

## Summary

---

# Defining quality and rights-based Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for disabled children and young people

## About the DRILL Programme

---

DRILL (Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning) was an innovative 5 year, UK wide programme led by disabled people, for disabled people and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Launched in 2015, the programme was managed by a partnership of Disability Action Northern Ireland, Disability Rights UK, Disability Wales and Inclusion Scotland.

The aim of the programme was to build better evidence about approaches which enable disabled people to achieve independent living. The findings from the projects it funded can be used to inform future provision across a wide range of policy areas, and give a greater voice to disabled people in decisions which affect them.

This is one of a series of summaries of the project supported by DRILL. Final reports, toolkits and summaries of all the projects are available from the DRILL website at [www.drilluk.org.uk](http://www.drilluk.org.uk).

### Overview of the project

This project worked with disabled young people to produce a quality and rights-based framework to benchmark the delivery of EHCPs in Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire.

## Approach

---

The project undertook qualitative research, interviewing 15 disabled young people, 10 parents/carers and 17 professionals from a range of disciplines.

## Findings

---

Healthcare professionals often found it difficult to talk about what information should be shared with disabled young people about what an EHCP is, and how this should be done.

Some discussed the role of the SEN and Disability Information and Advice Service (SENDIASS), which offers guidance for disabled children, young people and their parents, but none of the young people interviewed mentioned this service.

Most professionals stated that giving disabled children and young people a voice in the EHCP was ideal but, in reality, there was a long way to go to achieving this.

To achieve a quality person-centred plan, communication with disabled children and young people is vital.

Very few of the young people interviewed knew if they had a plan or, if they did have one, rarely knew what was in it.

Respecting young people by enabling and supporting them to prepare for meetings in advance is important. It empowers them to know what options are available.

It is important that parents are supported to understand their child's increasing rights as they grow older and become independent adults.

The 'About Me' section in an EHCP, where young people and parents have the opportunity to express their views, can be difficult to write without support. Often, the child's views are missing. Many professionals expressed the importance of this section in delivering a quality plan.

Most participants felt that EHCPs should not just focus on the negatives and the needs of disabled children and young people. Instead, they should recognise strengths and identify ways to support the development of these.

## Findings (continued)

---

Young people were concerned that they were not always treated as a whole person. There was a focus on their diagnosis, condition or additional needs.

EHCPs are often not clear enough on what outcomes they are working towards for disabled children and young people.

Education and educational outcomes were seen as the dominant focus of most EHCPs.

## Recommendations

---

The project outlined many recommendations, some of which are listed here. All recommendations are included in the full report, which is linked below.

- Disabled young people and children's voices must be valued whilst writing their EHCP
- There should be an opportunity for an individual to see what is in their EHCP before it becomes final. They should have the opportunity to ask questions and raise issues
- EHCPs must be made more accessible. Professionals gave ideas such as online portals for sharing EHCPs as well as the use of more accessible language
- Person-centred planning will ensure EHCPs capture and work towards enabling disabled children and young people to achieve their ambitions
- The social care section should contain provision to support young people towards independent living, inclusion in the community, access to community groups and services such as youth clubs
- Good quality plans should not contain lots of medical jargon, which makes it inaccessible to the young person and their family
- EHCPs should not just contain a list of their medical history, but should focus on what was relevant and important to a young person
- There should be a legal obligation to provide young disabled people, and their families, information about the complaints and appeals process. They should be advised on how to access it and where they may be able to find support.

## Final report

### Defining quality and rights-based Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for disabled children and young people

Please click on report name to read the full report.

## Project partners

---

Coventry University



Grapevine Coventry and Warwickshire



Coventry City Council



Nottinghamshire County Council



Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE)

