



KPO/THO

2nd December 2024

Dear Parent/Carers,

My name is Mr K Pope and I am the Associate Assistant Headteacher responsibility for Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities for the school. I hold strategic responsibility to ensure Colton Hills Community School is an inclusive environment which supports its pupils regardless of any: learning need; communication need; social needs; mental health need; physical disability; medical condition.

I am writing this lesson to offer an in-sight into one specific element of support for pupils with SEND – an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). You may want to read our school's SEND Policy, and SEND Information Report, but this letter specifically is going to outline the journey towards gaining an EHCP for your child.

What is an EHCP?

An EHCP is a document that is owned by the Local Authority. It is a child-centric plan which obliges professionals from education, health and care to all work towards achieving the same outcomes, via specific provision.

What is provision?

Provision is the name given to any support that is given to your child. This ranges from high quality teaching, specific classroom resources, Teaching Assistant support to evidence-based interventions. All pupils within the school access Ordinarily Available Provision (standard teaching and learning), but some pupils with SEND will access provision that is above and beyond their peers.

How do I get an EHCP?

To request an EHCP, schools or parents can request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) – sometimes known as a Statutory Assessment. Once the request has been submitted, the Local Authority have 6 weeks to respond with a decision on whether they will assess your child or not. The EHCNA is an online form.

How do I submit a parental request?

A parental request is a small WORD document that asks for basic details about your child's needs. Is it better to send a parental referral or a school request? Although parents have a right to make their own request, it is best practice to consult with the school first to ensure the right evidence in place to support the request. After you submit your request, the Local Authority will get in touch with the school to ask for specific evidence. If this evidence is not in place, then the decision will be not to assess. This can be a very frustrating experience for parents.

Does my child need an EHCP?

Not all children with SEND or medical conditions require an EHCP. An EHCP is for pupils who require above and beyond support, compared to peers of their age, and to allow health care and social care professionals to work together.

Does my child get support without an EHCP?

Yes. All pupils with SEND are entitled to specific support, according to their needs. Not having an EHCP does not mean that your child will not get support.



Does the school receive funding for pupils an EHCP?

There are myths in relation to funding. One common thought is that a pupil with an EHCP will get a 1:1 Teaching Assistant due to funding. This is not the case. The Local Authority has a legal obligation to provide the support written into the EHCP and will give the school additional funding in order to achieve this. The funding is broken down below:

Total Funding allocated to pupil

School-budget Funding Top-up Funding

School-budget funding is known as Notional Funding. In short, this means the school has to contribute £6,000 out of their own school budget.

Top-up funding is a small amount of funding the Local Authority provide to make up the cost of the total funding.

Example:

The EHCP demonstrates a pupil needs £9,000 a year to be supported in education through resources, intervention and Teaching Assistant support.

£6,000 from whole-school budget

£3,000 top-up from the Local Authority

Will my child get a full-time 1:1 Teaching Assistant with an EHCP?

Not necessarily. As you can see from the above example, the funding does not cover the salary of a teaching assistant. If the Local Authority writes, in the EHCP, that a 1:1 Teaching Assistant is required throughout the whole-school day, then the Local Authority must fund this. This is rare.

What are best steps to take in order to get an EHCP?

There are clear steps that must be taken to support the Local Authority's decision on whether an EHCP is needed or not. The Local Authority must be under the impression that the school needs more financial support in order to help education, health and/or social care to meet your child's needs through specific provision and support. In order to evidence this, the following needs to be done.

1. A thorough assessment of your child's normal way of working. This will consist of class teacher reports, senior leader observations, trial and error of changes in teaching and learning. Overall, how does the school's normal way of working impact on your child's outcomes.
2. Time and effort in applying group or 1:1 intervention with your child. This can be a reading intervention, a social skill intervention, a therapeutic intervention, etc. The intervention reports will let the Local Authority know just how much support your child needs and how this intervention is vital to your child's progress of learning. Overall, how much does your child need regular and intense support, and what impact does this make?
3. Observation and consultation from health care services, such as Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language therapy, etc. These specialists give more information about your child's needs and help strengthen the decision-making for the Local Authority. Overall, what are specialist's findings of your child's needs.

Once the above has taken place, the Local Authority feel they are in a position to decide if an EHCP is appropriate or not. It is vital these steps are followed, in that order. If these steps aren't taken in sequence, then evidence isn't clear. For example, if an assessment of your child's normal way of working, and intervention, hasn't been completed, a specialist will just suggest for us to do that. This wastes time. Another example: if your child's normal way of working hasn't been



explored, then your child may be placed on an intervention which does not match their needs. This results in a report which does not fully highlight your child's needs.

How long does it take to get an EHCP?

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states the timeline for an EHCP to be finalised (published) is 20 weeks from when the request was submitted – if the decision was made that your child needs an assessment. If the decision was not to assess your child, then the process stops.

It is vital to note that the 20-week timeline is there to give the Local Authority time to read the evidence, organise the evidence, communicate with family and school and write the plan. It is critical all relevant evidence is in place, before the request, to help the Local Authority during this 20 week timeline. This is why it is important that both schools and families work together. If the evidence isn't there, the Local Authority might decide not to assess within weeks.

Please see below the steps needed to be taken before the request for an EHCP. The advice given to class teachers still shows the child is not making progress. Specialists are then Wave 3 Specialist Offer. The child has taken part in interventions to determine their needs. Advice is then given to class teachers. Wave 2 Targeted Offer Child's normal way of working is assessed, and advice given to class teachers. Wave 1 Universal Offer.

Where does this guidance come from?

The law and statutory guidance is very clear, which helps the Local Authority with their decision. Legislation such as the Children and Families Act (2014) and SEND Regulations (2014), as well as statutory guidance, such as the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

What do I do if I want further clarification?

If you want clarification, or guidance, around the law, systems or processes within Colton Hills Community School, then please do not hesitate in contacting me. I am more than happy to support parents/carers.

May I take the opportunity to thank you for reading and supporting the school in helping your child achieve great educational outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

Mr K Pope
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