EHCP AND ASSESSMENTS | ENGLAND

EHCP Vague Wording Checklist

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A practical checklist for spotting wording in an EHC plan that may need a clearer explanation, with space to record questions about provision, outcomes and consistency between sections.

This does not decide whether wording is lawful. It is a reading aid to help you prepare comments on a draft, or questions for a review.

Who this is for

Parents, carers and young people in England who are reading a draft or final EHC plan and want help noticing unclear phrases.

What is inside

- Common phrases that often need a closer look
- A checklist you can tick as you read
- Space to write the questions you will raise

Please read this first

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. It does not guarantee an assessment, plan, adjustment, payment or any other outcome. Check current official guidance (for example GOV.UK) and get individual advice from SENDIASS, IPSEA or a suitably qualified adviser when you need it.

How to use this checklist

Read the plan with a highlighter or a notebook. When you find a phrase that you could not explain to a new teacher, mark it and write a question. Focus especially on Section F (provision) and Section E (outcomes), and on whether they match the needs in Section B.

EHCP processes described here apply in England, under the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015). Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have different systems. Always check the current official position and any deadline on letters you receive.

Phrases that often need a closer look

These phrases are not automatically “wrong”, but they can be hard to check unless they are explained:

- “Access to”, “opportunities for”, “input from”, or “support as required”
- “Regular”, “as appropriate”, “as necessary”, or “when needed”, with no further detail
- A type of therapy or support with no frequency, length, or group size
- “A differentiated curriculum” or “quality first teaching” without saying what will actually be different
- Outcomes that only say “to make progress” or “to reach potential”

As I read the plan

- [ ] I can see who is meant to deliver each main piece of special educational provision
- [ ] I can see how often, and for how long, it should happen
- [ ] I can see whether it is 1:1, a small group, or whole class
- [ ] Health or social care provision is not being used as a substitute for missing education provision, or vice versa, without a clear explanation
- [ ] Outcomes are specific enough that we would know if they had been met
- [ ] The needs in Section B are reflected in the provision in Section F
- [ ] The reports listed in Section K appear to have been considered

Wording I want to question, with the section or page number

The questions I will ask, in my own words

Useful next steps and sources

Use what helped in this pack and leave the rest. You can come back to it when you need to. Live tools on mysendfriend.co.uk remain free, including Help Me Now, the SEND Letter Builder, the Reasonable Adjustments Builder, the DLA and PIP Claim Planners, and the free resources hub. Saving work to My SEND Plan is optional.

Where to check official or independent information

Guidance and benefit rules can change. Check the current official position, and get individual advice when you need it.

- GOV.UK: Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- GOV.UK: SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)
- Children and Families Act 2014, and the SEND Regulations 2014
- Your local SENDIASS service (free and impartial)
- IPSEA, for legally based information about SEND law in England

A reminder about this free pack

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. Using it does not start a statutory process or guarantee a particular outcome. Adapt every page to your situation.

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