

My Child has additional needs, what does this mean and what can I do?

Information for Parents and Carers on Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway to support children and young people with additional needs including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



Gloucestershire Care Services **NHS**
NHS Trust

Gloucestershire Hospitals **NHS**
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Gloucestershire
Clinical Commissioning Group

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COUNTY COUNCIL

Additional Needs – what does this mean?

All children can have additional needs at times. These could be to do with their development, learning, communication, behaviour, or emotional wellbeing. Sometimes, additional needs may be called special educational needs or disabilities, (SEND).

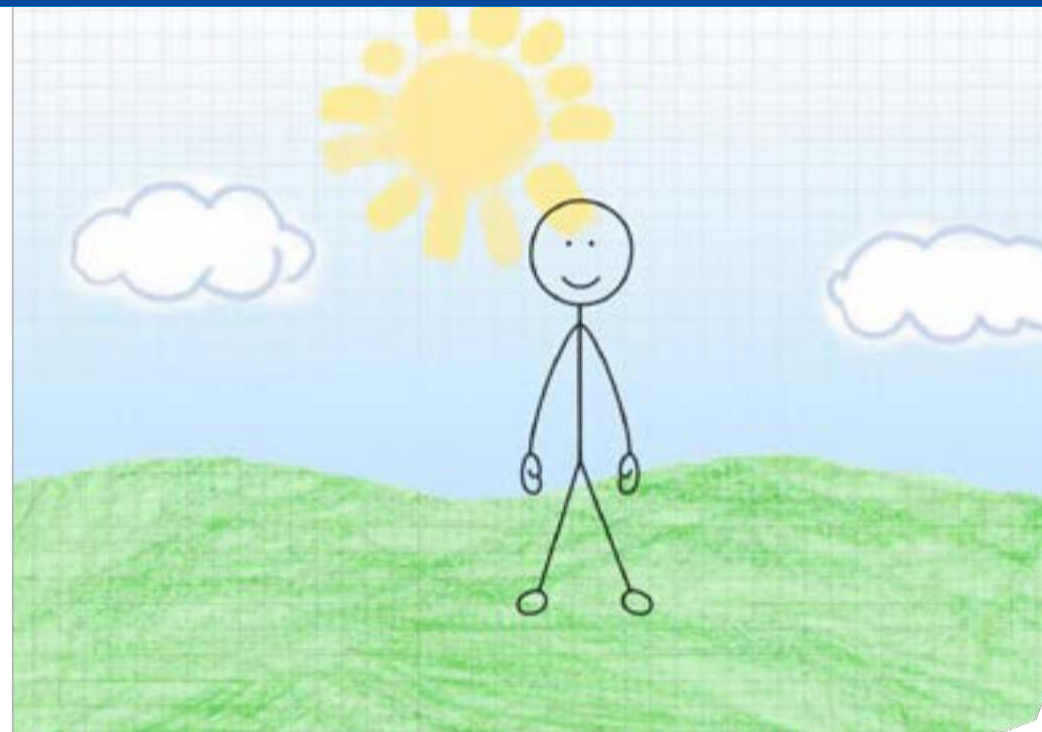
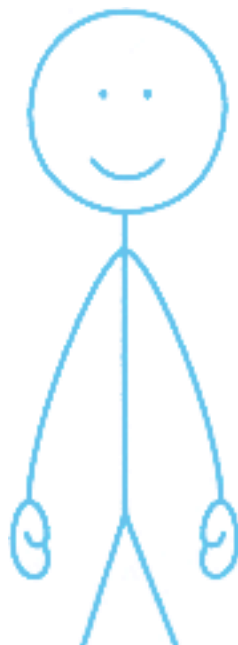
Additional needs can be short term or long term so that some children may need additional help for a short period of time while others may need it for longer.

What may concern parents or carers?

Parent or carers may worry about their child's development in comparison to other children of a similar age.

