

West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service Annual Reviews



What is an Annual Review?

If your child has an Education Health & Care plan (EHC Plan), the Local Authority must review it every 12 months at least to monitor your child's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the plan and to consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate. This process is known as the Annual Review, and for those attending school, this will be organised by your child's headteacher. These meetings are normally held at your child's school, during the day.

If there is concern about a child's progress or if your child is due to change schools, then an annual review may be brought forward.

For children under five years old who have an Education Health & Care plan/ Statement, the review will take place every six months.

Why does my child need an Annual Review?

The purpose of the review meeting is to:

- bring together the views of you, your child and all those involved in helping your child
- review the special arrangements made for your child
- make sure that targets set previously are being achieved and to set new targets for the next year
- recommend possible amendments to the EHC plan/ Statement
- consider whether an EHC plan/ Statement is still required

How Parents are involved

Your views are very important and your involvement in the Annual Review process is crucial. It is your opportunity to share your views about your child's progress over the last year and if the support provided is helping them to make progress. The school will write to you a couple of weeks before the meeting to invite you to attend, and to ask you to forward any comments or information you would like to make about your child's progress. The information you provide will be discussed alongside reports provided by others involved with your child.

How Children are involved

Your child should also be actively involved in the review process, attending all or part of their annual review meeting. Your child should be asked, where practical, how they feel about their progress, their likes and dislikes and school in general. This is generally recorded on a form, which may be sent to you to complete with your child, or may be completed with the help of a staff member at school. You may like to talk to the school about how your child will be involved in the review process.

Who will attend the review meeting?

The following must be invited:

- you – the child's parents or young person. You can really make a difference to the meeting by going along and sharing your views (you can also bring a friend or representative if you wish)
- A representative of the school who knows your child
- A representative from the Local Authority
- A Health Service Representative
- A Local Authority Social Care Representative
- Other relevant individuals should also be invited

It may not be possible for everyone invited to attend the review meeting, but the headteacher will try to make sure that the date fixed for the meeting is convenient for those people who have had most contact with your child.

What happens before the meeting?

The headteacher must ask for written reports from:

- you (the school will give your child a form to fill in)
- your child's teachers
- others invited to the review meeting

The headteacher must then:

- send copies of the written reports to all those invited to the review meeting at least two weeks before it takes place.
- invite further views, including comments from those who are unable to attend the meeting.

What to write in your report

It is helpful if you can include comments on:

- your views on your child's progress over the last year
- what you think is going well and also any concerns
- what you feel are your child's needs in school for the coming year
- what you think you and the school can do to help meet those needs
- any significant changes or events you feel may have affected your child's progress

Remember, you can ask for someone from the West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service to help you complete forms, look at reports and attend the Annual Review meeting with you.

At the Annual Review meeting

What will be discussed?

The Annual Review will focus on what progress your child has made, including their achievements throughout the last year and any difficulties that need to be resolved. This enables everyone involved to evaluate the effectiveness of the support in place and decide if the EHC plan/ Statement is appropriate or if any amendments are necessary.

The review will assess your child's progress against the aims of the EHC plan/ Statement and the targets. It will also consider the effectiveness of any special provision made for your child, including special equipment and resources.

Parents should be fully involved in these discussions. You will have been sent all the other reports that people have written prior to the meeting and you will be given the chance to ask questions and make comments. Take along a list of questions or points to raise if it helps. Feel free to ask any question's you want or ask for anything to be explained again if necessary. You can always take along a friend or supporter if you wish, or someone from West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.

What happens after the meeting

After the meeting, the school prepares a report summarising the results of the review meeting and setting out targets for the coming year. The report is then sent to all those who attended the review, within 2 weeks of the meeting.

Within 4 weeks of the review meeting, The Local Authority must then review your child's education health care plan in the light of the report and make the following decisions:

- To maintain the EHC plan / Statement without any changes
- To make changes to the EHC plan/ Statement
- To cease to maintain the EHC plan/ Statement

The LA must notify all decisions to you, the headteacher and anyone else involved.

If the outcome of the review is that the plan is still appropriate, it may be necessary for some changes to be made to your child's targets and support for the coming year.

If the Local Authority wants to amend your child's EHC plan/ Statement, they will let you know in writing of any changes they are planning to make and the reasons for them. You will then have at least 15 days to consider these changes.

The Local Authority has a period of 8 weeks following the review meeting to either issue the finalised EHC plan or decide not to proceed with the amendments. If you do not agree with the decision, you can discuss this with the Local Authority Officer involved.

In some cases, the Local Authority may decide that the aims of the EHC plan/ Statement have been achieved and they should 'cease to maintain' the plan. This would only happen if a child no longer requires the additional support that the Education Health Care plan provides. In such instances, the school would then continue to support your child through 'SEN Support'.

If you disagree with any changes made to your child's Education Health Care plan/ Statement, you have the right to access the County's Independent Mediation Service and/or the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SEND Tribunal). Further details can be obtained from the West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service on 0330 222 8555.

Special arrangements

Years 5/6 – The Annual Review in Year 5 should consider your child's transfer from primary to secondary school, so there is time for planning and for you to consider the available options. The Year 5 review should be held in the summer term so that the amended education health care plan can be issued by the 15th February of the year of transfer. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) of the secondary school may be invited to attend the Year 5 and Year 6 reviews.

What is a Transition Review?

In Year 9 and above, the Annual Review should address your child's needs on transition and a Transition Plan must be produced in addition to the normal Annual Review report. The Transition Plan must then be updated at each subsequent Annual Review until your child leaves school. The review involves:

The school, to provide information about ongoing school provision to support your child.

You and your family, to give your views on what you would like for your child after he/she leaves school, and to discuss what practical help they may need in developing personal and social skills needed in adult life.

Your child, who will be able to say what they feel his/her needs are and what he/she would like to do after leaving school.

(From year 11) A careers adviser, will be responsible for making sure the transition plan is carried out.

Depending on the circumstances, there may also be:

Social Care Services, so that arrangements can be made for any assessment under the Disabled Persons Act 1986, or if a child is in public care or a 'child in need'.

Health Service, to provide advice on any health services that are likely to be required.

How to contact us

Helpline:

0330 222 8555

By Post:

SEND Information, Advice and Support Service

St James Campus

St James Road

Chichester

West Sussex

PO19 7HA

By e-mail: send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk

You can also visit our web pages at:

<https://westsussex.local-offer.org/services/7>

SEND = Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The role of the WS SEND IAS is to ensure that all parents have access to impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their child's special educational needs. Any information that is shared with the WS SEND IAS is in confidence unless permission has been obtained to share this with other individuals, services and agencies that may be able to help the family with their circumstances.

