



**Bristol Parent Carers**  
Shaping the future together

**Parent Carer  
Participation Forum**

Working in partnership with:

**Supportive Parents** the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service in Bristol, and

**KIDS (Bristol)** the Independent Support Service

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

# *PARENT CARER GUIDE – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW*

**Version: March 2016**

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**NOTE:** In this Guide:-

“Child” is used to mean child (0-16) and young person (16-25)

“Setting” is used to mean nursery, school, or college

“SEN Team” is used to cover the SEN Team (0-16) & the Preparing for Adulthood Team (16-25)

The content aims to describe the situation in March 2016. As procedures are changed/modified over time, this Guide will be revised - please always look for the latest Version on Bristol Parent Carers’ website (see back page).



## What Do I Do If My Child is Struggling at Nursery/School/College ?

1. Talk to your child's class teacher, head of year, tutor – the person who has most contact with your child every day AND is responsible for your child's progress.

Ask them how they're viewing your child. How is s/he progressing compared to other similar-aged children?

### Parent-to-parent advice

Although your child sees their LSA/TA every day, remember it is their teacher/tutor/head of year who is responsible for planning to meet their needs.

2. See if the staff have concerns too. Perhaps your child's difficulties are things that all children may experience some time during their education.

If not, persist by asking for information on all types of progress – academic, social, and developmental.

### Examples of your concerns

- ◆ Does your child play alongside other children, rather than with them?
- ◆ Does your child seem to have great difficulty completing their homework and can't tell you what the lesson was about - resulting in lots of detentions?
- ◆ Has your child become really anxious about going to their nursery/school/college?

3. If your child has a serious health and/or care issue, discover how the setting is coping?

Does the setting have an individual health care plan for your child?

### Top Tip

If a Health professional is already working with your child (health visitor, GP, paediatrician, physio, etc), you may raise your initial concerns with them. Ask them to copy in the SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO) at your child's setting with any letters/advice.

4. How is the setting sharing important information about your child amongst other staff – within the setting, and with other agencies?

### Top Tip

Ask for copies of the records the setting is making about your child's progress, and the actions they are taking. You should be told if they are referring your child to another agency.



5. During any discussion, keep a record of agreed actions. Then, next time you meet, you can ask to see progress against these actions.

**Top Tip**

What are they going to do?  
Who will do it?  
When will it be done by?  
When will you meet again to review progress?

6. The setting has to report to you on your child's progress at least once a year in a written report, as well as at parents' evening(s).

7. You may find the setting can address any needs using a wide range of usual interventions available for any child as a matter of course, using internal resources. These interventions will be covered by the standard budget the setting has per pupil per year (up to £4000).

**Top Tip**

All settings in Bristol should be practising Quality First Teaching, which includes differentiation of tasks for pupils to meet their individual needs.

8. The setting should be able to tell you all the things they are doing to help your child, and if these are making a difference.

**Top Tip**

Ask the staff to share these ideas with you, so you can try them at home.

**Parent-to-parent advice**

Be persistent!

If your gut feeling is that something is wrong, don't be put off by the "Everything's fine!" response given by many settings.

Talk to other parents of children at the same setting to see if any others are having similar problems.

Take your concerns higher in the setting (eg. the Nursery Manager, Head, Inclusion Manager)

Contact Supportive Parents for advice: [www.supportiveparents.org.uk](http://www.supportiveparents.org.uk)

9. If these interventions don't enable your child to make progress, your child may have **Special Educational Needs (SEN)** - see next page.



## What are “Special Educational Needs”?

### 1. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child’s ability to learn.

They can affect their:

- ◆ behaviour or ability to socialise, eg. they struggle to make and keep friends
- ◆ academic progress, eg. reading, writing, and maths
- ◆ ability to understand things and follow instructions
- ◆ concentration levels and ability to remember things
- ◆ physical ability to join in all the activities with the other children
- ◆ ability to cope with a busy education environment.

#### ***The law says:***

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

#### ***The SEND Code of Practice says:***

A child must have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, or has a disability which prevents use of what is normally available in mainstream settings.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

### 2. Some difficulties may NOT be SEN

Your child may be responding in usual ways to difficult life events, for example:-

- ◆ They may display changes in behaviour due to bullying, bereavement, etc.
- ◆ They may be recovering from an operation or illness and need additional support for a time.
- ◆ Their first language is not English and they are struggling to learn and make friends
- ◆ They are acting as a carer for an adult or a sibling and may not be making consistent progress
- ◆ They may, for various reasons, show disruptive behaviour only with certain teachers or in certain lessons.

