

# **SEND Admissions Guidance for Specialist Provisions in Cumberland for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

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## Introduction

The guidance is intended to give a broad framework for making decisions about the setting in which the special educational needs of an individual child or young person can be met most appropriately, considering the views and preferences of the young person, parents and carers.

Where a child or young person whose special educational needs are such that they are likely to need specialist provision not ordinarily available within a mainstream school, the local authority may consider a special school or a resourced provision placement in a mainstream school.

Admissions to special schools and resourced provisions are for the local authority to determine based on its consideration of all the advice received about a child or young person's special educational needs.

## Role of specialist provision in Cumberland

The specialist provision made in special schools and resourced provision in Cumberland is part of a wide and diverse range of services and provision which the local authority makes for children and young people with special educational needs and disability.

Cumberland special schools and resourced provisions:

- demonstrate expertise in working with children and young people who have Special Education Needs
- provide high-quality education for children and young people, adapting the curriculum to meet their needs
- ensure effective partnership working multi multi-agencies to meet the needs of children and young people
- have high expectations of all children and young people

Requesting a specific school can be done either following the issuing of the draft Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or at an Annual Review, which identifies a wish by parents and carers to consider specialist placement. This will be taken into consideration alongside the local authority's identified closest suitable school and a place will be allocated to the child in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015):

- the school is suitable to the child's or young person's age, ability, aptitude or SEND
- the placement would be compatible with the efficient education of the other children and young people with whom the child or young person would be educated  
and
- the placement would be compatible with the efficient use of resources.

All admissions to special schools and resourced provisions are agreed through the process at the Specialist Placement Panel.

## The admissions process

Most children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are generally able to attend and have their needs met effectively in their local mainstream school. For those whose needs are best met in specialist provision, the following stages are involved when considering the placement.

## Early discussions with parents and carers

It is important that any discussions with parents and carers about a potential request for a specialist placement take place well in advance of a request being made for a place.

Parents and carers should be informed of the process that needs to be followed and encouraged to visit appropriate potential specialist placements. They can be supported in this process by the [SEND Information, Advice and Support Service](#) (SENDIASS).

## Referral to Specialist Placement Panel

The local authority is responsible for the decision to place a child or young person in a special school or resourced provision in a mainstream school.

A provision panel with multi-professional membership considers individual children with an Education, Health and Care Plan where a specialist school placement is requested.

Children and young people are only admitted to special schools and resourced provision in mainstream schools if they have an EHCP.

The panel was established to ensure that fair and reasonable decisions are made.

Referrals can be made as part of the consultation process following the issuing of the draft EHC plan, or Annual Review identifying a request by parents and carers to consider a specialist placement. This is done through the completion of the specialist placement referral form, which includes evidence from the current school and professionals involved

There may be occasions when parents and carers wish to make a request for specialist provision outside of the Annual Review timescales. In these circumstances the school /setting should hold an early review and follow the referral process as outlined above.

## Specialist Placement Panel

### Terms of reference

The specialist placement panel has the following Terms of Reference:

- To consider the evidence for the placement of children in line with the agreed criteria to local authority commissioned specialist placements
- To ensure the most effective and efficient use of Cumberland's High Needs Block funding
- To ensure fair and equitable access to educational provision for Cumberland children and young people having regard to the views and preferences of those children and young people as well as their parents and carers
- To provide transparent and consistent evaluation of the evidence of high level and additional needs
- To offer a multi-disciplinary decision-making forum in which best outcomes for the child along with alternative options are agreed upon.

The panel has a quality assurance function that ensures that no reasonable steps that could have been taken by the local authority or existing school to ensure a successful mainstream placement have been missed.

### The Panel

The Panel comprises:

- Service Manager Inclusion – SEND (Chair)
- SEND Education Team Managers
- Principal Educational Psychologist
- Professional Lead Specialist Teachers (as required)
- Special School Headteacher Representative

Quorum is 60% of members.

