DATE NAME

 ADDRESS

 Phone numbers

Name and address of SA service

Dear Sir/Madam,

**CHILD’S NAME (DOB) – REQUEST FOR EHC NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

We are writing to you as the parents of the above named child to request an assessment of [his/her] Education, Health and Social Care needs under section 36 (1) of the Children and Families Act 2014.

[Child’s Name] [was given/is awaiting an assessment for] a diagnosis of [diagnosis] in [date] and currently attends [Nursery/School], where s/he receives [specify level of additional support, such as 1:1]. [His/her] educational care is overseen by [Professional involved, such as Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher. Use their title and name. This should preferably be an educational support professional rather than a medical one]. Despite the high level of support, and having had [number of] reviews of [his/her] support plan, [child’s name] has made minimal progress. It is clear that s/he will need the support of an EHC Plan before s/he starts school in [expected start date].

We understand that the test that the LA must apply in considering this request is contained in Section 36 (8) of the Children and Families Act 2014 and has two parts. Part one of the test is that the child has or may have special educational needs.

[Child’s name] has already been identified as having special educational needs. They include:

[First Area of Need – e.g. Speech and Language/Behavioural Difficulties/Sensory Needs etc]

[Use bullet points to specify ALL the ways the child struggles because of this particular area of need. These should be specific and should always point at something which will cause the child problems in an educational setting.

These should be backed up by paperwork, which should be referenced. No need should be listed unless it can be evidenced by a report issued by a medical or an educational professional. If a professional hasn’t seen it and has not reported on it, it will not be counted as evidence.

Use footnotes to refer to the report, and include the reports with this letter as evidence.

Below are some examples. If the first area of need is the child’s speech and language difficulties, some things you could write are:]

* He struggles to follow two word instructions and only understands simple sentences. He often displays rigid attention, appearing not to hear when he is addressed. [1] [5] [6] [7] [8]
* He does not initiate conversation and he cannot engage in reciprocal conversation. Often, he does not respond even if asked a direct question. [1] [5] [8]
* His speech is often at an inappropriate volume and can be rushed and difficult to understand. He frequently reverts to using gesture and vocalisation. [3]
* Much of his speech consists of past learnt statements and scripted phrases. These are often used out of context and can be inappropriately formal [1] [3] [5] [7] [9]
* He has difficulty understanding 'How' and 'Why' questions, and is often unable to explain himself. He is able to ask for help, but unable to explain what he would like help with. [6] [7] [8] [9]
* If X is asked to speak in front of peers, he will shut down and disconnect himself from the situation; he is much more comfortable when in a quiet room or working alongside one other peer. [1] [5]

[Second Area of Need]

[Divide the child’s needs into as many areas as you feel appropriate, and list the needs as above, using bullet points and evidencing each one.]

Part two of the test is that it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child through the issuing of an EHC Plan.

Our reasons for believing that a school may not be able to make the provision required to meet X's needs are:

[First Area of Need]

[In this section, you must evidence how the needs listed in the previous section will have an impact on the child’s ability to function at school, and where they will require support.

There is no need to be specific about what this support should be – this is the function of the Outcomes Meeting, just list the ways in which the child would struggle unsupported at a mainstream school in a class of 30 of their peers.

Again, this should be evidenced from professional reports.

Some examples:]

* X will need an enormous amount of support to understand the curriculum as his listening and attention abilities are those of a 16-26 month old child. At present, he struggles to follow a two-word instruction and cannot communicate independently with adults or peers. [1] [2] [5] [6] [7] [8]
* Due to his autism, X is very focussed on his own agenda and often cannot follow adult instruction or notice what is going on around him. He will need staff who are used to engaging children with his difficulties to ensure he is not left out and tailored strategies in place to help him move between activities at the right times and model the expected behaviour. This will need a very careful, slow introduction as X's comprehension of visual aids is so low. [1] [5] [8]
* He will have difficulty communicating his needs and will need special provisions like picture cards that he can carry, depicting moods. Introducing these and getting X to understand how to use them will require a specially tailored programme carried out by trained and experienced staff. [5] [8]
* He may need flexibility to school uniform rules to enable him to find something he feels comfortable in. He will need vigilance to make sure he does not attempt to undress or take shoes and socks off. [1] [3] [4] [5] [9]
* He takes ear defenders to nursery to help with his dislike of noise, but needs vigilant adult support to help him use them. He will rarely ask for them as he cannot reason that he needs them, and lacks the dexterity to put them on himself. [3]

We understand that you are required by law to reply to this request within six weeks and that if you refuse we will be able to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal.

Yours sincerely

[Parents]

References (included):

[List the reports that you have referenced here, including the date and the author. For example:]

[1] EYFS Observation Summary – [authors]

[2] Developmental Progress Wheel – [Nursery]

[3] Consultant Paediatrician's Assessment Report – [Paediatrician]

[4] [Nursery] Support Plan, Autumn 2015

[5] [Nursery] Stones Support Plan, Spring 2016

[6] SALT Report 1/12/14 – [SALT]

[7] SALT Report 22/12/15 – [SALT]

[8] SALT Report 15/3/16 – [SALT]

[9] Paediatrician Report 3/3/15 – [Paediatrician]

Also enclosed:

[Nursery] Review, Autumn 2015

[Nursery] Review, Spring 2016

Orthoptics Report 13/11/2015 – [Author]