

# Somerset Virtual School

## For Children looked After



### What to do for CLA with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or if you think a Somerset CLA might have SEND

#### Context – a general summary.

For full details please refer to the SEND Code of Practice 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

The term Special Educational Needs and Disabilities covers a huge range of additional needs, the vast majority of which are managed very well within mainstream schools. Many children and young people with SEND have a learning need identified by their school and are supported well through minor adjustments, additional help or specific interventions as part of the school's 'Graduated Response'. These children and young people are able to feel safe and happy and to make good progress at school. Somerset schools receive funding directly into their budgets to make provision for these children with SEND.

#### Education Health & Care Plans

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a formal, legally binding document that protects a child or young person with SEND until they are 25. Previously EHCPs were solely education documents and called Statements of Special Educational Needs or simply a 'Statement'. It is not usual for a child to have an EHCP because they have been identified as having SEND. An EHCP is used to support those children and young people with the highest level of complex needs, where specialist intervention is needed to facilitate successful outcomes.

A 'Request for Assessment' is the starting point for a child or young person being given an EHCP. This can be made by a parent, a professional with Parental responsibility or a member of school staff, usually the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). The request requires a body of evidence to support it including the views of professionals and always requires parental consent. Full details of the process and all the documents can be found on the Somerset Choices website:

<https://www.somersetchoices.org.uk/family/information-and-advice/education/education,-health-and-care-plans/>

An EHCP names the school identified as able to support the child or young person effectively. The named school will have been consulted and will have provided evidence to Somerset's SEND team that they are able to make high quality, appropriate provision as set out in the EHCP. An EHCP is maintained by the Local Authority where the child or young person resides and that Local Authority

funds agreed costs to meet the needs set out in the EHCP. All EHCPs are reviewed annually with all parties, including the child, involved in the process.

### **EHCPs and CLA**

The processes around EHCPs/SEND are important for CLA when school moves are being considered. A Somerset CLA with an EHCP, cannot be moved from one school to another without the full involvement of Somerset's SEND team. The SEND team will be able to give a view on whether the proposed new school is suitable and whether any funding implications are acceptable and will be met by Somerset SEND. These discussions usually take place at an emergency Annual Review which should be called if there is any thought of, or need for a school move for a CLA with an EHCP.

Somerset CLA living in other authorities will usually have their EHCPs maintained by that Local Authority. Costs related to specialist provision, however, are still met by Somerset and so reference to Somerset's SEND team is the best starting point. Each Somerset school has a named SEND caseworker and the Virtual School can let you know who that person is.

### **Pupil Premium Funding for CLA and SEND costs**

The SEND of Somerset CLA are considered within every PEP meeting and documented carefully. Where Pupil Premium funding is requested to support learning and increase rates of progress, questions will be asked to check that the school's SEND budget is being used in the first instance and that, where appropriate, applications for HN funding have been made. Pupil Premium funding for CLA should not be used to meet a shortfall in SEND funding but can sometimes be used to bridge the gap between an application for HN funding and it being made available to a school.

### **Actions for Social Workers/Carers**

If you think a Somerset CLA has SEND, you should start by talking to the school. The SENCo will be your best starting point and will usually provide the school's view and explain anything that can be put in place to provide additional support where appropriate. PEP meetings provide a useful opportunity to talk again about any SEND concerns and it would be appropriate when setting up this meeting to request the input of the SENCo if SEND is a particular issue.

The Virtual School will support discussions and signpost to further sources of advice and guidance. It is important that the Virtual School Advisory teacher is made aware of any concerns around SEND and specifically any possible moves for CLA with HN funding or EHCPs.

Revised summer 2018