoy going to school/college?
- What do they like best?
- What would they like to achieve? What makes it hard for them to do this?
- What help do they think they need?
- What works well for them? What does not work well for them?

Submitting the completed application

The completed application form can be emailed to: specialneeds.ELS@bexley.gov.uk. It is recommended for security that you use a secure email system, for example, [Egress Secure Email](#).

Alternatively, you can deliver or post your completed application forms ('signed for' is recommended) to:

The Bexley SEN Statutory Assessment Service, Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, DA6 7AT

In Bexley, the application will be received and processed by the SEN Admin Team. They, (and SEN Case Officers) are part of the [Bexley Statutory Assessment Service](#).

The Local Authority (LA) must tell you in writing within 6 weeks whether or not they are going to assess your child/young person. This is a statutory requirement by regulation 4(1) of the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#).

The 6-week time limit runs from the date on which the LA **receives** the request for assessment. When it is classed as 'received' will depend on the method used to send it. If it is:

1. Delivered by hand - the 6 weeks runs from the day of delivery (or the following working day if it is delivered after 5pm or on a non-working day);
2. Sent by signed for delivery - the 6 weeks runs from the date on which a representative of the LA signs for it (you will be able to check online when the item was delivered);
3. Sent by first class post - the 6 weeks runs from the next working day after it was posted;
4. Sent by e-mail - the 6 weeks runs from the day that it is sent (or the following working day if it is sent after 5pm or on a non-working day)

Are there exceptions to the time limit?

Yes. There are some circumstances in which an LA may not be required to comply with the 6-week time limit if it would be impractical for it to do so. These are where:

- (a) The LA asks for advice about the request from a school, college or early years provider during a time when it is closed for a period of longer than 4 weeks (i.e. in the summer holidays), or in the week before it closes for such a period.
- (b) During the six-week period, exceptional personal circumstances affecting the child/young person or the parent/carer or the young person, or they are away for more than 4 weeks.

The LA will only be able to rely on one of these exceptions if it can show that making the decision on time would be impractical. The LA is still required to notify you of its decision of your request as soon as possible.

Who decides if a statutory EHC Needs Assessment is appropriate?

In Bexley, a **panel of local area representatives** considers the information provided in the request and makes a recommendation about whether or not an EHC Needs Assessment is appropriate. This panel may include Head Teachers or SENCOs from local mainstream or special schools, Educational Psychologists, SEND officers and health representatives.

When deciding if an assessment is appropriate, the LA will look carefully at and consider the SEN support that has been put in place for a child/young person by the educational setting they attend and how well the child/young person's needs are already being met.

Visit the IPSEA website for more information about what the LA must consider when deciding if an assessment is appropriate: [IPSEA - asking-for-an-ehc-needs-assessment](#)

If Bexley Local Authority have then agreed to a full assessment of a child or young person for an EHC Plan, (normally by week 6), you will be allocated a temporary SEN Case Officer, to help manage and support the development of the plan.

What happens after the EHC Needs Assessment application is submitted to the LA?

Parents/carers are informed of the outcome in writing within 6 weeks of a request being made. The local authority will give a reason for their decision and will make a recommendation about what the next steps should be.

If the EHC Needs Assessment is agreed:

If the LA has agreed to carry out an EHC Needs Assessment, an LA representative contacts the parent/carer to discuss the next steps.

For more information about the assessment process, visit: [EHC Needs Assessment – 20-week assessment process in Bexley](#)

If the EHC Needs Assessment is rejected:

If the LA refuses to carry out an assessment, you will be contacted in writing with details as to why the decision was made. You can discuss this with your child/young person's education setting about how their needs can be met on SEN Support level.

You also have the right to appeal to First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) against the decision not to undertake an EHC Needs Assessment. If you wish to consider Mediation/lodging an appeal, you have **2 months** from the date of the written decision confirmation. The letter should explain that there is a right to appeal and should contain details of a mediation service for you to contact.

For more information on Mediation, Appeals and challenging the LA's decision, visit: [IASS - Get Informed - Mediation and Appeals](#)

What do I do if the Local Authority don't contact me?

If you have not heard from the Local Authority regarding your EHC Needs Assessment application you should complain as soon as the **6-week** period has expired.

Who to complain to:

If you do not hear from the Local Authority at the end of 6 weeks, you might find this [complaint letter template](#) useful. To complain, please contact the SEN Admin Team:

Telephone: 0203 045 3311

Email (for new EHC Needs Assessment requests): Specialneeds.ELS@bexley.gov.uk

Website: [Bexley SEN Statutory Assessment Service | Bexley Local Offer](#)

The EHCP Statutory Timeline:

The LA receives a request for an EHC Needs Assessment.	This is the start date
The LA decides whether an EHC Needs Assessment is needed. The LA must tell parent/carers about its decision.	Within six weeks of the start date
The EHC Needs Assessment takes place	This starts as soon as the decision is made
<i>EITHER</i>	
The LA tells the parent/carer of the decision not to issue an EHC Plan	Within 16 weeks of the start date
<i>OR</i>	
The LA sends a draft EHC Plan to parent/carer	
Parent/carers must respond to the draft EHC Plan. They can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree that the draft is adequate • ask for changes • ask for a meeting. Parent/carers have the right at this point to state a preference for a school, college or early year setting	Within 15 days of receiving the draft EHC Plan
The LA consults with the school, college or early years setting	Within 15 days of parents/carers response to the draft EHC Plan
The LA issues the final EHC Plan	Within 20 weeks of the start date
For information about the 20-week assessment process in Bexley visit: Bexley local offer EHC NA process in Bexley	

Further advice and information:

Bexley Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS)

IASS is an impartial and confidential service offering information, advice and support to parent/carers of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and young people with SEND up to 25 years.

Tel: 020 3045 5976

Email: bexleyiass@bexley.gov.uk

Website: www.bexleyiass.co.uk

Bexley Local Offer

The SEND Local Offer website - information about Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) services for children and young people aged 0-25 in Bexley.

Tel: 020 3045 5677

Email: localoffer@bexley.gov.uk

Website: www.bexleylocaloffer.uk

[EHC Needs Assessment – the application process in Bexley](#)

[EHC Needs Assessment – the assessment process in Bexley](#)

Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (IPSEA)

IPSEA offers free and independent legally based information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We also provide training on the SEND legal framework to parents and carers, professionals and other organisations.

Website: www.ipsea.org.uk/ehc-needs-assessments

CONTACT

National charity supporting families with special needs and disabled children.

Website: <https://contact.org.uk/>