What may concern people working with children?

People working with children may be concerned about a child's progress with their learning, attendance and participation in their education setting and activities outside of the home, emotional wellbeing, physical health and development, or communication skills.



What can I do if I think my child has additional needs?

Whatever the concerns may be, it is important to discuss them with people working with your child. These could include a Health Visitor, Early Years practitioner, Teacher, Family Support Worker or anyone else involved with your child. It is also important to let people and services working with your child know what your hopes are for your child. Having a good understanding of what your child wants to achieve in the future will help make good decisions today.

How can this leaflet help?

This leaflet provides some information and guidance to parents who may be concerned that their child has additional needs. It will explain what is available in Gloucestershire to support your child and how to get the help that may be needed. We call this Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway – getting the right kind of help at the right time.

What is Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway?

In response to the Children and Families Act 2014, which seeks to improve outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, Gloucestershire has developed an approach that ensures children are at the centre of the support that is given. This is called 'person-centred' planning and it is important because children are individuals with individual preferences, motivations and needs - what helps one child might not necessarily help another.

The Graduated Pathway ensures that there are consistent reviews of progress made so that the type and level of support given will change as the needs of the child change.

In short, the Graduated Pathway includes:

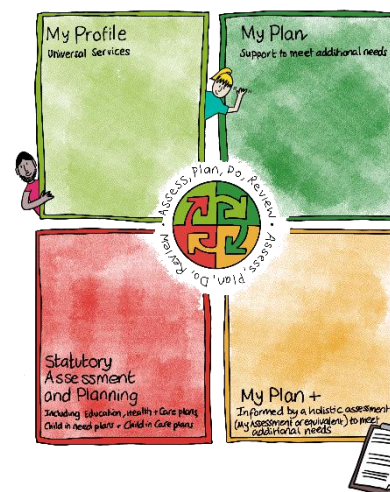


My Profile

My Plan

My Plan+

My EHC Plan



Pages 6 to 11 provide more detail.

Information and advice about the range of services and activities available to support your child can be found on Support for Families with

SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer:

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

What is the Local Offer?

Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer provides information and advice about the range of services available in Gloucestershire and how they may support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Education settings (early years, schools and colleges), health, care and community services have provided information about each of their services so that you and your child know what is available and what you can reasonably expect from them. The Local Offer does not guarantee that a particular service will be available where you live, but should be a useful guide to what you can expect in your area. Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer can be found on

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

The seven steps of Gloucestershire's graduated pathway are:

Step 1: "My Profile"

This is a short profile that all children (aged 0-25 years) can use, or be supported to use, to provide information about them as individuals. This includes:

- What is important to me
- My hopes and goals
- What people like and admire about me
- What helps me
- What doesn't help me

This information can help people working with your child know more about him or her as a person and be used as part of person-centred planning.

Parents, carers and families can also use this information as a guide towards finding the services and activities best suited to their child. Parents and families can look on Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer for information about services and activities to support children and young people with additional needs. The Local Offer gives you information about education, health and care services all in one place.

