

AGILISYS EHCP AGENCY

Empowering councils to swiftly clear EHCP backlogs and deliver timely, high-quality care plans for children and young people.

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EHCP Writing Outsourcing in the UK:

Costs and Considerations for Councils

The number of EHCPs issued in England has been steadily increasing since their introduction in 2014 as part of the SEND reforms. This has placed a significant strain on Local Authorities (LAs), leading many to explore outsourcing EHCP writing as a potential solution. It is estimated that roughly one in three LAs has outsourced the production of draft EHCPs to third-party firms. This report examines the practice of EHCP writing outsourcing in the UK, focusing on the costs and considerations for councils.

Reasons for Outsourcing

Councils face several challenges in managing the EHCP writing process in-house. One of the primary challenges is the increasing volume of EHCPs and the resulting fluctuation in workloads. In January 2024, there were **576,000** children with EHCPs, a **140%** increase since 2015. The sheer volume of work can be overwhelming for SEND case officers, who often have unmanageable caseloads, sometimes in the hundreds. This impacts the timeliness of plan development, with only **50%** of plans completed within the required 20-week timeframe in many areas in 2024.

Furthermore, workloads can fluctuate unpredictably, making it difficult for councils to manage staffing levels effectively. High workloads and a lack of training focused on SEND Caseworkers' development contributes to staff retention issues, leading to a constant need to recruit and train new staff.





Benefits

Reduced workload for in-house staff:

Outsourcing EHCP writing can significantly **reduce the workload of in-house SEND Caseworkers**, allowing them to focus on other tasks, such as supporting families and schools, coordinating assessments, and managing reviews.

Improved timeliness of EHCPs:

By utilising external EHCP writing services, councils can **increase their capacity to produce plans and improve their ability to meet the 20-week statutory timeframe for issuing EHCPs**. The EHCP writing service will also be a game-changer for councils struggling with EHCP backlogs, allowing them to provide timelier EHCPs to children and families.

Enhanced plan quality and consistency:

Specialist EHCP writers possess the **expertise and experience to ensure high-quality plans** that meet all statutory requirements.

Cost-effectiveness:

Outsourcing can be a **more cost-effective solution compared to hiring and training new staff**, eliminating the costs associated with recruitment, training, salaries, and benefits.

Increased flexibility:

Councils can **scale their use of outsourcing services up or down as needed to manage fluctuating workloads and demands**. This allows them to adapt to changing circumstances to meet their statutory obligations without overspending on staffing.



Drawbacks

Potential for reduced "co-production":

"Co-production" is a core principle of the SEND reforms, emphasising the active involvement of families and young people in the EHCP process, ensuring that their views and wishes are considered.

Data protection concerns:

When outsourcing EHCP writing, councils must ensure that **any external provider used will handle sensitive data securely** and comply with data protection regulations.

Potential for communication breakdowns:

Clear **communication and coordination between the council and the outsourcing provider** are essential for successful implementation.

Risk of inconsistent quality:

While outsourcing can lead to improved plan quality, there is also a **risk of inconsistent quality if providers are not carefully selected and monitored**. Councils need to establish clear quality standards and implement ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Potential impact on other services:

Outsourcing EHCP writing may have **unintended consequences for other SEND services** with poor quality EHCPs causing further work for staff and delays to children and families.

The Role of Technology

Technology can play a significant role in streamlining the EHCP writing process and improving timeliness. AI-powered tools can intelligently extract and summarise information from various sources to generate initial draft EHCPs in a fraction of the time it would take manually. This can free up SEND professionals to focus on more complex tasks and ensure that EHCPs are delivered promptly. It is important to remember that technology should complement, not replace, the expertise of SEND professionals and the involvement of families in the process.



Costs of Outsourcing

The cost of EHCP writing outsourcing can vary **depending on several factors, including the complexity of the plan, the experience of the writer, and the specific services required.** Costs can also be influenced by the type of service being provided, such as whether it is writing a new EHCP, or amending an existing plan. In addition to the direct cost of outsourcing, councils should also consider potential indirect costs, such as the need for staff to manage the outsourcing process and ensure data protection.





