

**Annual Review Guidance for Early Years Settings and Schools**

Annual Review guidance v1.2 1

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**Annual Review Guidance**

This guidance is to support the completion of the annual review form for education, health and care plan (EHCP) reviews. This is the formal record of a pupil’s progress over the previous year. It may be used to:

* inform an amendment of an EHCP
* support a request for change of placement or additional level of support
* in some circumstances, be submitted as evidence towards a SEND tribunal.

As such, the form must be completed thoroughly and accurately. The annual review form should be used for all reviews and key stages.

For further guidance on the annual review process please refer to the following helpful resources:

* Wokingham School’s Hub resources for school professionals: [Annual Reviews](https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching-support/senco-hub/annual-reviews)
* Wokingham’s SEND Local Offer guidance for families: [How EHCP annual reviews work](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/children-families-and-young-people/send-local-offer/help-learning/education-health-and-care-plan-ehcp/how-ehcp-annual-reviews-work)
* SEND Code of Practice (CoP): [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25) [(www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)
* The Council for Disabled Children’s guidance: [What is an Annual Review?](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-programme/useful-resources-publications/what-0) [(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-programme/useful-resources-publications/what-0)
* The Council for Disabled Children’s training: [Training catalogue | Council for Disabled](https://learning.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/) [Children](https://learning.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/)

# The purpose of an EHCP annual review

The [SEND Code of Practice](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7dcb85ed915d2ac884d995/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf) states that EHCPs must be reviewed by the local authority as minimum every 12 months.

The review must

* + focus on the child or young person’s progress towards achieving the outcomes set out in the current EHCP
  + consider if these outcomes are supporting targets that remain appropriate
  + be undertaken in partnership with the child and their parent or the young person
  + take account of their views and wishes and feelings
  + consider the continuing appropriateness of the EHCP in light of the child or young person’s progress during the year or changed circumstances
  + consider whether changes are required including changes to outcomes, enhanced

provision, change of educational establishment or whether the plan should be discontinued

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) are committed to improving the quality of all annual reviews, to ensure that children and young people’s EHCPs remain relevant, up to date and reflect their special educational needs.

# When an annual review should take place

Notification to parents or the young person of the decisions from the review meeting must be completed within four weeks of the review meeting and within 12 months on the date of issue of the plan or previous review.

This means that **the review meeting should be held no more than 11 months** after the date of the issue of the first EHC plan or the last review meeting. This allows a four-week window for the recommendations from the review to be considered and decide on whether the plan should remain the same, be amended or ceased within the 12 month deadline.

Schools are advised to schedule EHCP annual review dates for all pupils at the beginning of each academic year. Annual review dates should link to other regular reviews, including the child in need plan or child protection plan reviews if appropriate.

# Who chairs and hosts the meeting

WBC delegate the responsibility for arranging and conducting the review meeting and the administration of this to the school, setting or other education provider. They are known as the ‘host’.

***Section 9.175 of the SEND CoP states:*** *‘In most cases, reviews should normally be held at the educational institution attended by the child or young person. Reviews are generally most effective when led by the educational institution. They know the child or young person best, will have the closest contact with them and their family and will have the clearest information about progress and next steps. Reviews led by the educational institution will engender the greatest confidence amongst the child, young person and their family. There may be exceptional circumstances where it will be appropriate for the review meeting to be held by the local authority in a different location, for example where a young person attends programmes of study at more than one institution’.*

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# Who should be invited to the review meeting

The parent/carer, child or young person and all the relevant professionals currently involved with the child or young person should be invited to the review meeting. Parent/carer attendance is important so schools should try and be flexible with dates and times where possible to facilitate this.

**The SEND CoP Section 9.176** states ‘*The following requirements apply to reviews where a child or young person attends a school or other institution: The child’s parents or young person, a representative of the school or other institution attended, a local authority SEN officer, a health service representative and a local authority social care representative* ***must be invited and given at least two weeks’ notice of the date of the meeting****.*

*Other individuals relevant to the review should also be invited, including youth offending teams and job coaches where relevant’.*

The CoP does not state that a child or young person’s SEND Casework Practitioner has to attend the annual review, only that they should be invited at least two weeks’ notice of the date of the meeting. At the annual review meeting there may be other officers from Wokingham Borough Council present such as educational psychologists or social worker

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# EHCP reviews for children aged 0 to 5

The SEND CoP section 9.178 states ‘Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under five at least every three to six months to ensure that the provision continues to be appropriate. Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child’s parent must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal’.