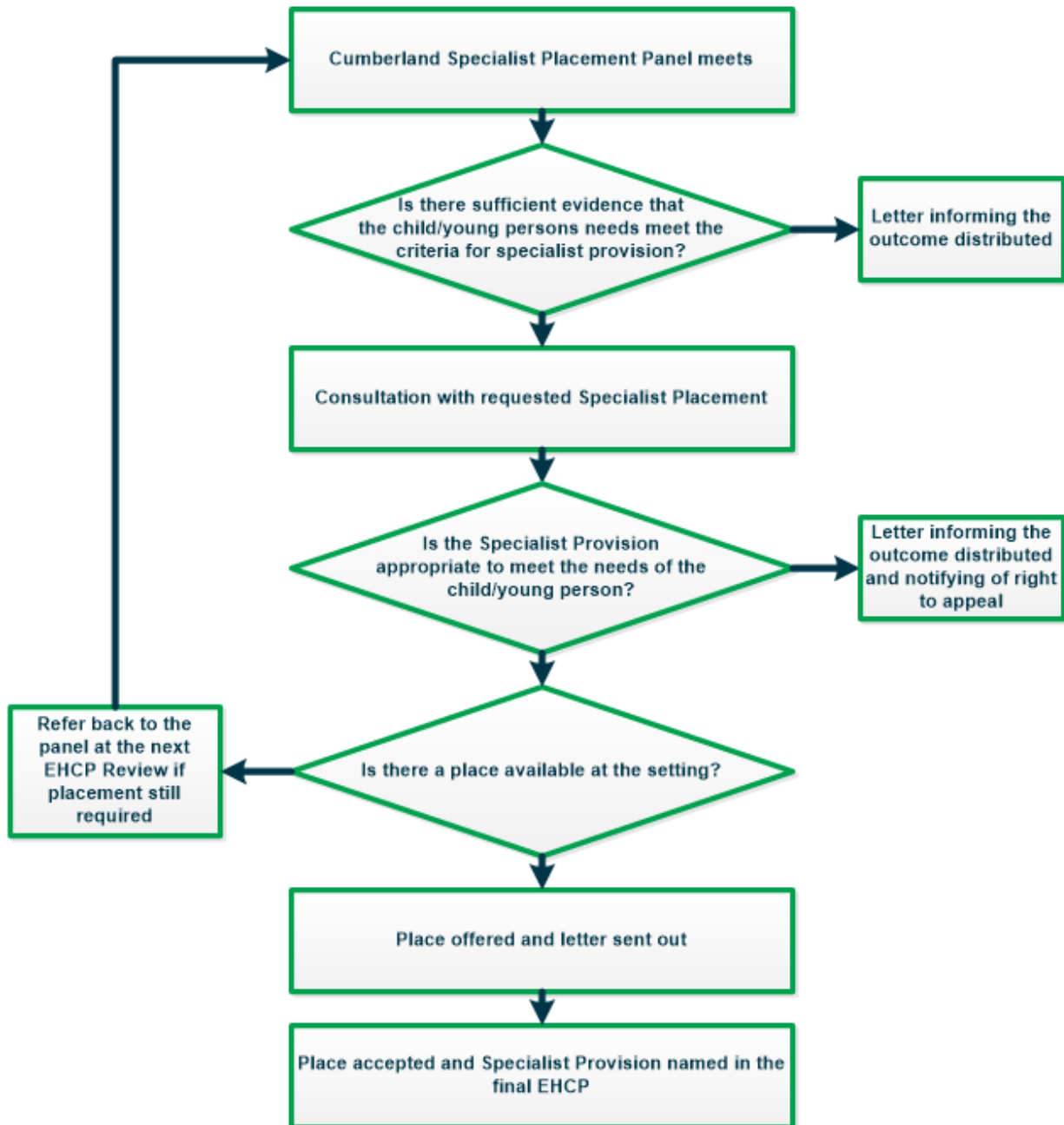
### Meeting dates and timelines

Panel dates will be published for the next academic year in July of the previous one. The panels will occur at regular intervals of four working weeks to minimise delays in decision making.

### Outcome from consideration at panel

Following a positive decision of suitability for a specialist placement and best fit all papers will be forwarded to the recommended setting for formal consideration allowing 15 days for the setting to respond.

## Specialist Placement Process



## Appendices

### Criteria for Admission to Cumberland's special school provision

The criteria below are a summary of the information the panel would consider; however decisions are based on the evidence submitted relating to the child's individual needs.

- All pupils in SEND Special Schools in Cumberland have an Education Health and Care Plan
- All Special Schools and settings provide small classes to support both learning and social and emotional development in a nurturing environment
- Parents / carers have expressed a preference for the school
- The school is suitable to the child's or young person's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs
- Consideration is given to profile of current cohorts in the schools and settings
- Admission to the school is not incompatible with the efficient education and efficient use of resources
- The placement is suitable and demonstrates an efficient use of resources
- Placement will be compatible with the safety of other students
- Evidence from relevant professionals demonstrates that needs cannot be met within a mainstream setting

### Resourced Provision Settings in Cumberland

A list of all schools providing Resourced Provision, and the special educational needs catered for, can be found on the [Local Offer](#).

### Special School Provision in Cumberland

A list of all maintained and academy special schools can be found on the [Local Offer](#).