

## Best time of year to apply for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA)

You should request an EHCNA when you believe an Education, Health and Care Plan is necessary to meet a child's needs. However, the effectiveness of applications can vary depending on the time of year due to strict timescales associated with EHCNAs.

Below is a guide to the implications of applying in different months:

- **Green:** Works well with the school year.
- **Amber:** May not be as effective for some children.
- **Red:** Unlikely to result in a comprehensive multi-agency assessment.

Application dates for an EHCNA	Implications of application timing for an EHCNA
Sept to Feb	Applications made in the first half of the academic year allow for assessments, co-production meetings, and consultations to occur within the school year, enabling a well-rounded assessment.
Mar	Applications at the end of March mean co-production meetings are likely to be held right at the end of term, with consultations taking place during the summer holidays.
Apr	Applications in April result in co-production meetings during the summer holidays, and consultations will not be completed in time for the new school year.
May	Applications in May mean co-production meetings are likely to occur at the beginning of September, which is not ideal for children starting a new school.
June	Applications in June lead to assessments over the summer holidays, meaning children will not be seen in an educational setting. This may result in an inaccurate assessment of all their needs.
July	Applications in July may limit access to additional information needed to support the decision to assess due to school holidays. Children may be assessed over the summer holidays, meaning they will not be seen in an educational setting. This could result in an inaccurate assessment of their needs.
Aug	Applications in August mean the child is likely to be assessed at the beginning of September, which may not provide an accurate assessment for children moving to a new school or class.