# Preparing for adulthood in reviews

**The SEND CoP section 8.9** states ‘Local authorities must ensure that the EHC plan review at Year 9, and every review thereafter, includes a focus on preparing for adulthood. It can be helpful for EHC plan reviews before Year 9 to have this focus too. Planning must be centred around the individual and explore the child or young person’s aspirations and abilities, what they want to be able to do when they leave post-16 education or training and the support they need to achieve their ambition. Local authorities should ensure that children and young people have the support they need (for example, advocates) to participate fully in this planning and make decisions. Transition planning must be built into the revised EHC plan and should result in clear outcomes being agreed that are ambitious and stretching and which will prepare young people for adulthood.’

**The SEND CoP section 8.10** identifies ‘Preparing for adulthood planning in the review of the EHC plan should include:

**The Annual Review Process for Schools**

## Step 1

The host (education setting) obtains written advice and information from all the relevant professionals.

They must also write to the parent/carer and young person inviting them to contribute their views, wishes and feelings. This should include their view of the current arrangements and provide an opportunity to discuss changes which the parent/ carer/ young person may want to be made to the EHCP.

**These reports must be circulated two weeks before the meeting.**

The host should notify professionals six weeks before the review is due so that they can submit their written advice and reports in time. It is advisable for the host to notify everyone of when the meeting is likely to take place at this point, especially where their attendance is required.

## Step 2

The host must send out formal invitations inviting them to attend the annual review meeting and circulate copies of all the reports they have received at least two weeks before the date of the annual review meeting.

This will usually be the same people contacted in Step 1 but may include others if their assistance or contributions are required.

The host should start filling in the Wokingham EHC plan annual review form with relevant information. The host will then complete the form during the annual review meeting.

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## Step 3

The annual review meeting is held. The host will chair the meeting and complete the Wokingham EHC plan annual review or interim review form based on discussions at the meeting and written contributions.

The annual review must enable full involvement of the parent/carer, child or young person and consider their views wishes and feelings, especially when making decisions. Reviews must focus on the child or young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHCP. The review must also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate.

## Step 4

After the meeting, the host must prepare a report that includes any recommendations for amendments to be made to the EHCP. This should include where there are differences of opinions and not just the general consensus.

**The report must be sent to everyone who had been invited to the review and to Wokingham Borough Council’s SEND Team within two weeks of the meeting taking place.**

It is important that The SEND Team receives these papers as soon as possible after the review, as we must inform the parent/ carer/ young person of our decision within four weeks of the annual review meeting. This date should be no later than the anniversary of either when the EHCP was first issued or the decision letter from the last review.

## Step 5

We review the annual review documentation and decide which one of the three following options applies. Whether the EHCP:

* + Should remain unchanged.
  + Needs to be amended.
  + Should be ceased.

**We will write to the parent/ carer/ young person and notify them of our decision within four weeks of the annual review date.**

An EHC plan will not need amending annually and the annual review will form part of the EHCP appendices so that it can be referred to as needed.

Where amendments are agreed, we will send the draft EHCP with the decision letter to the parent/ carer/ young person within four weeks of the annual review meeting, and they will have 15 days to respond. The educational setting will also be consulted with. The final amended EHCP will be issued eight weeks after the review meeting takes place.

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# Different types of EHCP reviews

## Annual Reviews

All EHCPs must be reviewed by law at least every 12 months. For children under the age of five, EHCPs should be reviewed every three to six months. For a new EHCP the first review should take place within 12 months of the first finalised EHCP being issued (this date can be found on the front page of the EHCP). After that, the annual review meeting must take place within 12 months of the last annual review decision letter.

## Interim Reviews

Interim reviews are only held in special circumstances where there is a significant and demonstrable change or concern that needs to be addressed. It might be requested because:

* the child or young person's education, health or social care needs have changed and are no longer accurately described in the EHCP, or
* the education, health, or social care provision in the EHCP is no longer meeting the child or young person's needs.

