

**Commissioning**  
Learning and Attainment, Access Service  
Level 12, Civic Centre, West Street,  
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Dear Parent or Carer

**Re: Changes to Learning Difficulty Assessments – For Information**

I am writing to you as a parent or carer of a young person who previously had a Statement of Special Educational Needs which was replaced by a Learning Difficulty Assessment on leaving school. This letter is purely for information purposes and does not require any action at this time.

You may or may not be aware of a change in the law which from 1 September 2014 means that young people in education or training who receive their support as a result of a Learning Difficulty Assessment can choose to:

- Continue to receive their current level of support (where it is still required) until the end of their time in further education or training or until 1 September 2016 whichever comes first, or
- Request an education, health and care needs assessment which will decide if an Education, Health and Care plan should be put in place.

Where a request for a needs assessment results in an Education, Health and Care plan being put in place, this will be done by 31 August 2016.

Where a request for a needs assessment does not result in an Education, Health and Care plan being put in place, the parent or young person has the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal. Local disagreement resolution arrangements can be considered and the parent or young person will be expected to consider mediation before an appeal.

What is an Education, Health and Care plan?

An Education, Health and Care plan brings together a young person's education, health and social care needs into a single, legal document. It describes the outcomes which are being worked towards and how the support in place will help the young person to achieve these outcomes. It is important that the plan sets out very clearly how the education and support in place will prepare the young person for adulthood.

This information will also help to inform the young person and their family about personal budgets which is not additional monies but the same money used in a different way to respond to individual needs where possible.

### What happens if the Learning Difficulty Assessment is to be converted to an Education, Health and Care plan ?

This will be done through a 'transfer review' which is organised by the local authority and may include officers from other services and teams that support your son or daughter; it is likely that this review will take place at your son or daughter's current educational setting. Your son or daughter's views will be central to this discussion so that the outcomes for their future area clear.

During the transfer review process, we will make sure that a named person will act as a key-worker co-ordinating matters and ensuring you are kept informed.

### What happens next ?

The local authority is required to take all reasonable steps to inform young people in further education or training of the option to request an education, health and care needs assessment. As you will appreciate, there are large numbers of young people potentially involved in this process so we will be working closely with education providers and partners to identify priority groups to be contacted over the next 18 months as per the Department for Education's expected timeframe.

### Who else can I speak to for help about these changes?

There are a number of organisations, websites and forums available to support young people, parents or carers to understand the changes around the special educational needs and disability system. These are listed below.

You may also like to have an independent supporter, which in Oldham is delivered through the Oldham Special Educational Needs and Disability, Information Advice and Support Service. Their advice and support is completely independent and they can be contacted as follows:

#### **Oldham SENDIASS Officer**

Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Information, Advice & Support Service (IASS) SENDIASS (formerly Parent Partnership Service) Tel: 0161 667 2055

Email: [iass@pointoldham.co.uk](mailto:iass@pointoldham.co.uk)

Website: [www.iassoldham.co.uk](http://www.iassoldham.co.uk)

Further information and guidance can also be found at:

**Oldham Point:** <http://pointoldham.co.uk/>

**The Department for Education:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

**Special Needs Jungle:** <http://www.specialneedsjungle.com/>

There are other resources available through the Council's 'Local Offer' webpage which is being developed, such as what an Education, Health and Care plan will look like and what additional services and support are available for your son or daughter and your family.

[http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200368/children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_with\\_special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilities](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200368/children_and_young_people_with_special_educational_needs_and_disabilities)

Please do not be concerned about these changes, it is important that we let you know what we are doing as we move towards a better system for supporting young people with additional needs. This letter is purely for information purposes and does not require any action at this time but we will be in touch with you and/or your son or daughter in the future.

If you have any further questions regarding the above information, please do not hesitate to contact the Access team on the above numbers or via email at [ehcinfo@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:ehcinfo@oldham.gov.uk) .

Yours sincerely



Matthew Prenton  
Contracts and Commissioning Manager