

Early Health Notifications Information for Health Professionals

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Date: 30 September 2024

Early identification of needs

A child or young person has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) if they have a learning difficulty and/or disability that means they need special educational support to be provided for them.

For some children it will be clear from early on that they will require additional personalised support to access early education due to the complexity of their needs. The importance of early identification and intervention is explained in the paragraphs 5.14 to 5.19 of the [SEND code of practice 0-25](#).

Health professionals have a legal duty to notify Wigan Council of pre-school age children who have, or are likely to have, SEND.

By sharing information, we can make sure children get the right help at the right time.

Notifications

The Notification Form should be completed by the most appropriate health professional, alongside parents or carers. This form should only be completed for children whose home address is in Wigan.

The Early Identification Notification should not be used to recommend specialist provision, such as a special school, or full-time one to one support. It will support professional conversations and information sharing about children who will need a high level of additional support in their early years and beyond.

When might it be appropriate to send an early notification?

- Children identified aged 0-2 years with Profound and Multiple Difficulties, usually identified soon after birth.
- Children with significant needs who will be eligible to access a 2-year-old funded place.
- Children identified at the 2-year-old check with significant delays across all their developmental milestones.
- Children with significant needs who will access their free early educational entitlement (funded nursery place).

- Children with significant needs who will be starting school in September 2025.

It is important to note that families may not wish to take up funded nursery provision. In these cases, it is important that the Council are notified of early years children who may have special educational needs who are not accessing a setting.

What details will health professionals need to provide?

Health colleagues will provide information completed in liaison with the parent/carer and will include:

- Personal information about the child, including their Name, Date of Birth, Address, etc.
- The needs of the child, what it will mean for their development and the impact on their daily living.
 - Any diagnosis the child may have; the complexity of these needs and whether they are likely to be long, medium or short-term.
- The setting the child attends (where appropriate).
- Any other information felt to be relevant in agreement with the parents/carers.
- Parental consent to the notification.

What will happen with your notification?

All notifications are received by the SEND Service. They will share this information with other support services working with children with additional needs. The notification will also be discussed at the Early Years Forum.

For a child accessing early education or childcare

If the child attends an early year's provision the setting will be expected to follow the graduated approach and use the SEND support available. The early learning and childcare team are available to support early years settings to meet the needs of the child.

For a child not accessing educational provision

Some children may not be accessing an early years' setting. If they are being supported by specialist educational services such as Sensory Support or

Portage, information will be sought from the lead educational service about the needs of the child.

The early learning and childcare team will provide parents with information to ensure they can make an informed choice about accessing their child's education entitlement and will signpost parents to partner organisations that can offer support and advice.

Support in early years education

The Early Years Team support children with SEND from birth to the end of reception and work closely with early years settings to follow the Graduated Approach and meet the needs of children that attend their settings.

They support the identification of need and provide, when appropriate Early Years Support. This can be in the form of a visits from a SEND Officers who use a modelling and coaching approach to support both the child and setting staff. This may include providing additional funding where appropriate.

A Portage Home Teaching Service is available for young children who have an additional need and are not yet accessing a nursery provision.

Portage helps parents and children play and learn together in their home through regular home visits. This involves planning for family focus time, child led play and structured teaching activities.

Portage groups are also available. These are set up in a nursery style environment, providing opportunities for families to network and plan for their child's transition into an early years' setting.

Personal information

The information collected from the SEND notifications will be used for several purposes – the Council will:

- Contact the child's parents and signpost them to Wigan's Local offer and the Family Hubs
- Add the parents' details to the Council's information management system
- Check the child is accessing their early education entitlement

- Check the setting has the right support in place to meet the needs of the child
- Use the information to consider what further intervention is required from specialist services and if an Education Health and Care needs assessment is needed
- Plan school placements for children with SEND

Legal duties

Section 23 of the Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the duty on health bodies to bring a child who is under compulsory school age to the attention of Wigan Council if they form the opinion that the child has (or probably has) special educational needs or a disability (SEND). Health bodies must:

- inform the child's parent of their opinion and of their duty to notify the Council, and
- give the child's parent an opportunity to discuss their opinion with an officer of the health body.

Health bodies must then bring their opinion to the attention of Wigan Council.

If health bodies think a particular voluntary organisation is likely to be able to give the parent advice or assistance in connection with any SEND the child may have, they must inform the parent of that.