#### **Examples of help available:**

If your child’s difficulties are not SEN – don’t worry they should still get health, pastoral and personal care in the setting, and from outside agencies, for example:-

- ◆ Bereavement support
- ◆ Medical and social support
- ◆ Classroom support to enable learning, achievement, and social and personal development
- ◆ Pastoral and emotional support to enable inclusion



### 3. What might be causing the SEN difficulties

- ◆ Are there medical or physical issues?  
Perhaps there is underlying condition at the root of the problems?

#### Parent-to-parent advice

Go and talk to a member of Health staff (such as your health visitor, GP, school nurse). Different Health services have different ways that children can be referred for help, or for an assessment for a health diagnosis (if you wish). Search here alphabetically by service:

<https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/cchp/explore-cchp?filter=a>

- ◆ Does your child have very complex difficulties which were identified or diagnosed at birth or soon after?

#### Top Tip

Ask the staff working with you (eg. Consultant, Portage worker, community nurse) if they think an EHC Needs Assessment is required at an early age (see Page 10)

### 4. Help you can seek during this time

- ◆ Are you struggling with coping with the practical aspects of life (eg. understanding benefits, applying for Disability Living Allowance or Carer's Allowance, finding grants, dealing with your landlord)?

#### Parent-to-parent advice

Contact an organisation that has parent carer support workers who can help you, eg:-

Carers Support Centre's CarersLine: 0117 965 2200

Cerebra, Bristol Regional Officer: 0117 905 5020

Contact a Family's Free Helpline: 0808 808 3555

- ◆ Do your child's struggles at their setting mean they come home and explode with aggression? Is this having such an effect on your family that you feel you need help from social care services?

#### Top Tip

Call First Response: 0117 903 6444

They can put you in touch with the social care services within the Birth to 25 Service that offer advice, support, signposting, and practical help. Some families may require input from a social worker, but a lot of help is available without this.

- ◆ Are you feeling isolated and want to meet with other parents in similar situations, and find mutual support.

#### Parent-to-parent advice

Find a support group run by other parent carers who have children with similar difficulties.

You should be able to find them on social media or the Findability Bristol website, or contact Bristol Parent Carers

<http://www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk>

- ◆ Do you want to find places to take your child which suit their particular difficulties, and activities they can do?

#### Top Tip

Search on Bristol's Local Offer for local information, help and support for children with SEND: <http://www.findabilitybristol.org.uk/>

5. If the setting determines that your child has Special Educational Needs (SEN), it should offer extra provision different to what all other children get. This is known as **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support** - see next page.



## What is Setting-based SEN Support?

1. Once the setting has told you they are providing SEN Support (something they must tell you), they will start an SEN graduated approach based on the **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** cycle.

2. The setting can use internal resources (their own staff and expertise) and external resources to help your child.

These interventions will be covered by the setting's delegated SEN budget (money they already have in their budget to meet the needs of children with SEN – up to an extra £6000 per pupil per year).

The amount of help the external agencies can provide is detailed in their Core Offer to settings, which vary with each profession. Settings and parents can purchase more support if they wish.

### Examples of external advice available, which the setting will then implement

Educational psychologist (EP)  
 School nurse  
 Learning Improvement Support  
 Behaviour Improvement Support  
 ASD Outreach Team (if your child is diagnosed)  
 Health (eg. speech & language , physio, and occupational therapists)  
 Primary mental health specialist  
 Social care services

3. The setting should be meeting with you at least 3 times a year to:

- ◆ review progress
- ◆ agree outcomes
- ◆ agree next steps
- ◆ draw up a new plan.

### Parent-to-parent advice

It is well worth making some notes about what you want to say at the meeting – any concerns you have, what you think is working well and not so well.

Take someone with you to the meeting. This could be a relative, friend or support worker. Another “pair of ears” is always useful and they can remind you about the things you want to say.

4. This information will be recorded in some way. In Bristol, each setting can use their own paperwork, but guidance is provided to settings by the Council. In Early Years they use a non-statutory EHC Support Plan.

5. You and the setting can agree that there are periods of time when your child should not be at school.

If your child has a part-time timetable agreed with you as part of their Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle - it should be for a short period only and constantly under review.

### Top Tip

Bristol City Council is developing a toolkit of procedures, paperwork for staff at settings - look out for its launch.

