



# Request for Social Care Advice

## Education and Health and Care Plan Procedure

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### Policy Summary:

This document sets out the procedure for requesting social care advice as part of an Education Health and Care needs assessment in order to ensure that high quality information is provided to make an informed decision with regard to an Education Health and Care Plan.

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to support the inclusion of good social care advice when considering an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment and Plan that meets the requirements of the Children and Families Act (2014) and the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

At the core of the Children and Families Act is the coordination and integration of support for children and young people with special educational needs to improve their outcomes. This includes their life outside of school and social inclusion.

This procedure is for social care teams and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) teams, particularly those responsible for EHC needs assessments and planning.

The procedure should be read alongside the Slough Children First Tri.x procedures.

## **Social Care advice for Education, Health and Care Plans**

In order to secure good quality social care advice in EHC need assessments and planning, the following key practices need to be embedded;

### **Clear thresholds for social care intervention:**

- the Threshold document is clear on which children require statutory social care support and intervention, and there is a clear pathway for support for children who do not require statutory social care intervention as part of EHC needs assessments and planning.
- children and young people should receive inclusive support in line with the graduated approach and be able to access universal, and targeted services.
- social care advice should be provided regardless of whether the child is known, has been previously known or not known to social care.

## **Requests for Social Care Advice**

All requests for social care advice for children and young people aged 0-18 should be made to the Slough Children First Front Door. Requests for social care advice for young adults aged 19-25 years should be made to Adult Services within Slough Borough Council.

The SEND service will provide the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) Summary Form to Slough Children First Front Door when requesting Social Care advice. This will enable social care to make a decision based on the needs of the child and young person.

The Front Door will determine if the child is known or has previously been known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help and record this as a Contact.

## **Child / Young Person known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help**

If a child / young person is known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help the Front Door will forward on the EHCNA to the relevant Social Worker or Targeted Early Help worker and request that the social care advice is provided.

The response should be completed by someone who knows the child and family well. This will vary depending on the circumstances of the child, young person and their family.

Where a child is currently known to statutory Social Care, has an allocated Social Worker and either a specialist short breaks plan, Child in Need (CIN) plan, Child Protection (CP) plan or Child in Care, or Care Leaver (Pathway Plan) the response should be completed by the allocated Social Worker based on the relevant information within the child/ young person's short breaks, CiN, Child Protection, Care Plan, Pathway Plan or in the case of Early Help, the Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Child meetings.

If the child / young person has an allocated worker, the Front Door will send on the EHCNA summary of needs and request that the information is provided to the SEND Team.

**The advice should be provided to the SEND Team within 4 weeks.**

## **Child / Young Person previously known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help**

If a child / young person has been previously known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help, the Front Door will provide the social care advice within 4 weeks.

### **Information to be provided**

The Council for Disabled Children provides good practice examples of advice to be provided, however, typically this should include;

**Child / young person's needs**

**Child/ young person's ambitions and aspirations**

**Outcomes**

**What is going well / not well**

**Family history and needs**

**Wider factors such as inclusion, hobbies and interests**

**Any provision already provided**

[Advice for Education, Health and Care Plans](#)

## **Child / Young Person not known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help**

If a child / young person is not known, the Front Door will review the EHCNA summary form and will determine the advice based on the needs of the child / young person.

The Front Door will determine;

- whether the child / young person's needs suggest that they could access universal provision, including access to support and provision that is advertised on the Slough Local Offer.

- where it appears needs are currently being met through universal provision and the Local Offer, this should be detailed in the response form and sent back to the SEND Team, who should then follow up with those universal providers who know the family well to request advice.
- whether the child / young person's needs suggest that an Early Help service may be helpful in co-ordinating the needs of the child / young person. If so the Social Care advice should include reference to the SEND Team contacting the parent / carer to discuss a referral to the Targeted Early Help service and submit a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).
- whether the child / young person's needs suggest that a child may be a child in need as defined by S.17 of the Children Act 1989 due to the child's disability and an assessment of needs should be offered. If so the Social Care advice should include reference to the SEND Team contacting the parent / carer to discuss a referral and submit a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).

It should be noted that the consideration of a referral to Targeted Early Help or Social Care is dependent upon the needs of the child / young person and in itself does not constitute a service offer that could be written into an Education, Health and Care Plan. An outcome letter will be provided by the Front Door, that clearly sets out the advice offered. The outcome letter will be sent to the SEND Team to discuss with the parent / carer.

### **Seeking wider social care advice for children and young people not known to Social Care or Targeted Early Help**

In line with good practice, the SEND Team should seek further social care advice from those who know the child/ young person well, which should start with their family and the child themselves but may also include other involved professionals such as SENCO's, teachers and providers of universal services.

### **Information Sharing and Consent**

Parental consent will be sought by the Social Worker / Targeted Early Help worker prior to sharing the information already held.

When a child is or has been known to statutory social care services, there may be detailed information shared as part of the advice which may not necessarily be included in the plan. Practitioners need to be mindful that information submitted as part of the advice will remain in the appendix of the EHC plan. Judgement will be needed about what is relevant and proportionate to share.

Any concerns relating to safeguarding the child / young person including any concerns about a child / young person being Electively Home Educated will be shared even if consent is not received. In such circumstances the reasons for dispensing with consent should be clearly recorded on the child's file by a Manager.

Parents / Carers should be aware of what information has been shared with any differences in opinion being clearly recorded.

## **Requests for young adults aged 19-25 years**

Young people who do not already have an Education, Health and Care Plan continue to have the right to request an assessment of their SEN at any point prior to their 25th birthday (unless an assessment has been carried out in the previous 6 months).

The social care needs of these young people will be assessed and supported (where eligible) by Slough Borough Council Adult Services under the provisions of the Care Act 2014.

Slough Borough Council Adult Services should make contact with Slough Children First Front Door to discuss whether any previous information held should be shared in accordance with the young person's needs.

The consent of the young person should be sought prior to sharing information by Adult Services.



