



What is an EHCP and what is the application process if my child has an EHCP?

Introduction

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), like the previous Statement of Educational Needs, is a legal document which is drawn up between the Local Education Authority, Health and Social Care and the family of a child (0 to 15 years old), or a young person aged between 16 and 25 years. The EHCP identifies a child or young person's needs and sets out the additional support needed to meet those needs. An EHCP may be suggested to parents whose children are having any difficulties at school and the wishes of the child, their parents/carers are viewed as central in the EHCP process.

The purpose of an EHCP is a positive one. The idea is to provide clear, structured support for any learning support needs a child has, and to identify what a school needs to provide in order to help them, along with the necessary outcomes. For example, this could mean getting extra help for your child such as speech and language provision, occupational therapy, or assistive resources. There will also be a clear time frame drawn up, during which the outcomes should be achieved, and when they will be next reviewed. The local authority must fund any extra help identified as necessary.

The EHCP process

The process varies according to the local authority, but has some set requirements. Initially, you will be asked to request an EHC needs assessment to see if your child's needs can be met under the school's current SEN arrangements or whether an EHC plan is necessary. Not all EHC needs assessments will lead to EHC plans.

There are certain criteria to meet to qualify for an EHC needs assessment. You must supply evidence of your child's academic attainment and rate of progress, as well as information about the nature, extent and context of their needs, and what intervention has been put in place to support the child. Evidence of the child's physical, emotional and social needs is also required. You will be asked to participate in information gathering about your child, including filling out a page called, 'All About Me'. This is your opportunity to document your child's strengths, difficulties and aspirations and it will inform the local authority of your perspective. If an EHC plan is deemed necessary, these reports will form the first section.

Usually, within six weeks you will receive notice whether the request for an EHC needs assessment has been approved. If the request is denied, you have the right to appeal and your appeal will be dealt with by the SEND tribunal.

Once they agree to assess, the local authority gathers information from parents and all education professionals, therapists and doctors involved in your child's care. You should hear within 16 weeks of your initial request if they conclude an EHCP is appropriate. The family will be invited to a Support and Outcomes Plan session, to agree the provision before the final draft is published.

A parent can name the school of their choice on the EHCP and Section 43 of the Children and Families Act 2014 says that all schools must admit a child if their EHCP names the school. However, the school must agree to be able to support the admission when it is named.

Applications to join LCS

All parents interested in their child enrolling at LCS are asked to provide copies of all information relating to any learning support needs, such as an EHCP, individual learning plan, or educational psychologist's report. You will be invited to tour the school during the school day, so that you can see for yourself how the school operates on a usual day, talk to teachers and meet our pupils.

If you would like to pursue an application, we will ask for a reference from your child's current school and we may talk to their teachers or the school SENDCO, or visit the school to see your child in their current setting. This will help us to get a full picture of their individual needs so that we can ensure that the correct support is in place for any taster days or entry assessments.

The information from family, from the current school, in the learning support documentation, from the taster days and from the assessment tests will help us to determine whether or not we are able to provide for your child's specific learning support needs. If we are able to provide for their needs, a place will be offered and transition activities planned, including discussions with the learning support team.

For more information

Contact the Admissions Team on 01543 306168 or admissions@lichfieldcathedralschool.com for more information.