Early Years non-statutory EHC Support Plan is here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/resources-professionals/children-special-education-needs-early-years>

### Top Tip

The setting can NOT ask you to take your child home because they cannot cope with them. This would be an illegal exclusion. They also cannot require you to come into school to support your child.



6. The setting will continue assessing your child's needs using a graduated response in order to find what sort of help makes a difference, and to which aspects of their needs. The setting may find:-

- ◆ The support helped, your child has overcome their problem, and they no longer need SEN Support
- ◆ The support is helping and your child will continue to need SEN Support
- ◆ Your child needs more/further support.

7. You can ask the setting at any time to see your child's records.

#### Parent to parent advice

It is common for a child with SEND to show different behaviour at the setting than they do at home. Some problems won't be resolved unless everybody looks at the whole child.

#### Examples of records to ask for

Attendance record

Provision map

Progress against any assess/plan/do/review outcomes

Records of behaviour points over time

Records of learning points over time

Risk assessments used with your child

8. This support should only come to an end if the setting and you are in agreement that your child has reached all their outcomes, and has become an independent learner.

#### Parent-to-parent advice

There may come a time when the setting suggests that since your child is making progress, their level of support could be reduced.

Any changes in levels of support should be agreed with you.

9. These interventions might be sufficient to enable your child to make progress.  
They might be needed long-term to enable your child to continue making progress.

#### Parent to parent advice

Even if the setting has been very helpful and put in place a lot of support, it is okay to point out if your child is not making adequate progress.

10. If your child moves setting, SEN Support should still be provided, although it may be in a different format. The new setting might be able to meet your child's needs in a different way/using their resources differently.

#### Parent-to-parent advice

Meet the SENCO in the proposed new setting. Discuss your child's needs before they transfer there, and discover how they'll meet the needs.

If it feels like the right place for your child, make sure that a proper transition process is put in place between the existing setting and the new one.

Take part in the transition activities with your child.

11. Some children will require support which costs more than the setting has available.  
Then the setting can apply for some **Top Up funding** to contribute to the costs- see next page.



## What is Top Up Funding?

1. Nationally, the government has developed a funding formula for education, and currently allow Councils to make their own decisions on certain elements. In Bristol, Top Up funding works as follows:-

2. A few times a year, your child's setting has the opportunity to apply for Top Up funding. This is extra money to cover additional resources to support the child - known as the "high-needs block"

### Top Tip

Bristol has developed guidance for staff on applying for Top Up: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp>

3. Ask the setting if they have thought of applying for Top Up

### Top Tip

If the setting has been keeping adequate records all along, and has gathered supporting professional evidence, the Top Up application is more likely to be successful.

4. To apply, a setting must demonstrate that they have:-

- ◆ already used SEN Support interventions and your child has not made adequate progress
- ◆ studied the Bristol Universal Descriptors (BUDS) to ensure your child's needs fall into one of the 7 funding bands
- ◆ multi-professional evidence that your child has that level of need
- ◆ used the budgets available to them
- ◆ put extra provision in place and can demonstrate the need for it.

### Top Tip

Top Up funding is a contribution the Council makes to the setting, to help towards the additional cost required to meet your child's SEN.

5. The decision to award Top Up is made by a panel of up to 7 Council Education staff and SENCOs. The decision is determined based on evidence provided by the setting and how it measures up against the BUDS.

6. If Top Up Funding is not awarded, the setting/you CANNOT appeal. However, the setting can try to collect better evidence and apply again.



7. If Top Up Funding is awarded, ask how long it is for – typically this will be for 1, 2, or 3 years.

**Parent-to-parent advice**

Do make sure that the setting reapplies for top-up before it expires!

8. Be reassured that the Top Up funding WILL go with your child to a different setting, if they move.

**Top Tip**

If your child is moving to a new setting, the new setting might not have enough evidence about your child. Then the new setting can make a joint application with the setting your child is leaving.

9. The Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle will continue.

This information will be recorded in some way. In Bristol, each setting can use their own paperwork, but guidance is provided to settings by the Council.

**Top Tip**

Bristol City Council is developing a toolkit of procedures, paperwork and guidance for staff at settings - look out for its launch.

10. These interventions might be sufficient to enable your child to make progress.

And they might be needed long-term to enable your child to continue making progress.

**Parent-to-parent advice**

Once you have understood your child's needs and have managed to get support that helps – it is very common for your child's needs to change/move on!

So making sure they have the right support will be an ongoing task for you.

11. This support should only come to an end if the setting and you are in agreement that your child has achieved all their outcomes, and has become an independent learner.