If the child or young person has been excluded from school or is at risk of exclusion, this would also be a good reason to ask for an interim review.

When considering holding an interim review, the setting should contact the child or young person’s SEND Casework Practitioner to discuss the rationale.

## Transition Reviews

**Phase Transfer Review**

Children and young people with EHCPs have a separate school admissions process for moving to a new stage of education. This process is known as a phase transfer (also known as a key stage transfer). Phase transfers occur when a child or young person moves from:

* early years education to school
* infant to junior school
* primary to secondary school
* secondary school to a post-16 institution

An annual review with a focus on key stage transfer is normally held in the year before the transfer is due to happen so there is time to discuss the type of setting needed for the next stage of education.

**Year 9 Preparing for Adulthood Review**

Whilst Preparation for Adulthood happens from the earliest years, the annual review meeting in Year 9 marks the start of planning for the young person's transition to adulthood. This means thinking about what they will want to do when they leave school at age 16+.

**Post 16 Preparing for Adulthood reviews**

When a young person is already attending a post-16 institution and it’s proposed they move from one post-16 institution to another at any time, this is classed as a transition review. The host (usually the young person’s current post-16 setting) must carry out a review following the steps above and the LA should amend the EHCP at least five months before that transfer takes place

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# Reviews and ongoing appeals

If there is an ongoing appeal relating to the EHCP, the annual review must still be carried out. The host should carry out the steps above regardless of there being an ongoing appeal. This could be a useful way of seeking agreement on the issues in the appeal. The child or young person’s SEND Casework Practitioner should attend these meetings where possible.

# Before the annual review takes place

**At least two weeks before** the meeting, settings should pre-populate the annual review document. All pieces of the document in pink can be pre-populated and sent out to invitees, alongside all stakeholder advice received.

Supporting documents can be used when planning the annual review. Please use the child, young person and parent/carer voice forms to gather the views of the family ready for the review. These should be requested in good time to circulate alongside the annual review document **2 weeks before** the meeting.

[Parent Voice Annual Review](https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/schoolshub/files/2024-07/Wokingham%20Parent%20Carer%20Voice%20Annual%20Review%20form.docx)

[Parent Voice EHC needs assessment and key stage review](https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/schoolshub/files/2024-07/Wokingham%20Parent%20Voice%20EHCP%20assessment%20and%20key%20stage%20review%20booklet.docx)

[Child Voice EHC assessment and key stage review document](https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/schoolshub/files/2024-07/Wokingham%20Child%20Voice%20EHCP%20assessment%20%26%20key%20stage%20review%20booklet.docx)

[Child Voice Annual Review](https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/schoolshub/files/2024-07/Wokingham%20Child%20Voice%20Annual%20Review.docx)

[Young person annual review (14-25)](https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/schoolshub/files/2024-07/Wokingham%20Young%20Person%20Voice%20Annual%20Review%20form.docx)

Information should be requested from other professionals supporting the child or young person, including health and social care. They can be sent a form for completion which can be pre-populated and returned in time to circulate 2 weeks before the meeting.

# Completing the Wokingham EHCP annual review document

\*It is advised that the setting have a working copy of the current EHCP available during the annual review meeting to enable them to make suggested amendments to the document using strikethroughs and track change

**Key information relating to the child or young person**

Complete this section of the paperwork, highlighting key information that is to be updated on the EHCP. Make sure to enquire if the child or young person has any new involvements with health or social care, even if the EHCP does not previously indicate their involvement.

Be sure to include the attendance rates for the child or young person alongside suspension and exclusion data, making sure to differentiate between the two.

**Section A: Schools update on the child or young person and parent/carer profile**

Please note any significant changes to the child or young person’s background information. If changes made to section A are not deemed as significant, this may not result in the whole EHCP being amended.

Capture the child or young person’s and family/carer’s views and aspirations for the future. Use information collected in the child or young person and parent/carer voice documents that are collated before the annual review meeting takes place.