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk



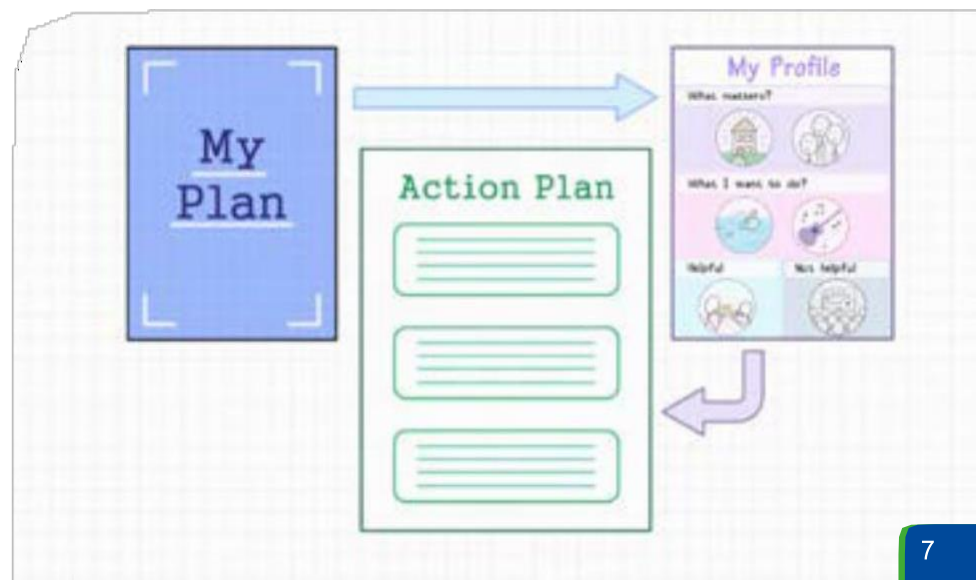
Step 2: My Plan:

If your child is identified with additional needs, someone working with him or her will talk to you about putting a plan of support in place. This would include being clear about your child's needs, the outcomes wanted and the actions needed to achieve those outcomes.

My Plan should use the person-centred information from "My Profile" to make the plan relevant to your child in terms of the outcomes agreed and the ways in which they could be met that would best suit your child as an individual.

Regular reviews of My Plan will show what is working / not working towards the outcomes to be achieved. When outcomes are met, your child may no longer need a My Plan.

If outcomes are not being met or if needs are identified in other areas of your child's life, Step 3 may be needed.





Step 3: My Plan+

If your child's additional needs require assessment and intervention from different agencies such as education, health and social care, My Plan+ may be used. My Plan+ is a multi-agency framework that brings different assessments and interventions into one single assessment and plan. Someone working with your child will co-ordinate and bring this information together.

A meeting of all those involved, sometimes called a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting, will be organised, to which you would be invited to attend. During the meeting, the team around your child will look at the support and help already in place for your child and explore what is available through the Local Offer. The plan will then be agreed.

As with My Plan, My Plan+ will use regular reviews to show what is working / not working towards the outcomes to be achieved. When outcomes are met, your child may no longer need a My Plan+.

Step 4: Request for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

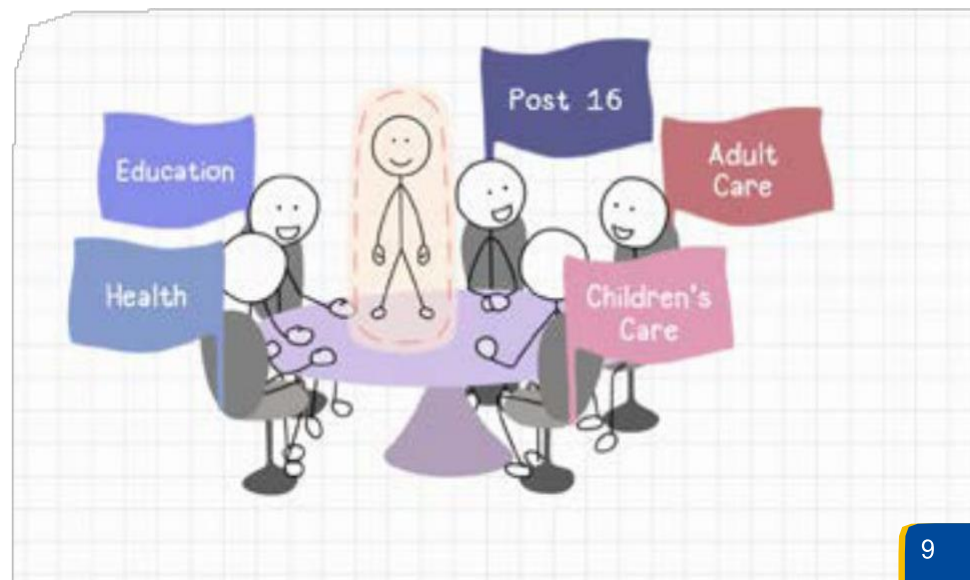
At this stage, you and the team around your child (TAC) may be considering making a request for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). This is because your child's education outcomes are not being met. An EHC Plan is a statutory plan that is only needed when a child's education needs cannot be met within the additional resources already in place.

