



## Factsheet

# The Children and Families Act 2014

An factsheet for parents/carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

## The Children and Families Act 2014 (in part 3 of the Act)

What the Act does in relation to Children and Young people with SEND? The Act aims to:

- Get Education, Health and Social care services to work together
- Tell children, young people and their parents what they need to know about their disability or Special educational need
- Make sure children, young people and families know what help they can get when a child or young person has an SEND
- Give children and young people and their parents more say about the help they get
- Set up one overall assessment (EHCP) to look at what special help a child or young person needs with their education and their health and social care needs, all at the same time
- Give a child or young person just one plan for meeting their education, health and social care needs which can run from birth to age 25 if councils agree that a young person needs more time to get ready for adulthood
- Make sure children and young people and their parents can choose some help they need
- Provide ways to sort things out if a child or young person or their parent needs to appeal about the help they get

## The Core Principles of the Act

- Consideration must be given to the views of children, young people and their parents/carers
- Children and young people should be encouraged to participate in decision making
- Children and young people should be supported to achieve the best possible outcomes in their education and other areas of their life
- Education, health and social care services must work more closely together when they are deciding on the support available for children and young people with SEN in their area



The Act aims to put parents and young people at the heart of decision making so that they are working with schools and local authorities rather than having things done to them. There is an emphasis on person centred planning.

The Act says **NINE** main things to help children and young people with special educational needs from birth to age 25. For the first time, young people aged 16 - 25 have the right to ask for their needs to be assessed, the right to say which college they want to go to, and the right to make appeals about the support they receive.



**1. Getting education, health care and social care services working together** - the Act says that if health professionals think a child under five is disabled or may have SEN, they must tell their parents.

They must also tell the parents if there is a particular organisation that can give them advice about the disability or special need.

They must then tell the local authority and the local authority can check what help the child may need. Once they have agreed what help there should be, then professionals should work together to make sure it is given to them.

2. **Telling children, young people and their parents what they need to know about their disability or special educational needs** - the council should ensure this is done.
3. **Making sure children, young people and families know what help they can get when they have a disability or special need** - every council in England must write down what help there is in their area. This is called the 'Local Offer'. It should cover issues such as health and social care, education and training, leisure and social opportunities.
4. **Making sure that different organisations work together to help children and young people with SEN** - this covers schools, including academies and specialist provision, nurseries, colleges, youth offending teams, detention centres and parts of the health service.
5. **Giving children, young people and their parents more say about the help they get** - councils should take families wishes and feelings about their education, training, hobbies and activities have to be taken into account too. If families think there is not enough help, the council have to say what they are going to do about that.
6. **Having one overall assessment to look at what special help a child or young person needs with their education, health and social care needs, all at the same time** - young people or parents can ask for an assessment and the council then needs to decide whether help is needed. If a young person is aged over 19, the council must consider whether they need more time to complete their education or prepare for adulthood.
7. **A child or young person to have one meeting for their education, health and social care needs, which can run from birth to age 25** - the plan is called an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) and replaces the Statement of special educational needs or Learning Difficulty Assessment. The plan has to include the views of the young person and parent and must be checked and updated every year.
8. **Making sure children, young people and their parents can choose some of the help they need** - a young person who has an EHCP, or their parents can ask the local council to give them their own 'personal budget'. This means the amount of money the council has to pay for the help they need with their education, health and social care. They can use the money to spend on the help they need or work jointly with the council to decide how it is spent.
9. **Providing ways to help sort things out if a young person or their parent needs to appeal about the help they get** - there should be help and information about the appeal process and a mediator should be offered to help them sort things out.



Further, more detailed information about the Children and Families Act 2014 can be found at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) or [www.gov.uk/dfc](http://www.gov.uk/dfc)

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