



One minute guide

Pupils with medical conditions—Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP)

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What is an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)?

Under the Children and Families Act 2014, schools and education settings have a statutory duty to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. The aim is to ensure that children and young people with medical conditions affecting either their physical or mental health (or both) are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy, and achieve their academic potential.

An Individual Healthcare Plan (known as an IHP) is a shared plan that is written in collaboration between healthcare and education practitioners, parents and children or young people. An IHP primarily clarifies medical needs and care as it relates to school, including emergency arrangements and daily medical care. IHPs also support conversations and planning about the impact of medical needs upon a child's education, identity, inclusion and personal experiences. An IHP is a graduated approach which includes identifying universal, targeted and specialist provision.

Who is an IHP for?

An IHP can be completed for any child or young person who has medical needs or conditions which affects the child's health and wellbeing, even for conditions that pupils may generally be able to manage well in their day to day life, such as asthma or diabetes. The IHP is a non-statutory document which means that it can be used for any child where it would be helpful to ensure safety, establish a shared understanding of additional needs and support planning. Any parent or practitioner can suggest that an IHP is completed and contribute towards one.

An IHP is distinct from an [Education Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\)](#). An IHP can be put into place as soon as a health need is identified, does not depend on a formal statutory process, and it can be reviewed at any time if health needs change. Education settings have a statutory duty to meet any special educational needs which have been identified. In Leeds, funding to further support children in education settings comes from applications to [Funding For Inclusion \(FFI\)](#).

Which practitioners can collaborate on an IHP?

Anyone who is involved in the care and support of a child's medical and educational needs could collaborate on an IHP.

Healthcare professionals (e.g. Hospital Consultants, Paediatricians, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists) will provide information around the child's medical difficulties and the necessary interventions or treatments. Specialist Nursing teams and School Nurses will have further advice around how the child's medical needs might be met within school and if additional training or support is needed to meet medical needs safely.

A school's SENCo or senior member of staff is likely to coordinate an IHP by holding a review of a child's additional and special educational needs. School staff will need to consult with medical professionals to ensure that interventions and treatments are delivered correctly and safely. Class teachers, teaching assistants, pastoral and support staff can help recognise the impact of medical needs upon a child's educational experiences and contribute to planning.

Additional advice or collaboration may come from external practitioners such as Health Visitors, [Learning Inclusion](#) (e.g. Educational Psychologists, Visual or Deaf and Hearing Impairment Teams, SEN Inclusion Team), Attendance, and relevant Third Sector organisations, e.g. Scope.

How do children, young people and families contribute to an IHP?

Parents and carers are key to successful IHPs as they will understand how a child's medical needs affect their personal experiences. Parents and carers are likely to have a detailed understanding of their child's medical history and have experience of meeting the child's medical needs at home. Parents should be involved in the writing of the IHP and its review.

Children and young people should be supported to contribute their views and share what is important to them. Any adult around the child can support the child's agency and ensure that their voice is not lost in the process. Children and young people should be encouraged to be part of the IHP process, particularly when they are aged 14+ and are preparing for adulthood.

How can an IHP be used?

An IHP should be started when a child is identified as having medical needs which need intervention or treatment within an education setting.

The first task is to complete the sections about safely meeting medical needs in school and agree emergency procedures, if necessary. A meeting should be held where all involved in the child's medical and educational care can discuss the impact of the medical needs upon the child's educational and personal experiences. The IHP template then gives a series of prompts for reflection and planning of the child's identity, inclusion, social, emotional and learning experiences, experience of personal and medical care, and planning for the future. Adults around the child can, through these discussions, agree what additional provision is needed to help the child thrive. Examples of provision maps for each area can be found in the IHP Provision Planning Guidance document found on [Leeds for Learning](#). The IHP also prompts a discussion around attendance, which may be affected by the child's medical needs and appointments.

An IHP can be used to support transitions, apply for FFI and plan for a child or young person's future. An IHP can be reviewed flexibly, at any time, to reflect and plan for developments relating to medical and health conditions, which can sometimes change suddenly.

The collaboration required to develop an IHP can contribute to the safeguarding of children with medical needs, as it ensures that health and education practitioners are directly sharing and discussing accurate information about medical needs, allowing practitioners to exercise appropriate [professional curiosity](#).

Key contacts and further information

For individual IHPs, the SENCo for the school or setting can coordinate an IHP with the relevant health and education practitioners. The [Individual Healthcare Plans page](#) on the Leeds for Learning website contains resources, up to date templates and guidance on completing IHPs.

Statutory guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions is available [here](#).

There is information about professional curiosity on the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership [website](#).

Parents who would like independent advice around additional and special educational needs can contact [SENDIASS](#) (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Service).

Please see the [making schools accessible one minute guide](#) for information on inclusivity in school and education settings.