In most cases, practitioners working with you will make a request on your behalf.

The request is looked at by a multi-agency panel, which is a group of people from across Education, Health and Social Care. The panel will decide if your child is eligible for an EHC assessment which may lead to an EHC Plan and contact you to explain what will happen next.

If the decision is yes, then Step 5 will begin.

If the decision is no, you and the team around your child will be signposted to alternative sources of support.





Step 5: “My Story”

If your child is eligible for an EHC needs assessment which may lead to an EHC Plan, you will be asked for more information about his/her additional needs that are impacting on their education outcomes.

You will be sent a form called “My Story” to complete. “My Story” covers all areas of your child’s life and asks you to think about things that are working and not working so well.

While you are completing “My Story”, the practitioners working with your child will be asked to provide information about your child’s needs and what has already been put in place to support your child’s outcomes.

All of this information is brought together by a named Casework Officer in the Council’s SEND Team and the multi-agency panel will decide if an EHC Plan is needed.

If the decision is to issue an EHC Plan, Step 6 will begin.

If the decision is not to issue an EHC Plan, you and the team around the child will be signposted to alternative sources of support.

Step 6: “My EHC Plan”

An EHC planning meeting will be held to discuss the content of the draft EHC Plan. You and your child will be invited to attend so that you can contribute to the wording of the Plan. The EHC Plan will set out what will be needed to ensure your child achieves his/her goals.

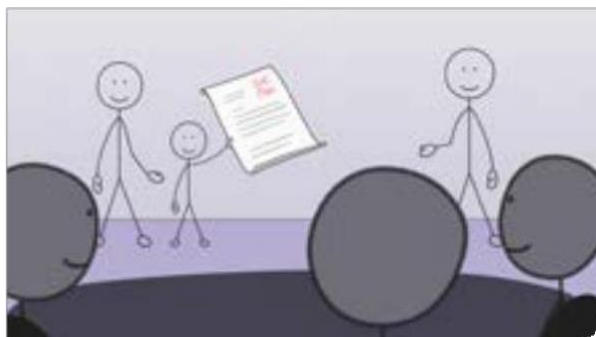
At this stage as a family you can discuss how you would like some of the resources available to be used. Options to consider could range from contributing ideas about how best to use some of the resources to the option of taking a proportion of the resources as a direct payment. Direct payments would enable you to purchase a service independently on behalf of your child as long as it would achieve one or more of the outcomes identified in the Plan.

You will receive a written version of the Plan after the meeting and have 15 days to get back to the SEND Team with anything you would like to change.

The EHC Plan will then be finalised, the resources agreed and you and the team around your child will be ready to put the Plan into action.



Step 7: My Review



At least once per year, the family and practitioners involved with your child will be asked to review the EHC Plan. Regular reviews will also show what is working / not working towards the outcomes to be achieved. When the education outcomes are met, your child may no longer need an EHC Plan and needs that remain in other areas of his/her life can continue to be supported in a My Plan or My Plan+.

What can I do if I disagree with decisions made by the local authority?

You can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) if you disagree with the local authority's decision not to:

- assess your child's educational, health and care (EHC) needs (stage 4 above)
- create an EHC plan (stage 5 above)
- change what's in your child's EHC plan (stage 6 above)

More information on your right to appeal and mediation that is offered as a first step can be found on Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer website:

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk or from the services listed on page 13.

