



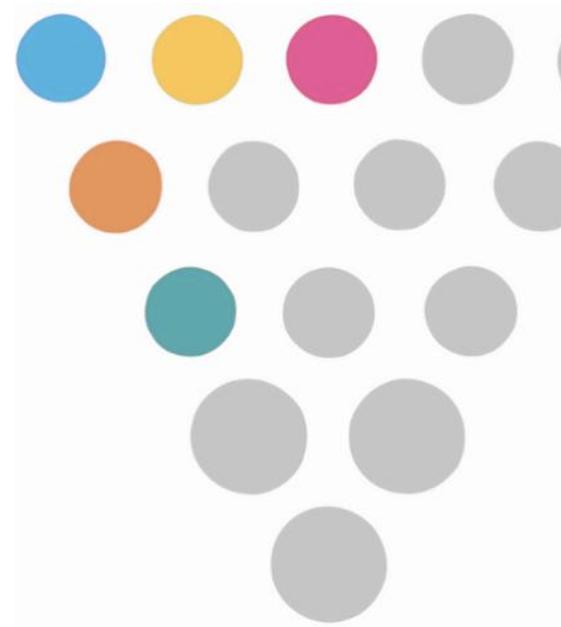
Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan reviews

Guidance for conducting Education, Health and
Care Plan review meetings with virtual
attendees

(August 2020) Version 2

Children's Health and Wellbeing

SEND



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Please note:

The first version of this document was produced to support schools and settings in the summer of 2020 when the review of EHC plans, in nearly all instances, became completely virtual.

Virtual review meetings were very successful. Some families reported that they preferred them. It was also possible for some professionals to attend more meetings than usual because they were not spending time travelling.

This second version of the document provides some key points to inform flexible practice when some attendees at a review meeting are not present in person.

Introduction

This guidance has been prepared to support staff in schools and settings to organise and lead an education, health and care (EHC) plan review meeting, particularly when one or more attendee is not present in person.

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 2015, Chapter 9, is the essential reading about annual reviews for all schools and settings. The document you are reading is only supplementary.

It is recognised that for many EHC plan review meetings the preference is for face-to-face meetings however there may be attendees who for a range of reasons do not attend in person but are able to take a full part through virtual means.

This guidance includes:

- Key points about review meetings
- Planning before a meeting
- Ideas for during a meeting
- What to do after a meeting

Key points about review meetings

The meeting whether completely virtual, one with mixed virtual and in person attendance, or fully face to face all have the same function and status.

As well as the meetings having the same status it is important in every meeting that all contributors, whether virtual or present in person, are able to contribute in full.

School and setting SENCOs have to establish what is likely to work best to support the engagement of children and young people and their family, and involved agencies including the local authority. For example, some families have reported that they feel more comfortable contributing to meetings using webcam technology or via a telephone call.

The “SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25” Chapter 9; Section 9.166-9.185 is the legal guide to conducting the meeting. **Please refer to this vital information.**

SENCOs must refer to their school’s own policies on communicating with parents and external agencies before including people virtually in a review meeting.

Considerations when preparing meetings

- When engaging with participants about the date of a review meeting and to seek their views in advance also check their availability to attend in person and virtually.

- Establish whether there are any individual needs of participants which need to be accommodated to support full participation. For example, someone attending a meeting in person may have a hearing loss and adjustments may be required to enable them to engage with another attendee who is joining the meeting virtually.
- Ensure that, whatever form the meeting takes, the voice of the child or young person is represented. This could include any resources which may be needed to support the child or young person in their understanding and in expressing their views such as symbols, for example those available from PCS (Picture Communication Symbols), Communicate in Print or Twinkl. Other suggestions for gaining the views of the child or young person are:
 - completing a questionnaire before the meeting
 - updating their one-page profile
 - creating a talking mat about their likes and dislikes, worries, successes and aspirations using words or symbols
 - making a video or PowerPoint to share their views (as long as this can be shared during the meeting)
 - showing everyone involved something which is important to them, which can be done by photographs or drawings
 - attending the meeting and sharing their views
 - parents or carers can share their perspective of the views of the child and young person on their behalf if they are unable or unwilling to communicate their views
- Invite attendees; setting the date and time. Invites should request attendees to reply to how they intend to attend the meeting (in person or virtually). Request professional advice, parental views and child or young person's views, such as an All About Me, prior to meeting. It may also be useful to schedule an approximate end time for the meeting
- All paperwork is found here: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/special-educational-needs-file/send-forms-and-guidance/>
- Disseminate Education, Health and Care plan paperwork securely prior to the meeting.

During the meeting

Whatever way people attend a review meeting a clear introduction is important. Things to include are:

- names and roles
- reasons for involvement
- a positive welcome to the meeting
- who is attending face-to-face and who is attending virtually

- noting apologies and making it clear whether people who have apologised for not being at the meeting have provided their views in advance
- the importance of confidentiality, for all attendees, meetings are not recorded
- what will happen to any information as a result of your work together
- what information you will recording and any additional documents you will refer to in the meeting
- what will happen following the meeting e.g. circulation of the notes of the meeting to everyone invited.

It is very beneficial to think through a meeting in advance, this supports the meeting being effective. These are a few points you may wish to think through:

- Take clear notes including attendees and date of meeting Use the EHC plan during the meeting.
- The space used for review meetings should be confidential and welcoming. It may be helpful to check any room reservation system before the meeting is due to start. If anyone is joining the meeting remotely check that equipment is working correctly, and volumes are set at the right level
- If a child or young person's views are represented by other people, make a note of how they were ascertained e.g. reported by parent
- If you are interrupted, pause the meeting until the interruption is over. Do not continue with a conversation if an attendee is absent
- Be aware that sometimes individuals attending the meeting may be anxious. Have a plan for how you might offer support.
- Try to record the conversations in detail so that if there is a query when the record of the meeting is circulated you can identify how any misunderstanding or ambiguity might have occurred. Stop conversations and clarify your notes regularly to ensure clear understanding
- If anyone is attending virtually visual cues can be missed. It is important to take the meeting a little more slowly than if everyone is present in person, re-iterate past points, check back and clarify.

After the meeting

When the review documents are circulated, ask everyone involved to confirm if their contributions have been accurately recorded in the meeting.

Whether or not the Statutory SEN Service were present in person, virtually or did not attend all the documentation needs to be sent without delay to the Statutory SEN Service electronically and securely by email e.g. using [Egress statutorysen@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:statutorysen@cornwall.gov.uk).

Safeguarding

All child protection/safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead within your setting and to the Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU)

Email: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk Tel: 0300 1231 116 (For urgent referrals after 17:15 or at the weekend call the Out of Hours Service on 01208 251 300)

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and work with, and on behalf of children and young people with SEN.

Prepared by:

Julie le Masurier

Head of SEND

Together for Families

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If you would like this information in another format, please contact:

**Cornwall Council, County Hall
Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY**

Email: equality@cornwall.gov.uk

Telephone: **0300 1234 100**

www.cornwall.gov.uk