12. Some children need more help than the setting can provide, or may need a more specialist setting. In these cases an **education, health and care (EHC) needs assessment** might be the next step - see next page.



## What is an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment?

1. EHC needs assessments and plans are processes governed by law. Bristol City Council has the responsibility for these statutory processes and delivers them through their SEN Team. They must follow the legal steps and timetable in the SEND Code of Practice.

### Useful links

View the SEND Code of Practice here  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

2. It is possible to request an EHC needs assessment from the SEN Team in the Council at any time of the year.

Your child's setting can apply on their own behalf.

Or you can apply as the parent/carer(s).

### Parent to parent advice

In reality not all settings will have been recording evidence or putting in support. Or they may not support your application.

Seek free and impartial support from organisations, such as Supportive Parents (0117 989 7725) or KIDS (0117 947 6111). Be aware legal routes may not be necessary and can be expensive.

3. The setting has to have evidence (gathered over about 6 months) showing:

- ◆ the interventions they've tried and what the outcomes were
- ◆ what other professionals are recommending
- ◆ that progress has not been made
- ◆ that the needs are beyond their ability to address.

As parents, you must be asked for your opinions.

### Useful links

Bristol City Council is developing a toolkit of procedures, paperwork for staff at settings - look out for its launch.

Current EHC assessment guidance is here:  
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp>

4. When parent/carers request an EHC needs assessment, you should write a letter explaining why you think that your child requires an EHC Needs Assessment, and you can send in any other evidence that you have which will help the Council make a decision. This could be reports from medical staff, an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, social worker, etc.

### Top Tip

Supportive Parents have developed a template letter that parents can use to request an EHC needs assessment  
 Email: [support@supportiveparents.org.uk](mailto:support@supportiveparents.org.uk)

KIDS use a Council for Disabled Children template which they are happy to adapt for you. Email:  
[IS.SouthWest@kids.org.uk](mailto:IS.SouthWest@kids.org.uk)

5. The Council has 6 weeks for their SEN Panel to make a decision about whether to **carry out the assessment**. The SEN Team will write to the setting and ask for evidence of:

- ◆ the support given
- ◆ timescales of the support
- ◆ outcomes, etc.

And will write to you asking for your views as the parent/carer(s)

### Top Tip

If your child's setting does not provide sufficient evidence, the application WILL be turned down.



6. If your application for an assessment is turned down, the SEN Team will write to you explaining their decision and the reasons for it. If you do not agree with the reasons given, you can:

- ◆ write to the SEN Team asking them to reconsider explaining why the reasons being given are wrong
- ◆ you or your child (16+) can appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal within 2 months of the date on the letter.

**Useful links**

If you want to appeal the decision, you first need to consider Mediation

<http://www.globalmediation.co.uk/our-services/special-educational-needs-and-disability>

If you go on to Tribunal, here is information about the process

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunal/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

7. If the application for an assessment is agreed, the Council has a further 6 weeks to carry out the assessment:

- ◆ A Council Assessment Co-ordinator will write to you, as the parent/carers, asking you to complete a contribution form
- ◆ you can ask for help with the form from Supportive Parents or KIDS
- ◆ The Assessment Co-ordinator will gather evidence from all professionals involved and draw up a draft Plan
- ◆ The Plan and all evidence collected goes to the Council's Panel who undertake the assessment according to criteria laid out in the SEND Code of Practice, and will decide:-
  - Either a Statutory EHC Plan IS required
  - Or a Statutory Plan is NOT required.

**Useful links**

Supportive Parents is the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service in Bristol

[www.supportiveparents.org.uk](http://www.supportiveparents.org.uk)

KIDS (Bristol) are the Independent Support Service <http://www.kids.org.uk/Event/independent-supporters-bristol>

View the EHC plan paperwork here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp>

8. If the SEN Team's decision is NOT to issue a Plan, they will inform you and the setting with the decision, the reasons, and the rights of appeal (see Useful Links at the top of this page).

9. If the SEN Team DOES agree to issue an EHC Plan, the Assessment Co-ordinator has 4 weeks to send you the draft, and invite you to a multi-agency meeting to discuss it and agree any changes to the Plan. The Council should negotiate with parents and professionals about the date of the meeting where possible.

10. After the consensus reached at the multi-agency meeting, the SEN Team issues a Final Draft **EHC Plan** - see next page.

**Parent to parent advice**

Even if you cannot attend, the meeting WILL go ahead.