Other sources of help and advice:

For more information on Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway, SEN Support and EHC Plans, please visit Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer website on www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

SENDIASS Gloucestershire provides information, advice and support on matters relating to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The service is offered to parents and carers of children and young people aged between 0 and 25 years old. The service is also offered to young people between the ages of 16 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities.

SENDIASS provides free, confidential, impartial advice and helps parent carers play an active and informed role in their child's education. SENDIASS also supports young people to participate in meetings and annual reviews and to ensure their voice is heard.

SENDIASS has a freephone telephone helpline **0800 158 3603** which is available all year round. An answer phone is available to leave a message for a callback. Callers who are using a mobile phone can dial **01452 427566/7** as an alternative. The service can be contacted by email: sendiass@gloucestershire.gov.uk or via the 'Contact Us' page on our website: www.sendiassglos.org.uk

The service also has a Facebook page (SENDIASS Gloucestershire) where relevant information and events are shared, as well as a Twitter Feed (@sendiassglos). The Post 16 Advisers also have a separate Post 16 Twitter Feed (@p16sendiassglos).

The service operates a 'self-referral' process. However, on occasions it may be considered appropriate for a professional to make contact with the service on behalf of the parents/carers or young person. The service will act upon such requests only on the full understanding that consent has been given.

Gloucestershire Parent Carer Forum is an independent Community Interest Company run by Parent Carers for Parent Carers. We have a strategic partnership with the Local Authority and Health Authority with a [Memorandum of Understanding](#). We provide a voice for those with lived experience of being a Parent Carer (This means parents and/or carers of children with any disability, condition, impairment or additional need).

Join other Parent Carers for regular meet ups (online and in person), a friendly Facebook support group, free training, and opportunities to share your experiences to influence decision makers. There are lots of opportunities to meet with other Parent Carers across the county and you are welcome to any of those. Details can be found [here](#) .

Telephone 07494 704564

E-mail info@glosparentcarerforum.org.uk

Website www.glosparentcarerforum.org.uk

[Facebook page](#)

Family Information Service - offer free impartial advice, information and support for families with children aged 0-19 years (up to 25 years for children with additional needs).

Email: familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk

The Key - Disabled children's and young people's register and information service.

Email: thekey@gloucestershire.gov.uk

What can I do if I am not happy with the support provided for my child?

Occasionally, disagreements and misunderstandings happen. Families and practitioners need to talk and work together to solve any problems.

However, if after discussion you have a complaint or are unhappy with your child's support, there are a number of things you can do:

- Check the information provided by the service in question on Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk to see if it is in line with your child's experience;
- Talk to the manager of the service, Head Teacher or Principal of their education setting;
- Ask for a copy of the service's special education needs and/or disability policy as this will explain how the service will handle your complaint;
- Contact the Gloucestershire Parent Partnership Service for information and impartial advice



Glossary

Additional needs: is when something is limiting a person's development. For children, additional needs could be in areas of physical development, learning, communication, wellbeing and behaviour.

Education, Health and Care Plan or EHC Plan: is a statutory plan for a few children whose education needs cannot be met within the existing additional resources. A statutory plan is one that must be provided if a child is eligible for it.

Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway: is a pathway of support that helps children with additional needs. The level and type of help needed is in proportion to the level and type of additional needs. It starts with support that can be put in place by parents and families using the Local Offer.

Support for Families with SEND, Gloucestershire's Local Offer: is a website that provides information, advice and guidance on a range of services available to children with additional needs, special educational needs and disabilities.

Outcomes: are actual differences that are made as a result of support given. Some outcomes are universal as a result of services that are in place for everyone. For example, every child receives an education that prepares them for adult life. However, when outcomes are agreed for a child with additional needs, they should be individual to that child.

For example, *'Jenny' can sit independently for 10 minutes and complete a task by herself, or,*

'Jake' is using simple sentences that are helping him to be understood better by his teachers and friends in class and by his family at home.

