

September 2014

Dear Head teacher / SENCO,

***Conversion of Statements of Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulty Assessments to Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans.***

**Introduction:**

I am writing to inform you about the work done to date by Lambeth SEN in preparing for the conversion of statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans), and to let our schools know what we expect from them to support this process.

In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 Lambeth LA is required to transfer Statements of SEN over to EHC Plans by no later than April 2018 and, where appropriate, transfer Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) to EHC Plans no later than September 2016.

In order to achieve this it is proposed that conversions will happen as part of an 'extended annual review' process. This conversion meeting will take the place of the Annual Review meeting scheduled for that year. The process and extended meeting will follow a person centred approach, in line with the underpinning principles of the reform. Parents/carers, children and young people will be at the heart of the process with their involvement being central to the development of each new EHC Plan.

The SEN team will provide direct support through attendance at a number of the first transition review meetings in each school/setting. The SEN Officer will agree this with each setting and the team will then provide support as usual where there are particular concerns / complexities.

Guidance on how to convert a Statement to an EHC Plan will be provided for all settings. Statement/EHC Monitoring Officers and the Lead Educational Psychologist for SEN will endeavour to attend as many conversion meetings as possible.

**Until the transfer review is completed the local authority will remain under a duty to maintain the statement and arrange the special educational provision set out in the statement.**

## **Conversion Process for Children and Young People with Statements of SEN**

### Pre- conversion review meeting

To conduct a transfer review the local authority must undertake an EHC needs assessment. In many cases much of the assessment information contained within the statement will be recent and relevant, and the school will be able to complete the transfer review promptly.

- School / setting identify pupils from Lambeth SEN's priority year group list and sets date for review meeting.
- The school provide the SEN team, parents, young people and all involved professionals with 6 weeks' notice of meeting date.
- The school will send a standard letter to parents / carers / young people explaining the process. *SEN will be shortly issuing standardised templates and guidance for schools use.*
- The school/setting issues invites for the transfer review meeting.
- Schools ensure up to date information from professionals currently working with the child/young person is submitted for circulation 2 weeks prior to the date of the transfer review meeting.
- The schools / setting using the EHC assessment paperwork will gather parental and child / young person's contributions. Schools should begin to develop the 'All About Me' Section A through meetings with the child, young person and their family.
- Once the professionals reports have been received by the school, copies will be sent to the parents / carers / young person (16+) a week in advance of the meeting, along with a draft EHC plan.

### Conversion review meeting

#### Week 1

- Outcomes are developed for inclusion in EHC Plan along with provision identified to support the child/young person to achieve outcomes.
- The school will chair this meeting; ensuring relevant professionals are invited and subsequently complete the transfer review documentation – using the EHC plan template and conversion guidance provided.
- Parents (and child/young person where possible) must be at the review unless they are represented by another person.
- The format of the meeting will be to review the draft EHC plan, taking particular account of progress / challenges over the last year and then setting new targets for the coming year.

- Following the meeting the paperwork will be returned to the SEN team, by secure email.

#### Week 2 - 3

- Within two weeks of the transfer review meeting the school MUST send the completed transfer review documentation to the Local Authority (SEN Team).

#### Week 3 - 9

- On receiving the transfer review documentation the Local Authority will decide whether the information is sufficient, or supplementary information is required for the purposes of the EHC needs assessment. SEN will then gather any further information if needed.
- Any final collation of information will be completed.

#### Week 10

- No later than 10 weeks after the transfer meeting the local authority must decide whether it is going to issue an EHC Plan.
- Proposed EHC Plan issued for parental/ young person (16+) agreement.

#### When it will happen?

Lambeth LA is required to transfer Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) over to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) by no later than April 2018 and where appropriate transfer Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) to EHC Plans no later than September 2016.

