



EHCP SUPPORT SERIES

Chapter 6

Reading the Draft EHCP What Should I Check?

A practical guide to checking whether the draft reflects your child or young person's needs, makes provision clear, and connects the evidence to the support described.

The key idea

Read the draft as a connected plan rather than a set of separate boxes. The needs described in Section B should be reflected in outcomes and, most importantly, in clear provision in Section F.



Before You Start Checking

Give yourself a simple structure before reading line by line.

A draft EHC plan can feel dense. A first read can be used to understand the overall picture; a second read can focus on accuracy, omissions and wording.

Key Fact

When a local authority sends a draft EHC plan, the parent or young person must be given at least 15 days to make representations about its contents and to request a particular school or other institution (Department for Education and Department of Health, 2015; Great Britain, 2014, s.38).

A useful three-pass read

- 1 — Does this sound like my child or young person?
- 2 — Are all identified needs and relevant evidence represented?
- 3 — Is the provision clear enough to understand what will actually happen?

In Practice

Keep the draft, professional reports and your own notes beside you. Mark anything that is inaccurate, missing, vague or inconsistent. You do not need to solve every wording issue on the first read.



Start With Accuracy

Does the plan describe the child or young person you know?

Check names, dates and factual details first, then look at the description of strengths, difficulties, views and day-to-day impact. A plan can contain correct diagnoses but still miss how needs affect access to education.

Things to check

- Are important needs described, including needs that are less visible?
- Does the wording explain the impact on learning, participation, communication, regulation or independence?
- Are the child or young person's views and aspirations recognisable?
- Have relevant professional findings been reflected rather than reduced to a vague summary?

Example

Less clear — Ava has sensory difficulties.

Clearer — Ava is highly sensitive to unpredictable noise. In busy classrooms she may be unable to process spoken instructions and can become distressed or need to leave the environment.

Parent/Carer Note

If something important appears in an assessment report but not in the draft, note the report, page or professional and explain what you think is missing. This can make requested amendments easier to follow.



Follow the Thread: B → E → F

Needs, outcomes and provision should make sense together.

Section B describes special educational needs. Section E records the outcomes sought. Section F specifies the special educational provision required. Reading these together can reveal gaps that are easy to miss when each section is read alone.

Study Note

The SEND Code of Practice says provision in Section F should be detailed and specific and should normally be quantified, for example by type, hours and frequency of support, where appropriate (Department for Education and Department of Health, 2015).

Worked example

- B —** Need: Noah has difficulty understanding multi-step spoken instructions and needs additional processing time.
- E —** Outcome: Noah will increasingly follow classroom instructions independently so he can participate in learning.
- F —** Provision: A trained adult will pre-teach key vocabulary and break new multi-step instructions into short written and spoken steps at the start of relevant lessons.

Question to Ask

For each significant need in Section B, can I find provision in Section F that explains how that need will be supported? If not, mark the gap.



Watch for Vague Provision

Could two people read the wording and provide very different support?

Words such as 'access to', 'opportunities for', 'regular', 'as required' or 'where appropriate' may leave important details unclear when they are used without further specification.

Compare the wording

Less clear — Access to adult support when needed.

Clearer — A named or appropriately trained adult will check understanding at the start and end of each maths lesson and provide up to 10 minutes of structured clarification where needed.

Ask:

- What exactly will happen?
- Who will deliver it, or what training/skill is required?
- How often, for how long, and in what context?
- How will anyone know whether it has actually been provided?

Important

Specificity does not mean every support must be written in exactly the same format. The question is whether the plan is sufficiently clear about the provision required for this individual child or young person.



Compare the Draft With the Evidence

Section K and the assessment advice are part of your checking process.

The draft should be read alongside the advice gathered during the EHC needs assessment. Look for recommendations, identified needs or important context that may have been omitted or substantially changed.

A simple evidence check

- 1 — Find the recommendation or identified need in the professional advice.
- 2 — Check where that information appears in the draft plan.
- 3 — Check whether the meaning has changed or important detail has been lost.
- 4 — Record the amendment you want and identify the evidence supporting it.

Example note for your comments

"The Educational Psychologist's advice identifies significant working-memory difficulties and recommends written visual prompts. Please add the working-memory need to Section B and specify the recommended support in Section F."

In Practice

You can use page numbers, report dates and professional names to make your comments easy to trace. Keep a copy of the version you return.



What About Placement?

The draft stage is also when placement preferences can be raised.

When the draft is issued, the parent or young person can make representations about its content and request that a particular school or other institution is named. The local authority must consider the request in accordance with the statutory framework.

Key Fact

The draft plan must be provided with the advice and information gathered during the assessment. Parents or young people must have at least 15 days to comment and may request a meeting with the local authority to discuss the draft (Department for Education and Department of Health, 2015).

Things to think about

- Does the provision described in the draft help you understand what type of setting could meet need?
- Have you recorded your preferred setting, if you have one?
- Are there questions you want to ask about how a proposed setting would deliver Section F?

Remember

Placement and provision are connected, but they are not the same thing. A strong draft should first make the child or young person's needs and required provision clear.



My Draft EHCP Check

Use this page to collect the changes you want to raise.

Section / page

What looks inaccurate, missing or vague?

What does the evidence say?

What change would make this clearer?

Questions I want to ask



References & Further Support

References

Department for Education and Department of Health (2015) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years. London: Department for Education. Available via GOV.UK (accessed 23 September 2026).

Great Britain (2014) Children and Families Act 2014. London: The Stationery Office. See sections 37–42, including section 38 on the draft EHC plan.

Further support

- SENDIASS — free and impartial SEND information, advice and support. Find your local service through your council or Local Offer.
- GOV.UK SEND Code of Practice — statutory guidance covering EHC needs assessments, draft plans and final plans.
- Your local authority's Local Offer — local EHCP processes, contact details and information about education settings.

Important

This guide provides general information about the SEND and EHCP system in England. It is not individual legal advice. If you need support with your circumstances, SENDIASS or a specialist SEND adviser can help you understand your options.