Agilisys EHCP Agency

Empowering councils to swiftly clear EHCP backlogs and deliver timely, high-quality care plans for children and young people. The Agilisys EHCP Agency offers a comprehensive solution to streamline the creation and management of EHCPs, combining expert EHCP drafting services with the latest AI technology. Our innovative service, partners with local authorities to tackle longstanding delays, ensuring that every child receives the support they need - when they need it.



Focus on what matters most

Providing high-quality support for children and young people with SEND. By automating time-consuming administrative tasks, our agency allows SEND Caseworkers to dedicate more time to building relationships with families and providing personalised support



Reduce backlogs and improve timeliness

The agency's AI-powered EHCP Drafting tool automates draft creation, **saving an average of 6 hours per plan**. This allows for faster processing of EHCPs, helping councils meet the 20-week statutory timeframe and reduce backlogs, which have been exacerbated by increased demand and limited resources.

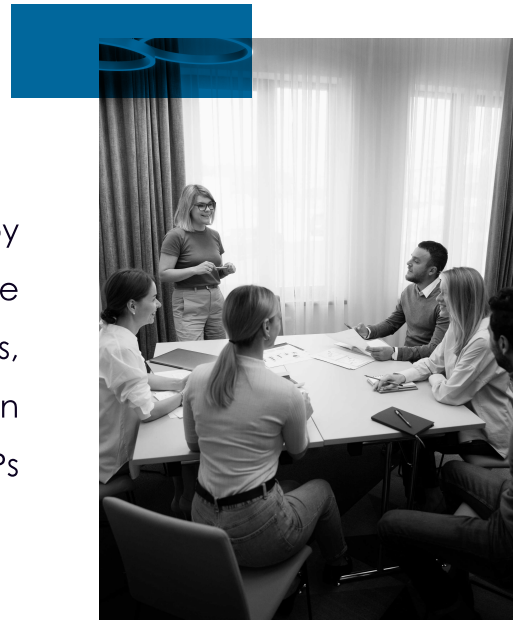


Improve accuracy and consistency

The EHCP Drafting tool ensures consistency and accuracy in plan development, minimising errors and reducing the need for revisions. This leads to higher-quality EHCPs that better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND

Enhance outcomes

Agilisys is dedicated to supporting children with SEND by helping local authorities deliver timely and effective support. By streamlining processes and reducing backlogs, the agency ensures children and young people can access the services and provisions outlined in their EHCPs faster.

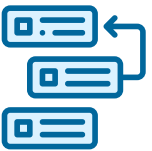


Our Services



Subscription Service

For ongoing support and active management of EHCP drafting, councils can opt for our subscription service. With this option, the Agilisys EHCP Agency takes on the responsibility of drafting EHCPs directly, leveraging our AI technology and expert knowledge to create high-quality, personalised plans. This allows your council to free up valuable resources and focus on other critical aspects of SEND provision.



Rapid Backlog Clearing

This option focuses on a short-term engagement to quickly address existing EHCP backlogs. Our expert team works with your council to accelerate the plan creation process. This service also includes the set-up and training for our AI-powered EHCP Drafting tool, empowering your SEND Caseworkers to efficiently manage future EHCPs.



How we operate

The Agilisys EHCP Agency addresses the challenges faced by EHCP and SEND teams head-on, providing a unique combination of services designed to drive impactful solutions.

In-house Expertise in EHCP Writing

Our team of experienced SEND professionals works closely with local authorities to understand their specific needs and challenges.

- Tailored support from experienced SEND professionals
- Outcome-centred EHCPs, with expert writers prioritising the child's voice and aspirations, crafting EHCPs that reflect individual needs, strengths, and desired outcomes
- Quality Assurance, with rigorous quality control processes, we ensure every EHCP meets established standards

AI-Powered EHCP Drafting Tool

Leveraging the power of generative AI, our EHCP Drafting tool significantly reduces the administrative burden on SEND Caseworkers:

- Automates first-draft creation using generative AI
- Saves SEND Caseworkers an average of 5 hours per plan
- Potential to free up over 40,000 days of professional time nationally
- Enables SEND Caseworkers to focus on complex cases and direct family support
- Co-developed in partnership with North Somerset Council, and in use by 3 councils today