



1. Background and Functions of the SEND Panel

The SEND 0-25 Panel was set up as part of GCC's response to the SEND reforms in 2014 to support effective decision making. The SEND Panel meets on a weekly basis, this includes school holidays.

The role of the SEND Panel is to consider the recommendations presented by the Case Coordinator to support the Council's decision making in respect of:

- Whether an Education, Health and Care Plan is required following completion of assessment (see below)
- Confirmation of resourcing for Education, Health and Care Plans (see below)
- Significant changes recommended following Annual Reviews of an Education, Health & Care Plan e.g change of type of placement and/or increase/decrease in resources/the ceasing of an EHCP (see below)

2. Chair of SEND Panel

SEND Panels will be chaired by the SEND Team Manager or, in the absence of the Chair, by a member of the casework team or SEND Service Manager. The role of the Chair is to ensure all cases presented to the Panel are considered fairly and on their own merits, and that there is consistency in decision making. The Chair will be responsible for ensuring that all decisions are recorded appropriately and that decisions are signed and dated.

The Chair of the Panel acts on behalf of the Head of Special Educational Needs & Disability and SEND Service Manager in respect of delegated budget responsibility and should ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of the child/young person but also that they are an effective use of LA resources.

3. Prior to Panel - Preparation required

The Case Coordinator

In respect of consideration of issuing and resourcing an EHC Plan, the relevant Case Coordinator will present their recommendations for Panel consideration and decision. Cases should be prepared for Panel by the Case Co-ordinator and checked by the Lead Coordinator in order for the case to be added to the agenda by midday of the Friday before Panel.

Panel should be provided with confirmation and evidence of the following:

- All relevant assessments and reports have been received and analysed by the Case Coordinator
- A Resource Allocation System (RAS) form has been completed and an indicative budget has been allocated
- A multi agency Team around the Child (TAC) meeting has been held to agree a set of SMART outcomes for the child/young person
- A copy of the draft EHCP where relevant.

4. Panel composition

Team	Position in team/agency	Role on panel/comments/level of commitment
0-25 Casework Team	Team Manager	Chair
Educational Psychology Service	Senior Educational Psychologist (SEP)	Panel member. On a rotation, alternating between a SEP and a Lead Advisory Teacher (LAT)
Advisory Teaching Service	Lead Advisory Teacher (LAT)	Panel member. On a rotation, alternating between a SEP and a LAT.
School and/or College representative	Head Teacher/Principal	Panel member. One Head Teacher per panel, drawn from a rota of primary, secondary or Post 16 Head Teachers/Principal from state funded mainstream and specialist settings.
Parent/Carer representation	As nominated by the Parent/Carer forum	Panel member.
<p>A copy of the agenda will be sent to nominated representatives from health authority as well as both children's and adults' social care teams. This will enable any relevant information to be shared with the named officer within the 0-25 SEN Casework Team about involvement from these services. Representatives from health and social care are not required to attend the panel. Similarly, pre panel input can be requested from the LA's Early Years and YST colleagues where drawing on this specialist knowledge will assist panel in discharging its responsibilities. Representatives from these teams need not attend panel.</p> <p>Any sign off that may be required associated with jointly commissioned provision will be secured outside of the main panel via the nominated representative budget holder from the relevant agency.</p>		

Panel members should work to the principles set out in this document and:

- Provide expertise in their own specialist area and offer impartial advice on individual cases without promoting the interests of their service or setting
- Use their experience and knowledge and offer views on assessments, outcomes, appropriate and proportionate provision and other matters in relation to children and young people with SEND
- Offer relevant advice about legislation, code of conduct, reforms or priorities in education settings, services or organisations
- Advise on, monitor and challenge the use of the education setting's own resources and delegated budgets
- Take a collegiate approach to support the efficient working of Panel

Discussions will need to focus on the matters related to the decision to be made about the individual case before them. Wider issues about process or policy should be followed up separately. The Joint Additional Needs Development Group, or the LA's SEND Senior Leadership Team, provide suitable fora for this.