Ask for help with the meeting from KIDS or Supportive Parents.



## What is an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan?

1. If the assessment process and multi-agency meeting has led to the Council issuing you with a Final Draft Plan, your Assessment Co-ordinator will send it to you. With all evidence attached. You have 15 days to comment on it, and to name the setting you want.

If you think that they have missed out any needs or provisions from the evidence supplied, then ask for changes.

2. The Final Plan must be issued within 20 weeks of the date you asked for an assessment. It will name the setting, or type of setting, your child will attend. It will detail the long-term outcomes for your child until the end of their current Key Stage. If you do not agree with what the Plan says or the setting named, you can appeal (see Page 11).

3. The Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle will continue in the setting.

You should be invited to meet your child's teacher/tutor at least 3 times a year, to agree and review progress with your child's 12 month short-term outcomes.

4. Your child's EHC Plan **must** be reviewed annually at the setting in a meeting with the young person, parent/carers, other professionals involved with your child, and anyone else the parent/young person wishes to invite.

The setting will forward you a "Parental Contribution to Annual Review" form to complete.

The setting will undertake a person-centred approach and capture your child's contribution too.

The setting must share all professionals' reports with you before the meeting.

5. This support should only come to an end if the setting and you are in agreement that your child has reached all their outcomes, and has become an independent learner. Thus the EHC Plan is in place until your child no longer needs it, they are no longer in education/training/apprenticeship, or until their Preparing for Adulthood outcomes have been met (see over).

6. Some children need more help than a mainstream setting can provide.

If your child does not make progress despite everything that the setting has tried, a move to a specialist setting might be required.

### Top Tip

The Plan lists your child's needs, outcomes, and the provision to meet those outcomes from Education, Health and Social Care.

See an example here: <http://www.findabilitybristol.org.uk/pages/education-city-wide-offer/ehcp/Other-documents>

### Top Up

Talk to your Assessment Co-ordinator throughout this process to try to resolve any issues before having to go to appeal.

### Parent-to-parent advice

Meet up regularly with your child's health and social care professionals. Make sure they share their reports and strategies with the setting. Request they attend the Annual Reviews of the Plan.

### Useful links

Bristol's annual review paperwork can be found here <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp>

In Bristol, settings can develop their own form for recording short-term outcomes.

### Top Tip

If you want your child to move to a specialist setting: -

- ◆ Talk to your child's Assessment Co-ordinator in the SEN Team
- ◆ Make your request at an Annual review (or ask for an early review)
- ◆ Get agreement that different provision at a different setting is appropriate
- ◆ If this is agreed, go and look at possible settings.



7. Parents can request a Personal Budget (PB) is drawn up as part of the EHC Plan process - there is a section in the EHC Plan for this. PBs are offered to expand your choice and control over how a service is delivered. Every local authority is introducing PBs gradually between 2015 and 2018. Currently in Bristol PBs are available for short breaks, home to school travel, and continuing health care - the list will expand in due course. Currently only those children who are already in receipt of these 3 services will be assessed to see if they meet the criteria for a PB.

**Useful Links**

Read all about Personal Budgets here <http://www.findabilitybristol.org.uk/pages/care-city-wide-offer/personal-budgets>

8. To obtain an EHC Plan, there must be an education portion to your child’s special needs/disability. If your child only has health and/or social care issues, they are not eligible for an Education, Health and Care Plan. This is because the education portion is the part that Councils have to provide by law - the statutory part.

**Top Tip**

If your child does not have an EHC Plan then:-

- ◆ If the Health needs are high enough, a Health Care Plan is set up and taken forward by the School Health Nurse.
- ◆ If Social Care Services agree some outcomes for your child, a short-term or targeted service will be agreed to meet them. If the needs of your family require the skills of a social worker, this may sometimes lead to a Child-In-Need Support Plan.

9. For young people Post-19, the education element refers to education, training, and apprenticeships. Under Preparing for Adulthood, independent living skills are also an outcome. These education activities should be leading the young person towards more independence (in skills and living) or to employability.

**Useful links**

The Preparing for Adulthood website <http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/>  
 Mencap’s advice <https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-learning-disability/transition-and-further-education/transition>

If the young person is not participating in these types of activity, they will not be eligible for an Education, Health and Care Plan.

