

A indepth guide to the Education, Health and Care Plan process

Day 1: Ask for a EHC Needs Assessment

The first step in the process is to ask for a needs assessment, you can use this template letter [here](#) from IPSEA and follow the information on what to include in your letter send it to: sen@bristol.gov.uk

Week 6: A decision is made

By week 6 the Local Authority (if you live in Bristol this is Bristol City Council) will tell you whether or not they will carry out an EHC Needs assessment. If you have not been informed of the decision send [this](#) letter from IPSEA to the SEN team on: sen@bristol.gov.uk

Week 6: Panel 1 decide they will not assess

It can be upsetting for families when they find out that the local authority will not carry out an assessment. Our [SEND Support leaflet](#) has lots of helpful information on whom to contact for support during this time. If the panel asked for more evidence you can submit another request including this information. You can also appeal or mediate the decision, for more info see [here](#) and [here](#)

Week 6: Panel 1 decide they will assess

The next step is for the Local authority to speak to the school, the family, the child or young person, an Educational psychologist & the social care team to understand your child's needs and the support they need. There is more information on this on our website [here](#), if you would like advice from specific professionals you should request it now using [this](#) IPSEA letter

Week 12: You should receive all of the reports

Depending on when the local authority requested the advice, you should receive a copy of all the reports by week 12. If the local authority have been unable to obtain the advice by week 12 they will call you to inform you of this and when they will be likely to get the advice so that you are kept up to date. If you do not hear from them contact them on sen@bristol.gov.uk

Week 14: A decision is made

It is good practice to inform families or young people by week 14 as to whether an EHC Plan will be issued. This is not the legal deadline but is the best time to notify the family to ensure the Plan is complete within 20 weeks. If you have not been notified send the Local Authority [this](#) letter from IPSEA, to sen@bristol.gov.uk

Week 14: Panel 2 decide they will not issue an EHCP

It can be upsetting for families when they find out that the local authority will not issue a plan. Our [SEND Support leaflet](#) has lots of helpful information on whom to contact for support during this time. You can appeal or mediate the decision, for more info see [here](#)

Week 14: Panel 2 decide they will issue an EHCP

You will receive a letter which informs you that the Local Authority has decided to issue a Plan. They will soon send you a draft of the plan, you are able to read the draft and comment on it there is information to support you with this [here](#) and [here](#). You should also request a school at this stage, see [here](#) for a list of specialist schools in Bristol and [here](#) to understand the process of parental preference

Week 16: I do not have a decision or Week 20: I do not have a final plan.....What do I do?

Some families tell us that they have not received a decision by week 16, or that they have not received a final plan by week 20. Usually, the Local Authority will have called or written to you to explain the delay. Where this hasn't happened get support from the SEND community, the details can be found [here](#) and use the IPSEA model letters [here](#) or SOS!SEN [letters](#) to contact the local authority