

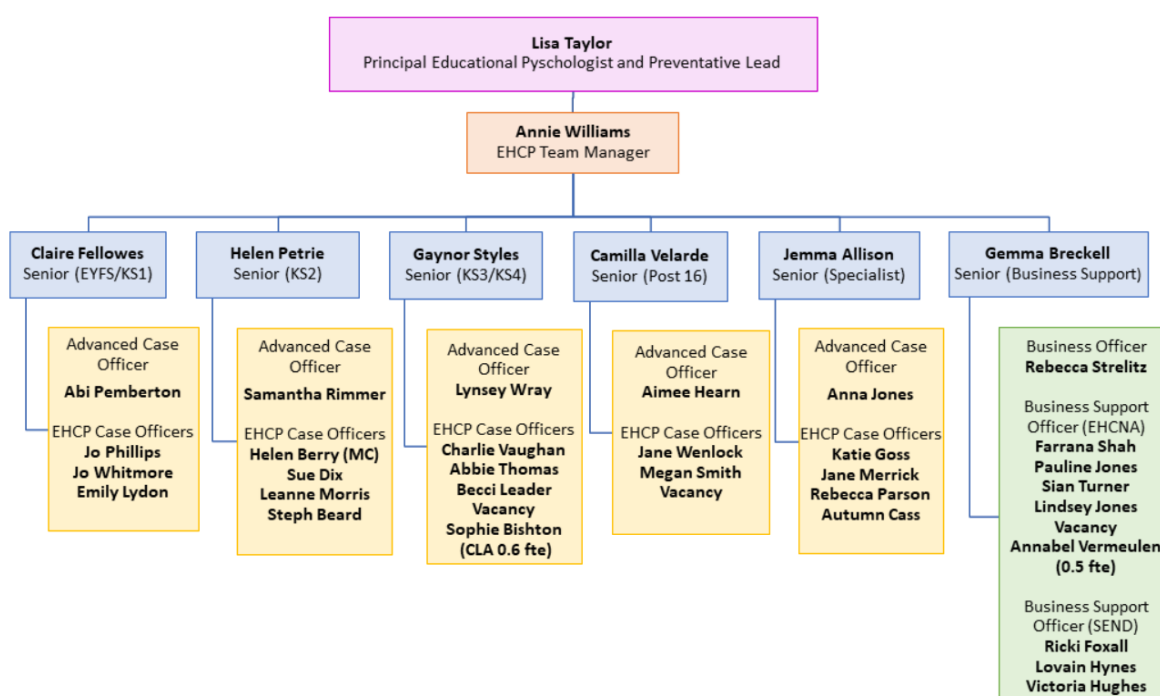
EHCP Team update for settings – September 2026

Structure

The EHCP Team has been remodelled to focus on expanding the team's capacity, improving training and professional development opportunities, and ensuring a more responsive service for children and young people. Our aim is to foster stronger collaboration with schools and external partners, enabling us to address challenges proactively and deliver high-quality outcomes for all stakeholders.

From September 2026 the new model looks like this:

EHCP TEAM – SEPTEMBER 2026



EHCP Team Page / Case Officer Allocations

EHCP Team page: <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/education-services/ehcp-team/ehcp-team/>

Case Officer allocations: <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/media/biwcivax/case-officer-allocations-all-key-stages-september-2026.pdf>

New templates

Further to the newsletter circulated in May 2026 – “you said we did” around EHCP Templates and the Annual Review Templates, these are now live and you will begin to see them circulated across the County in the form of new plans.

Link to EHCP page which has the new template in the related information section:

<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/how-is-sen-funded-in-schools/education-health-and-care-plan-ehcp/what-is-an-ehcp/>

Link to annual review page which has the new template in the related documents section: <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/how-is-sen-funded-in-schools/education-health-and-care-plan-ehcp/ehcp-annual-reviews/>

Annual Review training was rolled out over Spring and Summer Terms, and the Annual Review template was shared in that training to make sure SENDCO colleagues were familiar with them.

Parent carer training on the Annual Review process and participating in those review, is being co-produced with our parent carer forums and will be launched in the Autumn Term 2026.

Phase Transfers

Children and young people in your setting with an EHCP due to move to a new phase of education will require their Annual Review to be completed before the end of October to ensure that the EHCP is ready for the phase transfer deadline of 15th February or 31st March, depending on their age. The EHCP Team will send out letters to settings to support with this.

Phase transfers will be managed in the EHCP Team across the whole team and not specifically within their key stage cohort, so that we can more efficiently meet deadlines.

Our phase transfer guide for parents, explains what happens next, how their views will be gathered, how settings are consulted, and the key deadlines families need to know. Please read the guide to help with your understanding and for signposting parents to the guide. Contact your allocated EHCP officer if you have any questions or concerns you would like us to consider.

