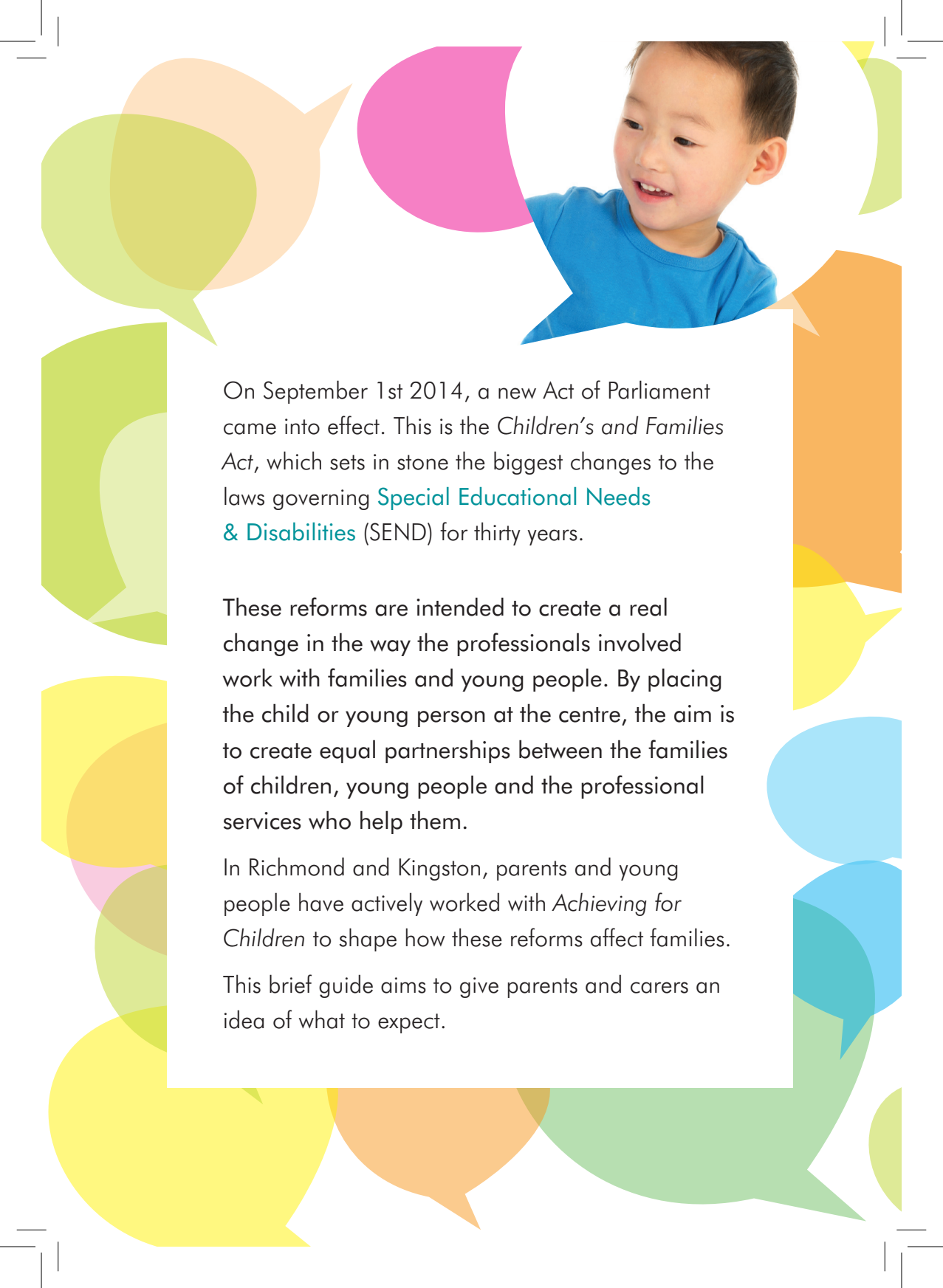




PARENTS & CARERS GUIDE TO THE SEND REFORMS

A new approach to Special Educational Needs & Disabilities



A young boy with dark hair, wearing a blue t-shirt, is smiling and looking towards the left. He is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page. The background is white, and the page is decorated with several large, overlapping speech bubbles in various colors: light green, orange, pink, yellow, and light blue. The text is contained within a white rectangular area that has a slightly irregular, hand-drawn edge, set against the background of these speech bubbles.