10. Your child’s setting should start Transition planning with your child and you from Year 9 onwards. From 18 years of age:-

**Useful links**

Bristol City Council (BCC) has prepared a series of transition information leaflets here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/transitions-information-service>

- ◆ If your child has a social worker from the Birth-25 Service, they will get help from the Preparing for Adulthood Team (formerly Transitions Team).
- ◆ If your child has a social worker from a different team, they may be referred to the Preparing for Adulthood Team if they are eligible.
- ◆ If your child has not had social work support, but you feel they need it now to move to their next level of independence, contact: Care Direct: [adult.care@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:adult.care@bristol.gov.uk) or 0117 922 2700 to see if they’re eligible.

At this link, you will also find the 2 flowcharts that Bristol Parent Carers developed, in partnership with BCC, to help parent carers understand who does what, when in transitions.



## My Child has a Statement/Learning Difficulties Assessment (LDA) - How will it be Converted into an EHC Plan?

1. In Bristol, all children who currently have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or a Learning Difficulties Assessment (139a) are having a Conversion Review (nationally known as a Transfer Review).

2. These conversions are taking place in stages, and will be completed by 2018.

### Top Tip

The Conversion stages are:-

By Sept 2016—All Learning Difficulties Assessments

By Sept 2017—Statements for all those at Key Stage transfer points

By Sept 2018—Statements for everyone else

3. The conversion process in total should take 20 weeks, and involves:-
  - A multi-agency meeting with you and your child
  - Reports from professionals
  - An EHC needs assessment

### Useful links

Bristol City Council is developing a toolkit of procedures, paperwork for staff at settings - look out for its launch. Current conversion guidance and forms are here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp>

4. The setting should:-

- ◆ Call a meeting with you, any other professionals involved, and anyone else you want to be there, providing at least 2 weeks notice. This may coincide with your Annual Review meeting.
- ◆ Gather the latest reports from professionals, to submit as appendices to the Plan
- ◆ Ask you to complete a Parental Contribution Form
- ◆ Distribute the papers/reports to all attendees before the meeting, if possible
- ◆ Pre-populate the Plan with suitable text - ie. still relevant portions cut and pasted from the Statement
- ◆ Write the outcomes collectively at the meeting
- ◆ Submit this first draft to the SEN Team as soon as possible.

### Parent to parent advice

Even if you cannot attend, the meeting WILL go ahead.

Ask for help with the conversion meeting from KIDS or Supportive Parents.

### Parent to parent advice

If the setting does not carry out all these actions, the Plan you end up with will be less than useful. The draft you receive will require you, and any advice agencies helping you, to put in much more work and time to make it a good Plan that adequately describes your child and their needs.



5. As part of the EHC needs assessment, the SEN Team has to:-
- ◆ Gather any further evidence which is needed. They will look at the reports submitted, determine if you and the professionals agree that they are adequate, and if not ask for more current ones.
  - ◆ Undertake an EHC Assessment using this evidence and the draft submitted by the setting
  - ◆ Issue a Final Draft EHC Plan, and send it to you with all evidence attached.

6. You have 15 days to comment on the wording, and to name the setting you want.

You can ask for advice about this draft plan from Supportive Parents and/or KIDS.

If you think that any needs or provisions from the evidence supplied have been missed out, then ask for changes.

**Useful links**

Supportive Parents is the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service in Bristol  
[www.supportiveparents.org.uk](http://www.supportiveparents.org.uk)

KIDS (Bristol) are the Independent Support Service  
<http://www.kids.org.uk/Event/independent-supporters-bristol>

7. A Draft Plan should NOT:-

- ◆ have been developed without input from you or your child
- ◆ look like it's simply a cut and pasted Statement/ Learning Difficulties Assessment
- ◆ omit your child's health and social care needs
- ◆ have poor descriptions of outcomes
- ◆ have insufficient up-to-date evidence from professionals attached.

**Top Tip**

In future, the SEN Team's Senior Assessment Co-ordinators and Educational Psychologists will be giving settings more help through the Conversion process.

8. The SEN Team will ask the setting if they can meet your child's needs, then will issue the Final EHC Plan within 18 weeks of the Conversion Review meeting.

**Top Tip**

It would be unusual for a setting to say it couldn't meet the needs of a child already with them.





**Bristol Parent Carers**  
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**Independent Voice**

For families of children & young people  
with disabilities, special needs &  
life-limiting conditions, 0-25 years

### Participation Forum

Working in partnership with BCC and NHS Bristol  
to design better services for our children

**Run by parent carer volunteers, for parent carers**

Website: [www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk](http://www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk)

Email: [rosie@bristolparentcarers.org.uk](mailto:rosie@bristolparentcarers.org.uk)

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