Children with complex needs

Eligibility / Thresholds for Assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan

- Statutory Assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan is intended only for those children and young people with the most severe and complex SEND.
- This is defined locally as a child or young person whose needs cannot be met from the resources normally available through the Local Offer.
- This is likely to include all children who attend a special school. It may also apply to a very small number of children who attend mainstream school and whose needs can be regarded as ‘exceptional’.
- The model of delegation of money to schools has changed to reflect this ‘threshold’ and will become fully operational from September 2014. Under the new model of funding, schools will receive increased amount of money by formula to meet an expected (or predicted) profile of SEN.
- Locally, we promote the use of a local ‘SEN Support Plan’ that has a similar format to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to capture arrangements for children and young people with high needs but who do not meet the threshold for an EHCP.
- It is the intention that this voluntary plan will provide reassurance to parents, as well as helping to ensure that provision is outcome focused.

EHCPs and Early Years

- ‘Very young children’s needs can change so quickly that often, meeting their needs through the support set out in the Local Offer may be more valuable than beginning an EHCP’ (Code of Practice, 5.34).

EHCPs Post 19

- The Children and Families Act 2014 places new duties on LAs to enable a young person with SEND who may need to stay in education after the age of 19 to finish a course, or do some further study to get the right job or living skills, to do so.

Co-ordinated Assessment Process

The assessment to see whether a child may require an Education, Health and Care Plan is sometimes called a 'single assessment' but this can be misleading. It is actually a co-ordinated assessment and brings together all existing relevant information about a child. If further assessments are required, the ‘Keyworker’ from the SEN Team assigned to the family (see below) will arrange for them to happen.

The assessment process takes a maximum of 20 weeks but could be less if no further assessments are required and all the necessary information has been received.

Who can request a co-ordinated assessment?

Requests for an assessment of education, health and care needs can be made by:

- The child’s parents (or somebody on their behalf).
- 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 institution (this should be with the knowledge and agreement of the parent or young person where possible).

Assessment Process
The following is a simplified overview:

Stage 1: Is an Education, Health & Care assessment needed?

• There will be a single point of entry for assessment requests through the Education SEN Team.
• The application can be made by a professional (see ‘Who can request an assessment, above), with parental consent, by completing a request for assessment. The request will normally be Education led.¹
• Support for parents to complete an application can be provided through Islington SEND Community Support Service (www.islington.gov.uk/SENDIASS) or other support groups
• See below for the Education information required by the LA to consider a request, where appropriate.
• All applications will be considered by a Panel to determine whether the threshold for a Co-ordinated Assessment is met.

There are three possible outcomes of an application:

• It does not meet the threshold for a Co-ordinated Assessment (see ‘What happens if the LA decides that an EHC plan is not necessary?’ below).
• There is need for co-ordinated support (from more than one service) but at a ‘targeted level’ rather than a ‘specialist level’ (see SEN Support Plan).
• The application meets the threshold for a Co-ordinated Assessment.

¹ When a child has exceptional need for education, health and social care need that cannot be met from resources / assessments / interventions normally available, they will need an EHCP. Where a child’s health or care needs are considered exceptional, but their education needs can be met from the resources normally available, they would not normally require an EHCP. Children with exceptional education only needs may require an EHCP.