The DfE guidance sets out that all school leavers must be transferred as a priority from September 2014. Lambeth's initial plan recognises the DfE has identified additional priority year groups for transfer:

#### **A Phased Approach**

##### **PHASE 1      1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015:**

- All Learning Disability Assessments (LDAs post 16) to be converted for young people continuing in further education or training.
- All children/young people in Year 11 (not just those continuing in further education)
- Children in nursery/pre-school due to start Reception in September 2015
- All Year 2, 5 and 9

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children/young people leaving custody</li> <li>• Children/young people moving from one local authority to another</li> <li>• Children/young people transferring from a mainstream to a special school</li> </ul> |
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**PHASE 2      1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016:**

- All Learning Disability Assessments (LDAs post 16) to be converted for young people continuing in further education or training.
- All children/young people in Year 11 (not just those continuing in further education)
- Children in nursery/pre-school due to start Reception in September 2015
- All Year 2, 5, 7 and 9 children
- Children/young people transferring from a mainstream to a special school

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children/young people leaving custody</li><li>• Children/young people moving from one local authority to another</li><li>• Children/young people transferring from a mainstream to a special school</li></ul> |
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**PHASE 3      1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017**

- Children in nursery/pre-school due to start Reception in September 2016
- All Year2, 5 and 9 children

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children/young people leaving custody</li><li>• Children/young people moving from one local authority to another</li><li>• Children/young people transferring from a mainstream to a special school</li></ul> |
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**PHASE 4      1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

- Phase 4 becomes a period of time in which to convert all outstanding Statements of SEN.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children/young people leaving custody</li><li>• Children/young people moving from one local authority to another</li><li>• Children/young people transferring from a mainstream to a special school</li></ul> |
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**Proposed Timetable:**

|                    | Phase 1          | Phase 2          | Phase 3          | Phase 4*         | Notes           |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
|                    | Sept 14 – Aug 15 | Sept 15 – Aug 16 | Sept 16 – Aug 17 | Sept 17 – Apr 18 | No. of children |
| Nursery/Pre-School | Conversion       | EHC              | EHC              | EHC              | 24              |
| Reception          | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              | EHC              | 39              |
| Year 1             | Statement        | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              | 71              |
| Year 2             | Conversion       | Conversion       | Conversion       | EHC              | 96              |
| Year 3             | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              | EHC              | 106             |
| Year 4             | Statement        | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              | 104             |
| Year 5             | Conversion       | Conversion       | Conversion       | EHC              | 123             |
| Year 6             | Statement*       | EHC              | EHC              | EHC              | 132             |
| Year 7             | Statement        | Conversion       | EHC              | EHC              | 126             |
| Year 8             | Statement        | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              | 141             |
| Year 9             | Conversion       | Conversion       | Conversion       | EHC              | 121             |
| Year 10            | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              | EHC              | 133             |
| Year 11            | Conversion       | Conversion       | EHC              | EHC              | 138             |
| Year 12            | Statement        | EHC              | EHC              |                  | 124             |
| Year 13            | Conversion       | Conversion       | EHC              |                  | 67              |
| Year 14            | Conversion       | EHC              | EHC              |                  | 36              |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>605</b>       | <b>705</b>       | <b>271</b>       |                  | <b>1581</b>     |

**Year 6\***

Because these children are already a priority for the authority, almost all of the 132 pupils who will be secondary transferring in 2015 were subject to an annual review during the summer 2014 and the process to amend their SEN is already underway in order to provide them with confirmed school placements by February 2015. Their Statements will now be transferred at annual reviews during the autumn of Year 7 and plans issued before the end of July 2016.

**Next Steps**

All Lambeth schools will be written to with a list of children that are expected to be transferred from a statement of SEN to an EHC plan at the point of annual review during the academic year 2014/15.

All parents who have children with statements of SEN will be written to no later than the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

All young people aged 18-23 years in further education with a LDA will be written to no later than 24 October and invited to request a transfer to an EHC plan on the basis that they meet the Lambeth threshold.

The plan for transferring Statements of SEN and LDAs to EHC Plans will be reviewed annually with a revised plan published each September until 2017. Progress of this plan will be reviewed in consultation with parents, children, young people, professionals and schools.

Lambeth SEN team will be shortly issuing conversion guidance, and letter templates for schools to follow and use. We will also be developing guidance for schools on running EHC Plan reviews going forward. **It is important that schools adhere to the schedule for conversion as set out in this document so that Lambeth SEN can ensure that all conversions are made in a line with statutory guidance.**

In the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss the new conversion review process in more detail. Or please speak to your named monitoring officer for your school.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Donkor  
Head of Special Education Needs Service  
Education, Learning & Skills  
Delivery Cluster  
Email: [mdonkor@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:mdonkor@lambeth.gov.uk)  
Council Web: [www.lambeth.gov.uk](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk)  
London Borough of Lambeth  
phone: 020 7926 9450  
fax: 020 7926 9453  
Olive Morris House  
18 Brixton Hill  
London SW2 1RD