On September 1st 2014, a new Act of Parliament came into effect. This is the *Children's and Families Act*, which sets in stone the biggest changes to the laws governing **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities** (SEND) for thirty years.

These reforms are intended to create a real change in the way the professionals involved work with families and young people. By placing the child or young person at the centre, the aim is to create equal partnerships between the families of children, young people and the professional services who help them.

In Richmond and Kingston, parents and young people have actively worked with *Achieving for Children* to shape how these reforms affect families.

This brief guide aims to give parents and carers an idea of what to expect.



IN THE BEGINNING

There is a new *Education, Health and Care plan* (EHC plan) replacing the system of *Statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments*. The EHC plans will support children and young people between ages 0-25 (Statements run from 0-19 years). As the name suggests, an EHC plan will cover not only a child or young person's educational needs but their health and social care needs as well.

There is a single assessment process, coordinated across education, health and social care. This process will take 20 weeks (instead of the previous 26).


Children, young people and their families will be involved throughout the assessment process; these reforms are about an equal partnership between you and the professionals involved.



WHAT ARE EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE PLANS?

An EHC assessment and plan looks at life beyond education and brings the different services together. It is outcome focused and reflects the child or young person's aspirations for the future as well as their current needs.

Unlike a statement, EHC plans are person centred and flexible; they may be written in the first person (I like), not the third person (Sarah likes). This in itself is a huge shift in perspective. The EHC plan also includes the views of the parents and professionals who provide support around the child or young person.




In Kingston & Richmond, existing Statements will steadily be replaced with EHC plans, probably at transitional Annual Reviews such as the move from nursery to school, the move from primary to secondary school and the Year 9 review. The first group to be assessed for EHC plans will be those in Year 11 now.

The intention is to have three versions of the EHC plan:

Early Years	age 0-5
School Age	ages 5-14
Preparing for Adulthood	age 14-25

These begin in September 2014 and be assured no-one will lose the support they receive as a result of these changes.



WHEN WILL THE STATEMENT BE CONVERTED TO AN EHC PLAN?

Here is the current transfer schedule for converting Statements to EHC plans.

Phase Number	To take place between
1 a, b & c	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015
2	1 Sept 2015 and 31 Aug 2016
3	1 Sept 2016 and 31 Aug 2017
4	1 Sept 2017 and 31 Aug 2018

Unless you are at the point of transferring from a Statement to an EHC plan, you are effectively in the 'old' system until your child or young person reaches their point in the transfer schedule. Only then will you begin the EHC plan assessments. It's worth repeating that no-one will lose their support as a result of these changes. This is a brand new system - new for everyone - and we will all be learning and developing as we go.

Most families will want to know exactly when their child or young person will move to the new system. The table below illustrates the transfer point for each child or young person, based on their year group in September 2014.

School Year Group 14/15	Transfer Date	Phase
Reception	1 Sept 2017 and 31 Mar 2018	4
1	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015	1b
2	1 Sept 2017 and 31 Mar 2018	4
3	1 Sept 2016 and 31 Aug 2017	3
4	1 Sept 2015 and 31 Aug 2016	2
5	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2016	1c
6	1 Sept 2016 and 31 Aug 2017	3
7	1 Sept 2016 and 31 Aug 2017	3
8	1 Sept 2015 and 31 Aug 2016	2
9	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015	1b
10	1 Sept 2015 and 31 Aug 2016	2
11	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015	1a
12	1 Sept 2015 and 31 Aug 2016	2
13	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015	1a
14	1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015	1a

HELP WITH THE EHC PLAN

Please contact the *Independent Support Partnership* (ISP) for help with new EHC plan. ISP is also the first point of contact for new EHC plans or conversions from Statements of SEN. Their aim is to provide a friendly and flexible service over telephone, e-mail, or they can arrange to meet at a place that suits you.

E-mail: independent.support@richmondaid.org.uk

Tel: 020 8831 6076

Website: www.richmondaid.org.uk/services-disabled/independent-support-partnership

ISP work closely with the *Parent Partnership Service* (now called *Information, Advice & Support*) which is delivered by *Enhanceable* across Richmond and Kingston. They provide advice, guidance and support for families.

E-mail: children@enhanceable.org

Tel: 020 8831 6179

Website: www.enhanceable.org/parentpartnership

WHAT IS AN OUTCOME?

Outcomes underpin and inform the detail of EHC plans. Outcomes will usually set out what needs to be achieved by the end of a phase or stage of education in order to enable the child or young person to progress successfully.