Detail how and when information has been obtained. Identify how you gathered the information and what adaptations and accommodations have been made. For example, asking questions and scribing. If you were not able to gather the child or young person’s input, complete the last box explaining the background to this. We do understand that some children and young people may not want to answer these questions or find this aspect too overwhelming. Identifying the barriers can help to give a clearer picture of the child or young person’s needs and help to inform the best way of working with them in the future.

**Section B: Strengths and needs of the child or young person**

Please note if there have been any significant changes to the child or young person’s needs that would require a change to the EHCP. Please note any needs that are no longer considered appropriate and provide evidence if possible.

For children and young people in Year 9 and above, consider any needs relating to preparing for adulthood. The headings to be considered are detailed on the annual review paperwork.

**Section C: Setting overview of the identified health strengths and needs of the child or young person**

Use this box to state the child or young person’s current health needs. This must only be current and not pre-existing or resolved conditions. Any historical health issues can be added to Section A if they are no longer relevant.

To add new conditions/diagnosis we will require sight of the medical report/diagnosis. Please state the needs related to the medical condition, who diagnosed it and when it was diagnosed. Attach the report as an appendix.

If there are no health needs identified for the child or young person during the annual review, please make a note that the attendees were asked if they wished to add anything and it was confirmed as not being needed.

If health concerns are raised at the annual review but there is no health professional in attendance and no reports were submitted before the annual review, find out what you can from attendees and make a note in the paperwork for our SEND Team to explore this when we receive the annual review report.

It is key in this section to note how the health needs impact the child or young person’s ability to access education.

**Section D: Setting overview of the identified social care strengths and needs of the child or young person**

Use this box to state what current social care needs the child or young person has. This must only be current and not pre-existing/resolved involvement. Any historical social care involvement can be added to Section A if it is no longer relevant.

To add new social care involvement, we will require sight of the most recent social care report or plan. Please state the needs related to the social care provision, who the named social worker is and when the social care team became involved with the child or young person. Attach the report as an appendix.

If there are no social care needs identified for the child or young person during the annual review, please make a note that the attendees were asked if they wished to add anything and it was confirmed as not being needed.

If social care involvement is raised at the annual review but there are no social care professionals in attendance and no reports were submitted before the annual review, find out what you can from attendees and make a note in the paperwork for our SEND Team to explore this with social care when we receive the annual review report.

It is key in this section to note how the social care needs impact the child or young person’s ability to access education.

**Section E: Outcomes**

Outcomes should be holistic and therefore all outcomes for education, health and social care are listed together .

Copy outcomes from the current final EHCP. You may need to add further lines to the table to accommodate all of the outcomes in the plan.

Use the right hand side of the table to establish what progress level has been made against each outcome. If an outcome has been achieved, detail more information about this in the space provided.

If new outcomes for the child or young person are recommended, please list them in the table and include which identified need they are related to. Ensure each outcome is SMART-



Outcomes should not only be linked to a need but the aspirations of the child or young person. This is especially important for those aged 14 and above who are preparing for adulthood.

**Section F: Special educational provision**

Identify if the provision detailed in section F of the EHCP is still appropriate. Only state ‘no’ if there is a need for significant change to the provision in the EHCP.

If there is no longer a need for certain provision, please make a note of these during the review meeting (record under the heading ‘do the contents of the EHCP need updating?’) and send a working copy of the current EHCP with strikethroughs identifying the provision to be removed.

If there is new provision to be added to the EHCP, it must be linked to both a need and an outcome. Use the table on the form to be clear about who will be responsible for delivering provision, the frequency and the cost.

If the child or young person is receiving external support to get needs met, either from an outreach service or alternative provision, please detail what interventions were undertaken, who delivered them and the frequency and timescale. Please also detail what the outcomes for the child or young person were.

**Section G- Health provision**

Please only recommend amendments to the EHCP where there is a significant change in health provision.

If there are changes to be made to the health provision, please ensure they are detailed with the reason why, who will be responsible for delivering provision, the frequency and the cost. This should be backed up by advice from a professional attending the review meeting or a report submitted in their absence. If this is not available, make a note for the local authority to follow up with health professionals regarding the details of the provision.

If there is no change to health provision identified, please make a note in the review paperwork that this was explored and attendees confirmed the content of the health provision in the EHCP was adequate.