Link to phased transfers page which has the parent carer guide in the related

information section: <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/nurseries-schools-colleges-and-specialist-provision/phased-transfers/>

What SENDCOs can do now: Encourage parent carers to take time to read this guide and think about any questions, preferences or concerns they would like to share about their child or young person's next education setting. Please make sure parent carers contribute to their child or young person's annual review and contact your allocated EHCP officer if there is anything you would like the team to consider as part of the phase transfer process.

Recovery Project Update

We recognise that, due to a significant national increase in requests for Education, Health and Care needs assessments, the EHCP Team has not consistently met statutory timescales. We sincerely apologise for these delays and for any concern or inconvenience this may have caused to the families and community we support.

The Local Authority is taking proactive steps to address this. Since 1st May 2026, a dedicated recovery team has been in place to focus specifically on reducing the backlog of EHC needs assessments and annual reviews, as well as improving the overall timeliness of our service.

Throughout this recovery period, we remain committed to maintaining the quality of all EHCPs alongside improving timeliness. Our aim was to address all backlog cases by 31st October 2026. However, due to recruitment issues and our aim to secure the most suitable resource to support the project we have been hampered. It is likely that we may need to extend the project by a short period of time, but that will result in all annual reviews that had not been reviewed for some time, all being completed and up to date.

With additional staff now supporting this work, we are also prioritising improved communication. We will endeavour to keep parents, carers, and education settings better informed of progress and updates, both in relation to the recovery programme and across the wider EHCP Team.

Escalation Process – reminder

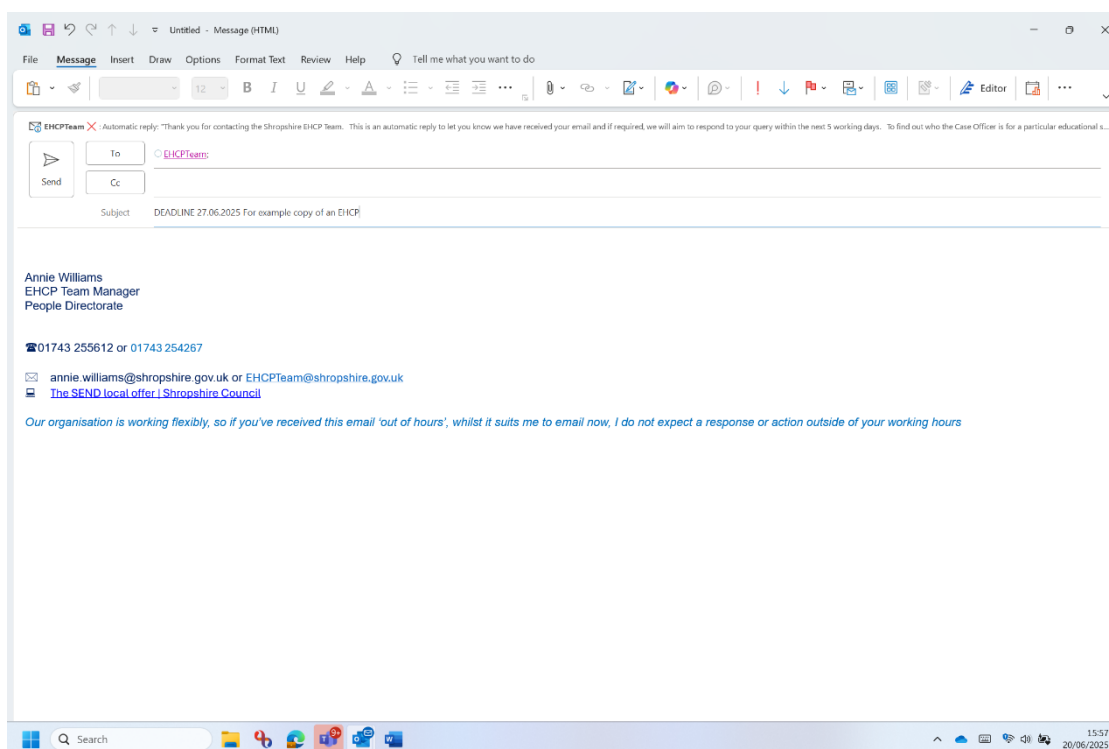
We are aware that frustrations around communications within the EHCP team continue to exist from time to time.

Our aspiration is to be responsive, and we are aware that due to the volume of emails, phone calls across the partnership and parents that we are struggling to keep up with responding in a timely manner.