When agreeing outcomes, it is important to consider both what is important to the child or young person – what they themselves want to be able to achieve – and what is important for them as judged by others with the child or young person's best interests at heart.

Outcomes should be something that those involved have control and influence over, and while it does not always have to be formal, it should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART) - and most importantly relevant to the child or young person.

Example

This is an outcome that fits the criteria, but may not be relevant to the child:

"By the end of Year 3, Peter will be able to read CVC words with 80% accuracy at home and at school."*

This is the same outcome, but as agreed with Peter:

"I will read my little brother his favourite book by his birthday."

*Consonant, Vowel, Consonant words are pig, cat, dog etc



WHAT IS A PERSONAL BUDGET?

There is also the option for families and young people with an EHC plan to request a Personal Budget to extend their choice and control over their support. This means that sometimes the money being spent on services can be freed up and used in different and creative ways to meet the agreed outcomes. Personal budgets must be agreed with the school, or college and *Achieving for Children*.

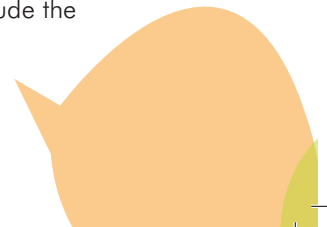
HOW DOES A PERSONAL BUDGET WORK?

If your child or young person has an EHC plan, and a Personal Budget has been requested - and an indicative personal budget has been agreed - then a Support Broker will contact to help you make a plan. The plan must explain how the money will be used to meet the agreed outcomes for the child or young person.

Your Support Broker will help you with the options that most suit your child's needs, including services purchased and choices as to how the money is managed. At the moment, these are called:

- **Notional Budget:** the council do it for you
- **Third Party Managed Budget:** an organisation separate to the council will do it for you
- **Direct Payment:** you will do it
- **A mix of all three**

The amount of money will be based on the support needed for one year and will be reviewed on an annual basis, although you can ask for a review any time. The last draft of the EHC plan (before final sign-off) will include the Personal Budget amount and the agreed method for managing it.





WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

There is a new duty on health commissioners to deliver the health elements of EHC plans (eg speech & language therapy, physiotherapy etc.) where these are part of the child or young person's educational requirements.

There are new statutory protections for young people aged 16-25 in further education, including the right to request a particular institution named in their EHC plan and the right to appeal to the first-tier tribunal. Statutory means that the protections are enforceable in law.

Academies and Free Schools have the same SEN duties as maintained schools.

WHERE DOES THE 'LOCAL OFFER' FIT IN?

As part of the reforms, all local authorities must develop a Local Offer for young people and families of children with SEND.

The purpose of the Local Offer is to:

"Provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about the support, resources and opportunities (both within and outside the local authority's area) that are available for all children and young people with SEND and their families (not just those who have an EHC plan)."

As well as providing information, the Local Offer will also improve the services that are provided, making them more responsive to local needs and wishes

USEFUL WEBSITES

Read about the reforms locally and nationally

www.richmond.gov.uk/send
www.ipsea.org.uk
www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk
www.specialneedsjungle.com
www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk

Read the new SEND Code of Practice and the Parent's Guide

www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers



This booklet has been jointly written by Richmond SEND FAMILY VOICE and L.E.A.D Kingston, in partnership with Achieving for Children.



Richmond **SEND FAMILY VOICE**

Working in partnership to give families a voice...

We're a mix of individual parents, plus leads from disability specific support groups and specialist schools; we all offer our time on a voluntary basis and take responsibility for representing the views of a wider group of parents. By ensuring families voices are heard, we empower children and young people to obtain the best possible care and services.

Contact details Richmond SEND FAMILY VOICE

Telephone: 07758 305 472

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Facebook: [richmondsendfamilyvoice](https://www.facebook.com/richmondsendfamilyvoice)

Website: www.richmondsendfamilyvoice.org

Contact details L.E.A.D KINGSTON

Telephone: 0208 547 6201

E-mail: children@enhanceable.org

Website: www.leadkingston.org.uk



L.E.A.D KINGSTON

Listening . Engaging . Advocating for Disability

We work with parents and carers of children and young people. Our mission is to bring people together into a community to provide support, share ideas, news and contacts. We ensure that the voices of families are reflected in the policies and practises of the educational and healthcare services that are an essential part of our everyday lives.