**Section H1 and H2: Setting overview of social care provision**

Please only recommend amendments to the EHCP where there is a significant change in social care provision.

If there are changes to be made to the social care provision, please ensure they are detailed with the reason why, who will be responsible for delivering provision, the frequency and the cost. This should be backed up by advice from a professional attending the review meeting or a report submitted in their absence. If this is not available, make a note for the local authority to follow up with the identified social care team regarding the details of the provision.

If there is no change to social care provision identified, please make a note in the review paperwork that this was explored and attendees confirmed the content of them social care section was correct.

**The Difference between H1 and H2**

To help providers understand the difference between sections H1 and H2, here is more detailed information on what these sections should be used for-

**Section H1: Social Care Provision Resulting from the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (CSDPA)**

This section outlines any social care provision that must be provided to the child or young person under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (CSDPA) 1970. The CSDPA applies to children and young people under 18 with disabilities and mandates certain types of support.

It includes services such as:

* Practical assistance in the home
* Provision of equipment or adaptations to the home
* Assistance to enable the child to access leisure facilities
* Short breaks or respite care
* Home-based personal care

Any provision listed in this section is legally enforceable, meaning the local authority must ensure it is delivered.

**Section H2: Any Other Social Care Provision**

This section details any other social care provision identified through the assessment process, but which does not fall under the CSDPA. It may include broader social care support that is not a statutory duty but is still necessary to meet the child’s needs.

It may include:

* Support for young people over 18 (who are no longer covered by the CSDPA but may be eligible for care under the Care Act 2014)
* Services recommended through the Children’s Act 1989, such as family support or child protection services
* Social care provided by local authorities that doesn't fall under other statutory duties but is seen as beneficial for the child or family

Unlike Section H1, the provision in Section H2 is not legally enforceable in the same way. The local authority may provide this support but is not legally bound to deliver it if circumstances change.

**Post-review - Summary and recommendations from the annual review meeting**

This section should be used to highlight in no uncertain terms if the EHCP requires amending/updating or not.

The box below on the form allows you to flag which specific sections of the EHCP require amendment. It may be that several sections needs updating so please ensure that you tick each relevant box.

Please remember and inform attendees that we may decide that the recommended changes are not significant enough and do not require an amendment of the EHCP at this stage. The annual review paperwork can be seen alongside the EHCP until it is decided an amendment to the EHCP is necessary.

**Section I: Educational placement recommendations**

This section gives the provider and the family the opportunity to express if there is a need for a change in setting. Please make sure you flag the correct sections of the form if you feel there is a need to explore a different type of provision at the phase transfer point. This is especially important to discuss the year before the phase transfer, for example: years 1,5,10,12. This will give us time to assess the changing needs of the child and help with understanding placement sufficiency needs.

**Section J: Personal budget**

If the child or young person does not have a personal budget, please indicate this in the first box and then move onto the next section of the form.

If they are in receipt of a personal budget, please detail how it is being used to pay for education, health or social care provision in sections F, G or H.

Social care personal budgets should be included in this section of the annual review paperwork to ensure there is no risk of double funding of support. Please detail if a social care personal budget is being received in the second box of Section J.

If a personal budget is requested at the annual review, make sure to capture the reasons why and how it will be used to pay for provision listed in sections F, G or H.

**Attendees:**

Please make sure names and contact details for attendees of the annual review are recorded.

When a professional is unable to attend the review but did provide a report or update on how they support the child or young person, please ensure this is recorded on the form and any reports are attached to the annual review paperwork when it is sent to our SEND Team.

**Annual review meeting notes:**

There is space towards the end of the annual review form to capture a narrative view of the key participants of the review. This should be to record anything that does not fit into the other sections of the form and reflect on the achievements of the child or young person over the last academic year.

Any actions that have arisen from the annual review should also be captured here.

When setting the date of the next annual review, the provision should consider holding it earlier if the child or young person will be going through a phase transfer the following year. This will allow for any important updates to the child or young person’s needs to be considered when the EHCP and annual review paperwork is sent to provisions for consultation.

**Attainment information**

Please ensure the academic progress of the child or young person is captured clearly. If the school uses a specific system or terminology for recording progress, an explanation of any shorthand should also be provided for ease of understanding.