

RIASS

Redbridge Information, Advice & Support Service
for Special Educational Needs & Disability



What is a Needs Assessment?

The Needs Assessment completes a review of identified support needs and who would be best to support these needs. The Needs Assessment will ask for specialised assessments to be completed by professionals such as EP, Schools, Specialised Outreach teachers, SALT and OT - professionals that the education setting, and parents, feel need to be involved.

Once the Needs Assessment is completed then a copy of all the assessments is gathered and presented to a panel who then can conclude if there is a need for an EHC Plan to be in place to meet needs.

A request for a Needs Assessment is when the child or young person is still behind their peers once the current education setting has implemented all the suggestions from the professionals and exhausted its best endeavours in terms of SEN support.

There is a legal test under the Code of Practice that is implemented when considering if a Needs Assessment is required:

The local authority must secure an EHC needs assessment for the child or young person if, after having regard to any views expressed and evidence submitted under subsection (7), the authority is of the opinion that —
(a) the child or young person has or may have special educational needs, and
(b) it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHC plan.

Key argument points

- Is there more professional report/assessment that are needed that have not been captured?
- Is the current setting unable to meet needs following on from the current reports/implementations?
- Is the provisions that the school have in place sustainable?
- Is there more support needed then the school can provide?
- The assessments completed and used as evidence for the Needs Assessment request is focused on current needs. The Needs Assessment will look at longer term support needs

Legal argument points:

1. a full assessment is the only way to find out what the difficulties are and what help is needed.
2. the school/institution may not be able to supply all the educational help needed unless it receives extra help from the LA;
3. the school/institution has provided all the help that could be expected but the child or young person has not made enough progress.

The argument is not about having an EHCP but the needs for the assessment to identify the support needs and who is best to deliver these. This can only be done through a Needs Assessment.

Things to be aware of	Questions	Arguments
a full assessment is the only way to find out what the difficulties are and what help is needed	What are the current support needs?	
the school/institution may not be able to supply all the educational help needed unless it receives extra help from the LA;	What is the currently nursery is providing? Is there further support the nursery can give?	
Services involved	Detailed reports on needs.	
Level of education and support needs	How far behind peers? Is the gap increasing?	
Issues with the school	Any other concerns?	
Health needs	Identified health needs	
Social Care concerns support needs		