5. Confidentiality

Panel representatives must uphold confidentiality in all cases considered at the SEND Panel and act in accordance with the Data Protection duties of the Local Authority and work together to safeguard children. Panel members **MUST NOT** advise on decisions about cases which they are directly involved in or where there may be the perception of a conflict of interest.

6. Decision Making through the SEN Panel and, the separate, officer lead decision making arrangements outside of panel

SEND Panel members offer advice and recommendations that enable the Local Authority decision to be made by the designated officer (Chair of SEND Panel). Every effort will be made to reach consensus on each case but the final responsibility for decisions where agreement cannot be reached will lie with the Chair.

Panel will consider cases and make decisions about recommended provision if the following apply:

- Recommended provision is above indicative resource, or
- Relevant agencies did not attend TAC, or
- There was disagreement at TAC regarding the level of provision or
- Recommended provision is over the equivalent of 15 hours support plus 2.5 hours Mid day supervision (ie £10,125 per annum based on mid grade TA grade F and mid grade Mid day supervision rate grade D)

- All specialist provision requests would continue to be considered for approval by main panel.

Where the following apply, a decision will be made by SEN Lead Coordinators through the separate **officer lead decision making arrangements outside of panel, signed off** by the SEN Casework Team Manager, outside of SEN panel:

- Requests for EHC assessment

In the case of completed EHC assessments:

- Where provision is within indicative resource, and
- Where the TAC was attended by relevant agencies, and
- Where there was unanimous agreement at TAC regarding the level of provision, and
- Indicative resource is less than the equivalent of 15 hours TA support plus 2.5 MDS . (ie £10,125 per annum based on mid grade TA grade F and mid grade Mid day supervision rate grade D)

In the case of Annual Reviews:

- increases in support arising from annual reviews where the increase represents up to 10% of the current allocation
- where the recommendation to cease the plan is supported by all parties at the annual review

Members of panel are invited to join officers in the officer lead decision making arrangements from time to time, and this can be arranged via the SEN Casework Team Manager. A moderation sampling exercise will be carried out on a quarterly basis, undertaken by the SEN Casework Team Manager the Lead SEN Monitoring Officer and a representative drawn from the Educational Psychologist Service or the Advisory Teaching Service. The purpose of this sampling exercise is to ensure there is consistency of decision making and decisions are made in line with policy. There will be feedback to the Head of SEN Service after each round of monitoring.

7. Panel Observers

From time to time, the Local Authority receives requests for colleagues to join the Panel in an observatory capacity. The Local Authority agrees to this in the spirit of promoting joint working, joint understanding, professional development and workforce development. In order to manage this effectively, observers must book in advance to attend by contacting the Chair of Panel. Observers should note that they **MUST NOT** take part in any elements of the panel's case discussions.

The following principles should be applied by the Panel:

- Aspirational and person centred;
- Empowerment of children/young people and families
- Promotion of equality;
- Preparation for transition at appropriate phases;
- Preparation for adulthood;
- Evidence based, transparent and consistent processes and decision making;
- Value for money, effective use of resources and range of provision to be considered;
- Evidence that level of resources are aligned to the needs/outcomes of the child
- Safeguarding and working together for positive outcomes for children and young people.

These terms of reference are designed to be realistic and practical and provide the right balance between helping the system to work for the diversity of children, young people and families living in Gloucestershire and the need for the Local Authority and Health Authority to carry out their duties, using robust decision making and accountability procedures.

8. Review Arrangements

The Local Authority SEND Panel is designed to promote equality in respect of the decision making. Comments and feedback are welcome at any stage and minor amendments to the operation of Panel that do not impact on due process being followed and compliance with legislation can be made by agreement with the SEND Service Manager.

The Lead SEND Monitoring Officer will attend Panel and provide feedback on a regular basis, however a formal review of the Panel operation will take place annually.

June 2017