

Educational Psychology Overview Guide

The EP Role: Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Review of Needs

All Education, Health and Care Plans (also called EHCPs), must have a formal annual review every 12 months. The meetings are led by the education setting as they know the child/young person and their family best and they will have the most up to date information about progress and next steps. Sometimes the school will ask an educational psychologist to attend a EHC review meeting to contribute to this discussion. These reviews are important opportunities to capture the progress a child/young person has made towards achieving the outcomes listed in the EHCP and to re-look at how ongoing needs can continue to be met.

As part of this review process, occasionally, the local authority will ask an Educational Psychologist to undertake a formal 'EHC Review of Needs' assessment

What is the Educational Psychologist's role in a formal EHC Needs Review?

The EP's role is to review the child/young person's strengths and needs in the context in which they are living and learning. EPs can work in a number of different ways to do this:

- Consultative approaches which involve conversations with key people (parents/carers, education staff and other professionals)
- Direct assessment work
- Contributing to multi-disciplinary planning through attending/facilitating meetings

The EP will contribute to decisions about what outcomes* will show that the child/young person is progressing and make recommendations about the educational provision and approaches needed for this progress to happen.

What does an Educational Psychology EHC needs assessment look like?

EPs recognise that every child/young person is unique and individual and we adapt our approach to meet the needs of each individual and their educational context. This means that the EP will decide what assessments they will use based on what they feel is going to help them to best understand the child/young person, their needs and their strengths

There are key features to all EP EHC Reviews of Needs assessments, described overleaf.

Key features of an EP's review assessment

- EP assessment will always include conversations with parents/carers to understand their journey to this point, their views about their child's strengths needs and what the hopes are for the future.
- EP assessment will, wherever possible, include listening to the views of the child/young person. They use a range of approaches to achieve this.
- EP assessment will always explore key areas of the child/young person's development, with a greater focus on areas where the child/young person experiences the most need.

Assessment Tools and Approaches

Consultation provides the framework for much, and in some cases, all of the assessment completed. Where some direct work with the child/young person is needed, the EP will use their psychological knowledge to select the most appropriate approach. They will consider:

- The specific concerns identified and what questions need answering.
- The age, interests and needs of the child/young person they are working with.
- The 'least intrusive and most effective' approach to obtaining the information needed.

(Please see our separate guides to consultation and EP assessments for more information).

EP psychological assessments are most successful when the EP has known the child/young person, the family and the teachers over a longer period of time. This allows them to see the child/young person's responses to support and progress over time. Where ongoing involvement is not possible the limitations to our recommendations are made clear. The degree of specificity we are able to offer in our recommendations will likewise will be aligned with our degree of involvement. Any one-off assessment can only ever be a snapshot of the child/young person's needs at that moment in time and should be viewed as contributing to wider information collected over time by others.

