

WHEN TO COMPLETE AN EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)



What is the Early Help Assessment?

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) is how we capture the conversation we have with families to gather information to help us plan with the family, the help that they need.

It helps us work with the family and other people who support the family (their support network), to create a plan of how to meet those needs. This is called the Early Help Plan.

Where multiple or complex needs are identified, multi-agency professionals from services and agencies that can support the family should work together to coordinate the support the family require and record this in the Early Help Plan.

Do all children with SEND need an Early Help Assessment?

No, not all children with SEND need an EHA. The [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015](#) sets out the actions that education providers should take to meet their duties in relation to identifying and supporting children with SEND. The [Ordinarily Available Education Provision document](#) provides practical guidance and information for schools and educational settings who work and support children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), using a Graduated Approach.

When a pupil is identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) the school, college, early years provider or other education provider must take immediate action by:

- Putting effective SEN provision in place and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to support progress and attainment
- Informing and working in partnership with parents/carers, listening to their views and proactively involving them in decision making and planning
- Reviewing SEN provision at least three times a year with all reviews involving the pupil and their family, as well as any external specialists involved

The meetings that take place under SEND procedures such as the SEN Support Plan or an Education, Health and Care Plan do not need to link to an Early Help Plan unless the family is receiving coordinated early help from two or more agencies at 'targeted focussed' level or it becomes evidence that early help is additionally required due to wider family needs.

SEN support and provision should be informed through a four-part cycle known as the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle, which is recorded on the SEN Support Plan.

What if there are emerging Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities or the child is being referred to the Neurodiversity Pathway or waiting for an Education, Health and Care Plan assessment?

Unless wider support needs for the family have been identified or other issues that impact on the wellbeing of the child/ren, it is not always necessary to complete an Early Help Assessment. The SEN Support Plan (or other robust Assess, Plan, Do, Review record) should provide evidence of the approach you have taken to support the child, how and when this has been reviewed and the progress or action required to help the child achieve their potential.

Who should I contact if I am unsure?

If you have identified a child or family who you think would benefit from an Early Help Assessment, then this should be discussed and initiated with the family's agreement. Professionals can seek advice from their manager or safeguarding lead if needed and refer to the relevant policies and procedures including the Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document. If you are still unsure then you may wish to contact the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) on 01724 296500 for advice.