

Script for Video: Who can request an EHC needs assessment and how?

Title slide

This short video will look at who can request an Education, Health and Care (or EHC needs assessment) and how a request can be made.

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The following people have a specific legal right to request an EHC needs assessment:

A child's parent or a person with parental responsibility

A young person between the ages of 16 and 25 years

And the educational setting

(SEND Code of Practice 2015, section 9.8)

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The SEND Code also says that:

'In addition, anyone else can bring a child or young person who has (or may have) special educational needs to the attention of the local authority, particularly where they think an EHC needs assessment may be necessary.'

(SEND Code of Practice section 9.9)

So, for example, a GP or a foster carer or an Early Years practitioner or a Family Support Worker or physiotherapist can contact the local authority and say why they think an EHC needs assessment would be helpful for a child or young person they know.

In Suffolk, the Family Services team are responsible for EHC needs assessments and if they receive this kind of notification, they may contact the family as a next step to get their views on this.



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If your child has past the end of the academic year in which they turn 16, the right to request an EHC needs assessment switches to them.

The SEND code says that local authorities and practitioners should normally communicate directly with the young person at this point.

But the SEND Code is also clear that the young person's family and parents should continue to be involved in discussions. The young person may also ask for the help of their parents throughout the process.

(SEND Code of Practice sections 8.15 and 8.16)

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So how can a request for an EHC needs assessment be made?

Well to begin the process, a request is usually made by the learning setting but as we said earlier, you or a young person have a right to make a request directly too.

We would recommend that you talk to the learning setting if you are thinking about an EHC needs assessment as the local authority will need to contact them.

In Suffolk, you or a young person can make a request by contacting the Family Services Team by email or phone.

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These are the contact details for the Family Services teams in the north, south and west of Suffolk. These details are on our Suffolk SENDIASS website, but you could also pause the recording to make a note or take a photo on your phone.

Lowestoft & Waveney: SENDLW@suffolk.gov.uk

Ipswich, Coastal & South Suffolk SENDSS@suffolk.gov.uk

West & Central Suffolk: SENDWS@suffolk.gov.uk

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Some other counties may ask for a more formal request to be made in writing. Any parents watching this video from outside Suffolk may like to look at the IPSEA website as they have a helpful template letter for requesting an EHC needs assessment.

(The image on screen is for this [IPSEA Asking for an EHC needs assessment](#) webpage.)



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This chart shows the twenty-week timeframe for the whole EHC needs assessment process as set out by the Children and Families Act of 2014.

When you make a request for an EHC needs assessment, you trigger the first stage in this process.

(Here is the [EHC timeline](#) shown on screen.)

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This slide shows this first stage. Week one starts when the local authority receives a request for an EHC needs assessment. There then follows a six-week period when the local authority gathers the views of you, your child or young person and the views of the educational setting, to help them decide whether an EHC needs assessment is appropriate.

(The slide refers to the first stage of this [EHC timeline](#))

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In our county of Suffolk, to gather the views of you and your child, the local authority will send you a Family Views Form. In this slide, we're showing you a couple of pages of the form to give you a bit of an idea of what to expect to receive.

[View the family advice form and related documents on the Suffolk Local Offer website.](#)


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On our website, in the EHC needs assessment section, we go through the questions on this family views form. If you click on each of the blue bars it opens a drop down with information about the kind of things to think about, to help you with filling in this form.

The screen refers to this [family views](#) webpage.

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It's really important to include your child or young person's views as this process is all about them. So, we'd encourage you to go through some of the questions on the family views form with your child and there are links on our website to person



centred resources like those in this slide which may help your child or young person to share their views and their feelings.

These resources and more can be found here:

[Helen Sanderson Associates](#)

(Social enterprise working to create person-centred change)

[Preparing for Adulthood](#)

(Equality for young people with SEND as they move into adulthood)

[Sheffkids variety of one-page-profile templates](#)

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We have more information and videos around the EHC process and SEND support and inclusion on our Suffolk SENDIASS website and YouTube channel which you might find helpful.

[EHC needs assessments and plans](#)

[Education](#) (including SEN support, equality and inclusion)

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This video was made by Suffolk SENDIASS, but every county has an impartial and confidential SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.