In listening to our partners, initiated an escalation process, earlier this year which has proven to be useful. This is how it looks:

Case Officer → Senior Case Officer → Team Manager → PEP/Preventative Lead

To manage the incoming traffic of information requests, our preferred method of communication is email initially. We would request that we embed a protocol of naming to emails which include wording in the subject line:



By adding a **DEADLINE – 27.06.2025**, rather than URGENT, the team can readily understand by when you need a reply. If partners can apply this objectively, then we can manage the incoming and output of information more easily and manage expectations.

You will note from the example, that we haven't added anyone to be copied in. If you direct your request firstly to the EHCPTeam@ email account, or the Case Officer, if you are already in dialogue with them, it will help to support with the volume of emails coming into everybody's inbox.

If you are aware of the pupil's Case Officer (Case Officer Allocation List) please direct your email directly to the Case Officer, there is no need to also copy in the EHCPTeam@shropshire.gov.uk email address.

If the email remains unanswered after the agreed 5 days turnaround, you can forward to the next person within the escalation process.

The suggested naming convention here would be **ESCALATION**. This is clear to us then, that there is not a 5-day tolerance and a reply is expected by the requester.

If an enquiry is about a response for an Annual Review, then you can use the Annual Review email account for those specific queries: senannualreviews@shropshire.gov.uk

Please be aware that Thursdays are focused plan writing days and therefore the EHCP Team are not available Thursdays and will not respond on a Thursday. We kindly request that you avoid sending messages on this day but to make contact on the other four days of the week so as not to delay response times.

Consultations for Children and Young People with an EHC Plan

You will be aware of the Recovery Project in place and the traction needed on protracted cases. It has been identified that some of the cases have become entrenched in negotiations and discussions around placement offers. This blurs the lines around the Local Authority statutory duties, leads to frustrations on parent carers behalf and hinders progress for the child or young person's outcomes.

The EHCP Team will continue to undertake consultations with educational settings in strict accordance with the **Children and Families Act 2014**, the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014** and the **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**. In particular, the Local Authority will apply the statutory consultation process rigorously and will expect settings to respond within the prescribed **15 calendar day** period. Consultation responses must clearly identify, with evidence, any lawful basis on which the setting contends that it should not be named. Where no response, or no sufficiently evidenced response, is received within that timescale, the Local Authority will proceed on the basis of the information available, make its decision in accordance with its statutory duties, and where appropriate name the setting in Section I of the Education, Health and Care Plan. In those circumstances, the Local Authority will expect the setting to comply with its legal duty to admit where it is named in the final Plan, save where a lawful exception applies.

Resubmission of Requests for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment – Guidance for Schools

Where the Local Authority has made a decision **not to proceed with an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA)**, this decision will have been reached having considered the evidence provided by the school and other professionals, and by applying the statutory threshold set out in legislation. At this stage, the EHCNA request is formally concluded.

Following a decision of **no to assess**, schools are expected to continue to meet the needs of the child or young person through **SEN Support**, underpinned by a robust and graduated **Assess–Plan–Do–Review (APDR)** approach, in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

If, having continued to implement and review SEN Support, a school believes that an EHC Needs Assessment may now be required, a **new EHCNA request must be submitted**. The Local Authority is unable to revisit or reopen a previous “no to assess” decision without a formal resubmission.

Any request resubmitted must be supported by **new and substantial evidence** which clearly demonstrates what has changed since the previous decision and why the statutory threshold for an EHC Needs Assessment may now be met. In line with the graduated response, this should include clear evidence of:

- **Assess** – updated assessments providing a detailed and current understanding of the pupil's needs;
- **Plan** – targeted and outcome-focused SEN Support plans, informed by relevant professional advice;
- **Do** – evidence that planned support has been consistently implemented, including appropriate use of delegated and notional SEN funding;
- **Review** – documented reviews over time demonstrating the impact of interventions and showing that, despite sustained and well-planned SEN Support, the pupil's needs cannot reasonably be met without an EHC Needs Assessment.

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Resubmissions which do not evidence meaningful progression through the APDR cycle, or which do not demonstrate significant change or additional information since the original request, are unlikely to result in a different decision.

This approach ensures that decision-making remains lawful, transparent and consistent, and supports schools to use SEN Support effectively before requesting an EHC Needs Assessment.

Schools play a critical role in evidencing the graduated response and are asked to ensure that any resubmitted request clearly sets out the SEN Support undertaken and the reasons why an EHC Needs Assessment is now considered necessary.

EHCNA Request by young people:

The EHCP Team have set up an email address for parental/young person EHCNA requests, it is EHCNA.request@shropshire.gov.uk. The team have a high volume of daily queries to the generic team email address so by creating this new email address which is specific for parental/young person new requests we will be able to pick these up and acknowledge them quicker. We have updated the parental/young person request pages on the local offer with the new email address.

****Schools should continue to submit new requests to the Shropshire SEND Portal****